HOW DOES THE ACT OF SPECTATING DEFINE THEATER IN THE LANDSCAPE?

The project’s prompt asked for the design of two theaters in the landscape, one in the round and one in the ground. The project’s site is Olmsted’s Emerald Necklace in South Boston, and a system of artificial, naturalized vistas connected by seemingly organic paths. My first mark into the landscape was a line, about half of a mile in length, that obliquely intersected the existing paths at six moments. This line performed as more of an axis in the development of the project, along which a series of theatrical experiences were designed. The axis stitched these experiences together across the landscape, effectively adding a new path in the park.
The project’s axis intersects with both the weaving paths of the park, but also the changing elevation of the park topography. This creates experiences both above ground and below ground.
The axis of moments in the landscape is anchored by two primary theater spaces, one for approximately 1,050 spectators and the other for approximately 450 spectators (as dictated by the prompt). The larger one, the theater in the round, is defined by just the element of the stage and takes advantage of an existing ‘bowl’ in the landscape.
The second theater, the theater in the ground, is embedded into a hill on the south side of the site. The theater has two levels of experiences, the first framing the sky, and the second framing the performance below.

In the entirety of the project, there are three defined relationships: spectator to performance, spectator to landscape, and spectator to spectator.
The desert is understood as a field of fragile conditions, a place where time and movement acquire new meaning. The desert surface itself is marked with natural incisions and boundaries, each generating a new set of local conditions that synthesize the multiple climatic forces acting upon the landscape. This project began by understanding these conditions and contextual layers through drawing, establishing connections and creating opportunity for interventions. Pulling open the desert surface reveals an intense construction that embeds the rhythms and measures of the sun. The construct, programmed as an outpost for aerial archaeology, utilises the changing process of light and shadow as a catalyst for programmatic clarity.

WHAT IS THE FIRST MARK IN A LANDSCAPE ABSENT OF SCALE AND MEASUREMENT?

Edges within the structure are emphasized in relation to time and program based on the movement of the sun. The permanent structure will evolve through varying lighting conditions.
Opening the desert’s surface reciprocates architecturally with the atmospheric qualities of both the submerged and exposed spaces. The intervention holds an instrumental capacity to translate the desert’s character for human understanding.
CAN A MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY PERFORM NARRATIVES OF GLOBAL SCALE?

Many of Earth’s bodies of water are disappearing. The Aral Sea, in Central Asia, is the epitome of this phenomenon; a sea twice the size of Massachusetts has all but disappeared in only 50 years. Decades of short-sighted resource extraction has initiated a degradation of the region’s ecosystem with disastrous consequences, from species extinction to contamination of local crops. The impacts of this disappearing body can be felt for hundreds of miles and are dramatically altering the climate of an entire continent. In this installation, we bring tangible life to this large scale phenomena, so that the public may understand a body of water as a living, breathing creature. The whistle buoy gives breath to this creature. Its voice is spoken through a series of instruments, and important specimens are embedded within the instruments themselves, allowing the visitor to peer into the pipes and discover the different scales of impact of this disappearing environment.

The highlighted specimens- salt, cotton, sand, fish, fishing boats, dust- tell the story of both the natural and human characters in this story of loss.
Through the design of an acoustic and visual atmosphere, the Aral Sea is given a physical presence in the museum. This experience seeks to engage the observer and compel them to care for a body infinitely larger and more complex than their own.

Project film: https://vimeo.com/300165270
My analysis for this project began with a sectional study of the Florida peninsula, in an effort to capture and illustrate the varying contextual layers between each coast. Critical to this study was understanding the key moments of transition between specific regions with respect to qualities of air, water, and plant life. Natural cycles between these elements change in response to location, allowing for different scales of human interaction with these landscapes. The project’s site, Paynes Prairie, stands as a naturally occurring joint between Florida’s omnipresent aquifer systems and the humid air. The visual manifestation of this joint is the horizon line, a datum for understanding both the near and far landscapes.

**How can architecture exist as an instrument to understand and regenerate the Florida landscape?**
The approach for this project placed emphasis on the beauty of the construct’s tectonics, specifically in the joints of materials both within the intervention and between the intervention and ground. The simplicity and logic required to design a material joint can translate to multiple scales of construction. This method of making stems from my belief that both the development of material joints and the generation of spatial joints are integrally linked in the architectural design process.
Creating an effective itinerary in Paynes Prairie requires augmenting the subtle relationship between the near and far landscapes. Understanding this connection between the immediate and distant territories involves careful calibration of the approach to the intervention. This approach allows the inhabitant to occupy and transition through the near landscape while evolving their perception of the unattainable far landscape. This type of understanding and response to the site’s conditions inversely influenced the development of interior moments looking back onto the landscape.

A modeling exercise developed the intervention’s moments of occupation into the ground. This generated the main structural system of the pavilion, which then bled into the surrounding landscape as a network of actuating conduits.
The interstitial spaces bounding the pavilion are constructed in such a way that leverage the interior presence of both *pellucid* light and *filtered* light. Creating these spaces allows the inhabitant’s experience within the intervention to constantly engage with the near and far landscapes of Paynes Prairie. Opaque and translucent materials veil and unveil the surrounding context, choreographing the observer’s understanding of the horizon line. The pavilion is a machine that breathes with air and light. The pavilion respects these elements with a *restrained intensity*, allowing its beauty to reside in the constructed edges and joints between exterior and interior space. The sun-filled shadows rest on its surfaces and harmonizes its interior spatial sequences.

The pavilion rests above the prairie’s surface, allowing for seasonal fluctuations in water levels. *Rooted* conduits extend out from the structure to the south, reaching into the unconstructed landscape.
4,000 years ago, before screens, before print, we told stories through performance. The library must resurrect communal rituals of reading and writing. This project proposes a new public forum for writing and exchanging ideas, one that mandates the presence of a body to read and write. ‘Bodies’ of knowledge are constructed in this assembly facility, large-scale tools for reading and writing as a community. The library becomes a sandbox. Several times every year, an object moves out of the library and onto the adjacent public causeway in Zuidas. The tool slowly moves down the causeway to the nearby Station Square, where it rests while the citizens of Zuidas speak to the tool. After a month, sometime after sunset, the tool speaks back. Each tool has its own voice, its own writing performance. The tool inscribes their stories into the square.
The people of Zuidas gather in the square to read together. The stories fade over time, to make room for new ones. The people of Zuidas line the causeway to watch the tool return to the library. The guilds of the library disassemble the tool. Some pieces are reused for other tools, some pieces are stored in the sand.

The narrative of the project was primarily created through film. Large models were created as set stages for experimentation that evolved over the course of the semester.

Project film: https://vimeo.com/300189492