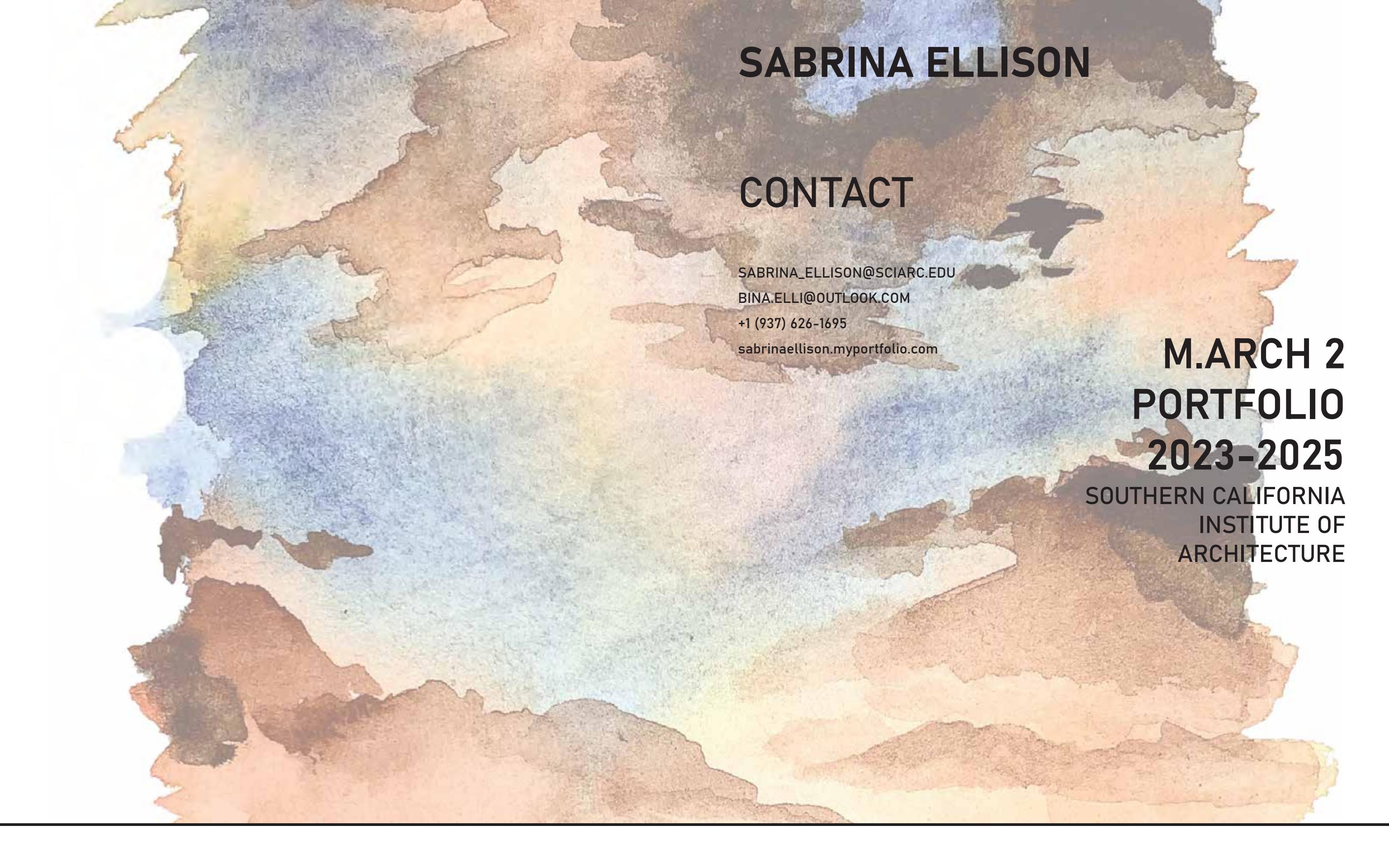


SABRINA ELLISON

**M.ARCH 2
PORTFOLIO
2023-2025
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
INSTITUTE OF
ARCHITECTURE**



SABRINA ELLISON

CONTACT

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**M.ARCH 2
PORTFOLIO
2023-2025**

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
INSTITUTE OF
ARCHITECTURE**

STATEMENT

My work lives at the intersection of visual storytelling, digital experimentation, and material sensitivity. Over the past two years at SCI-Arc, I've used architecture as a medium to question how we experience space. Not just through form or function, but through layers of perception, contradiction, and emotion.

This portfolio brings together a range of explorations, from community-centered design and ecological systems to scenographic worlds, AI-driven narratives, and tactile studies. Across these projects, I'm drawn to friction, between image and reality, body and interface, memory and material. I'm especially interested in how spatial narratives can hold multiple truths at once, sometimes destabilizing, sometimes grounding.

While some of my recent work centers on sensory misalignment and inclusive design, this collection reflects a broader interest in spaces that sit at the edge of architecture, media, and performance. Whether working through set design, digital collage, or speculative fiction, I aim to create environments that unsettle expectations and invite layered forms of engagement.

Rather than offering one fixed idea of space, this portfolio maps an evolving practice. Curious, critical, and always attuned to the felt experience of design.

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80	THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO 3GBX DS Vertical Studio Elena Manferdini
98	FROM FLESH TO CODE 3GBX LA Outsider Geographies Daniel Tovar

CARVING PATH

2GAX: Computational Design Studio I

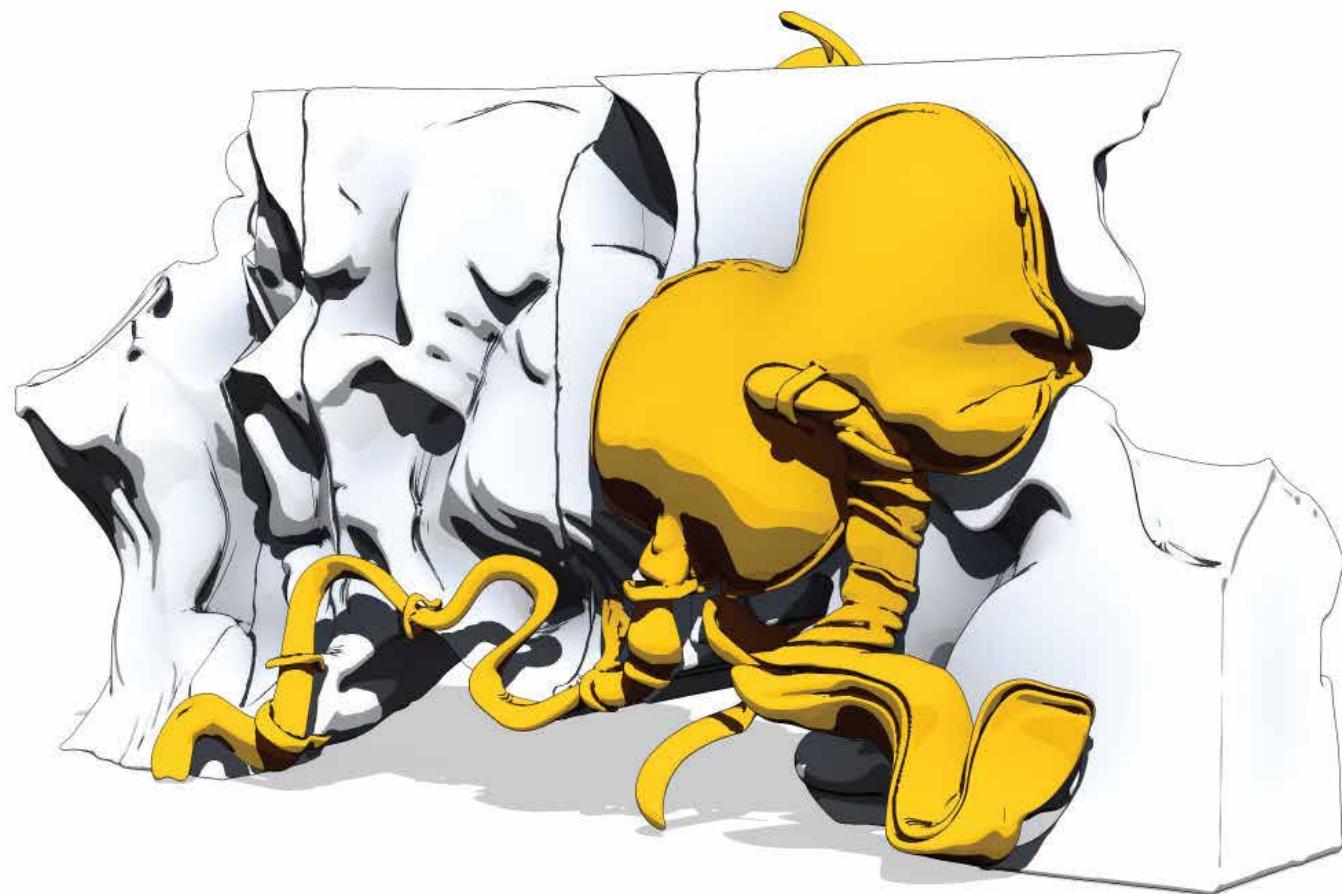
FALL 2023

INSTRUCTOR: William Virgil

PARTNER: Karlson Ty

PERSPECTIVE RENDER





PERSPECTIVE OF FORM STUDY

Our project at Lincoln Heights Jail, inspired by Homeboy Industries, reimagines space as a dynamic interplay of form and function. Through careful study models and sculptural explorations, we crafted a design that respects the site's history while embracing transformative potential. By adapting to existing architectural features and integrating elements like color-shifting patina and

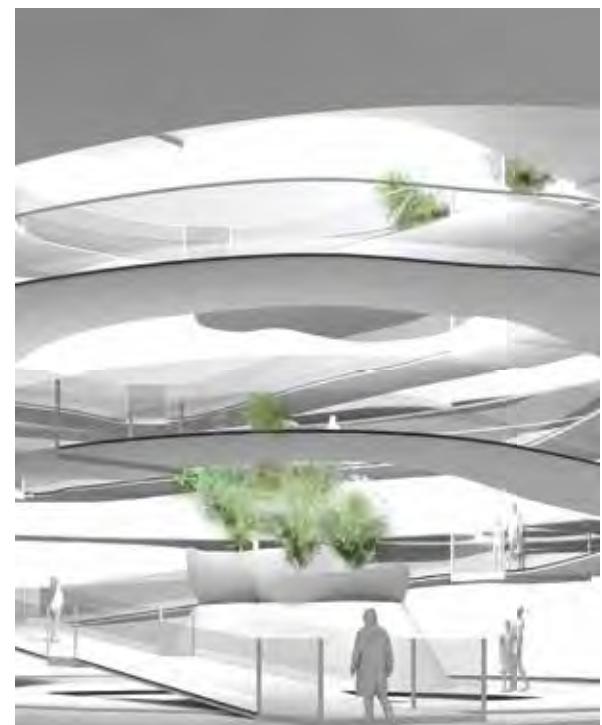
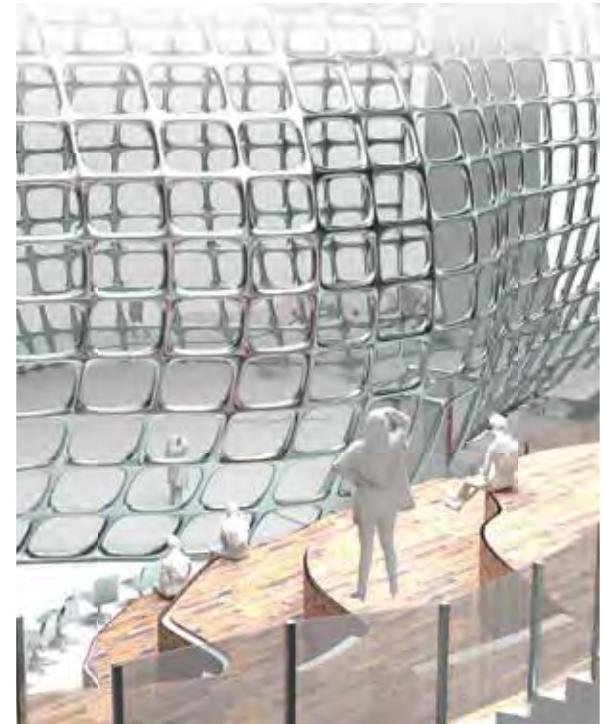
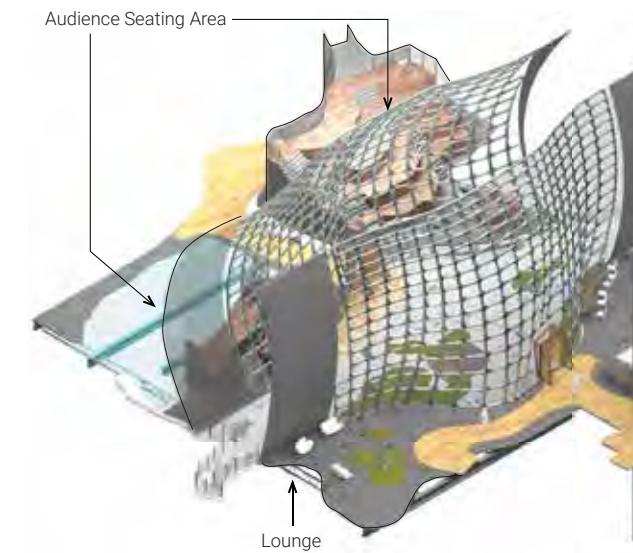
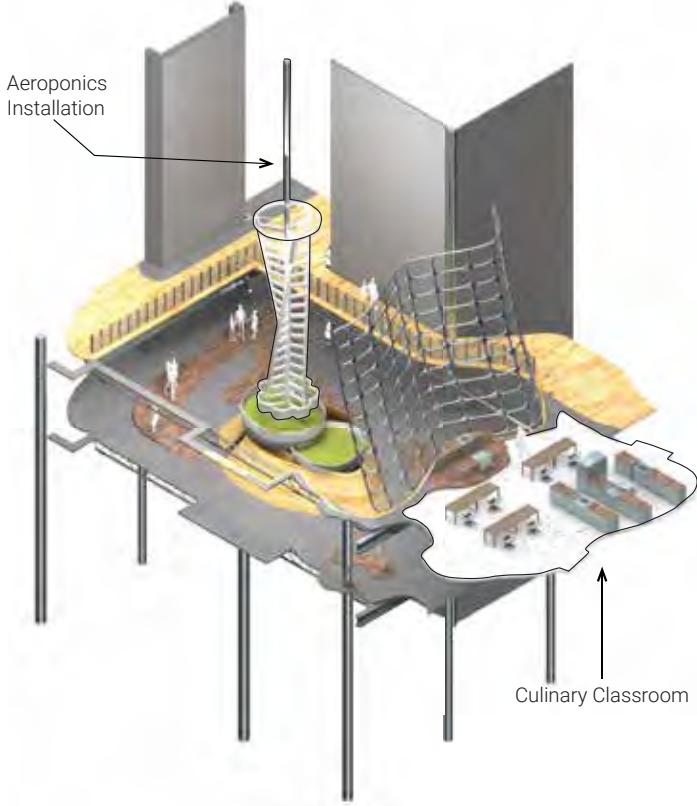
innovative vertical farming, we create a welcoming yet impactful environment. Our project fosters community engagement, sustainability, and healing, embodying the ethos of Homeboy Industries as a space of inclusion, forgiveness, and refuge.

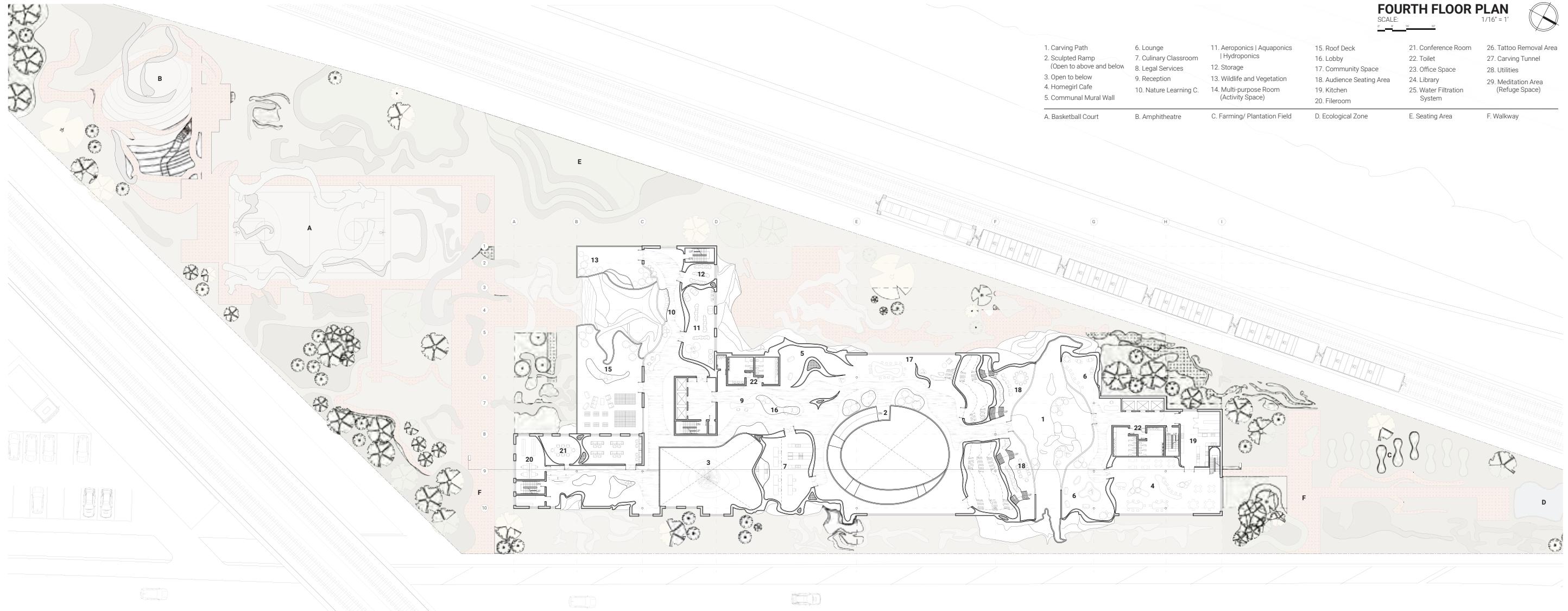


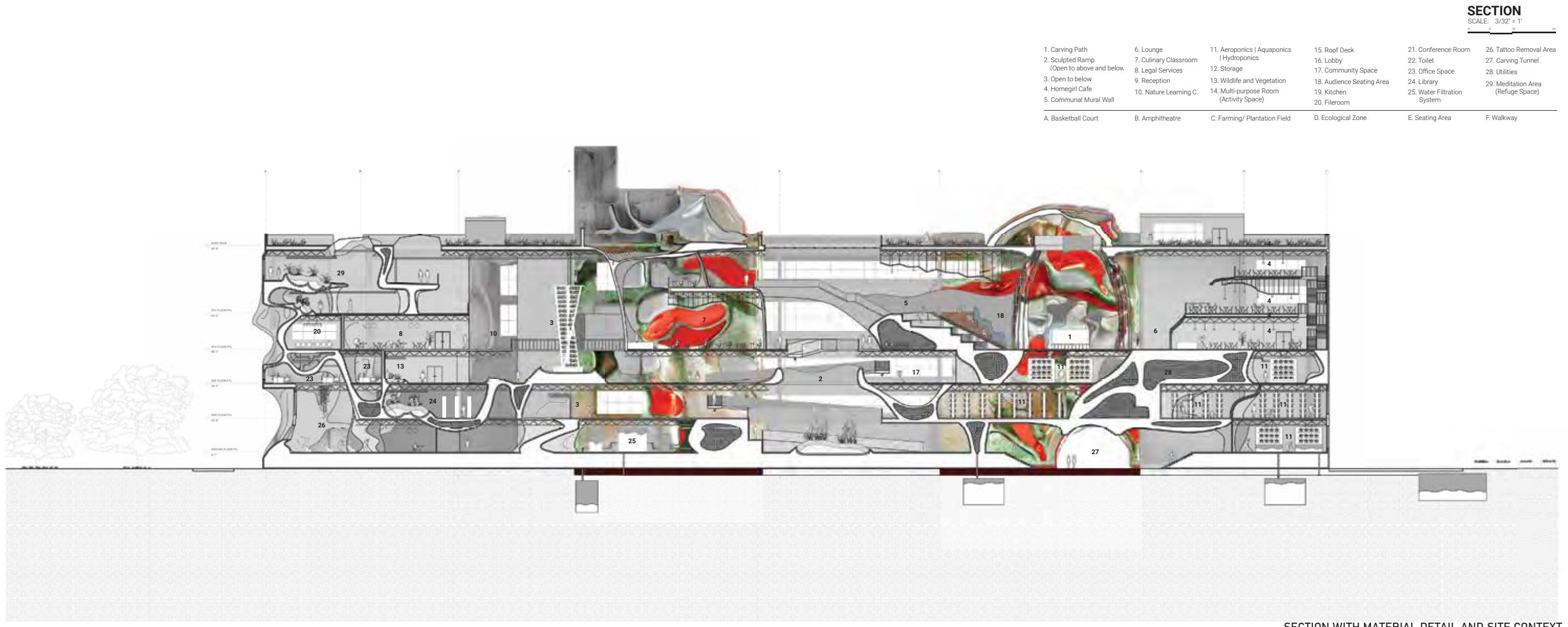
FORM CREATED USING BUG PARTS

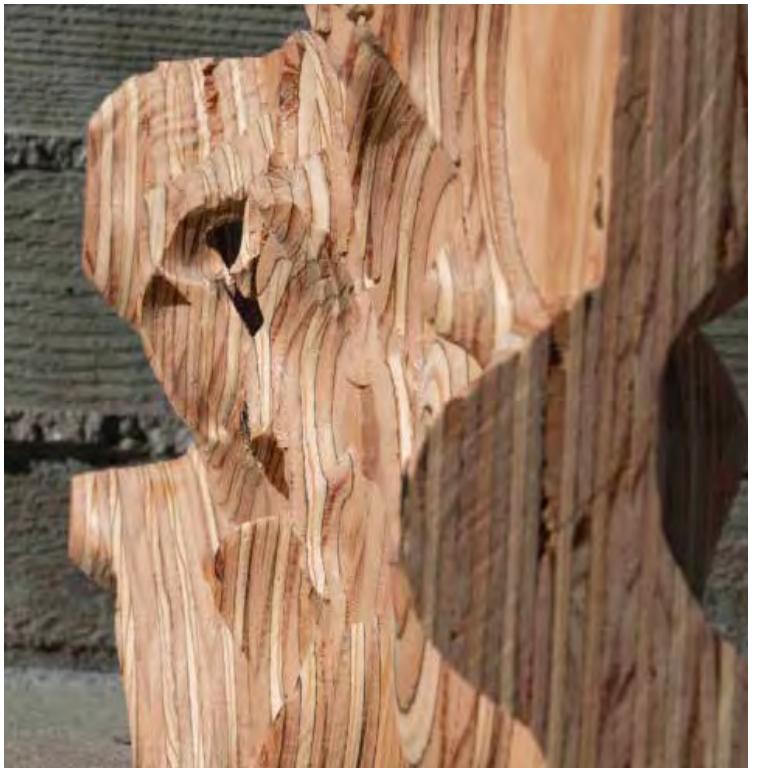


EXPLODED ISOMETRIC OF FORM STUDY









DETAIL PHOTO OF FORM STUDY MODEL



BACK ELEVATION OF FORM STUDY MODEL



FRONT ELEVATION OF FORM STUDY MODEL



BACK ELEVATION OF FORM STUDY MODEL



FRONT ELEVATION OF FORM STUDY MODEL



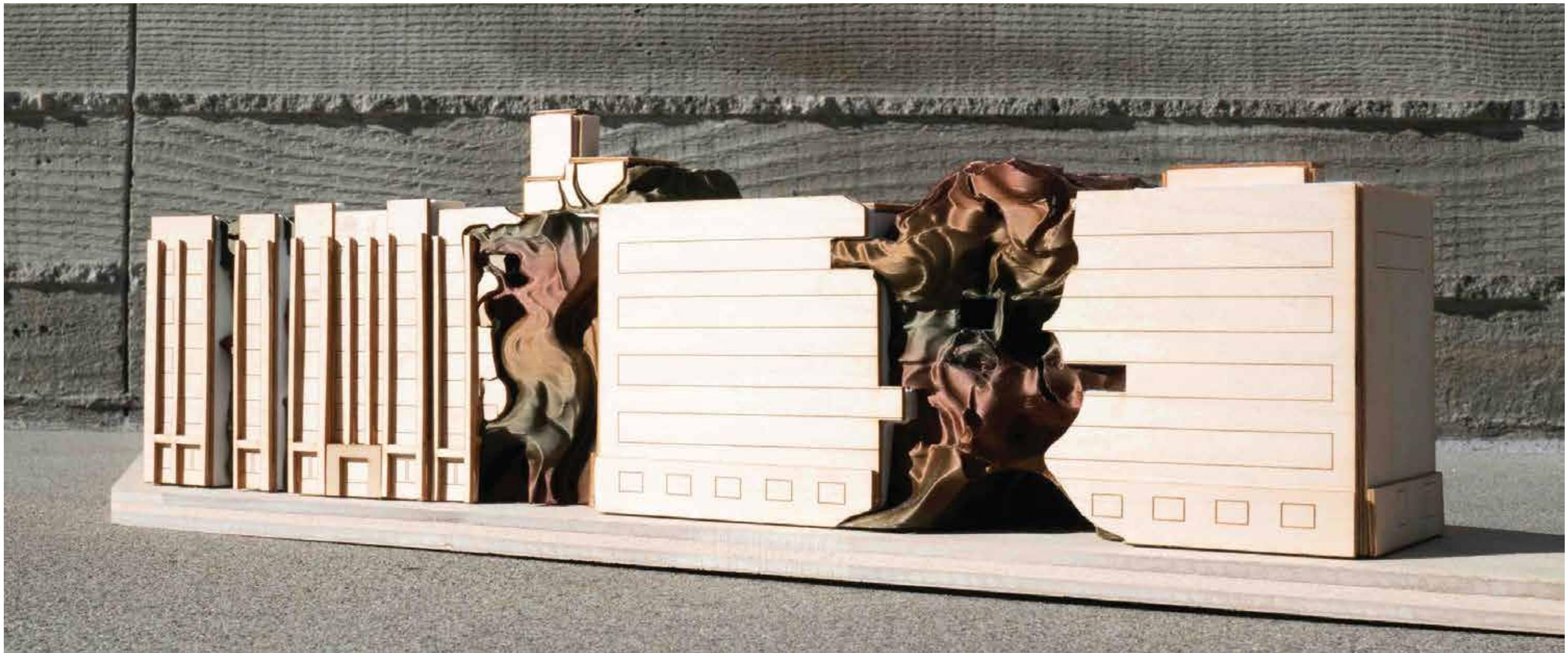
DETAIL PHOTO OF FORM STUDY MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF FORM STUDY MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF FORM STUDY MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF FINAL MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF FINAL MODEL



FRONT DETAIL ELEVATION OF FINAL MODEL

Our design embraces sustainability through vertical farming systems and a rainwater collection system, promoting ecological resilience and community stewardship. These initiatives serve as educational opportunities and sources of fresh food for the community. We integrated existing architectural features through the facade, preserving the site's essence while introducing subtle interventions to redefine its purpose. The

interplay of voids, geometry, and materiality symbolizes resilience and transformation, echoing Homeboy Industries' mission of inclusion and acceptance. In summary, our project embodies the transformative potential of architecture as a catalyst for social change. Rooted in principles of inclusivity and forgiveness, it offers a sanctuary for healing and renewal, echoing the ethos of Homeboy Industries as a beacon of hope and resilience.



TOP RENDER



FRONT RENDER



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF FINAL MODEL



PERSPECTIVE RENDER

algaeNESIS

2GBX: Computational Design Studio II

SPRING 2024

INSTRUCTOR: Herwig Baumgartner

PARTNER: Sagar Ratnani

PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF GROUND

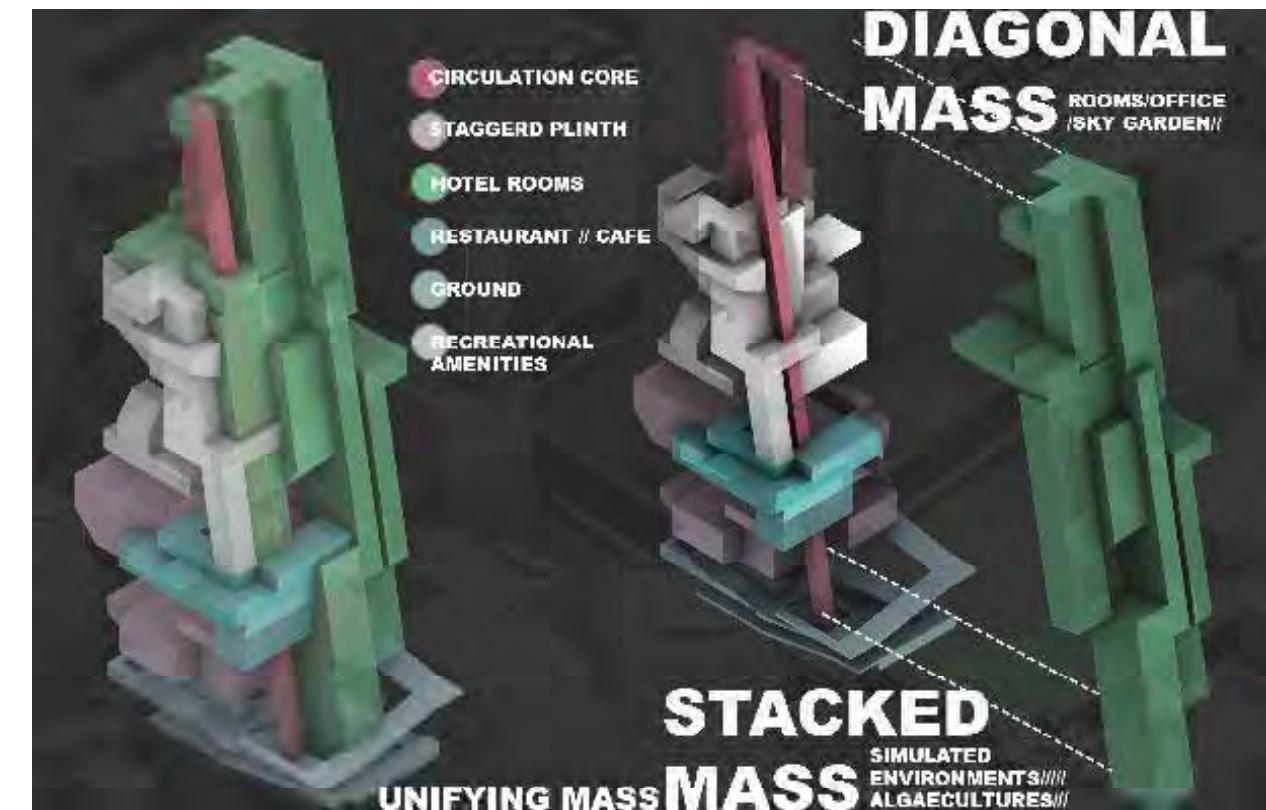




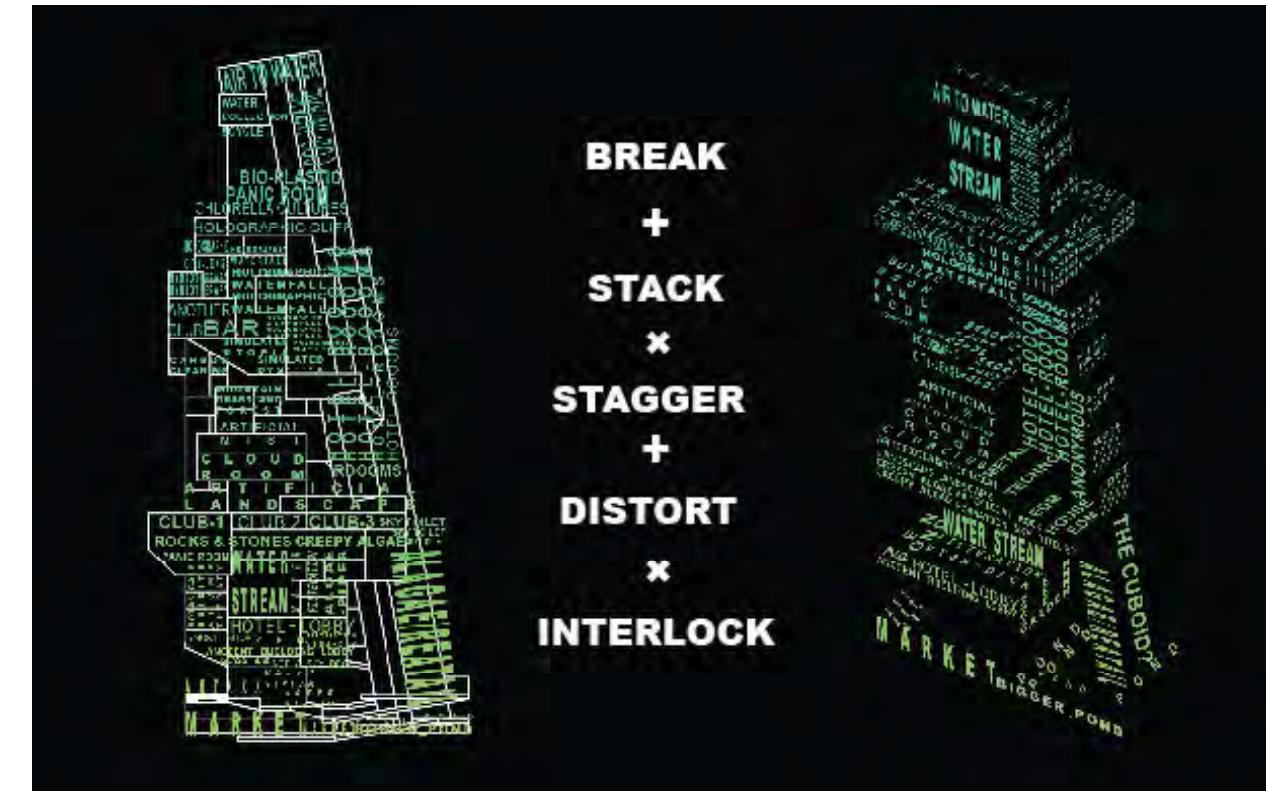
SITE INFORMATION

Situated at the prominent intersection of W 5th Street and S Grand Ave in Los Angeles, the Gas Company Tower redevelopment project led by Sagar and Sabrina aims to reimagine the urban landscape. By conserving and repurposing the tower's core, the project seeks to attract the public from neighboring landmarks such as the Los Angeles Public Library and Pershing Square. The innovative design integrates hospitality and sustainability concepts, blending natural elements with artificial environments to

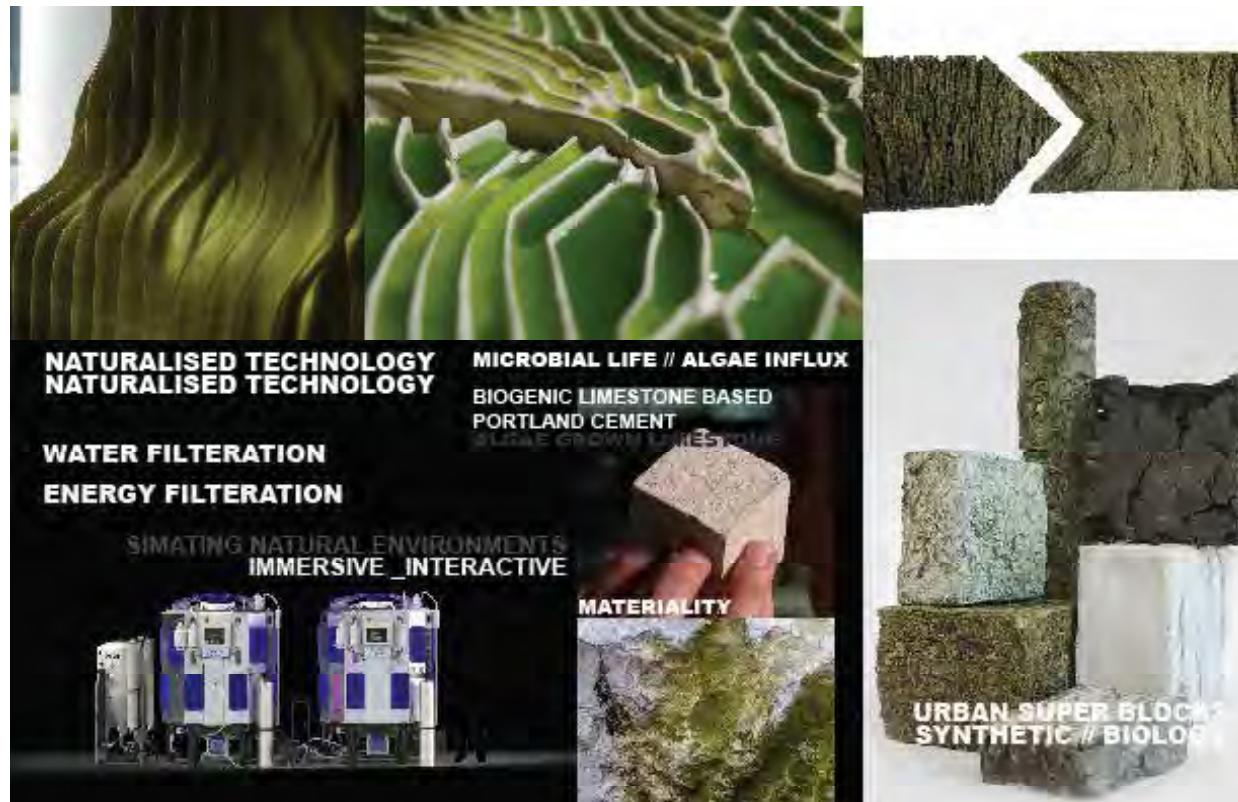
create a unique immersive experience. Through a carefully crafted program that includes event spaces and relaxation areas, the project caters to diverse needs, whether for work or leisure. Sustainability lies at the heart of the project, utilizing algae and water to generate energy and improve air quality, while also implementing eco-friendly building materials. Algae sourced from live cultures will be grown and harvested for energy production, complemented by water collection and reuse systems.



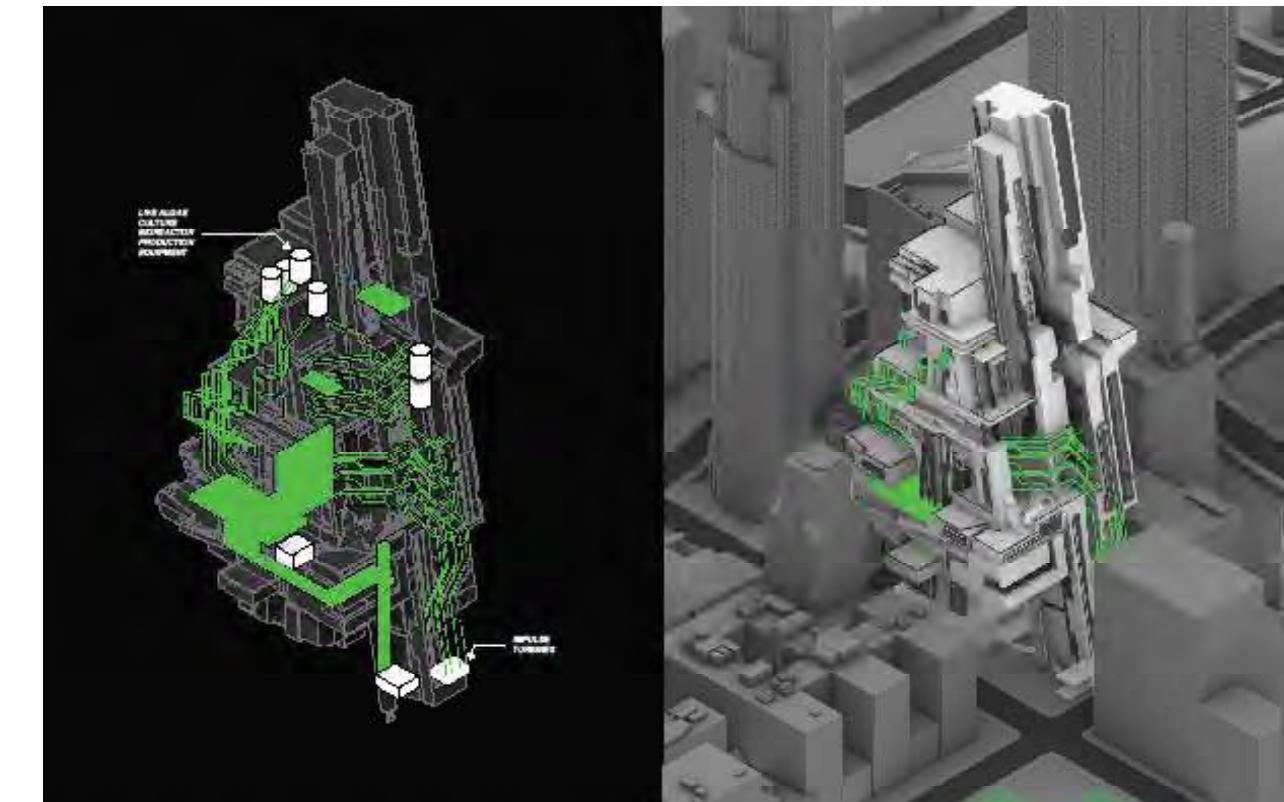
PROGRAM DIAGRAM



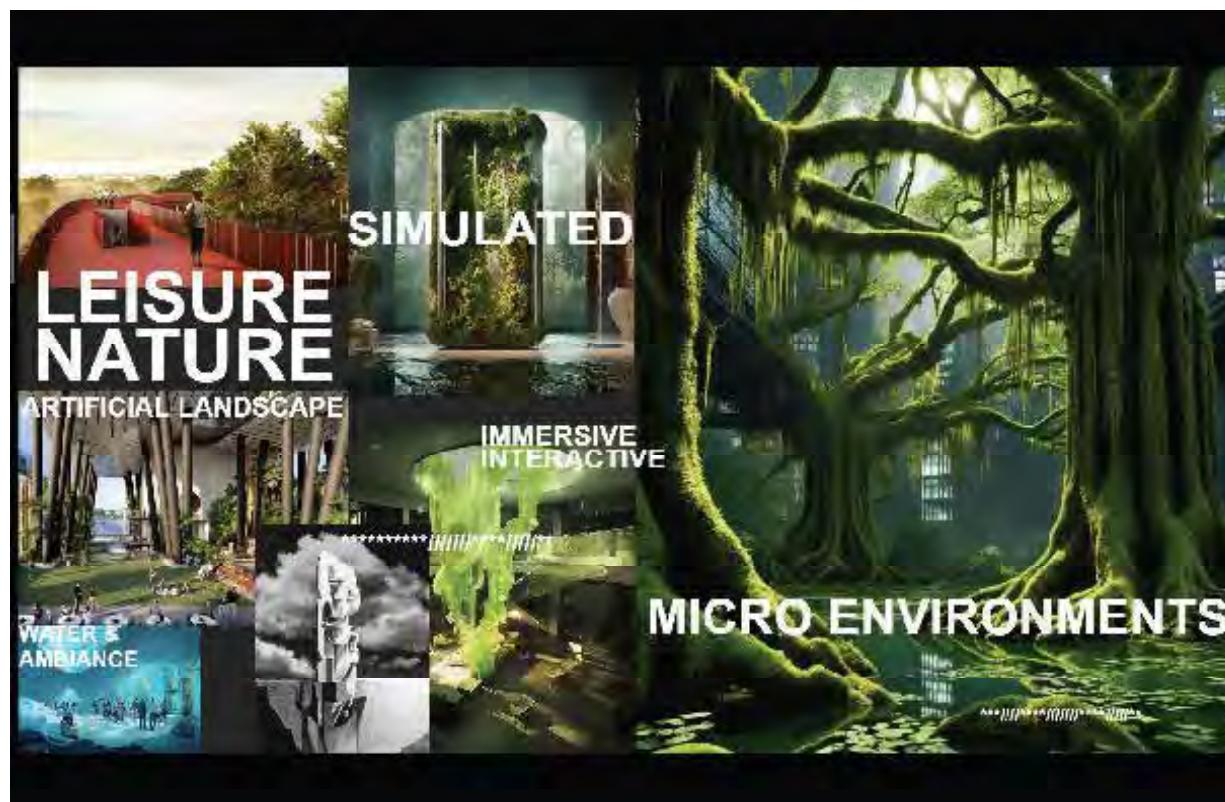
PROGRAM DIAGRAM



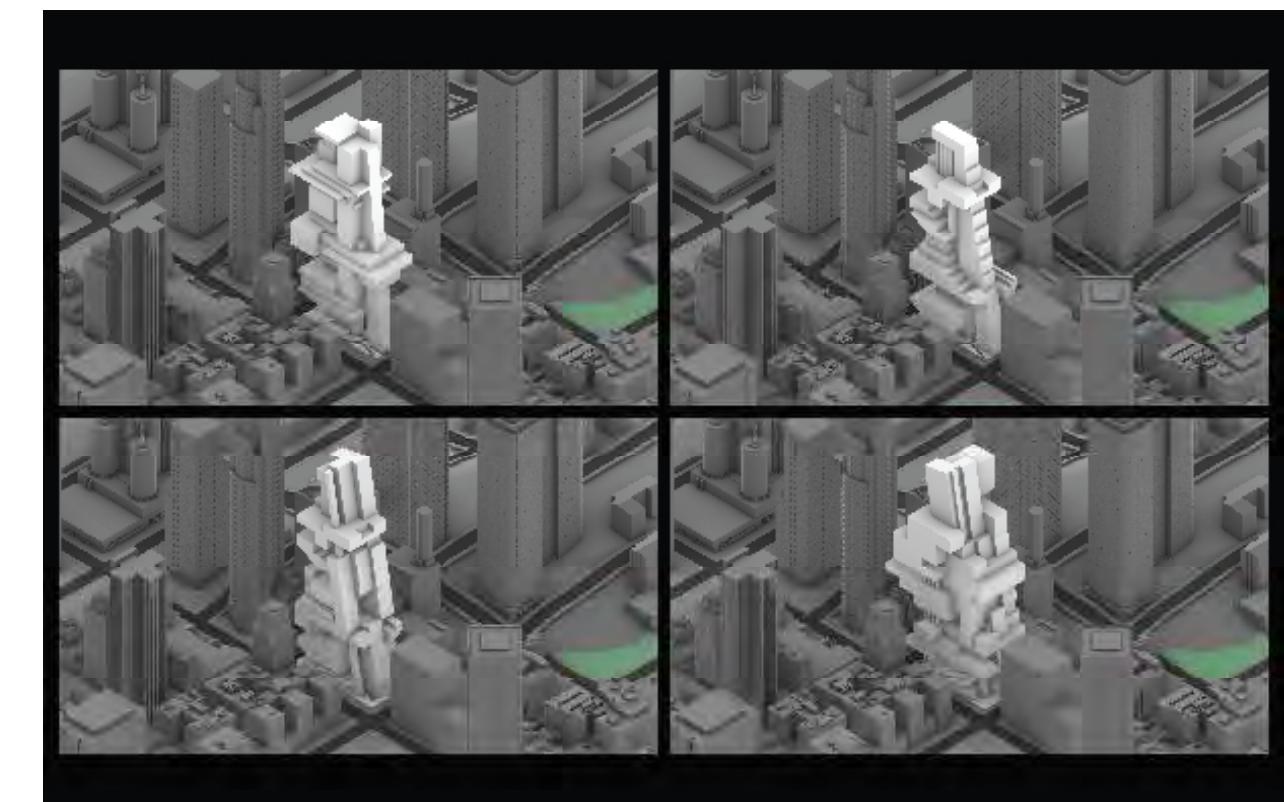
SUSTAINABILITY GRAPHIC



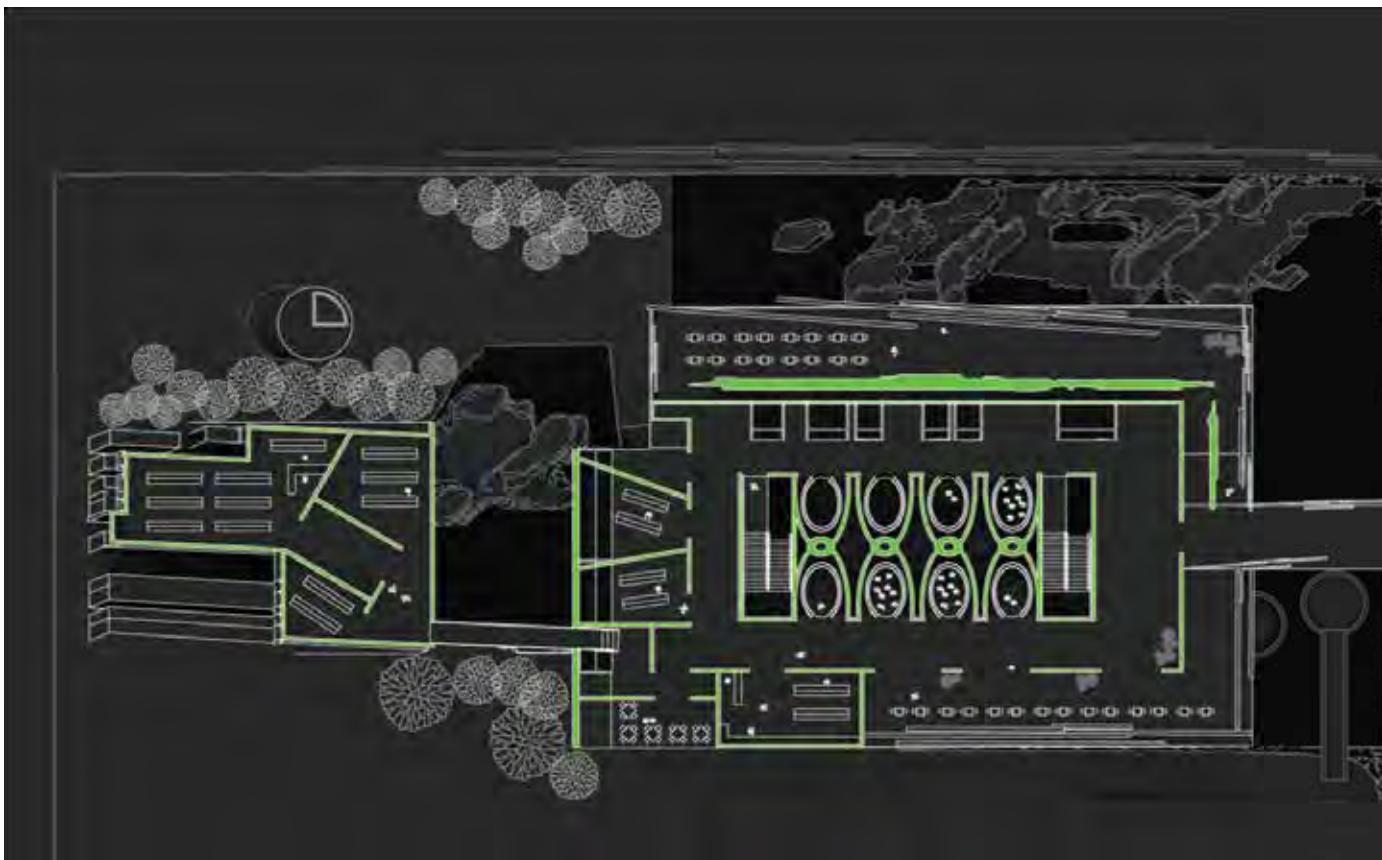
ALGAE/WATER SYSTEM DIAGRAM



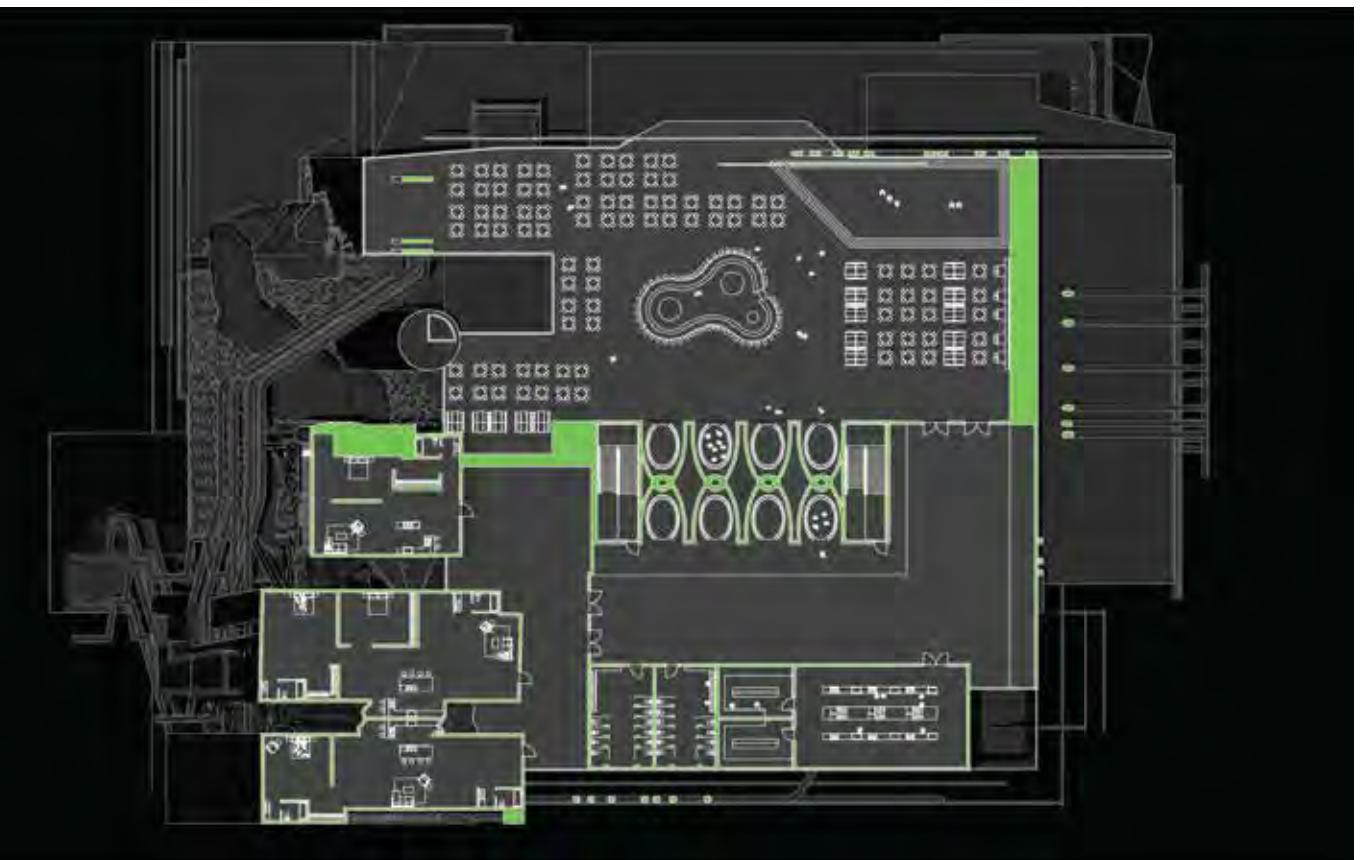
HOSPITALITY GRAPHIC



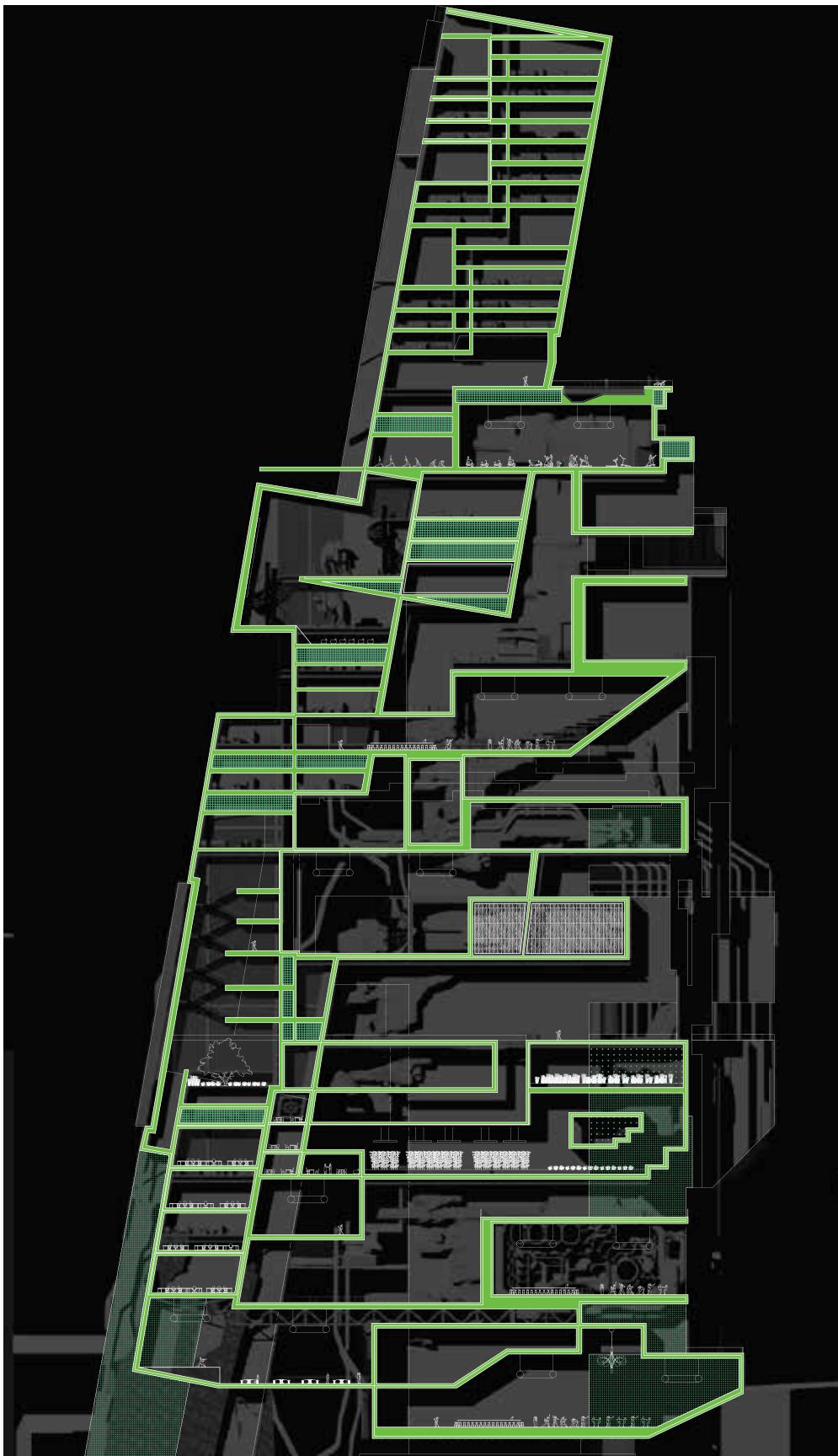
MASSING ITERATIONS

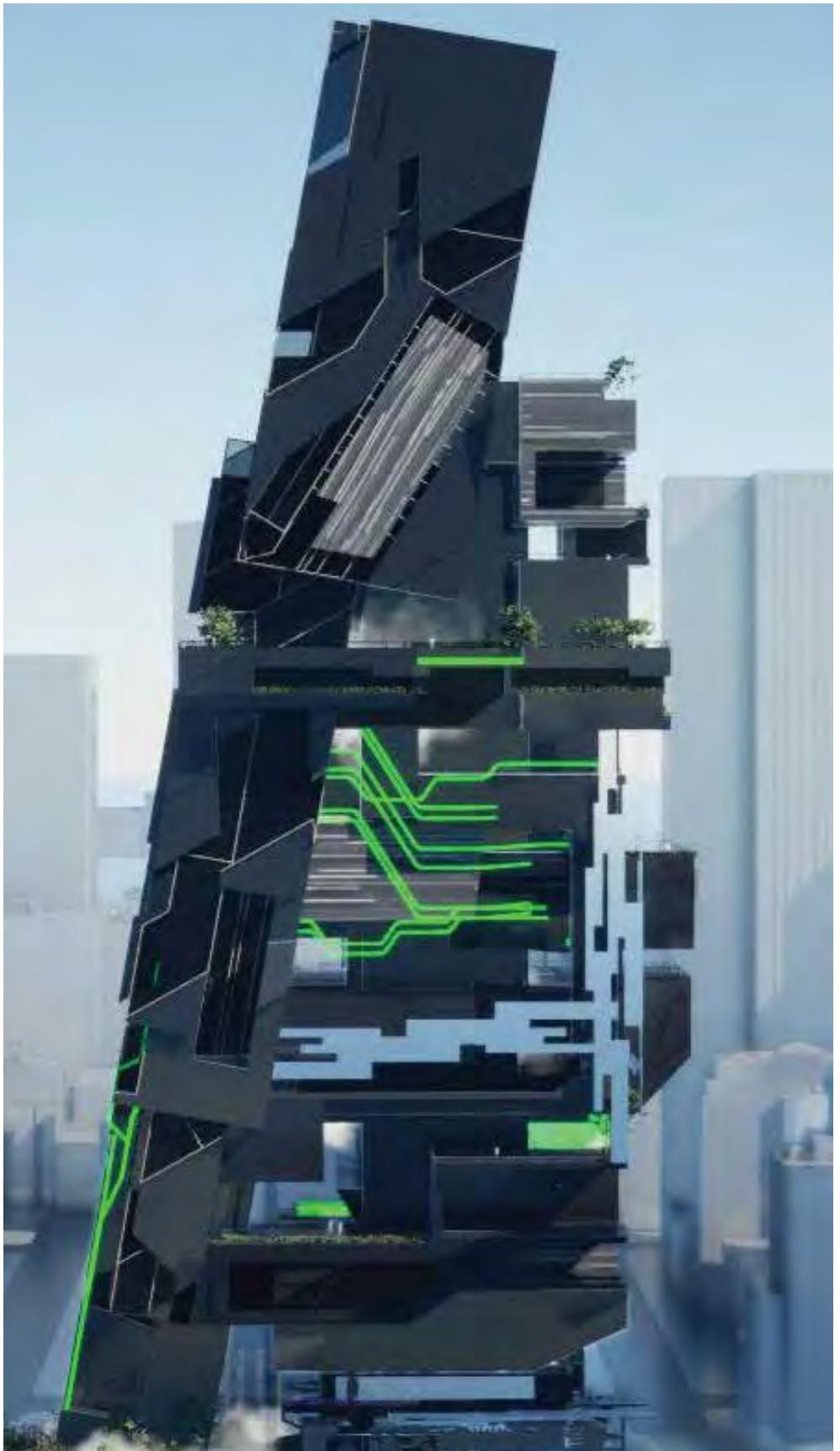


GROUND FLOOR PLAN

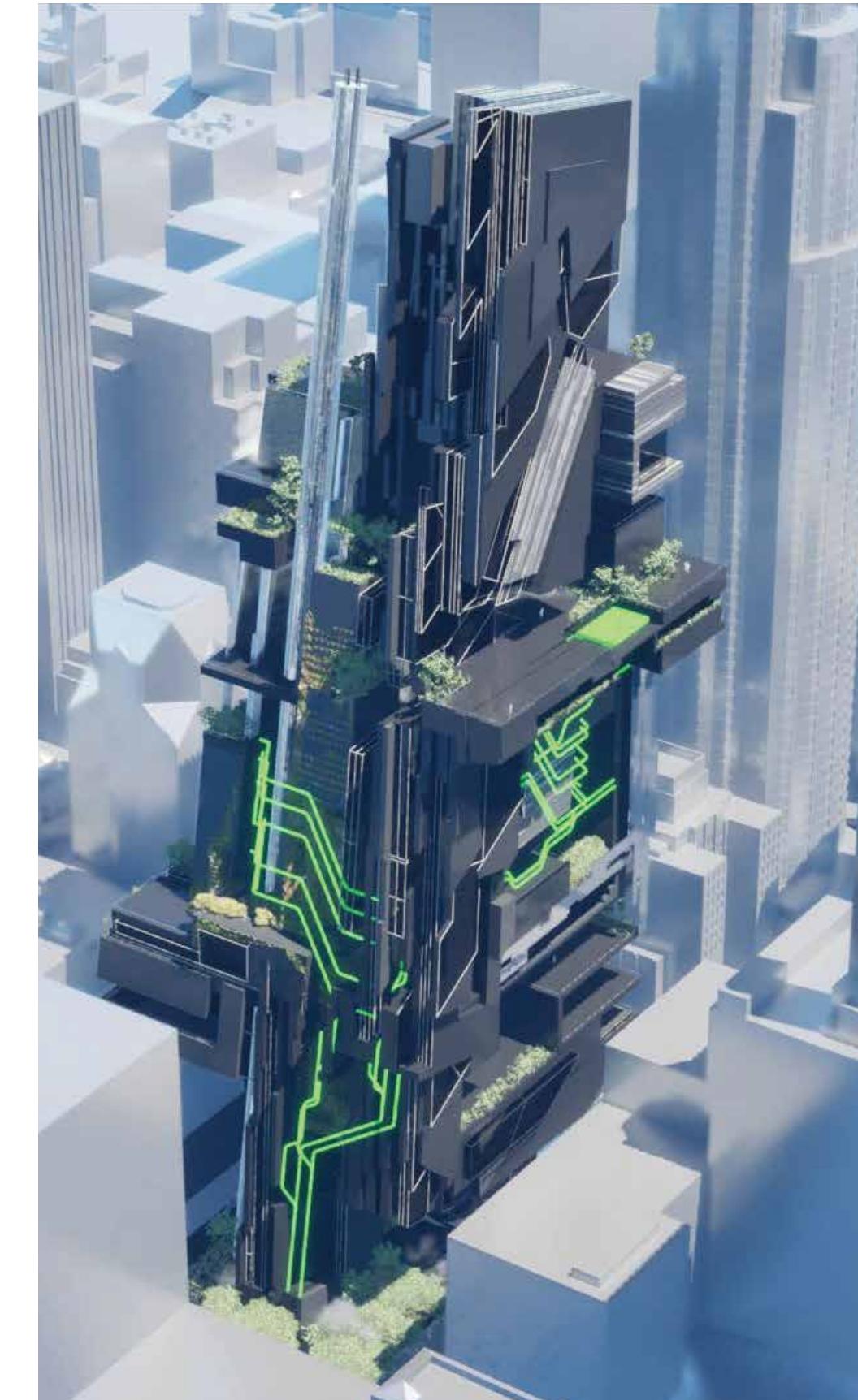


PLINTH FLOOR PLAN





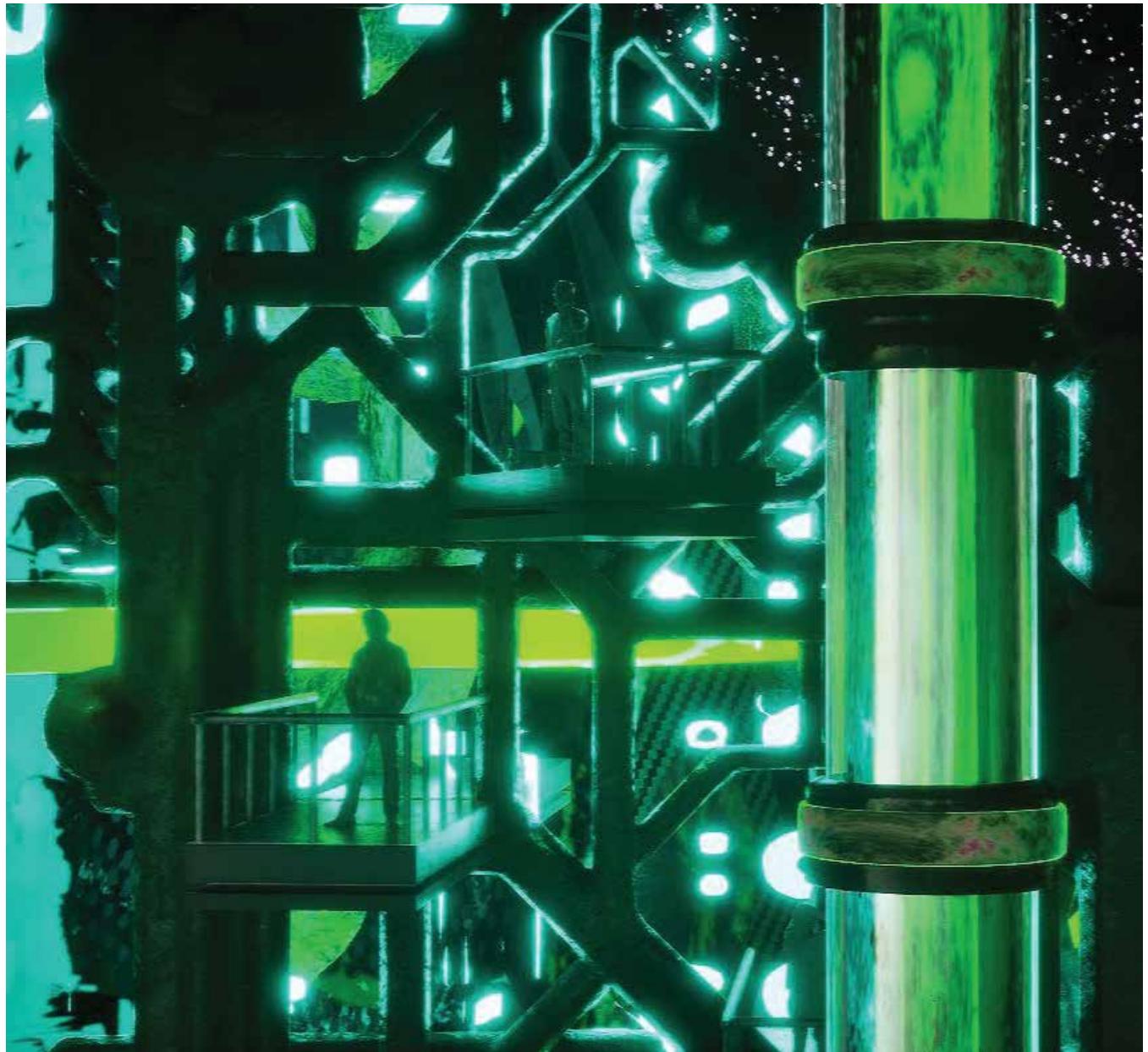
ELEVATION RENDER



PERSPECTIVE RENDER



PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF GROUND



PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF PLINTH

By leveraging its strategic location and sustainable design principles, the project aims to extend the public space and guide visitors to explore captivating artificial landscapes on the raised plinth. The project's

main points focus on integrating with the surrounding park, merging the ground plane to create an extended public space, and guiding guests to delve into the immersive environments crafted within the tower.



PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF GROUND



PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF PLINTH



PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF PLINTH

ULTRAVIOLET

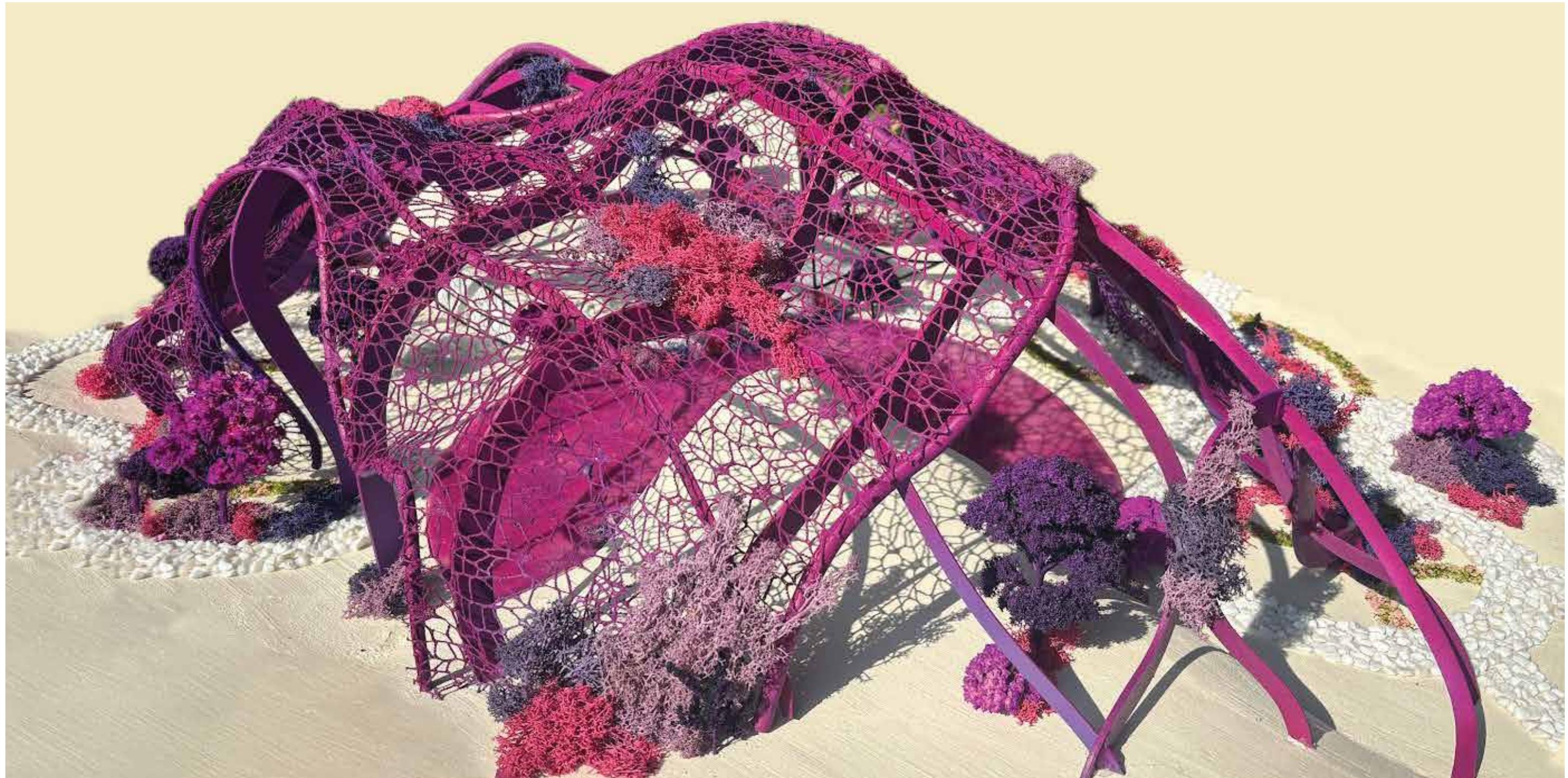
3GAX: DS Vertical Studio

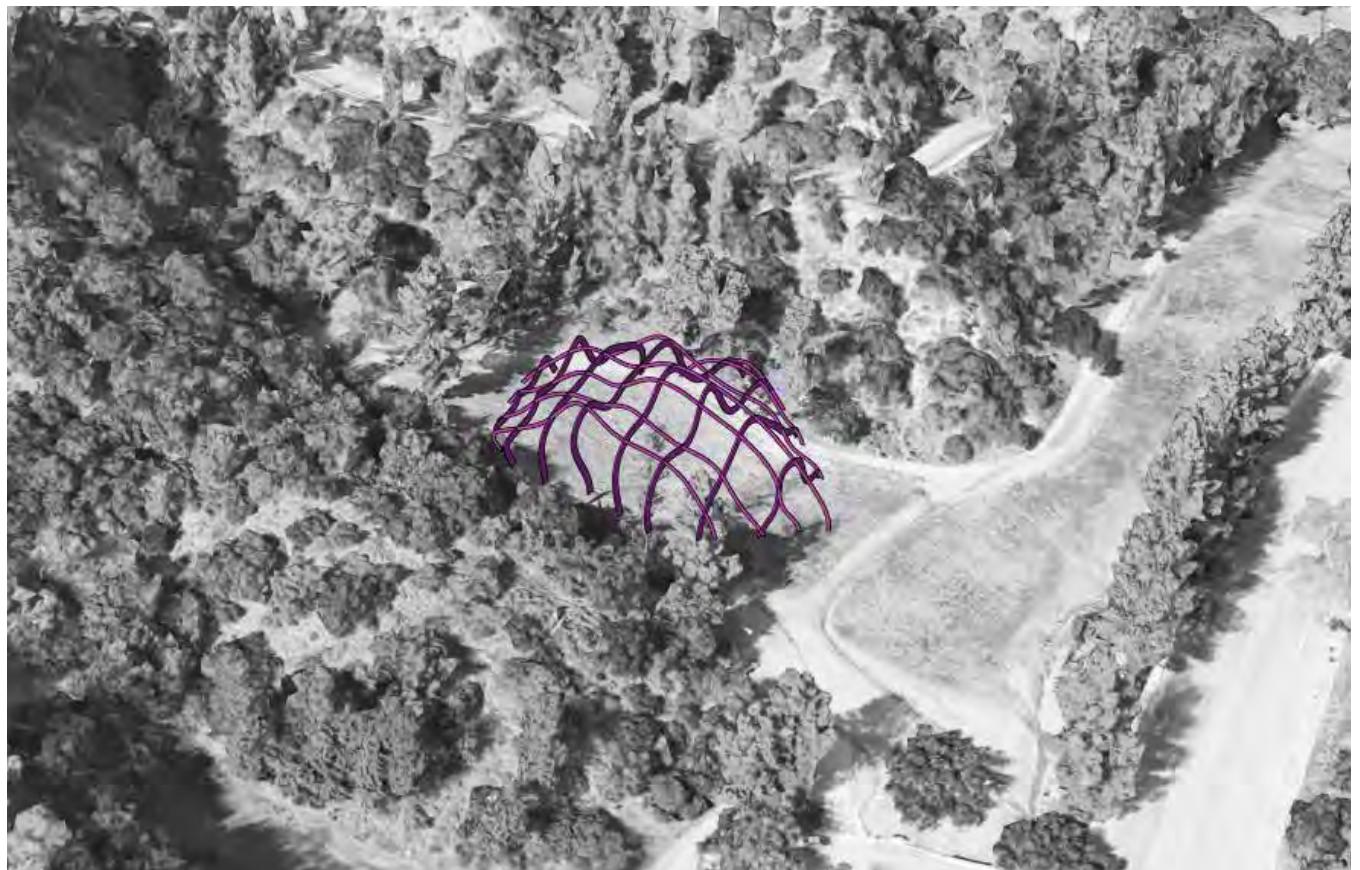
FALL 2024

INSTRUCTOR: Jackilin Bloom

PARTNER: Carissa Auth

EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF MODEL





SITE ISOMETRIC

Situated in the dynamic landscape of Griffith Park, this aviary project examines the intersection of architecture, ecology, and ultraviolet light—a spectrum integral to hummingbird vision. Designed to harmonize with the park's mountainous terrain and diverse wildlife, the aviary fosters a symbiotic relationship between humans and nature.

The landscape incorporates meandering lines, forming intersections that symbolize convergence points of coexistence. UV-

inspired colors accentuate elements to attract pollinators, while the mesh framework supports a layered habitat where birds occupy the upper spaces and visitors interact below, under the landscape.

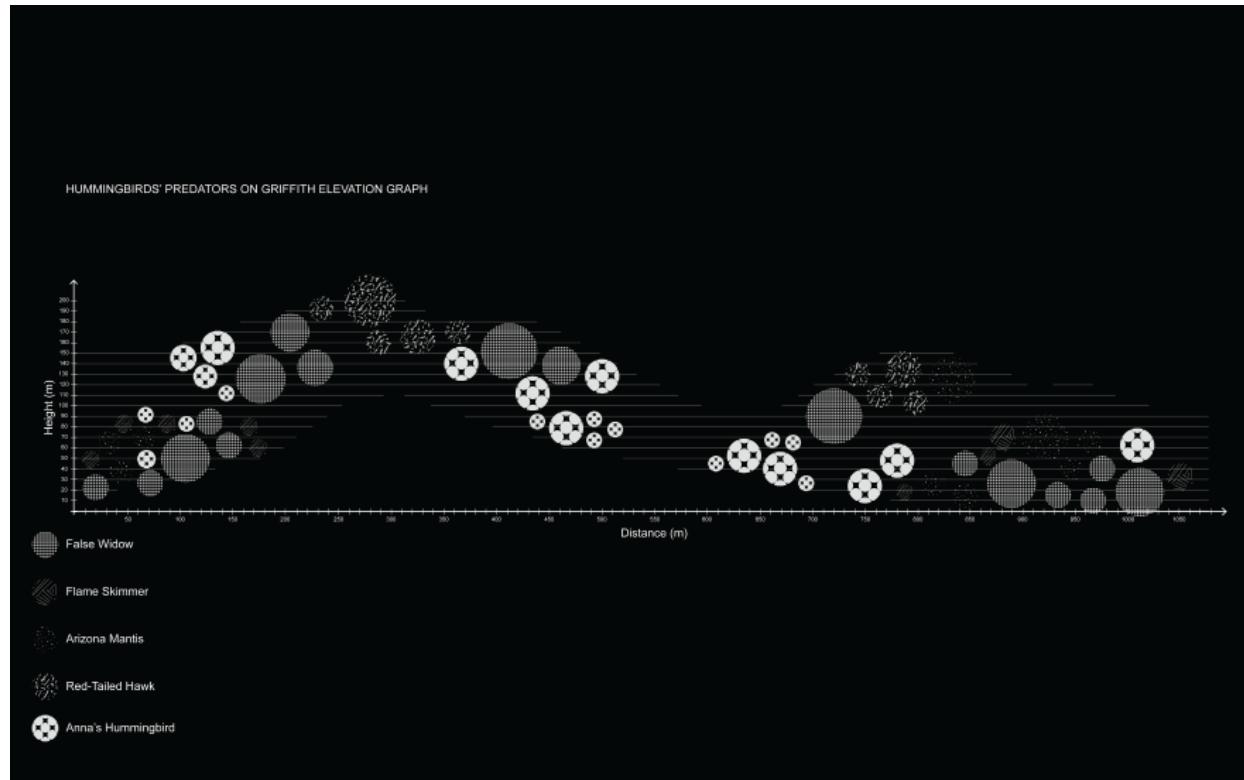
Key elements include native plant species such as golden currant and hollyleaf cherry, essential for the hummingbirds' ecosystem. The aviary's design celebrates their traits and life cycles, emphasizing sustainable coexistence and ecological balance.



MEANDERING LINE DIAGRAM



HUMMINGBIRD PREDATORS DIAGRAM



HUMMINGBIRD PREDATORS DIAGRAM



SPECIES ID CARDS



SPECIES ID CARDS



NATIVE PLANT SPECIES

Detailed plans highlight the park's topography and accessible entrances, while sections reveal the interplay of paths, materials, and habitats. The result is a vibrant, living space that blurs the boundary between human

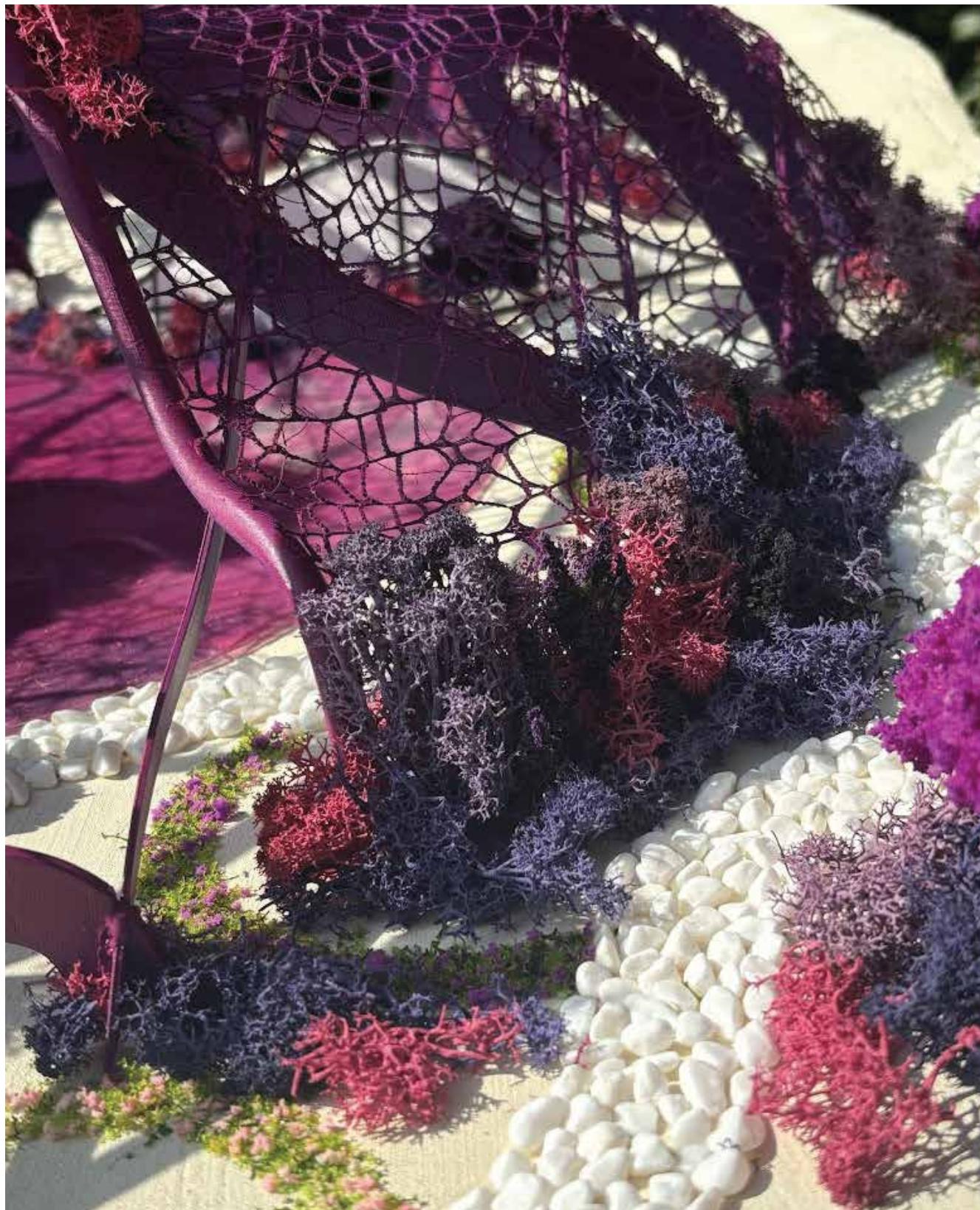
interaction and the natural world, honoring Griffith Park's unique ecology and the enchanting nature of its smallest inhabitants.







INTERIOR PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF MODEL



EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF MODEL



INTERIOR PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF MODEL

FLO DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

3GAX: AS Design Doc GR

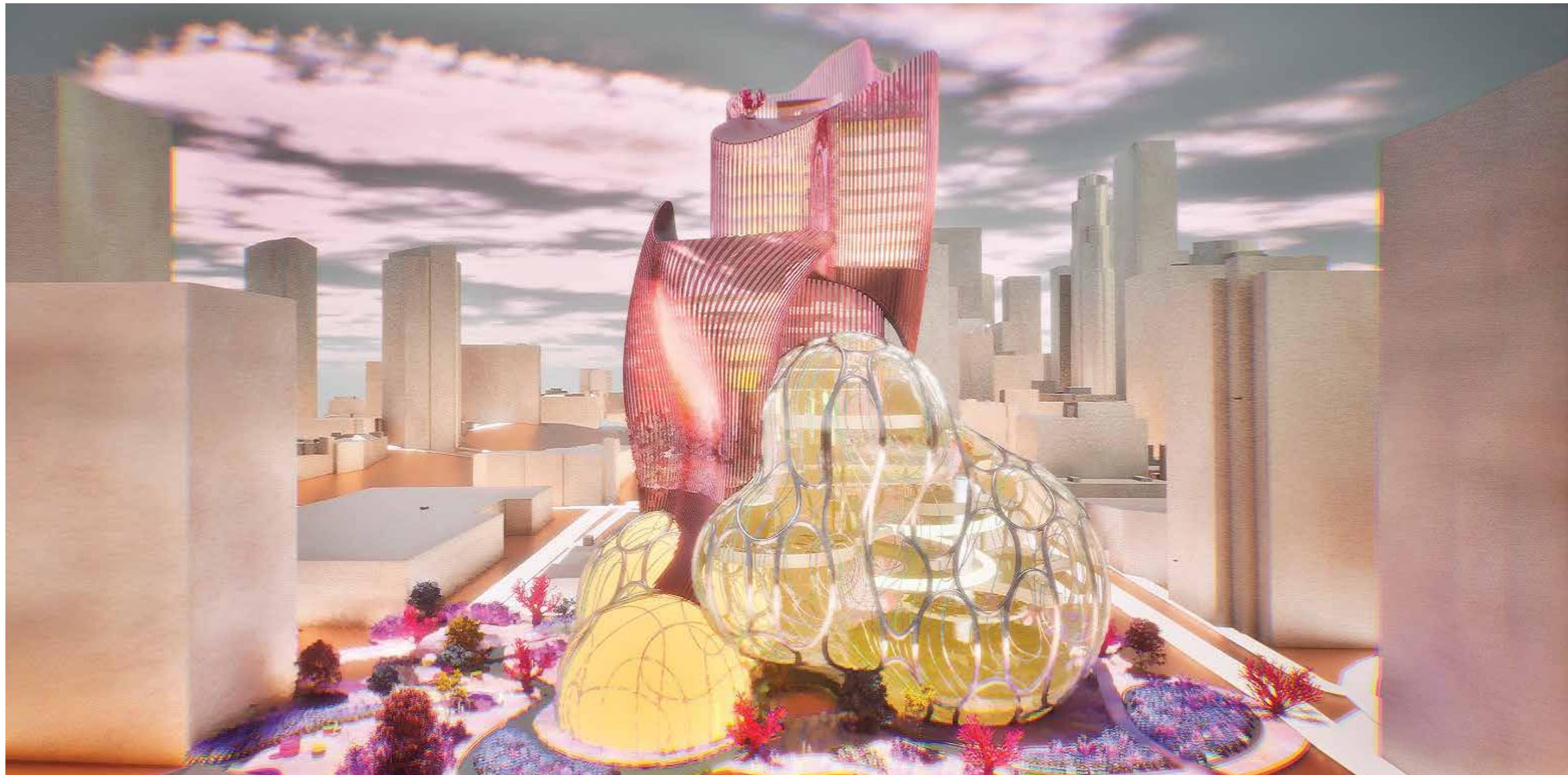
FALL 2024

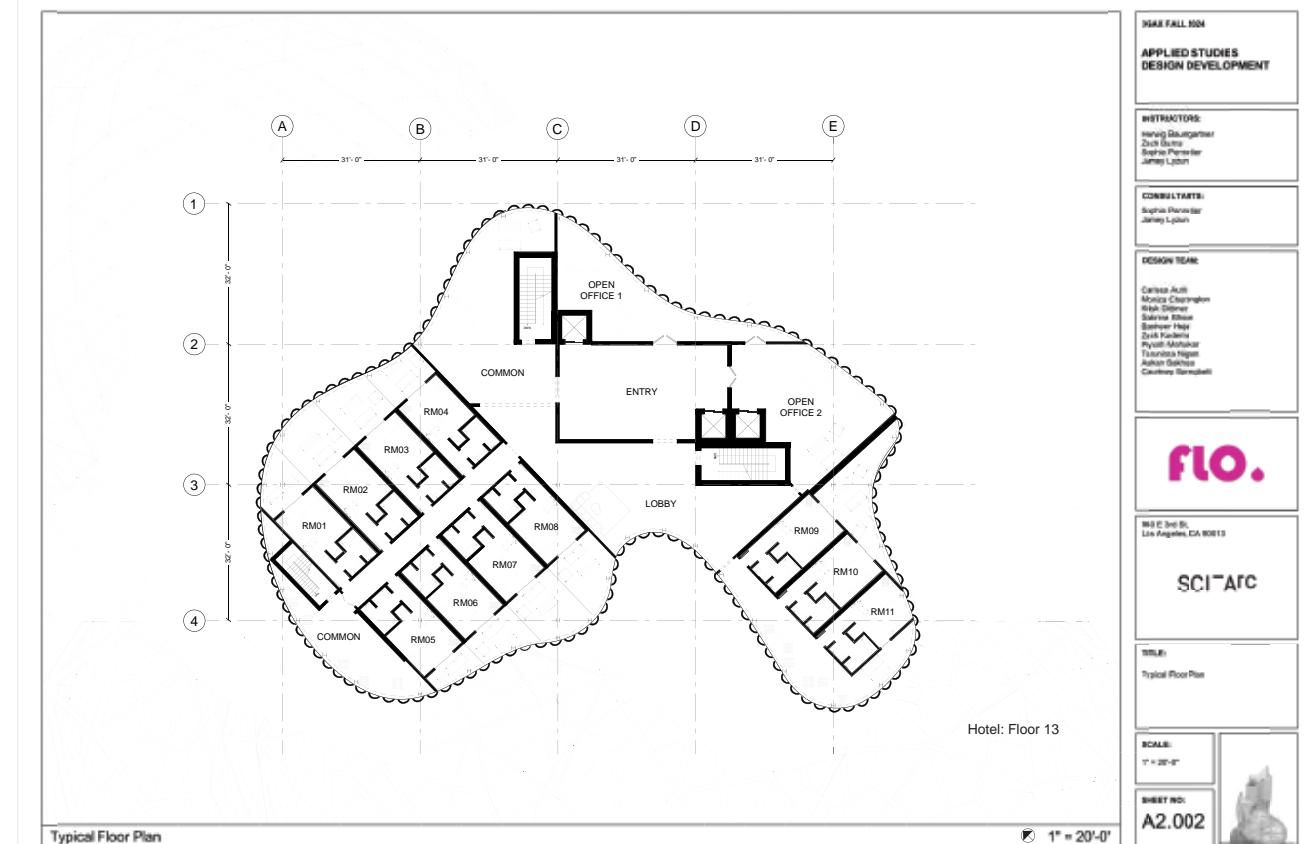
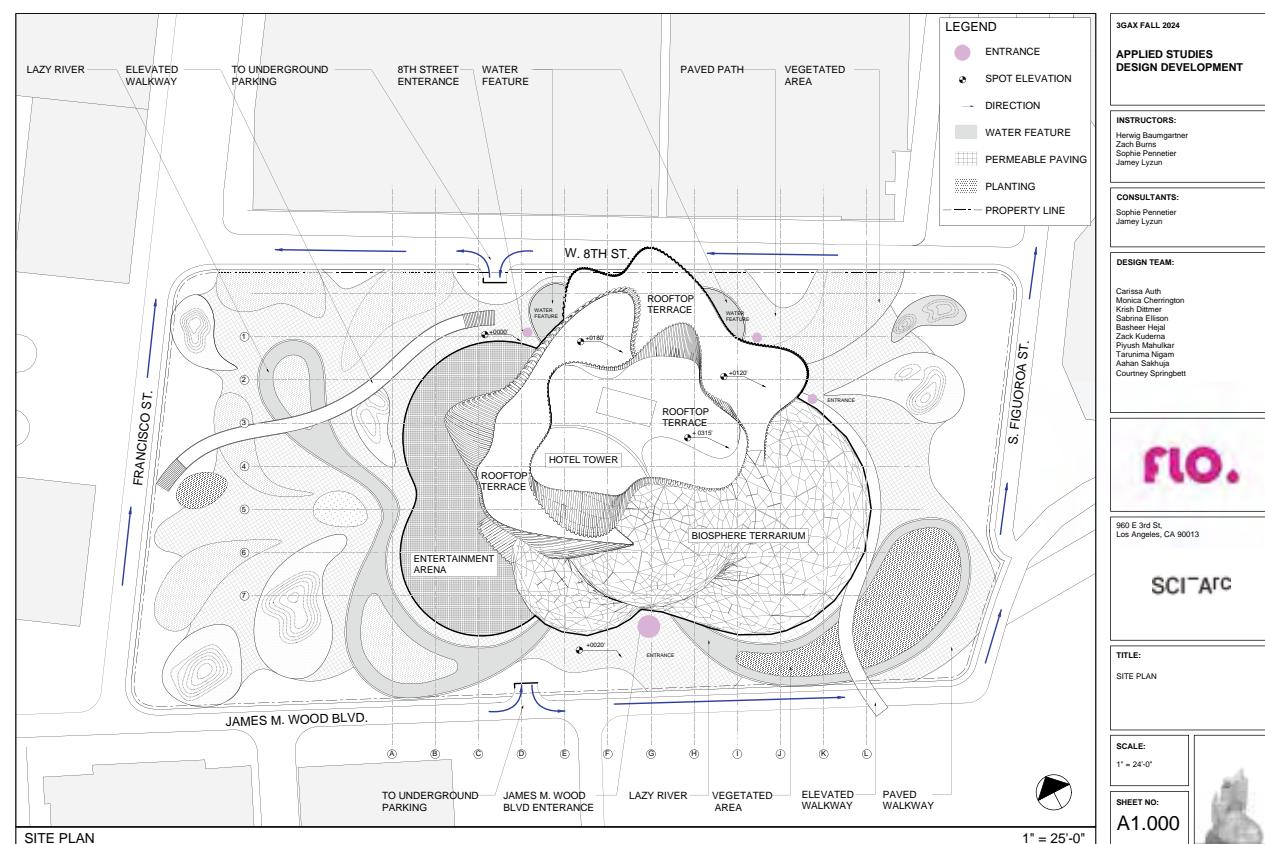
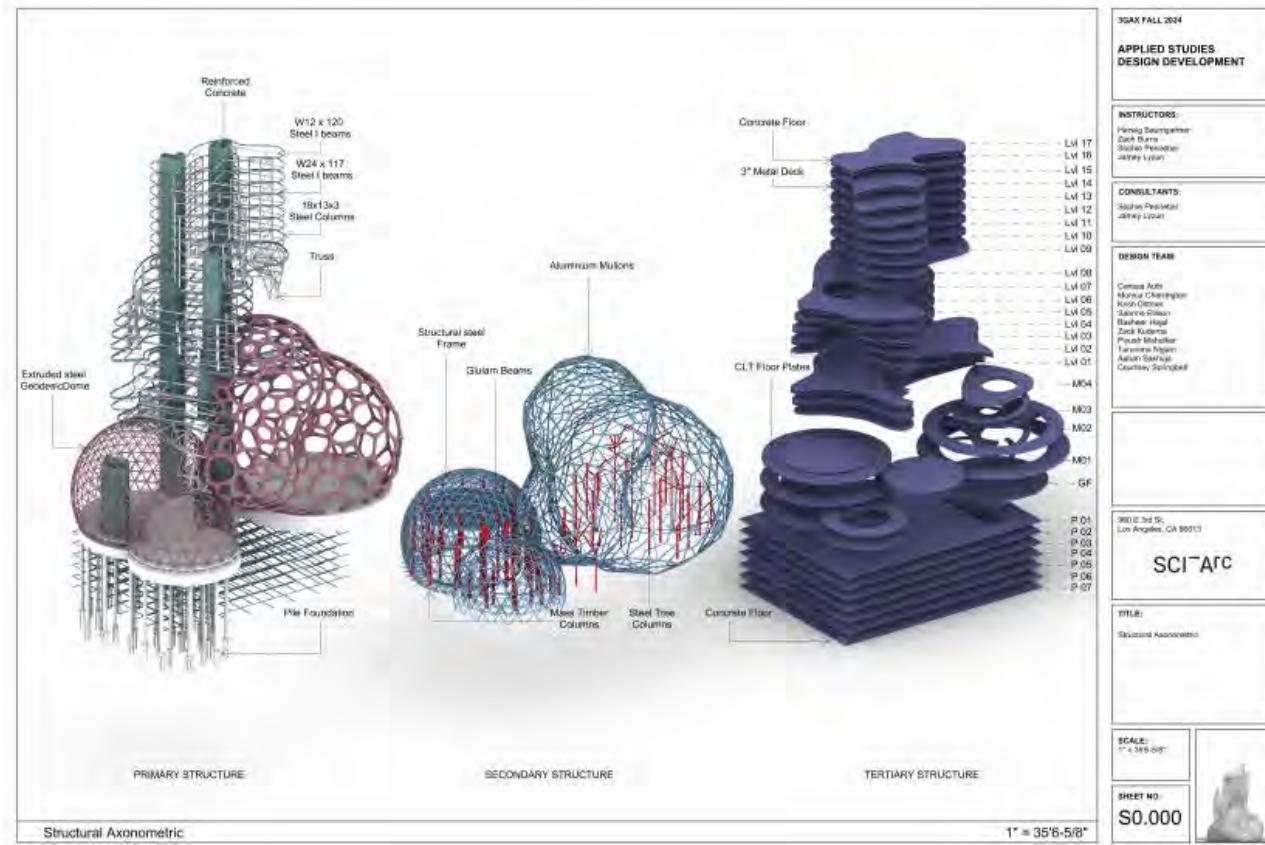
INSTRUCTOR: Zach Burns, Herwig Baumgartner

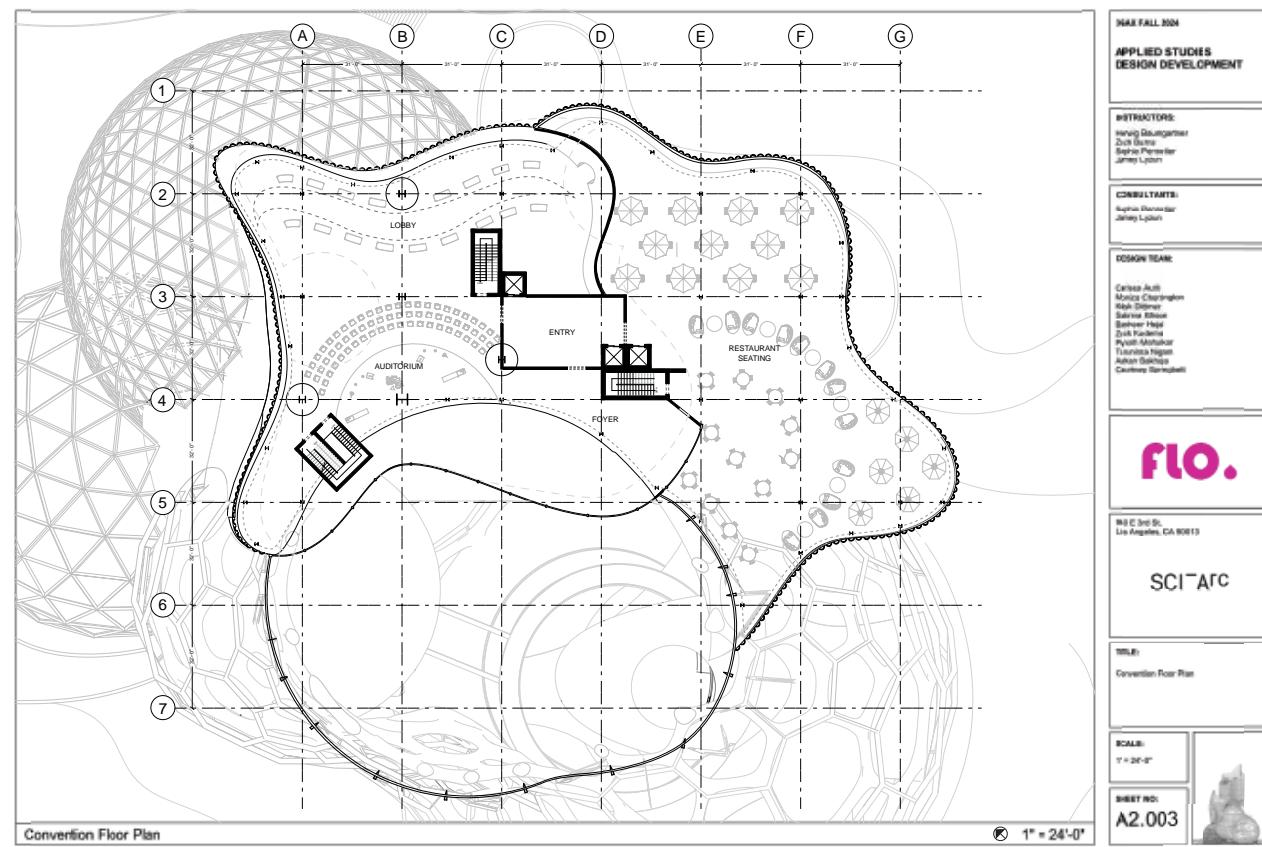
PARTNERS: Carissa Auth, Monica Cherrington, Krish Dittmer, Basheer Hejal, Zack Kuderna,

Piyush Mahulkar, Tarunima Nigam, Aahan Sakhija, Courtney Springbett

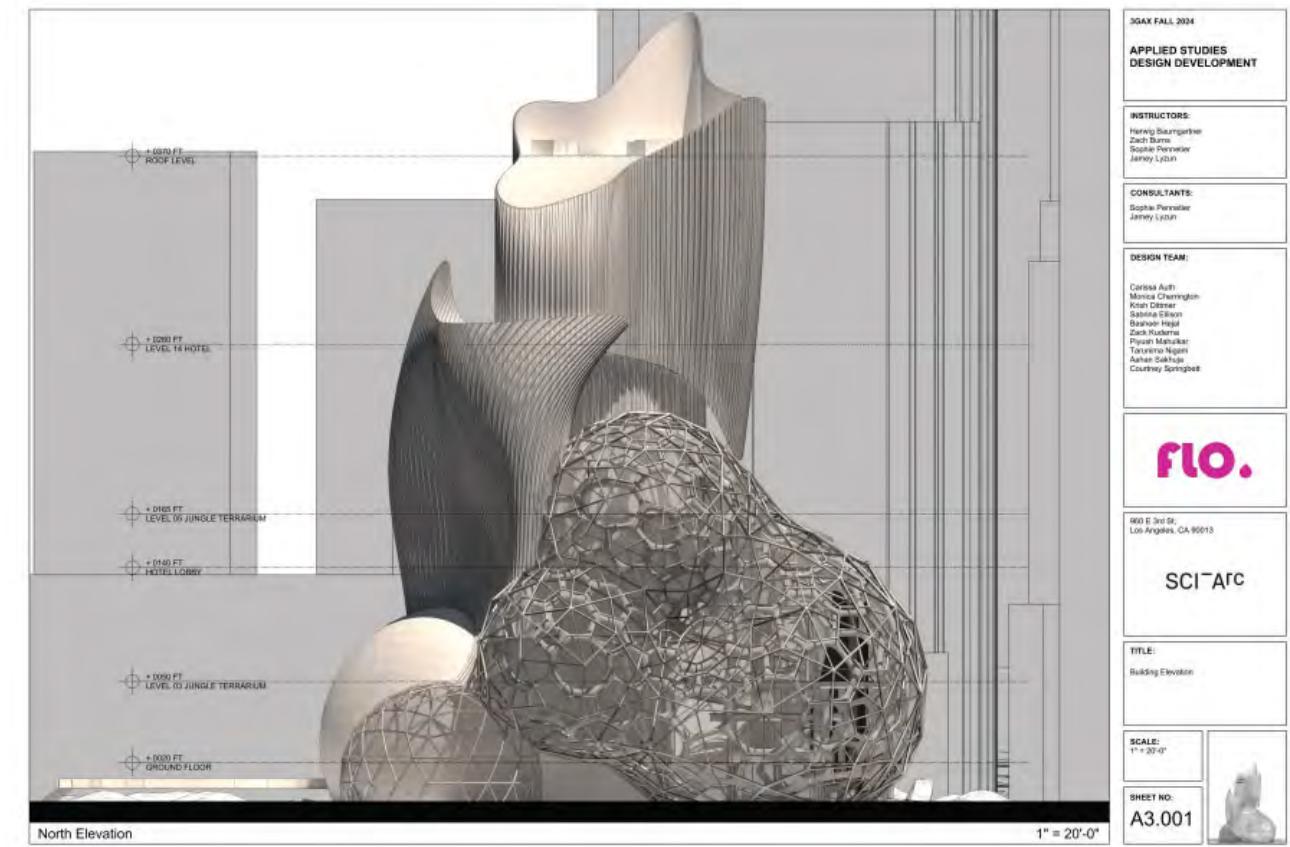
PERSPECTIVE RENDER OF FLO HOTEL



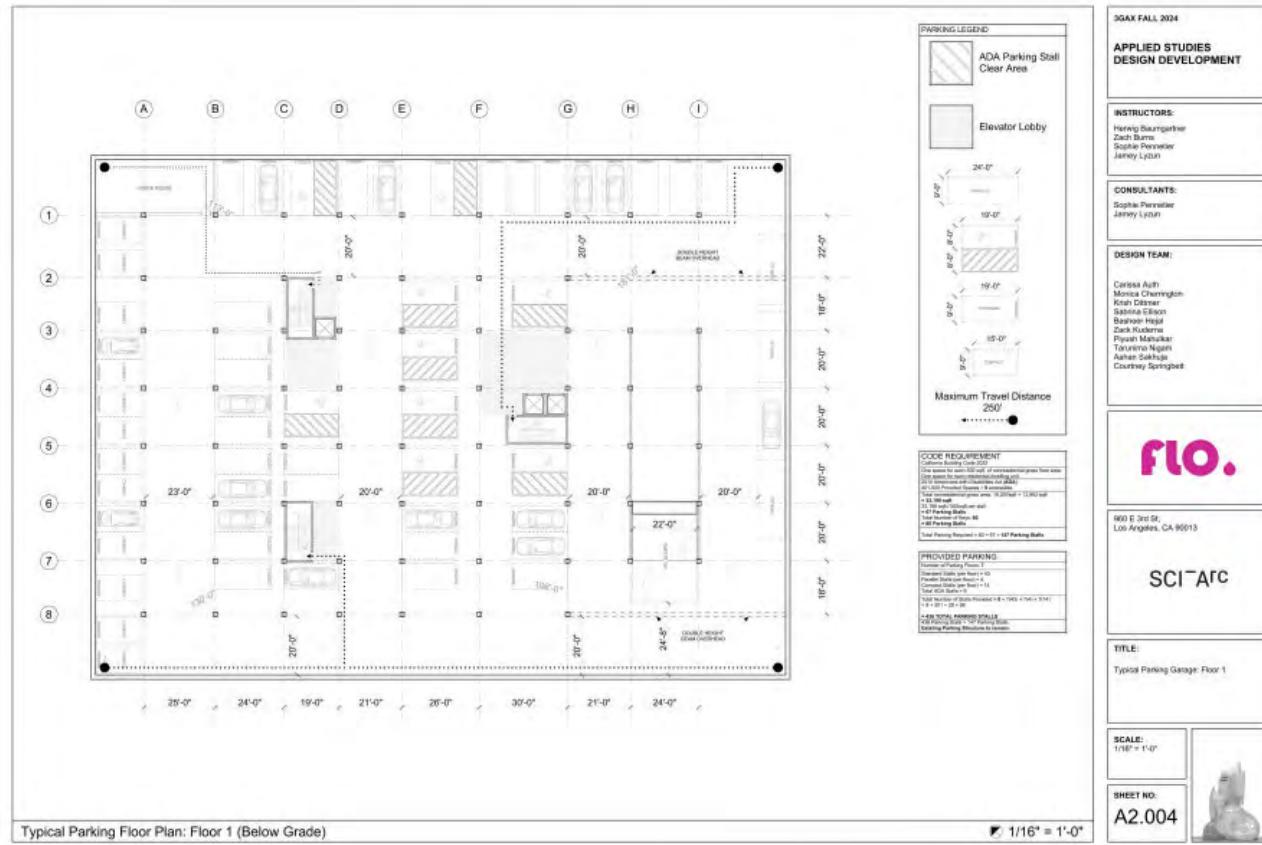




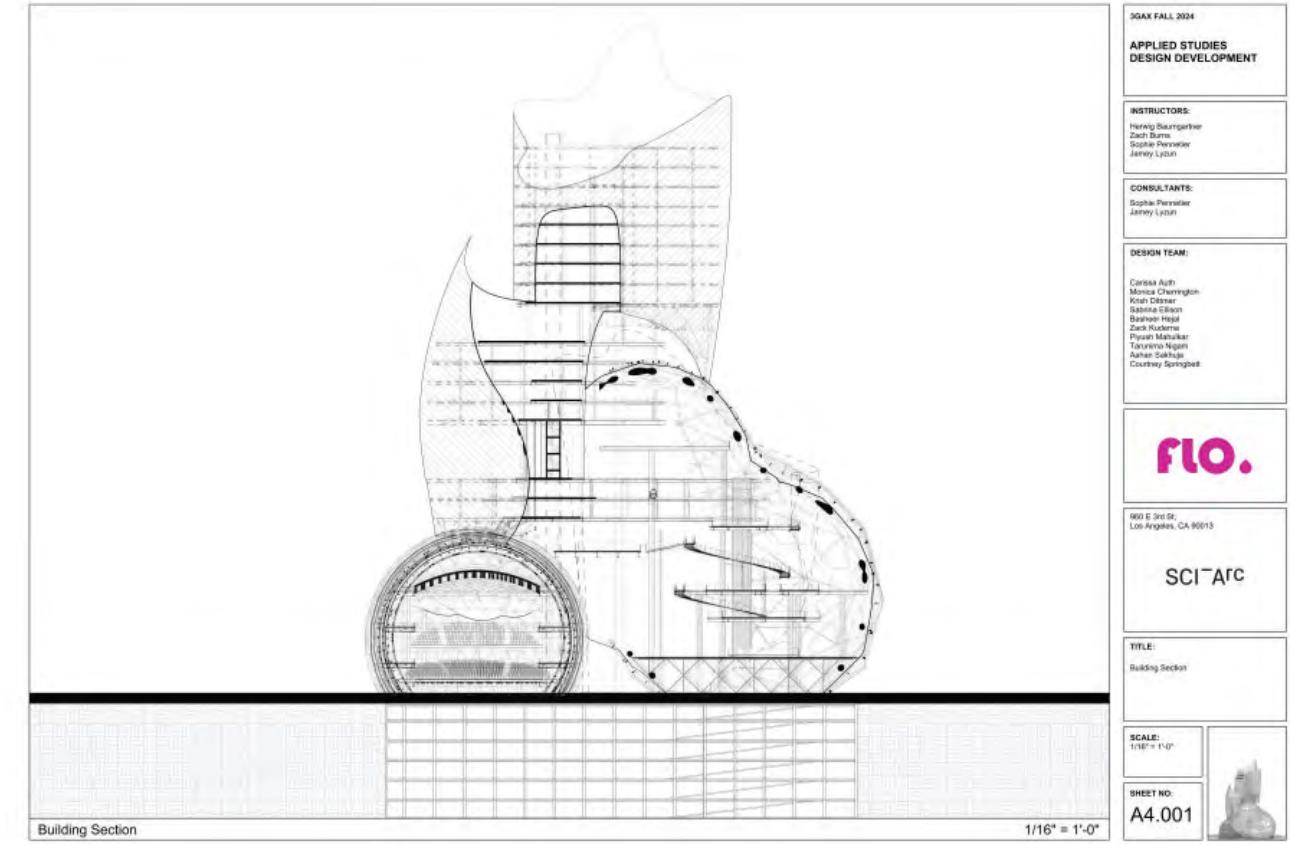
SAIA FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
INSTRUCTORS:
 Herwig Baumgartner
 Zach Burns
 Sophie Penner
 Janey Lyon
CONSULTANTS:
 Sophie Penner
 Janey Lyon
DESIGN TEAM:
 Corissa Auh
 Monica Cherrington
 Krish Dassani
 Sabrina Ellison
 Baharere Hajai
 Zach Kuderna
 Payman Mousavi
 Tusharika Negoti
 Aksan Sakaoglu
 Courtney Springhall
flo.
 460 E 3rd St.
 Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC
TITLE:
 Convention Floor Plan
SCALE:
 1" = 24'-0"
SHEET NO:
 A2.003



SAIA FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
INSTRUCTORS:
 Herwig Baumgartner
 Zach Burns
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CONSULTANTS:
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 Payman Mousavi
 Tusharika Negoti
 Aksan Sakaoglu
 Courtney Springhall
flo.
 460 E 3rd St.
 Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC
TITLE:
 Building Elevation
SCALE:
 1" = 20'-0"
SHEET NO:
 A3.001

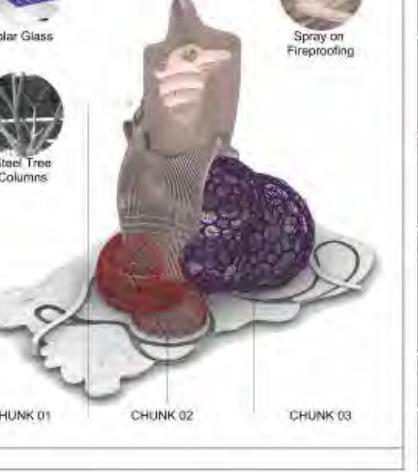


SAIA FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
INSTRUCTORS:
 Herwig Baumgartner
 Zach Burns
 Sophie Penner
 Janey Lyon
CONSULTANTS:
 Sophie Penner
 Janey Lyon
DESIGN TEAM:
 Corissa Auh
 Monica Cherrington
 Krish Dassani
 Sabrina Ellison
 Baharere Hajai
 Zach Kuderna
 Payman Mousavi
 Tusharika Negoti
 Aksan Sakaoglu
 Courtney Springhall
flo.
 460 E 3rd St.
 Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC
TITLE:
 Typical Parking Garage: Floor 1
SCALE:
 1/16" = 1'-0"
SHEET NO:
 A2.004



SAIA FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES DESIGN DEVELOPMENT
INSTRUCTORS:
 Herwig Baumgartner
 Zach Burns
 Sophie Penner
 Janey Lyon
CONSULTANTS:
 Sophie Penner
 Janey Lyon
DESIGN TEAM:
 Corissa Auh
 Monica Cherrington
 Krish Dassani
 Sabrina Ellison
 Baharere Hajai
 Zach Kuderna
 Payman Mousavi
 Tusharika Negoti
 Aksan Sakaoglu
 Courtney Springhall
flo.
 460 E 3rd St.
 Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC
TITLE:
 Building Section
SCALE:
 1/16" = 1'-0"
SHEET NO:
 A4.001

MATERIALS

Aluminum	CLT	Extruded Steel	Glulam	Green Concrete	Aluminum Mullions	Corrugated Metal Sheet
Damp Proof Membrane	Low E Double Pane Glass	Mesh Reinforcement Steel Wire	Powder Coated Cast Steel	Recycled Rubber Insulation	Screed	Timber Planks
High Strength Low Alloy Steel	High Strength Reinforced Concrete	Bamboo	Tempered Glass	Solar Glass	Spray on Fireproofing	
						

SYSTEMS

Space Frame Truss	Aluminum Louvers	Composite Floor Slab	Steel Tree Columns
Braced Frame	Pile Foundation	Geodesic Dome	LED Exosphere
Concrete Core	Terrarium	Landscape Mounds	Lazy River

CHUNK 01 CHUNK 02 CHUNK 03

Building Materials & Systems

3QAX FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTORS:
Hilary Baumgartner
Zach Burns
Sasha Pospisil
Jesse Lyon

CONSULTANTS:
Sasha Pospisil
Jesse Lyon

DESIGN TEAM:
Cassia Atri
Monica Chingpan
Kaitlin Oberle
Sasha Pospisil
Bashirah Haq
Zack Kuderna
Preston Moller
Taremine Nigam
Aidan Sankar
Courtney Spraggart

flo.
360 E 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC

TITLE:
Building Materials & Systems

SCALE:
1:50

Sheet No:
A5.000

3QAX FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTORS:
Hilary Baumgartner
Zach Burns
Sasha Pospisil
Jesse Lyon

CONSULTANTS:
Sasha Pospisil
Jesse Lyon

DESIGN TEAM:
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Zack Kuderna
Preston Moller
Taremine Nigam
Aidan Sankar
Courtney Spraggart

flo.
360 E 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC

TITLE:
Building Materials & Systems

SCALE:
1:50

Sheet No:
A5.000

ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS

Aluminum	CLT	Extruded Steel	Glulam	Green Concrete	Aluminum Mullions	Corrugated Metal Sheet
Stainless Steel	Laminated Veneer Lumber	Titanium	Mass Plywood Panels	Ashcrete	uPVC Mullions	Engineered Bamboo Panels
Damp Proof Membrane	Low E Double Pane Glass	Mesh Reinforcement Steel Wire	Powder Coated Cast Steel	Recycled Rubber Insulation	Screed	Timber Planks
Bitumen Sheets	Aerogel Insulated Glass	Composite Reinforcement Grid	Galvanized Steel	Cellulose Insulation	Self Leveling Compound	Laminate Flooring
Structural Steel	High Strength Reinforced Concrete	Bamboo	Tempered Glass	Solar Glass	Spray on Fireproofing	
Reinforced Concrete w/ Steel Reinforcement	Reinforced Geopolymer Concrete	Bamboo Polymer Composite	Impact Resistant Glass Coating	Flexible Solar Cells	Fireproof Paint	

Building Material Alternatives

3QAX FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTORS:
Hilary Baumgartner
Zach Burns
Sasha Pospisil
Jesse Lyon

CONSULTANTS:
Sasha Pospisil
Jesse Lyon

DESIGN TEAM:
Cassia Atri
Monica Chingpan
Kaitlin Oberle
Sasha Pospisil
Bashirah Haq
Zack Kuderna
Preston Moller
Taremine Nigam
Aidan Sankar
Courtney Spraggart

flo.
360 E 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90013
SCI-ARC

TITLE:
Building Material Alternatives

SCALE:
1:50

Sheet No:
A5.001

M01
Structural Steel

Pros:
- High Strength-to-Weight Ratio
- Improved Corrosion Resistance
- Enhanced Toughness
- Weldability
- Cost Efficiency
- Versatility

Cons:
They have a carbon content between 0.03% and 0.20% to retain formability and weldability. Other alloying elements include up to 1% manganese and small quantities of copper, nickel, and molybdenum. Structural steels are heat-treated to yield strengths, or drop-heat, when yield strengths can be anywhere between 35,000-90,000 psi.

M02
Bamboo

Pros:
- Eco-friendly
- Durable
- Aesthetic appeal
- Cost effective
- Material consistent
- Hypoallergenic

Cons:
Bamboo floors combine beauty, sustainability, and practicality, making it a versatile choice for eco-conscious homeowners seeking a stylish and durable flooring option.

M03
High Strength Reinforced Concrete

Pros:
- High load bearing capacity
- Durability
- Efficient use of space
- Improved safety
- Economic in long term use
- Fire resistance

Cons:
High Strength Reinforced Concrete (HSRC) Cost: It is a type of concrete that includes fibers, mesh, or fibers and has a higher compressive strength compared to normal strength concrete. It is widely used in modern construction for its superior load-bearing capacity, durability, and ability to resist seismic forces.

M04
Solar Glass

Pros:
- Energy generation
- Energy saving
- Sustainable
- Space saving
- Aesthetic appeal
- Innovative technology

Cons:
Solar glass also known as photovoltaic glass or solar panels, is a type of advanced glass that integrates energy harvesting capabilities. It serves both functional and aesthetic purposes, making it an essential component in modern sustainable architecture and renewable energy solutions.

M05
Tempered Glass

Pros:
- Enhanced strength
- Safety
- Thermal resistance
- Scratch resistance
- Improved aesthetic
- Customizable

Cons:
Tempered glass, also known as toughened glass, is a type of safety glass processed through thermal or chemical treatments to increase its strength compared to standard glass. It is widely used in applications where durability and safety are crucial.

M06
Spray on Fireproofing

Pros:
- Fire protection
- Cost effective
- Versatile application
- Lightweight
- Customizable fire rating
- Effective installation

Cons:
Spray on Fireproofing, also known as Spray Applied Fire-Resistant Material (SPFRM), is a special fire protection material used to protect structural components of buildings, such as steel beams, columns, and concrete slabs, from high temperatures during a fire. This material is sprayed onto the substrate by utilizing special nozzles.

Chunk 01 Materials

M07
Aluminum

Pros:
- Ductile Metal
- Light weight
- Recyclable
- Low maintenance
- Excellent Strength-to-Weight Ratio
- Can be recycled in different colours

Cons:
Aluminum is the most abundant metallic element in Earth's crust. It's a lightweight, silvery-white metal with remarkable properties that make it incredibly useful. Commonly used for structural components, food packaging, and electrical wiring. It's 100% recyclable without loss of quality.

M08
Glulam

Pros:
- Excellent strength-to-weight ratio
- Sustainable
- Durable
- Can span long distances
- Customizable
- Good fire resistance

Cons:
Glulam (glued-laminated timber) is an engineered wood product that offers several interesting structural capabilities. Multiple layers of dimensioned lumber bonded together with durable moisture-resistant adhesives.

M09
CLT

Pros:
- Durable
- Low Cost
- Light weight
- Reduced installation cost
- Sustainable
- Visually aesthetic

Cons:
Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT) is a unique type of engineered wood panel made from gluing together at least three layers of softwood lumber. (i.e. Lumber cut from a single log). Each layer of timber is usually oriented in a different direction and glued on the face layers of each board, usually in a symmetric way so that the outer layers have the same orientation. An odd number of layers is ideal.

M10
Green Concrete

Pros:
- Sustainable
- Durable
- Fire resistant
- Better insulation properties
- Reduced maintenance

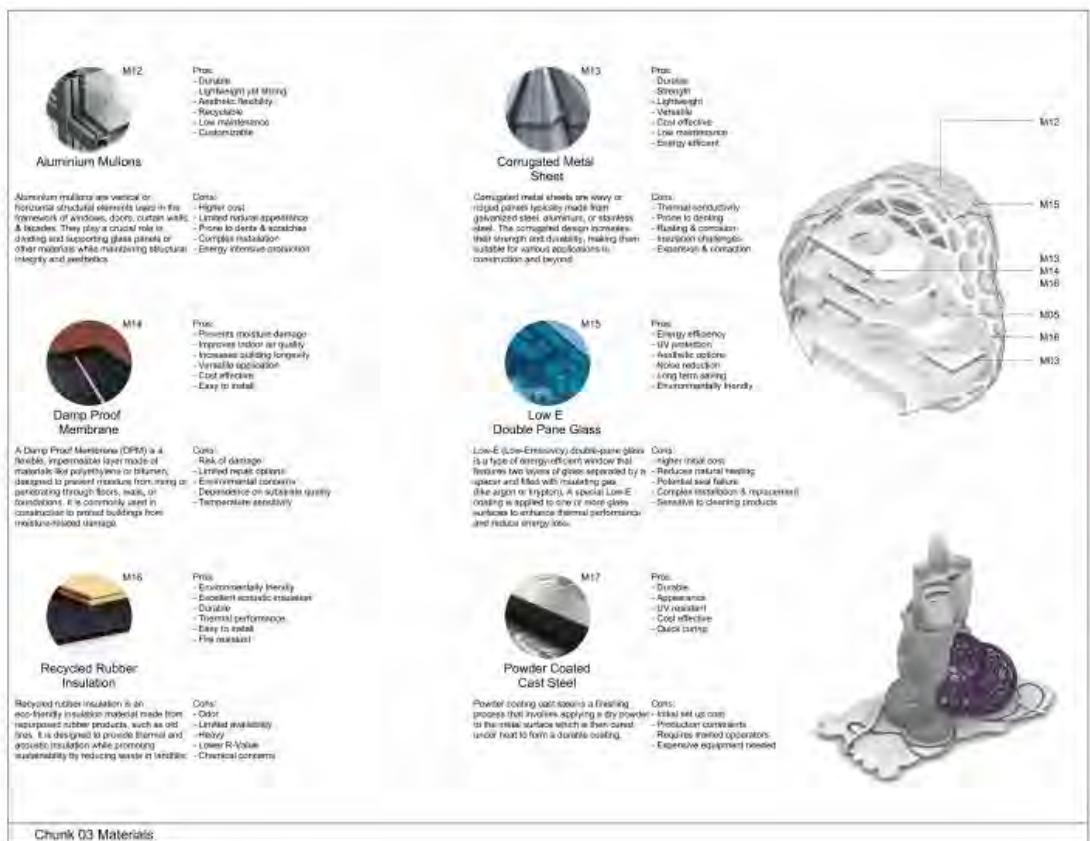
Cons:
It is an increasingly popular version of traditional concrete, made by incorporating recycled materials. Unlike standard concrete, which heavily relies on natural resources like limestone and clay, green concrete uses industrial waste such as fly ash, steel slag, and aggregates. This approach not only reduces the consumption of natural resources but also becomes an ideal form of waste management. Architects and engineers can advantageously select the right materials to maximize the environmental and financial benefits of green concrete.

M11
Extruded Steel

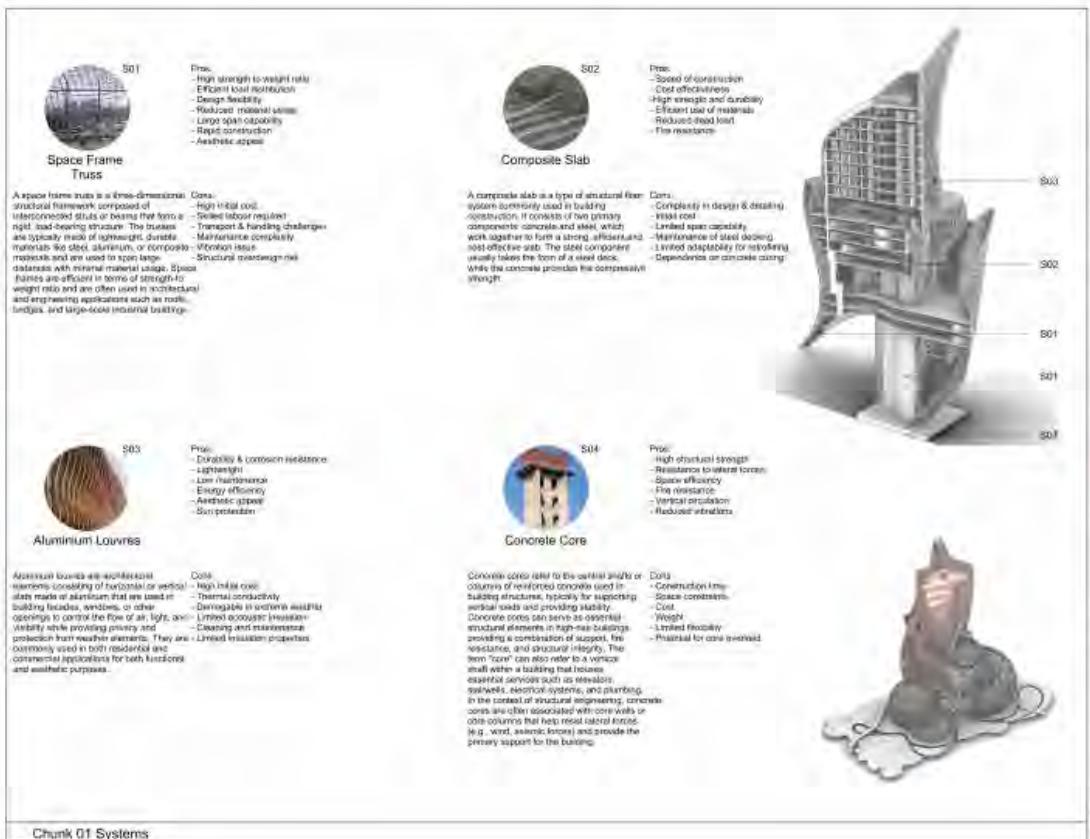
Pros:
- Strength
- Improved corrosion resistance
- Low weight
- Cost efficient
- Weight reduction

Cons:
Metal extrusion is a forming process in which we force a metal (either hot or cold) through a die to create a specific shape. The metal is extruded as a solid metal as it passes through the die. The material emerging from the die is known as "extrude". The metal extrude contains air bubbles and is a decorative die shape. The result of these forces and the extruded temperature enable us to form materials with otherwise difficult properties.

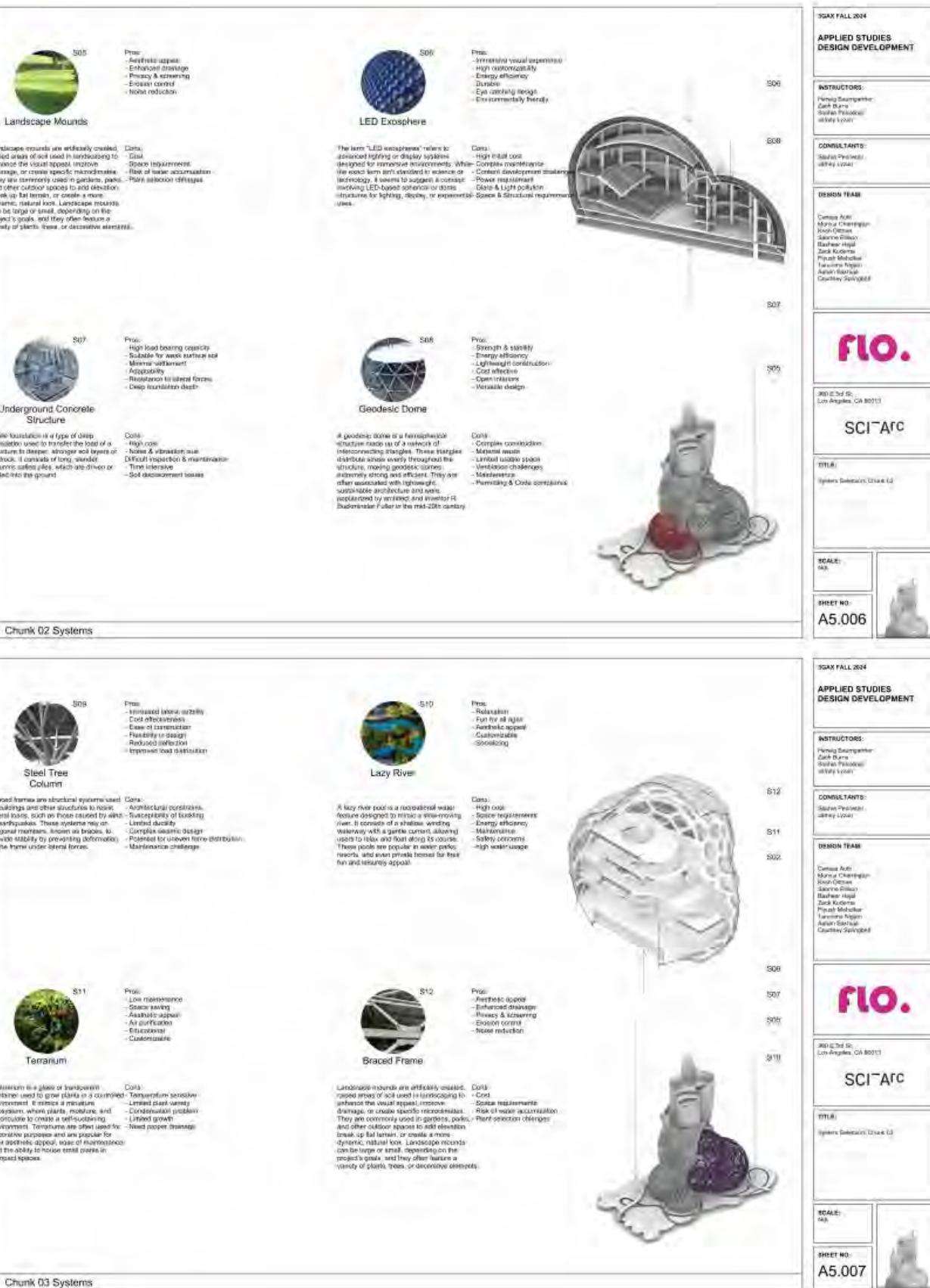
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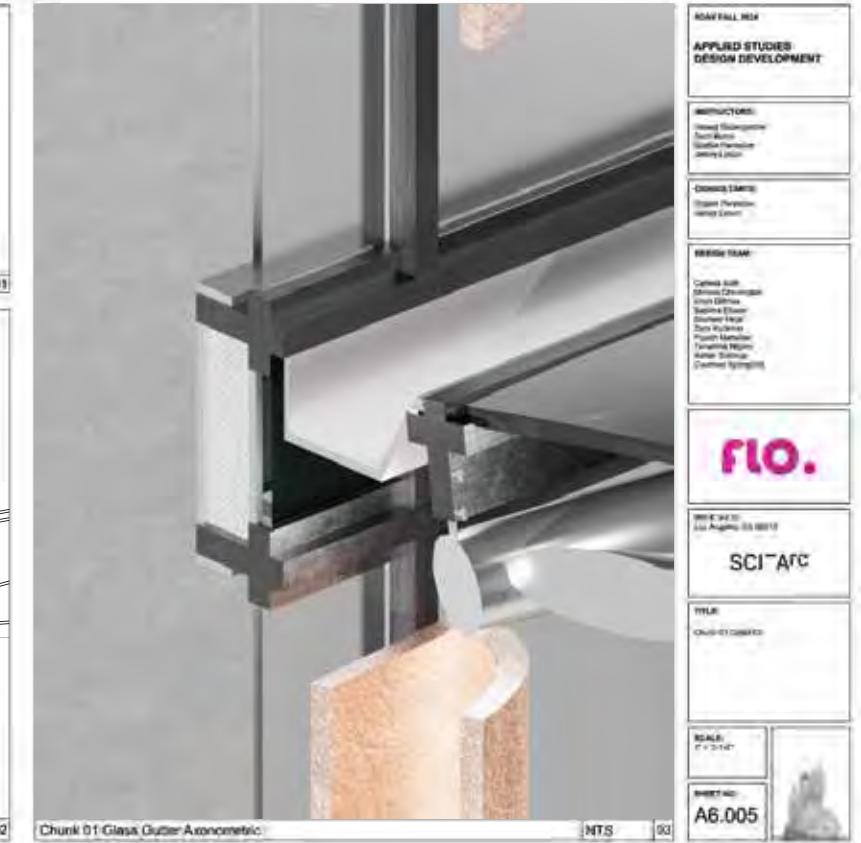
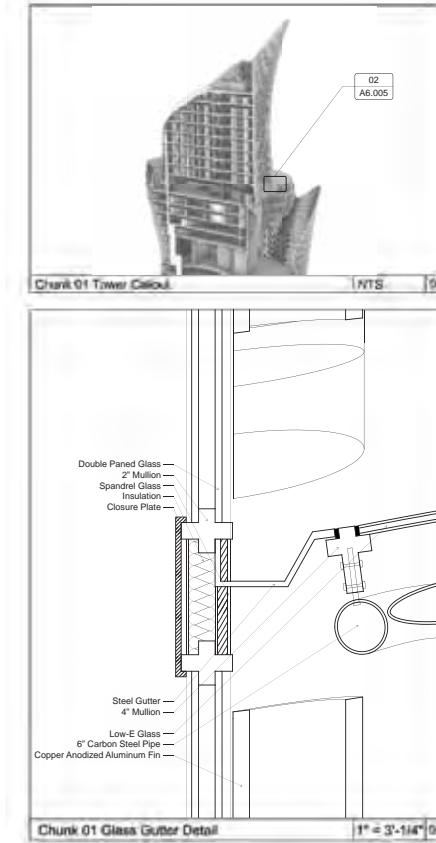
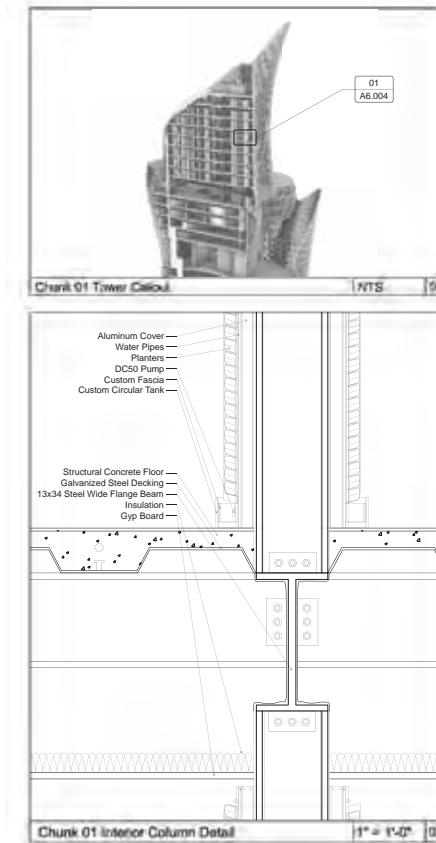
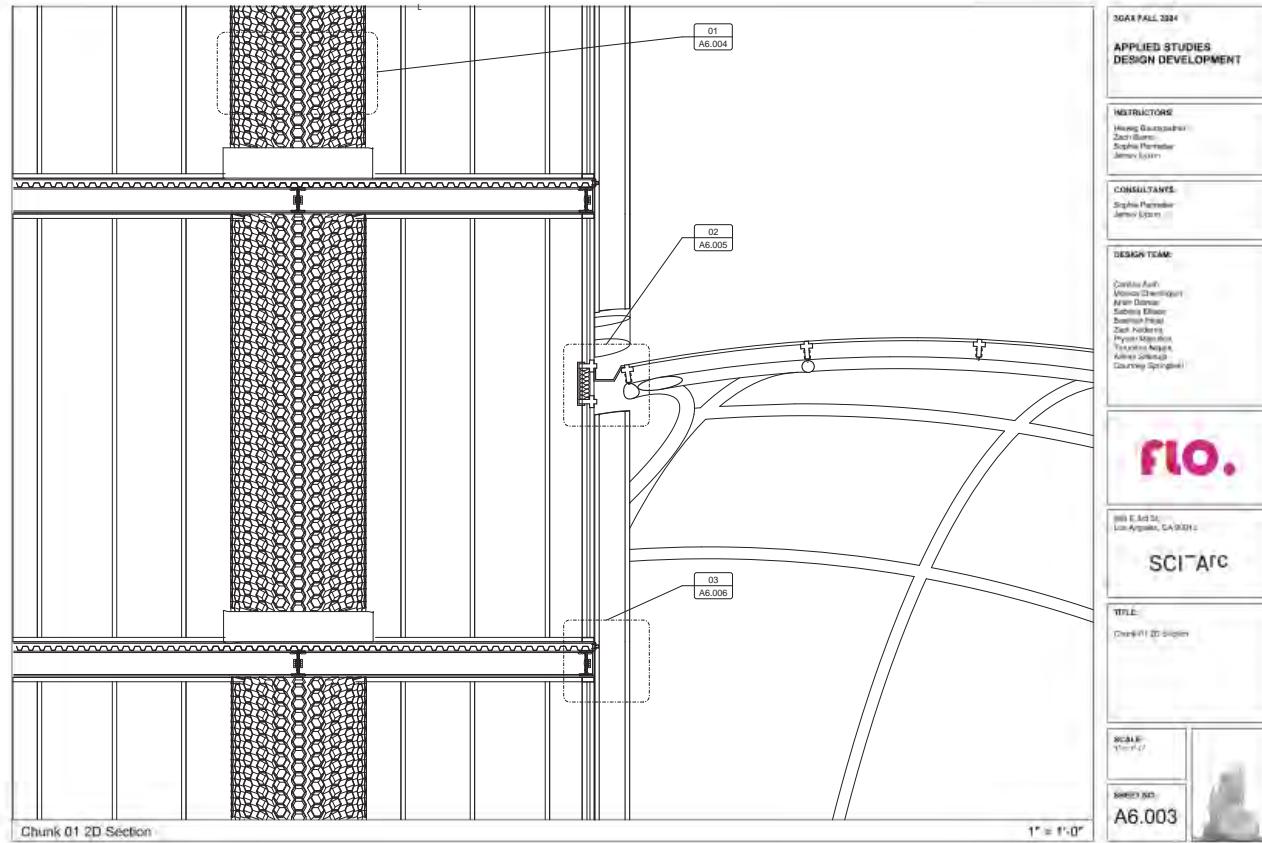
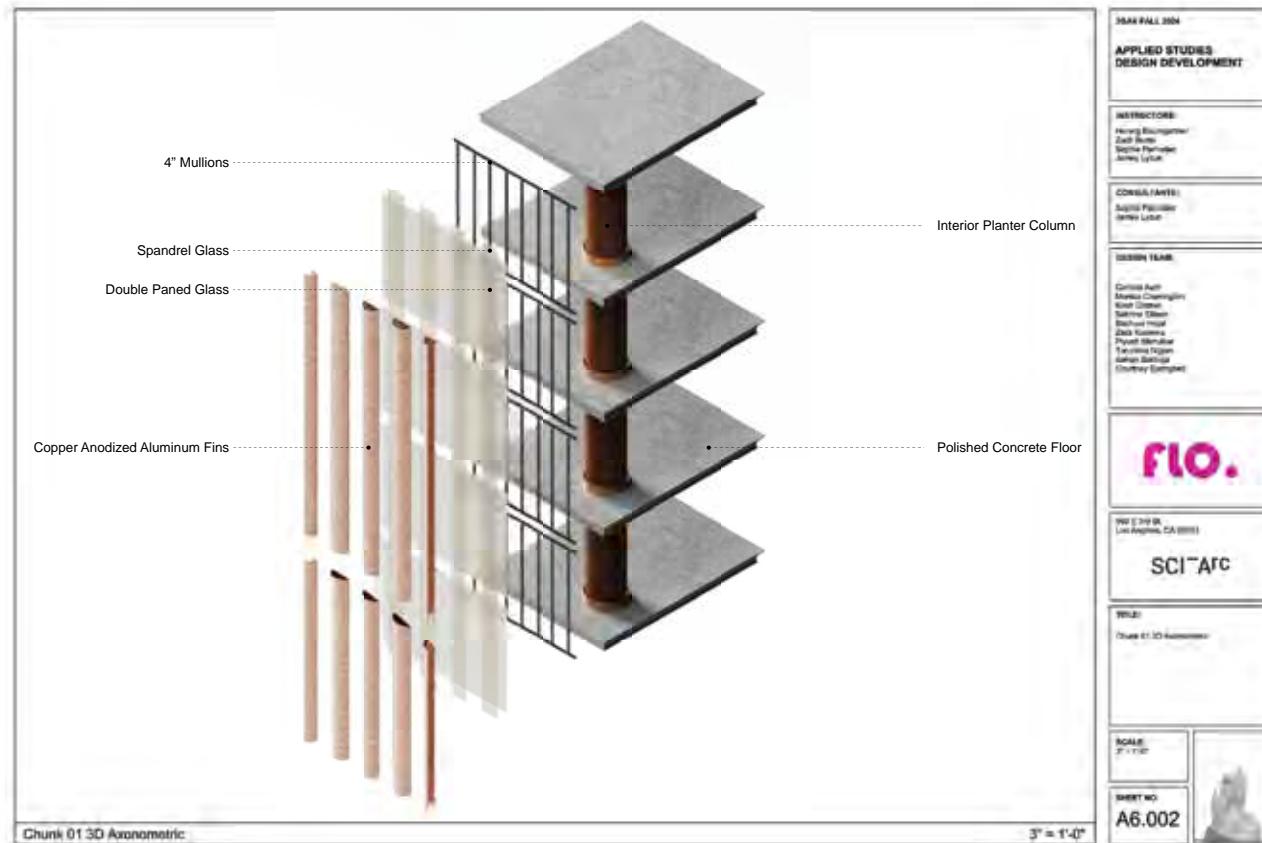
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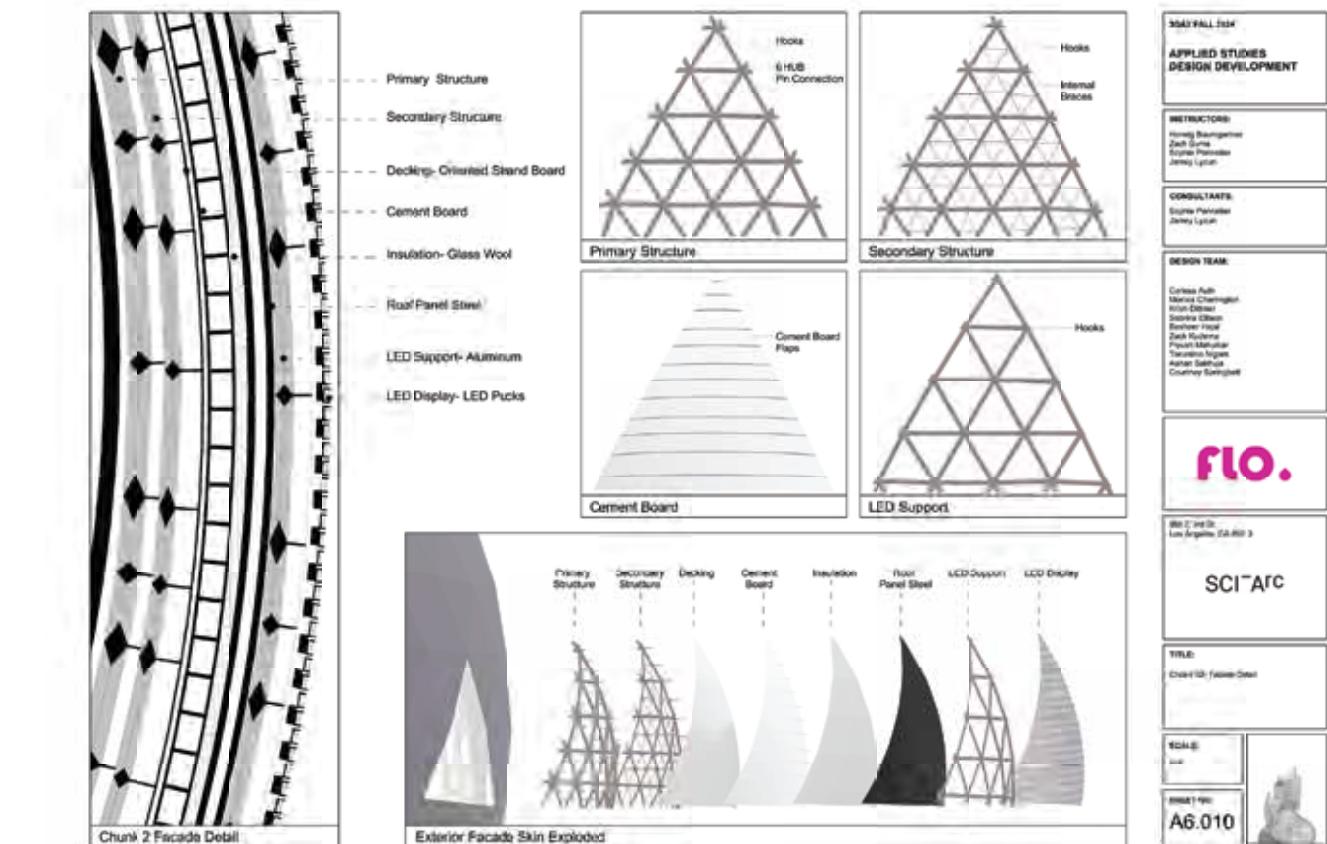
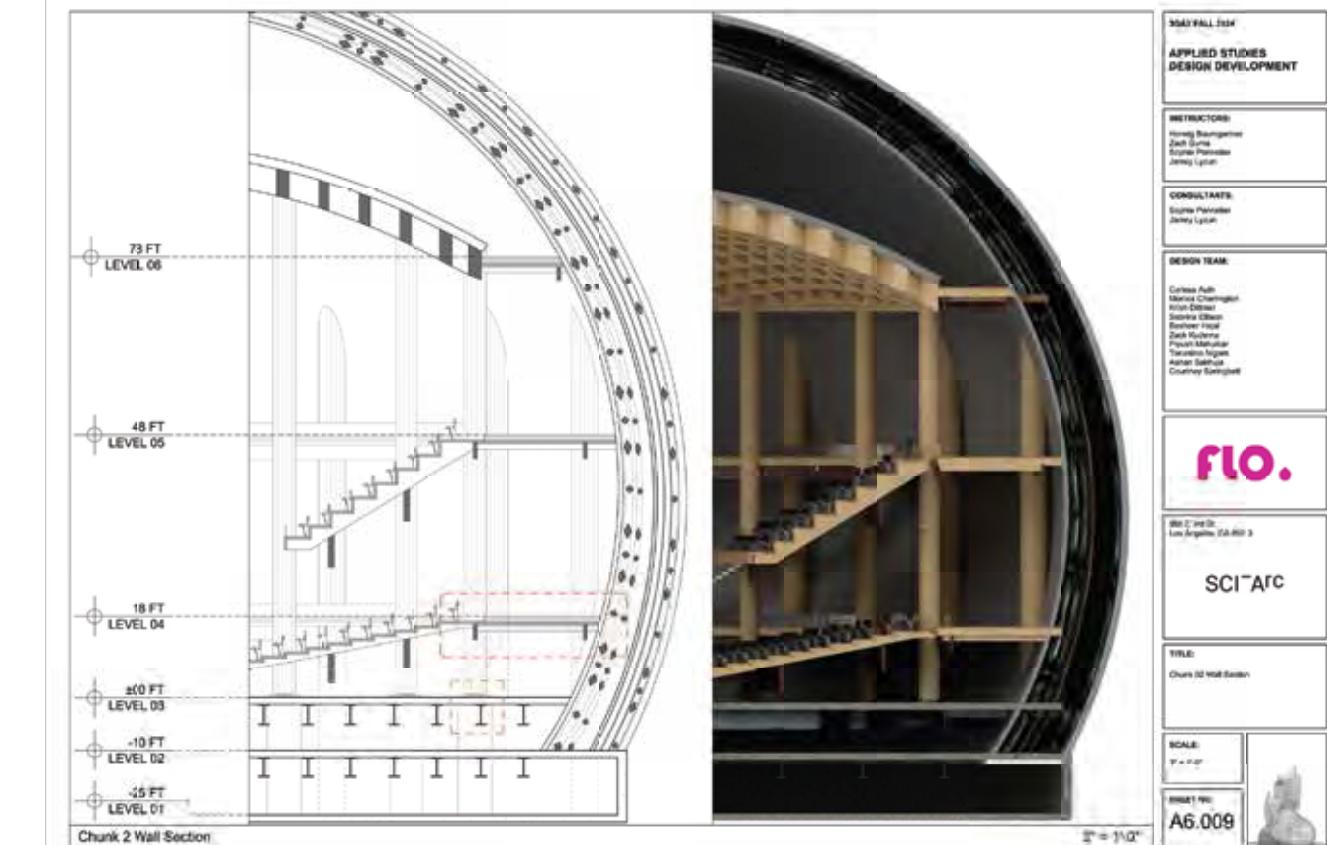
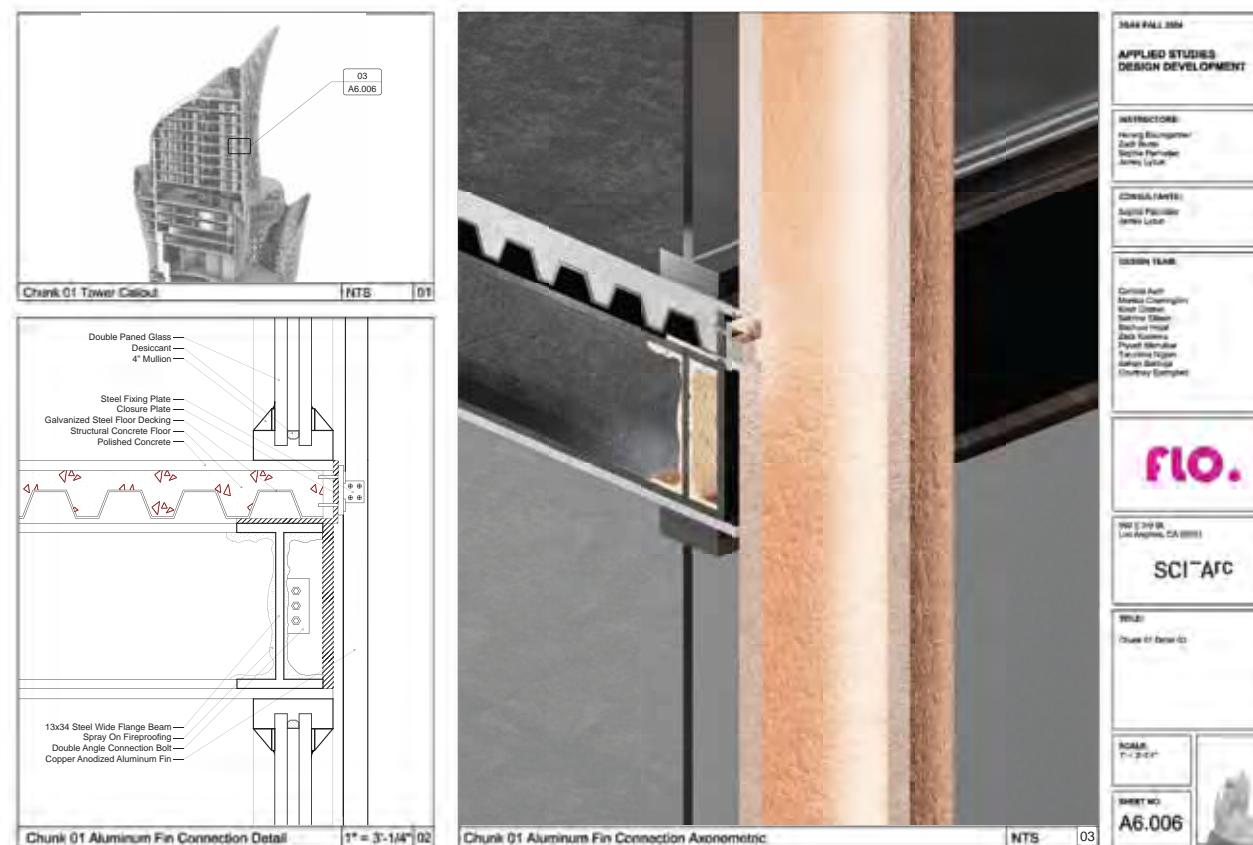


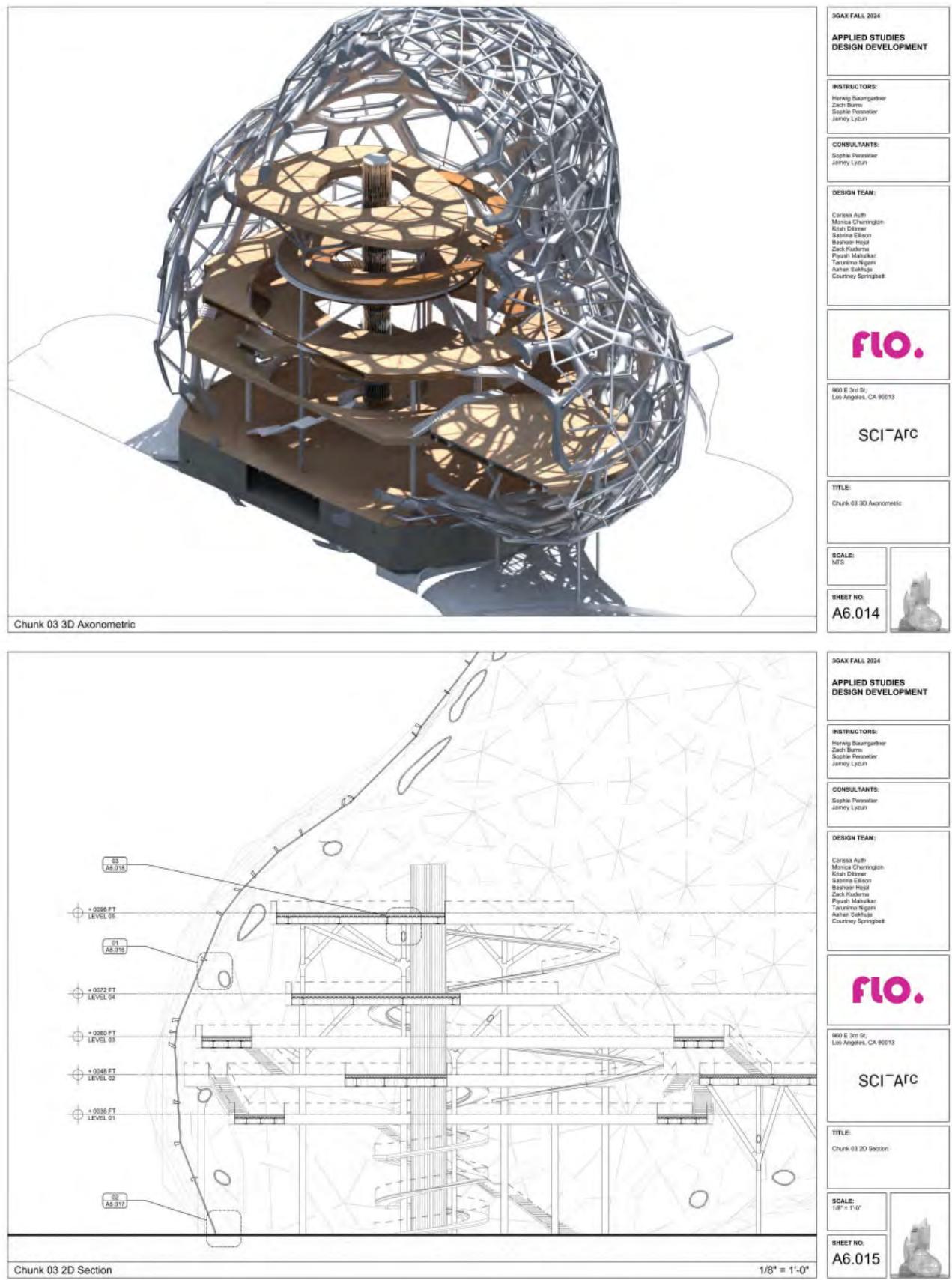
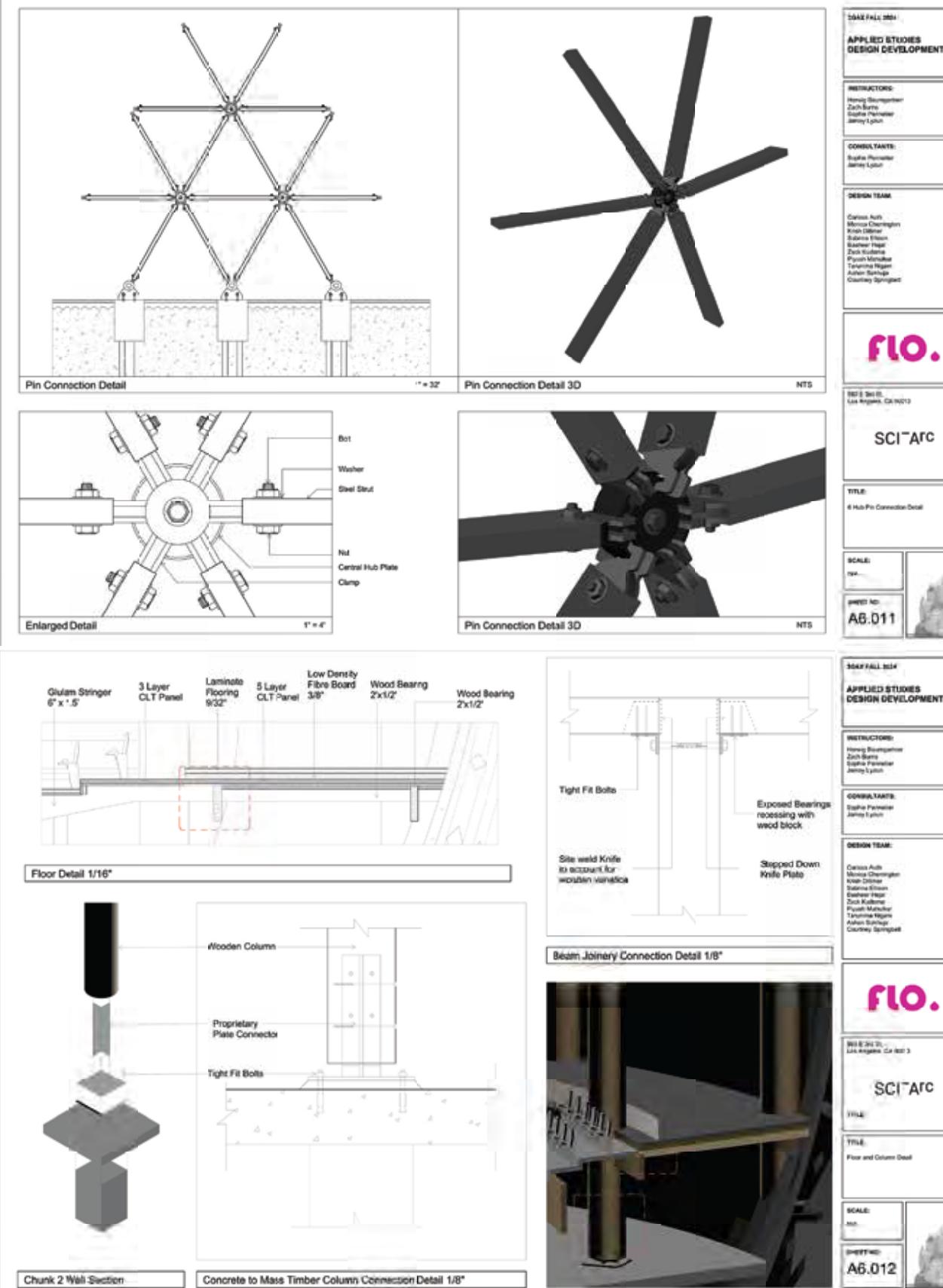
Chunk 01 Systems

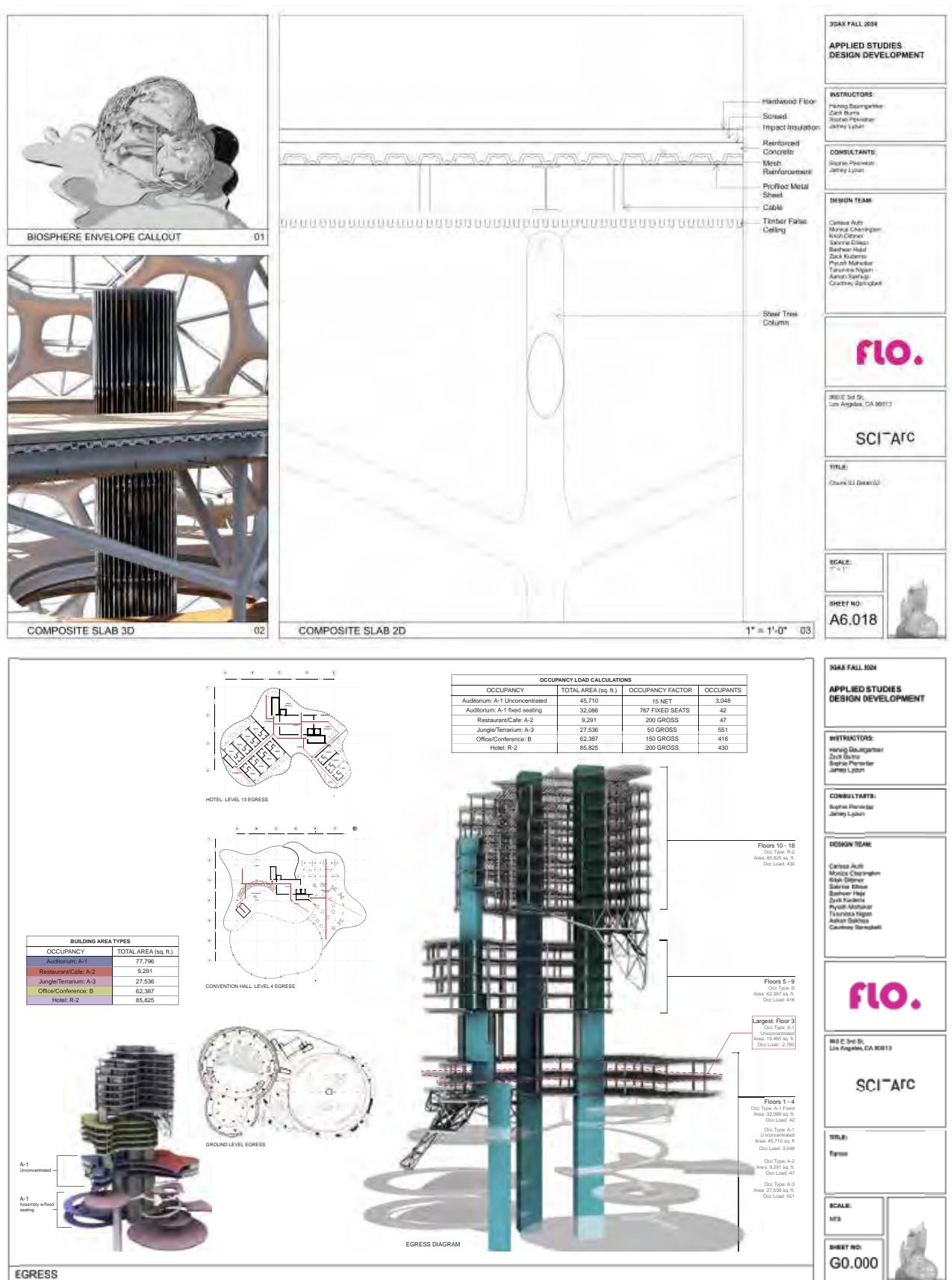
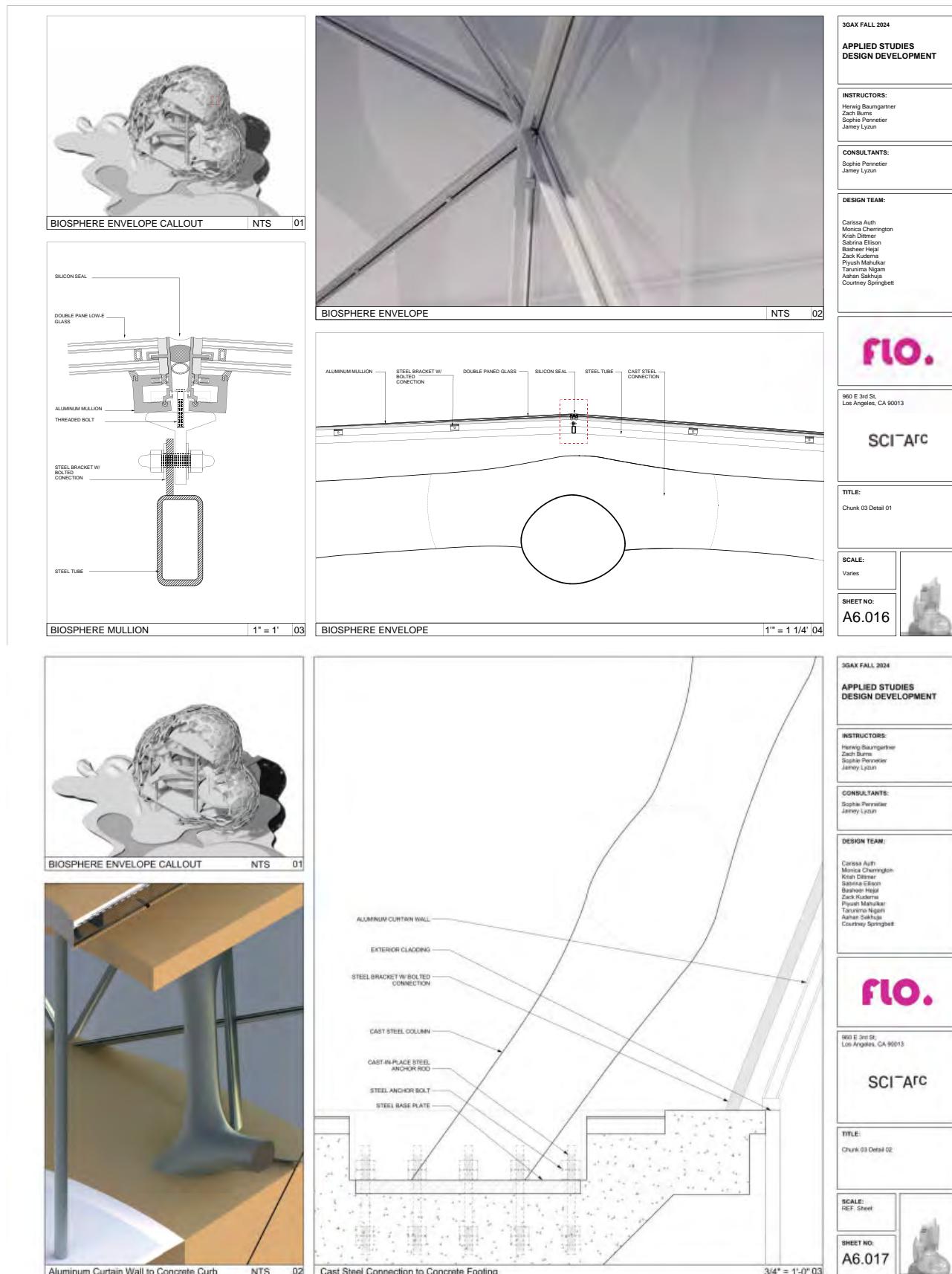


Chunk 02 Systems











2023 FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTORS:
Hans Baumgartner
Zach Burns
Sasha Penner
Janey Lyon

CONSULTANTS:
Sasha Penner
Janey Lyon

DESIGN TEAM:
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Monica Cherrington
Kish Oberoi
Samantha Elliott
Bianca Hepp
Zach Burns
Piyush Mitalwar
Tatyana Nigut
Aidan Selsky
Courtney Barnabell

flo.
600 E 3rd St.
Los Angeles, CA 90013

SCI-ARC

TITLE:
Mass Motion

SCALE:
NTS

SHEET NO:
G0.001

2023 FALL 2024
APPLIED STUDIES
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTORS:
Hans Baumgartner
Zach Burns
Sasha Penner
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Kish Oberoi
Samantha Elliott
Bianca Hepp
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Tatyana Nigut
Aidan Selsky
Courtney Barnabell

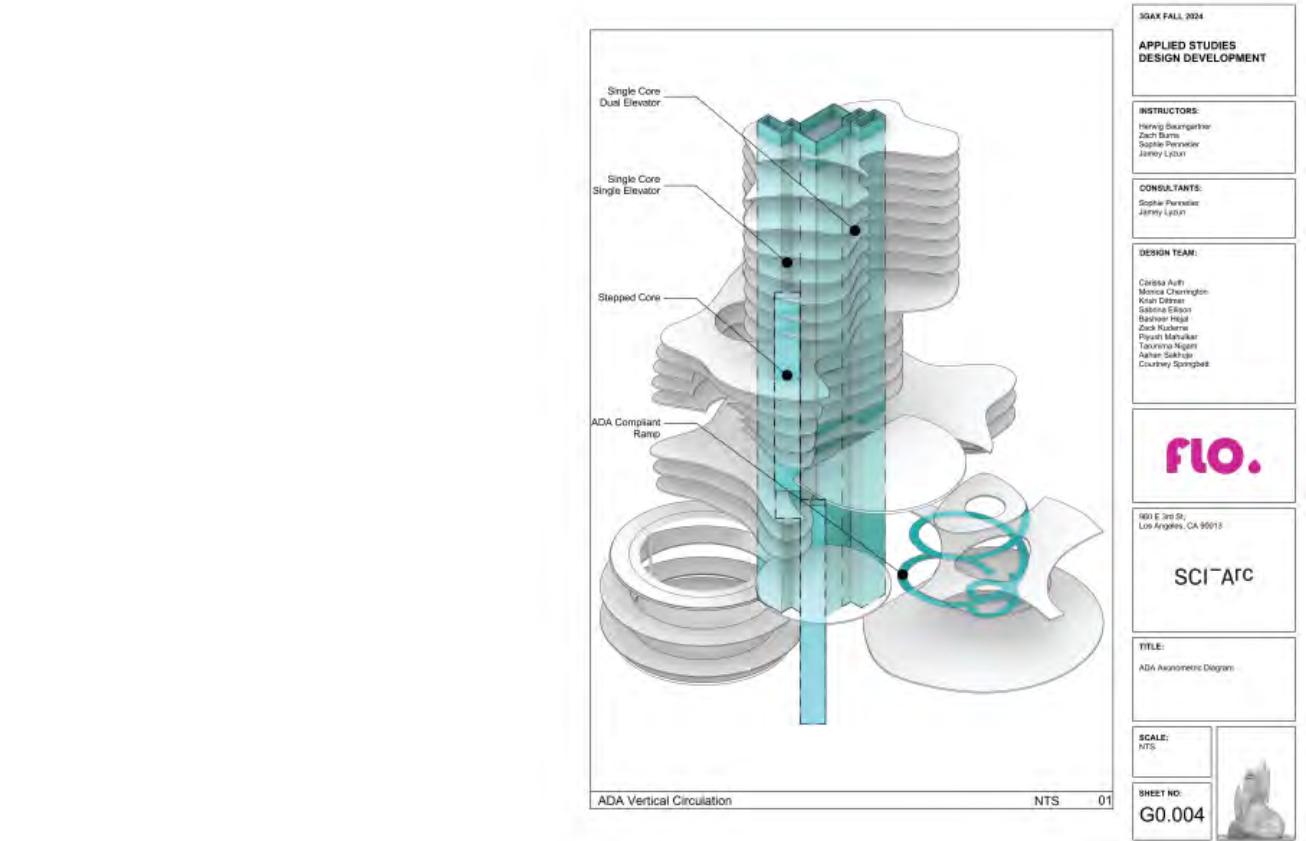
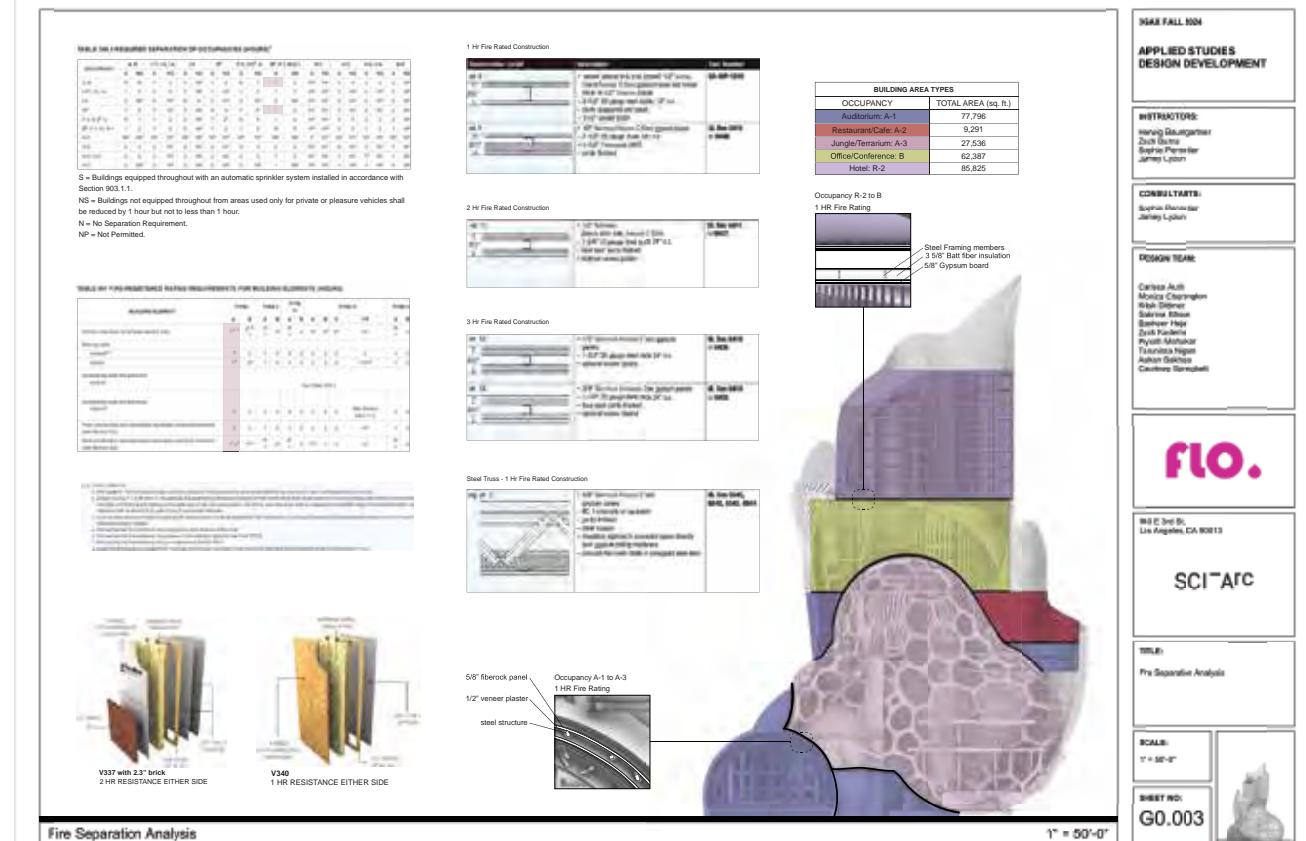
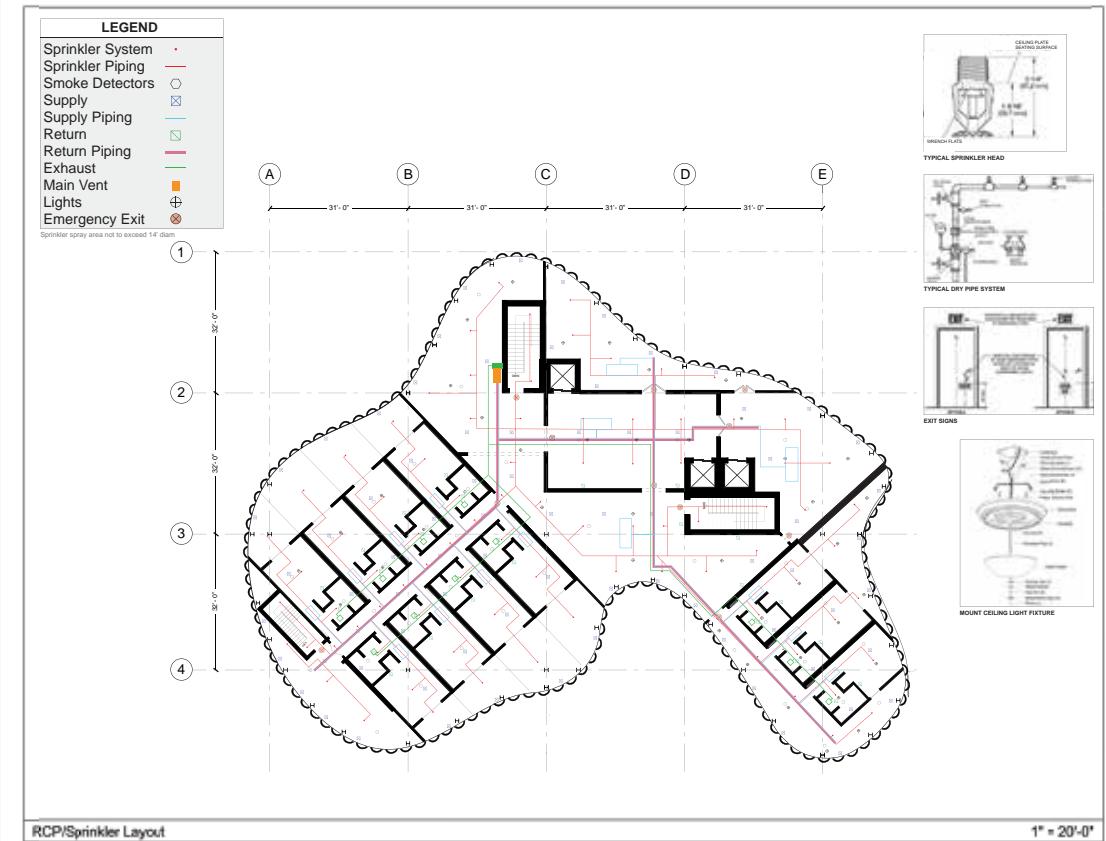
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Los Angeles, CA 90013

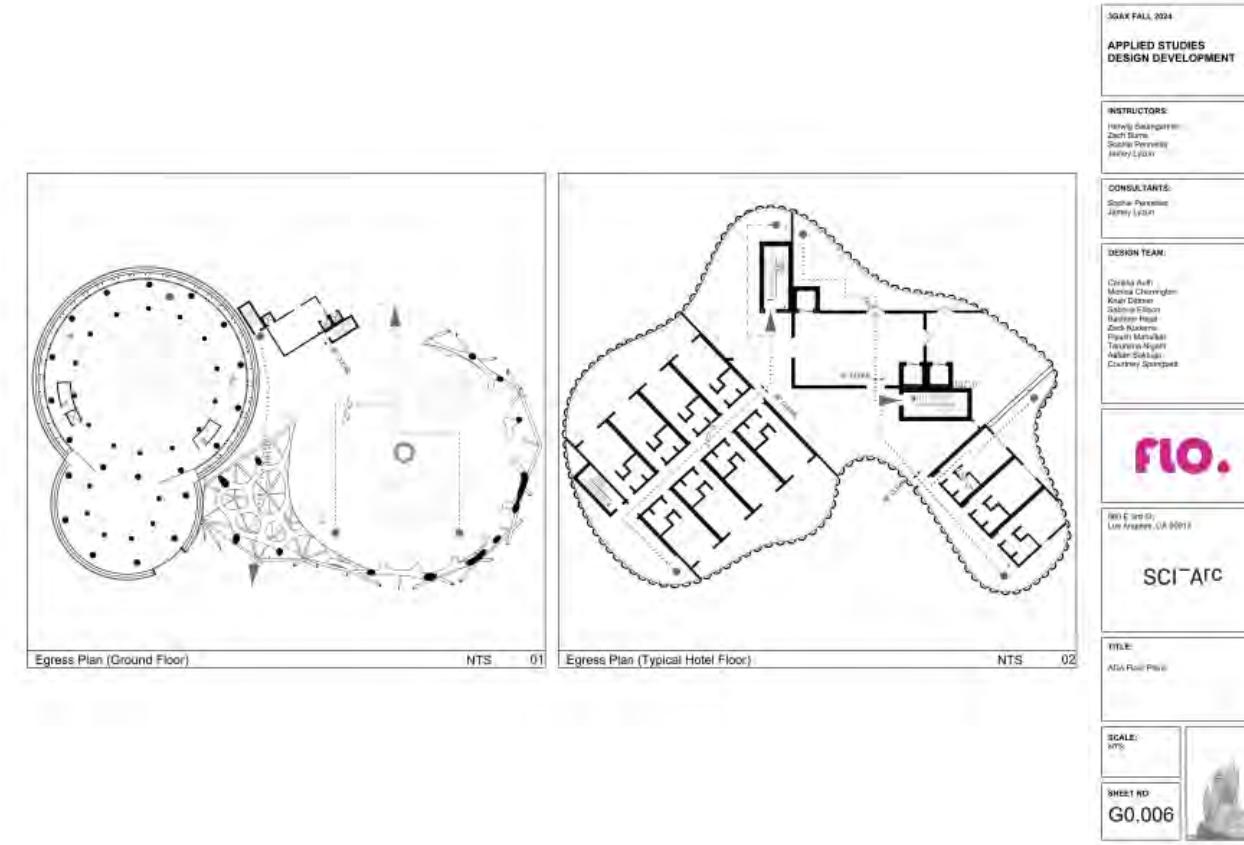
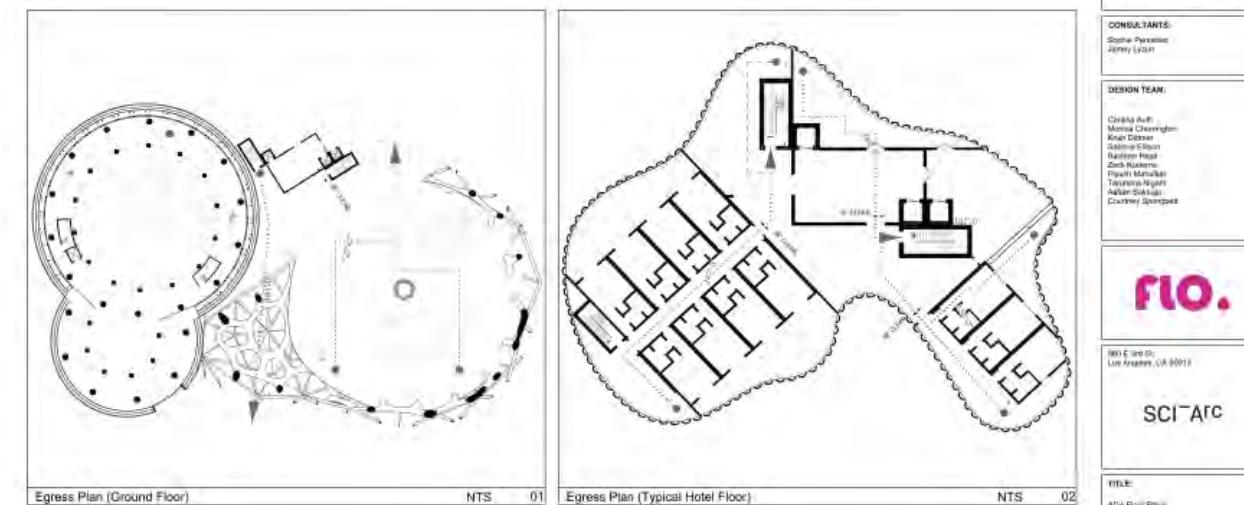
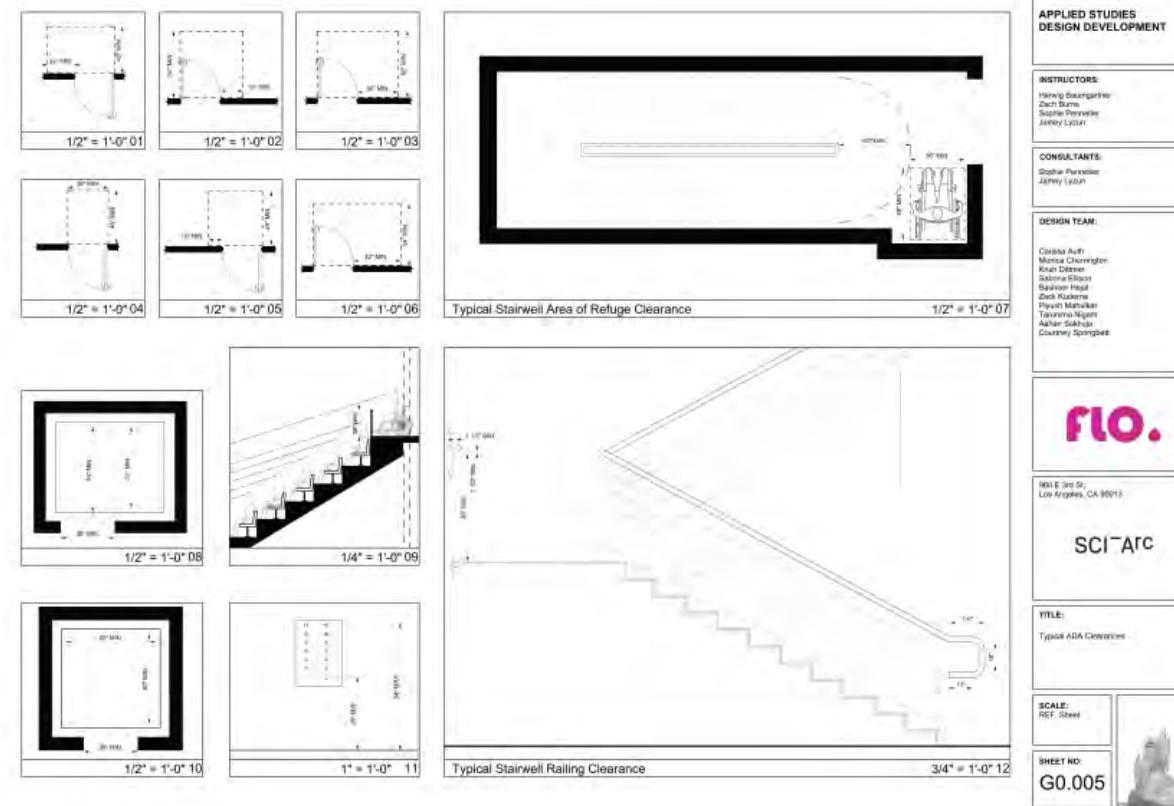
SCI-ARC

TITLE:
RCP/Sprinkler Layout

SCALE:
1" = 20'-0"

SHEET NO:
G0.002





3GAX FALL 2024

APPLIED STUDIES

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTORS:

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Tatjana Nigat

Ashaar Salihi

Courtney Spongbar

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Los Angeles, CA 90013

SCI-ARC

TITLE:

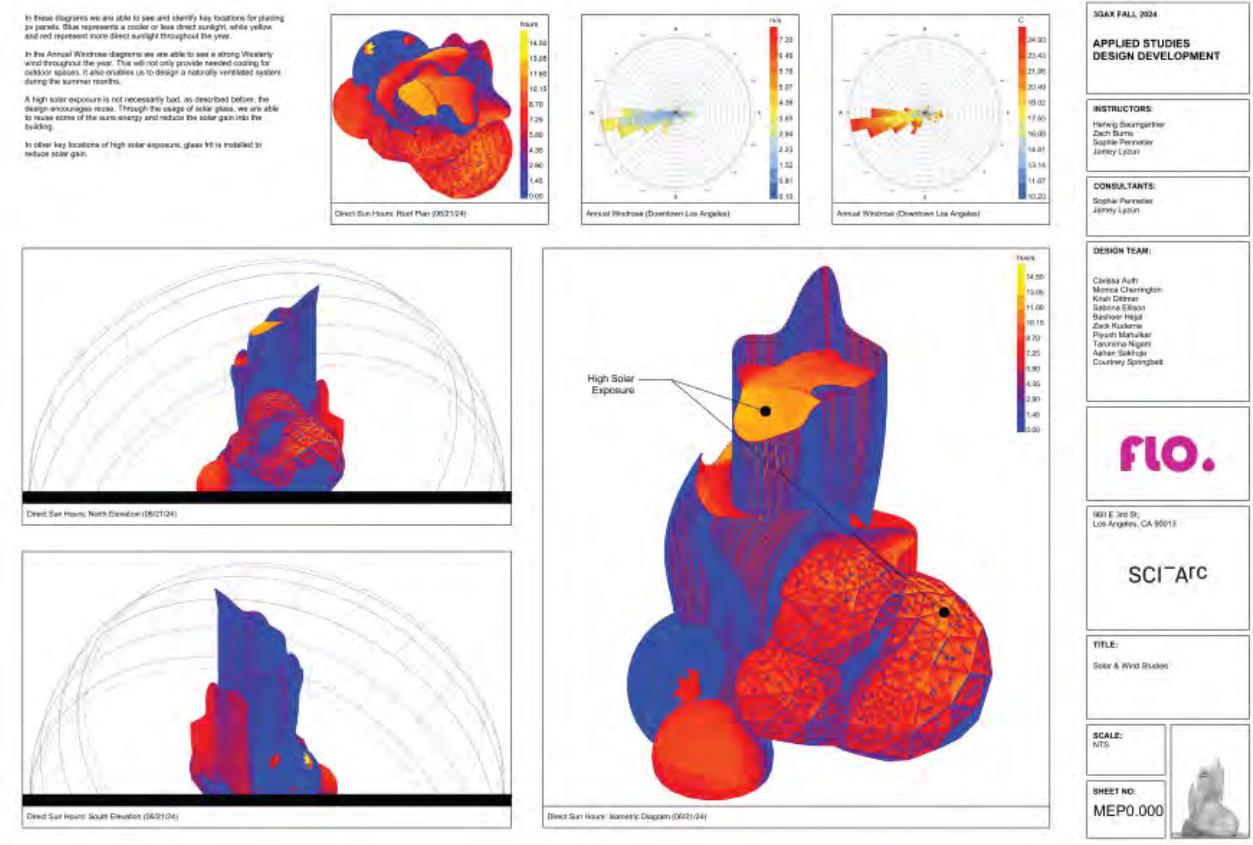
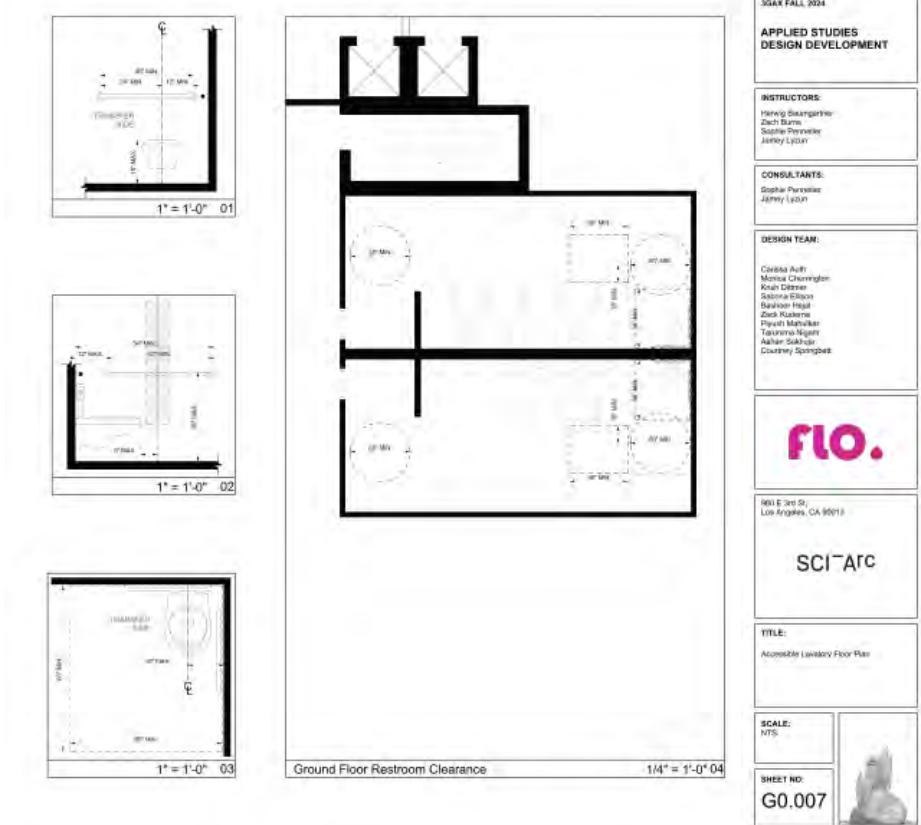
ADA Rail Plans

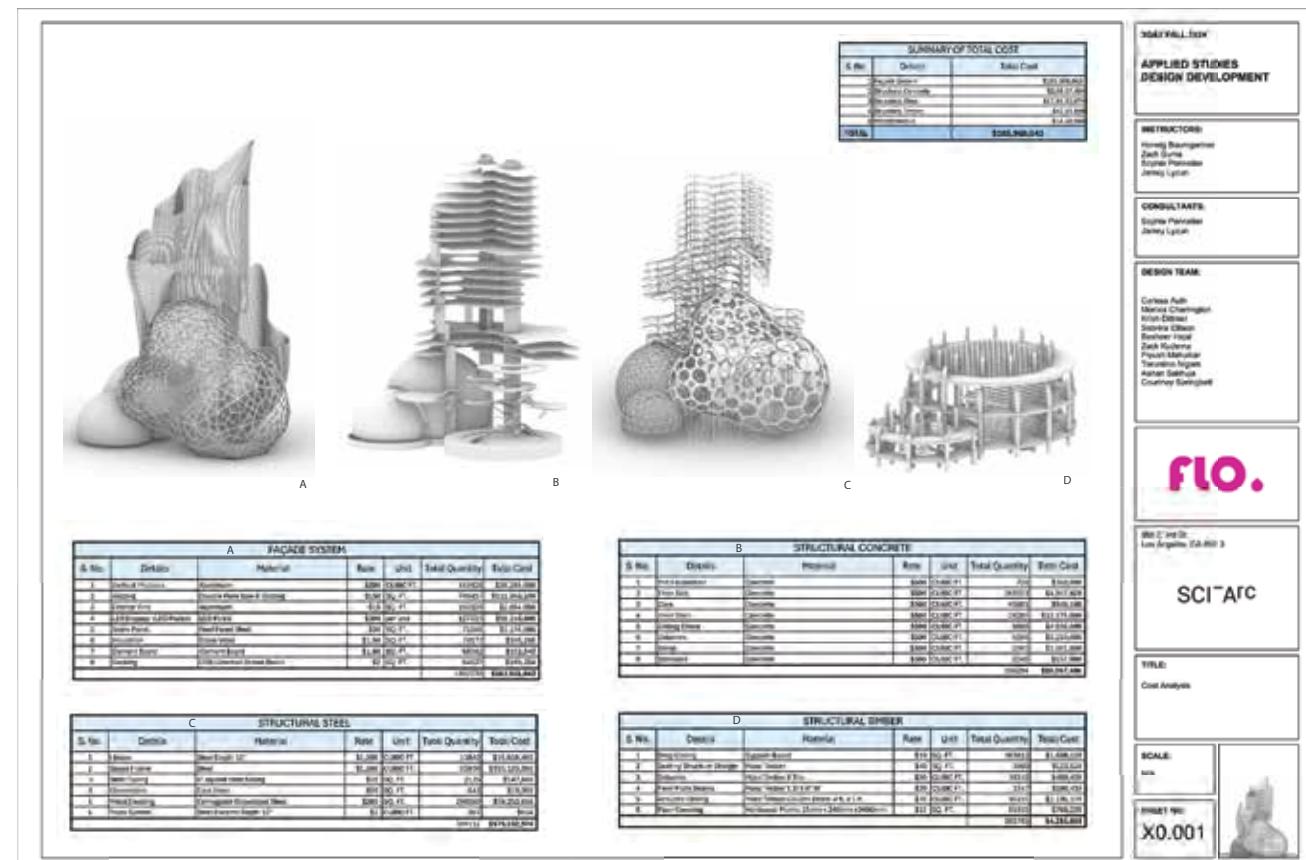
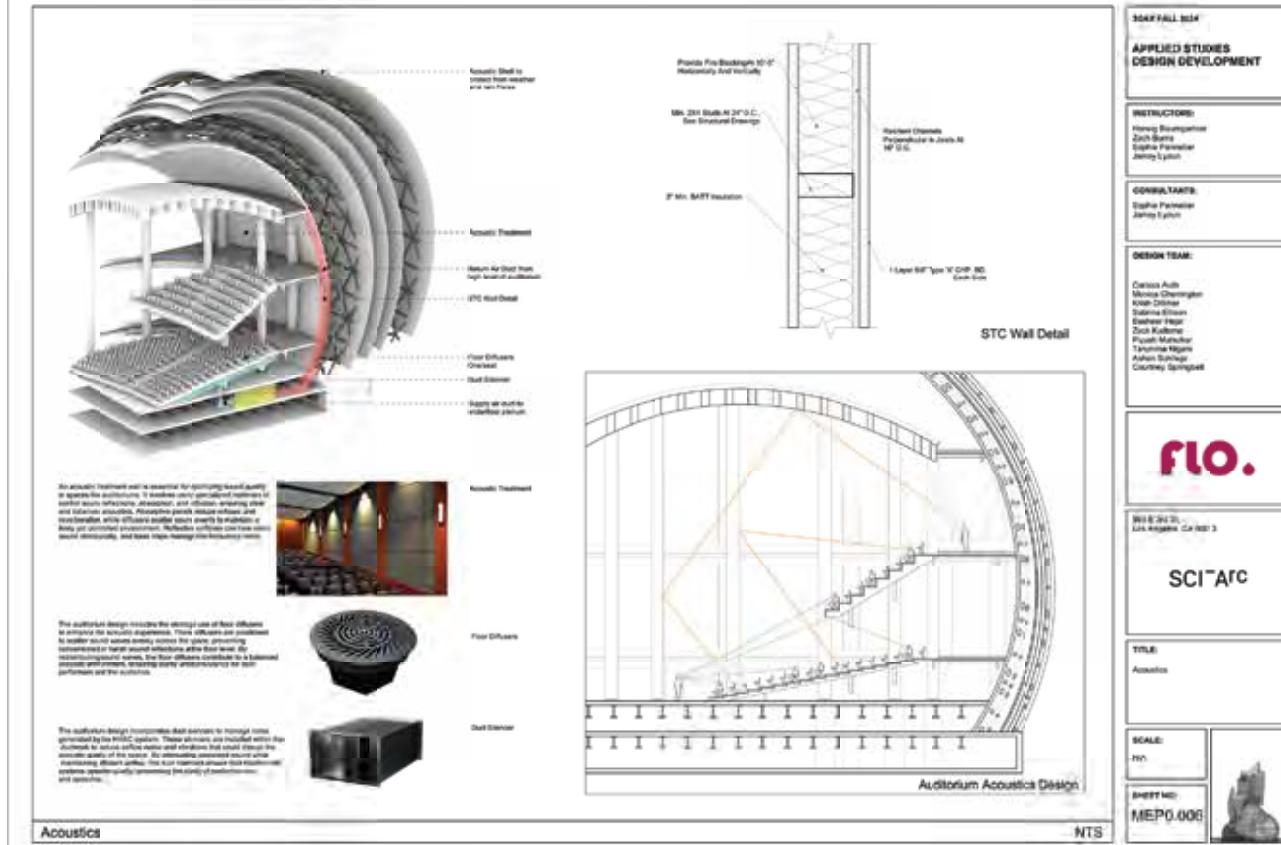
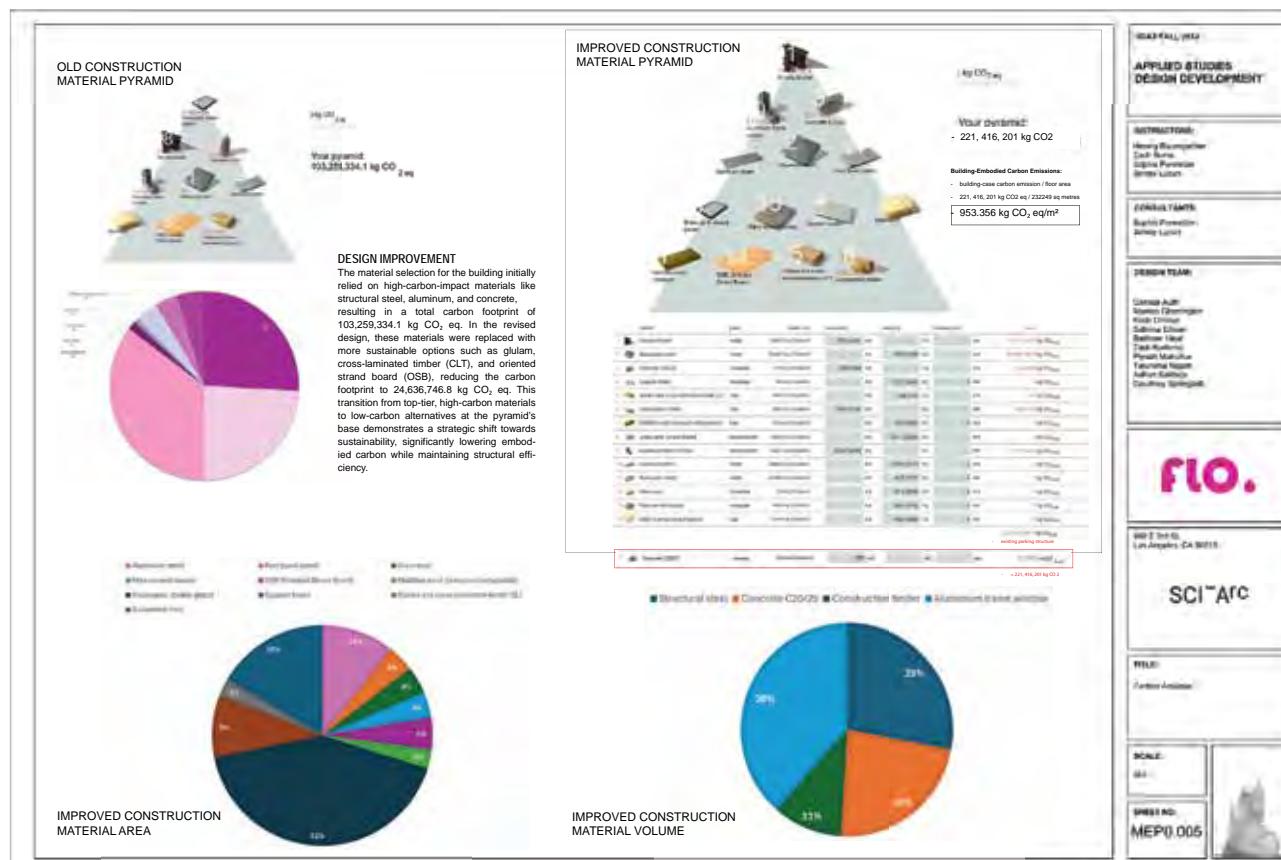
SCALE:

NTS

Sheet No:

G0.006





Our approach to design development is not only a technical advancement of the project but will also be a disciplinary one, where we challenge representation and search for relevancy in an era where documentation of design and manufacturing are in ux and are increasingly based on three-dimensional live data. While BIM is an important development in this regard, our aim is to re-think how we can envision and communicate design in innovative ways which exceed the design object itself.

We are teaching this class in an all-digital format that spans from digital mark ups to digital building systems simulations into a final video presentation/ augmented drawing set. Building assemblies and components will no longer be represented in static drawings printed on large sheets of paper but rather in the format of dynamic animations of building assemblies considering multiple dimensions including materiality, sequencing, cost, lifecycle etc .

The way how we construct things and how we use digital information to build buildings today is undergoing a dramatic change. AR and AI will be playing a key role of how we design, develop and build things in the future. Overlaying of digital information onto the built environment to both facilitate the construction and have everything derived from a single database have

been the status quo for automotive and aerospace industries for decades and are slowly finding its way into architecture.

The primary part of our work will be an augmented drawing set in form of multi segment videos combined with 2 d drawing to an interactive drawing set. Each chapter will address one of the core topics of the seminar and offer different views, components, sizes, descriptions, energies, systems, vantage points, transparencies, materials, colors, scales, and so on. A point of departure will be the genre of multi-dimensional building information modeling. Each group will work on set of given topics with a range of digital tools to simulate everything from assembly of structure and skin, to crowd simulations, environmental and re simulations, to construction cost and lifecycle cost of a building and the effect of one model onto another.

The final presentation will be a 10- 15-minute video walk through the digital drawing set either projected or displayed on large TV screens in the final exhibition of the project. A digital drawing set with all the embedded links as well as 11x17 print outs of screen shots will be made that specifically highlights the deliverables from the MACROS, MICROS and 2.5D's categories below.

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

3GBX: DS Vertical Studio

SPRING 2025

INSTRUCTOR: Elena Manferdini

PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 1 MODEL





PORTRAIT OF WOLFGANG MOZART

This project was developed as part of the Spring 2025 studio The Dream Factory at SCI-Arc, where each student selected one opera, opera house, and set design to research and reinterpret through the lens of contemporary architecture and visual storytelling. The class challenged us to reimagine operatic narratives and spatial environments in response to today's sociopolitical and cultural realities, using architectural techniques and emerging AI tools to visualize new forms of performance and meaning.

Premiering in 1786, Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* is a comic opera based on a controversial play by Pierre Beaumarchais.

Set in 18th-century Spain, the story follows Figaro, a servant, and Susanna, his bride-to-be, as they try to outwit their employer, Count Almaviva, who attempts to seduce Susanna before her wedding night. With the help of the Countess, Almaviva's neglected and heartbroken wife, the couple stages a series of clever schemes to expose the Count's behavior. Through mistaken identities, disguises, and social reversals, the opera critiques class inequality, patriarchal power, and aristocratic privilege. Despite its comedic tone, the work carried radical undertones for its time, championing the intelligence and agency of servants over their noble masters and ending with forgiveness and reconciliation.



OPERA ARTWORK



CHRISTIAN GERHAER PLAYS THE CLEVER FIGARO AND SIMON KEENLYSIDE HIS ARISTOCRATIC MASTER IN THIS REVIVAL OF DAVID MCVICAR'S MUCH-LOVED PRODUCTION AT THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE.

This project reimagines Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro through a contemporary architectural and narrative lens. Drawing on the opera's original critique of class, power, and gender, the story is relocated to a lavish modern wedding venue where institutional hierarchies, corporate entitlement, and gendered power dynamics come into sharp focus. Figaro becomes a quick-witted wedding planner, Susanna the determined bride, and the Count is

reinterpreted as Mr. Alvaro, a manipulative venue owner whose actions threaten the celebration.

Rosina, the venue owner's wife, experiences her own awakening as she shifts from complicit bystander to active ally. These updated character arcs explore themes of loyalty, consent, and resistance within a glossy, high-pressure environment that mirrors real-world social structures.



CONTEMPORARY VERSION OF THE COUNT



CONTEMPORARY VERSION OF ROSINA



CONTEMPORARY VERSION OF FIGARO AND SUSANNA



SCREENSHOTS OF AI GENERATED VIDEO OF SUSANNA TURNING 360 DEGREES



AI GENERATED IMAGE OF ACT 1 STAGE SET



AI GENERATED IMAGE OF ACT 2 STAGE SET



AI GENERATED IMAGES OF OTHER CHARACTERS



DIGITAL MODEL OF ACT 1 STAGE SET



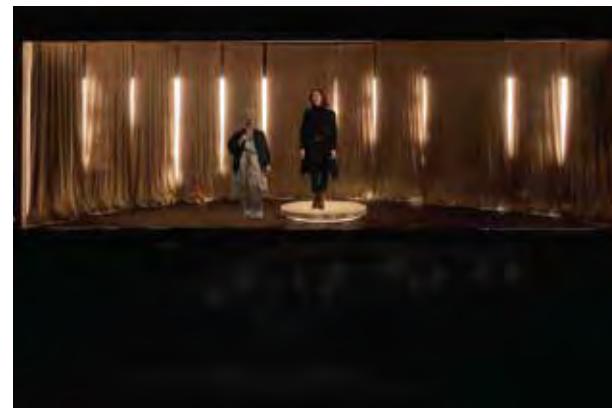
DIGITAL MODEL OF ACT 2 STAGE SET



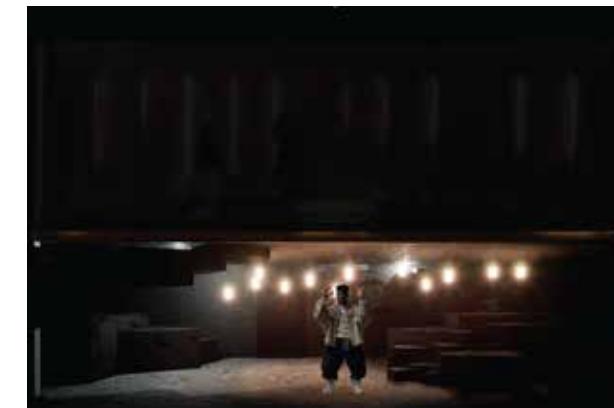
AI GENERATED VIDEO OF ACT 1

Architecturally, the project blends minimalist design with surreal scenography, inspired by the immersive light work of James Turrell. The set features mirrored panels, void-like staircases, and atmospheric lighting to heighten the emotional and psychological tension of the scenes. AI tools like MidJourney and Kling were used to generate imagery and cinematic sequences, allowing for a hybrid storytelling approach that merges performance, architecture, and digital experimentation.

This reinterpretation asks how the operatic stage, both physical and symbolic, can be used to challenge outdated narratives and spotlight ongoing cultural conflicts through spatial design and visual media.



AI GENERATED VIDEO OF ACT 2



AI GENERATED VIDEO OF ACT 2



AI GENERATED VIDEO OF ACT 2



AI GENERATED VIDEO OF ACT 1

ACT 1

At a luxury wedding venue, wedding planner Figaro and bride-to-be Susanna go over final details, but Figaro becomes suspicious when he learns their suite is next to the venue owner, Mr. Alvaro, who has been making unwanted advances toward Susanna. Figaro vows to stop him while venue staff member Marceline demands repayment of an old debt, threatening legal action to force him into marriage, with Dr. Bartholo supporting her claim. Meanwhile, Susanna's flirtatious cousin Cherie reveals that Mr. Alvaro meddles in his employees' lives, and Rosina, Mr. Alvaro's wife, arrives, hiding her frustrations under a polished socialite facade.

ACT 2

In the bridal suite, Figaro and Susanna devise a plan to expose Mr. Alvaro, with Cherie flirting with him as a trap, though his power unnerves them. Rosina misinterprets the scene as an affair, but after confronting her husband, she discovers his true nature and decides to help Susanna. Meanwhile, Figaro overhears Marceline's lawsuit and learns she is his long-lost mother, resolving the debt but leaving his power struggle with Mr. Alvaro unresolved.



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 2 MODEL

ACT 3

Rosina and Susanna unite against Mr. Alvaro, while Cherie, in disguise, lures him into a compromising situation that is caught on camera. However, his furious reaction serves as a stark reminder of the dangers they face in challenging his power.



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 2 MODEL

ACT 4

Mr. Alvaro makes a public apology, but Rosina quietly asserts her independence, refusing to be controlled any longer. Figaro and Susanna finally marry, celebrating their love and victory, despite the lingering tensions from their struggles.



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 1 MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 2 MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 1 MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 1 MODEL



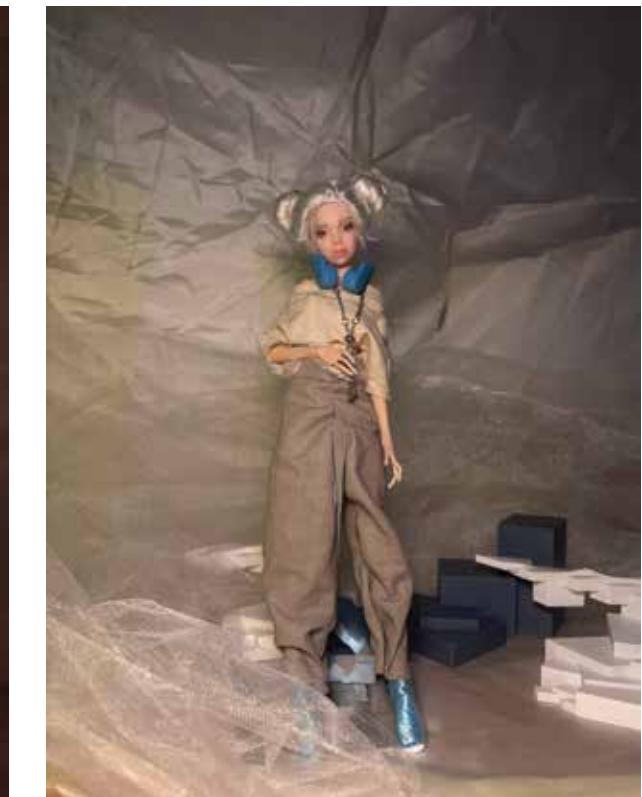
PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 1 MODEL



PERSPECTIVE PHOTO OF SET 1 MODEL



PHOTO OF SUSANNA AS A DOLL



PHOTOS OF SUSANNA AS A DOLL

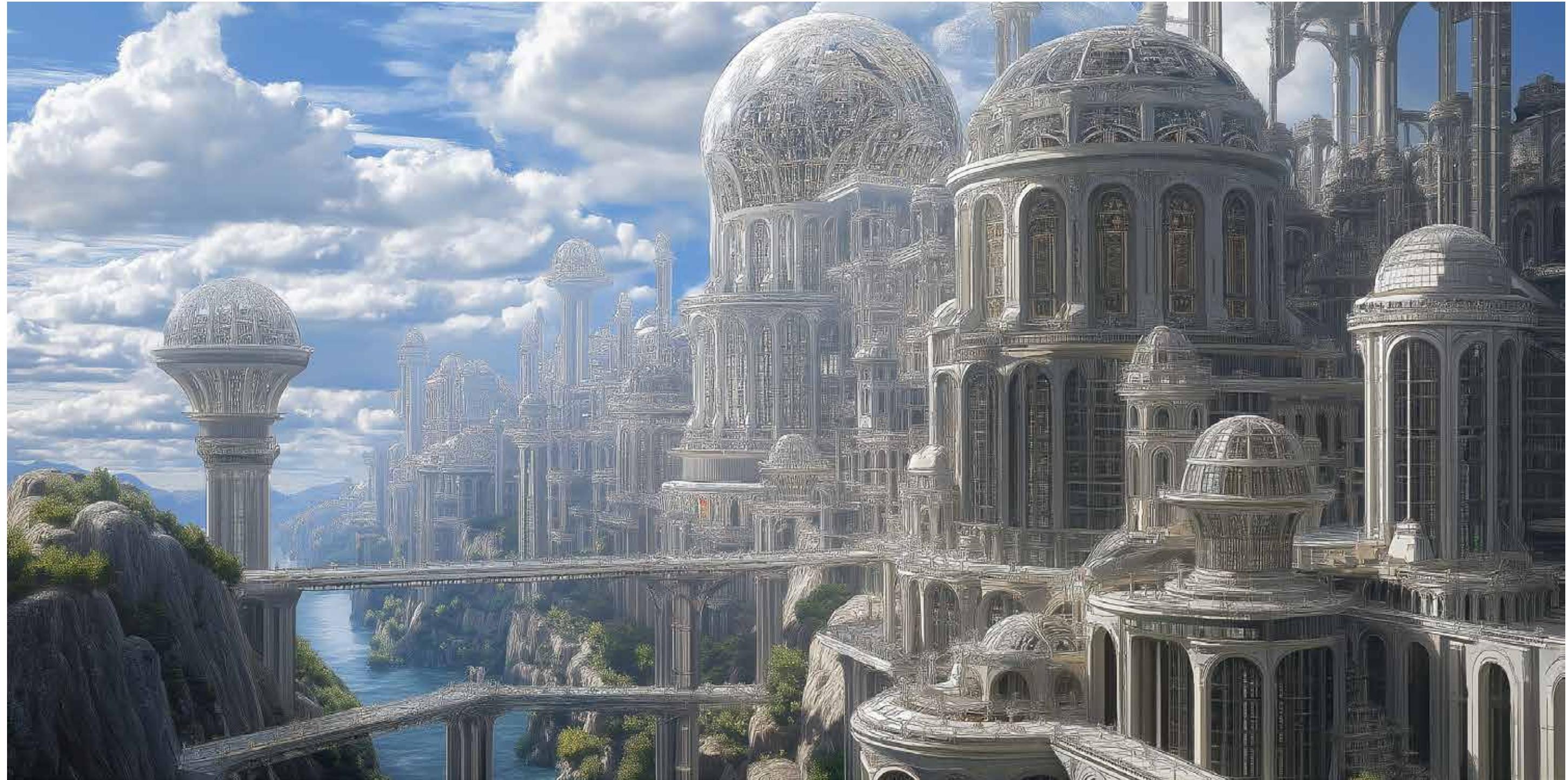
FROM FLESH TO CODE

3GBX: LA Outsider Geographies

SPRING 2025

INSTRUCTOR: Daniel Tovar

AI GENERATED UTOPIA



This video project, created for *Outsider Geographies*, explores the unstable boundary between lived experience and synthetic environments. Inspired by Thomas More's *Utopia* and Michel Foucault's writings on utopias and the body, *From Flesh to Code* interrogates how digital tools reframe our perceptions of landscape, embodiment, and presence.

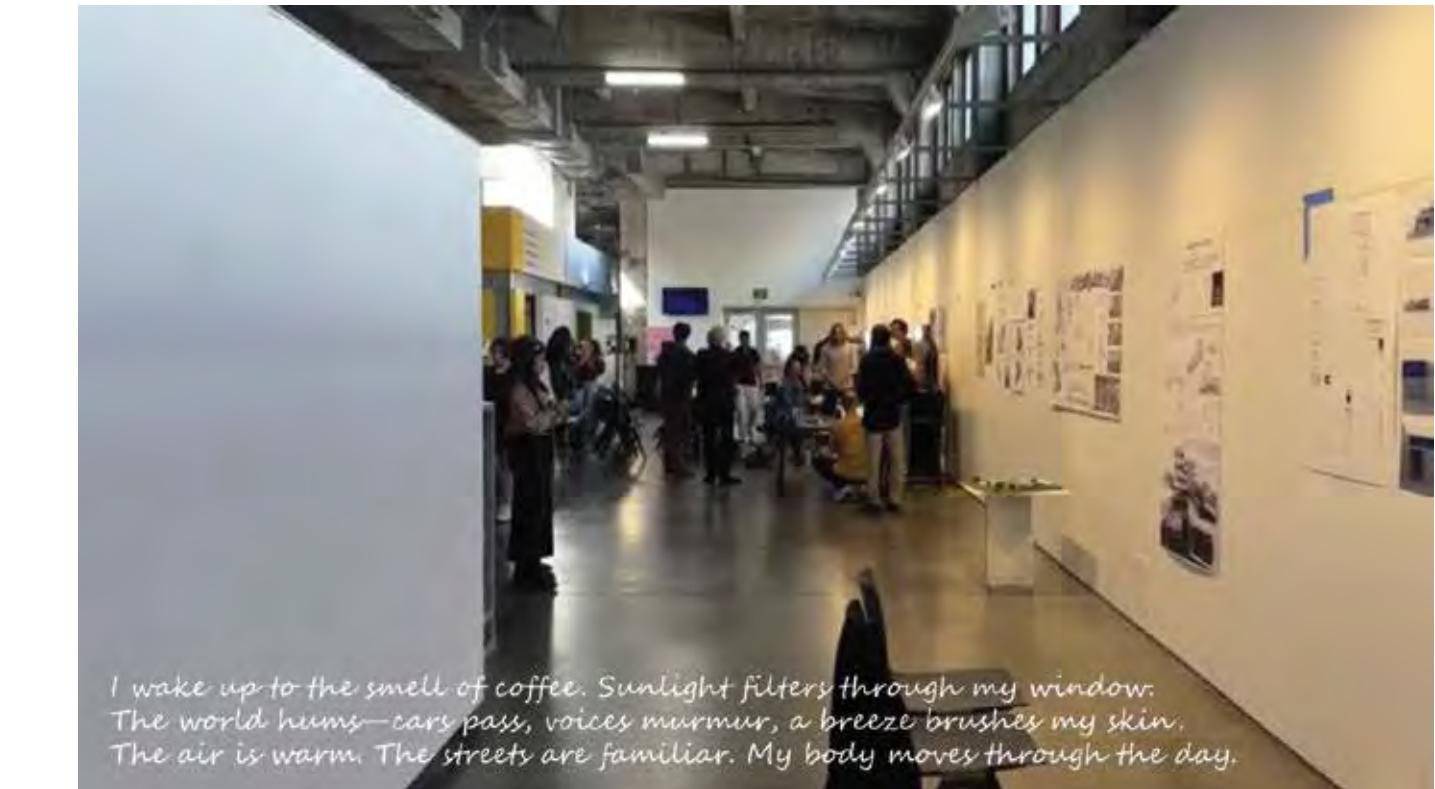
The video opens with a grounded sensory narrative: sunlight filtering through a window, ambient city noise, and text that mimics personal reflection. These moments form a recognizable "eutopia," a flawed but tangible world that engages the senses and feels materially inhabited.



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO

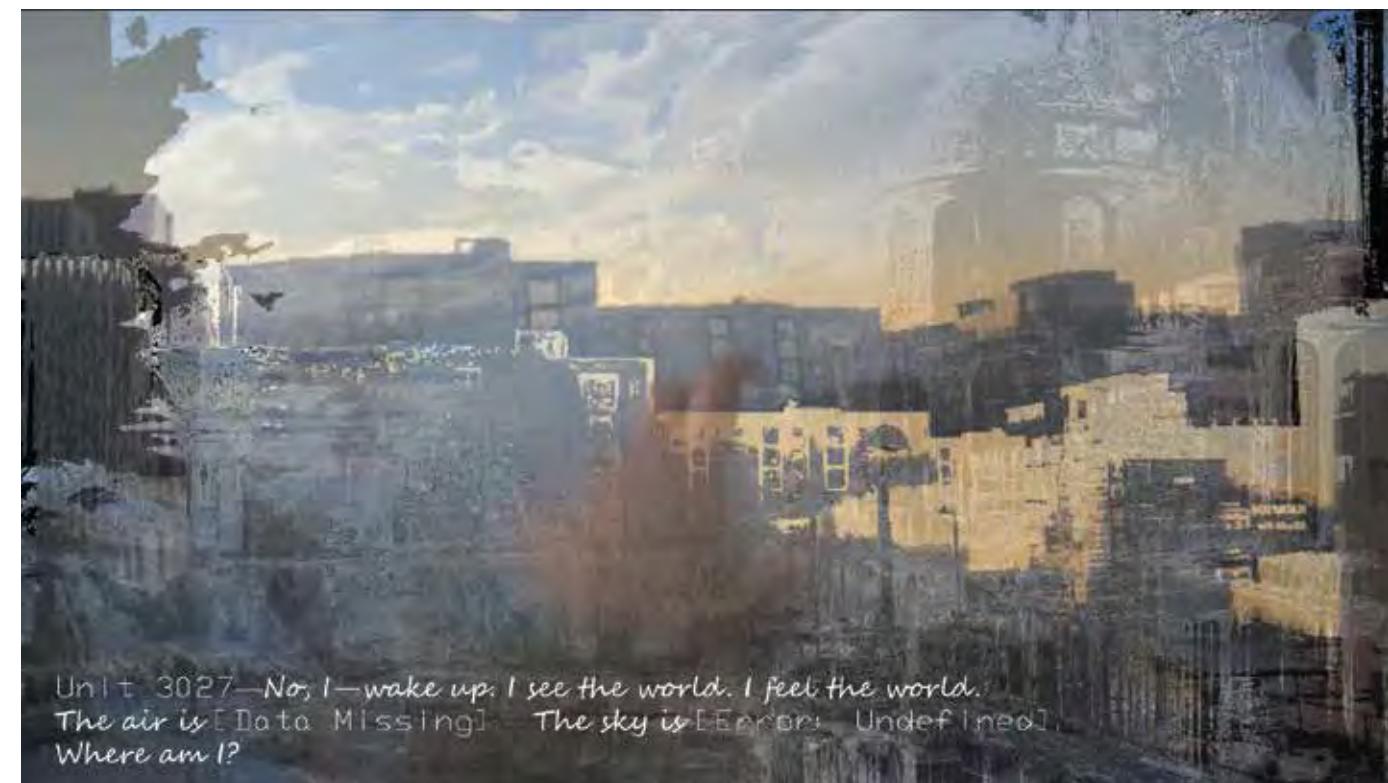
As the piece progresses, reality dissolves. The organic morphs into the rendered. Familiar textures glitch. AI-generated cityscapes, clean, ordered, and eerily perfect, overtake the screen. These synthetic utopias, while visually seductive, become "non-places": uninhabitable, frictionless, and devoid of bodies. On-screen text evolves in parallel, shifting from journaled thought to robotic syntax, marking the erasure of subjectivity and sensation.

Yet, this technological perfection cracks. Glitches emerge. A human hand reappears. Text fragments reclaim the first-person voice. The project closes in a liminal zone where the artificial cannot fully contain the real—where the human leaks back into the machine.

By mapping the visual and linguistic collapse from presence to simulation and back, *From Flesh to Code* critically examines the aesthetics of idealized environments. It suggests that even in our most designed and disembodied digital utopias, the complexity of human experience endures.



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO



SCREENSHOT OF VIDEO

Sabrina Ellison

Outsider Geographies

SCI-Arc Spring 2025

From Flesh to Code

What happens when the world around us is no longer experienced, but rendered?

Inspired by Thomas More's *Utopia*, particularly his idea that a "good place" (eutopia) and a "non-place" (utopia) are the same, I wanted to explore how synthetic, AI-generated environments echo our collective longing for ideal spaces while simultaneously dislocating us from material reality. My video transitions from footage of everyday life to a digitally constructed cityscape. The final product is not just about AI or futurism; it's about the slippery nature of space, memory, and embodiment in an era of synthetic reality that influences how we perceive our environment.

The video opens in what feels like a "good place." A quiet morning with ambient city noise that increasingly gets louder as I progress through my schedule. These are lived, textured experiences that root the viewer in a recognizable world. This is eutopia as many of us understand it, as I understand it. This section of the video prioritizes organic movement and natural light to ground the viewer in what feels immediate and real. Text on screen mimics journal-like thoughts: "I wake up to the smell of coffee. Sunlight filters through my window." These human markers emphasize the lived-ness of the world. It's not a perfect place, but it's a place, nonetheless.

As the video progresses, this tactile reality begins to dissolve. The light shifts. Familiar objects glitch and blur. Eventually, the real world is overtaken by futuristic

cityscapes and landscapes. In many ways, this cityscape represents a contemporary version of eutopia: technologically advanced, visually perfect, and devoid of error. It's the kind of world imagined in marketing campaigns and rendered by image generators like Kling.ai. And yet, it is also a "non-place," a visual simulation, not a space that can be inhabited in any meaningful way. There is no dirt, no noise, no unpredictability. Just order and design.

This shift in the video, from human experience to synthetic rendering, is not meant to suggest that technology is inherently dystopian. Rather, I'm interested in the ways that human manipulation and digital tools create a new kind of utopia. The AI cityscape is beautiful, even mesmerizing. But its perfection comes at a cost. There are no people in this landscape. No friction, no clutter, no noise. It's utopia as a rendered dream, an algorithm's best guess at what we want, based on what we've already consumed. In this sense, the city becomes a visual metaphor for the constructed experience of AI itself, seamless, structured, and detached.¹

Throughout the second half of the video, the on-screen text evolves too. What began as human reflection becomes robotic data: "Unit 3027 activates. Optical sensors detect 99.87% light exposure." Language becomes syntax. The text shift mirrors the environment shift, from a personal perspective to disembodied information. What is lost in this transition is not only the "real," but the body itself. This parallels Michel Foucault's observation that utopia is often imagined as a space without bodies, free of the mess and mortality of physical life.²³

Still, the video does not end with a clean break into the synthetic. In the final moments, the digital begins to glitch again. Small cracks form in the perfection of the AI world. The previous bustling cityscape transitions in. A human hand reappears. The text becomes fragmented: "Unit 3027—No, I—wake up. I see the world. I feel the world."

These disruptions suggest that the real and artificial boundaries are never fully stable. Even in our most carefully designed utopias, the mess of human experience inevitably leaks back in.

Ultimately, my video tries to hold space for this in-between state, the place where reality and simulation blend, where utopia is both a dream and a glitch. By visually tracing the movement from a lived-in world to a synthetic, AI-generated environment, I wanted to examine how our desire for a better place often leads us toward abstraction, not presence. And yet, even in the most polished digital environments, traces of the body, of memory, of real life persist.⁴

¹ Thomas More, **Utopia**, ed. George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

² Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias," **Architecture/Mouvement/ Continuité**, October 1984.

³ Michel Foucault, "The Utopian Body," in **Sensorium: Embodied Experience, Technology, and Contemporary Art**, ed. Caroline A. Jones (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 229–34.

⁴ James C. Scott, **Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed** (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).



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