

2023

Rasha Lama



HEART

pages from my journal
notes from the city

HEAD

Building 21 – Spatial Design Plan
PLNT 312 – Urban Horticulture

HANDS

to build a landscape
to make pottery

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Building 21 – Spatial Design Plan
PLNT 312 – Urban Horticulture

HANDS

to build a landscape
to make pottery

date:

2014 - present

category:

personal

A Moleskin has held my hand for 9 years.

I live days not worth mentioning in ways other than illegible strings of poetry and erratic sketches of shadows. At times, images too stubborn to leave the mind find themselves in this journal. Otherwise, the Moleskin is carried along on walks for a bit of fresh air. This selection comes from the most recently completed Moleskin (marking #13 of the full collection).

This is a study of patterns, of movement, of lights, of shadows, of growth, of dissolving, of the words and images that hold me on any given day.



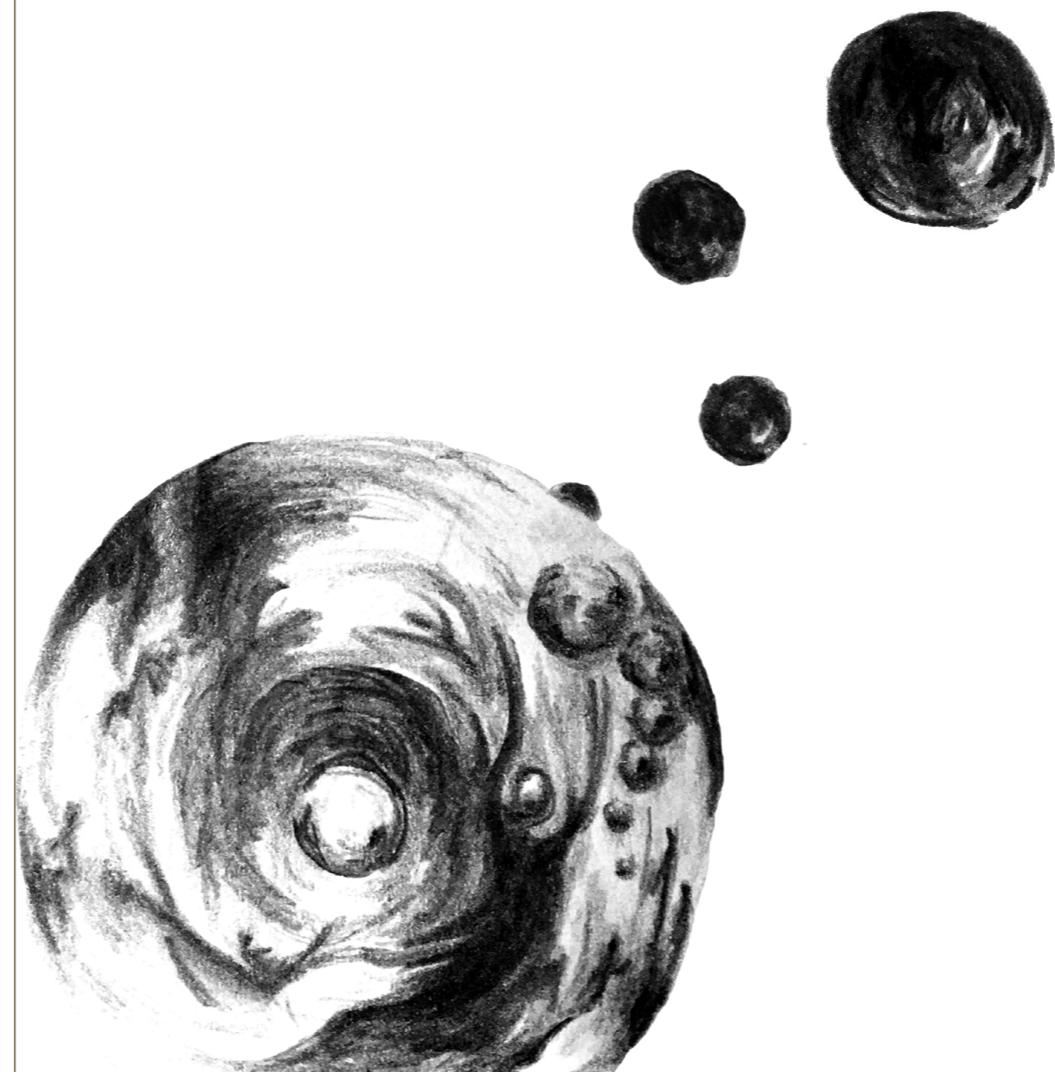
A tree's shadow
branches on the ground,
crosses a puddle collecting
the tree's reflection.

I touch the apple to see what holds
as I pierce at skin and find it grow
from seeds round heart beats flesh outpoured,

to the edges of the earth as magma turns cold.
Solid of peach or red, falls apart under
force when skin tastes earth.

This change of Light, I heard,
is not of spit seeds, spilt poison,
or fallen fruit of our kind;

but of the sound of movement that,
with one touch, unsews all around:
this curtain contains our Knowing.



medium: pencil

dimensions: 26 x 42 cm



medium: digital collage, acrylic paint, pen

dimensions: 26 x 42 cm

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date:

11/2021 - 02/2022

category:

personal

Memoirs of Montréal is a newsletter project about the life of an adopted local preparing for her departure from home.

A collection of 12 stories, each newsletter pairs a monologue with a photograph and sketch, originally published on Substack:

“My final lease in Montréal expires in 2022. What has been 8 homes of changing addresses, 5 years of volatile seasons, and 2 languages of confusing acceptance, is to become a single memory of my time spent here. I do not want my memories to expire, so here I am to write of the city I have hated and loved enough to now call home.”

*excerpt from
story #2: the renaissance man*



"This story is about the man we had first made an acquaintance with in last year's dreary winter of 2020.

[...]

This man is wound to a clock promising his passing between 9:30-10:30 each weekday morning. At bell toll, the man rolls down Avenue du Parc past our frozen feet on the pavement. The bicycle holds its master dressed in a cloak of wisdom and hair of pure snow, in a manner so strange to the ice underlying his tires.

[...]

In short: the man has become an acquaintance of which we, nor him, know anything of each other, except that each holds the other's apparition as a sign to remain with hope."



*excerpt from
story #8: feels like -36°C*



"There is a light that reminds you of the warm days of spring:

It is the light of a warming home preparing its hospitality for the visiting of the night's stories.

It is that warm home listening to the neighbours passing time in their kitchens, as the people are heard passing by on their pavements, as the lovers hear the roads being passed by people. Precisely, it is the moment when you hear the city's presence in the silence of your home that you begin to remember how much you really belong."



story #2: (text) 5 dec 2021; (photo) 30 oct 2022

story #8: (text) 16 jan 2022; (photo) 20 sep 2020

*excerpt from
story #9: 4 corners of an intersection*



"This is the intersection of Rachel x Laval. At each corner persists a patron story to the vernacular corner stores' themselves.

[...]

2 weeks ago, amidst the peril of -25°C weather, we sat on the Southeast side of the abandoned white storefront that generously collects the morning sun's warmth.

[...]

Winter bikers, crosscountry runners, European skiers, mama's strollers, and of the sort continue on their routines. No matter the season, no matter the week, the story remains the same on this corner of the street."

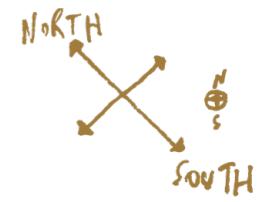
*excerpt from
story #4: the postcard home*



"If not at a café nor waking slowly at home, the people of this city (on such a day of such a season) will be found in the market. I imagine it to be humming with the weekly meetings and the season's greetings. What we found was sophisticated gluttony on our visit some mere mornings ago.

Still, Marché Atwater is where I shall bring my sister currently looking out her train window, as she thinks of how different Christmas will be, this being the first spent without family.

As her twin, I can only admit fraternal thoughts."



story #9: (text) 2 feb 2022; (photo) 29 oct 2022

story #4: (text) 19 dec 2019; (photo) 21 jan 2022

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date:

09/2019 - 03/2020

category:

professional

Building 21 is an academic interdisciplinary hub fostering different approaches to pedagogy at McGill University.

The Spatial Design Plan concerns space utilization with the community's expansion. How do we maximize our space's potential to gather more people while letting the space express ourselves? It is to craft our story through our space following (3) design goals:

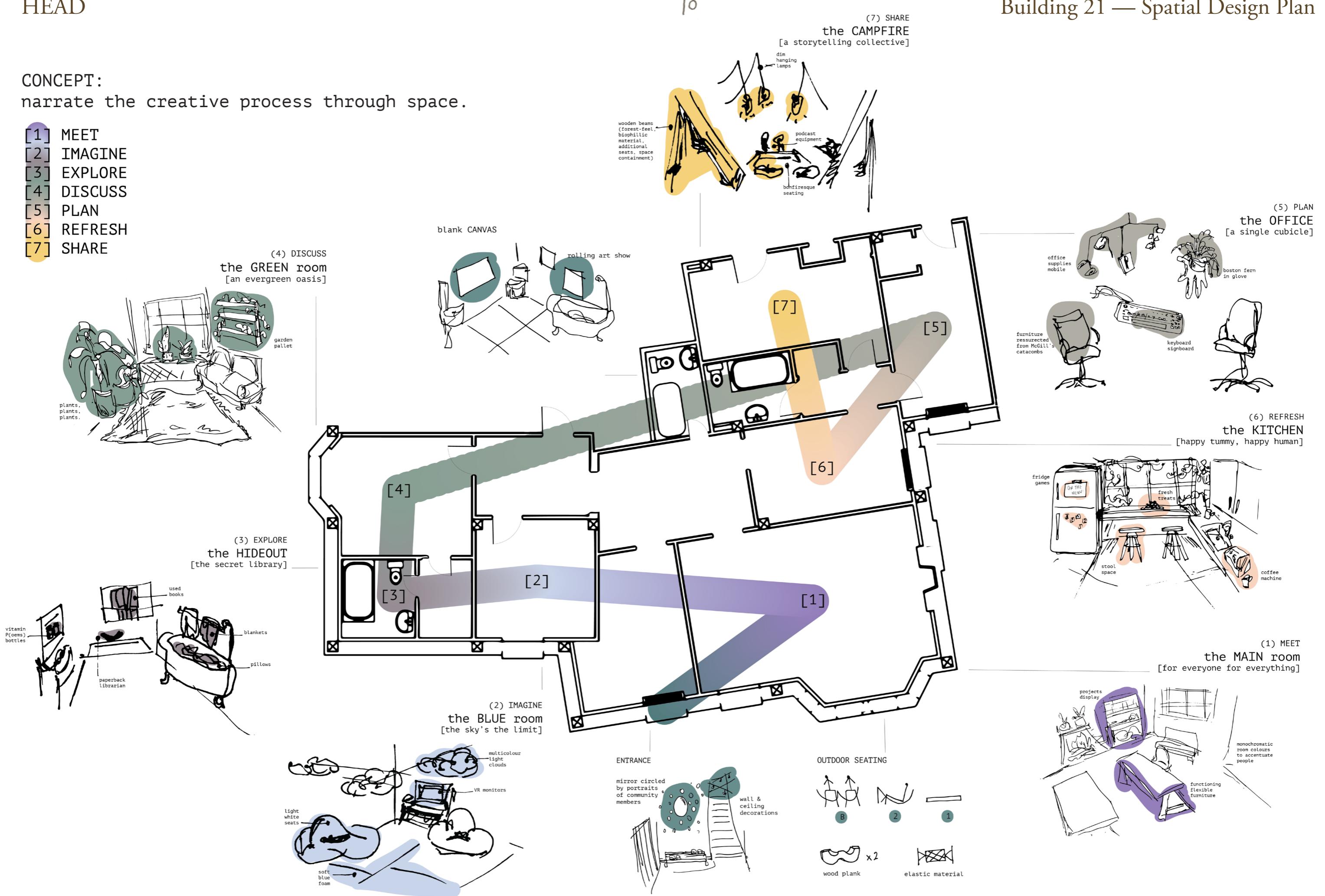
- 1_fill every room with something,
- 2_let our building speak for us,
- 3_do everything with creativity and community in mind.

HEAD

Building 21 — Spatial Design Plan

CONCEPT:
narrate the creative process through space.

- [1] MEET
 - [2] IMAGINE
 - [3] EXPLORE
 - [4] DISCUSS
 - [5] PLAN
 - [6] REFRESH
 - [7] SHARE



HEAD

11

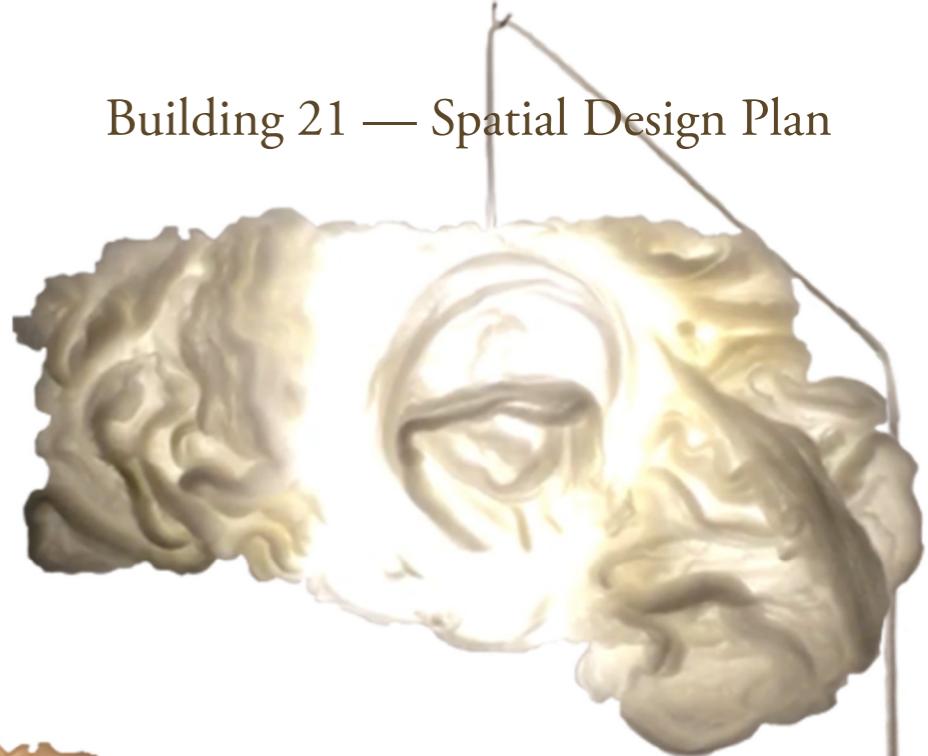
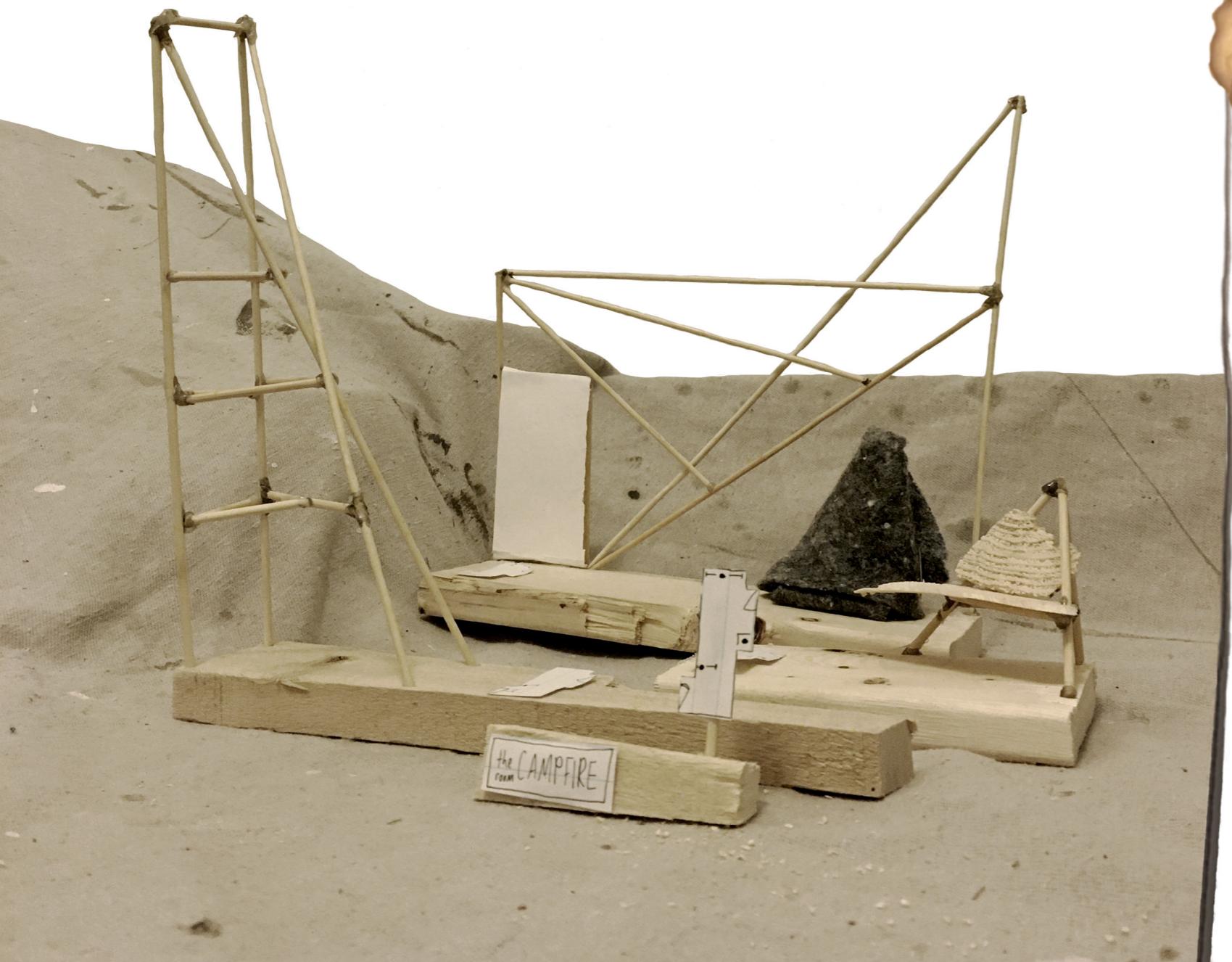
Building 21 — Spatial Design Plan

(7) SHARE
the CAMPFIRE
[a storytelling collective]

[TITLE]
Integrated Seating and Shelves Model

[MATERIAL]
scrap wood, scrap felt, paper

[DIMENSION]
24 x 38 x 25 cm



(2) IMAGINE
the BLUE room
[the sky's the limit]

[TITLE]
Handmade Cloud Lights

[MATERIAL]
cotton, paper lanterns, LED lights

[DIMENSION]
90 x 62 x 72 cm

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date:

01/2019 - 04/2019

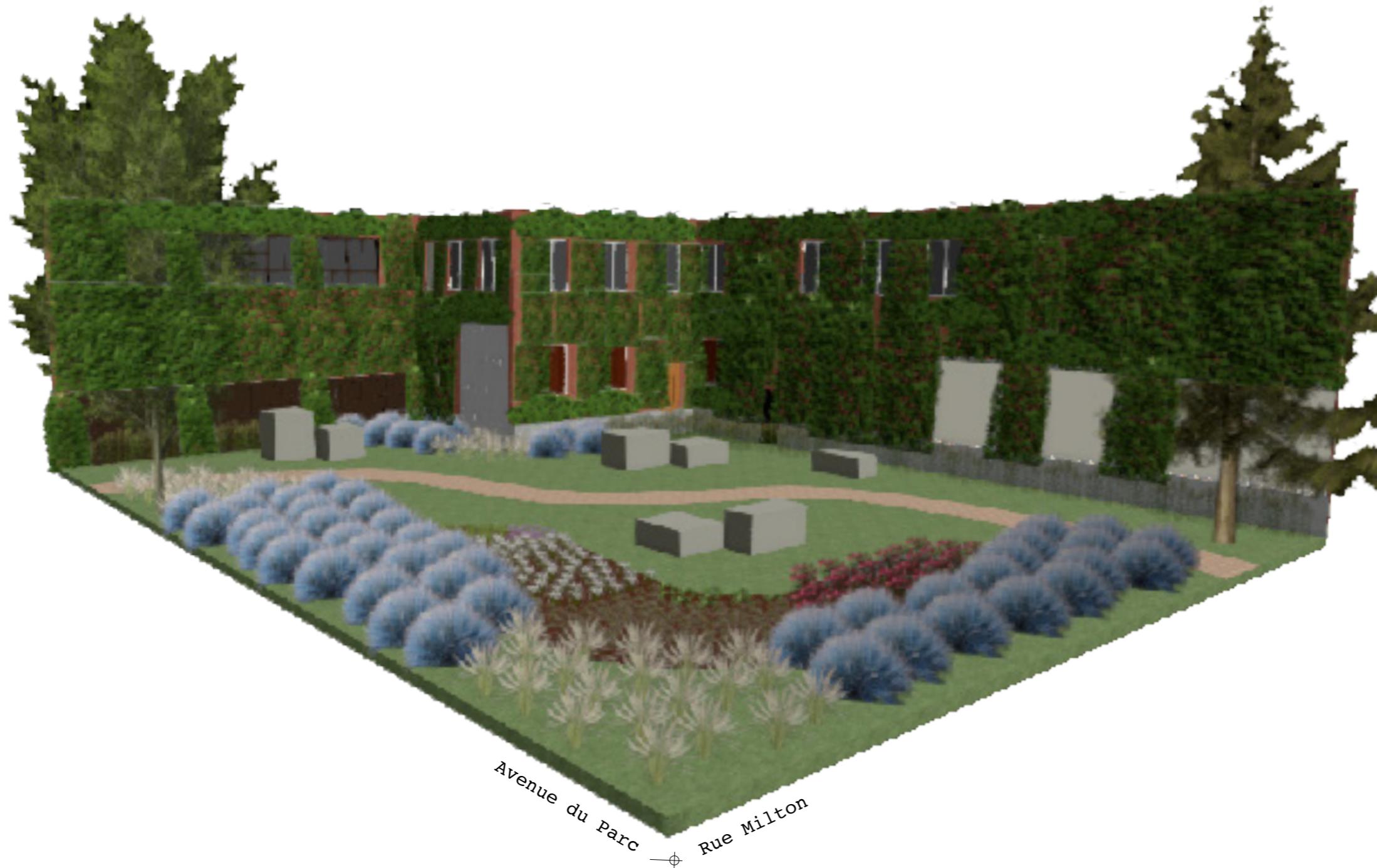
category:

academic

PLNT 312 Urban Horticulture is a plant science course taught at McGill University's agricultural campus, MacDonald Campus.

The Milton x Parc project concerns a vacant lot on the intersection of a neighbourhood known from the 1970s housing rights struggle that formed Canada's largest non-profit housing cooperative community land trust: Milton-Parc Citizens' Committee.

Honouring the local features and historic desires, the Milton x Parc project aims to revive native species, relieve socio-economic tensions, and reignite communal connections through a shared public green space.

**Milton x Parc**

[MONTRÉAL, QC]

[AREA]
811.60m²[DESCRIPTION]
discarded parking lot[LOCATION]
intersection of Rue Milton x Avenue du Parc[ZONING]
commercial intersection in residential area[DEMOGRAPHIC]
students, families, elderly, unhoused residents[PARTI]
"a healing meadow in the city"

[EXISTING SITE: West perspective]



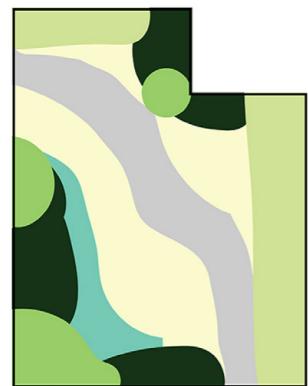
[EXISTING SITE: detailed perspective]



[PROPOSED SITE: detailed perspective]



[PROPOSED SITE: North perspective]



[GRASS & SEDGE SELECTION]
lighter green = earlier bloom

Creeping red fescue

- shade tolerant
- cool-season
- low fertile
- rhizomes
- 3-8cm

White clover

- shade intolerant
- cool-season
- wear-tolerant
- nitrogen fixing
- stolons
- 5-8cm

Snowy woodrush

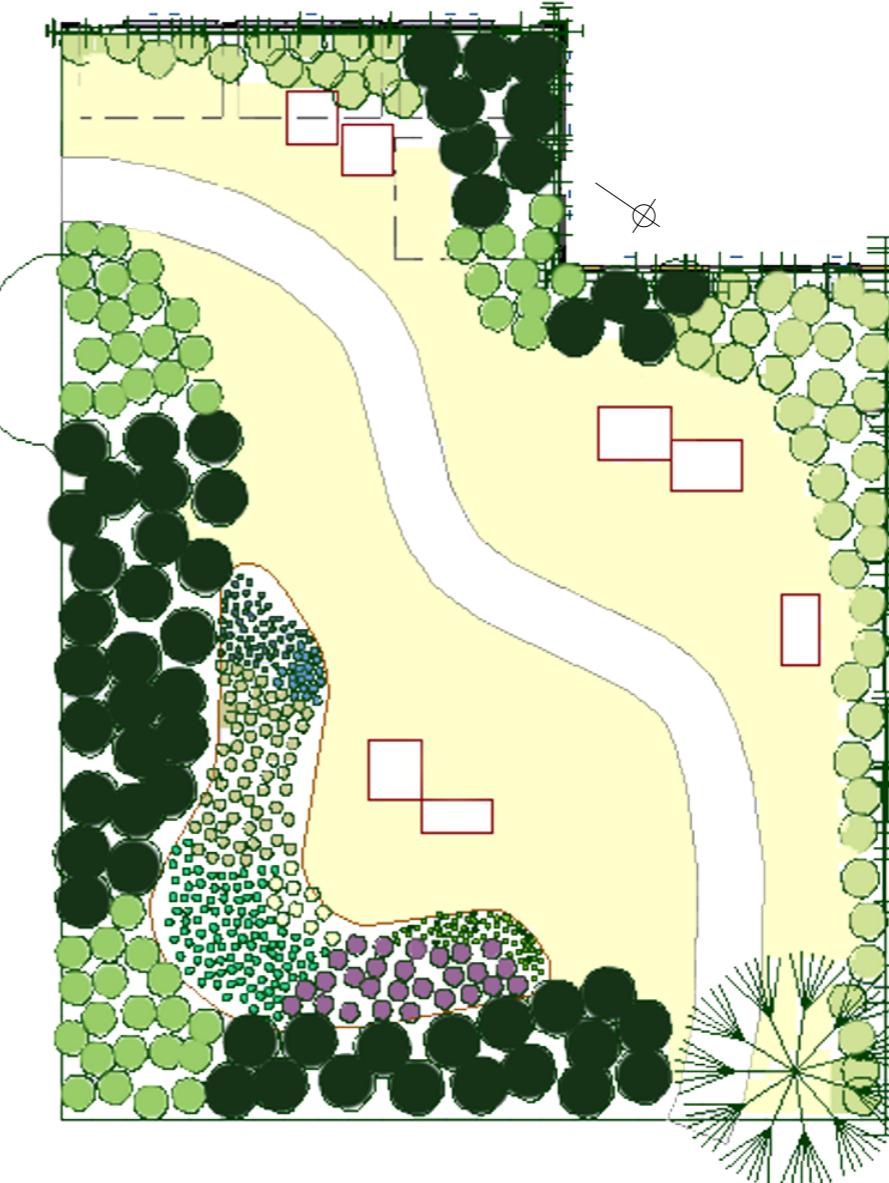
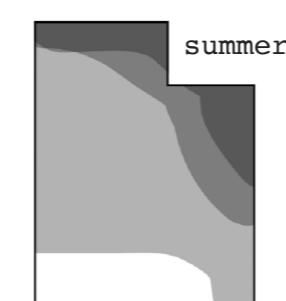
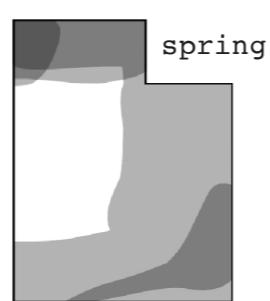
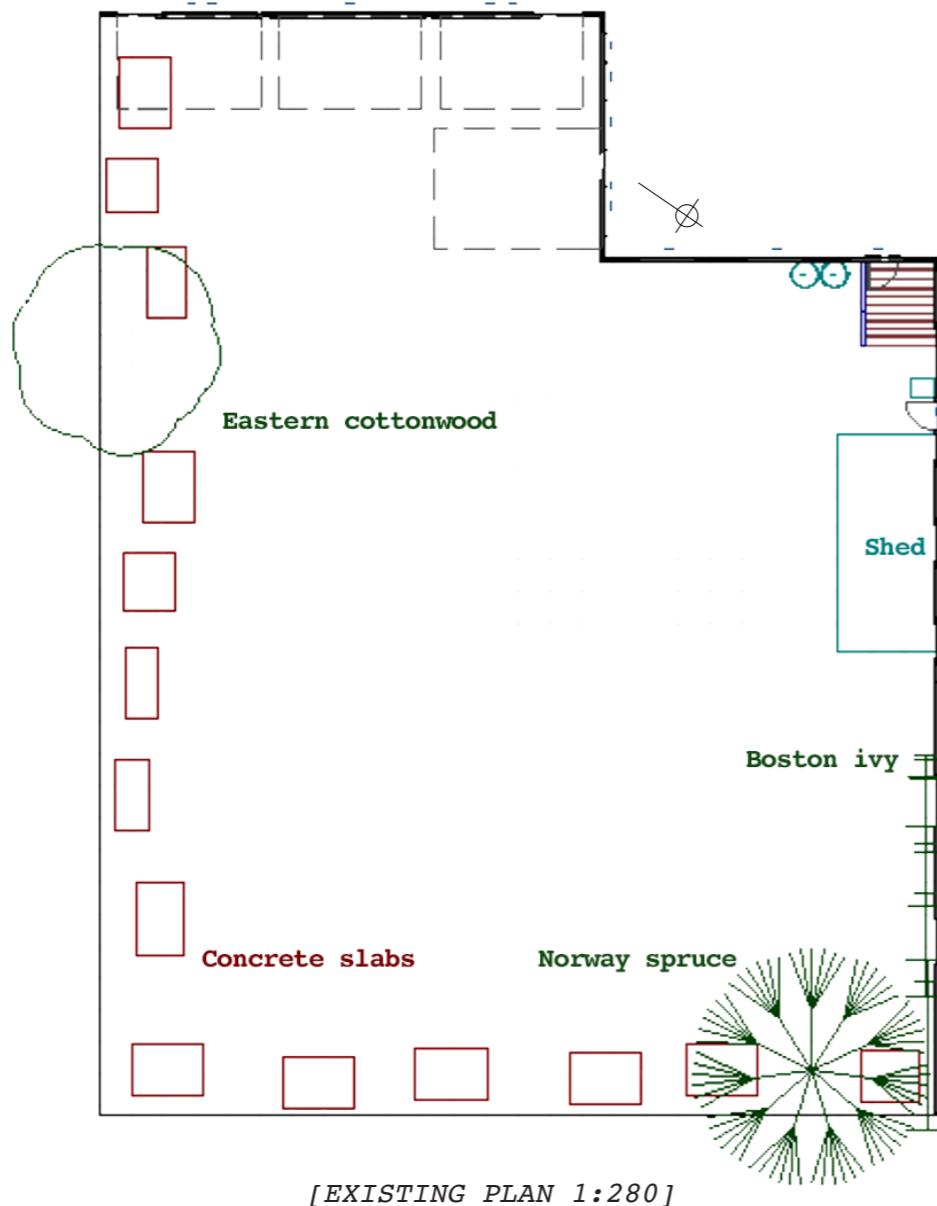
- part-shade/shade
- MAY-JUN
- bunch
- 30-40cm

Foxtail barley

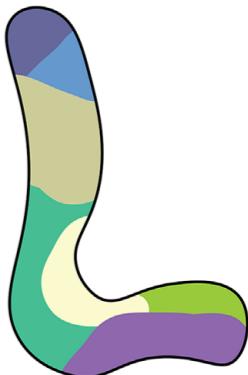
- sun
- JUN-JUL
- bunch
- 30-60cm

Blue fescue

- sun/part-shade
- MAY-JUN
- bunch
- 20-30cm



[SHADE STUDY DETERMINING PLANTING PATTERN]



[FLOWER BED SELECTION]
*green shades = spring bloom
blue shades = summer bloom*

Wild ginger

- shade
- APR-MAY-JUN
- 15-30cm

Canada anemone

- sun/part-shade
- MAY-JUN
- 20-40cm

Stout blue-eyed grass

- sun/part-shade
- MAY-JUN
- 10-15cm

Common yarrow

- sun
- JUN-JUL-AUG
- 60-75cm

New England aster

- sun
- SEP-OCT
- 80-100cm

Wild basil

- sun/shade
- JUL-AUG
- 20-60cm

Purple coneflower

- sun
- JUL-AUG-SEP
- 60-100cm

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date:

10/2022

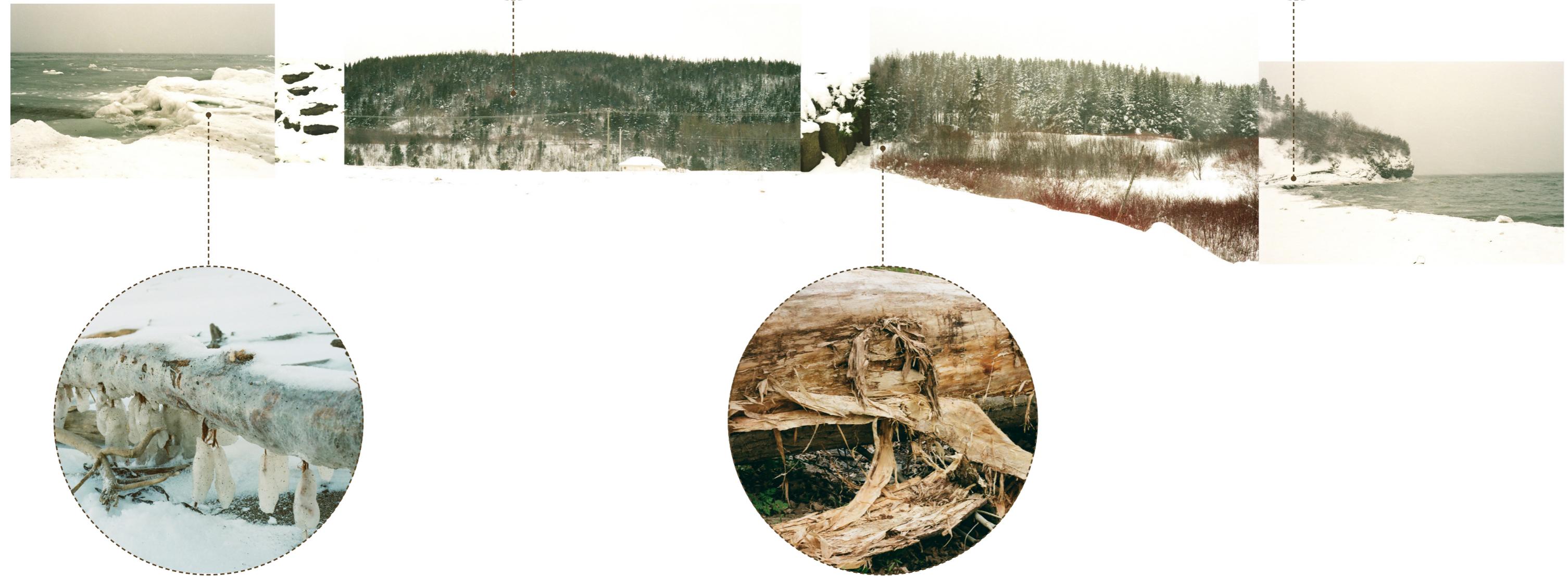
category:

personal

An experiment in context, a body is built
through the textures of landscapes.

Stripped of context, the landscape adopts a new narrative, a narrative equally dependent on the foreign environment as on the witnesser responding to the phenomena. Natively, they occupy the same region, but the manipulation of representation reveals another form of unification: a sensory relation, not a national allegiance.

In a similar arrangement, I find myself occupying ground between my native place and my expatriate space, unsure where my true identity begins and ends.



locations: Montréal, Gaspé, Toronto, Saguenay

35mm film: Portra 400, Kodak Gold

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date:

06/2021 + 12/2021

category:

personal

An exploration in presence, these bowls speak more to the feeling of my hands than the volumetric hold of their bodies.

This selection of 12 ceramics shows the natural differences between pieces made by the same hands in the same studio with the same materials. Variations in form, an artist's intention concedes to the reality of her material. The result is an impulsive emotion translated into the material's own language.

A back-and-forth of intention and constraint, each piece represents a compromise between my hands and material itself.



materials: stoneware, porcelain, glaze

dimensions: varies between 100 - 400ml

