

ESALA 2018

Master of Architecture

**PARA-SITUATION**

**[CALCUTTA/KOLKATA]**

Dorian Wiszniewski

CALCUTTA

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**PARA-Situation [Calcutta/Kolkata].**

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Transforming Tuscan Towns: Re-Imagining Communities for a Rural Ageing Population.

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[CALCUTTA/KOLKATA]**

Dorian Wiszniewski

CALCUTTA



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## PARA-Situation [Calcutta / Kolkata]

The economic-cultural condition within which contemporary Kolkatans are inscribed can be understood by a comparison between two maps: the well-known *Simm's Plan of Calcutta*, 1847-49 (revised to 1857) [Figure 1]; and the not so well-known Romanauth Dass' *Kalikātār Māncitra* of 1884 [Figure 2]. The first describes the city in Western terms using the conventions of early politically motivated geography and an economical-cultural index propelled by the interests of the East India Company and the British Raj. This map locates all buildings, particularly the buildings of state, and consequently orients its readers by the cardinal points, main buildings and street names. Its categories reinforce the systems of power and knowledge it inscribes. It was official and sat mainly in offices of state.<sup>i</sup> The second is a hand map, used by Indians, and describes another economical-cultural context of Calcutta. It describes, "all places . . . and several other places," places used in an everyday sense. Hence, the map is organised according to how places are known locally and where to find the useful and necessary things, from food to the departure points of ships.<sup>ii</sup> The second map owes much to the previous cartography of the first. Embedded in the second is the ordering and governance system of the first. However, Dass' map also makes quite a distinctive record of a cultural backdrop, pointing to a rich and intense tradition of international Indian mercantilism, which the formal buildings of governance of Simm's Plan tend to mask. However, interestingly, both maps still hold accurate registers and measures useful for studying the contemporary economical-cultural context of Kolkata.

i Chatterjee, Partha, *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal* (Minneapolis, London : University of Minnesota Press, 1995)

ii Dasgupta, Keya, A City Away From Home: The Mapping of Calcutta, in *Texts of Power, Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal*, ed. Partha Chatterjee (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995) pp.145-166.

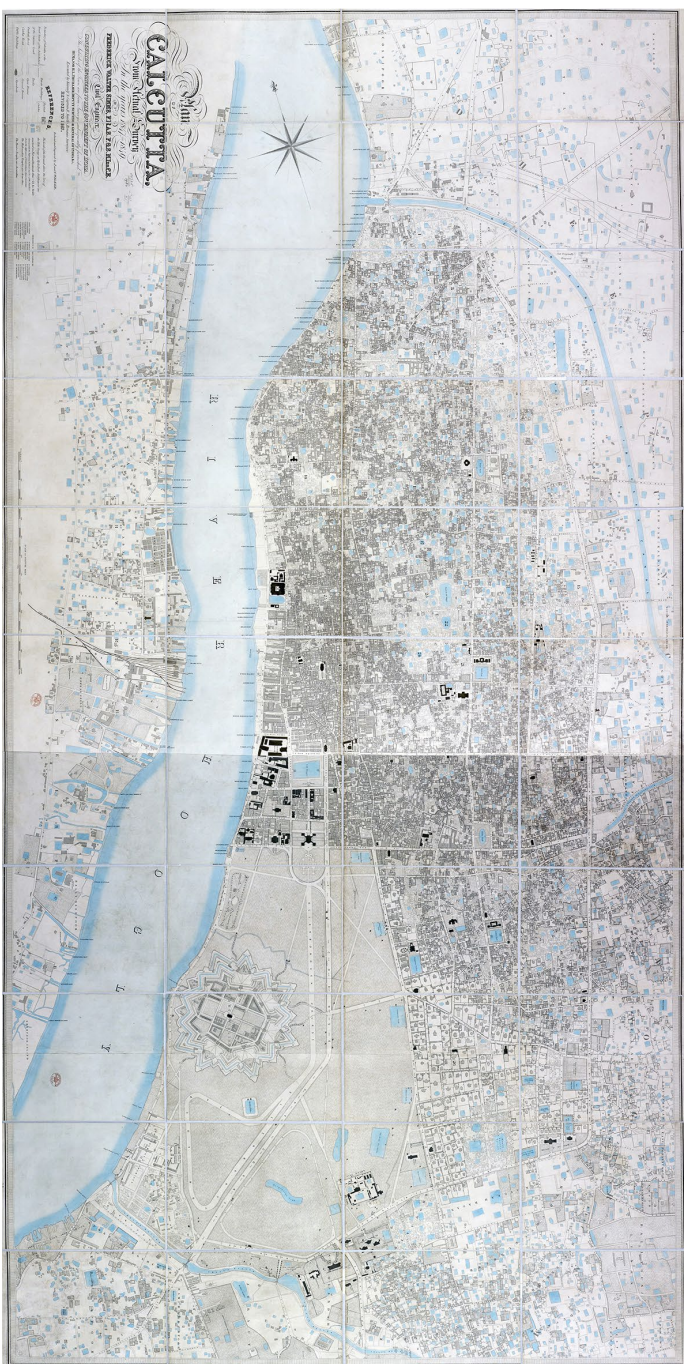


FIGURE 1 - SIMM'S PLAN OF CALCUTTA, 1847-49 (REVISED TO 1857)

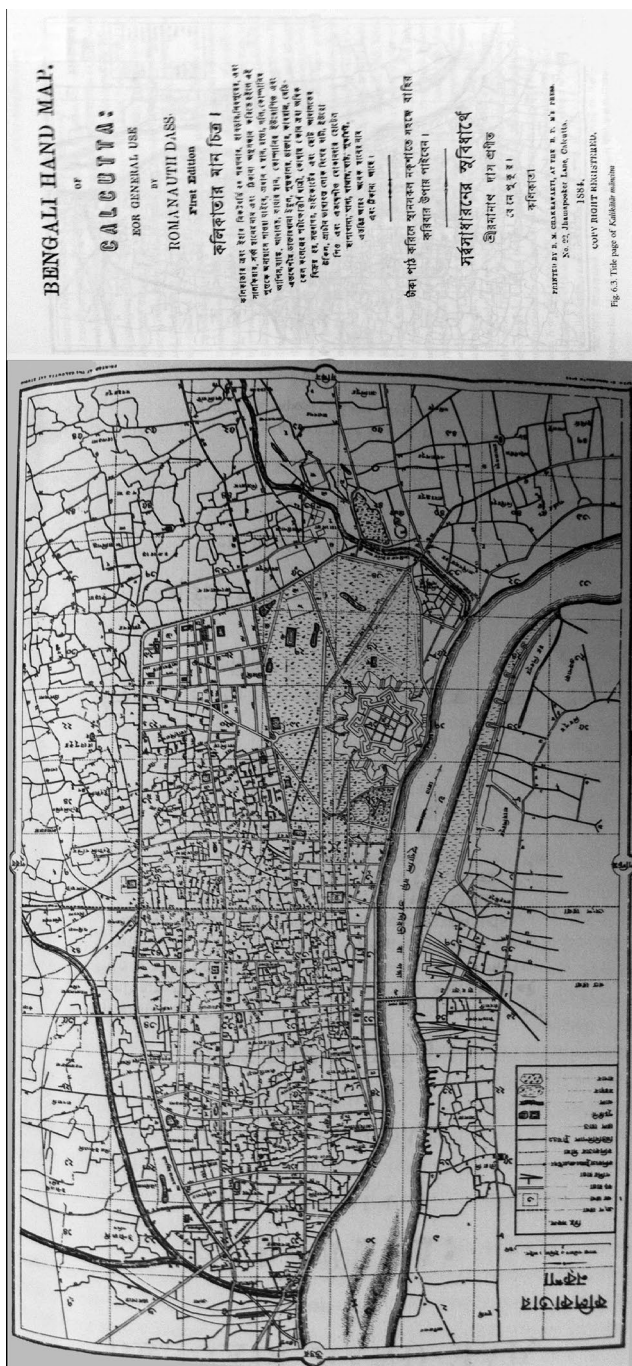


FIGURE 2 - ROMANAUT DASS' KALIKĀTĀR MĀNCITRA OF 1884



Our project navigates paths through both the historical context and contemporary contexts of Kolkata. We create new images of the city and its broader landscape. We operate in detail and in overview. We deal with specific locations and look to developing networks at the infrastructural scale. We operate in specific situations and recalibrate given overviews to offer alternative views of the city. We use design impulses and design projects both to offer and intercede in reinterpretations of the city. Our Research-By-Design practices are “strategic design” practices.

### **Inside Out**<sup>iii</sup>

The theme of **Inside Out** develops alongside and in view of the work of Diane Lewis.<sup>iv</sup> It is not so much that we draw a parallel between Calcutta and New York, although this seems perfectly possible. We are carrying out research into a city of modernity. The theme of **Inside Out** prompts us more to develop specific tactical operations for considering Calcutta. We consider the tactics of **Inside Out** in multiple scales, from body through to landscape. However, we also understand how **Inside Out** implicates where we place ourselves in the first instance: in terms of the city (The City **Inside Out**), the work of others (Others’ Works **Inside Out**, e.g. Diane Lewis, Patrick Geddes, Rabindranath Tagore, Dilip da Cunha, Amit Chaudhuri and Partha Chatterjee) and the work that we produce on the city (Our Work **Inside Out**).

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iii Lewis, Diane, *Inside-Out, Architecture New York City* (Milan: Charta, 2007)

iv Diane Lewis was Simpson Visiting Professor at the University of Edinburgh 2006 and 2007. Her book, *Inside-Out*, was published shortly afterwards. It records her practice in New York. Diane was full Professor at Cooper Union School of Architecture, New York, and considered John Hejduk as one of her most important mentors.

Partha Chatterjee wishes us to see Calcutta as a contemporary city borne more out of the modernity and search for democracy marked by the 1930s rather than the decline of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Bengal Renaissance and, hence, by inference, its colonial past.<sup>v</sup> We will neither enter a trajectory of decline nor a presumed progressiveness. We, simply, place ourselves inside the city and work out how to move forward into speculations for the contemporary city. The project of modernity is continuous. We respect all projects of modernity, whether historical or currently in process. We can never be inside Calcutta properly as though we were either Amit Chaudhuri or Partha Chatterjee. However, we can be alongside them as much as we can be alongside Diane Lewis, Dilip da Cunha and Anuradha Mathur and anyone and any project that has pertinence to our enquiries. By placing ourselves within the physicality of Calcutta we work out with what, how and why we best align our productivity. We work this out both as individual designer-researchers but also as a collective studio of designer-researchers working alongside each other. Our studio is a working **Inside Out**.

Diane Lewis was a New Yorker and projected her city from **Inside Out**. However, this was not merely the view of an insider. **Inside Out** is a philosophical principle, developed from the vantage point of being both an insider and a very skilled architect. **Inside Out** is a privileged position. It is gained by anyone who is capable of navigating from within to without, recording the path as they go; such a movement informs and changes the position of being from without as much as being from within. Being on the inside develops very particular understandings of the city. However, it is an immersion from where it is not always possible

---

<sup>v</sup> Chatterjee, Partha, *The Present History of West Bengal, Essays in Political Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)

to have a critical [cultural] viewpoint. Being is not self-conscious. Being simply is being. However, Diane Lewis developed her procedures of *sprezzatura*; such a position suggests her works are capable of being both non self-conscious as well as critical cultural explorations. Her skills were finely developed. Architecture as finely developed means has the potential to communicate beyond any self-obsession. Architecture, and its means, is as much critical [cultural] as ontological.

The ontology Diane Lewis promotes occurs at the nexus of architecture and all other cultural-everyday-life. New York is where she worked. When the work was in New York New York was also seen as her work. She was equally excited and inside Rome, another city she recommended was best understood from **Inside Out**. New York, Rome, Calcutta and Edinburgh are all great cities best studied **Inside Out**. Cities that have fine architecture facilitate an **Inside Out** perspective. Diane Lewis was definitely always inside her work. It was a double immersion: inside the city and inside her work. In such an ocean of ontology a trained critical [cultural] view presents work and city to and as the other. However, the vantage point Diane Lewis promotes is not merely a pedagogical recommendation for architects. She projects it as the means for others, non-architects, also to enter architecture. Architecture is the means of architects. Diane Lewis' means are architectural. She sees both the city and the work as architecture. She is arguing that to draw architecture requires us to draw the city as architecture. However, we know the city is more than buildings and the lives that are made in and between buildings. She is suggesting *architecture presented unashamedly as such can also be the means for those who are not architects to enter the city as architecture*. To enter the work is to enter the city. Her work, architecture, is an invitation to take up the **Inside Out** view. Her work is architecture as a highly skilled operation as critical [cultural] ontology.





Architectural means are important to understand. Our means will be more of Lewis' and da Cunha's than Chaudhuri's or Chatterjee's. Lewis was an architect. However, she was also an architect informed deeply by literature and the experiential dimension literature is and conveys. Her methods were as much inter-textual as inter-architectural; she considered architecture and the particular idiomatic expressivity developed with John Hejduk at The Cooper Union as a textuality that could work within, alongside and between other textualities: architectural and literary, material and abstract. She was a great admirer of Julia Kristeva. It is possible Diane Lewis thought her own work to be the continuous project of modernity and as such part of an architectural revolution in poetic language.<sup>vi</sup> She was, we are, always working in given contexts. She developed them as critically understood situations, architectural and cultural situations – she would certainly have understood the assertion that a parasituation can be considered more than merely analogous to a paratext: parasituations are paratexts. The city-work is always inside and alongside existing architecture [texts]. Diane Lewis was always working her idiomatic expressions within, **Inside Out**, and alongside existing and newly found relationships between different texts and hence also different types of authors: between architect-authors, literary-authors and everyday-authors. The city-work can be understood, then, as recurrent authoring: a recurrent reading and recurrent writing and rewriting. Her ends? Our ends? We have no stated ends. We are engaged in pure means, pure authoring, para-authoring: authoring alongside each and many others.

We went to Calcutta from the Outside.<sup>vii</sup> It is not our city. We could look at it from the conventional outside-to-in viewpoint. We could try

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vi Kristeva, Julia, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985)

vii Grosz, Elizabeth, *Architecture from The Outside, Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).

developing an “objective” view, an overview, and draw it using the terms with which we, and others, are already very familiar. This would be conventional but, in our mind, a foreclosing rather than opening position. If we were to go about it conventionally, our would-be objectivity might blind us to the possibility that we bring to bear upon Calcutta the limits of our own understanding and the limitations we feel obligated to reaffirm: for example, [scientific, philosophical, architectural and urban] paradigms and their means that already tend to dominate us. Passing on the effects of domination opens us to the accusation of acting as just another colonialism. Our will operates other than through the will of power. We develop our own will-to-power:<sup>viii</sup> we will architectural and urban design speculations through means that allow for the will of others to develop free from domination – to enter architecture freely.

There is no doubt we have brought our prejudices to bear upon Calcutta; they are plentiful, probably emanating from the compound misunderstandings of architecture, urban design, the history of Calcutta and India. Therefore, our tactic is to place ourselves, as best we can, on the inside, with a neutral and somewhat naïve view. We situate our view. It is immersive, gaping and in awe. However, we have skills and means. We have trained our skills in developing methods to develop new means, hence, new skills. We use them to gain a perspective and develop a view not considered in advance of being situated. This is the basis of “research questions” that drive our theses of and for Parasituation [Calcutta / Kolkata]. We take all of our given skills and find [para]situations by which to extend them. We extend our skills in proportion to how we extend the horizons of our view.

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viii Will to Power is a philosophical urgency promoted by Nietzsche. Simply stated, it places an obligation on each person to take seriously the requirement to recurrently ask the deepest philosophical questions for themselves by themselves and move themselves, for their own sake and that of others, recurrently, into an intellectual position beyond the horizon of their initial view. Hence, Nietzsche's affirmation of everyone who does so as an artist no matter what work they do.

We adopt a simultaneous double tactic for **Inside Out**. We operate simultaneously between two extreme scales: at one end is the body scale, which is a very obvious inside where we project ourselves inside architecture, inside building, inside series of buildings, inside the city, inside Calcutta's metropolitan landscape, Bengal; and at the other is what we frame as the [Loving] Metropolitan Landscape, which sees Bengal inside India, India inside a global cultural and economic exchange system, Calcutta inside Bengal, and any building and series of buildings inside a series of city to hinterland relations, all of which is inside an ecological drama of the highest order that we are calling **OCEANS OF WETNESS**.<sup>ix</sup> We devise systems by which we draw out architecture emerging from inside these two scales.

---

ix A Manifesto by Dilip da Cunha and Anuradha Mathur, <https://www.mathurdacunha.com/ocean-of-wetness>



## OCEANS OF WETNESS

**OCEANS OF WETNESS** is a Manifesto. It holds an important metaphor for the development of our architectural and urban design methods: our research-by-design is immersive. Our research is an immersive practice and our design outputs undergo saturation. What we immerse ourselves in is drawing – we draw **OCEANS OF WETNESS** by immersing ourselves in various understandings of water. We ask the first question of how we should draw water. We see ourselves in the wet. We understand the dry as an absolute condition of the wet, which we really cannot afford to make as a desired or permanent perspective and should realise is only ever, if ever, a temporary condition. We ask how we draw the wetness that situates us in specific places at specific times. We ask how we draw the variances of wetness across places at different times. We saturate our drawings, both literally in techniques of wetness but also phenomenally as serial images of wetness. Our drawings can be considered both a phenomenology of wetness and a scientific record of wetness. They are gestural and empirical, existential and metaphysical, experimental and radical, soaked and moist. Individually they are mere drops; but in series they speak of the oceans.

Dilip da Cunha and Anuradha Mathur who initiated this manifesto, seek nothing less than to encourage a paradigm shift. We give further impetus to this shift. We too bring the flux of wetness, carried by both the metaphor (immersion and saturation) and the theoretic impetus of **OCEANS OF WETNESS**, into the apparatuses formed by conventional categorical imperatives: that is, we immerse the dryness of apparent scientific truths in saturated forms of speculation and redraw the lines that would otherwise compartmentalize them and act to territorialise their claims and workings. We immerse ourselves in these traditions and immerse such traditions in our practices, i.e. we saturate them and



dissolve old methods in the solutions held by the newly configured apparatuses of **OCEANS OF WETNESS**. Through the specific enquiry of **PARA-Situation [Calcutta / Kolkata]**, we add to Mathur's and da Cunha's critique of the line. It is not so much that they and we do not like lines. It is more that they and we are critical of the absoluteness of a line and the reductionist and conformist tendencies of certain types of delineations. We see lines as affording seepage as much as containment. Lines are means: they can record, prevent but also facilitate seepage. Lines are notional as well as actual; they are projections as well as introspections, they can lead or follow, push and pull, drawing things out and drawing things in. Lines are many, thick and thin, long and short, straight and curved, in fact so varied that they may take on characteristics that make the line a very special part of the mark or trace of **WETNESS** and the **OCEANS** from which we argue all life emerges and all lives share as fertile medium. We draw lines - as demarcations of conceptions of sharing principles; but we also draw out, into and from, as best as we can, using all the skills we have as architects and urban designers who are sensitive to the full array of ecologies of life that exist in **OCEANS OF WETNESS**, the water without which we are incapable of life.

*Dorian Wiszniewski*

Tutors

Kevin Adams

Chris French

Maria Mitsoula

Neil Cunning







# WATER WORKS & WORKS OF WATER

## THE BOAT CLUB AND “PROJECT MAYHEM”

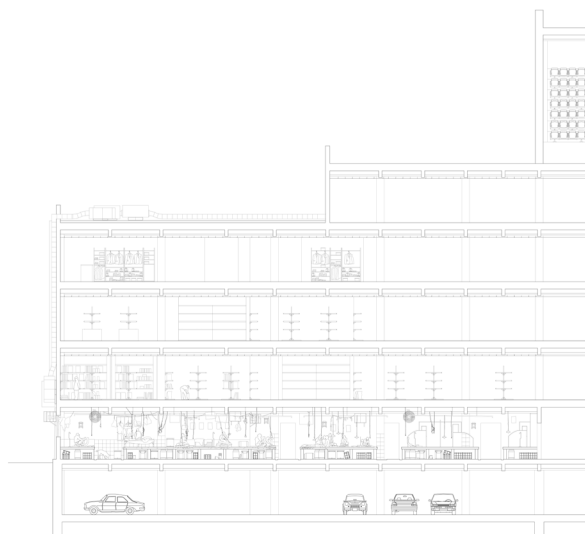
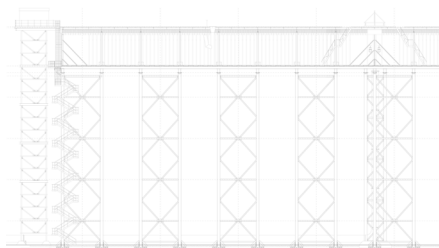
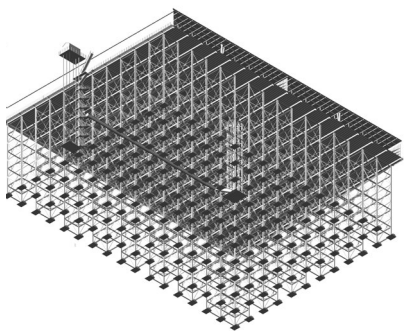
CORRIE GRAHAM, MICHAEL POSSO

Boat Club | A statement that conveys an elite club mentality, sub-urban structure, notions of wealth and exclusive social interaction. Kolkata encourages urban infrastructure built upon bourgeois social clubs, linked together as series of buoys floating on a surface of fragmented colonial class-formed residue.

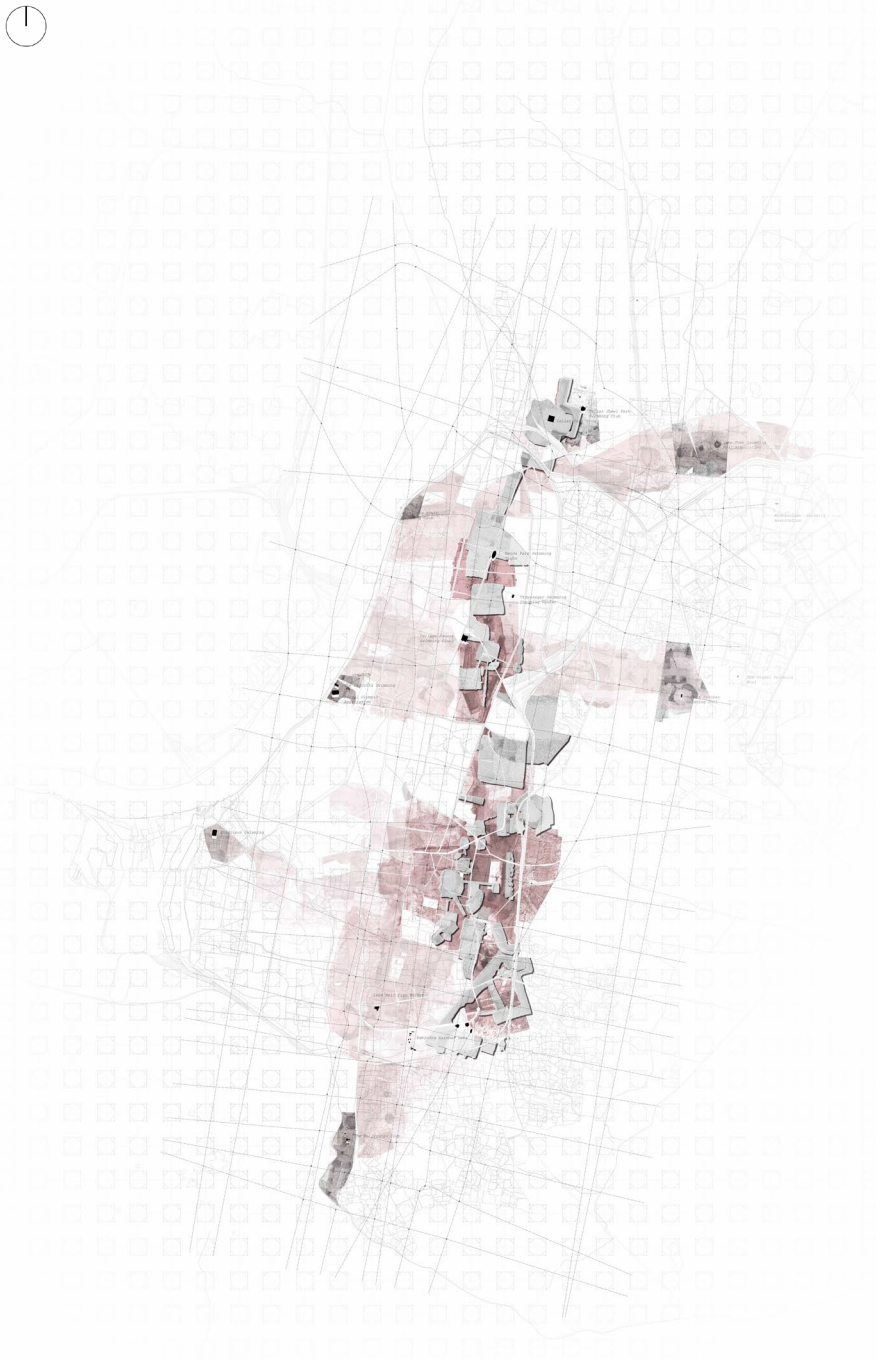
Lake Mall | A distinction between the “up”-market precise measure of civilization of the Mall and the double-measure (negotiated and bargained) of the fish “down”-market represents a division in the water distribution of Kolkata. The divide is ever-present, an authoritative policed mass hovering over an open gutter, witnessing two concepts of Baazar, water and regulatory systems of the socio-economic.

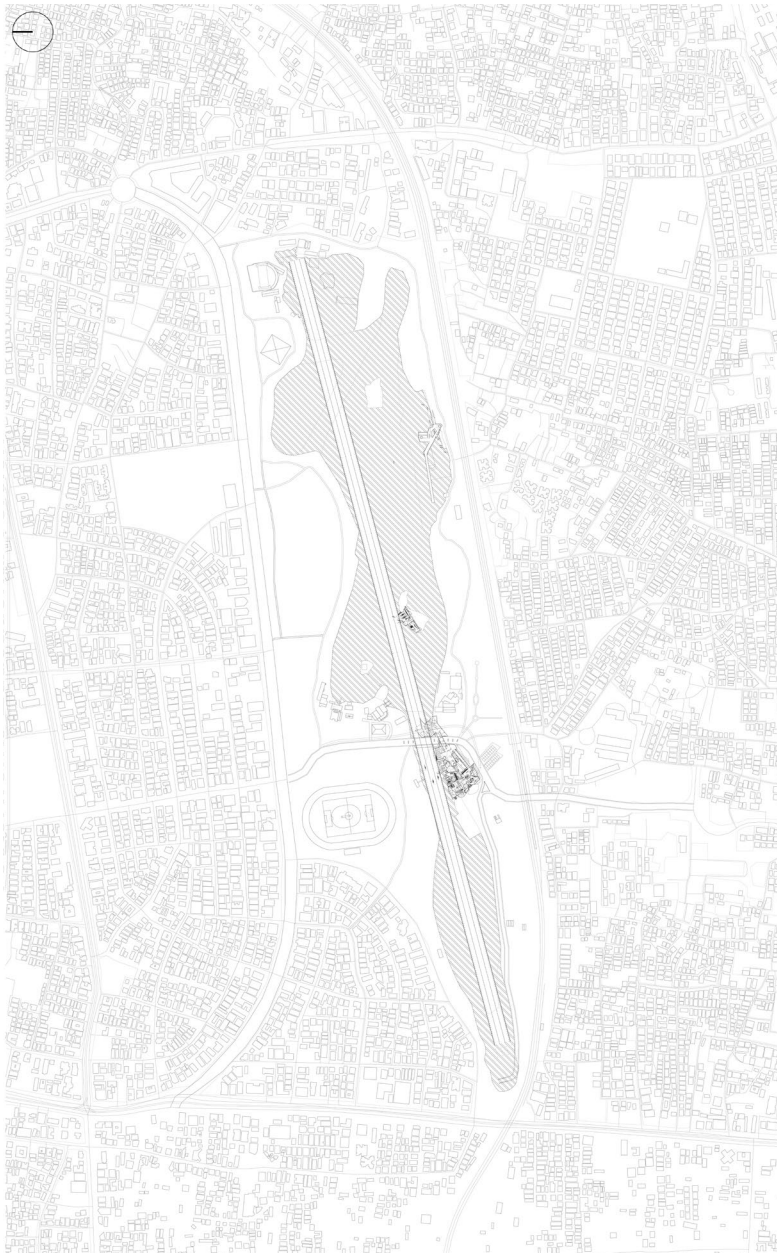
Pure Measure | The Tallah Tank represents a pure measure of Kolkata’s water needs: an engineered Ganga on stilts fluctuating between states of tension. It reappropriates the measure of nature. A rowing track looks beyond the handicap of water through aquatectural thresholds, using pure measure to rupture Ganga and Ganga to rupture measure.

“Project Mayhem” | The PM of Boat Club proposes a recalibration of water measures in Kolkata. A rowing track is proposed for the Rabindra Sarobar Lake. It will disturb current water and Ganga relations; there will be newly configured and calibrated water and ground measures.





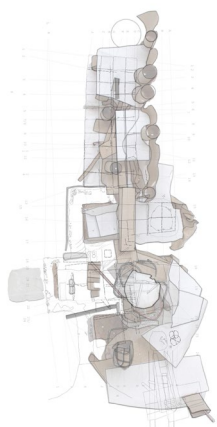
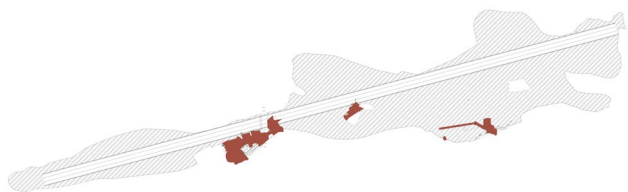
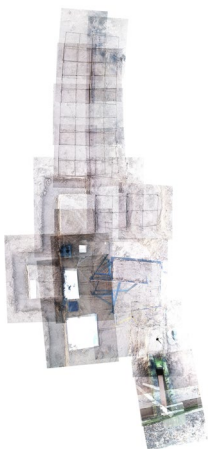
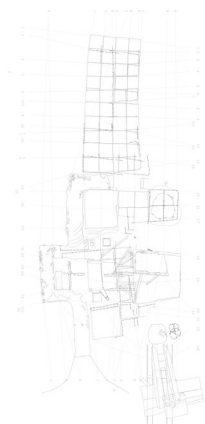




◀ PROJECT MAYHEM, TLML

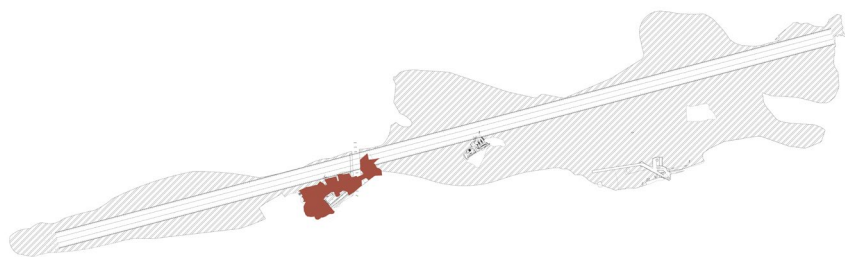
▲ A RECALIBRATION OF MEASURES IN THE RABINDRA SAROJAR LAKE



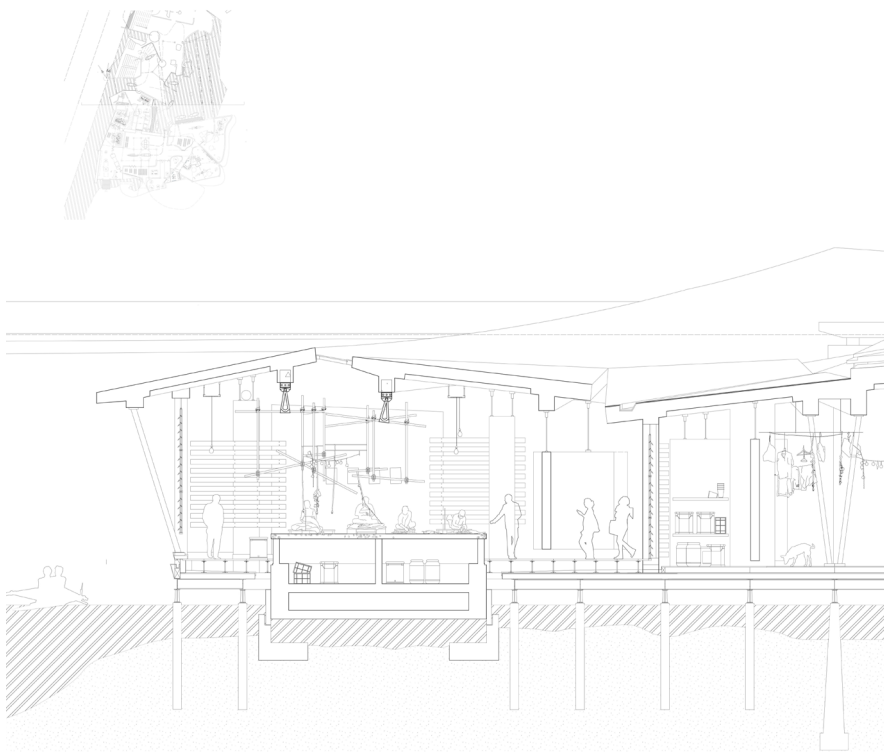
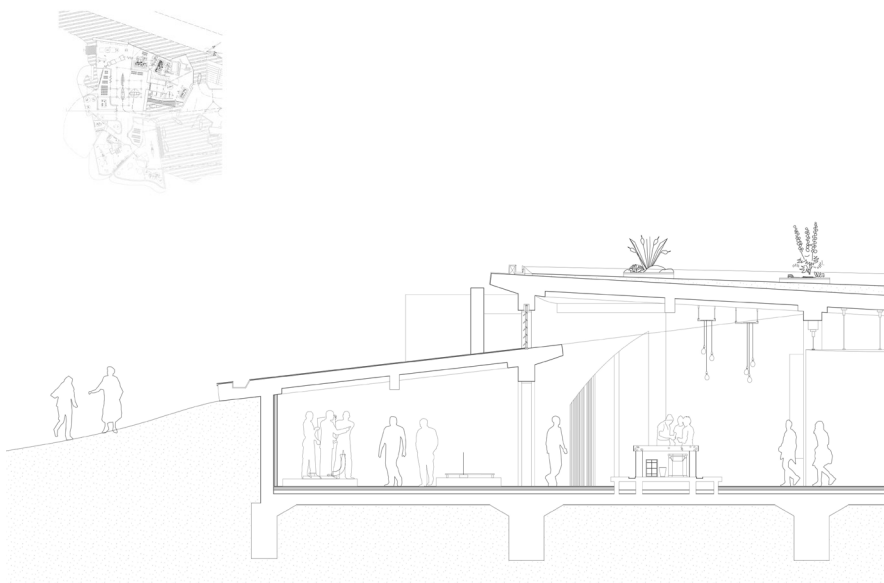




- ◀ THE BEACH DESK SERIES
- ◀ CASTING MEASURE AND NON-MEASURE
- ◀ A SERIES OF PROPOSED RUPTURES ON THE RABINDRA SAROVAR LAKE
- ◀ A WATER HOUSE SURVEY
- ▲ PROJECT MAYHEM, AUCTION HOUSE



▲ AUCTION HOUSE PLANS AND SECTIONS OF SECTIONS



## BENGAL SCENTS

### MANGO RHYTHM

DESMOND CHANG

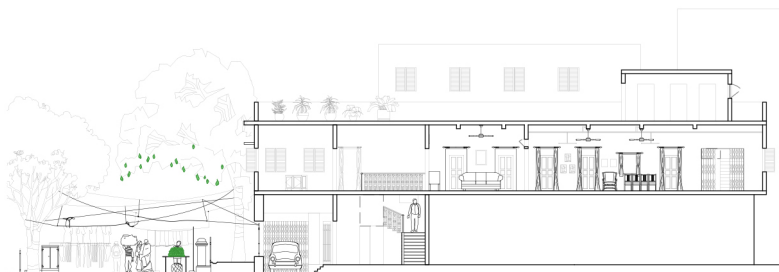
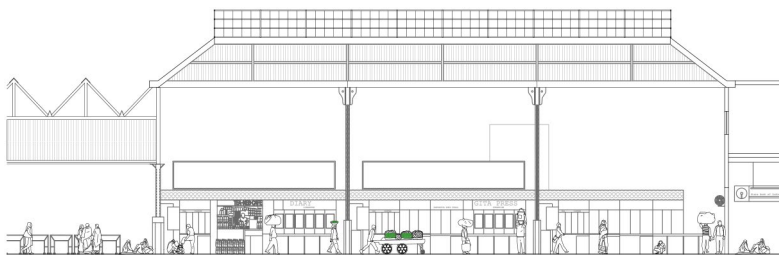
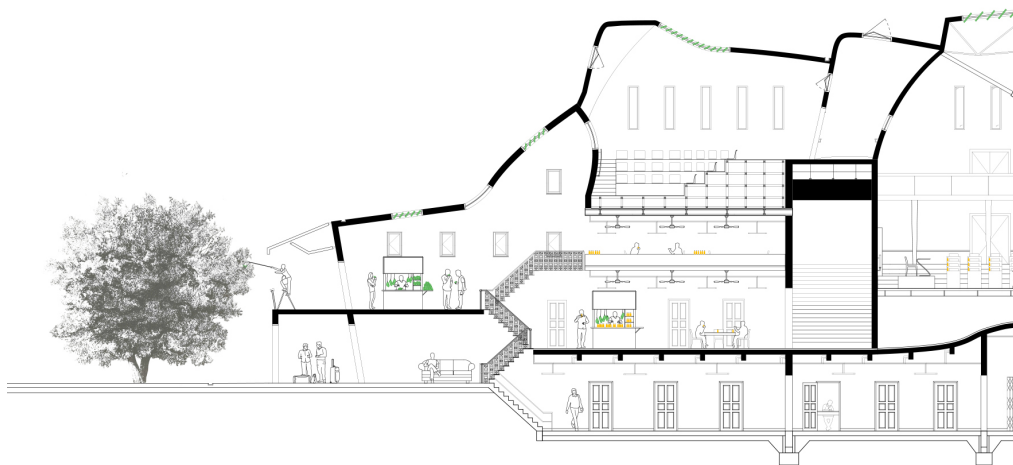
Here he comes, Sujan arrives at his everyday workplace - a local mango factory in Malda. He takes the required mango samples, wrapped in an ordinary jute bag and puts them on his head. He walks to the platform and boards the train 12:42 heading to Howrah. Sujan knows he will be stuck in the train for another 5 hours, he therefore puts the mango samples in front of him; he is fast asleep.

The factory was asked to deliver mango samples from their local orchard for quality inspections, by the Mango Institute located near the city of Kolkata. A few major mango production towns in West Bengal including Malda, Medinipur, Bakura & Murshidabad were also invited to participate in this conference. Since mango exports to the EU were banned for a year in 2014 because fruit flies were found in consignments, the Mango Institute has been offering advice to these production farms to ensure the quality of the mangoes are always at their best.

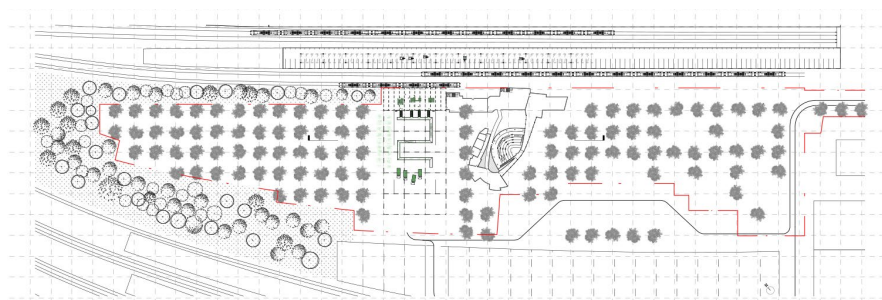
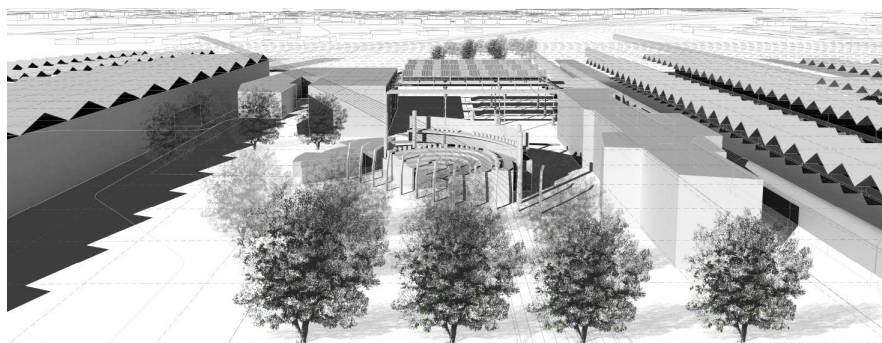
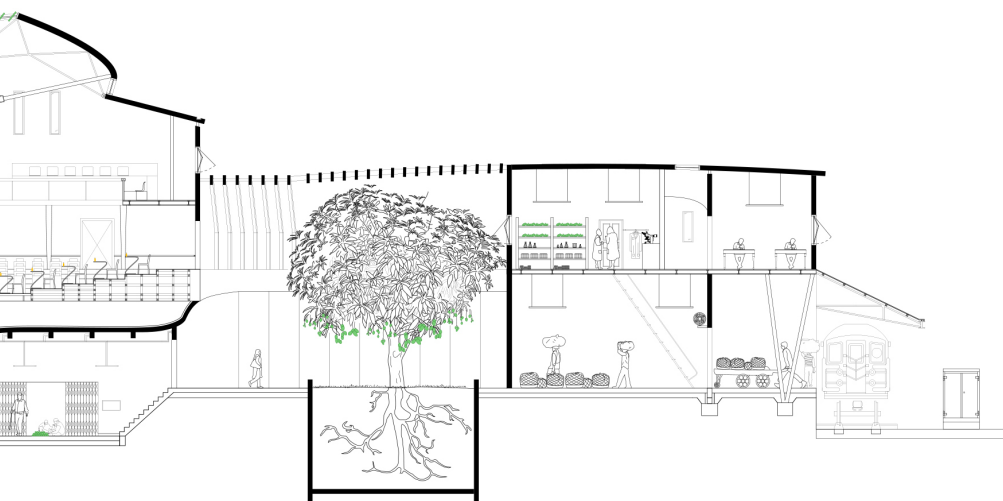
5 hours later, the train slows down as it approaches Howrah station. Sujan looks up; all he sees is a mango forest. The train brushes right past these mango trees. A strong scent of fresh mangoes floods into the train. As if it needed announcing, it is June, the mango season. Sujan knows he has arrived.











◀ JOURNEY OF THE MANGOES: HARVESTING, ARRIVING, SELLING

▲ SECTION ACROSS THE MANGO INSTITUTE

▲ MANGO INSTITUTE, GRAFTING OLD & NEW HOWRAH, FACTORY & ORCHARD

# MASS-ING THE SUPER-NATURAL

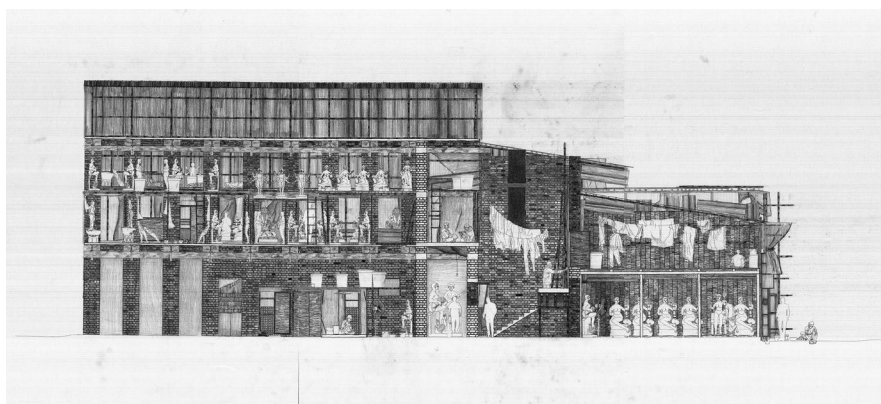
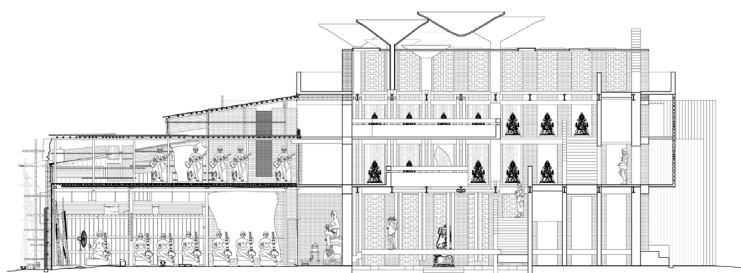
LIU WEI

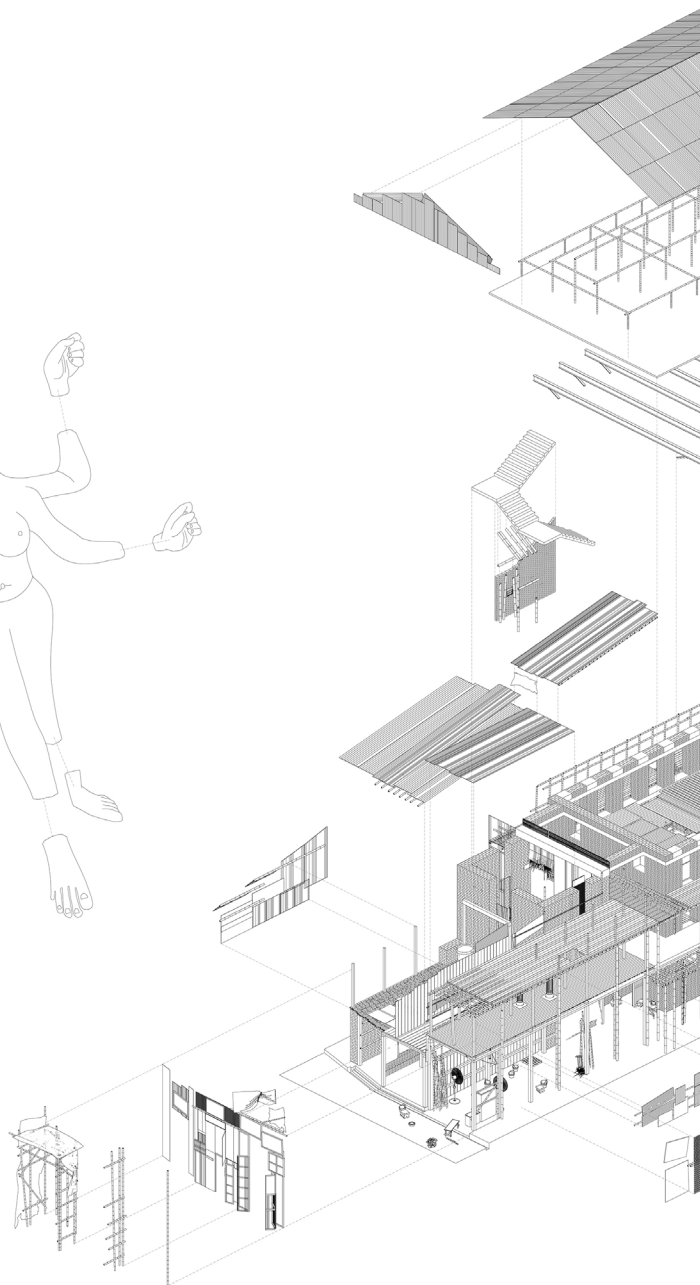
LIU WEI - MASS-ING THE SUPER-NATURAL

In (W) Bengal, there are many festivals, and more than 100 gods and goddesses are worshiped throughout the year. The festival cycle begins with the making of idols. The people who bring the supernatural powers of the gods down to the earth are the Kumartuli sculptors. They have been doing this for generations.

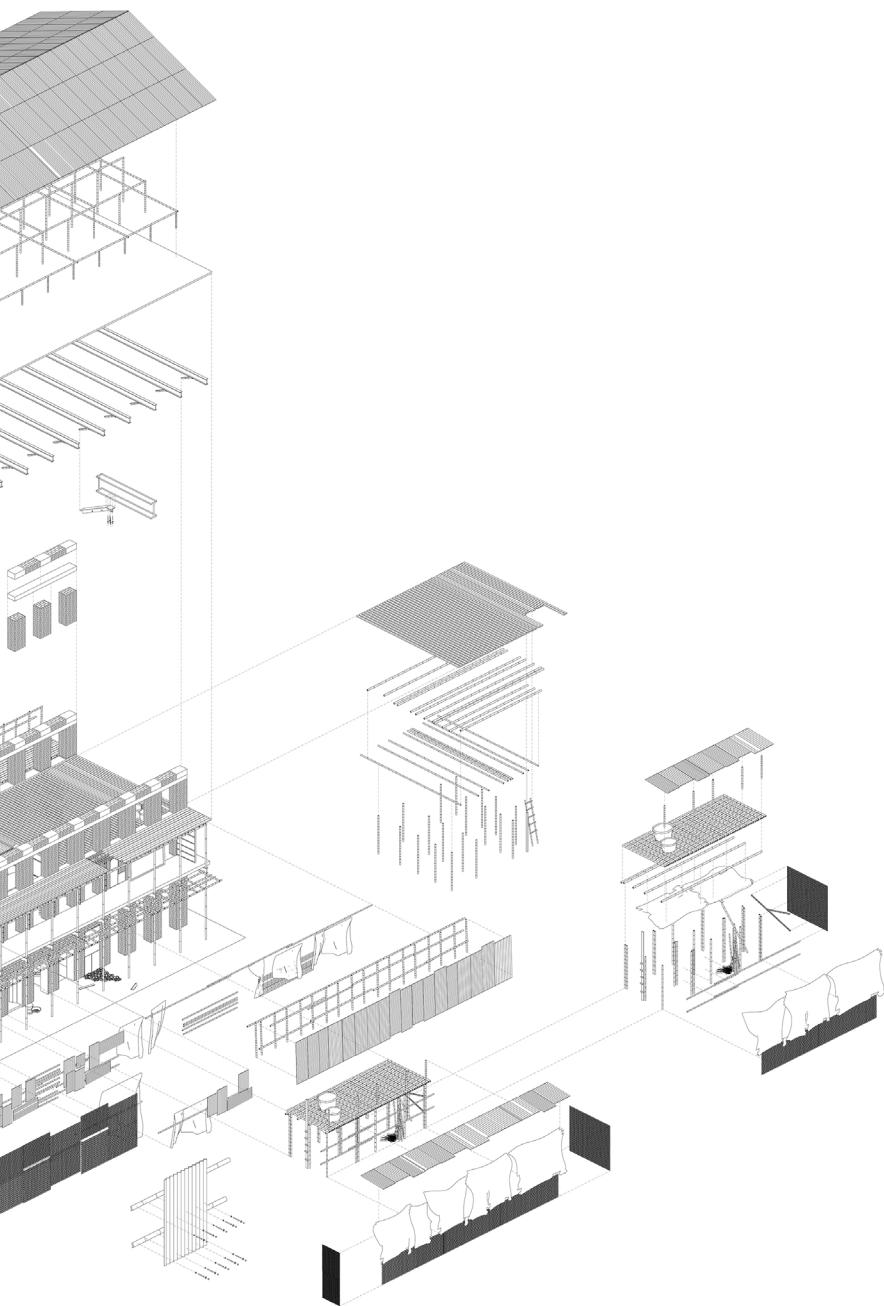
Kumartuli's special character is measured intensely. Such recalibration brings new means to rethink architecture. *(M)MASS-ing the Supernatural* under a "Monsoon Mediation" is a project for a gallery; it is based upon existing "supernatural" processes found in the everyday workshops of Kumartuli. The Gallery accommodates the flux of Monsoon, it mediates the wet and dry processes, it **Models** space as the idolmakers model flesh, it **Moulds** clay and other materials of the idol makers into architecture, it **Assembles** its parts and programme to the partis of many idols rather than as a single body, each part **Shadows** others and respects a **Sectional** disposition locally and across the Kolkata clay body-scape.

The Gallery is both Epic and Filmic: experience is serial and episodic.





▲ IDOL WORKSHOP EXPLODED



## REPETITIVE SCENES

### INTIMATE WATER BONDS

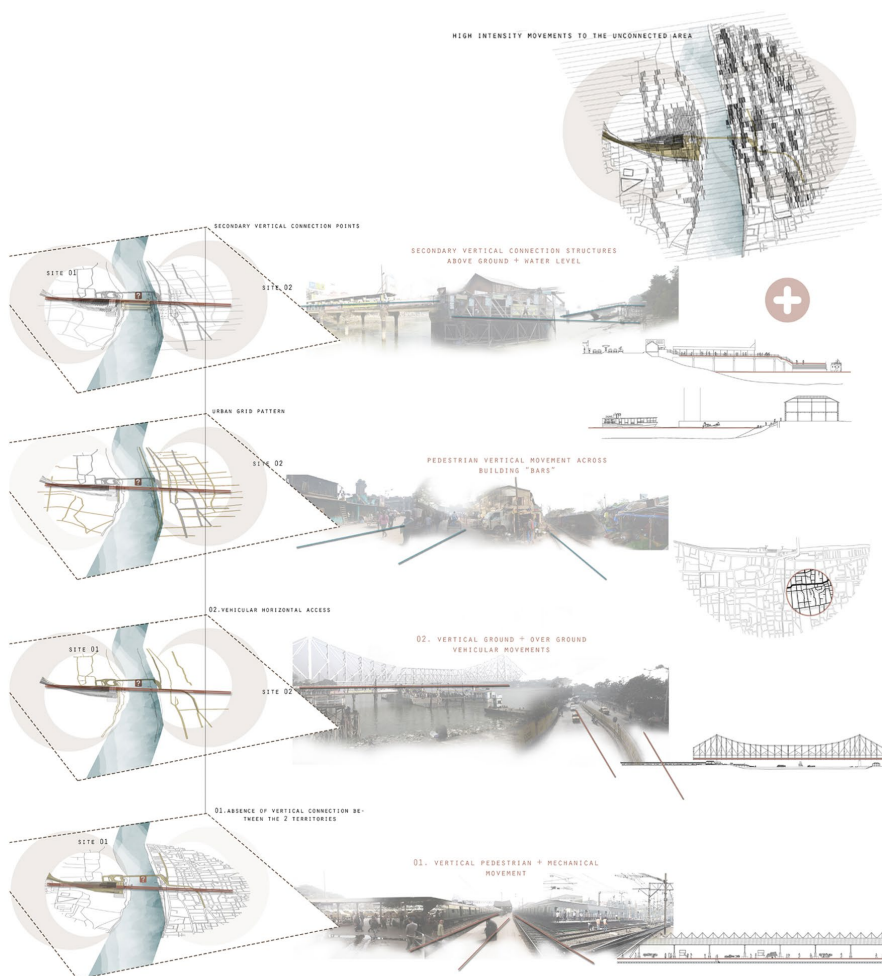
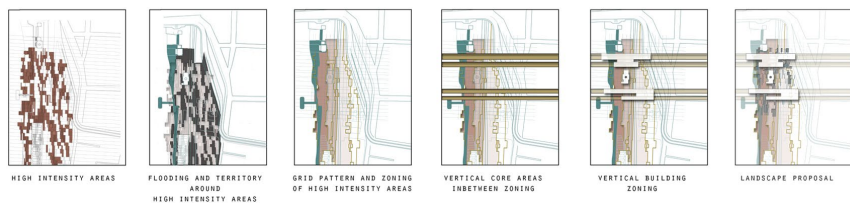
ANASTASIA REPPA

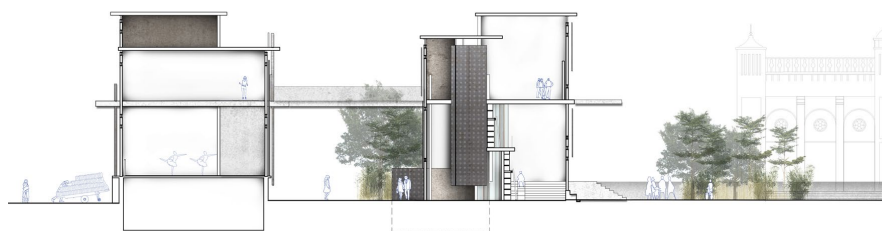
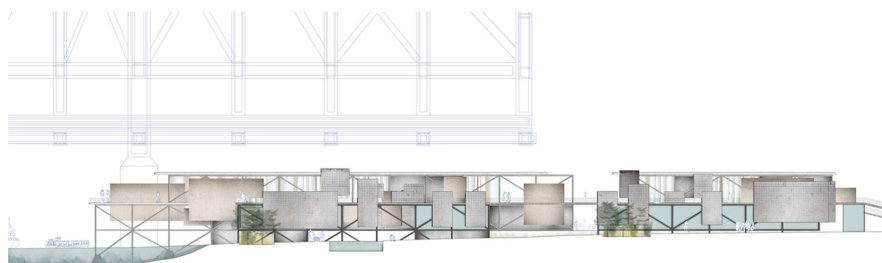
Howrah Railway station has been the lively transportation hub of Calcutta since 19th century and the first train station of India. The regional and cross-country trains feed the city with many types of visitors.

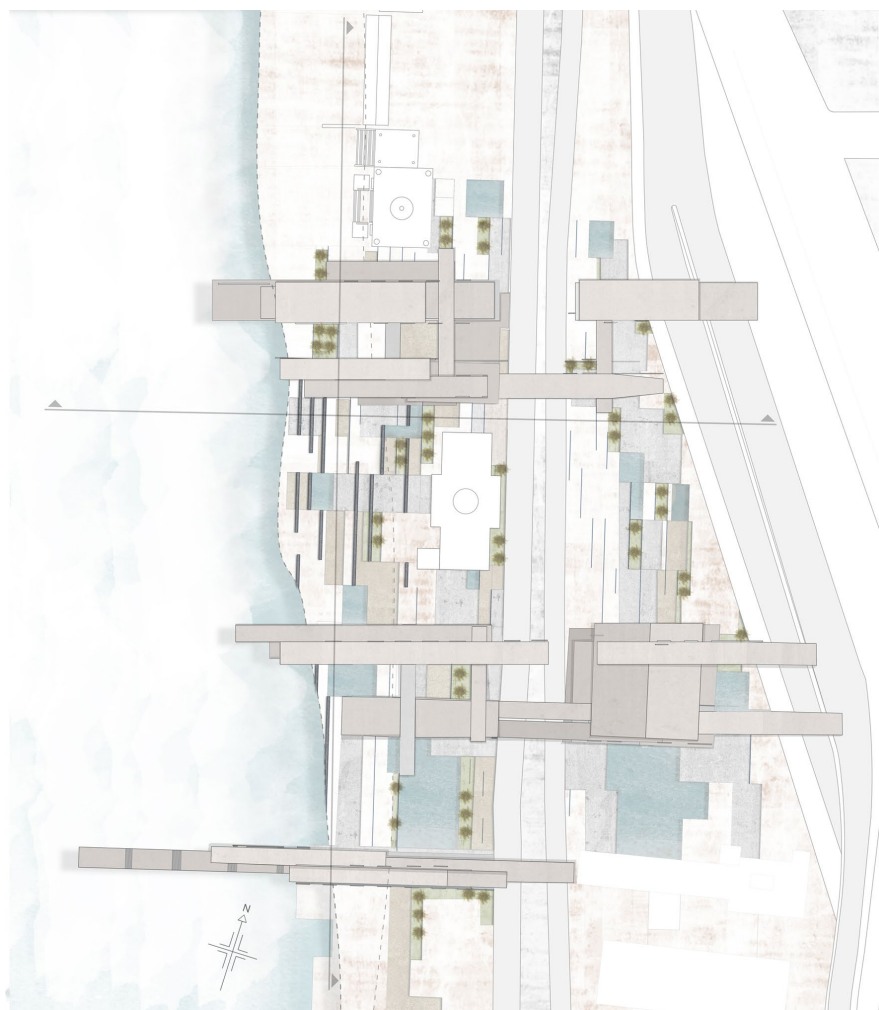
There is a strong relation between Howrah Railway Station, Howrah Bridge and the bazaars of the city which operate as trading centres of the whole region. The river banks opposite Howrah station have a rich history of their own. Though the area seems to be dilapidated these days, as most of Calcutta's waterfront, it is still home to some of the most famous Indian Ghats.

This thesis focuses on the creation of new, intensive bonds between the city and the river. The river edge is now conceived to be a Youth Centre, with all existing and new production operating alongside historical spaces of spiritual significance bringing new generations closer to their cultural history. Human intensity within and around the bazaar areas in the old city of Calcutta have formed a pattern between time and space. This pattern sets the rhythm of a new youth culture that will attract visitors from the city.









◀ SECTIONAL VIEWS THROUGH THE INTIMATE WATER LANDSCAPE

▲ OVERVIEW ACROSS THE RIVER THRESHOLD









## CHAI PENDANTICS

### RE-CRAFTING THE LIMINAL

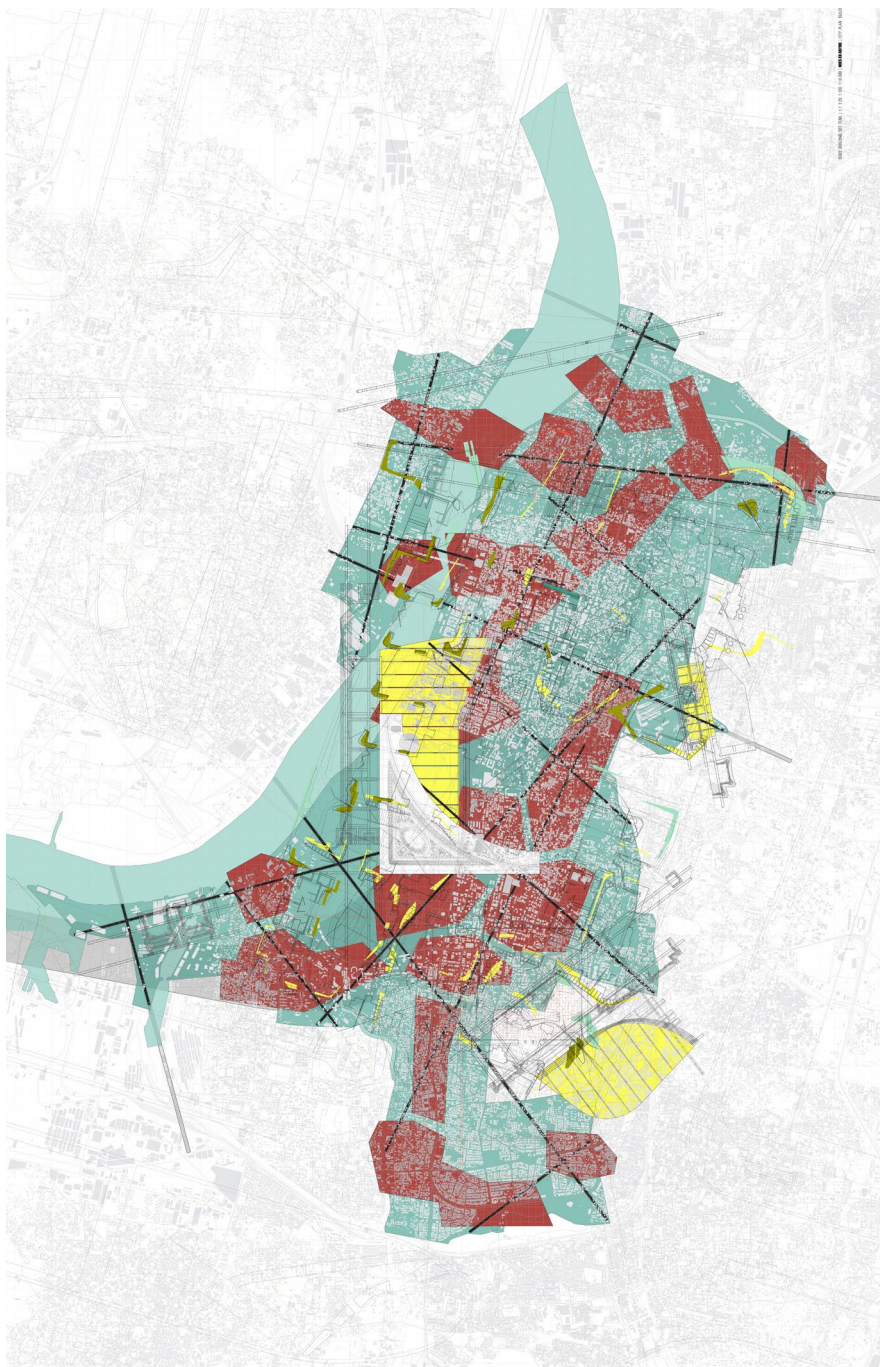
ANDREW CHAVET, KATE LE MASURIER

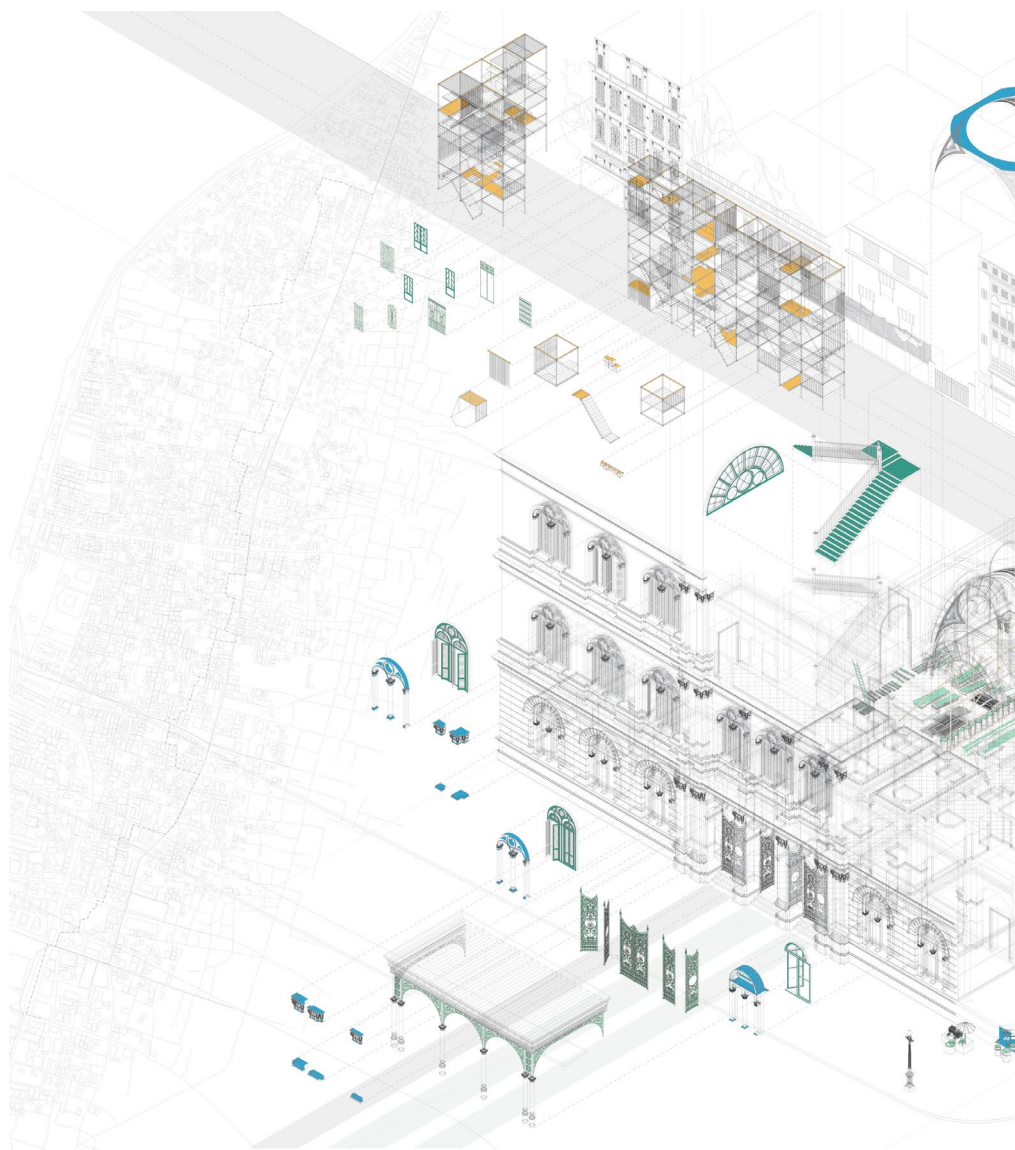
Appearing not only as manifestations of chai culture and a derelict history, the crafted kutchra and pucca artefacts epitomise the city's ecological conundrum: the built environment is dissolving. Humidity, ground saturation and permeance of the Hooghly obscure the thresholds of traditional air, land and river, capturing Kolkata within the liminal.

Clay teacups belong to a sustainable cycle of excavating, moulding, drying, drinking, disposing, disintegrating and dissolving. The scale and effort required in the construction of Kolkata's architecture is prone to but does not suppose the same cyclic economy. Where the visitor may perceive romance in the city's state of decay, its inhabitants enact various systems of creative upkeep: buildings are not simply conserved but continually maintained and adapted, revealing a type of Bengali modernity. Within the aqueous landscape, there is potential for a cyclic architectural craftwork to flourish; an industry of re-crafting the liminal, which requires a scaffold.

The pavements of Kolkata define the liminal within the city; teeming with craftsmen whose work pours out onto them, and mixes with bathers and chai drinkers, they provide a manipulatable scaffold which could be re-crafted. Acting as a microcosm of a citywide system, the former Currency Building acts as a convergence for the assimilation of water and crafted construction amongst the city's pavements.







▲ MANGOE LANE AND ABHAY MITRA STREET COLLIDING AXONOMETRIC



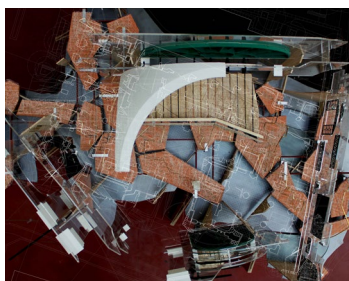
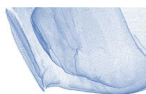
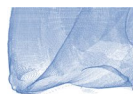
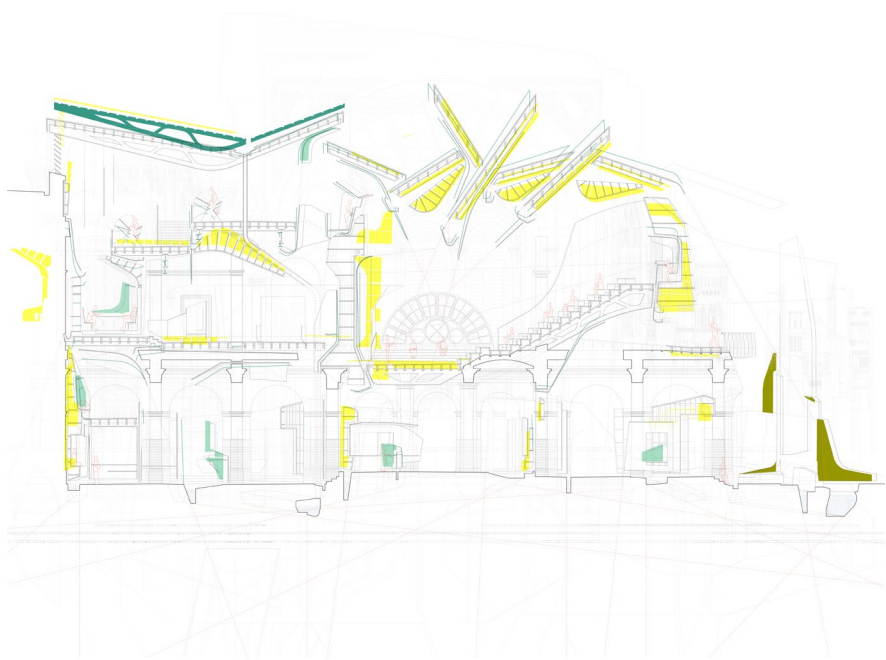


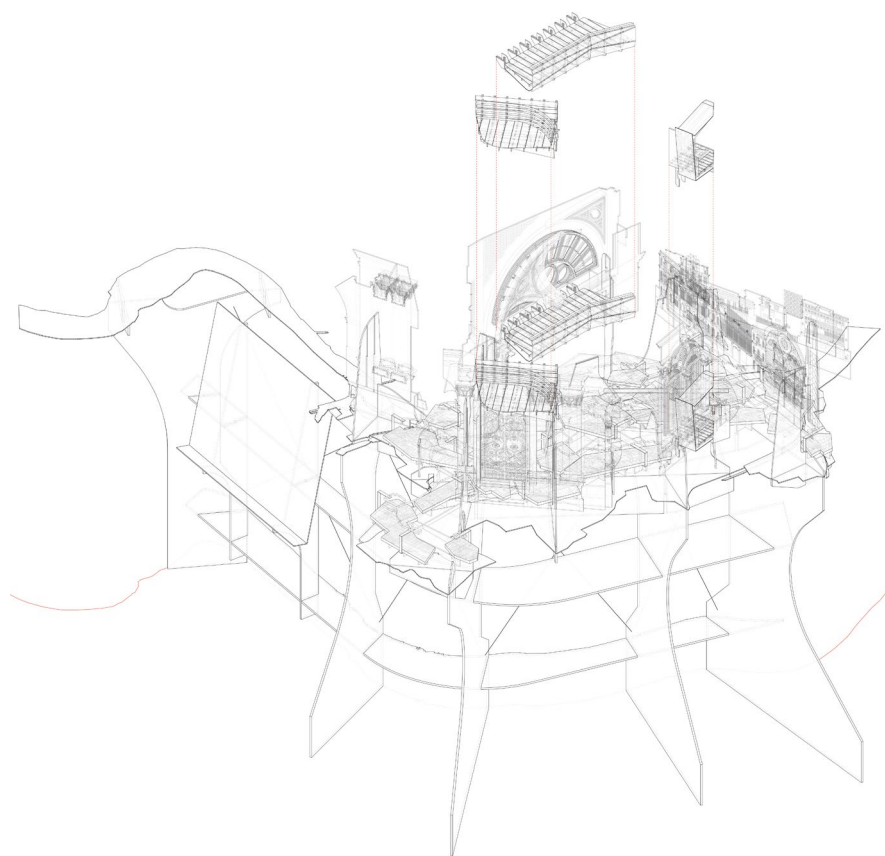


▲ A CRAFTED EXTENSION OF THE PAVEMENT

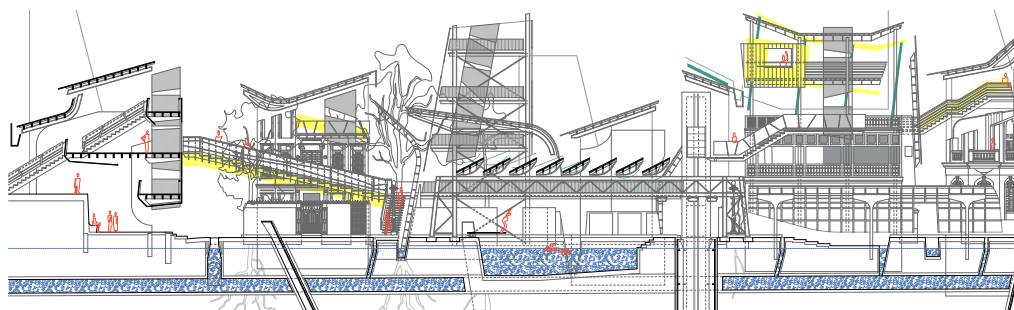
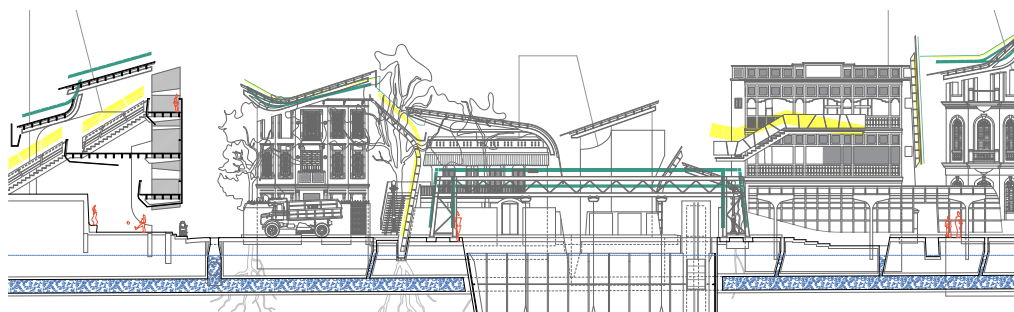
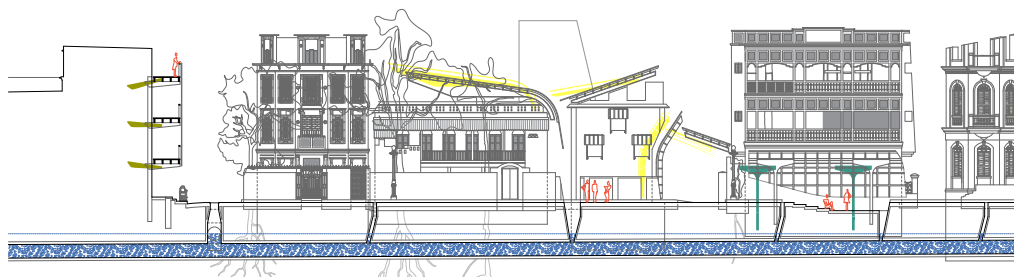




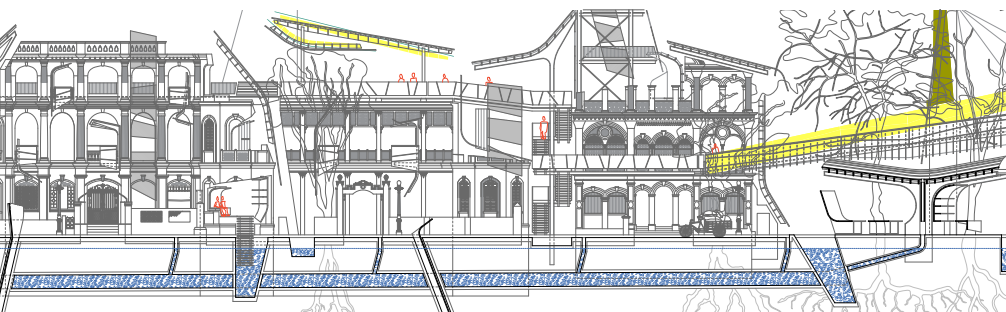
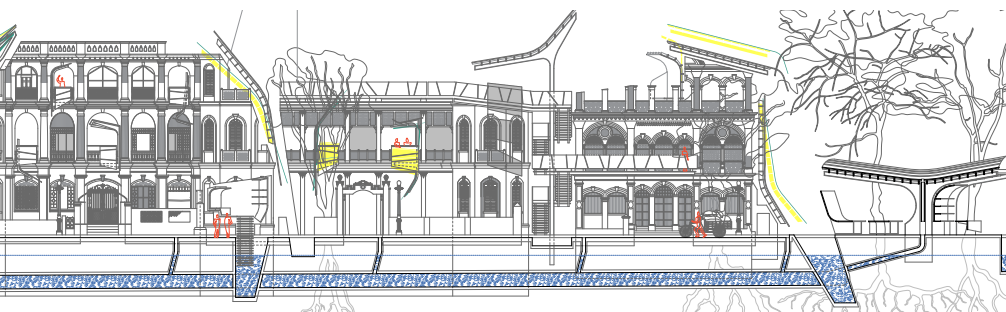
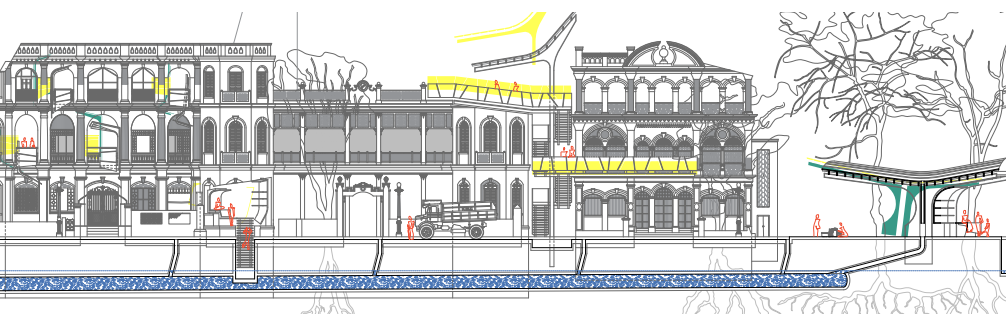
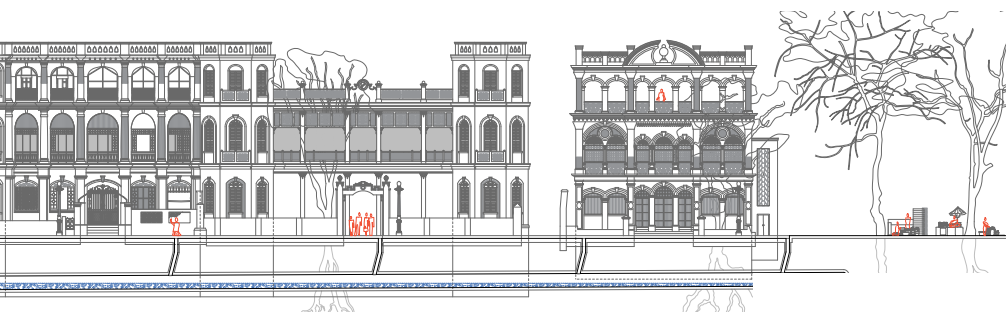




- ◀ SECTION THROUGH THE CRAFT HUB
- ◀ AERIAL VIEW OF A STUDIO CITY SCAFFOLD
- ◀ CLAY *BHAR WALLAH* CUP X-RAY
- ◀ INTERPOSITIONS WITHIN THE STUDIO CITY SCAFFOLD
- ▲ STUDIO CITY SCAFFOLD ISOMETRIC



▲ A PAVEMENT THROUGH TIME: 2018, 2038, 2058, 2078



## INK-LINEATIONS

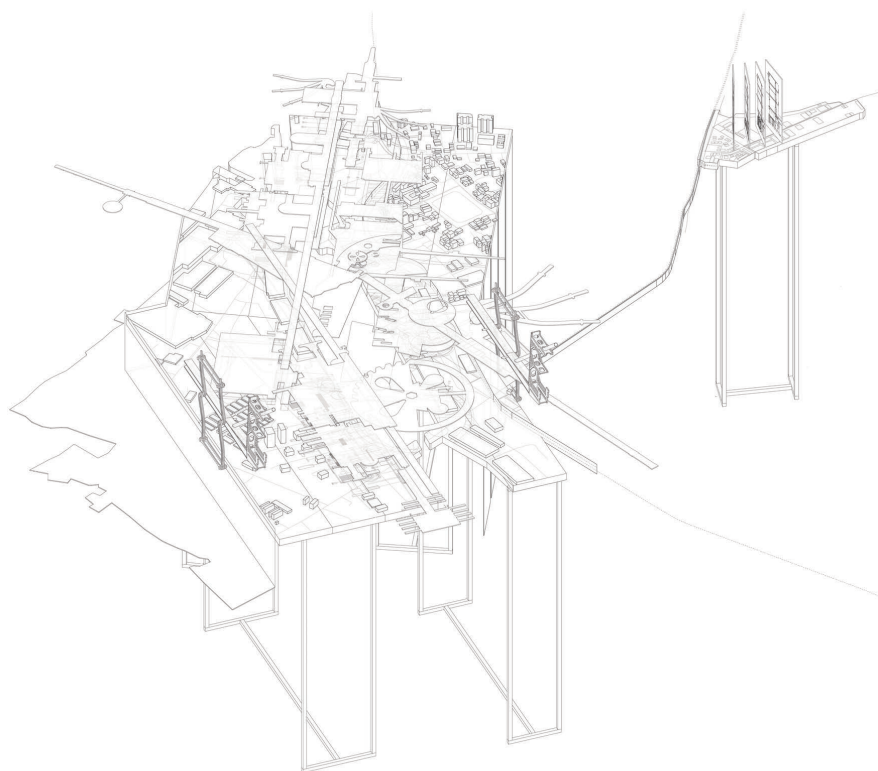
### PO[U]ROSITY OF RE-TERRITORIALISATION IN THE KIDDERPORE DOCKS

DAANA BOLOT, RUOTIAN WANG

The project explores the geopolitical situation of the Kidderpore Dock territory in South Kolkata. A proposal for immersion of the existing boundary between the private and the public is offered, where a recalibration of boundaries is directed by the ink-lineations of cultural exchange. The governmental authorities of the Kolkata Port and its rich history of being constructed by the British East India Company have, over time, defined a hard border. Thus, the project offers architecture that softens the existing hard borders to re-territorialize former exclusivities as perforate series of public/private economic land and aquascapes.

The measured intensities taken place in the Kidderpore market and 539 Rabindra Sarani in Kumortuli have revealed a character of Kolkata whereby residential dwelling spaces are closely knit with spaces of trade, production and distribution: the printing press factory adjacent to the Kumortuli apartment building and the busy Khidirpur market are immersed amongst vivid individual and shared residential spatial systems. The Kidderpore Docks are explored and recalibrated through the lineaments of Kidderpore and Kumortuli – places of particular social and urban character that immerse productivity into everyday life. Kidderpore and its architecture are redrawn as intensely inscribed surfaces that describe porosity rather than impermeability, taking their regulatory instructions from the various creative recalibrations of printing works, food packaging and other cultural distribution systems.

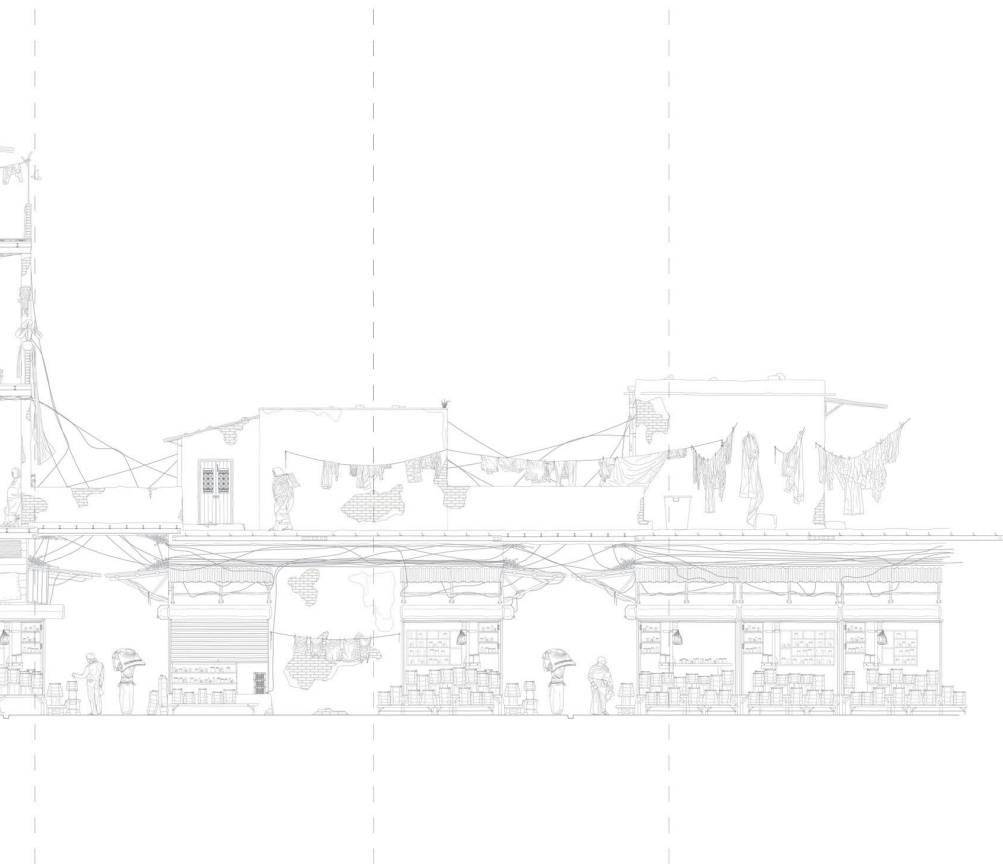
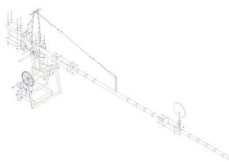
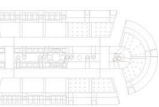


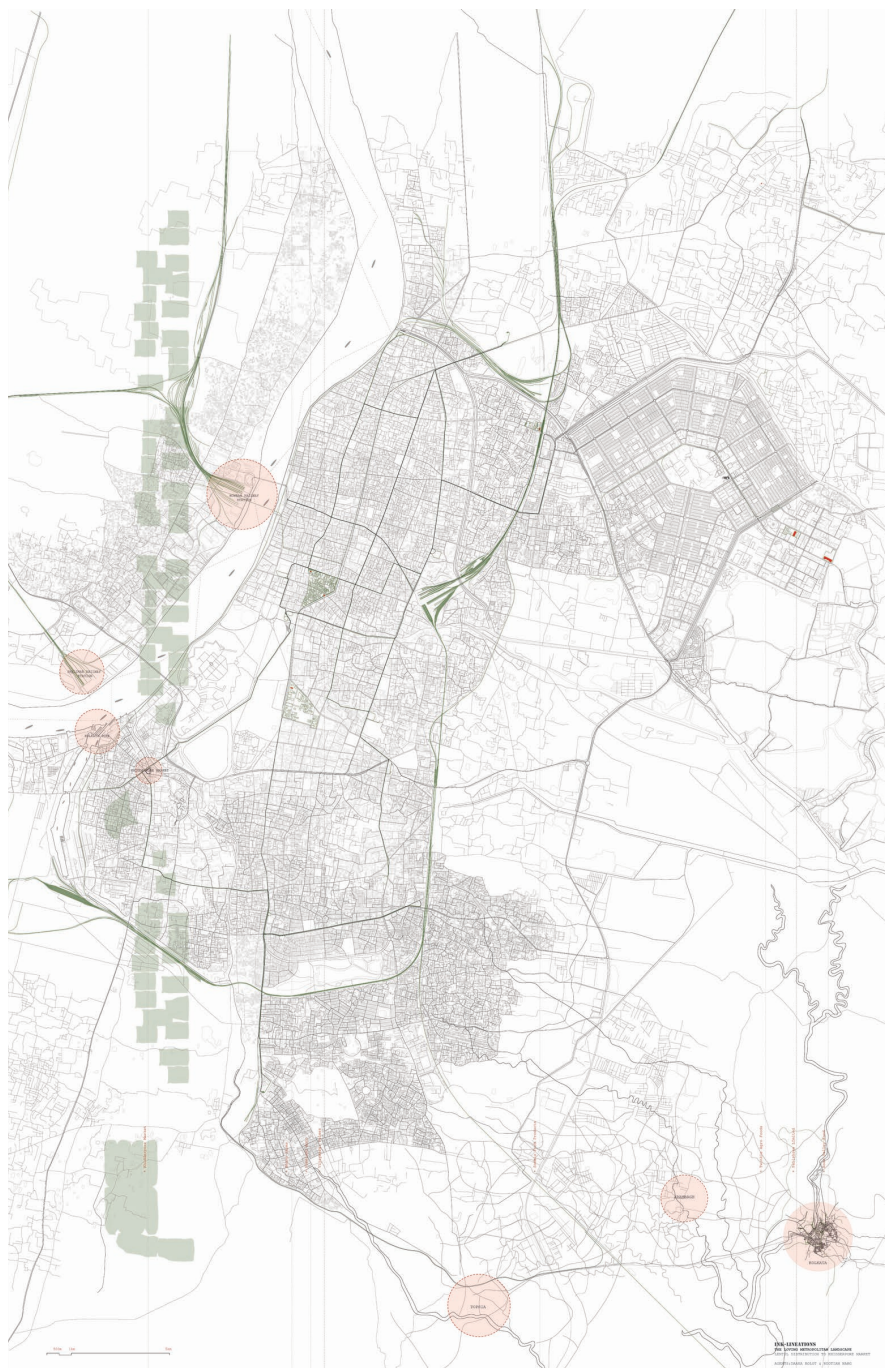


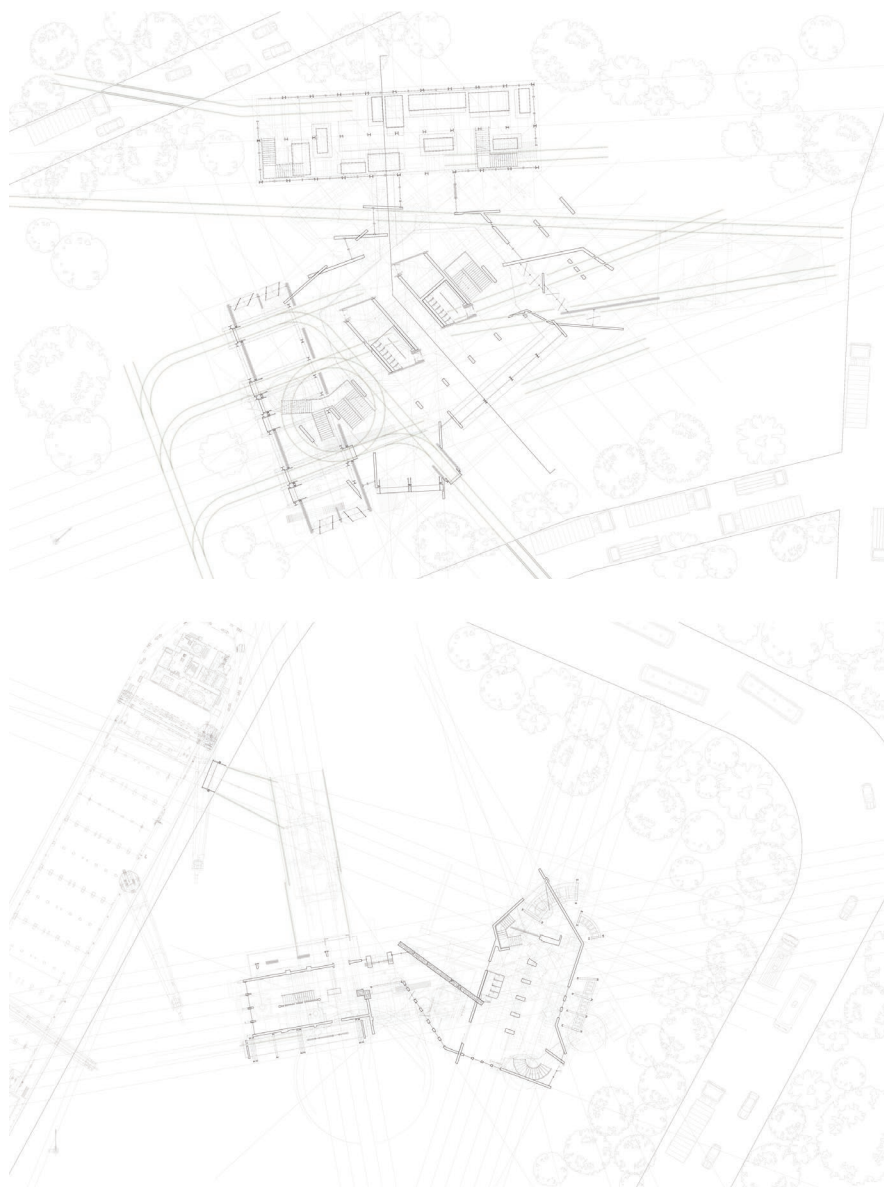
BOLOT, WANG - INK-LINEATIONS



▲ SEMIOGRAPHIC POROSITY OF THE KIDDERPORE MARKET







◀ TLML DISTRIBUTION OF PULSES TO THE KIDDERPORE MARKET

▲ PRINT HOUSE BUILDING

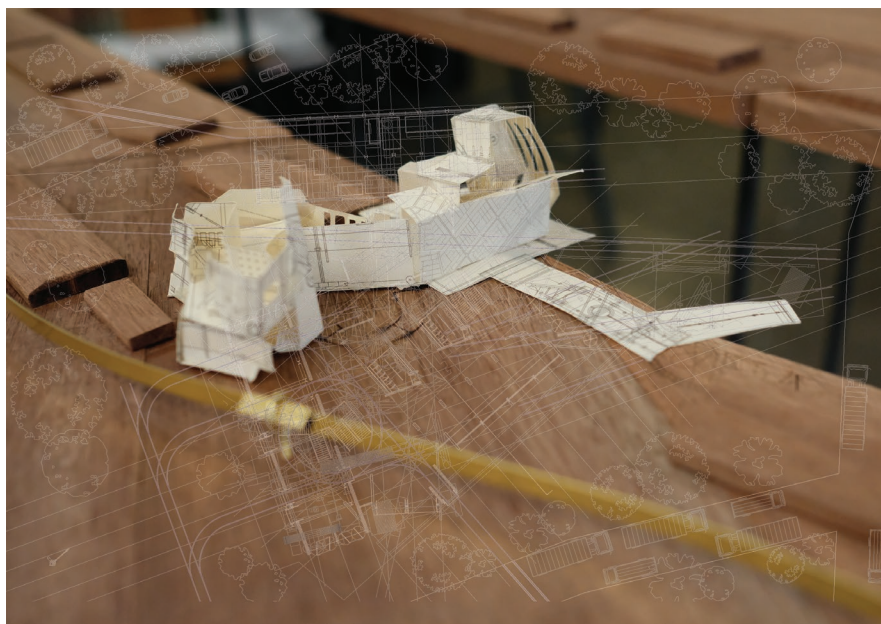
▲ KOLKATA PORT MUSEUM BUILDING





▲ RE-TERRITORIALIZATION OF THE KIDDERPORE DOCKS

► PRINT HOUSE AND KOLKATA PORT MUSEUM

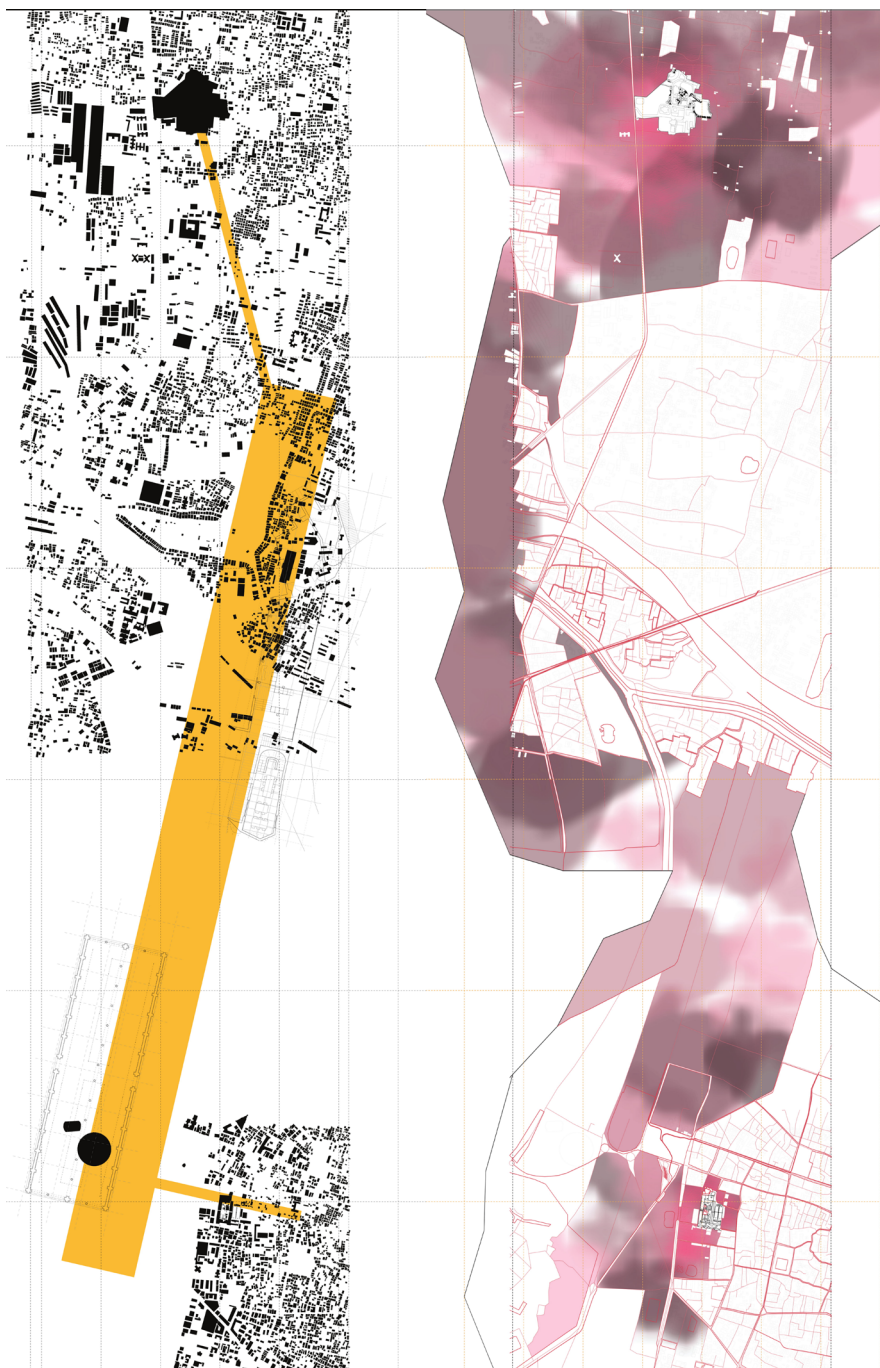


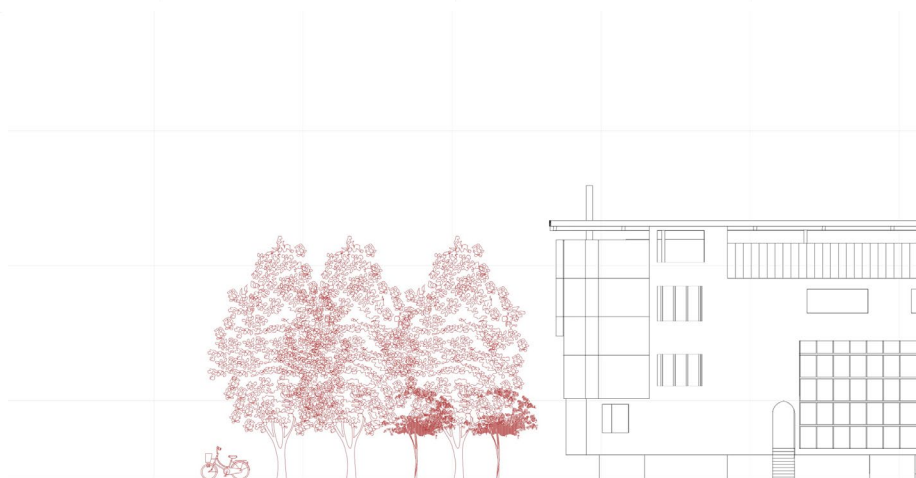
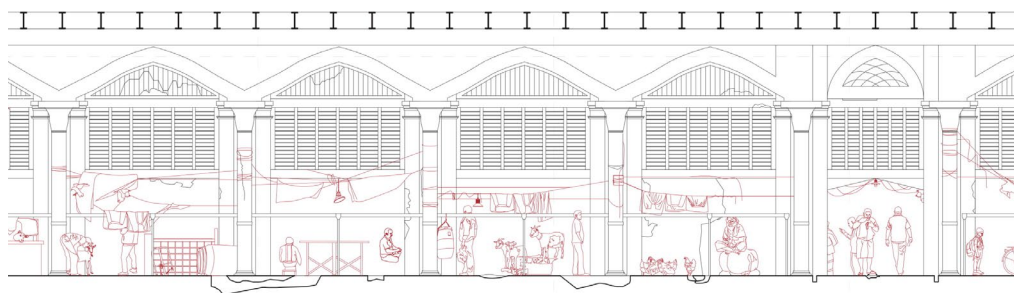
## RIVERS OF BLOOD

G B E K E   A K I N K U G B E

In reading a city like Calcutta, one can get lost in the multi-layered frenzy of its ecology. It is however key to note that the way the city operates can be read through the study of concentrated clusters. Such an example can be found in the meat packing hall of the S.S Hogg Newmarket, where animals, children, butchers, motorcycles and other amenities co-exist within close proximity to each other. The hall is an Ark, sitting within a landscape where various vessels interact with it on a daily basis. The Ark in this project is paramount in reading the architecture of the city, where each building/individual is a vessel that sifts through the landscape of Calcutta. Judging the effectiveness of each vessel is hinged on its hybridity and its accommodation of the elements within its ecology. In trying to create a new architecture (or Vessel) it is important to consider Calcutta as not the dehydrated flat table that it is, but as a layered ocean which must be assailed through programmatic and tectonic considerations.



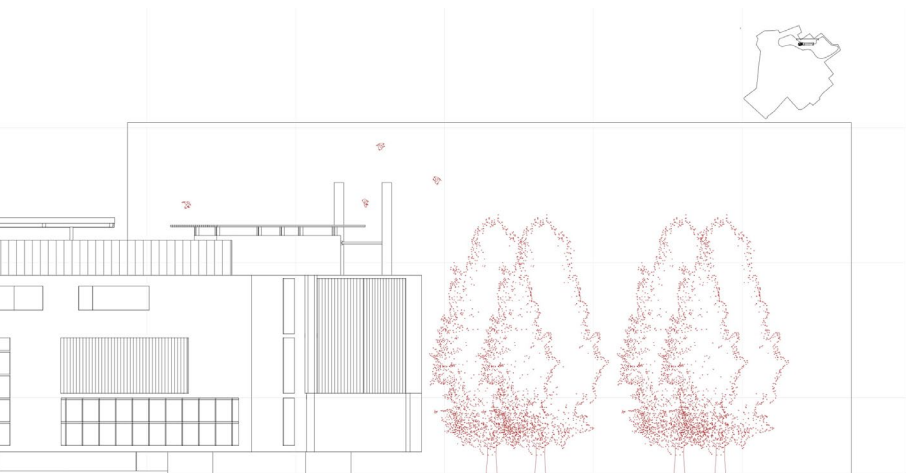
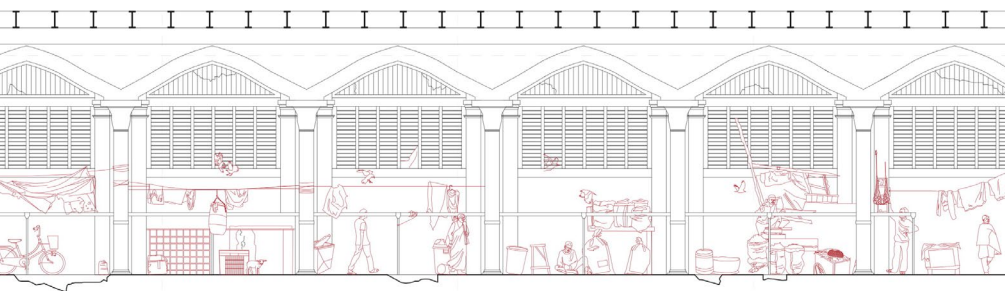




▲ THE ARK IN ACTION, MEAT MARKET

▲ THE MACHINES OF CARE, PROPOSITION





## THE DRAWING ROOM OF DRYNESS BLOTTINGS AND ANCESTRY

ADAM BROWN, FINDLAY MCFARLANE, SABRINA SYED

BROWN, MCFARLANE, SYED - THE DRAWING ROOM OF DRYNESS

Sukanya's House floats upon a dream of dryness.<sup>i</sup> Calcutta belongs to this same delusion: the assumption that there is an infrastructure which understands the city's aqueous context. The moat which surrounds Sukanya's house gives the impression of this understanding, but the rising damp in the drawing room is evidence of the reality – Calcutta is an Ocean of Wetness.

The intensity and intimacy of the drawing room is microcosmic. Its pieces are fragments of other worlds reassembled and exhibited as the possessions of one Bengali family. Challenging the moat as the threshold of the drawing room could therefore carry an intelligence that builds on the scale of the city. In testing this, we re-calibrate the moat as part of an apparatus that re-imagines Calcutta at Body scale, Building scale and at the scale of the [Loving] Metropolitan Landscape. These blotting zones engage with wetness rather than ignore it. They cultivate dryness by drawing water away.

i Sukanya Mitra, scholar and resident of Calcutta.

ii Amit Chaudhury, international author, scholar and resident of Calcutta. The neighbourhood in question refers to that of the novel *A Strange and Sublime Address*.

Our three architectural proposals exist as heirs of their Bengali ancestors, with familial resemblances drawn from Sukanya's house and Amit's neighbourhood.<sup>ii</sup> Further genetic variations are imagined from Bhadrakalok grandparents. These proposals are conceived as blotting instruments: not only do they celebrate various civic programmes, they introduce patches of dryness to their contexts in which they can thrive in the Ocean of Wetness.



BROWN, MCFARLANE, SYED - THE DRAWING ROOM OF DRYNESS

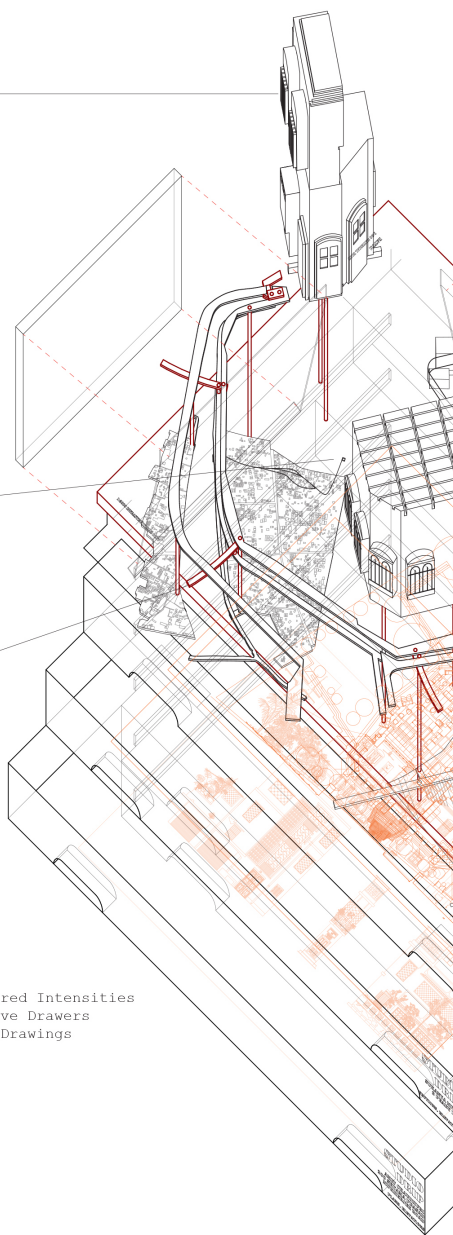
"Water Room"  
Water Negative  
Plaster Cast  
1:20

Design Archive

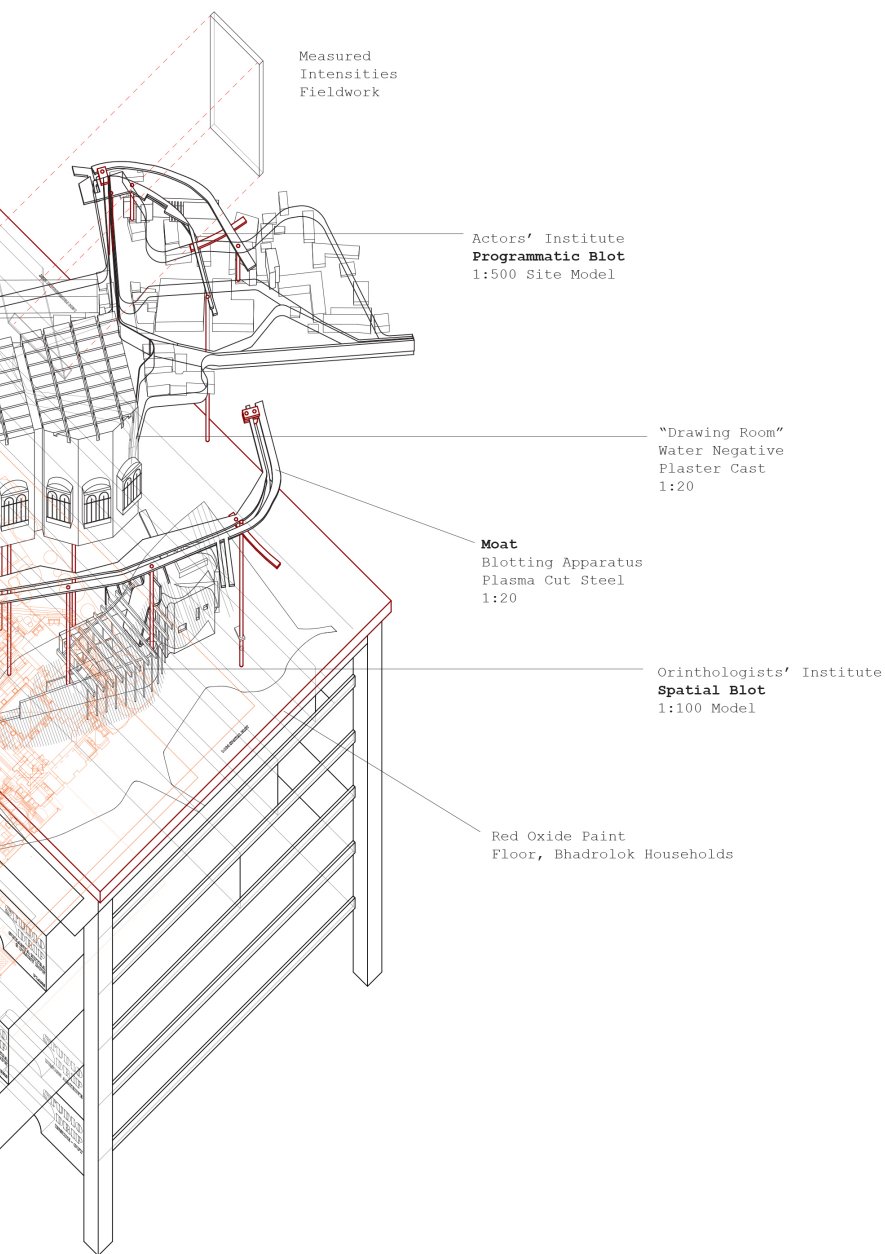
Writers' Institute  
**Infrastructural Blot**  
1:5000 Urban Morphology

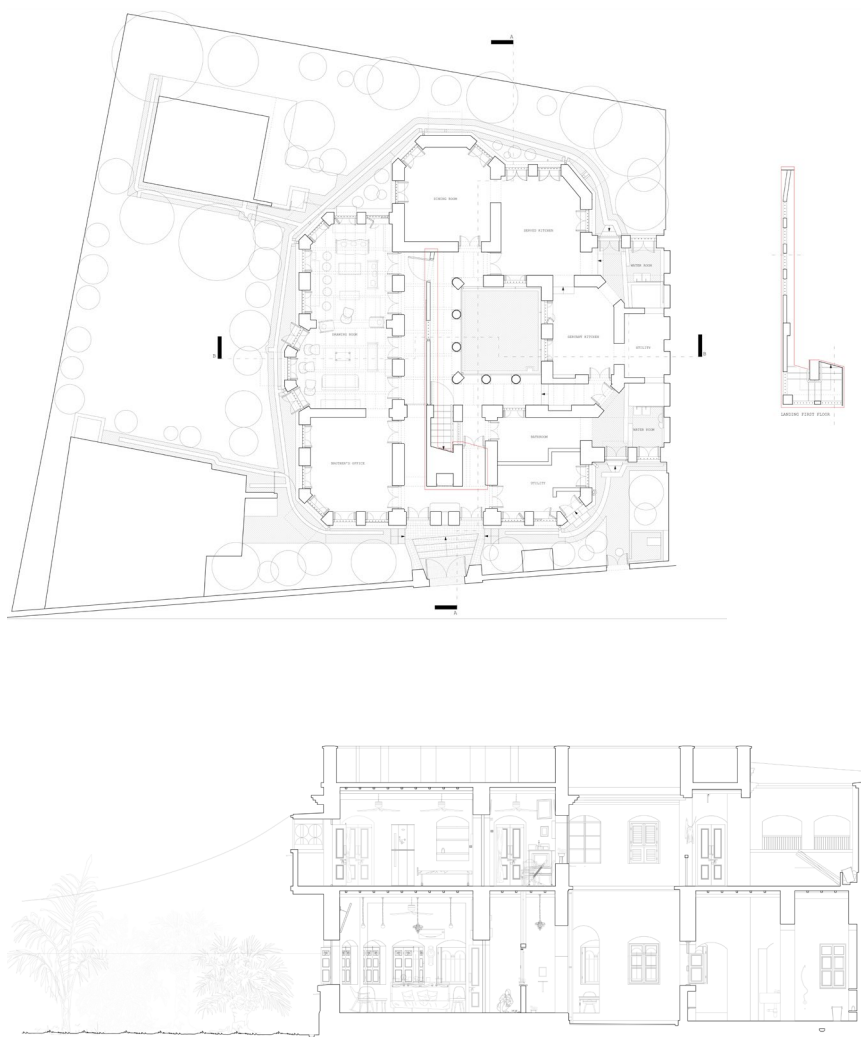
**Hinge**  
Operates across  
multiple scales

Measured Intensities  
Archive Drawers  
1:50 Drawings









▲ SUKANYA'S HOUSE, PLAN

▲ SUKANYA'S HOUSE, SECTION

► AMIT'S NEIGHBOURHOOD, PLAN

► AMIT'S NEIGHBOURHOOD, ELEVATION



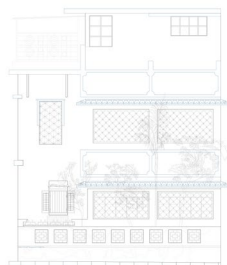
Elevation 1A

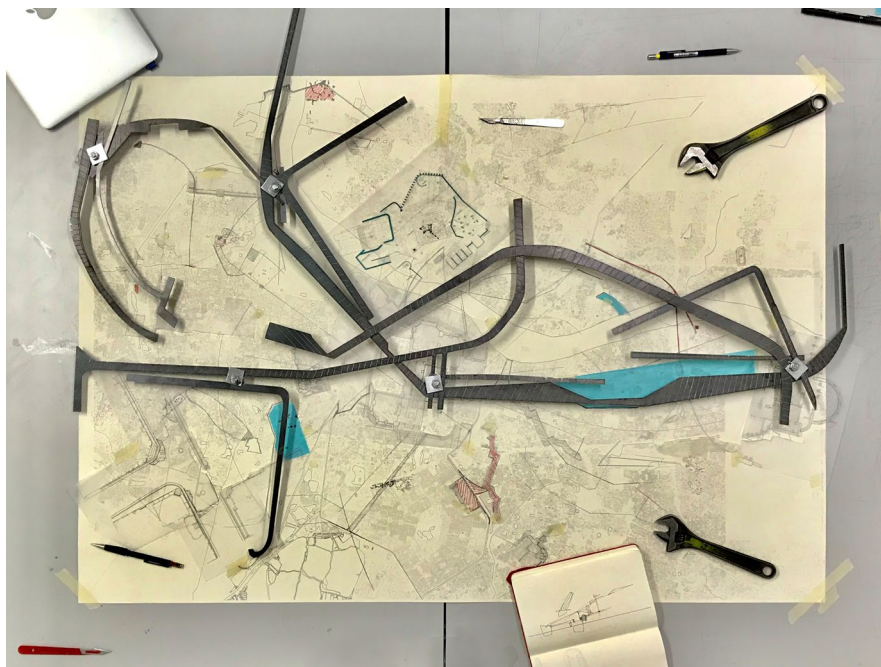


Elevation 1B

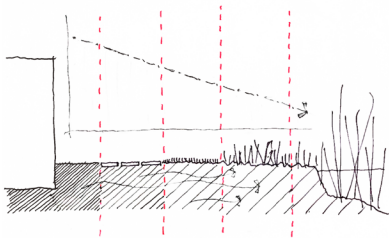


Elevation 1C







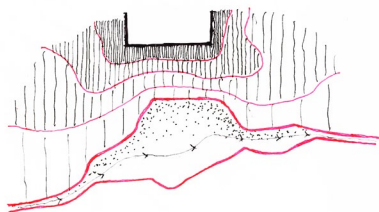


BODY [DRIP] SCALE:

**MATERIAL BLOTING - Gradient of Permeability**

A gradual increase in permeability of material creates a potential gradient, giving any water on the surface or within the materials a direction through displacement- away from the impermeable building.

Body acts on Building: 1:50 House is recalibrated using 1:20 apparatus to alleviate rising damp for 5 people through material blotting.

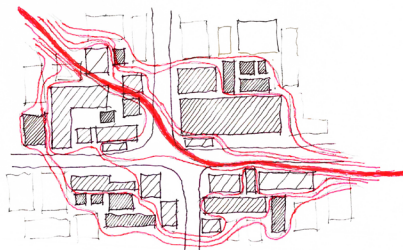


BUILDING [CHANNEL] SCALE:

**SPATIAL BLOTING - Infiltration Basins and Swales**

Reeded basins form the lowest permeability end of the material gradient - water is drawn away from the building into them. These bodies slow run-off water from the vast expanses of concrete and asphalt in Calcutta, alleviating the frequently overwhelmed drainage systems. The basins are swellings upon underground or overground swales, ensuring the constant movement of water.

Body acts on Buildings and TML: Arbitrary placement of Genealogical Origins - 1:100 house and neighbourhood and 1:20000 city are recalibrated using 1:20 apparatus. Damp is alleviated for 20 people at Building scale and 4000 people at TML scale.

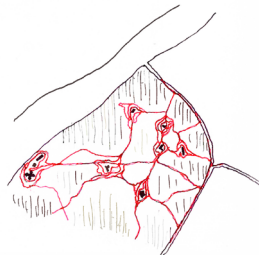


SET [CANAL] SCALE:

**PROGRAMMATIC BLOTING - Contours of Programmatic Permeability**

An institution's Series of Enzymatic Territories are graded into permeability of programme, and the 'line of best fit' informs the location of a Spatial Blot. This basin or swale forms the centre from which contours swell to encompass their corresponding gradients of permeability. By crossing and breaking these concentric contours, the proposal can then find its appropriate situation within this new Blot, as well as beginning to form its own internal programmatic arrangement.

Body acts on Building, SET and TML: Genealogical Origins are given Geometric Origins through contextual placement and apparatus follows line of pumping stations. 1:100 plans, 1:500 site plans and 1:20000 city plans are recalibrated using the 1:20 apparatus. Thresholds are displaced to widen streets, locating blotting zones at TML scale.



TML [RIVER] SCALE

**INFRASTRUCTURAL BLOTING - Institutional Epicentres**

SETs become individual Programmatic Blots of dryness which seep into The [Loving] Metropolitan Landscape, connected within the Ocean of Wetness by an infrastructure of Spatial Blots. Colonial institutions of power become epicentres for programmatic contours, within and across which we can appropriately situate counterpart institutions of 'water power'.

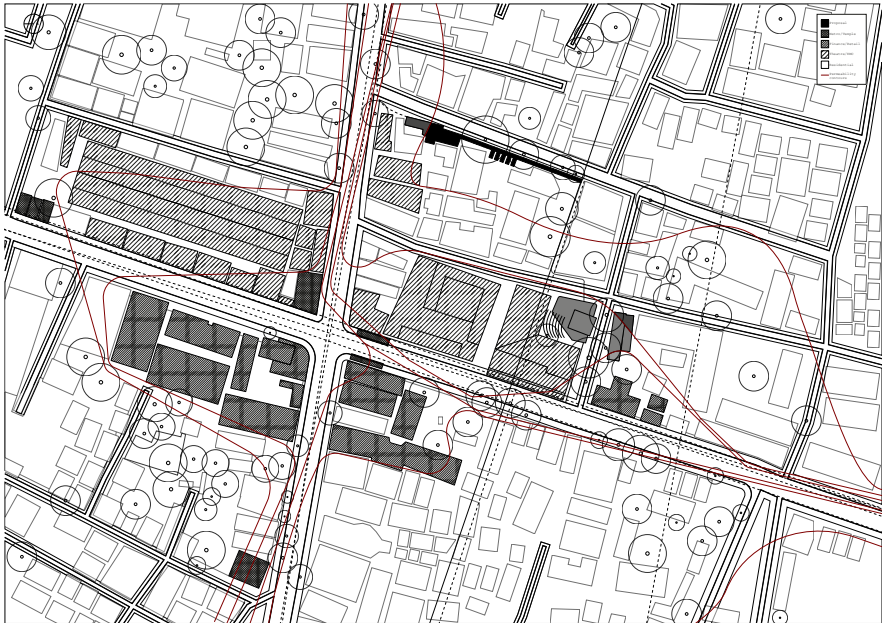
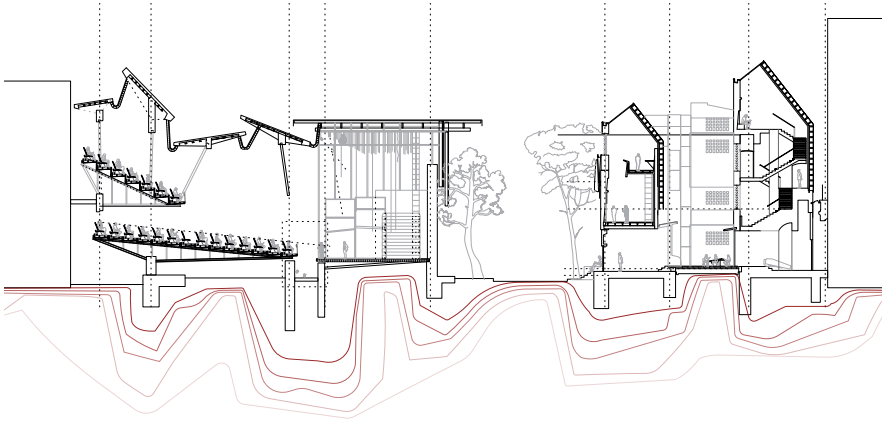
Body acts on Building and TML: Re-situated vessels of Origin architecture are unmoored from their Genealogical and Geometric origins to become blotting instruments in new contexts.

◀ MOAT RE-CALIBRATION

◀ BODY ACTS ON BUILDING, SET AND TML

▲ MATERIAL, SPATIAL, PROGRAMMATIC, INFRASTRUCTURAL BLOTS

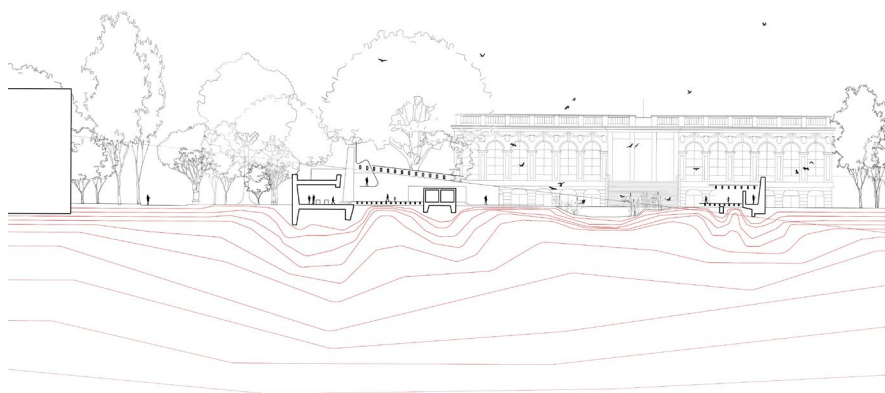




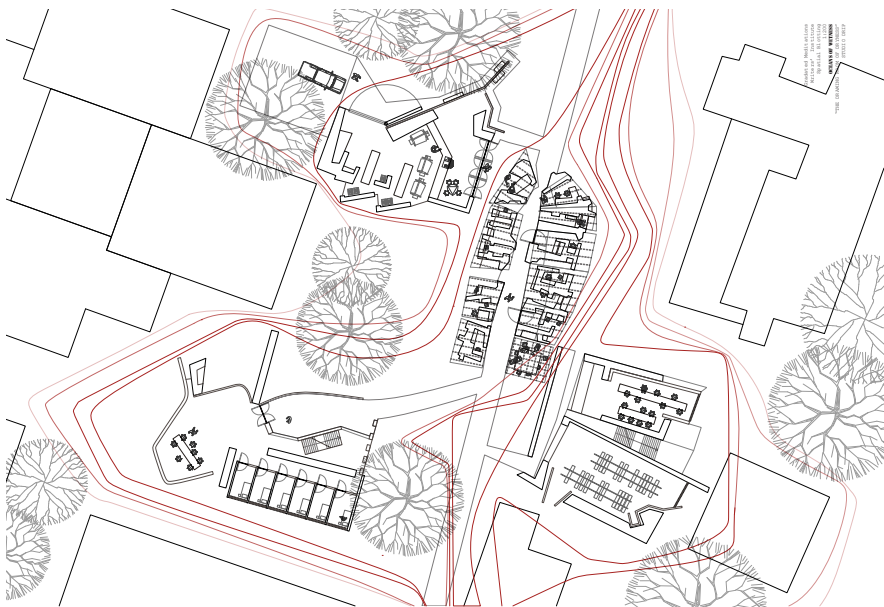
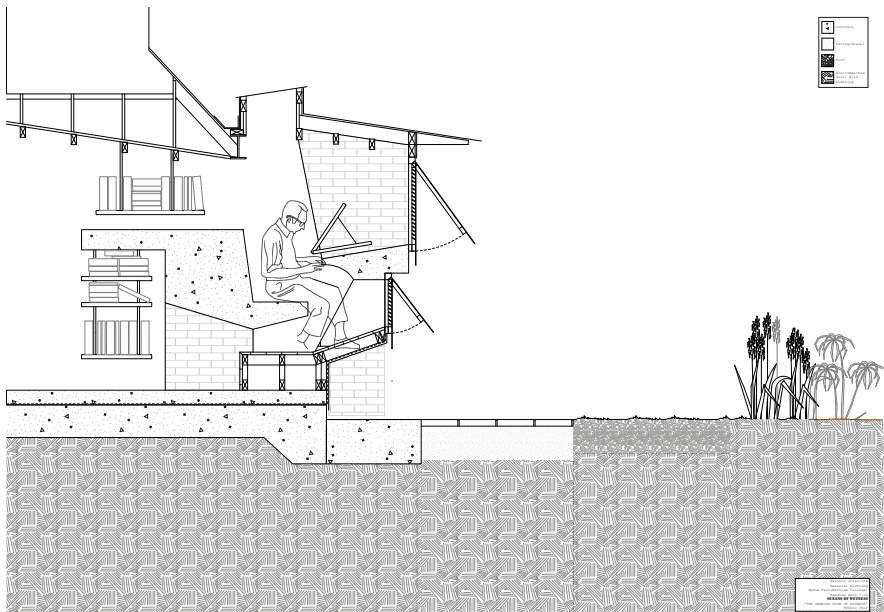
◀ BLOT ATLAS

▲ CHARACTERISING GRADIENTS

▲ PROGRAMMATIC BLOTTING



- ▲ BLOT INTRUSION
- ▲ WETNESS TABLE DISRUPTION
- BLOTING BOOKS DRY
- GRADATED MEDITATIONS





## BLIND BLENDS

### LINGUAL LIBRARY

SHIDAN HAGOS

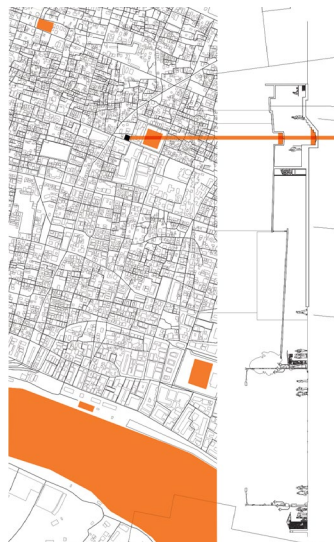
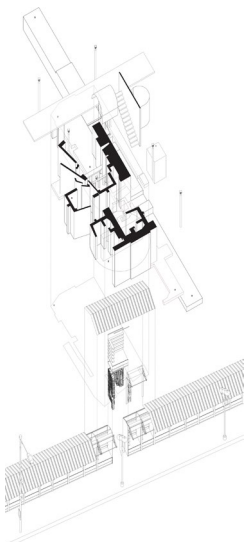
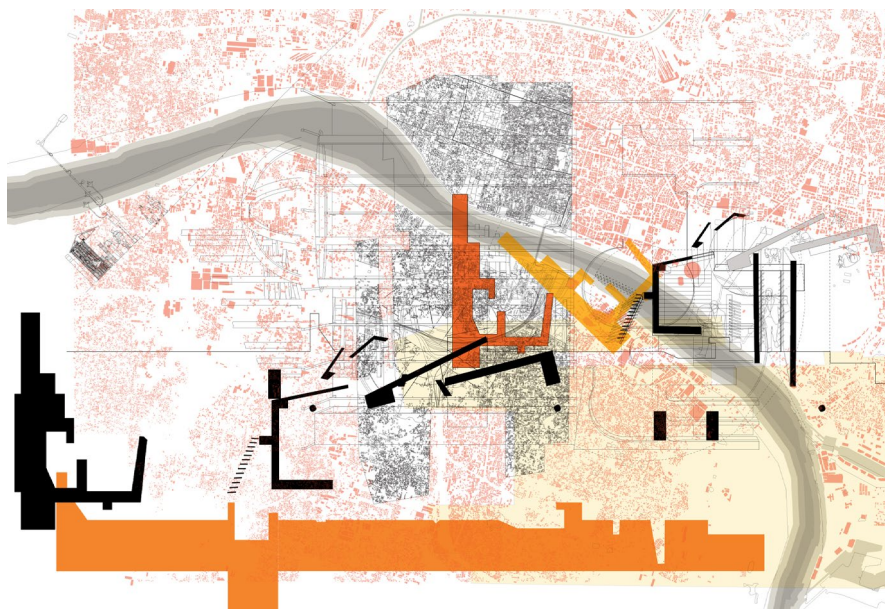
Satadru Pain, a regular of Calcutta's Coffee House, sits in the privacy of his table and orders coffee. Sat across from a foreigner he begins to divulge dialogue fit for politics & the Arts. He finishes his drink.

Iraz Malik, the owner of the book stall, sits in his usual sanctuary sipping chai. Sat across from a foreigner, he too begins to divulge dialogue fit for politics & the Arts. He finishes his drink.

The project is a study of lingual liberties facilitated by the agencies of coffee and chai. The architecture redefines, reconfigures and reinterprets the confinement of coffee and the seclusion of chai and designs a tactical gap between the two commodities. The gap, the Lingual Library, a blur in the relationship between the two agencies, is stirred to provide spaces that negotiate the ground of discussion between them and beyond into the academic ground of College Street.

Michael Madhusudan Dutta sits in the privacy of the English Language room, drinking tea, smelling the coffee, writing Bengali poems about politics. The workshop in which Michael composes blends multiple agencies.







◀ SCALE-SCAPE, SKETCHING OVER THE CITY

◀ MICHAEL'S ROOM APPROPRIATING THE BOOK STALLS

▲ PALIMP-PSEST-SCAPE SPATIAL APPROPRIATION

▲ OCEAN OF WETNESS IN THE LINGUAL LIBRARY





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## IMAGE CREDITS

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Catherine Ingraham

Michael Webb

Luis Callejas

Nandini Sampat

James Craig

Anuradha Mathur

Dilip da Cunha

Amit Chaudhuri (Calcutta, January 2018)

Sukanya Mitra (Calcutta, January 2018)

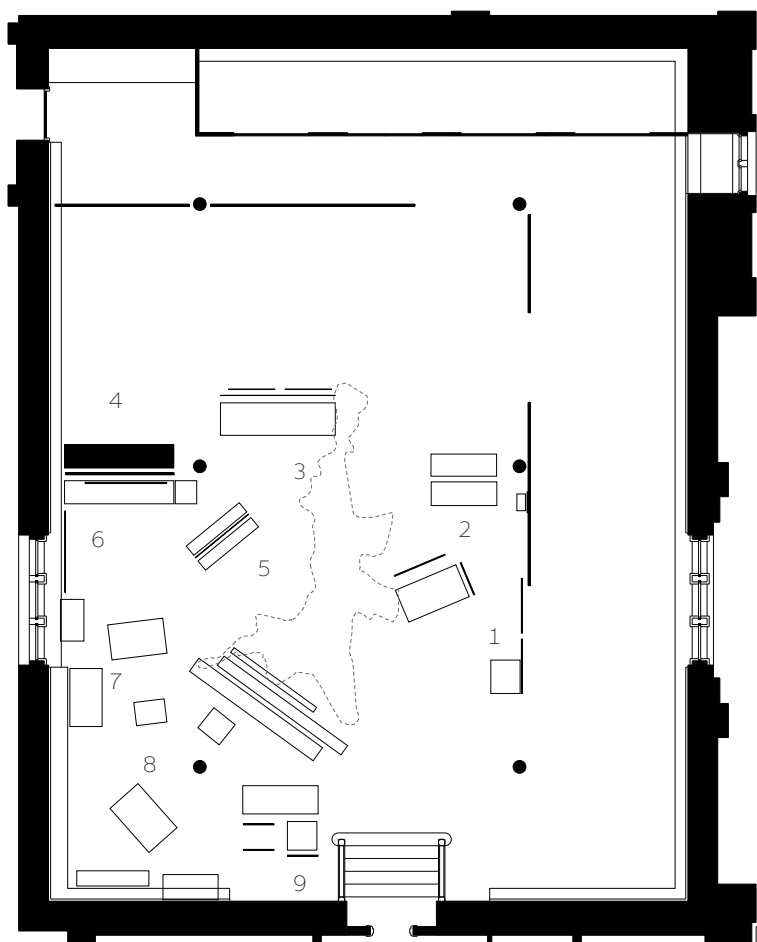
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- 1 WATER WORKS & WORKS OF WATER
- 2 BENGAL SCENTS
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- 9 BLIND BLENDS



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