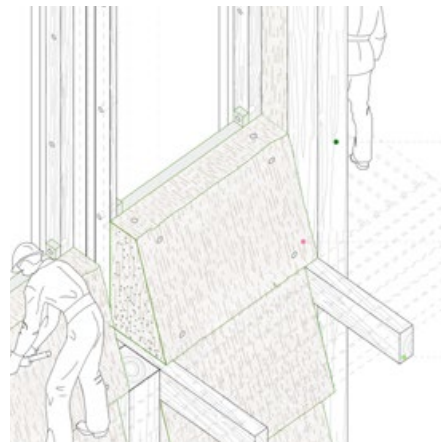
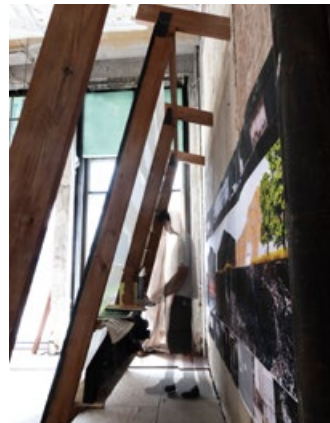


David Zhang
张镜维

June 2003
REVIEW

June 2003
REVIEW

Important questions



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i.

How can we animate our dormant relationalities
to local ecologies?

Coastal Material Reciprocities re-wilding post-industrial tidal marshes of Red Hook, NY

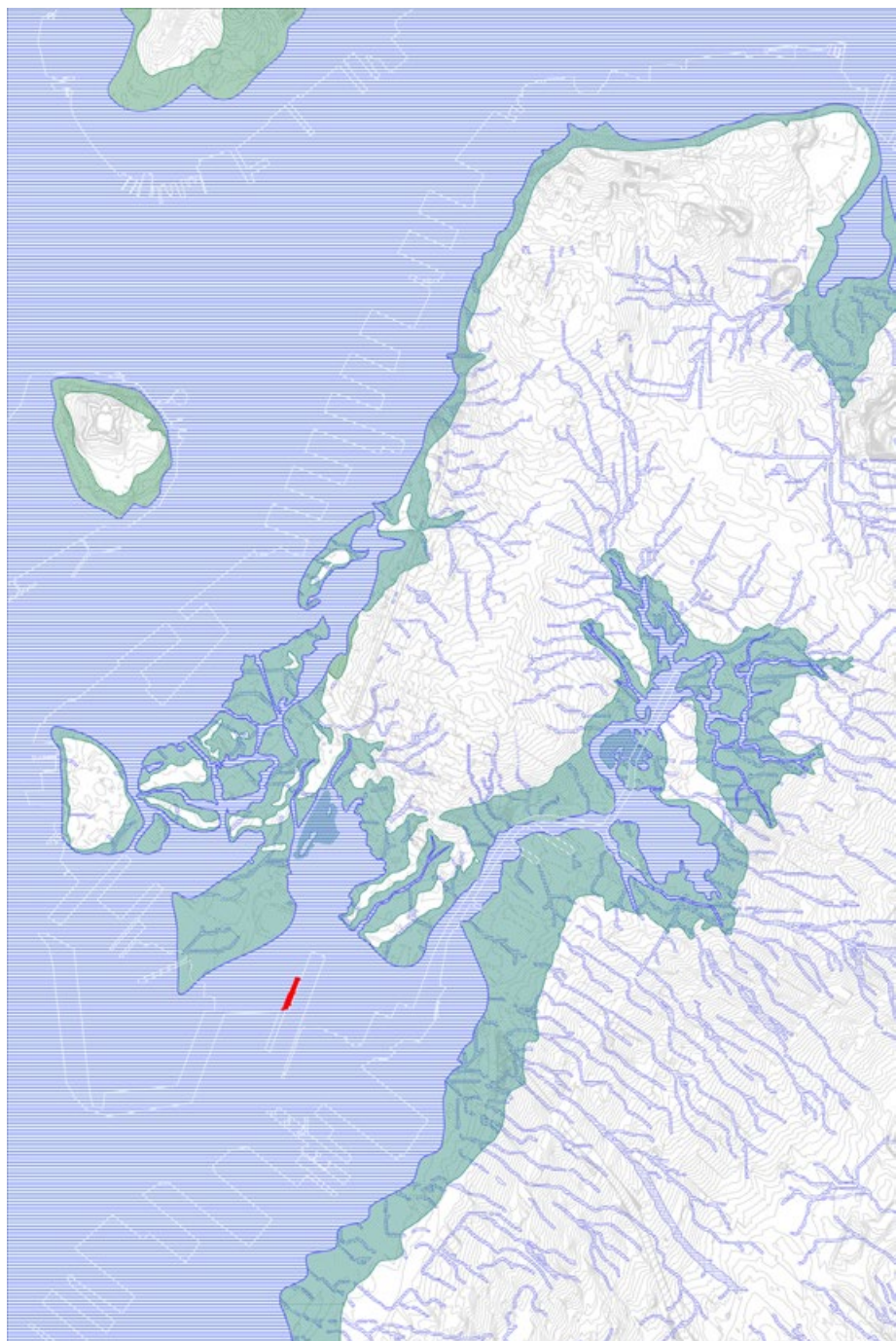
A research and design project centered around an ecological understanding of a perpetually eroding coastal landscape. Taking the site's historical function as a material port as a point of departure, this project imagines a resurgent landscape of the 48b ecoregion's endemic plant material, specifically spartina grass, phragmites reed, marine clay, and cedar wetland trees.¹ Responding to it, an architecture of built of these materials.

This project imagines the post-industrial coastline of Red Hook as a landscape of retreat, a littoral space of non-capital driven, ambiguous programming that responds directly to the re-wilded conditions of urban coastal erosion.² Animated by renewed interactions of native organisms, people begin to build in response.

place Red Hook Grain Terminal, Brooklyn, NY
timeline 09/2023 - 12/2023
advisors Ruth Mandl & Bobby Johnston, Daniel Chang, *ADV-V Industry of Waste*



a site axonometric at +9ft sea level rise (22nd C.)



b pre-colonial Brooklyn shoreline



c historic industrial polluters of the Gowanus Canal



d future projected flood plains (100yr & 500yr fp in 2020)

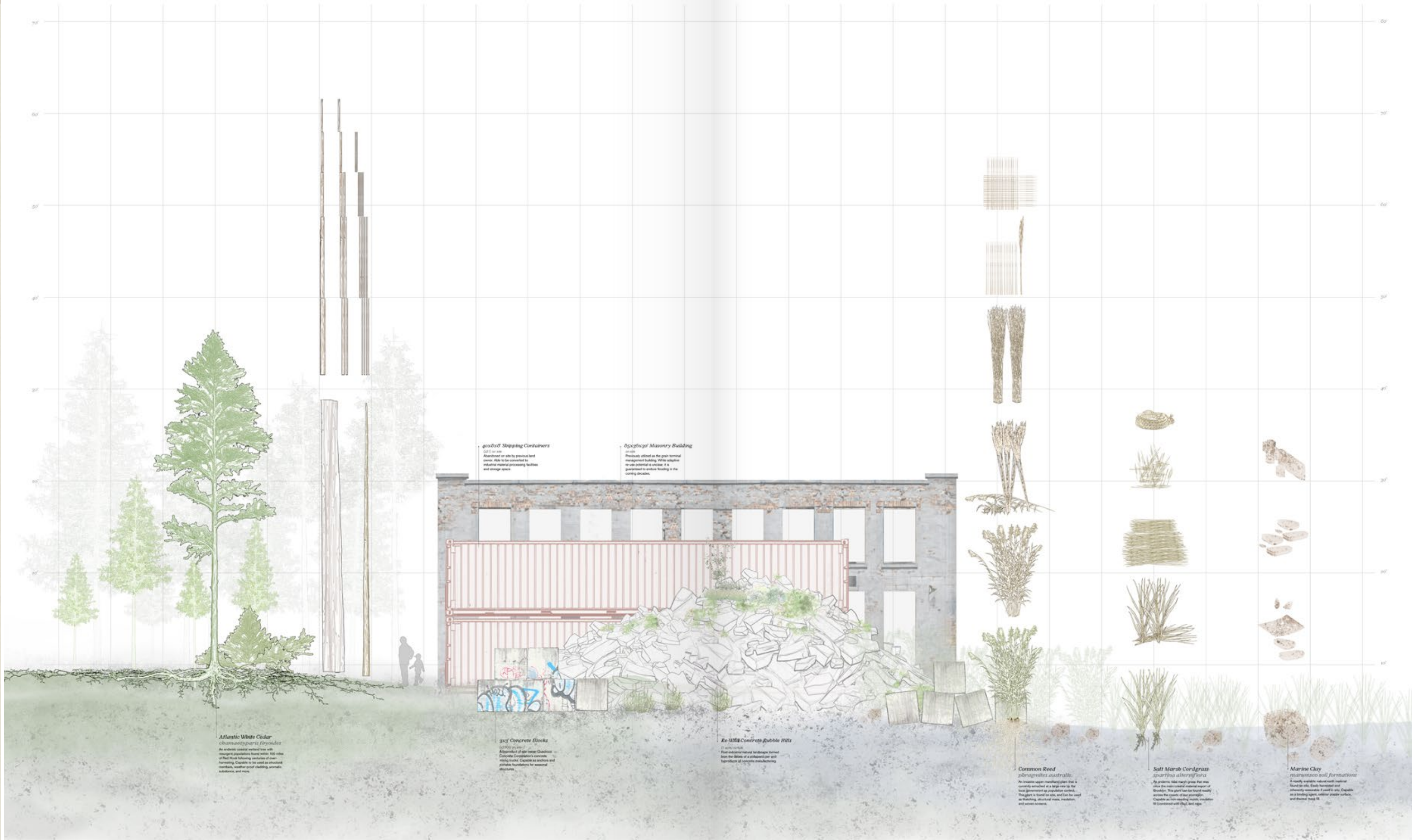
In developing a holistic environmental understanding of Red Hook coastal ecologies, both the pre-colonial and the post-industrial coastlines heavily inform the conditions under which future landscape and architectural design must be considered. In the case of coastal NYC, we must design for a future that looks more like the past than the present. Prompting design that centers the values of resurgence, re-wilding, and de-growth at its core.



e coastal site conditions (2023)



f resurgent tidal marshes inform site design



40x200' Shipping Containers
 2021 on site
 Abandoned on site by previous land owner. Able to be converted to industrial material processing facilities and storage space.

85x15x30' Masonry Building
 on site
 Previously utilized as the grain terminal management building. While adaptive re-use potential is unclear, it is guaranteed to ensure loading in the existing structure.

Atlantic White Cedar
Chamaecyparis thyoides
 An endemic coastal wetland tree with average populations found within 100 miles of Red Hook featuring centuries of over-harvesting. Capable to be used as structural members, weather proof cladding, ornamental substance, and more.

3x3 Concrete Blocks
 40000 on site
 Remnants of old water treatment facility. Capable as bricks and potcrete foundations for seasonal structures.

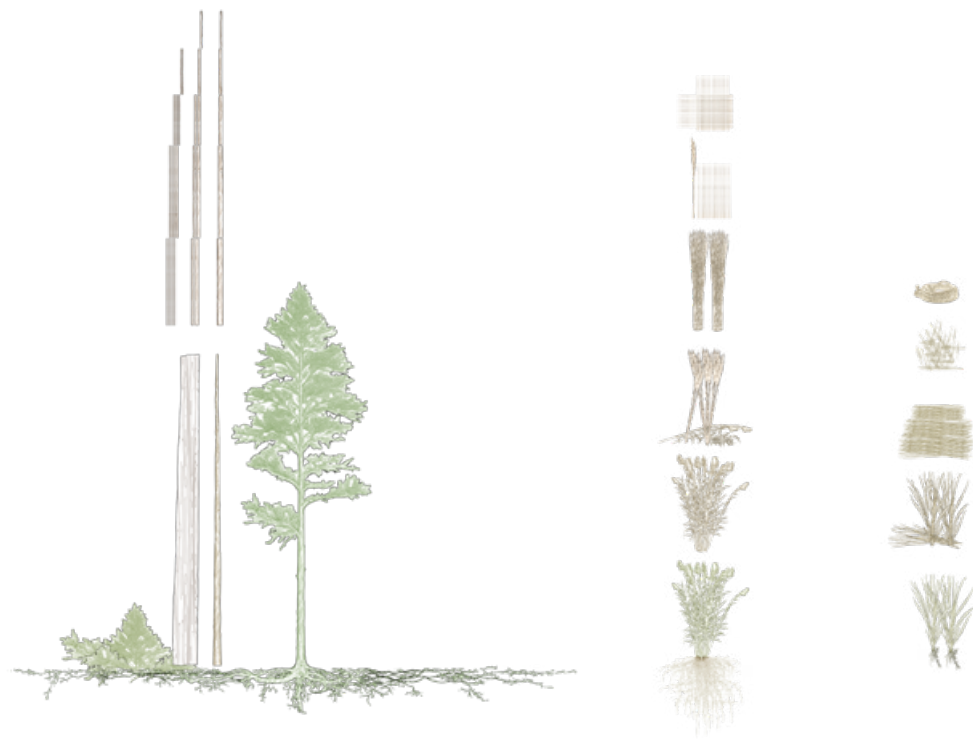
Re-Utilize Concrete Rubble Hiltz
 on site
 From industrial material and landscape formed from the debris of a collapsed pier and byproducts of concrete manufacturing.

Common Reed
Phragmites australis
 An invasive upper marshland plant that is currently eradicated at a large scale by the local government as problematic species. The plant is found in size, and can be used as building structural mass, insulation, and screen screens.

Salt Marsh Cordgrass
Spartina alterniflora
 An endemic salt marsh grass that was once the main coastal material export of Brooklyn. The plant has to be found mostly across the coasts of the peninsula. Capable as a low-maintenance, erosion-resistant, and structural material.

Marine Clay
psammiteco soil formation
 A mostly eroded natural earth material found in site. Each horizontal and vertically eroded it used in site. Capable as a building agent, interior plaster surface, and structural support.

g material inventories of a re-wild, entangled coastal ecology



The material inventory was created based off of regional ecological observations which witnessed the traces of historic natural material extraction and the continued presence of those organisms in our urban coastal ecologies.

Prompting the question:
Can we create reciprocal material landscapes which prioritize natural life cycles before extraction?



h reciprocal material transfers, cedar forests 50 miles from brooklyn, ny



i material landscapes of the 48b ecoregion

Can we create reciprocal material landscapes which prioritize natural life cycles before extraction?



● **Historic Atlantic White Cedar Forest Hackensack, New Jersey (7.5 miles)**

The New Jersey Meadowlands was once home to the largest Atlantic White Cedar wetland forest in the NYC-NJ metropolitan region, approx. 15,000 acres.¹

This forest was harvested by Canarsie-Munsee Native Americans in a regenerative manner, but following the arrival of Dutch & English colonists, the entire forest was depleted by the 20th century. What remains are inundated, lifeless fields of cedar



● **Persistent Atlantic White Cedar Forest Northhampton, Long Island (75 miles)**

Long Island was once home to over 30 large populations of AWC forests. Only 3 of the remaining 15 forests carry significant populations of cedar trees.²

Many of these forests were clear cut and converted into agricultural land or cranberry bogs, such as the forest shown in the image. While ecologically damaged, these forests have displayed extreme resilience and are now resurging in number and health. Providing potential sites for responsive harvesting.



● **Remnants of Salt Hay Farming Sawkill Creek, Staten Island (8 miles)**

Salt hay farming of Spartina cordgrass tidal marshes was a dominant coastal material economy of the 18th and 19th century.

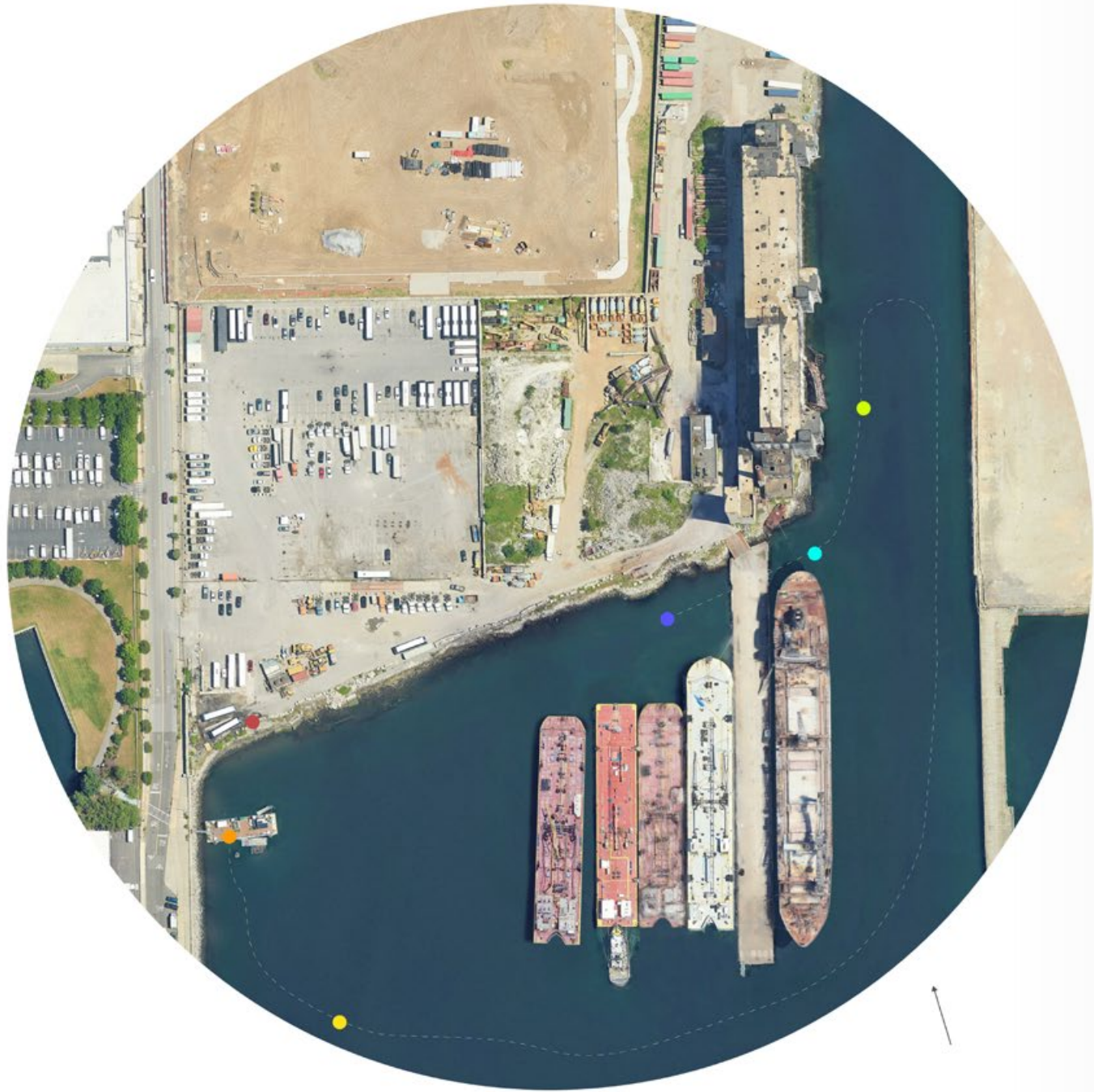
Salt hay farms existed in the region up until the last closed following Hurricane Sandy in 2012. The grass was historically used as agricultural mulch, insulation material, bedding, and strong rope fiber material. Spartina cordgrass is still the dominant tidal marsh grass and exists in abundance along the coasts of the ecoregion.



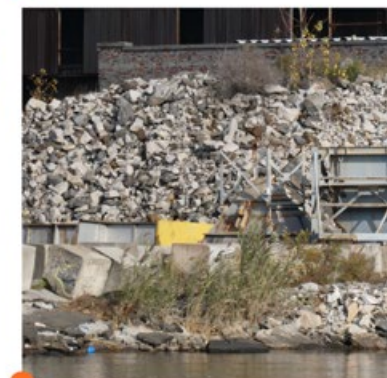
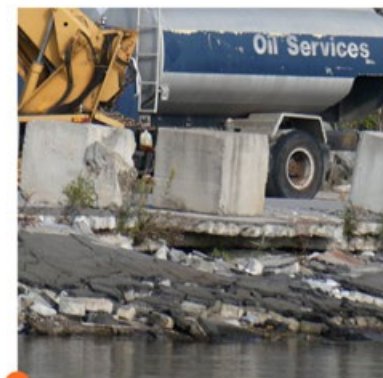
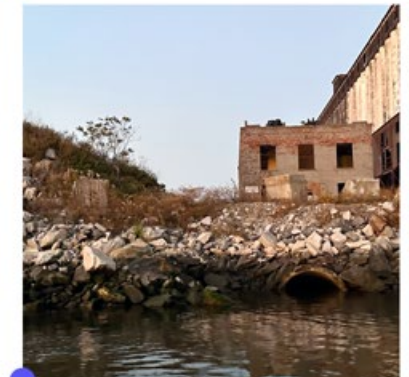
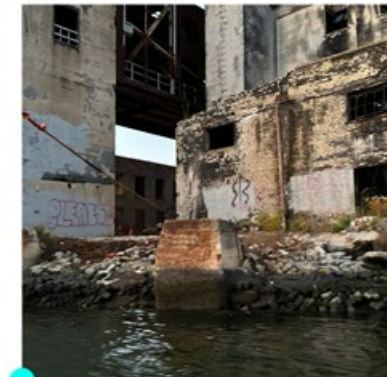
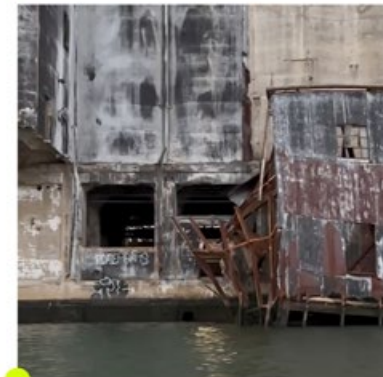
● **Phragmites Reed Removal Practices Jamaica Bay, Brooklyn (10 miles)**

Invasive phragmites reed exists in extreme and often problematic abundance across the ecoregion. In many cases, efforts to restore endemic coastal and freshwater ecologies results in the large scale removal of these reeds.

Through this removal, plant matter is often burned or buried, representing a largely untapped material waste stream. By tapping into these material waste streams, and proposing for the sustainable harvest of native phragmites species, reeds could become a local staple material of the region.

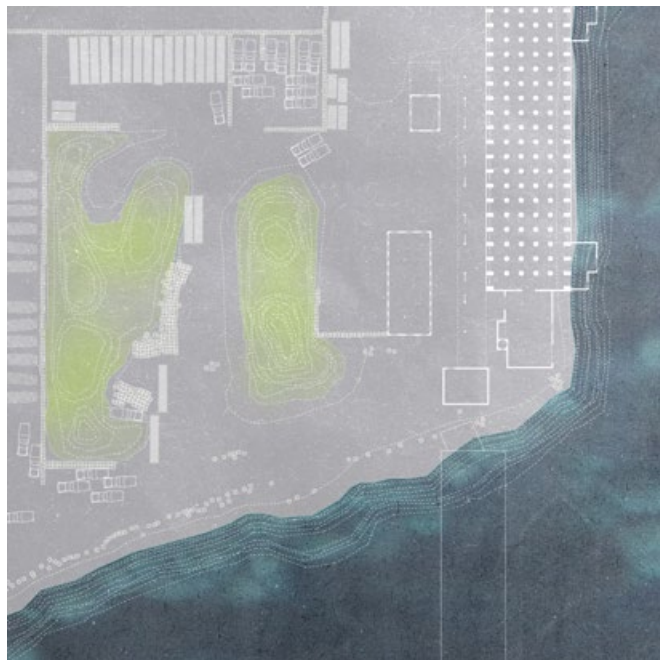


j satellite image of the site and boat path

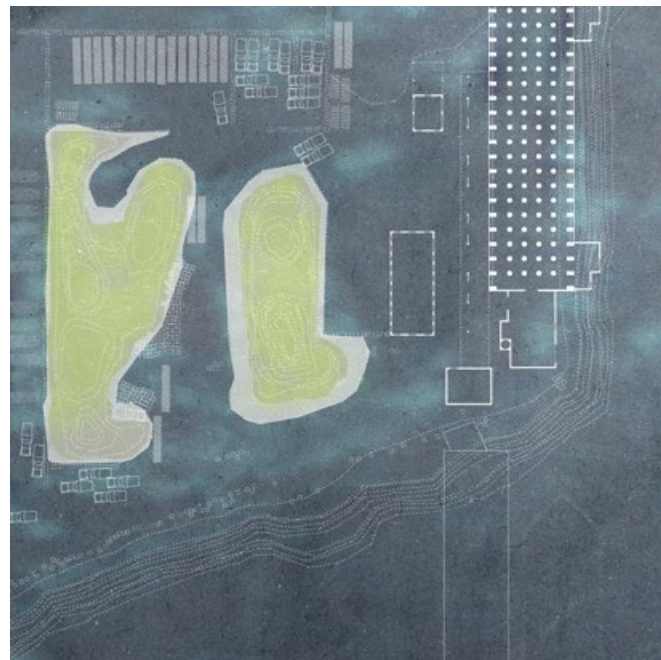


I visited the RETI Center, a floating research barge, on a warm November day. I bargained with Tim, the founder, to take me out in the bay to see the coastline.

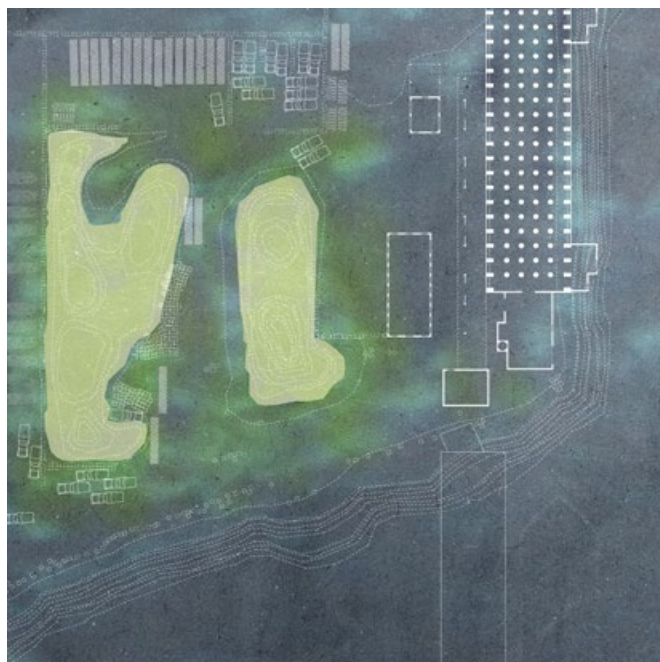
After helping to fix his boat, we went out, where I was able to see firsthand the multiplicity of layered material history that makes up the infilled coastline. Spartina grass in floating cork planters. Crumbled asphalt and uneven paving stones, phragmites reed growing between them.



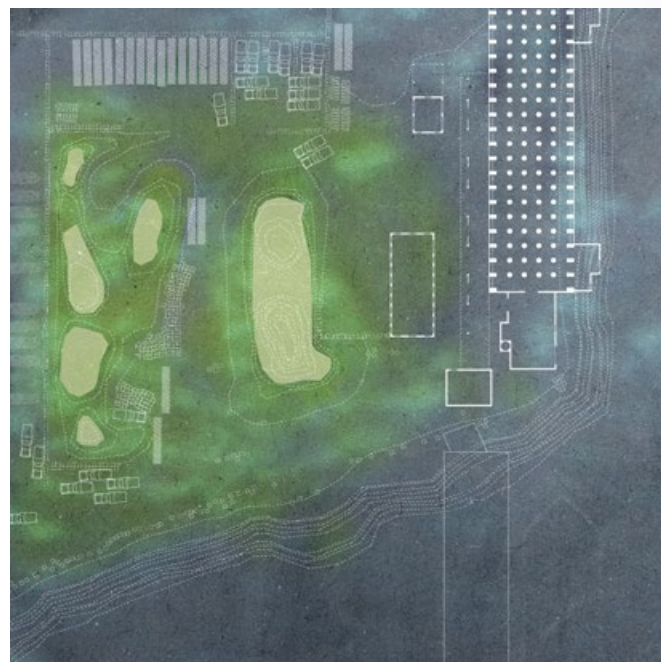
2023



2053, +3 ft

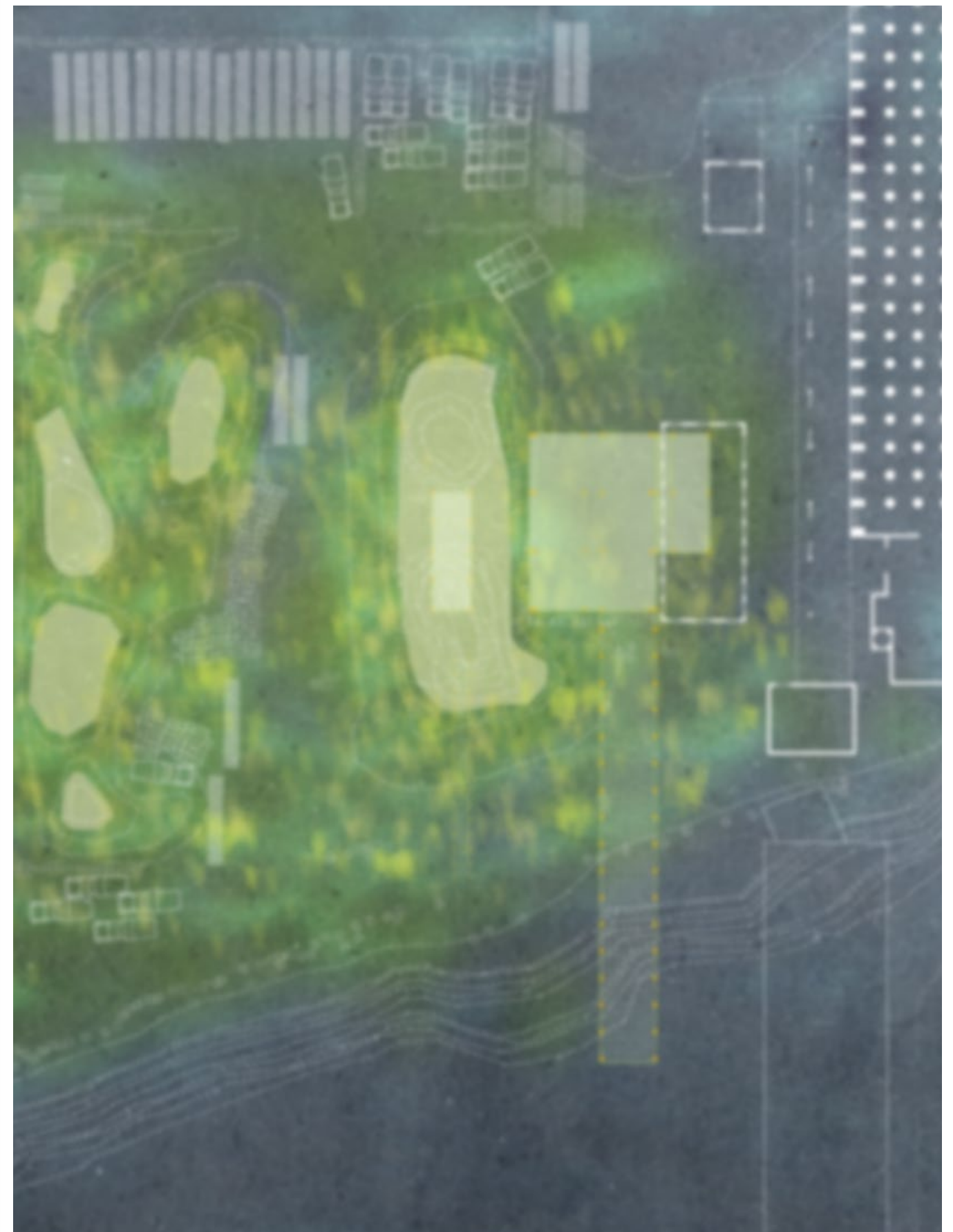


2083, +6ft



3013, +9ft

k est. sea level rise on site over the next century



l site plan, islands of material procession (1:100)



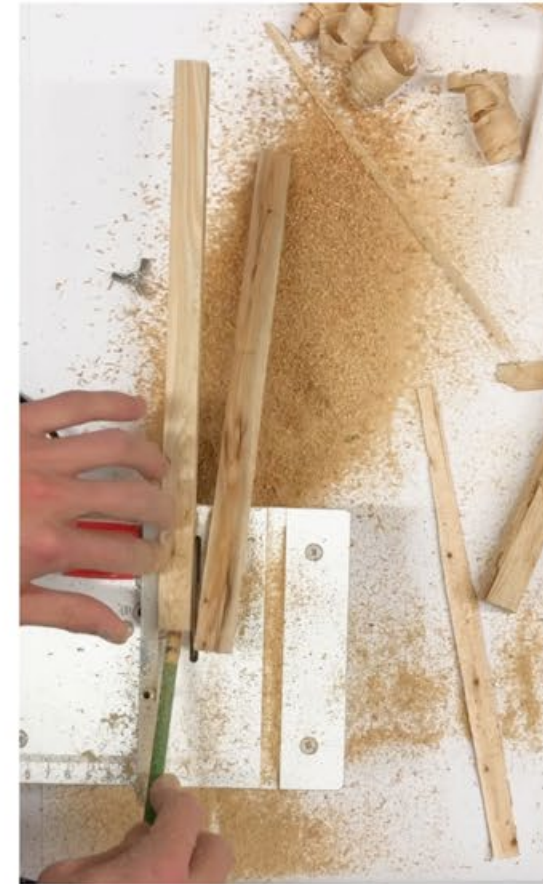
harvesting and material accounting



debranching



debarking

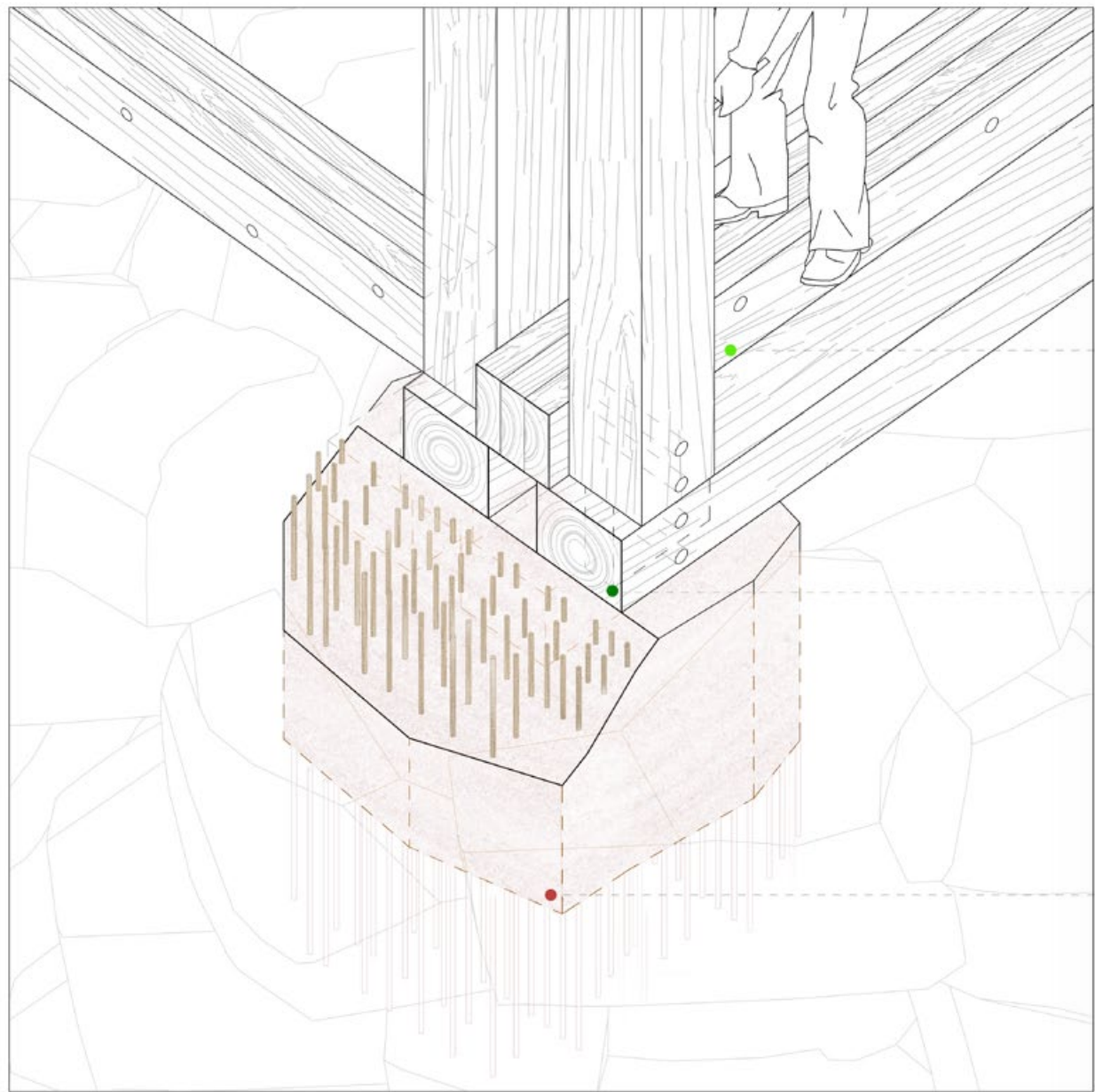


milling



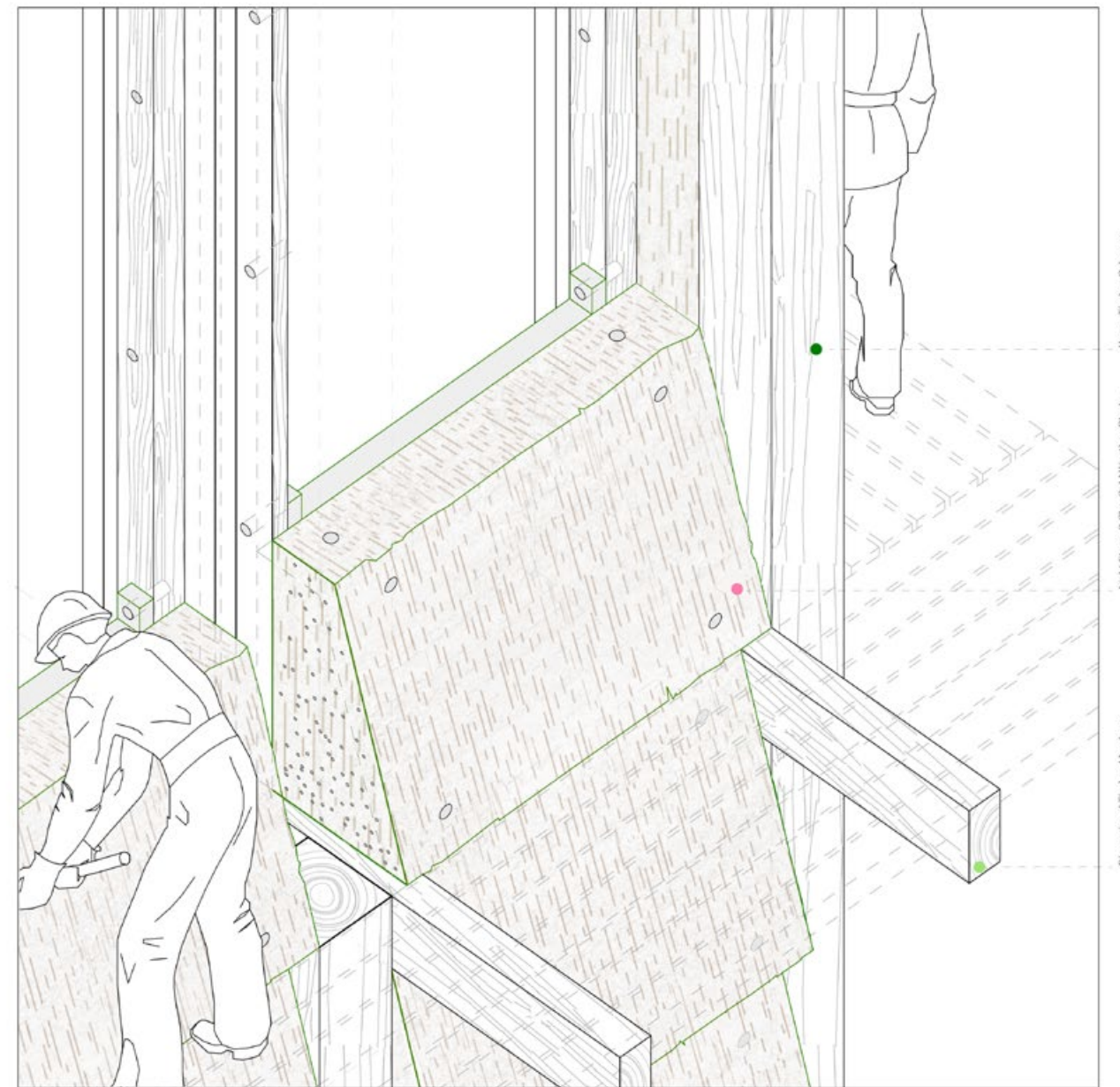
dimensioning and planing

Important to this project was developing an understanding of the labor required in converting natural organisms to natural materials. While not 1:1 in scale, this practice of harvesting and milling a local small cedar tree became foundational to understanding a direct translation of material craft.



A Building Rests on a Hill of Concrete Rubble

Hundreds of reeds (7-12' long) are inserted deep into the rubble pile. A formwork is made around the perimeter, and among the network of reeds a mix of marine clay slip and powdered gypsum is poured and cast into place. The formwork is imperfect and the mixture sometimes spills out, but soon the gypsum hardens and the foundation is set.



A Building is Adapted for the Winter

Fifty light straw and clay thermal blocks, ranging from 4-5' in width and 3' to 6' in height, are fastened onto the outside of a building to prepare for the incoming winter. These blocks are built by packing a mix of grounded reed, salt hay, and marine clay into a frame and allowing time to cure. The blocks are brought to upper levels using seasonal scaffolding and lifted into place by small teams of 2-4 people over the course of a few days.



o perspective view

Tall Reeds from Queens, NY

Enacting harvest and complicating native/invasive binaries

Following research into the latent material potential of phragmites reed in our local ecoregion, this project acted on both a proactive, yet meditative impulse to grapple with the precise ecological relationship that we as designers have with the seemingly invasive phragmites reed plant in North America.

At once ubiquitous in its rapid spread, exceptional in its natural size (up to 12' tall), and problematic in its inhospitability to most flora/fauna, phragmites has become a pariah to most environmental management groups.³ Through conversations and site visits with local organization NYC H2O, who manage urban bodies of freshwater such as Ridgewood Reservoir, fellow students and I were able to better understand the risks and potential of harvesting local phragmites.

However, due to the widespread cross-pollination of native and invasive phragmites species, its place in local wetlands becomes complicated, and further complicates our use of it as a dormant material. The work of this project seeks to rest in this zone of uncertainty, creating sculptural pieces with it that both celebrate the plant as an ecological actor and suggest its potential as a building material.

place Willow Lake /Ridgewood Reservoir, Queens, NY
timeline 01/2024 - 05/2024
advisor Micheal Wang, *Metabolic Materialities*



a harvested reeds from Willow Lake, Queens, NY



Ridgewood Reservoir, Queens, NY

Willow Lake, Queens, NY



harvested reeds from Willow Lake, Queens, NY

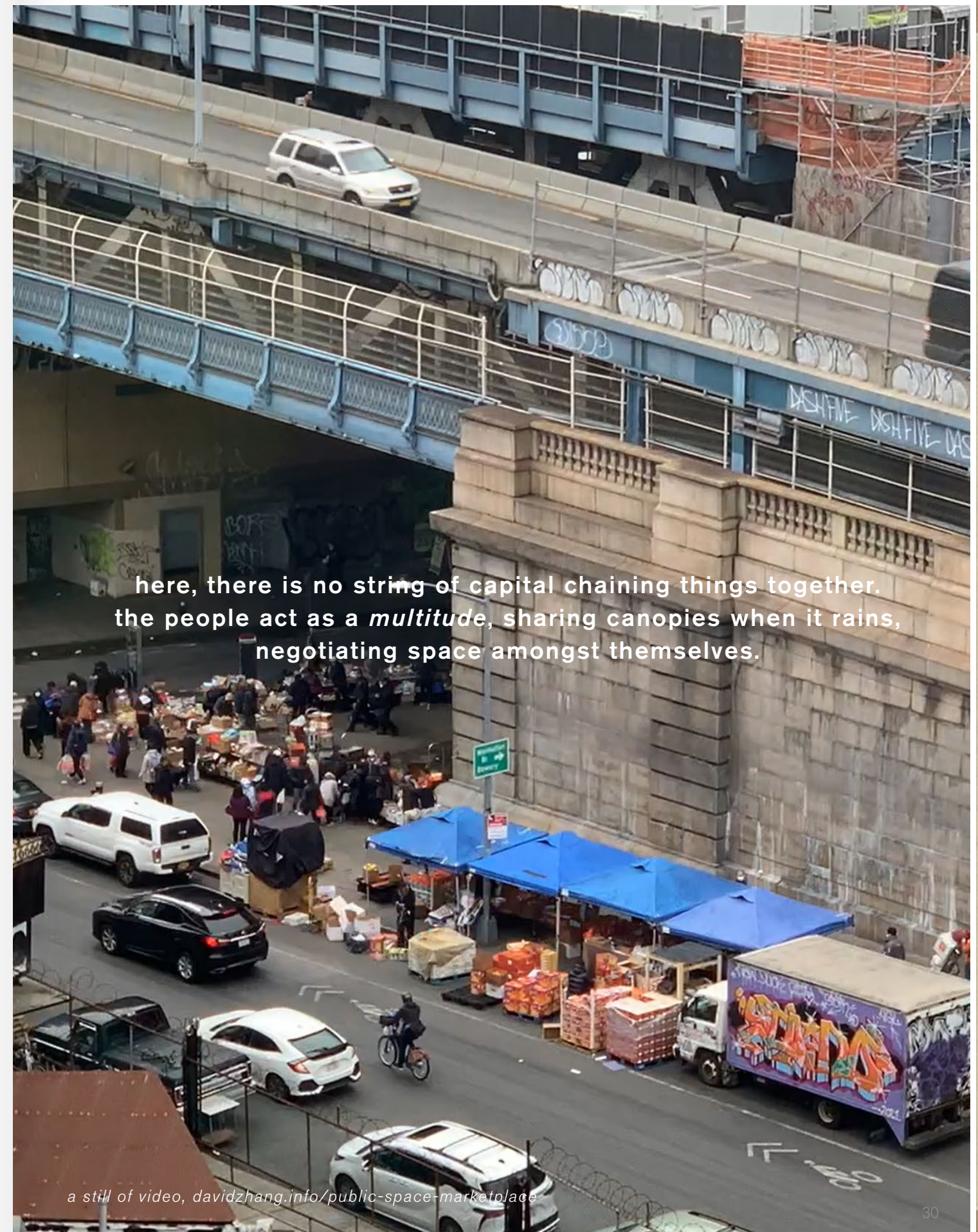
Public Space, Marketplace

Stories of resilience and displacement

Under a complex web of infrastructural development, immigrant communities within Manhattan's Chinatown have historically found opportunity for mutual support. No place better represents this than the Forsythe Street produce market, a space of socio-economic support built under the noisy Manhattan Bridge.⁴ The markets landed here after decades of displacement by neo-liberal forces seeking to regulate street life within the minority neighborhoods.⁵ And nearby, older businesses continue to be squeezed out of the neighborhood, whether by boutique fashion and art or by forces of market governance.

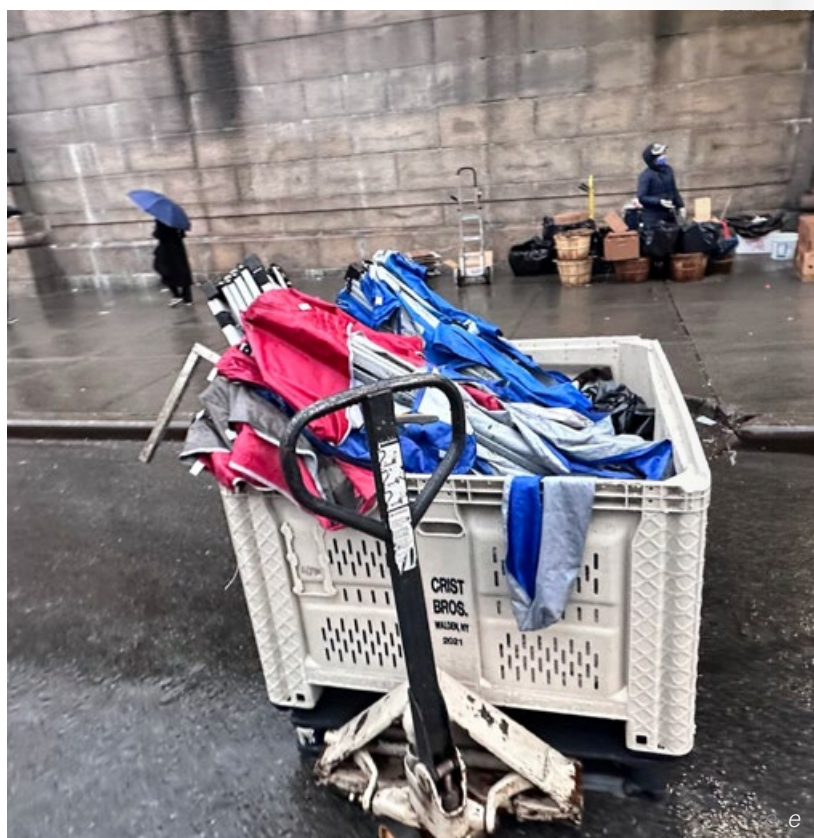
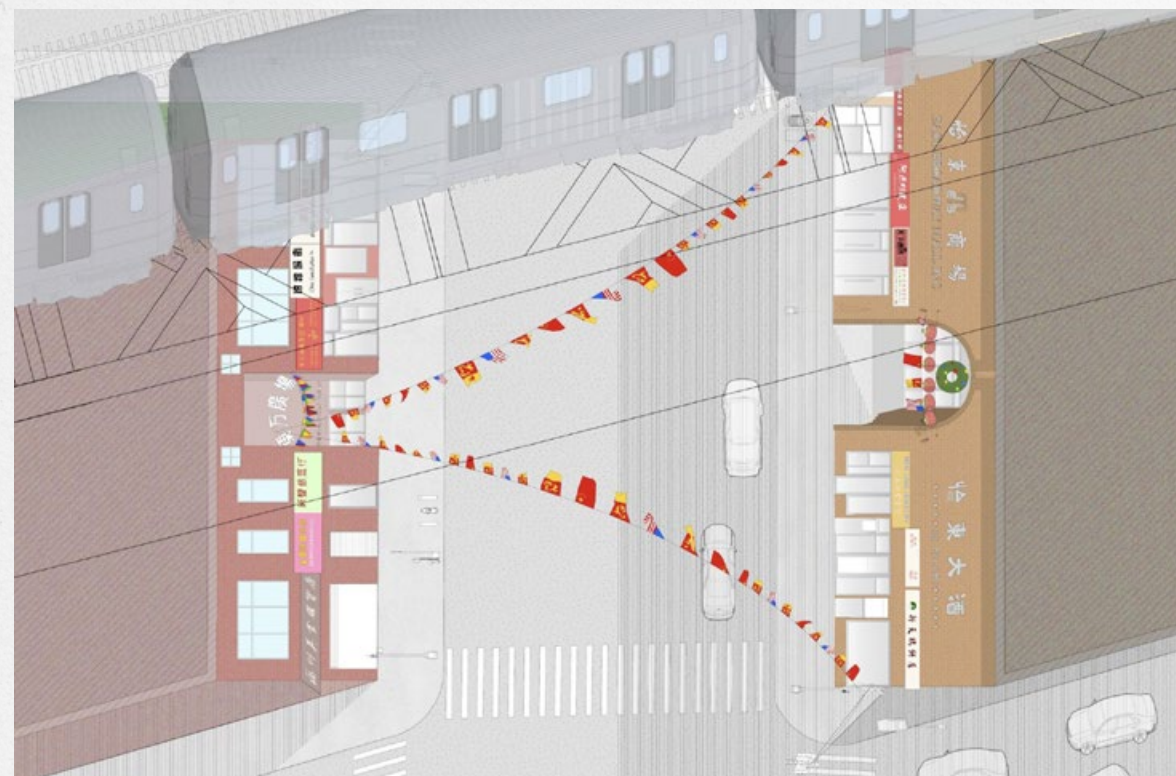
This study seeks to recognize the material conditions that create real, resilient street cultures in effort to push back against top-down notions of cultural hegemony and economic development in the neighborhood.

place Chinatown, NYC
timeline 09/2022 - 12/2022
advisor Ijlal Muzaffar, *Decolonizing the (Architectural) Imagination*
past collaborators Zoon Amir



here, there is no string of capital chaining things together.
the people act as a *multitude*, sharing canopies when it rains,
negotiating space amongst themselves.

a still of video, davidzhang.info/public-space-marketplace



*signifiers of displacement
means of ethnic support
architecture as media[tor]*

Facing south on my 10th floor terrace, I watch vehicles fall towards me on the Manhattan Bridge. Their sounds mostly glide, with larger trucks churning a bit and police cars yelping. The B, D, N, and Q take turns punching through the underpass towards Brooklyn or pushing their way into the city. If the vehicles above glide or churn or yelp, the trains stomp across the bridge. The choir of noise is both rhythmic and jarring, with a steady footbeat cut at whim by shrieks of metal. Even at ~500 ft away and ~70 ft above it I can feel it.

Below the bridge, a pair of malls sit in between the existing footings of the bridge, the first built in 1988 and the second a decade later. The first of these, East Broadway Mall (88 East Broadway), is a tan, stout two story brick building with floor to 8ft window walls displaying job services, cell carriers, hair salons and more on the ground floor. The windows end 10ft from the corners, keeping the building stable to transfer any excess vibrations. The second floor is mostly windowless aside from a deep, recessed entrance vestibule on the south East Broadway side of the building. It is an architecture that fortresses, blocks cacophony, and keeps rituals quiet.

b shared canopies, food security

c risky canopies and the "dimes square" effect

d local fabrics, sign infrastructure

e shared street vendor canopies

f written prose, drawing by Zoona Amir

“We Won’t Move!”

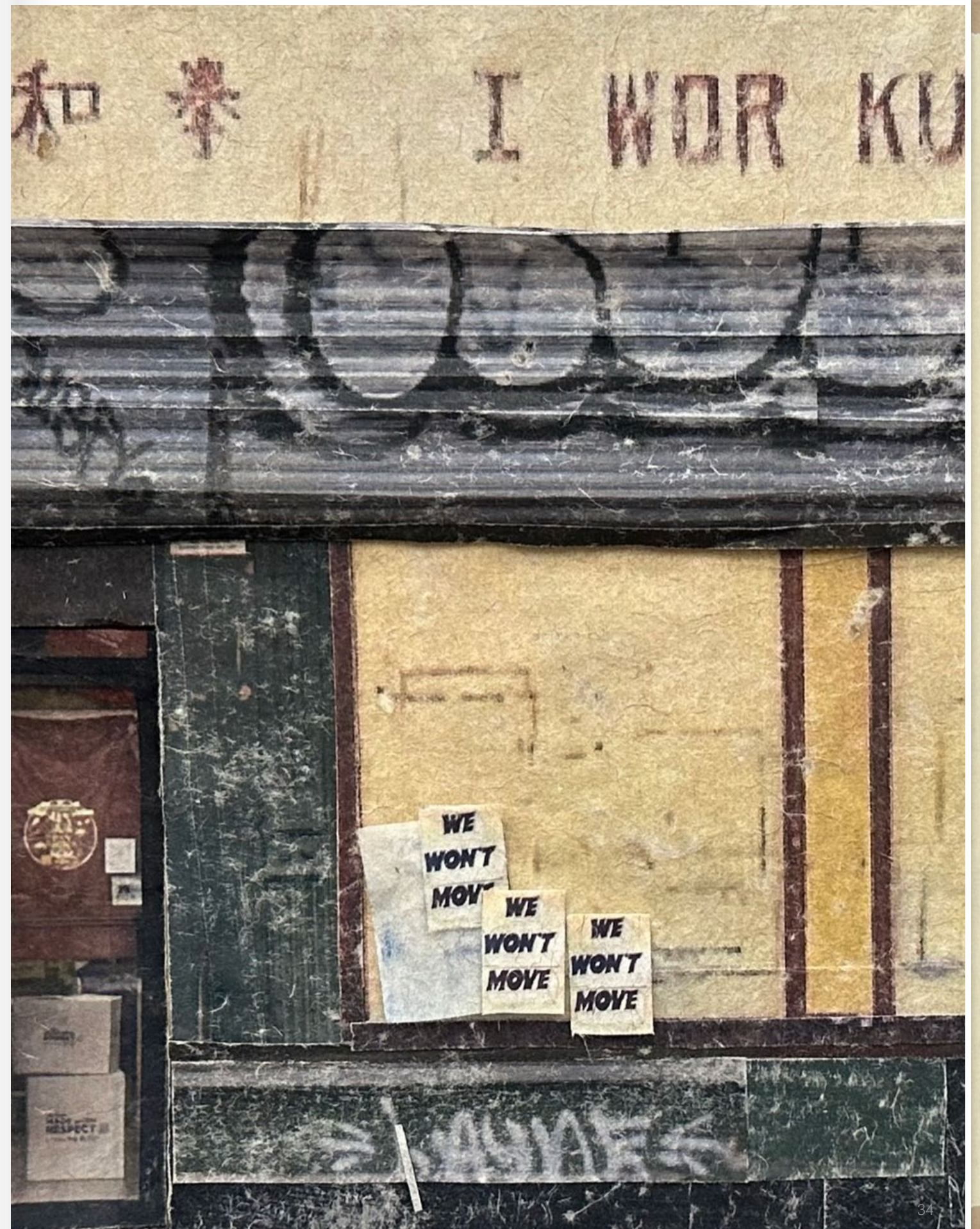
Tracing oral histories of a 1970 housing protest led by I Wor Kuen

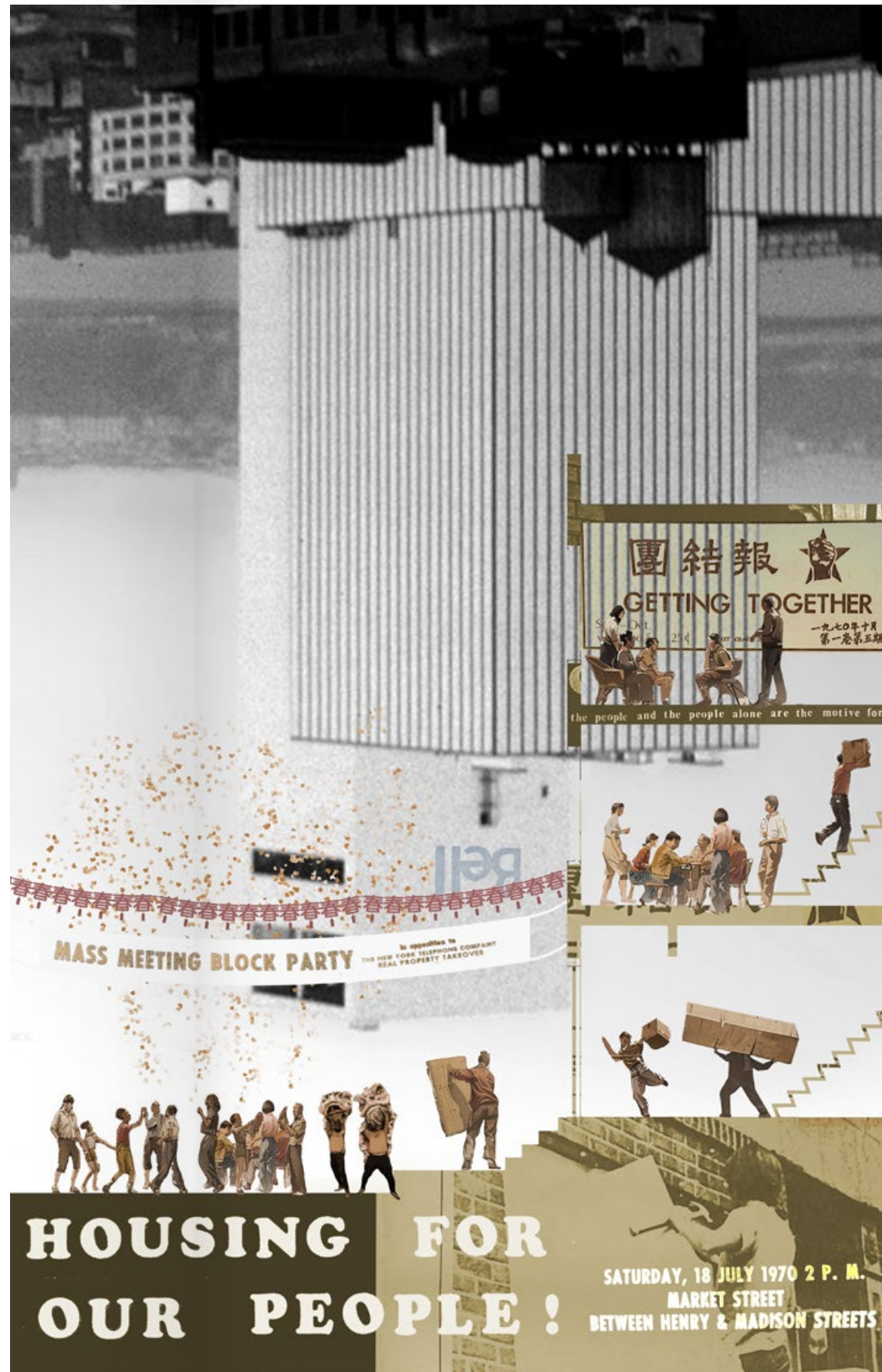
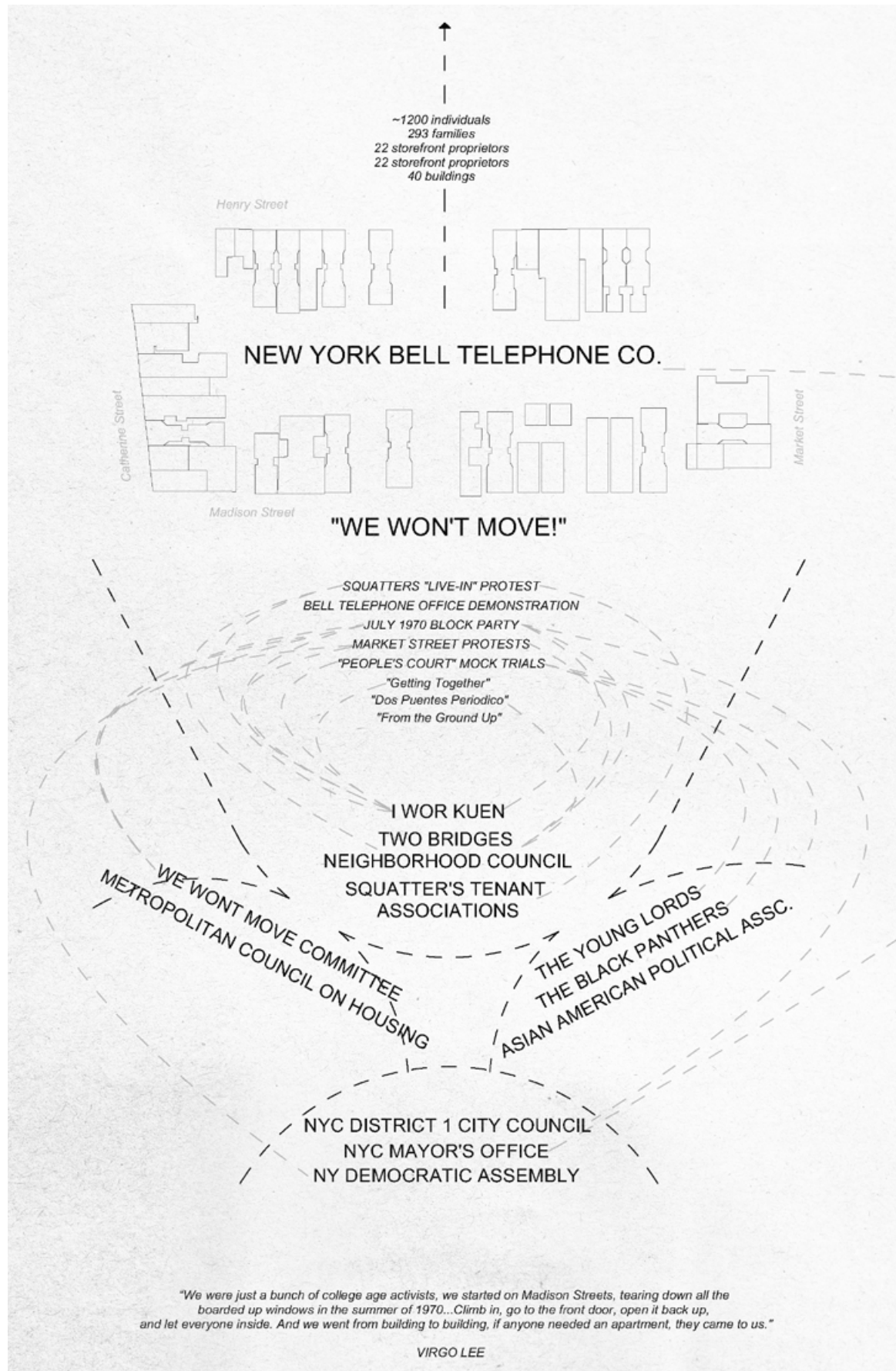
Beginning in 1960, the NY Bell Tel. Co. communication infrastructure began falling under the weight of increased home telephone installations. Their existing exchange system relied on the manual labor of human-controlled switchboard operators who could no longer keep up. Their need to automate led them to buying out two blocks of tenement houses between Market St. and Catherine St. in the heart of working class Chinatown. Over the second-half of the decade, hundreds of families were slowly vacated by way of delayed maintenance and neglect. The buildings were then boarded up, awaiting demolition.⁶

In July 1970, twelve college-aged, radical leftists broke those boards, and re-opened the buildings to neighbors free of charge. Hundreds of families moved in, and could not be moved.⁷ Two years later, as momentum built up from the block to the Mayor’s office, the NY Bell Tel. Co. relinquished its ownership of the two blocks, moving their plans elsewhere.

This research and representational work was created following a visit to the MOCA archives and an extended interview with a founding member of I Wor Kuen, Virgo Lee.

place Chinatown, NYC
timeline 01/2024 - 05/2024
advisor Jelisa Blumberg, *Power Tools*





One Acre

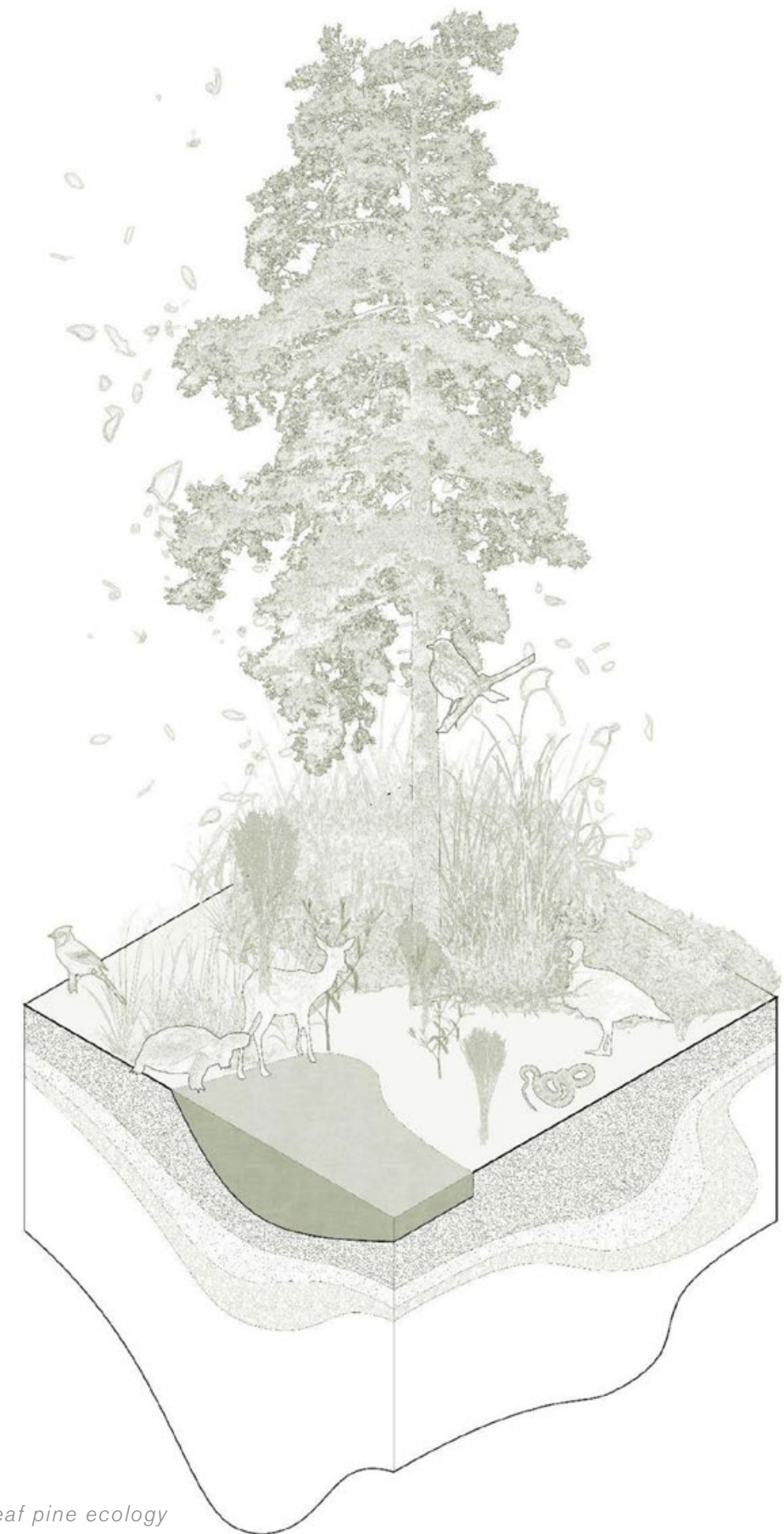
Throughlines of timber harvesting in North America

Beginning with analyzing the origins of structural lumber within an adaptive re-use building project in Brooklyn, NY, "One Acre" expands to visualize the hidden ecological impacts of both the significant historic forestry practices of southern Longleaf Pine ecologies and the burgeoning frontiers of northern Black Spruce mass timber forestry today.

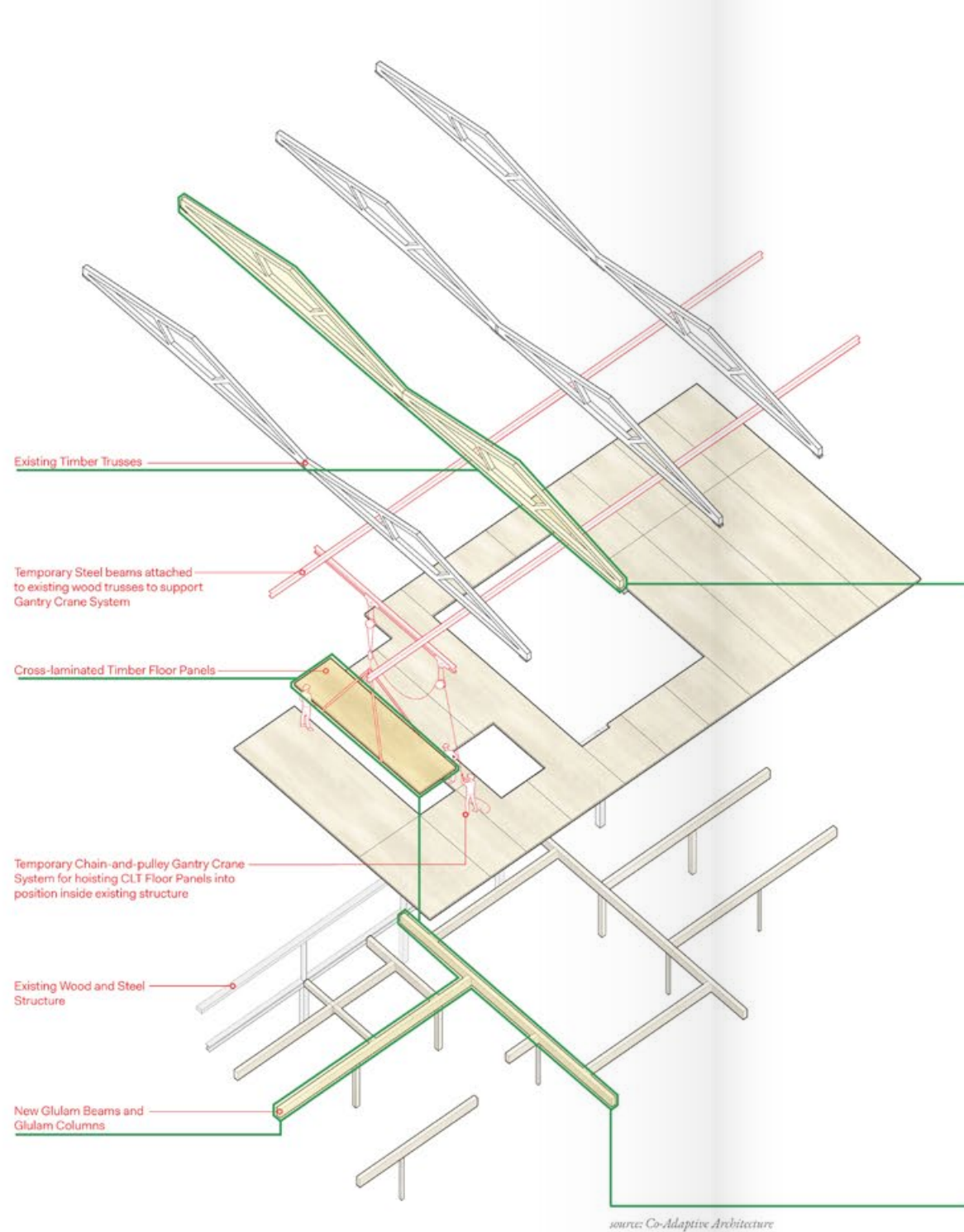
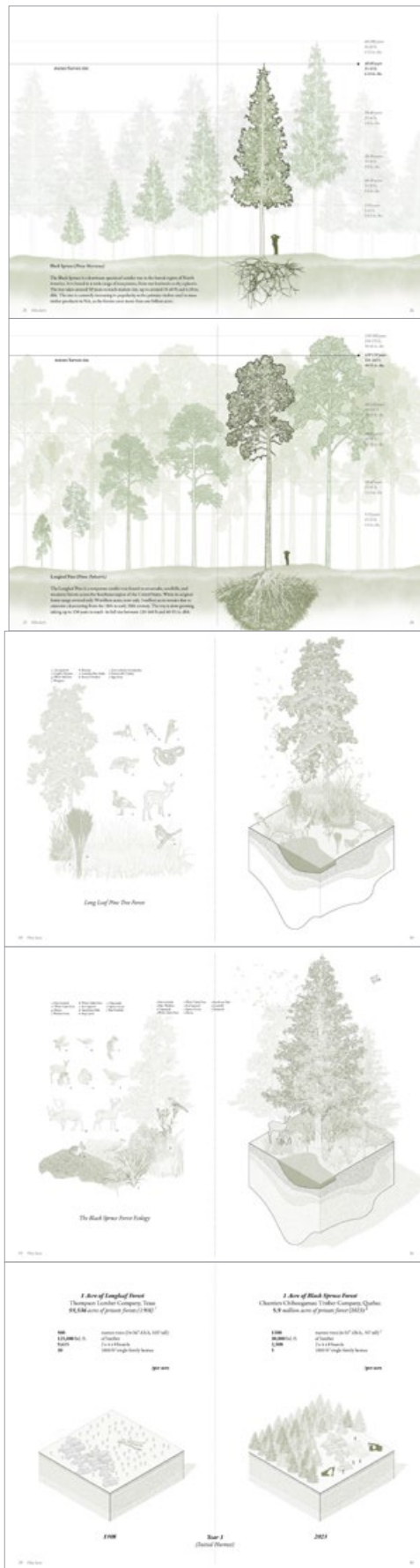
With each analysis situated within an area of a single acre, the project seeks to create projections of territorial scale environmental manipulation at a scale which centers the relational, yet extractive contexts between humans, creatures, organisms, and our complex natural and built ecologies.

place East Texas, Northern Quebec, & Gowanus, BK
timeline 09/2023 - 12/2023
advisor Thomas Schaperkotter, *Construction Ecologies in the Anthropocene*
collaborators Meghan Jones, Zack Bryson

**for full project pdf, visit davidzhang.info*



a vignette of longleaf pine ecology



source: Co-Adaptive Architecture

How can we relay the significance of our building materials across interspecies timescales?



Longleaf Pine (*Pinus Palustris*)
Histories of Linear Extraction

The Longleaf Pine, a slow-growing coniferous giant, was once the primary timber commodity of the Southern region of the United States. Its nearly 90 million acre forest coverage was decimated in the first two centuries of American colonial land occupation, leaving only 3 million acres left today.

Driven by accelerating technological and infrastructural growth of the late 19th and early 20th century, the demise of the species was inevitable due to its incredible structural properties and volume per harvest. What this meant from an ecological point of view, however, was the complete collapse of ecosystems which relied on this keystone species to regulate the coastal plain ecologies through fire. The extirpated longleaf pine forests were then quickly transformed into timber plantations, replacing biodiverse ecosystems with densely packed loblolly and slash pines grown solely as cash crops.

source: Alvin S. Sarrill, Natchez, Texas

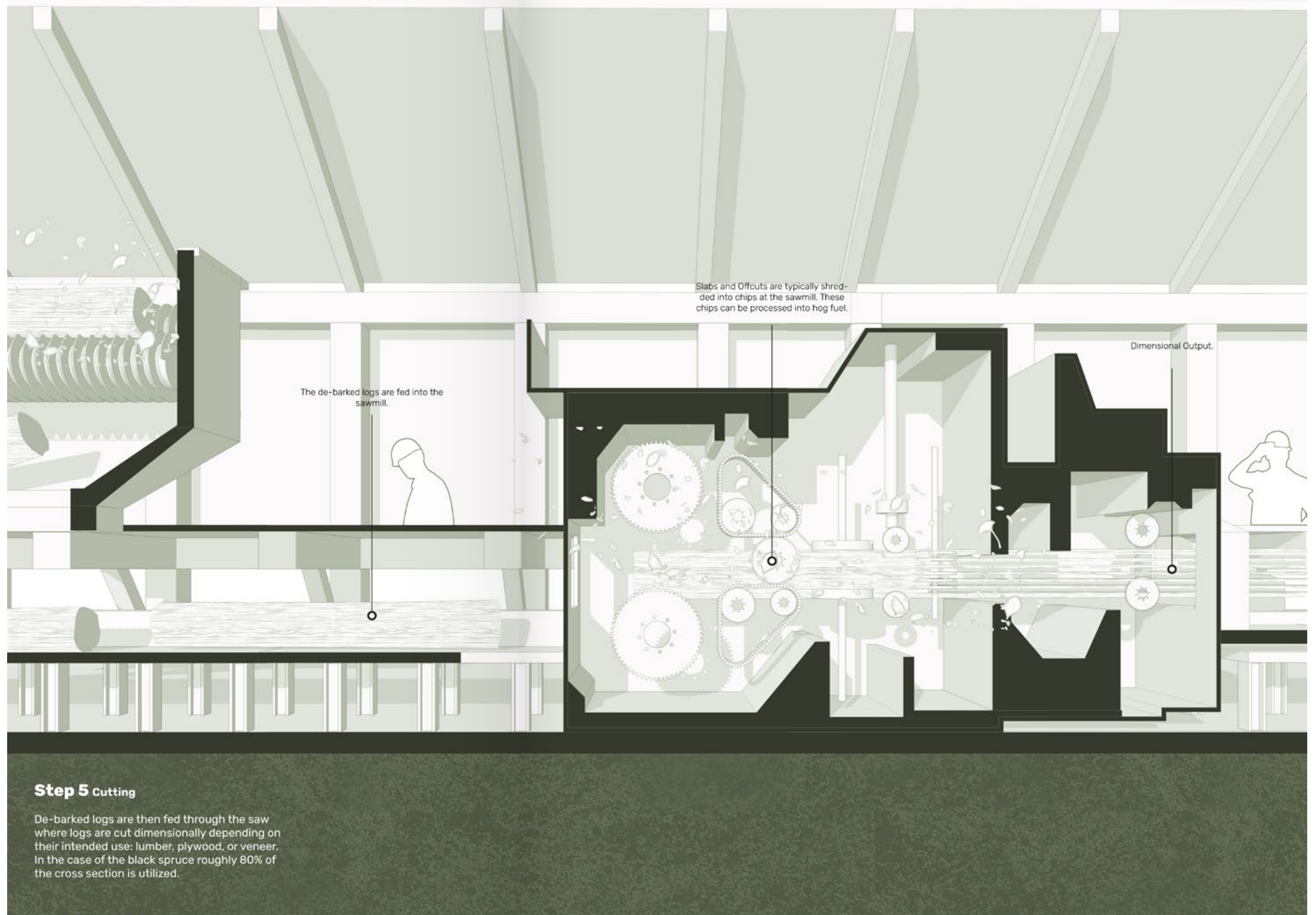
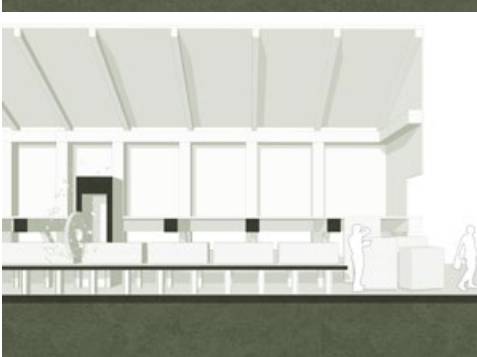
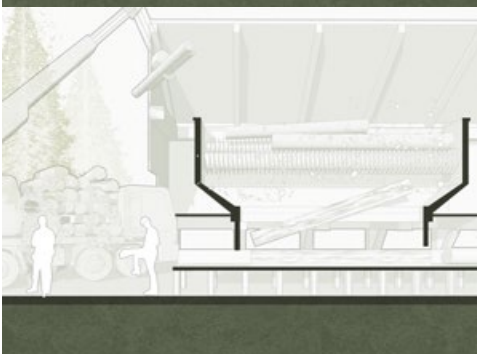


Black Spruce (*Picea Mariana*)
Frontiers of Mass Timber Forestry

The Black Spruce is a relatively skinny, immensely abundant conifer species that is a dominant keystone tree of the North American boreal forests. Once overlooked as a softwood timber commodity due to its meager mature diameter of 6-10 inches, it is now one of the most popular trees used in mass timber products due to its abundance and the technological capacity to aggregate small timber members into mass timber units.

Like the longleaf pine, the black spruce is both fire dependent and fire producing, relying on heat to release its seeds through generational stand-replacement fires. This ecological patterning is a primary driver of current silvicultural practices that balance timber harvesting and ecosystem regeneration through strategic clearcutting methods. This balance is crucially important in avoiding the ecosystemic collapses of past generations of timber harvesting, yet it is one in deep contention with growing economic demands for black spruce wood.

source: Tigmot Feller, Banquet



Step 5 Cutting

De-barked logs are then fed through the saw where logs are cut dimensionally depending on their intended use: lumber, plywood, or veneer. In the case of the black spruce roughly 80% of the cross section is utilized.

Resurgent Wetlands Ramapo Land Reclamation in the Black Dirt Region

Our project is focused on drawing out the long history of the nearly extinct, yet presently resurgent Atlantic White Cedar wetlands in the Black Dirt Region of Orange County, NY. The history is told in positioning architectural production in an intimate relationship with agricultural and ecosystemic relations. Specifically, we have explored the historical changes in food production and forest usage, and its subsequent architectures: from the Lenape long-house built of adolescent cedar trees to the Dutch barn built of mature parent trees. Each of those architectures are inextricably bound within the production of local resources and land relationality, from trail foraging/polycultural food practice to enclosed, industrial agriculture.

Building off of the momentum of naturally resurgent Atlantic White Cedar wetlands in the disturbed, over-nutriented, economically non-viable lands downstream of the Black Dirt Region, our design for both wetland polycultural farming and the architecture to support it seeks to challenge normative measures of material efficiency (minimal materiality, span, and envelop) by situating hyper-local timber based architecture within intentional forest thinning practices. Through the practice of building with adolescent cedar trees, efficiency is measured here as the capacity to which the larger ecosystem can continue thriving.

place Black Dirt Region, Orange County, NY
timeline 01/2023 - 05/2023
advisor Feifei Zhou, *ADV-IV Studio*
collaborator Zack Bryson



a A temporally flattened site history of the Black Dirt Region

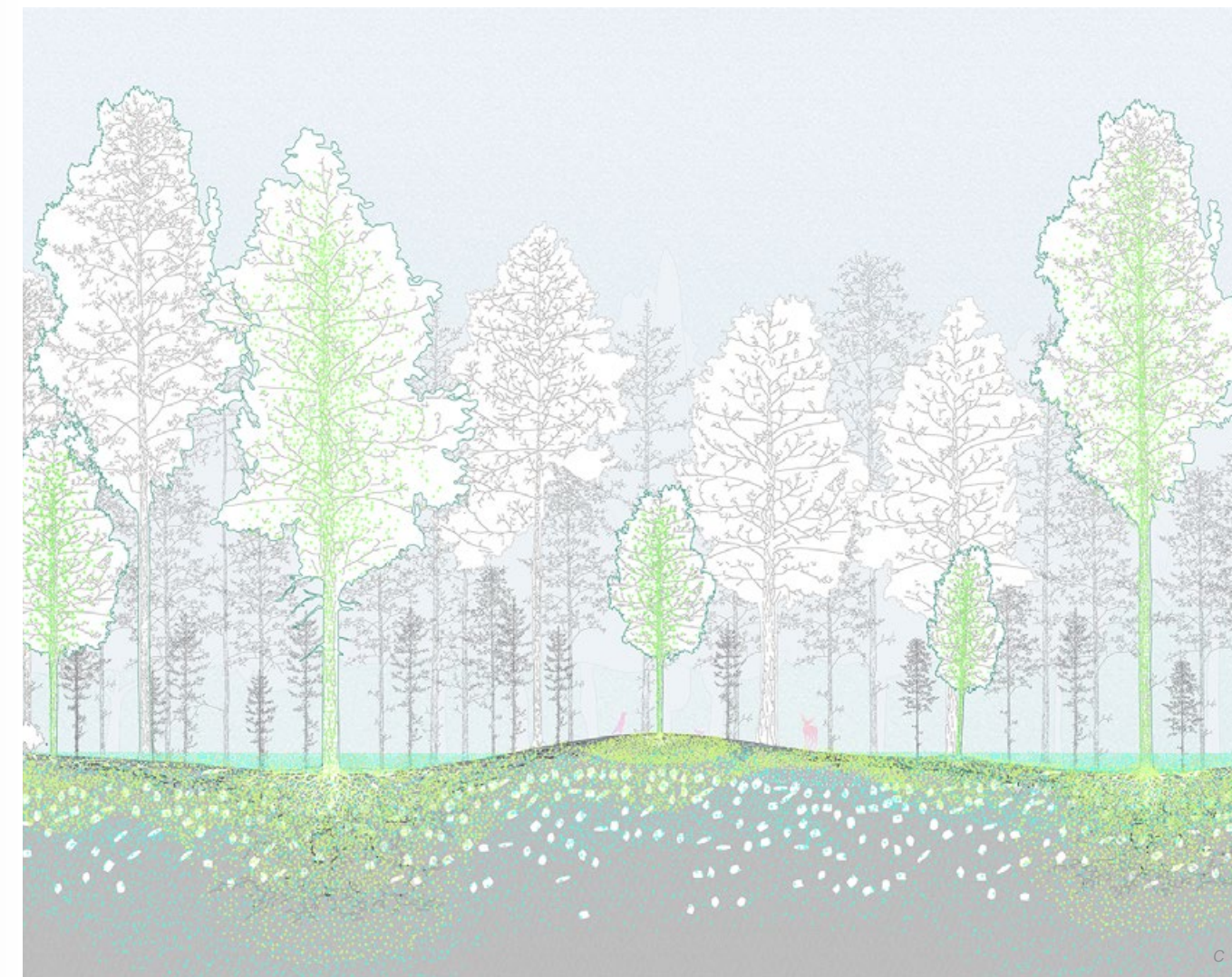
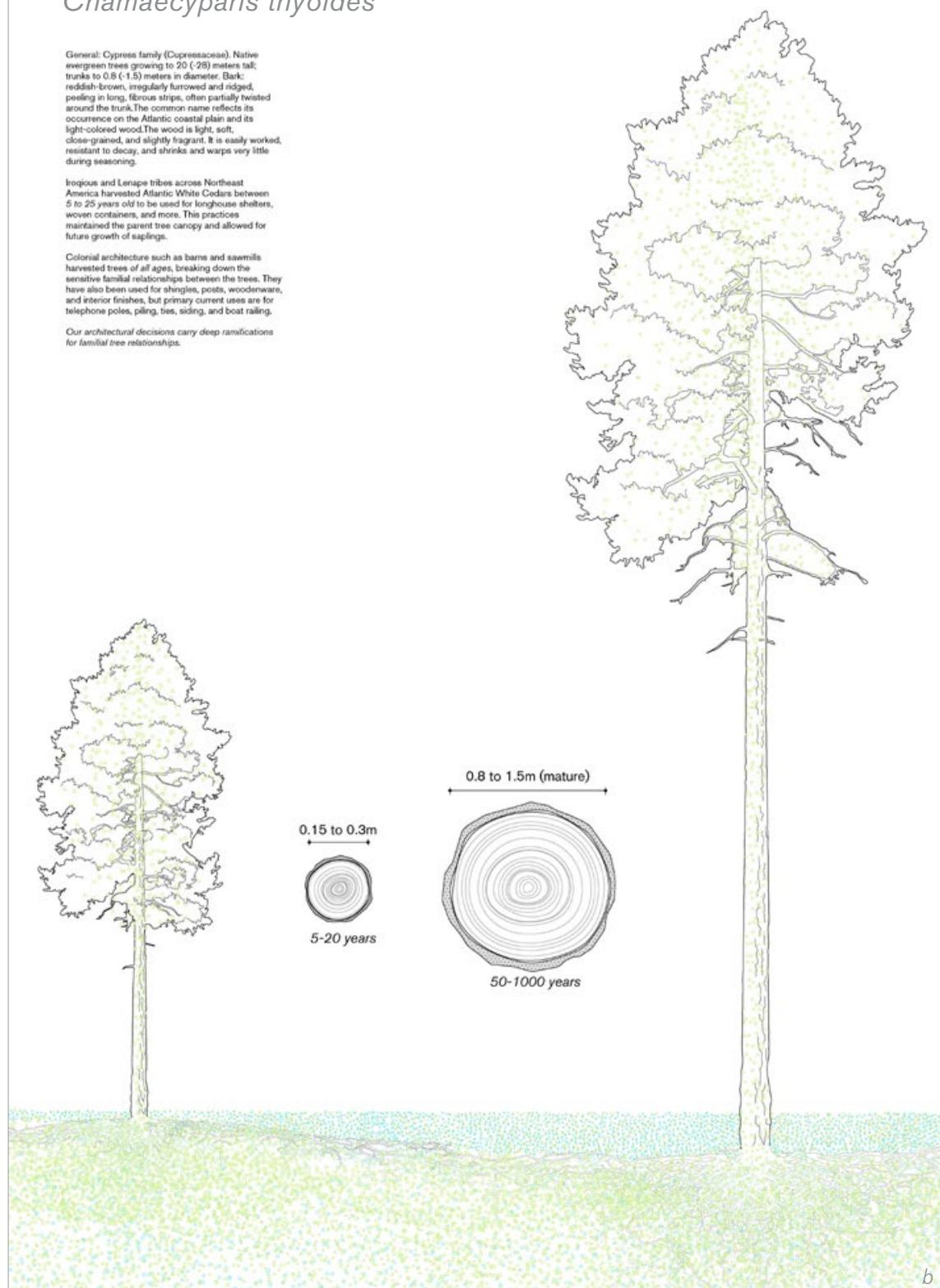
Atlantic White Cedar *Chamaecyparis thyoides*

General: Cypress family (Cupressaceae). Native evergreen trees growing to 20 (28) meters tall; trunks to 0.8 (1.5) meters in diameter. Bark: reddish-brown, irregularly furrowed and ridged, peeling in long, fibrous strips, often partially twisted around the trunk. The common name reflects its occurrence on the Atlantic coastal plain and its light-colored wood. The wood is light, soft, close-grained, and slightly fragrant. It is easily worked, resistant to decay, and shrinks and warps very little during seasoning.

Indigenous and Lenape tribes across Northeast America harvested Atlantic White Cedars between 5 to 25 years old to be used for longhouse shelters, woven containers, and more. This practice maintained the parent tree canopy and allowed for future growth of saplings.

Colonial architecture such as barns and sawmills harvested trees of all ages, breaking down the sensitive familial relationships between the trees. They have also been used for shingles, posts, woodenware, and interior finishes, but primary current uses are for telephone poles, piling, ties, siding, and boat railing.

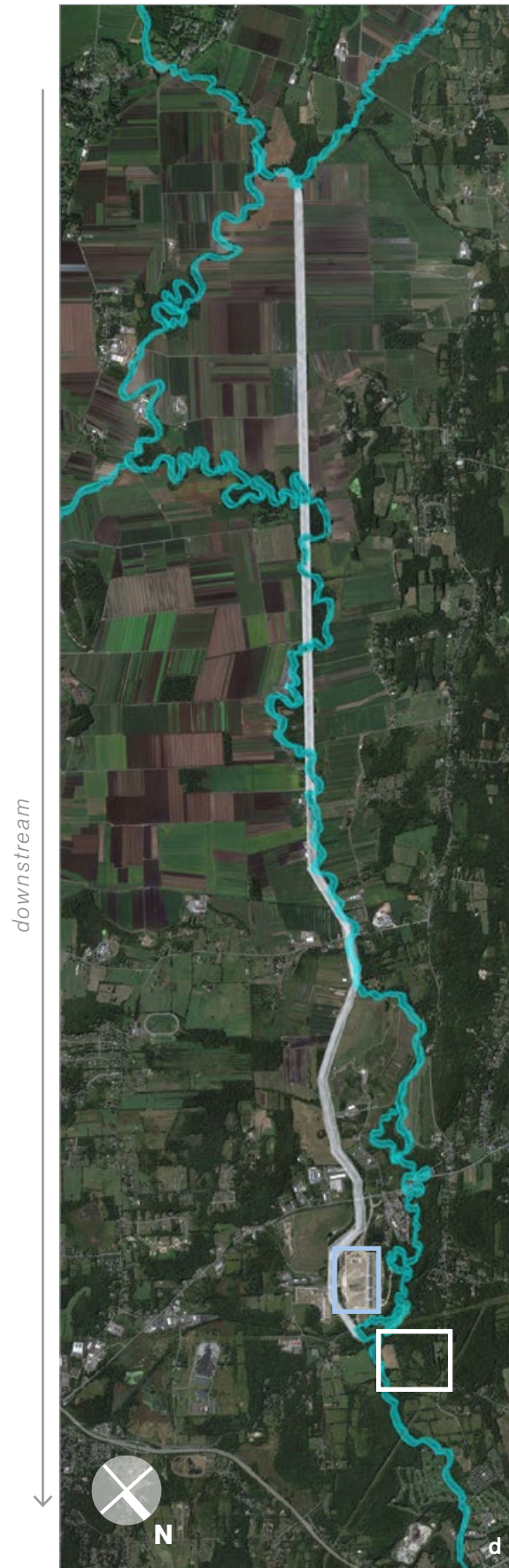
Our architectural decisions carry deep ramifications for familial tree relationships.



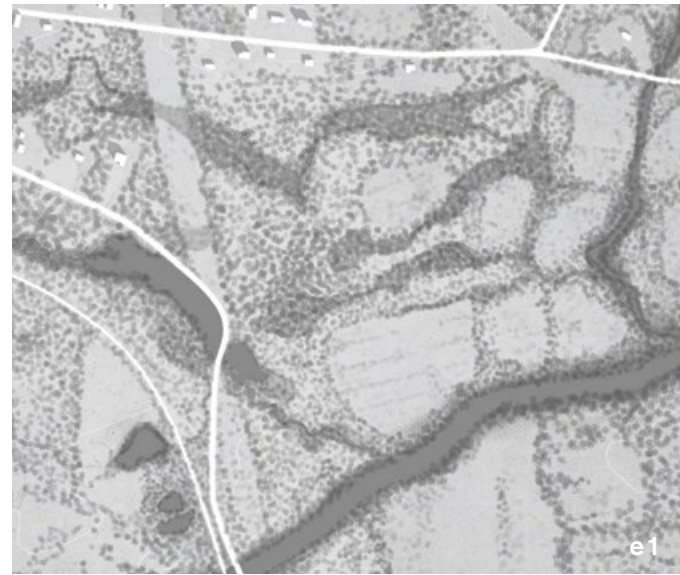
The Atlantic White Cedar tree was the focal point of our research and design proposal. A native pioneer species of the region, the AWC was important for both the health of the larger ecosystem and as a primary building material for native Lenape groups.

In time, it was also one of the first mass-harvested natural commodities by the Dutch along the Hudson river, decimating native tree populations and converted wetland forests to agriculture.

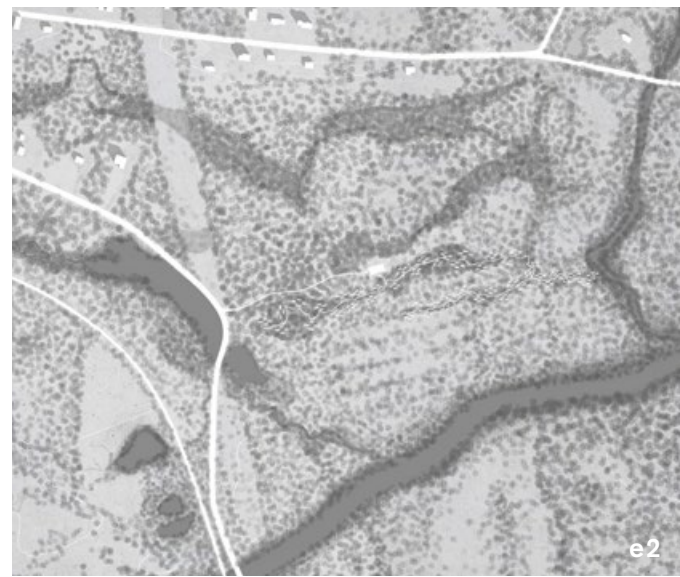
c Section of the natural AWC wetland conditions



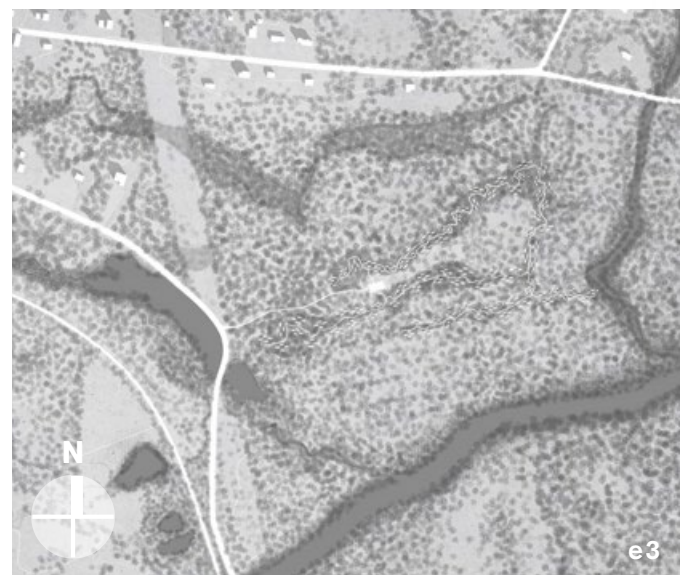
d 1:10000 satellite view of the Black Dirt Region



1990*

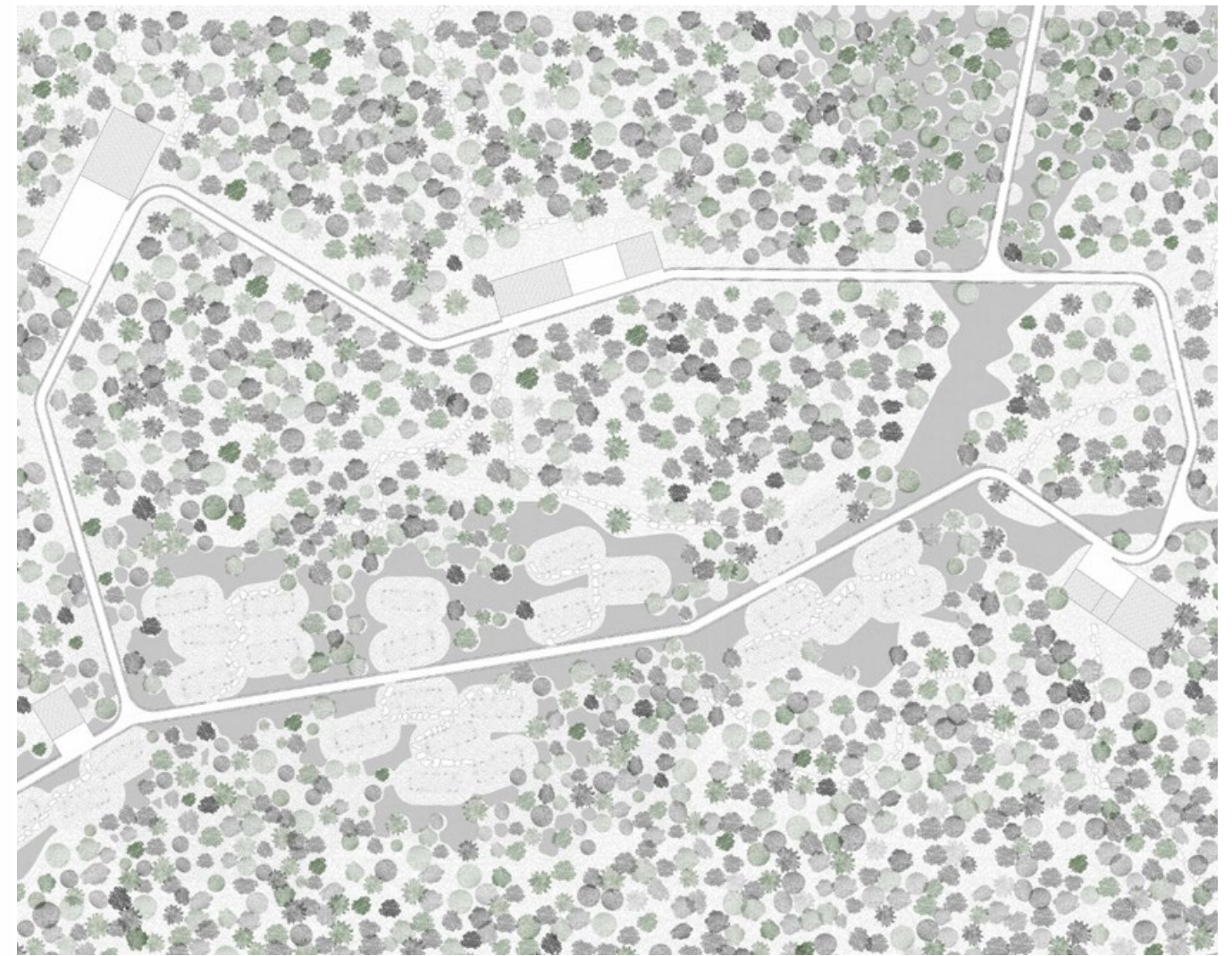


2023



2060*

e1-3 1:1000 site plan of resurgent Atlantic White Cedar wetlands



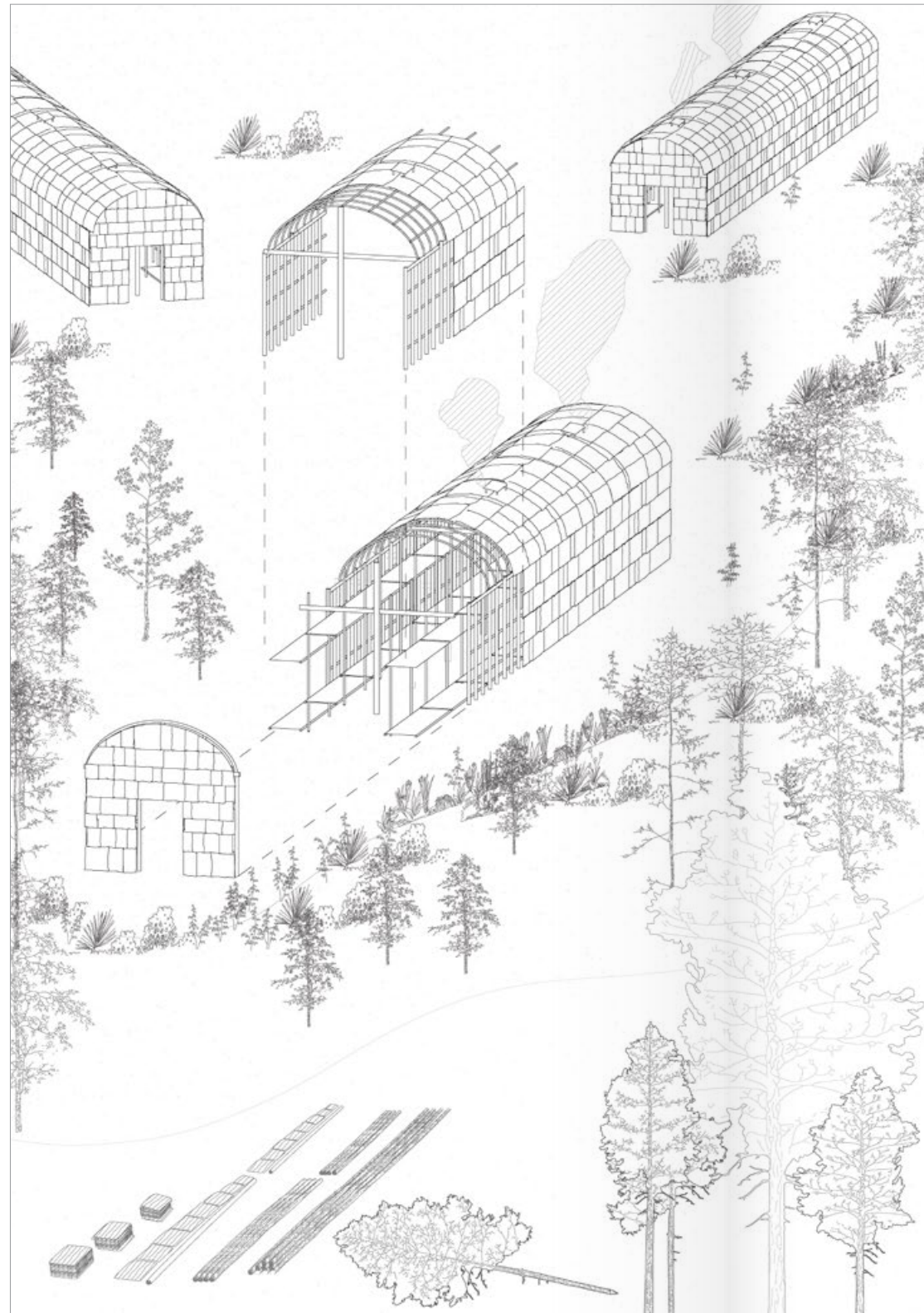
f

Our proposal for a wetland farming and ecological education center is rooted in our observations (following site visits and historical research) that as agricultural plots are abandoned due to industrial-ag. and landfill contamination, resurgent Atlantic White Cedar wetlands are beginning to be found in their place.

f 1:250 site plan, the patterns of forest mound farming are created by selective trimming

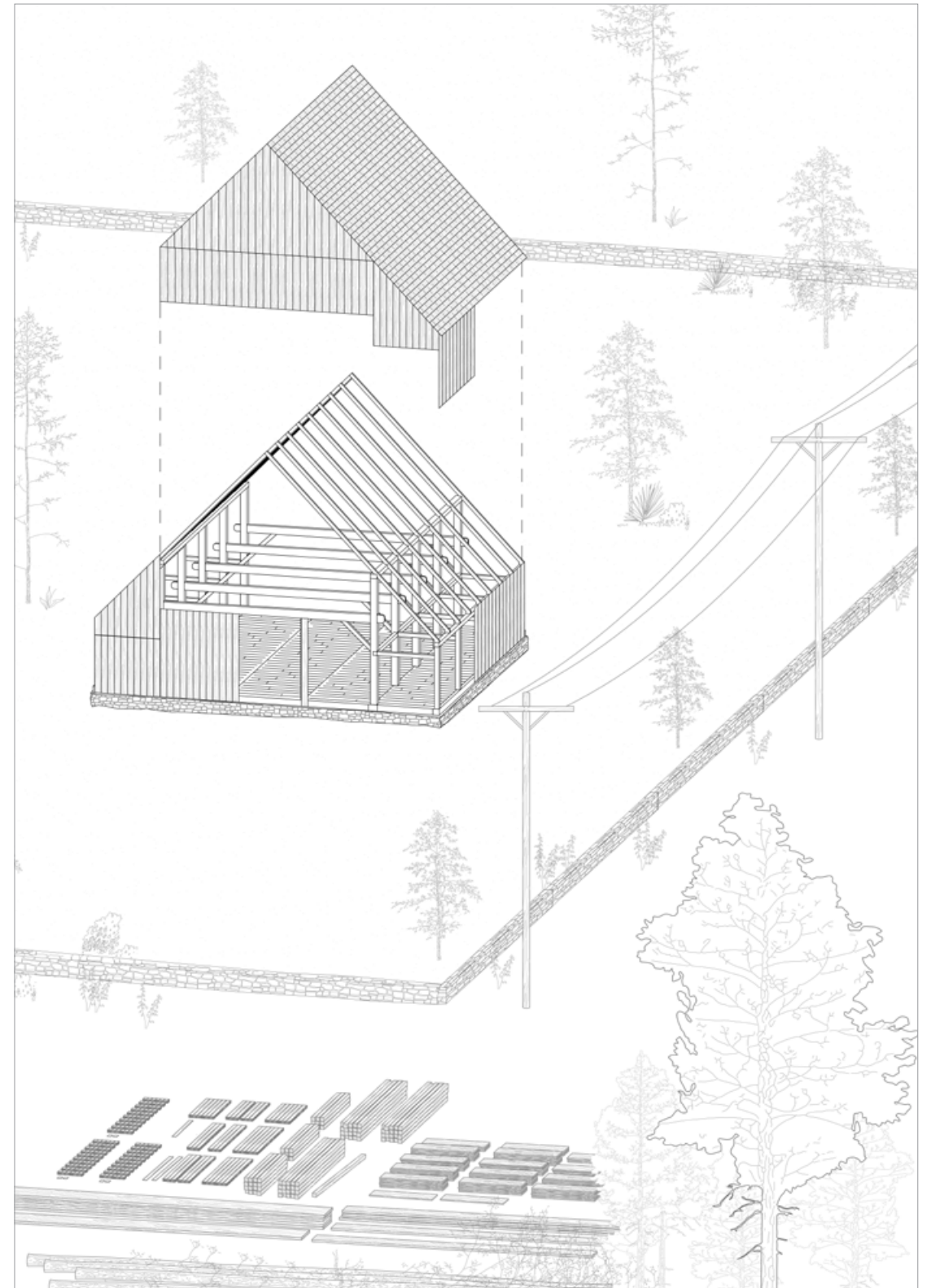
The materials of traditional Lenape longhouses relied on a reciprocal relationship to the forest, using only young trees.

In comparison, the architecture of the Dutch barn was built of large timber members, supporting a linear, extractive relationship to the forest.



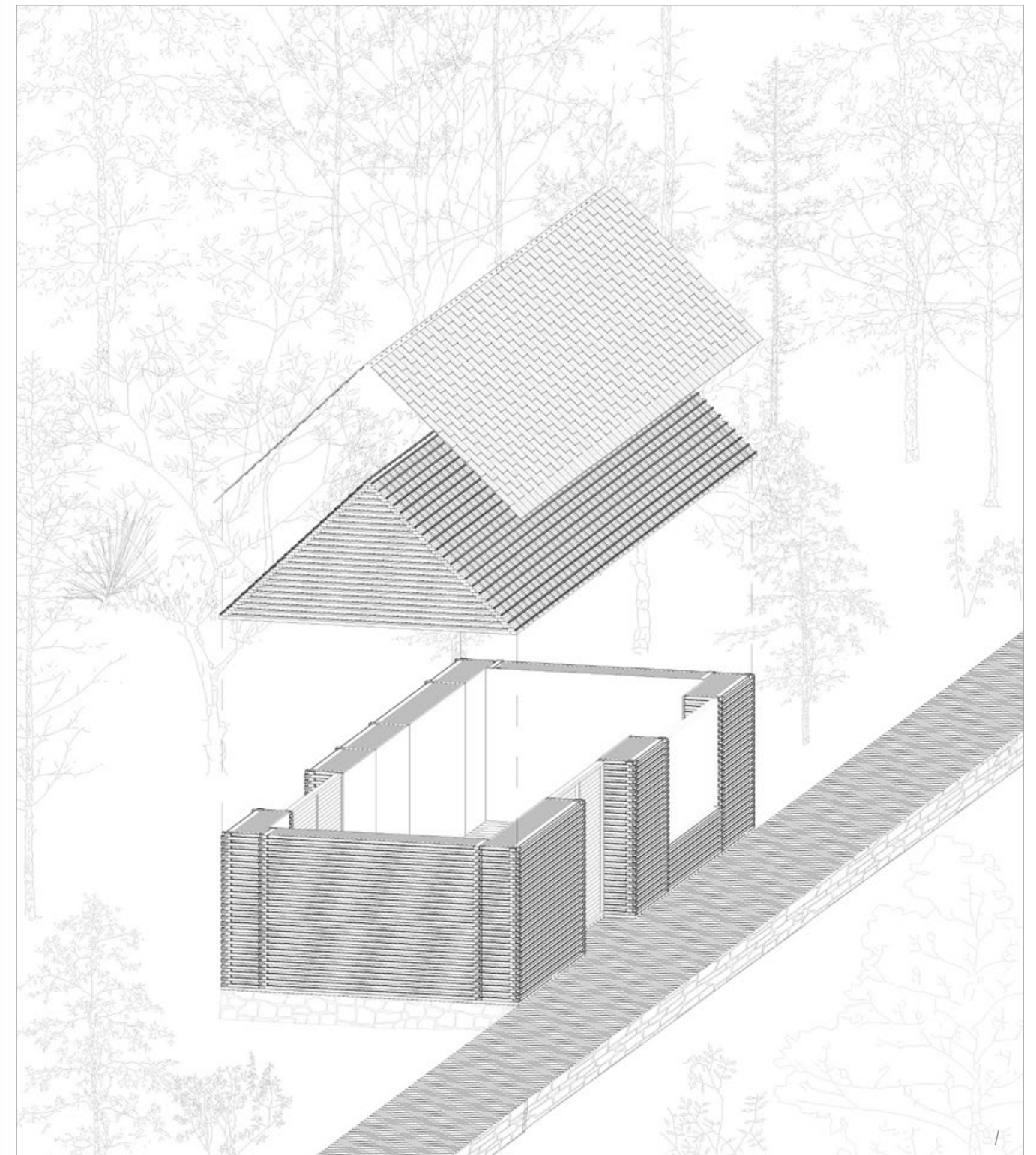
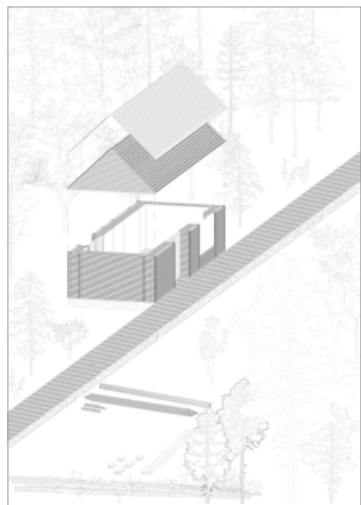
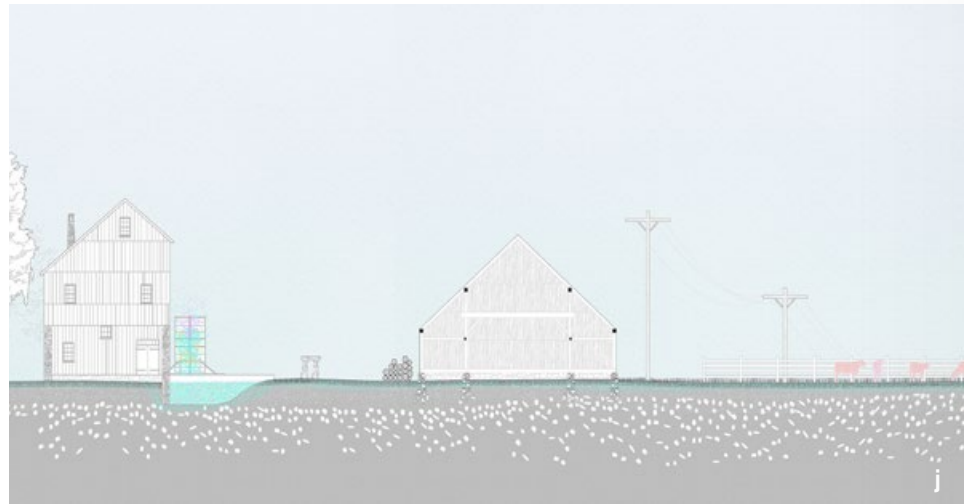
g

g Axon of Lenape longhouse



h

h Axon of Dutch barn

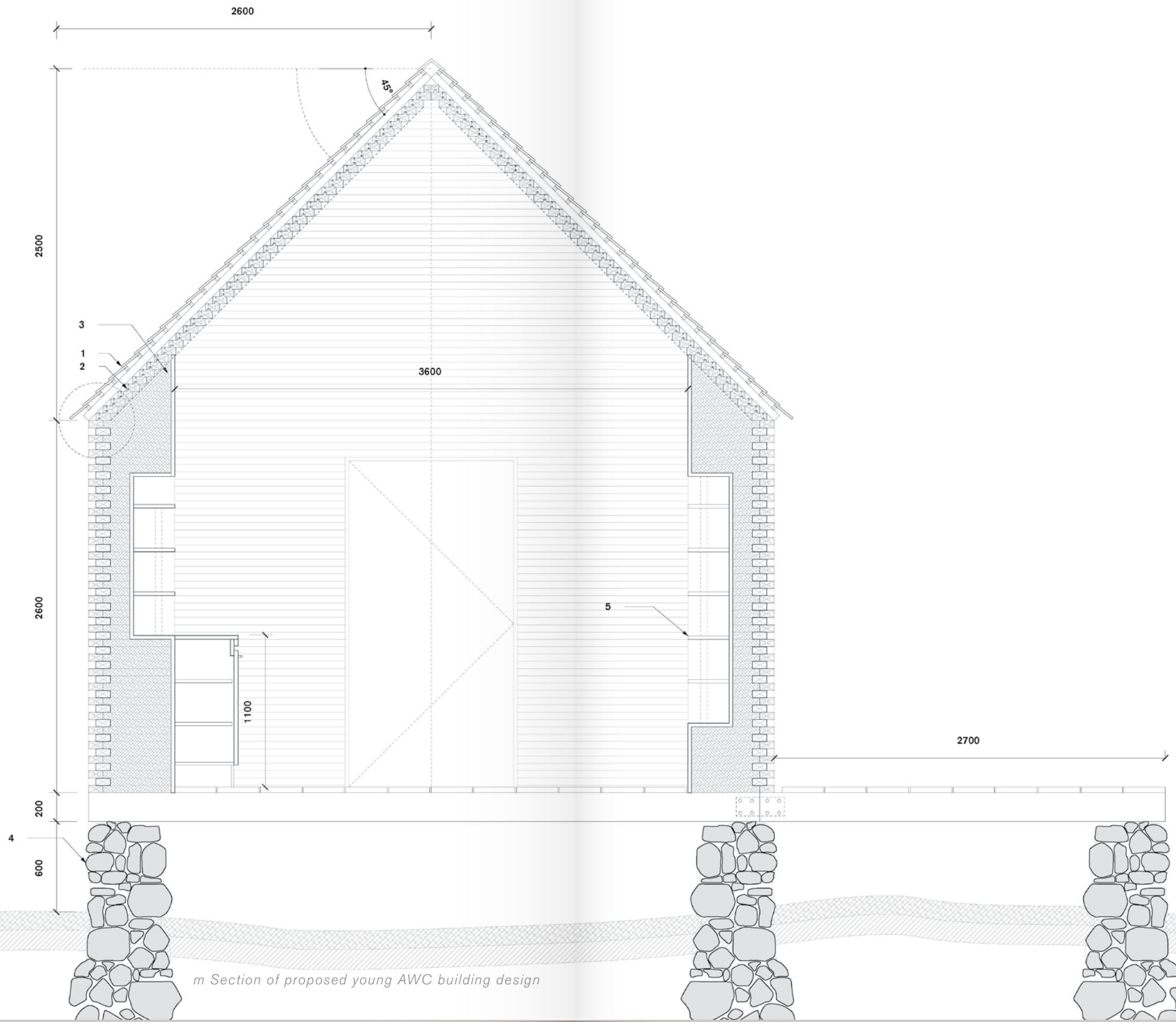


Our building design utilized corner lapped Atlantic White Cedar trees between 5 to 20 years old, seeking to reinstate a non-destructive material relationship to wetland forests.

i Reciprocal environmental relationships

j Extractive environmental relationships

k Resurgent environmental relationships

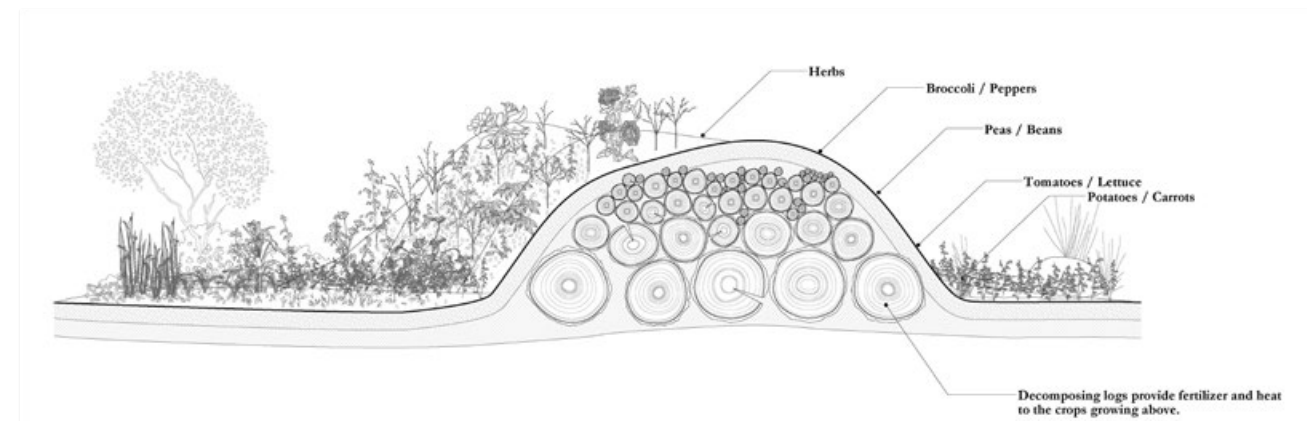


- 1 - Cedar Bark Shingles
- 2 - Dowel Laminated Cedar Members
- 3 - Wood Fiber Insulation
- 4 - Stone Wall Foundation
- 5 - Embedded Shelving

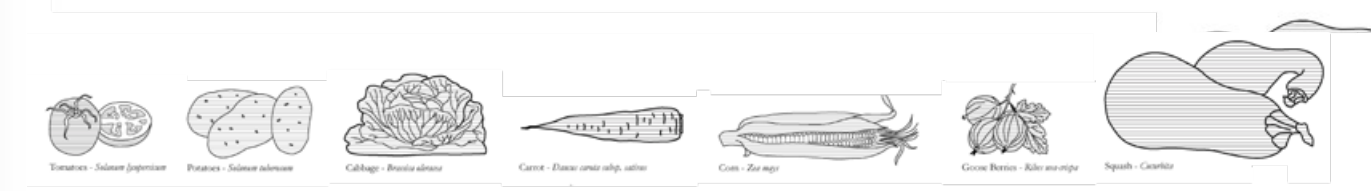
m Section of proposed young AWC building design



m Programmatic scheme of the farming and education center



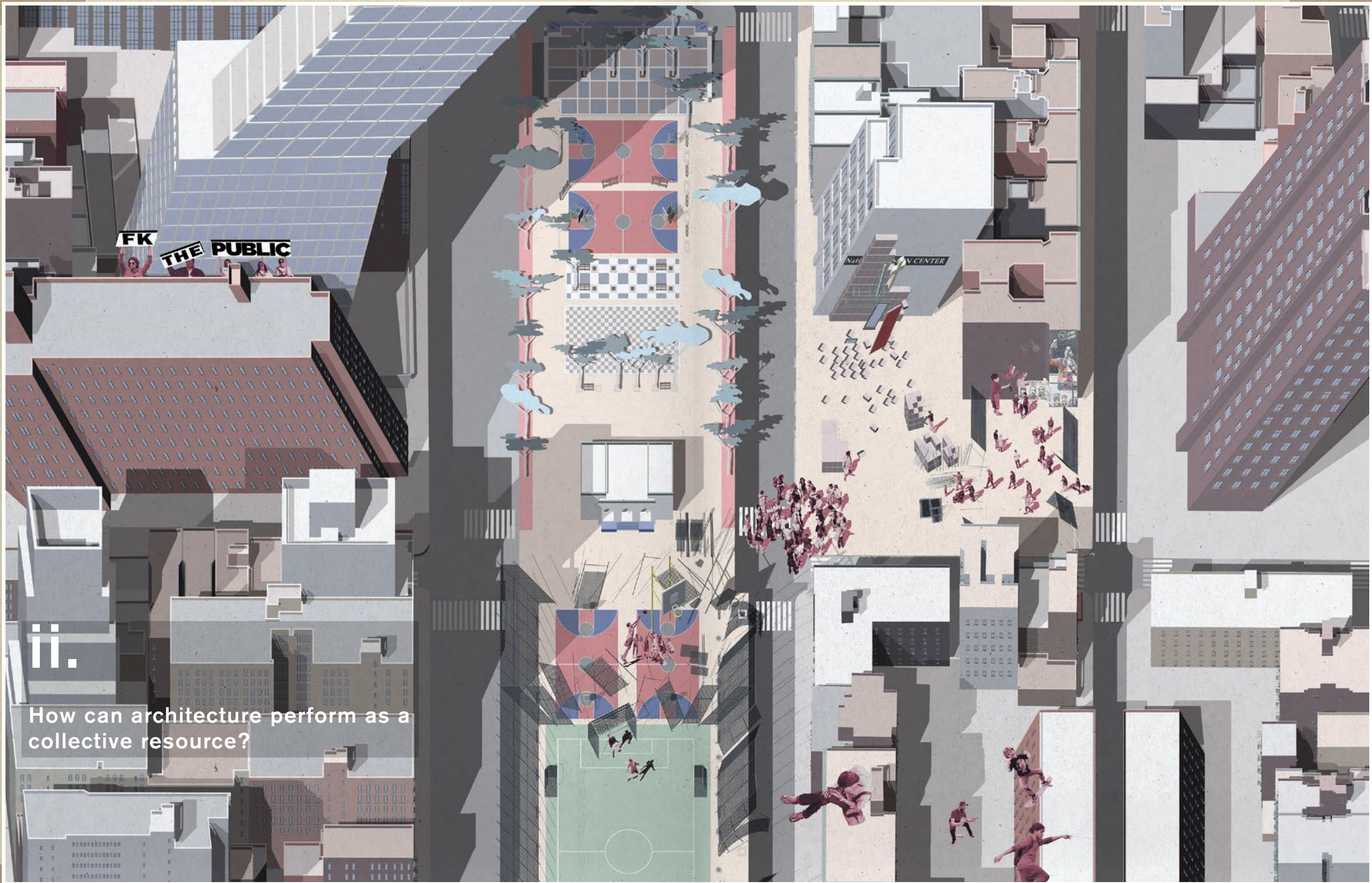
- Wild Rice - *Zizania palustris*
- Highbush Blueberries - *Vaccinium corymbosum*
- Sun Flowers - *Helianthus annuus*
- Raspberries - *Rubus idaeus*
- Skunk Cabbage - *Symplocarpus foetidus*
- Arrowroot - *Maranta arundinacea*
- Marsh Marigold - *Caliba palustris*
- Currants - *Ribes*
- Jewel Weed - *Impatiens capensis*



o Wetland mound farming, mound construction and planting scheme



p Collage perspective view of the wetland mound farming



ii.
How can architecture perform as a collective resource?

Neighbor to Neighbor

Co-operative housing centered on allotment gardens in the S. Bronx

This project positions housing as a mediator between individual and community and its architecture as a mediator between city and nature. In this stance, our proposition for housing on our site has a simple goal: to provide stability to its residents through “scales of collectivity”.⁸

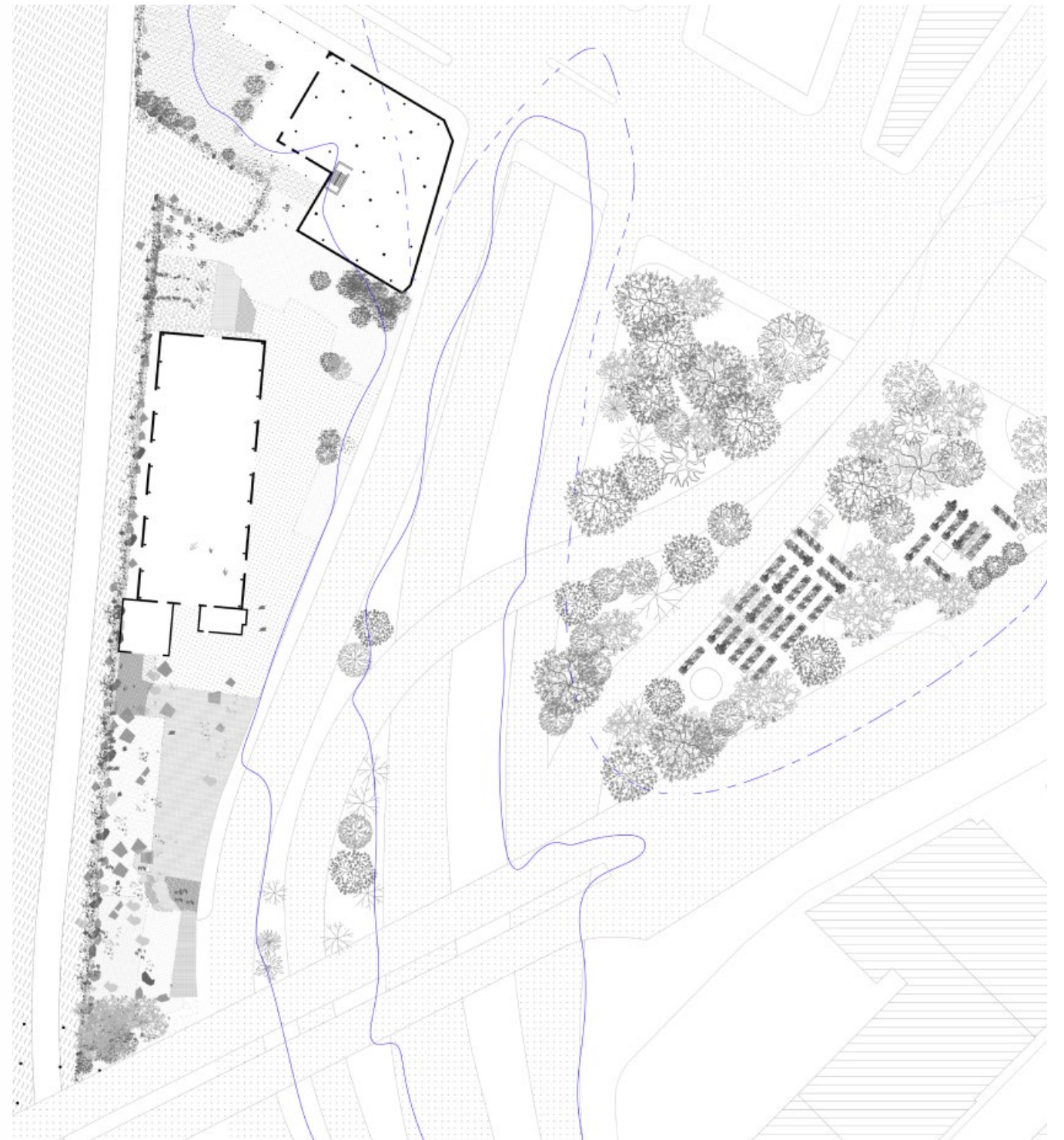
The housing is designed to appeal to local collectives: the church groups, the community gardeners, the non-propheteers. Our project is designed for resilience through cyclical conditions. For ground conditions that disappear or return and for individuals that come and go, a constant place for gathering and care to occur nonetheless.



place Mott Haven, Bronx, NY
timeline 09/2022 - 12/2022
advisor Hilary Sample, *Core III Housing Studio*
collaborator Andrew Chee

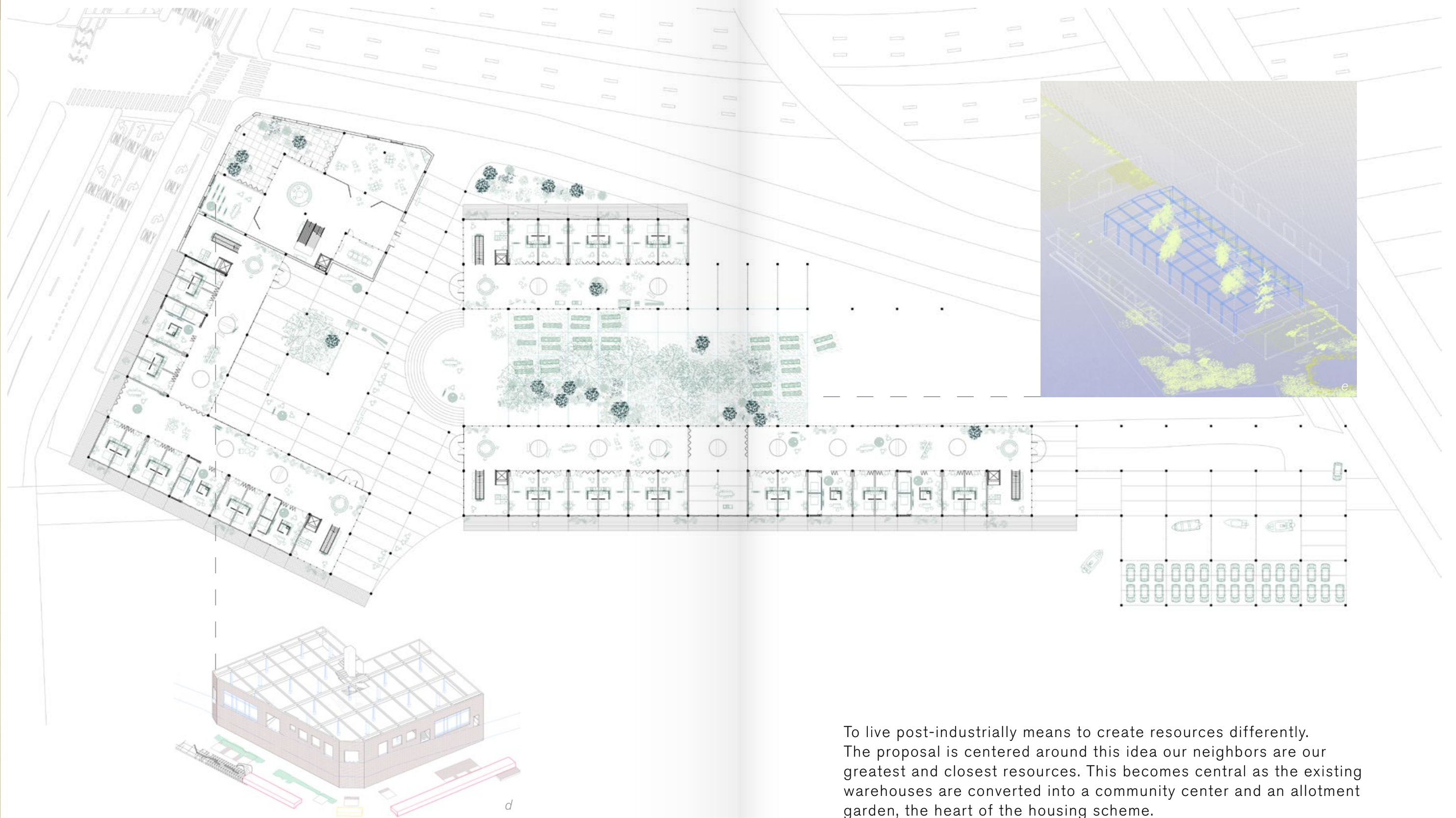


b existing site conditions



The site of the project is located on the SW tip of the Bronx, a historic industrial trading hub. The main driver of our design was to explore the question:
Can we live post-industrially?

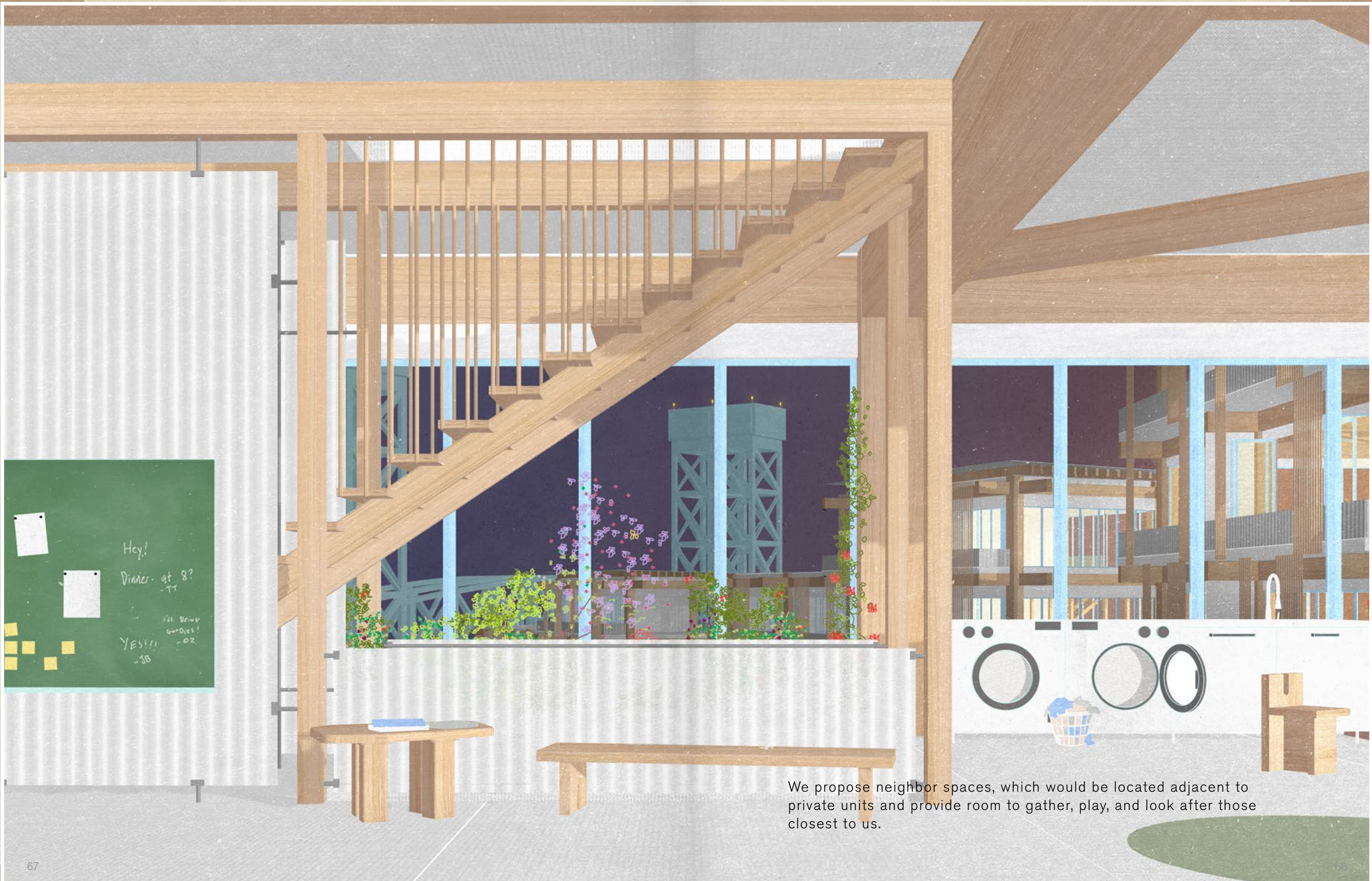
c existing site map in Mott Haven, incl. adjacent community garden



To live post-industrially means to create resources differently. The proposal is centered around this idea our neighbors are our greatest and closest resources. This becomes central as the existing warehouses are converted into a community center and an allotment garden, the heart of the housing scheme.

d defunct car dealership to community center

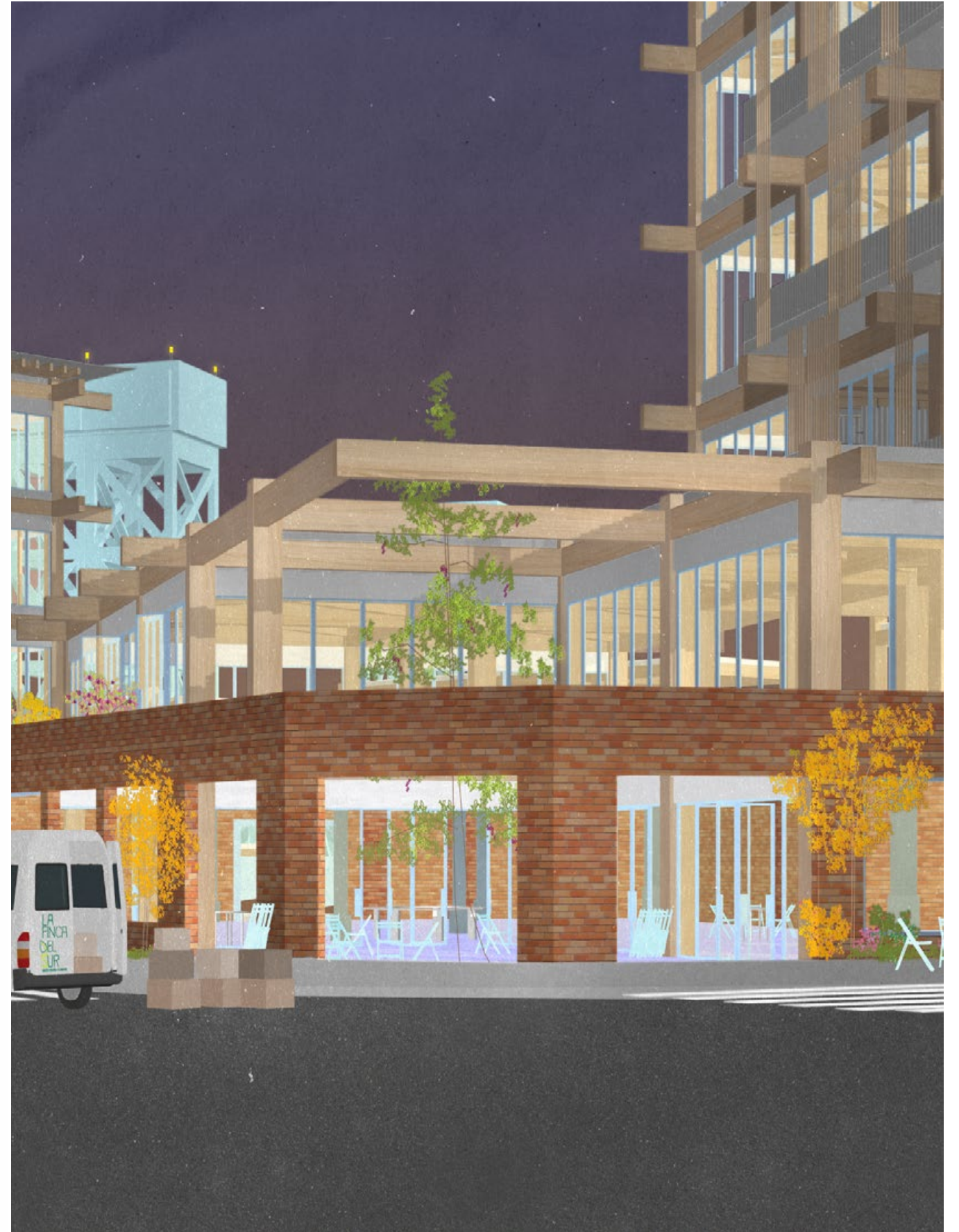
e existing warehouse to collective garden



We propose neighbor spaces, which would be located adjacent to private units and provide room to gather, play, and look after those closest to us.



f preliminary model collage



g community center, "after an event"

Parish Library for Objects

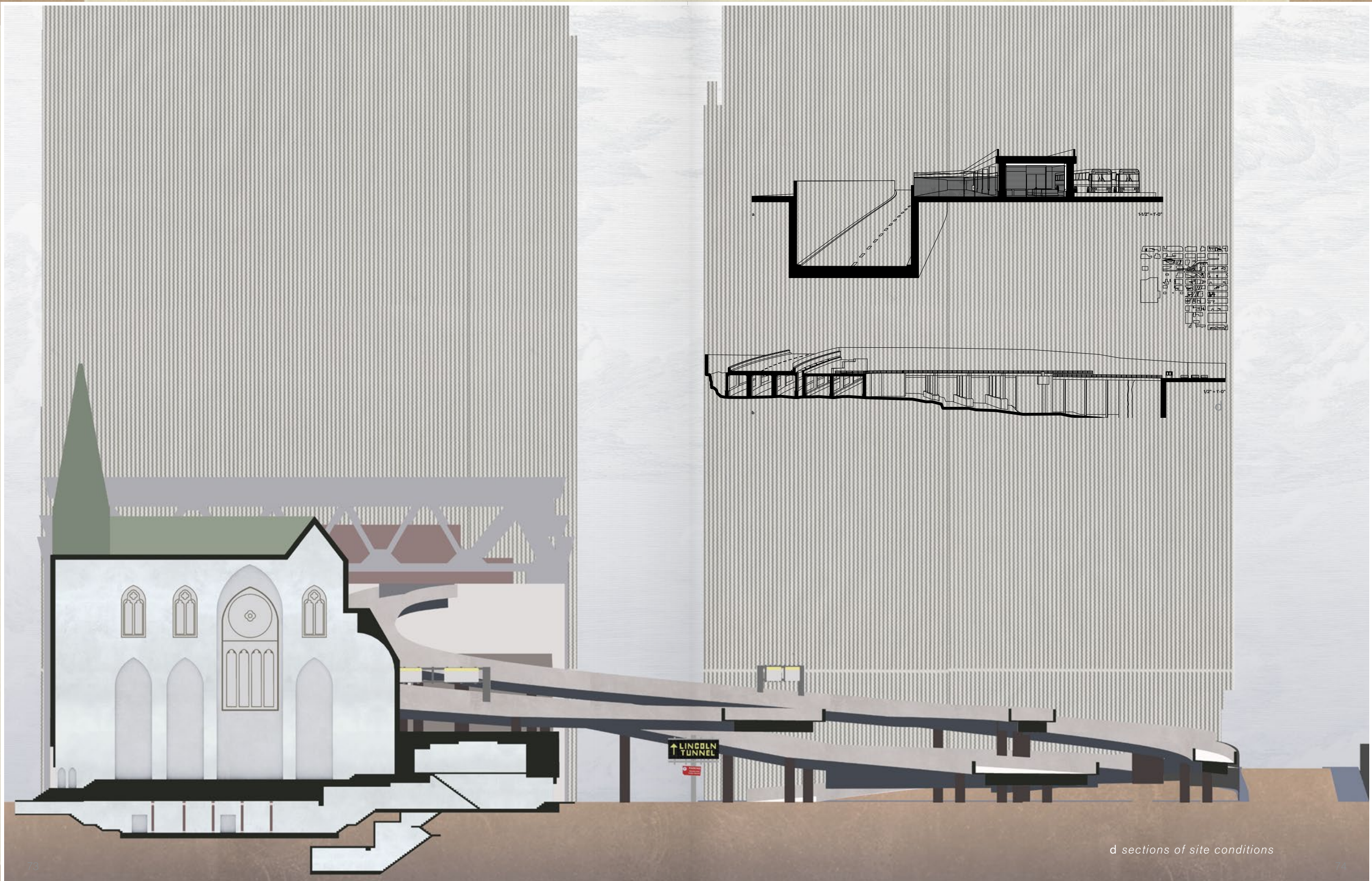
Re-imagining social support in a Midtown church

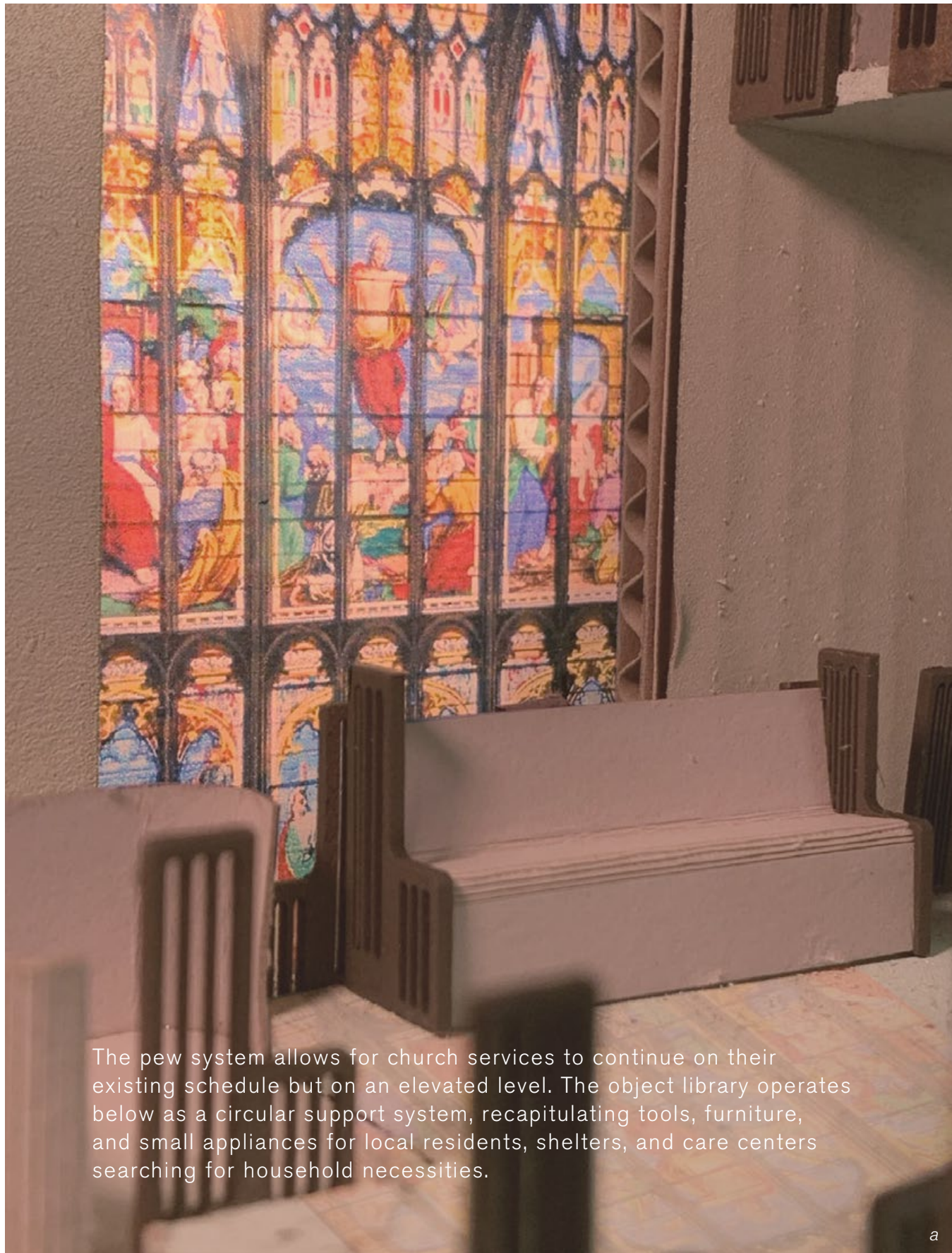
A re-imagining of the parish church typology in the age of late capitalist hyper-consumption. The neighborhood of Midtown West, adjacent to the Hudson Yards and Times Square, is home to one of the densest proportion of supportive, rehabilitative, and homeless care centers in Manhattan. In addition, it is an arterial center of material flow due to the Lincoln Expressway, seeing millions of Amazon packages through its gates weekly.

The proposal is a response to these two conditions, adding a library for objects in its central nave of the Sts. Cyril and Methodius and St. Raphael Croatian Church on 41st and 10th Ave., implicating its large footprint, yet lack of social presence in the neighborhood.



place Midtown, NYC
timeline 09/2021 - 12/2021
advisors Thomas de Monchaux, Carlyle Fraser, Aditi Shetye, *Core | Broadway Stories*

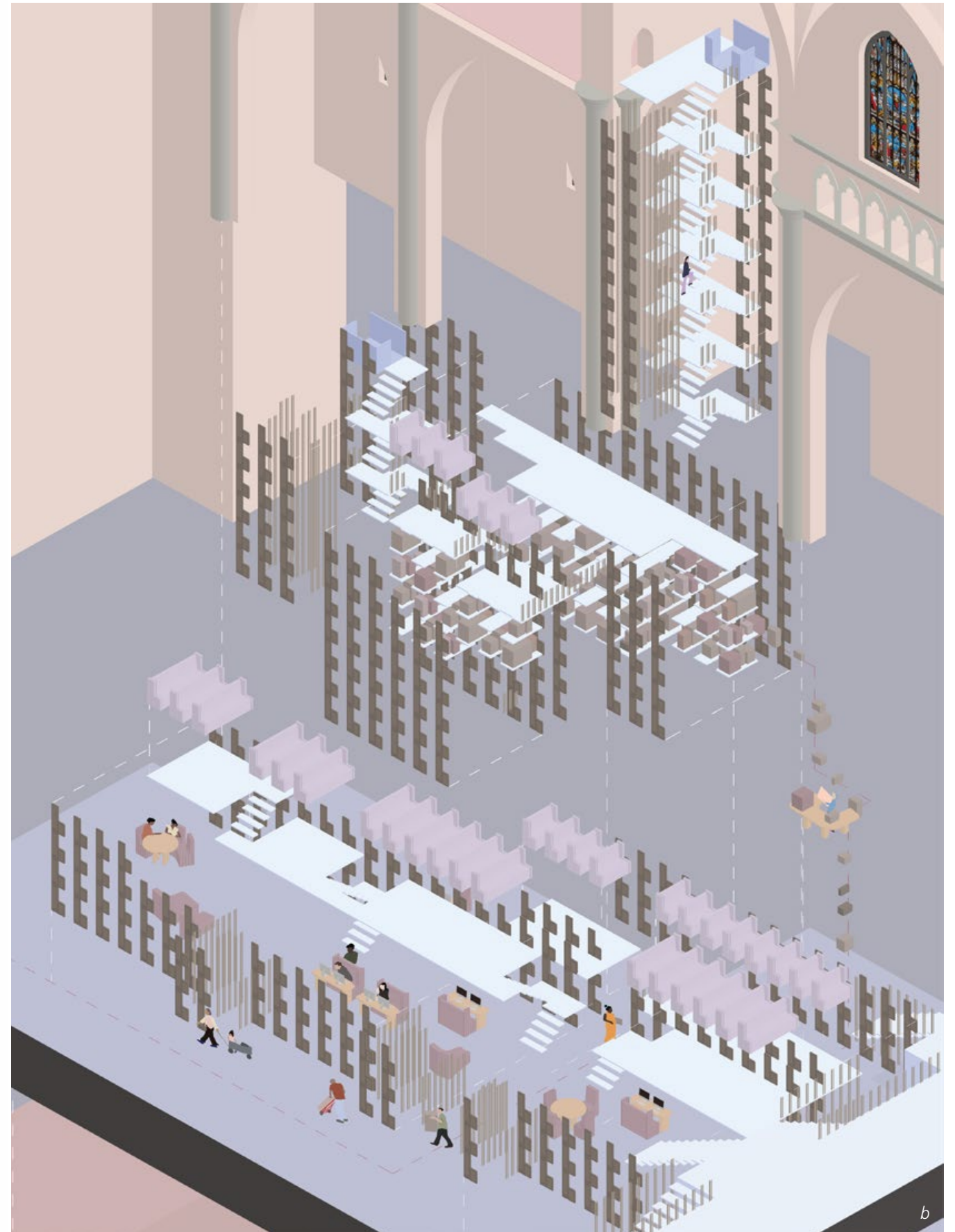




The pew system allows for church services to continue on their existing schedule but on an elevated level. The object library operates below as a circular support system, recapitulating tools, furniture, and small appliances for local residents, shelters, and care centers searching for household necessities.

a

a 1/8" model



b

b exploded axonometric



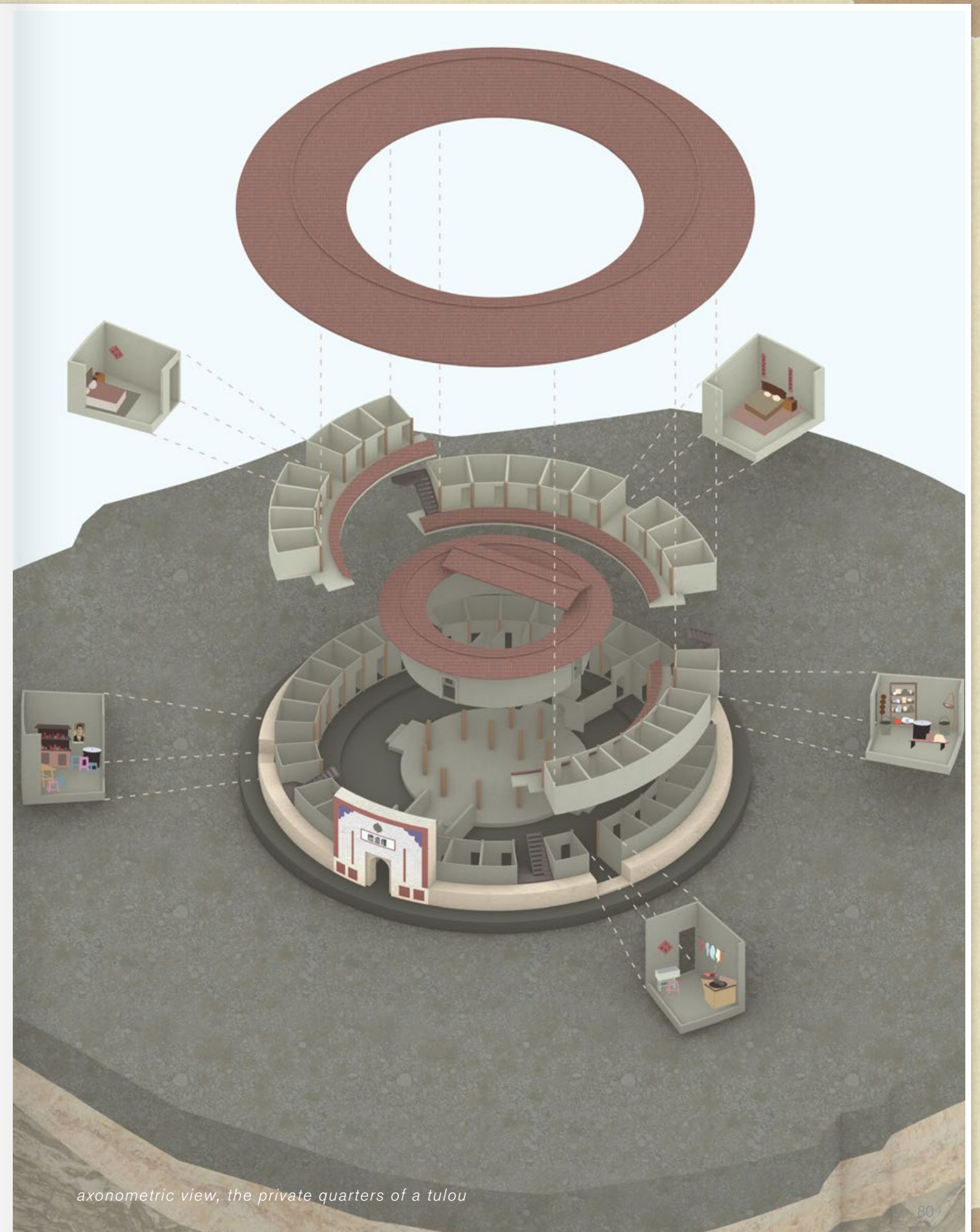
Drawing Out the Tulou

Community, stability, resource security, digital isolation

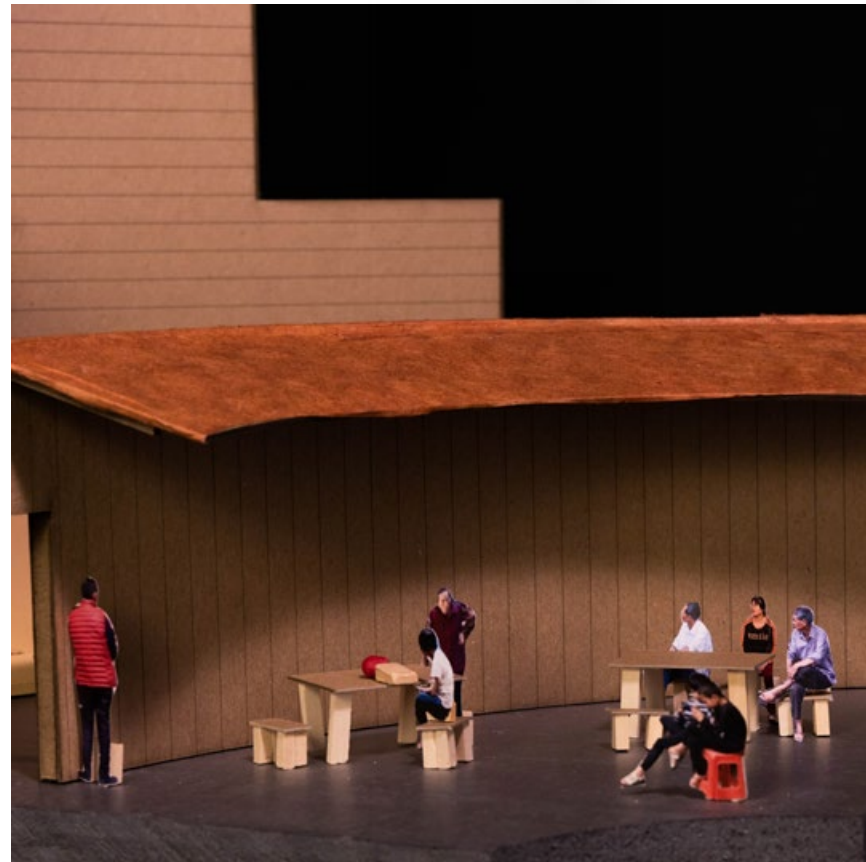
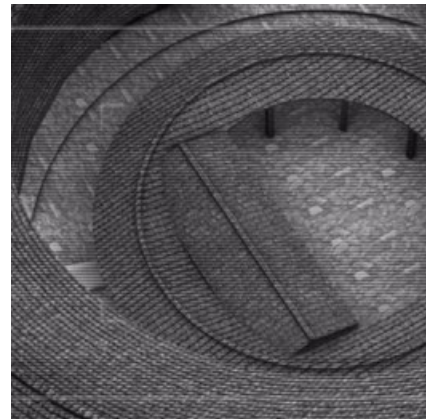
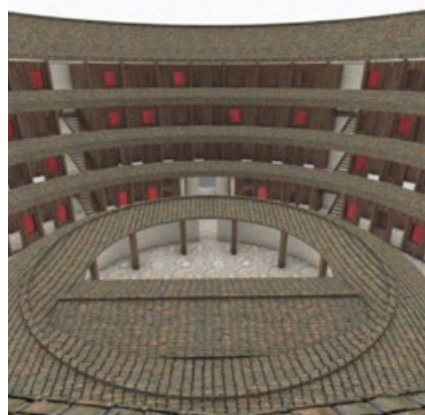
This semester of representational exercises was focused around understanding the constitutional parts of the Fujianese tulou housing typology as it relates to communal living and resourcing in contemporary times. The drawings and models were specifically focused on highlighting contemporary conditions of insularity caused by digital technology and social media usage.

Following decades of exodus from the countryside by emerging generations of Chinese citizens, the tulou seems less materially and socially relevant than ever. How can architectural drawing and representation highlight these tensions?

place Fujian, China
timeline 09/2021 - 12/2021
advisors Josh Uhl, Lucia Song, Jonghoon Park, ADR /



axonometric view, the private quarters of a tulou

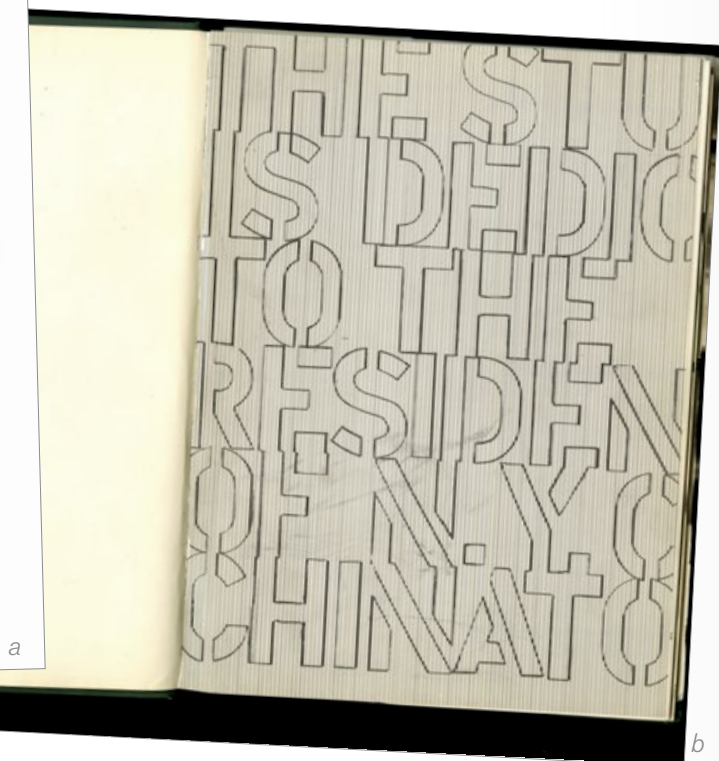


Locating the Legacy of Basement Workshop in the Years 1969-1975:
An Analysis of the Two Participatory Domains



[Source: Alex Zheng]

David Zhang
Prof. Samuel Stewart-Haley
ARCH 6511-1



a

b



c



The Yellow Pearl Arts Anthology as a Platform for Identity Convergence

The *Yellow Pearl Arts Anthology* (1972) has been widely considered as a cornerstone project of Basement Workshop and the Amerasia Creative Arts Program, both by its cultural importance and by providing the organization with a deep cache of public funds contributed by the NYS Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and other institutional sources.²⁸ With these funds, Amerasia Creative Arts was able to expand their arts programs beyond the production of *Bridge Magazine* and other internal projects and into the public realm. This included educational programs such as the Children's Workshop and the Dance Workshop, both of which operated within the same block as 22 Catherine Street, the home of the Asian American Resource Center beginning in 1972. Although Amerasia Creative Arts was widely considered an organization within Basement Workshop, its separate financial identity as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization meant that it was by all intents and purposes a separate and much more well funded institution. This was made clear following the creation of their own Artists' Resource Center, "an information bank of visual, audio, [and] mixed media... poster art services to the community; and the silkscreening-crafts workshops".²⁹ Beyond the overlap of language, the creation of this entity and the specific services they provided to the community marked a clear separation in the direction of the two resource centers, as the Asian American Resource Center was focused on providing English language courses, draft services, and career development services to the original residents surveyed in the

²⁸ Wong, Ryan Lee, "Basement Workshop: The Genesis of New York's Asian American Resistance Culture" *Signal, Issue 06, February 2018, Interference Archive*, 26-49, 34.
²⁹ *Basement Workshop, Amerasia Creative Arts Program Poster, 1972.*

Within the framework of the *Participatory Design* history/theory course, my analysis of the early years of Basement Workshop attempts to illustrate the complex and increasingly turbulent relationship between the group's two-pronged approach to community empowerment via collective art and working class enfranchisement. With an institutional legacy that includes the Chinatown Health Clinic and the Museum of Chinese in America, the group's early years provide deep insight into the formations of collective action in and beyond Chinatown, centered on third-world solidarity.

Storefront Learning

A public school centered on place-based education

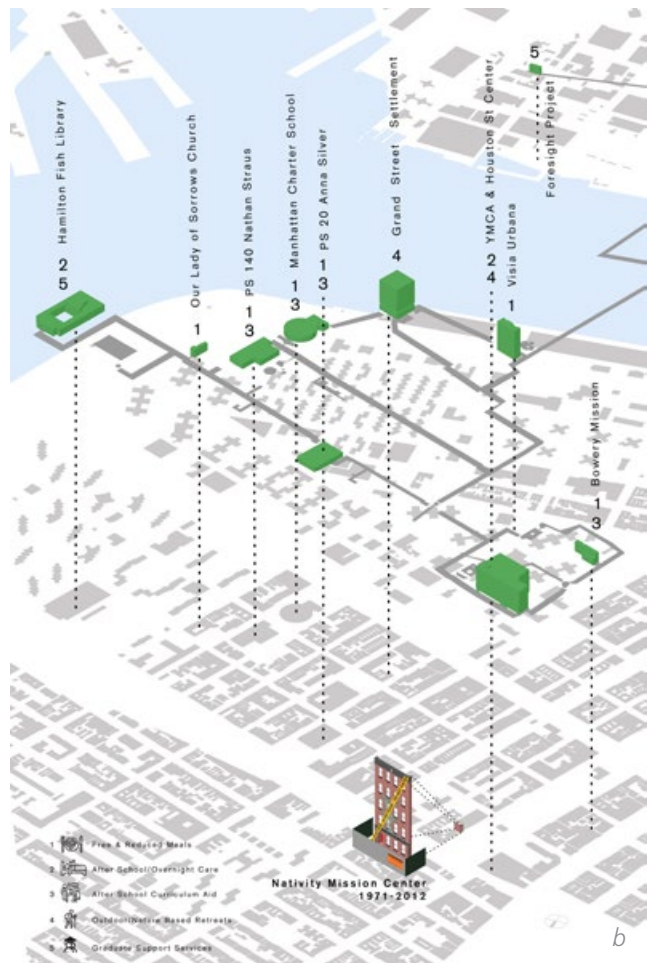
is a K-8 public school that seeks to provide a contextual learning environment based on the principles of Place-Based Learning (Sobel et al.) by creating a street scape condition within the lot and extending that idea to each consecutive floor.¹⁰

The project's primary design proposal is centered around the typology of the urban storefront, as a platform through which interaction and engagement occurs in our city. Building off of past precedents such as the Harlem Storefront project, this public school seeks to become a commons of knowledge distribution, a series of spaces for non-hierarchical learning and gathering.



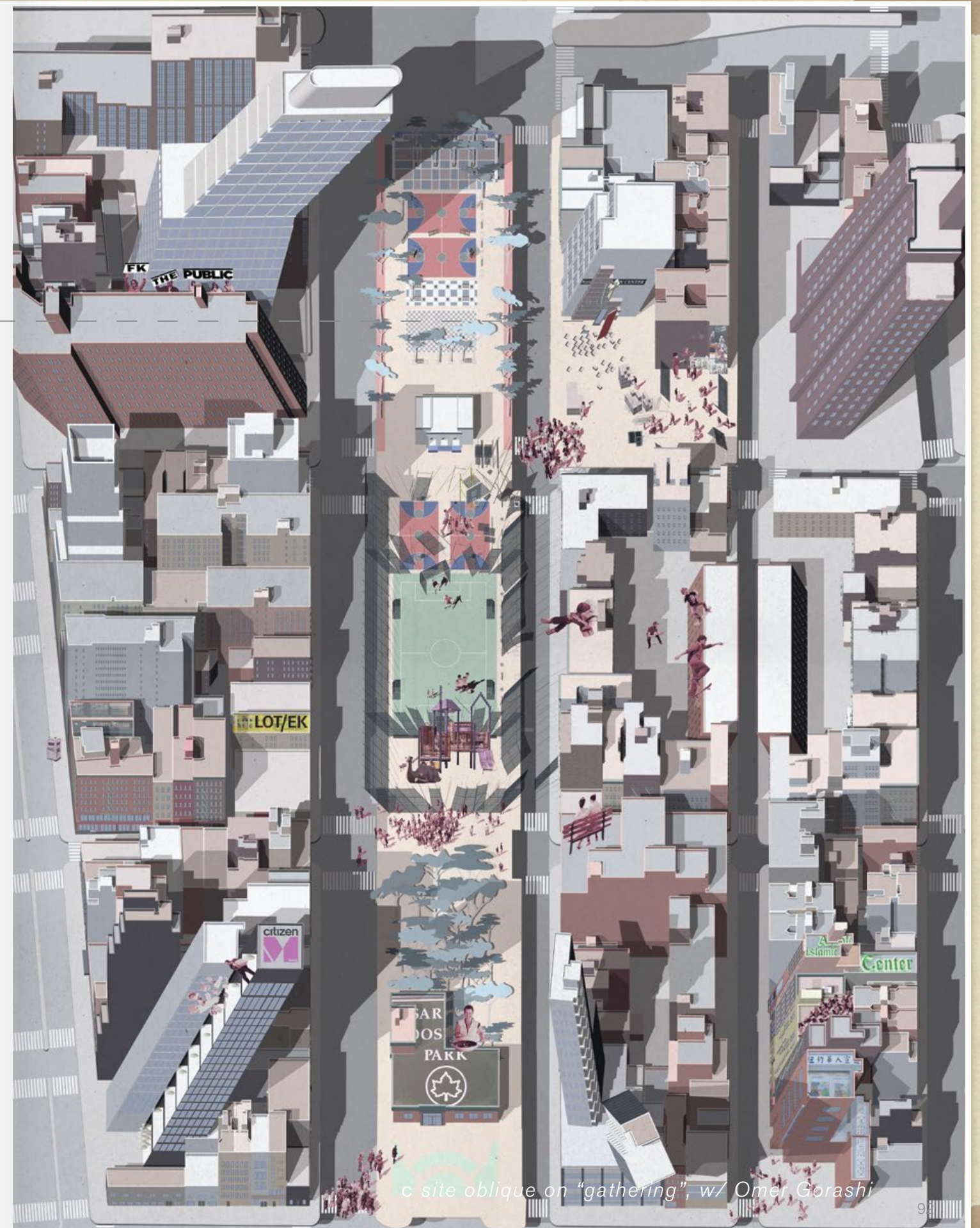
a corridor as classroom, davidzhang.info/storefront-school

place Lower East Side, NYC
timeline 01/2022 - 05/2022
advisors Esteban de Backer, Blake Kem, *Core II Studio*



Adjacent to the site of the project, a historically significant private middle school, the Nativiy Mission Center, served underprivileged youth from 1971 to 2012.¹¹ The programmatic capacity of the school reached well beyond standard education, providing overnight support and free meals to its students. In proposing a much larger school on the same site, the main goal is to create a hybrid programming model through the development of storefronts and streetscapes, allowing privately funded partners to contribute to the school in ways that public schools cannot typically afford.

b city:school programming at Nativiy Mission Center



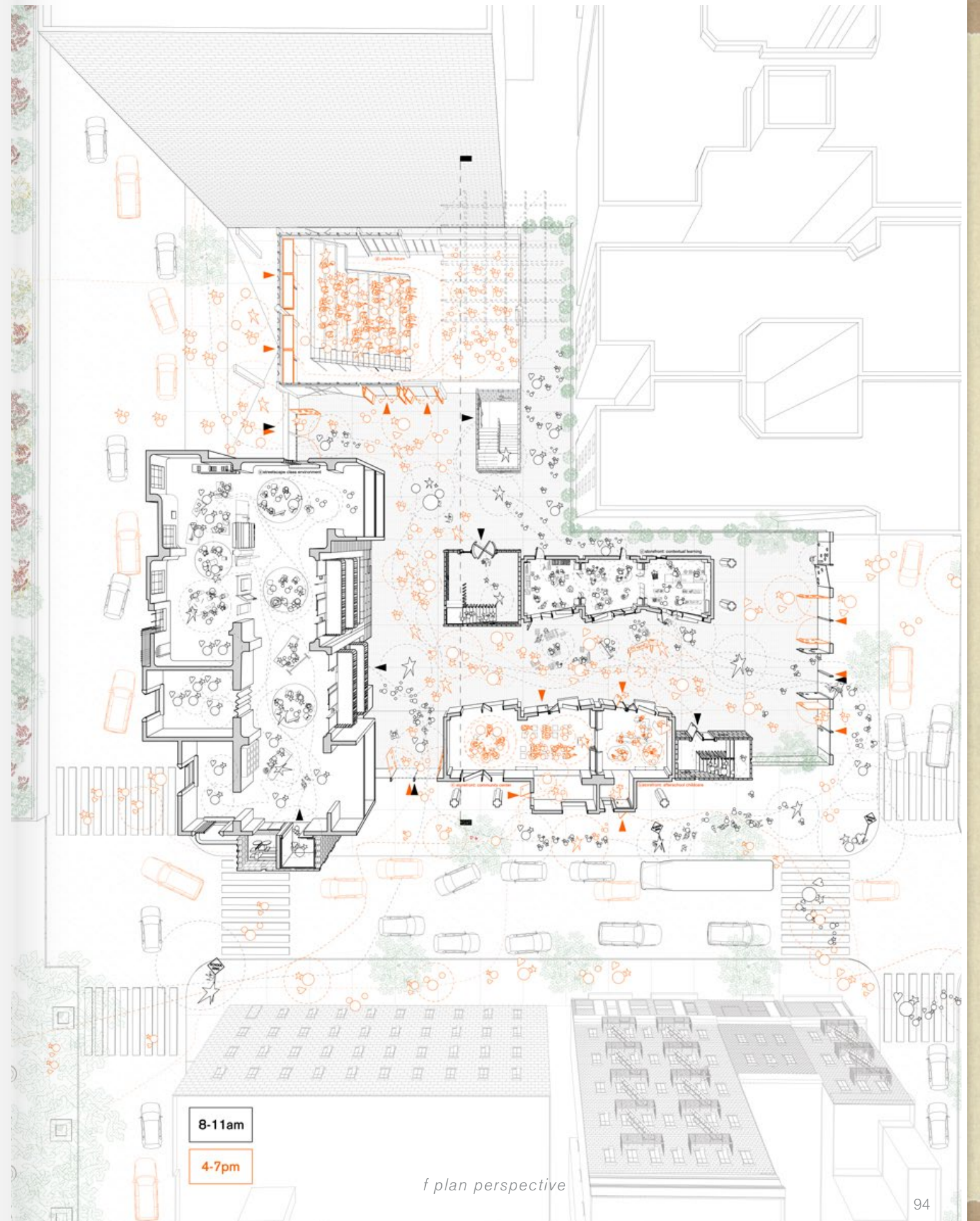
c site oblique on "gathering", w/ Omer Gorashi



d



e

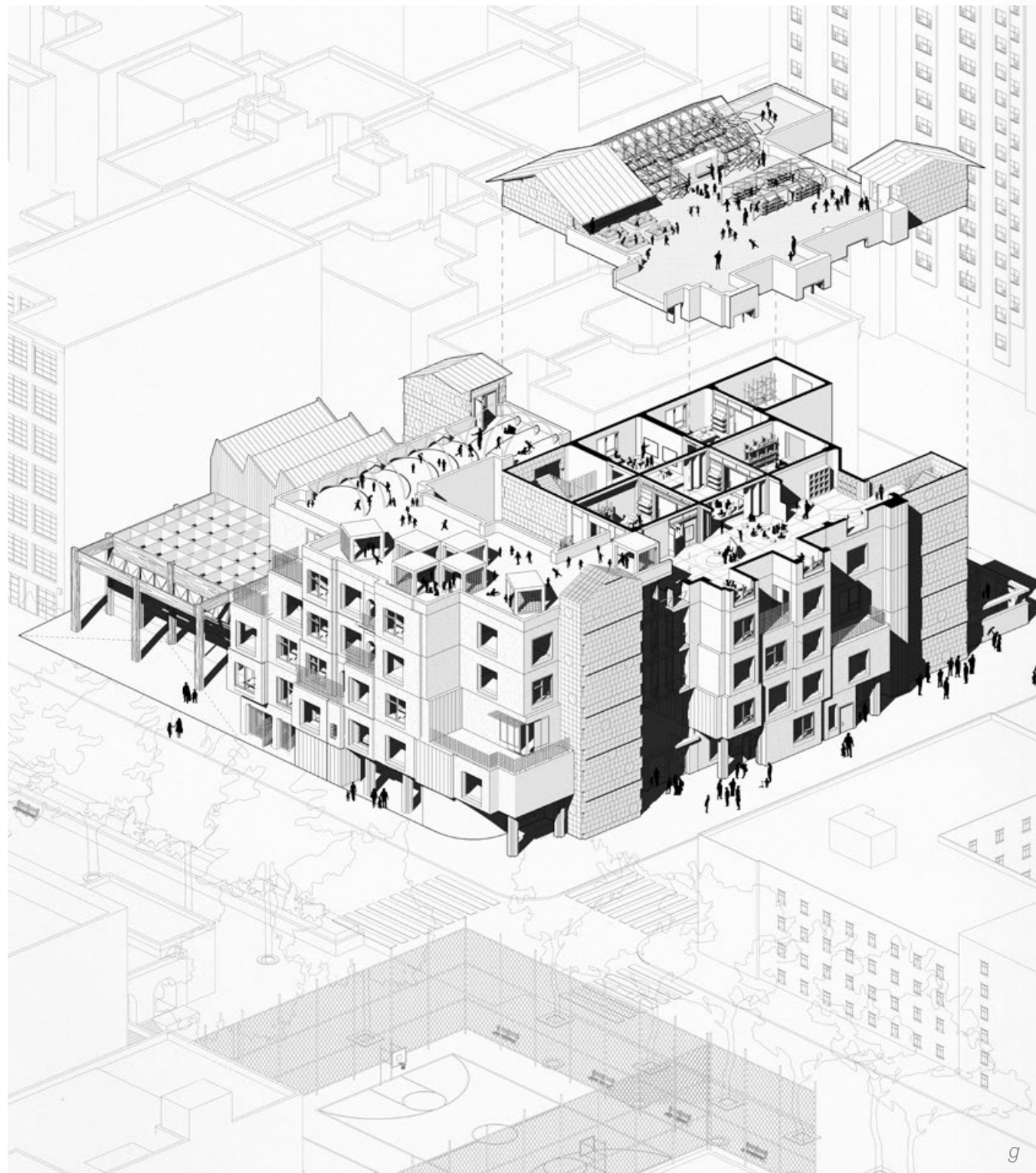


8-11am
4-7pm

f plan perspective

d 1/4" model: street scape

e 1/4" model: corridor learning

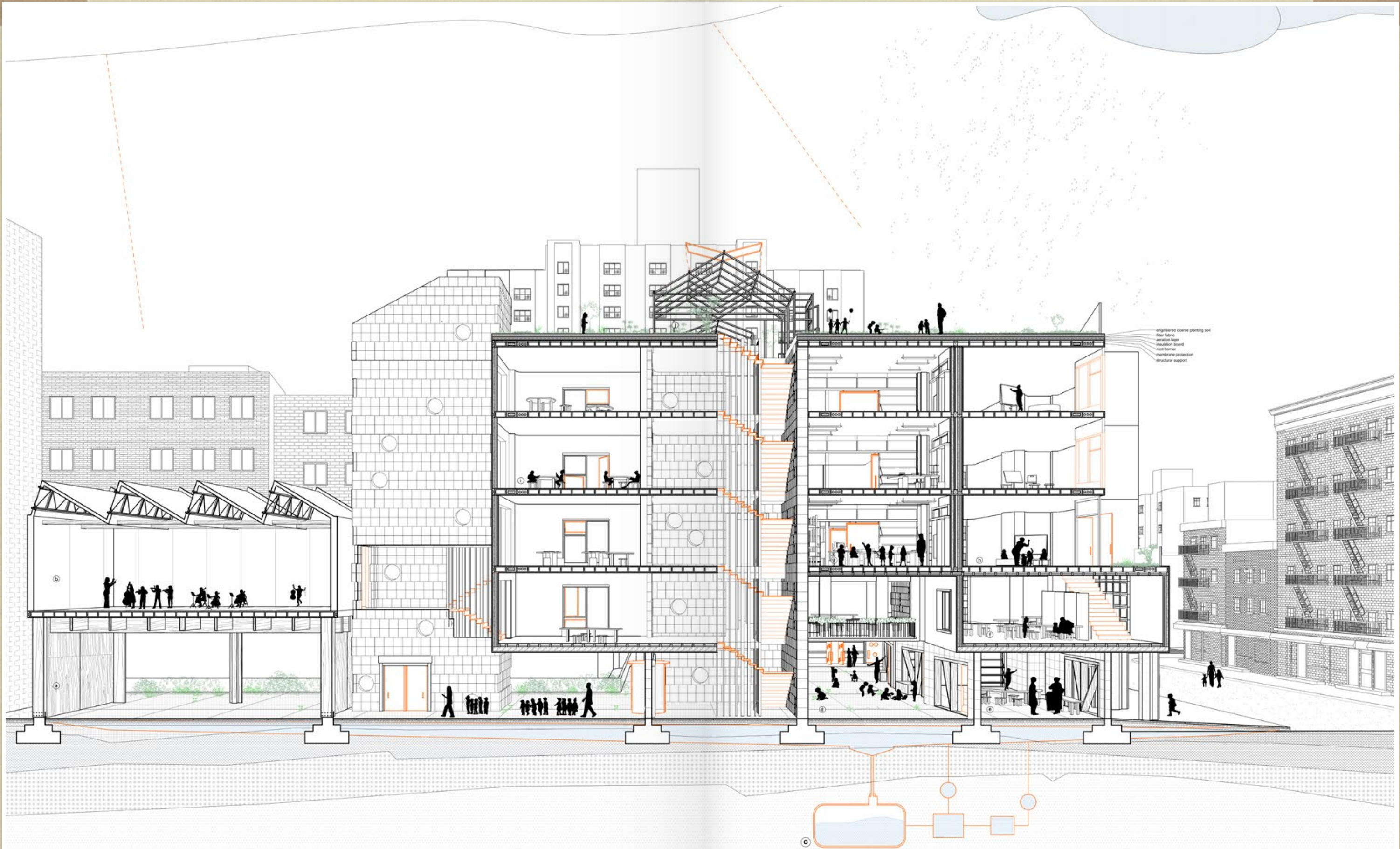


g exploded axonometric

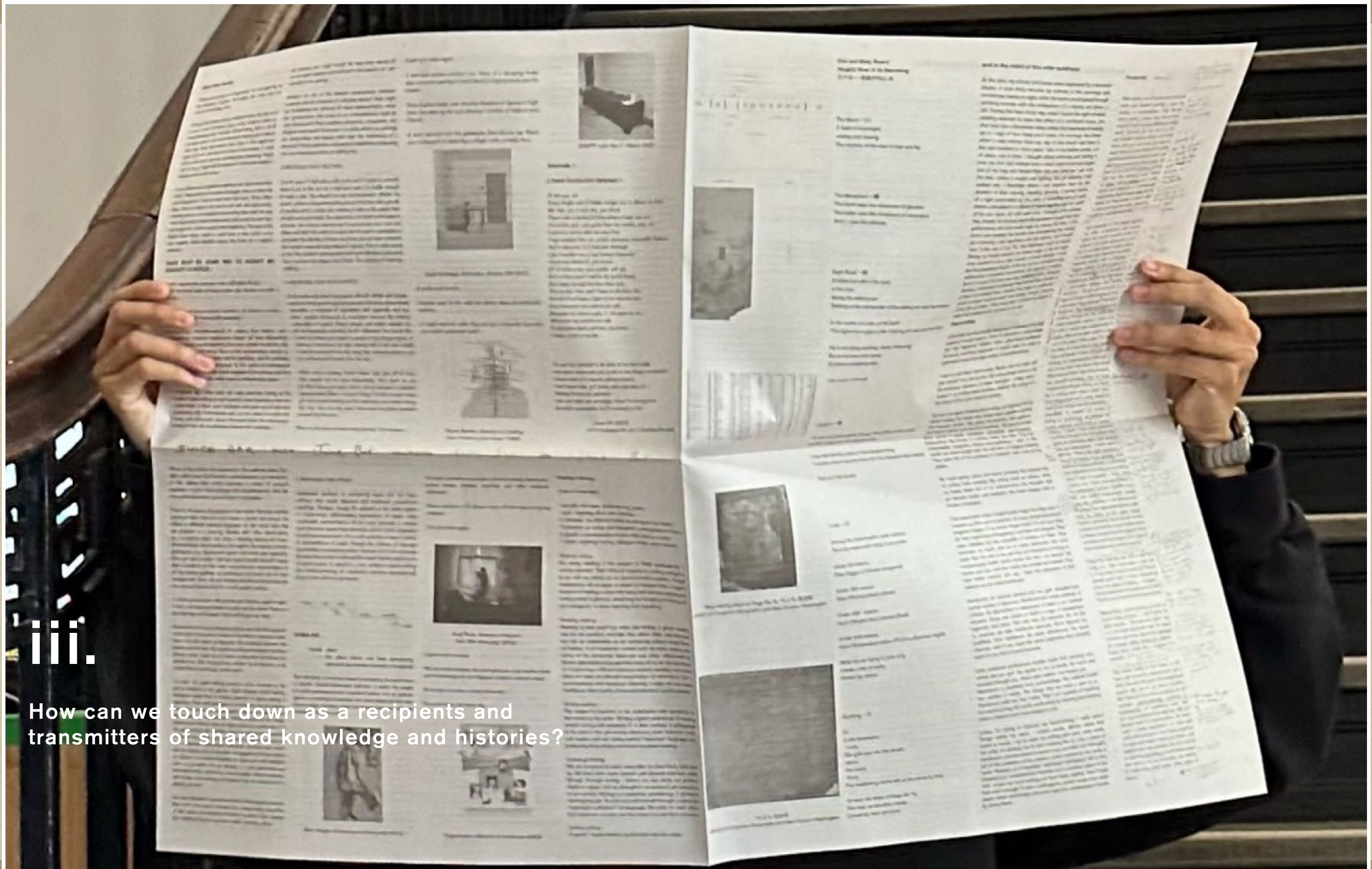


Linking the architecture to historical (NY Urban League's Street Academy, 1966) and contemporary storefront school precedents (The Perry School, W. Village), two rows of storefronts provide the setting for both contextually focused learning and school engagement with the neighborhood.¹²

h after school hours at 4pm



engineered coarse planting soil
filter fabric
aeration layer
insulation board
root barrier
membrane protection
structural support



iii.

How can we touch down as a recipients and transmitters of shared knowledge and histories?

Juice Bar

A student newspaper based out of Avery Hall

An ongoing project between close friends talking about the relationships that reading and writing have with each other, and its proximity to design.¹³ Sharing physical objects, critiquing as a form of care, and operating through materiality is at the core of Juice Bar's work.

"The first issue was a D.I.Y. endeavor that produced fifty copies, distributed around Avery Hall in bright red boxes. The second issue was imagined and materialized with funding from the M.Arch student affairs office. Tapping a print company that past GSAPP student magazines have used—linco—juice bar produced one thousand single newsprint broadsheets, one issue per. The publication's latest (third) issue was done again with Linco as printer and one thousand copies. That issue was made of four centerfold spreads and a single page high quality color insert, representing a much larger challenge in scale, planning, and logistics. Issue two was released with a widely-attended, catered launch event sponsored by student affairs. The distribution of Juice Bar is both tactical and ad hoc, with its members distributing in high traffic areas and at events around Columbia and New York city to audiences sympathetic to design writing."

place Avery Hall, NYC
timeline 02/2022 - ongoing
advisor Mario Gooden
collaborators Anoushka Mariwala, Juliana Yang, Peter Walhout, Bernardo Maletesta

Postscript - Transcript

After studio, we all sat around a kitchen table and started reading. it was like having a conversation, only silently. when i read, i cannot help but to react, respond, have my own, different, or eerily similar opinions. for me, this is a rare and valuable instance where i can share these with you, and have you respond, react, have your own different or similar opinions about how i read your text... and also how we read each other's notes, and learn to lean into the frictions of editing with four, five voices. to pass around an object, and to change it as it shifts hands and voices as it is increasingly fingerprinted feels ~~in many ways~~ like the closest we have gotten to each other in avery. [we hope you print, cross over, underline, and rewrite similarly.]

Last semester, on the vernal equinox, our office of academic and student affairs and student council's health and wellness committee sponsored a juice bar. An unfolded banquet table covered in a draping, navy tablecloth and plastic ~~tropicana~~ bottles was a welcome, if meagre, gesture of care. It was not a site of congregation, nor a fountain of replenishment. And so Juice Bar began: a conversation between two people.

- critique as a form of care
- operating through material
- wip wip wip!
- scale
- conversation (perpetual)

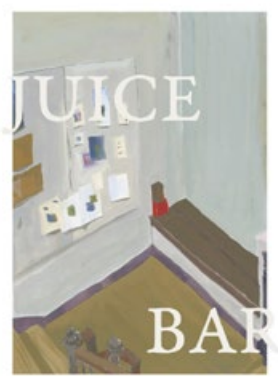
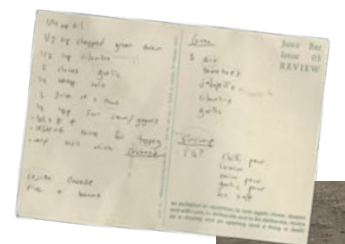
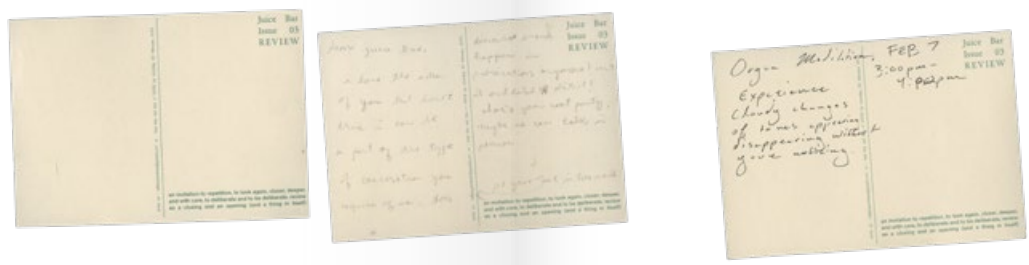
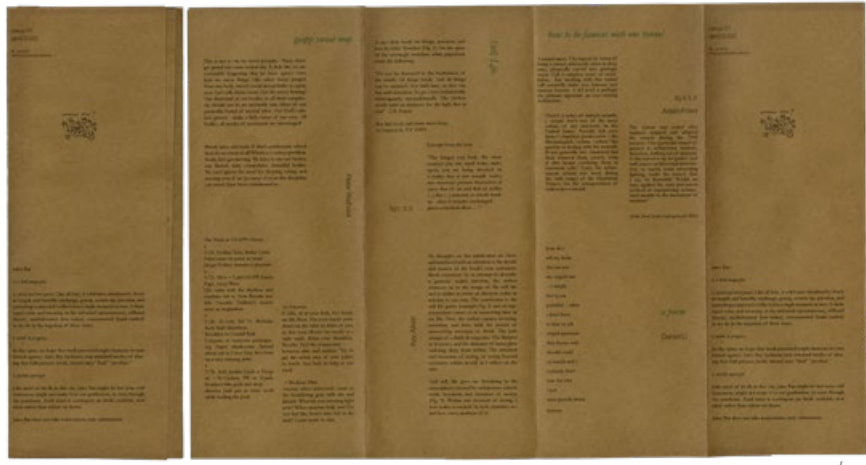
And eating?
students need to eat too?
even in New York!

"i" as a collective I?

when the declaration of identity is taken from the First Person, maybe ~~it~~ the narrative can transcend individuality

↳ I wonder if a collectivizing "you" has the opposite effect of capitalizing denying difference?

The talk around i in the days following this bar - I remember that time fondly, a simultaneous appreciation and critique to write



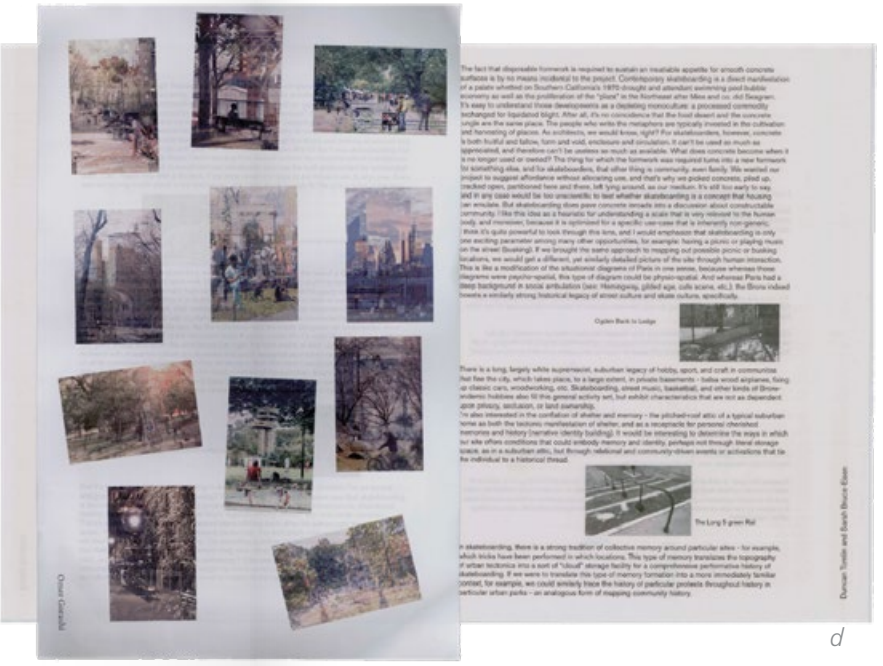
call for submissions

What is your relationship with reading and writing?
How do you read and write?

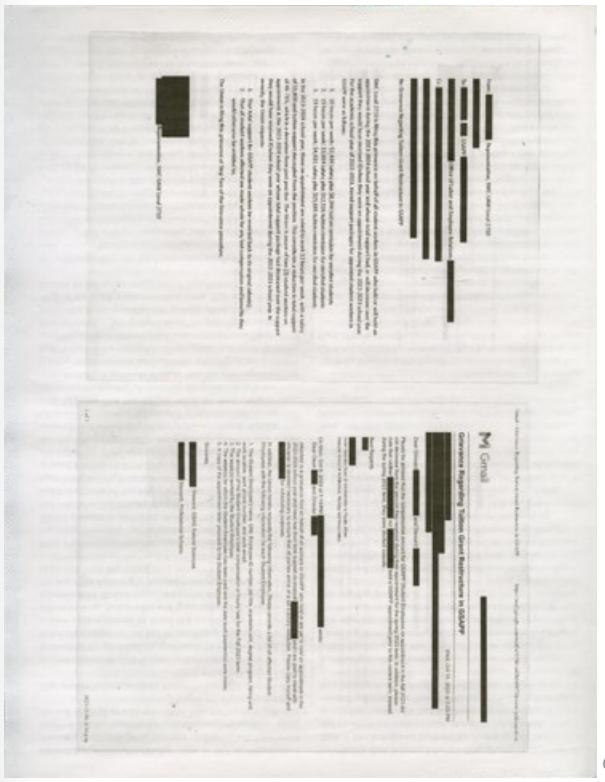
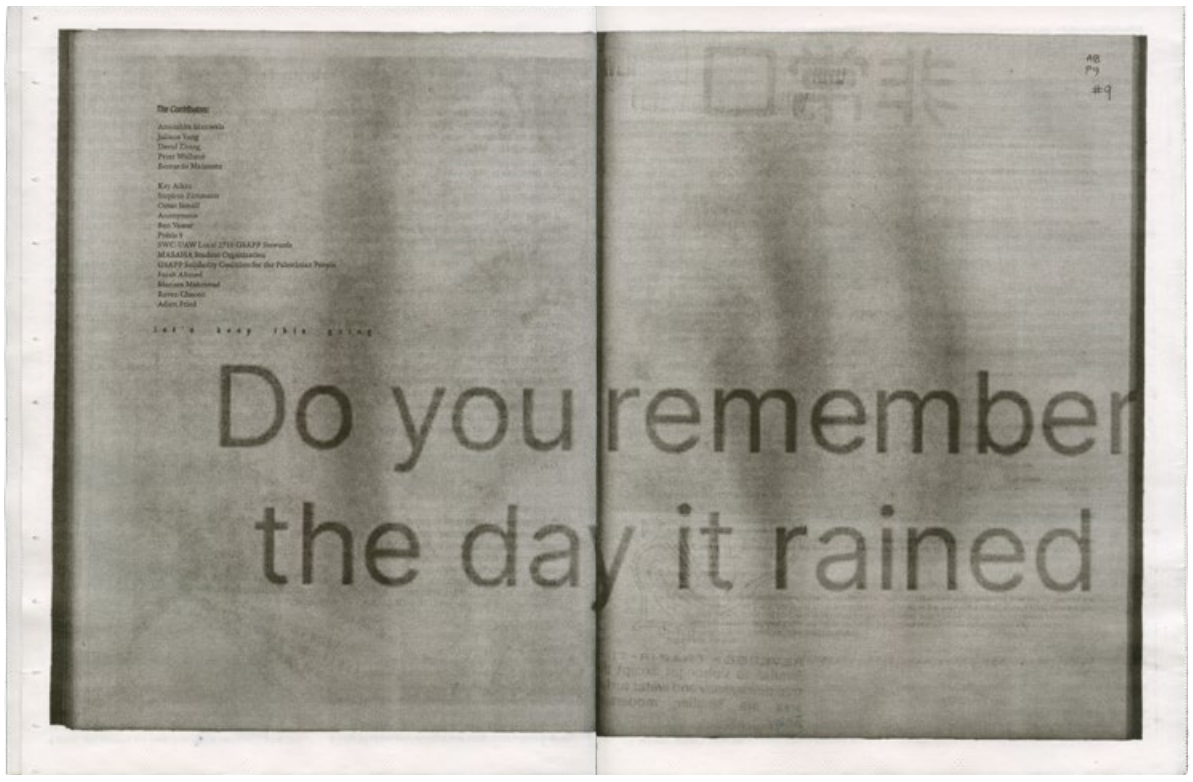
Submit
October 8
lukal.jacob@post.com

Why do we read?
How do we write?
What is your relationship with reading and writing?

How do we read?
How do we write?
What is your relationship with reading and writing?



d



e

b issue 01

c issue 02 call for submissions

d issue 03

e issue 05

GSAPP Mapping

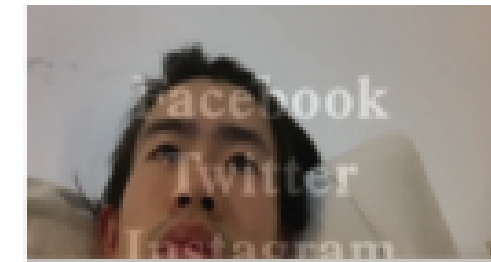
Tracing an outward web of connections from popular architectural language

Excerpt:

“How does research present itself as a final piece of work? As architects and research academics, our work often presents itself as “original” ideas represented in new or novel ways. However, in attempt to contextualize our work, we turn to lists: of work cited, contributors, collaborators, etc. These attempts at engaging with precedents, entities, scholars, and peers that contribute the knowledge we bring to our work offers a standardized language of citation. And as a reaction to this standardized language of “knowledge collected”, my piece (video and map) is a documentation of my initial research process, oering an unabashed diary of sorts which seeks to highlight the people and processes that underly my specific and incidental experience of our class and this assignment in particular.

The piece begins with the prompt, “embedded intelligence”, and I quickly search “embedded intelligence architecture”. By the 5 minute mark, I have come across people and entities I am familiar with and that in fact this prompt to begin with (Autodesk>The Living>Lorenzo Villagi). From here, my “research” loosens significantly, being driven not a desire to understand the initial prompt, but rather by a more frenzied, name-driven search. Weaving through large corporate entities, past GSAPP student publications, and linkedin profiles. By the 30 minute mark, my experience ends with interviews of two past professors of mine, Mosette Broderick and Thomas de Monchaux.”

place Avery Hall, NYC
 timeline 01/2022 - 05/2022
 advisor Lorenzo Villagi, Zoonam Amir, Jonghoon Park, ADR-II



march 7, 10:40pm to 11:10pm

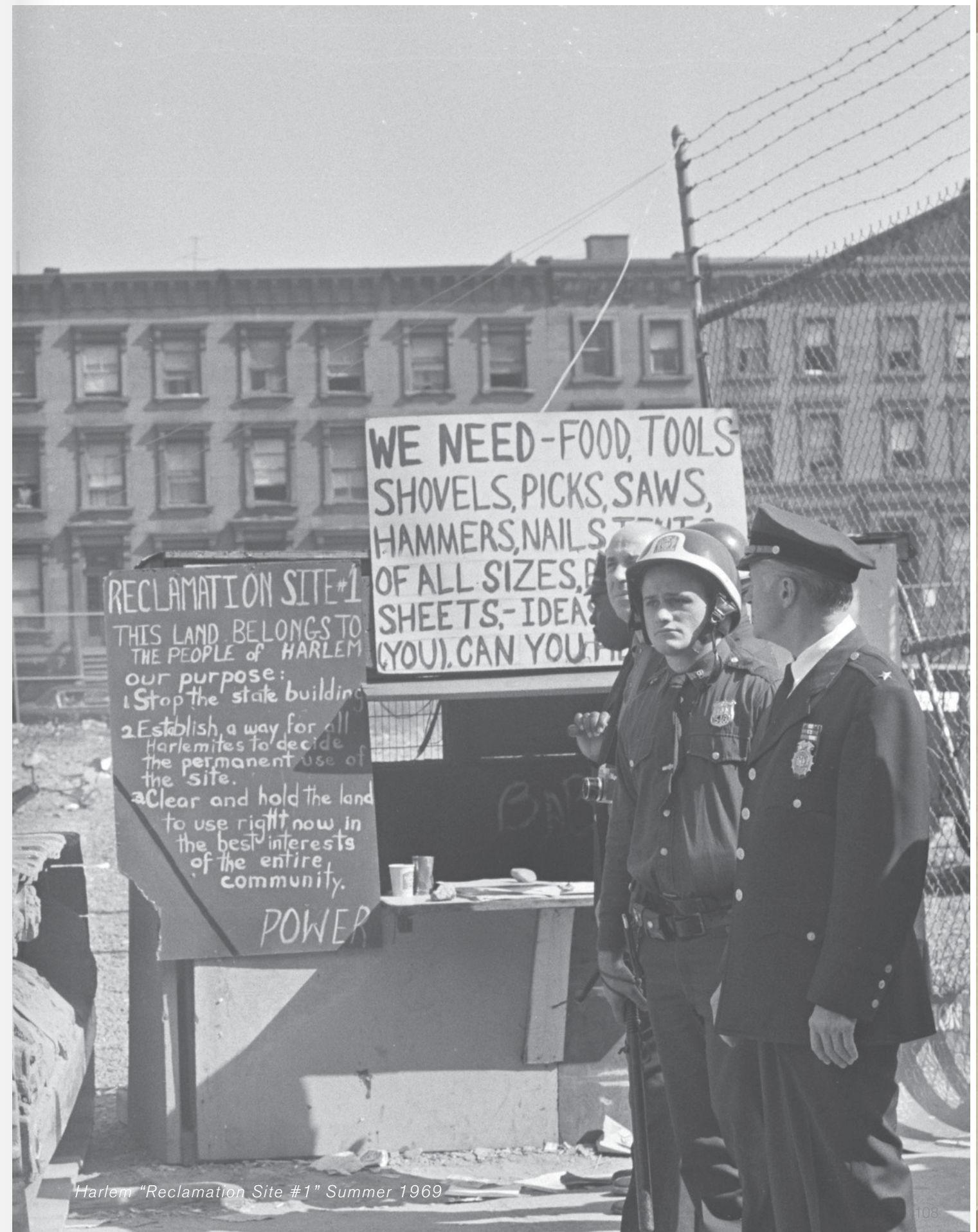
john locke, david benjamin, danil nagy, damon lau, dale zhou, jim stoddart, ray wang, lorenzo villaggi, jorge otero-pallos, harrison bush, bika rebek, valerie lechne, sharon leung, michelle tse, sabrina barker, leah guszkowski, megan murdock, rashad palmer, michael schissel, hasty vigi, zhewu zhueng, cecil barnes, wade cotton, isabell kirkham-lewitt, ricardo a. leon, george louras, james quick, lily wang, miranda rogers, patrick armacoat, paul duston-munoz, paul mocooy, scott chung, heather mcarthur, hyung rok do, ian labash, jackie krasnokutskaya, joe littrell, jonuk kim, lee lim, lindsay reichart, madison butler, david maple, don david, dongxiao cheng, eileen witte, eric gu, joe vessell, john backman, justin kwok, justin ning, kerry o connor, marion weiss, alexandra lee, michael manfredi, andrew ruggles, armando petruccelli, scott overall, carlo bailey, yehuda safran, daniel sherer, jimenez lai, mattero petricoli, paul goldberger, mosette broderick, thomas de monchaux

Medias of "Radicalized" Architectural Education Pedagogical impacts of the 1968 Columbia Sit-Ins

This essay was originally conceived and written as an attempt to better understand the positionality of students, faculty and administration within GSAPP (formerly the School of Architecture) during a time of mass rejection of Columbia University as a force of displacement in Morningside Heights and Harlem. The essay is written through an application of Ananya Roy's concept of "doubleness... that the center of power can also be a profound edge of negotiation and contestation, a consciousness of crisis".¹⁴

The essay interrogates a thread of media, from calls for university occupation to new curriculum integrated into the School of Architecture by architect Max Bond Jr., as a way to understand how moments of anti-institutionality effected the radical positioning of Columbia SOA.

place Avery Hall, NYC
timeline 01/2022 - 05/2022
advisors Pedro Correa Fernandez, Ateya Khorakiwala, QAH-II



Harlem "Reclamation Site #1" Summer 1969



b



d

THE TAR ARCHITECTISH COMMUNE COMES TOGETHER AGAIN IN NEW YORK CITY FRIDAY-SUNDAY NOVEMBER 28-30

EVENTS?

The Dates
 Opening Feast, Friday 7 P.M., Nov 28
 Enormous Party, Saturday night, Nov. 29
 Stagger-home, Late Sunday, Nov. 30
 In Between, Serious Business, (see column at right)

The Place
 Tompkins Square Community Center
 (the largest liberated building in the country)
 147 Avenue B, corner 9th Street
 New York City

THE DISCUSSION: !

DEALING WITH DOWNTOWN: Our Relationship with the Profession organizing within it; an architects union; firms subsidizing employees to work in their own communities; respect for our elders; etc.

ALTERNATIVES: or, how to be an architect without going downtown non-profit corporations; totality companies; unemployment insurance, welfare; school connections; advocacy—is it still relevant?

STIRRING THINGS UP: position papers, demonstrations, etc. follow up on our first three position papers; new issues for national and local actions; new actions for national and local issues

TAR ORGANIZATION: need we have any? autonomy of local branches; national steering committee for coordination; members, dues, by-laws, mayor, dean field marshal, space frame, etc.

TAR COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK: is this where it's at? who else is doing this thing?; directory, newsletter; project coordination; getting to know each other.

FILTHY LUCRE, e.g. money, how much?; foundations, contributions from rich liberals; events, gimmicks, frauds, rip-offs, etc.

NEW IDEAS—right on!
 TAR goes to the people (saying) "Don't trust your local architect just because he is registered, wears hip clothes, and does slick drawings!; complete with slides, bands, movies, etc; the TAR Travelling Road Show, saying the aforementioned in a big way; TAR movies on large researches like Housing or what not—"Why Capitalism Builds Slums and Public Housing Projects"; etc.

WHAT TO DO!

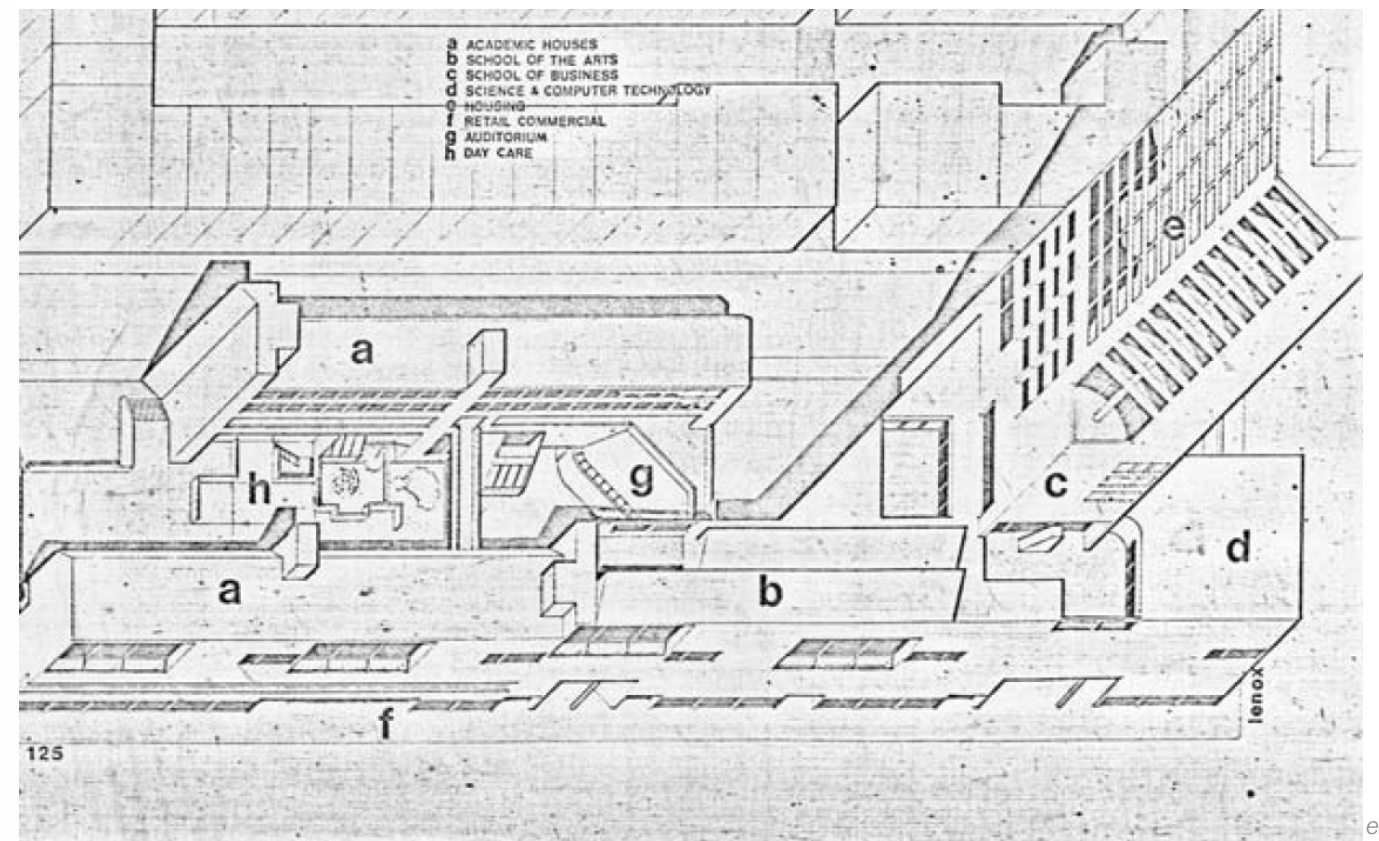
Get here any way you can!
 Bring your friends!
 Bring sleeping bags!
 An enormous room, knee deep in food and paved with mattresses will be your home
 Reply fast!

AHEM!

Tell us your ideas for further discussion!
 Tell us your problems and see if we can help!
 Tell us who you are and how many of you are coming!
 Our Address:
 TAR
 1078 Chapel Street
 New Haven, Conn.
 06510

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

c



e

b "Stop Gym Crow" protests in Morningside Park, 1968

c The Architects' Resistance flyer

d Columbia Sit-Ins, Avery Hall 1968

e Axon drawing Max Bond's "West Harlem Platform" studio

“Damage Control” Mentoring and participating in new knowledge production

As both a mentor and active learner from two professors and twenty four students across these two years, my experience participating in the Core II Damage Control studio became a foundational part of my growth as a critical practitioner in the built environment.

Excerpt from Damage Control syllabus:

“The Core II studios will... take on damage control as a theme and as a complex of spatial, material, and technical conditions and responses. Media documents, public narratives, news events, and political tensions of various kinds may well populate and animate much of the work we do this semester. But our understanding and use of damage control will substantially depart from its sly and opportunistic public relations formulation.

Most important, for us architecture comprises the media of damage and damage control. And the spin of our work will not attempt to disguise or minimize damage but to understand, articulate, expose, and critically intervene in the myriad spaces and multiple sites of damage. So, we will not engage damage control as a cover up but as the opposite. We will research, think, and design damage control as an uncovering, intervening, architectural transformation.”¹⁵

place Avery Hall, NYC
timeline 01/2023 - 05/2023, 01/2024 - 05/2024
advisors/collaborators Esteban de Backer, Abraham Murrell



sketches and images from two semesters of mentoring Core II “Damage Control”



iv.

How can we animate the reciprocities between the natural, the extractive, and the sacred?

Ecologies of Land Termination

The commercialization of Klamath tribal forests, 1954-61

"Ecologies of Land Termination" centers three major tree species, the Ponderosa Pine, the Lodgepole Pine, and the White Fir, at the heart of a well documented history of Native American land theft during the Termination policy era of US governance against the Klamath Nation of South Central Oregon in the 1950s and 60s. These forcible, yet "democratically" guised termination policies resulted in the nationalization of almost all 800,000 acres of Klamath Tribal forestlands through the creation of the Winema National Forest in 1961. This was the last instance of a long history of tribal land theft within the US National Forest system, and the largest territorial tribal land grab of the Termination era.

While this history is commonly narrated as a battle between tribal sovereignty and government imposition, by repositioning historical agency among the three major commodified tree bodies of the ecoregion, a greater capacity to understand the commodity driven, privatized networks of land/resource control that undergirded the termination of Klamath land rights may be drawn out. This apparatus of territorial governance was born out of a changing landscape of aggregated, fiber-based timber commodities (responding to the rapid deforestation of first-generation Ponderosa Pine forests and subsequent adoption of previously non-commercial Lodgepole and White Fir). Supporting this major shift in the timber commodity landscape of S. Oregon was the research driven, agriculturally inspired Klamath Tree Farm of the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, which operated in conjunction with the US National Forest system under dubious forest management standards. These two scales of arboreal control, individual and networked, created a new commercial landscape under which the last remaining first generation forests (Klamath tribal forestlands) could be harvested and economically transformed.

place Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin Snake Ancestral Lands, OR
timeline 09/2023 - 12/2023
advisor Felicity Scott, *Environments of Governance*



Johns-Manville wood manufacturing plant on Klamath Reservation land (est. 1954)

Tribal Forest Resources:

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Volume M.B.M.</u>	<u>Value</u>
Commercial timber	551,378	3,672,969	\$12,855,391
Cut-over timber	188,487	377,822	944,555
Non-commercial timber	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>
Total	749,865	4,060,791	\$13,809,946

Trust Allotment Timber:

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Volume M.B.M.</u>	<u>Value</u>
Commercial	10,280	99,482	\$ 348,187
Cut-over	<u>39,855</u>	<u>48,025</u>	<u>120,062</u>
Total	50,135	147,507	468,249

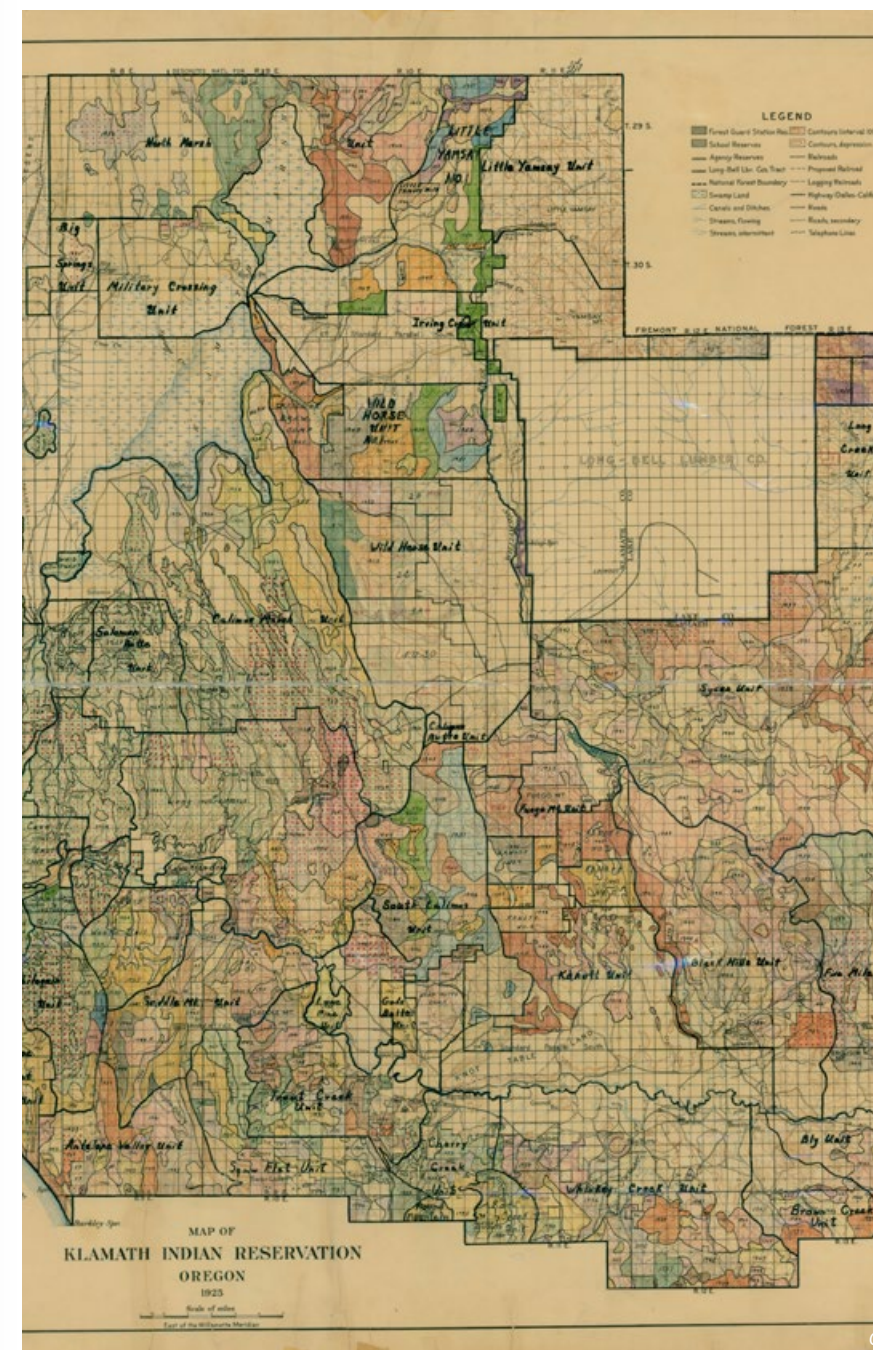
Grazing Resources (Range types by acres):

Open grassland	15,000 acres	
Meadows	49,838 "	
Woods	500 "	
Sagebrush	63,890 "	
Browse	800 "	
Range in coniferous timber	<u>800,000</u> "	
Total grazing land	930,028 acres	
Barron and waste	15,000 "	
Total grazing capacity in animal months (estimated)		128,700
Present stocking		103,644

The reservation has an immense present and future potential value. At present the principal source of income is from the sale of timber which is being harvested in a well-regulated manner.

Timber, estimated to be 92 per cent ponderosa pine, is being cut from both tribal and allotted lands, though most of the allotted timber has been cut. Selective cutting is practiced and logged-over areas contain fine stands of young timber.

An excellent fire protection plan has been developed which under normal climatic conditions should amply protect the timber. However, execution of the fire protection plan is hampered by lack of funds with which to maintain physical equipment necessary to its operation. Though the road and truck trail system has been designed to make all parts of the reservation accessible with the least amount of travel, maintenance of them has lagged because of lack of sufficient funds. Telephone lines are in a poor state of repair. A complete new communication system is needed.



The essay is written with the contemporary, radical collaboration between the Klamath Tribe and the US Forest Service as a backdrop and a marker of the persistent ecological afterlife that the Termination era of environmental manipulation still has today. An important aspect of the paper is that in re-centering tree bodies as a historical agent, our conception of generationality is deeply challenged. While the Termination era of tribal governance is now several generations removed, its ecological effects are still in their nascent stage as the present-day trees and their surrounding ecologies are direct descendants of commodity-driven forestry practices. In this consideration of inter-species timescales, a broader, more representative history of environmental governance may be understood.

b US Bureau of Indian Affairs "Klamath Reservation Planning Program" (1938)

c US Dept. of the Interior "Klamath Reservation Map" (1925) d mature ponderosa pine tree

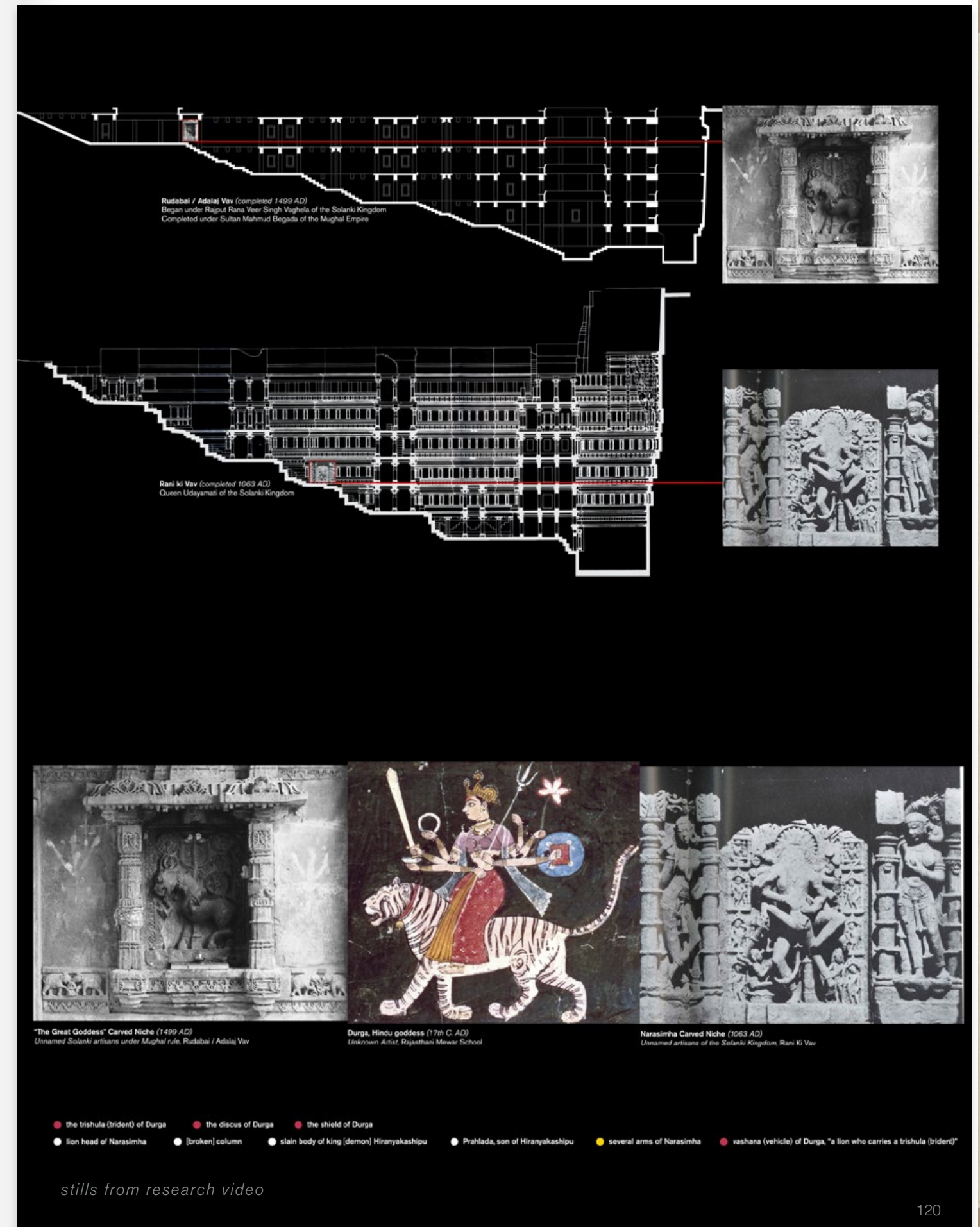
Politics of Figuration Spiritual associations embedded in a Mughal stepwell

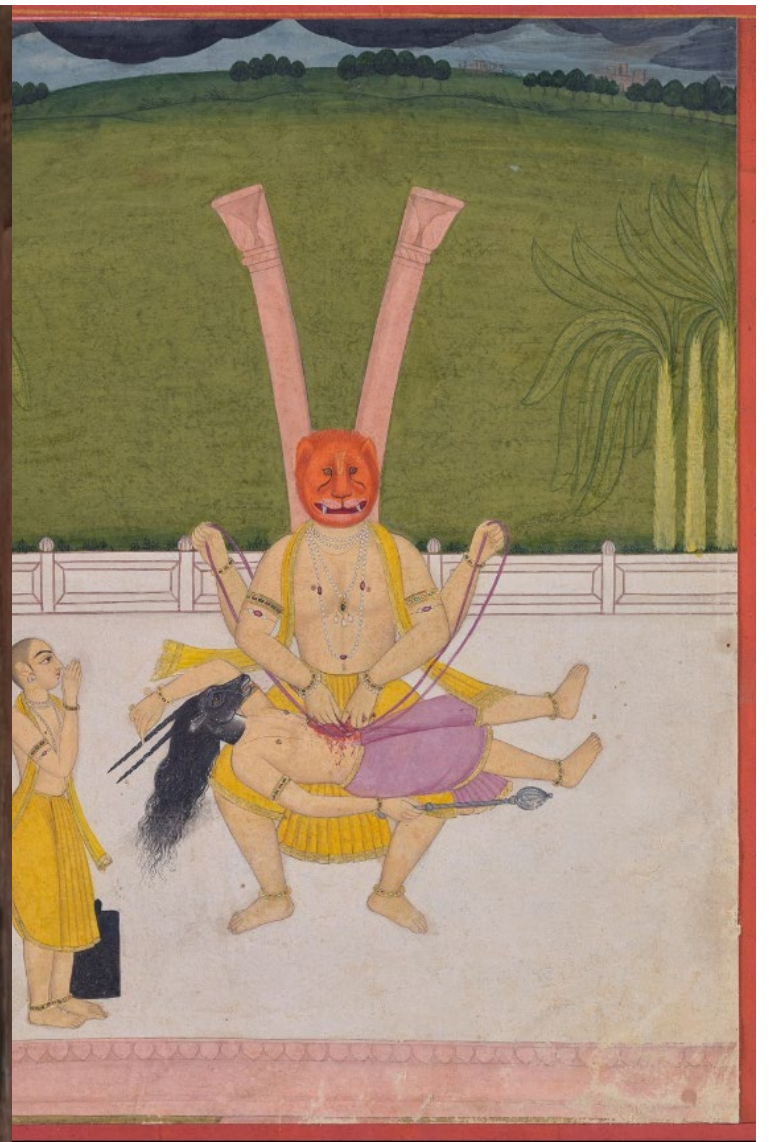
Excerpt from essay introduction:

“Marks of ritualistic encounter coat a carved sandstone niche on the second subterranean storey of Rudabai Vav (Adalaj ni Vav), located in Adalaj, Gujarat. On either side of the recessed niche, a simple trident form is smudged from white powder. The columns articulating the niche are wrapped in red and yellow fabric, and at its base a candle burns. Within the niche itself, the main figure of a lion is dotted with red gulal powder. Behind the lion, a trident springs up, its vertical base smeared with the same red gulal powder and atop it two yellow flowers sit. These marks bear evidence of the niche’s continued spiritual importance to its local community.”

This essay seeks to understand the potential for multiple god(desses) to be associated to the single figurative niche located at the Adalaj Vav, a Mughal built stepwell dating from 1499.¹⁶ Specifically, the niche contains imagery typically associated to both the goddess Durga and the god Narasimha. In the essay, the primary question becomes how these religious associations create a space for the activation of religious and social resistance.

place Adalaj, Gujarat, India
timeline 01/2024 - ongoing
advisor Mark Rakatansky, *Recombinant Renaissances*





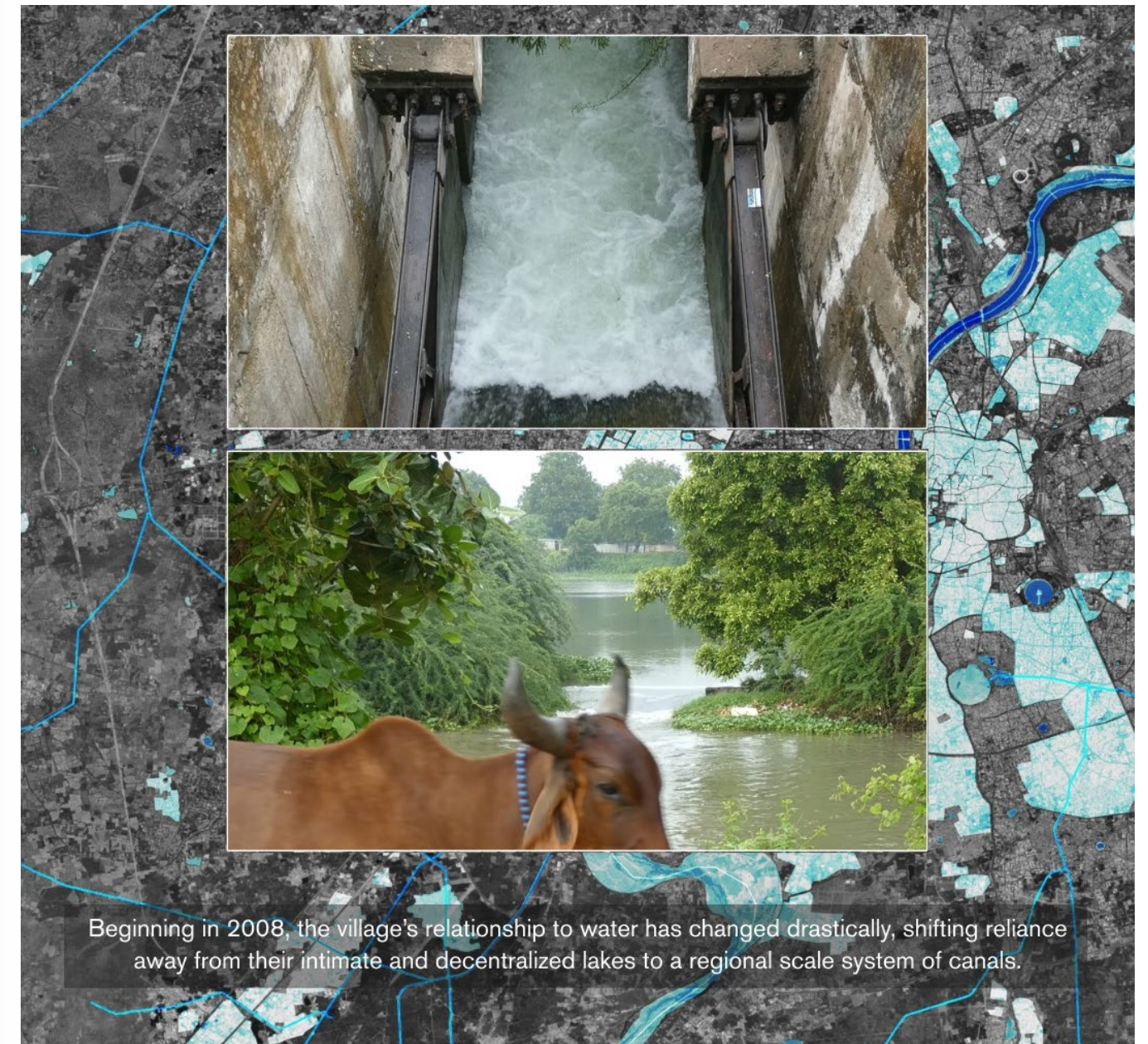
the niche in question, along with paintings of goddess Durga and god Narasimha

Godhavi Water Interactions

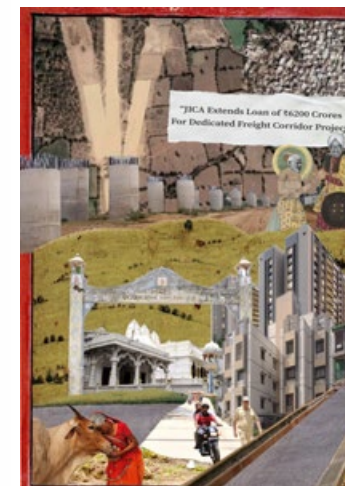
A village rests between infrastructural and urban expansion

This project occurred within the GSAPP 2023 Summer Workshop series, "Peri-Urban Water Management in Gujarat". Our group, consisting of eight local architecture students and two GSAPP students, worked together to create a body of work documenting the multiplicitous social relations to water that are present in a peri-urban village, Godhavi, which rests between a national scale freight corridor and an ever expanding urban Ahmedabad.

While the traditional water resource of the lake and shallow well located at Godhavi are no longer utilized in their original manner, their presence nonetheless represents a vital characterization of how urban village life may unfold in the future. Specifically, negotiations around the treatment of the lake edge (natural vs hardened) become central to dictating the continuation or fragmentation of human-ecological relations.



Beginning in 2008, the village's relationship to water has changed drastically, shifting reliance away from their intimate and decentralized lakes to a regional scale system of canals.



a still from research video



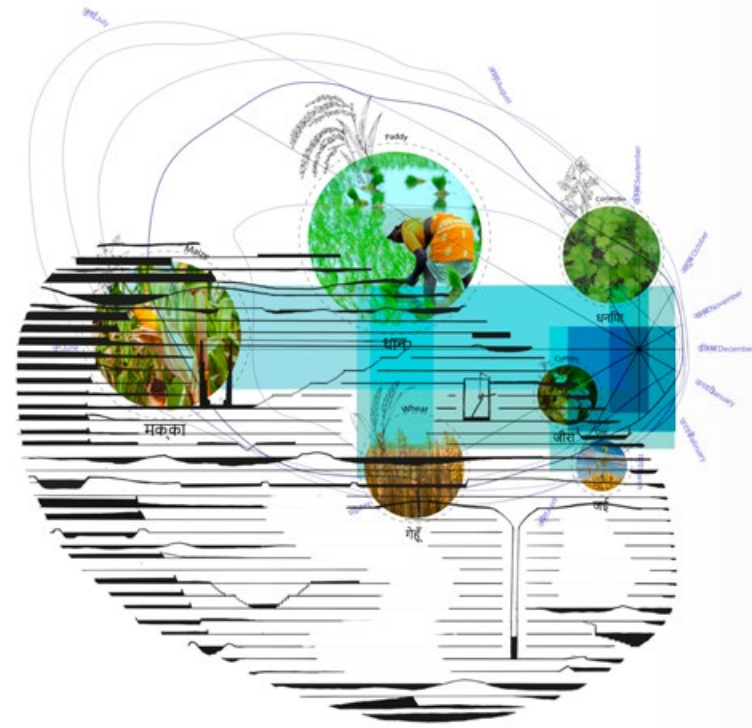
b research collage

c group photo, Anant U & GSAPP students

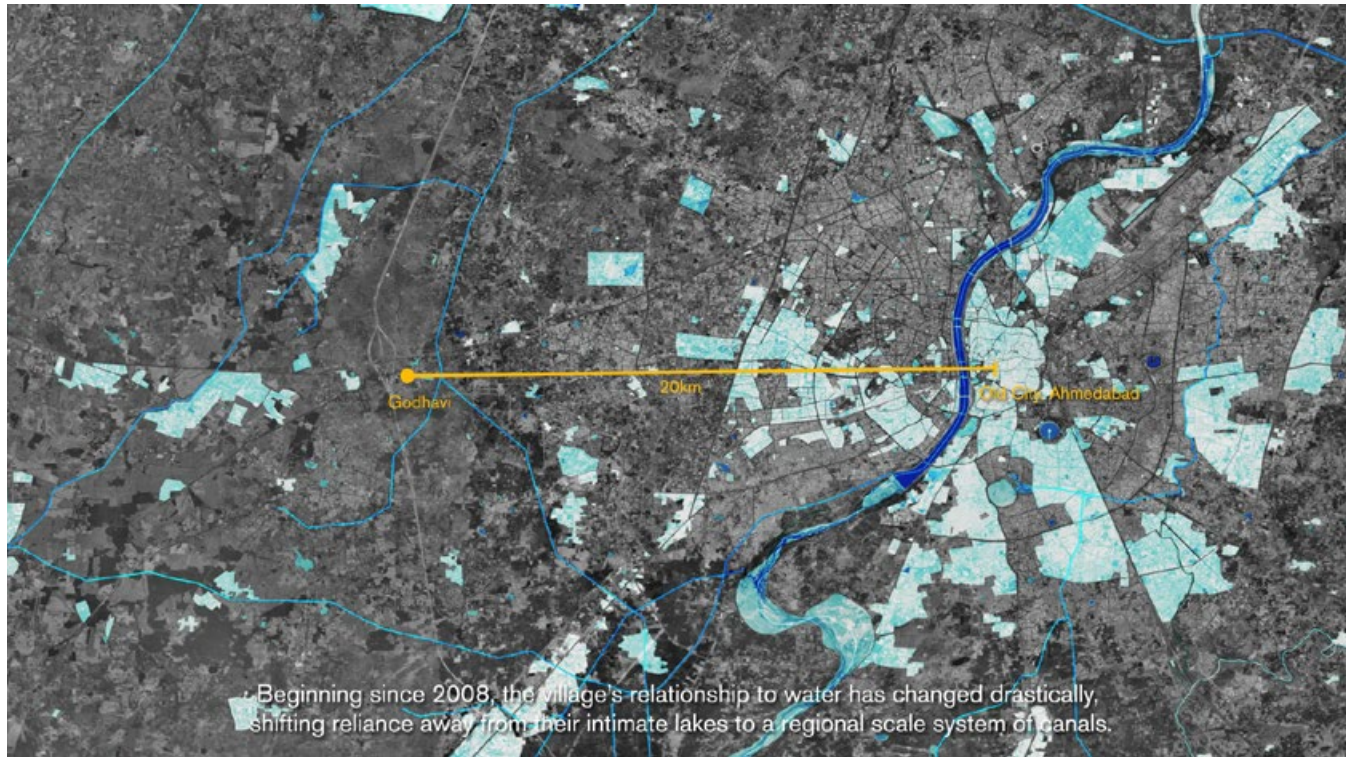
place Godhavi, Gujarat, India
timeline 06/2023 - 08/2023

advisors Sonal Beri, Sandro Marpillero, *Peri-Urban Water Management in Gujarat*
collaborators Daniela Perleche, Anant U B.Arch students

davidzhang.info/godhavi-water-interactions



local waste site Narmada Canal



Beginning since 2008, the village's relationship to water has changed drastically, shifting reliance away from their intimate lakes to a regional scale system of canals.



Godhavi Lake edge conditions

Felt Chair

Moving on in life, through heartbreak and shared space



a felt chair really made out of plywood and dowels. I wanted the felt to stand on its own but it didnt get there, It sat one because the felt was too expensive, and it was the first chair i ever made, in a frenzy of thought about church pews and making someone without Sarah for the first time. we designed another chair together a month later as we moved into the last covid deal of 2021, but it was built by someone else. it was also her figuring out her life without me. we broke up the summer between 2nd and 3rd semesters, and I moved into a chinatown 12 floor building that sits above a hotel on Canal Street. off the manhattan bridge with a balcony for my cats. the space isnt long enough for them to chase each other, but i take them to the fire stairs, one of three public spaces but we all take the elevator There's actually two fire stairs, but they dont meet to touch each other. both stairs have a door to the 2fl of the hotel. I put my felt chair and an old table leg in the stairs one day, hoping someone would sit. But only a few people in building go there to smoke. I left it there for 2 weeks, and someone took it.



Critical Replications

De-neutralizing British Museum land through acts of sacred production

This project traces the story of a set of objects, three sacred Taíno-made figures, as a critical retelling of the history of the British Museum. Looking from within the experience of these sacred figures outwards, a critical history emerges. A history which “begins” with the growth and carving of a guaiacum tree, and generations of ritual care between the figures and their community. A reciprocal dance of seasonal fertility rituals, guaiacum resin recoatings, followed by new growth, new offerings, and new zemi figures made.¹⁷

A history which was severed by their theft away from their cave on Carpenter’s Mountain, Jamaica, to an imperial center, London, UK.¹⁸ Having undergone a series of violent replications, from block print reproductions to plaster cast replications, these figures now face yet another move in June 2024 to the newest British Museum facility, the BM-Archaeological Research Center.¹⁹ Located in Reading, UK, between a highway and a heritage “copse” forest, these figures will undergo another round of chemical sterilization before retiring to a custom foam cutout, labelled and placed on a steel rack shelf.

Our project seeks to disrupt this new move. By building a critical replica of the new BM-ARC facility on an adjacent field set aside for future expansion, we will intercept the three objects and create two new sets of them. One set will be an absolute facsimile, returned back to the the British Museum. Another set will be made with the help of relevant diasporic Taíno and Jamaican communities, alongside artists practicing critical replication as restitution.²⁰ Finally, the originals will be put to rest, in a manner deemed fit by the visiting communities and artists. An emphasis will placed on understanding what it means to make something sacred today. Restitution will be in their hands, and the British Museum might now see the weight of their perpetual expansion. Our land is not neutral, our land is now sacred.

place Reading, UK & New York City, NY

timeline 01/2024 - 05/2024

advisors Emanuel Admassu, Daniel Chang, *Afterimages Vol. 3*, ADV-VI Studio

collaborator Ian Callender

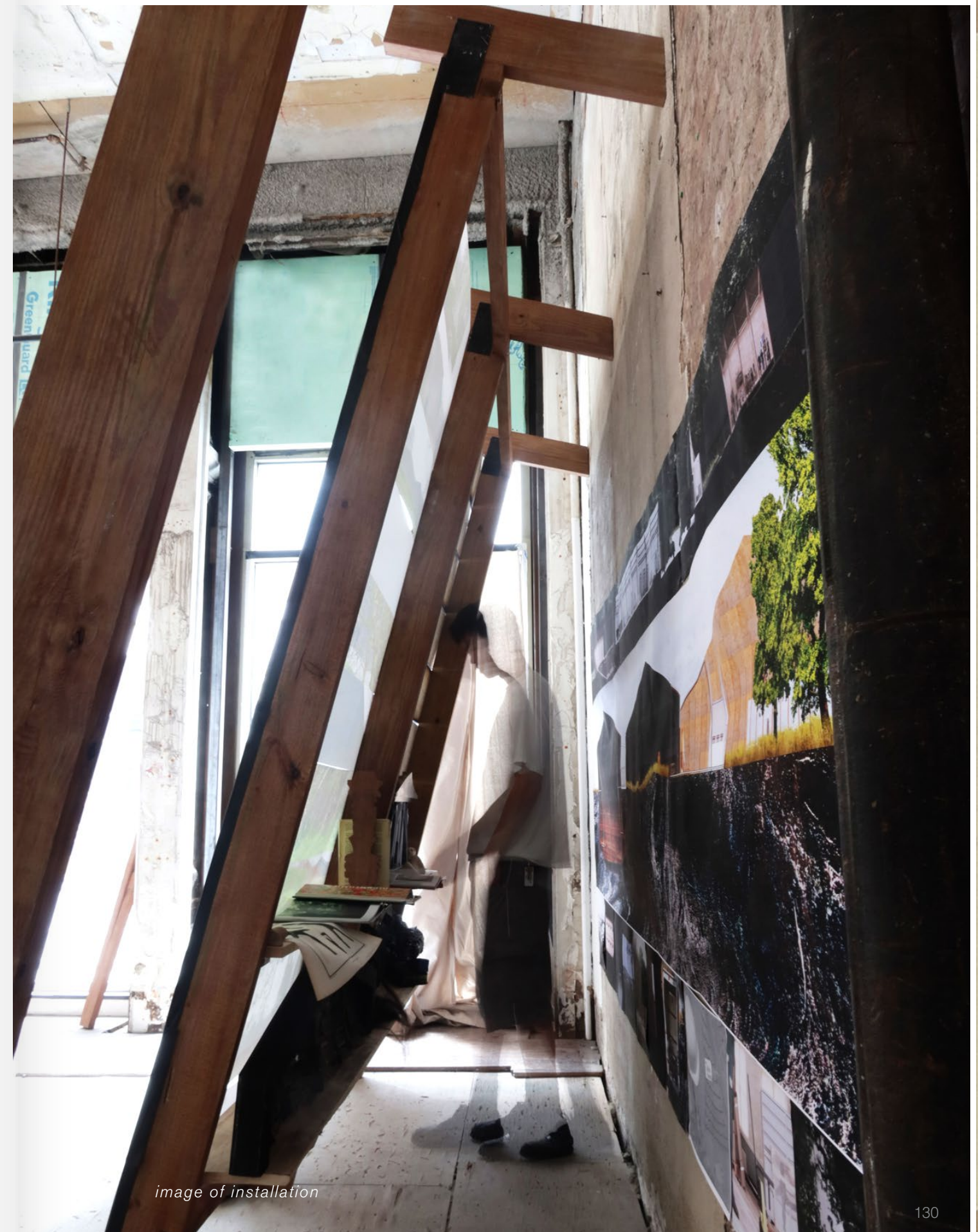


image of installation

Loans Department
The British Museum
Cutbush Lane East
Reading RG2 9AA
loans@britishmuseum.org

Friday 26 April 2024

To Whom it May Concern:

We have been retained by an undisclosed cultural institution to seek restitution of the following objects in your permanent collection, and thus formally request on loan:

1. figure; AM1977 Q.2; Jamaican, Taino; known as "Bird-man"
2. figure; AM1977 Q.3; Jamaican, Taino; known as "Boinayel"

These figures were cut from the guaiacum tree, fashioned into their forms during the 14th century and continuously re-coated in the guaiacum tree's resin over the three hundred years which followed. Spirituality was not an abstraction; it was grounded in place, and directly associated with local ecologies. They were taken from a cave atop Carpenter's Mountain in 1792, brought to London, and displayed at the Royal Society of Antiquaries in 1799, at which time they entered the collection of the British Museum. When the National Museum-Institute of Jamaica sought their restitution in the 1950s, you created plaster cast replicas and returned those instead. The originals remain within your storage, not on display. This is insufficient.

Shifting our positionality not from outside the archive looking in, but from inside the archive looking out, our organization's mission is to co-opt methodologies of reproduction, those very methodologies you exploit, and reframe them within a cultural reproduction framework. As your authority is predicated on the authenticity of the objects in your archive, our practices of replication are in an effort to de-authenticate the originals that you possess. In turn, this will de-authenticate your institution as a legitimate purveyor of authentic cultural objects.

Our organization is located in Reading, an hour and a half's drive from London, on a field south and east of Cutbush Lane. This might sound familiar: so too is your off-site archive located in Reading, an hour and a half's drive from London, on a field south and east of Cutbush Lane. We are sited on the land currently set aside to accommodate the purportedly inevitable perpetual expansion of your collection. To that end, we've decided to block your way. This should, however, make fulfilling this loan request simple, as our loading dock is conveniently located across the driveway from your loading dock. In fact, our entire facility mirrors and reproduces yours.

If you approve this loan request, we will not be returning the original. We will be returning a facsimile of the object. This facsimile will be created at our state of the art facilities, modeled after your state of the art facilities. The original will be packaged and returned to that undisclosed institution which has retained us. As earlier stated, this act will de-authenticate your institution as a legitimate purveyor of authentic cultural objects.

If this loan request is not approved, more drastic action will be taken. We will invite the requesting institution, as well as local diasporic communities and the local public at large, to participate in the critical replication of these objects. This practice of critical replication through continued practice in the diaspora will be an effort to de-authenticate the originals that you possess. In turn, this will de-authenticate your institution as a legitimate purveyor of authentic cultural objects.

Critical replication of any object will consist in the research of both historic practices as well as contemporary practices, as in many cases these objects were taken from still-extant communities, both local and in the diaspora. In the instance of the two objects presently being requested, the Taino community is alive and well, and continue figural sculptural practices to this day.

Materially, in the instance of these Taino figures, we will revive the traditional British practice of coppicing at the adjacent St Johns Copse forest to supply the wood for these sculptures. Gesturally, we will engage traditional and contemporary fabrication methods of the Taino people. Performatively, we will consider the spatial requirements and implications of such objects and their placement. These Taino figures, for instance, were traditionally buried. As such, these objects will no longer perform under the violence of abstraction (as image), but will be reclaimed through spiritual grounding by the adoption of ancestral traditions.

Through these, our shadow activities, our field of cultural production, we decolonize your epistemologies. What does a transmuted ancestral intelligence look like? in a foreign place, with new ecological conditions to respond to? How can the practice of ancestral intelligence perform the work of de-neutralizing land? Land upon which systemic theft and cultural supremacy has been further replicated? As we begin to orient an architecture around "re-grounding" as a practice of cultural restitution, it becomes critical to see ground as the active agent through which the many animisms and spiritual dimensions of every displaced object in your collection might be addressed. Just as the Taino figures require a certain series of practices and associations to begin expressing spiritual relationality to ground and ecology, each object which continues to be held by your institution requires an equally distinct and deep set of practices in order for replication to take form as such a critical vehicle for restitution.

In this sense, we take on the idea of archaeological research, as is the namesake of your research facility. Through the perpetual act of imbuing this ground with acts of ancestral intelligence, we hope to disrupt the foundational notions of temporal linearity and provenance through which you gain authority. Does the act of continuing spiritual traditions with a clear specificity to this local ground not make the ground and its resultant life sacred?

Where your facades enclose soil compacted by concrete pours, we delineate and enter into active conversation. Our tectonic appropriates your facade, all that is necessary to uphold an image of expansion and normalcy, simultaneously hollowed out but steeped in meaning. We thicken the envelope to allow for our activities to take place. This, as a means of calling out the absurdity of your claims towards neutrality, terra nulla, foundation, authority.

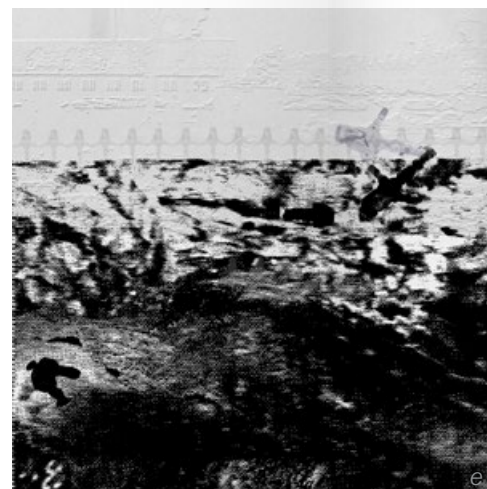
We are your foil, your mirror image but in negative, the active practices that have been redacted in order for you to maintain neutrality.

Your land is not neutral; your land is sacred.

Sincerely,

David Zhang and Ian Callender
Co-Directors, A British Museum

loan request by "A British Museum"



The three sacred Taíno-made figures held within the British Museum permanent collection were each carved from a single Guaicum tree between the 12th and 14th century. ²¹

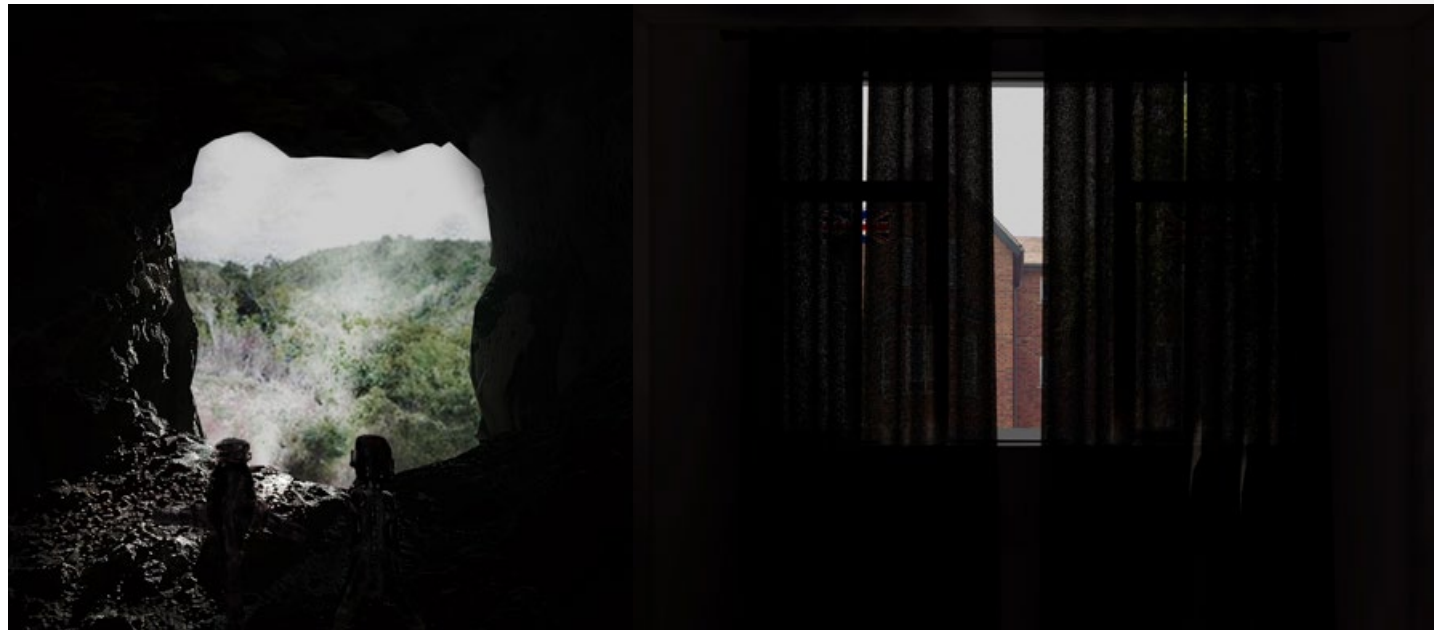
They were ritually recoated in Guaicum resin as a act of spiritual maintenance up until the 18th century, when “archaeologists” from the British Society of Antiquaries looted the figures. The figures’ likeness were subsequently reproduced in block print and falsely claimed as “ancient”. This is how imperial cultural authority was claimed.

a-b “reclaiming provenance”

c scale of Taino figures

d Society of Antiquaries 1800 black print

e grounded spiritualisms



f-g archive perspectives

wood

Dimensions

Height: Height: 104 centimetres

Weight: Weight: 45 kilograms

Width: Width: 52 centimetres

Depth: Depth: 15 centimetres

Curator's comments

Referred to in *Archaeologia*, 1803 as being exhibited to the Society by Rebello on 11/4/1799, having been found in a cave in June, 1792.

Method of acquisition by BM currently unknown. (AMD, 8/1993).

See Fagg, *Tribal Image*, pl.3.

McEwan 2009, p.27

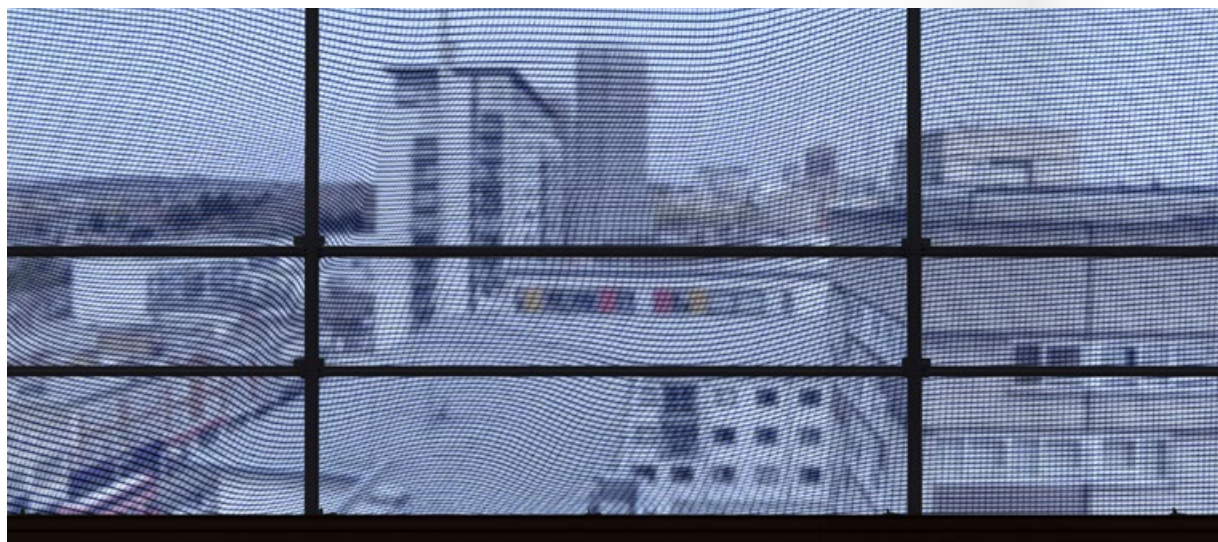
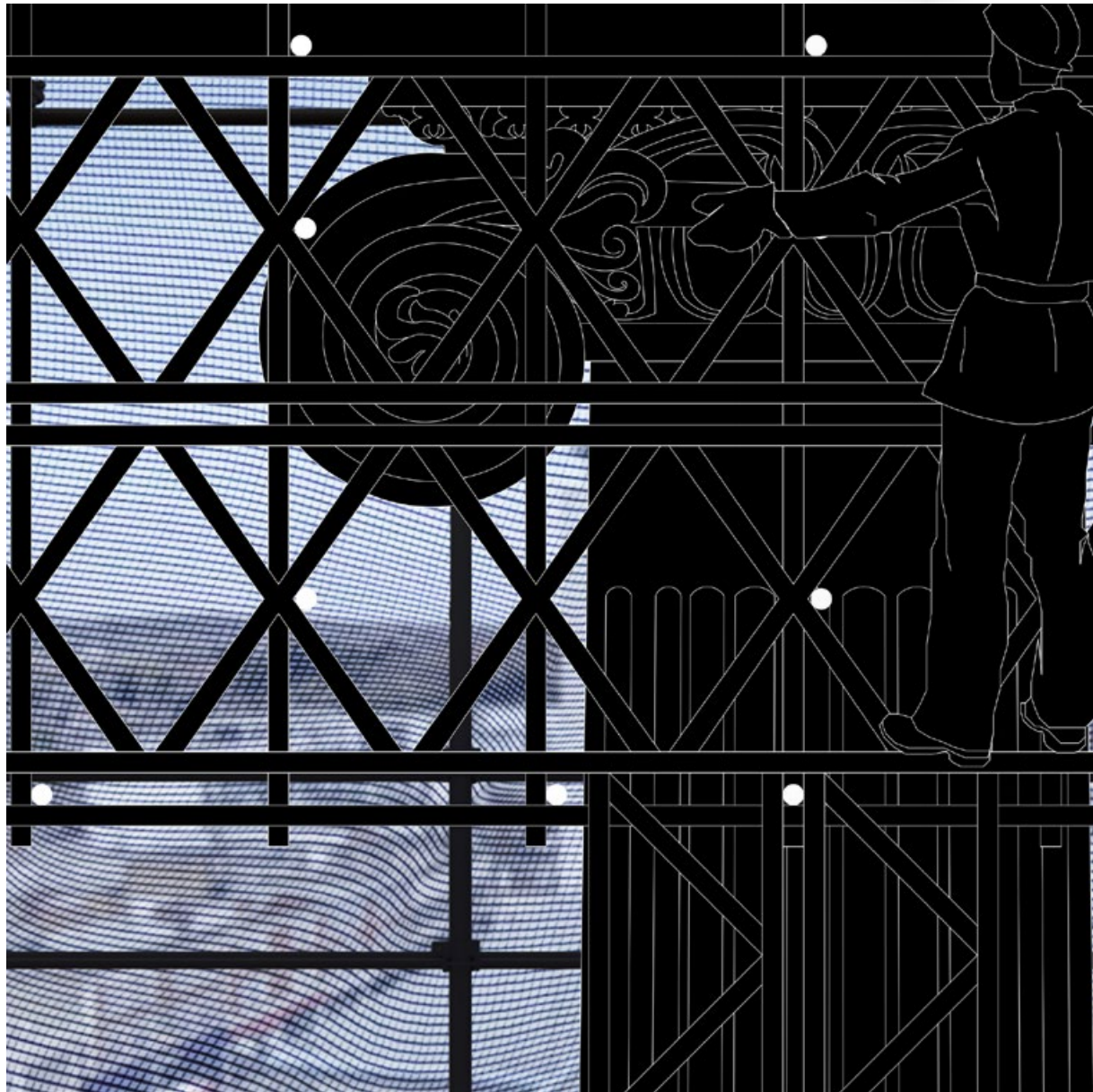
This imposing Taino sculpture stands in a rigid frontal pose of hallucinogenic possession, signalled by the grimacing teeth and tears streaming down his cheeks. The ostentatious display of the sexual organs, emphasized by the hands resting on the hips, underlines its aggressive marculinity.

The bulging calves are an admired manifestation of...



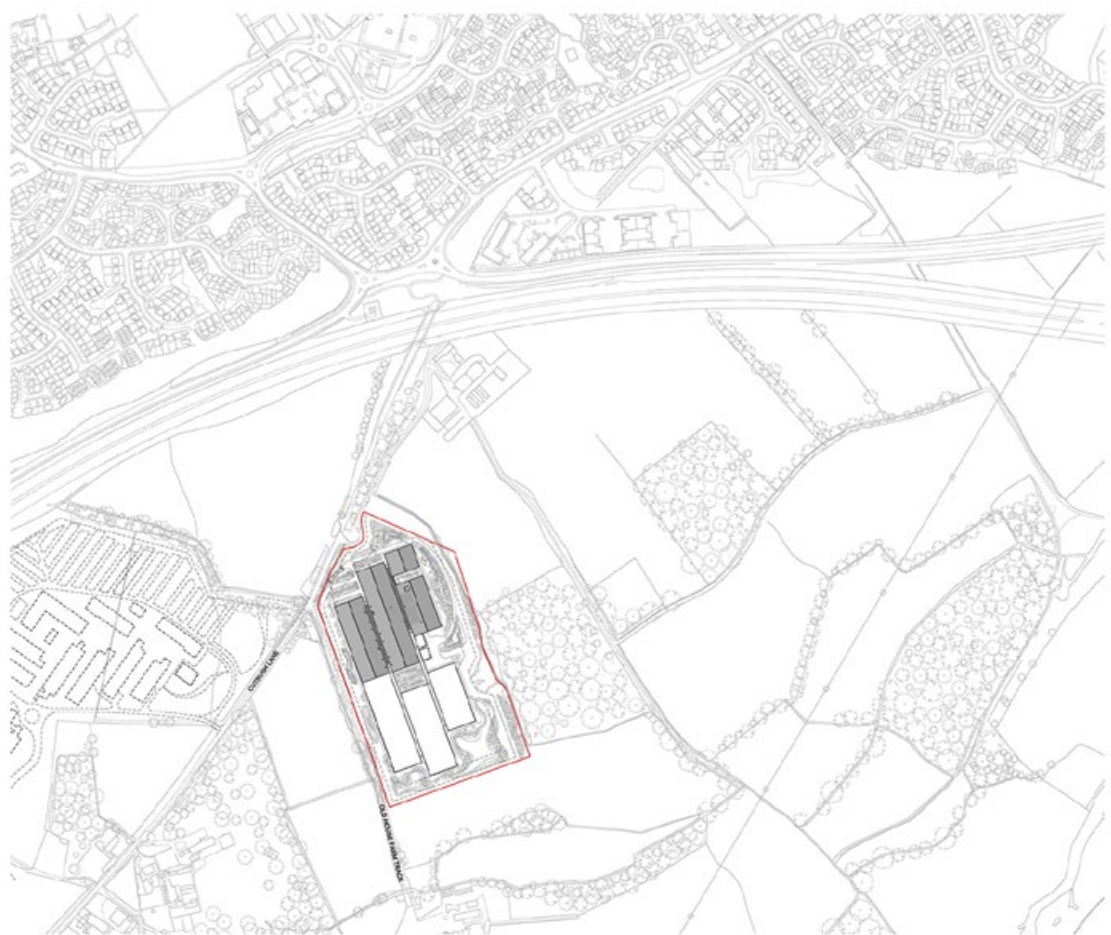
Back to results





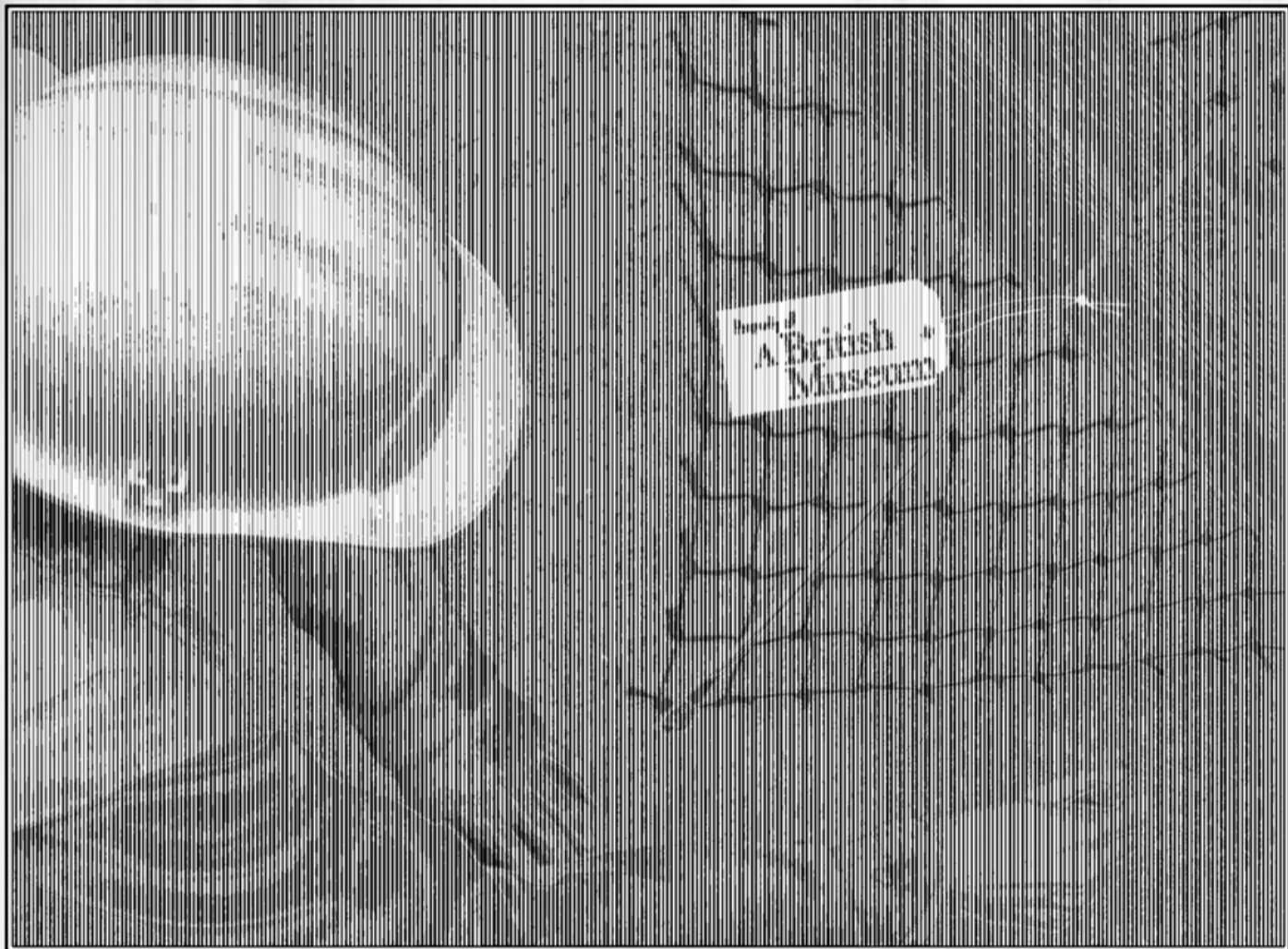
upkeeping the empire, BM facades

neutralizing the empire, towards rural spaces

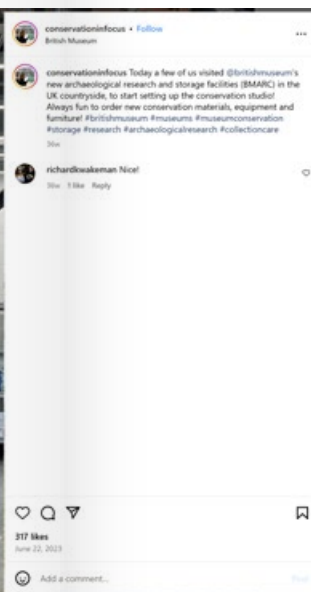
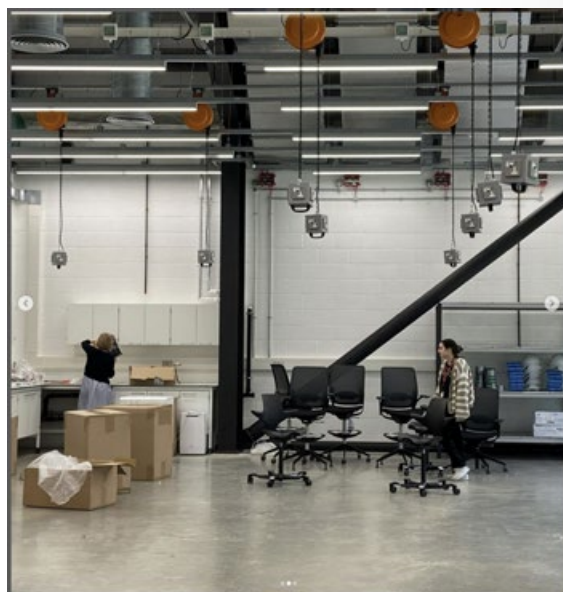
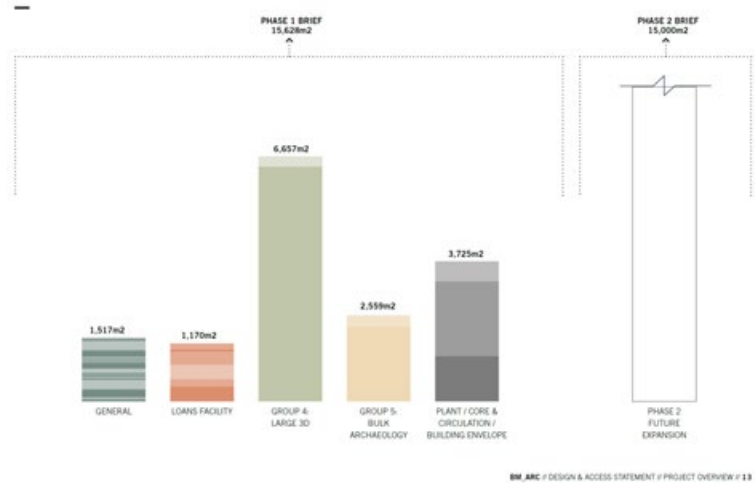


JOHN MASLAN + PARTNERS

British Museum
Archaeological Research Center
Location Plan - Phase 1+2 Outline

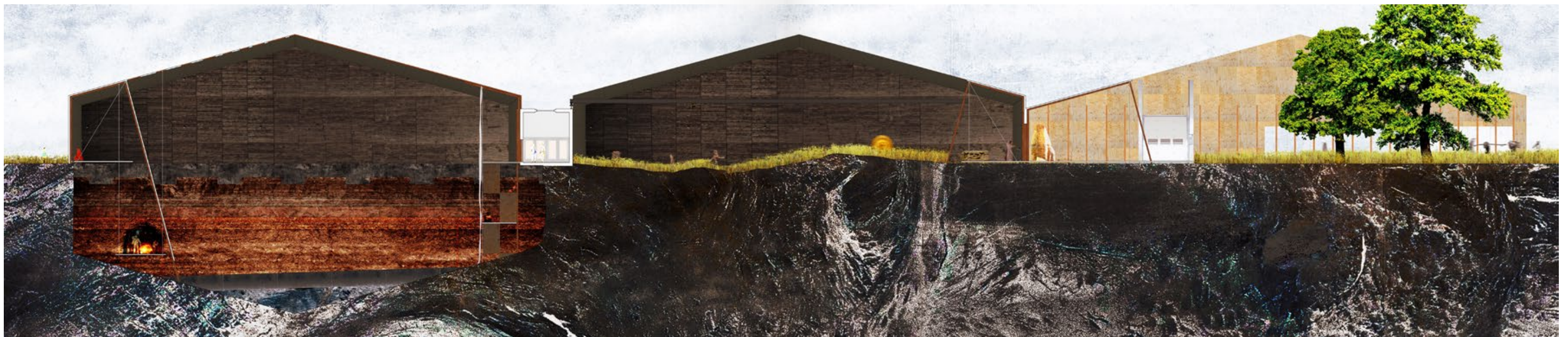
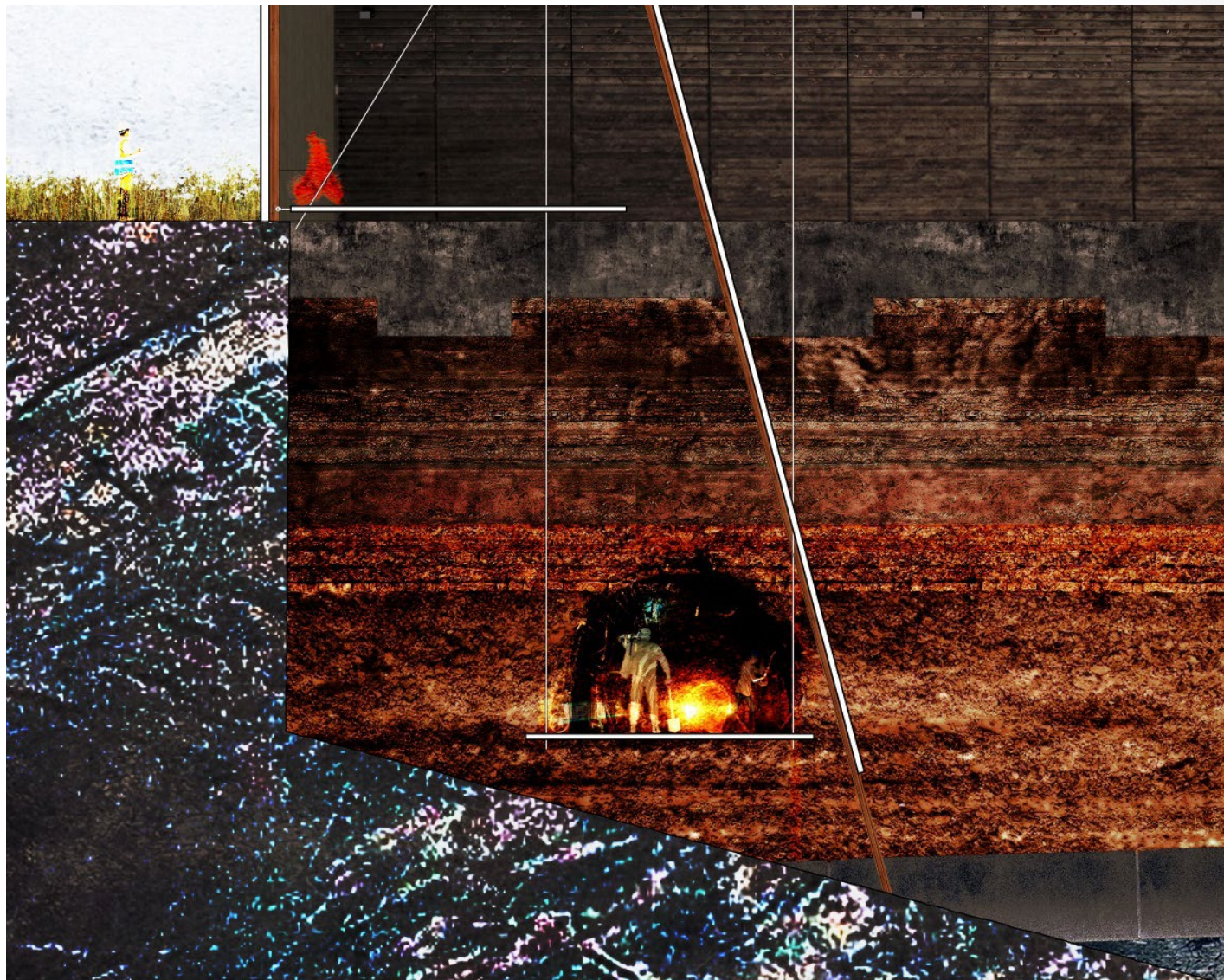


PROJECT OVERVIEW. 02.2
Project Brief

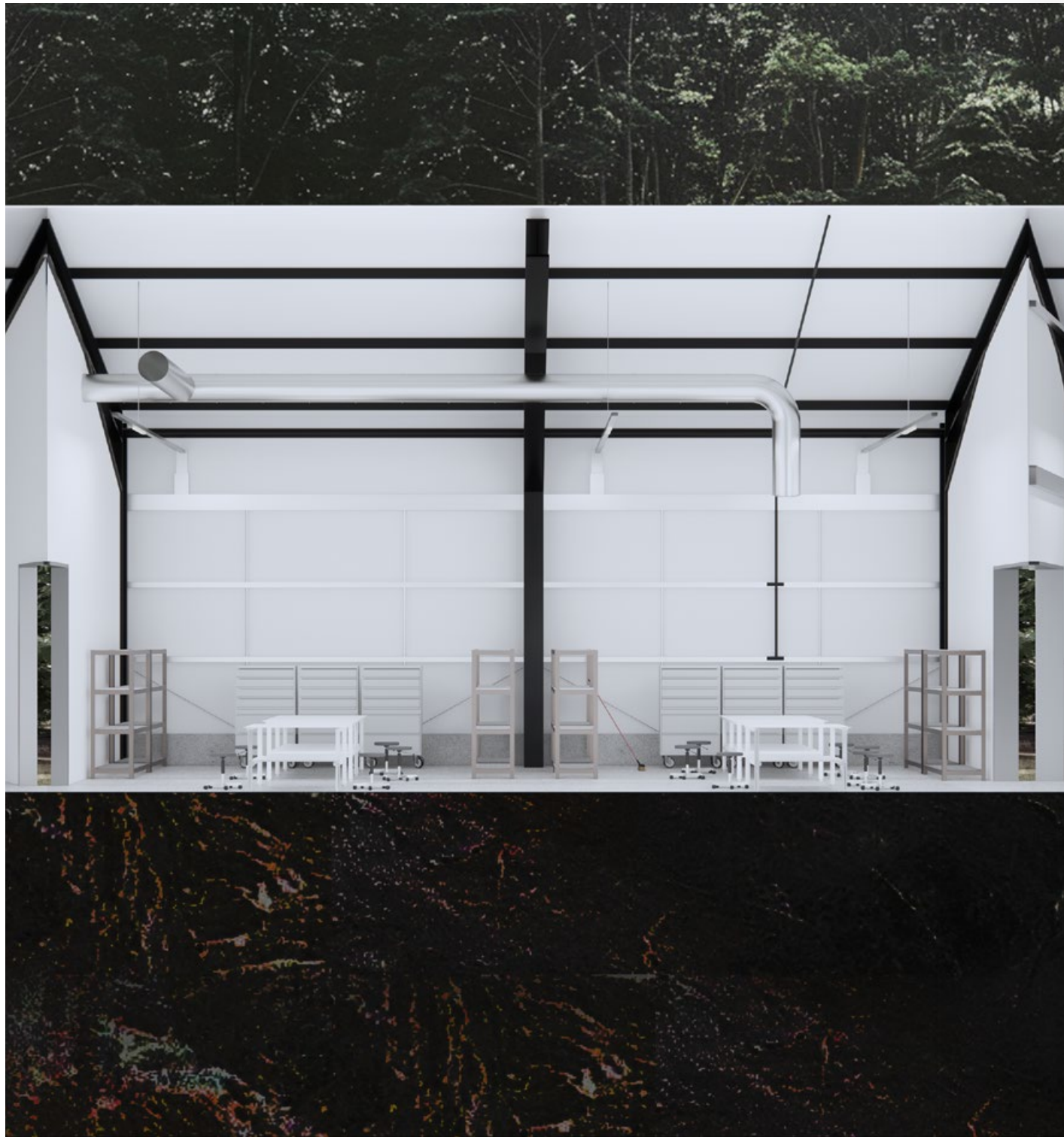




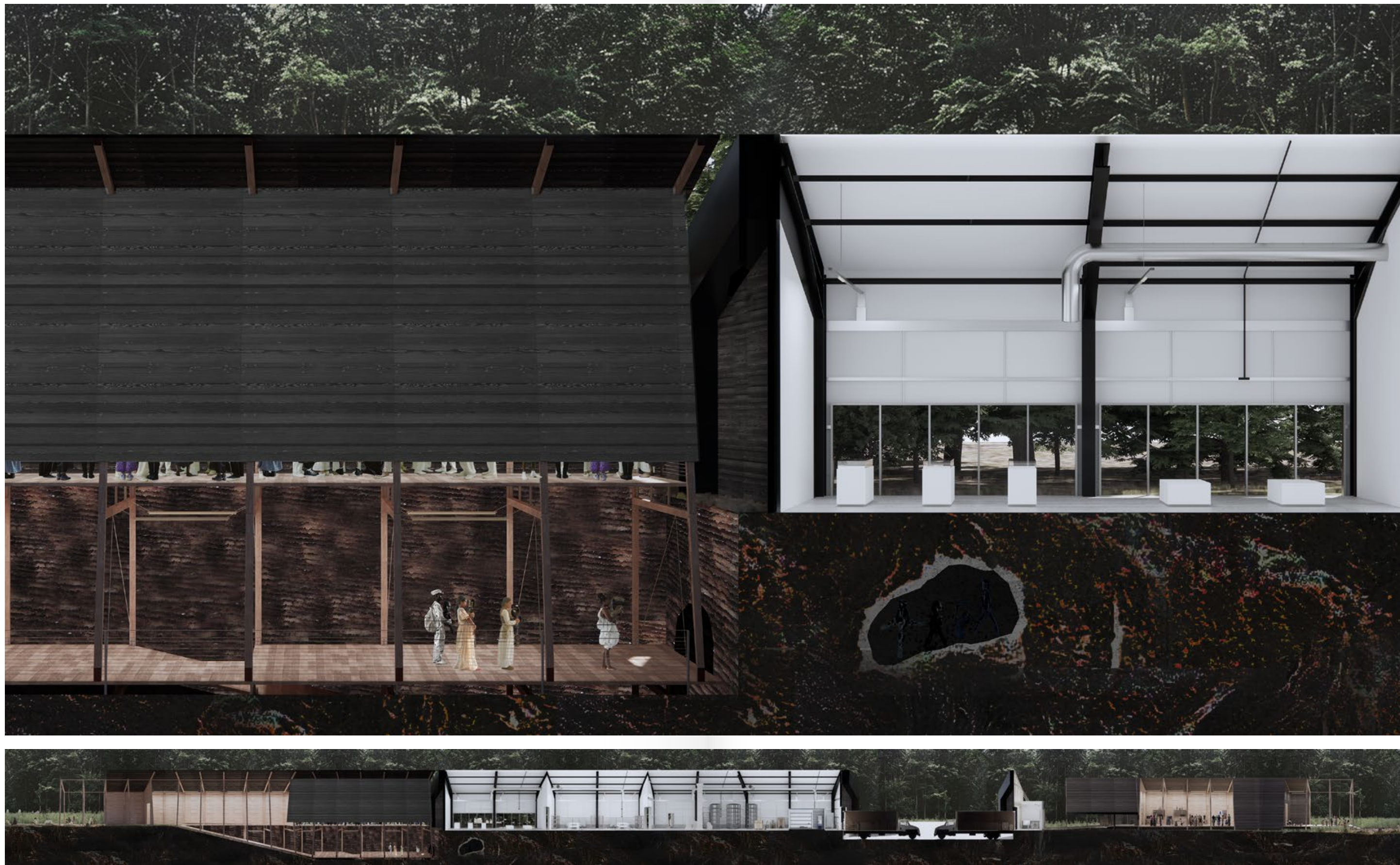
BM-Archaeological Research Center site photos, heritage forest and surveillance cameras



Re-connecting to ground, de-neutralizing the ground of future expansion



critical replications of object reiterations



opacities of ritual



109
34
1379

CAUTION
MOITUAQ

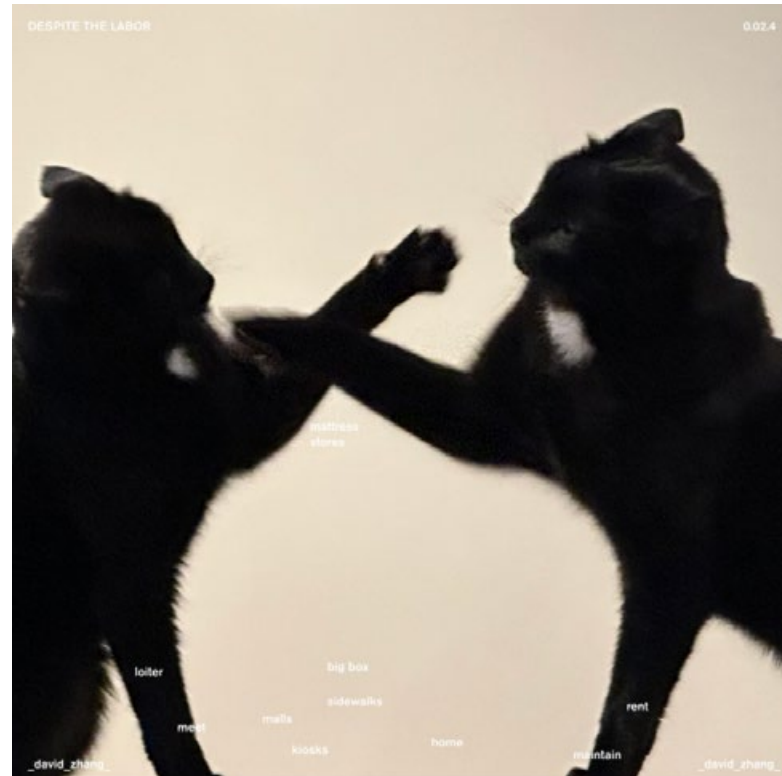
image of installation



images of self-driven critical replications of sacred figures and BM models

Endnotes

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- 14 Roy, Ananya. *Praxis in the Time of Empire*. *Planning Theory*, 5(1), 2006. 7-29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095206061019>
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at the moment we like architects very much.

like architects and we didn't for a long way I think it is partly because of this rejection of the Wrightian Builders were practical men, while architects ran off with other people's money, I think we've come back to star architects because of status that produced banality. The average building was built as cheap to take in as many paying tenants as possible, or to sell as many houses as possible. We didn't want the frills of it looking good or the whimsy that an architect could add. But I think we've gone beyond that in competitions in cities between star architects the world over.

most seems that the iconicism that many schools aspire to is to nurture or to tease out the next Libeskind in a visual studies class - so if it is to train "successful" architects, perhaps there should be an emphasis on public speaking. It's quite apparent that the reason Norman Foster is the most successful architect in the world is that he is Norman Foster. How did he become that famous?

like to attribute success to...

me?

David Zhang is an M.Arch candidate at Columbia GSAPP. He resides in Manhattan's Chinatown and lives with a childhood friend, Jackson and two black cats, Uncle and Tomo.

For animated drawings and videos featured in this portfolio, please visit davidzhang.info



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