





*'An ode to all the things that are lost, forgotten, or
never quite came to be'*

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*Part of the "Missing Series" organised by Sarah McLaren.

ARCHITECTURAL RUINS DAMAGED OR MONUMENTAL?



Created by Annabel Wood

Architecture is a physical signpost of history and societal change can be seen through the evolution of style and attitudes towards buildings and space. As technology and humanity's approaches to design have progressed, so has the impact of war and, throughout history, architecture has inescapably fallen victim to conflict.

The built environment can pave the way for recovery and act as a symbol of humanity's ability to progress and adapt after the devastation of war. This then begs the question, should such a core part of societal

SORRY, NO IMAGE AVAILABLE

growth be left as purely a monument and a symbol of such devastation, or adapted and reused as another functioning piece of infrastructure?

The French village of Oradour-sur-Glane is a particularly poignant example of the destruction and impact of war on the built environment. The rural village was left in ruins following the brutality of the German Waffen-SS troops when, in 1944, the town of Oradour was burnt to the ground following the murder of 642 men, women, and children. The president of the Remembrance Committee of Oradour, Dr. Pierre Masfrand, proposed the rebuilding of Oradour-sur-Glane nearby and to leave the village as it stood- a monument and symbol of the mercilessness of the Second World War.

With the housing crises that followed on from the bombings and loss of World War Two, there could have been an argument for the need for the village to have been rebuilt as opposed to left as the unoccupied monument that stands in its place. Over 40 million people were displaced during the war and the urgent need for housing was one of the key focuses of the post-war rebuilding efforts. Could rebuilding the village of Oradour-sur-Glane have provided homes to those in need? Efforts to rebuild could have arguably acted as a symbol of hope and resilience for the people of France and demonstrated a defiance and recovery from Nazi destruction. However, there is something quite moving about the decision to leave Oradour-sur-Glane exactly as it stood on that afternoon in 1944. The

decimation of almost an entire village will not be forgotten and allows a community of people to forever rest in peace. Together they lie in solidarity as an anti-war symbol and reminder of just how devastating the effects of war can be.

"Today, those who make the journey to the ruins of Oradour see a landscape and hear a commemorative narrative telling of the ideal French village which, through no fault of its own, became the target of Nazi barbarism." Sarah Farmer, author of *Martyred Village: Commemorating the Massacre at Oradour-sur-Glane* (The National WWII Museum, 2018)

With such a focus on environmentally conscious design, it has become clearer than ever that reuse and adaptation of existing structures, in favour of building new, is one of the most sustainable ways to build. Why then, for example, has Coventry Cathedral been left in its damaged state, frozen in time, with a newly designed and additional structure standing alongside it? The mass amounts of concrete and steel used to create the new Cathedral are materials that, in recent times, would be commonly frowned upon as a carbon intensive choice and, in addition to the environmental implications of Basil Spence's design, his radical and modernist approach to the scheme was cause for controversy upon its unfurling in 1950. Would rebuilding the ruins of the bombed Coventry Cathedral have been a more environmentally conscious decision that could have also remained in line with the old gothic style of the original space? The ruins of the old cathedral act as a

strikingly severe and indisputable reminder of the impact of war. Upon walking through the space, one can instantly feel the devastation of the destruction caused by the Blitz of World War 2, a stark contrast to the experience within Basil Spence's new cathedral, a symbol of hope and faith.

Ultimately there will always be a debate between the reuse and rebuilding of damaged or ruined structures versus the construction of new. However, in the case of Oradour-sur-Glane and Coventry Cathedral, it feels historically honest to preserve the ruins as a pause in time and symbol of reflection. Society's priorities following on from the destruction of Coventry Cathedral were understandably not placed on the environmental concerns we face today and the emotional element of preserving both the Cathedral's and Oradour-sur-Glane's symbolism of architectural ruin, is of much greater importance than the arguments of reusing materials and land space. One cannot equate any amount of infrastructure to a human life.

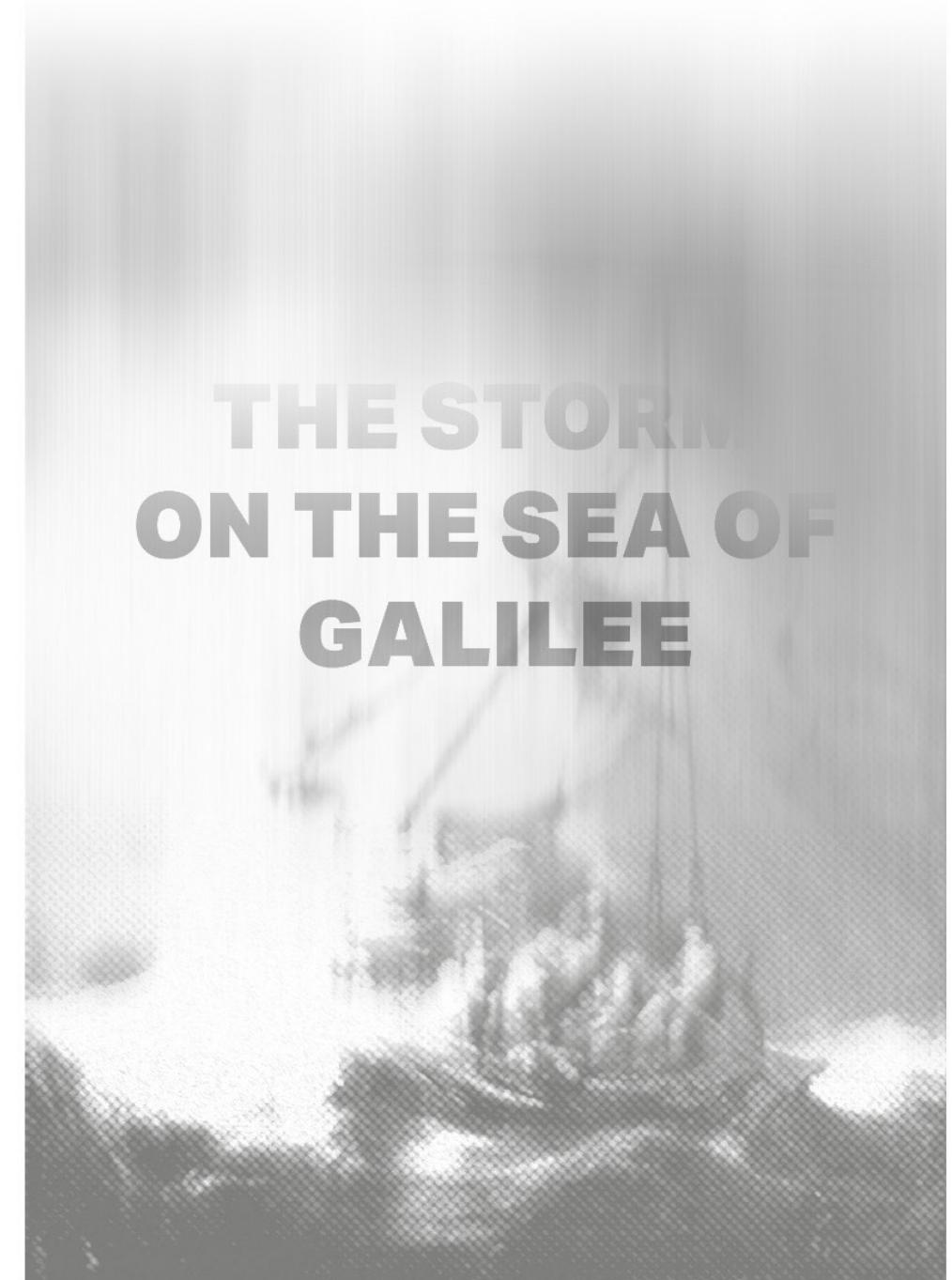
It is difficult to find ways that adequately portray what society has been forced to endure in times of conflict and architecture is only a small part how humanity has chosen to honour and respect those who have lost their lives or their livelihoods to war. The tragedies of war are something that must never be forgotten. To rebuild a ruin as monumental as Coventry Cathedral would have been to erase a defining part of not only the British, but the world's history. The sheer barbarity

of the massacre in Oradour-sur-Glane is remembered to this day by the decisions people made to allow the village to rest. Memorialising the architectural ruins of war creates a powerful physical reminder of the impact of conflict on humanity whether it be on a large, cathedral scale or the home of a local member of the community. Architectural ruins are evocative and moving symbols of hope and recovery. The decision to rebuild such spaces would have been to erase their history and, in my opinion, the wrong one.

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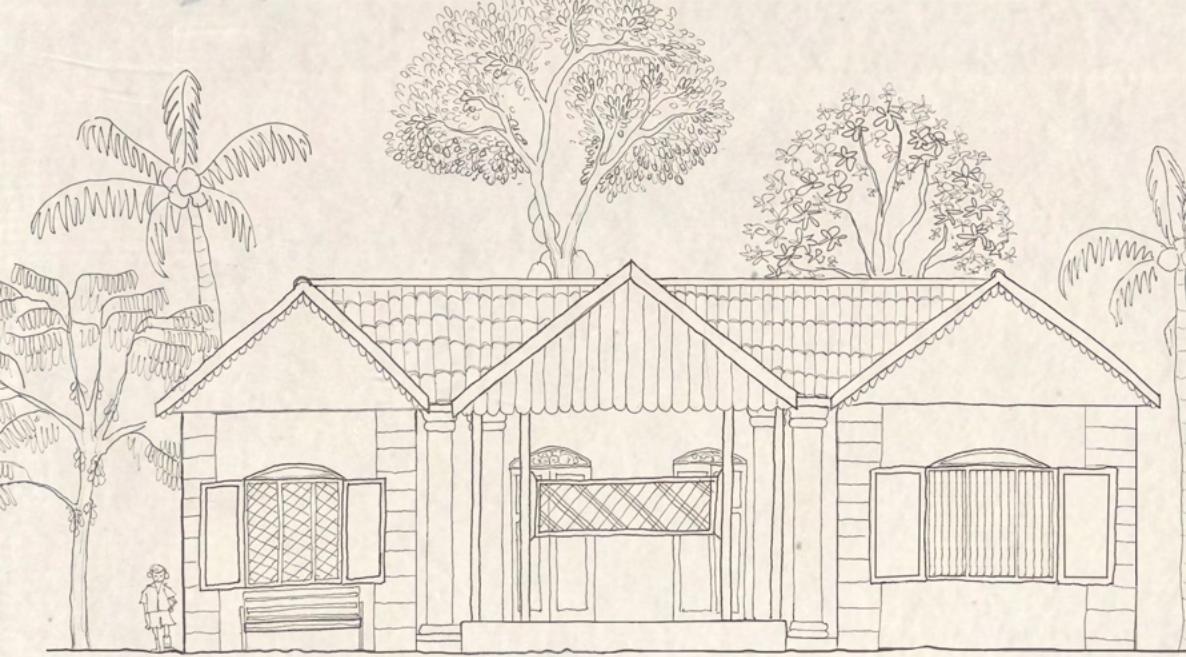
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THE STORM ON THE SEA OF GALILEE

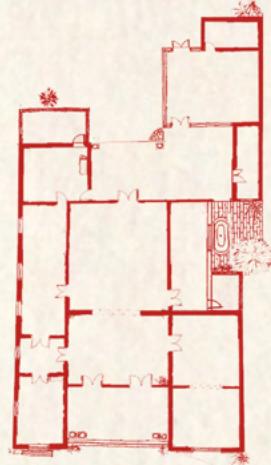


Sea of Galilee, the biblical landscape surrounding it, in historical and religious depictions of the region. Many painters throughout history, from Renaissance masters to modern impressionists, have sought to capture the serene beauty and spiritual significance of Galilee's waters, rolling hills, and ancient settlements.

One of the most famous subjects linked to Galilee in painting is Jesus Christ walking on water, an event said to have taken place on the Sea of Galilee. Artists such as Ivan Aivazovsky, Gustave Doré, and Rembrandt have attempted to depict this miraculous moment, often portraying stormy waves, frightened disciples, and a luminous Christ figure standing upon the



TO BE DEMOLISHED



MY CAMERA

Me and Akki had a concert and I earned Rs. I also had 15Rs with me and Akki and sat. went to the shop. The way camera was in the shop. It was the pavement. It was back. It had come



Croydon

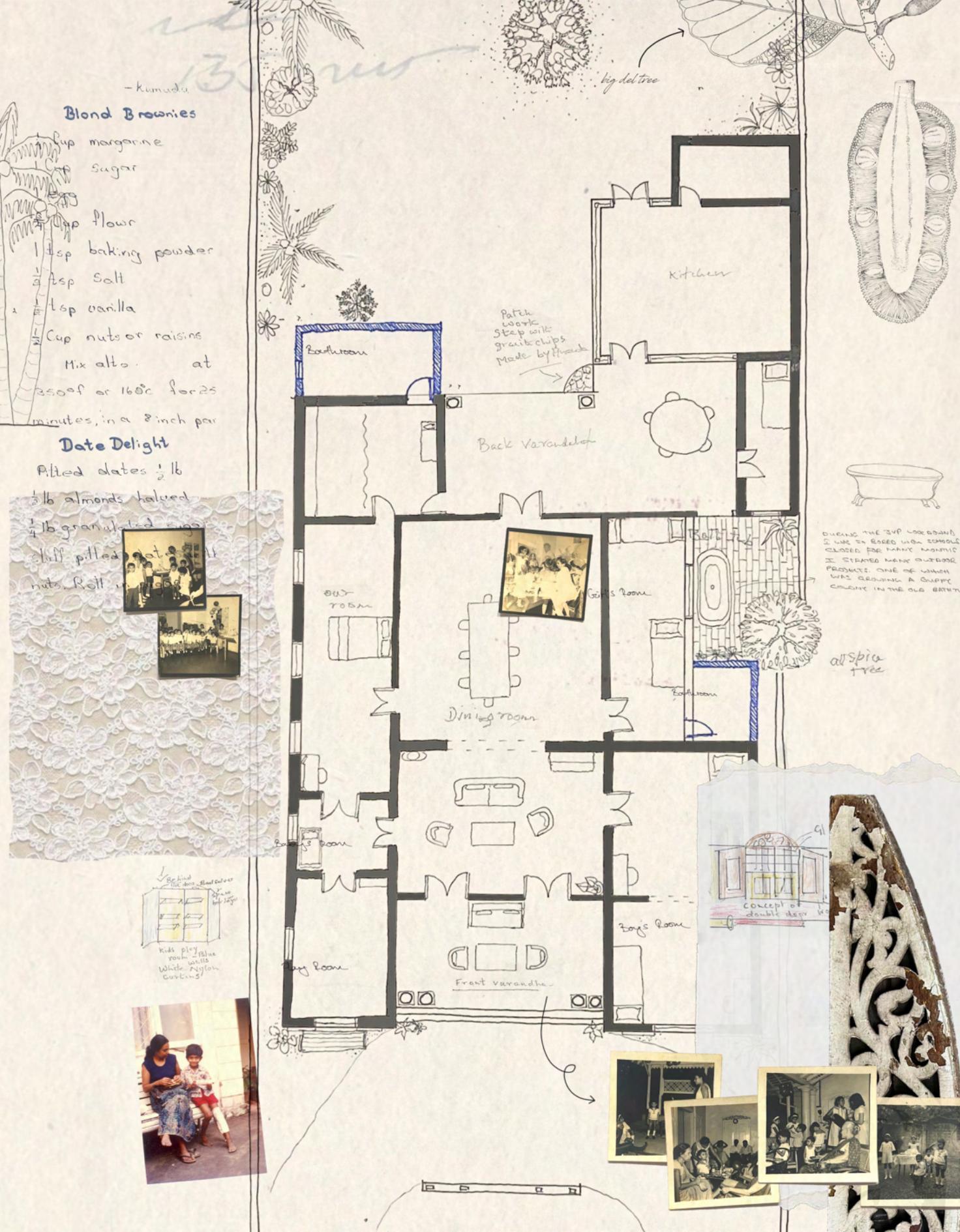
Created by Santushni Gunetilleke

Croydon sat in the middle of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Despite its name alluding to the South London suburb, its walls, weather-beaten by tropical sun, housed my father and his family for 15 years. As its name suggests, the house was a remnant of colonial Sri Lanka; it was a bungalow configured to suit a hotter climate, with period flourishes and details evoking the English countryside. As the children grew up, a bigger space was needed and the family moved one door down into a purpose built house.

The old house, already worn when the family moved out, eventually became derelict and was torn down. No photographs of it exist, only the memories remain. My grandmother recently asked if I would like to draw an architectural sketch of the house for the sake of documentation. Since the house was pulled down 20 years before I was born, I relied purely on my family's memory of the house.

Parts of the house are better remembered than others, some are recalled more clearly by my grandmother than my father or aunt, and vice versa. My grandmother remembers the kitchen well, the place she developed a passion for experimental cooking whilst feeding a family of five. My father, however, remembers his bedroom and the garden, where he spent time doting on his menagerie of three cats, two dogs and countless fish.

In this way, through stories and conversations, layers of the house are stacked together to create a patchwork recreation of what it looked like; their memories translated by my hand.



Affordable Architecture Unavailable

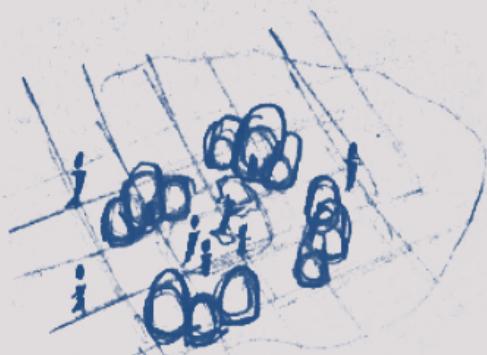
Created by Caroline Rodrigues

The current population in India is over 1.4 billion, making the state of housing an urgent crisis, however, with the current construction costs, there grows the cynical view that there are no 'images' of affordable structures serving our communities.

Schooling, community centres and care homes often became secondary structures devaluing the people who relied on these services to be provided at a lower price. To some extent, designers for the built environment have presented it as an overly idealistic dream. However, this is not true. We find many cases with varied success ranges that often gain little attention. Community housing in India remains a growing issue. With over 100 million people living in slums in Mumbai alone. I hope to highlight the designs of the architect Anupama Kundoo, as her design ethos encompasses these concerns. As the future draws permanently closer, it is crucial to acknowledge more sympathetic construction.

What is affordable architecture?

Labour, sustainability and empathetic design are all factors worth considering. The process and time required for building depends upon the expertise of people, with lower labour costs being associated with unskilled manual labour. For materials, oftentimes concrete is the more economical choice. However, local building materials within India exist in the form of clay, lime, mud and many other local materials - which exist both in abundance and are easy to collect. Vernacular architecture



followed these principles, however, it did not account for modern conveniences that made designers opt for cheaper materials that did not at all acknowledge the climate.

Unsympathetic housing is easy to find. Mumbai is known to have one of the largest slums in the world. Housing is cheaply built and entirely unsafe for its inhabitants. But generations have survived in these spaces, and relocating them would have been a difficult feat. However, the government tried to commission buildings that could provide citizens a more comfortable place to live.

These buildings are cramped and overheat easily, increasing the costs for residents and furthering our dystopia. Studies conducted by a lecturer from the University of Cambridge found "readings of 37 °C when it was 10 °C cooler outside." [Almeroth-Williams, T. (2017)]. Housing like that in India is brutal to lower-income families, where energy bills are high and the weather is entirely unforgiving. Its main intent was not achieved; create housing that's more comfortable and affordable for people.

Architecture by Kundoo

To find people whose architecture responds to these concerns, looking at the work of the architect Anupama Kundoo is a helpful example. She began her firm in 1990, focusing on creating buildings using local materials, making her designs more responsive to the environment and people residing there. Much of her work experimented with designs that responded to the climate but utilised unskilled labour, both lowering costs and providing jobs to people in the area. Her trials have resulted in a colourful array of structures that house people from a range of backgrounds.



Volontariat Homes is one of these projects, meant to house orphaned children and their foster parents and located in Pondicherry.

The structures are small domes, formed using a construction technique by ceramicist Ray Meeker, wherein the structure is formed and baked in situ. As a construction technique, this requires unskilled labour and used local materials, making it immediately more affordable while also providing a more environmentally conscious design. The small forms create intimate gathering spaces within, emphasising their point as a shelter.

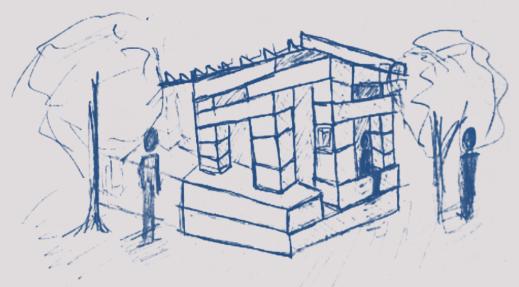
By using clay, the thick forms also respond to the environment, through thermal massing. There are smaller openings by the top which allow light to filter through without overheating these interiors, maintaining their cool atmosphere. Passive ventilation is also maintained through these openings, allowing hotter air to escape the spaces. Though the forms initially appear organically placed, they fit on a grid structure, ensuring they retain cohesion. Shared washrooms and service zones are located between the clusters, making them easy to access. Each smaller set of domes has a singular entry point and three rooms, accessible via openings as opposed to doors. Additionally, these are spaced closely together, forming a central courtyard

which forms a safe central gathering space for the children to play.

Another design of hers is Fulfil Homes in Auroville. Meant to be a hostel for students in the area, and it was designed to answer concerns for affordable short-term housing within the town.

The driving factor for this experimental housing was to be cost-effective and quick to build. Both of these are achieved by using prefabricated blocks made of ferrocement. This material is made of lime which is reinforced by a mesh, allowing it to be thin and use less of materials with higher embodied carbon. Combining "skilled stone masons from India together with engineers from Germany to create" allowed this innovation [Frearson, G. (2016)]. These prefabricated blocks are allowed to become the furniture, providing ample space for storage while allowing the spaces to be separated by function. Using prefabricated blocks also reduces the time of construction, while the shape of the material makes it easier to transport. Another exciting element of this construction technique is that it can exist in different colours, allowing these spaces to feel unique to their users.

The style of these spaces is much less organic than Volontariat Homes, emphasising the functionality of these spaces, as they are designed for an older inhabitant. Moreover, the design and use of colour engage an element of play in the construction, allowing it to feel more interactive and adaptable. Her concepts and design focus are evident in the design.

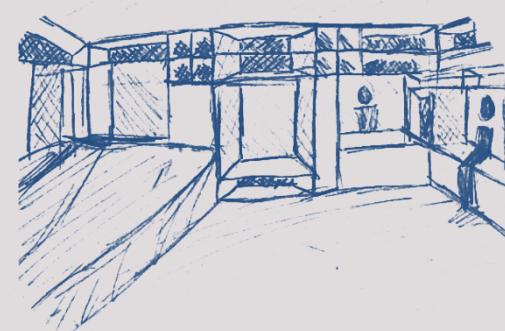


Lessons from Kundoo

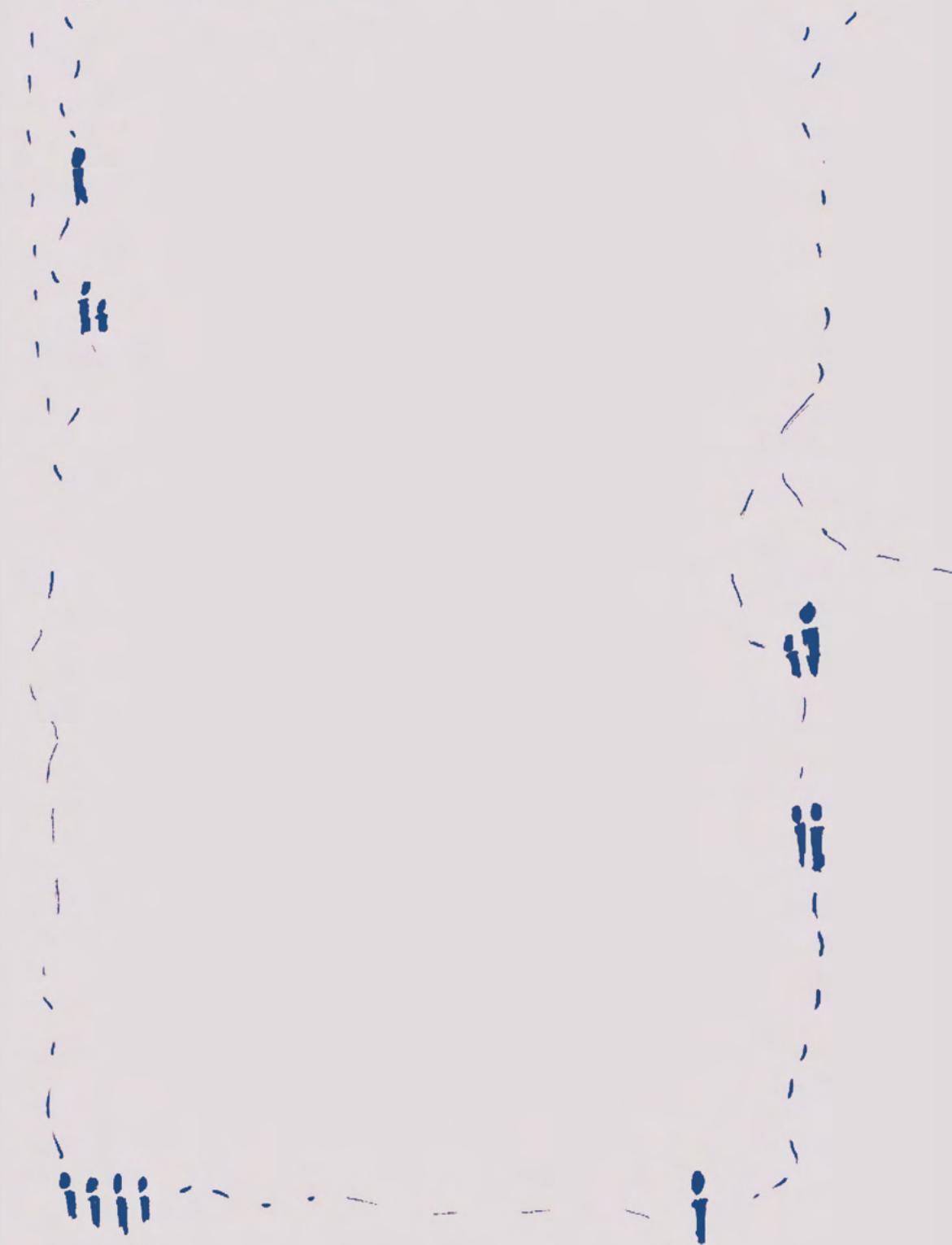
Defining the success of these designs is difficult. It is a step towards the kind of architecture which is often emphasized by design schools. The kind that approaches the built environment with an awareness of materiality and the inhabitant. It has a range of successes but falls short - once again - of the utopia. Why are governments not replicating these sorts of designs on a larger scale? Despite both methods being showcased at the Venice Biennale, these case studies are trapped within the world of architects, remaining unused in larger contexts. The image of large-scale affordable housing still does not exist.

Though they are affordable, they cannot be replicated at a larger scale as they lose their quality, since the goal of most urban developments is to maximize the amount of residences without regard towards the inhabitants. Why provide space when you could maximize the number of residents? Additionally, local material is difficult to reinforce, enough to create multiple levels, making Volontariat Homes unhelpful for the scale of crisis cities like Mumbai are facing.

Overall, affordable housing remains open-ended. The cases presented here are not the answer, but they are precedent. Something to inspire people within the field. We should continue to strive towards bettering housing and spaces for communities, allowing them to be socially and environmentally conscious. Cost does not need to be a barrier, but a way to innovate and rediscover what is available. For people entering the field, we must continue to experiment with sustainable design to give our communities places to call home.

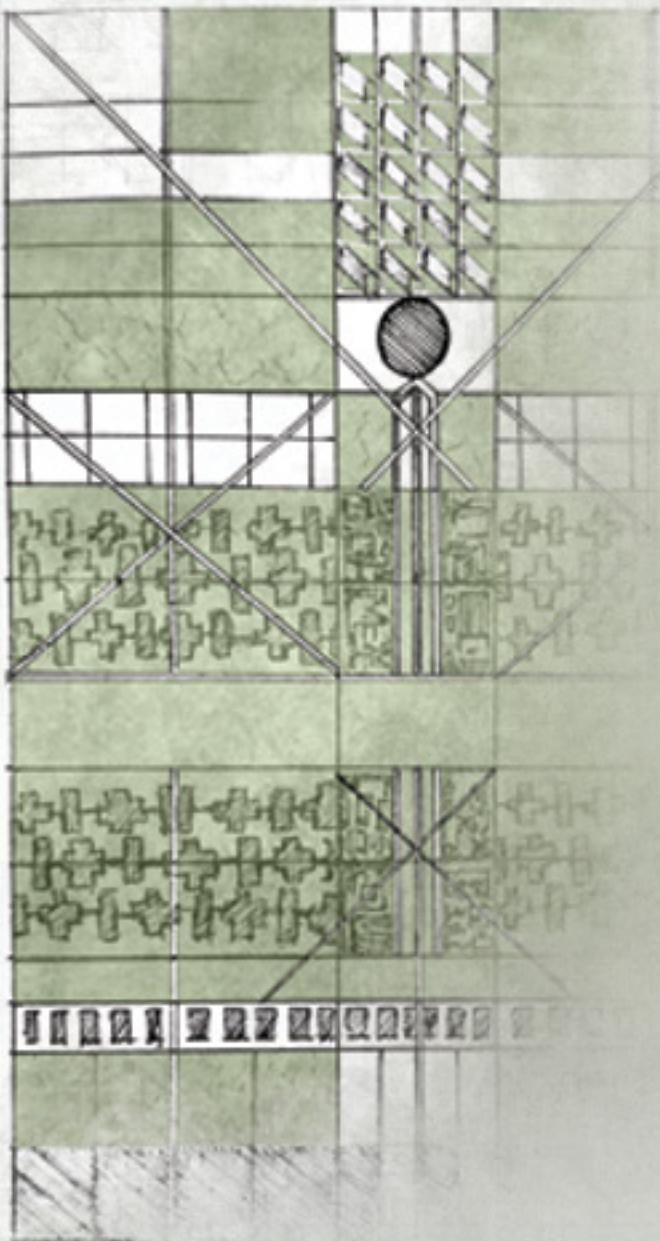


AFFORDABLE ARCHITECTURE; (your turn now)



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Adapted from The Radiant City (Ville Radieuse), Le Corbusier

The Radiant City (Ville Radieuse)

Created by Liliya Ostovari

A utopian 'radiant city', otherwise known as Ville Radieuse, is arguably one of the most prevalent unbuilt proposals to date. Led by Le Corbusier, the design aimed to pivot from the chaotic nature of urban cities and create a functionalist plan, focusing on better transport, housing and environment. Although efficient in its nature, I believe the design remains unbuilt as it was not designed for people, but to better society.

Totalitarian at its heart, the proposal seemed more socio-political for Corbusier than simply a new and improved metropolis plan. The repetitive and linear formation of the design relayed some of his strong and polarising opinions when it came to classism and societal structures (Fishman, 1977). Although Ville Radieuse never fully came to fruition, projects such as Brasilia and Chandigarh which followed Ville Radieuse's design scheme (Neuman and Bosk, 2013), were examples of why this project is a hypothetical plan rather than one executed in reality. I believe that even though Corbusier wanted to shape a cohesive and equal society, his proposal would've created an isolated and dysfunctional community, breeding ground for anti-social behaviour due to the lack of variety and freshness in the proposed environment.

Inspired by the functions of the human body (Corbusier, 1925), The Radiant City had a central main road connecting the area of skyscrapers to the north and the building

blocks 'Unites' to the east and west. The skyscrapers could then be categorised as the head, the main road as the spine, and the building blocks as the hands and legs, making this a radical take on architectural planning. Although intriguing, much like the human body, this plan had its flaws.

A personal affinity with this proposal and perhaps where I believe it failed to provide, roots from the lack of human connection in his design. In an attempt to create efficient and functional plans, Corbusier missed the importance of urban complexities and societal dynamics.

Through all the critics and controversy, Ville Radieuse can still be considered one of the most vital pieces of lost architecture. It is necessary to explore these unbuilt designs, as through the flaws, the radical and efficient aspects of this proposal have been adopted into our modern metropolises through the zoning, material features and compact skyscraper designs. This is why lost pieces of architecture are never truly lost, but disguised as inspiration in our surroundings.

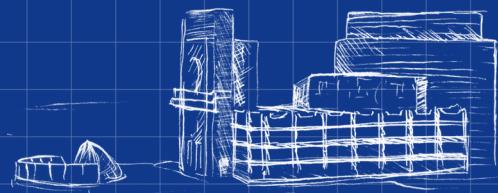
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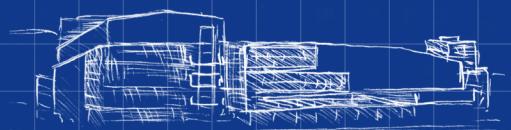
Opera Houses

Graphics by Elizabeth Dyer
Written by Milly Ducker

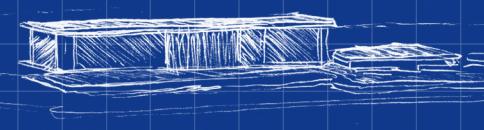
Many of the world's most famous landmarks we know today were originally commissioned as architectural competitions. For every design that won and was built, there were hundreds of design proposals that were not chosen, and therefore never came to fruition. But what of the fate of these extraordinary but unsuccessful designs? Sadly, they are lost to history with very little recognition surrounding them. This piece aims to shed light on some of the most interesting but unsuccessful design submissions for one of the world's most famous and recognisable buildings: the Sydney Opera House. There were over 200 competition entries that could have been built instead of the iconic sailship-like structure, designed by Jørn Utzon, that we all know today. It has become an unmistakable icon for the city of Sydney, became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2007, and Utzon was awarded the Pritzker Prize for the design in 2008. However, after looking at the seven greatest losers illustrated here, my question to you, the reader, is: do you think the right design was built?



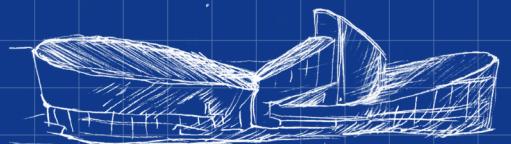
Sir Eugene Goossens, conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and one of the key voices in demanding for an opera house to be built.



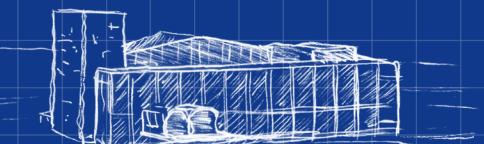
Vine and Vine, features two auditoria separated by a restaurant.



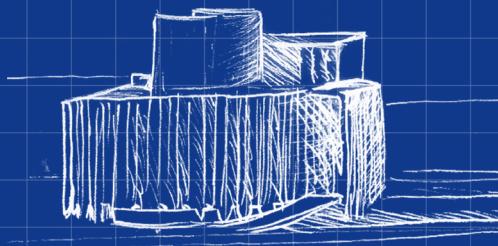
SW Milburn and Partners, promenade under a raised building with a helicopter pad on the roof.



Peter Kollar and Balthazar Korab, refugees from the communist regime in Hungary, most favoured design by certain Australian entities.



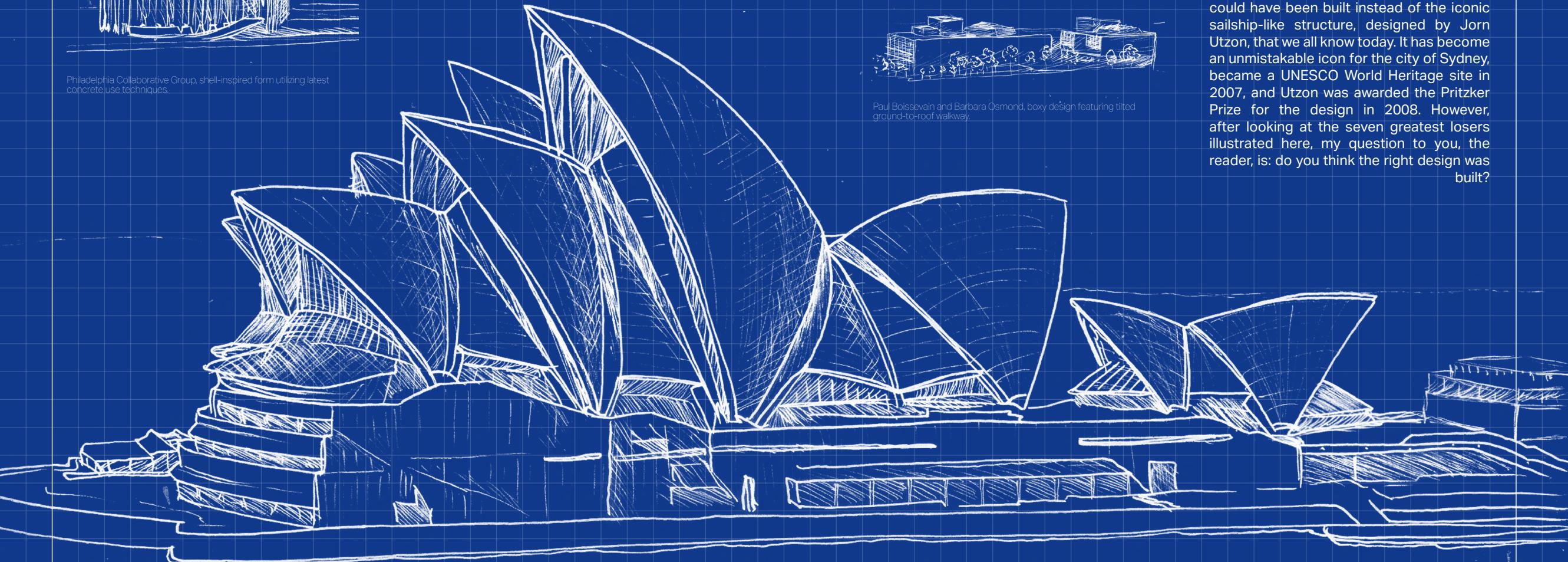
Kelly and Gruzen 'possesses a certain Vegas-style pizzazz'.



Philadelphia Collaborative Group, shell-inspired form utilizing latest concrete use techniques.



Paul Boissevain and Barbara Osmond, boxy design featuring tilted ground-to-roof walkway.



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<https://www.archdaily.com/65218/ad-classics/sydney-opera-house-%e2%80%93-jorn-utzon>

At the Kitchen Table

Created by George Knight

The tea is hot between fingers. Jumper cuffs are pulled down to my knuckles and my fingers poke pathetically out, reaching around the porcelain confines. Vapour floats carelessly through the air, billowing through air borne dust, cutting and dominating before dissipating. They swirl and weaken as they rise, coming in and out of focus as they dip in and out of morning rays. My eyes follow upwards until they disperse just below the ceiling.

For a moment, my gaze lingers on the ceiling rose, delicate plasterwork speckled with black spots from vapour long before, now stagnant. A small crack. A small crack is just visible – hairline near the centre. I imagine hands pushing their way inside, pulling apart to widen the space until plaster dust crumbles onto the table I stand on. Instead, my hands remain clasped around the mug while my eyes follow the crack along the ceiling. My head tilts as I follow the staggering line down the wall before white expanse is interrupted by tiles.



These tiles have a magenta hue.

They are dull in the fractious morning light that cuts through the window frames. This colour may have been bright in the right light. The magenta hue recalls memories of figures in paint-flecked aprons, arched over paint-flecked tables. A community gathers innocently around these tables, eyes pointed forwards towards the figure who stands with her fingers expressing wide and animated shapes across their vision, reminiscing memories to encourage expression in the lifeless clay piled next to them. A shout of commencement and clean fingernails soon become encased in drying layers of clay. A kaleidoscope of paint swirls innocently onto now flattened clay. The colours spiral and flow in contained squares to be observed from afar. Just under their heads, their necks ache from contorted positions to see best under artificial light. This ache is a privilege rather than a problem; a symptom of impassioned concentration.

A stylus is planted firmly between their fingers, marking lines and shapes inches from eyes that squint to ensure precision. As the surface cuts the warm ceramic, lines spiral off like shavings off a pencil, dropping to the table below, and fingers brush them away.

Now fingers remain intertwined in porcelain handles on a kitchen table and eyes are fixed on the tiles with a magenta hue. The mug, which was once hot enough to billow particles is now cold on the table cloth.

Suicide of



Created by Lisa Kurdziel

The graphic depicts a raft with Cristiano Toraldo di Francia's, one of the co-founders of Superstudio, 1970 Autoritratto floating through Superstudio's collage, Salvataggi di centri storici italiani (Italia vostra).

“Where in fact, does architecture go once it has been entirely erased from the architect’s sketchpads and drawing boards?”

This quote by Peter Lang (2003, p47) is a reflection on ideas that the architectural group Superstudio explored in the 20th century. Superstudio were a group of five Italian architects, founded in Florence around the time of the 1966 floods. They were active for just over a decade, with a lot of their work as a reaction against the modern movement. Their main goal was a removal of architecture for the people, and instead the creation of ‘architectural people’. In order to do this, they began a complete rejection of architecture and design, trying to pave the way towards a life without objects. Adolfo Natalini, co-

founder of Superstudio, observed in a lecture for the AA School of Architecture that “the architects’ suicide and the disappearance of architecture are two equivalent phenomena”. This summarises the feelings held amongst the group of young radical architects, who perceived the deconstruction of architecture as the solution for society’s decay. These suicide idealisations, and the overall rejection of design, formed the basis of their critique against the modern movement.

Superstudio created ‘Histograms’ in an effort to combat the over consumerism that came with modernism in the late 60s. It reduced design to a reference grid which could be modified and adapted to a variety of scales, most notably applied in the ‘Misura M’ furniture series but also seen in works such as the ‘Continuous Monument’. Simplifying the design process meant that designers would become increasingly redundant, and this is why these Histograms were sometimes known as the Architect’s tomb. These Histograms were a fundamental part of Superstudio’s efforts to move towards a ‘life without objects’, and a step closer to the Architect’s metaphorical suicide.

Superstudio’s erasure of the built world continues in their work ‘Hidden Architecture’. For this project, they burned original drawings, sealed copies of the design information and recorded the proceedings with an eyewitness. The documented process is described:

“We produced an architectural project which will remain hidden in hermetically sealed covers. Forever. Of this project, we printed three copies, which were folded into A4 size. The original drawings were burned into ashes. The copies were sealed into a polyethylene envelope, which was sealed and then placed into a polyester and aluminum foil cover which was

sealed and then put into a box measuring mm. 250x350x75 in zinc sheeting mm. 1.5 thick, which was soldered, cleaned and brushed. A lawyer who was present at this event produced and authorized a witness account. The labeled box, July 25,1970. Hidden Architecture + Superstudio”

By Superstudio incinerating what was the creative process, many questions are posed about their views on one’s role in architecture. It can be seen as an attempt to reject and alienate the Architect from their work, or equally as a critique of the true importance behind creative processes. The clinical tone which is present throughout ‘Hidden Architecture’ is in stark contrast to the warmth often found within architectural works, adding to the cynical tone that Superstudio portray in their mission to erase architecture.

Whilst no-one has answered the questions which Lang remarked on, it leaves Superstudio’s work still extremely relevant and interesting in today’s architectural world, especially when considering the hidden work behind the creative process.

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Watercolour of Tokyo Imperial Hotel

Omitted Evolution

Created by Vedika Manwani

In the process of urbanization and the necessity to evolve in response to our capitalistic culture, many pieces of our historical heritage have been altered with time. As a result, our society's connections to the past and the stories they represent have diminished, leaving us with mere glimpses through images and memories of what once existed. This urges the ever-growing need to balance development with the preservation of our architectural culture and history.

The Tokyo Imperial Hotel, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, marked a significant phase in his career: a departure from the Prairie School style of the previous decade and the subsequent development of Organic Architecture. Wright's travels to Japan and Europe shifted his perspective on architecture, inspiring his focus on integrating buildings with their natural surroundings. In essence, his transition to biomorphic architecture reflected his ambition to design spaces that responded to a broader range of human, environmental, and structural considerations while staying true to his belief in architecture as a living, integrated art

form. Louis Sullivan, a mentor to Wright and often called the "father of modernism," was an American architect known for pioneering the use of steel-frame construction and emphasizing the principle that "form follows function." He described the Tokyo Imperial Hotel as a uniquely individual creation: "In this structure is not to be found a single form distinctly Japanese; nor that of any other country; yet in its own individual form, its mass, and subsidiaries, its evolution of plan and development of thesis; in its sedulous care for niceties of administration, and for the human sense of joy it has expressed, in inspiring form as an epic poem, addressed to the Japanese people, their innermost thought." The hotel's elegant design harmoniously blended Eastern and Western culture, reflecting Japan's modernization. Wright achieved this by using local Japanese materials like Oya stone, detailed with intricate terracotta panels, married with the Mayan Revival style, and his globally appealing organic aesthetic.

The decision to welcome an American architect for such a prestigious project symbolised Japan's embrace of Western influence while maintaining a local identity. Thus, the hotel became a point of attraction for international travelers and businesses, establishing itself as a beacon of modernisation and a symbol of Japan's role as a bridge between Eastern tradition and Western progress.

While the design harmonized cultural elements, it also demonstrated Wright's innovative approach to structural engineering. The Imperial Hotel featured a pioneering floating foundation built on a bed of soft, compressible volcanic ash, a method that evolved from earlier Japanese practices of adapting structures to seismic conditions. This innovative foundation enabled the building to absorb and dissipate seismic energy effectively. The cantilevered floors were designed to distribute the building's weight and withstand lateral forces, positioning the hotel as a significant milestone in the development of structural engineering. As a challenge to conventional construction techniques, the design experimented with methods to minimise earthquake impact, creating multiple joints throughout to allow movement of the building with the ground and surrounding environment.

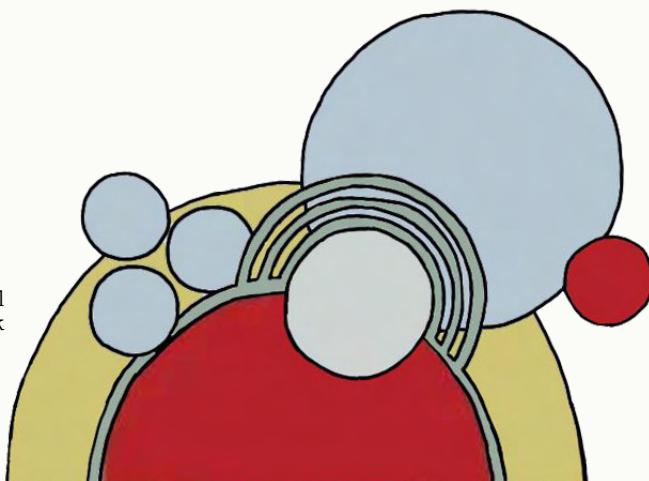
Additionally, the reinforced concrete base, combined with a steel mesh, provided optimal compressive and tensile strength to resist the dynamic forces of earthquakes. This innovative approach not only advanced

structural design but also resulted in a romantic, free-flowing aesthetic that harmoniously blended Eastern and Western influences in a reinterpretation of Mayan style.

Ironically, despite these innovations, the mud beneath the foundation amplified seismic waves, creating additional challenges for the surrounding structures over time. Whilst the hotel famously withstood the devastating Kanto earthquake of 1923, this amplification, coupled with aging terracotta panels, made modernising the building impractical and ultimately led to its demolition in 1968 in advance of the 1970 Tokyo World's Fair.

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Reimagined Tokyo Imperial Hotel custom dishware and artwork



The Tokyo Imperial Hotel, therefore, represents a marriage between the conceived triumph of architectural resilience against the forces of nature and the relentless pressure of capitalism. Although it stood as a significant milestone in earthquake-resistant design, its small rooms, lacking modern amenities like air conditioning, rendered it financially impractical to maintain.

Consequently, this symbol of Japanese modernization and its ties to the West became outdated, leading to the permanent closure of its gates to make way for a new skyscraper capable of accommodating three times the number of guests and offering unparalleled views of the palace grounds. Alas, this shift symbolises the prioritization of economic utility over architectural innovation, a recurring theme in modern urbanization.

Today, in remembrance of the original hotel's demolition, the lobby and entrance pool have been reconstructed and preserved at the Meiji Museum in Inuyama, Japan. Iconic furniture from the hotel has been dispersed across various exhibits nationwide, serving as a poignant reminder of a lost masterpiece.

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Navratri in Bhopal

Written by Jamie Ferguson
Photos by Beth Kippin

Extracts from a journal written during a masterplanning trip to Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Names have been anonymised. To those who made this trip possible, thank you for your incredible kindness.

Day 3: 02:23:00 - Arrival in Bhopal (dinner with Ranajay)

The forecourt is less grand than the Falaknuma, ten years past
But the emotions are familiar

Ranajay is dressed very similarly to me
But the seams are tidy, thinner thread, and neatly pressed

He escorts us up a marble staircase to the Begum's terrace
Twelve tables and a bar, eleven people

Introductions and handshakes: Imran, Mihir, Aditya, Kal, the Professor
I am uncomfortable with such generosity.

The Professor has soulful eyes.
Ranajay says he is powerful, not knowing his own weight

My leg draws attention as always
He calls me a broken man, 'broken foot, broken eyes, what about a broken heart?'

He has a mastery of conversation
That unending Indian wine does not afford me.

Accompanied with a wry smile, at times conversation is tense
'No one talks about carbon when your parents have seen destitution'

We are eager to understand and experience.
We overeat the starters, thinking they are mains.

After, Sam, Aaron and I recount our conversation, minuting every clue
A slurred podcast, scrambling to capture wisdom.



Day 4: 09:47:00 - Meeting the city

We meet at Taj-ul-Masajid
With Imran & Mihir

The red flagstones burn, but the white only lightly scald
We can dance across to the tree within the courtyard

They kindly allow us inside
It is surprisingly cool

Another kind-eyed man talks to us
He is proud to show off his English,

Proud to show off his son
He will be the next Ronaldo, he says.

We look out across Motia Talab
At the ruins of the Taj Mahal

They talk about wasted potential
We discuss the Indian mentality, specifically Bhopal

'They cannot see the value in restoration'
'There is a culture of moving on - chalo.'

Three herons fly past.
We head down to the Taj

We cannot enter but a dog does, squeezing through a snagged door
I envision some Ghibli wonderland beyond.

Day 4: 13:36:00 - The old town

The overbuilding, the layering of history is clear,
The narrow streets draw you deeper

They introduce us to unctuous and intriguing childhood sweets
Mihir and I compare food nostalgia

He explains what makes Bhopal so great
'The whole street is a city - they have weddings here, business, dinner, cricket'

Even within the strict grid we lose each other
It's a "quiet" day.

As we walk down the ghat to VIP road, Imran is stopped by the police
He walks over to their table, they laugh and nod together

He is not from around here
'His walk and talk'

He says if we are ever in Delhi again,
He will show us around.

A white bird: big with a long dark bill, graceful over the severed lake
Like the shooting star the night before

A black headed ibis (I think)
They say there are less migrations now, due to the war.

I am improving at spotting birds
Like the split tail police bird sitting on a wire in Delhi airport

B says when we are grandparents, she will be the one who names the plants
And I the birds.

**Day 8: 13:07:00 - Chai at Rishabh's**

'Best Chai in Bhopal'
We follow him up winding stairs to a small apartment

Rishabh gestures at the fan in the hall - 'cool'
He beams

A young girl, Mira, greets us
He embraces her, his brother's daughter.

She speaks fantastic english
Off school for Navratri

We share an apple
While her mother makes chai

'Alexa, play Tauba Tauba'
She teaches Aaron the dance routine.

We head up to the terrace
So they can show us their neighbourhood,

Plants growing from empty cement buckets
His brother works in construction.

We ask Mira questions
'Ya', she tilts her head

'We are getting solar panels, like the neighbours'
She points across the void.



Day 11: 17:16:00 - Airport drive

We drive past UCIL
before heading to the airport.

The wall is low, unadorned
A stark contrast to the bustling city to our left

A single vendor, an old man
He sells fruit from a blanket

I cannot shake the image of Delhi
Of glass, horns pushing to get through

Men in helmets, bikes discarded, picking up a still body,
Head lulled forward, eyes closed.

An ambulance coming the other way
small and old - brightly coloured - siren on.

B later says - in her eyes she believes it
They were quick, they can resuscitate

I can barely re-read my own words,
What's one against forty thousand.

Since the Professor on the first night
No one has talked of Union Carbide.

'We don't celebrate history in the same way'
'There is a culture of moving on.'

I hope to see the ibis one last time
Fleets of crystal white heron and crane instead.

We take off with intensity,
Below us the Ravans burn.

ERRORS

WHY IS EVERYTHING SO POLISHED
WHERE IS THE ROOM TO BREATHE?
THE ROOM TO BE?
THE SPACE BETWEEN WHAT WAS AND WHAT'S BEST
WHAT WILL MIGHT BE?

WHY IS IT ALWAYS THE BEST?
WHY AREN'T MY MISTAKES
~~THE LINE ON A PAGE MERELY STRUCK~~
~~MERELY STRUCK FROM A PAGE~~
GIVEN THEIR TIME
IS ONLY PERFECTION WORTHY YOUR TIME?

IT MUST BE
~~IT IS TOO~~ CONFUSING TO BE THE ART

THE ARTIST HASN'T CHOSEN
TO BE REDUCED TO AN ~~✓~~
Error

Why is everything so polished?
Even this is polished.
Where is the room to breathe?
The room to be?
The space between what was and what's best?
It is always the best.
They aren't my mistakes.
Merely struck from a page.
~~Merely struck~~
Given their time?
Is only perfection worthy our time?
It must be
~~Merely~~ confusing to be the art.
the artist hasn't chosen
To be reduced to an error.

By Lisa Kurdziel
Graphics by Author and Venisse Low

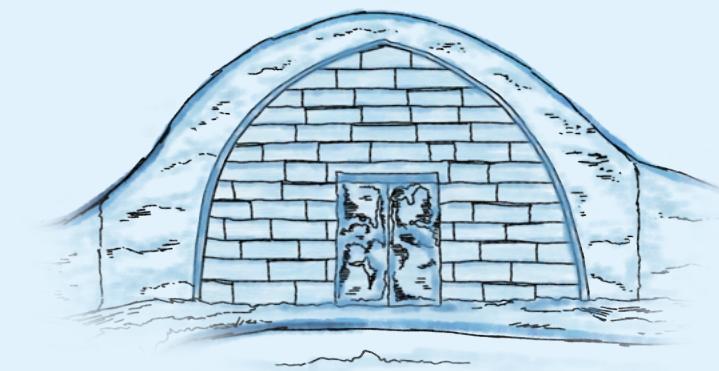
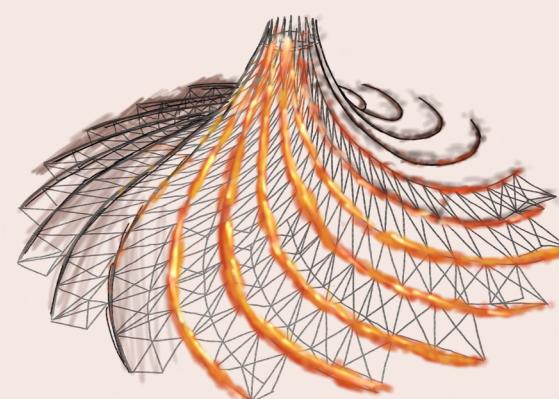
Memory over Monument: Architecture Without a Trace

In an age where architecture often strives for permanence, etched into skylines, catalogued in coffee-table books and immortalised on social media, a counter trend runs quietly yet significantly. Ephemeral architecture, designed to leave no lasting trace, invites us, as users and consumers of the world to reconsider the essence of building, challenging us to question whether the power of a structure lies in its transience rather than its permanence (Chappel, 2010).

The idea of impermanence is inexplicably intertwined with the history of humankind. Nomadic tribes built collapsible shelters, medieval fairs erected fleeting marketplaces, and even grand festivals like the Olympic Games and the Expos of the world leave behind temporary pavilions (Chappel, 2010). Yet, in a world preoccupied with longevity, ephemeral architecture resists change. It favours experience over objecthood and emotion over documentation. Such architecture refuses to be captured and fixed in visual memory resulting in 'no image available', instead, it demands a more profound form of engagement, one rooted in presence and participation, rather than in aesthetic qualities (Chappel, 2010).

Perhaps no contemporary example encapsulates this ethos as vividly as the temples of Burning Man. Rising annually in Nevada's Black Rock Desert, these intricate wooden structures serve as sanctuaries for reflection, grief and celebration (Burning Man, n.d.). They are neither monuments nor memorials; they exist only for the week-long festival before being ceremoniously burned, reducing them to ash (Burning Man, n.d.). This embodies a philosophy where memory supersedes physicality. Their beauty, instead of being immortalised in glossy photographs resides in the minds of those who experienced them. They challenge architecture's reliance on permanence to create meaning, fittingly leaving no image behind, only the trace of a shared, intangible moment.

The Temple of Galaxia designed by French architect Arthur Mamou-Mani encapsulates this philosophy. A swirling lattice of interwoven wooden beams spiralled upwards creating a sense of infinite connectivity (Mamou-Mani, n.d.). Visitors filled the space with notes, photographs and offerings, transforming it into a communal repository of collective emotion. When flames consumed the Galaxia, it didn't mark its destruction but rather its final act of catharsis, fulfilling its eternal purpose.



Ephemeral architecture also grapples with materiality, often embracing sustainability by its very nature. The IceHotel in Jukkasjärvi, Sweden, rebuilt annually since 1989, demonstrated how transient design can harmonise with cycles of the elements (IceHotel, n.d.). Constructed entirely from ice and snow harvested from the nearby Torne River, the structure melts back into the same river in spring. Inside, carved ice sculptures and crystalline corridors create a dreamscape where the boundaries between architecture, art and environment dissolve. Guests sleep in insulated sleeping bags atop ice beds, engaging directly with the materiality of the structure (IceHotel, n.d.).

The IceHotel's impermanence is not a flaw, but a feature. It may remind us of the fragility and cyclical nature of our ecosystems. Here, the act of building is inseparable from the act of letting go. The IceHotel leaves no scar on the landscape, no remnants of its existence, only the memory of inhabiting a frozen masterpiece. It presents a model of architectural humility, urging us to design with the planet's temporal cycles in mind. This deliberate erasure offers an experience instead of an artifact; 'no image available'

is a reality with the IceHotel, epitomising architecture's potential in venturing to the unusual.

From Nevada's Burning Man to Sweden's IceHotel, ephemeral architecture reflects the diverse ways cultures embrace impermanence. In reimagining spaces that leave no lasting image, we uncover architecture's latent potential to resonate not through what it builds, but through what it allows us to experience. As we grapple with the environmental and cultural imperatives of our time, perhaps the greatest legacy we can leave is a fleeting one, felt in the heart, remembered in the mind and dissolved into the earth.

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American Dream or American Nightmare?

The results of the 2024 United States Presidential Election, and its predicted consequences to the political stance towards migration, compels us to reflect on the idea of the 'American Dream'. This ubiquitous idea has acted as a beacon of hope for many – yet did it and does it truly carry hope for racially minoritised workers within the construction industry?

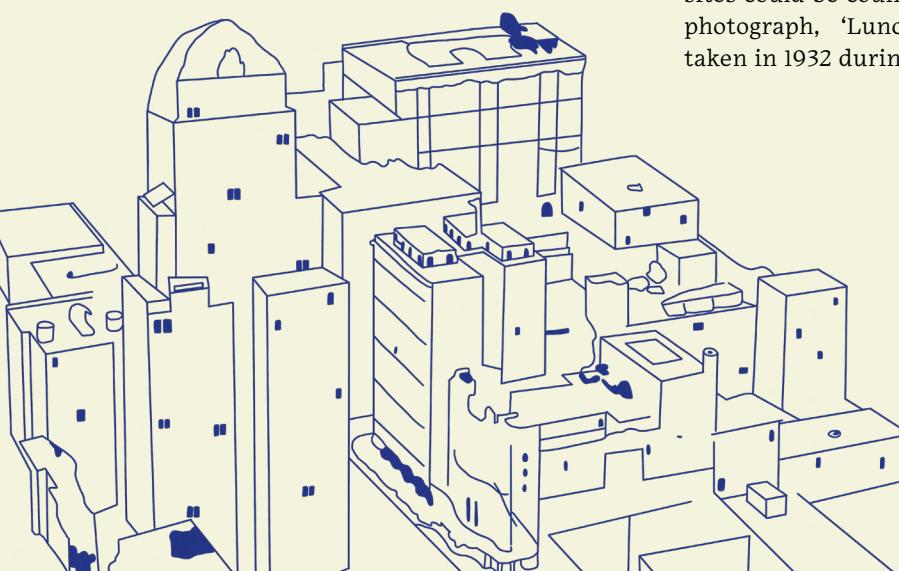
The term 'American Dream' was coined by James Truslow Adams in his 1931 book, 'The Epic of America'. According to Adams, the 'American Dream' was that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement (Clark, 2007).

Thanks to Adams, this concept became widely recognised not only amongst Americans but also within migrant communities who sought work opportunities in the US.

The global financial crisis of the 1930s led to a severe shortage of work opportunities, with unemployment rates reaching as high as 20%. Despite a strong desire to work, the lack of opportunities created immense pressure on the country to fulfil the idea of the American dream for everyone (Murtoff, 2024). Yet some hope remained, in the form of the booming construction industry, specifically relating to office spaces in skyscrapers for the expanding white-collar workforce. The Empire State Building, a domineering icon of the New York City skyline, was completed in just one year and forty five days, with as many as 3,400 construction workers involved on-site at the same time. At first, this seems an impressive achievement; however, lurking underneath this success is the uncomfortable fact that 42 workers' lives were claimed in construction-related accidents (Cheng, Davis, Wilson, 2020) – souring the idea of the American Dream.

The harsh conditions of the construction sites could be countered by the well-known photograph, 'Lunch atop a Skyscraper', taken in 1932 during the construction of the

Created by
Karolina Pavlikova



Rockefeller Centre. One can observe men eating lunch and smoking cigarettes, a jovial scene which adds to the American Dream narrative. Much like the construction of the Empire State Building, underneath the surface is the reality that this was not an authentic, candid shot but a staged event as part of a promotion campaign for the skyscraper (Hudes, 2023). Again raising the question of whether the American Dream is actually real or merely constructed.

Furthermore, whilst most workers in the photograph were not identified, those

identified were white American and European immigrant workers, who lived in Queens, the 'slums' of New York City (Cualán, 12). The photograph is a testament to the lack of racial diversity amongst the construction workers, a point which Cheng, Davis, & Wilson (2020) highlight. The 20th century American megacity skyscrapers were designed by white male American architects, and built by working-class white people; while offering limited opportunities for racially minoritised Americans due to discriminatory hiring processes. (Cheng et al., 2020).

Black Americans were amongst the first to lose their jobs at the outset of the Great Depression, and the last one to regain employment. The New Deal, a programme under the Roosevelt Administration, introduced a series of reforms which helped Black Americans significantly by providing job prospects and low-cost housing (Lynch, 2024). This is not to say that these reforms were a panacea to the deep-rooted and wide-reaching racism within American society, and anti-racist organisations were (and continue to be) a driving force in the fight to improve the lives of Black Americans.

It is important to critically examine how skyscrapers played a role in further entrenching racial disparity, and how one's race impacted their experience of the built environment. This has to be done with gravity to process the past and future of the architecture practice and liability it carries. Issues of discrimination raise questions about which groups of people a building is designed for, and whether its design and subsequent use can further fuel racism and classism.

Thus, 'Lunch atop a Skyscraper' offers a different perspective on the idea of Adam's 'American Dream' – a poignant testament to the term having different meanings to people according to identities such as race and class. Although the construction of skyscrapers has given work opportunities to a myriad of jobseekers, it has also inevitably supported the racial disparity present within the construction industry and society at large. Successful megacities, like New York City, that create the so-called 'dream', in reality hide the nightmares of racism and classism to this day, are yet to be fully and meaningfully addressed.

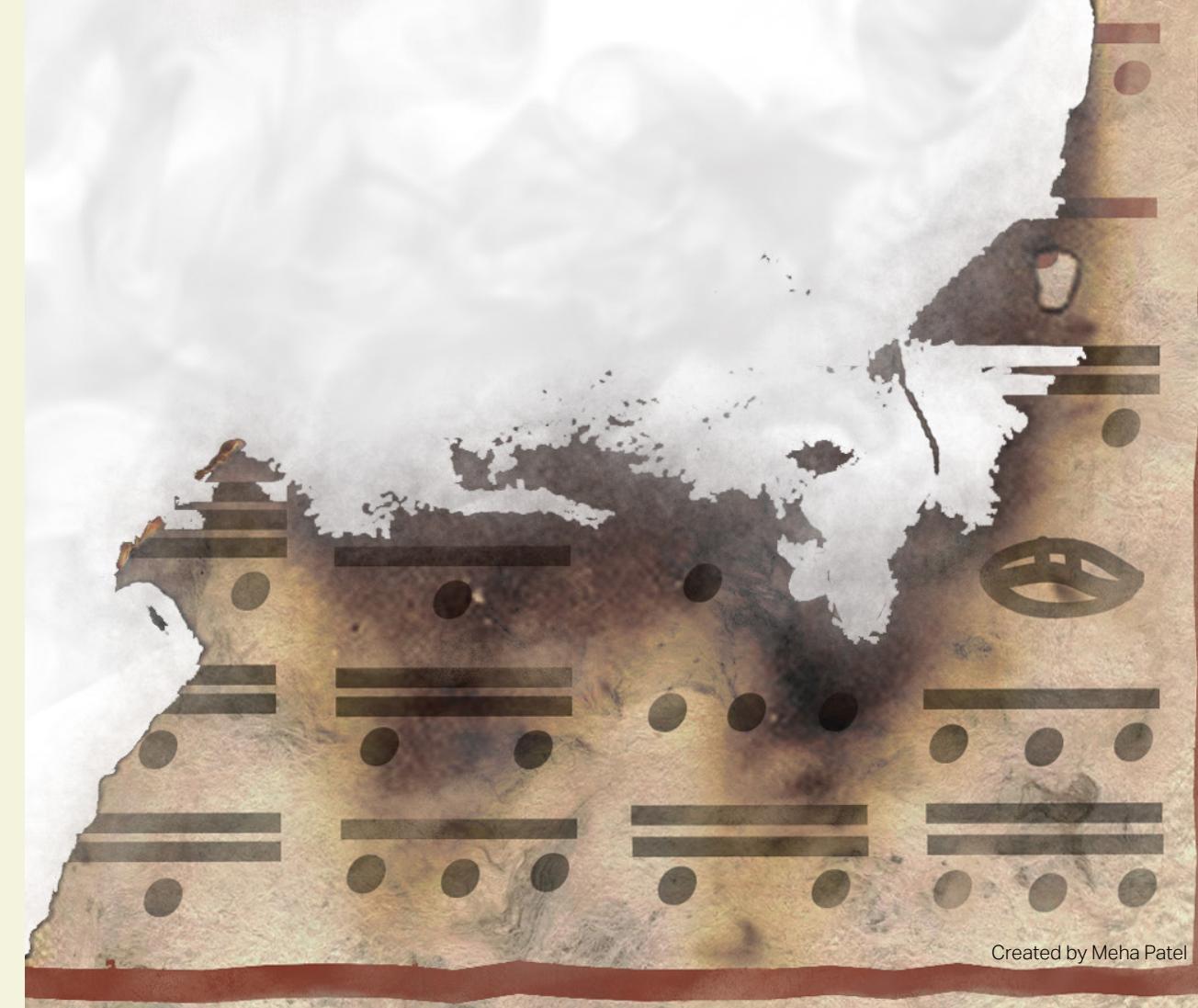
"racism and classism are yet to be fully and meaningfully addressed."

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BURNING OF THE MAYAN MANUSCRIPTS

The burning of the Mayan texts was a tragic event in history committed primarily by Spanish conquistadors and missionaries in the 16th century. The most infamous destruction occurred in 1562, led by Diego de Landa, a Franciscan friar in Yucatan. He viewed the texts as heretical because they promoted idolatry. Thousands of sacred Mayan codices and artifacts were burned, erasing invaluable knowledge of Mayan history, astronomy, mathematics, and religion. Only four codices survived, significantly limiting modern understanding of Mayan civilization. This destruction represented a major cultural loss and exemplified the broader impact of colonialism on indigenous knowledge systems.



A Domed City



Written by Faheem Kathawala
Graphics by Yukta Chegu

He saw the monumental hoarding hovering over the roadside inn as he drove past. He recognised the familiar advert. It was a proposal - a proposal for paradise. An innovation that would protect the city from the harshness of nature and comfortably envelop it.

The whole city had heard the whispers - the rumours of an audacious dream conjured by Buckminster Fuller and Thomas C. Howard. The idea of building a "Dome over Manhattan" seemed like the most ambitious and extraordinary proposal the city council had seen in years. The geodesic dome, one of Buckminster Fuller's greatest inventions, was the inspiration behind this idea. According to the 1959 proposal, Fuller suggested that the dome would act as the saviour of the city, helping to regulate the environment and control the ever-increasing electricity bills.

The heavenly dome has become the icon of the city. Navigating through the morning mist in his elliptical pod, he could see the Domed City in the distance. The city shone bright with an inviting aura. The Dome saved a lot of electricity, imagine lighting up each building. Floating over the snow-covered paths, he could feel the chilly winds pushing his vehicle to one side. The dome is temperature-regulated, and the seasonal change doesn't affect the microclimate inside. The insulated glass panels and beautifully structured steel framework keep the dome warm. The lightweight envelope is a structural wonder in itself, spanning two miles and covering half of Manhattan. Gathering his thoughts, he joined the long queue of floating cars waiting to get inside the utopia.

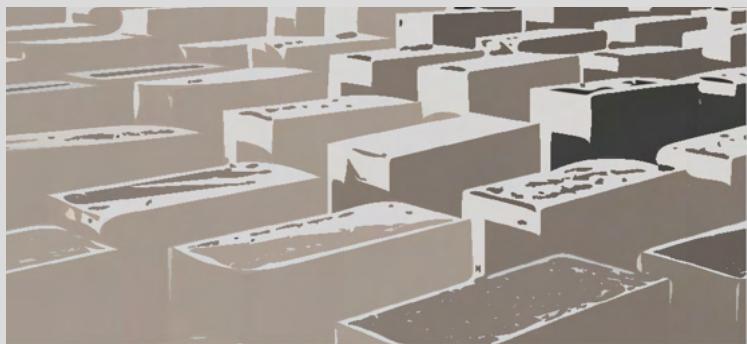
The honks are deafening. The Doomed City is now covered with a thick cloud of smog and has been declared uninhabitable. People are rushing like maniacs to get out of the hell that trapped them. The darkness that surrounded him was a reminder of the failed, over-ambitious dreams. The deteriorating condition of life and the environment over so many years had finally led the government to take a bold decision to abandon the dome. Amid riots, it has become an intensely brutal scene. No one wanted to be left behind; no one wanted to be left in this dystopia.

As he stood there, looking up at the old, peeling advert, a sense of realisation washed over him. The open sky, vast and endless, stretched before him, something he had never truly appreciated until now. "Maybe paradise isn't something we can create," he thought. "Perhaps we can never truly regulate the environment". Reconciling his thoughts, he took a glance back at the proposal, as the warm sunlight filtered through his car window.

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Memories of Nothingness.



Adapted from Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe - Stiftung Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas (2025)

Written by Aditi Kundan
Graphics by Maaria Mamujee

A vast unsettling emptiness - the concrete slabs towering above you, as the burdening silence closes in on you. Nothing remains, no faces, no names, only the memories left behind; memories of the countless families torn apart, innocent faces wiped out, reminders of who they once were before hatred tore them apart - the echoes of their pain charging through every fibre of your being.

The Holocaust Memorial, or the Memorial of Murdered Jews in Berlin (Stiftung Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas, 2025) is merely one of the thousands of memorials built to honour the lives lost in meaningless wars.

This architecture doesn't narrate but instead forces a deeply personal confrontation with the enormity of absence. This one in particular does not participate in the idea of narration or grandeur, but the stillness of the walls around arouses a sense of disbelief and astonishment at the horrors that surround you. It honours the memories of those who

have lost their lives, and compels one to confront the horrors within them, instilling a feeling of responsibility and thoughtfulness. The Holocaust Memorial's empty void does not ask you to remember the millions of lives lost, but the abstractness and starkness of the architecture forces you to confront the enormity of the absence in a manner in which no image or story could ever achieve.

While the Holocaust Memorial leans on absence, others, like the Cenotaph, evoke memory through presence. Designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens (English Heritage, n.d.), this memorial stands over the city of London, embodying the stillness of the dead rather than the void that the Holocaust Memorial offers. Its intention is not to overwhelm, but to symbolise the collective sense of loss.



Adapted from The Cenotaph, English Heritage, (n.d.)

Strikingly different is the 9/11 Memorial in New York City (About the Memorial, n.d.) that also uses absence as its defining feature, although in a different manner than the Holocaust Memorial. The sunken areas, where the Twin Towers once stood, are surrounded with cascading water, with the sides engraved with the names of those lost. Here, the bustling sounds are muffled by the water, creating a space that experiences the absence of the present, encouraging reflection on the vibrant life that once thrived there. In this



Adapted from About the Memorial (n.d.)

case, absence does not symbolise loss - it reminds those visiting of the vibrant hub of life that once stood there - now lost to history.

These memorials might be very different from each other, but they use the idea of stillness and absence to immerse their visitors in a sensory experience of self-reflection - be it through the presence of certain things, or the absence of those.

This reminds us that memorials are not merely places to remember, but spaces designed specifically to remind us of the weight of our actions, and how it remains indifferent to the passage of time. Here, the power lies in their ability to bridge the gap between personal experiences and collective memories; here silence becomes the loudest voice and absence becomes palpable. They remind us that honour lies not in the monument itself but in the emotions it evokes. These spaces ensure the past is felt, not forgotten, and their lessons carried forward.

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Architecture as a Reminder of Armageddon A Political Statement: Lebbeus Woods

Created by Vanessa Tjhai

Architecture is an embodiment of the people's protest, tied to the paradox in the culture of then and now. We see this around us in the architecture built post-war which contrasts the definitions of architecture previously. Woods believed that "architecture is a political act, by nature." He saw destruction as the beginning of architectural reinvention.

Introducing Woods

Lebbeus Woods was influential in the 1980s, known for his imaginative, and rather dystopian drawings—recognised for their radical nature. His childhood left him a lingering sense of doom, in which the world will end sooner or later. Woods lived through the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall and the Cuban Missile Crisis, an intense 13-day standoff between the U.S and Soviet Union in 1982.

Woods reimagines the cities in disarray in his drawings with a poetic sentiment evoking discussions amongst the public. His "new" architecture turns ruins into a monument—a living testament—to survival, memory, and revival.

Lebbeus Woods had three principles:

1. To restore what was lost, to its pre-war condition
2. Damaged buildings are to be demolished and rebuilt into something radically different, or a refurbished version.
3. To salvage the destroyed city to build a new, reimagined city.

These three primary principles: to restore, demolish, and salvage, responded to the ways society can recover from a catastrophic event in tandem. Restoring what once was allows the civilians to continue their comfortable lives and old routines. Whereas demolishing erases the tainted past to rebuild anew, something even better. And salvaging pieces of the city brings the old to the new era; it brings peace and comfort to the people in unrest, presenting them with a piece of home as they are brought into the new era.

His architectural principles acknowledge the community and ancestors who built the now-destroyed city, carrying with it a sense

of justice and remembrance – an homage, of sorts. It reasserts the culture and traditions that were unsuccessfully erased.

In due course, as people forget the past, these radical constructions drawn by Woods will be a reminder of what once was, and what could be. Woods' architecture, at once, becomes a monument that carries the past agony, allowing the community to move on without holding onto the pieces of the old city with disdain.

About Free Space

In Woods' own words, "...traditional architecture tries to choreograph people's movements, even their thoughts and feelings." Freespace is a word he coined to describe spaces free of predetermined purpose and meaning. The term confronts the crisis of contemporary existence and the hurried necessity to invent individuality in a rapidly changing world.

Most rebuilding projects start with the primary focus on returning to the old or rebuilding the improved. And rarely do they become a bold reminder of the past. This traditional practice is a safe path to take, as it does not embrace chaos as Woods' work intends to do.

In an urban setting, this radical reconstruction might evoke unease instead. Contrasting opinions might appear in this complex world.

"Architecture and war are inseparable. Architecture is war. War is architecture."

Woods' Principles in the Contemporary World

Lebbeus Woods' work represents the considerable authority that architecture has in the contemporary world and is a great example of the impact of abstract ideas on the political scene. The sheer scale and contrasting form of Woods' drawings defy the definition of local architecture as if it has been taken from elsewhere. This overall dilutes the cohesive culture of the surroundings.

Zagreb Free Space And Architecture as a Political Act

Woods has proposed a project called Zagreb Free Space, during a political upheaval in Yugoslavia to establish a Free Zone. His proposal depicts a dynamic structure that fosters new political and social conditions. However, this project became unrealisable due to a war outbreak. This failed proposal became evidence of his radical ideas that advocate architecture as a form of transformative political act.

"Architecture is a political act, by nature. It had to do with the relationships between people and how they decide to change their conditions of living."

— Lebbeus Woods



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High Street Decay and Regeneration

Written by Charles Ko
Graphics by Charlotte Martin

The high streets of towns and cities are integral to the economic growth and the identity of their local areas. Whether people came here to 'shop-till-they-dropped' or merely to browse, there was a time when high streets were bustling with visitors, particularly on weekends and holidays. However, the impacts of Covid-19 and the global shift towards online shopping have caused many high street shops to struggle to meet their sales targets, forcing them to close. As a result, the once brightly lit shop fronts with well-decorated window displays have gradually been replaced by ugly 'to let' signs and boarded-up facades. The high streets are decaying, and with this so are the memories and meanings attached to them.

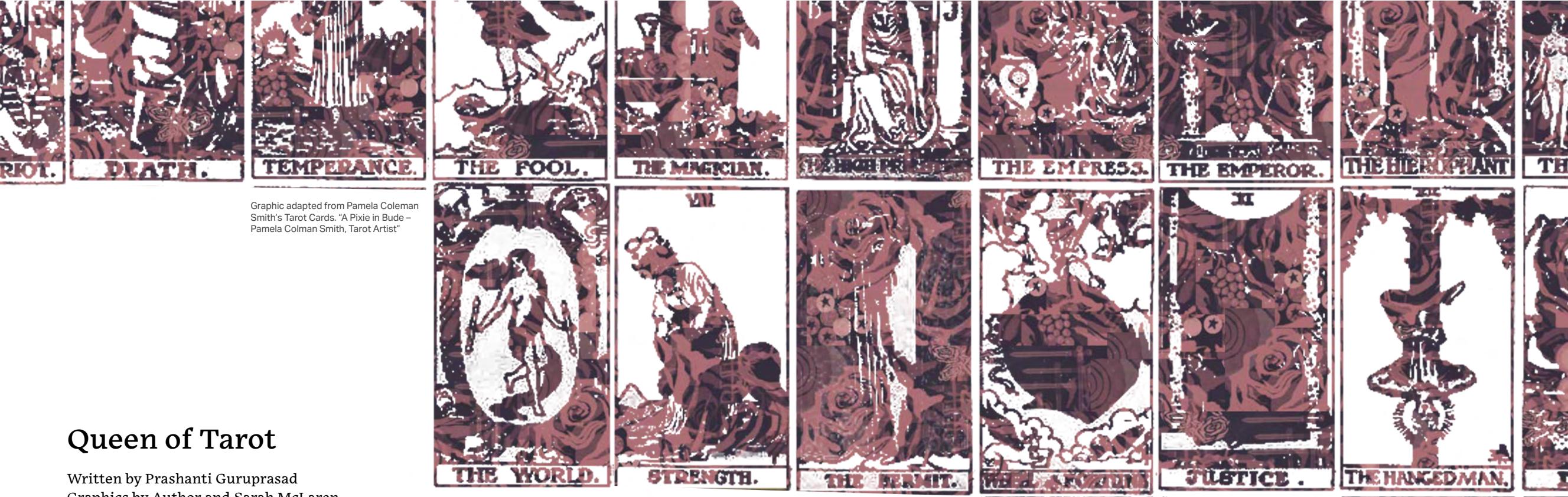


To my pleasant surprise, this wasn't the case in Frome when I visited last summer. Along the cobblestone streets winding through the hills of this town were an array of local, independent shops. Their elegantly decorated windows displayed artisan products such as furniture, stationary and vintage clothes. One particularly remarkable shop sold wooden stationary and engraving tools; it even featured a laser cutter that produced custom maps and posters. In the lanes that branched off these streets, local coffee shops offered spaces for rest and relaxation. Even during off-peak times, the streets were populated with residents and tourists alike. While this might sound like a travel blogger's review, my point is this: Frome managed to shield itself (at least to my knowledge) from the decline of in-person retailing, maintaining engagement with the local community. Perhaps there is something other high streets can learn from this example.



In our third and currently fourth year studies, we've discovered that "regeneration" is a recurring theme in local plans and policies aimed to encourage sustainable development. One of the successful examples can be found in King's Cross, London. The once neglected industrial area has been transformed into the vibrant public realm now known as Coal Drops Yard, serving as a cultural and retail hub and connector for the wider community. This project shows how meticulous planning and considerate design can bring new life to a struggling area.

Instead of looking at the decline in high-street retail as a challenge, we could instead focus on the opportunities it presents to positively enhance the cultural and socio-economic value of towns and cities. Vacant shops could be used to house businesses, streets could be redesigned into more accessible and inviting public realms, and entire blocks of vacant retail space could be turned into residential schemes to tackle the ever-growing housing crisis. Regardless of what the transformation may be, it is most important that, like Frome, the cultural identity of the place, the meaning its residents and visitors associate with it, and the value it brings to the community should be preserved and strengthened. Through the decline of high-street retail we have the chance to take a step back and regenerate our towns and cities into dynamic spaces that contribute positively to the local economy and cultural fabric.



Queen of Tarot

Written by Prashanti Guruprasad
Graphics by Author and Sarah McLaren

As recently as the late 20th century, art produced by women was seen as far less superior than that of their male counterparts. This led to the ongoing marginalization and devaluation of female artists. Pamela Colman Smith is the world's most famous occult artist, but her name is almost unknown - forgotten.

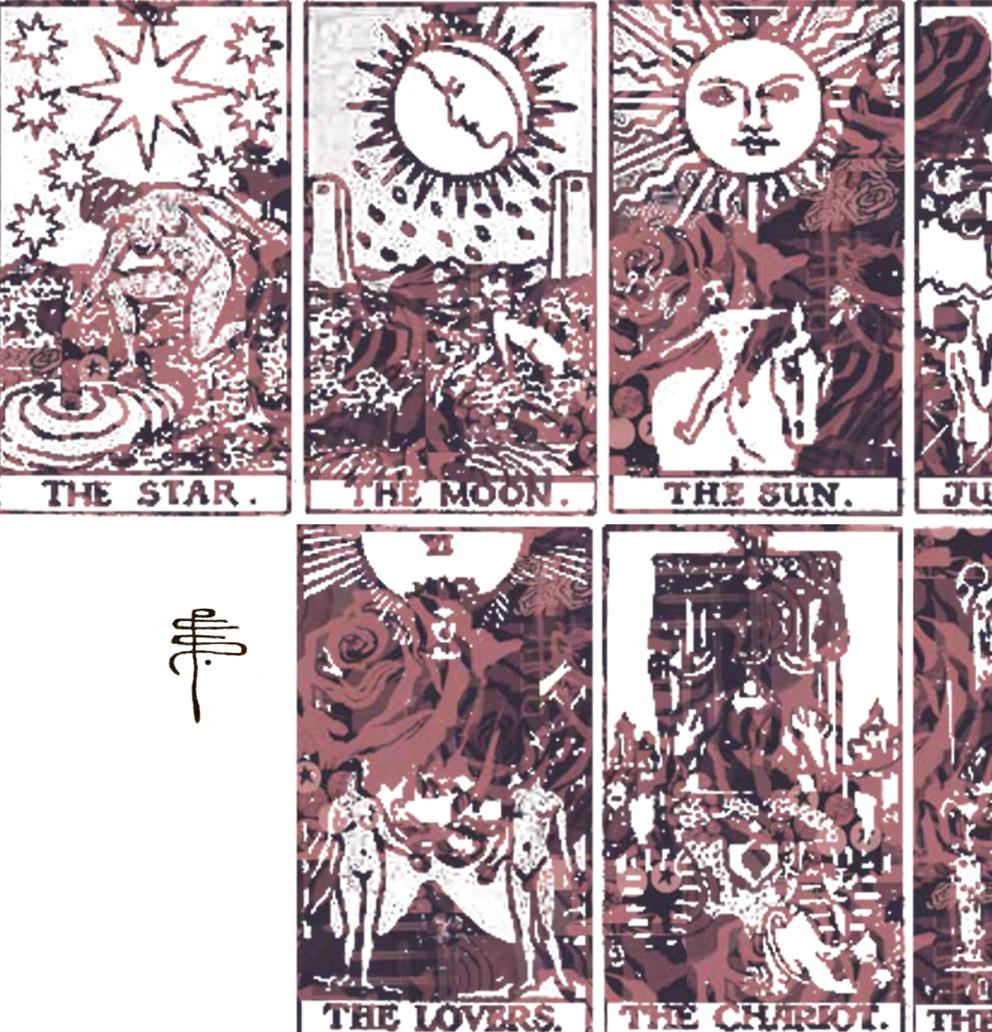
Pamela Colman Smith was the artist who designed the iconic Tarot Deck. With its abundance of psychological and metaphorical insights, it questions the world around you. The Rider-Waite tarot deck was one of the first decks where an artist had rendered the tarot with complete, detailed illustrations with the suit's symbols. The tarot was accessible to a wide range of people due to the art's profound significance, which went beyond linguistic and cultural barriers.

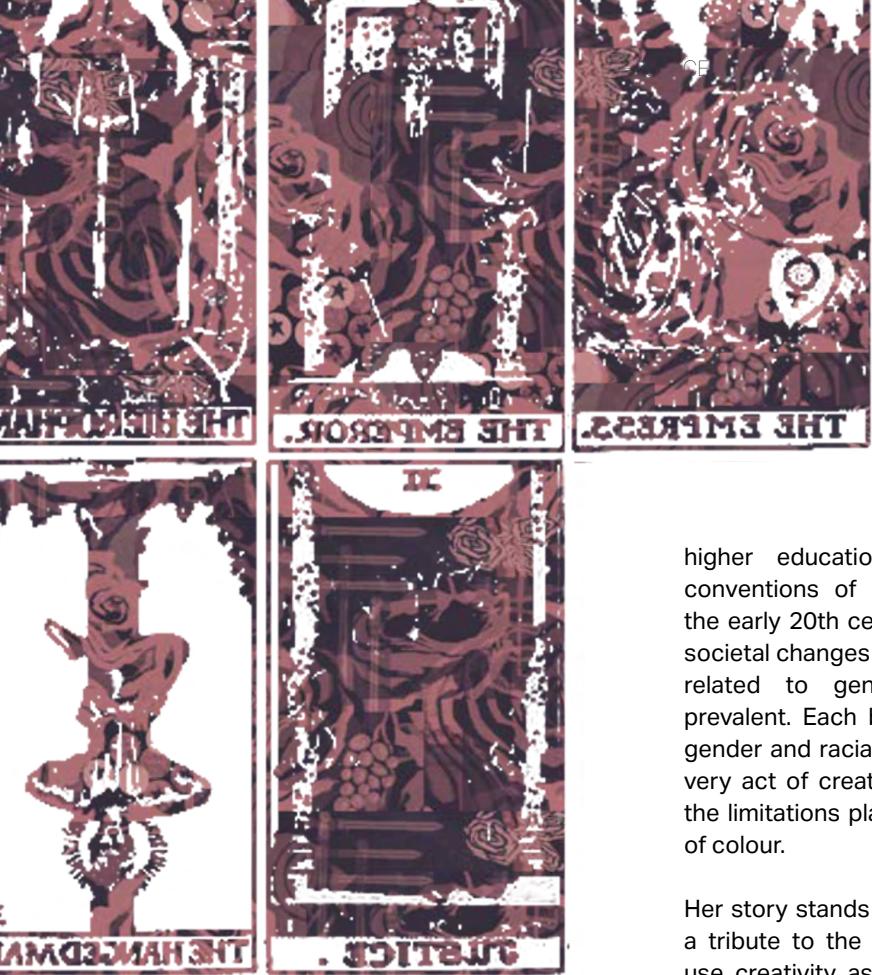
Colman-Smith's tarot designs have influenced art and fashion; from Dior's designers to Salvador Dali, artists and designers have been using tarot cards as inspiration for years. Furthermore, her interpretation of the arcana would revitalise Tarot and inspire countless decks to come such as the Morgan Greer,

Robin Wood, Hudes, and Aquarian decks. The visual interpretations of the symbols and illustrations have become a cornerstone for occult art today. They have evolved to fit their certain time, place and society.

Colman-Smith fell into obscurity, despite her early fame and success. Even before her pieces were known, they were experimental and integrative. However, she never fully received the credit she was due. If not for her iconic signature, her name might have been lost forever. She designed a monogram of her own initials using a traditional woodblock method while she was a student. This formed Colman-Smith's monogram, PCS, was a serpentine cipher on every tarot card.

Her familial roots bestowed upon her a unique cultural heritage which influenced her artistic journey profoundly. She moved between Britain, the United States and Jamaica, leading to speculation that her frequent images of ships and the ocean are personal anecdotes. During her time in Wales, she sketched sceneries of lush greenery and rolling hills, while her Jamaican heritage brought a





vibrant element to her artistic range. Fusing the warmth and energy of Jamaica with the soft hues of Welsh meadows created a bold palette of colours and dynamic compositions. In her younger years, she embraced the bohemian spirit, adoring the diversity of ideas and perspectives that surrounded her. This helped cultivate her exotic and vibrant style. The years spent in the Cornish Art Colony were life changing; she turned to her natural surroundings and the quietude of the landscape as inspiration, allowing her to explore the depths of her creativity. Colman-Smith fostered a strong connection with the unseen, finding inspiration in the enigmatic parts of life. The amalgamation of the serenity of nature and bohemian influences laid the essentials for her future work, especially in the realm of tarot card illustrations.

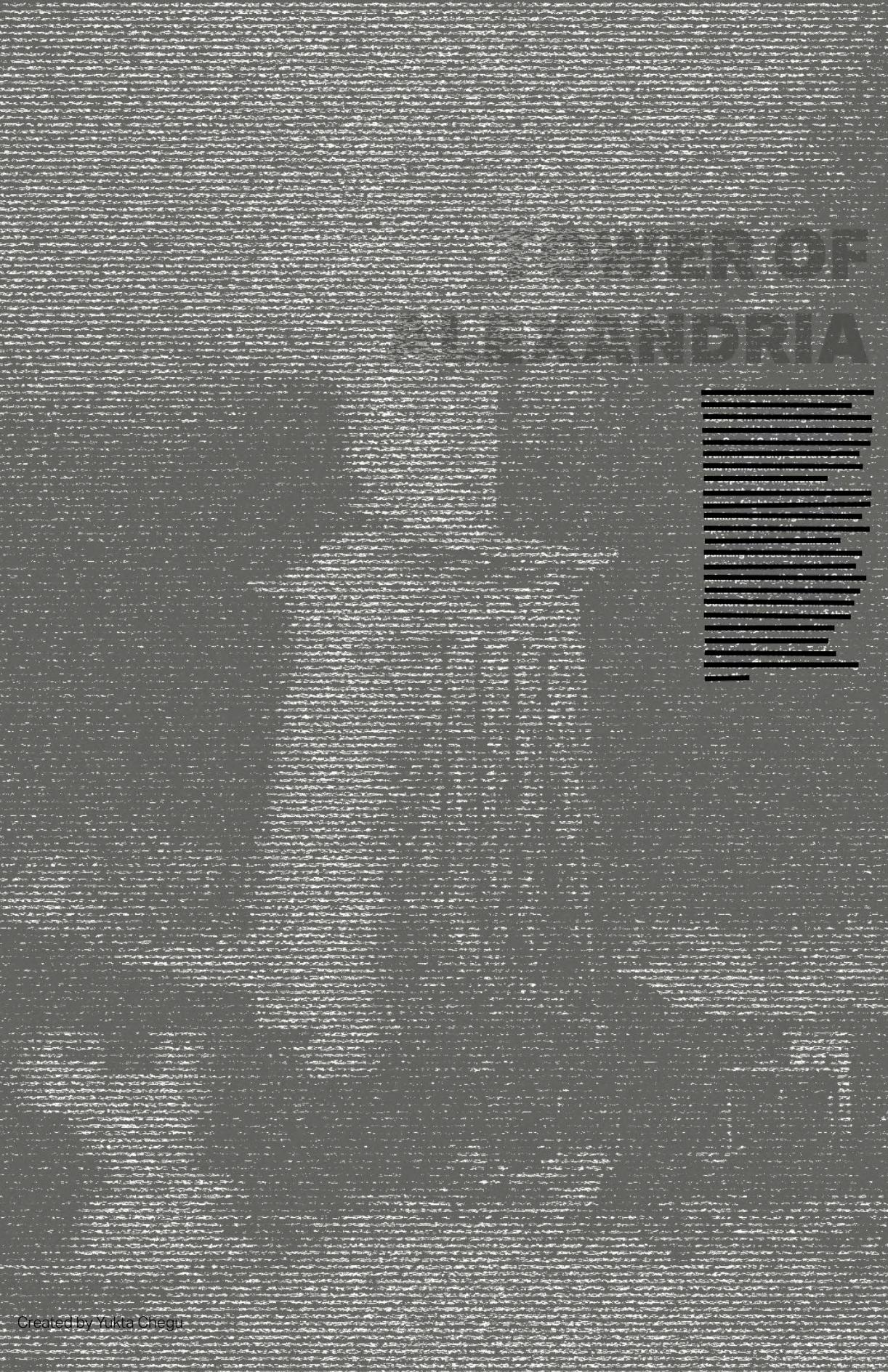
Pamela Colman-Smith, a woman of colour, bravely pursued the uncharted waters of

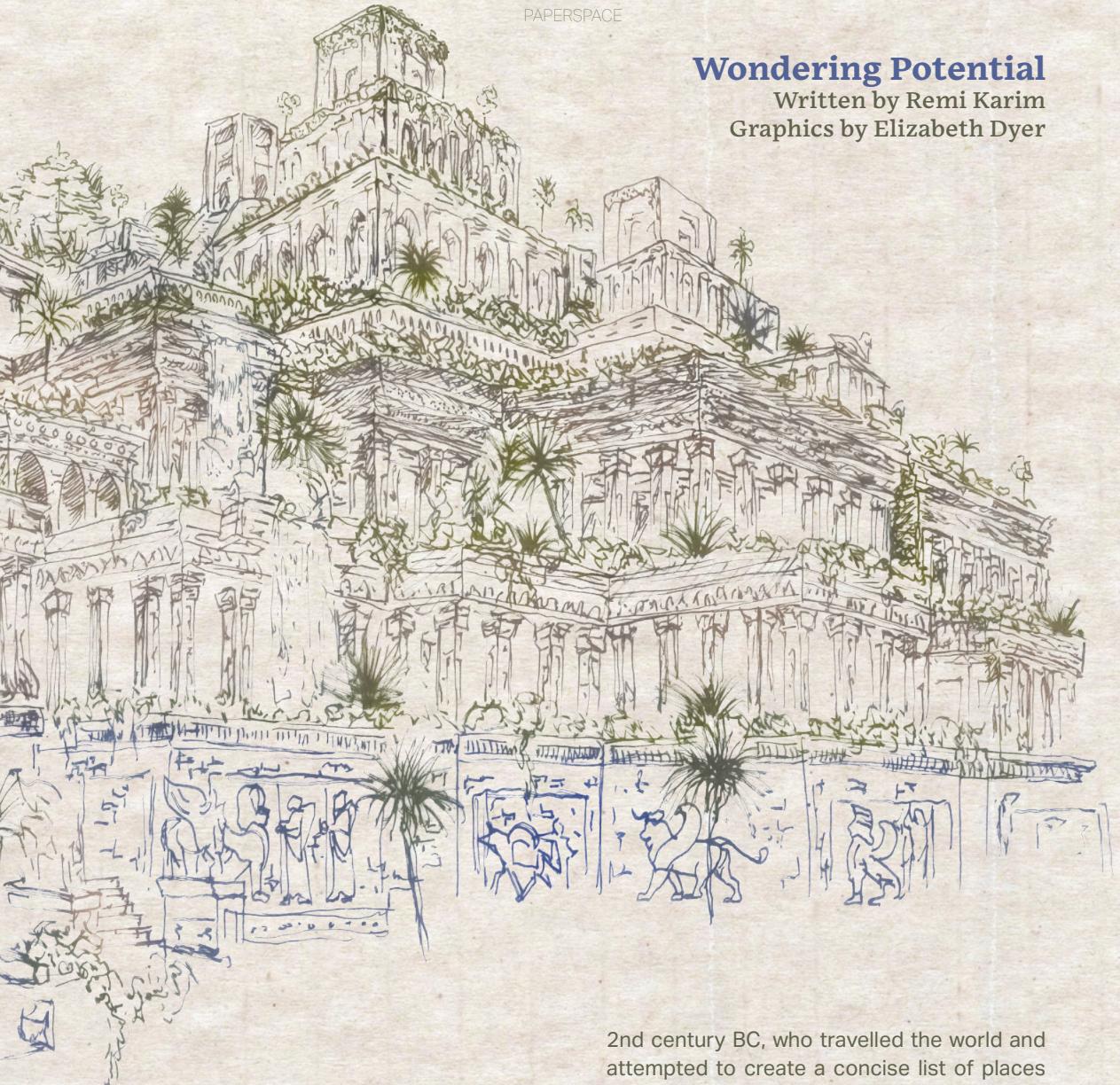
higher education despite the prevailing conventions of her time. This was during the early 20th century which was marked by societal changes and progress, yet obstacles related to gender and race remained prevalent. Each brushstroke challenged the gender and racial biases of the era, as if the very act of creating was a defiance against the limitations placed on women and people of colour.

Her story stands as a testament of strength, a tribute to the relentless determination to use creativity as a guiding light. The cards she made reflect not just the intricacies of the human experience but also the subtleties of her personal journey. Pamela Colman Smith's life invites us to delve into the cards of our own lives, unveiling the artistry concealed in every chapter. Pamela Colman Smith's life and art remind us of the lasting strength of art to transcend barriers, offering insights on the human experience and inspiring future generations of artists.

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Wondering Potential

Written by Remi Karim
Graphics by Elizabeth Dyer

What deems a structure, a building, or a statue worthy of the title 'Wonder of the World'? What aspects of its nature mean that it inhabits an elitist group of architecture- schemes whose notoriety will or has outlived themselves, their own historical evidence, and the places where they existed.

To most, the seven wonders of the world consist of those recognised by the New7wonders campaign in 2007¹. However, before the campaign, there was a different set of wonders. The seven original wonders were chosen by Antipater I, a Greek writer in the

2nd century BC, who travelled the world and attempted to create a concise list of places that others should go to visit².

Imagine the pre-industrial world of the 2nd century BC. A world without the modern capabilities of engineering and conservation. How does one dictate which out of all the intricate and hand-crafted buildings should live on thousands of years later! What makes a design a wonder and has the specification for what humankind deems a wonder changed through the lens of modern development? Antipater I chose his wonders based on what he had seen so his seven wonders could never truly be an accurate depiction of the feats of architecture globally, but after it was written, many writers reiterated his list until it became

agreed on by other academics and travellers. The modern-day wonders were voted on by millions of people globally, however, subjective personal experience undoubtedly played into the decisions of voters rather than objective reasoning; although that leads to the exploration of whether there is a quantitative way to rank buildings from 'wonders' to 'forgettable'.

Six of the seven original wonders no longer exist, destroyed by natural disasters, humans and inevitable time - wonders which now stand in the liminal space between myth and historical accuracy. One of the most interesting examples of this is the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. In terms of the seven ancient wonders, it holds a different weight in that there is not enough evidence to guarantee it ever existed. No archaeological excavation in Babylon has ever proved it was real. However, evidence cannot disprove its existence, so for now, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon is remembered through its acknowledgement as a wonder, and the related writing and artworks it has inspired. The gardens were said to be a variety of exotic plants orientated up tiered structures or hanging from the walls in the ancient desert city of Babylon³.

The original 'Hanging Gardens' led to mimics in many Ancient Mesopotamic cities. Some scholars now believe that if the Hanging Gardens of Babylon did exist- this ancient wonder may have been in Nineveh (also known as 'Old Babylon') instead⁴. Whether or not the Hanging Gardens of Babylon existed for sure, might never be known, but the image that is projected through history and time of how and what we remember about it is equally as powerful and important as the structure itself. When it comes to the wonders the ability to choose what becomes history - whether truth or myth - demonstrates how much power wonders and opinions have over the future.

The only existing ancient wonder is the pyramids of Giza, one of the most remarkable structures humans have ever created. But if they can survive to join the list of modern wonders, maybe Antipater I chose the others wrong. Or is there something that makes the

Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the lighthouse of Pharos, and the others more magnificent in its disappearance.

Despite all the technological advances that have taken place and what can now be achieved in architecture, all the new wonders are still relatively old to when they were chosen – maybe the wonders and how we see them are immune to technology. Maybe wonders are being created today and have just not reached their time to be added to a newer list of wonders. There were twenty-one finalists for the modern wonders⁵, structures we can still appreciate despite their potential for a higher standing in history as a wonder. The acknowledgement of the several schemes that did not win a place in the modern seven wonders mirrors the same notion with the contenders for the ancient world wonders. Those schemes may be ruins, or in other cases they are forgotten entirely, lost somewhere even history cannot even reach.

The Wonders List

The ancient seven wonders:

The Statue of Zeus, Olympia Greece; The Tomb of Mausolus, Halicarnassus Greece; The Colossus of Rhodes, Greece; The Temple of Diana, Ephesus Turkey; The Pharos (Lighthouse) of Alexandria, Egypt; The Pyramids of Giza, Egypt and The Hanging Gardens of Babylon, Iran (Darvill, 2021)

The modern seven wonders:

Taj Mahal, Agra India; Christ the Redeemer, Rio de Janeiro Brazil; Machu Picchu, Peru; Petra, Jordan; The Great Wall of China; Colosseum, Rome Italy and Chichén Itzá, Yucatan Mexico (New7Wonders, 2007)

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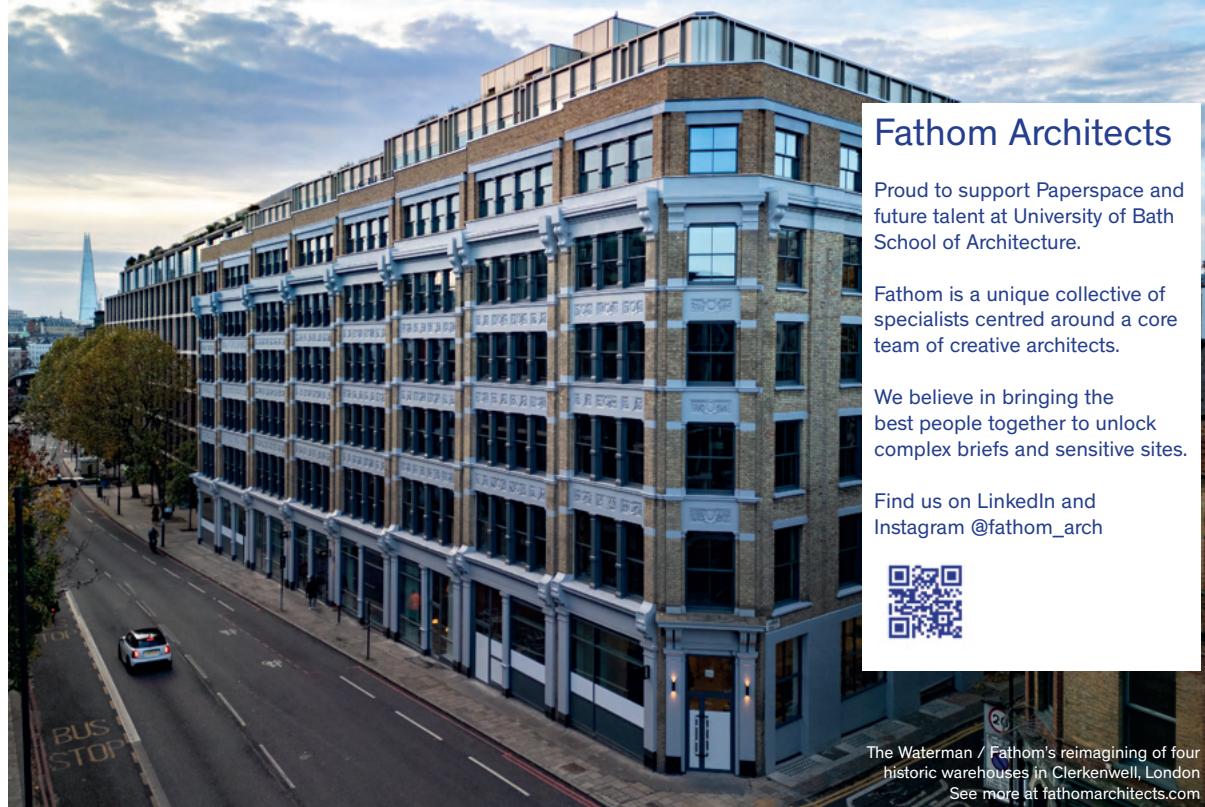


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