(De)Natured

Paprika!

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1. Letter from the Editors

The title of our fold, (De)Natured is a reference to Vincent Scully's contribution to the publication Denatured Vision following the 1988 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art which opens *"The way human beings see themselves in relation to nature is fundamental to all cultures; thus the first act of architecture is the natural world, the second is the relationship of human structures to the topography of the world, and the third is the relationship of all these structures to each other, comprising the human community as a whole."*[1] In this quote is a call for a radical reconsideration of the role of architecture, moving from the conception that architecture is primarily a social discipline that defines our relationship with each other to an architecture that is primarily dependent on our relationship with the landscape, and by extension nature.

Humanity, technology, and nature, once seen as progressing towards an inseparable future, are now overwhelmingly perceived as distinct from one another, even adversarial. Even the concept of the Anthropocene has an underlying dialogue of conflict which necessitates an "other" (note how the Holocene extinction is also referred to as the Anthropocene extinction). More recently, Slavoj Zizek[2] postulated that rather than being impotent in the face of nature, we are in fact omnipotent, to the point where nature can no longer be thought of as existing.

Technology is being tasked with expanding its role as the mediator between humanity and nature, protecting humanity from the hostile nature of our own construct, and the unspoiled "other" nature from humanity's destructive presence. In post-Sandy New York City, there is a heightened sense of the city's evolving relationship with its rising and volatile coastline. Recent resiliency legislation and rebuilding projects[3] have formed a preliminary methodology for addressing the city's vulnerability, defining the condition and performance of the city's developing perimeter. These steps have struggled to define where exactly the line exists between the nature we must defend ourselves against and the nature we must defend ourselves with. Some proposals call for a separation and defense from a broken and hostile ecosystem (see: BIG's "BIG U" for Rebuild by Design) while others have worked to actively blur the line through adaptive and performative landscapes that incorporate or disperse the rising waters (see: LTL's proposal for MoMA's Rising Currents exhibition).

In this vein, natural conditions and environments are increasingly used as generative devices. However, these responses tend to be superficial, often embodying a false image of simplistic formal means. Furthermore, technophilic solutions abound, promising efficiencies—spatial, performative, philosophical—that will "reduce" our impact on the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency has meekly stated on their website that "green building is gaining momentum,"[4] as LEED formulas and sustainable design consultants promise to institute a criteria for building that will mitigate the industry's inherently harmful effects on the environment.

This is insufficient.

Architecture must bridge the supposed static and adversarial relationship between humanity and nature, acknowledging that the two exist in a metabolic continuum. Yet establishing this continuum calls into question previous notions of protection and preservation, making preconceived boundaries between humankind and nature increasingly undefinable. Without the benefit of existing standards, architecture must contend with the vaporous rhetoric of a new ecological agenda.

Without a deeper understanding of this ecology, we tend to construct in its absence simplified working definitions for its constituent parts. Rooted in an often necessary pragmatism, we loosely employ ideas of "nature as other" in order to keep rain out of buildings while necessarily ignoring that those building in fact affect that very rain through their presence within an ecological metabolism. We are at once intimately familiar with these working definitions—we all know what natural means—and confounded upon their investigation— what really is natural? Indeed, the term natural invokes both a technical and teleological argument without clarifying either.

Though it resists comprehension, humanity's relationship with the natural is a primary architectural concern and must be continually investigated with conceptual, technological, and systematic rigor. We must ask: are current conceptions adequate or are they based on dubious ontological arguments and symptomatic of a fundamental misunderstanding of the issues? Are the physical and philosophical buffers we create between ourselves and nature necessary? Or are they problematic simulacra that present a controllable and definable nature that further separates humanity from physical realities? Or on an even more fundamental level, what is the legacy of these dichotomous forms of thinking and how do they affect our conceptions of preservation, stewardship, and production?

To philosophically address these relationships is to make explicit the dialogue that is noticeably absent, yet crucial to the profession and our education.

Signed,
Dimitri Brand
James Coleman
Jonathan Molloy

1. Scully, Vincent. "Architecture: The Natural and the Man Made" from *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. Edited by Stuart Wreke and William Howard. Adams. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1991.
2. Slavoj Zizek. Ecology Without Nature, Lecture Athens 2006.
3. The New York State Assembly passed a bill judiciously titled *"An act to amend the environmental conservation law, the agriculture and markets law and the public health law, in relation to the consideration of future climate risk including sea level rise projections and other weather-related data; and in relation to requiring the preparation of model local zoning laws relating to climate risk"* that links funding of future projects to their consideration of environmental risks, most notably sea level rise.
4. http://www.usgbc.org/leed

2. 2016—Stocktaking

In 1960, Reyner Banham assessed the state of architecture. Titled "1960—Stocktaking," first published in the *Architectural Review*, Banham presents a discipline divided into two narratives: tradition and technology. Two trains, on different tracks and moving swiftly in opposite directions, Banham's traditionalists lament the responsibilities architects have beyond "carefully balancing horizontal things on top of vertical things," believing this extension threatens the integrity and identity of the profession.[1] As technologists on the other hand (or track, rather), believe that "architecture, as a service to human societies, can only be defined as the provision of fit environments for human activity."[2]

Sound familiar? The debate still persists in the architectural profession, and rages at YSOA. So today's battles are nothing new, in revisiting their history we add perspective to our contemporary arguments. Anthony Vidler, Vincent Scully Visiting Professor and teacher of YSOA's "Architectural Theory II 1968–Present," has lectured on the evolution of the two polarizing authorities of form and technology, which he argues spawned from the initial 1960s split between the respective camps of Colin Rowe and John McHale. In 2008 lecture at Syracuse, Vidler sets out the dichotomy: those who believe in the primacy of architectural form define themselves in opposition to those who include technological, social or consumerist logics in design. The characters on both sides of the debate are iconic, including Buckminster Fuller in all his dymaxion glory, as well as Peter Eisenman, a Rowe disciple, with his "save architecture" movement.[3] The technologists today lack an icon, perhaps because of the ideology's pervasiveness. I might venture our own Keller Easterling as its new boss, with her credo that we architects, as masters of space, should employ any and all tools in our arsenal to make environments more 'fit' using active form, which sometimes has no physical form at all.[4] Easterling writes that by sometimes looking beyond object form, we can use our unique artistry to meddle with other disciplines that influence space, possibly gaining the widespread power enjoyed by fields like economics or politics.

Here at Yale, Dean Stern's mandate of pluralism has ensured that traditionalists maintain a seat at the table, a position unique among architecture schools. GSAPP, with its stated desire to "re-imagine the future of architecture,"[5] doesn't exactly invite the likes of Leon Krier to teach studio. While the tradition-technology dichotomy has morphed, 66 years later, into what feels more like Formalism vs. Everything Else, the fundamentals of the debate remain the same, and the problems that follow from this division are still at work. At YSOA, this tension is consistently palpable and often entertaining, but I think we can do better to have productive discussions and collaborations. Vidler agrees: "unless we can reconstruct a vision of bringing architecture together in some non-polemical way in relationship to the authority of technology, the authority of form, the authority of the authority of the past, we're lost."[6] As we face a changing of the guard, the time is ripe to reflect on our discipline and how it is rendered in the pedagogy at YSOA.

Vidler presents a compelling rallying point, which has only become more relevant in the eight years since his lecture: "our survival as architects, from form-givers to problem-solvers…depends on [us confronting] the future of the planet." His "pitch" is for a brand new discipline, a "truly radical ecological architecture" that would bend the tracks of our two warring trains.

Can ecology really unify our discipline? I'm sure today's formalists would shudder at the thought, but in the spirit of new beginnings let's all consider it. Vidler uses Patrick Getties' definition, the first brought to architecture, which claims ecology as "a holistic examination of the problem." It seems tame enough. In a time of ever more complex and pressing world issues, how could you argue against comprehensive analysis when working within the built environment? For the traditionalists, can't form itself respond to holistic assessment, and shouldn't it acknowledge changing times? Vidler proposes an "Ecological Bauhaus," a vision for architectural education that would pool the knowledge of formalists, landscape designers, urban designers, urban ecologists, and conservationists into a pedagogy that might begin to tackle the spatial problems of global warming, densifying cities, and urban slum conditions that he says architects must confront to survive. Having sat on a number of curriculum committees, he is not optimistic about this change. But I think now, if ever, is our time for optimism.

1. Reyner Banham, "1960—Stocktaking," *The Architectural Review* 127 (February 1960), 94.
2. Banham, "1960—Stocktaking," 93.
3. Anthony Vidler, "Whatever Happened to Ecology? Technology and Sustainability from Banham to Today" (Syracuse University: Slocum Hall, November 12, 2008).
4. Keller Easterling, "Launch," *Perspecta 47: Money* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014).
5. Amale Andraos, "Letter From the Dean," Columbia GSAPP, <http://www.arch.columbia.edu/about/letter-from-the-dean>.
6. Anthony Vidler, "Whatever Happened to Ecology?..."
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

3. Interview: Alan Organschi

What is natural?

Everything or nothing…which is to say that a philosophical construct that positions the relatively recent development of human culture in counterpoint to some unquantifiable terrestrial condition that predates it is dangerously obsolete. The concept of the "natural" may have served as a compelling origin story about our struggle to control the physical conditions, climatic forces and biological competitors that first comprised our experience of the environment but it has now become ingrained as cultural habit and evolved into a set of institutions and technological artifacts with profound global impacts. We have *anthropomorphosed* our environment.

Is humankind natural?

Theorists of the Anthropocene have described contemporary human agency as inextricably bound up in a kind of terrestrial metabolism. No global biomes remain that are unaffected by our consumption of the planet's resources, either the direct result of global settlement or the indirect climatic side effects of anthropic activity. From a different discipline and the perspective of evolutionary biology, Richard Dawkin's concept of the extended phenotype may

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serve as another useful model for the complex but inevitable interactions of *homo sapiens* with the earth's physical, biological, and chemical systems. The evolutionary growth of the human prefrontal cortex represents a series of adaptations of the hominid brain. This enabled our capacity for abstract thought and problem-solving that produced such human technologies as nitrogen fertilizer or the internal combustion engine along with the processes of mineral and fossil extraction that supply them. One could argue, then, that the rapid and potentially catastrophic increase in global atmospheric CO_2 concentrations is a *natural* phenotypic extension of a successful species.

Our evolutionary success has resulted in a kind of demographic hyperplasia, a relatively unchecked growth of human population and the extreme distortion of its role within the global ecosystem. That this is unsettling doesn't make it less natural, nor does the fact that significant distortions within a "natural" system—be it a homeostatic chemical equilibrium, a forest stand, a bacteriological culture—may *naturally* result in its collapse.

We seem to be entering a strange time in our relationship with the natural world: namely, that we spent much of our history destroying it—through extraction, pollution, over-construction, razing, etc.—and now find ourselves trying to bring it back to life. In many ways, we are trying to reconstruct the natural world we increasingly depend on.

One might view the Anthropocene age as the simultaneous acceleration of geologic time and a compression of geographic scale in which previously rare terrestrial or climatic distortions now occur with increasing frequency, their cause rooted directly in the machinations of human industry and its associated global economic networks.

Lacking evidence of either the collective inclination, political will or technical capacity to recover some lost environmental moment, I do recognize our propensity to create images and construct narratives that reflect our longing for a kind of mythic ecological redemption.

With that, it seems that we are approaching, or have even crossed, natural boundaries or limits of the natural (making this a rather profound moment), and now find ourselves trying to backtrack. Where do you see the limits of reconstruction? Can we successfully re-naturalize the world, or are we in an inherently new paradigm where the world is now only quasi-natural?

How does one measure the threshold of the natural?

Atmospheric concentrations of CO_2 and its greenhouse gas equivalents? The surface area of global wetland and forest cover? Some number of animal and plant species expected in a particular biome? Rates of pollination? The flows of phosphates and nitrogen through oceans, soils, and the atmosphere? The weight of biomass? We have already surpassed several critical thresholds of irreversible environmental change, as we continue to satisfy the needs and habits of an exploding human population through the economic institution of what Andreas Malm called fossil capitalism.

No matter the metric, the fantasy of reconstructed nature is as unstable and improbable as the concept of the natural itself. Perhaps the recognition that the current status of the planet is "natural" just as the complete extinction of numerous species, the thawing of arctic ice, are all, in a sense, natural (albeit anthropogenic) phenomena. Better to seek to understand and begin to manage the metabolic exchange between terrestrial systems and human activity. Rather than artificially recreate some particular planetary moment, we may instead, through various analytical systems, administrative institutions and technical practices, find and sustain some sort of new global equilibrium, some balance of biodiversity, atmospheric and oceanic chemistry, and social equity.

With the unparalleled levels of contemporary production/construction, a man-mature symbiosis like that of ancient Japanese cultures—in which human consumption was determined almost entirely by natural systems—seems impossible. Does an idea of global equilibrium, then, increasingly depend on deliberate stewardship, where advancing technologies facilitate and invigorate the natural? (e.g. sustainable forestry) Or is this an inherently flawed conception of resource/production?

The example of early Japanese culture is an interesting one. Today Japan is a rapacious consumer of Indonesian timber, despite its reverent preservation of its own forests. The vestiges of spiritual animism that motivate the protection of local timber exists simultaneously with the capitalist imperative to exploit distant landscapes.

The Nobel Prize Laureate Elinor Ostrom described a kind of best practice in the governing of the Commons (i.e. any shared pool of resources such as a fishery or a forest.) Ostrum observed, on the one hand, that large, geographically detached economic or political institutions with vested interest in maximizing consumption tend to be poor (or, at best, clumsy) resource administrators. Local populations, on the other hand, receive direct feedback about the impacts of overuse and are therefore more likely to arrest exploitation and successfully govern their resources. Contemporary Japan's relationship to timber as both a local cultural treasure and a global economic commodity is a perfect expression of the NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard) of that country's advanced economic status within the social and environmental ranks of industrial modernity. Effective environmental stewardship would call for a system-wide assessment, an accounting of the ebbs and flows of material and energy through the entire economic supply chain.

How does a model of this kind of stewardship delineate the natural world into that which is for our use—the constructed natural—and that which is preserved—the truly natural (or at least conceived as truly natural)? Further, as we see with the conception of national parks which pose as truly natural but are, of course, deeply affected and maintained by human intervention, to what extent is this delineation constructed itself?

In directing increasing quantities of energy and material from global sources through processes of industrial production and commodification, we have turned the nested relationship of man within nature inside out. Today, and for the remainder of the relatively new geologic era, we will seek to isolate and preserve what will amount to a series of zoological or botanical institutions dotting the vast geo-economic and technological landscapes of a rapidly changing planet.

The concept of preserving nature, which presupposes the existence of closed ecological systems (such as the much debated "climax" forest), accounts for neither the

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inevitable distortions and catastrophic events that occur over time within ecosystems nor their capacity to recover from those events. As with the preservation of animals within a zoological park, the act of artificially sequestering and protecting the natural may produce unintended existential threats, novel management problems, and new demands for energy and material.

How do you position architecture in this duality?

Certainly, it both opposes nature in producing shelter and depends materially on it for its manifestation. How do you see this playing out in contemporary architecture—particularly that which concerns itself with "sustainability" or new construction practices? Is there value in those biomimetic, symbiotic building practices of old? Or are they no longer applicable?

Sentimental notions of the natural as something we can retrieve—or, failing that, mimic—aestheticize and trivialize the complex political and environmental interactions of human society and culture with the physical resources and ecosystem services on which it depends.

This is the real danger we face, particularly as architects, who are at once avid technologists and all-too-convincing story-tellers. We make claims for our work but often fail to substantiate them. Recent vintages of "sustainable" architecture boast enormous energy performance benefits but call on excessive quantities of material and carbon-intensive technologies to produce and maintain them. The formal (as well as material and technical) luxuries of our most celebrated buildings often come at significant cost to the populations that subsidize them and offer only bespoke solutions without broad application or sufficient ecological import. We propose dramatic increases in the consumption of energy and matter to build (adaptive (read derivative) buildings, without acknowledging that the production of infrastructural megaprojects usually fails to mitigate, and may actually exacerbate, the accretion of greenhouse gases that produce the effects of climate change we seek to defend ourselves against in the first place. This reflects either too narrow an analytical framework, deeply flawed thinking, or gross hypocrisy. It is the inherent contradiction embedded in the concept of "sustainable development."

Rather than suggest specific solutions—there are many that at the moment that seem at least superficially attractive but demand real scrutiny and assessment rather than uncritical promotion (these might include building materials drawn from the waste stream or synthesized biologically; design approaches that mimic or even incorporate biological systems; building practices that capture and store carbon; planning that reduces not only the embodied impacts but also the literal footprint of building and infrastructure...)—I'd simply note that the architect's toolbox has everything needed to research, analyze, experiment with, visualize and ultimately work within a paradigm of *scarcity*, instead of under the pretense of *infinite* natural abundance and implicit technological capacity.

Where does this leave us? How does an understanding that humankind participates in this global ecological metabolism—the growth of which seems to depend deeply on a reciprocal system of physiologic interaction—inform our conception of...well everything, but specifically architecture? Particularly when considering that the destructive nature of humankind can be considered a natural phenotypic extension of a successful species, it becomes complicated to discuss an idea of stewardship or conservation without its implications inside of this genotype-phenotype interaction. Further, it seems to bring up the possibility that to do so might be either evolutionary or moral, or both. What might architecture seek to accomplish, then?

Architecture, the conception, visualization, and production of the built environment, a man-mature symbiosis like that of ancient Japanese cultures—in which human consumption was determined almost entirely by natural systems—seems impossible. Does an idea of global equilibrium, then, increasingly depend on deliberate stewardship, where advancing technologies facilitate and invigorate the natural? (e.g. sustainable forestry) Or is this an inherently flawed conception of resource/production?

The idea of counterfeiting *natura*, or the living aspects of the real world, was another development of the Renaissance. As conceived of at the time, *natura* was divine—animated by God. A replication of *natura* "enacted the reintegration of the divine and the human to the point that[the viewer might be moved to an essentially religious reverence by contemplating both the depiction of God's creation and the inspired virtuosity with which it was done."[8] The ongoing classification of the natural world through its representations in two and three dimensions created a new visualization of the world that critically and aesthetically combined the divine and the human.

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4. The Diorama: Memory, Nature, Conservation

Memory

Dioramas were created to serve as metonyms to the natural world, recursive replications of physical places, plants, and animals. Originally meant to be used pedagogically, to inform the public of the types of biological life that existed in locations both foreign and familiar, the diorama borrows its structure and utility from traditions and practices of memory, recall, and collection. The diorama is, for the most part a wholly constructed object. It contains models of a specific landscape's flora and fauna; plastic and clay plants, taxidermied animals, and a carefully painted background, perspectively engineered to enhance the illusion of reality. Each diorama has a root in a specific location to which expeditions are made to gather animal and plant specimens and record the environment in person. Every aspect of its fabrication imparts authenticity to the diorama to the point that (*res ipsa loquitor*, "the thing speaks for itself") it becomes a 1:1 example of the habitat region it represents. The diorama as the "re-creating [of a] slice of the real world for public exhibition", but it does "not copy nature slavishly… it aims to give a broad and graphic presentation of the conditions under which certain assemblages of animal life are found…so that it is a complete whole artistically, geographically, historically, and biologically."[1] Reaching

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heights of popularity in 1940, it was proclaimed that "the public is rapidly becoming familiar with the world through the increased applications of its models...thus making us 'diorama conscious.'"[2] As dioramas became a popular way to bring "a vision of the world to those who can otherwise never see it," they became surrogate memories of the past and for experiences of the present—always idealized to an extent so that the scenes displayed could never truly be found in nature.

The diorama as a localization of memory is a construct that is highly influenced by the Renaissance interpretation of the classical Art of Memory. The Art of Memory is rooted in the tradition of Greek and Roman orators who, instead of memorizing word for word the content of their speeches, began to create mental structures, rooms inside houses, placing in them objects that evoked passages and theses when seen (through the mind's eye). When beginning to speak, they would simply 'walk' through these virtual spaces and recall their speech. As the constructed space of a diorama has a physical correlation to the reality of nature, so did each memory room to the text of a speech.

The aesthetics of these virtual spaces of memory eventually begat a physical form: the early Renaissance *wunderkammer*, curiosity cabinets. These were rooms and display cases filled with artifacts generally classified under the heading of natural history. Each artifact or specimen alone deserved interest in this context due to its geographic and temporal relationship to the site and moment of display. As one of many specimens, instead of losing its affect, it would only become a more unique poignant image through its juxtaposition and differentiation. This is the mechanic by which virtual memory rooms operate—the incongruity of the objects that it contains allows for the recall of specific information, each item standing for a discrete thought.

Throughout every iteration of the virtual spaces of memory and the physical spaces of display, meaning is generated through the precise calibration of the objects in their placement, appearance, and referent. The differences between the Art of Memory and the curiosity cabinet boils down to the difference between the frail and the eternal. The frail, according to Giulio Camillo, resided in the insubstantial relations made by ancient orators wherein objects were made to represent only ideas. The eternal was everlasting because of the inherent real truths of the "eternal nature of all things."[3] To Camillo, the immaterial space of memory room was frail, weak and fungible, while his memory theaters were superior physical spaces filled with tangible, thus eternal, objects that correlated to outer, universal, truths.

The diorama can be further interpreted as an mnemotechnic through the work Frances Yates. He defines Camillo's memory theater as "a system of memory places that perform[s] the office of a classical memory system for orators by 'conserving for us the things, words, and arts which we conserve to it'" and which "utilize real places to improve upon and reduce the burden of memory."[4]

The memory theater was a tool for instantly imparting information, not simply one of recall. It was immediate knowledge—an instant primer on every subject included within its walls. It assumed that "all things that the human mind can conceive after being collected together…may be expressed by certain corporeal signs in such a way the beholder may at once perceive with his eyes everything otherwise hidden." Yates writes that "memory can only be improved…by the operation of fantasy towards ideas in the round art, or through images of corporeal things in the square art," referencing the two forms of memory as described by the 16th century physician and mystic Robert Fludd.[5]

However, in the diorama, this divisive binary of memory becomes intertwined. Square art is the foundation, the anchor, for the actions of the round art. Square art utilizes "images of corporeal things, of men, of animals, of objects…engaged in actions of some kind" and it is strongly suggested to place these images in "real places." These are the taxidermied animals, the modeled flora, and the painted backdrop. However, the diorama as it is contained in a curated interior space is not technically a 'real place.' Its status as an authentic replica of a 'real place' is gained through the physical actions of its architects and the more intangible workings of the round art of memory. As the craftsmanship in constructing the diorama tends towards the idiom of *ars ostare artem*, art to conceal art, there needs to be a more dynamic aspect that activates objects within. Round art is this metaphysical act, 'the operation of fantasy towards ideas' that connects the square images to the thematic whole and outer reality that they signify. Because of the incredible veracity of the items (square art) within a diorama in respect to the real, round art is activated by being organically affiliated at a base level with the items and images found within it. The combination of the two activates memory, supplying a replacement for experience (immersion). The illusion of a diorama is meant to recreate "the experience of encountering wildlife in the out-of-doors."[6]

Nature

The idea of counterfeiting *natura*, or the living aspects of the real world, was another development of the Renaissance. As conceived of at the time, *natura* was divine—animated by God. A replication of *natura* "enacted the reintegration of the divine and the human to the point that[the viewer might be moved to an essentially religious reverence by contemplating both the depiction of God's creation and the inspired virtuosity with which it was done."[8] The ongoing classification of the natural world through its representations in two and three dimensions created a new visualization of the world that critically and aesthetically combined the divine and the human.

In discussing the rise of Natural History in America, Sue Ann Prince writes that: "A specimen is a curious means of representing nature because what is used is all or part of what was the living thing itself. It is thus more than a representation but less than real, live nature. It is mediated by human hands, whether in the form of a bone removed from the context of a body, a skin stuffed with straw, or a flattened flower deprived of fluid and color. Yet specimens were universally used for study and as "live-models" for drawings and paintings."[7]

Prince illustrates the general acceptance that single specimens, even ones that were contaminated (mediated), were thought of as 'good enough' to produce an accurate description of reality. But to create a coherent whole from a series of parts is always an exercise in failure. The way that specimens (objects) operated within memory theaters and rooms was due precisely to their ability to cohere. Their differentiation from the whole was what allowed them to hold such iconic potential. However, the diorama required the creation of a cohesion experience and thus attempted to achieve a higher accuracy, removing mediation as much as possible to be able to create a whole from its parts. To this end, extensive and expensive expeditions

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were sent to the sites that would later be recreated. For instance, in 1996 the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) sent "a team of twenty-six artists and scientists to the wilds of the Central African Republic to collect the references to create its largest diorama."[11] This collecting (though hunting is a more accurate word) of animals, plants, and the creation of sketches, photographs, and paintings produced what Michael Rossi calls 'remnant data'—"scraps of information taken from the physical entities being modeled."[13] This gathered data combined with the virtuosity of the human hand, created what was accepted as accurate reproductions—drawn from scientific study of physical integrity with the subjects.

Authenticity is problematic in the diorama as it is precisely *not* real. It is a representational fiction, at once both real and fabricated (this combination is the source of its once religious reverence). It is in its necessary mediation 'by human hands' where the public and scientific communities find the most qualms and it is thus their dimensionality that is indicted here. While the three dimensionality of the diorama distinguished it from earlier representational efforts, the effects of modeling were problematic. As the diorama approached a fidelity that allowed it to be perceived as real, its inherent artificiality cast doubt on its authenticity. It was agreed that to first encounter a subject in its natural environment made its replication legitimate, authentic, to the public.[?] To mold without experience was to make a false image. Thus the diorama's casts and models captured "not just a two-dimensional representation of the subject at a particular moment in time, but the subject's proprioceptive space—its actuality, its authenticity, or, in other terms, its "feeling of reality."[6]

Animals staged in dioramas as-large as they lived become larger than life in their new contexts. Donna Harraway writes on this monumentalization of the diorama in *Primate Visions* saying that here "the specular commerce between an animal at the interface of two evolutionary ages is completed. The animals in the dioramas have transcended mortal life and hold their poses forever…No visitor to a merely physical Africa could see these animals. This is a spiritual vision made possible only by their death and literal re-presentation. Only then could the essence of their life be present. Only then could the hygiene of nature cure the sick vision of civilized man."[?] Harraway positions the diorama as an optical storytelling device that adds new synthetic politics of reproduction to the natural world. Her critique is an accurate one as it was intended that each habitat group "form a developmental series, such that [it] can represent the essence of the species as a dynamic living entity…This required a conservation of each species' particular habits and environment into a metonymic composition and, as comes with any method of reduction and representation, details were lost.

But that is not to say they are not memorial—for they are, and perhaps even more so for this reason. Dioramas function as memorials similarly to *lieux de mémoire*, as defined by Pierre Nora, which is to say "moments of history torn away from the movement of history, then returned; no longer life, not yet death, like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded."[?] *Lieux de mémoires* are intrinsically unstable spaces that attempt to preserve their specific histories while society inexorably moves forward around them. Dioramas are created at moments, and preserve those moments. As they are relatable to a specific place and time but are fundamentally never exact replicas of it, they force "the spectator to establish a conceptual relationship between these two [temporal and spatial] sites."[?] Presented publicly, they are decidedly more active than Nora's *lieux de mémoire*: not just idle stewards of the past, but actively memorializing their represented spaces to create an awareness of its fragility.

Conservation

Until the onset of the Industrial Revolution in the late 19th century, the American wilderness was "a land of moral resource and a basis for national self esteem."[11] While it continued to be after this point, this sense of pride was now related to what could be done with it. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago marked this transformation, showcasing the potential of electrical power and manufacturing over that of the ideal of utopian nature which Thoreau had preached only fifty years prior. The image of hydroelectric dam overshadowed, sometimes quite literally, the waterfalls that had once defined the nation's heritage. In this context, the dioramas again act as embodied memory, providing an escape into the 'virgin wilderness' as well as a reminder of the potential of nature. "One of the central justifications for the production of habitat groups in natural history museums during the early 20th century was their value as documentation of a passing era, not only in American history, but in the history of the world."[12]

The AMNH promoted the creation of the Hall of North American Mammals "in light of the increasing disappearance of American wilderness" and "for future generations that may not have the opportunity of knowing the living animals."[13] Targeting threatened species, this was replaced with a more direct message saying, "on account of the encroachments of civilization, it [the diorama] was determined to collect them first."[14] For every habitat group, there will come a time that the environment it represents can only be imagined.[15] What the Hall of North American Mammals did is pre-empt this time. By making the future of as much interest as both the past and the unfamiliar, the diorama was enacted to produce a "correct image of nature, and perhaps, someday, the only remaining evidence of its existence."[16]

Owing to this message of conservation, some dioramas have engendered acts of preservation in the physical spaces they represent. Because of this third transformation: from reality to virtuality, back to reality—a few characteristics of the diorama's constructed nature bleed back into the world. Upon the creation of the Pelican Island diorama in 1902, President Roosevelt responded by establishing the Pelican Island Federal Bird Reserve. The same site represented and contained in the diorama's microcosm was similarly preserved and contained in its own right. Instead of glass walls, federal laws protect its contamination—and instead of a dynamic staged tableau, the dynamism of lived-life exists within its own organic, rather than synthetic, ecosystem.

In another situation, slightly more sinister, the creation of the Tule Elk diorama occurred during a period when its population was in drastic decline. When the diorama was completed in 1916, "there remained only one small herd confined to an enclosed and protected refuge."[17] In this case, by the time the diorama had approximated reality, reality had already taken on the characteristics of preservation that the diorama innately applied to its subject. Here the diorama's mimesis becomes more like an equilibrium than anything else in its doubling of the real: its replication shaping reality to match it.

If we recall Harraway's critique that "this is a spiritual vision made possible only by [an animal's] death and literal re-

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presentation,"[18] we can make an interesting observation on the rise in popularity and the cultural significance attached to the diorama. The first habitat group at the AMNH was purely American one. The Robin Group featured two birds nesting in the boughs of an apple tree and "proved so popular that it easily generated funding for more."[19] These subsequent dioramas were of a limited scope, including only birds found in a fifty-mile radius of New York City. The question here is why would painstakingly fabricated dioramas of quotidian sights, so often experienced that they represented a natural vernacular for American citizens, excite so much response? The answer lies in the fact that the diorama, when all is said and done, is a distinctly unnatural vision. The same sight that was displayed in the museum could just as easily been seen outside a kitchen window or in a backyard—so the ability of the diorama to trick its viewer into believing they had been "transported in time and space" was irrelevant.[20] Something decidedly 'other' in the diorama's appearance must have been at play in the popular perception of these images to make them so celebrated.

By idealizing the otherwise mundane *natura* of the robin and the apple tree, the diorama removes it from an ordinary context and presents it as an example of the potential of nature. Despite this superficially simple operation the themes of preservation and conservation are still invoked. The re-presentation of the robin in the space of a diorama carries with it a different set of relations and signifiers than the simple sight of the bird in a more personal setting would. This is the reminder that the diorama elicits. That it is displayed gives it attention, that it is familiar makes it relatable, and that it is both dead and alive gives it pathos.

The Robin Group, by bringing the diorama dangerously close to what it represents in both space and time, stresses its mechanics and makes its functions visible. We can see through this screen that the wonder the birds elicit is related to their 'literal re-presentation' within a spatially conflated *lieux de mémoire*—but it also is derived from the "belief in the macrocosm-microcosm relationship."[21] Through this, they become more real than nature could ever be—and even replacements for it (better examples of themselves). In Yates' terms the robins' transformation was possible because they did not require 'the operation of fantasy towards ideas' as the sensations usually created by this operation were familiar to of its observers. Both the frail and the eternal, the round and the square are collapsed into one—the image. The experience, the object, and the idea are all fully realized in the diorama of the robin. Its relationship to a common reality sets it apart from the rest of the dioramas contained within the museum's halls. It becomes differentiated as it's more real than our common reality, but not so real as to be completely virtual.

Although the diorama only opens itself up to an observer visually, it is not an image. As it is a closed volume it can be approached as an object, but only from specific perspectives. Most importantly, repressed into the wall, it can never be fully seen. It can be experienced and conceptualized on multiple levels, but at the most instinctual level it engages the body in the urge to see more. "You can see a lot of nose traces on the glass."[30] It stretches truth through the metonymic relationship of its contents to the outside world and its strictly sign based method of communication. It is purely an object of memory, of recall and projection. Its intangibility, like our own histories and dreams, make it even more so.

1. Karen Elizabeth Wonders, *Habitat Dioramas: Illusions of Wilderness in Museums of Natural History*. (Uppsala, Acta Universitas Upsaliensis: 1993), 19.
2. Ibid., 14.
3. Ibid.
4. Stephen Quinn, *Windows on Nature*, (New York, Abrams: 2006), 12.
5. Camillo was a 16th century Italian architect who designed a physical theater of memory based on platonic ideals and an astrologically inspired layout.
6. Frances Amelia Yates, *The Art of Memory*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1966), 328.
7. Ibid., 144.
8. Ibid., 324. (these can be seen as expansions on the frail and eternal)
9. Ibid., 327.
10. Quinn, *Windows*, 12.
11. Jonathan Wylie, "Counterfeiting Nature: Artistic Innovation and Cultural Crisis in Renaissance Venice." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32 no.01 (1990): 80
12. Sue Ann Prince, *Stuffing Birds, Pressing Plants, Shaping Knowledge: Natural History in North America, 1730–1860*, (Philadelphia, PA, American Philosophical Society: 2003), 4.
13. Quinn, *Wonders*, 21.
14. Michael Rossi, "Fabricating Authenticity: Modeling a Whale at the American Museum of Natural History, 1906–1974," *Isis* 101 no.02 (2010): 338.
15. Ibid., 349.
16. Ibid., 356.
17. Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*, (London: Routledge: 1989), 30.
18. Ibid.
19. Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire," *Representations* 26 (1989): 12.
20. Ann Reynolds, "Reproducing Nature: The Museum of Natural History as Nonsite," *October* 45 (1988): 14.
21. Wonders, *Habitat*, 160.
22. Ibid., 161.
23. Ibid.
24. Wonders, *Habitat*, 142.
25. In a way, every habitat group represents an imagined environment, an ideal of natural history existing without mention or evidence of man's intervention.
26. Reynolds, "Reproducing Nature," 123.
27. Wonders, *Habitat*, 165.
28. Harraway, *Primate*, 30.
29. Quinn, *Wonders*, 16.
30. Reynolds, "Reproducing Nature," 114.
31. "It is of course a highly occult or magical system, based on belief in the macrocosm-microcosm relationship." Yates, *The Art of Memory*, 120.
32. Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Chronotopes and Dioramas*, New York, Dia Art Foundation: 2010), 58.

5. The Case for Architectural Suicide

In the deep Turkish countryside two shepherds sat on the edge of a cliff sipping on coffee and eating their breakfast as their herd was left to graze. In a blurry minute, one sheep was seen to run and jump off the cliff to its death. The shepherds watched helplessly as nearly 1,500 other sheep followed,

each leaping off the same cliff. The last 1,000 were saved by the pile of fluffy sheep that had accumulated below.

Whether this was a case of a conscious mass sheep suicide or a fault of subpar intellect is unclear, but the surreal image of 1,500 sheep falling off of a cliff is an image worth analyzing.

The desire to be like nature in architecture has asserted the natural and sensible world as a higher order. As a discipline we look at nature as an ideal, we use it to conceptually defend our designs, we mimic it formally, and we study it to understand its supposedly perfect mechanics. As a profession, however, we must be aware of nature's imperfections.

The story of the sheep reminds us that there are glitches in the natural system that are important to analyze. The events on the fringes, the supplemental, are usually fundamental in understanding the larger network.

It is worth noting that in descent selection, mutations are filtered and passed on if beneficial, and tossed if they aren't. One can visualize the natural world as made up of positive mutations that have been filtered through natural selection, which analyses the value of these natural glitches.

The only reason the evolutionary process works is not only by this consistent and rapid destruction of useless elements but also by the adoption of beneficial mutations. Architecture similarly could have a framework that is open to all concepts, but that is consistently removing glitches.

The case of the sheep should be of warning to architects. The sheep have been led and fed by others, they've been domesticated for centuries so that they are no longer exposed to the pressures of the wild and have lost the ability to constantly improve themselves. Architecture is so curated and controlled, it has equally been pressured by itself and the public to contribute to the demands of the world, rather than constantly try to improve itself as a discipline.

6. Eagerness and Cynicism in Bridgeport

This semester, students in the second year urban studio have confronted the task of mediating the imaginary and the sensible, a task that necessitates inquisition regarding the role of architecture in making cities. The application of ecological thinking into our examinations of Bridgeport empowers us to think broadly about what architecture can do, yet it also awakens our inner skeptics. We at once embrace expanded notions of the role of architecture and also envision an autonomous position for our academic work, negotiating a paradoxical embrace of eagerness and cynicism.

One end of contemporary discourse and practice positions the designer as a mediator between parties involved in a project, emphasizing comprehensive vision and calculated intervention over specialization. Lauren Elachi of SCAPE and Daniel Pittman of OMA, two designers working on projects for Rebuild by Design, articulated this role at the Coastal Resilience and Urban Water Systems Symposium held in Rudolph Hall in February. Given the complexity of large scale infrastructural interventions aimed at improving coastal resiliency, architects employ design thinking as a means of balancing the multitude of voices and considerations involved in the task. With nearly a billion dollars of federal funding dedicated to Rebuild by Design proposals, Elachi and Pittman spoke of the challenge and necessity of mediating vision and pragmatism.

Relevant to this position is Christopher Alexander's argument that, "it is not possible today to escape the responsibility of considered action by working within academic styles."[1] This view maintains the transformative potential of architecture and calls into question the value of academically acceptable form-finding within the autonomous strains of the discipline. It stands as a provocation for practicing architects to commit to comprehensive thinking and, perhaps, "heroic" potential.

Lurking cynicism ranging from the pragmatic to the existential has made it difficult to fully embrace ecological thinking. A publication of Rebuild by Design projects features a photograph of architects—members of the competition's ten teams—posing in front of a Robert Moses-era public housing facility in Lower Manhattan and smiling widely. The photograph exposes an irony of Rebuild by Design, reminding us of the failures of large, federally-funded design projects aimed at improving our cities. While public housing and coastal resiliency are profoundly different yet interrelated issues, both represent large infrastructural changes to the fabric of cities.

The role of the architect as mediator in large urban design projects is one that we, as students, have not explored. The scope and complexity of urban scale interventions demands diligent examination. For most of us, our interactions with graduate students at the School of Forestry did not inform our design schemes, nor did the conversations that we had during our site visit to Bridgeport. Given the reality that we are having discussions among ourselves, it is difficult to suspend disbelief regarding ecological thinking. At the end of the semester we will move on to new projects, and Bridgeport will once again be a stop on the way to New Haven on the Metro-North. As such, an earnest exploration of tactics aimed at resiliency seems irrelevant to our education as architects.

The product of our doubt is form-finding, speculation, and generalization. We seek to expose the challenges of large design schemes and to free ourselves for creative exploration. The perceived value of our speculation lies in its ability to be critical, rather than imaginary. Here we derive our academic preoccupation with rigor, which reinforces our position between the imaginary and the sensible. We ask the rhetorical question, "if a tree falls in a forest and nobody is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" Or rather, if a project is discussed in Rudolph Hall, does it bear significance outside of these walls? No, probably not. Therefore, all we can hope for is to provide insight into contemporary practice.

There are two remedies to academic cynicism, both of which require a shift away from the paradoxical nature of our work. The first involves an embrace of the speculative and visionary, an approach that allows relief from the self-consciousness of rigor. The second is to ground the work in reality, requiring a reconceptualization of our goals in order to emphasize processes over products. Either remedy might provide relief from that moment at the conclusion of a semester when it becomes clear despite sleep deprivation of the Sisyphean character of the task performed.

    1. Christopher Alexander, "Notes on the Synthesis of Form," (Cambridge, 1964), p. 25.

7. Curriculum Advisory Committee

In Latin, *curriculum* originally meant a race, or the course of a race, which we suppose would make the students the racers, would make our faculty and the administration the referees, and would make us—elected by our peers as members of the Curriculum Advisory Committee—some kind of counsels to the referee. We were then naturally disappointed to learn that our committee would not have the opportunity to render even that small service. In fact, as those who read On The Ground will know, none of the 7 student committees are ever called to meet.

So we took matters into our own hands, and met anyway. We are, after all, an elected body, and that carries some sovereignty, not to mention responsibilities. Given, moreover, the impending change in administration, this seems a particularly important time to think about our curriculum.

We began our efforts by issuing a school-wide survey. For an involved survey, so far the response rate has been pretty good: more than 88 students. From their responses we have identified the following areas around which to focus our counsel:

    Scheduling
The easy: 86% would like a class-free lunch hour. Many asked that the school align our schedule with the rest of the university. The school can do that. The difficult: 73% say they have an unhealthy sleep schedule. 59% feel the amount of work compromises their quality of work. These are thornier issues, which raise fundamental questions about work habits, studio culture, and the balance between product and process.

    Politics
There is unhappiness with a perceived political way in which our school is run. This is evident in our TA selection system, the way electives are assigned, and sometimes even studios. At the same time, many appreciate the close bonds that form between students and teachers—how do we keep the family while avoiding the nepotism?

    The Basics
Students take issue with the basic required courses aimed at honing our fundamental skills with a particular ire for the visualization sequence. First year is and probably always will be very intense, but are we making the best use of all that effort?

    The Personal Project
Students consistently reported frustration with a lack of control over their education. We have no thesis, only two option studios, few electives, and little time for anything extra-curricular. How do we balance the need to initiate students into the profession—exposing them to a range of different perspectives, projects, and practical knowledge—with the need to develop their own Project?

Outside of BP there are few opportunities for hands-on engagement. We offer no advanced structures courses. There is little interaction with the engineering department. We eschew the research-based 'lab' method seen at MIT and the AA altogether. Bernstein keeps telling us we are singularly business un-savvy. How can we productively engage the world?

This semester, we hope to write something on each of the above topics, publishing them here. As you could expect, many of the respondents were free with their views and colorful with their language, and we hope to be able to publish some of them. We are not just hosting an open session for complaints, to which we know architecture students can be prone, but trying to mark some ideas—relevant here and everywhere—as to what today constitutes an education in architecture.

Excellence, especially in something so complex as the curriculum, does not happen all at once, but through small and constant incremental adjustments. To make those adjustments, we need to give students raw political power in the form of seats on the real curriculum committee. The real opportunity for improvement, after all, is not the policies themselves, but the process by which they are formed.

8. Landscape Flâneur

Our boots sank into the muddy grass grazed by mother sheep and their lambs as we navigated the man made grounds at Castle Howard. We encountered endless fields along the graveled path and out would emerge a pyramid in the distance: turn a corner, and it disappears. Humorous follies, monumental mausoleums, and eye-catching pedestaled sculptures were dotted strategically to guide the walker through the panoramic estate.

Bryan Fuermann spent the last ten days leading a group of twelve students, including me, all around England to walk, breathe and see landscapes and gardens designed between 1600 and 1900. Each day we walked the ups and downs of British ground. At Iford Manor we walked between mini worlds that manipulated views and perspectives to choreograph steps through sculptured terraces on a hillside. At Rousham we fell in love with topiary (the art of clipping shrubs into ornamental shapes) and saw the gardens' structure before spring bloomed—each tree and shrub was well trained, and behaved according to the lessons taught by human hands. We learned of how Capability Brown managed to create his artificial lake by having his workers and goats stamp clay into the sunken ground before letting water fill it for two years, literally molding the ground into shape. If Stourhead was composed to be like a painting, the gardens at Castle Howard were choreographed like a scenographic film... Each place we visited taught a lesson of how it came to be, and how it was designed.

Boots off, back in New Haven, I flip through the pages of Meaghan Kombol's *30:30 Landscape Architecture*, a compilation of 60 landscape design projects (Phaidon Press, 2015). She profiles 30 internationally renowned designers and asks them to each pick an emerging landscape design firm of their choice to feature, altogether painting a refreshing and experimental image of the landscape scene today. The work she surveys is a diverse collection of bold, sometimes strange works that truly spatializes landscape on a different scale. The book also provides information such as the designers' inspirations, favorite plants, and materials. Whilst it may be categorized as a beautiful "coffee table book," the book is also structured as the script of an open debate, offering similar questions and key issues contended by the designers, as if each page was engaged in a conversation with the next.

The project shown in the cover—Taylor Cullity Lethlean and Perry Lethlean's [TCL] Australian Garden—is an example of a contemporary language of graphic landscape markings. While eighteenth century gardens such as Rousham gently divided the land through markings of edges and boundary, TCL takes on similar themes of delineation, but with a graphic and colorful approach; swirling patterns and rounded, defined edges orchestrate a singular system. 30:30 Landscape Architecture is a meandering, informative and luxurious journey through today's designed world, maybe an invitation to the landscape *flâneur* two hundred years from now, to discover not the gardens of housing estates but rather the *rus in urbe*—the condition of creating an illusion of being in the countryside created by landscape and architecture, despite being in the city—of the twenty-first century.

9. Health & Wellness

While you may not care that you have just inhaled a lifetime's worth of carcinogenic molecules by thrusting open the laser cutter hatch immediately after your job has finished, I do—especially when I'm the innocent bystander huddled in the same room. Throughout our time at YSoA, we are exposed to our fair share of toxins, whether they come from the laser cutter rooms, from the spray booths outside of the bathrooms, or from sitting at our desks as a neighbor uses a foam cutter and Zap-A-Gap to make that last model before Studio begins. This too-often-toxic air quality is due as much to non-functioning spray booths as it is to the fact that as students, we often do not take proper precautions with how we use our materials and equipment. Indeed, there ought to be better space to deploy spray paint, as surely the current facilities and protocols do not suffice. However, we must also take it upon ourselves to prioritize both our personal health and that of those sitting in the contiguous space around us. It is important to recognize that while most of us are not exposed to toxic chemicals for six to eight hours every day, even the less frequent, shorter exposures that we are all subject to can have serious consequences. Though effects can be as minor as mere discomfort and agitation, over time the exposure to fumes from certain glues, spray paints, and cut plastics can cause severe allergies, upper respiratory problems, or even types of cancer. Next time you use the laser cutter, keep it closed for thirty seconds or a minute once the job has completed to allow the exhaust to do its job. Or, if you smell fumes by the spray booths, perhaps you actually report them like the sign says. Be courteous of your neighbors; your lungs will thank you later. Now if only we could open the windows...

10. On the Ground

3/8
The 6th floor became a veritable Serengeti as the M.Arch I class of 2018 wrangled with Rhinoceros, Tapir, Vicuña, Quail, Salamander, Walrus, Uakari, and Zebra. This strange menagerie represents the names of eight out of eleven possible projects presented to groups at midterm, with each spirit animal corresponding to a collection of curated house models and drawings. Unlike last year—where students individually voted for their favorite projects—this year's selection challenged groups of six or seven (brought together via SOM-administered personality and professional experience quizzes) to come to consensus about which set of architectural material, harvested from two to four individual projects, seemed most fruitful. A quick scan of the terrain reveals some obvious taxonomies: specimens cracked on the diagonal, some pregnant with other houses, the traces of a flock of micro-homes. Others were less keen to be spotted; thus, each group will consolidate and present the 'idea' of their selection this week. As usual, no group member was allowed to select their own project. Unusually, by some estimates, roughly half of the class had some component of this semester's work selected for consideration in the midterm vote.

3/10
We were watching with a trepidatious eye as students in the Jacob and Griffiths studio attempted to birth their enigmatic model-cum-sculptures in the workshop a few weeks ago. At midterm reviews, their efforts seemed to have paid off. Upon seeing MATTHEW BOHNE'S lumpy column, GLEN CUMMINGS imagines "Duchamp [meeting] Brancusi at the cold cut counter." SAM JACOB congratulates the prowess of CAITLIN THISSEN'S pink, puffy chair: "Predatory, defecating, having sex...and you can plug it in."

3/11
Midterm reviews for studio HANS KOLLHOFF included important lessons about tectonics, aesthetics, and the problem of the architectural detail. Kollhoff delivered his message about the importance of the detail as students copied his sketches, heeding his advice, 'You just have to do the constructive exercise. You might not like it in the beginning , but you will handle it.'

3/11
"I heard someone dispensing wisdom on high rises in New York and wanted to learn something," was the only thing ROBERT A. M. STERN said at the ZAHA HADID review. Catching, perhaps, the BP spirit, PATRIK SCHUMACHER consolidated the studio into two teams post-review, each of which is to make their own cluster of towers for the final. When asked for an explanation, Schumacher said that the decision was "highly ideological"—the first, Team Pretty, he called 'the forest,' akin to a Mahler Symphony. The second will be 'the jungle'—high-risk—maybe more like a DJ mashup, or the free market. ZAHA simply mandates "models as tall as Patrik."

3/14
The Gehry studio travels once more, this time to Los Angeles, where they visit Gehry's office, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gehry's old and new homes, and the Walt Disney Concert Hall. The studio had the rare privilege of being the only students that Gehry took sailing on the brand new boat, 'Foggy,' named after Gehry's initials. The larch-hulled sailing yacht moved like a hot knife through melting butter as it made a lazy circuit from the California Yacht Club, out to sea and back.

3/22
Our very own RICHARD DEFLUMERI led the crusade against the Great Fruit-Fly Epidemic of 2016. And while we are not yet prepared to hang the 'Mission Accomplished' banner, the battle appears to be drawing to a close with Drosophila in full retreat. We would like to congratulate and thank General DeFlumeri for his valiant efforts against the fruit-fly menace.

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