

**caring,
shifting,
fluctuating**



Metabolic Materials

Spring 2025
Critic: Michael Wang
Building Technology Sequence



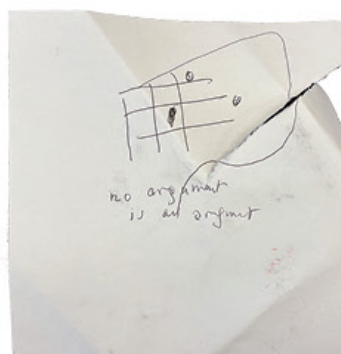
A Path For Growth

Spring 2023
Core II: Damage Control
Critic: Rosana Elkhatib



Subaquatic Forests: *Algae Ecologies for Carbon Capture*

Fall 2024
Adv V: SCALED | Carbon Removal Architecture
Critic: David Benjamin



The Contemporary

Spring 2025
Critic: Bernard Tschumi
Architecture History Sequence



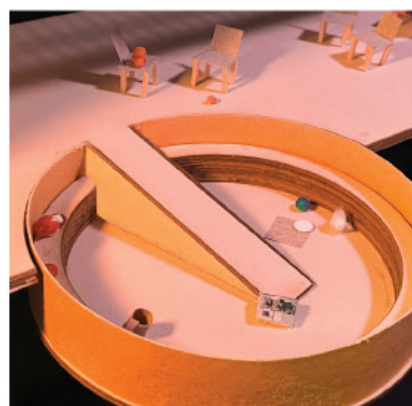
Waters of Exchange: *Food Sovereignty Across Inter-Caribbean Waters*

Spring 2025
Adv VI: Coding the Storm
Critic: Mireia Luzárraga



Unfinished Housing

Fall 2023
Core III: Block Party
Critic: Gary Bates
Collaborator: Thomas Gómez Ospina



Rotating Corners

Fall 2022
Core I: Broadway Stories
Critic: Alessandro Orsini



Veiled Landscape

Spring 2024
Adv IV: Wild / Willed
Critic: Mimi Hoang
Collaborator: Bryce Emerson



Towards a Transpecies Architecture + Seminar of Section

Spring 2024
Critic: Marc Tsurumaki
Critic: Mark Wigley

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a block party

mis-belonging

transience

un-building



Unfinished Housing

Fall 2023

Core III: Block Party

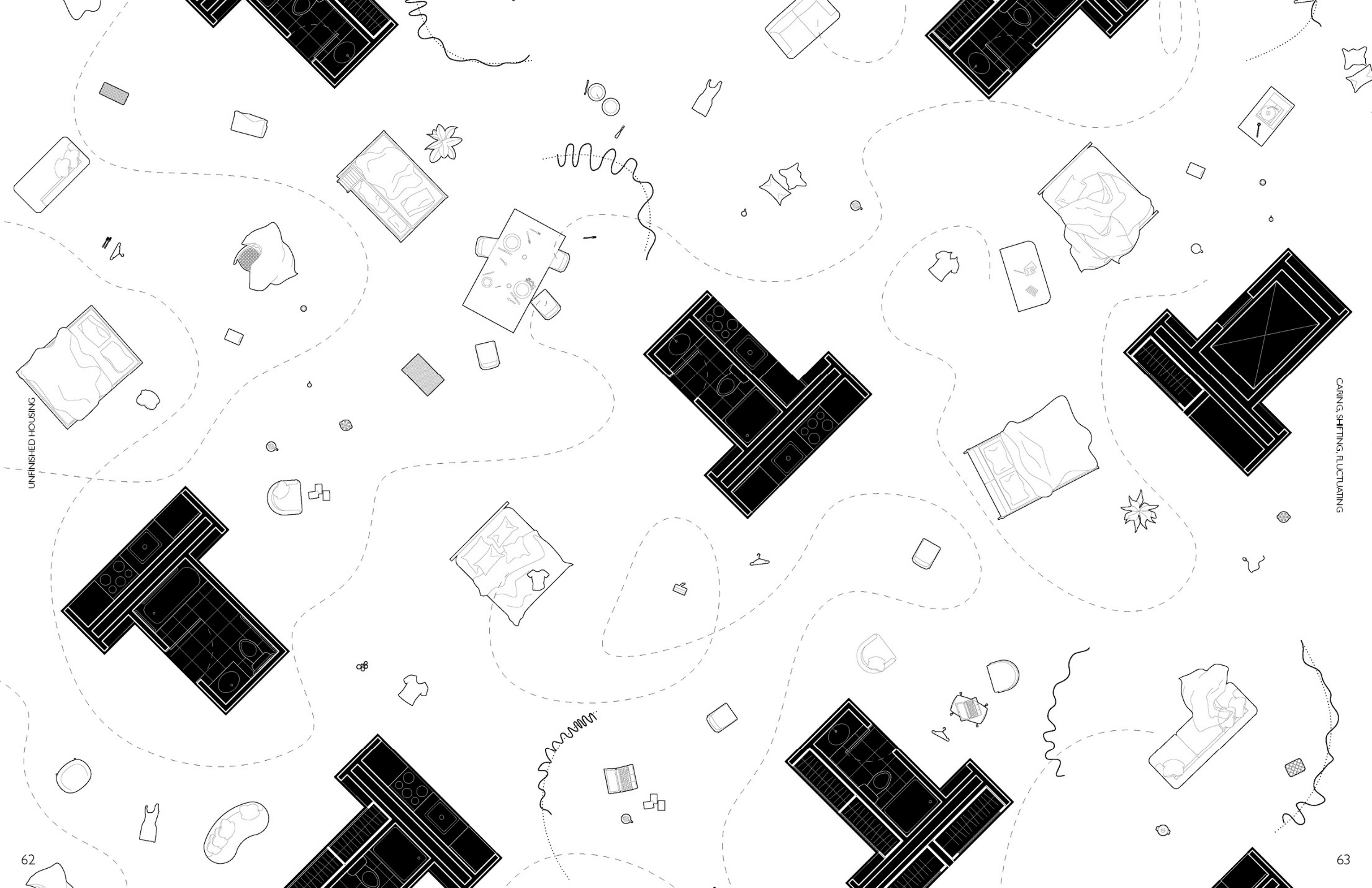
Critic: Gary Bates

Collaborator: Thomas Gómez Ospina

Unfinished Housing explores the open-ended potential of the free plan to resist typological closure. Rather than prescribing unit, family, or room types, the project proposes a housing framework that is intentionally incomplete—capable of adaptation, reconfiguration, and growth over time.

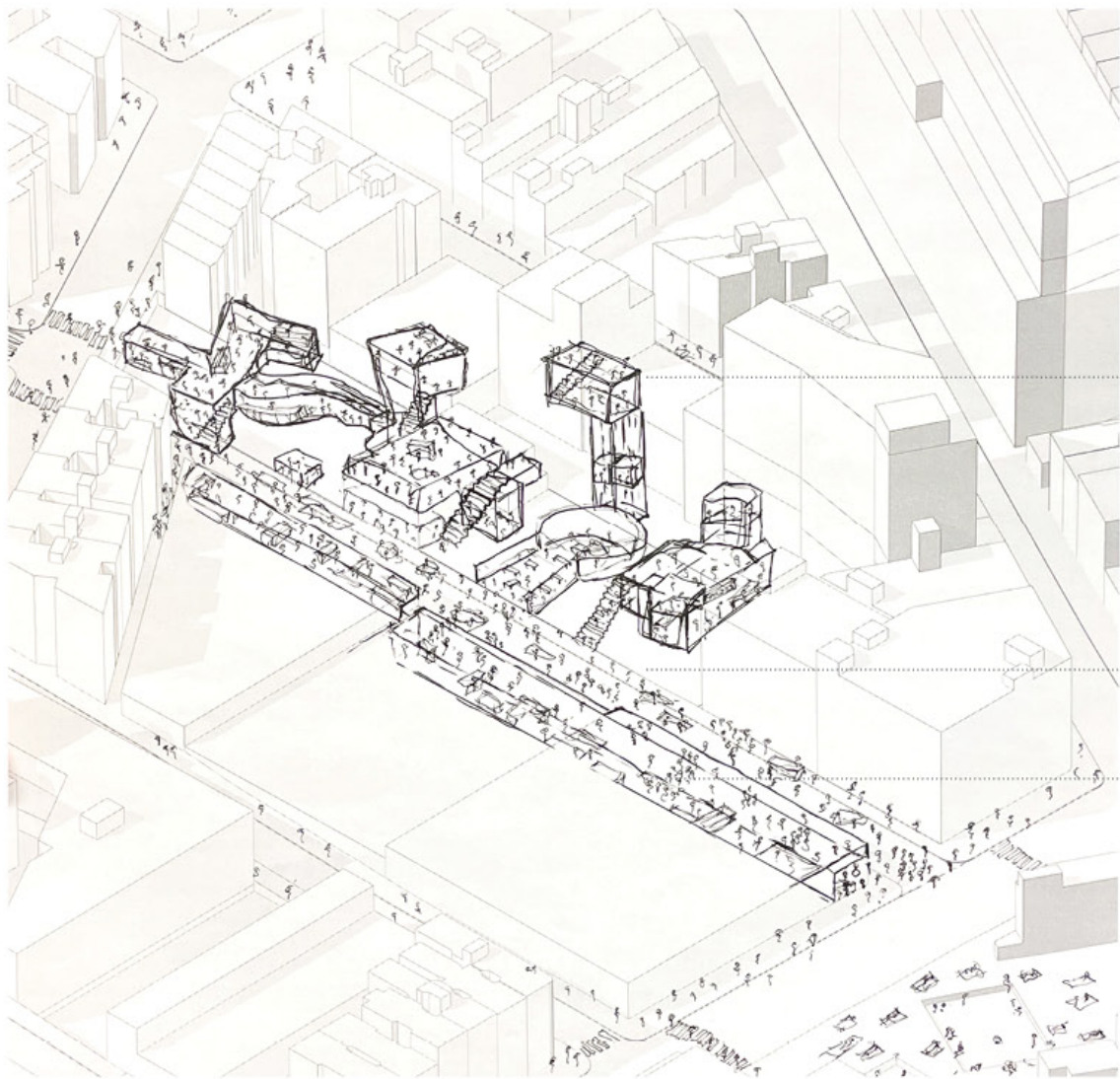
The structure is organized through a series of T-shaped mass timber service cores that concentrate load and infrastructure. Scattered across the plan, these cores free the spaces in between for inhabitation. Walls rise and fall as needed, allowing layouts to shift in response to evolving forms of domestic life. The scheme supports a range of models—multi-family, transitional, student, and beyond—without privileging one over another.

Prefabrication enables future vertical expansion, while pockets of collective space are embedded throughout the massing to support shared uses and informal interaction. At the street level, the building lifts to create a public promenade. The existing bus depot is partially repurposed for local markets, while new spaces for community use unfold at the base—extending the project's ethos of flexibility and co-authorship to the scale of the neighborhood.



UNFINISHED HOUSING

CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING

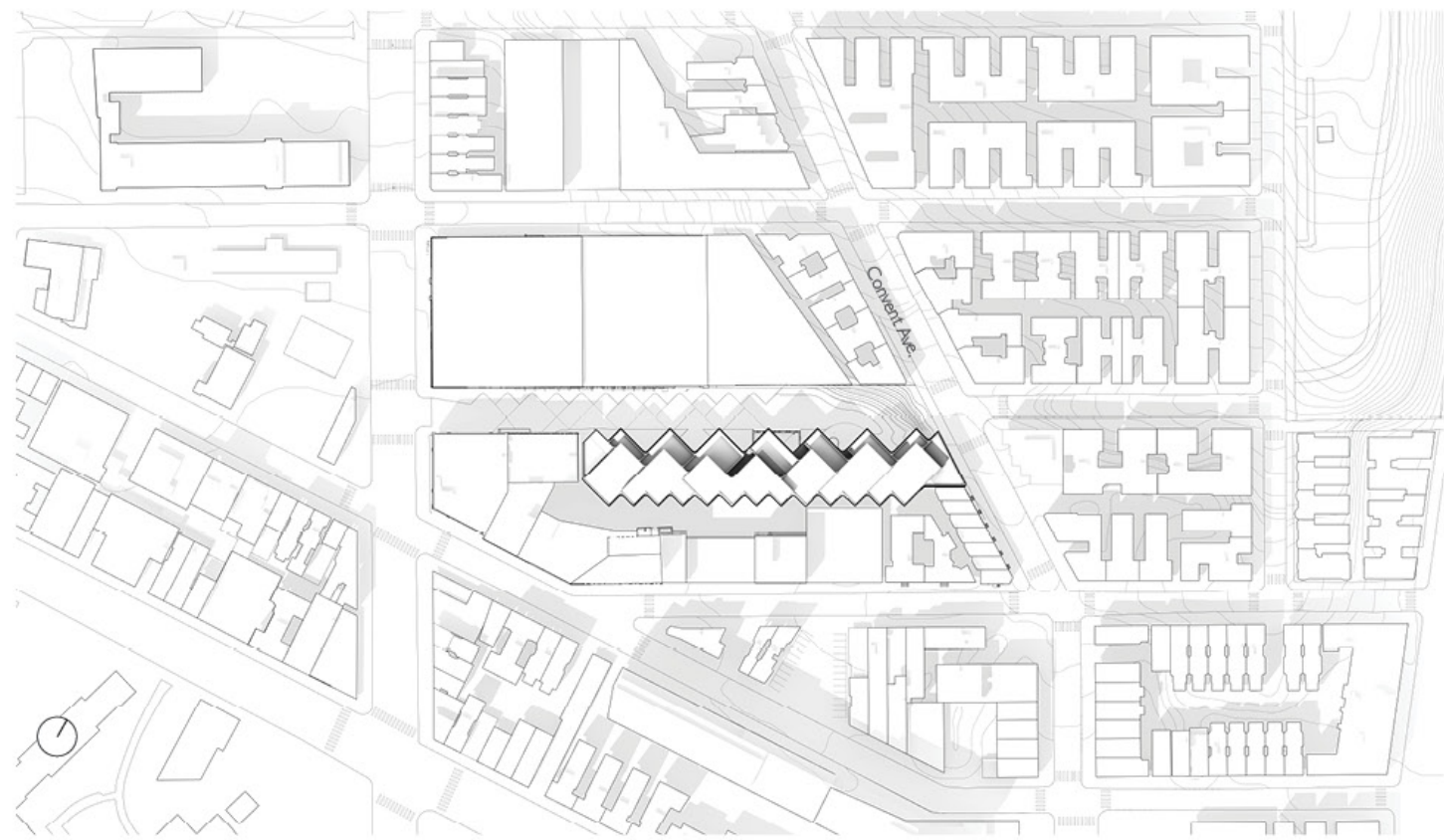


Network of negative spaces

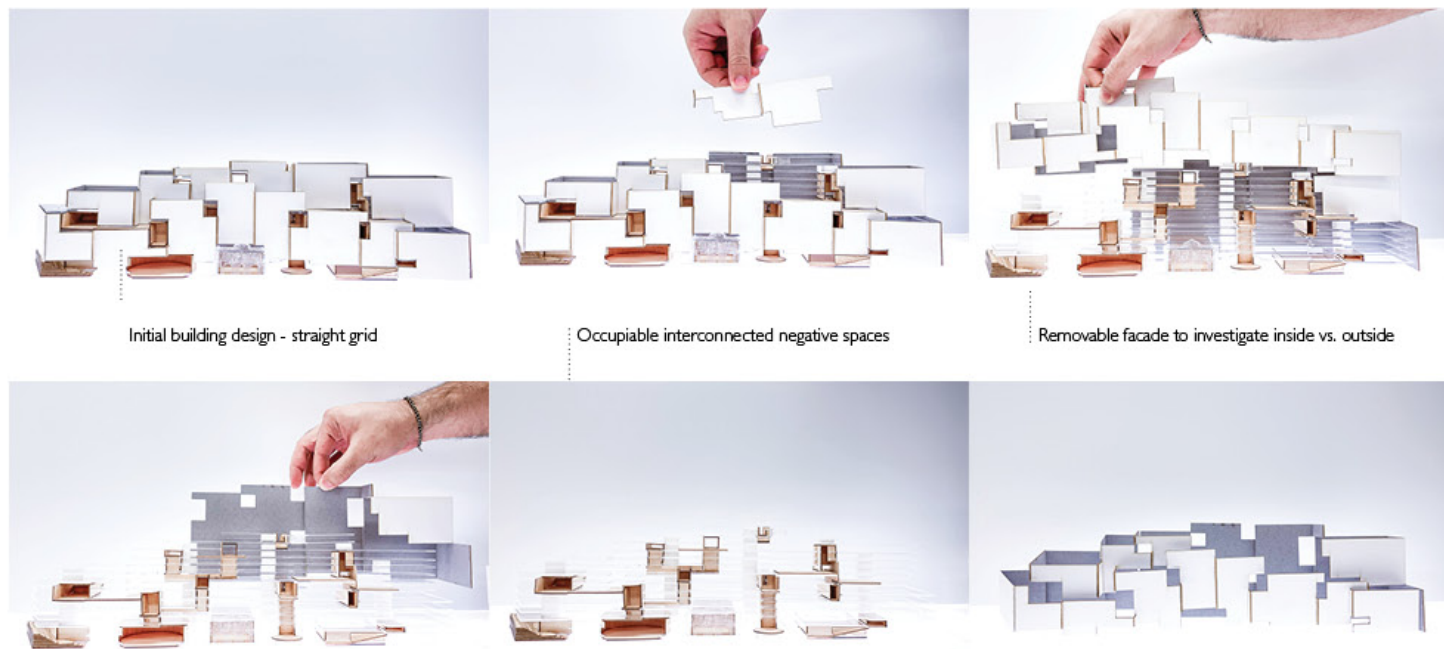
Negative spaces as an extension of the block party

Repurposed garage doors from bus depot for local businesses

Block Party - Negative Spaces - Sketch



Site Plan



Initial building design - straight grid

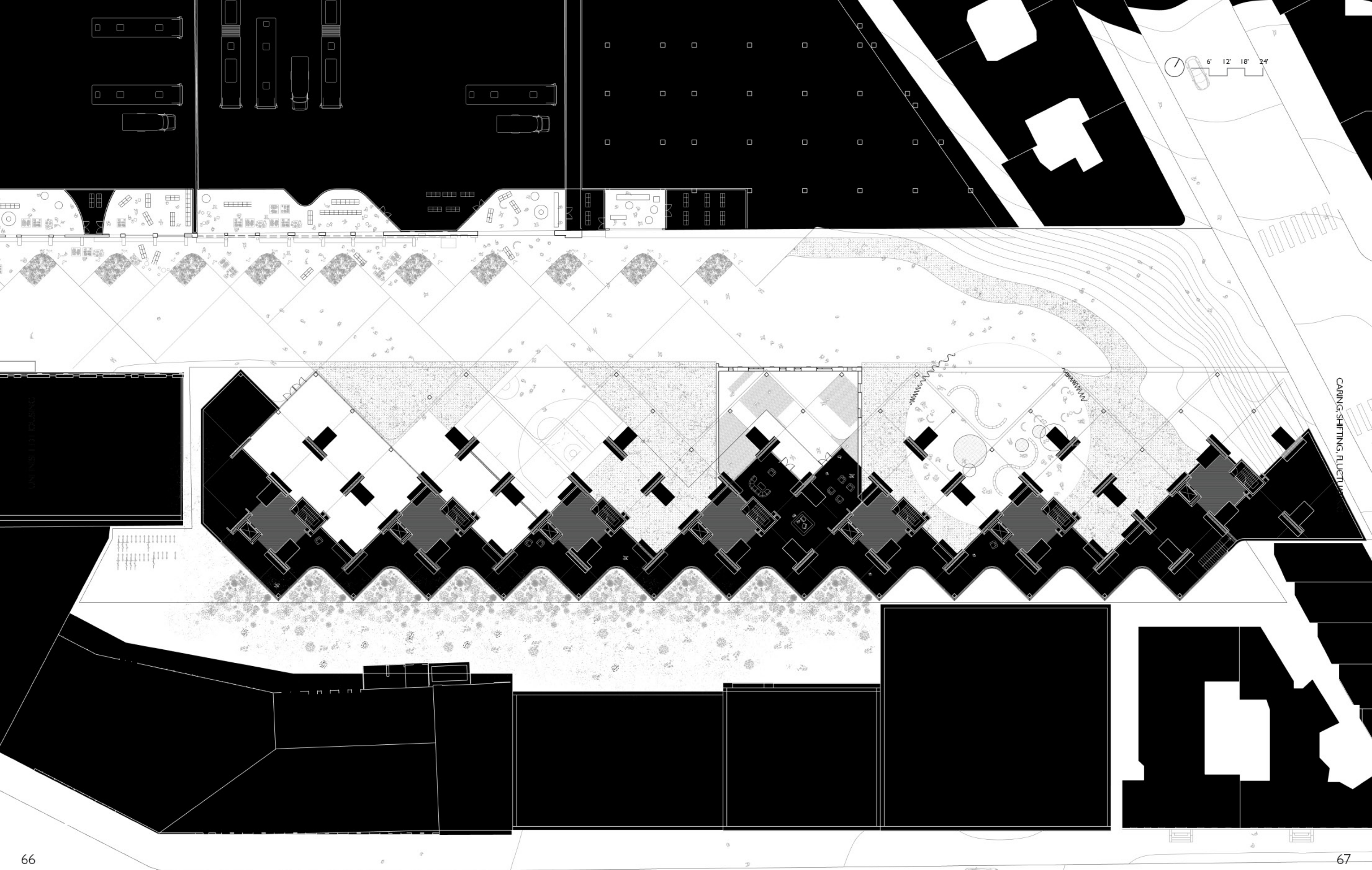
Occupiable interconnected negative spaces

Removable facade to investigate inside vs. outside

Stills from first massing model design 1' = 1/32"



Final massing model on site 1' = 1/32"



1' = 1/4" Chunk model north facade



Communal area
'Urban Livingrooms'

1' = 1/4" Chunk model removable slabs



Removable slabs to show different
configurations around the cores
from student housing to affordable
apartments

1' = 1/4" Chunk model south and top view



Resident garden and corridor
to elevator cores

Existing bus depot adapted for small local businesses

New green infrastructure and pedestrian street

Building and reconfigured streetscape

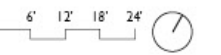
Lifted ground floor for retail and play areas

Communal spaces that connect the building
with the community





Plan - 7th Floor - Affordable housing scheme



UNFINISHED HOUSING

CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING



Convent Ave.

Convent residential entrance

Tiered steps and gardens

Agora

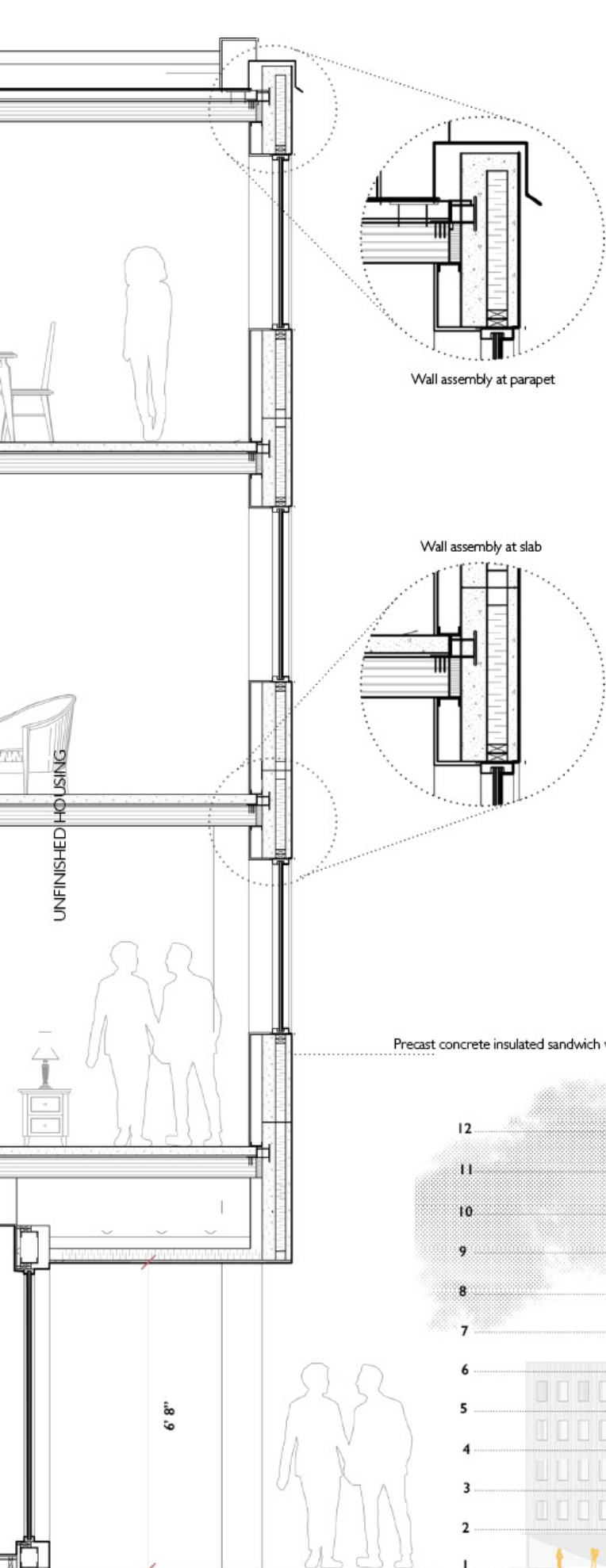
Existing building as main residential entrance

Sports court

Cafe and retail

Existing commercial office building

Elevation perspective

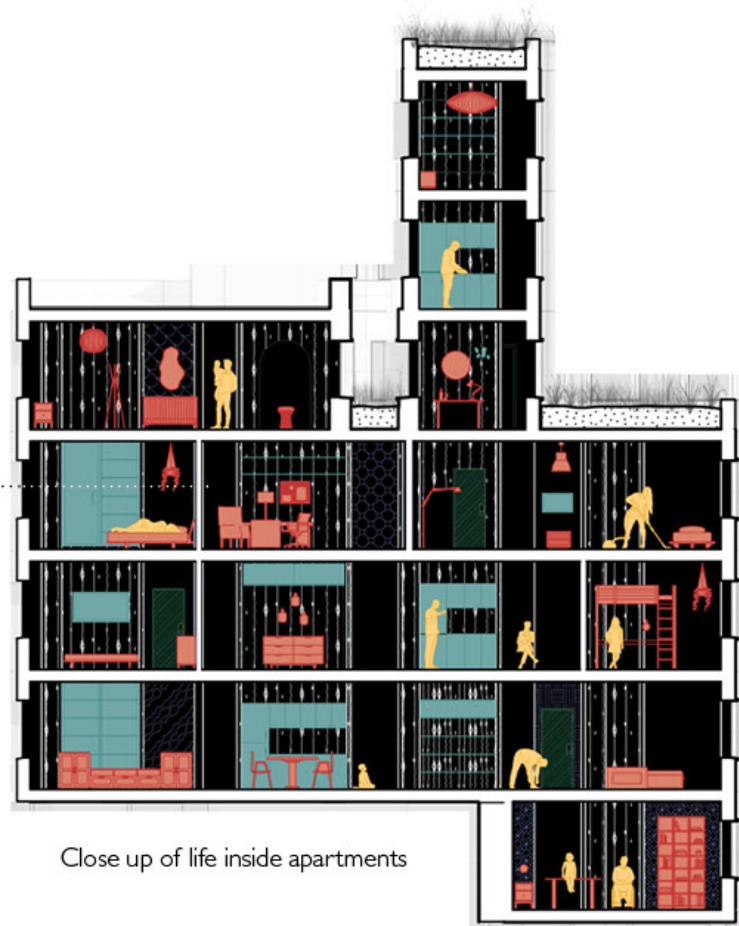


Wall assembly at parapet

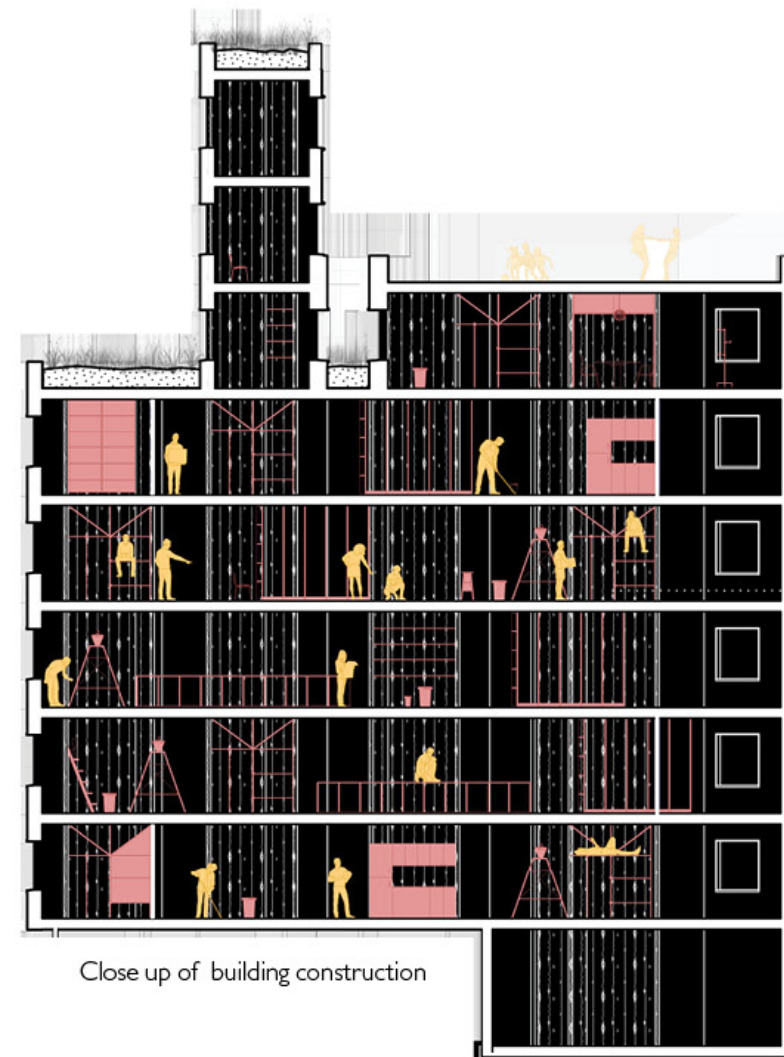
Wall assembly at slab

Precast concrete insulated sandwich wall panels

The cores allow apartments to house different apartment schemes



Close up of life inside apartments



Close up of building construction

The structural mass timber cores allow new towers to be erected while residents live in the building



Longitudinal section



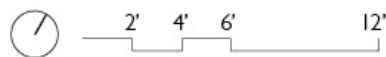
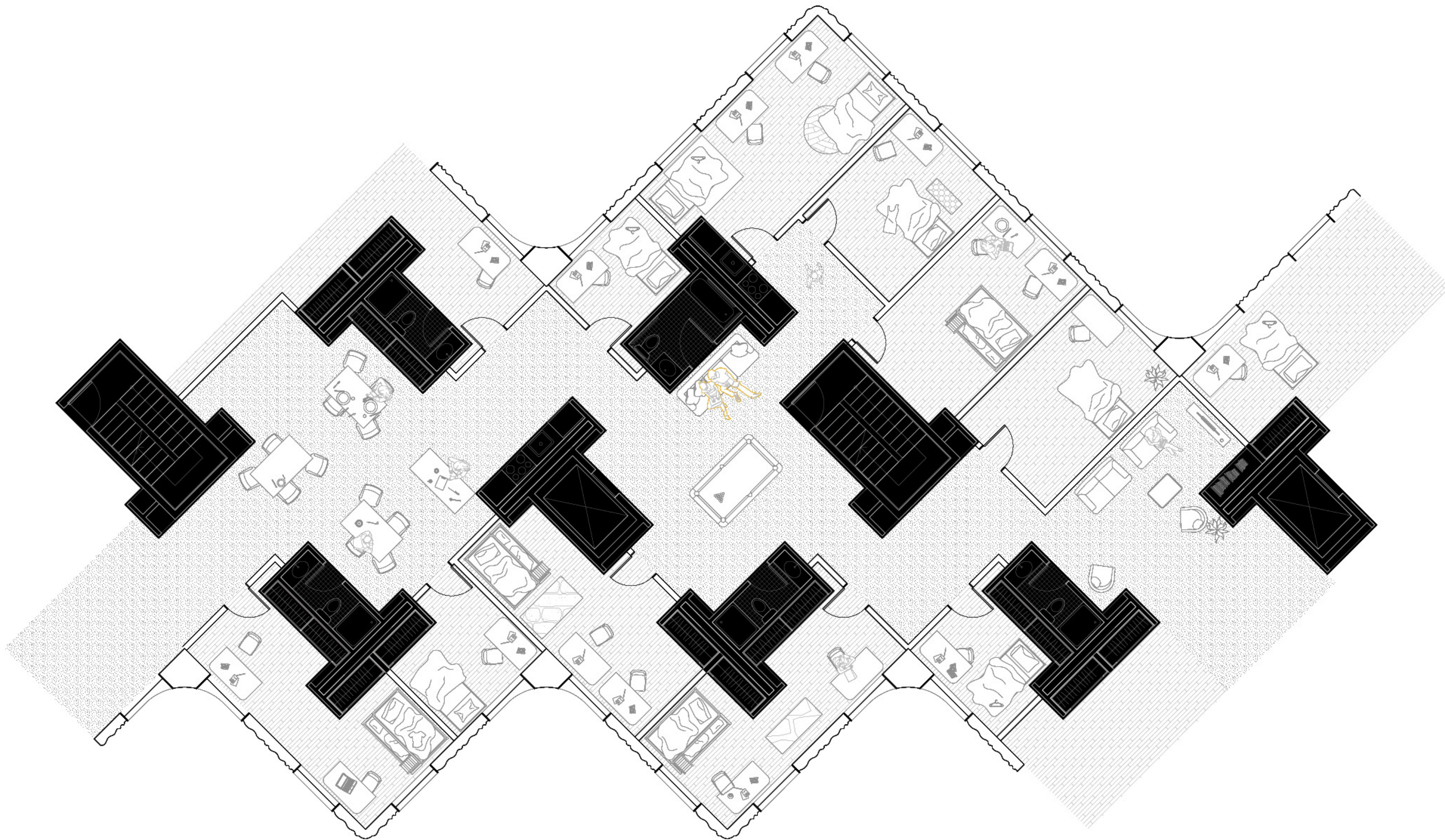
1" = 1/4" chunk model



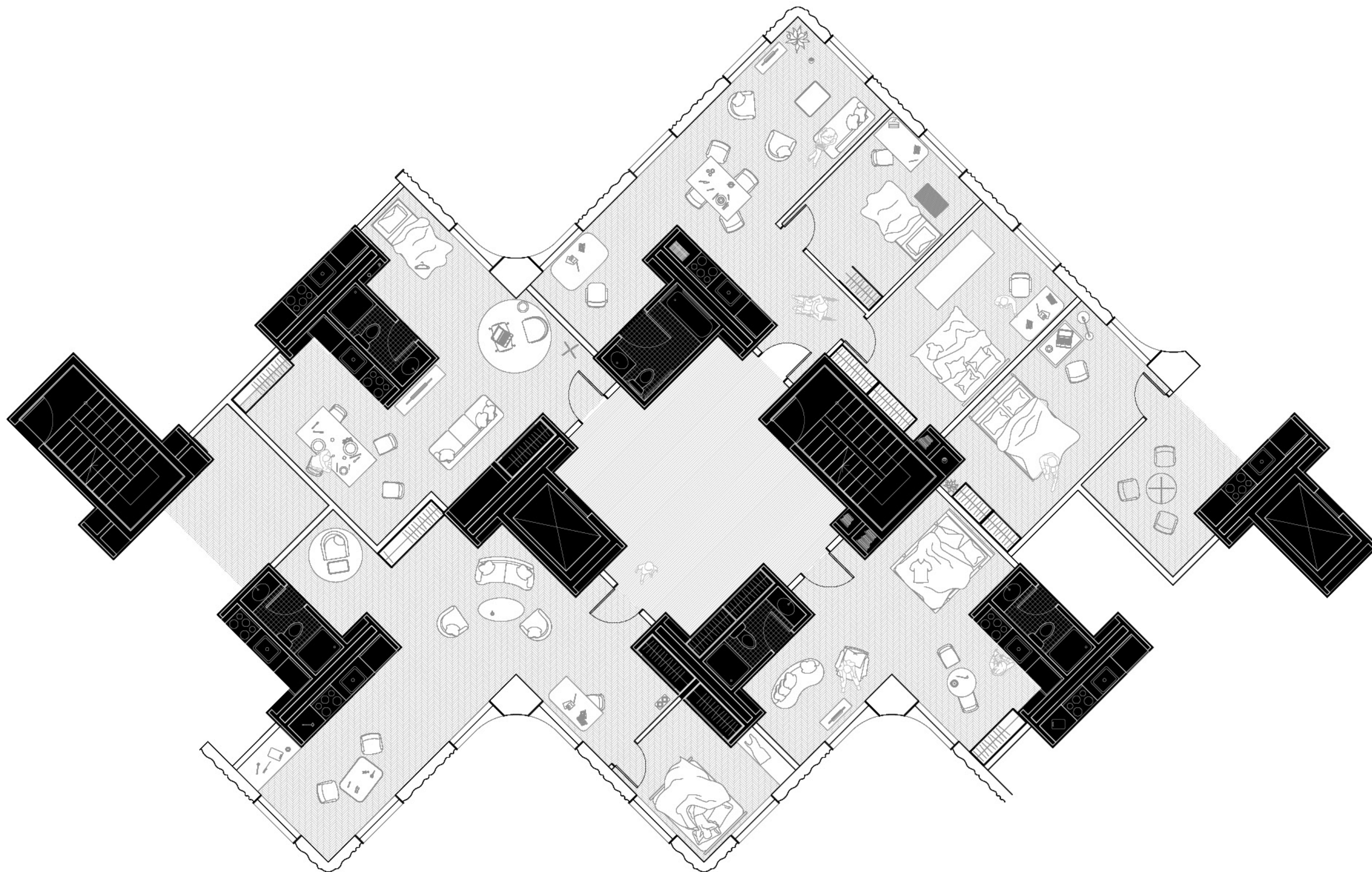
Communal space as a children's daycare



South elevation with communal spaces framing the neighborhood



Chunk Plan - Student Housing Scheme



A MARKET AS ()

negotiated space

forest of columns

coastal threshold

series of platforms

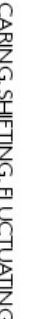
liquid territory

tapestry of displays

temporal assemblage

archipelago of exchange

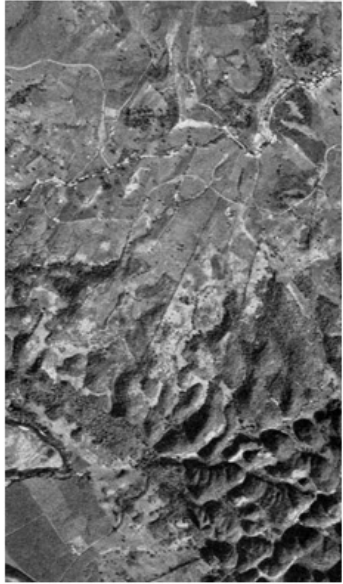
borderless commons



Spring 2025
Adv VI: Coding the Storm
Critic: Mireia Luzárraga

Composed as a shifting archipelago of platforms - some stilted, others buoyant on raft systems of repurposed 55-gallon barrels - the market is designed to grow incrementally. Select platforms can detach and drift twelve nautical miles offshore, evading maritime restrictions and forming provisional nodes for renewed inter-island trade. Onshore, the structure serves as a support system for Puerto Rican food sovereignty movements - offering independent growers, such as Josco Bravo, an alternative to supermarket-driven infrastructure.

46



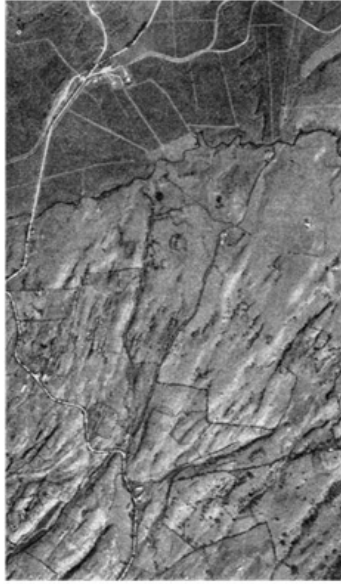
Ciales



Aguilla stony clay - San Anto



North Coast Limestone - Arecibo



Limestone hills





Market concept collage

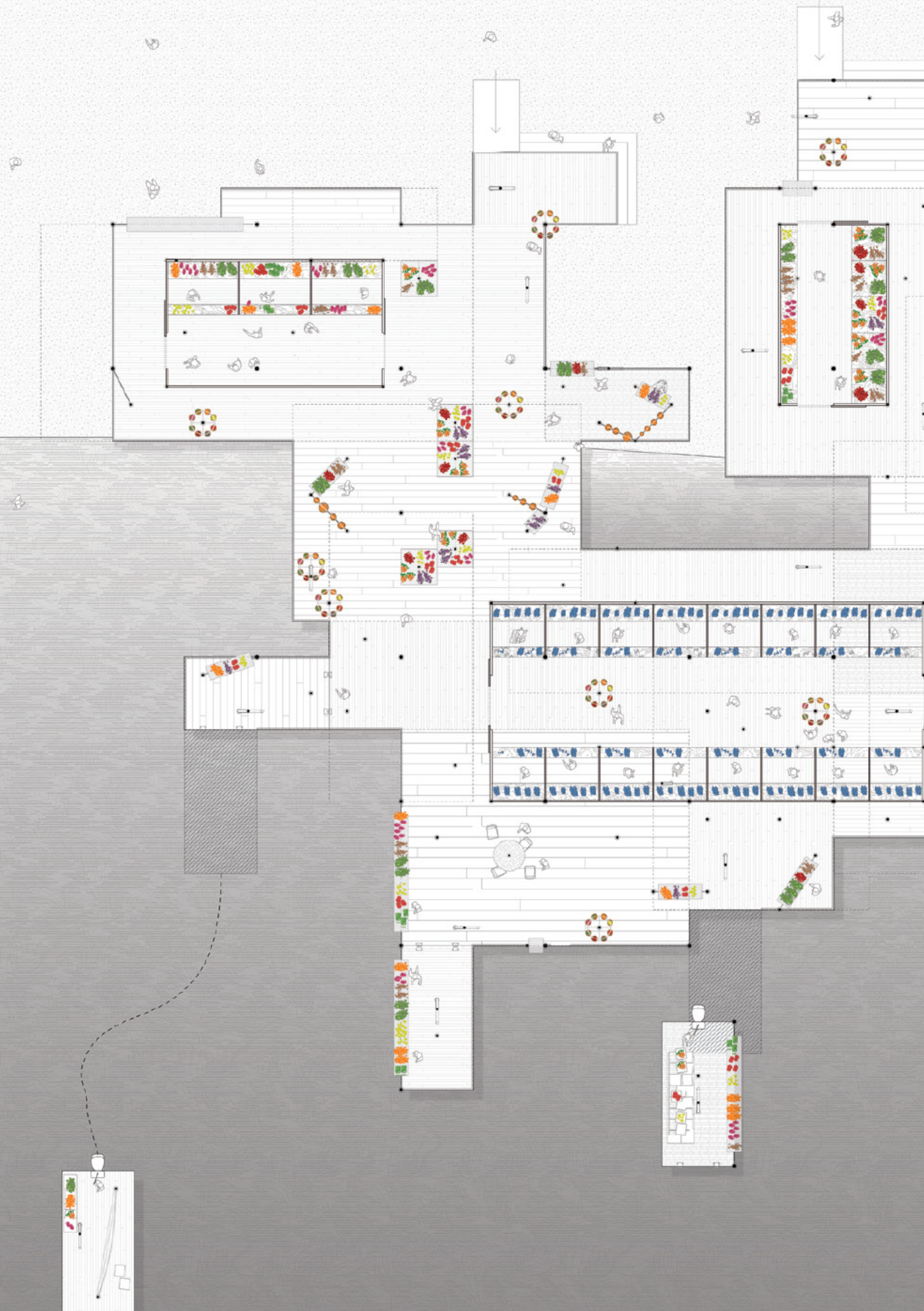


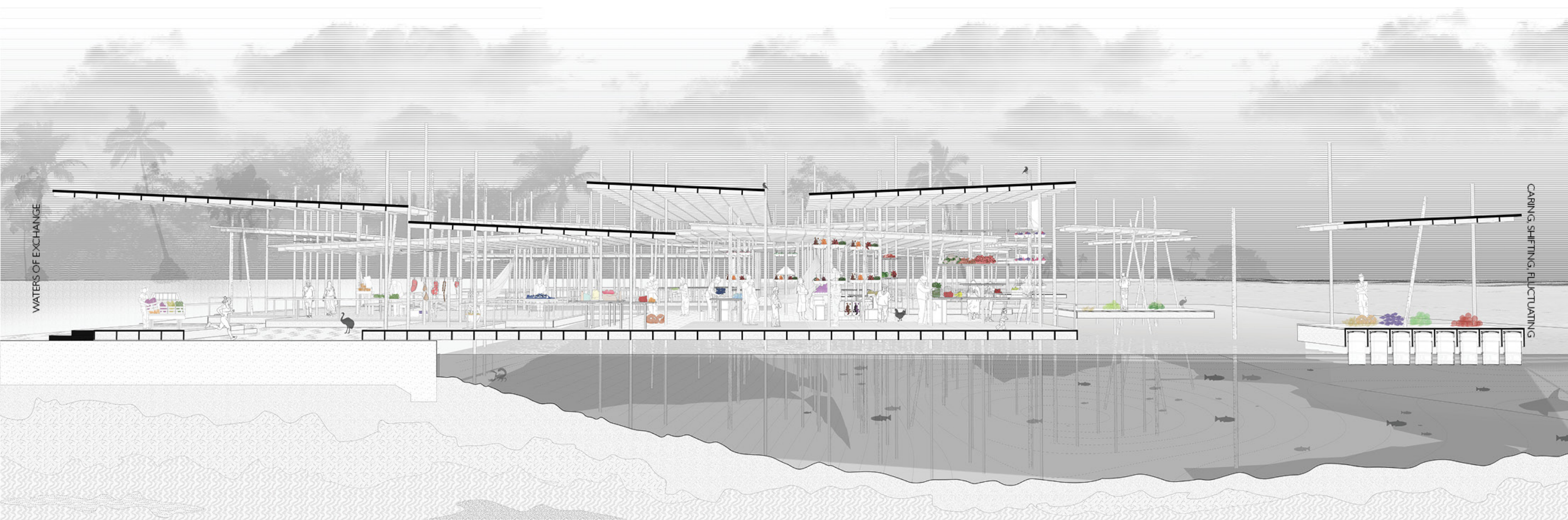
Main edible crops native to Puerto Rico



Puerto Rican food sovereignty collaboratives







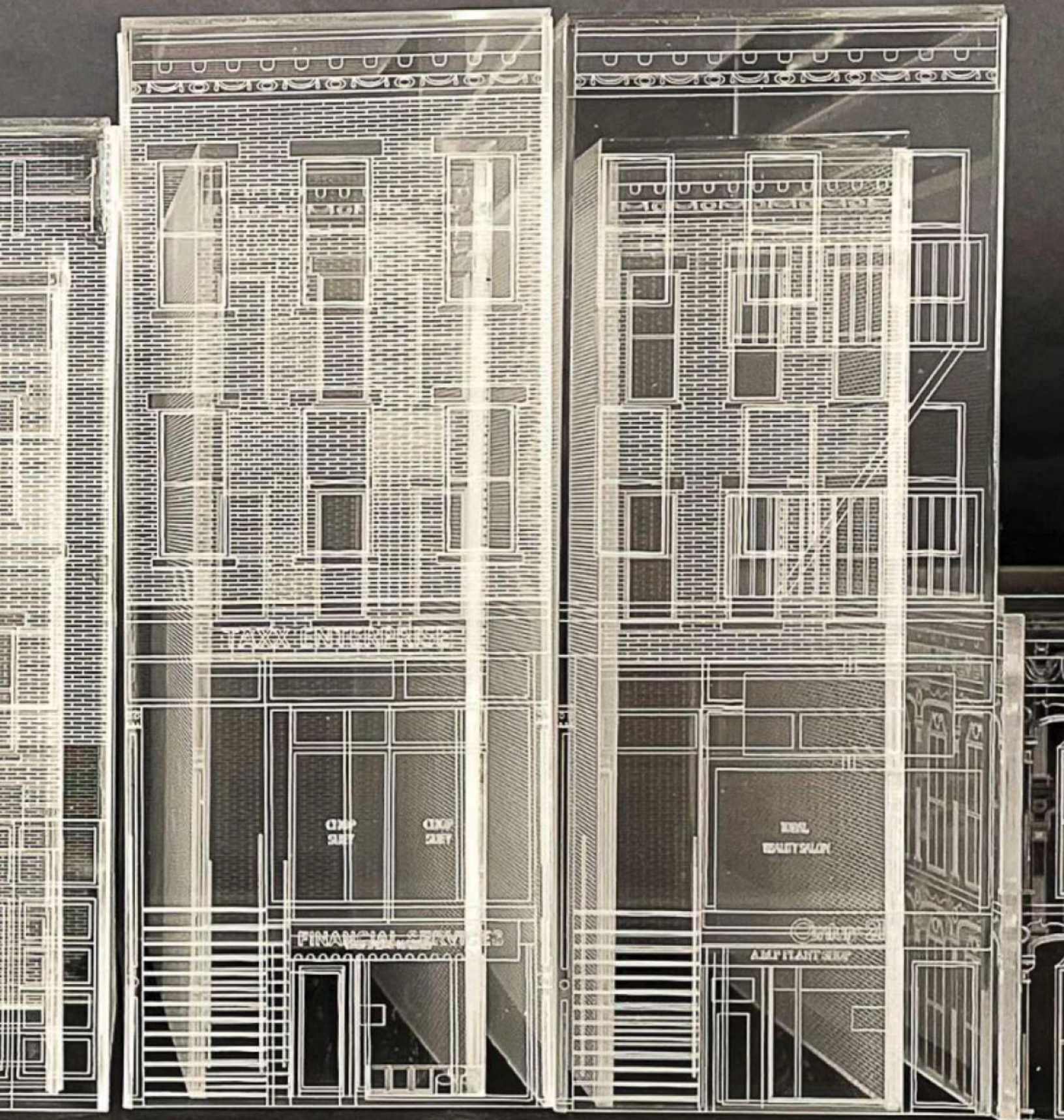
WATERS OF EXCHANGE

CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING



THE STREET AS ()

living corridor
silos of aggregate
building with memory
knowledge sharing
reclaiming
material reuse
sharing culture
slow-building city
rituals of care



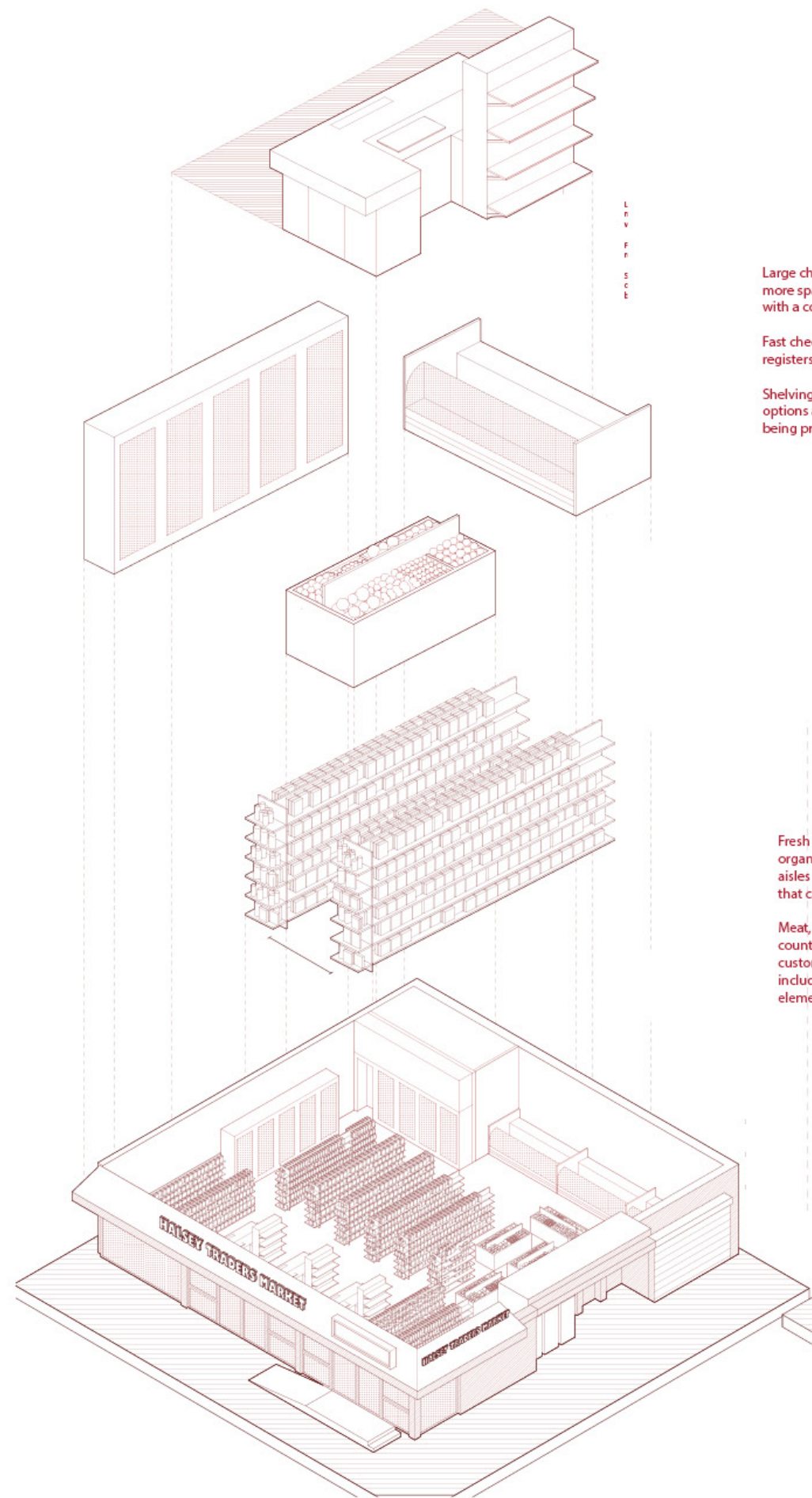
A Path For Growth

Spring 2023
Core II: Damage Control
Critic: Rosana Elkhatib

In Bedford-Stuyvesant, where cycles of displacement intersect with fragmented infrastructures of care, A Path for Growth proposes not a masterplan but a spatial leak - an intervention that seeps through the seams of the neighborhood's street grid. By tracing and linking existing community gardens, the project carves a discontinuous path that interrupts vehicular logics and reclaims asphalt as ground for gathering, cultivation, and refusal.

This path does not arrive fully formed. It emerges through excavation and reuse: cast from the waste of adjacent construction sites, assembled through local silos storing aggregate for collective fabrication. Bricks become both boundary and invitation - marking zones that are neither public nor private, but negotiated. Raised beds, walls, and surfaces are shaped not only through casting, but through temporal accretion: residues of labor, seasonality, and maintenance.

Rather than framing food as product or space as solution, the project rehearses a different urban metabolism - one in which sustenance, debris, and proximity are co-authored. Here, the street becomes a site of situated repair, where architecture lingers in process.



Large checkout with 120% more space to place items with a conveyor belt

Fast checkout with more registers and availability

Shelving with further food options and healthier snacks being promoted

Fresh fruit displays, with organic options. Frozen aisles with food options that can last longer.

Meat, fish and cheese counters which as a customizable element and include part of the social element of bodegas

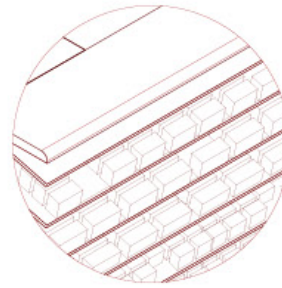


Small checkout area for a couple of items

Unhealthy products marketed all the way till the end of the transaction, with candy bars and other sweets being displayed under the counter

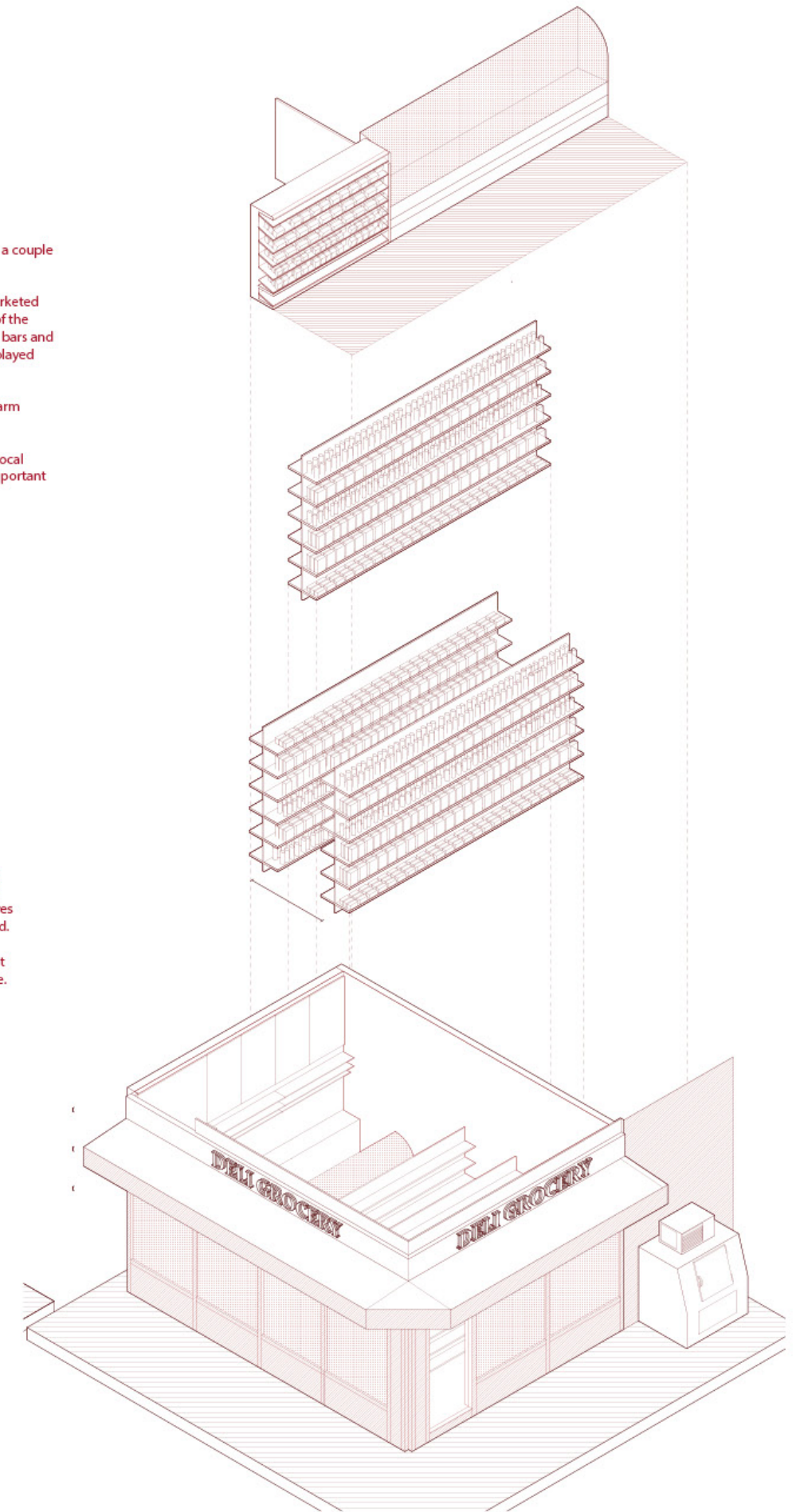
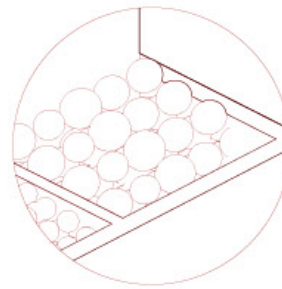
Deli with convenient warm bites.

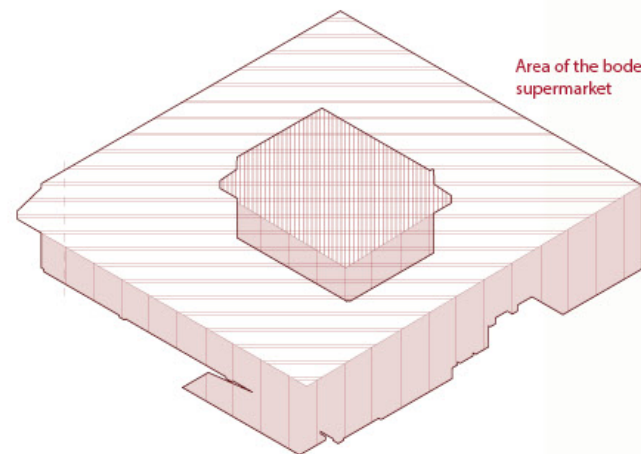
Social interaction with local workers becomes an important interpersonal factor.



Canned and precooked food. High sodium and other unhealthy additives and preservatives added.

Time-saving options but lacking nutritional value.



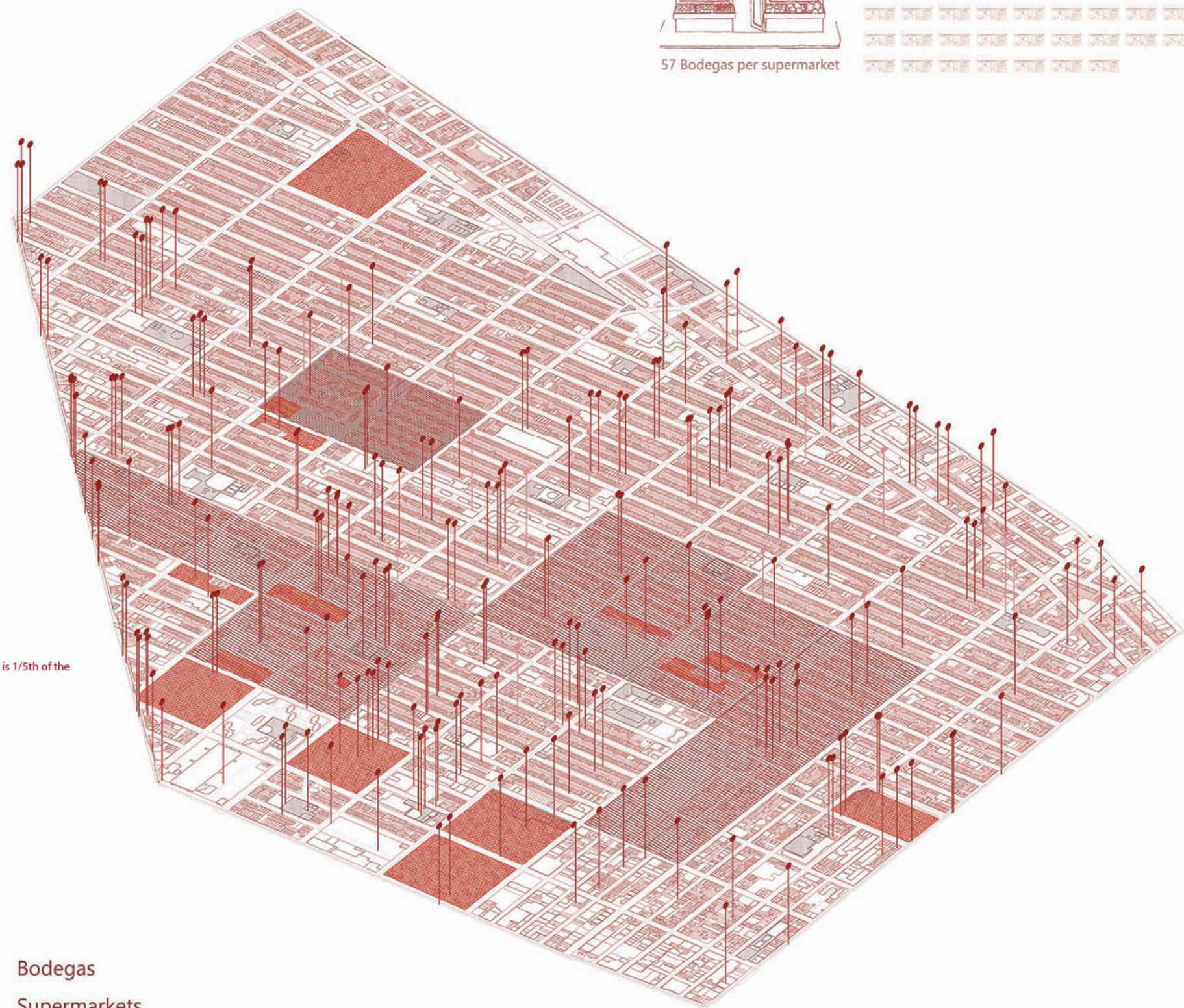
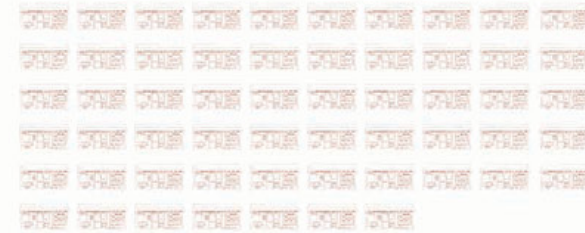


Area of the bodega is 1/5th of the supermarket

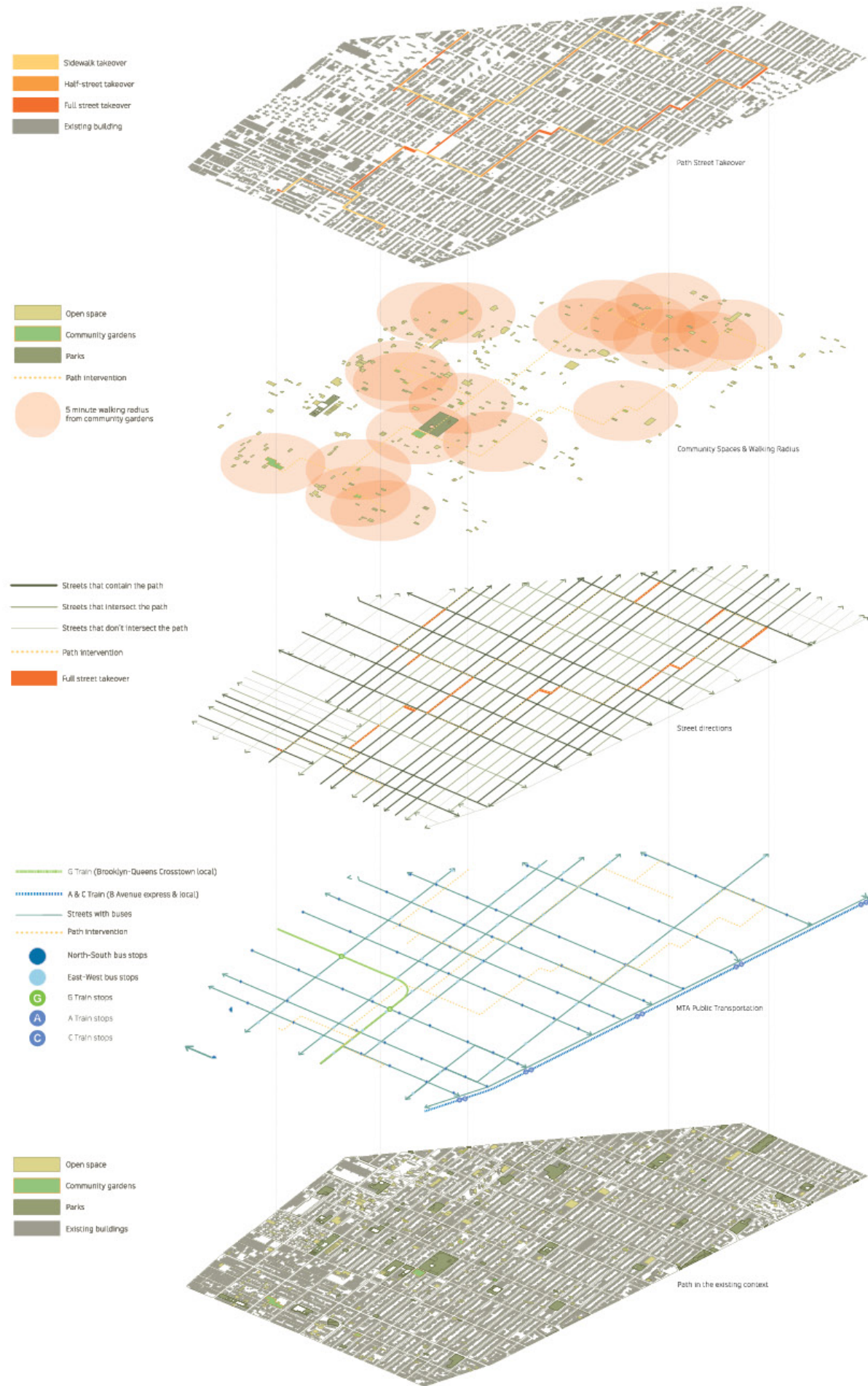
- Bodegas
- Supermarkets
- NYCHA
- Opportunity Zones
- Parks



57 Bodegas per supermarket



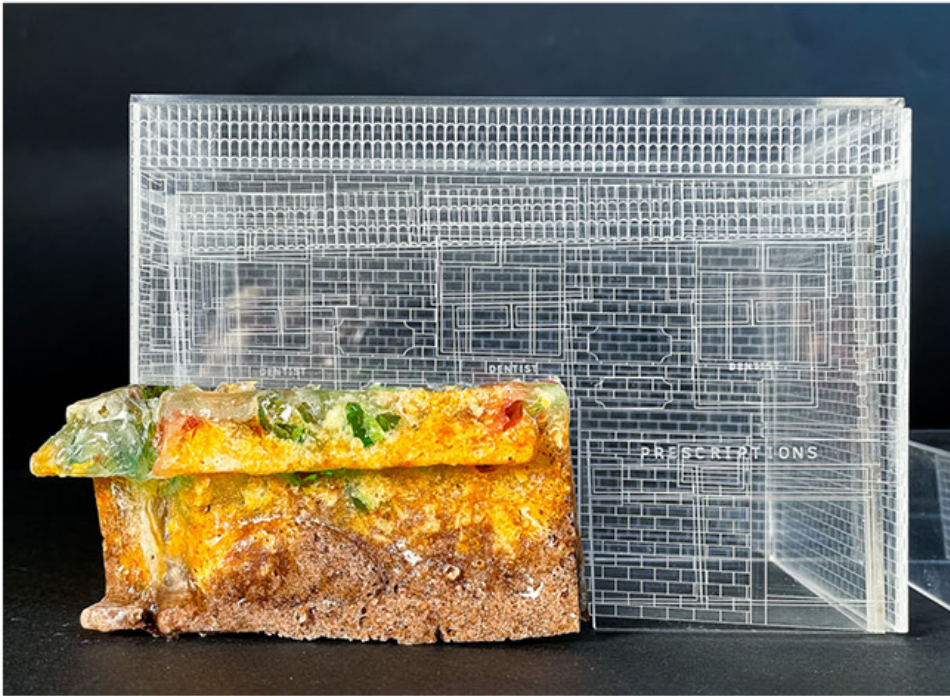
Bedford-Stuyvesant



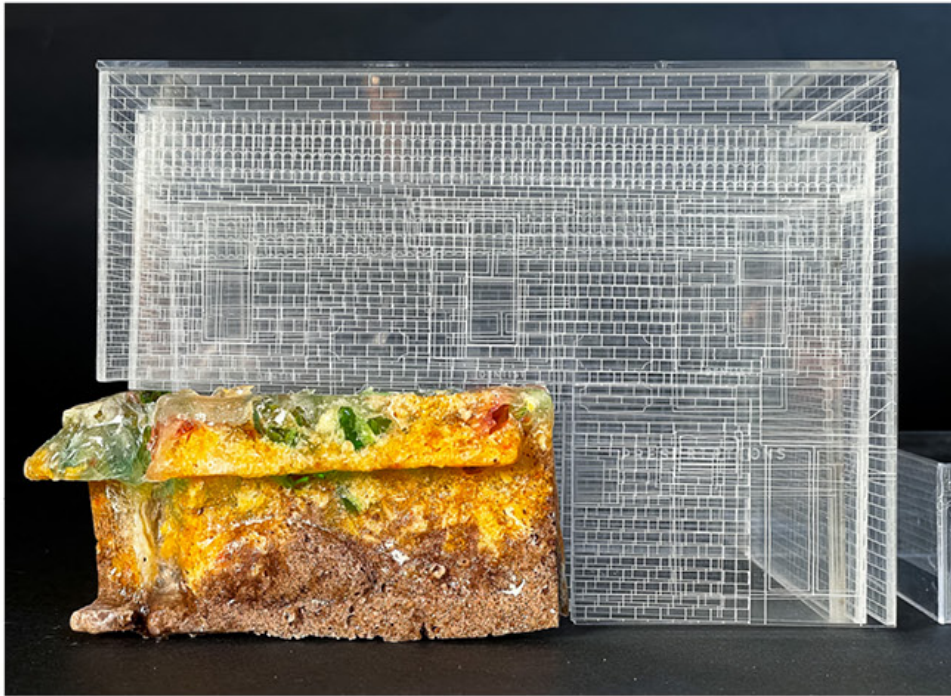
Bodega 1940s - Nostrand Ave. & Gates St.



Bodega 1980s - Nostrand Ave. & Gates St.

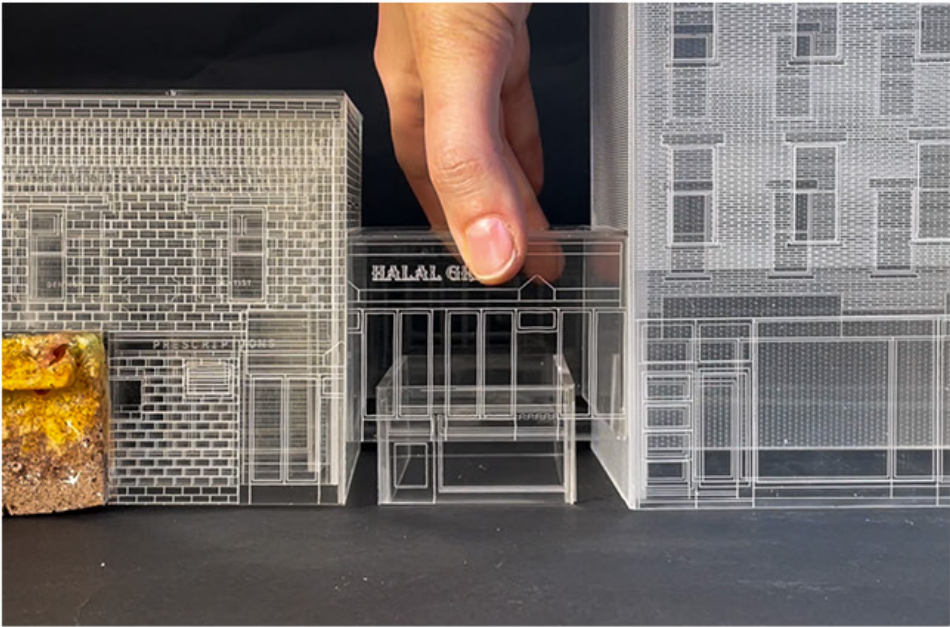


Bodega 2020s - Nostrand Ave. & Gates St.



A PATH FOR GROWTH

CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING



Time-based model - Store changes



Food-based model - Supermarket made from dried supermarket food rejects



Time-based model - Building typology

ALGAE AS ()

growing

living scaffold

community toolkit

oceanic archive

coastal vernacular

alternate economy

carbon sink

repair

cultivation, not extraction



Subaquatic Forests: *Algae Ecologies for Carbon Capture*

Fall 2024

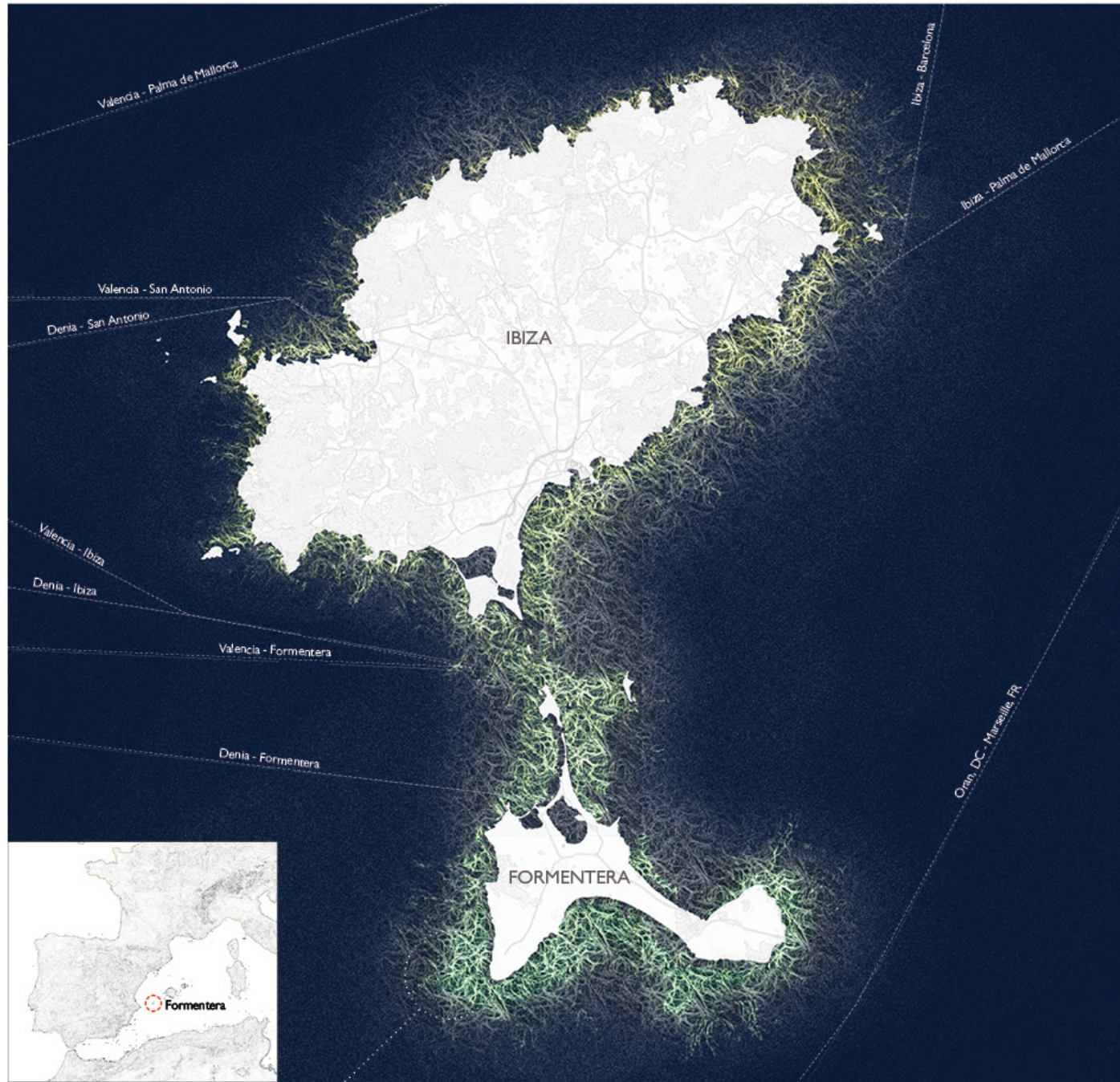
Adv V: SCALED | Carbon Removal Architecture

Critic: David Benjamin

Subaquatic Forests proposes a material and territorial strategy for reintroducing marine ecologies as agents in architectural production. Piloted along the Atlantic coast of Galicia, the project envisions the re-algifying of the ocean—cultivating biodiverse underwater forests not only for their regenerative potential, but as part of a distributed system for carbon capture and construction.

The site is informed by vernacular material practices: in coastal Spain, algae—especially *Zostera marina*—has historically been used for livestock bedding and building insulation, embedding marine biomass into routines of maintenance and inhabitation. Building on this legacy, the project combines shoreline eelgrass collection with the cultivation of fast-growing species like sugar kelp (*Saccharina latissima*). Once harvested, the algae are dried, milled, and blended with local clays and binders to create a family of biogenic construction elements, from bricks to facade panels.

By positioning algae as co-author rather than resource, Subaquatic Forests proposes an alternate form of coastal practice—where cultivation becomes both ecological maintenance and architectural infrastructure. Though rooted in Galicia, the project outlines a transferable model: a system that can be adapted across oceanfront territories, reattuning submerged landscapes to cycles of stewardship, fabrication, and multispecies repair.



Mapping seagrass meadows in Formentera and Ibiza



Zostera meadow

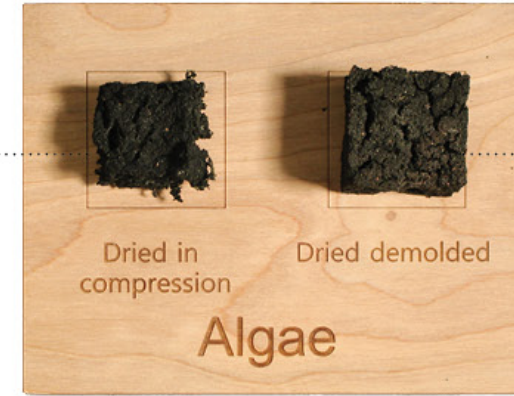


Kelp farming



Posidonia on the shore

Over 30% shrinkage after fully dried



Slight cracking but stable under constant pressure (force exerted: 100 N)

Most stable mixture with sand, 15 % shrinkage



Minimum shrinkage, brittle failure

Stable under constant pressure, 50% lighter than concrete



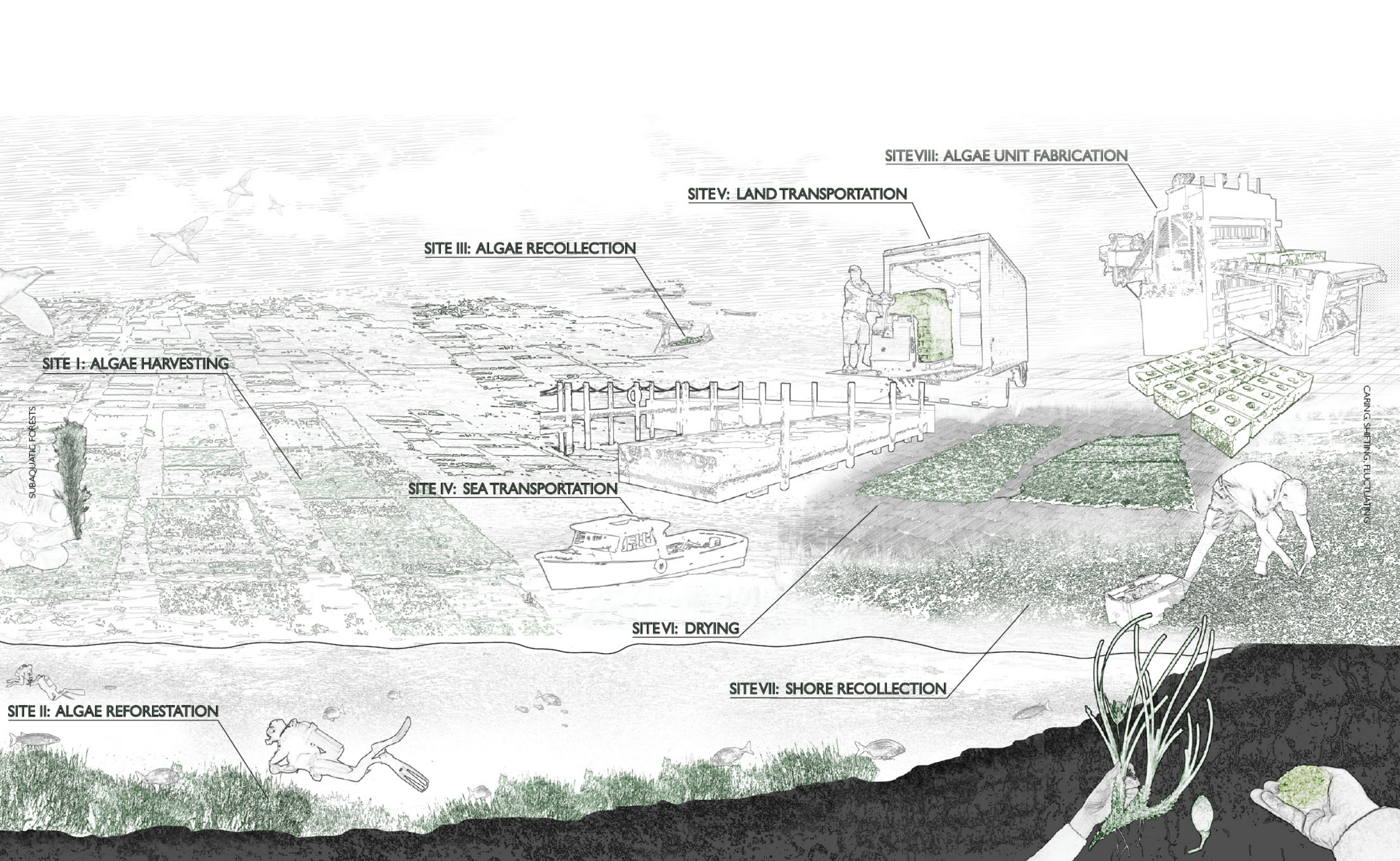
Minimum shrinkage, brittle failure

High rate of deformation and cracking



Minimum shrinkage, stable under constant pressure (force exerted: 100 N)

Algae-based material tests



SITE I: ALGAE HARVESTING

SITE III: ALGAE RECOLLECTION

SITE V: LAND TRANSPORTATION

SITE VIII: ALGAE UNIT FABRICATION

SITE IV: SEA TRANSPORTATION

SITE VI: DRYING

SITE VII: SHORE RECOLLECTION

SITE II: ALGAE REFORESTATION



Sugar Kelp (*Saccharina latissima*)

Annual growth (yield) : 5 kg dry weight per m2 per year
Carbon capture potential per brick at 1:3 ratio: 206 grams of CO2
Carbon content: 48% of dry weight
Carbon potential 1 acre: 9.71 metric tons/acre/year



Sea Lettuce (*Ulva lactuca*)

Annual growth (yield) : 2.5 kg dry weight per m2 per year
Carbon capture potential per plant:
Carbon content: 30% of dry weight
Carbon potential 1 acre: 3.04 metric tons/acre/year



Dulse (*Palmaria palmata*)

Annual growth (yield) : 3 kg dry weight per m2 per year
Carbon capture potential per plant:
Carbon content: 35% of dry weight
Carbon potential 1 acre: 4.25 metric tons/acre/year



Zostera marina (Common Eelgrass)

Annual growth (yield) : 1 kg dry weight per m2 per year
Carbon capture potential per plant:
Carbon content: 34% of dry weight
Carbon potential 1 acre: 1.38 metric tons/acre/year

Ulva lactuca



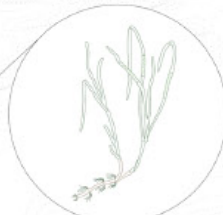
Palmaria palmata



Saccharina latissima

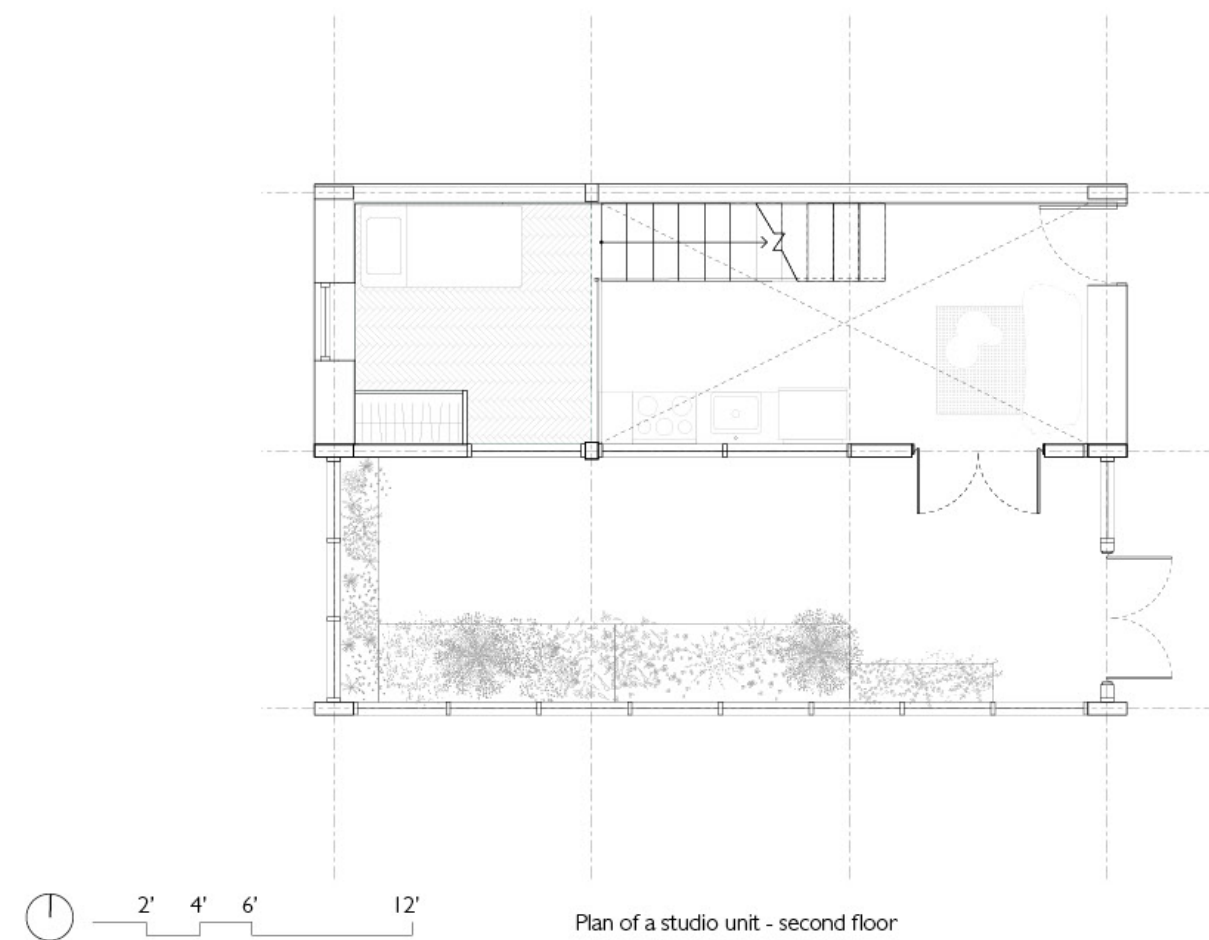
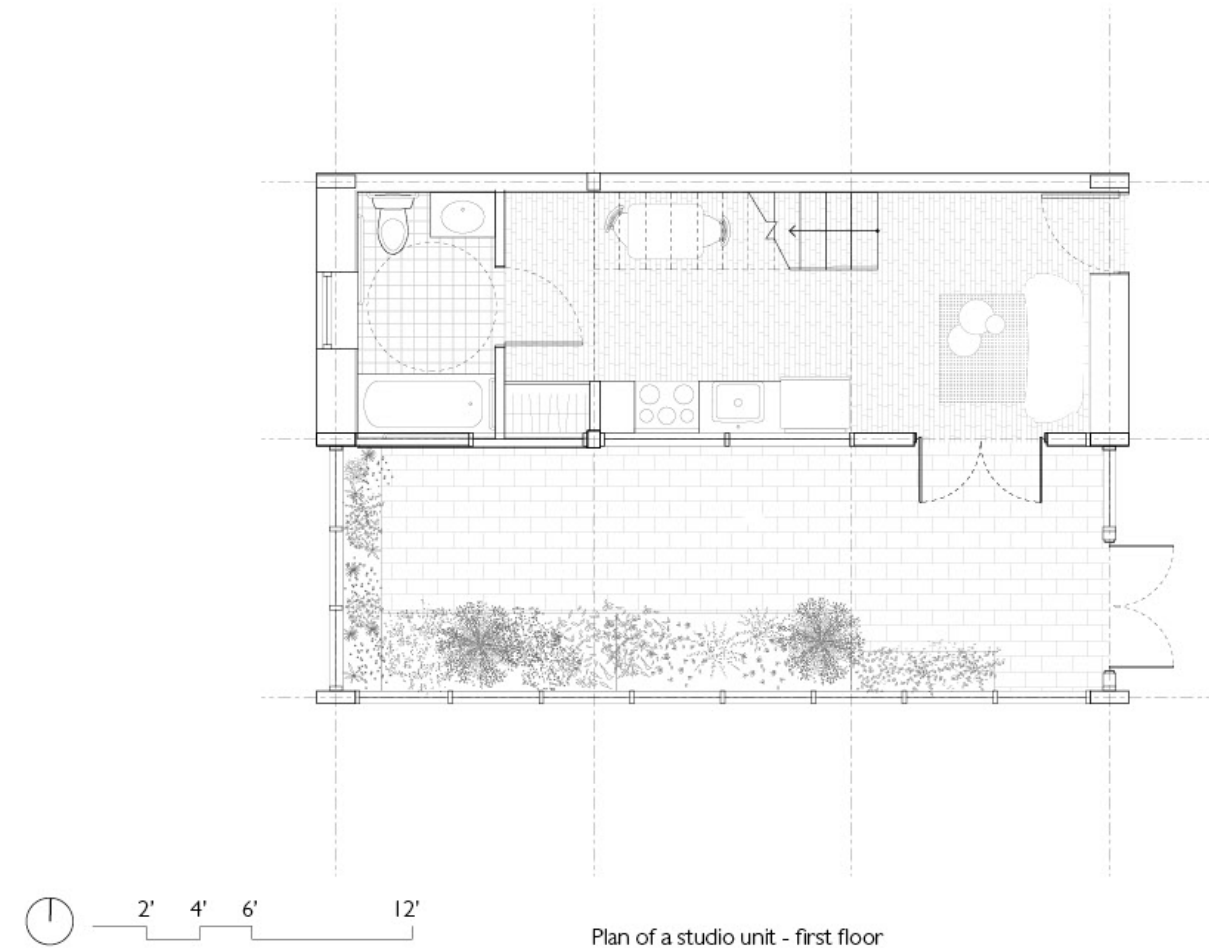
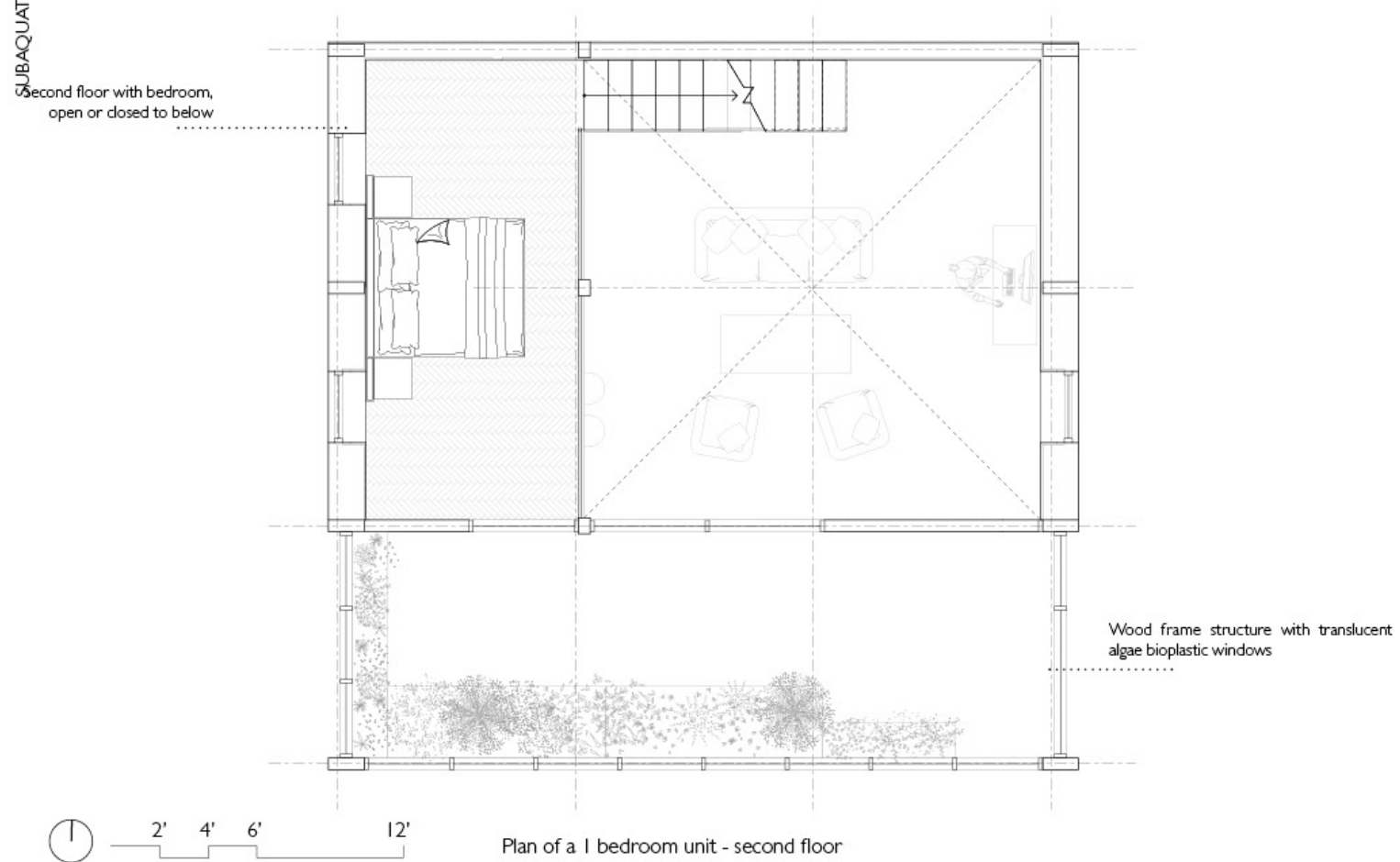
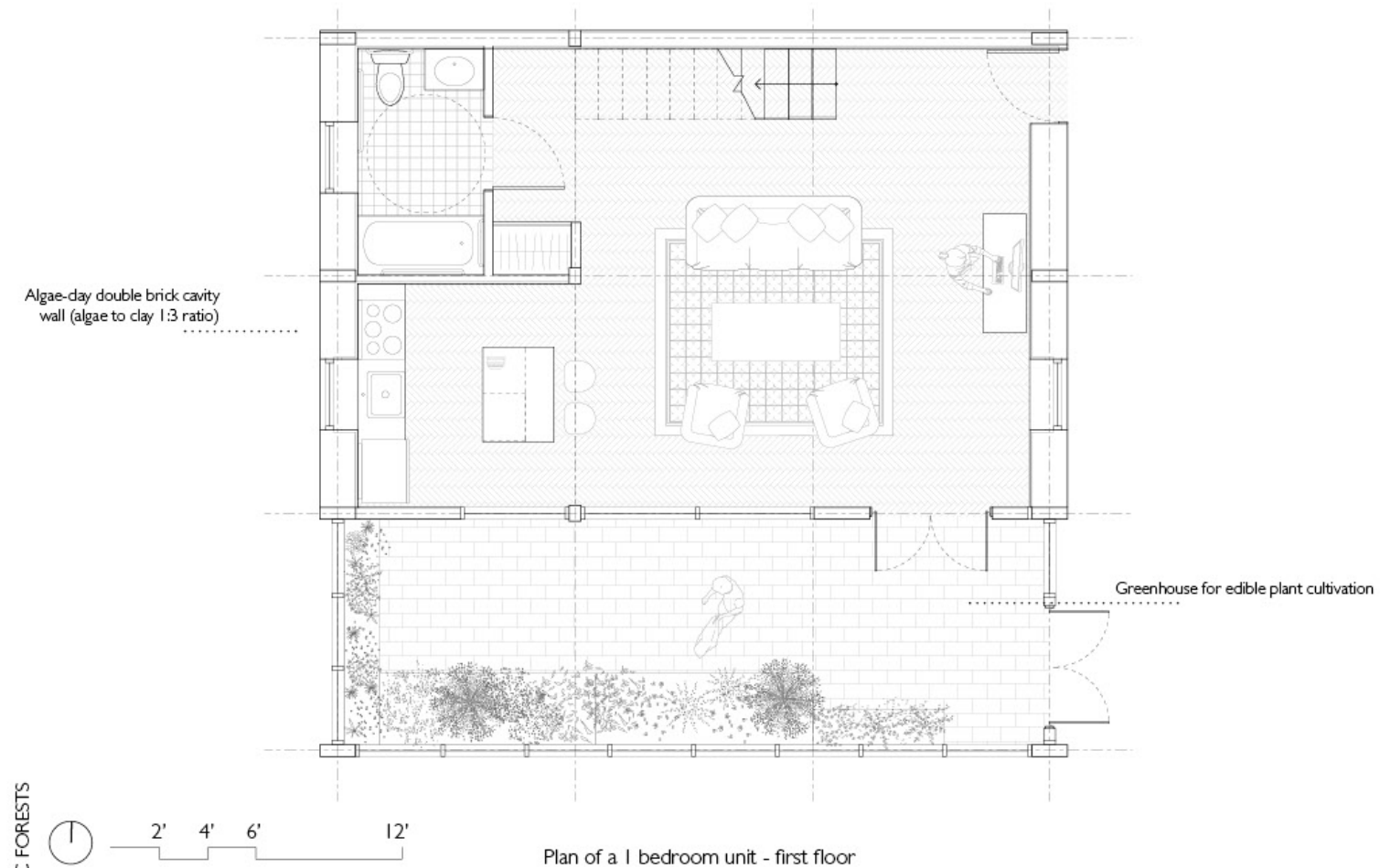


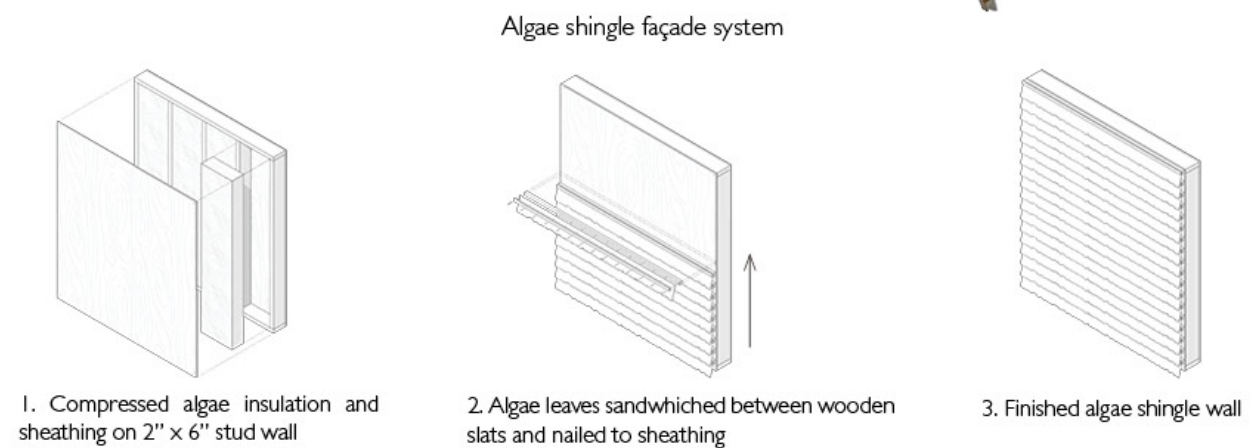
Zostera marina

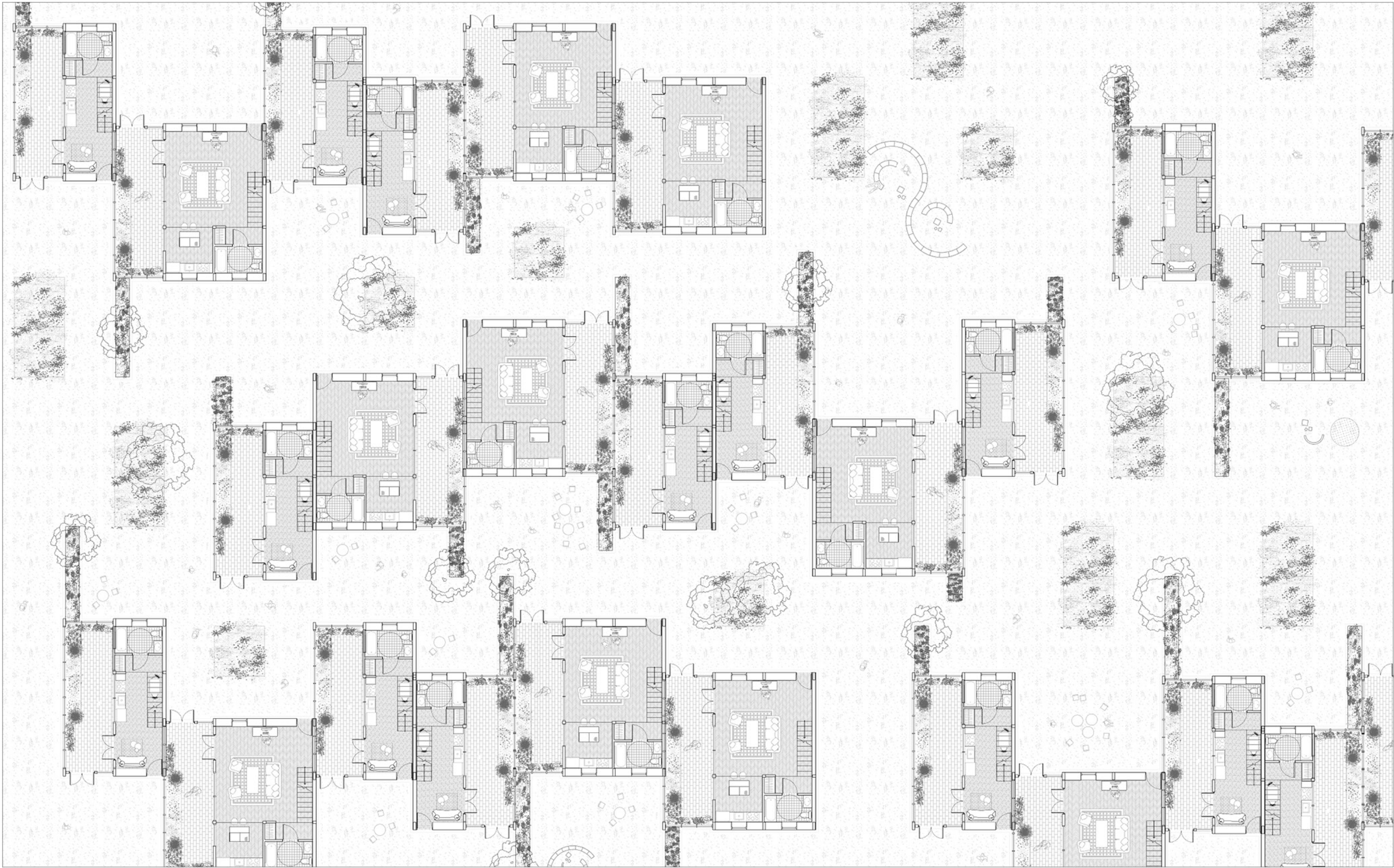


SUBAQUATIC FORESTS

CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING







Soft Currents / Forms of Holding

To sway is to remember the current. To hold is not to resist, but to absorb.

Soft Currents is a mobile made from glycerin-treated kelp membranes, suspended in delicate balance. Each element reacts to subtle air currents, echoing the slow movement of drifting kelp forests.

Kelp absorbs up to ten times its weight in water. Underwater, it filters light, supports ecosystems, and moves with constant responsiveness. Treated and suspended here, it retains its softness, translucency, and ability to hold - not just moisture, but memory.

This work follows the material logic of kelp: to hold, release, adapt, and respond. Each piece is a surface of filtered light and quiet weight, moving not in reaction, but in relation.

Soft Currents offers a quiet reflection on transformation, fragility, and interdependence - where movement is not spectacle, but slow evidence of life in process.

METABOLIC MATERIALS

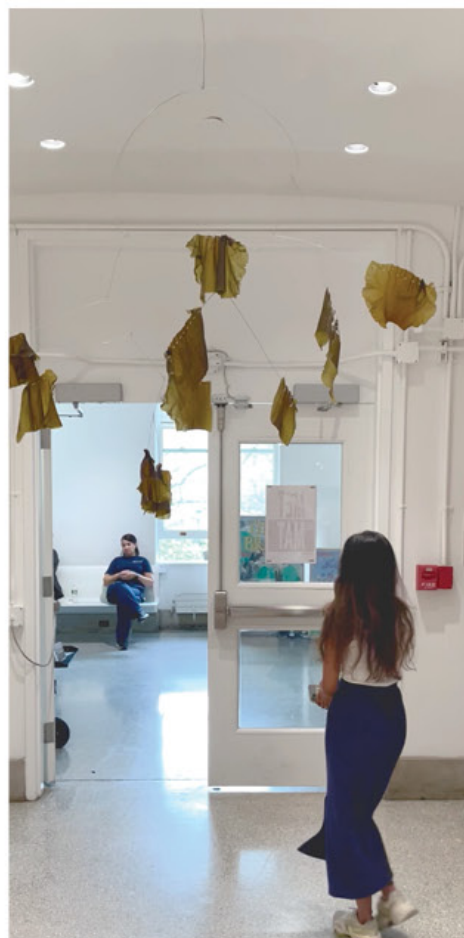


Metabolic Materials

Spring 2025
Critic: Michael Wang
Building Technology Sequence



CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING



MARSHLAND AS ()

netscape of care

tidal timelines

multispecies care

edible care

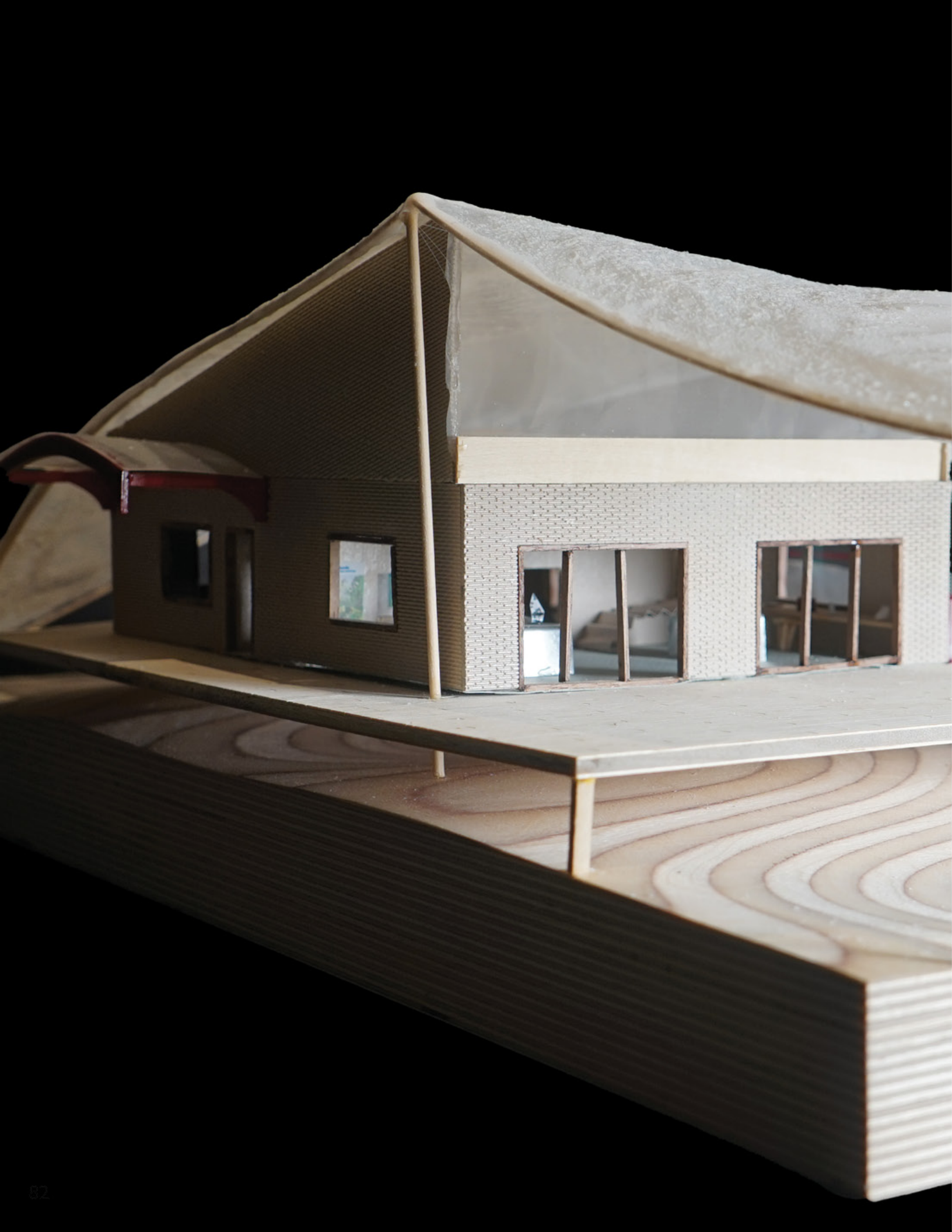
ephemeral coverage

map of shifting grounds

living datum

transpecies repair

impermanence



Veiled Landscape

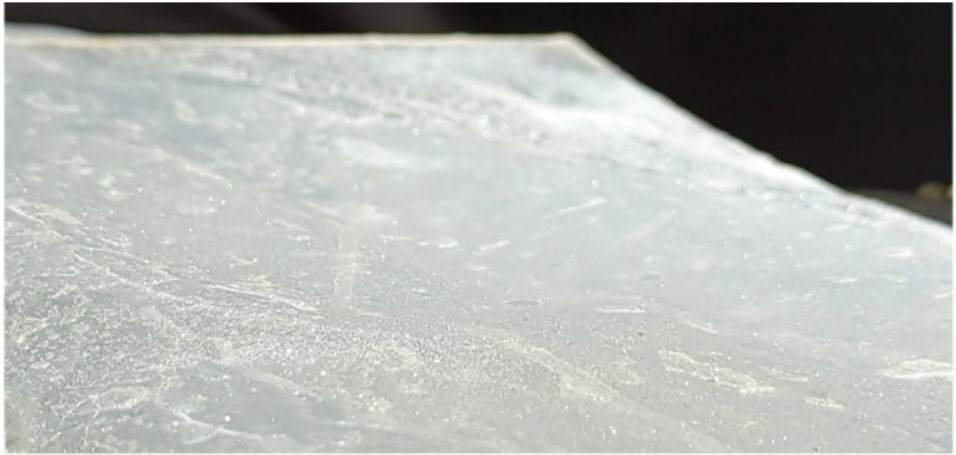
Spring 2024
Adv IV: Wild / Willed
Critic: Mimi Hoang
Collaborator: Bryce Emerson

Veiled Landscape is a proposed rehabilitation site for the once-active salt marshes of the Hudson Estuary, situated atop the disused Liberty Train Station along major migratory paths for birds and fish. The project reclaims the industrial remnants of the site - reusing existing columns, girders, and foundations - as scaffolds for a renewed relationship between human and nonhuman ecologies. Salt, once a byproduct of the marsh, becomes both medium and mediator: indexing cycles of evaporation, erosion, and return.

The intervention unfolds across three primary datums. The lowest, a restored marshland, is re-flooded with brackish water through a reversed drainage system, forming tide pools and salt flats that support returning species. The middle datum, elevated atop reused and new structure, houses a marsh research and interpretive center. Here, scientists and community members study wetland ecologies, rehabilitate injured species, and engage in public education. The center's salt-clay brick envelope is designed to weather rather than resist, embracing the erosive effects of salt-laden winds as part of its life cycle.

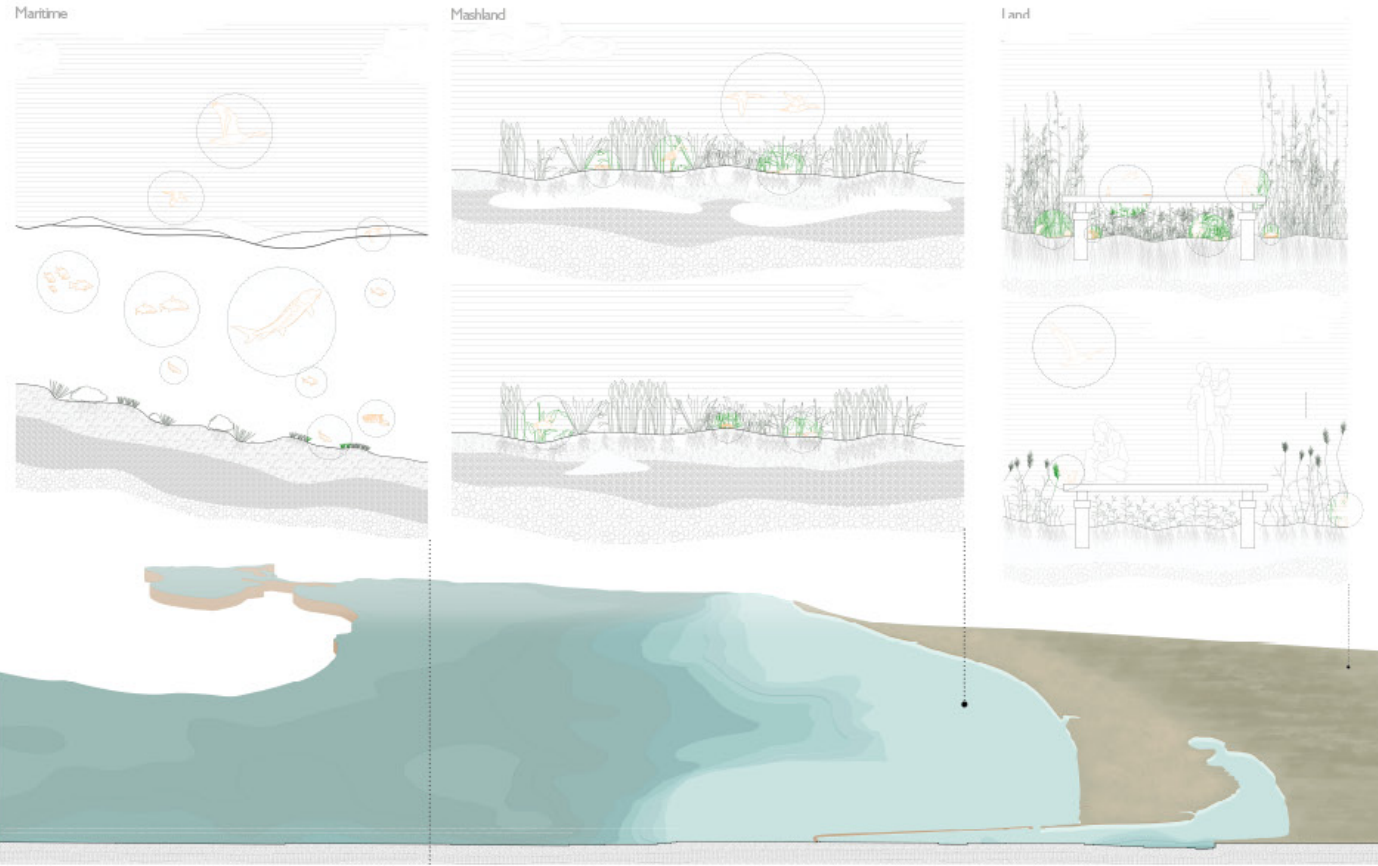
Suspended above, a netscape of hydrophilic and hydrophobic fibers collects crystalline salt formations through evaporative cycles powered by brackish water pumped from the bay. This upper layer becomes both a porous canopy and a site of ecological care: the salt formations are consumed by migratory birds along the Transatlantic Flyway, aiding their digestion during long-haul flights. Shade, sustenance, and structure merge into a slow, accretive performance.

Throughout, Veiled Landscape resists stabilization. It proposes an architecture of calibration - where structural reuse, material decay, and ecological rituals unfold in parallel, allowing salt to choreograph the return of a landscape once disfigured by abandonment.



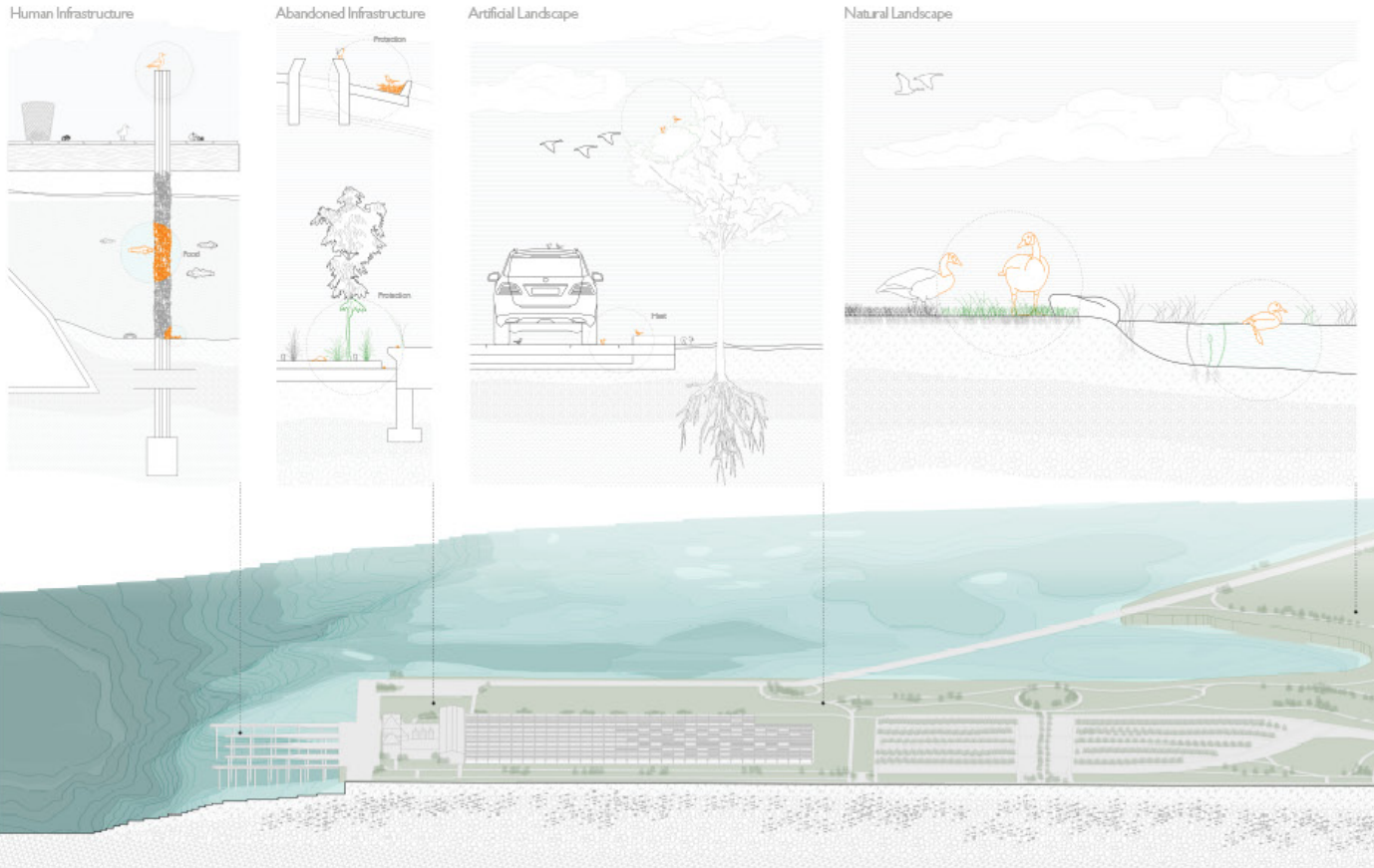
WILDLIFE INTERACTIONS IN NATURAL ECOSYSTEMS

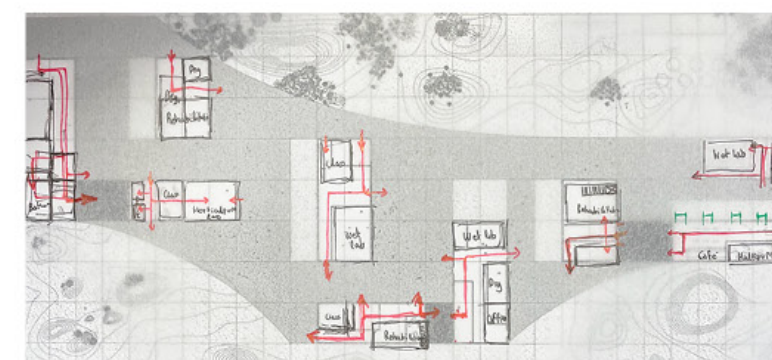
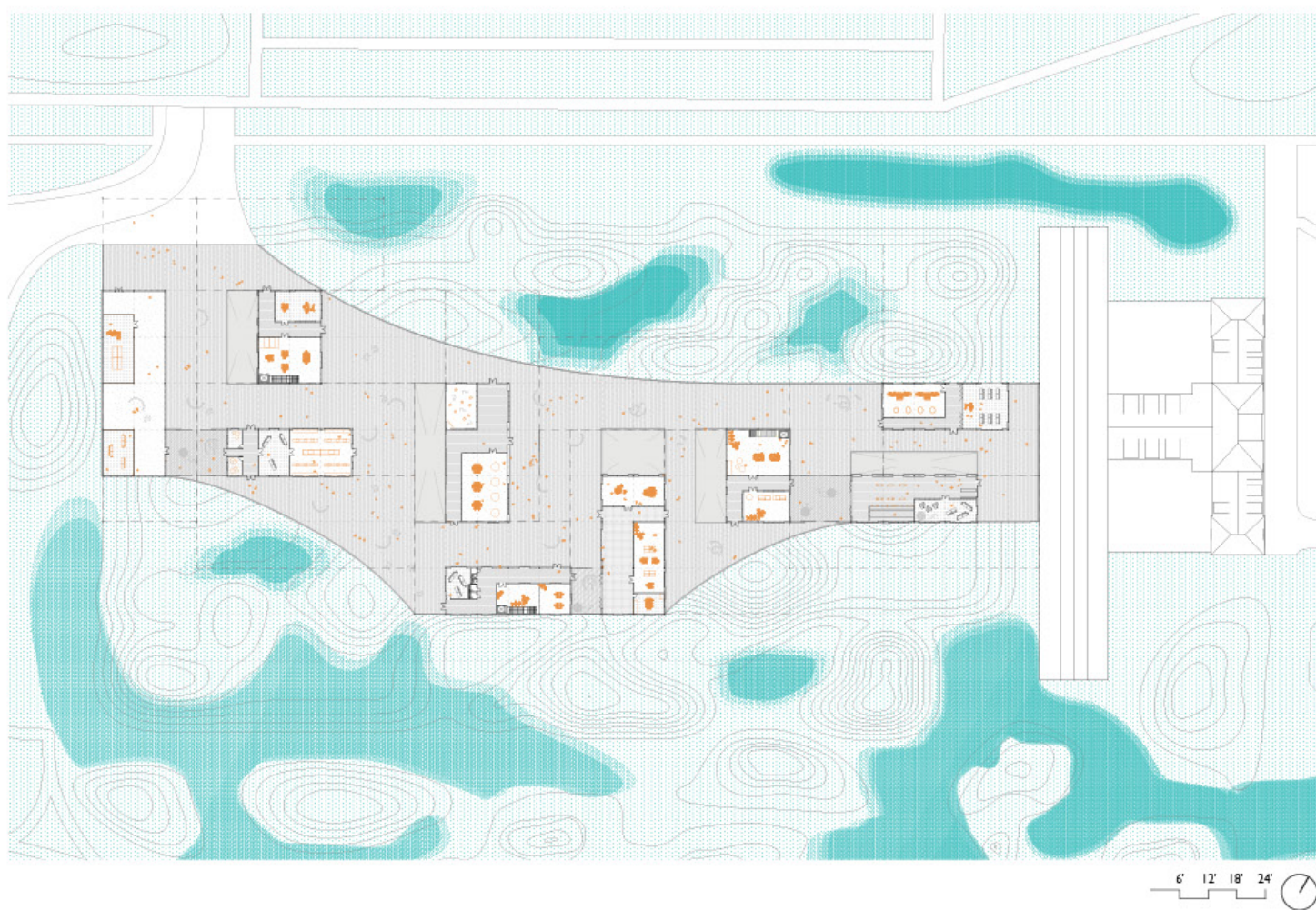
CAVEN POINT, NJ

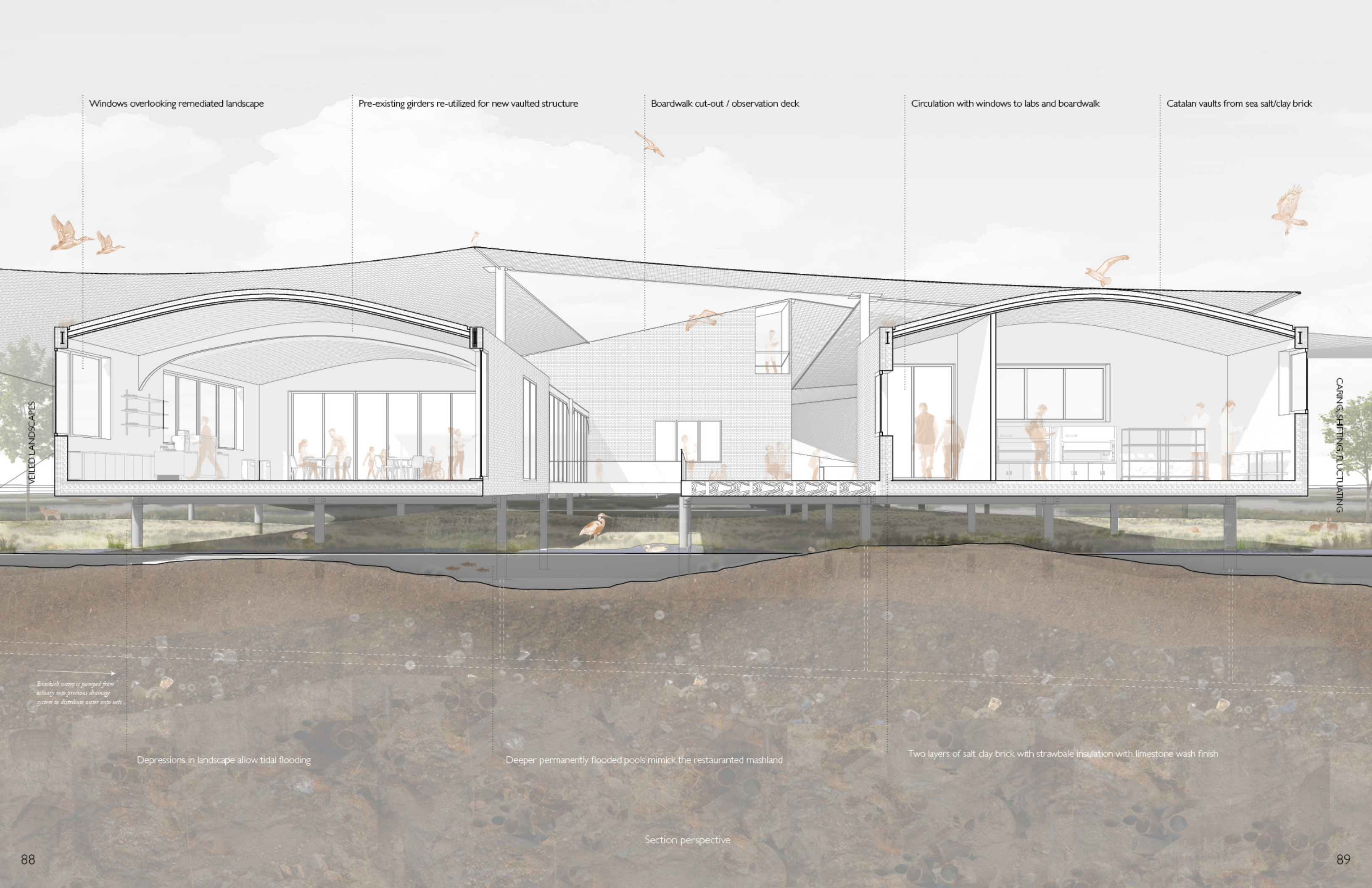


WILDLIFE AFFORDANCES IN URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE

LIBERTY STATE PARK, NJ







Windows overlooking remediated landscape

Pre-existing girders re-utilized for new vaulted structure

Boardwalk cut-out / observation deck

Circulation with windows to labs and boardwalk

Catalan vaults from sea salt/clay brick

VEILED LANDSCAPES

CARING SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING

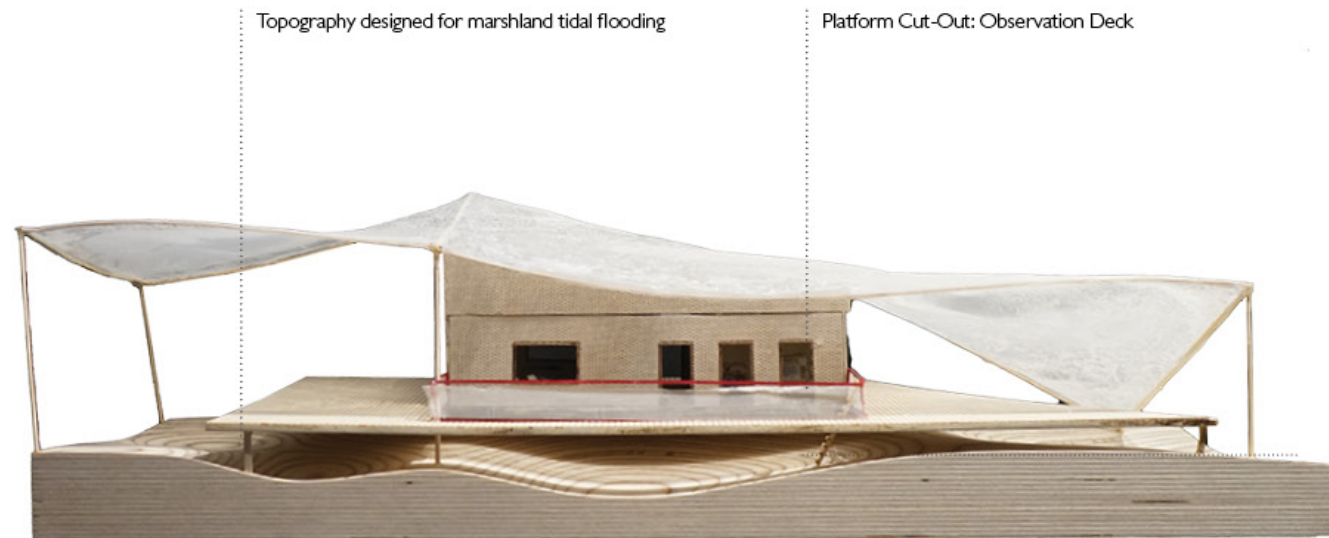
Brackish water is pumped from estuary into previous drainage system to distribute water onto nets

Depressions in landscape allow tidal flooding

Deeper permanently flooded pools mimic the restauranted mashland

Two layers of salt clay brick with strawbale insulation with limestone wash finish

Section perspective

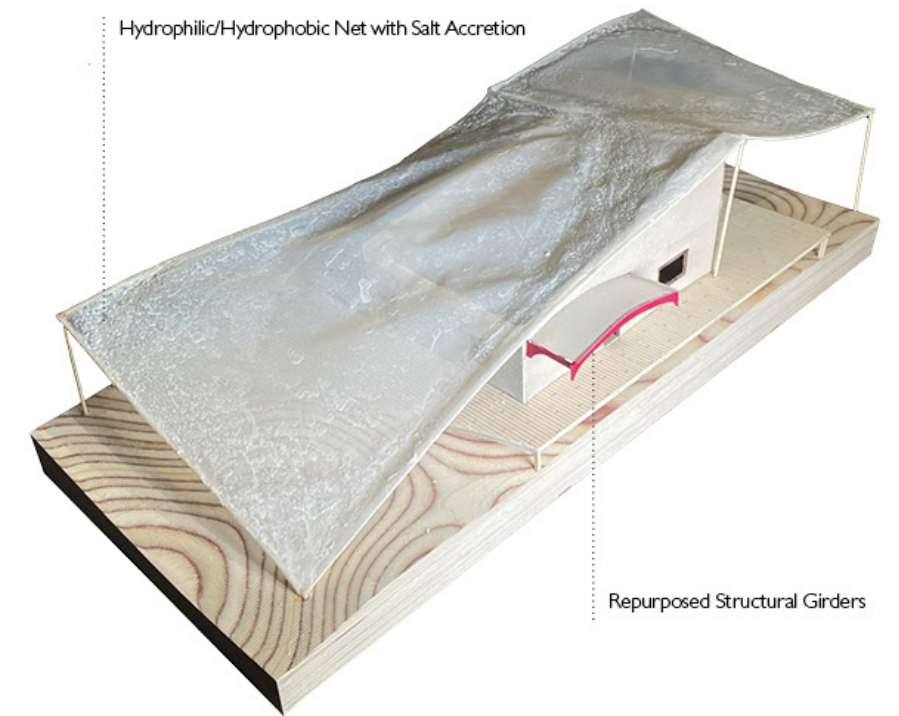


Topography designed for marshland tidal flooding

Platform Cut-Out: Observation Deck



Educational Viewing Windows



Hydrophilic/Hydrophobic Net with Salt Accretion

Repurposed Structural Girders

VEILED LANDSCAPES

Pre-existing Liberty State Park Terminal

Net Softscape for salt accumulation

Statue of Liberty

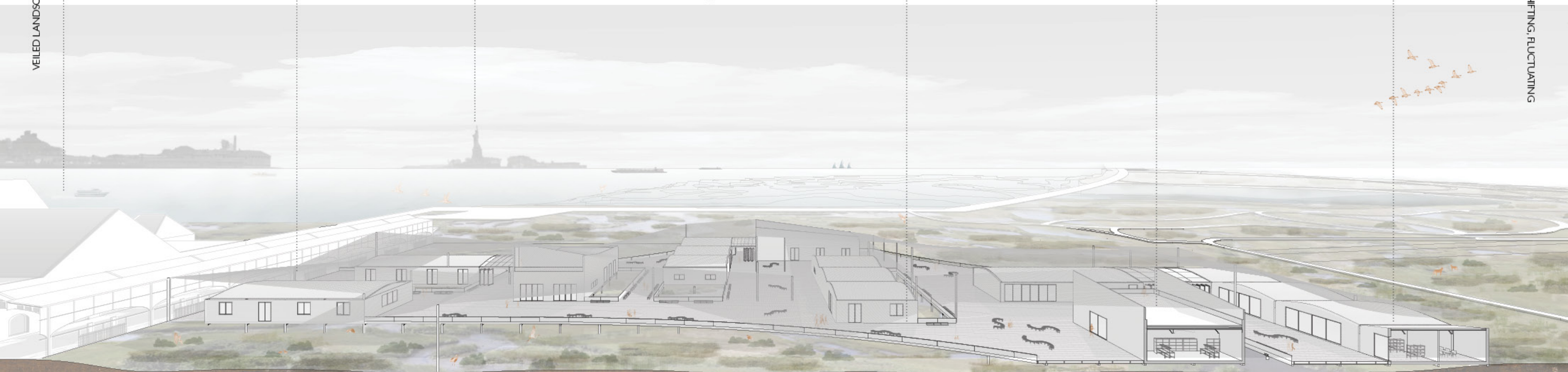
Site section through rehabilitated marshland

Raised boardwalk

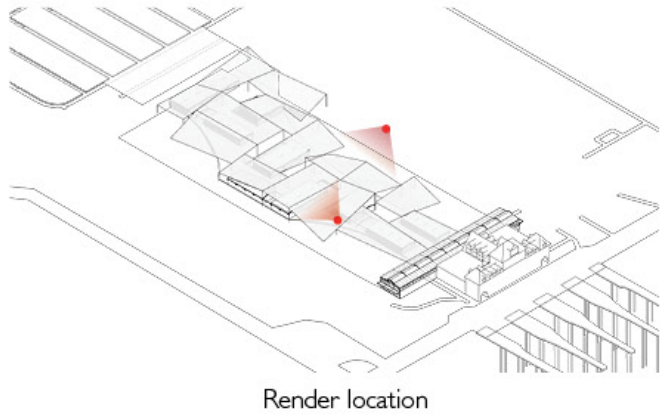
Second floor for temporarily housing animals

Classrooms and circulation

CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING



The highest datum features a net softscape composed of hydrophobic and hydrophilic layers that foster crystalline salt formations, creating a natural shading device. Salt accumulation is achieved by reversing the existing on-site drainage system—pumping brackish water from the nearby bay through a network of columns and onto the nets above, harnessing the natural process of evaporation.



1' = 1/8" Model - Laboratories at night

The lowest datum functions as an ecological restoration zone, reactivating the site's latent landscape potential. Utilizing the reversed drainage infrastructure, brackish water floods the terrain to generate tide pools and salt-rich deposits, cultivating conditions for biodiversity and non-human habitation.

The middle datum is articulated as a raised platform, spatially organized through nodal frameworks derived from marshland ecologies. Existing structures are reprogrammed, while new interventions are constructed using salt-clay masonry - a material system engineered to endure saline exposure and coastal winds without degradation. By embracing rather than resisting environmental forces, the architecture transforms efflorescence from a condition of decay into one of resilience and tectonic expression.



Towards a Transpecies Architecture

Spring 2024
Critic: Mark Wigley
Architectural History Sequence

TRANSPECIES MANIFESTO

Trans-species architecture is not a style; it is an ethic of attention.

It does not seek to define a universal aesthetic or form. Instead, it demands a radical attentiveness to context: to soil acidity, rodent patterns, bird calls, and bacterial bloom. Just as architecture adapts to climate or culture, it must also tune itself to the agencies of nonhuman lives.

Designing for one species does not absolve you from excluding others.

To provide habitat for bees while displacing worms is not a victory. Trans-species thinking requires trans-scalar consideration - not only of species visible to the eye but of mycelial networks, spores, gut bacteria. Inclusion must not collapse into curation.

Architecture must be rethought as a site of negotiation, not imposition.

Buildings are rarely neutral; they reflect dominant hierarchies of who belongs and who doesn't. A trans-species architecture does not merely accommodate - it makes room for contestation, for territorial overlap, for the messy entanglement of lives with diverging temporalities.

Design begins with observation, not imagination.

Trans-species design is not a speculative fiction but a forensic act. It studies the existing traces - nesting zones, microbial residues, flight paths - before proposing anything new. Observation is not passive; it is an ethical and political act of listening without translating.

Every environment is already multi-species.

The myth of a sterile interior or a "purely human" space is an architectural fantasy. The home is a mycobiome. The sidewalk is a wormway. The attic is a roost. To design as if this were not true is to build in denial.

Not all species desire visibility.

Trans-species architecture does not always mean green walls or exposed nests. Some beings thrive in darkness, in silence, in corners we find repulsive. Architecture must unlearn its obsession with spectacle and instead attend to cryptic habitats and fugitive life forms.

Material is never inert.

Concrete leaches lime into soil. Steel emits sound frequencies inaudible to us but piercing to birds. Trans-species architecture examines toxicity, tactility, porosity - not only for humans, but for paws, roots, and feelers. Material selection is no longer a matter of performance; it is a matter of coexistence.

Structures are not fixed; they are metabolic.

Buildings mold. They rot. They are scratched, gnawed, nested in. A trans-species architecture anticipates its own digestion by other life forms. It embraces decay as a design parameter, not a defect.

The inclusion of plants is not enough.

Placing a tree in a courtyard does not constitute trans-species care. Plants, like any being, have needs - room to root, light to photosynthesize, networks to exchange nutrients. To domesticate a plant for human pleasure while stunting its life cycle is to render it decorative and mute.

Trans-species architecture is not utopian; it is insurgent.

It resists the anthropocentric systems that govern zoning, sanitation, and aesthetics. It questions the boundaries between building and environment, between user and parasite. It reframes architecture as a spatial politics of entanglement, responsibility, and dissent.

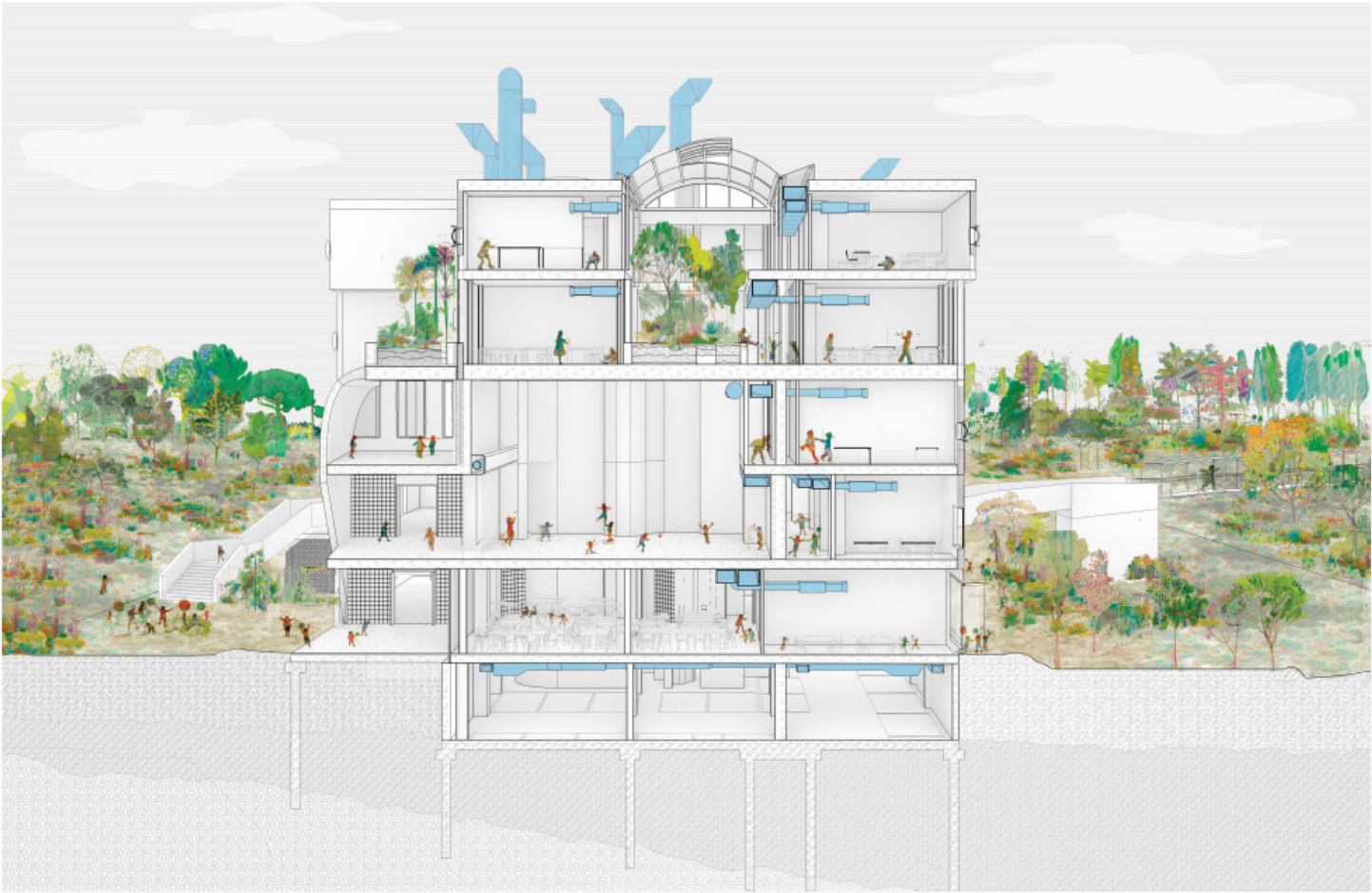
TOWARDS A TRANSPECIES ARCHITECTURE

Veiled Landscape - A Transpecies Renderl - ADV. IV - Critic: Mimi Hoang



CARING, SHIFTING, FLUCTUATING

Colegio Reggio - A Transpecies School - Seminar of Section - Critic: Marc Tsurumaki



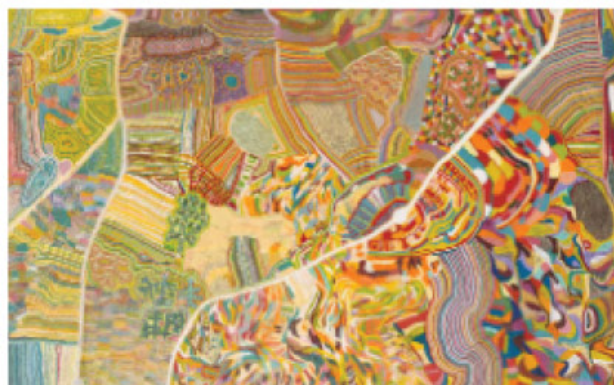
FORM FOLLOWS CLIMATE

FOR

"When we call a place by name it is transformed from wilderness to homeland." Robin Kimmerer, 'Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants.' p. 37.

This quote beautifully captures the transformative power of language in constructing spatial belonging, a theme that underlies many of our discussions on poetics, heterogeneity, and the experiential nature of architecture. In the reading, the idea that some Indigenous communities assign two names to a place - a public name and a real name known only through repeated experience - suggests that true knowledge of a place arises through time, presence, and embodied familiarity. As someone whose work explores notions of belonging, I found this distinction to be a compelling lens for thinking about what it means to know a space architecturally and emotionally. In a moment dominated by digital representations and virtual access, this idea feels increasingly urgent: while augmented reality and 3D scans offer new tools for architectural understanding, they are always framed through someone else's perspective, lacking the intimate, layered knowledge that only direct spatial experience can provide. Naming is not just classification - it is a cultural act of claiming, relating, and knowing, and in doing so, transforms space into place, and wilderness into home.

This is a contemporary representation of Indigenous Australian Songlines, it visualizes how spatial knowledge is encoded through naming, movement, and cultural memory, emphasizing that place is not simply occupied but constructed through embodied experience and relational practice.



Martumili Artists 'Yarrkalpa (Hunting Ground)', 2017

AGAINST

"It is Post-Human." Rem Koolhaas, 'TRIC: Post-human Architecture RK' p. 272..

Rem Koolhaas describes the Tahoe-Reno Industrial Center (TRIC) as post-human, citing its lack of ornament, human scale, or spatial generosity. However, I would argue that TRIC is not post-human, but rather the ultimate byproduct of human systems, not human-centered, but profoundly anthropocenic. It is a landscape shaped entirely by capital, logistics, and consumption, a typology born from human desire for speed, efficiency, and extraction. The architecture may appear devoid of humanity, but it is in fact an amplification of human systems, where labor, environment, and movement are organized around optimization and profit. In this sense, TRIC is not beyond the human, but a hyper-human artifact, where the user is reduced to a worker or consumer, and the building to a machine for capital. Rather than seeing it as a detachment from the human, we must understand it as a mirror of the values that contemporary society chooses to prioritize - which makes it all the more human, and all the more troubling.

Much like Charlie Chaplin's character in Modern Times, the human is not absent in spaces like TRIC, but rather fully embedded—reduced to function, consumed by systems, and instrumentalized by the very logics they helped construct.



Charlie Chaplin 'Modern Times', 1936

REGIONAL AFFECTS

FOR

"Modern building is now so universally conditioned by optimized technology that the possibility of creating significant urban form has become extremely limited." Kenneth Frampton, 'Towards a Critical Regionalism' p. 17.

I agree with Kenneth Frampton's statement for several reasons. The pursuit of efficiency and technological optimization has led to standardized forms and construction methods, advancing building technology but resulting in homogeneous urban landscapes. However, this uniformity is not due to a lack of technological capability for diverse design, but rather to economic and systemic pressures, where cost-cutting favors modular, mass-produced solutions over architectural differentiation. This trend was accelerated by industrial prefabrication, modernist zoning, and speculative urban development, which imposed standardized building typologies to maximize profitability. The gridded city block, a legacy of modernist planning ideals, reinforces rectilinear structures, while speculative land development further incentivizes cost-effective, repetitive designs. Examples such as International Style corporate towers or post-war mass housing blocks illustrate how these economic and planning constraints have prioritized efficiency at the cost of urban richness and diversity.

This project exemplifies how the pursuit of efficiency and standardized construction led to architectural and urban failure, reinforcing Frampton's argument that technological optimization restricts meaningful urban form. Designed with modernist mass-housing principles, its rigid, cost-driven modularity ultimately contributed to its social and spatial breakdown.



Minoru Yamasaki 'Pruitt-Igoe', 1955

AGAINST

"A critical arrière-garde has to remove itself from both the optimization of advanced technology and the ever-present tendency to regress into nostalgic historicism or the glibly decorative.." Kenneth Frampton, 'Towards a Critical Regionalism' p. 20.

While I don't entirely disagree with Frampton's statement, I believe it overlooks key nuances. Taking an 'arrière-garde' position does require stepping back from both extreme technological optimization and nostalgic historicism, but this does not mean rejecting them entirely. Instead, I argue that there is a productive middle ground, one increasingly evident in contemporary material research, where past aesthetics, once dismissed, are being reassessed through scientific methods.

What may seem like a regression into history can, in fact, reveal advanced principles that surpass certain modern technologies. Rather than distancing oneself from both extremes, a more compelling approach would be to critically engage with historical materials and methods - not for their nostalgic value, but for their overlooked technical, environmental, and cultural intelligence. Through this lens, advanced technology and historical knowledge are not opposing forces, but complementary tools for innovation.

Research on mud architecture within material labs demonstrates how natural materials, long regarded as outdated, can be re-examined through a technological lens. This suggests that rather than rejecting the past or fetishizing progress, architecture can synthesize tradition and innovation, using both as critical resources for future design.



Natural Materials Lab GSAPP 'Muddy Stools' 2023

PROGRAMMATIC CONCEPTS AND DIAGRAMS

FOR

"The absence of a theory of Bigness-what is the maximum architecture can do? - is architecture's most debilitating weakness. Without a theory of Bigness, architects are in the position of Frankenstein's creators." Rem Koolhaas, 'Bigness or The Problem of Large' p. 509.

Rem Koolhaas's observation on the absence of a theory of "Bigness" underscores architecture's uneasy relationship with the unpredictability of scale. Like Frankenstein's creature, large-scale projects often emerge from architectural ambition yet risk mutating into fragmented urban artifacts, severed from their social and spatial contexts. Without a critical framework, Bigness can become an architectural black hole, a gravitational force that consumes context rather than negotiates it, leading to isolation within the urban fabric. Just as a black hole distorts everything within its orbit, untheorized Bigness can create autonomous objects disconnected from the cultural and experiential narratives of the city. In this vacuum, architects find themselves not as authors of contextual urban visions, but as instigators of experiments whose outcomes can be as chaotic as they are monumental.

The Barbican exemplifies how Bigness can create fragmented urban environments, with its monolithic architecture and elevated walkways leading to a sense of isolation and disconnection from the surrounding city.



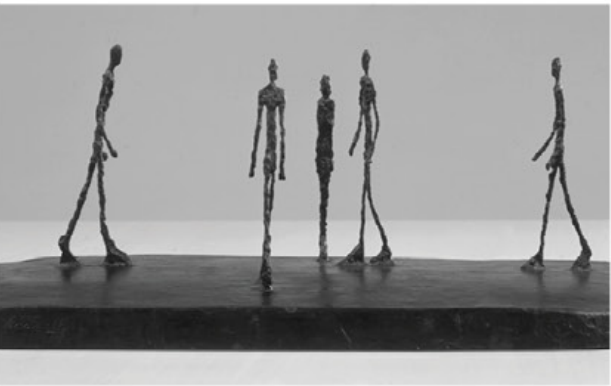
Chamberlin, Powell and Bon 'Barbican', 1965-76

AGAINST

"Economic and political crises reduce the possibilities for experimental architecture." Winy Maas, 'Towards an Urbanistic Architecture' p. 15.

While political and economic crises can certainly impose physical and financial limitations on architecture, such as reduced budgets and shifting priorities - I believe that scarcity and constraints often catalyze creativity and innovation. In moments of uncertainty, spatial conditions have the unique ability to mediate and mitigate crises, driving architects to create new possibilities with limited resources. For example, Archigram's Plug-In City (1964) emerged during the postwar housing crisis, responding to the rigidity of modernist urbanism with a vision of a flexible, modular city that could adapt to changing needs and resource constraints. Just as Giacometti's sculptures captured the scarcity, isolation, and fragmented landscapes of post-war Europe, the Plug-In City illustrates how crises can push architecture beyond conventional boundaries, transforming limitation into a generative force for experimental design.

Giacometti's sculptures demonstrate how scarcity and isolation in post-war Europe became a source of creative expression, with his minimal, elongated forms capturing the fragility and resilience of the human condition amidst ruin and uncertainty.



Alberto Giacometti 'The Square II' 1948-1949

MINIMALISM AND THE ART OF CONSTRUCTION

FOR

"Quality architecture to me is when a building manages to move me. What on earth is it that moves me?" Peter Zumthor, 'Atmospheres: Architectural Environments.' p. 11.

Zumthor's statement foregrounds a critical yet often neglected dimension in certain schools of thought, architecture's ability to provoke an affective, spatial response. While architecture is shaped by theory, material intelligence, and contextual conditions, its success is not solely defined by these parameters but by how it is experienced and engaged - not just by architects, but by those who inhabit, traverse, and encounter it in daily life. A truly compelling work operates within a rigorous conceptual framework, responds to site and community, and yet transcends these foundations to elicit an emotional or sensory reaction. This response is not necessarily one of comfort - it may emerge through rupture, friction, or estrangement - but it must be felt. Too often, architectural discourse privileges formal and programmatic resolution over the ways in which space is lived, perceived, and inhabited. Architecture does not exist in isolation, it is continuously engaged by those who pass through, move around, and dwell within it. Its critical agency lies at the intersection of intellect, material, and sensation, ensuring that it is not only conceptually rigorous but also deeply resonant in everyday experience.

The 'Skyscape' heightens the perception of space, light, and time, transforming the simple act of looking at the sky into a deeply immersive and emotional experience.



James Turrell 'Skyscape', Colorado, 2022

AGAINST

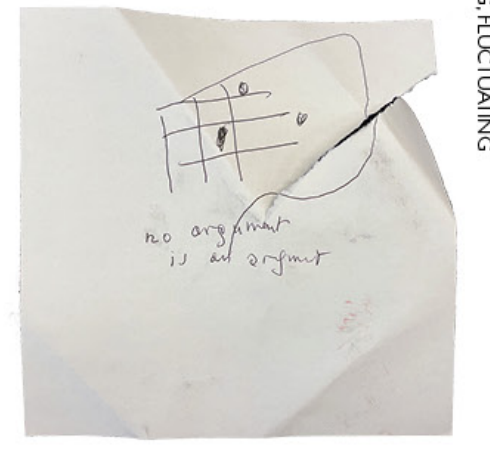
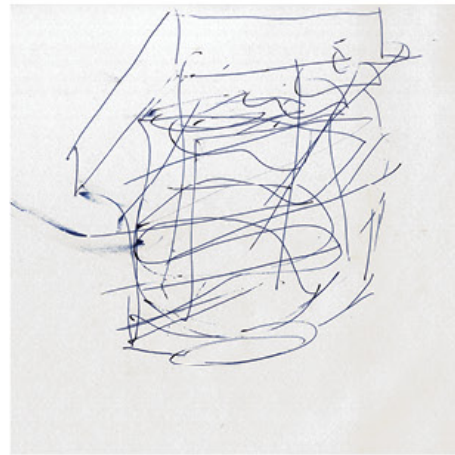
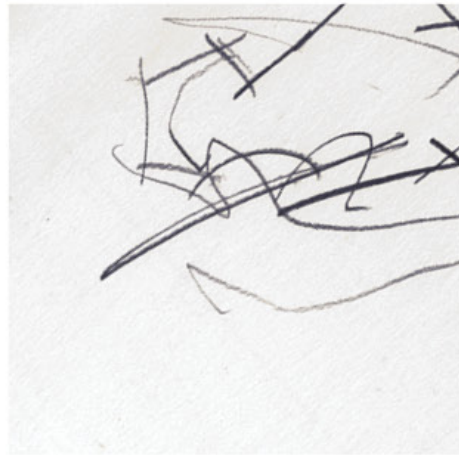
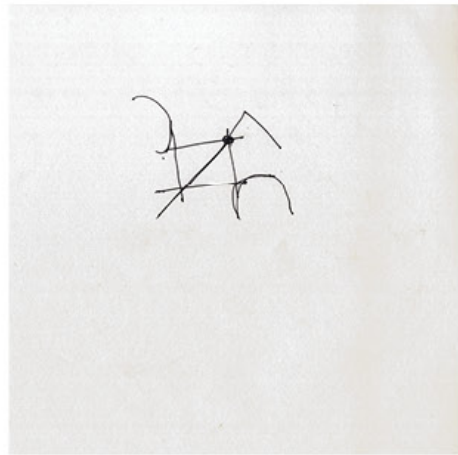
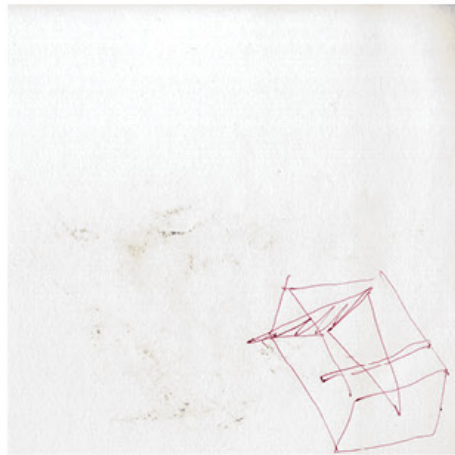
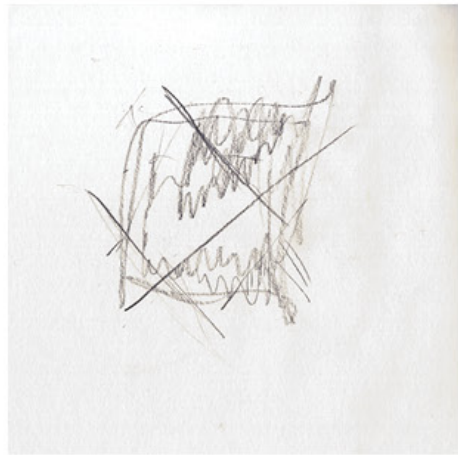
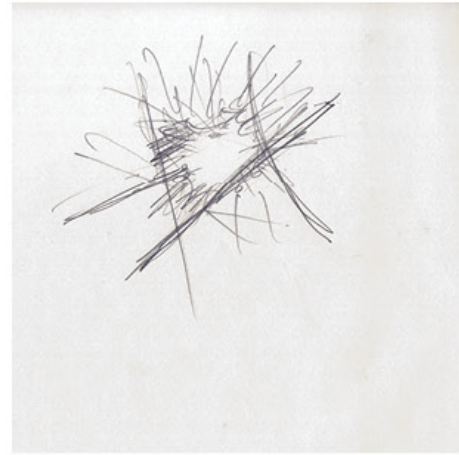
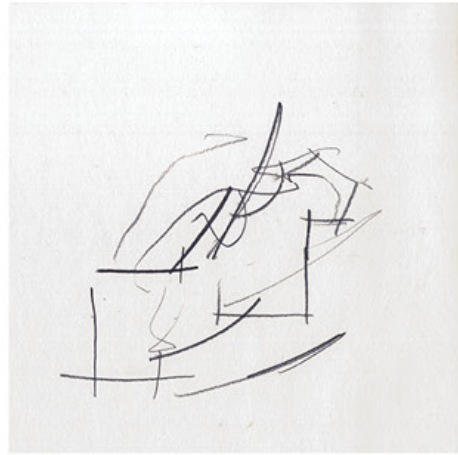
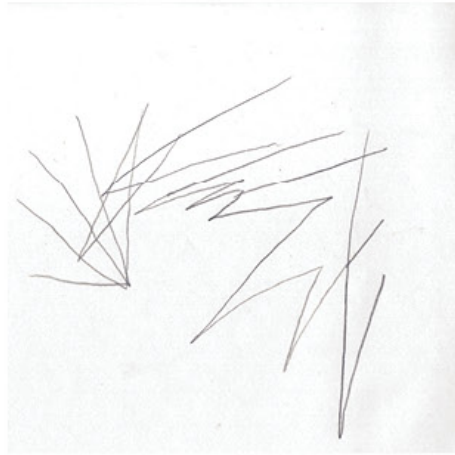
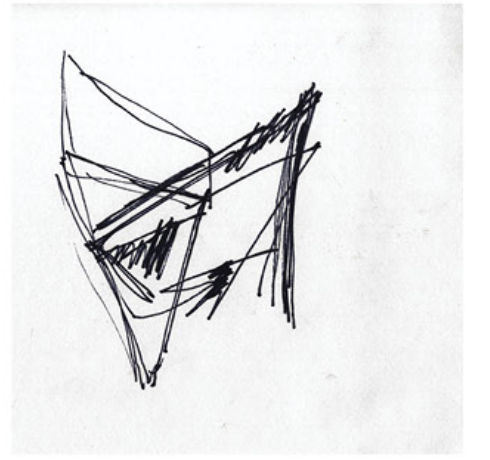
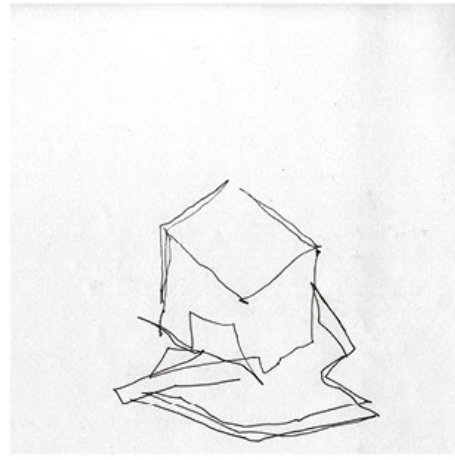
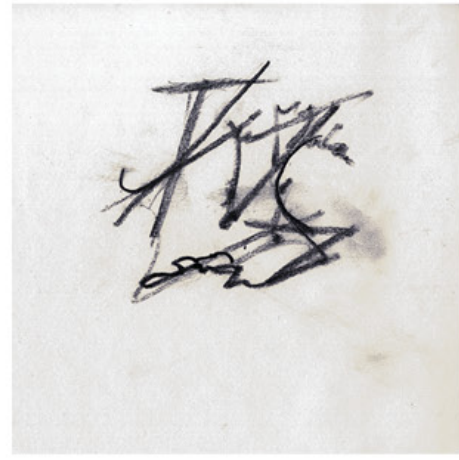
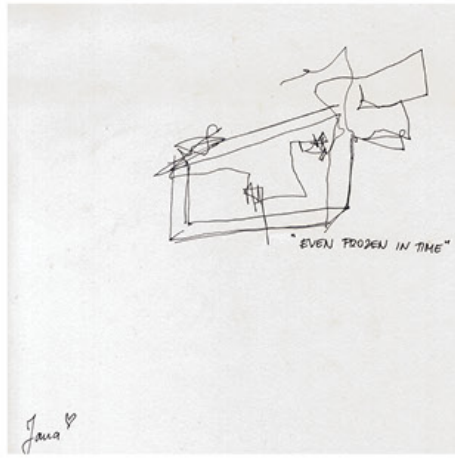
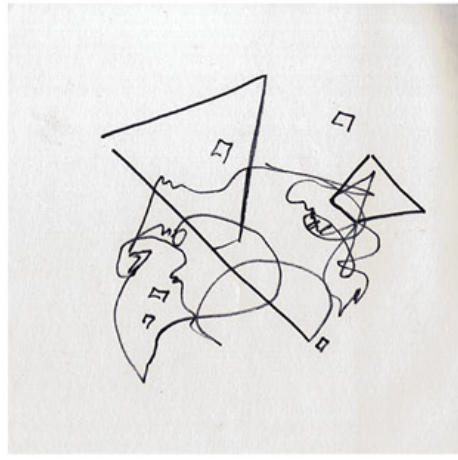
"Architecture is not a vehicle or a symbol for things that do not belong to its essence." Peter Zumthor, extract from a quote referenced in Ruby, Ilka and Andreas. 'Essential, Meta-, Trans-. The Chimeras of Minimalist Architecture.' p. 18.

I disagree with this statement because it assumes that architecture can exist as a self-contained discipline, detached from the events, programs, and cultural forces that shape its meaning. Architecture is never just about materiality or form, it is a medium of inscription, where space is activated by movement, conflict, and interaction rather than reduced to its physical presence. Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial exemplifies how architecture operates beyond its pure essence, acting as a site where memory, history, and experience unfold through spatial engagement. To strip architecture of its narrative, event-based, and programmatic dimensions is to overlook its critical agency - its ability to mediate between abstraction and lived experience, between structure and the conditions that define it.

I included Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial because it demonstrates how architecture can function as a site of memory and narrative, rather than as a purely formal or material object. Its power lies in how it engages the body, history, and emotion, revealing that architecture's meaning often emerges through experience and cultural inscription, not essence alone.



Maya Lin 'Vietnam Veterans Memorial', 1982



OPEN HOUSE VS. ORDER - TRIAL

In lieu of a traditional defense, the jury was invited to perform the very operation that generated Open House: drawing as event. Echoing Bernard Tschumi's reminder that "there is no architecture without event," we asked each witness to close their eyes and, for thirty seconds, trace instinctive lines - seismographs of light, darkness, and spatial tension. The resulting marks refused legibility as "house" or "plan"; instead they registered rupture, motion, and the latent energies from which architecture might emerge.

These collective drawings, mirror the status of Open House itself. They prove that architecture can reside in the interval between impulse and construction, in the speculative act that unsettles certainties. If we acknowledge these sketches as architecture, we must also accept Open House as architecture: a project whose power lies in provoking re-evaluation of what makes a building "real." Built or unbuilt, it occupies the same disciplinary territory - turning instability into form and event into space.

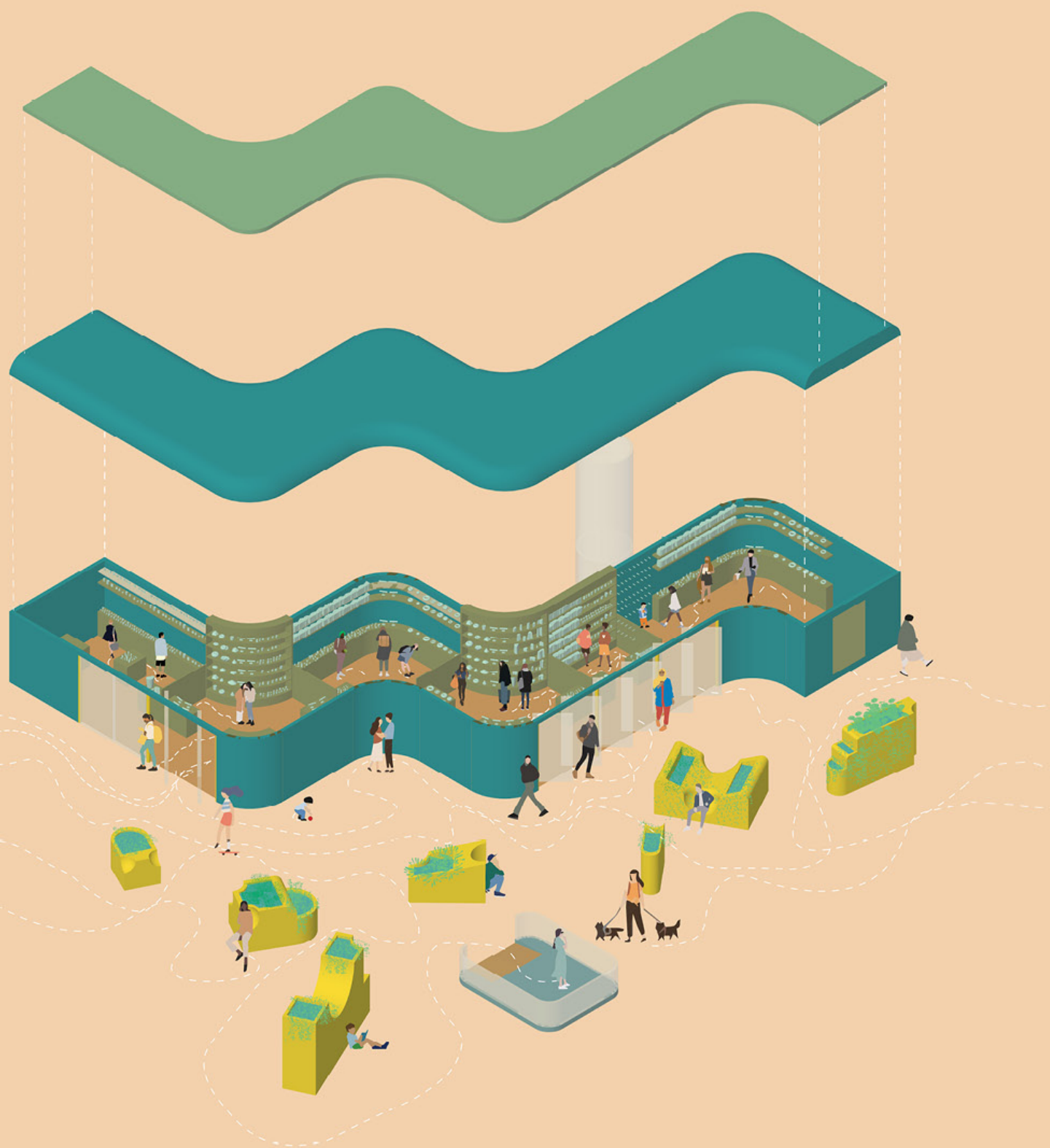
"Before this jury casts its final verdict, let us engage in an event of our own. Tschumi reminds us that "there is no architecture without event." And so, you, our witnesses, will now take part in the very act that created the Open House. You will draw.

STEP 1 (30 seconds) - Close your eyes. Feel the movement, the energy. Do not think of a house, do not aim for coherence. Make a mark, make a stroke. The line is not a boundary, nor a structure. It is a rupture. Let your hand act as a seismograph, recording the feelings that the space will evoke. Think of light, darkness, space, rupture. Now - draw.

STEP 2 (30 seconds) - What you see before you is not a house, not a space, but an event frozen in time. Now, introduce further disjunction. Interrupt your own lines. Cut through them. Fragment them. Architecture is not about continuity; it is about moments of collision. Let your drawing become a site of conflict."

PLANTERS AS ()

reclaimed edges
tools for encounters
pauses in motion
spatial spontaneity
shifting pathways
shelters of care
mischievous
spatial agency
disruption



Rotating Corners

Fall 2022

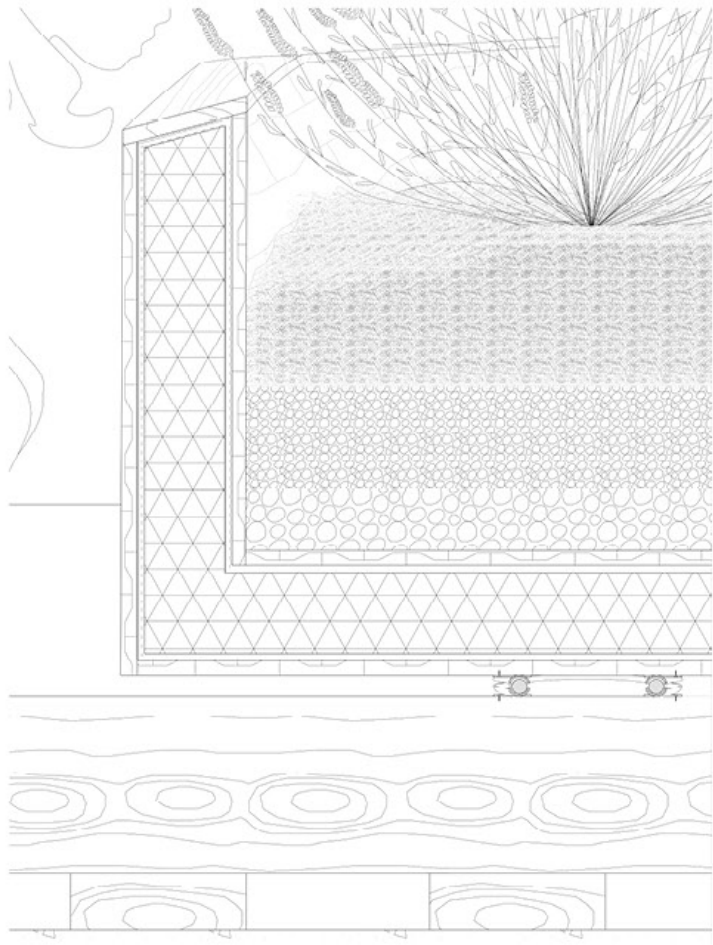
Core I: Broadway Stories

Critic: Alessandro Orsini

On the rooftop of a one-story commercial building at 125th Street and Broadway, Rotating Corners intervenes in the overlooked airspace of Harlem to propose a field of soft resistance. A series of pivoting planters - truncated, incised, and hollowed - act as mobile spatial instruments. Rotated by hand, they generate a shifting choreography of clearings, corridors, and enclaves. Space is not assigned but continuously reassembled, shaped through gesture and proximity.

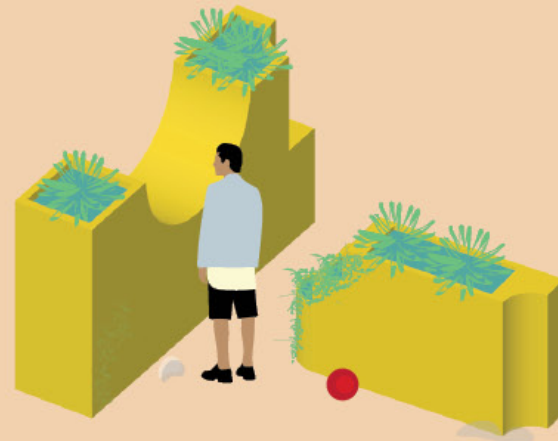
Anchored by a modest structure for collective use, the project draws from the latent dramaturgy of corners - sites of pause, evasion, collision - and disperses their logics across the rooftop surface. Vegetation operates not as ornament or resource, but as infrastructure: a living scaffold for encounter.

Rotating Corners resists fixity. It proposes a participatory landscape in which agency is distributed and configurations remain provisional. Rather than stabilize form, the project foregrounds impermanence as both method and ethic - suggesting that architecture might unfold through acts of moving, turning, and holding space open.





Intersection



Window



Corridor



Congregation



Refuge



Clearing



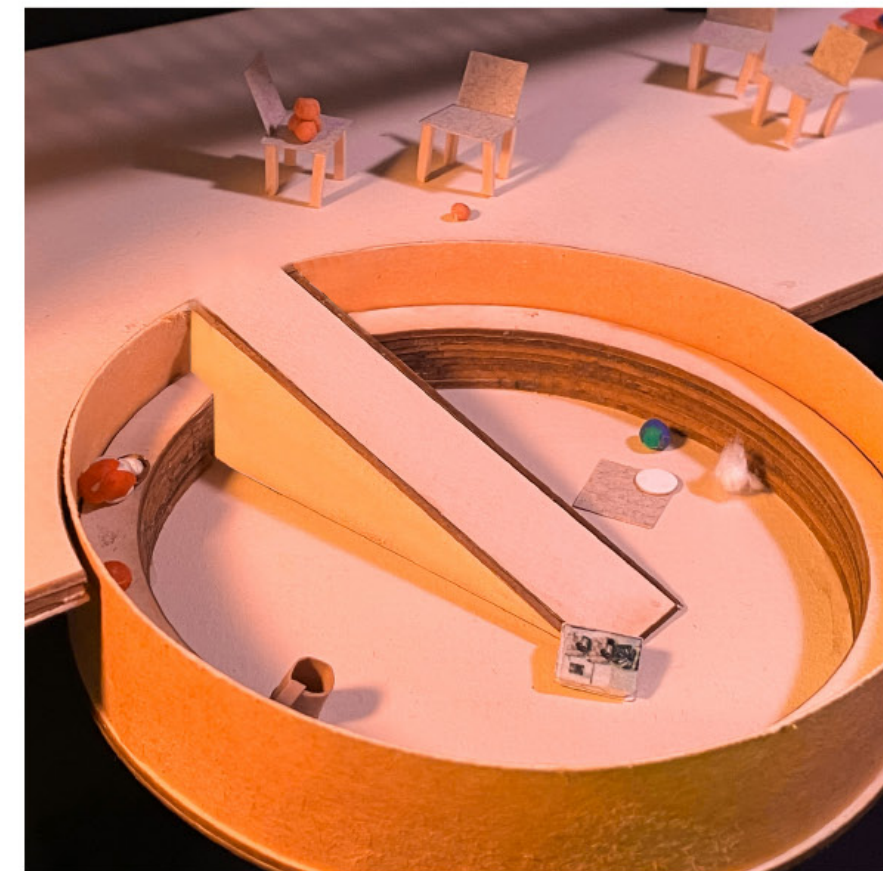
Planters



Community building



ROTATING CORNERS



Gathering nook



Train tracks extension and gathering nook

Thank You,

To everyone who's supported me these past few years - I couldn't have done this without you.

To my mother, María José Soria Vaquerizo, and my father, Eduardo Amo Mora - thank you for always being there.

To my family, thank you for your constant backing.

To my professors, friends, and peers - thank you for pushing me, questioning me, and showing me how much architecture is shaped by the people around it.

There are too many of you to name, but I hope this work reflects a piece of what I've learned from you.

- María Jesús Amo Soria

**caring,
shifting,
fluctuating**