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CONDIA + ORNELAS FELLOWSHIP PROPOSAL

"Some of the most radical changes to the globalizing world are being written, not in the language of law and diplomacy, but in these spatial, infrastructural technologies—often because market promotions or prevailing political ideologies lubricate their movement through the world"

- Keller Easterling, *Extrastatecraft*, 2014¹

The built environment, if unchecked, often benefits those with power and, unintentionally, harms those unseen and unheard in the design process. I have come to understand architecture as an inherently political force that shapes and is shaped by the sociopolitical contexts in which it is sited. This realization began to take form during my first year of design studies as I grappled with architecture's historical impact, contemporary challenges, and transformative potentials. Inspired by researchers, academics, and practitioners exploring these ideas, I started analyzing design as a tool for equity and justice. What started as a personal inquiry bridging social, cultural, and political realities has evolved into a distinct design identity that integrates sociological frameworks, policy analysis, ecological interventions and activist movements.

When not characterized as political, the built environment risks displacing communities, marginalizing histories, and erasing community stories. It also exacerbates climate change and ecological degradation, especially when cities and buildings are not planned with the environment in mind. These ideas were strengthened through Urban Design and Sociology, engaging the interplay between larger-scale interventions and small-scale moments within our built world. As I see it, Urban Design is positioned to engage political and economic powers while advocating for local communities. By oscillating between urban plans and

architectural interventions, we can interrogate the built environment and its relation to both community and environmental needs.

This interdisciplinary perspective was expanded during my study abroad experience, where I engaged new thoughts and ideas across cultural and disciplinary boundaries. During my time abroad, I enrolled in courses outside of design to broaden my understanding of the city. A course titled Activism: Engagement and Resistance examined grassroots movements globally and offered insights into how ground-up initiatives can address pressing social needs. Equality in Scandinavia: Developments and Challenges of the Welfare State exposed me to public policy, economic models, and class debates that encouraged me to explore the intersection of state intervention and individual lives. As the only architecture student in these courses, I offered a spatial lens to class discussions, providing insights on how the built environment both influences and reflects societal structures.

These courses informed my studio project alongside a course on Adaptive Re-Use in Europe. This focus provided me the tools to better understand how we can reinterpret built structures to respond

to contemporary needs and became the foundation for my design proposal. I developed a kit of parts aimed at fostering inclusion and belonging in a community marked by division, providing agency to the local community. This focus on socially responsive design continued to inform my previous studio project, centered on the idea of a 'middle' World Expo. While the project required an innovative, international pavilion, it also became important to understand Manhattan's infrastructure and its ability to host such a large-scale event. This presented an opportunity to reimagine the world expo pavilion as a culturally and socially responsive space that gave back to the surrounding community. This involved bringing these designs back to the human scale, providing opportunities for engagement and exploration within the pavilion. This work has refined my approach to architecture, continually emphasizing the intersection of immediate needs with long-term social impact.

My inquiry into the life of Olympic sites and the planning of Olympic venues began unexpectedly during a study tour to Tallinn, Estonia. It was here that we toured Taliinna Linnahall, a once vibrant Soviet era Olympic venue now abandoned and in a state of disrepair and decay. As we walked through its vast, deteriorating

spaces, our guide painted a vivid picture of the energy the structure had once held during the 1980 Summer Olympics. What was once a symbol of global unity, ambition, and architectural innovation now stood as a faint echo of its energized past, overshadowed by its abandoned state and the contemporary needs of the surrounding community.

This experience underscored the broader consequences of hosting international events. While Tallinn's story centers on a single structure, contemporary host countries face far-reaching urban and architectural challenges. To appeal to international excitement and receive short-term financial gain, many governments displace local communities and damage native environments to improve the city for this international experience. However, this economic boom is temporary. The rapid development required for these events leaves behind abandoned structures, decaying infrastructure, and underutilized spaces once the global spotlight fades. It is critical that designers interrogate these events so that we can advocate for future adaptations.

1. Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London: Verso, 2016.

"The games may be a two-week-long show for the rest of us, but for the displaced, the disruption they cause could last a lifetime."

-Katie Herzog, Grist, 2016¹

The Olympic Legacy

The Olympic Games are celebrated as a symbol of global unity and competition, yet the skeletons left behind reveal a more controversial legacy. Often funded by a large influx of international visitors and funding, these urban areas and their structures can be difficult to maintain post-event. In 2004, the Athens Olympics became a cautionary tale for Olympic development. Struggling with underuse, financial strain, and costly maintenance issues, the construction failed to integrate into the city's long-term plan. In 2008, the Beijing Olympics featured many architecturally impressive venues, but struggled to find long-term use for these spaces. While globally celebrated, the use of this space highlights a disconnect between Olympic design and community needs. The contrast between global excitement and local discourse highlights political, economic, and social consequences that can result from this international event.

Rio de Janeiro: A Case Study

The 2016 Olympics were marketed as a transformative opportunity, that promised economic growth, urban revitalization, and infrastructural development. The government of Rio de Janeiro framed

the games as an opportunity to elevate the city's global profile and address longstanding urban challenges. The reality of the games was heavy public spending, mass displacement, and environmental degradation. Largely considered an economic disaster, the games altered the urban fabric of Rio de Janeiro, leaving an unfinished and underdeveloped environment behind.²

Among the most significant of these impacts was the erasure of favela communities, where thousands of people were forcibly removed, and ecologically protected areas, which transformed the city's natural geography into a stage for environmental exploitation. The impact of this displacement was immediate, leading to the establishment of the *Museum of Removals* by local community members, recognizing the past displacements while preventing future ones.³ Despite the Olympic's expensive investments, many sites remain underdeveloped and underutilized while local residents fight for their neighborhoods and homes.

Nearly 40 years before these Olympic games, Lina Bo Bardi designed the SESC Pompéia sports and cultural center in São Paulo. During her initial site visit, she discovered that local residents had spontaneously claimed the space for



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Composed of 4 Olympic zones, the contemporary sites sit in various conditions ranging from abandoned and destroyed to revitalized and in progress. Through an analysis of these outcomes, we can better interrogate the built environment through both large-scale planning and small-scale artifacts.

3. "Museum of Removals." Museum without Walls. Accessed January 6, 2025. <https://www.museusemparedes.com/en/museum-of-removals/>.

4. Team, ArchEyes. "Lina Bo Bardi's Iconic SESC Pompéia Factory in São Paulo." ArchEyes, July 9, 2022. <https://archeyes.com/>.

2. Goldenbaum, Chris, and Isabella Galante. "Five Years On: Revisiting Rio 2016 Olympics' Unkept Promises." Al Jazeera, September 19, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.com>.

community centered activities. Instead of imposing her own spatial vision, Bo Bardi preserved and enhanced the space around their community needs, introducing additional programming adjacent to the space. Her approach protected common space and centered local communities, highlighting a sensitivity to local realities.⁴

Foz do Iguaçu also provides a key perspective on curating a positive relationship between urban development and environmental conservation. Iguaçu Falls and Iguaçu National Park highlight Brazil's unique landscape, reflecting ecological relationships and transformations seen in urban and Olympic development in Rio de Janeiro.

Thesis Statement

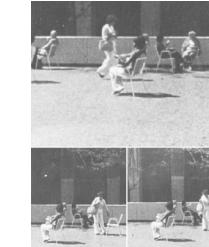
This research will examine the spatial and socio-political impact of Olympic architecture in Rio de Janeiro, contrasting the activities during the game with the lived realities that surrounded them before and after. Through an understanding of Bo Bardi's legacy, I will explore precedents that honor the needs and voices of local communities. This will aid my understanding of the culture present in Brazil, providing a more thorough understanding of Olympic impact in Rio de Janeiro.

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The 4 Olympic Zones

The 2016 Olympic venues were spread out among four competition zones: Barra, Deodoro, Maracanã and Copacabana.⁵

The *Barra zone*, also known as the Olympic Park, was the vibrant heart of the Rio Olympics, hosting specialized indoor arenas and the Olympic Village.



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The *Deodoro zone* showcased events centered on physical endurance and precision. This area had a strong emphasis on the outdoors through a community park.

The *Maracanã zone* was the stage for grand ceremonies, celebrating the cultural and symbolic Brazilian sports history against the backdrop of legendary landmarks.

The *Copacabana zone* is set along the coast, hosting many water-based and beach-centric sports. Nearby are Sugarloaf Mountain and the statue of Christ the Redeemer.



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This analysis will be synthesized into video essays, integrating both physical and digital elements. This video will take inspiration from *Anatomy of the Wallpaper*.⁸

6. Whyte, William H., Jr. 1917-1999. *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation, 1980.

7. "Firelei Baez, the Fact That It Amazes Me Does Not Mean I Relinquish It." Hauser & Wirth. Accessed January 6, 2025. <https://www.hauserwirth.com>.

8. "Anatomy of the Wallpaper." YouTube. Accessed January 6, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com>.

Research methodology

The research will employ a multi-layered methodology that combines direct observation, spatial analysis, and creative documentation. Inspired by *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*,⁶ I will observe and document absence and presence in these Urban and Architectural spaces. Where there is absence, I will search for decay, abandonment, and disuse. Where there is presence, I will highlight energy, activities, and spatial upkeep. This documentation will use photography, videography, and on-site sketches to capture the qualities of this environment.

The second component will involve mapping and spatial analysis using architectural drawings and city maps. These will be used to create collages that visualize disruptions and transformations, drawing inspiration from Firelei Baez's work.⁷ By juxtaposing these drawings with the site's past and present conditions, we can begin to capture the dissonance between design intentions versus lived realities.

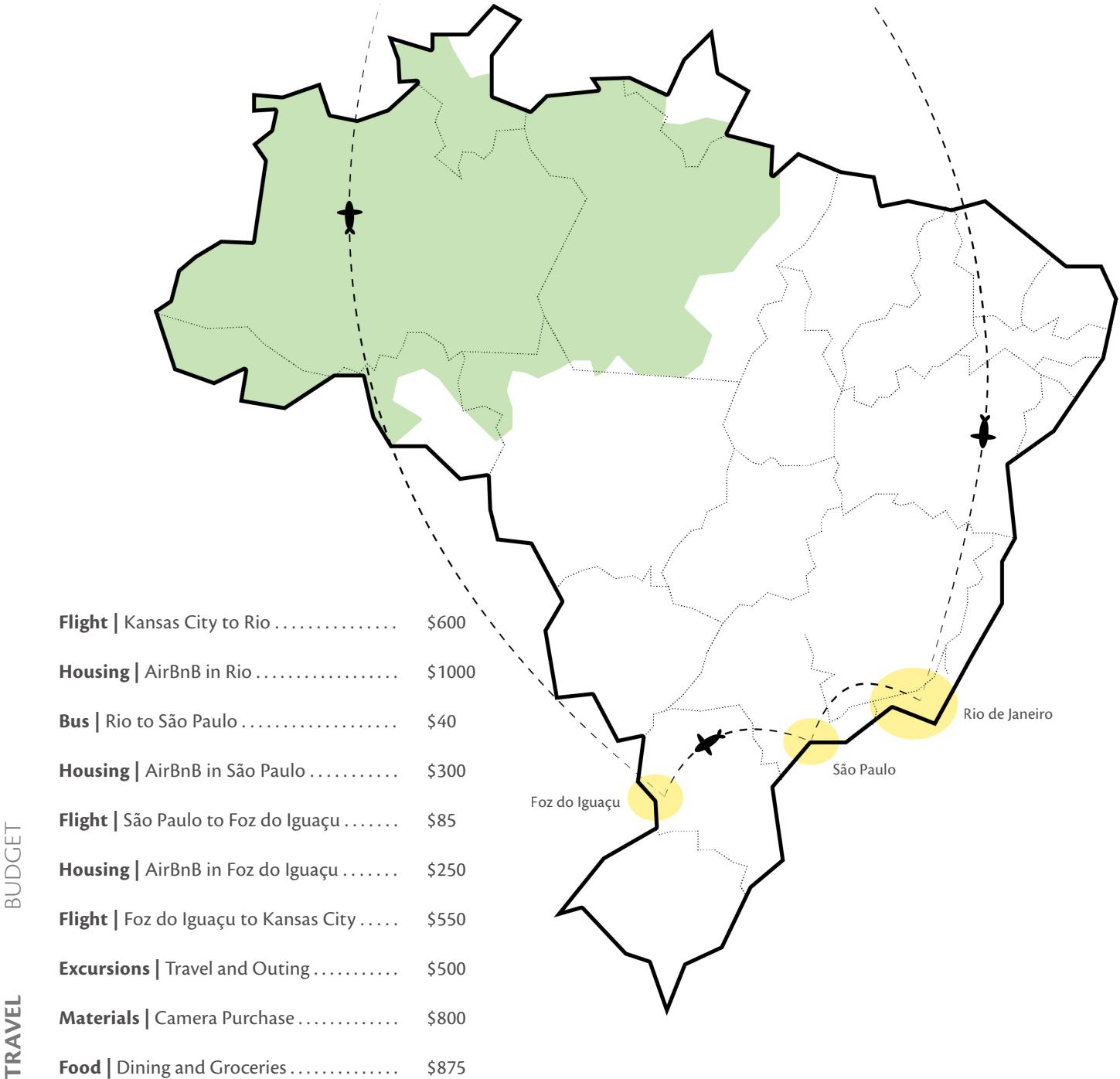
The intention of this research is to spark further conversations around Olympic development in the design profession, striking a balance that preserves the international spirit of the games while also addressing the exploitation and harm that these events often perpetuate.

Research Output

The research will culminate into approximately ten minutes of film, complemented by the physical artifacts that sit within them.

The film will be structured into chapters, with the introduction and conclusion sitting at approximately 1-minute each. Each of the four Olympic zones will be explored in approximately 2-minute segments that document the areas present activities, past intentions, and future potentials. These chapters allow the video essay to adapt to different formats. For a presentation, the chapters can be combined into a single 10-minute video essay; alternatively, while in an exhibit format, the chapters can function independently through QR codes placed next to the physical artifacts. This adaptability will make the information more digestible, with those engaging the work choosing the speed at which they take in the information.

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EXPERIENCE

Oz 47 Co-Editor
Oz Architecture Journal
[may 2024 - present]

Student Grader
Contemporary Architectural History
[dec. 2024 - present]

Graduate Teaching Assistant
Environmental Systems 1
[aug. 2023 - dec. 2024]

Design Intern
Multistudio KC Office
[may 2024 - nov. 2024]

Collegiate Team Member
Gateway Decathlon Competition
[sep. 2023 - aug. 2024]

Graphics Assistant
APDesign Communication & Events
[jan. 2023 - aug. 2023]

LEADERSHIP

President
Women in Design +
[dec. 2020 - dec. 2022]

Public Relations/Historian
AIAS Freedom by Design
[dec. 2021 - dec. 2022]

Student Representative
Intercultural Collaborative Committee
[dec. 2021 - dec. 2023]

AWARDS

Fulbright Semifinalist - Türkiye
Institute of International Education
[jan. 2025]

DLR Group Scholarship
Kansas City Architecture Foundation
[june 2024]

Daw/Jarvis/Goodman Scholarship
Kansas City Architecture Foundation
[may 2023]

Oscar Ekdahl Design Award
Kansas State University College of APD
[jan. 2023]

Women in Design - KC Scholarship
Kansas City Architecture Foundation
[june 2022]

OURCI Summer Research Award
Office of Undergraduate Research
[may 2022]

RESEARCH

¡Buen Camino!
OURCI Summer Research Award
[may 2022 - dec. 2022]

My first real travel experience was a Spanish and Biology focused trip to **Costa Rica**. Initially out of reach due to financial constraints, my excitement for the opportunity drove me to save for what I saw as a trip of a lifetime. This experience not only sparked a passion for cultural immersion, but also changed my relationship to the environment, the products I consume, and the activities I engage in.

As a result, I have used my time at Kansas State University to embrace every possible opportunity to travel, both through the College of Architecture, Planning, and Design and through personal exploration.

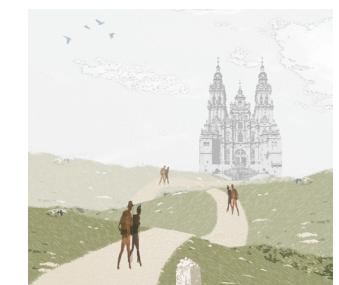
During the summer of my second year, I proposed a research project centered on *el Camino de Santiago* in **Spain**, and received an OURCI Research Award to execute it. Through pilgrim interviews, photographs, and sketches composed as collage works, I completed my first independent research project as a design student.

Through my studio projects, I have traveled to **New York City, New York** and, most recently, **Bangkok, Thailand**. These trips have not only contextualized the projects I was working on, but have continued to inspire the way I approach and interrogate the built environment.

Last year, I got to embark on my dream study abroad experience in **Copenhagen, Denmark**, which included explorations around **Western Denmark, Finland**, and **Estonia** through organized study tours. Beyond these scheduled trips, I also ventured to **Sweden** and **Norway** to see and experience the beautiful Nordic environments and cultures, as well as **Austria** and **Hungary** to connect with friends who were studying in Italy. My European journey began in **France**, which welcomed me with mulled wine and sipping chocolate, and concluded in **Germany**, which bade me farewell with warm weather and beautiful parks.

Beyond these incredible opportunities, I have planned many personal travels centered on exploring National Parks throughout my college experience. The summer after my first year, I embarked on a road trip to explore 10 National Parks across **Colorado, Utah**, and **Nevada**. During Spring Break of my second year, I traveled to **Texas** to visit **Big Bend National Park** and **Guadalupe Mountains National Park**, with a stop at **Carlsbad Caverns**. In the summer of my third year, I worked as a seasonal employee in **Denali National Park** and had the incredible opportunity to explore the breathtaking landscape of **Alaska**, including a visit to **Kenai Fjords National Park**.

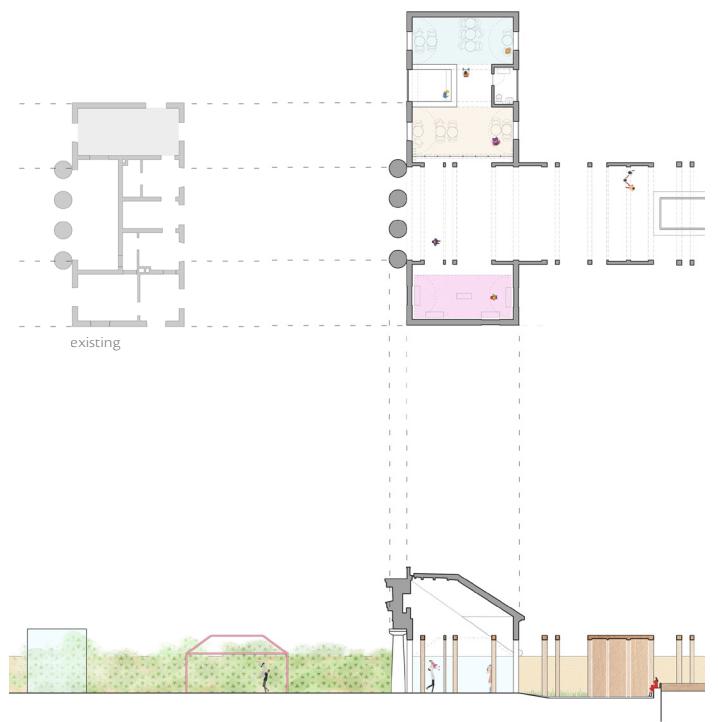
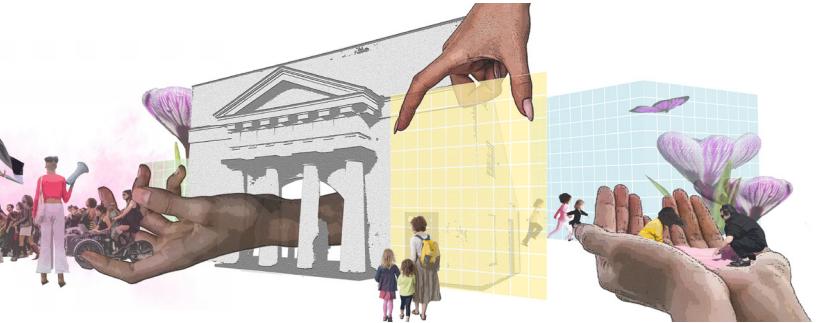
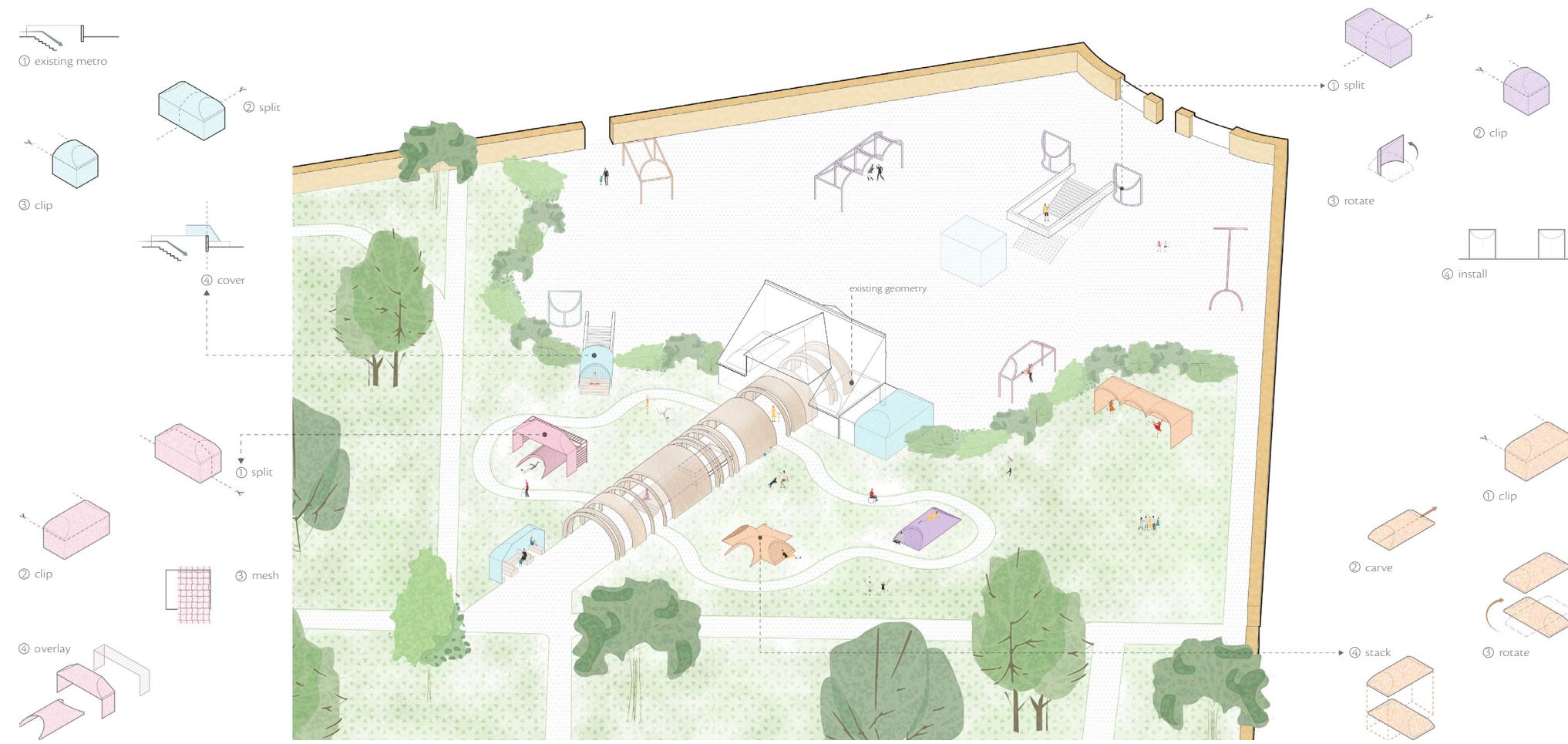
All these experiences have inspired me to evolve, learn, and listen as I encounter new people, places, and perspectives.



¡Buen Camino! Collage Work. 2022

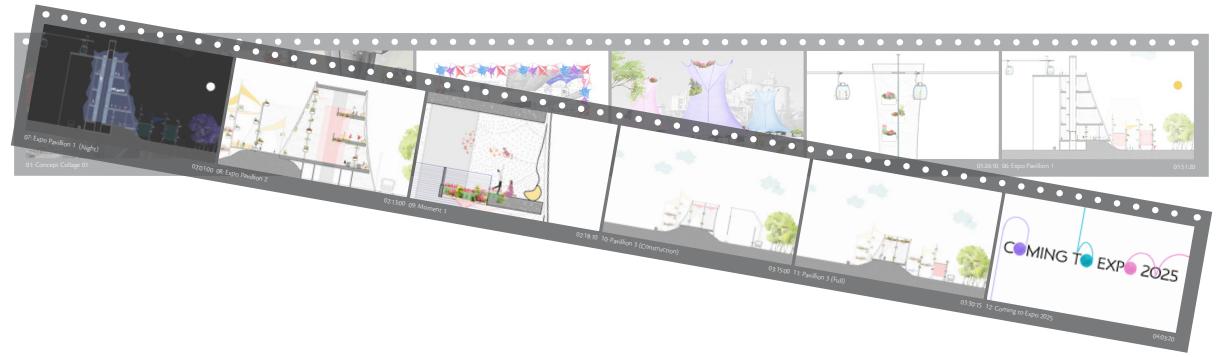
CULTURAL ECHOS PROTECT COMMUNITY, PROJECT IDENTITY

Nørrebro is København's most diverse district, housing generations of immigrant communities. The neighborhood is threatened by recent anti-ghetto laws that disproportionately target their majority immigrant community. Tasked with adapting the Gravedigger's house in Assistens Cemetery, a large green space now used as an informal community park, residents emphasized the need for a community platform. Using the existing as a threshold, how can the neighborhood project identity while protecting community?

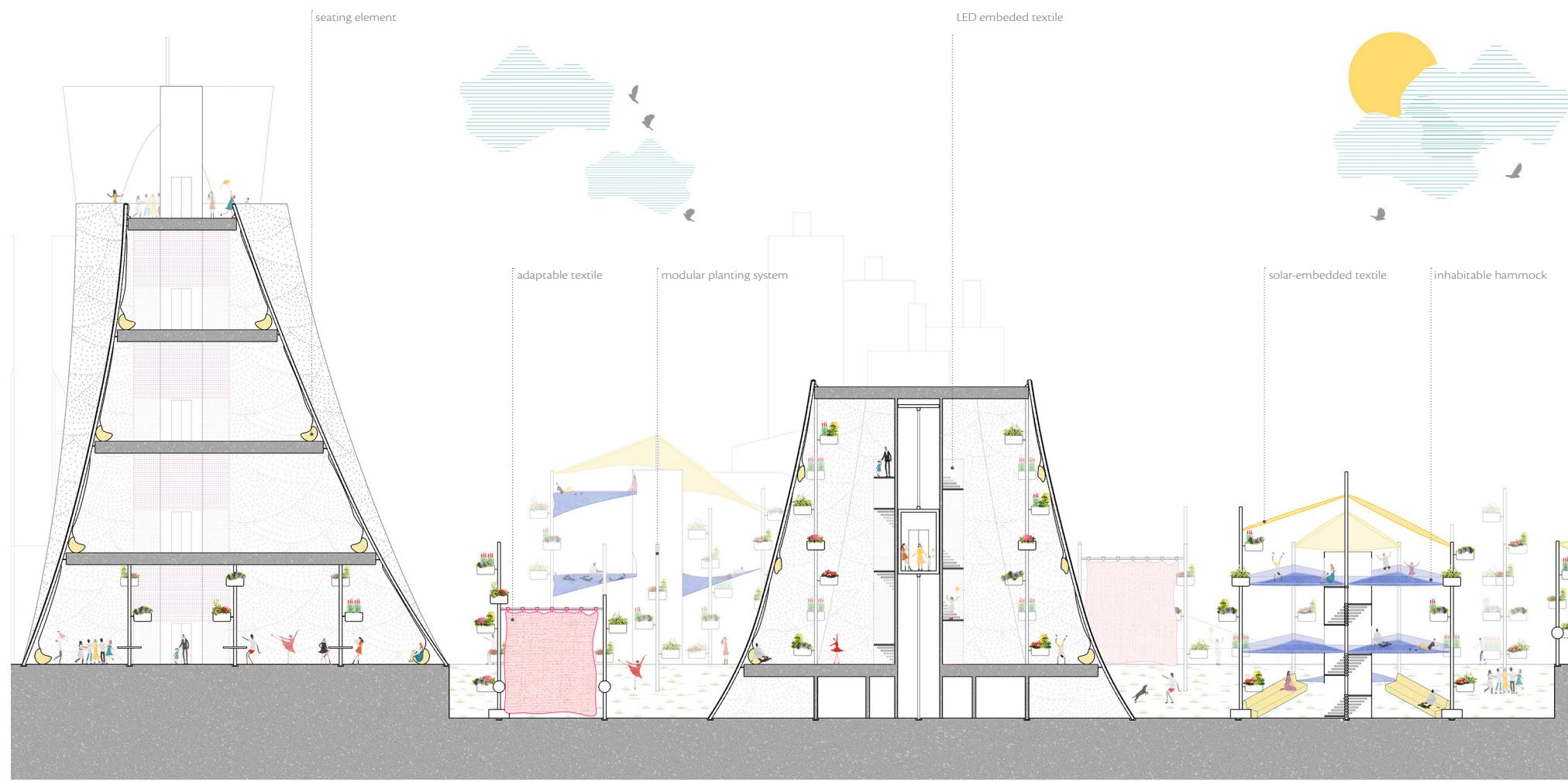


BEYOND THE FACTORY A 'MIDDLE' WORLD EXPO PAVILION

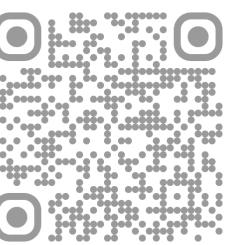
Positioned next to an active cement plant, this pavilion bridges our industrial heritage with a sustainable, community centered future. By integrating ecofriendly materials and energy-efficient systems activated by human interaction and play, the pavilion fosters community engagement and ecological connection. A key component is the park modules, that stay post-expo. Through native plantings, eco workshops, and a modular park, the project asks: Can industrial sites become a catalyst for climate-positive and human-centered activity?



PROJECT WORK YEARS 5



WATCH ME



CHAROEN CHAI [BKK] A COMMUNITY PUSHED TO THE SIDE

This documentary uncovers the hidden struggle of Bangkok's Charoen Chai community, one of Chinatown's oldest neighborhoods, as it faces destruction in the name of urban development. Known for religious wares and joss paper crafts, this small community is a bridge between the Sino-Thai and their Chinese ancestry. As Chinatown becomes increasingly commercialized, many community members face displacement.

Why when prosperity comes, do historic communities get overlooked and erased?



PERSONAL WORK MISC.



VIDEO EXPLORATIONS A COLLECTION OF PERSONAL WORKS



Finding A Home Animated GIF

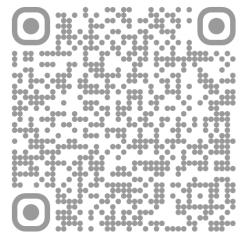


What Will Stay With You?



A Little Turtle's Culinary Adventure

WATCH ME



WATCH ME



WATCH ME

