

GSAPP Core2 Spring 2020

Karla Rothstein, critic

Tung Nguyen, student TA

TENDING : intertwined impact

To tend is to pay close **attention**.

To **contribute**.

To **cultivate**.

To **grow**.

To **produce**.

“What we are really talking about, if we’re honest with ourselves, is transforming everything about the way we live on this planet.”

- Rebecca Tarbotton (1973-2012), former ED of the Rainforest Action Network

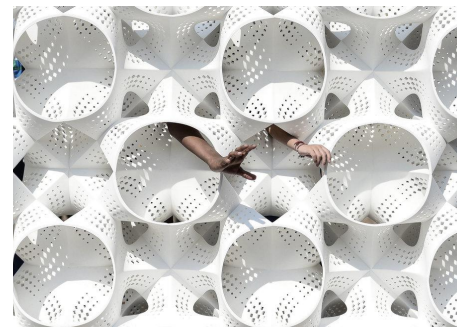
Tending, (Blue) is a luminous installation by James Turrell built in 2003 at the Renzo Piano–designed Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, Texas. Part of the ‘Skyspaces’ series, *Tending* is a contemplative chamber that curates **intimate and expansive dialogues with the atmosphere**. Ten years after it was finished, a 42-story tower was built in the vicinity of *Tending*’s skyward aperture. The artist declared the experience “destroyed,” and closed the space to the public. The sky was not big enough to hold both art and architecture. A similar infraction happened last year at Turrell’s installation at MoMA PS1, when construction scaffolding for luxury condos became visible, and there too, the meditative artwork was closed until the offending distraction could be dismantled.

Maintaining **conceptual integrity** is a design imperative. We will honor and refine our engagement with light, space, and awesomeness; and simultaneously design **social infrastructures** that are resilient to the unstable and unpredictable contexts of our time. Democracy requires recognizing and **strategically opening edges and borders** – sometimes to embrace things we do not fully understand. In this context, architecture has the capacity to frame diverse activity, to support civil behavior, critical discourse, contemplation, celebrations, and mourning.

Learning at all stages requires **attentive engagement** – *tending* to the work at hand.



James Turrell, *Tending (Blue)*, Texas



NUDE Offices, xvii_MathSurf, India

Curiosity and optimism render difficult tasks meaningful. **Purpose and persistence** fuel innovative, iterative exploration and production. Learning requires a **space to focus**. ‘Schools’ in this section will be **immersive yet porous oases** comprised of both interior and exterior spaces – environments benefitting from **integration with restorative landscapes** and the city at large.

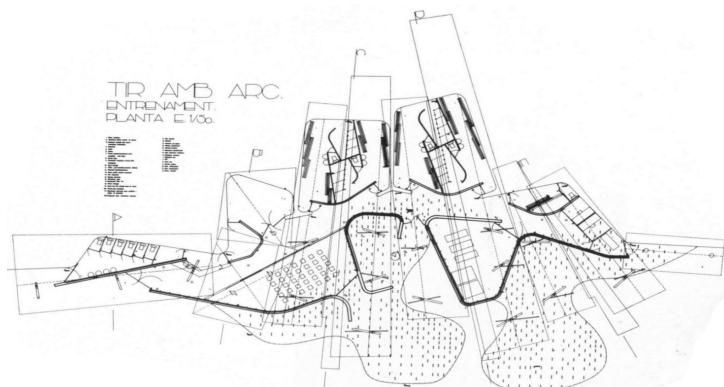
Spaces of learning have the utmost opportunity and responsibility to **inspire and enlighten**. ‘Buildings’ will be understood through **material and spatial agency** encompassing nuanced gradients of hard-, soft- and water-scapes, **intertwined to support education, community and regenerative legacy**. Architecture and garden will be **interdependent and associative**; healthy and resilient spatial-scapes experienced temporally through the changes of seasons, and interacting with **sunlight and moon-shadow**.

The year 2020 demands impeccable design vision to help shape future communities. Projects will negotiate **delicate coexistence** among intertwined, oscillating **intergenerational** groups and individuals, defining and engaging the issues upon which our collective future depends. Urban-ecological challenges — which are human predicaments, really — demand both **innovation and progressive perspective**.

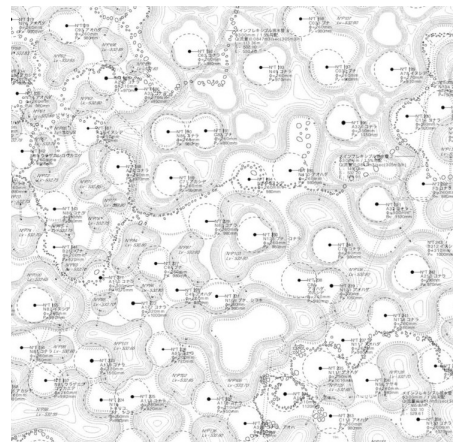
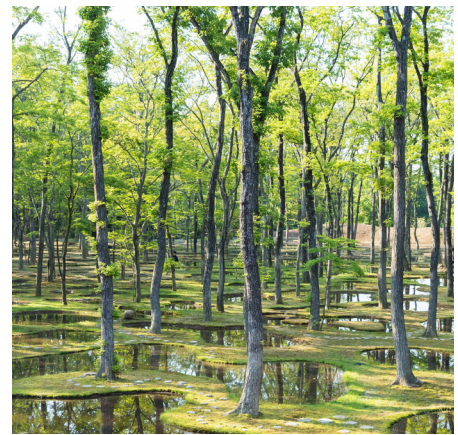
Here, architecture is a proactive participant — **making space for reflection and wisdom**, while fostering new venues and affirmations of social and environmental **integrity**.

"In landscape, as in every other field, intellectual and practical, the most intriguing questions lie precisely at the boundary -- which is, of course, no longer a boundary -- at the very point where such interactions occur: in nature at the ecotone, in society along the transgressive lines where identities merge and hybridity rules."

- Denis Cosgrove, *Liminal Geometry and Elemental Landscape: Construction and Representation, in Recovering Landscape, 1999*



Enric Miralles & Carme Piños, Olympic Archery Range, Barcelona



Junya Ishigami, Art Biotop Water Garden, Japan

OTHER TENDINGS

Pretend. **Critical imagination** allows us to believe in possibility that does not yet exist.

Portend. Your **design vision** is a manifestation of conscious choices, and can inspire an impactful and more elegantly responsible future.

Intend. Expectations are high and **proof of consequence** will be required. All projects will have the dignity of working titles, and evolving statements of intent.

“finding the words is another step in learning to see.”

Bryologist, Robin Wall Kimmerer, in *Gathering Moss*

Attend. Ambition deserves **focus** and fully engaged participation. Students are expected to work in studio and embrace the diverse social **rituals** of studio-life.

Extend. Beyond expectations of the studio-wide brief, the program of the school day will be complimented by evening and weekend **civic interaction**. Where fruitful, projects may expand to integrate and requalify proximate open space.

ON PROCESS

This studio celebrates the ability to **work and think meticulously** (and ideally simultaneously). A passion for making, testing, remaking, and proving is imperative.

Project evolution will include conceptual exploration, analyses, careful iterative discovery, recalibration and refinement. Students are expected to critically explore a conceptual position, through which the premise of your work will be interrogated and argued. Received ideas from social media do not constitute innovation; and like all decisions, color will be used with intention.

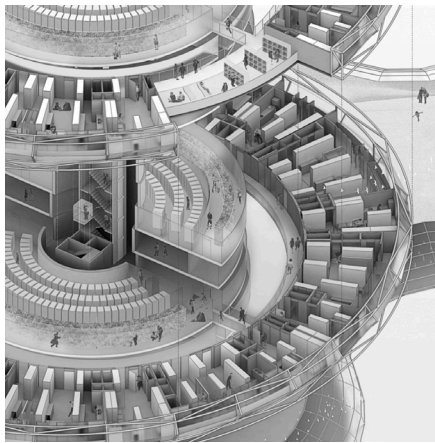
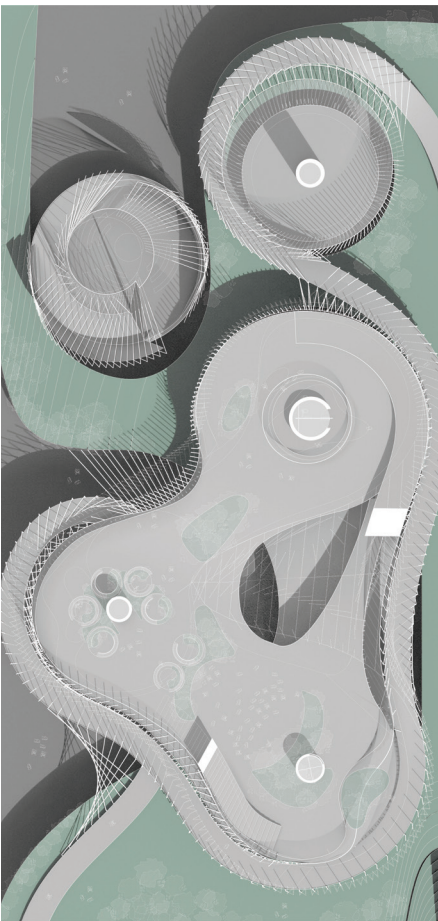
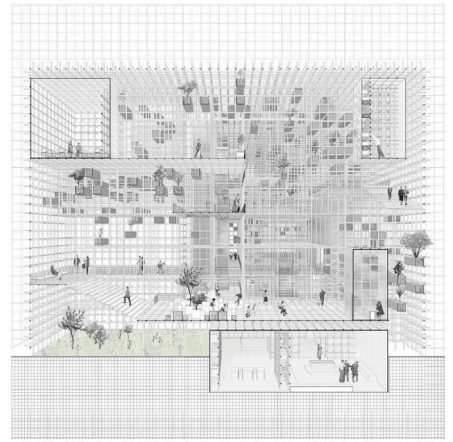
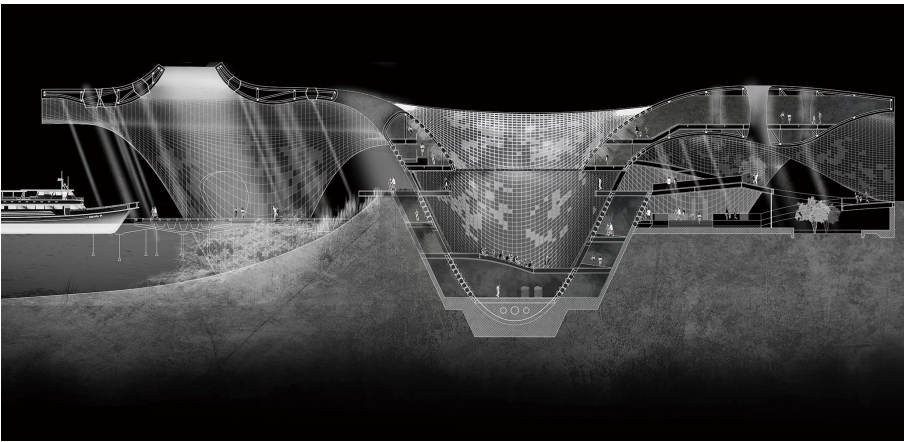
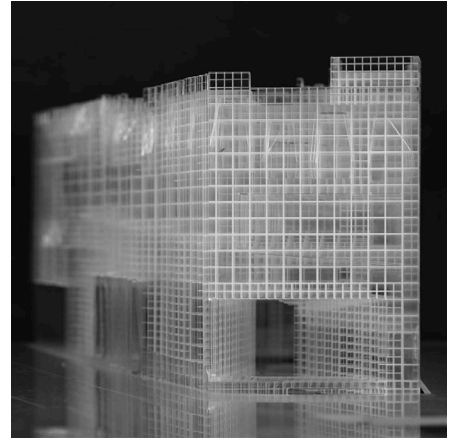
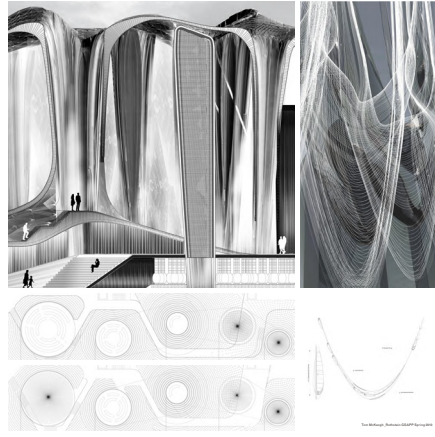
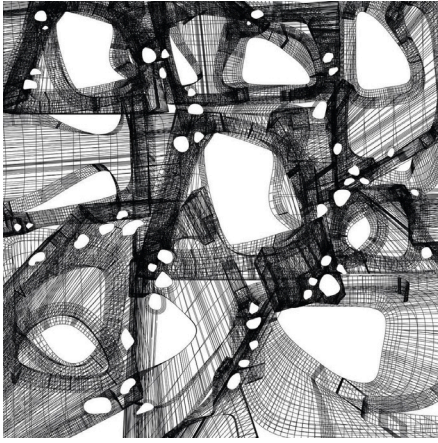
Students will articulate a position on the program, be **critically experimental**, and develop projects that contribute to architectural discourse and design potential. Agendas will evolve and be honed through the substance of your work - which shall be **compellingly crafted**, socially relevant, personally meaningful, and perhaps suitably alarming for the complex times we are in.

This studio believes in the power of good questions, the precision of poetry, and truths (with an ‘s’). A culture of discussion and respectful debate will be fostered. We support bold and operatic passions, duly edited to **precisely sublime and purposeful** tactics. We appreciate beauty and craft, eschewing mashups for critical and surgical intersections, chimerical transformations of specifically articulated ideas, distilling surplus to uncover **lucid and impactful opportunities and consequence**.

Work will sometimes be difficult, complex and even occasionally messy, but always in the service of exquisite intellectual and physical inquiry.



DeathLAB: Democratizing Death, exhibition at 21C MoCA, Kanazawa Japan



- From left to right
1. Valentina Angelucci
 2. Tom McKeogh
 3. Yvette Liu
 4. Zhao Gao + Li Ling Lin
 5. Michael McDowel
 6. Tung Nguyen
 7. Alexis Burson + David Zhai
 8. Chenyan Zhou
 9. James Piacentini

RESOURCES

In addition to studio-wide readings and references, the following may be useful

- Allen, Stan.** *Notations and diagrams: Mapping the Intangible in Practice: Architecture, Technique and Representation*, 2009
- Allen, Stan.** *Field Conditions*, 1985.
- Appiah, Kwame Anthony.** *The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen*, 2010
- Balmond, Cecil.** *Informal*, 2002
- Benjamin, Walter.** *The Task of the Translator*, 1923
- Cadwell, Michael.** *Strange Details*, 2007
- Colomina, Beatrice.** *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media*, 1996
- Corner, James, ed.** *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Architecture*, 1999
- Deleuze, Gilles.** *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, 1981
- Dickinson, Greg, et al.** *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials*, 2010
- Foucault, Michel.** *Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias*, 1967. <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html>
- Griffith, Saul.** *inventor, a MacArthur genius fellow, and the founder and CEO of Otherlab, a high-tech research and development company on the frontlines of trying to imagine our clean energy future. Griffith and his team were contracted by the Department of Energy to track and visualize the entirety of America's energy flows — he describes climate change is an energy problem, and explores what it means to be part of a translation to a de-carbonized future.*
- Harvey, David.** *Spaces of Hope*, 2000
- Holl, Steven.** *Parallax*, 2000
- Johnson, Steven.** *Emergence: the Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software*, 2001
- Klein, Naomi.** *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*, 2015.
- Klinenberg, Eric.** *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*, 2019
- Reiser + Umemoto.** *Atlas of Novel Tectonics*, 2006
- Rothstein, Karla.** *The New Civic-Sacred: Designing for Life and Death in the Modern Metropolis*, *Design Issues* Volume 34, Issue 1, p.29-41, 2018
- Sacks, Oliver.** (neurologist and author, 1933–2015) "Why We Need Gardens," in *Everything in Its Place: First Loves and Last Tales*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/18/opinion/sunday/oliver-sacks-gardens.html>
- Sorkin, Michael.** *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*, 1992
- Suzuki, Hisao.** *A+U: 522 Supermodels*, 2014
- Tanizaki, Jun'ichiro.** *In Praise of Shadows*, 1977
- Urban Green Council.** <https://www.urbangreencouncil.org/content/projects/new-york-city-energy-and-water-use-2017-report>
- Vidler, Anthony.** *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*, 1994

Karla Rothstein is a practicing architect and adjunct Associate Professor teaching design studios at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. She is the founder and director of Columbia's trans-disciplinary DeathLAB and a member of the Columbia University Seminar on Death. Rothstein's areas of inquiry weave intimate spaces of urban life, death and memory with intersections of social justice, the environment, and civic infrastructure. She is also Design Director at LATENT Productions, the architecture, research, and development firm she co-founded with Salvatore Perry. In this role, she utilizes a deep understanding of the political and practical aspects of realizing built work, and the importance of societal and cultural levers to promote positive change within communities. In 2016, LATENT Productions and DeathLAB were awarded first place in the international "Future Cemetery" competition and DeathLAB's initiative was recognized as one of New York Magazine's 47 'Reasons to Love New York.' *DeathLAB: Democratizing Death*, a solo show of DeathLAB's mission, design proposals and interviews was exhibited at the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan from July 2018 – March 2019. In the Fall of 2018 Rothstein had a solo show at ART OMI and was in residency at MacDowell Colony to support work on a current co-authored book manuscript. Among other international publications, Rothstein's first single-family house is included in Kenneth Frampton's *American Masterworks* 2nd edition, Rizzoli 2008. LATENT is currently re-vivifying a 240,000 SF / 9-acre former cotton spinning mill campus in the Berkshires - @GreylockWORKS, completing 25 units of new affordable housing for home ownership in Brownsville, Brooklyn, and a meandering private urban oasis behind a translucent faceted façade in Carroll Gardens.

<http://www.deathlab.org> @studioRothstein @gsappdeathlab @greylockworks @latentnyc
<http://magazine.columbia.edu/features/spring-2016/making-light-death> <http://www.greylockworks.com> <http://www.latentnyc.com> <http://www.npr.org/2014/12/13/370446879/avant-garde-afterlife-space-shortage-inspires-new-burial-ideas>, <http://inhabitat.com/heres-what-the-environmentally-friendly-cemetery-of-the-future-could-looklike/> <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2016/12/reasons-to-love-new-york-2016.html#forty-three>

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