

**EVOLVING
GROUNDS
PORTFOLIO
RUNQING XI
M.S.AAD**
SELECTED WORKS
2024—2025

BEFORE EVERYTHING

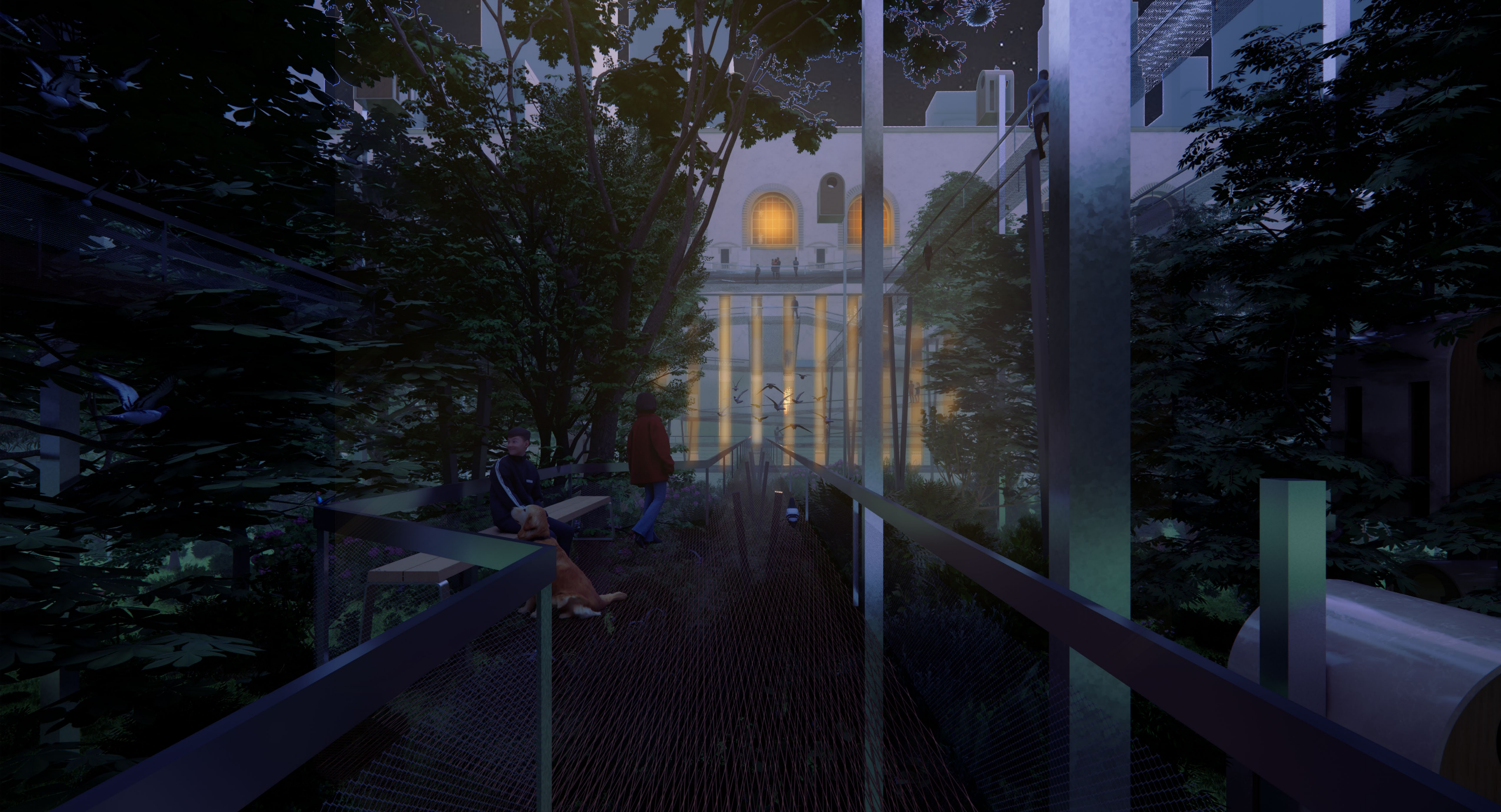
Under the title Evolving Grounds, this portfolio frames architecture as an adaptable practice, deeply attuned to the sacredness of nature and the evolving complexities of our time. In an age marked by ecological urgency, rapid technological shifts, and multifaceted social issues, architecture must cultivate an openness, learning continuously, adapting sensitively, and embracing change as a guiding principle.

My experiences at GSAPP have deepened this conviction, guiding me into dialogues not only with my own spiritual world, but with water, earth, sky, and the diverse communities inhabiting our shared spaces, reaffirming the deep interconnectedness and sacred character of our natural world. This journey has challenged me to question utopian visions of technology, re-examine cultural and historical identities embedded in built environments, and explore new mediums for architectural storytelling. Architecture, I have come to believe, must remain agile, responding thoughtfully and ethically to the living systems that sustain and surround it.

Through varied studios, critical research, and digital explorations, I've developed a broader perspective on architecture as a discipline defined by conversation, sensitivity, and continual evolution. Evolving Grounds is thus not merely a theme, but a statement of purpose: architecture as a humble yet ambitious practice that recognizes the sacredness within nature, embracing complexity, and adapting gracefully to the fluid challenges of our contemporary world.

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01 FOREST SOUNDSCAPE

SITE | NYPL Bryant park, New York
ACADEMIC | Advanced Studio
INSTRUCTOR | Larissa Belcic & Michelle Farang Shofet – Nocturnal Medicine
YEAR | Summer 2024

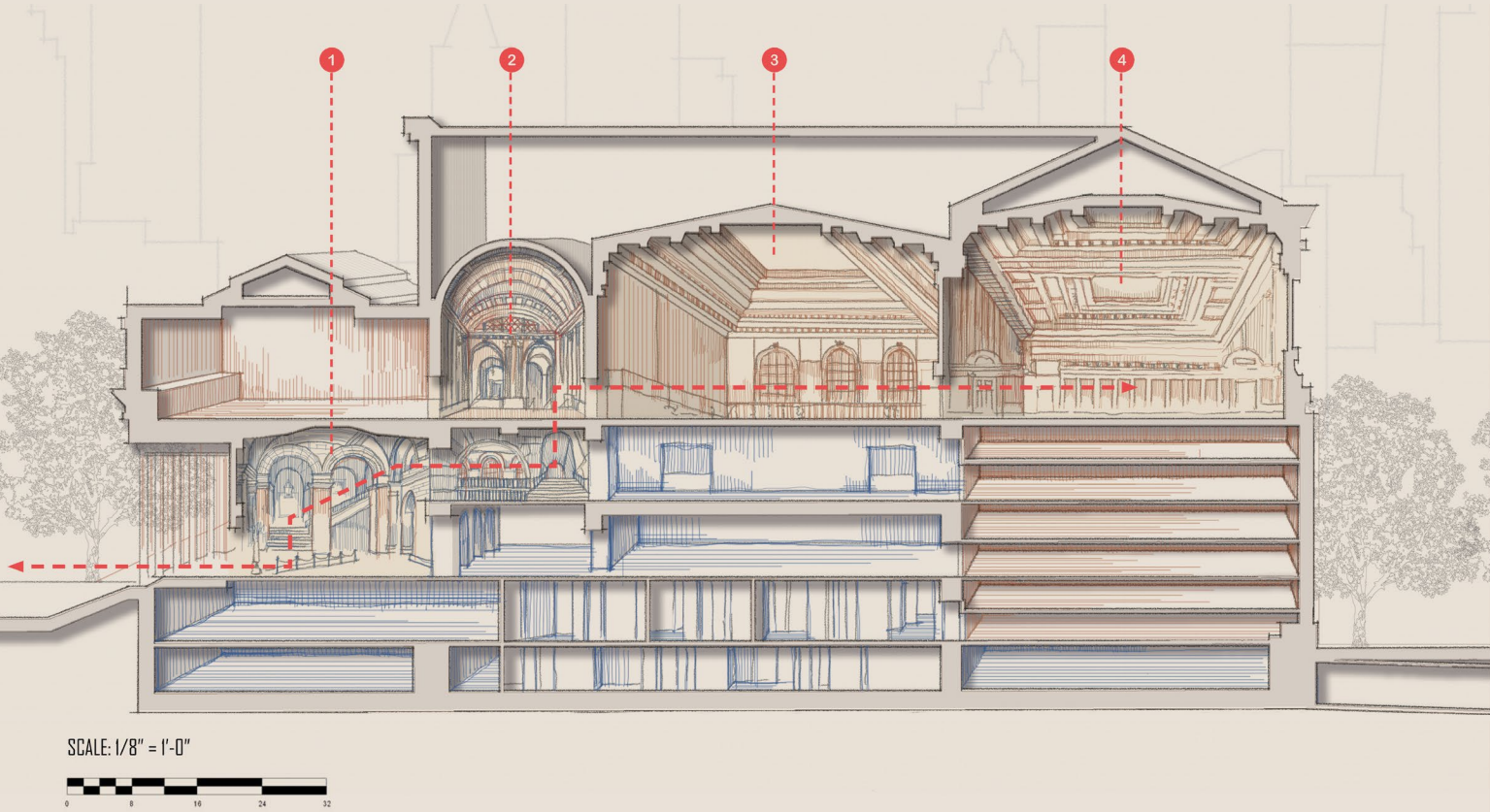
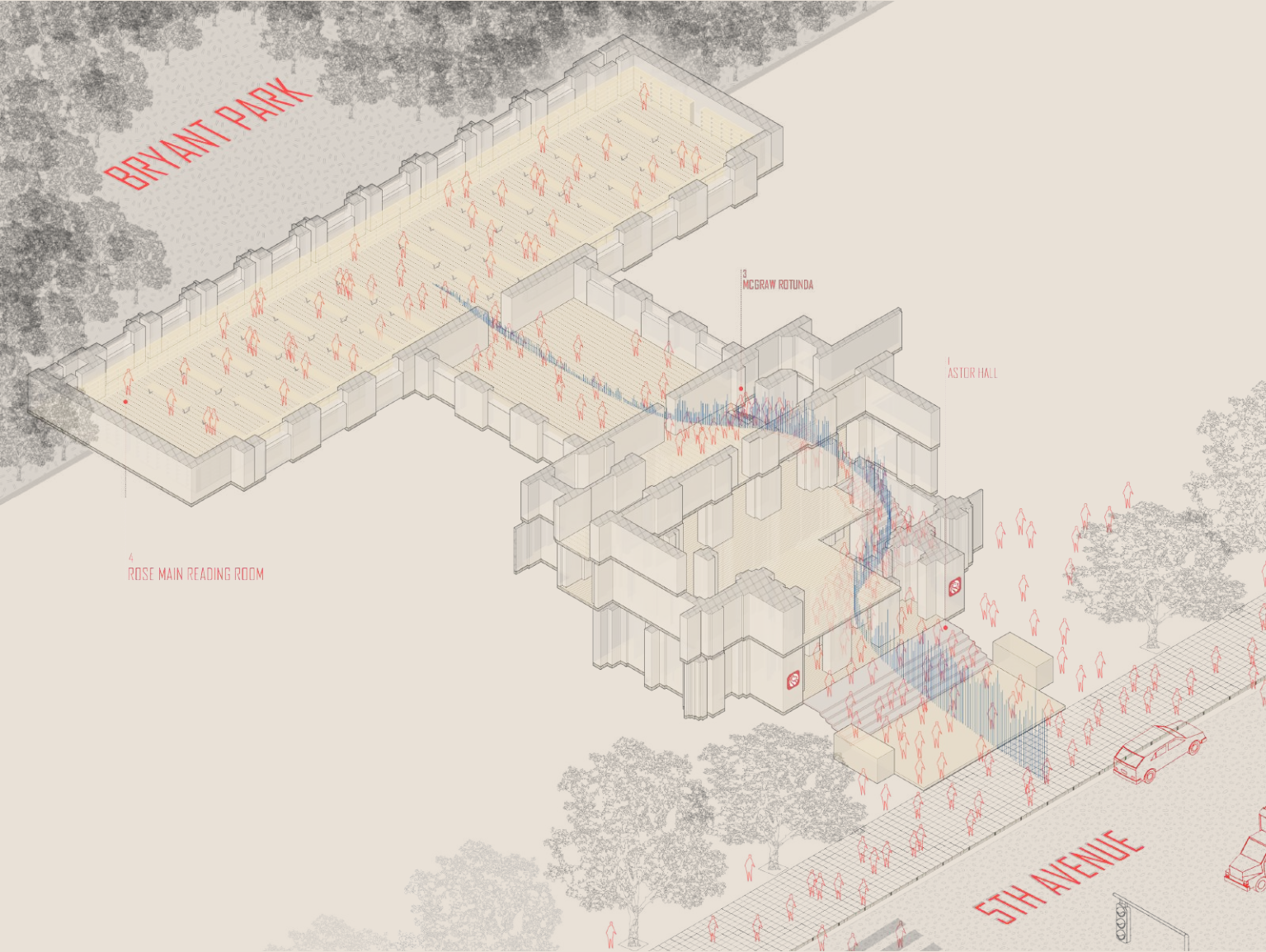
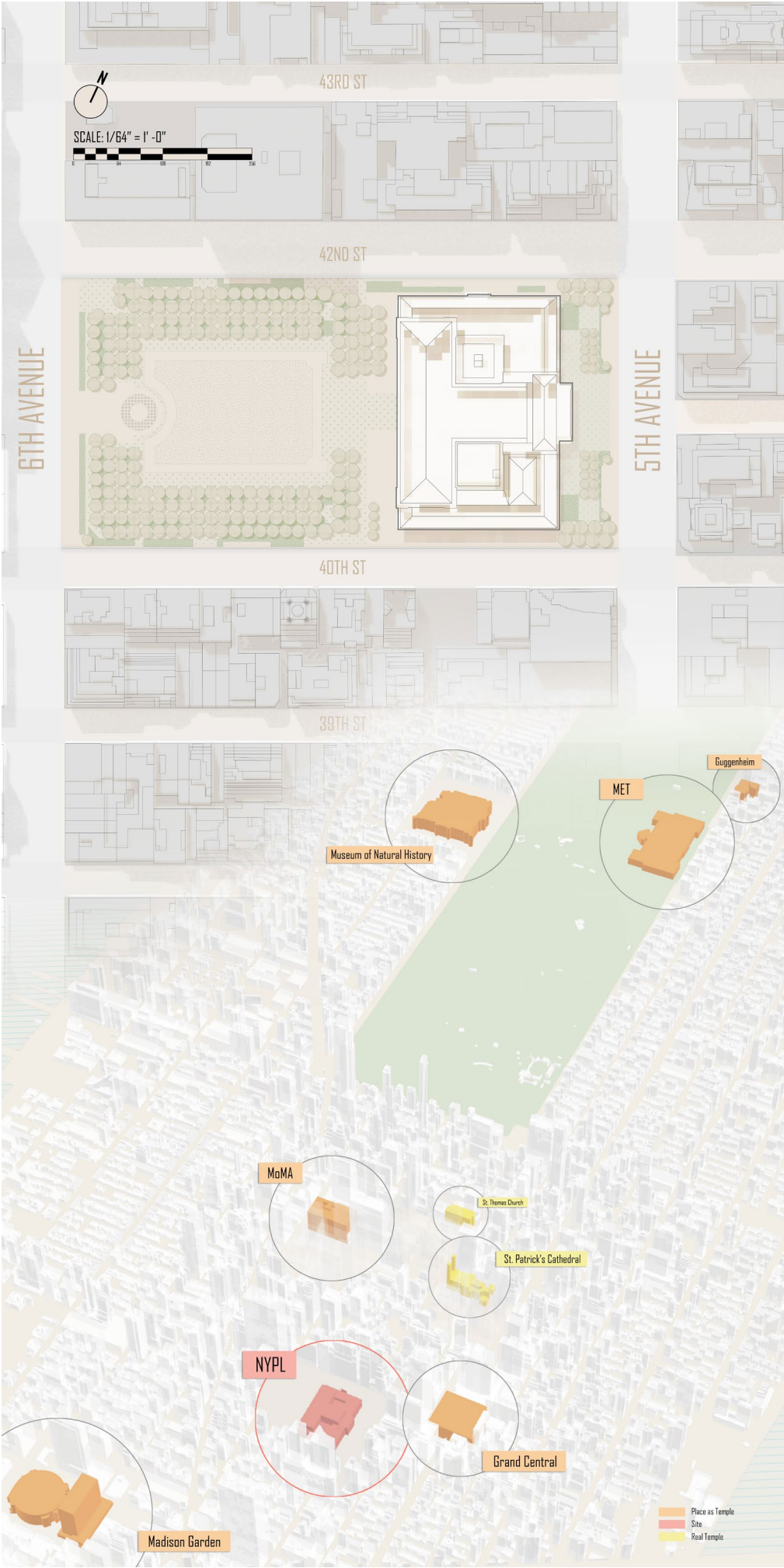
This project redefines the New York Public Library—long revered as a temple of knowledge—as a dynamic, adaptive institution responding to the climate crisis through immersive environmental education. Bryant Park is transformed into a thriving forest habitat, while the library's punctured facade introduces sound chambers filled with live-recorded bird songs, drawing visitors into intimate dialogue with nature. Elevated platforms extend carefully into the trees, positioning architecture as a mediator between humanity's pursuit of knowledge and the sacredness of the natural world.

The New York Public Library, established in 1895, is the first public library in New York. Over the years, it has become a symbol of knowledge and learning, welcoming millions of visitors annually.

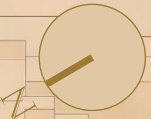
However, in our rapidly changing world, where people read books less often, it's crucial for such institutions to evolve and address contemporary issues at stake like climate change and educate people in different ways.

Human beings and nature coexisted on this planet, one can not live without each other. The New York Public Library was the first one in New York that is truly accessible for the public, which made the image of library in people's mind shifted from fortress to sanctuary. The library, as a sanctuary for people, should and could more than spreading knowledge through books.

This perspective extends to other notable landmarks surrounding the library, such as Grand Central Station, Madison Square Garden, MoMA, the MET, the Museum of Natural History, and the Guggenheim. Additionally, there are literal temples where people worship, like St. Thomas Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral.



SITE MAP



5TH AVENUE

42ND STREET

40TH STREET



SITE AXON
BIRD SANCTUARY

FOREST

BIRD SPECIES

AMERICAN WOODCOCK
BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER
CANADA WARBLER
GREEN WARBLER
ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK
SCARLET TANAGER
VEERY
WOOD THRUSH
PIPING LOVER
BALD EAGLE

PLANT SPECIES

NORTHERN RED OAK
WHITE PINE
BLACK OAK
HOPHORNBEAM
PIGNUT HICKORY
RED MAPLE
PINE
BLACK WILLOW
NORTHERN BAYBERRY

WETLAND

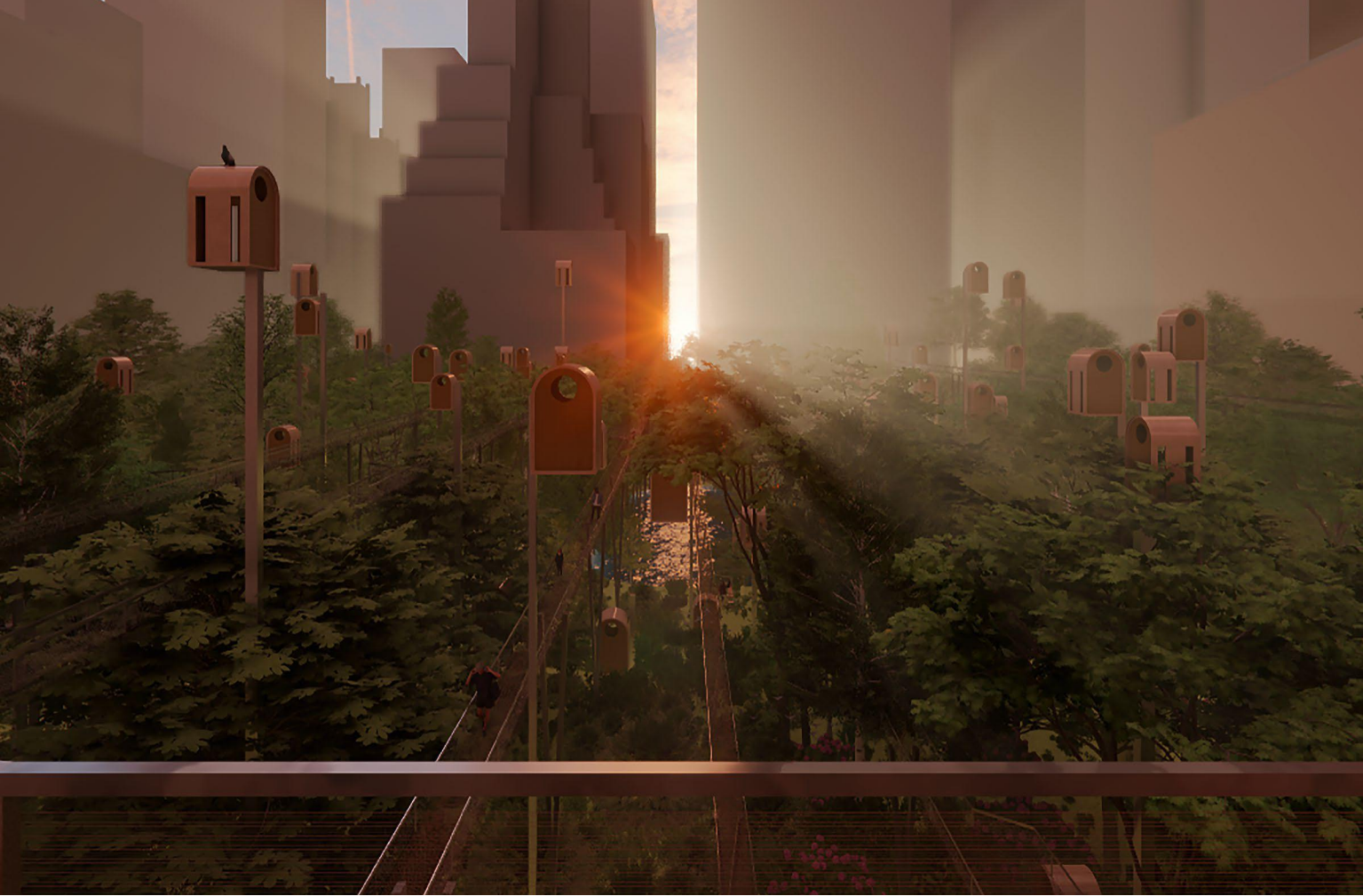
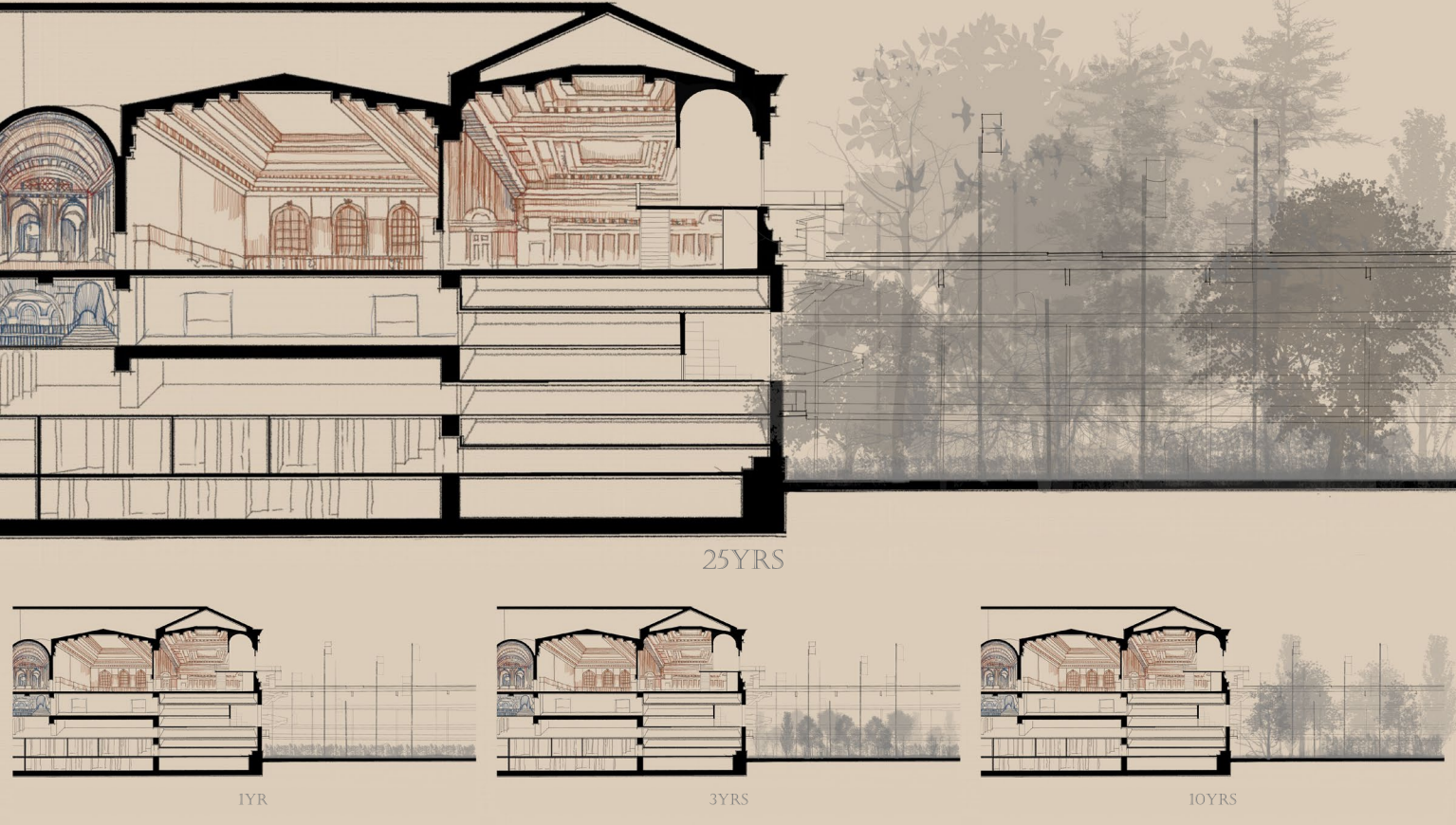
BIRD SPECIES

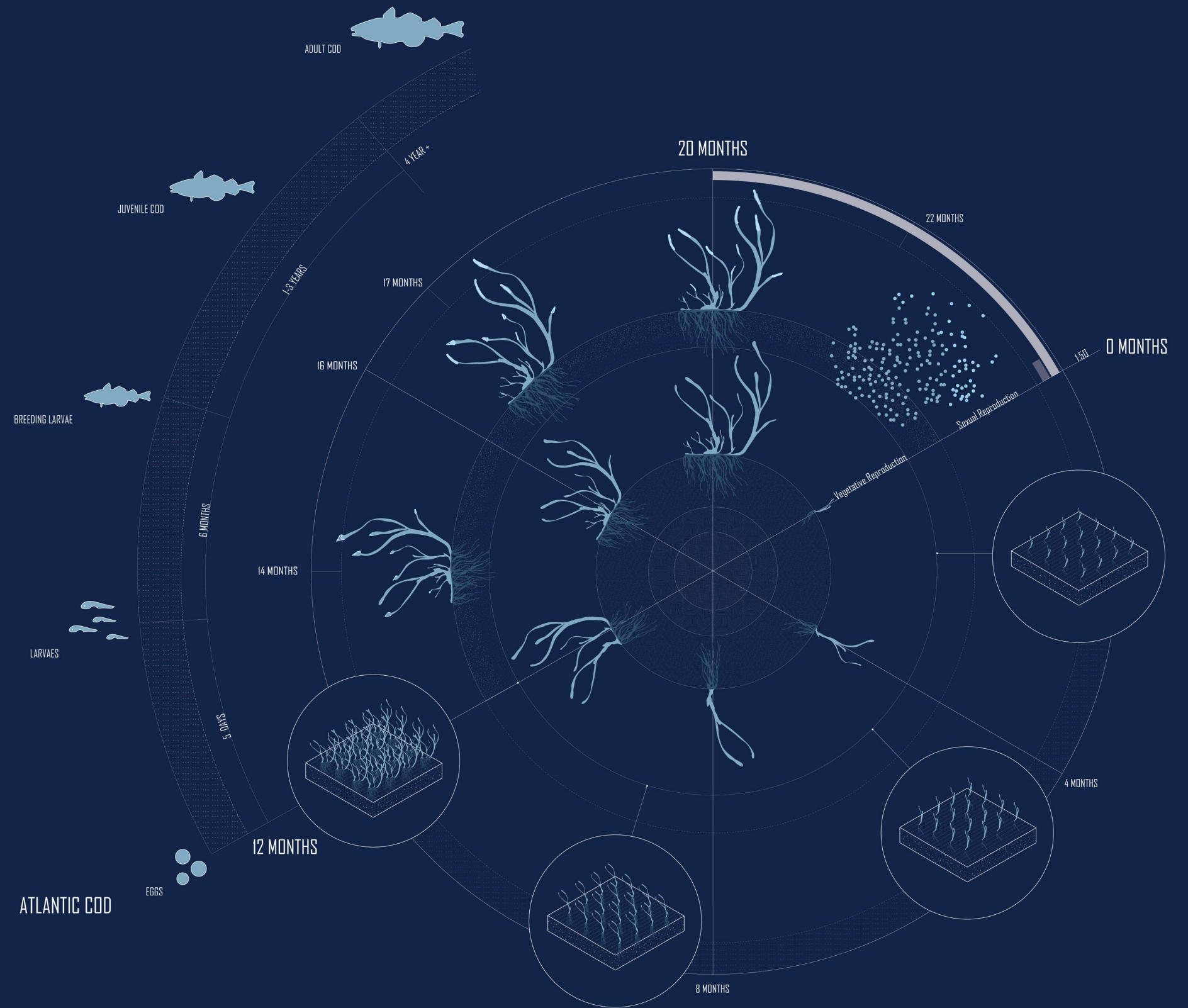
AMERICAN ROOT
OSPREY
SORA
COMMON GALLINULE
GREEN HERON
MARSH WREN
SEASIDE SPARROW
MALLARD
SWAMP SPARROW
TREE SWALLOW
BRANT

PLANT SPECIES

WILLOWS
ALDERS
CATTAILS
SEDGES
ARROW ARUM
RUSHES
WATER LILIES
BOTTON BUSH
SPICEBUSH
SWEET GUM
WHITE ASH

MIYAWAKI FOREST

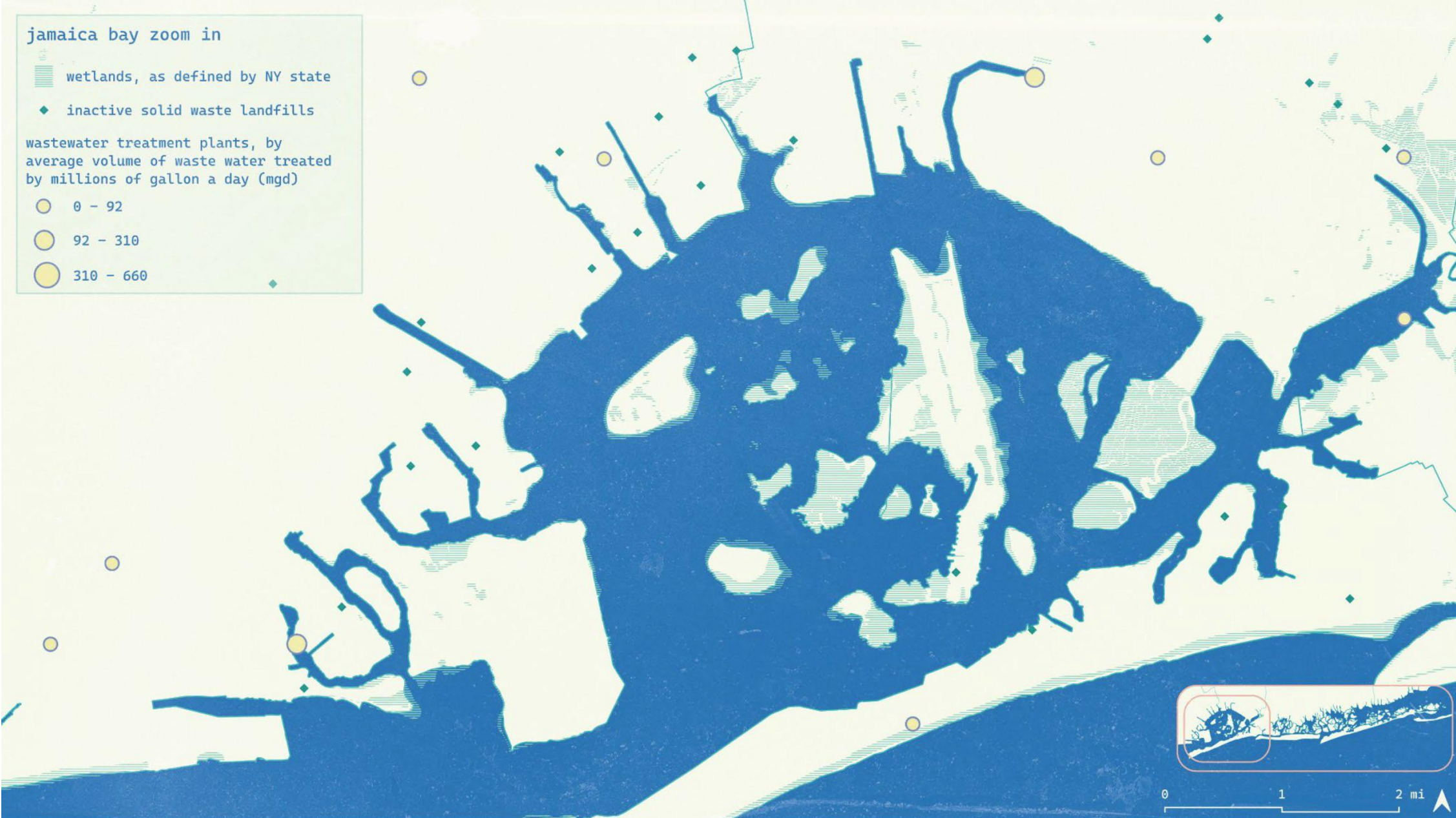
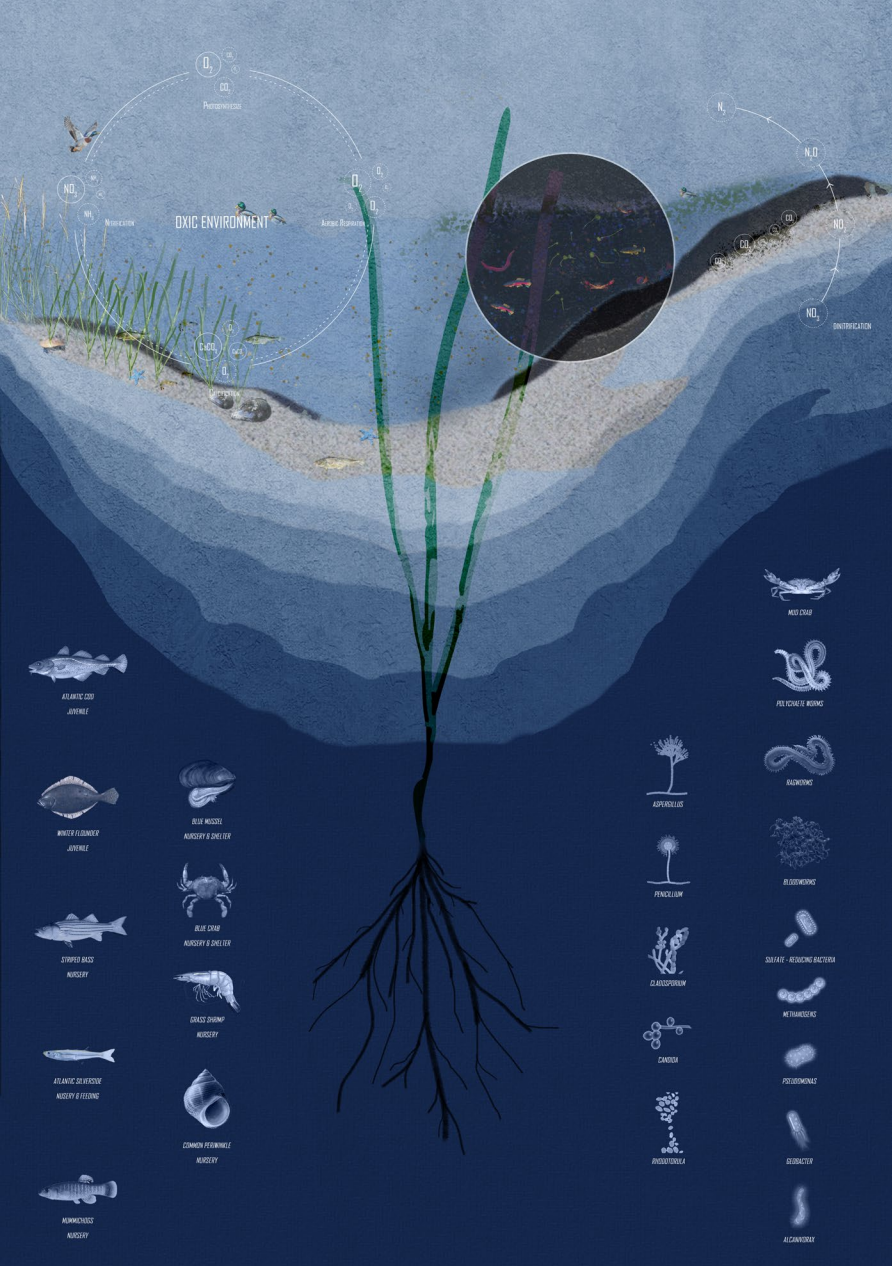
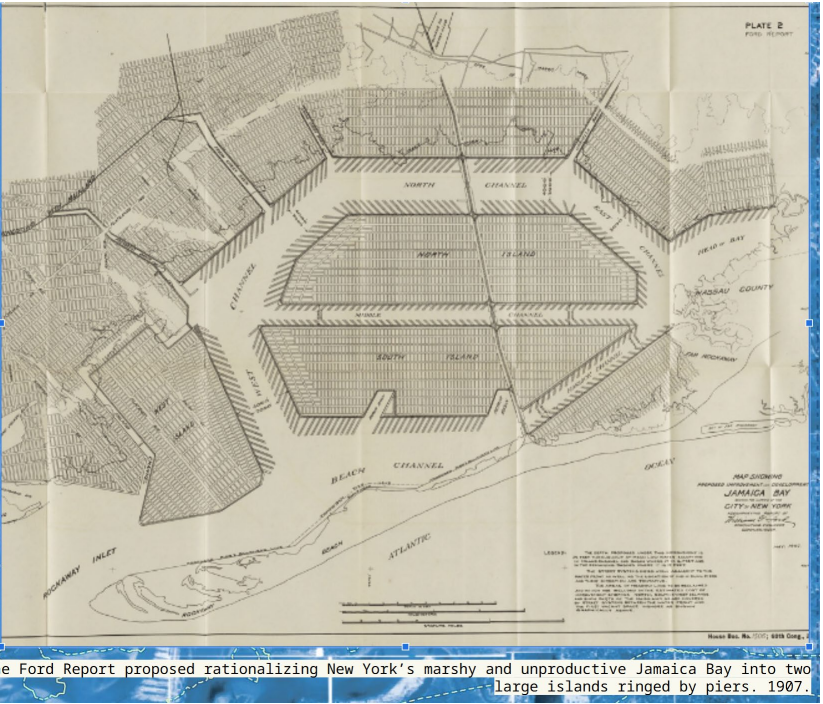
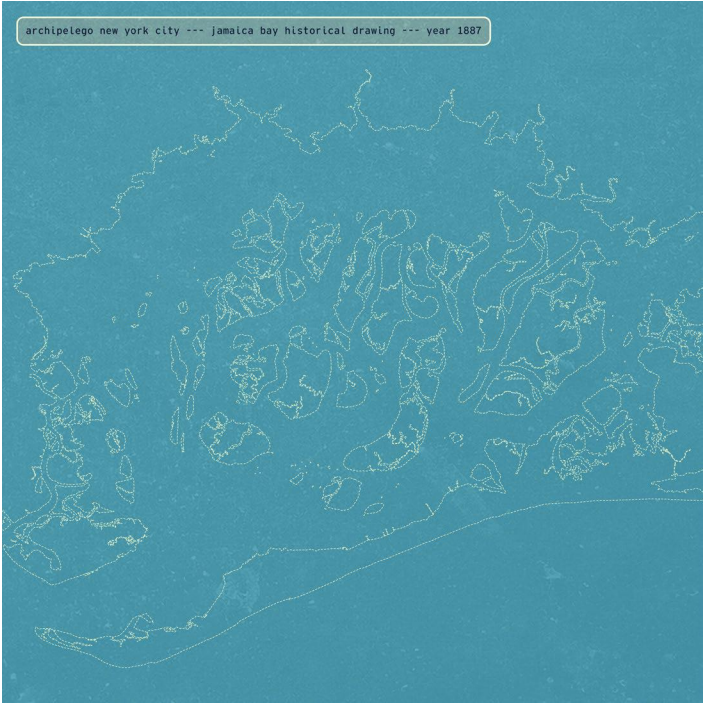




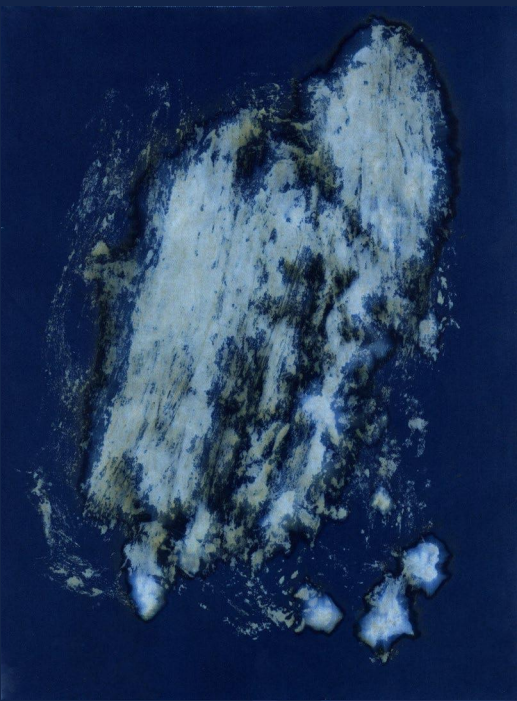
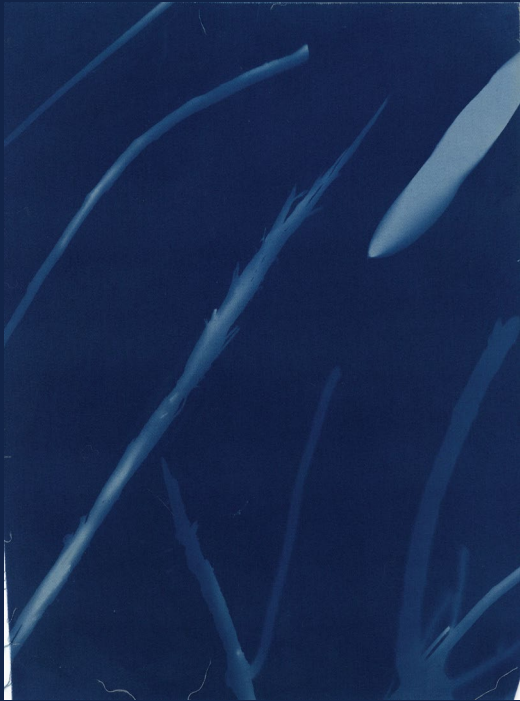
In the 19th century, Jamaica Bay was an estuary with a rich marsh ecosystem. The grass' roots stabilizing the very sediments that you would be walking on. Undulating, with a multitude of sea depths. The tributaries of the sea bed guiding the flow of the tides into a twist, softening their harsh procession.

In 1907, the city set out a plan to transform the bay into a major international shipping port. While the plan to consolidate the Bay's many marshy islands into two massive concrete ones was never quite realized - the plan did guide dredging decisions about the Bay for over two decades of excavation work, so that by the 1930s a massive sedimentary transfer had taken place. Channels, slips, and basins — fifteen, eighteen, thirty feet deep, and hundreds of feet wide — were excavated from the bottom of the once marshy shallow Bay. After the dredging, the project changed the bay in a major fashion, altering the ecosystem dramatically. Beyond physical changes in the landforms and sea bed, the ecosystem was and continues to be affected by factors such as waste water treatment plants dumping into the bay.

As all our previous mapping diagram showed, today, Jamaica Bay is vastly different from the ecosystem it once supported. Landfills, industrial pollution, and wastewater treatment plants have turned the bay into a highly altered environment. Black mayonnaise, a thick layer of toxic sludge, coats much of the bay's floor, composed of organic material, heavy metals, hydrocarbons, and other pollutants.



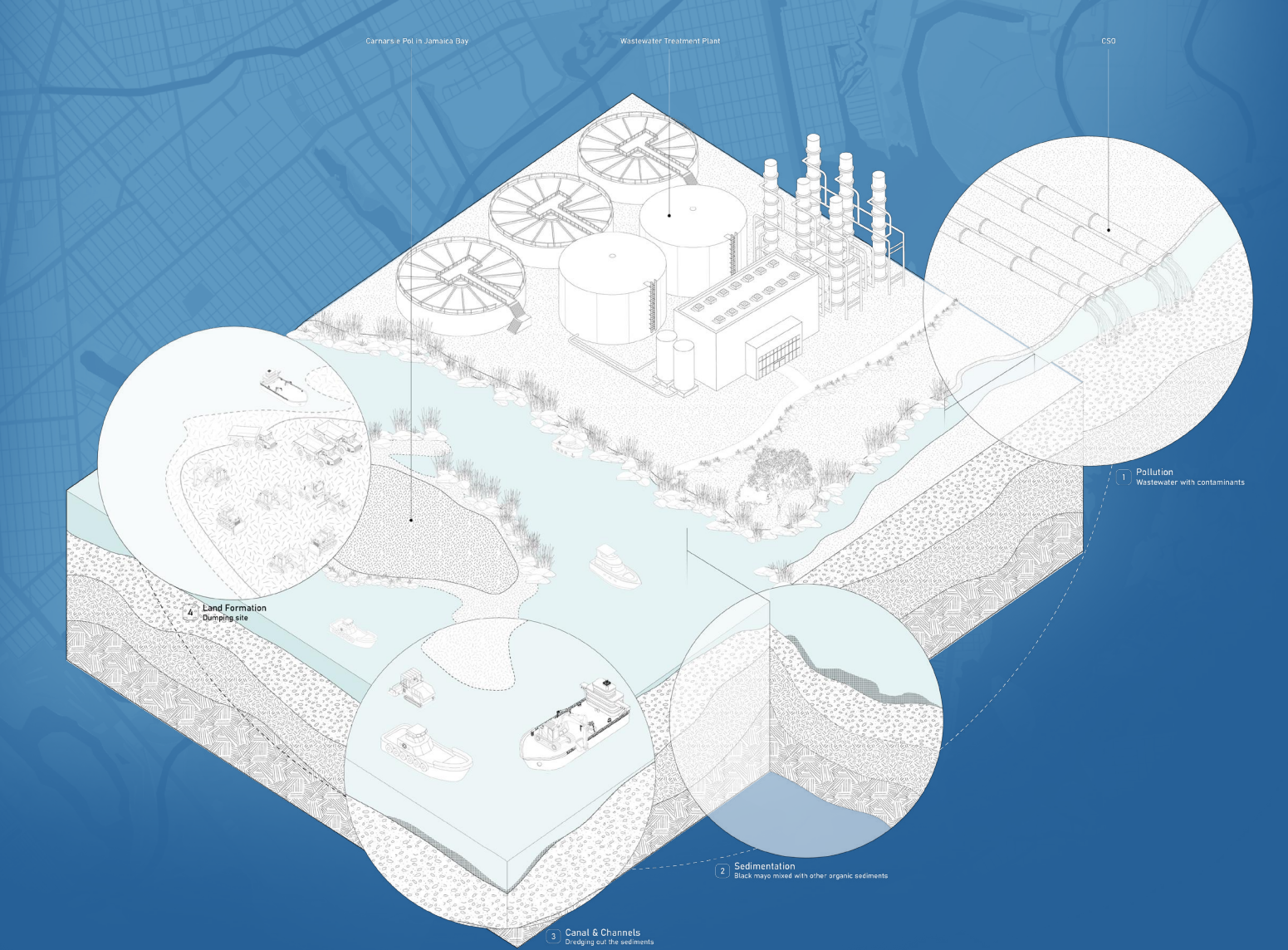
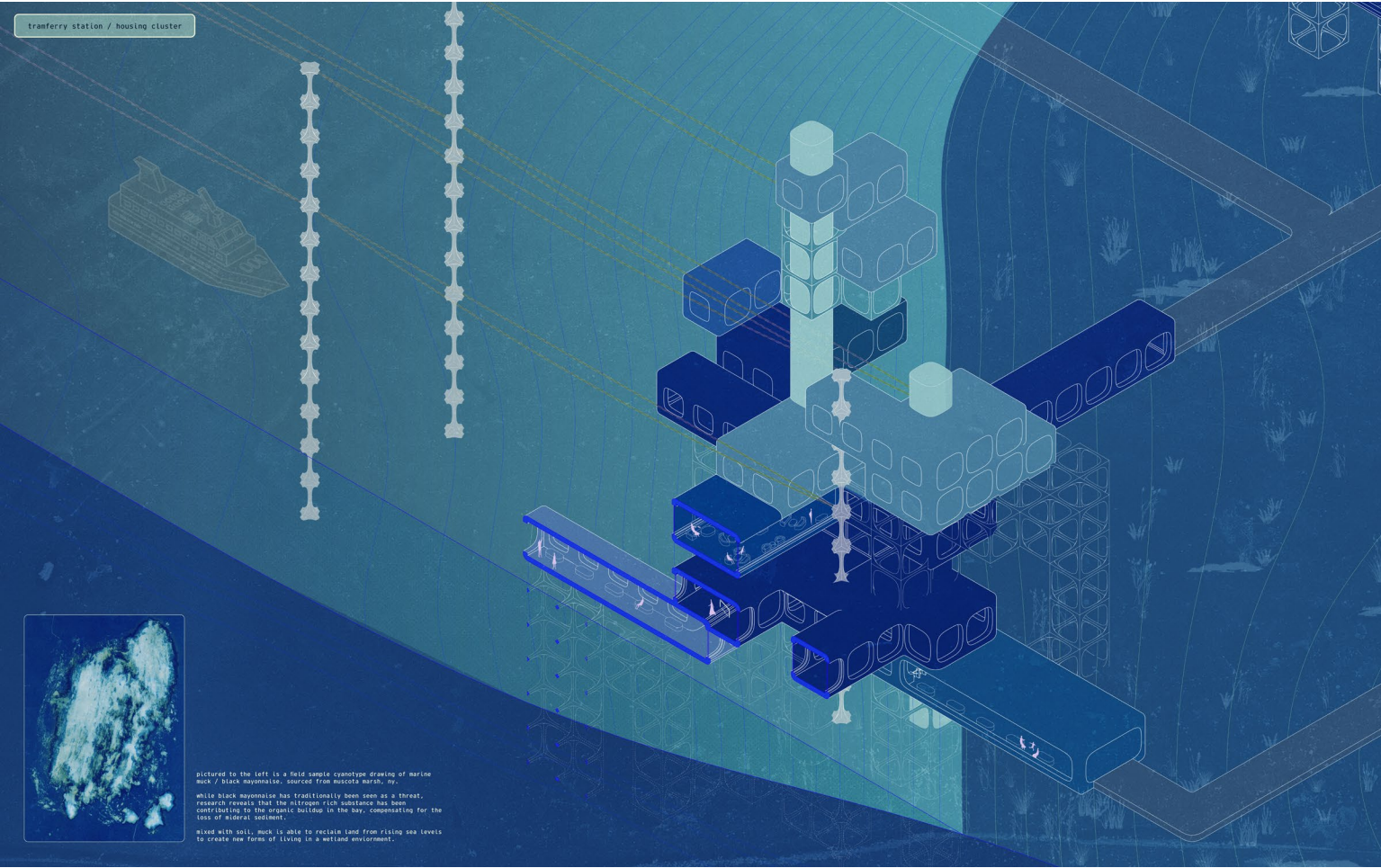
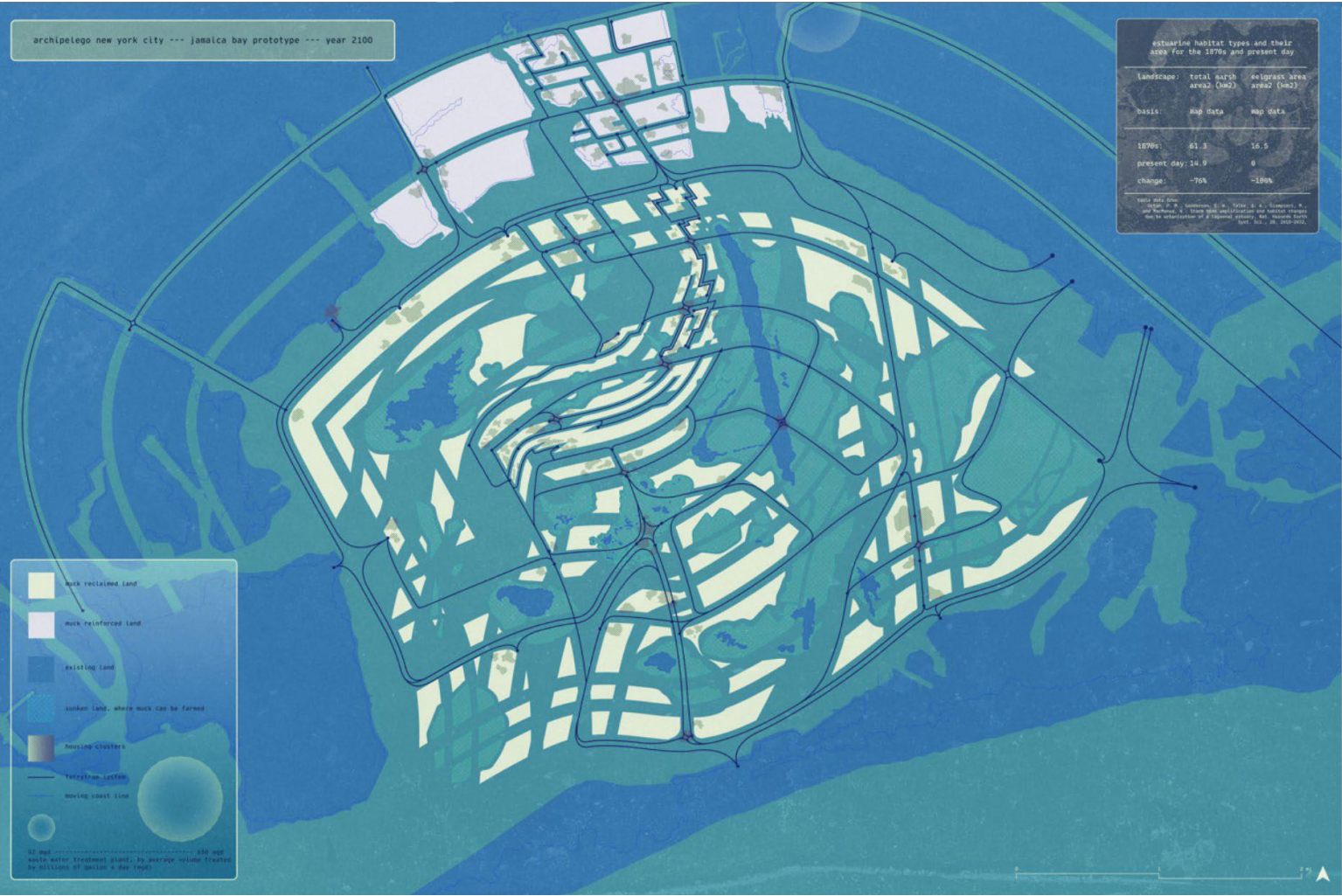
The ecosystem of an environment where black mayonnaise exists contains certain type of microbes, like methane consuming ones which is beneficial to the environment. Other than that, Researches reveals that not only does it trap the carbon but the nitrogen-rich black mayonnaise has also contributed to the organic buildup of marshes and accelerated vertical land growth, partially compensating for the loss of mineral sediment over centuries. It also enhances denitrification in aquatic environments by providing an anaerobic habitat conducive to the bacteria responsible for this process. As these bacteria break down organic matter in the sediment, they convert nitrate into nitrogen gas, which is then released into the atmosphere. This helps to reduce the nitrate levels in the water.



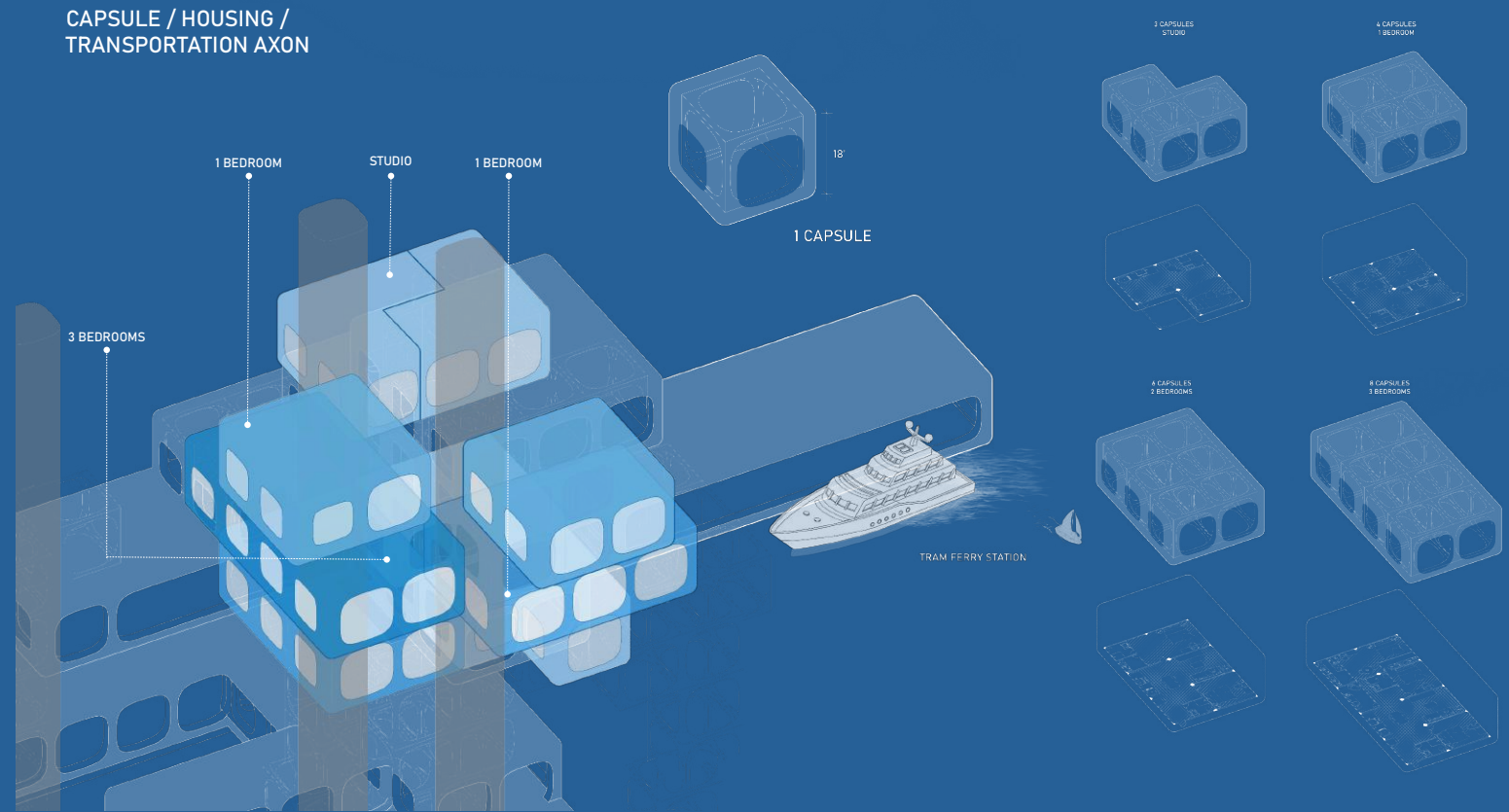
Cyanotype Prints



Carbon



CAPSULE / HOUSING / TRANSPORTATION AXON

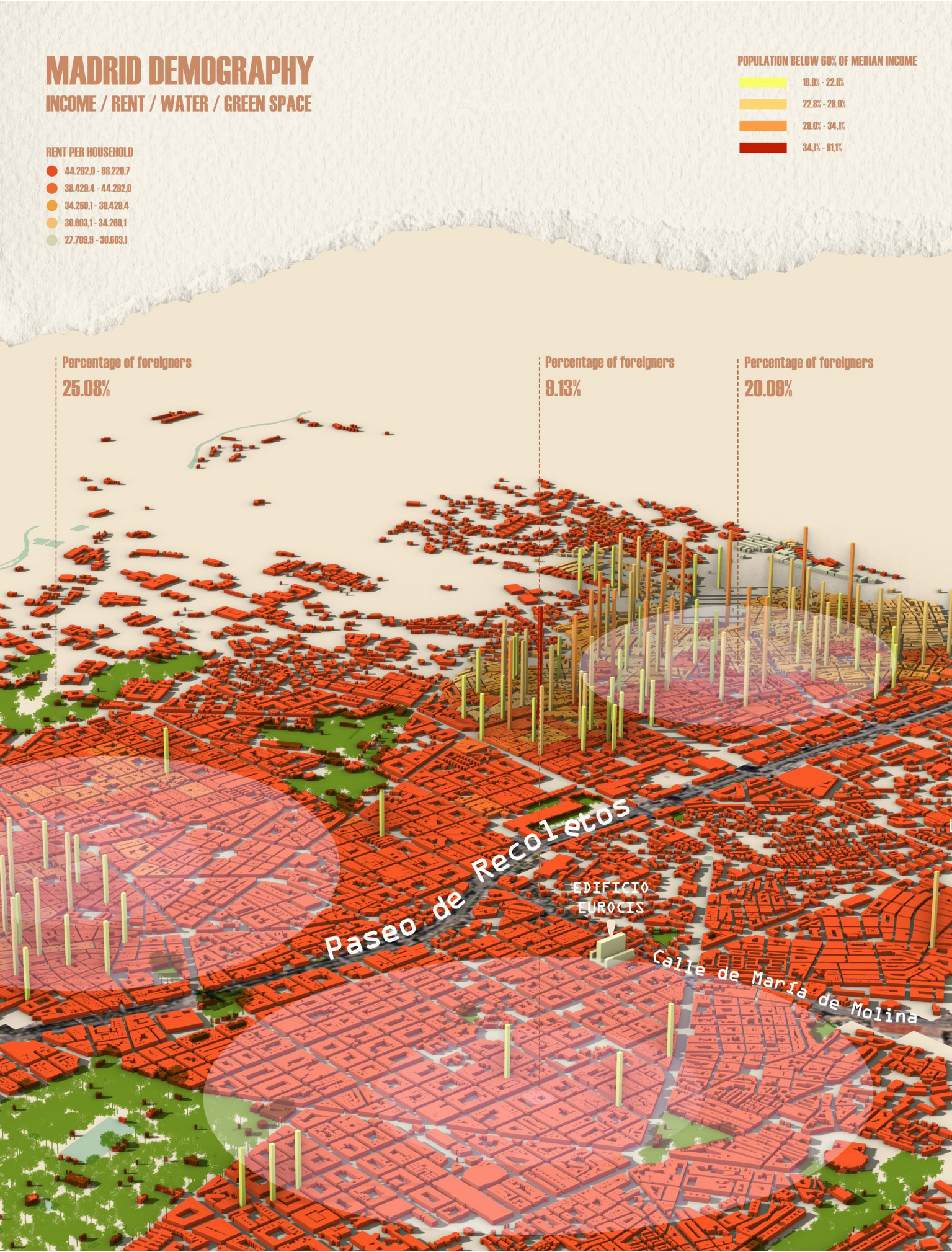


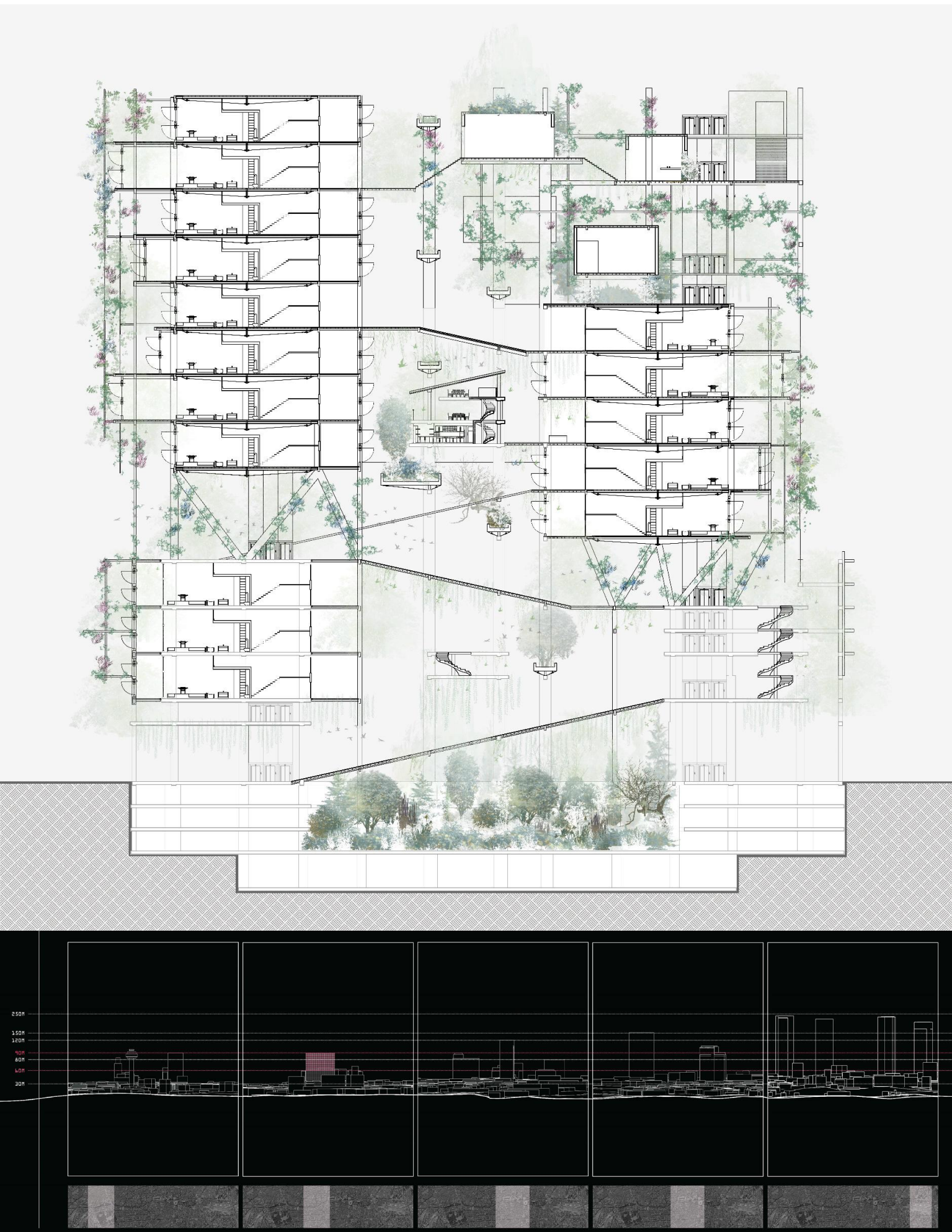


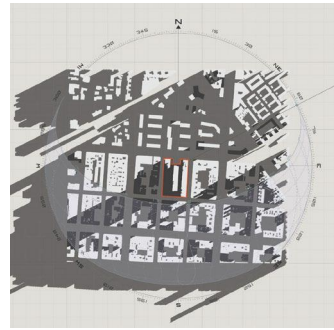
03 OPEN HOUSING: WILD EDITION

SITE | Madrid, Spain
ACADEMIC | Advanced Studio
INSTRUCTOR | Juan Herreros, Oscar M Caballero
YEAR | Spring 2025

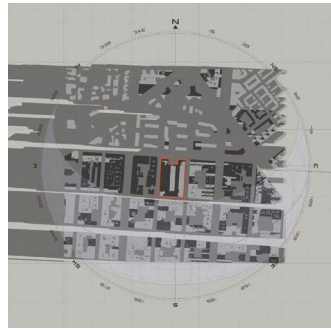
This project transforms a large modernist industrial building in Madrid's Salamanca district into a porous, vertical residential ecosystem. By reimagining this monumental structure as both a home for people and a habitat for migratory birds, the design challenges the conventional notion of homeownership as stability — a legacy of Spain's urban policies. Through strategies of spatial porosity, ecological integration, and shared spaces, the project explores alternative models of living and offers a speculative response to Spain's ongoing housing crisis.



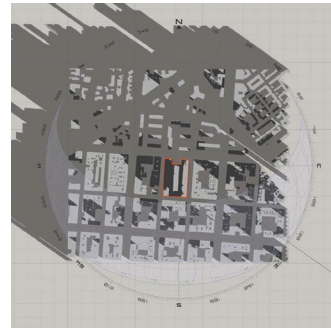




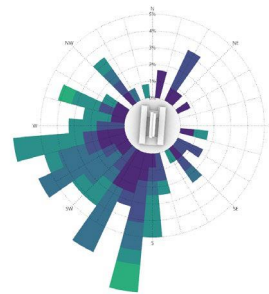
June 21st
Summer Solstice



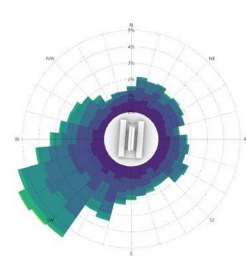
Mar 21st / Sep 22nd
Spring / Fall Equinox



Dec 21st
Winter Solstice



Jan 21th
Jan - Nov Wind from SW

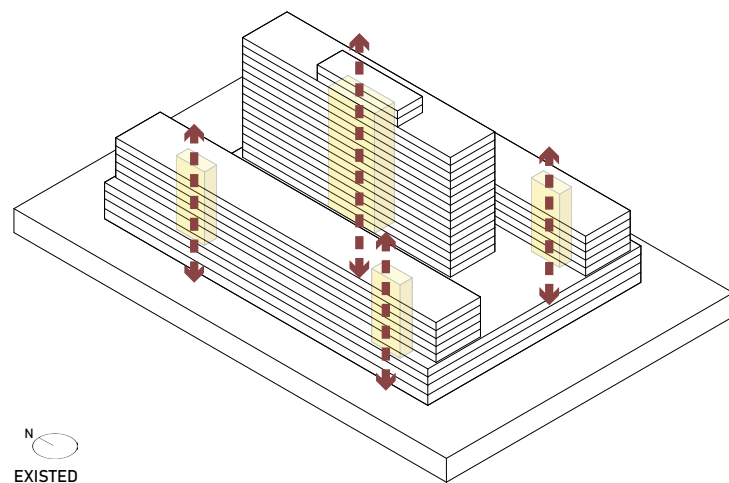


Dec 21th
Dec Wind from S to W and NE

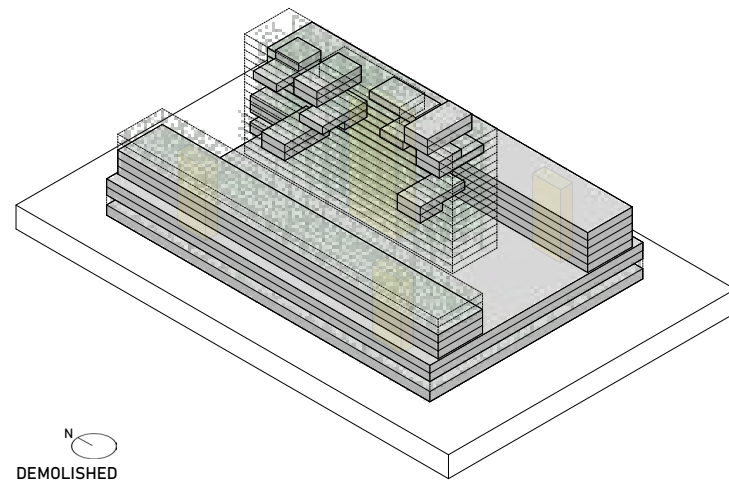


South

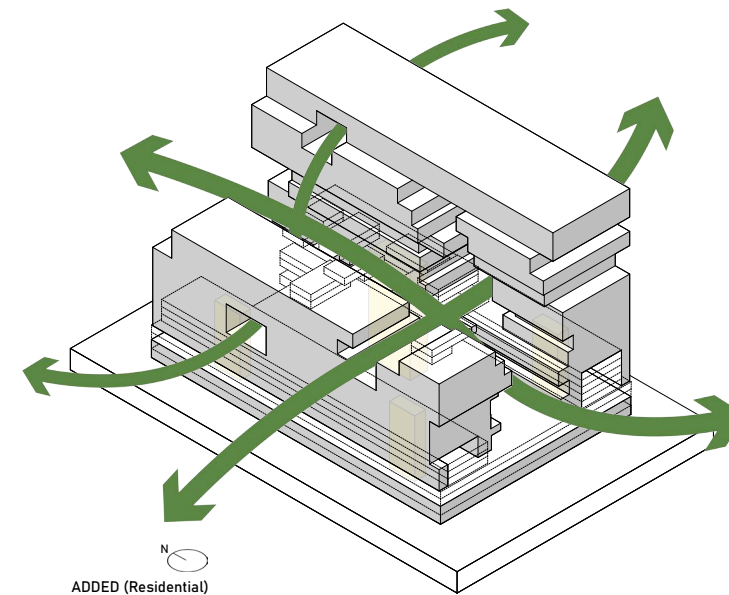
This project reimagines the Eurocis office building, a 1970s brutalist structure built under Franco's dictatorship, as a porous vertical habitat for both humans and birds. Originally 60 meters tall with a repetitive concrete panel façade, the building reflects modernist ideals imported from the U.S., influenced by its architect's studies with Paul Rudolph at Yale. We extended the height to 90 meters, transforming it into a new ecological landmark within Madrid's low-rise urban fabric. By demolishing most internal slabs, walls, and façades of the central tower while preserving its structural frame, we introduced voids and passage-ways that allow light, wind, and wildlife to permeate the building. A new east wing extends toward the sunlight, offering residential spaces interwoven with openings for bird migration, challenging the building's original rigidity and proposing an alternative model of coexistence.



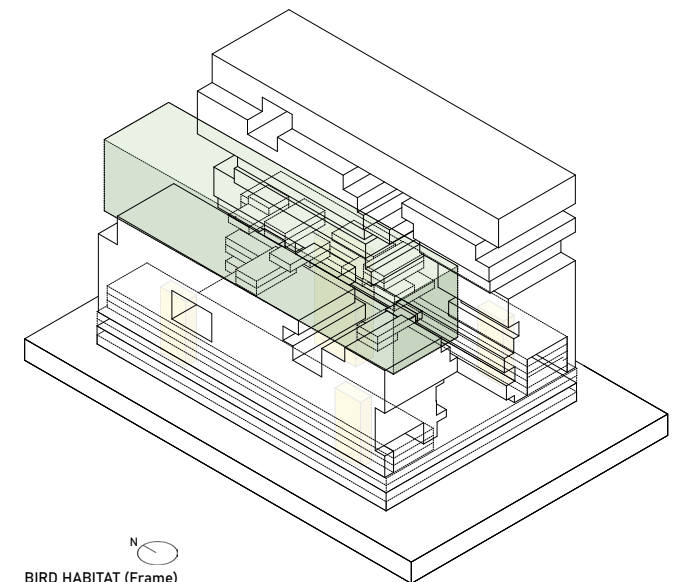
N
EXISTED



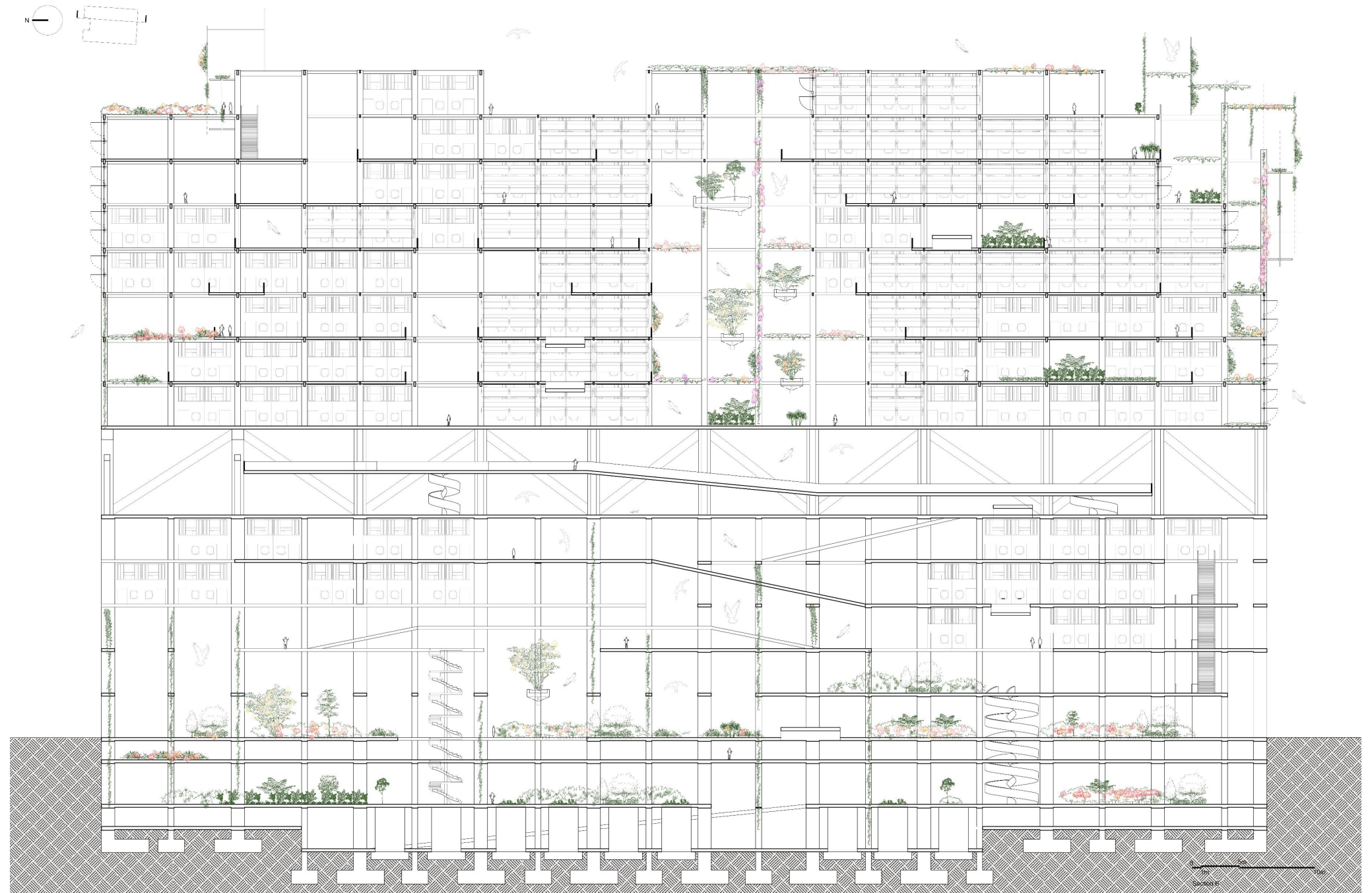
N
DEMOLISHED

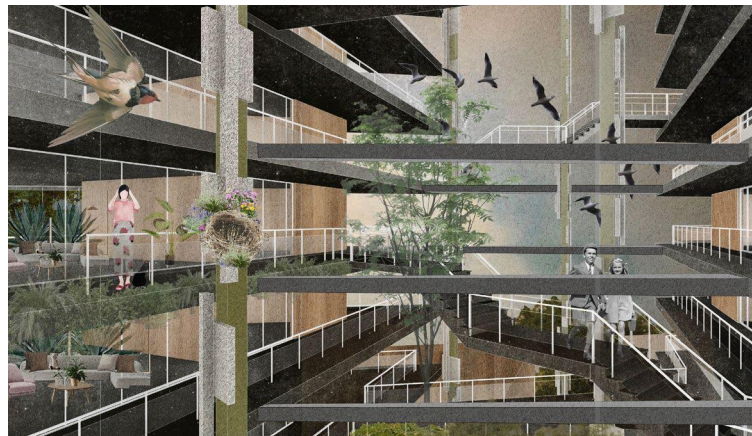
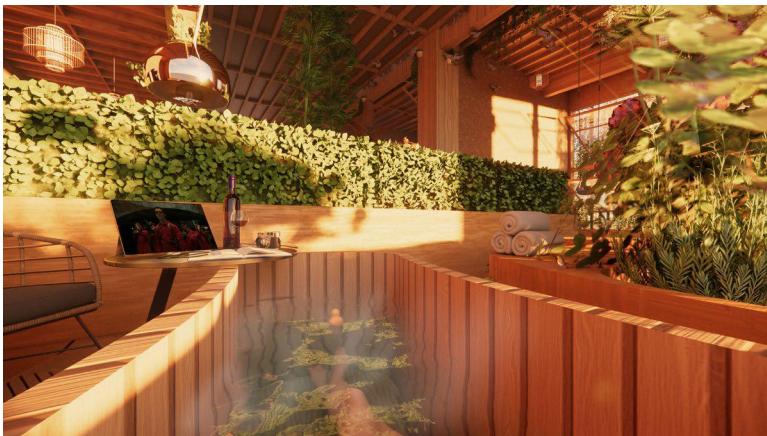
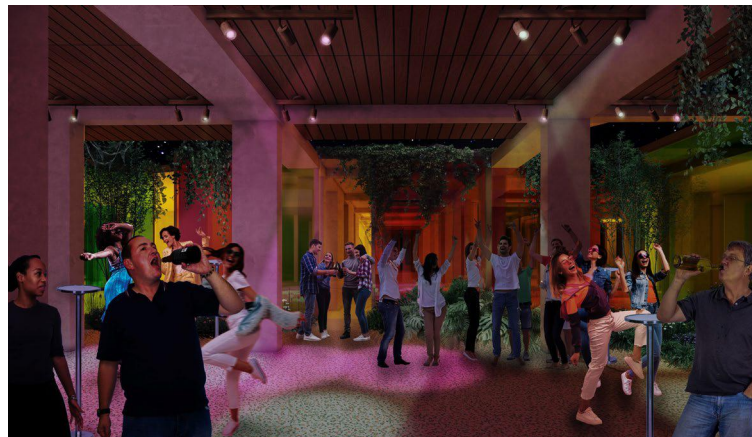
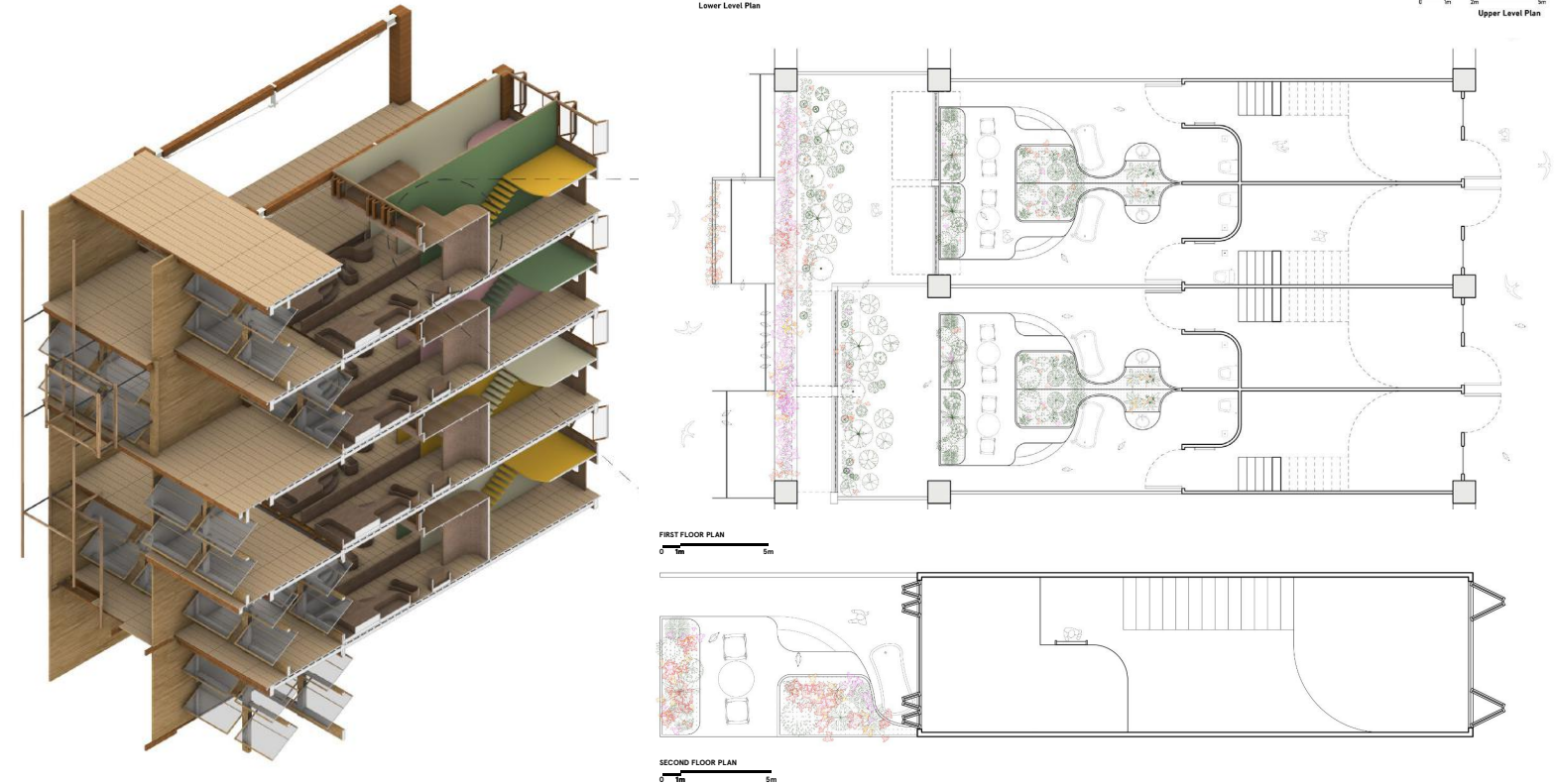
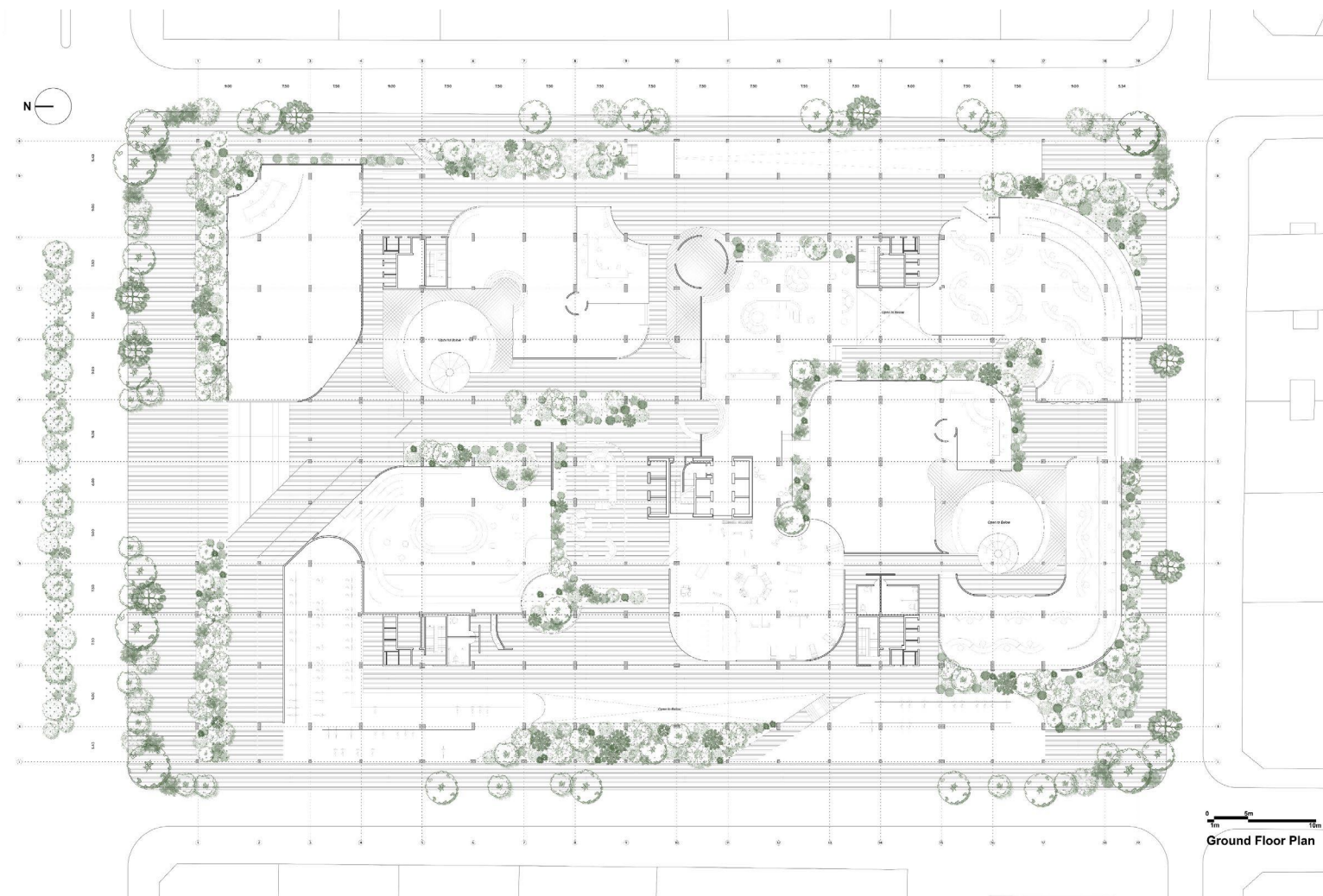


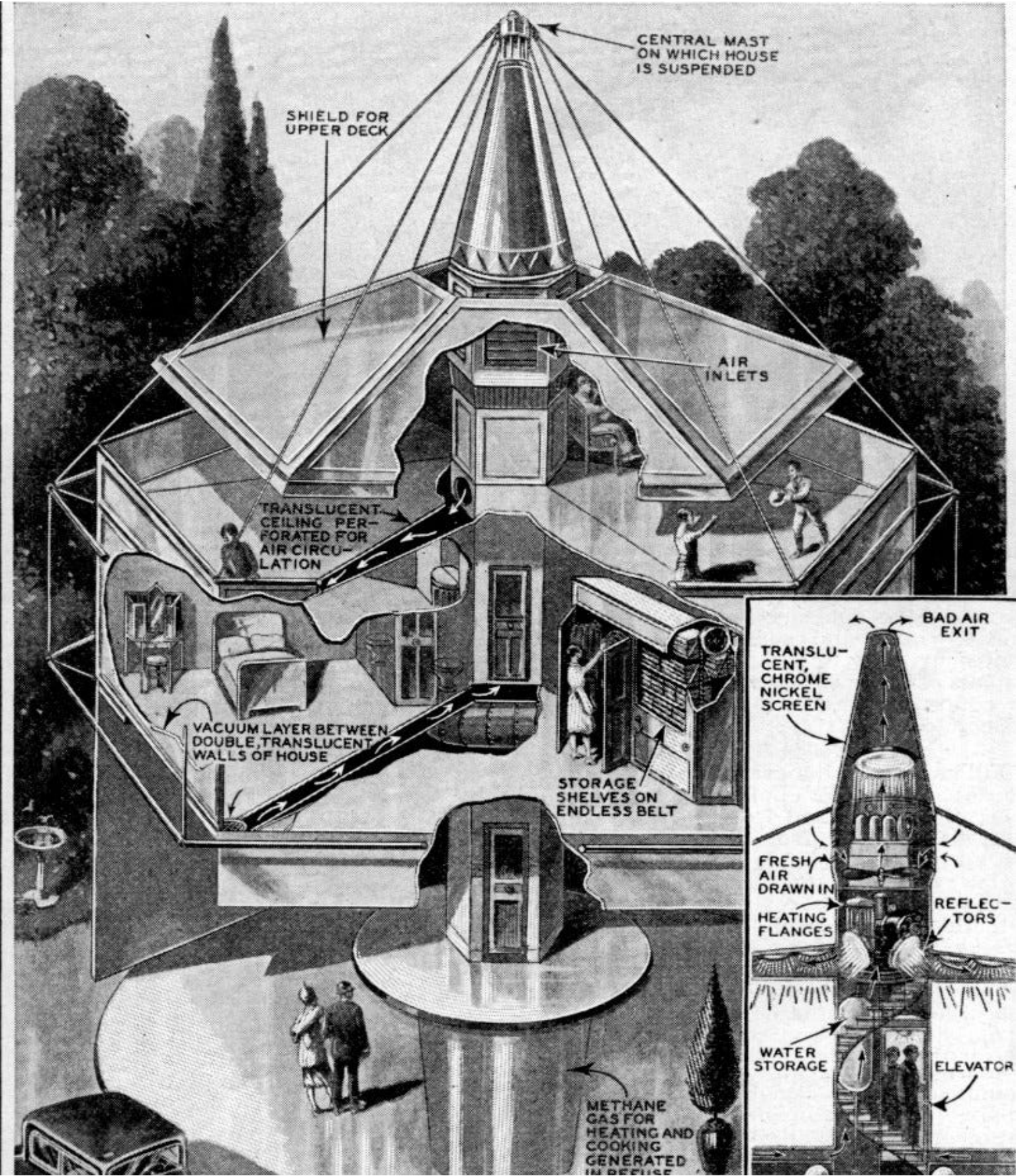
N
ADDED (Residential)



N
BIRD HABITAT (Frame)







Imagine a house that could be shipped in pieces, assembled in hours, and last a lifetime—a futuristic vision promising to revolutionize how we live. This was the dream of Buckminster Fuller, a visionary architect and inventor, who in the late 1920s designed the Dymaxion House to challenge the very fabric of traditional housing. Fuller's innovative concept aimed to combine mass production, advanced technology, and sustainability in a single, lightweight structure. Yet, despite its groundbreaking design, the Dymaxion House never became the widespread solution Fuller envisioned. Its failure reveals a deeper story of how radical technological utopianism can clash with the gritty realities of labor and socioeconomic constraints in the post-war period.

The Dymaxion House was a radical departure from traditional housing. Fuller envisioned a lightweight, mass-producible, and transportable house that could be assembled quickly and easily, akin to the assembly line production of automobiles. His experience in the U.S. Navy in 1910s exposed him to efficient military engineering, and later applied similar principles to civilian housing.¹ The Dymaxion House featured a central mast-suspended structure, passive systems, and lightweight aluminum frames, reflecting Fuller's belief in integrating technology and design to improve living conditions.

However, the Dymaxion House faced significant challenges. Fuller's commitment to rapid constructability and scientific management clashed with the entrenched practices and economic interests of the time. Skilled laborers, accustomed to traditional construction methods, resisted the drastic changes Fuller proposed. His approach to housing, which emphasized minimizing labor through assembly-line production of "4D Utility Units,"² conflicted with the existing labor market and the socioeconomic context of the post-war era.

Fuller's ideas were particularly ill-suited for the post-World War II environment, which demanded affordable and accessible housing due to severe shortages. While his design aimed to ad-

dress these issues, the practicalities of implementing such a visionary concept within the existing economic framework proved difficult. The construction industry at the time was not prepared to adopt Fuller's radical methods, and the economic interests of skilled laborers further hindered the project's success. Fuller's vision of mass-produced homes was ahead of its time while the existing infrastructure and labor market were not equipped to support such a drastic shift in construction methodology.

Furthermore, Fuller's utopian ideals often overlooked the complexities of the socioeconomic realities. He believed that technological advancements could liberate labor for more intellectual pursuits, a notion that was at odds with the prevailing economic values. Fuller once stated, "We must do away with the absolutely specious notion that everybody has to earn a living. It is a fact today that one in ten thousand of us can make a technological breakthrough capable of supporting all the rest."³ This quote encapsulates Fuller's radical belief that advancements in technology could potentially render traditional labor obsolete. He envisioned a future where a single technological innovation could provide for the needs of many, thereby freeing people from the necessity of conventional work. However, this perspective was not well-received in a society deeply rooted in traditional economic and labor structures. His idea challenged the foundational notion of earning a living through work, proposing instead a society supported by the breakthroughs of a few, which was seen as unrealistic and idealistic during his time.

In conclusion, Buckminster Fuller's vision for the Dymaxion House highlighted the potential for technological advancements to revolutionize living spaces. However, the contradiction between his utopian ideals and the practicalities of the existing labor market and socioeconomic context ultimately led to its failure. The Dymaxion House serves as a case study in the challenges of implementing visionary concepts within the constraints of the time, illustrating the difficulties faced by those who seek to radically transform established practices.

¹ Brennan, AnnMarie. "Dymaxion House: R. Buckminster Fuller." In *Companion to the History of Architecture*, 1-12. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118887226.wbcha127>.
² MORSHED, ADNAN. "Ascension as Autobiography: Buckminster Fuller and His 'Land to Sky, Outward Progression.'" In *Impossible Heights: Skyscrapers, Flight, and the Master Builder*, 105. University of Minnesota Press, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctt1287nsj.6>.
³ LLC, New York Media. *New York Magazine*. New York Media, LLC, 1970.



05 Rethinking China’s Museum Expansion: The Case of Zhuhai Huafa Contemporary Art Museum

CATEGORY | Academic Paper
ACADEMIC | Transscalarities
INSTRUCTOR | Beril Sarisakal Erkent
YEAR | Summer 2024

Emerging during a period marked by rapid museum construction, the Zhuhai Huafa Contemporary Art Museum, designed by Abalos & Sentkiewitz, epitomizes China’s recent museum boom. Like many other contemporary Chinese museums, it serves as both a cultural landmark and a tool for patriotic education.

China’s remarkable economic growth in the late 20th century has enabled substantial investments from both the government and private investors in cultural infrastructure, resulting in a surge in the number of museums based on the government’s plan. From a mere 25 museums in 1949, the number swelled to over 3,866 by 2012 due to the increase of budget¹ which are mainly showcasing their own cultural heritage. Due to the past inadequacy in revealing and confronting China’s history, newly established museums place a special emphasis on displaying China’s culture through artifacts and historical sites. This dramatic growth reflects a deliberate governmental strategy to utilize museums as instruments for shaping public perception and reinforcing national identity. Sofia Bollo and Yu Zhang’s work highlights how Chinese museums serve as “bases for patriotic education,”² emphasizing the commemoration and celebration of Chinese history as a means to promote national heritage. This strategic focus ensures that even as China develops rapidly and starts to westernize, its cultural roots are not only preserved but also celebrated by its audience.

Zoom into the selection of artifacts displayed in Chinese museums, it is meticulously curated to emphasize the historical depth and aesthetic appeal of Chinese civilization. Often, these exhibits feature cultural relics of significant historical value, such as ancient pottery, exquisite jade carvings, and intricate silk

garments³. These artifacts are chosen not only for their historical importance but also for their ability to evoke feelings of pride and admiration among visitors. By showcasing objects that highlight the artistic and technological achievements of past dynasties, Chinese museums aim to foster a deeper appreciation for the nation’s rich cultural heritage. This careful selection process ensures that each exhibit contributes to a cohesive narrative that celebrates China’s long-standing traditions and accomplishments, reinforcing a sense of national identity and cultural pride.

In an era dominated by new media and digital engagement, museums have become commodified, making them attractive to younger generations who are the main targeted audience now where interactive experiences are developed which allows people to engage with the real artifacts and historical sites. This trend is reflected in the creation of museum shops, the sale of merchandise, and the development of digital content like mobile applications and virtual tours.⁴ These efforts not only generate revenue which makes the museums keep running, it’s a way to promote cultural education subconsciously as well.

Chinese museums have evolved from tools of political indoctrination to platforms for cultural nationalism, emphasizing China’s long history and achievements. This transformation has led to the aestheticization and commodification of artifacts, appealing to a younger, more cosmopolitan audience but raising concerns about historical accuracy. The increasing involvement of private actors and market-oriented strategies adds complexity to museum management.⁵ Despite these challenges, Chinese museums continue to adapt, balancing innovation with cultural preservation, ensuring that they remain vital in exploring and celebrating the nation’s cultural heritage for future generations.

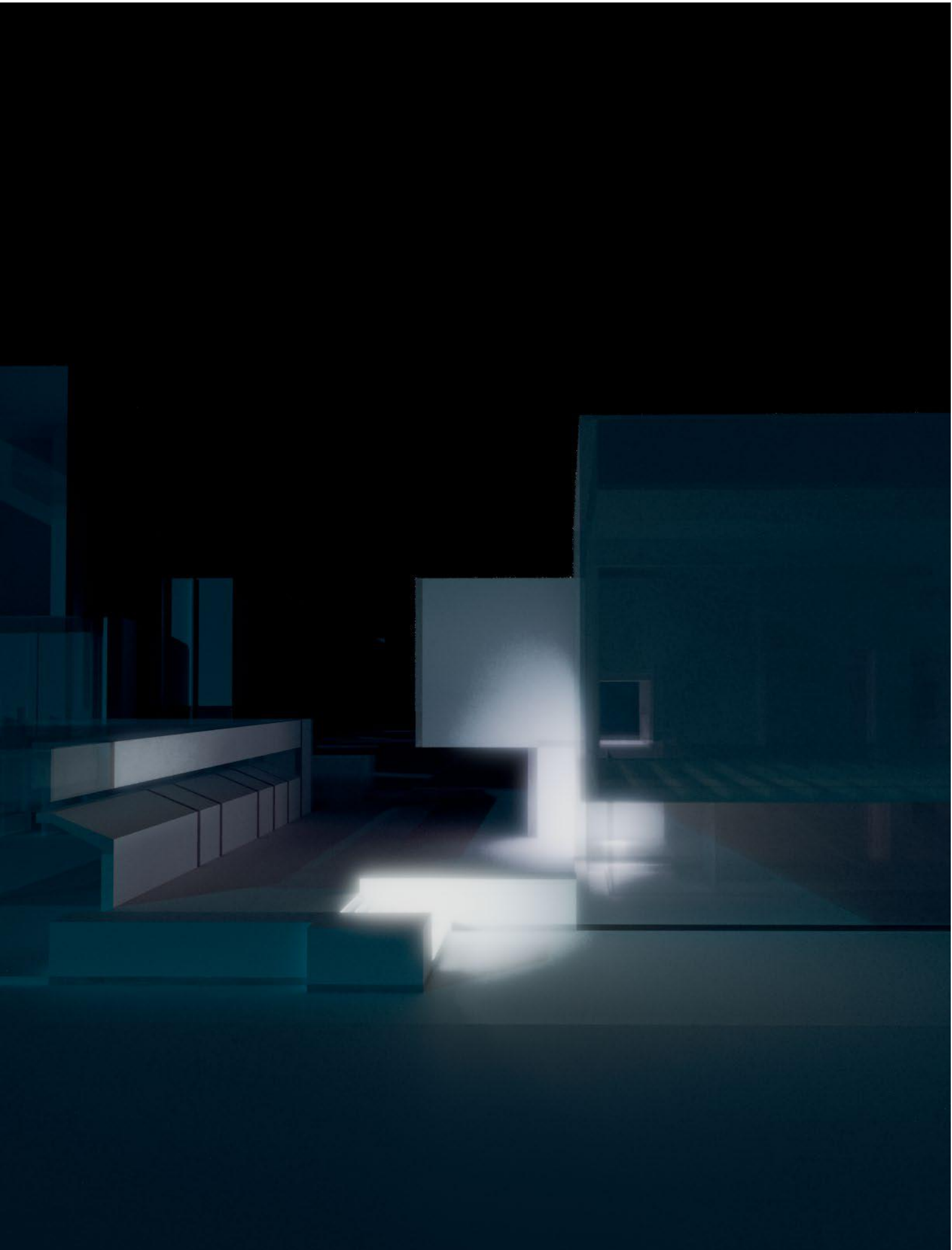
1 Bollo, Sofia, and Yu Zhang. “Policy and Impact of Public Museums in China: Exploring New Trends and Challenges.” *Museum International* 69, no. 3–4 (July 2017): 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/muse.12170>.
2 Bollo, Sofia, and Yu Zhang. “Policy and Impact of Public Museums in China: Exploring New Trends and Challenges.” *Museum International* 69, no. 3–4 (July 2017): 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/muse.12170>.
3 Marzia Varutti. *Museums in China : The Politics of Representation After Mao*. Heritage Matters. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014. <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip&db=n-lebk&AN=605608&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.
4 Bollo, Sofia, and Yu Zhang. “Policy and Impact of Public Museums in China: Exploring New Trends and Challenges.” *Museum International* 69, no. 3–4 (July 2017): 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.1111/muse.12170>.
5 Marzia Varutti. *Museums in China : The Politics of Representation After Mao*. Heritage Matters. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2014. <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip&db=n-lebk&AN=605608&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

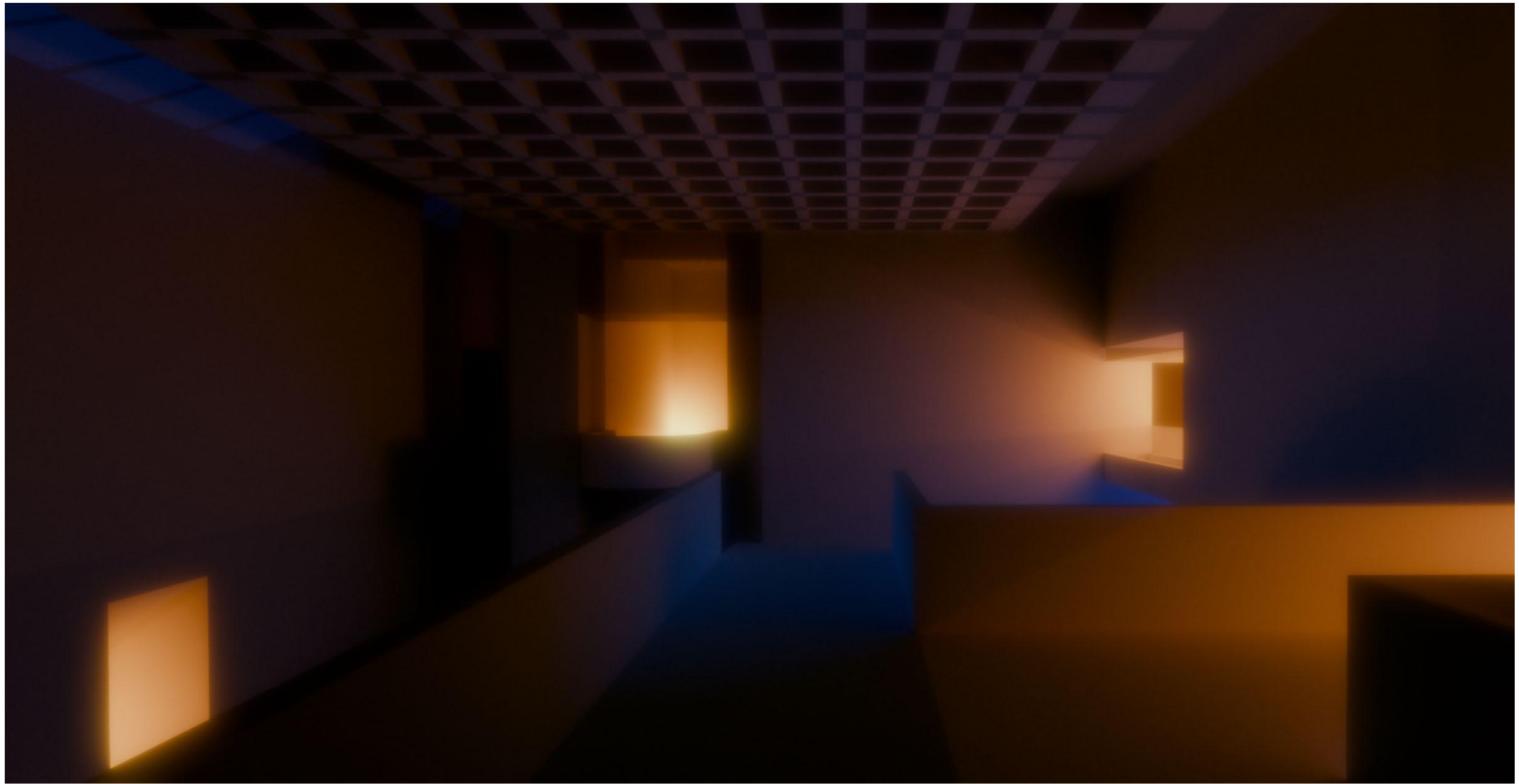


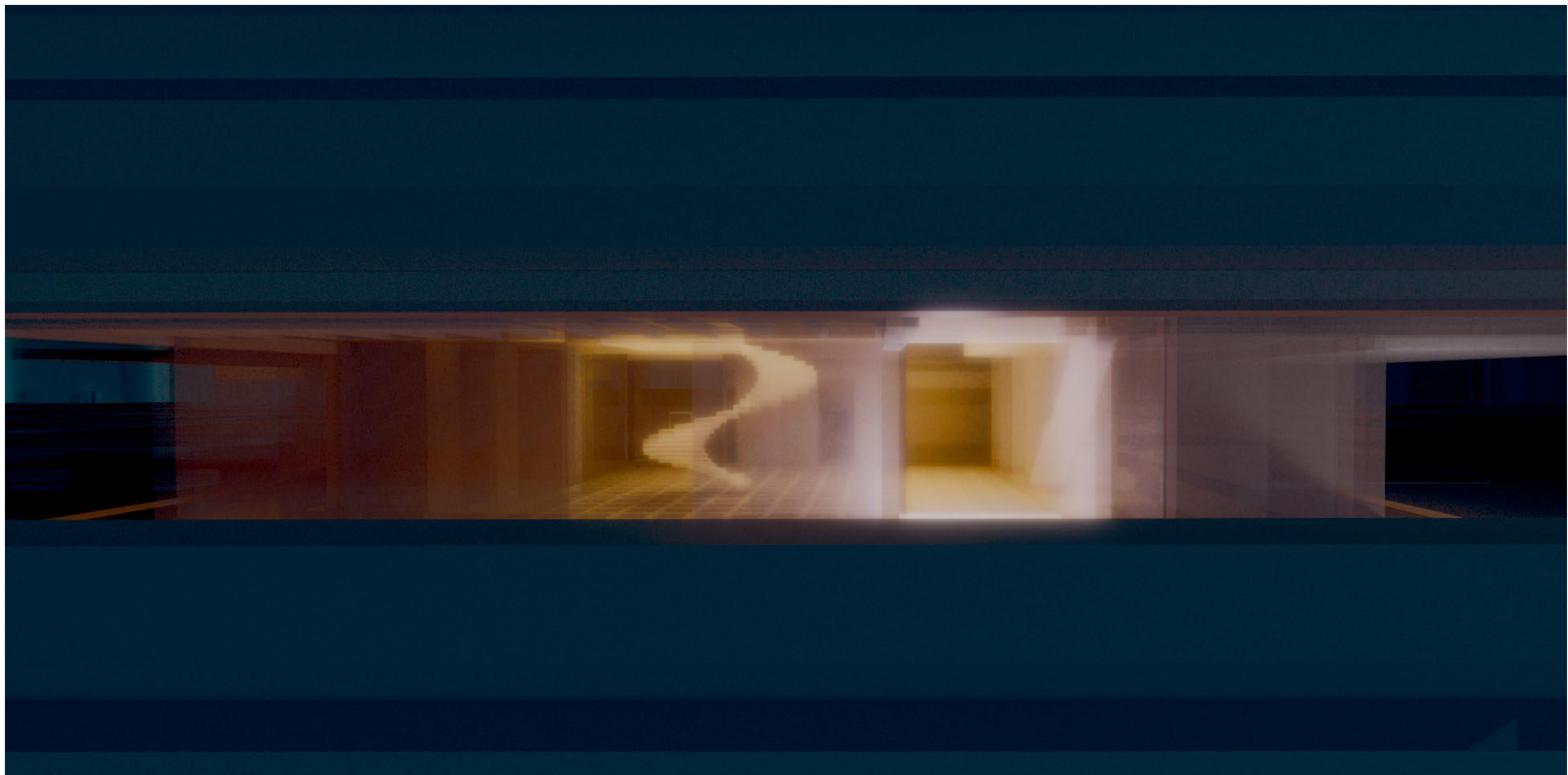
06

Inside Out

CATEGORY | Digital Exploration
ACADEMIC | Rendering System
INSTRUCTOR | Seth Thompson
YEAR | Fall 2024







Chinese Mixed Salad

大拌菜

Makes around 5 servings

MAIN INGREDIENTS

Napa cabbage	1/4 of a whole
Cucumber	1
Black Fungus	One Small Cup

SIDE INGREDIENTS

Carrot	1/2 of a whole
Thin Glass Noodles	A handful of it
Shredded Potato	2
Shredded Pork	1/4 lbs

SEASONING

Cilantro	A handful
Green Onions	A handful
Garlic Paste	3 tablespoon
Rice vinegar	1/4 cup
Soy Sauce	1/4 cup
Salt	1 tablespoon
Oyster Sauce	1/4 cup
Sugar	1/2 tablespoon
Sesame Oil	1 tablespoon
Sichuan Pepper Oil	1/4 tablespoon

1 Slice the Napa cabbage, cucumber, black fungus, carrot, potato, and pork into thin strips around 1-2 cm.

2 Blanch the Napa cabbage, black fungus, carrot, and glass noodles separately in boiling water. If you prefer a crunchier texture, blanch for 1 minute; if you prefer a softer texture, cook a bit longer.

3 Marinate the sliced pork with cooking wine, light soy sauce, salt, and starch for 10 minutes. Then stir-fry it over high heat until fully cooked.

4 Place the prepared ingredients from the previous steps into a large bowl, then add chopped green onions, cilantro, and garlic paste.

5 Add rice vinegar, soy sauce, salt, sugar, oyster sauce, sesame oil, and Sichuan pepper oil into the bowl one by one.

Last but not least! Pour a generous amount of oil into the pan. When the oil heats to about 70 to 80 degrees Celsius (small bubbles start forming), carefully add the sliced potatoes. Do not stir them initially. Wait until the bottom turns golden, then flip and fry until they turn a light brown color.

Top the salad with the fries and **ENJOY IT!**



07 Indigenous Cuisine

CATEGORY | Creative Practice
ACADEMIC | Feasting + Fasting
INSTRUCTOR | Ateya Khorakiwala
YEAR | Fall 2024

Walking through the bustling streets of Hong Kong, like Nathan Road or Temple Street, I find myself immersed in a sensory overload that feels uniquely alive. The narrow pathways are flanked by towering buildings, their facades a striking blend of colonial-era remnants and modern high-rises. Neon signs in bold colors hang precariously over the street, advertising everything from herbal tea shops to luxury electronics. The sidewalks are a chaotic dance of hurried footsteps—locals rushing to their next destination, tourists pausing to snap photos, and delivery workers skillfully maneuvering their way through the crowd with overloaded carts. Yet amidst all this movement, it's the aromas that always stop me in my tracks: the buttery scent of egg tarts cooling in a bakery, the savory richness of roasted duck glistening in shop windows, and the faint bitterness of freshly brewed milk tea wafting out from small, bustling restaurants.

Inside of these cramped eateries, the atmosphere is no less dynamic. Conversations flow in a medley of languages—Cantonese dominating the air, English punctuating the rhythm as tourists seek help navigating unfamiliar menus, and Mandarin threading its way in as mainland visitors negotiate business deals or catch up with friends. This linguistic symphony mirrors the multicultural fabric of Hong Kong itself, a city where diverse voices coexist and blend seamlessly. As *The History of Hong Kong Cuisine: Looking at a Future Through Food* explains, these restaurants reflect the cultural hybridity of the city, not only through their patrons but in their very essence. Their dishes tell a story of resilience and adaptation, where Western culinary practices introduced during British colonial rule were not simply adopted but transformed into something entirely new.

Hong Kong's unique culture system is deeply rooted in its colonial history. British rule left behind more than just legal frameworks and architectural landmarks—it introduced Western tastes and dining customs that locals reimagined with their own twist. Dishes like Hong Kong-style borscht, made with tomatoes instead of beetroot, and “soy sauce Western cuisine,” where European recipes are infused with local flavors, epitomize this fusion. Similarly, the city's architectural landscape echoes this

hybridity, blending colonial sensibilities with traditional Chinese aesthetics, as explored in *Building Colonial Hong Kong: Speculative Development and Segregation in the City*.

Hong Kong's restaurants and streetscapes are more than just places to eat or walk through—they are living, breathing artifacts of its past, reflecting a cultural legacy where resilience and creativity have turned colonial imprints into a cornerstone of its own identity.

Hong Kong's colonial history began in 1842 with the Treaty of Nanking, which marked the end of the First Opium War and the cession of the territory to Britain. Over the next 150 years, British rule transformed Hong Kong from a small fishing village into a global trading hub and a bridge between the East and the West. As part of the British Empire, Hong Kong was governed by colonial administrators who prioritized economic growth and strategic control. The city's location and free port status attracted merchants, laborers, and refugees, creating a dynamic and diverse population. Colonial policies reinforced a hierarchical society, with the British elite occupying positions of power while the local Chinese population often faced systemic inequalities. This stratification was evident in governance, education, and urban planning. The British established their own institutions and systems, such as English-language schools and a common law legal framework, while leaving many aspects of Chinese society, such as traditional markets and temples, to function autonomously. This dual approach created a space where two distinct cultures coexisted but rarely integrated fully. By the time sovereignty was returned to China in 1997, Hong Kong had evolved into a cosmopolitan city with a distinct character that reflected its colonial past and cultural resilience. The legacy of British rule remains visible in its legal systems, education, and societal structures, serving as a testament to the enduring influence of this complex period in the city's history.

Colonial Hong Kong became a melting pot of ideas, practices, and identities. The influx of migrants from mainland China during periods of turmoil, combined with British influences, fostered the emergence of a hybrid culture.

While British governance shaped the city's infrastructure and institutions, the local population adapted and reinterpreted these influences to meet their own needs and preferences. This interplay between colonial authority and local ingenuity laid the groundwork for Hong Kong's unique identity.

The establishment of British rule in Hong Kong was not merely a political transition; it brought with it a clash of ideologies, values, and daily practices between Eastern and Western cultures. British colonial authorities introduced systems and customs that often seemed at odds with the local Chinese way of life, creating a sense of cultural dissonance. From governance to education, language, and even food, colonial influence often sought to impose a British worldview on a population deeply rooted in Chinese traditions. While these changes facilitated Hong Kong's integration into global systems of trade and diplomacy, they also highlighted stark divisions within the society.

Cuisine became one of the most visible arenas where this cultural tension played out. British colonizers brought their culinary traditions—afternoon tea, bread, hearty stews, and puddings—into a city where food was integral to community, tradition, and identity. For many locals, British food was alien, bland, and overly formal, reflecting the cultural and social distance between the rulers and the ruled. In comparison, the traditional Cantonese cuisine, with its emphasis on fresh ingredients, intricate preparation, and shared dining experiences, contrasted sharply with the individualistic and pragmatic dining habits of the British elite. This difference was more than a matter of taste; it symbolized the deeper cultural chasm that existed between the two groups.

It's revealed in the spaces where food was consumed as well. British officials and merchants frequented visited spaces that replicated as much of the Western culinary experiences, often inaccessible to the local population. For the British, Cantonese food was not just unfamiliar but perceived as a marker of the “other.” Markets selling live seafood and freshly butchered meat, integral to Cantonese cuisine, were seen as chaotic and unsanitary by colonial authorities and foreign residents. Dishes such as dim sum or stir-fried noodles, now iconic in Hong Kong's culinary identity, were often overlooked or ridiculed by British settlers, who preferred more on a more controlled and familiar environment, like Western-style dining rooms or private clubs.

This rejection created significant challenges for Cantonese cuisine and its purveyors. Local eateries, street vendors, and Dai-Pai-Dongs (open-air food stalls) struggled to gain le-

gitimacy or recognition under a colonial administration that prioritized Western norms in public health regulations and urban planning. For instance, street food, which was a lifeline for the working-class population, was often targeted by policies that sought to clean up and “modernize” the city, forcing many vendors to operate in precarious conditions. Traditional restaurants, often family-owned and serving affordable meals to local communities, had little access to the resources or spaces allocated to Western-style establishments. The separate culinary spaces had been one of the representatives which mirrored the broader societal segregation enforced by colonial policies.

Hong Kong's architectural and urban planning at that time served as an excellent example as a manifestation of societal segregation in colonial Hong Kong, reflecting and enforcing the racial and class divides that characterized the colonial order. The British colonial administration deliberately created exclusive enclaves for Europeans, such as the Mid-Levels and the Peak, through ordinances like the 1888 European Reservation Ordinance. These areas were designed with grand, Western-style mansions that embodied colonial authority and cultural superiority. Elevated locations not only provided cooler climates but symbolically placed the European elite above the crowded, chaotic urban spaces occupied by the Chinese population. The Chinese, on the other hand, were relegated to densely packed tenements in areas like TaiPingShan, where buildings were designed for maximum density rather than comfort or hygiene, exacerbating poor living conditions and disease outbreaks. This stark contrast in architectural styles and living standards reflected and reinforced the racial and class divides of the colonial order.

The architectural division of the city extended into public spaces and urban infrastructure. European areas featured broader streets, gardens, and clubs that mimicked the layout of British towns, providing spaces for socializing among the colonial elite while excluding locals. Meanwhile, Chinese quarters were marked by narrow alleyways, overcrowded housing, and a lack of basic urban amenities such as proper drainage and sanitation systems. These inequalities were justified by the colonial administration under the pretense of cultural differences and public health concerns, although they primarily served to entrench social hierarchies.

As time goes by, western colonial culture gradually permeated Hong Kong's local culture, particularly in the realm of cuisine and interior design, which becomes a site of negotiation and adaptation.

Spaces like Cha Chaan Tengs (Tea Restaurants) were shaped at that time, becoming symbols of cultural negotiation and adaptation. The menus of these tea restaurants were distinctive at that time which reflected a creative fusion of British and Cantonese influences. Dishes such as macaroni in soup, baked pork chop rice, combined with affordable, widely available ingredients with Western cooking methods, reflected a creative reimagining of Western staples, transforming foreign ingredients such as butter, condensed milk, and canned goods into flavors tailored for local tastes. For instance, Hong Kong-style milk tea, a staple in Cha Chaan Tengs, took inspiration from British afternoon tea but replaced fresh milk with condensed milk, creating a richer, sweeter flavor that appealed to locals and suited the subtropical climate.

The adaptation extended beyond the food to the dining environment itself. The interiors of these restaurants emphasized this hybridity much more, featuring Western-style booth seating, tiled walls, and metal fixtures alongside Chinese motif like calligraphy posters, creating an atmosphere that was both familiar and modern. These tea restaurants were designed to be functional and affordable, making Western dining experiences accessible to the working-class population. Unlike the exclusive colonial clubs or fine-dining establishments frequented by British elites, these restaurants were spaces that address equity more where locals could experience the blending of cultures without the barriers of class or cost. This hybridity turned dining into a shared cultural experience, softening the cultural divisions that once defined colonial Hong Kong. These spaces embodied a compromise between the colonial presence and local traditions, making foreign dining practices accessible and relevant to Hong Kong's working class.

On a broader scale, the architectural context of these spaces was equally significant in revealing the adaptation and integration of culture. Many of the restaurants mentioned before were housed in a unique style of architecture, Tong Lau, a quintessential Hong Kong building typology that blended Western construction methods with traditional Chinese design elements which integrates residential and commercial spaces. This architectural style is typically constructed narrow and with multi stories, featured arcaded shopfronts with shelter on the ground floor, where restaurants operated, while upper floors were reserved for residential use. This mixed-use design was a pragmatic response to Hong Kong's high-density environment, allowing both commerce and living spaces to coexist efficiently.

The architectural elements of Tong Lau, such as high ceilings and verandas, borrowed from Western styles to suit Hong Kong's subtropical climate, while the compact spatial arrangement and decorative details, like lattice windows, reflected Chinese aesthetics and functionality.

In modern-day Hong Kong, the legacy of colonial influence is woven seamlessly into its culinary and spatial identities, creating a unique cultural tapestry that continues to evolve. Hong Kong's cuisine, often dubbed the "world's food court," has embraced globalization while maintaining its distinctive fusion of East and West. Dishes such as Hong Kong-style milk tea and pineapple buns, which originated during the colonial era, have not only persisted but gained international recognition, becoming iconic representations of the city's identity. Moreover, cha chaan tengs remain a vital part of the city's culinary landscape, adapting to contemporary tastes by offering innovative dishes while retaining their nostalgic charm.

The spaces in which Hong Kong's cuisine is consumed have also evolved, reflecting the city's rapid urbanization and changing social dynamics. While traditional Tong Lau are less common in the modern skyline, their legacy lives on in retrofitted dining spaces that echo their mixed-use functionality. Many contemporary trending cafes and restaurants draw inspiration from the design elements of the colonial period, incorporating vintage decor such as patterned tiles, booth seating, and neon signage to evoke a sense of cultural continuity. This deliberate blending of old and new not only preserves Hong Kong's architectural heritage but also caters to a younger generation eager to reconnect with the city's history. In the meanwhile, public spaces also play a role in the modern food scene, with markets, food trucks, and open-air food courts offering a more casual dining experience that celebrates Hong Kong's cultural diversity. Places like Tai Kwun and PMQ, which were formerly occupied by colonial-era buildings, have been transformed into cultural hubs that integrate dining, art, and community spaces. These venues encapsulate the city's ability to adapt historical structures to contemporary needs, creating stunning harmonious environments where tradition and modernity coexist.

In addition to preserving traditional culinary spaces, Hong Kong has embraced innovation in food culture through high-end dining and fusion cuisine. The city's Michelin-starred restaurants and international food festivals showcase how Hong Kong has leveraged its colonial past to position itself as a global gastronomic hub. Fusion cuisine, such as foie gras-filled pineapple

buns or truffle egg tarts, reflects a creative reinterpretation of traditional dishes, catering to the city's cosmopolitan tastes while honoring its culinary roots.

Hong Kong's cuisine and spaces tell the story of a city shaped by a complex history of colonial influence, cultural negotiation, and local resilience. From the early days of societal segregation and the rejection of traditional Cantonese food to the emergence of Cha Chaan Tengs and Tong Lau as symbols of cultural adaptation, Hong Kong has continually transformed challenges into opportunities for reinvention. The hybrid dishes and architectural styles that emerged during the colonial period became not just markers of survival but also powerful expressions of identity, blending Eastern and Western elements into something entirely unique.

Today, Hong Kong continues to evolve, balancing preservation with innovation. Traditional restaurants still thrive alongside high-end fusion restaurants, while heritage buildings like Tai Kwun have been reimagined as cultural hubs that connect past and present. This ongoing process of adaptation highlights the city's remarkable ability to embrace change while holding onto its roots. Hong Kong's food and spaces are more than remnants of history—they are living, dynamic reflections of a city that thrives on its hybridity.

In a rapidly globalizing world, Hong Kong stands as a testament to the power of cultural negotiation. Its cuisine and architecture remind us that even under the weight of colonialism, communities can reshape external influences to create identities that are vibrant, resilient, and entirely their own. This spirit of adaptation continues to define Hong Kong, making it a place where history and modernity coexist, and where the flavors of the past enrich the possibilities of the future.

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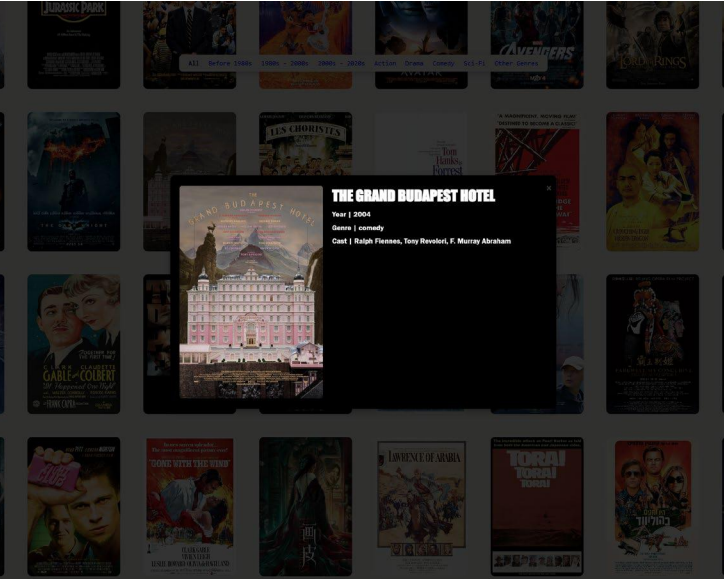
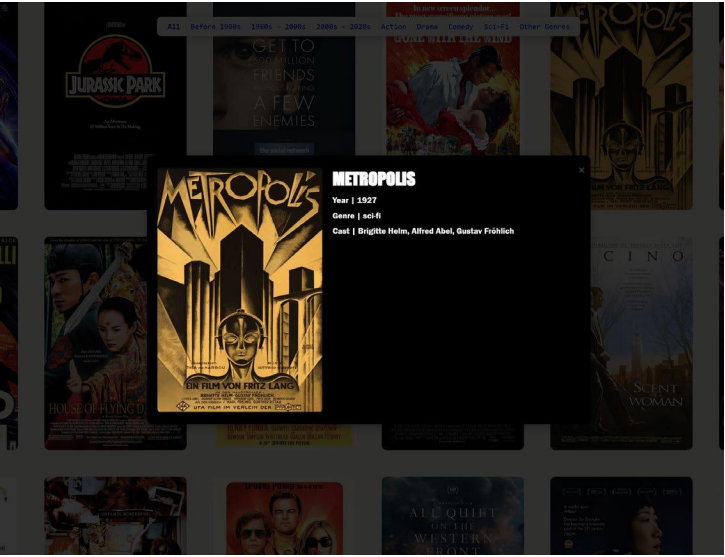
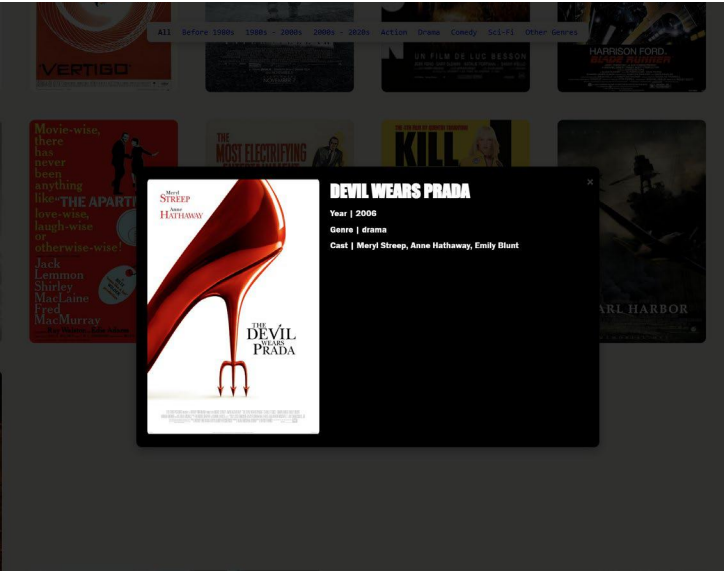
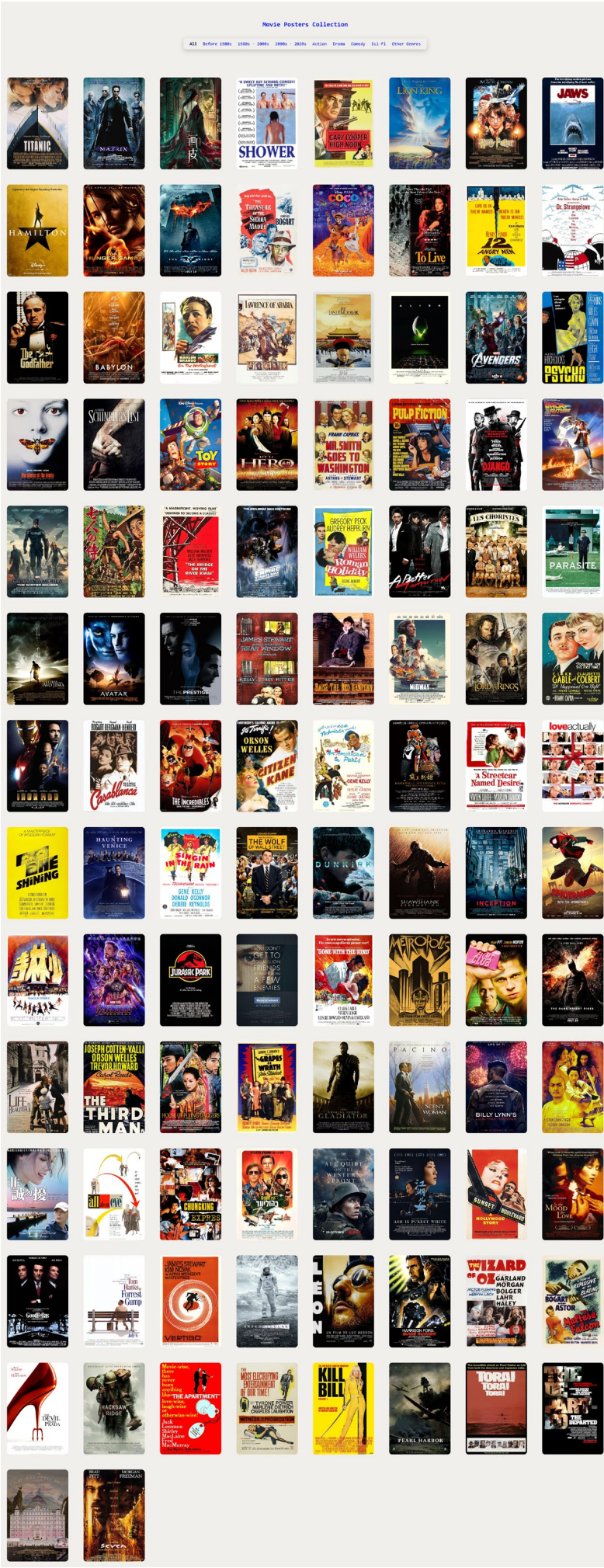
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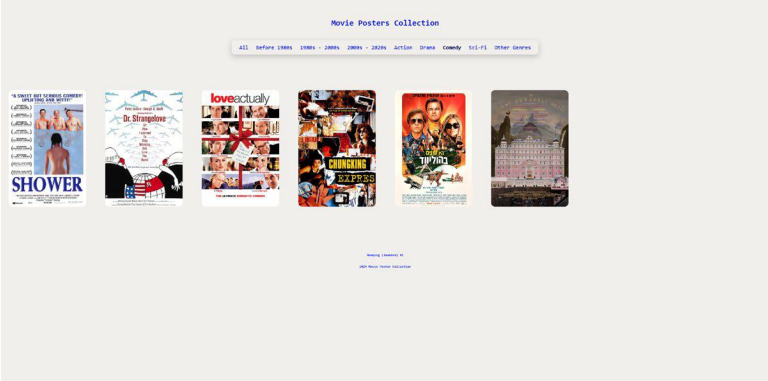
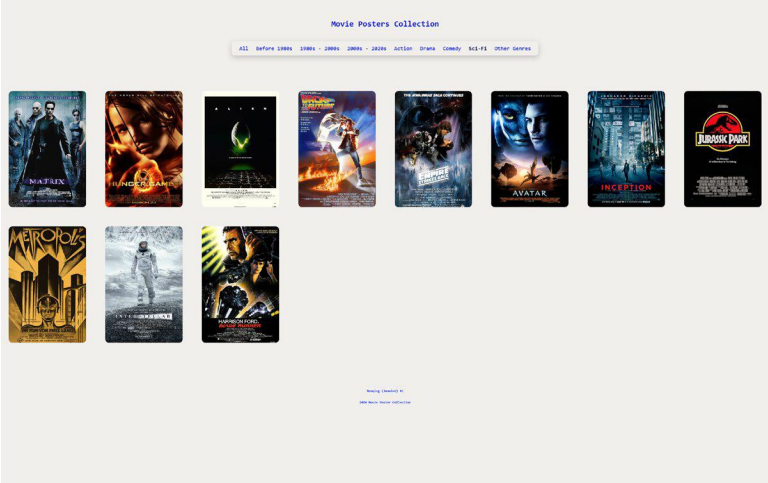
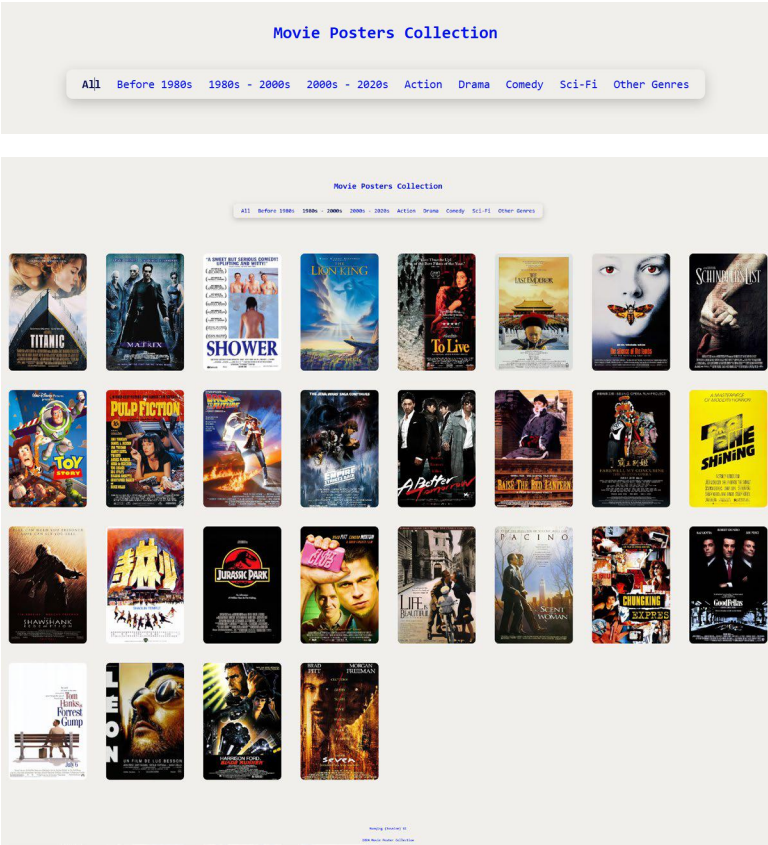
09 100 Movie Posters

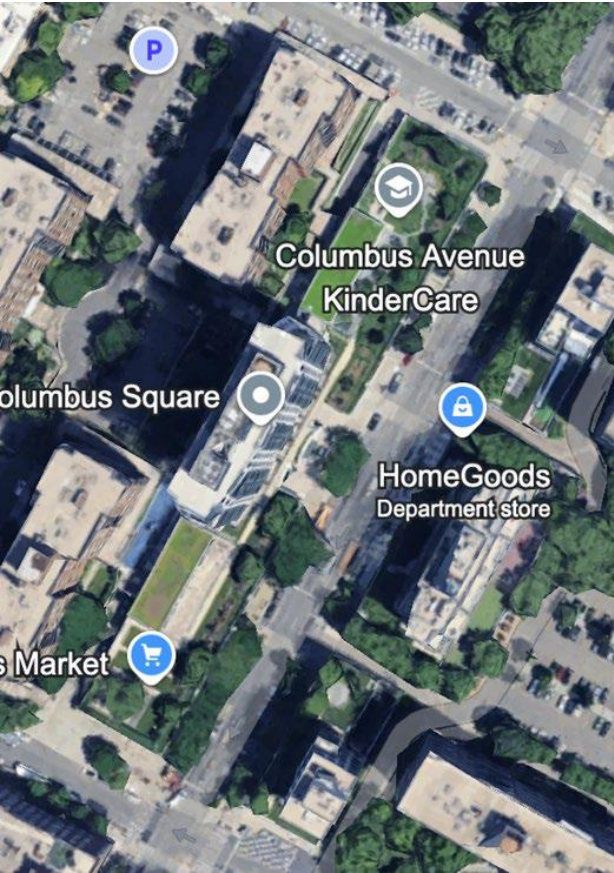
CATEGORY | Digital Exploration
ACADEMIC | Coding For Spatial Practice
INSTRUCTOR | Celeste Layne
YEAR | Fall 2024



This website includes not only images of movie posters, but also basic information of each movie, including released year, genre of the movie, and also the cast. By using javascript, I was able to created a filter system that could filter the movies by the time periods and genres.

<https://jasminex1.github.io/miniature-potato/Projects/Movie%20Posters/index.html>





Columbus Ave. between 97th and 100th Street

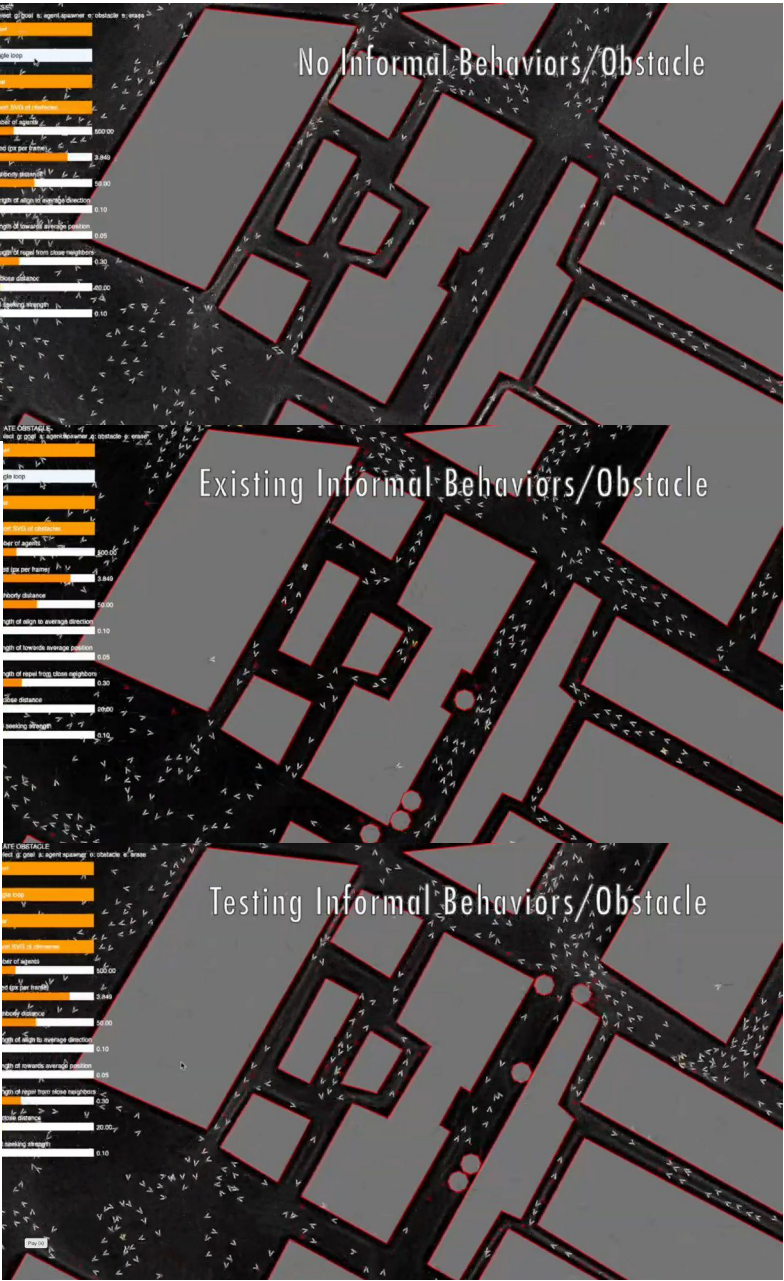
Space is a dynamic opportunity economy, a fluid urban passage defined by static boundaries like buildings, sidewalks, and zoning, yet animated by a continuous flow of agents. It channels movement and interaction, merging formal rules with informal behaviors to shape both the physical environment and the experiences of its users.

Our research focuses on Columbus Avenue between 97th and 100th Streets in Manhattan’s Upper West Side—a dynamic, mixed-use urban passage defined by static elements (buildings, sidewalks, transit stops) and animated by diverse flows of pedestrians, vehicles, cyclists, and deliveries. Influenced by policies like Vision Zero and Open Streets, this space functions as an “economy of opportunity” where regulated infrastructure meets ever-changing human activity.

Can the way people informally use space, without disrupting traffic or pedestrian flow, help us understand where cities have unused potential or overlooked gaps in city design?

Entities & Attributes

Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">10-30 storiesMixed-used	Pedestrian	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Age Group: 58.12% (25-64) / Median: 44 (From Census of Upper West Side)
Sidewalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">20ft widePavement10/10 Accessibility	Retail Store / Restaurant (Chick-Fil-A, Barburger, Chipotle, Starbucks, Wholefoods, Target, Sephora, Five Below, TJMAXX, Homegoods)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Purpose (commute, leisure, shopping)Mobility (walking, stroller, wheelchair)
Score Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lanes (3 traffic+2 parking+1 bike)	Vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Type (grocery, cafe, pharmacy, etc.)7AM-10PM / 9AM-8PMNO Outdoor seating
Asphalt Paved Tree	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Direction (one-way)Speed Limit: 25 mphRoad Condition:	Bus Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">M7,M11 busesShelter presence (yes/no)
Vendors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sell Posters, food trucks	Traffic Signal	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SpeciesCanopy sizeHealth	Crosswalk	
		Curb Extension	
		Outdoor Dining Area	



Pipeline

1. Data Ingestion
 - a. Pull latest building footprint data
 2. Data Processing
 - a. Clean geometries
 3. SVG Creation
 - a. Optimize SVG file
 4. Web Application
 - a. Embed SVG into HTML/CSS
 5. Automation
 - a. Perform automated or manual visual quality
 6. Iteration
 - a. Use feedback, improve data? Change in city design
- ### 1. Feedback Loop

This analysis confirms that existing informal behaviors naturally occupy optimal spaces—areas capable of absorbing activity without disrupting circulation. These “gray areas” represent opportunities rather than obstacles, validating our concept of the Fluid Urban Passage. The street, therefore, should be understood not as rigid infrastructure, but as a flexible environment capable of accommodating dynamic urban interactions.