

*Unit 2*  
*Research Record*

workshop: project:

1 2 3  
4

theory  
site  
works

*Xingxing Zhou*

## Workshop 1

### Olfactory space



Ornamental Hands: Figure One is the first of a series that reinforces long held standards of beauty by recreating the elegant hand positions seen in artworks throughout the centuries. Each work consists of attachments for the fingers that are suspended by chains and braced on the wrist, positioning the hand marionette-style. A play on precious jewelry, the real decorative ornament is the gestures these bracelets encourage the wearer to assume. The splint-like aesthetic of the works also plays with the idea of training the hand to rest in this graceful manner. Like corsets and other restrictive beauty aids, Ornament Hands is yet another extreme tool for beauty. When not worn, the pieces mount onto displays depicting details from the historic paintings that inspired them.

## Workshop 3

### Olfactory space



Gündüz extends his practice in this new series of works by addressing the paradoxical nature of modern society and human nature by dwelling on the notion that our world is often considered dull, desolate and monotonous and yet vibrant, abundant and varied at the same time.



## Workshop 2

### Printmaking



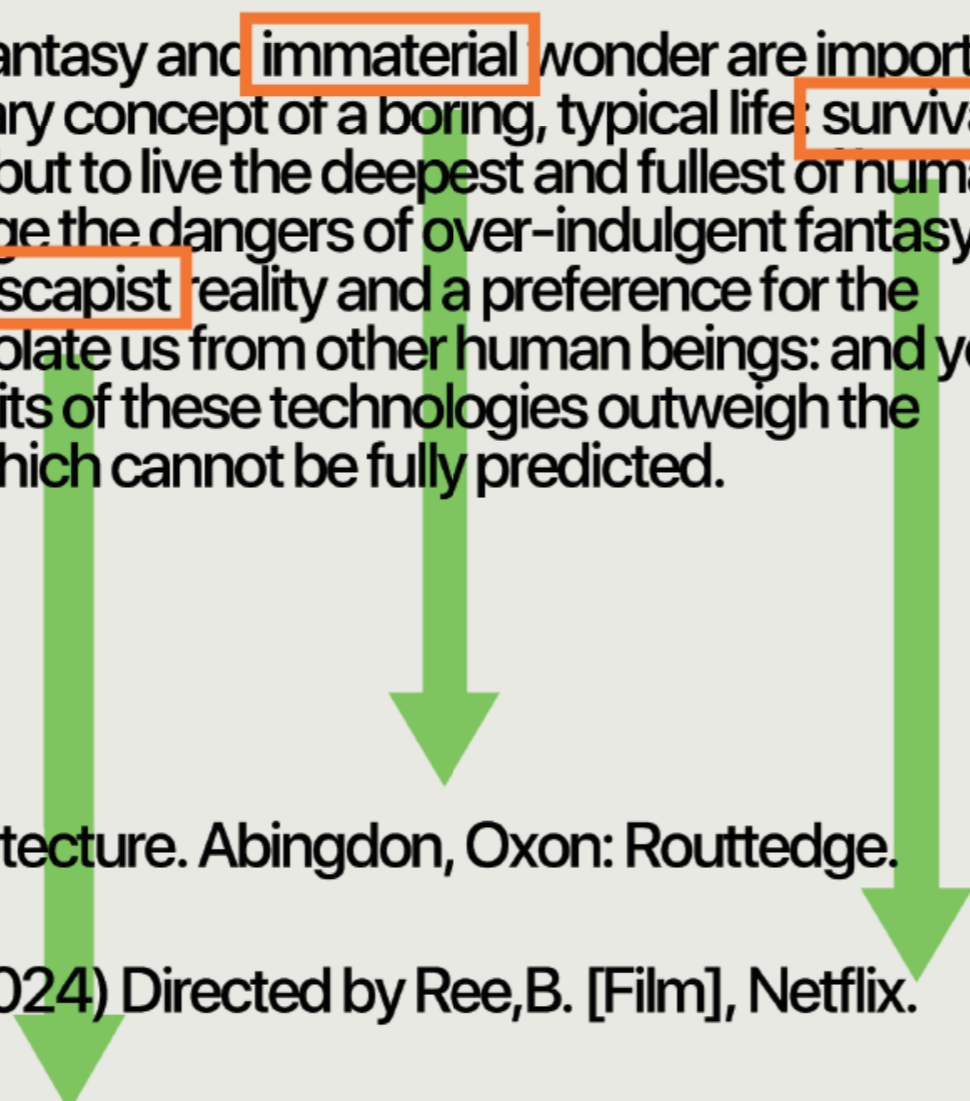
Reluctant to credit concepts such as modernism or brutalism as inspiration, Mazey's creative process involves reflecting on what resonates with him. He sifts through a back catalogue of material as a source of inspiration – equating himself to a magpie collecting bits and pieces from far and wide.



# Thematics

## Immaterial

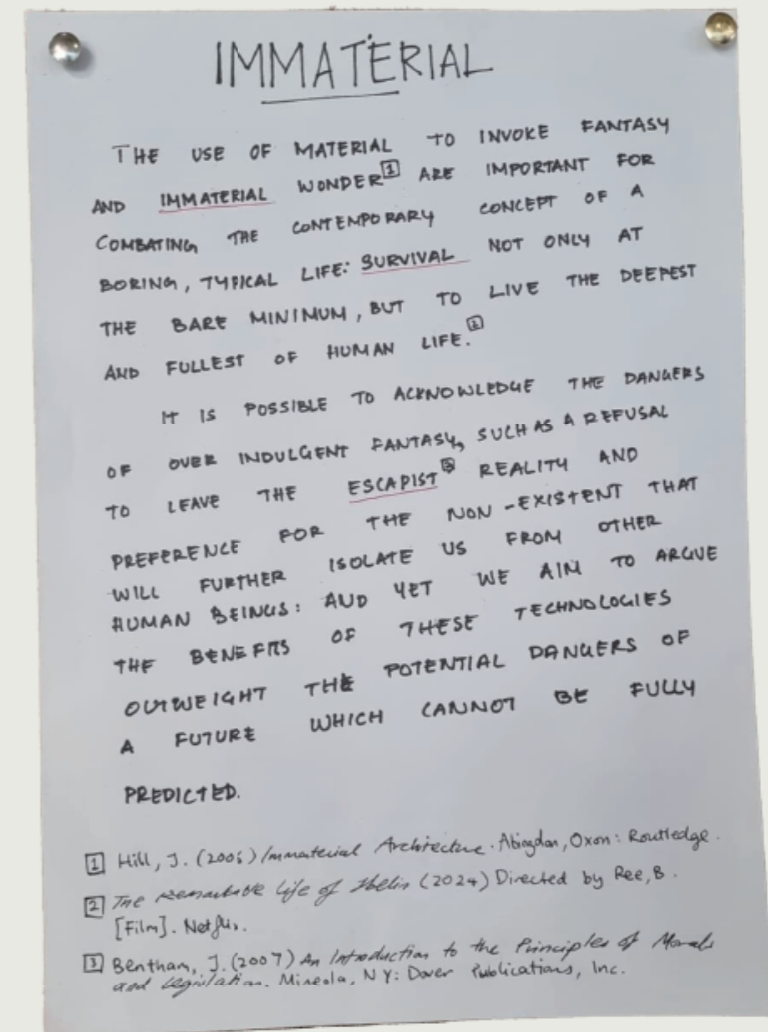
The use of material to invoke fantasy and **immaterial** wonder are important for combating the contemporary concept of a boring, typical life: **survival** not only at the bare minimum, but to live the deepest and fullest of human life. It is possible to acknowledge the dangers of over-indulgent fantasy, such as a refusal to leave the **escapist** reality and a preference for the non-existent that will further isolate us from other human beings: and yet we aim to argue that the benefits of these technologies outweigh the potential dangers of a future which cannot be fully predicted.



Hill, J. (2006) Immaterial Architecture. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

The remarkable life of Ibelin (2024) Directed by Ree, B. [Film], Netflix.

Bentham, J. (2007) An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation. Mineola, NY: Dover Publication, Inc.



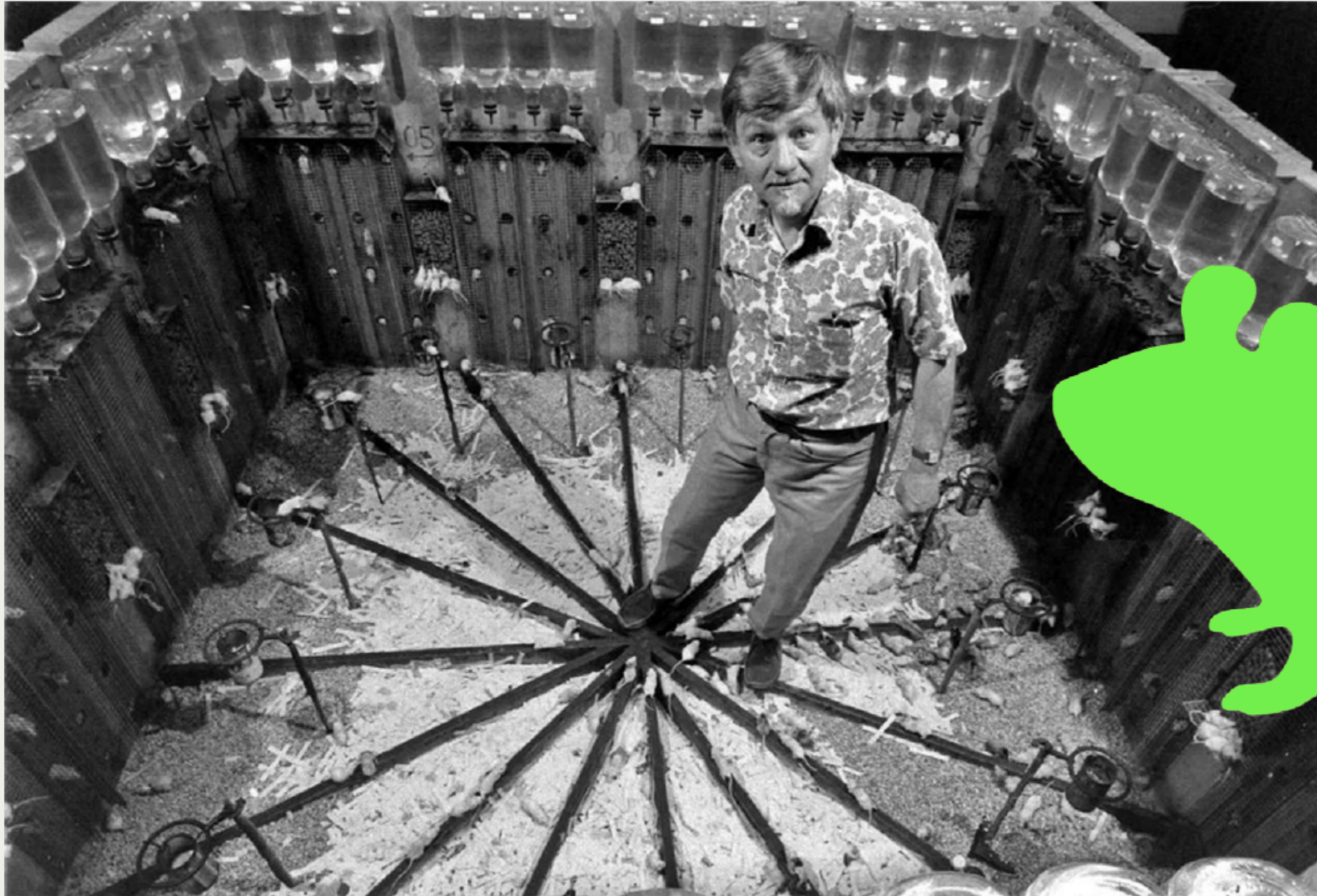
GROUP  
**IMMATERIAL**

THE IMMATERIALITY GROUP INVESTIGATES THE MOMENTS IN SPACE THAT IS NO LONGER PERCEIVED AS TANGIBLE BUT BECOMES DISEMBODIED AND IMAGINED.

WE EXPLORE ON THE CONCEPTS OF NON-PHYSICAL EXISTENCE - THE ELEMENTS THAT ARE INTANGIBLE, YET HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON OUR EXPERIENCES, PERCEPTIONS, AND BEHAVIORS. OUR PROJECT FOCUSES ON THE ELEMENTS INFLUENCING SPACE IN AN EXPERIENTIAL & EPHERMAL LEVEL.

LIGHT	COLOR	TIME	EMOTION
SOUND/ ACOUSTICS	TEMPERATURE AIR	DIGITAL/ VIRTUAL SPACES	WELLBEING

# Project Theory



In "Universe 25," he constructed a large and highly intricate "rat apartment complex." The experimental area consisted of 16 identical apartment buildings arranged in a square formation (4 buildings per side). Calhoun explained to observers that each building contained "four duplex one-room apartments," totaling 256 units, with each unit comfortably housing about 15 rats. Additionally, every apartment building featured a series of dining areas, and the rooftops were equipped with drinking fountains to quench the rodents' thirst. Calhoun tagged each rat with a unique color combination, and he or his team observed the "rat city" daily for several hours from an overhead loft, continuing for over three years while meticulously documenting every detail of the experiment.



As the initial population of rats exploded, followed by stagnation and decline, this paradise gradually descended into hell. In this inferno, the rodents exhibited a series of aberrant behaviors—males lost their sexual drive, while females abandoned maternal instincts. Even when relocated from Universe 25 to less densely populated enclosures, these rats persisted in their maladaptive behaviors. In summarizing the results, Calhoun deepened the audience's bewilderment by introducing a newly emerged group: "the Beautiful Ones." These rodents spent their time grooming and eating, utterly rejecting all social interaction.

01

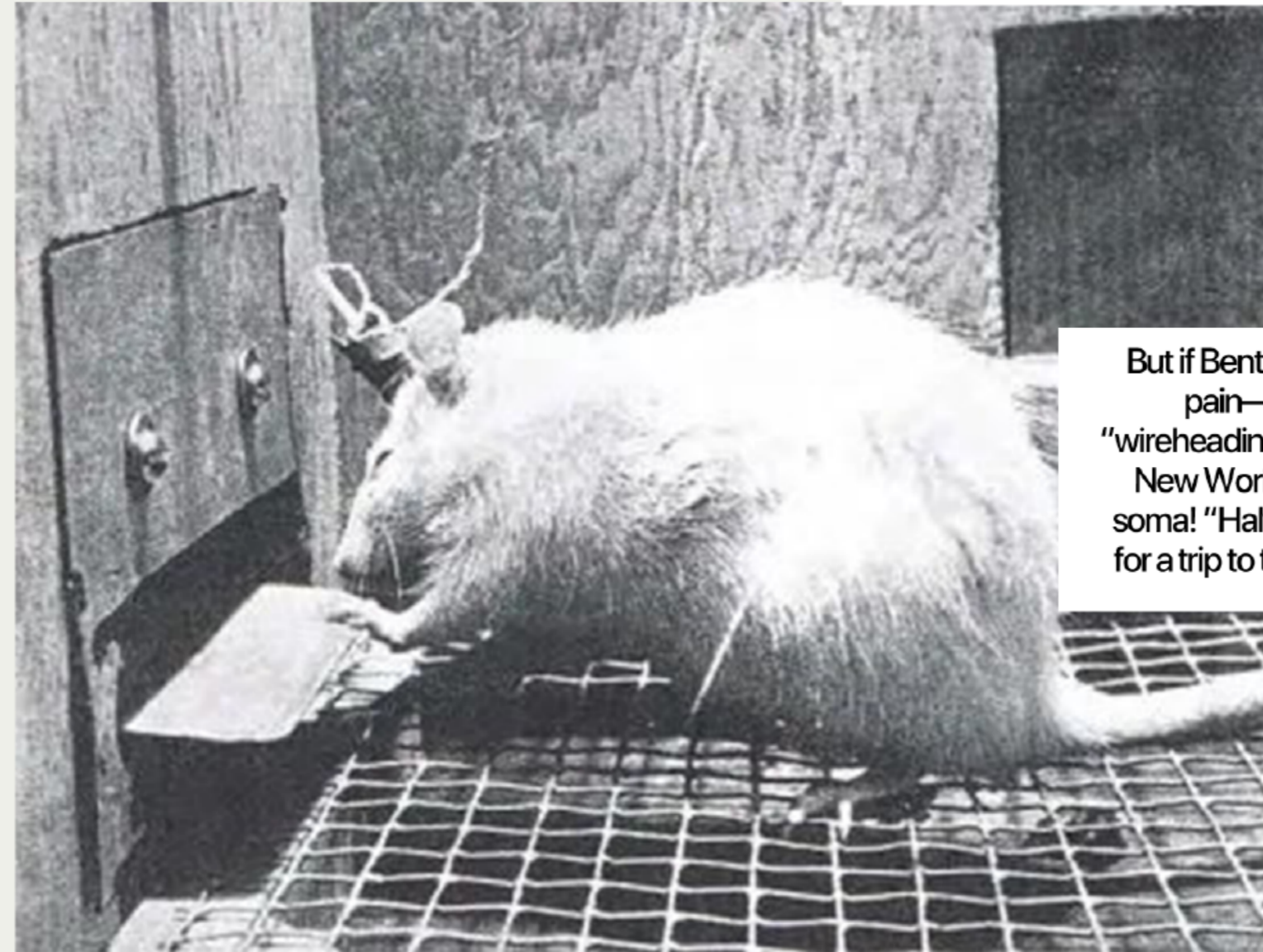
*John B. Calhoun's Universe 25*

Calhoun once remarked, "Yet they share striking physiological and social parallels with us. At the very least, we may hope to derive insights that illuminate human social dynamics and their psychological consequences."

# Project Theory



In 1954, science had just discovered the brain's "pleasure center"[1]. It was an electrifying era! Thrilled researchers replicated the experiment with monkeys, finding they could directly stimulate the hypothalamus, lighting it up like a Christmas tree and turning subjects into blissed-out automatons.



But if Bentham's formula is pushed to its extreme—perfect pleasure, zero pain—you become that caged rat. This state of bliss has a name: "wireheading," a recurring motif in dystopian fiction. In Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, citizens facing distress need only turn to "soma"—delicious soma! "Half a gram for a half-day holiday, a gram for a weekend, two grams for a trip to the enchanting East, three grams for a long dark moonlit night..."

01

*"wireheading" and Brave New World and Bentham's formula*

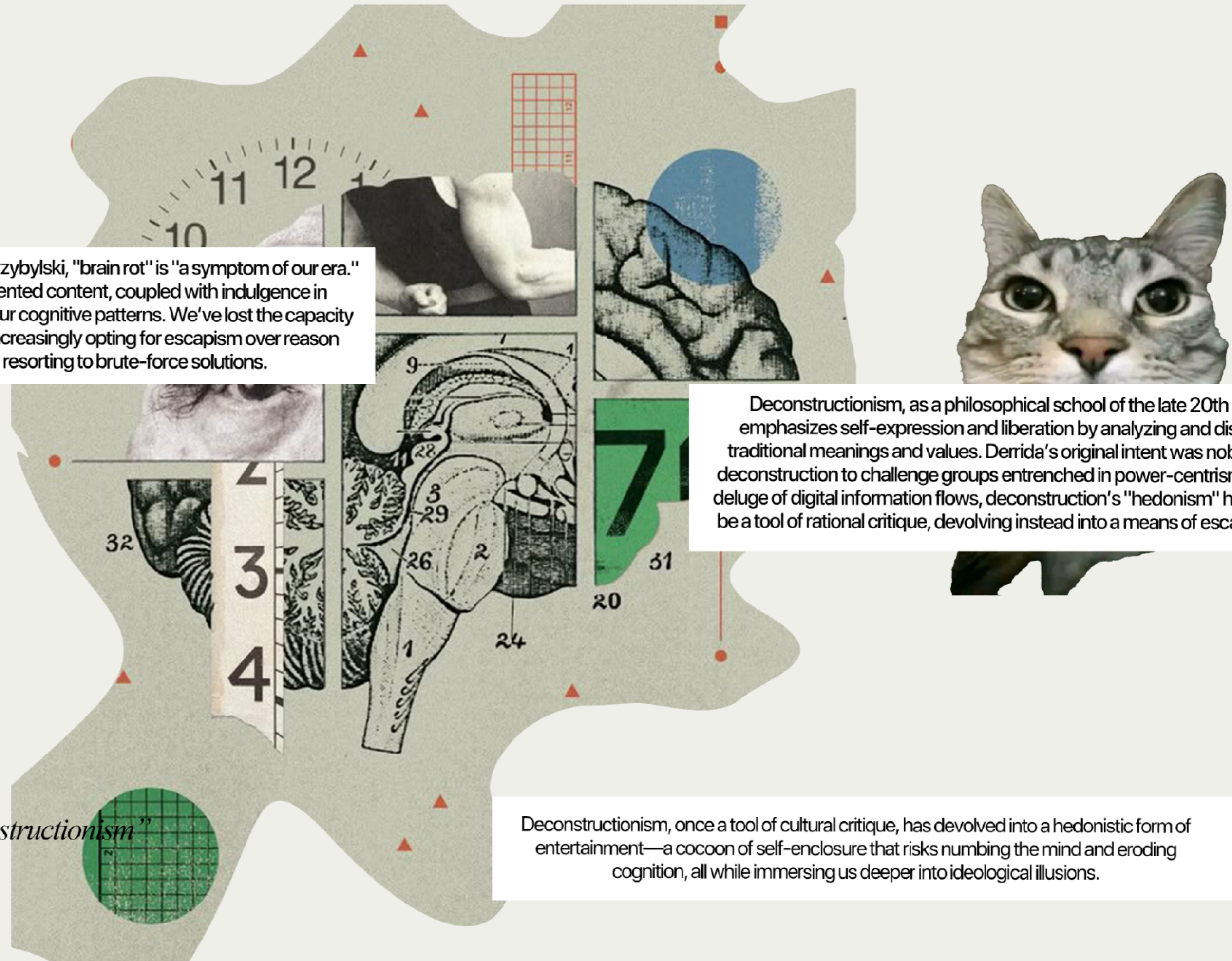
"We will be locked inside machines, paralyzed 'for our own good'—drooling and docile—proving through the ruin of civilization that 'the road to hell is indeed paved with good intentions.'"

# Project Theory

According to Oxford University psychologist Przybylski, "brain rot" is "a symptom of our era." Prolonged immersion in low-quality, fragmented content, coupled with indulgence in hedonistic ideological illusions, has corroded our cognitive patterns. We've lost the capacity for deep thought—our minds fragmented, increasingly opting for escapism over reason when confronting complexity, even resorting to brute-force solutions.

Deconstructionism, as a philosophical school of the late 20th century, emphasizes self-expression and liberation by analyzing and dismantling traditional meanings and values. Derrida's original intent was noble—to use deconstruction to challenge groups entrenched in power-centrism. Yet, in the deluge of digital information flows, deconstruction's "hedonism" has ceased to be a tool of rational critique, devolving instead into a means of escaping reality.

Deconstructionism, once a tool of cultural critique, has devolved into a hedonistic form of entertainment—a cocoon of self-enclosure that risks numbing the mind and eroding cognition, all while immersing us deeper into ideological illusions.



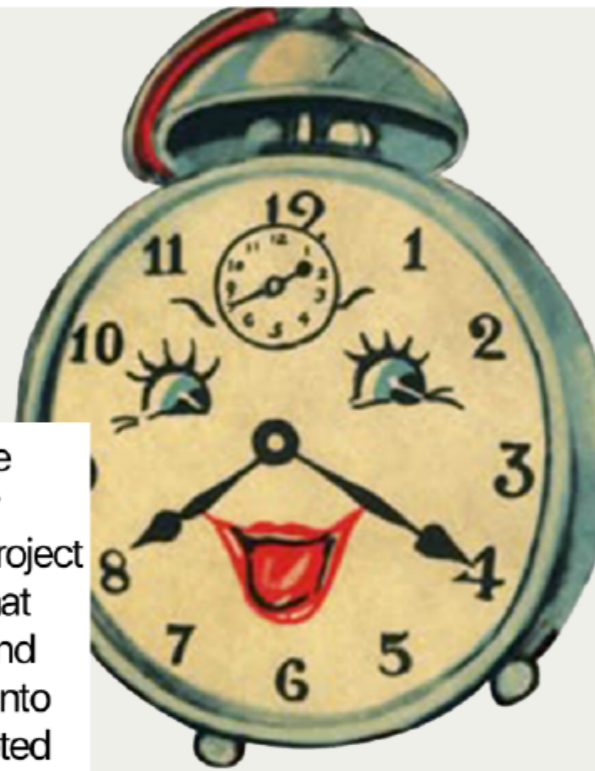
# Project Theory

One experiment

Project MKULTRA, spearheaded by CIA chemist Sidney Gottlieb, was a sprawling program encompassing at least 149 subprojects. Its objective: to weaponize the human mind as a theater for strategic and tactical operations—covert missions, intelligence gathering, and the very tactics of war.

Woody Bledsoe, a pioneer in artificial intelligence, specialized in designing algorithms for pattern recognition.

one scientist



The individual is utterly defenseless against direct neural manipulation, stripped of even their most intimate biological reflexes. In experiments, electrical stimulation of adequate intensity invariably overrides free will

one conclusion

One future

Through facial recognition technology, Bledsoe embarked on a path to harness computers for "perceiving" the world of human faces. With "Subproject 94," he pioneered a new form of media—one that discarded images, representations, narratives, and abstractions. Instead, it directly input commands into living brains, using neural stimulation to elicit targeted emotions, behaviors, or perceptions.

04

*"Electrical stimulation of adequate intensity invariably overrides free will."*

*"Reality is a controlled virtual"*

05

"We are forever immersed in illusions; what we call reality emerges when these private hallucinations converge."

Our minds do not passively receive the world around us—they actively construct it based on past experiences, learned patterns, and expectations. The brain does not simply receive information from the physical world and translate it into perception; rather, it continuously predicts, fills in gaps, and hypothesizes what comes next. Every moment of your existence is the product of your brain's "best guess."

The human brain was not designed for truth, but for survival.

Our sense of reality is not merely a private hallucination—it is a shared perception synchronized with those around us. Though we inhabit self-constructed mental realities, we rely on society and others to reinforce the collectively agreed-upon 'reality.'"

All cultural norms, beliefs, and social expectations act like filters shaping our shared reality—rendering personal perception increasingly impersonal, as others too are conditioned to see through the same lens.

## Version of fiction and literature

### Wireheading

"Brain rot" can be traced back to Thoreau's criticism of vulgar reading in Walden in 1854, but it has been reactivated in the mobile Internet era: it refers to the attention loss, slow thinking and emotional dullness caused by excessive exposure to fragmented and low-nutrition digital content. In 2024, Oxford University Press named brain rot the "Word of the Year". Academic reviews define it as a digital addiction syndrome accompanied by "zombie scrolling" and "doomsday screen swiping", with the core symptoms of cognitive overload and emotional numbness.

## Version of reality society

### Brain Rot

### Four major components × three levels

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1. Stimulus
2. Delivery Mechanism
3. Neuro-Cognitive Receptor
4. Socio-Economic Feedback

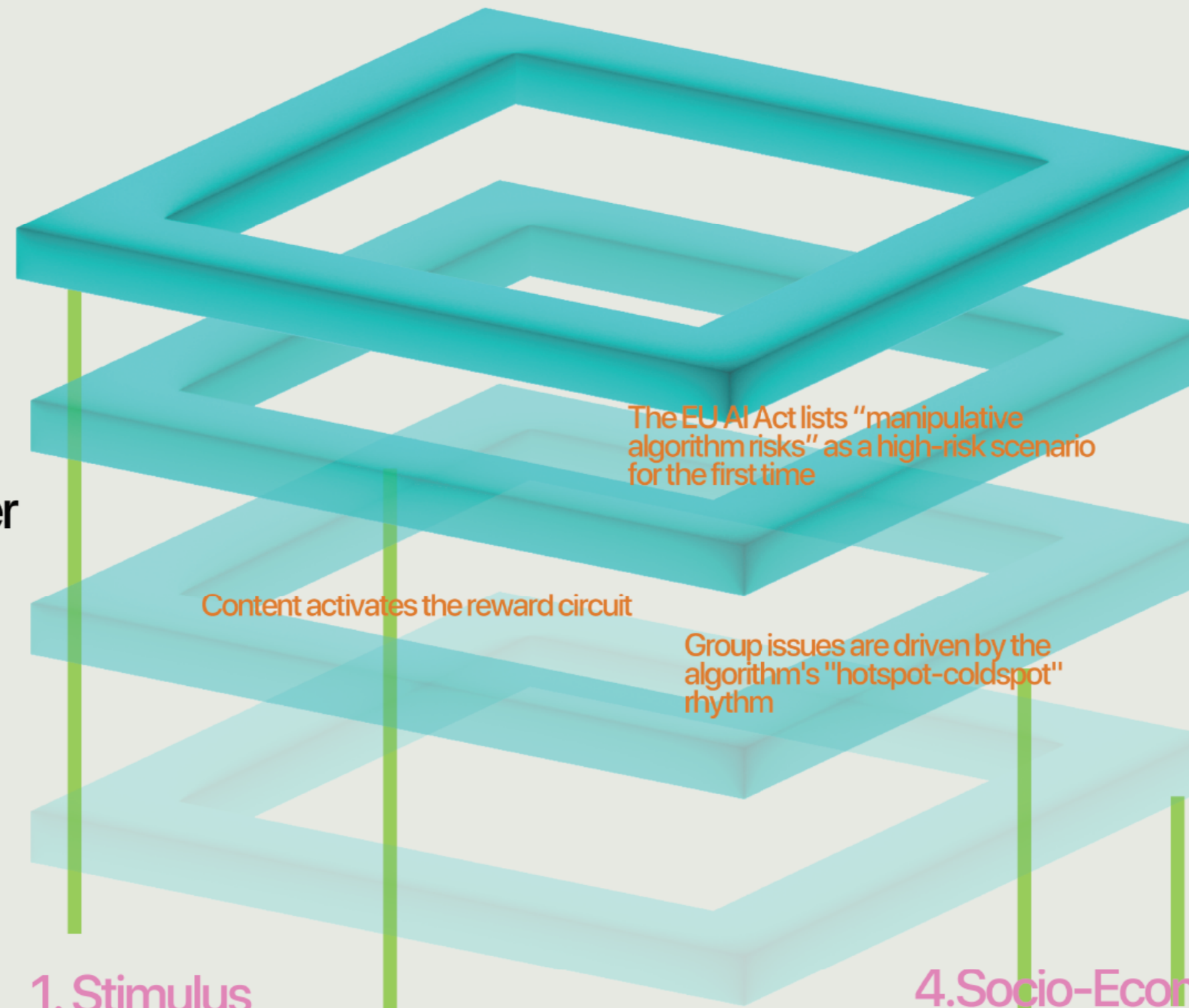


3

1. Micro-individual
2. Meso-group culture
3. Macro-Structure

This contains connectivity

Stimulus × Individual Level  
Delivery Mechanism × Cultural Layer  
Receiver × Structure layer



Level 1. Micro-individual

level 2. Meso-group culture

level 3. Macro-Structure

level 4. ?

1. Stimulus

2. Delivery Mechanism

3. Neuro-Cognitive Receptor

4. Socio-Economic Feedback

# Project Theory

posthumanist spaces.

"Posthumanism refers to 'a historical moment where the decentralized embeddedness of humans within technological, medical, informatic, and economic networks can no longer be ignored.'"

*"Deleuze & Guattari's Anti-Oedipus"*

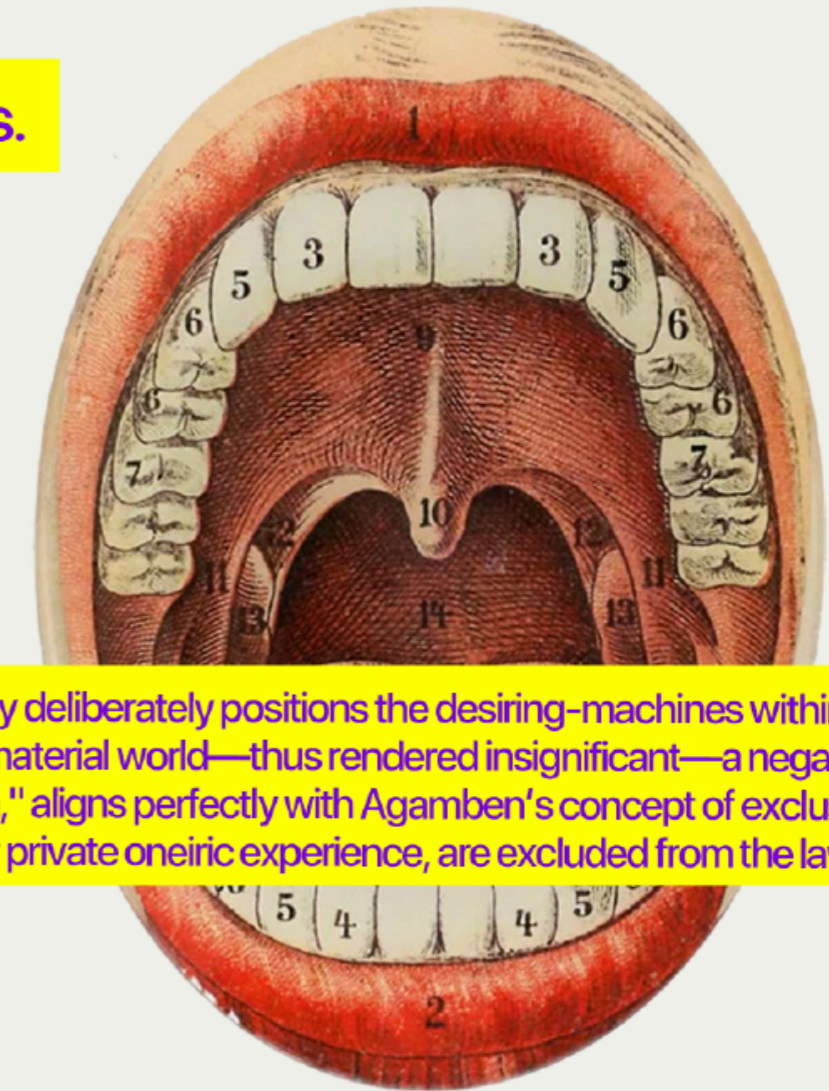
I will explore the possibility of situating the act of dreaming within posthumanist spaces.

possibility

Michel Foucault defined biopolitics as a fundamental element of capitalist development, proposing the deliberate implementation of biopower—a concept intrinsically linked to biopolitics, referring to the exercise of power through the control of life processes. Biopower operates through a constellation of centripetal apparatuses: not merely abstract regulations, but invasions into living bodies, means of value extraction, and the managed distribution of its force.

Deleuze and Guattari, in *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), elucidate how capitalist society deliberately positions the desiring-machines within the realm of dreams or imagination. Through this operation, desire no longer resides in the material world—thus rendered insignificant—a negation epitomized by the dismissal: "It's only a dream" (p. 304). This very phrase, "only a dream," aligns perfectly with Agamben's concept of exclusion: dreams, belonging to no political domain and admitting no legal jurisdiction over private oneiric experience, are excluded from the law itself.

Capitalist Desiring-Machines

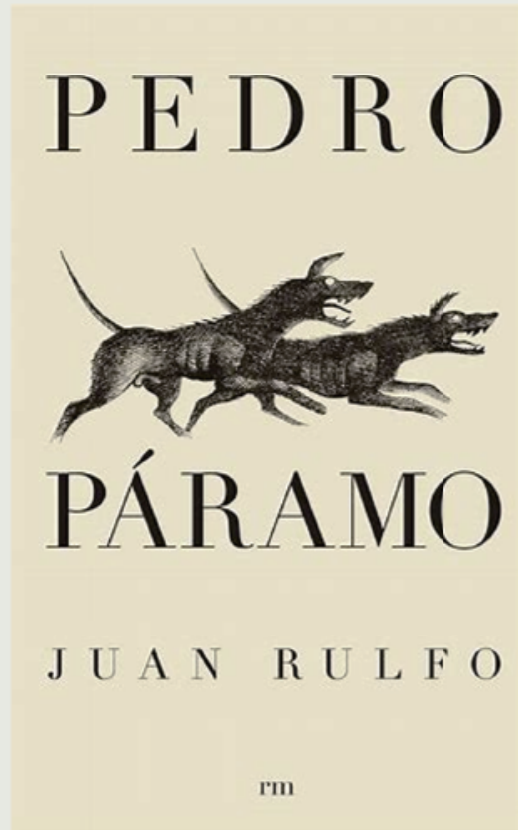


06

*"Dreams and Biopolitics"*

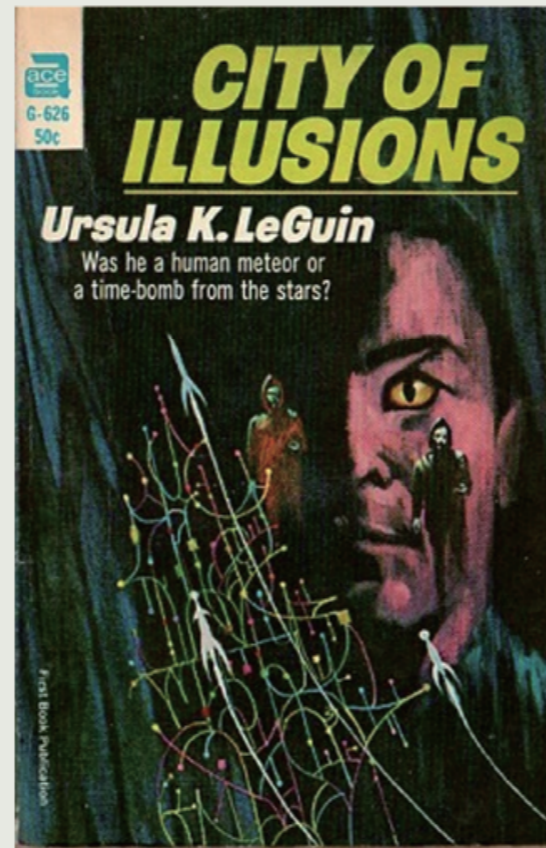
Thus, advancing dreams as a zone of bare life accessible to all would forge a new political space—simultaneously physical and non-physical. This space would challenge rationalism's hegemony over politics and knowledge. Dreams are never "just dreams"—they are the possibility of posthuman resistance.

# Project Literary works



The narrative style of magical realism, the atmosphere of blurred reality and the process logic of self-discovery

The story begins with the first-person account of Juan Preciado, who promises his mother on her deathbed that he will return to Comala to meet his father, Pedro Páramo. His narration is interspersed with fragments of third-person dialogue from the life of Pedro Páramo, who lived in a time when Comala was a robust, living town, instead of the ghost town Juan now sees. The two major competing narrative voices present



Science fiction imagination of the future structure of human society, science fiction concept of human social organization

The indigenous inhabitants of Earth have been reduced to small communities that are widely separated, living in highly independent rural communes, or in nomadic tribes. The Shing control the human population by using various strategies of indirect manipulation, which include divide and rule, as well as deceptive telepathic mental projection, known as mind-lying. In contrast, innately truthful telepathy, which is the only form of telepathy available to human beings, is known as mindspeech. The ability to lie during mindspeech is unique to the Shing.



It breaks the conventions of traditional novels by extracting the continuous story and leaving it to the readers to organize the materials and develop the plot themselves. Different readers read a different novel.

The story begins on a hot summer Sunday, when a serious traffic jam suddenly occurs on the highway leading to the city in the south of Paris. The traffic jam lasts for days, even across the change of seasons. During this time, drivers and passengers who originally did not know each other were forced to stay where they were, and gradually established a temporary micro-society. They began to communicate with each other, share food and water, organize resource allocation, and even develop romantic relationships.

However, when the jam was suddenly lifted and the vehicles restarted, this temporary society quickly collapsed, and people returned to their respective cars as if nothing had happened before. The protagonist, an engineer, tried to reunite with the woman he met and developed feelings for during the traffic jam, but found that she had disappeared in the sea of people.

# Project

## Film works

<Withnail and i>

Black comedy

A decadent story about artists, alcohol and failure, using black humor and poetic language to record the last tremor of youth.

Between ideal and reality, on the edge of life and the world

A class of young people trying to break away from the old world cannot find a way out in the new urban culture, nor can they return to the traditional world.

The film breaks the traditional "idyllic utopia" fantasy, shows the romanticized misunderstanding of rural life by urban people, and reveals the urban-rural divide and cultural misunderstanding in British society. This is a failed "return", and the British rural landscape is no longer a place of romance and roots, but a backdrop for identity loss and cultural rupture.

The two main characters  
The farmer and the host



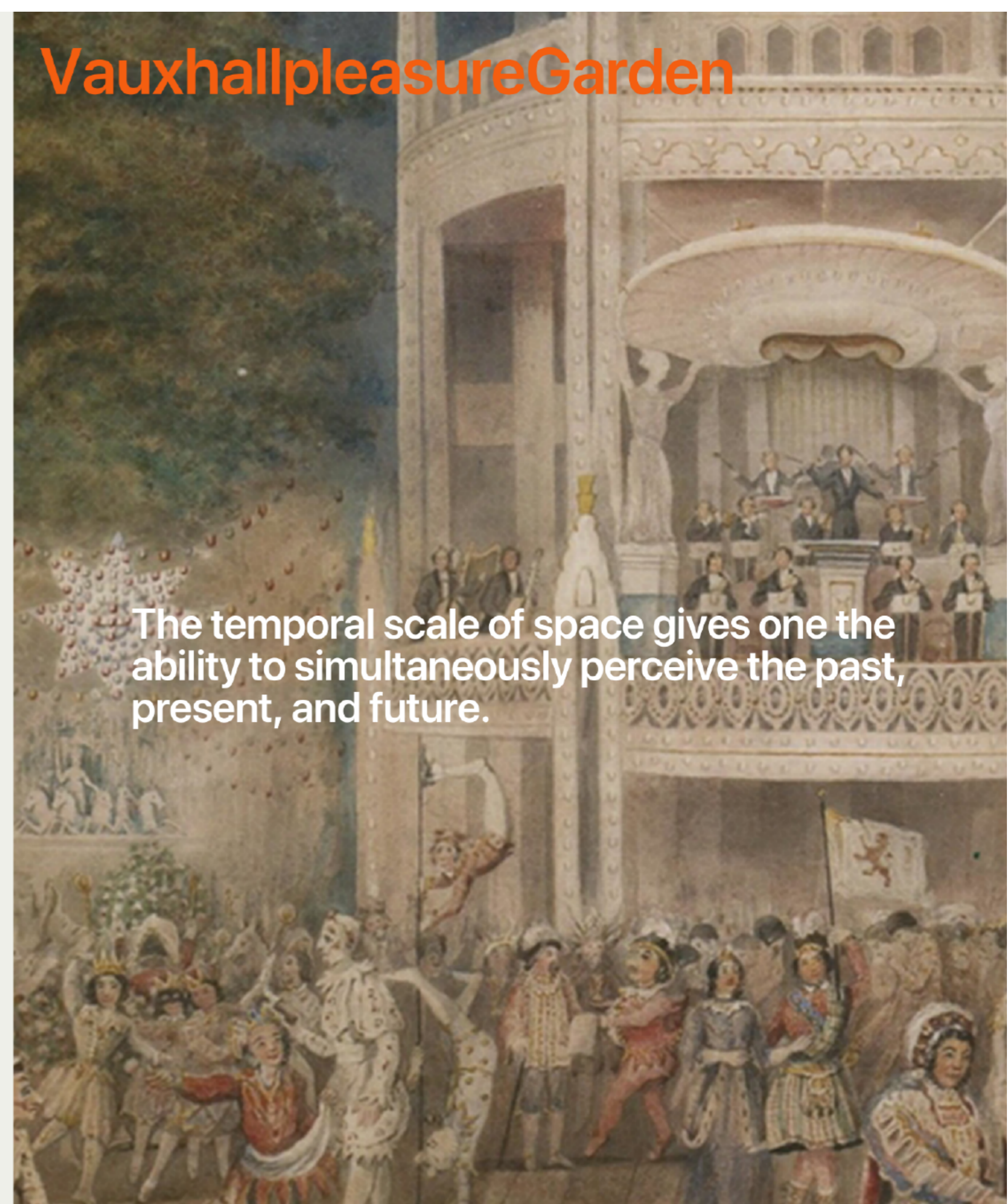
# Project Site

What attracts me most about the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens is not its spatial scale, but rather its distinctive features that set it apart from other sites. Its uniqueness lies in the dimension of time. A small green space within a modern urban area was, two hundred years ago, one of London's main public entertainment venues.



01

# Vauxhall Pleasure Garden



The temporal scale of space gives one the ability to simultaneously perceive the past, present, and future.

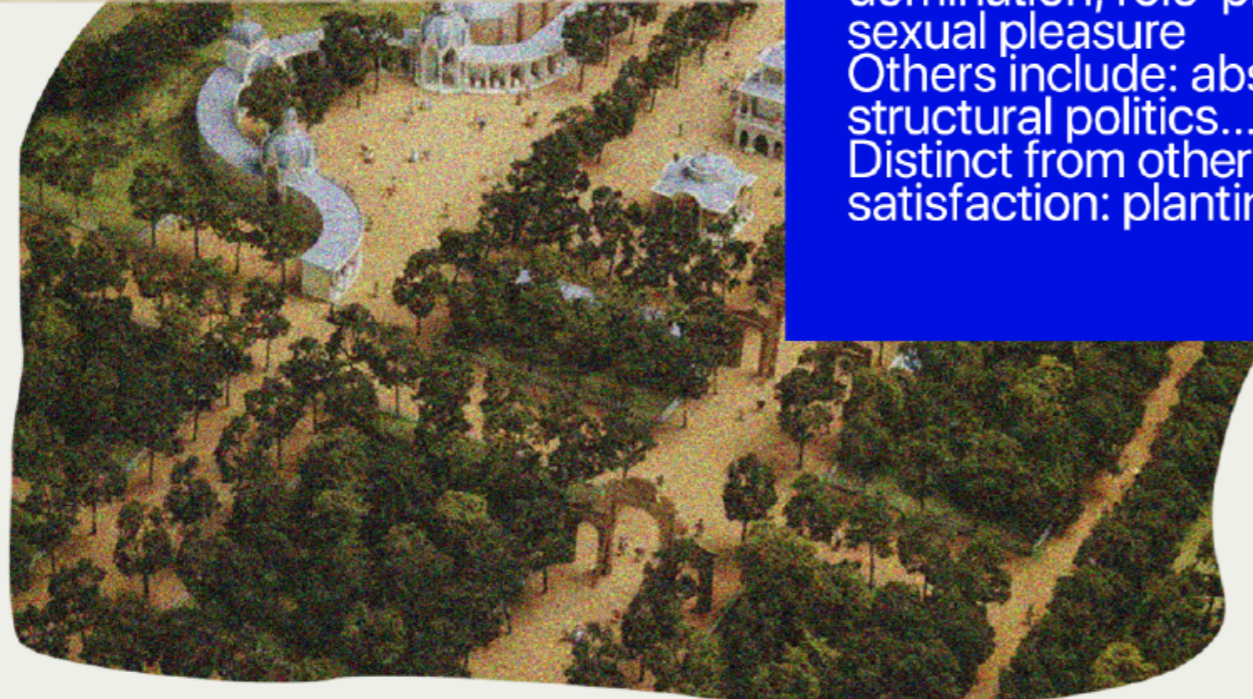
# Project Site



02

Division of the area  
 The space is divided according to different aspects of human virtual satisfaction. Each individual has a different sensitivity to virtual pleasure, and the ways of satisfaction also vary.

Killing, expansion, domination, role-playing, and sexual pleasure  
 Others include: abstraction, structural politics...  
 Distinct from other forms of satisfaction: planting.



I found some 18th-century descriptions of him from Jonathan Colin:

Once safely arrived, parties entered through the house on the western edge of the site, where they paid their admission fees and deposited their servants in special holding pens. On the other side, two snaking lines of supper boxes stretched ahead of the visitor, flanking a raised orchestra pavilion surrounded by trees. The rotunda (or "Temple of Pleasure") and a saloon were on the left. The majority of the site was given over to long allées or "walks": three running to the eastern edge of the site, bisected by two more running north-south. The supper boxes, orchestra, and westernmost walks were brightly illuminated with hundreds of lamps, but the "dark walks" clearly lured many visitors to explore the dim reaches of the site. Here lived a mock hermit in his hermitage (where he told fortunes), a marble statue of Milton surrounded by "musical bushes" (a small orchestra hidden in pits dug in the earth), and a small diorama of a village mill powered by a tin cascade—the effect of moving water created by "waves" made of tin mounted on rollers and a synchronized "waterwheel." This diorama was unveiled only for performances, announced by the ringing of a bell. One of the bisecting walks had trompe l'oeil eye-catchers at each end: massive canvases painted with fake views of the Roman campagna. Although the musical programming was excellent, the main entertainment offered at Vauxhall was not scripted. It lay in perambulating in groups around these sights, looking at other people and being looked at oneself. Given the popularity of the Gardens with the Prince of Wales, his mistresses, duchesses, actors, and visiting dignitaries (including Native American chiefs), surprises lay around every dimly lit corner.

history



The Rotunda



The Temple of Comus



The Orchestra



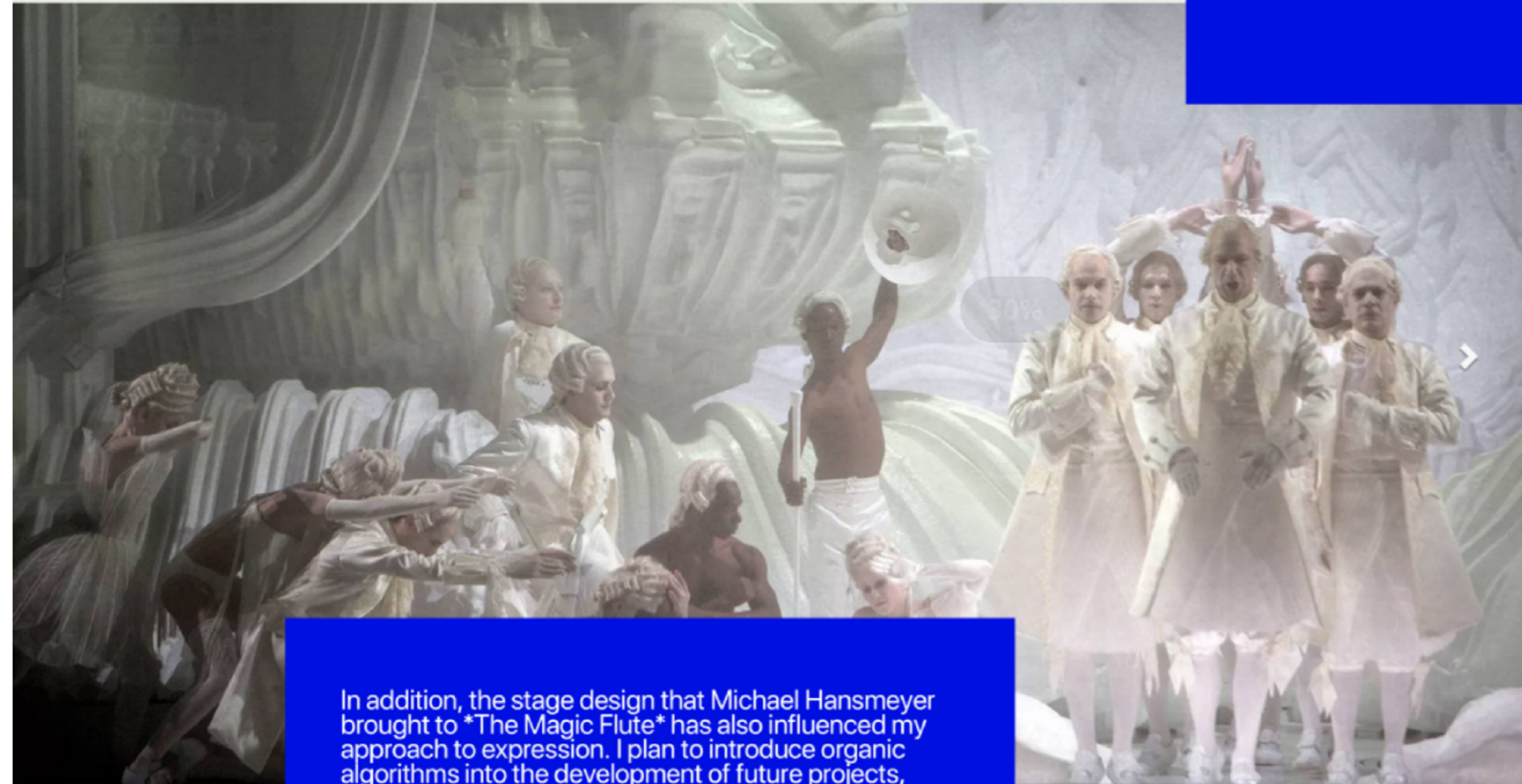
The Cascade



The Triumphal Arches

# Project works

An architecture between chaos and order, neither foreign nor familiar, both natural and artificial.



In addition, the stage design that Michael Hansmeyer brought to *The Magic Flute* has also influenced my approach to expression. I plan to introduce organic algorithms into the development of future projects, aiming to construct a building that exists between chaos and order—neither unfamiliar nor familiar, both natural and artificial. The design process will strike a balance between expectation and surprise, control and

Zauberflöte - First Act, La Monnaie

B. Uhlig, La Monnaie B. Uhlig, La Monnaie

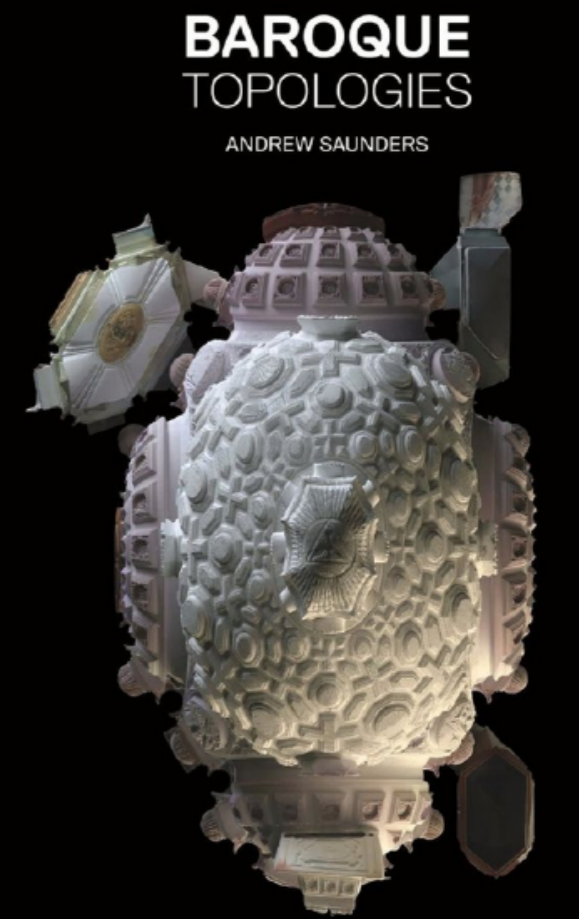
Zauberflöte projection, from Digital Onstage 1

# Project works

Baroque Topologies\_Andrew Saunders and Helsinki Guggenheim Museum



The new 129,000 sq. ft. museum, sited on the urban waterfront in Helsinki, Finland, was designed to be exclusively constructed from "recycled digital materials," - objects that were randomly downloaded from various online sources but have no intentional existing relationships with one another or larger symbolic agenda. Through the high-resolution recombining, or, "kitbashing" of components, the individual figures were intended to lose any associations of symbolic content in favor of the emergence of a new and highly complex form of architectural aesthetic that mysteriously hints at, but in no way reveals, the curious and varied importance of the artistic contents within.



**BAROQUE TOPOLOGIES**  
ANDREW SAUNDERS

Baroque Topologies\_Andrew Saunders\_PennDesign

Exhibition Opening Reception  
6:30pm Tuesday February 07

Lecture by Andrew Saunders  
6:30pm Monday February 20  
(Meyerson Hall B-1)

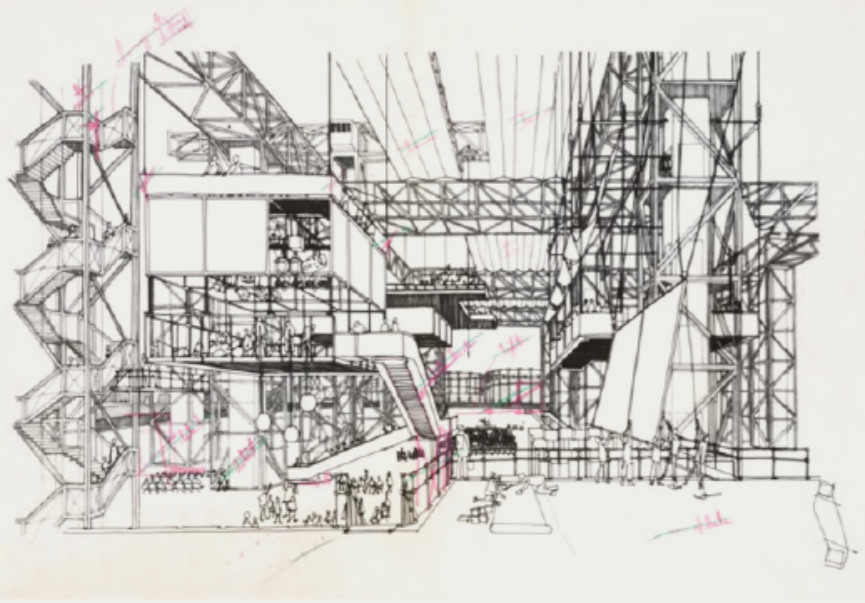
Exhibition Closing Reception  
Monday February 20

Charles Addams Gallery  
200 S. 36th Street  
February 07-24  
Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm

Project  
Rendering generated from 115.47 million 3D scan  
pieces of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane (1696),  
Francesco Borromini, architect. © Andrew Saunders

© PennDesign  
A AUTODESK  
PARTNER

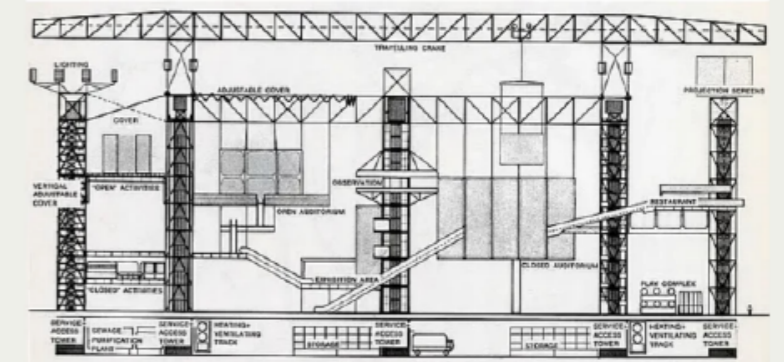
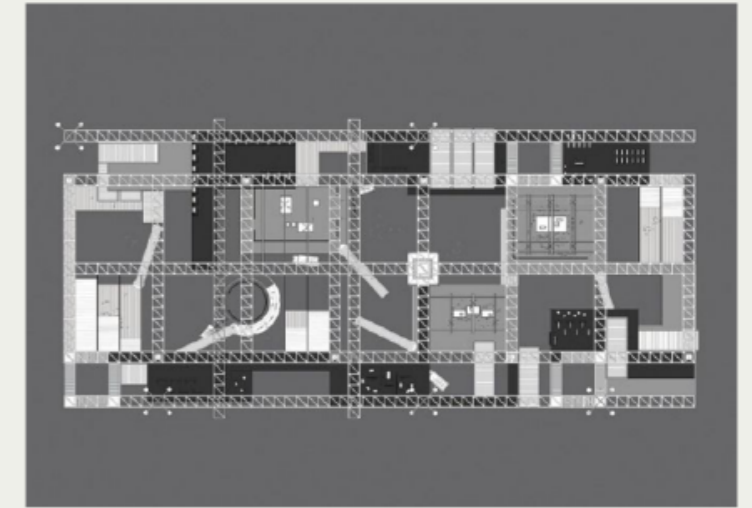
# Project works



Fun  
Palace

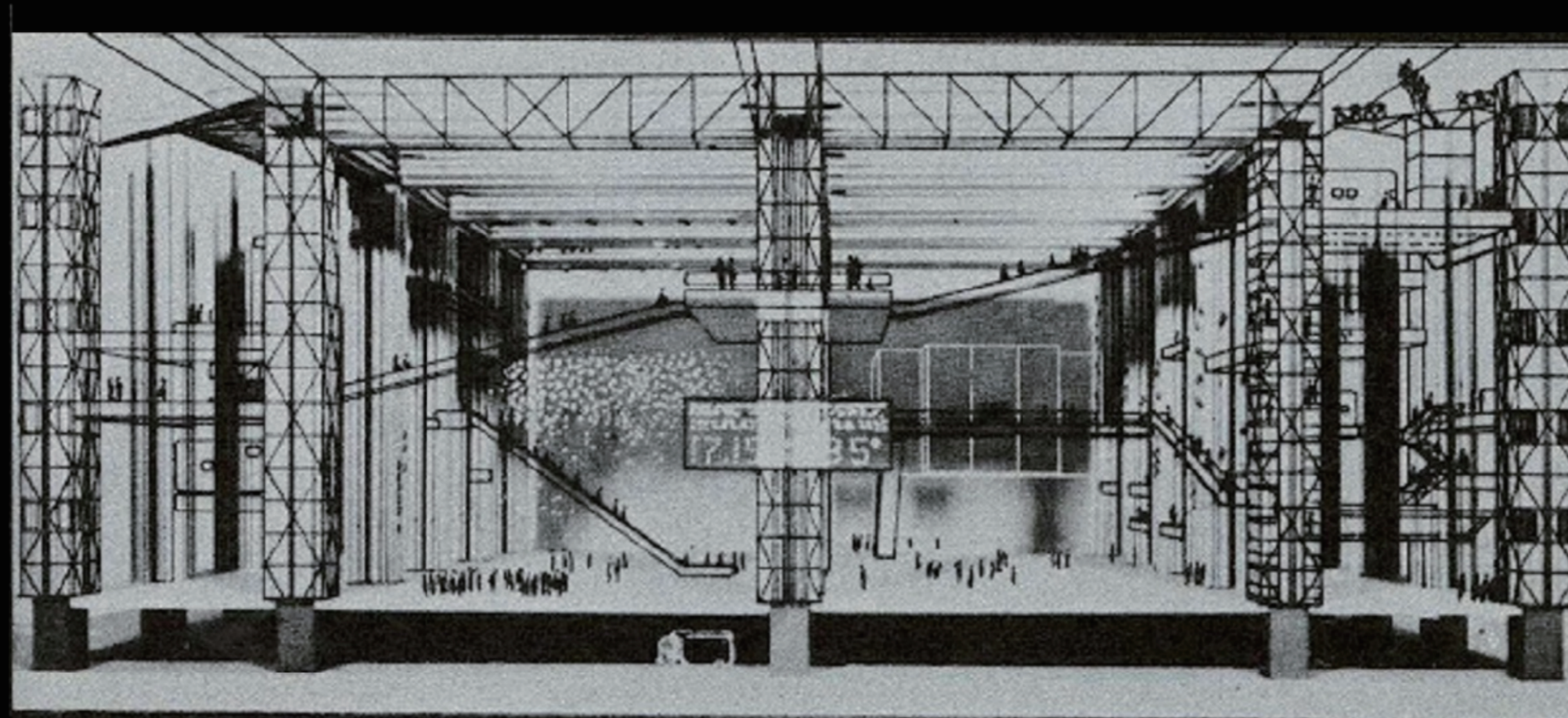
"Fun Palace" from  
Joan Littlewood  
and Cedric Price

It is a social interaction machine, an experiential system based on collective virtual ecstasy, an immersive experience device. Its function and formation are not defined by itself, but are generated along with the uncertain behavior of the participants.



Cedric Price's Funpalace project has had a significant influence on me. The inspiration for Funpalace came from the avant-garde theater producer Joan Littlewood, whose vision of a theater was not a traditional stage and audience setting but an interactive public space that integrated gardens, street life, and concert halls. In Cedric's vision, Funpalace became a dynamic system that could self-regulate according to people's needs and behaviors, evolving continuously as an interactive environment.

# The *ORGANS* of the Fun palace



## Service Towers

Centrally arrange vertical traffic (stairs, elevators) and all pipelines (HVAC, water supply and drainage, electricity, lighting, sound, etc.)  
- Form a grid structure for the entire site, freeing up other spaces for free combination

## Gantry Cranes

Move horizontally/vertically on the tower top track  
- Hang, install, and reorganize various modular units to achieve instant space transformation

## Plug-in Enclosure Modules

Quickly generate temporary function rooms: theaters, cinemas, exhibition halls, workshops, rest cabins, dining units, etc.  
- Each module can be independently transported, assembled and dismantled

## Service Boxes

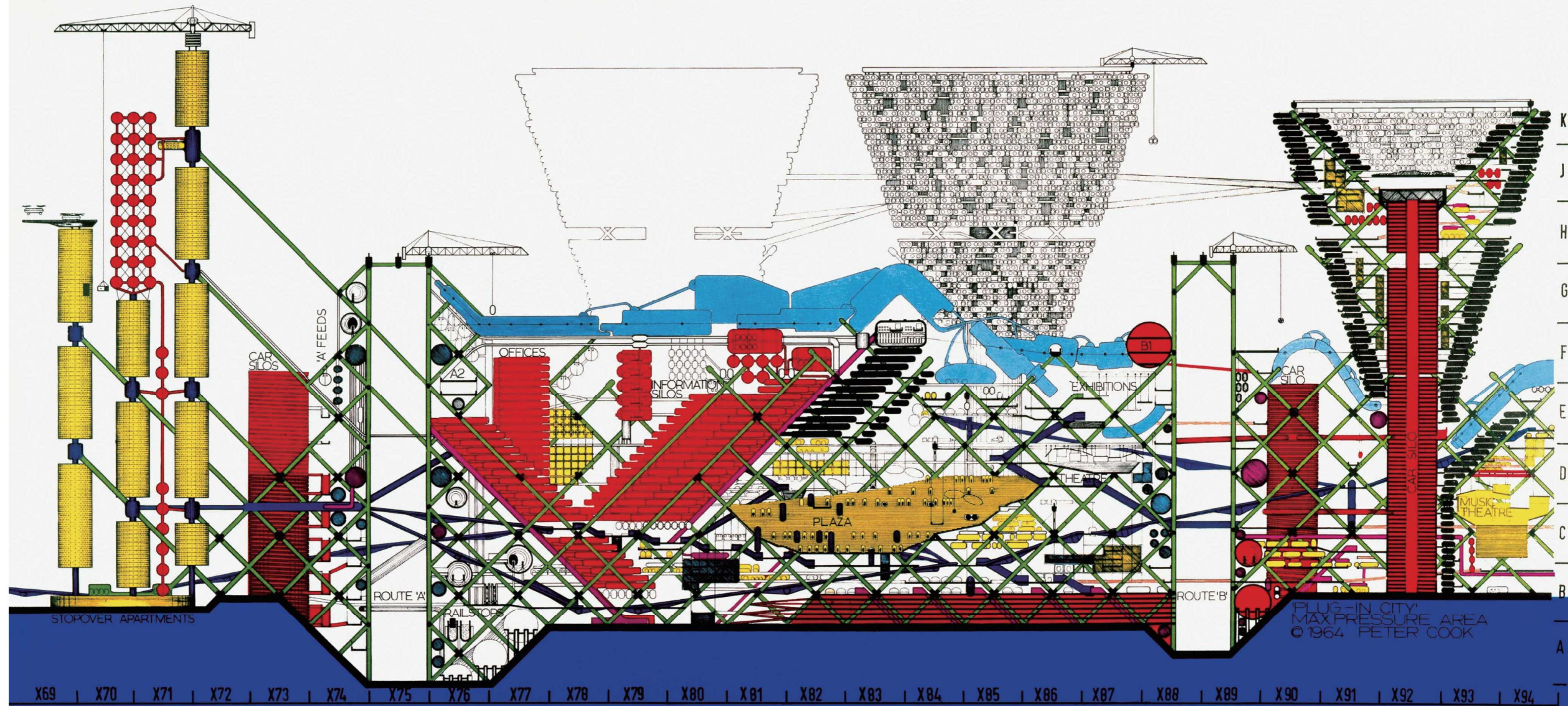
Inserts into the platform opening, providing a "plug and play" fit for the module

## Link Bridges

Connect different service towers and module areas to form a high-altitude pedestrian network

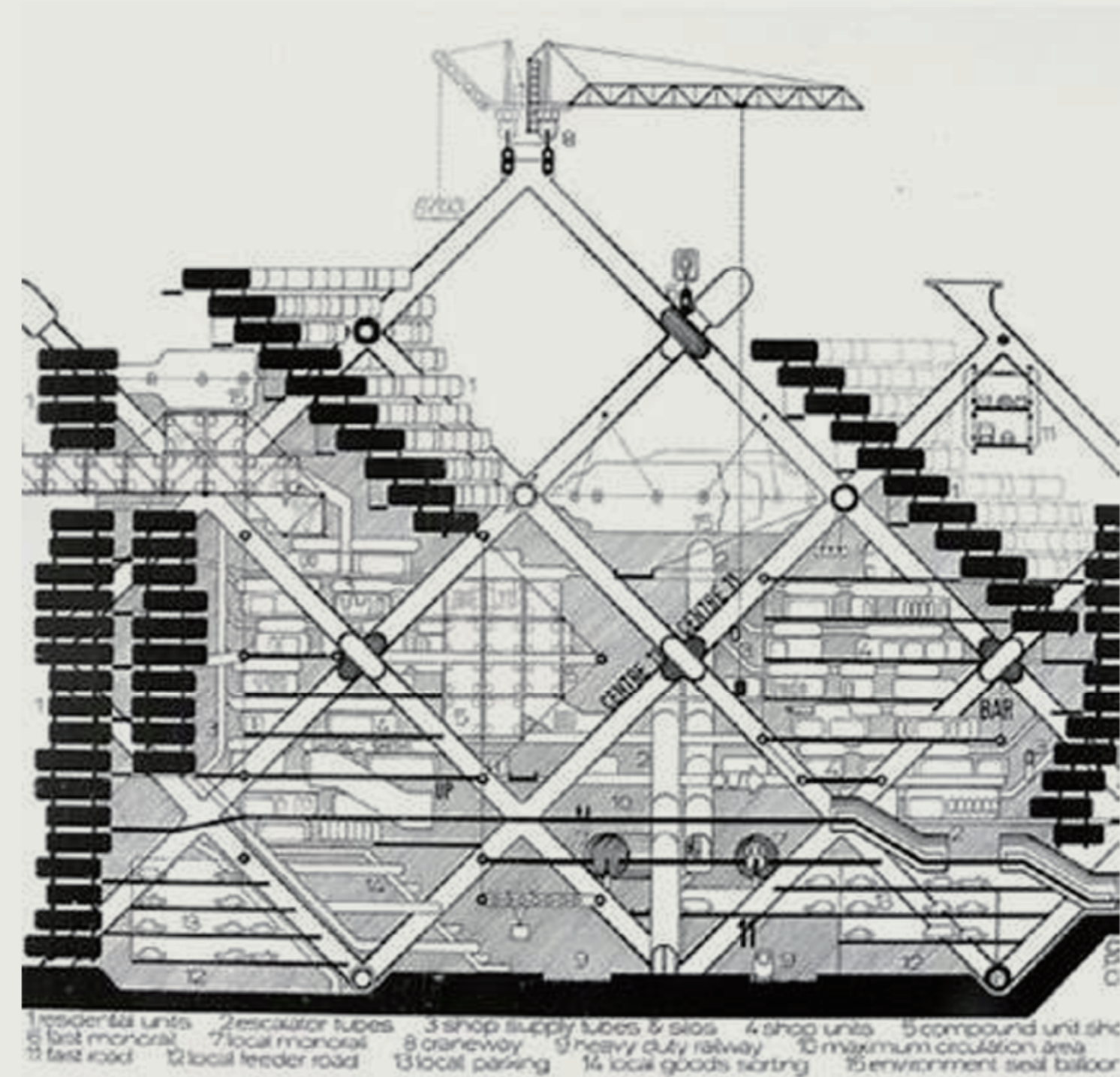
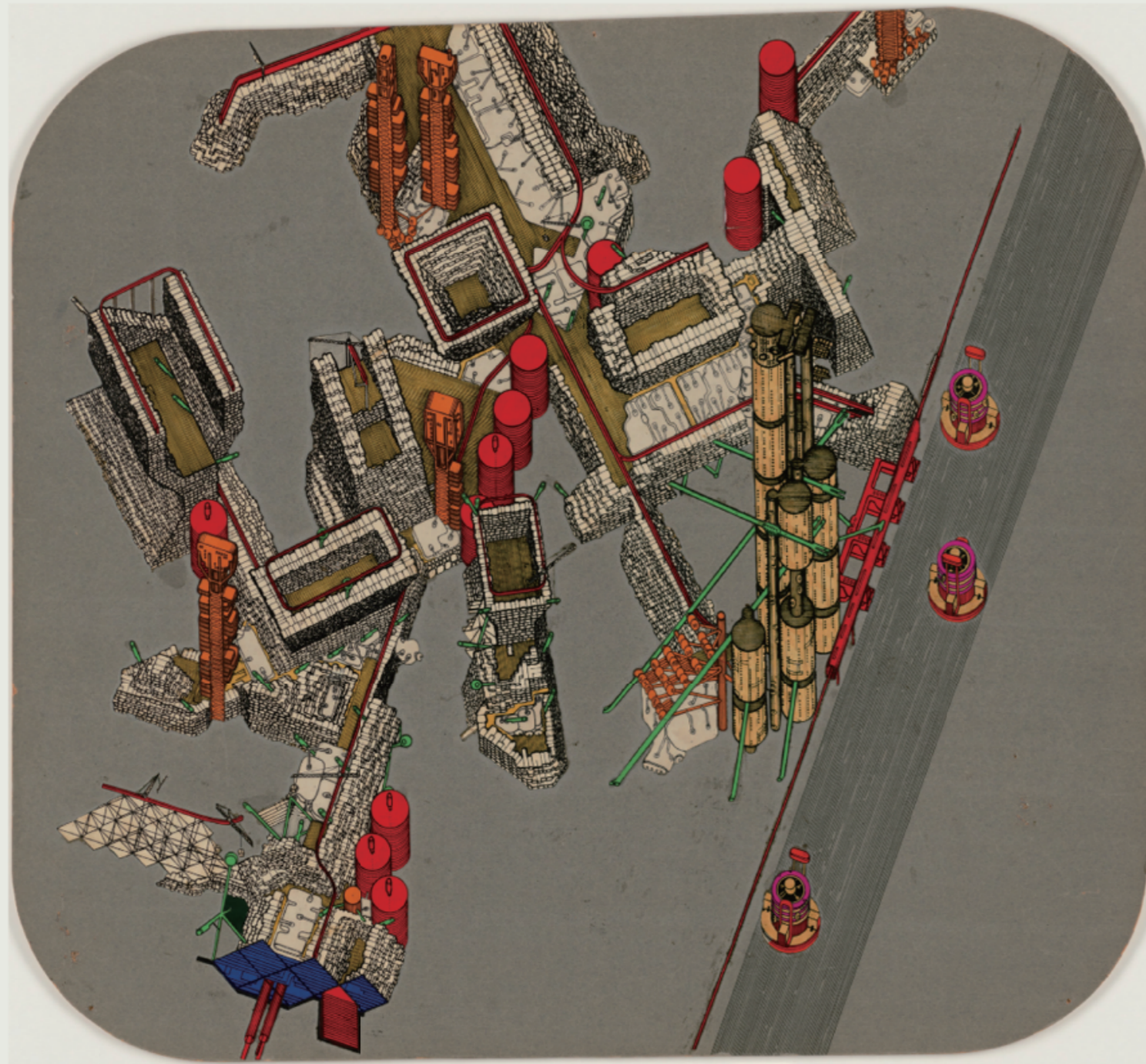
## Kiosks & Pavilions

Small independent units can be used as markets, information desks, art studios, etc.  
- Distributed deployment to strengthen the "street university" and "laboratory" atmosphere



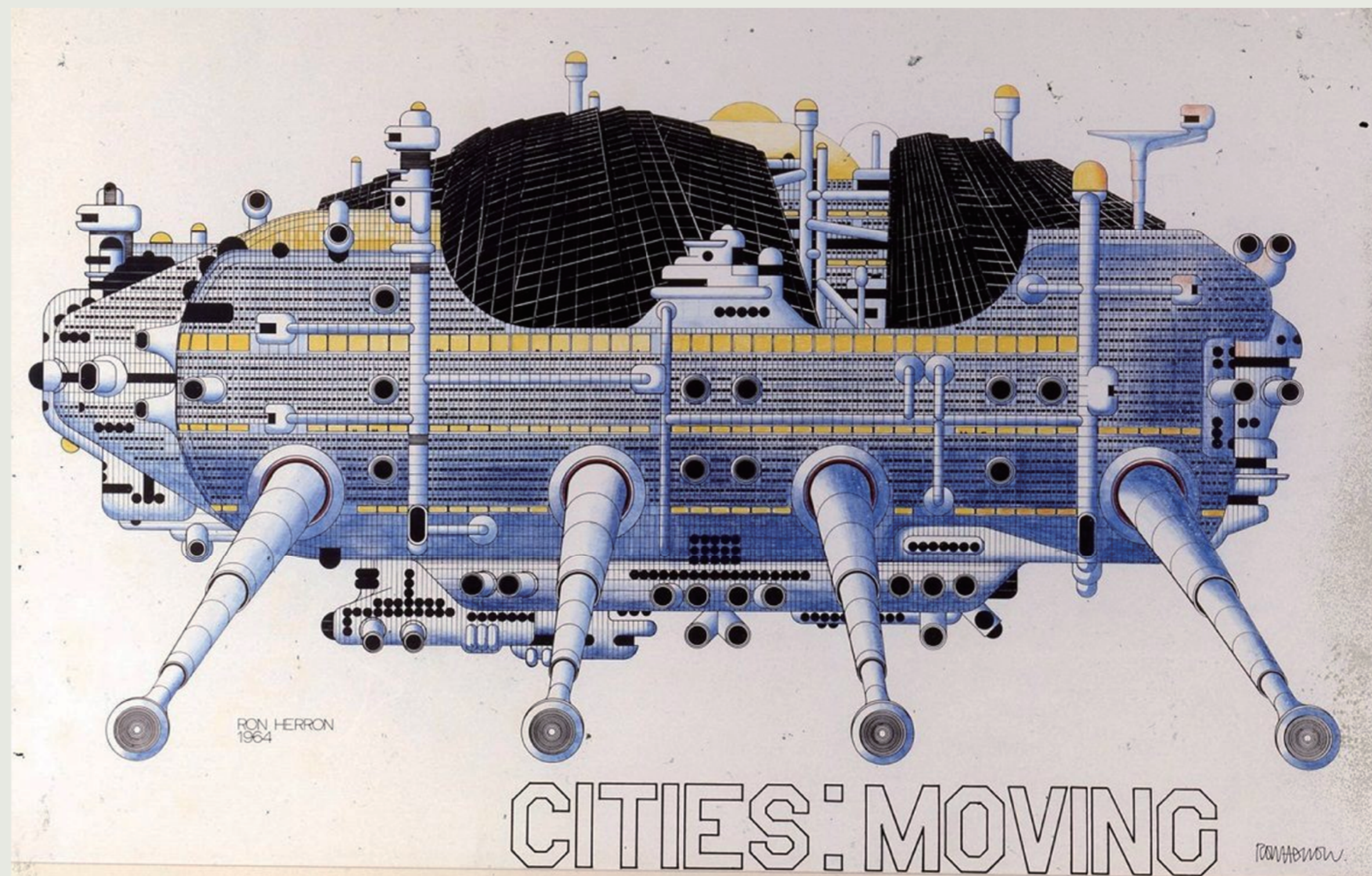
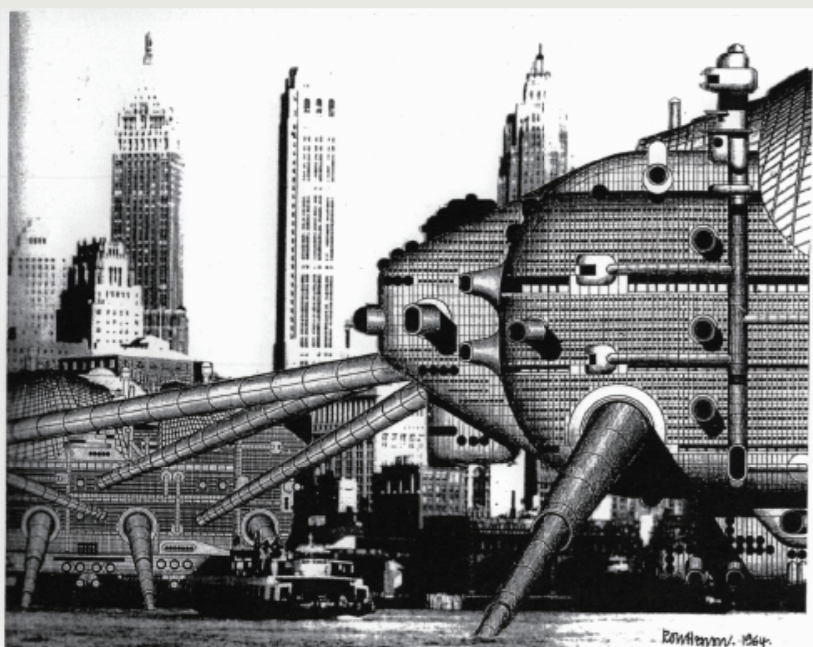
Large-scale metal mesh infrastructure, people can insert or remove living modules and equipment units according to their needs.  
 Emphasize dynamic modular system, free expansion and high flexibility.  
 Encourage users to build their own living space in a personalized way.

The "Plug-in City 1964, Peter Cook



Archigram's "Plug-In City" and "Walking City" liberate architecture from fixed forms, making space a container for human behavior and social activities. When this concept is extended to virtual space, it is reflected in the fact that space can be reorganized according to user behavior, virtual architecture itself is decentralized, and the place becomes a node for collaboration and gathering, rather than a simple carrier.

The "Plug-in City 1964, Peter Cook

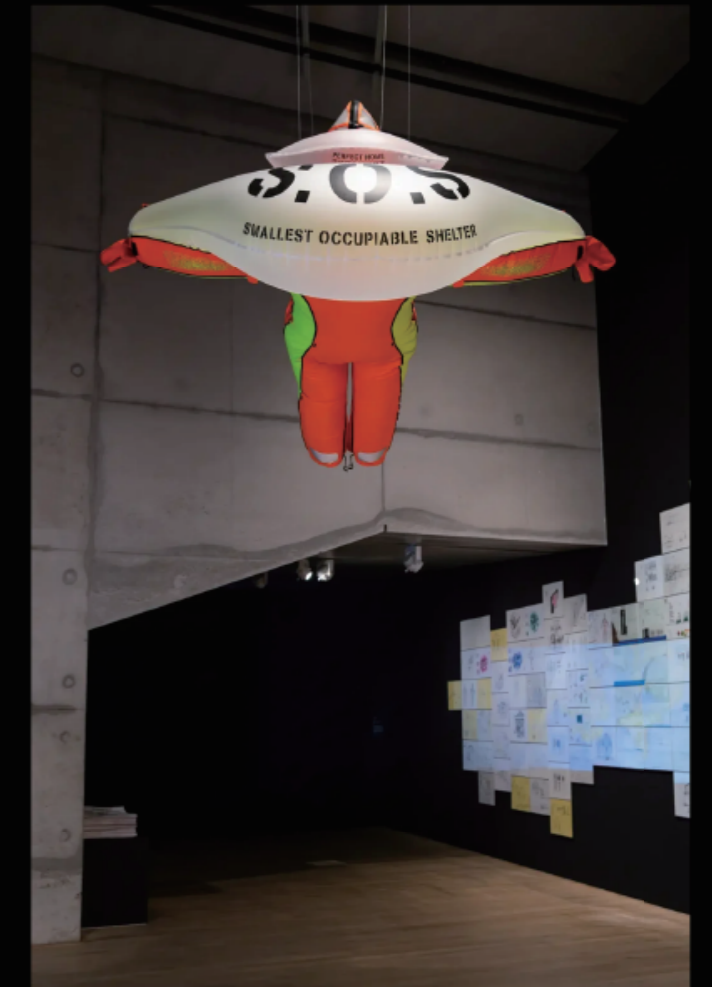
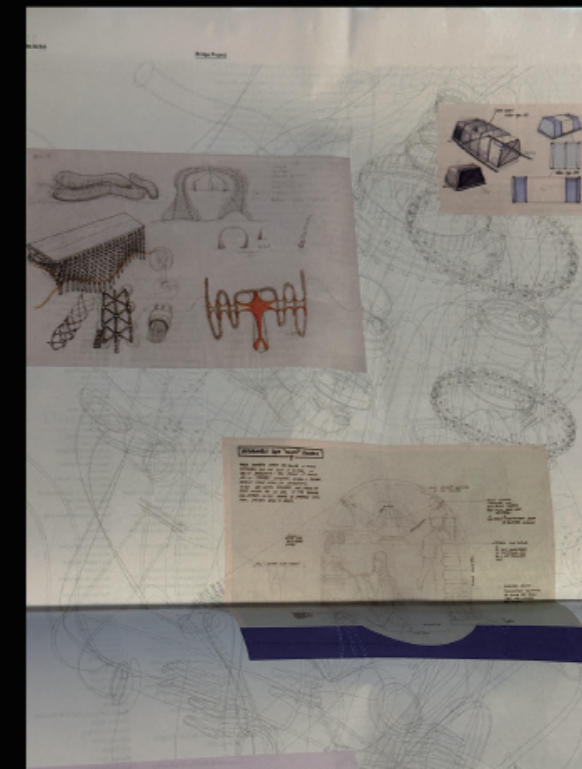
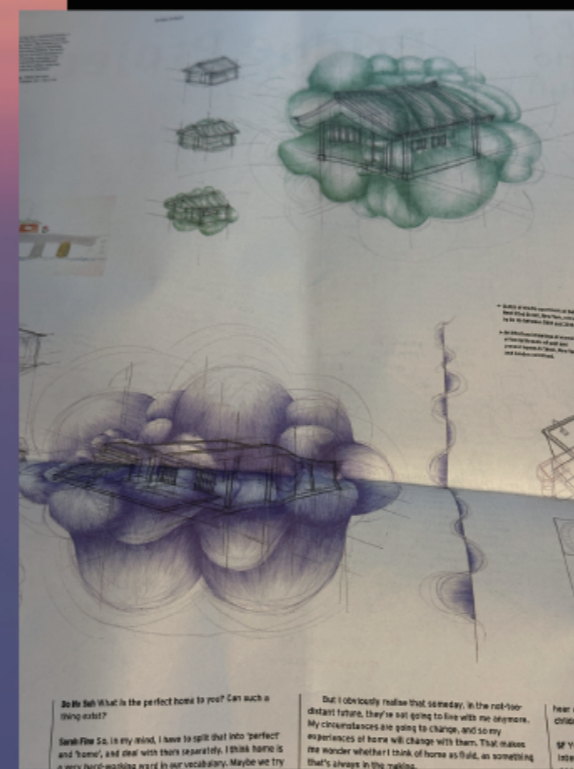
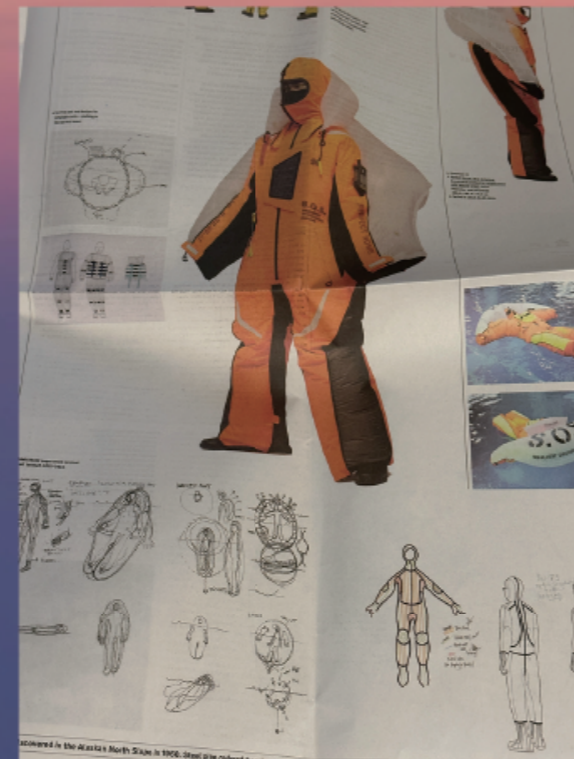
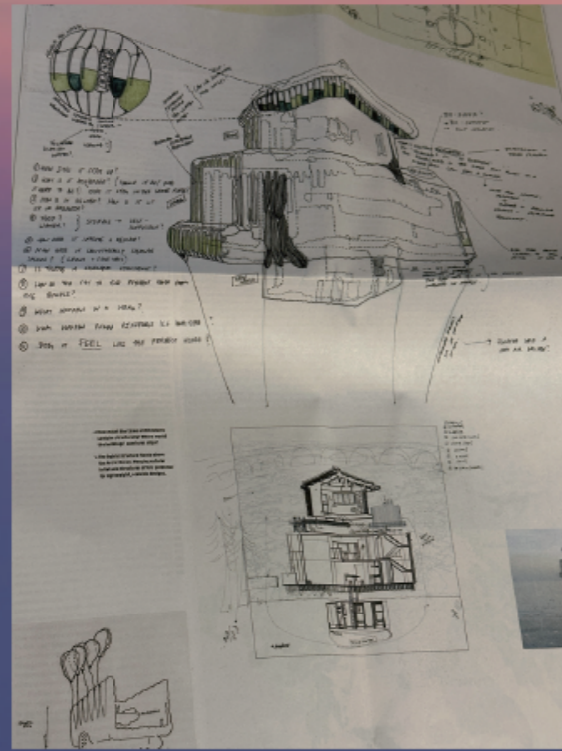


The building itself becomes a mobile and living body

It emphasizes that the city can dynamically adapt to environmental changes, and the building itself can realize nomadic life.  
It provides instant cultural and technological infrastructure

The "WalkingCity 1966, Peter Cook

# Project works



Over the past two years Do Ho Suh and his team of researchers, architects, and designers have generated four fantastical bridge designs that propose ways to connect Seoul, South Korea, and New York City. This conceptual project, which roots back to Do Ho Suh's first drawings of this inhabitable bridge in 1999, proposes to build a bridge that joins two homes into one, connecting the spatial, temporal, psychological, and cultural distance between Seoul and New York. The project constructs the bridges within a new space of projected desires where economic and structural optimization are not the defining elements of design. His studio's rigorous and speculative research method has led to the uncovering of a multitude of challenges. Each of the four bridges uses different technologies, structures, and forms to contend with the issues of climate, biodiversity, and human activity. Each design factors in specific environmental and oceanographic data: ocean current, tide, wind, wave, salinity, temperature, sea level, precipitation, snowfall, foliage, cloud fraction, hot spot, natural disasters, the migratory routes of aviary and marine life, etc. The plans also consider political conditions, factoring in missile testing, as well as the migratory patterns of people via air route, ocean liner route, and cruise routes.