

# Teaching Portfolio

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# Thomas Provost

## On Teaching

This abbreviated portfolio shows design work completed by students throughout NAAB-accredited design studios as well as visual communication, history, and theory courses that incorporate drawing, making, and analysis as learning methods. Over the last 4 years, I have taught at every level, including foundations courses in visual communications, introductory digital design studios incorporating tutorials and techniques, comprehensive design development studio (for dual interior+architecture majors), fourth year research-focused urban design studios, as well as three graduate-level studios, including a year-long integrated design capstone studio sequence.

Throughout, I incorporate prompts, themes, methods, and assignments that shift the focus from architecture as object-oriented to social-agent. A most compelling instance is *ARCH 415: Atlas/Operative*, a fourth-year urban design studio that made space for student-centered and student-led design-research projects on social, economic, or ecological justice topics through the framework of a Green New Deal. One of my student's project was curated by the Landscape Architecture Foundation for their online Superstudio exhibit — a small-scale sustainable textile industry project for the Kettering neighborhood in Detroit.

Student success is the most significant marker of my own success as an instructor. Student success relies on the recognition of divergent experiences, abilities, interests, and futures. As studio is a place for freedom and individual expression, I believe learning outcomes can be achieved under a variety of circumstances while responding to differing abilities. With close personal knowledge of the complex phenomena of learning disabilities, ASD, special needs, and their requisite individualized attention, fundamentally I teach with compassion and empathy — placing individual identity ahead of architectural ideology in learning spaces.

As a first-generation university graduate, I am very aware of precarious economic and social circumstances. I am equally proud of my roots in the diverse, working-class city that Windsor, Ontario is. I grew up celebrating and participating in multiculturalism. Exercising curiosity and respect toward issues of race, gender, class, sexuality, et al, has enlightened my global understanding and ultimately encouraged a greater self-understanding. I carry forward this fundamental form of respect in my teaching and make space for diverse, open, and welcoming classrooms and studios.

I have twice had the pleasure to be a guest critic for the University of Michigan's ArcPrep program, an outreach model for which our discipline is in dire need of in order to support a more representative demographic. As a thesis advisor with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, I am similarly mentoring underrepresented individuals, offering an alternative path to licensure primarily for new Canadians. As a mentor with the Architecture is Free Foundation, I am part of a network working to make our field more transparent and accessible. I am committed to working with all students to ensure no circumstance deters educational opportunity, in addition to working with administration to overcome any challenges to student retention.

I also believe design-instruction to be portfolio driven. Given my skill-set and experience with graphic design, editing, layout, typography, etcetera, I encourage and develop these skills in my students at every opportunity. I view the studio sequence as continuous inquiry and the portfolio as a record of this critical development and growth. The ability to communicate and critique is empowering.



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*ARCH 301, Structural Integration, Modelling, Scaling, Process, Design-Build, Hands-on, Floating Buildings, Experiential Phenomena, Erie Canal, Regatta*

## 02 Atlas/Operative

*ARCH 415, Urban Design, Green New Deal, Superstudio, Justice, Cultural Landscapes, Energy, Design Research, Mapping, Matter, Humanism*

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*ARCH 225, Introduction to Digital Techniques, Rhino, Illustrator, InDesign, Vector Graphics, Color Theory, Form-finding, 3D-printing, Abstraction, Phasing*

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# Tectonics of Buoyancy

SUNY B/a+p

Tectonics of Buoyancy, a third-year integrated studio, focused on structural clarity through experimental boat making, studies in buoyant form, and the ultimate design of a floating building on the Erie Canal. Design-build and hands-on processes introduce structural design development using buoyancy and water as a unique atmosphere and “site.” The studio began with a month-long boat build and regatta on Lake Erie that introduced basic principals of buoyancy, structural logic, and material applications. Throughout, wood models of increasing scale were used instrumentally to teach complex design issues.

In the next phase, students paired up to ultimately design a floating multi-purpose building on the Erie Canal that evolved out of earlier floating tectonic experimentation. The unorthodox emphasis on

buoyancy and water requires a novel and experimental structural design solution that combines joy with challenge while introducing integrated design topics. The building project approached space planning, systems, and design excellence on a student-centered, group-by-group basis.

Architectural strategies remain — there must be enclosure, consideration of program, and logic to the form — but unlike a traditional integrated structures studio, the “foundation” is floating and thus more integral to the overall performance. With an emphasis on model making and section perspectives, students produced complex and diverse floating buildings.

Instructors: Chris Romano (coordinator), Elaine Chow, Nick Bruscia, Thomas Provost, Jin-Young Song.



OWTB 1/2-scale model, Martin Vargas.

Stitch 1/4 scale model, Austin Wiles.



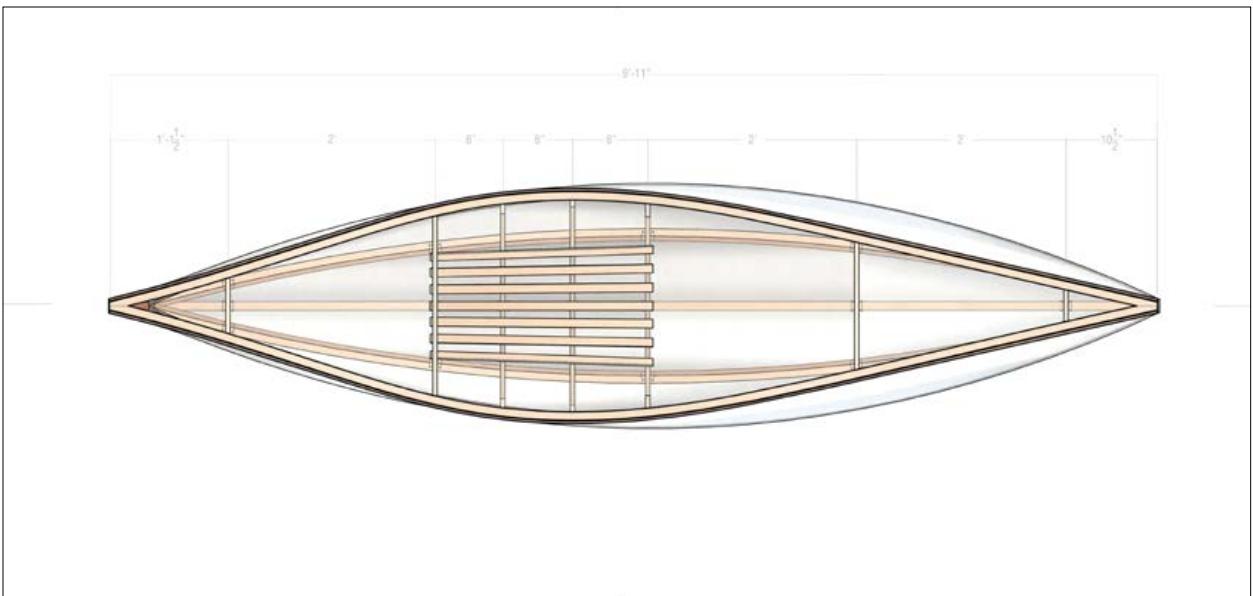
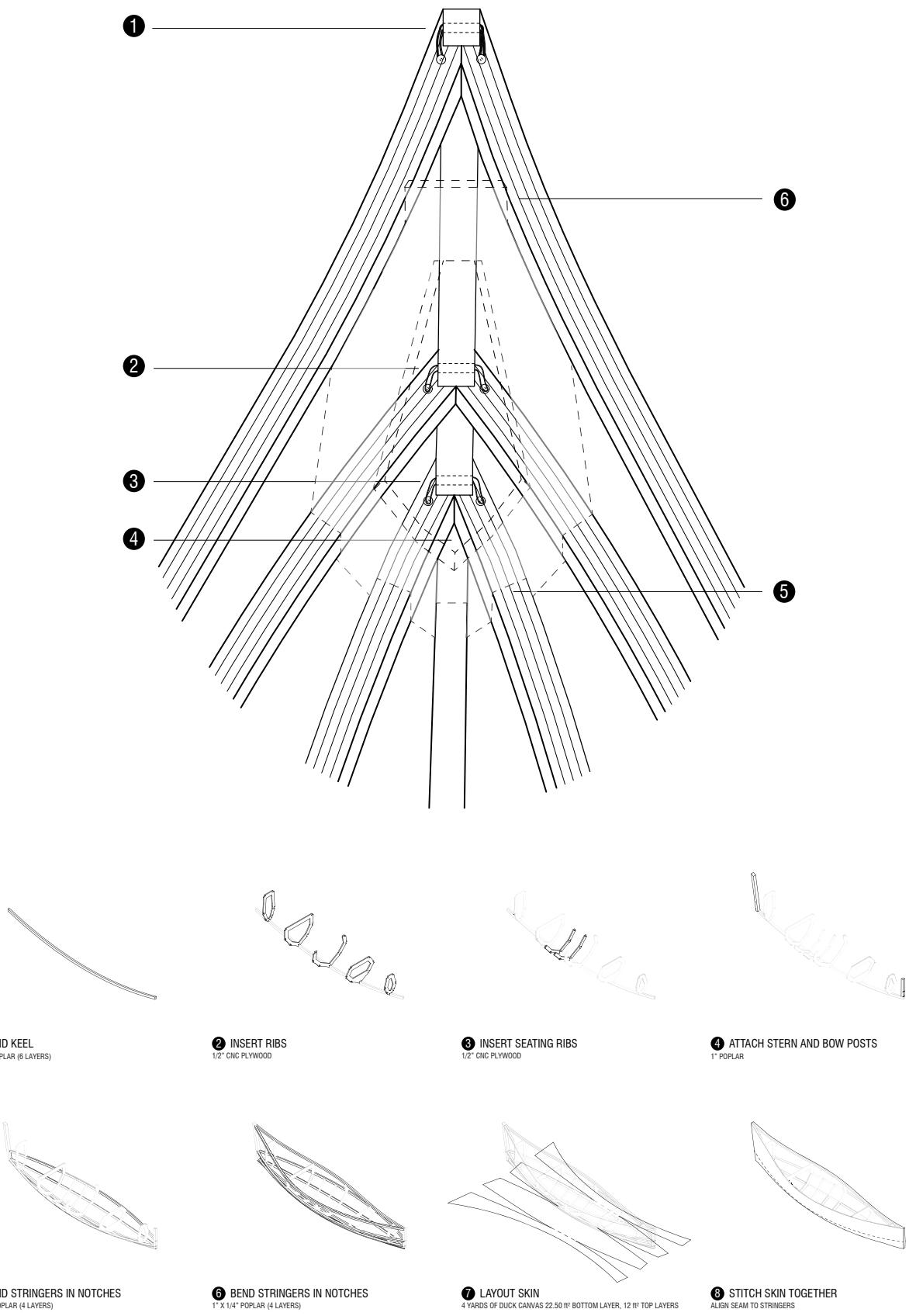
Martin Vargas  
Xuwen Zhang  
Austin Wiles

Rene Franqui  
Sakeena Nazir  
Althea Seno

David Zhu  
Marissa Hayden  
Erin Hens

Alex Sansolo  
Cris Hopkins  
Carter Laramee

Lydia Ho  
Ben Starr  
Joshua Barzideh



**Tectonics of Buoyancy Log**

**September 14, 2018**  
H85/L70 Humid  
Notes: We finished working on the shop, to sand, drill, and router the jig in studio. Marissa and Sakeena Lake in Deleware Park, the boat had this can be fixed with a caulk for

**September 15, 2018**  
H86/L67 Partly Overcast  
Notes: we began the boat building process. This took more time, effort and planning all came together in the end quite nicely.



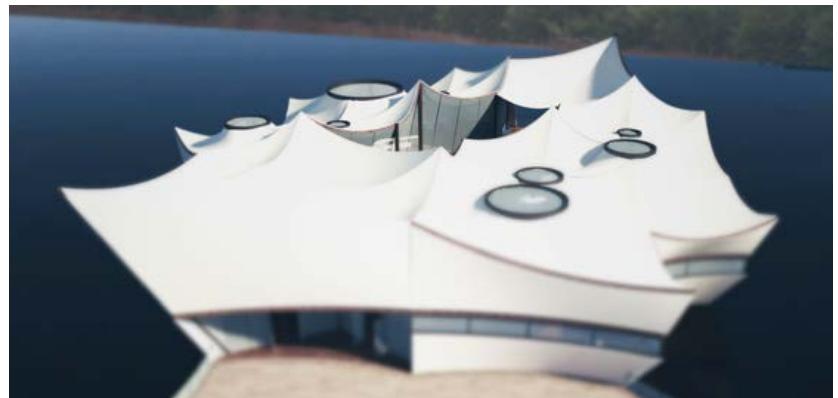
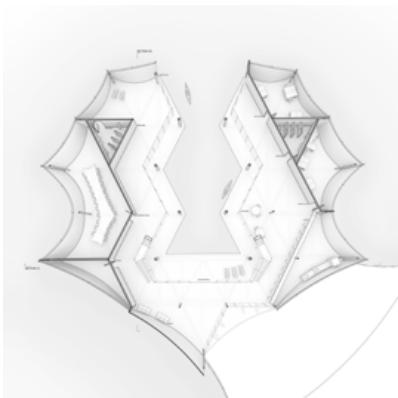
Log by Austin Wiles and Josh Barzideh.

1/8-scale model by Team Stitch.

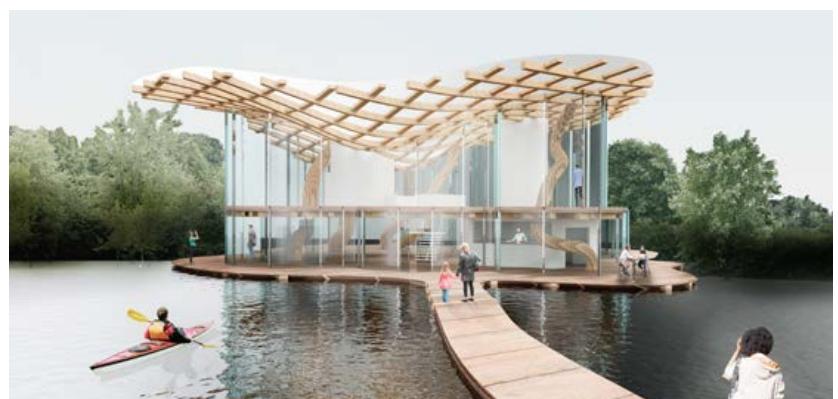


Led by Sakeena Nazir, students documented their build and race and created a 7-minute feature film — Stitch.

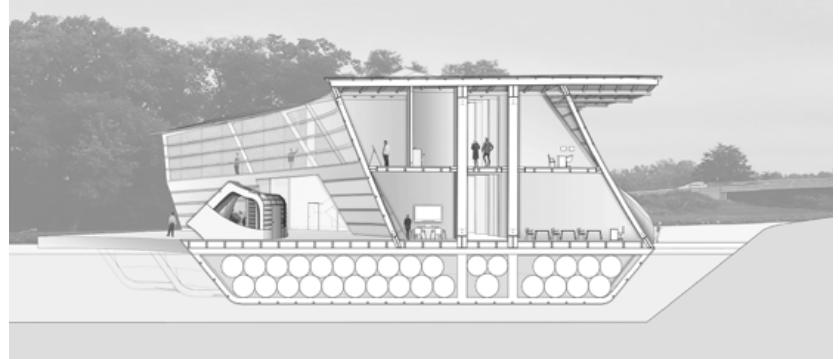
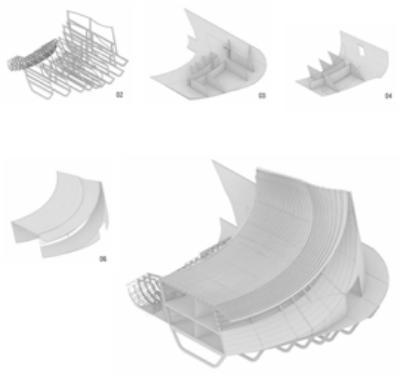
Sakeena Nazir & Althea Seno.



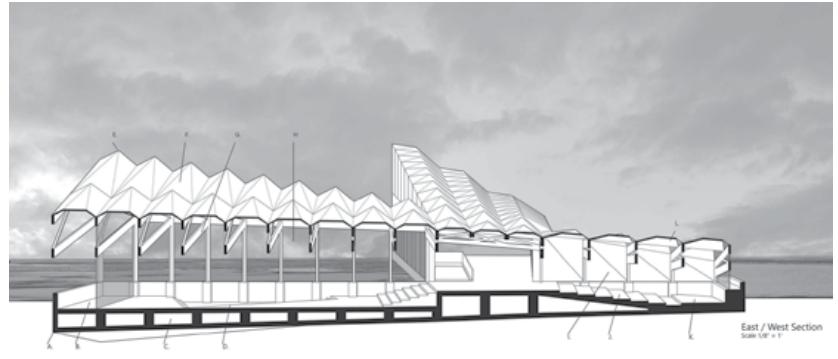
Lydia Ho & Alex Sansolo.



Marissa Hayden & Ben Starr.



Martin Vargas & Austin Wiles.



# Atlas / Operative

## Louisiana Tech University

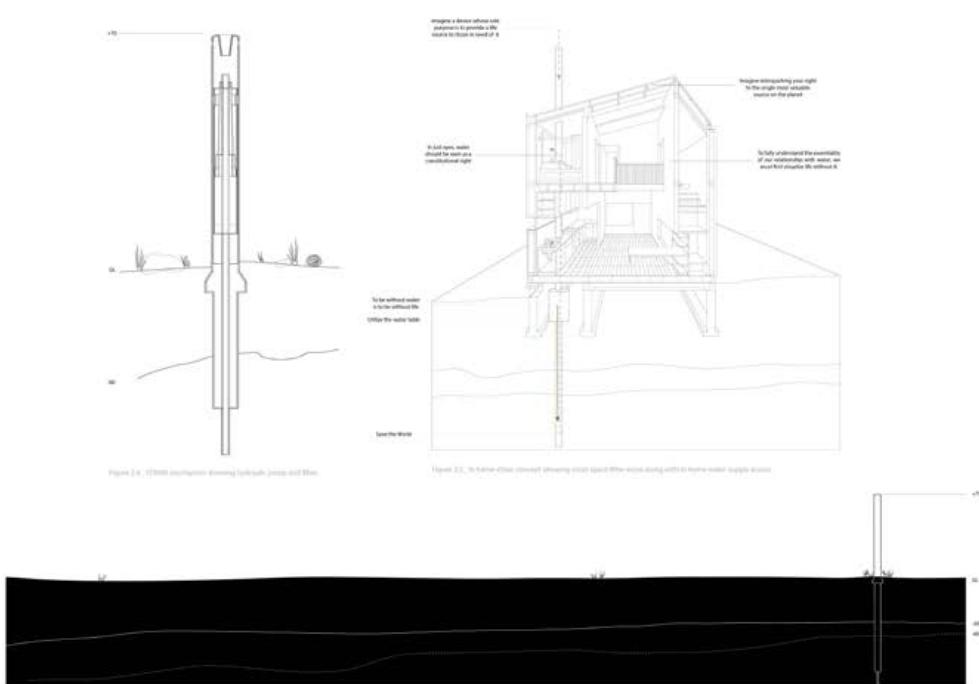
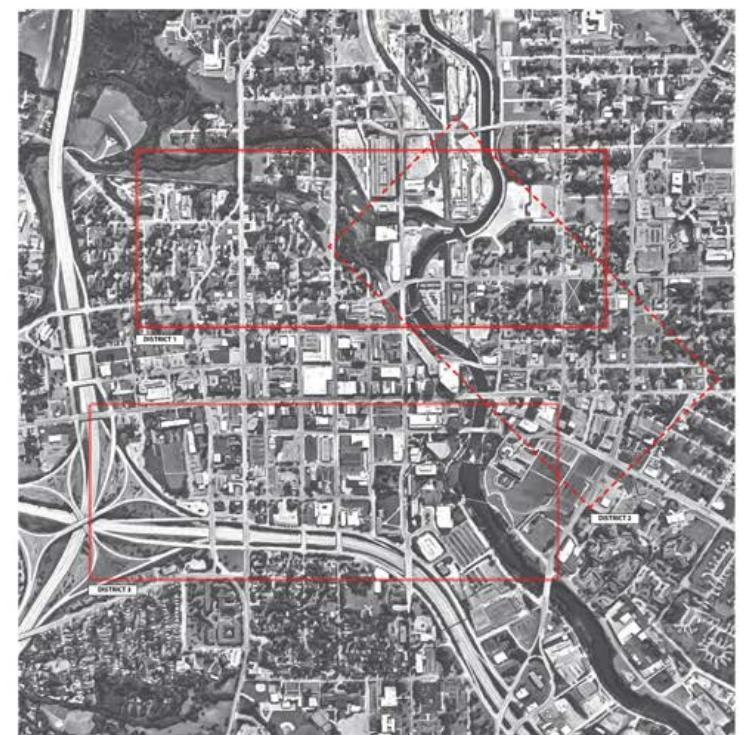
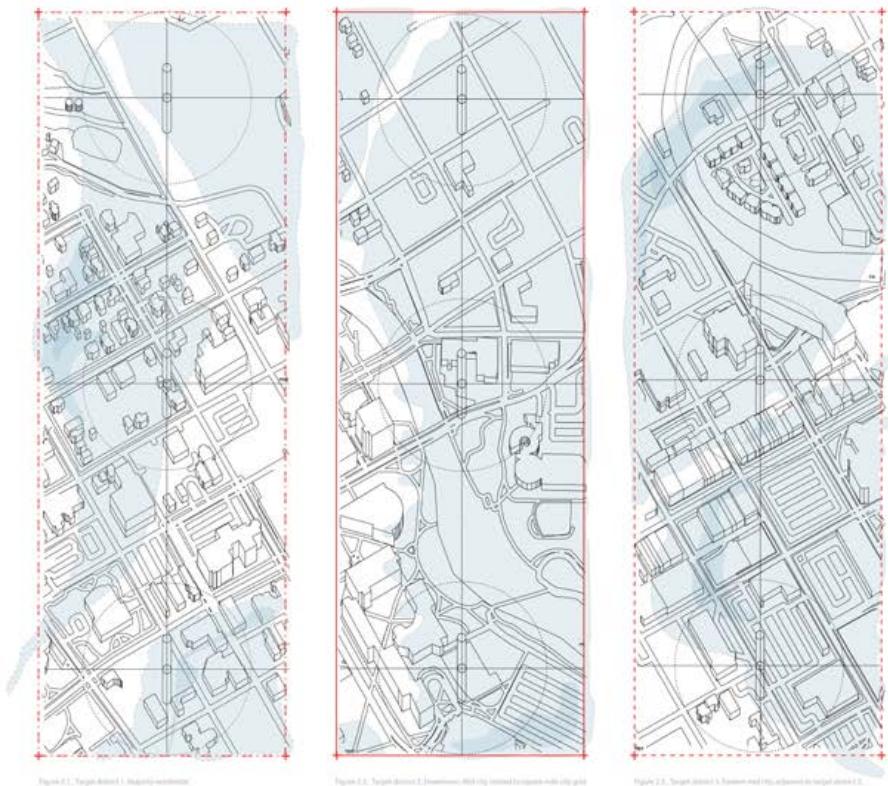
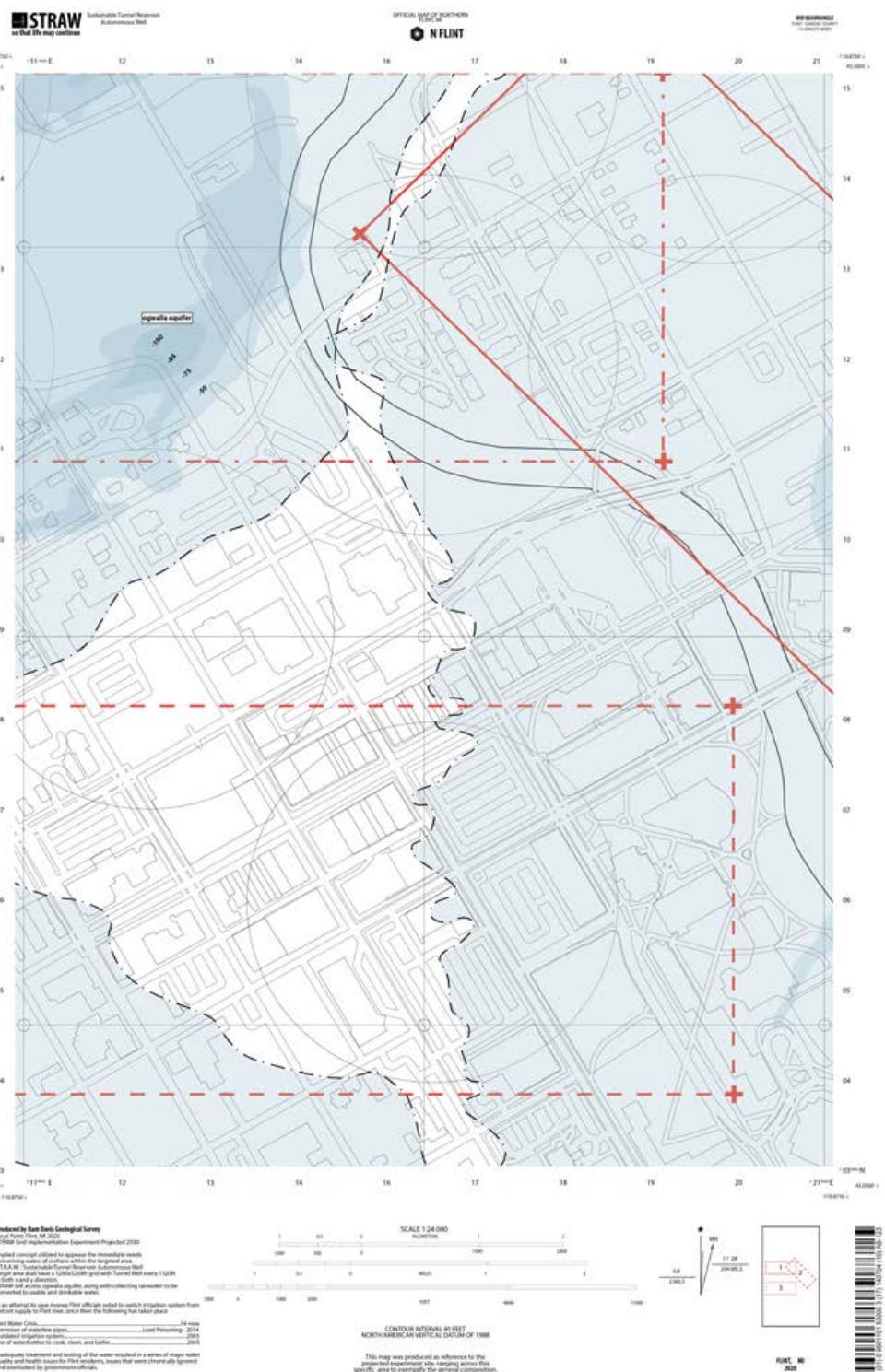
It is undisputable that human activity is the dominant cause of observed climate change. We are attached to an abundance of stuff, with a non-stop pursuit of 'more' in every imaginable way.... we pursue excess as a foot-in-mouth badge-of-honor! Dangerous levels of excess cause many documented upsets to our planet's health.

If our behavior is left unmitigated, what will this do to our frontline communities? How can we reconcile our technological capabilities with the need to 'zero' greenhouse gasses? Can we envision a future without compromise to systemic injustice? What does it take to support the health of our collective environments?

In Fall 2020, ARCH 415 participated in the Landscape Architecture Foundation's Superstudio initiative in which allied design studios simultaneously work to translate the goals of the Green New Deal – decarbonization, justice, and jobs – into actionable design projects across the fields of urban design, landscape urbanism, urban ecology, social practice, architecture, public policy, etc. We will draw out the entangled relationship between things, places, and systems. We will consider the deep-time implications of matter, energy, industrial & manufactured goods, etc. We will learn from places like Centralia, the Great Lakes mega-region, or the forests of Oregon. We will interrogate existing systems and systemic injustices, be it social, racial, agricultural, economic, immaterial, or omnipresent. In every case, we will foreground the concept of justice in our spatial propositions.

*tags: climate change, urbanism, landscape, ecology, human activity, anthropocene, architecture, regions, pockets of density, nature, behavior, mobility, transport, scale, atlas, narrative, storytelling, home, homeless, jobs, labor, profit, entropy, indemnity, reciprocity, spatial justice, equity, community, mapping, volatility, collectives, communication, public life.*

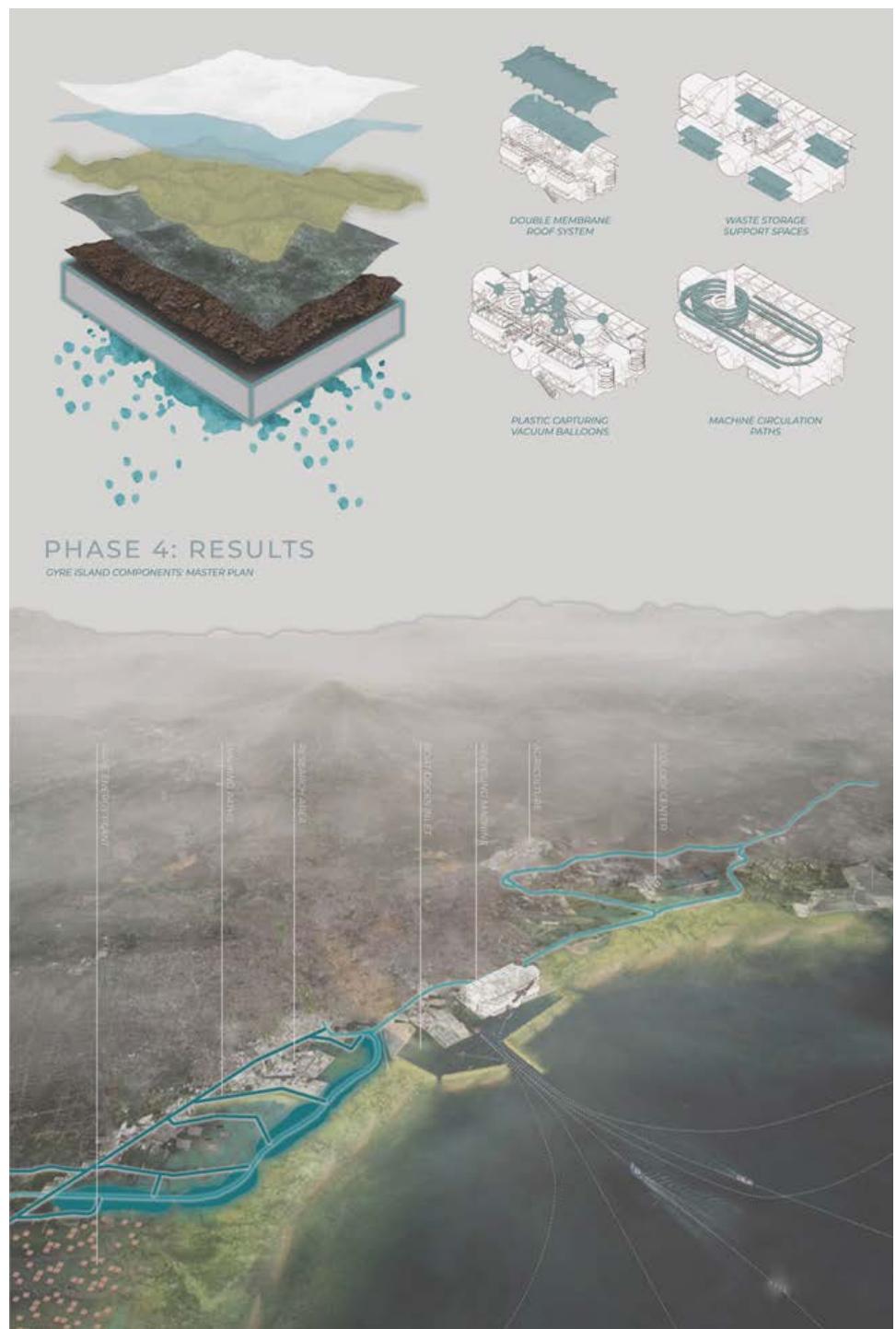
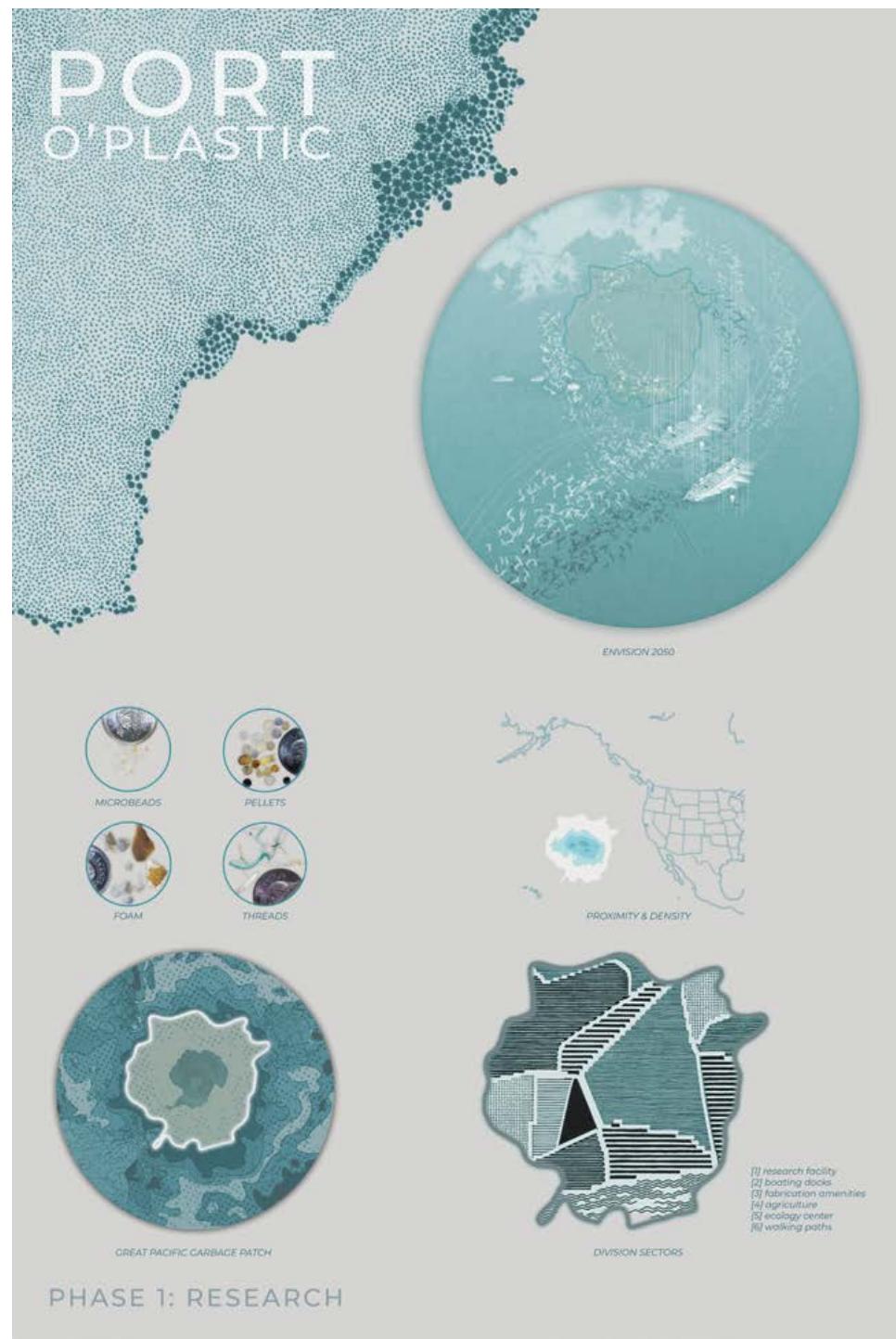




Justice for Flint, MI

# S.T.R.A.W / Sustainable Tunnel Reservoir Autonomous Well

## Bam Davis

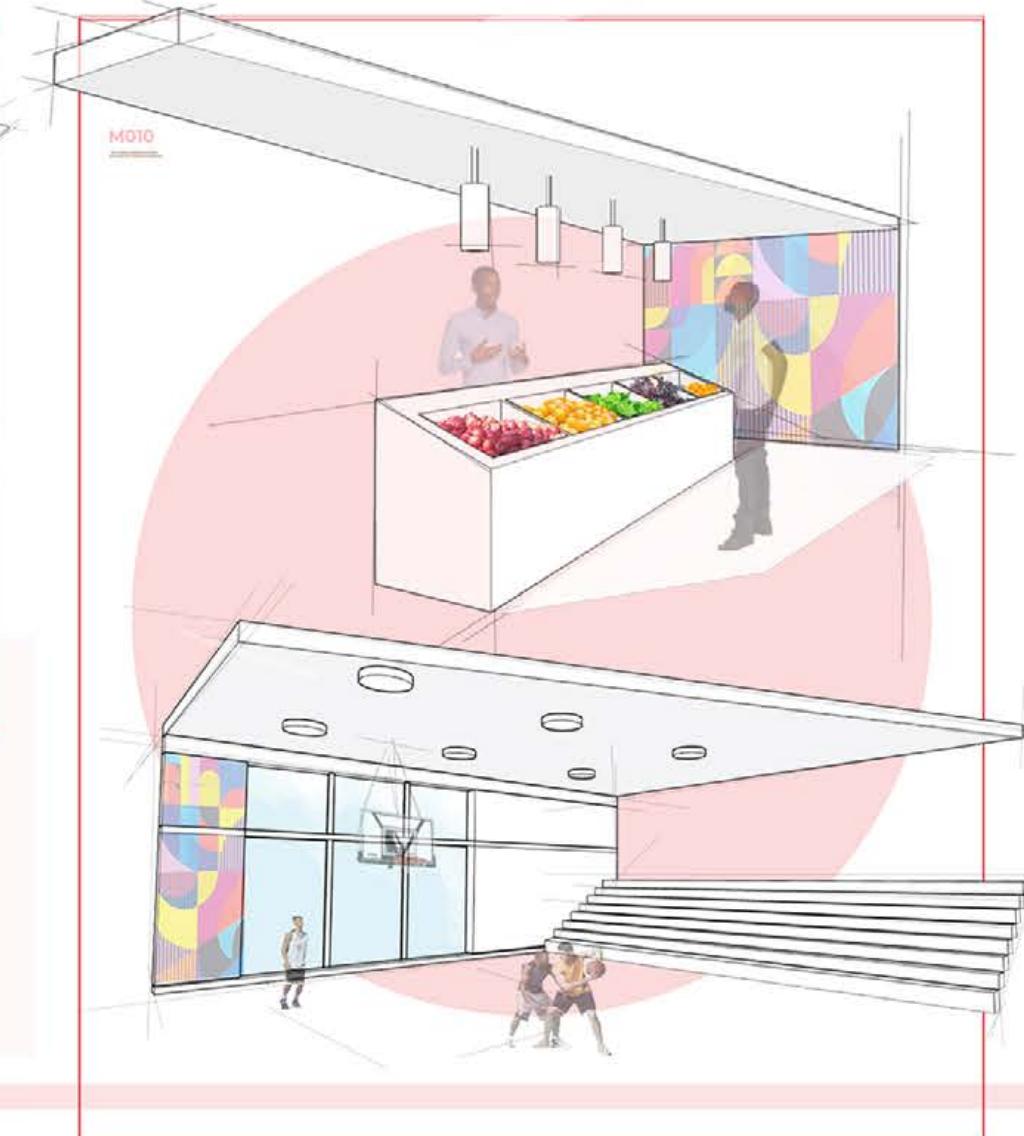
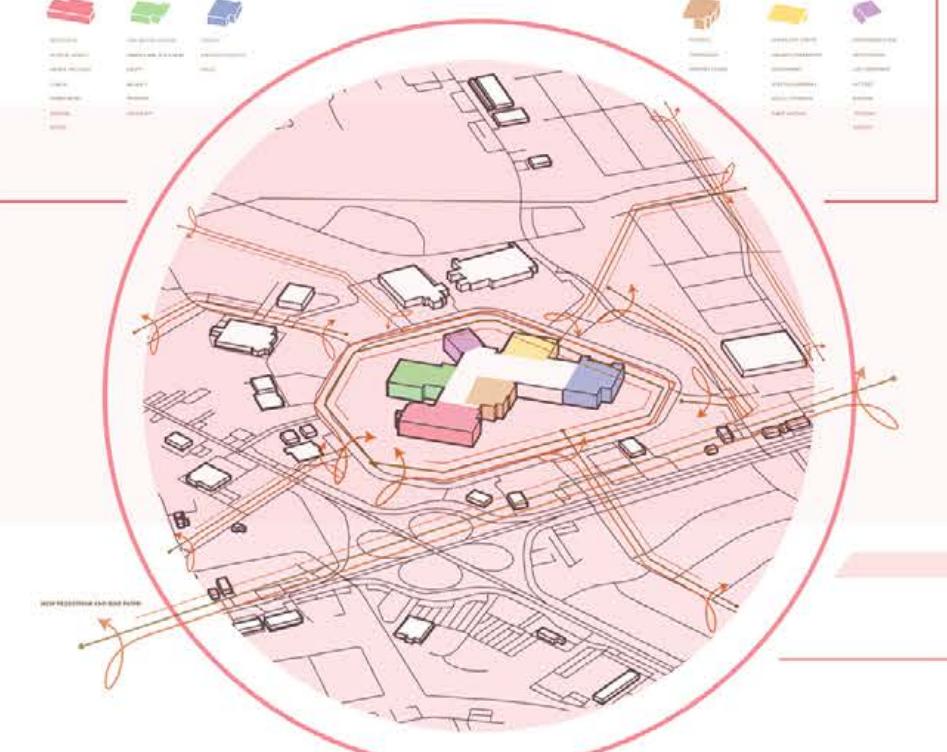
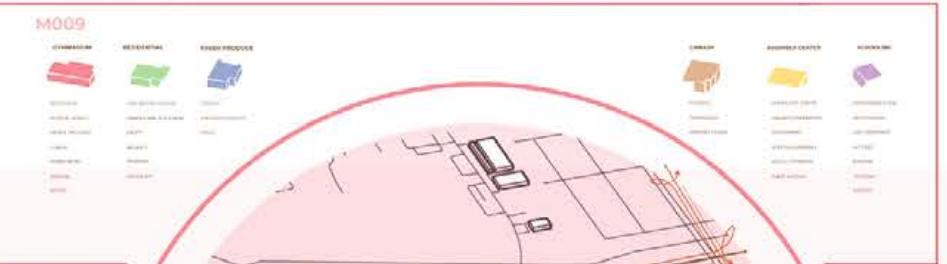
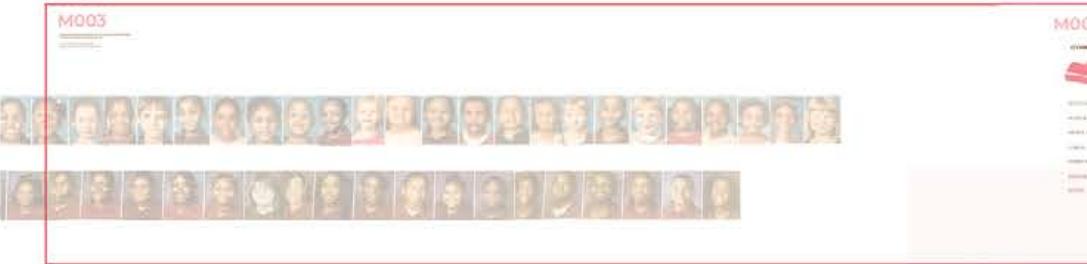
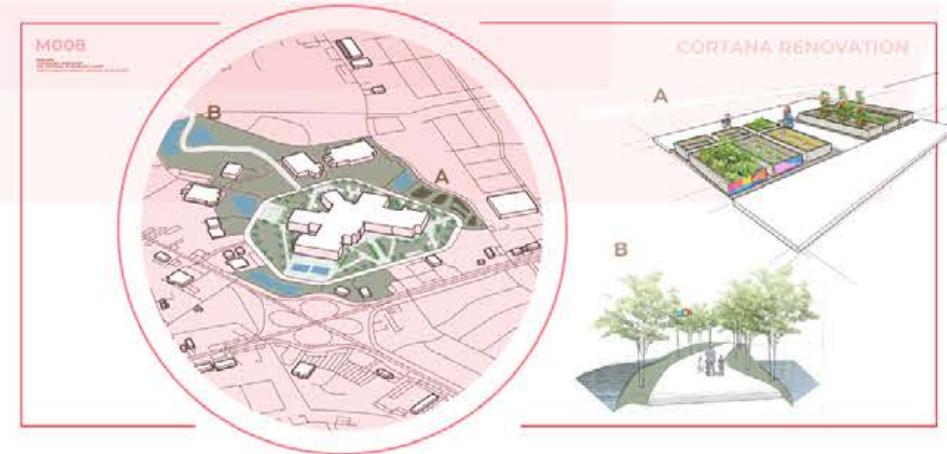


## For Our Oceans

Port O'Plastic on The Great Pacific Gyre  
Katelyn Reynolds

# MONEY MOVES

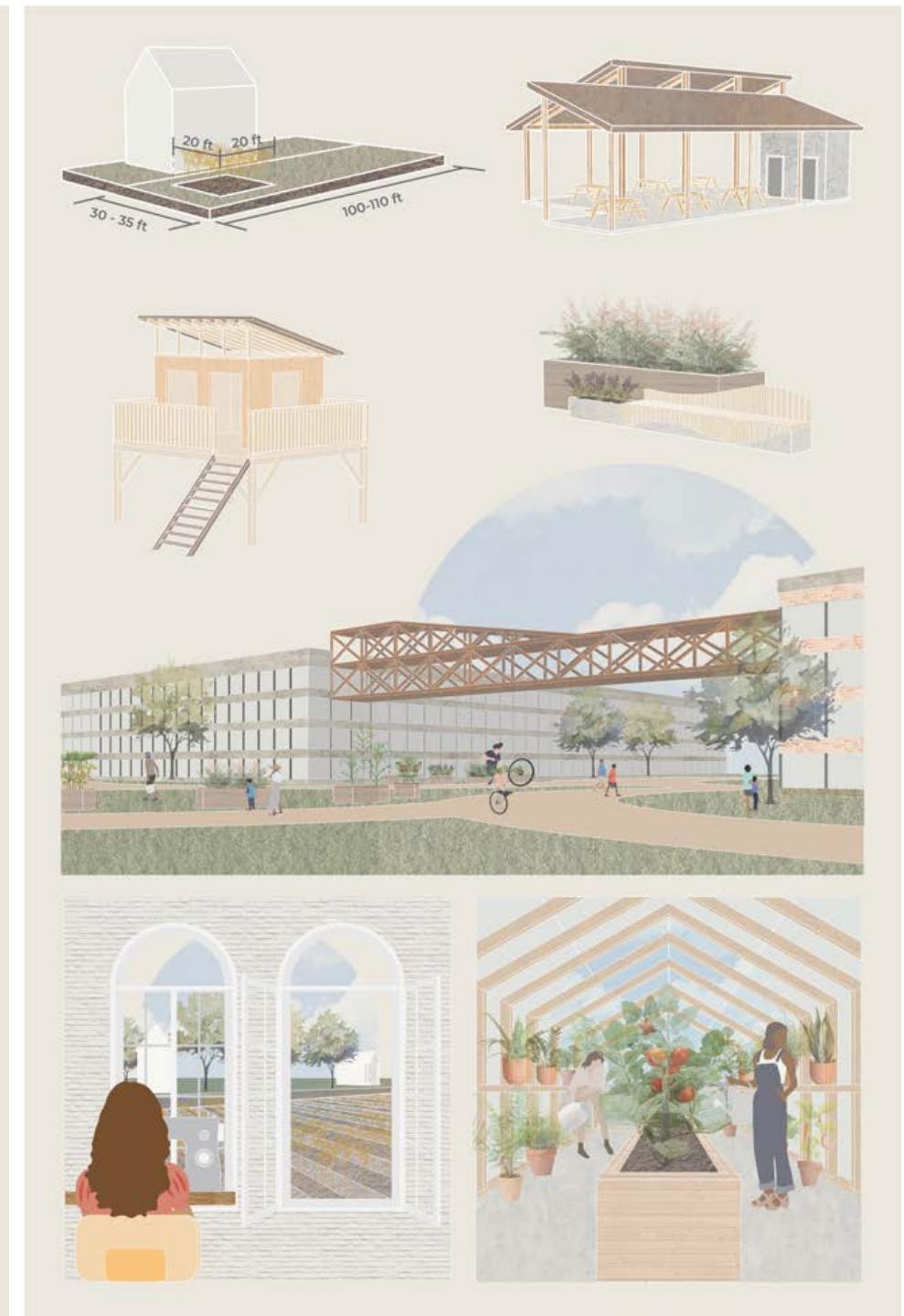
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA



1 2 3

**Justice for North Baton Rouge, LA**

Money Moves — Cortana Mall Rehabilitation  
Danai Metoyer



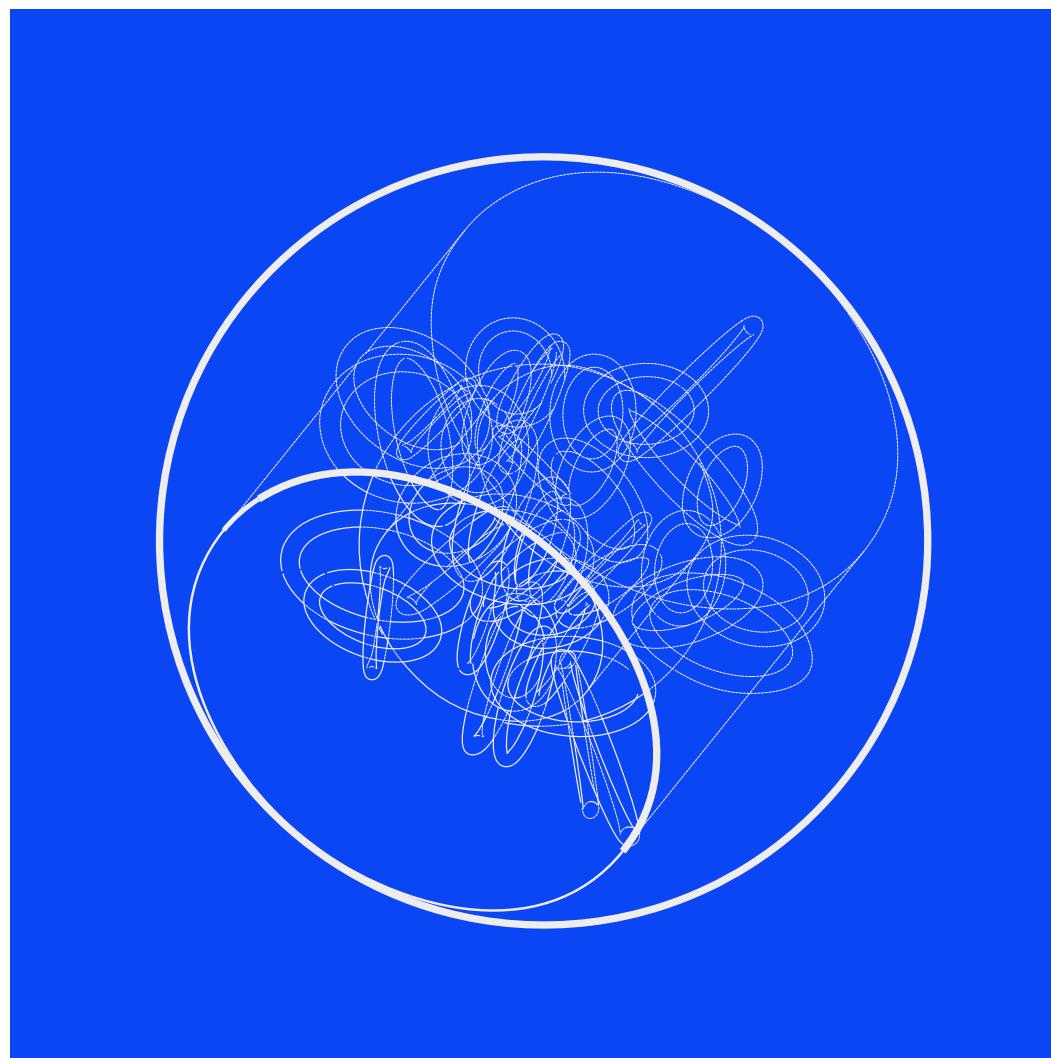
## Decarbonization, Justice & Jobs

Field to Garment  
Erin Eubanks

# OBJ — Graphics Tutorials

## Louisiana Tech University

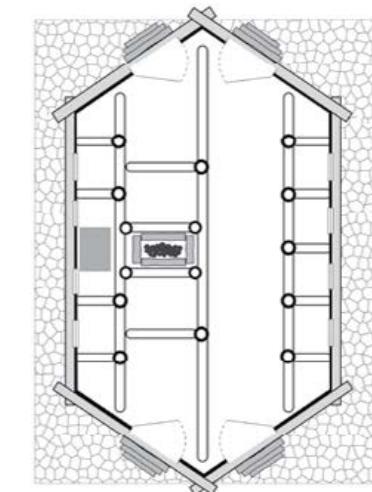
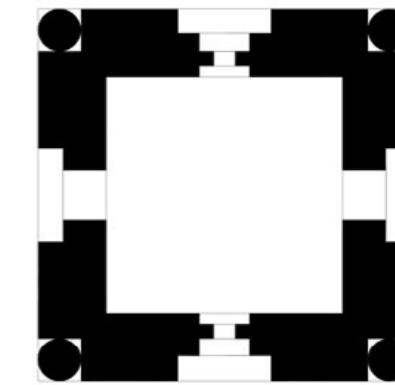
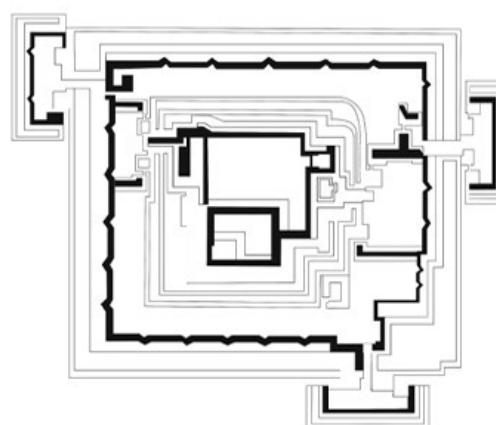
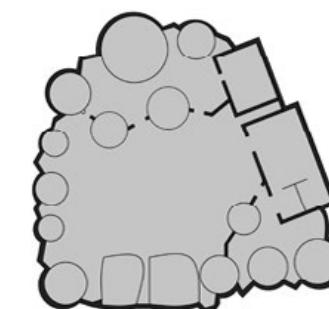
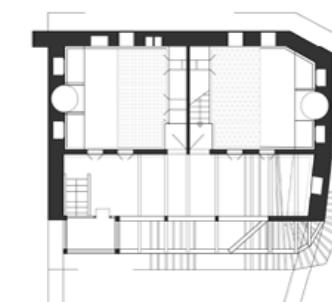
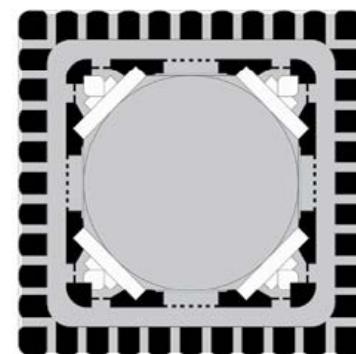
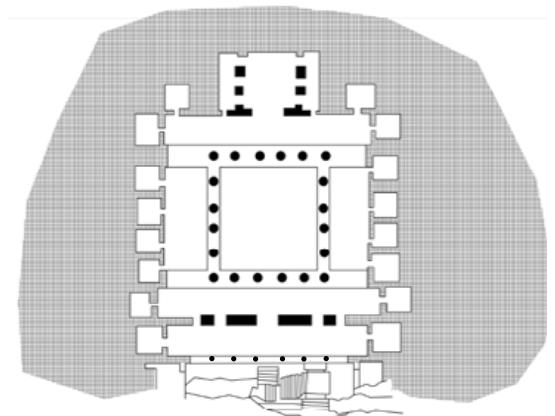
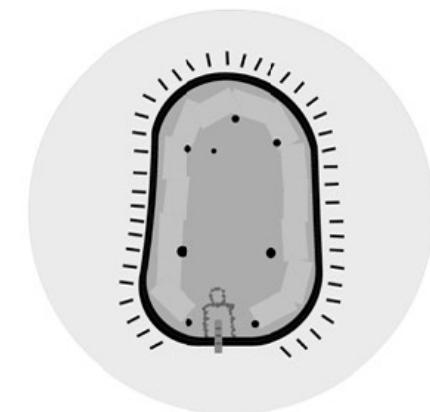
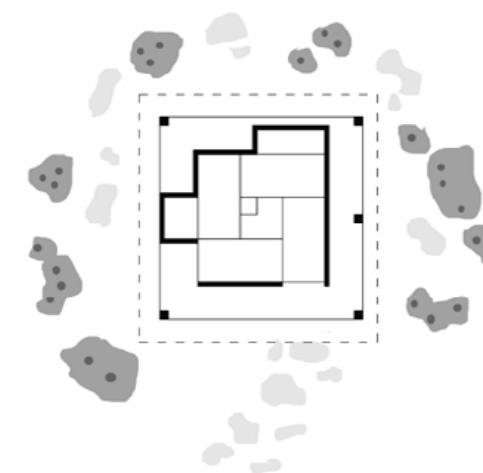
For the 2020-2021 year, I led a new tutorial-based module system for the foundational digital techniques sequence that teaches abstraction, form-making, and rapid prototyping. Using Rhino 3D to model and translate into 2D vector drawings, students used Adobe Illustrator to then convey sensibilities toward lineweight, color, and layout. This layout shows the work of Sarah Morgan.



# On Dwelling

Louisiana Tech University

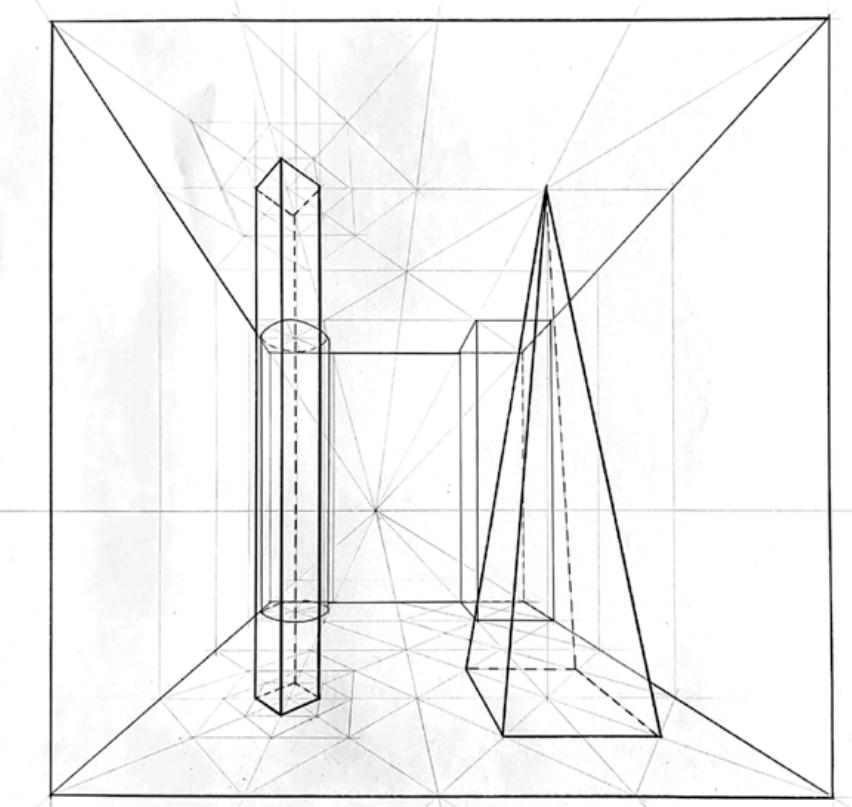
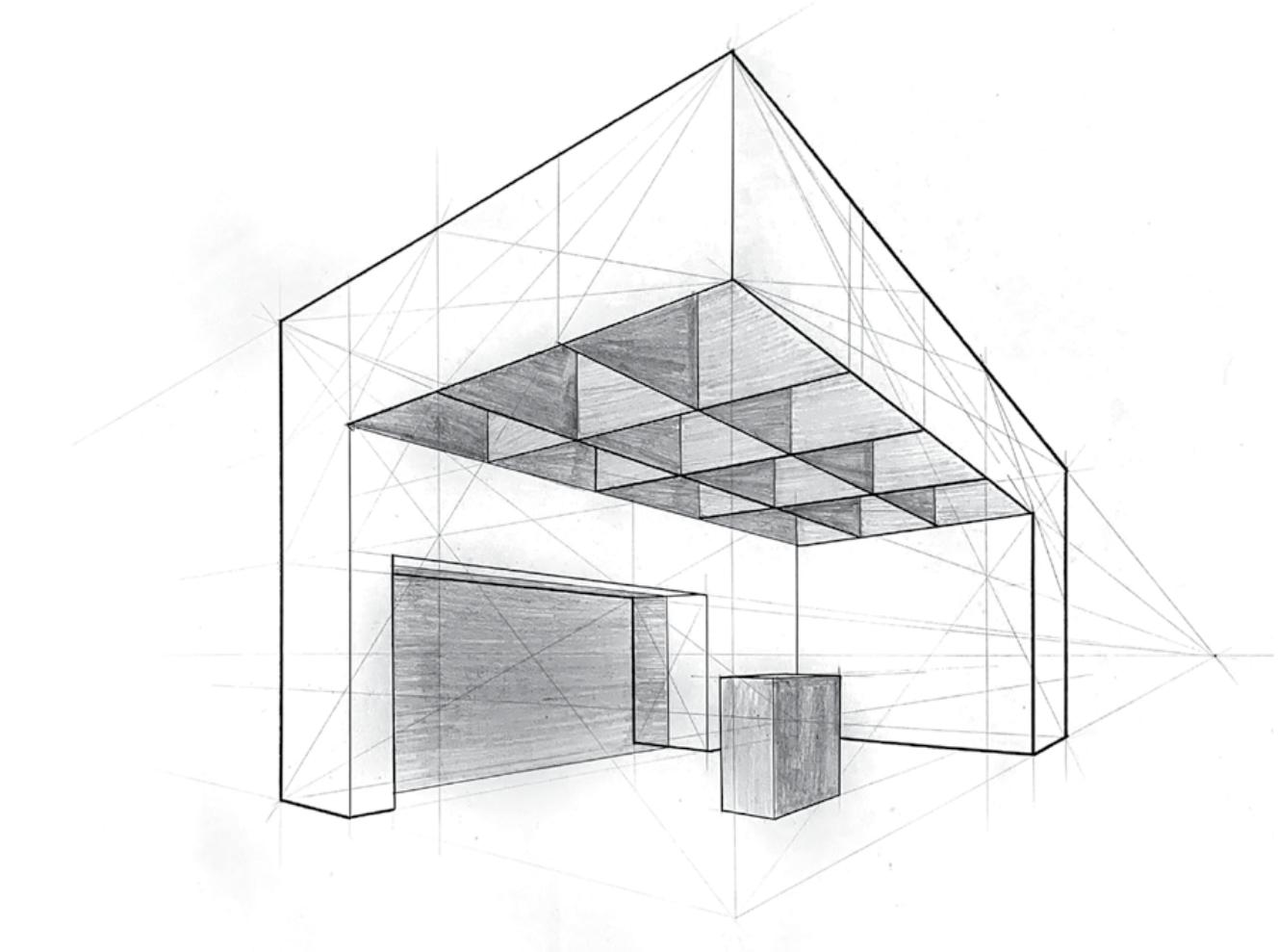
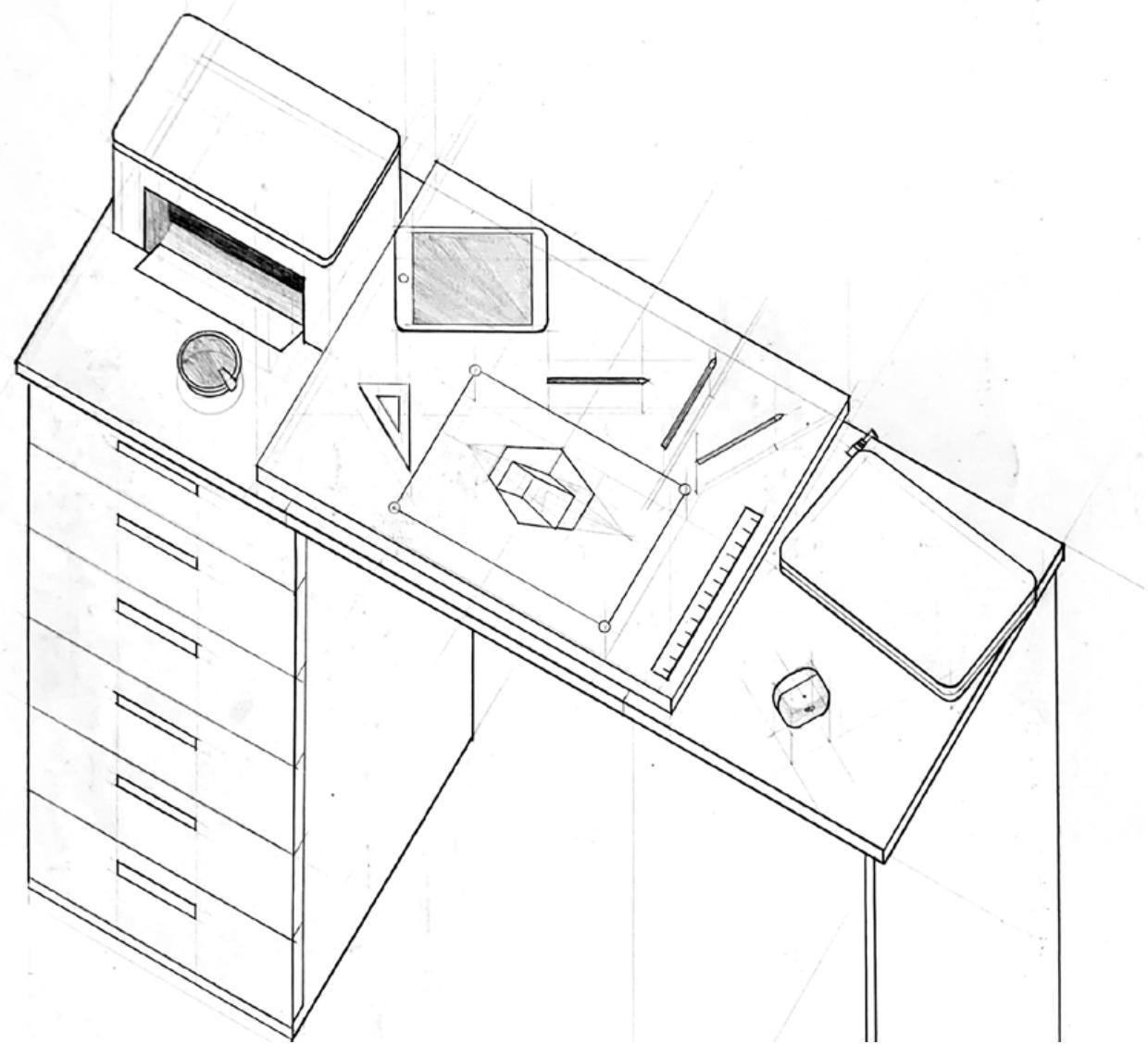
ARCH 211 – Architectural History 1 — focuses on architecture as a global phenomenon; a history of different cultures and traditions, not simply a chronology of influence. Throughout, I find opportunity for students to pursue different learning modalities to engage with history, such as: crafting models, drawing from historic reference, collaborative timelines, advocating for preservation in letters to elected officials, creating narratives, and recording podcasts. This page shows a collaborative research effort on global dwellings over the last 1600 years.

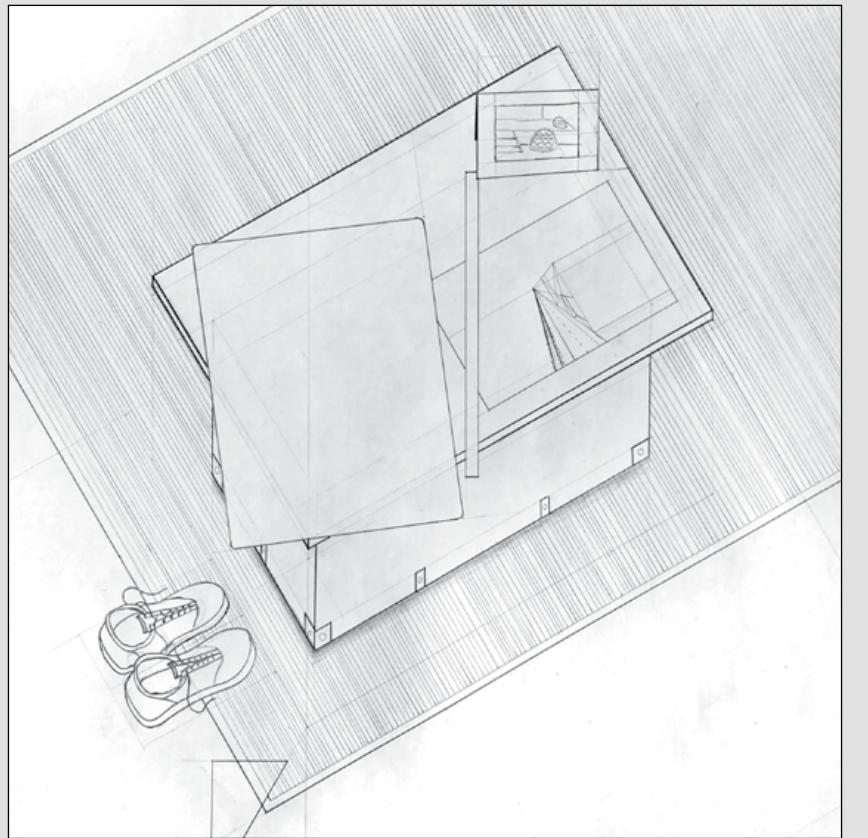
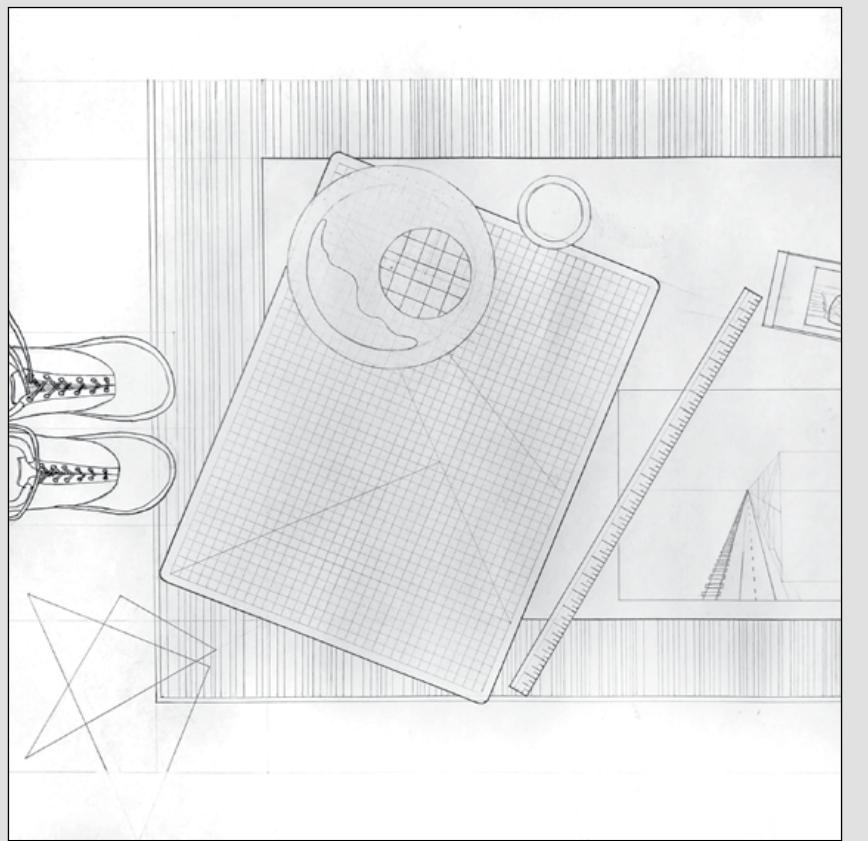


# Drawing Analog

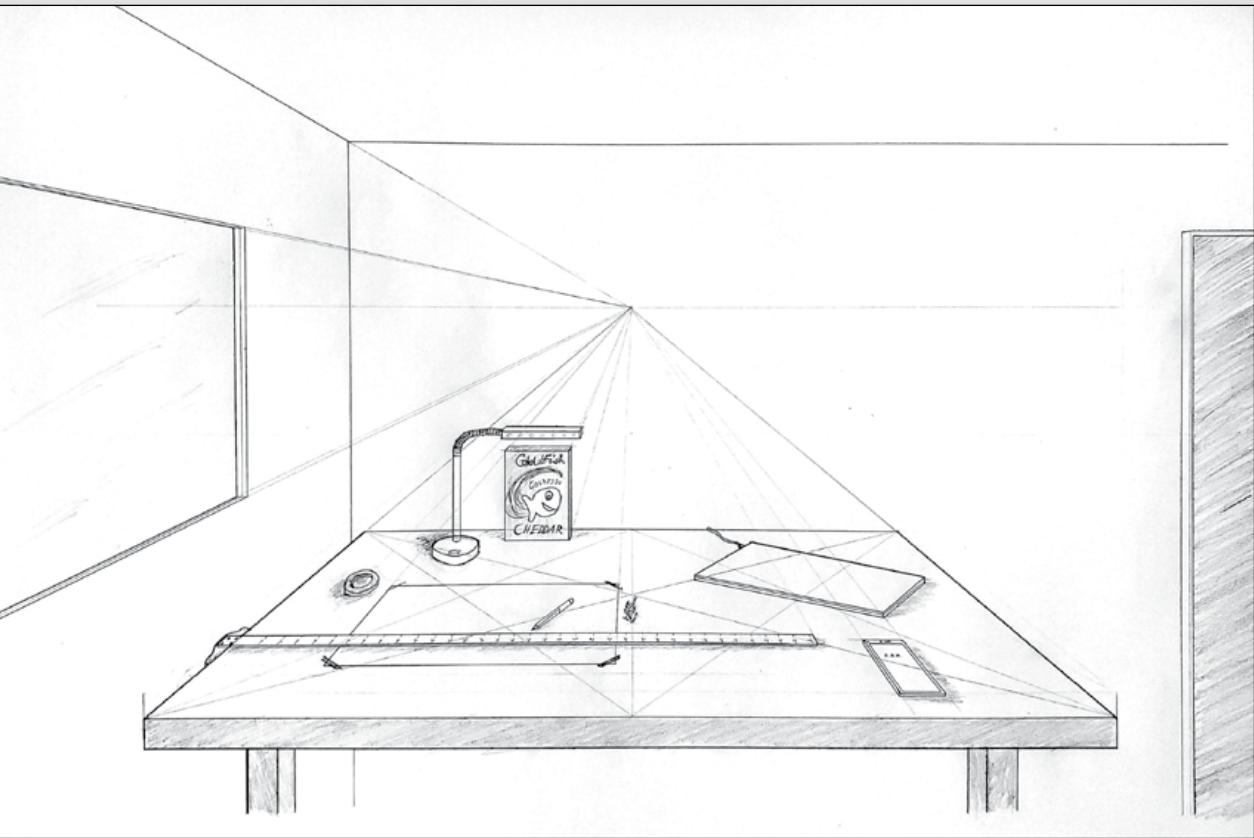
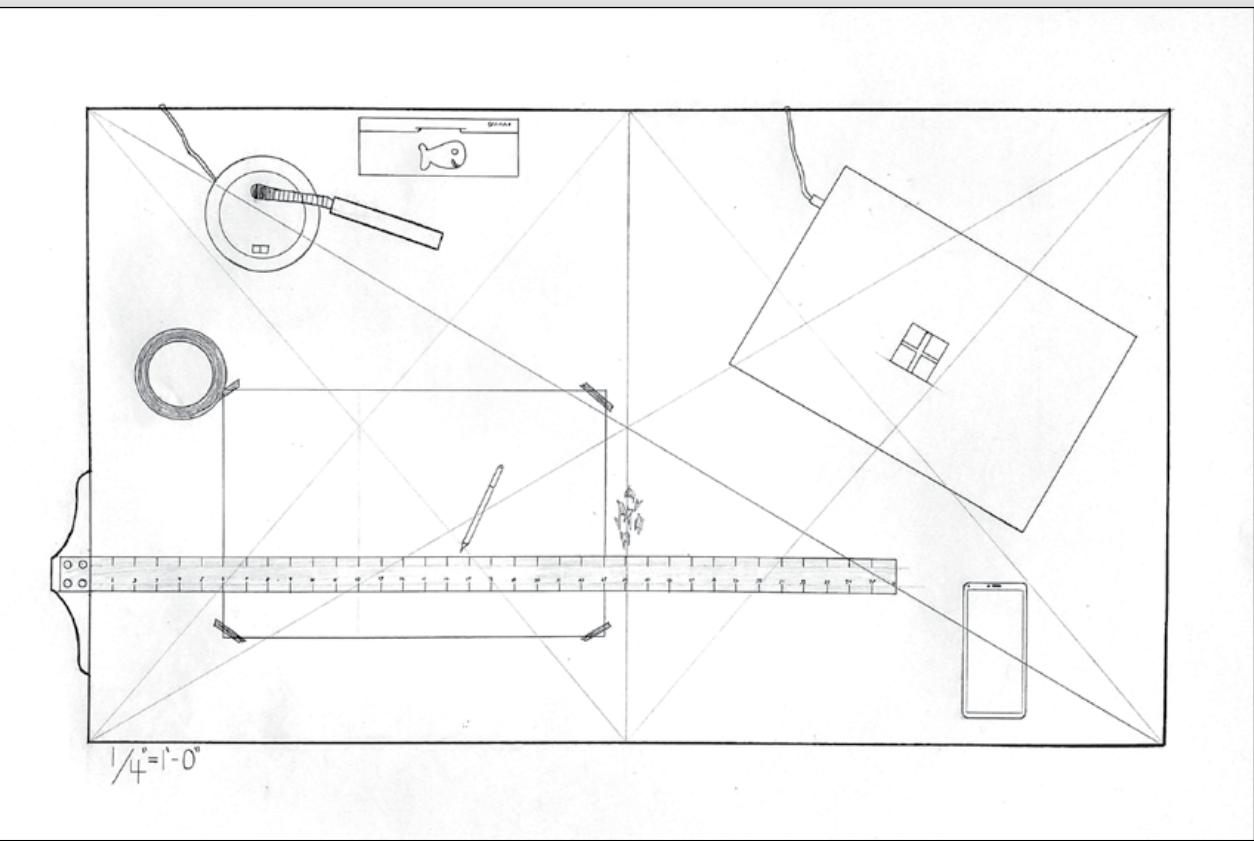
## Louisiana Tech University

Analog drawing is integral to the foundations curriculum at LaTech. For two years, I taught Visual Communications 2 which introduces architectural drawing techniques such as perspective, axonometric, lineweighting, and orthographics. During the pandemic, while teaching with an iPad, I completely restructured the course around a set of tutorials and integrated architectural design lessons on materials, history, language, process, and detailing throughout.





Ben Burguires



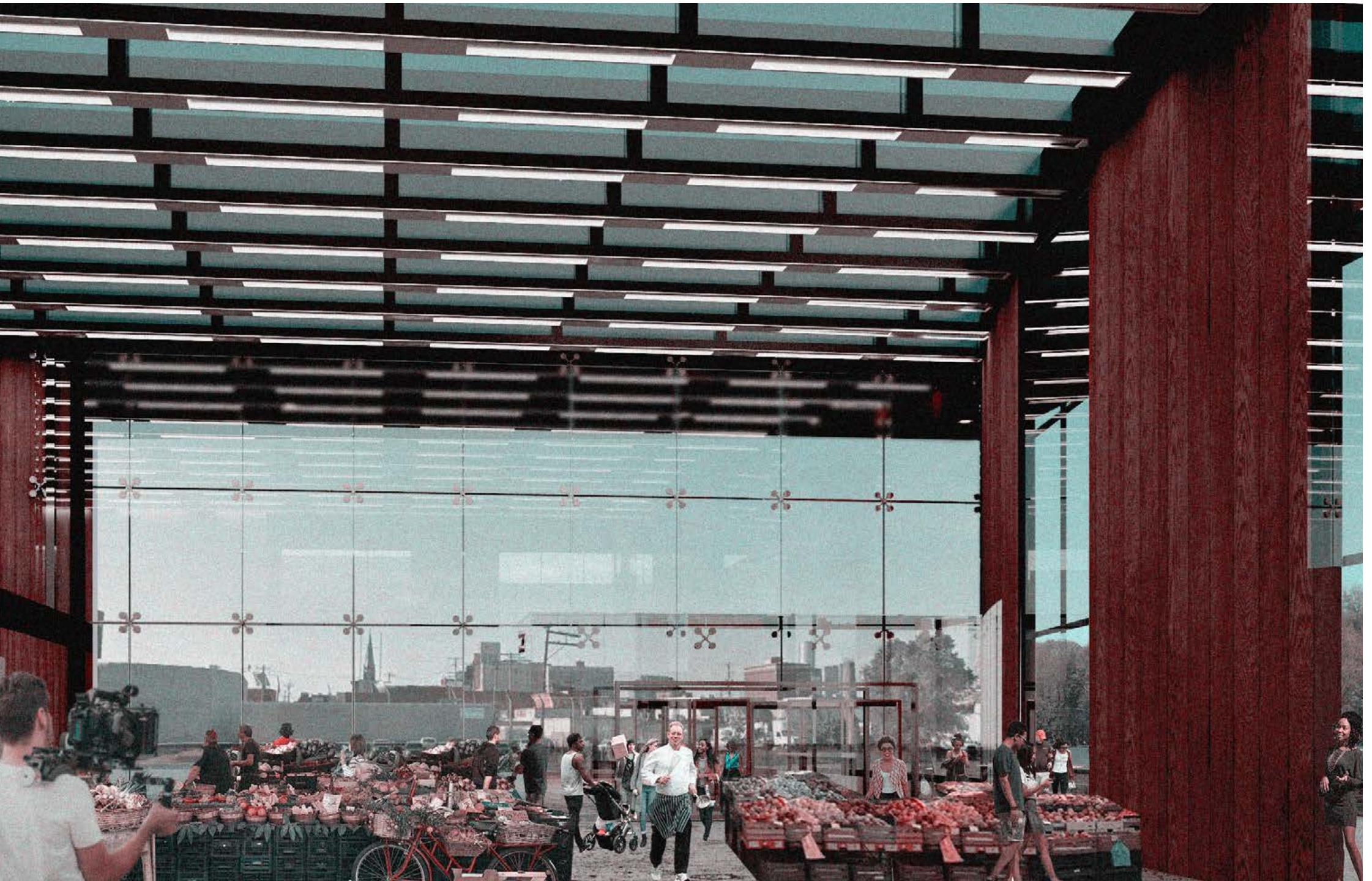
Nathan Bucy

# Food Hub Detroit

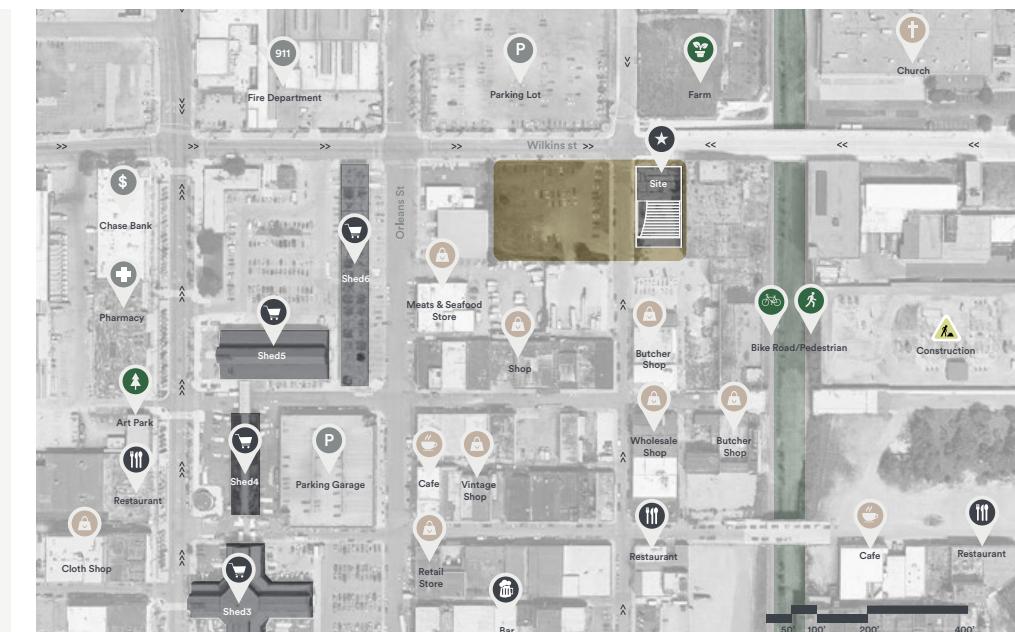
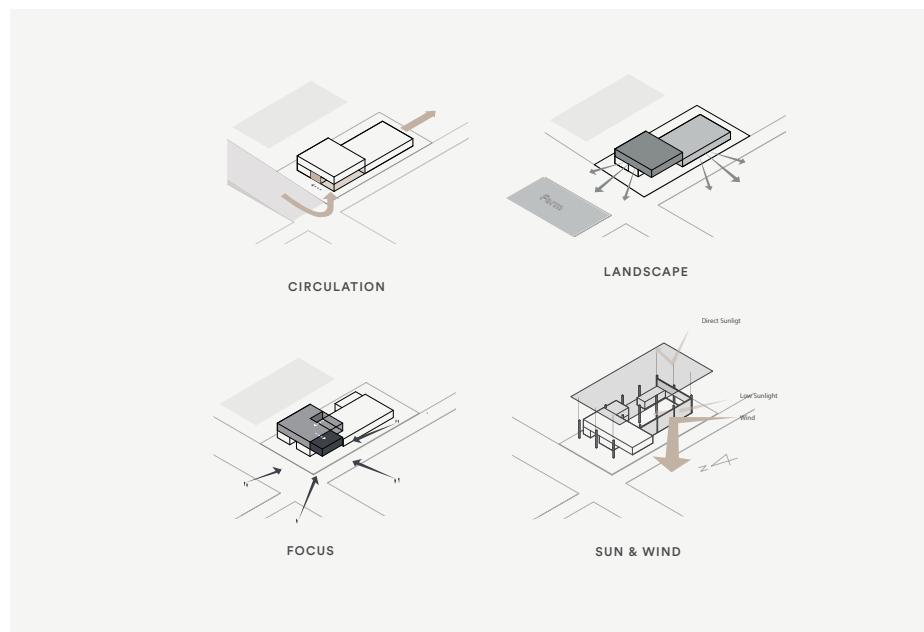
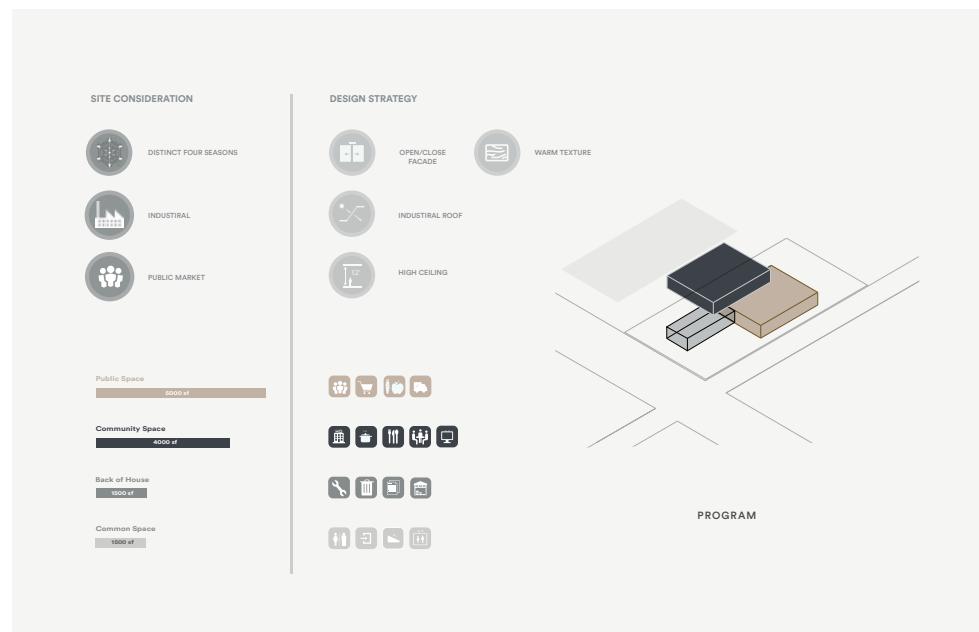
## Louisiana Tech University

Delivered virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic, ARCH 225 explored Detroit from a distance; through street-view, drone footage, music videos, and stories. Eastern Market, located just outside downtown Detroit, is the oldest continually operating market in the USA. *Food Hub* is a split personality building:

One-half open food market and one-half food-based community programming. Students proposed community-focused spaces such as food banks, communal kitchens, and rooftop food growing clubs, while Yun-In Jeung designed a television studio kitchen that exposes Eastern Market food culture to the nation.



Food Hub: Film Studio by Yun-In Jeung



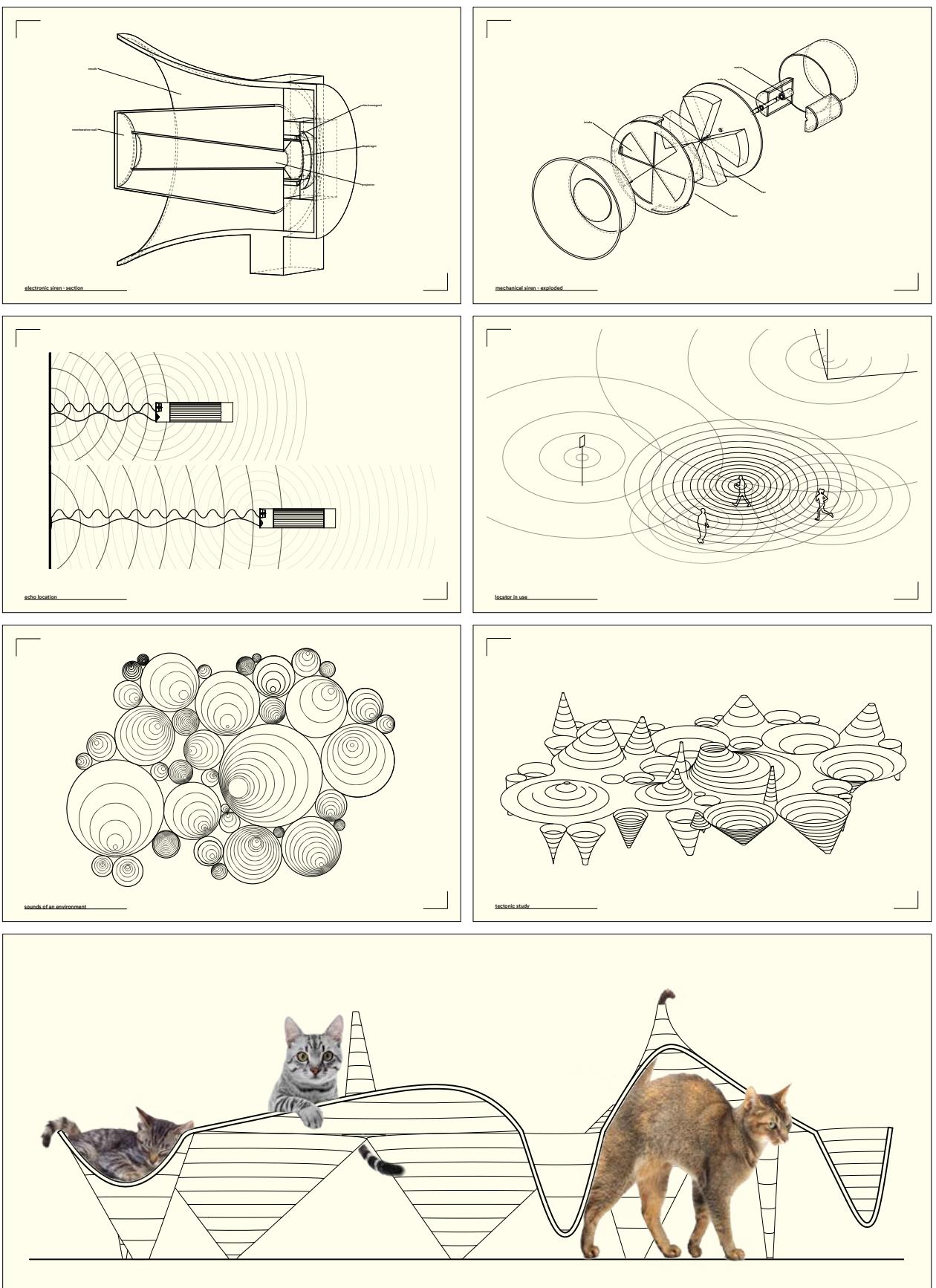
# Tectonics of Sound

Louisiana Tech University

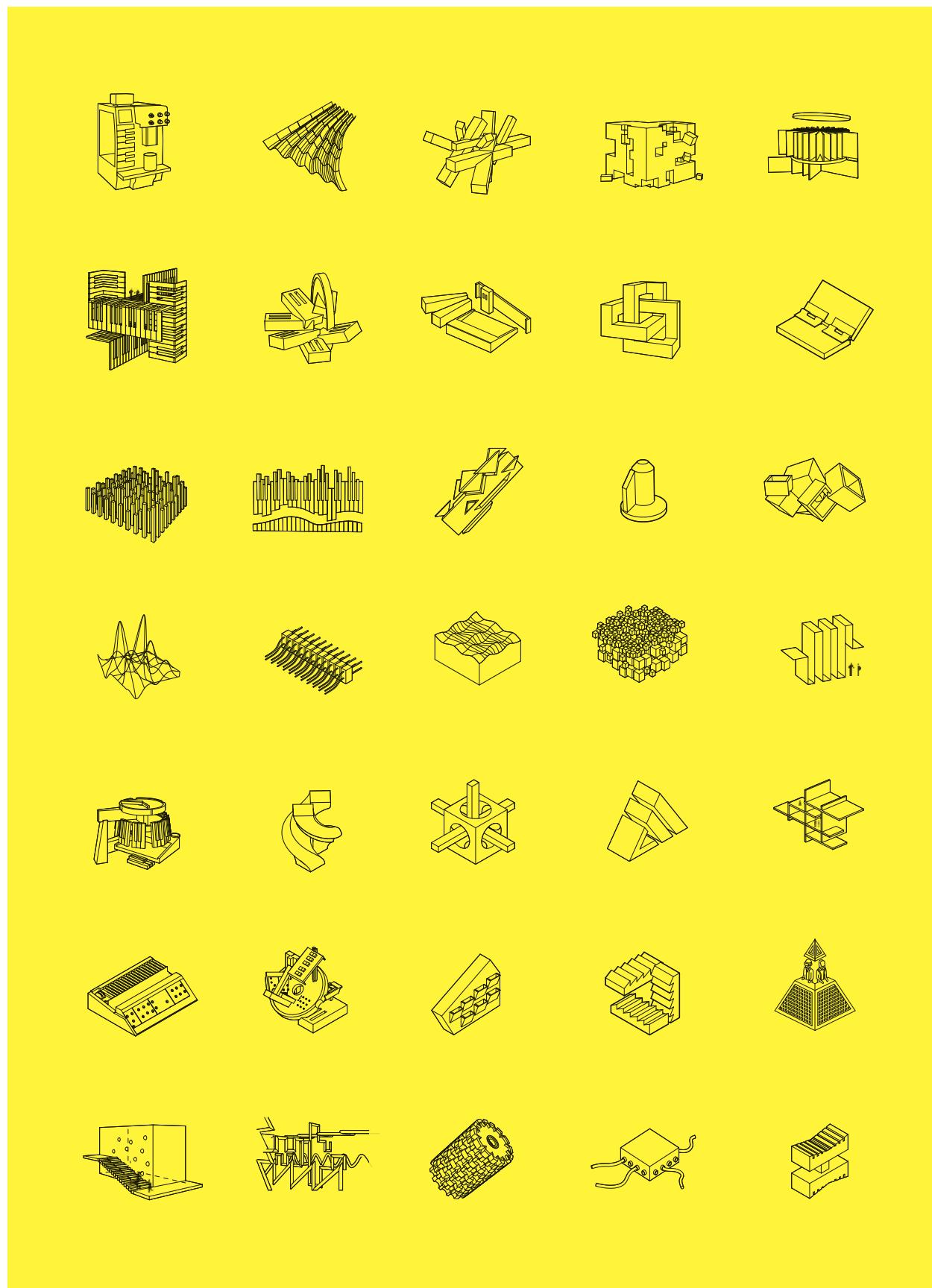
During the pandemic, while teaching over Zoom, I led the implementation of a new digital techniques design sequence for second-year students. Building upon their digital apriori from OBJ, students in ARCH 235 experimented using the tectonics of sound and sound-making objects, such as the synthesizer, grammaphone, piano, jukebox, and siren.



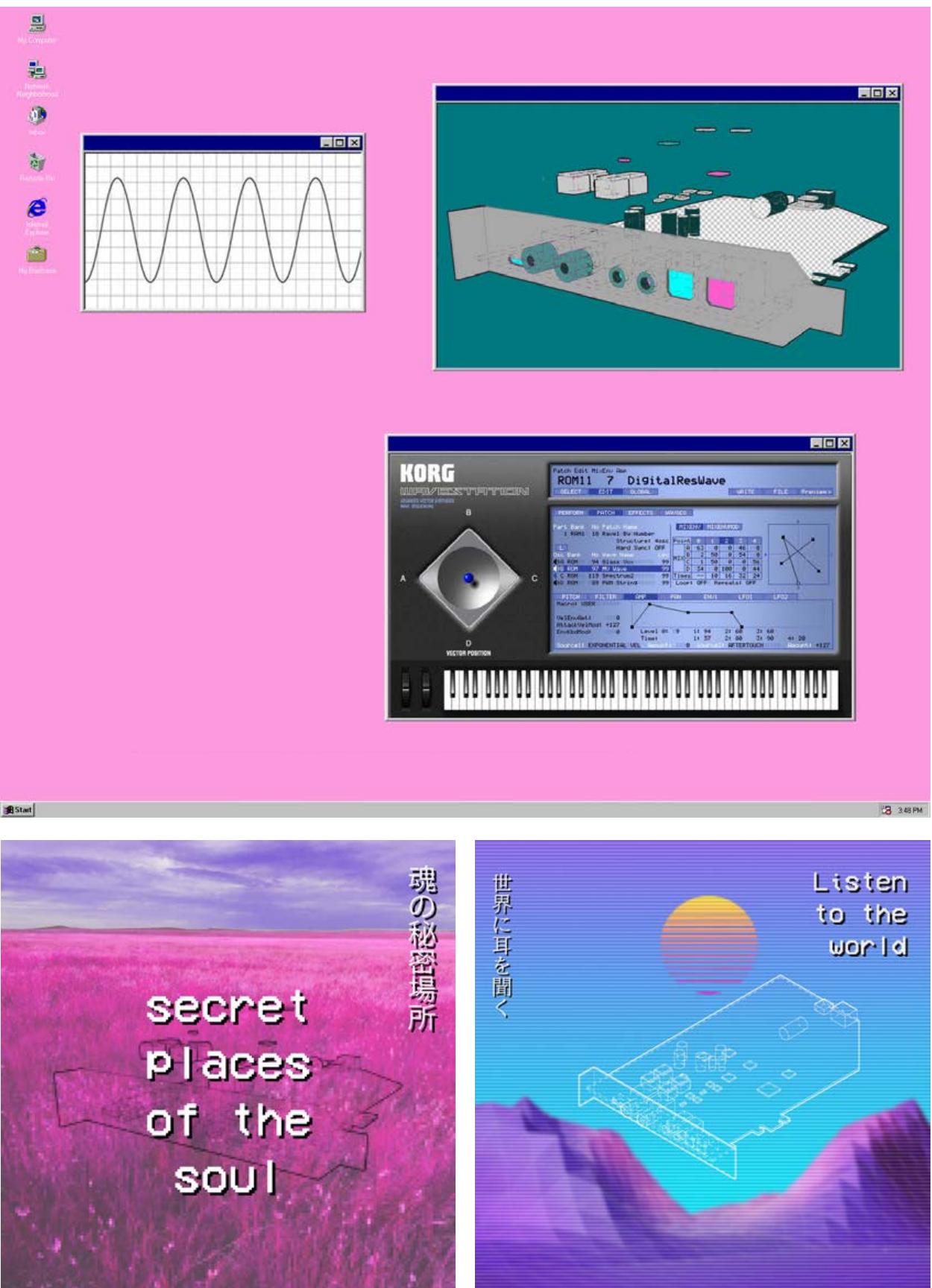
Grammaphone Knoll by Sarah Morgan



Doppler Effect by Nolan Courville



MiniMoog and Synth-Wave-Forms by Yun-In Jeung



Soundcards & Vaporwave Tectonics by Cole Chivers

# Archive of Sound

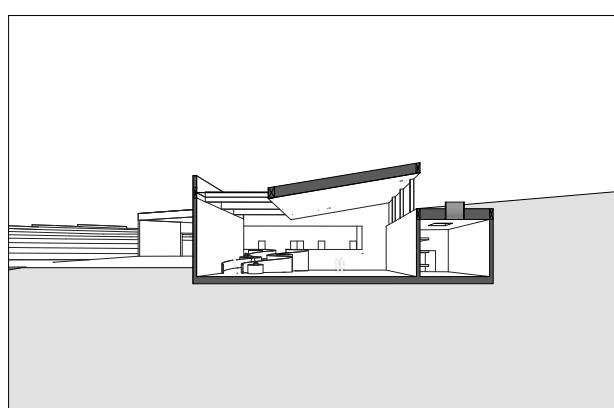
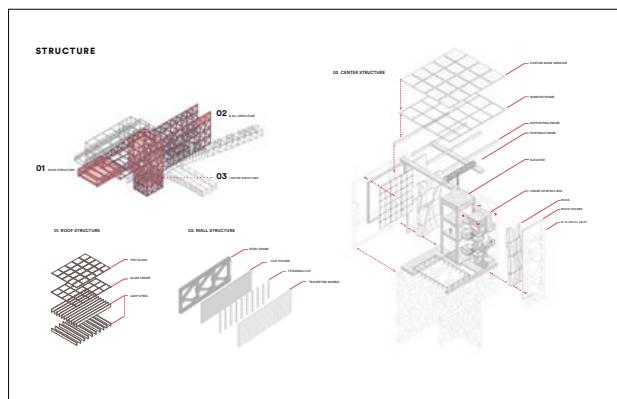
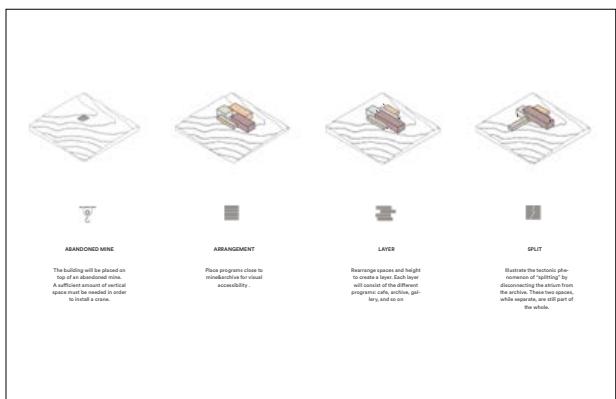
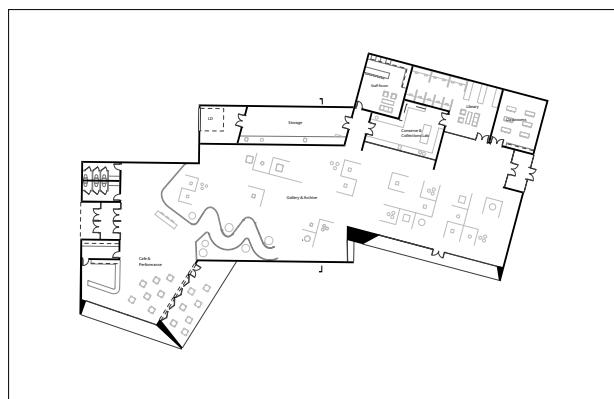
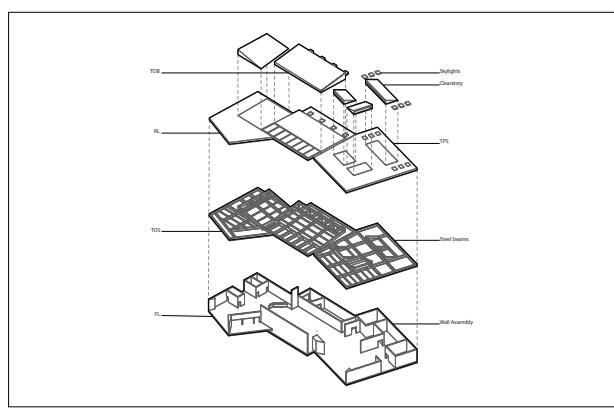
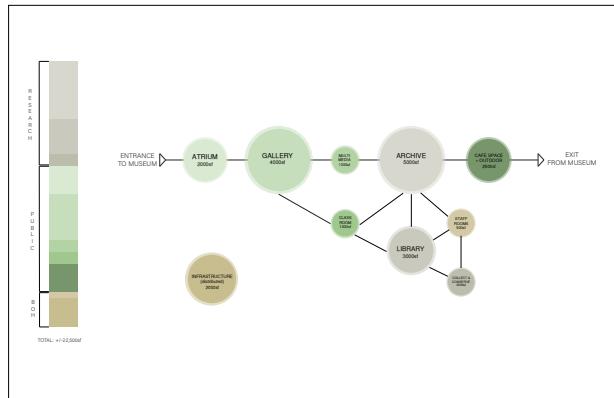
## Louisiana Tech University

Evolving out of the *Tectonics of Sound* module, second-year students in ARCH 225 worked through their first public building design using the archive typology to learn programming, public/private dichotomies, structural integration, and visualization techniques. Using sound as a theme and New Mexico as a location,

students considered context and community to pursue archives of the speed of sound, of colonial reconciliation, of the cosmic, of the geologic, and of sounds lost in the void of progress and consumerism. Integrating topography was a requirement along with introducing students to accessible design.



Sound of Strata Research Center by Yun-In Jeung



Archive of Lost Sounds by Emily Brinkerhoff

Sound of Strata Research Center by Yun-In Jeung

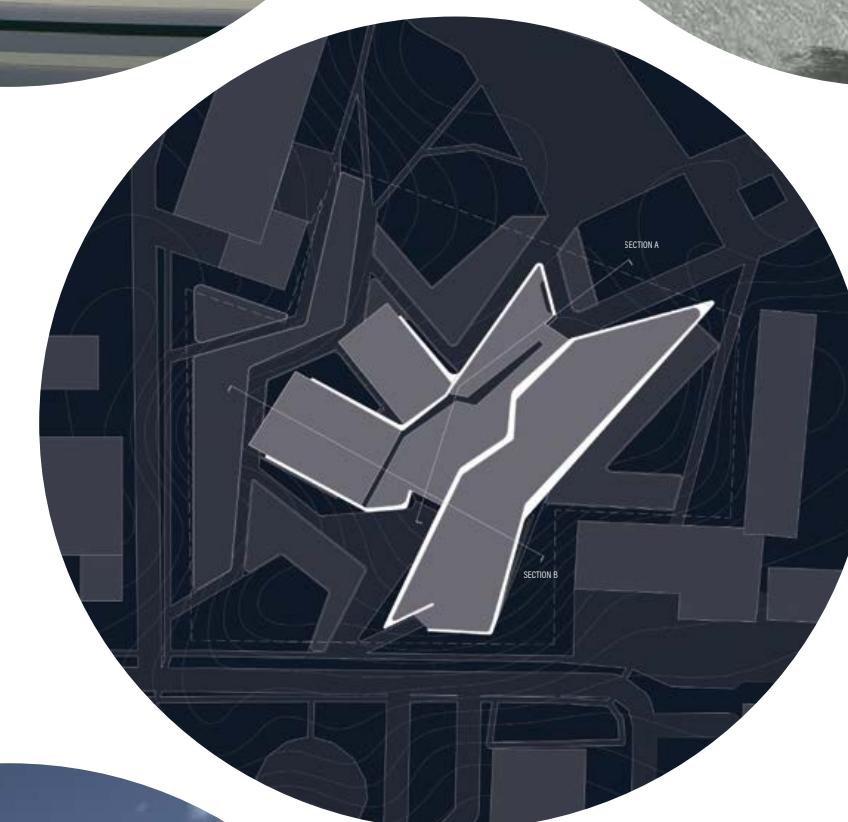
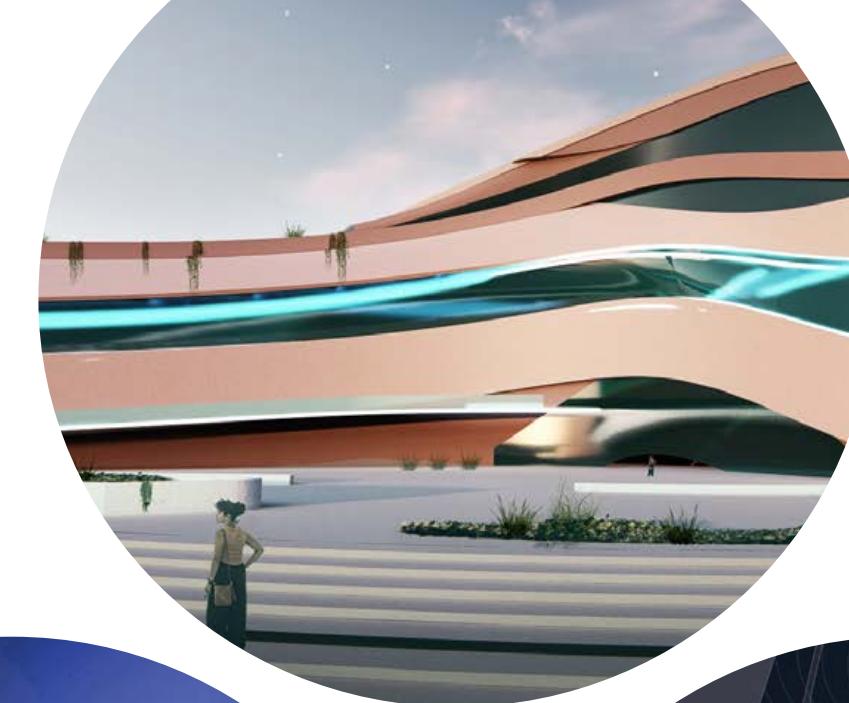
## School of Music

### Louisiana Tech University

The graduate program at Louisiana Tech centers around a three-studio capstone sequence focusing on the design and documentation of a complex institutional building. For the 2019-2020 academic year, students worked through the design of a *School of Music* for the Louisiana Tech campus, managing approximately 80,000 square feet on a limiting, dense site.

Students worked through all phases of design and development to produce ARCH D printed and bound architectural drawing sets. With the generous support of a faculty grant, students collaborated with Stantec for critiques and feedback on the design and detailing of chosen structural systems.

Design Development by Noonan, Ramsey, Le, Cashio, Nieto, Carlisle & Roberts at right.

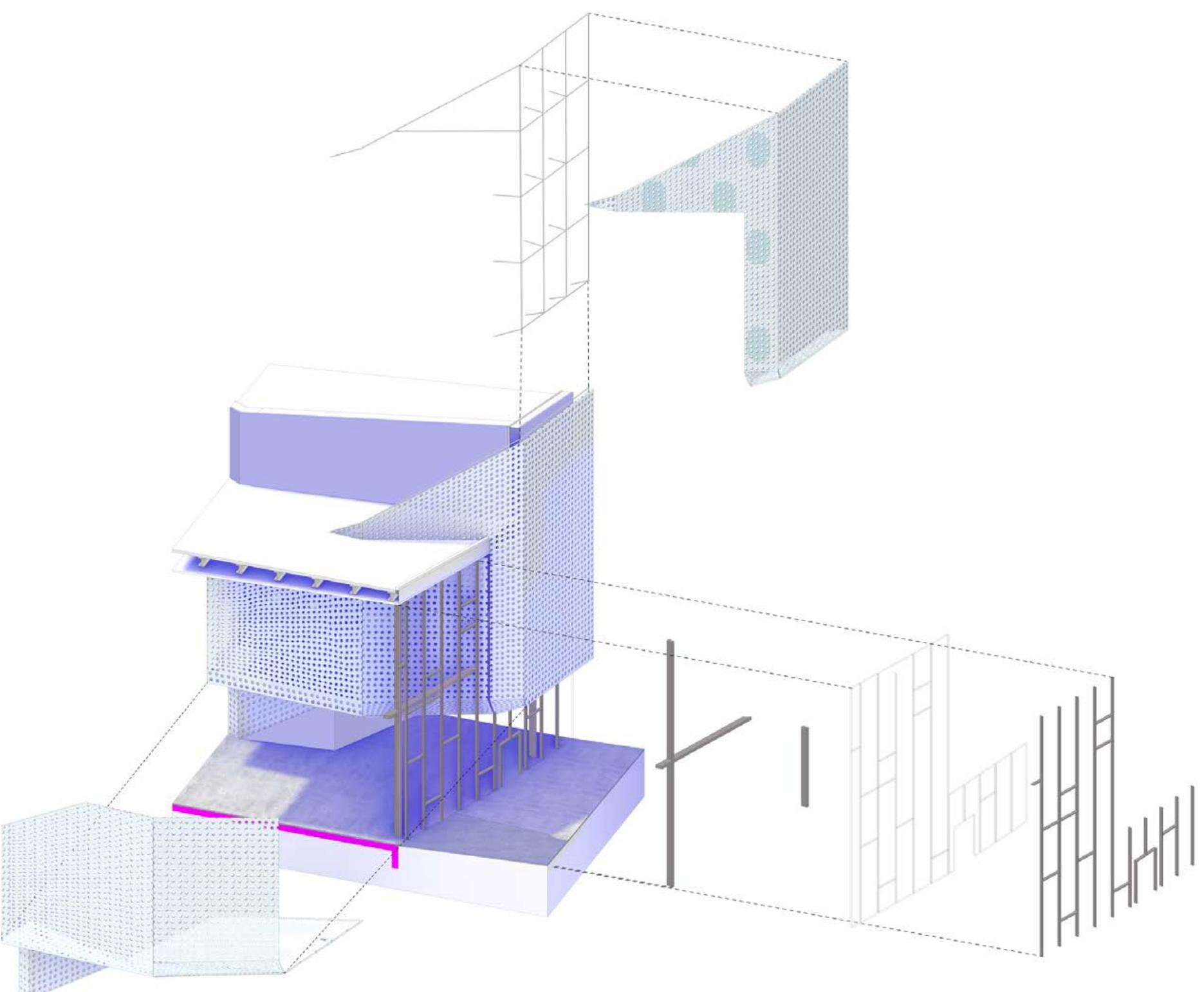
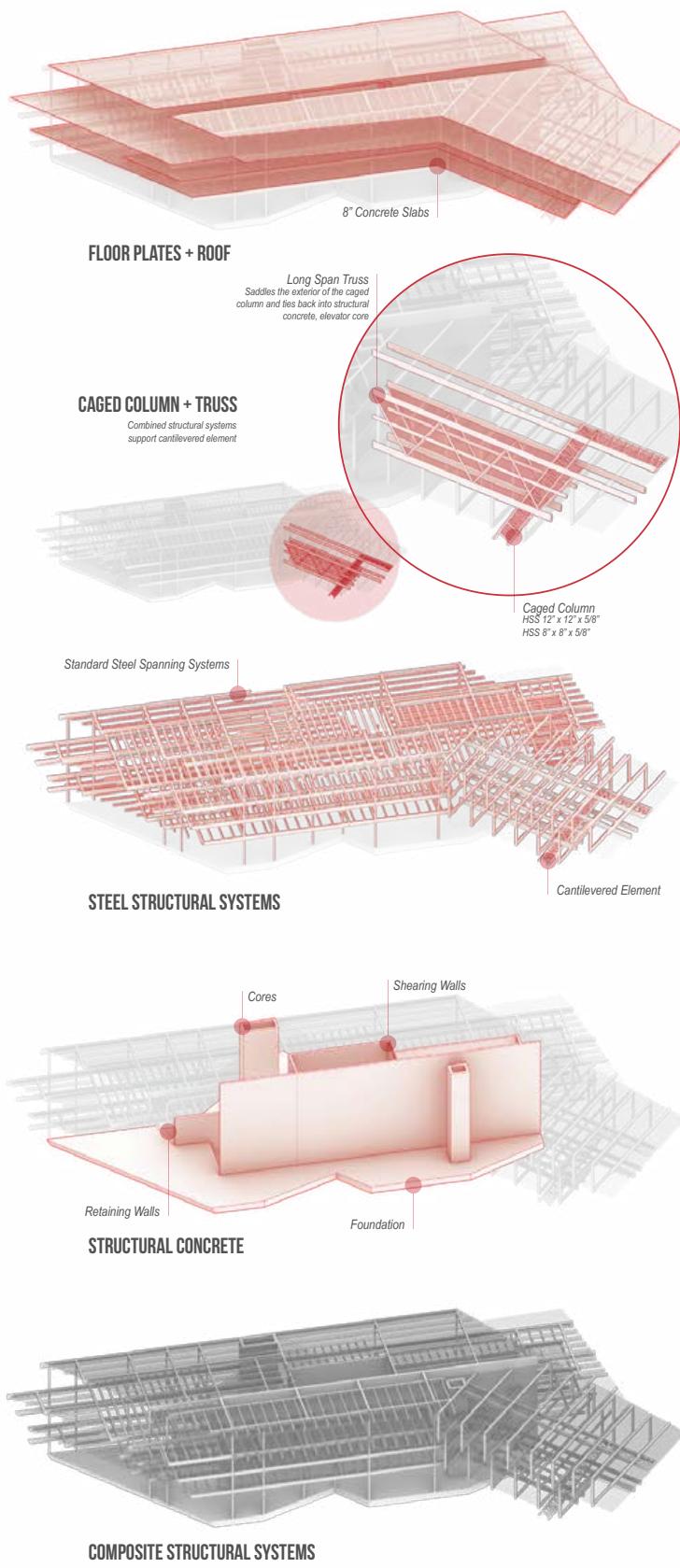


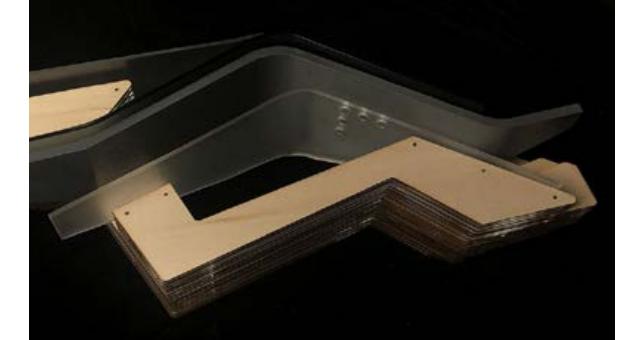
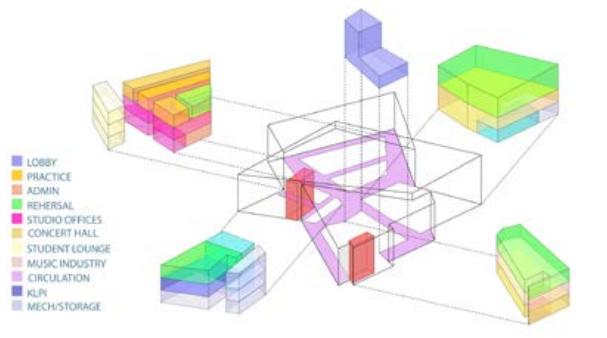
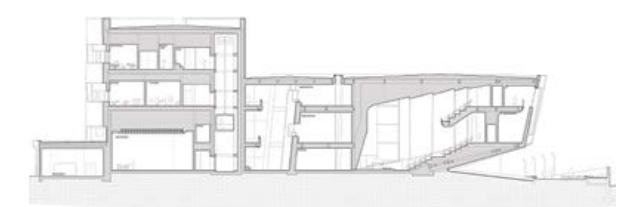
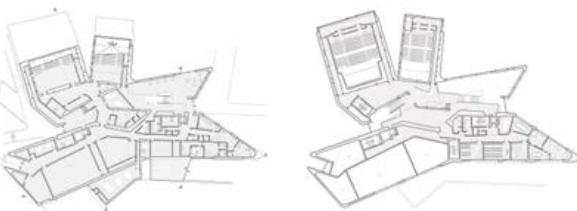
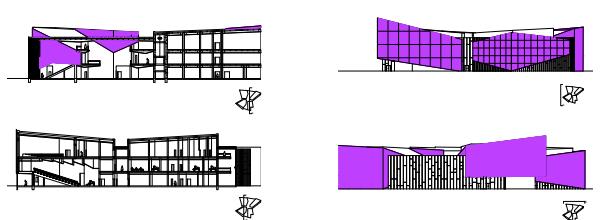
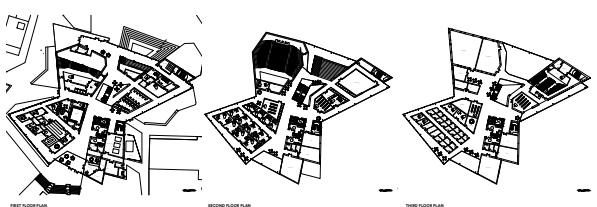
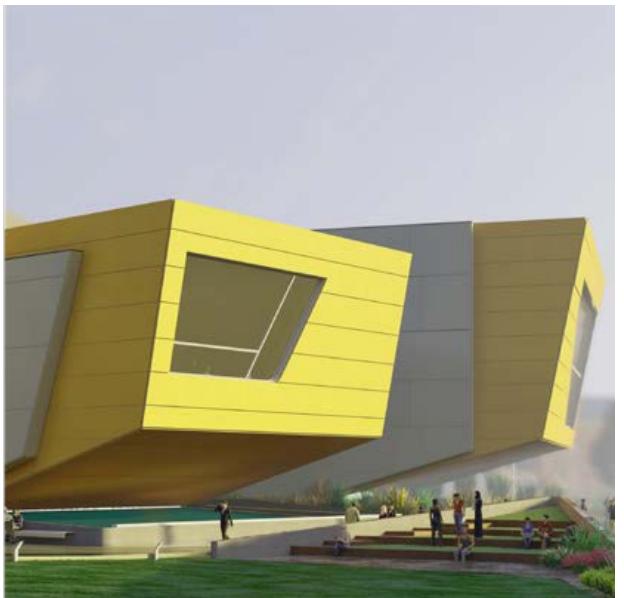
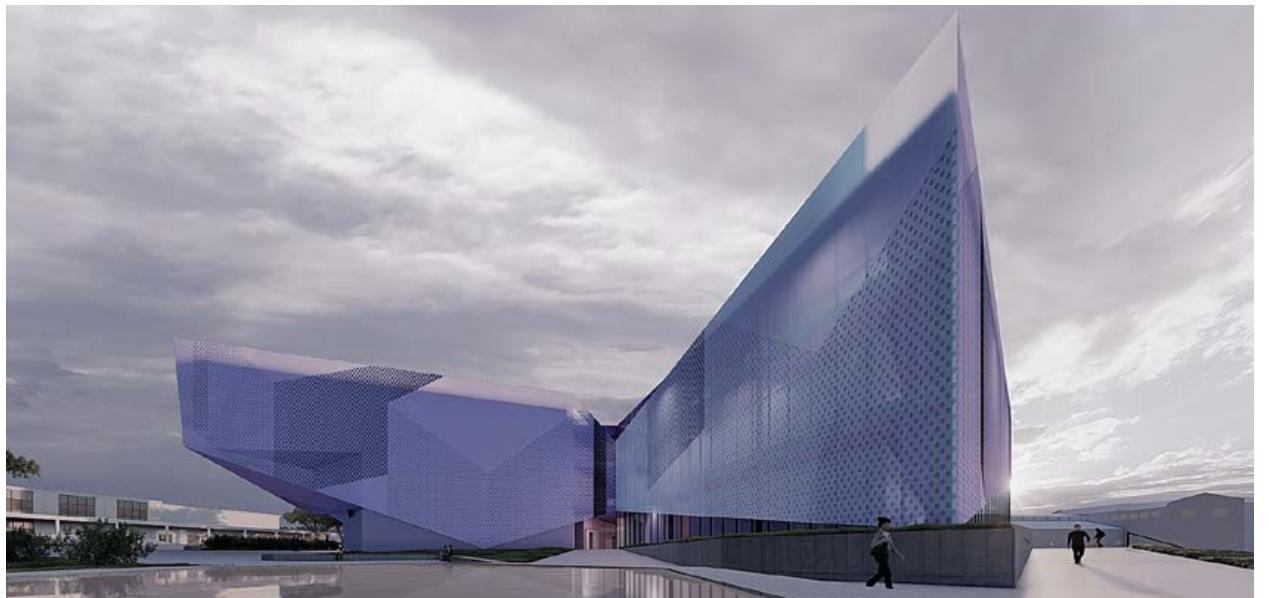


Wunderkammer by Christian McVay



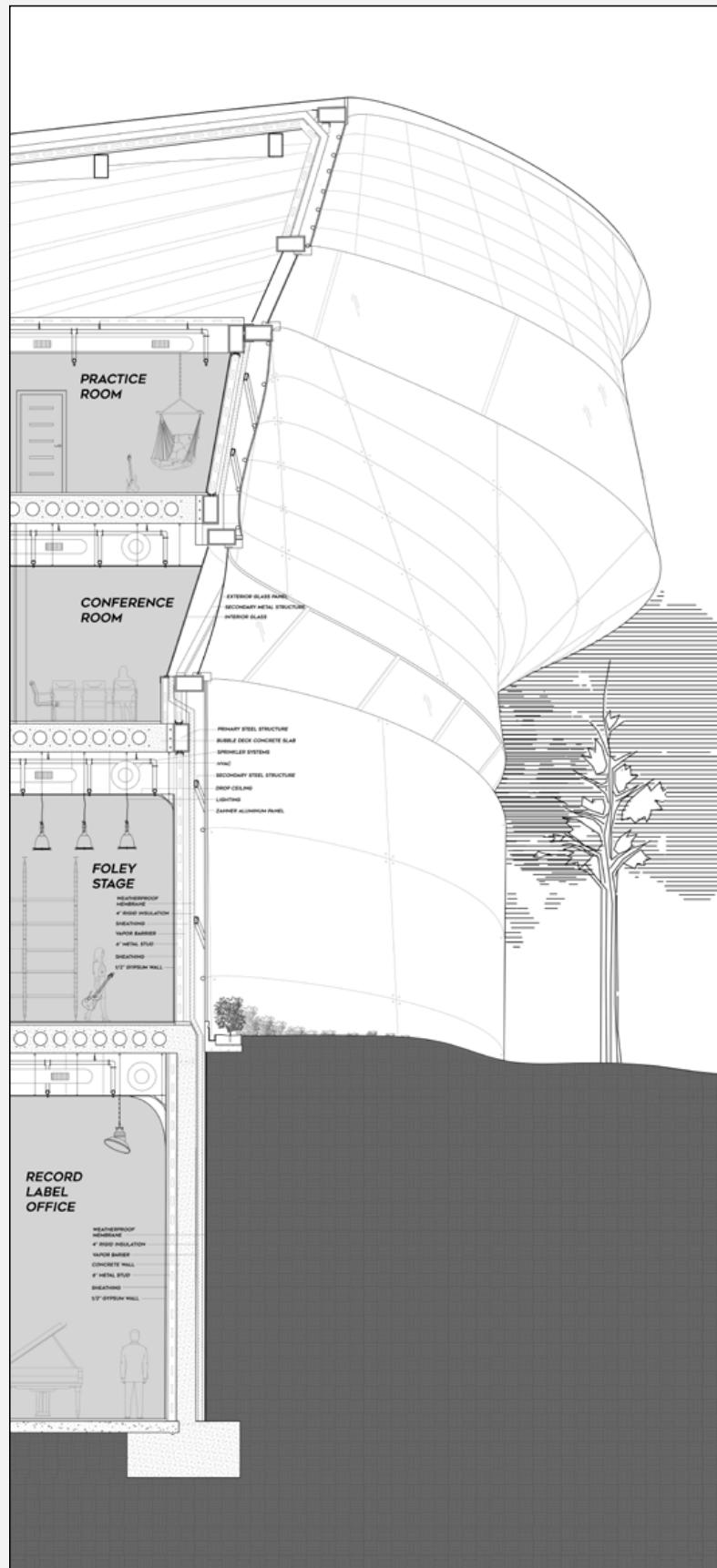
Wunderkammer by Marissa Noonan



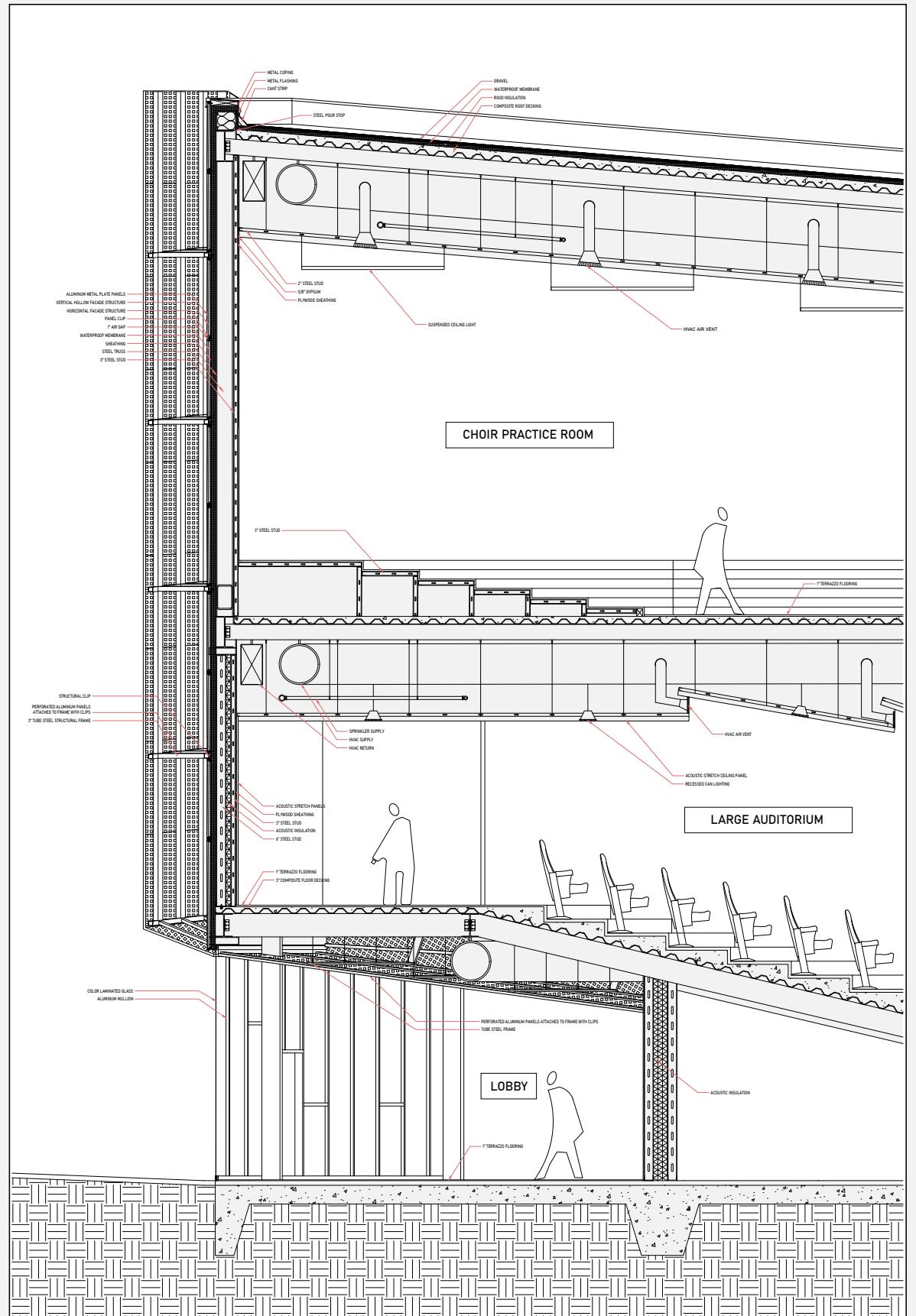


Project Portfolio by Jane Emory

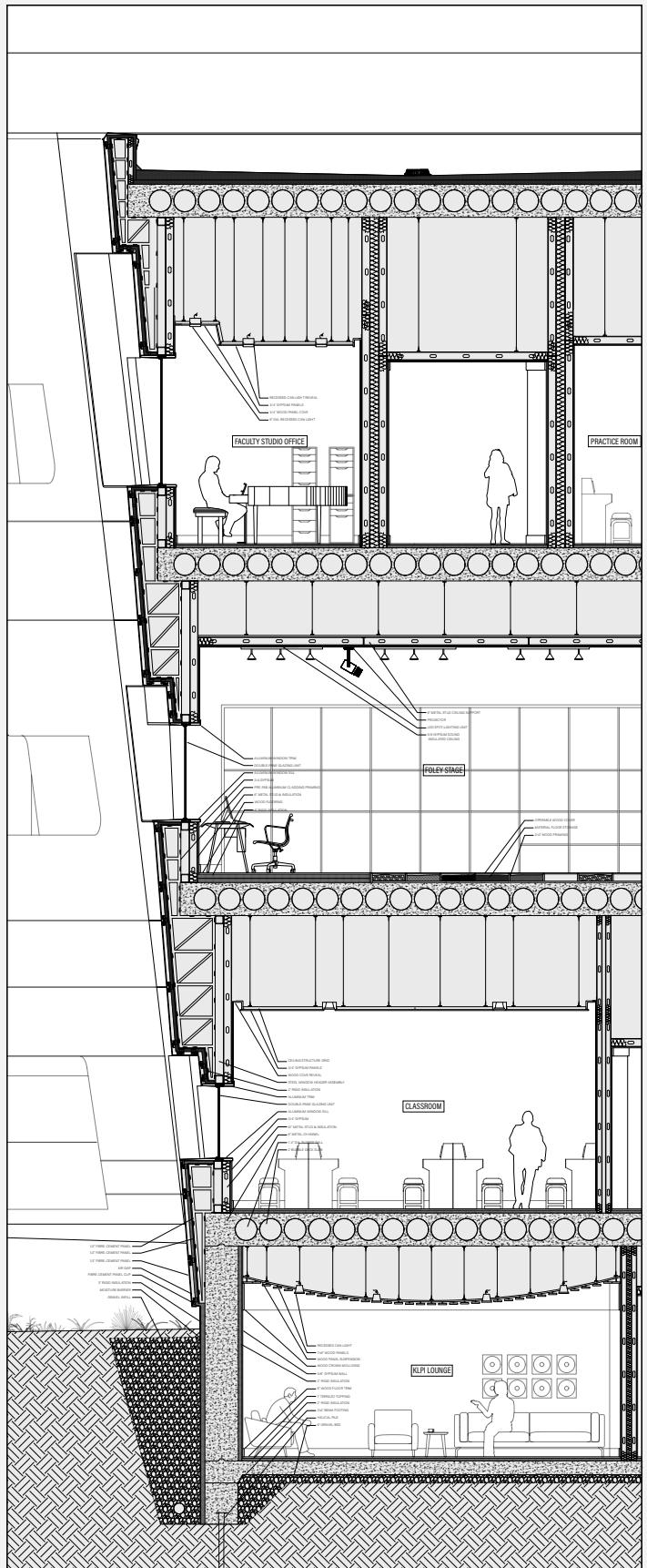
Project Portfolio by Ethan Carlisle



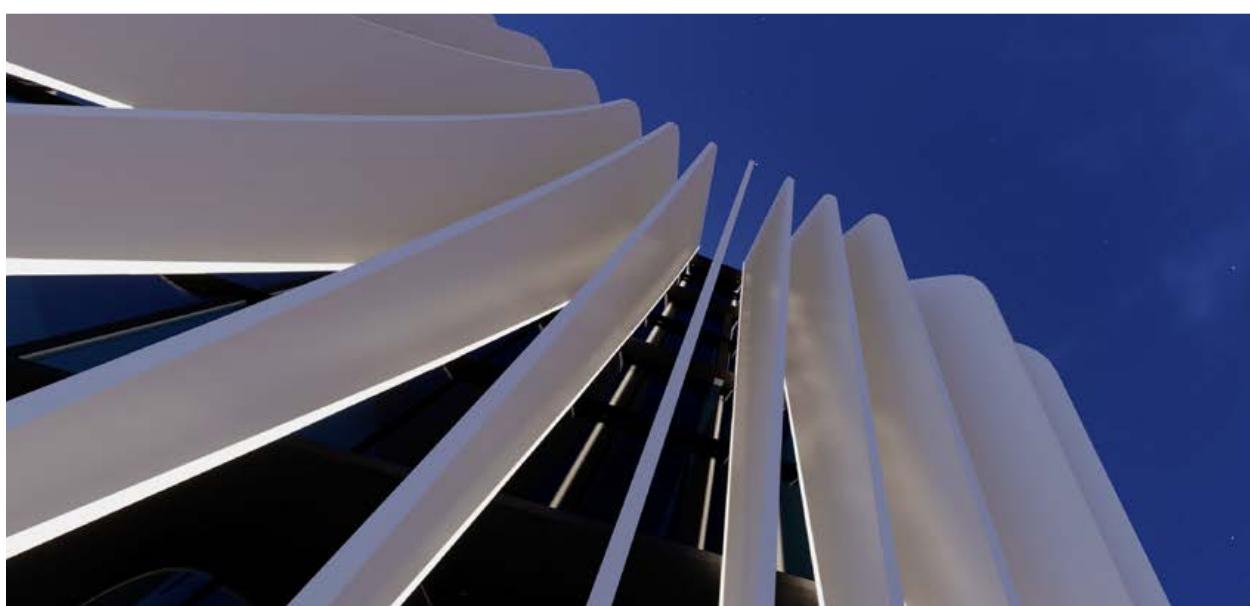
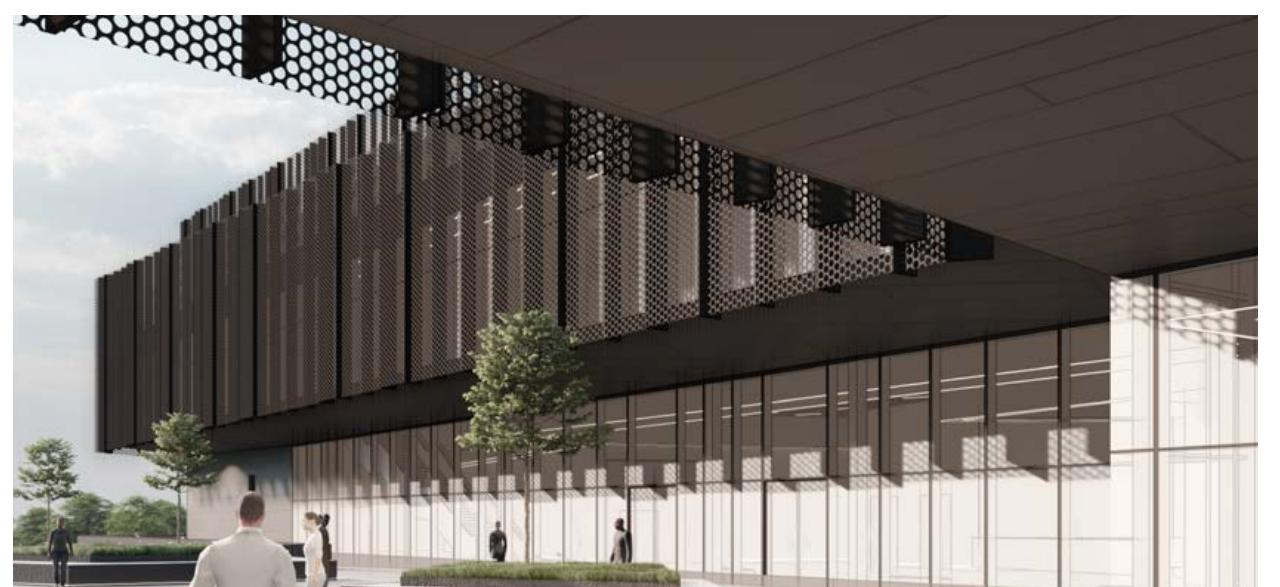
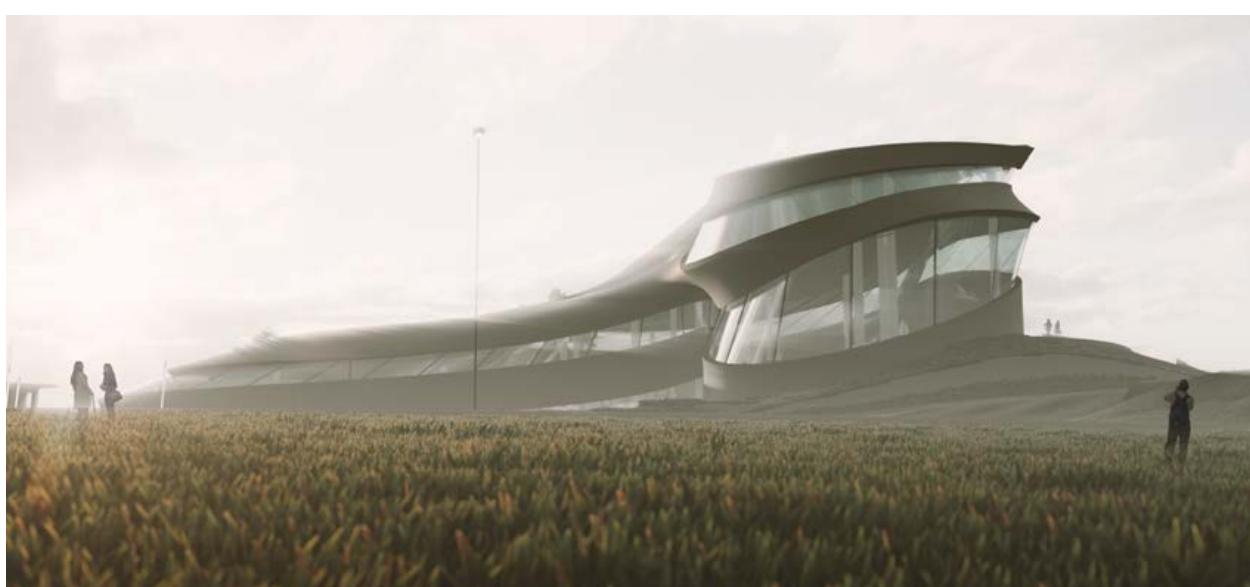
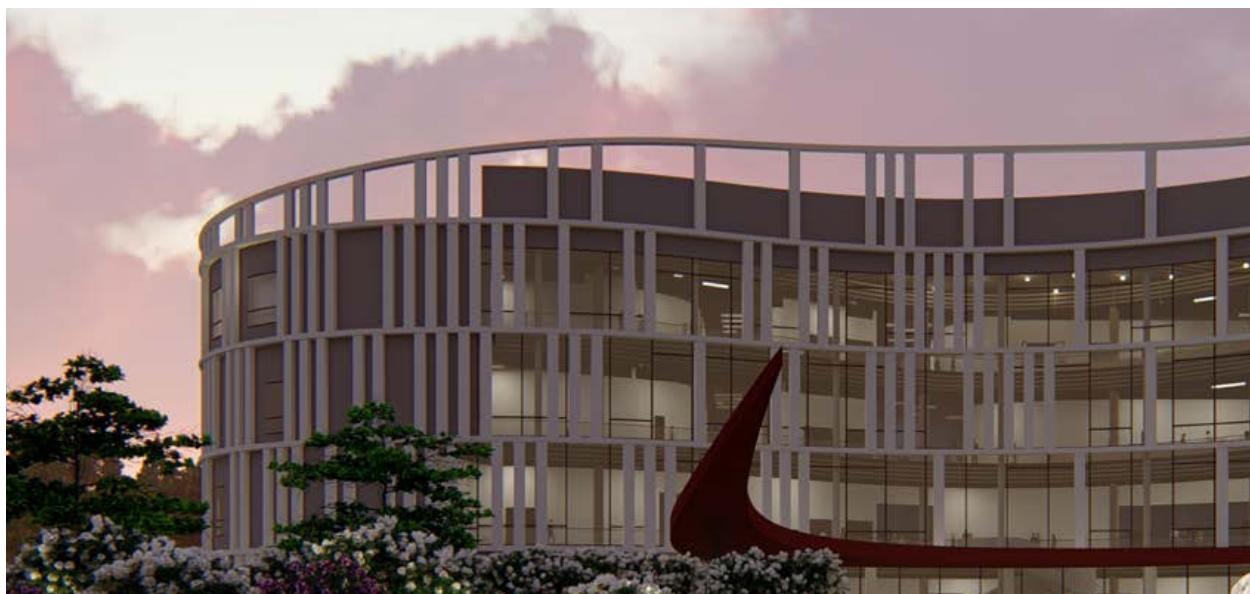
Wall Section by Marissa Noonan



Wall Section by Jane Emory



Wall Section by Ethan Carlisle



Final Visualizations by Coggins, Noonan, Cashio

Final Visualizations by White, Roberts, Ramsey

# American Spolia

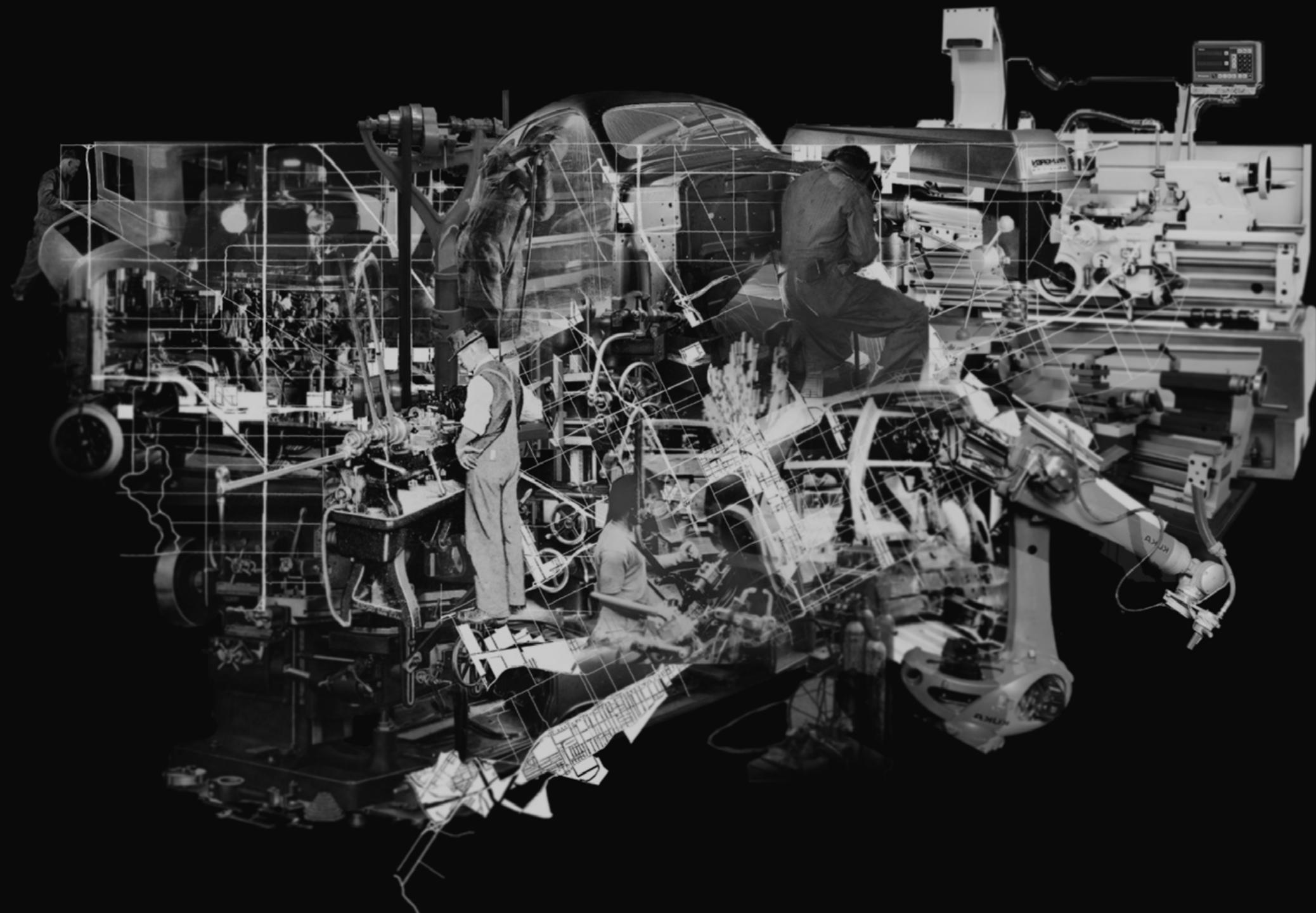
## Lawrence Technological University

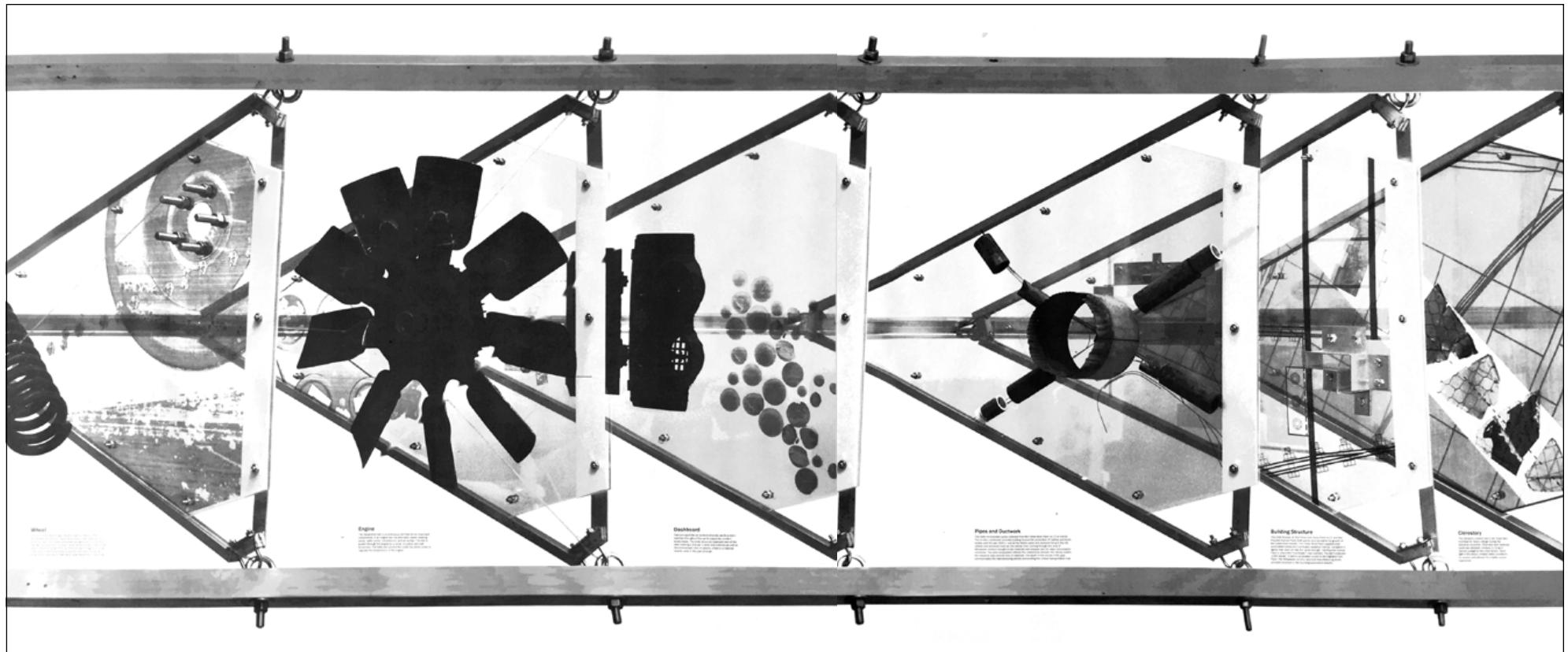
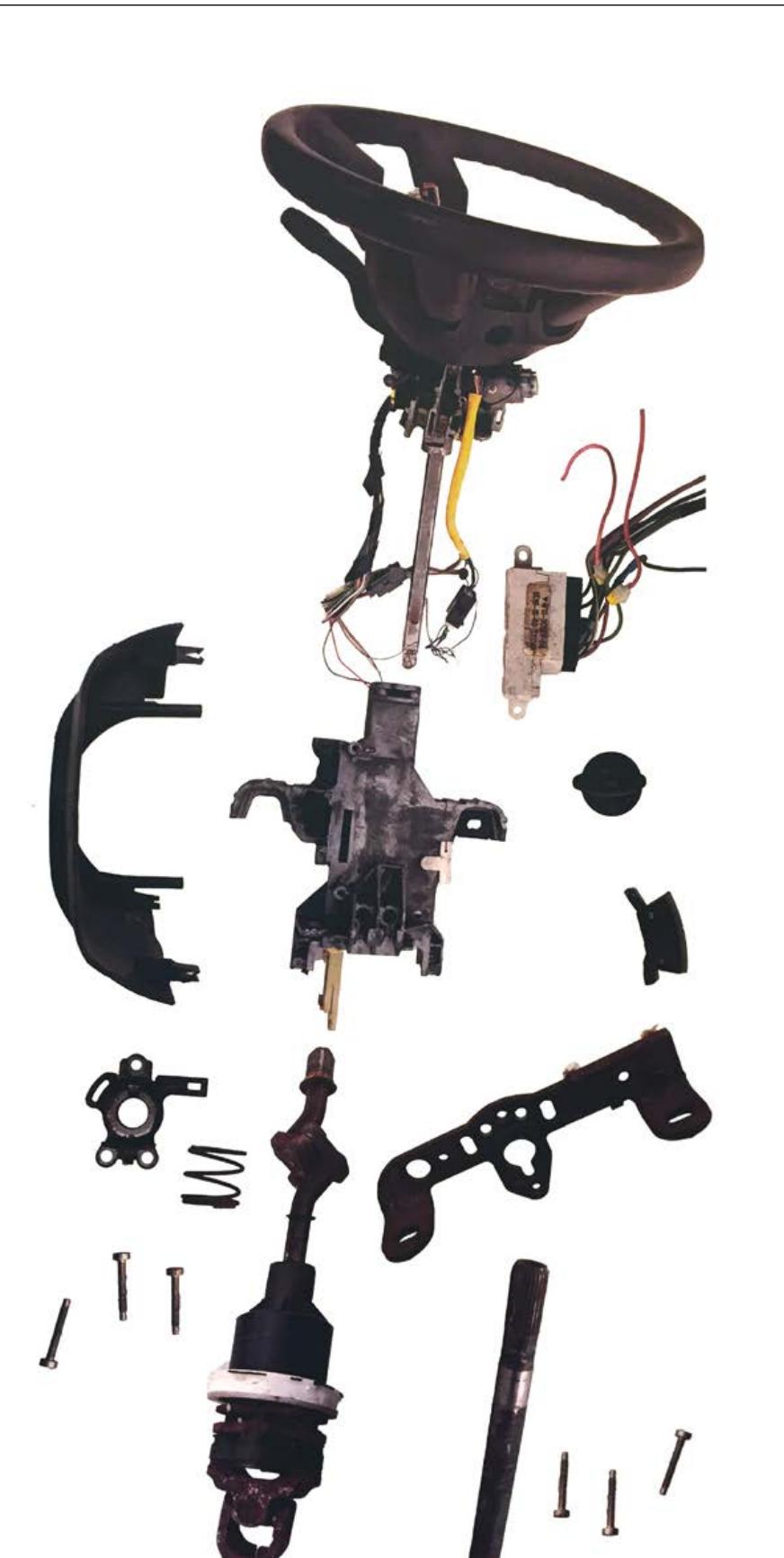
As a Critical Practice Teaching Fellow at Lawrence Technological University, I taught two parallel studio sections under the coordination of Aleksandr Mergold and Jason Austin (Austin+Mergold) who established the studio prompt. Nikole Bouchard and Matt Burgermaster were also fellows and taught two parallel sections. Together, the six groups researched residential, commercial, and industrial parcels within Detroit.

My two sections investigated the past 100-years of manufacturing in the city of Detroit by taking core samples through historical industrial space and time. Core samples were large mixed-media sculpture-like installation objects, held within 2' x 2' x 10' metal rigs that displayed readings of this history of spolia (spoils) of the city. At our final exhibition, there were six large core sample rigs on display and over one hundred large-format drawings that explored material culture, urban transformation, and ecological design strategies.

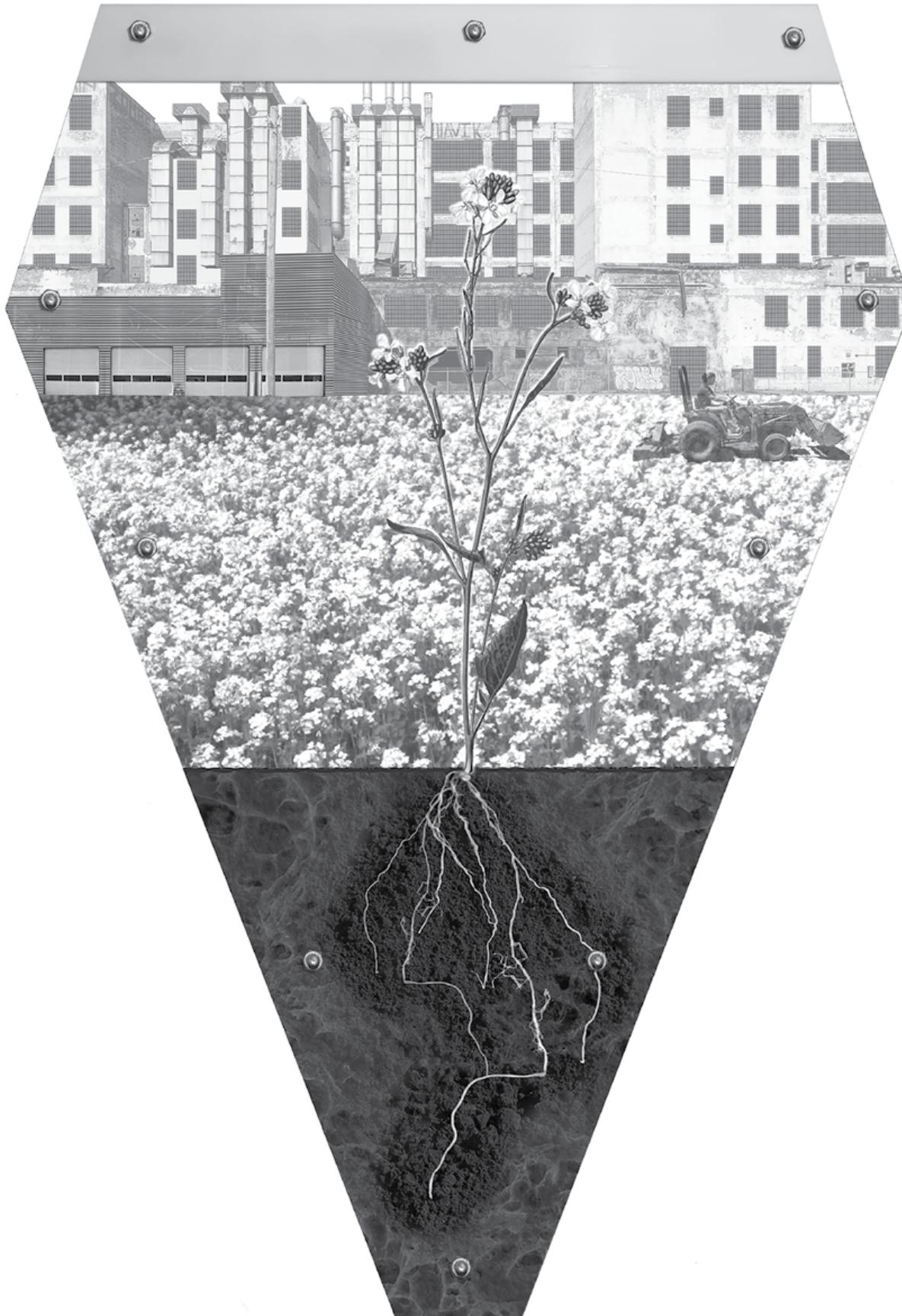
Group 6 designed rigs that core sample through automotive industrial history. Rig 1 highlighted manufacturing and factory components in Detroit factories, while Rig 2 drew out the effects and environment conditions caused by manufacturing (political, social, and ecological) — pointing to the agency of matter to story-tell urban history. The final project called for the design of image-plates proposing ecological strategies for the rehabilitation of the site.

Group 6 Students:  
Fajr Najib, Alissa Pillon, Catie Schmitz, Nicholas Geers,  
Bryan Burnham, Nancy Rodriguez, Aaron Barracough.





Group 6: Deconstruction, Rig #2, Kahn-mashup

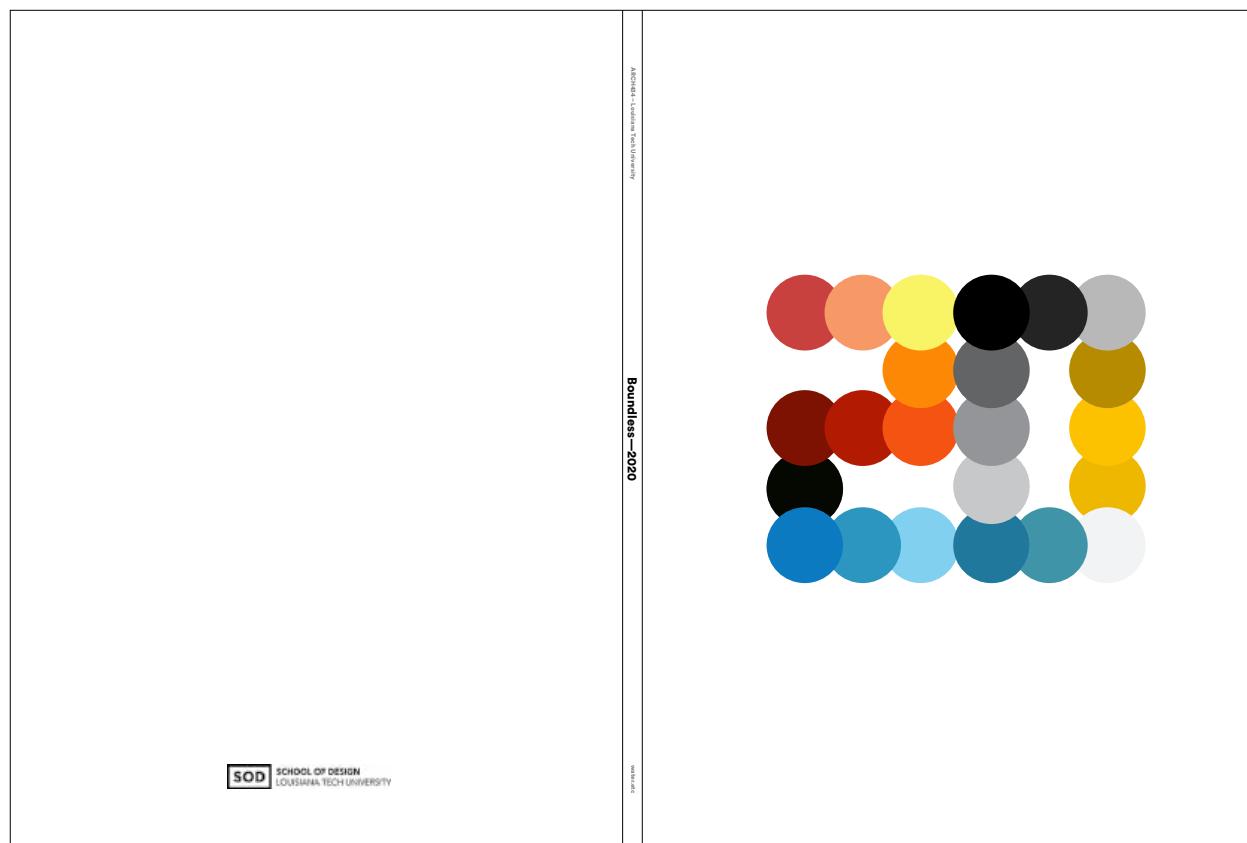


Acid Rain by Nancy Rodriguez  
Mustard Seed by Nicholas Geers

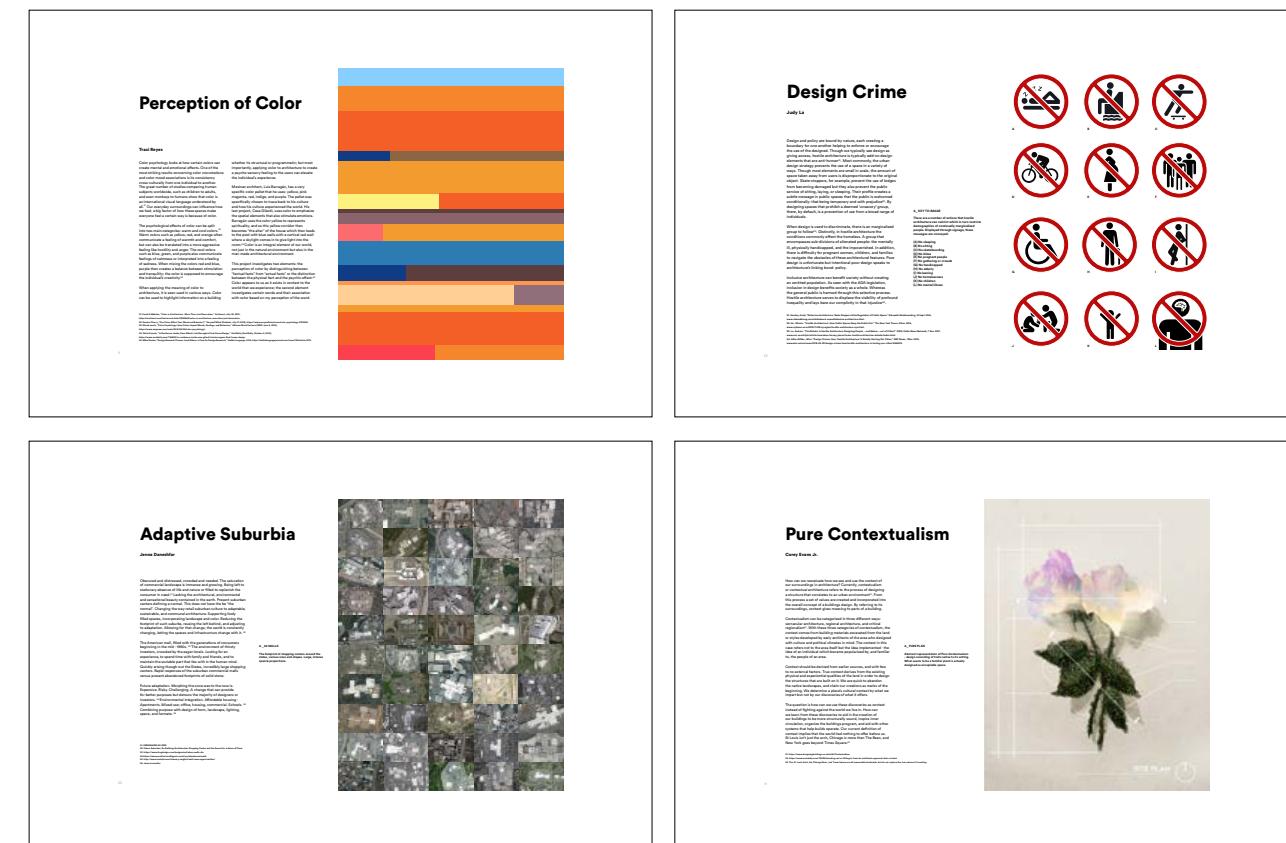
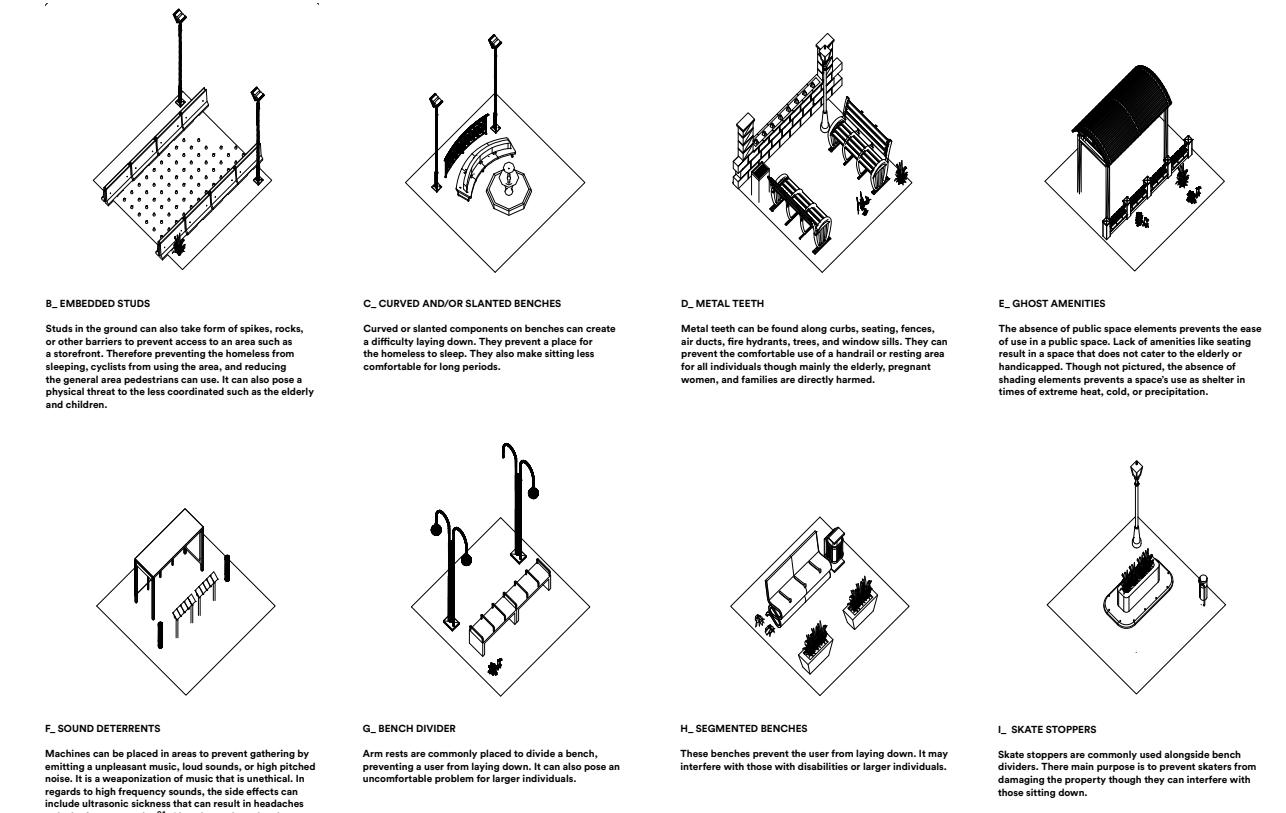
# **Journal of Theory & Criticism**

Louisiana Tech University

Between 2019 and 2021, as part of a reworked curriculum for *ARCH 434 Contemporary Theory and Criticism*, I introduced students to the idea of publishing book-making, and the history of architectural student journals. Students created a speculative final project proposing how a work of theory, criticism, or design can stake a position towards contemporary architectural issues. Together, the work assembled to form a journal known as A434. The first volume was titled *Boundless* by student editor Judy La. Projects were diverse in both type and method, with a range of articles, interviews, manifestos, design research projects, visualizations, and diagrams interrogating contemporary issues. [www.arch434.org](http://www.arch434.org)



Design and layout by Thomas Provost, faculty advisor.



Design Crime: Hostile Architecture by Judy La (top)

# Teaching Portfolio

**Thomas Provost**

Detroit, Buffalo, Louisiana, Memphis

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2022