SOGGY SOVEREIGNTY ON THE IRISH BORDER

by Hugh Magee

Bachelors of Art in Architecture
Belfast School of Architecture, University of Ulster, 2012

Submitted to the Department of Architecture in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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Signature of Author: Signature redacted

Department of Architecture
June 24, 2018

Certified by: Signature redacted

Ana Miljački
Professor of Architecture
Thesis Supervisor

Certified by: Signature redacted

Sheila Kennedy
Professor of Architecture
Chair of the Department Committee on Graduate Students

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Professor of Architecture

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Abstract

BREXIT caused an existential crisis in Northern Ireland, by March 2019 the Irish border, between Northern Ireland (part of the UK) and the Republic of Ireland will become the EU's only land frontier with another union. Considering more than double the number of land crossings (275) exist on the Irish border than the entire eastern block of the EU, coupled with Northern Ireland's conflicted history, how this new border should function has caused a political deadlock, and stalled UK/EU negotiations on their formal divorce.

Following the 2015 migrant crisis in Europe, the BREXIT slogan "take back our borders" promoted the xenophobic vilification of a particular kind of outsider. This is particularly significant given 2016 saw a record number of visitors to Ireland in the island's history. At same moment that the idea of national sovereignty is intensifying, so too is the need for open borders.

BREXIT revives the Irish border, which had all but disappeared, threatening the recovery of the region's towns, which suffered decades of militarized violence, customs checks and the general friction of the geopolitical abstraction of a border. Given this history of conflict, the UK has vowed for a "frictionless"and "invisible" border, while no proposals have been made for how this could be avoided. The only consensus between Belfast, Dublin, London and Brussels is that no "hard infrastructure" should be proposed, a non-solution based on the violent image of the Irish border's past, and wishful thinking given the administrative imperative of border management.

This thesis instead argues that if construction is going to happen, it should be an architecture that takes the border town as its subject, and serves local life while attracting visitors. Indeed the majority of the border is made up of waterways that already act as anchors for an array of local and visitor activities.

Having historically bore the brunt of the border's imposition; border towns have developed numerous cross community initiatives to attract EU and Tourism investment. The thesis proposes to leverage these sources of funding for grassroots community initiatives, to propose locally tuned architectural interventions along the waterways of border towns.

In a context anything but stable this thesis aims to produce a space for architectural stability, bringing people together at a point of division; to float, drink and otherwise not care about the border. Soggy Sovereignty offers a space to soak in the jurisdictional ambiguity, and ultimately, challenge the Irish Border.

Thesis Supervisor

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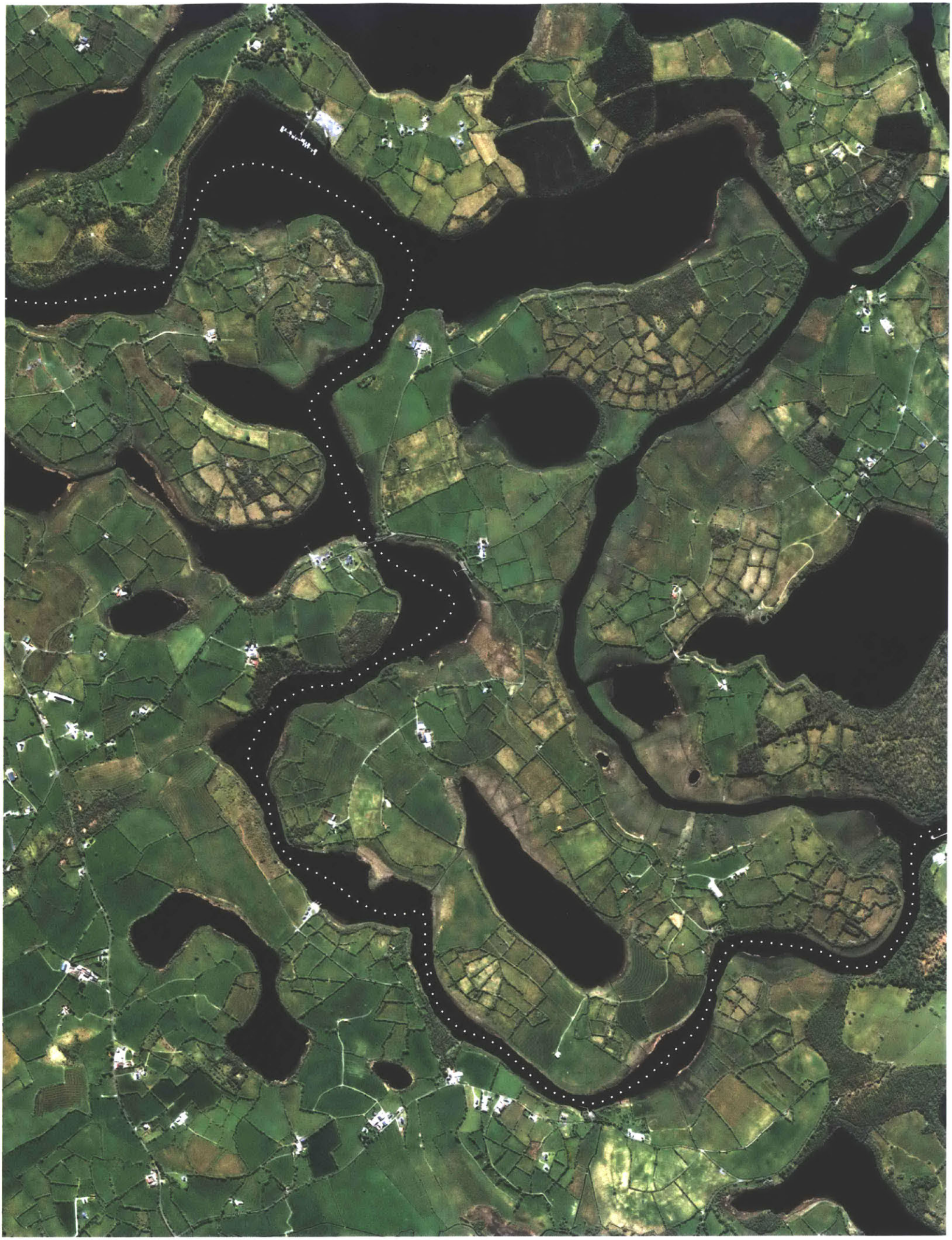

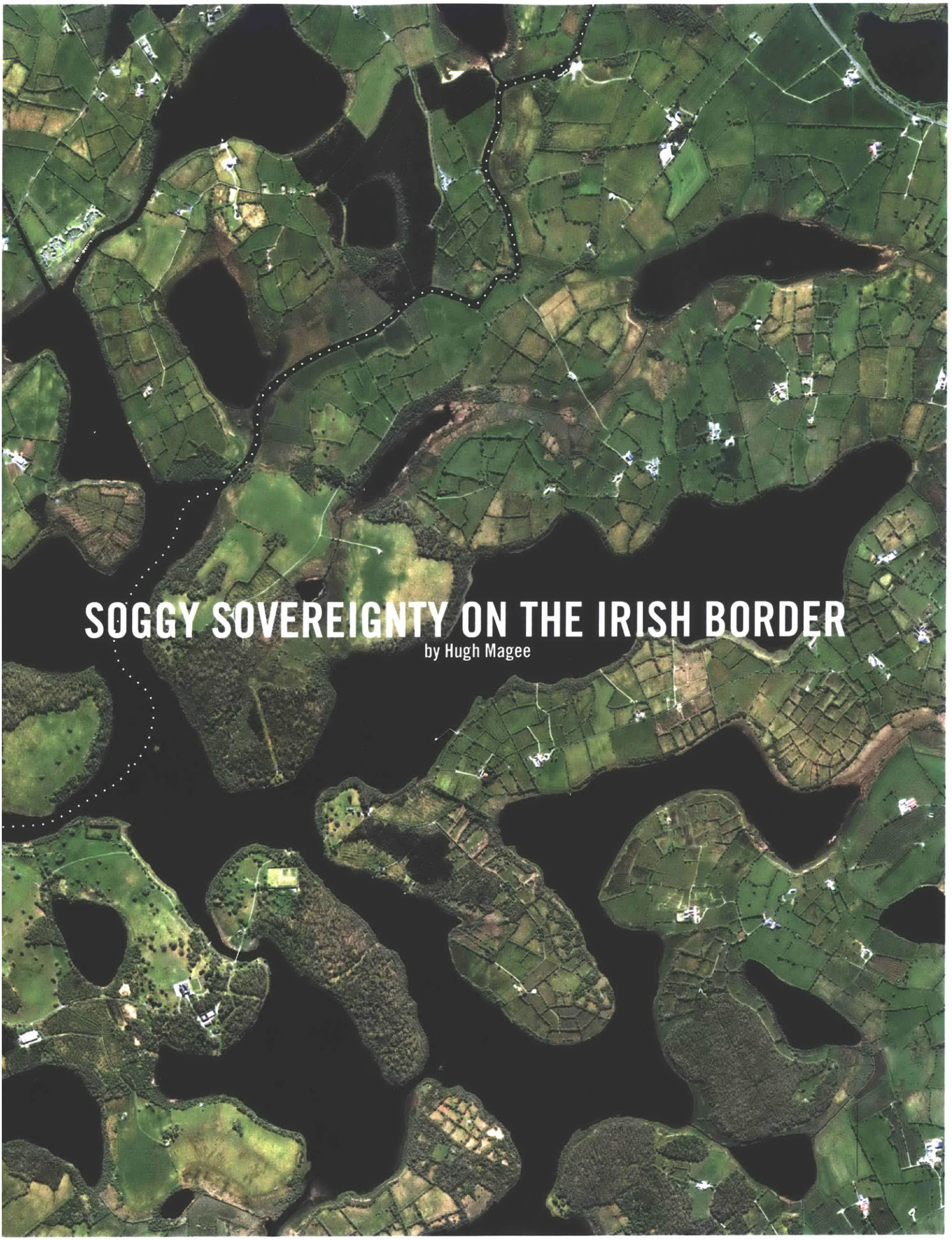

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With your help I arrived at a thesis that speaks to an optimism for architecture, something I'll value for life. For the sustained support, prodding and patience, thank you. It was a pleasure.

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For being there when it mattered and supporting my education over the last three years.

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To my darling, my best friend, my wife, this wouldn't have been possible if it weren't for you. I love you.

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INTRODUCTION

The thesis begins with the crisis of BREXIT, and its unintended resurrection of the Irish Border, and attempts to carve out a space for architectural stability in a context anything but stable. I'm proposing a series of civic interventions which leverage the funding BREXIT induces, together with the existing system of EU Tourism funding, to ultimately produce a way in which one might dance on the border, drink to, or otherwise not give f#@k.

Propaganda

Despite the Northern Ireland voting to remain; by 2019 the Irish Border will become the EU's frontier with the UK. BREXIT has the potential of unraveling Northern Ireland's peace process, and the fear of a return to violence has lead to a political deadlock on how the border should function. Flipping the rhetoric of BREXIT slogan "take back our borders", the thesis centers on the visitor, proposing a series of cultural and social programs at border towns oriented towards tourists.

The Border is Wet

The intrinsic nature of the border offers this potential. Given that the majority of the border is wet, comprised of a series of rivers, lakes, bogs and loughs, the picturesque quality of the border region offers the potential for the border crossing to become border stopping; taking advantage of the necessary slowness border's produce.

Managerial Difficulty

The soggy nature of the border is also the reason for its granularity. In a 6 mile stretch of road one might cross the border 4 times. More than double the number of crossings exist on the Irish Border, than the entire eastern frontier of the EU. The difficulty this poses was recognized at the point of its creation in the 1920's, when the south of Ireland becomes a republic.

The Making of a Border

Inheriting the existing country boundaries the border was drawn around those areas in the north with a protestant majority who wished to remain within the United Kingdom. Since this inherited line cut towns and communities in half, a Border Commission was created which identified the border's "more absurd anomalies".

Divided Towns

Their map, which showed a loss to Irish territory, was leaked and both British and Irish governments ignored their recommendations. The border remained where it was, following the same natural features, while dividing border towns in half. This abstract device of the nation state became increasingly problematic over the next 70 years.

British Irish Trade War

The 1930's saw an Irish British economic trade war that increased the role of border's in customs checkpoint. By the early 40's the friction between Northern Ireland's participation in WWII and Ireland's neutrality, manifests with new passport controls. By the end of the 50's, the previously unified national railway system, is gutted along border towns.

Northern Ireland Conflict

By the 1960's conflict is breaking out in Northern Ireland, "Operation Banner" is initiated. 27,000 British Troops are deployed and for the next 30 years engage in low-level conflict with the IRA. The border becomes a means of smuggling guns into the north while previously identified absurd anomalies become hotspot for violence. The border becomes a militarized line further diminishing the potential of normal life in border towns.

Cratered Roads

In response to the difficulty of border management 200 roads are cratered with plastic explosives to prevent crossing. Only 20 are considered "approved".

The Border region becomes a site of clandestine resistance; communities on both sides attempt to back fill holes to reconnect to their hinterland, their farms and families.

Architectural Hostage

While in border towns themselves, military installations project architecture of violence and the equivalent of taking a hostage, constructed adjacent to homes, schools and businesses in an attempt to reduce the risk of IRA bomb attacks. Despite the decommissioning and removal of these installations in the early 2000s, they left an imprint on the collective consciousness of how bad a border can be.

The Latent Memory of the Border

In 1998 Irish and British EU membership enabled the tricky problem of national identities in Northern Ireland to be parked in favor of a place in the larger European family. Almost over night the border disappears. Over the next decade the UK and Ireland experience huge economic development, however border towns remain sluggish, hamstrung from the preceding decades of conflict.

Declining Border Towns

The 2013 G8 summit, held at a Northern Irish hotel 30 minutes from the border, shed light on this economic deprivation in border towns. Almost 5 years after the 2008 financial crisis border towns attempt to mask the dereliction of their shop fronts with fake facades. In response for the need for economic development, the EU begins to invest in social and cultural amenities in border towns.

EU and Tourism Ireland

The EU's Peace and Reconciliation Program for Northern Ireland, and Tourism Ireland, the Island's tourism corporation were formed with bilateral support from UK and Irish governments as part of the agreement that ended the Northern Ireland conflict in 1998. More than $8 billion has been spent

in support of social and economic development of the border region, and the promotion of the Island and a single, digestible commodity for tourism consumption.

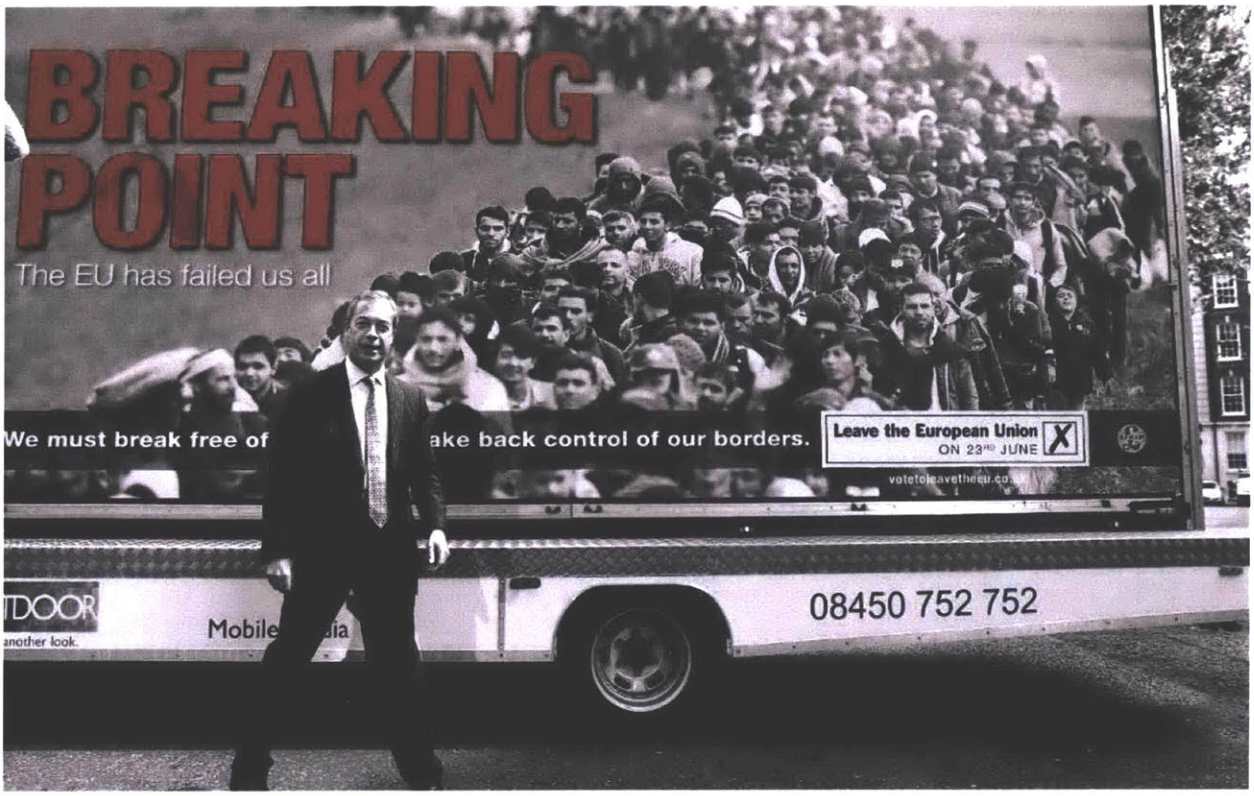
Administrative Functioning of the Border

Rather than challenge border crossing's administrative functions – the thesis proposes to simply squeeze these programs often requiring no more than a desk into locally orientated landmarks. Examples of civic programs acting as border crossings has a precedent, on the US Canada border one finds old post offices operating this way. Given that 2016 saw a record number of visitors to Ireland, the thesis argues that border crossing, as welcome center is a viable approach in the current context.

Enter Kitsch (Welcome to the Border)

The thesis proposes a strategy that leverages the continuing potential of grassroots community groups to access EU and Tourism Ireland funding, as a means to deploy a series of architectural landmarks sited a 14 crossings along the watery border. While the M1 Motorway on the east coast carries the majority of traffic and cross border trade, the focus is instead on remote towns.

BREXIT AND THE SOGGY BORDER



UK vows to negotiate a "seamless and frictionless border"

EU post-Brexit trade cannot be "frictionless"

IRE "will not design a border for the Brexiteers"

NI government has collapsed and remains non-functioning

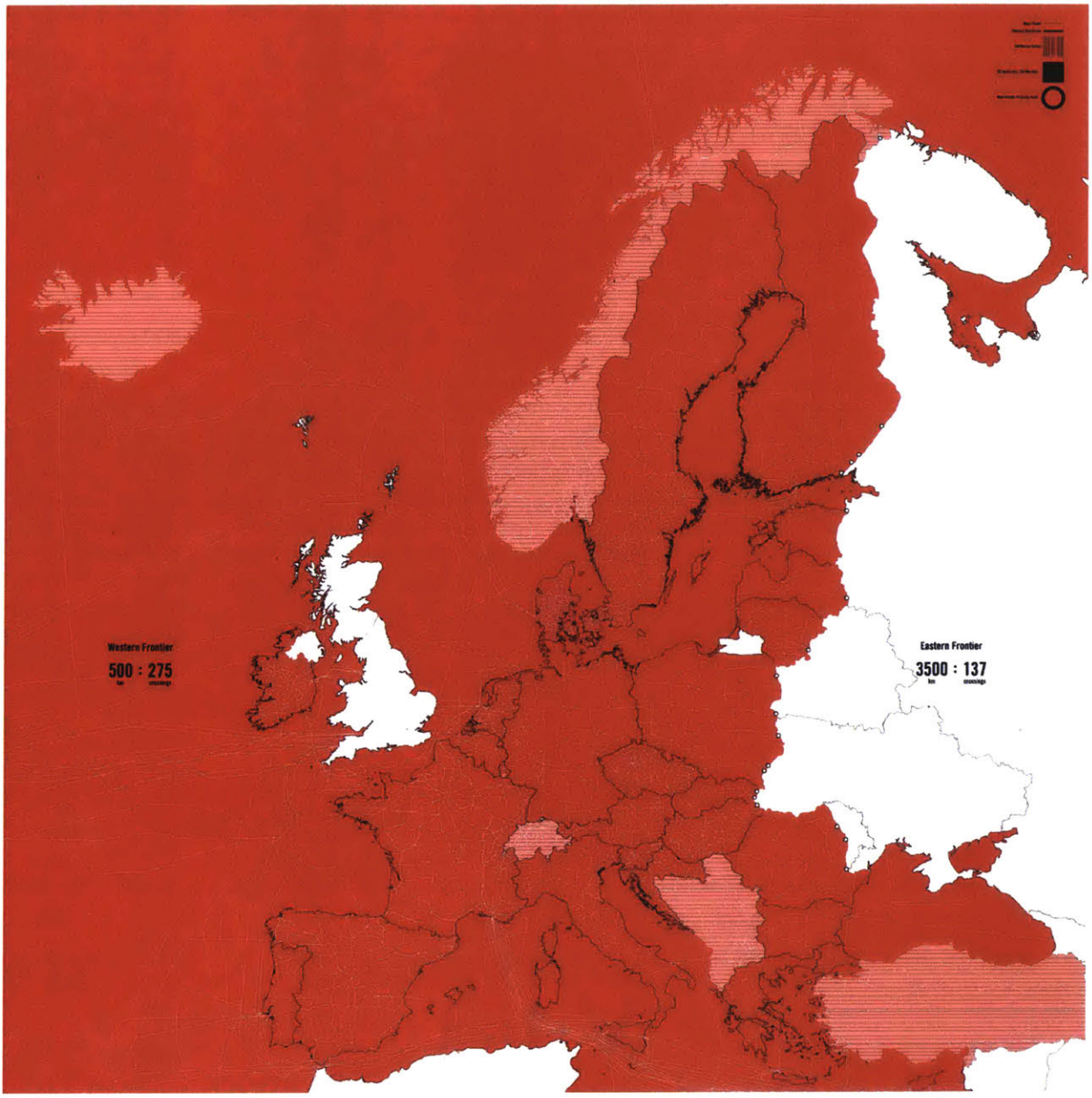
all agree
no infrastructure along the border

XXX Nigal Farage, UKIP, Leave Campaign, 2016 ahead of the BREXIT vote. Xenophobic imagery following 2015 Migrant Crisis

EU Eastern Frontier

3500 : 137

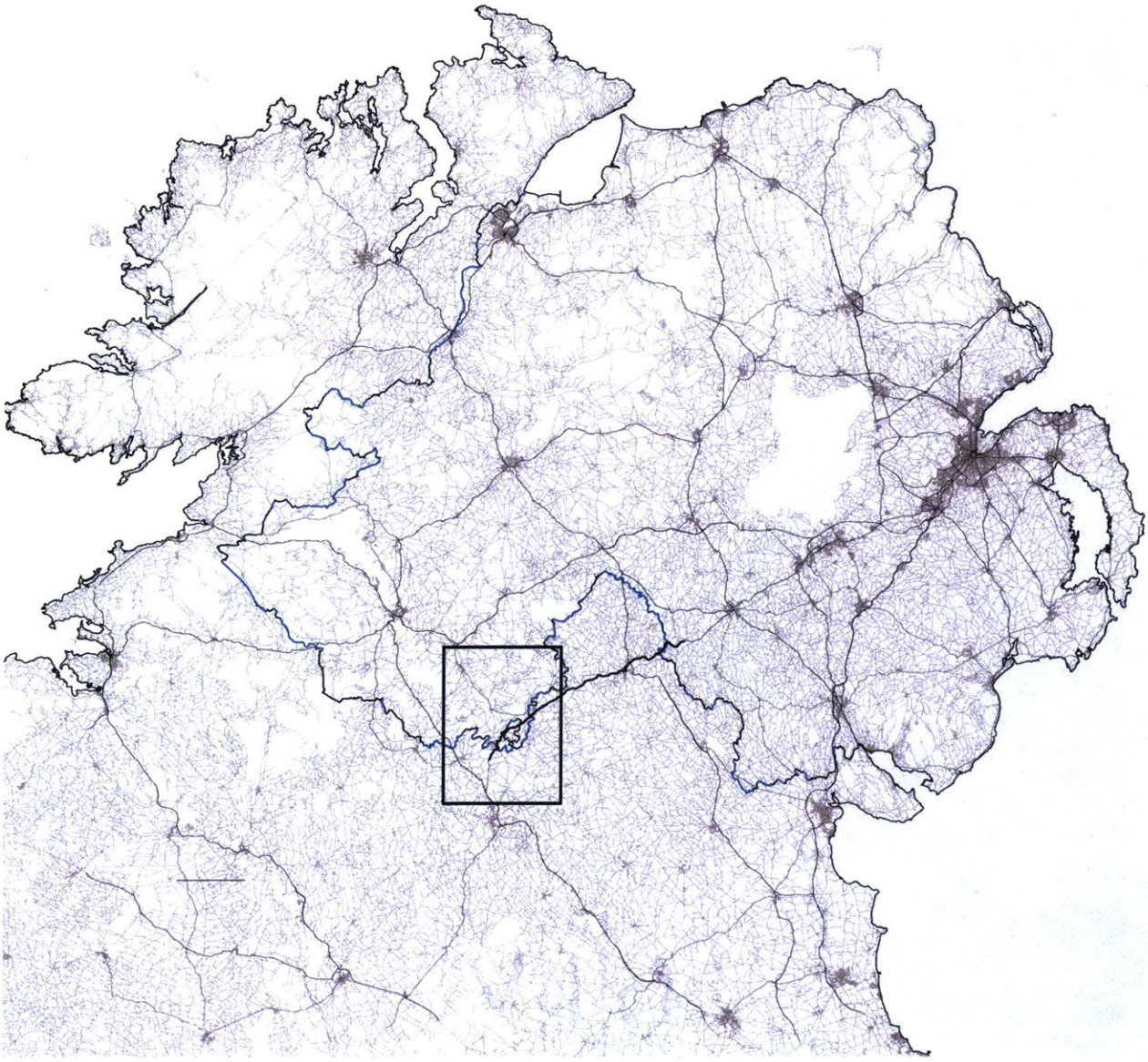
km crossings



More than double the number of land crossings on the Irish Border than the entire EU eastern frontier

Irish Border

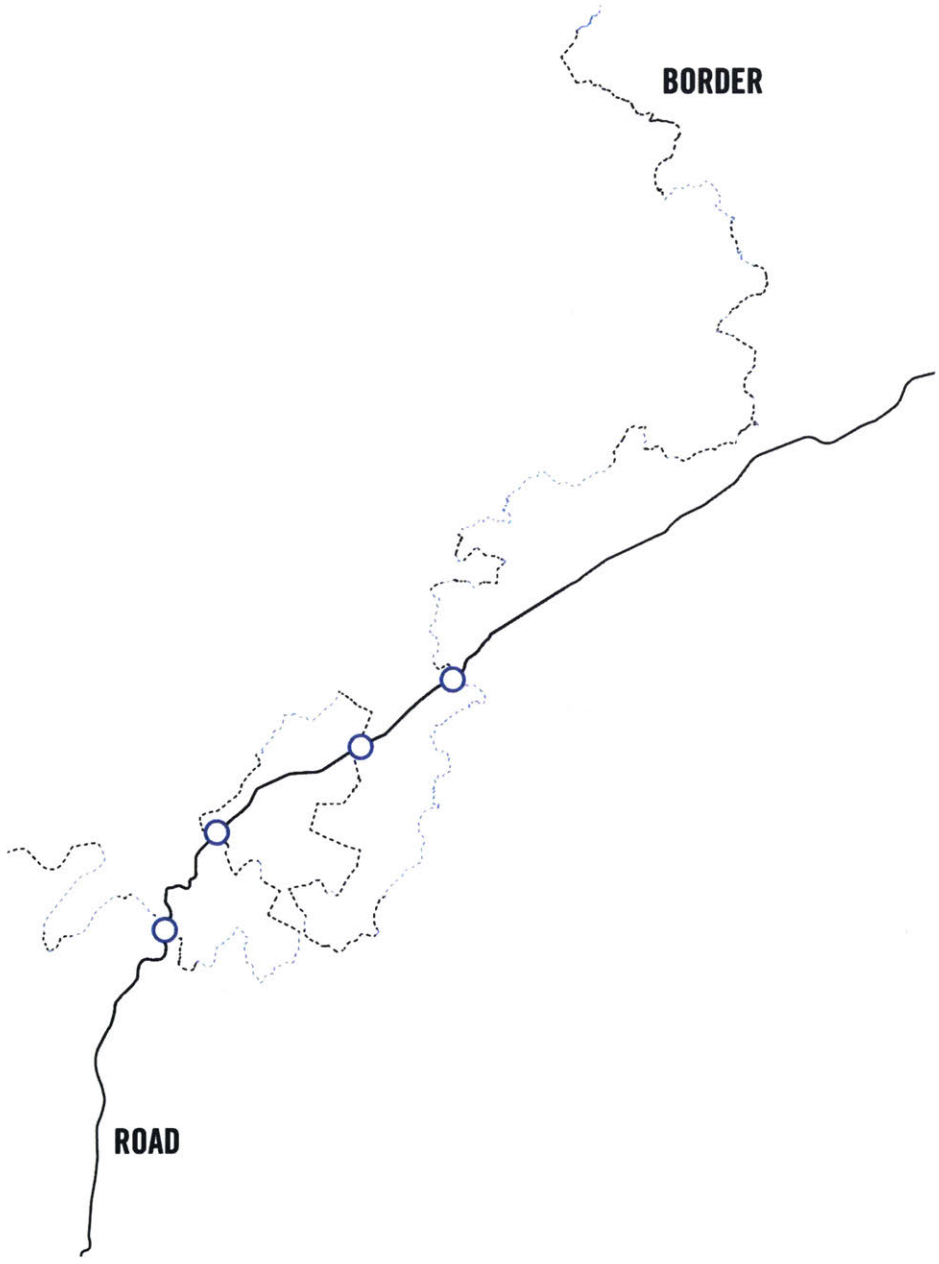
500 km : 275 crossings



The Irish Border's granularity as a line following natural water ways.

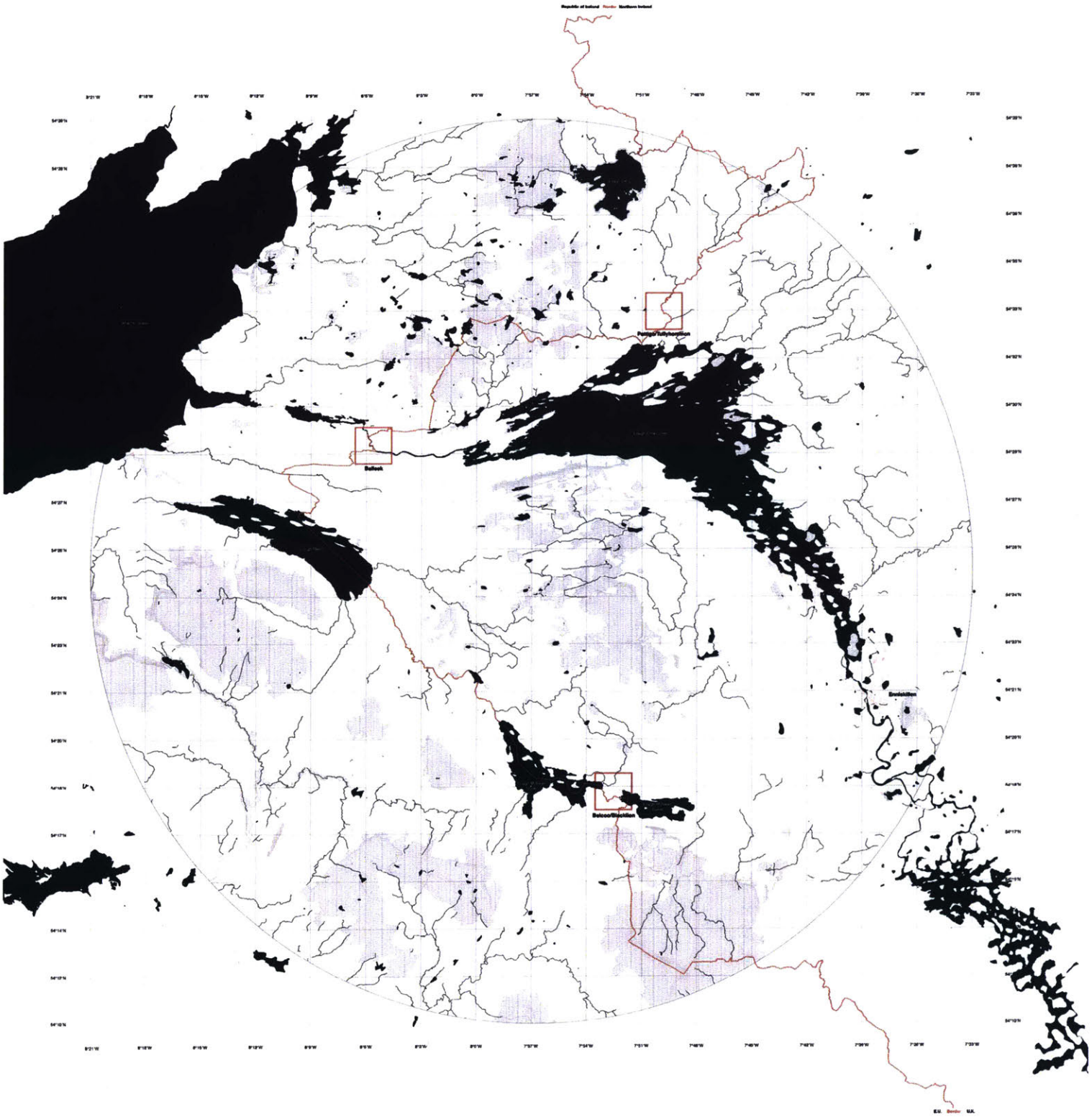
Portion of Irish Border

10 km : **4** crossings



In a 6 mile stretch of the same roads one crosses the Irish Border 4 times. The difficulty of managing this has a long history, starting in the 1920

Island Networks and the Irish Border.

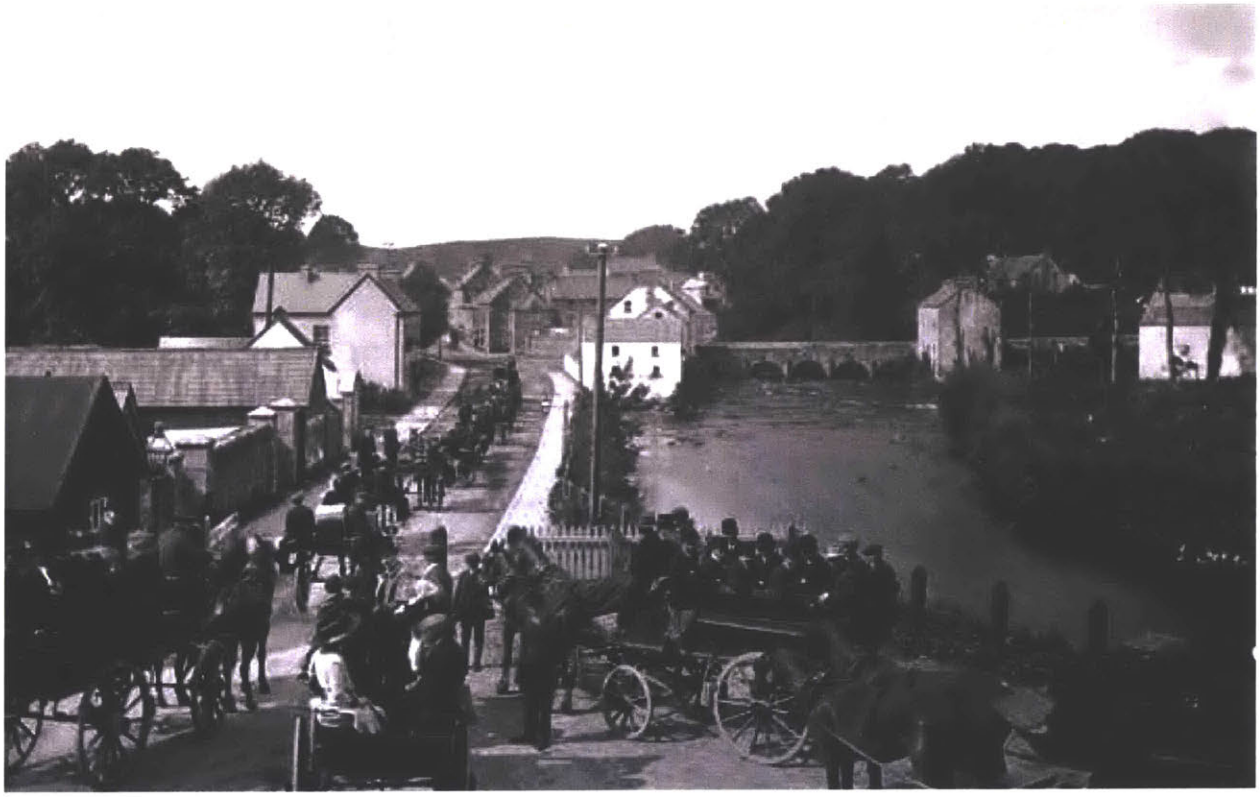


The western edge of the Irish Border within miles of the Atlantic turns north following rivers and lakes.

THE IRISH BORDER
A Brief History

Divided Towns - 1920s

After Partition of the Ireland into North and South peaceful border towns became the sight of conflict, with skirmishes breaking out between nationalists and loyalists. With towns cut in half by what used to be their center, they began to struggle economically.



Pettigo, 1921 - The market town sits along the River Termon dividing Northern Ireland (right) and the Republic of Ireland (Left)

Trade Wars and Customs Posts - 1930s

After Ireland's independence the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, took on a new formalized role as the site of customs checks. However by the 1930s due to lack of agreement on remittances for past English landlords, the UK and Ireland entered into a trade war, the border begins to represent a site of consistent friction, particularly for local residents with land and business on both sides.

1940s Customs Checkpoint, Carrickarnon

End of Rail - 1950s

Partition brought about the splitting of a previously unified rail system. By the 1950s the Northern Irish system was faltering, trips across the border were difficult and required paperwork and checks. As such the rail system, particularly to the west was systematically shut down, gutting small towns from a connection vital to their local economy.

Controlled Demolition of Railway Bridge in Belcoo, 1970s

Operation Banner - 1960s

On the heels of civil rights marches of the late 60's, riots broke out in the Northern Irish cities, in particular in Derry and Belfast. Failing to control the situation, British Forces were invited to help, in the beginning the majority of residents welcomed their presence, however quickly relationships deteriorated. While for many in Northern Ireland this presence was seen as a protector, for others, the soldier's began to symbolize a quasi occupational force. By the mid-70's 21,000 troops were stationed in Northern Ireland, with a presence maintained until 2007. This was the longest continuous deployment in British Military history.

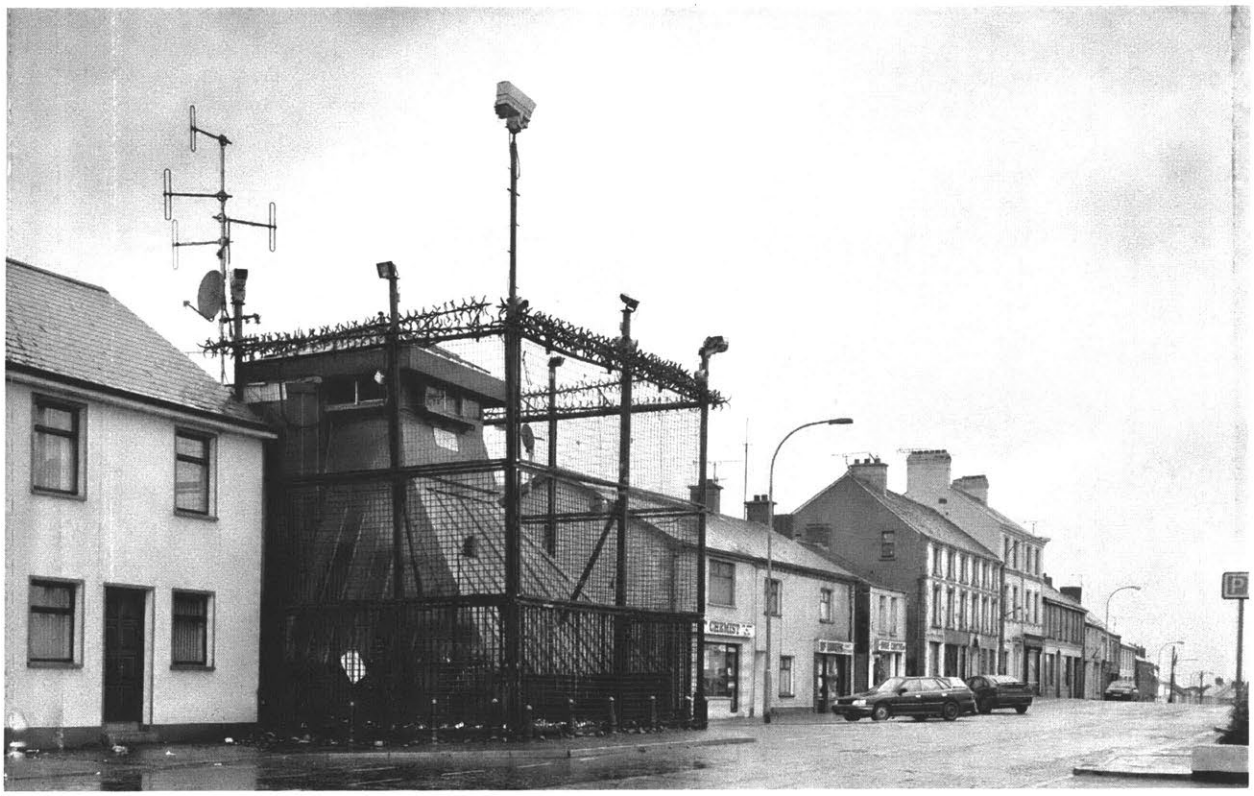
Young British Soldier stationed in Northern Ireland as part of Operation Banner

Infrastructural Violence - 1970s

In the early 1970's, after failing to control border traffic and prevent gun running from the Republic of Ireland to the south, British Forces took the extreme steps of closing down the majority of the border's roads. Plastic explosives were used to "crater" rods, which others were blocked with concrete bollards. Of the 250 plus roads crossings, only twenty remained officially open and "approved", the affect to the local residents considered collateral damage in what became known as "low level war".

"Cratered" Road

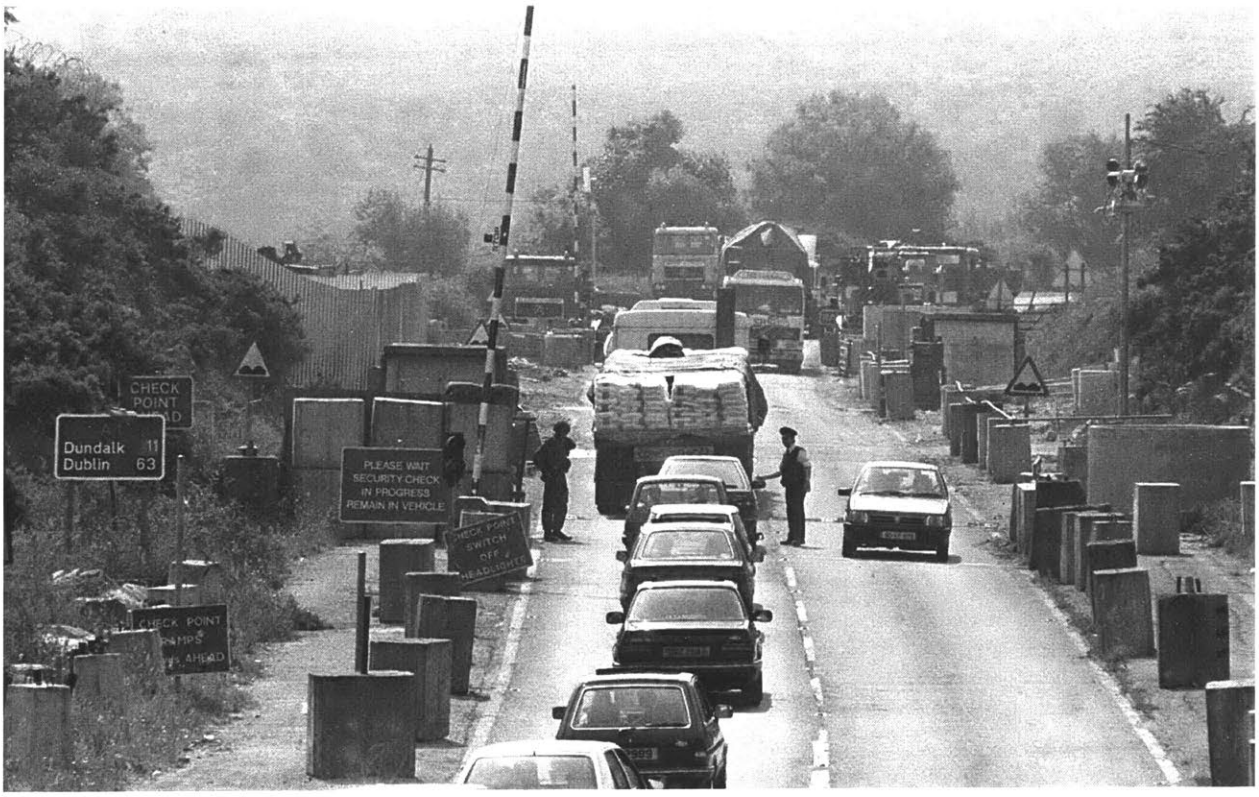
Architectural Hostage Taking - 1980s
As a means to monitor local settlements while defending against attacks, military installations were constructed against existing residential areas were the threat of bomb attacks would be reduced.



1980s, RUC Barracks, Town Center, Crossmaglen, County Armagh

The Collective Memory - 1990s

Until 1998s Good Friday Agreement, the image of the Irish Border was one of friction and imposition. The Checkpoints on the road from Belfast to Dublin remain ingrained in the collective memory, and an index of a past no one wants to repeat.



1990s, Belfast to Dublin Road, Check Point

Masking Dereliction - 2000s

While the rest of the island began its economic rise of the 2000s known as the Celtic Tiger, border-towns struggled to recover, remaining vulnerable from their difficult past. Ahead of the 2013 G8 Summit close to the Irish Border, border towns made heads lines for attempting to mask their dereliction, posting fake posters on vacant high street shop.

2013, Fake shop fronts printed on derelict buildings, Belcoo.

EU to the Rescue - 2000s

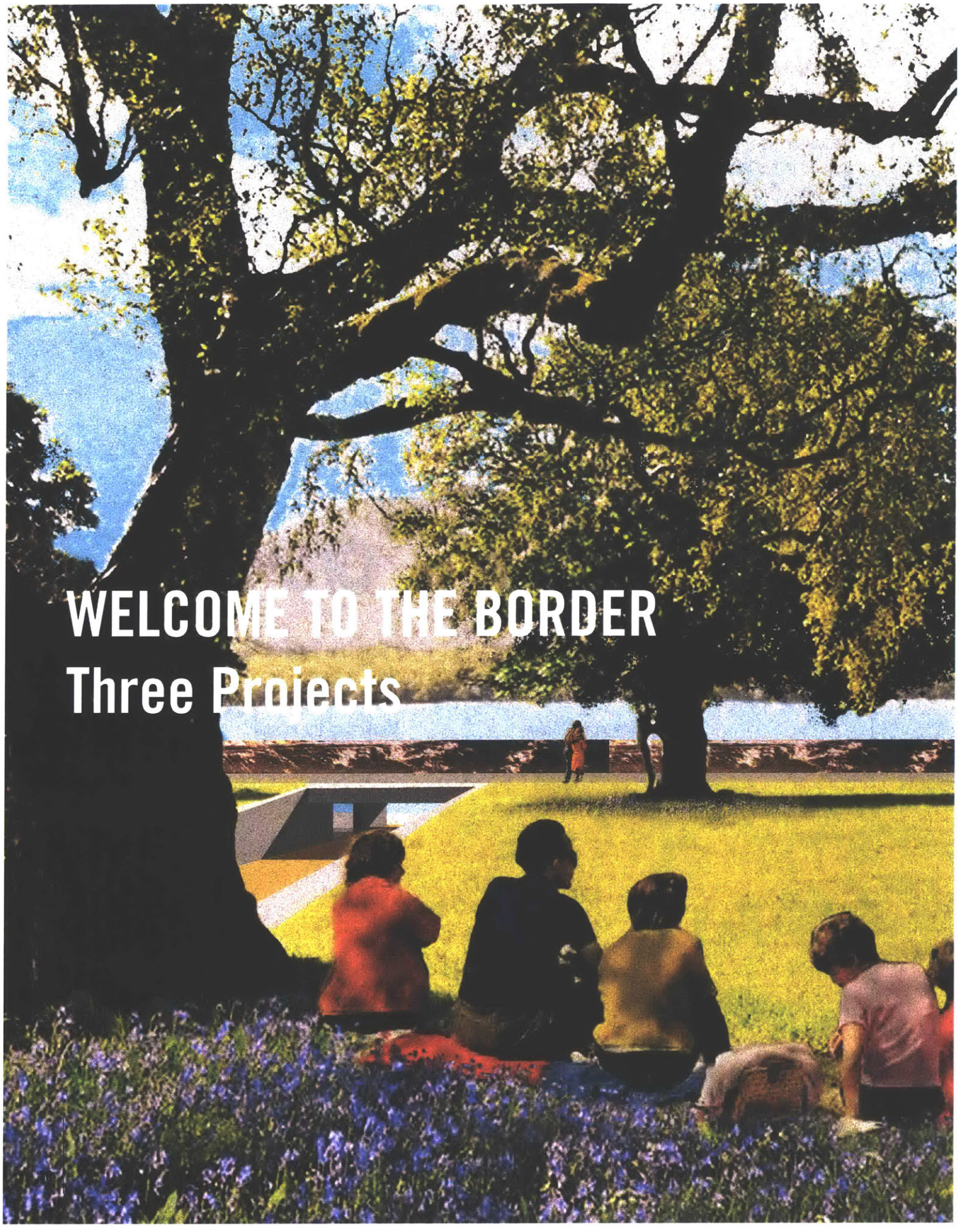
During this time two EU funded programs (Tourism Ireland and the EU Program for Peace and Reconciliation) invested over $8 Billion in Northern Ireland to aid these area's recovery. With the aim of the promotion of cross cultural activities and civic amenieties, as well as the promotion of Ireland as a single consumable destination border towns began to recieve the vital support. BREXIT threatens this progress.

EU Program for Peace and Reconciliation

Investment in Border Region Social and Cultural Programs

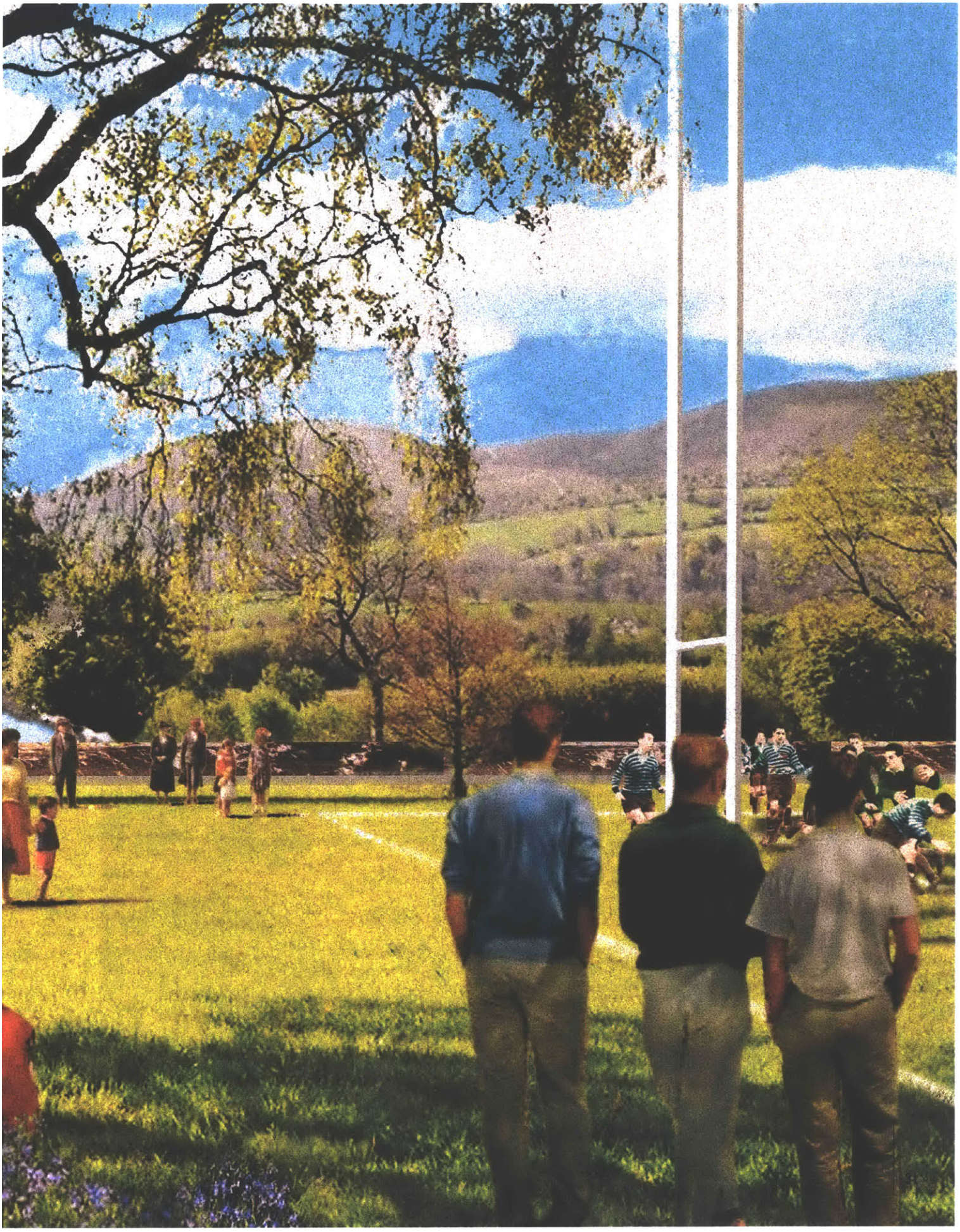
Tourism Ireland

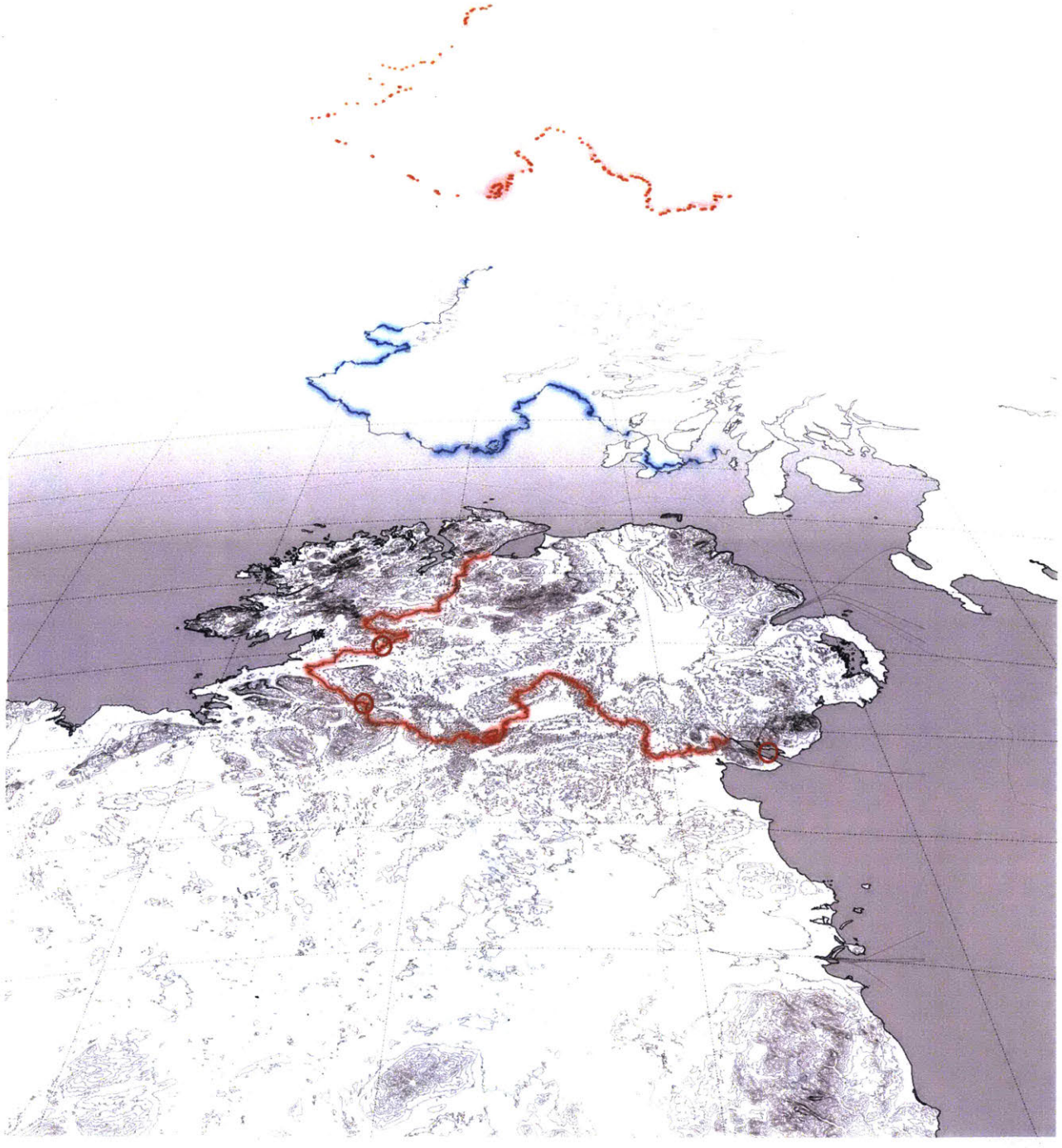
Marketing the island of Ireland overseas



WELCOME TO THE BORDER

Three Projects





Land crossings, water system along border's length

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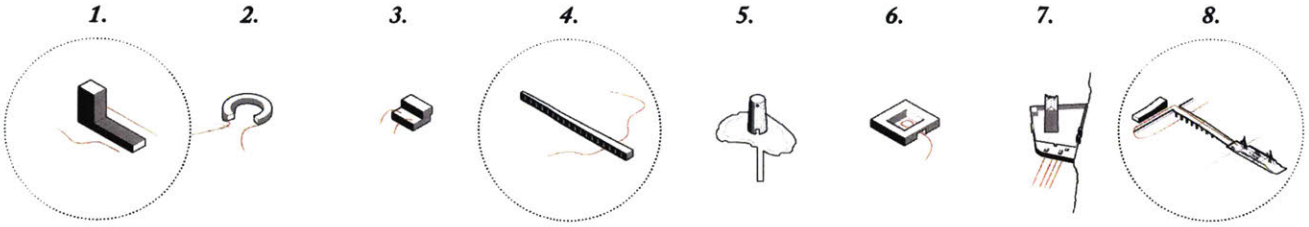


1. PETTIGO INN
2. Belleek Welcome Center
3. Clad Game Angler's Lodge
4. BELCOO PARK COMMUNITY CENTER
5. Crom Island Canoe Camp
6. Glaslough Guest-House
7. Narrow Water Keep Visitor Center
8. GREENCASTLE FERRY TERMINAL & TIDAL POOL

THREE PROJECTS ON THE WATER

The thesis addresses the border through three projects along its length, that engage with three kinds of water ways. A river, a lake and a coastal lough.

275 LAND CROSSINGS

During Operation Banner (The 30 year conflict in Northern Ireland only 20 crossings were designated as "Approved". The rest were closed, blocked with bollards and often "cratered" with plastic explosives. A recent history of one way to manage a border.

THE SOGGY BORDER

The majority of the Irish Border's 310 plus mile length is comprised of water. A series of rivers, lakes, bogs and loughs make up the space of the border. Like most human settlements, these water ways were historic attractors for habitation, towns developing along rivers that connect rather than divide.

The imposition of the border thus cuts towns at the exact center of their origin point, the water. The thesis sees this presence of water in border-towns as advantage in a post BREXIT future, an opportunity for reorientation, from places on the periphery, to places of attraction, picturesque points of entry into two jurisdictions.

WELCOME TO THE BORDER

A series of locally tuned civic programs which act as welcome centers for the region are proposed along the towns of the Irish Border. The picturesque quality of these places is already an attraction for tourism, while their location along the border offers the potential for border crossing to become, border slowing, a destination rather than a cross, roads, where the visitor and local come together to engage in the basic human urge to be by the water.

MANIFESTATION #1
PETTIGO INN AND GUEST HOUSE

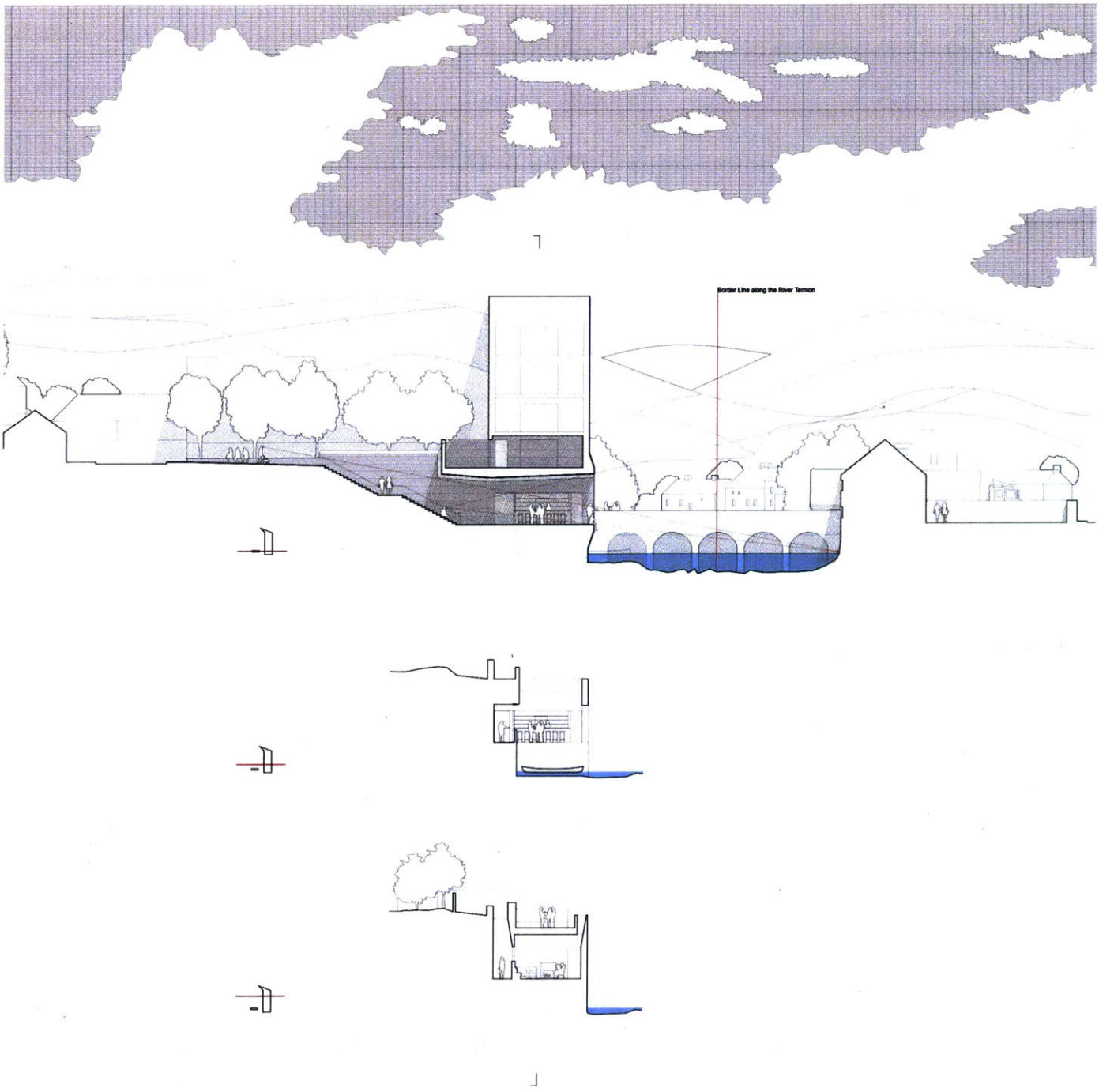
Pettigo Inn and Guest House

Along the River Termon, the village of Pettigo developed as mill industries took advantage of the site. In the early 1900s it was a vibrant market town, with a rail connection to the larger Irish rail system. A stopping point for travelers from Northern Ireland heading to the west coast towns in Donegal, Pettigo became a battle ground between loyalist and nationalist forces at the beginning of the 1920's. By the 1950s the rail system had stopped journeys to Pattigoe and the train station shut down.

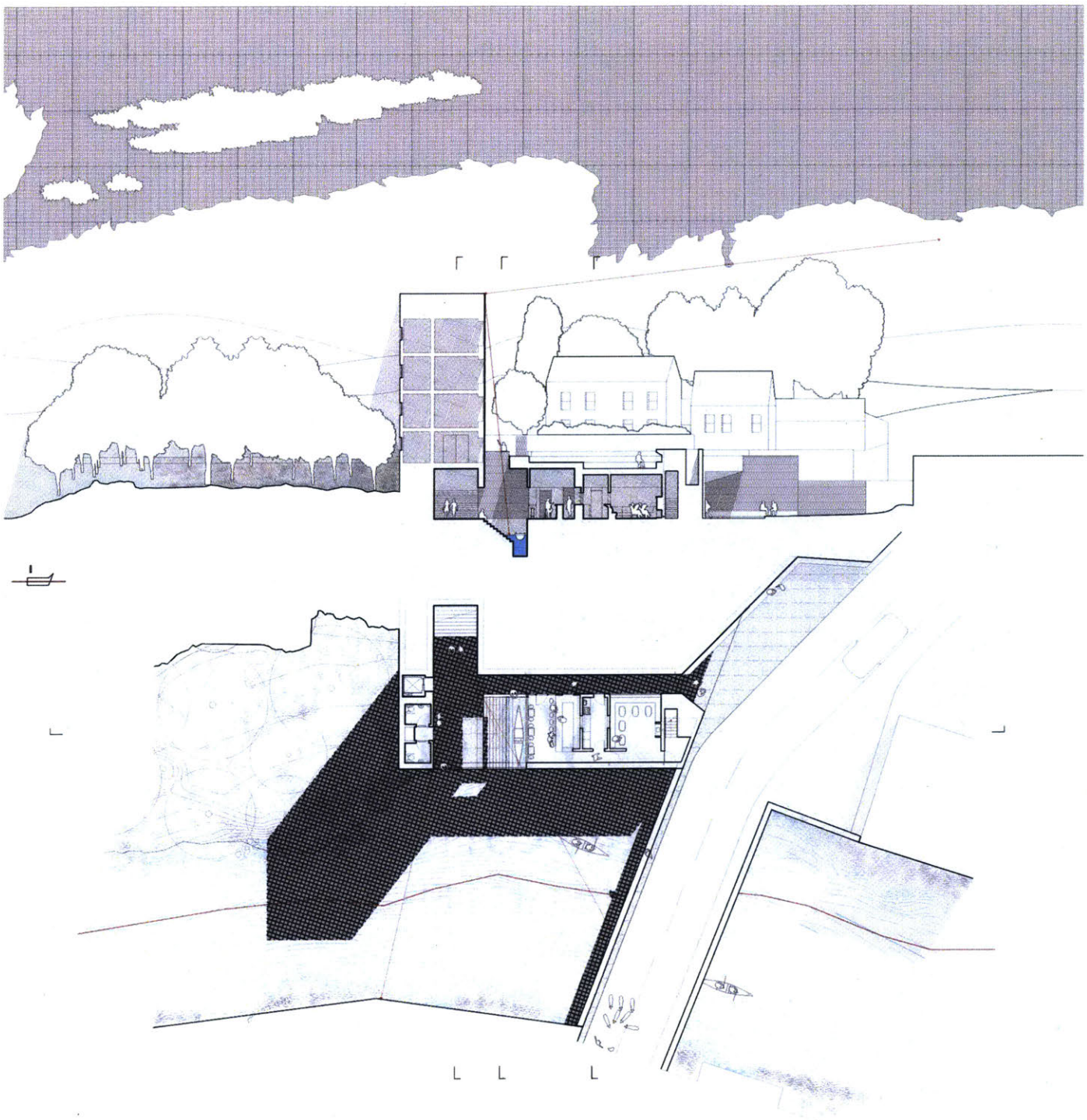
In the early 2000s, with assistance from the EU's Peace and Reconciliation Program for Northern Ireland, a cross-community group from both sides of the river established the Termon Complex, a large multi-purpose community center with a restaurant and sports hall, built on the Southern side of the river.

The Pettigo Inn and Guest House sits at the intersection of the Pettigo Road and the River Termon. Embedded into the riverbank, the Inn offers access from three sides. An entry from the bridge side offers a last stop before crossing the border, the higher entry to the rear offers a view from Northern Ireland to the river and EU on the other side, and an opening on the river side offers the chance for the passing canoe enthusiast to stop for a pint.

Pettigo Village on the River Termon

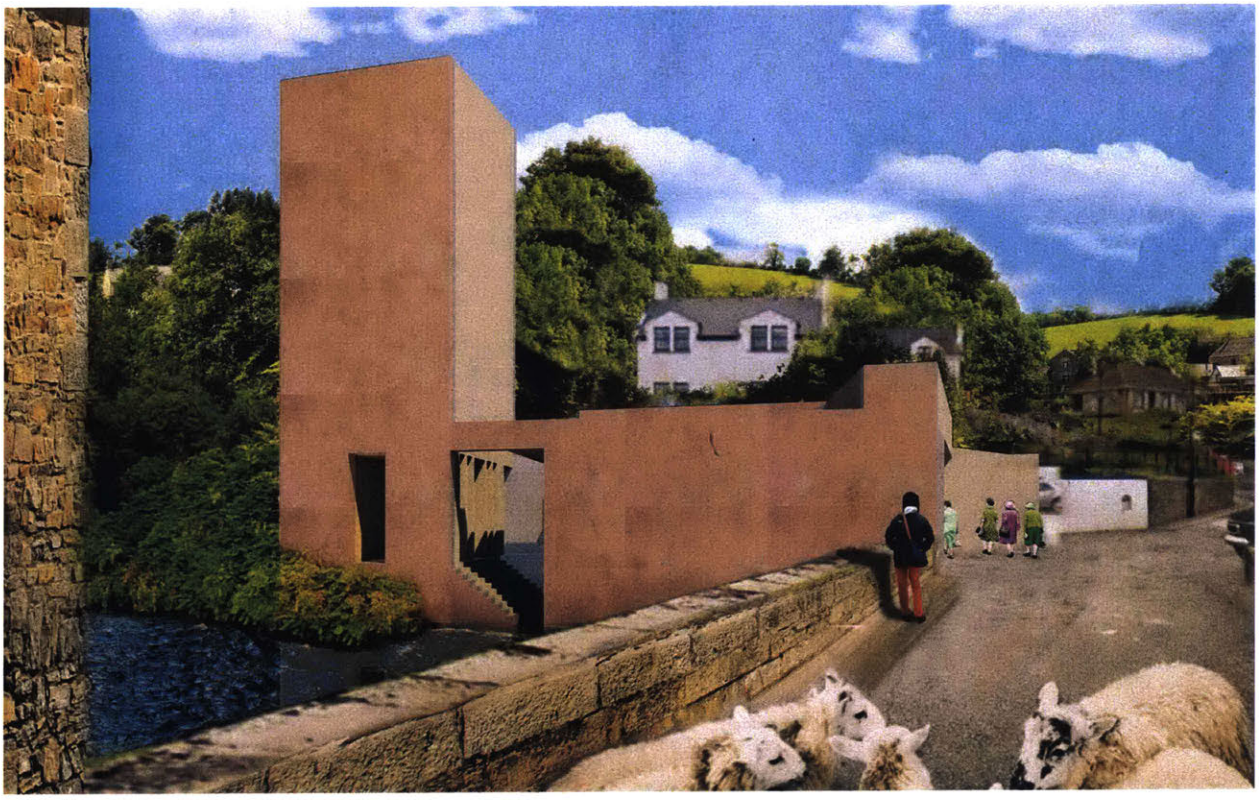


Pettigo Inn and Guest House, Views from Northern Ireland to the EU are shaped by openings



A small tower signals to the region its position, marking the border while connecting it to its wider region .

Passage along the border is common place, offering access from the juridictional ambiguous space of the river



View from the EU towards the UK

MANIFESTATION #2
GREENCASTLE FERRY TERMINAL & POOL

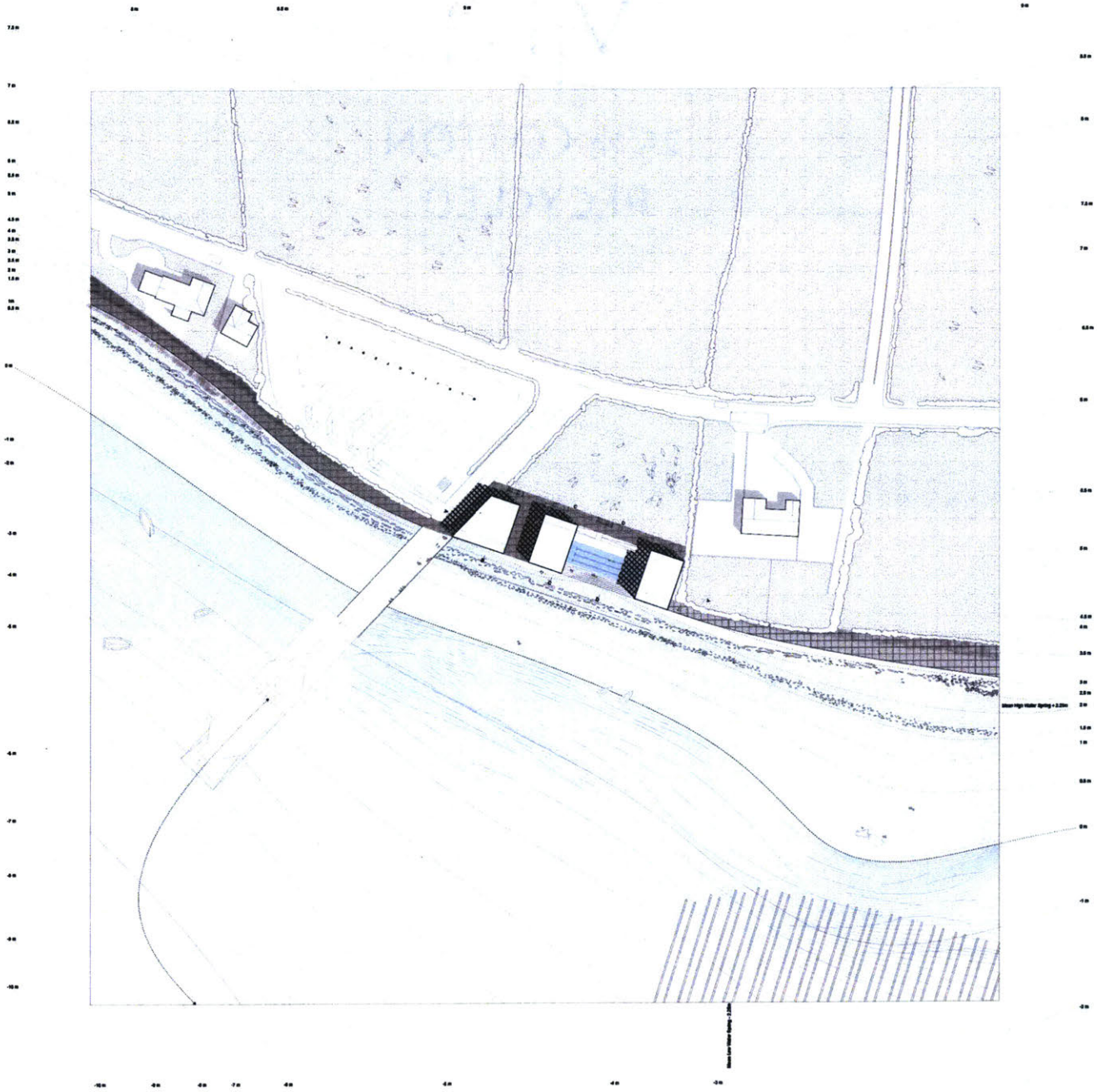
Greencastle Ferry Terminal and Tidal Pool

After five years of planning in the summer of 2017 a private ferry company launched the Greencastle (Northern Ireland) to Greenore (Republic of Ireland) crossing. The ferry, capable of carrying cars and people shuttles between north and south. This investment marked a significant step forward for local economic development. While only a slipway was built, a process is on-going to discuss a small building with visitor programs.

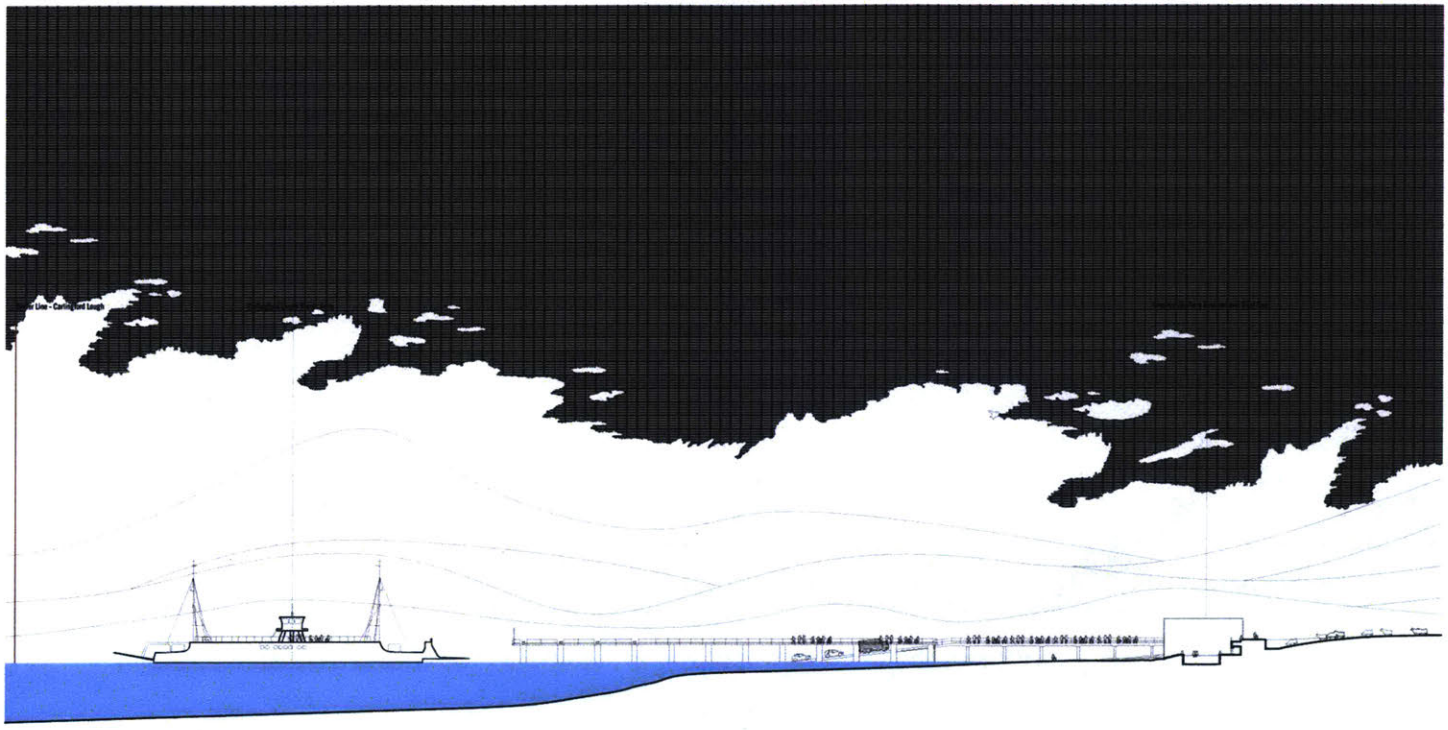
Historically the quite fishing villages of Greencastle and Greenore were more active, connected by Carlingford Lough, the water way that passes between them. The 14th century castle on the coast for which Greencastle earns it name evidence of the activity these places once had. The new ferry brings with it the promise of increased activity, in the form of international tourists traveling Ireland's eastern coast from Dublin to Belfast, local residents taking a weekend day trip and commuters who can now avoid a 1 hour drive.
Before the ferry company built its slipway, Greencastle was almost off the map, BREXIT now creates the condition where this small beach landing will double as a frontier between the UK and Ireland.

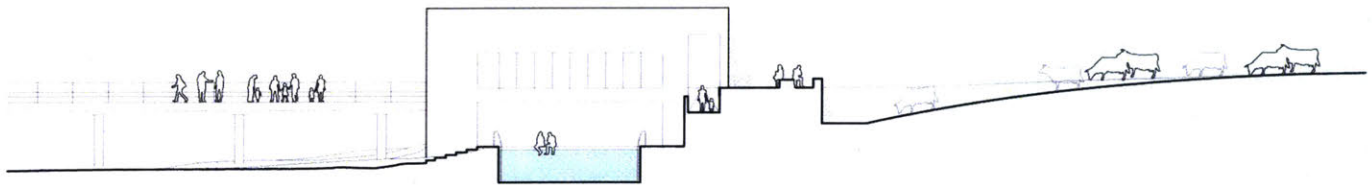
Greencastle Ferry Terminal and Tidal Pool, builds upon the historic significance of the Greencastle's 14th century ruin, the new transit node created by the ferry, and the need for further investment to manage the border post BREXIT.

Greencastle Castle, 14th ruin without dedicated visitor space. The new ferry terminal support this.

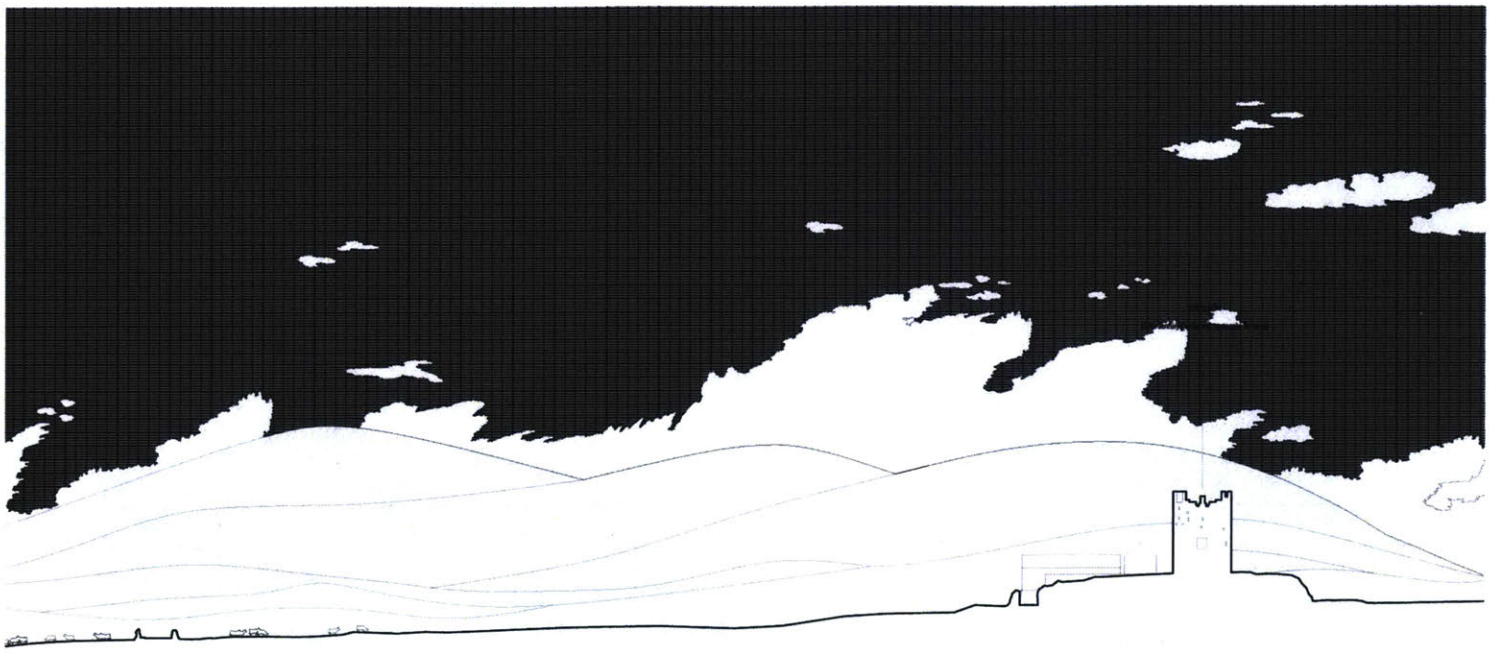


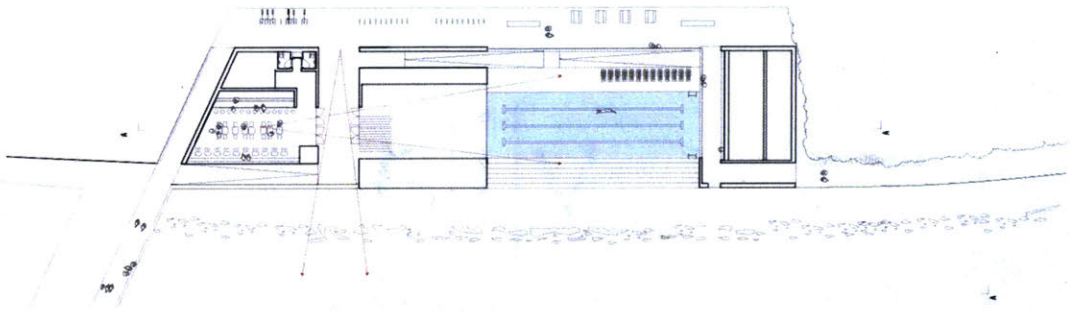
Greencastel Ferry Terminal and Tidal Pool, at the edge of the beach allows for the tide to serve the pool while the building connects to a walking path

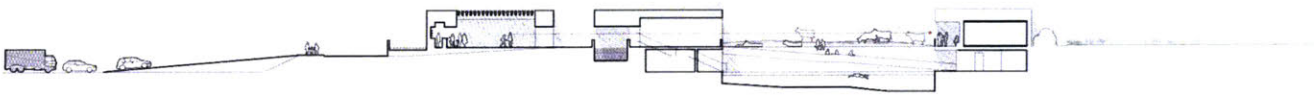


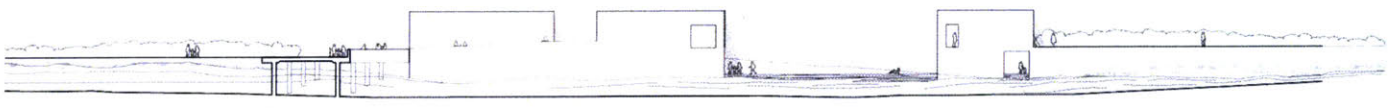


Connecting the historic landscape of the castle on the coast, to the beach, to the ferry to the border.

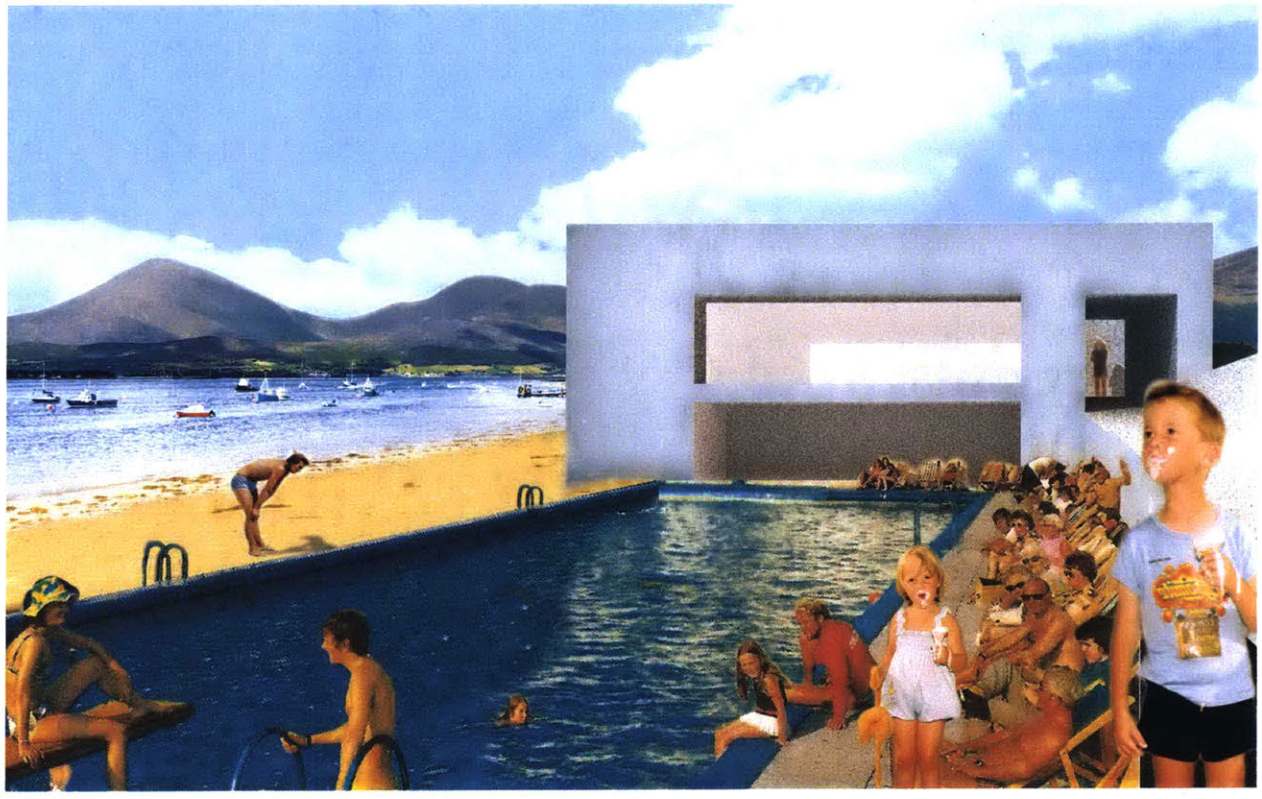








View from the Ferry approaching the slipway with Greencastle Castle beyond.



View of pool and Greencastle Beach

MANIFESTATION #3
BELCOO PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

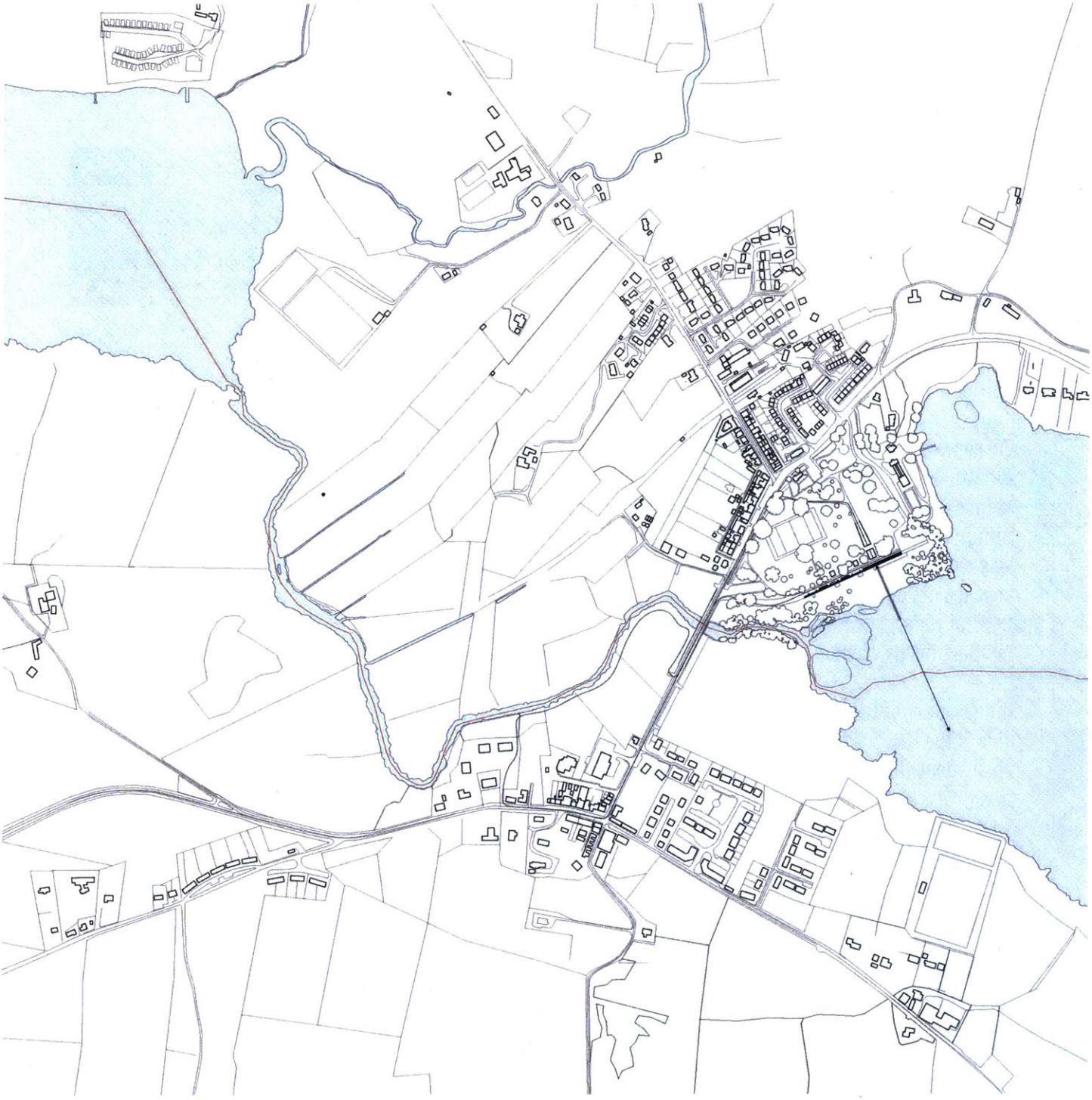
Belcoo Park and Community Center

The towns of Belcoo and Blacklion sit on opposite sides of the Lough McNean Upper and Lower. Divided by a small river and connected by a bridge, the distance between both towns is a function of the flood plain. Situated at the only crossing point for many miles, the bridge is the only link between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

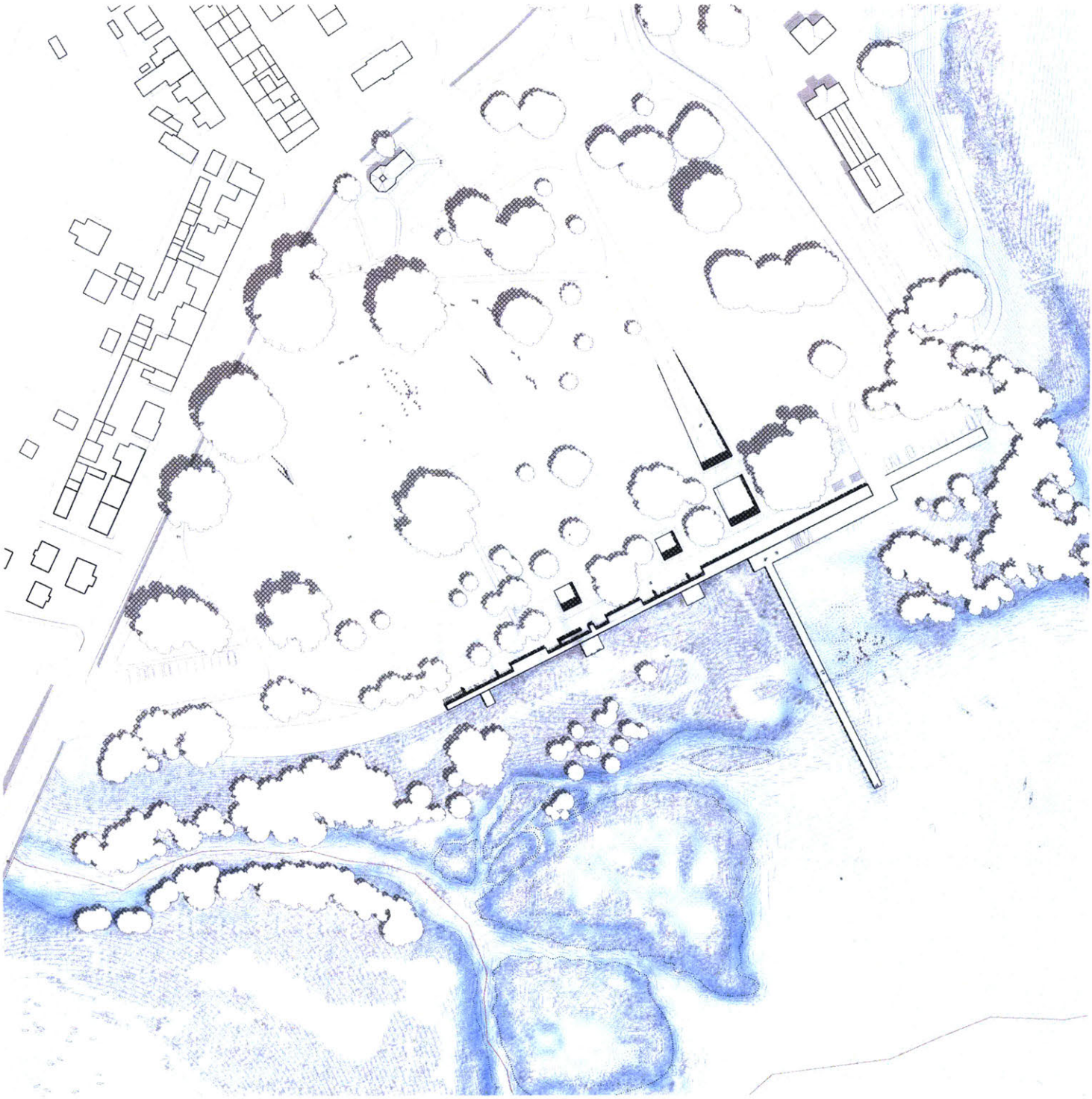
These two towns are familiar with the risks of BREXIT. A the height of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, when border crossings were limited by British Forces, the Belcoo Black Lion crossing was one of the "approved roads". At best, such checkpoints delayed people simply crossing to buy milk, at worst, direct conflict with a number of murders taking place.

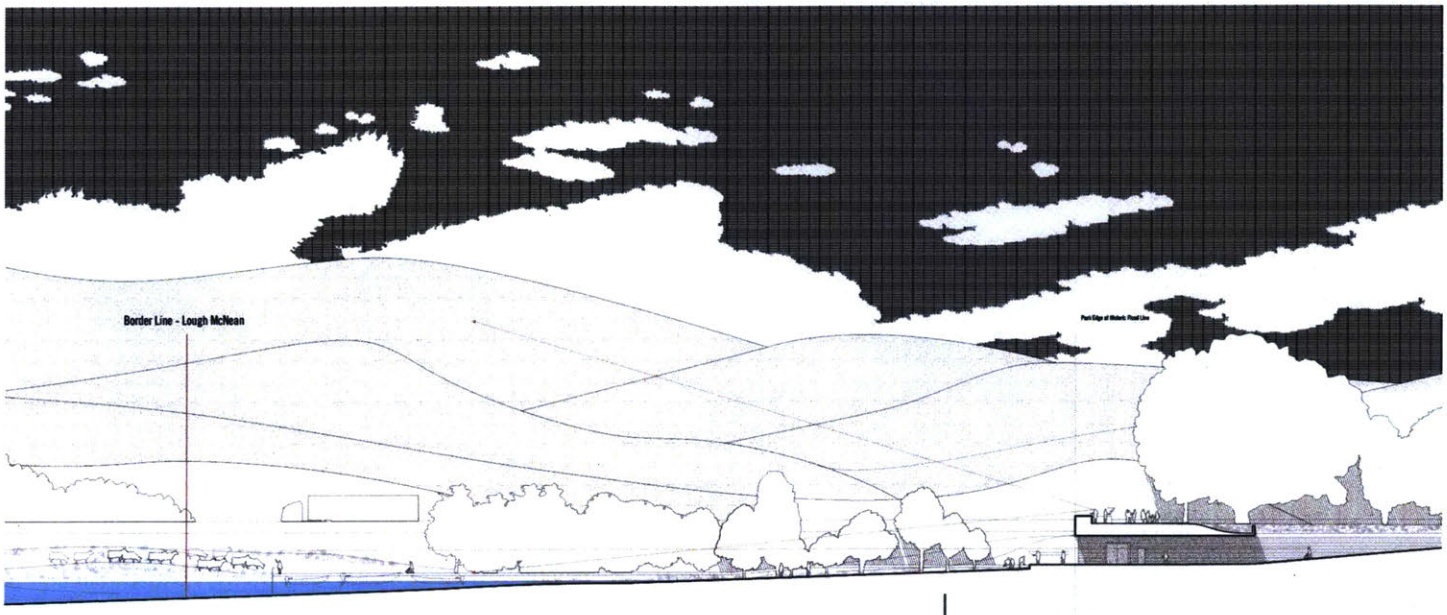
In the center of Belcoo town on the Northern Irish side is the Belcoo Park and playing field. A large open space that connects the town to the Lough Mc Nean, lake goers on paddle boats, canoes and small power boats enter the lake via the park.
The Belcoo Park and Community Center approaches the site of Belcoo Park as an opportunity to reinforce the connection between urban life and the lake. Sighted at the historic flood line the building simultaneously provides a fixed edge to the park [offering a vista to the landscape beyond] and a continuity between those arriving from the lake side to the park and vice versa, as well as those following the EU funded walking path that loops between Belcoo and Blacklion.

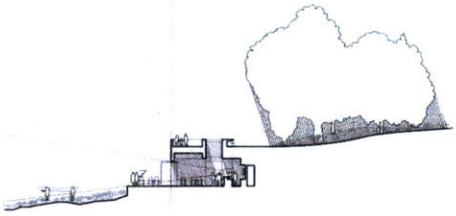
Belcoo/Blacklion Bridge

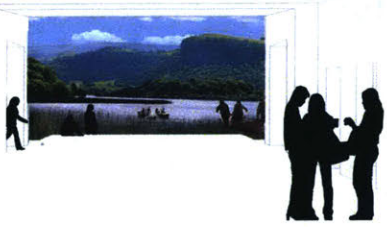


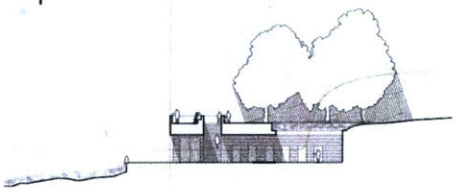
Belcoo/Blacklion on the bank of Lough McNean

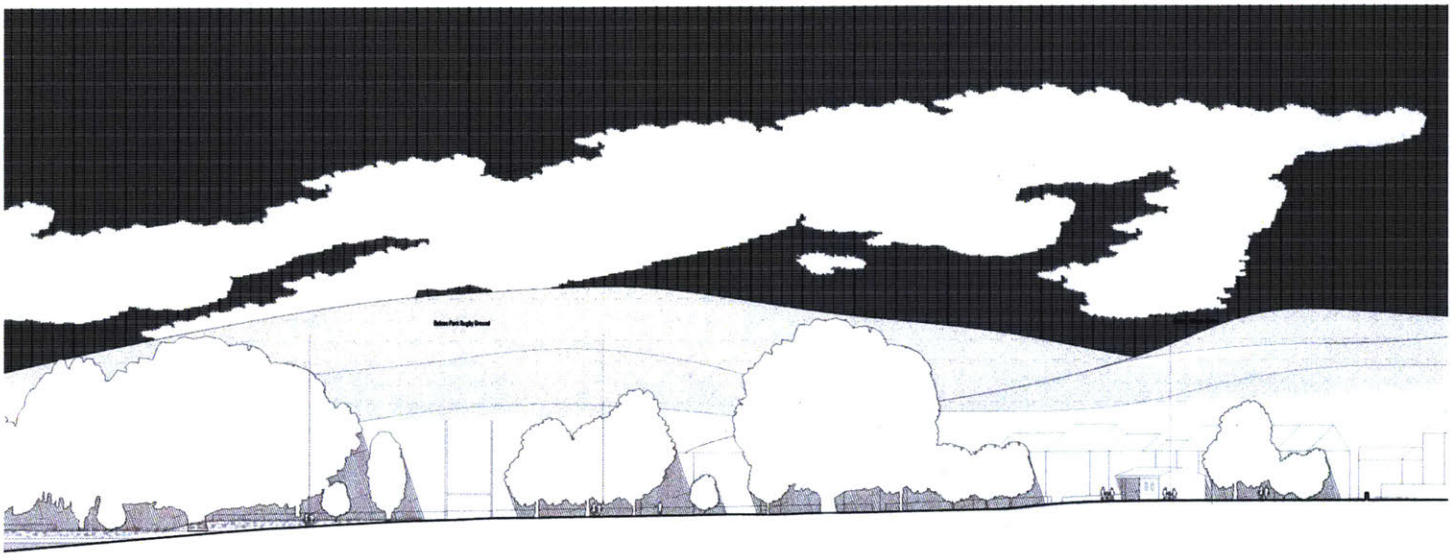


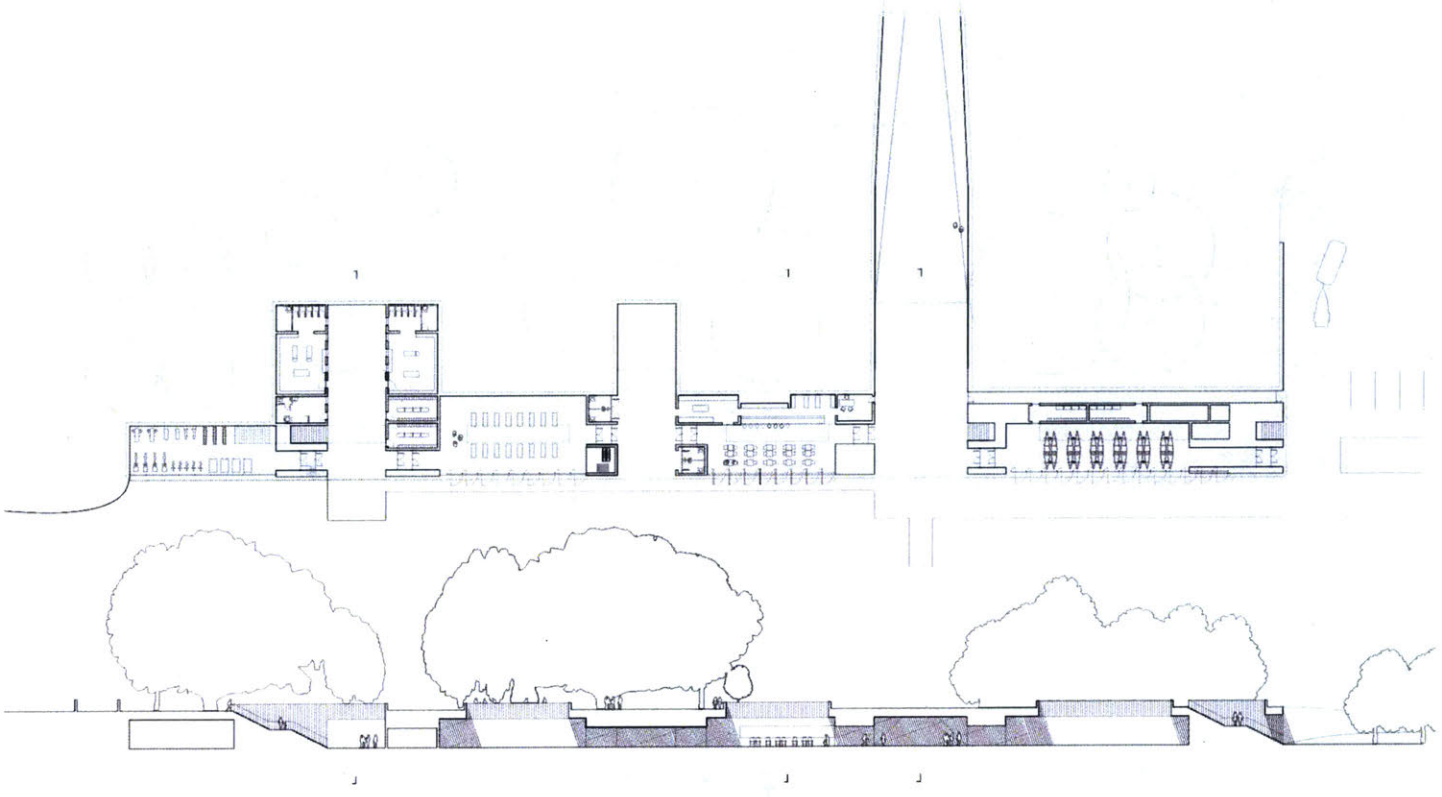

Border Line - Lough McNean







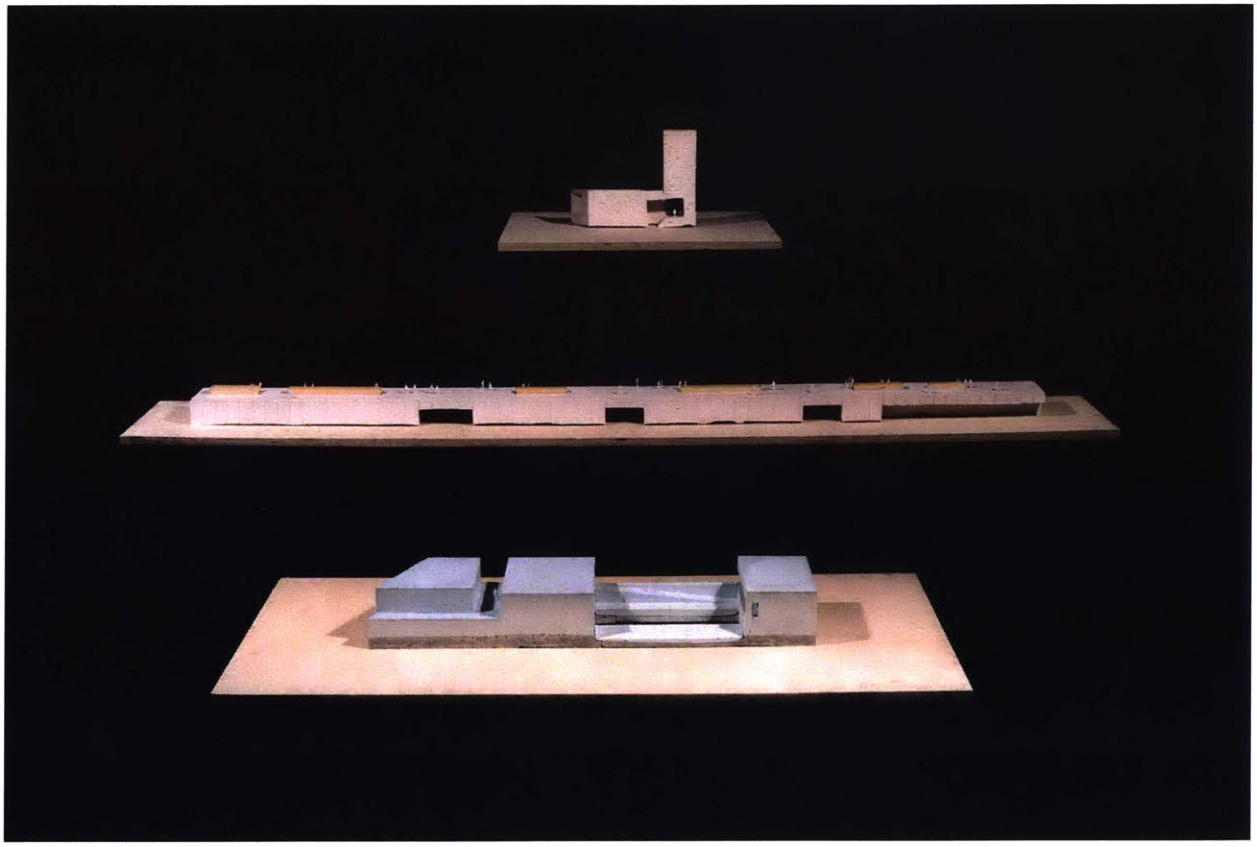




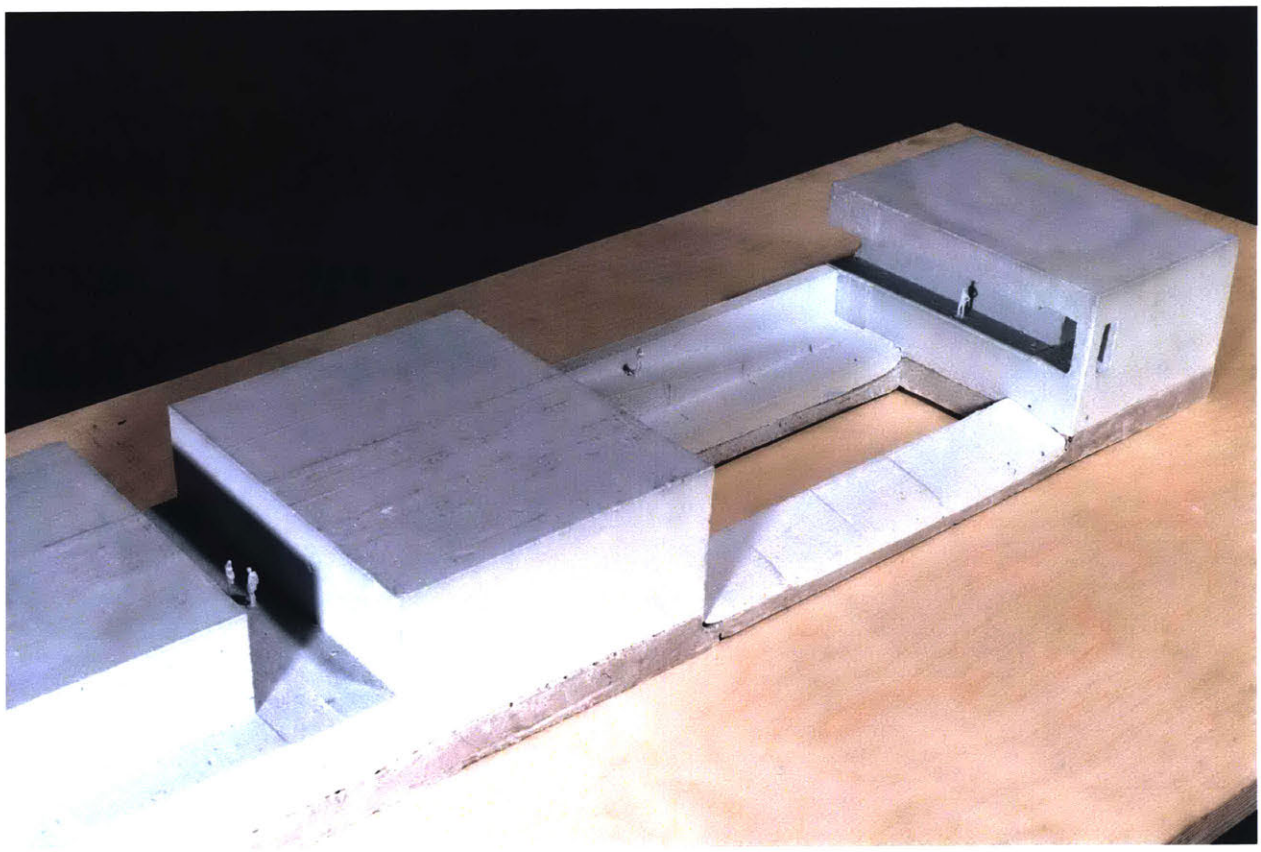
Belcoo Park Community Center, View from Northern Ireland to the EU

View from Lough McNean

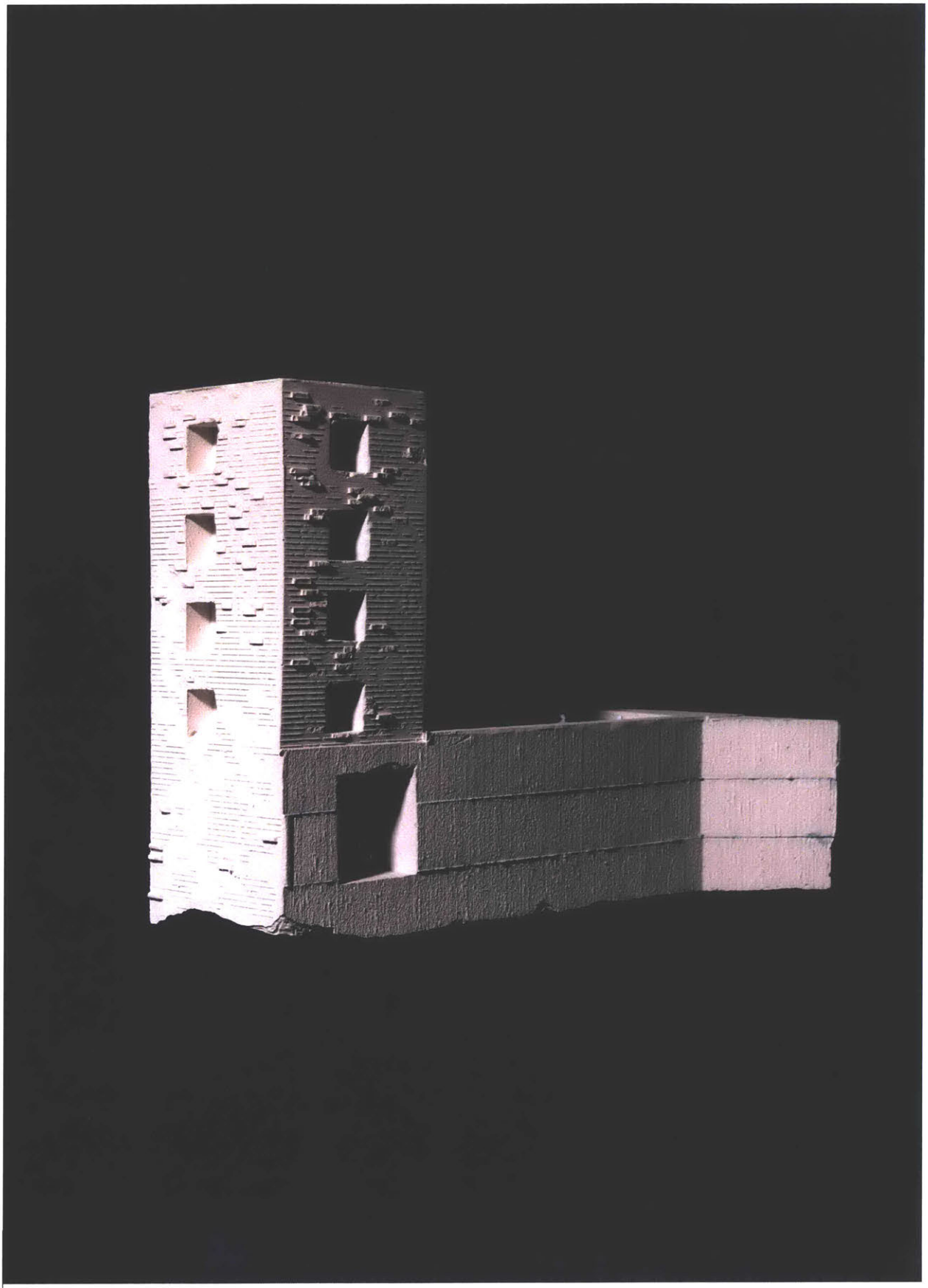
DESIGN PROCESS ARTIFACTS

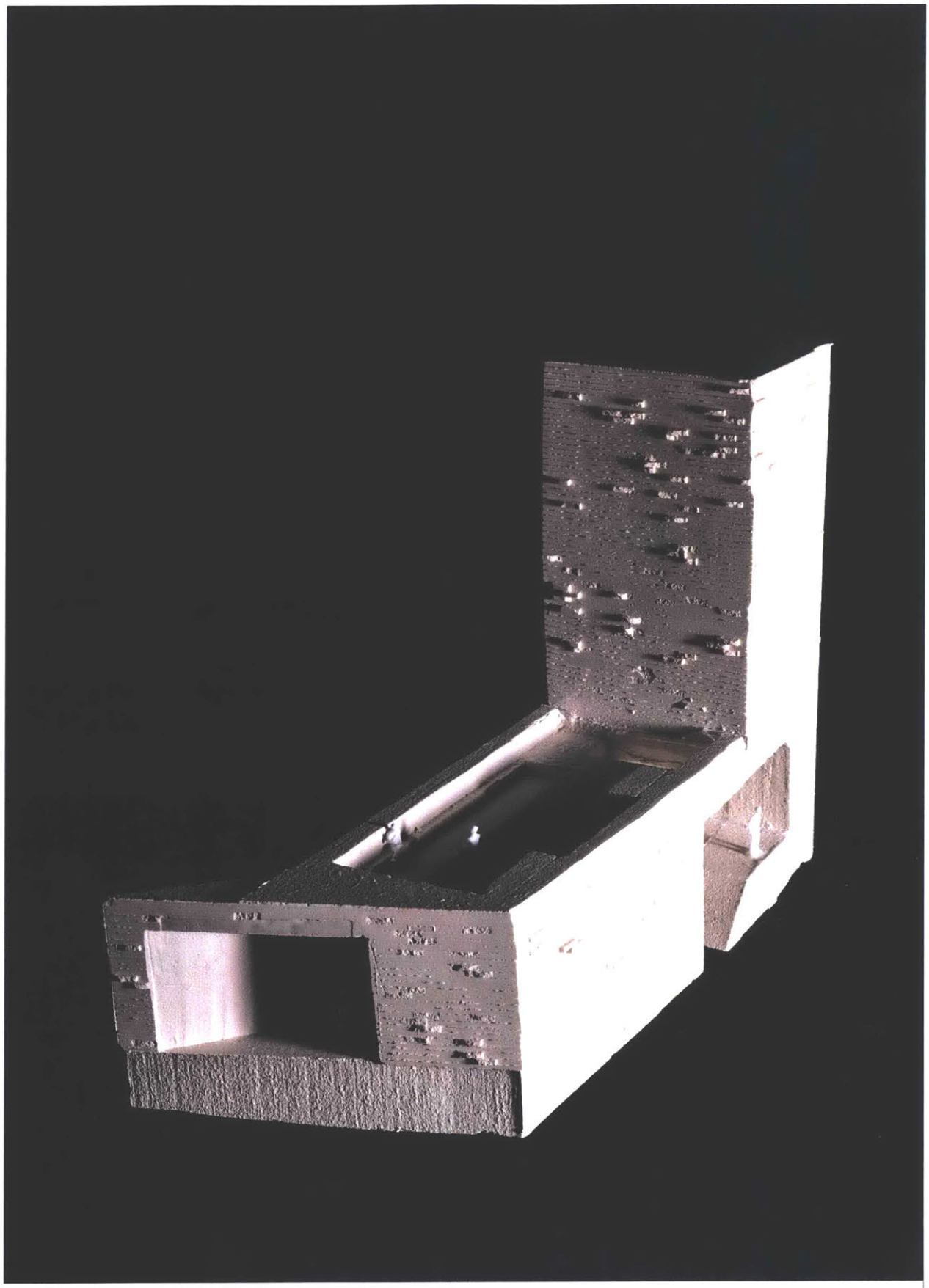


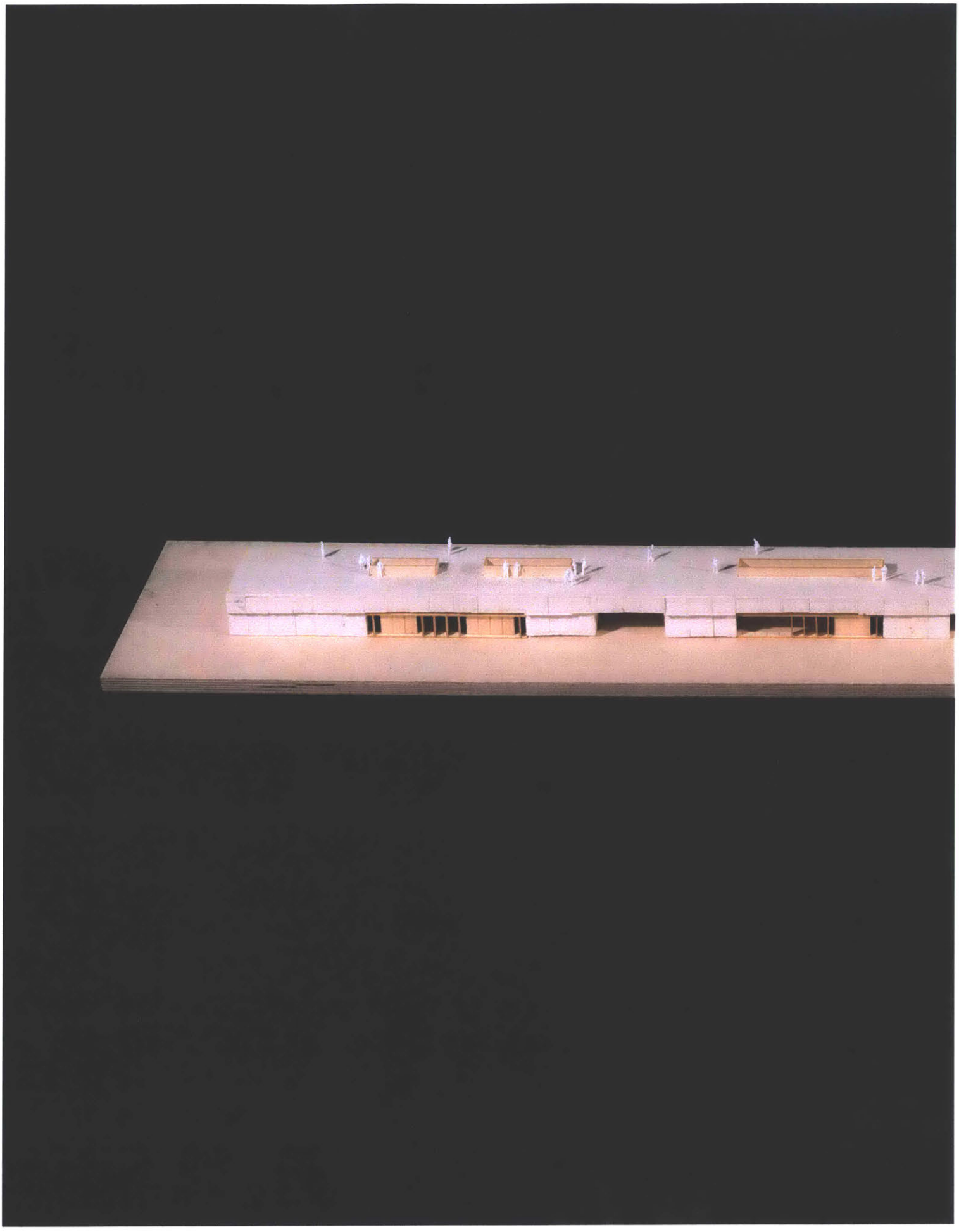
1:100 Cast Models of three projects.

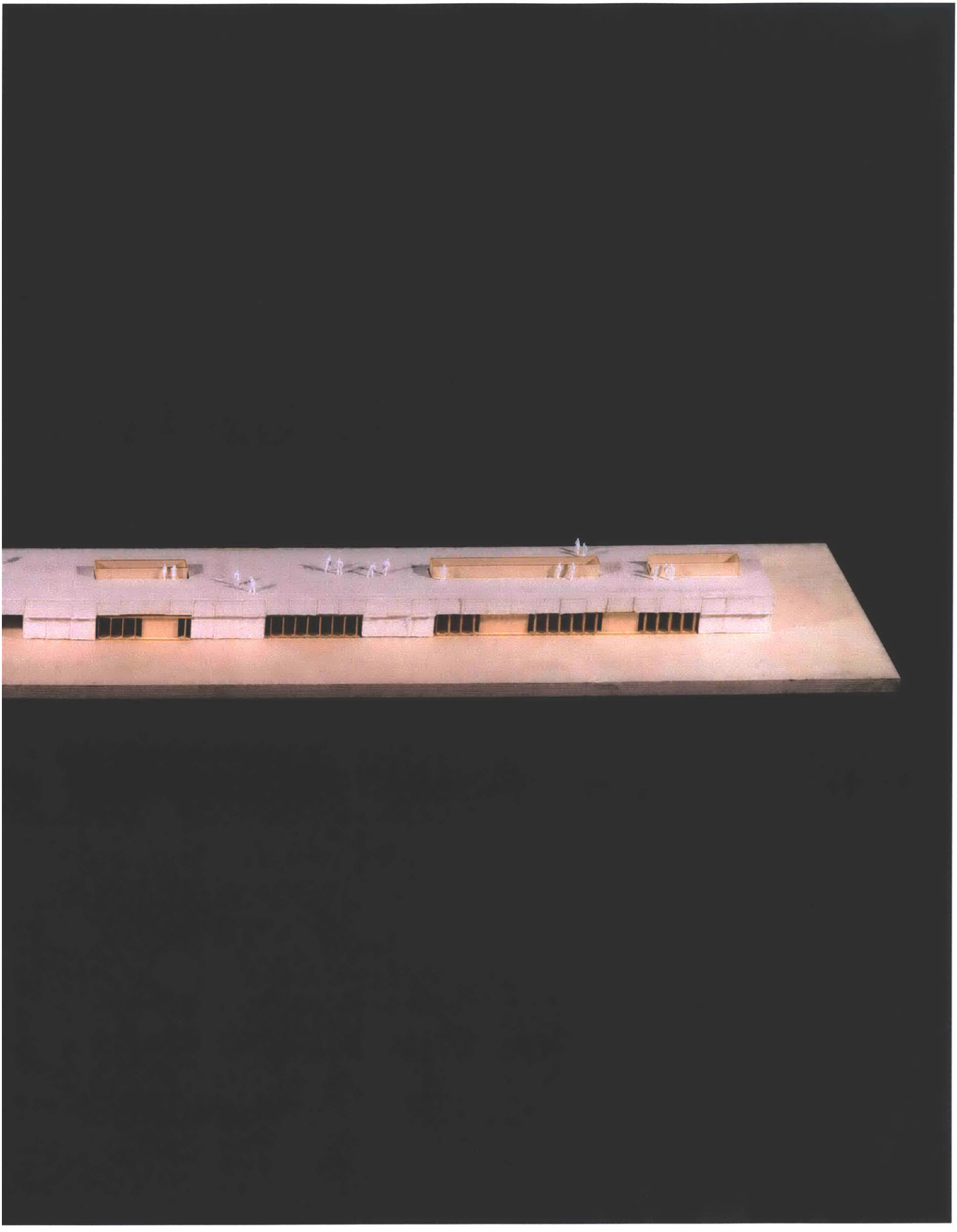


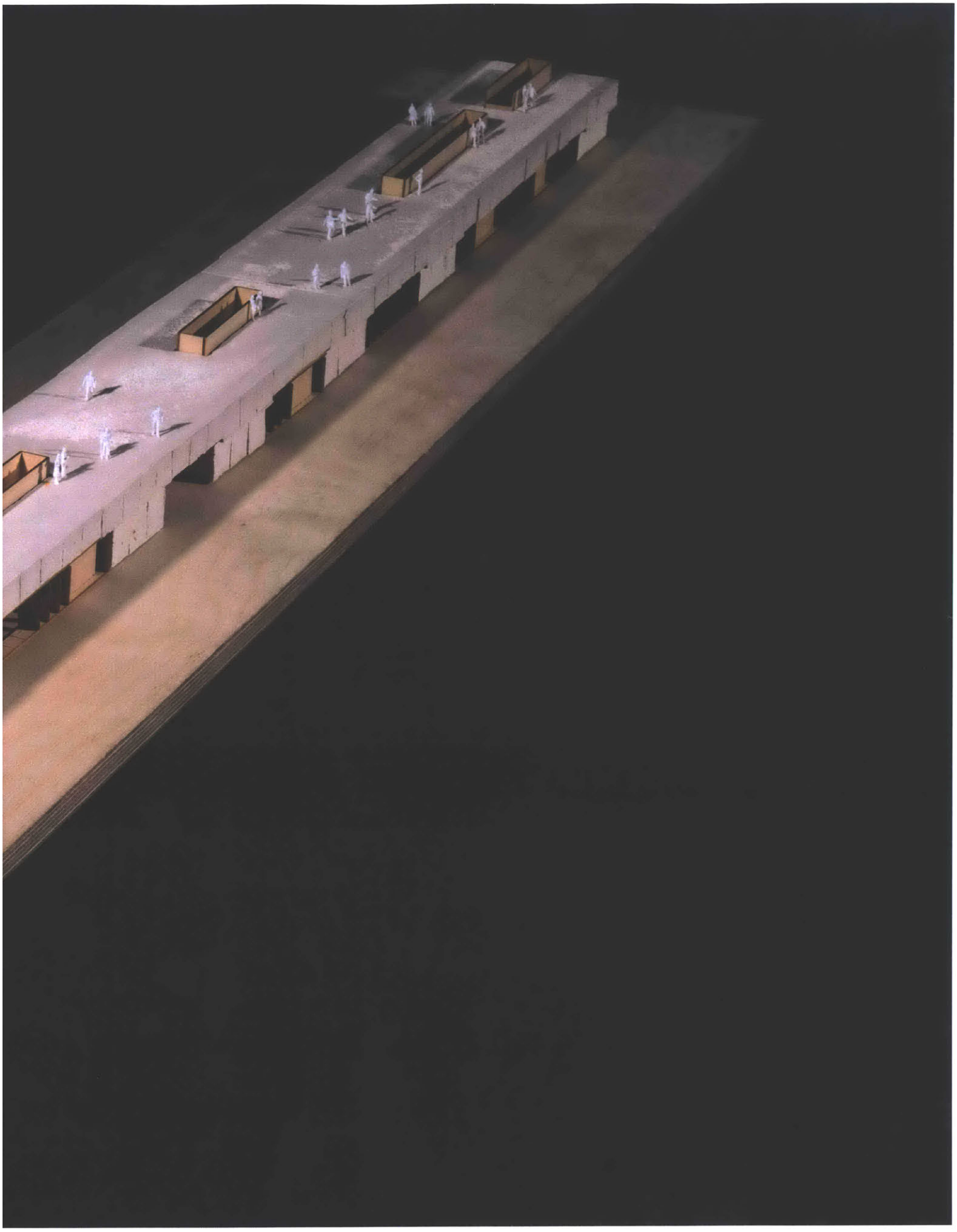
View of Massing, Greencastle Terminal and Tidal Pool

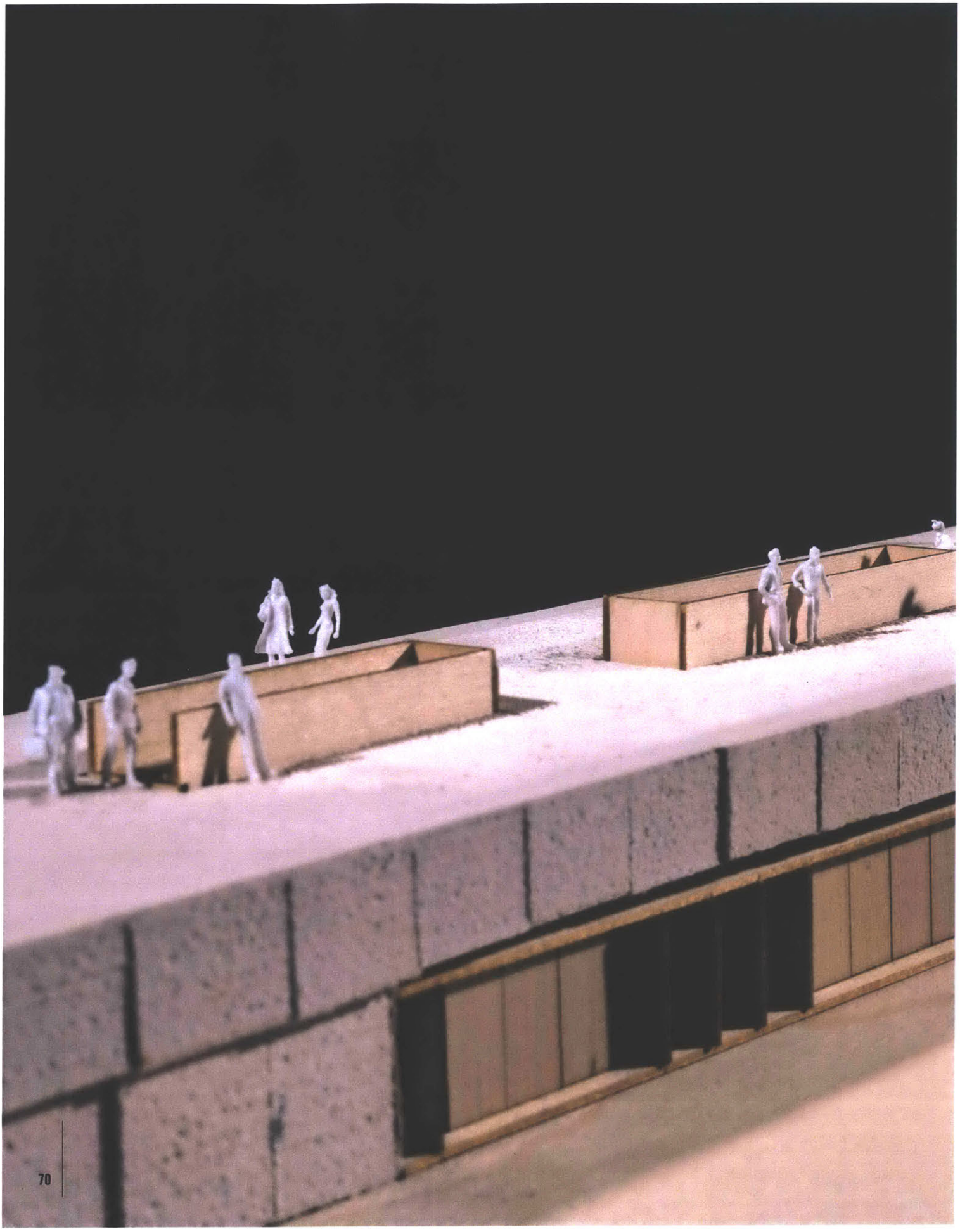


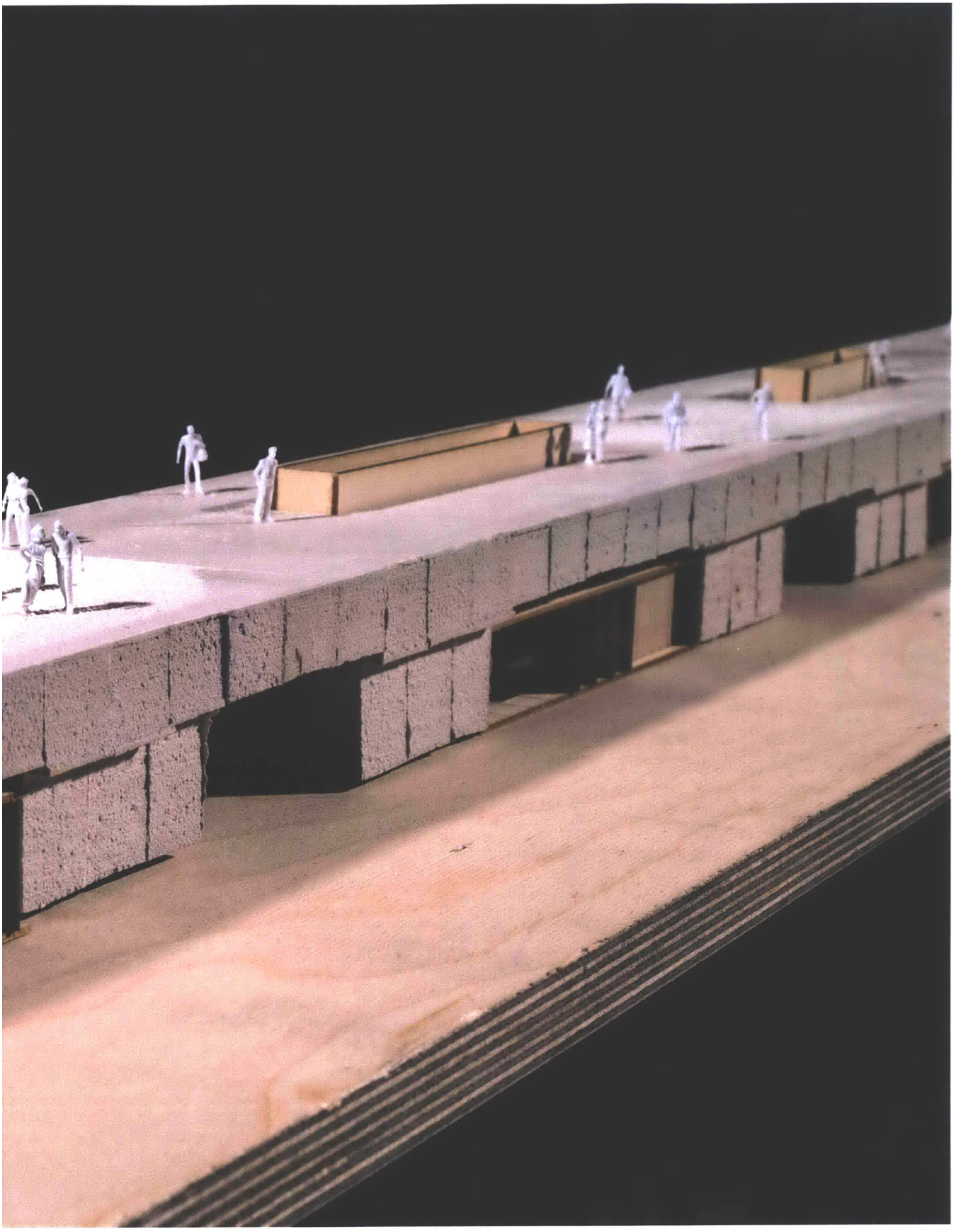


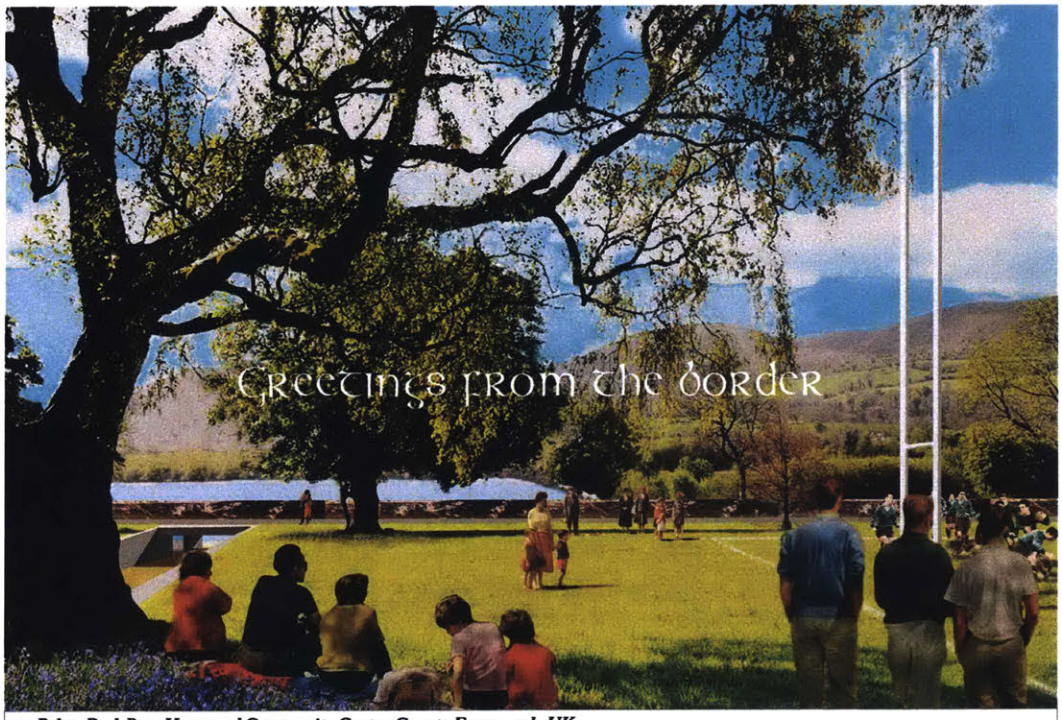




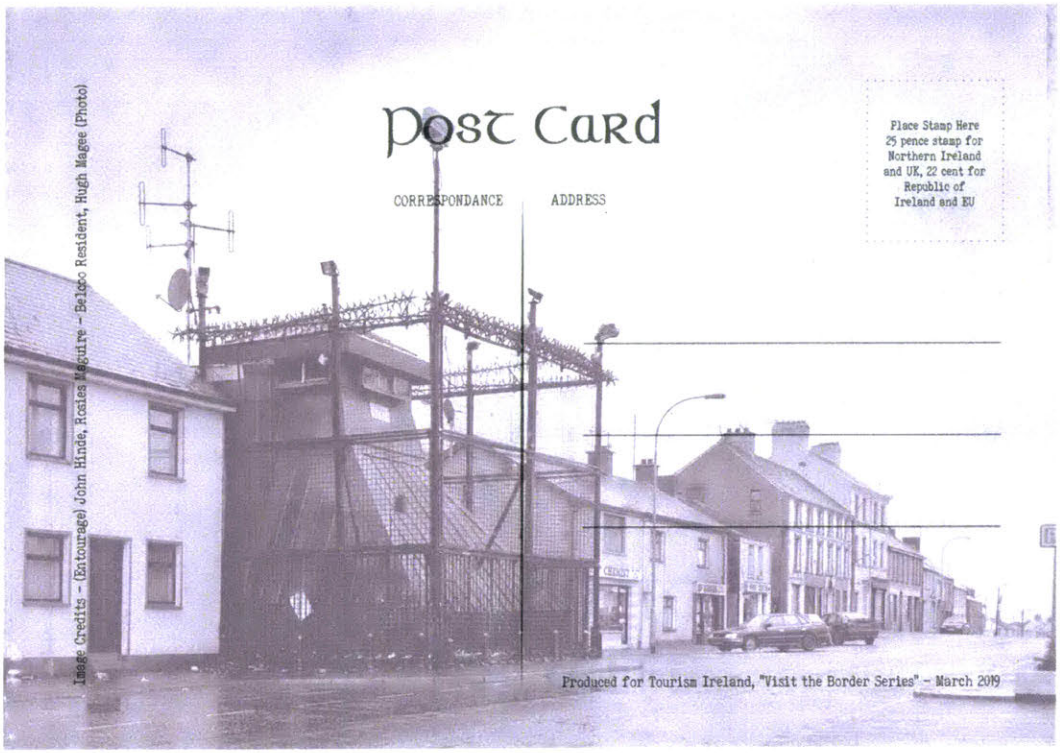








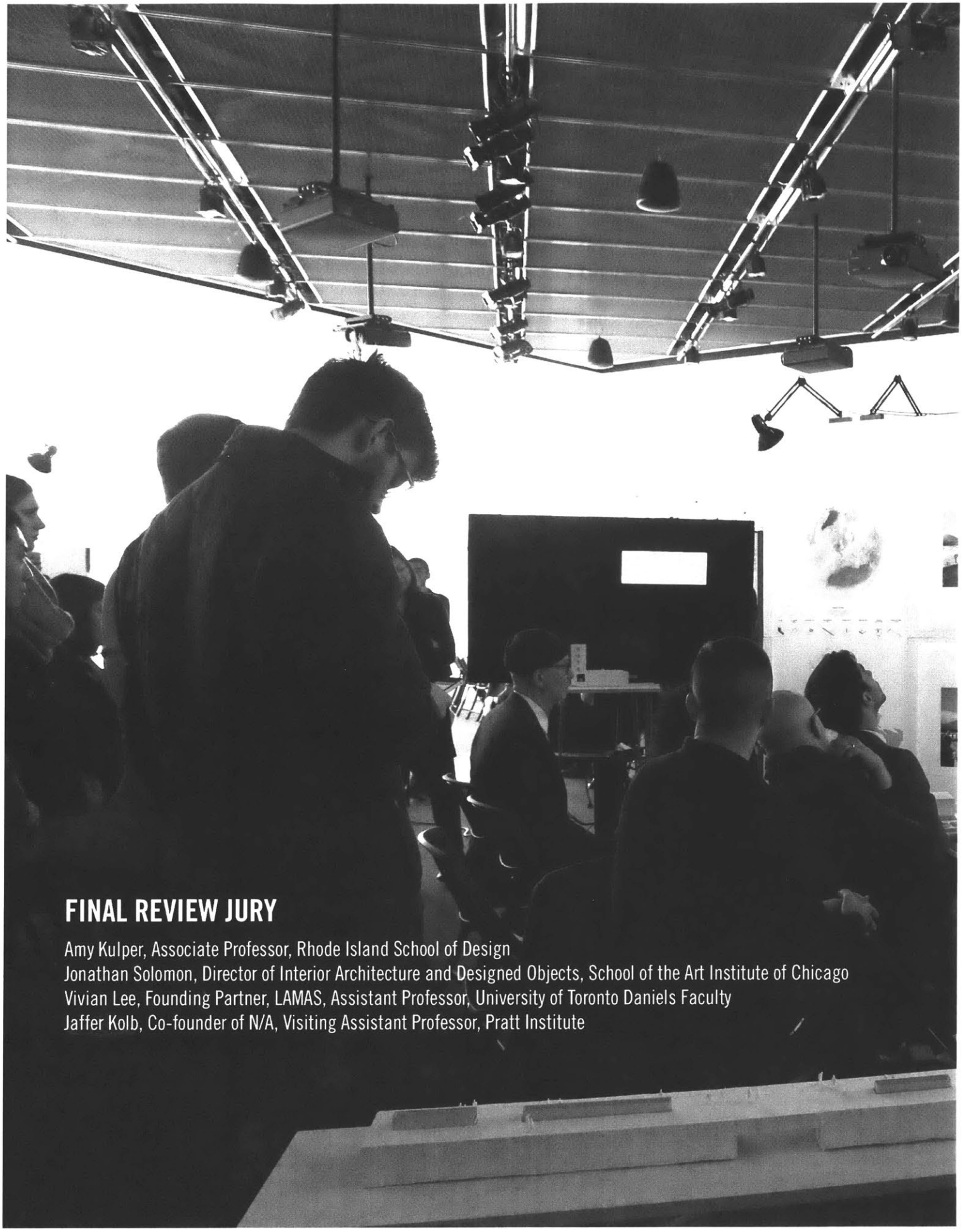
Belcoo Park Boat House and Community Center, County Fermanagh, UK



Post Card Diptychs show both sides of the border's potential.

Greetings from the Border. Appropiating the aesthetic of the Irish pitch post card.

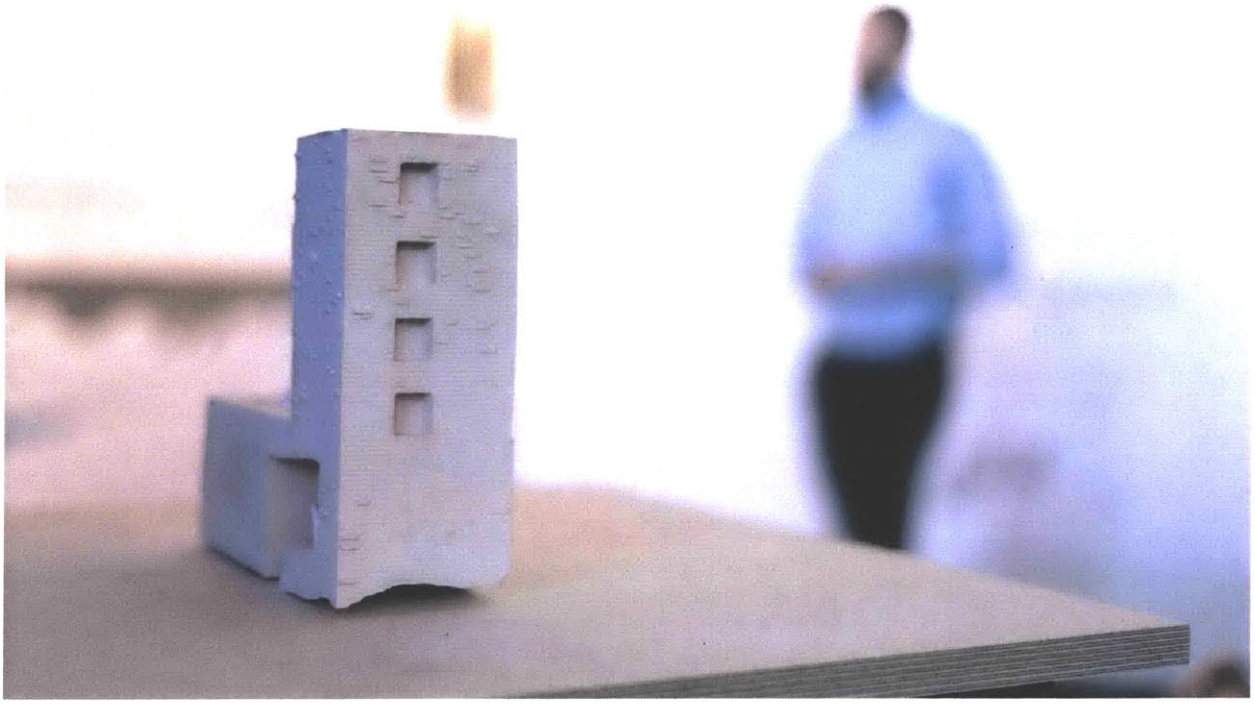
APPENDIX I - FINAL REVIEW

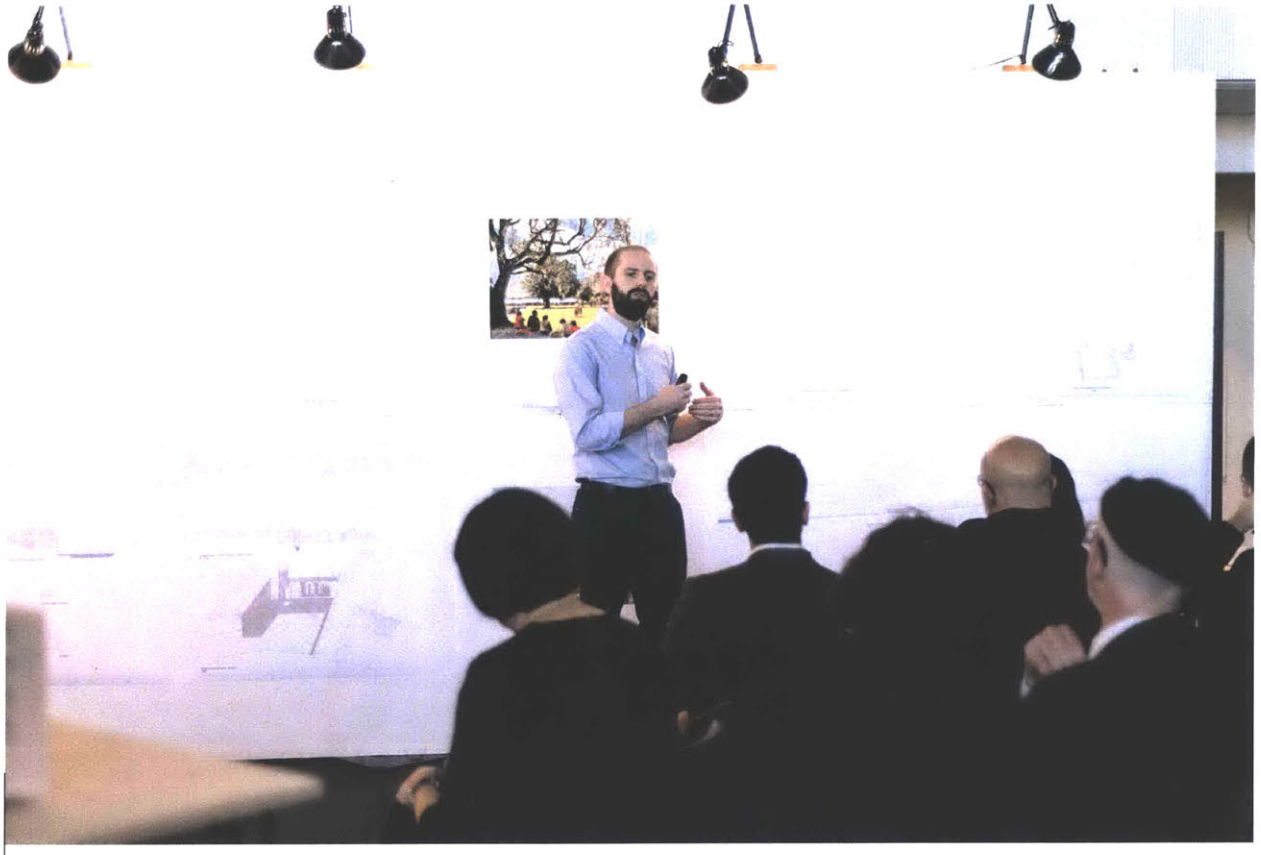


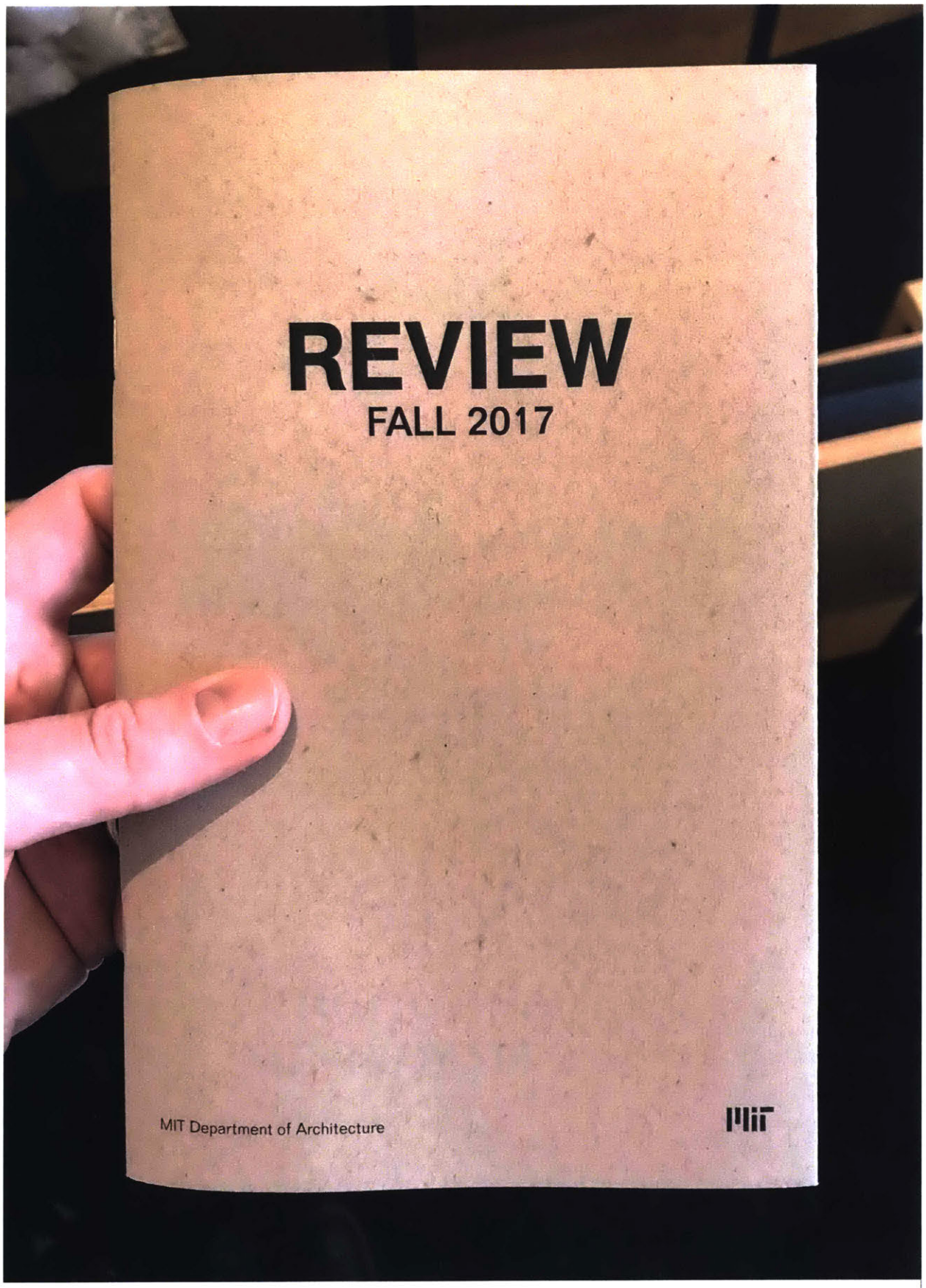
FINAL REVIEW JURY

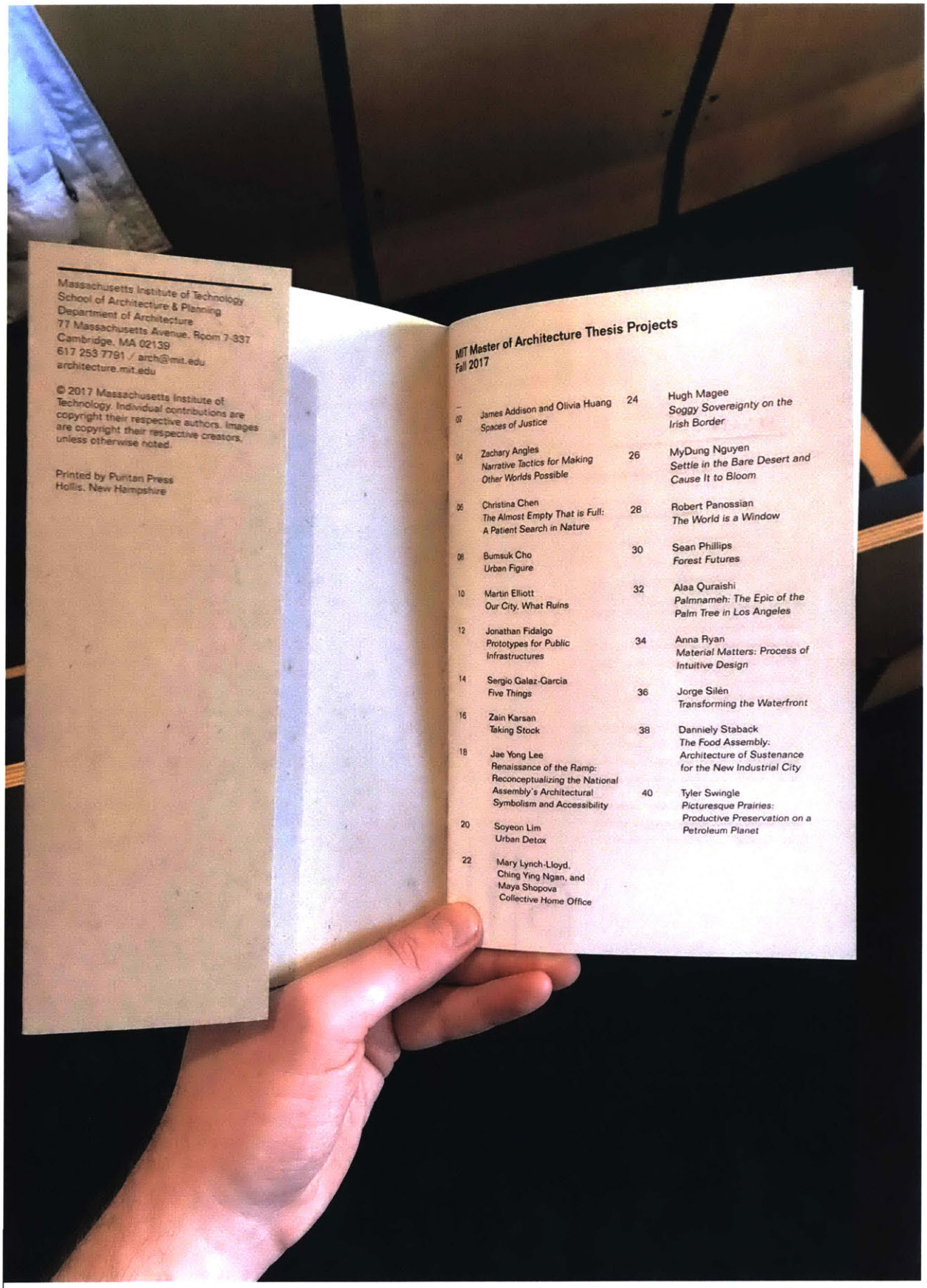
Amy Kulper, Associate Professor, Rhode Island School of Design
Jonathan Solomon, Director of Interior Architecture and Designed Objects, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Vivian Lee, Founding Partner, LAMAS, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto Daniels Faculty
Jaffer Kolb, Co-founder of N/A, Visiting Assistant Professor, Pratt Institute

December 2018, MIT Media Lab






REVIEW
FALL 2017
MIT Department of Architecture



Massachusetts Institute of Technology
School of Architecture & Planning
Department of Architecture
77 Massachusetts Avenue, Room 7-337
Cambridge, MA 02139
617 253 7791 / arch@mit.edu
architecture.mit.edu

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Fall 2017

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Spaces of Justice

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Narrative Tactics for Making Other Worlds Possible

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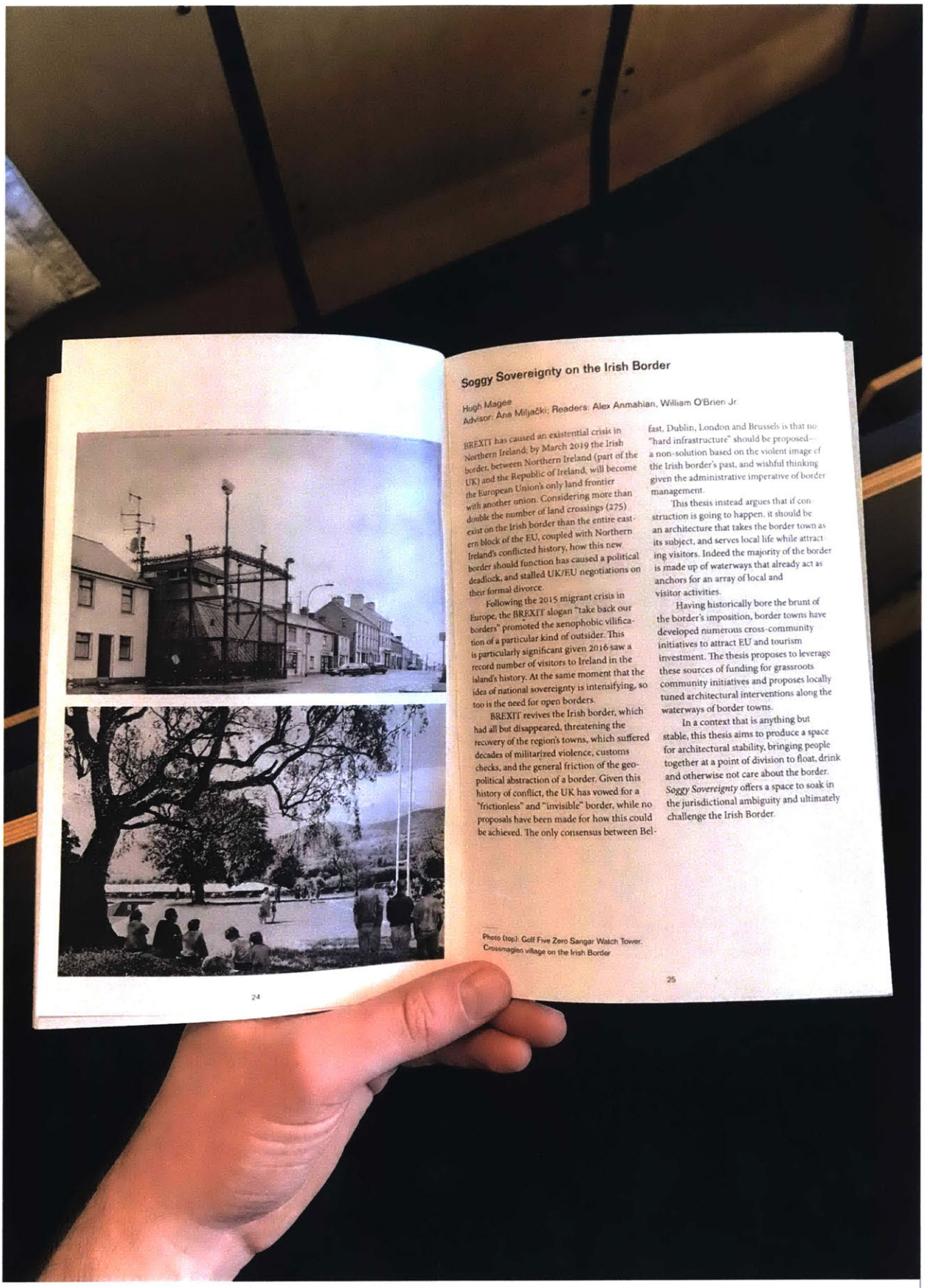

Soggy Sovereignty on the Irish Border

Hugh Magee
Advisor: Ana Miljački; Readers: Alex Anmahian, William O'Brien Jr

BREXIT has caused an existential crisis in Northern Ireland; by March 2019 the Irish border, between Northern Ireland (part of the UK) and the Republic of Ireland, will become the European Union's only land frontier with another union. Considering more than double the number of land crossings (275) exist on the Irish border than the entire eastern block of the EU, coupled with Northern Ireland's conflicted history, how this new border should function has caused a political deadlock, and stalled UK/EU negotiations on their formal divorce.

Following the 2015 migrant crisis in Europe, the BREXIT slogan "take back our borders" promoted the xenophobic vilification of a particular kind of outsider. This is particularly significant given 2016 saw a record number of visitors to Ireland in the island's history. At the same moment that the idea of national sovereignty is intensifying, so too is the need for open borders.

BREXIT revives the Irish border, which had all but disappeared, threatening the recovery of the region's towns, which suffered decades of militarized violence, customs checks, and the general friction of the geopolitical abstraction of a border. Given this history of conflict, the UK has vowed for a "frictionless" and "invisible" border, while no proposals have been made for how this could be achieved. The only consensus between Belfast, Dublin, London and Brussels is that no "hard infrastructure" should be proposed—a non-solution based on the violent image of the Irish border's past, and wishful thinking given the administrative imperative of border management.

This thesis instead argues that if construction is going to happen, it should be an architecture that takes the border town as its subject, and serves local life while attracting visitors. Indeed the majority of the border is made up of waterways that already act as anchors for an array of local and visitor activities.

Having historically bore the brunt of the border's imposition, border towns have developed numerous cross-community initiatives to attract EU and tourism investment. The thesis proposes to leverage these sources of funding for grassroots community initiatives and proposes locally tuned architectural interventions along the waterways of border towns.

In a context that is anything but stable, this thesis aims to produce a space for architectural stability, bringing people together at a point of division to float, drink and otherwise not care about the border. *Soggy Sovereignty* offers a space to soak in the jurisdictional ambiguity and ultimately challenge the Irish Border.

Photo (top): Golf Five Zero Sangar Watch Tower, Crossmaglen village on the Irish Border

APPENDIX II - DOSSIER EXCERPTS

BORDERLANDIA

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Notes

This dossier outlining a series of exercises aimed at championing a Thesis proposal, it therefore is a collection of thoughts at different scales through different representations, these thoughts have been directed to the site of the Irish border, which post Brexit is reviewed from a peaceful slumber into another period of uncertainty in a region that needs the opposite.

This thesis is not interested the geopolitical complexity that is likely to become a reality for the borderland region in Ireland, e.ats soon to become a new EU frontier. To borrow a term from Timothy Hyde, the thesis is disinterested in three terms, aiming to tackle them through the subtext of the thesis.

More direct interests of the thesis are the tectonics of structure on a landscape, and the narratives of specific individuals or groups in the region.

The Irish border is wet. Over two thirds of this line, that curiously represents UK and EU territories, is made up of rivers, lakes, streams, bogs and two lengths at either end. The border is therefore a natural border first, formed during the last ice-age, located within the Drumlin belt of tiphur, a large band form created by an ice sheet moving from the north and downwards. As such the landscape has been debatable and defended throughout the ages with myths and legends, battles over castles and the more recent construction of the state of Norther Ireland in the 1920's.

The thesis therefore takes a long view of the site culturally considered a border, working more closely with what the landscape offers for strategic deployments of architecture of intervention that run past the current moment.

The decision to work on the border offers to potential to operate in a charged locale, even small interventions can have a larger meaning given the history and potential future of the site. As such the decision to work there was specifically chosen as a means to say something loud about the context.

Early semester conversations differentiated two potential ways of thinking about a thesis on this border, the first begin An Architecture that operates at a territorial scale. the second being architecture that operate at a territorial scale.

Examples of the former lead to research into Megastructures, with references to Exodus, Or Voluntary Prisoners, Bruno Taut's Alpine architecture. Cedric Price Potteries Thinker-belt and Cedbreaker vision for Aldgate. These projects could be seen to be mega in scale, aiming to create worlds.

Examples of the latter, of architecture§, took the form of strategic and repeatable interventions that taken together work at the scale of a territory. One example is Dogma's competition entry for Durres in Albania where a series of interventions aim to recast the identity of a sprawling urbanism with archetypes of the bridge, the community centre, the hills view, etc.

Given the ambition of entering a tectonic resolution of the thesis (1:500/1:20), and coupled with a desire to avoid trying to define an entire world (which might necessitate a developed political position that could take years), the current version is leaning towards architectural, interventions in the borderlands that explore how architecture might sit in the wet landscape, and comment on the various cultural contexts of it past, present and future.

The thesis does not have a defined program to explore however some specific programs have become of more interest than others. The border crossing as a program is an obvious choice however the thesis is not about this program. Rather program is seen as a means through which other interests can be explored, this dossier attempts to highlight these interests.

Examples of typologies of interest include:

The Bridge
The Island
The Tower
The Wall
The Dock
The Boat house
The Bar

4 5

Tendency

Architecture is fundamental

Architecture marks the earth with definition, with specificity. At its best it clearly defines itself as autonomous to its wider context yet for it to exist in any other form than one of dominance, it must aim to be 'of' a 'place'.

In thinking about the idea of 'place' this thesis objects the term genius loci. The place has no spirit. Instead there are people who tend the world and tell stories. These stories create the places in which architecture acts.

Architecture cannot speak, but its tones illicit readings which can either jive with a place or rub against it.

Architecture that lives too well within a particular context isn't architecture at all, we might call it part of the 'use of arbourism' to use Pier Vittorio Aureli's term, complicit in the manifestation of capitalism and its urges.

Architecture that rubs against its grain, that is to say, cannot fit within the existing narratives of place, nor recreate its own narrative for a new place must then be sponsored by an agent of power or doomed to die a quick death.

Why a Border?

Borders are fundamental. The mark the earth, the define nations in physical terms and are necessarily sites of contradiction.

This thesis begins with the site of an international border. Its interest is not one of geo politics, but rather the potential these contradictions offer architecture.

The particular border in question, marking the connection between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, offers a collections of conditions of contradiction, some old, others new. Farms, dividing or smuggling passages for excise found sit the reverse streams of paramilitary organizations opposed in principal to the borders existence in the first place. Watch towers villages naturally split by a river unnaturally split by the border, ribbon growth

The partiucal border in question is first and foremost a natural border, more often wet than dry, more often empty than occupied. The border is a site to think about architecture comes from the contradictions it poses to human habitation.

6 7

Ex #1
GREETINGS FROM THE BORDER

Greetings from the Border

The postcard.
A symbol of where you've been. Of where you are. Of where you might go.

As a thesis sited on a border in this post Brexit moment, a border drawn to form a state, around to form a government, then redrawn to form the European Union, the idea of nationhood, its history and more crucially its future are at the forefront of the collective mind.

Postcard #1 represents the past forms of the nations of Europe, drawing attention to the unavoidable potential "futures".

Postcard #2 uses a statement to discuss the idea of ownership, declaring it as a problem. A border can define a nation and a nation represents the largest unit of ownership.

The background uses collage to depict towers in a line, while the region is that of south Armagh, a notorious smuggling region with strong links to Irish nationalist paramilitary organizations.

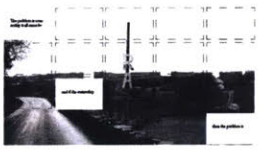
Postcard #3 presents one the border region's decommissioned watch towers from the Troubles posing a question

Keywords
Brexit, Nationhood, military, Paramilitary, Towers, Power

8

9

Ex #1
GREETINGS FROM THE BORDER



10

11

Ex. #2
DRAWING THINGS TOGETHER

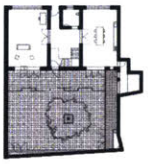
BW + Colour...Click for Text

Summer House Extension by OFFICE architects uses a minimal addition to the rear of an existing house to create a winter garden, a transitional space in which micro-climatic potentials are offered while achieving an effect of "thickening" the boundary or terrain between inside and out. This thickening of a boundary could be read in their competition proposal for the US Mexico border, where a walled garden partition acts as the crossing from one country to another, the reference to an oasis in the desert although clear, while in all its simplicity it raises questions about the desire for the presumed land"

The format and choice of image here is a reference to three things, an affinity for hard geometry, the use of a detail to tell the story of a project and the slightly naive way how the practice present their on-line work; drawing (massive), image (bright), then click for text..

Keywords
Limited Palette, Transition, Tolerance, Thickening, Details, Representation, BW +Col, BW & Col

12



Summer House Extension, Plan

Summer House Extension, Detail window up-off

13

Ex. #2
DRAWING THINGS TOGETHER

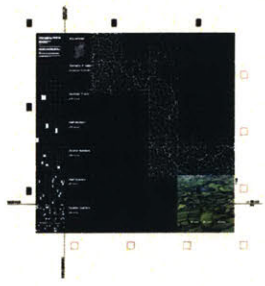
The Survey Landscape

The culmination of improved surveying technology, an enlightenment idea of a "single" nature which man can control and the vast expanses of "empty land" set the stage for the systematic identification and subsequent appropriation of the American landscape by of Europeans settlers. Recognizing the limits nature imposes on man's efforts to control, James Corner's "mappings" highlight the layers of contradiction, lunacy, efficiency and beauty achieved by the straight line (of the grid). On an island already propagated by feuding tribes, turf farmers and absentee landlords, colonial efforts to measure the land were confined to the rich granularity of existing boundaries. (draft)

This drawing attempts to apply Corner's technique of drawing "The Survey Landscape" to the border region of Ireland. The exercise proved useful as a means of drawing through the stark differences in terrain between the US and Ireland. Ultimately the drawing is a collage between two landscapes. The Irish grid is not one then manifests itself physically, as the boundaries of the island, eminent before mapping techniques of the British arrived and proved too fixed to local farming practices to be rendered differently as such the border of Northern Ireland and the republic of Ireland is mostly natural water ways. Issue that predate any human activity

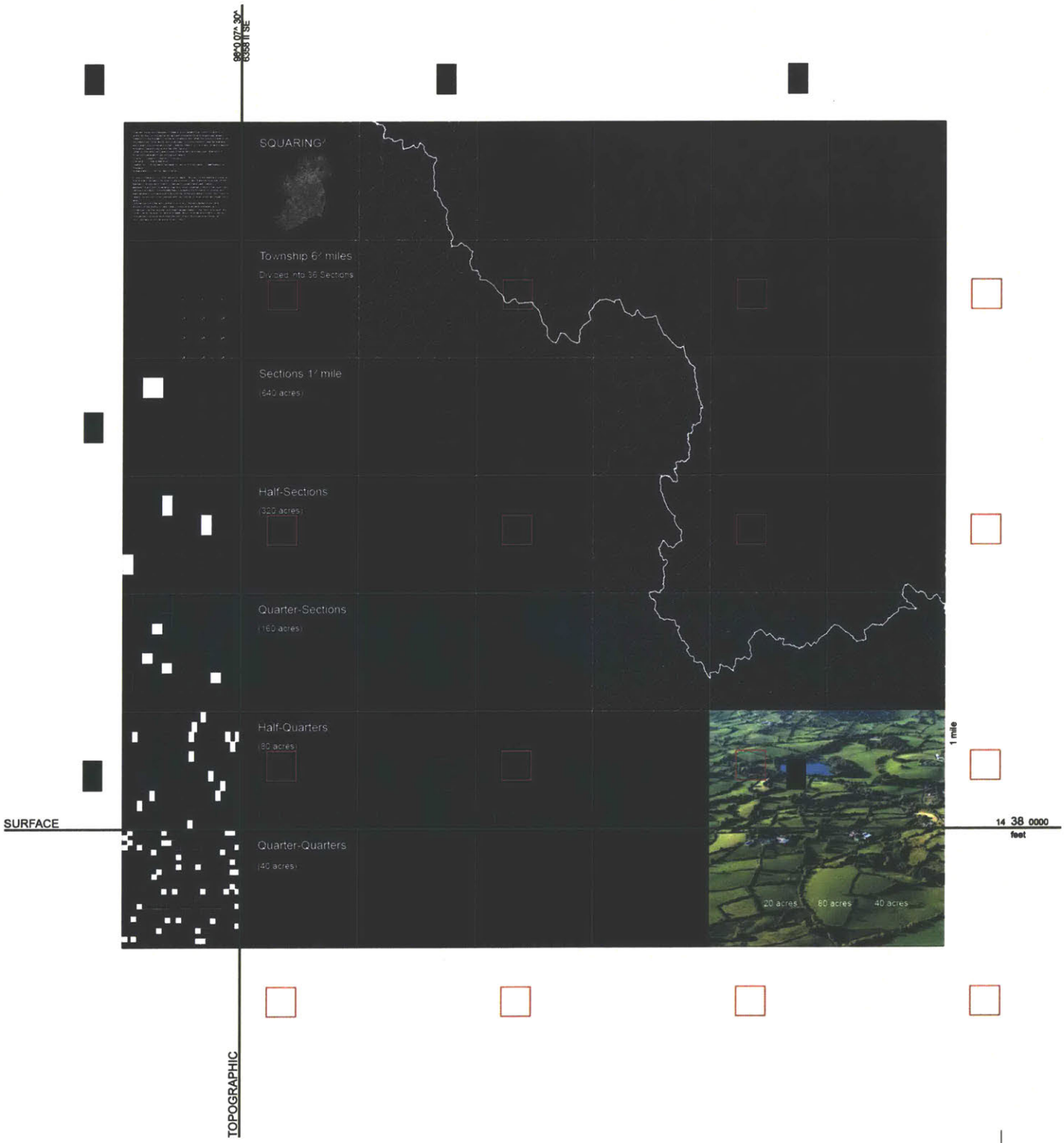
Keywords
Grids, landscape, property boundaries, geology, townlands

14



The Survey Landscape. 14" x 20"

15


SQUARING
Township 6 miles
Divided into 36 Sections
Sections 1 mile
(640 acres)
Half-Sections
(320 acres)
Quarter-Sections
(160 acres)
Half-Quarters
(80 acres)
Quarter-Quarters
(40 acres)
20 acres
80 acres
40 acres
1 mile
SURFACE
14 38 0000
feet
TOPOGRAPHIC

Ex. #2
DRAWING THINGS TOGETHER

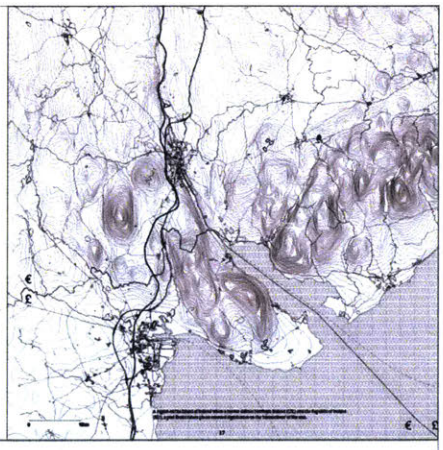
Territorial Architecture

The reference to representation and attitude is to that of Dogma's work, specifically in relation to their winning competition entry, in collaboration with Studio BeL and Andrea Branzi, focused on the Albania region of Durrus. 'Easter Tokens Here' operates between two disparate urban regions and uses the means of architectural production to stitch together a shared sense of identity and place in an other wise "un of urbanism".

The idea of architecture operating at a regional scale through strategic implementation of civic infrastructure is highly seductive as a project, offering the potential of material and tectonic explorations at the scale of an individual while aiming to impact large scale systems.

The drawing here (without a project) begins as a means to frame a space, and define a scale at which the architect's moves could be legible, particularly as a starting for a project's corpus, rather than an urban systems analysis.

The border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, specifically along the eastern coast on the road to Dublin, was a contentious space for decades. In the 1990's after the end of the conflict in Northern Ireland the militarized checkpoints dotted across the landscape we slowly dismantalioned and for almost 20 years the border kind of disappeared. The United Kingdom's choice to exit the EU has revived the significance of the border as the UK, Irish and European governments attempt to imagine how this frontier to Europe on the Island of Ireland with function, while local populations fear a return to a "hard" border and a trajectory into a future mirroring the conflict of the past. This thesis takes, as a starting point, this moment in the long history of a border, as an opportunity to produce a critique of the finiteness of the division of property while simultaneously trying to recircle the idea that if architecture is itself a limit, a border, a rupture, how might it be deployed in this context to subvert current notions of identity and speculate on alternative futures?



16 17

Ex. #3
CONTEXT: POWERS OF TEN

Ring Road

State of the Competition

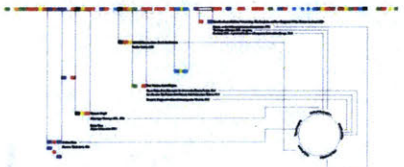
20 21

Ex. #4
FAMILY TREE FEUDS

Exercise 4 - Family Tree Feuds

The image referenced: AMO's 2000's flag designed as a means to reconfigure the idea of Europe as a collage of member state's flag into one homogenous whole. However in the run up to Brexit AMO held an exhibition where a room scene showcasing artifacts designed by designers from member states poignantly deployed the flag as a living room blind, where an strip representing the UK had fallen to the floor. Acknowledging the rise of nationalist movements in Europe and in particular the potential of a split of UE member states, this image depicts future states falling from the block and father splitting, as in the case of the UK.

Aligned with these areas are references to disciplinary characters with whom the thesis take reference.



22 23

Ex. #5
PART 1 - AN ARTIFACT

Exercise 5 - Part 1 - An Artifact

This exercise aimed to identify disciplinary characters with whom my thesis is pushing against or in dialogue with.

The image referenced: AMO's early 2000's flag designed as a means to reconfigure the idea of Europe as a collage of member state's flag into one homogenous whole. However in the run up to Brexit AMO held an exhibition where a room scene showcasing artifacts designed by designers from member states poignantly deployed the flag as a living room blind, where an strip representing the UK had fallen to the floor. Acknowledging the rise of nationalist movements in Europe and in particular the potential of a split of UK member states, this image depicts future states falling from the block and father splitting, as in the case of the UK.

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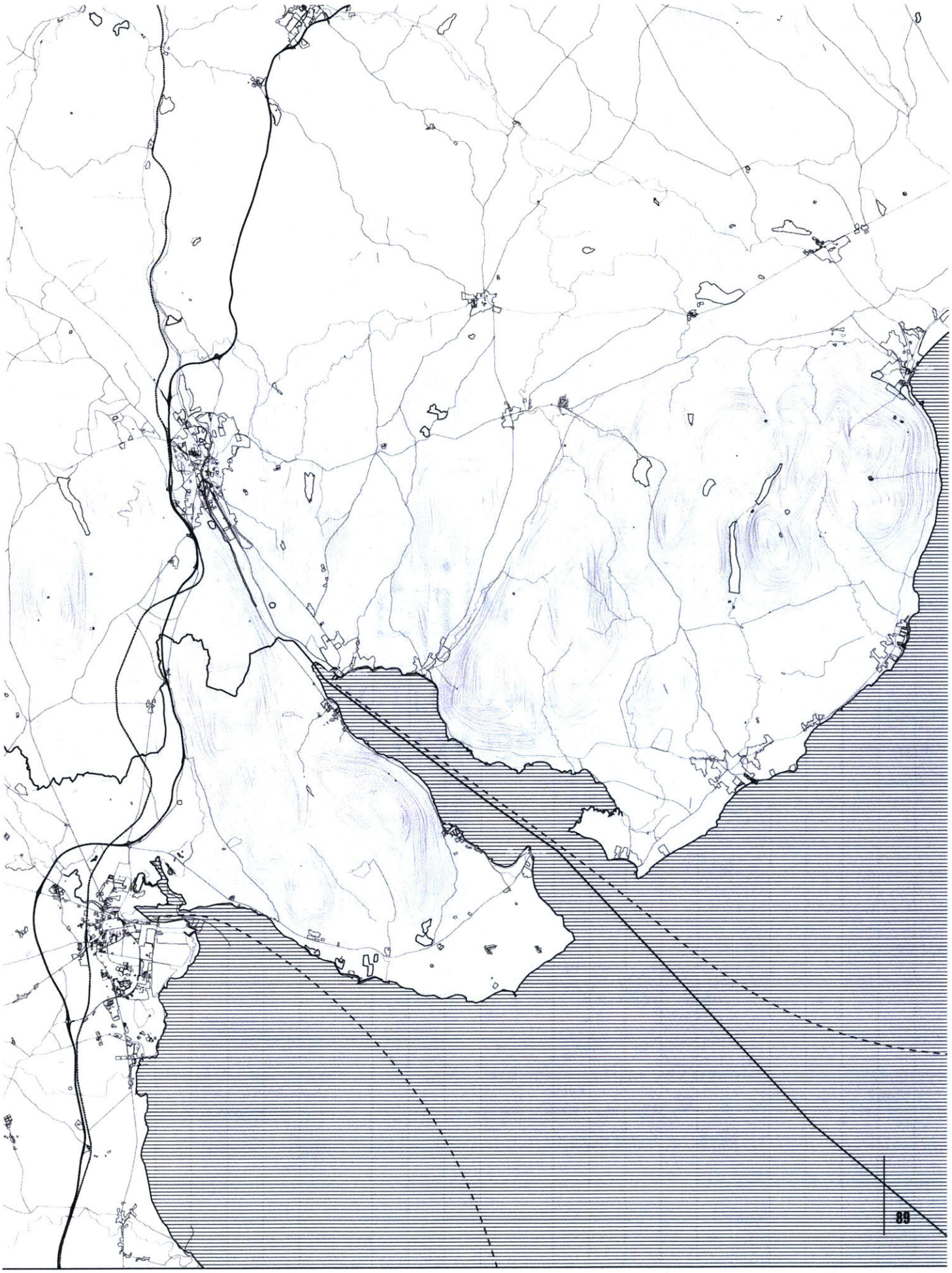
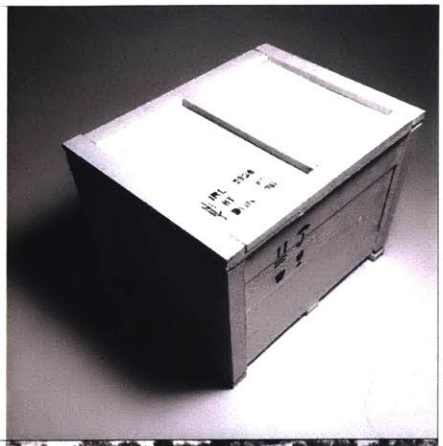


Ex. #6
PART 2 - AN ARTIFACT

Exercise 5 - Part 2 - An Artifact

Like most artifacts connected with trade, the wooden crate is a highly specific object designed to meet strict regulations for shipping. Marks indicate timber has been checked for infestation, stamps indicate where its from, where its going, etc. The wooden crate is also a symbol of a romanticised past, finding its way into the listy "crafty" space for sale. You can buy a wooden crate online and probably have it shipped to you in a cardboard box. The wooden crate remains used for certain products, mostly food and drink and therefore represents the continued use of an arcitype that containerization has mostly replaced. As an artifact used to move goods, the wooden crate can be used as a means to house certain contents, the images aiming to evoke atmospheres such as curiosity, illegality, consumer culture, and counter measures



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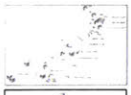
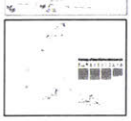


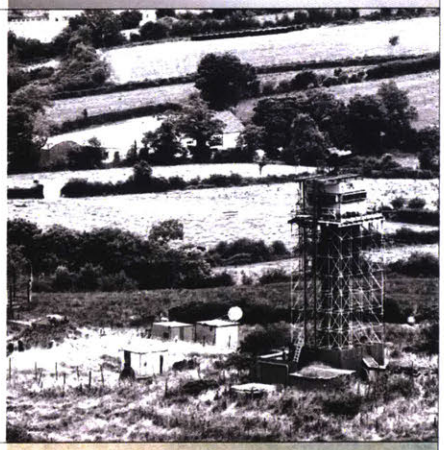


From Garrett Carr's Map of a Watchful Architecture

"The Map of Watchful Architecture suggests that defensive points contributed to the creation of the border rather than to have been simply placed in reaction to it. Dig down and back through time and almost everything on the map seems to have had a precursor. For example, the military towers of southern Armagh, in the late 20th century, seems to have been predicted by the placement of Norman structures, like Mayo's Castle in 1691. Such towers, in their turn, are often built on the sites of older structures, cashels or ring-forts. Underlying all this building we can detect a constant drive to claim high ground. Even more fundamentally, we may come to suspect that,

the landscape itself was one suited to the formation of mental borders. Much of the borderland is hilly and much of the rest is water. Rivers make up about two thirds of the border's length and it widens into impressive lengths at both ends. There was something of the frontier right there in the land itself.

sometime that history reinforced. The Map of Watchful Architecture charts the points that were planted in this borderland and helped narrow it to a borderline."



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Space between two conditions

This thesis deploys architecture on and in the border as a divisive tool. It poses the question, if the border is a necessary evil, in what ways can architecture subvert it?

Examples exist in the discipline of architecture where the space of connection, outside of the status quo, acts as a critique to it.

The interest in producing a space outside of a norm necessitates the definition of the eshelds and requires a position to the contrast in which it rests.

At a time when the likelihood of further and further subdivision of land into smaller and smaller parcels seems imminent this thesis attempts to develop alternatives ways of viewing the intersection the border constitutes.

In thinking about the opportunity of a thicken line, Palladio's second version of the Rialto Bridge offers an example an architecture achieving multiple things simultaneously. The bridge is first and foremost a crossing, however the addition of space at its center, a forum, it challenges the line of the crossing to become a point, a place to dwell.

This reference is something of interest as it necessitates one to think about water as a content, given that the majority of the Irish Border is wet, the thesis could take on very directly the problem of working in the wet...

30

Cú Chulainn in battle, from T. W. Rolleston, Myths & Legends of the Celtic Race, 1911, illustration by J. C. Leyendecker

Queen Mae by Joseph Christian Leyendecker (1874 - 1951) - T. W. Rolleston, Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race

32

Ancient Ireland

Ireland has long history of conflict over two things, territory and cattle. In ancient Ireland in the area that is now the border region, queens battled kings to raid cattle, a measure of wealth that remains relevant to the farmers of the border today. So common was cattle raiding that ancient mega structures were constructed, designed to navigate the drumlins that bramlet the landscape.

The Ulster Cycle, a collection of stories in Irish mythology relates specifically to the borderlands region and Ulster. Of these legends, *Tân Bô Cûalnge*, or The Cattle Raid of Cooney is considered an epic, telling the story of the cunning Queen Medb of Connacht attacking Ulster to steal a prized bull, *Donn Cûalnge* defended by Ulsters warrior Cu Chulainn.

33

IMAGINARY A

BORDERLANDIA

End of the Nationstate

In 2017 following the United Kingdom's decision to exit the European Union the Northern Irish Government collapsed. The question of what it would mean for the Irish border and the border citizens invoked the violent past where a hard border represented a region in conflict since the 1960's. In response anti Brexit border movements seeking to remain part of the favourable EU subsidy zone, and fearful of a return to violence on their doorstep began to organize.

Brexit marked a turning point for the idea of nations in the 21st century. The two years that followed brought about the largest restructuring of nations since world war 2. As the beginning of the end for the United Kingdom as well as the European Union, the post Brexit era saw Scotland's secession, triggering the Shetland Islands to detach from Scotland. At the same time separatist movements across Europe propagated. Catalonia and Andalucia in former Spain, Brittany and Alsace in former France, Cornwall in former England and 40 other secessionist movements

Beginning of the Borderstate

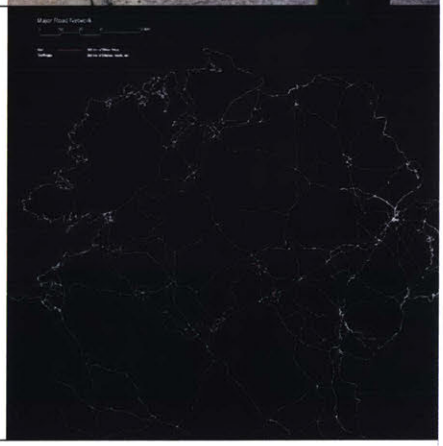
The disintegration of the 21st Century Europe continued past the scale of cities. Nations at the scale of houses emerged propelled by the potential of interconnected networks.

In Ireland, following the Northern Irish referendum to detach from the UK, the island began to split into informal fashions returning slowly to its smaller sub-divisional unit, the Townland.

In the border region the threat of a return to a hard border, an end to EU investment and the potential disintegration of the region, resulted in border citizens north and south establishing collective territories along the border region.

These territories take advantage of the craggy conditions of the landscape the border cross occupied; rivers, stream, lakes and bogs make up most of its length. Where it passes through open ground it follows natural ditches and the odd road, cutting through only a handful of urban settlements.

In 2017 in preparation for EU mandated hard border the Irish Government began identify points for border crossings. These sites, located at 8 major road intersections attempted to police the border despite the historical difficulty in doing so. Over 200 roads tracks and paths traverse the old border, these are the sites appropriated in Borderlandia.



Borderlandia

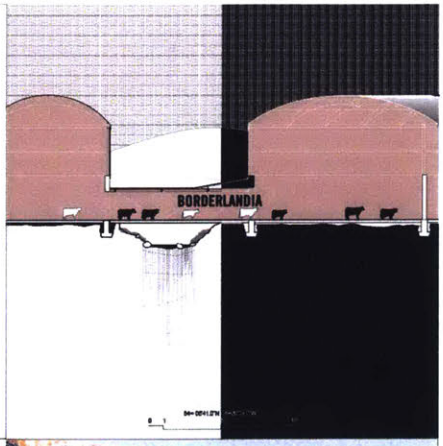
The collection of disparate territories that comprise Borderlandia share common waterways, reflecting the ability of many to travel in between states. While vast areas of previously protected land under Irish and British governments sought to maintain the natural habitats along the wet border, these areas became ideal zones for appropriation by Borderlanders, allowing territories to become wider in the Wetlands.

As such Borderlandia, as a space between the north and south, moves from terrain as thick as lakes to a line as thin as a building.

Launderlandia

In the South East region constitutes the most eastern part of Borderlandia and its first state. Colloquially known as Launderlandia due to its history of oil and moose smuggling and more sinister organized crime laundering plants. The history of land ownership in Launderlandia is such that farmers with land on either side of the old border could smuggle goods between buildings, at time creating buildings to serve this purpose.

LAUNDERLANDIA



IMAGINARY B
THE BACK AND BEYOND BORDER

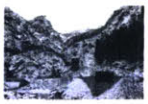
Like the border between east and west germany a protected natural environment exists along the Irish border. Comprised of a series zones of UK, Irish, European and Global distinctions for natural beauty, scientific interest, waterway preservation and wildlife management, the border region is also a rich natural environment with little urban settlement.

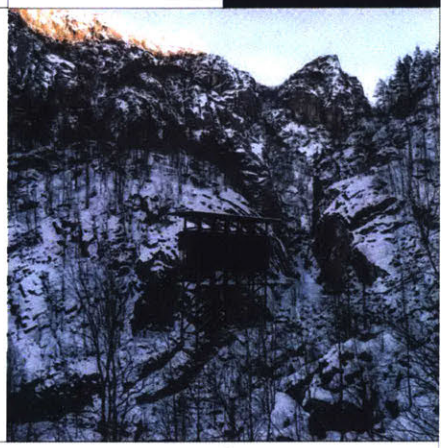
Similar to Imaginary A where the project avoids major border crossing nodes as sites of complex and potentially less interesting problems, the Back of Beyond Border proposes to reclaim these areas of the border away from major roads, and instead think the relationship of a border crossing in an area of natural protection.

Could a bird viewing platform double as an international border crossing?

Could a canoe dock be a means to travel not across the border but along it?

This line of thought finds a precedent in terms of interventions that relate to their topography in Peter Zumthor's projects for visitor facilities for an old mine in Norway.





IMAGINARY C
CITIZENS OF THE BORDERLAND - A PARTY

As a means to push outside of a comfort zone Citizens of the Borderlands - A Party progresses more emphasis on the creation of a series of characters who occupy the thesis. The Excise man, the smuggler, the priest, the fisherman, the tourist, the farmer, the exile, the student, the emigrant, the wrecker, the cattle raider, the fuel laundrer, etc.

The development of the thesis in this regard is non existent. I lack the tools to begin working on it. It is attractive as my first instinct when thinking about these characters is not a consideration of the external conditions, and how they relate to the landscape, but very much one of interiors, something the thinking to-date has not considered.

This is obviously a placeholder for thinking about the thesis through different lens. more to come...

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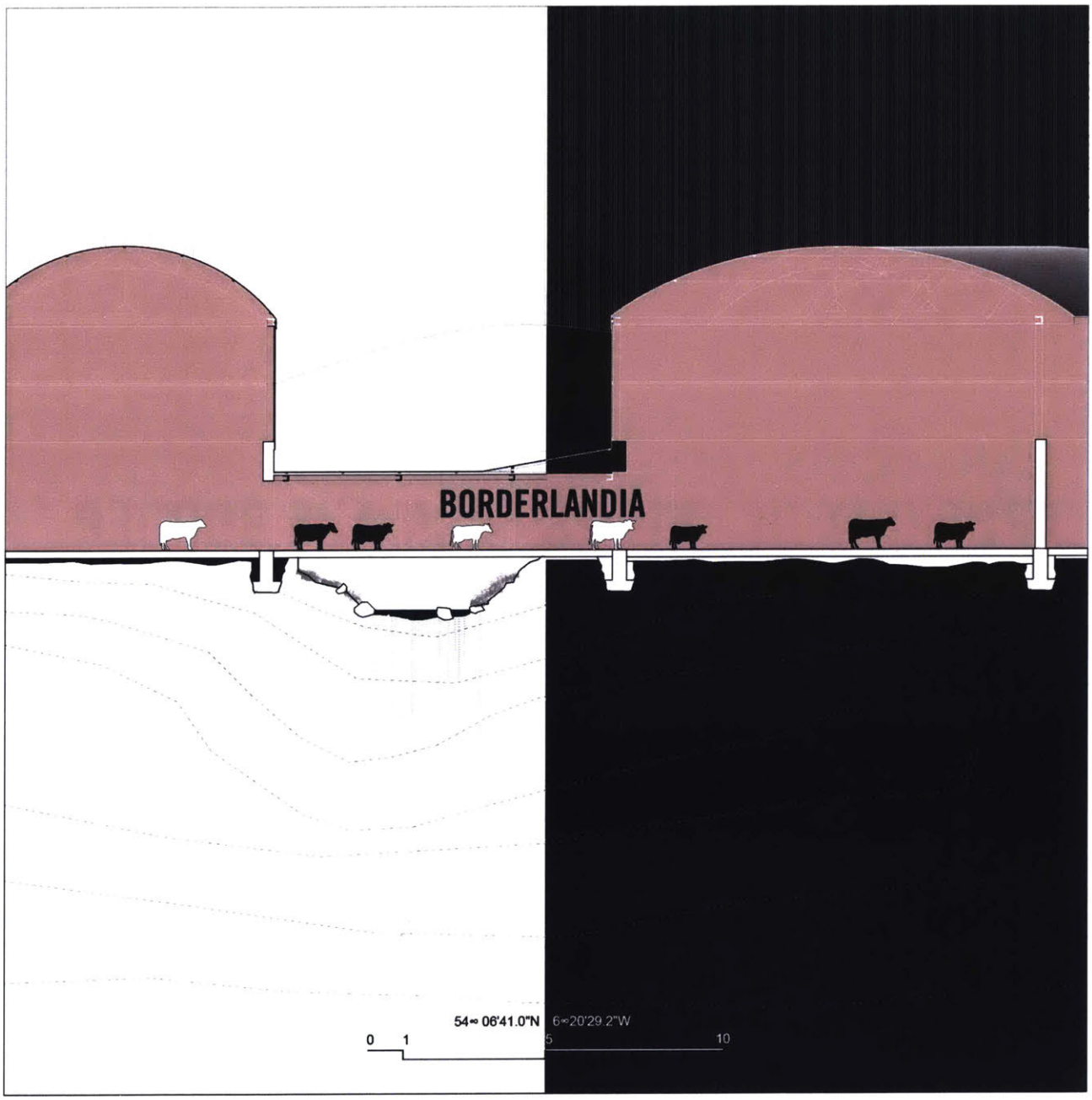
Jordan Lloyd Norman Allison


BORDERLANDIA
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APPENDIX III - VIEWS FROM THE BORDER

THIS IS
NOT A

Caution
Deck
Slippery
when
wet

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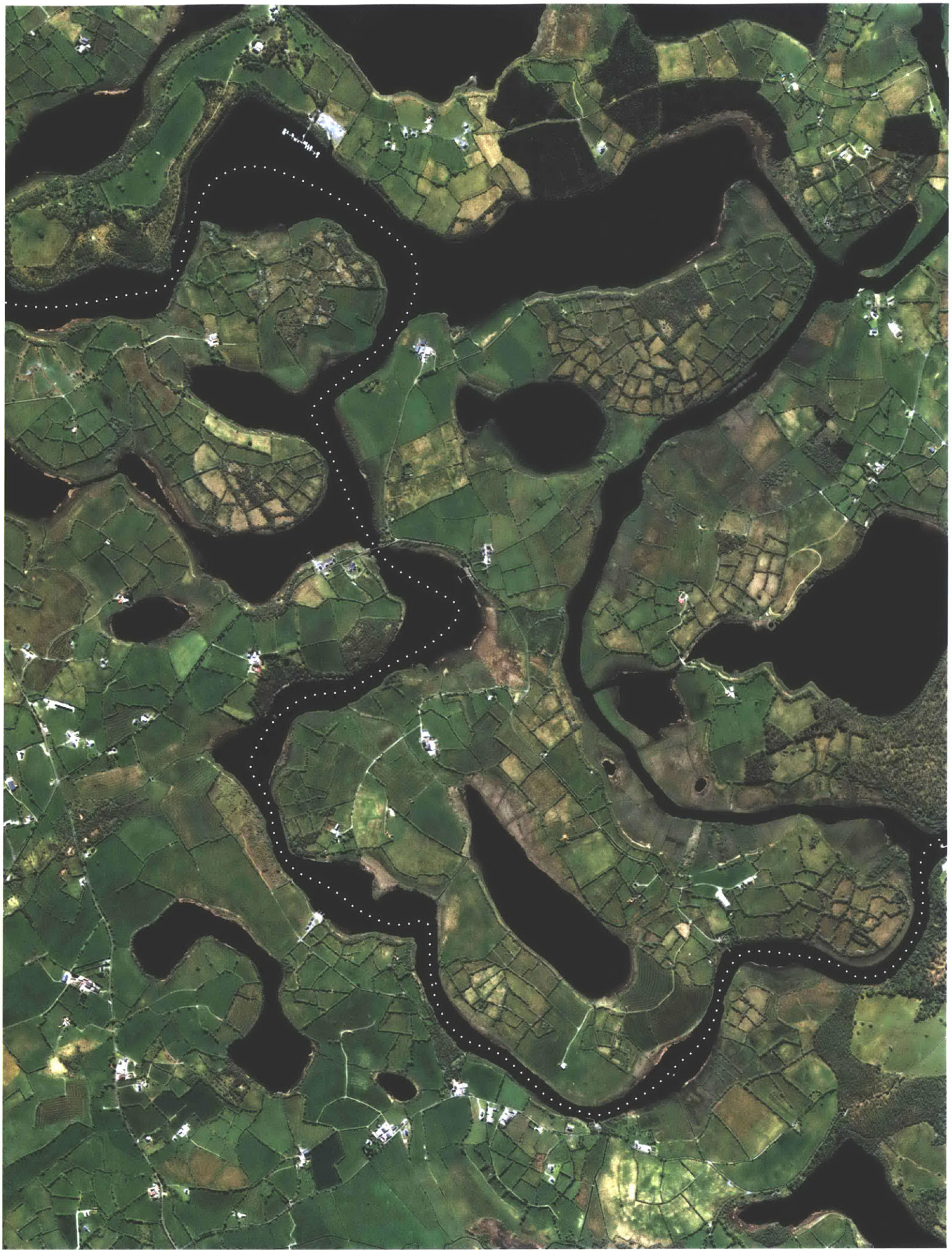
30

Fresh
Coffee
To Go!