

ON THE EDGE OF EMPATHY: AMPLIFYING THE VETERAN'S VOICE



ON THE EDGE OF EMPATHY: AMPLIFYING THE VETERAN VOICE

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By

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Primary Thesis Advisor

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Figure 1 | Cover Page, Rifle Range Training at Fort Ord
Image Credit | Hanson A. Williams, Jr.

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THESIS ABSTRACT

We live in a world of physical and conceptual edges that guide and shape our lives, and challenge us every day to choose whether to cross them or to remain within their shepherding corrals. Often we forget that edges connect different planes, worlds, and ideas, all of which, if explored, enrich the human experience. Storytelling is a vector of consciousness and is a catalyst of change, transporting one beyond the edges of preconception to a realm of understanding, where the speaker shares their experience and the audience learns new knowledge. This transforms casual listeners to interested parties, where the connection of understanding and interest grows empathy within the listeners, helping to experience the other side of the Other.

Can architecture create, promote, and foster empathy? My thesis proposes a library and interpretive center of the United States soldier experience to raise awareness of the myriad journeys of service members before, during, and after service. Sited on the California coast at decommissioned Fort Ord, the project is nestled in a bluff that marks the edge of Western Civilization, and looks across the plane of the Pacific Ocean to the Eastern world. The thesis examines how architecture can empower and amplify the veteran's voice to foster civilian empathy for United States service men and women, and reveals, over time, the strength of the veteran experience and its transcendence beyond the edges of understanding.

UNIFYING IDEA

The human condition is filled with stories of experience, all of which define a person's existence. However telling our stories is not always an easy act as we often set limits, or boundary edges, on what we divulge to those listening. We see that our narratives are not comprised of just one story, but of hundreds, if not thousands, and we are challenged to tell the whole story all the time. Desire for privacy, or questions of worthiness, of the listener or yourself, may be behind the reluctance. Or apathy in the situation is another cause . Whatever the reason, the neutral approach we take on our own stories is also projected to the stories of others. It's this edge of not knowing or not telling too much that allows the needs of others to go unnoticed.

Philosopher Edward S. Casey writes, "An edge acts not only to curtail vision and undermine motion, but also to invite exploration of its other side." (Casey, 2007) It's the exploration of the otherside, the place unknown and uncomfortable, where emotional growth happens. This thesis explores ways to challenge the edges set before us to expand understanding and empathy for others.

NARRATIVE OF THE THEORETICAL ASPECT OF THE THESIS

A prevalent edge boundary of our time is the awareness of the enlisted service member's experience before, during, and after active duty. Perhaps a result of polite acknowledgment, the civilian population chooses to not look too deeply at the physical and emotional demands of the soldiers who volunteer to serve in the armed forces. It's these stories that need to be told for the betterment of the collective knowledge of the military experience. The military is effective in transitioning a civilian to soldier, but upon discharge, the post-service support system lacks programs and funding to properly treat trauma and to reintegrate the soldier into society (Igielnik, 2019). Veterans traded their youth for the honor of protecting our country, however in exchange they return to instability, which can lead to depression, addiction, and homelessness.

The divide of understanding does not fall solely on the public shoulders. The edge of understanding is also a product of the soldier/veteran community maintaining their own reservations. A 2019 Pew Research Center poll found that a majority of veterans see themselves as more disciplined (84%) and patriotic (71%) than the general public. And of those who experienced trauma in combat, over 30% feel disconnected from loved ones (Igielnik, 2019). This mindset of the veteran as the 'other' is what Richard Sennett describes in his book Fall of the Public Man as fraternity, where "fraternity has become empathy" in speaking of those rejected from society. In this case, the veteran may perceive themselves as not necessarily rejected, but as an other class of citizen. Sennett continues, "[t]his rejection creates demands for autonomy from the outside world. For being left alone by it rather than demanding the outside world itself change" (Sennett, 266). Pulling away from the general public as a coping mechanism, or badge of distinction, deprives the general population the opportunity to understand and empathize in the veteran challenges and achievements, while also depriving the opportunity for the veteran to participate in the education of the public on military life.

THE PROJECT TYPOLOGY

I am proposing a library campus of the soldier military experience, as a place for educating the civilians and embracing veterans. The library's intent is to encourage the sharing of the soldier and veteran stories through a variety of media, including books, articles, audio interviews, and live storytelling sessions. Likewise, the complex will host a variety of spaces to support the storytelling mission: an interpretive center of the site's history; a book repository housing soldier stories; a reading room with spaces for interaction; contemplative study spaces for quiet moments; large indoor and outdoor assembly spaces; classrooms for veteran education and skill-building;

PRECEDENT RESEARCH

When determining case studies appropriate for this thesis, I looked for the following qualities:

- Typology
library and book repository
- Materiality
projects which uses a single dominate material
- Cultural Significance
project is a destination for locals and tourists and sparks a dialog between users

The precedent research focused on the following built projects

- Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
New Haven, Connecticut
- Library François Villon
Bourg-la-Reine, Paris, France
- The Therme Vals
Vals, Graubunden Canton, Switzerland

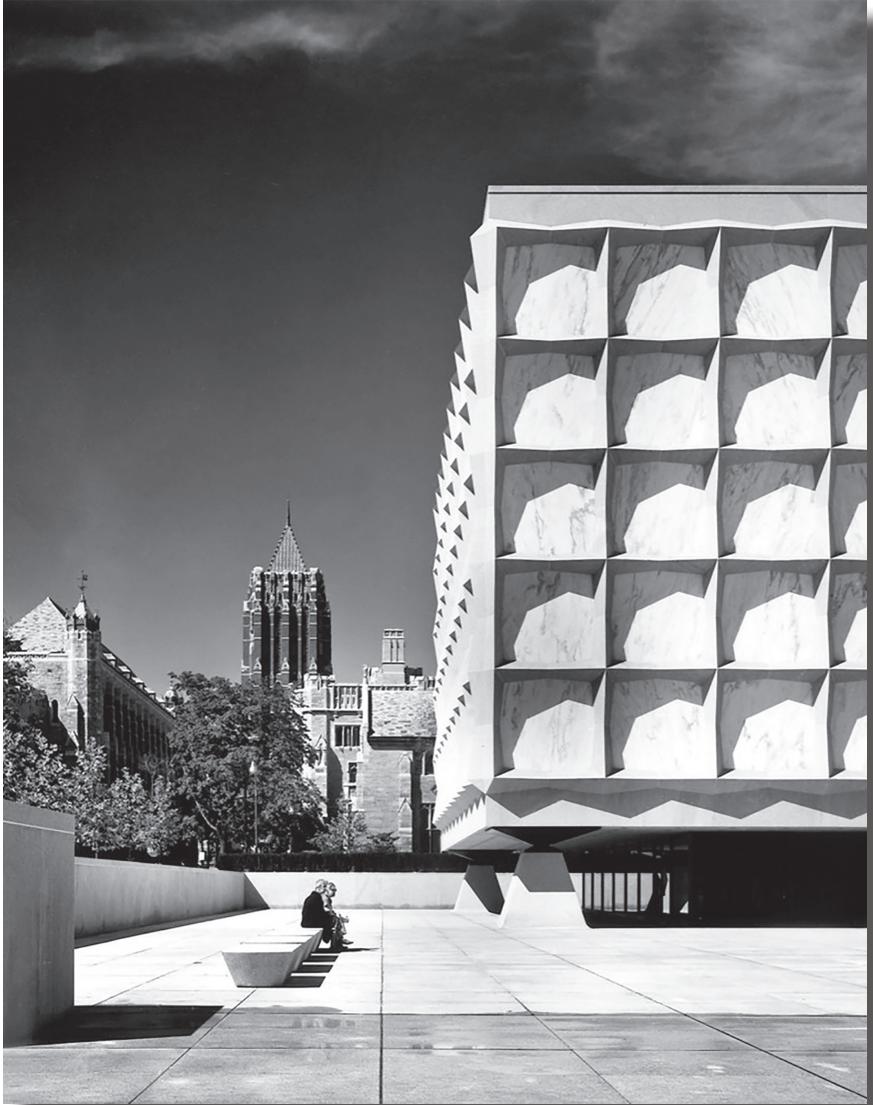


Figure 3 | Beinecke Library Exterior | archdaily.

PRECEDENT RESEARCH

BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University is a modern solution to a century-old problem: how to effectively archive rare and delicate books and manuscripts. Gordon Bunshaft's 1963 modernist structure was initially dismissed as a 'folly,' one which did not fit within the university's traditional context. As time progressed the sentiment of the white box shifted from mocked to beloved, and has become a destination for scholars and visitors of the Yale campus.

The six-story building is a mass of white marble and granite with glazing only located at the ground plane. Within the mass is an empty volume, with a glass heart that soars to the ceiling and contains a 200,000-piece rare book collection, 300 years in the making. The thinly sliced marble panels on the library's exterior allow diffused sunlight to illuminate the interior space while protecting the precious collection. Below the marble volume and the plaza outside, two levels of additional library services include stacks of over 300,000 books and millions of individual manuscripts in various types of media. A sunken courtyard featuring three sculptures by Naguchi, allows natural daylight to enter the lower level.

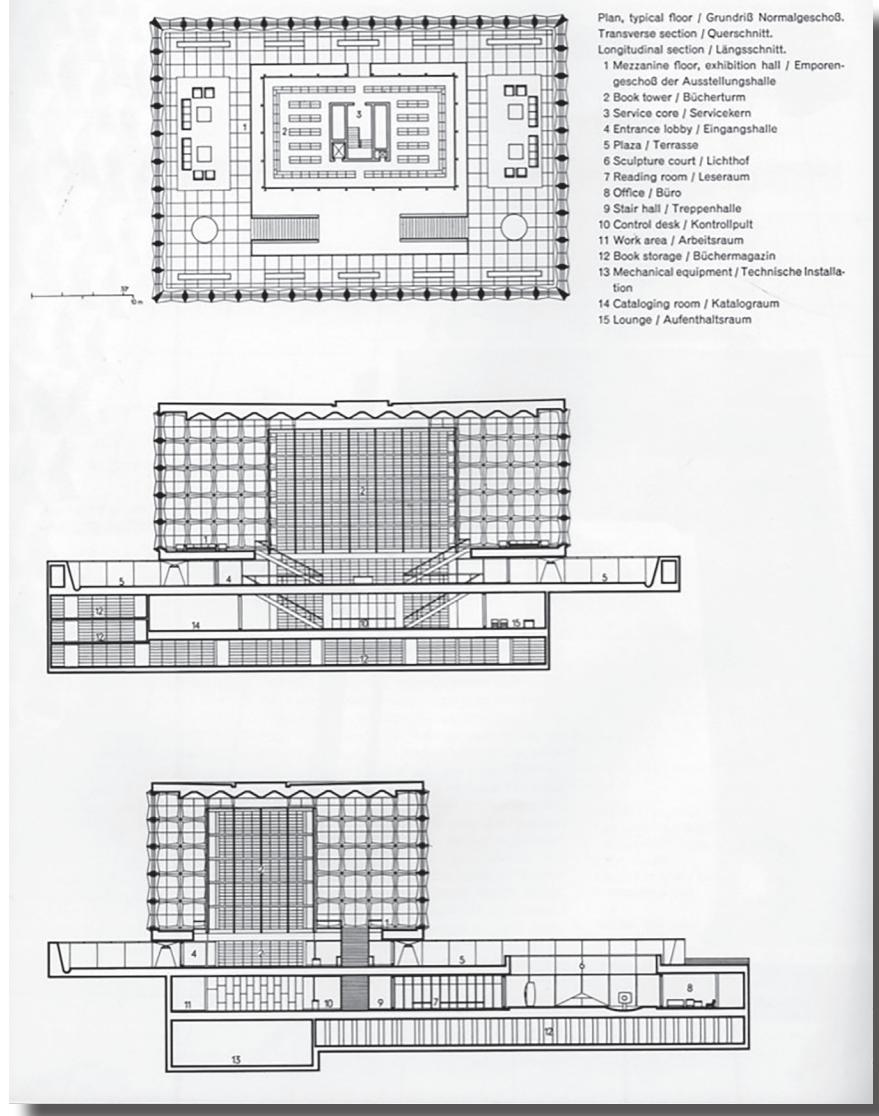


Figure 4 | Beinecke Library plan and section | archdaily

ANALYSIS

The rare book tower gives a sense of importance to the collection held within. Accessed only by library staff, the collection is still available to the general public to 'see' and makes the collection reverent yet approachable. Additional library spaces are adjacent to the main space and though in secondary position (underground), are not secondary in function. The use of the glazing on all four sides of the sunken courtyard allow daylight to reach into the lower level, making the areas feel like a primary space. Though not constructed of a single material, the minimal material palette places the focus on the content and the function of the library, with the monochrome color scheme unifying the structural elements. Sunlight provides variance in the spaces in the form of color and intensity, and aids in the atmosphere of each area.

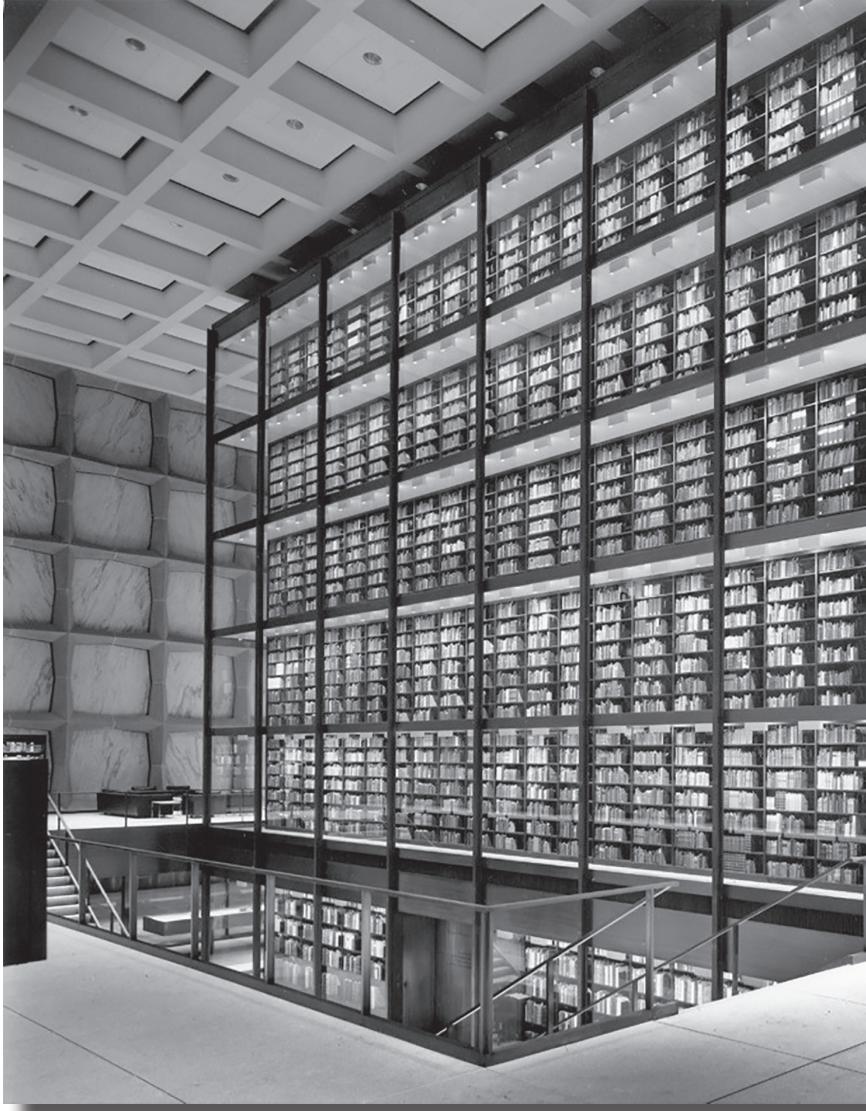


Figure 5 | Beinecke Library interior | archdaily

TAKE AWAY

A study in the Leibnitz's Law of Continuity, the Beinecke Library requires one's imagination to complete knowledge of the space. From the exterior, one is confronted with a mass with no indication of what is held inside. Once inside, the books are still not immediately accessible and provide yet another edge to pass to get more information. If not familiar with the floor plan, one may not know there are interior shelves behind the outward-facing shelves of the rare book tower, or of the additional stacks of books in the two levels below. Applying the concept of the plenum and the void, the interior of the shell is a void filled with light and knowledge; the book stacks and library services below is a plenum, also filled with knowledge and leads one to the exterior, sunken courtyard.



Figure 6 | Library interior | archdaily

PRECEDENT RESEARCH

LIBRARY FRANÇOIS VILLON Bourg-la-Reine Paris, France

Situated near the town center of a suburb south of Paris, France, the Francois Villon Library sits discretely at an intersection that separates a commercial district with a residential district. Designed around a 100-year-old black walnut tree, the library is a dynamic form that at once celebrates its mass and shows its transparency. The two-story structure completed in 2014 houses a variety of media in a small footprint. Over the 10-year design process, the library's book collection decreased by 20% as the digital collection grew. The resulting program allowed for open spaces throughout the building to connect patrons to the services, collection, outdoors, and each other.

The exterior shell is clad in gray quartzite stone tiles on both the walls and the roof, providing a uniformity in materiality, which is only interrupted with clear glazing. The street side of the library is protected with two indentations in the stone façade to designate the entry and a view into the second story volume. As the building unfolds along the perimeter edge, a courtyard deck bound by the glazed walls of the building and a stone wall of a neighboring church auto court, cascades down the gentle slope around a large walnut tree.

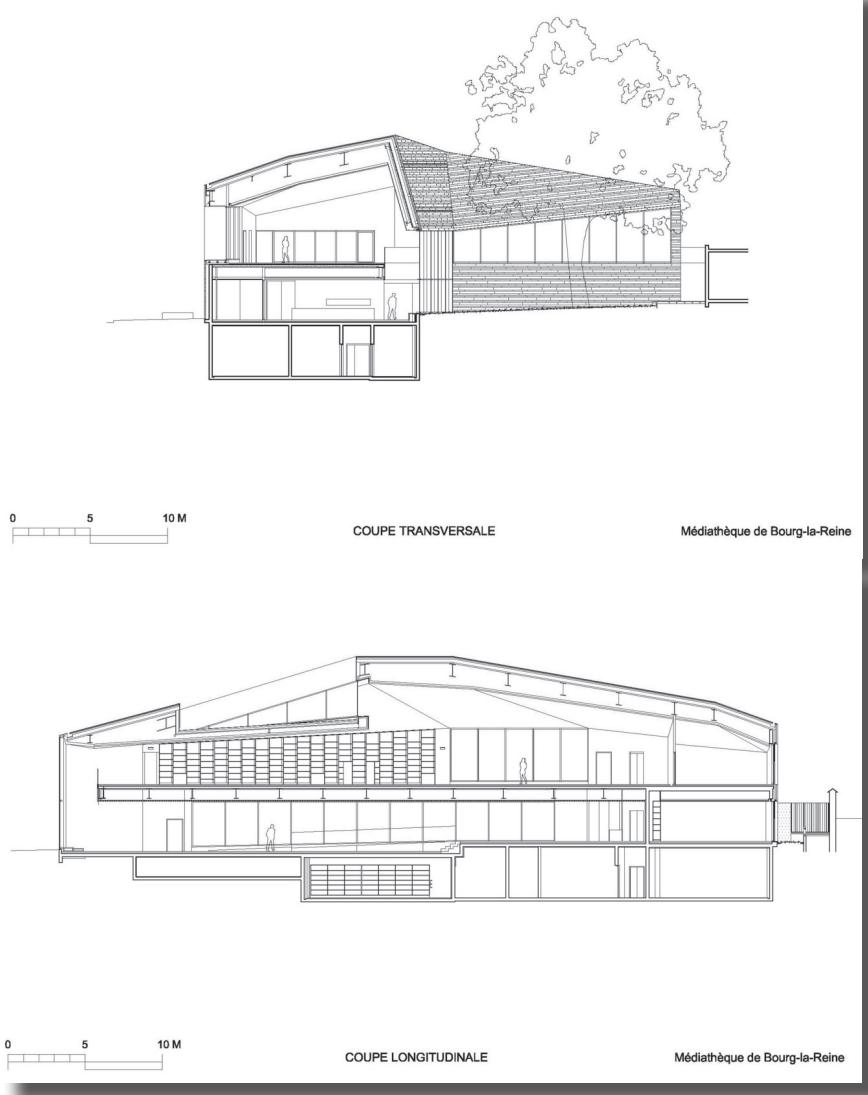


Figure 7 | Library transverse section | archdaily
 Figure 8 | Library longitudinal section | archdaily

ANALYSIS

The library fits into the context well, borrowing materiality language from neighboring buildings and reinterpreting in a modern way. The gray stone and the silver frames of the glazing echo the trunk and branch structure of the surrounding trees, effectively camouflaging the library into the neighborhood. The interior spaces seem larger than they actually are due to the open plan, with space defined by floor elevations and furniture groupings. The courtyard-facing glazing runs the full height of both stories is response to the second story pulling away from the wall, providing a connection to the two levels inside and to the courtyard outside. In fair weather, the courtyard is an additional reading area for visitors.



Figure 9 | Beinecke Library exterior courtyard | archdaily

TAKE AWAY

The François Villon Library is a place the community can connect with each other and gain knowledge from the modern media collection. Access to daylight and a variety of spaces make the small library feel larger than it is, and reinforces the concept of the outdoors is equally important as the indoors as a place for learning. The singular material on the exterior façade solidifies the building mass but allows for the building to discretely respond to the context through a series of folds that push and pull, in and out, up and down.



Figure 10 | The Therme Vals interior | dnahotels

PRECEDENT RESEARCH

THE THERME VALS

Vals

Graubunden Canton, Switzerland

Nestled in a hillside in the village of Vals, Swiss architect Peter Zumthor's 1996 thermal baths are caverns of experience in stone and water. With the grass-covered roof giving little indication of the structure below, the sensitive treatment of the landscape preserves the views from the hotel and the surrounding buildings beyond the hillside. What sets Therme Vals apart from other modern buildings is that it's not the physical building that creates the mood, but rather, it's the spaces and the way they interact with the topography that create the experience.

The caverns are formed by structural blocks 'carved' out of the mountain and are a composite of concrete and local quartzite slabs, with some areas only being surfaced in the quartzite and others in raw concrete. The blocks act as separators and enclosures for the various bath-related activities and pools. Both intimate and cavernous, the spaces within the blocks offer a duality of being

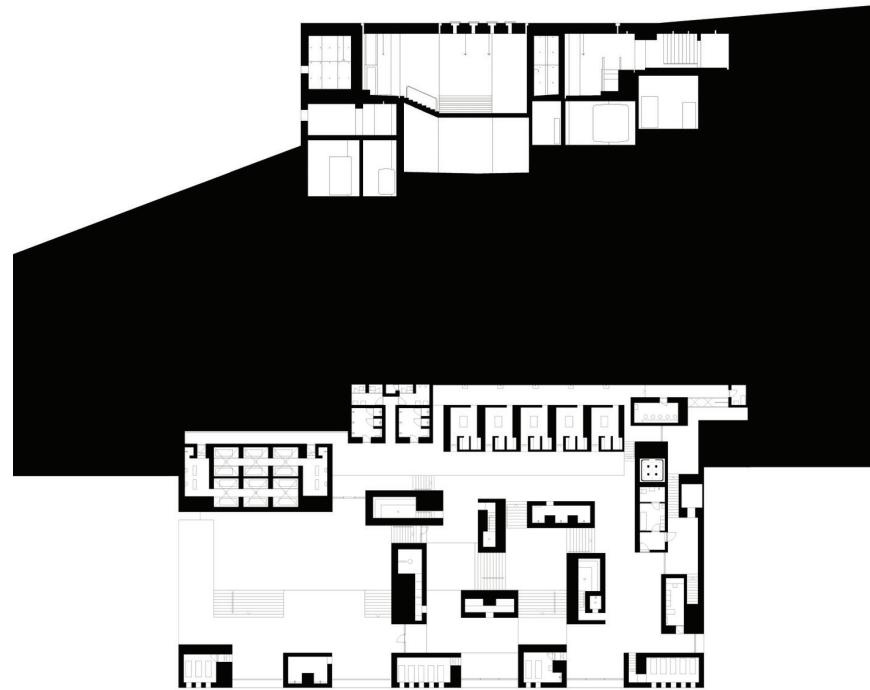


Figure 11 | The Therme Vals section and plan | archdaily

underground, yet experiencing the weightlessness of outer space while submerged in the water. Slits in the ceiling allow light to penetrate from above, faintly illuminating the interior pools and offering hint of the light one encounters from large openings in the wall when they reach the perimeter of the building, either indoors or outdoors. Capped by flat roof planes covered in wild grasses, the pools' footprint is scarcely understood in the grid of top lights embedded in the grass, the building's expansion joints, and is hardly noticeable from the hotel next door.



Figure 12 | The Therme Vals roof | Walter Scharer

ANALYSIS

The marrying of the materials makes Therme Vals a success in that of a monolithic entity. Though the concrete, stone, glass, bronze and brass are distinctive in their use, their complementary application gives the perception of a unified building element. Zumthor considers concrete to be "liquid stone" (Hauser, 2007) and developed a construction method specifically for this project to merge the stone panels with the poured concrete, this creating a single material for the baths. The other material most prevalent is water, one which can be experienced with all the human senses. The water creates planes and blurs edges within the spaces of Therme Vals, where surface modulation distorts the solid architecture underneath it and dances with the light both above and below. The stone changes color from the water below the surface, or by footprints on the floors leading from one room to the next. Time is both marked and blurred by every drip, splash, gush, and gulp that echoes within the caverns of the baths, and in a rare interaction with the materiality of the architecture, the water can be consumed by visitors at a faucet trickling water directly from the spring.



Figure 13 | The Therme Vals interior | archdaily

TAKE AWAY

Therme Vals is an experience that brings visitors to the tiny village of Vals in southeast Switzerland. The integration of the project into the topography is successful due to the careful manipulation of the transition from underground to above ground. The spaces within are designed to delight and engage the senses, and provide a path for exploration travel. One can be fully submerged in the interior environment of the caverns, and with a few moves can emerge to an open sky and views to the Valser Valley beyond. The limited material palette is regarded for its simplicity and understated elegance, and focuses the attention to the experience within.

PRECEDENT RESEARCH SUMMARY

The three case studies I explored range in size and location, but all have the unifying elements of materiality expression, spatial experience, and cultural significance. These three elements are the qualities I aim to embody in this thesis project. The monumental scale of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library gives patrons a sense of awe while focusing attention to the library's attention. The intimate nature of the Library François Villon and its connection to the outdoor courtyard are the qualities I wish to emulate in this project. And the exploratory journey one experiences in the Therme Vals is a quality I want the library visitors experience as they walk through the project.

MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS

LIBRARY

Storytelling is the primary focus of the project, with four distinct spaces for this occurrence:

- Interpretive Center
stories of the location's past and its involvement in military efforts
- Story Hall
a library reading room and active forum for stories and discussion
- Book Repository
a growing collection of stories of experience
- Tower of Stories
a tower of spaces to engage with the edge of the Pacific Ocean, culminating at the top level with a platform to tell your story to the world

ASSEMBLY SPACE

- Assembly Hall
a large open hall for gatherings; the hall is flexible in how it is used.
- Courtyard
large outdoor court for contemplation, ceremony, memorial, and honor
- Classrooms
rooms for meeting, training, and therapy
- Café
a space for nourishment and conversation

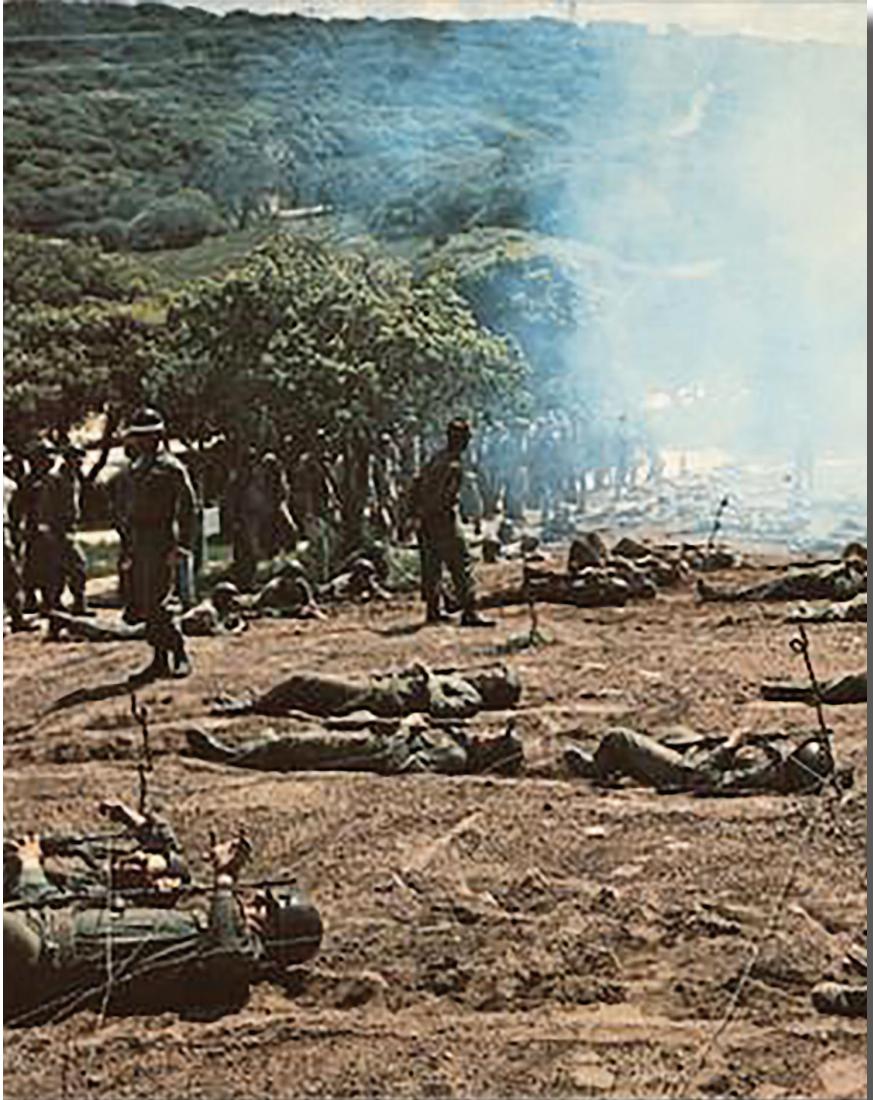


Figure 14 | Fort Ord Postcard 1 | Darlene Thorne Collection

SITE

Fort Ord in Marina, California, was one of the largest military installations in the United States. It was decommissioned in 1996. Situated on the coast 90 minutes south of San Francisco, the base stretched from the Pacific Ocean eastward into the rolling coastal mountains. The variety of topography of this area lead to the establishment of an artillery training field location for the US Army in 1917. The site gained fort status in 1940 and acted as a staging and training camp for soldiers being deployed to the Pacific in WWII, Korean and Vietnam wars.

The sand dunes along the beach proved to be the ideal soldier- silent, strong, and self-healing, as the rolling coastal mountains endured the abuse of grenades and bombs. An exercise in edges, the former base still maintains the separations that were developed over several decades of operation:

The Monterey Bay was a busy fishing and canning port in the late 19th century and is now a marine preserve; the sandy beaches and the dunes that tower over them; the scenic Pacific Coast Highway running alongside the dunes; and perimeter trees that offer privacy to the housing on the edges of the base. These all separate the land from the neighboring communities.

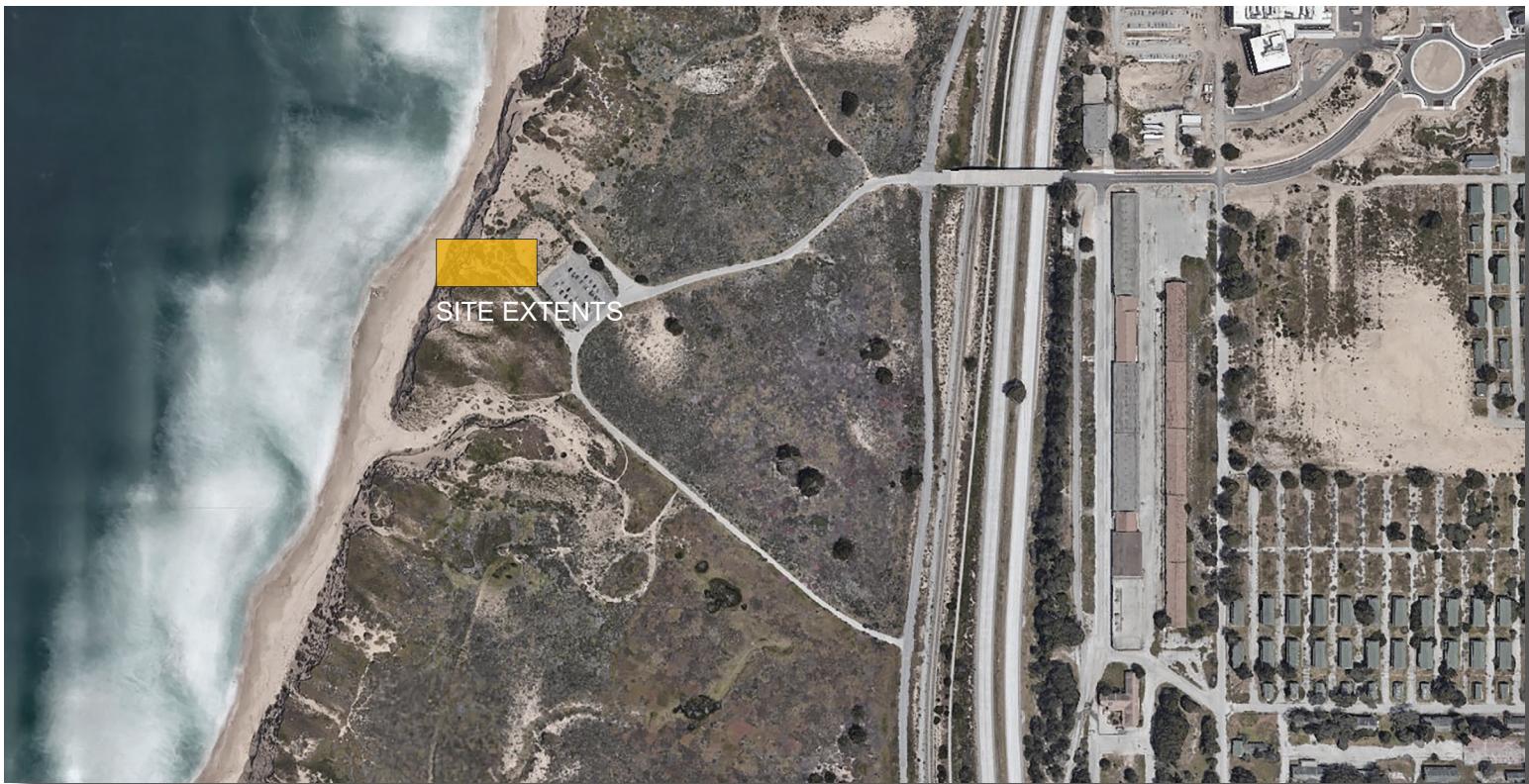


Figure 15 | Fort Ord | GoogleEarth

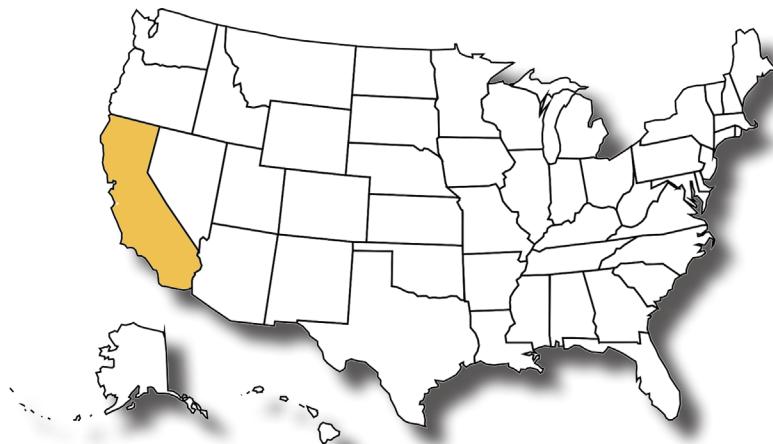


Figure 16 | United States | pngkit.com



Figure 17 | California | pngkit.com



Figure 18 | Soldiers Club | nimst.tripod.com



Figure 19 | Stilwell Hall | Gary Griggs

SITE SELECTION

The project site is on and within the sand dunes that line the ocean edge, across the highway from the former base housing and a short distance from the California State University Monterey Bay. The project on this site will be to some a memento to those who were stationed at Fort Ord, but to most of the visitors it will be palimpsest, a new life built on the faded remains of the past.

Stilwell Hall, or informally known as the soldiers' club, was perched on the top of the dunes until 2003 when it was demolished due to the eroding escarpment below. What remains of the soldier's club is the elevated driveway that loops in from the nearby access road. This site was chosen for the fond memories soldiers stationed at Fort Ord have of Stilwell Hall and its proximity to the beach. As place for unwinding, the hall was a source of positive memories for veterans, and the location may help generate conversation about military life.



Figure 20 | Looking east from site | D. Badilla

USER / CLIENT DESCRIPTION

The client is the United States Department of Defense in partnership with the California State Park Administration.

USER GROUPS

| | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| Veterans | 1 – 100 |
| Local Community Members | 1 – 60 |
| Students | 1 – 60 |
| Tourists | 1 – 60 |
| Library Staff | 20 – 30 |

CONSIDERATIONS

Storytelling Spaces

Natural light
Flexible rooms to accommodate a variety of storytelling techniques
Expanded ADA accommodations

Assembly Spaces

Flexible spaces
Chair and table storage
Expanded ADA accommodations

THE PROJECT EMPHASIS

- Provide a forum to foster empathy

Bringing veterans, active service members, military families, and the community together to exchange stories and deepen the understanding of experience of military service and the effects and impacts on each of their lives.

- Create a cultural experience through spaces as the storytellers

Culture is a learned behavior. Exposing a wide variety of people to the military experience and the effects that are physical and emotional, a culture of empathy may result, aiding in the support for veterans and service members.

- Placemaking

Providing a destination for people to visit to gain a sense of peace, comrodarie, community, and celebration.

- Integrate sustainable systems

Respecting the site is as important as respecting the experience. The goal is to design a building complex that sits comfortably and responsibly on a sensitive location, using sustainable systems to ensure the project's future impact on the environment is minimal.

GOALS OF THE THESIS PROJECT

Libraries have long been a reservoir of knowledge; knowledge that is shared and stored in various media. I aim to design a library complex that promotes a context where people challenge the edges of their minds, and that of the site. A place where visitors explore beyond the edges of doorways and corners, walking through narrow passages, where courtyards and plazas emerge, and people will meet and interact; places where people find stories of past experience and feel compelled to share stories of their own.

TIMELINE

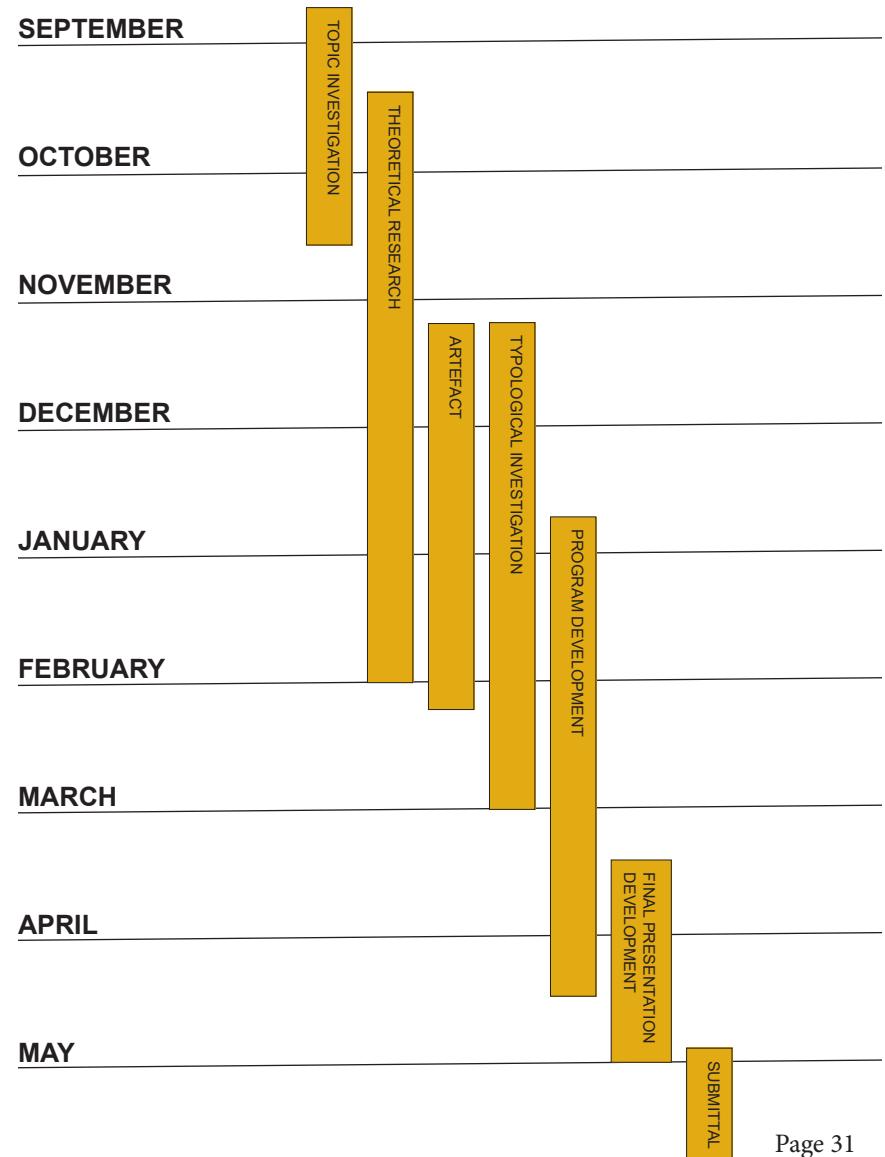


Figure 21 | Process Timeline | D. Badilla

A PLAN FOR PROCEEDING

DESIGN

Artefact Development

I look to explore further the potential for amplifying the veteran voice through the artefact. For the gallery installation in the spring, I am challenged to convey the message of the artefact without being present and in a space that is significantly brighter than the darkened room which I initially designed for the artefact.

Building Development

The majority of the design will be through physical modeling and presentation to peers. Digital modeling with 3D modeling software will have a role in design development and documentation.

RESEARCH

Literature

I am reading the 2001 novel “Austerlitz” by W.G. Sebald to further understand the concepts of palimpsest and memento. I will make further connections with Rumiko Handa’s essay which analyzed “Austerlitz” and the role architecture plays in memory recall.

Stories and Interviews

Looking deeper into the idea of empathy, I’ll find stories of the soldier experience in print and video, and conduct interviews with veterans.



Figure 22 | Looking south from site | D. Badilla

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

I come from an extended family of military service, yet I did not follow the path of my cousins, or set the trail for my two younger brothers. Fortunately in my family, the military experience has been mostly positive, but the few stories I've heard of others close to them, those who experienced difficulties during and post service, have always stuck with me. My own empathy for the soldier grew out of learning of the struggle that follows them into civilian life. I feel that I have the opportunity to shed light on the topic of empathy for the soldier, and to start the conversation that a place specifically for the soldier stories is a necessary part of the transition from soldier to civilian.

Several of my past projects have been on a smaller scale, residential or office space. I wanted to do something in a larger institutional scale to expand my skill set in programming to multiple needs. While this thesis could have easily been based on purely on statistical knowledge, the theoretical approach that I learned this year help me broaden my understanding of not just the specific needs of the soldiers, but also in understanding the needs in human nature. I feel the duel approach of philosophy with data will strengthen any project I work on, thus showing the profession that data and budgets are only a portion of the successful design.

While this project would require significant funding , the return on this investment would be Initially intangible, however over time, the qualitative benefits of social interaction and the exchange of knowledge become tangible in the form of increased visitors. Post occupancy, the impacts of the project are intended to extend beyond the boundaries of the library. The idea of growing empathy in the general population would then lead to increased support for veteran services from the United States government. The project aims to reveal the challenges and successes in military life. Often as civilians we try to equate our own lives with that of a soldier, but in addition to balancing jobs, family and friends, the rigors of military experience add additional layers of stress on the soldier.

Siting the library on the grounds of a decommissioned army base in California, at the physical edge of the western world, I use the physical context to bring visitors in. The project for veterans and soldiers is a palimpsest built on the remains of the beloved soldiers club, a place for relaxation and fun, which long ago succumbed to the erosion of the sand dunes. Open to the public, the library will also pique the interest of the civilian tourist or the local visitor who's had a strong curiosity of the base when it was in use. In the social context, the idea of bringing the soldier and the civilian together, to share stories, and to build bridges of empathy, will make commonplace a forum for soldiers and veterans to open up about their experience, and likewise, make the civilian more receptive to said stories.

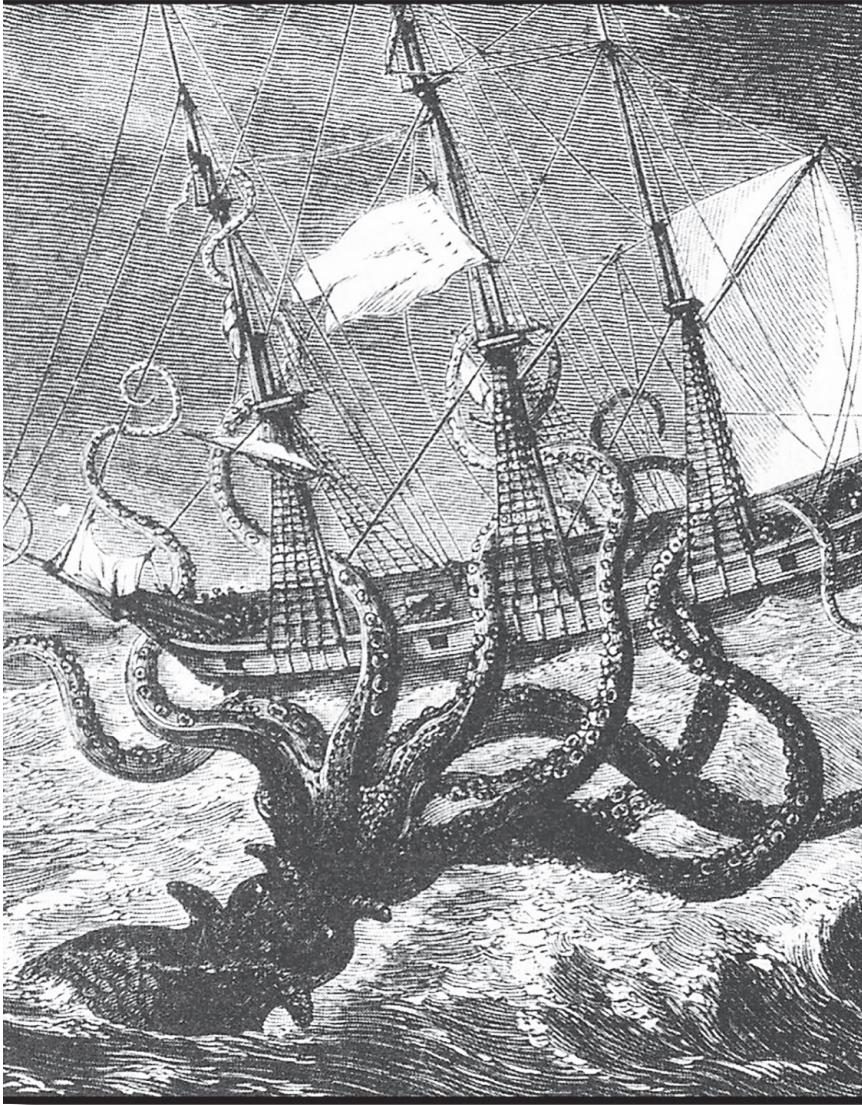


Figure 23 | “The Kraken, as seen by the eye of imagination.” | J. Gibson

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

We encounter edges at all scales, From a sheet of paper, to walls and fences, to oceans and mountains. Whether in our imaginations or in real life we have to determine what to do about the edge and what, if obscured, is not in view. The ancient Greek sailors had a fear of the edge and what lied beyond the Columns of Hercules, or today, the Strait of Gibraltar. Philosopher Edward S. Casey asserts that we've learned to observe edges through a series of quick glances that note distinguishable features, and through scanning, a gesture that continually surmises the landscape of the edge without the eye stopping in one particular location (Casey,2003). The Greek sailors thought that only evil existed out in the primeval waters of the ends of the world; it was the brave who dared to look beyond the Columns of Hercules from the Mediterranean Sea and enter into the vast unknown of the Atlantic Ocean. Like the greek sailors, we as individuals and as a society are challenged to look past the edge boundries we place on ourselves. When we open our minds to that of the unknown, we are open to encounter a broader understanding of our world.



Figure 24 | Monterey Coast | Jay Dunn

The Law of Continuity introduced by 17th century polymath, Leibniz, advocated of a world of continuity and plenitude (Casey,2003); one which holds no surprises because nature never makes leaps and therefore has no gaps. Leibniz's world is full and dense, where the unknown is filled by the imagined continuance of nature. When fog shrouds the shoreline, the trees and land still exist even if we cannot see them. This continuance allows us to know that there is more than can be seen, and that the world exists not on edges but between the edges, what is described as the folds.

As edges define a space, it is within the folds where we live and cultivate the experience of life. The Greek sailors remained along the shore's edges, and through the Law of Continuity, they imagined a world full of dangerous creatures in the folds beyond. But they did not imagine the possibility of other lands across the ocean. They believed the water as a void filled with fear and failed to consider the water as a membrane, or a plenum, a container of another space. When a plenum is considered, there is a fullness with the entirety of mass and emptiness (Casey,2003).

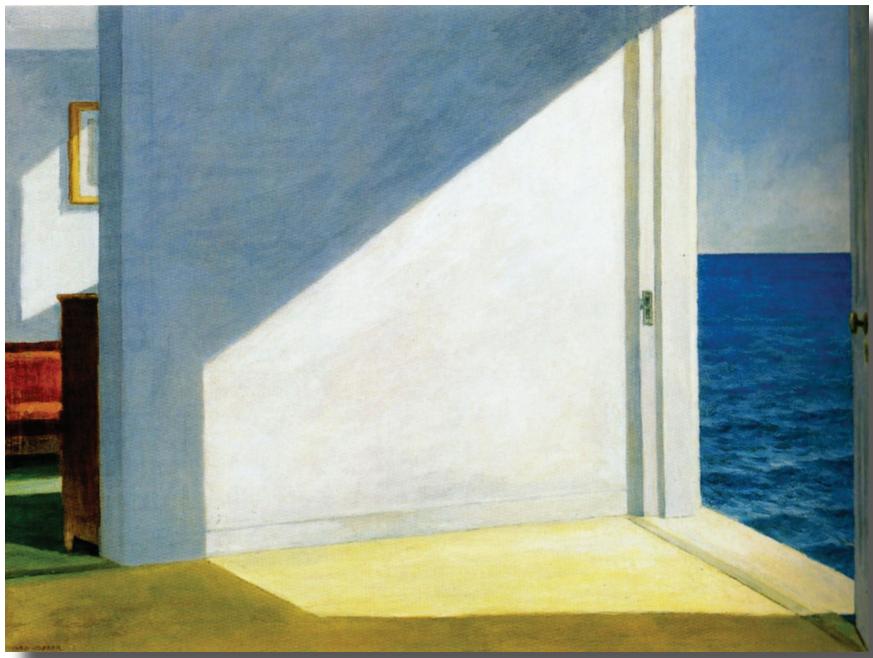


Figure 25 | Rooms by the Sea | Edward Hopper

Casey's examination of De Chirico's 1913 "Nostalgia of the Infinite" is an example of the edge experience and the continuity beyond. Created on the precipice of WWI, the painting features an imposing tower, inviting questions of the visible and invisible, the empty and the full, and the continuous and discontinuous (Casey, 2003). When prompted to look past the edges, we are encouraged to use our imagination to perceive the happenings on the other side. We tend to imagine what we know, based on the law of continuity, which there may be nothing but the existing landscape, but in actuality, there may be something much more interesting, calming, or frightening.

Another illustration of the connection beyond the known edges is found in Edward Hopper's painting "Rooms by the Sea". It is a series of edges that implore the viewer to look into the vastness of the ocean, imagining what lies beyond. The painting's open door shows no intermediate ground to the water. The observer is left to inquire of what is below and beyond the door. Are there steps? Is there a cliff? Does the water lap against the side of the building? What's in the horizon? When considering the law of continuity we can image that the world does not abruptly end at the horizon, but rather, continues across the Atlantic to the Strait of Gibraltar joining the Greek sailors to the unknown world through the plenum of the ocean.

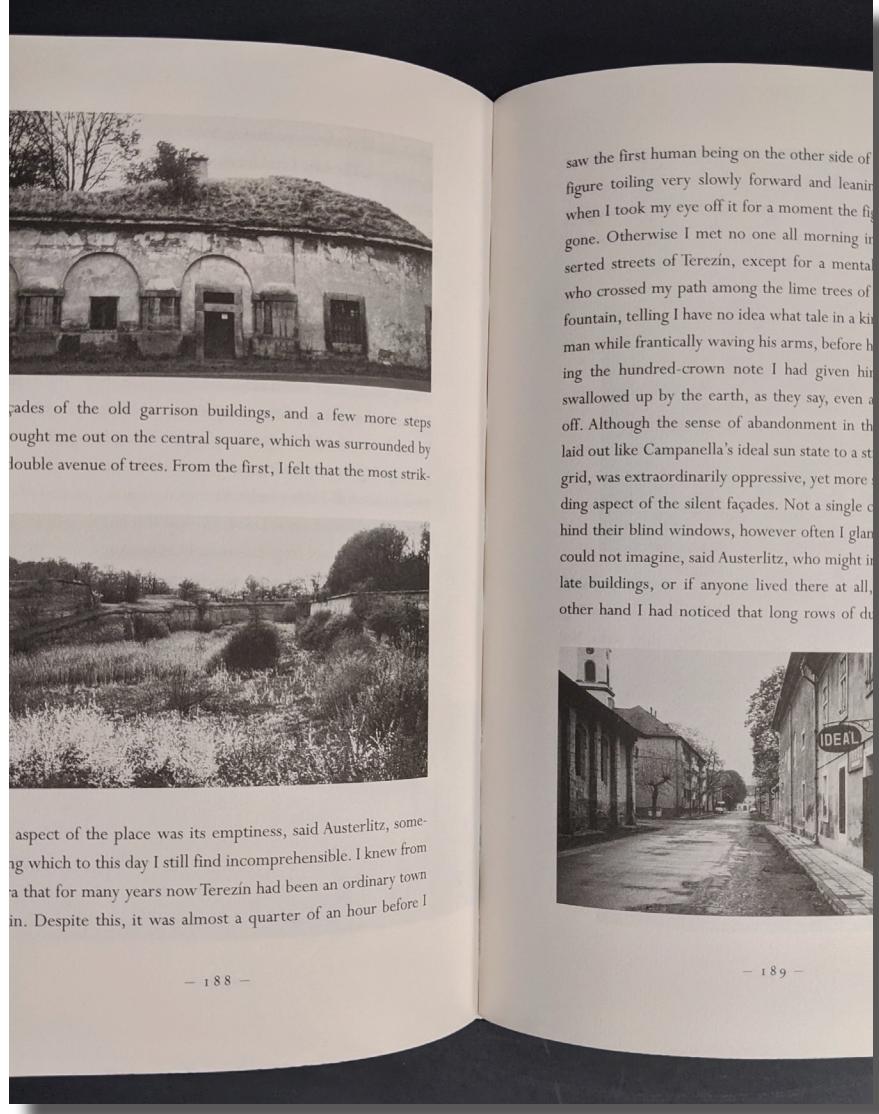


Figure 26 | Austerlitz, W.G. Sebald | D. Badilla

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Architectural educator and theorist Rumiko Handa examines WG Sebald's 2001 novel *Austerlitz* as an example of exploring the experience in the context of fiction in real places and real architecture. Identifying edge conditions as memory from experience in architecture Handa discusses the phenomena of memento and palimpsest in architecture through passages of the novel; on how memory and place is interconnected.

A memory built on events, a memento is not intrinsically tied to the architecture, but rather, to the event being contained in the space. The event can be held anywhere and when it's over, ideally leaves no physical trace behind. The events leave a lasting memory in one's self: the memory of sight, sound, scent, taste, temperature, etc., but can be held in any location

A memory tied to a real place, as Handa describes, is a palimpsest (Handa, 2018). A place which one has experienced in the past and the experience is intrinsic to the architecture. It builds on the foundations and remains of historical material of one's own experience, and also is dependent on all the senses being activated. The sensory experience will not only remain in one's mind, but if the memory was significant enough, it will dwell in one's soul.



Figure 27 | Chinese New Year in London | Timeout.com



Figure 28 | Sporkova 12 | Andrew Goodall

Figure 29 | Sporkova Street | Vintage Postcard



PRAHA. Z MALE' STRANY.
Toto neu' snat muij vymysel alle
je to u nato jakejne' nepravosti
zaklonevu. Z obrazu se zavim pre-
svedca's je je dobr' lat.
Chciho pozdravio Tobe i charme a
muky pat' dou' mil. paui'malince
M.H. 1908
Na shledaniou a pat'lat! chtudy.

"...it was as if I already been this way before and memories were revealing themselves to me not by means of any mental effort but through my senses."

-W.G. Sebald, Austerlitz



Figure 30 | Liverpool Street Station c.1969 | Rob Baker

Sebald's *Austerlitz*: The story of a Welsh architectural historian who learned at the death of his mother that he was adopted at the age of 4 during WWII and his birth name was Jacques Austerlitz. After retiring in 1991, Austerlitz searched beyond the boundaries of his known world of Great Britain for his lost past in the Czech Republic and Paris, where various places triggered hidden and sometimes painful memories of his childhood.

Sebald uses actual places in Austerlitz's story to concretize the connection of the built environment to the memory. When Austerlitz waited in Liverpool station, memories of his childhood flickered in his mind bringing forth something he couldn't quite comprehend, but he knew existed.

The train station as a palimpsest, unlocked a series of recollections of arriving in London as part of the Kindertransport rescue of WWII, where Jewish children were smuggled to England to escape the horrors of the concentration camps.

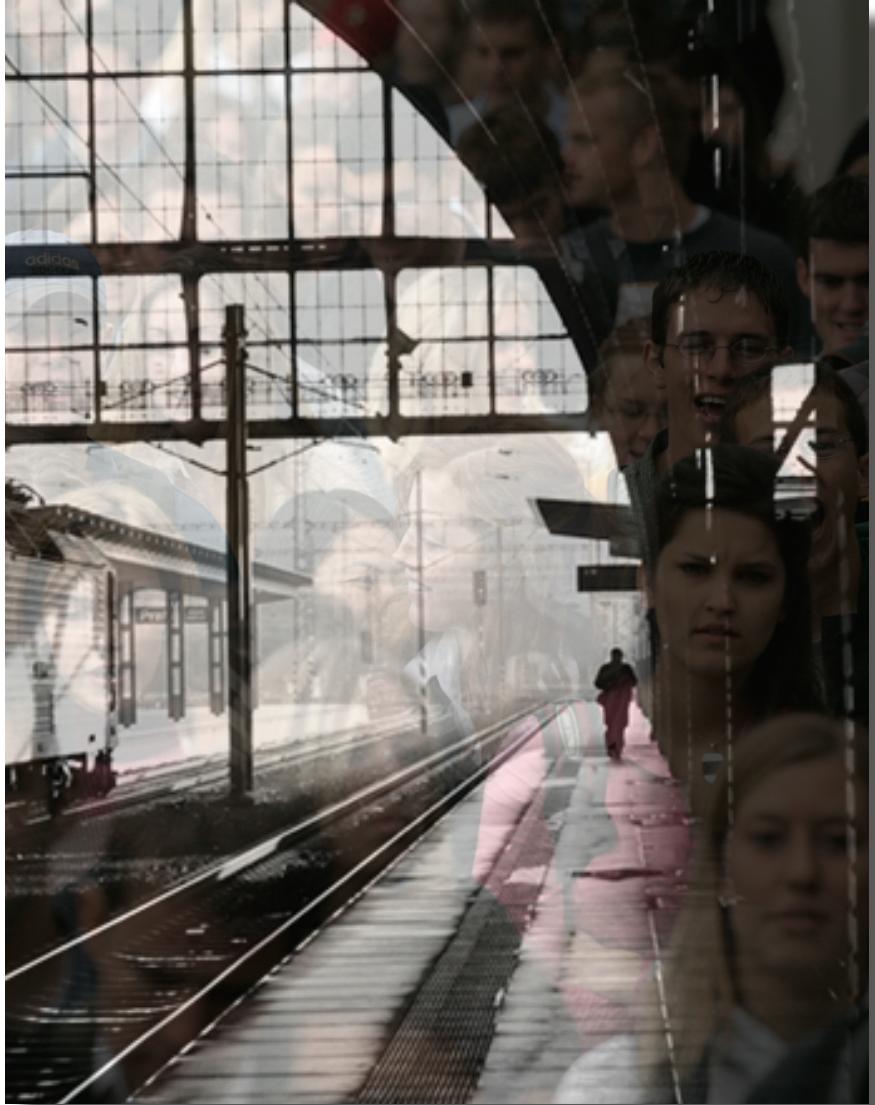


Figure 31 | Train Station | Kathrine Fitz

Austerlitz is told through an anonymous acquaintance of the character Austerlitz, in the first person. This type of narrative opened the opportunity for the reader to feel his experience and how Liverpool station and the streets of Prague are memento for him.

Empathy results as the memento transitions to a palimpsest, as new memories (Austerlitz's) are built upon our own experiences. This results in creation of collective consciousness, and we now perceive Austerlitz's experience as our own. This transformation of personal stories is the basis of my proposal, to create a bridge of all facets of military life to the civilian population, connecting young and old, and bending and blurring the edges of past establishment.



Figure 32 | Atrefact 1 | D. Badilla

ARTEFACT

STORYTELLING AND PARTICIPATION

The way I explored of the idea of the edge of experience was through an artefact. A physical interpretation of philosophical readings, the artefact is a linear progression of edges designed to multiply and amplify the soldier's voice. In a darkened room, users participate by placing their own mobile phones within the artefact, while playing a video of a soldier's experience, a recitation of the poem "Dulce et Decorum Est" by Wilfred Owen. Whether with one phone or several, the images are reflected and refracted on the acrylic surfaces, multiplied and layered, while echoing the voice of the soldier within the chambers of the artefact.

Dulce et Decorum Est

Wilfred Owen

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.
In all my dreams before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.



Figure 33 | Artefact 2 | D. Badilla



Figure 34 | Artefact 3 | D. Badilla



Figure 35 | Artefact 4 | D. Badilla



Figure 36 | Site | Google Earth

SITE ANALYSIS

LOCATION

Fort Ord, the largest military base on American soil that has been decommissioned, is rich in history yet is mostly abandoned 23 years after its closure in 1996. Through revitalization efforts, portions of the base have experienced a renaissance in either reuse of existing structures or new development altogether, and slowly the base's edges are blending into the surrounding civilian communities of Marina and Seaside. Standing out as a not-so-gentle reminder of the past are the deteriorating soldier barracks that line the western edge of the base; a haunting mass of rotting wood and broken glass that whisper the stories of thousands of soldiers who once occupied the spaces. Across the Pacific Coast Highway is the former location of Stilwell Soldier Club, now a parking lot for the Fort Ord Dunes State Park.

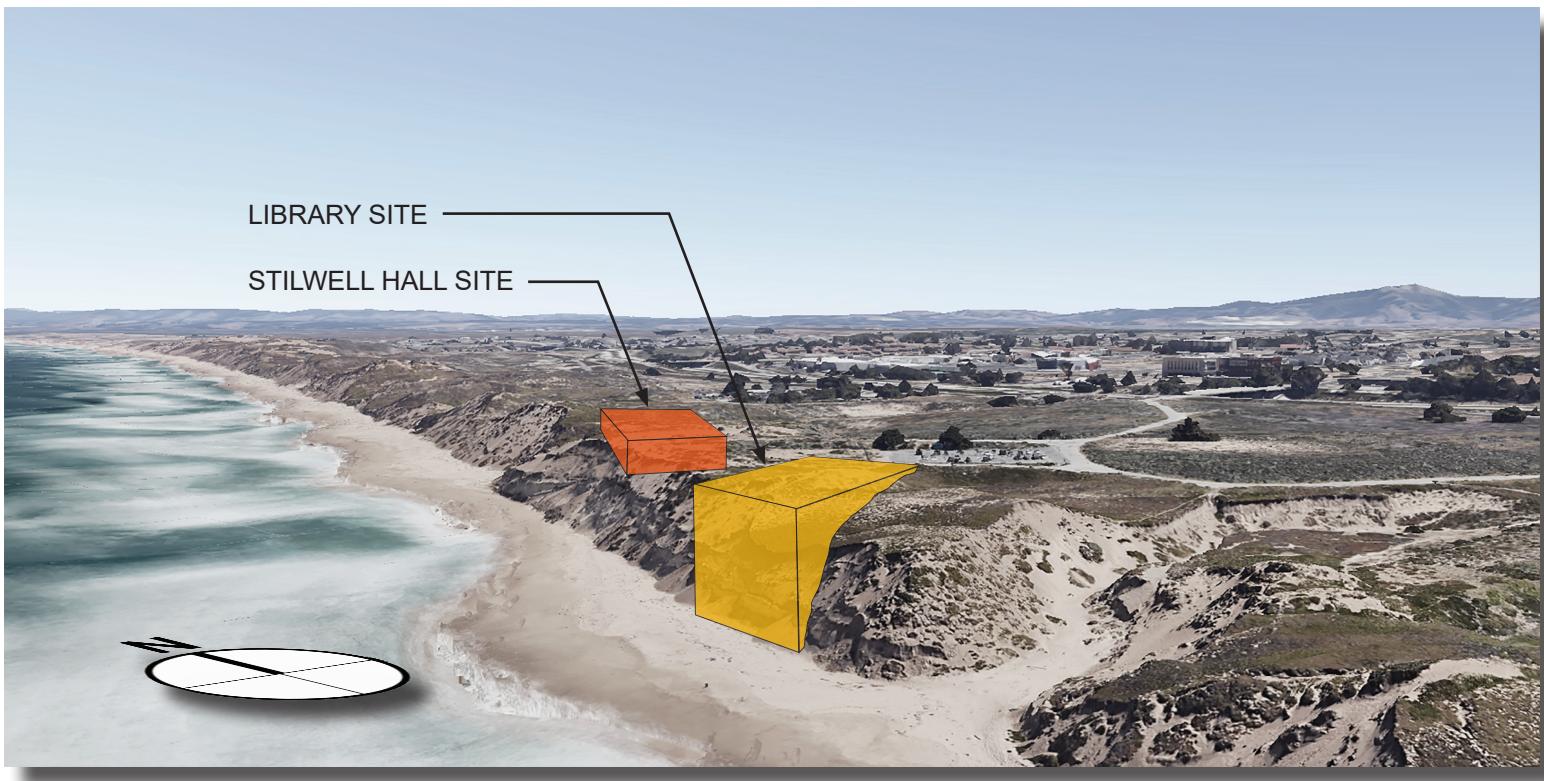


Figure 37 | Site | Google Earth

SITE

As the land's edge recedes east-ward, the topography rises; Ocean wind carries sand up the escarpment edge, continually adding to the elevation, even as the walls below are crumbling to the beach. Stilwell Hall was seated approximately 75 feet above the beach, 10 feet lower than the 85 foot escarpment edge today. The top of the sandy dunes are covered in low-lying coastal scrub an dotted with Monterey cypress trees twisting in the wind.

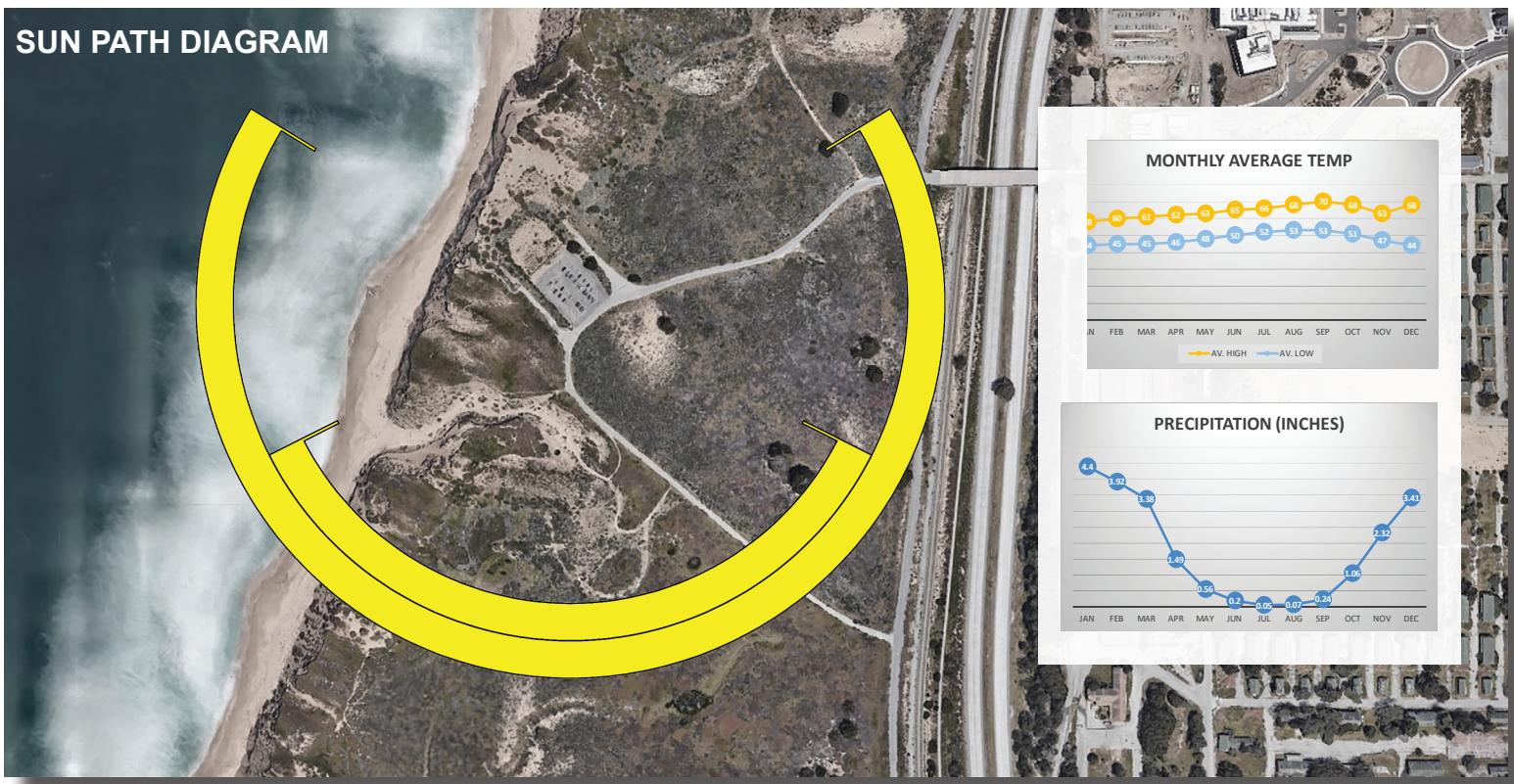


Figure 38 | Site | Google Earth

SITE CLIMATE - Zone 3
Sun Path
Temperature
Precipitation

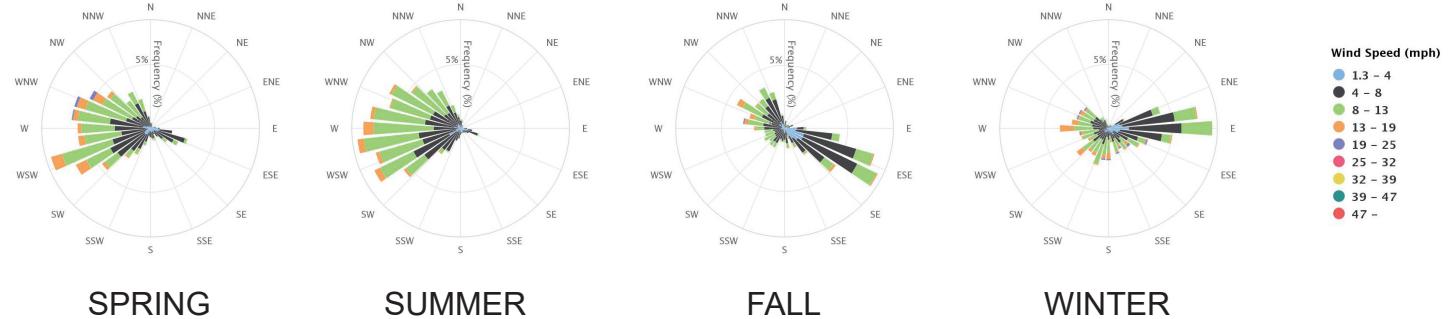
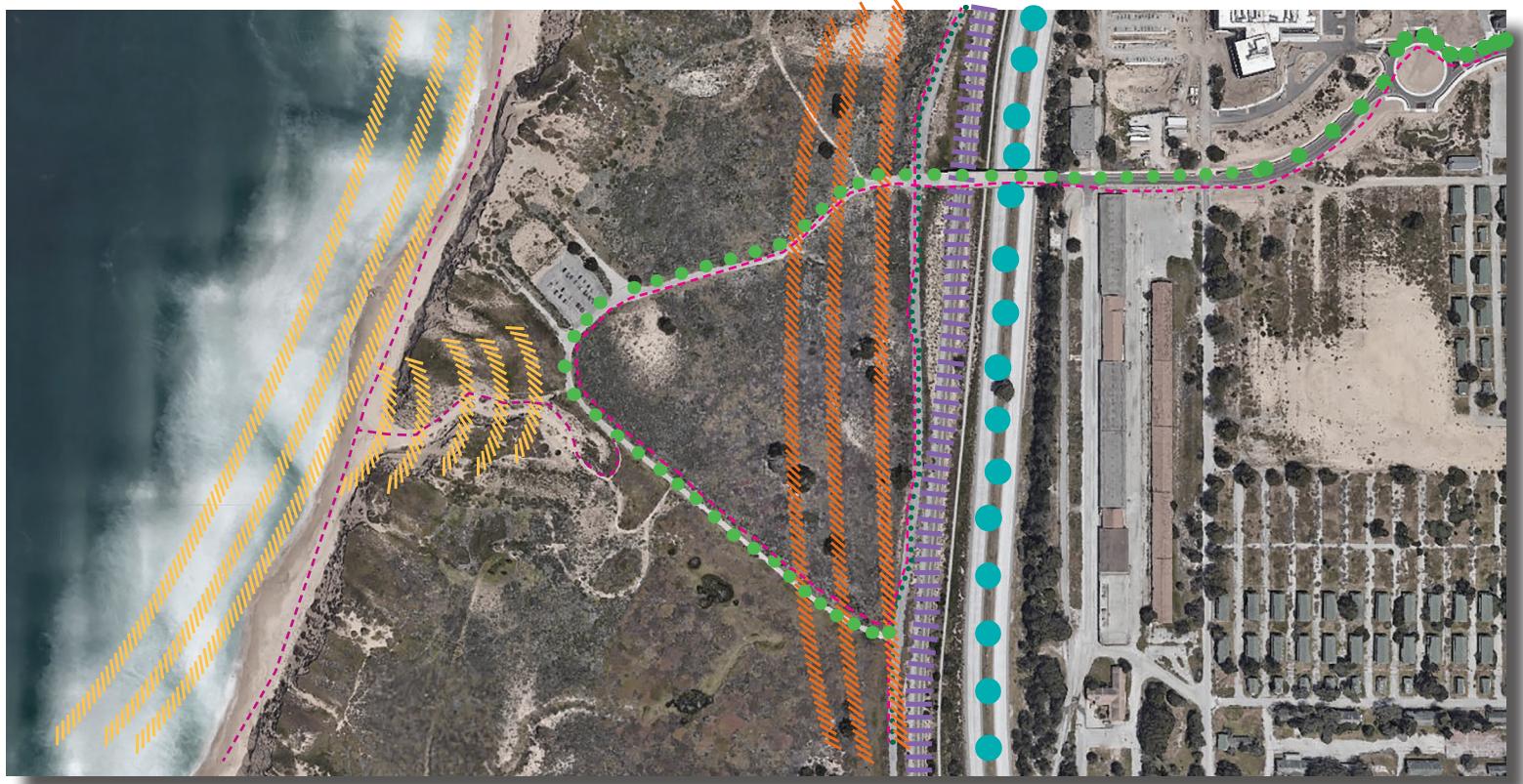


Figure 39 | Site | Google Earth
 Figure 40 | Wind Roses |



LEGEND

- A legend consisting of six entries, each with a colored icon followed by a label. The icons are: a purple vertical bar for RAILROAD, a green dotted line for MINOR ACCESS ROAD, a green horizontal bar with dots for ACCESS ROAD, a teal circle for FREEWAY, a pink dashed line for PEDESTRIAN ACCESS, an orange diagonal hatched bar for NOISE - FREEWAY, and a yellow diagonal hatched bar for NOISE - FROM WAVES.

SITE CONDITIONS

Transportation Access Noise

Figure 41 | Site | Google Earth

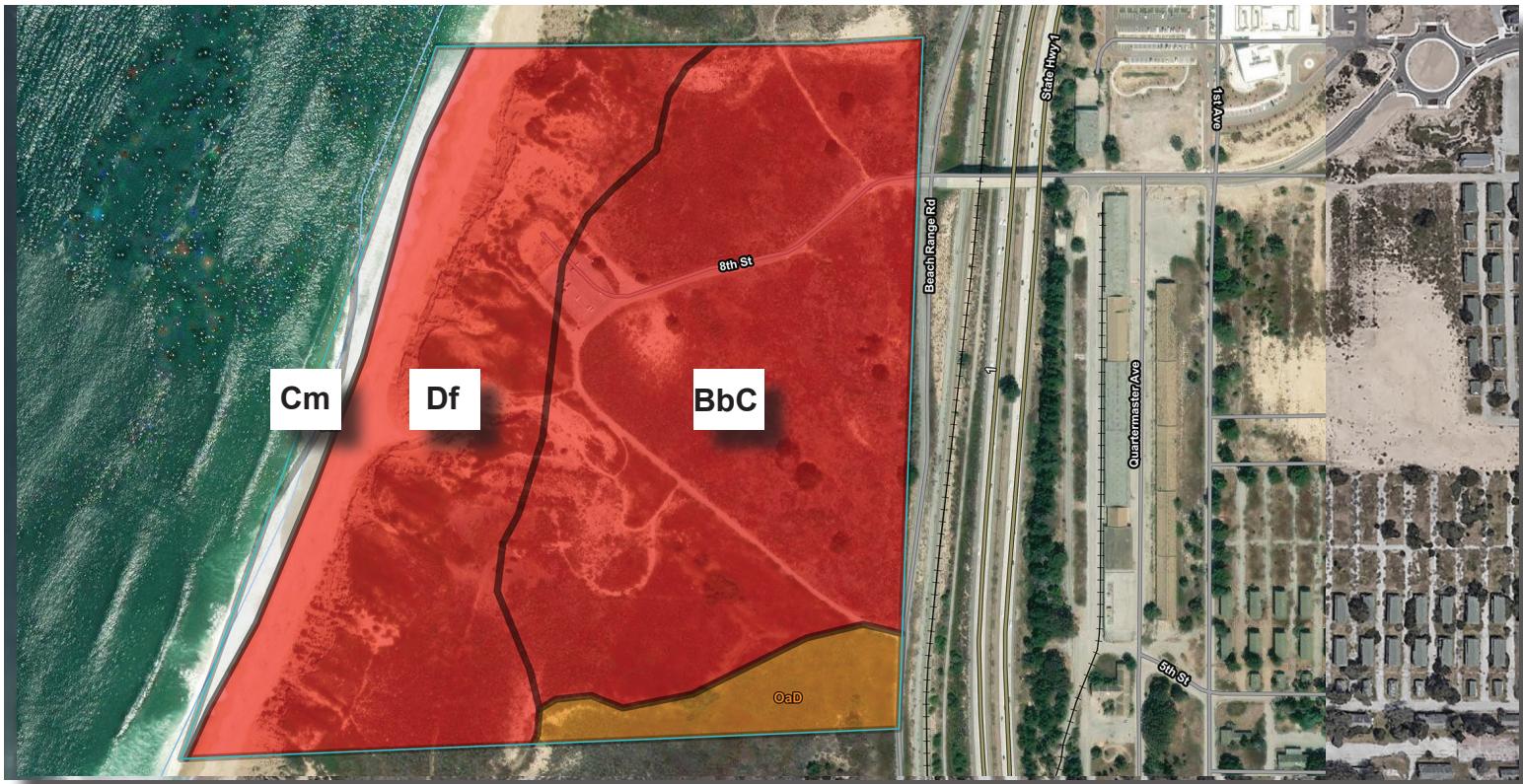


Figure 42 | Site | Google Earth
 Figure 43 | Table | NRCA

SITE SOIL CONDITIONS

Tables – Wind Erodibility Index – Summary By Map Unit

Summary by Map Unit – Monterey County, California (CA053)

| Map unit symbol | Map unit name | Rating (tons per acre per year) |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| BbC | Baywood sand, 2 to 15 percent slopes | 220 |
| Cm | Coastal beaches | |
| Df | Dune land | 250 |

CA-2701-A-25



Figure 44 | Fort Ord, Soldiers' Club | Library of Congress

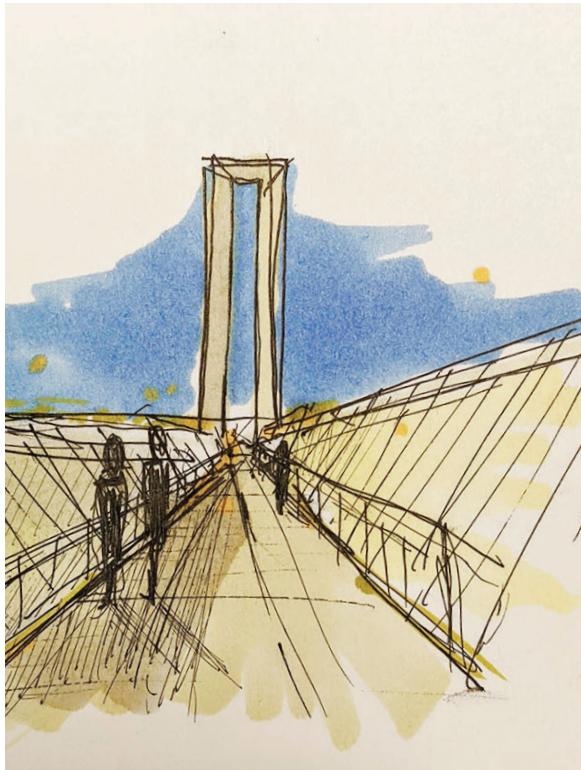
DESIGN SOLUTION





Past, present, and future conditions

PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

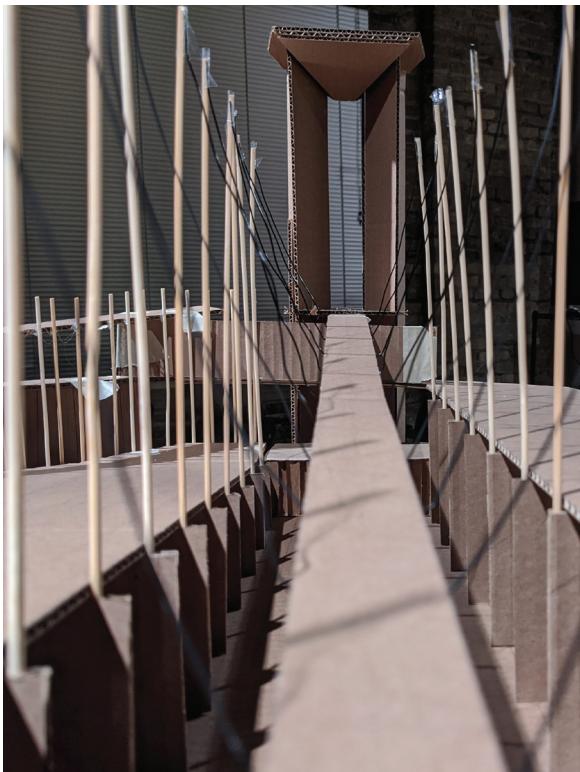


early sketch

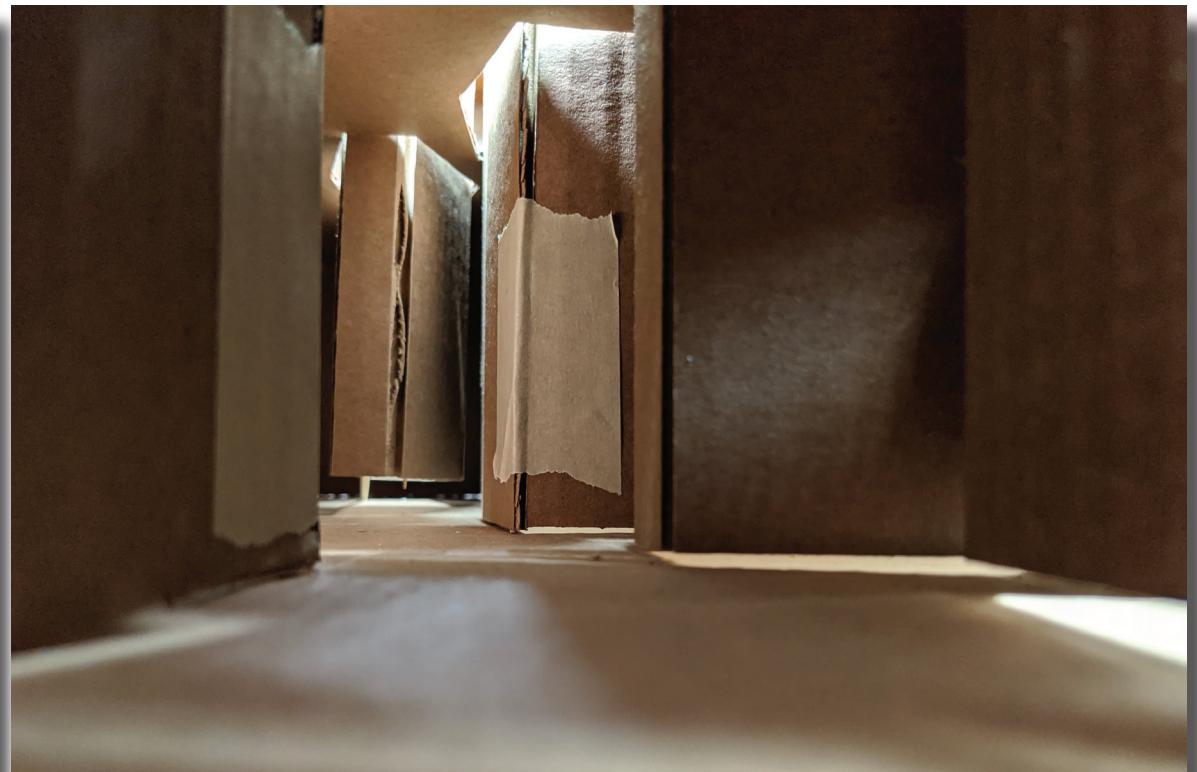


mass model

PROCESS DOCUMENTATION



entry sequence study



chamber light study

PROCESS DOCUMENTATION



artefact installation

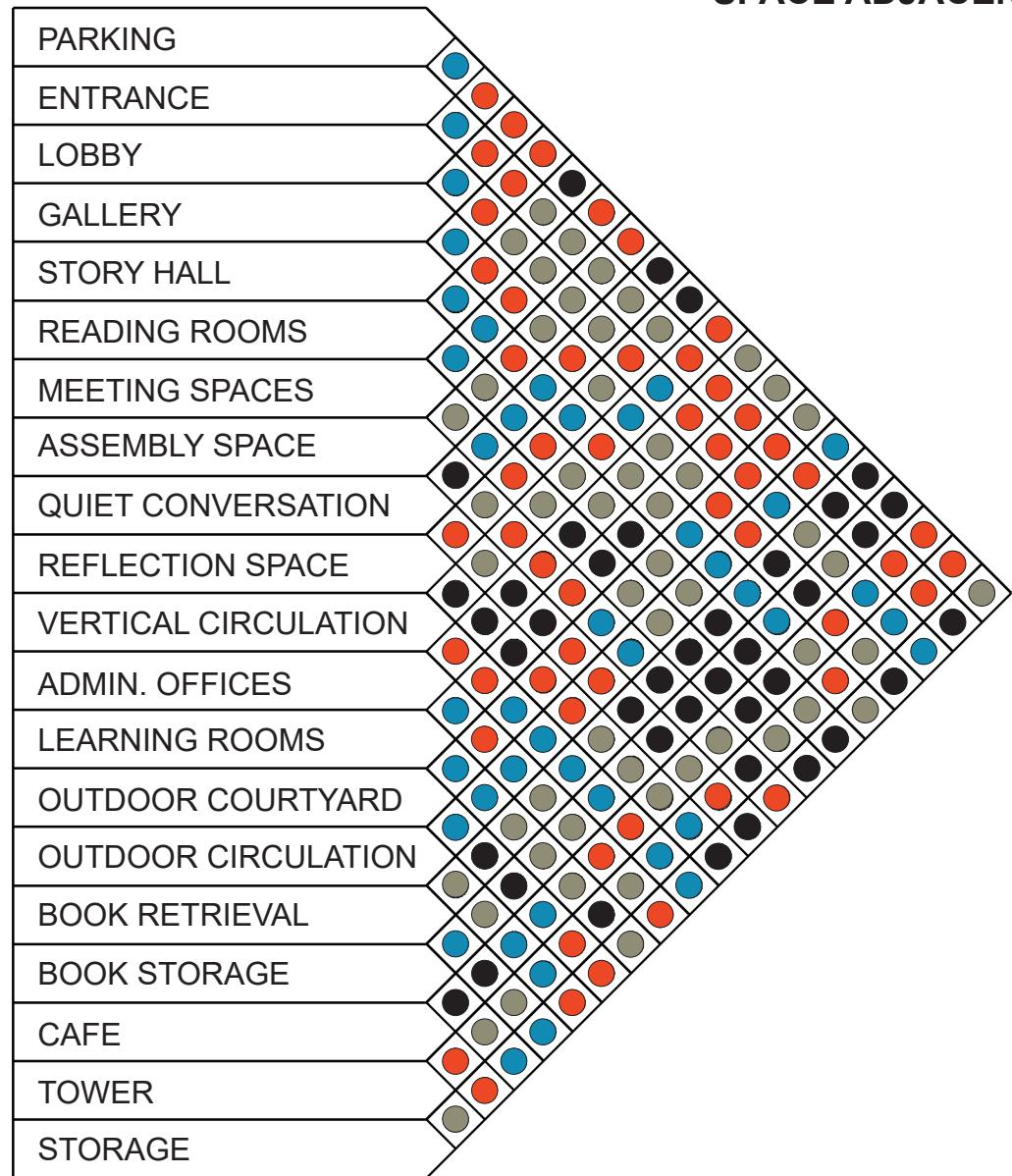


artefact arrangement study

PROGRAM SPACE ADJACENCY MATRIX

LEGEND

- ADJACENT
- NEARBY
- NOT ADJACENT
- NOT RELATED



PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR THESIS PROJECT

Performance criteria for this project is based on qualitative metrics of site placement, illuminance, connection, and transition. Each of these criteria can be measured initially and over time as the library grows in popularity and use.

SITE

Response to the topography and climate, immediately after construction and over time.

LIGHT

Measurements of illuminance in a mostly subterranean complex, designed using direct and indirect lighting strategies.

CONNECTION

Measurement of library patron usage over time, the types of activities performed by the patrons, the spaces used, the events scheduled, and the stories collected.

TRANSITION

The physical measurement of the quality of spaces and the passage between spaces. Transition includes the measurement of transition services offered to veterans through community outreach, skills building courses, housing and job placement, and emotional support groups.



Figure 45 | buried ten years later | D. Badilla

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS SITE RESPONSE

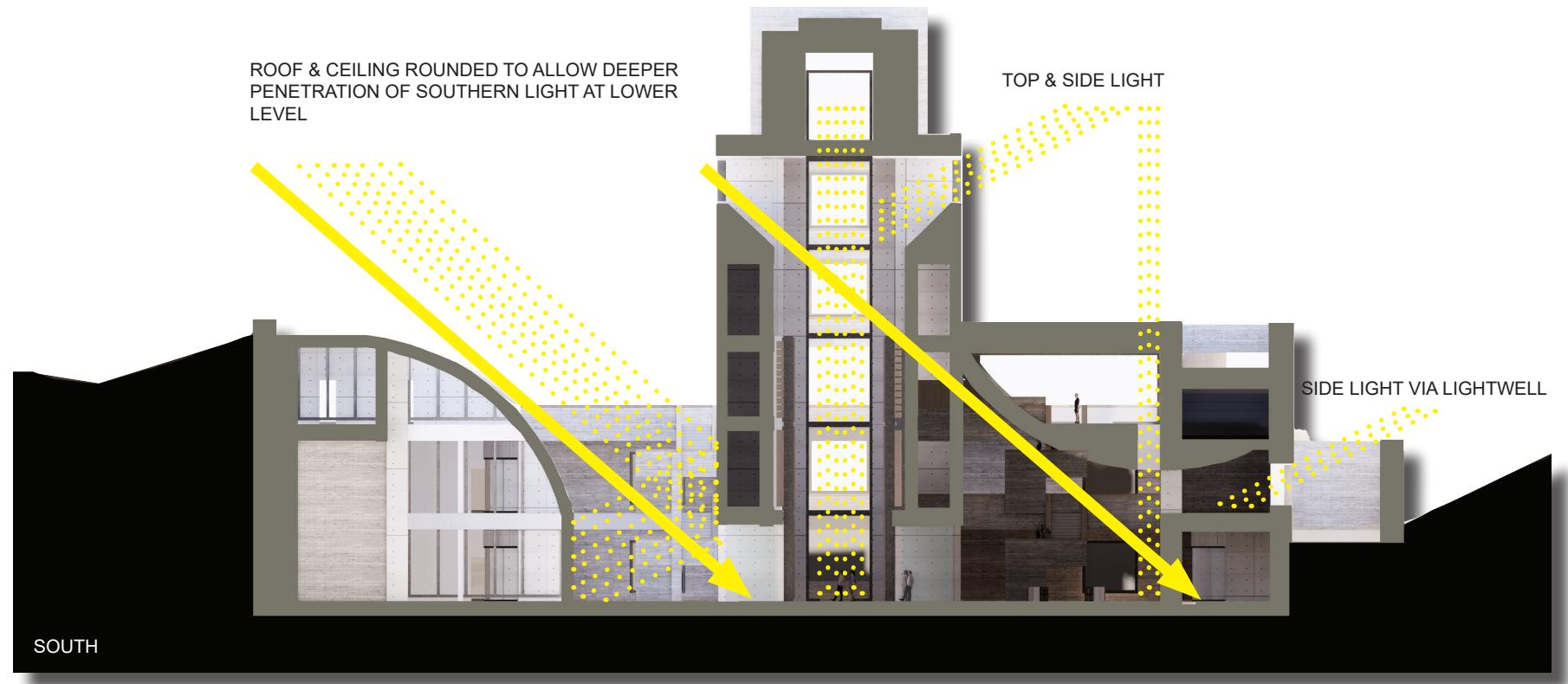


Over time the effects of climate change will change how the library complex interacts with the land and the ocean. As the sea-level rises and the escarpment erodes, the building foundation and the tower is revealed, standing like a fortress protecting the voices of the soldier within. Envisioned as a book wedged in the sand, the book repository is continually building and changing with the accumulation of veteran stories told in the complex, while the edge condition at the base turns from land to water. A special platform at the bottom of the tower is revealed to allow the visitor to connect with the water.



Figure 46 | coastal scrub, morning view | D. Badilla

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS ILLUMEINANCE



Illuminance brings a space to life. Special considerations in the massing of the complex allows southern light to reach deep into the protected spaces. The axis of the complex runs east to west, with southern exposure solar radiation warming the concrete walls and flooding the interiors with light. Northern clearstories and roof glazing aid in flooding the space with light, as well as the light well to the north that bathes the story hall mezzanine with even light throughout the day. Light color concrete walls reflect light into the assembly space, learning rooms, and offices.

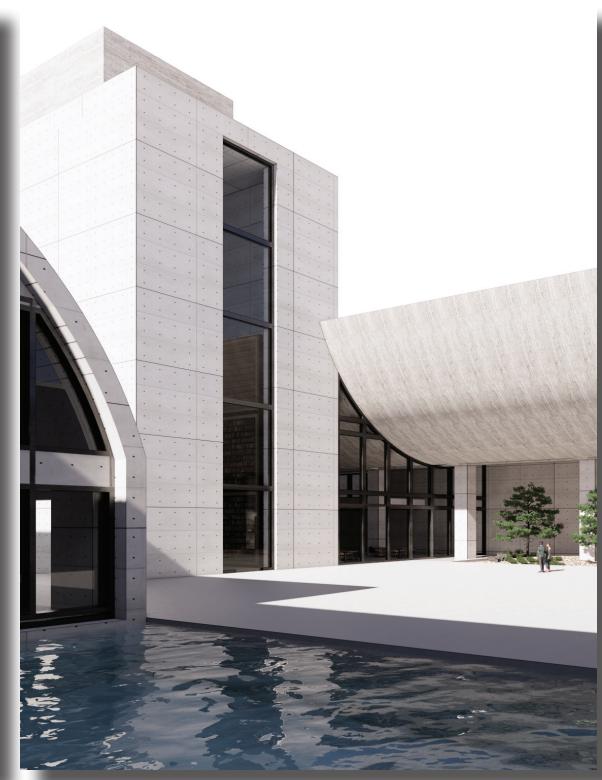
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS ILLUMINANCE



Roof glazing illuminate the interpretive center gallery, washing the walls with natural light that reach beyond the apertures in the floor to the story hall below.



Borrowed light from the gallery above highlights the structure and the directional flow from east to west. Both the storytelling volume and the mezzanine level benefit from the lighting strategy.



A curved roof and ceiling allow sunlight to penetrate deeper into the subterranean spaces, while softening the geometry of the concrete structures.



Figure 47 | Fort Ord offices and barraks| D. Badilla



PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS CONNECTION

Connections in a space go beyond the physical experience to that of emotional and spiritual. This project aims to provide the environment necessary to dig deep into one's self to share stories and experiences with loved ones and strangers alike. The book repository provides connection to the past and the ability to add to the collection with one's own experiences. As time progresses, the collection will build to fill the upper shelves that sit bare at the time of the project completion. The repository itself is a plenum in the mass of the building, and the staff book access in the plenum behind the bookshelves serve as a connection to the innerworkings of the library.

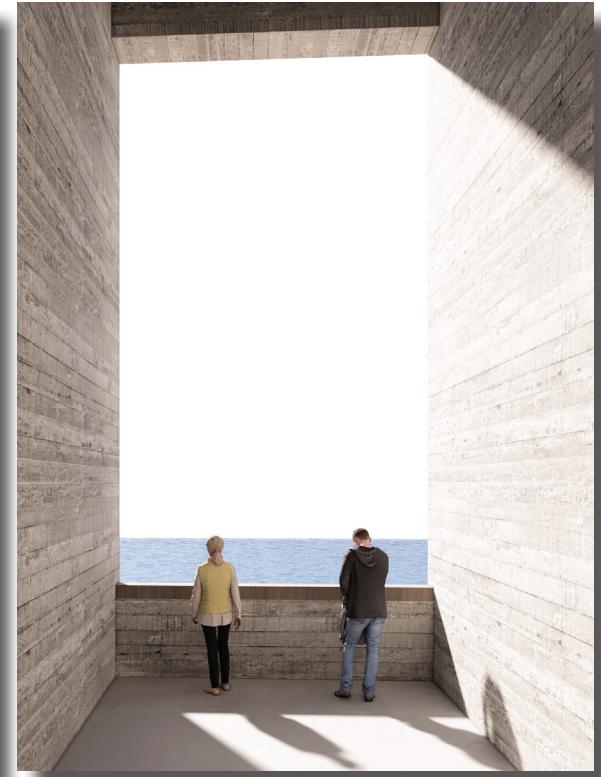
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS CONNECTION



History and location connections are made in the interpretive center gallery and in the surrounding hiking trails.



Community connections are made in the story hall and adjacent meeting spaces. Stories and experiences are shared and documented for the library collection.



Personal connections are made with nature, the world, and spirituality through internal reflectance. Spaces like the story tower allow visitors to contemplate over ocean vistas and tell their stories for cathartic relief.

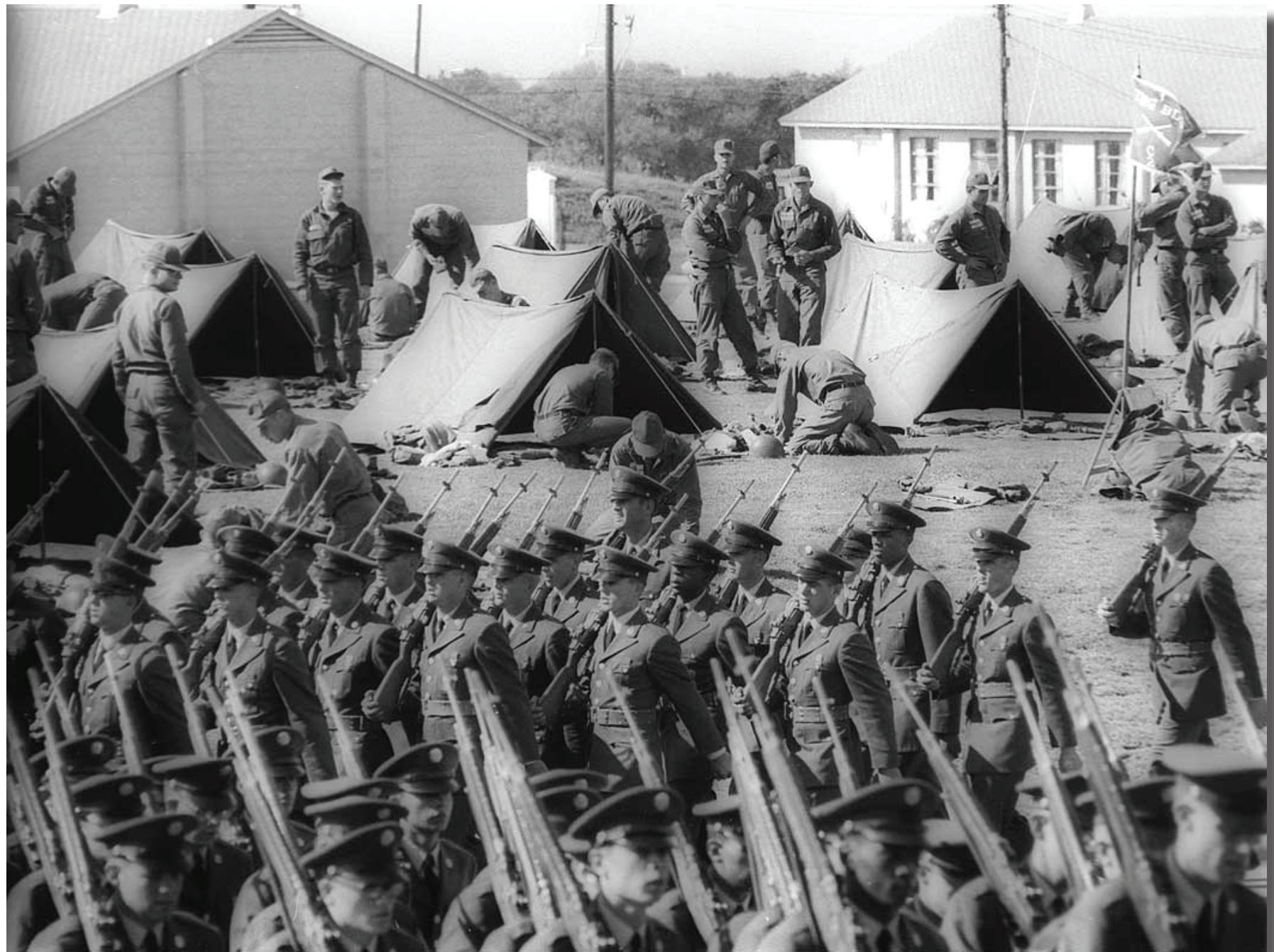


Figure 48 | Vietnam basic training | santacruztrains.com

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS TRANSITION



Transitions from space to space in the project are an exercise of compression and release, usually with a hint of what lies beyond. A metaphor for the transition process soldiers experience, the architectural gesture of compression can relate to stresses in a veteran's life but conversely, can also be the embrace needed from time-to-time to protect and affirm that everything will be alright. The entry sequence takes the visitor from the everyday to a place of memory and experience. Within the protective walls of the library campus, views to the sky and the ocean provide the release from the compression of the built environment.

PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS TRANSITION



The thickened walls mute the surrounding world and glass panes direct visitors into the book repository. Like slipping through the pages of a book visitors transition from a community space to a space of collected stories of the soldier experience.



A continuance of ceiling plane brings the visitor from the inside out, while the upward curve allows light to fall in deep spaces and well as ushers the visitor's eye to the sky.



A transition from the entry plane to the lower plane, the stair switchbacks give the visitor views into a variety of spaces both large and small, and changes the audible perception of the space from murmur to cacophony, and everything in-between.

THESIS APPENDIX



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PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION



Daniel H. Badilla

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

PREVIOUS STUDIO EXPERIENCE

2ND YEAR

FALL: Cindy Urness

- Tea House Moorhead, Minnesota
Conceptual design in response to site survey
- Montessori School | Fargo, North Dakota
design based on program and building code

SPRING: Milt Yergens

- Dance Academy Fargo, North Dakota
conceptual design for a specific typology
- Dwelling Cripple Creek, Colorado
design a small dwelling individually, and a community with peers
- Birdhouse Fargo, North Dakota
Design a birdhouse for a specific bird species in the spirit of a Pritzker Prize winning architect

3RD YEAR

FALL: Regin Schwaen

- Cabin East Crooked Lake, Minnesota
Timber design of a small cabin for a young family
- Veteran Transition Center Nekoma, North Dakota
Masonry design of adaptive reuse of an abandoned anti-ballistic missile site

SPRING: Mike Christenson

- IIT Institute of Design Chicago, Illinois
Steel digital design exploration of a design school

4TH YEAR

FALL: Don Faulkner

- Comprehensive Capstone: High Rise Miami, Florida
Design a tower in response to context, history, and climatic conditions

SPRING: David Crutchfield

- Future Cities New Australia, Antarctica (fictional)
Conceptual design of a mobile city, 250 years in the future
- Marvin Windows Competition
design a house showcasing Marvin windows in response to local and climatic context