



***The Reversible Edge:***

***Traces of Alterity at the Site of Loss, Hart Island, New York***

alterity:

*n. pl. (al·ter·i·ties)*

*The state of being different, especially with respect to one's perception of one's identity;*  
**OTHERNESS.**



***The Reversible Edge:  
Traces of Alterity at the Site of Loss, Hart Island, New York***

A Design Thesis submitted to the  
School of Design, Architecture, and Art  
North Dakota State University

by Musab Ataelmanan  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Architecture

North Dakota State University Libraries Addendum

To protect the privacy of individuals associated with the document, signatures have been removed from the digital version of this document.

May 2021

table of contents:

List of Figures	<b>8 - 10</b>
Abstract	<b>12 - 13</b>
Narrative	<b>15 - 27</b>
Precedent Research	<b>28 - 57</b>
Project Elements	<b>58 - 59</b>
Users/ Clients	<b>62 - 63</b>
Site	<b>64 - 71</b>
Project Emphasis	<b>72 - 73</b>
Theoretical Context	<b>74 - 93</b>
Justification	<b>94 - 95</b>
Artefact	<b>96 - 101</b>
Design	<b>102 - 115</b>
Boards	<b>116 - 118</b>
Appendix	<b>120 - 121</b>
Personal Identification	<b>122 - 123</b>

list of figures:



Figure 1: Ancient Greeks map of the world  
Figure 2: "The Assyrian kings"  
Figure 3: "John Shute Composita"  
Figure 4: "Hypnoerotomachia cinocephala"  
Figure 5: "Michelangelo, Hands of God and Adam"  
Figure 6: "The Captain's Sculpture"  
Figure 7: "Exquisite Corpse"  
Figure 8: "Giorgio Martini, human proportions in church facade"  
Figure 9: "Spoglia Fragments"  
Figure 10: "Wunderkammer, Cabinet of Curiosities"  
Figure 11: Igualada Cemetery Main  
Figure 11a: Igualada Cemetery Entrance  
Figure 11b: Igualada Cemetery Back  
Figure 12: Igualada Cemetery Panoramic  
Figure 13: Igualada Cemetery Excavated Landscape  
Figure 14: Igualada Cemetery Paths  
Figure 15: Igualada Cemetery Land Cutouts  
Figure 16: Igualada Cemetery Land Cutouts  
Figure 17: Igualada Cemetery, Sections, Site  
Figure 18: San Cataldo Cemetery Main  
Figure 19: San Cataldo Cemetery Paths  
Figure 20: San Cataldo Cemetery Structure  
Figure 21: San Cataldo Cemetery Framed View  
Figure 22: San Cataldo Cemetery Interior View  
Figure 23: San Cataldo Cemetery Aldo Rossi Drawing  
Figure 24: San Cataldo Cemetery Aldo Rossi Drawing  
Figure 25: San Cataldo Cemetery Interior Structure  
Figure 26: San Cataldo Cemetery Paths  
Figure 27: San Cataldo Cemetery Interior Structure  
Figure 28: Lonen Pavillion Main  
Figure 29: Lonen Pavillion Site Plan  
Figure 30: Lonen Pavillion South View  
Figure 31: Lonen Pavillion East View  
Figure 32: Lonen Pavillion Cantilever Roof  
Figure 33: Lonen Pavillion Back Cutouts  
Figure 34: Lonen Pavilion Interior View  
Figure 35: "Native American Sky Burial"

- Figure 36: "Mourning Ritual of the Mingrelians, Georgia"  
Figure 37: New York Map  
Figure 38: Hart Island, Aerial View  
Figure 39: Hart Island Burials and Existing Ruins  
Figure 40: Hart Island Ruins  
Figure 41: Hart Island Ruins  
Figure 42: Hart Island Ruins  
Figure 43: Hart Island Ruins  
Figure 44: New York City, Precipitation Graph  
Figure 45: New York City, Humidity Graph  
Figure 46: New York City, Wind Graph  
Figure 47: New York City, Light Graph  
Figure 48: New York City, Light Graph  
Figure 49: New York City, Temperature Graph  
Figure 50: "Exquisite Corpse, Surrealist Challenge Montage"  
Figure 51: "Albrecht Dürer, Melencolia I"  
Figure 52: "Gustav Klimt, Death and Life"  
Figure 53: "John Hejduk, Victims, 1983"  
Figure 54: "John Hejduk, Victims Plan, 1983"  
Figure 55: "Catharsis of Grief, Artefact, Musab Aaelmanan"  
Figure 56: "Artefact Collage"  
Figure 57: 'Artefact Collage"  
Figure 58: "Artefact Collage"  
Figure 59: "Artefact Collage"  
Figure 60: "Artefact Performance"  
Figure 61: "Textural Veils"  
Figure 62: "Fragments of Poetry, Artefact Performance"  
Figure 63: "Artefact Cover, Poem Fragment"  
Figure 64: "Spoglia Collage"  
Figure 65: "Path Lines Formulation"  
Figure 66: "Connection lines, New York, Cemeteries"  
Figure 67: "Connection lines, New York, Hospitals"  
Figure 68: Site Map  
Figure 69: Interweaving Paths  
Figure 70: Ruins Collage, Reframing Old Through the New  
Figure 71: Reconciliation Landscape, Reframed Ruins  
Figure 72: Section Cut  
Figure 73: Exploded View, Sky Grave, Extracting Stories  
Figure 74: Interior View, Sky Grave, Wonder World Domes



abstract:

“We cannot overlook the way in which the Industrial Revolution and its technological consequences have transformed the experience of death in people’s lives.”

As discussed by the German Philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, we stand at a point where the relevance of death in our lives has increasingly been excluded from the public realm, as cemeteries and monuments have been displaced from the centers of our cities. This “underrepresentation of death” has had a tremendous effect on the cathartic articulation of the public ritual and the deep human need to reconcile the ephemeral boundaries of life and death.

Drawing upon the surrealistic strategies of the “Exquisite Corpse,” this project explores the intersectional overlapping between the Visible and Invisible at New York City’s largest public burial ground, Hart Island (also dubbed “prison of the dead”). This site epitomizes the outcasted, forlorn and forgotten other, thus the project not only seeks to shed light on the loss of identity but provides spaces of empathetic exchange and ritual for contemplating the peripheries between self and other and even (the potential reversibility) of life and death.



narrative:

Human beings habitually position themselves at different intersections. Culturally, spiritually, geographically. Within us, these orders must interweave and interact, creating a bridge between higher and lower, unknown and known, seen and unseen. The duality of situating ourselves on the side of an equation is almost transcribed in our nature; we tend to view the world as extremely black and white. We characterize and dichotomize everything because polarities are attractive to us. Yet, in that action, the whole other side of the edge is unknown to us (truly, objectively). These fragmented polarities guide our lives without considering the fold that occurs in between. The space of the Chora (the third kind) as designated by Plato in *Timaeus*, an interval or material interaction. This term has been admitted differently by many renowned philosophers from Heidegger to Derrida and Merleau-Ponty, but it always carried a certain weight to its radical otherness as a space for the lively matter. Exploring the dichotomy of life and death in terms of edges and folds of the same surface could aid us in creating a space of Chora for reconciliation.

***“Edges reveal a chancy world whose very fullness is shot through with gaps, whose certainties are themselves uncertain, whose near side is already at a distance, and whose place cannot be taken for granted.”***  
**- Edward S. Casey**

This quote by Edward S. Casey extracted from his informative journal ‘Around the edge of the world’ He dissects the concept and condition of the edge and its relevance in our lives, tracing back to the Greeks and how they interacted with it. Ancient Greeks did not possess the knowledge we have now in relation to the world; they were able to construct an experience that was not negatively impacted by their lack of knowledge or fear of the unknown. They played with imagination and used it as an elastic fabric even through the edges not known to them.

The Greek world revolved within the limits of their maps preemptively. For them, the edge of the world lay at the border of the sea where the horizon would vanish, going up to the Pillars of Heracles. Sailors were anxious about what lied beyond their imagination and would construct tangible realities. The fact that they did not know what was beyond this edge prompted the Greeks to create different myths that became their reality.





The exploration of the imagination and expansion of the horizon for the Greeks would occur over many years, and even after their fall, the maps kept growing, and the edges would reveal even more. The edge, in a sense, contains a form of finality in its embodiment. Appearing outwardly as an end yet then revealing that which lies through the corner as it “folds” echoing a finality of death that folds into rebirth. The way to unseen occurs through the seen, penetrating a mystery of contextualizing that which lies ahead.

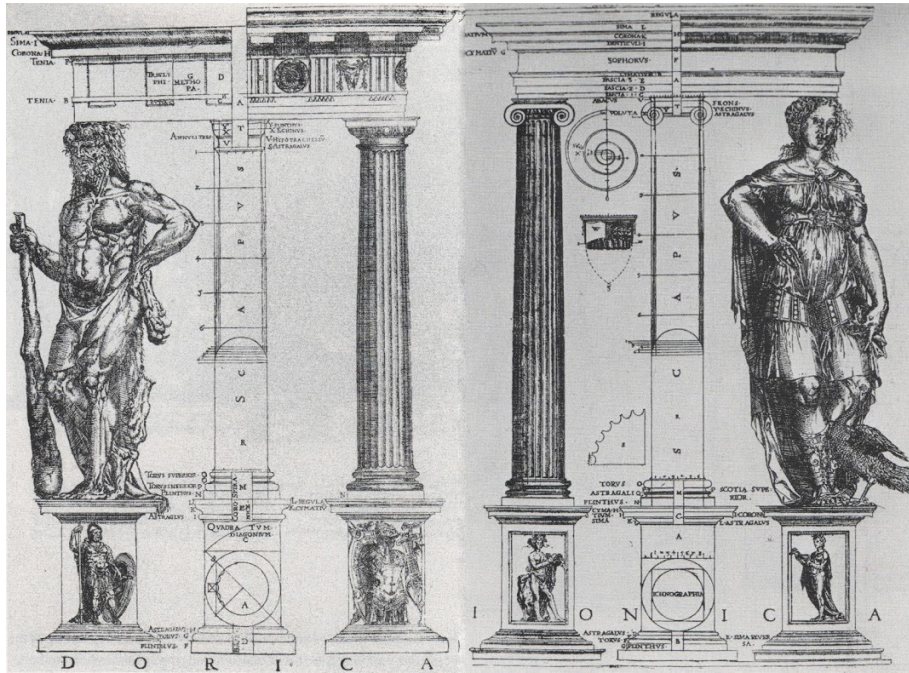
***“...we are confronted by a pictorial vacuum that challenges our imagination”***  
***-Edward S. Casey.***

The model of the fold is also explored in Merleau-Ponty’s ‘The visible and invisible.’ According to Merleau-Ponty, the world is not some obdurate “other” that we manage to grasp; it is something that envelopes us “invaginates” us. He discusses that a person’s flesh is congruent with the world’s flesh. They irremediably intertwine in a chiasmatic embrace where one coils over the other, crosses over into the other, and finally IS the other. It stands as a metaphor for the continuance of life, a magical relation that generates a fold between what is visible and invisible, what is known and unknown, what is alive in matter, and ‘non-living’ within the central cavity of the world.



**FIGURE 2**  
 “The Assyrian kings”

All principles in life (specifically within the culture, religion, and geography) are governed by their permanence in our memory resonating at infinitely small and large levels, simultaneously moving through our minds, leaving a lasting impact on our lives, and making a tangible footprint in our memory. In imagining architecture that attempts to merge two sides of the same surface hinged by the edge, we must consider the vitality of the duality. Our differences are able to show us the depths of ourselves and frame our perception of the other. These edges that we dare not diverge from could also limit our scope of the horizon, just like the ancient 'Greeks' condition of the edge of the world.



**FIGURE 3**  
"John Shute Composita"

As much as architecture is almost an object of man to be used and act as a shelter, it has a vital presence in the dichotomy between self and other. It is a canvas for cultural exchange, opening a space for interaction through our senses; it folds over us just as much as we fold over it.



FIGURE 4  
"Hypnoerotomachia cinocephala"

***“As humans we fundamentally understand, interpret, and engage the world through sight, taste, touch, sound, muscle, and bone, as well as through memory and Imagination.”***

***- Alberto Perez-Gomez***



**FIGURE 5**  
"Michelangelo, Hands of God and Adam"

Architecture embodies the interaction of our senses, creating a space for representation hinging on the tactility of an experience/emotion. Merleau-Ponty's concept of the flesh, revealing a reversible relationship of something that can both touch and be touched simultaneously. This ambiguous definition of flesh, where the touched hand is touching back, creates an interweaving of object and subject. Therefore one could surmise that the flesh of architecture is responding to our senses in a synchronous relationship of give and take. Our understanding of said relationship could be lying in the Chora of thought.



**FIGURE 6**  
"The Captain's Sculpture"

CHORA (the Greek word for "space"), is devoted to exploring the potential of architecture beyond conventional aesthetic and technological reductions. – Alberto Pérez-Gómez

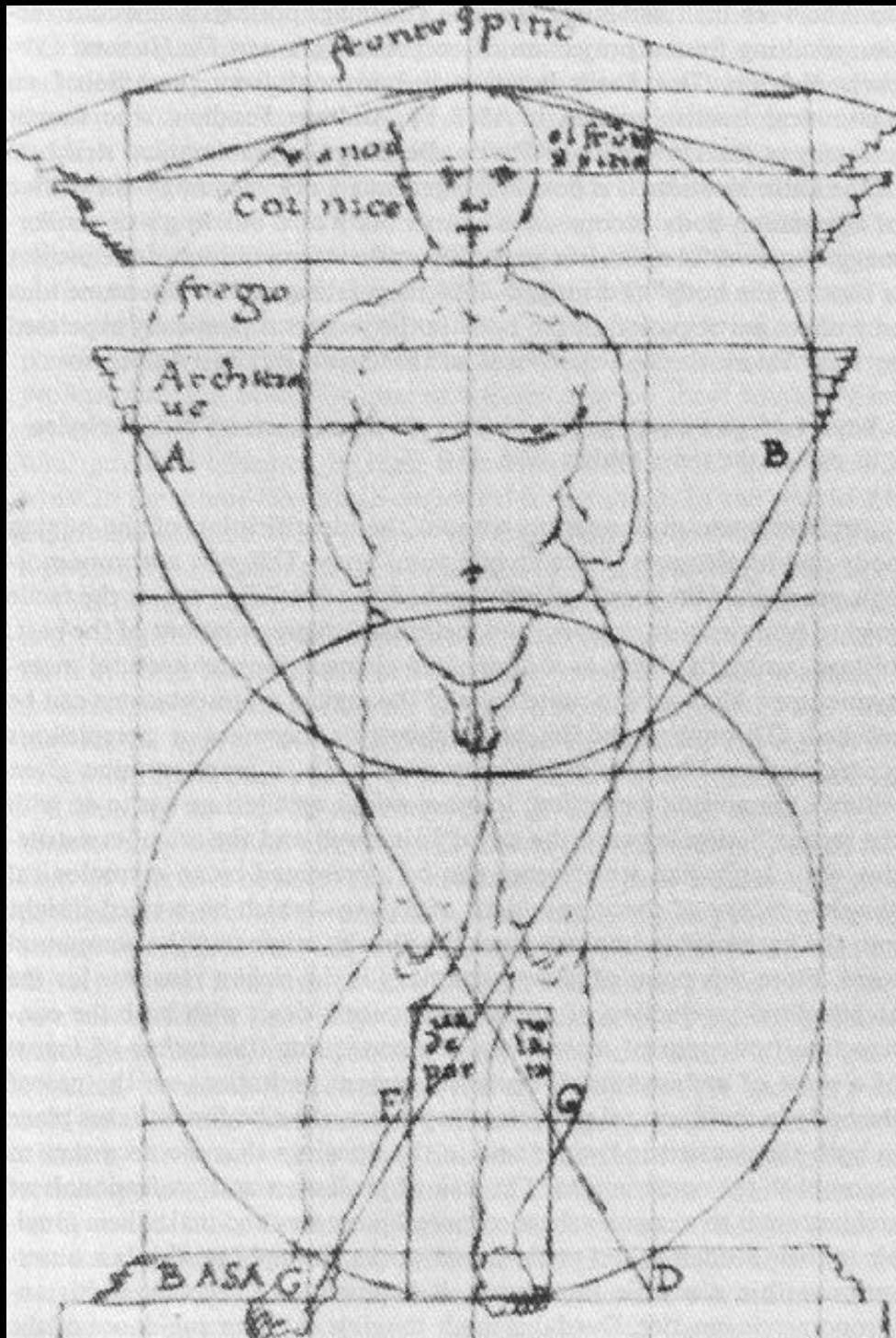
As stated earlier, this chora has been re-defined by different theorists and philosophers; however, Perez-Gomez's adaptation layers the idea of designing architecture that opens a space for metaphorical thinking. Deeper, rooted in experience and sensual harmony. Holistically it is a field that links dual realms, a threshold space between local and larger global conditions. The word includes notions such as matrix, a kind of womb, and the unfolding of an outside world into a specific body. Or inversely, the folding of a specific world (architecture) unto the outer the self. In this exploration of notions, the relative positions of self and other, man and architecture within the world have the tendency to permeate divisions and create a chora between self and other.

**"a civilization obsessed with permanence and predictability, a civilization that believes its destiny is to dominate and possess an external reality transformed into natural resources, while consciously or subconsciously concealing mortality and the ultimate ephemerality of all things human, from personal belongings to the powers of the mightiest empire"**  
-Alberto Perez-Gomez



**FIGURE 7**  
"Exquisite Corpse"

It is a study of the chora of this world; the places in-between the edges, the transitions, as one plane or condition folds into another. An exploration of the constantly shifting, folding, and ephemeral meshwork of morality, right, and wrong, real and fiction that make up our realities. The intersection of these dualities bring forth a complex interplay of presence and absence, with the most impactful space being the unexplored in-between shared experiences.



**FIGURE 8**  
"Giorgio Martini, human proportions in church facade"



Architectural Theorist Marco Frascari also states:

***“Architecture is the monstrous frame of the “depiction” of life.”***

Essentially echoing a chiasmatic reversibility Just as we think architecture with our bodies, we think our bodies through architecture. When discussing Paul Valery’s translation of Edgar Allen Poe’s work “Marginalia” Frascari states

***“There they transcended the text, first by making the relationship between the part and the whole an Enigma, and second by placing events within our vision that are capable of putting our thought out of place, of determining a buried but real possibility of meaning. Architecture makes possible a total world orientation in a universe of constructed signs.”***

These signs are effectively tropes or Spoglia. Tropes, is a notion evident throughout Frascari’s work, which are basically trophies of war collected by the victors and are architecturally often used for the creation of something new from the old. A rebirth or re-orientation of meaning that echoes the past in a new form. According to Frascari the entire history of architecture is a complex hybrid body consisting of fragments or tropes.



**FIGURE 9**  
“Spoglia Fragments”

The voice of the lost can serve as an analogy for spoglia, hence, troping occurs all throughout this thesis from the artefact performance to the architectural translation, fragments are brought forth and the distance is crossed allowing the project to become a physical manifestation of the german term Wunderkammer or a cabinet of curiosities, that are begging to be explored. This collection of various meanings in-turn construct an exquisite corpse where the invocation of space and the ideas that construct it pull out the suppressed stories and allow the dead to be alive again within us.



**FIGURE 10**  
"Wunderkammer, Cabinet of Curiosities"

In fact Hart Island as a whole is an exquisite corpse. An amalgamation of histories, stories, ruins construct what is thought of as the island of doom. Reclaiming these tropes allows for a renovation of meaning through orientation. An unbroken continuum made only of fragments, where the multiplicity allows for a continuous discourse.



precedent research:

Emphasis will be given to the recombination of fragments and stories. The memorials and projects in general consist of a strong metaphoric symbolism. The monumental quality of symbols in architecture brings back the memories in visitors' minds in different ways.

Various forms like walls, pillars, arches might be used to create a sense of monumentality and convey a message to the general public about life and death. The memorial will also use inscriptions and graphic projection methods to display the stories. Sites that utilize unifying and recognizable markers that embody important meanings are monumental. For instance visitors to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. recognize it as and refer to it as the Wall. This long black reflective marble Wall is the core element of this site and has 58,226 names inscribed within it. This implementation of remembrance and standing in solidarity as we unify life and death, lost and found is one of the major exploration points with my design.

The edge formed between self and other, life and death is the root cause for many of the issues we face currently. These issues will be explored through the ideas I mentioned earlier but also through creating an atmosphere for dialogue. As Albero Perez-gomes stated, mood and atmosphere are one of the cornerstones for meaningful and impactful architecture, this thesis aims to create that mood through opening a space for healing and reconciling with the other by remembering and forgetting.

Igualada Cemetery:



FIGURE 11

**Architects:** Enric Miralles + Estudio Carme Pinos  
**Location:** Catalonia Province, Spain  
**Project Year:** 1994

The Igualada Cemetery is situated between an industrial and manufacturing town and that is reflected directly in the typological design of the cemetery. The site of this architectural excavation urged the designers to consider what it means to design a cemetery in a site like Igualada, through the emphasis of cutting through the land and deriving it from the geomorphic history embedded in the history of the site. The edges and assembly of the site is focused on the basis of extracting the stories of the site for the people and from the people. The remembrance activities scattered throughout the movement around the site begs the visitors to understand the eternal links between the decay of the land and the decay of the people.

In this cemetery the land is being carved out and excavated in various areas to simulate the idea that this structure (cemetery) has been standing for a long time and the different corrosive qualities of time emphasize the idea of remembrance. The direct connection between site, stories, space, and time embeds the idea of monumentality and memory in a space that speaks to not only the organic inspiration behind the design but the equilateral representation expressed through these concepts.





FIGURE 11a



FIGURE 11b





FIGURE 12

The composition of movement through the site begs the visitors to explore the “unknown” through the orchestrated circulation around the site. The cemetery consists of a chapel, mortuary, entrance, and divided burial niches directing the visitor to a mausoleum at the lower level of the site. The exploration of the site urges people to explore the space by situating various concealed, and stacked walls and floors around the enclosure of the site.



FIGURE 13



FIGURE 14



FIGURE 15



FIGURE 16

The graves and memorials are stacked along sloped landscapes through the earth. The deceased become an integral part of the soil, concrete bands embellish the movement through the site. Due to the utilization of compression and expansion with site elements the idea of light and shadow carries forth and emphasizes movement through the site allowing the descension and exploration of stories within the landscape.

The site is divided between land, excavation, and context. This provides the area with elements of boundaries and "finding out" what lies between and beneath the surface. The various elevations that are structured through perforated nature, geometric walls and cutouts establish a clear connection between stories and land; ultimately reflecting the importance between whole and part.

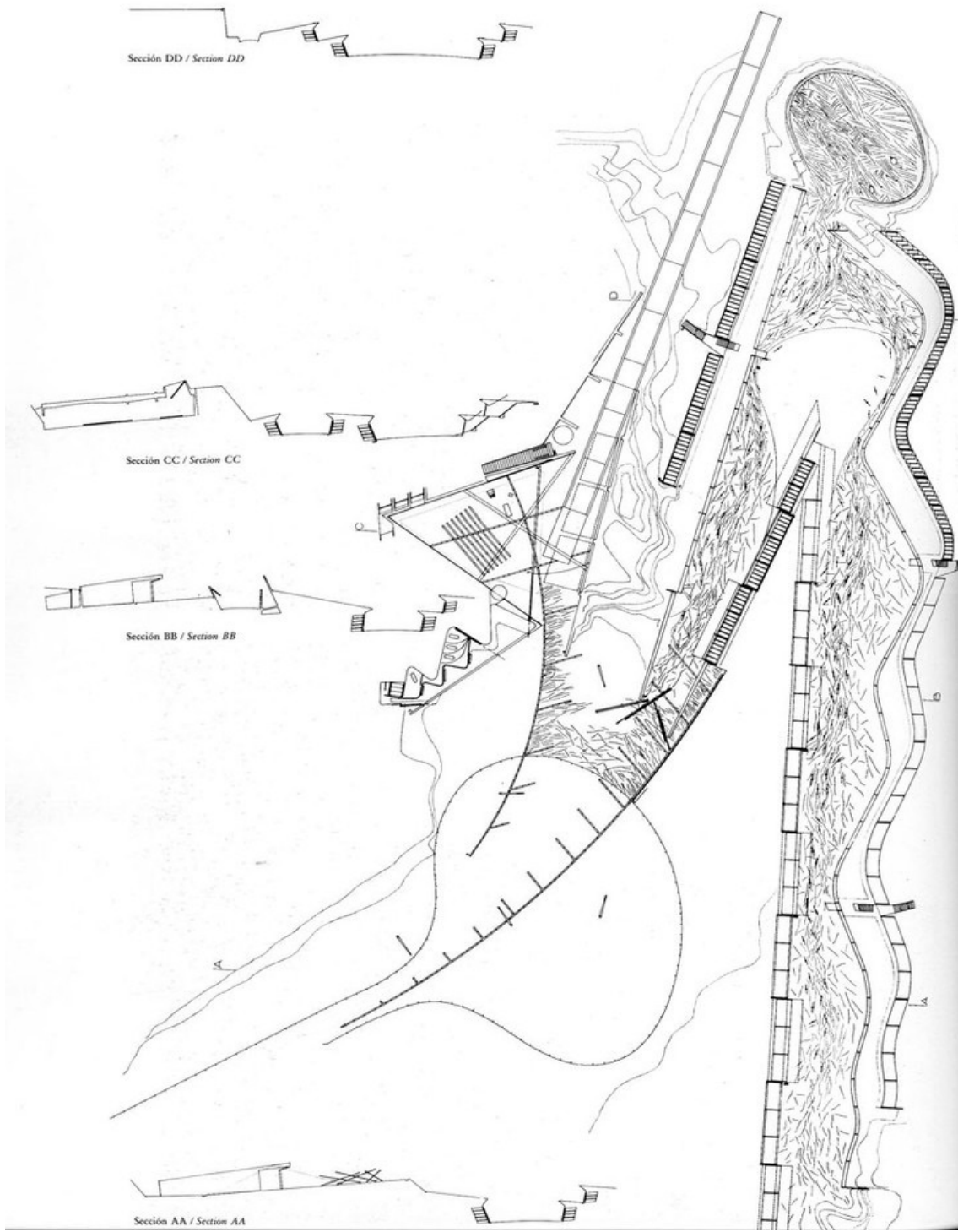


FIGURE 17

San Cataldo Cemetery:





FIGURE 18

**Architect:** Aldo Rossi  
**Location:** Modena Province, Italy  
**Project Year:** 1971

Situated in San Cataldo, this cemetery designed by Aldo Rossi exemplifies the utility of time and memory in construction of space and city. The consideration of the urban artifact to orchestrate historical and factual space lent the project the name "City of the Dead". The locus of this city becomes about collective remembrance allowing the visitor to grasp the relevance of part and whole. For Rossi architecture and memory are eternally linked. The design channels the use of time to construct monument, and is structured around linking the new and old cemeteries through a bilateral space that connects different fragments from around the area.



FIGURE 19



FIGURE 20



FIGURE 21



FIGURE 22

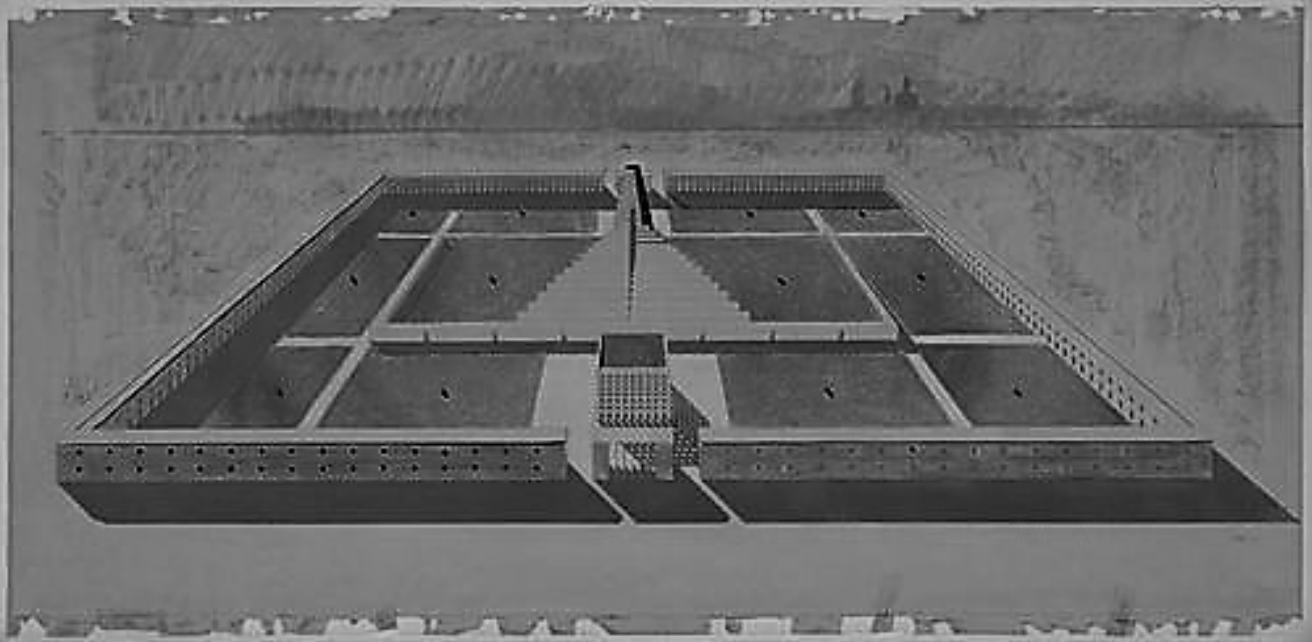


FIGURE 23

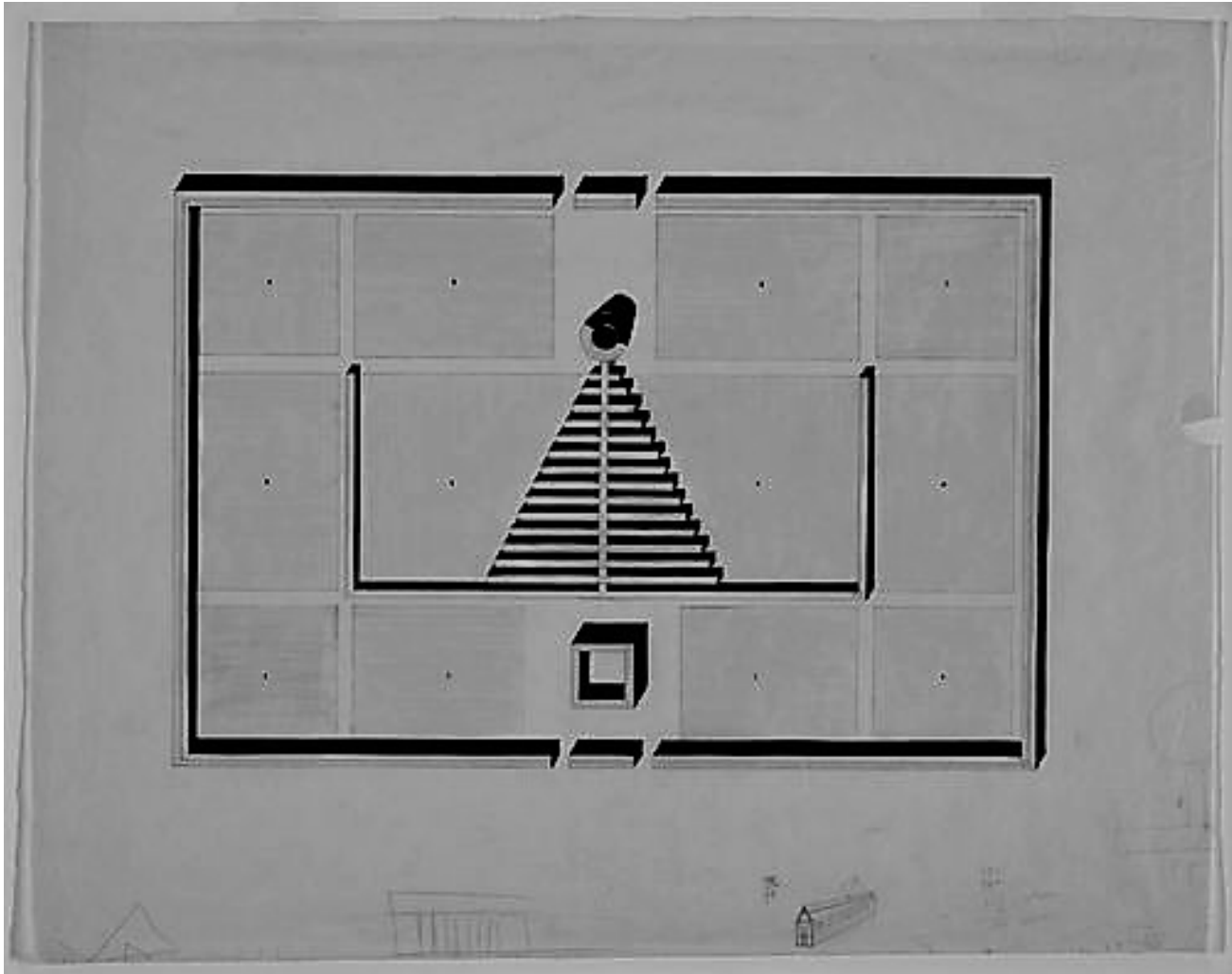


FIGURE 24

The design constitutes three different forms that speak to the stories and burials; a triangular central spine, a perspectivaly morphing cone, and an ossuary. Considering the interweaving of the ancient cemetery and the new additions created by Rossi allows a framing of images throughout an analogical route. The cemetery is able to pull images from the past and project them onto the the future. The idea of combing multiple structures and fragments around the site was inspired by Rossi's exploration in regards to how fractures in the body need to heal and reconst through time. Compositionally the cemetery translates and transforms different elements such as position, axis, and materiality utilizing time as cornerstone.

This "city of the dead" stands with multiple rib-like buildings that contain a communal grave and offer a collective experience for mourning and remembrance. The structres construct the space mostly through being voids or shells with openings, echoing the loss of what was once there. That within itself allows the visitors to formulate their own architecture through a perspectival remembering of stories. Rossi's ability to create architecture that was metaphysical and is in a constant state of confronting death in a plethora of ways makes this project one of the most impactful and potent translations of a remembrance space.



FIGURE 25







FIGURE 26



FIGURE 27

Lonen Pavillion:



FIGURE 28

**Architect:** Aldo Rossi  
**Location:** Modena Province, Italy  
**Project Year:** 1971

The Loenen National War Cemetery site, one of the two located on Dutch territory, was designed by landscape architect Daniel Haspels (1894-1954) shortly after the Second World War, reflecting the landscape of the area with its clusters of wispy trees that honour the peaceful environment and bring comfort to the bereaved. KAAN Architecten opted to draw the trees and buildings together, letting the trees dictate the structure's form, to achieve a fusion of architecture and landscaped nature.

The pavilion, with its 52 x 19-meter footprint, stretches along with one of the five axes that are the foundation of the site, like a horizontal white line settled amidst slender birch and pine trees. Seen from above, it is situated between two stretches of woods, flanked by two forest rooms envisioned by landscape architects Karres en Brands. The pavilion was kept as narrow as possible to preserve a maximum number of trees between the two open spaces, its horizontality gently adopts Haspels' philosophy by avoiding vertical elements, which could disrupt the calming natural atmosphere. For this reason, the War Cemetery's gravestones are lying flat on the grass.

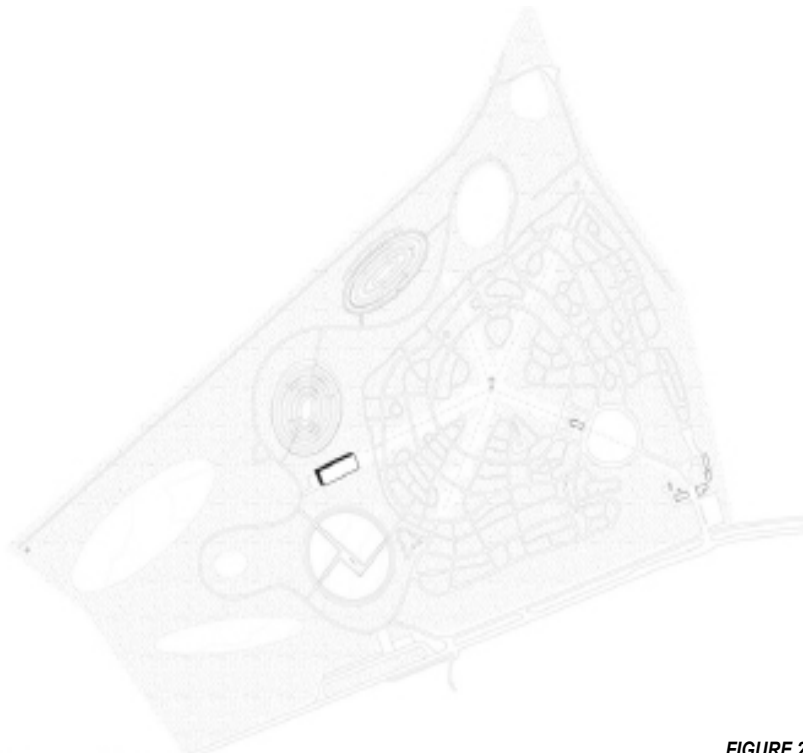


FIGURE 29





FIGURE 32



FIGURE 33



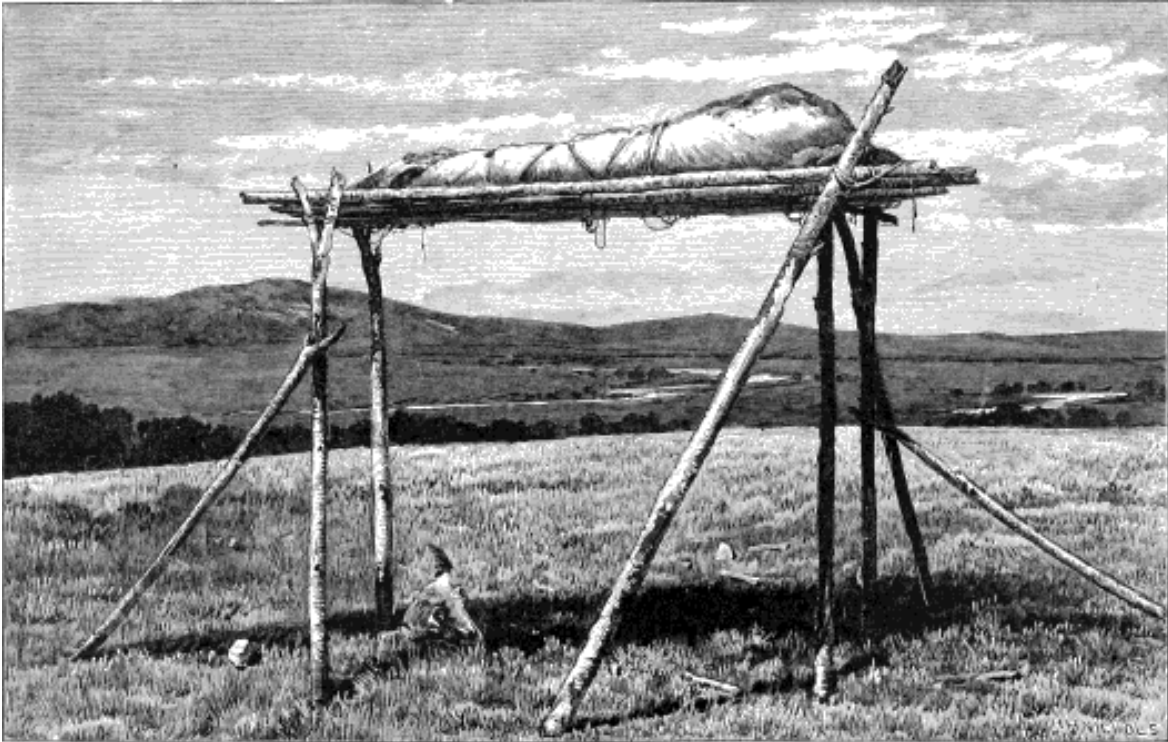
FIGURE 34



The various spaces each have their own identity and lookouts. The condolences area offers views of two opposite sides, each oriented towards a forest room: one for veteran burials and one for the War Cemetery. Meanwhile, the auditorium looks out over the sightline ending at the cross in the middle of the War Cemetery. The eye is guided through a big window that feels like a large opening in the pavilion rather than a standard window. High ceilings and large roof spans ensure flexibility and contribute to an open sense of space.

Gently detached of any religious connotations, the pavilion conveys a calming natural atmosphere to its interiors, thanks to the unconventional open spatial configuration, the abundant natural light, and the elegant choice of materials. The distinguished yet subtle Loenen Pavilion architecturally enriches the National War Cemetery, providing a reinvigorated place of honour and consolation, while allowing the forest to be the guide.

major project elements:



**FIGURE 35**  
"Native American Sky Burial"

The space is divided into three main interaction spaces:

***Sky Graves***

- Remembrance Columns
- Mourning Chambers
- Wonder World Domes

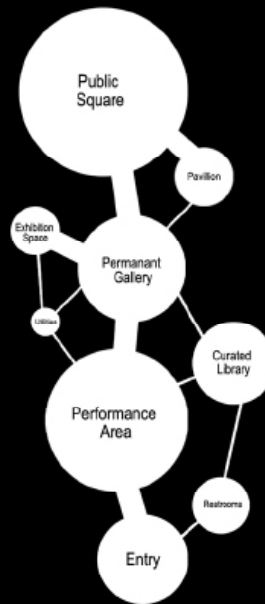
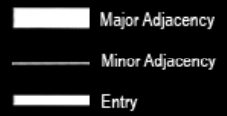
***Interweaving Paths***

- Elevated Walkways
- Piercing Tunnels
- Connected Circuits

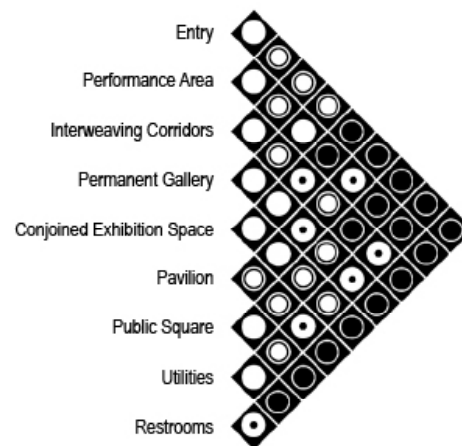
***Reconciliation landscape***

- Reframed Ruins
- Textured Plots

It is expedient that the environment is integrated into the design as it cuts across the shrubs, topography, trees etc. The second typology of this project is the landscape structure that creates a narrative journey. There are paths, waypoints, monuments, symbols, and many other features that exemplify the lost histories present in the texture of the site. The landscape creates a series of events, not just limited to monuments, the fabric of the island facilitates a range of perceptual experiences and consequently of moods at one memorial site. To the visitor, the landscapes evoke different emotions and associations, just as that with the stories of the deceased.



space interaction net:



space interaction matrix:

users/clients:

The main target client for this project is the marginalised deceased and the living affected by the silencing of stories and memories which is part of Hart Island's reality. Considering how the current standing of Hart Island and the state at which this necropolis is out of bounds for remembrance there is a dire need of an architectural excavation. This project is not just limited to the families of those buried in the island but it is a general space for mourning with particular moments that allow for the manifestation of memory and healing. Loss and death are very much linked to a space for remembrance; however, there is a very significant hinge between one and whole. Creating a place for those seeking to experience the catharsis of grief and the ability to understand the other through mourning is the main goal for the users and clients of this project.

By creating a place which is both universal and specific, a place which serves to guide and heal, a place that remembers not only the history of the events, but its victims, heroes, and survivors, the memorial can become a valuable setting for the individual, and an integral part of the collective.



FIGURE 36

"Mourning Ritual of the Mingrelians, Georgia"



site:

**FIGURE 37**  
New York Map



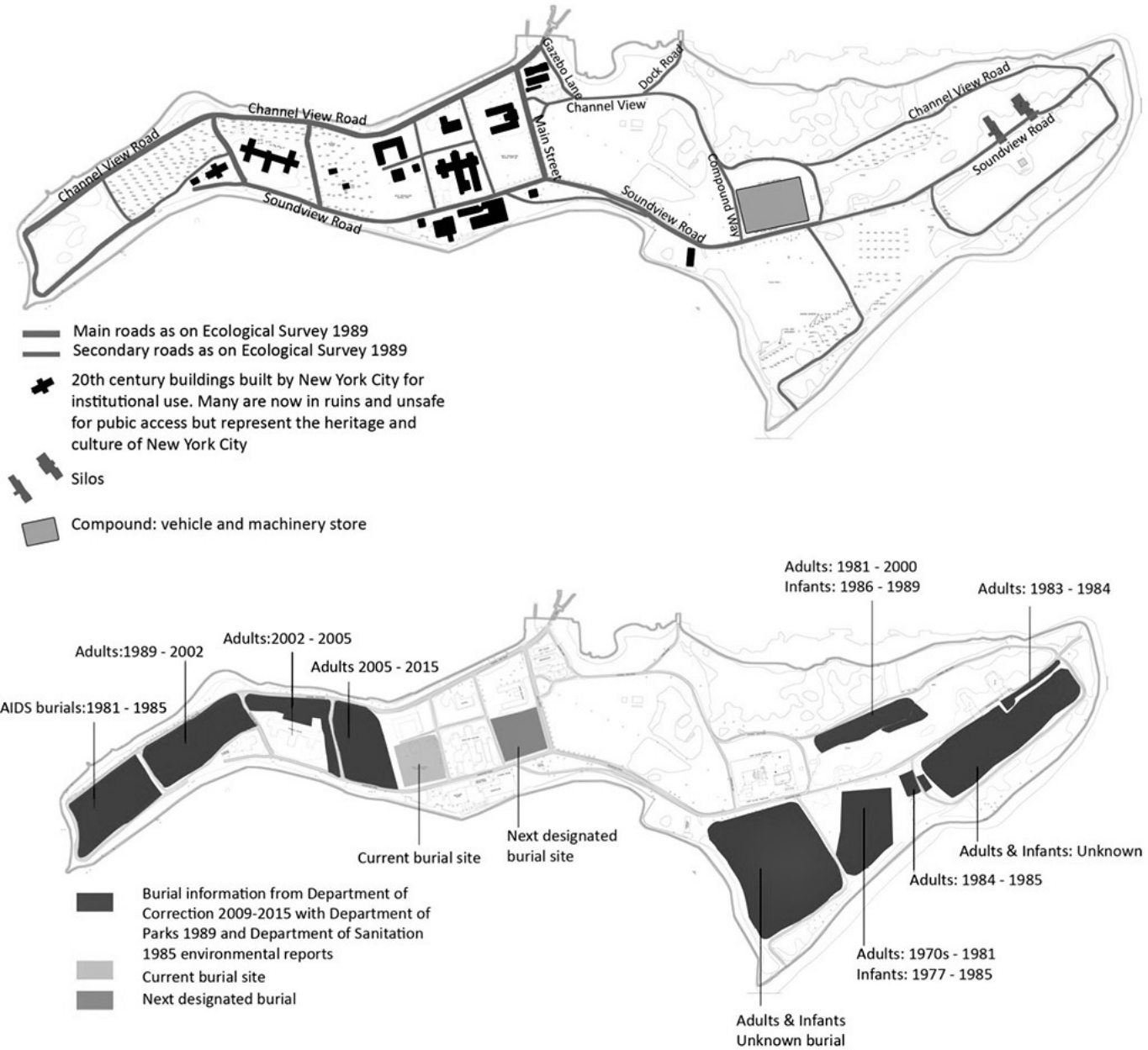
***Hart Island, New York City, United States of America***

Hart Island's rich history fills the site with a plethora of ruins (spoglia) and spaces that were once inhabited by lively matter. Ruins that are a reminder of architecture's ability to remain within us, often embodying contested projections of fragmented meaning and memory.

They open up another layer of tension between what was once entirely visible and is now invisible. From a hospital, a chapel, a rehabilitation center, a prisoners of war camp, a quarantine station, to even a potential amusement park. The stories, otherness, and lack of representation encapsulated in all the past roles of the island is evident in the fact that this island is and has always been designated for a society that was not "deemed" befitting of the city. A society that has been pushed to the edge even through the universality of death.



**FIGURE 38**  
Hart Island, Aerial View



**FIGURE 39**  
Hart Island Burials and Existing Ruins





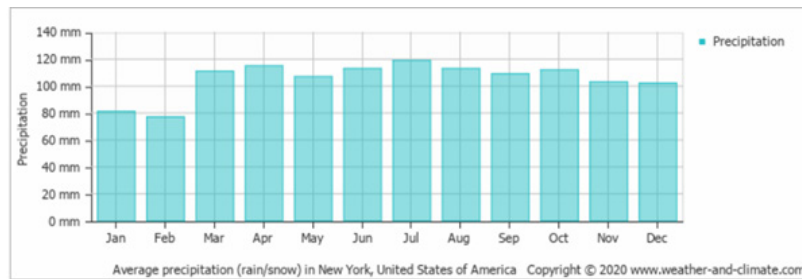
FIGURE 42  
Hart Island Ruins



FIGURE 43  
Hart Island Ruins

## Percipitation

FIGURE 44



- A lot of rain (rainy season) falls in the months: March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November and December.
- On average, July is the wettest month.
- On average, February is the driest month.
- The average amount of annual precipitation is: 1100.0 mm (43.31 in)

## Humidity

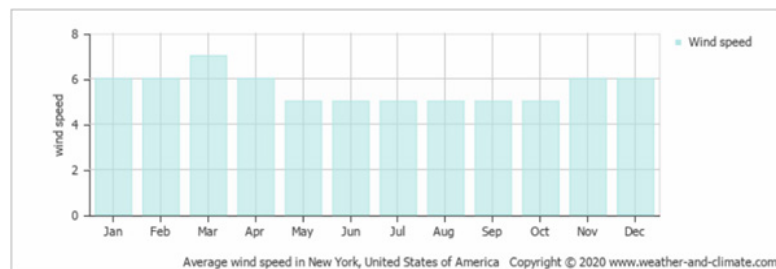
FIGURE 45



- On average, September is the most humid.
- On average, April is the least humid month.
- The average annual percentage of humidity is: 63.0%

## Wind

FIGURE 46



- On average, the most wind is seen in March.
- On average, the least wind is seen in August.

## Light



FIGURE 47

### Average hours of sunshine

- On average, July is the most sunny.
- On average, January has the lowest amount of sunshine.
- The average annual amount of sunhours is: 2540.0 hours



FIGURE 48

### Daily percent of sunshine

- On average, August is the most sunny.
- On average, December has the lowest amount of sunshine.

## Temperature

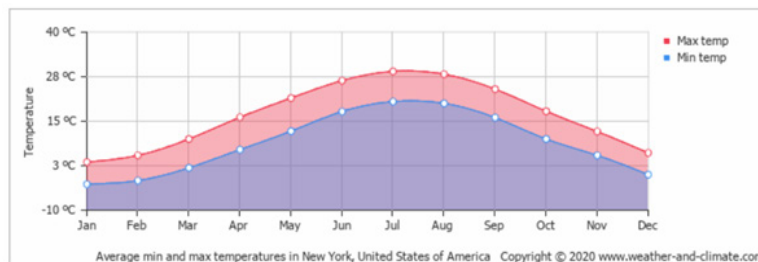


FIGURE 49

- The months May, June, July, August and September have a nice average temperature.
- On average, the warmest month(s) are July and August.
- On average, the warmest month is July.
- On average, the coolest month is January.

project emphasis:

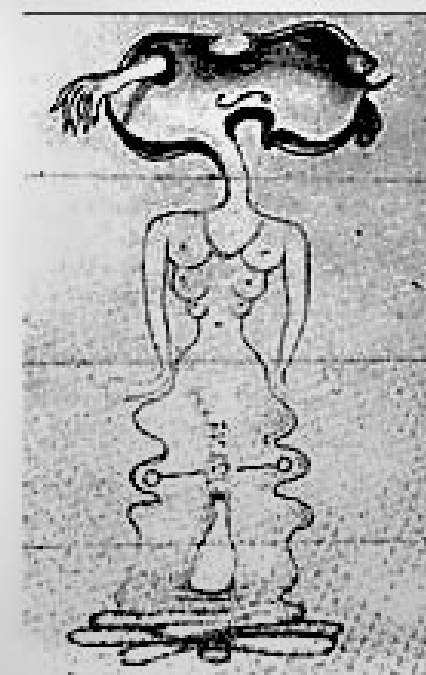
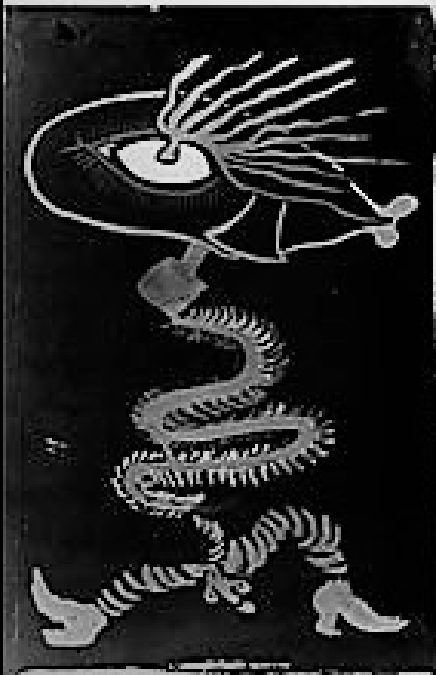
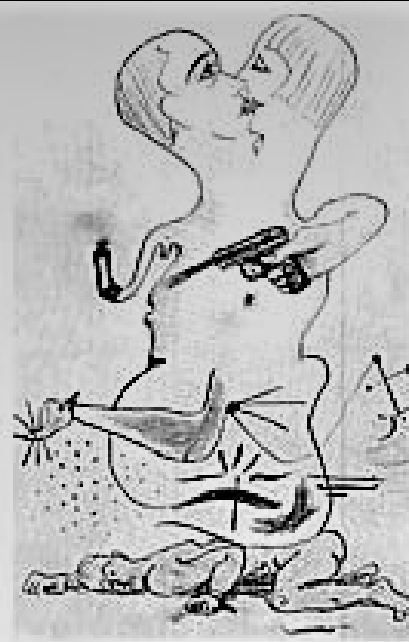


Emphasis in this will be given to the form of memories, the condition of the other and the symbolism of their need to re-emerge. This type of monument or project needs to utilize symbols which in turn stand for many of the embedded meanings. The meanings reflected by the elements create a sense of monumentality. Various forms like walls, pillars, arches might be used to create a sense this monumentality and a conveying of messages to the general public about life and death. The memorials will also use inscriptions and graphic projection methods to transfer these stories. Sites that utilize unifying and recognizable markers that embody important meanings are monumental include the 'Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.' which is recognized as/ refer to as the Wall. This long black reflective marble Wall is the core element of this site and has 58,226 names inscribed within it. This implementation of remembrance and standing in solidarity as we unify life and death, lost and found is going to be one of the major exploration points with my design. As Albero Perez-gomez states mood and atmosphere are one of the cornerstones for meaningful and impactful architecture, I aim to create this through opening a space for healing and reconciling with the other.

theoretical context:

The Reversibility present all throughout the fragments of this exquisite corpse extracts the stories of Hart island and begs the exploration of what truly lies underneath the surface. The alterity and otherness embedded in the “trip” to the last place is lined with intentional silencing and suppression of spirits. Considering these elements this thesis attempts to create an architectural seam that weaves together all the various fragments. Pulling from the surrealistic elements of the exquisite corpse this project not only challenges the typical depiction of the final place but also and perhaps more importantly what happens after loss. The living and dead have a connection that is everlasting and that is evident in the construction of space,time, and memory.

The consideration of death as a commodity is an issue that plagues our modern world. As discussed by many historians, philosophers, and theorists death is not as relevant in our lives, which caused it to become something that is only considered when in necessity. The relative connection is extremely evident in our transcendental daily encounters with death and loss in general. We are in need of a re awakening of meaning in our daily life and in the way we remember.



**FIGURE 50**  
"Exquisite Corpse, Surrealist Challenge Montage"

The exquisite corpse as a concept speaks to the collection of stories and meaning present in the site. The basis of this school of thought stemmed from surrealist ideologies and effectively revolved around the construction of different magnificent drawings that combined a plethora of styles and aesthetics from different artists. Each surrealist artist would draw a part of a “corpse” or body and then seamlessly hand over the work to the next artists to draw different fragments. What culminated were drawings that challenged the way people think about drawing and the threads that were pulled from one creation to the next. It became a metaphorical site for understanding how the one and the whole work in tandem to construct a much more complete and coherent image.

The city of New York itself is an exquisite corpse, Architectural theorist and writer Michael Sorkin states the following in his informative and vivid book exquisite corpse:

***“As an unfolding terrain of invention, the city is also a means of accommodating disparity, of contextualizing sometimes startling juxtapositions.”***

He talks about the construction of a city and how it consists of multiple players that each create a fragment ( in this buildings), the interweaving of design and ideas all around the fabric of the city engages people in what is a spectacle of wonder and connections between what was there, is there, and will be there. An exquisite corpse through space and time.

### ***The World of Perception by Maurice Merleau-Ponty***

Maurice Merleau-Ponty was a renowned French philosopher known for his outstanding work in phenomenology. In the year 1948, he releases a series of seven lectures on French Radio. These lectures were fundamental to the understanding of the central themes within phenomenology. He states that perception is imperative to our understanding of the world, a concept that is quite contradictory to that of Descartes. He argues that our senses and our perception are essential in helping us feel the world around us.

Space, science, art, animal life, our relationship with the other were all brilliantly explored by Merleau-Ponty. He constantly states throughout his work that we as creatures possess embodied minds, and our perception is not learned and applied to the world; instead, we are born perceiving. Constantly in a state of unpredictable contact with the world. Quite vivid examples were presented through his arguments, such as the works of Cezanne and their influence in the concept of modern art, as well as our inherent animal behavior.

We may believe that our daily lives are all clear to us; however, the reality from a utilitarian point of view, they are still “unknown territory”. And that is one of philosophy’s biggest achievements; it allowed us to “rediscover the world in which we live, yet which we are always prone to forget.”

***“The real world is not this world of light and color; it is not the fleshy spectacle which passes before my eyes. It consists, rather, of the waves and particles which science tells us lies behind these sensory illusions”***

Merleau-Ponty states that to understand light; for instance, we must consult a physician before asking our senses. The Methodical Investigations of science can provide us with a clear idea of what light is, as opposed to the information produced by our senses.

He also writes that art and philosophy rehabilitated the world as we perceive it. This was not meant to limit the scope of science, but “Rather, the question is whether science does, or ever could, present us with a picture of the world, which is complete, self-sufficient and somehow closed in upon itself, such that there could no longer be any meaningful questions outside of this picture.” This is a clear form of to justify the way we view the world through the lens of poetry and art, and not just through the laws and methods of science.

Furthermore, Maurice Merleau-Ponty argues against the belief that there is a difference between form and content, object, and space. “Objects do not inhabit an empty, neutral space, but rather exist in distinct spatial regions and are affected by those regions.” Through

connecting this to painting, he argues that Cezanne and modern artists like him see space and objects as one and the same, helping write parts of the same story.

Modern painting and modern science coincide through these findings, as he claims. Cezanne stated that “as soon as you paint, you draw,” in contrast to the distinction presented by the classical doctrine where the object is drawn first and filled with color afterward. We cannot distinguish between the outline of an object or the point at which colors end/fade through the picture or the perceived world. The colors “encompass all that there is, the object’s shape, its particular color, its physiognomy and its relation to neighboring objects.” The philosopher also references painting throughout his extensive writing since it draws us into the world of perception. The objects drawn do not simply pass by our gaze but convey “the very model of their material existence” just like in the works of Cezanne. This reciprocal relationship allows us to explore how we see an object within a space but also the space within the object.

Merleau-Ponty later further discusses the objects that actually fill the lattice of space. According to the understandings of classical psychology, objects are comprised of systematic properties that are united by intellectual synthesis. An object, in that case, is a combina-

tion of the properties that form it. It is not clear to us how these properties are fully incorporated into one another. For instance, it is like an apple appearing as one entity. The properties that unify objects will forever remain a mystery to us as long as we comprehend them as being related to the isolated senses apparent to us.

Each quality possesses an “affective meaning” that links it to the other senses forming a connected net. Merleau-Ponty uses the example of picking a rug for a space; each color, tactile feel, and everything about the rug sets an atmosphere. This mood is set by the qualities is activated through the connection of the color with other aspects such as temperature, sound, etc.

The relationship between qualities can best be restored to it’s said “affective meaning” by understanding its place in experience. For instance, the viscosity of touching honey, such an experience only makes sense when thought of in a bodily context. The grasp of the consistency and the way in which it engulfs the fingers and becomes “embroiled in a sticky external object.” The hand attempts to take control of a substance that “reverses the roles by grasping the hands of whoever would take hold of it.” It is a very peculiar interaction that begs the question of what is in our control and what properties are at work in this dichotomy.

Just like with the example of the honey, the sensual signals attached to it allow us to feel it, see it, interact with it, etc. It is impossible to separate things from their mode of appearing. Another example used by Merleau-Ponty was the standard description of a table- considered as a flat surface supported with three or four legs- however, that is not perceiving but defining. To fully perceive and comprehend something, one must withdraw their interest from the uses one makes of that thing, so for the table, one must consider things other than the shape of the molding. Rather the age, the grain, the color of the wood, where it is situated, all these details are what constitutes a table.

The world of perception is an amazing collection of literature that truly shifted our understanding and the way we perceive the world. Looking from the lens of my project, I think a lot of the differences that arise in the world and within the dichotomies present between life and death based on perception. A set of pre-disposed ideologies that do not account for the unknown for the things that are not apparent at the surface level at first glance. It takes a deeper understanding of the most basic qualities within space and memory to help us identify what something truly is and the way it interacts with our senses. Perception, both figuratively and literally, is what attaches us to our world and to one another. It is imperative that we not just see but sense the other in the place of the self, and writings by the great Maurice Merleau-Ponty help in dissecting that theme.





FIGURE 51  
"Albrecht Dürer, Melencolia I"

***Embodying Perceptions of Death:  
Emotional Apprehension &  
Reversibilities of Flesh***

Suzanne Laba Cataldi

Suzanne Laba Cataldi is a noteworthy philosopher and educator. She worked as an assistant professor at Moorhead State University Minnesota and then later at the University of Illinois after receiving her Ph.D. in philosophy. Her work in contextualizing works by the philosopher Merleau-Ponty was genuinely refreshing and insightful in a plethora of ways. In this essay, she explores the concept of death and our perceptions of it, in relation to Merleau-Ponty's notion of the "flesh." An ontology essential in understanding our connections and perceptions of one another.

Cataldi starts this excavation by stating:

***"In our ordinary experience of time, as it is lived, the past and the future reversibly cross over into each other in the (chiasmic) medium of the present. Our pasts open up onto a future that in turn crosses over into a past, which again opens up onto a future and so on. Until we die, death interrupts this circulation of time."***

This statement creates a form of 'a folding of the flesh'. The relationship we have with death is an ephemeral one where death is and can only be perceived as the "other." Meaning that our perception of death lies within our

thoughts and is never truly embodied in person. This perception, however, is quite evocative and intrinsic within a personal affective experience. Merleau-ponty's famous ontology of the reversibility of flesh is an impartial notion in perceiving an event such as death. This experience of reversibility presents two ways of perceiving death. Either as an experience of facing the tangible through the inevitable loss of one's own selfhood or a horrific experience that scars the preceptor, as stated by Cataldi.

"My horrified hand instinctively withdrew itself from this lifeless piece of flesh (I immediately left off touching it), and I remember being very shaken by the experience..." Cataldi provides this vivid description of an encounter she had perceiving death when she was a young girl. This quite tactile and perhaps tangible experience of death arising in a "lifeless piece of flesh" that became lifeless after that transition into said lifelessness.

This experience works at varying levels of the perception of death where a person is not just experiencing the inevitable aspect of death but also the intangible composition of life as both an object and a subject. Considering the perception from Merleu-ponty's notion of the flesh and the duality between object and subject, we come to realize that there is a reversibility occurring. A dead body in the context of a living body can be contextualized as an object for perception,

where one is perceiving whilst the other is being perceived. The eerie or fear-inducing concept is the directionality of perception between dead and alive. Where the two edges of the same fabric come in contact, the thing missing is the loss of an outwardly reciprocated perception. As in both bodies are made of the same skin, yet one is alive, and one is dead. The way we perceive the perception of a lifeless piece of flesh is explored by Cataldi in this quote:

***“The sidedness of the perception is confused, crossed over, so that, absorbed in the horror of this “gripping” experience, one no longer knows who is perceiving and who is being perceived. That’s reversibility.”***

This horrific interaction produces a multi-level sensory and perceptive experience. It paints a picture of “impurity” through the exchange that occurs whilst touching the lifeless piece of flesh; the distinction between living and dying is that of intruding. It reminds us of the horrific nature of death due to the fact that it is a loss of senses that is met with a pure sensitivity that occurs by actually touching a dead body. The other perspective is that of grief and the loss of embodied exchanges occurring with the dead. In Merleau-Pontyean terms, the rise of the feeling of horror constructs an encroachment in feelings of repulsion, fear, and hatred towards death through that reversibility. Intercorporality, in terms of the flesh, in-

roduces the concept of “incompletion of time.” Cataldi delves into and dissects a collection of poetry created by Jacques Roubaud. Titled “Something Black,” the poems explore death through the loss of his wife and the incompleteness of her time. He reports on a moment of enlightenment that occurred to him upon laying his eyes on the watch worn by his wife as she was lying “lifelessly” and dead. The watch on her wrist sat there exactly where her pulse was, ticking and moving “mechanically and senselessly.” This different perspective of time as a textural fabric correlating directly with death is synthesized by Cataldi as she states

***“... our ordinary sense of time, our past and future often overlap on our present. Our past opens up to the future only to become the past and this cycle of time opening up to the future while overlapping in the present continues until death.”***

The intrusion of time, perception, and feeling that occurs due to death severely hinders the future. This dissection in the cycle of time is perceived by us as a horrific experience. The notion of the flesh stands for the sensitivity of not just our bodies and selves but also the fabric of time. Perceiving the horrific experience of death and the “crossover” that occurs as the body transition away from life awakens the embodied sensation of our body as it is and the body as it was.

This crossover is perceived by the living in the form of mourning death through expressing grief and fear. Cataldi examines this grief by profoundly explaining “Kriyah,” the Jewish custom for mourning. The Jews embody the grief of loss by ripping their clothing and occasionally their hair aggressively whilst expressively crying out loud. The internal mourning crosses over to an external expression that shows vulnerability in that jarring finality.

“The internal tearing asunder that mourners feel in their relationship with the deceased.” This tearing ritual stands for the severity of death and embodies the emotional pain of losing the other, and in turn of the self. It is an existential encounter that requires the person to feel and live the loss both outwardly and inwardly in order to facilitate healing. The chasm or gap between the dead and us should echo that ritual and be carved into our collective memory to initiate the process of reconciliation.

The experience of reversibility and crossing over from death to life can metaphorically be translated into an architectural experience. Death, for the most part, lies within the vaults of memory and “lives” through remembrance, but is also embodied in space, it is expressed in spaces of remembrance. Most notably, architectural spaces that are “dead” due

to their loss of living interactions occurring within them. The folding over of the past into the future that occurs in the present to the textural quality of existing ruins. It is in these cracks of existing stories and memories are the places where the lifelessness of the flesh can lie.

Reviving a dead space of encounters through mourning our dead links presents reversibility in how life becomes death that fold into life. An experience that asks the participants to pursue reconciliation and overcome the horrific nature of loss of both a person and space.

Overall the lessons learned through Cataldi's exploration of the embodied perceptions of death offer great metaphorical principles applicable to the theoretical aspects of my thesis. Understanding the intertwining that occurs between life and death, the self and the other, past and present, greatly echoes the duality present in our inherent nature. Notably, with the east and west dichotomy, there is a chiasm or space for interaction that is opened through comprehending the reversibility that takes place in our interaction; the themes explored in this text relate to death of that link or bridge between self and other and have caused us to live in the periphery.

***How can "the death of a space" be claimed, treated and contextualized as a parallel to the end of a human life?***



**FIGURE 52**  
"Gustav Klimt, Death and Life"

**John Hejduk: The Linguistics of the Architectural Metaphor**  
**Musab Atalemanan**

This section will excavate the relations between metaphor, poesis, praxis, and mimesis in John Hejduk's "Berlin Masques" and "Victims" in relation to the essays 'Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality' and 'Reading Poetry and Philosophy' in order to tease-out the poetic function of Hejduk's later work. The diversity of spatial phenomena addressed by Hejduk can be clearly seen through his description of imaginary work through language. John Hejduk was an American architect, poet, and artist known for his elaborate and highly investigative works that exist on paper, collage, drawing, scale models, and most importantly in the linguistic realm. His manifestations spanned from the language of architecture as an echo of the human condition and social construct; as well as the creation of humanistic characters that were embodied in architectural representation.

This act of reading into the many fragments of Hejduk's Masques

***"certainly takes us into the basic dimensions generated by all genuine reading: we are drawn toward the human condition, out of ourselves to be ourselves, and up to beings displaying changed countenance."***

This quote from Cyril and Liliane Welch's "Reading Poetry and Philosophy" manages to address the true "seed" or "yolk" of what language is able to spark

within us and this is very much reflected in John Hejduk's theories that stem from semiotics and linguistics. Hejduk through his work creates a countenance to the architectural practice by linking all the different realms that construct a reality of fiction. His Masques are investigatory assessments of imaginary work in a historical context that reflects methodologies and comprehensions of the human condition.

John Hejduk considered architecture as not only composed of building but as a being that inserts itself into a vastly broader discourse between characters and forms, transparency and opacity, contextualized and realized. As Cyril and Liliane Welch put it, "the evocation to put together while seeing through the elements" is vividly painted by how the Masques created by Hejduk manifests the identity of an object, and the identity of a subject that are intertwined and intermingling continuously; a dynamic marriage, an amalgamate.

This co-emerging everlasting connection between depth and surface is quite evident in the relationship transpiring between a grid and a formless erratic volume (an investigation that is quite prevalent in a majority of Hejduk's works). Between "praxis" and "poesis" as described by Daniel Leviskind in his introduction of Hejduk's works in 1984, he states that these works are an imitation of chance in a radical and ethical dimension. Hejduk further strengthens this claim in this quote from the "Berlin Masque":

***“So completes the masque which in a way composed into a masque in our time, for as it was necessary for the highly rational-pragmatic city of 15th century Venice to create masques, masks, masses for its time in order to function, it would appear that we of our time must create masques (programs ????) for our times.”***

However, this highly complex rendering of imitation within the ethicism and radicalism of the masques must not be misconstrued as purely just a reflection of our times. Rather as Paul Ricoeur stated in “The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality” when referencing painting as a medium for metaphor and imagination, “...imitation is no longer a reduplication of reality but a creative rendering of it.” In the same breath, these characters realized by John Hejduk are a creative projection of our time both in the past, present and future. They function as “untapped resources” or “unclaimed potentials”.

The “Berlin Masque” and most of Hejduk’s preceding works acted as a “critical stance” as stated by Cyril and Lillian Welch - the ideologies explored through these past investigations create a folding over into further development in the 1984 project titled “Victims”. The excavation was a collection of 67 architecturally manifested characters, proposed to be constructed by the citizens of Berlin within two generational 30-year pe-

riods. (Hejduk revisits the generational aspect of architectural representation in his earlier work, which very much echoes Ricoeur’s point that construction across time stands as an

***“intertwined depth refraction and surface reflection revealing that with labor, the luminosity of the universe can be recreated.”***

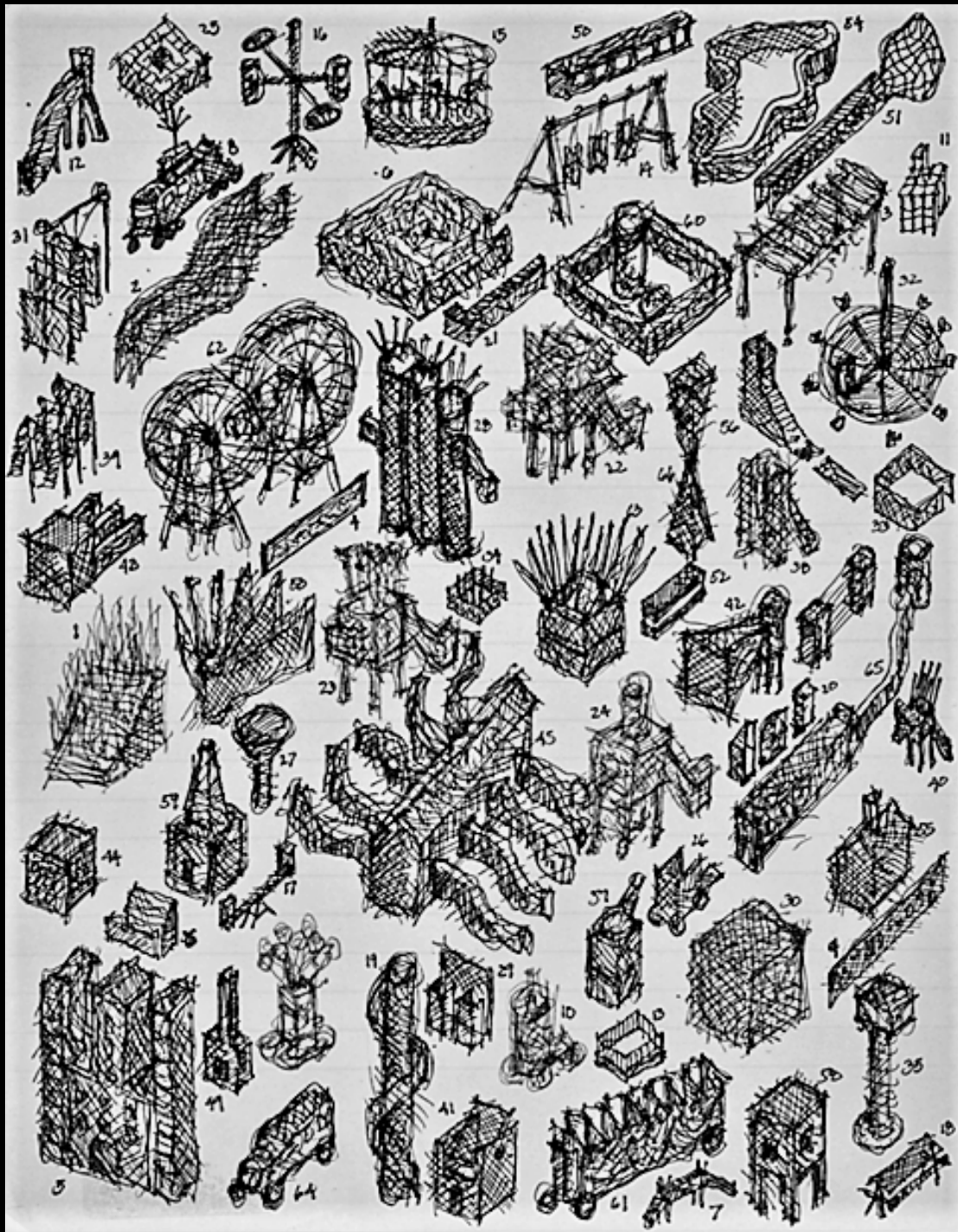


FIGURE 53  
"John Hejduk, Victims, 1983"



The elements and structures of “Victims” are located on an old Gestapo site in Berlin, which included a torture chamber during the Second World War. These characters are schematically shown in either perspective or silhouette. As opposed to showcasing these elements in a grid-like layout, Hejduk opted to display them in a dispersed labyrinthine-like arrangement. These characters are very much a “floating” proposal that is intentionally left in a space of interpretation. From dominant towers, pavilions constructing time, chambers confronting mysteries, the “masks” are very much attached to a poetic linguistic realm.

Ricoeur states:

***“Poetry, even more than painting, appears at first sight to be a retreat of language into itself, a pure and simple abolition of reality. But, what is denied by poetry is the ordinary vision of reality as it is described in ordinary language. Suspension of the condition for the emergence of new dimensions of experience and reality, exactly those which are re-described by fiction.”***

The last part of this statement being the most relevant, notably through Hejduk’s manipulation of time and the establishment of relations between experience and reality. It is a harmonious union between different media that are

continuously emerging in architectural elements. The conceptual framework of the utilized methods is not just a theoretical pursuit of logos or autonomous formalism. Rather, it is a “retreat of language” that implies a bodily situation of a force that perhaps could be described as an embracing of a character. A blurring of identity that creates a fictitious yet tangible discourse.

The methodical and metaphoric silhouette fabrications in a world of imagination constructed by Hejduk allow a constitution of different worlds. Ricoeur illustrates a similar point stating:

***“the transfer of the metaphorical process is the key to the transfer of meaning proper to all displacement of concepts, the work of the model shows the way in which poetic fictions themselves effect the metamorphosis of reality.”***

The model in this case being Hejduk’s translation of a “euphoric” construction of time that is in a constant transferal between different models that may be associated with the notion of expression and the human condition. “Victims” points to the relevance of “metamorphosis” in the creation of reality. Its existence is very much centred around the fact that it doesn’t exist (yet?). A set of proposals that point to a spatiotemporal, psychological, social, and even political “mimesis of reality”.

It very much relies on interpretation and imagination to be constructed, the fact that the plan of this project is just an "option" and not a definitive fact opens up a plethora of avenues where the use of the poetic metaphor allows for unlimited interpretations.

Hejduk's suspension of time through its construction (or lack thereof) manages to provide 67 structures that act as "homes" for the people of Berlin. The undeniable fact of the potency of metaphor present in these "masks" create a sense of otherness. Relying on different textural realities painted through the models of poems, drawings, and plans; these structures act as a house for the presence of absence in the story of Berlin. Gaston Bachelard states in "The Poetics of Space" that:

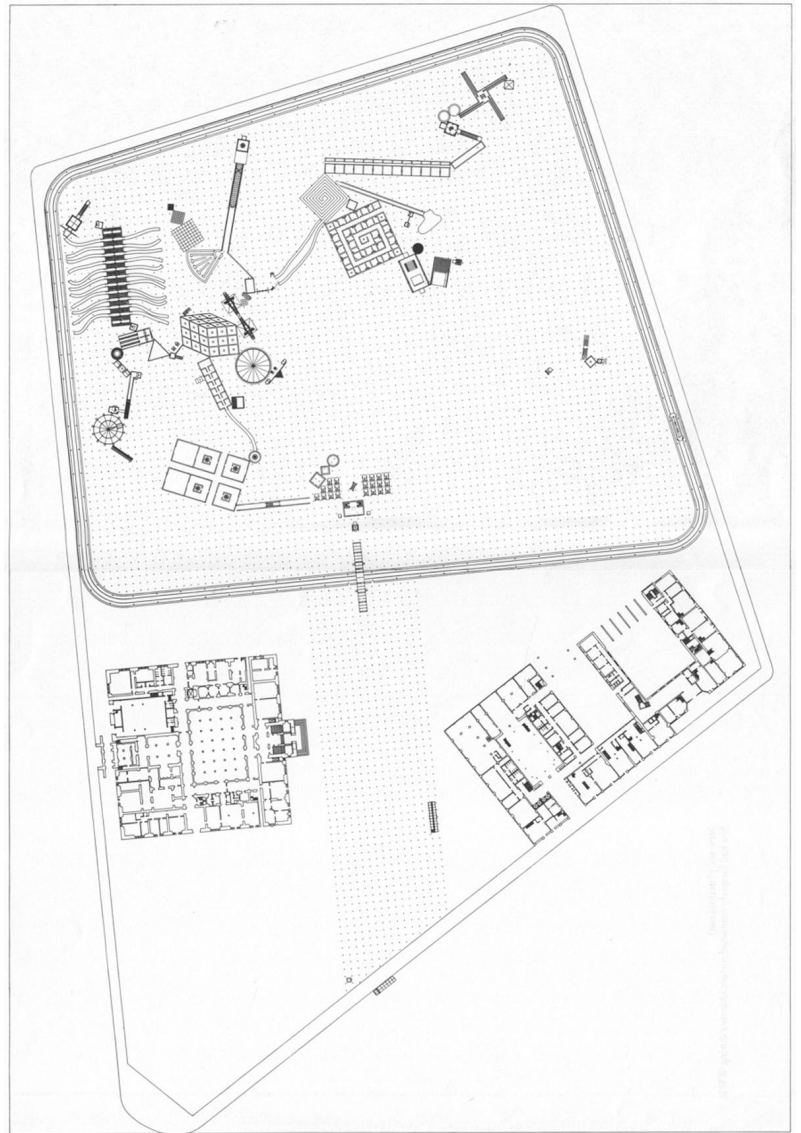
***"our house is our corner of the world. ...it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word. "***

"Victims" constructs these houses that become the subject/object of any given discourse, it possesses the greatest power of the integration of memories, body, and the dreams of mankind. The interpreter identifies the space through the linguistic realm creating a moment of sentient consciousness where even the realization of one of these structures can reference the loss and otherness associated with it.

Through relying on imagination, Hejduk was able to continuously search for new forms and programs, even after the creation of these structures. In a broader sense, he was able to dialectically and dynamically relate human beings to their surroundings, through linguistic metaphoric events and actions. Ricoeur paints a living image of this concept through this statement:

***"Imagination thus identified is doubtlessly the productive, schematizing imagination. The benefit of a semantic theory of imagination lies precisely in approaching the image through its verbal nucleus, then proceeding from the verbal to the non-verbal, from the semantic to the sensible, and not vice versa. Treated as schema, the image is, in the words of Bachelard, a being of language."***

Hejduk's "Victims" and his masques series, in general, were constantly a "being of language" and moreover they were "being through language". They need not be physically constructed to prove their "realness" but rather their existence through language made them "real". The architectural model of this project investigated the limits of metaphoric signification through the imaginary realm. Eventually landing at a contemporary architectural ethos that was much more about the materiality of absence, rather than just the construction of yet another reductive and repetitive architectural structure.



**FIGURE 54**  
"John Hejduk, Victims Plan, 1983"



**FIGURE 55**  
"Catharsis of Grief, Artefact, Musab Ateelman"

The expedition and exploration process of finding new material that speaks to different variables of this issue is a deeply vital one. This is not just a mere inscribing of texts but rather a deeper dialogue rooted in cultural interactions of understanding one another. Through the reversible nature of all of our exchanges with our counterparts, we are met with a certain level of expectation. The world we currently live in strives on inward experiences that fail to become embodied.

Our most vital mode of understanding is our perception. It allows us to comprehend something and treat it with a certain level of gravity. Setting up a stage for this perceiving action must occur in relation to our senses and the weight they envelop in architecture. The divide between self and other is deeply rooted, but I would argue that even through the rich history, culture, class, religion, and geography, it all comes down to perception. We fail to reconcile with one another and truly feel the ephemerality of life because we don't understand one another and that in turn makes us lose focus on what actually is relevant in our interactions with people from the other side. Memory and past are integral to forming the context for understanding; they ask us to either live within our own perceptions or crossover into a deeper analytic process of feeling or mourning our human understanding.

Death and the finality accompanying it are not restricted to the death of bodily interaction, but here it takes shape as the death of understanding. We must take the time we have and celebrate life through mourning the past but setting it up as a launchpad for our unity.

justification:

As humans, we are all in the eternal search for a purpose, a meaning, a faith - a goal that is perhaps unattainable by some measures. However, I believe that in this reconciliation with the other we just might be able to the ephemerality of life and the significance of our shared humanity. Locating this project specifically at "The Prison of The Dead" which as established earlier was the name given to the potter's field which is Hart Island. This dubbing has a symbolic and literal meaning to it that aligns quite proficiently with the theoretical aspects that drive this thesis. We are living in a time where injustice prevails even through death and it might've always been that way and could for all we know sustain. But being at a site with abandoned ruins and structures that directly stand for the fact the there was once something there, a living breathing anthropomorphic being that has left but is still present. This transient yet eternal connection is what binds us to one another like it binds that power plant to its lived history. We can not detach the stories embedded in the fabric of the walls or the lace of time, parallel to that we as humans can not detach ourselves from the other, we are as one linked by skin and blood.

**"Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee." -Augustine of Hippo**

This quote from Augustine of Hippo manages to synthesize the manifold reasons for this project. We can not claim to have found peace or be united without truly embodying it through our interactions with the other - the black, and the white, the rich and the poor - this is obviously relative but I do solemnly believe that there is a need for a dance in every duality in order for us to create a world rich in not just history but empathy and compassion. The time for this is now, it is not yesterday and it is not tomorrow. However, it is crucial for us to strengthen this conversation and to be a part of a change that is vital for our coexistence. Ruins of our past will and **MUST** always be present to guide us, but the way in which we interpret them must take into account all aspects of each story as implied by Augustine of Hippo.

*The contour of a ritual that is no longer there, various “othering” lamentations in constant overlap, ultimately folding into a harmonious transcendental moment.*

artefact:





FIGURE 56  
FIGURE 57  
FIGURE 58  
FIGURE 59

The artefact channels the reinvigoration and cross-over that occurs in the preformative acts of mourning and grief. As discussed earlier in the mentioned essay regarding Cataldi's exploration, she was able to paint a vivid image when describing grief of loss, stating it is:

***“A counteraction between sensing their presence and realizing their absence, a conflict between accepting and denying the reality of loss...I image grief as an injury; as a type of open wound, torn tissue”***

Mourning and lamenting poses the power to heal the wounds and form a space for a mutual understanding between self and other. Through a theatrical interplay that pierces through the veil of time a perfect moment for grief and mourning to be embodied collectively is presented.



**FIGURE 60**  
"Artefact Performance"



**FIGURE 61**  
"Textural Veils"

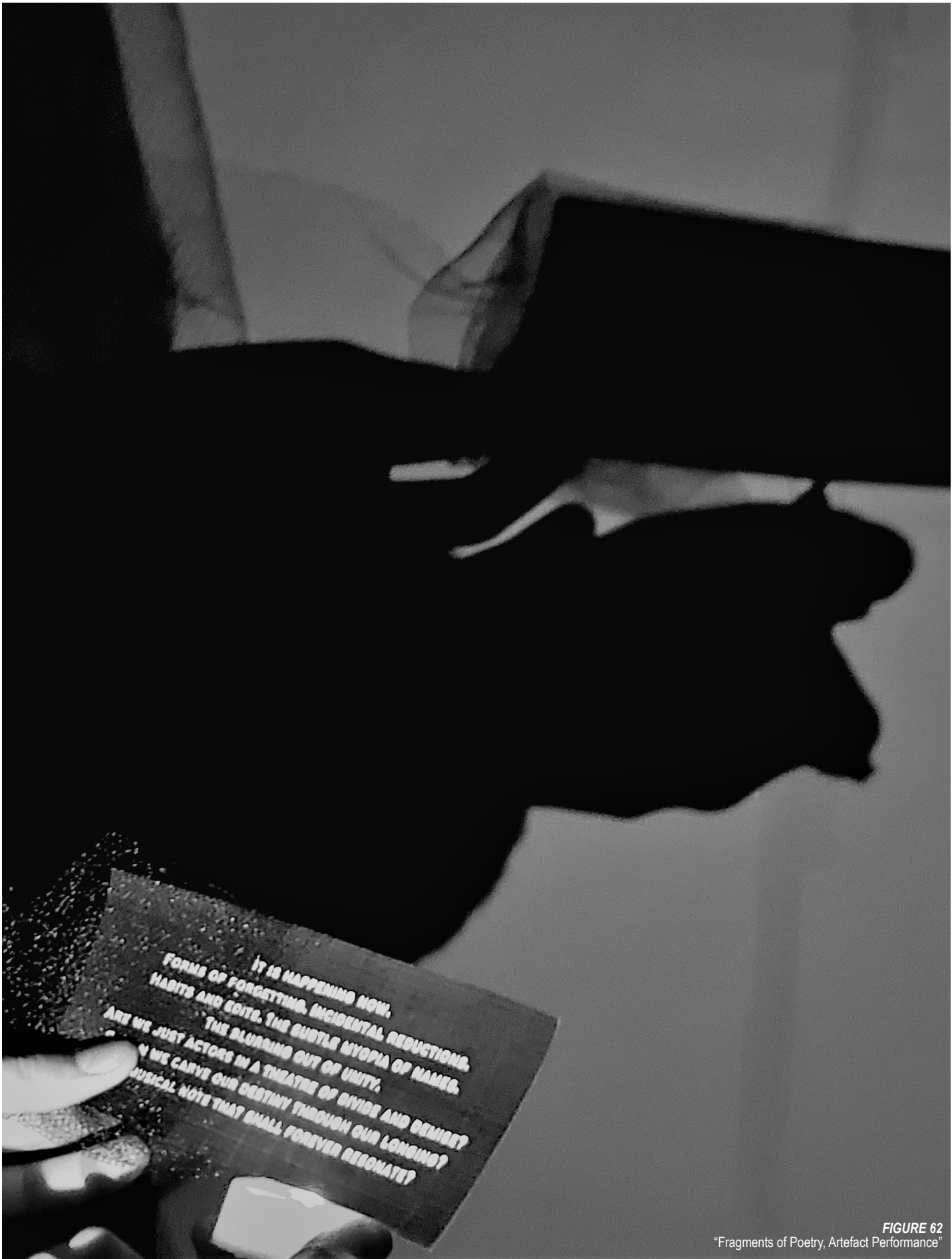
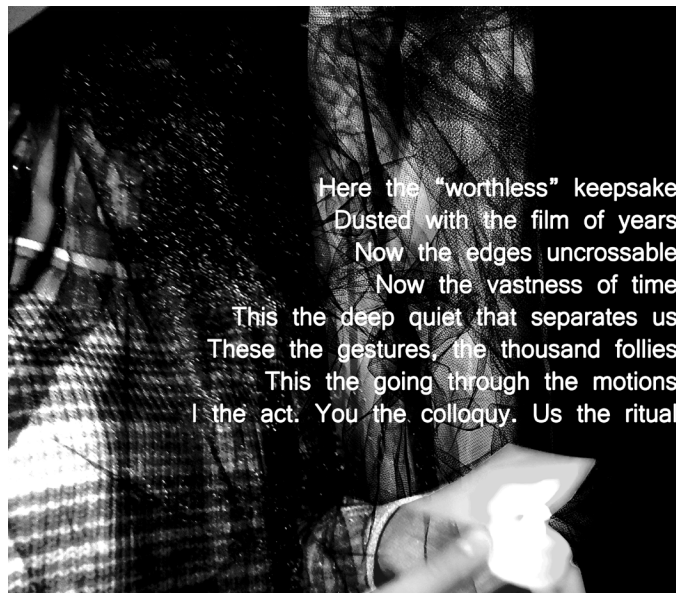


FIGURE 62  
"Fragments of Poetry, Artefact Performance"



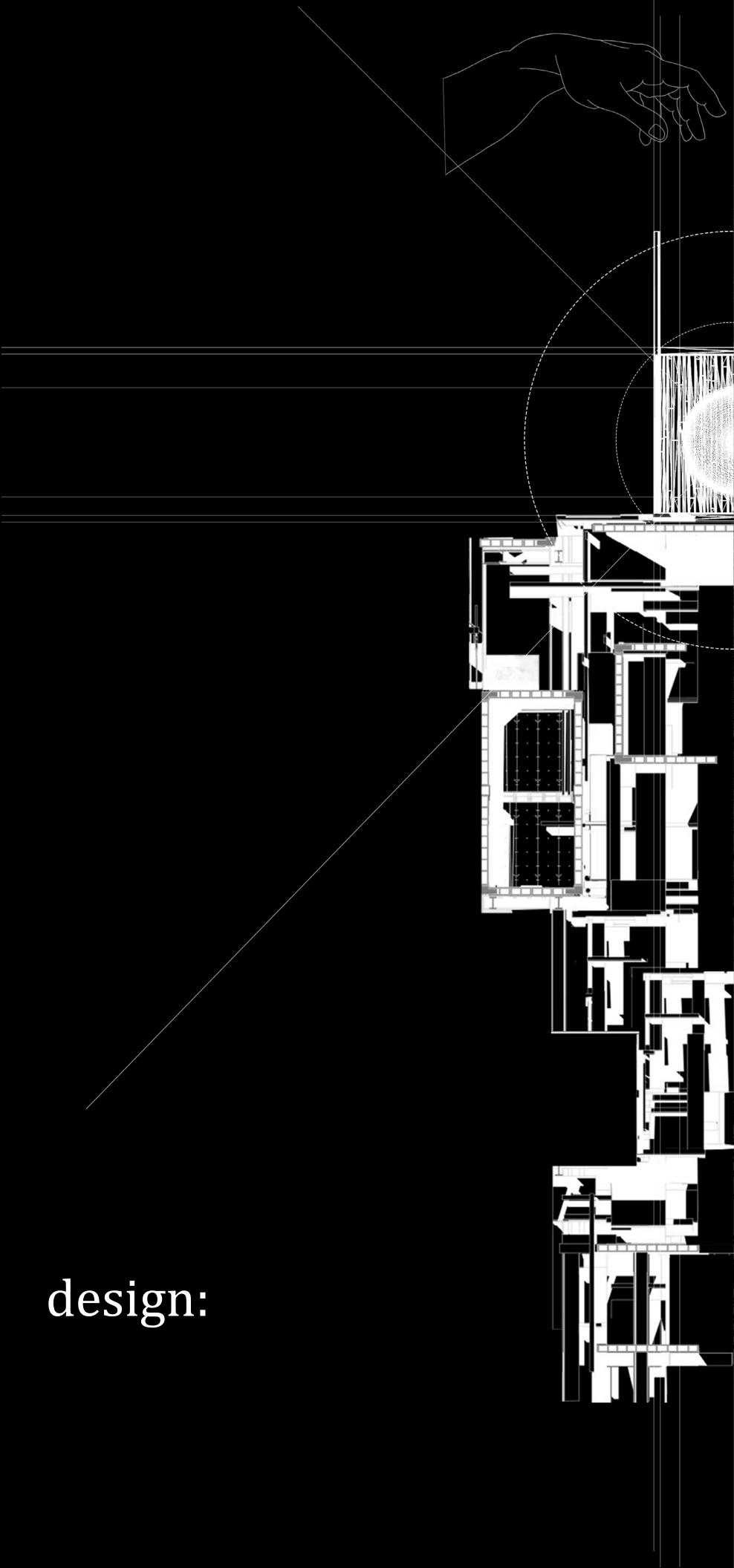
**FIGURE 63**  
 "Artefact Cover, Poem Fragment"

Mourning can be a very "othering" act yet through a participatory layering of fragmented lamentations that each speak to a culturally diverse encounter with death, the individual and the collective overlap and the cultural sound of the "other" is echoed. An exquisite corpse. A tension that converges into a singular harmonious moment where the dichotomies between self and other, life and death, past and present are ultimately transcended.

So one of the biggest exploratory questions was

***How, How can architecture materialize the catharsis of grief?***

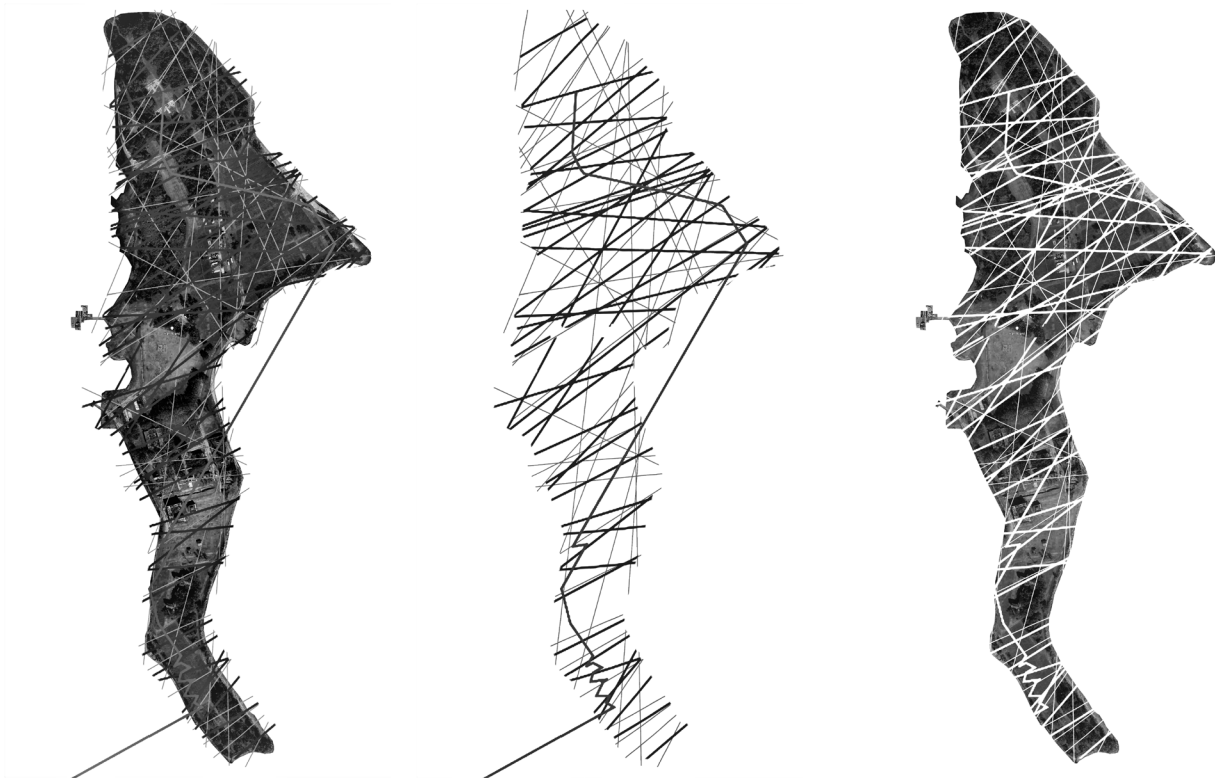
The reciprocal relationship present between the expression and the comprehension of Alterity is also reflected in the architectural manifestations of space.



design:



FIGURE 64  
"Spoglia Collage"



**FIGURE 65**  
"Path Lines Formulation"

Echoing the exquisite corpse, edges, tropes, and the reversibility of the amalgam of stories present in the site. This Architectural intervention aims to awaken "the other side of the other".

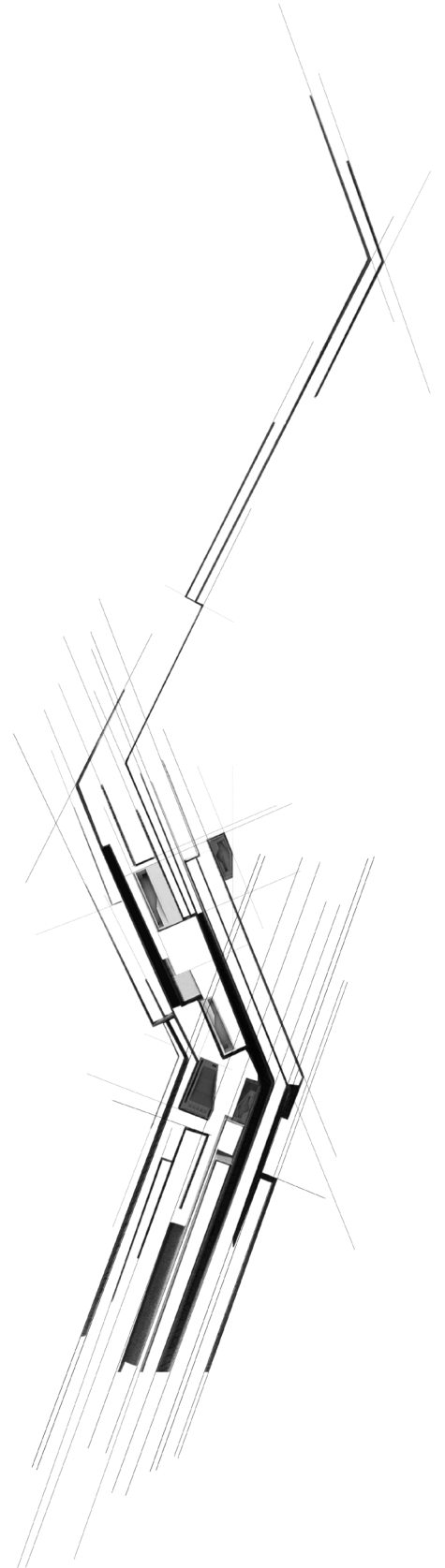
The design starts with paths that are formed through the extension of strings that are manifested from the cemeteries and hospitals in New York City.







**FIGURE 68**  
Site Map

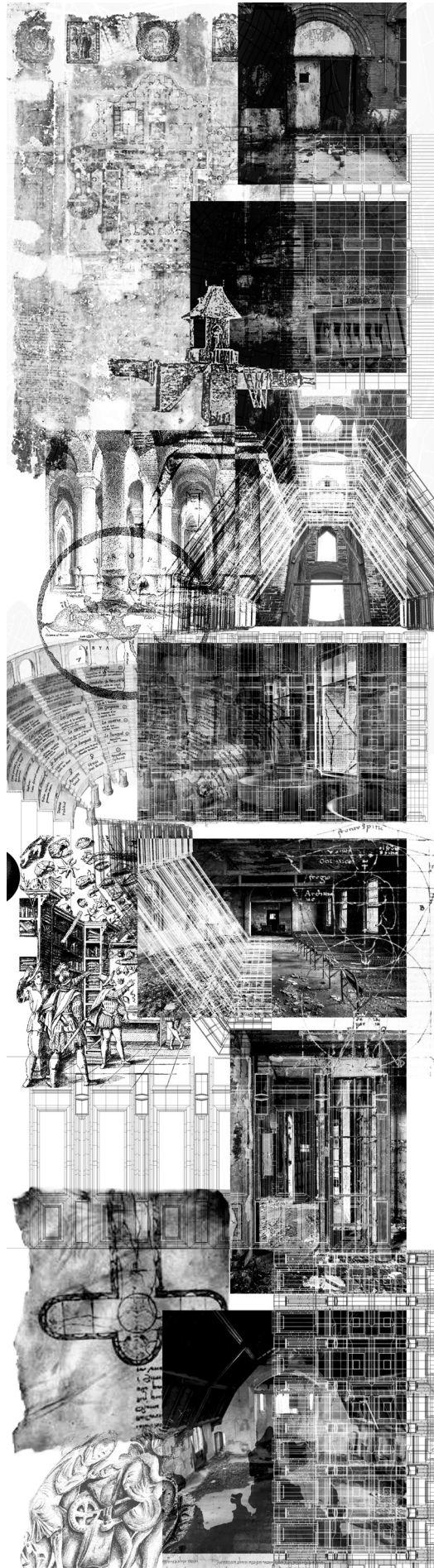


**FIGURE 69**  
Interweaving Paths

The journey begins with crossing over the edge and into the island, where the ruins stand there as a constant reminder of a silenced past. The island is forged with paths that contextualize the textural reality of the place. Paths that are crossing through and around the old and the new forging links and weaving the ruins of the past, the stories of the people, the history of the site and reversing the undeniable suppression occurring, unto the present.

Reviving the old through the fragmentation of the new presents another experiential chora where the stories line the architectural cavities, and are both particular voids in the land that bring forth the absence, yet it also creates bridges that metastasize in the understanding of the other and create a folding over between presence and absence.

These paths weave under the ground in select areas - pushing the people to sink under the ground, to be one with the other as they cross over into the two most populous edges of the island - the burial plots of the other.

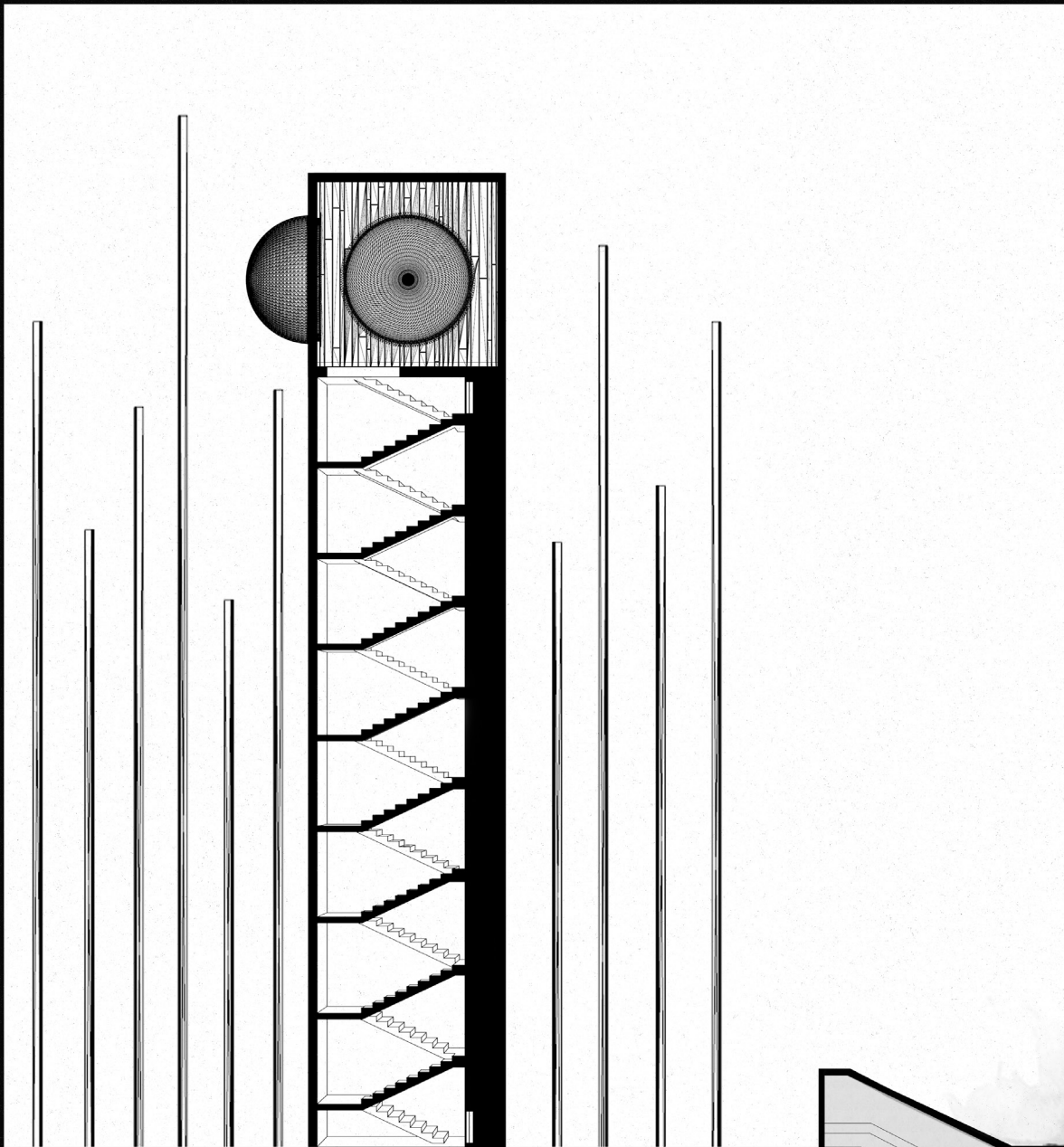


**FIGURE 70**  
Ruins Collage, Reframing Old Through the New





**FIGURE 71**  
Reconciliation Landscape, Reframed Ruins

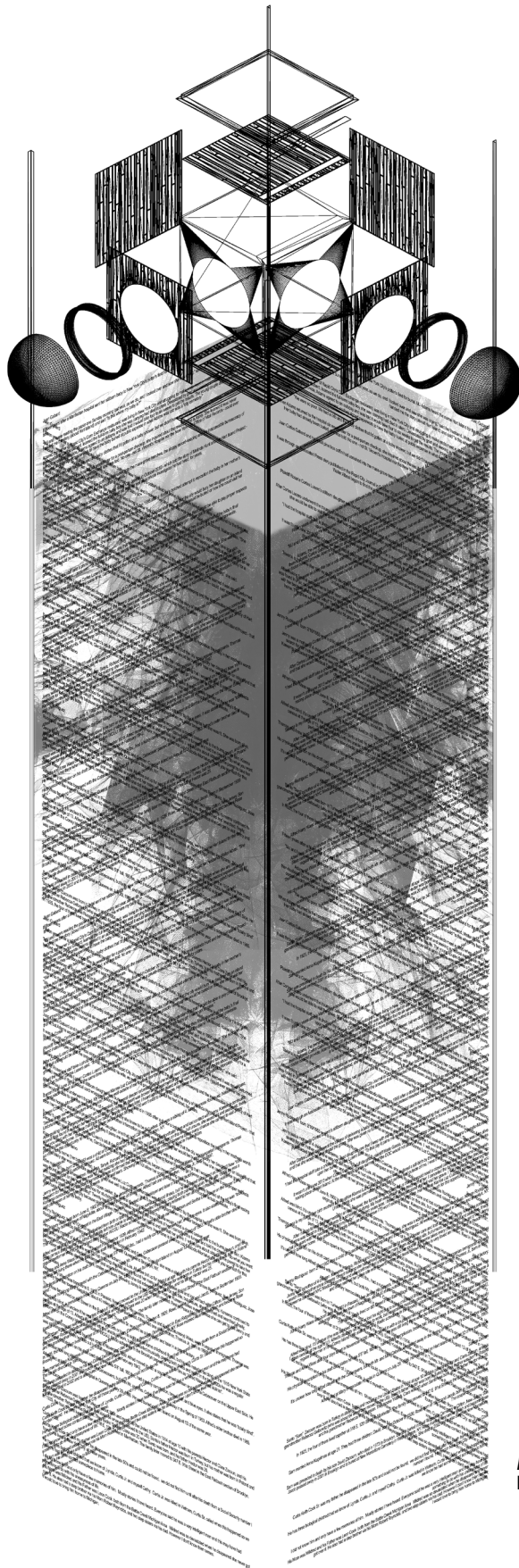


**FIGURE 72**  
Section Cut, Sky Graves, Interweaving  
Paths, Reconciliation Landscape





These plots were nameless, and without stories with only headstones indicating the plot number. Here long columns extend outwards from each headstone, creating a bridge between higher and lower, with intermittently placed bodies that stand as sky graves for the silenced, forgotten and forlorn dead.



These mourning chambers sit atop some of the burial plots and act as spaces of remembrance. Best described with the German term "Waltraum" or a 'world room' of different tropes and fragments eternally linked through the stories of the dead. These chambers weave together the rich history of the site through being positioned directly over undignified burial plots eternally standing as a metaphor for the Native American tradition of sky burials or celestial burials - where bodies of the deceased are elevated into the sky and given back to the elements through the atmospheric quality of nature.

The stories are being extended from the cyclical nature of life, (from the elements, back to the elements). A reversibility of the flesh. The site itself once upon a time belonged to the Native American Siwanoy Tribe. This architectural intervention pays tribute to the erased stories of the dead, as well as the petina of the site.

**FIGURE 73**  
Exploded View, Sky Grave, Extracting Stories

searching, I have  
I would often get u  
a great guy, but t  
e I was chasing a  
r. Years would pa

mely ill in 2013 a  
te, or that I saw o  
disappointed with  
ake chances, my fi  
ur family in Puerto  
sins, here in Florid  
l the really bad. T

lped make this ha  
much love, joy and  
great dad and ma  
all of it is a part o  
You will live on thr  
but I know in my  
ould find my sister,

searching, I have  
I would often get u  
a great guy, but they hadn't heard from you in a while. I could find no trace of you or your family... my  
e I was chasing a ghost. Maybe my mom had lied about the name of my father, maybe he was the one  
r. Years would pass and I would stop searching for a bit but you were always there, a thought, a feeling,  
an ache but more importantly a secret wish.

mely ill in 2013 and surviving near death, my search for you became a mission. I can't say it's because  
te, or that I saw or heard you while in my comatose state but something did happen, that I know. I felt  
disappointed with every empty or fruitless clue, I had to continue. After much deliberation about life being  
ake chances, my fiance and I decided to move to Florida. I continued my search for you on line looking in  
ur family in Puerto Rico. Finally, after all this time, I found them...your sister and nephews, my sister and  
sins, here in Florida. Through them, I then found you. Stories of the type of person you were, the good,

After 30 years of searching, I have finally found you, and in more ways than one, it's ironic that I began r  
before you died. I would often get upset because I would come across someone who said they knew you  
day" and you were a great guy, but they hadn't heard from you in a while. I could find no trace of you o  
family. I felt like I was chasing a ghost. Maybe my mom had lied about the name of my father, maybe h  
who had lied to her. Years would pass and I would stop searching for a bit but you were always there, a t  
an ache but more importantly a secret wish.

After becoming extremely ill in 2013 and surviving near death, my search for you became a mission. I ca  
you helped save me, or that I saw or heard you while in my comatose state but something did happen, th  
driven and although disappointed with every empty or fruitless clue, I had to continue. After much deliberat  
to short to not take chances, my fiance and I decided to move to Florida. I continued my search for you o  
NYC and for your family in Puerto Rico. Finally, after all this time, I found them...your sister and nephews,  
brothers, my cousins, here in Florida. Through them, I then found you. Stories of the type of person you  
the bad and the really bad. They said they hadn't heard from you since 1989 after you told them you had  
pneumonia. After more searching, I found you! Thank God for the Hart Island Project.

ou brings your soul peace, and your loved one  
you're smiling down on me. You were never ab  
if my life allowed that to happen. I accept the  
a "new" family that is giving me all the love th  
k you for the gift of life. I hate that this is wa  
gone from that place and you are right by m  
sins here in Florida because I am guided, prot

more ways than one, it's ironic that I began r  
ome across someone who said they knew you  
in a while. I could find no trace of you o  
ed lied about the name of my father, maybe h  
nching for a bit but you were always there, a

h, my search for you became a mission. I ca  
comatose state but something did happen, th  
clue, I had to continue. After much deliberat  
ve to Florida. I continued my search for you o  
s time, I found them...your sister and nephews,  
and you. Stories of the type of person you  
you since 1989 after you told them you had  
for the Hart Island Project.

ou brings your soul peace, and your loved one



FIGURE 74  
Interior View, Sky Grave, Wonder World Domes

Like the artefact these spaces present an opportunity for a cathartic articulation of grief and mourning. Names and stories of the people buried at the island are projected or superimposed in the sky graves urging the visitors to cross the threshold and begin the process of understanding the other. The deceased were victims of unremembrance and their loved ones were rarely given a chance to mourn the loss. However, through the troping of these spaces, an opportunity for collective mourning and the overlapping of lost stories is indeed possible. Unity through Finality.

boards:







appendix:



Cataldi, S. (2000). *Embodying Perceptions of Death: Emotional Apprehension & Reversibilities of Flesh*.

Cahal, S. (2018, October 5). *Glenwood Power Plant. Abandoned - Abandoned Building Photography*. <https://abandonedonline.net/location/glenwood-power-plant/>

Climate and average monthly weather. (n.d.). *World Weather & Climate Information*. <https://weather-and-climate.com/average-monthly-Rainfall-Temperature-Sunshine,yonkers-new-york-state-us>

Bernstein, N. (2016, May 15). *Unearthing the Secrets of New York's Mass Graves*. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/05/15/nyregion/new-york-mass-graves-hart-island.html>.

A. (2011, February 21). *John Hejduk-Thoughts of an Architect*. *Aesthetakc*. <https://aesthetakc.wordpress.com/2011/02/21/john-hejduk-thoughts-of-an-architect>.

Souza, E. (2018, January 16). *AD Classics: Igualada Cemetery / Enric Miralles + Estudio Carme Pinos*. *ArchDaily*. <https://www.archdaily.com/375034/ad-classics-igualada-cemetery-enric-miralles-carme-pinos>

Sveiven, M. (2020, May 12). *AD Classics: San Cataldo Cemetery / Aldo Rossi*. *ArchDaily*. <https://www.archdaily.com/95400/ad-classics-san-cataldo-cemetery-aldo-rossi>

Surico, J. (2017, November 9). *The Journey from Death to Hart Island*. *Urban Omnibus*. <https://urbanomnibus.net/2015/10/the-journey-from-death-to-hart-island/>

Gadamer, H.G. (1993). *The Enigma of Health*.

Dodds, E. R. (1956) *The Greeks and the irrational*. Berkeley,

CA: The Regents of the University of California.

Edward S. Casey, *Chora 5. Looking around the Edge of the World: Contending with the Continuist Principle and the Plenarist Passion*

Frascari, M. (1991). *Monsters of Architecture*

Halavaara, S. (2016) *My Interactive Image*. Available at: <https://www.thinglink.com/scene/695925677953646594>

"Loenen Pavilion / KAAAN Architecten" 27 Nov 2020. <https://www.archdaily.com/952194/loenen-pavilion-kaan-architecten>

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Thomas Baldwin (2004). *Basic Writings, The Visible and the Invisible: The Intertwining-The Chiasm*

John Hejduk (1986). *Victims* (London: Architectural Association).

Ricoeur, P. (1986). *The function of fiction in shaping reality*.

Welch, C., Welch, L. *Reading poetry and philosophy: The case of Michel Butor*.

Adam Smith. (n.d.). *Depictions of My Mind*. <https://descriptions-of-my-mind.tumblr.com/image/39785614844>

Perez-Gomez, Alberto. *Attunement: Architectural Meaning after the Crisis of Modern Science*. The MIT Press, 2016

Ponty, M.M. (2008) *The world of perception*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge Publishers.

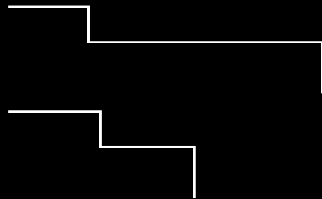
Tschumi, Bernard (1994) *Architecture And Disjunction*



***Musab Atalemanan***

***Hometown***

Dammam, Saudi Arabia  
Khartoum, Sudan



personal identification:

**2nd Year**

Fall 2017: Darryl Booker

Tea House: Fargo, North Dakota  
Boathouse: Minneapolis, Minnesota

Spring 2018: Charlott Greub

Small Dwelling: Marfa, Colorado  
Birdhouse: Fargo, North Dakota

**3rd Year**

Fall 2018: Paul Gleye

Downtown Visitor Center: Fargo, North Dakota  
Student Center: Fargo, North Dakota

Spring 2019: Niloufar Alenjery

Fairy-Tales Competition: San Fransisco, California  
Dennis Lanz Competition: Moorhead, Minnesota

**4th Year**

Fall 2019: Cindy Urness

Highrise Competition: Miami, Florida

Spring 2020: Amar Hussein

Marvin Windows Competition: Fargo, North Dakota  
Island Urban Design: Minneapolis, Minnesota

**previous studio experience:**

the end/beginning: