

— notes on in-vestigations
& explorations ...

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COLUMBIA GSAPP

in—roduction...

This collection of notes on investigations and explorations contains various modes of inquiry.

Sometimes an interpretation is proposed, while sometimes it is just the beginning. Sometimes it is embodied, and sometimes the topic was totally new.

I have also included my journey rediscovering history and theory, attempting to come to terms with what is current and what should be left behind.

The stories all weave together, like a quilt and exist in a symbiosis of both hopefulness for the future and sadness for what still must be overcome, together.

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66... attempts an in—depth writing and analysis

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in-between joy...

House of Liberation: a Dark Room for Ernest Cole.

Advanced Studio VI Sp23

Project: "in-between joy"

Faculty: Ilze Wolff (Wolff Architects, Cape Town) & Tianyu Yang
with Ruben Gomez Ganan

"WHAT THAT QUILT KNOWS ABOUT ME"

"My whole life is in that quilt... my hopes and fears, my joys and sorrows, my loves and hates. I tremble sometimes when I remember what that quilt knows about me."

- anonymous elder needleworker as written at the entry of the quilt exhibit at the Folk Museum NYC

Abstract:

Joy and more specifically communal joy is shared between people across scales, experiences, and places – and, at times, in simultaneity with sorrow. Cole's images capture these moments of joy that often occur in the shadow of (and in ways despite) the larger surrounded societal armatures. Women in South Africa share moments of rest while people in Harlem share music as places of communal

joy disappear from the private sphere leaving them to create their own public and semi-private gatherings on sidewalks, stoops and at times streets.

Quilts have a way of saying what is often unheard, of telling history while also providing embodied comfort. This project seeks to give voice to some of these stories while also becoming a vessel for creating more.

Pillow created as test for quilting methods

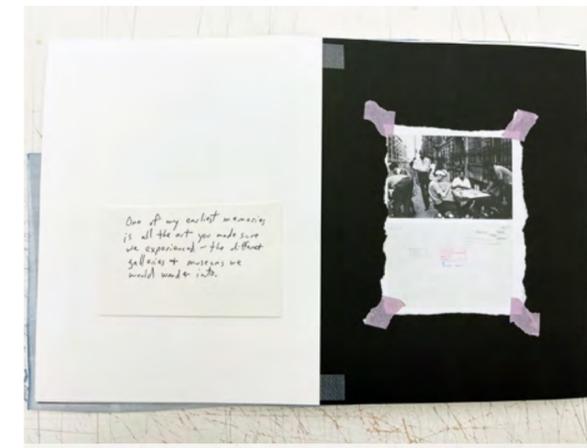
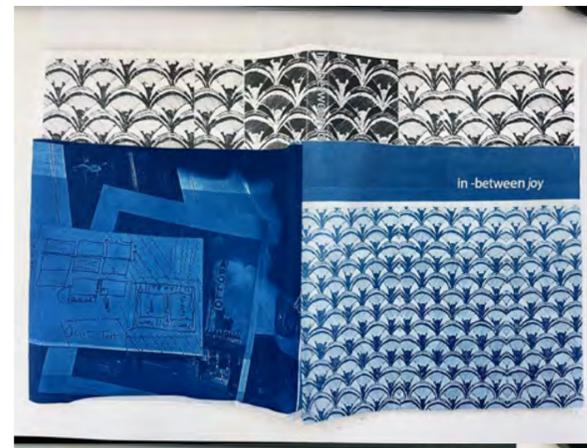


While we began this studio by looking at Cole's images in House of Bondage, we at the same time began exploring Harlem and its history.

Personally, I was born to parents who spent most of their lives in Harlem, and these explorations brought up a lot of memories and emotions for me.

I realized that while looking at Cole's images (in New York), they reminded me of the images in my parents' old photo albums that I had been pouring over just a month ago. They were taken at the same time, and in the same places.

While Cole's images starkly mirrored those he had taken in South Africa, clearly showing the hard life people were enduring, mixed in you can also see those glimpses of hope, and glimpses of joy.

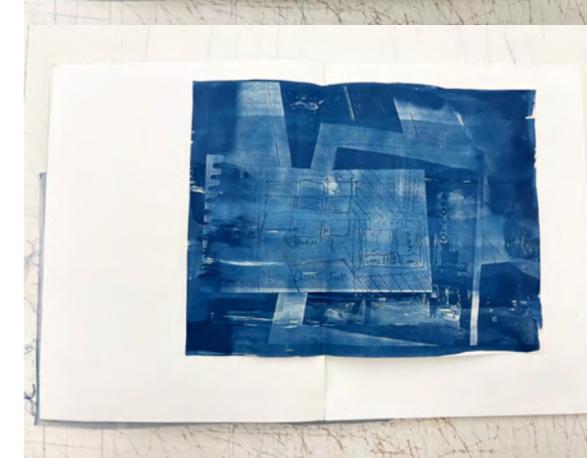


While the women created their own space of rest on the South African sidewalks, people in New York claimed their own sidewalk spaces of rest.

They made these spaces their own, these spaces that exist in between public and private.

The spaces in front of the many renowned Harlem jazz clubs became grand display spaces. Here, in this area between public and private, the everyday patron could be the star.

Nora Miller recounted the joy she felt dancing on the sidewalk outside the savoy club for tips. This eventually gained her notice, and entry into the jazz scene. I followed her journey from the sidewalk inside that important club that for a time set the basis for music in NY and the US.



Another club, Smalls, was black owned in a time when most were not. Black patrons (and not just famous ones) could come in and really enjoy, not being paraded on display at some of the places created for white eyes.

A young Malcolm X was a waiter here. W. E. B. DuBois celebrated his 83rd birthday here, a party co-hosted by Albert Einstein after they were denied from the Essex House further down Manhattan.

These spaces, like all changed throughout the years, and as were walked the streets looking at their current incarnations, I was drawn to attempting to create some method to honor them and honor the history that happened there.

I began to question if the best way to honor the famous savoy was the fenced off plaque that now stands next to the building?



Our studio partook in our Kinne research travel to Cape Town. There we also walked around the city immersing climatizing ourselves on the sidewalks. I began to notice how much the local vegetation reminded me of Los Angeles where I live. What our eyes today see as native to these “Mediterranean” climates, were largely indigenous only to Australia. To learn of how their roots change the soil, making it more conducive to construction revealed levels of colonial organization and violence lurking again under the surface, and still thriving in plain sight. The soil and indigenous plants were irrevocably changed to this new interchangeable landscape across the globe. This in ways can be seen as in parallel to what has happened more visibly to people and ideals as they migrated and were forcibly displaced across the oceans.

Photo of sunset in Table Mountain National Park, Cape Town, South Africa by Christopher Wierer



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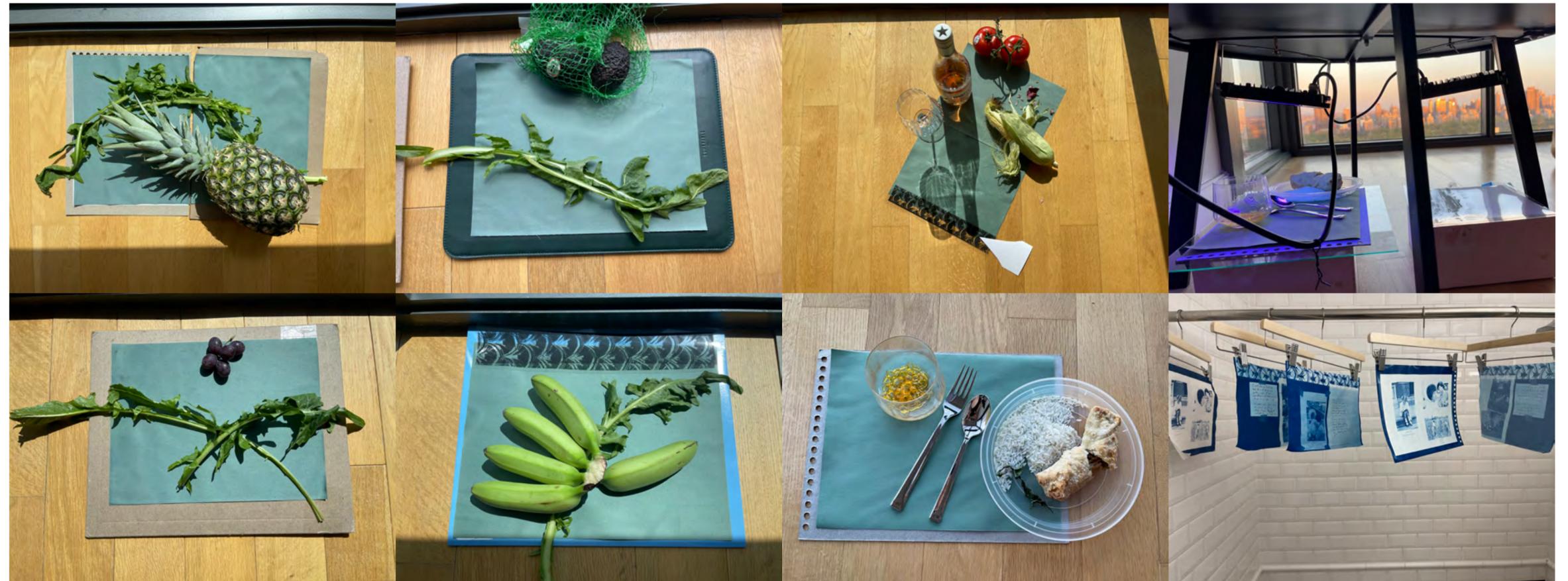
Photo of sunset in Table Mountain National Park, Cape Town, South Africa by Christopher Wierer

This began my thinking as to what to include on my public offering for this studio, the quilt. I compiled a list for myself the reasons why I began exploring the quilt as a medium in the first place.

They (Quilts) are:

- o History keepers
- o Embodied hopes and fears
- o A sum that is larger than its parts
- o Generational keepsakes
- o Biographies
- o Domestic necessities at times
- o Can expose multi-scalar realities, from community goals to personal fears
- o Some quilts contain “The Personal and the Political” – they sometimes speak for those without a big voice, and often times women’s lives who were not recorded into formal history – at times those who actually made the quilts were erased, such as the attribution of many southern quilts to slave owners rather than the black people who made them
- o Many quilts attributed to white people were in reality sewn by other than white hands
- o Some quilts were made from clothes of who had died
- o Some quilts were made to commemorate families
- o Certain materials embody the violence of history, for example the indigo used in blue dyes was grown by enslaved people in the south for white profit
- o Quilting was at times undertaken by imprisoned people to pass time, such as imprisoned, subjugated pacific islanders
- o Flora and fauna were often included in quilts as botany was seen as stemming from notions of a “cultivated mind”

The following photos demonstrate the cyanotype process - various foods and planting materials were studied and chosen in mindfulness with their colonial history/ futures.



My quilt:

In organizing this quilt, I wanted to tell that story of Cole, woven in with the story of my parents, that interracial couple who met by chance and against all societal odds survived.

That story is depicted linear along the perimeter

Inward, there is a layer of vegetation, with dandelion leaves (weeds). Coming off those weeds are pineapples, bananas, plantains, wildflowers.

Inside is a sun printed picnic of sorts, that could be taken on the sidewalks or small urban parks of Harlem.

Here we have grapes, corn, tomatoes, flan, wine, European made tableware.



The quilt is double sided with the front face being the more 'formal journey'.

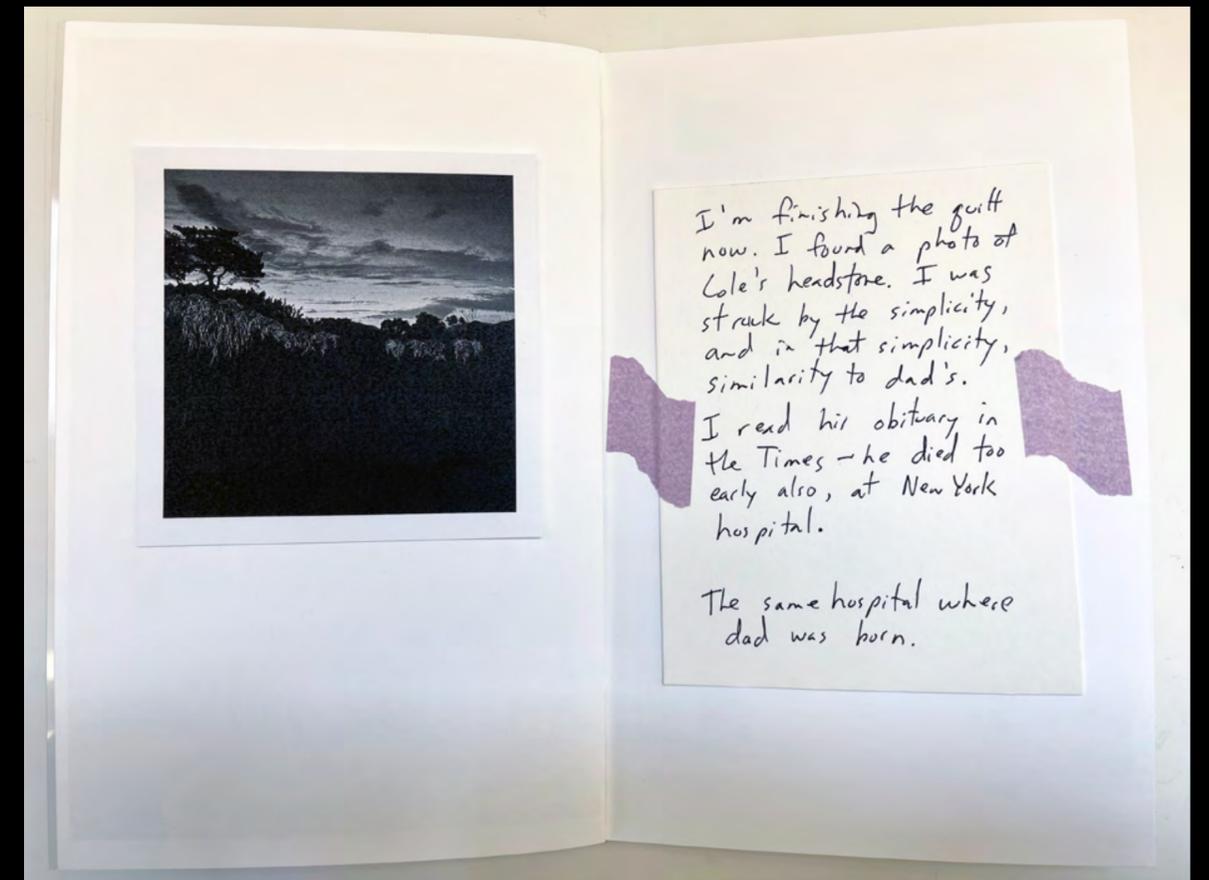
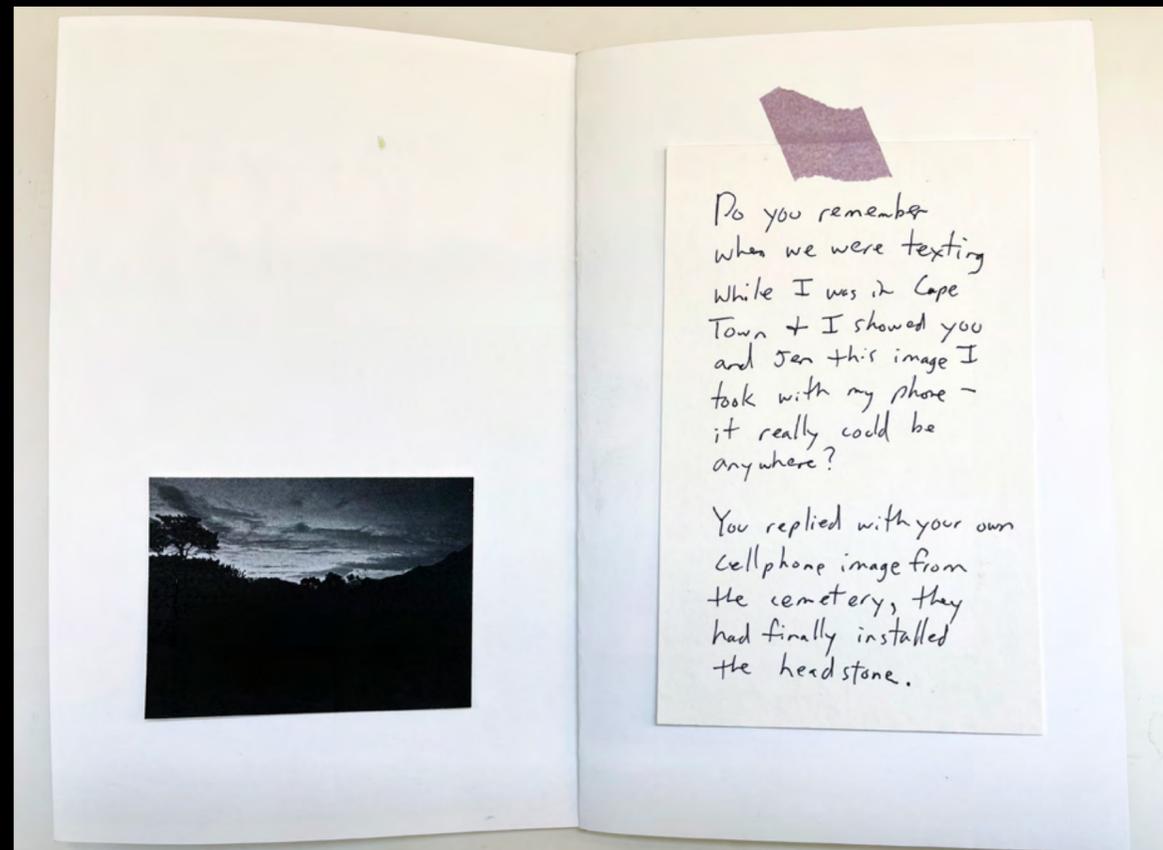
The two sides are sewn together across an inner layer filled with kapok, a seed-based material indigenous to Southeast Asia.



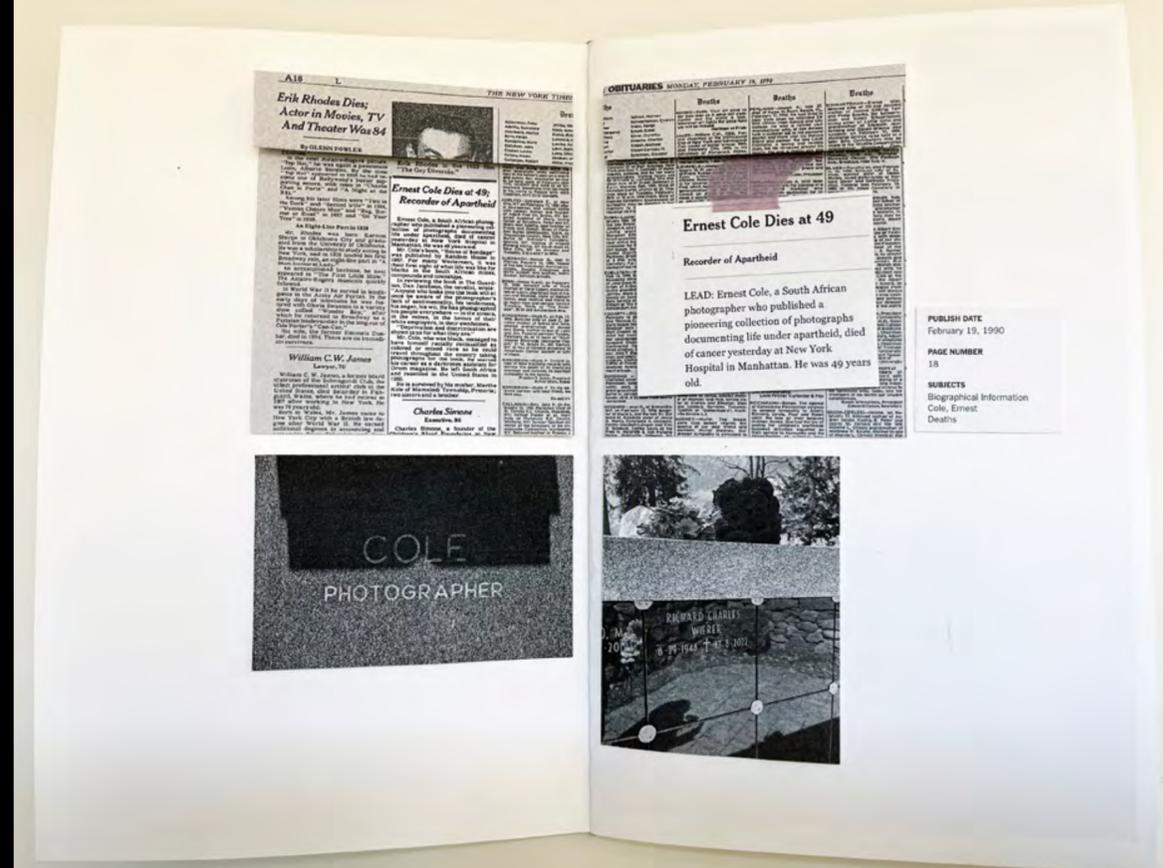


On the reverse I have embodied the tests and my personal learning of this craft.

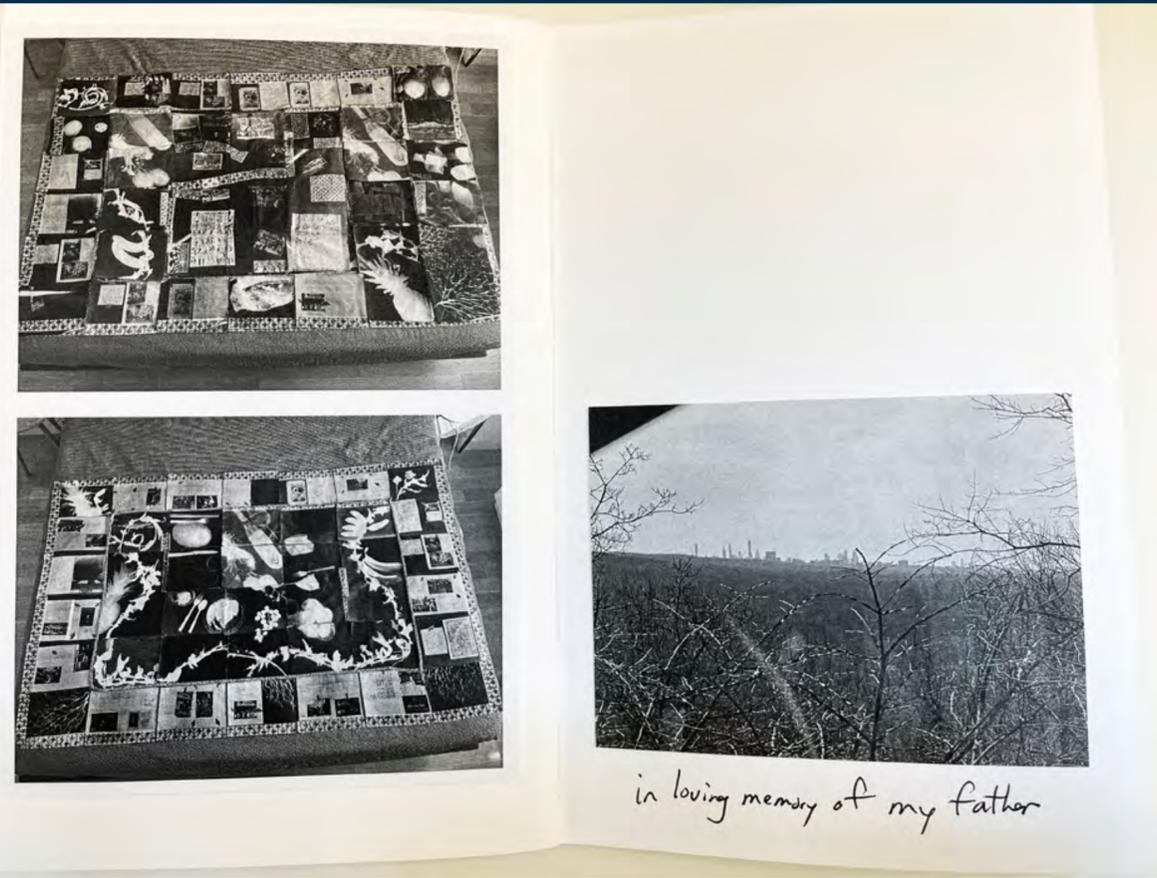
The top of the quilt is intentionally left 'unfinished', allowing for it to grow and expand as further study occurs.



In closing, I felt like I needed to see how Cole eventually died. I read his obituary in the NY Times. I saw how his headstone was made of the same material as the headstone my mom and I had just chosen for my dad. Immediately this made me text my mother. I read that Cole died at New York Hospital at the age of 49, waiting for his mom to be by his side after her long hasty journey from South Africa. My mom confirmed what I had remembered, it was the same hospital where my dad was born.



Now I look forward for using this quilt on a picnic with my mom and sister and new nephew hopefully this spring while we use it to create a new moment of joy while being reminded of all the history embodied here.





Post-Plantation Museum(s)

Advanced Studio V Fa22
Project: "Guggenheim Uncovered"
Collaboration with: Zhicheng Zhao
Faculty: Mabel O. Wilson, PhD & Jordan Carver, PhD
with Gene Carver

'The plantation moves through time, a cloaked anachronism, that calls forth the prison, the city and so forth.'

— Katherine McKittrick, "Plantation Futures"

"Post-Plantation Museum(s) studio will examine the plantation's architecture and spaces as an evolving typological model and discursive form to understand, undermine, explicate, and complicate the mechanics and techniques of enclosure and circulation. We will also study New York's preeminent institutions as "plantation museums" ...This studio will imagine new architectural protocols for a post plantation future..." – MOW & JC

Abstract:
"Guggenheim Uncovered" examines the many public facing layers the iconic museum

utilizes to outwardly portray a global, cultural powerhouse. Our intervention seeks to increase transparency into the institution itself and attempts to reclaim the space, the art, and agency for the public while surgically inserting an alternate path.

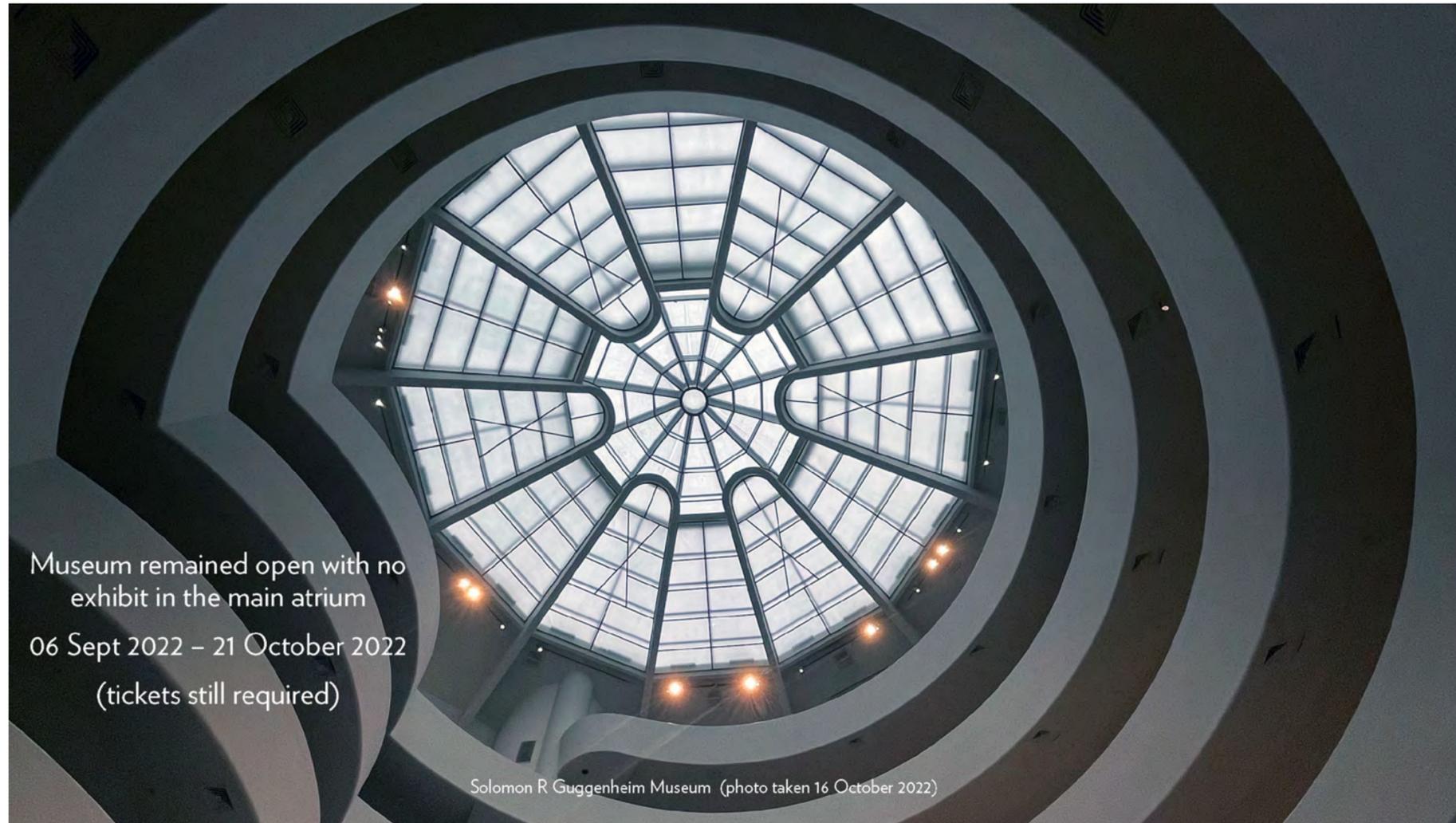
By creating a second, more accessible door across the atrium and a new ramp (that on first glance is identical to the first) leading to a new public rooftop gallery – non-ticket holding visitors can begin to uncover and subvert once hidden museum logics.



Exploring Relationship of Brand and Museum

A main part of our research was Exploring the Relationship between the Brand and the Museum. In culture and even in our collective hearing of the word 'Guggenheim', we picture in our minds the white Frank Lloyd Wright structure on Fifth Avenue, we might also imagine the Guggenheim family, but we would rarely imagine that the family still exists today and that the Guggenheim Foundation who runs the museum has been operating as a BRAND around the world. The Guggenheim Foundation controls the museums and the Guggenheim Partners controls the \$325 Billion of assets. The business journalists we have read say that this collective imagining of the museum while also collectively forgetting the business side of things allows that 325 billion force to go on and make deals relatively quickly, quietly, and unchecked.

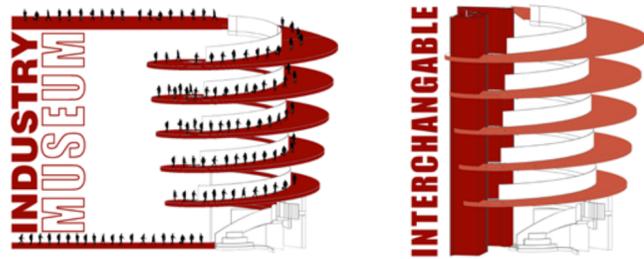
The family legacy started in the US with Meyer Guggenheim, a Swiss Jewish émigré to the US who launched a mining and smelting company. One of his son's, Solomon, born in Pennsylvania where the family settled used



the family money for education and ultimately grew the family business. Once it was one of the most successful mining operations in the US, he turned his attention to 'collecting' art as his story states. Like many people of the day it appeared one of his main goals was to remake himself into the ideal of a 'gentleman' and the collecting of art was one avenue into that world of NY society. He was then able to marry into the Rothchild family (of the British banking Rothschilds). This cemented his image now as that 'gentleman'. The Guggenheim-Rothchild family traveled heavily to Europe with some taking up residences there, and they hired a British Baroness to become their art consultant. That is how the Guggenheim collections were born.

Entering Into The Museum

Photo taken on October 16 During our first few visits this semester, it was clearly the museum itself on display. While waiting in line for entry, they would warn you that there was no main exhibit on view, yet no one ever left the line.



Brand diagrams

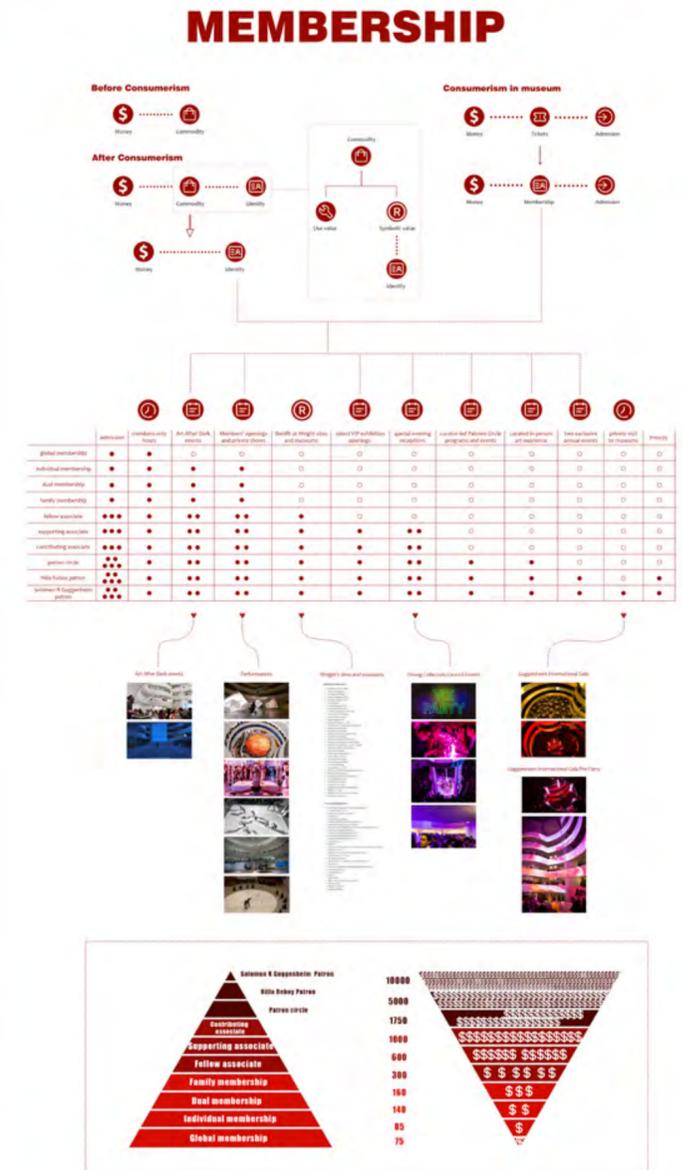
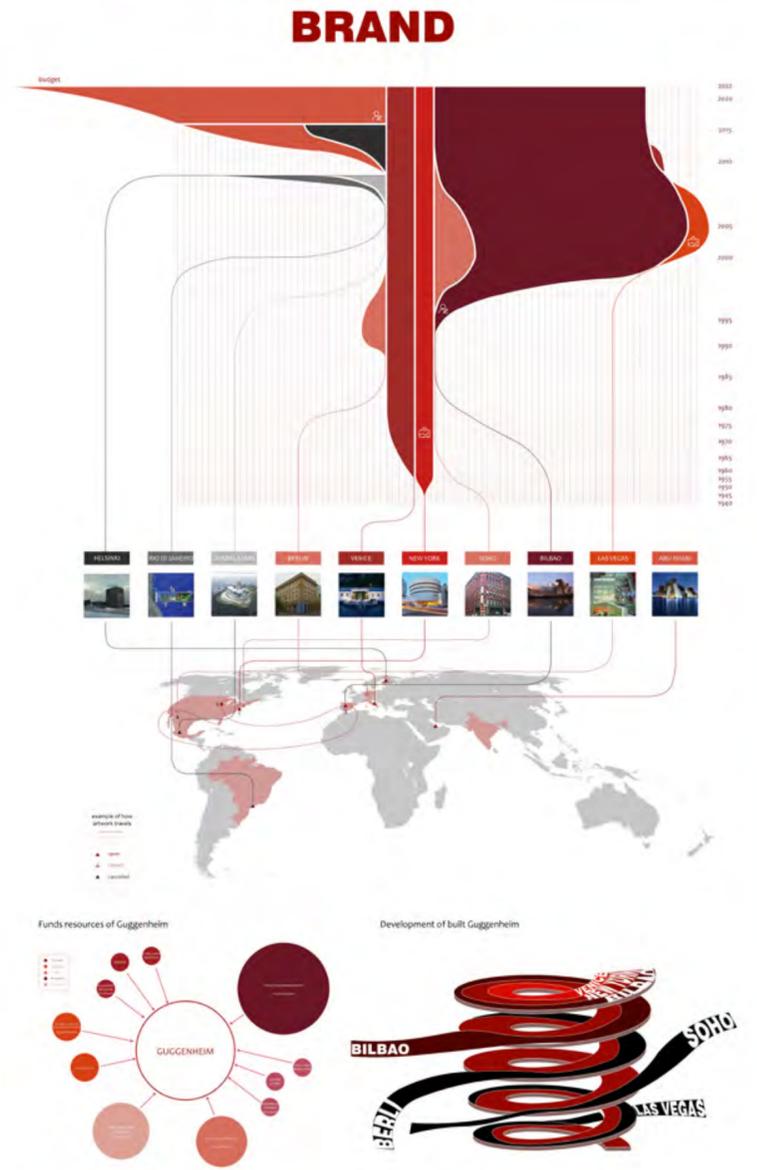
(Their timeline of brand growth: First establish the global image. Then global capitalization of that image. Utilize 'starchitects' museum as the art/ object. Cities around the world as both the funding source and the 'recipient of culture'. Perpetuating the 'Bilbao effect'.)

Rio: \$20 mil naming, \$300 mil construction
 Helsinki: \$24 mil naming, \$140 mil construction, \$15 mil annually
 Abu Dhabi: initially added \$300 mil budget, then cancelled, then continued with pledge of \$1Billion

This diagram attempts to visualize the expansion of the brand across time and across the globe while visually revealing some interesting relationships. Going down the center you have the Fifth Ave Flagship. The width visualizing the capital injected into the museum brand at the time of construction. Some museums close, some get cancelled. What is striking is how much money is now at play, and how much struggle it has had at certain years. It begins also to show the divide between looking at the museum brand above the line, a 'thriving museum enterprise for spreading culture' - or is it a spreading brand for its own image that tries to replicate the success of Bilbao. The Bilbao effect, where a semi struggling city looking for renewal takes a gamble with the Guggenheim and pays them for their name and construction costs and art acquisition.

Here we can trace another aspect of the 'business art enterprise, the success of the 'motorcycle exhibit'. It was highly questioned if it was even art or was it for the spectacle and money. Designed by Frank Gehry, it traveled next to Chicago then Bilbao then Las Vegas, by Rem Koolhaas. Now it is available for loan to other museums, for profit.

Begin to peak lower down, closer to the line that they don't want us to look beneath showing the business behind the Guggenheim name.

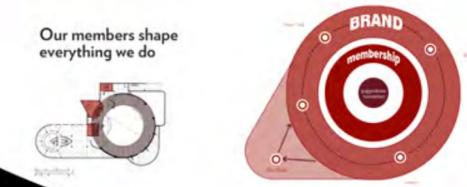
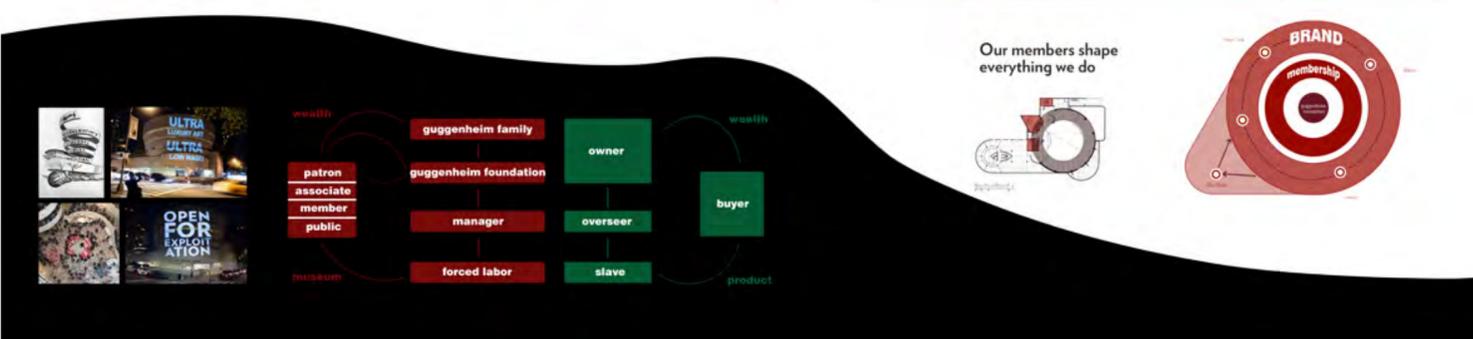


Some numbers:

GUGGENHEIM NY - \$30mil initial adjusted money, grew to about \$100 mil over the years
 Bilbao: \$20mil naming rights, \$100 mil construction cost, \$50 mil acquisition fee, \$12 mil annual
 Guadalajara: \$20mil naming rights, \$170 mil construction

Below the line

Then we can look completely at what they don't want us to see, and what they ignored until the brand backfired. It was able to be used against them. The exposure of the forced labor at Abu Dhabi, which at first they tried to ignore, then deny and back pedal. It was the activism as their locations in NY and Venice that they could not ignore, turning that nice white structure into projection.



New York



Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum
Frank Lloyd Wright, architect | 1959

Venice



Peggy Guggenheim Collection
Lorenzo Bochetti, architect | ca. 1948

Bilbao



Guggenheim Museum Bilbao
Frank Gehry, architect | 1997

Abu Dhabi



Guggenheim Abu Dhabi
Frank Gehry, architect | In Development



Solomon R Guggenheim Museum
Lobby wall (photo taken 16 October 2022)

The Guggenheim Brand presents itself as a global cultural powerhouse. Utilizing a unique reliance on iconic architecture and strategic expansion, the Guggenheim Foundation has been able to recreate its museum offering multiple times in its various outlets and remains ever ready to grow more.

This is a photo presents the brand logic front and center.

Entering into the Museum

As soon as you enter the Fifth Ave location the wall you encounter immediately in front of you announcing your first glimpse of the Guggenheim Global Brand. The wall has four images of their three open locations and one under construction. They show their formula of the museum as the star, announcing their 'starchitects' of the day below each image.

Exploring the Plantation Logic through our Lexicon terms:

- Big Idea of: **Hierarchy**
- Supported by the Idea of: **Capitalism**
- Through the Process of:
 - **Industrialization**
 - **Globalization**
- Utilizing tools of:
 - **Class**
 - **Architecture**
 - **Enclosure**
 - **Money**

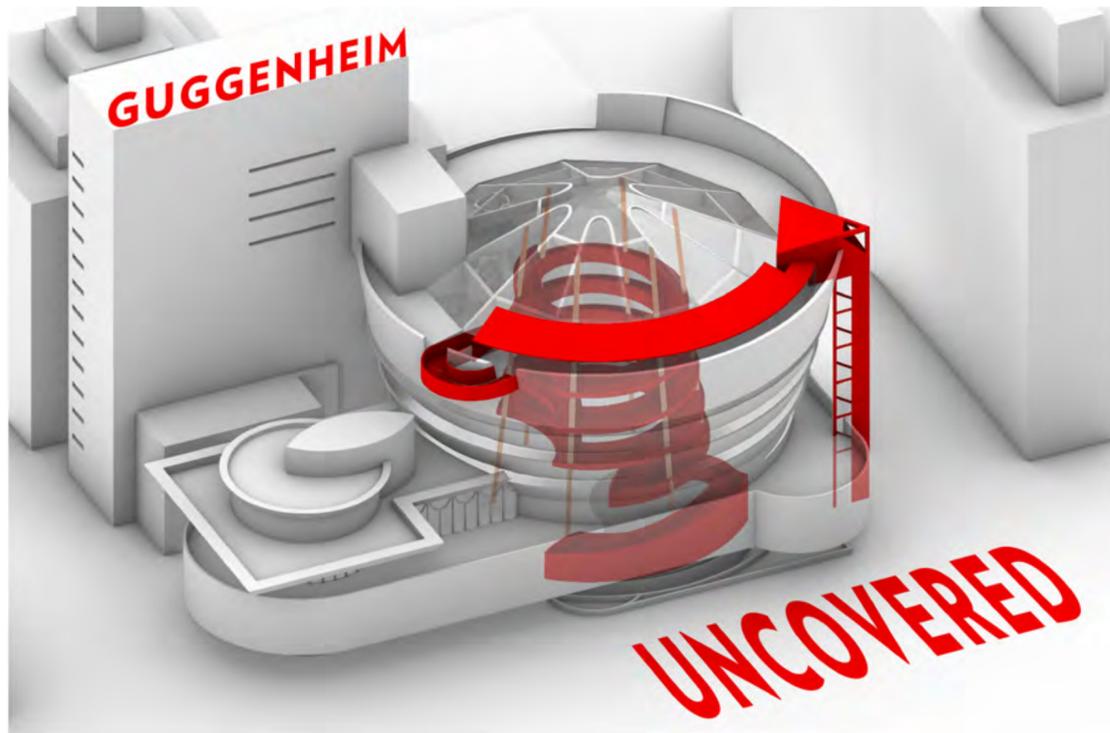


Solomon R Guggenheim Museum
giftshop (photo taken 16 October 2022)

Our research showed that behind the pretty photos however, In effect the museum partakes in the consumption of public funded art from cities around the world that is then privatized into its own ecosystem of display, expansion, exploitation, and exclusion.



The museum has been added upon and changed over the years, yet usually through well-integrated, often imperceptible ways.

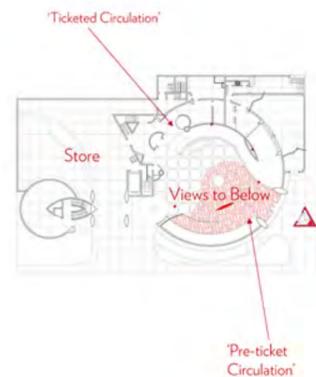


Our intervention seeks to increase transparency into the museum itself and attempts to reclaim the space, the art, and agency for the public while surgically inserting itself into the workings of the brand's iconic Fifth Ave flagship.

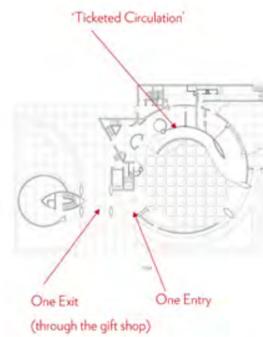
Moving up the new surgically inserted ramp, the public begins to reclaim the space vertically.

Visitors have options on how they want to use the space. They can take the elevator up directly and come down, or slowly ascend up. Afterwards they can leave with options as well, removing the cliché need to exit through the gift shop.

The visitors can interact with the original icon ramp, up close, yet a few inches off. The ramps do not touch, we have inserted its own support structure.

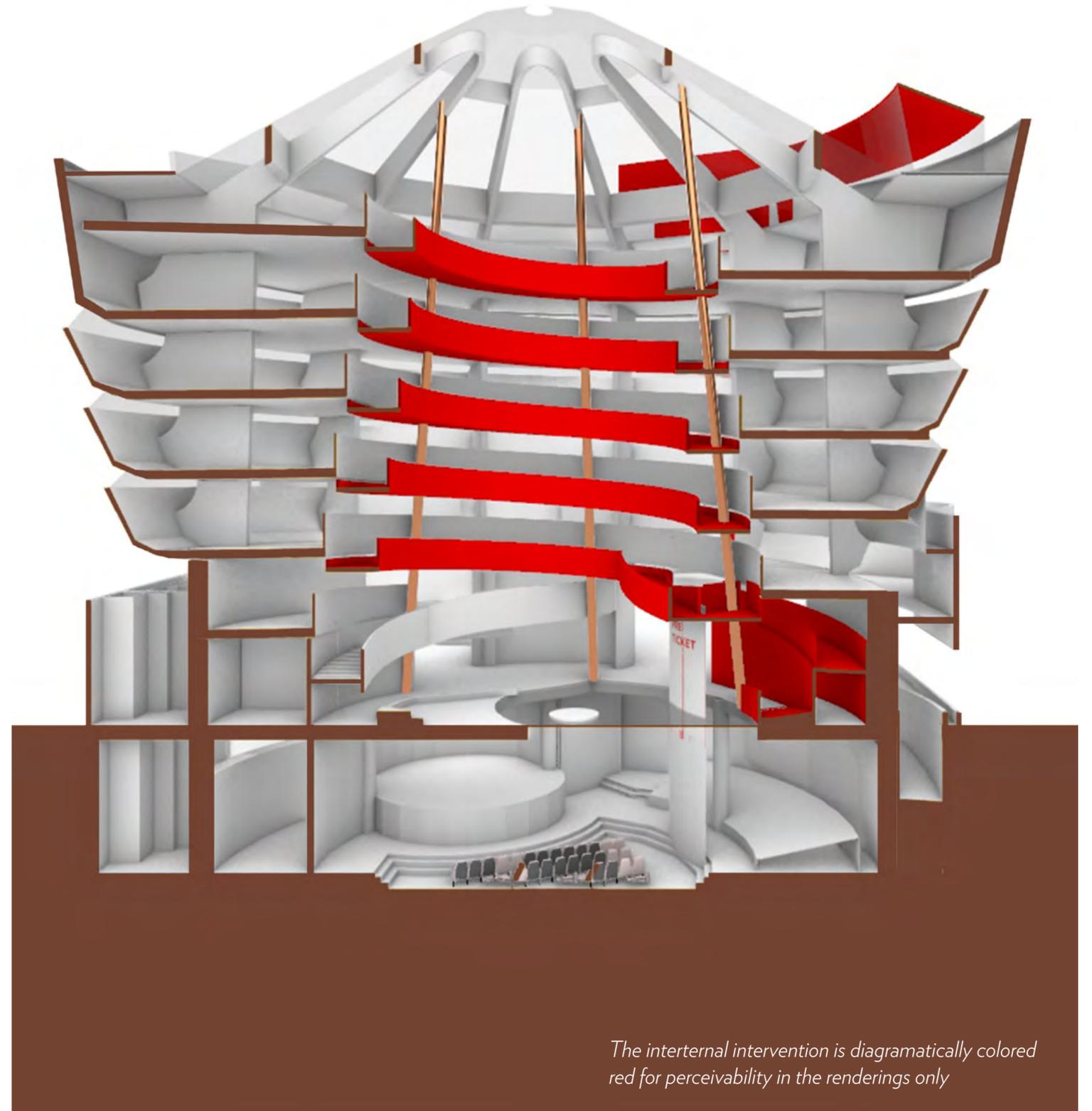


Proposed Plan



Existing Entry Level Plan

The interinternal intervention is diagrammatically colored red for perceivability in the renderings only



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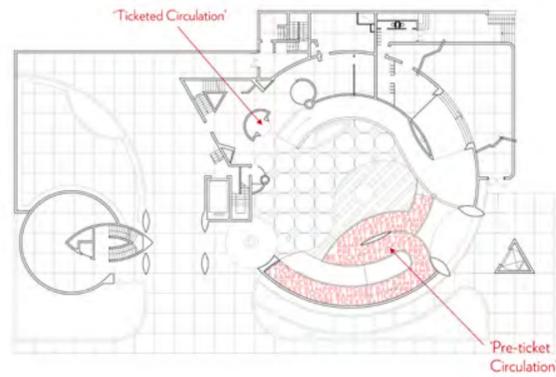
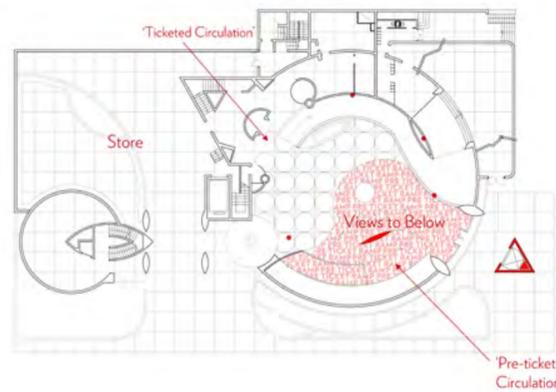
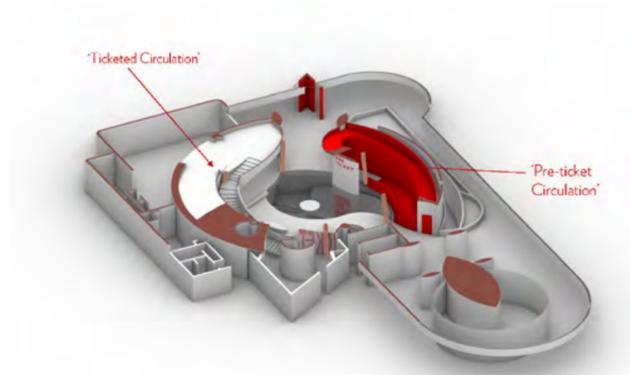
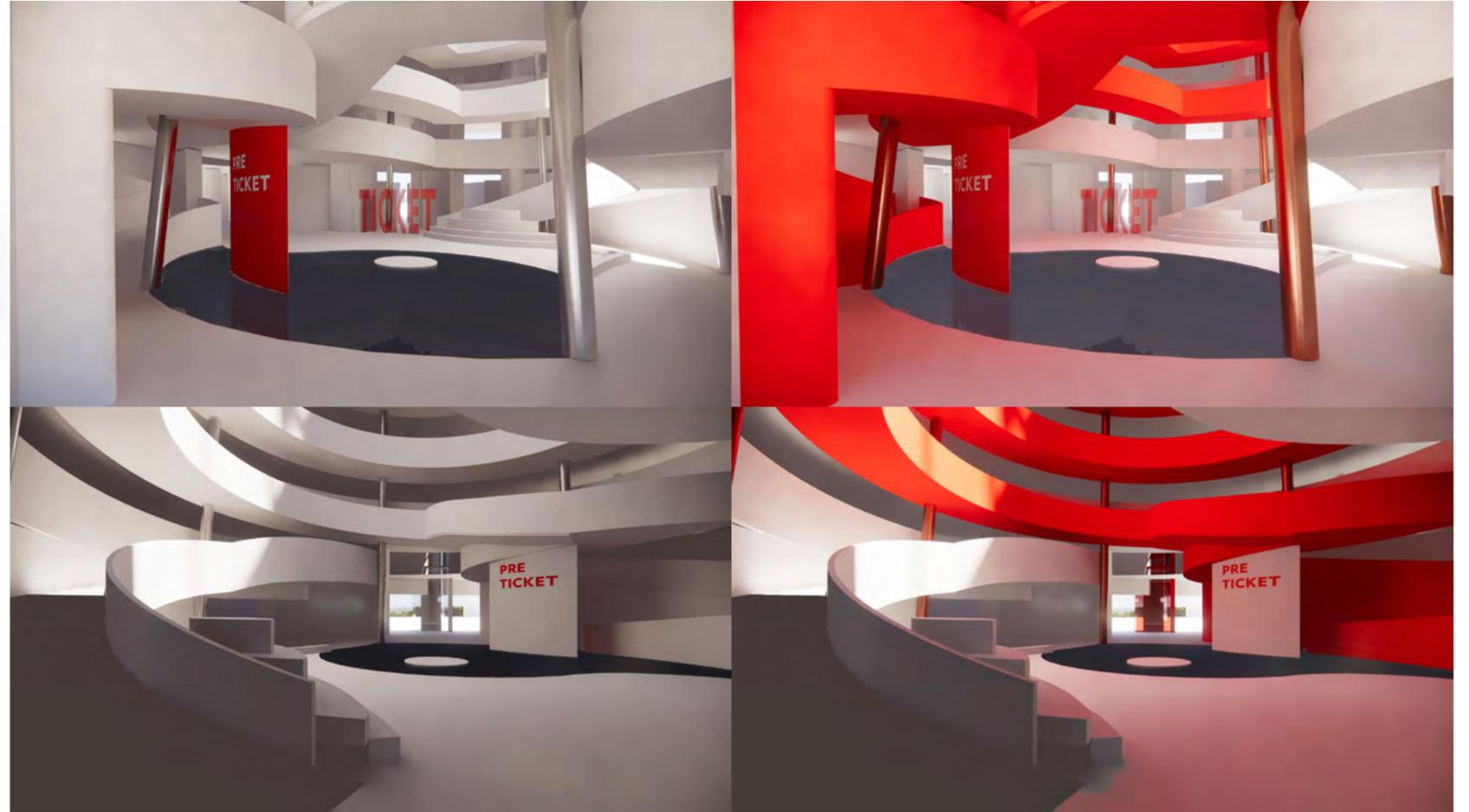
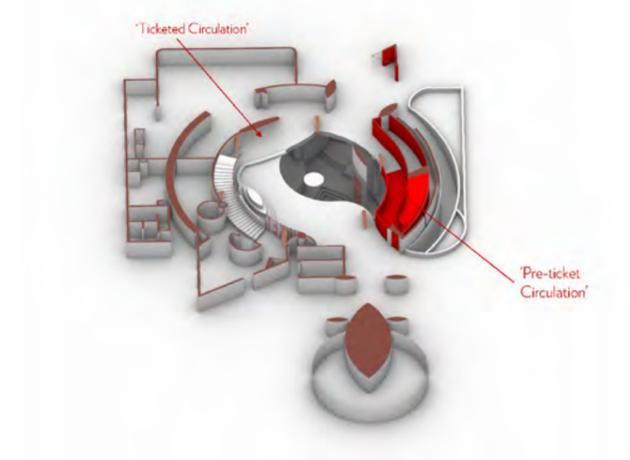


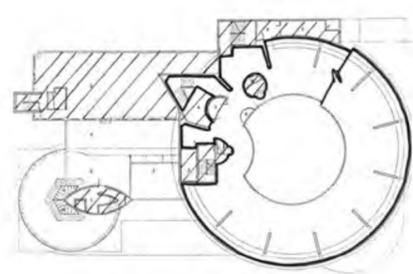
Diagram progressing upwards



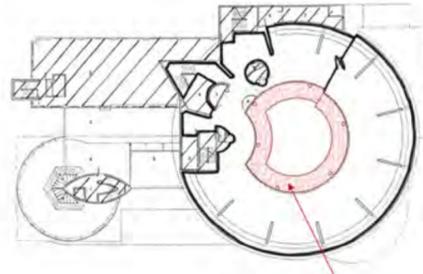
Entry level diagram



The interinternal intervention is diagrammatically colored red for perceivability in the renderings only



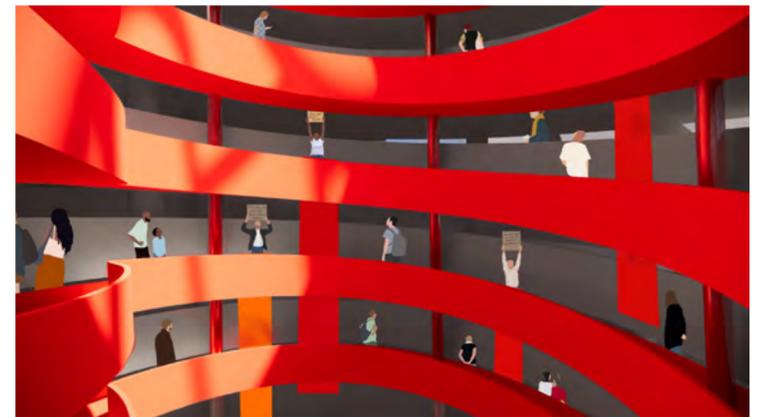
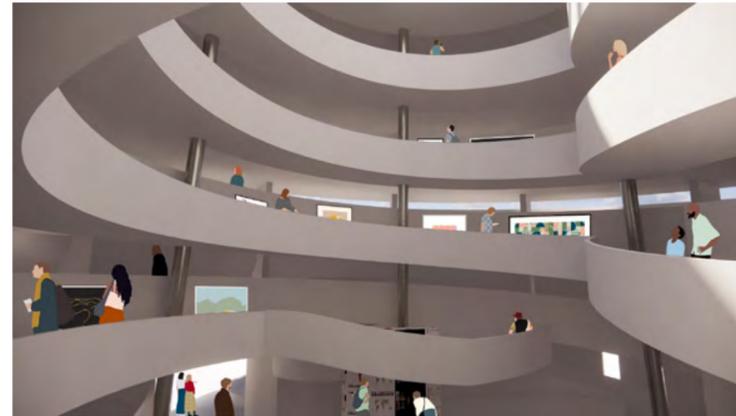
Existing Plan



Proposed Plan

'Pre-ticket
Circulation'

Moving up (or down) the ramps, the new internal intervention maintains the space for public occupation (and protest).

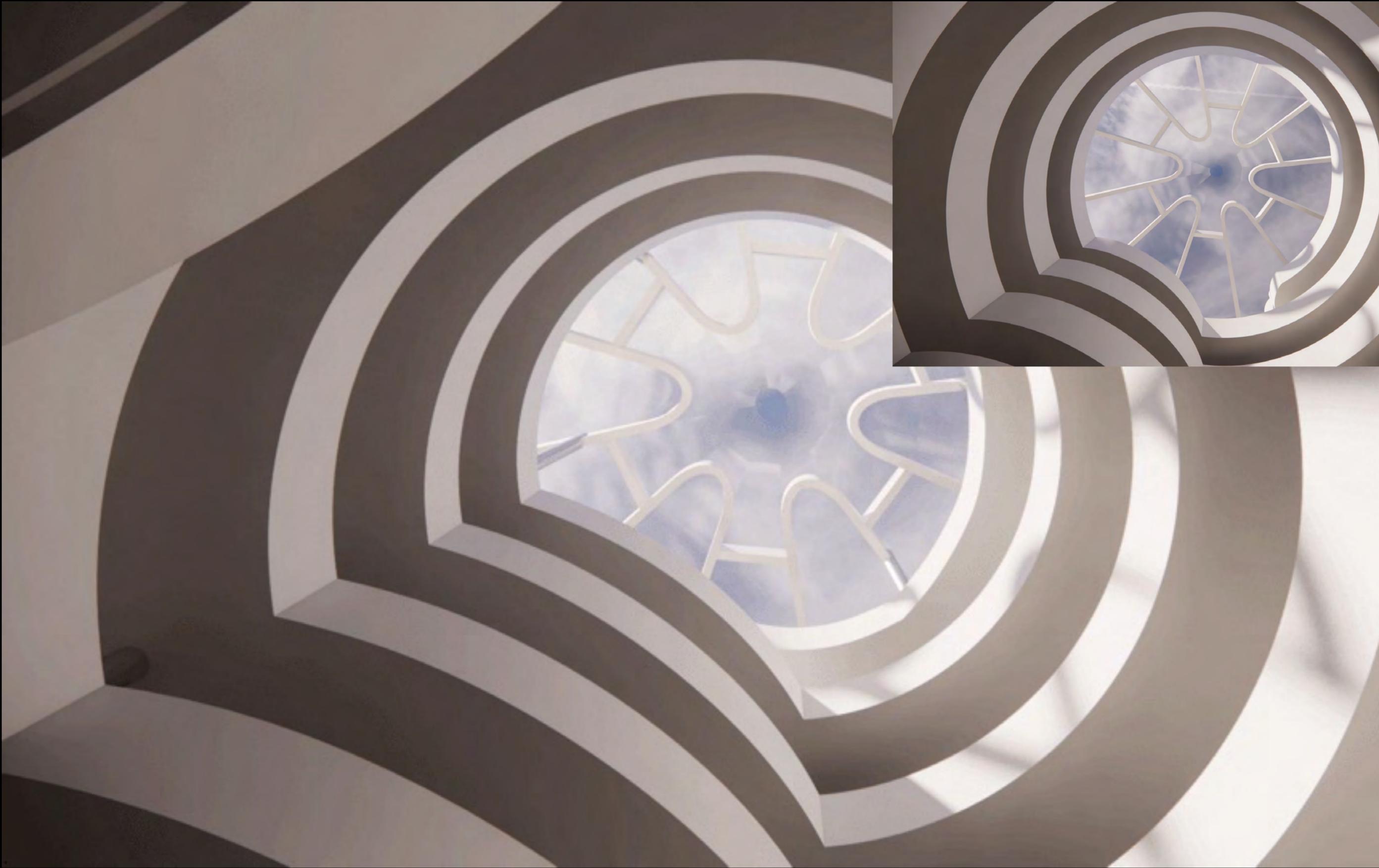


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*Existing vs. Proposed
Intervention*

The Met
→ Thank you
for your
Generous
Donations

After the Great Loudreading... On post-colonial reconstructions, repatriation, and reparations

Advanced Architectural Design Studio Su22
Project: "The Met - Thank You for Your Generous Donations"
Faculty: Cruz Garcia & Nathalie Frankowski (WAI Architecture Think Tank)
with Leon Duval

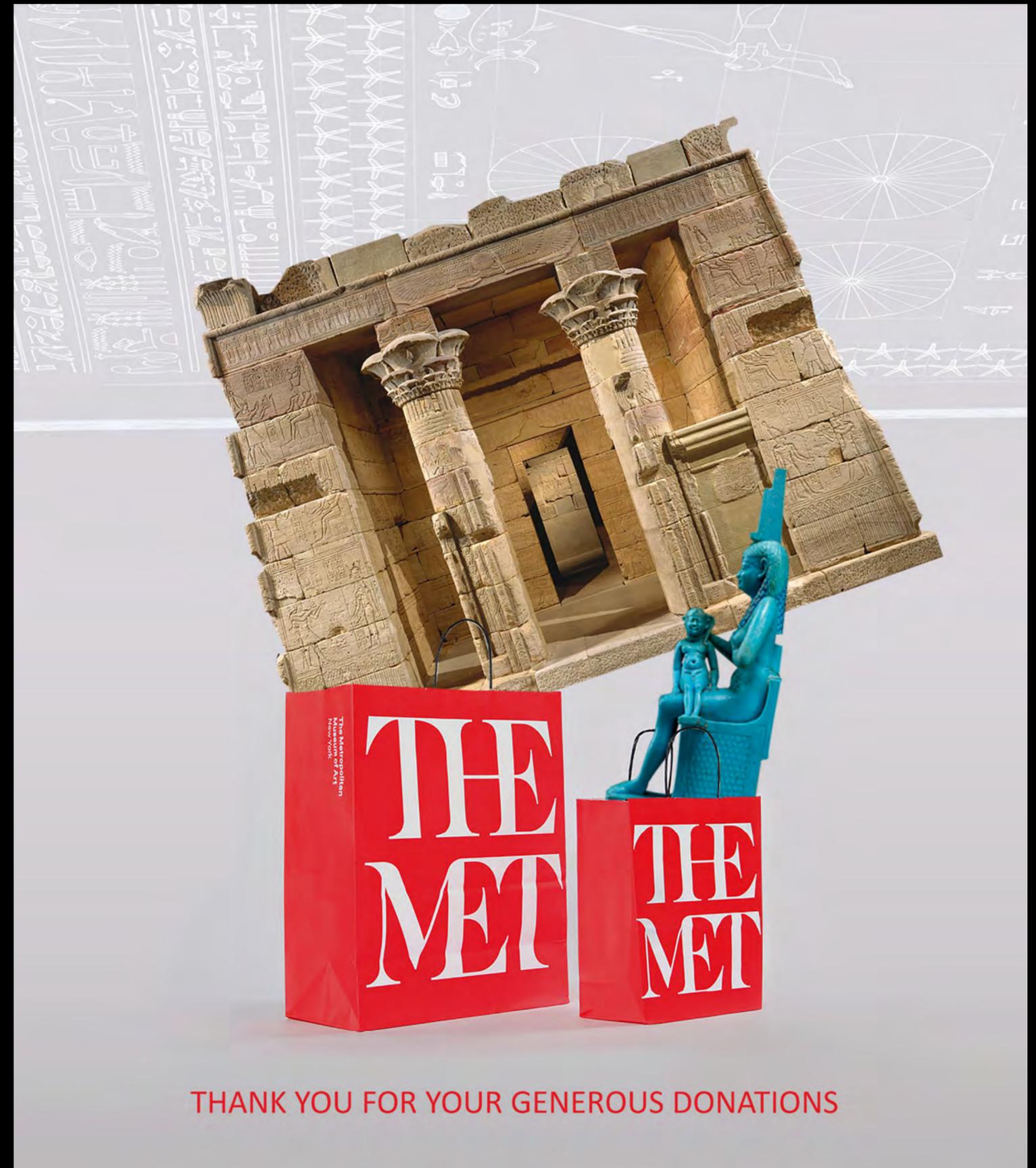
"Continuing the legacy of loudreading, a practice originating in tobacco factories of the Caribbean, the studio examined what happens when the anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, transfeminist, and anti-capitalist demands raised by the loudreaders have been accomplished. If the loudreading is about raising class consciousness and awareness of the power of networks of solidarity and mutual aid, the events that follow demark how institutions are forced to cope with their colonial footprint. 'After the great loudreading' explored the possibility of reparations, reconstructions, repatriation, and, eventually, disappearance." - CG & NF

Abstract:

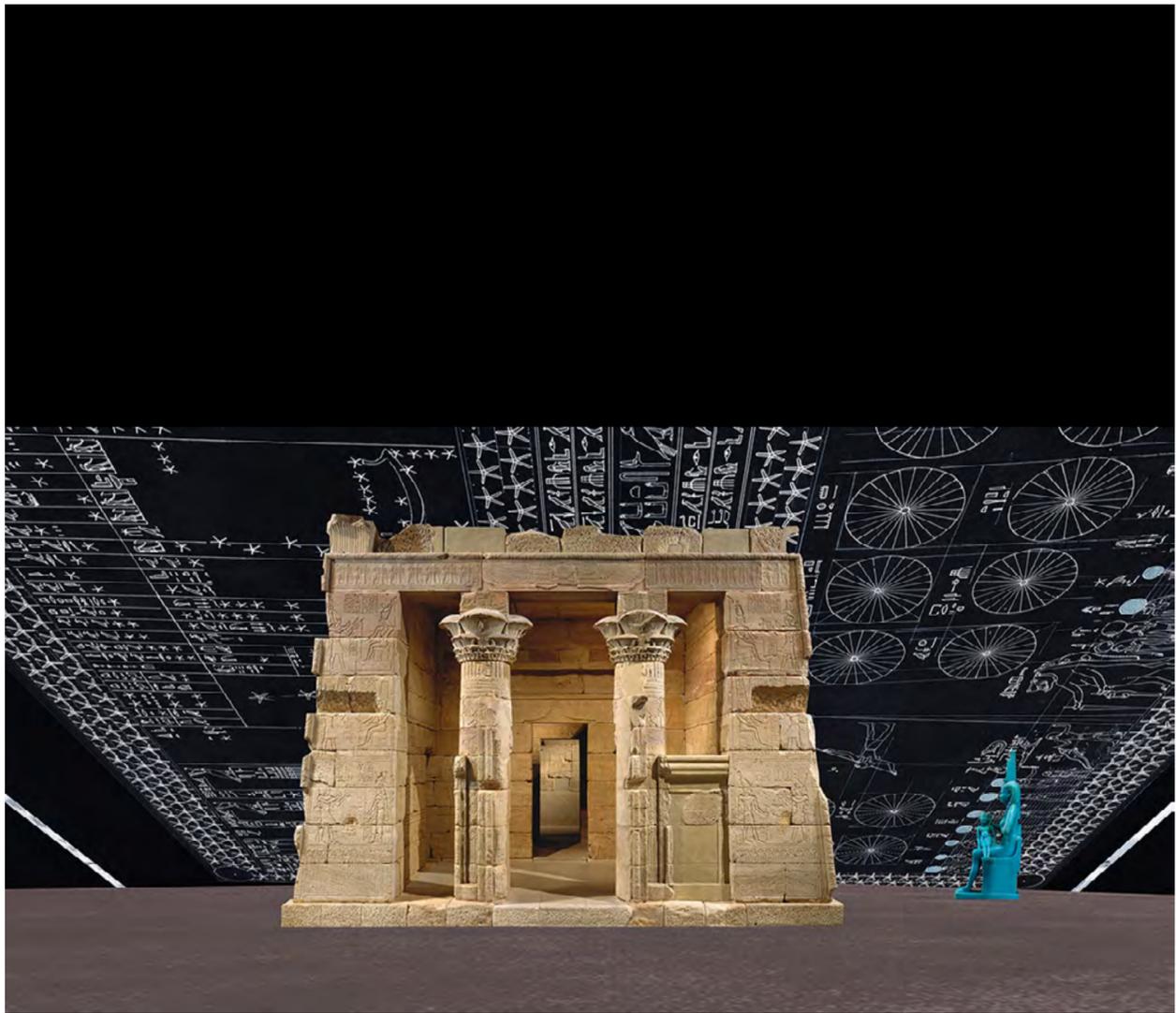
A 'gift' from Egypt to the United States, The Temple of Dendur, one of The Met's prized possessions, is now available for exclusive private events (such as The Met Gala). Available to the right people and for the right donation (of course).



QR code leads to full project video:
<https://thankyouforyourdonations.cargo.site/>



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS



The journey of the actual stones themselves are researched and illustrated in a promotional Met Event video.

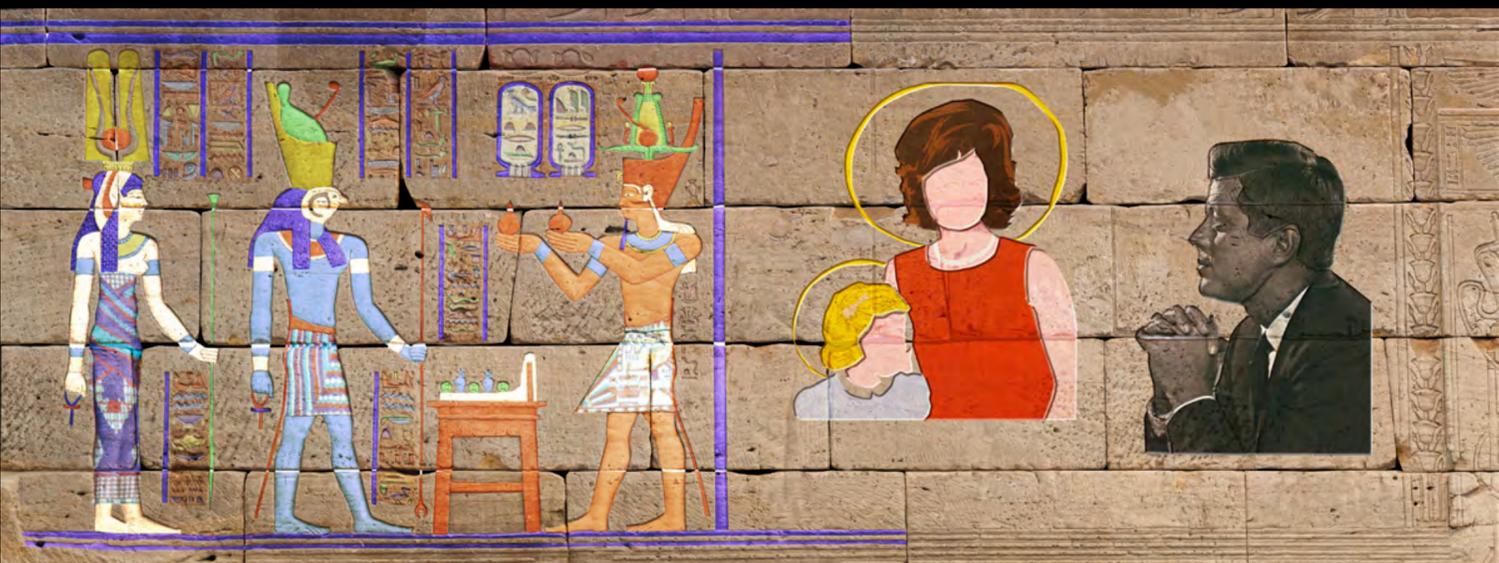
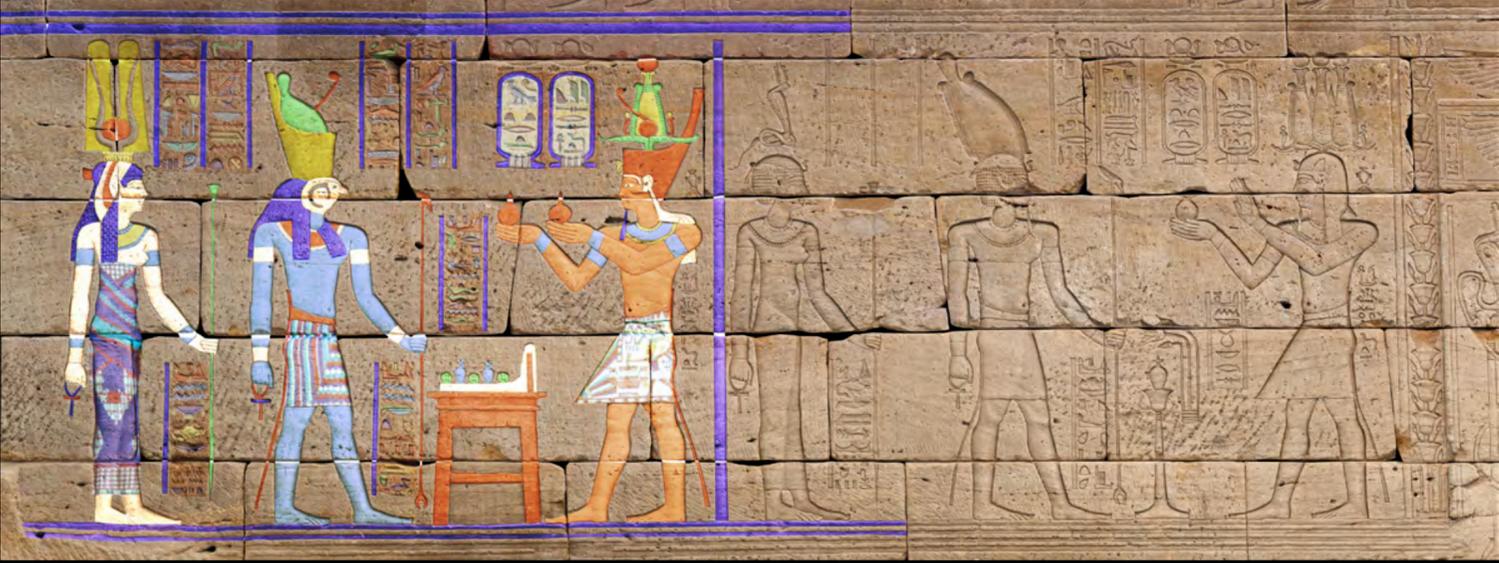


As the history of the Temple is recorded on the walls, the further history is illustrated



notes on in—vestigations + explorations..

As the history of the Temple is recorded on the walls, the further history is illustrated



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FILM SEQUENCE:

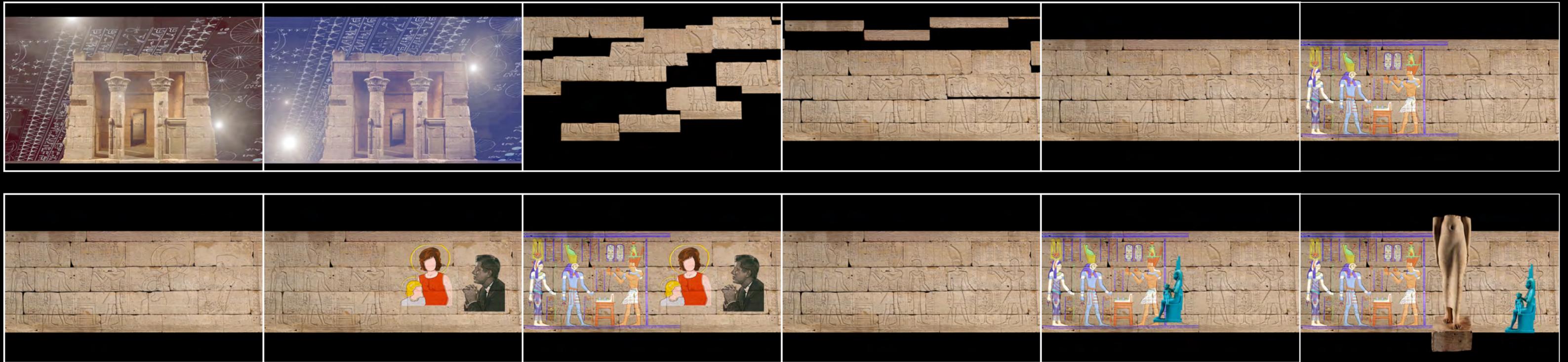
1. Intro – opening outside on Met Steps
2. Quick sequence through the Egyptian wing from Entry to Sackler wing
3. Party sequence inside Sackler wing
4. Water sequence from NY to the Nile
5. Sequence of party collages at other 'religious/ monumental sites'
6. End w/ collage of original location w/ colonial boat in distance with met flag and party

MET FAÇADE WITH SEARCH LIGHTS FOR PARTY

The met is available for after-hours entertaining Monday through Sunday providing exclusive event opportunities and private access to the collections where over 5000 years of art lives.

COLLAGE OF EGYPTIAN WING (ZOOMING DOWN GALLERY TOWARDS TEMPLE)

Previous donations to the met may not be applied to fulfill the contribution requirement for the privilege of hosting an after-hours social event.



TEMPLE WITH FLASHING LIGHTS AND MUSIC

The temple of Dendur was a momentous gift from Egypt to the people of the United States. Being a grand New York City landmark the temple provides a dramatic destination for the celebration of a pivotal occasion.

ZOOM TO SIDE OF TEMPLE SHOWING CARVINGS & IMAGES OF RESEARCH

According to sources, during the cold war it was Jacqueline Kennedy who urged JFK to convince Congress to approve the \$10 million contribution to the cause. In return Egypt offered the US the temple of Dendur.

SHOW SILOUETTE OF JACKIE AS MADONA ARTWORK

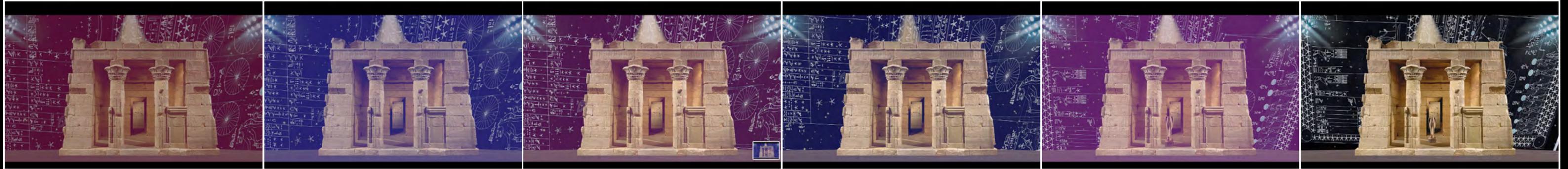
"I don't care if the temple crumbles into sand but I want it to be built in the center of Washington as a memorial to Jack", Jackie was heard saying. "I don't care about the met I don't care about New York or Bobby's senatorial duties or his constituents or scholarship or this conservation business". Although Jack eventually called back to apologize that conservation business was likely what tipped the scales in the Mets favor.

ZOOM TO INSIDE OF TEMPLE SHOWING ISIS (THEN REPLACE WITH TAGAREM)

The Roman emperor Caesar Augustus presents an offering to the powerful goddess Isis Although many depictions of Isis are in the met collection none are shown in the Sackler wing – She has been moved to storage to provide more room for your event. A statue of the priestess Tagerem is a better size to display inside while still providing room to party around her. This particular statue was a gift commemorating an important donor’s wedding. Perhaps if you donate enough money we can display something commemorating your event with your name written for all the common visitors to see and admire.

ZOOM OUT TO SHOW STARMAP CONTINUING TO FLOW ABOVE TEMPLE

The goddess Isis watches on from met storage She has company in storage with other important artifacts such as Egyptian star maps integral to her religious adoration’s. This is a stunning space where every detail comes together to create a night to remember, Reception up to 800 guests 6:30 to 9:30 PM, Dinner up to 550 guests 6:30 to 10:30 PM.



SHOW RESEARCH IMAGES (SACKLER CONSTRUCTION)

But how did this gift become available for your special event? The current home of the temple was formerly known as the Sackler wing (still shown on the wall plaque). The met has removed the larger signs though so your party doesn’t have to deal with the uncomfortable history regarding the Sackler family’s role in the current oxy addiction crisis across the world.

OCEAN COLLAGE WITH PHOTOS FADING IN AND OUT

The Norwegian cargo ship the Concordia star sailed across the Atlantic Ocean from the Mediterranean Sea to New York City in the summer of 1968 with precious cargo including canned tomatoes, maraschino cherries, wheels of cheese, and 661 crates containing the dismantled temple.

COLLAGE OF TEMPLE IN ITS ORIGINAL LOCATION

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IMAGES OF COLLAGES SHOWING OTHER 'SACRED' SPACES AT THE MET

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Travel with The Met December 29, 2022–January 9, 2023

Egypt & the Nile: A Journey into Antiquity Aboard Sanctuary Nile Adventurer with Joan Aruz, Curator Emerita, Ancient Near Eastern Art

Egypt & the Nile: A Journey into Antiquity Aboard Sanctuary Nile Adventurer

Dear Members and Friends of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Surrounded by ancient Egypt's immortal treasures, please join me to celebrate 2023 on a historic voyage to the Nile River valley and the Great Pyramids of Giza.

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- Enjoy up-close access to the Great Sphinx, venturing beyond the museum to fully appreciate this colossal ancient statue.
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Egypt & the Nile: A Journey into Antiquity Aboard Sanctuary Nile Adventurer December 29, 2022–January 9, 2023

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Edfu / Kom Ombo Friday, January 6 This morning, visit the Temple of Isis at Edfu, one of the best preserved temples in the world, with its massive pylon, fully intact roof and imposing sandstone walls adorned with hieroglyphs and floral scenes. Lunch is set for you at the hotel.

Aswan / Dismark / Abu Simbel / Cairo

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100% Nile Cruise (100% Nile Cruise)	\$1,500	Yes	Yes	Yes	Includes 100% Nile Cruise, 100% Nile Cruise, 100% Nile Cruise.
100% Nile Cruise (100% Nile Cruise)	\$1,500	Yes	Yes	Yes	Includes 100% Nile Cruise, 100% Nile Cruise, 100% Nile Cruise.

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Ten Royal Principles

Prince Charles on (A)rchitecture

The History of Architectural Theory Fa22

Project: "Analysis: Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century 'a(A)rchitecture'
-Ten Royal Principles"

Faculty: Mark Wigley

This final project attempts to analyze one particular piece of architectural theory in depth, only using that piece of theory itself. No outside sources were introduced in the analysis.

Prince Charles set forth his Ten Principles of Architecture in an essay written for *The Architectural Review* on December 20, 2014. In the body of the text, the Prince (his title as of 2014) reminded the reader many times of his position and of the associated trappings, to put forth the justifications for why his approach to urban growth and architecture are essential and the proper way forward, while simultaneously discounting other professional and industry leader's points of view – with dashes of the divine thrown in for good measure.

This paper analyzes how the Prince frames himself and his opinions on architecture through a carefully created religious framework. He positions his role as God-given and his ten principles ultimately as those that must be followed for the sake of the future, using dramatic and at times ominous references. Always

reminding the reader of his position of royalty in British society, and in the larger world, he sets forth his ten principles as commands (or Ten Commandments in an unstated religious analogy) that must be obeyed or ignored at the peril of the audience. Ultimately, he frames how the future of society is at stake, and provides easy examples to follow, if architecture simply follows the past. The essay constructs this mystic and grand framework, yet culminates in very grounded, almost banal principles.

In the relationship between the narrative created to introduce the list, and the list itself, a series of contradictions becomes evident. The Prince carefully employs feigned victimization, attempting to paint a more humble version of himself. This is at odds however with the main supporting evidence of his arguments, himself, and his exalted position. He constantly reminds the audience of his position while paradoxically portraying himself as a lowly victim. While relying solely upon his birth right, or God-given position as the justification for the reader for believing, and obeying his architectural treatise, he undercuts those notions by attempting to make himself appear less grand (unsuccessfully). This attempt at mixing grandeur and relatability remains in tension throughout the essay.

Simultaneously self-diminishing while relying on his birthright justification, ordained by the divine, the Prince carefully tries to convey these ten principles in a publication geared toward furthering the discourse on architecture, as stated in *The Architectural Review* byline included below the essay. As it goes on to state, the publication itself is open to varying points of view in discourse. This article itself however stands in contradiction to that mission, and in its written argument is only open to one view of architecture, that of His Royal Highness, discounting all others as un-enlightened.

In analyzing the text of the essay itself, the audience first reads HRH The Prince of Wales, as he credits himself with the most formal use of address as the author, entitling the essay: *Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture*. Here, the second reference to his position comes immediately, using the slightly less formal version of his name, "Prince Charles". All subsequent references to his

title occurred in the form of "The Prince of Wales" with the word 'Prince' appearing 7 times in total. The overall structure of the essay consists of 2,220 words set in 13 paragraphs, 5 integrated images/ diagrams (with captions), and finally the list of 10 principles. The principles themselves are presented as a simple declarative list consisting of about three sentences each.

The essay opens with the only uncaptioned photo (Figure 01), a close-up of what the reader later can assume to be an image of a rose window from a High Gothic cathedral built in medieval Europe as The Prince later references in paragraph 4. Following the photo, the essay begins with a sub-heading: "The Prince of Wales sets out ten key principles for sustainable urban growth that values tradition".¹ This is the third reference to himself and his first reference to 'tradition', a word that will appear in two forms: tradition and traditional 14 times in total. The following sentence refers to The Prince's surprise: "I was somewhat surprised to be asked by this magazine to explain why I consider traditional approaches and universal principles so important,"² the cause of that surprise remaining somewhat unclear. What is also unclear is whether or not the publication did ask him, or if he proposed his ten principles on his own, or if he asked the magazine to ask him. There can be two possible causes for his surprise inferred. First, why would anyone question the importance of traditional approaches and universal principles, or secondly why would anyone question him. The writing implies a mixture of the two. Both his historic position as prince is implied to be hand in hand with traditional approaches and principles, both to society and to its buildings. Without asking nor stating, it appears implied that the reader should not question his own position nor the importance of traditional approaches. The article expands upon this non-questioning stance by slowly building a religious-like positioning. In positioning it like a religious, in that vein certain things should not be questioned and taken simply as fact.

The Prince wants the audience to assume that he was in fact asked and did not propose this specific

¹ HRH The Prince of Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture," *The Architectural Review*, December 20, 2014, https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/facing-up-to-the-future-prince-charles-on-21st-century-architecture?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com.

² Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

essay (nor did he search for a publication to ask him). The Prince continues to express his delight that *The Architectural Review* (and implying the industry in general at large) is finally catching up to what apparently “has always been my (his) central concern,” by ‘inviting’ him to write the essay. He notes his eternal “central concern” has been “designing places to the human scale and with Nature at the heart of the process.”³ He set forth the premise that this has often been misunderstood, and he will now out of his own benevolence outline why and how to design with these as the central themes. He deliberately capitalized the N in Nature and continues to do so 14 times in total. As a counterpoint, architecture nor urban design are afforded that capitalized respect anywhere in the essay. Even the essay’s title deliberately includes a lower case ‘a’. By elevating the word Nature and diminishing the word architecture in the text itself he appears to construct a clear hierarchy in which Nature is on a higher level and as such should be more respected. Nature and the natural are aligned with his elevated view of himself, while architecture and building can be seen as things that encroach upon that. The lowly earthly things cannot encroach upon the heavenly which he associated himself with.

In the second paragraph the Prince puts forth what he describes as a ‘terrifying prospect’, one that he will guide the world out of through design. By 2050, another 3 billion people on earth will need houses. He cannot even count the number of times he has been ‘accused’ of wanting to return to architecture of the past by turning back the clock and vehemently insists that is not what he is advocating. His feigned victimization is highlighted by using the word ‘accused’, implying this notion makes him a martyr to his cause. Fallen prey to this religious-like persecution, he presents himself as an exalted victim who ultimately in his explanation is correct. His explanation is presented as correct simply because it is his. His explanations are not presented as just one explanation as the path forward, but the only path forward that is correct, or righteous in religious terms. He goes on to explain that we must return to the past and to “reconnect with those traditional approaches and techniques honed over thousands of years” which

3 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

are only now seen as traditional.⁴ Paradoxically he is advocating exactly what the persecutors are *accusing* him of doing, freezing architecture in a time of his choosing. He is implying that current architecture is no longer the result of the further honing of architecture in its traditions. That which is built now without explanation he discounts not as further evolution but an implied de-volution. This freezing in time is implied to be something one must accept in religious terms, on faith.

After the feigned victimization, he quickly shifts tone to condescension by stating only now do we see traditional architecture as ‘old fashioned’ – yet in the Prince’s logic, it is time to take the ‘mature view’ of returning to Nature. In the Prince’s view ‘old fashioned’ architecture represents this exalted Nature. In his logic, paragraph 3 explains that in representing Nature, old fashioned architecture can never have that description, because Nature cannot be called old. He emphasizes that it is ‘at our peril’ to ignore his exalted reasoning (without explanation). His method of dramatizing quickly shifts to threatening, the Prince commanding the reader to obey him. One must adopt this view, his view, in order to be saved from that impending peril.

If we now look past the Prince’s lack of logic in explaining why current building and architecture must be discounted, our acceptance is implied as a given simply because he has stated it. In his logic, much like the faith-based foundation of a religious argument, the stage has now been set for him to outline the basis for his principles. He does so with a constructed logic connecting Nature with building practices highlighting this with images and one diagram that he had created for his argument. In having those diagrams created for him (by commanding others to create rather than he himself creating), he furthers his unstated justification of he himself as the proof needed for his noble cause. He appears not only in a position of God-given power, but as a master of creation as well. Someone of his position and status would not sully his hands by doing the creative work themselves, but by gentlemanly having it created.

In the fourth paragraph, the Prince states that there

4 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

are simply certain undeniable beauties that exist in the world, both naturally occurring and built. Those built structures of course were created in medieval Europe, where people “sought to produce physical manifestations of the Divine order of the universe.” He goes on to even state it is “in short, a model of Heaven on Earth” and describes a rose window in a High Gothic cathedral (which he capitalizes the H and G).⁵

This alerts the reader as to why the opening photo (Diagram 01) was included. This entire argument shows that it is grounded upon medieval European architecture, implying that there lie the origins of (and end of) architecture, or more importantly good architecture. The beginning of architecture in his view emanates from a church, a religious structure. All previous religious structures from this culture and other preceding cultures are discounted from their lack of inclusion as the starting point. His big revelation he states is a ‘simple’ one. That this grand divine architecture began with “the division of a single circle.”⁶ The prince begins in paragraph 5 and continues throughout the rest of the essay to explain how he came about with this revelation and how he has tried to impart this knowledge using his tools available to him as the Prince of Wales to the architecture and design industries and to society at large. His personal religious-like epiphany is the foundation for him to spread his knowledge, as missionaries spread their knowledge to others.

The answer to the aforementioned terrifying prospect facing society is a simple one, to divide a single circle into patterns, more notably six times. In paragraph 5, the prince delights on presenting a clever word play by further expanding upon his idea of the circle being the answer. He demonstrated that at the center of the circle is an ‘*origin*’, deliberately italicizing the word. He goes on to state that “rose windows are truly *original* works of art.”⁷ Further expounding, he enters that at the origin of things lie the world’s ‘sacred traditions.’ Traditional art and architecture he triumphantly declares are answers to his logic. They are “Divine”,

5 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

6 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

7 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

and from this the patterns derived from dividing a circle are to be referred to as “sacred’ geometry”. He tempers his use of western religious words and iconography implying that it is a ‘universal’ global truth he is putting forward by introducing secular proof. The windows are ‘sacred to all things’ as he states because snowflakes apparently follow the same ‘sacred’ geometry he is proposing. The use of the snowflake again reinforces his desire to link the two notions of Nature and the Divine. Following from this, his circular geometry should be adopted in current architecture and design.

The Prince goes on to explain in paragraph 7 that this is not a new idea to him, and that he has already used the tools available to him as The Prince of Wales to begin to save the future of design and society. At his direction, the teaching at his own School of Traditional Arts teaches this ‘spiritual mathematics.’ He equates his own efforts at the school to those of Plato in teaching a “precise ‘grammar of harmony.’” Prince Charles states, “I have found it communicates directly to people by resonating with their true being.”⁸ Again he attempts to underscore the fact that this form of design teaching is very religious, and he goes on in the following paragraph to offer specific examples of how he has influenced real peoples’ lives for the better. The blatant un-ironic comparison of himself to Plato is used to further present himself as a great figure in society and in history, without question.

Paragraph 8 recounts an event that occurred at the British Museum. By positioning the example at this specific institution, he is again reinforcing his position as heir apparent of the United Kingdom. At an unnamed gathering of top designers, the people under the direction of the Prince from his school introduced this notion of sacred geometry onto the design industry at large. He described how his staff deliberately allowed these great design minds to become “confused in this process so that they found no sense in what they were doing.”⁹ In his exalted wisdom, he allowed those below him to be confused. He deliberately described these professional designers to be on a lower par than the young students at his school. He then chose fantastic

8 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

9 Wales, “Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture.”

words to describe how enlightened they were with his own sacred geometric teachings. They had a 'breathtaking moment of realization', a 'perception-changing experience', and were 'overwhelmed'.¹⁰ They suddenly realized why they were moved by the beauty of cathedrals, because of Nature. They could now look at the world differently. All the people who underwent these religious design conversions remain unnamed in the text. He uses both the inclusion of cathedrals themselves and these religious experiences to reinforce that his entire argument is situated in the realm of the religious, with him as the evangelizing prophet.

A senior executive, who also remains unnamed yet is from an apparently well-known company, expressed her concern over her company's use of an iconic contemporary architect and design for their new headquarters. Had she and the company only been introduced to these ideas earlier, perhaps a more 'old-fashioned' design could have been implemented. Here the Prince recounts, without explicitly stating, that he is in fact advocating for an 'old-fashioned' style of building in his examples, even though he specifically stated at the beginning of the essay that he wasn't. He allows the contradiction to fully stand in the text of the example. He closes paragraph 9 with the statement "Time will tell who was right,"¹¹ implying in a not so veiled notion to that audience that of course he is the victor. This mixture of ominous language and condescension towards others does little to bolster the image the prince initially tried to portray of himself as magnanimous and baselessly maligned.

The Prince then attempts to pre-empt dismissals of his principles of Nature, the Divine, and Traditional architecture by introducing the word 'esoteric' in paragraph 10. He introduces it as a bad word, one that can be dismissed. By introducing it, however, he reveals that he wants his sacred geometric principles to be elevated to great thought, on par with the teachings of the aforementioned Plato and other esoteric philosophers. In paragraph 11 he states, "these four interconnecting levels have been completely abandoned and ignored".¹² He does not explicitly

¹⁰ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

¹¹ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

¹² Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

state which four, and the reader must look back in the text to see. In organizing it this way, he puts fourth his four principles as having already been accepted by the world of design, and as existing long enough for them to be ignored now by contemporary architects and designers. Presenting them as a historic constant of the world again situates his argument in the world of the divine.

He expresses that his great concern is that for the larger part of the 20th century, the idea of Nature's order has been now ignored. Looking back in the text, the reader can see those four principles now stated as fact, were introduced by him offhandedly as 'universal principles.' They are expressed by 'Nature's order' with no further explanation other than listing them as teachings of 'traditional' thinking. "As traditional thinking teaches, basing designs on the timeless universal principles expressed by Nature's order enables the full scope of our humanity to be fulfilled, on the physical, communal, cultural and spiritual levels."¹³

The Prince goes on to introduce another tool, or privilege at his disposal as prince, his *Foundation for Building Community*. In paragraph 12 he states that his foundation already espouses these ideals and advocates for them creating better developments and architecture in the real world. Finally, concluding the text portion of his introduction to his 10 principles, he states in paragraph 13 that in order for people to have a greater shared sense of pride, master-planning must adhere to his ten geometric principles stated below.

Interspersed throughout the text were three other photos and one diagram illustrating pertinent points from the text. The captions describing the images are vitally important situating their context into the essay. The second photo with its caption attempts to situate the Prince in architectural discussion as having a long history and importance in the field. (Figure 02). The image contains the prince looking out onto a town below, yet in reading the caption, one can see two dated inclusions. He gazes out as a God-like figure, with a halo-like mist surrounding his corporeal form.

He is looking upon what we learn is land owned by his own Duchy containing an entire urban extension.

¹³ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

The text further reveals that the photo is from 2001 and contains the towns extension built upon principles long advocated by the Prince. The development as stated was built upon principles he advocated for in his book, *A Vision of Britain* that he wrote in 1989. These details serve to bolster his status on many levels, as evidently, he owns vast amounts of land and buildings. He has written for many years, and he has been affecting building changes for many years as well. The audience is not meant to question, if he has had such influence for this many years, why then have his principles not been placed into further use around the country he rules. With all his examples of religious conversions, why has every visitor to this town not experienced that same religious design conversion and spread out across the country trying to replicate.

The next photo with caption depicts what appears to be traditional British village houses. (Figure 03). From the text the reader learns that these are in fact houses built in the "Welsh – vernacular tradition", apropos to Prince Charles' position of 'The Prince of Wales.' Upon closer inspection, the text also serves the purpose of re-enforcing 'Welsh' as 'British', first establishing the houses as British, and then through hyphenation identifying them closer as "in this case the Welsh".¹⁴

The last photographic image introduces a person gluing paper. (Figure 04) The caption identifies a student learning about geometry "at *The Prince's School of Traditional Arts*." Here the text further emphasizes that the Prince has an entire school devoted to espousing his principles and benevolently disseminating them onto the design world and society.

The final image does not contain a photograph, but a drawing of the Taj Mahal. (Figure 05) The caption is the essay's longest and postulates that the Taj Mahal's "serene harmony of compositions" was a result of "a carefully calibrated system of geometrical relationships".¹⁵ This statement, presented as fact, is further grounded into the Prince's argument by stating the illustration was created by an employee of the Prince, again mentioning his own school.

Curiously, however, in examining the Taj Mahal

¹⁴ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

¹⁵ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

drawing, it is evident this 'example' goes against the principles he is advocating for. It doesn't fit into landscape, has jagged materials, and more importantly isn't scaled for humans to enter. This inclusion betrays that the Prince appears to be advocating more for a superficial look in architecture – one that skews religious and one that was built in the past. He reveals his hand of cards, that in his view outward appearance is more important than well-conceived and executed architecture based on true human need and experience. A primacy of form and ornamentation over substance and use.

The essay concludes with the 10 principles stated in a simple list. Surprisingly the principles themselves do not mention the Divine, nor circles. They are relatively mundane in their statements and are set in the present, with very pragmatic short sentences. Many principles are also in contradiction to his preceding narrative and photographic examples. Points 1, 2 and 3 can easily be summarized as respect the landscape, utilize the building code, and create appropriately scaled buildings (skewing towards the smaller side). This is an odd counterpoint to his opening argument and photos of the cathedrals as well as the Taj Mahal. They all are over-scaled, specifically designed to impose and intimidate (just as his narrative intends to do.)

Point 4 is the first instance where a point from his 13-paragraph introduction is included: Harmony. While calling for harmony in the look of the buildings, the Prince introduces another point from the intro, Nature. Inspiration can be taken from Harmony and Nature in creating the details of the buildings, that he clearly identifies as door cases, balconies, cornices and railings. Point 5 calls for no jagged angles while point 6 advocates for traditionally styled materials. Again, this contradicts the churches with their gothic spires rising at jagged angles. Examining gothic churches in context, one can also easily ascertain that those were modern at the time they were built, an innovation in architecture advancing the field not stuck in repeating the past.

Point 7 appears to have the most design logic and language written into its text. The Prince advocates for building like Poundbury, revealing why he included the town's image in the intro (Figure 02) He casually

reveals in the text that a significant amount of (God-like) social engineering went into the design, far more than he revealed in any of the preceding text. His example states they included 'events' in the design such as bends in the road or squares and trees every 60 -80 meters "which cause drivers to slow down naturally."¹⁶ Doing this allowed them to include less signage and street infrastructure (lights and utilities), perhaps the first real world example of contemporary design innovation he presented in the entire essay.

Pedestrians as a key considering summarizes the simple point 8. In Point 9 while discussing Density, the Prince advocates against high-rise towers more in favor of the 'charm and beauty' of the Royal Boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea. Apparently without explanation those can be the models for accommodating the extra 3 billion people the Prince presented as terrifying at the outset of the essay. Finally in Point 10 the Prince takes pride and once again issues a declarative statement of what he himself has found. "I have found it is possible to build flexibility into schemes and I am pleased to say that many of the innovations we have tried out in the past 20 years are now reflected in national engineering guidance."¹⁷

In this simple statement closing his essay he brings the points back to himself and how he has influenced design over the years. In counting the number of specific words he re-uses many times through the essay, in descending order, it is clear to see the primacy he has attributed to himself in the equation of affecting design, architecture, and its return to more a more traditional harmony with nature. He refers to:

- "I" 16 times and "my" 6 more times
- "Tradition/al": 14 times
- "Nature": 14 times
- "Urban": 11 times
- "Order": 8 times
- "Prince": 7 times and "HRH" 1 more time
- "Old": 6 times
- "Geometry": 6 times

¹⁶ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

¹⁷ Wales, "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture."

- "The Prince's School": 5 times
- and finally, "architecture": 5 times (lower case 'a')

At the bottom of the list, it becomes apparent that architecture itself is the least included and expounded upon. As a counterpoint, the Prince refers to himself many times and in four different ways. Excluding the five references to his own school, he is referenced 30 times in total. This clearly demonstrates the justification for his own principles is in fact himself, not based on outside research. While the second most used word is a tie between Tradition/al and Nature at 14 times each, this is less than half the references to himself. His own definition of Tradition being a specific style of building frozen in time – one that quite simply he likes aesthetically and hence should be repeated by everyone, everywhere, no matter the use.

The contradiction that exists between the introductory narratives, explanatory photos and the principles themselves cannot be ignored by the audience. By trying to create this careful mixture of persuasive words, emanating from a divinely ordained ruler whose subjects to their peril cannot ignore, the potential religious argument for the ten principles based on order and tradition do not themselves live in a cohesive harmony. It does seem however that in trying to create a list intent upon innovating the way future building can improve upon lives, the Prince unknowingly is advocating for a new kind of architecture. It can eschew the old traditional ways of building for symmetry and outward appearance shown in his examples, (which could be seen as what not do) for a more modern style born not from dividing a sacred circle six times, but from careful human-focused thought and crafted Architecture with a capital A.

Images

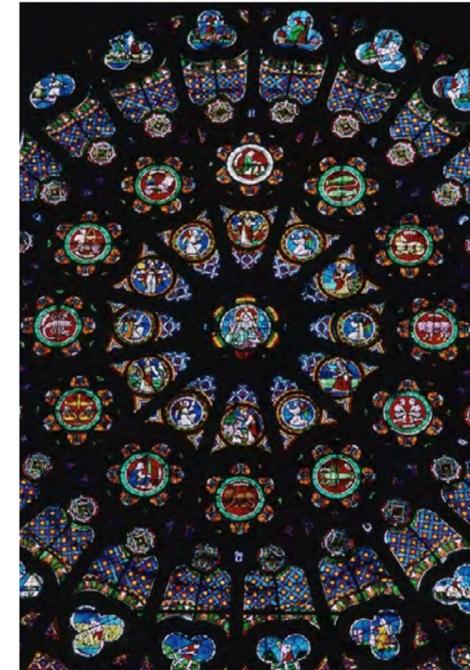


Figure 01 - "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture", The Architectural Review, HRH The Prince of Wales, updated December 20, 2014. https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/facing-up-to-the-future-prince-charles-on-21st-century-architecture?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com.



Figure 02 - "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture", The Architectural Review, HRH The Prince of Wales, updated December 20, 2014. https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/facing-up-to-the-future-prince-charles-on-21st-century-architecture?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com.

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Figure 03 - "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture", The Architectural Review, HRH The Prince of Wales, updated December 20, 2014. https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/facing-up-to-the-future-prince-charles-on-21st-century-architecture?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com.



Figure 04 - "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture", The Architectural Review, HRH The Prince of Wales, updated December 20, 2014. https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/facing-up-to-the-future-prince-charles-on-21st-century-architecture?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com.

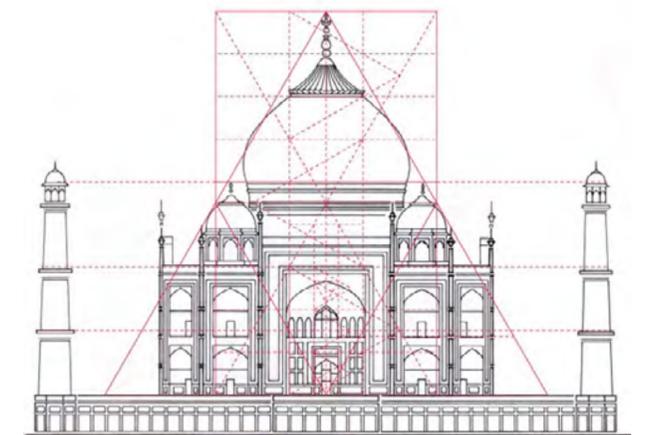


Figure 05 - "Facing up to the future: Prince Charles on 21st century architecture", The Architectural Review, HRH The Prince of Wales, updated December 20, 2014. https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/facing-up-to-the-future-prince-charles-on-21st-century-architecture?utm_medium=website&utm_source=archdaily.com.

Zaha

Cardiff Bay Opera House study

The Contemporary (Ideas and Concepts from 1968 to the Present) Sp23
Project: "Cardiff Bay Opera House, Zaha Hadid"
Collaboration with: Jillian Katz
Faculty: Bernard Tschumi

This final paper and presentation for the class, The Contemporary (Ideas and Concepts from 1968 to the Present) builds upon the weekly research conducted.

One topic was selected and studied further, also examining the ideas of contextualizing concept vs. conceptualizing context.

Jillian Katz & Christopher Wierer
Professor Bernard Tschumi
The Contemporary (Ideas and Concepts from 1968 to the Present)

Selected Project: Cardiff Bay Opera House, Zaha Hadid

Images:

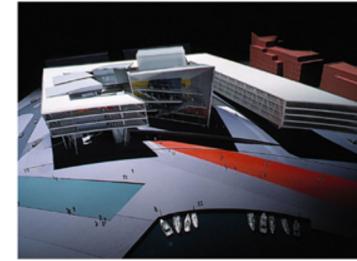


Figure 1: Model produced by Zaha Hadid Architects

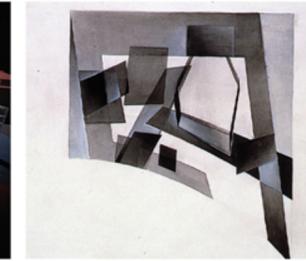


Figure 2: Abstract Plan Drawing by Zaha Hadid



Figure 3: Perspective Drawing by Zaha Hadid

Quote:

"Since deconstructivist architecture seeks the unfamiliar within the familiar, it displaces the context rather than acquiesce to it. The projects... do not ignore the context; they are not anti-contextual. Rather, each makes a very specific intervention."

~ Mark Wigley, Deconstructivist Architecture, p. 17

Hypothesis:

Zaha Hadid's Cardiff Bay Opera House exemplifies a project that conceptualizes a context by forming an aspirational concept. Hadid expressed a signature style of fluid lines, bold forms, and futuristic aesthetics, though she intentionally omitted any contextual imagery and references in her design materials. Hadid's "necklace" design allows the theater to be almost entirely enclosed, creating its own context. Hadid's concept was developed with an ambitious expectation of the future of a then potentially-burgeoning cultural city center. Though this was the winning proposal among a panel of architects, ultimately funding was withheld by members of the local community for being too "elitist and foreign". Hadid's conceptualized future for the city, while well-intentioned, became highly controversial as ignoring context felt like a slight to the present community.

Christopher Wierer (crw2156)

FOR DEMONSTRATION:

Imagine if Dame Zaha Hadid's winning design for the Cardiff Bay Opera House in Wales was rendered with an illustrated site plan in context.



STATEMENT:

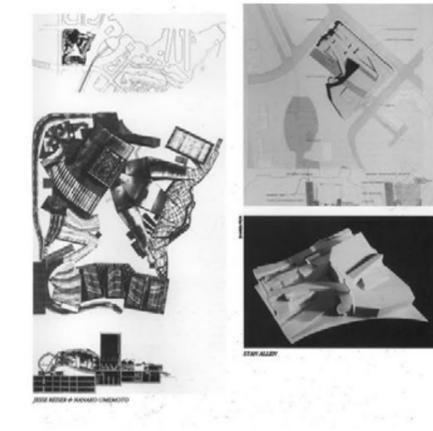
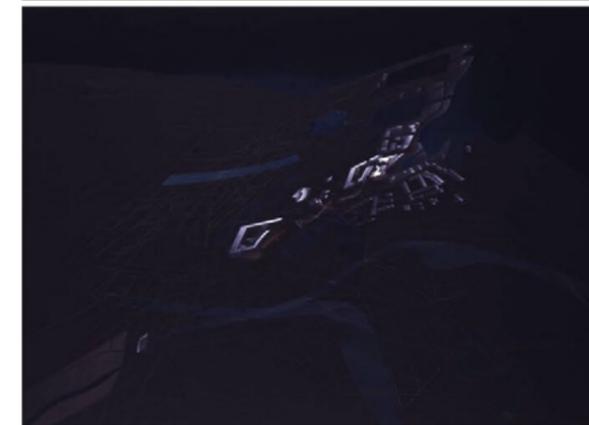
Why didn't Zaha Hadid's team show an illustrated site plan? Looking back upon the project, it appears as if a lot of back and forth could have been avoided if they simply provided an illustrated site plan, or any plan showing their winning project in context.

Conceptualizing a context pre-supposes that the concept is eventually sited and explained in that context. With the complexity and thoughtfulness that went into the design (enough that allowed it to win the same competition every time the results were overturned) it can be assumed that the design professionals on the jury could understand how well conceived and sited the designs truly were. The simple step of depicting them in a manner that non-architects could understand might have been all that stood between the project and its ultimate funding – that is if an illustrated site plan could somehow step over the overarching xenophobia that also engulfed the ensuing fiasco.



The designs all floated in a sea of black water, whose purpose it appeared was to reflect back the jewel necklace inspired opera house. In researching the project, one must turn to other design firms' submittals to find a more understandable site plan.

Left: ZHA rendering, Bottom Left: ZHA site plan
Below: Competitors site plans



Hadid's concept, was itself forward thinking and sought to re-examine public vs private activities. It attempted to study the relationship of monument and space. "The building concept is based on the architectural expression of the hierarchy between serviced and servicing spaces... (the) spaces spring like jewels from a band of rationally lined-up support accommodations." – Zaha Hadid Architects. The other proposals in comparison could be classified as superfluous theoretical and/or formal studies. None of Hadid's moves were superfluous and all were grounded in purpose.

According to Bernard Tschumi in an article for Artforum in 2016, "Hadid's unbuilt competition scheme for the Cardiff Bay Opera House should be remembered for its program-driven reexamination of public and private activities. Everyday functions typically hidden in basements were "externalized" on the facade; dressing rooms and workshops were made visible to passersby. The intent was to open up a hermetically sealed object and private functions to the city. Hadid's formal experiments were never gratuitous, but responded conceptually to functional constraints."

The form was a result of the concept – of how the program should be interpreted, not superfluous. Unlike the large sweeping shell of OMA, or the tendril-like proposals of Greg Lynn or Reisser & Umemoto, the Hadid design was a simple result of program, and how that program was conceptually arranged. In an interview at the Oxford Union, when discussing “context”, Hadid states, “On one hand, it seems very new but on the other hand its very contextual without trying to mimic the surroundings, you draw ideas, or respond to it.”



Curiously, or fittingly, the AI program ‘Midjourney’, drawing upon all readily available project info, when asked to create an illustrated site plan, shows the opera house floating in the bay on its own island, separated from the city context by a black sea of water.

How the Opera House in fact responds to the site is only revealed in the narrative form, describing aspects of the project itself. “The project provides a raised plaza suitable for outdoor performances and offering an enhanced vista back into the Inner Harbour and Bay.” (Zaha Hadid Architects) Perhaps if any rendered views demonstrated this, (and again the xenophobia was overcome), the project’s masterful conceptualization of the context could have become visible to the local residents and the opera house might have been built. Possibly we would be referring to the “Cardiff Bay” effect rather than Bilbao.

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→ For
+
Against

The Contemporary...

The Contemporary (Ideas and Concepts from 1968 to the Present) Sp23
Project: "For and Against"
Faculty: Bernard Tschumi

While studying various theories in the contemporary period of Architectural history from the 1960's to the present, each week we read and researched certain moments in the discourse. This project presents a selection of "For and Against" statements, each one formulating an idea or theory from that moment that is still relevant today, while also presenting an "against" that is no longer or should no longer be still in practice.

Christopher Wierer
The Contemporary – 29 January 2023 "For/Against" Statement

FOR

One of the 'gray' notions of a building of current culture/ context is highly relevant today. Robert A.M. Stern writes in *Gray Architecture as Post-Modern, or, Up and Down from Orthodoxy*, "The layering of space characteristic of 'gray' architecture finds its complement in the overlay of cultural and art-historical



references in the elevations. For 'gray' architecture, 'more is more'." Here in a current example of the new St Regis residential towers in Miami by RAMSA, in what could easily have been dismissed as placeless, current residential tower design, the architects subtly infuse not 19th century British ornamentation as many

buildings from the firm do, but employ art deco and nautical styling to ground the buildings on the ocean coast of Miami.

AGAINST



The pop-art like decoration of buildings, while it was a useful commentary in its time, it seems as if people have the capacity now to move beyond one-note architectural concepts. In their essay *On Ducks and Decoration*, Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi state "We'd rather see the need admitted and the decoration applied where needed... This is an easier, cheaper, more direct, and basically more honest approach to the question of decoration." As seen in their example of the Children's Museum of Houston from 1992, the building does come across as cheaper and direct, but is that what they want to convey in perpetuity? The façade could be more useful in making a more meaningful statement for kids to decipher and want to engage with.

Christopher Wierer

The Contemporary – 12 February 2023 “For/Against” Statement

Against (Architecture must exist equally between ‘progress’ and ‘past’)

Frampton states: “Architecture can only be sustained today as a critical practice if it assumes an arrière-garde position, that is to say, one which distances itself equally from the Enlightenment myth of progress and from a reactionary, unrealistic impulse to return to the architectonic forms of the preindustrial past... It is my contention that only an arrière-garde has the capacity to cultivate a resistant, identity-giving culture



while at the same time having discreet recourse to universal technique.” (Towards a Critical Regionalism pg 20) As seen in the Foster designed example of the “Apple Park” headquarters, sometimes architecture does need to assume a totally futuristic persona, and does not need to be situated in a site-grounded in-between. Built for a company whose device did truly revolutionize the way people live with its invention, the

iPhone, the attempt at a totally unique building was necessary. This building leaned into the fact that it was innovative in its spaces, obscenely expensive, and seemingly out-of-this-world, just as apple attempted to push the inhabitants of the building to strive to continue creating and refining world changing innovations.

For (Architecture must take on the paradox of being modern and culturally contextual at once)

Frampton quotes Paul Ricoeur, “It is a fact: every culture cannot sustain and absorb the shock of modern civilization. There is the paradox: how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization.” (History and Truth) In this other example for Apple, Foster & Partners slightly tweaks the generic, placeless Apple stores for its Kyoto location.

Drawing upon the Japanese tradition of paper lantern lighting, the store keeps both its global identity and attempts to ground itself in a more regional tradition. It attempts to walk the thin line between pastiche and parody as Jameson describes in his *Postmodernism and Consumer Society* essay.



Christopher Wierer

The Contemporary – 26 February 2023 “For/Against” Statement

HETEROGENEITY, DISJUNCTIONS, FRAGMENTATION

Against (Notion of “Western” dismissing other societies)

Frank Ghery on Korea: “Up to now the unbuilt Korean museum is the farthest out I’ve gotten...

I was trying to make a waterfall in Korea, because the most beautiful parts of Korea are nature.

The man-made part is terrible there. So I was trying to relate to nature in Korea ... And I got close.”

(*Ghery Talks* pg 50) The notion of a Western architect being brought in to ‘save’ a city while dismissing all local knowledge is rightly now being rejected. The period has passed when design can be pursued as pure intellectual study removed from the local society. The eventual museum was built by a coalition of



architects which included Botta who utilized terra cotta tiles dramatically interpreting local knowledge into the project. The architect’s statements can no longer be separated from the work in current society (even if unintentional).

For (Seeking the unfamiliar within the familiar)

Mark Wigley states “Since deconstructivist architecture seeks the unfamiliar within the familiar, it displaces the context rather than acquiesce to it. The projects... do not ignore the context; they are not anti-contextual. Rather, each makes a very specific intervention.” (*Deconstructivist Architecture* pg 17)

Upon first glance, the museum appears completely anti-contextual to (quasi-classical) Washington DC. It however inserts itself squarely into the middle of American History, unapologetically culturally “creating a forum for multiple interpretations of America’s history and demography – however uncomfortable those may be.” - David Adjaye (museum’s architect) This is a powerful intervention into the contemporary state of DC and “American” architecture exploring the middle passage (slave trade) across the Atlantic and deriving inspirational, dramatic built architecture in the process.



Christopher Wierer

The Contemporary – 19 March 2023 “For/Against” Statement

PROGRAMMATIC CONCEPTS AND DIAGRAMS

Against (Notion of “Bigness” for bigness sake being Architectural force for good)

On Bigness, Rem Koolhaas writes: “Beyond signature, Bigness means surrender to technologies; to engineers, contractors, manufacturers; to politics; to others. It promises architecture a kind of post-heroic status - a realignment with neutrality.” (*Bigness* pg 514) These over the top, big projects of today are not neutral and possess definite point of view – often their only reason for being built. In this example of ‘The



Line’ in Saudi Arabia it is being used as a tool for showing off. The project is extraordinarily problematic, about extreme excess, and is being conceived for the ‘right people’, while exploiting others (such as cleaners, “support” staff and builders – those who would be excluded from ability to live inside. All despite what its clever marketing states.

For (Striving for a balance of place and placelessness in urbanism)

Rem Koolhaas states “The street is dead. That discovery has coincided with frantic attempts at its resuscitation. Public art is everywhere - as if two deaths make a life. Pedestrianization - intended to preserve - merely channels the flow of those doomed to destroy the object of their intended reverence with their feet.” (*Generic City* pg 1253) While these cities are all striving to create the same non-place streetscapes, architects & planners can still strive to have well-constructed, well-sited city interventions to ground them. Not a pastiche reference to the past, but an attempt to design for the place and the people of the place. This example of the Miami Design District, while it does check all the boxes of what Koolhaas proposes are the hallmarks of generic cities, does in some aspects contain well-thought out interventions and created a less generic Miami neighborhood.



Christopher Wierer

The Contemporary – 26 March 2023 “For/Against” Statement

MINIMALISM AND THE ART OF CONSTRUCTION

Against (Minimal architecture pretending it is about anti-consumerism)

Ika & Andreas Ruby state: “For Pawson’s former office partner, Claudio Silvestrin, the unornamented architecture of the Cistercians also forms one of the major sources of inspiration for his work where,



according to his own words, his main Interest lies in:

“Questioning the conventional aspects of consumerism.” To fully understand the deeper Significance of this statement one must realise that since 1999, Silvestrin has been responsible for the “world architectural of Giorgio Armani and in this function has designed the Armani boutiques.” (*Essential, Meta-, Trans-. The Chimeras of Minimalist Architecture* pg 21) While in many aspects, the work of ‘minimal’ architects do create meditative spaces that

invite the inhabitants to relax and possibly ponder existential philosophy, these spaces are usually created in luxury consumer boutiques such as the Giorgio Armani boutique in Milan pictured above. In some respects, by creating these quasi-religious spaces where religious iconography has been replaced by luxury goods does invite the inhabitant to question consumerism, but the design is leading them to the conclusion that the luxury good is god, and acquiring those goods brings you closer to the divine.

For (The inclusion of people in architectural photography)

Ika & Andreas Ruby state: “In the process the meaning of the architecture changes decisively due to the presence of people in the photographed space (an effect that architecture photographs of the same always take pains to avoid but that was, in contrast, emphatically demanded by the artists who produced Minimal Art).” (*Essential, Meta-, Trans-. The Chimeras of Minimalist Architecture* pg 22) While architectural photography is usually without human inhabitants, the architects of today often times profess the designs were created with those absent inhabitants in mind. Tyler Brule’s inclusion of the human models (mostly for stylistic effect) did bring this curious paradox to light. The people in the photos inform the intended audience. In this image for 432 Park Ave, the viewer can see that the businessman in the distance can represent any man rich enough to buy this supertall, overpriced condo, in which the female models will just present themselves to him seductively in his bought lifestyle in the sky.



Christopher Wierer

The Contemporary – 02 April 2023 “For/Against” Statement

IDEOLOGICAL AND ECOLOGICAL ENVELOPES

For (Architecture and building being used to convey political ideology)

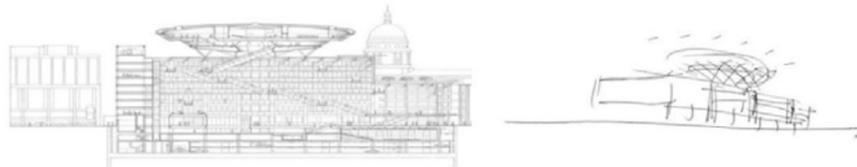
Regarding Norman Foster, Hal Foster states: “Foster’ suggests an analogy between architectural and political openness, not only at the Reichstag but also at City Hall. (“It expresses the transparency and



accessibility of the democratic process,” we are told.” (*The Art-Architecture Complex* pg 48) In his design for the dome above the Reichstag, Foster was able to achieve this spectacle of looking down or observing the government by its people. The studies for the dome showed the great care that went into attempting to achieve this carefully calibrated experience that could have bordered on a kitsch device rather than aspirational architectural intervention.

Against (Architects blindly conveying a false ideology removed from reality)

Regarding Norman Foster, Hal Foster states: “Foster’ suggests an analogy between architectural and political openness... (“It expresses the transparency and accessibility of the democratic process,” we are told... Yet the analogy is shaky from the start, and, when applied to the Singapore Supreme Court (2000-05)—‘Foster’ touts the “dignity, transparency, and openness” of its design—it seems absurd given the track record of that government in general.” (*The Art-Architecture Complex* pg 48) While architects in their designs can and should convey utopian democratic societal ideals, they have an obligation to do so with critical cognizance. In this quotation, Foster appears to be stating the Singapore government espouses those ideals, which the government admittedly does not. Foster has the responsibility to distinguish the ideals of his building, or even his own ideals from the marketing he was hired to convey on behalf of a closed, backwards looking governing body. His built structure does provide lovely views to Singapore itself from observation windows but that cannot be confused with transparent governance.



Space Habitat:
On (or under) Mars

Transcalarities Case Study 01

Transcalarities Su22

Project: "3D PRINTED SPACE HABITAT: On (or under) Mars"

Faculty: Andres Jaques
with Maur Dessauvage

A mid-term case study examining an unbuilt project proposed for Mars.

A home constructed mostly by autonomous robots and covered in many layers of compacted, microwaved-Martian soil to protect from radiation. Does that sound like the most hospitable place to work and live? In 2015, in response to a NASA sponsored competition open to entries from the US, through its NY architecture office and in partnership

with engineers, scientists, psychologists and sociologists, the British firm Foster + Partners proposed their second place winning 3D Printed Mars Habitat project. Team Gamma as the partnership was called drew upon 'local' resources to develop living pods capable of sustaining human life. This paper demonstrates that their secondary focus on human mental well-being inside the self-sustaining closed ecosystem attempted to fulfil the inhabitants' needs while perhaps inadvertently succumbing to one major 'oversight'.

Human beings have both physiological as well as mental and sociological needs that needed to be addressed in the design proposal. As stated in his book *The Case for Space*, Robert Zubrin lays out the case for establishing physical bases for human habitation on the planet surface itself, not in orbiting space-craft as humans have been relying upon until now:

"Since no one has been left in orbit, the entire crew has available to them the natural gravity and protection against cosmic rays and solar radiation afforded by the Martian environment, and thus there is not the strong driver for a quick return to

Earth that plagued previous Mars mission plans based upon orbiting mother ships with small landing parties."¹

With the basic physical human needs accounted for, a large part of Team Gamma's presentation material turned to the psychological and sociological needs of sustaining human life for an extended period of time in what would be a confined, small live/work environment very far from the rest of humankind.²

Foster + Partners proposed a series of overlapping private and public spaces to encourage and in some aspects, force interaction among the inhabitants. (Fig. 01)

The lounge for relaxation is also included in the work area, further blurring their daily activities. While private areas exist for basic needs such as sleeping and bathing, the lines between the public rest and work areas are intentionally blurred. To combat anticipated boredom, many virtual surfaces are proposed to surround the inhabitants with changing content.

¹ Robert Zubrin, *The Case for Space: How the Revolution in Spaceflight Opens Up a Future of Limitless Possibility* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2019), chap. 4.

² "2015 - Space, Mars Habitat," Projects: Industrial and Research, Foster + Partners, updated 2015, <https://www.fosterandpartners.com/projects/mars-habitat/>.

In Nasa's own study *Space Settlements: A Design Study*, Gerard K. O'Neill put forth the case that protection against "The Solipsism Syndrome in Artificial Environment" is of utmost importance in extraterrestrial environments. Their main point in combating this syndrome in which people fall into helplessness because they feel that everything is not real, is compounded by everything appearing to be within their grasp (with unlimited virtual access). They advocate for: "A large geometry, in which people can see far beyond the "theater stage" of the vicinity to a view which is overwhelmingly visible."³ This calls for the basic human need to look out and have 'site' of their surroundings.

Perhaps the Foster + Partners design placed number 2 in the competition because while they skillfully proposed a groundbreaking new way of protecting human's physical need, the bulk of their proposed structure is subterranean, completely covered in Martian soil, in a bunkerlike fashion. The winning entry proposed

an above ground structure with views out to the newly inhabited Martian world. The residents' mental well-being might have been better served knowing they are living and working in truly a technological marvel, sited physically and 'visually' on a newly inhabited planet.

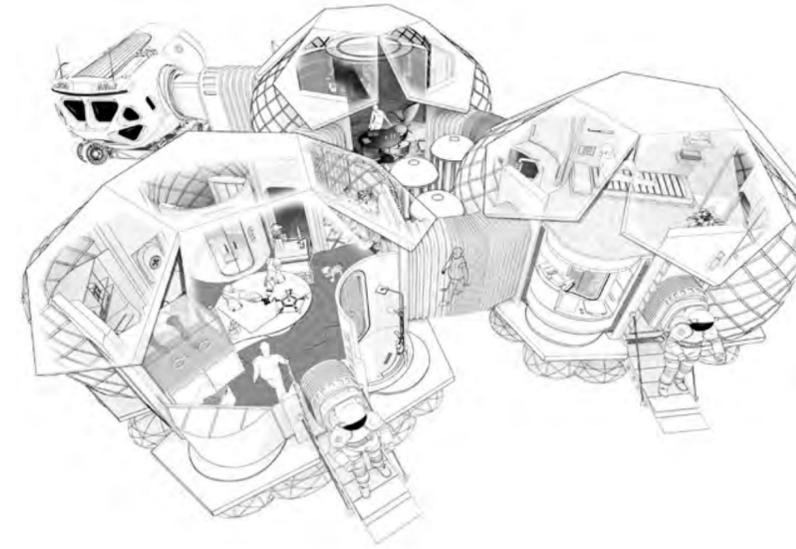


Figure 01 - "2015 - Space, Mars Habitat," Projects: Industrial and Research, Foster + Partners, updated 2015, <https://www.fosterandpartners.com/projects/mars-habitat/>.

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³ N.A.S.A. and Gerard K. O'Neill, *Space Settlements: A Design Study* (n.p.: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), chap. 3.



The Drone Aviary

Transcalarities Case Study 02

Transcalarities Su22

Project: "THE DRONE AVIARY: A Case for Taming Digital Birds of Prey"

Faculty: Andres Jaques
with Maur Dessauvage

A final project case study examining the ever growing surveilled state of society, its implications and possible futures.

Outside near your home on a cloudy morning, you glance up at a drone hovering above with its screen displaying an ad for your favorite morning coffee. You are early today, as you are heading off to work because you can't sleep. The drone of course knows this as each morning it records the specific time and location you pass. From your facial expression it notes your

drowsiness. It searches online data about your purchasing history and surmises that this specific coffee you buy when time allows is the perfect ad for you. This Orwellian scene from the not-too-distant future showcases the real potential of drones to shape and influence our lives (with as of yet unknown outcomes) as highlighted in the Drone Aviary study/exhibition by The Superflux Lab.

In 2015, the Arts Council of England commissioned a study on drones in the UK undertaken by the futurist design group. In conjunction with their exhibit, "All of This Belongs to You," the V&A museum included an installation of the findings in their Civic Objects display. While most of the focus on drones has been on their technical innovations, Superflux grappled instead with "How the presence of these machines will change our lived experience of the urban environment, and the way we understand and interact with their increasing autonomy. And that is precisely the ambition of the Drone Aviary project: to

explore the physical, digital, spatial, and civic complexities of this technology."¹ By exploring the 'civic complexities' of drone technology, Superflux Lab revealed that anonymity will become increasingly hard to control as drones become more prevalent in everyday life. Jon Arden, the co-project lead predicts they will become pervasive in cities referring to them as "quasi living urban animals."² The Drone Aviary suggests that a framework for regulation and oversight will need to be quickly developed and implemented, yet by whom still needs to be determined.

Drones technically are already present in many facets of society and are very simple to assemble. For this project all the drones were 'home-made'. The study highlighted surveillance on multiple scales for multiple purposes: security, convenience, advertising, and ultimately the gathering of demographic

¹ Anab, Jain, The Superflux Lab. "The Drone Aviary Journal," Anonymous Systems. Updated Sept. 4, 2015. <https://superflux.in/index.php/drone-aviary-journal/#>.

² Jozuka, Emiko. "Drone Aviary: Imagining When UAVs Will Be as Common as Birds", Motherboard Tech by Vice, updated April 13, 2015. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/ypw4pb/drone-aviary-imagining-when-uavs-will-be-as-common-as-birds>.

data. Five of these drones flew over the UK where it became rapidly apparent that there was a lack of laws for regulating this emerging technology. It is in this gray, currently 'law-less' space where study and discussion of societal implications are greatly needed. The study culminated in a film where "the drones become protagonists, revealing fleeting glimpses of the city from their perspective, as they continuously collect data and perform tasks. It hints at a world where the 'network' begins to gain physical autonomy, moving through and making decisions about the world, influencing our lives in often opaque yet profound ways."³ By switching to the perspective of the drones, it becomes apparent that the drones themselves are assuming a level of authority, above the humans who launched them into the air.

One highlight of the film is the blurring out of a woman. (Figure 02) Superflux noted that from the drone's vantage point, everything could be seen and gathered. "In the advertising sequence, you'll notice someone who has an 'access denied' block. We assume anonymity

will become a luxury, an expensive service you pay for."⁴ This one image spotlights how while governments have begun the work of restricting their powerful gaze, such as no fly zones over the White House, a network for restricting personal freedom and anonymity will need to be quickly developed. Their study presented the beginnings of a mapped framework for surveilling and restricting these own surveillance devices, yet it remains to be determined who will create and police this new personal realm. While drones are often presented as a way of promoting the luxury of private and personal services, privacy and anonymity from these potentially ever-present digital birds of prey might become the ultimate luxury in the end.



Figure 01 - "Drone Aviary: Imagining When UAVs Will Be as Common as Birds", Motherboard Tech by Vice, Emiko Jozuka, updated April 13, 2015. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/ypw4pb/drone-aviary-imagining-when-uavs-will-be-as-common-as-birds>.



Figure 02 - "THE DRONE AVIARY JOURNAL," Anonymous Systems. The Superflux Lab, updated Sept. 4, 2015. <https://superflux.in/index.php/drone-aviary-journal/#>.

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The Superflux Lab. "Drone Aviary," Projects. Updated 2015. <https://superflux.in/index.php/work/drones/#>.

³ The Superflux Lab. "Drone Aviary," Projects. Updated 2015. <https://superflux.in/index.php/work/drones/#>.
⁴ Anab, Jain, The Superflux Lab. "The Drone Aviary Journal," Anonymous Systems. Updated Sept. 4, 2015. <https://superflux.in/index.php/drone-aviary-journal/#>.

³ The Superflux Lab. "Drone Aviary," Projects. Updated 2015. <https://superflux.in/index.php/work/drones/#>.

From Basketball
Courts to
Bodegas

Power Tools - Visual Studies

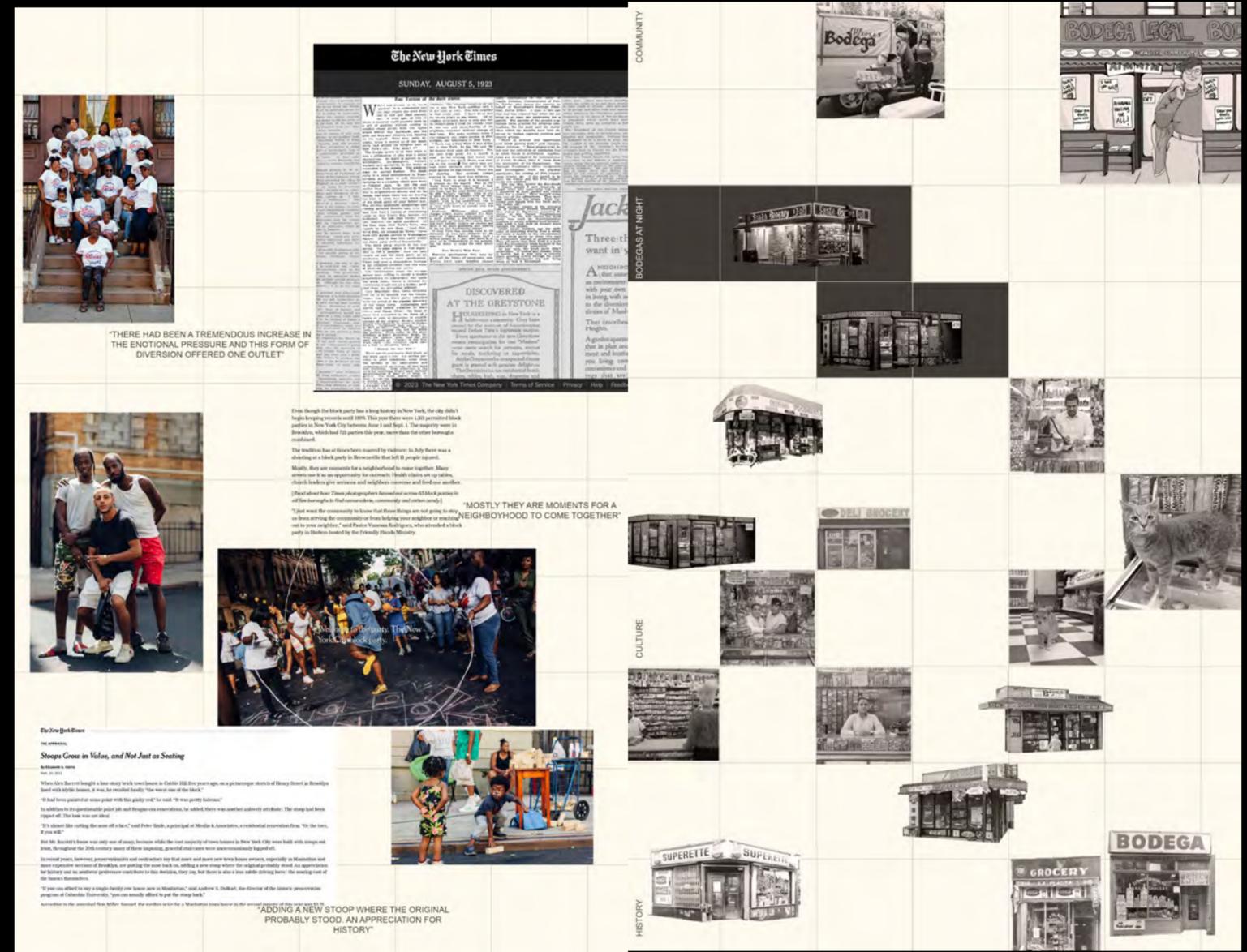
Power Tools Sp23
Project: "From Basketball Courts to Bodegas"
Collaboration with: Amiti Singh
Faculty: Jelisa Blumberg

In this group project for a Visual Studies course, we were tasked to research and model what are usually overlooked spaces. From a starting point of the Harlem Renaissance to the present, we examined and studied spaces common to residents' lives.

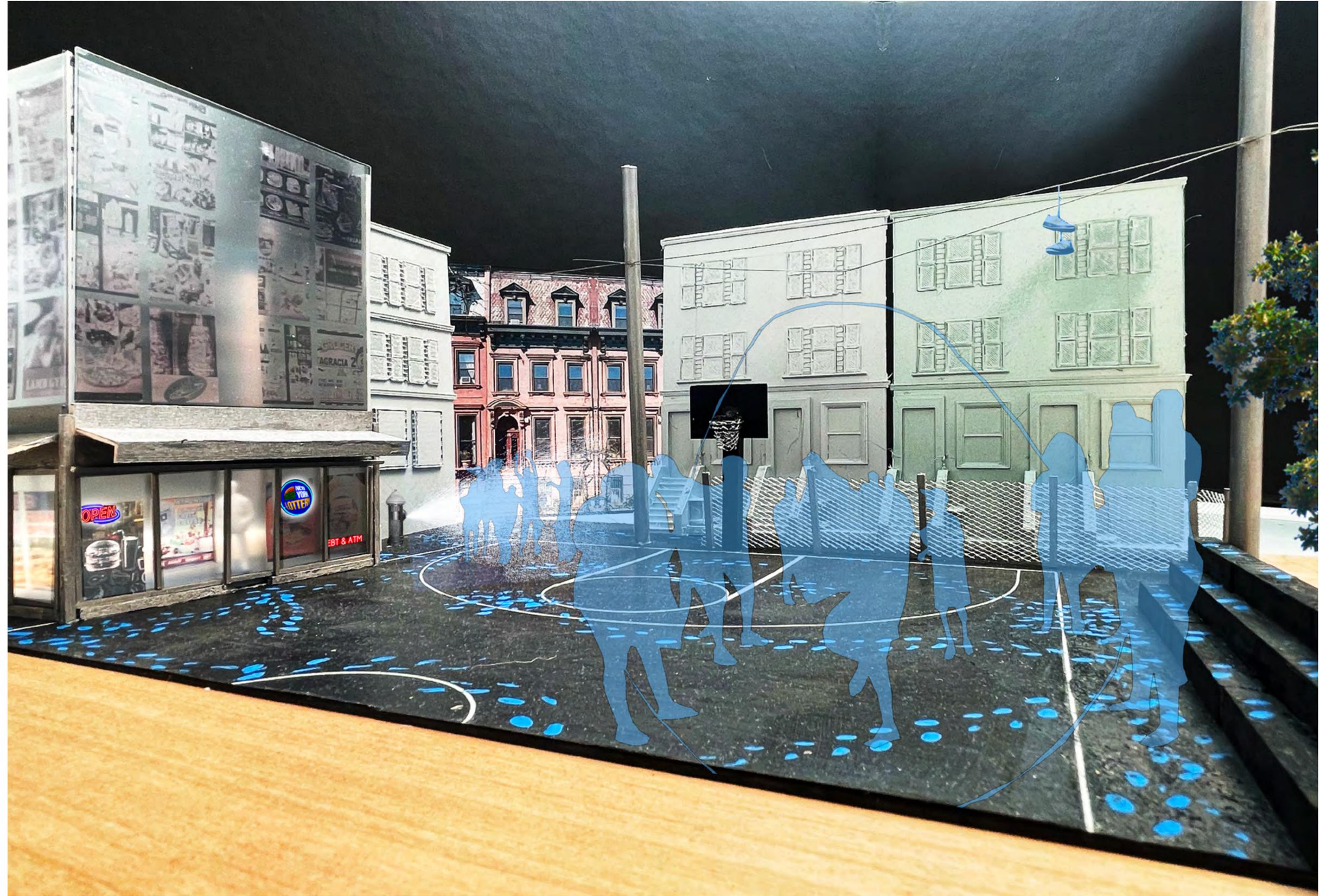
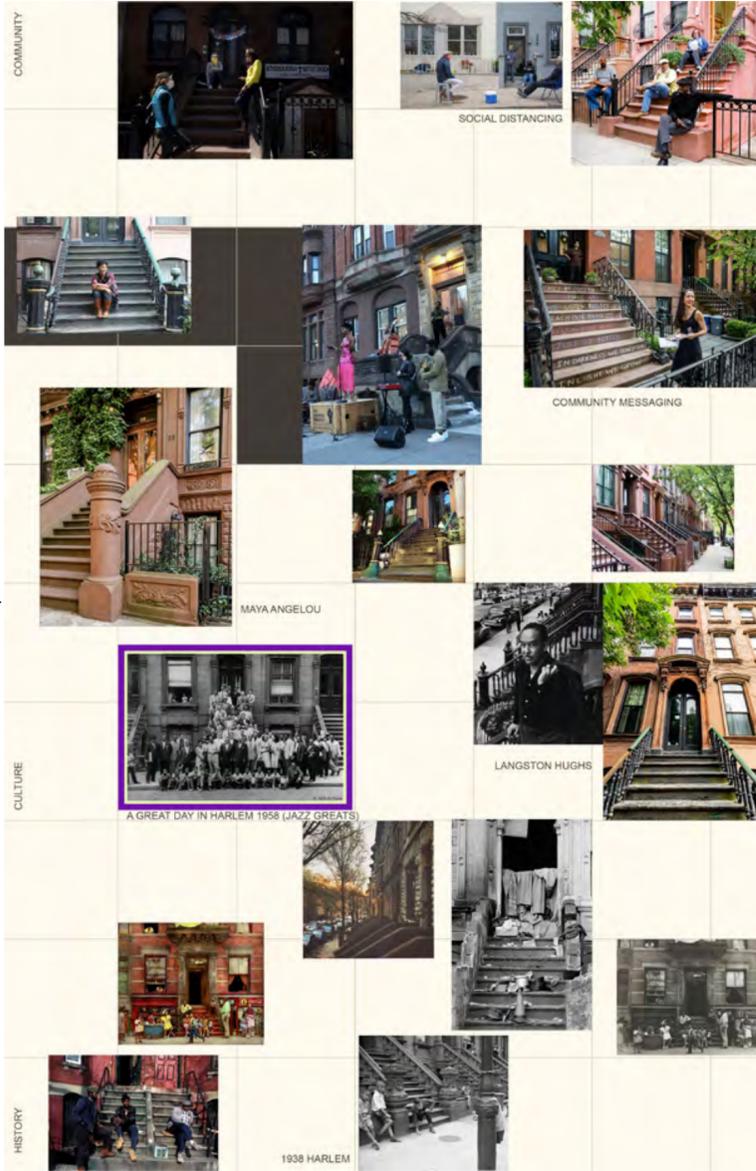
Our project focused on the spaces shared in Harlem used for community, basketball courts, stoops, and bodegas.

The resultant physical model created a new hybrid space meant to examine people, and how they interact. Of particular importance was

the area outside the bodega used for security, the bodega itself used for community pride and convenience, the bleachers as a site of interaction, the court itself, the sidewalks, the stoops, and of course the fire hydrant in summer time.



notes on in—vestigations + explorations...





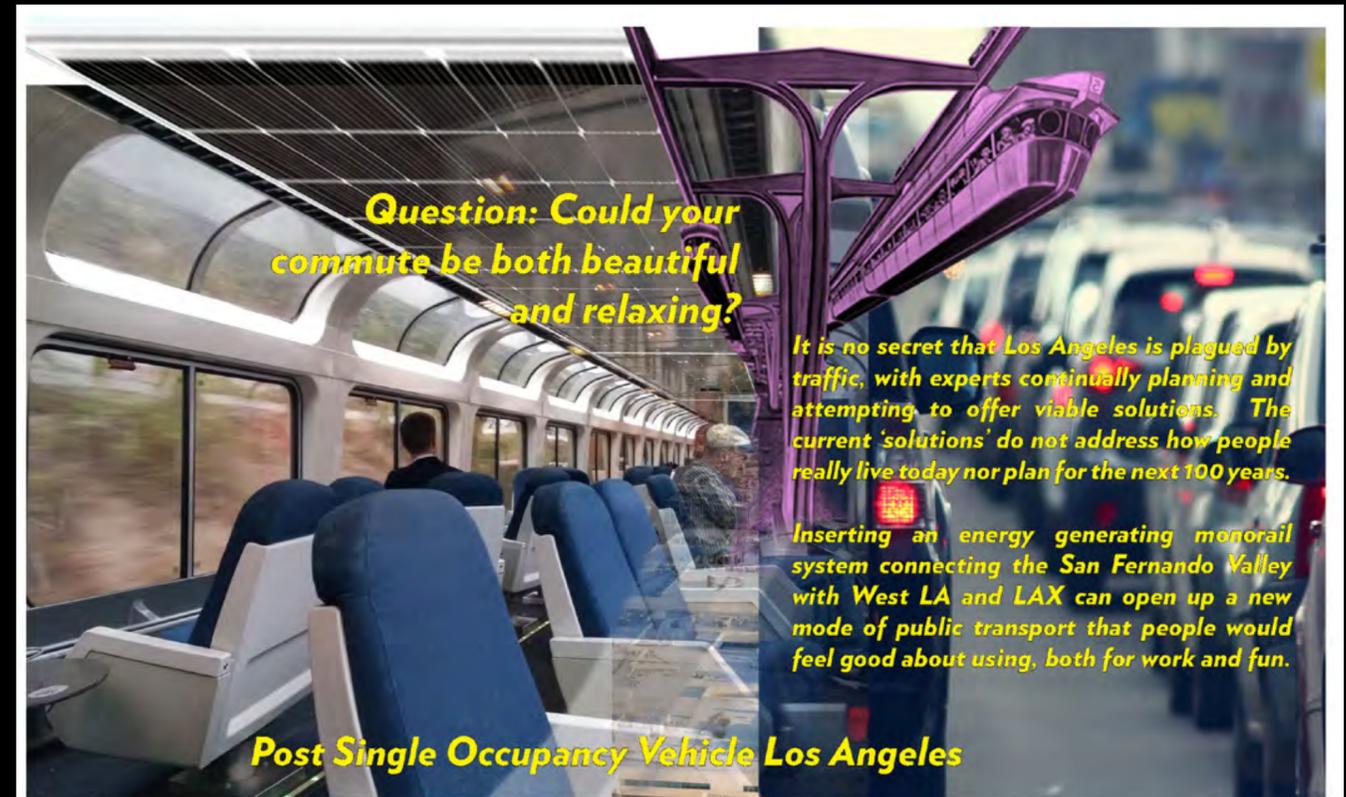
"PSOVLA"

MMiL - Tech Studies

Power Tools Fa22
Project: "Post Single Occupancy Vehicle Los Angeles"
Faculty: Sean Gallager

This Tech Studies project poses the question, could your commute be relaxing and beautiful while also attempting to imagine other forms of more sustainable transit for Los Angeles.

Semester long research on various built environment systems culminated in a test proposal intended to be presented to the Los Angeles City Council entering new modes of solutions into the public discourse.



Question: Could your commute be both beautiful and relaxing?

It is no secret that Los Angeles is plagued by traffic, with experts continually planning and attempting to offer viable solutions. The current 'solutions' do not address how people really live today nor plan for the next 100 years.

Inserting an energy generating monorail system connecting the San Fernando Valley with West LA and LAX can open up a new mode of public transport that people would feel good about using, both for work and fun.

Post Single Occupancy Vehicle Los Angeles

Man Machine and the Industrial Landscape
Fall 2022

Christopher Wierer
16 Dec 2022

The Work/ Home Relationship has evolved

As Los Angeles developed people lived in the suburbs and worked downtown - and public transit options developed to match this dynamic



suburbs

1925 streetcars

downtown

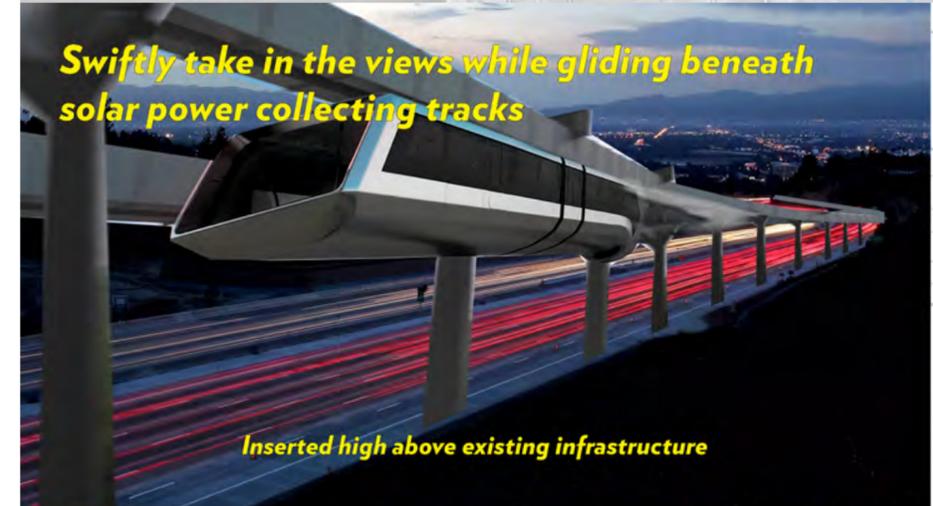
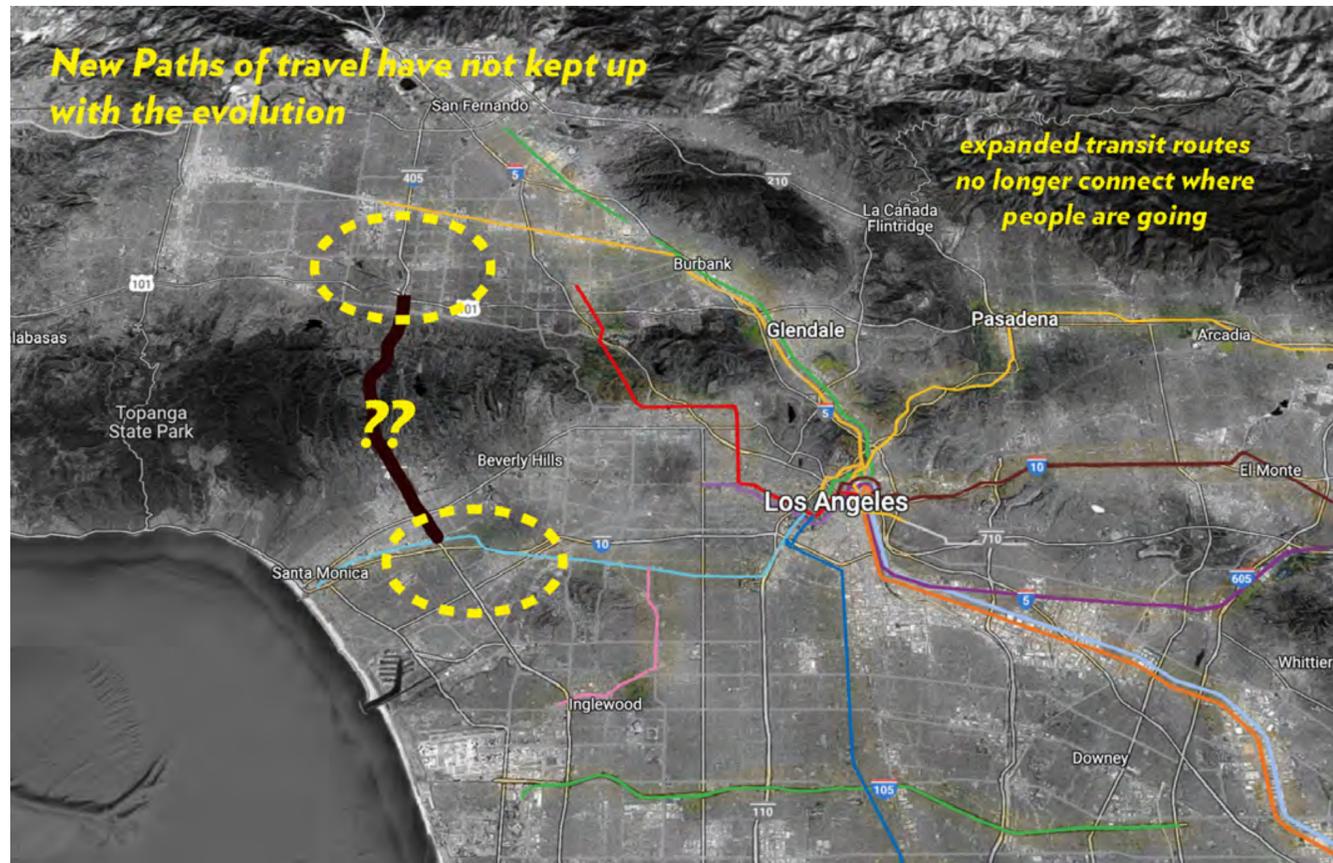


shifting population centers

endless traffic

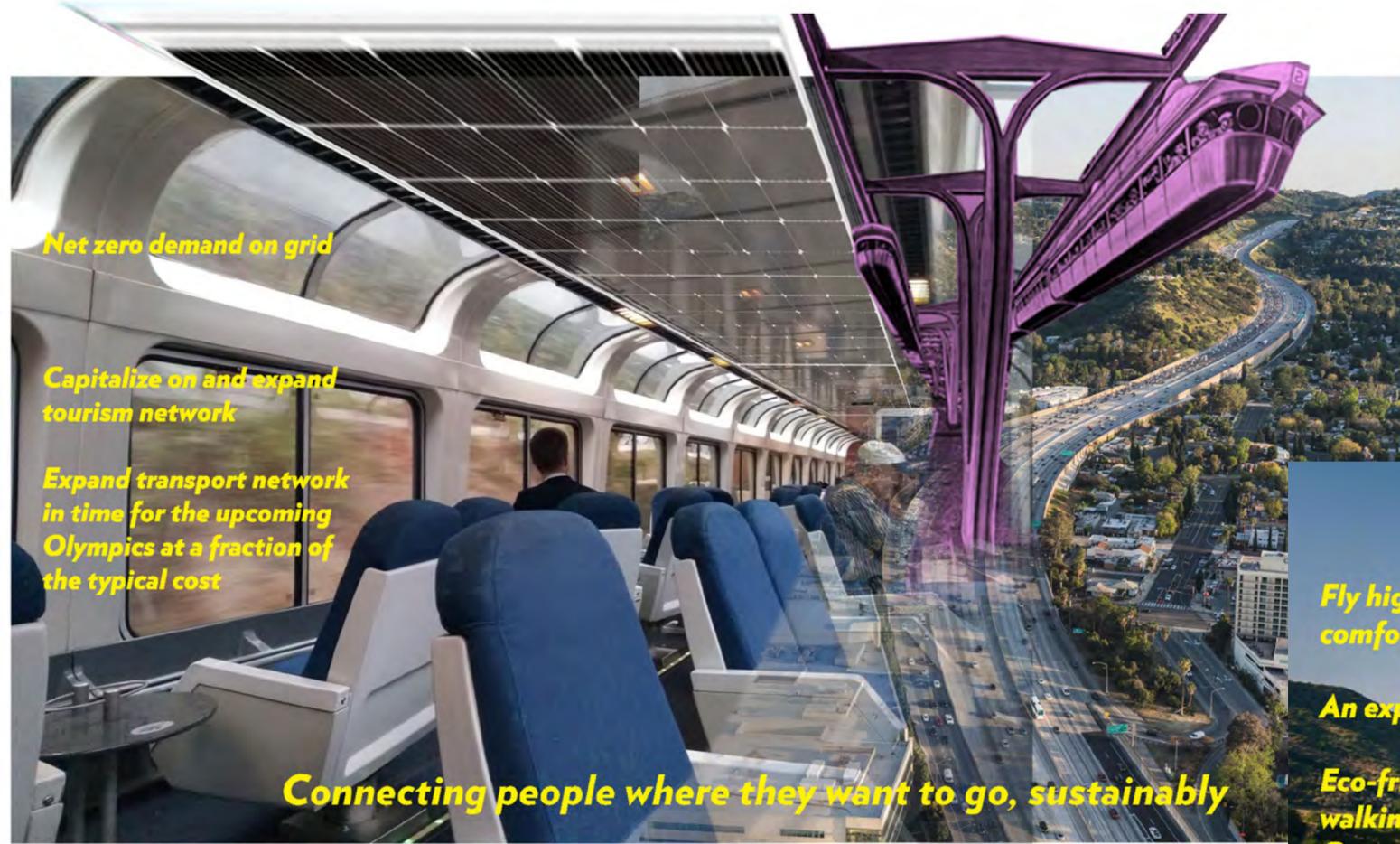
empty downtown

Current options no longer match people's habits - work from home and shifting job centers changed where people commute to and from



Energize:

- Monorail Engine: 750 volts**
- Sepulveda pass: 5.5% grade (within 7% monorail max)**
- 22.8 miles of track (x2) for photo-voltaic collection (32 thousand watts/ hour generation potential)**
- wind turbine inside front of trains to collect addition energy**
- embedded batteries on-board trains for after-hours use**



Net zero demand on grid

Capitalize on and expand tourism network

Expand transport network in time for the upcoming Olympics at a fraction of the typical cost

Connecting people where they want to go, sustainably



Fly high above traffic in comfort

An expanded view of LA

Eco-friendly access to walking trails and The Getty Museum

Improving the quality of life and environment for Angelenos & visitors alike

Connecting people where they want to go, beautifully

DTG - Visual Studies

Drawing to Gather Fa22
Project: "Lets Play Cards"
Faculty: Dare Brawley

Continuing the long traditional of an architectural study of games and game theory, this project attempted to merge a research project of the aging population of NY with one practical attempt at a useful aid.

The study concluded with a one to one mock-up of the game used in a test case study informing potential evolutions and uses for the project.

Lets Play Cards!

Lets Play Cards Christopher Wierer

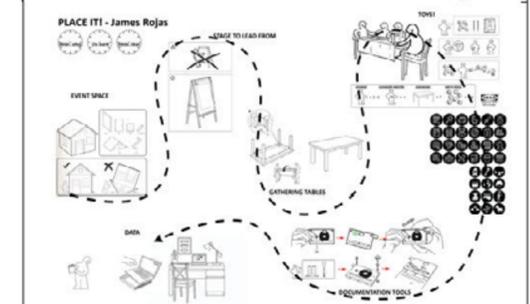
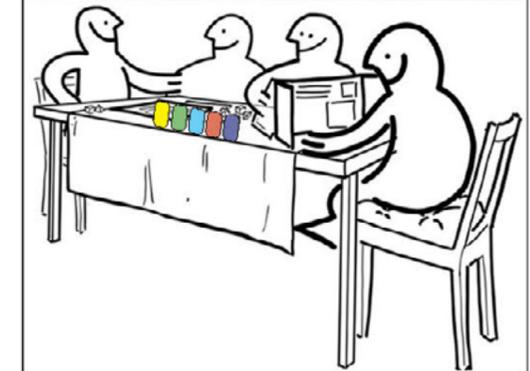
Much of the senior population is trying to navigate the rapidly digital focused, confusing world alone. 'Lets Play Cards' presents a tool to facilitate their participation in both digital and physical communities (which they have often lived in for years.)

Taking inspiration from James Rojas' 'Place It!', these cards present a mutual learning opportunity in a fun, game-like fashion.

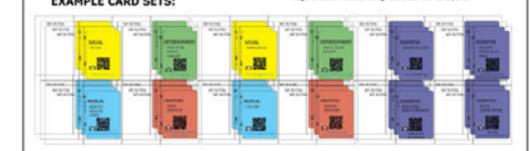
NYC is home to unique senior living configurations - NORCS (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities). The community rooms of these buildings present safe and comfortable places for the card games to take place and for everyone to make the digital leap together.

Each resident can keep a deck which they have been given to be used in classic 'memory card' game fashion. The fronts have QR codes leading to online resources tailored to them, while the backs have space for writing real world suggestions they have for each other.

This collective relationship building and learning can lead to interaction both online and in their physical communities.



A Card Game COLLECT FEEDBACK & SHARE
1. Back of each card to have space for participants to write down their favorite websites or favorite neighborhood location
2. Cards have links to websites that can be accessed via barcode photos for 'senior' factor
3. Link everyone for the bar-coded access websites
4. Take photos of everyone with their cards or just with their barcode tags to document back of card resources
5. Place their name tags on a page where they can attach their favorite cards to keep on their refrigerator
6. Take photos of each card set with resources and their name tags for use in later sharing resources with everyone



in-thanksgiving

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Mario Gooden
Mark Wigley
Dare Brawley
Sean Gallagher
Ilze Wolff
Tianyu Yang
Bernard Tschumi
Jelisa Blumberg
Xioaxi Chen

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