

ESALA 2018

Master of Architecture

**ISLAND TERRITORIES V:  
HAVANA, RE-MAKING ISLANDS,  
DISMANTLING INSULARITY**

Adrian Hawker

Victoria Clare Bernie

HAVANA





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**HAVANA**

Adrian Hawker  
Victoria Clare Bernie

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# ISLAND TERRITORIES V: HAVANA

RE-MAKING ISLANDS, DISMANTLING INSULARITY

*Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises, - Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not. - Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments - Will hum about mine ears; and sometime voices - That, if I then had waked after long sleep, - Will make me sleep again; and then in dreaming, - The clouds methought would open, and show riches - Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked - I cried to dream again.*

Caliban, Act iii Scene ii, The Tempest, William Shakespeare

Cuba lies 48 miles west of Haiti and 93 miles south of Florida. An island in the Caribbean, it hovers geologically and politically between North America, Central America and South America. A Spanish colony for some four centuries, it offered safe harbour for the trade in precious metals between the American mainland, Cadiz and ultimately Madrid. At the turn of the 19th century, following the Haitian slave rebellion, Cuba became the larder for an unremitting European sweet tooth founded on sugar cane cultivation and production. A monoculture that brought extreme wealth to a select few and with it, the mass enslavement and transportation of people from western Africa conveyed via the port of Liverpool to Havana, the capital city. Cuba is a strategic Island and Havana is a safe harbour whether for trade or military advancement. Throughout its history it has felt the relentless tug of Empire: Spain, Britain, The United States of America and the Soviet Union.

As places of strategic importance, island territories such as Cuba are highly prized and, inevitably, colonised. Consequently, their cultural landscapes have evolved into complex hybrids, drawn from a net of diverse global connections – threads that become woven into the urban fabric of the island’s cityscapes, forming the textural fenestration of their colonial façades. In an island, resources are limited so levels of invention and re-articulation are high - a shipwreck is re-assembled as a church on a treeless archipelago or stone is cut and detailed like timber on a bare limestone landmass. Architecture operates within these landscapes with an intoxicating intensity, a remarkable interplay of invention and wit.

The urban form of the island territory city is inextricably linked to the landscape upon which it is founded. It is built from the material and mineral wealth of the land, it responds to the extremes and exposures of its climate. Island cities receive the ocean that surrounds them and the landscape that enfolds them, filtering, dredging and harvesting. Inevitably, fragments from other worlds, Gulf Streams and tidal anomalies, get caught in their fibers.



In 2016 the annual carnival on Havana’s great seafront, the Malecón, celebrated the ninth decade of its revolutionary hero, Fidel Castro. A few months later the city adopted two weeks of monumental silence to remember his passing. It is a city caught in amber, in a 1950s stasis - its polychromatic skin pocked with the weathering of high humidity, over population and low maintenance.

In the year prior to our visit in the autumn of 2016, something shifted - the long-shuttered embassy of the United States of America reopened on the Malecón and Pope Francis performed a mass in Revolution Square below the mural relief of Che Guevara. Barack Obama had shaken the hand of Fidel and the Rolling Stones performed a free concert in the Coliseo de la Ciudad Deportiva stadium. Cuba was on the move, tentatively emerging from an extreme form of cultural, political and economic insularity - an insularity of trade and time, a result of decades of embargo. As we explored Havana's streets, the time of Obama drew to a close. Through the windows of an air conditioned hotel we could glimpse the only screens permitted to broadcast the election of his less than sympathetic successor. The rapid sense of change began to falter but not entirely fade away. The two-year gestation period of the work of this studio has witnessed the death of Fidel and the retirement from power of his brother, Raoul. The Revolution is entering a new phase. For the first time in over five decades, the leader of the Cuban nation is not one of those who voyaged on a modest and cramped yacht, the Granma, to wage revolution in the Sierra Maestra mountains. As bridges reform with the West, with the scions of past Imperial powers and present expansionist initiatives, the future of Cuba, and its capital, ebbs and flows. Havana exists in a constant state of immanence. This has been a unique time to study the Cuban capital. Whatever happens next, things will not stay the same.

*Island territories v: Havana* set out to engage directly with this extraordinary moment of change. It dug deep into the physical, environmental and cultural layers of the city with the aim of 'drawing out' an imaginary, yet possible, future. Island territories are inevitably strange. Whilst self-reliant, they long for an expanded world reaching far beyond their waters. *Island territories v: Havana* sought out the unexpected and the anomalous, the hybrid and the indigenous in a closely curated and finely articulated project of architectural enquiry, wit and invention.

The Cuban novelist, essayist and musicologist, Alejo Carpentier, became an immediate guide and constant source of reference to us. In his 1963 essay, *La Ciudad de las Columnas* (City of Columns), he laid Havana out as a limestone city bleached by sun, a Spanish Baroque outcrop dismantled by iron grilles, canvas awnings, balustrades and the animate, chromatic glass of the mampara screen. Air permeates; privacy is but a thin veil. The director, Mikheil Kalatozov, also meditated on the porosity of the city in his seminal film of 1964, *Soy Cuba* (I am Cuba). In what is ostensibly a propaganda film for the young Revolution and an early indicator of Soviet influence on the city, Kalatozov's camera seemingly slides up the surface of buildings, passes through walls, levitates over the desks of cigar workers, passes through a window and continues, angel-like, over a funeral parade for a fallen revolutionary hero. Such elongated single shot sequences were the consequence of craft, invention and the wit of opportunism – accessibility to the latest in Cold War Soviet military optics – the results are magical, *marvelous*.

Carpentier particularized the Latin American tradition of magical realism to the context of his Cuban homeland. He preferred the term the 'Marvelous Real': 'The marvelous real that I defend and that is our own marvelous real is encountered in its raw state, latent and omnipresent ... here the strange is commonplace, and always was commonplace'. The encounter with city on the ground, within the shadow cooled depths of its streets, reaffirmed this experience as a reality and not merely a literary trope. The city seemed nothing less than a shipwreck, a city of coral whose progress into the modern age had been delayed, becalmed by forces beyond its coastlines. Some parts of the city had been washed away or weathered, dismantled and reused or allowed simply to fall while others remained, preserved by omission, indifference or an unspoken acknowledgement of a history that can no longer be named.

The crisis of the city and the resilience of its citizens presented themselves in equal measure. The marvelous was indeed 'commonplace'. Out of the crumbling facades emerged the pristine white apparel of the initiates





of Santeria, the hybrid of Catholic beliefs and West African rituals that emerged from over four centuries of slavery. The water trucks that delivered the daily ration of fresh water to the ubiquitous blue roof top barrels, became, on demand, a choreographed fire department amongst the tight streets of the old city. Building sites doubled as quarries where discarded materials fed the barbacoa, the ad-hoc interior architectures that operate outwith the norms of officialdom and economy. Such devices convert the generous height of Colonial space into multiple layers of intense, close living. The Revolutionary policy of urbanising the rural poor brought into the city the culture of the landscape – a pig tethered in an ornate entrance hall, tilled ground in the patio, a dawn chorus of cockerels.

*El Bloqueo*, the fifty year trade embargo has generated an unsurpassed level of craft and ingenuity. Redundant furniture is reformed into musical instruments, re-wound electrical transformer wire repurposed as their strings. Gleaming Chevrolets, Cadillacs and Buicks run with the mechanisms of Ladas, Toyotas and Volgas. In the 1990s the fall of the Soviet Union, Cuba's main trading ally, announced the advent of the 'Special Period' when the harsh realities of isolation catalyzed advances in urban farming, recycling and alternative medicine. The island is now a world leader in sustainable practices. The measure of luxury itself is strange here, hand-rolled cigars hang from the mouths of street vendors and the ballet of the Tacón Theatre is as much a public event as it is highlight of a pricey cultural tour.

The architectural thesis propositions of *island territories v : Havana* have emerged from a serious engagement with the complexities of a city at once marvelous, strange and practically disintegrating. Architectural devices map, draw, craft and fabricate possible futures in a critical response to the realities that now face the island city: the maintenance of its crumbling buildings; the pressures of tourism and the displacement of residents whose lives and homes do not sit comfortably with a policy of urban 'restoration' targeted at the tourist dollar; the form of a hitherto nomadic revolutionary government, the question of water – the thirst of the city and the deluge of the hurricane; how majority state ownership begins to re-engage with an open market as insularity becomes dismantled; and the ongoing issue of a fractured, archaic, transport network. Carpentier attributed to Havana a 'telluric pulse' wherein 'the extraordinary is not necessarily lovely or beautiful. It is neither beautiful or ugly; rather, it is amazing because it is strange. Everything strange, everything amazing, everything that eludes established norms is marvelous'.<sup>i</sup>

*Adrian Hawker and Victoria Clare Bernie*

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i Carpentier, Alejo. Baroque and the Marvelous Real. Essay from 1975 translated in *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community*. Lois Parkinson and Wendy B. Faris, eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995)



EXPRESS

3<sup>c</sup>

JACK CITY ATTRACTIONS  
WORLDWIDE PRESENTS  
THE INTELLIGENCE

75  
JACK CITY

CONVENTION CENTER  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS  
SUNDAY 2:00 P.M.  
A SIGNED COLLECTION





# 1

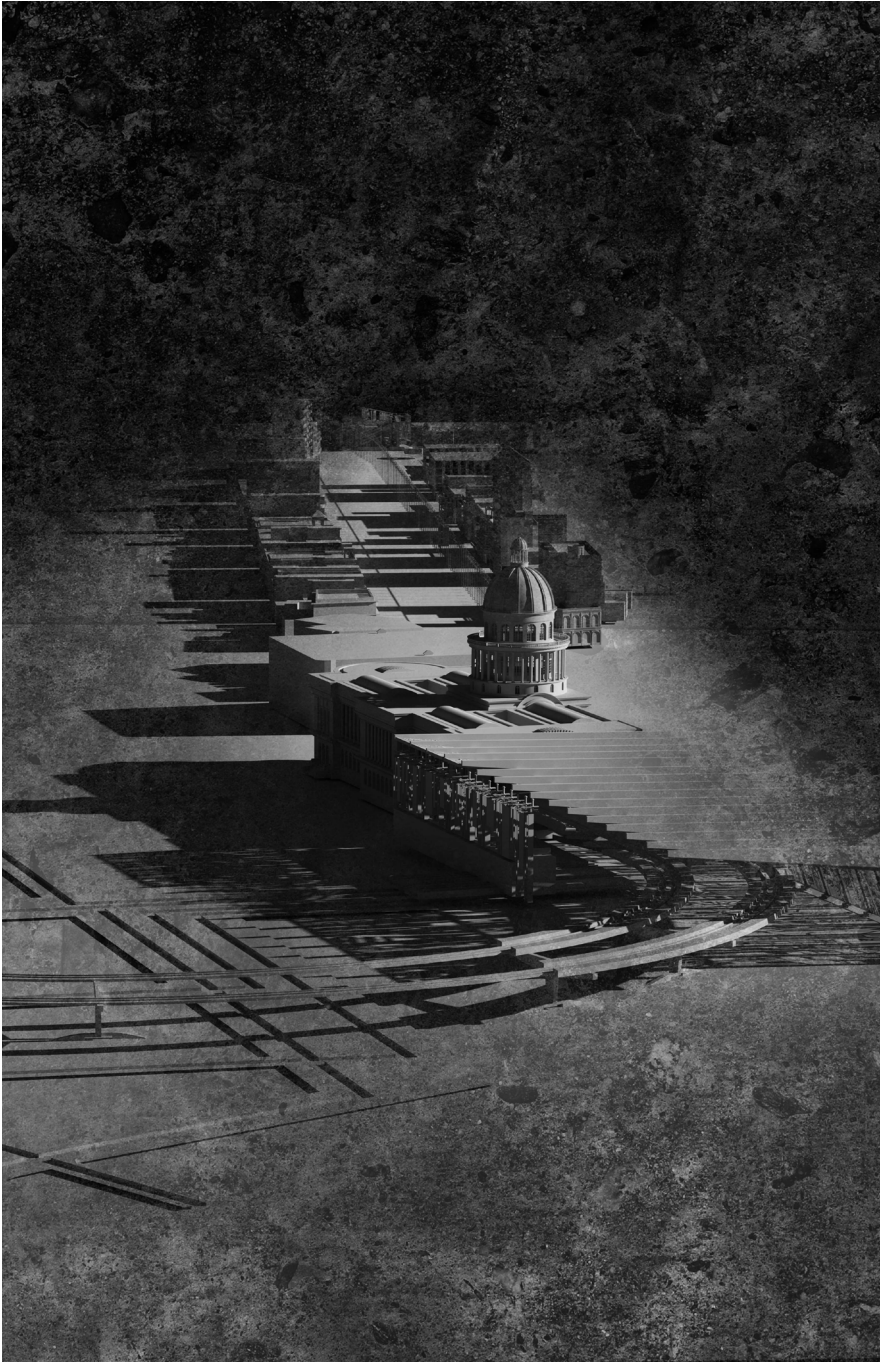
## THRESHOLDS OF MOVEMENT AND REPAIR

JAMES DUFFIELD

JAMES DUFFIELD - THRESHOLDS OF MOVEMENT AND REPAIR

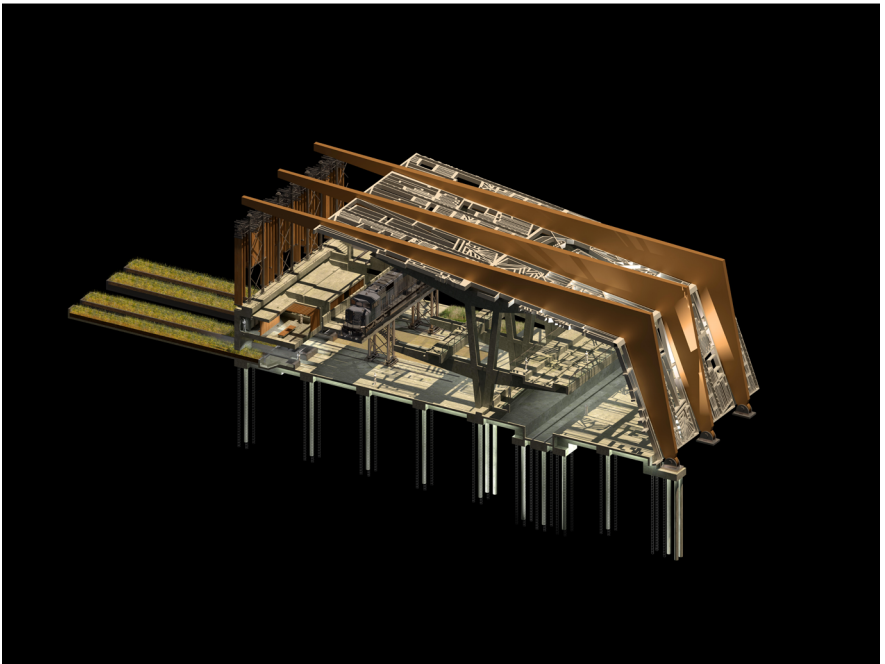
The lack of resources following the Revolution, have left Havana in a state of disrepair that money from tourism alone cannot repair. Indeed, the large influx of tourists, whilst providing the country's greatest current source of income, are burdening a transport network already unreliable and unable to support the core requirements of the population of Havana. Lack of finance for new equipment exacerbates the problem, with locomotives many decades old still running, with no centralised position of knowledge to engage in their repair. The historic architecture of the city is also suffering; with the specialist knowledge required also lacking a centralised repository of knowledge and repair.

Engaging with these issues of Infrastructure, Maintenance and Restoration, *Thresholds of Movement and Repair* proposes a series of architectures designed to address the main issues identified as blocking growth and future architectural security of the historic city of Havana. To enable this, four main architectures consisting of a new railway station, a locomotive repair facility, a recreational space, and an architectural restoration workshop are proposed. These main buildings, linked along an initial spine, will illustrate the strategy for improving the transport network and enabling restoration of the city's extraordinary Baroque architecture.





- ▲ THE GNOMON AND ANIMATED SPACE IN WEST COURT, ECA
- ▶ THE SALON AT NIGHT-TIME
- ▶ THE PROJECTED ROOM - A NEW WORKSHOP AND RAILWAY STATION



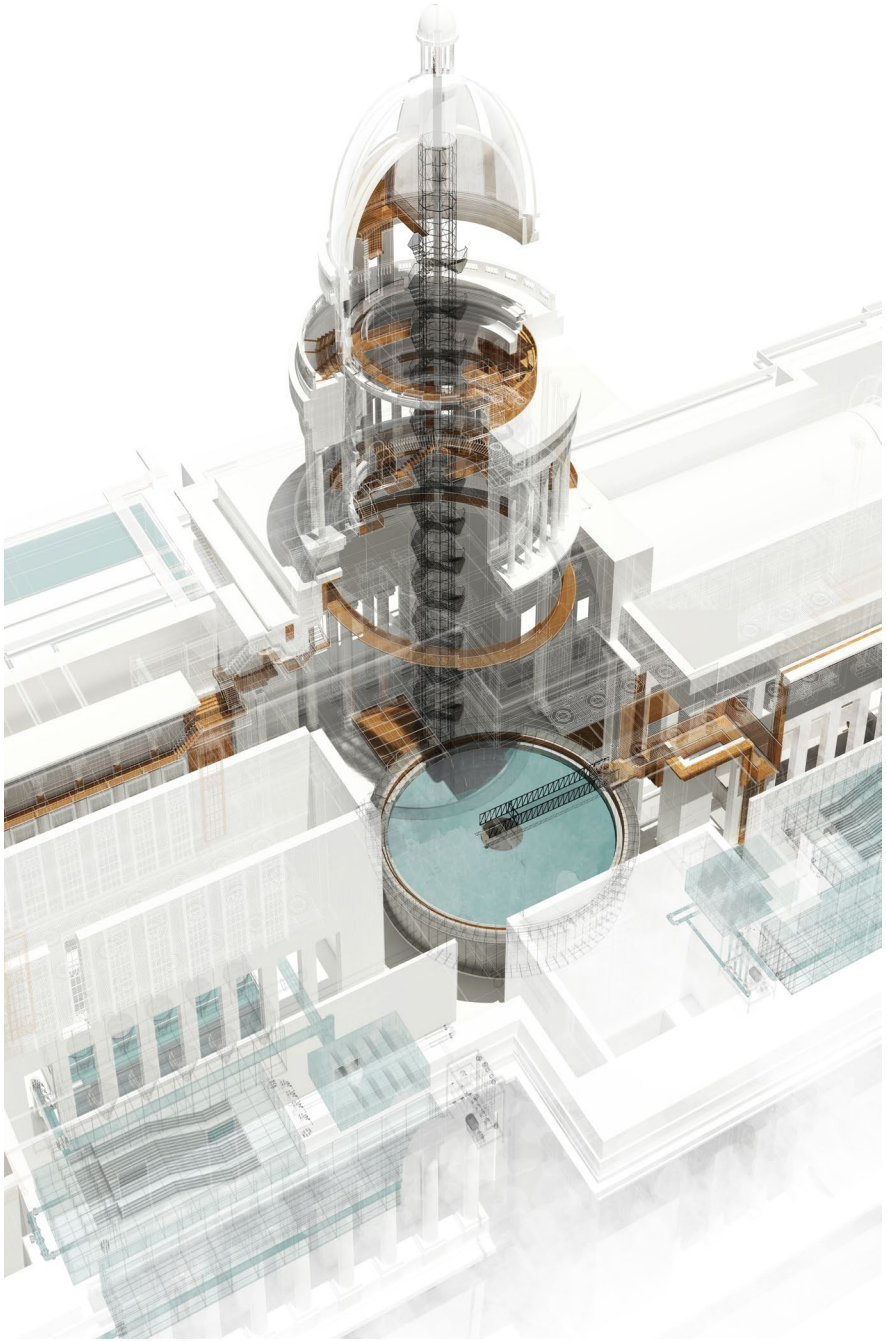
## LA CASA DE LAS PERSONAS

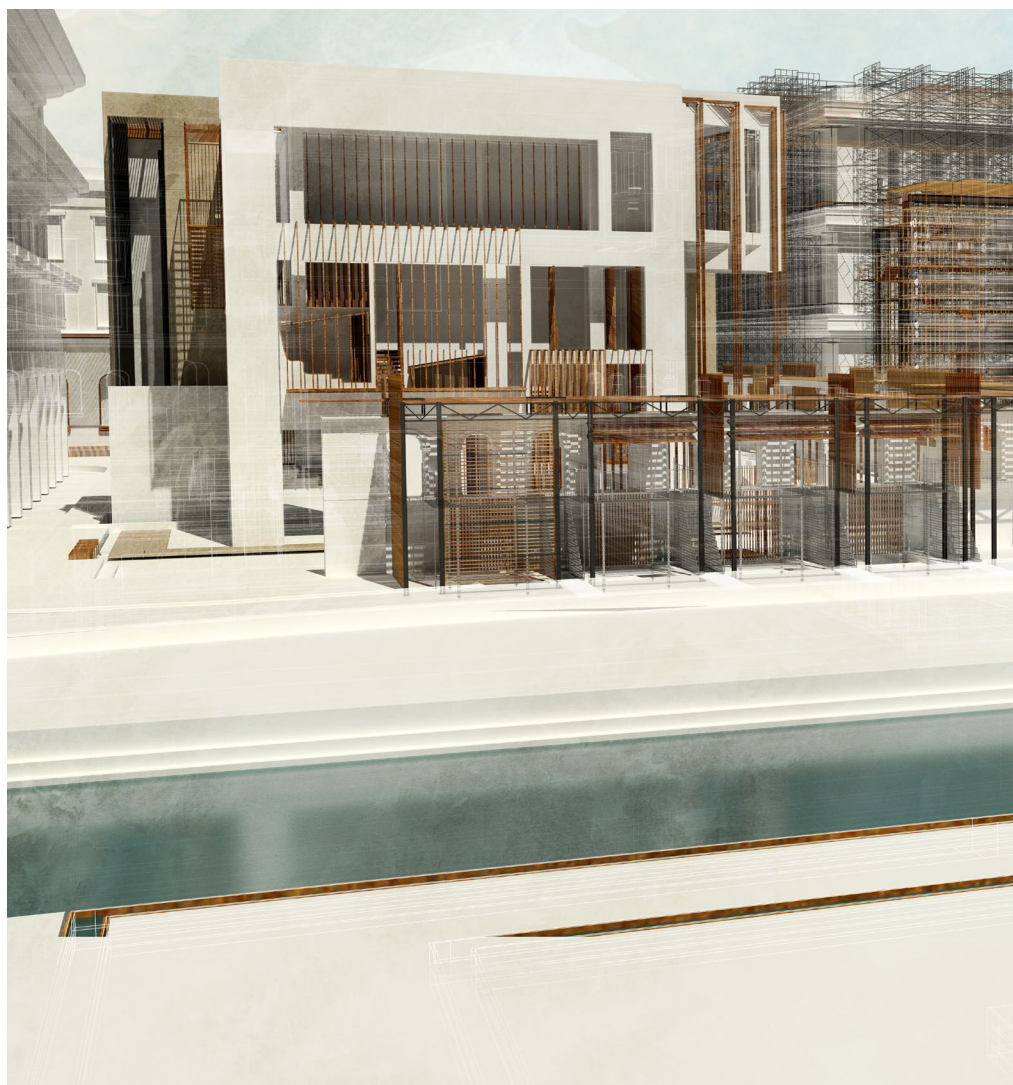
JESSICA BARTON, INDIA CHENEVIX TRENCH

*La Casa de las Personas* is an architectural proposal for a new Cuban parliament in the heart of Havana Vieja that presents an opportunistic response to the country's current, delicate political circumstance. The [re]interpretation of a parliament as an open landscape presents permeable architectures and animated infrastructures, of varying scales, that aim to collectively facilitate, interact and promote the livelihood and independence of the Cuban public, combing the bustling textures of everyday practice with moments of major political decision making.

Laid out in front of "El Capitolio," the new parliament unpacks and [re]distributes back to the city of Havana the nuances of power, through the renovation of the abandoned monument into a water filtration plant and Internet hub. The implementation of the new infrastructure taps into Havana's ailing aqueducts and offers a new reservoir for the city's clean water, catalysing urban agendas, environmental benefits and recreational opportunities.

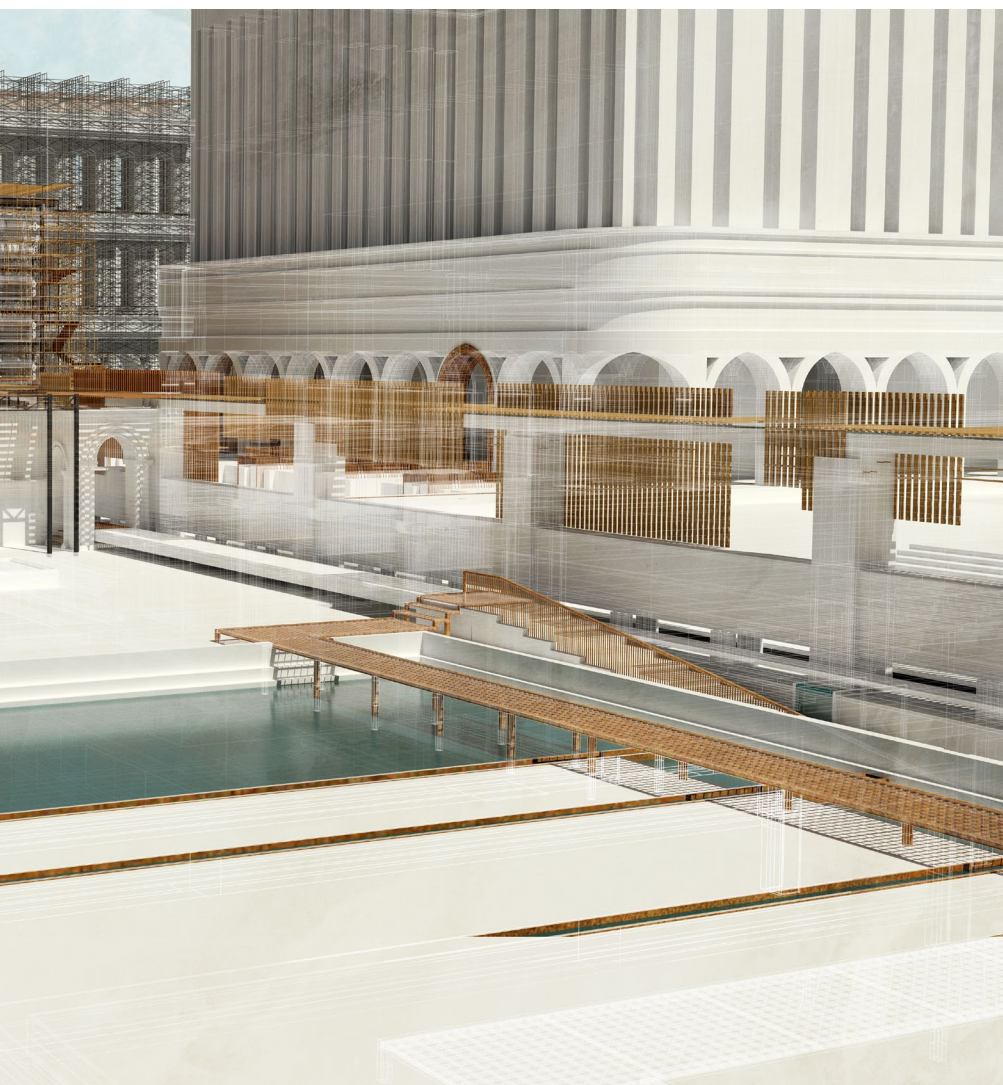
The articulation of spaces within the parliament present a taxonomy of scales that echo the arrangement of the traditional Cuban House. La casa de las personas presents architectures that embody the vivid, detailed, interwoven narratives, relationships and experiences of the traditional houses of the Bourgeoisie of Havana but proposes a dissipated arrangement, coupling each public room with an open political face.

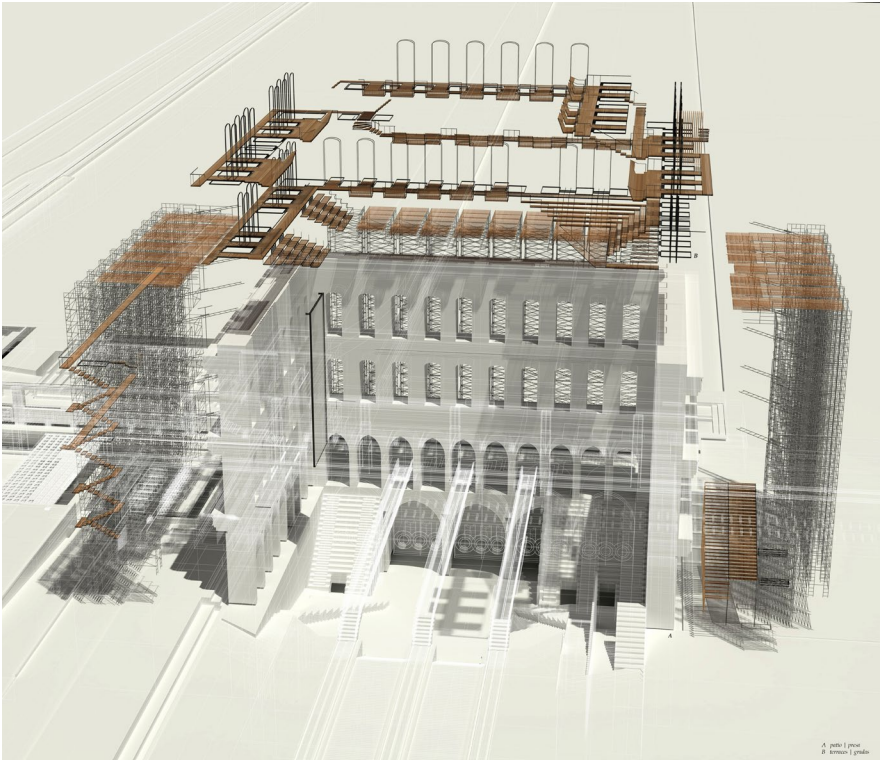
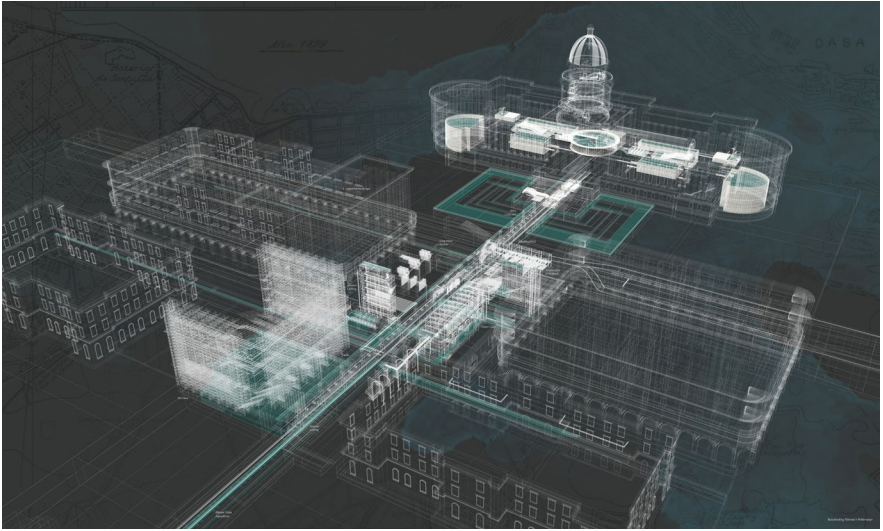




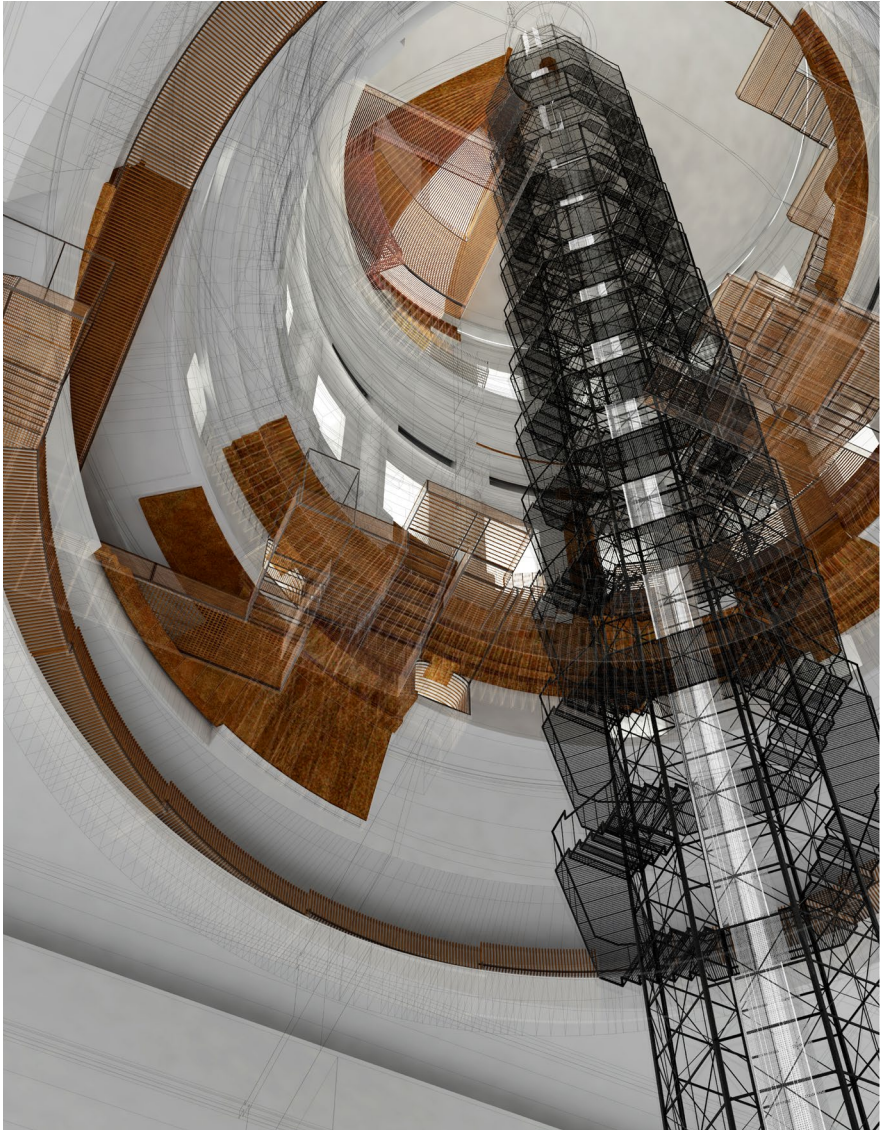
▲ LA CASA DE LAS PERSONAS







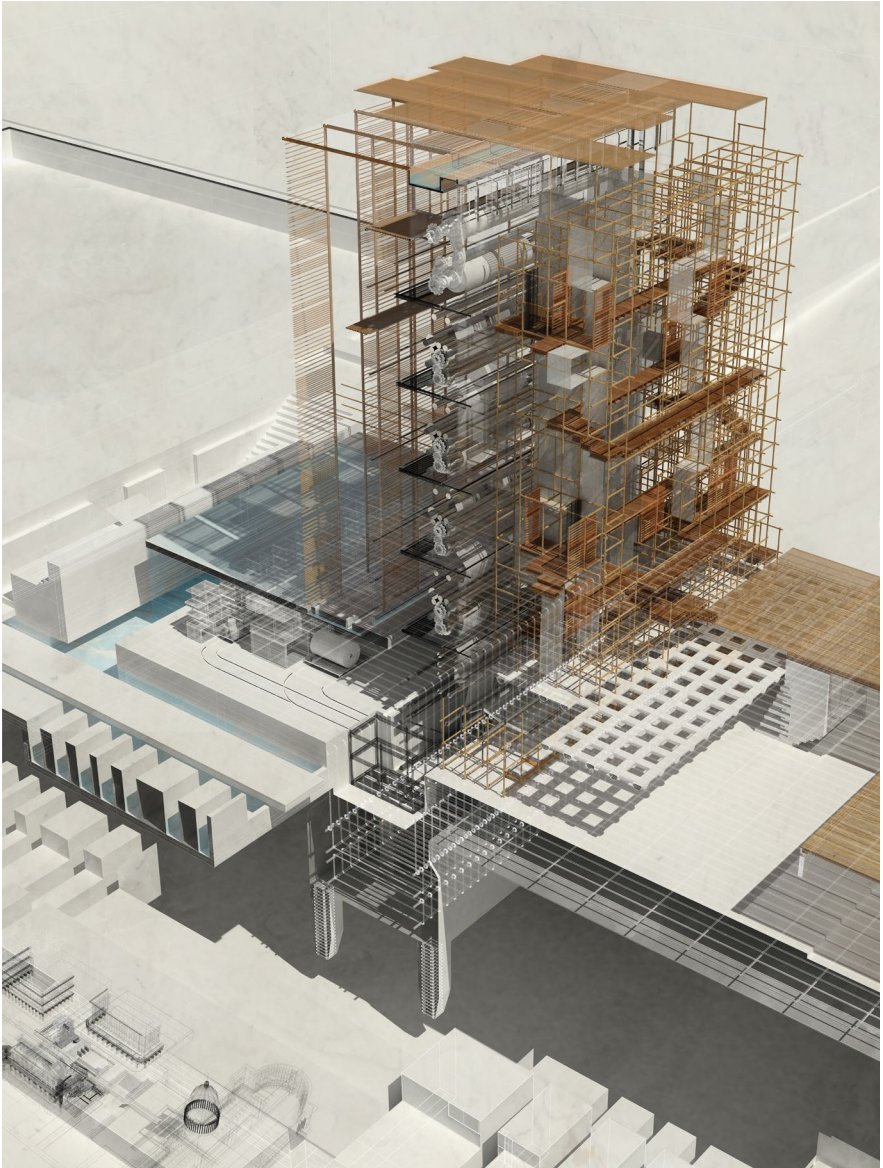
A: patio | pool  
B: terrace | garden



◀ WATER WAYS

◀ THE DAM

▲ CUARTO ESQUINERO





## SCORING THE MALECÓN

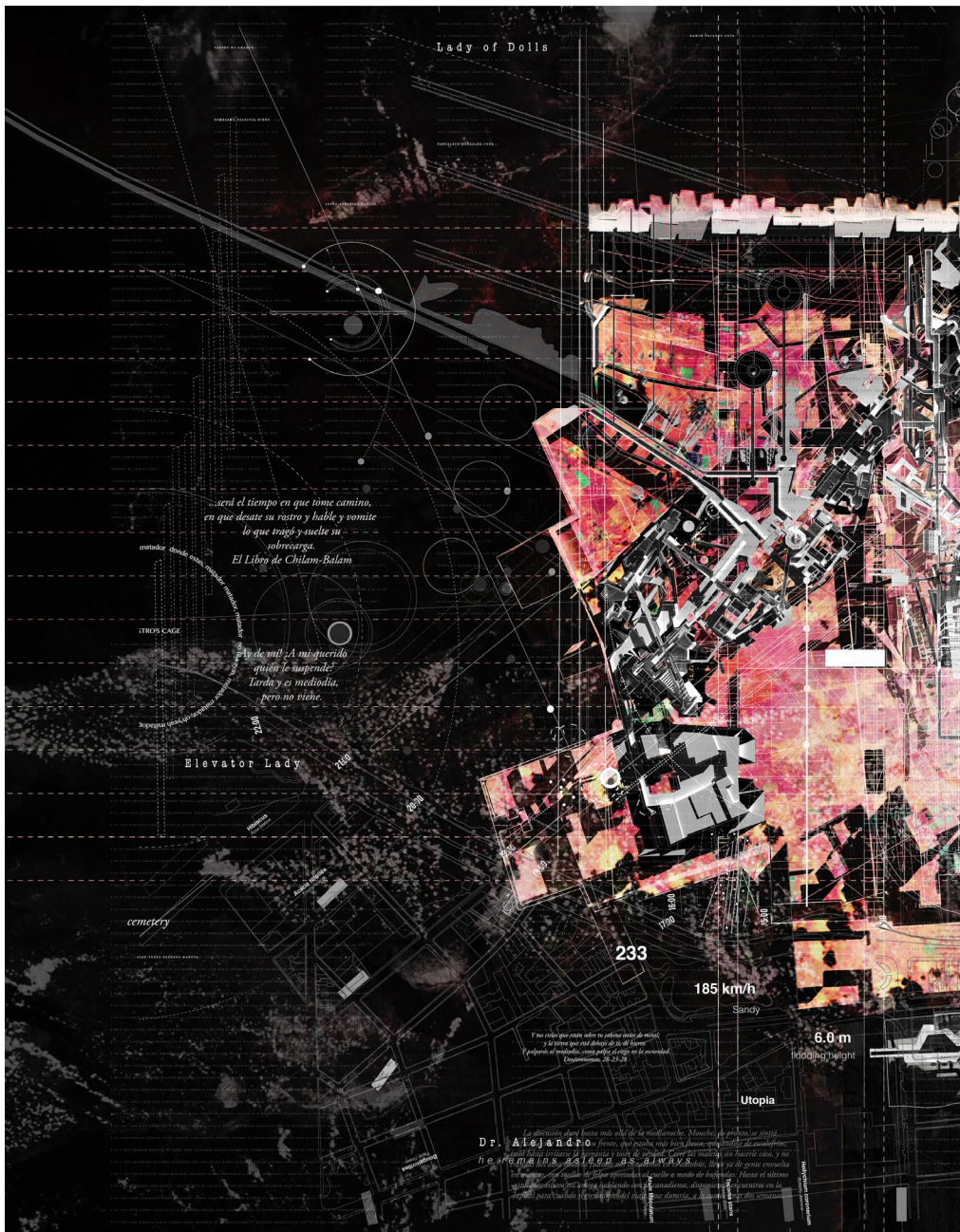
SHERYL LAM, EZMIRA PERAJ,  
ALECSANDRA TROFIN, LEO XIAN

The nineteenth century boulevard of the Malecón is an extraordinary resource of stories. The buildings that formed the city edge were once home to a privileged elite who fled the Revolution. Now, within its potted, weathered and eroded walls, live the descendants of artists, writers and politicians - favoured figures of the early Revolution. Out of the walls, shipwrecked by the sea and blasted by hurricanes, emerge curious, sometimes tragic, often fantastical narratives of Habaneros.

*The Sea Room* is an architectural manifestation of these stories. It forms a new public space, a pause along the nightly promenade of the Malecón. Within its protective frame, the interior public landscape is a littoral condition – a tidal topography upon which a field of vessels and seams gather in the shadow of Hermanos Ameijeiras Hospital, an edifice diverted by Revolution from capitalist bank to a tower of social care. In response, the *Sea Room* choreographs new seams of care, aquaculture to develop alternative forms of medicines denied by embargo, care for infirm, care for the dead, care for exiles, care for names.

The programmatic drive of the collective voice of the *Sea Room* seeks to protect the Malecón by proposing environmental defences and medicinal resources in the face of weather extremes and political embargoes. Individual voices speak to other narratives, seams of architectural investigation and invention that traverse the *Sea Room*.





▲ SCORING THE MALECON: THE MALECON SEAROOM & A LANDSCAPE OF CARE





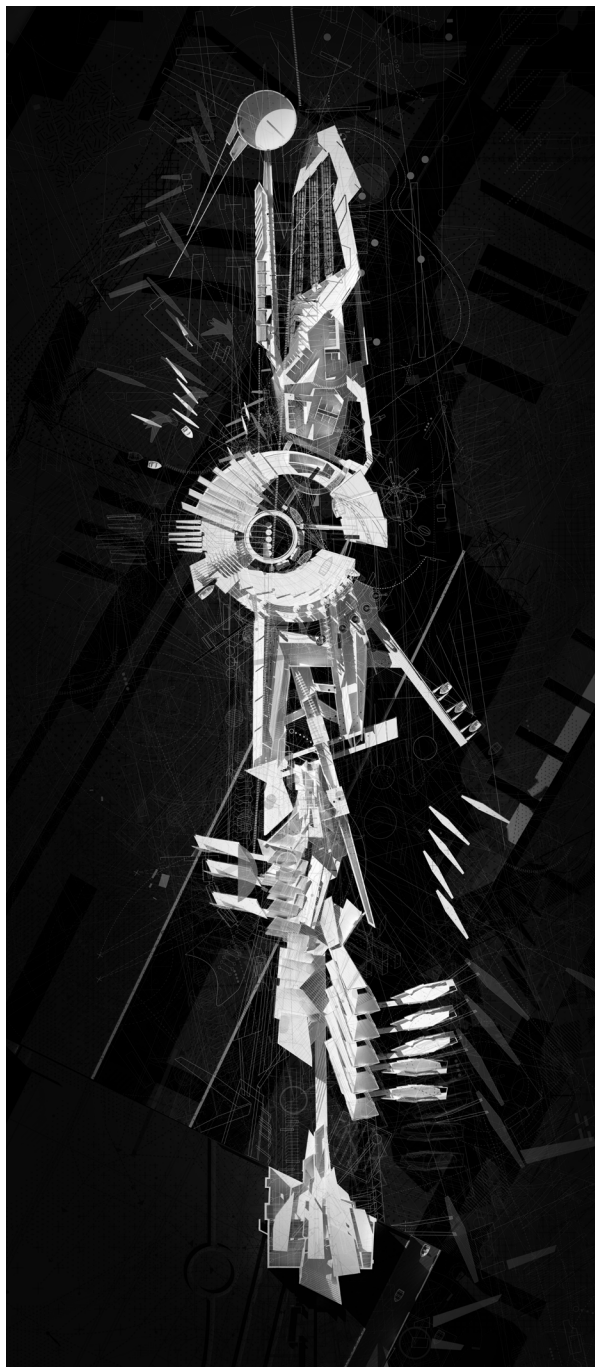
## 3.1

# SCORING THE MALECÓN THERAPEUTIC BATHHOUSE

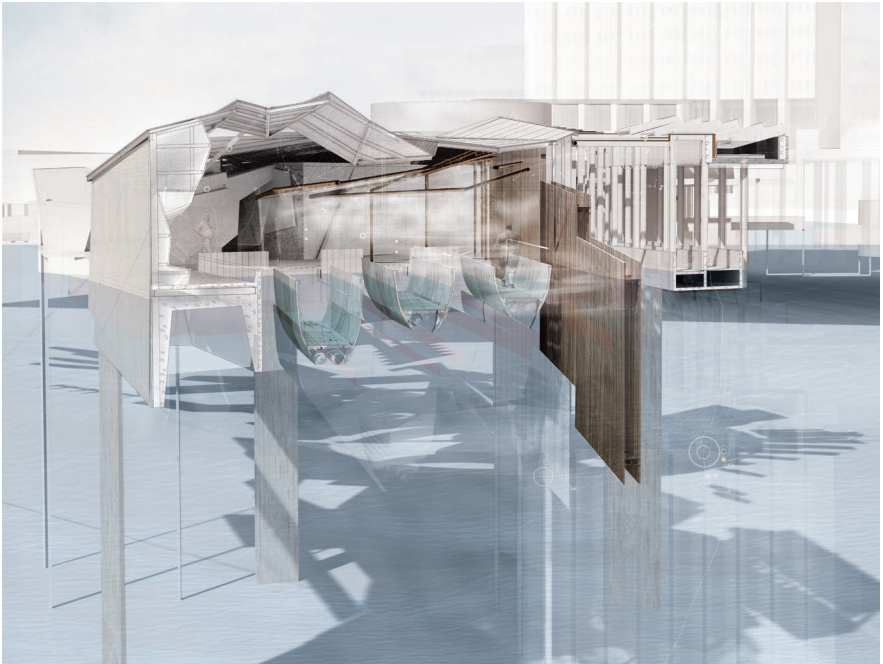
SHERYL LAM

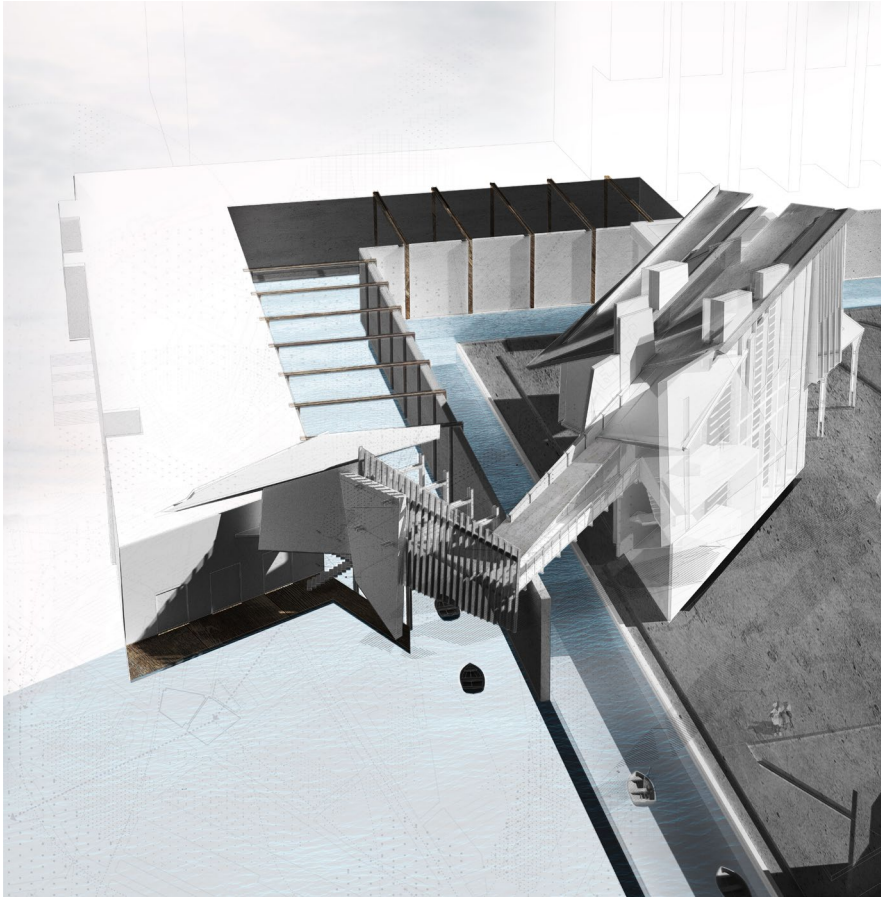
After the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the newly minted government introduced universal free healthcare to the population of the island. Today, Cuba has one of the highest doctor-to-patient ratios in the world. However, economic embargo and the shifting terrain of national and global politics in recent decades have resulted in shortages of medicine and equipment. The Cuban medical community has impacted on effective treatments for familiar conditions.

Inspired by Dr. Alejandro Oses, a long-term resident of the Malecón apparently present but always asleep in his room, his story told by others, the importance of the architectural relationship between the city and Hermanos Ameijeiras Hospital is foregrounded as an important theme in a project to increase therapeutic treatments for both cure and care. Water facilitates sensory stimulation, social interaction and is a primary resource in the invention of alternative healthcare. The thesis proposal connects people in the hospital to the *Sea Room* through a sequence of architectural figures: as responded with ingenuity and resourcefulness but limited access to international advances articulated ground, faceted walls, vessels and poolings that play to the affinity of humans with water.



SHERYL LAM - THERAPEUTIC BATHHOUSE





- ◀ THE SENSE OF CALM RESTORE MIND AND BODY
- ◀ THREE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF WALKWAYS OSCILLATE WITH THE WAVES
- ▲ THE GUARDIAN OF CISTERN PRESERVE AND STORE MEDICAL RECORDS

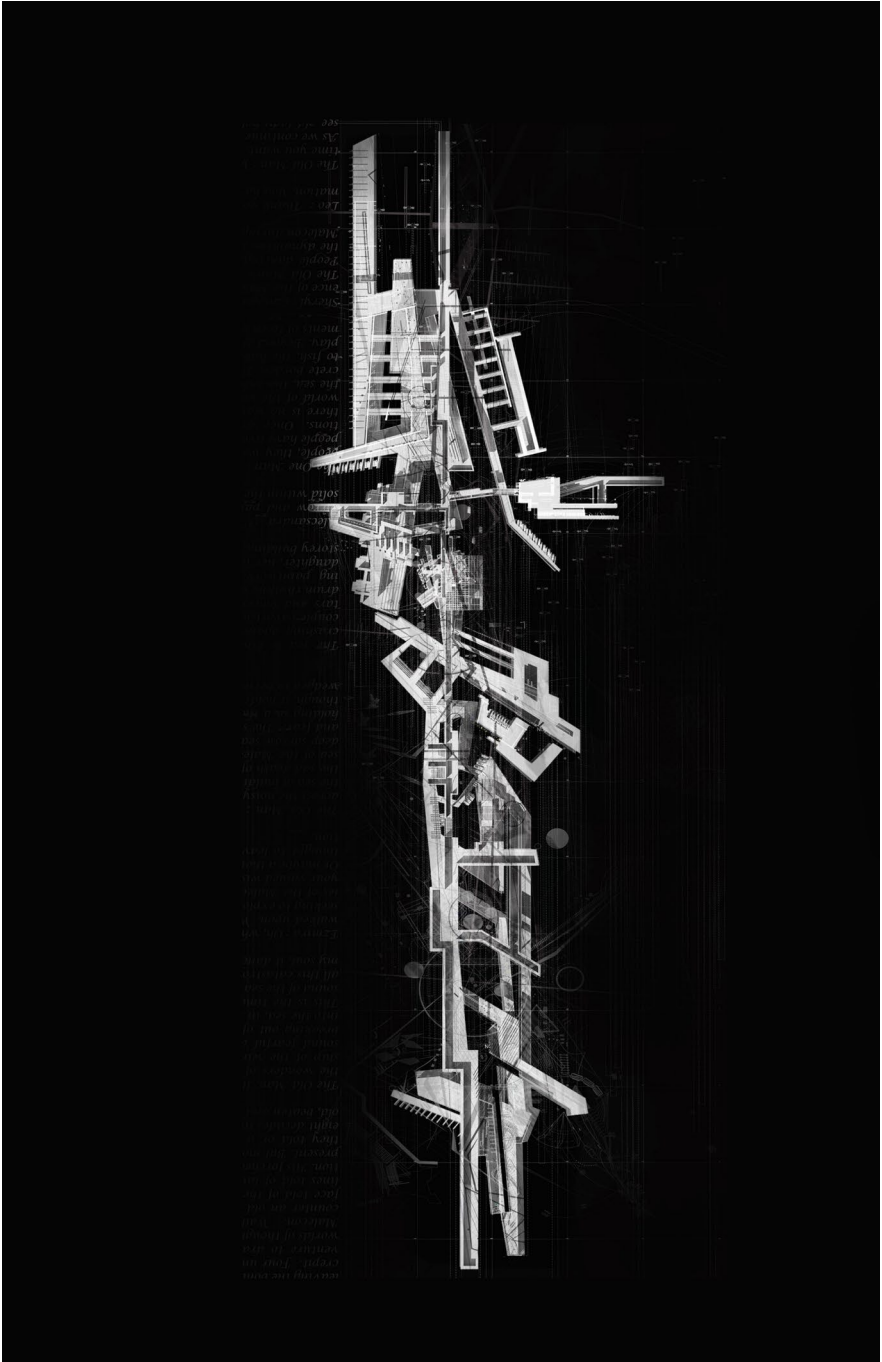
## 3.2

# SCORING THE MALECON FROM SEA TO SKIN: A PHARMACEUTICAL MEDICAL LANDSCAPE

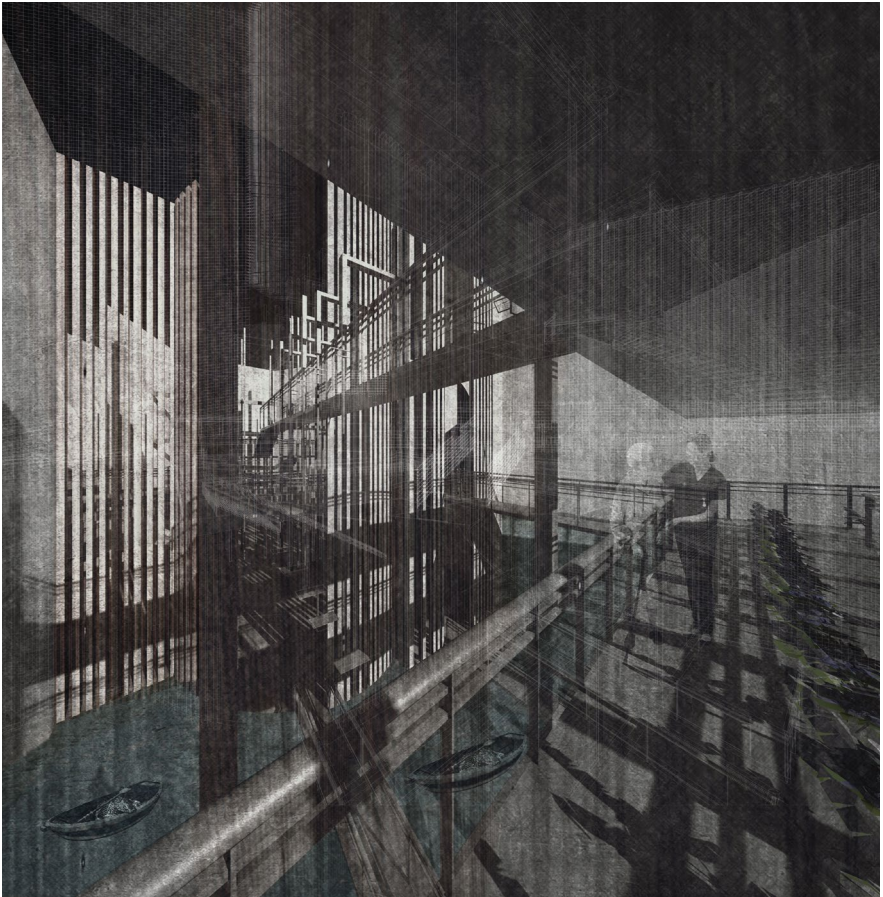
EZMIRA PERAJ

Gently hand harvested, the self-generating sea kelp can grow up to half a metre a day, evidence of the power of the sea that contrasts to that of the annual hurricane season. These underwater strands contain a source of concentrated energy rich in benefits for medicine and, from its vitamins and oils, the care of skin exposed too long to the severities of the climate of the Caribbean. Out of necessity, this island nation, for so long outwith the norms of international trade, has become a world leader in the development of alternative forms of medicine and treatments.

*Sea to Skin* choreographs seams of lavender gardens that are punctuated by medical research rooms, archives and a pharmaceutical laboratory that draws from the cultivation of kelp within the waters of the *Sea Room*. The seam reimagines the lagoon as a room of production, inspired by a resident of the Malecón who had dedicated her home to the crafting of exquisite dolls.



EZMIRA PERAJ - FROM SEA TO SKIN



EZMIRA PERAJ - FROM SEA TO SKIN





1 3D View 45  
1 3D View 47

EZMIRA PERAJ - FROM SEA TO SKIN

- ◀ THE VOID OF COLUMNS
- ◀ THE CULTIVATING GARDEN
- ▲ THE ARCHIVE VESSEL

### 3 . 3

## SCORING THE MALECÓN AN OCEANOGRAPHIC LANDSCAPE

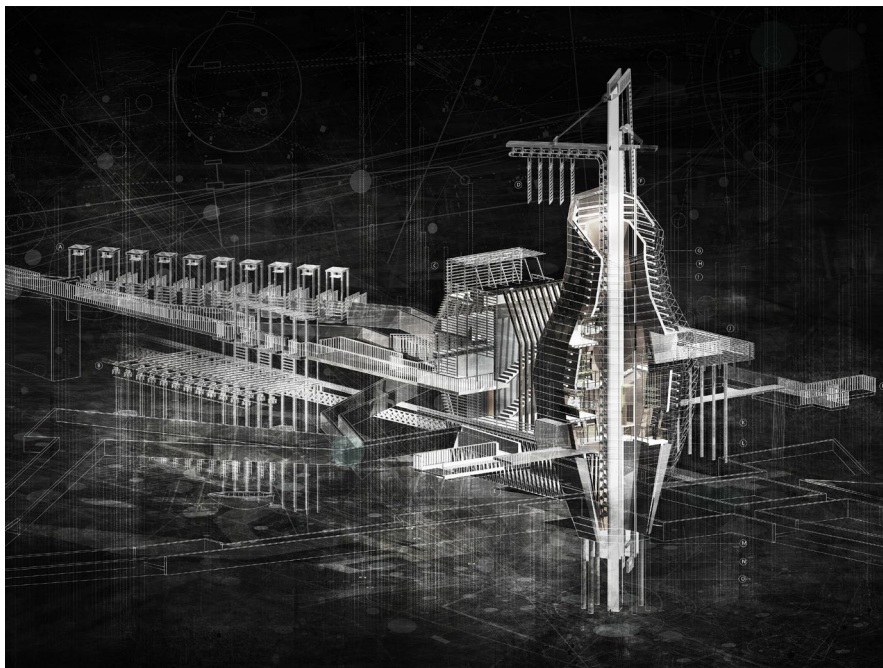
ALECSANDRA TROFIN

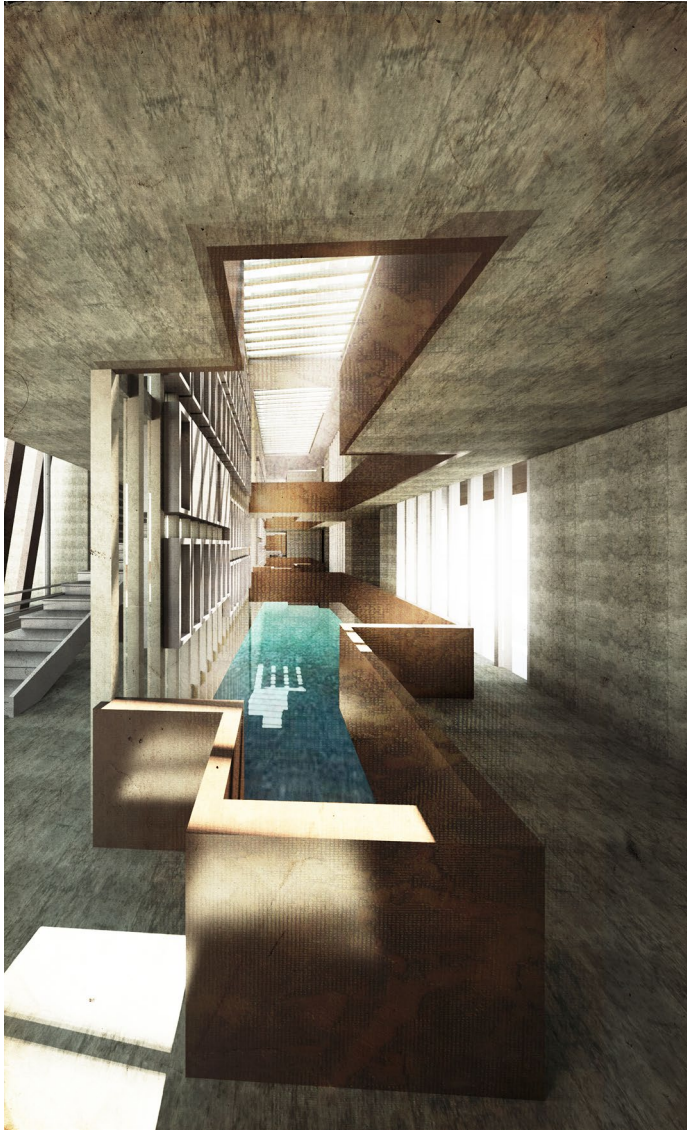
Within the crumbling walls of the Malecón a woman spends her long day operating the temperamental mechanism of a caged elevator. Like the building that it moves through, the elevator is scarred by decades of economic sanctions. The Elevator Lady, however, has maintained its operation through wit, resourcefulness and invention. The concern for the vertical and the inventive spirit that operates outside the ease of economic norms drives this seam of the *Sea Room*.

Here the *Sea Room* is seen as a cultivated garden drawing the harvest of seaweed from the depths of the formed coral topography of the seabed up into the towers of the drying lofts. The landscape that it forms is both productive and recreational – a source of power, nutrient and tonic and a place of escape from the ruins of the city. Here, looking out towards the horizon, imagination and dreams are encouraged. While the city is caught in amber, this garden is animate with change – the tide, the harvest, the storm.

The arms of the seam hold and tether vessels of refuge – drying rooms, store houses, laboratories and studies where water is the constant foci of thought. All the while their horizontal datum measures the rise and fall of the tide and the swell.







- ◀ THE SEAWEED DRYING LANDSCAPE
- ◀ THE SEAWEED DRYING TOWER SECTION
- ▲ THE OCEANIC ARCHIVE

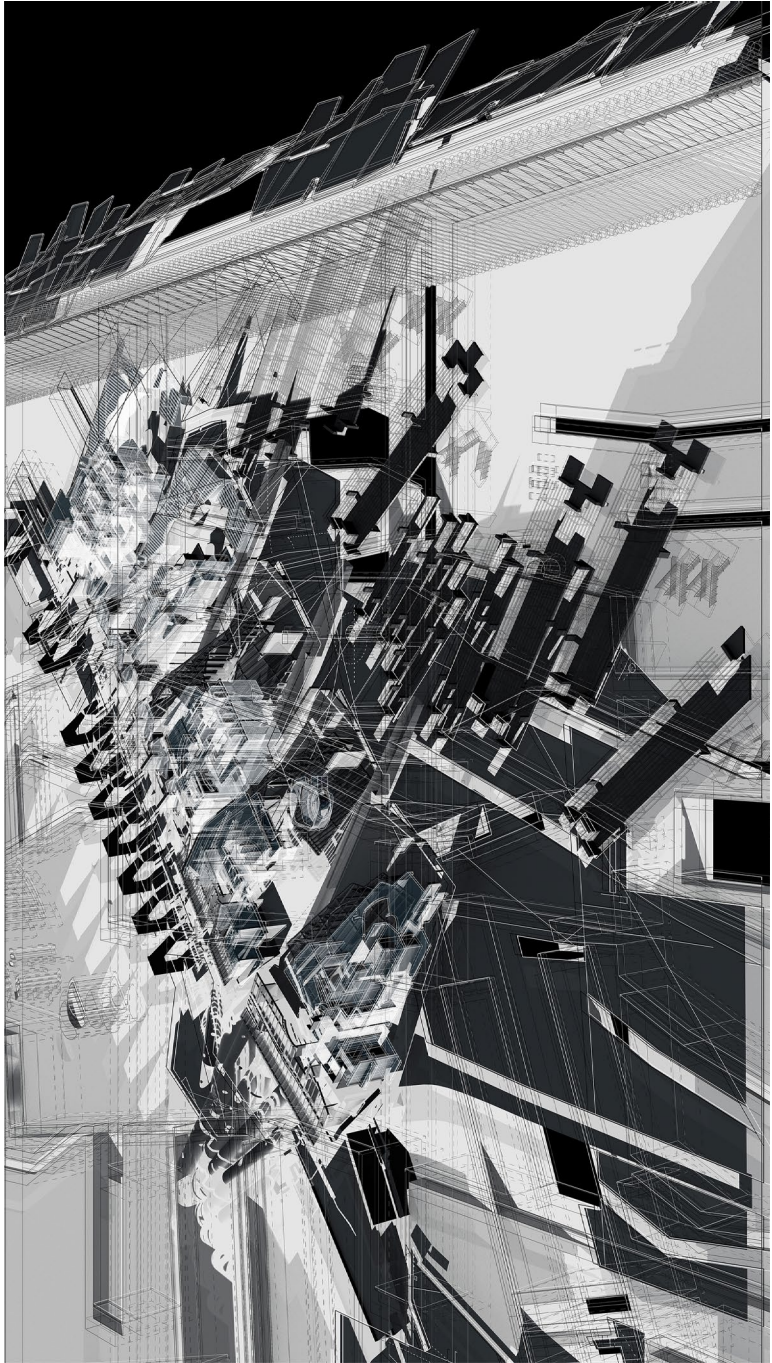
## 3.4

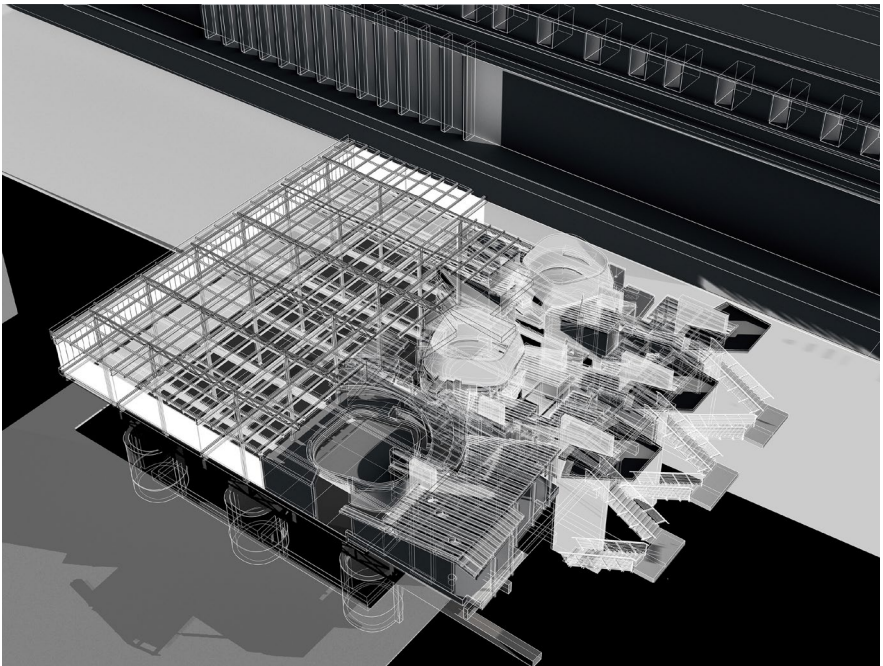
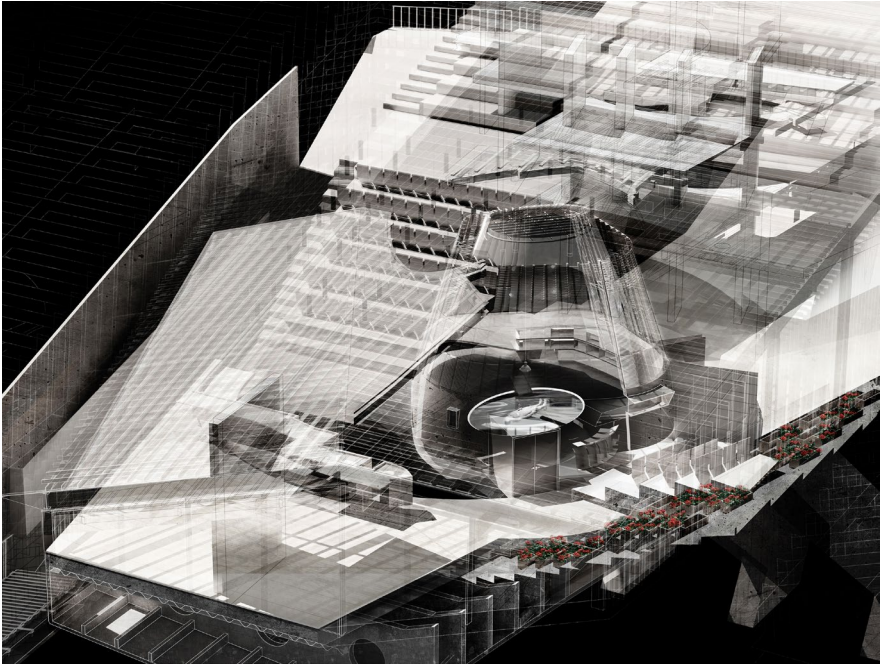
# SCORING THE MALECON FUNERAL MARCH, FLOWER FIELD & THE REGIS- TRY OF NAMES

LEO XIAN

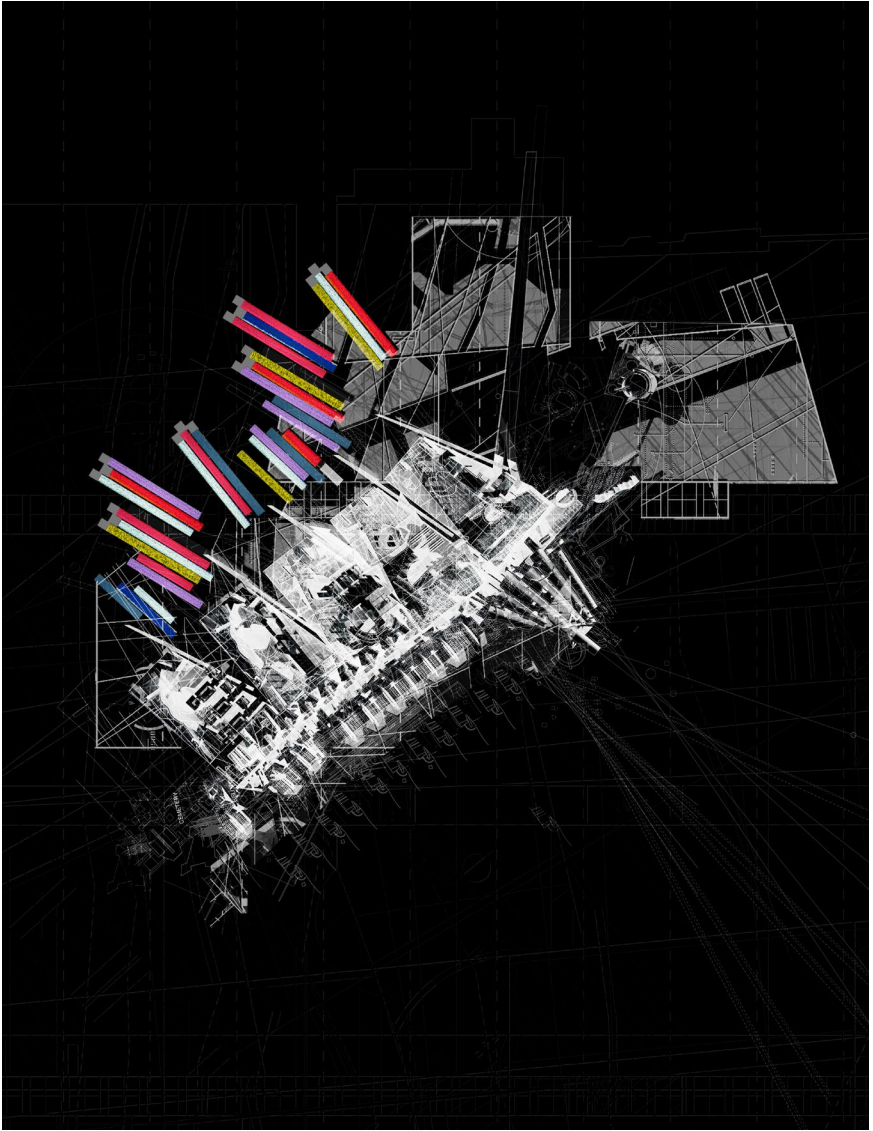
It was the sound of the church bells, the smell of the sea and the accidental encounter of a Malecón resident, a dying photographer, that underpinned the marvellous (to use Alejo Carpentier's term) narrative of the *Funeral March* seam. This seam engages with the ritualistic inhabitation of the place.

For almost sixty years exiles from the Cuban revolution have sought a last homecoming, to be buried one day back in the motherland they fled. The lack of burial spaces, as well as a dignified way of treating death, has never really been addressed satisfactorily outwith the context of religion and within revolutionary thought. A ceremonial landscape within the *Sea Room* forms a response to these neglected needs. It is both a last resting place and a field charged with the productive energy of flowers cultivated for ritual purposes. An archive of exiled names is housed above the flood line, held in perpetuity for family and history, at home and abroad. A form of care for those that have died and for those that have left. Every Habanero mourns someone who has gone.









- ◀ PROJECTED ROOM: MORTUARY AND FUNERAL HALL
- ◀ MICRO ISLAND: REGISTRY OF NAMES (OF THE CUBAN EXILES)
- ▲ RITUAL LANDSCAPE: FLOWER FIELD

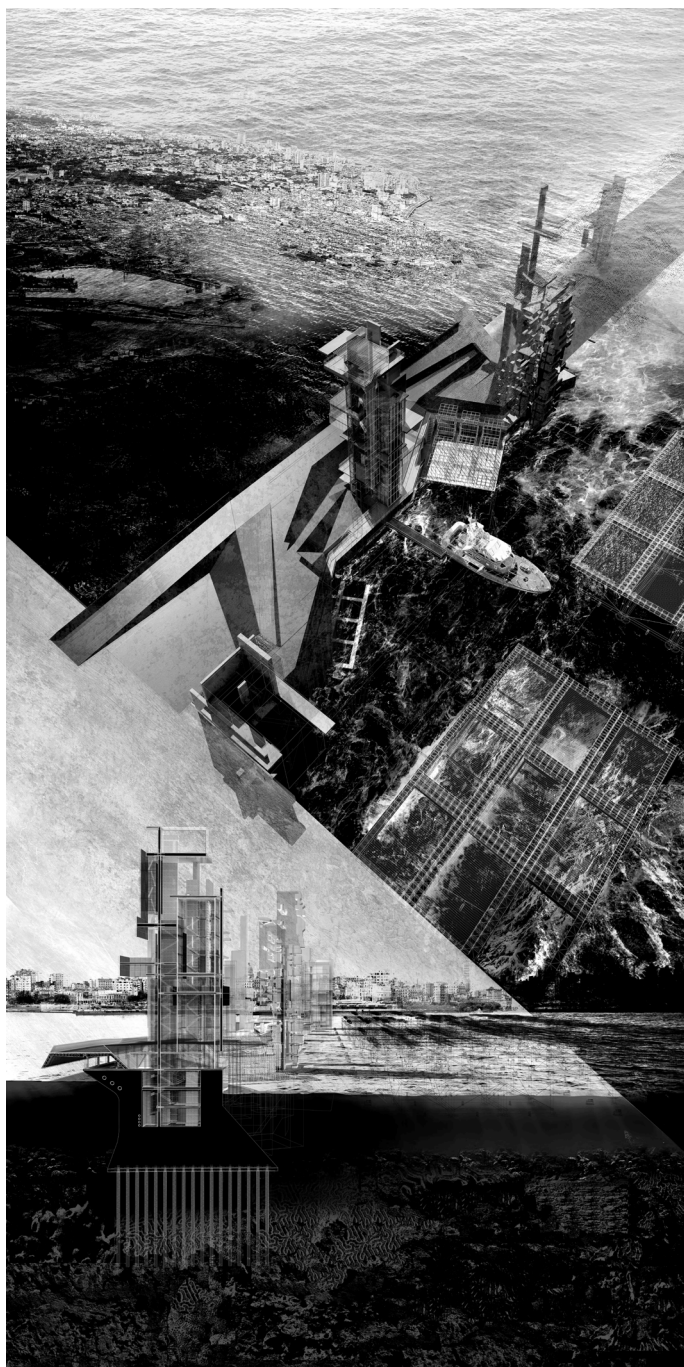
## CORAL CITY

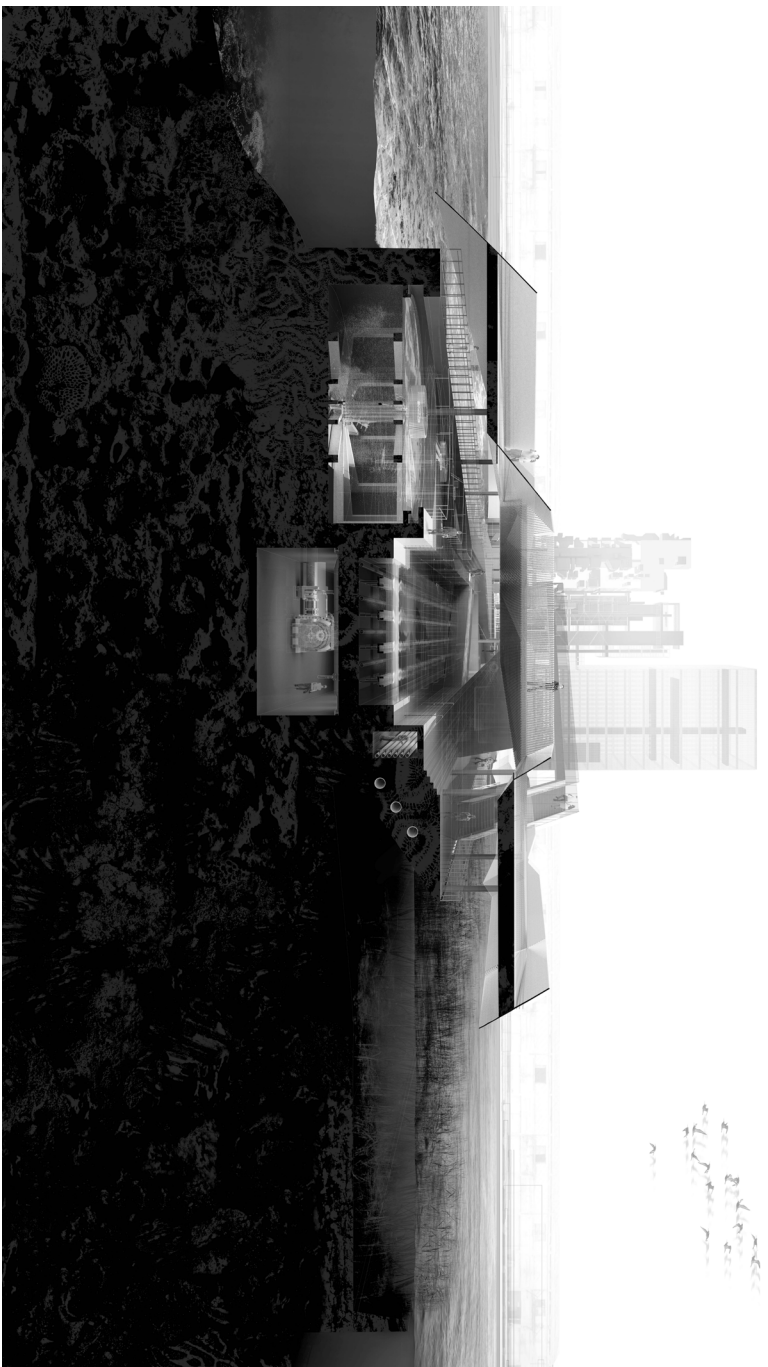
JAMES NESS

*Coral City* seeks to address the environmental and infrastructural issues surrounding the protection and supply of water to the City of Havana. Through the strategic siting of a causeway dam across the South-West side of Havana Bay, conceptually read as an extension of the Old City Wall, a new body of much needed fresh water is framed to sustain the historic city.

Cuba's Coral Reefs are said to be some of the healthiest in the world. Under embargo, Cuba has inadvertently avoided use of pesticides and genetic modifications and instead, has cultivated an organic approach to agriculture that protects the coral reefs. *Coral City* reinforces this approach by including a series of hydraulic seaweed farms that are driven by water displacement from the adjacent reservoir.

A series of towers emerge from the causeway dam - like coral from rock - each containing specific programmes relating to water and sustainability in the Caribbean context. Above the causeway lies a timber public deck acting as an extension to the Prado, a 19th century promenade on the site of the old city wall. This deck moves relative to the ocean's temperature by tapping into live data emitted from data buoys in the Gulf of Mexico. Kinetic undulations reveal rising temperatures and ultimately coral bleaching events to the occupant, scientific worker and visitor to the *Coral City*.





JAMES NESS - CORAL CITY



- ◀ A LIGHTWEIGHT DECK STRUCTURE HOVERS OVER THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD
- ▲ THE CAUSEWAY READS LIKE AN EXTENSION OF THE OLD CITY WALL
- ▲ SLUICE GATES RELEASE EXCESS WATER FROM THE RESERVOIR

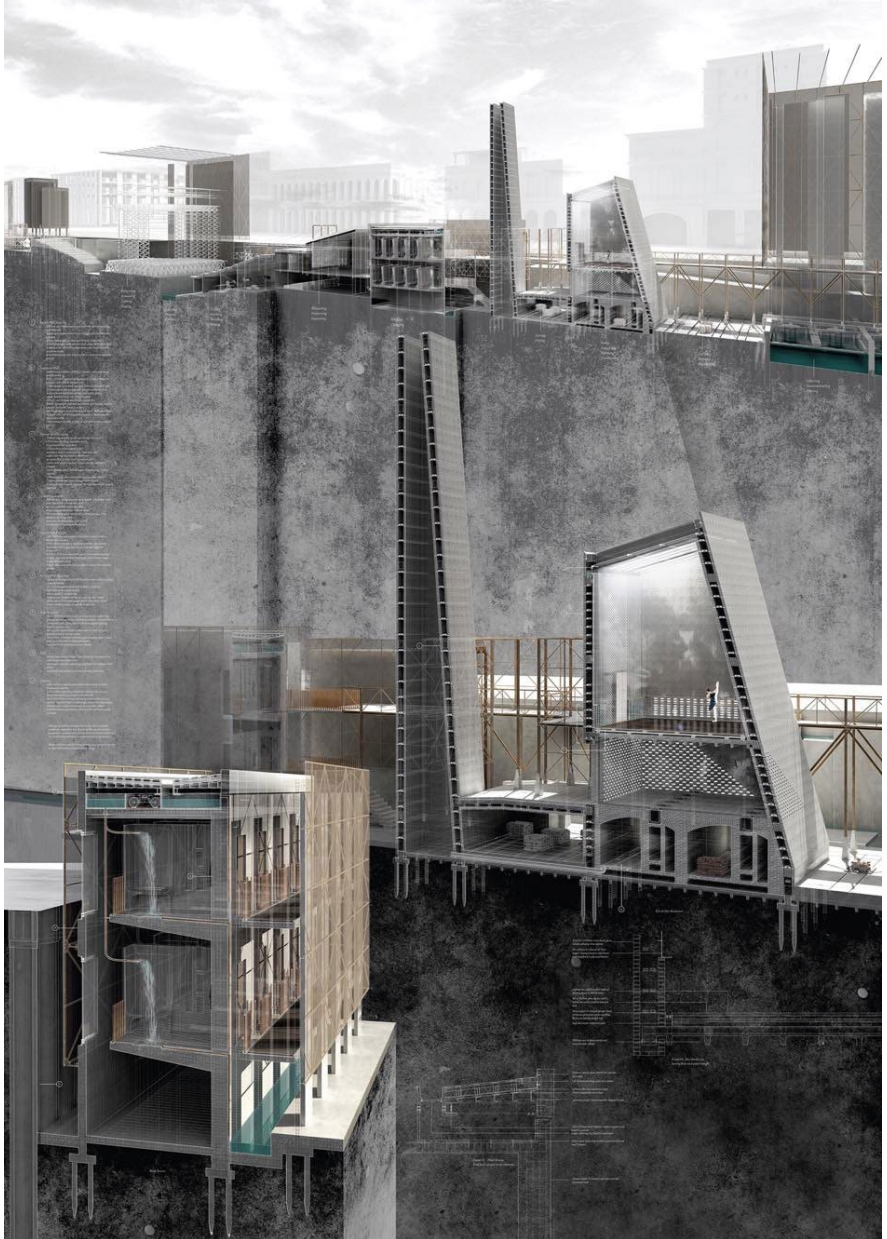
## TILLING THE PRADO

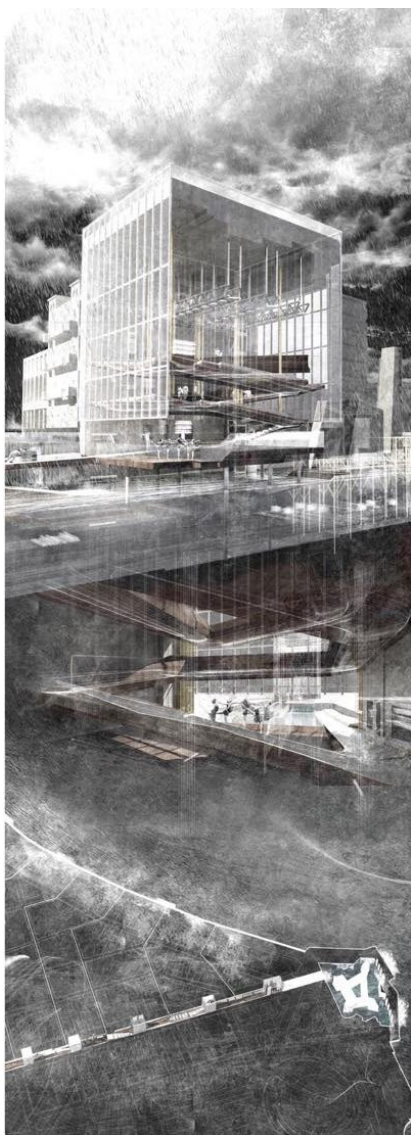
### A FURROW OF RE-CONSTRUCTION

RUTH MCNICKLE

The architecture, dictated by a conceptual framework of solidified shadows, is set in place as a means by which to care for and rebuild the city in three manners. The first relates to the reinstatement of Guevara and Castro's National Art Schools into the city center, providing a landscape in which schools of music, art and dance are embedded, opening the art institution to all. The next takes the form of a series of workshops and factories that craft the building materials required to reconstruct Havana's eroding buildings. These two seams occupy a deep cut in the fabric of the city, a line through the 19th century Paseo del Prado, a promenade. In doing so, they pass through one another, encountering each other at distinct moments in which there is an abrupt meeting of the two programs.

With an increasing number of hurricanes hitting the Caribbean and flooding ever more frequently penetrating the city at the Malecón, the Prado cut, the third architectural gesture in *Tilling the Prado* also acts as a bilge tank and a point of refuge for residents. It encourages floodwater away from Havana's unstable buildings and into the adjacent landscape which is able to collect, channel and distribute large infiltrations of floodwater. The cut offers a threefold system of protection of Havana's culture, buildings and people, from accelerating globalisation, rising sea levels and trade embargos.





▲ THE GALLERY OF REFUGE

▲ THE THEATRE OF REFUGE

► TILLING THE PRADO: A FURROW OF RE-CONSTRUCTION





RUTH MCNICKLE - TILLING THE PRADO





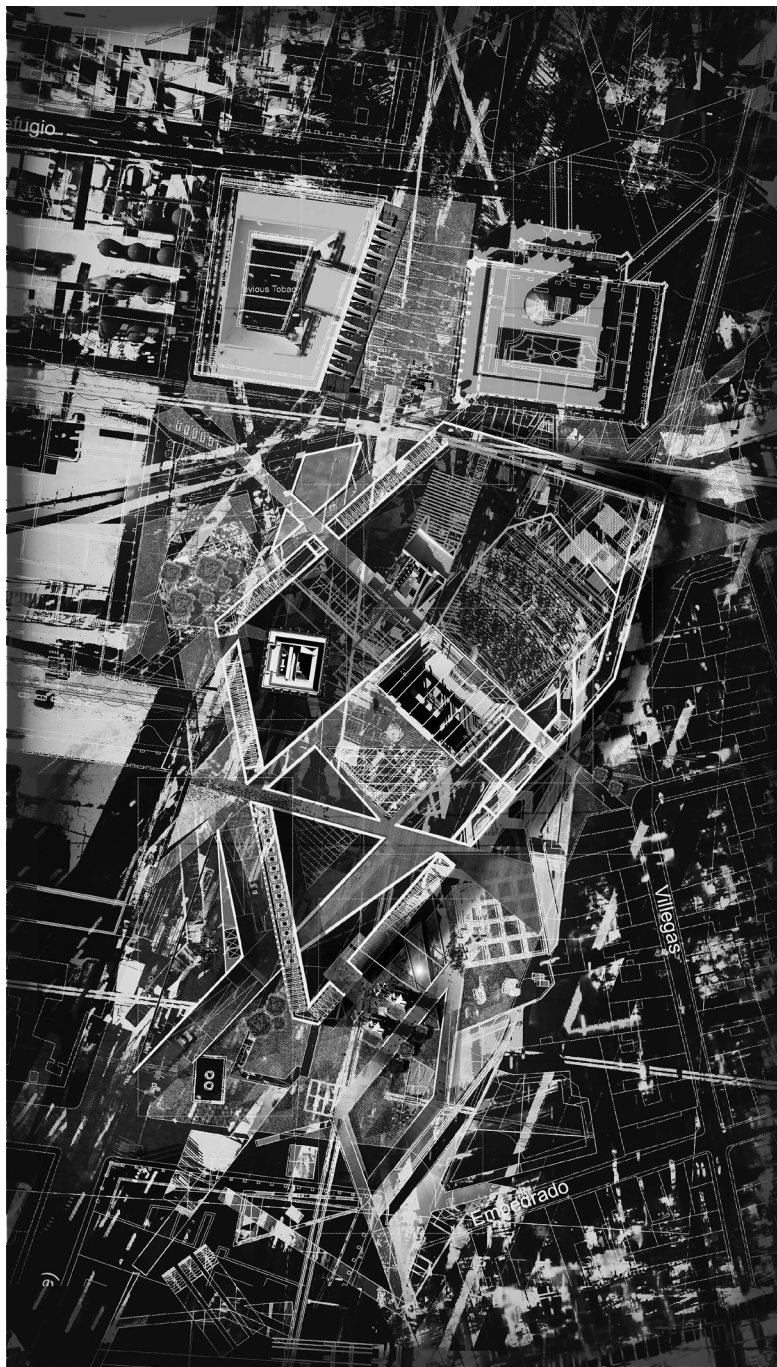
## ISLAND OF THE REVOLUTION

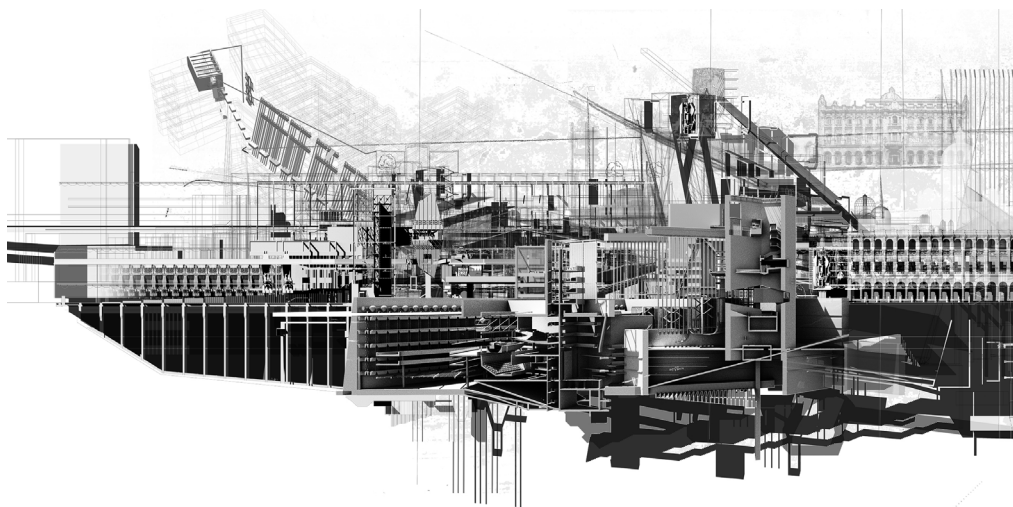
GEORGE MANDER

*The Island of the Revolution* is an architectural investigation of the formal, material, environmental and cultural consequences of revolution in Havana, the capital city of the Republic of Cuba. Through the device of drawing, it seeks to dismantle an existing landscape of institutional architectures by means of a critically charged process of delamination, defenestration, recalibration and invention motivated by the medium of cinema and its ability to edit, invert, cut and reconstruct space.

The resulting architecture, an *Island of the Revolution*, subverts the datum of the city, excavating an 19th century promenade, eviscerating a Palace, creating cavernous cisterns, surge tanks and channels overwritten by walkways, belvederes and balconies and guarded by a sequence of elevated vessels at once custodian and refuge for the landscape beneath.

A succession of bridges overwrite the *Cataclysmic Landscape* bracing, spanning, suturing, drawing out the programmatic, material and structural concerns of the adjacent city fabric. As micro-islands these bridges activate the landscape in the city, acting as catalysts for programmes within an architecture intended to operate as cultural landscape, workshop and storm surge infrastructure for a city at once vibrant, romantic, productive and subject to the environmental extremes of storm surge and hurricane.

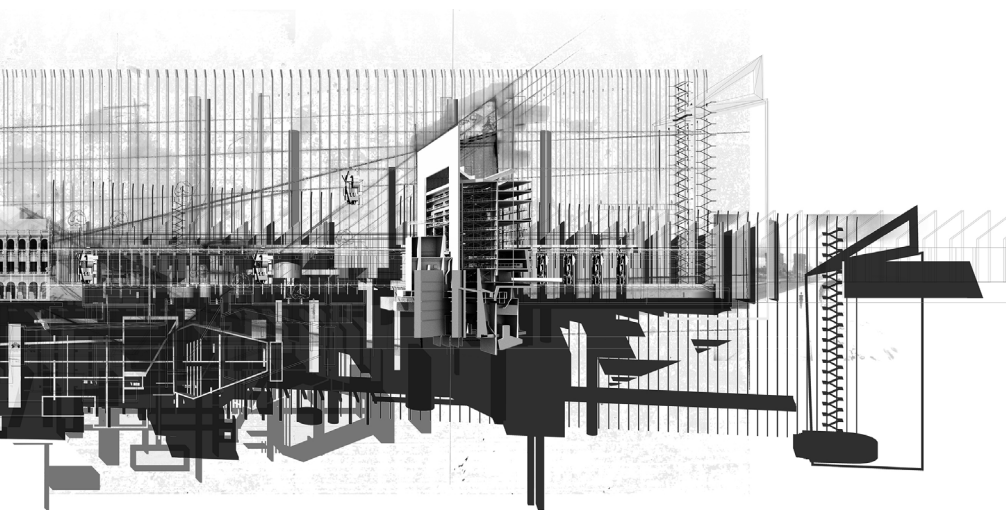




▲ SECTION THROUGH THE CATACLYSMIC LANDSCAPE

▲ ROOM OF THE ISLAND OF THE REVOLUTION

▶ VIEW FROM INDOOR MARKET SPACE WITH VEHICULAR REFUGE VESSEL



## AQUA // TERRA

RACHEL BRAUDE, HENRI LACOSTE , ELLIE SILLETT

The shared meta-thesis is concerned with operating within a moment of prolonged anticipation, uncertainty, transition and flux; the present condition of the Cuban republic as it hovers between isolation and contact. Cuba is on the cusp of change, its insular economy open to a restricted but highly lucrative and potential seismic tourist dollar. Tourism as an industry represents the most substantial economic shift in the island economy since the fall of the Soviet Union and the complete cultural and economic isolation that ensued.

Havana is enveloped by water and the sea is at its backbone. The city has always had an extreme relationship with the bay, from its foundation as a city, to times of military advancement or economic strength. Havana's harbour was once seen as a 'haven' and this is said to be the origin of the city's name.

Three projects are proposed that triangulate around the bay of Havana, addressing these concerns of economy, insularity and flux together with the historic relationship between land and sea. The first project deals directly with an opportunistic and reciprocal relationship between the city and the cruise liners; the second addresses the state owned businesses which occur as a consequence of the influx of tourism; and the third engages the economy of tourism as it begins to feed into the reconstruction of the city of Havana.







▲ CONFIGURATION OF THE STUDIO AS A TESTING GROUND



# 7.1

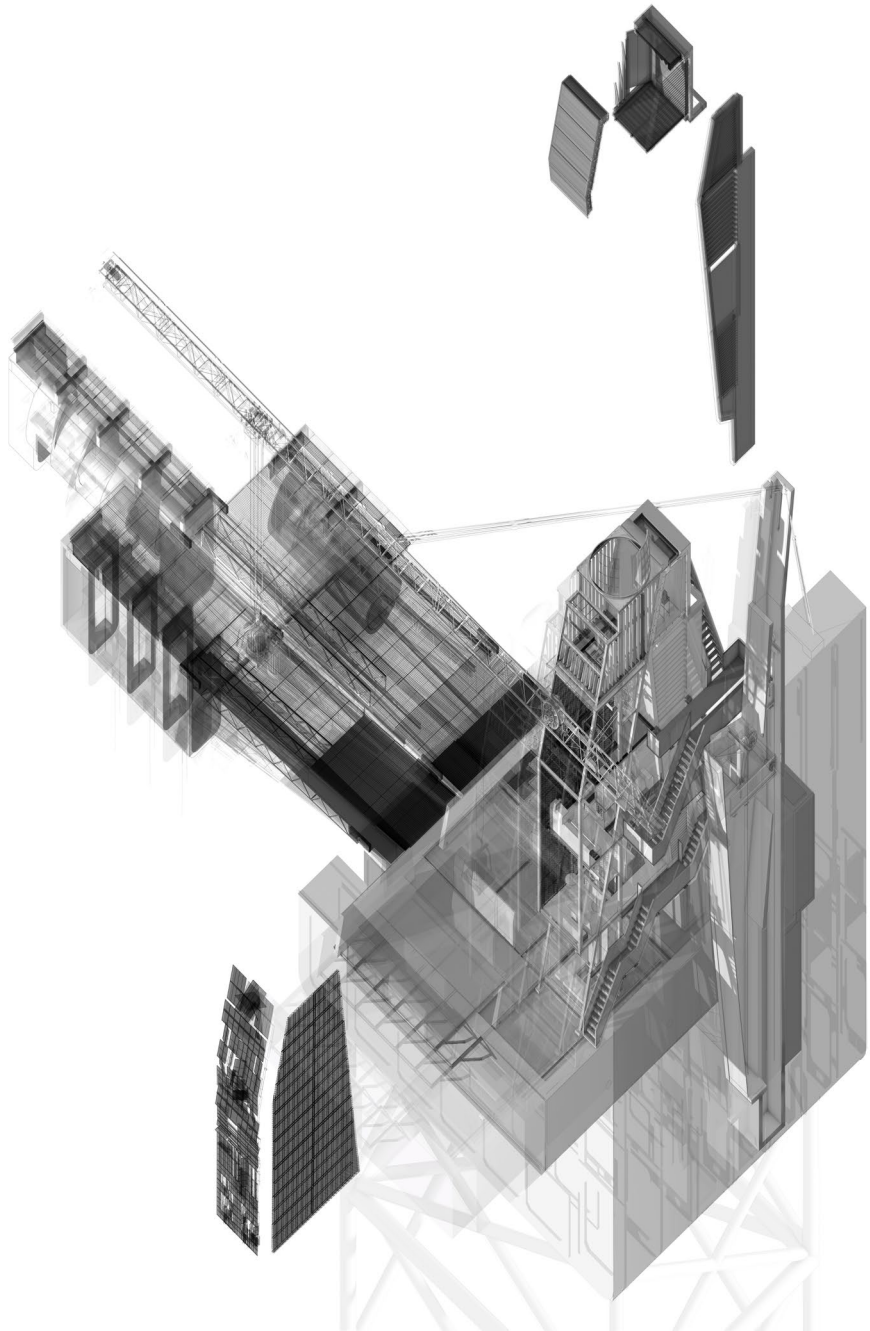
## AQUA // TERRA ARCHIPELAGO OF RECONSTRUCTION

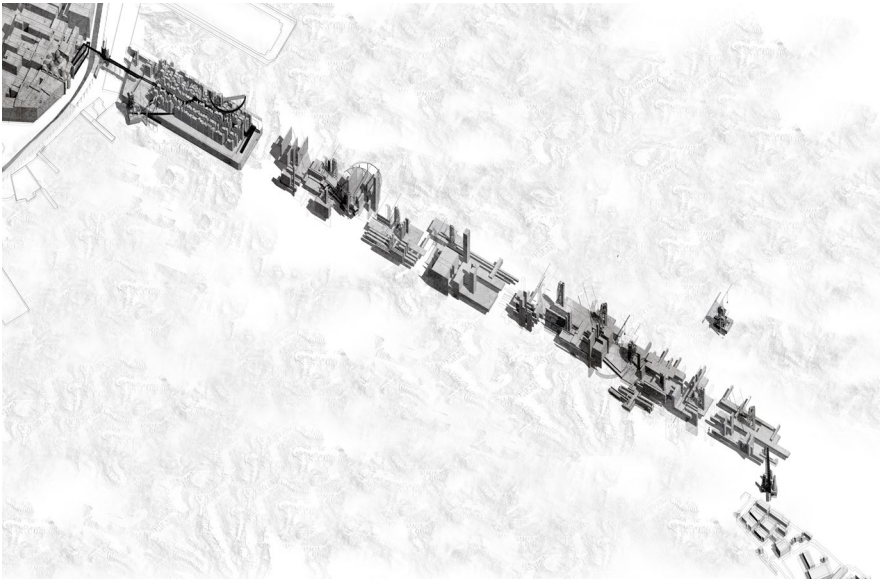
RACHEL BRAUDE

*Aqua // Terra : The Archipelago of Reconstruction* focuses on a doubling, on another city of Havana that contains all the materials to rebuild the city. It deals with the economy of tourism as it begins to feed into the reconstruction of the city of Havana.

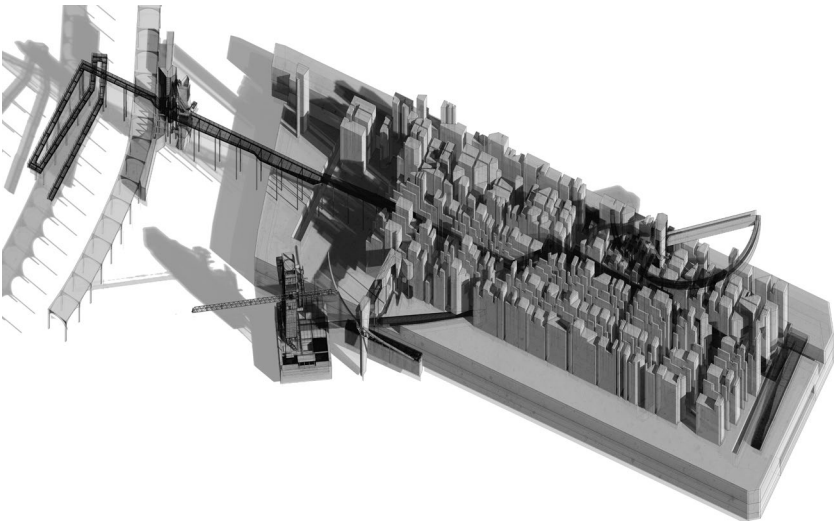
The architecture operates at four scales; the first explores the seam of the city from the ancient wall to the harbour and addresses the dilemma of reconstruction and repair and the consequential problem of population displacement. There is the scale of the warehouse of the Sierra Maestra depot, and the dense field of the compressed city and the temporary housing for those displaced in this process; and then there is the archipelago of islands and infrastructures that hold, test and prepare the materials for the reconstruction of the city itself. The fourth scale is that of the micro-architectures, of both the testing station and the 'memory houses' for the cultural histories of the city. These operate as programmatic transects through the macro territory, each with specific operations and characteristics facilitating the choreography and movement of the archipelago.

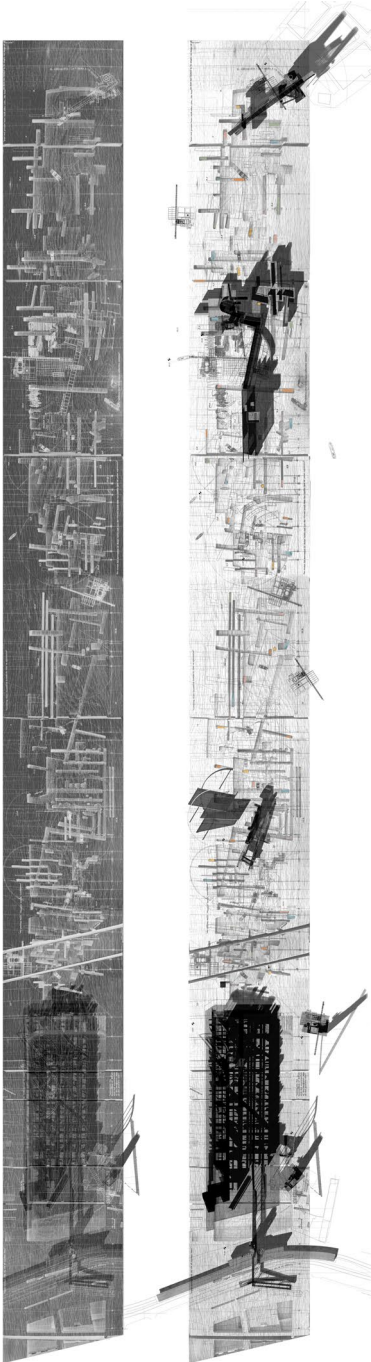
The islands lie in flux; responding to changes in weather conditions and city-wide events and festivals, while facilitating the movement of citizens from Habana Vieja across the bay to La Regla.





- ▲ BRIDGING THE BAY OF HAVANA
- ▶ THE ARCHIPELAGO OF RECONSTRUCTION
- ▶ PACKED AND UNPACKED ARCHIPELAGO
- ▼ THE WAREHOUSE OF MATERIALS: MAP OF THE CITY





RACHEL BRAUDE - THE ARCHIPELAGO OF RECONSTRUCTION

## 7.2

# AQUA // TERRA

## THE CORAL MUELLE

HENRI LACOSTE

Although impossible to corroborate, the presence of state involvement in every corner of Cuba's finances is a reality. Estimates see 60 to 80% of all transactions in Cuba pass through the Castros' inner circle. From buying a bottle of water to taking a taxi, Cubans and visitors alike are unknowingly complicit in a military regime. Cuba's economy is, however, in flux. With a series of moves signalling a migration towards capitalist values, the state's relationship to private and public business will inevitably be rethought.

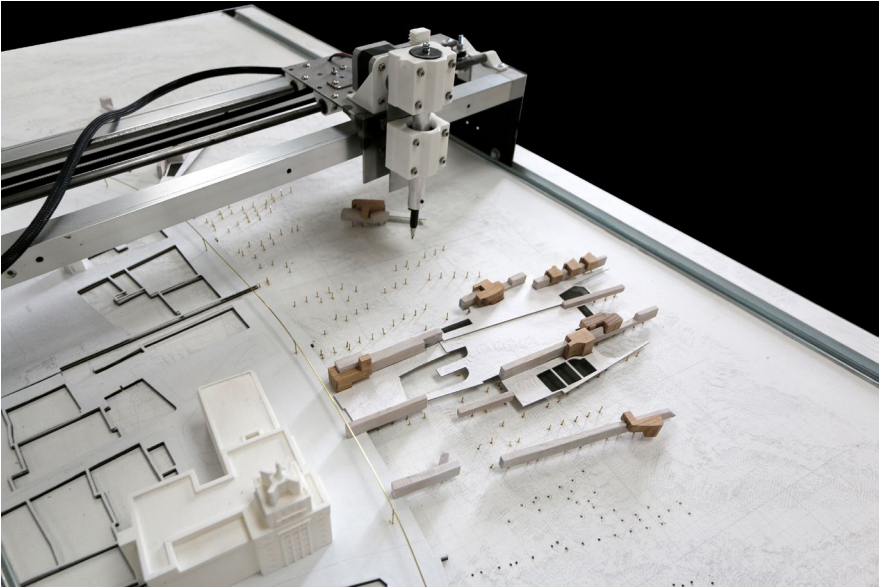
The bureaucratic arm facilitating the military's involvement in Cuba's finances is the Grupo de Administración Empresarial S.A [GAESA]. Its headquarters are strategically placed where Havana's port authority once stood; at the water's edge in old Havana.

*The Coral Muelle* sees the introverted workings of the GAESA unpacked as a taxonomy of programs reflecting the state-owned activities of Havana. These programs are not only the storehouses that enable these programs to operate but also the workshops that allow their maintenance and the schools that ensure their continuation. *The Coral Muelle* is not a masterplan, rather a fluid strategy allowing its development to be responsive to the changes in the economic and political situation Cuba finds itself in.





HENRI LACOSTE - THE CORAL MUELLE





- ◀ MODEL OF THE MACRO-TERRITORY OF THE CORAL MUELLE
- ◀ MUELLE AND MORADA OF THE TAXI DRIVER
- ▲ NEGOTIATION BETWEEN CORAL-SCAPE AND ARCHITECTURE

## 7.3

# AQUA // TERRA

## THE ISLAND OF RECIPROCITY

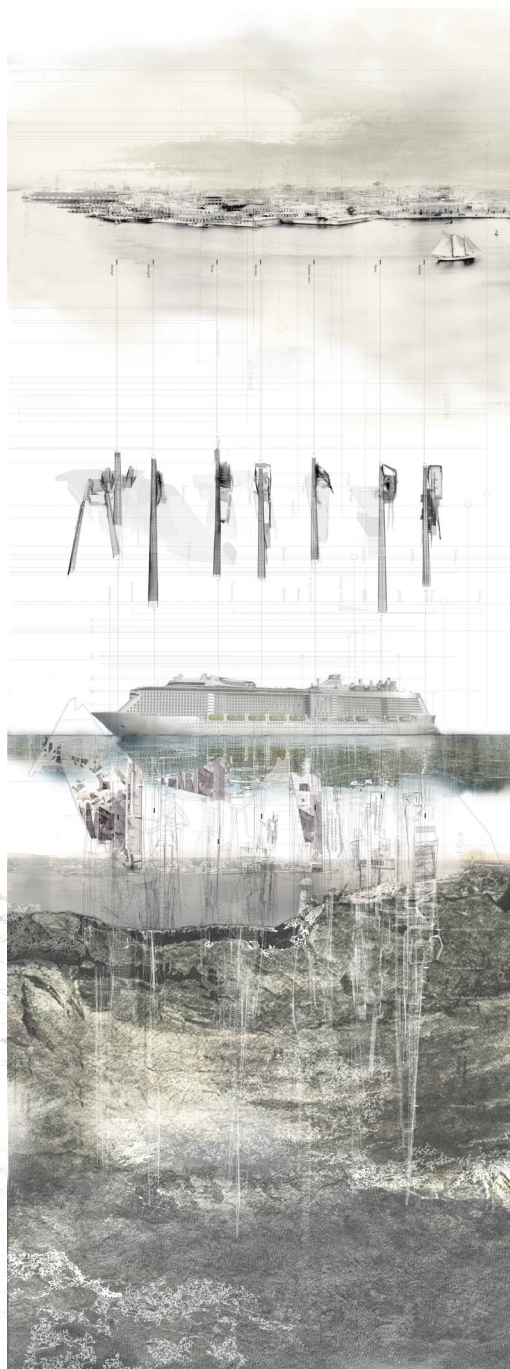
ELLIE SILLETT

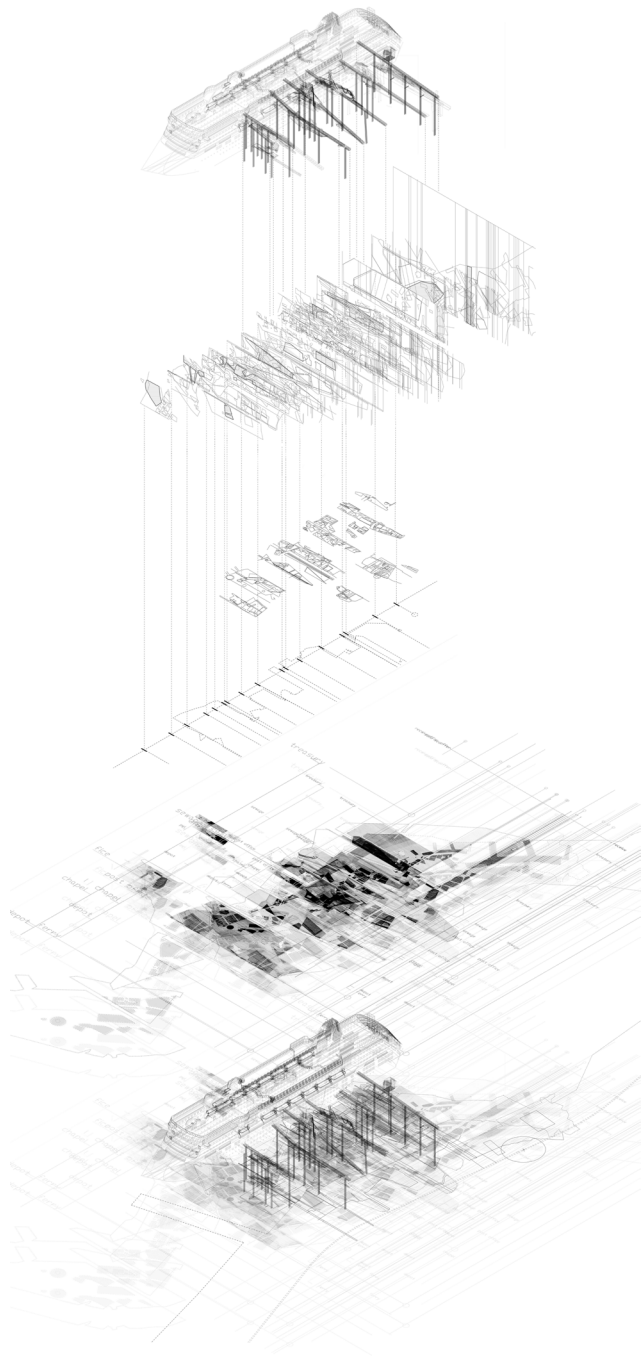
*The Island of Reciprocity* is a proposal for a new occupation of the landscape that surrounds the bay of Havana. A floating island, it establishes a reciprocal relationship with the succession of incoming cruise liners while simultaneously engaging at a much smaller scale with the city as a haven for a rich seam of cultural activities.

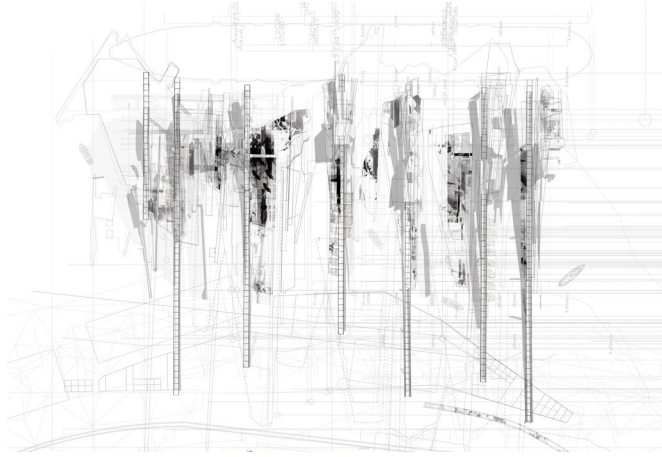
The proposal explores the condition of the harbour as a public space and through opportunistic composition activates incoming cruise liners as architectures for citizen and tourist use. The *Island* becomes a guardian for the bay acting as the city's watchful eye from Casablanca's historically protective coastline.

The *Island* acts as a filter for the choreography of transportation activities within the harbour, from the formation of connections to a wider network beyond the city via the use of an existing train line, to the recalibration of the visual relationship between tourists and Havana.

While in a state of political and economic flux, Havana is calling for this sustainable tourism model to ensure future longevity. The proposed *Island* engages with the fragility of the harbour being conscious of the danger that increasing cruise liners will bring to its waters and to the city beyond.



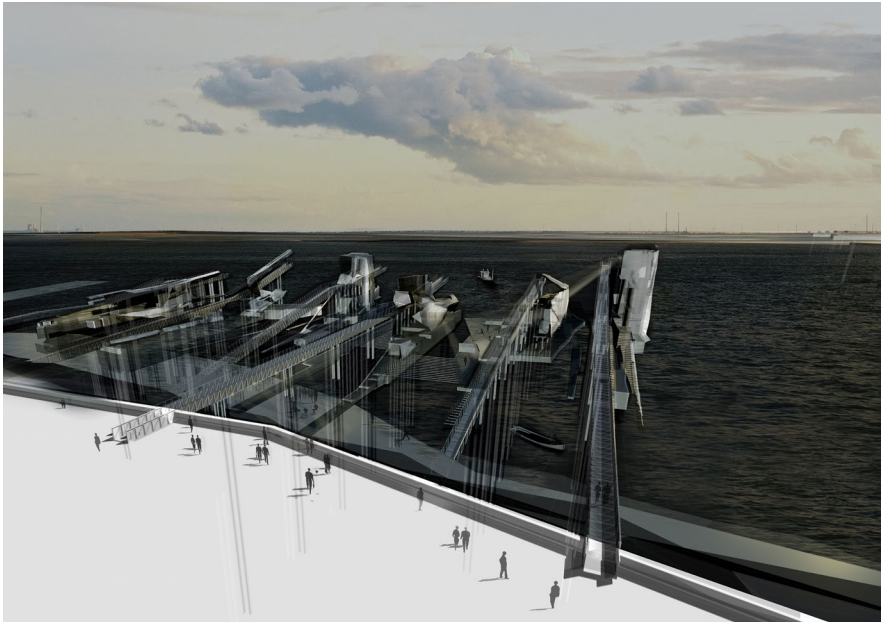




◀ FRAGMENTING THE FOLDED ISLAND

▲ THE ISLAND CALIBRATES TO RECEIVE THE INCOMING CRUISE SHIPS

▼ A NEW LANDSCAPE FOR PERFORMANCE IS OFFERED TO THE HARBOUR



## PORTA JOYAS OF HAVANA

ALICE VIVODA

Havana is vibrant city full of vernacular manufacturing. The project focuses on eight modes of fabrication referred to as the *Eight Senses of Cuba*: rum, tobacco, art, music, dance, sugar, fish/seafood and perfume. The project, located in the Plaza de San Francisco, functions as a valve between the sea and the city.

A series of buildings inhabit the plaza creating a new water line that shapes the interaction with the harbour. The design incorporates two typologies of buildings: the *sense keepers*, represented by the cabinets, and *the screens*. All the buildings sit onto a carved ground that is the result of a redrawing and drawing out of the city's skins, walls, surfaces and gaps. This process of architectural lamination creates a compressed performative space that changes its configuration constantly through the practical and poetic articulation of moveable screens. When one cabinet opens, the space surrounding it is transformed to host the public and release one of the *Eight Senses in the city*.

The arrival of a cruise ship is celebrated through an intense scenography that had been drawn out from the crumbling world of Havana, a compact world of hiding and revealing that welcomes the visitor, the tourist and the citizen alike.

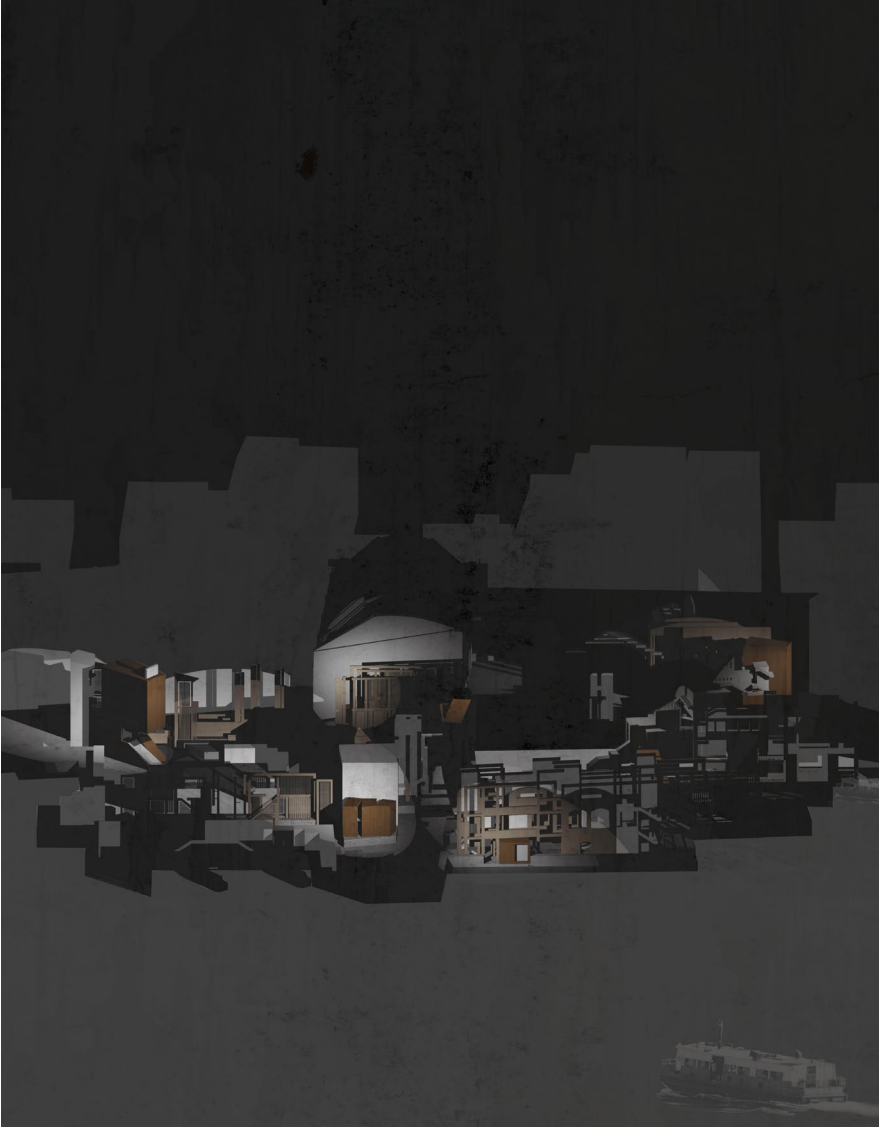




ALICE VIVODA - PORTA JOYAS OF HAVANA

- ▶ THE MAP OF TERRITORY - A PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF HAVANA
- ▶ THE PORTA JOYAS OF HAVANA - THE NEW ENTRANCE OF CUBA
- ▼ APPROACHING THE PORTA JOYAS GLOWING IN THE DARK

ALICE VIVODA - PORTA JOYAS OF HAVANA





## THE LIONS OF HAVANA

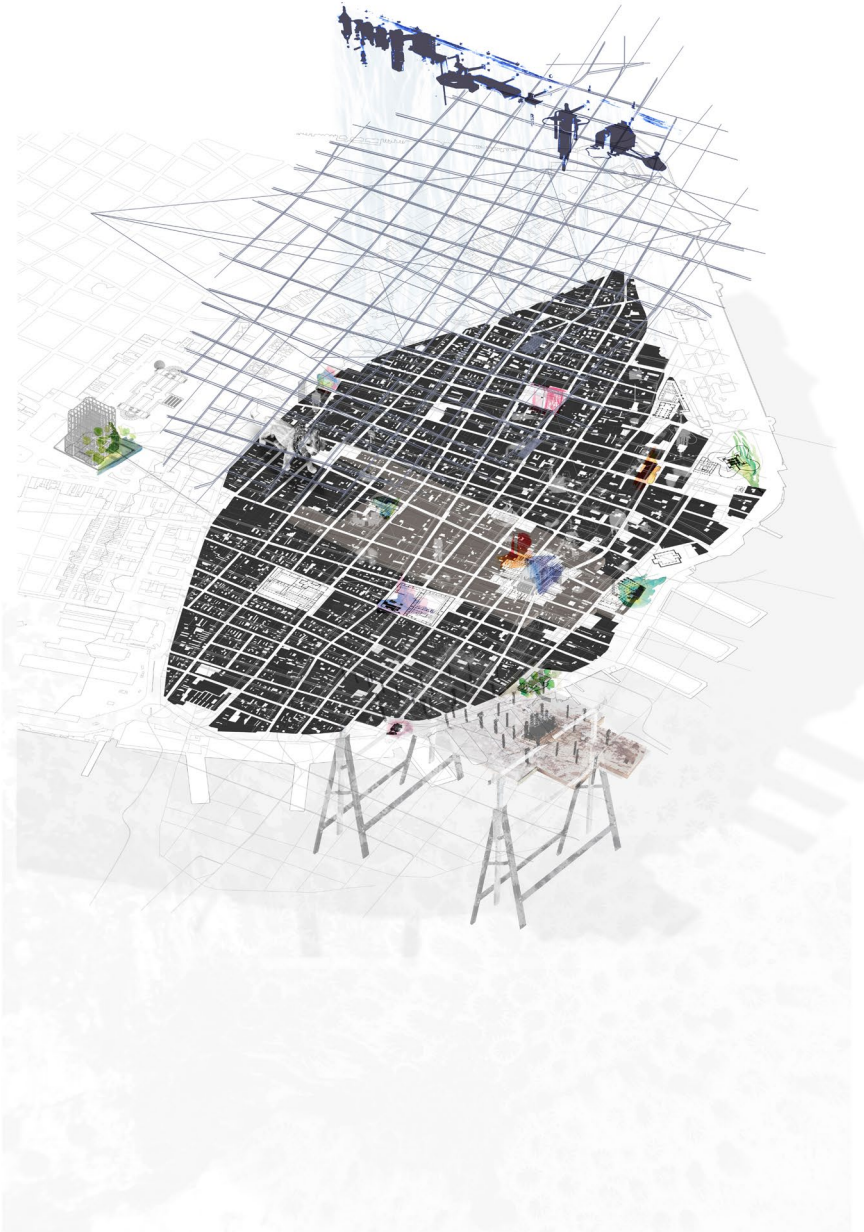
### ENGINEERING THE AQUEOUS LANDSCAPE

SOPHIE BURGESS

*The Lions of Havana* proposes an approach to water and its infrastructure within Old Havana, a city steeped in what Alejo Carpentier describes as the *marvellous real*. In response to Havana's water crisis a landscape emerges of the poetic - fountains, gardens, downpours, mist - and the pragmatic - elevated aqueducts, tanks, pumps, taps - with both elements being reliant on the other.

Within the Marvellous Real of Havana seemingly contradictory treatments of water exist: abundance and scarcity; flow and containment; freedom and capture. Water wears away the coral entrenched stone and takes the shape of vessels. Its saline presence is throughout the city; its downpours are intensified by the Gulf Stream. It is an essential but scarce commodity that flows freely from the mouths of lions.

*The Lions of Havana* is a response to the current water crisis and takes the form of a horizon of aqueducts and an array of water houses, that inhabit now washed away buildings in the city. The project reflects the unique treatment of water in Havana and addresses the urgency of the situation, bringing with it an exploration of the sheer delight of water and a tentative investigation into the sublime.





▲ RAIN HOUSE (WATER INSTITUTE)

▲ SALT HOUSE

▲ CLOUD HOUSE



▲ TOWERS OF THE ELEVATED AQUEDUCT







FEYND

## CINEMATIC TOPOGRAPHY

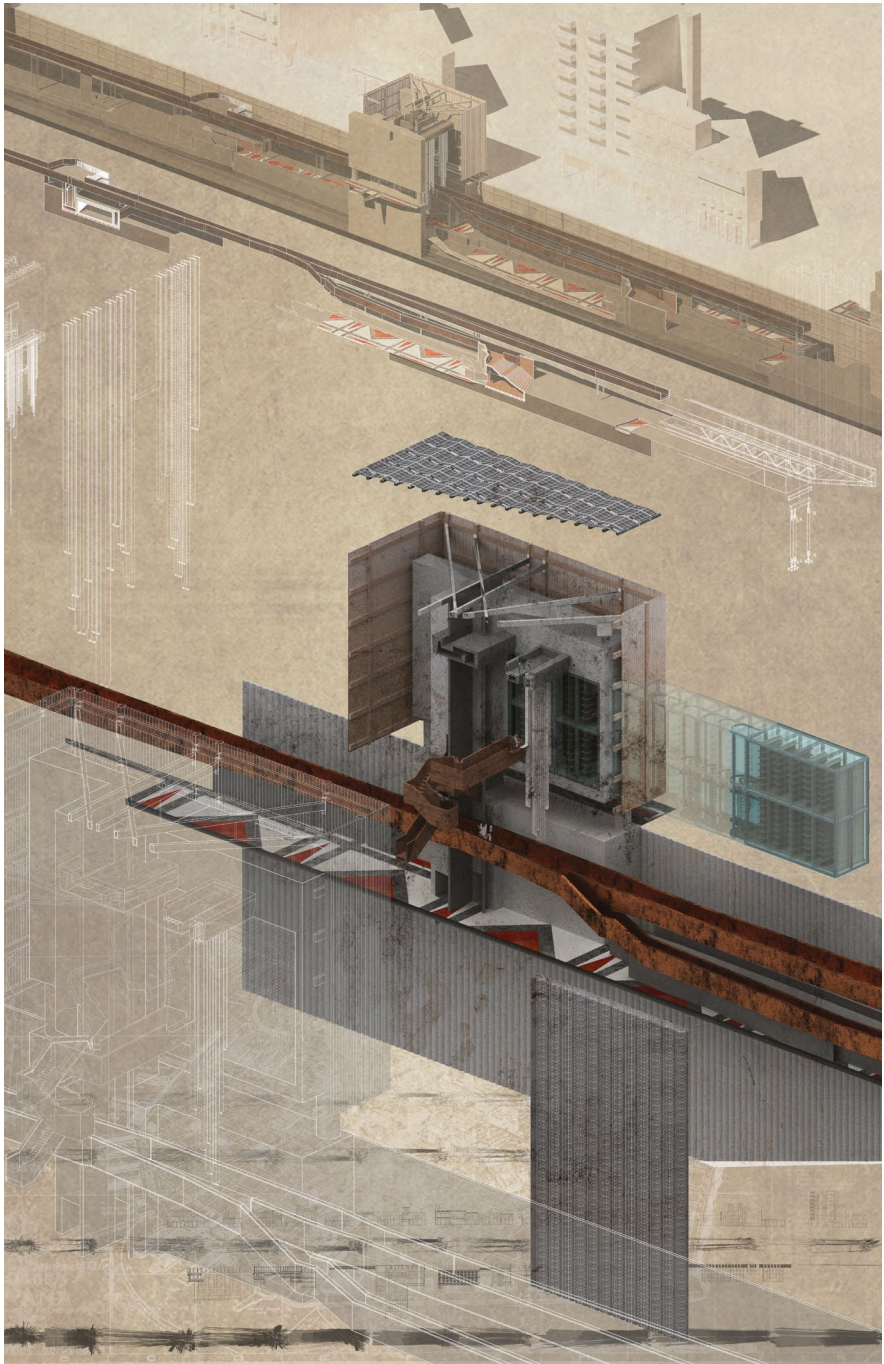
### A LINEAR FILM CITY FOR HAVANA

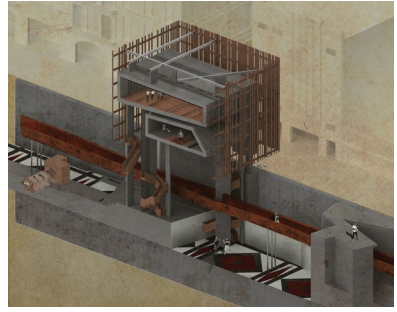
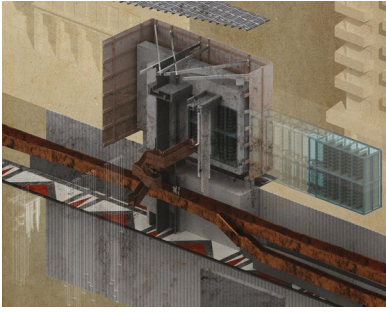
ALICE MEARS

A linear film studio is offered to Havana, housing resources and space for sound and image recording, production and post production, dissemination and connection. *Cinematic Topography* offers the space needed for the growth of filmmaking in Cuba, encouraged as part of the country's free arts education.

Paseo del Prado is a 19th century promenade on the edge of the old city wall, sitting between Habana Vieja and Centro Habana. Engaged in the tension along this boundary, this project is conceived as a way of viewing the city from the outside. The camera is pointed towards the old city, with the wall being rebuilt through the process of filmmaking. Fighting against the broad critique of the lack of legitimate depth within filmmaking, the landscape is one that socially integrates into the city. Evolving from the drawn ground of the Obra Pia, the architecture is intrinsically linked to the fabric of the city. Projected light from the lighthouse translates the drawn ground onto the Prado, as an interpretation of the city itself.

The topography acts as a surge tank to mediate the penetration of the water during hurricanes, with resources also available to the cities inhabitants to aid the restoration of Centro Habana in parallel to film production.





◀ THE NARRATIVE HUSK

▶ THE ARCHIVE HUSK

▼ MAPPING THE CHARACTERS OF THE CINEMATIC TOPOGRAPHY

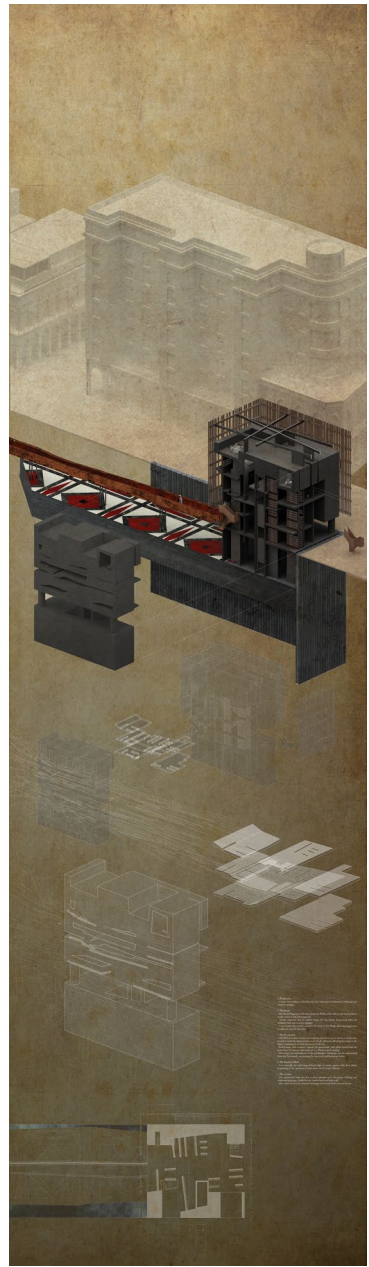
ALICE MEARS - CINEMATIC TOPOGRAPHY





◀ ORATORIO DE SAN FELIPE NERI

▶ THE SOUND HUSK



ALICE MEARS - CINEMATIC TOPOGRAPHY

## THE TALLAPIEDRA MERCADO- TEATRO

MALIN BERG

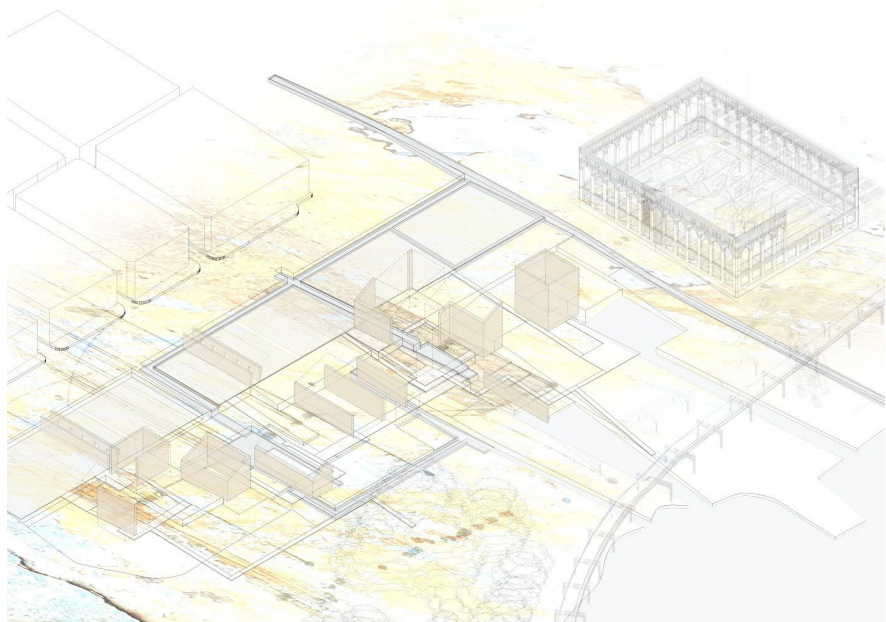
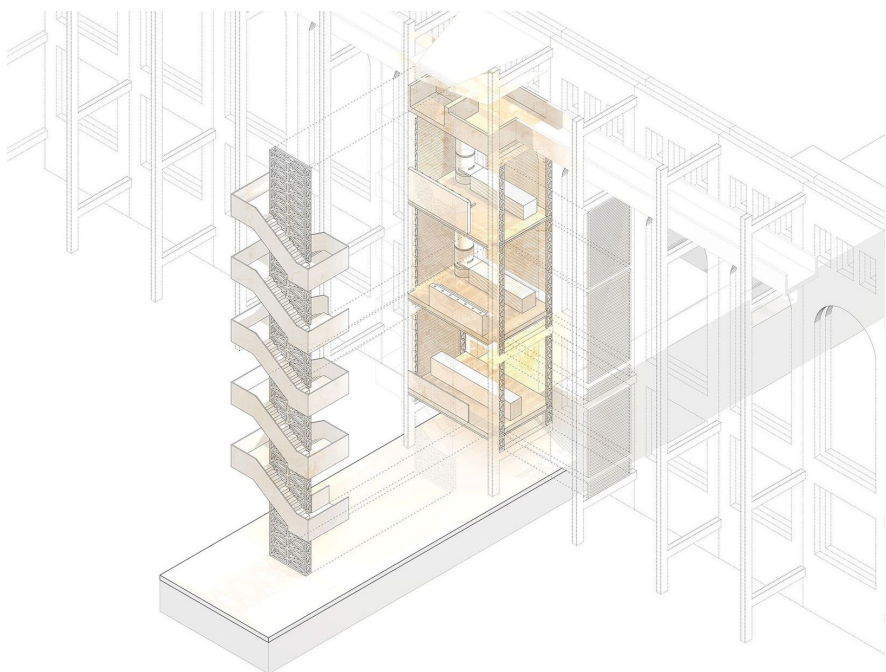
As Cuba opens to the world following a change in politics, the Old Town of Havana is undergoing an ambitious restoration project to save the crumbling city. Outside the boundaries of the now demolished fortification wall, however, the former industrial area of Tallapiedra is left neglected and diminishing.

*Tallapiedra Mercado-Teatro* proposes an approach to revitalising the area in a manner that encourages local participation and activity, while engaging the economic interest of the central government. The proposals suggest a rediscovery of this area that works with the particularities of the current conditions as well as drawing from its vibrant past as a trade hub for the city and, indeed, the island nation.

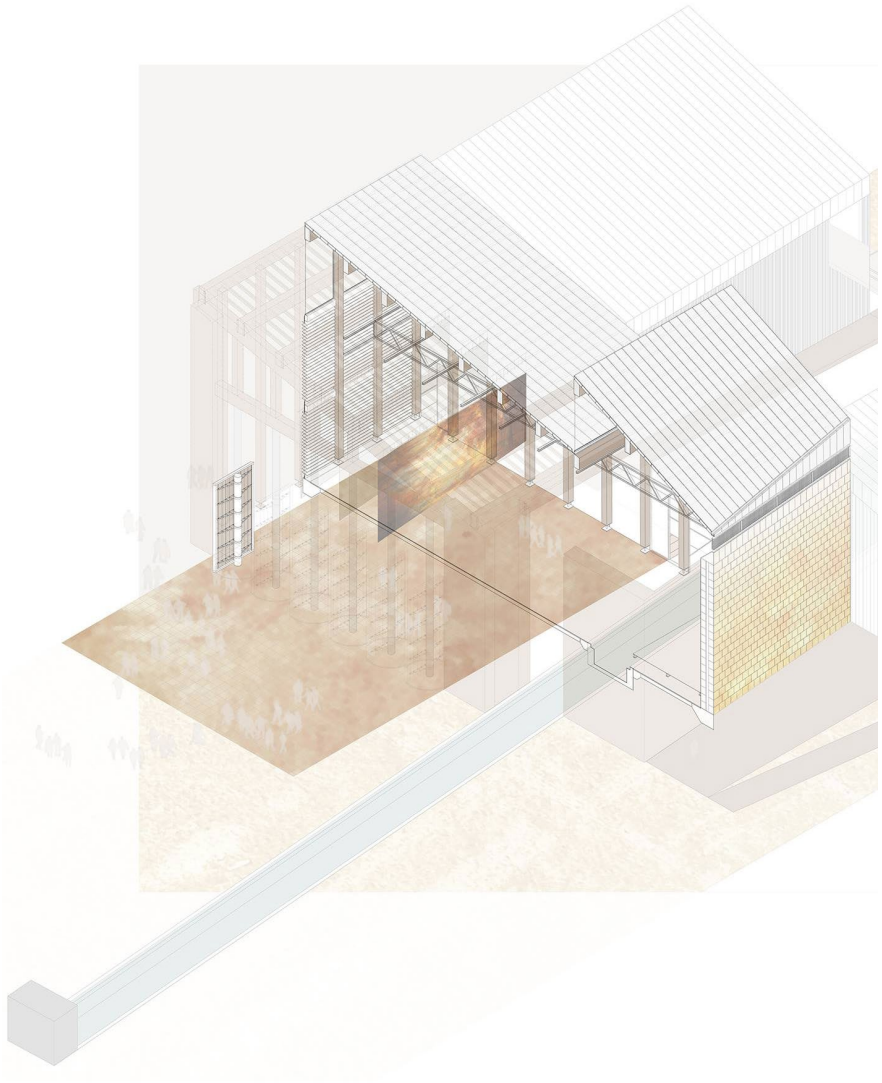
The 'Special Period' following the Soviet Union collapse left Cuba economically isolated in the 1990's, creating a culture of extreme individual ingenuity and, out of necessity, an ability to find value in any space or matter. *Tallapiedra Mercado-Teatro* seeks to support and legitimise this through the formation of designated architectural space.

A new productive landscape spans, cuts through, and bridges the desolate stretch of land between the harbour's edge and the neighbourhood inland, giving Tallapiedra a purpose that is at once old and new. It enhances the cultural landscape with goods, provisions and occupation.









- ◀ CONFÍTERIA; SUGAR CONFECTIONERY INHABITING THE FACTORIA
- ◀ DOUBLE HARBOURING; QUARRIED COASTAL EDGE
- ▲ BAGASSE MILL; SPACE FOR PRODUCTION OF THEATRE BACKDROPS

## CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS

EMMA BENNETT, EMMA HENDERSON,  
SHONA SIVAMOCHAN

As the restoration of Old Havana takes place, a significant number of Habaneros are being displaced, the restored architecture no longer houses the kinds of densities made possible since the Revolution by the ad hoc barbacoa interventions. Currently, most of these people are being relocated to socially and environmentally unsuitable housing in satellite towns. *Ciudad de Los Bajos* responds to this issue. By drawing out Havana's streets – its textures, characters and processes – we have sought to create an urban condition that keys into the cultural context, rituals and social interplay of people in Havana.

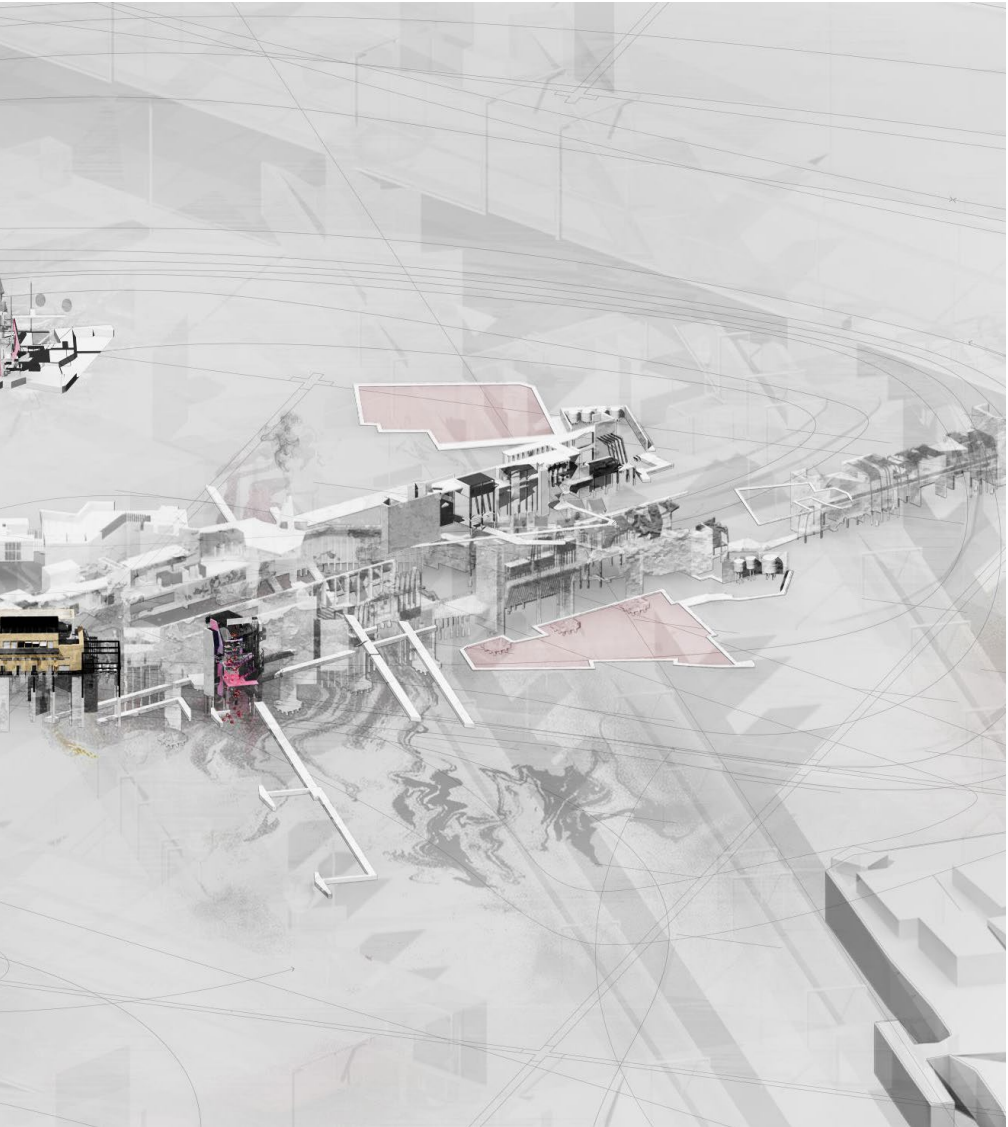
*Ciudad de Los Bajos* is a series of proposals that are situated within a productive landscape in the bay of Havana clustering around the landforms barely submerged beneath the waters – the bajos. It aims to rehouse some of the displaced population whilst retaining connections to the city. The work has emerged from a constantly present, critically charged, group exchange. Our individual narratives – of cultivation, fabrication and hydrology – sit in relationship to one another within the collective meta-scale. Tectonically and programmatically, it is an investigation into what persists and what dissipates in a landscape ravaged by extreme weather and political shifts. Imagining that the bay will continually be reshaped, our representational devices drift in and out of focus in an attempt to record a future of ever-changing clusters and associated narratives.



BENNETT, HENDERSON, SIVAMOHAN - CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS



▲ CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS WITHIN THE BAY





▲ CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS, URBAN PLAN

► JOURNEYS FROM HABANA VIEJA TO CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS

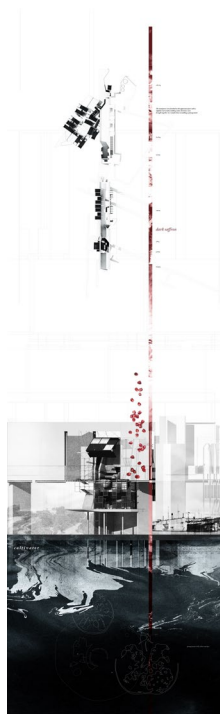


▲ GNOMON DEVICES FOR CAPTURING JOURNEYS FROM CITY TO SEA

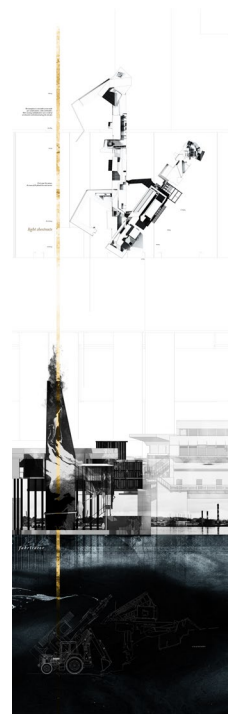
► CHARACTERS OF THE CIUDAD: HYDROLOGIST, CULTIVATOR, FABRICATOR



HYDROLOGIST



CULTIVATOR



FABRICATOR



▲ AN ORREREY DEVICE FOR SPECULATING ON POSSIBLE URBAN FUTURES





BENNETT, HENDERSON, SIVAMOHAN - CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS



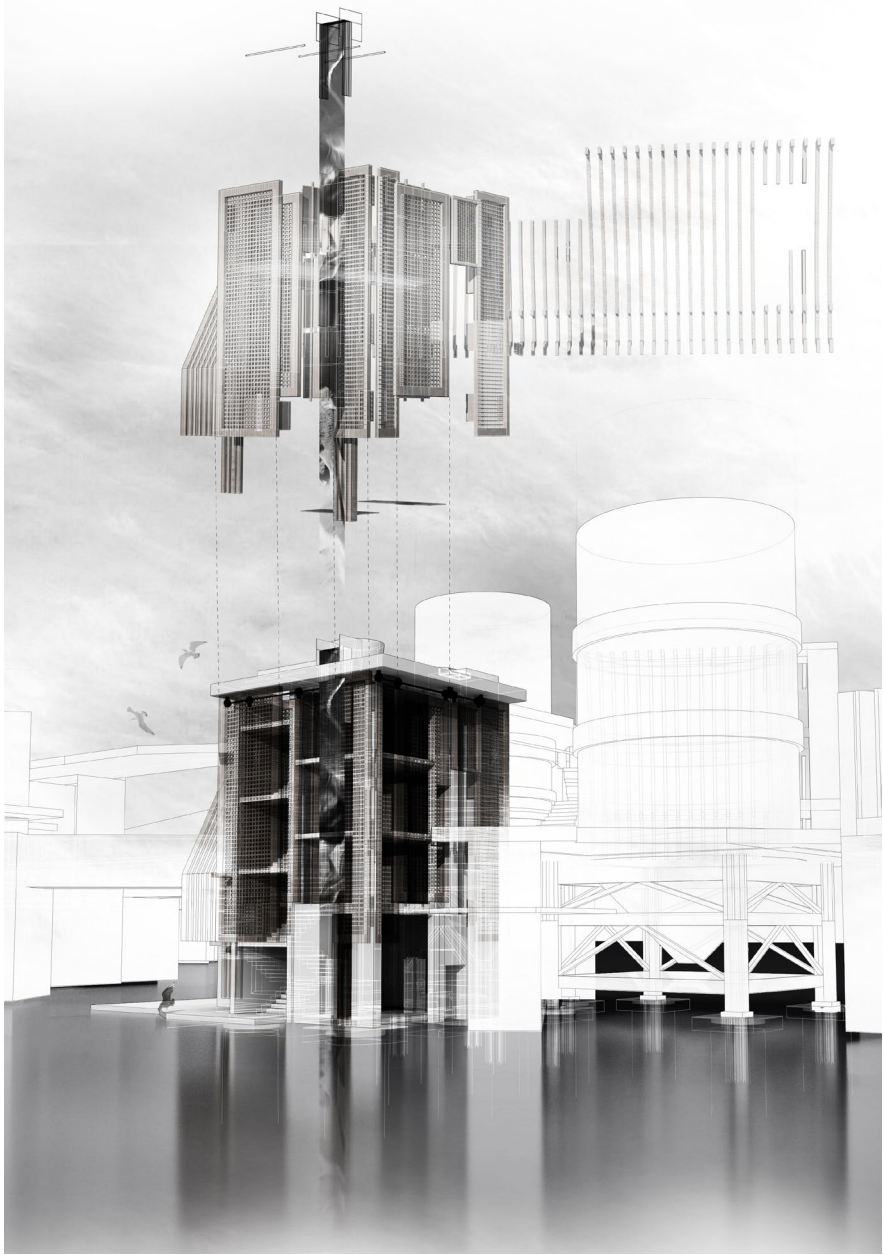
HYDROLOGIST



CULTIVATOR



FABRICATOR



BENNETT, HENDERSON, SIVAMOHAN - CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS

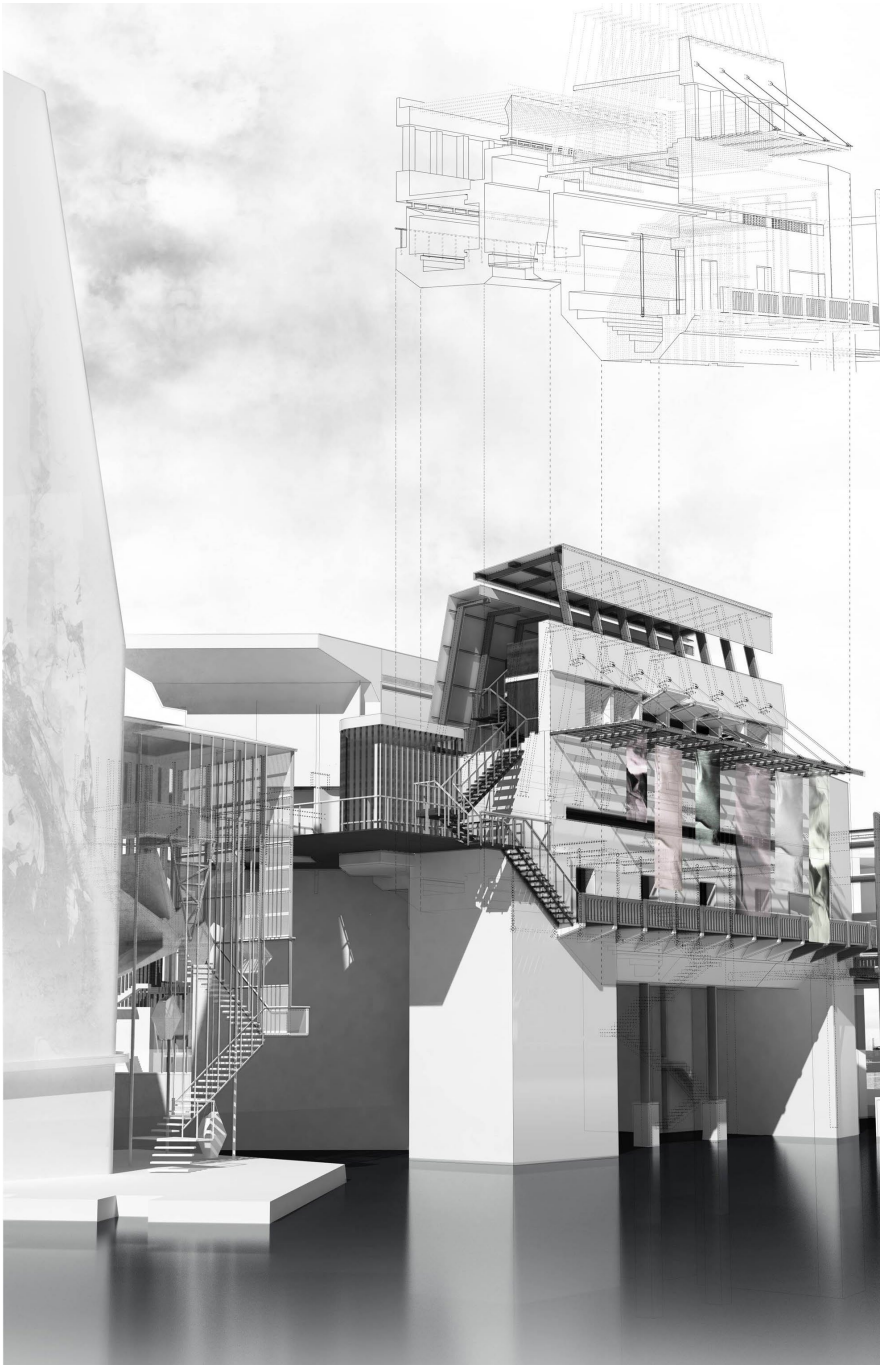
▲ HYDROLOGIST: WATER RESERVOIR AND FAMILY DWELLING

◀ JOURNEYS FROM HABANA VIEJA TO CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS



▲ CULTIVATOR: POMEGRANATE PROCESSING PLANT

► FABRICATOR: APPROACH TO THE BRICKWORKS AND WEAVING WORKSHOP



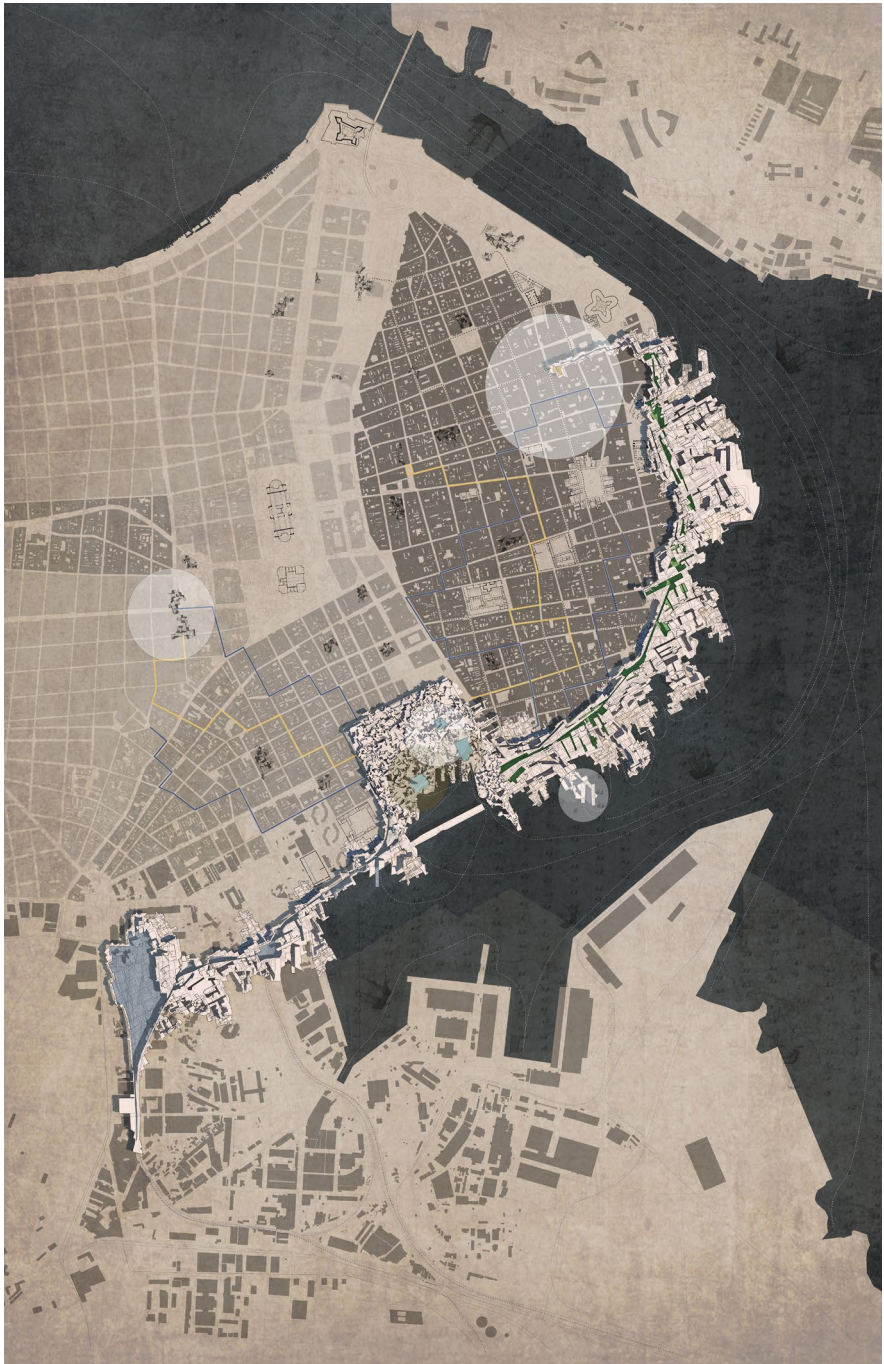
BENNETT, HENDERSON, SIVAMOHAN - CIUDAD DE LOS BAJOS

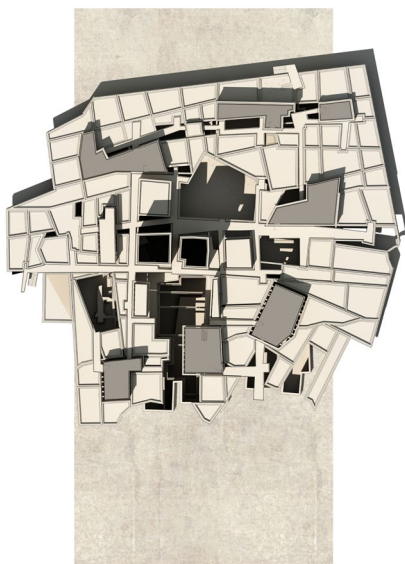
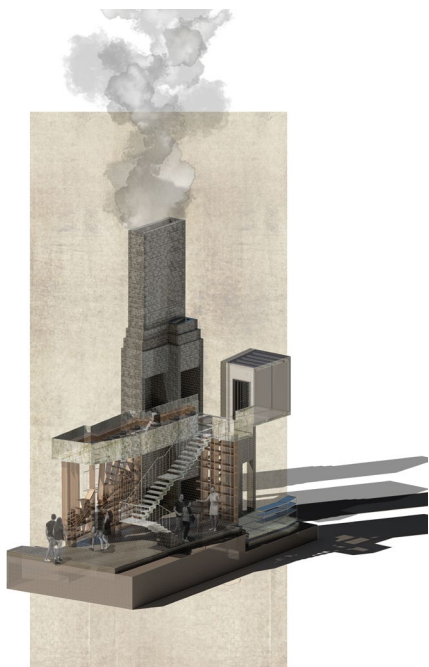
## THE CITY OF INDENTATION JUXTAPOSITION AND RECIPROCITY OF PRODUCTION AND CIVIC SPACE

AUGUSTĖ JUOZAPAVIČIŪTĖ

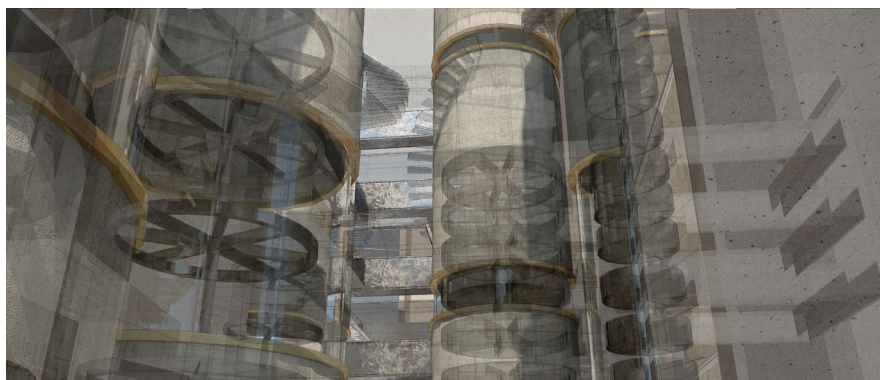
*The City of Indentation* is the interpretation of a palimpsest, the diverse and colourful historic grain of the city of Havana, and the juxtaposition of possible futures in the merging of the industrial and residential patterns of occupation found within. This proposal investigates a means of living and developing in a city at the point of change through a collection of fields, environments, furniture-like moments, and concomitant processes of recycling, manufacturing, production and distribution that people the *City of Indentation*. It feeds off materials and waste produced within the developed landscape to further build and construct the city in a manner that allows the continuous circle of exchange within a thick matrix of programmatic connections.

*The City of Indentation* is a set of architectures that operate at different scale interfaces between the space of production and landscape and the space of consumption in the city. It creates the in-between, where production runs alongside dwelling and functions overlap, architectural language and materiality, forging civic spaces in their own right. The combination of thick interfaces generates urban landscape relations that continuously run throughout the city. Manufacturing, creating and building itself - as well as being and being used - it is a functional furniture for the inhabitants as well as being a topographical invention, a landscape of utility and beauty.





- ▲ MICRO ISLAND THE BAKERY
- ▲ SUSPENDED STRUCTURES ROOF PLAN THE IRON FURNACE
- ▼ WATER RUN GRAIN MILLING TOWERS THE FLOUR MILL
- ▶ OPENING THE VESSEL THE IRON FURNACE









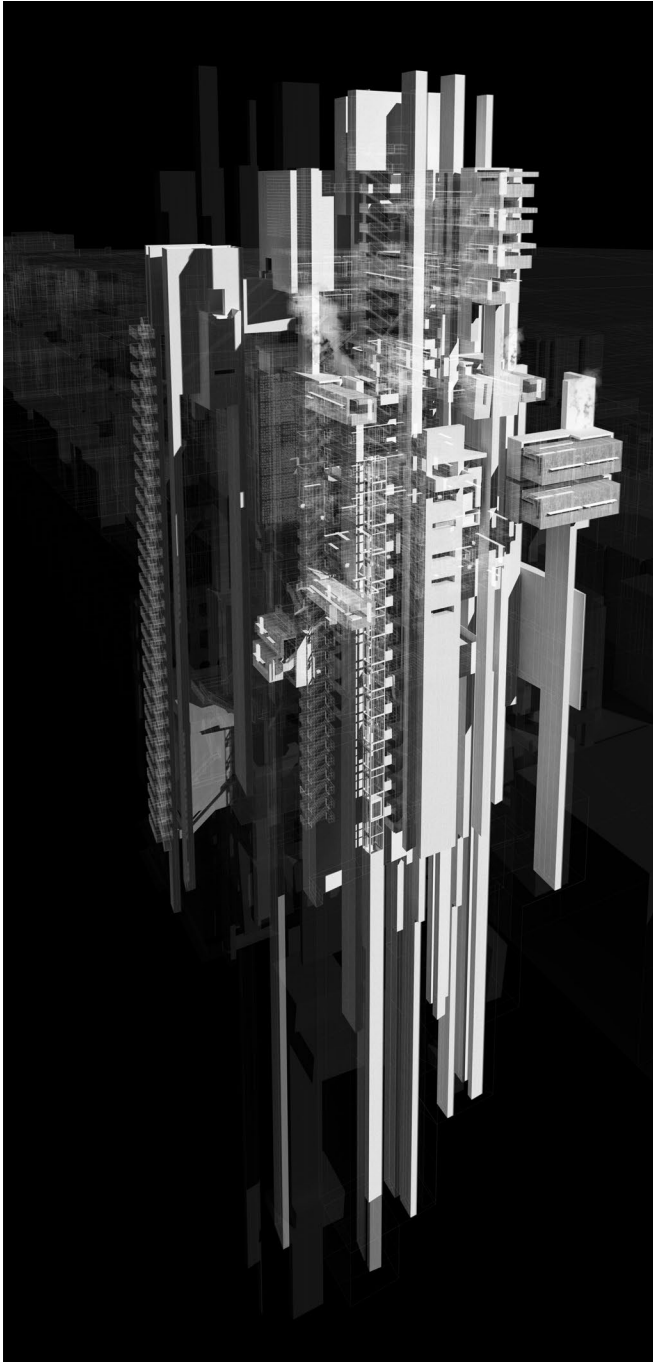


## THE TOWER OF DECANTED CITIZENS AND THE OFFICE OF THE CITY HISTORIAN

ALEX FAULKNER

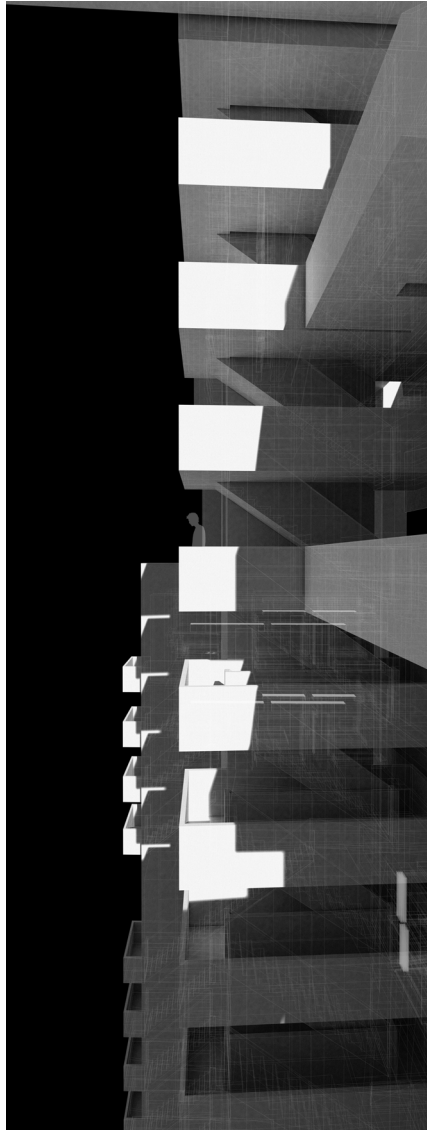
*The Tower* acts as a vessel, born out of the decay of old Havana, that fills the voids left over by deterioration. *The Tower* is calibrated against the city from the site where the first Spanish colonists landed to the line of the old city wall. It stands on the border between the old and the new observing the old city. Due to building decay, lack of renovation and a strategic emphasis on investment in the Old City harbour edge as a draw for tourism, the population of Old Havana is being displaced outwith City.

*The Tower* is designed both to house this population in situ, in Havana, and host the Office of the City Historian, the agency that governs city development and planning and, as an extension, the two city models - the Maqueta De La Havana and the smaller model of Old Havana. The models act as tools of reflection and inspiration whereas the Office of the City Historian will be an instrument of renovation standing amongst the people it serves, enforcing its position as the branch of government dedicated to the restoration of La Habana Vieja.



ALEX FAULKNER - THE TOWER OF DECANTED CITIZENS





ALEX FAULKNER - THE TOWER OF DECANTED CITIZENS

▲ THE VIEWER

▶ THE CLIMBER

◀ THE CITY WITHIN A CITY

## CASA DEL CARNAVAL

YUXUAN TU

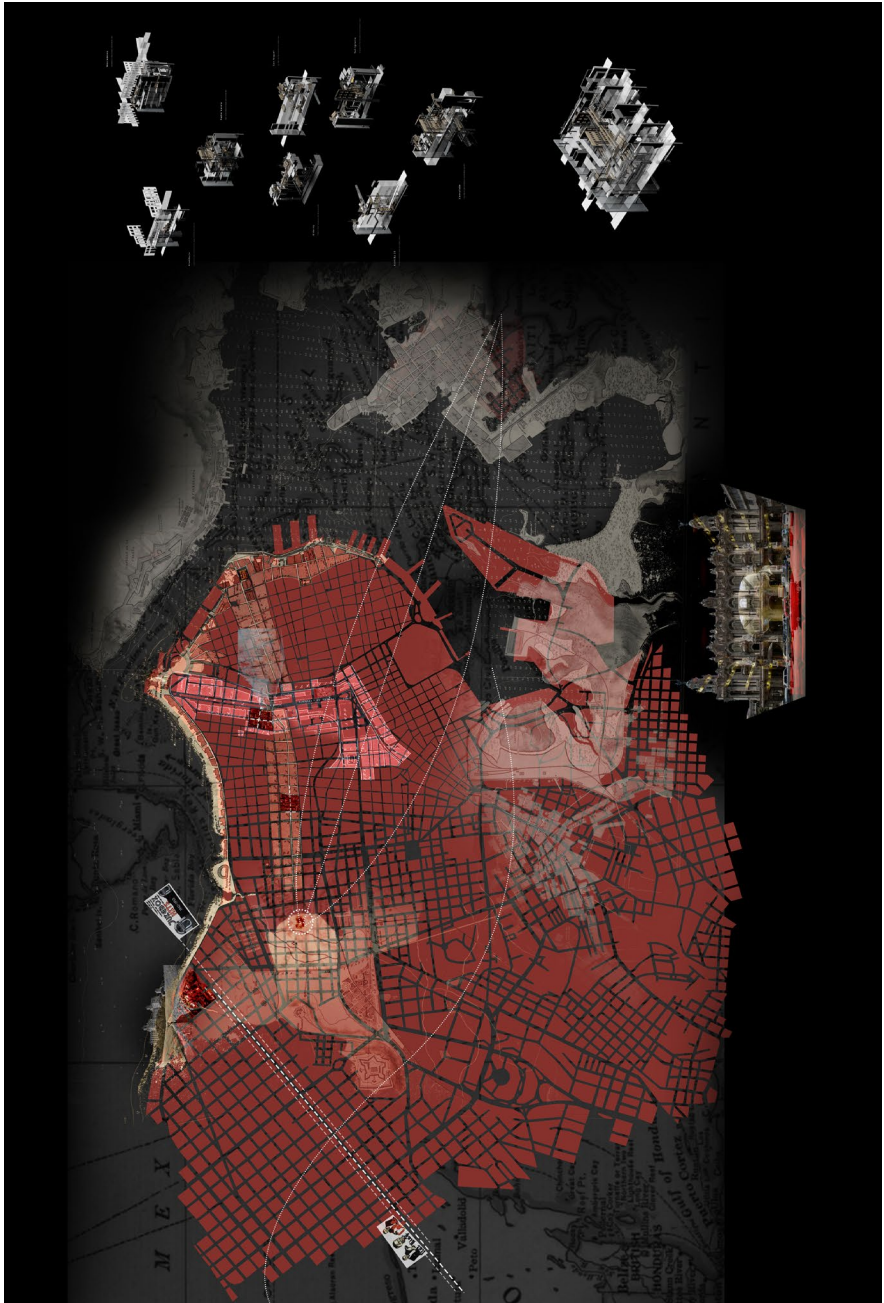
The *Casa del Carnaval* proposes a family of architectures which orchestrate and build upon the annual phenomena of the Havana Carnival. The history of the Carnival reflects various layers of cultural backgrounds associated with the city. The architecture, thus informed, manifests itself at three stages.

The first operates beneath the historical square, Plaza Vieja, and facilitates the production of festivity – housing and maintenance of the floats, rehearsal and planning of events, manufacture and processing of performance-related products.

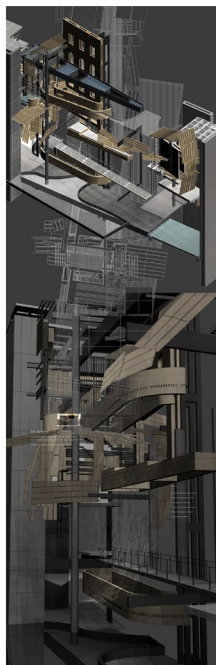
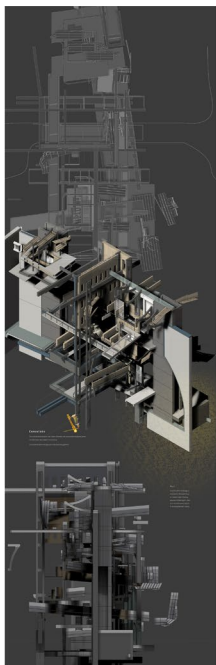
The second is a pop-up structure assembled in the back garden of the great Hotel Nacional de Cuba for the duration of the Carnival, where the eight floats gather at the end of the main day parade and present a concluding collaborative performance.

The third stage is a series of travelling stations, of which each float pauses at one for a short period during the parade and offers back to the city physical traces of the festival: shells, sweets, incense, pigment, music, light, fireworks, dance. Throughout all stages, a fluid choreography of skin-like enclosures permeates the cavernous depth of densely inhabited sites.









▲ THE EIGHT CARNIVAL FLOAT WORKSHOPS IN PLAZA VIEJA

◀ CHOREOGRAPHING THE PARADE FROM PLAZA VIEJA TO HOTEL NACIONAL

## CORAL ORILLA

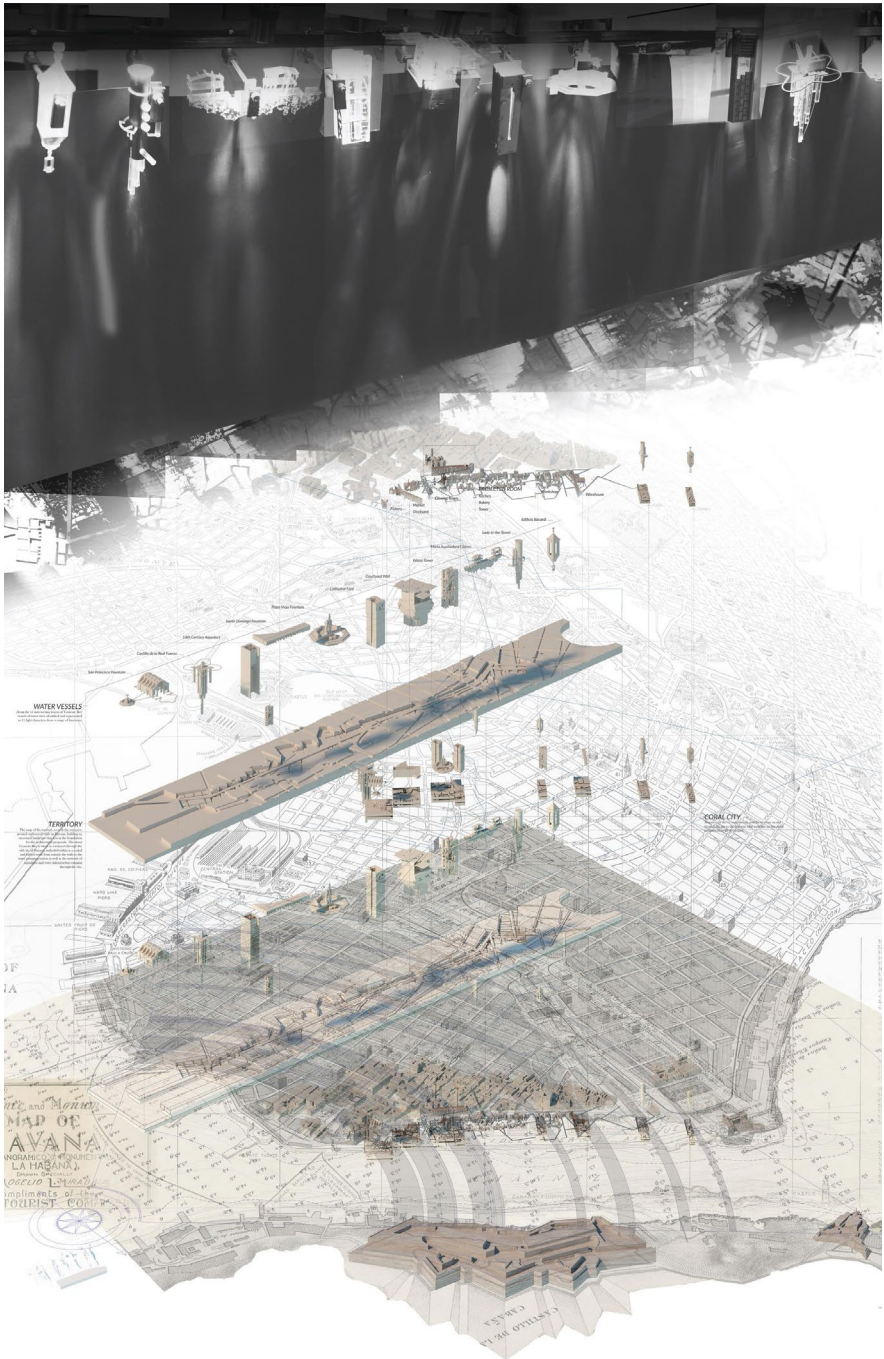
### CULTIVATED EDGE

JAMES BARRACLOUGH

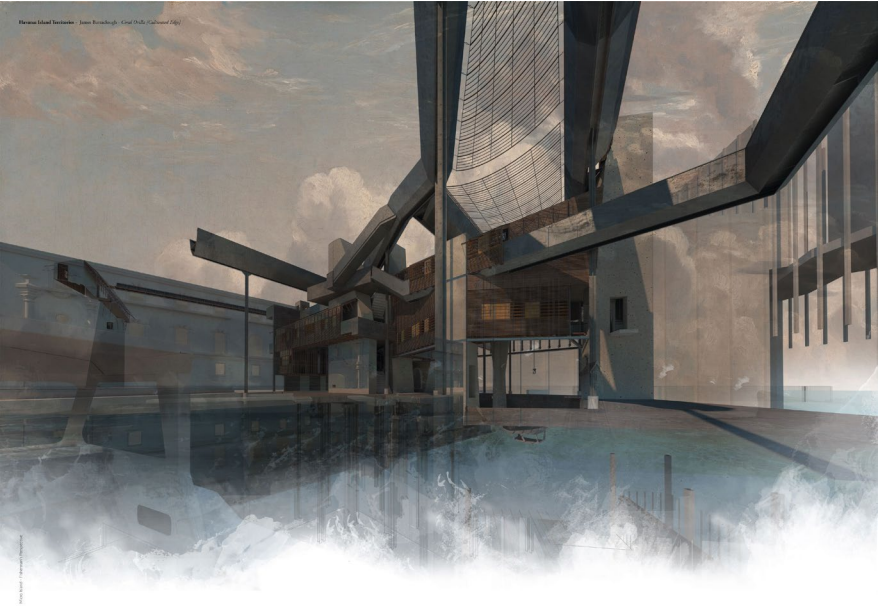
*Coral Orilla*, situated along the harbour mouth edge of Havana, is a sequence of programmatic interventions settled within a cultivated landscape, a constructed shore. The architecture is conceived through, and then experienced by, a series of journeys. Firstly, parallel journeys of investigation guide and inform the architecture and secondly, this architecture is then described through three journeys taken by occupants of the *Coral Orilla*; Farmer, Fisherman and Citizen.

Responding in scale to La Cabana Fortification, reflected across the bay, *Coral Orilla* is a piece of resilient infrastructure built to sustain Old Havana during its uncertain transition from isolation to accessibility and the pressures of re-construction, tourism and rationing.

The isolation and resulting food shortages, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, forced a revolutionary intensive urban agriculture programme that in turn established the Habanero culture of shared sufficiency. This spirit informed the reciprocal functions of the cultivated edge. The coral limestone of the classical Spanish Baroque city is echoed through the construction of coral towers, which preserve the porous quality of the material by hollowing out programmes and vertical circulation within their structures whilst also providing support for a sequence of suspended timber spaces. A network of raised walkways intersects these coral towers, providing vertical access and connections.

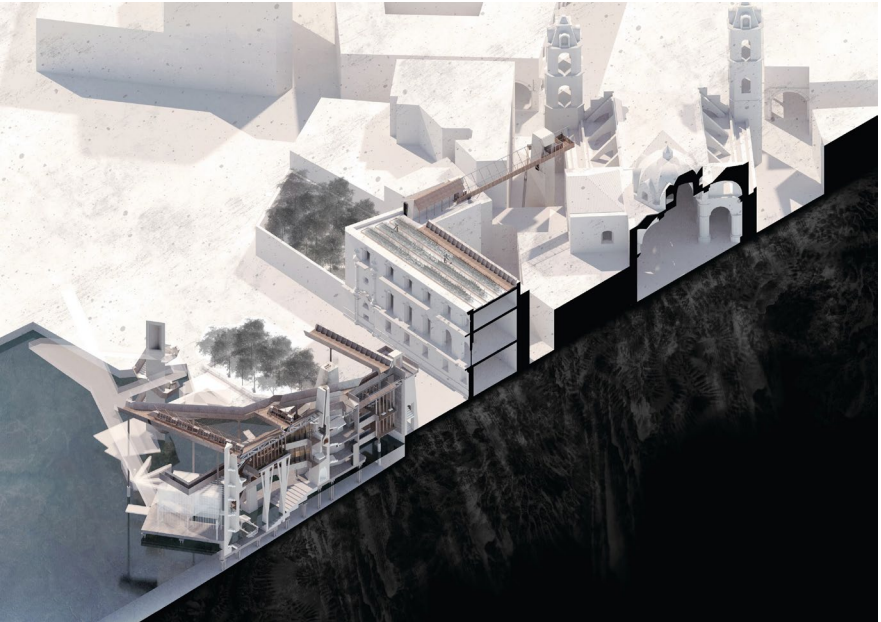


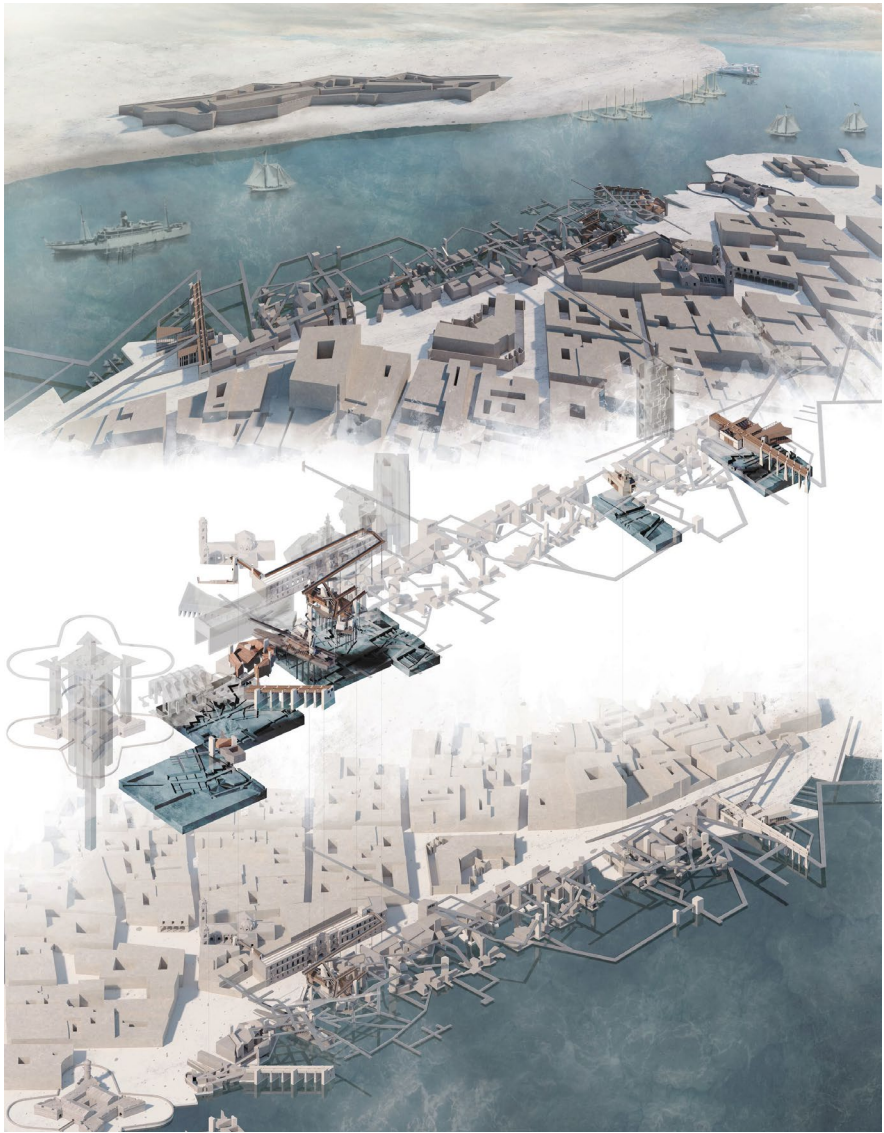
Human Ideal Institute - James Barraclough - Coral Orilla (2017)



© James Barraclough 2017

JAMES BARRACLOUGH - CORAL ORILLA





▲ THE KITCHEN

◀ THE FISHERMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

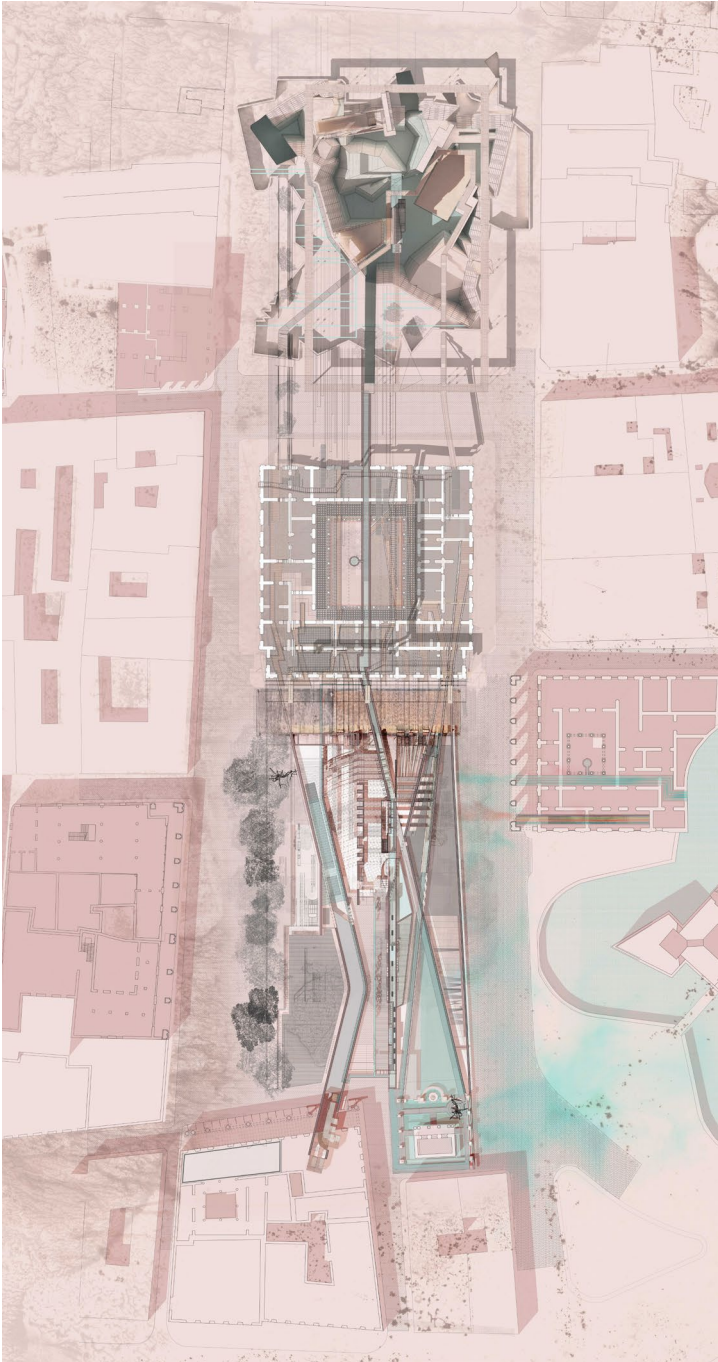
◀ THE CULTIVATED EDGE AND MICRO ISLANDS

## THE HAVANA GAME

PALLAVI GUPTA, ANNI MÜÜRIPÉAL

*The Havana Game* is a socio-political and economic proposition for the City of Havana. It addresses the city's need to reconstruct itself as it emerges from 50 years of economic isolation and the era of Spanish colonialism preceding it. Game-play, as a methodology underpinning the work, acts as a counter-narrative to the traps of the present-day Kafkaesque bureaucracy and authoritarian systems; its inherent unpredictability a critique on our inability as citizens to engage meaningfully in the way the city is shaped. It devises strategies for the heart of Old Havana – The Captain General's Palace – the former palace of the Spanish Generals and the present seat of the 'Office of the City Historian', the organization where urban designers are trained and rules governing the preservation and future of the city are written. To curate the future remaking of the city, *The Office of the 'Marvelous' City Historian* exposes the physical and political processes to public scrutiny through two new *fields* unfolding on either side of the Captain General's Palace. These *fields* are created through the physical, conceptual, and programmatic dismantling of the palace, the symbol of byzantine power, and an economic repackaging of it in the city. *The Field of Transmutation* draws on the processes of making the artefacts in order to re-make the city and the *Field of Subversion* contains archives and game stages while engaging with the curation of artefacts. Together the two fields set the scene for people to meaningfully engage in the fabrication and re-imagination of the city.







▲ CUTTING GAME: DISMANTLING THE GENERAL'S PALACE



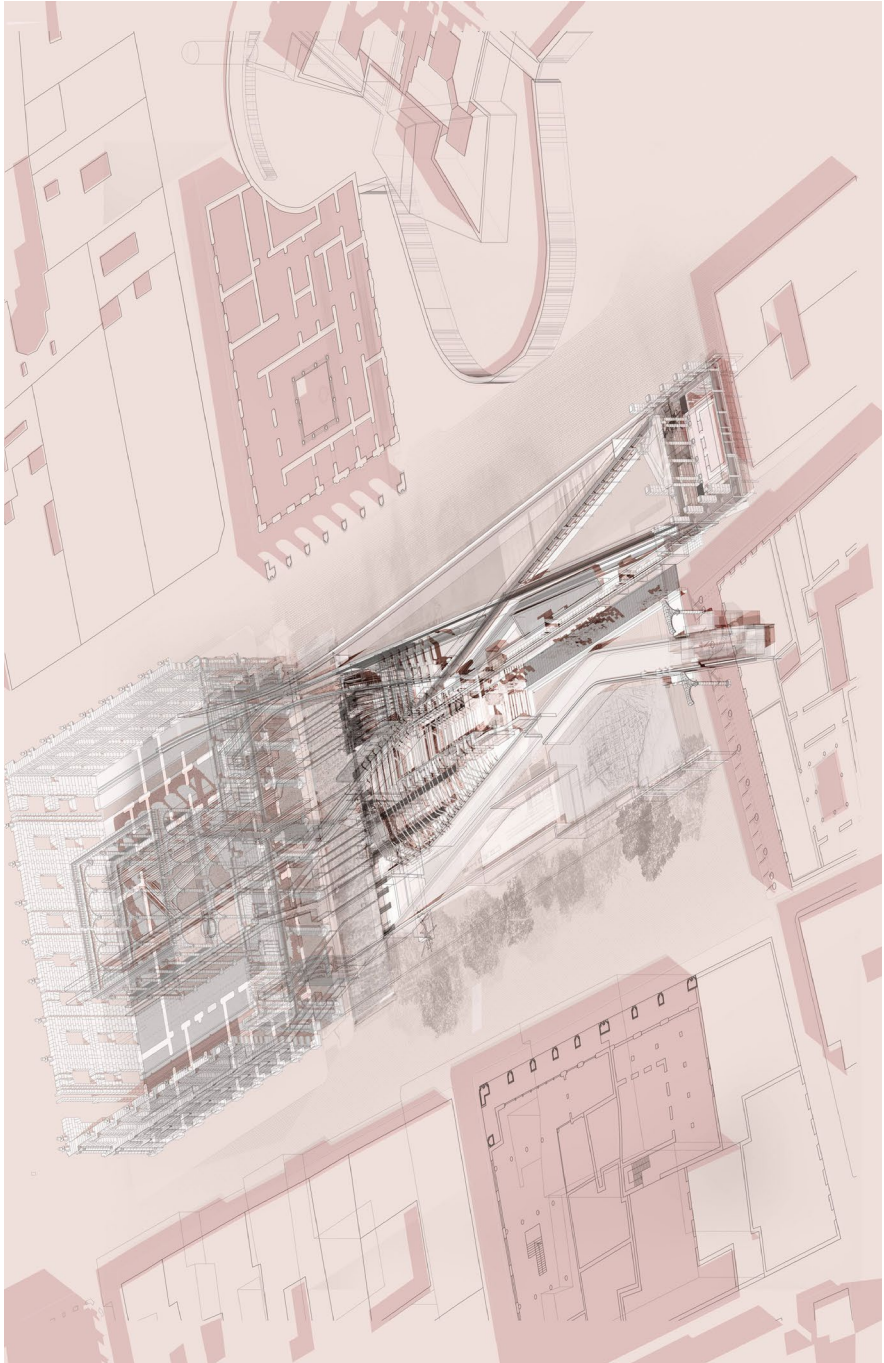
GUPTA, MŪRIPEAL - THE HAVANA GAME

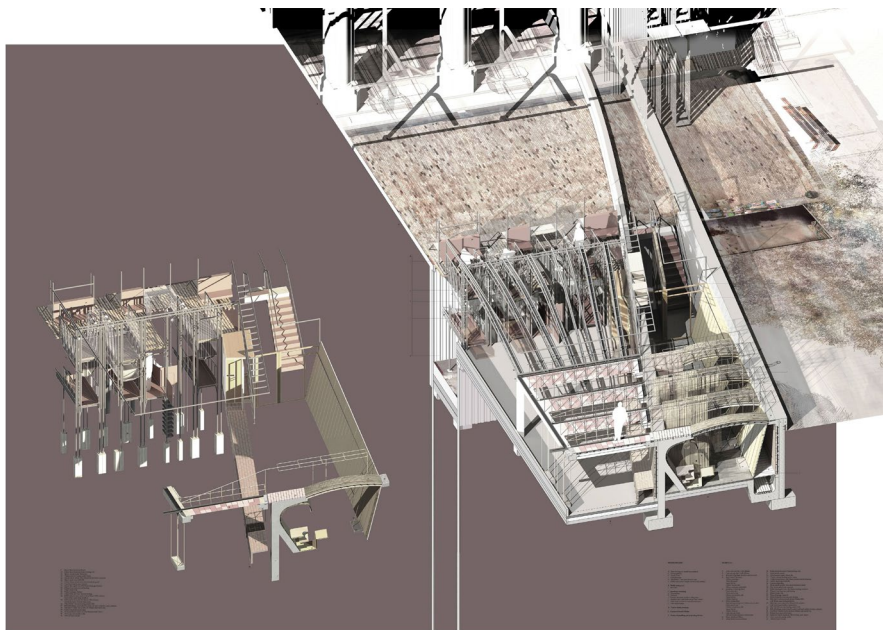
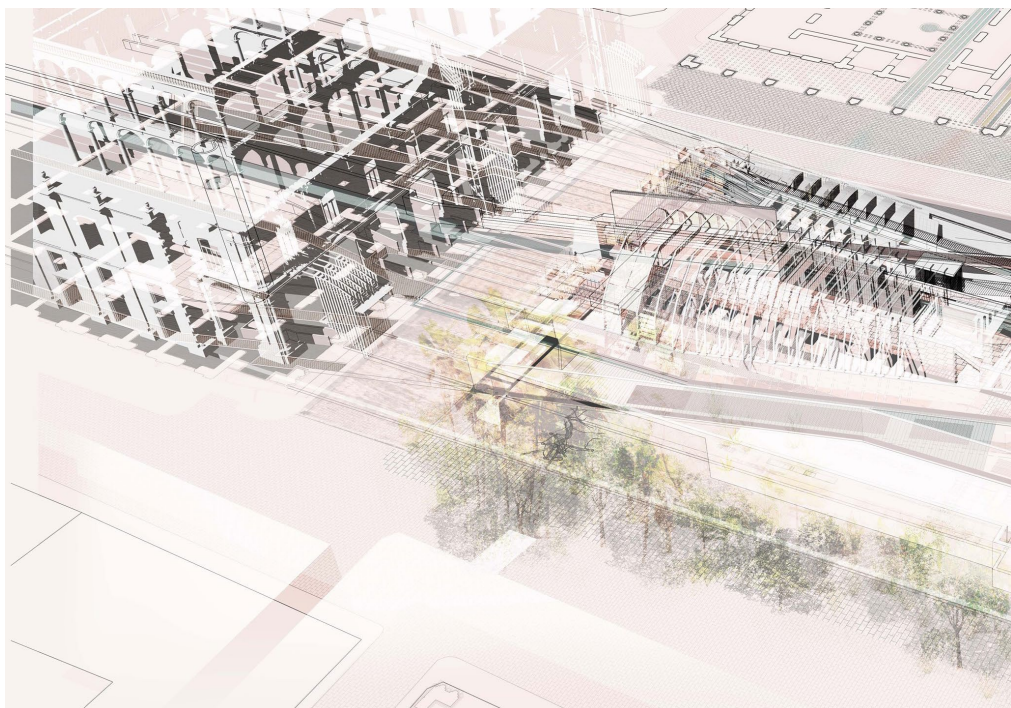
# 17.1

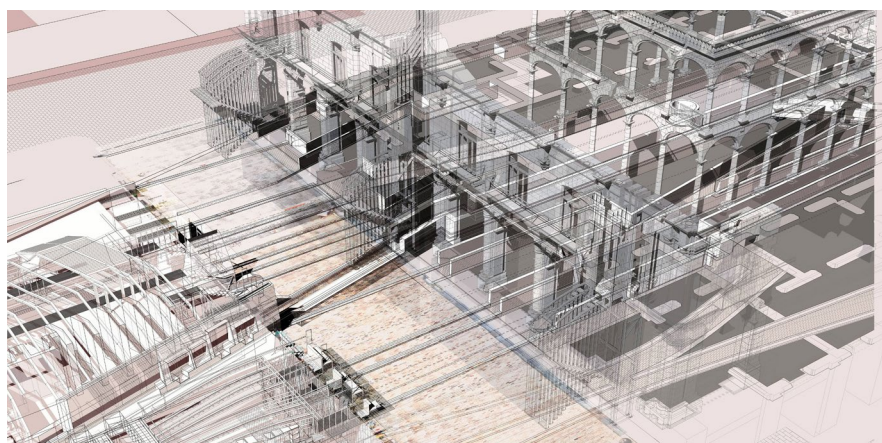
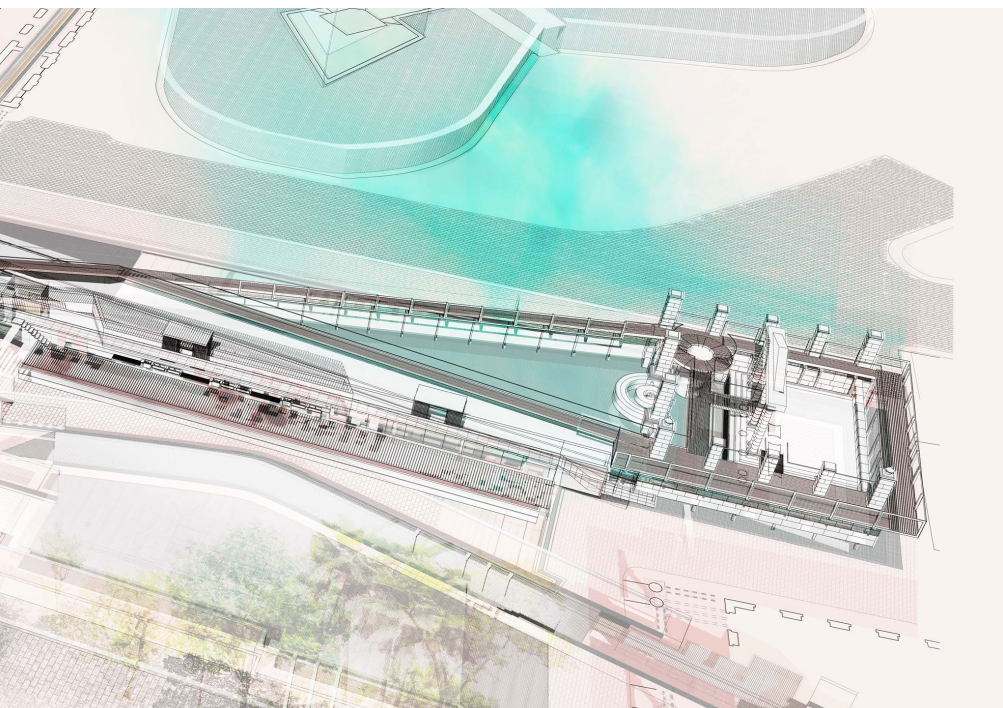
## THE FIELD OF TRANSMUTATION

PALLAVI GUPTA

*The Field of Transmutation* is an active landscape of craft-based production, grown out of an act of unpacking of the relics of the colonial palace into the city; what was once out of reach within its confines is now unfolding in the realm of the everyday life of the city as a set of production spines that operate at a crafts-scale but have an urban influence by engaging with the material economies of a city where one goes to a jeweller to have a door handle made to maintain the city fabric. It is the act of melting down the crown in an empty thrown room in order to make a door latch that begins to describe the nature of this landscape where materials are channelled and changed in their scale and grade across processes. It is a landscape of exposure through a series of overviews that allow the witnessing of production sequences through tempered skins of enclosure. It is a landscape of displacement where the earth and rubble from the landscape is experienced through channels that cut through the dismantled husk of the palace.







◀ JEWELLERY AND METAL CASTING WORKSHOP

▲ SOAKING THE CITY

▲ UNFOLDING THE BIRDCAGE, UNPACKING THE GENERAL'S PALACE

## 17.2

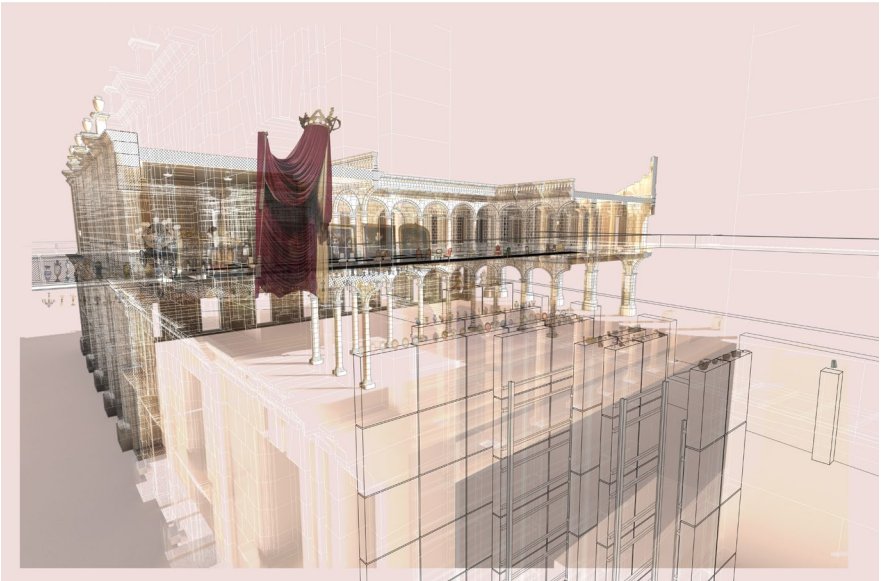
# THE FIELD OF SUBVERSION

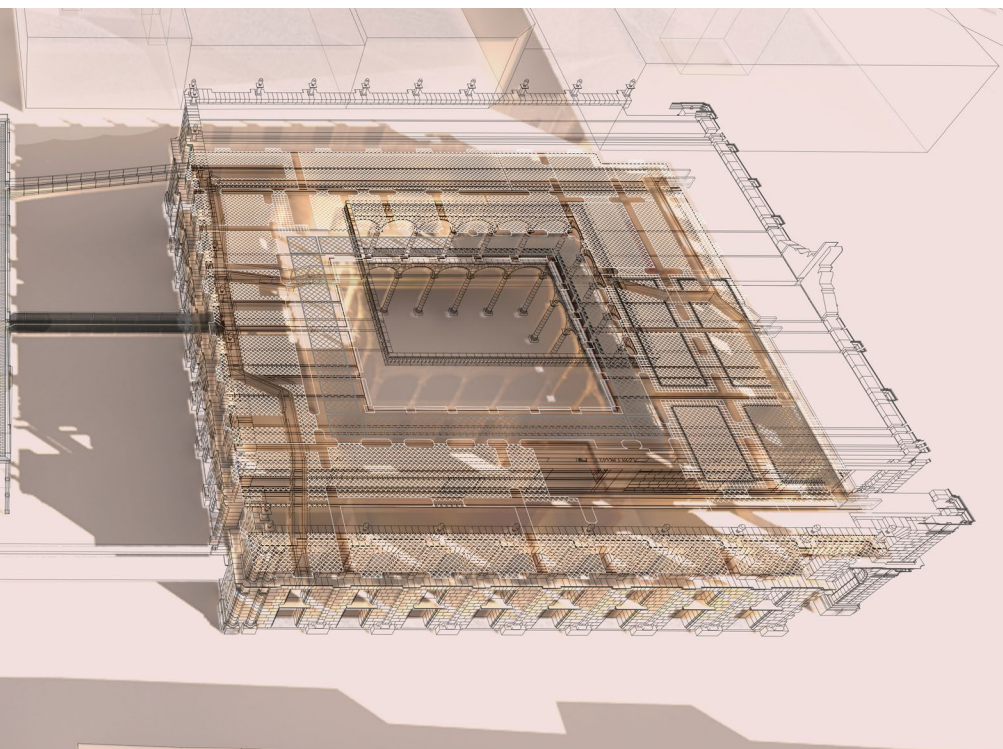
ANNI MÜÜRIPÉAL

*The Field of Subversion* is a collection of archives, stages and gardens. Within this field, cultural and political modes of operation are reinvented and exposed. Artefacts and trinkets, previously safeguarded in the Captain General's Palace and domestically organized, become exposed through cuts in the back facade of the building and reorganized according to weight. The paper and cloth artefacts become archived in stalagmites penetrating the coral stone strata and exposing the stable datum of limestone through an excavation. Within this field of uncertain grounds, three stages are held by the stalagmites. The stages act as a place for political discussion, exhibiting artefacts and dance and music performances. In parallel to man-made environments, water is allowed to leak into the base of the excavation and is pumped to moisten parts of the excavation allowing nature to reclaim parts of the exposed earth. *The Field of Subversion* is framed and extended by series of elevated timber brick and concrete walkways. This allows an elevated view on the unglorified scarred landscape below. *The Field of Subversion* frames the discussion of the future of Havana on a stage surrounded by the *marvelous* history and culture of Cuba.









▲ UNFOLDING THE BIRDCAGE

◀ UNVEILING THE BESPOKE

▼ THE UNCERTAIN GROUND OF THE HAVANA GAME







## IMAGE CREDITS

All images taken in Havana, Cuba, November 2016. Authors as follows:

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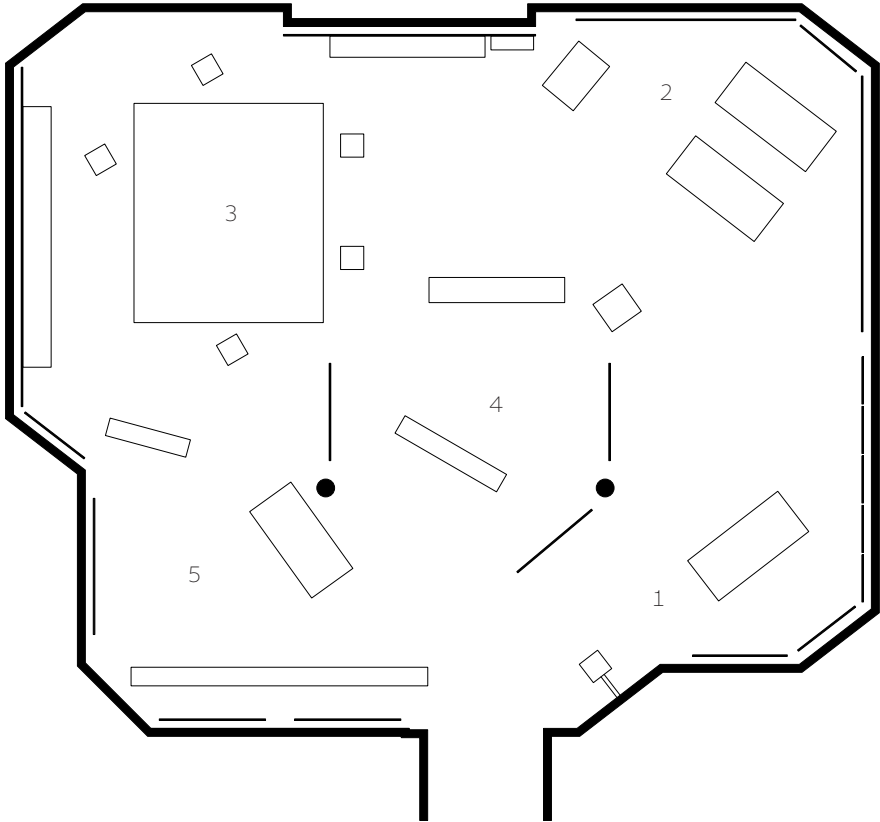
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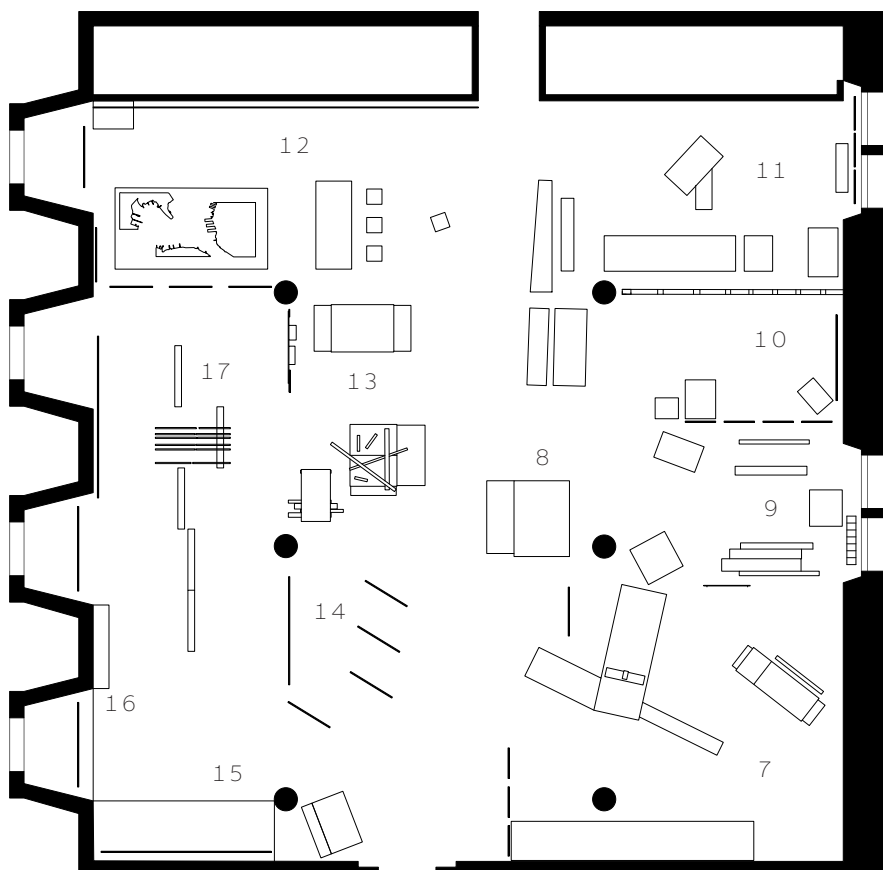
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- 2 LA CASA DE LAS PERSONAS
- 3 SCORING THE MALECON
- 4 CORAL CITY
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# ESALA

Edinburgh School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture



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