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The group deliberates on each question. When they land on an answer that they agree most appropriately captures the essence of The One (e.g. “an earthy beige,” “anchovy toast”), they call “Essence!” and move on to the next question. The Asker gets no more than three chances to guess The One.

- “If The One were a color, which color would they be?”
- “If The One were a time of day, what time would they be?”
- “If The One were a moment in 2020, which moment would they be?”
- “If The One were a conspiracy theory, which one would they be?”
- “If The One were to choose their own method of death, what would they choose?”
- “If The One were a pantry lunch deep into quarantine, what dish would they be?”
- “If The One were a point on a lowbrow-to-highbrow/ despicable-to-brilliant scatterplot, in which quadrant would they fall?” etc.

Some questions The Asker might ask:

1. The Asker returns and asks questions to the group to determine who The One is.
2. The Asker returns and asks questions to the group to determine who The One is.
3. The Asker returns and asks questions to the group to determine who The One is.

ESSENCE is a game best played with a group of 8-24 players. This is the way it is played:

by Yale School of Drama  
by Leyla Levi

So where do we put our efforts? Do we dive back into the discipline like previous generations: the architecture of elements, architecture as autonomous pursuit? The stuff we know we can control, but what some might call a form of isolationism. Or do we keep trying? Do we claw away at culture and experience and bodies and art, and hope that these studios and our best attempts just might poke through to something real?

Our scope of our work as students and as architects has been confuted. Schools have committed to reveling in the project's capacity to account for identity without making sense of what this actually means. Especially when leaning into identity seems to trivialize individuals and rely on group differences. It shines a new light but also draws a new line. And this is to say nothing of what we might actually see in a space, as we architects are not in control of how our work is received and subsequently used. Our projects and buildings do take on identities, yes, but not as prescribed by us.

Despite this necessary reckoning, the body has become just that: a body, stripped of autonomy, receiver of bespoke building. And this has led, I emphasize here, to a new type of privilege: what Brown University's social scientist Glenn Loury calls “racial epistemology”—the claim that identity gives you some insight on “what is true”—which intertwines the author of a project with the project's validity, and more generally makes conversation around these topics exclusive, emotional and fraught.

So, it seems we've landed back where we started. We've transcended a cis male euro-heteronormativity to fall back on identity as the end-all, be-all. Instead of acknowledging the differences of experience of all people, we've further categorized the bodies of building occupants into new typologies: x-type moves like this and thinks like that, thus corresponding to x-architecture. Person as identity and identity as programmatic fodder.

Through now, in order to deal with these nuances and to discuss them in architecture school, the discipline has resorted to distilling bodies to an essence, which has resulted, in *essentializing*. And with this has come the creeping assumption that formal intent can somehow correspond to a group at all, that one can truly design a “Black” or “indigenous space,” for example, and imbue architecture with an identitarian magic.

Two years ago, Bryan Norwood, as guest editor of *Log 42*, attempted to expand the journal's discourse by including writers from outside of the discipline, such as critical race scholar Adrienne Brown and feminist theorist Sarah Ahmed. These scholars sought to “disorient phenomenology” with the varieties of bodily experience—that of black, white, queer, and otherwise—and untangle what's been deemed “normative” in space and acknowledge privilege by putting the assumed body, power relations, and all “effects of history” in question.

In a year of racial turmoil, schools of architecture have gone through a reckoning. At the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD), *Notes on Creativity*, co-written by the African American Student Union and AfricafGSD, was the catalyst: syllabi have been scrapped and reworked, inadequate BIPOC representation has been spotlighted, and explicit “anti-racist” instruction has been demanded. As the memo's introduction makes plain: “The school cannot claim academic excellence while maintaining silence... [as] silence is complicit in anti-Blackness.”

In response, the GSD this semester has piloted new “modular” studios, many of which place notions of identity and race at their center—a first attempt, one might say, at not remaining complicit. Opinions vary, but following final reviews, they seemed to share at least one fault: the explicit and overly-ambitious conviction that architecture-as-building could confront and radically alter race relations. The user, or *identity* of the user, had become the focus, and, I would argue, subsumed the architecture and design discussion. In turn, no building could ever be adequate. Thus, the most successful projects proved to be the ones that didn't seek to suggest a building at all but instead focused on the capacity of images as images, identity in representation alone—something, I think, more akin to the production of art.

There's a DJ set by Kerri Chandler. I've been listening to it starts in stasis. A track with only one chord articulates its compositional across other dimensions: the entrance and exit of h-hats up top, occasional moments of breath when the kick drops out, changing rhythmic patterns within the unchanging harmony. We can feel the music shifting and evolving while the single chord keeps us rooted in the same place, a kind of corporeal dissonance. After sustaining a consecutive 7 minutes of tracks comprising only static harmonies, Chandler releases us into a multi-bar phrase of moving chords. The moment is powerful and freeing, opening a new horizontal dimension.

That we can arrive here, now, only after several minutes of buildup, signals that harmonic motion is an element to observe *over time*. It is a sensory parameter as well as a formal one. What is needed in order to understand the music, then, is attention to *feeling*: how it feels in the body to hear a richly chromatic chord; how it feels to move through horizontal time in the harmonic space the vertically of each individual chord; how it feels for that moving-between to then loop around and be made into its own recursive unit, which then becomes a building block for the surrounding track and set.

Some approaches to theorizing the essence of pre-20th century Western classical music involve reducing the music down to an elemental, ultimately atemporal harmonic core. In other words, a few verticalities represent the essence expressed through the more elaborate details of a composition. Deep harmonic coherence is the primary reason why a given piece hangs together, even when the surface of its form might seem totally unpredictable.

While useful, this approach is inadequate for understanding a crucial capacity of music: it is a code, through which a person may share a piece of their own experience and facilitate the experience of another. In classical music, this capacity hinges on relationships between harmony and time—between the vertical and the horizontal—and the sensations that result. The temporal dimension is what allows listeners and interpreters to connect to a composer's internal life. Moments of ceaseless suspension in Brahms' breaths that might eventually give a piece the capacity to reference itself: these are all ways we can feel a person's hand on the other side. None of them can exist without time. The essence of music is the impulse to look at a set of points, stretch out the lines between, and say, “There's a connection! It is the desire to find and the capacity to recognize interactions. When I encounter a new score, my aim is to find how and why its objects relate to one another.”

Tracking the rate of harmonic motion in Chandler's set yields a series of melodic, gestural, motive objects, over the course of 73 minutes, it moves from stasis to popping chord cycles and, eventually, to what we might call a full-blown pop song structure, with distinct chords for “verse” and “chorus” sections, which are recombined and composed.

After the anticipatory momentum, generated by 52 minutes of gradually lengthening loops, the arrival of this multi-pronged structure is climactic, leaving us whirling. In this context, the conventions of song structure can be heard anew. We can now dance through the track's structural linds, through its multidimensional field of time.

Listening is an action. Music is something you do.

1. Kerri Chandler, *Peak To Peak* Session, Resident Advisor YouTube Channel, Feb 28, 2020, video, 1 hour 14 min-20. [View on YouTube](#)  
2. Chandler, *Peak To Peak* Session, Resident Advisor YouTube Channel, Feb 28, 2020, video, 1 hour 14 min-20. [View on YouTube](#)  
3. Chandler, *Peak To Peak* Session, Resident Advisor YouTube Channel, Feb 28, 2020, video, 1 hour 14 min-20. [View on YouTube](#)



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hasps. So Modern!

Basement alone with a folding chair, a cooler, and a ladder and some jeans. Folding ping-pong table. Fold it all up! Avoid Everything! Tension rods provide effortless opening and closing of the heavy gauge steel doors. Ready to be useful. Springing to service out of nowhere and then gone in a flash, folded back up. Positive slam latch with interior and exterior padlock

Who needs it? Life would be so easy and convenient in the through first floor rooms. Avoid the first floor all together. A Bilco Door so convenient, so easy to avoid tracking convenience and safety that only direct access can provide. Long-lasting, Watertight. Ease of Operation makes a Bilco Door so convenient, so easy to avoid tracking

also goes up for the Bilco door that exists as required. Shhhh, I see you. I admire your neat, trim appearance and rugged construction. Too cool for school. Too safe for signage. Hang on with your free hand while taking advantage of one-hand-only operation. Watch carefully for the Bilco door that also goes up

the wall. Like a patch of suns in the corner of the room. Total disregard for planar continuity. What could be more modern? Bold disregard for anything less than essential. Simple modern timeless disregard. Urban tracheotomy. Let's enjoy the usefulness, convenience and safety that only direct access can provide. Long-lasting, Watertight. Ease of Operation makes a Bilco Door so convenient, so easy to avoid tracking

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6	curiosity
5	humility
4	flexibility
3	good health
2	patience
G	open-mindedness
B	an endless supply of paper and pencils
SB	daylight

PAPRIKAI

ESSENTIAL

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Iris You

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TYPEFACE  
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○

changing reminder that in New York City the ground isn't

the... oh god! What to wear when passing through your Bico? Something everyday but a little on the tough side. Something extremely normal. Denim! No apartment building is complete without its Bilco roof hatch. Welcome to heaven! Be very afraid as you tiptoe balance on that ladder wondering if you shouldn't have. How do your legs and arms go again? Not a problem with Pre-punched Cap Flashing to receive the Bil-Guard 2.0 Hatch Safety Railing System. Have you earned this gateway to the sky? Did you bring a metal stick? A ladder perhaps? Carrying a ladder up a ladder is possibly the most important experience in a young person's life. In the ladder's life! A Bilco door is utility's utility. Got a cooler? Some Bulky Articles? Put that utility to use with a Bilco door. Hey cheerios, peanut butter sandwich, need something more risky? Let's go get it. Be somebody. Get to it. So practical, it's scary. Young father's nightmare. Watch your kid meander down the patchwork sidewalk. That

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B	an endless supply of paper and pencils
SB	daylight

Photo here for your reading pleasure

H I W T D I

IN TIME

by Conrad Tao  
by Musician in New York



by Luiza Dale  
by Yale School of Art

“Home Is Where The Heart Is” is an Elvis song. It says no matter where you are or who you're with, your home is the center of your gravitational emotional pull. Home is where the love is, where you feel good. Home is where it's warm inside, with your loved ones, your family, your friends. It's nice to be where they are, it feels like home. Moms love saying home is where the heart is.

We've all had laptops for so long, we were always moving around carrying our laptops...Now we're sitting down. Classes are online, Zoom sucks, everyone's meetings are online. And the internet is unstable, like, everywhere. It's unstable at the library, at the dorm when it's raining, it's unstable at your friend's house. Home is where the internet works well. Home is where there's good WiFi.

It's kind of nice, isn't it? That home is where there is a computer you can rely on, maybe with a big screen, a comfortable desk, and the chair you like. You feel good there, you wear sweatpants, you eat snacks, you have tea if you're into tea. It's not good exactly, it's too much, homes been taken away from us, it turns out that home is work. That's beside the point, we can talk about it later. Crisis forces us to log on, You. Are. Online.

