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East Boston has been home to many of Boston’s immigrant communities since the mid-1800’s. The Jeffries Point neighborhood in particular, is especially linked to these histories. Over the last decade however, gentrification has catalyzed displacement. In response, this project proposes a housing cooperative and cooking school for immigrant communities in Jeffries Point. For new immigrant tenants, the cooking school and food related programs provide a space to celebrate their unique cultures and develop skills for employment opportunities in an otherwise unfamiliar and new environment.

The site is located on a hill between two parks and serves as a transition point between a quiet neighborhood on the northern facade along Brigham Street and a more public throughway on the southern facade along Marginal street which leads to the Marina. The site strategy is dictated by a desire to create a stronger connection between the residential neighborhood on top of the hill and the industrial neighborhood below. Two public staircases are added in alignment with the existing street grid. A wider staircase cuts through the massing while the narrower staircase is positioned at the western edge of the site, mirroring the existing stairs on the eastern edge. Coupled with the public stairs are the main entrances to the building with interior stairs and elevators.
A first floor concrete podium contains the cooking school and unprogrammed storefronts for future cafes and markets. Above the podium are two floors of timber housing elevated out of the flood plain. In order for all units to receive views of the harbor and southern exposure, they are oriented perpendicularly to the waterfront.

An external street, or esplanade, cantilevers over the Marginal Street sidewalk and gives access to units along the southern facade as well as a place to socialize with fellow residents. The esplanade’s sliding louvers allow residents to control daylighting. Rather than block views, the one storey northern facade along Brigham Street allows existing homes to see the harbor beyond. The wood slat facade along Brigham Street is more muted, responding to the surrounding neighborhood with a series of at-grade entrances and courtyards that provide light to second floor units.
Four unit types are based on a logic of two units within every 36-foot structural bay. More isolated activities like sleeping take place along the Brigham Street facade while more social activities take place closer to the esplanade along Marginal Street. Units on the third floor are accessed either via an at-grade entrance off of Brigham or via the esplanade. Sleeping spaces on the floor below receive light from courtyards that can be visible from Brigham Street. The range of unit sizes matches the ebb and flow of new families and relatives arriving to the neighborhood.
In order to maximize living spaces, the building is pushed to the edges of the site. Without any buffer between the building and the street, distinct architectural thresholds aligned with the character of Brigham and Marginal Streets provide transitions between the public street and private interior.

Along Brigham Street, bedroom windows are hidden behind a wood slat facade. More visible are the courtyards that provide light to second floor units and at grade entrance for third floor units signaled by protrusions that break the parapet datum. The Marginal Street facade is characterized by sliding louvers which give residents control over daylighting of the esplanade. The movement of louvers creates a dynamic facade visible from the harbor.
Retreat from the Street
At grade entrances to third floor units as well as courtyards that provide light to second floor units create a rhythm of solids and voids along the Brigham Street facade.

Esplanade above the Street
The social space of the esplanade combined with culinary activity along Marginal Street create a home and hub for newly arriving immigrant communities in Jeffries Point.
Over the past several decades, the Valle de Guadalupe in Mexico has developed a boutique wine tourism industry centered around attracting tourists from outside the region. While the influx of capital has provided day jobs for local residents, winery ownership and leadership remains out of reach.

In this context, Winery Raising proposes a worker’s winery in which creating community among an expanded definition of workers including students, researchers, viticulturalists, and field laborers, is as integral as producing wine.

The building system reimagines a ubiquitous construction material, light-gauge steel studs. The construction sequence uses a series of crimping operations which transforms straight members into curves. Crimping the steel studs requires only a simple machine that can be operated by a few people, highlighting a low-skilled construction system that can be built collectively.

Group Project with Ana McIntosh
An interest in experimental wine production and education led to adaptations of a typical winery program.

1. Lodging provides a place to rest for student-visitors and winery workers who've missed the bus back home.
2. Workers share knowledge about production techniques at classroom spaces within fermentation and aging.
3. Tasting more closely aligns with a process of inquiry to taste test wine during the fermentation process.
4. A makerspace space allows for experimentation with simple construction that can augment wine production.
5. An outdoor terrace provides space to gather and discuss strategies for winery leadership in the Valle.

Organization

The winery consists of three horizontal terraces with ramps that wind between them. A walkway leads from arrival up toward the research center and makerspace. A more private entrance at the upper edge of the site provides winery workers direct access to sleeping spaces as well as a terrace for outdoor recreation that doubles as grape intake during the harvest season.
Central to the project is the use of readily available materials. As such, the design employs 14" light-gauge steel studs, the largest dimension that is commercially available. This posed a trade-off when considering structural stability. To strengthen the structure, a series of buttressing, trussing, and cross-bracing was employed. The resulting nested forms create a series of spaces that stand between inside and outside. This layering of structure informs an enclosure strategy that locates thermally sensitive wine production spaces under a double layer of metal cladding and translucent polycarbonate.

A second thermal strategy uses a system of plinths on each horizontal terrace which defines a secondary axis of organization. More exposed programs such as the open gathering space with a kitchen and communal eating area are to the left of the plinth. Wine production and the research space are embedded into the hill to the right of the plinths to take advantage of thermal mass in order to maintain cooler temperatures.
Vertical Wine Production
The project takes advantage of the site’s topography through an organization of vertical wine production embedded into the hill. Production begins at the upper entrance where grapes are dropped from intake, down into fermentation. The tasting room is easily accessed on the same terrace to allow researchers and workers to taste test wines during various stages of fermentation. Barrels are then brought down to aging via the ramp. The third space that takes advantage of thermal mass is the research space.
Gathering & Makerspace

To the left of the plinths are programs that are more exposed to the elements. The gathering space provides a place for communal meals, presentations, and informal meetings, central to co-creating knowledge about wine production in the Valle. The makerspace allows workers, students, and researchers to experiment with building techniques that can augment wine production. This could include innovations in fermentation tanks, water management, or building construction.
1:4 study model showing double layer of cladding
THE GREAT ESCAPE
MIT SPRING 2019 | CORE 2: MARIANA IBAÑEZ, LIAM O’BRIEN, ROSALYNE SHIEH

This project was completed as a group for a competition within MIT’s Core 2 studio.

We took cues from a precedent study of the Saitama Arena proposal by OMA which fused together ideas about continuous circulation, iconicity, and flexible program during the years in which Rem Koolhaas published S,M,L,XL. Inspired by these themes, our second-place entry capitalized on Coney Island’s history as a fantastical dreamscape to design a “People’s Pool”. Rather than imagine our users as tourists to the Island, we envisioned our project to construct a hidden water world exclusively for Coney Island residents.

Group Project with Inez Su Wei Ow & Ellen Wood
Escape... an escape...
within an escape...
through an escape.

In a city,
under a city,
embedded within a city -
moving down, down below.
This project for the Coney Island YMCA began with conceptual studies of porosity as a way to architecturalize ideas of openness and privacy. These two themes are central to the institution’s identity as a membership organization whose mission is to support healthy communities.

Rather than treat these two themes as diametric, the design utilizes a series of translucent and semi-transparent curtains to generate gradients of open, public, and closed, private spaces. In this context of shifting visibilities, the YMCA communicates through its materiality, visual and programmatic connections that offer new ways in which to balance openness to the community and privacy for YMCA members.
Rather than occupy a monolithic block of space at the ground level like many neighboring buildings, the project creates a sense of openness where local residents can move through the site easily. The form of the project consists of open interior floor plans that become successively larger when moving up the building. Curtains hang from the outer ring of each floor plate down to the second floor, creating a layered effect of privacy for programs such as administrative offices, teen lounges, and the daycare.

Connections between floors are made through cut-outs in the floor plate. For example, runners inside the indoor track can look down into the basketball court, and visitors in the plaza can peer down into the swimming pool. In addition, several balconies such as those on the roof where dorms are located, offer visual connections between YMCA members in the building and those on the street.
Floors B1 & 1
The ground floor contains the most public facing programs including the community meeting space and theater, which are pulled apart from the main entrance to create open pathways through which community members can traverse across the site. Visitors walk through the café and around the check-in desk to reach the basement level where lockers and the water programs are located.

Floors 2 & 3
The second floor contains the most private programs such as administrative offices, the teen lounge, and daycare. Upper floors with larger floor plates use fabric to subtly delineate zones of athletic programs such as the basketball court, cardio, yoga, and weightlifting.
Rather than mark distinct boundaries between inside and outside, the combination of columns, glass enclosures, and curtains creates gradients of visual and physical access from the street. The open plaza invites the community to stroll through the YMCA without having to enter into the building itself.

Exercise Zones
Open plans on the third and fourth floors allow for visual access across various zones of exercise programs and the YMCA’s Coney Island context. Among more strenuous exercise programs such as cardio and weightlifting, are zones for quiet yoga and stretching, enclosed by curtains.
This project conceived of proto-architectural venues that could mediate visual and auditory aspects of a flamenco performance. By first encountering only its sounds, the audience would be asked to actively imagine what the performance might look like. The audience would then synthesize the constituent sounds and build the performance back together. Three venues were designed to fit within three distinct sites in Boston's Emerald Necklace: a flat field, a valley, and a pond.
Site 1
The first site consists of a path along which the audience encounters a guitar player, dancer, and singer in one-to-one relationships. However, the performers can only be heard and not seen because they are separated by arched follies and platforms. In this way, architecture becomes an avatar for the performers.
Site 2
As the audience descends into a cavernous venue at the second site, they briefly glimpse the performers entering a stage with red sound canons. Once inside, the audience hears muffled sounds from the performance above. Only when approaching the sound canons, which link the performers and audience, are the individual guitar players, dancers, and singers heard distinctly.
Site 3
At the third site, the audience hears the performance in the distance as they descend along a pathway into the water. At the end of the path, the stage cracks open to reveal the flamenco performance.
Although the issuance of building violations is supposed to protect residents and workers from unsafe conditions, recent reports have shown how landlords in New York City have evaded enforcement. The New York Times cited many cases in which city inspectors were paid off by landlords to dismiss subpar living conditions. Building violations were also cited as a tool to catalyze gentrification driven displacement in which landlords would allow buildings to deteriorate in order to then necessitate renovations, evict residents, hike up rents for new tenants, and increase profits.

How might these questions linking building violations to a cycle of displacement exist in Boston? With this question, I investigated patterns of building violations in Boston. Using datasets from the City of Boston and the American Community Survey, I focused on violations described using “unsafe & dangerous” and “maintenance” categories from 2015-2019.

This initial analysis shows that many low income areas of Boston also have high rates of “unsafe & dangerous” and “maintenance” violations. This can be seen in neighborhoods like Nubian Square, Dorchester, Roxbury, and Codman Square.

Anomalies within this pattern include Alston and East Boston. Further analysis should include a study of race, owner occupied units, and eviction rates in relation to building violations.
Despite the democratic notions of Participatory Action Research (PAR), age remains a significant barrier to co-creation in community settings. This project prototype imagines young learners to be a key constituent of the PAR process and aims to make PAR ideas and practices more accessible to them. Concepts are introduced through drawings, simple definitions, examples and action prompts on cards that can be remixed and built upon to respond to a given community context. The multiple methods of engagement attempt to spark embodied understandings of PAR.

**Participatory Action Research Cards**

MIT Fall 2019 | PAR: Dayna Cunningham & Katrin Kaeufer

Group project with Alia Husain Rizvi, Yusuf Ahmed, Suresh Subramanian, and Winn Constantini
Home Grown is a forthcoming publication by Terreform consisting of design proposals and essays that investigate the premise of self-sufficient urban food systems. Its aim is to uplift the voices of grassroots organizers and forge bonds between them in order to inform urban policy. It focuses on New York City as its case study and identifies distribution, rather than production, as the major issue facing equitable access to food. While enough food is produced in the US to feed everyone nutritiously, 1.3 million people in New York City are still food insecure. It also understands that change must occur over multiple phases and various scales to address the economic, environmental and policy implications of such changes.

I assisted in creating graphics to accompany a segment of the short-term proposal to transform Hudson Square’s system of food production, distribution, preparation, consumption, and waste management. The icons were made to explain how certain interventions would catalyze improvements. The rendering depicts a storefront gallery where food waste from neighboring restaurants is collectively composted in high capacities to provide soil for growing mushrooms indoors and produce in the adjacent garden. This system is part of a larger network of neighborhood drop-off locations that use “composting lanes” specially designated for redistributing food waste.

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