

lunch

volume I
trespass

architecture and landscape architecture

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photo: Locust Point with abandoned grain silo

ON THE EDGE / AT THE CENTER: INTERVENTIONS AT LOCUST POINT

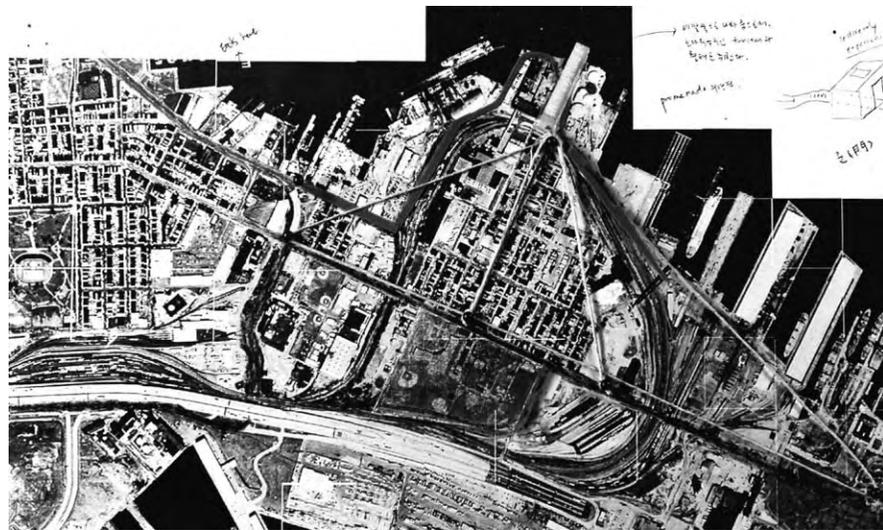
Phoebe Crisman
Assistant Professor of Architecture

SITE(S) OUT OF MIND

Locust Point is a Baltimore waterfront district long occupied by layers of industry, housing, and transportation infrastructure. Complex and diverse in physical form, the area itself is an immense *site out of mind*. Although Locust Point's Domino Sugar refinery is perhaps the city's most prominent landmark, highly visible to those passing through Baltimore on I-95, few Baltimore residents or visitors have actually been there. This condition is largely due to its geography, urban history, and sectional complexity. The peninsula developed to serve maritime trade and had been primarily accessed via ship and later rail transportation. During the nineteenth century Locust Point was a center of shipbuilding and a major port of arrival for European immigrants. A stable, working class neighborhood of dense, fine-grained rowhouses developed inland to serve the massive factories and terminals at the water's edge. In the late twentieth century, global and

1. This Arch 701 Studio was taught in parallel with Professor Judith Kinnard's Arch 701 Studio during the fall 2004 semester. The semester-long studio concept and Project One were collaboratively conceived. This Live/Work investigation has been a crucial starting point for several Arch 701 Studios also taught by Professors WG Clark and William Sherman. We developed Project Two separately, but both continued to work in the Locust Point area.

local economic shifts brought new development pressures to the neighborhood and its underutilized and inaccessible waterfront. With Baltimore's reorientation back to its harbor as an urban center, the seemingly remote position of Locust Point is changing. Commuters now travel around the Inner Harbor by water taxi and kayak, while sailing is an important recreational activity. However, Locust Point residents have yet to fully engage their waterfront, as large maritime industry departs and new opportunities arise. In two design projects, first at the scale of the individual¹ and then at the community scale, the studio explored the simultaneity of dramatically different scales of activity, space, and form in this compelling urban site.



site analysis, Suhoon Bae



photo: Pier 7

PROGRAMMATIC SYNERGY

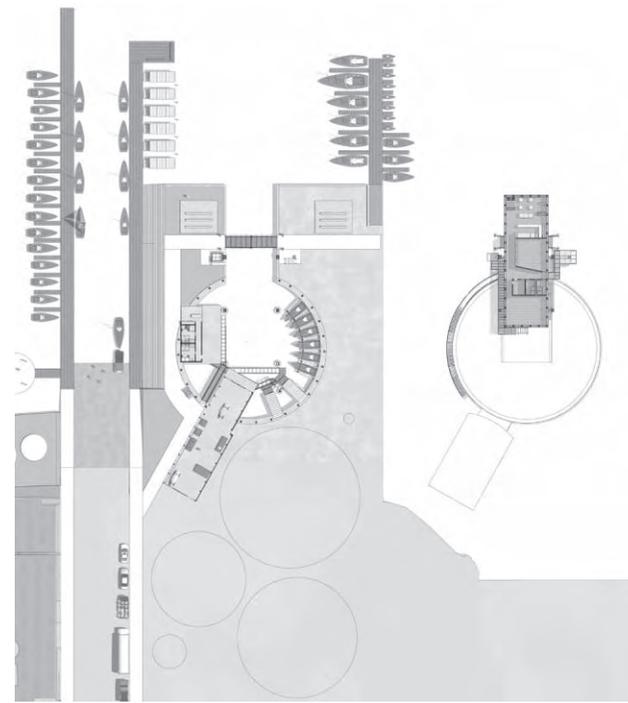
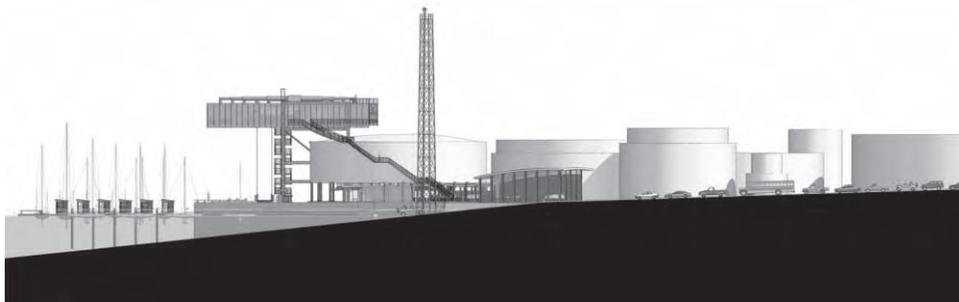
Students intervened on several vacant sites at the water's edge with four intertwined programs—Wooden Boat Building School, Community Sailing Center, Water Taxi Landing, and extension to Baltimore's Waterfront Promenade.² Each considered which uses would be distinct, shared or hybridized, given differing hours of use, public access, spatial requirements, and institutional identity. They explored how particular combinations of inhabitation—"private" boat building school and three "public" uses—might instigate new forms of social interaction and architectural/urban space. As large-scale maritime industry leaves Locust Point, smaller places of skilled production such as the Wooden Boat Building School will continue to utilize the waterfront's unique conditions, while enriching and revealing the land/water threshold to the community. As an urban outreach program of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, the school will continue a rich history of boatbuilding as shipwrights and apprentices build small wooden Chesapeake Skiffs. Twelve apprentices will live and work on site, while weekend courses will engage the local community. The program includes wood and machine shops, sail loft, classrooms, library, boat launch, café and studio apartments for apprentices. The non-profit Community Sailing Center will offer affordable community access to sailing instruction and events at all levels for all ages. This includes boat slips, boat repair, winter boat and equipment storage, outdoor and indoor classrooms, and library. Although a small portion of the spatial program, the Water Taxi Landing and Promenade are important points of arrival that connect to numerous points along Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The work began with four modes of inquiry—description, analysis, interpretation and evaluation—to create a critical, concise and elegant site understanding that informed the design process. During the ten-week project, students engaged in an iterative drawing and modeling process to investigate several issues across a range of scales—from urban systems to precise material junctures.

2. The city of Baltimore and various community groups are promoting the completion of a continuous public promenade around the Inner Harbor connecting communities and historic sites from Canton to Fort McHenry. Currently covering seven miles of shoreline, there is a gap in the promenade along the Locust Point Waterfront. The Waterfront Promenade was established during the reconstruction of the Inner Harbor in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Subsequently, the promenade extended through adjacent neighborhoods through Urban Renewal Legislation. This legislation requires private waterfront property owners to donate a public easement and construct a landscaped promenade along the waters edge. When complete, the Promenade will become an important component of the National Historic Seaport of Baltimore that provides visitors a way to tour the entire harbor along one continuous route on land and/or sea.

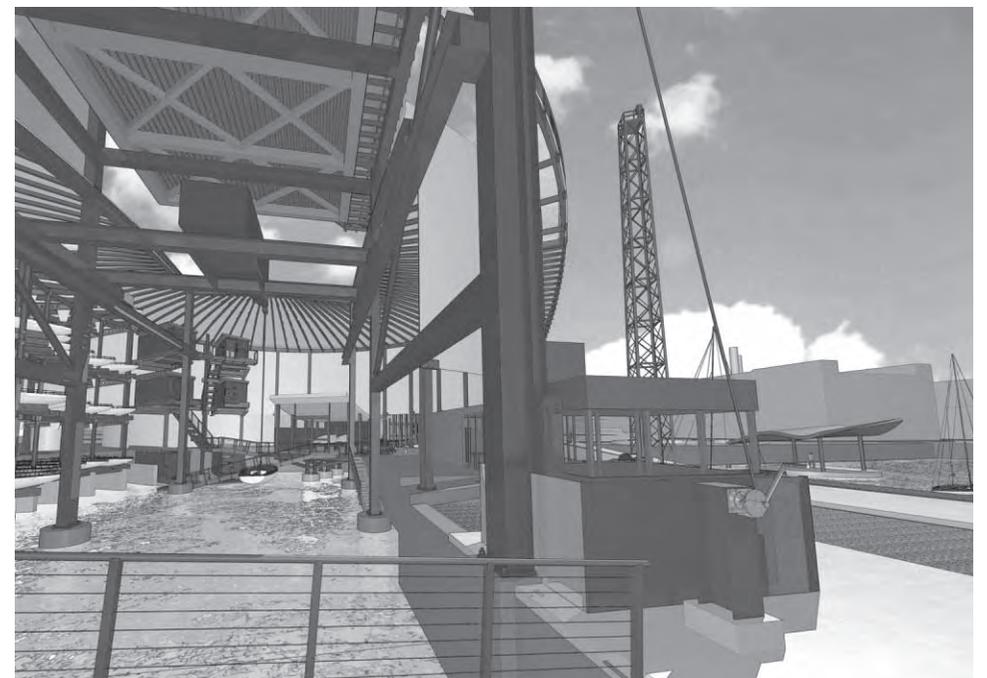


TRANSFORMATION OF AN INDUSTRIAL ARTIFACT

Along with horizontal piers and vertical silos, several immense steel tanks punctuate the Locust Point landscape. Fascinated by the potential for programmatic transformation, Ryan Hughes proposed converting a disused molasses tank into winter sailboat storage—generating a sectionally complex assemblage of found and new structures. By jacking up the tank and inserting a ring of columns beneath, the ground level is opened up and light and air is brought into the opaque cylinder. A new channel conveys water into the tank, so that boats may float in and be lifted by an overhead gantry crane into storage racks along the perimeter, which also hold small living spaces for apprentice boat builders. These living modules, as well as the student-built boats, will be constructed in the workshop that penetrates into the tank, allowing the finished boats to be slid directly into the water within. A portion of the tank roof, removed to admit light and accommodate the crane, is reused as a roof for the boatbuilding workshop. The library and café volume is cantilevered above the tank, recalling the cranes of this industrial port, and providing spectacular views of downtown and the Chesapeake Bay. Connection to the neighborhood is reinforced



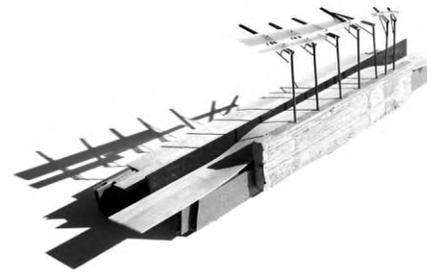
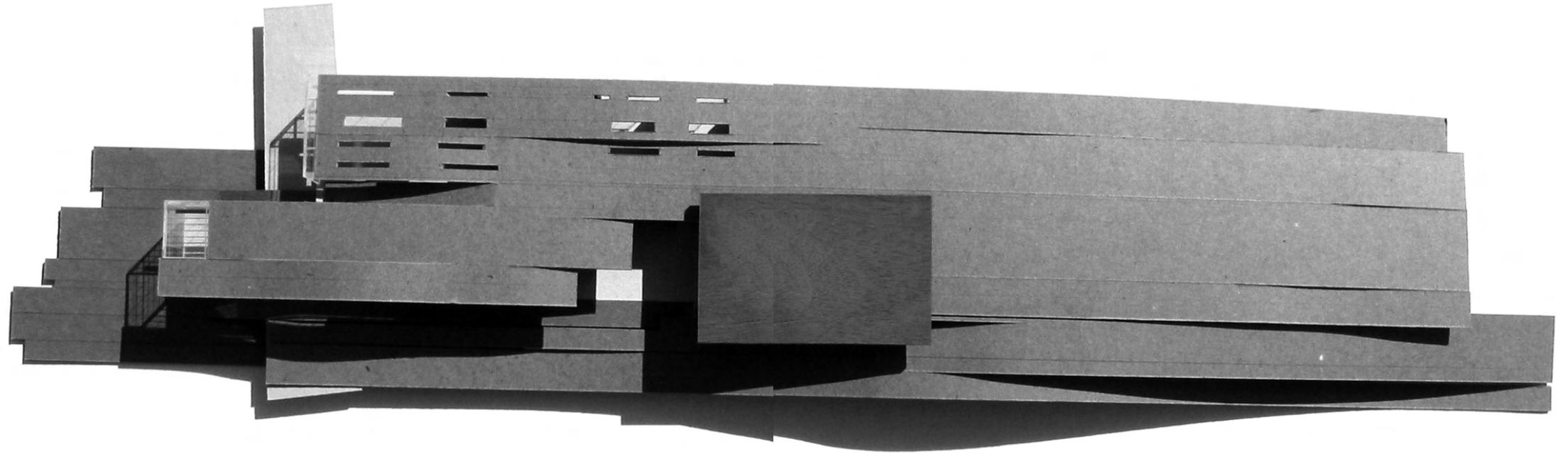
by the redesign of Hull Street, which runs perpendicular to the water alongside the tanks and awkwardly terminates at the water. Hughes' design extends Hull Street into the water as a boat ramp—parked cars become parked boats, sidewalks become floating walkways, and public access and views are created. An existing communications tower is retained, serving both as a beacon to sailors returning and an industrial sundial, marking the passage of time through the day.



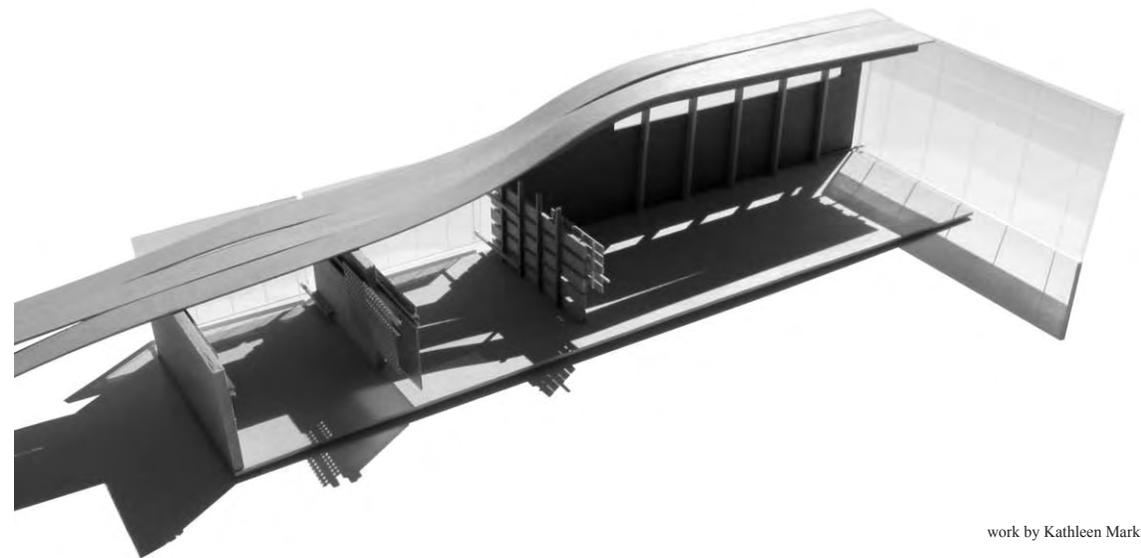
work by Ryan Hughes

PUBLIC/PRIVATE OVERLAP

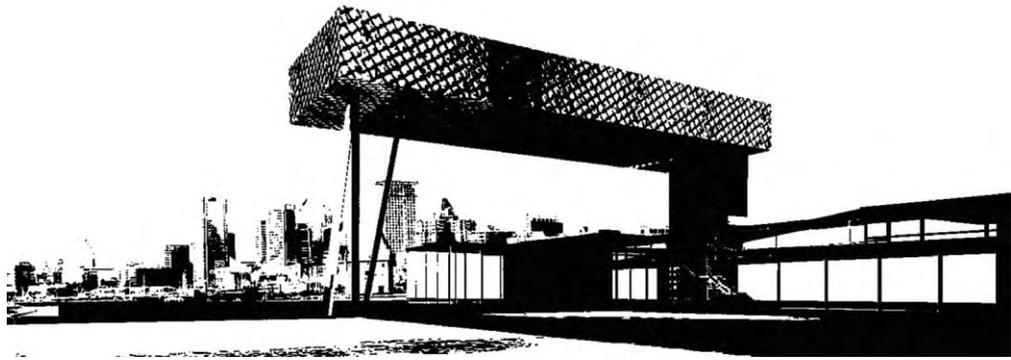
The re-inhabitation of abandoned industrial structures offers rich spatial possibilities, especially where public and private spaces overlap. Rather than work with a freestanding architectural element, however, two students chose to engage the earthen ramp of a long gone railway pier. All that remains is a retaining wall along Hull Street that holds a large area of fill with several concrete tank bases and other surface fragments. Kathleen Mark conceived the Boat Building/Sailing Center as an exhibition and learning space that could provide the Locust Point community with public waterfront access. The elevated ground of the railway pier approach becomes a new planted roof for



interior spaces excavated beneath, while the retaining wall becomes a new building façade for street access. This strategy, sensitive to the multiple levels and histories of site and neighborhood, also negotiates the extreme grade change at the waters edge. Rather than incorporate housing into this public location, apprentices will live with host families in the community and create a direct social tie to the new institution. In conjunction with this housing strategy, a new system of shaded benches and landscaped paths will link the neighborhood, the new Boat Building/Sailing Center and the public roof garden.

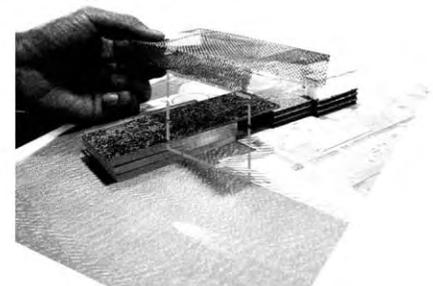
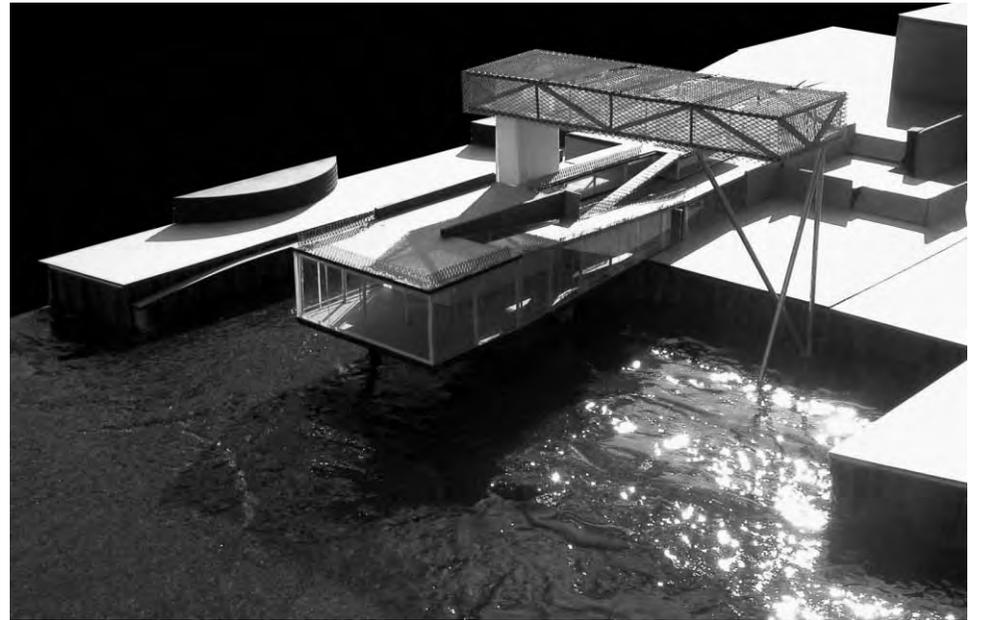
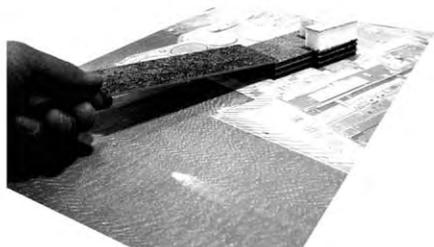
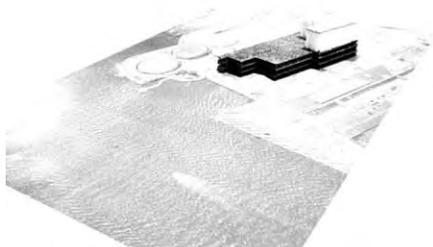


work by Kathleen Mark



SECTIONAL COMPLEXITY

Working on the same site and also sectionally exploiting the existing ground conditions and level changes for public use, Suhoon Bae developed a second project component in strong juxtaposition to the primary embedded strategy. By locating apprentice housing within a single-story glazed bar elevated thirty feet above, the public park and pier are undisturbed by private uses and the temporary residents visually connect with the larger Baltimore landscape. Both projects clearly manifest the public and private project components, as well as the relationship between the singular boat-building volume and the repetitive apprentice dwellings—Mark by programmatic adjustment at the urban scale, and Bae through a highly figural sectional displacement. In both cases, the students explored the making of sectionally rich and appropriate rooms and assemblies of rooms, both inside and outside.

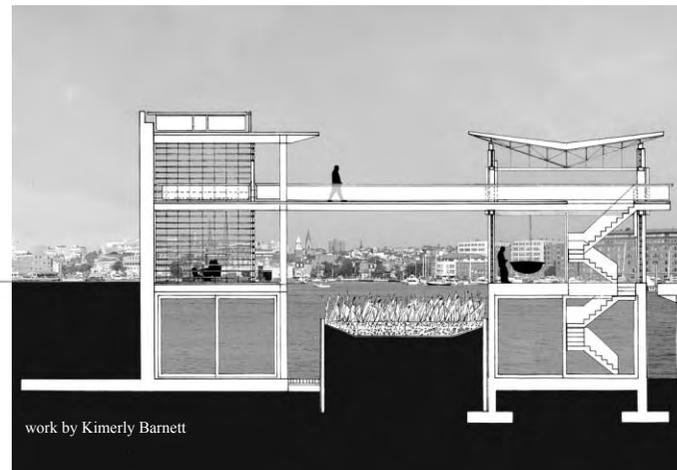
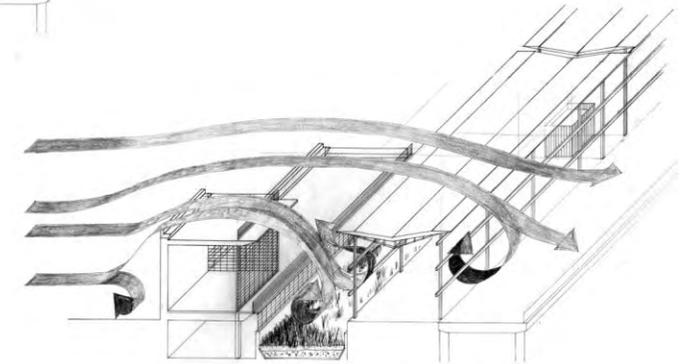
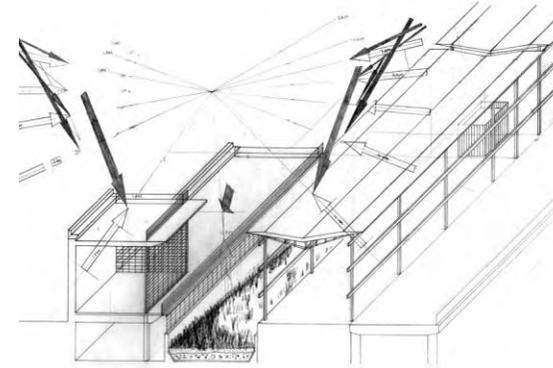
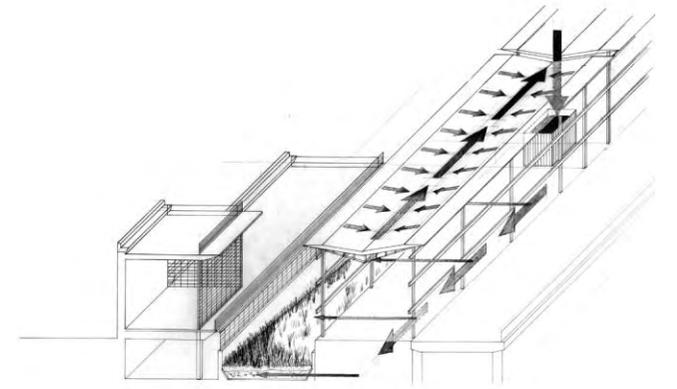
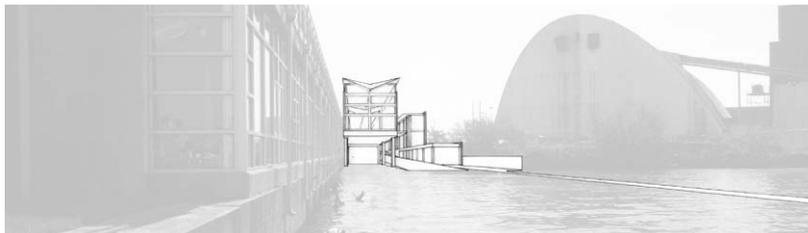
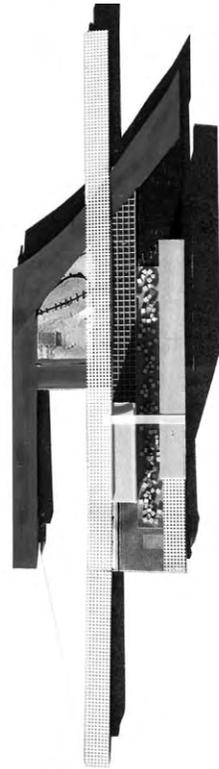


work by Suhoon Bae



CULTURAL + ENVIRONMENTAL ECOLOGIES

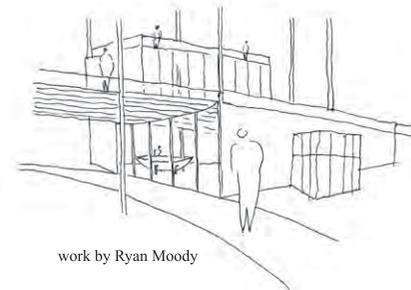
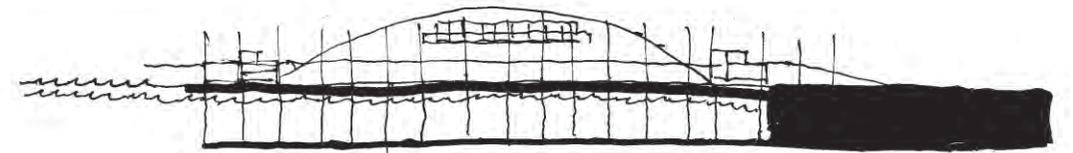
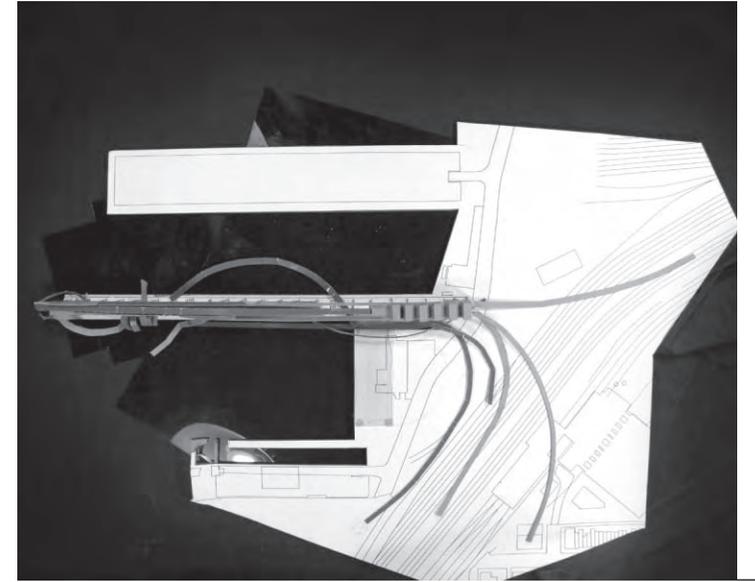
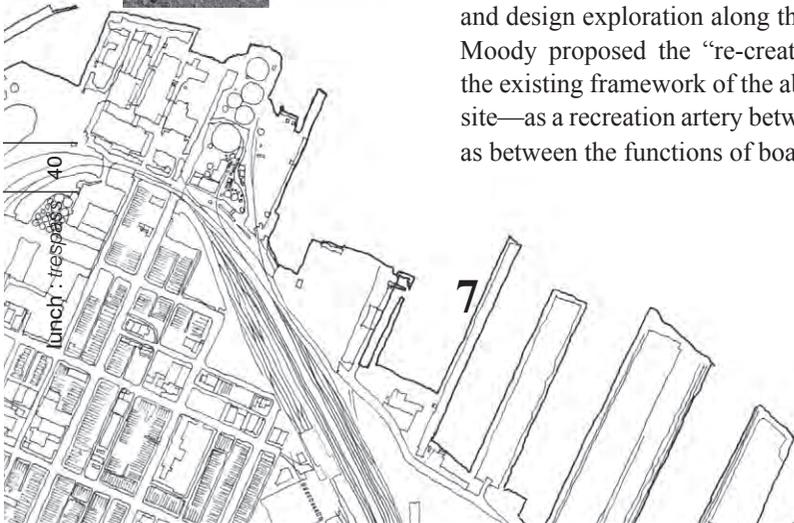
Students analyzed the richly intertwined cultural and environmental ecologies of Locust Point, and proposed interventions that explored the didactic possibilities of architecture itself. They probed how a building or landscape might teach about the distinct history and future of this place. Kimberly Barnett chose a site squeezed between the immense Domino Sugar and Proctor & Gamble factories, which is the only location where the ground still slopes toward the water as it would have before industrial development. Barnett's design probes the environmental, educational, and sectional significance of that found condition. A publicly accessible wetland garden is created by planting the slope with native grasses to slowly filter storm water runoff and register tidal and temporal change, while revealing the pre-industrial conditions of the harbor. The wild garden is spatially framed by two thin bar buildings that negotiate the slope and provide access—one for boat fabrication and the other for public learning and social gathering. The section and enclosure system of each building is carefully calibrated to maximize natural light and ventilation, directly connect interior spaces to social and environmental site conditions, and teach students about the complex co-existence of human inhabitation and environmental forces.



work by Kimerly Barnett

MOVEMENT + HAPTIC EXPERIENCE

Given the sectionally and historically complex layering of transportation infrastructure at Locust Point, several students studied how their site is part of a larger network of urban movement systems and public and private spaces. For instance, Pier 7 was a crucial link between land and water, or rail and ship, in an international grain transportation network that exploited Baltimore's deep-water harbor and excellent rail connections. The cultural and historical significance of these abandoned structures in Locust Point make it imperative that the temporal layer they represent is not totally erased, while their adaptive re-use exemplify the potential for economic rehabilitation and design exploration along this edge. To this end, Ryan Moody proposed the "re-creation of circulation" within the existing framework of the abandoned pier and adjacent site—as a recreation artery between land and water, as well as between the functions of boat building and sailing.



work by Ryan Moody

New paths allow one to experience the beauty of the fine steel structure, without damaging the Pier itself. Circulatory elements extend vertically within and horizontally around the structure to generate views and spatial engagement at different heights. Passive and active recreation paths promote differing speeds of bodily movement in relation to the structure's rhythm. By developing a palette of color, sound and texture through materials such as sand (bocce ball path), wood (sunset path), translucent recycled plastic/rubber (running track), colored carbon fiber (elevated sunrise path), and lightweight concrete (bicycle path), travel at Pier 7 maps a rich haptic and visual experience. At the urban scale, this circulation path extends into the fabric of Locust point, encircles the neighborhood, links Latrobe Park, provides harbor access through the sailing school, and finally extends beyond Pier 7 to connect life at Locust point with Baltimore harbor.



THINKING ACROSS TERRITORIES

This studio is one in a series of ARCH 701 studios that develop critical thinking, analytical and communication skills, and spatial and formal design abilities while engaging three specific issues from my own research: marginal and unseen sites, the threshold between public and private life within city and building, and the importance of materiality to haptic experience. Site out of mind is the term I use to conceptualize the edges and gaps between one thing and another often resulting from a collision between scales and uses, unoccupied spaces under, over and along highways, railways and other infrastructure elements, urban voids, ruined places and leftover material evidence. These spaces are both proliferating exponentially in our contemporary landscape and emerging as significant areas for theoretical speculation and design intervention. I intend site out of mind to be read in multiple ways: as a specific site in which things are explored and as a sight or thing seen. Thus, a site out of mind is a condition or sight visible but not seen or minded—not taken charge of or cognitively acknowledged. Working in several cities on sites out of mind marginalized by immense transportation infrastructure or seemingly inadequate dimensions for the intended use, students devise scalar, spatial and programmatic strategies for inhabitation.

Through program briefs that combine unlikely public and private uses, such as a neighborhood Public Library and Community Fitness Center or Community Center and Elementary School, students explore the possible environmental, social, and spatial benefits of breaking down unnecessary barriers between these two realms. In this process, they consider how specific functional typologies have developed in the modern period, and the reciprocal relationships that exist between social construction and building typologies. These unlikely programmatic combinations intentionally undermine the ability to literally rely on such typologies, and also instigate conceptual, spatial and even environmental probing of new possibilities. A third area of exploration concerns bodily experience. Students carefully consider movement through space and time, texture, light, color, sound and other non-quantitative phenomena in their design of a highly resolved material architecture. These studios require that students oscillate between urban and detailed architectural investigations, focusing on physical form embedded within a deep understanding the specific cultural, environmental, economic, political, and technological context.