

**EDGAR ALLAN POE RARE BOOKS LIBRARY  
AT YALE UNIVERSITY**

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**THE REMATERIALIZATION  
OF LANGUAGE**



# Signature Page

A Design Thesis Submitted to the Department of Architecture and  
Landscape Architecture at North Dakota State University.

By

Luke DeVries

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Masters 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.



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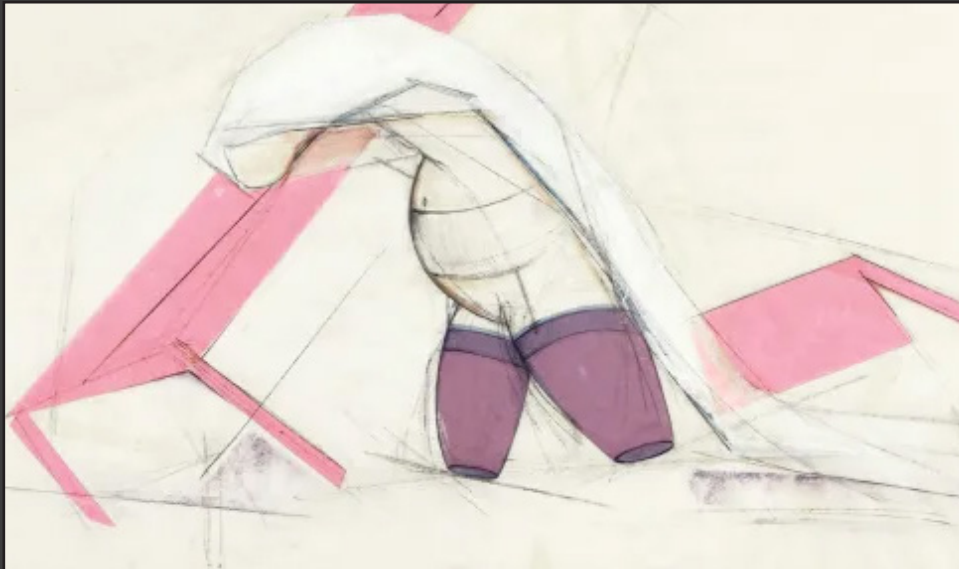
# Introduction



# Thesis Abstract

Michel de Certeau states, “The current industrial mass production of visual imagery tends to alienate vision from emotional involvement and identification and turns imagery into a mesmerizing flow without focus or participation” (Pallasmaa). Based upon a critique of the expedient exchange of information in our modern culture, this thesis examines how creative language and the act of reading itself might open an interpretive dimension for new pathways that are more and more lost in our current cultural milieu.

Inspired by Edgar Allan Poe’s story *La Ligeia*, which follows a grieving lover through the death and reemergence of his first true love, this rare books library examines how poetic images that emerge from Poe’s story might be transformed into the time and space of architecture. Fragments and spaces, both written and built, aim to conjure unique images within the visitor as an enduring testament to the importance of language itself.



# Thesis Narrative

With a rise in social media usage and cellphone addiction, the world has taken a regress as to how information is handled. Throughout history, books and scripts have been held as a symbol of power and knowledge. As time has passed, reading the ancient scrolls and works of our ancestors have become obsolete, thought of as unnecessary. Time has a tendency to pass by without acknowledgment or regard to whomever may be present. In a world that is increasingly more fast paced as each day passes us, it is imperative that, if one truly has a desire to learn and be able to think clearly, they must find an inner haven.

In modern day, the sense of sight is being used against the human race. Companies want the advertisement or product that shines brighter than the rest. "The current industrial mass production of visual imagery tends to alienate vision from emotional involvement and identification, and to turn imagery into a mesmerizing flow without focus or participation." Michel de Certeau perceives the expansion of the ocular realm negatively indeed: 'From television to newspapers, from advertising to all sorts of mercantile epiphanies, our society is characterized by a cancerous





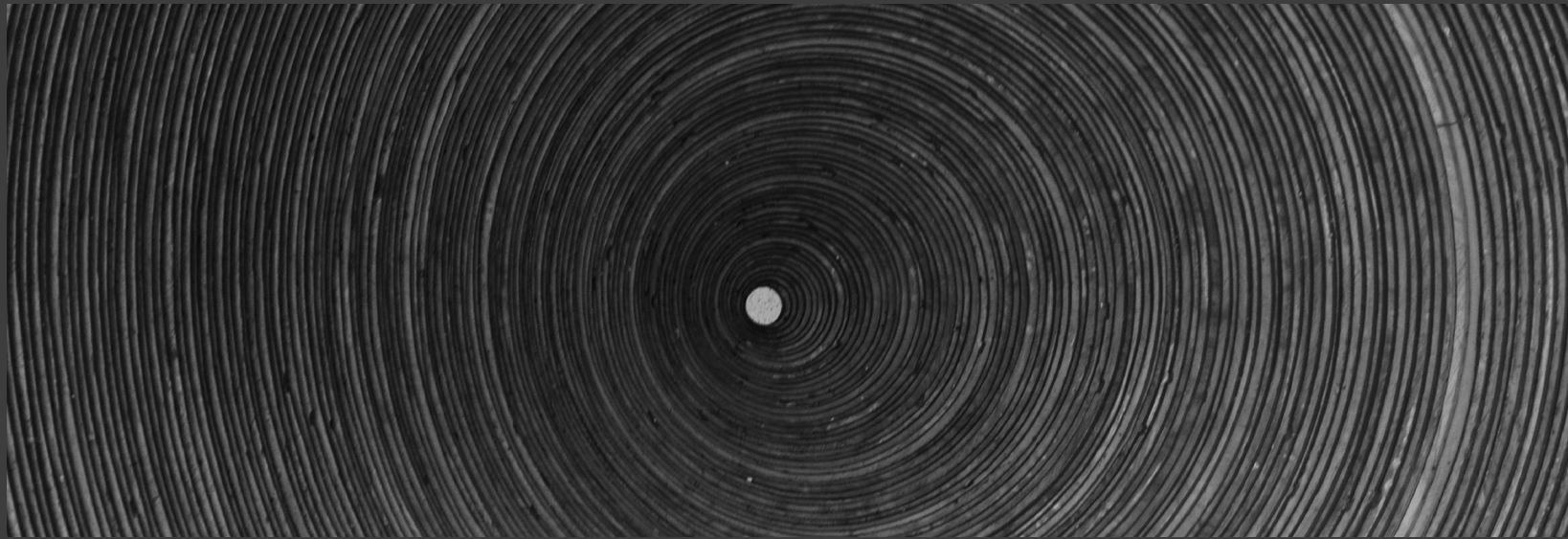




Creating a rift amongst modern culture may be what is needed to restore what was once so beloved. A return to the true form of learning, “reading its authors as though nobody had ever read them” (Arendt). A design that aids the user in their journey on the creative and thought processes, while gifting the works needed to accompany them along their journey.







## Project Typology

The typology of this thesis is a library that allows creative exploration within each person that interacts with the building. A return to how information has been passed along through each generation will aid the user in personal development and meditative thinking. The modern technique of exchanging information is harmful to society and culture and this library will provide a space where knowledge thrives.

# User Descriptions

## SCHOLARS

Scholars ranging from high school to graduate level are welcome to use the contents of the library at any time. These adults and young adults will mostly reside at one of the K-12 schools from the New Haven School District. A main source of students will also be from Yale University and Quinnipiac University.

## PROFESSORS

Professors who are looking to further their knowledge or perform research on various topics are also welcome to use the contents of the library. Professors are also encouraged to experience the library with their students.

## RESEARCHERS

Researchers come from all around the world to perform research with the various rare books the library contains. Not only are these rare books available, there are multi-sensory rooms that aid the researcher in learning about the topic chosen.

## PASSERBY

The everyday passerby is welcome to use the library whenever they please. All of the resources to find the inner motivation to turn their lives around. Giving the public the opportunity to experience learning and knowledge as was intended many decades ago.

## HISTORIANS

Historians and philosophers are another demographic that frequents the library. Having the ability to study their field of work in an environment that promotes experiences gives a unique perspective that is not available in many other locations. The gathering of historians and philosophers also provides a space where communication and collaboration thrive.



# Major Project Elements

## MAIN HALL

The main hall will contain the lobby and a major portion of the circulation. A place where users can gather and meet before, during, or after their research will promote collaboration amongst each group.

## LIVING QUARTERS

Short term housing will be provided on site for researchers, philosophers, and professors who travel notable distances. Having short term housing will allow users traveling to New Haven an environment that fosters thinking and creativeness.

## FRAGMENTS

Each genre of history will be separated into 'fragments' throughout the library. These 'fragments' are each customized to whichever genre the books within each section contain. This provides a multi-sensory experience for the user which is a perfect incubation spot for creative thinking.

# Project Emphasis

1. Shine light on modern culture and what it means for the future.

Defining what modern culture consists of and how society today has arrived in this position. Based off of the historical findings, a plan will be put in place to aim culture to an enlightened disposition.

2. Create a rift in the current way of thinking.

The trajectory society is currently on pace for is detrimental and harmful for future generations. A library that places an emphasis on learning and knowledge may be an example of what is needed to return to the true way of the intake of knowledge.

3. “What is Utopia?” and broaden the horizon of the understanding of such a concept.

Understanding what a Utopian Society consists of and the historical upbringings of the concept of Utopia will invite the user to become more critical of their everyday surroundings.

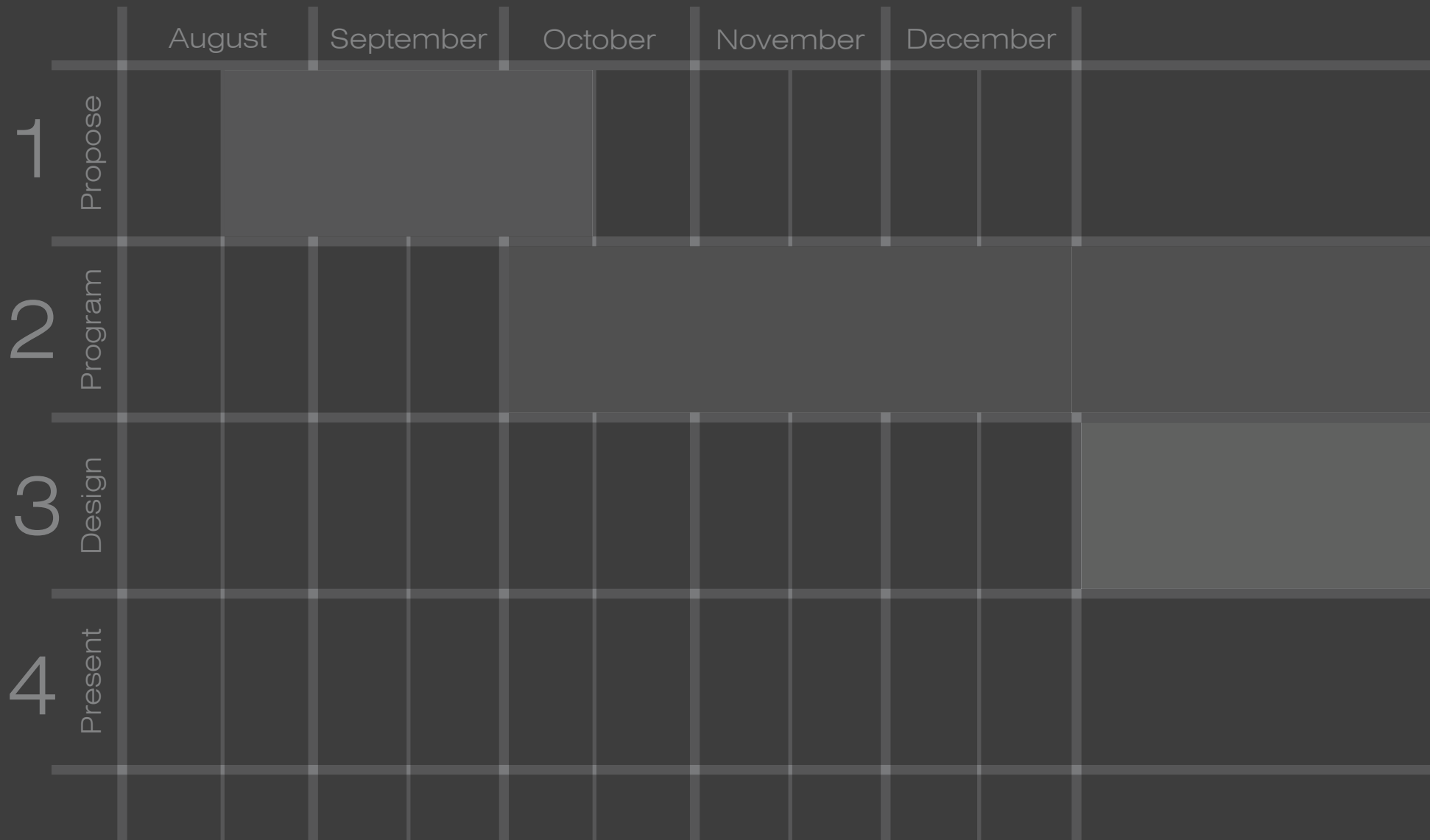
# Project Goals

1. Research historical methods of how information was learned and retained.
2. Contrast the modern way of thinking and being critical of the surroundings.
3. Gain a more thorough understanding of the thought processes of historical figures.
4. Improve rhetoric and mental imagery through architecture.
5. Set minor 'self-deadlines' for having work completed throughout the design process.

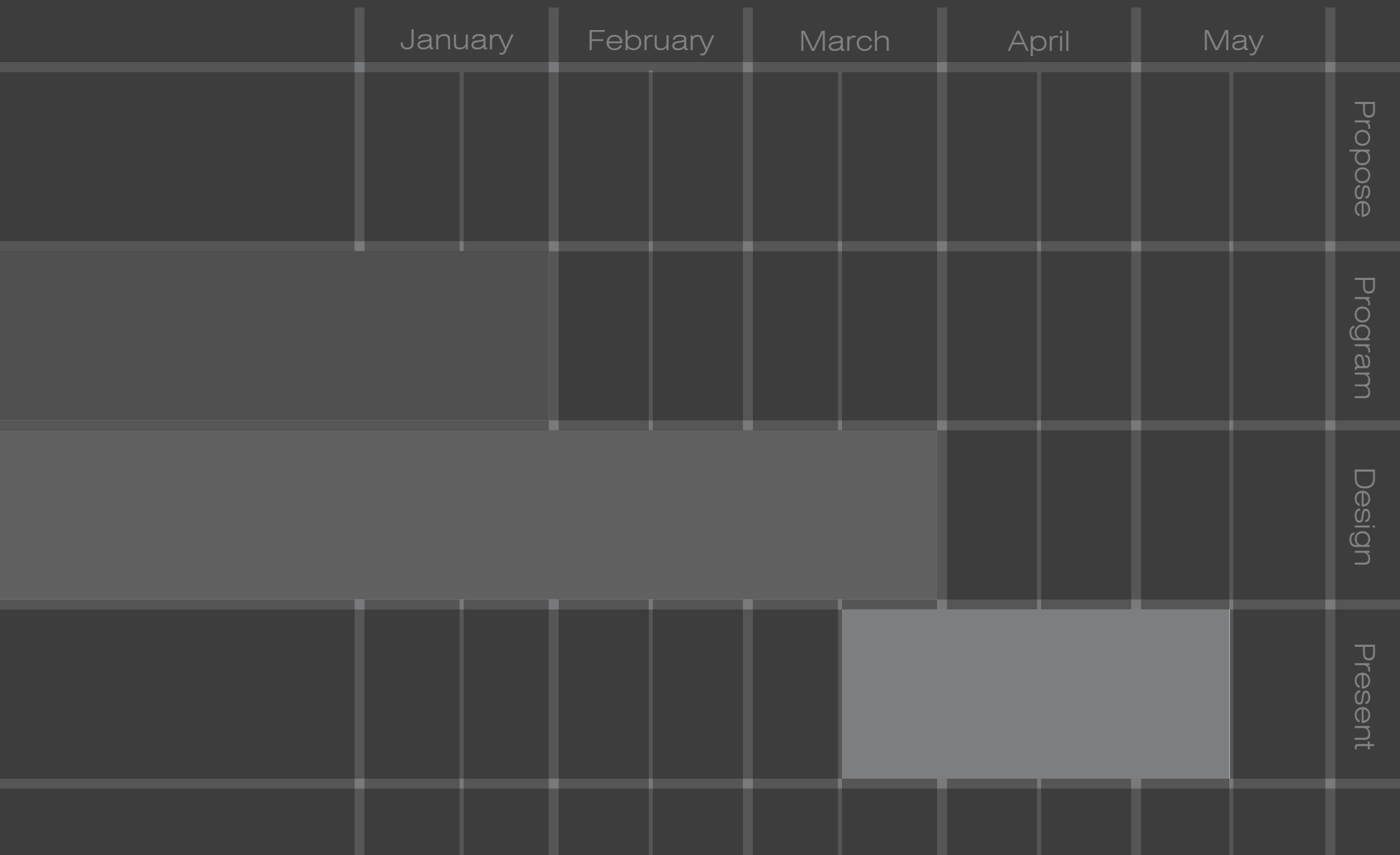


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# Project Schedule









# Typological Research

# Typological Research

## Topics to Consider

1. Sustainability Measures: Which strategies are being used, how does each project utilize various materials.
2. Project Typology: How are spaces used within the building, organization patterns.
3. Location: How does the project reply to the surrounding area, how is the location of the project used for advantages.
4. Impact on Community: Was it a successful design, did the project incorporate ways for the community to gather.

## Typological Case Studies

Dongtai Library Complex | China  
Deichman Library | Norway  
Yeodamjae Library | South Korea

# Dongtai Library Complex

Location: Yancheng, China

Year: 2021

Architect: ORIA

Typology: Library, Renovation

Square Footage: 30,000 m<sup>2</sup>



# Introduction

”Traditionally, a library is a carrier of historical records and a place of cultural heritage, a building type with a particularly clear functional orientation. However, in response to the development of the times, the Dongtai Municipal Government wanted it to embody the spirit of openness of urban space, providing a wide variety of functional services based on reading, while creating a low-carbon and green quality environment. How can the library be transformed from a serious figure to a new, open, and attractive public space for modern society, and how can it highlight the relationship with the serious government buildings within the context, thus creating a dramatic effect? These are the initial questions [ORIA] held for the transformation” (Li).





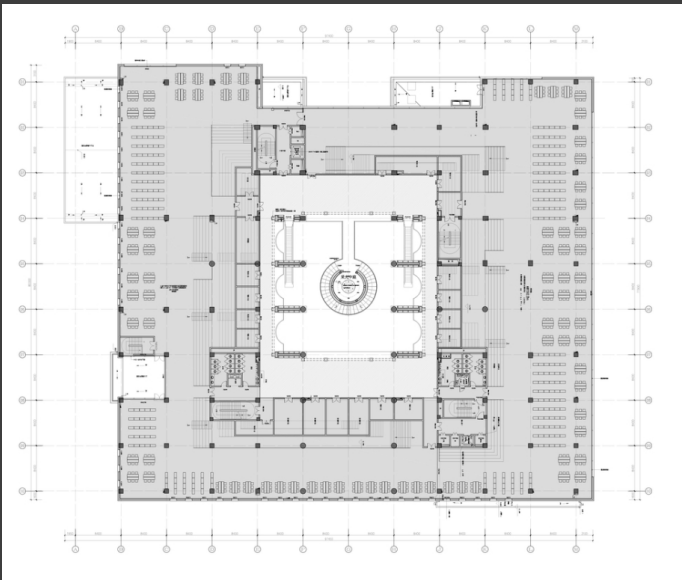
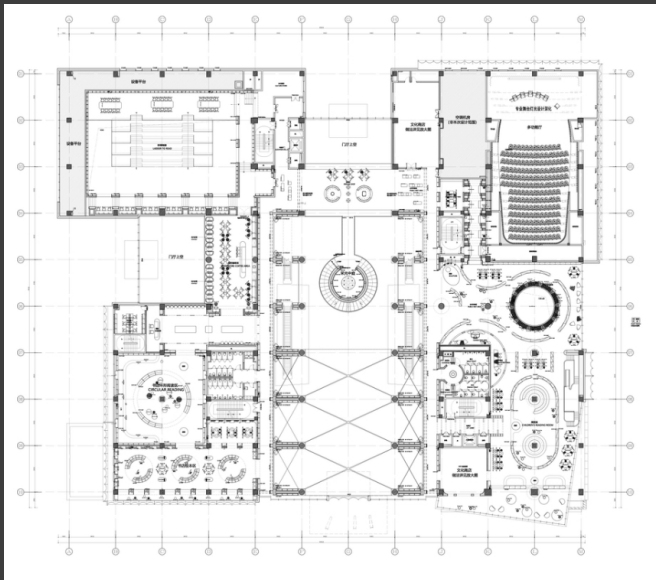
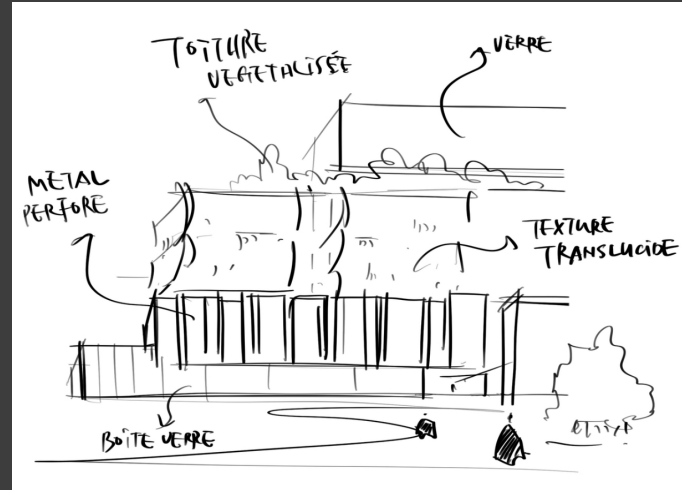
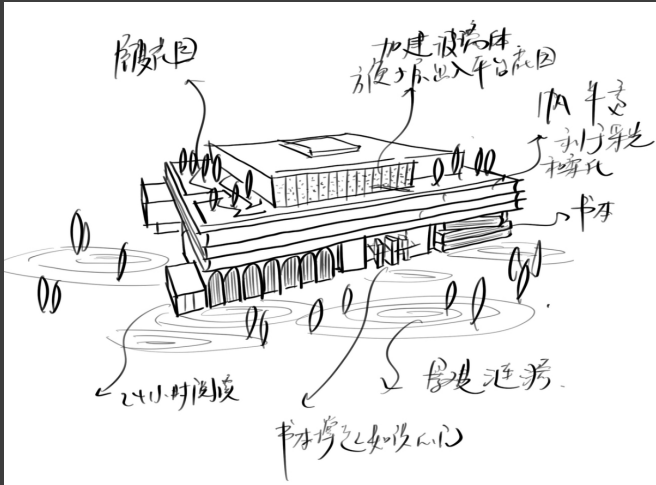
## Sustainability

The Dongtai Complex uses a curtain wall system with a simple and pure color palette. On the second and third level, the curtain wall is protected by perforated aluminum panels which allows natural light to flow into the building. On the fourth and fifth levels, the curtain wall is protected by sunshades which allow sunlight to rush into the building according to the time of year.

## Program

The Dongtai Library Complex incorporates a book-related multi-functional ground and first floor. This allows the library to offer a vibrant public space that is not only used for reading. The ambiguous nature of the interior and outdoor plaza focusing on the community aspect that ORIA was trying to focus on. The levels above the second level have spaces allocated for information and reading and immersive learning. How the books are organized and the roof terrace provide a spatial experience for each and every user.







## Community



”The project has evoked a contemplation on how a public building exists in the public view: the space and detail once again become the method, not just serving for the basic function but to provide an atmospheric scene within which the visitors can choose the purpose of use. It will be a place of freedom with enough tolerance on multi-purpose utility, it will also be a public era returned to the city” (Li).



# Deichman Library

Location: Sentrum, Norway

Year: 2020

Architect: Atelier Oslo + Lund Hagem

Typology: Library

Square Footage: 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>



# Introduction

”The international architecture competition to design Oslo’s new main library was won by Lund Hagem and Atelier Oslo architects in 2009. The librarians wanted a house that would inspire visitors to explore all the new facilities and activities the modern library can offer. This



motivated [Atelier Oslo] to create an open and intriguing building in which [the user] is constantly invited around the next corner, to discover new places” (Pintos).



## Community

With the ground level facade being completely transparent, an enhanced feeling of connection and openness with the city occurs. Users are greeted at one of the three main entrances by 'light shafts' that are cut diagonally through the building, which allows natural light into the building and the users catch a glimpse into three separate sections of the library.

## Program

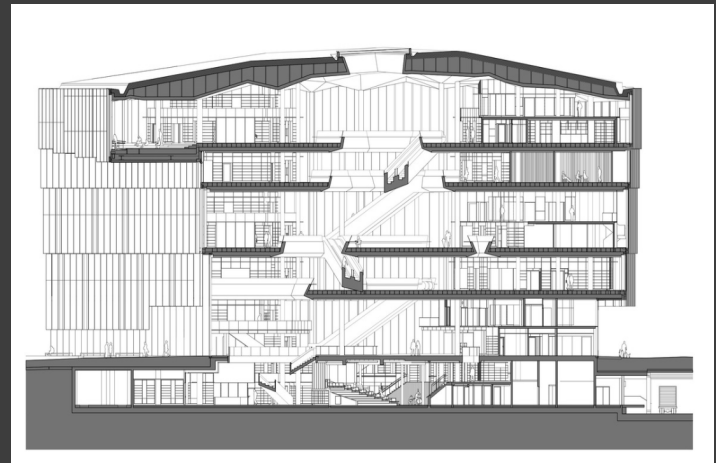
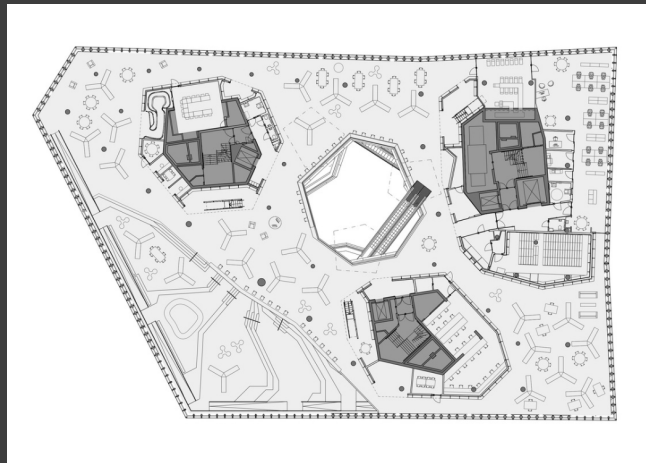
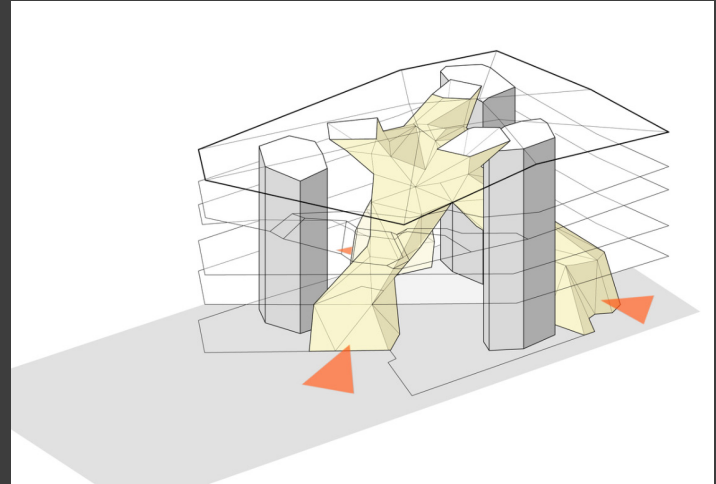


The interior of Deichman Library is dominated by open public space which makes room for a variety of furniture and activities. Natural light peers through the facade due to the free standing book shelves and organized niches throughout the building. These niches create areas for temporary exhibitions and installations which also create various atmospheres as the user travels through the building. The non linear angles the facades face create moments at the intersecting corners allowing undisturbed views of the surrounding landscape.

# Sustainability

”The facade combines high insulation value and even distribution of daylight. Narrow insulated panels alternate with narrow glass panels. The diffused glass of the interior eases the impression of the closed panels, creating a soft and even interior light. The facades are relatively closed in order to strengthen the impression of the light shafts and the library’s inner life and activities. In the corners of the building panoramic windows open views in different directions, lending variation and tension to the interior” (Pintos).





# Yeodamjae Library

Location: Seoul, South Korea

Year: 2021

Architect: Emer-sys

Typology: Library, Renovation

Square Footage: 750 m<sup>2</sup>





# Introduction

”Located in Changsin-dong, Seoul, this site for this project is surrounded by a huge apartment complex and a school. Its location, in the middle of the Naksan Mountain, descends 10m in height. Formerly a Buddhist temple named Wongaksa constructed in 1983 and abandoned since 2003, the site became disconnected from the local context and its purpose due to the nature of religious architecture. It is assumed that it was once accessible from the south, but ever since the retaining wall was constructed for the apartment complex, people can only enter the site from the northern mountain trail leading from Naksan Mountain” (Caballero).





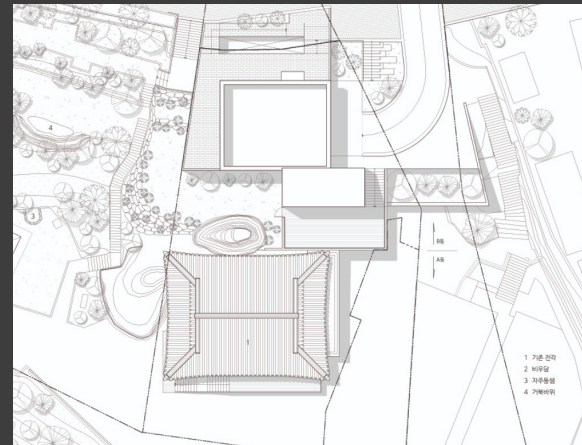
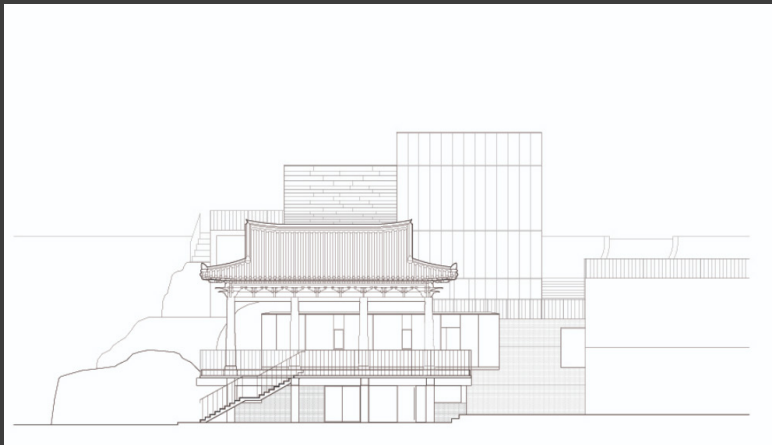
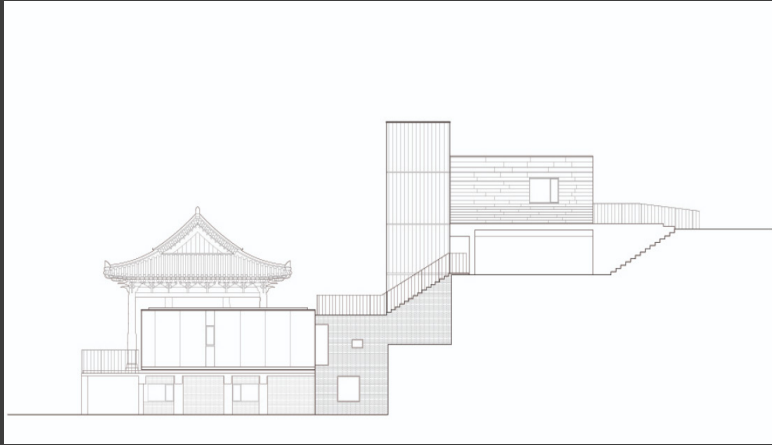
## History

In 2021, the Seoul Metropolitan Government acquired the land that the Yeodamjae Library sits upon now. The site was deserted for years and was overrun by delinquent juveniles using the space to illegally smoke and drink. The Wongaksa underground also illegally took over a part of the site. The neighboring sites offer historical significance as it was home to a well known author named Lee Sookwang.

## Program

A large glass box was placed adjacent to the existing structure which holds the children's library on the second level and the feminist history library on the ground floor. After reconfiguring the layout, an area for lectures, seminars, and performances rose to prominence. The children's library offers a comfortable space for children to read books and interact with one another. The carefully placed masses offer stunning views to the neighboring parks and creates glimpses of the 'natural realm' that blends the building in with its surroundings.





## Structure

”To provide easy access from the sidewalk, we inserted deck plates as high as the Naksan Mountain road, and a single-story café and exhibition hall to connect with the library on the level below, while the stairs connecting various indoor-outdoor spaces could ignite active exchange and encounters between local residents both inside and outside of the building. Inside the café and exhibition hall, there is a folding door that can accommodate various programs, such as exhibitions, seminars, educational activities, etc.”  
(Caballero).



# Project Justification

Pursuing the current thesis topic at this moment in my rapidly developing academic career is a catalyst for life after academia. Completing research on Utopian society, modern culture and society, and true exploration of how linguistics and hermeneutics are used in architecture gives a new perspective on design. Gaining knowledge of what has happened in history and the relationship between people and the perception of architecture gives meaning and emotion to the spaces created throughout the process of practicing architecture. Working on the thesis proposed will give much needed insight and experience with designing moments within the spaces created, used to evoke feelings and emotions. Through the thesis research process, the concepts touched upon will give the field an idea of how society has evolved to where it is today and which direction it may go. This will prove helpful while society is experiencing a dramatic and rapid shift. As the program of the thesis topic is a library, the funds would be drawn from national funds distributed to various states and regions, as well as grants and the municipality.

Following the construction of the library, society will be presented with an escape from reality where one can pursue any subject of history and participate in an immersive experience to expand their knowledge. After this portion of the project is completed at North Dakota State University, the ideas can be explored further by scholars within the academic world. As culture and society is ever-changing, there will be opportunities to draw from the past and apply what our ancestors learned from



## Literature Review

In *Utopian Knowledge: Eidetics, Education, and the Machine*, Jonathan Powers dives into the idea of Utopia and how the concept came to be. He starts by stating what the early critiques of Utopia classify Utopia as: fictional, describing a particular state or community, and its theme is that political structure of that state or community. According to this definition, the chances of Utopia are close to zero. This set of classifications, however, stand as a more analytic definition than an essential definition. Powers introduces Tommaso Campanella, an Italian friar, philosopher, theologian, astrologer, and poet who lived during the turn of the seventeenth century. Campanella's *City of the Sun* deploys images within the framework of fiction relating to more specified teaching purposes. An elaborate city is described by a network of circles and rings with the only streets facing the cardinal directions of the compass. This city, which has been organized in replication of the cosmos and mythical order, also has a set scheme of how information is passed along. Images, accompanied by labels, cover every upright exterior surface teaching the youth everything from astrology to languages.



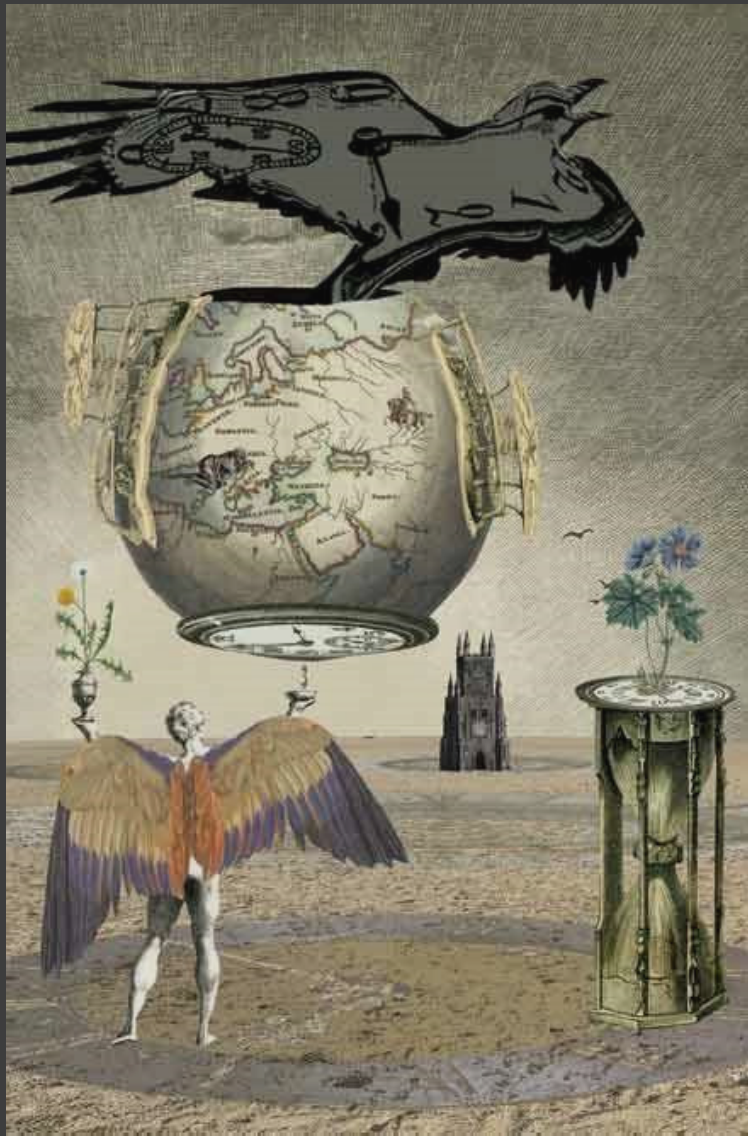


Campanella suggests that the mere presence of these murals influences the children's intellectual development.



The reader is accompanied by a pilgrim who has the ability to survey all potential occupations that a human may take up during their life. The reader and pilgrim have a bird's eye view of the world and are able to analyze the world as a whole. The pilgrim says he sees thousands of shafts, wheels, hooks, and teeth that all move and hum together. Some moved quietly, others rattled. For the spirit of the wheel was diffused through all the separate parts and directed everything. Almost as if it were a machine. The importance of this vision of the machine as an antidote to the depraved world lies not in the specifics of a machine, rather in its character as an eidos. The essential meaning of modern machines is not in their specific operations but in the fact that they carry out their purposes independently of humans, that they act automatically.





Comenius's great machine, as do all machines, continues to accomplish its purpose, despite the fact that its maker has died, that no one can remember why the machine exists, and that the cultural framework that made it possible to imagine and desire how the machine has evolved. The problem with machines is precisely their great advantage: they keep plugging away until they run down, or someone stops them. We often speak of machines as performing work for us, but it is more accurate to say that machines perform work as us.





## Site Analysis

Location: New Haven, Connecticut

City Population: 135,000

Annual Growth Rate: 0.33%

Area: 20 miles<sup>2</sup>

Median Age: 37.8 years old

Caucasian: 43%

African American: 35%

Asian: 5%

High School Diploma: 32%

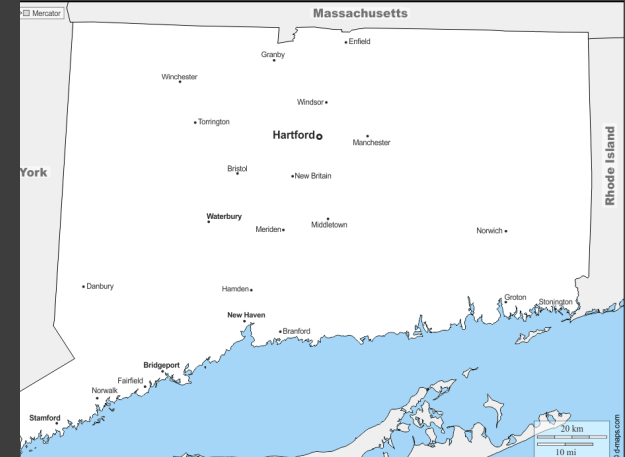
Some College: 14%

Bachelors Degree: 15%

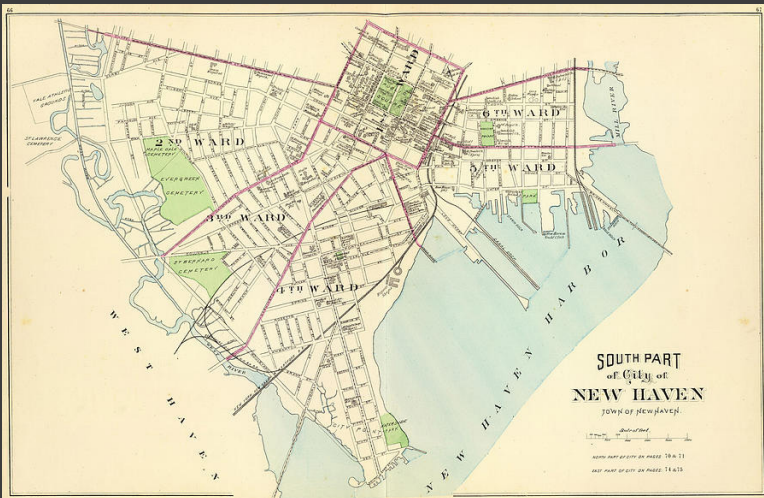
Graduate Degree: 19%



United States



Connecticut



New Haven

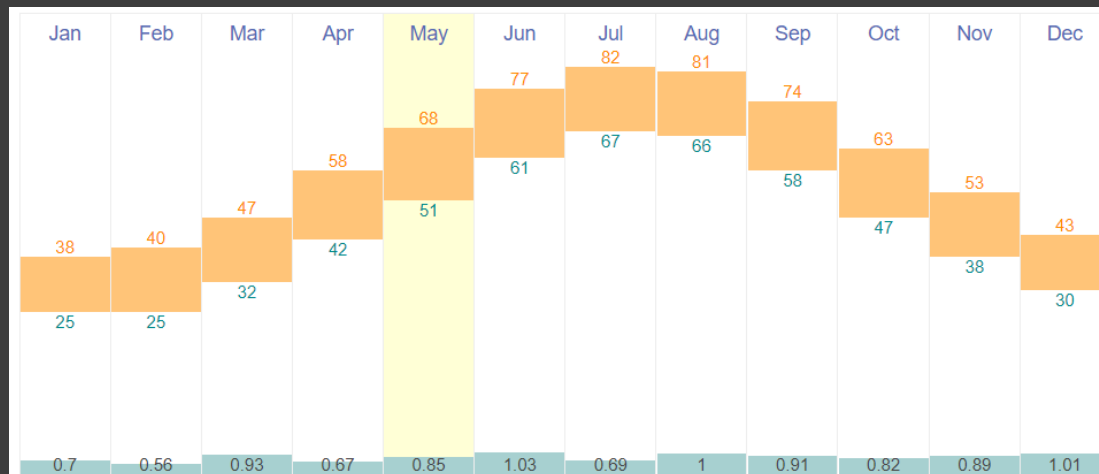
# History

The New Haven area was once home to the Quinnipiac Native American tribe, who lived in various villages around the harbor and survived off the local fisheries and the farming of corn. In 1614, the Quinnipiac tribe was visited by Dutch explorers who conceived a small trading system of beaver pelts within the community surrounding the New Haven area. In 1637, a small group of Puritans reconnoitered the harbor area and wintered over. April of 1638 brought a group of around 500 Puritans who sailed into the harbor in hopes of setting up a theological community with the government more aligned with the church than what was already established in neighboring Massachusetts. This led to the Quinnipiac tribe selling their land in return for protection from the Pequots. By 1640, the government had established a nine-square grid plan and had named the area 'Newhaven'. Over a century later, New Haven was incorporated as a city and struck gold as a recent Yale graduate developed the cotton gin and established a gun-manufacturing factory in the city.



# Climate

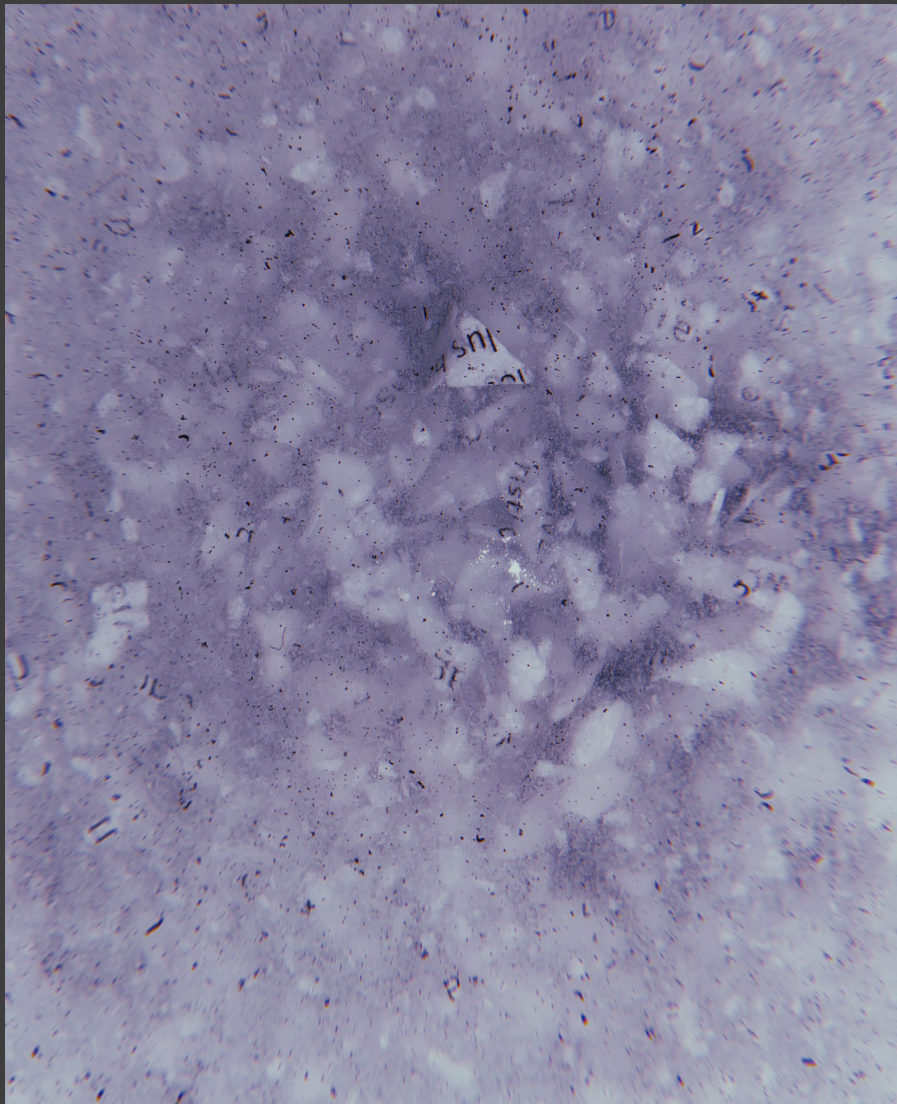
Annual High Temp: 82 F  
Annual Low Temp: 25 F  
July High: 82 F  
January Low: 25 F  
Annual Rain: 10 Inches  
Precipitation Days: 170 Days  
Sunny Days: 190  
Annual Precipitation:  
Elevation



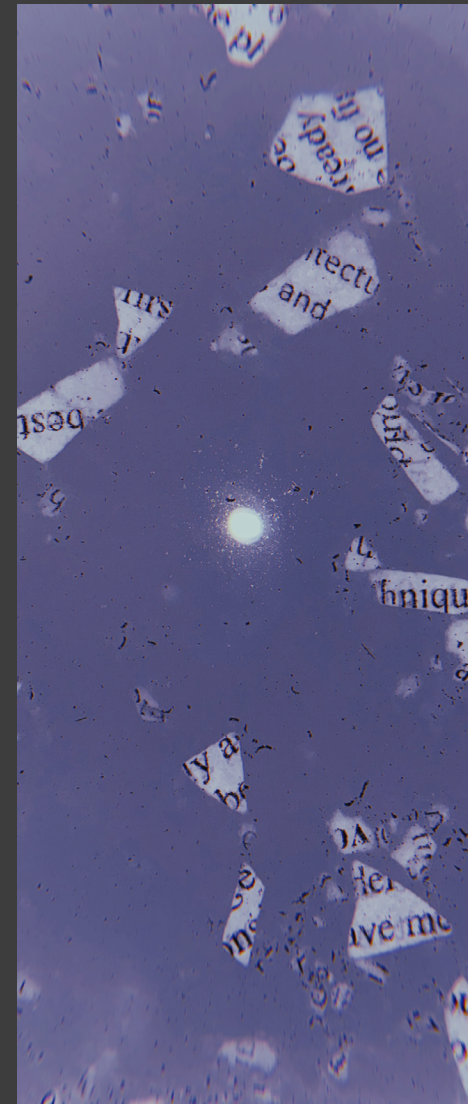


Artefact

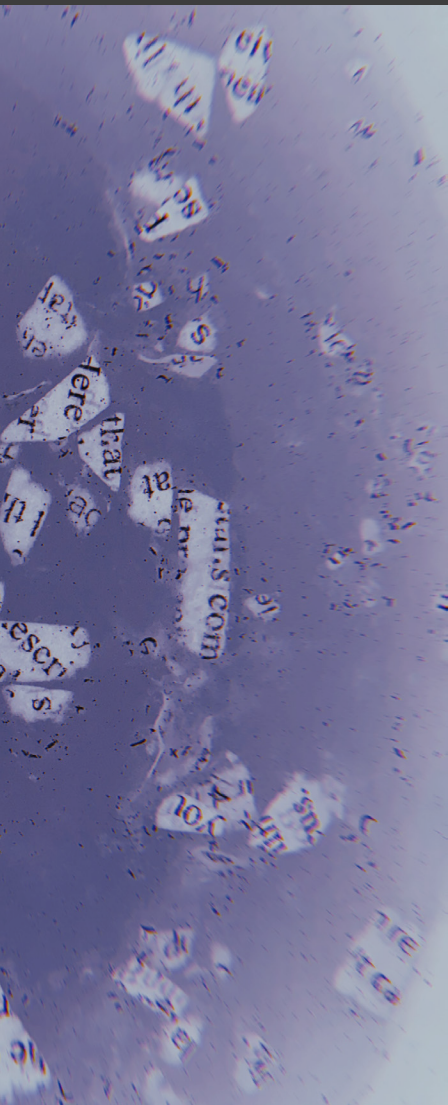




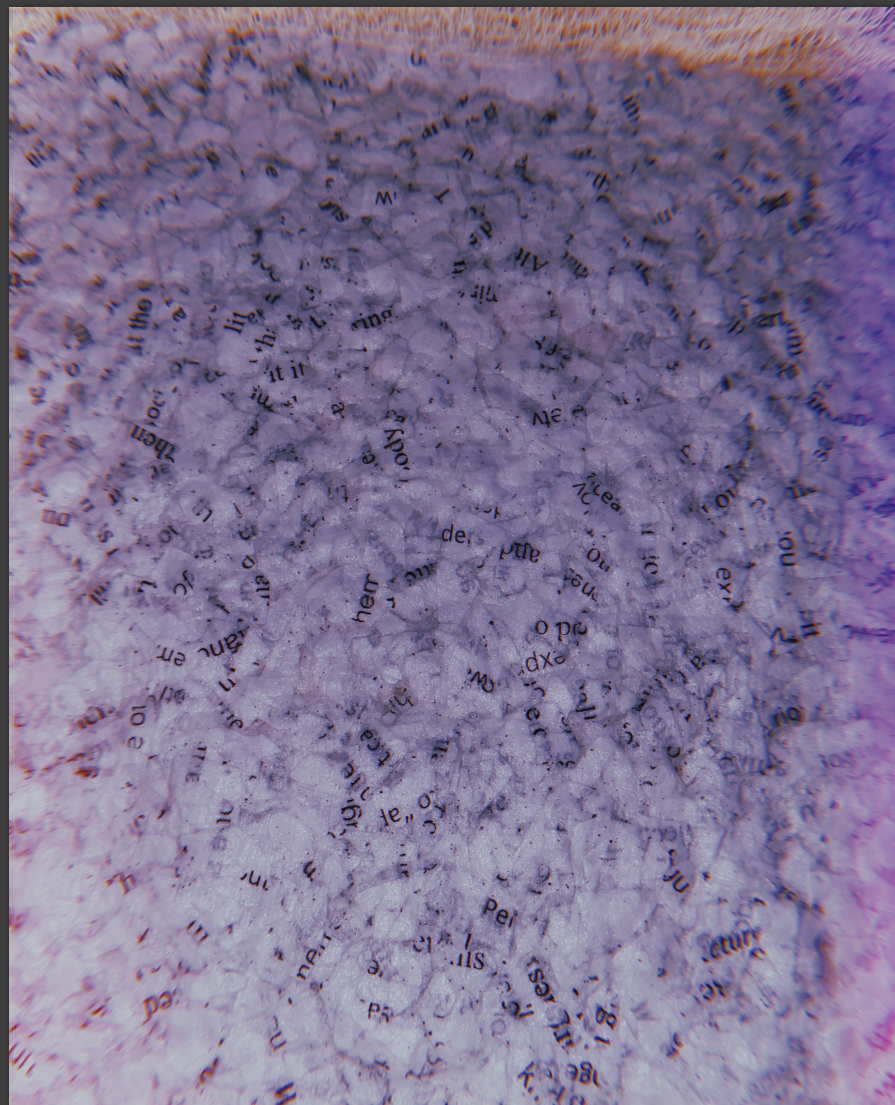
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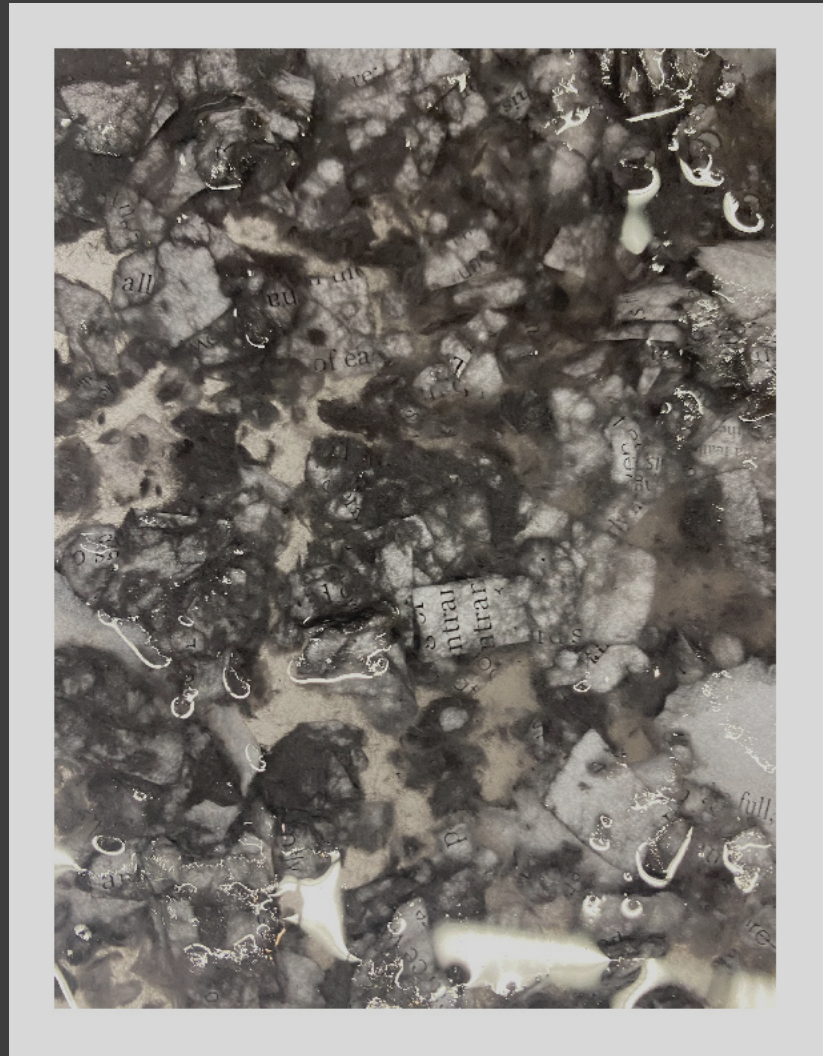
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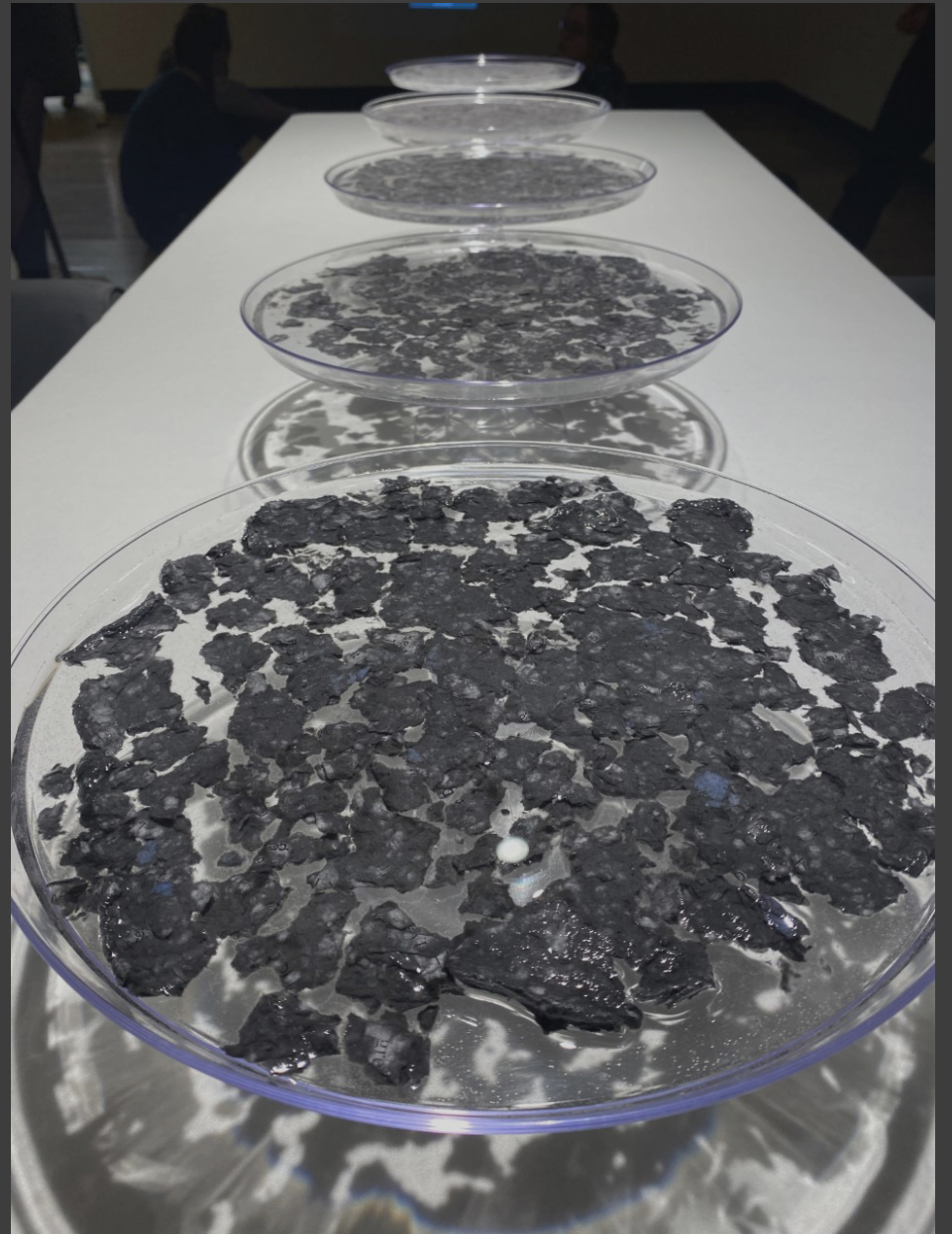












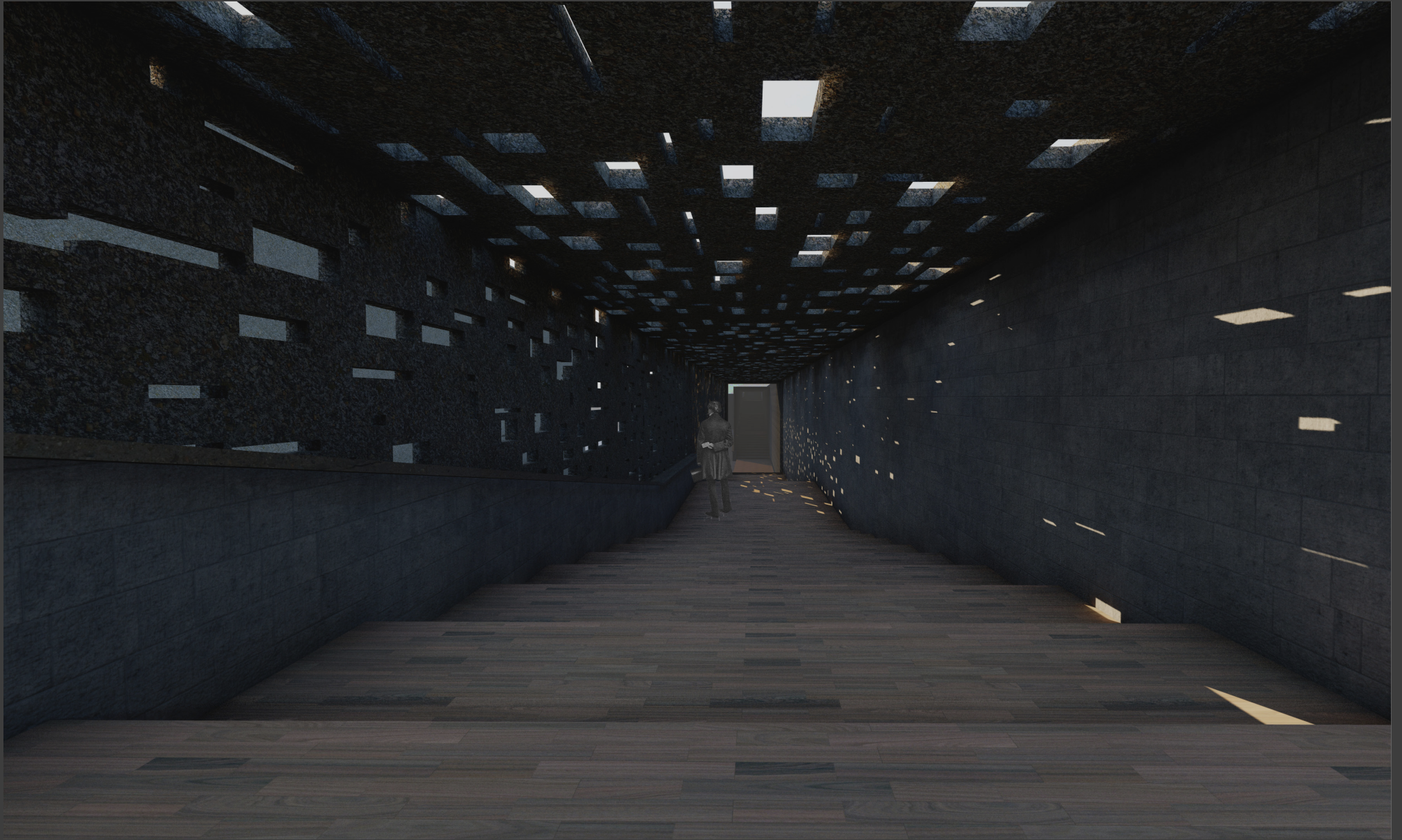


The artefacts from ARCH 772 were shown during the Speculative Architecture artefact exhibit in the Memorial Union Gallery on the main campus at North Dakota State University. The exhibit was available to the public between the dates March 8 and April 7.



Design









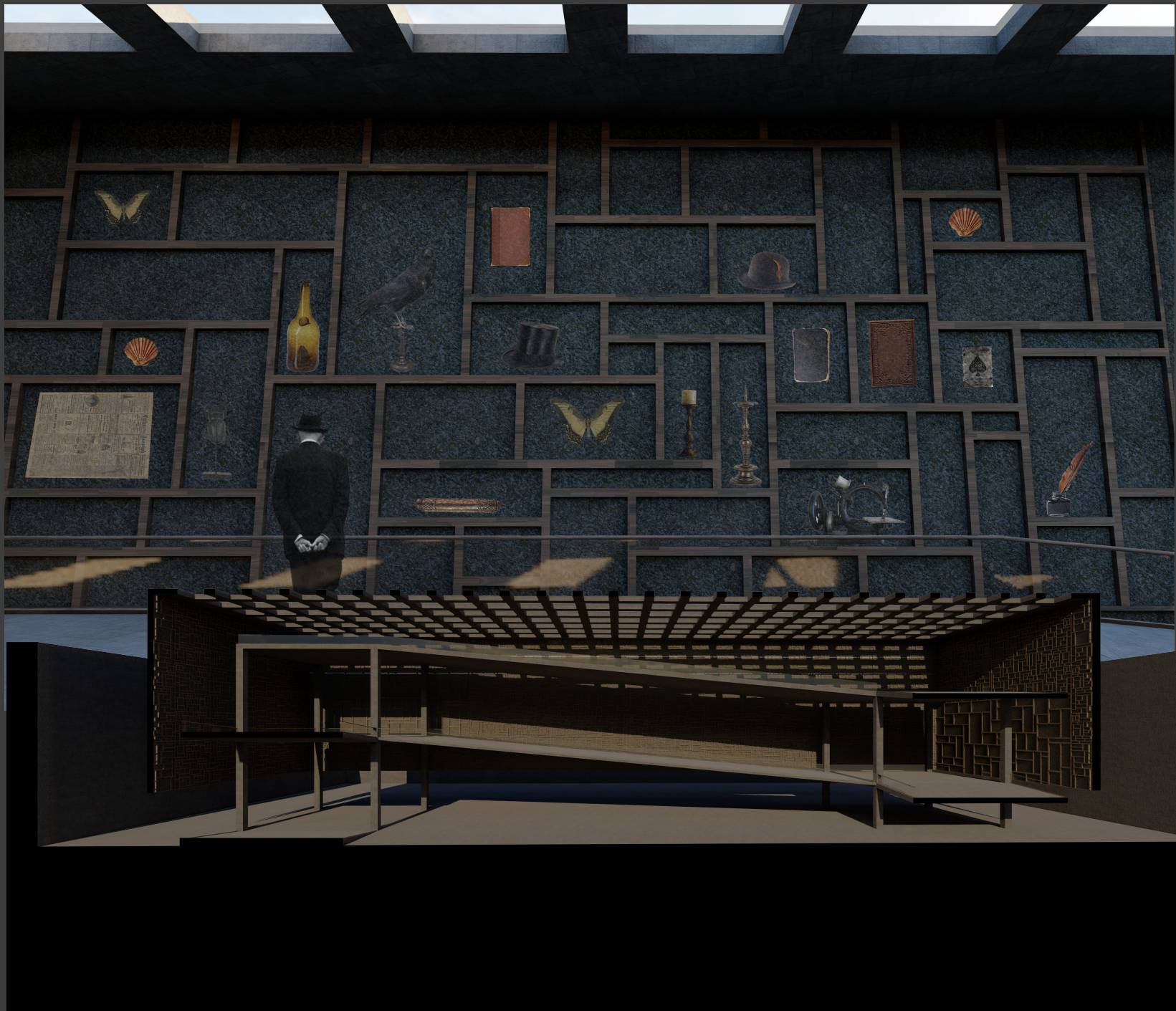












# Studio Experience

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

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Term:	Fall 2018	Spring 2019
Professor:	Charlott Greub	Amar Hussein
Projects:	Tea House Boat House	Mixed-Use Marfa Residential

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Year

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Term:	Fall 2019	Spring 2020
Professor:	Niloufar Alenjery	Regin Schwaen
Projects:	Music Museum	Waffle House State Capitol

## 4<sup>th</sup> Year

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Term:	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Professor:	Amar Hussein	Amar Hussein
Projects:	High-Rise Capstone	Marvin Windows Miami Urban Design

## 5<sup>th</sup> Year

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Term:	Fall 2021
Professor:	Stephen Wischer
Projects:	Thesis Studio



Name: Luke DeVries

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