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Selected Work Samples
Venice, Italy was studied for its complex systems of volumes, vessels and apertures. Apertures are the spaces between that allow light to pass through and that act as critical connections between conditions in Venice. They create a continuous gesture that extends from the sky to ground with the water acting as the mediator between.

The concept of ground is questioned in how it can be occupied not only on the water, but also in the sky. The focus of this project was to create contrasting conditions between humans and elephants based on sky and ground. In Venice, there are chimneys of several sizes that pierce the sky along with the altana, a floating wooden roof garden structure. This brought into question how to create an inhabitable rooftop landscape.

**HOW DOES VENICE JOIN THE SKY & GROUND?**

“**I DO NOT REPRESENT, I INQUIRE**”

My architectural education is summarized in this quote by Eduardo Chillida, a Basque sculptor from Spain. It is not the final product that is important, but the steps of inquiry that lead from the creation of an idea to its final construction. With each project, I question how architecture positions itself in the ground and the way it touches the sky. And in between these two entities, it is the human dwelling in the architecture that acts as the connecting joint.

Architecture is not just a physical entity that we build, but it has become a way of thinking and seeing the world. Through my research with the University Scholars Program, I stepped back from designing architecture to seeing architecture as the human body, specifically the hand and the act of “making.” The hand is the key instrument in transforming intangible designs into the need to expanded contracts of the real world. Along with my studies of the hand, I have also studied various sculptures to understand space is informed not only by architecture.

The external joint is the connection that I have observed both within architecture and within humans. This joint is expressed in multiple ways but as stated by Giuseppe Zambonini in his “Notes for a Theory of Making in a Time of Necessity,” there is a continuous relationship between the parts to the whole. My architectural inquiry is to understand the making of material joints and how the human informs the material that is space. I believe that in order to build better spaces for people, the intention of good design must reside at the smallest scale of “making” the material joint.
In Venice, the campo is a place of communal gathering for both tourists and natives. Along with incorporating the elephants and their procession, there is an emphasis on the difference between the “bystanders,” the tourists, and the “locals,” those involved in orchestrating the procession of the elephants. What divides these two is the water canal, which ruptures in between. A moment of temporary interaction is created by a makeshift bridge above multiple gondolas; this speaks to Venice being an adaptive city that improvises solutions.

A scaffolding system was created that engaged the existing architecture and comes to create a screen in between the elephants and the tourists. The scaffolding became the human-made joint between existing architecture and new interventions. Waving through the scaffolding on the top of the building are the natives who observe and orchestrate the procession from the urban that is nestled between the two buildings.

The relationship between sky, ground and water is crucial to Venice as the idea of ground becomes a permeable material to be manipulated in various forms. To understand this relationship, a sectional collage was created that explored the joints between elements and how they hold space.
HOW DO YOU INHABIT THE SKY?

When one inhabits the sky, there is an immediate disconnect from their surroundings. The purpose of the hotel is to escape from one’s reality. It is the responsibility of the architecture to help the tourist to forget about their actual life. Escapism can occur on three different scales: separation from mundane life, from the city of Manhattan, and from one’s immediate surroundings. This is integrated in three of the five modules of the building.

To connect all five modules of the tower, a screen scaffolding system envelops the tower as a constructed joint to hold and hide the space inside. The tower is divided into modules in response to the nature of buildings in the neighborhood. This area of town was historically occupied by warehouses, which served the purpose of storage. The modular organization of the warehouse buildings informed the form of the tower.

The top and bottom modules contain two contrasting ideas: a looming mass in the bottom and a reaching void in the top. These two opposite elements speak to the relationship between reality and fantasy, which are on opposite ends of the same spectrum: reality looms heavily, while fantasy stretches up lightly.
One method of mentally escaping is through cinematography. The site's location within the Tribeca district and its proximity to the Tribeca Film Festival affords the opportunity to provide a space for the film festival within the tower. A theater is situated in the center module of the building, extending out from the south facade, making a gesture toward the heart of Tribeca where the film festival takes place.

The two tower modules that rest in between the bottom, middle, and top are hotel suites. These suites serve two different types of clients: typical New York City tourists, there to escape from mundane life, and refugees, there to escape from the dangers of their home countries. These two different clients come from very different backgrounds, but come together for escapism.
The Heart envisions a cultural center and museum that embodies the soul of the community. The proposal emerges from the concept of the heart as the central life-giver of the people, consisting of a rhythm and a beat. To this end, the Heart of Leimert promotes the regrowth of the music and art culture in Leimert Park, as well as serving as the core of the neighborhood and providing a haven for community services.
With the process of making, a tradition is respected that preserves a cultural act. In colonial Savannah, indigo was harvested and exported as a commodity from Ossabaw Island. Indigo goes through a linear itinerary: harvesting, settlement, and extraction. The process of extraction is represented in the Anchoring Mass where students can learn about the process of indigo dye making and its use in the final production of fashion pieces. The anchoring mass would serve as the joint between these two ends of the indigo process that would hold cloths to dry within its space. Below the anchoring mass are the vats of ink where the cloths are soaked in. People would be able to observe the process of indigo dying as they walk in from River Street, allowing them to experience the true “making” nature of Factor’s Walk.

The main circulation within the project floats above with a fashion runway, reflecting the modern intervention as an extension of the city. The fashion runway cuts the rigidity of the old Cotton Exchange building and introduces a new datum that shifts upon the façade and extrudes out to the River side. This serves as a point of interaction for the people coming from the city to view the fashion runway and the models as they exit backstage. The introduction of a new architecture is exemplified with the façade of the Cotton Exchange hanging onto the modern intervention.
In Charleston, there is a dichotomy between the existing and new conditions as the city is grounded in its history, but does not support modern interventions. I carried this idea of opposition into the program of two contrasting types of dance: neoclassical ballet versus modern dance.

Ballet focuses on floating above ground and questions how one touches the sky. Within the urban fabric of Charleston, there are many alleyways that frame the sky in their thresholds along with church steeples that pierce the sky. Ballet dancing also disguises the weight of the body and attempts to hide gravity.

Opposite of this is modern dance, which reclaims the pull of gravity and uses grand movements to allow the dancer to embed themselves into the ground.

Contact with the ground is a critical connection between ground, dancer, and sky. The ballet shoe serves as the joint for the ballerina to lightly support themselves on the ground and reach up to the sky. The shoes have a vertical support called a shank that leads to the box at the bottom which is composed of layers of support.
**HOW DOES ONE TOUCH THE SKY?**

Facing Marion Square to the north is the sky theatre which embodies the qualities of ballet. A gap is placed at the horizon so the ballerina uses the horizon to support their verticality. The main focus of the theatre is the roof which has operable louvers that open to the sky, similar to how a ballerina extends their arms upwards. The stage reflects the sky so that the ballerina literally seems to be dancing in it. The interior of the theatre reflects the dynamism of the dance within a rigid floating box. To enter into the theatre, a floating stair descends down to the ground level for people to ascend into the sky.

Opposite this is the modern dance theatre embedded in the ground to the south. The audience and dancers are in a compressed space for a more intimate relationship. The stage is above a pool of water that reflects light back up on the dancers to highlight their movements on the ground. The modern dance is also continued outside of the theatre to become an outdoor performance space.
In the small town of Madison, Florida there is a strong precedent for the art of quilt making and the communal gathering it brings. We wanted to emphasize the act of coming together to create a communally pieced work. At the center of all the interventions is a Quilt Garden with a variety of flowers that change for the season.

The Quilt Garden would be inspired by the spatial zoning and itinerary of the quilt so people could inhabit the conditions they craft. Along with the Quilt Garden there is a studio space provided for quilters to come together and quilt. Facing the lake is a teahouse where quilters can take a respite from quilting and enjoy iced tea together.
To expand on the communal qualities of the quilt, we designed a screen system that envelops the interventions, switching the typical orientation of a quilt and allowing it to be held in public space vertically. By pulling seams of burlap, the scale of material shifted and changed the amount of light filtered through. By manipulating fabric, we were able to change the qualities of light to create more engaging spaces.

HOW DOES A PATTERN OF A QUILT INFORM THE GROUND?

We studied the quilts of Gee’s Bend, Alabama to understand the diagrammatic spatial qualities they bear. By creating diagrammatic mappings based on the language of the quilts we studied, we created models of them and projected them so that we could see the markings upon the wall.
In the midst of gentrification and large-scale development, Chelsea Local aims to preserve the local neighborhood feel of its immediate surroundings while bridging the social divide in the area. It does so through the gestures of uniting, sharing, strengthening, growing, and collaborating.

The primary expression of uniting is accomplished through the programs of food and performance. Food is ubiquitous across all cultures and classes, and provides a foundation on which people come together and communities thrive. Food and dining programs take place primarily throughout the ground floor as a matrix for other programs to insert into.
To the east of the performance center, seven residential towers nest into the food and dining spaces. Their orientation relates to the angled orientation of the Elliot apartment buildings, forming a dialogue between the two.

They are joined together at different elevations by community gardens, where residents gather to grow their own crops and plants, as well as grow in community. The community gardens float above the food spaces as elements that bridge between each tower. An atrium is created by the towers that opens to the ground floor of the food spaces. The atrium creates a visual connection between the food space and the residential towers above.
The school faces south, overlooking Chelsea Park. The language from the floating community gardens on the residential program is communicated here through the design of floating classrooms. These classrooms are in a glass box to convey the sense of transparency in education. Spaces between offer fluid seating under a translucent overhead, offering space for students to share with one another and strengthen their knowledge outside the classrooms.

A culinary institute is located at the ground level. Here, students can learn how to prepare the food that they would grow in the urban farm. Similar to the community gardens, this urban farm serves as the hinge between the floating classrooms above and the culinary classrooms below.