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*Apart We Are Together*

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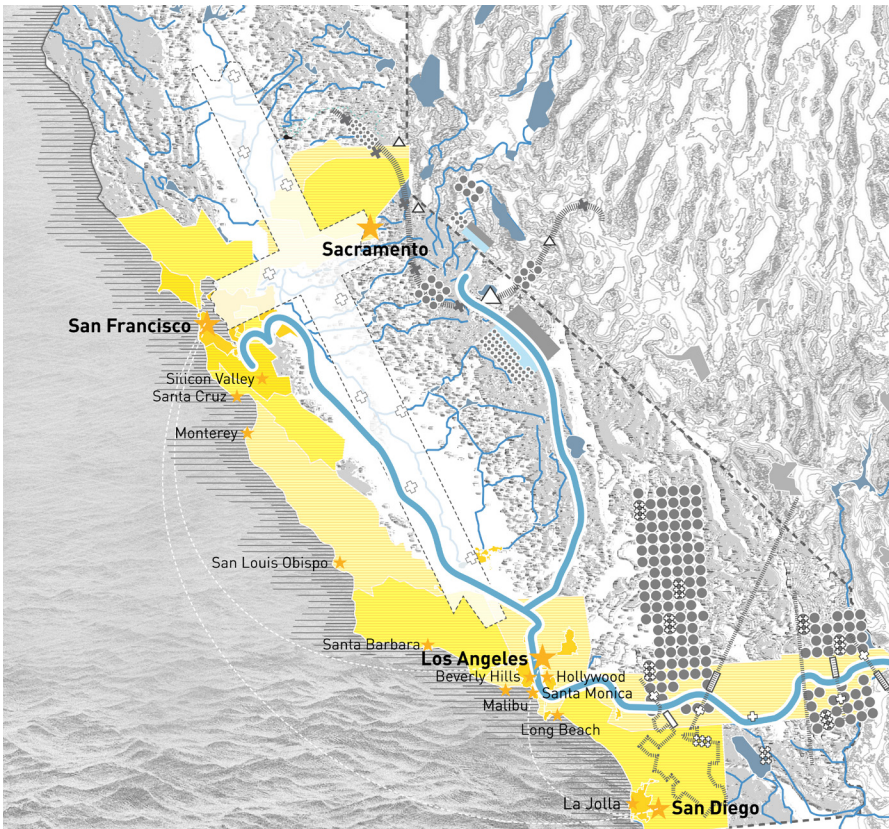
APART WE ARE  
TOGETHER

## Apart we are Together

California will not be homogeneously dry.

Its future's main geographic challenge is economic and political. With 21 spots on the list of 30 neighborhoods with the highest percentage of million dollar homes, the taxpayers in these zip codes will pay for desalted water, a cost nearly twice as expensive as the rate for imported water was. They will ramp up their infrastructure to convert salty ocean water into drinking water to quench their long-term thirst. (Don't worry about the intensive energy needs of such infrastructure, oil is imported from new drillings in the Arctic).

Project details: Archinect Dry Futures competition, honorable mention, 2015.



"California has 111 billionaires, more than any other state, and all but two countries (behind China and the U.S., tied with Russia). In total, they hold assets worth \$485 billion."  
—Forbes Magazine

Some people had to bleed so other people could drink. Simple as that.  
— Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Water Knife*





"Thinking in terms of stories does not isolate human beings as something separate from the starfish and the sea anemones, the coconut palms and the primroses. Rather, if the world be connected, if I am at all fundamentally right in what I am saying, then thinking in terms of stories must be shared by all minds, whether ours or those of redwood forests and sea anemones, the evolutionary process through millions of generations whereby the sea anemone, like you and me, came to be—that process, too, must be of the stuff of stories."

—Gregory Bateson, *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*, 1979.

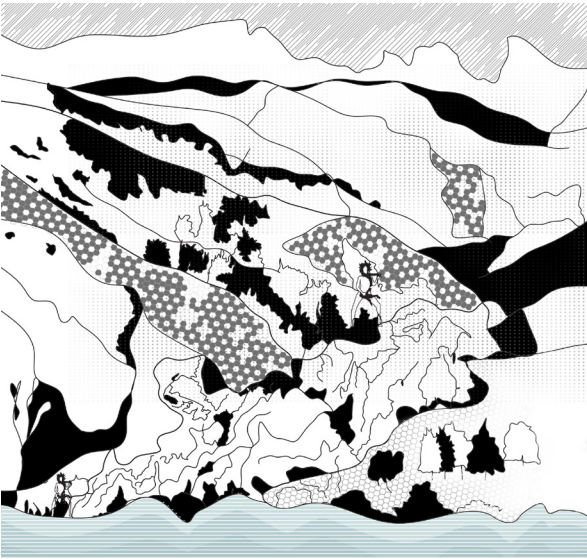


"Either you bring the water to L.A. or you bring L.A. to the water."  
—Chinatown, 1974.



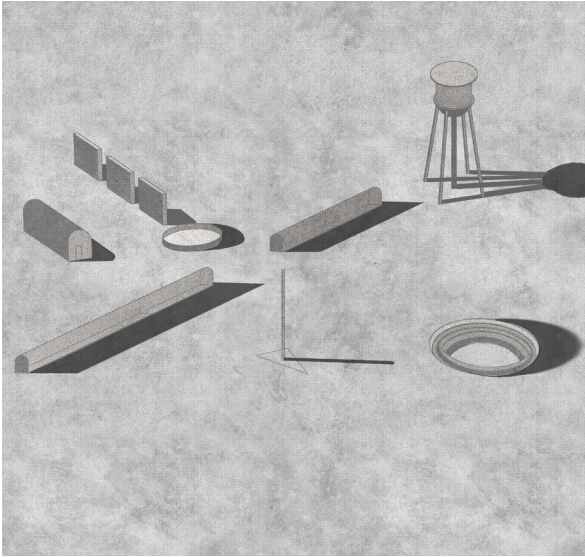
"This rude platform is an altar, and on it we are here consecrating this water supply and dedicating this aqueduct to you sf your children and your children's children—for all time."

—William Mulholland



"In the west, it is said, water flows uphill toward money. And it literally does, as it leaps three thousand feet across the Tehachapi Mountains in gigantic siphons to slake the thirst of Los Angeles, as it is shoved a thousand feet out of Colorado River canyons to water Phoenix and Palm Springs and the irrigated lands around them."

—Mark Reisner, *Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water*

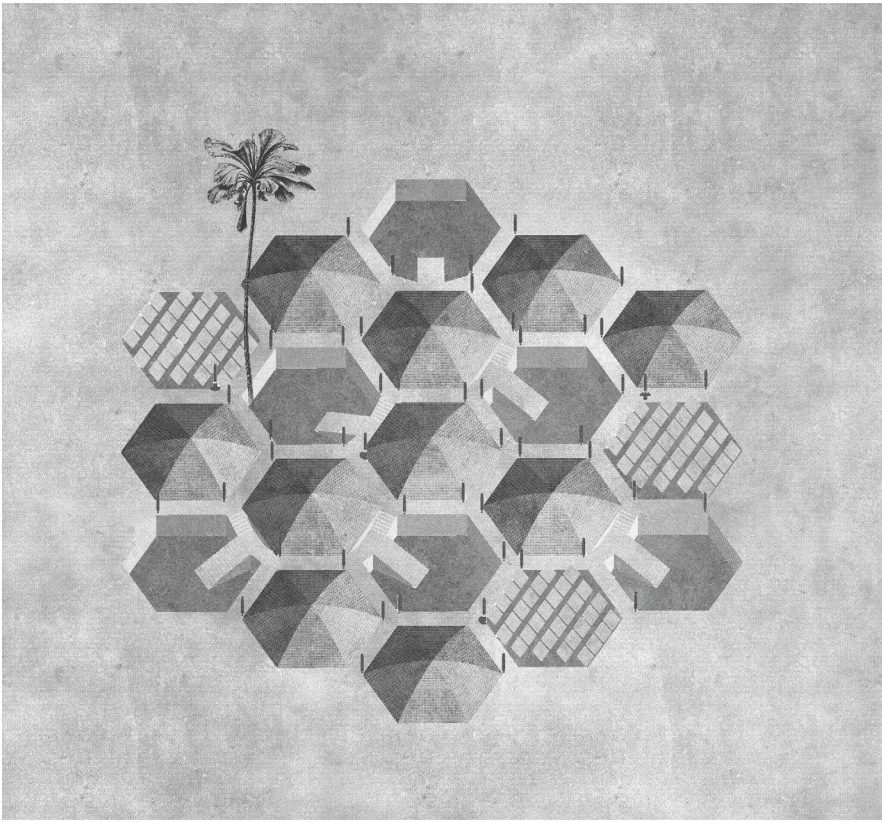


"In this landscape we see two screens and a chair. It was the opposite of a ruin. They were the fragments of a future place."  
— Jean Cocteau

#### What about the other California?

The California Aqueduct and Owens Valley, the grand water infrastructure, fell silent, repurposed centuries later as national parks and monuments, memorials to the repercussions of ancient climate change. Across it scattered bones of dehydrated poor bodies.

In the arid hinterland, a series of Dropping arcologies – named for those things that birds leave when they fly overcreate live-in work of art water mini-worlds, even as nearby lakes drop dangerously low. They see promise in techniques to harvest water from the air, manipulate the ground, irrigate with brackish water, and inject the water of human waste back into the aquifer, once methane is extracted for fuel. They believe that if you build it, they will come. Some stay, most leave.



"When, in the year 1913, in my desperate attempt to free art from the ballast of objectivity, I took refuge in the square form and the exhibited a picture which consisted of nothing more than a black square on a white field. The critics and, along with them, the public sighed. Everything which we loved was lost. We are in a desert ... Before us is nothing but a black square on a white background! But the desert is filled with the spirit of non-objective feeling."  
— Kazimir Malevich



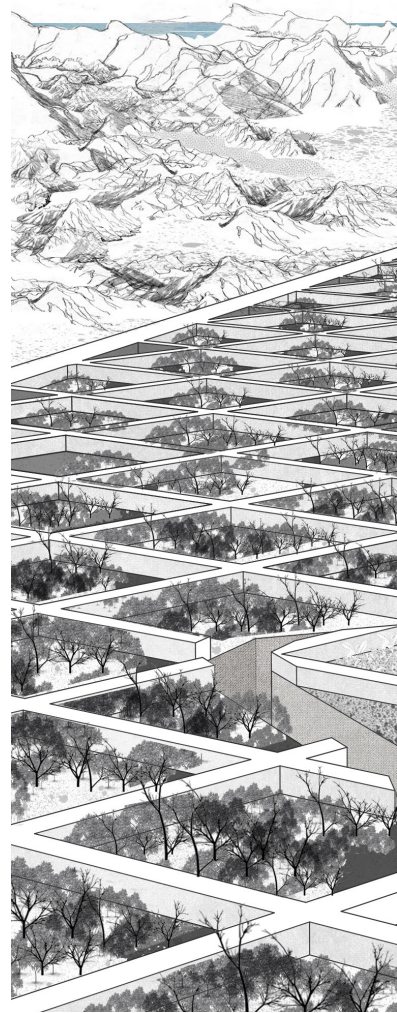
And in-between?

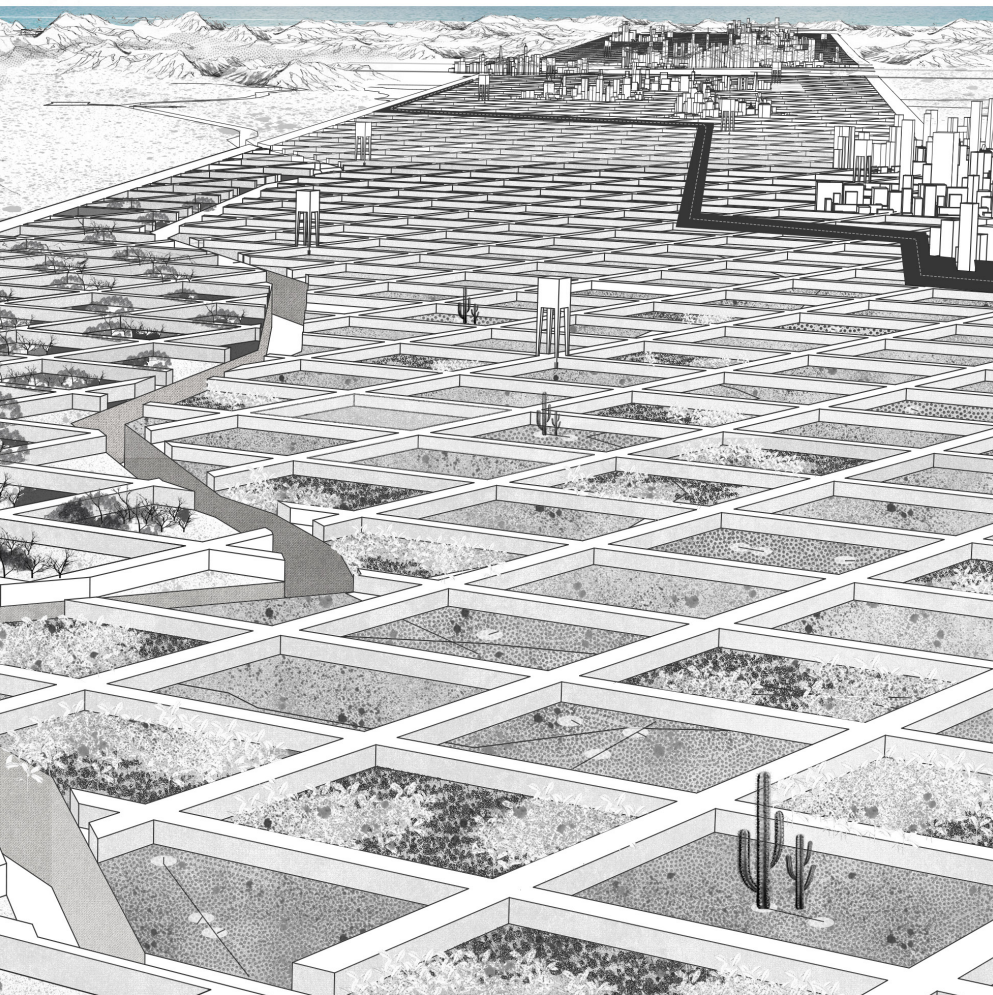
Vast areas of California's Central Valley have sunk fast with massive amounts of groundwater being pumped during the historic drought. To stabilize the ground, a massive Green Cross forestation project extends across the state. An ancient emblem for both painful execution and salvation, the figure separates — or connects these two Californias. It is a cross-breed, a hybrid, a pumping heart.

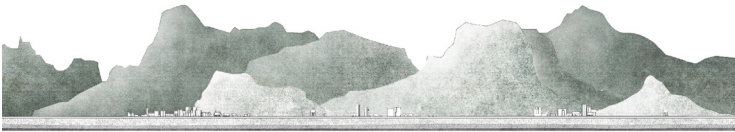
It is a beast that retains the moisture, a sanctuary for the climate refugees. It is also the green zone, the space that allows both words to remain separate all while bound by a figure of unity.

It is our suffering that brings us together. It is not love. The bond that binds us is beyond choice. We are brothers. We are brothers in what we share. In pain, which each of us must suffer alone, in hunger, in poverty, in hope, we know our brotherhood. We know it, because we have had to learn it. We know that there is no help for us but from one another, that no hand will save us if we do not reach out our hand. And the hand that you reach out is empty, as mine is. You have nothing. You possess nothing. You own nothing. You are free. All you have is what you are, and what you give.

- Ursula K. Le Guin,  
The Dispossessed







"Just as a geologist can hear the clicks of radioactivity, but only if he is equipped with a geiger counter, we can register the presence of morality in the world provided that we concentrate on that particular emission. And just as no one, once the instrument has been calibrated, would think of asking the geologist if radioactivity is "all in his head," "in his heart," or "in the rocks," no one will doubt any longer that the world emits morality toward anyone who possesses an instrument sensitive enough to register it."  
-Bruno Latour, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence*

