Untold Narratives:
Realizing Personal Design Identities

by

Rania Kaadan

B.Sc, Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering
University of Aleppo, 2013
M.Arch, Master of Architecture in Architectural Design
University College London, 2017

Submitted to the
Department of Architecture
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science in Architecture Studies

at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

June 2021

_____
SIGNATURE OF AUTHOR
Department of Architecture
May 21, 2021

_____
CERTIFIED BY
Terry Knight
William and Emma Rogers Professor of Design and Computation
Thesis Advisor

_____
ACCEPTED BY
Leslie K. Norford
Professor of Building Technology
Chair of the Department Committee on Graduate Students

Thesis Advisor

Terry Knight, PhD
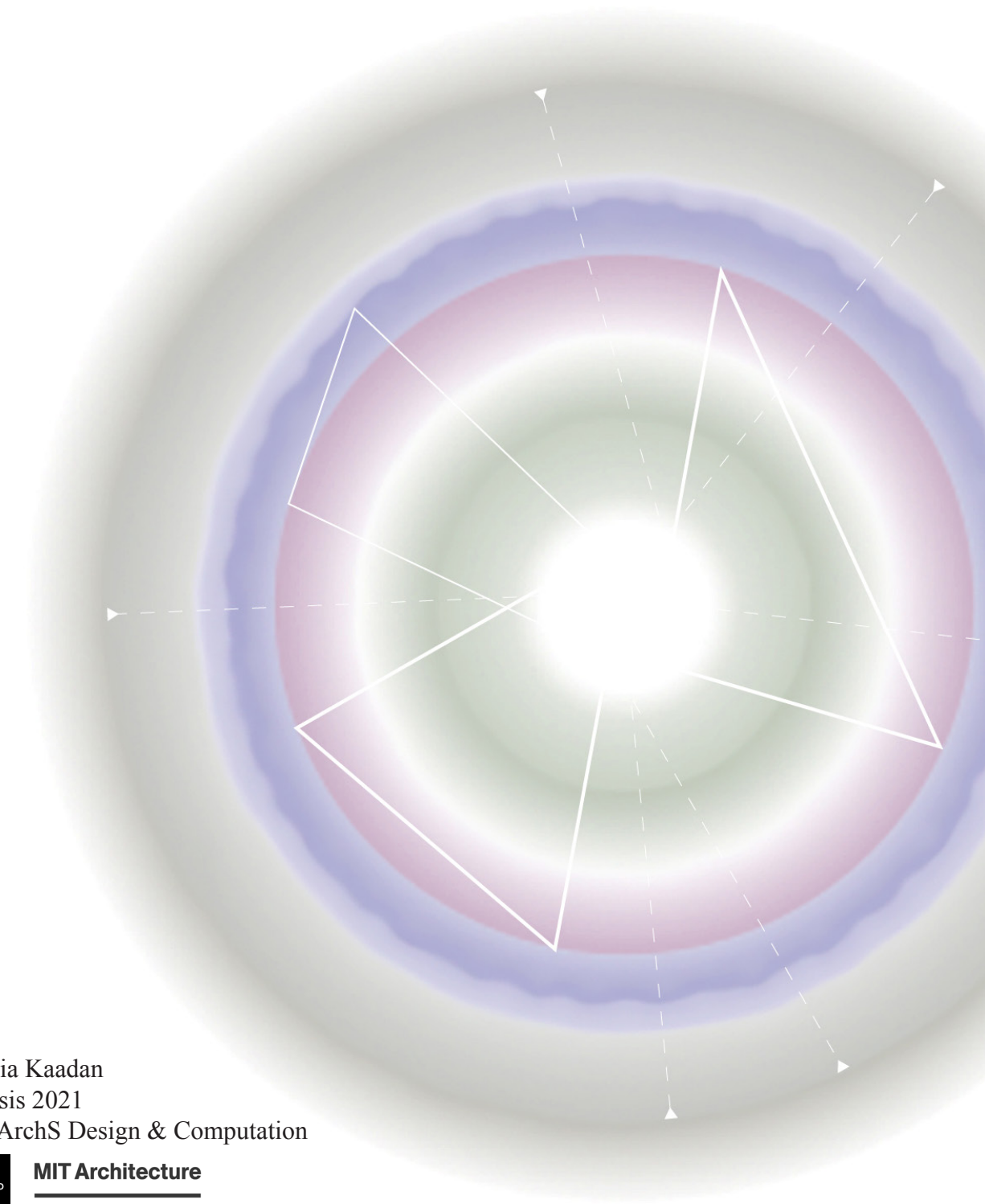William and Emma Rogers Professor of Design and Computation, MIT

and Readers

Lorena Bello Gomez, PhD
Visiting Professor in Architecture and Urbanism FAUP, Porto University
Lecturer in Architecture and Urbanism, MIT

Nicholas de Monchaux, PhD
Professor and Head of Architecture, MIT

Untold Narratives:
Realizing Personal Design Identities

by
Rania Kaadan

Submitted to the Department of Architecture on
May 21, 2021
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Architecture Studies

ABSTRACT

This thesis introduces alternative possibilities for structuring design education to emancipate designers' personal creative identities. It was motivated by personal experiences and a series of observations and case studies recorded and conducted at MIT's graduate and undergraduate architecture and design studios. My study examines a crucial set of dialectics: subjectivity and objectivity, agency and structure, and political and personal narratives.

The hypothesis is that the structures embodying students' relationships — the self and society, the self and others, and the self and self — are all essential to how design identities develop, yet these relationships are often unintentionally unrealized due to the inherent challenge of developing personal design intentions. Examination of this hypothesis led me to instrumentalize students' personal narratives as a design tool to emancipate their agency through worldmaking exercises, and thus promoting students' agency in a process of developing a personal design language, geometries, and visual imagination.

The study herein offers a pedagogical framework — experimental case studies part of a larger aspired transformative reform — the first running in tandem with core studios, and the second a workshop that followed. Both case studies utilized introspective and performative design practices to help students harness a personal sense of narrative, methods of representation, design language and their embodying social and cultural identity. Through this framework, students cultivate their own personal "worlds," in awareness of the embedded structures. This framework is a step towards a pedagogically transformative and socially solidaristic project of decolonizing personal narratives – a tale of designers' voice realization.

Thesis Advisor: Terry Knight

William and Emma Rogers Professor of Design and Computation

Untold Narratives

Realizing Personal Design Identities

Rania Kaadan
Thesis 2021
SMArchS Design & Computation

MIT SA+P **MIT Architecture**

How is a designer's creative identity to be developed? How can design students question design assumptions and experiment with a range of design practices that allow them to decide which intentions to amplify, discard, or replace? In this thesis, I examine the objective and subjective interest in finding our voices by introducing personal narratives as a design tool to emancipate design students' agency through worldmaking exercises. As an architect and a designer, this work has emerged from my own experiences, a student aware of mediated biases; and on another, an educator attempting to resist and mediate her own biases in design studios, hence avoiding a loss of students' agency in developing a personal design language, geometries, and visual imagination. Experimenting with both introspective and performative design practices, students are guided to cultivate a personal sense of one's narrative, methods of representation, design language and their embodying unique socio-cultural, political and environmental identity. Through a series of worldmaking exercises, students harness narrative evidence of their own stories, their own imagination, captured through a reflexive and performative practice of self-discovery. In this regard, this thesis does not offer theories of how-to-design, or seek to constitute a curricula review. Rather, it is an alternative contribution to a relationship that flows through interwoven narratives and sequences of time. That is on the one side political and on another personalist, the latter being a theory derived from the person or personality as a key to an interpretation of one's reality – a story of a long process challenging the limitations of colonized narratives to motivate transformation, a tale of designers' voice realization.

for my family,
in all that you have been and all that you will be

The means for design students to find their personal voices is not a self-evident journey. How is a designer's creative identity developed? How can design students question design assumptions and experiment with a range of design practices that allow them to decide which intentions to amplify, discard, or replace? For these two main inquiries, I investigate alternative possibilities for structuring design education to emancipate designers' personal creative identities, while examining a crucial set of dialectics: subjectivity and objectivity, agency and structure, and political and personal narratives.

As an architect and a designer, this work emerged from my own experiences, a student aware of mediated biases; and on another, an educator attempting to resist and mediate her own biases in design studios. Moreover, it is motivated by a series of observations that were recorded at MIT's graduate and undergraduate architecture and design studios. Through these observations, I recognized that the structures embodying students' relationships — the self and society, the self and others, and the self and self — are all essential to how design identities develop, yet these relationships are

often unintentionally unrealized due to the inherent challenge of developing personal design intentions. Examination of this hypothesis led me to instrumentalize students' personal narratives as a design tool to emancipate students' agency through worldmaking exercises, and thus promoting students' agency in a process of developing a personal design language, geometries, and visual imagination.

Chapter I offers insights about the relationships that we live by in our daily practices and thus inform our surrounding context, of the self and society, the self and other, and the self and self. In Chapter II, I discuss these relationships across a set of dialectics: subjectivity and objectivity, agency and structure, and political and personal narratives, hence arriving at how we conceive of all three relationships and how we position ourselves relative to them. Finally, in Chapter III, I introduce a pedagogical framework based on my understanding of how we identify our own agency through a practice of questioning all three relationships. Based on this hypothesis, I use two interconnected case studies to materialize a framework to help students cultivate a personal sense of narrative, methods of representation,

design language and their embodying socio-cultural, political and environmental identity. In the end, students' reflections about this process demonstrated that this framework is a potential alternative contribution in the service of architects and designers[1].

When Malik approached me to discuss his future academic and career plans on the afternoon of Monday, November 25th, 2019, I responded to his inquiry as a teaching assistant, unprepared for its greater influence on my own perceptions of design education.[2] This undergraduate studio was Malik's first encounter with the design discipline. He was a dedicated student, always delivered more than what was required and was engaged in studio discussions. However, in this conversation in particular, I could sense he had a general tone of malaise.

When he asked his first question, "what is the difference between art and design?" attempting to resist my own assumptions, I followed up by asking, "what makes you think of this?" Malik explained that he wasn't sure whether he should continue to major in design. He was concerned about designers' career opportunities, felt constrained by the "structured" process of designing, and found design to be "very subjective." He said, "I mean feedback is sometimes conflicting with separate ideas; one instructor ((names instructor)) tells you one thing, another ((names second instructor)) tells

you another, and you continue to go back and forth, and that part confuses me." In response to this, Malik said that he was learning to trust his own instinct and explore more all his "given ideas", rather than "trying to please others." (Appendix)

I left the conversation thinking I relate to Malik's observations. I believe the purpose of design education is not just to focus on developing a final product but, even more so, the process through which we arrive at our own well-informed design intentions. During the rest of the conversation, Malik acknowledges the importance of the iterative process, but what he was questioning was what intentions to explore and why. This reflection is not foreign to other suppositions my fellow architecture peers and I have previously had. For instance, although my own story happens to be slightly more specific, in that after five years of studying architectural engineering in a heavily structured program, I was suddenly expected to create a portfolio. Not only had I not heard of the term portfolio[3] before, but it also turned out to be the universal medium for representing one's creative design identity. Similarly, my architecture peers were affected

---

1   For a thorough and up-to-date version of this thesis, see raniakaadan.com

---

2   Malik is an undergraduate student at MIT whose name has been changed to conceal identities. This applies for all the following characters.

---

3   Pae, The Portfolio and the Diagram.

by other educational structures, for instance one was enrolled in a year-long program based on a confining clustering system that prevented her from exploring her own research interests. Hence, Malik's experience was not one of its kind, but what made it different this time was my desire of finding means of enablement. This reinstated many questions I've previously speculated on from my own experiences, such as: how to investigate further the objective and subjective assumptions between students' design intentions and instructors' objectives? Are these contradictions perennial to design education? And is there a certain structure that could lead us to an affinity between the collective interest and our personal interest in finding our voices?

I argue that this affinity is possible through repetition — examining, breaking up, engaging with, and trying other structures that inform the relationships that we live by. To arrive at this affinity, we can start by examining these relationships. In part, we want to live with unique, individual identities; yet we also want to be connected to others around us. We are also motivated to shape the shared identity that we carry as part of a society, group, or even a romantic relationship. Roberto Mangabeira

16

Unger, a contemporary philosopher and a social and legal theorist, introduces in his book *Passion: An Essay on Personality*[4], a set of relationships that we confront in our personal growth journey. These relationships form one step among many others in developing the idea of self-realization in order to ascend to a higher form of creativity. Each generates a particular normative force in shaping our contexts within frameworks of consensus and malleable constraints[5].
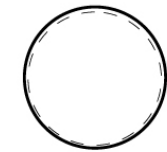
A. The Self and Society

One of the relationships that Unger addresses is between our individual relation of *the self* and the collective context or *the society* that we are part of. He claims we can't live as individuals without engaging in a collective social context, but neither could we be free if the engagement requires us to surrender to our context. To be free, or empowered, we have to be able to engage with our society without surrendering. Hence, to understand how the collective structure can be organized in such a way that allows the individual to engage without surrendering, we have to become insiders and

4   Unger, "Passion."
5   Neville, "Normative Cultures." Robert Cummings Neville is a systematic philosopheꞧ and theologian.

outsiders of the existing framework with our ability to change, revise, and transform until we arrive at this notion of having a structure that opens itself to revision. In doing this, we relativize the distinction between the ordinary moves we make within a framework and the exceptional moves by which we change and challenge pieces of the framework.

B. The Self and Others

The second relationship Unger presents is about the relation between *the self* and *the others*. To be free, or empowered, we need to connect with others around us in solidarity, it is internally related to self-construction. Yet, every connection to another human being threatens us with loss of personal distinction and subjugation. Hence, just like in our connection with *the society*, to be free we have to be able to connect with others without being subjugated. Through a form of cooperation, or dialogue, the organization of the others could inform the individual with malleable ways of feeling, living, and acting, instead of a rigid system. These forms of cooperation also have to be able to take alternative forms. The student should feel safe and secure against domination, as well as capable of educational and financial

17

the self and the self
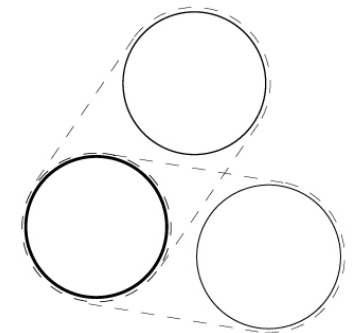
the self and the other
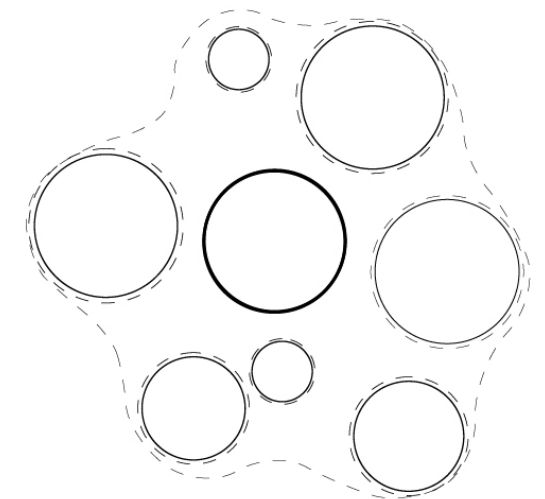
the self and the society
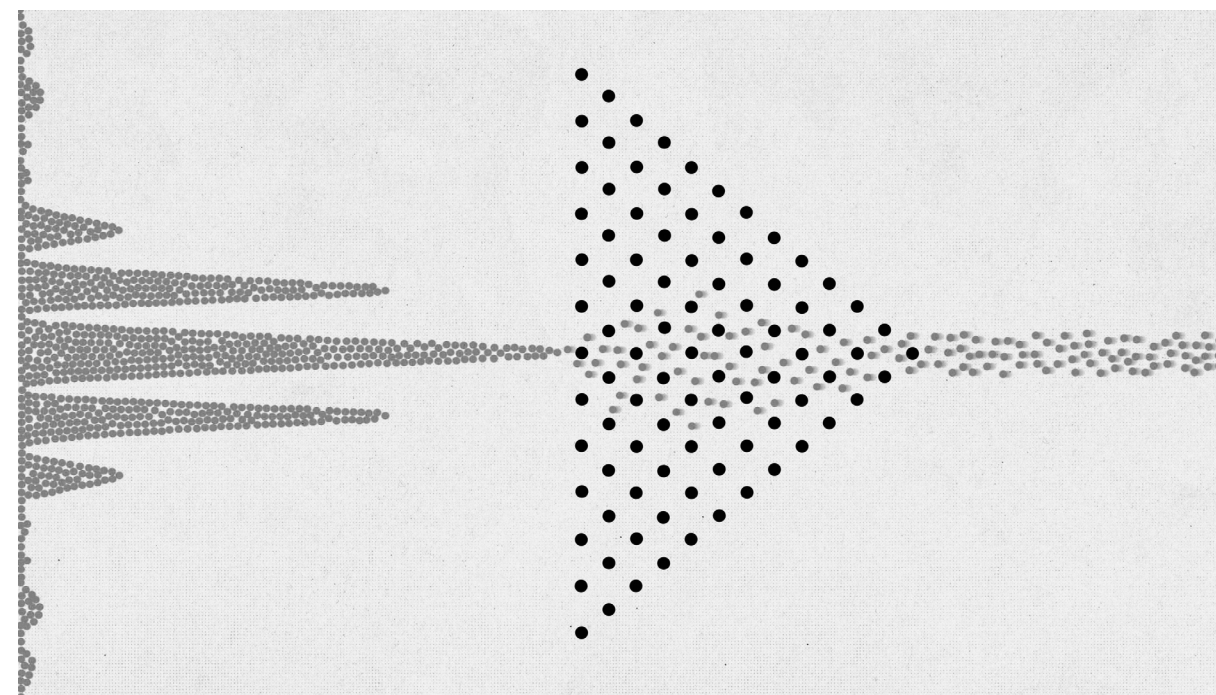Diagrams: author's own

support while their surrounding collective context remains open to experiment and innovate. This challenge between the safety and the risks of experimentation is part of arriving at the higher form of cooperation.

C. The Self and Self

The third relationship that Unger offers is less directly related to the organization of society but related nevertheless, the relation of the individual agent to themselves — *the self* to *the self*. In order to be free we have to have a coherent form of acting in the world, or what we refer to as a character. Yet, this character should not become a rigidified form of the self, *a shell*, within which we grow and begin to wither. Thus, to develop a free self-expression of this character, we have to examine it, break it up, rebel against it, and try other forms of experience. We live in search with the society organized, to create better chances to break out of the shell, for instance, by creating the practical conditions for students to change direction, or shift interests, in the midst of their experience with resources that allow space for such risks.

In reflection on the previous stories and their connection with the three relationships of the self, for "the self and the self" it's my relationship with my work, for "the self and the other" it's the subjective feedback for Malik, and it's "the self and the society" for the clustering system. Through these stories and many others, I recognized that design students' creative identities are often being determined by the structures embedded in their relationships to their own work and their surrounding context, which I refer to as *institutional determinism*. But, since these relationships are part of life and their embodied structures are unavoidable, then how do we address this ordeal?

I believe we can transform such ordeals into an instrument of our empowerment. We can ascend to a higher form of education but our ascent is not in the overcoming of these challenges, meaning we can have one form of design education to be higher than another, but no form will be ideal in the world of design. Hence, this is not a kind of fatalism, instead it's the opposite. It is an attempt to motivate transformation.

These three relationships between *the self and the society, the self and the others, and the self and the self* have two implications or two relations to the bigger argument of this thesis. The general one is part of the conception of design education by the individual designer, and the second is in how its transformation has a particular significance to self-empowerment. Thus, in desire of achieving this empowerment, we can consider these three sets of relationships while actively seeking additional propositions for change. They all depend on this interplay between tangible alternatives and conceptions of who we are, and what we can become.

A representation of institutional determinism.
Collage: Pradeep Mutalik, Quanta Magazine, accessed Dec 3, 2020

A. Objectivity & Subjectivity

In understanding further what other propositions of change we can bring, we need to examine how we position ourselves relative to all three relationships of *the self*, while considering the dialectics of subjectivity and objectivity, agency and structure, and personal and political narratives. The history of philosophy has been in a continuous attempt to sort through these dialectics, yet at some moments in time the dialectic of subjectivity and objectivity extended to either sides of the relationship; misconceiving human's nature as an either or.

The historical and philosophical lens of philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's early work, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*[6] claims that in earlier civilizations, human beings were completely identified and submissive to the customary form of life in their society; subjectivity did not exist. He believes subjectivity only emerged as a response to the formation of states and cultures in historical civilizations, rather than as a lens we embody from the beginning of our lives. More specifically, Hegel points to three stages of our development. The first stage is accepting or conforming to the way

things are in life. The second stage challenges the way things are, claiming a different, subjective understanding and identifying where there's conflict between these two perceptions. The third stage is a reconciliation between both, where subjectivity is no longer in conflict because we will now develop practices and structures that can fully accommodate the demands of subjectivity, and from which we will no longer need to be in conflict.

This was the period of these contradictions, which Hegel describes in these three stages. Unger argues that Hegel misconceived subjectivity in all stages, and I agree with his argument. For the first stage, there is never a stage where a human being is perfectly identified with their culture or society with no possibility of rebellion or non-conformity. Unger says "We can't resign ourselves to the way things are. No society has even been like that. There is always this possibility in turning against the ideals of the tribe no matter how isolated and primitive a tribe may be."

For the second stage, the narrative of transformation, in that our confrontation with the conflict and our overcoming of it does not follow

6   Hegel and Inwood, Hegel.

a single script. Unger explains that Hegel gave a paradigmatic significance to his stylized version of the history of European culture, but that is only one of the many contingent forms upon which the confrontation with the conflict has taken. Hence, it has no universal significance as Hegel wrongly supposed it did.

The third, which is the most significant, is in Hegel's view of the final stage, that at the end we will finally have a form of social life from which we no longer need to be conflict and from where there will no longer be contradictions. Unger believes there is no reason for that to ever happen, given who we are. He says "we are those agents who are always seeking the absolute, the infinite and the unconditional; and all that we have around us is the relative, the finite and the conditional." Hence, we are demanding the absolute from the relative, the infinite from the finite, and the unconditional from the conditional.

B. Decolonizing Narratives

Since we concluded earlier that Hegel's belief is not true and that there is no definitive form of life in which we will no longer need to be in conflict with subjectivity, then we can examine its opposite the romantic belief, or the Sartrean[7] belief, presenting structures as the death of spirit or agency. Jean-Paul Sartre, one of the key figures in the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology, claims that the only time we are fully alive and fully human is the moment in which we rebel against the structures to an inter-loop of unstructured life. For example, in a plot of a romantic novel, the hero is oriented towards winning the hand of the beloved, yet the actual marriage, which is supposedly the goal of the whole exercise, is never represented in the romantic novel. It would be an enormous anticlimax, a falsification of the whole romantic thesis, making this romantic idea of love a form of despair. It is an escape from the daily structures of life, yet it despairs of the possibility of changing the relation between agency and structure. A relation where we can't create an ideal structure to be the definitive home of humanity, but would allow us to engage without surrendering because it would facilitate its own revision through repetition. Though it usually awaits a crisis to make its revision possible, but then it would arrive at a higher form of freedom in structure.

7　　Sartre and Barnes, Being and Nothingness.

Repetition or routine is part of life as described in *Repetition* by Kierkegaard. Søren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher, theologian, poet and social critic, said that the war against repetition[8] is the war against life. The Danish term for "repetition," is *gentagelsen* (or *Gjentagelsen[9]*) meaning "the taking back." As architects and designers, we are aware how innovation takes place against the background of "taking back" in our iterative practices. In fact, the practice of repeating in one's own performances is an architect's principle enquiry of designing "something excellent"[10] as described by Leon Battista Alberti. Therefore, the intention is to seek the kind of repetition that makes innovation possible.

The fulfillment of design is in the interplay between the dissonance and consonance. The design process develops what is in one moment seen as dissonance, to the next moment to what is seen as consonance. We advance in the relation between the new and the repetitious or the familiar. This act invests design in everything we make; it is our internalized intentions that are eventually

---

8　　Kierkegaard and Mooney, Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs.
9　　Melberg, "Kierkegaard's 'Gjentagelse.'"
10　　Alberti, "The Ten Books of Architecture."

externalized for interpretations in everything we do. Encapsulated with personal intentionality, design becomes the theme of innovation within all three relationships. Hence, this thesis rejects both the Hegelian belief and the Sartrean belief, as a set of ideas or assumptions of our humanity and its transformation, instead it advocates transformation through repetition.

In overcoming the limitations of such philosophical arguments, we can consider several initiatives, innovations, or reforms. One inspired from another part of my conversation with Malik and can be considered for innovative transformation, addresses graduation requirements embedded in an institutional scale structure.

Malik: The HASS (*Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences*) requirements are strict
(1 sec pause)
I need to make up my mind
only few subjects qualify for design
(0.4 sec pause)
I'm also interested in CS (*Computer Science*) but I don't want the structure in CS to constrain my creativity
but it's also somehow being constrained in design
(0.2 sec. pause)
uhhh I really enjoy the time I spend doing design

MIT Architecture vacant hallways, "Be your whole self." "Explore at MIT. "
Photograph by author

The picture above was captured on March 17th 2021, at MIT Architecture's vacant hallways. That was almost a year since the COVID-19 pandemic forced the switch to remote learning and the campus to be evacuated. Like the remains of an apocalyptic scene, this poster among many others was hanging strong, untouched, an ironic message from the past, calling on students who no longer occupy those hallways: "*Be your whole self. Explore at MIT. Apply for a HASS minor.*" The HASS Minor[11] is only one or two extra subjects from the required HASS Concentration, which was addressed by Malik.

As described on MIT's registrar website, the HASS Concentration is part of MIT's General Institute Requirements: "All undergraduates must complete the HASS Requirement. It consists of eight subjects of at least nine units each in the humanities, arts, and social sciences. Learning in the humanities, arts, and social sciences (HASS) is an indispensable part of your undergraduate education. The HASS Requirement provides you with opportunities to deepen your knowledge in a variety of cultural and disciplinary areas, practice critical thinking, and develop vital skills while trying something new."[12]

From Malik's perspective, it was a limiting requirement embedded in how the structure of minoring and majoring operates. In fact, it wasn't only Malik, it was reported among other design students. By the end of Spring 2020, another design minor student, Samar, approached me with a similar inquiry. Hence, I asked her to write me an email that I can forward in search for an answer. Her email reads:

Subject: Hoping that there is a way to pursue Design while completing HASS requirements.

> Hi Rania!
> I really enjoy the Design Studio classes and was hoping that I could take them while completing a HASS concentration. I looked

into the two offered HASS-concentrations related to Design & Architecture, however, none of them had 4.022, 4.031, and 4.032 as classes that could be taken to fulfill the concentration. Currently, I am planning to major in Physics and Mathematics, but I also want to pursue Design, so I am very torn on how to fit all these classes while also meeting the graduation requirements. I absolutely love the hands-on experimentation learning process of Design Studio classes and I find that the creative process practiced in these classes really help me think differently in other fields. *How To Design* studio showed me how much I love designing and I really do not want to have to give up on this passion because of graduation requirements. Is there some way to make this possible? Thank you so much!

Like all other structures, whether on an institution level or a studio level — a design brief, list of precedents, or even feedback — they unintentionally place a load on students' personal decisions. Therefore, understanding that architecture is a discipline, embedded within contexts of structures and practices, makes institutional determinism as inevitable and equivalent to the realities of life that are earlier described by Unger's three relationships. It is a set of ideas or assumptions of design education that could help make sense of these arguments, along many other ways of making

sense of them. The difference among these ways could potentially over time have problematic implications that can only be discovered little by little. However, it's only through transformations that we gain agency and arise at a greater form of autonomy within systems.

C. Political & Personalist

When politics are serious, just as Malik's conversation was, they are ultimately about who we are. Every social movement is the prophetic element in politics being both political and personal. It is about institutions, consciousness, who we are, and what we can become. Deep transformations emerge from this prophetic element. We have to continue to invent and reinvent a language and a practice in which to deal with it. Through such movements[13], we have been moving closer to our desired transformations, but it's also important to acknowledge that in some other ways they were contradictory and led to less freedom; with systems, models, and votaries of those movements, with agreements and disagreements with one another.

We have all these schools of Architecture

---

11   "MIT SHASS: Undergraduate Studies - Minors."

12   "HASS Requirement | MIT Registrar." accessed 30,03,2021"

13   "Radical Pedagogies"

that exist around the world as examples of a certain project or movement, once motivated by the desire to empower creativity. If we look at two of the current major architecture schools in the world, MIT comes in with a central theme in pioneering a culture that "investigates questions that occupy the space between people and their environment"[14] as it takes pride in bringing light to design and architecture and the rest of the creative discipline. Another, The Bartlett School of Architecture at University College London, prides itself for its emphasis on representation, but also defines its academic excellence as a commitment to make "a responsible impact on the world" through "insight and ingenuity"[15]. Most architecture schools tend to have a particular reputation, described as either cinematic, artistic, graphic, program-based, and so forth... Whichever architecture school we address, they are all seeking to empower creativity in their own ways, cultivating in its student bodies an influence of those systems, in both their design language and eventually cultural practice – including academia.

As an example of how a school's cultural environment affects students' ability to grow, architectural education has always been influenced by institutional kinds of legacies at a given moment in time. At a graduate MIT studio, students from this studio brought into discussion their experiences. The following dialogue is a short snippet of their conversation, the rest has been excluded to conceal identities.

x: However, like we do have agency!
       Uhm...
       But I think in other studios
       That does exist
       Similar to what you're talking about
X":   I don't know
       Like we have agency
       But we are also being indoctrinated into this
       pedagogical lineage where "architect Z"
       comes up over and over and over again
       And we are eight weeks into the
       semester and I feel like…
       I have maybe had "architect Z" projects
       referenced TEN times
       And like ZERO "architect Y" projects, So
       "architect Z" is like a reflection…
x: ((interrupts)) Who is "architect Z"?
       Who is bringing up "architect Z"?
       Cause that hasn't happened for me

Some of the students complained about being "indoctrinated into this pedagogical lineage where "architect Z" comes up over and over and over again." However, for others, it was like, "who is "architect Z"? Who is bringing up "architect Z"?" At a first glance, this conversation may be confused as a subjective pedagogical approach biased towards specific architects and schools of design. However, spotlighting that students sharing the same studio, content, and structure still had different experiences, highlights that this model created various possibilities by diversifying instructors' input. This was possible because students themselves have different academic backgrounds, personalities and ways of engaging with instructions, but most importantly it's because they were not taught by the same group of instructors.

This approach may be one model that could respond to the problem of institutional kind of legacies – *the other*. The concern is that pedagogy is propelled and developed in a particular direction, in part because the academic system nudges an agenda, particularly within foundational or core studios. Academics begin to frame conversations, hence giving a particular flavor to frame their pedagogy and establishing one part of the structure that depicts institutional determinism. On another part, the academics themselves are part of a higher structure that requires them to build and shape their own pedagogy around a set of deliverables, such as books, publications, and articles, all of which pressure them into a particular framework submerged within academia. Then the agenda is evidenced and is propelled through different mediums and intensities depending on which phase the student is in their academic journey. In this understanding, I believe two activities are crucial to designers' development. The first is participating in realizing our surrounding context, and the second is revising one's assumptions and our agency in what and how we create. It is a matter of continuing to raise questions and preparing design students to explore and engage critically, while communicating their creative personal voice in their work, particularly their social and cultural self-expression in design. Afterall, design is motivated by the expression of personal intentions[16]. Intentions are embodied within the designer's context. Hence, it is important to continuously question whose intentions are design students exploring and how is their context shaping these intentions.

Academic structures were organized on a model of hierarchy under the primacy of ideologies and revisions in the name of emancipation. As much as this structural thinking may be effective in more scientific

14   "About | MIT Architecture."
15   UCL, "About Us."

16   Jencks and Baird, Meaning in Architecture.

disciplines, they can become mostly problematic in disciplines that pride themselves on creativity. They are a common project at any moment of architecture's academic history with a dimension of less or more autonomy. They are about an idea, that the ordinary student is lifted up to a higher form of creativity, and the regimen is the instrument of this collective lifting up. It is a long running peculiar idea and it remains in its position of shaping the architectural discipline. Hence, how it shapes the agenda bears on the issue of creativity. The question of what could make someone creative has occupied some of history's greatest minds, yet it only continues to grow in the ambiguity that surrounds it.

There are two approaches to the concept of creativity. One is the early romantic idea of creativity, in which you have no constraints and it is simply a question of the free-flowing imagination – turning out to be false. As Chomsky says, "I would like to argue that without a system of formal constraints there are no creative acts."[17] Hence, real creativity is premised on constraints. Only when being placed in a multi model structure of constraints,

creativity becomes possible. There needs to be "intrinsic and restrictive properties"[18] for the mind to struggle with, otherwise it is just an experience of anarchy of being loose. The restrictive properties are on one side concerned with the canon of knowledge that an architect needs to know, and on another, the context through which they master this canon. With a similar consistency with the second approach to creativity, if we have to follow all those subjective institutional demands for many years and wait for the spiritual core to be manifested in professional practice; the spiritual core may not emerge and may be buried in these technical demands and in the gap between education and practice. Thus, structures' greater influence on design curricula have to be continuously revisited to avoid foreclosing transformative models for both students and educators.

This is another dilemma presented by institutional structures and one that has to be addressed. Having to work with all these constraints, there needs to be a parallel track in which students discuss and examine their personal intentions. Thus, as a basic concession, instead of waiting until the last phases of their

education journey to develop their own personal argument or "thesis", students practice both modes simultaneously. They begin to harness their personal voices and imagination while equipped by increasing mastery of the technical demands. On the one hand, they arise with personal ambition, aspiration, and curiosity and at the same time, they are able to create both technical and cognitive capabilities[19]. Both the collective interest and personal interest can then go in a double ascent, in the hopes that the two tracks begin to converge.

However, for this ascent to potentially happen, we should ask who are the representatives of this idea? It is everyone within those systems: the institutionally empowered decision makers, the academics, and the students who consume this discourse. Having faith in those actors, the conservatives and the progressives, is as essential as understanding where they would situate themselves with such a movement.

The conservatives believe that our interests and ideas need to be pursued within the horizon of the established institutional

arrangements[20]. They believe we can adjust them at the margin but we shouldn't imagine that we can change them fundamentally or radically over time — a result of this long historical evolution that has demonstrated in practice what works and what doesn't work. The progressives, on the other hand, believe the advancement of all of our ideas and interests requires innovation in the structure, in the institutional and ideological structure[21].

What always matters is the direction of the initial steps by which we begin to move in a particular direction according to a particular circumstance. We don't have to await a crisis, such as a pandemic[22], to have the motivation in finding alternative possibilities. One could have different attitudes towards this ordeal. One possible attitude is thorough disenchantment, but this is not my concern in this thesis. Rather, I believe in design education but I think it has to be continuously examined in order to thrive. I also don't believe there is a simple way to demonstrate how to make this happen, particularly because the method of making this thrive depends on the controversial ideas of time,

---

17   Chomsky and Peck, "The Chomsky Reader." Chomsky is a linguist, philosopher, cognitive scientist, historian, social critic, and political activist.

18   Chomsky and Peck.

19   Alberti, "The Ten Books of Architecture."

20   Unger, The Left Alternative.
21   Unger.

22   "The Pandemic Has Caused an Unprecedented Reckoning with Digital Culture. Architecture May Never Be the Same Again (and Why That's Okay)."

labor, finances, the interpretation of architecture history and it's philosophical assumptions and so forth.

Assuming that our political and biographical trajectories emerge from our own experiences, the meaning of each move is determined by what comes next. Every particular move can be an excuse to not go further or it can be a step to proceed with more intentional transformations. The current situation may be seen in retrospective correction, however the desired transformation that I aspire for is progressively looking into what we can create. It matters what position we take in order to penetrate a long set of forms of normalization and rationalization.

For example, MIT Architecture's recent response to the pandemic brought much-needed change in design teaching methodologies; something I consider a step toward reimagining design education. It wasn't a clear and straightforward trajectory but in recognition of this pandemic reality, it brought a much-needed refreshing movement to experiment with design teaching methodologies[23], particularly within

Core studios[242526]. Such transformations can extend to ongoing questioning of teaching and engagement methods, feedback and critique, program structures of required and optional subjects, and program lengths and engagement with practice.

My own contribution to this movement is an experimental pedagogical intervention, one at a level of a SMArchS thesis, that introduces a set of tactical prepositions, or alternatives, in an attempt to dislodge biases in search of design methodologies that help design students harness their personal stories and voices in development of their design identities. I believe, we can begin by equipping design students with intellectual instruments such as studying the history of philosophy, history of design and architecture, and engaging in dialogue of transformative pedagogical alternatives that can reinvent current structures through content, medium and time.

We do have the means to do these transformations, but they require effort as they run in friction against the grain. This touches on

a moral conundrum in our relation to political activity. Political activity is not to be treated as a romantic adventure, in which our objective position is just an instrument of some discovery of *the self*. On the other hand, we should not treat our political activity as the reduction of the self and the individual to an instrument of some collective project of *the society* and *the others*. The collective project advances or fails in historical time and we only live-in biographical time. Hence, we have to believe in the actors and discovering the affinity between the collective interest and our personal interest in finding our voices, even more so, in not becoming passively submissive to our circumstance at any moment in history. It is precious to confront these predicaments.

23   "Highlights from IAP 2021 Workshops | MIT Architecture."

24   "Architecture Design Core Studio III | MIT Architecture."
25   "Architecture Design Core Studio II | MIT Architecture."
26   "Architecture Design Core Studio I | MIT Architecture."

A. Personal Narratives as a Pedagogical Tool

Having faith in the actors and the possibilities of alternatives, I developed and conducted two interconnected case studies that could be implemented during my limited time in the SMArchS program as part of a larger pedagogical framework. Offered as a complement to design studio curricula, the framework consisted of two related sets of delivered practice, one that is reflective and another performative. In this framework, the focus was on two activities that I consider to be crucial to designers' development. The first is creating the means for students to participate in realizing their surrounding context, and the second is creating opportunities that allow them to revise their personal voice and agency in what and how they create. It is a matter of preparing

design students to explore and communicate their creative personal intentions in their work in order to arrive at their own personal argument or "thesis" — particularly through their social and cultural self-expression in design.

First introduced in Fall 2020, the first case study was called 1 Second Everyday (1SE) and the second called 4.184 Architectural Design Workshop: The Untold Narratives. The first case study 1 Second Everyday (1SE) was running in parallel with three design studios: undergraduate required studio 4.021 How to Design (Almost) Everything, and two graduate required studios 4.151 Architecture Design Core 1 and 4.153 Architecture Design Core 3 — carrying with it an initial belief in its intuitive flow with no desire of statistical verification. However, acknowledging how this intervention situates itself within

Case Study:
1 Second Everyday (1SE)

Studio
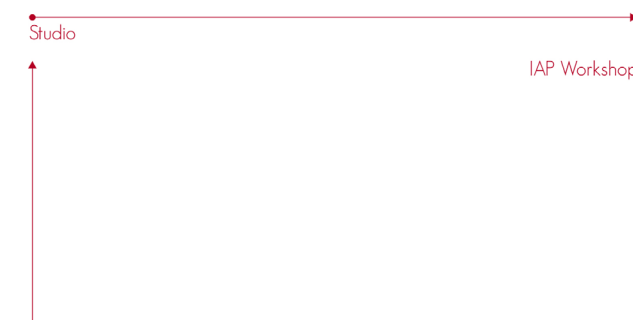
IAP Workshop

**First Case Study:
1 Second Everyday
(1SE)**
Diagram by author

Case Study:
4.184 Architectural Design Workshop: The Untold Narratives

a SMArchS thesis, I employed a qualitative research method including ethnographic practices, such as journaling, conversational interviews, questionnaires, focused groups and participant observations.

Both case studies instrumentalized students' personal narratives[27] — a medium of visual and written accounts — as a design tool to emancipate students' agency. Narratives as described by Elinor Ochs are a "discourse genre, mode of cognition, and social activity… they exhibit their own internal organization.[28]" As they capture students' diverse backgrounds and interests, they become a means of negotiating *the self* within all three relationships: *the self, the others, and the society*. It is a means of examining a long-process, to help design students harness greater autonomy in shaping their identities within a certain context.

Participating students were asked to start by taking a short survey to help me tailor my approach to each. With an opening disclosure, students were reminded that the questionnaire is not an assessment of their skills, instead, it is first

a method of self-reflection and second a piece that complements their 1SE visual and written narratives. As Arnheim says, "Reckless analysis of the self will do harm, but so will the artificial primitivism of the man who refuses to know how and why he works.[29] The survey captured students' academic and professional background, the medium they prefer communicating through and the digital software and fabrication techniques they prefer most, concluding with two questions that I felt would be most relevant to how they identify as architects and/or designers.

Select one or more that usually guide(s) your design decisions the most. (Check all that apply.)
    a. "Form follows function" Louis H. Sullivan
    b. "Form follows beauty" Oscar Niemeyer
    c. "Genius loci - Architecture is in the genius of the place " Anonymous
    d. "Tools guide ideas" Anonymous
    e. "Architecture is always political" Andrés Jaque
    f. "There are things we live among 'and to see them. Is to know ourselves.' George Oppen
    g. "I prefer drawing to talking. Drawing is faster, and leaves

less room for lies." Le Corbusier
    h. "A story must be told or there'll be no story, yet it is the untold stories that are most moving." J.R.R Tolkien
    i. Other: …
Space for any other design peculiar thoughts you'd like to share... (Long answer text)

The questionnaire received 24 responses in total (Appendix), that is about 30% of the number of students from all three studios, with 12 only eventually participating in the daily journaling. The 12 participating students were all graduate students, thereby eliminating the undergraduate design studio 4.021 How To Design from the rest of the case study. Hence, it's important to clarify that the overview of this questionnaire and the case studies are representative of a very minor segment of the MIT Architecture student community and do not stand as a generalizing statistical verification.

Students participating demonstrated diverse academic backgrounds, coming from Anthropology, Architecture, International Relations, Fine Arts, Design, Finance, Geology, Liberal Arts Education, Materials and Mechanics, and Mechanical Engineering. Their professional

backgrounds ranged depending whether they were undergraduate or graduate students, two of which with 4 years of work experience and the remaining majority between one to two years of work or internships in Architecture, Agriculture, Exhibition Design, Textile Design, and military service. Additionally, more than 50% percent of the responses showed preference of communicating their design intentions through a manual medium; meaning hand sketching, hand making, and so forth. The second majority, indicated that the digital medium was of their preference with the rest almost equally splitting up between film, written and oral. A percentage that reflected similarly on making or fabrication techniques with the majority preference to manual architectural applications, then subtractive manufacturing, and coming last additive manufacturing. Taking into consideration their academic and professional backgrounds, soft and hard skills, and their preference to several mediums, informed an understanding of their prior knowledge in order to better recognize their contributions and tailor the approach for each, whilst also giving them a chance to reflect on their own unique ways of approaching each exploration.

---

27   Gornick, The Situation and the Story.
28   Ochs, "Narrative Lessons." Elinor Ochs is a linguistic anthropologist and professor of anthropology.
34

29   Arnheim, Visual Thinking.
35

Following this questionnaire, I remained in touch with both Core 1 and Core 3 participating students as they continued to progress in their studio work. Both studios are offered for the MArch core program at MIT. 4.151 Architecture Design Core 1 is offered the first semester of the MArch program following a syllabus of a project-based learning approach. In Fall 2020, the central project, addressed by each student individually, was guided by a prompt to "Design a destination for a community to gather, to be together, once a year, in response to a moment" within the site of Boston's Emerald Necklace. This new Fall 2020 model of Core 1, or what was called *CoLab (Collaborative Laboratory),* brought together the disciplines of History Theory and Criticism, Building Technology, Design, and Computation to provide focused circuits for exercising and exploring the central project.

The other studio, 4.153 Architecture Design Core 3, is offered in the third semester and concludes core studios of the MArch core program. It followed a syllabus that brought, together with the Building Technology subject, the chance for students to "explore and test the development of an architectural design proposal with an integrated understanding of building performance, design for climate change, and the decarbonization of constructive systems and materials in architecture." This Fall 2020 model for Core 3 was guided by a prompt to design "a community owned and operated seaweed farming plant in Maine."

My access to Core 3 studio was limited to the two final reviews and one-to-one email check-ins with participating students. However, through my teaching assistant (TA) role in Core 1 studio, I had the chance to perform as a participating observant in a sort of a postmodern anthropology[30] of the studio — virtually documenting responses, intuitions and narratives. My position followed the project of decolonizing anthropology[31], to decolonize students' narratives as to decentralize design education in its historical understanding and recenter it on a tailored progressive practice that brings together the collective and individual interests — "the instrumentalization of liberating intellectual production"[32]. This TA position, on one side, allowed a better insight of both the instructors perspective and the students' experiences, and on another, it generated some resistance given studio ethnography is not a common practice. Yet, as a graduate student myself, this helped reclaim my position to engage in the conversation.
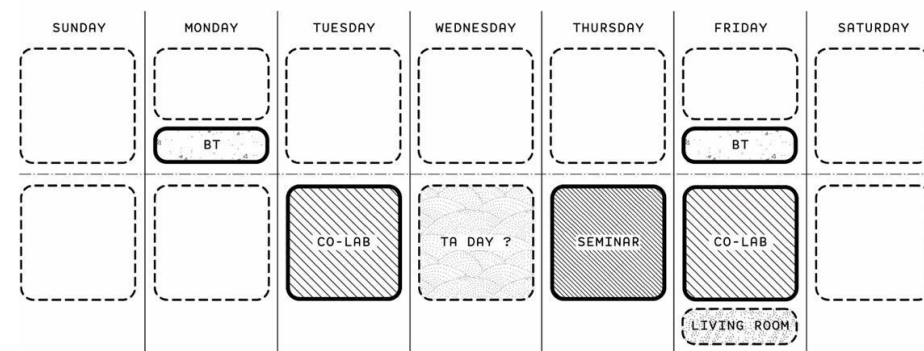
30   Geertz, "From the Native's Point of View."
31   BEJARANO et al., Decolonizing Ethnography.ethnographers
32   "Women Writing Culture by Ruth Behar, Deborah A. Gordon - Paperback - University of California Press."

i. Reflective Narratives: 1 Second Everyday (1SE)

As the first case study ran in parallel with the studio, an application called 1 Second Everyday[33] was introduced for capturing a one-second-long video with a one written caption, every day. Following Donald Schon's strategy of *reflection-on-action[34]*, the pedagogical framework incorporated autoethnography, or self-ethnography, as a metacognitive practice, or awareness of one's own thought processes, for the construction of design students' identity. It is a means of mindful self-reflexivity to help design students become aware of the socio-cultural practices and ideologies they find themselves in and to simultaneously question them through their personal narratives. Their personal narratives would form a collection of life stories

33   "1 Second Everyday."
34   Schön, The Reflective Practitioner.

Core 1 weekly schedule, bringing together the design studio, HTC seminar, and the BT subject
Diagram source: MIT Architecture Core 1 Syllabus
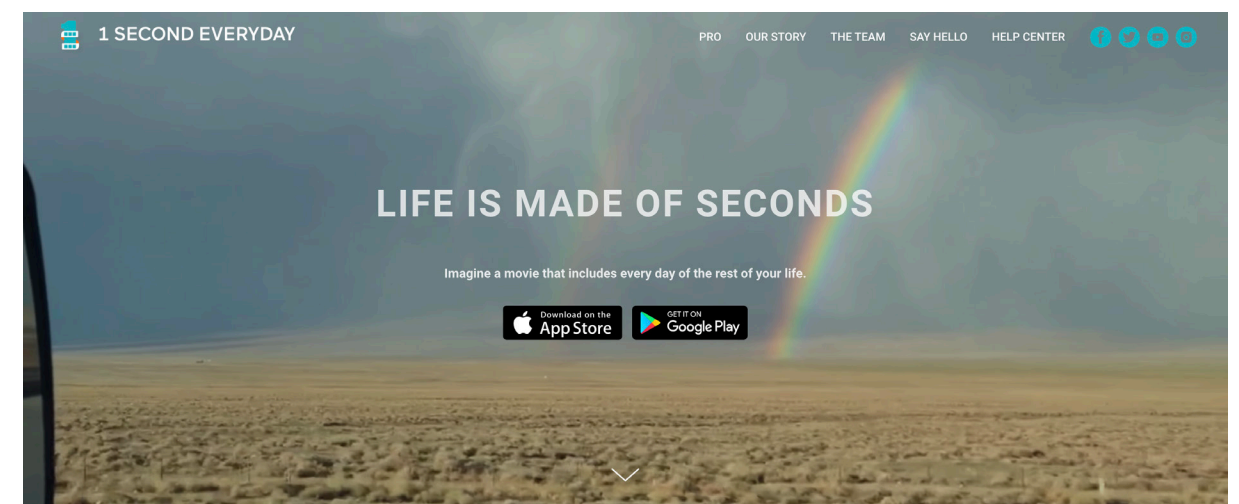
or short episodic moments derived from their daily lives. Hence, giving agency to students' unfiltered design intentions and advocating for the inclusion of their unfiltered diverse socio-cultural, political and environmental identities. It is a means to have students tell a story - their story - through the visual material they create, the narrative they write, and the voice they bring to their work. The focus was to explore what the students personally thought is interesting or relevant about their work and life every day.

Due to the remote nature of the study, I was connected with the students through nodes of "e-field" events. Specifically, almost all of our interactions happened on Zoom[35], Miro[36], and Slack[37]. Studios relied mostly on those three mediums given both their audio and visual features to conduct virtual conversations, desk-crits, reviews and interviews. Miro in particular was favored as it became the medium that allowed students to look over each other's shoulders, share work and keep a documented flow of the design process; thereby to a certain extent[38] maintaining studio culture within a fluid

35   "Video Conferencing, Web Conferencing, Webinars, Screen Sharing."
36   "Miro | Free Online Collaborative White-board Platform."
37   Slack, "Where Work Happens."
38   "The Pandemic Has Caused an Unprecedent-
38

exchange of ideas.

The 12 participating students' input varied in consistency, what they journaled and when they started and ended journaling. The narratives that were collected are of two types; I call them *internalized and externalized narratives*. Internalized narratives are all the narratives students constructed in progress with their design projects and while making their design decisions. They consist of the daily documented visual and written material, in addition to any objects and models produced in progress of their design work. And since the design process advances between the new and the repetitious or the familiar everything we make is our internalized intentions that are eventually externalized for interpretations. Hence, I decided to also collect what I am calling the externalized narratives which consisted of the exchange in the students' reviews and their desk crits, meaning any representations they used to share their ideas with an external audience and was then infiltrated by feedback.

ed Reckoning with Digital Culture. Architecture May Never Be the Same Again (and Why That's Okay)."

ii. Performative Narratives: The Untold Narratives

To utilize these collected narratives in an intuitively reflective and performative practice, I introduced my second case study during MIT's Independent Activities Period (IAP)[39] 2021 called *4.184 Architectural Design Workshop: The Untold Narratives*. The workshop, an intensified two-weeks long, offered participating students the space to use their previously collected *internalized* and *externalized* personal narratives as a design tool to voice their design intentions, whether highly pragmatic or highly speculative. The workshop was designed to develop students' design autonomy, give agency to their unfiltered

39   "Highlights from IAP 2021 Workshops | MIT Architecture."

design intentions, and empower their design self-expression — to tell their "untold" narratives.

Four students, two from core 1 and two from core 3, out of the twelve who participated in the first case study, joined the workshop. On the first day of the workshop, we came together to introduce ourselves and our motivations in being part of the workshop, then concluded with individual discussions on the students' projects and their aspired trajectories. I introduced the syllabus and the flow in which the workshop will follow. It focused on two main themes, the content of the students' personal narratives and them communicating these narratives. The first quarter of the workshop was dedicated to analyzing and reflecting on their studio project
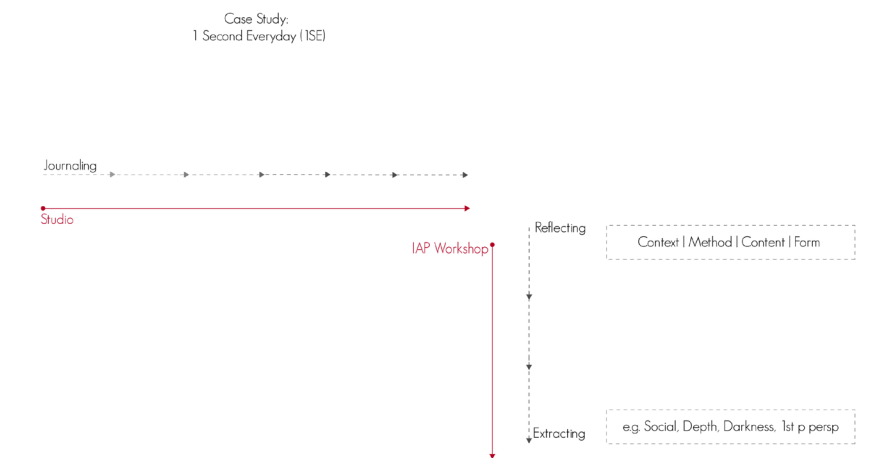
Second Case Study:
The Untold Narratives Workshop
Diagram by author

39

4.184 Architectural Design Workshop:
The Untold Narratives

Two weeks - 5 credits

Offers students a space to use personal
narratives as a design tool to voice their design
intentions and interests, be it highly pragmatic
or highly speculative. It is a collective for
those who make in reflection - remaking a
studio project while considering what design
intentions to amplify, discard, or replace.
Following a mindful and personal process,
students will revisit their studio's project brief
and their own written and visual narratives to
remake their design worlds through a
publishable vignette. This workshop is
designed to develop students' design
autonomy, give agency to their unfiltered
design intentions, and empower their
expression of design identities - to tell their
"untold" narratives.

Enrollment cap of 12 students.

Instructors:

Skylar Tibbits
Rania Kaadan
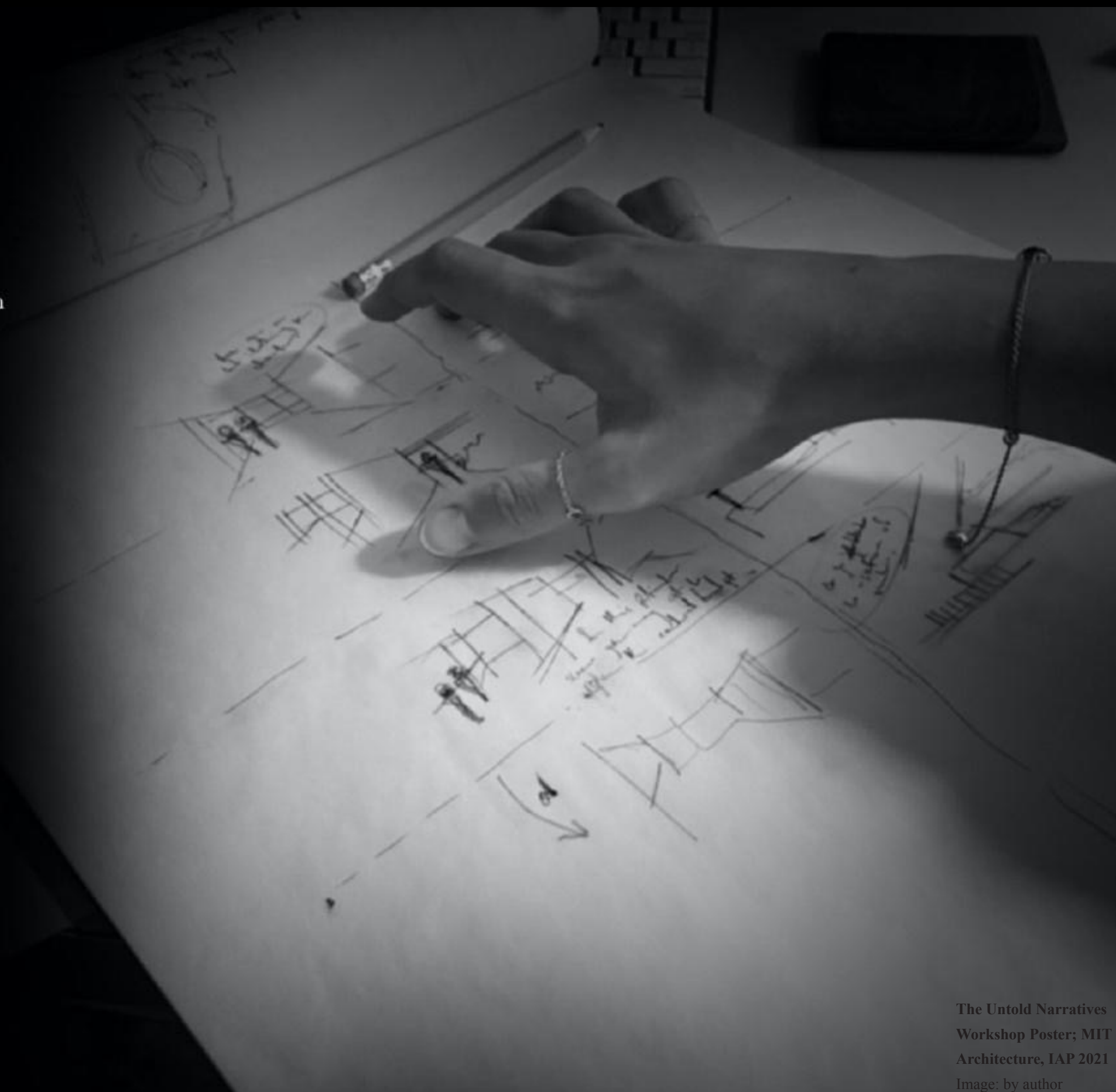
The Untold Narratives
Workshop Poster; MIT
Architecture, IAP 2021
Image: by author

brief, in addition, to their own internalized and externalized narratives across four main central themes of design matters: these are context, method, content, and form. *Context* being any material relevant to the sociopolitical, cultural, environmental aspects. *Method* captured the process, whether pragmatic, speculative, tool-led, or concept-led, and so forth. *Content* is the setting, space, time, choreography, and so forth. And, *form* means any material that has to do with composition, line weights, scale, massing, density, depth, and so forth.

In reflection on those narratives and what they already have from personal experiences, students were guided through a series of exercises to arrive at their *retrospective narratives*. They were then asked to extract the design matters they would want to remake, introduce, or discard in preparation for their worldmaking. To assist in this thinking, I introduced Nelson Goodman's ways of worldmaking, as optional methods of remaking their projects, or their worlds, in addition to offering his paper *Words, Works, Worlds[40]* for theoretical support. They were then required to write a short paragraph, no more than 200 words, with any drawings or illustrations

that could support their reflections and what they intend to do, and then to bring it the next day to share and discuss with the class. The following are the worldmaking methods or practices that I referenced from Goodman and from which they were asked to choose only one as a motivation of their own.

- *Composition and Decomposition*: taking apart and putting together. For instance, splitting their project into parts, deciding which is a whole and which is a part, and putting them in a new composition.

- *Weighting*: deciding which design matters they would like to make relevant or irrelevant. For instance, spotlighting or emphasizing a particular design matter.

- *Ordering*: to shift entities or design matters, putting them in a new order or sequence. With this, they could manipulate the element of time and structure and shift around their narrative's linearity and nonlinearity.

- *Deletion and Supplementation*: to either discard or weed-out a design matter, or maybe fill-in with a new one to replace the one removed – thereby supplying

Jan 4 10 AM	Jan 5	Jan 6 10 AM	Jan 7 10 AM	Jan 8 10 AM	Jan 9	Jan 10	Jan 11 10 AM	Jan 12	Jan 13 10 AM	Jan 14 10 AM	Jan 15 10 AM	Jan 16	Jan 17
Intro	-	Visiting Guest + Discuss chosen projects	Work-shop	Workshop + Writing & Visuals Workshop	-	-	Workshop + Revision Workshop	-	Workshop + Revision Workshop	Work-shop + Individual Check-ins	Final Workshop + Individual Exit Interviews	-	Final

The Untold Narratives Workshop Schedule, MIT Architecture, IAP 2021
Diagram: by author

new material. For instance, they could replace their setting, taking their project into another site or context.

- *Deformation*: maintaining all that they have, but reshaping or deforming particular aspects through either "correction or distortions[41]" This could be perhaps in the language they use to address their project. For instance, if they're addressing it in a third-person perspective, they may want to shift it to a first-person perspective and change how they embody the space.

For the second day of the workshop, students brought their work for discussion and given this was our second meeting, they were still in the process of intuitively reflecting. The intention was that by the end of the second day, students would decide on what they'll be doing for their vignettes — both the written and visual

deliverables. For that, we had individual one-to-one discussions and concluded by introducing vignettes[42] — narratives they would inhabit with a visual description to evoke or share a feeling with the reader. Vignettes are similar to how we design in architecture; they reveal short scenes within a larger story while describing a frozen moment in time. They were intended to be passively shared, meaning they ought to be accessible without any additional explanation. Hence, with this, the workshop would then conclude with no final review, but instead the work to be shared in a silent virtual or live exhibition. To understand vignettes better, they were offered references of written works: *The Lord of the Rings[43]* by R. R. Tolkien and *The Little Prince[44]* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

The intuitive reflecting exercises,

40   Goodman, "Words, Works, Worlds."
42

41   Goodman.
43

42   "Vignette."
43   "Lord of the Rings Books by J. R. R. Tolkien | Barnes & Noble®."
44   Saint-Exupéry and Howard, "The Little Prince."

Case Study:
1 Second Everyday (1SE)

Journaling

e.g. Social, Scale, Sound, 1st p persp

Extracting

Studio

Reflecting

Context | Method | Content | Form

IAP Workshop

Context | Method | Content | Form

Reflecting

Extracting

e.g. Social, Depth, Darkness, 1st p persp
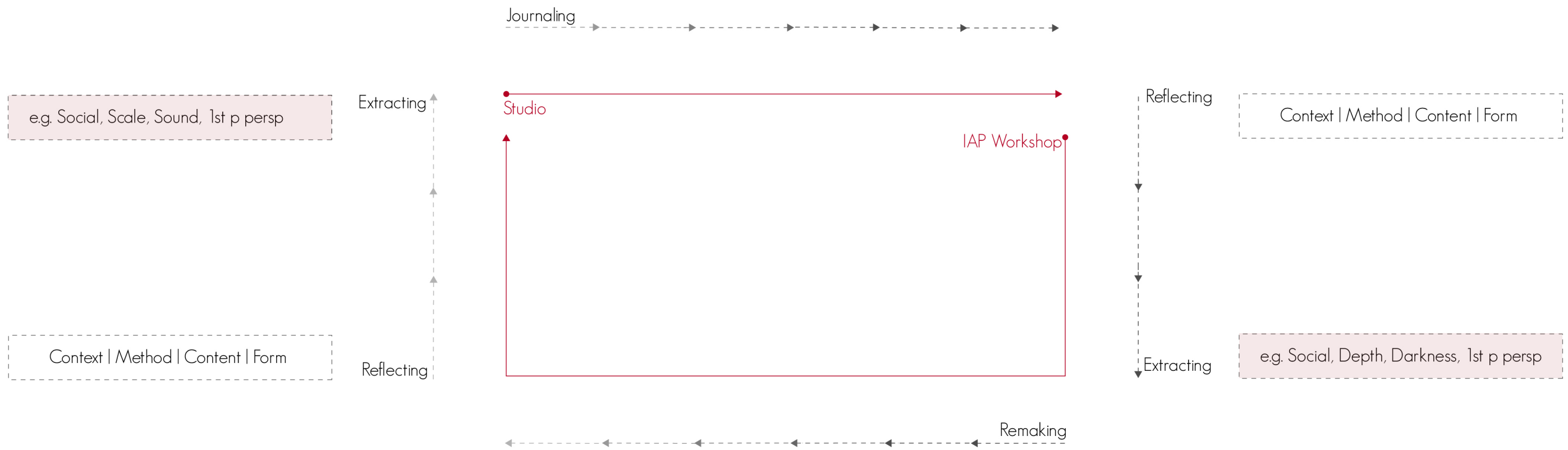
Remaking

Case Study:
4.184 Architectural Design Workshop: The Untold Narratives

The two Case Studies.

Diagram by author

one and two, resulted with the *retrospective narratives* and were used as tools for the remaking process in the new direction students chose. Since the workshop was discussion-led, it offered an audience with a version of peer coaching. It proceeded through two interrelated prompts: individually creating and then offering constructive criticism and feedback. Hence, the remaining meetings progressed in an interplay of developing one's own work and offering feedback to peers. Students were asked to upload their work on a shared online folder through which they would exchange their work. Then, they would review and workshop each other's work through discussions and letters of constructive feedback describing what kind of experience they had while reviewing their peers' work; what senses did they appeal to, what is accessible and what is not, and what perhaps they would like them to elaborate more on. With that, they would conclude remaking their design projects, or worlds, in a process of deconstructing and reconstructing their actual worlds through utilizing their personal narratives.

For the final deliverable, the idea was to create a document that expresses their "untold narratives", while reflecting on both

46

iterations and arriving at their own introspective narratives. Given students were required to provide a statement of interest before joining the workshop, each student's flow structure was tailored to what they want to voice while sharing a common deliverable that complements their studio work. Students could either use what they have already produced in their studios, or remake or create new visualizations. In the end, the deliverable was a publishable short document — their introspective narratives — with an option to publish either identified or anonymous, depending on their personal preference.

In the proposed pedagogical framework students take their new work into another round of coding. The intention was to extract design matters and reflect on the different iterations through a qualitative analysis process using Atlas-ti and steered by questions, such as: How many of the codes overlap from both interpretations of the same project? What codes remain evident or occur frequently? Which coded narratives are descriptive, and which are reflective? Followed by a set of questions to help the educator evaluate the process, such as: Is there a correlation of interest between students of the same group? Do more senior students show

**An example of students'
retrospective narratives**
Diagram: by Inge Donovan, Part 1

47

linear sequence — sampling — slowing — I, II, III, IV, V

circular/sequential

radial/non-sequential

spiral/sequential

distributed/non-sequential

redefinition of antechamber

nesting

nesting

An example of students' retrospective narratives
Diagram: by Inge Donovan, Part 3

radial/non-sequential

linear/sequential

Written Retrospective Narratives: Inge Dononvan- Part 2

"For this workshop, I want to address the linear sequence of my project. It is clear that the episodic sequencing of the project is not something that can be discarded since it depends on a movement from "fast" to "slow," but instead, linearity itself can be interrogated. To achieve this, I would take away the emphasis from the diagrammatic nature of the plan/section and workshop new sequences that do not necessarily follow a straight line. These could follow circular, spiral or radial paths, they could be distributed, nested or overlapping, resulting in a blurring, an expansion and contraction and a more nuanced spatial organization. I will begin by mapping out these new possible geometries, challenging the linearity of the sampling process (which may fail) and the binary I established. Since the project essentially functions as a cinematic device, the exercise could culminate in a sequence of perspective drawings that are delivered cinematically, bridging the gap between my animations and sections. These drawings could become a destabilizing device in their relationship to both internal and contextual referents."

48

a more homogeneous interest? Is it evident how their diverse backgrounds play a role in how they approach design? And, so forth... However, the act of coding was not applied in the case studies, given several limitations, and was instead guided by raising the questions and asking students to intuitively reflect on both versions of their work.

The students' experiences and the work produced varied based on their motivations. In conclusion of the workshop, I share below students' own brief description of their work with a detailed layout in the unit that follows.

Introspective Narratives:

Inge Donovan wrote: "The work completed for 4.184 *The Untold Narratives* builds off my Core I project, in which I explored a new definition of memory and storage using the ice house both conceptually and morphologically. The limited time frame of the work (3 weeks) yielded a project in which straight lines were drawn between episodic moments, triggering questions about linearity. During the workshop I explored the idiosyncrasies of the flow of time through the five distinct episodes of the project. Using collage, I explored possibilities for layering, overlapping, wandering, congealing, and straying moments, drawing on the nonlinear

49

and irrational nature of our perception. The introspective nature of the project also sparked a reflection on the relationship between myself and my work, leading to a blurring between my personal narrative and the narrative of the project."

Yiqing Wang wrote: "The work completed for 4.184 *The Untold Narratives* builds off the Core 1 project Building Together. It facilitates the self-organized construction in order to stage a scaffolding of polyphonic narrations pervaded with designers' interventions, assembled to empower the community to actively shape the city. Create a manual. Exchange knowledge. Mount the towers. Test the materials. Modify the space. The project is turning ~~the~~ ~~Emerald Necklace~~ Shanghai into an activated lab where community members are able to respond, learn, gather, and collaborate."

Natalie Pearl wrote: "On the coast of Maine's Mount Desert island, home of Acadia National park, and sacred land of the Wabanaki people, an architecture has been proposed that questions ownership and permanence through an architecture of stacking. The work completed in 4.184 Untold Narratives, builds off the Core 3 group project *The Politics of Stacking in*

Introspective Narratives

Retrospective Narratives

Externalized Narratives

Internalized Narratives
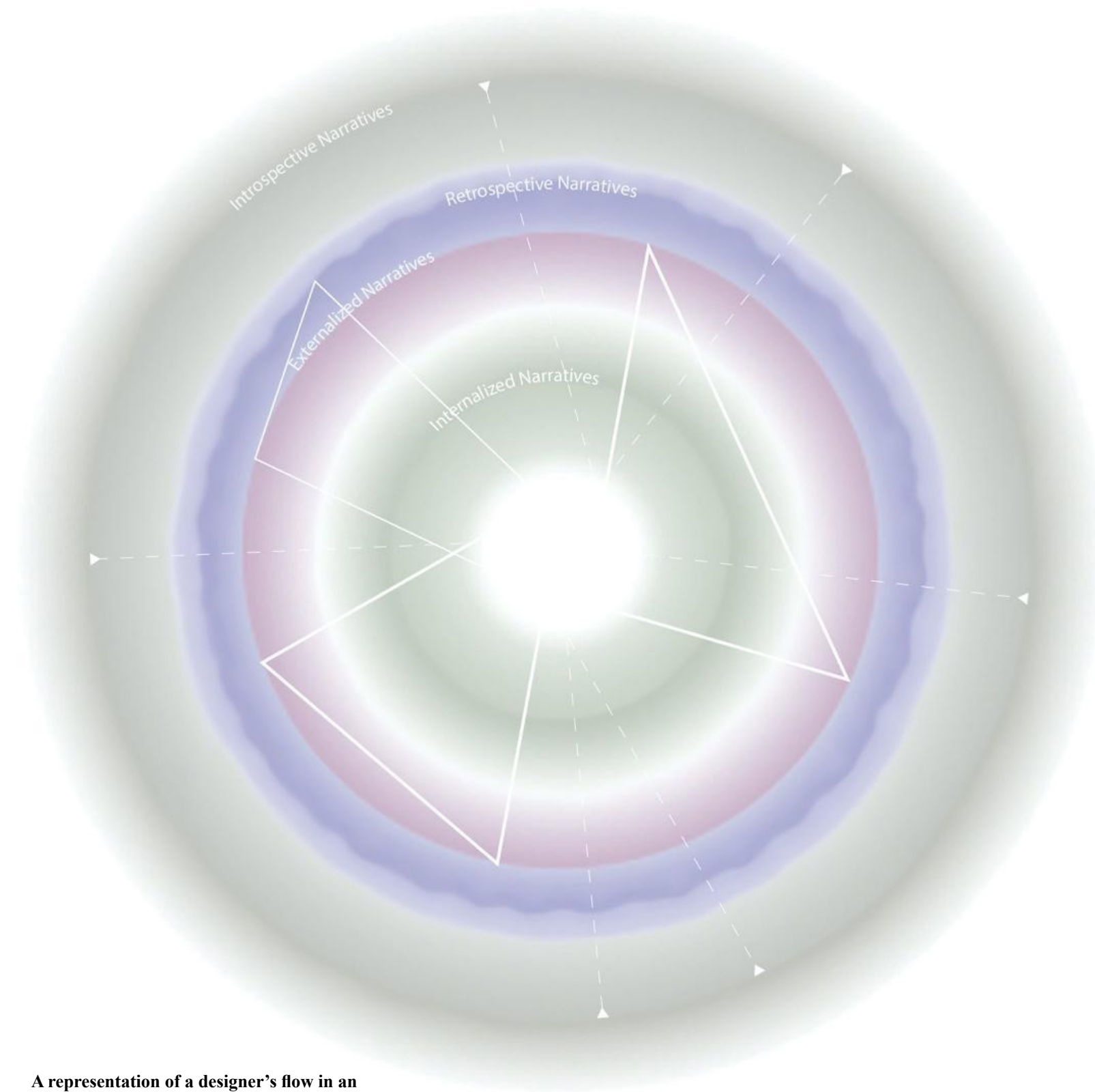
A representation of a designer's flow in an interwoven sequence of personal narratives.
Diagram by author

which we wanted to question ownership and existence on the island in an effort to honor indigenous values and practices. During the workshop I explored these themes of *temporality and assembly through stacking* through the representation of the site at different moments in time and phases of assembly. The goal of the paintings is to expand the time frame in which we understand and present our architecture, and through doing so personalize the work and allow the necessary time to work with the medium of watercolor."

To conclude both case studies, students were invited to participate in an exit interview where they were asked to reflect on their experience from both an emic and etic viewpoint; emic from inside - the subject's perspective; and etic from outside - the observer's perspective[45]. Below are short snippets of their anonymized feedback:

Student (1)[46]: It's so interesting Rania, I have to say, I came into the workshop and I was like oh my god, this is not going to work for me, and it's been like so interesting for me to

actually reflect – I don't reflect on my architecture work in this way – like I do – but it actually challenged a lot of my beliefs on how I work, so it's been actually really good.

Rania: I am so happy to hear this!

Student (1): I have really enjoyed it. We will do a debrief tomorrow I guess, but mostly, I really enjoyed the written aspect and tying that to my design work because that's something... like I came to MIT to try and create a bridge over those two parts of myself and its actually like happened in the workshop… so that's cool.

***

Student (1): " uhm… so when I was thinking about this (the workshop) and my project this semester,

What I… the project I did in the semester and the project I did in this workshop was actually really different. And it got lost in some steps in one way, but gained up in another way.

So, in my semester project, I was trying to steer away from narrative, and obviously this workshop was very conducive to that, so it became… I wasn't satisfied with having just the

narrative… how it would lead to the space… collapse the narrative of me making the project into the narrative of the space which I think was fun, I had fun doing that.

I already mentioned this to you, so maybe its redundant, but it was very interesting for me to look inside myself, like probe how… what my relationship with my work is, and how I can challenge that and kind off heal that gap that I have created as a form of self-reservation in my undergrad when I didn't want to feel attacked by critics, hahah so yes, I enjoyed that a lot."

***

Rania: It's different based on what student you are dealing with. Sometimes…

Student (1): yeah! If I hear "why did you do it this way?" I don't like that, hahah

Rania: exactly, some students want that specific feedback…

Student (1): yes, yes, I prefer people saying I don't like this, but it takes a while to get used to that… If you're coming into an architecture… you know it could be quite horrible, hahah

Rania: yes, so it's pretty much different, and it's more about tailoring it to what one needs. I don't believe there is an ideal

method, but I guess what I am saying is that we've been doing the same method, years and years now, maybe especially after Covid, since we started experimenting, we can actually experiment more in the direction that allows…

Student: in a way like the system should allow the individual to learn in their own way. Like Waldorf schools[47], in terms of the pedagogy of the whole, but I guess architecture is behind, we are all expected to stand up, present our drawings, and get roasted hahah"

***

Student (2): You know, I think there's, like, an underlying kind of big question… like whether as a designer are you expressing yourself, or it is to design for some purpose.

Because, I don't know, like... I feel especially like for me, based on my education, during university, my B.Arch degree, like I think many of my peers were more comfortable with like your (meaning instructors) feedback because they're thinking of like you're learning like how to do things right,

45   "Somewhere Between Here and There."
46   Student numbers here are not indicative of any order of the students participating. It is only a means of differentiating between different conversations.
47   "Waldorf Education - Association of Waldorf Schools of North America." Based on the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy, it is an educational philosophy that emphasizes the "child-centered" philosophies of the Progressives.

so that they can later pursue a career, they can know how to do it right when they're entering a firm or something.

Rania: Yes, I think what you're questioning is very important – whether design is a means of self-expression or designing for a purpose. I think design should be both.

You're designing for a purpose but as you do that, your design decisions are to be made based on your own self-expression – it should come from you. You have your own life experiences, and others around you have completely different ones.

Student (2): Yeah, I really like enjoyed this process. It is refreshing because, because I have been learning architecture for like five and a half years now, and I want to question… uhm... like one…   the first one is more personal, like whether I'm going to be more of a practical (means practicing) architect or will I be staying in academia.

Like I know you can be in between, be an instructor but also practice, but I think those are different trails for me personally and I've been thinking which way to take.

The other thing is about architecture itself I've been questioning whether there is like

a standard for good design and how to compare it. Because I think if you say that this is my personality, then my personality cannot be compared with others… it cannot compete with the other. But then if you actually have like two iterations of your own, then you actually can kind of compare them to see which one is closer to you.

***

Student (2): I think the workshop is really helpful because… I think especially for me – in studio I've been accumulating stuff and raising questions. From all the externalized materials, I saw like guest crits and instructors keep asking me more and more questions and, in this workshop, I tried to answer several of them, which I think is really helpful and I think this is actually like a topic, I will probably keep looking into.

Yeah, so in the sense, I think this workshop is really helpful.

***

Student (3): I mean, I guess for a skill set I mean… I just think about like technical skills like how to use grasshopper, how do you make an axonometric, or how do you create a gradient on illustrator, like all those sorts of things are really skill sets that are differentiated… like… some

people aren't aware of those skills or potential… which I feel is inhibiting but that's just like very much different than just not knowing how to develop a certain thought, although I suppose having the skill set can help you develop unique thoughts.

And then this workshop is very much just reflecting on and exploring what you didn't necessarily have the time or space to in studio, it wasn't like a space to sit and learn illustrator for a couple of weeks and I think that's an interesting approach.

***

Student (3): I mean being mindful I think is probably like a challenge for life in general.

But I really like what you're saying in terms of like having to defend each decision you make and understanding the decisions you're making because I feel, I mean I am totally guilty of sometimes being like I don't know why I did this and it's not even because, like my Professor told me.

I mean making decisions that I made but like I didn't necessarily think through why I was making them, which is why this is a good exercise as a designer.

***

Student (3): um… I think it went really well, I mean I like the short chick-ins, I almost wonder if there were maybe… it's not like there were too many chick-ins, but I found it interesting how we've seen each other's work like every day, to the point where like at the end it's not really an exciting reveal or anything you know, because you're like this is what we've been working on together.

which I don't know if that's like good or bad. I mean it took the pressure off today, I guess. It's just something… just like another set of sharing and getting feedback.

***

With the students' reflections on all *the self* 's relationships to *the self, the others, and the society*; I conclude the two case studies with an aspiration of taking them into a pedagogical framework within design curricula. The next section is dedicated for students work, in both their insightful visuals and intimate writings. Like all other contributions to pedagogy, this framework has to be further practiced, scaled, examined and observed for progress over time. However, based on student's feedback, I believe

offering students space to investigate alternative possibilities allows them to question how they identify with design in general and their work in particular, in addition to what their interests can become as part of a group, a studio, or an institution.

This parallel track is one minor step to a larger aspired transformation, but for its own scale, I believe it would allow students to harness their personal voices and imagination while being equipped by increasing mastery of the required technical demands within studios. On the one hand, they develop in realizing a personal voice and, at the same time, they are able to create both technical and cognitive capabilities. Both the collective interest and personal interest can then grow in double ascent, in the hopes that the two tracks at the top begin to converge. As such, this framework situates itself as part of a longer-process, one that advances through reimagining alternatives in light of experience, observing progress, and innovating in structural possibilities. It is a pedagogically transformative and socially solidaristic project – decolonizing design students' diverse narratives in order to realize personal design identities.

B. Personal Worldmaking
Student: Yiqing Wang

First Year Graduate Student

MArch '24 - Core 1
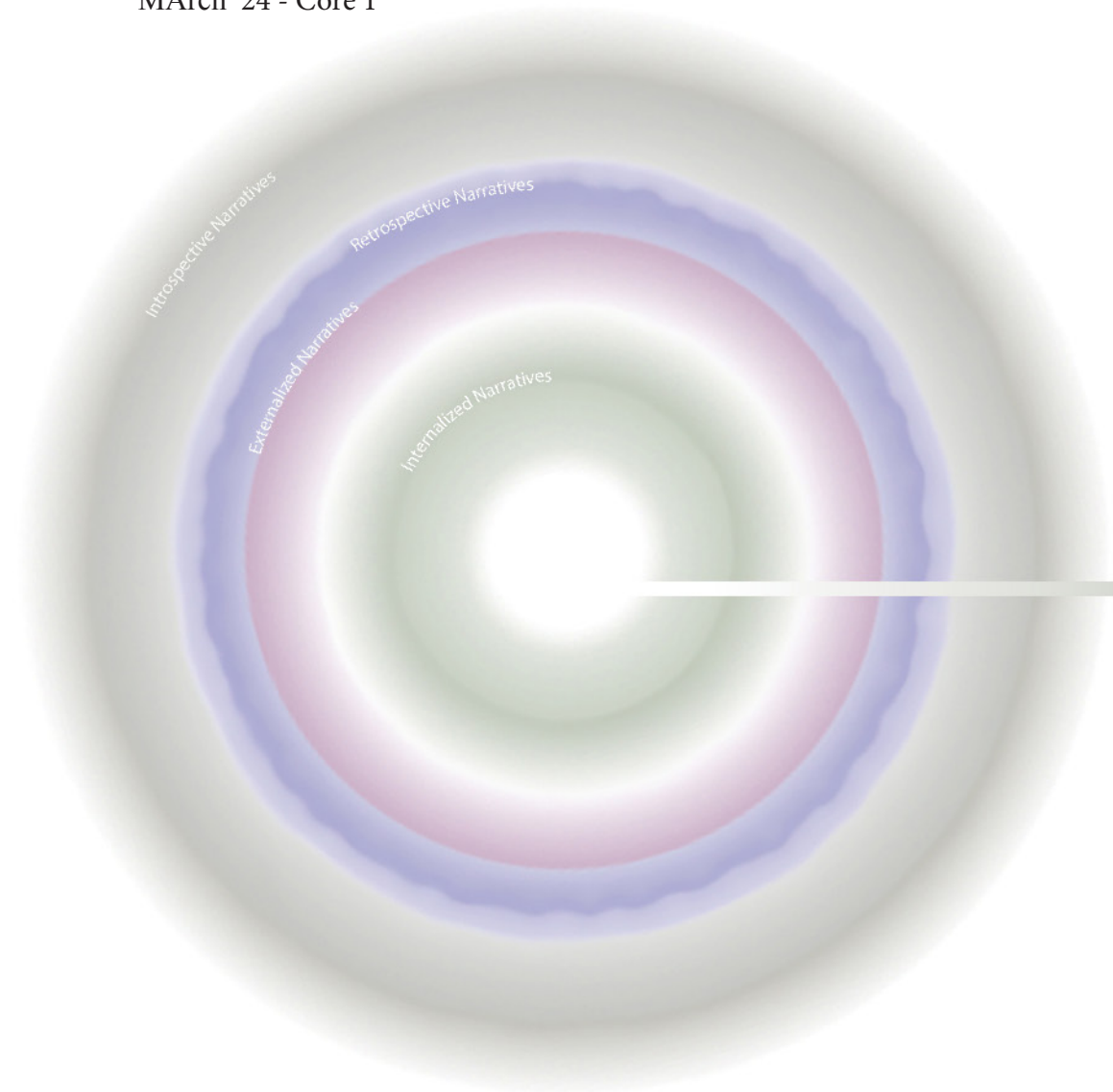
Tuesday, 9 Sep 2020

Vectors construct motion while constructing epicenters of stillness.

Flexible metal wire to wire.

Thursday, 10 Sep 2020

But it is so common to create architecture of failure.

Friday, 11 Sep 2020

Walls come from Extrusion of lines, as shades from depths of light.

Saturday, 12 Sep 2020

We don't design a cookie but a mold. But without a mold I could still use my little hands. Enjoy this piece of architecture without architects.

Sunday, 13 Sep 2020

Nobody in it the building bein' a structure so just watch it standing as a sculpture

Monday, 14 Sep 2020

A yellow dragon tastes no different.

Tuesday, 15 Sep 2020

A wall should be more than a concrete structure, he alarmed me but I might have an emotional attachment to the material.

Wednesday, 15 Sep 2020

Movement&Access

Program&Massing

Surface&Infrastructure

Parallel
Interact
Overlap
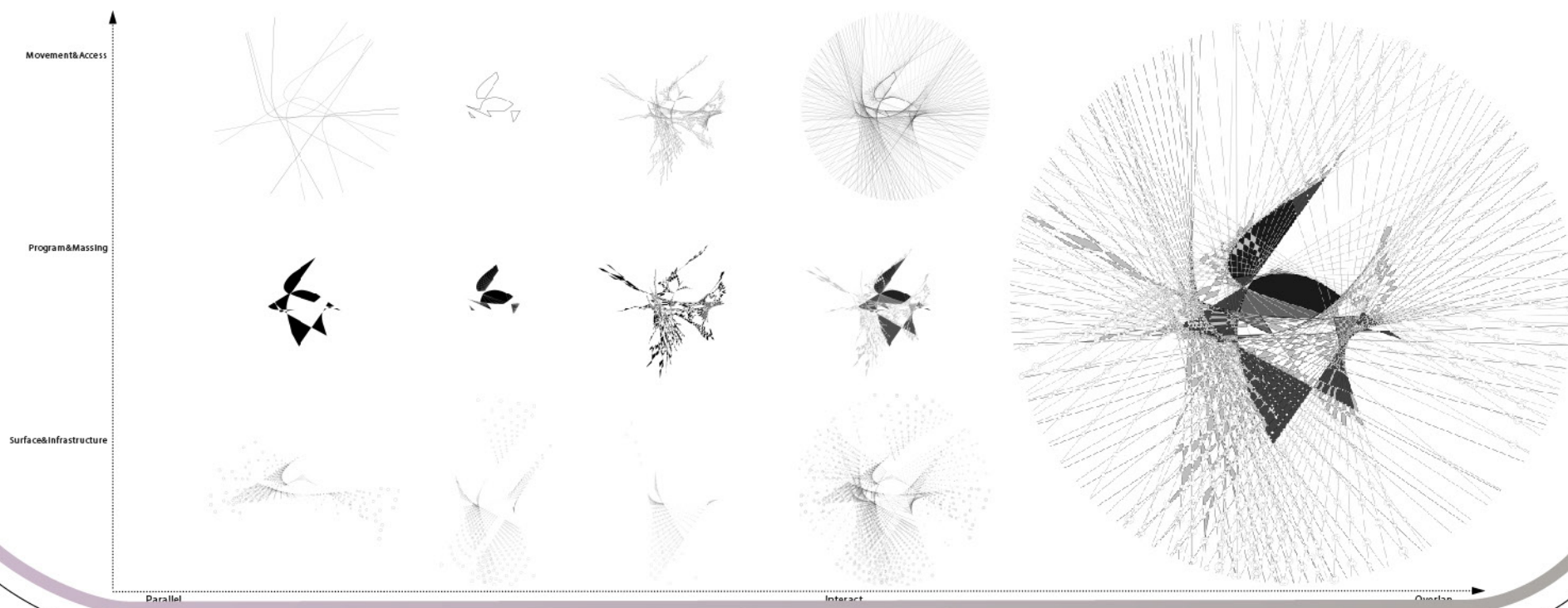
Wednesday, 16 Sep 2020

Less and more in the process is never a bore. Time to simplify, which is the toughest stage.

Thursday, 17 Sep 2020

Sound from the clouds knocking my brain. Again a rainy day prevents me from walking outside.

Friday, 18 Sep 2020

Rental life is over, smell of shrimp cannot be removed.

SEP 21 2020

1SE.co
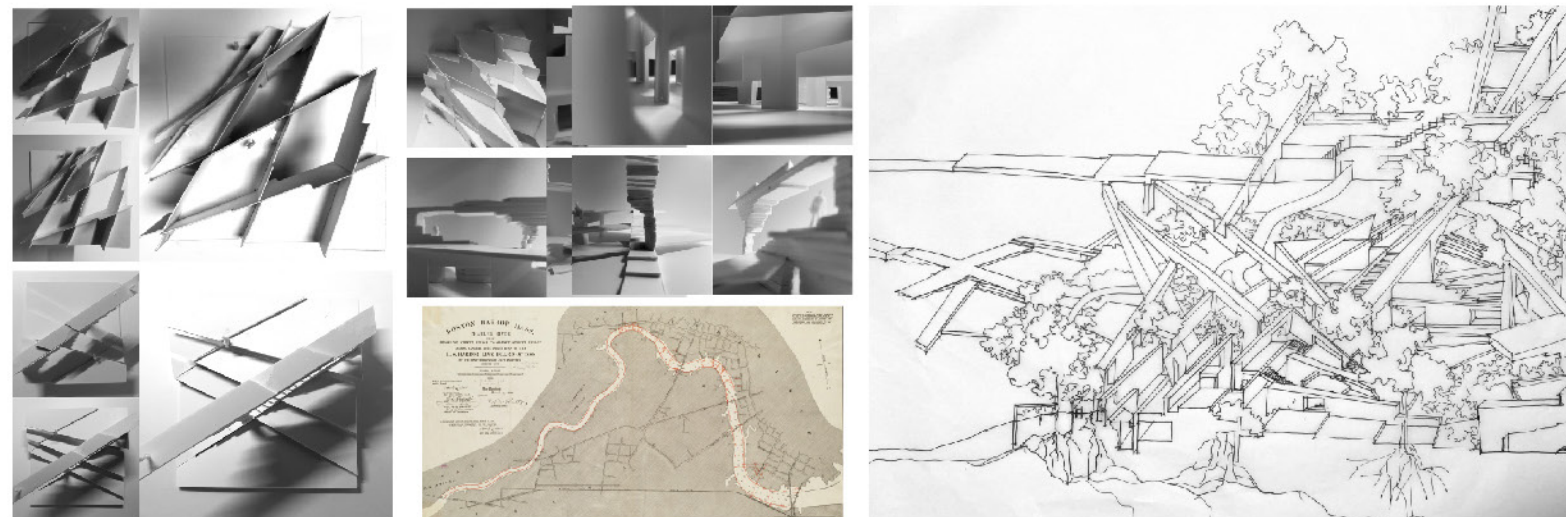
Tuesday, 22 Sep 2020

The process is a buzzing traffic packed with thoughts. Zero in and pivot on the gathering and the site.

Circuit Process

Plans

Sections

te Sections

50 ft   100 ft
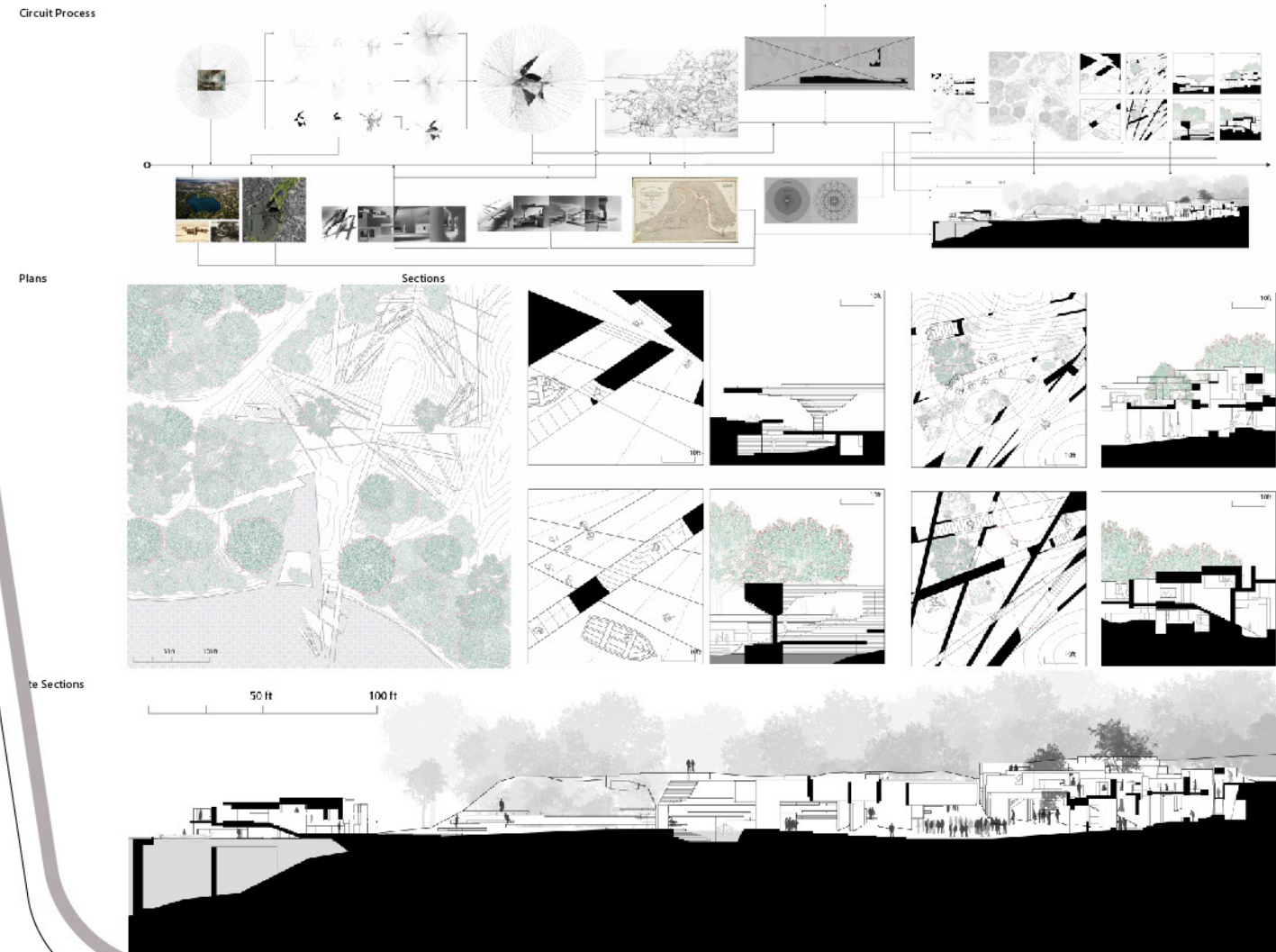
Saturday, 19 Sep 2020

Farewell my rental room
Pack up belongings
That belongs to me

Sunday, 20 Sep 2020

I waited for a whole week
for this ray of sunlight to
finish my building
technology assignment. So
not poetic poem.

Monday, 21 Sep 2020

Back home and step back. The design process is not a continuum, rather a spiral
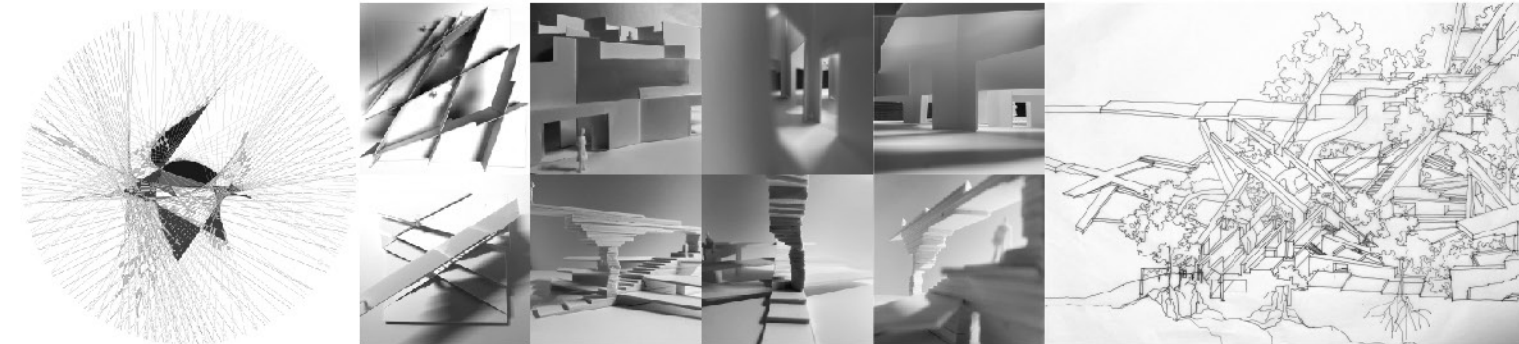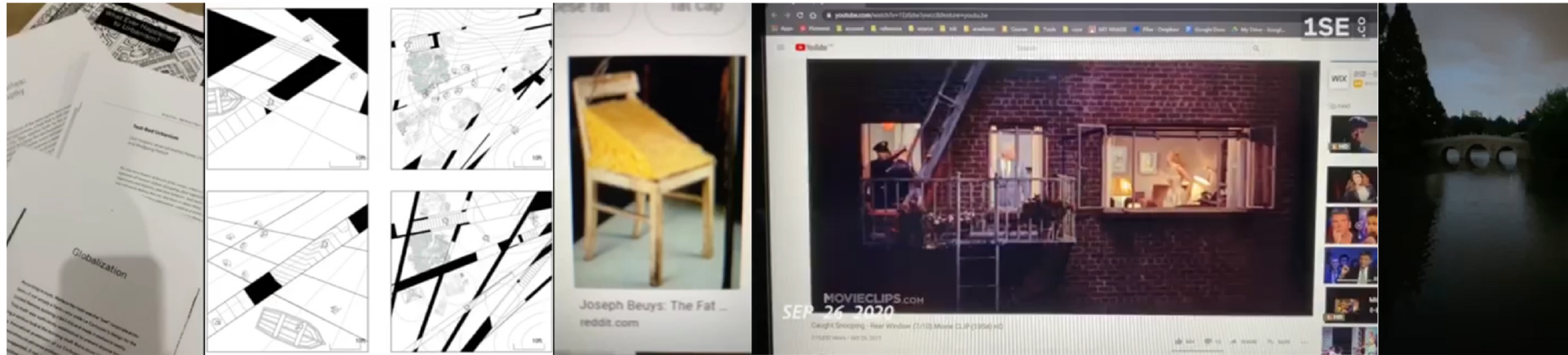
Wednesday, 23 Sep 2020

Stacking the reading papers makes me feel safe before I get started. Moving forward to Circuit B is another round of accumulating works for the central project. What is my central project is too early to decide but never too early to explore.

Thursday, 24 Sep 2020

Re-Thinking about aperture and movement, is to see thickness as surfaces where interactions happen. But is no activity is happening, the poche has to be a structure, a still life, a monumental object, an extension of the landscape.

Friday, 25 Sep 2020

The fat chair: it is a melting chair, a ropy chair, a warm chair, a body chair, a non-architect chair, an uncanny chair, a dying chair, a living chair.

Saturday, 26 Sep 2020

Rear window: the character, the observer, the audience. The interaction, the threshold, the background.

Monday, 28 Sep 2020

Postmodernism:)

Tuesday, 29 Sep 2020

The plaza is occupied when it's daytime and left empty at night. Use the gathering place as an anchor to weld scenes together. The crowds are communicating through the objects.

Wednesday, 30 Sep 2020

Chatter: the looping sound track.

Thursday, 1 Oct 2020

What canorous songs transmitted from the watching machine.

Friday, 2 Oct 2020

Meet on the grids.

OCT 03 2020

Saturday, 3 Oct 2020

Night time:
Shadow A and B and C ... and J were still there talking.
The street light twinkled to remind them time to leave.
I was shooting the video and wondering when would they go then I could take the dispersal moment.

Sunday, 4 Oct 2020

The green screen waiting for a scale figure.

Monday, 5 Oct 2020

Story board of individuality and conformity.

Tuesday, 6 Oct 2020

I walk in the city, through the pedestrians, on the grass shaded by the dense forest. Finally, in front of me is the weird portal. On the other side sits a roaring infrastructure, a massive plinth, a porous maze.

Untold Narratives

Exchange Machine / A Giving & Taking Maze
YouTube

Wednesday, 7 Oct 2020

I am not sure if it is about labor. I still do not understand this word.

Thursday, 8 Oct 2020

It is so awkward to use one's own scale figure: this is the most unfamiliar figure.

Friday, 9 Oct 2020

How could a piece of junk be ecstatic.

Saturday, 10 Oct 2020

They all remind me that people are gathering while I cannot see anybody. I pick up one piece of souvenir to whomever it belonged, and then I leave mine. I bend; I stand up; All of a sudden, through the aperture, I see another pile of stacks. As I go deeper and deeper, the resonances get louder. At the epicenter, we arrive at the same moment when we exchange and celebrate. We do not sigh for the ending since this place is always where the barter happened without time collapse. Now we can join the carnival, give what we have, and take what we need. This machine collects and filters for us, and preserve a cavity for our used treasures.

OCT 11 2020

OCT 12 2020

OCT 13 2020
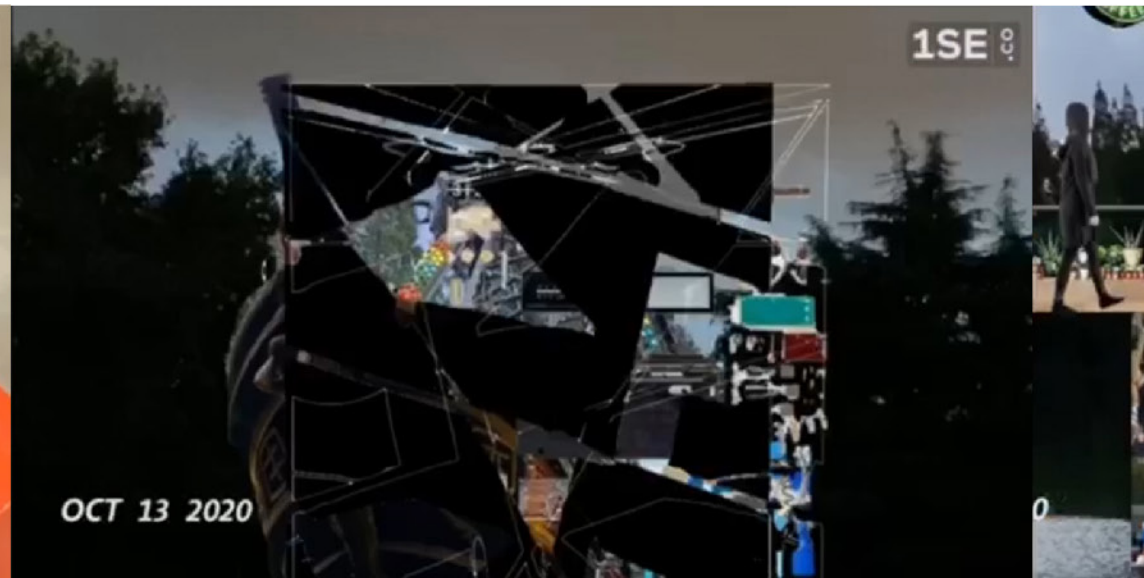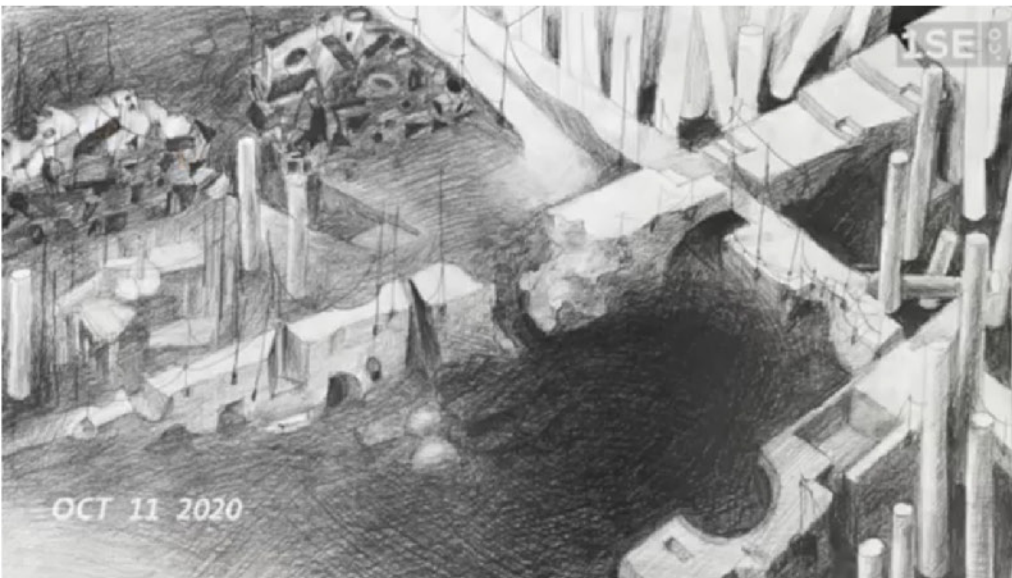
Sunday, 11 Oct 2020

A discarded junkyard drawing.

Monday, 12 Oct 2020

A failed dump model.

Tuesday, 13 Oct 2020

Turning the thing vertical.

Tower of Babel of STUFF

Wednesday, 14 Oct 2020

Moving up getting more intimacy in the Tower of Babel of stuff.

Thursday, 15 Oct 2020

I am a little confused after review... What does it mean by "I was not making a design decision" ? If I was supposed to build a building before making a video then I could have done it. The film could have been just a visualization of an architectural design. I was able to do it I mean but I had been just making a narrative film...... Maybe I was just not saying it right...

Friday, 16 Oct 2020

Well I need some therapy space like the end of the video.
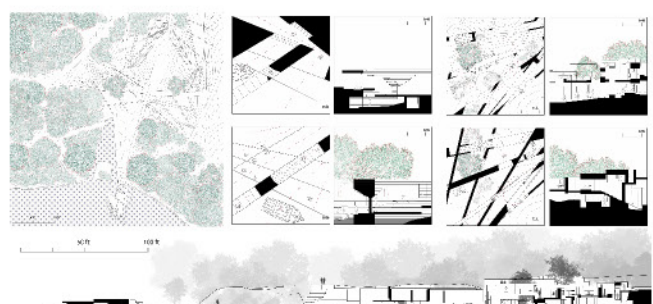
Saturday, 17 Oct 2020

Had some sketching time. Painting or sketching is like swimming, which once you know how to do it your body will never discard.

Sunday, 18 Oct 2020

A grocery portal. The scene after the local government clearing the illegal stalls along the street. Still there is a tension between residential building and commercial use. Hard to balance between the occupied pedestrians safety issue and an interactive street interface.

Monday, 19 Oct 2020

It's getting cold. A huge avocado feels so warm.

Tuesday, 20 Oct 2020

Had an individual talk about the last review and the new circuit. Jeremy suggests we take least packages from last circuits at the beginning, which is a little contradictory to what we discussed during last debrief. I totally understand the concentration of the single circuit could be diluted, but is the circuits' focuses also diluting the central project if I am not plotting the whole structure ahead? I feel things do get easier if we have an intended research topic at the beginning and try to shape the single circuit rather than be fully devoted to the specific syllabus.

Wednesday, 21 Oct 2020

Damn I could not believe I also learned Tai chi before. I definitely need some exercises.

Thursday, 22 Oct 2020

Testing geometry.

Friday, 23 Oct 2020

Six types of geometric transitions depending on ruled surfaces.

Saturday, 24 Oct 2020

Making devices out of basic geometric elements.
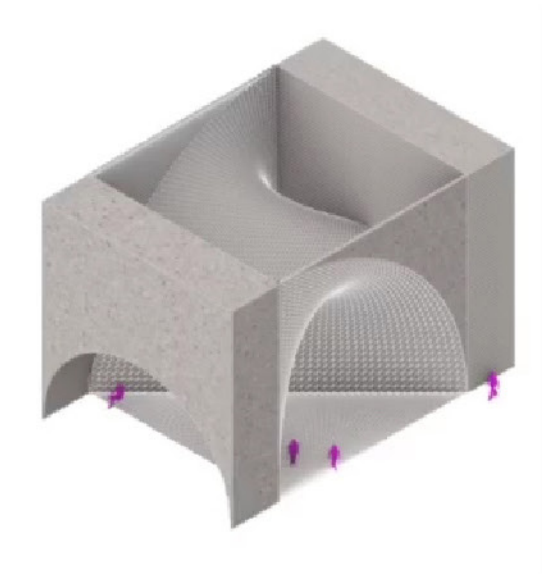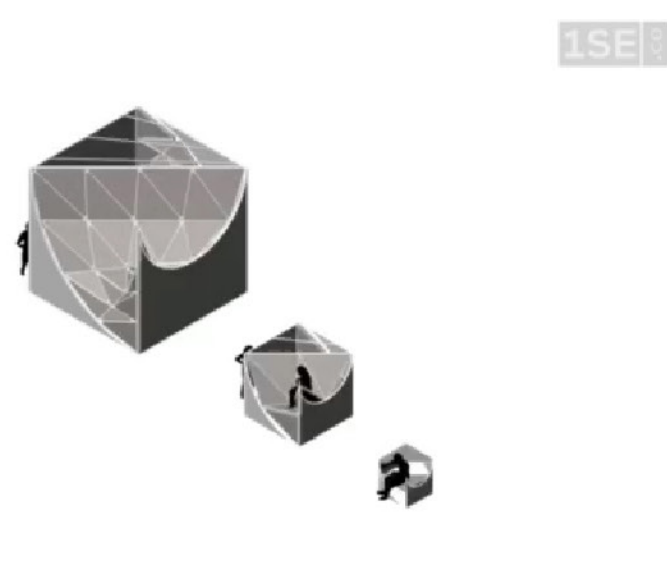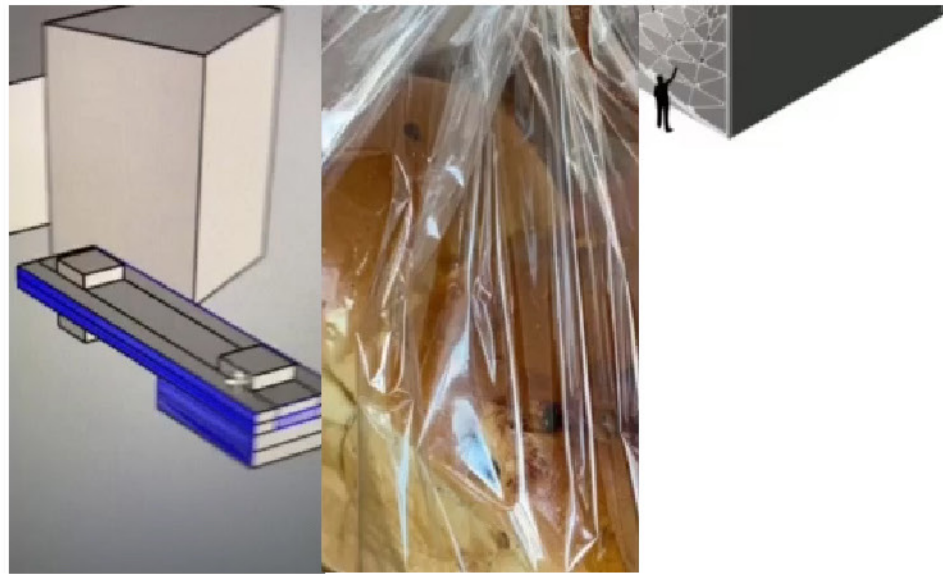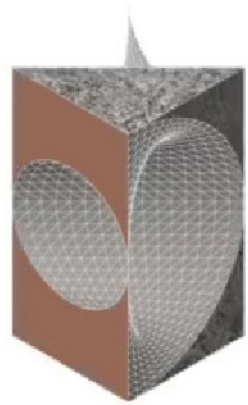
Sunday, 25 Oct 2020

Assembly. Orientation.

Monday, 26 Oct 2020

Built the thermal model for bt course. I really enjoy the progressive improvements of the models.

Tuesday, 27 Oct 2020

Needing carbs to energize me.

Wednesday, 28 Oct 2020

Scales and interaction.

Thursday, 29 Oct 2020

I felt skeuomorphism is inauthentic. There has been an obsession with readability in me maybe. Let me remove the unnecessary arms.

Friday, 30 Oct 2020

Rip Mdes

Energy and Environment

The Energy and Environments concentration focuses on buildings and landscapes on both small and large-scale thermodynamic systems that aim to maximize energy intake, use, and feedback, achieving broad design and ecological impacts.

History and Philosophy and Media

History and Philosophy platform for scholarly design in the disciplines of architecture, urban architecture and spatial and technological...

Technology

Coupling an intensive critical and theoretical approach with practical, lab-based projects, the Technology track allows post-professional students to pursue a broad spectrum of inquiries, including design computation, digital fabrication, robotics, and the exploration of responsive environments.

Urbanism, Land...

MDes candidate in Landscape, Ecology advanced studies in contemporary urban geography, or terri... broader contexts of and natural environ...

OCT 31 2020

NOV 02 2020
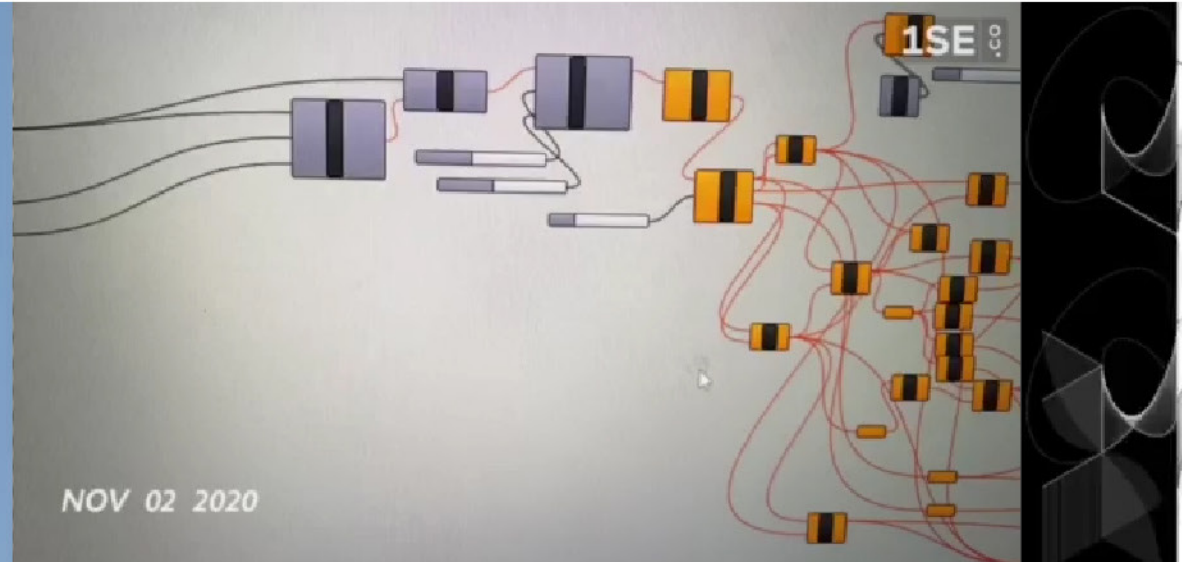
Saturday, 31 Oct 2020

This is convivial. I was thinking of a visit to nature but there are people everywhere.

Sunday, 1 Nov 2020

No it's not my kite but I took a photo.

Monday, 2 Nov 2020

...it is really not a good time to do grasshopper in the early morning. It looks messier than my sleep-deprived face.

Tuesday, 3 Nov 2020

Tension versus compression. Something of duality.

Wednesday, 4 Nov 2020

Compiling the dossier project. The rhizome looks not well-organized though.

Thursday, 5 Nov2020

Forces flow to the ground. I am not sure if I am interested in making didactic physical pavilions.

Friday, 6 Nov 2020

Wend through the city to see Yangtze River
Ten years ago where a line I penned
The view not so different
The insect should be one old friend

Saturday, 7 Nov 2020

Feel like facing an intersection
At the crossroads with three signs
Go ahead
Go ahead
Go ahead

Sunday, 8 Nov 2020

I must be the last one to see the result!
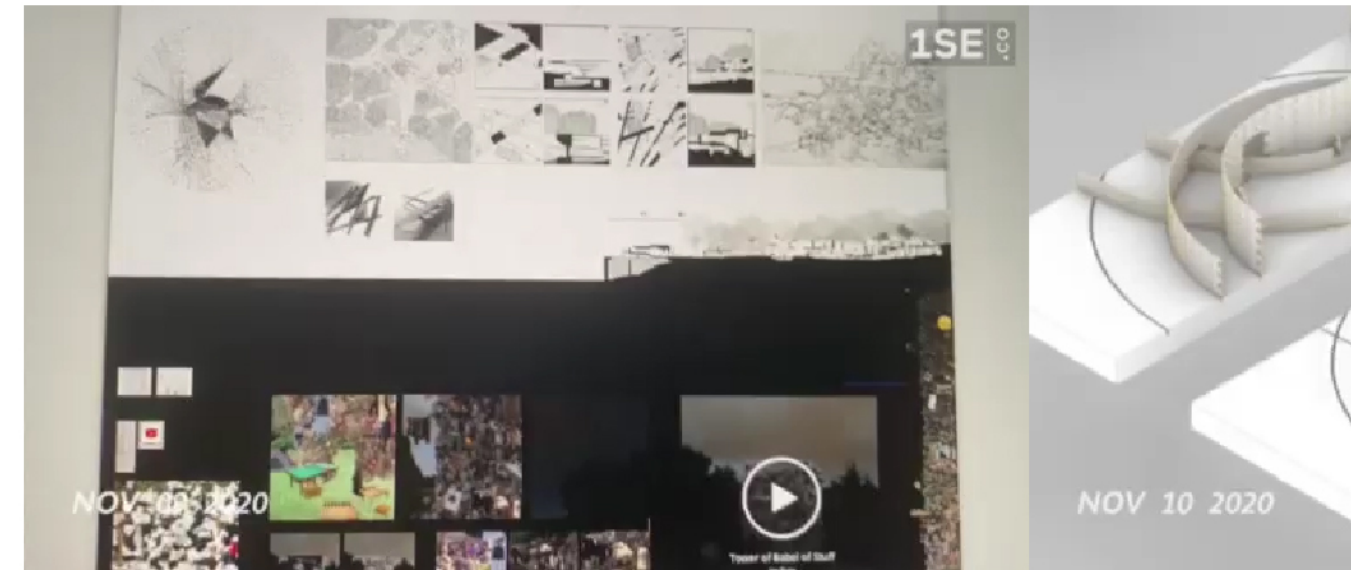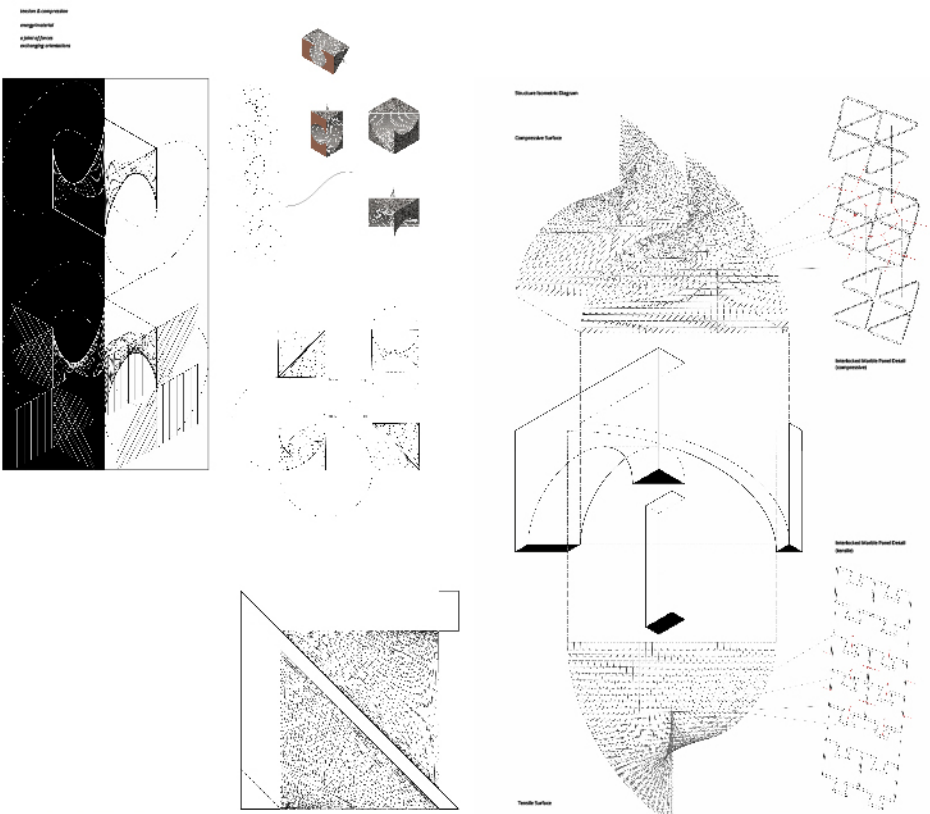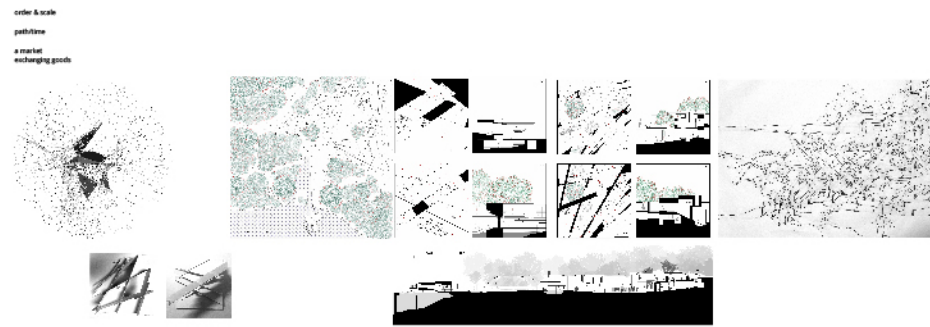
Monday, 9 Nov 2020

Returning to the previous circuits is like watching the previous episodes. Now I even hear the song "carry on my wayward"... Three weeks of independent study is short, intense but exciting. I might jettison some of the stuff or might revisit some original thoughts. And our instructors kept assuring us that this is all about experiments and process. It is a precious chance, undoubtedly.

Tuesday, 10 Nov 2020

Turning the circuit c sophisticated

NOV 12 2020
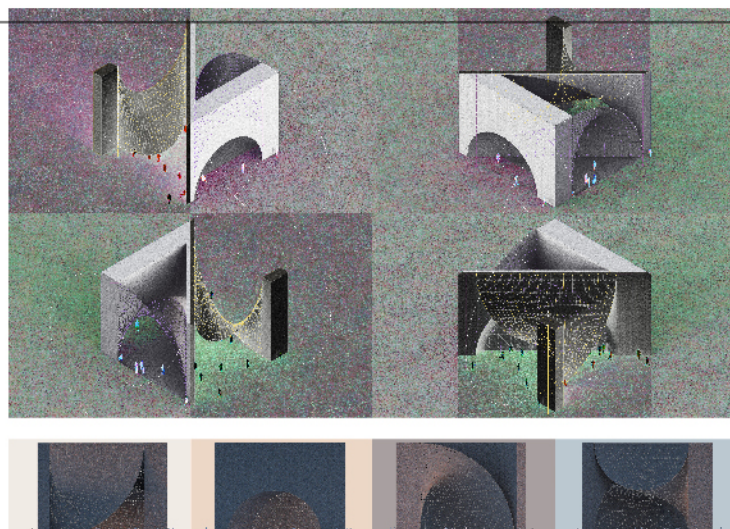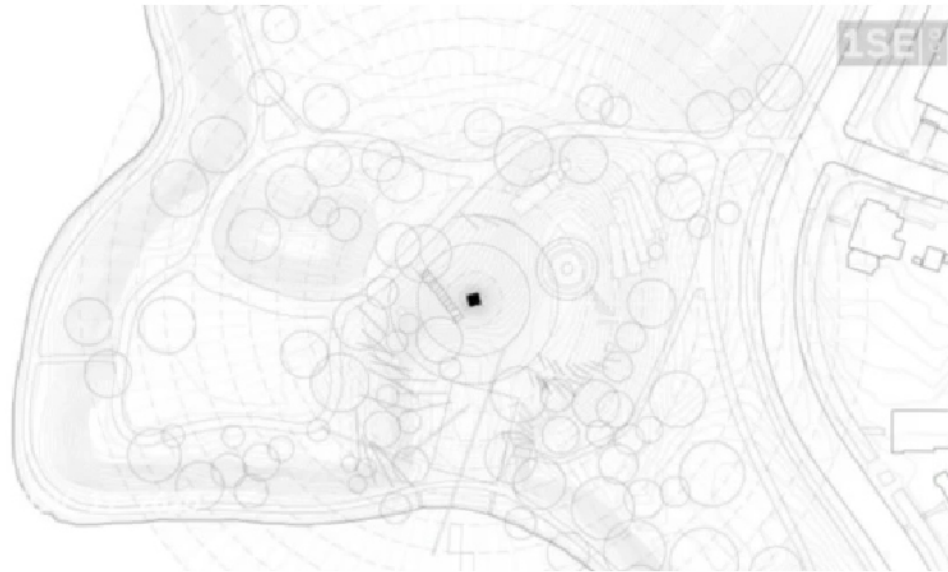
Wednesday, 11 Nov 2020

At the epicenter, what can I see? What can I hear? Why I go to that specific spot? Do I have to?

Thursday, 12 Nov 2020

Clicking on pc sounds like rhythms.

Friday, 13 Nov 2020

I guess some one must be trained to climb up this fo

l curated structure into an operable low tech assembly.
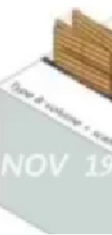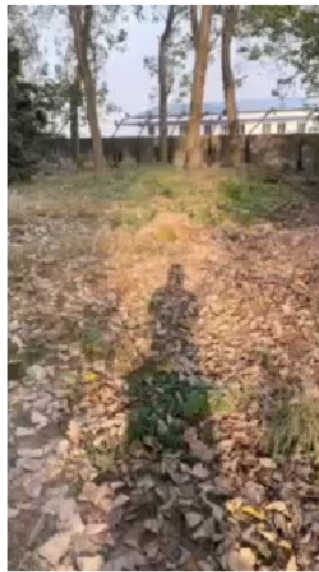
rmwork.

Saturday, 14 Nov 2020

Me on the ground. Over that retaining wall could I see a new picture?

Sunday, 15 Nov 2020

Crane said hello. I greeted with a photo shoot.

Monday, 16 Nov 2020

A tower of instruments, of instructions, of formulas, of tools, of products, of labels, of matters, of materials, of iterations, of assemblages, of an assemblage.

Tuesday, 17 Nov 2020

I need more coffee to stay awake. The Starbucks cup reminds me that Christmas is approaching! I wish I could take some time off.

Wednesday, 18 Nov 2020

It's bubbling. Smells nice!

Thursday, 19 No

This device is re the mass itself, s

NOV 20 2020

NOV 21 2020
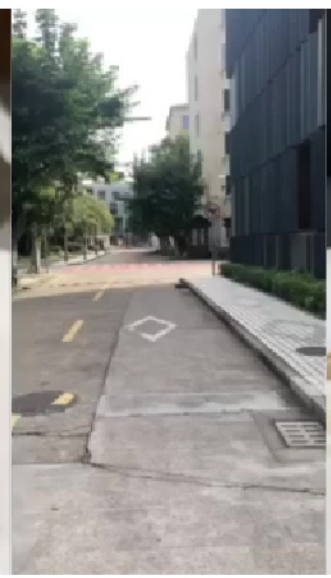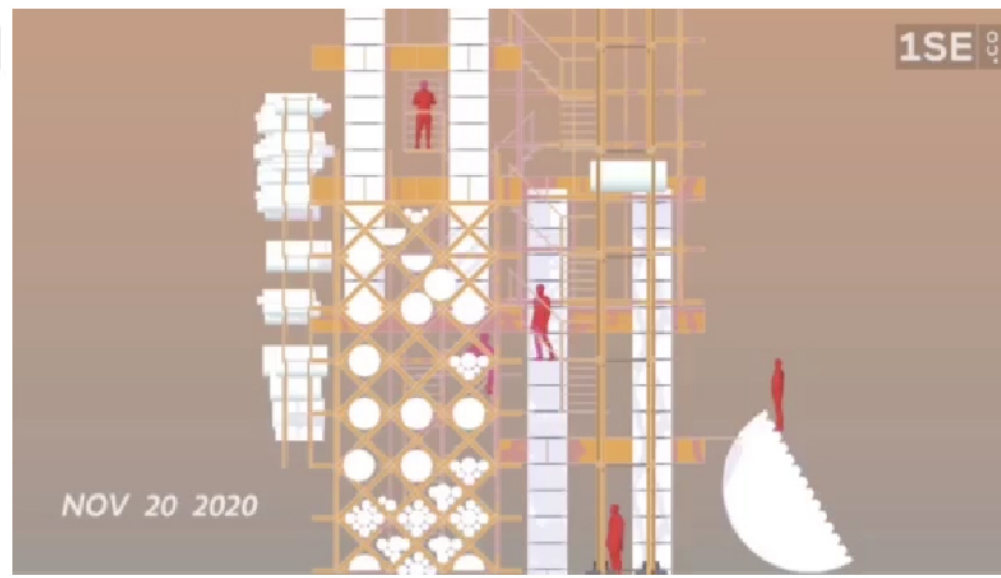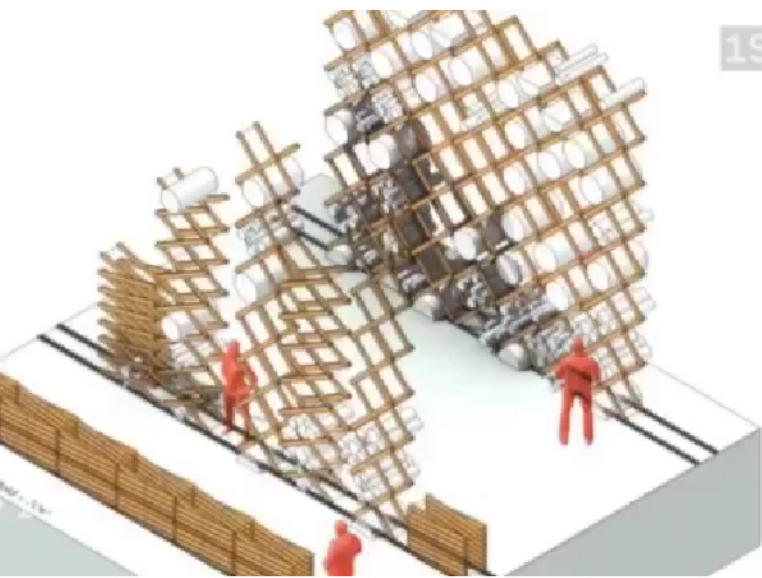
ally operated in a peculiar way: foams are plugs and the volumes hold the verticality by eemingly an imprudent design that is going to be such a waste of materials.

Friday, 20 Nov 2020

Saturday, 21 Nov 2020

Happy birthday to my mom:)

Sunday, 22 Nov 2020

I went to visit my college friend today. Though she lives several blocks away, I don't drop by often because she has been working overtime since she graduated. Occupying her time might make me feel so guilty. If being an architectural designer means you have to work for six days a week at least twelve hours per day without extra payments, I could hardly persuade myself that passion is enough for one to stay in the industry. Let alone the fact that most of time we are not actually working as a designer but a drawer. Another classmate of mine quit her job after two months of endless extra hours and started to work on the graduate school application. I am still determined to be an architect, which now becomes rare and strange. I definitely have the anxiety and feel the occupation will be consuming, regarding my time, health, and life plans probably. It is inevitable that everyone turns to be competitive when no one wants to be left out of the team.
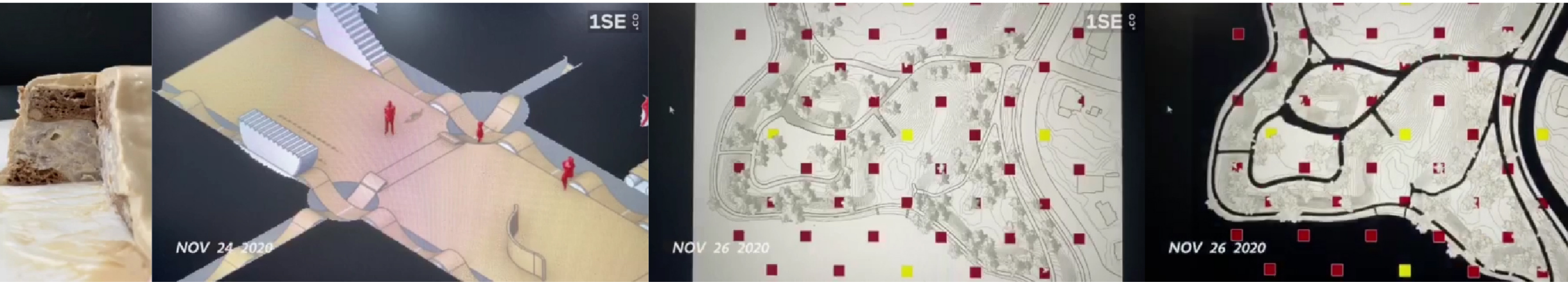
Monday, 23 Nov 2020

Made a cake and made a section model out of it. I started to prepare for the final review production. Every time I try to pack what I have for the semester I will be thinking of all the projects I have done over these years. Am I progressing? This has always been the question haunting and I understand once one becomes a designer they will never be satisfied.

Tuesday, 24 Nov 2020

Type: Channel
Linear. Operative. Low entropy.

Wednesday, 25 Nov 2020

Yea I really made this scissors lift.

Thursday, 26 Nov 2020

It is a striking question for me: does context matter? I have been such a site-specific designer since the very beginning. Kind of a zealous fan of Siza .
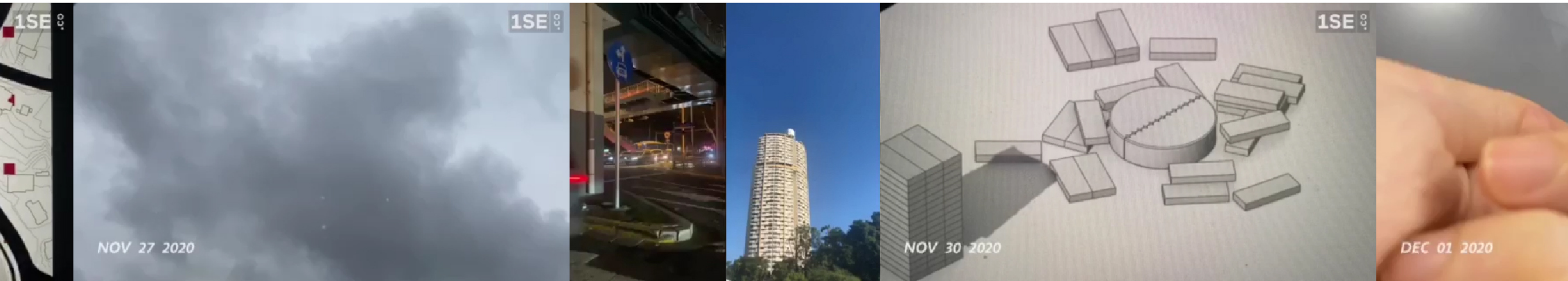
Friday, 27 Nov 2020

It has been rainy for a week. There will be an outdoor activity tomorrow night. Yet the weather is not ready.

Saturday, 28 Nov 2020

Gregariousness is exhausting.

Sunday, 29 Nov 2020

When winter of Shanghai makes my palms clammy all through the day, I would miss the eternal summer in Singapore. The brutal sun light could wipe out any homesickness and frustration.

Monday, 30 Nov 2020

Type: Stage
Spread horizontally. Max entropy.

Tuesday, 1 Dec 2020

Hello figure:)
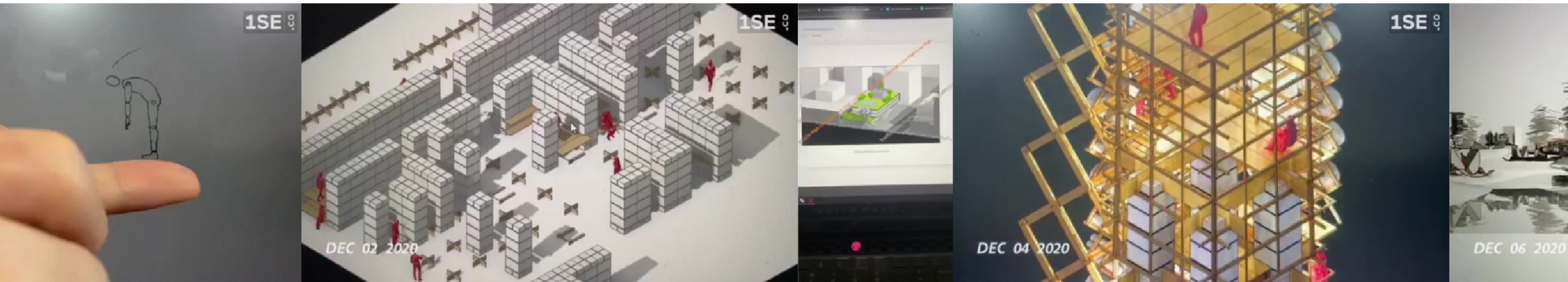
Wednesday, 2 Dec 2020

Type: Platforms
Horizontal spread with limited verticality. Medium entropy.

Thursday, 3 Dec 2020

Why we dare to move the final
presentation of BT course to
this Friday???

Friday, 4 Dec 2020

Day and night
We mount the tower
Now and then
Construction takes forever
Building is an arduous leisure
But leisure is an hollow pleasure

Saturday, 5 Dec 2020

Boston is nothing but a skyline on the background. In the vicinity of the site are houses and one taller
building. I imagined I saw Boston on the top of the tower.

Sunday, 6 Dec 2020

The reflective surface re
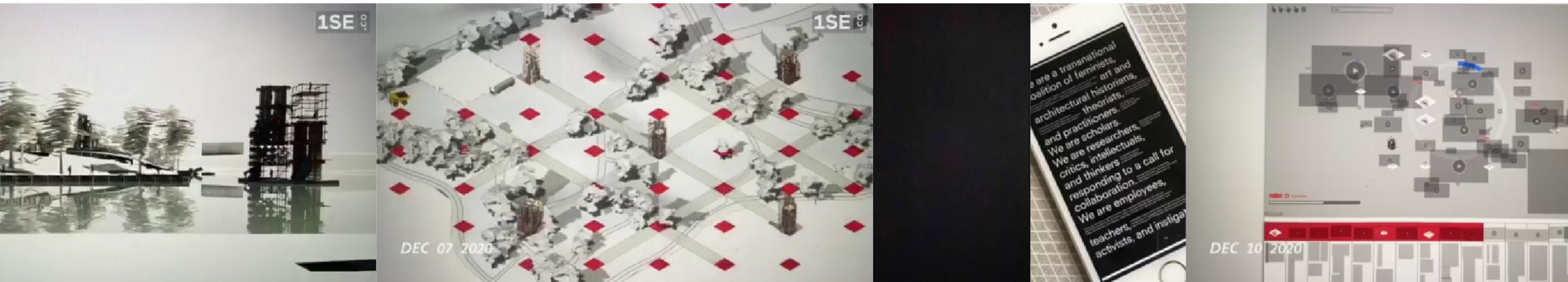
...nders an infinite growth of the structure.

Monday, 7 Dec 2020

The final review: I really appreciate the conversation. Social political, the event, community, narratives, story, technophile, robot, artificial intelligence, online scope, gamification... I think it's interesting to have the review also an open-ended one, with every crit producing a different reading.

Tuesday, 8 Dec 2020

I slept for a whole day... It was a five second dissociation when I woke up losing the sense of time and space. Luckily I realized I was in post-review era and I joyfully stayed in bed.

Wednesday, 9 Dec 2020

To menifesto: I have been thinking of a textual diagram which could represent the written diaries for dossier projects.

Thursday, 10 Dec 2020

Found it really looked like a loading game board when the Miro page is refreshed
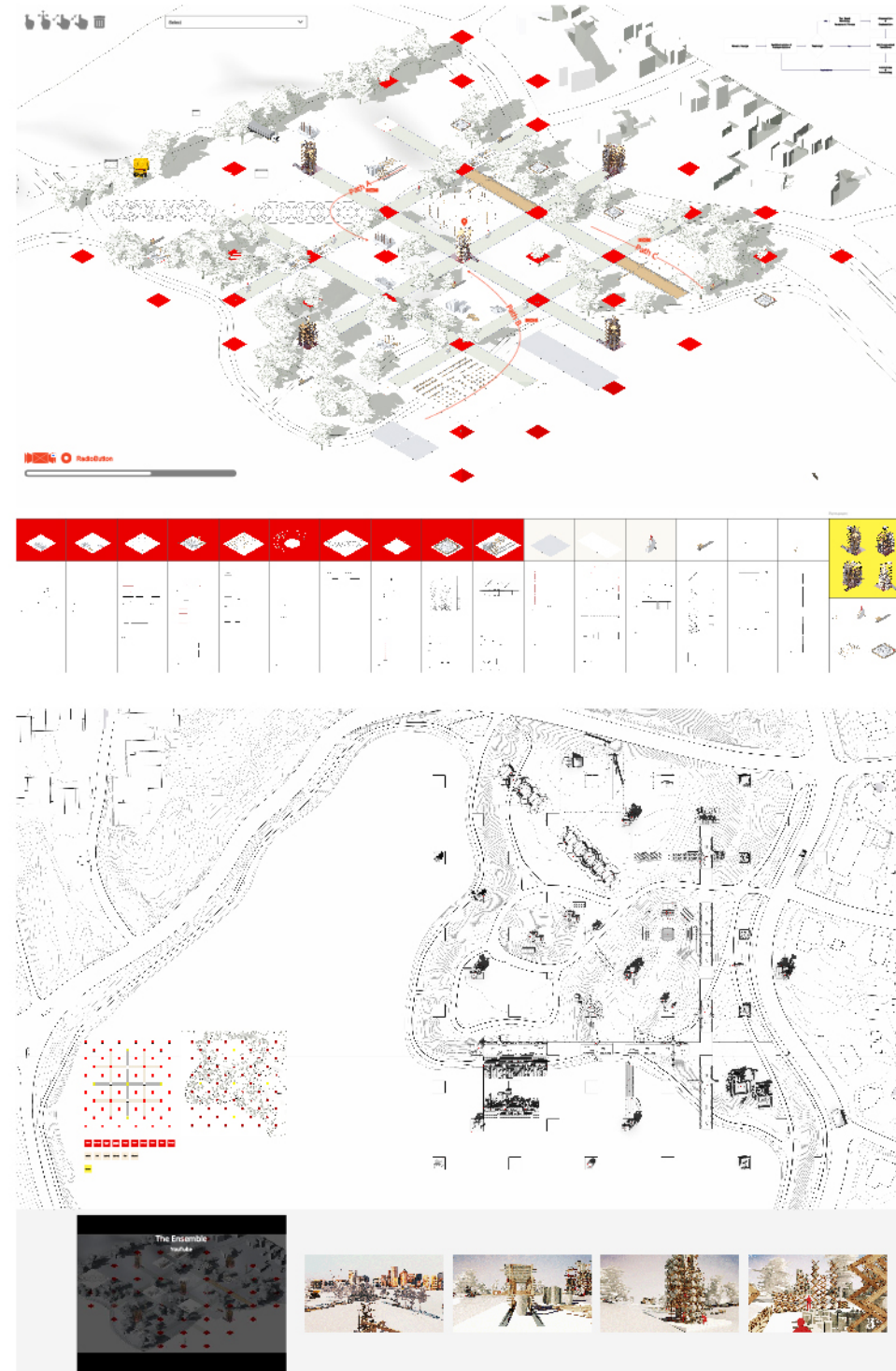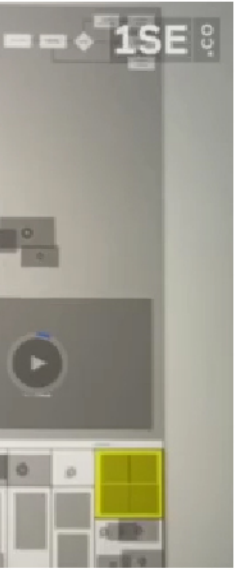
Manufacture Instructions

Chapter I Assembly Components

Chapter III Assisting

Chapter II Installations

Building Together

Core | Central Project
Yiqing Wang

Instructors:
Homeroom: Hans Tursack + Kimball Kaiser
Circuit A: Rosalyne Shieh + Rania Kaadan
Circuit B: Deborah Garcia + Clarence Lee
Circuit C: Jeremy Jih + Lavender Tessmer
Brandon Clifford + Sydney Cinalli

We are the community, the dwellers in the city, the actors on the stage.
We construct the building so it will present us.
We hunt for the undermined, the suffocated, the deserted in our city
We need a formwork of participation, of self-expression, of immediacy.
We follow; we operate; we create, oblivious to the difference in us.
We build the community so it will represent us

I am the designer, the housekeeper in the city, the coordinator behind the screen
I disassemble the structure so it will intimidate nobody
I trace the documented, the detected, the questioned in our city
I initiate a repository of modularity, of materiality, of growth
I plot; I draw; I construe, aware of the limitations in us
I facilitate the synergy so it will include everybody

Sliding Puzzle/ROSHOMON

The Rules:
Details are real.

The descriptions can be specious, contradictory, or absurd.
The visual (perspective renderings) insinuates doubts into the readers 'minds.
The vignette will reflect the actors' individuality and perception in self-organized construction while hinting at an unusual collective scheme behind the scene.

Visual I
Place: A public park turned into a populated construction site. (The backdrop is the photo I took in one of the local parks during circuit B)
Scene: Everyone is engaged. The structures seem to be robust as the growth everlasting.
Tip: Physicality, synchronous/ asynchronous
A Propaganda
"I represent nobody, for the creation is presenting everybody.
When I hiked, I was alone and accompanied. I did have a destination, but I got distracted, by traffic, by sound, by flashes, by illusions, by memories, by strangers, by friends. It should NOT be only me who is subtly dramatizing this city. Why it has to be grand? As I promised, directing the show was a permanent ensemble where one can act addicted or nonchalant, bold or seclusive."
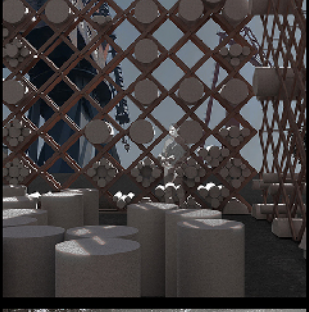
Visual II
Place: Bottom of a built tower (the vertical pavilion)
Scene: Human Field of View scene of one when he woke up looking up.
Tip: Time
Day and night: The construction is overtly or secretly performed?
He opened his eyes, confused by the view rather than the sleep drunkenness. The sunlight permeated the forest of wooden beams and foam pillars, tickling his hands clutching the blanket. The unexpected building seemed to be breathing: it quivers with a pulsing rhythm. A flimsy staircase was spiraling upward to where the silhouette of sky intervened by moving figures.

Visual III
Place: One's shelter
Scene: one with the prefabricated components. Through a window, you see the outside.
Tip: modularity, scale
He found the chunk to be weird after he pulled it back to the shelter. The campfire lit the nook, and then, suddenly, the man with a tatty haircut saw the traces on the surfaces. There were dark speckles, fissures, graffiti, colored marks, and dirt. Naturally, he took it for granted that this stuff would be a

perfect fit among his collection. Carefully scrubbing it, he saw the blurred text at the bottom. "F-7", he murmured with a delighted smile.

Visual IV
Place: clearing
Scene: A peak to see the gigantic gameboard and materials and tools piling up all over the place. Silent ambience with rusty smell.
Tip: technique
(TBC)

Visual V
Place: urban area
Scene: I am winding through the ongoing construction with drawings (or the gameboard). My fingers are touching the screen.
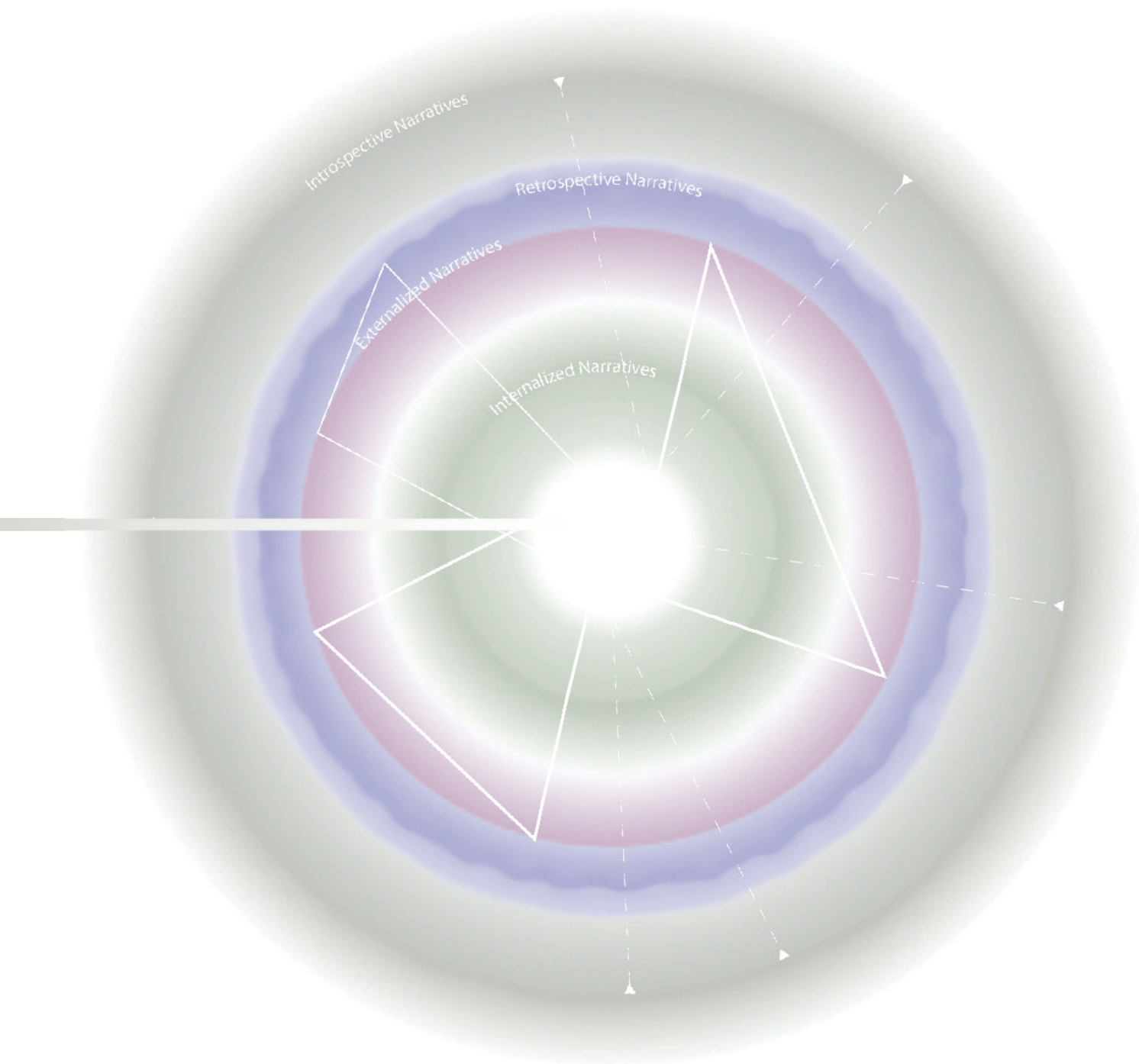Tip: synchronicity
(TBC)

He opened his eyes and groped the spectacles, confused by the view rather than the sleep drunkenness. The sunlight, tickling his hands clutching the blanket, permeated the forest of wooden beams and foam pillars fading into artificial speckles of warmth. The unexpected building seemed to be breathing: it quivers with a pulsing rhythm, a restrained duet – a duet, he thought, which he could recollect the merest fragment. A flimsy staircase was spiraling upward to where the silhouette of sky intervened by moving figures – one of them called out, "Whoever down there, please do us a favor!" He grabbed several modular planks, leaving his blanket placed upon a pile of posters on the ground, and circumspectly mounted the steps.

They found the chunk to be strange? after he pulled it back to the shelter. The campfire lit the nook, and then, suddenly, the gang wearing saffron uniforms saw the traces on the surfaces, covered by dirt, fissures, graffiti, dark speckles, and colored marks. "We got a new one, the last missing piece. Time to pick up the threads!" she extolled, greeted by acclamations. "This stuff would be a perfect fit for the column." Carefully scribbling it, she saw the blurred text at the bottom, "#7", she murmured with a delighted smile.

The cranes, staring at me barbarously, palpitate with tumultuous motions beneath the silent clouds. For these cunning two-legged animals, building is arduous while, for me, leisure is a hollow pleasure. However, one day, these gigantic monsters vanished. My rodent friends sneered at me when I told them that humans are building by hand, moving pale white inedible blocks and assembling them together by wood joinery. I want to bite off a sophisticated wood component to prove it is not a sheer caprice, as they said.

The community fell into an exhausted slumber, and I meander through the city. Sauntering along the Yangtze River, I skim through the to-do list on my sketchbook. "Replenish insufficient materials,—check the stability of the scaffolding and plywood tools, recycle weathered foams, record inoperative and innovative structures, and provide new design options." This spot, SH-X24Y14-2y, a waterfront plaza next to the logistics center, is growing into an outdoor canteen. Three months ago, another planner proved the request, and later, I designed the scaffolding for this desolate landscape. Now new vendors and food stalls are welcomed by the workers. Staring at the cranes along the bay, I hear the squeaking creatures. "Hmmm…A new lot for storage." I quickly scribble a note and draft a plan on the vellum, accompanied by a gentle glimmer from the lighthouse for construction.

The vignette will reflect the actors' individuality and perception in self-organized construction while hinting at an unusual collective scheme behind the scene. The narratives limn out the fortuitous encounters in an urban context, demonstrating a guided architectural game operated by the community.

A Propaganda

" I represent nobody, for the creation is presenting everybody.

When I hiked, I was alone and accompanied. I did have a destination, but I got distracted, by traffic, by graphic, by sound, by dance, by flashes, by splashes, by illusion, by confusion, by strangers, by friends. It should NOT be only me who is subtly dramatizing this city. Why does it have to be grand? As I promised, directing the show was a permanent ensemble where one can act addicted or nonchalant, bold or seclusive, nice or bad."

Yiqing Wang (MArch 24') @yiqingwang4214

Builds off the Core 1 project Building Together. It facilitates the self-organized construction in order to stage a scaffolding of polyphonic narrations pervaded with designers' interventions, assembled to empower the community to actively shape the city. The project is turning the Emerald Necklace Shanghai into an activated lab where community members are able to respond, learn, gather, and collaborate.

Introspective Narratives

Retrospective Narratives

Externalized Narratives

Internalized Narratives

The work completed for 4.184 The Untold Narratives workshop, builds off the Core 1 project Building Together. It facilitates the self-organized construction in order to stage a scaffolding of polyphonic narrations pervaded with designers' interventions, assembled to empower the community to actively shape the city. Create a manual. Exchange knowledge. Mount the towers. Test the materials. Modify the space. The project is turning ~~the Emerald Necklace~~ Shanghai into an activated lab where community members are able to respond, learn, gather, and collaborate

Based on Core I Central Project: Building Together, Individual Project: Yiqing Wang, Homeroom Instructor: Hans Tursack

The vignette reflects the actors' individuality and perception in self-organized construction while hinting at an unusual collective scheme behind the scene. The narratives limn out the fortuitous encounters in an urban context, demonstrating a guided architectural game operated by the community.

***

A Propaganda " I represent nobody, for the creation is presenting everybody. When I hiked, I was alone and accompanied. I did have a destination, but I got distracted, by traffic, by

graphic, by sound, by dance, by flashes, by splashes, by illusion, by confusion, by strangers, by friends. It should NOT be only me who is subtly dramatizing this city. Why does it have to be grand? As I promised, directing the show was a permanent ensemble where one can act addicted or nonchalant, bold or seclusive. nice or bad."

***

"We are the community, the dwellers in the city, the actors on the stage. We construct the building so it will present us. We hunt for the undermined, the suffocated, the deserted in our city. We need a formwork of participation, of self-expression, of immediacy. We follow; we operate; we create, oblivious to the difference in us. We build the community so it will represent us…"

***

"I am the designer, the housekeeper in the city, the coordinator behind the screen. I disassemble the structure so it will intimidate nobody. I trace the documented, the detected, the questioned in our city. I initiate a repository of modularity, of materiality, of growth. I plot; I draw; I construe, aware of the limitations in us. I facilitate the synergy so it will include everybody…"

"He opened his eyes and groped the spectacles, confused by the view rather than the sleep drunkenness. The sunlight, tickling his

hands clutching the blanket, permeated the forest of wooden beams and foam pillars fading into artificial speckles of warmth. The unexpected building seemed to be breathing: it quivers with a pulsing rhythm, a restrained duet – a duet, he thought, which he could recollect the merest fragment. A flimsy staircase was spiraling upward to where the silhouette of sky intervened by moving figures – one of them called out, "Whoever down there, please do us a favor!" He grabbed several modular planks, leaving his blanket placed upon a pile of posters on the ground, and circumspectly mounted the steps."

***

They found the chunk to be strange? after he pulled it back to the shelter. The campfire lit the nook, and then, suddenly, the gang wearing saffron uniforms saw the traces on the surfaces, covered by dirt, fissures, graffiti, dark speckles, and colored marks. "We got a new one, the last missing piece. Time to pick up the threads!" she extolled, "This stuff would be a perfect fit for the column." Carefully scrubbing it, she saw the blurred text at the bottom. "F-7", she murmured with a delighted smile.

***

The cranes, staring at me barbarously, palpitate with tumultuous motions beneath the silent clouds. For these cunning two-legged animals, building is arduous, while for me, leisure is a hollow pleasure. However, one day, these gigantic monsters vanished. My rodent friends sneered at me when I told them that humans are building by hand, moving pale white inedible blocks and assembling them together by wood joinery. I want to bite off a sophisticated wood component to prove it is not a sheer caprice, as they said.

***

"The community fell into an exhausted slumber, and I meander through the city. Sauntering along the Yangtze River, I skim through the to-do list on my sketchbook. "Replenish insufficient materials, check the stability of the scaffolding and plywood tools, recycle weathered foams, record inoperative and innovative structures, and provide new design options." This spot, SH-X24Y14-2v, a waterfront plaza next to the logistics center, is growing into an outdoor canteen. Three months ago, another planner proved the request, and later, I designed the scaffolding for this desolate landscape. New vendors and food stalls are now welcomed by the workers. Staring at the cranes along the bay, I hear the squeaking creatures. "Hm…A new lot for storage." I quickly scribble a note and draft a plan on the vellum, with a gentle glimmer from the lighthouse for construction.

Student: Inge Donovan

First Year Graduate Student

MArch '24 - Core 1

Introspective Narratives
Retrospective Narratives
Externalized Narratives
Internalized Narratives
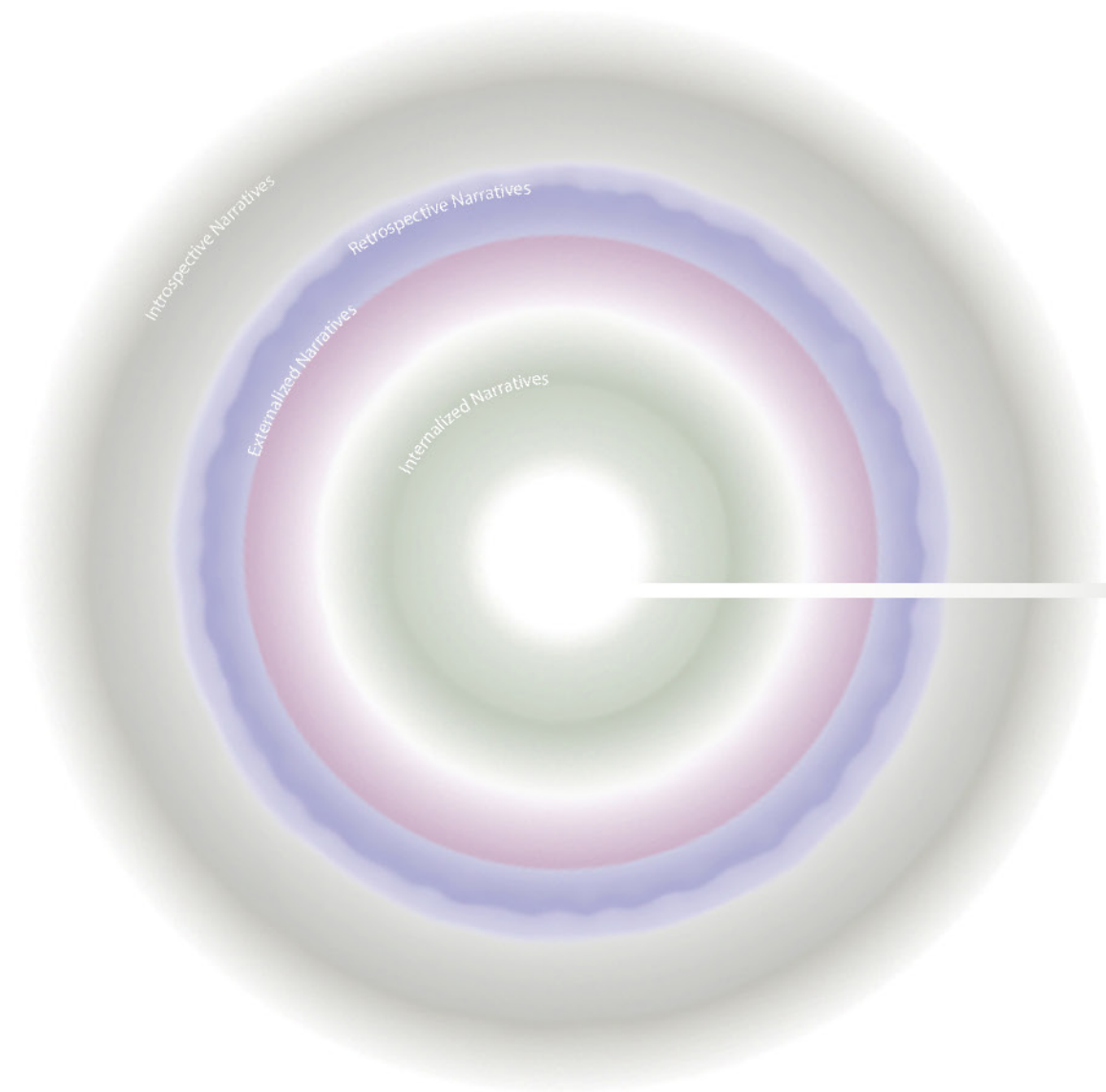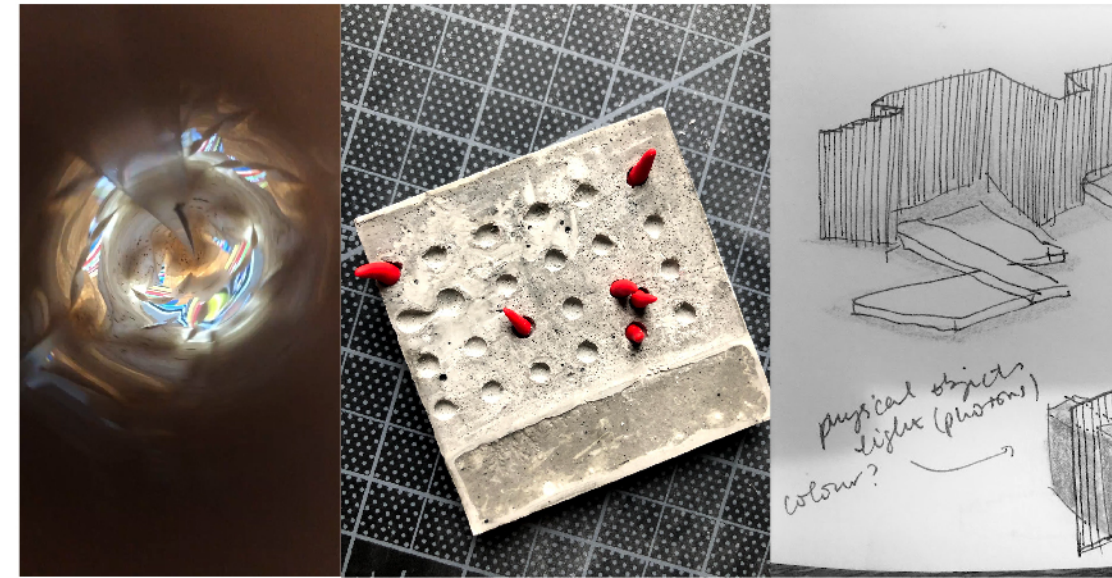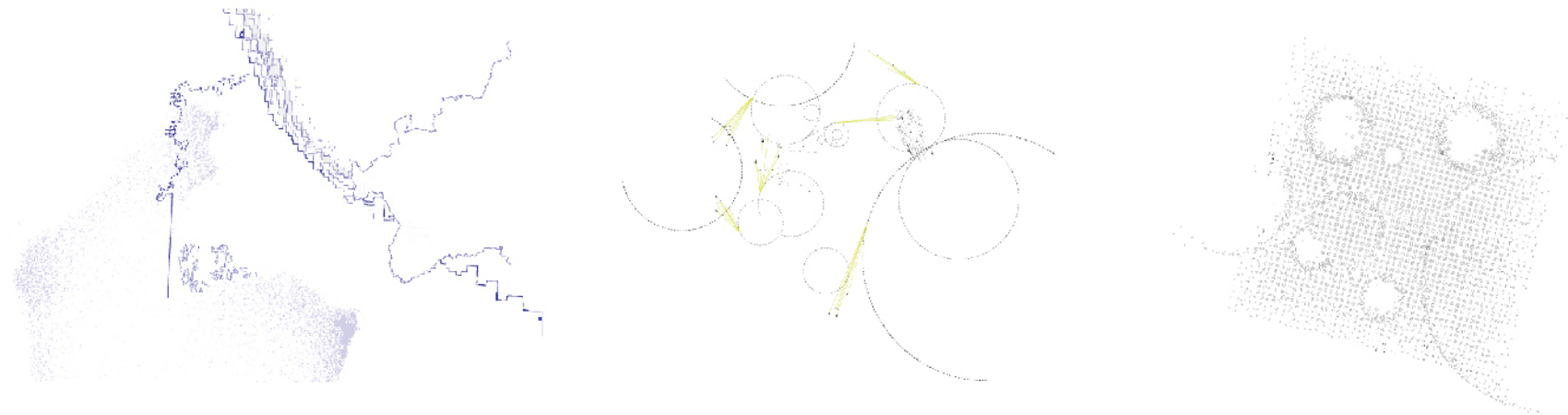
23 Oct 2020

Overlaid site with itself and pulled out temporal cycles, however remediated them
first through satellite imagery and then through tracing script in Rhino
This places a special emphasis on the edge
Moving away from the field condition
The edge of memory?
These interfered with the grid

24 Oct 2020

sudden jubilation in a
coiled up symmetry

25 Oct 2020

the grid resists imprintation and is
colonized by Maya primitives
shells of fragile fingerprints

26 Oct 2020

some things go through, and oth
in cold rockite.

114

115

27 Oct 2020

28 Oct 2020

29 Oct 2020

30 Oct 2020
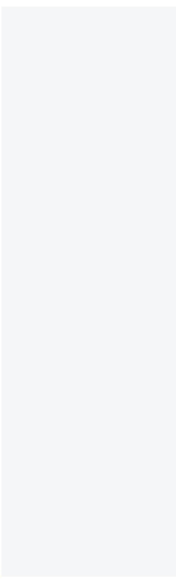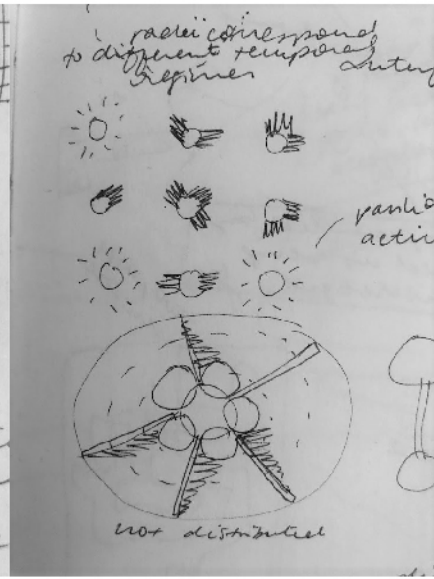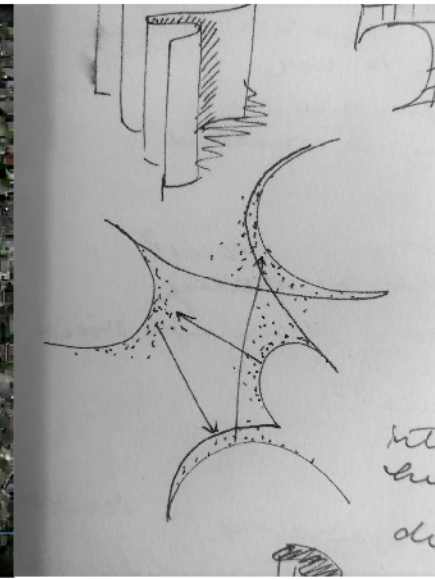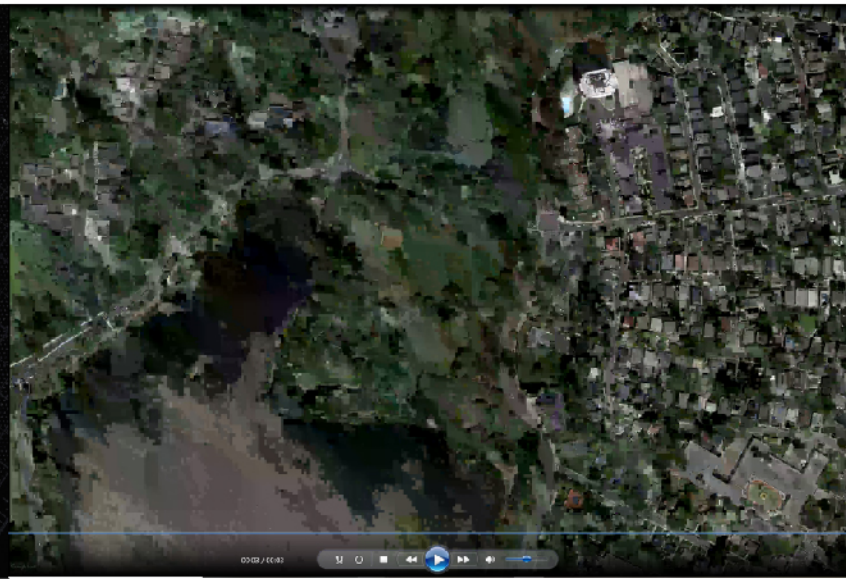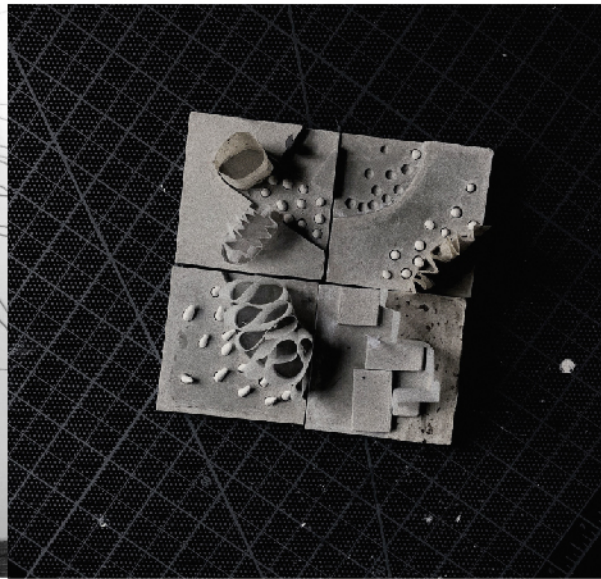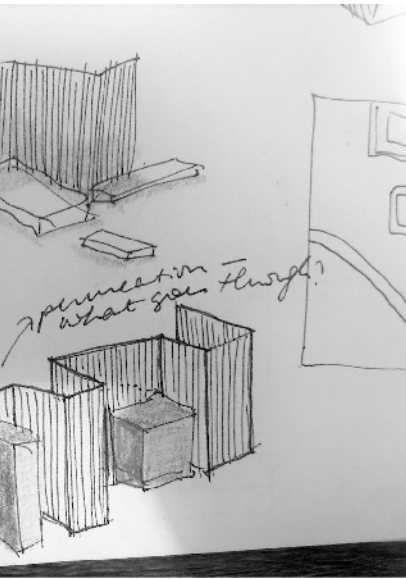
31 Oct 2020

01 Nov 2020

ers don't, as hot glue solidifies, nested the characters turn pale
randomness is sloppily choreographed
backdated a priori
as always

Satellite images overlaid interfere with the memory bottlenecks in my laptop
resulting in a residue that looks like striations
why are they inversely correlated to image complexity?

the sudden influx of program comes in
the form of dispersed theatres that
correspond to disparate temporal scales.
there are interferences in the satellite
imagery of the site.
they talk to one another.

the temporal regimes want to emerge in
radii but I stop them.
suddenly it seems too obvious to use
distribution.

a diagram crystallizes
(finally!) in its perfectly
banal entirety.

the diagram is re
it is as if it alway

02 Nov 2020

as work escalates, digital scraps accumulate in throwaway files.
they are not subtractive.

03 Nov 2020
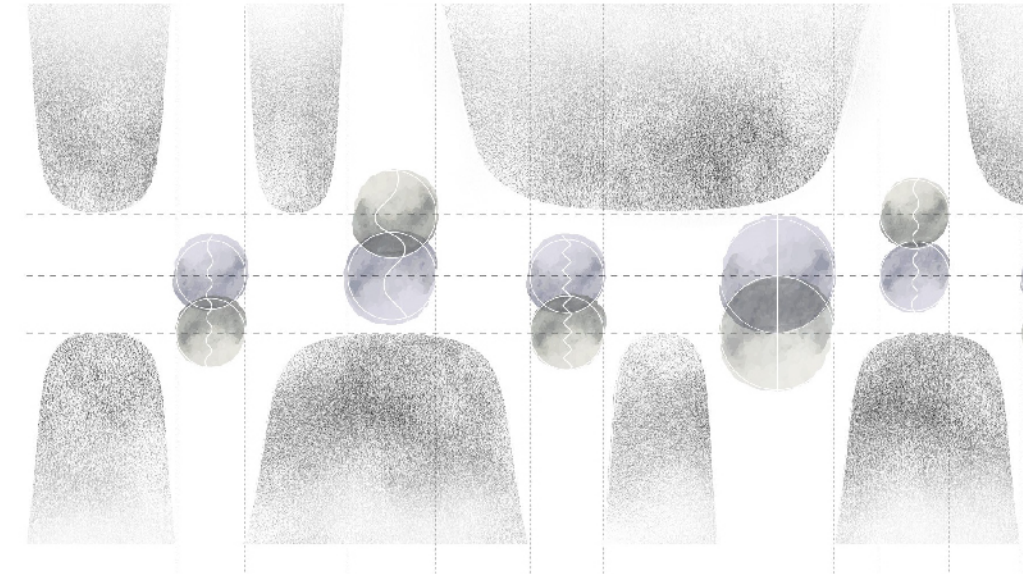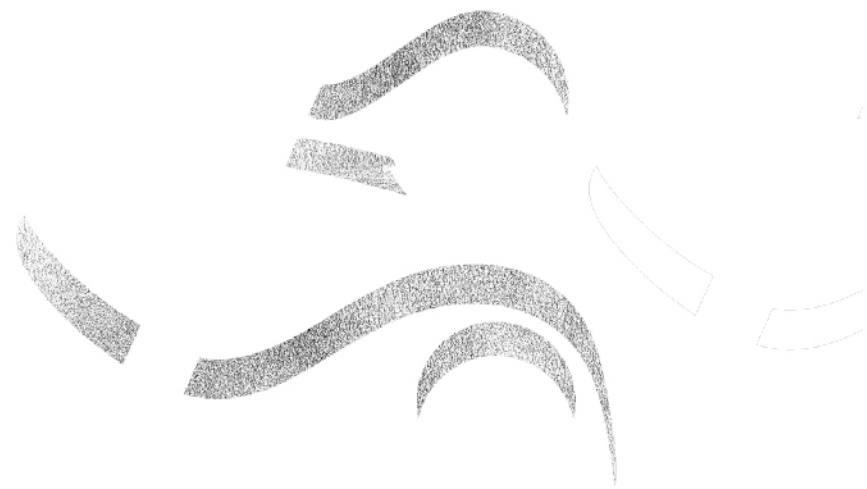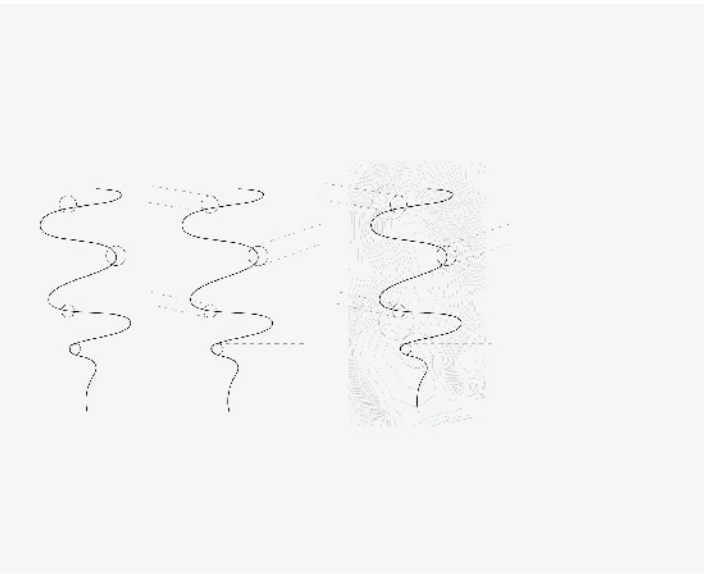
there is a need for an alternate notation to supercede the architecture of the line
with an even more stringent linear narrative.
it's time to stop trying to create images on an invented & imaginary plane!

-constructed in digital space.
ys existed, waiting to be extracted.
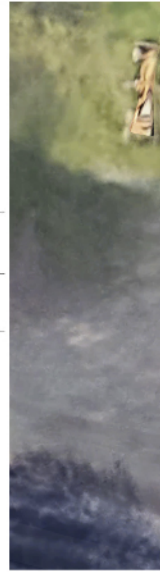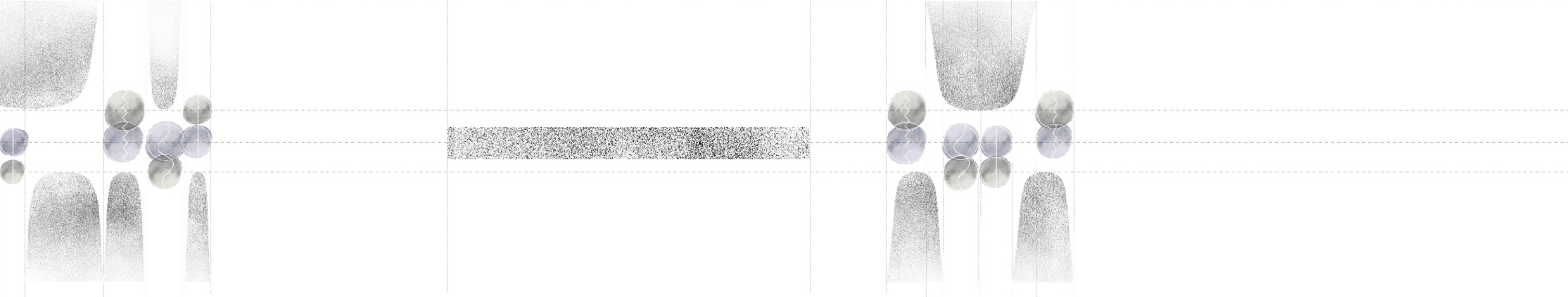
04 Nov 2020

dimensional i
my project sti
people appea

Untold Narratives

ID SwapMixer
YouTube

Circuit A Project

3. memory - the afterimage
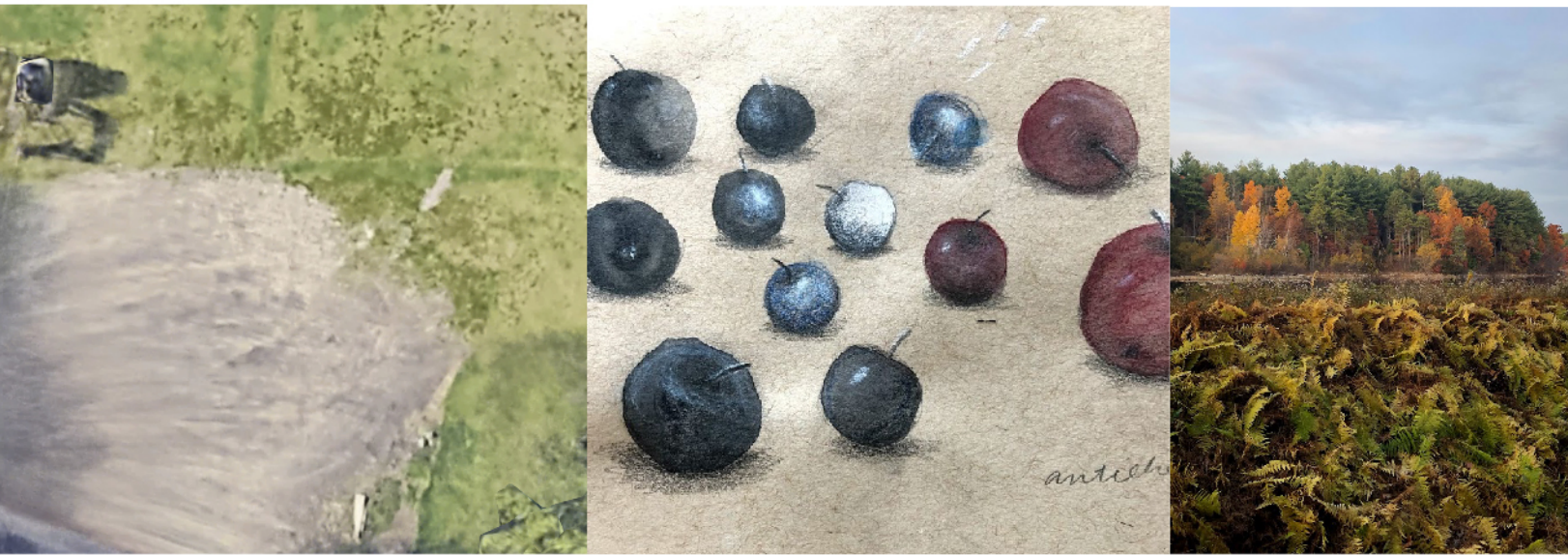
05 Nov 2020

ndecision
ll excludes all of it
and disappear in a temporally discontinuous experience

06 Nov 2020

The lines feebly constructed in Rhino are being attacked
from all sides by a fill,
entropy?,
ragged digital edges conceal themselves
I spend the entire review making apples out of blotches
of paint,
from who knows when
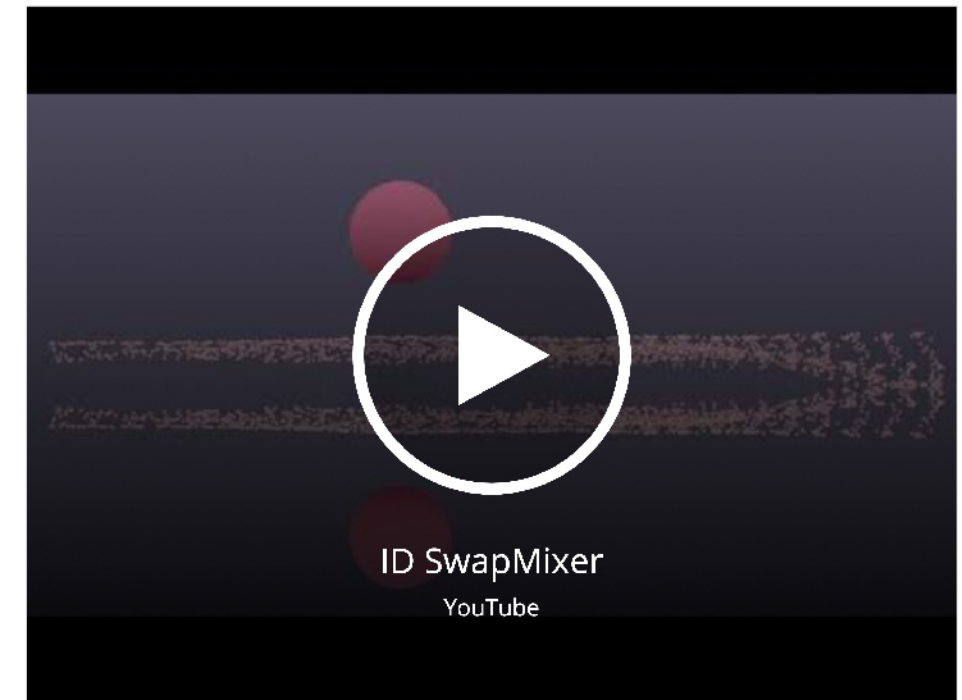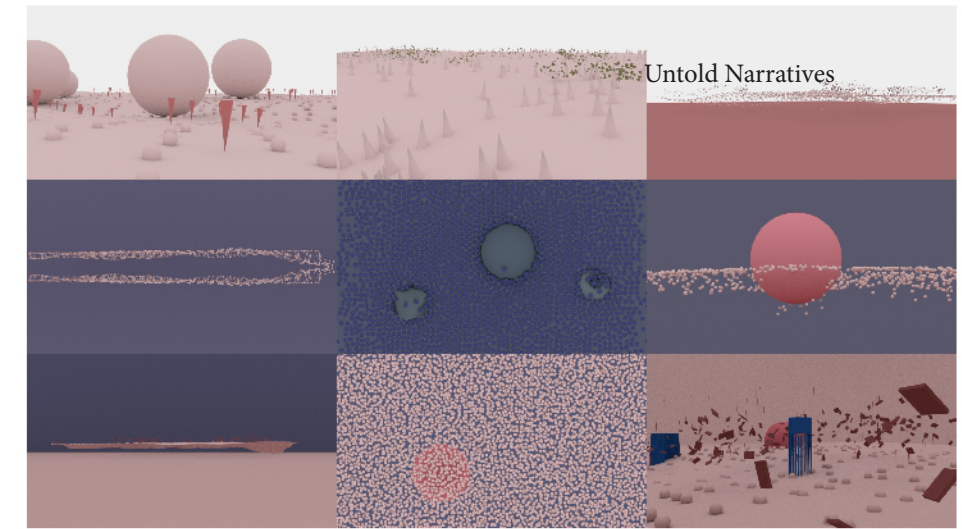
07 Nov 2020

Studio reprieve,
textured weekend,
collapsed plane

memory ⟷ digital residue
landscape

FieldConditions_Final
YouTube

Dossier Proposal Miro Board
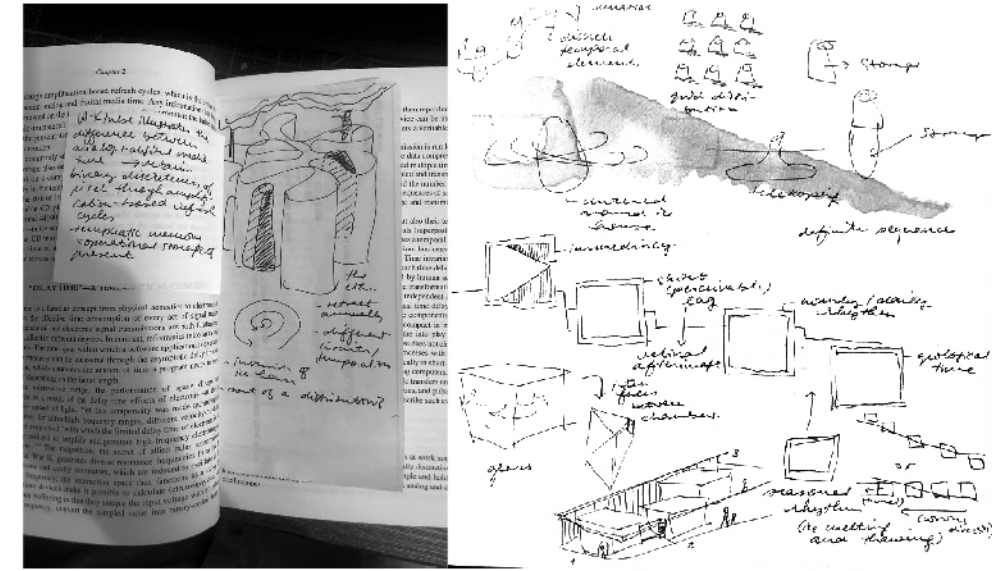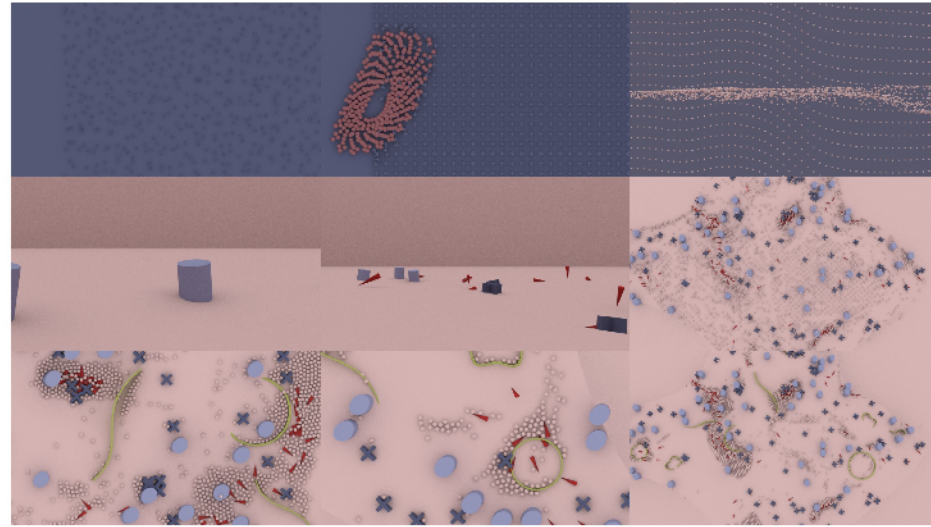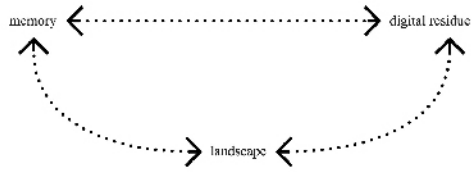
09 Nov 2020

do time-critical media destabilize
architecture?
the project attempts to coagulate
around a central idea
there is a certain lumpiness to it all

10 Nov 2020

The bigness looms
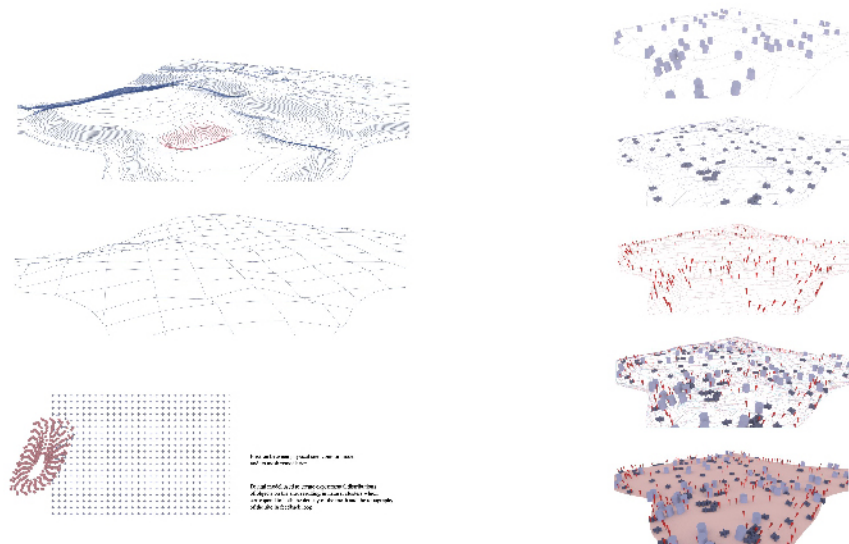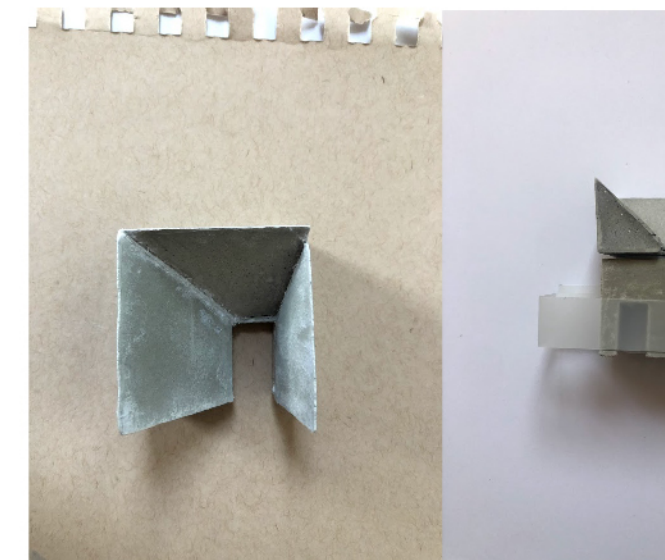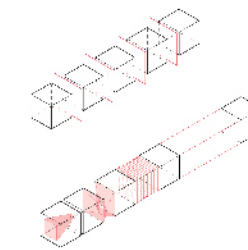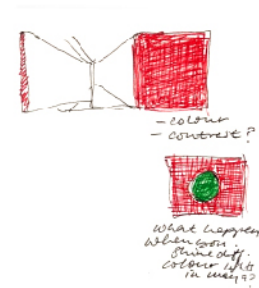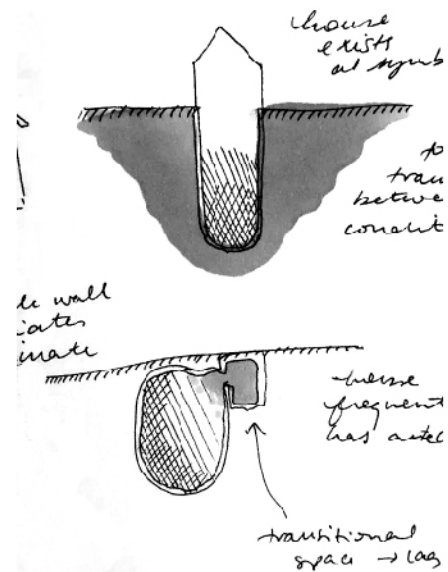
11 Nov 2020

around the corner from my house
there is an ice house where they
shovel dry ice all day.
who buys it?

12 Nov 2020

the ice house is back and it is storing a thermal
memory

13 Nov 2020

to attempt projection, is to sully form

14 Nov 2020

studio reprieve & a foreign vernacular
alien from the familiar dimensions of
my room

15 Nov 2020

the objects want to connect, but the
interface is much too complex

16 Nov 2020

i made models impulsively, after i
started getting black rings around my
eyes from looking at the screen too
much
the models were trying to solve the
interface problem, but they seem very
formal

17 Nov 2020

when reassembled,
- they taunt my wit
different studio proj
i end up discarding
to yellow on my wi
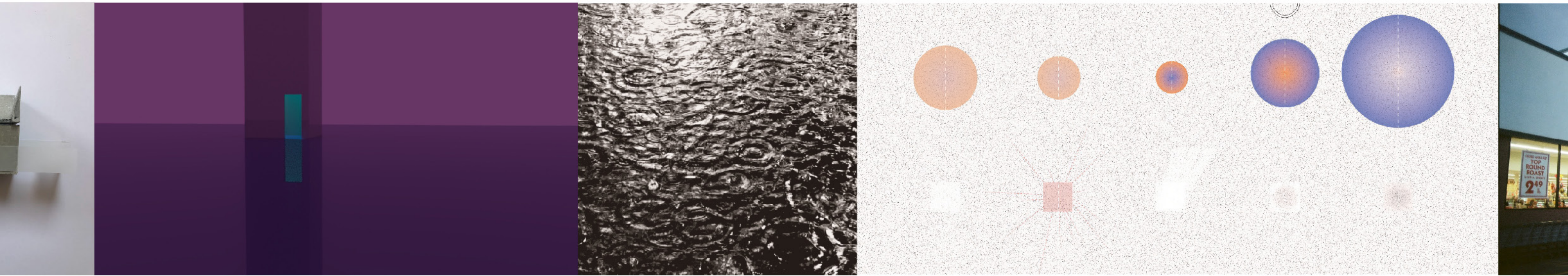
18 Nov 2020

the ice house is a light house now

19 Nov 2020

the project wants to move and to be outside
but i bend all phenomena into a stringent set of rules
the temporal regimes

20 Nov 2020

temperature and light allow themselves to be chronologized, diagrammatic swelling

21 Nov 2020

the sun goes
and i'm usual
when america
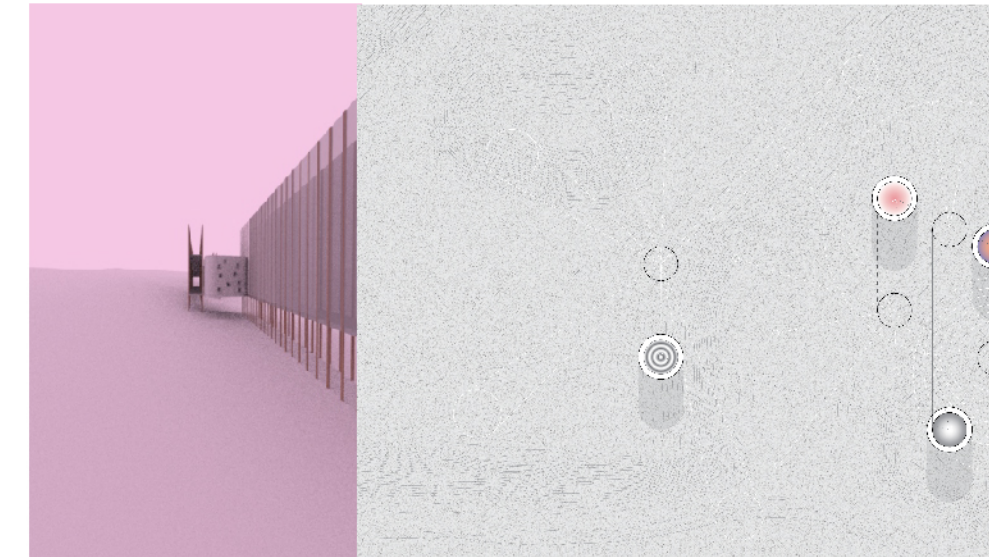
22 Nov 2020

unwelcome noise
background activity continues

23 Nov 2020

i'm starting to have those studio
dreams again, where I wake up in the
middle of the night and draw myself
cryptic sticky notes

24 Nov 2020

extractive architecture, like a poetic data mining activity

down early now
ly outside during that prolonged blue hour
a seems surreal

25 Nov 2020

In virtual space the project
still floats, structurally
unsupported and unfeasible. It
could probably stay this way

26 Nov 2020

The concept intersects with the topography once again, wh
back into it to dictate possible programs
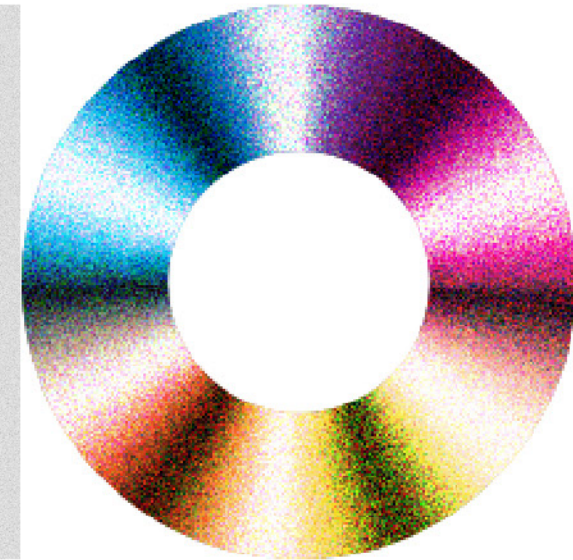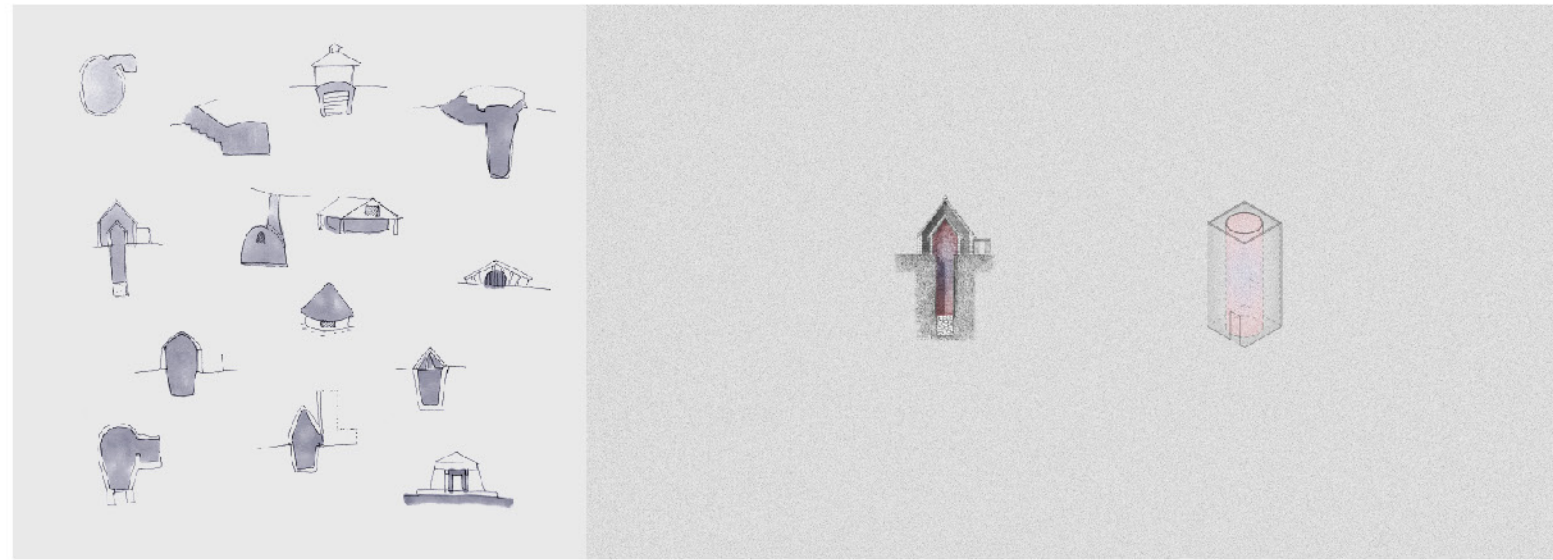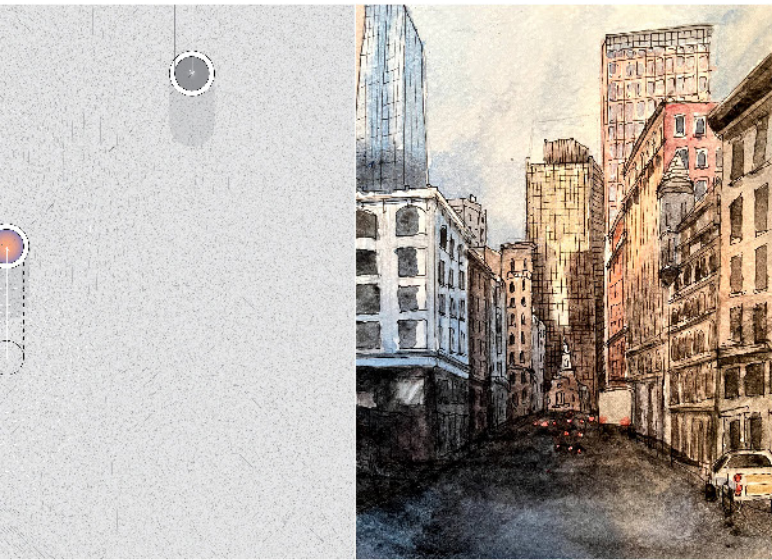
27 Nov 2020

28 Nov 2020

29 Nov 2020

30 Nov 2020

01 Dec 2020

...ose ebbing and flowing feeds

It's dark in Boston now, and a weekend
break illustrates
what is missing

Selective extraction,
confirms bias
typologically sublated

the project must congeal into a diagrammatic relationship with the concept
it works ok

timelines become loops to illustrate the micro (and
macro)temporalities on the site
I have to pick five
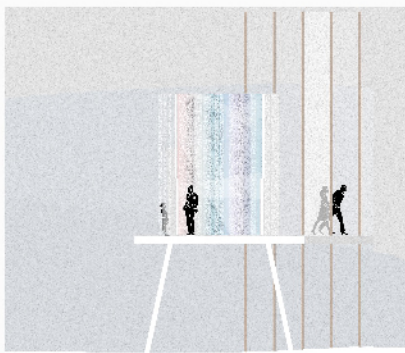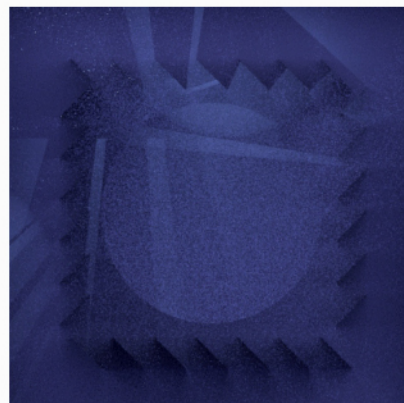
The ice house & the temporal operativity of the afterimage

Untold Narratives

My project suggests an expanded and decentralized definition of memory and storage, using the ice house as a conceptual and morphological starting point to propose an architectural sequence that serves as a viewing device for the different temporal regimes of the site. Building on Wolfgang Ernst's statement that 'time is only directly accessible to people when it circumvents or surpasses their sensory perception,' the project uses architectural intervention to cross this threshold and to introduce lag in the form of a linear sequence of channels that serve as a sensory deprivation device, and through intermediate spaces that sample the context for data and simulate the change over time in five different temporal regimes: the digital, the photochemical, the diurnal, the annual and the geological. The project offers a normally elusive spatial exploration of time, highlighting the urgency to acknowledge structural and ontological effects of the distinct operating times of our media on our culture. It is an invitation for a temporal resynchronization and a recalibration of the collective public memory.
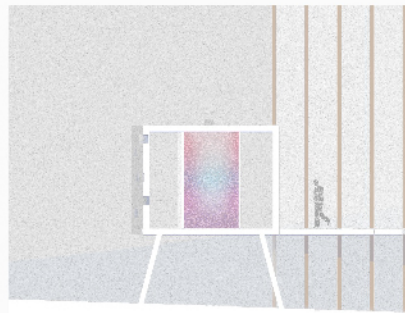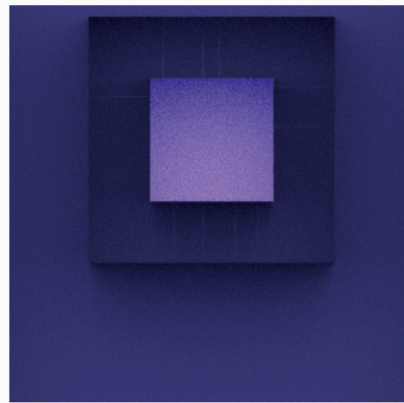

02 Dec 2020

They take flight and exist only in relation to each other

03 Dec 2020

The project again emerges through rendering,
the internal eye which sees on a similar timescale as the retina quickly discarded

04 Dec 2020

The project again emerges through rendering,
the internal eye which sees on a similar timescale as the retina quickly discarded

05 Dec 2020

cardinal signal

06 Dec 2020

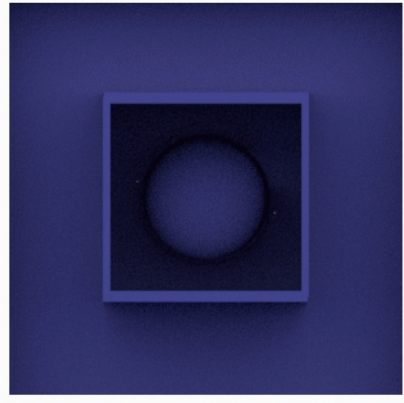to emphasize a point in the middle of the sequence, not beginning nor end

I

II

III

IV

V

Untold Narratives

1:200

movement

colour

light

1:200

3. memory - the afterimage

physical afterimage

cognitive afterimage
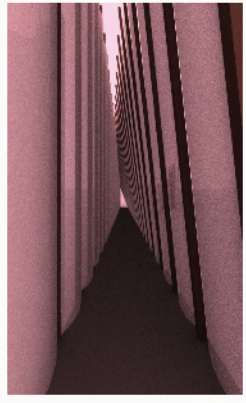
sensory afterimage

inventory of distortions
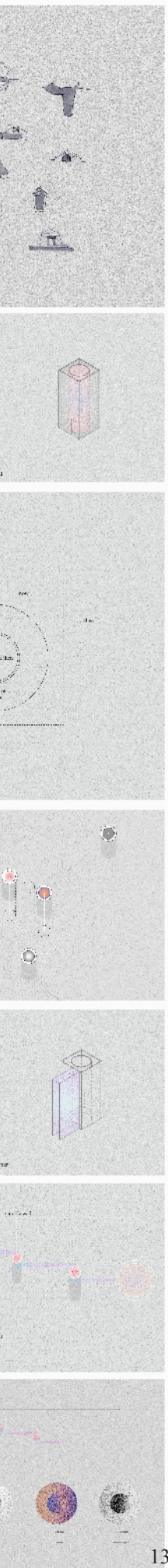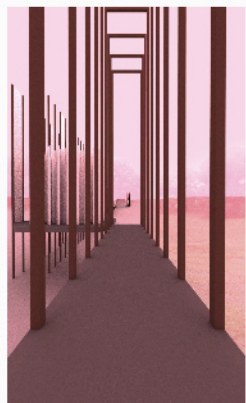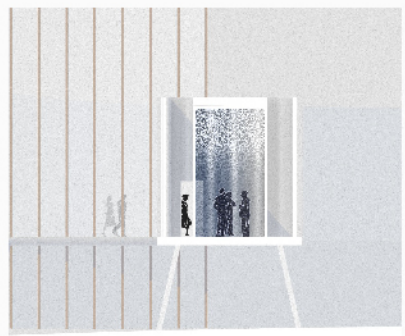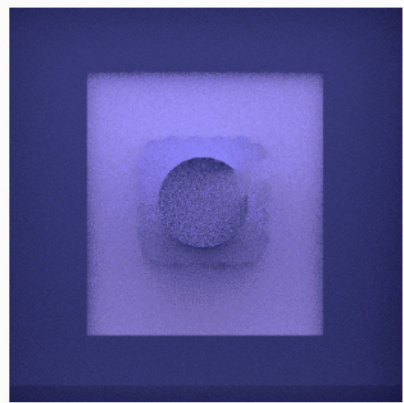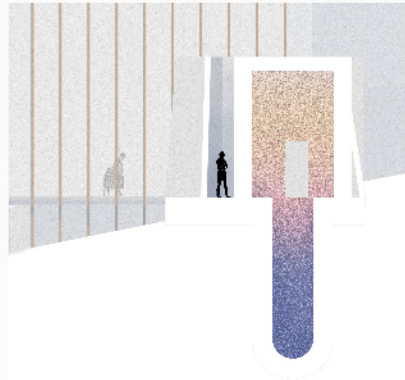
digital afterimage

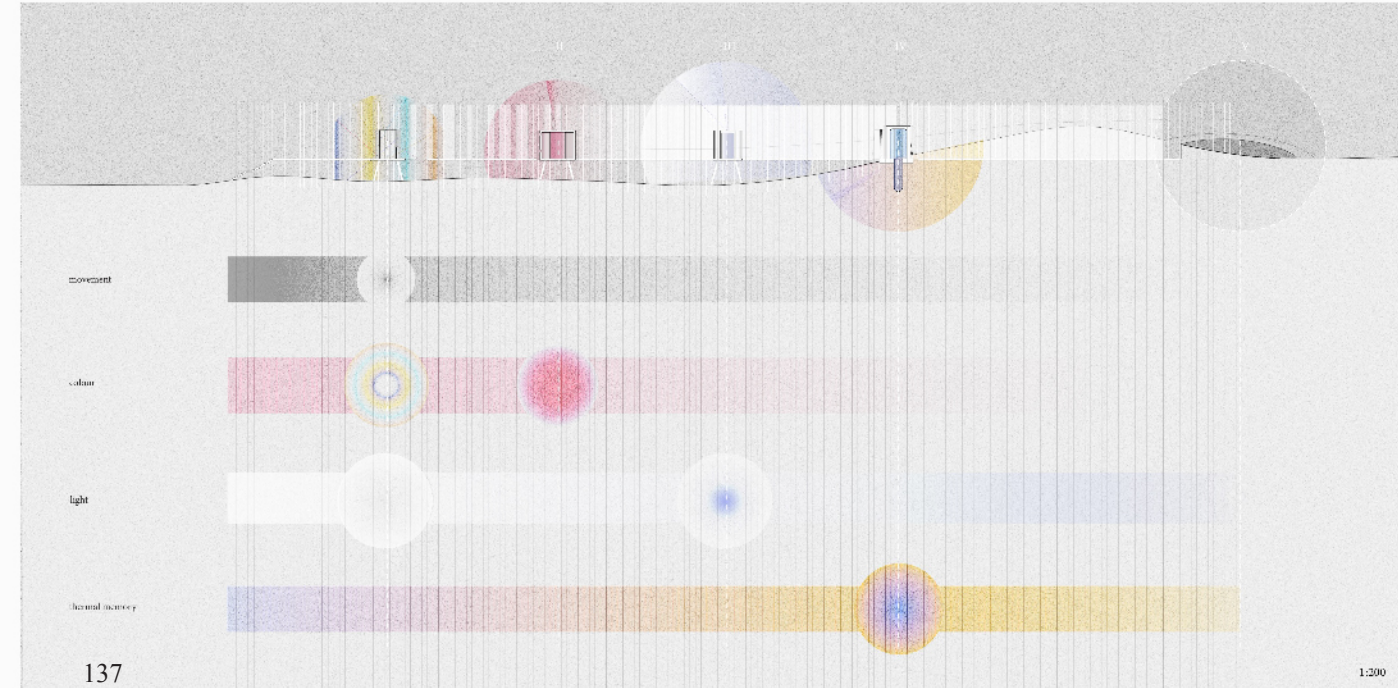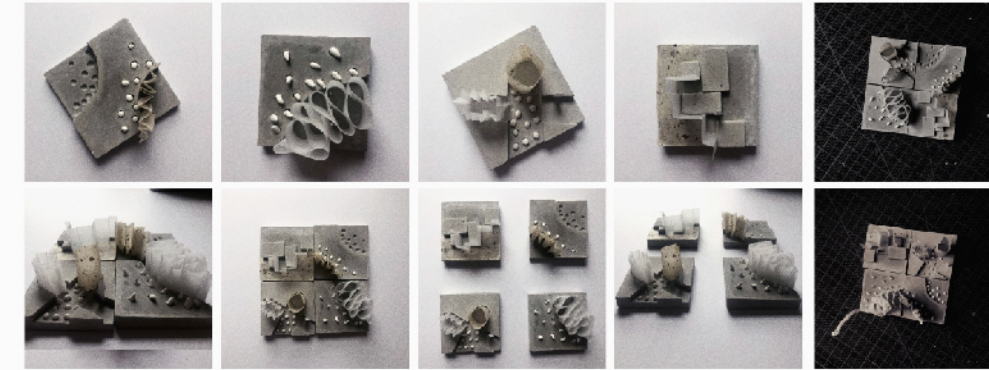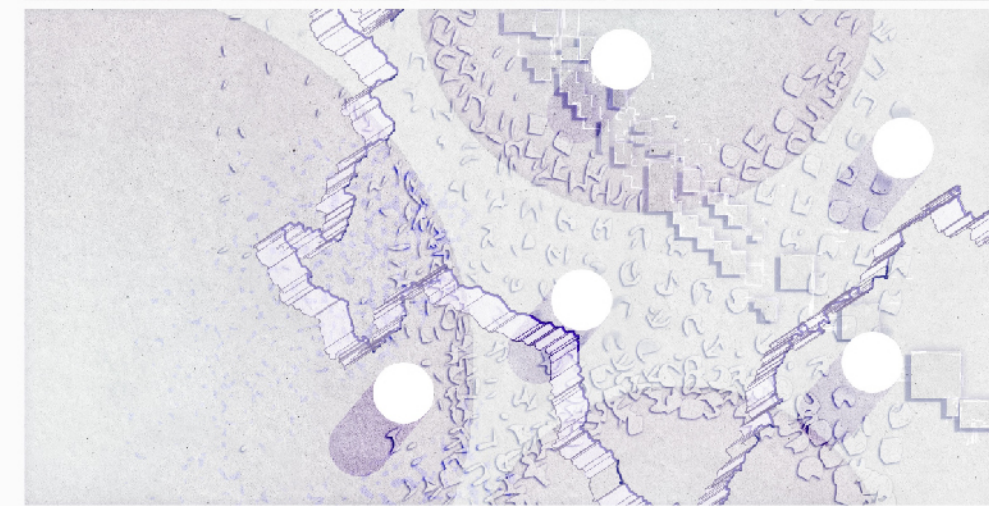**Picturesque**

I explored an expanded definition of storage media through the concept of the afterimage, encompassing the digital, the retinal, the cognitive and the physical phenomena that linger after an event.

Composition

I zoomed in on the digital afterimage to propose an updated ontological status of the digital model, pulling out the digital residue at the interface of landscape and digital model.
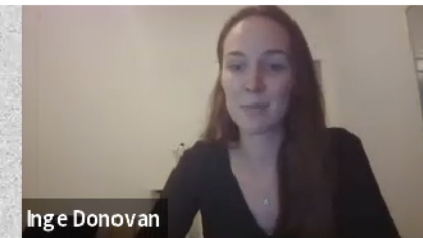
Order

I used physical modelling to think about edge conditions, mediation and the creation of inhabitable interfaces.

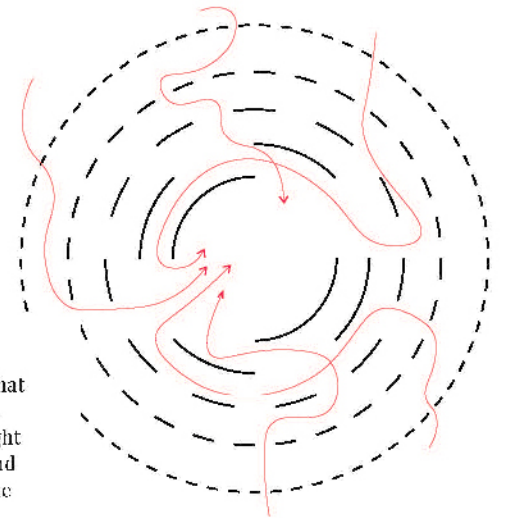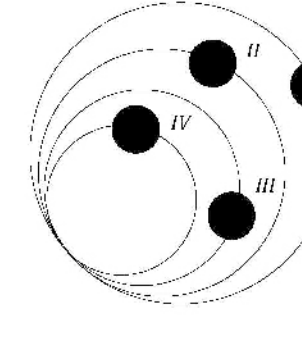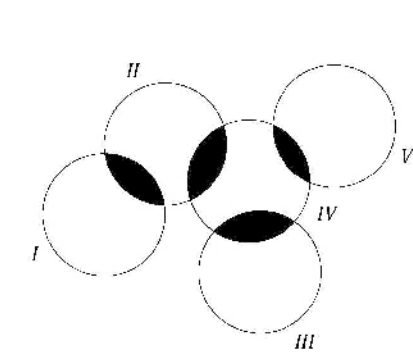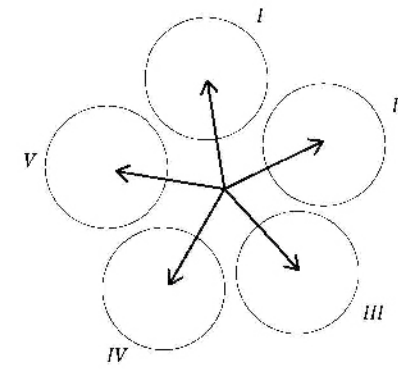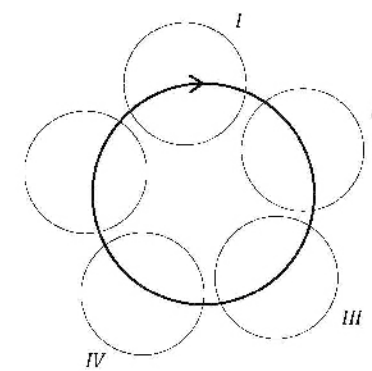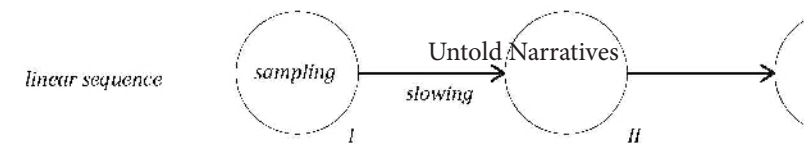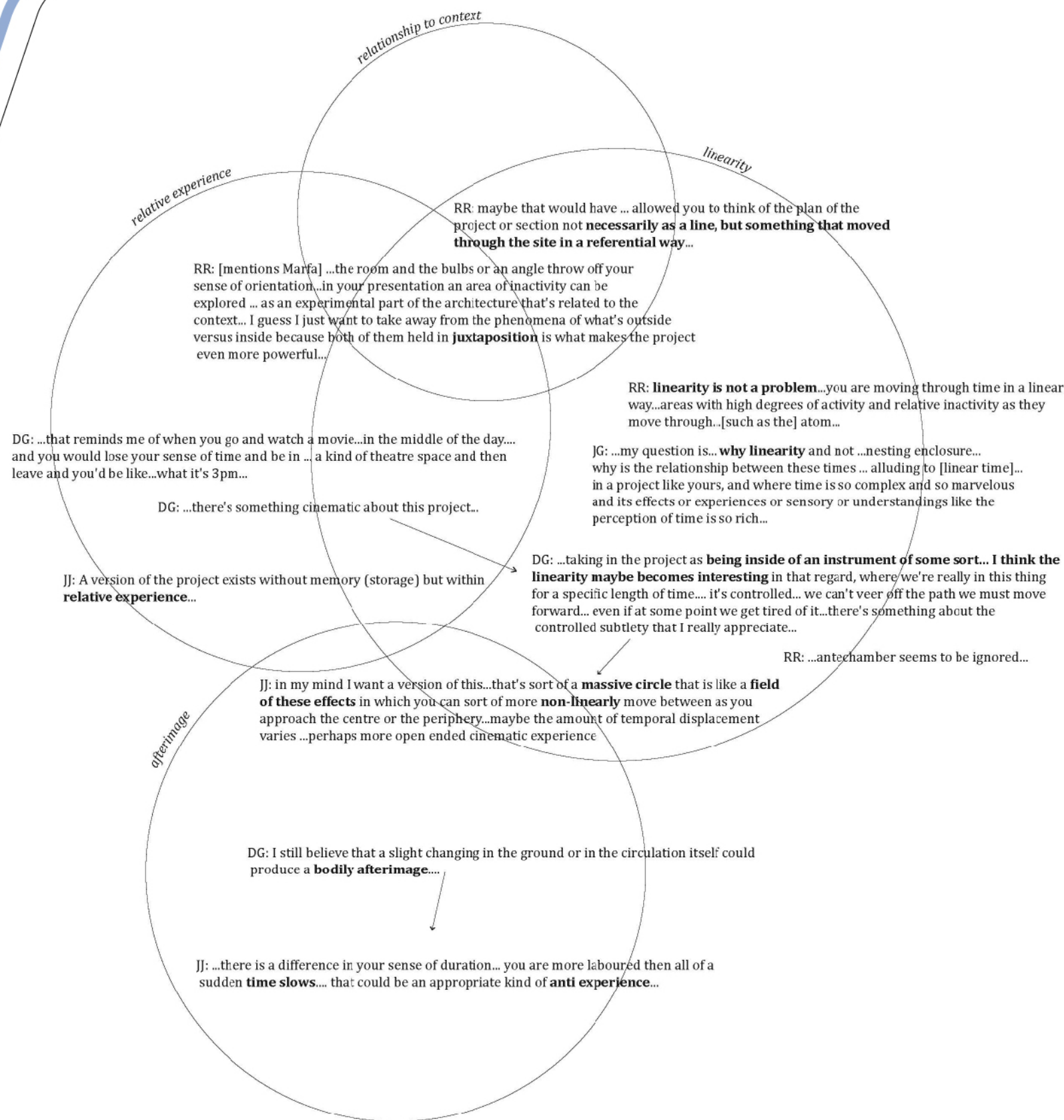**Presentation Sequences** *(sped up, for reference)*
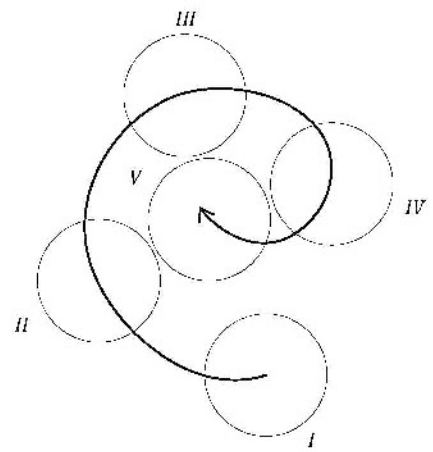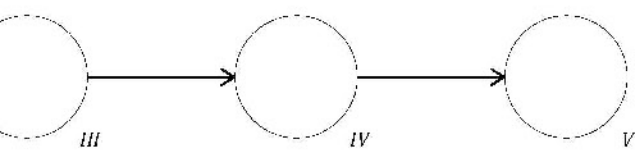
The ice house & the temporal operativity the afterimage

Inge Donovan
Core I Studio
MIT Architecture

sampling   Untold Narratives

slowing

relationship to context

relative experience

linearity

RR: maybe that would have ... allowed you to think of the plan of the project or section not **necessarily as a line, but something that moved through the site in a referential way**...

RR: [mentions Marfa] ...the room and the bulbs or an angle throw off your sense of orientation...in your presentation an area of inactivity can be explored ... as an experimental part of the architecture that's related to the context... I guess I just want to take away from the phenomena of what's outside versus inside because both of them held in **juxtaposition** is what makes the project even more powerful...

RR: **linearity is not a problem**...you are moving through time in a linear way...areas with high degrees of activity and relative inactivity as they move through...[such as the] atom...

DG: ...that reminds me of when you go and watch a movie...in the middle of the day.... and you would lose your sense of time and be in ... a kind of theatre space and then leave and you'd be like...what it's 3pm...

JG: ...my question is... **why linearity** and not ...nesting enclosure... why is the relationship between these times ... alluding to [linear time]... in a project like yours, and where time is so complex and so marvelous and its effects or experiences or sensory or understandings like the perception of time is so rich...

DG: ...there's something cinematic about this project..

JJ: A version of the project exists without memory (storage) but within **relative experience**...

DG: ...taking in the project as **being inside of an instrument of some sort... I think the linearity maybe becomes interesting** in that regard, where we're really in this thing for a specific length of time.... it's controlled... we can't veer off the path we must move forward... even if at some point we get tired of it...there's something about the controlled subtlety that I really appreciate...

RR: ...antechamber seems to be ignored...

JJ: in my mind I want a version of this...that's sort of a **massive circle** that is like a **field of these effects** in which you can sort of more **non-linearly** move between as you approach the centre or the periphery...maybe the amount of temporal displacement varies ...perhaps more open ended cinematic experience

afterimage

DG: I still believe that a slight changing in the ground or in the circulation itself could produce a **bodily afterimage**....

JJ: ...there is a difference in your sense of duration... you are more laboured then all of a sudden **time slows**.... that could be an appropriate kind of **anti experience**...
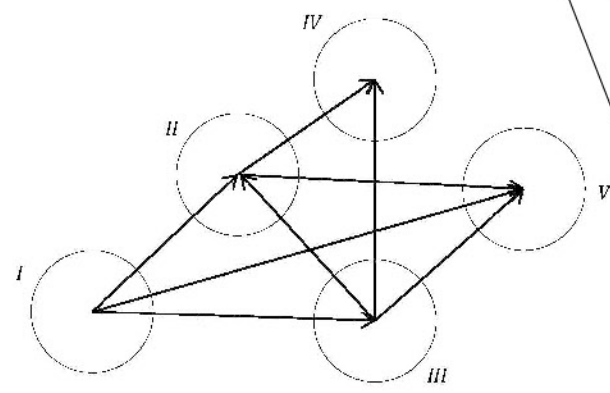
RR: delivery could have been better...felt like I was watching a new version of powers of 10...felt like it was such a package that that part could have been choreographed or produced as part of the delivery of this project...

JJ: the question of legibility is something that I think you've had a little bit of an ambivalent relationship towards...
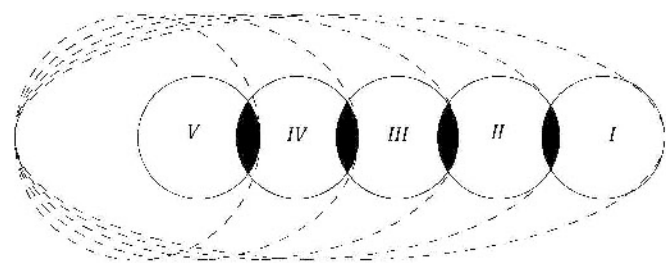
For this workshop, I want to address the linear sequence of my project. It is clear that the episodic sequencing of the project is not something that can be discarded since it depends on a movement from "fast" to "slow," but instead, linearity itself can be interrogated. To achieve this, I would take away the emphasis from the diagrammatic nature of the plan/section and workshop new sequences that do not necessarily follow a straight line. These could follow circular, spiral or radial paths, they could be distributed, nested or overlapping, resulting in a blurring, an expansion and contraction and a more nuanced spatial organization. I will begin by mapping out these possible geometries, challenging the linearity of the sampling process (which may fail) and the binary I established. Since the project essentially functions as a cinematic device, the exercise could culminate in a sequence of perspective drawings that are delivered cinematically, bridging the gap between my animations and sections. These drawings could become a destabilizing device in their relationship to both internal and contextual referents.
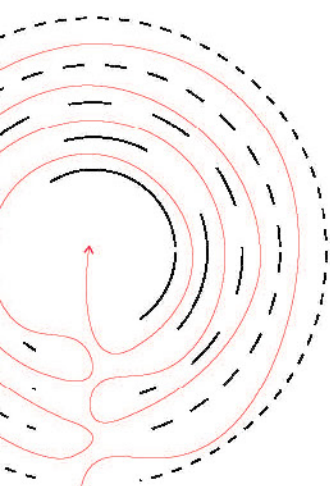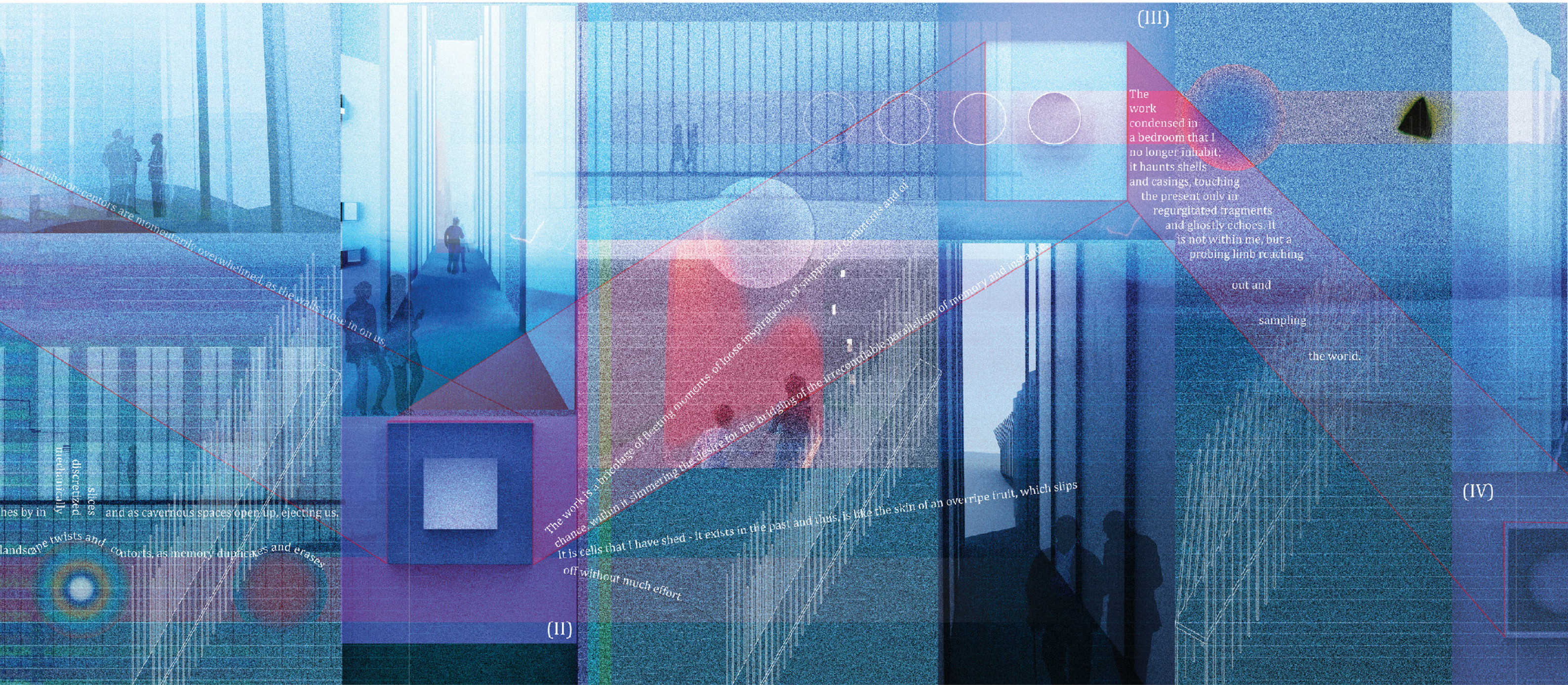
circular/sequential

radial/non-sequential

redefinition of antechamber

nesting

radial/non-sequential

III   iv   V

III
V
IV
II
i

spiral/sequential

IV
II
i
V
III

distributed/non-sequential

V   IV   III   II   I

nesting

I

linear/sequential

(I)

(III)

The work condensed in a bedroom that I no longer inhabit; it haunts shells and casings, touching the present only in regurgitated fragments and ghostly echoes. It is not within me, but a probing limb reaching

out and

sampling

the world.

...is our photoreceptors are momentarily overwhelmed as the walls close in on us.

discretized mechanically

slices

...hes by in

...and as cavernous spaces open up, ejecting us.

...landscape twists and contorts, as memory duplicates and erases.

The work is a bricolage of fleeting moments, of loose inspirations of snippets of memories and of chance within it simmering the desire for the bridging of the irreconcilable parallelism of memory and instan...

It is cells that I have shed - it exists in the past and thus, is like the skin of an overripe fruit, which slips off without much effort.

(II)

(IV)

In the art of extension the arm draws a line
- the connective tissue, or a higher dimensional folding,
an apotheotic smoothing.
The architecture becomes a scaffolding for
the roundness of moments that are

strung together like threads,
its extension through space creating a linearly
around which time
congeals in thick clumps

This arm
is foreign,
as is any
appendage;
but its
foreignness
increases with
distance until
its hands are
no longer
mine, and it
takes on an
objecthood of
its own.

It forces an indexing of sequence, as it is only in
stringing together that a story emerges, in which
temporal eddies
and wandering moments
are channeled into rooms of their own

and the beginning can possibly touch the end.

(V)

4.151 Core I Project Summary – The Temporal Operativity of the Ice House

Instructors: Jeremy Jih, Hans Tursack, Brandon Clifford, Rosalyne Shieh

My Core I project is centered around an expanded and de-anthropomorphized definition of memory and storage, using the ice house as a conceptual and morphological starting point to propose an architectural sequence that serves as a viewing device for the different temporal regimes of the site. Building on Wolfgang Ernst's statement that "time is only directly accessible to people when it circumvents or surpasses their sensory perception," the project uses architectural intervention to cross this threshold and to introduce lag in the form of a linear sequence of channels that serve as a sensory deprivation device, and through intermediate spaces that sample the context for data and simulate the change over time in five different temporal regimes: the digital, the photochemical, the diurnal, the annual and the geological. The project offers a normally elusive spatial exploration of time, highlighting the urgency to acknowledge structural and ontological effects of the distinct operating times of our media on our culture. It is an invitation for a temporal resynchronization and a recalibration of the collective public memory.

***

The work completed for 4.184 The Untold Narratives builds off my Core I project, in which I explored a new definition of memory and storage using the ice house both conceptually and morphologically. The limited time frame of the work (3 weeks) yielded a project in which straight lines were drawn between episodic moments, triggering questions about linearity. During the workshop I explored the idiosyncrasies of the flow of time through the five distinct episodes of the project. Using collage, I explored possibilities for layering, overlapping, wandering, congealing, and straying moments, drawing on the nonlinear and irrational nature of our perception. The introspective nature of the project also sparked a reflection on the relationship between myself and my work, leading to a blurring between my personal narrative and the narrative of the project.

The Untold Narratives: The Geometry of Sequence (*Reflection*)

It is tempting to exploit the curves of time, which surface in curled-up shavings, great arcs, and frenetic loops. On these arcs, time breezes by and stews in forgotten corners, it inhabits the infinitesimally brief refresh rate of a pixel or the indentation of light on the retina,

it stiffens in the compressed layers of geological strata that are sucked into the molten core of the earth. These arcs reveal the manner in which any sequence is heterogeneous, similar to the tugging on Bergson's spool: moments speed up and slow down as our photoreceptors are momentarily overwhelmed, as the walls close in on us, as the landscape flashes by in mechanically discretized slices and as cavernous spaces open up, ejecting us. Upon departure, the landscape twists and contorts, as memory duplicates and erases.

The work is a bricolage of fleeting moments, of loose inspirations, of snippets of comments and of chance, within it simmering the desire for the bridging of the irreconcilable parallelism of memory and instance. It is cells that I have shed - it exists in the past and thus, is like the skin of an overripe fruit, which slips off without much effort. The work condensed in a bedroom that I no longer inhabit; it haunts shells and casings, touching the present only in regurgitated fragments and ghostly echoes. It is not within me, but a probing limb reaching out and sampling the world. This arm is foreign, as is any appendage, but its foreignness increases with distance until its hands are no longer mine, and it takes on an objecthood of its own.
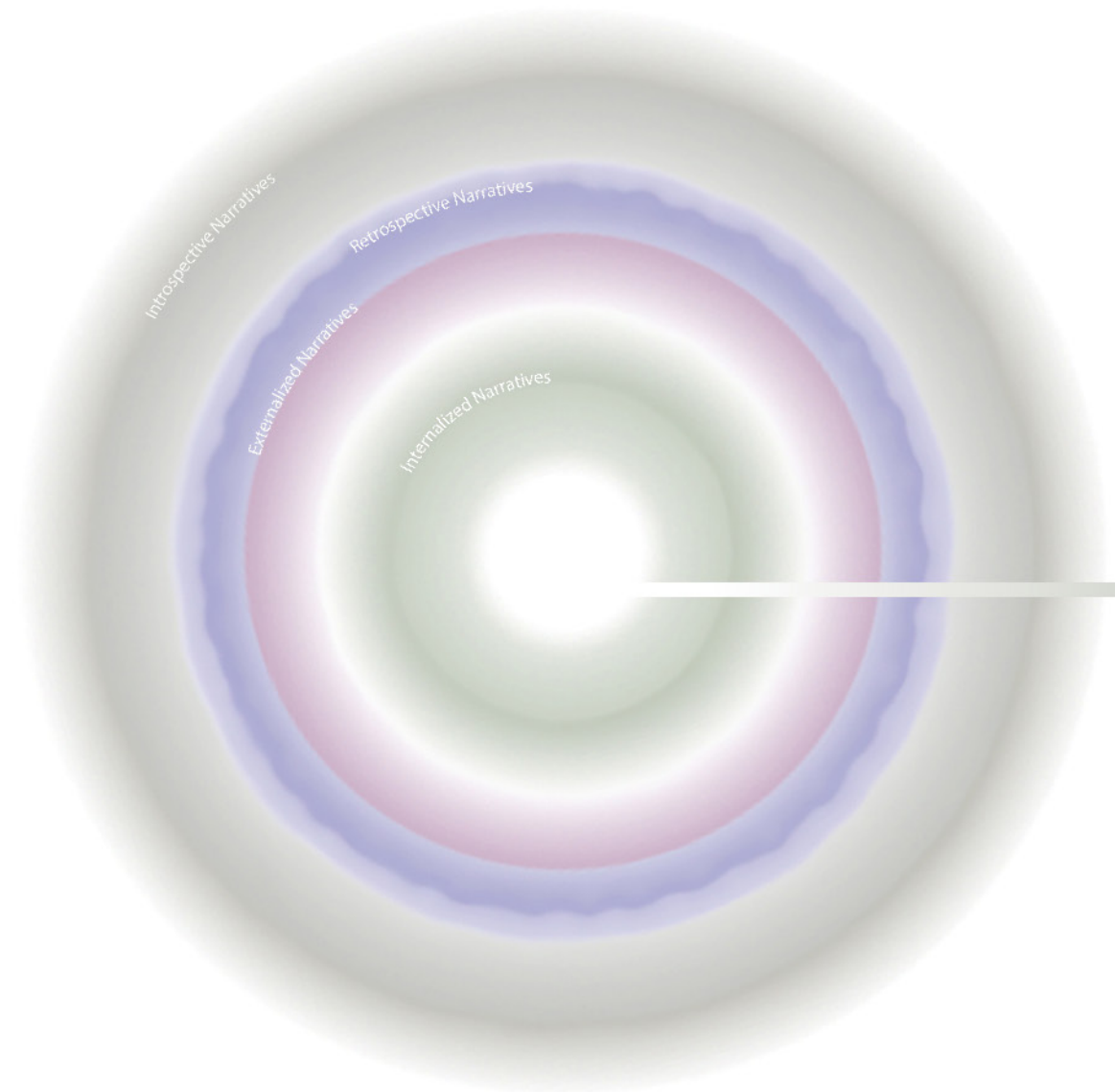
In the act of extension, the arm draws a line - the connective tissue, or a higher

dimensional folding, an apotheotic smoothing. The architecture becomes a scaffolding for the roundness of moments that are strung together like beads, its extension through space creating a linearity around which time congeals in thick lumps. It forces an indexing of sequence, as it is only in stringing together that a story emerges, in which temporal eddies and wandering moments are channeled into rooms of their own and the beginning can possibly touch the end.
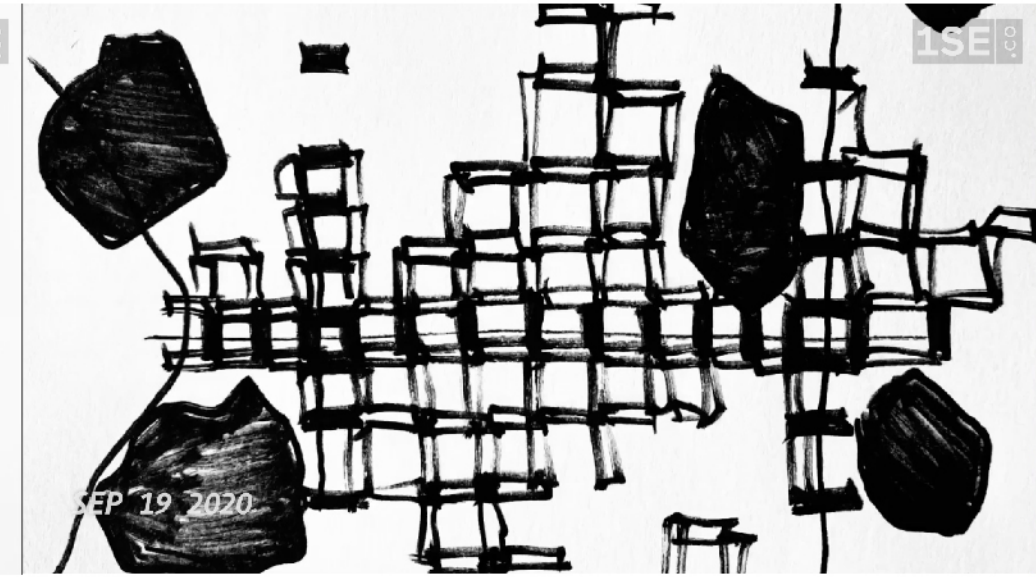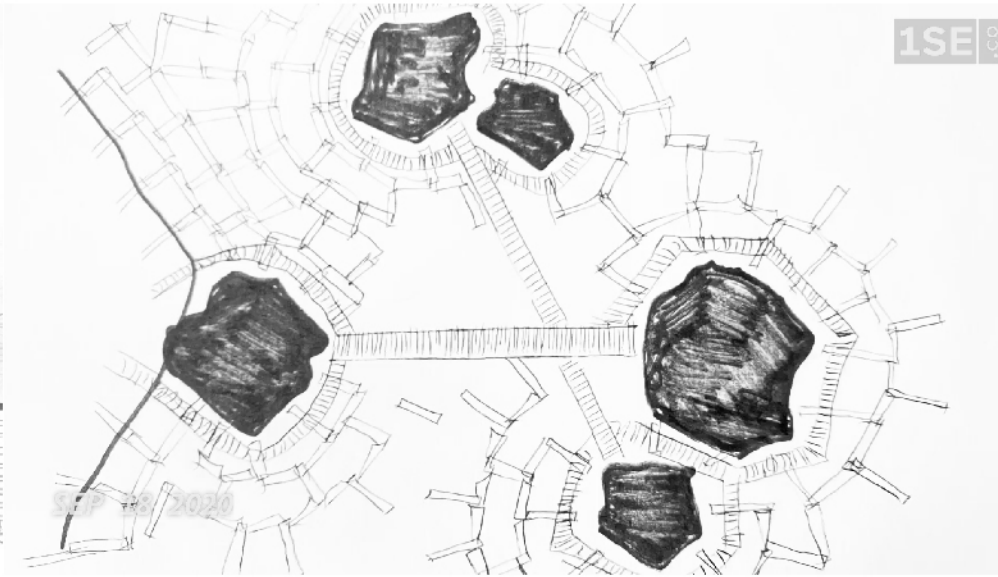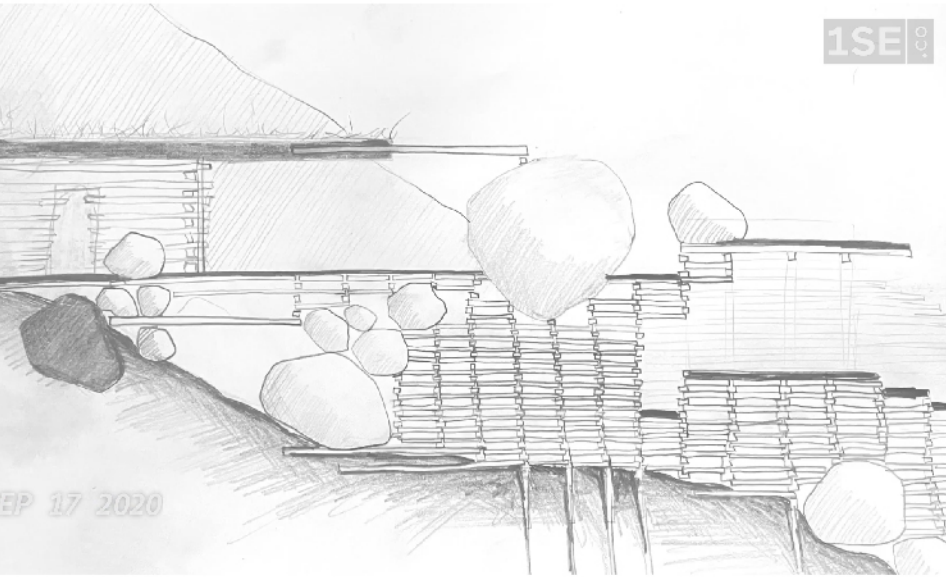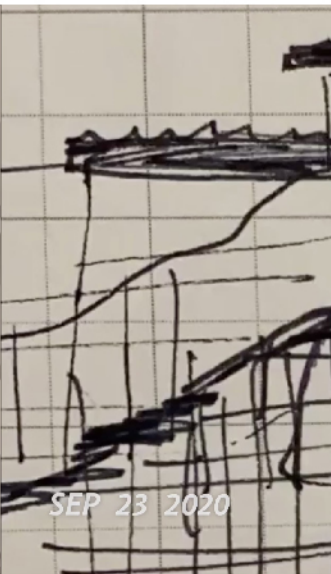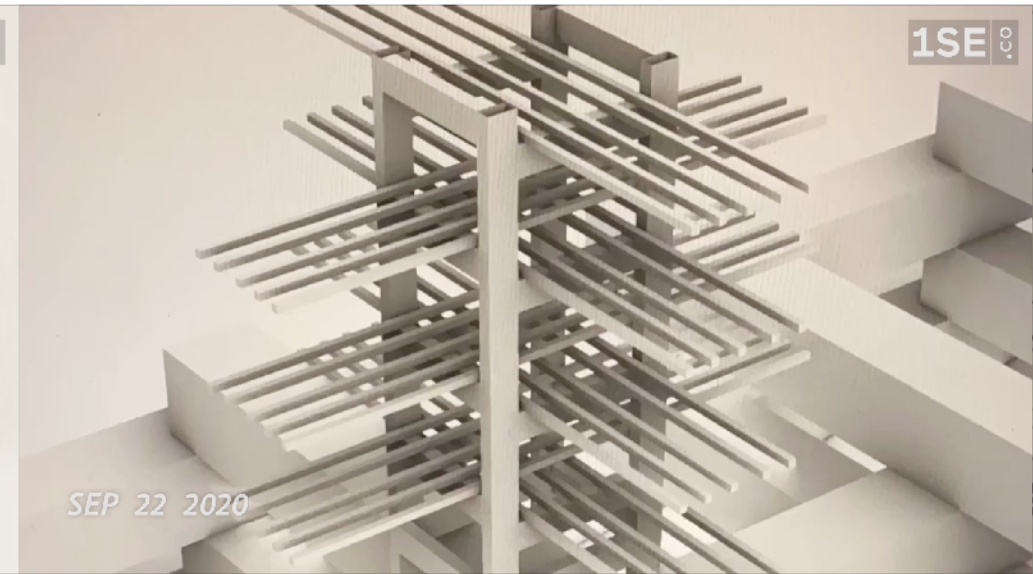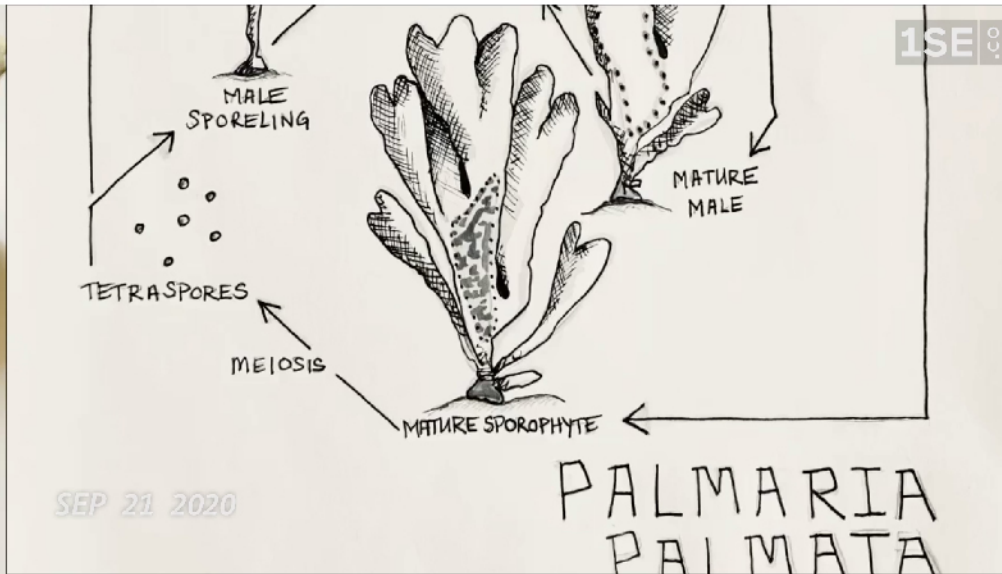
Student: Natalie Pearl

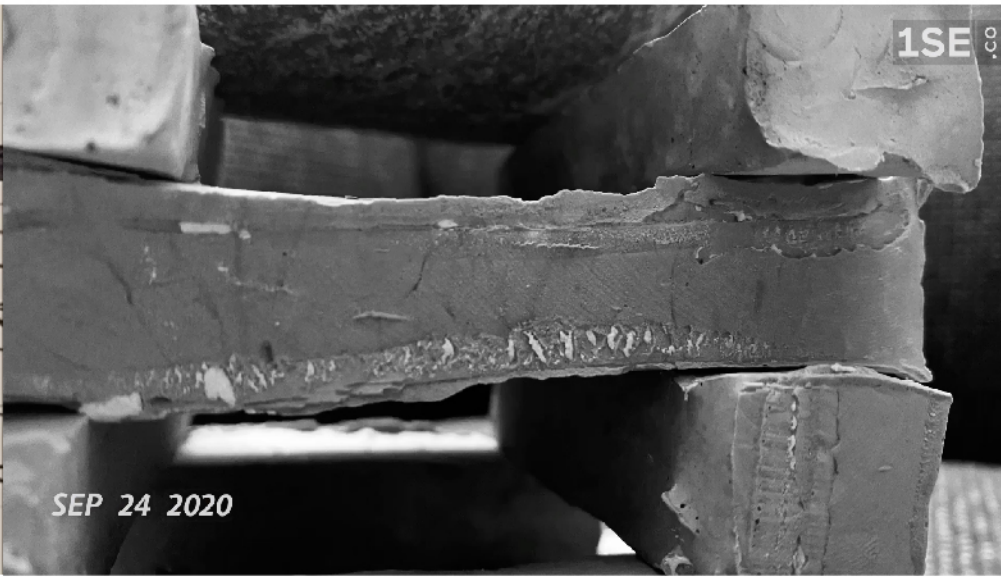Second Year Graduate Student

MArch '23 - Core 3

152
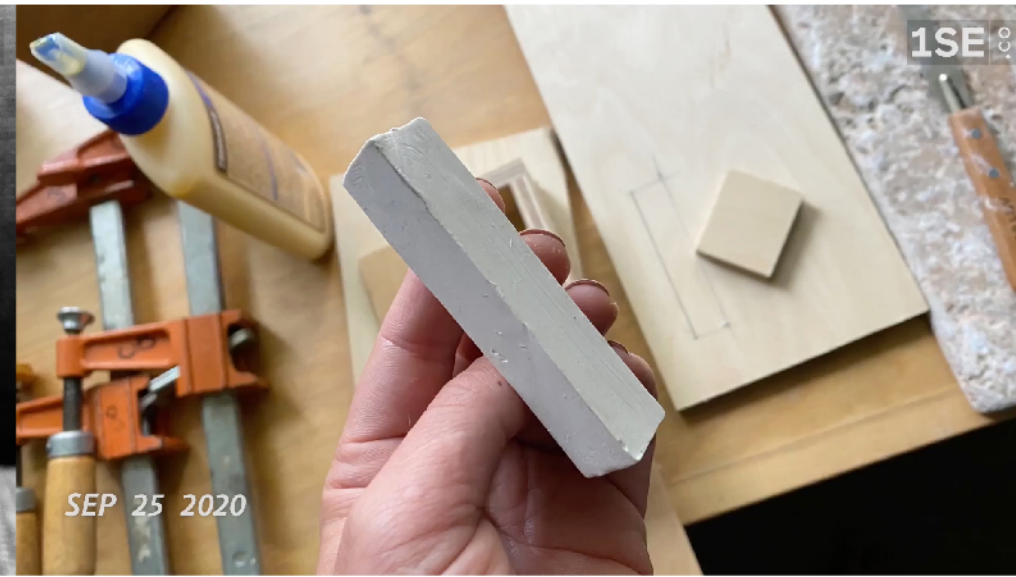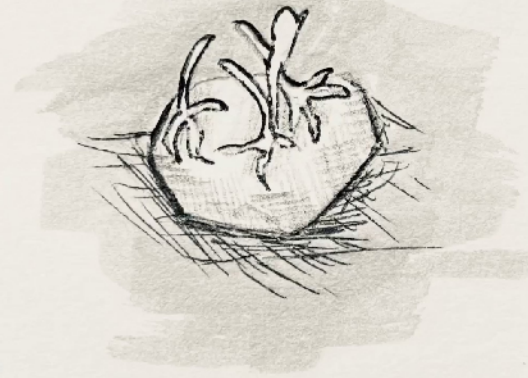
153

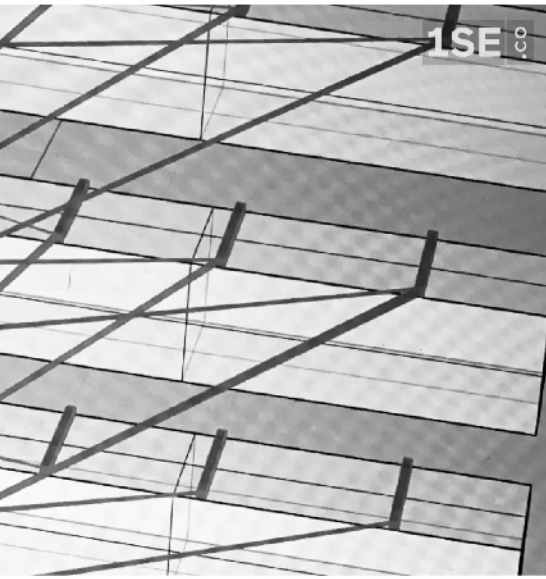SEP 14 2020

SEP 15 2020

SEP 16 2020

SEP 24 2020

SEP 25 2020

SEP 27 2020

SEP 28 2020

SEP 29 2020

OCT 09 2020

OCT 10 2020

OCT 11 2020

OCT

OCT 16 2020

OCT 17 2020

OCT 18 2020

OCT 19 2020

OCT 20 2020

OCT 21 2020

1SE .co

OCT 28 2020

OCT 29 2020

OCT 30 2020

OCT 31 2020

NOV 01 2020

NOV 02 2020

NOV 03 2020

NOV 04 2020

NOV 05 2020

NOV 06
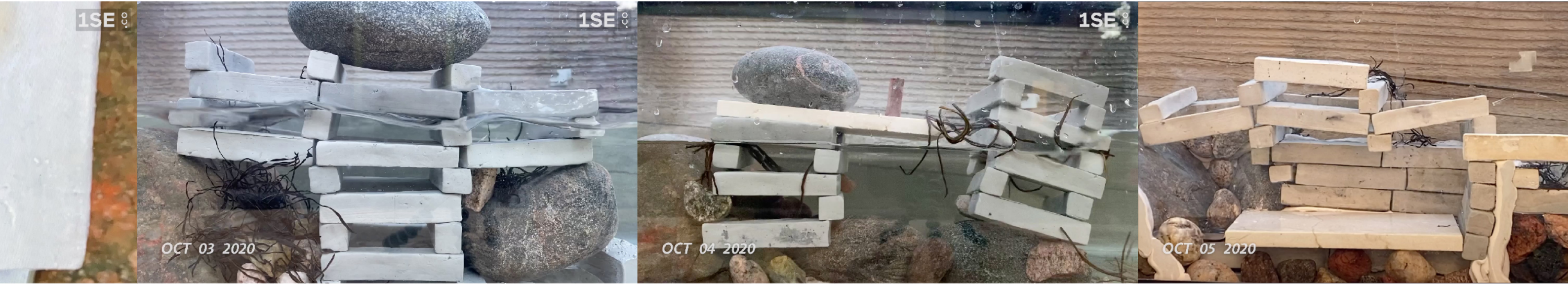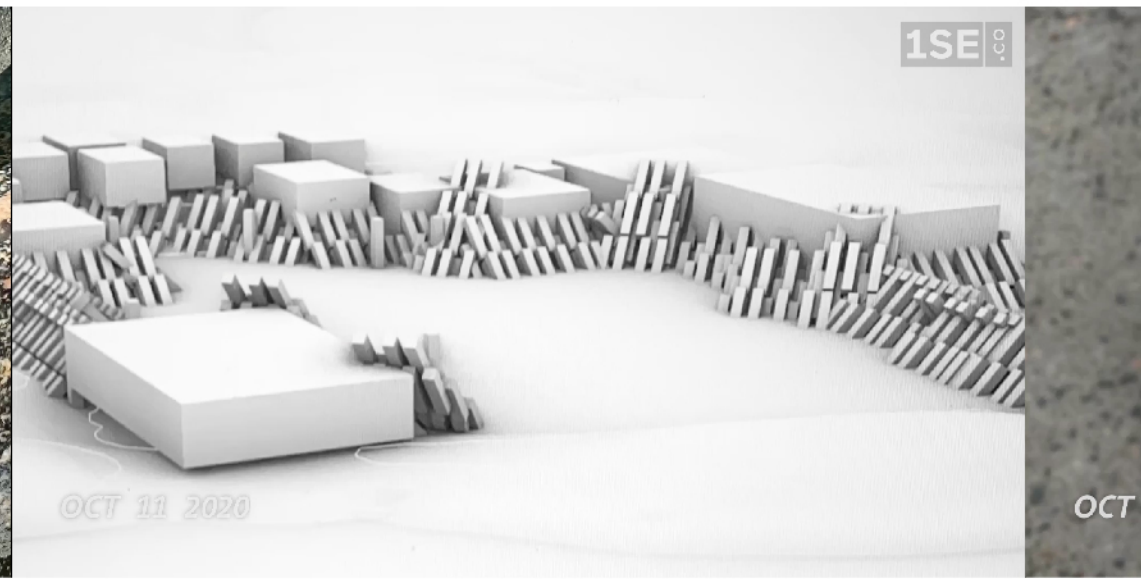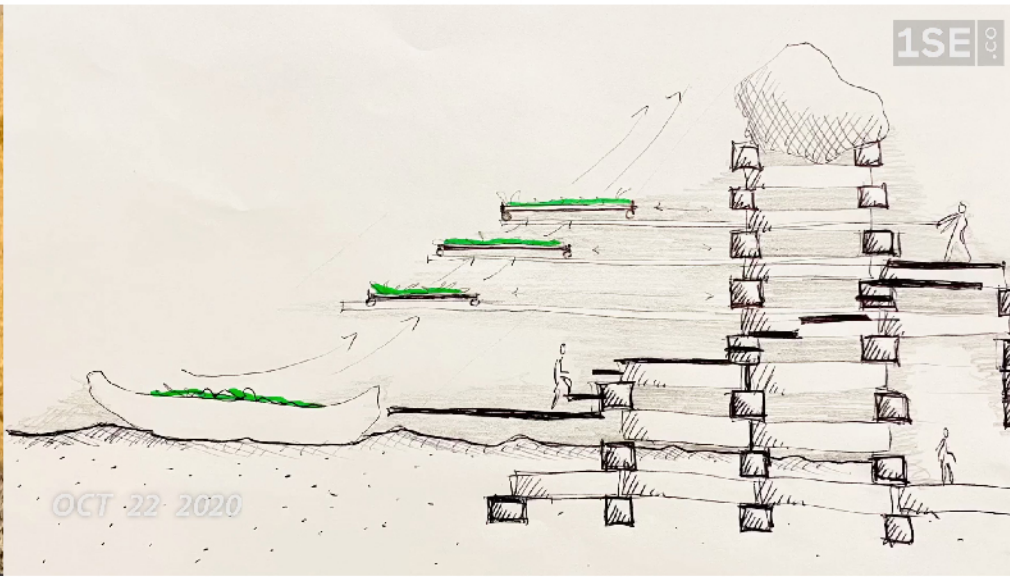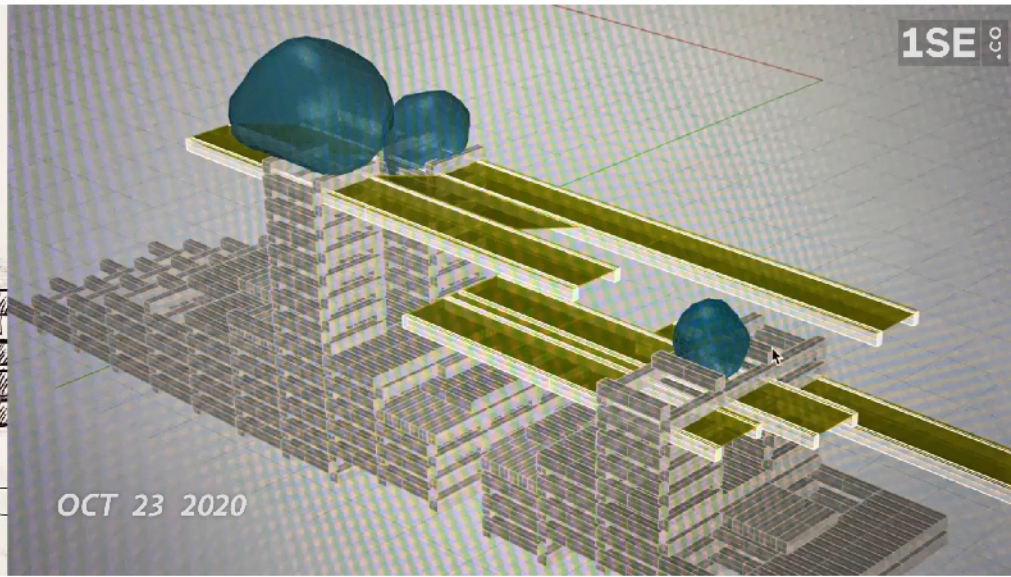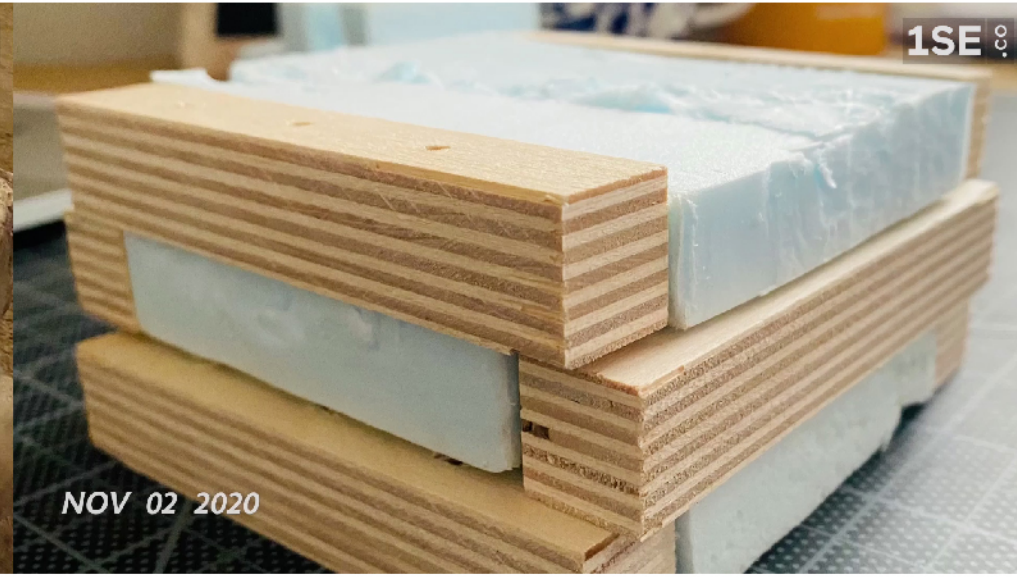
The ideal position of vapor retarders within a wall assembly will vary depending on the climate. (See Fig. 9.2 for the climatic zone map.) Their position must also be considered in conjunction with the location of the air barrier.

For example, in cold areas (generally, climate regions 5, 6, 7, and 8), warm, moist interior air will tend to migrate toward the cooler, drier air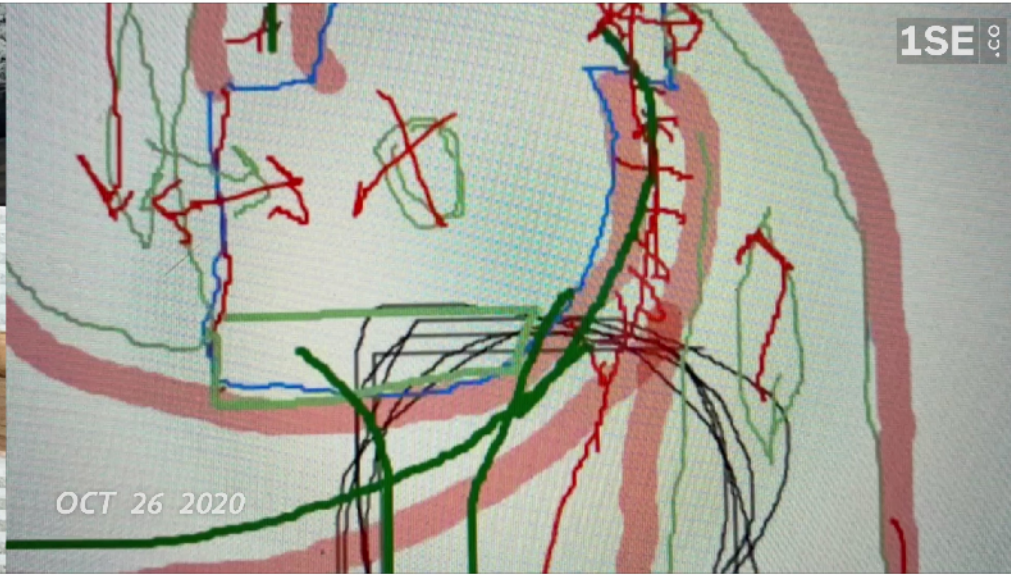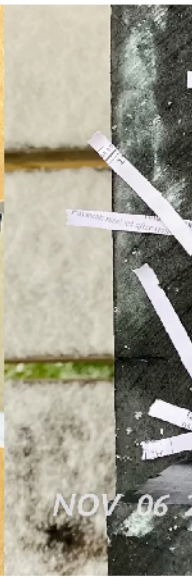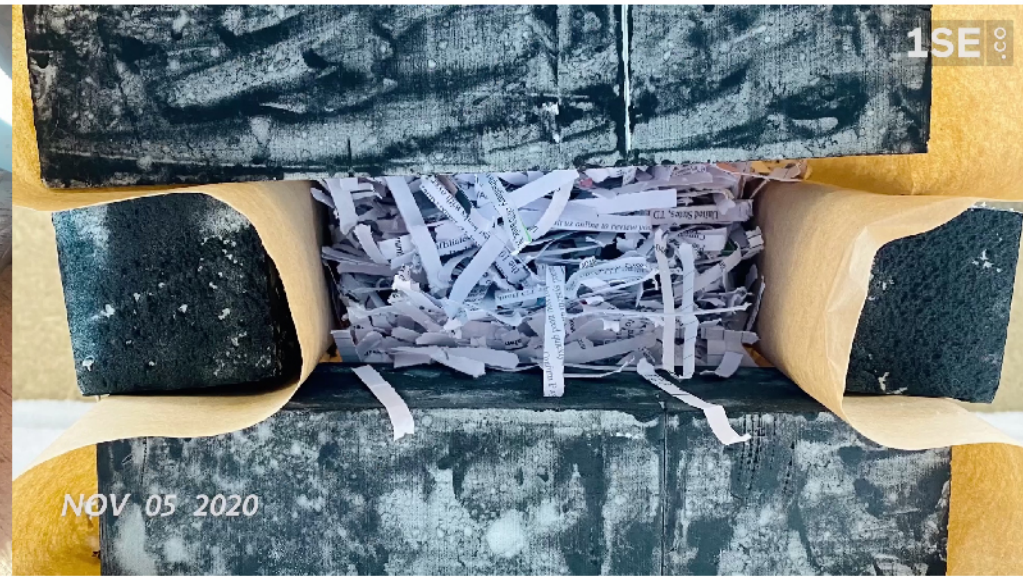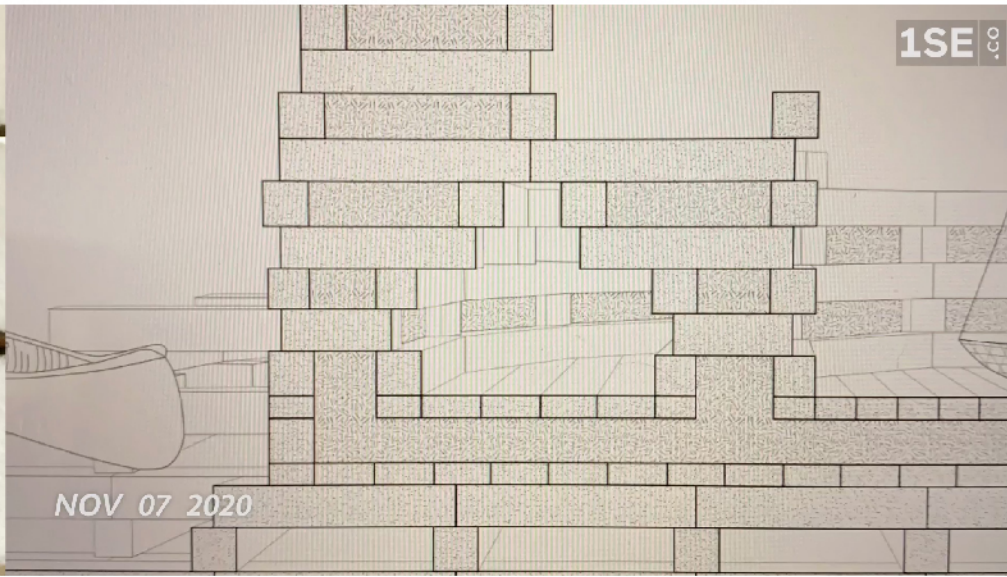 outdoors. This will lead to water vapor condensing inside the insulation cavity or elsewhere inside the wall. To prevent this, impermeable vapor retarders should be placed on the warmer inside of the insulation. Also, a *vapor-permeable* air barrier should be placed outside the insulation to prevent air infiltration while allowing any accumulated moisture to dry out. In most cases, the air barrier is placed outside the sheathing for support, protection, and ease of construction.

In air-conditioned buildings in hot, humid climates (generally, climatic regions 1, 2, 3A below the warm-humid line, and 3C), vapor retarders should be placed on the warmer outside of the insulation to prevent the moist, warm air outside the building from migrating to the cooler, dehumidified interior spaces. In these climate regions, the vapor retarder should also serve as air barrier, that is, the air barrier should be *vapor-impermeable*.

In mixed climatic regions (generally, climate zones 4, some parts of 5 and some parts of 3A, 3B, 3C, and 4B), a vapor-permeable air barrier should be placed outside the insulation, and no vapor retarders should be used. This allows any vapor or condensation to pass through the wall in either direction.

perm rating	term
less than 0.1	vapor impermeable
0.1 to 1	semi-impermeable
1 to 10	semipermeable
10 or over	permeable

Anything less than 1 perm is considered to be a vapor retarder (or less accurately called a vapor barrier).

NOV 07 2020

NOV 08 2020

NOV 09 2020

NOV 10 2020

NOV 11 2020

NOV 12 2020

summer

winter

summer fall winter spring

timber is planted, harvested and replanted on a 60 year time cycle

seasonal wetland food chain
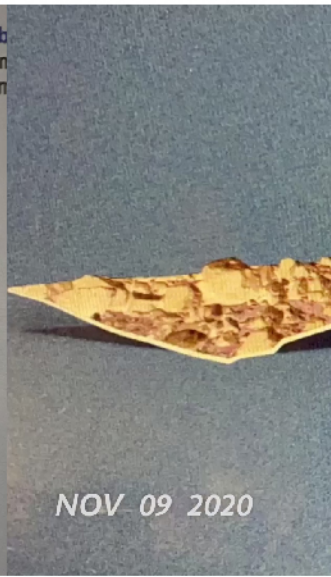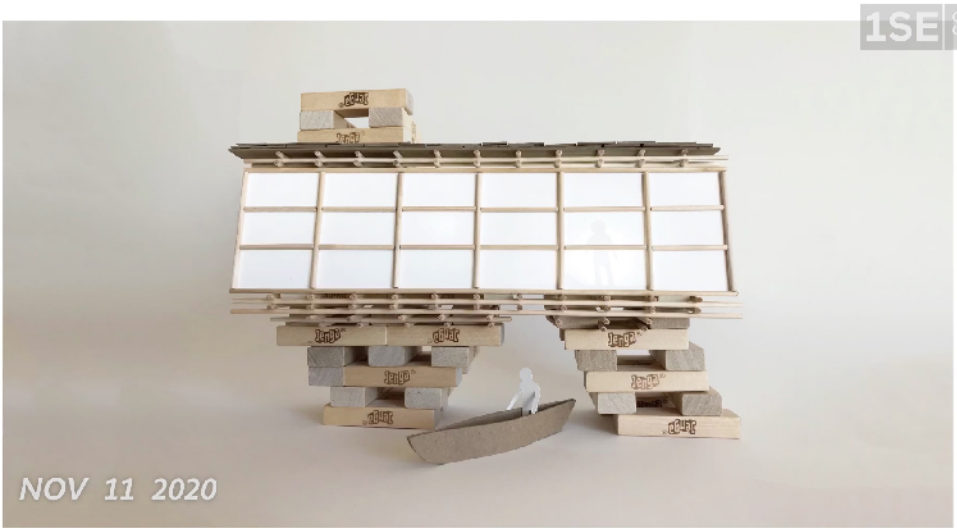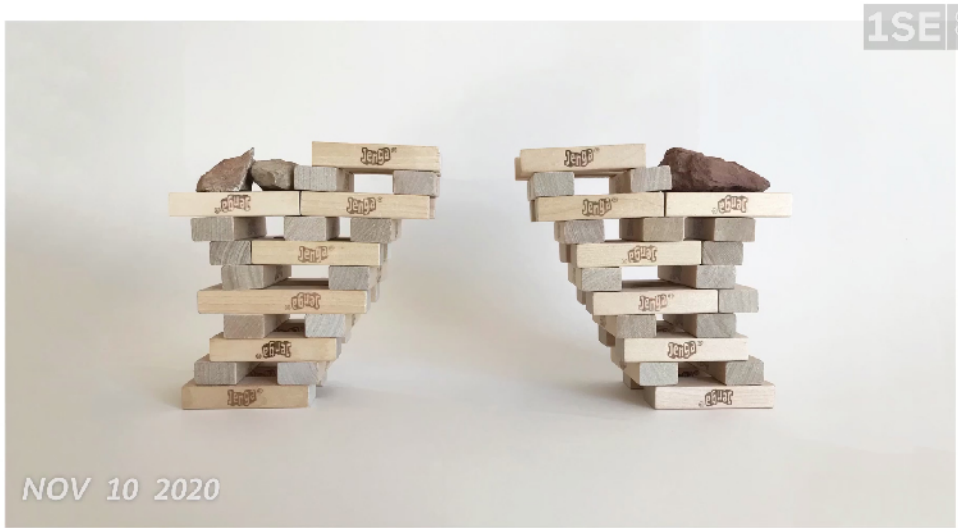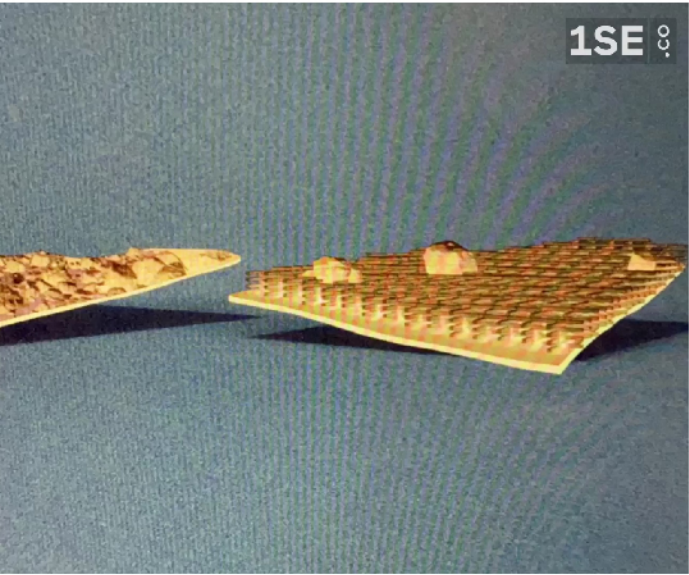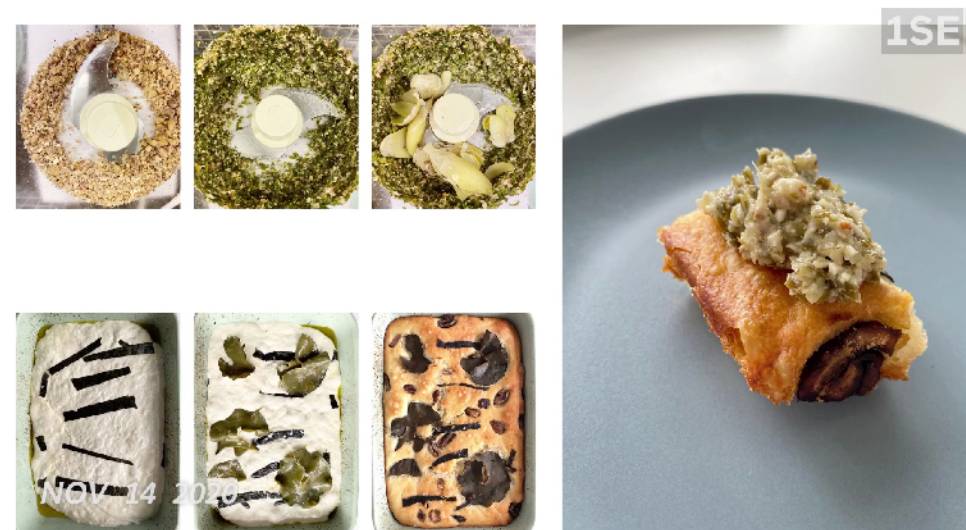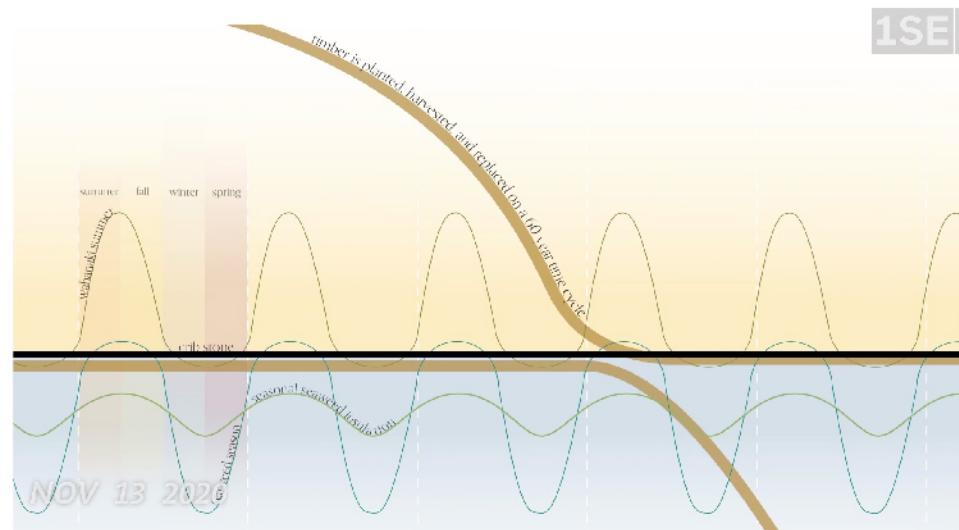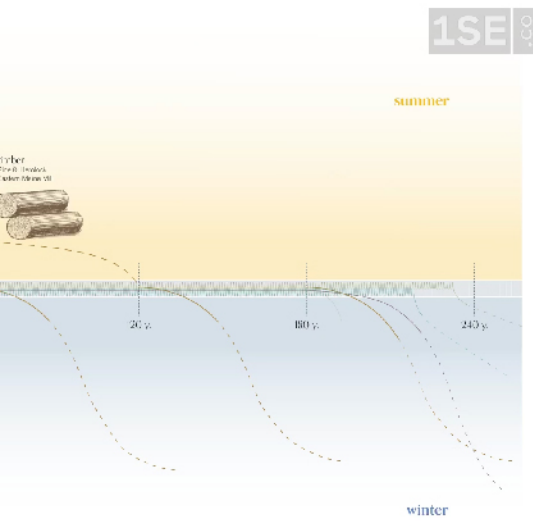
Seasonal Harvest

Dorr Point

NOV 13 2020

NOV 14 2020

NOV 13 2020

NOV 16 2020

NOV 17 2020

NOV 18 2020

NOV 20 2020

NOV 21 2020

NOV 22 2020

NOV 24 2020

NOV 25 2020

NOV 26 2020

0m 2m 10m

NOV 27 2020

Metal Shear Pins

Sistra

Small Diameter Timbers

Dry Seaweed Bales in Fishing Nets

Sawn Logs

Seaweed Insulation Mats

Seaweed Cultures

Stone rubbles

Granite Grit Stone

Seaweed Cultures

NOV 28 2020

$$sigma >= force/area$$

$$3015000 \ N/m^2 >= 1137 \ N \ / \ 0.01m^2$$

$$3015000 \ N/m^2 >= 113,700 \ N/m^2$$

Figure 8.3 Stability of corbel: (a) three blocks in stable equilibrium; (b) four blocks at the limit of stability; (c) five blocks in an unstable configuration; (d) added masonry as backweight to ensure stability.

DEC 03 2020

DEC 04 2020

DEC 05 2020

DEC 06 2020

DEC 07 2020

DEC 08 2020

DEC 12 2020

DEC 13 2020

DEC 13 2020

Enclosed & Conditioned Spaces

Temp	Humidity	Program	Possible Façade Adjustment				Nat. Vent?	Solar Exposure	Additional
			North	South	East/West	Internal			
<40F (4.4C)	Dry	Flash Freezer Area				x	No	None	Protected. Insulation - access to cold storage and workspace
	Moderate	Cold Storage				x	Yes	None	Insulation and access to freezer
45-80F	Wet	Nursery		x	x		Yes	High	UV light at night
55-80 F	Wet	Workspace	x	x	x		Yes	High	All light directions accepted/adjacent to boat house and harvest collection point
60F-80F (15.6C-26.7C)	Dry	Packaging	x				Yes	High	Adjacent to storage, workspace, shipping. Access to nice Views
	Moderate	Circulation Accessible	x		x		Yes	Moderate	Clear
	Moderate	Public Bathroom	x			x	Yes	Moderate	Plumbing point?
	Moderate	Office Spaces x4	x		x	x	Yes	Preferred	2" access
	Moderate	Gathering Room	x		x		Yes	Preferred	Warm and insulated
>80F (26.7C)	Dry	Seaweed Drying Areas		x	x		Yes	High	Risen warm air
	Dry	Mechanical Area				x	-	Some exposure if linked to solar and water harvesting	Protected and insulated well.

Drying Space   timber wall system
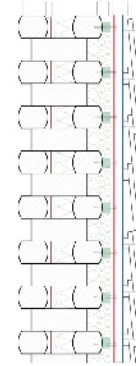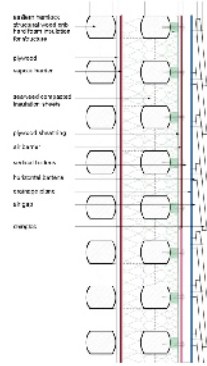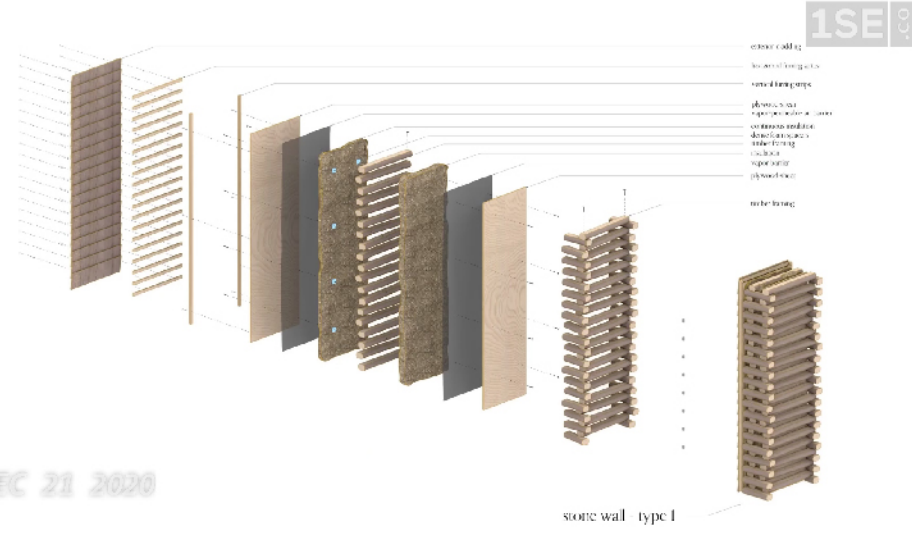
stone wall   type 1

Nursery Space   crib wall system

stone wall - type 2

DEC 23 2020

Boathouse crib wall system

DEC 24 2020

$sigma > force/area$

$3{,}015{,}000 \ N/m^2 > 843 \ N / 0.01m^2$

$3{,}015{,}000 \ N/m^2 > 84{,}300 \ N/m^2$
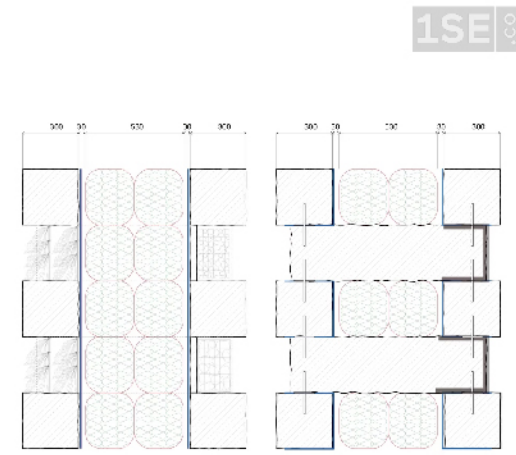
DEC 26 2020
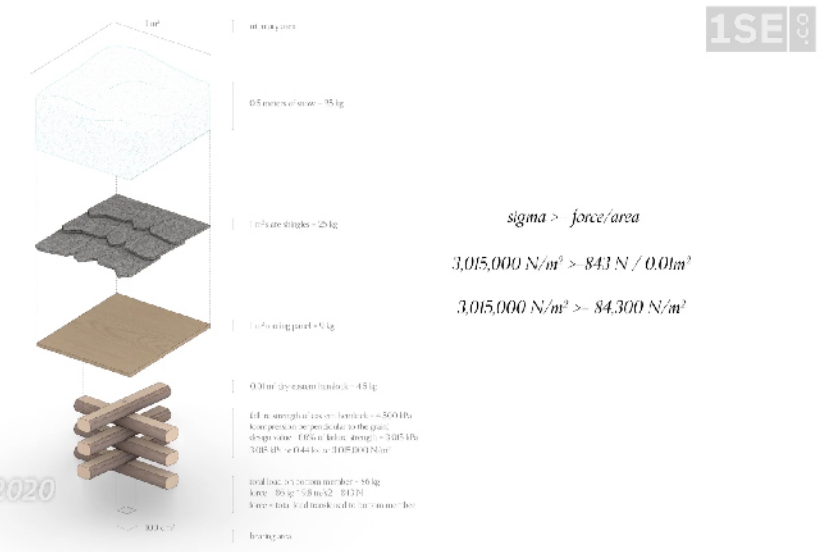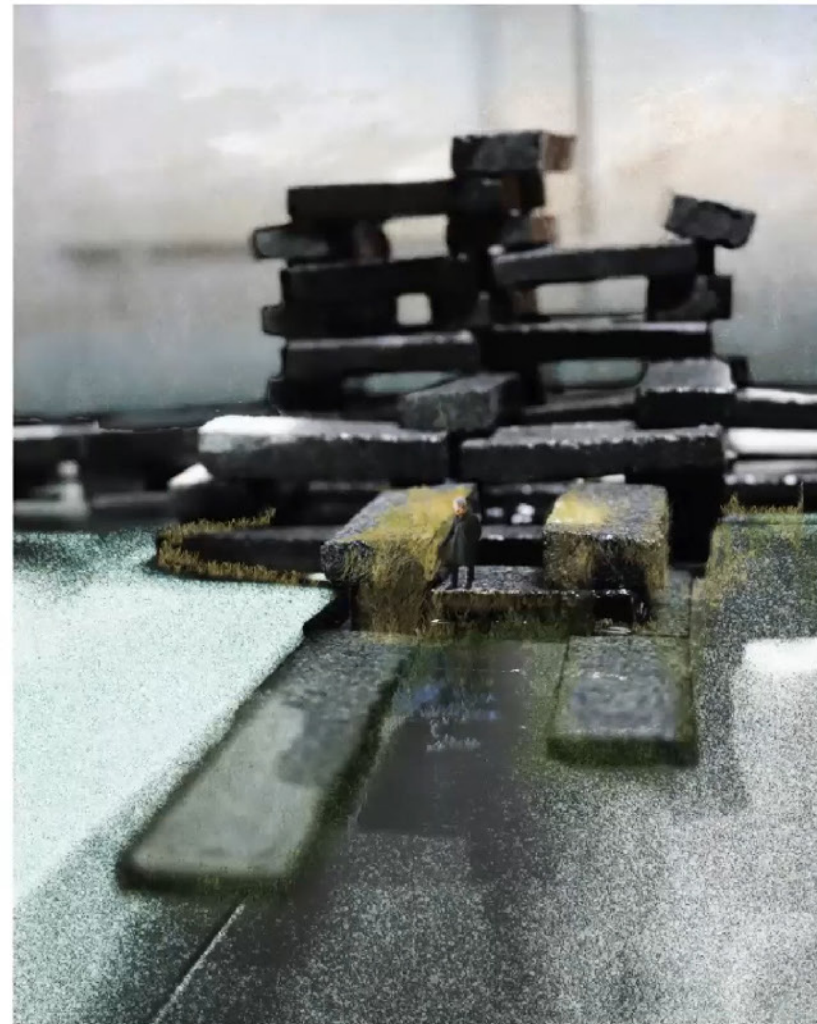
THE POLITICS OF STACKING

Latifa, Wilson, Natalie & Tim

before

beginning

aggregating

during
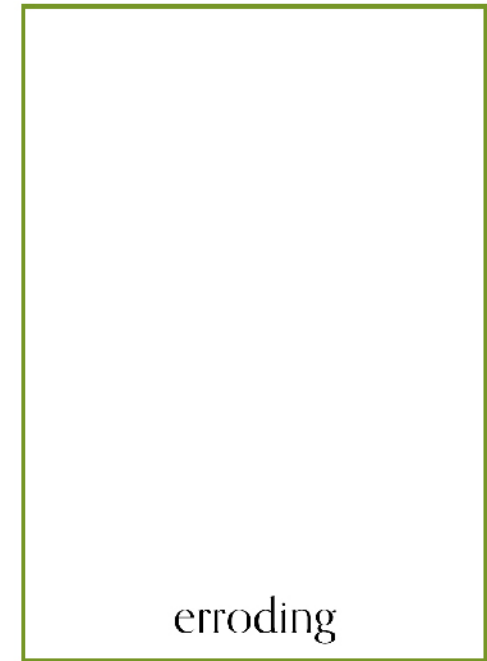
erroding

Pushing the themes of temporality and assembly through stacking. Visiting the land was a concept that emerged from our site on Dorr Point, Mount Desert Island. This land is sacred Wabanaki land, and so we wanted to question ownership and existence on the island in an effort to honor indigenous values and practices. This provoked the Politics of Stacking. Through the simplicity of stacking, the construction of our proposal is informal and adaptable. It has the potential to be built up or broken down over time and to migrate the coast as needed to adapt to climate. I am planning to expand upon a digital drawing of our site and massing, personalizing it and portraying our site at varying time stamps and phases of assembly.

Since the ice retreated, they have been here. Here where the earth's spin plunges me, day after day, into the rays of the sun. Here where stones grumble as they're dragged over my granite bones by ceaseless waves. The seams of scattered enclosures glow, like lanterns held by slender timbers that have been bent and embedded in the earth. They are cloaked in the bark of birch and skin of animal in a deciduous manner, tanning as the sun slips into the sky. Slowly, laborious and timeless routines commence. They wake, they pick and they gather. Eel grass is plucked from the sea to be woven into baskets. Clams are dug from the mud to be consumed then cast into heaps, hardening and calcifying merging with my existing skeleton. Artichokes are tugged from their stalks to be unfolded petal by petal. At the edge of my existence, where the ocean laps at the stones sprinkled between land and sea, a group is gathered. They season the roots that they pulled from my mossy skin. Each will puncture and stitch and repair canoes, vessels that have carried them to symbiotic ceremonies from the river's mouth.

5ka 6:15 am

As the world is warming, they surge forward, wrestling the fingers that are being constructed along my coast. Each wave draws them forward, boats whose cargo sinks them deep, their bows flirting with the flooding of waves. Beyond the horizon, they originate, an island populated by debris. They are stones, the consequence of violence, of production that has diminished into a lethargic quarry. Intense production followed by shifting practices and priorities. My gut wrenches as I contemplate the innards exposed and scattered over the landscape. For weeks they have been gathered, dragged, and hauled to me. Once aimless but now cradled in my coast. Relieving one island and constructing purpose on another. One upon another, piled high, like an appendage I never knew I needed. One by one they are dressed, nestled, and stacked, gently resting but always heavy. They are skeletal fittings, prosthetic extensions articulating enclosure, breaking waves, and nurturing sea life. They are an architecture that visits rather than eternally imposes itself on myself. I am a repository, dictated by a constructive presence and eventual absence of stone.

10.09.2032   11:26 am

The sea has risen, and throu
a blue waving wash of wat
I see it below. Above, wh
crystalline flakes drift. I s
lobster buoys sway, root
by cages, their once brig
coloring paling with ea
passing sun. My vision
parsed by moments of da
ness, and short visits from
sun that slinks low through t
sky. My crumbling stone Inn
is punctuated by a cryst
line granite structure bridgi
land to ocean. Emerald clir
and drips from each sto
extending my life giving furl
out to sea. Ice crystalizes, a
seaweed swings like chan
on a bracelet until froz
fingers dip beneath the wate
surface, slicing roots, scrapi
stone. The seaweed-lac
ocean surges and collaps
upon a permeable netwo
nurturing an intertidal garde
It is a ritual. Bloated gree
are passed from stone gard
to stone enclosure to eel gr
basket. Strung to a straini
body by a braided rope, t
basket is lifted. Seaweed
elevated to a warmer, dr
place where it will shrink a
shrivel.

01.08.2067 2:32 pm

The world continues to shift,
and so too do the spaces under
which I exist. Each afternoon,
as the wind grows dreary and
the sun slumps, limbs relax. I
am punctured by roots that
reach through a moistened
earth, navigating polished
stone, and gripping hardened
bedrock. I am topped by
salt-stained shingles scattered
and perched throughout. An
aircraft spits its way through
the sky, its reverberations
echoing off the water. Stones
once so impeccably dressed
and stacked have fallen as we
shift with time and evolving
purpose. I was fond of their
presence. I had started to
caress, to hug. For years they
were stacked and stored,
merging with earth and timber.
That is until they were needed
elsewhere. The past couple
of years have been marked
by disassembly, an architec
tural weathering. I have had
to loosen my grasp, to allow
them to be plucked from my
tendrils as an evolving erosion
of the coast. Those that remain
are held tightly, and many
continue to glisten green.
The breadth of my coast, my
ecosystem, nurtured by the
crib scape for years, continues
to flourish despite the dimin-
ishing landscape of stone.

04.26.3048 4:16 pm

Introspective Narratives

Retrospective Narratives

Externalized Narratives

Internalized Narratives
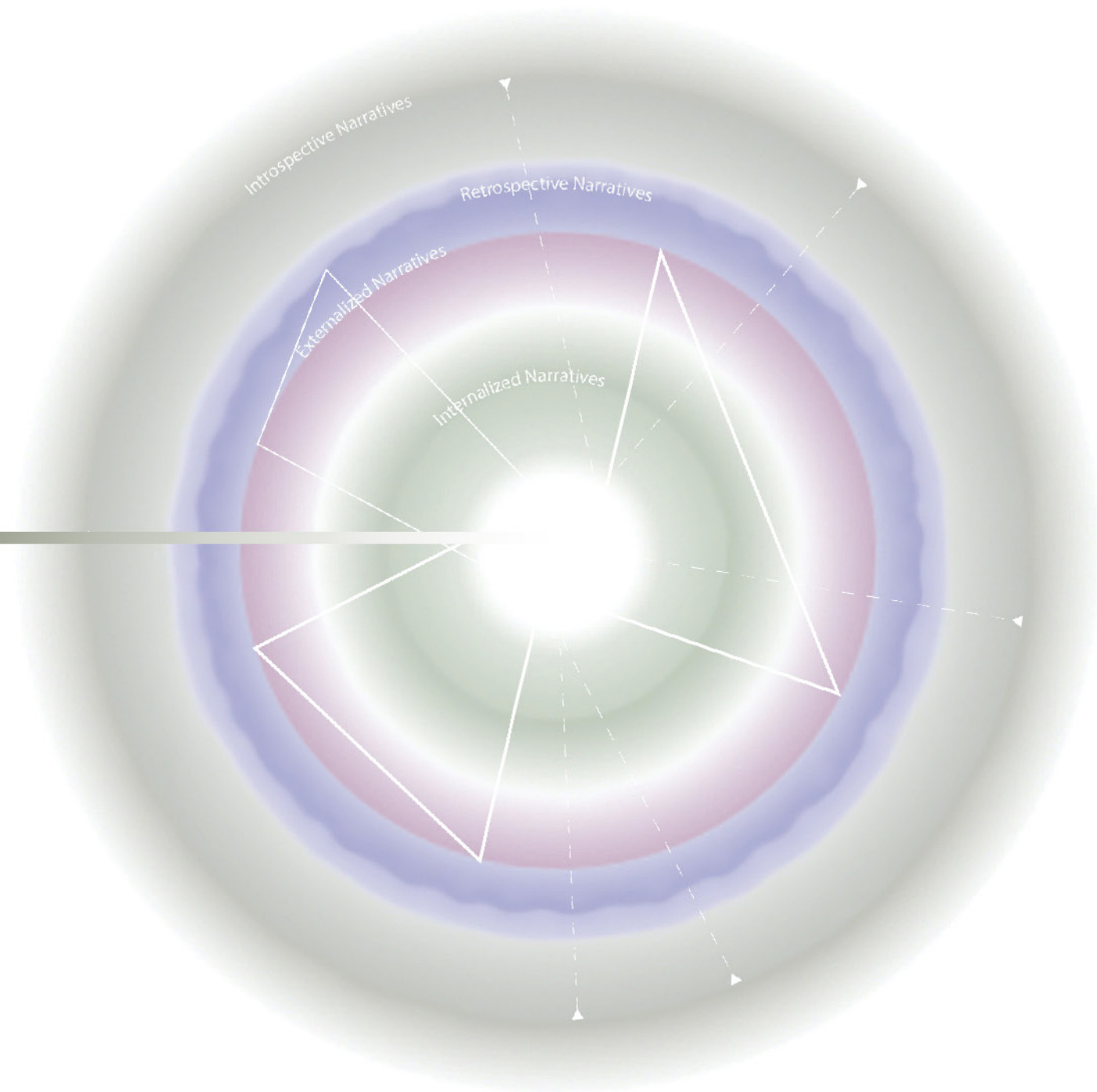
This work is based off of a Core 3 Project - The Politics of Stacking

Group Work: Latifa Alkhayat, Tim Cousin, Wilson Marshall, Natalie Pearl

Teaching Team: Sheila Kennedy, Cristina Parreño, Rami el Samahy

On the coast of Maine's Mount Desert island, home of Acadia National park, and sacred land of the Wabanaki people, an architecture has been proposed that questions ownership and permanence through an architecture of stacking. We wanted to question ownership and existence on the island in an effort to honor indigenous values and practices. This provoked the Politics of Stacking. Through the simplicity of stacking, the construction of our proposal is informal and adaptable. It has the potential to be built up or broken down over time and to migrate the coast as needed to adapt to climate. It is an architecture that will visit rather than eternally impose itself on the land.

Stacking Time - 4.184 Untold Narratives

The work completed in 4.184 Untold Narratives, builds off of the Core 3 group project The Politics of Stacking. It explores these themes of temporality and assembly through stacking through the representation of the site at different moments in time and phases of assembly. The goal of these paintings is to expand the time frame in which we understand and present our architecture, and through doing so personalize the work and allow the necessary time to work with the medium of watercolor.

A. Concluding Remarks

The means for design students to find their personal voices is not a self-evident journey. Like other movements over the history of architecture and design education, led by either individual efforts or movements of experimental colleges, I have investigated here alternative possibilities for structuring design education to emancipate designers' personal creative identities.

The pedagogical framework I proposed in this thesis was tested in experimental case studies, part of a larger aspired transformative reform. It offered students space to investigate alternative possibilities of self-expression, hence allowing them to question how they identify with design in general and their work in particular, in addition to what their interests can become as part of a group, a studio, or an institution. As such, this framework situates itself as part of a longer-process, one that advances through reimagining alternatives in light of experience, observing progress, and innovating in structural possibilities. It is a pedagogically transformative and socially solidaristic project – decolonizing design students' diverse narratives in order to

realize personal design identities.

B. Contributions and Future Work

This study situates itself as part of a longer-process, one that advances through reimagining alternatives in light of experience, observing progress and innovating in structural possibilities, contributing to the realization of *self*, *other*, and *society*. Coming to MIT, I was obsessed with understanding how a machine can generate design elements and how it could assist architects and designers in larger contexts. However, after two years, I realized my obsession was not about the machine itself but rather about humans, designers, and their architectural process. Specifically, I realized my personal interest is in teaching and practicing architecture as a discipline concerned with the development, structure, and functioning of human society – how we make our decisions, and how our decisions make us.

I believe my research offers a space for designers to investigate alternative possibilities of self-expression, hence allowing them to question how they conceive of design in general and their work in particular, and what their interests are as part of a group, a studio, or an

institution. Students' personalities and prior knowledge were factors in how they engaged in the experimental process. Graduate students were more motivated to participate, perhaps because this process offered a means of self-expression, in preparation for their own thesis, in contrast to undergraduates. Both their prior education and professional knowledge was also a considerable factor — whether non-architectural or architectural — and made them less or more susceptible to influences. Some already had the skill set to visualize and represent their creative intentions, and others found it to be more challenging to do so. Also, my expectation was that the task of journaling a one second video every day would not add any burden because the digital application offered a simple interface and a reminder notification. Yet, it was still difficult for some, suggesting that perhaps journaling itself needs to be brought back into design education.

I acknowledge that my framework had limitations, in time and resources. The online mode of the study also made it difficult to engage with the students. I believe it would've delivered a completely different experience if we were in person in studio. Also, in the future, I will

consider running a seminar in tandem with the studio, to go beyond journaling to offer both skills and theoretical literature on anthropology[48], ethnography[49], personal narrative, worldmaking, and digital visualization methods. The workshop can also run over a second semester, hence allowing more time for students to create several interpretations and introducing other projects[50], and reflecting during and after the design process. Through this process, students would recreate their projects through iterative feedback-loops, experimenting mindfully through experiences gathered from previous personal experiences. Finally, in the future, I hope to design a digital interface, a hybrid of both the *One Second Everyday* application and the *Atlas.ti,* specifically customized as a knowledge database that harnesses design students' personal narratives — a tool they can continue to use throughout their academic and professional lives.

Like all other contributions to pedagogy, this framework has to be further practiced, scaled, examined and observed for progress over time. As a process, it not only allowed space for experimentation but also contributed to the

48   Turkle, "Evocative Objects."
49   Narayan, *Alive in the Writing*.
50   Queneau, *Exercises in Style*.

dialogue on biases and subjectivity within the MIT Architecture department, *the society* – as one instructor put it: "now, you're not the only one talking about biases and structures." Design and architecture education, particularly the culture and structure of the design studio have not been transformed since the digital revolution of the 90s, and although this revolution brought advances, it also disengaged students from the intimacy of the studio culture, hence influencing all three relationships — with ourselves and our work, with the others around us, and with the society we're part off. This thesis advocates rethinking how the studio culture honors all three relationships — the reason I believe the "Untold Narratives" is promising.

Part 1 of Malik's Conversation

Rania: What makes you think of this?

Malik: I am not sure whether I should continue to major in design or not

Rania: Why is that?

Malik: Two things I'm not sure about

        (1 sec. pause)

        The first is that, I'm not sure about career opportunities for designers

        And second is that I don't like how design is very subjective

Rania: ((smiles)) What do you mean by subjective?

Malik: I mean feedback is sometimes conflicting with separate ideas

        One instructor ((names instructor)) tells you one thing

        Another ((names second instructor)) tells you another

        And you continue to go back and forth

        And that part conFUSES me

        Sooo I try to trust my own instinct

        (0.5 sec. pause)

        I mean, definitely, design is a people pleaser discipline

        You are not expressing your own ideas

        Instead, you're trying to pLEASE others

Rania: Uhm…

Malik: I'm also not sure why I need to follow the instructors' preference

        I would like to explore more all my given ideas

        (0.2 sec. pause)

        but I kind of feel restricted because I have to repeat and iterate

        And sometimes

        (0.1 sec. pause)

I would just like to explore my ideas

Part 2 of Malik's Conversation

Malik: The HASS requirements are strict

(1 sec pause)

I need to make up my mind

only few subjects qualify for design

(0.4 sec pause)

I'm also interested in CS (Computer Science)

but I don't want the structure in CS to constrain my creativity

but it's also somehow being constrained in design

(0.2 sec. pause)

uhhh I really enjoy the time I spend doing design

Samar's Email

Subject: Hoping that there is a way to pursue Design while completing HASS requirements.

Hi Rania!

I really enjoy the Design Studio classes and was hoping that I could take them while completing a HASS concentration. I looked into the two offered HASS-concentrations related to Design & Architecture, however, none of them had 4.022, 4.031, and 4.032 as classes that could be taken to fulfill the concentration. Currently, I am planning to major in Physics and Mathematics, but I also want to pursue Design, so I am very torn on how to fit all these classes while also meeting the graduation requirements. I absolutely love the hands-on experimentation learning process of Design Studio classes and I find that the creative process practiced in these classes really help me think differently in other fields. This semester's design studio showed me how much I love designing and I really do not want to have to give up on this passion because of graduation requirements. Is there some way to make this possible? Thank you so much!

Best,

1 Second Everyday Case Study Questionnaire

Thank you for joining! Please use this app - https://1se.co/ - to capture a 1-second-long video + 1 written narrative, everyday. Together, the visual and written material will comprise a daily journal, narrative or story of your personal design journey. You will basically tell a story - your story - through the visual material you create, the narrative you write, and the voice you bring to your project.

The focus here is not the application itself, but rather what you personally think is interesting or relevant about your work and life each day; and how you immerse us in your stories. While answering this survey, please keep in mind this is not an assessment of your skills. It is first a method of self-reflection and second, a piece that will compliment your 1SE visual and written narratives.

As Arnheim says, "Reckless analysis of the self will do harm, but so will the artificial primitivism of the man who refuses to know how and why he works."[51]

Note: I will follow up with a link to a private folder in which you can upload your visual and written material.

1- Email Address:

2- Full Name:

3- Which studio are you enrolled in?

   a. 4.021 Design Studio: How to Design

   b. 4.151 Architecture Design Core Studio I

   c. 4.153 Architecture Design Core Studio III

4- Academic Background (Short answer text)

5- Professional Background (Short answer text)

6- What medium do you prefer communicating through?

   a. Manual (Hand sketching, Hand making, etc.)

   b. Digital (Drawing, Mapping Software, etc.)

   c. Films (Videos, Sound recordings, etc.)

51   Arnheim, Art and Visual Perception.

d. Oral

e. Written

f. Other: …

7- What digital software do you prefer most? (Check all that apply.)

a. Rhino

b. Revit

c. AutoCAD

d. V-Ray

e. Grasshopper

f. Adobe

g. Creative Suite

h. Other: …

8- What fabrication technique(s) do you prefer most? (Check all that apply.)

a. Additive Manufacturing (3d printing, sheet lamination, etc.)

b. Subtractive Manufacturing (CNC milling, laser cutting, etc.)

c. Robotic Manipulation (additive or subtractive)

d. Manual Architectural Applications (assembly, casting, etc.)

e. Other: …

9- Asked to explore one material over a three months period, what would you choose? Any natural, artificial, organic, non-organic, etc... material you find inspiration in. (Long answer text)

10- Select one or more that usually guide(s) your design decisions the most. (Check all that apply.)

a. "Form follows function" Louis H. Sullivan

b. "Form follows beauty" Oscar Niemeyer

c. "Genius loci - Architecture is in the genius of the place " Anonymous

d. "Tools guide ideas" Anonymous

e. "Architecture is always political" Andrés Jaque

f. "There are things we live among 'and to see them. Is to know ourselves.' George Oppen

g. "I prefer drawing to talking. Drawing is faster, and leaves less room for lies." Le Corbusier

h. "A story must be told or there'll be no story, yet it is the untold stories that are most moving." J.R.R Tolkien

i. Other: …

11- Space for any other design peculiar thoughts you'd like to share... (Long answer text)

"1 Second Everyday." Accessed March 19, 2021. https://1secondeveryday.tilda.ws.

"About | MIT Architecture." Accessed April 20, 2021. https://architecture.mit.edu/department/about.

Alberti, Leon Battista. "The Ten Books of Architecture." EBook. The ten books of architecture / Leon Battista Alberti ; translated into Italian by Cosimo Bartoli ; translated into English by James Leoni., 1986. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.000305565.

"Architecture Design Core Studio I | MIT Architecture." Accessed May 11, 2021. https://architecture.mit.edu/subject/fall-2020-4151.

"Architecture Design Core Studio II | MIT Architecture." Accessed May 11, 2021. https://architecture.mit.edu/subject/spring-2021-4152.

"Architecture Design Core Studio III | MIT Architecture." Accessed May 11, 2021. https://architecture.mit.edu/subject/fall-2020-4153.

Arnheim, Rudolf. *Visual Thinking*. Nachdr. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1969.

BEJARANO, CAROLINA ALONSO, MIRIAN A. MIJANGOS GARCÍA, LUCIA LÓPEZ JUÁREZ, and DANIEL M. GOLDSTEIN. *Decolonizing Ethnography: Undocumented Immigrants and New Directions in Social Science*. Duke University Press, 2019. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv11smmv5.

Chomsky, Noam, and James Peck. "The Chomsky Reader." EBook. The Chomsky reader / Noam Chomsky ; edited by James Peck., 1987. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.000328941.

Geertz, Clifford. "'From the Native's Point of View': On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding." *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 1974. https://doi.org/10.2307/3822971.

Goodman, Nelson. "Words, Works, Worlds." *Erkenntnis* 9, no. 1 (1975): 57–73. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00223133.

Gornick, Vivian. *The Situation and the Story : The Art of Personal Narrative. The Situation and the Story : The Art of Personal Narrative / Vivian Gornick.*, 2001. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.001016265.

"HASS Requirement | MIT Registrar." Accessed March 30, 2021. https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/academic-requirements/hass-requirement.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, and M. J. Inwood. *Hegel : The Phenomenology of Spirit. Hegel : The Phenomenology of Spirit / G.W.F. Hegel ; Translated with Introduction and Commentary by Michael Inwood.*, 2018. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.002763459.

"Highlights from IAP 2021 Workshops | MIT Architecture." Accessed May 11, 2021. https://architecture.mit.edu/news/highlights-iap-2021-workshops.

Jencks, Charles, and George Baird. *Meaning in Architecture. Meaning in Architecture. Edited by Charles Jencks and George Baird.*, 1970. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.000374692.

Kierkegaard, Soren, and Edward F. Mooney. *Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs*. Translated by M. G. Piety. 1st edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

"Lord of the Rings Books by J. R. R. Tolkien | Barnes & Noble®." Accessed May 15, 2021. https://www.barnesandnoble.com/b/books/science-fiction-fantasy/j-r-r-tolkien-the-lord-of-the-rings/_/N-29Z8q8Z183p.

Melberg, Arne, ed. "Kierkegaard's 'Gjentagelse.'" In *Theories of Mimesis*, 130–89. Literature, Culture, Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511597732.005.

https://miro.com/. "Miro | Free Online Collaborative Whiteboard Platform." Accessed March 9, 2021. https://miro.com/.

"MIT SHASS: Undergraduate Studies - Minors." Accessed April 8, 2021. https://shass.mit.edu/undergraduate/minors.

Narayan, Kirin. *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Neville, Robert C. "Normative Cultures." EBook. Normative cultures / Robert Cummings Neville., 1995. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.000745662.

Ochs, Elinor. "Narrative Lessons." In *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology*, 269–89. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2005. https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470996522.ch12.

Pae, Hyŏng-min. *The Portfolio and the Diagram: Architecture, Discourse, and Modernity in America*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2002.

Queneau, Raymond. *Exercises in Style*. New York: New Directions, 1981.

Saint-Exupéry, Antoine de, and Richard Howard. "The Little Prince." EBook. The little prince / written and illustrated by Antoine de Saint-Exupery ; translated from the French by Richard Howard., 2000. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.003232307.

Sartre, Jean-Paul, and Hazel Estella Barnes. *Being and Nothingness : An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology. Being and Nothingness : An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology / Jean-Paul Sartre ; Translated by Hazel E. Barnes ; Introduction by Mary Warnock.*, 2003. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.001244441.

Schön, Donald A. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. Aldershot [England]: Arena, 1991.

Slack. "Where Work Happens." Slack. Accessed March 9, 2021. https://slack.com/.

Journal of Digital Social Research. "Somewhere Between Here and There: Negotiating Researcher Visibility in a Digital Ethnography of the Influencer Industry." Accessed May 15, 2021. https://www.jdsr.io/articles/2020/2/17/somewhere-between-here-and-there-negotiating-researcher-visibility-in-a-digital-ethnography-of-the-influencer-industry.

Harvard Graduate School of Design. "The Pandemic Has Caused an Unprecedented Reckoning with Digital Culture. Architecture May Never Be the Same Again (and Why That's Okay)," April 22, 2020. https://www.gsd.harvard.edu/2020/04/the-global-pandemic-has-caused-an-unprecedented-reckoning-with-digital-culture-and-architecture-may-never-be-the-same-again-and-thats-okay/.

Turkle, Sherry. "Evocative Objects : Things We Think With." EBook. Evocative objects : things we think with / edited by Sherry Turkle., 2007. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.001466830.

UCL. "About Us." The Bartlett School of Architecture, September 2, 2019. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/architecture/about-us-0.

Unger, Roberto Mangabeira. "Passion : An Essay on Personality." EBook. Passion : an essay on personality / Roberto Mangabeira Unger., 1984. https://lib.mit.edu/record/cat00916a/mit.000221494.

———. *The Left Alternative*. Verso, 2009.

Zoom Video. "Video Conferencing, Web Conferencing, Webinars, Screen Sharing." Accessed March 9, 2021. https://zoom.us/.

Literary Terms. "Vignette: Definitions and Examples | LiteraryTerms.Net," January 3, 2017. https://literaryterms.net/vignette/.

"Waldorf Education - Association of Waldorf Schools of North America." Accessed May 16, 2021. https://www.waldorfeducation.org/waldorf-education.

"Women Writing Culture by Ruth Behar, Deborah A. Gordon - Paperback - University of California Press." Accessed May 14, 2021. https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520202085/women-writing-culture.