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Thesis
Projects
Winter 24

Architectural Studies

Visual Studies



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
JOHN H. DANIELS FACULTY OF
ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE, AND DESIGN

This book showcases final thesis projects produced by Bachelor of Arts in Architectural Studies (BAAS) and Bachelor of Arts in Visual Studies (BAVS) students at the University of Toronto's John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design.

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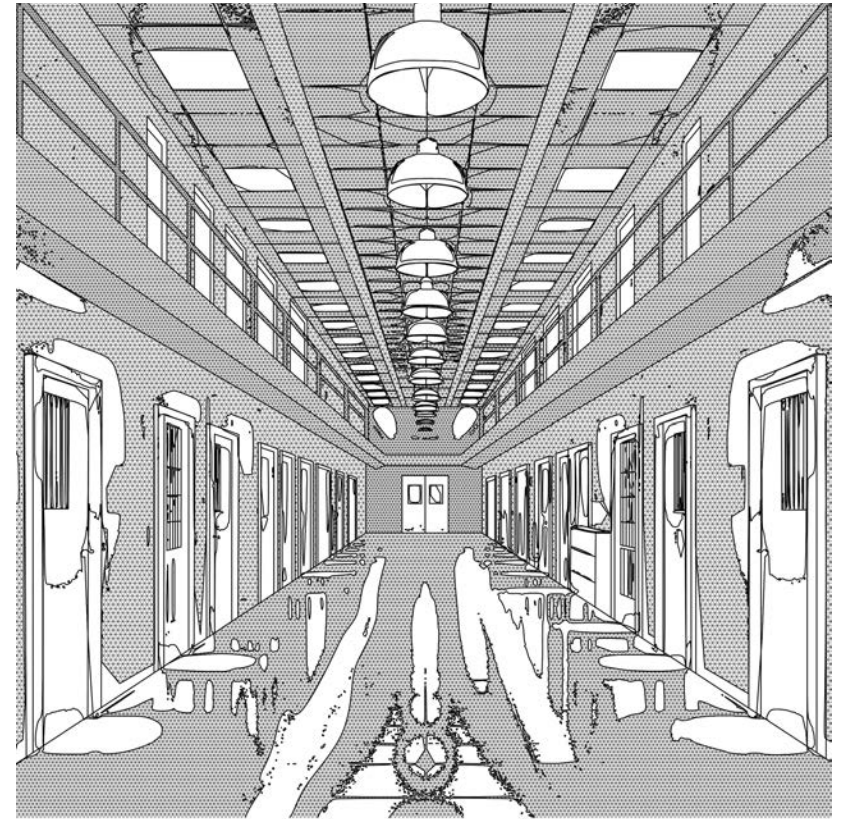


Yashara Abeysinghe
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Kapruka: Building from the Tree of Life

In Sinhala, the coconut tree is referred to as 'Kapruka,' meaning the tree of life, as every part of it can be made of use. At the peak of the climate crisis, architectural designers must take responsibility for the overwhelming consequences that synthetic building materials like concrete, have on the environment. Therefore, an investigation of the properties of the coconut husk presents the possibility of an innovative biomaterial suitable for tropical countries. By sourcing materials locally, this exploration envisions a biodegradable material that is less chemically intensive and emits lower carbon throughout its lifecycle compared to synthetic materials.

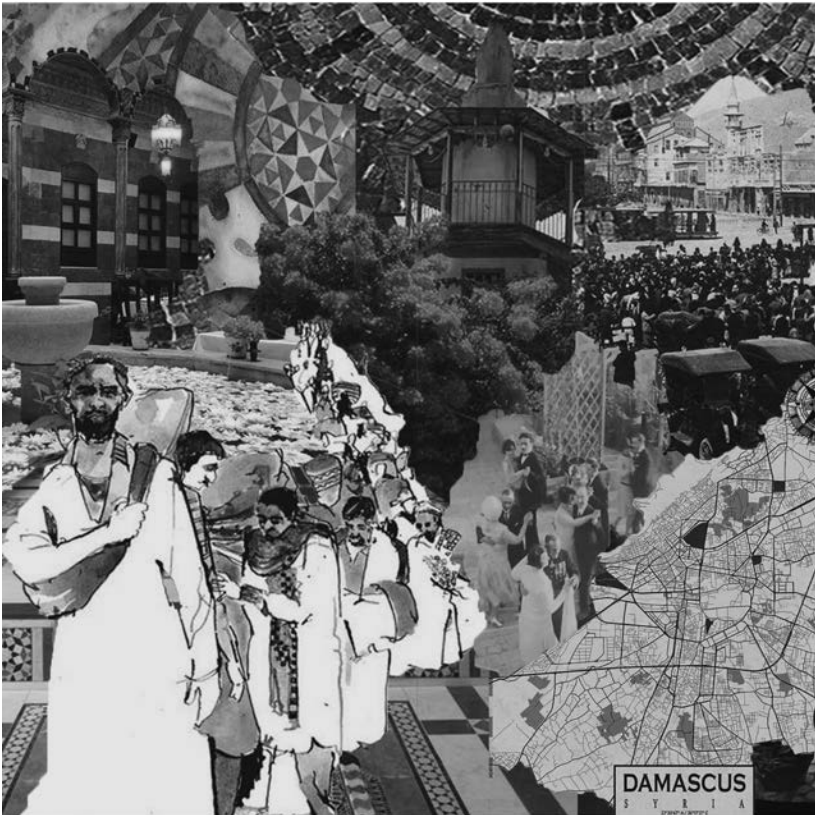


Dara Abu Khajil
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Architecture of Reoffence

The environment within correctional facilities plays an extensive role in the experience inmates have during their time in confinement. Architecture of confinement affects a person's well-being; through lighting, color, space, and occupancy. Spaces of solitary isolation have long lasting effects on a person's health and mental well being. Alternatively, humanistic correctional facilities instead include humanistic designs considering these factors' effects on their inmate population, staying mindful of their well-being. To best exhibit the experience of correctional facilities, virtual reality can be used to design varying correctional facilities to highlight the common lifestyle of an inmate in a given facility.



Shirin Al Asmi
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Preserving Cultural Continuity Amidst Displacement

In Arabic, “حنين” (haneen) embodies nostalgia and longing, reflecting a yearning for the past. Amid the ongoing fallout from the Syrian revolution, al-Za’atari refugee camp emerged as a haven for displaced Syrians, symbolizing their plight and resilience. This thesis delves into the camp’s sense of place and collective memories, particularly for the young, displaced generation raised outside Syria. By exploring how collective memories shape the camp’s permanence, the objective is to preserve Syrian cultural heritage and provide a sense of place for the displaced communities. How can the feeling of *haneen* encompass the ties that displaced communities have to their homeland?

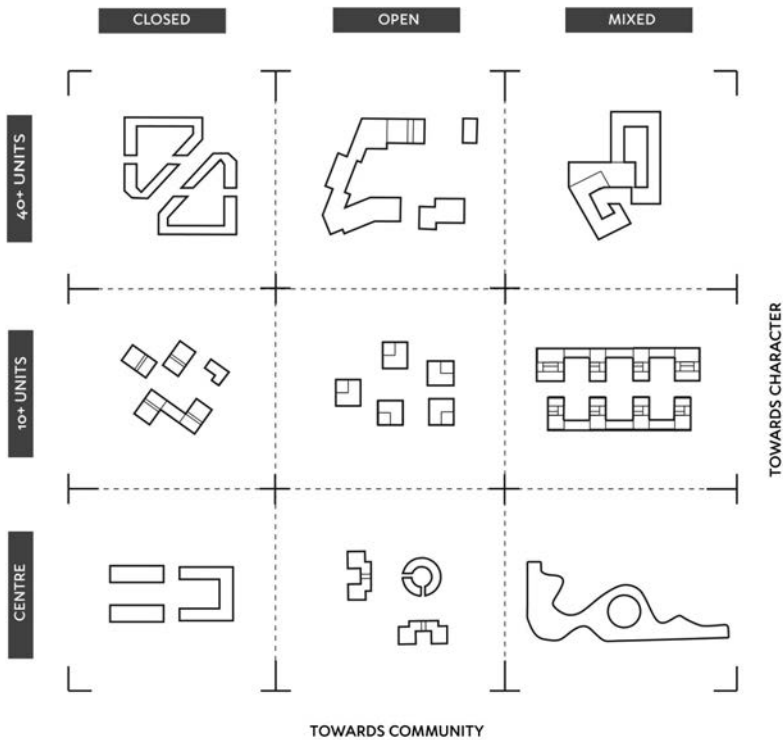


Selina Al Madanat
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Lessons from the Vernacular: Integrating Levantine Vernacular Architecture for the Sustainable Reconstruction of Beirut

The aftermath of the Beirut Port explosion intensified issues regarding energy usage and gentrification, along with destruction of the city’s heritage spaces. Despite the devastation, there lies an opportunity to reconsider the standard of building through the integration of Levantine vernacular architecture within present-day construction. This offers an environmentally and socially sustainable approach to reconstructing Beirut’s neighborhoods while conserving the city’s heritage. Through rigorous study, vernacular design strategies were tailored to a contemporary model of building. The developed strategies were realized through the design of a residential complex in Beirut, acting as a model for future construction in the country.

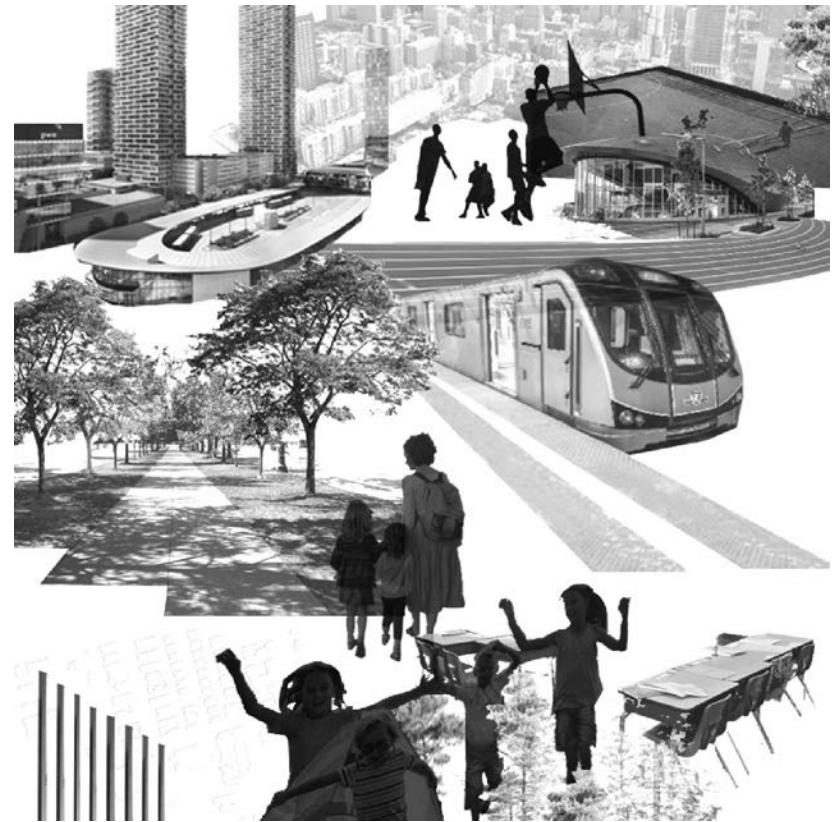


Noor Al-Sehail
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

FORM FOLLOWS CHARACTER

How can the lived experiences and aspirations of a community affect form? And what strategies can be implemented to design generous spaces that reflect the values and rituals of the individuals residing within them? Confronting the drive for greater density in suburban areas, this thesis engages the redevelopment of a large site at Dundas Street West and Erindale Station Road, considering whether the identity of a place and its collective memory can be transposed to a new configuration of forms. Gleaning insights from interviews with residents, their inherited wisdom from interacting with the environment takes precedence in guiding future habitations.

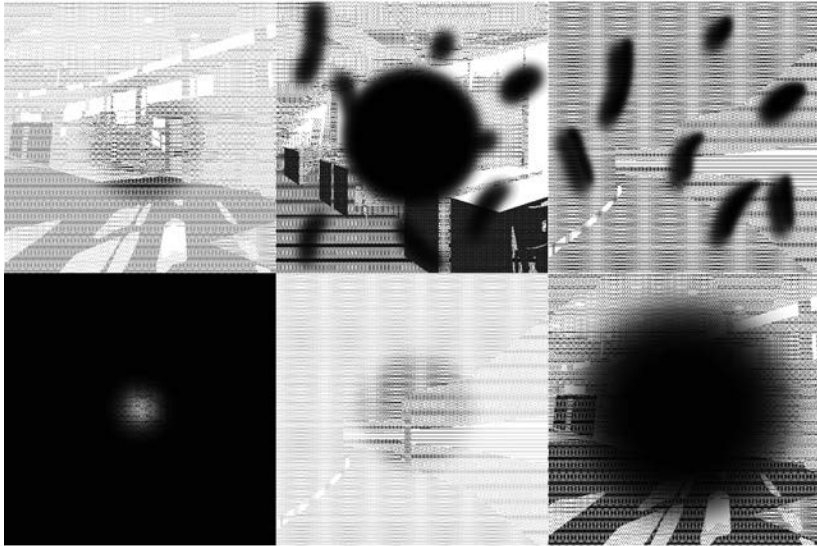


Brianna Arone
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Urban Fusion

Seeking to reconnect the fragmented nature of the proposed Vaughan Metropolitan Centre master plan, framed by Highway 400 and Black Creek, this thesis appropriates an excess of excavated materials from high-rise construction to form a new civic park, school, and community center. The discrete demands of institutional, civic, and environmental programs create a rich hybridity of landscape, recreation, community outreach, and educational spaces. Providing opportunities for engagement between humans and nature strengthens the generous potential of this site and embraces the synchronization of interactions, producing a synergetic urban landscape.

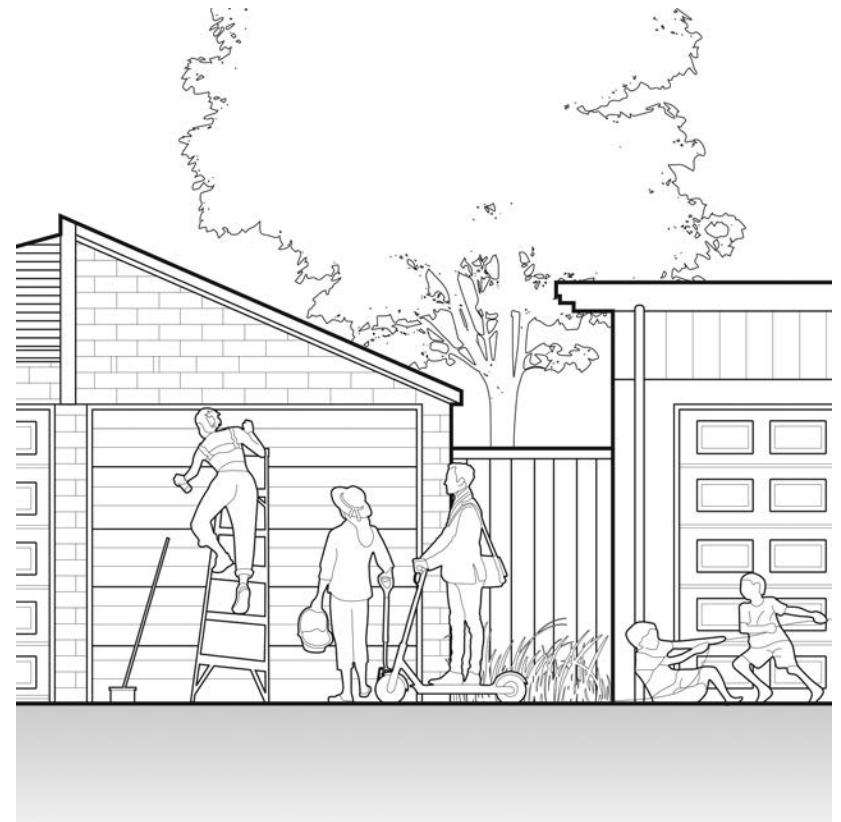


Naima Baig
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Educational Buildings for Visually Impaired and Blind Children

Through researching various visual impairments, design choices within educational spaces are evaluated to understand the importance of a multisensory approach in architecture. By integrating elements that cater to the sense of touch, architects can create environments that are accessible and enriching for students. This research aims to integrate successful design elements into an existing school providing the viewer with an immersive experience through virtual reality. These elements will highlight the lack of accessible design in elementary schools in Toronto and emphasize the significance of designing a building for its occupants.



Noemi Cabalbag
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Laneway Commons

This thesis explores Toronto's laneways as underutilized public spaces, advocating for a shift from car-centric to people-centric urban design. Despite how car-centric development has prioritized individual convenience, the history of laneways as dynamic mixed-use spaces remains. Microcosmic relationships continue to form between the residents and pedestrians of the laneways regardless of their monotonous and utilitarian character. Thus, by employing long-term public spatial design, this thesis aims to reimagine laneways as spaces that further support and promote local identity, social cohesion, and sustainable urban living. Ultimately, it advocates for laneways as vital components of Toronto's urban fabric and city experience.

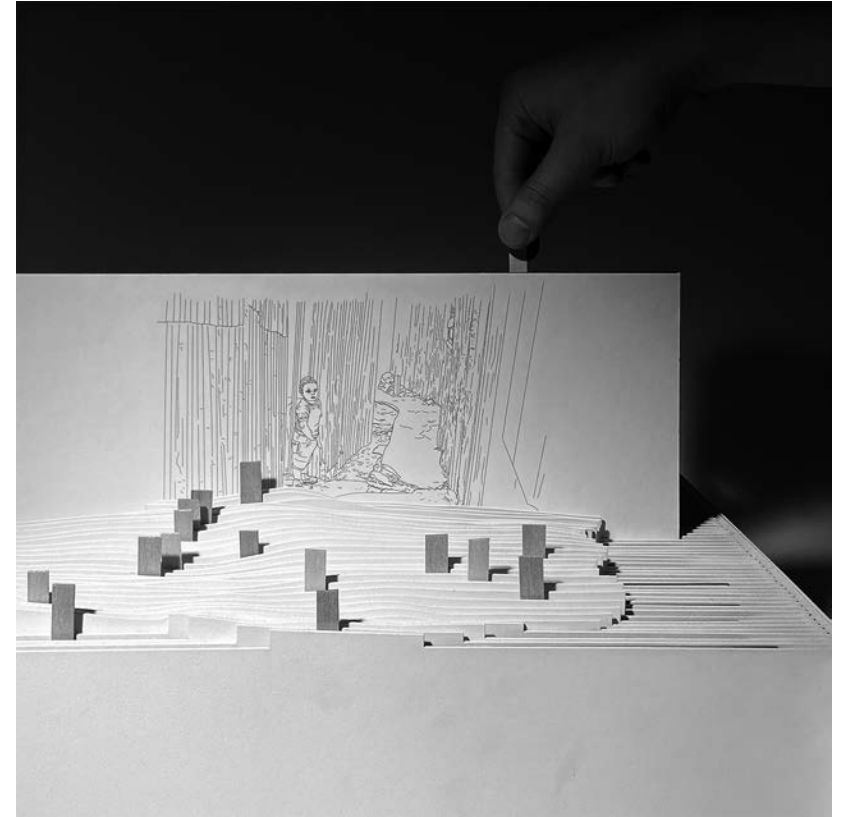


Skylar Chan
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Designing for Dignity: Adaptive Reuse Interventions

The scarcity of affordable housing has pushed the people of Hong Kong to inhumane conditions—living within subdivided units, that are hidden within old residential buildings. Infamously named “coffin homes” because of their resemblance to the dimensions of a coffin, they are a makeshift and unregulated space that houses those with limited financial means. This thesis aims to address current social issues in Hong Kong while using adaptive reuse at the unit, building, and block scale to create a space for a community and provide incremental improvements for the residents of these informal settlements.

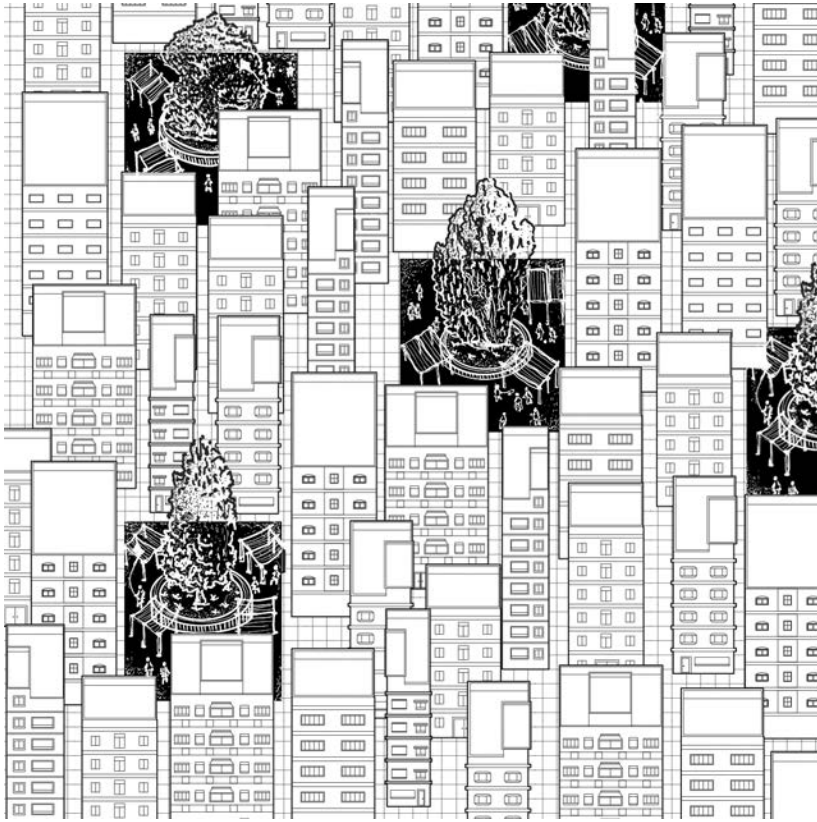


Qiaorong (María) Chen Liang
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Reclaiming Solidarity in El Triángulo

The erasure of marginalized communities is commonly experienced as a byproduct of urban megaprojects because these hidden victims are perceived as unconventional and less controlled. El Triángulo de la Solidaridad – one of the largest informal settlements in Costa Rica – was demolished to make way for the Northern Ring Road. This thesis unveils the solidarity, joy, stories, and aspirations that once lived within the neighborhood and are now buried in the memories of its residents. As a response, it seeks to reactivate the former site of El Triángulo as a public space to celebrate a community that has vanished physically but remains in spirit.

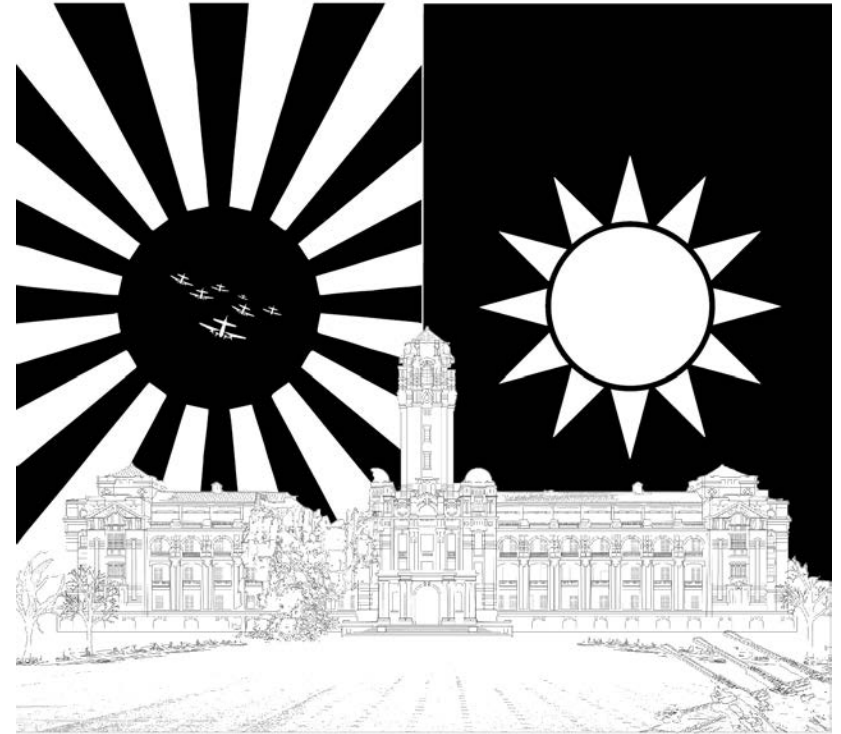


Lillian Chen
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Negotiating Density + Voids in Shenzhen’s Urban Villages

Shenzhen’s ‘Urban Villages’ refers to unique neighbourhoods that are characterized by high-density and self-built mid-rise buildings, emerging from rural villages absorbed by the city’s rapid urban expansion. Over the past decade, these villages have faced constant threats of demolition and redevelopment through a top-down approach by local government and developers. This thesis questions if there is an alternative approach, proposing adding higher density to existing structures, along with new community infrastructure – elevators, shared community spaces, landscape, and open spaces. The future framework will largely maintain present village structures while stimulating a more sustainable and vital urban life.



William Chen
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Where Are You Really From?

Taiwan’s identity has been hidden, rewritten, and suppressed by the imposition of culture during periods of both Japanese and Chinese rule — symbolised by Taiwan’s architectural history; erasures and restorations of street names and infrastructure, hiding the historical and cultural context in which they were created. Reflecting on its colonial past, modern Taiwan once again faces an external danger — the looming threats of the One China Policy. This thesis is not merely an historical retracing, but an urgent documentation of the formation of Taiwanese national identity, against a future where Taiwan might be spoken of in the past tense.



Kristianne Cheong
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Fragmented Spaces; Reclaiming Lost Japanese-Canadian Narratives

The Japanese-Canadian internment during World War II significantly impacted the representation of Japanese culture, with the consequences often overshadowed within Canada's society. The government's forcible relocation of individuals severed cultural and social bonds, leading many to struggle with rebuilding their lives post-war.

This thesis explores overlooked stories related to protests against possession and property confiscation, through digitally archived materials, including documents and letters. As a Japanese-Canadian descendant, I strive to engage with and convey these narratives impactfully as they have profoundly shaped my identity and familial history, while honouring the resilience of my ancestors who persevered through this historical injustice.

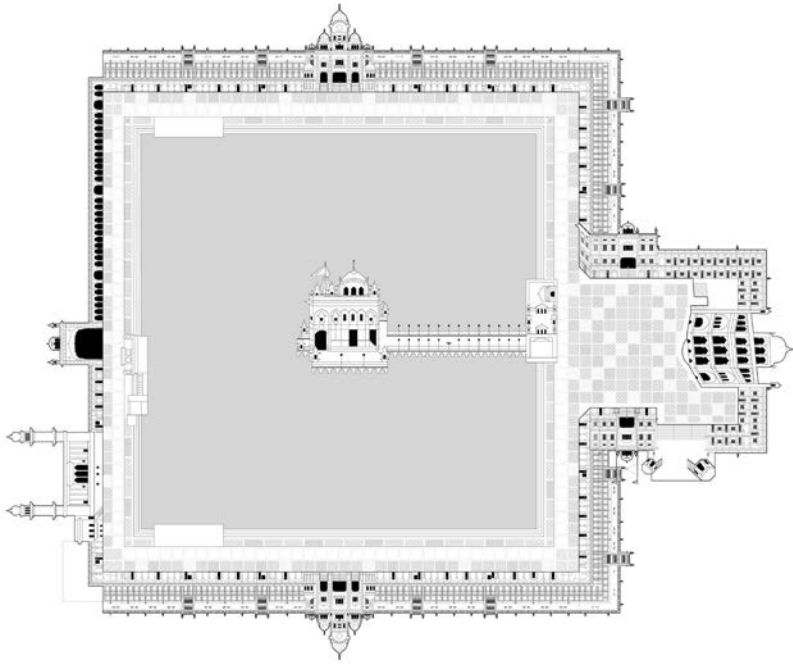


Ariel Clipperton
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Cut and Release: Urban Antennas for Toronto's Underground

Concealed underneath Toronto's dense urban fabric is a 33 km long pedestrian concourse, Toronto's PATH system. However, the expansive civic scale of the subterranean network is not reflected in its entrances. Through a series of relief cuts into voids in the downtown core, this thesis marks and releases the PATH by projecting it as a vertical volume. As a result, the PATH transforms from an ultra-capitalist infrastructure into a vertical public space. In this regard, these interventions act as beacons, simultaneously connecting the subterranean domain to the space above acting as a wayfinding system within a culture of congestion.

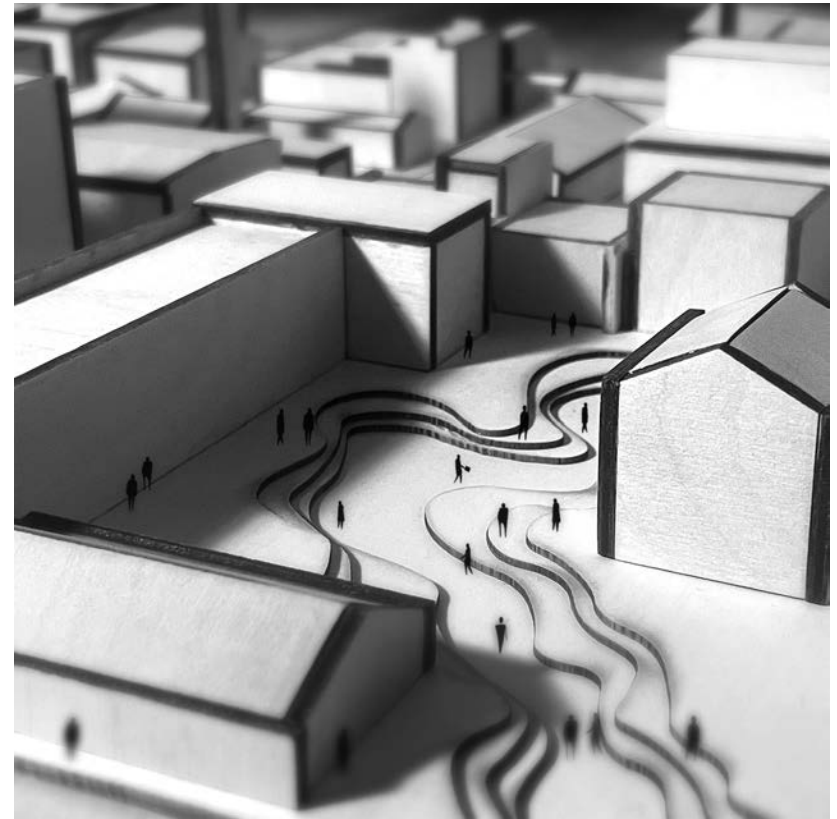


Tej Dhillon
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Reimagining Urban Sanctity: The Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple Complex) and Punjab’s Architectural Identity

The erosion of architectural identity in contemporary Punjab, with a focus on the Golden Temple complex, highlights a critical challenge. The complex, a cornerstone of historical and religious significance, serves as a lens to explore this shift. This study examines the complex’s architectural essence, historical layers, and its relationship with the urban fabric. The study proposes redesigning the surrounding urban infrastructure to reflect Punjab’s heritage while meeting modern needs. It aims to enhance the spatial quality around the Golden Temple, rekindling the lost connection between Punjab’s rich architectural legacy and its modern manifestations.



Gareth C. Dorscheid
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Meander

I interpret generosity as being experienced for a moment but remembered in perpetuity. If generosity were to manifest itself in design it would take the shape of something fondly remembered; hence, the concept of forming memories and how these memories tend to evolve beyond their initial reality became central in my thesis. Taddle Creek is one of Toronto’s ‘lost’ waterways, ultimately subsumed by the urban fabric in the early 20th century – more a memory composed of historical fragments and imagined cues than a tangible creek. I propose a manifestation of this creek’s memory on a single city block.



Yazmin Enriquez De La Cruz
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Designing Equity: Unconventional Assets for Urban Resilience

Informality is problematic. San Juan de Lurigancho, a former informal settlement in Lima, Peru, is not better just because it became formal. It was neglected in every aspect for multiple decades, yet the lack of resources hasn't stopped its citizens from owning their spaces. Through a bottom-up/top-down approach, inspired by local intelligence's self-built artifacts, a placemaking strategy aims to reform and activate deficient public space into civic nodes that: 1. empower the community to incrementally rehabilitate their environments, 2. enhance urban landscape resiliency, 3. and address the decline of public space in the district.

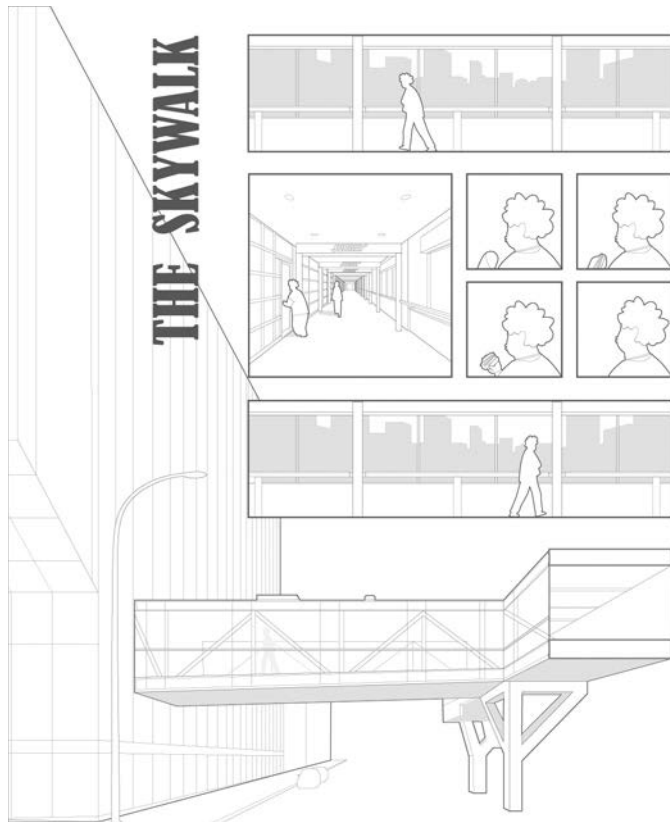


Thea Freer
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Harbord Village: A Reimagining of Densification and Heritage Preservation

Harbord Village is a neighborhood in Toronto with a rich architectural history, home to residential styles such as the Bay & Gable, the Workers Cottage, and the Second Empire style home. Additionally, this neighborhood supports a wide variety of people such as university students, families and the elderly. How can this neighborhood be densified whilst considering the current architecture? How can we rethink heritage guidelines in neighbourhoods throughout Toronto? Through additions on existing homes, creation of laneway homes, and larger homes on existing parking and open lots, this project considers ways of densifying Harbord Village while considering the existing heritage and culture.



Timothy Fung
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Recovering a Prairie

At the heart of Canada, Winnipeg's downtown was built upon dispossession and the flight of its middle class to the suburbs. The downtown core remains commuter-oriented: an introverted indoor walkway system and an 8-lane intersection are emblematic of a bygone city that fears the dirty streets and harsh winters. To begin bringing people back, this thesis imagines a system of street-level pathways that will reclaim the lost histories and barren hardscapes of Winnipeg. This is done by transforming roads into ice skating trails, spreading softscapes, and converting parking lots into spaces that respect our right to warmth.



Samantha Gillham
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Suburban Treehouse

Like many suburban cities, the neighbourhoods of Naperville, Illinois are hyper-reliant on cars, limiting walkability in spread-out single-family neighborhoods. Those most affected are early adolescents who seek independence during this crucial time of their social development but are too young to drive. This thesis aims to design a new type of park infrastructure as a 'third space' for this demographic. Akin to a treehouse and adaptable to many configurations and sites throughout the city, this infrastructure will be built across selected suburban parks in Naperville that are walkable from within various neighborhoods.



Mateusz Grabowski
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

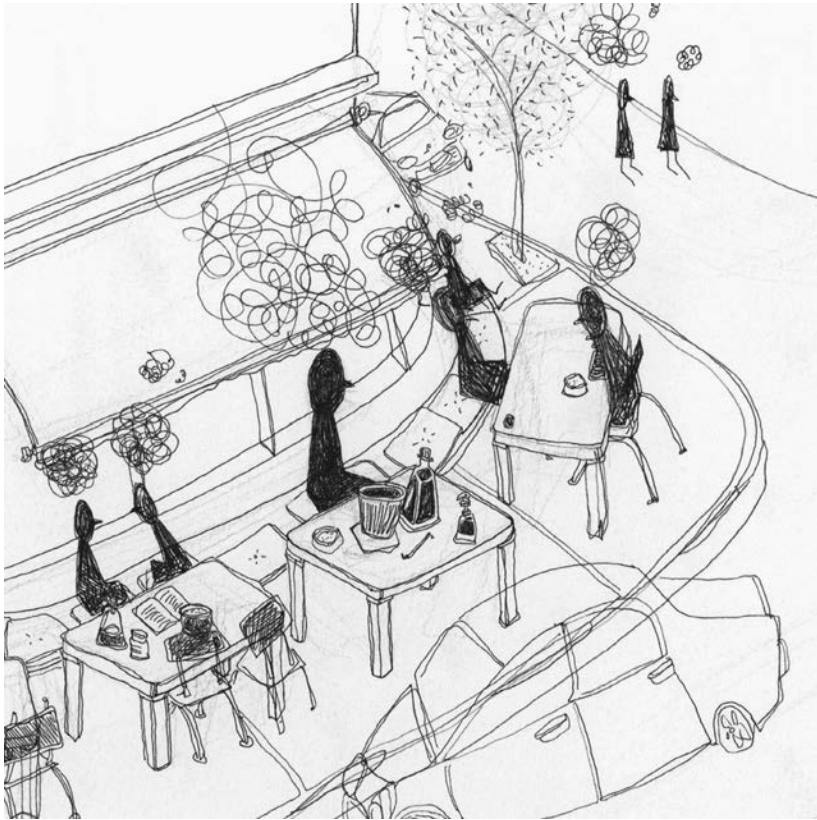
Grafted Landscapes: Aggregate Mine Rehabilitation in Ontario's Greenbelt
Commercial aggregate mining operations of monumental scale are dispersed across the Ontario Greenbelt region alongside a considerable number of legacy unrehabilitated sites. The presence of these active sites and their mining legacies poses a serious threat to the natural systems and ecology of the Greenbelt. Introducing a flexible rehabilitation framework applicable to mines across the region, facilitated by infrastructure that can actively accelerate ecological succession, is essential to initiate widespread rehabilitation efforts.



Darmana Khan
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Polyhedral Evolution: A Kinetic Journey through Space
Mathematical influence begins to translate within the forms of everyday objects to interpret the physical world and structures, making the construction of architectural design possible. This is achieved by dissecting how geometries are extracted from polyhedrons in two-dimensional space and how they transition from lines and points into kinetic three-dimensional objects. Chuck Hoberman offers adaptability by utilizing the polyhedron's geometric characteristics. How can Hoberman's spherical system be analyzed and re-engineered in order to invite more diverse usages that provide technological advancements for adaptive systems?

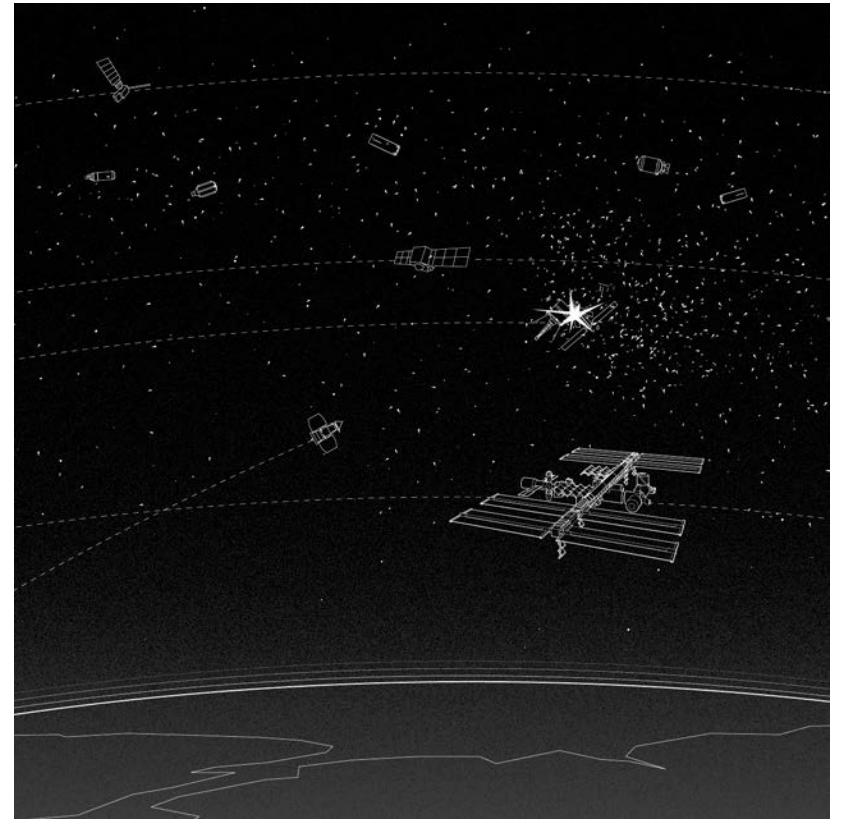


Young-Mi Kim
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

To Pause in the City

We desperately need a moment of pause. Our life in the city is full of distractions and spectacles that cloud our minds. We are constantly doing something, always going somewhere, and unnoticeably positioning ourselves in the chaos. The street is at the core of how we experience the city. A street is more than a path - it is a space. Beyond being a connective space, can the street mediate the chaos of the city? Can it create a pause? This thesis introduces physical installations to the street that invite one to pause and immerse in the city.

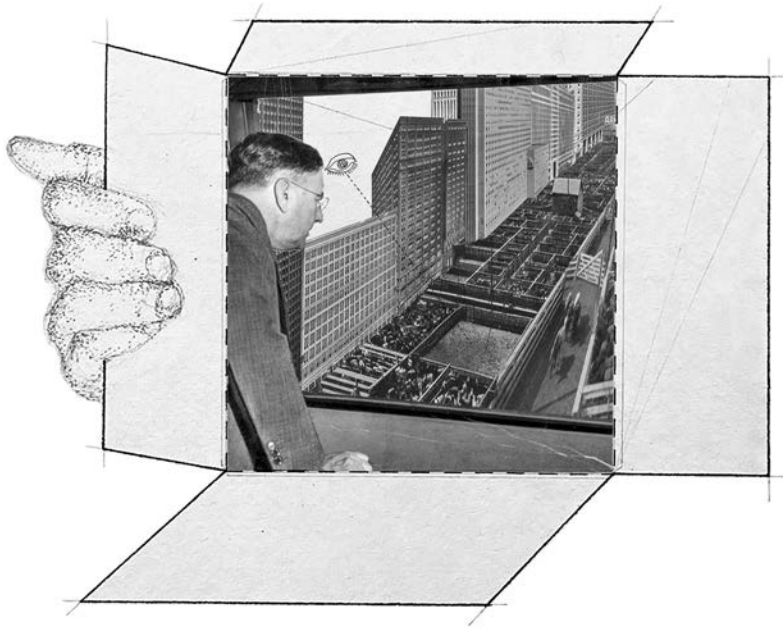


Lester Kong
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Orbital Renewal: Transforming Space Debris into Space Habitat

Decades of space exploration have left Earth's orbit littered with large amounts of trash that threaten to make space dangerous and inaccessible. Current solutions revolve around deorbiting debris, resulting in zero salvage value. With large investments such as the International Space Station planned for deorbit, the research investigates how structures in space can be salvaged instead. This study proposes a successor to the ISS that will reuse existing material in orbit to become a habitat that can facilitate not just research, but also clean up the surrounding environment.



Woo Soup Lee
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

From Detachment to Disjuncture

How has mechanization masked reality? The meat industry has successfully crafted distance from the public with the aid of architecture to abstract modern processes into a technological “black box” and a physical “white box”. Through a series of boxes, livestock—animals have become vastly invisible in four modes of invisibility: Statistical, Physical, Mechanical, and Logistical.

We number them, so they are nameless.
We slaughter them, so they are soulless.
We divide them, so they are formless.
We distribute them, so they are products.



Zelin (William) Li
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Other Spaces?

Most structures lack true flexibility due to their inherently static nature. Offering its purported generosity to the built environment, flexibility nonetheless remains an idealistic pursuit in architecture. Utilizing Vancouver’s Olympic Village area as a testing ground, this thesis explores the discursive topic of flexibility, proposing transformable spaces created in response to social and programmatic parameters and varied urban contexts. The primary project intention is not to offer a direct solution to the adverse effects of architecture’s static nature, but rather to examine the reciprocal relationship between generic spaces and their possible affordances for a multitude of programs and functions.



Qiqi Liu
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Between Water, Sky, and Land

Visitors to Gros Morne National Park, located on the west coast of Newfoundland, currently experience seasonal, infrastructural, and accessibility constraints in existing campgrounds. Through examining the tectonics of culturally significant boats related to Newfoundland fisheries, such as the Atlantic dory with its characteristic overlapping rib structures and flatboat bottoms, I developed an approach to creating basic shelters. In recombining prefabricated structural elements, light, moveable, easy-to-transport, adaptable seasonal modular dwelling units are created to provide visitor access to the more remote scenic areas in the national park, allowing intimate and ecologically responsible connections between humans and the natural realm.



Mitchell Mak
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Moss Vivarium – Rethinking Symbiosis in the Context of Outer Space

A hypothetical project for future Mars colonization, Moss Vivarium proposes a neo-symbiotic relationship between humans and nature (moss). I hope to create a more sustainable future settlement typology, characterized by reciprocity between humans and plants. Moss, a nomadic life form, propagates through spore dispersal; this operation is taken as a model for settlement expansion.

The neo-symbiotic logic of humans and moss interactions informs the formal, spatial, and structural characteristics of the settlement. In this ideal urban model, I argue a plant-driven relationship is a new source of spatial dynamism, facilitating communication, coevolution, cohabitation, and morphogenesis.

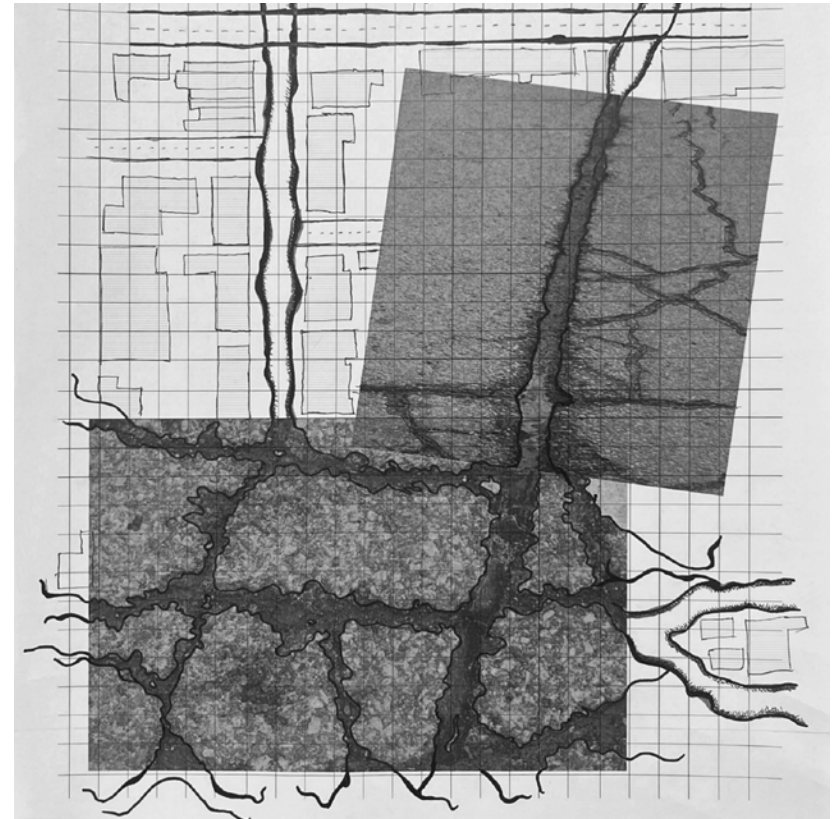


Sarah Mak
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Tectonics of the CNC: The Art of Japanese Joinery

Renowned for its history of wood craft and materials knowledge, Japan has continuously refined intricate wood joinery techniques, constituting the cornerstone of the nation's architectural heritage. By comprehending the success of centuries-old woodworking techniques, without the need for nails or screws, this research aims to rediscover the value of traditional Japanese joinery thru the lens of digital fabrication. Although the complexity of Japanese wood joinery poses technical challenges given the limits of CNC machinery, this thesis explores the adaptation of hand-crafted artistry to digital fabrication technologies, embracing a new method of wood joinery for the use in building construction.



Cameron Manore
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Breaking Ground; Mending Soil

The Skin is a Scab

Below Toronto's urban fabric lies Indigenous histories thousands of years long - yet today, they go entirely unnoticed by the passerby. What is noticed instead is colonial infrastructure that conceals and neglects these histories. This thesis recognizes the land that is occupied by Spadina Avenue as wounded and suppressed, and through processes of cutting, excavating and re-naturalizing at civic scale, the street is re-established as Ishapindaa, the trail after which it is named. By working within the colonial boundaries of the street, the masked past is confronted, and the suffocated land can breathe once more.



Grace McKibbin
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Child Led Design: Agency through Imagination in Play

Objects in parks that have been left behind by community members are a case study into how tools can be given to children so they can create their own playscapes and manipulate sites to their needs. Through a series of workshops at a local community centre, children were able to design their own public spaces and the objects which occupy them. This 2.5 km park adjacent to the Canadian Central Railway allows children to access the city in ways that could otherwise be inaccessible. Through children-led tactical urbanism, they will not only transform the urban environment but build it themselves.



Shelby O'Coin
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Reframing Bronte Creek Provincial Park: A Critical Guide

Looking at the boundaries of Bronte Creek Provincial Park, it highlights the intersection and engagement of the zones that exist both beyond and within it. The residential, industrial, and natural spaces have influenced one another over time, generating the space and elements that are found within the park today. Through further investigation, the park and the greater community's past is explored. Developing a new understanding of the site's heritage allows for a better approach in interacting with these elements and their continued transformation.



Yasaman Pazoki
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Light as a Living Element

Spatial architecture's significant contribution to treatment success emphasizes the importance of the need for designers to be sensitive and thoroughly analyze every architectural aspect of hospitals. This thesis specifically focuses on the aspect of lighting and seeks to answer how various forms of architectural elements in terms of integrating natural light impact staff and patient's circadian rhythm. Focusing on Western University Hospital as a case study, this research will analyze the influence of natural light on melatonin synthesis in several rooms where long-term patients stay. Following the findings, renovation for building interior and facade will be proposed.



Olivia Pires
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

At Home, and in the Garden

Generosity lies in easing the physical, psychological, and social transitions experienced by aging individuals so they can live with integrity, comfort, and fulfillment. This thesis proposes a NORC (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community) in Toronto's Yorkdale Glen Park neighbourhood, envisioning a new form of residential care, alleviating pressures occurring in Ontario's Long-Term Care Crisis. In a design combining the domestic intimacy of an *Estrutura Residencial* ('Lar,' a converted residential nursing home in Portugal), the empathic principles of hospice, and the satisfaction and delight found in gardening, this Home and Garden creates a space of community within a non-institutional setting.



Jana Rumjanceva
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

About Junk & Hanging Out

DIY and home renovation projects are rampant in the in the Greater Toronto Area. This thesis harnesses these affinities and the waste produced from them into assemblies of public furniture and community. The town of Stouffville becomes a testing ground for a suburban vernacular, pushing against the sterile, generic developer-driven public realm. Town residents are offered space to donate leftover material that more often simply accumulates in households; communal tools and a work space facilitate the reinvention of new uses and forms. Encouraging the existing and ever-accelerating renaissance of DIY & low-tech building practices, the thesis seeks to catalyze New Suburbanism.

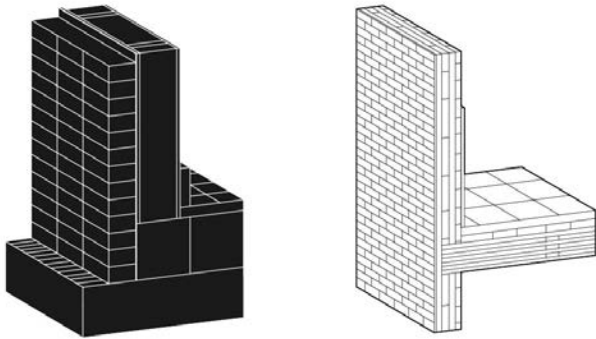


Bukhtawar Shahbaz
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

The City Becomes the School

Shah Faisal Colony, Karachi is home to 520,830 people, with 50,000 of the 200,000 school-going-age children (3-16) not attending school. The tarnished public image of government schools in Pakistan drives families to opt for unaffordable private education or child labour. My thesis proposes an intervention within and beyond a government school, enhancing spaces, expanding capacity, and fostering shared resources by integrating educational spaces within the urban fabric. The city becomes the school, mixing green spaces with educational facilities, this adaptable system catalyzes broader educational reforms, ultimately empowering public schools as crucial components of cities in Pakistan.



Isha Sharma
BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Biomass to Biogenic Buildings: Creating carbon sinks in Toronto

Toronto’s building stock generates 61% of the city’s total greenhouse gas emissions. With rising building emissions and global warming, reversing towards carbon negative in the construction industry is imperative. The next decade is crucial as 70% of the infrastructure in net zero 2050 already exists. Retrofitting structures and considering biogenic carbon possibilities can significantly reduce emissions. The guidebook acts as a tool to help future architects and engineers design biogenic buildings for Toronto’s housing stock and reconsider the holistic impact of materials throughout the building’s life cycle.



Osaze Smith
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Strengthening Identity through Creating a School of Architecture

Throughout Caribbean history, colonial oppression and its effects has been widespread. The physical and economic plight has plagued the region for centuries, but one form of colonialism is yet to be fully broken: intellectual colonialism, which is embodied in local architecture. In contemporary Caribbean architecture, vernacular design and building crafts are overlooked by both the general population and designers. With only one post-secondary institution teaching architecture, this intellectual neglect is prevalent in the Caribbean urban fabric, dominated by luxury minimalism. To combat this prevailing idea, a pedagogy that challenges these notions should emerge. Thus, by developing a new school of architecture that prioritizes the cultural methods of building and design, this intellectual colonialism can be broken, and an architectural identity can be realized.



Isaac Soares
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

Empowering Little Jamaica’s Public Realm

This project focuses on advocacy and leadership efforts in Little Jamaica. It brings together stories from residents, advocates, and writers to document a visual representation of protests, exploring each story and considering their relationships to one another. It traces events back in time to explore how and why advocacy groups formed. The next stage of this project involves redesigning a proposed development to include a leadership space which promotes community strength and autonomy. Public space is used as a tool to amplify existing community groups and foster the creation of new ones.

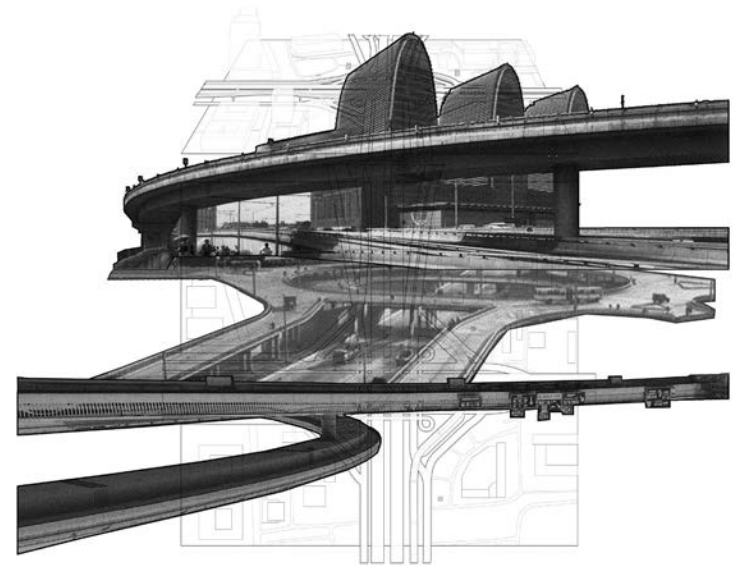


Laurel Wilson
BAAS

Advisor: Petros Babasikas

This North Country

Rural Muskoka-Parry Sound has experienced a loss of industry, infrastructure, and population. As a consequence, heritage structures that have informed the identity of this region have begun to rot away and be reclaimed by the landscape that they were once dedicated to taming. With the upcoming mining renaissance, these disconnected villages face a new problem: how do they build/adapt these spaces for an upcoming population boom while staying true to their built heritage that has informed their identity for the last century? “This North Country” reflects on the “what once was” while asking “what comes next?”



Candace Wong
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

What Can Play Look Like?: Re-envisioning Playscapes within the Educational Setting

Play is an activity that prompts participants of all ages to think creatively and react with spontaneity. Considering the physical, material, visual, and psychological implications of play on the built environment reveals the potential for architects and designers to use play as a way of rethinking design. Contrasted against the rigidity and banality of traditional academic institutions, this thesis seeks to create a publicly accessible recreational and play area, developed in partnership with an existing elementary school in Toronto. How could play reshape the ways in which such spaces are understood or used?

Ada Xu
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Drifting Around the Second Ring Road

Development pressures in Beijing incited the government to control migrant workers by demolishing their living and workspaces within the city. The workers, referred to as ‘Beijing Drifters,’ thus no longer share the same access to resources as ‘official’ city residents, counter to the “common prosperity” goal proposed by the Chinese Communist Party. How can Beijing Drifters attain a dignified life in the city? The infrastructural confluence created by the Second Ring Road with Beijing North Train station, several subway stops, and Xizhimen Bridge affords an armature for the creation of new housing and social services for Beijing drifters to reside.

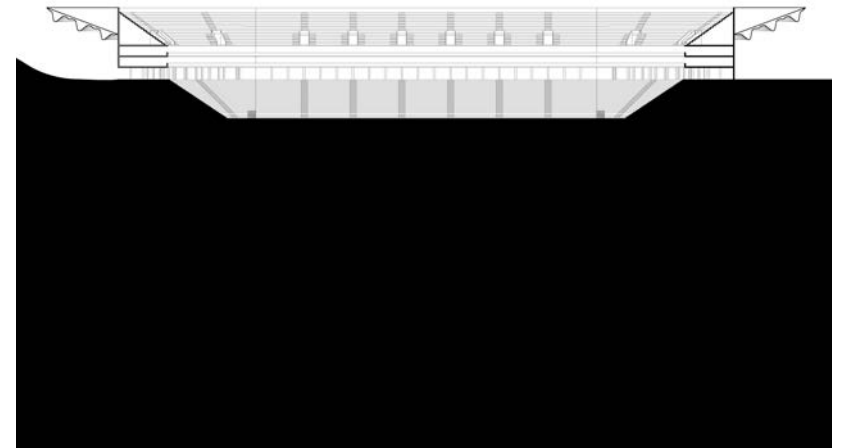


Adrian Yu
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

The Repository for Metropolitan History

The memory of the city is fleeting; the lives of its buildings even shorter, condemning its inhabitants to a near-permanent state of amnesia. How is the history of the present metropolis told? Through what documents and artifacts can it be recognized? Bridging two disparate sites linked to Toronto's cycles of creative destruction – Guild Parks and Gardens and the Leslie Street Spit – this thesis deploys processes of salvage and reconfiguration of the city's artifactual history. Toronto's rapidly developing metropolis is reimagined through a series of speculative dioramas marrying new and old, asking how the past can live in the present day.



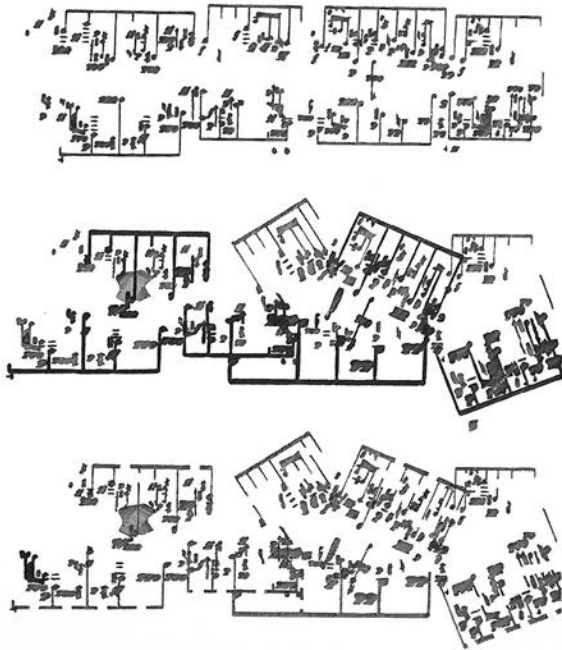
Christopher Zambrano Cevallos
BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

In, and Around, the Stadium

Designed to solely fulfill sports organizations' specifications while also projecting club owners' legacy and financial success, contemporary stadiums are immense structures with little relationship to their surroundings. Canada's hosting of the 2026 World Cup is a pretext for my thesis – the design of a stadium fulfilling FIFA requirements while simultaneously creating an urban park landscape incorporating different sporting facilities. My thesis seeks a hybrid form of generosity, creating a sense of continuity between the stadium and its surrounding urban context, promoting a healthy and active lifestyle for the local community, and enhancing the singular experience of World Cup fans.

Piano, Bar num: 8,9



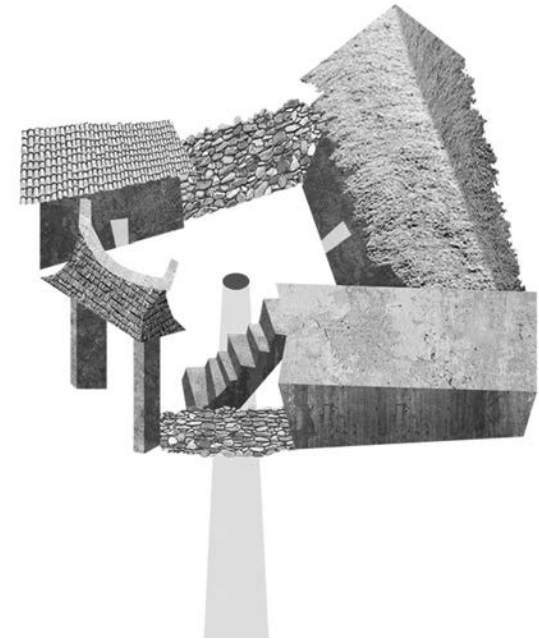
Yixuan Zhang

BAAS

Advisor: Nicholas Hoban

Visual Sonata for look and listen OP. 00 : Inside the Daniels building

Music, a sound but more than sound, it is a fusion of form, space, medium, harmony, rhythm and emotion. Architecture, meaning more than the assembly of materials, embodies a synthesis of scientific and artistic considerations that contain rhythms uniform into harmony. It is a result and ongoing process of being a merged carrier of science, function, social, emotions, memories, feelings, and personal stories. These features parallel to the characteristics of music. This thesis experiments on observing the 1 Spadina Crescent (the Daniels Building) acoustically. Transforming the building into an experimental music piece as well as illustrating the inherent objectivity of materials through the output method.



Sherry Zhu

BAAS

Advisor: Laura Miller

Recollecting Coastal Villages

Paralleling the rise of urban density in cities such as Weihai (Shandong), the migration of villagers to urban areas resulted in the dilapidation of rural coastal villages. In Chinese culture, individuals often trace their roots not to where they live within their respective city, but to their ancestral villages – commonly referred to as “Old Home.” This thesis aims to recover aspects of the culture and identity of rural villages, instilling traditional material patterns, crafts, and culinary traditions in the design of a new cultural destination for urban tourists and locals, erected at the site of an abandoned wharf in Weihai.

Bachelor of Arts, Visual Studies



Evan Bulloch
BAVS

Bliss of the Collector

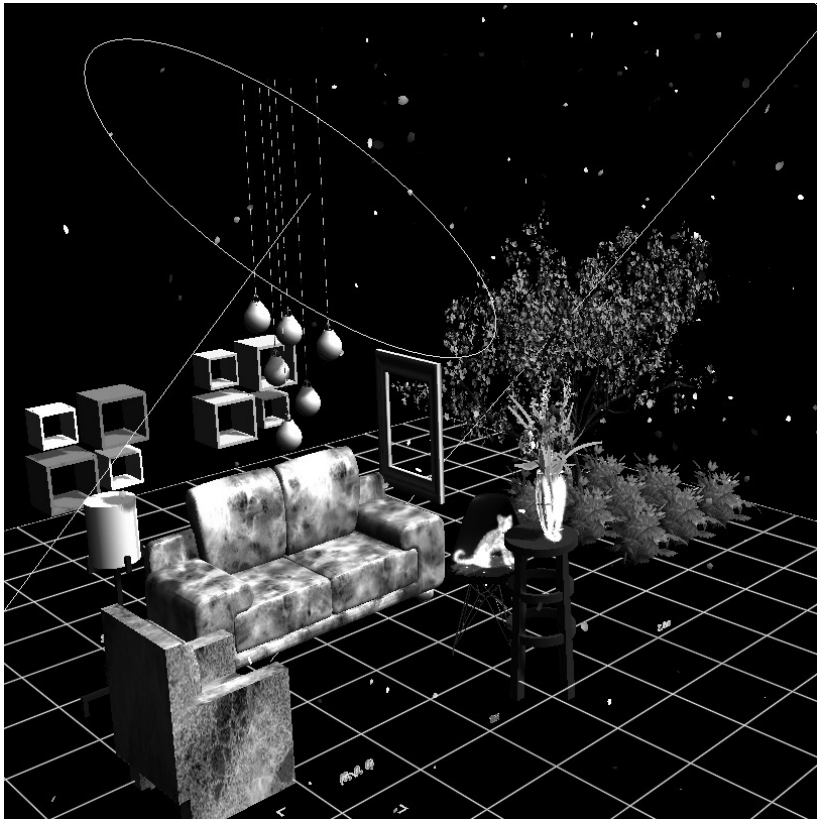
Bliss of the Collector is an exploration of how understandings of the world and the self are produced through the development of personal collections over time. The project takes the form of two pieces. The first is a two-channel video and sound installation that traces a journey through personal attachments to items and the connections between them. The second is a series of paintings on bricks taken from Bulloch's childhood home that are then broken and reassembled. Both of these components use personal experiences and connections to items as a way of investigating how everyone's lives are shaped by what they collect.



Noemi Cabalbag
BAVS

Tabi-Tabi Po (*excuse me*)

Despite the destruction inflicted on Filipino culture by Spanish and American colonization, pre-colonial customs have persisted, particularly in oral literature. Filipino folklore and mythology coexist with Christian doctrines in day-to-day existence. This hybrid, also known as 'folk Christianity,' demonstrates the enduring animistic beliefs of the Filipino people, such as using expressions like 'tabi-tabi po' to pay respect to mythical beings. Stories of lower mythological beings, though fostering fear, also shape Filipinos' behavior towards the natural environment, promoting respect, harmony, and preservation. Despite the fear, Filipinos' engagement with these narratives reflects how they perceive reality, blurring boundaries between the mystical and tangible, fostering a deeper understanding of interconnectedness.



Paris Chen
BAVS

Colliding Canvas

Colliding Canvas revolutionizes how we perceive and interact with art by seamlessly integrating Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) into our physical surroundings. This innovative approach blurs the boundaries between the digital and real worlds, allowing viewers to immerse themselves in a truly interactive experience. By combining AR and VR technologies, the artwork opens up new possibilities for artistic expression, enabling viewers to explore and engage with virtual environments in previously unimaginable ways. This convergence of art and technology redefines how we experience visual storytelling and challenges conventional notions of what constitutes an artistic medium.



Ashley Gu
BAVS

The Unseen Red

In *The Unseen Red*, Ashley Gu tackles the enduring cycle of sexual violence, counterbalancing its grim recurrence with the strength and solidarity embodied by Nüshu—a script created by and for women under patriarchal suppression. Rich with repetitive motifs, this installation casts light on the continuous thread of violence throughout history. Its centerpiece, a video veiled behind a curtain, symbolizes the often hidden and ignored reality of sexual violence, underscoring the difficulty in acknowledging and addressing it. Through this work, Gu aims to bridge the visible and invisible, urging a deeper engagement and recognition of an issue that demands our attention.



Rania Haider
BAVS

A Failure to Understand

A Failure to Understand is a series of paintings centered around language and text, particularly the Urdu script. These paintings utilize unreadable, indecipherable text as a medium to explore the loss and erasure of language and histories. These paintings highlight an inability to communicate using Urdu script that is broken apart, scattered into pieces, unable to perform its central function of communication. The text, much like language, can be misunderstood and misread, creating a failure to understand. Offering a reduction of the Urdu language into its simplest form, the letters stand alone - disconnected - mimicking the loss of a language.



Joy Li
BAVS

Reflecting on Alex

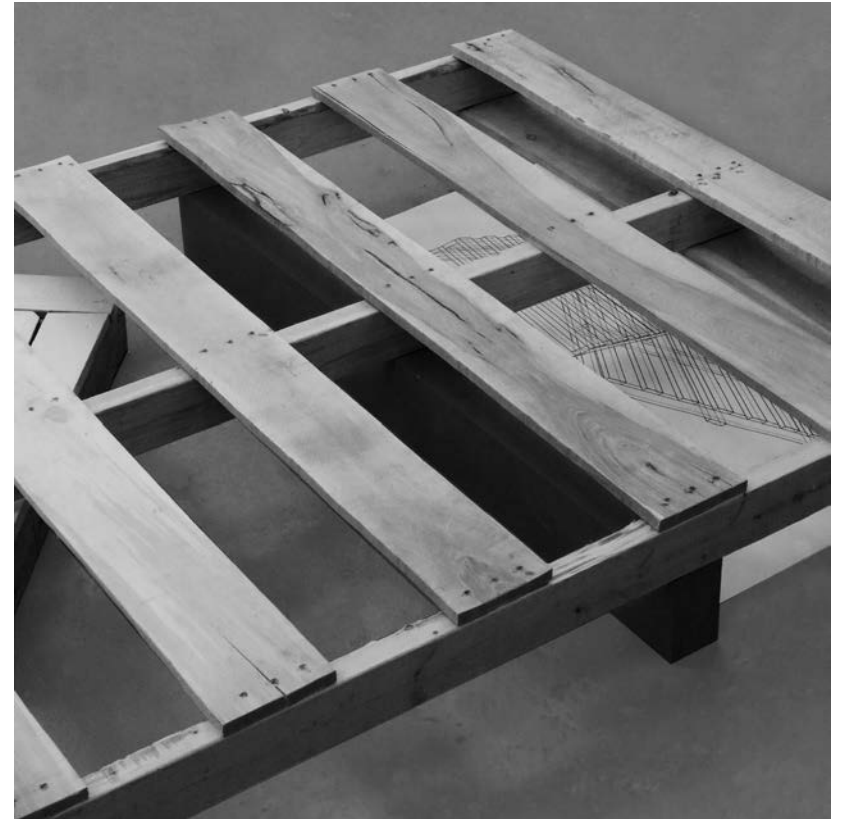
Multidisciplinary artist Joy Li works with memories and imagination to create pencil drawings that tell and record the story of her deceased childhood cat, Alex. *Reflecting on Alex* follows the history of the gray, curious cat starting from his embryonic formation to the abstracted afterlife. Though the drawings strive to complete an untold narrative of the pet's life, they remain fractured and sequential. Blurry memories contain fragments of detail shown through the juxtaposition of texture and negative space within each sketched scene. The lost truth can never be recovered, but the illustrated, speculative tale can comfort and soften the loss.



Alex Lyu
BAVS

Flow & Cover

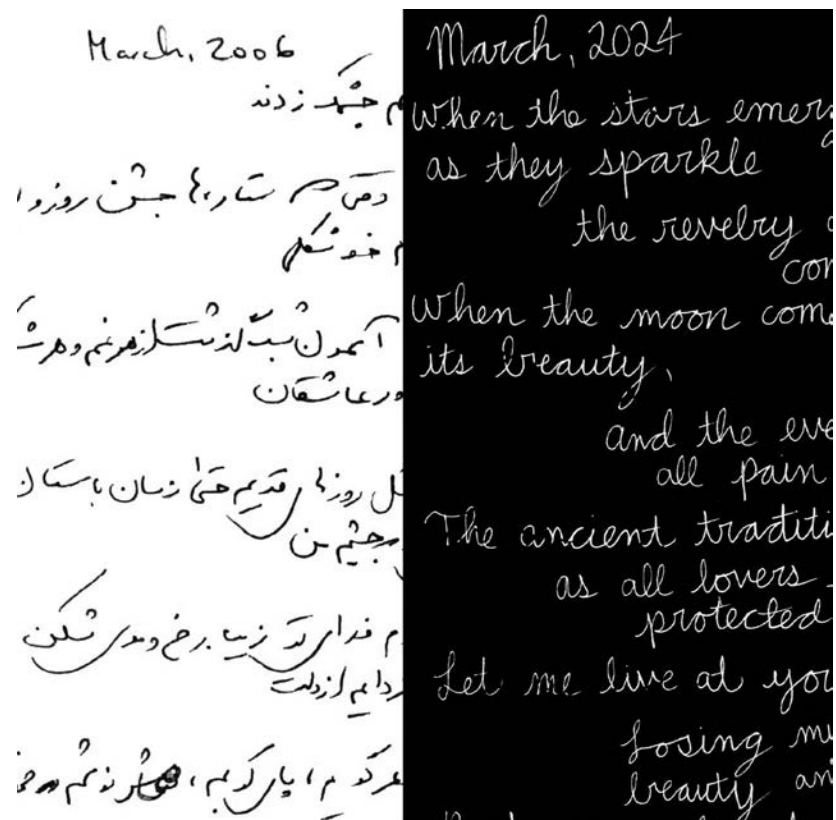
Alex Lyu is an artist who explores the impact of authority on individuals through installation. In *Flow & Cover*, Lyu uses meetings as a carrier, exploring the crafting of hierarchical relationships between superiors and subordinates by formalism and authoritarianism. Through creating this artwork, Lyu aims to peel back the layers of superficiality and inefficiency that are deeply embedded in the formalistic and authoritarian structures prevalent in modern Chinese meetings, providing a metaphorical critique of the perfect appearance of formalism carefully maintained through seating arrangements in such meetings and the deep-rooted hierarchy of identities beneath the surface.



Satyam Mistry
BAVS

how can I ask you to think with me

how can I ask you to think with me, presents itself both in the form of publication and spatial apparatus that stems from the ambition to produce relation building devices which become defined within the project as “sites of collectivity”. It aims to document and physicalize objects that encourage one to work, live, and simply be with another, the presented research attempts to build networks and objects that enable transformations of space to place. Both the dissemination of idea and objects within this work are designed to contain and incite relations between individuals that activate and develop the collective being and further encourage a dialogue and exchange of knowledge.



Nusha Naziri
BAVS

Familiar Stranger: Between the Lines of Language

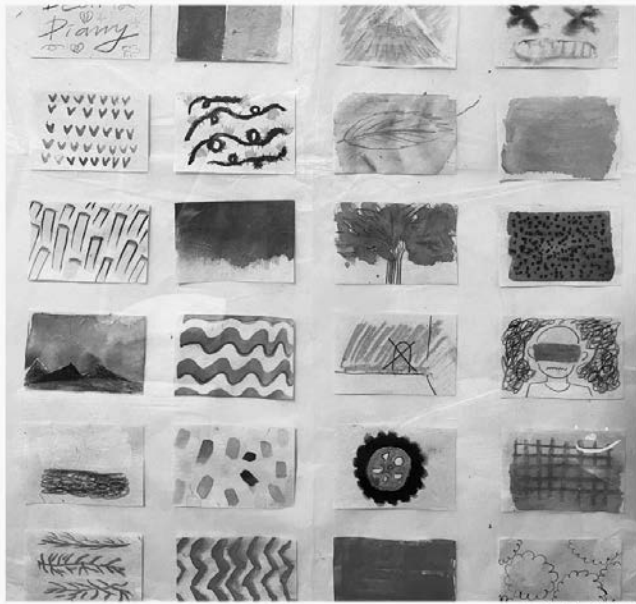
The term “Translation” can be defined in many ways. Aside from a firm literary sense, a translation can mean a form of movement, communication, or adaptation. When dealing with language, what constitutes a “perfect” translation often is difficult to navigate. Fluency between two can also take on different meanings for those who speak a language that they cannot read. Through translating poetry from Farsi to English, the work aims to underline what occurs between the lines of these processes. Here, notions of authorship are questioned through distinctions between translation, interpretation, and a possible middle ground between the two.



Salma Ragheb
BAVS

the constructed fabric, the consciously-induced collapse into classicality, the chaos of cosmic censorship

Salma Ragheb is responding to the disconnect between quantum and classical principles of modern physics. In addressing this disconnect, there is inevitable reference to the role of the conscious observer in reifying the universe as a participatory circuit. A salient thread in Ragheb’s work is the tuning of visual immediacy through modalities of transparency, perforations, blocking, and folding — as in *Einstein trapped in the (space-time) fabric and its loose strings*. These interventions index specific concepts like quantum superposition and the collapse of the wave function, but they also accommodate a general reading about the inaccessibilities and discontinuities of theoretical physics.



Antidote (2024)

Irene Dahyoun Song

BAVS

Antidote

Antidote delves into the transformative potential of art therapy in addressing anxiety, particularly among immigrant populations in multicultural urban environments like Toronto. I curated a series of interviews and artistic interventions, allowing participants to express their experiences of anxiety and cultural dislocation through enhancing Hanji paper. By juxtaposing vibrant artistic expressions with reflections on anxiety, the project aims to foster dialogue and empathy surrounding mental health. Through interactive artwork *Nevertheless*, participants explore the healing power of recalling positive memories. Ultimately, my project seeks to challenge perceptions of art and promote meaningful change within individuals and communities.

The act of reading a library book with penciled in annotations (pencil is used with increased respect for the book due to its lack of permanence) becomes disorientating, dizzying, as one's own markings become confuted with others, one is forced to reorientate themselves. A cannibalistic cycle of redigesting one's own reading takes place when attempting to understand ones past annotations. As if revising one's own work leads to a loss of linearity, the line between one's own thoughts and the past holder's dissolves.

Suddenly, one feels they have already read what lies ahead.

If all art is in essence poetry, then the arts of architecture, painting, sculpture, and music must be traced back to poesy. That is pure arbitrariness. It certainly is, as long as we mean that those arts are varieties of the art of language, if it is permissible to characterize poesy by that easily misinterpretable title. But poesy is only one mode of the lighting projection of truth, i.e., of poetic composition in this wider sense. Nevertheless, the linguistic work, the poem in the narrower sense, has a privileged position in the domain of the arts.

To see this, only the right concept of language is needed. In the current view, language is held to be a kind of communication. It serves for verbal exchange and agreement, and in general for communicating. But language is not only and not primarily an audible and written expression of what is to be communicated. It not only puts forth in words and statements what is overtly or covertly intended to be communicated; language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the Open for the first time. Where there is no language, as in the being of stone, plant, and animal, there is also no openness of what is, and consequently no openness either of that which is not and of the empty.

"Poetry -thus, nonetheless, totality gathering strength-is driven by another poetic dimension that we all divine or babble within ourselves. It could well be that poetry is basically and mainly defined in this relationship of itself to nothing other than itself, of density to volatility, or the whole to the individual." - Edouard Glissant *Poetics of Relation*

Poesy - (is this equivocal to dichten (meaning both to seal as well as to compose?) - architecture, painting and sculpture - are all forms of "composing poetry."

How does the act of composing come in conflict with the conception that poetry is the only form of writing which takes the word, and only the word into complete "unconcealment"?

A squiggly line is desperate from a straight underline. Typically denotes something is of "greater" importance to that reader, something needed to be highlighted in a more obvious manner.

"where there is no language, as in the being of stone plant and animal, there is also no openness of what is."



Ella Spitzer-Stephan

BAVS

Opera Aperta

Opera Aperta is documentation of Ella Spitzer-Stephan's year-long research on Martin Heidegger's theory of "the Fourfold" from his book *Poetry Language Thought*. Ella uses his phenomenology as a basis for understanding the significance, and effects of Marginalia. Through the analysis of many library copies of the same text, *Opera Aperta* analyses the different forms of mark making applied with in the gaps of the pages, and relates it to greater ideas of the transformative, living quality of writing. This work, existing both digitally and in print remains "unfinished" and will transform, as the library copies undergo further annotations, and as the artist conducts further research.



Auden Tura
BAVS

La littérature au second degré

By recontextualizing quotes gleaned from various sources in a palimpsestuous accumulation of “old” and “new” text, *La littérature au second degré* questions whether reading and research can be considered forms of writing. The selected quotes each share a word respectively with a selection of poetry from Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s seminal text *Dictée* which allows a new poem to be read through the relationship between the source and its annotations. *La littérature* invites the viewer to participate in the citational process, drawing personal references between the hypertextual poem, book sculpture, and their own specific readership.



Janie Wang
BAVS

Tie the Knot

Tie the Knot is a textile sculpture intended to embody the adolescent angst of growing up, particularly drawing from bridal imagery to mark the end of one’s “coming of age.” The haste for financial security in our neoliberal livelihoods culminates at the apex of taxation reprieve in the form of marriage (or common-law spoushood). Made to confront an increasingly grim future that forces upon us agonising decisions or offers an unbearably bleak guarantee of mindless living, the bride acts as a part of a greater ecosystem of us detritivores looking for a way to sustain ourselves.

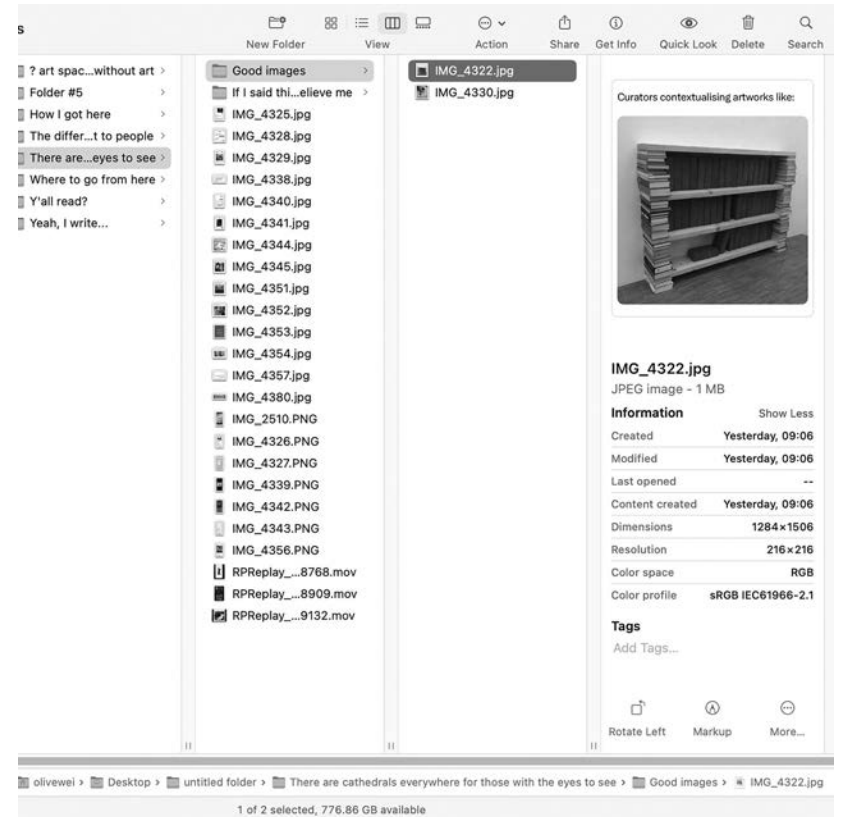


Maxen Wang

BAVS

STRATA

STRATA is a project exploring the concept of the simulacra. Inspired by Timothy Morton's concept of the Hyperobject, imagining the potential of these ever-growing entities in a sci-fi setting. A post-apocalyptic world left to be built by a now unmanned machine endlessly generating constructs fed by algorithms and data of pre-apocalypse history fabricating an illusion of continuity for the remnants of human society. To what extent is the narrative that we are presented with a faithful account or a misrepresentation of events, places, and people's deeds? Do what extent are we already living within an artificial construct?

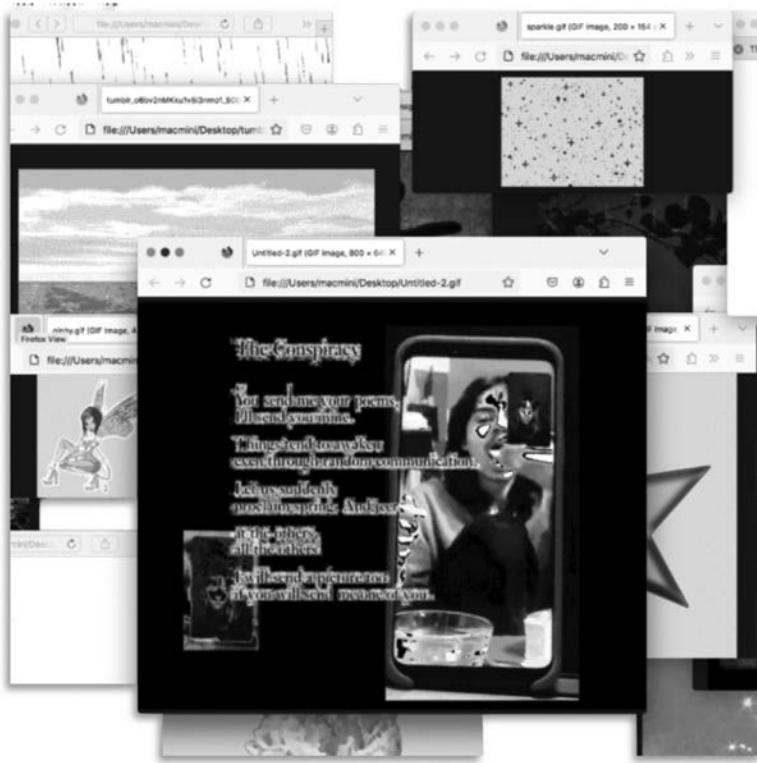


Olive Wei

BAVS

What are art spaces without art?

This research began in an attempt to understand what curating is and how it functions, outside of just placing objects in proximity to one another. The sprawling web of contemporary art has created an abundance of multifaceted roles where artists are also quasi-curators, directors, programmers and vice versa. Under the current locale where contemporary art is being produced, considered, and disseminated, what is the need for curators? My thesis looks into the purpose of art spaces and curating as generative of community and a form of knowledge production. Using an open-source resource file, my research becomes a shared document for continuous growth and collaboration.



Nara Wrigglesworth

BAVS

Post-gif

Post-gif is a work which examines the contemporary digital moment, considering how aesthetic centred identity is used as a strategy to make sense of the abundance provided by the internet. The work comes from a post-“post” perspective, situated in an artistic moment that is following post-net art and post-subculture. The work considers how digital experiences mediate an exploration of archival material in the simultaneous broadcast, creation and recording of persona.



Lilian Zeng

BAVS

faded intimacy, warmth disappeared

Lilian Zeng is a multidisciplinary artist dedicated to handmade works with a diverse medium and steering clear of digital realms. Themes of personal trauma and tragic childhood memories weave through her practices and create art that resonates on a deeply emotional level. Her thesis research explores the olfactory sense within imagined and nostalgic semi-private, stitched textile sceneries. Influenced by the realm of olfactory memory studies and how aromas shape narrative settings, Zeng’s work invites viewers into a sensory experience that goes beyond the visual, tapping into the evocative power of scent to tell intricate stories.

