To Dad

sylvia barnett
master of landscape
architecture
2013

LANDS
AS FIEI

SCAPE
LD

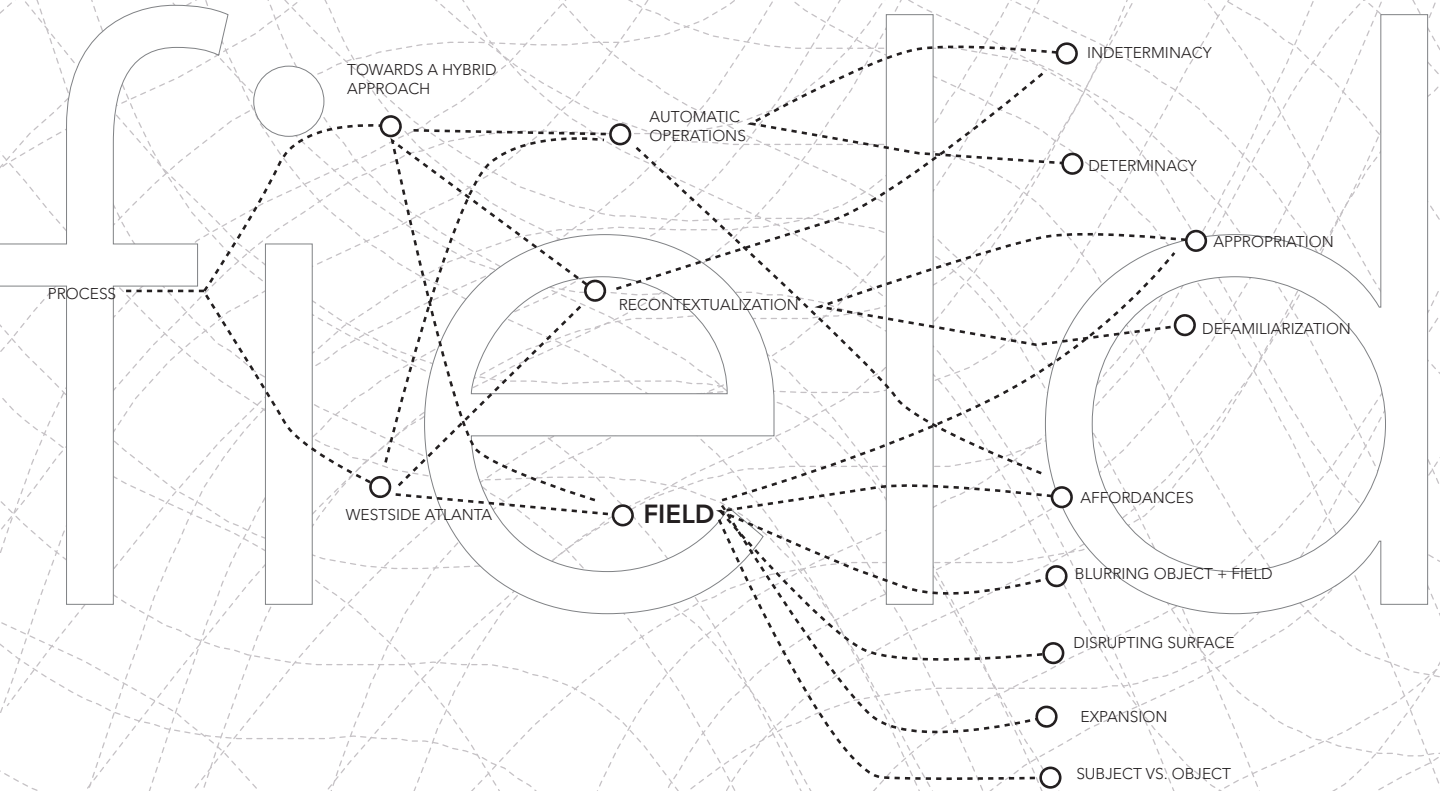**INVESTIGATING PROCESS
IN WESTSIDE ATLANTA**

how can landscape as field inform design?

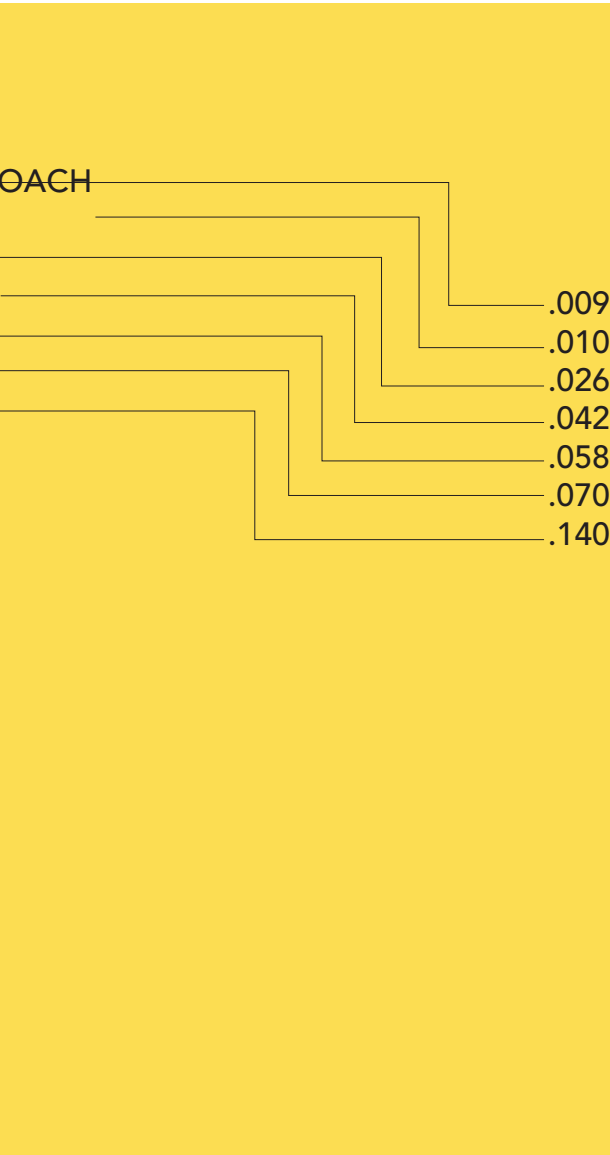## _ABSTRACT

Landscape is not a scene. It is not a static and distinct entity through which and upon which humans navigate the world. It is not the binary opposite to architecture and built structures or the outdoor constituent to human experience. It is a field, a matrix woven from connections between all human and nonhuman systems, supporting and enabling life through the collection of interactions. Yet this fact is little understood. The continued pictorialization of "nature" and the perpetuation of inherited Western paradigms allow landscape to be continually relegated to "other," overlooking its inherent functionality and regenerative potentials. This thesis challenges existing landscape design process in its surrender to the scenic and explores hybrid approaches to understanding complexity. A series of design investigations accumulated on a parking lot in the Westside Arts District of Atlanta seeks new possibilities for presencing dynamism. Through research by design, preformed site assumptions are cast away in favor of uncertain potentials for working with the given, the set of systems offered by a situation. The exploration of automatic operations acts as an intentional rejection of the most apparent components of site, in favor of indeterminate opportunities. A study of recontextualization seeks to examine the relationships between elements of the given and their affective and affected characteristics. Thus, landscape as field emerges as a rich and diverse mode for orchestrating landscape's continual becoming through design. The notion of figure and ground is subverted with the discovery that figures are intensifications, effects of interactions within the field. This process is a significant contribution to the cause of designing with landscape's complexity because of the inclusion of human experience. The guiding vigor behind this advancement is formed upon the comprehension that the potentials of landscape will never be understood as morphogenetic, adaptive, connective and continuous, a field, unless humans perceive themselves as a part of its fluctuating terrain. Poetic possibilities exist within the field to encourage the dissolution of the space between the subject and objectified landscape and attribute tangibility to the processual nature of living systems.

key words: field, hybrids, interactions, process, investigations, complexity, objectification

TOWARDS A HYBRID
APPROACH

INDETERMINACY

AUTOMATIC
OPERATIONS

DETERMINACY

PROCESS

APPROPRIATION

RECONTEXTUALIZATION

DEFAMILIARIZATION

AFFORDANCES

WESTSIDE ATLANTA

FIELD

BLURRING OBJECT + FIELD

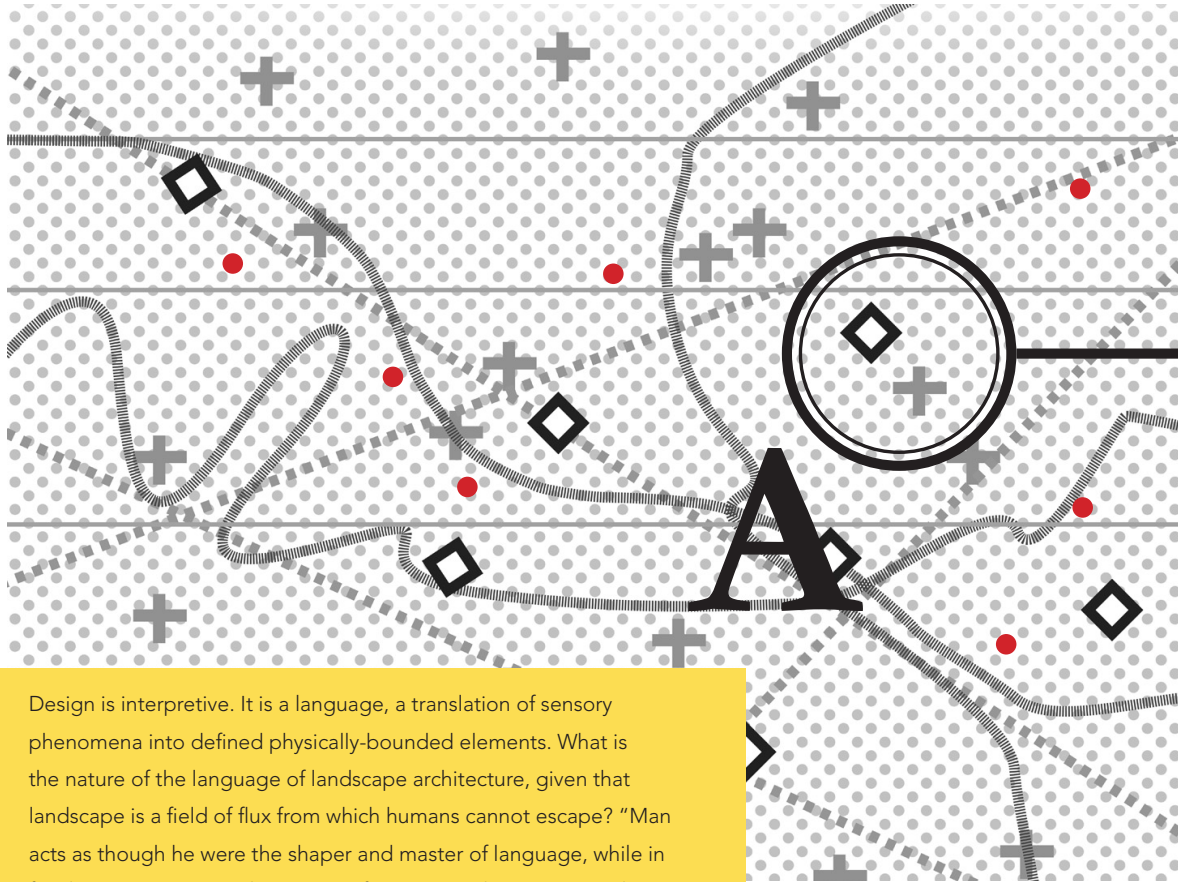DISRUPTING SURFACE

EXPANSION

SUBJECT VS. OBJECT

# x_CONTENTS.

2. towards a hybrid approach

Design is interpretive. It is a language, a translation of sensory phenomena into defined physically-bounded elements. What is the nature of the language of landscape architecture, given that landscape is a field of flux from which humans cannot escape? "Man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, while in fact language remains the master of man." (Heidegger, 1971) This thesis aims to explore the interface between the given stimuli and the interpreted and distilled designed object, which is not a distinct object at all but a tentacled and webbed continuum.
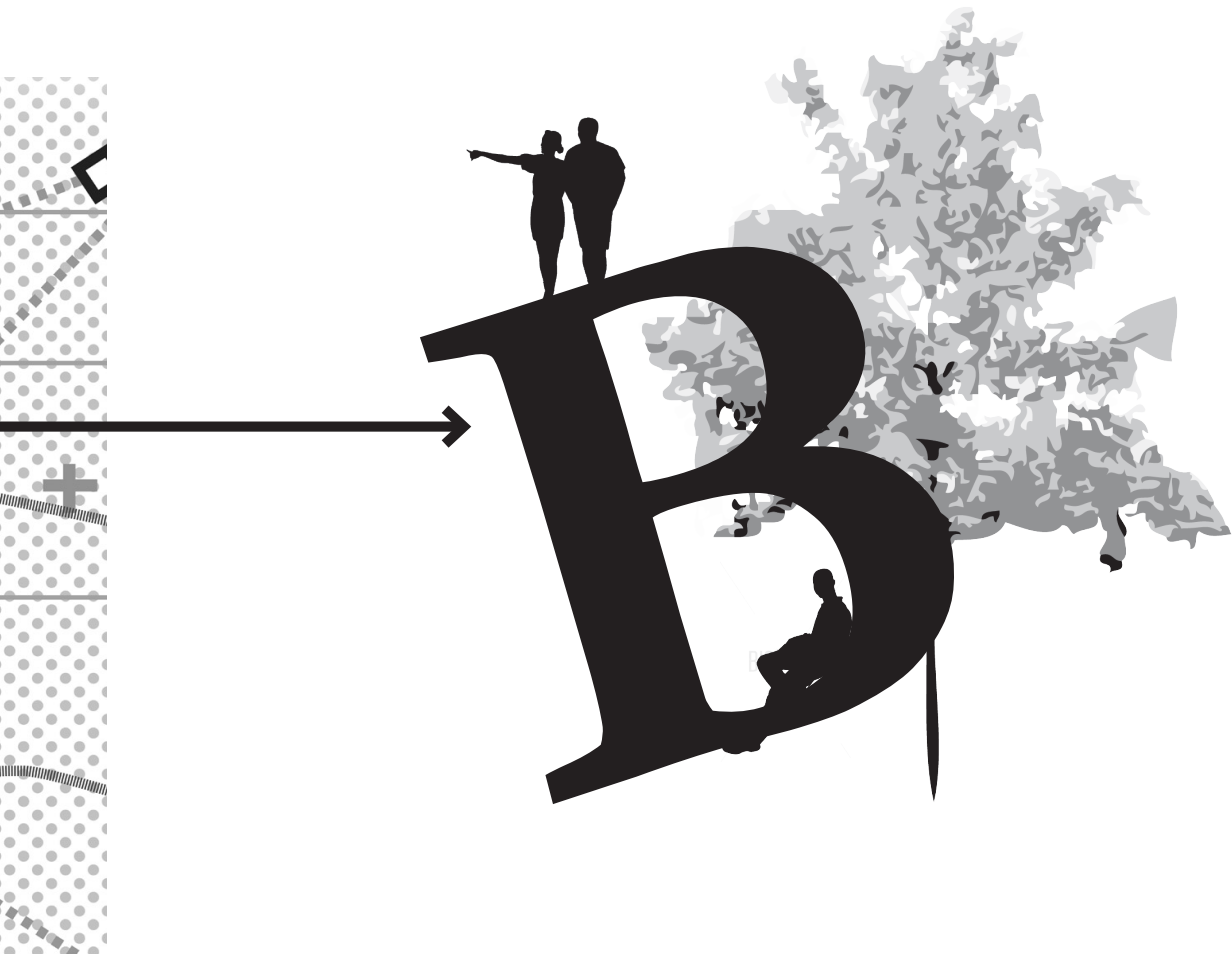
This thesis begins with the assumption that landscape is not a scene. It is not a static and distinct entity, through which and upon which humans navigate the world. It is not a realm relegated to trees and grass and nature in opposition to a world of human occupation and cultural forces. It is complex; not scientifically, systemically, politically, economically, hydrologically, socially, climatically, metaphysically or materially. It encompasses all of these and excludes them at the same time, for to isolate any one would be to omit its relation to another. It is so scientific, so systemic, so intricately connected to every facet of human existence that it can only be understood as a manifold web of separation and connectedness. Humans have a profound effect on the operations of landscape, but landscape transgresses the embodied boundary of human.

Landscape is commonly framed through a study of its etymological roots. Its complicated history renders it a simultaneously lucid and indefinable concept. In its German, Dutch and Old English incarnations, landscape implied the delineation of a bounded area (Jackson, 1984). It connoted ideas of property and ownership, and the imposition of boundaries onto the land. Later on came a schism within its history, between a static, objectified landscape (landskip) and a more culturally embedded one (landschaft) (Corner, 1997). It seems that contemporary notions of landscape are located on a discontinuous spectrum between these two outdated definitions. Landscape appears to exist as a separate realm from that of humans, while at the same time operating as a construct purely for anthropocentric consumption. Julia Czerniak identifies a trifecta of resulting issues – that of the scene overriding unseen processes, that of conventional design, and that of an ill-formed view of "nature" (1997).

The term still suffers from the residual inheritance of the Western Salon-Academy archetype. Annibale Carracci, Claude Lorrain and Nicholas Poussin were unwitting players in a legacy of idealized and objectified landscapes, which featured as backdrops to royal portraits, stage sets for plays, picturesque escapes for city-dwelling literati in need of unsullied and primitive inspiration for centuries to come. Throughout the enlightenment, penetrating the industrial revolution and
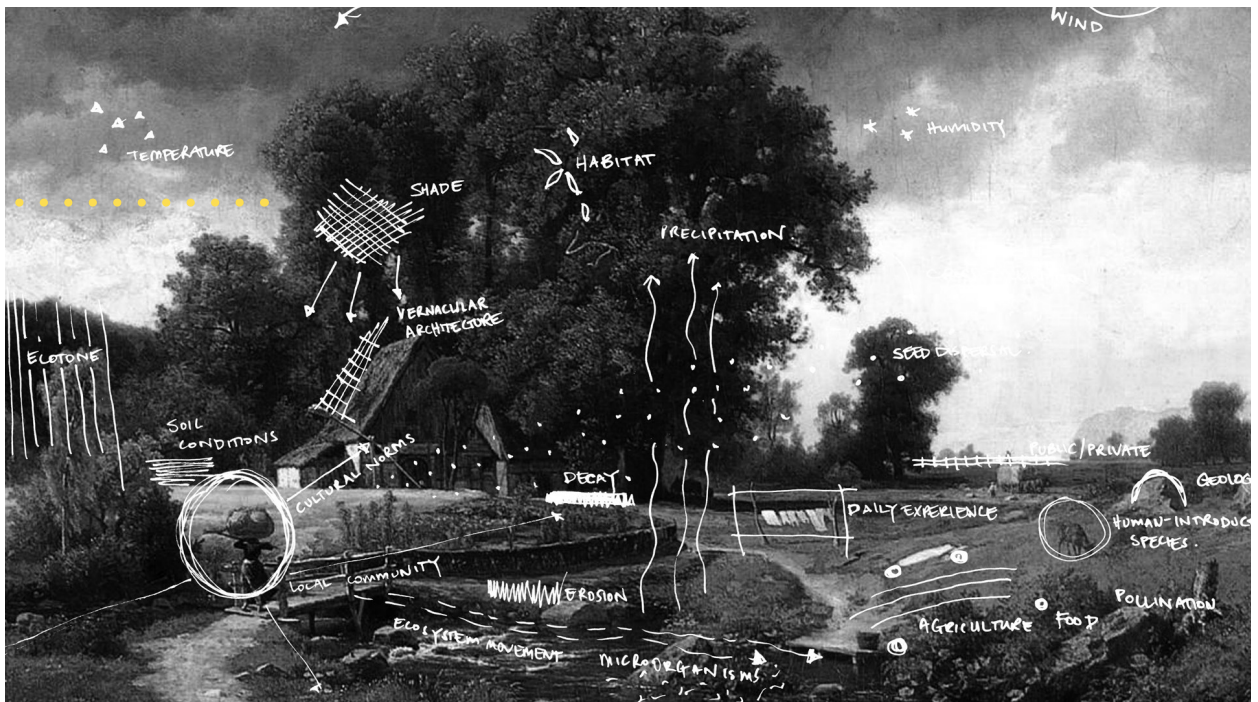
LANDSCAPE IS NOT A SCENE_

Figure 1: Anthony Goicolea, *Tree Dwellers,* 2005
C-print 72 in. x 98 in.
Collection of the International Contemporary Art Foundation

permeating the modern period, was an image of landscape as pictorial scene. An inert platform on which the escapades of human culture unfold, affected and affective but always distinct, as far as the thinking subject is concerned.

The parallel developments in the physical and chemical sciences are also deeply embedded in the scenic landscape issue. The Enlightenment gave the gift of rationalism, and consequently everything was reducible. The mechanist approach of understanding the world through analysis of smaller components from which to induce to the whole has in fact been one of the perpetuating forces of our misaligned view of nature, according to systems ecologist, Nina-Marie Lister. She describes the pragmatic categorization of the world around us is a result of a "dominant, white, Western" point of view, likening this to a pervading "monoculture" (2008). According to Lister, the quantification of "genes," "species" and "ecosystems," are falsely hierarchical classifications which neglect the performative and regenerative abilities of all levels of living systems. The logical extraction and categorization of phenomena is one of the leading causes of the invisibility of the processual tendencies of landscape.

Visible in the sticky indefinability of the word landscape and the conditioning capacity of the sciences is the meshed complexity of the human-perceived world. A study of this concept offers up problems and calls for adjustment to the way humans understand themselves as situated in opposition to something else, often called nature. It only takes a brief dip into the waters of systems thinking to encounter the jarring realization that it is illogical and unhelpful to continue to objectify landscape.   It is an important and interconnected part of a whole – and cannot be quantified or analyzed through the study of its parts alone (Lister, 2008). Systems ecology is essentially a non-linear method of studying living systems, focused on the relationships between all living things and systems, and avoiding the conventional tendency to attribute hierarchical value and climax points to ecological systems. The emphasis is instead on the complexity and uncertainty of living systems, on their ability to adapt and create novelty, and on their self-organization. There is an underlying philosophical view that the world is not a collection of objects, but relationships – everything is associated or connected to something else. A systems approach would take into consideration as many relationships as possible, through multidisciplinary means. It is seen as an accurate, but approximate way of providing solutions to problems which stem from conflicting systems (Capra, 1996). A movement towards a systems understanding of landscape would certainly eradicate its scenic qualities.

Unfortunately the pictorial paradigm lives on. It is evident in the pastoral greens of the business campus, the living ornaments extracted from the earth and relocated to the school driveway. The

maintenance of national parks is crafted around an image of landscape which does not recognize its potentials for harboring life. The "landscaping" is an added extra to the built project, should there be enough funds leftover after construction. Landscape is seen a furnishing to an otherwise complete dwelling experience, a commodity which contributes to health, happiness and aesthetic appeal. It is not understood as the continuous and metamorphosing framework, which supports human existence, or the building of life itself.

Artists such as Anthony Goicolea address such issues through self-critique of art as a practice. His series *Tree Dwellers*, 2005, is a comment on the constructedness of nature and culture, through his clearly staged photographs of people and landscapes (fig.1). He synthetically produced the impossibly wide tree at the center of the composition which groans under the weight of precariously positioned structures. In the foreground, a manicured lawn and a pile of wood, and in the distance, a forest-like setting populated by picturesque cows. In a sense, Goicolea has produced an image of a pictorial landscape, with its artificially manufactured space and author-positioned people who live only within the bounds of the picture frame. The difference is, the artist is attempting to remind the viewer where our concepts of nature and culture come from, those old master landscape paintings with golden skies and frolicking lords and ladies. Broken City Lab, an artist collective and non-profit organization from Canada, is bringing this idea into the public realm. Their series of installations Naturalized Areas, 2009 were installed in abandoned lots of Windsor, CA (fig.2). These identical signs which stated "Naturalized Area," were placed in front of untamed meadows, a simple political message with the hope that residents of these areas would realize that these spaces serve an important function in the urban realm.

I argue that through exclusive use of rational techniques of analyzing the landscape (commonly executed in the early stage of a project), landscape is similarly rendered as a static, objectified scene. The increasing awareness of environmental concerns such as sustainability and ecosystem health have led designers to rely ever more heavily on scientific and rational analysis as the primary mode of understanding landscape. The rationalist techniques pioneered by Ian McHarg and formulated through the computer software ArcGIS are omnipresent in the initial phases of the design process. Metric analysis and scientific survey tools are used as the launching pad for design progression which rarely looks back. Kathryn Moore (2010) calls into question the site survey as the ultimate description of the site "as it really is," arguing that landscape architects often approach this step with a "presumed neutrality" which causes profound problems later on in the design process. Beginning the fluid process of design with a restricted and objectified view of a place will lead to designing with the assumed perspective that the designer has not imposed her own values and ideals onto it.

Figure 2: Broken City Lab, *Naturalized Area*, 2009
FastSigns
Windsor, Ontario

The damage is further enacted through representational tools, in addition to the inherent paradigm already discussed. Landscape architects continue to overlook the hybrid relationships at play, extracting and abstracting the generative and creative processes that constantly occur within living systems through the utilization of static cross-sections, plans and perspectives. "Operating within the flatness of the picture plane, representational techniques such as framing, perspectival illusion, chiaroscuro, and spatial composition guide the formation of the built landscape" (Czerniak 1997: 110). Images are eidetic (Corner 1997), they possess the power to condition designed results. This issue within landscape architecture contributes to the prevalence of generic, uncritical landscapes, the perception that landscape is static and not dynamic, and the assumption that there is a climax point in the evolution of a designed landscape. Images are powerful.

_PROCESS

The realization that a designer is not a neutral observer could be provoked by the embracement of their own existence as part of landscape. Instead of standing on the outside, implicating landscape as the "other" to be gazed upon, humans are just as much involved in landscape processes and systems as non-humans. By reassessing "site" as a spatial and temporal terrain made up of relationships between things, landscape architects can understand their own role not as practitioners of a separate and defined discipline, but as interdisciplinary, multifaceted conductors of landscape processes. If landscape design procedures continue to depend solely on rational tools of analyzing the land, then designers are simply reinforcing hierarchical views of human dominance of, and opposition to nature.

Situating the designer within the fluctuating processes of living systems necessitates the separation of the designer from the designed. The design 'product' which typically results from the cumulative phases of analysis, creation of concepts and detailing is not synonymous with the physically designed terrain. The terrain is a landscape, it is a process, it continues to grow and change over time. The analog and digital tools belonging to the landscape architect's office negate this understanding with their tendency to design in separation from the terrain being designed. Humans are further disconnected from landscape complexity through the use of conceptual frames that locate the designer outside the designed terrain, for instance "woodland ecology," or "natural habitat." There is evidentially the need for landscape architecture to develop a language of hybrids that situates the designer within the systems they analyze.

Elizabeth Meyer (2003) asks, "if nature is a cultural construct, one that evolves as our society changes, shouldn't the field that is most concerned with shaping the land develop a shared language that reflects these hybrid relationships?" Arts practices have been successful in figuring dynamic complexities through the actions of making. Smithson intends *Spiral Jetty* (1970) to reconcile the viewer with the surrounding landscape, to make them feel that at one moment they are not distinct from its evolving systems (figure 3). He highlights the dynamism of landscape by creating the structural framework of the jetty to tangibly presence the fluctuation of the tides and saltation of the lake.

If a designer is too focused on an outcome, she will be constrained by her existing understanding of it, rather than giving herself the opportunity to discover what it could be. It is often argued that artists have the ability to escape these and other economic, bureaucratic, or social constraints in their processes of making, so they have more creative freedom. Ai Wei Wei's installation *Sunflower Seeds* is an example of how even though those constraints are still present for artists, they can be manipulated and employed to strengthen the power of a piece (figure 4). The eight million sunflower seeds exhibited at the Tate Modern were the product of a process highlighting the effects of mass production on traditional craft techniques. The installation was intentionally overwhelming as an outcome, but this was a simple move to call attention to the means of getting to that point. The installation would not be as commanding if the process it took to get to completion were omitted. There is undoubtedly a place for unfettered exploration within landscape design process. To design with fixed motives would be antithetical to the complex, shifting, hybrid existence of landscape itself. Landscape is nonlinear, so how can landscape design be nonlinear too?

The following research investigates design methodologies which can possibly enable a hybrid approach to understanding landscape. Through the potentials of automatic operations, recontextualization, and field, design processes can overcome problems associated with landscape objectification. Parallel to the design explorations, contemporary arts practices are studied for guiding examples of responding to complexity. This is research by design, it is founded on the principles of unconstrained creation and seeks to avoid categorization and predetermined outcomes, echoing the nonlinear character of landscape processes.

Figure 3: Robert Smithson, *Spiral
Jetty*, 1970
mud, precipitated salt crystals,
rocks, water coil 1500' long and
15' wide
Rozel Point, Great Salt Lake, Utah

Figure 4: Ai Wei Wei, *Sun-
flower Seeds*, 2010
Porcelain
Tate Modern

2. westside arts district atlanta

"[Atlanta is] a sparse, thin carpet of habitation, a kind of suprematist composition of little fields. Its strongest contextual givens are vegetal and infrastructural: forest and roads. Atlanta is not a city, it is a landscape" (Koolhaas 1999). The unique urban configuration of the suburban city affords Atlanta more tree coverage that almost every other US metropolis. It simultaneously is a concrete jungle built of the roads which access the suburbs. It is difficult to differentiate forested areas from developed land, so it is described by Koolhaas as "little fields." It is in fact a big field, connected by those very living and concrete corridors which structure its post-urban condition.
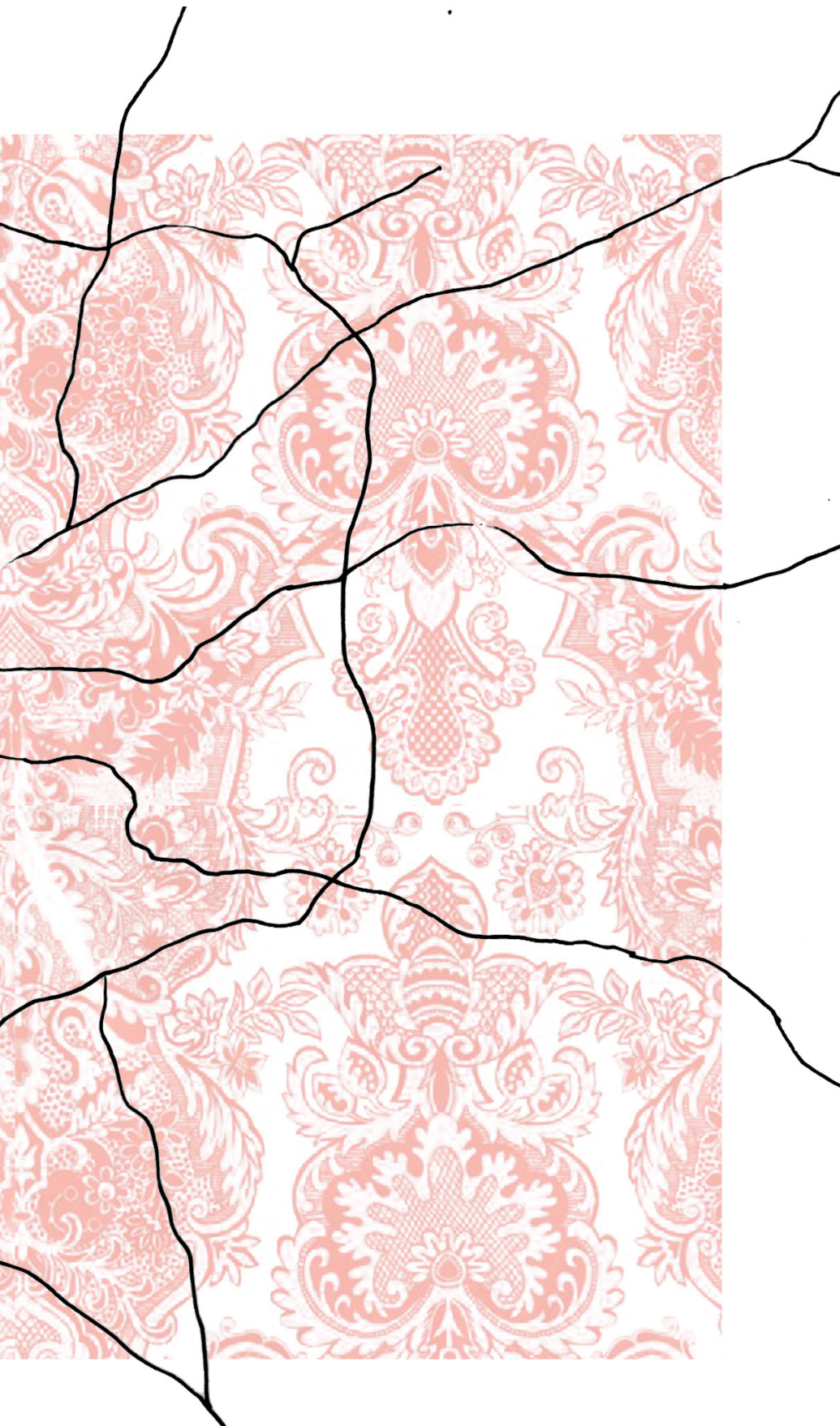
Map of the thinly inhabited condition of Atlanta, with the location of the parking lot identified and arterial roads providing structural form.

Atlanta serves as the testing ground for this project's investigations into landscape as field. It seems an apt location, for multiple reasons. It is a sprawling city, coined as post-urban because of its lack of center. It is a city of suburbs, yet it still feels somewhat like a metropolis. In a city like Atlanta, unseen connections and interactions are made where one thinks they do not exist, due to the distributed nature of its condition. Clues of interactive encounters emerge in areas which appear discombobulated but are in fact representative of intersecting systems. For instance, certain forgotten interstitial spaces which are left to be, are incredibly verdant and rich in biodiversity, and often occupy structures which held some significance at one point in time. It is this interpretation which is particularly useful for the purposes of an exploration of hybrid approaches to understanding landscape complexity.

The term noplaceness has been used to describe Atlanta's particular and generic woven condition. There exists the claim that Atlanta is devoid of cohesive identity, but this in fact is its identity. Because of the sprawling and sparse metropolitan network there seems to be the recognition amongst Atlanta residents that invisible connections are everywhere. The unseen guiding principles of the city's planning have been based on race for decades, indicating that deeper forces operate on the city continuously.   Within local arts practices there is a prevalent theme of presencing these systems of connection. "Noplaceness is the unifying quality that binds the conceptual liquidity of space severed from historical and geographic integrity. It is an abstraction that describes an underlying abstraction: place in a global world" (Corrigan 2012: 4). It seems a particularity about this kind of non-identity has enabled artists to land on the theme of representing the shifting nature of space and place. "In the space of flows, it's no longer where you are that matters but what you're connected to" (Hicks 2012: 17)

There is a burgeoning art scene in Atlanta, which is also distributed but connected, with a concentration in an area northwest of Midtown called the Westside Arts District. After exploring the area extensively on foot, an unassuming parking lot was selected as an ideal location for the testing of concepts related to the presencing of hidden relationships and connections. Its proximity to art galleries, student housing, low-income housing, an industrial area, high end restaurants and the Atlanta City Mission also represented as exemplification of the aggregated and distributed nature of this particular city.
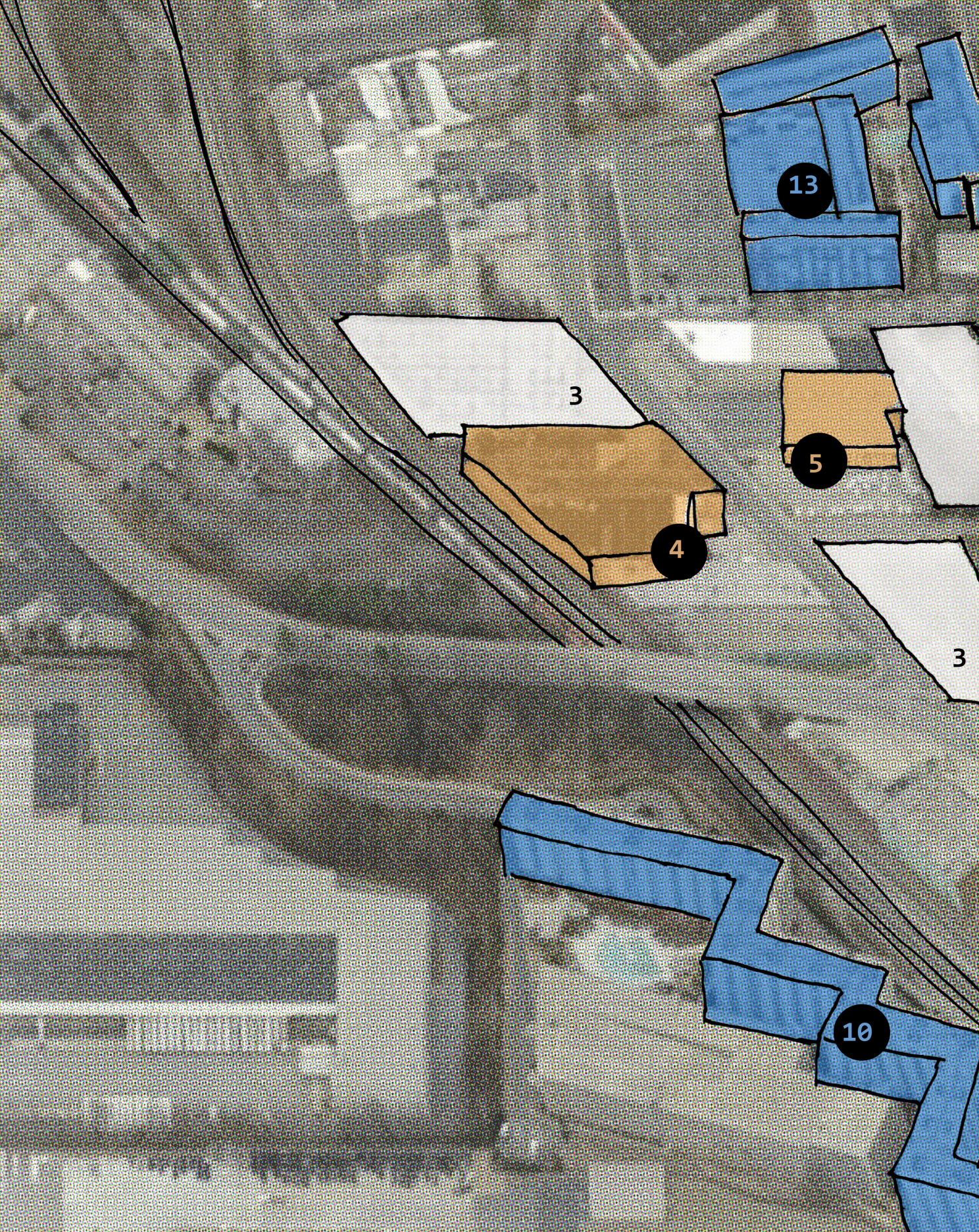
NO-PLACENESS

33.780321,-84.411795

The Westside Arts District, Atlanta

{1} Humane Society
{2} Atlanta Mission
{3} Vacant Space
{4} Georgia Receiving
{5} UPS
{6} Octane Coffee
{7} Five Seasons Brewing
{8} Toscano & Sons Italian Market
{9} Bocado
{10} Westmar Student Lofts
{11} M Street Apartments
{12} Northside Drive Apartments
{13} 10th St Apartments

The Westside Arts District is characterized by a proliferation of art galleries, ranging from independently-owned to city-operated. This collage overlays the broad range of artistic practices represented by these galleries with the opening hours to indicate the frequency of which they are open and available to engage in a possible intervention on the parking lot.
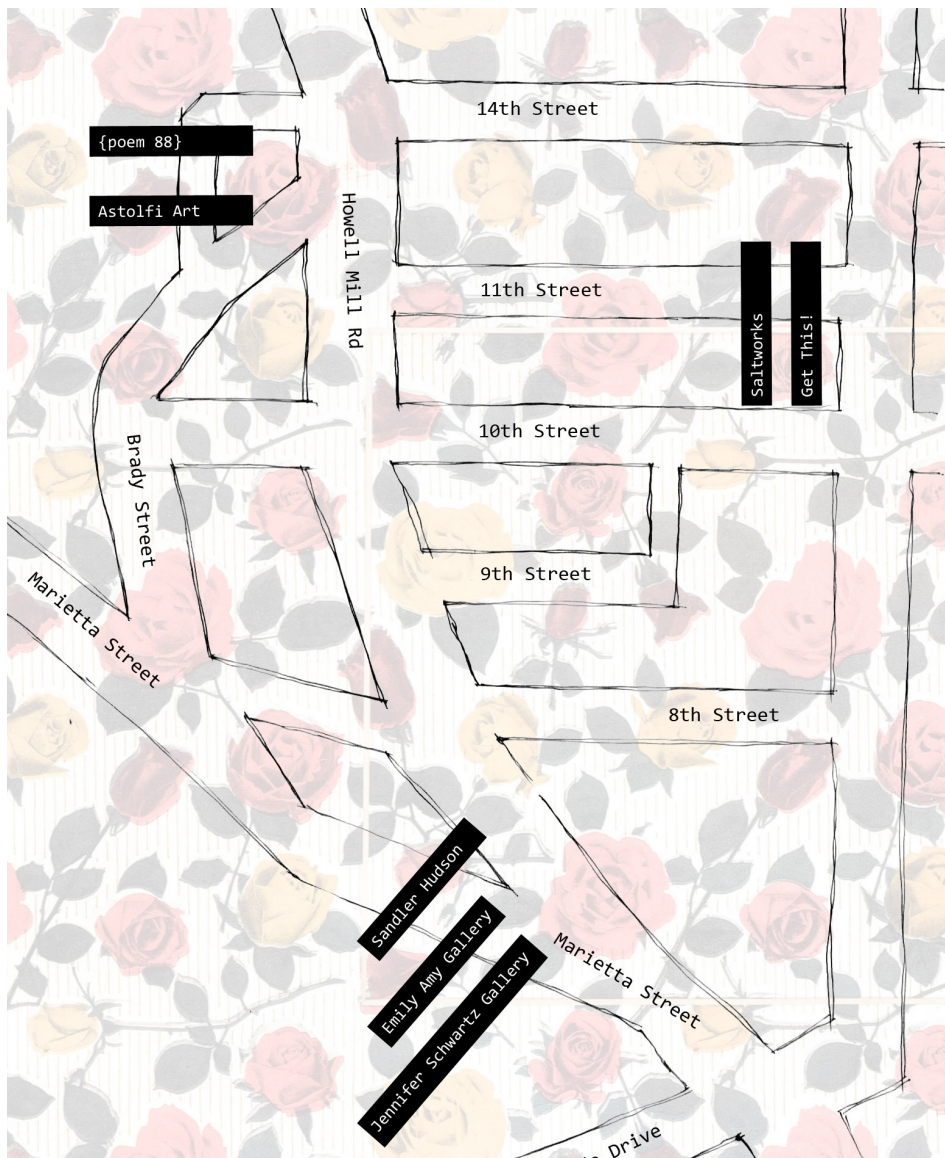
A map of the district shows the three concentrations of galleries which are frequently open to the public.

{poem 88}

Astolfi Art

14th Street

Howell Mill Rd

11th Street

Saltworks

Get This!

10th Street

Brady Street

9th Street

Marietta Street

8th Street

Sandler Hudson

Emily Amy Gallery

Jennifer Schwartz Gallery

Marietta Street

Drive

More than a parking lot: In the spirit of noplaceness, the parking lot is not mined for site specific details which could inspire design expression. It is instead interpreted as a situation of becoming, so rather than attributing objects and figures in this location with ideas about site, the relationships between them were studied. The parking lot is understood as 'the given,' and within it interactions and encounters occur at intersections between components. A seemingly unassuming parking lot is thereby rendered as an extremely rich and diverse foundation for design investigations.
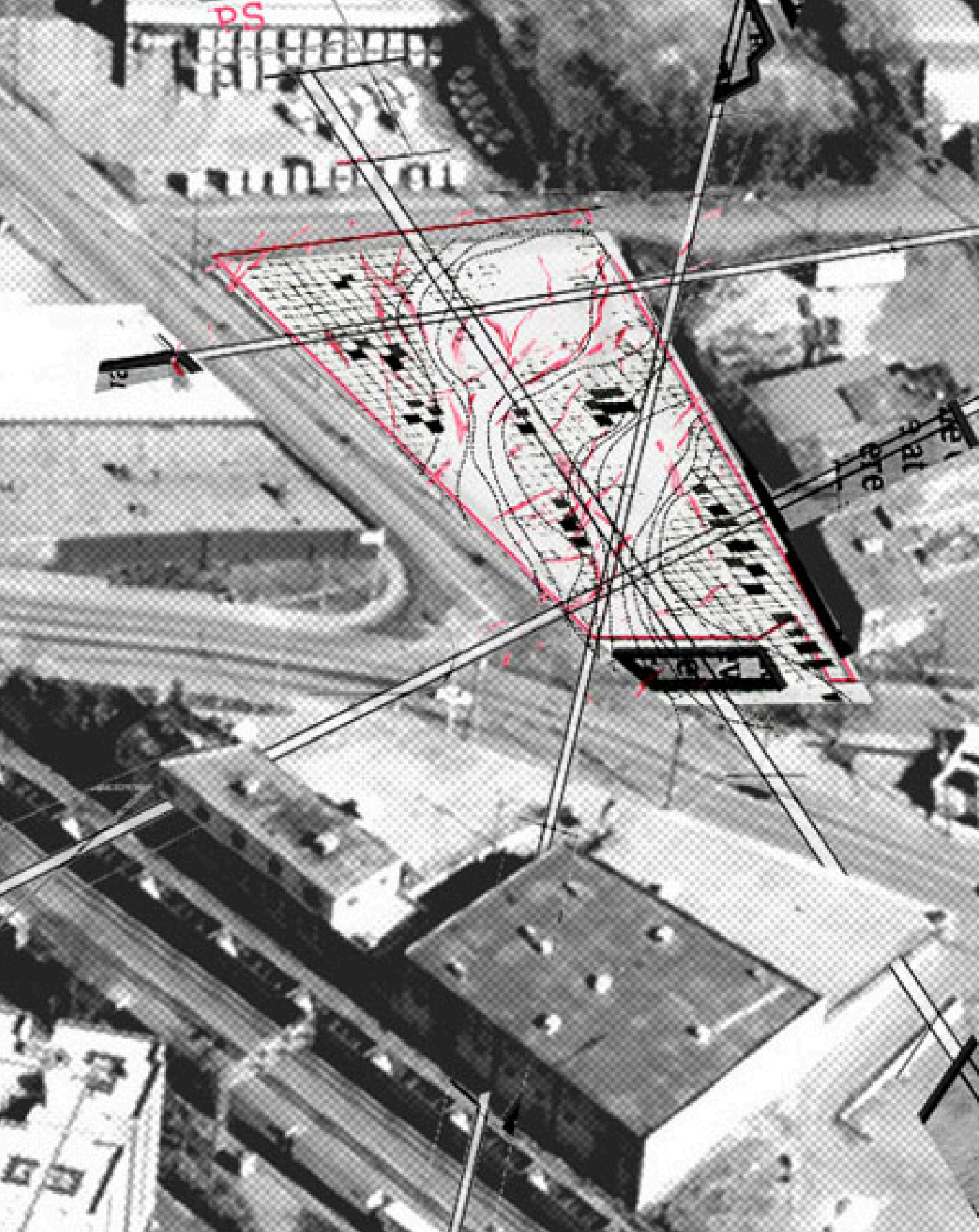
Evidence of the richness provided by the parking lot in Westside is the competing lines of receivership that are mapped out. The site yields potential for interesting encounters due to it being at the center of receivership:

Transecting the parking lot are paths drawn from the Atlanta Humane Society, welcoming abandoned animals, the Atlanta Mission, providing for the homeless, the USPS which accepts incoming mail and the Georgia Tech receiving office which is a place of collection.

This is an example of the unseen connections which exist on all levels of landscape, and are not necessarily confined to singular systems (social, ecological, political, hydrological), because these are each connected to one another at all times in infinite ways.

+_SITE
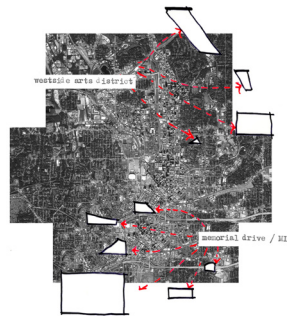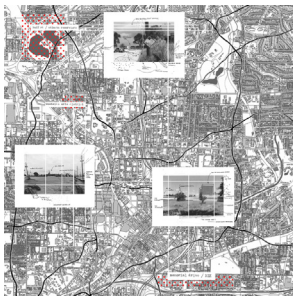
An ongoing battle between site and non-site lasts the
duration of this research project. The tension appears in
most of the design investigations, but the leap to non-site is
not undertaken. Beginning with the concept of noplaceness
situated this project in an uneasy dichotomy of attempting
to understand the site specific landscape conditions but not
wishing to succumb to hierarchal attitude of selecting some
systems to work with over others. Designing without context
can seem similar to designing a big box store or fast food chain
- it leads to a problematic identity.

-_NON-SITE

BASE MATERIALISM

YTIJATNOSIЯOH

PULSE

ENTROPY
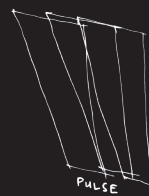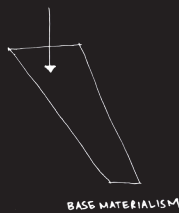
A contributing factor to the questioning of site is the fluctuating nature of landscape, which makes it difficult to attribute objects with permanence of being "specific to a place," because even the idea of place is subjective. In rejection of these projections, techniques of overcoming boundaries are explored through the concept of the "formless" (Bataille 1929)

3. automatic operations

Figure 5: Hans Arp, *Selon les lois du hasard (According to the Laws of Chance)*, 1933
Sugar paper on plyboard
Tate Gallery, London UK
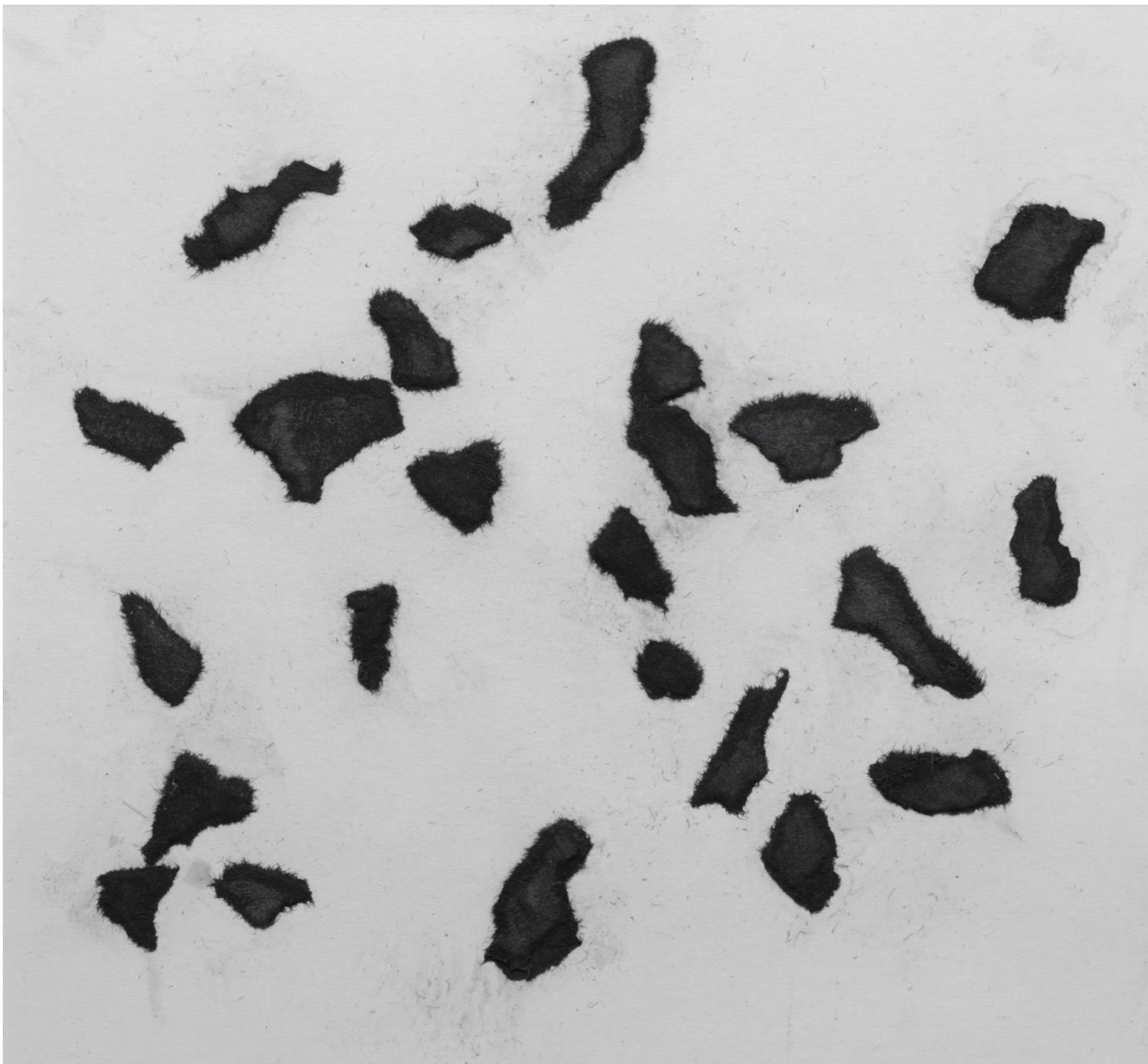
The exploration of indeterminate strategies has long been a widely utilized technique within arts practices, especially those which are concerned primarily with process. Indeterminacy in this project is seen as a way to avoid jumping too quickly to a design outcome, and not immediately accepting what is given (whether it be existing conditions, cultural context, or landscape typologies). Preformed concepts are set aside in favor of interrogation through design, in the hope that new perspectives will be yielded. Charles Waldheim (2006) outlines three major routes for indeterminacy within the design process in landscape architecture. The first is an engagement with the surface of a site through various automatic methods. The second is accepting open-endedness in response to all future possibilities of a place, social, cultural or otherwise. The third is an acknowledgement of an indeterminate quality within natural systems, and using ecological self-organization as a tool for site organization and programming.

Igualada cemetery was designed through the imposition of seemingly automatic or external actions to contribute to a sculpted groundplane. Within it also an interest in process, there are rail-ties scattered arbitrarily in concrete, and even within that material choice is the speculation that they will decompose at uncertain rates. The topography was drawn from a graphite overlay of the existing topographical conditions, which was then re-scaled to fit within the site boundaries. The project is therefore of the site in its reference to topography but through the deconstructive act of expanding the contour lines, a new system is overlaid which has less bearing on the specifics of the locale.

Tschumi was one of the first designers to propose landscape as a framework for urban revitalization. The design for *Parc de la Villette* was seen as an opportunity to embrace "indeterminate urban futures" (Waldheim 2006: 41) through the prioritization of programming. It recognized the self-organizing nature of urban systems and events and looked to provide the scaffolding on which social regeneration could occur. Tschumi's acceptance of uncertain urban possibilities was a catalyst for the landscape urbanism movement, for in the welcoming of indeterminacy, so too came the need for adaptability and flexibility in metropolitan systems.

James Corner Field Operation's design for Fresh Kills park is best understood as a strategy rather than a design. It represents a process for designing ecologies over time, embracing the processual nature of landscape in recognition that a park can never really come to completion. Inherent in this concept are theories of chaos and indeterminacy - the unpredictable forces embedded in living systems which are understood to underpin the development of cities too.   Through a 30 year phasing process, Fresh Kills is touted to undergo a transformation which could develop in uncertain ways, thereby rendering a masterplan as an empty gesture. In its replacement, is experimental speculation for possible futures which can grow in strength alongside the ecological systems over time.

Figure 6: Enric Miralles and Carme Pinos, *Igualada Cemetery,* Igualada, Spain
1984 -

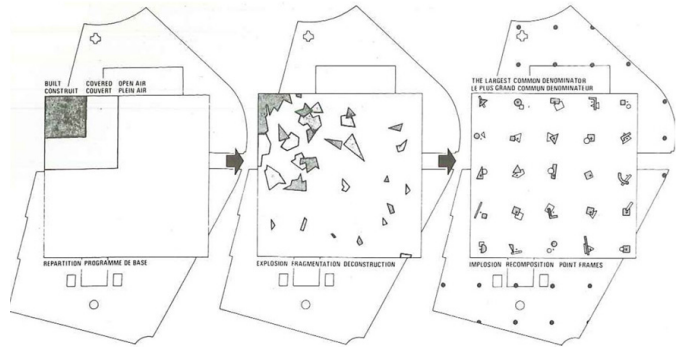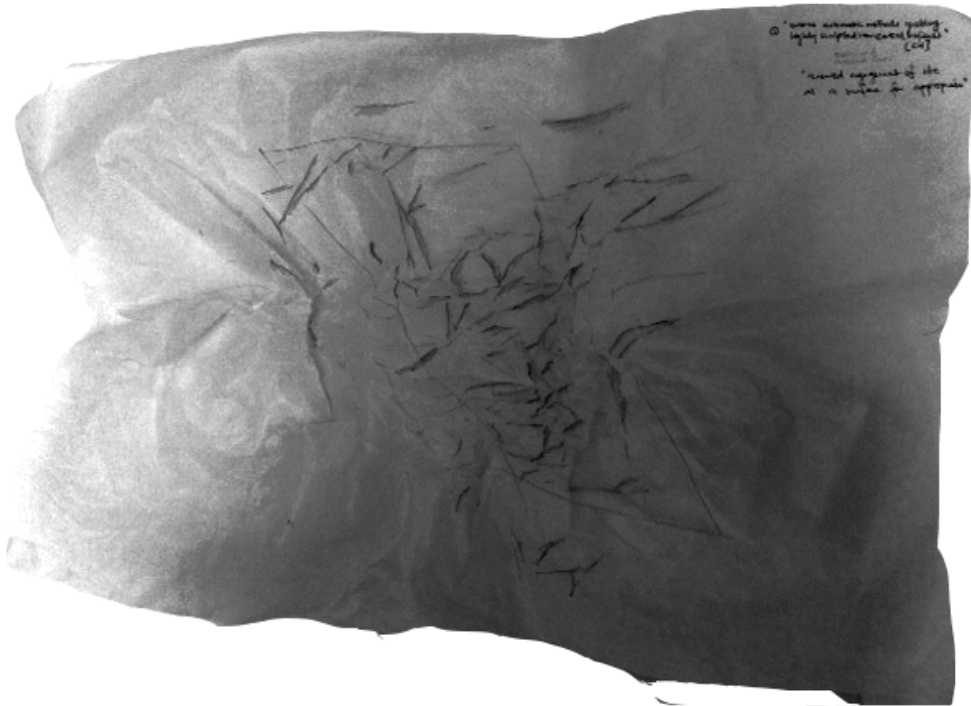Figure 7: Bernard Tschumi, *Parc de la Villete,* Paris
1982-88

Figure 8: James Corner Field Operations, *Fresh Kills,* Staten Island
2003 -

In this project, indeterminacy is investigated as a rejection of the given. The associated cultural climate, ecological context and existing conditions of the Westside Arts District are set aside with the purpose of interrogating an unbounded method for the investigations of site possibilities. Through the seemingly random configuration of elements abstracted from a crumpled piece of paper, lines and shapes are created and design ideas are generated. From path networks to seats to walls and topographical adjustments, each move is extrapolated from a pattern in the initial and subsequent phases. This type of indeterminacy as an escape from the given is not identified by Waldheim, or James Corner in his description of indeterminate futures providing "processes," "agencies," "strategies" and "scaffolding" for site design (1997), but is explored by Barnett (2000). The landscape urbanist version of indeterminacy seems to be appreciated from the distance of designing systems for urban-ecological organization rather than as a tool for opening up the design process to new possibilities for landscape. It operates at a level above that of human experience, so a revaluing of landscape processes is not achieved at a public level, even if it is at an intellectual one.
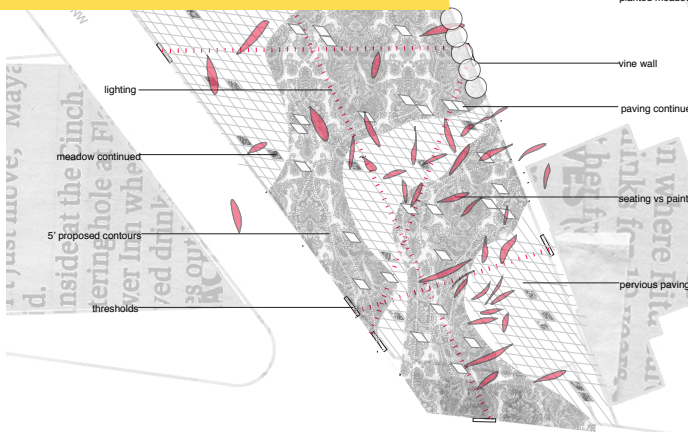
[crumpled paper] → [possibilities]

A B C
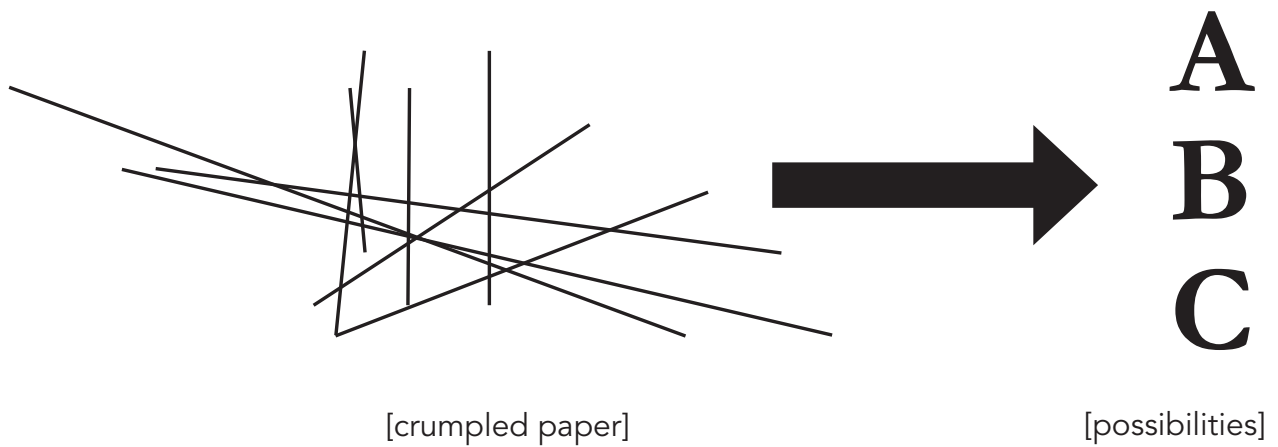
The explosion of possibities, or multiplicities of uncertain design outcomes, is primarily achieved through a distancing of the author, which gives the illusion that the designer's own constructed views are not involved. This is a nonlinear approach to design in that the purpose of the design is not decided upon prior to embarkation on the investigation. It is interesting how a schematic proposal eventuates, with seating informed by the amorphous forms found in one of the plan iterations, and stark lines of lit paths transecting the site. It is almost as though the proposal has emerged out of the interactions between paper and space, as though the design process is morphogenetic, or rhizomatic. "Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point…It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle from which it grows and overspills. It constitutes linear multiplicities with dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 21)

HP↑

LP↓

HP↑

UPS

Atlanta City Mi

UPS

Receiving

Atlanta
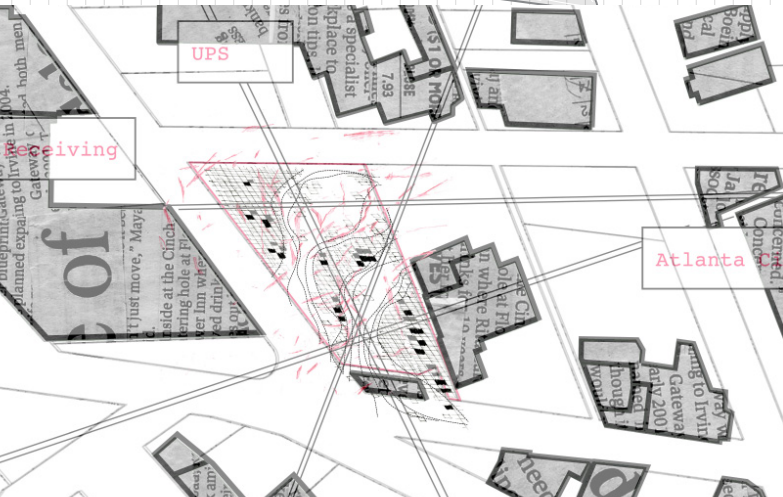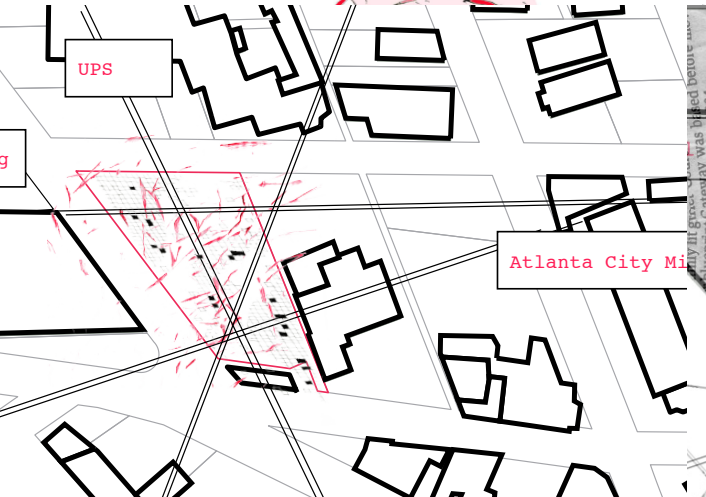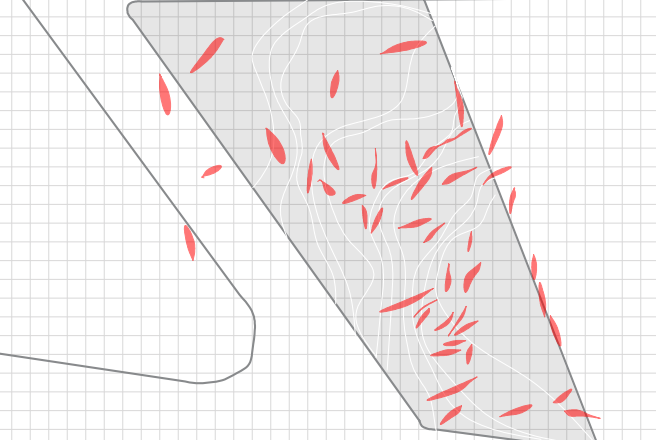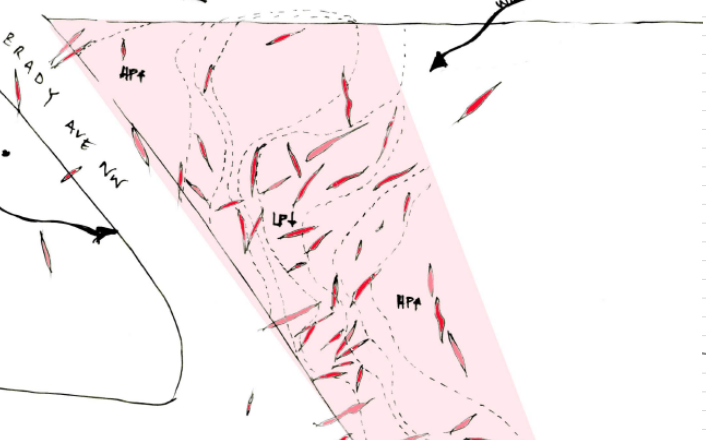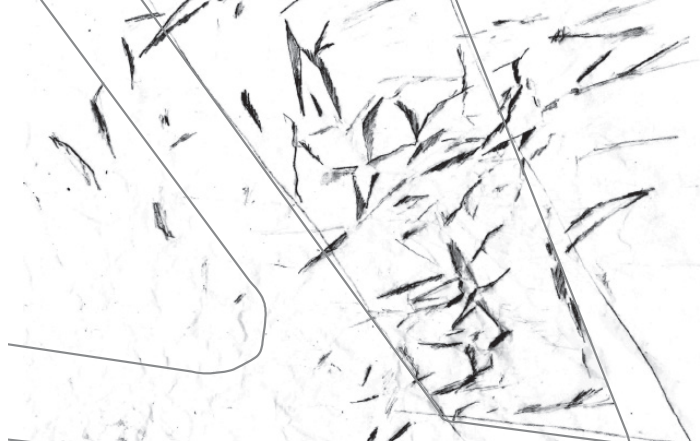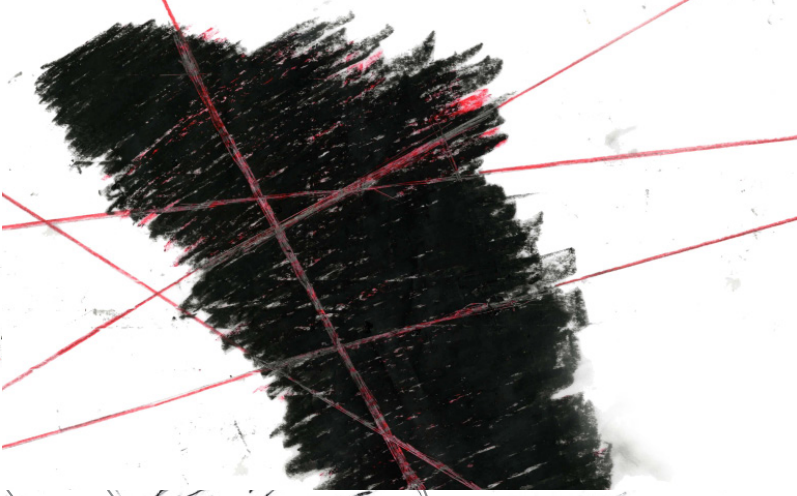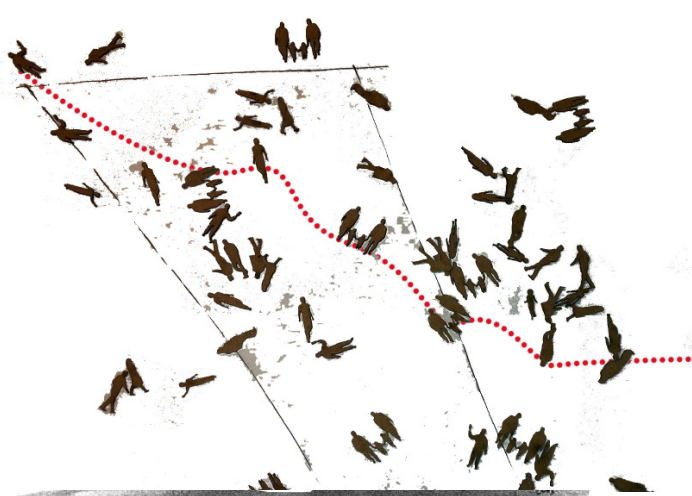
Automatic operations reject a rational or analytic approach in favor of a methodology which is governed by externally located forces. A design scheme emerges from the random folds of a piece of paper. The resulting lines guided each stage of the process, until a more finished version emerged as a preliminary concept plan.

planted meadow

vine wall

paving continued

lighting

meadow continued

seating vs paint
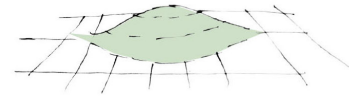
5' proposed contours

pervious paving

thresholds

The creased effects of the crumpled paper are found to be translatable into a multitude of design ideas - rapid prototyping identifies six interpretations from the infinite number of possibilities.
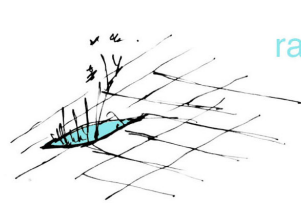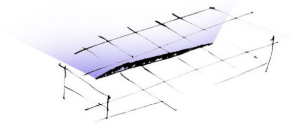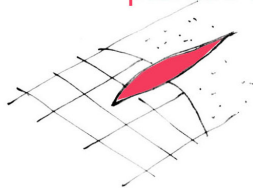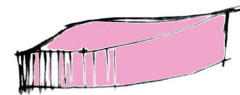
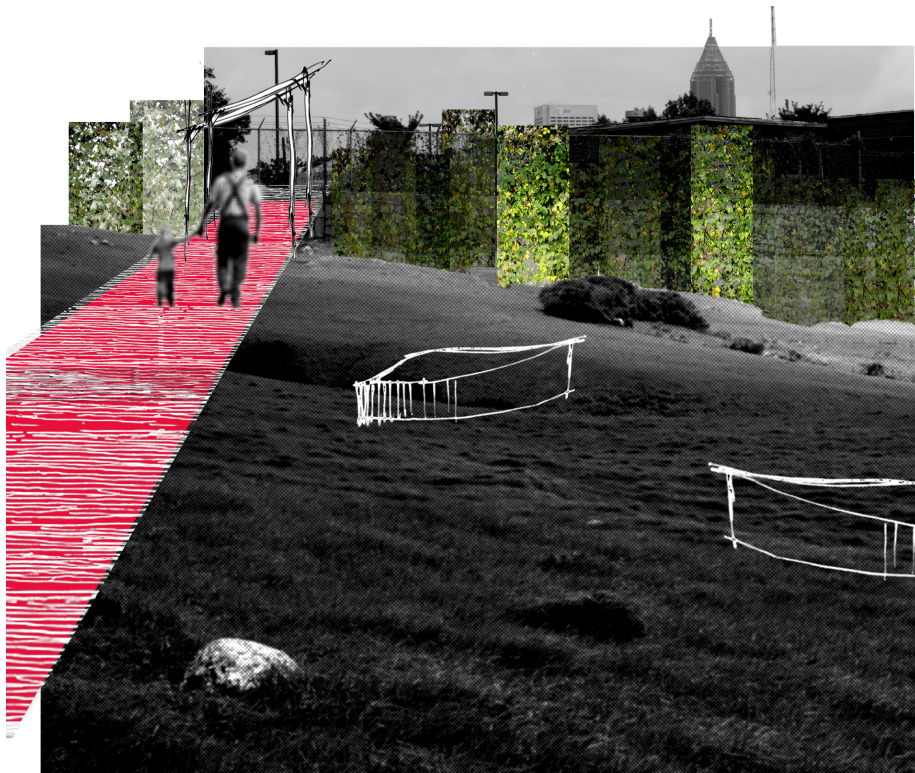rain garden

grassy knoll

planter

lighting

painted asphalt

seating

Hybrid drawings of the possibilities inspired by the crumpled paper - an undulating ground plane intercepted with scattered seating.

Topographical adjustments create interest while a lighted path transects the arbitrarily arranged elements

John Cage, from
Silence, 1961

Once   when   several   of   us
            were   driving   up   to
    Boston,   we
    stopped   at   a   roadside
restaurant   for   lunch
                                    There
    was   a   table   near   a
corner   window   where   we
    could   all   look   out
        and   see   a   pond
                                People   were
        swimming   and   diving
                                There   were
        special   arrangements   for
sliding   into   the   water
                                    Inside
the   restaurant   was   a   juke
    box
        Somebody   put   a   dime   in
                                        I
        noticed   that   the   music   that
            came   out   accompanied   the
swimmers,
though   they   didn't   hear   it

Ideas come into existence in multiplicities of ways. The emergence of ideas is a nonlinear process, and automatic operations can provide a supporting framework for their development. This investigation yields satisfactory results in its empowerment of a digression away from standard landscape forms and typologies, in favor of less obvious outcomes which can then be made relevant to context.

Incorporating indeterminacy into the design process for the parking lot in the Westside Arts District in Atlanta is a useful exercise in that it encourages a departure from the normative means of launching the design process. It is not an exclusively arbitrary approach. The main discovery is that there are moments of both indeterminacy and determinacy throughout the phases of design as decisions are clearly made at certain moments (*this* seat over *that* seat).

Aside from illuminating the uncertain moments which occur within the design process, the investigation also reveals the arbitrariness with which the contextual elements of a site are attributed qualities of relevance and specificity. A design scheme is arrived at here which is largely uninfluenced by the value judgements bound up in "appropriateness" and suitability to the specific conditions of the parking lot. While these things may re-enter later in the process, it is a worthy note to realize that perhaps the fascination with specificity is not as necessary in contemporary practice as it seems, and indeterminate strategies can be just as relevant.

STREET LIGHT.

PAPER TRASH.

POWERLINES.

CRACKED CONCRETE.

GEORGIA STATE RECEIVE.

ADJACENT BUILDING
[POSSIBLY OCCUPIED]

YELLOWJACKETS.

WIRE FENCE.

VINE.

4. [re] contextualization | defamilarization | appropriation

RAIL TIES.

STONE WALL.

FIRE HYDRANT.

GRAFFITI.

BRICK WALL.

ADJACENT PARKING.

ANTS.

STREET.

VACANT BUSINESS.

SIDEWALK.

POWER POLES

CARS.

WATER.

WEEDY GRASS

Figure 9: Sam Durant, *Proposal for White and Indian Dead Monument Transpositions, Washington, D.C*, 2005
Paula Cooper Gallery, NY

Following on the theme of interrogating selected elements of "site" as a route to new methodologies, the concept of recontextualization is explored. Recontextualization is a term borrowed from contemporary arts practices, and refers to the movement of things, people and ideas from one context to another, with the intention of studying whether their associations remain intact and meanings linger. This methodology was practiced by the appropriationists of the 1960s, Renee Magritte and his defamiliarization techniques, and the Pop Art Movement. It is still a common technique used within contemporary arts to question roles and portrayals in society and the constructs on which cultural norms and values are built. This type of investigation requires the designer to probe their own process of selection – how she decides to favor or bring to light certain elements over others, how she frames what is given out of the mass of interrelated, interwoven phenomena that appears to her.

Proposal for White and Indian Dead Monument Transpositions is an installation by artist Sam Durant, consisting of twenty-five replicas of war memorial monuments arranged in a gallery space. Along with these copied artifacts are a plan and model for the real monuments to be moved from their original locations around the United States, to the National Mall in Washington DC where a 555-foot stone obelisk already stands. The work is a comment on the racist tendencies of memorialization in the United States. Through the recontextualization of monuments built in commemoration of European and Native American dead, Durant highlights the underlying discrepancies between them. These are simultaneously apparent and concealed, and relate to larger questions of historical authenticity and myth. The artwork achieves a provocation which causes the viewer to rethink the role of monuments in commemoration and public space, but there are certain issues surrounding the physical display of the work, and further questions are raised about the ability of an artist to represent an alternative cultural perspective.

Durant wrote the catalogue which accompanied his show at the Paula Cooper Gallery. In it he describes the underlying racism behind the custom of erecting stone monuments as markers commemorating historical events. His particular focus is what he calls "massacre monuments and memorials," those which were built in certain places where wars occurred involving Europeans and Native Americans (Durant 2005). These massacres occurred throughout US history, from the period of the founding of the New World to the solidifying of Union territories during the Civil War. The proposal entails the transposition of a selection of monuments from around the country to Washington D.C. Durant claims that the majority of these are dedicated to 'American' soldiers. This is probably accurate, but it seems that his selection process could easily be biased to choose more of these to enforce his purpose. The monuments for European soldiers would be placed around the reflecting pool between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Those dedicated

Figure 10: Martha Schwartz, Ken Smith,
David Meyer Landscape Architects, *Village of Yorkville Park*
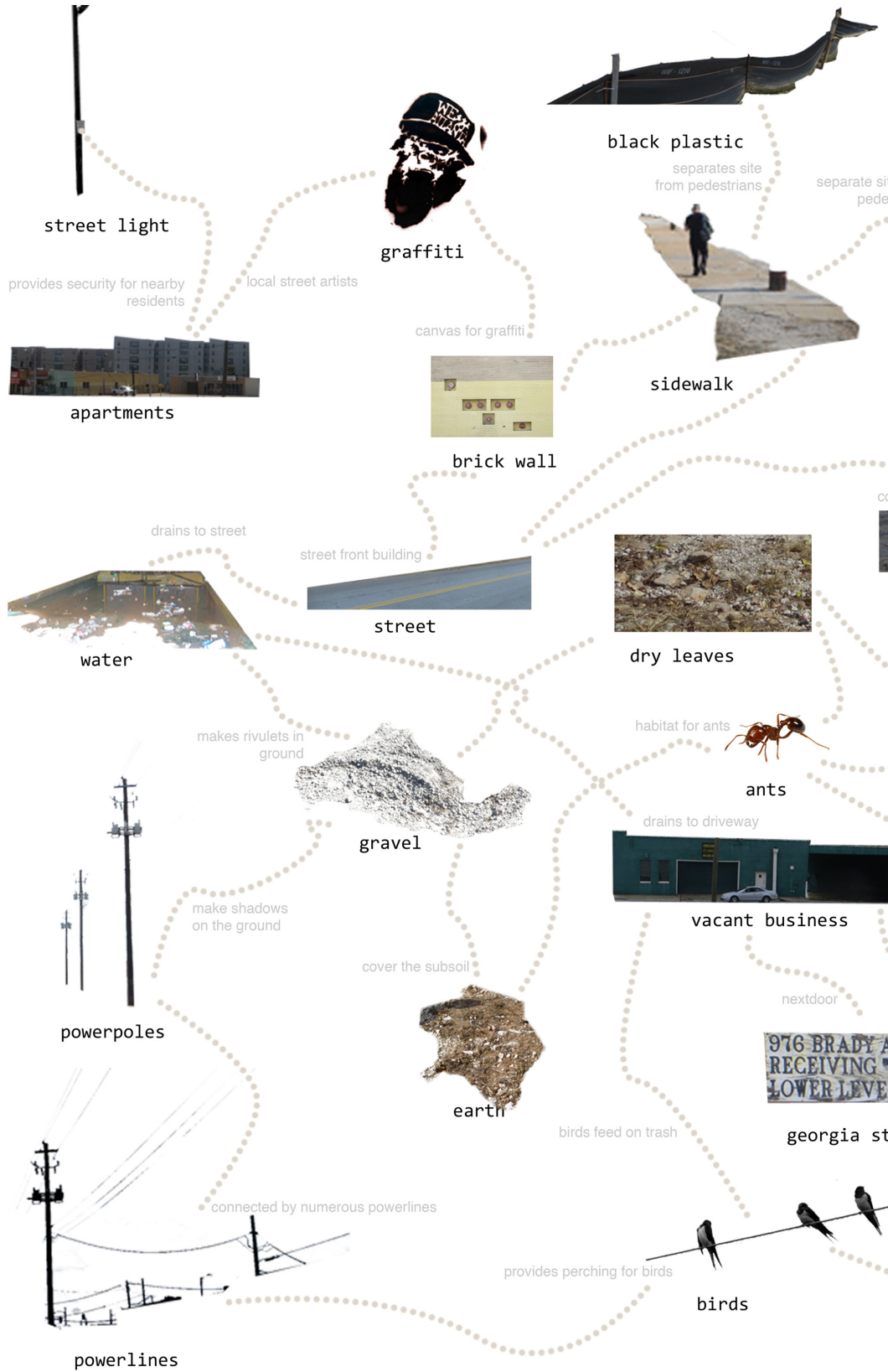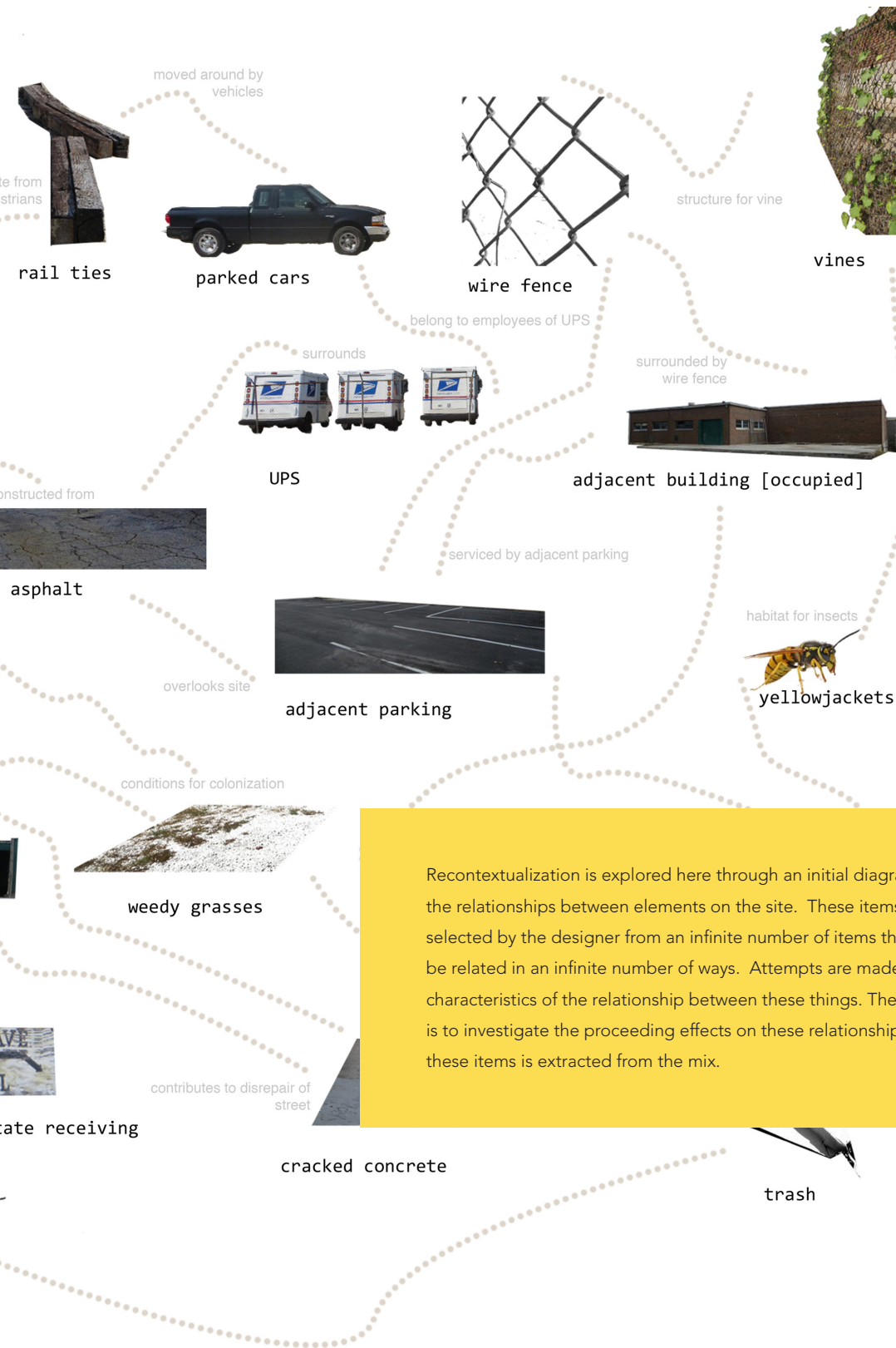Toronto, ON, 1994
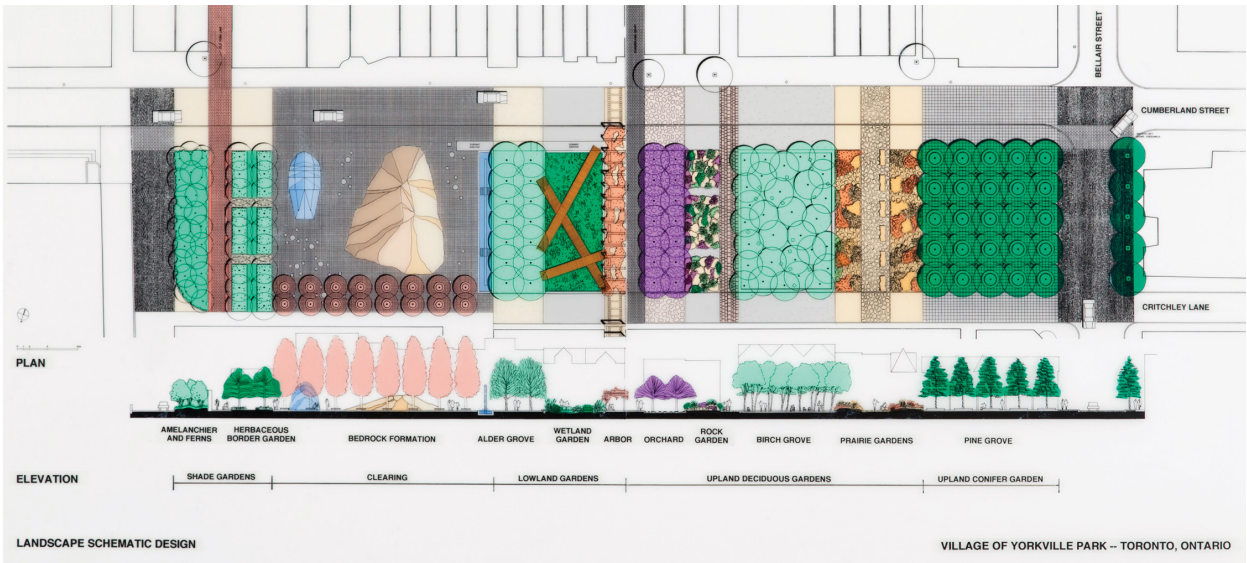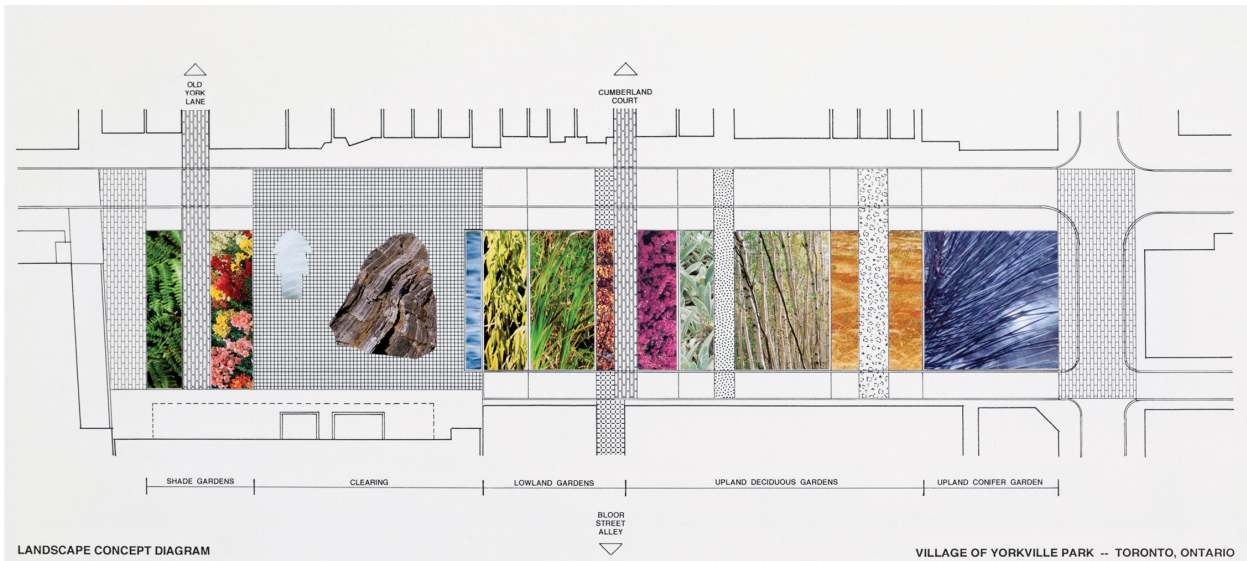
to fallen Native Americans would be arranged on the lawn area in front of the Washington Monument. This delineation would directly highlight issues of territory and history-making. The simple relocation of these monuments emphasizes how arbitrary the placement of artifacts can be, and how loaded the consequences are. In essence, the artist is suggesting that monuments are erected and located based on a particular worldview, a Euro-American one. Also brought to the foreground is an anonymity found in framing them as a collection. Each of these monuments commemorates the fallen en masse, and whether European or Native American there is the sense that these groups died without a cause, separated as they are from their context. This would be an unusual connection to make standing by the Washington Monument, surrounded at the very center of American freedom and individual rights.

Martha Schwartz and Ken Smith's Village of Yorkville Park in Downtown Toronto addresses recontextualization in a landscape application. Eleven distinct Ontario ecosystems are inserted into the city park with botanical and geological insertions. It is essentially a catalogue of the region's living systems ranging from plant communities, local rocks, pine forests and marshlands. The park is inspired by the 19th Century practice of "bringing specimens of the native landscape into the city as typified by the tradition of the Victorian "box collections" of insects, fossils, bones, etc" (Schwartz 1994). Yorkville Park has been referred to as a "designer ecology... largely a symbolic gesture provided by such parks' designers to recall or represent nature in some capacity" (Lister 35: 2007). It presents an interesting conceptual problem based on the very act of transporting entities from one locale to another. Of course, it is not just entities that are transported and supplanted, but their associated relationships and networks - physical connections such as food sources, subsistence and shelter, as well as mental ones; ideas about "nature" and public space.

In the act of transposing these living systems to the compacted earth of the urban realm of Toronto, have the designers rendered this park devoid of systemic functionality? To the average city-dweller, they represent "nature," an identifying feature of the region, but the park does not exist as a sustainable and performative ecology (Lister 35: 2007). Yorkville Park raises questions about the application of recontextualization within landscape architecture. It is an intentional inventory of external ecosystems, and was predicated on the concept of historical collections, but what of the invasive species found in many common landscapes? They too act as symbols of "nature" but are not necessarily contributing to ecosystem health. It comes down to value imposed upon certain aspects over others.   In this case Yorkville Park cleverly illuminates the issues of constructed nature, by confining each ecosystem to hard edged boundaries lined up in a row. By creating adjacencies that would not occur in ecologies without human intervention, the false opposition of nature "out there" in the wilderness against the built city is questioned. Its success comes back to the process of selection of given elements to work with and creates the need for criteria to guide points of decision.

street light

graffiti

black plastic

separates site
from pedestrians

separate si
pede

provides security for nearby
residents

local street artists

sidewalk

canvas for graffiti

apartments

brick wall

drains to street

street front building

co

water

street

dry leaves

makes rivulets in
ground

habitat for ants

ants

gravel

drains to driveway

vacant business

make shadows
on the ground

nextdoor

powerpoles

cover the subsoil

earth

976 BRADY A
RECEIVING
LOWER LEVE

birds feed on trash

georgia st

connected by numerous powerlines

provides perching for birds

birds

powerlines

moved around by vehicles

te from strians

rail ties

parked cars

wire fence

structure for vine

vines

belong to employees of UPS

surrounds

surrounded by wire fence

UPS

adjacent building [occupied]

onstructed from

asphalt

serviced by adjacent parking

habitat for insects

yellowjackets

overlooks site

adjacent parking

conditions for colonization

weedy grasses

Recontextualization is explored here through an initial diagram of the relationships between elements on the site. These items are selected by the designer from an infinite number of items that could be related in an infinite number of ways. Attempts are made to define characteristics of the relationship between these things. The intention is to investigate the proceeding effects on these relationships if one of these items is extracted from the mix.

contributes to disrepair of street

ate receiving

cracked concrete

trash

Gravel channels

Gravel cylinders

Gravel mounds

Approriated Wave Deck and
recontextualized long leaf
pine ecosystem

A series of layered ideograms enables the relocation and configuration of one element, gravel, and reveals the effect that this move would have on other elements. Whether it would affect the on-site water flow, or the ant habitat and thereby other insects, or the ability for people to park there, the intention is that these relationships can be dissected.   An experiment in appropriation is exacted in this parking lot by the same means. The Dutch design firm West 8's famed Wave Deck is translocated to the parking lot, again through ideographic techniques. Also relocated is the regional ecosystem of the longleaf pine, in a manner similar to Yorkville Park's designer ecologies. The medium of the ideogram allows for the quick insertion of any imagined component into the existing world. It is interesting to observe how a space can be transformed through the simple reconfiguration of its on-site components.

The study raises questions about the role of the landscape architect and the practice of reconfiguring existing conditions to achieve novel results. It presences the effects these actions have on unseen processes, such as ant colonies, which in turn affect something else. It reveals that designers recontextualize very frequently, a fact especially elucidated by the appropriation of the Wave Deck. Cutting and pasting images from different sources is a common representational technique for the quick display of design ideas, but its possible this act could be preventing designers from interrogating the conceptual design process.

These short design tests, partnered with the analysis of Sam Durant's work and Yorkville Park illuminate one of the problems with site. A designer may feel uneasy about planting invasive species, imposing a disconnected plan on a set of conditions, or ignoring contextual forces. In current practice, 'site,' is often the source of design expression, the justified reason behind decisions and the key to creating 'sense of place' (Meyer 2005). Designs informed by site analysis are frequently evaluated by their appropriateness in relation to the various landscape conditions. In the assessment of the blatantly recontextualized landscapes here, it becomes clear that appropriateness is not measured in the same manner, according to specifics of site.   Raxworthy declares that "the inherent subjectivity of any judgement of appropriateness has become the enduring paradox of landscape design process" (1997: 43). The lessons of recontextualization act a visible testament to this assertion.

The design tests based on the reconfiguration of gravel are particularly useful in their emphasis on relationships, rather than objects. Combined with automatic operations, which observe uncertainty within the process of design and within the functionality of landscape, these realizations sufficiently lay the groundwork for the forthcoming investigations of landscape as field.

5. field
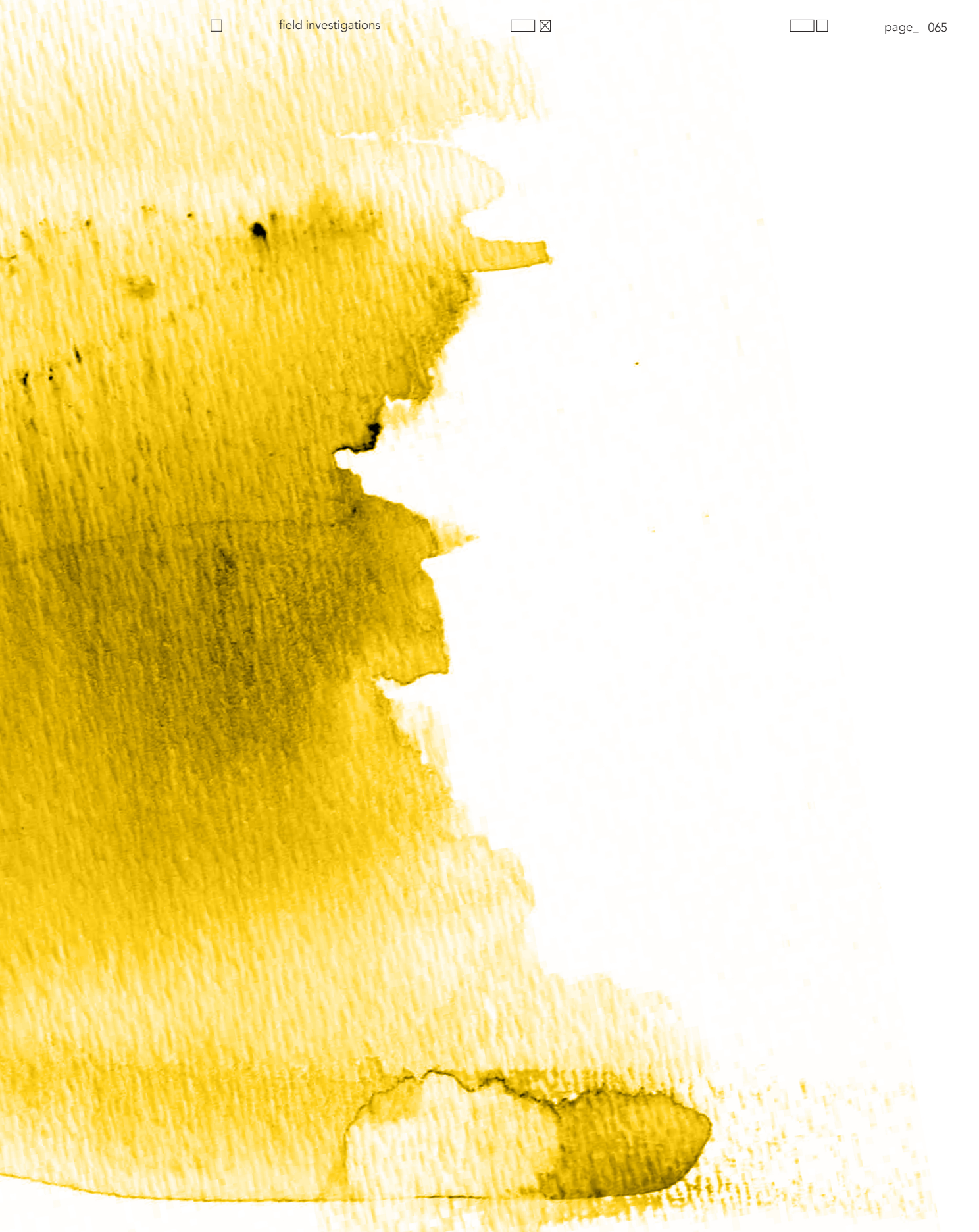
FIELD (n)

(1) : an open land area free of woods and buildings (2) : an area of land marked by the presence of particular objects or features <dune fields>

(1) : an area of cleared enclosed land used for cultivation or pasture <a field of wheat> (2) : land containing a natural resource (3) : airfield

: the place where a battle is fought; also : battle

: a large unbroken expanse (as of ice)

: an area or division of an activity, subject, or profession

: the sphere of practical operation outside a base (as a laboratory, office, or factory) <geologists working in the field>

: an area for military exercises or maneuvers

(1) : an area constructed, equipped, or marked for sports (2) : the portion of an indoor or outdoor sports area enclosed by the running track and on which field events are conducted (3) : any of the three sections of a baseball outfield <hits to all fields>

a space on which something is drawn or projected: as

: the space on the surface of a coin, medal, or seal that does not contain the design

: the ground of each division in a flag

: the whole surface of an escutcheon

the individuals that make up all or part of the participants in a contest; especially : all participants with the exception of the favorite or the winner in a contest where more than two are entered

the area visible through the lens of an optical instrument

: a region or space in which a given effect (as magnetism) exists

: a region of embryonic tissue capable of a particular type of differentiation <a morphogenetic field>

To observe landscape as field is to embrace the functionality, the open connections and apparent continuity of the intertwined world. It is to visualize relationships rather than objects, and see systems rather than figures. There is no ground, no surface, no horizontal plane on which actions and figures play out. There is only the field; only interactions occurring within space and time and the resulting effects. Figures are representations of where the field accumulates meaning no interruptions occur within it and externality does not exist. Landscape is a spatial and temporal terrain, and consequently humans are a part of it, in fact they are conglomerations of the field itself. If this view were accepted, the world would be understood as in a constant state of becoming, change would be welcomed with open arms, and future possibilities could be addressed with holistic intentions. The implications for design are immense; the landscape architect can be seen as an "orchestrator of matter-energy," rather than a genius architect or steward of the land (Barnett 2013: 68). The role of designer reflects that of landscape, she can gather and presence the fluctuations of the field but she herself is an event or a moment of intensity within the multi-dimensioned manifold. The landscape architect is not external to the field movements so does not have authoritative control over its dimensions. The investigations from this point are intended to explore this notion - how does one design with landscape as field?

LANDSCAPE AS FIELD_

Fields develop in many ways.   They are within science, the arts, cultural practices, history. A field can refer to something connected and rhizomatic, such as vegetation, an area of disciplinary study, a spatially bound differentiation or a vacuum in which interactions occur electromagnetically. Through the study of the various paths that field has trodden, in science, art theory and landscape architecture, this investigation intends to explore the question: how can landscape as field inform design? It is through research by design that solutions are discovered, although they are characteristic of the field itself; multiple and intertwined.

The notion of an expanded field was introduced into arts practices by Rosalind Krauss in the 1970s. She utilizes the "logically expanded field," a diagrammatic approach to explaining sculpture's position within cultural production. At a time when minimalist artists and land artists alike were creating sculptural works, it was realized that traditional modernist binaries were not sufficient to explain this artistic medium. Sculpture was frequently identified as "not landscape" or "not architecture," meaning that it occupied a zone characterized by negatives (Krauss 1979: 37). The idiosyncrasies intentionally pushed upon within much of the contemporary artists' sculptural work were thereby caught up in semantic critiques. Through the diagramming of sculpture's assumed oppositions, Krauss discovered that sculpture in fact inhabits a space of possibilities guided by other aggregated formations such as landscape and architecture. This

Figure 11: On Kawara, *Today Series*, 1966--
Acrylic on canvas, 10.125 × 105 × 1.875 inches
Walker Art Center, Minnesota

Figure 12: James Corner Field Operations, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and Piet Oudolf, *The Highline*, 2009
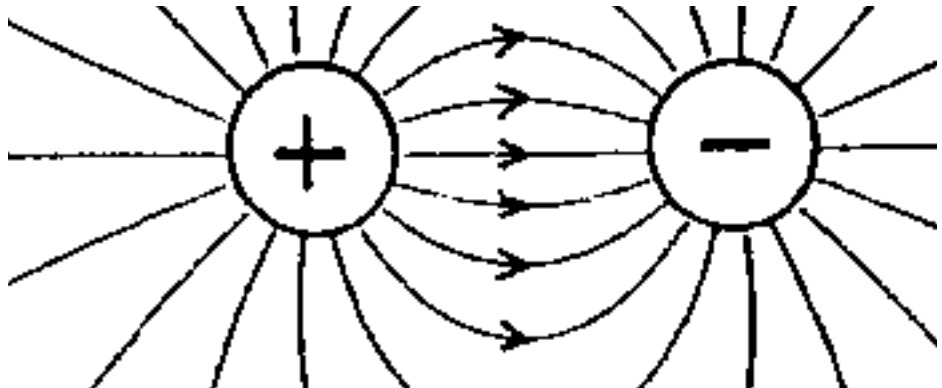

Figure 13: An electromagnetic field

Figure 14: An agricultural field

study revealed the expanse of undefined and uncontained areas for exploration and made room for the subsequent potentials offered by artists working with the temporality of landscape processes, within the movements of land art and earthworks. A gaping vacancy in artistic definition was uncovered by Krauss, illustrating the difficulty encapsulated in categorizing anything which represents movement and change.

The revaluation of inherent boundaries within a preconceived medium can be extended even further when one considers the object-field relationship. Artists such as On Kawara engage the idea that the distinctions between art objects and discourse are non existent, and subsequently art is the same as life. Everything merges together and interrelates, so that each condition is the product of some other occurrence. The *Today* series (figure 8) consists of a date painted in the same format, in the language of the country it was painted in, everyday for twenty years. If the painting is not exhibited, it is placed in its own box lined with the newspaper from the place on that day. He essentially absorbs the creation of art into his daily experience, meaning that when his paintings are exhibited, it is not just art on display, but his life. If this concept were to be applied in the process of landscape design, the problem of designer as distanced observer would be eradicated. The designer would no longer be responsible for arranging objects on a field, but orchestrating intensifications of a space-time continuum of which she is a part. This version of field could also be used overcome the apparent schism that exists between landscape theory and practice.

It is not just the observer-subject boundary which is interrogated through introducing the notion of an expanded field into landscape architecture. To expand something is to split it open, and extend it beyond its original reach. This action within landscape reveals a raft of in-between spaces ready for exploration. Beyond the conventional language of binaries landscape architects so frequently succumb to, is a world of "hybrids, relationships and tensions (which allow us) to see the received histories of the modern landscape as the ideologically motivated social constructs that they are" (Meyer 1997: 51). Expanding the field in fact enables humans to integrate themselves in the "other" and appreciate landscape as a co-creative field of competing interactions between humans and nonhumans. Like sculpture, landscape architecture needs to reexamine the assumed constrictions within its genesis, and discover a new language which speaks to the spaces between catalogued concepts and distinct disciplines and opens up to a wider range of collaborative power and organic possibilities.

In addition to the notion of expanding the field, field theory as derived from Einstein's general theories of relativity is similarly applicable to landscape practices. Space and time were rendered by Einstein as a continuum rather than as transcendent universals, as was propelled by Newtonian

physics (Barnett 2013). Everything is relative, part of a system which can only be defined by its interactions with other systems. The field is in a constant state of becoming, it is continuous and unbounded by the rules of metrics. It is similarly unfettered by the dimensionality imposed on it by humans. A large part of understanding landscape as a field is recognizing the systems-influenced idea that no singular element can be seen as productive in isolation. With this knowledge comes the assertion that humans play a large role in landscape systems – they are both affective of and affected by natural processes. Within the field however, it is no longer useful to distinguish between natural and cultural systems, because that act contributes to the tendency to separate humans from the complex aggregation of contingent parts.

FIELD INSTANCES_

Nikki Graziano's *Found Functions* (figure 12) highlights the constructedness of the universal language of math and physics by attempting to merge art and science. As Meyer suggests, the field can be opened up through the interrogation of the space between binaries (1997: 51). Graziano's composite image of a mathematical parabola overlaid upon an area of shrubbery presences these binaries and prompts the realization that the sole use of science will unlikely be sufficient to capture the processes and operations of the living world. It also hints at the foundations of these views, simultaneously juxtaposing art and science and uniting them together, reflecting the complex relationship of the field itself.

The eradication of embodied self is evoked by Yayoi Kusama's *Fireflies on Water* (figure 13). Through the presentation of undifferentiated space, an experience occurs where the viewer loses sight of her own embodied boundary. She no longer is able to detect where she ends and the space begins, and cannot perceive the termination of the space due to the unsettling reflection of millions of lights. The field is activated here through the attempt to dissolve the barrier between the subject and the field itself, and the signifier that humans should indeed see themselves as conglomerations of massed intensities.

The expanded field is engaged by James Lazarus' ongoing collaborative art project, *Too Hard to Keep* (figure 14). Through the collection of photographs from around the world that are deemed "too hard to keep," Lazarus is continuously co-creating an art event with collective meaning governed not by an individual's contribution, but the whole made up of component parts. An online collection gathers these moments in time within people's lives, extending their significance into the infinite spatial and temporal zone afforded by the internet. There is the immediate effect of questioning the motive for the photographs, the reasoning behind their being difficult to possess, and the shared human functions of curiosity and sadness, which refer to a collective field of emotive and affective power.

Figure 15: Nikki Graziano, *Found Functions,* 2008 www.nikkigraziano.com

Figure 16: Yayoi Kusama, *Fireflies on the Water*, 2002. Mirror, plexiglass, 150 lights and water, 111 × 144 1/2 × 144 1/2 in Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

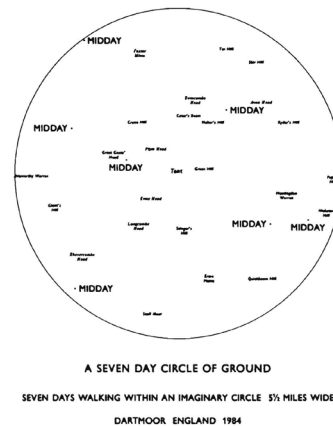Figure 17: Jason Lazarus, *Too Hard to Keep*, 2010 - 2013. http://toohardtokeep. blogspot.com/

60

40
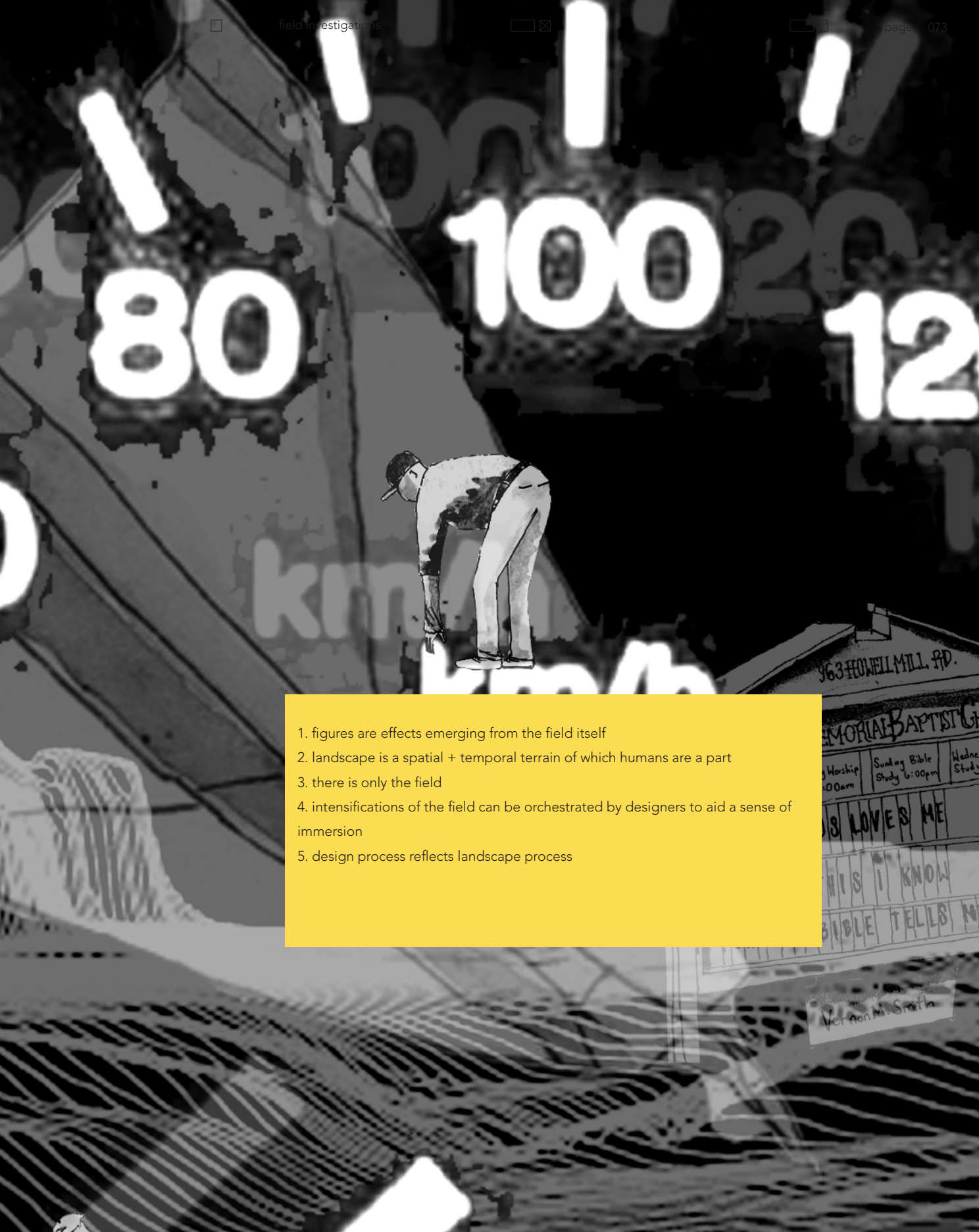
1. figures are effects emerging from the field itself

2. landscape is a spatial + temporal terrain of which humans are a part

3. there is only the field

4. intensifications of the field can be orchestrated by designers to aid a sense of immersion

5. design process reflects landscape process

The particular application of field conditions to the urban realm is one that appreciates the potentials of the city to be self-organizing and adaptive, in a similar manner to the biologic structures operating on all levels of living systems. Embedded in this regenerative capacity is the fact that cities are open systems – they absorb disturbance and are creative as a result; any change is uncertain and occurs from the bottom-up. Stan Allen encourages the designer to think of the field as "characterized by porosity and local interconnectivity," implying that it is an emergent condition which depends highly upon individual components but only for what they contribute in relation to the whole (1997: 24). This intertwined self-regulation demands that the designer refuse to see any component in isolation – instead each apparent figure is an "effect emerging from the field itself," and a "peak or valley within a continuous field" (1997: 28).

Figure 18: Richard Long, printed text from *A Seven Day Circle of Ground*

A SEVEN DAY CIRCLE OF GROUND

SEVEN DAYS WALKING WITHIN AN IMAGINARY CIRCLE 5½ MILES WIDE

DARTMOOR ENGLAND 1984

Major implications for the design process ensue – boundaries must be avoided and innate functionality embraced. The field is nonlinear, and design should reflect this. Allen refers to "registering the complexity of the given," and much of the forthcoming design investigations in this chapter are indeed focused primarily on trying to understand what the given really is (1997: 24). Corner suggests a "thickening" of the surface, involving the graphic overlay of contingent elements to arrive at a representation of complexity (1999: 235). A danger buried in this method is the uncritical acceptance of "site" conditions, and consequently an imposed disconnect between the mapped image and the experiential details of this complexity. He provides Richard Long's A Seven Day Circle of Ground as an illustration of the arbitrariness of the process of humans putting things in relation to each other in his explication of the agency of mapping. Long's delineated circle around several relational words is an "imaginary figure that holds otherwise inchoate things in a field of relationship" (1999: 234). Whether this cataloguing that humans engage in is avoidable is up for debate, but this chapter aims to explore several methods of embracing the field conditions of the Westside Arts District in Atlanta. There are five interconnected components to the following investigations into field. Without a preconceived outcome, and through research by design, it becomes clear that these threads of a broader mission are influenced by a series of propositions about field, and vice versa.

- there is only the field
- intensifications of the field can be orchestrated by designers to aid a sense of immersion

AFFORDANCES
BLURRING OBJECTS + FIELDS
EXPANSION
DISRUPTING SURFACE
SUBJECT VS. OBJECT

- design process reflects landscape process
- figures are effects emerging from the field itself
- landscape is a spatial + temporal terrain of which humans are a part

An initial foray sees field as a matrix of interrelated forces of which humans are a part, to the same degree which nonhumans are. Using watercolor and pen, elements of the given are attentively observed and recorded, to gain a better understanding of the landscape conditions. A design scheme arises out of the notion of affordances, which focused on the provisional requirements for chosen features of the conditions to populate the Westside Arts District parking lot.

The field does not consist of a horizontal plain on which objects are located. To see through a lens of this construct would be to restrict the potentials of designing within it. An exploration of how to combine landscape conditions so that the object and field distinction is blurred results in an increased understanding of how connections can be translated into designed elements.

_PROCESS

The expanded field involves the idea that landscape is not confined to the physical and visual realm, but is affective in its insertion into human and nonhuman life. The site is not defined by a boundary, but within it is a concentration that seeks to multiply connections in art and discourse.

The field is more than a material surface to be interacted with and impressed upon. It encompasses all levels of the landscape, materially and spatio-temporally. A modeling exercise aims to eradicate the notion of groundplane and see landscape for its fully stratified potential, by disrupting the surface.

The understanding of landscape as field depends upon the realization that humans are a part of the systems at play. By dissolving the subject-object divide, design can attempt to create a sense of continuity between human experience and the strength of the landscape condition – it can be controlled through the conditioning of material details and choreography of the journey through the space.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS_001
AFFORDANCES

picking up trash

filled with water

on the fence

BRADY AVENUE

reflecting the sun

broken in pieces

finishing
work at usps

Brady Ave NW, Atlanta GA	Saturday November 4th 12pm-4.30pm
CARS WITH LOUD MUSIC	12
USPS VANS IN	7
USPS VANS OUT	4
MARTA MOBILITY VANS	8
CARS IN	9
CARS OUT	3
PEOPLE	17

walking to marta
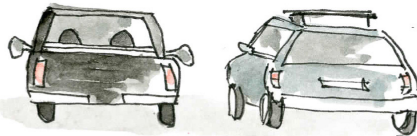
the "parking lot"

meeting a friend
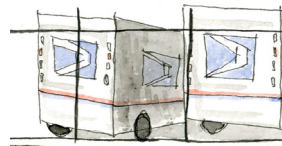
next to the road

still intact

colonizing grass

shortcut home

barking dogs

coffee residue inside

on a date
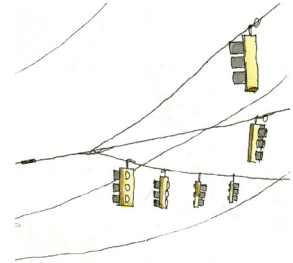
swaying in the wind

HOWELL MILL RD
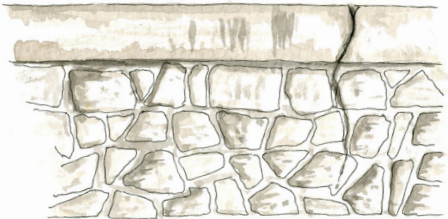
cracked and crumbling

walking home from work

sitting at bar

octane
coffee bar & lounge

Octane Coffee   Saturday November 4th 4.50pm
NUMBER OF PEOPLE ON A LAPTOP   13
NUMBER OF PEOPLE WEARING HEADPHONES   12
NUMBER OF PEOPLE READING   3
NUMBER OF GROUPS IN CONVERSATION   4
TOTAL PEOPLE   49

parked for the night

OCTANE COFFEE
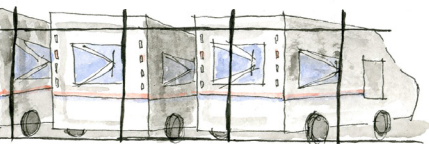
habitat for ants

distracted; looking out
window

avoiding traffic

serious discussions

RAISED AREA
GRAVEL
CLEAR PATH FOR CUTTING THROUGH

SUBTLE LIGHTING

DALLIS GRASS 'LAWN'

MOVABLE SHADE STRUCTURES
TERRACED SEATING
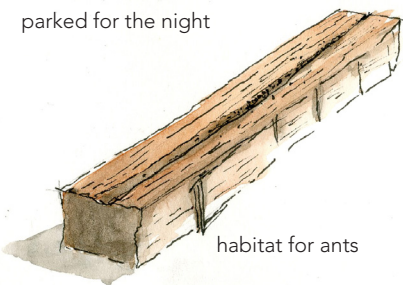
A proposed site plan based
on a study of "affordances"

Rising out of a need to capture the complexities of the field and embrace landscape's functionality is the necessity to accurately portray the meshed and uncertain nature of the given. Landscape architects are often restricted to a confined area defined by property boundaries and other bureaucratic entities. The initial phase of billed work begins with the analysis of site conditions, for the purpose of determining spatial issues, hydrologic character, view shafts, ecological diversity and more. Often these aspects are seen as conclusive and objective readings of site, despite being of little use without the exploration of the relationships and causal associations between these intensifications of the field. The previous illustrations are closely observed studies in watercolor of elements of the given in the Westside Arts District of Atlanta. These onsite drawings are intended to harness a certain integrity of analysis. The designer used the method of assimilation and observation, absorbing herself into the activities of the actants of the field in an attempt to better understand their relationships. The translation of embodied people and things into painted vignettes allow a transition from discombobulated object into components of field, with the inclusion of the designer into the capacity of the interactions in the parking lot. It must be remembered however, that it is impossible to objectively or externally analyze the conditions of place, due to the multiplicities of systems at play and the inevitability of overlooking infinite aspects. We can only ever gain approximate knowledge at best (Capra 1996).

Designing with the estimated and subjectively-guided integrated components of a field yields a methodology that is based upon the provision of affordances. The designer can seed conditions which may be populated by human-nonhuman processes and develop over time in evolving and self-organizing ways. It is the provision of a framework that allows the continued shifting of the field. "Designing to create an indeterminate and propitious range of affordances replaces the traditional fascination of designers with permanence with that of the temporal and dynamic" (Wall 1992: 246). The illustrative plan details how each designed element is responding to an observed action of the given; subtle lighting is provided so that the transitory users of the parking lot may continue to pass through safely, while terraced seating affords the more situated occupants to remain in place. A raised gravel edge allows dallis grass to colonize in a way that infiltrates the geometric form of the terraced stairs – so the concept of a dynamically populated framework is made legible.
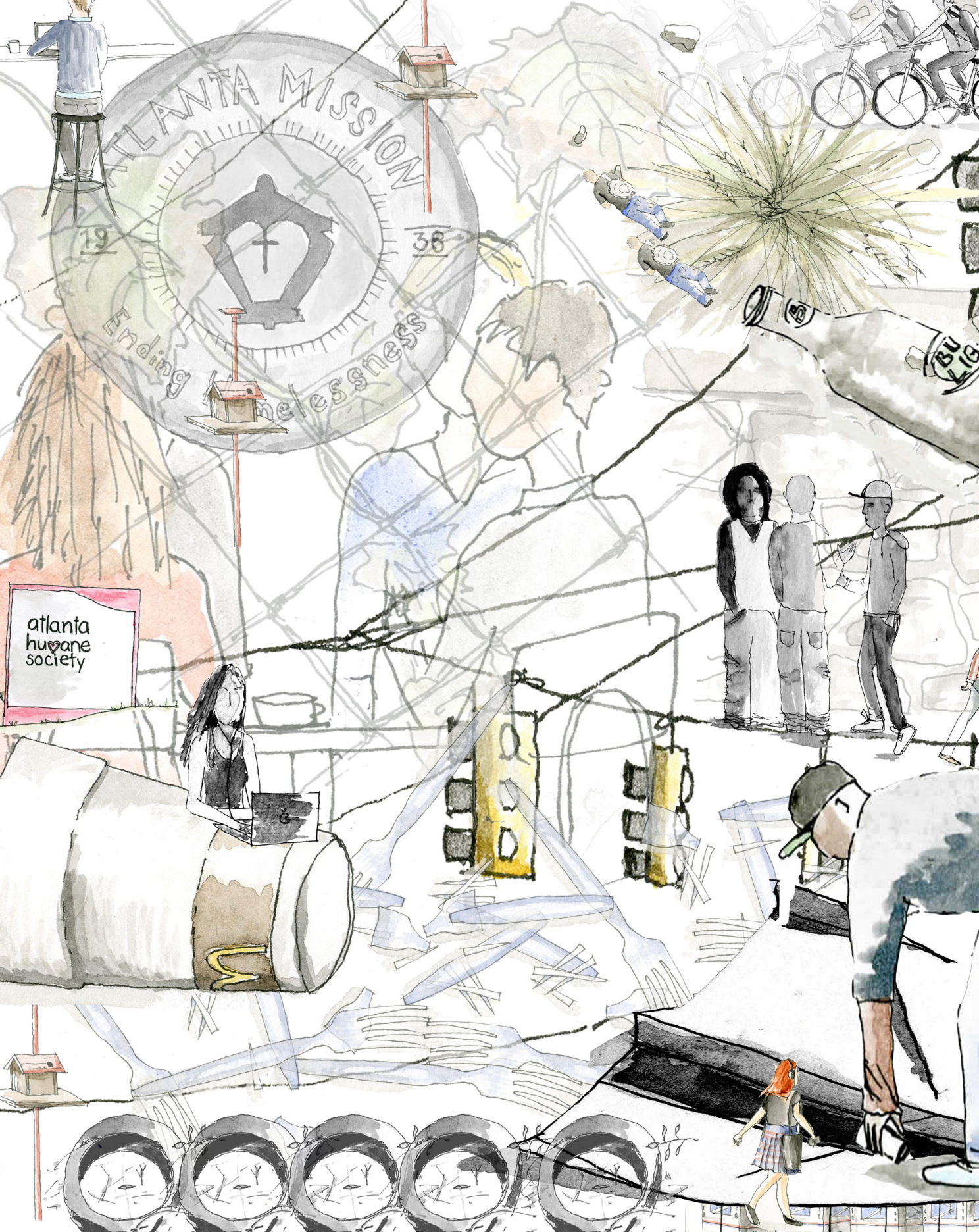
A byproduct of extracting elements of the given is the inevitability of emulating the appearance of static, disconnected objects. The arrangement of the actants on a blank background recalls the style of the famed figure-ground representations that expel the given world into two defined and opposing categories of black and white, ultimately failing to register the relationship between figures. Consequently the assumptions made at this stage inform the manner in which the design progresses. If landscape conditions are rendered in isolation from the start of a project, then throughout the design process the separation will continue, resulting in a product that fails to resolve complexity. Designing with affordances is about "absorbing future demands without diminishing the integrity of the project" (Wall 1992: 246). This mission however, relies heavily on the initial phases of analysis, a fact that landscape urbanists attempt to resolve with the "thickening" of the surface.

A layered montage technique is employed to avoid the representation of figures on a ground and move some way toward putting the elements at odd and indeterminate affiliation to one another. Through the operations of rescaling, repositioning and repetition the relationships between things are called into question, and possibilities for interpretation are revealed. How are the broken plastic forks related to the traffic lights at the intersection? What is the nature of the interaction between the paper plane and the urban nomad collecting trash? Just like Long's circle, these elements are brought into relationship with each other through the imposed boundary of the picture frame, but their extension beyond the page alludes to the continuity of the field. Their existence within the imagined zone of the Westside Arts District is not confined to any borders but moves as the field does; beyond the anthropocentric imposition of site to a state of becoming in space and time.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS_002
BLURRING OBJECT/FIELD

The preceding investigation utilizes a technique of extraction and montage to represent the way elements interact in unexpected formations. This action is essentially an attempt to render relationships between things as intensifications of a field, rather than figures which move across it. As is demonstrated, the potentials for the development of design strategies born from these uncertain interactions are immense. The translation into physical elements of place needs examining however, because the complex and woven nature of field almost requires extraction for humans to understand it. For instance, the method of providing affordances falls short in this case due to its inability to describe how the designed elements work together to create a self-organized space. Each design feature is placed for the purpose of easing the occupation of the parking lot by certain actants, but the interaction between these elements is not encouraged. A truly systemic design of this parking lot could not be convincingly dissected into individually designed components, because in order to be morphogenetic it is the operations of the collective that create the space. This shortcoming reveals the necessity for the figure and ground to be merged not only within the analysis phase but in the proceeding stages of the design process.

The diagram describes a possible methodology for translating complex systems into complex design interventions. An understanding of relationships between elements of the given is required, combined with the detailed attention that comes with the careful drawing of the field. Then, the elements are fused so that there is no differentiation between them and a perceived background or surface against which they act. This can be done through layering or montage. From this represented flux, the designer may select certain relationships to work with and perform a range of operational processes which will allow interactions to continue. A phase of rapid design vignettes may be required to sufficiently explore the range of interactions, resulting in a design that is a gathering of the field conditions and a presencing of their relationships to one another.

relationship diagram

+

drawing the field

+

combining the drawings

random selection

OPERATIONAL
PROCESSES

design vignettes

DEVELOPABLE DESIGNS
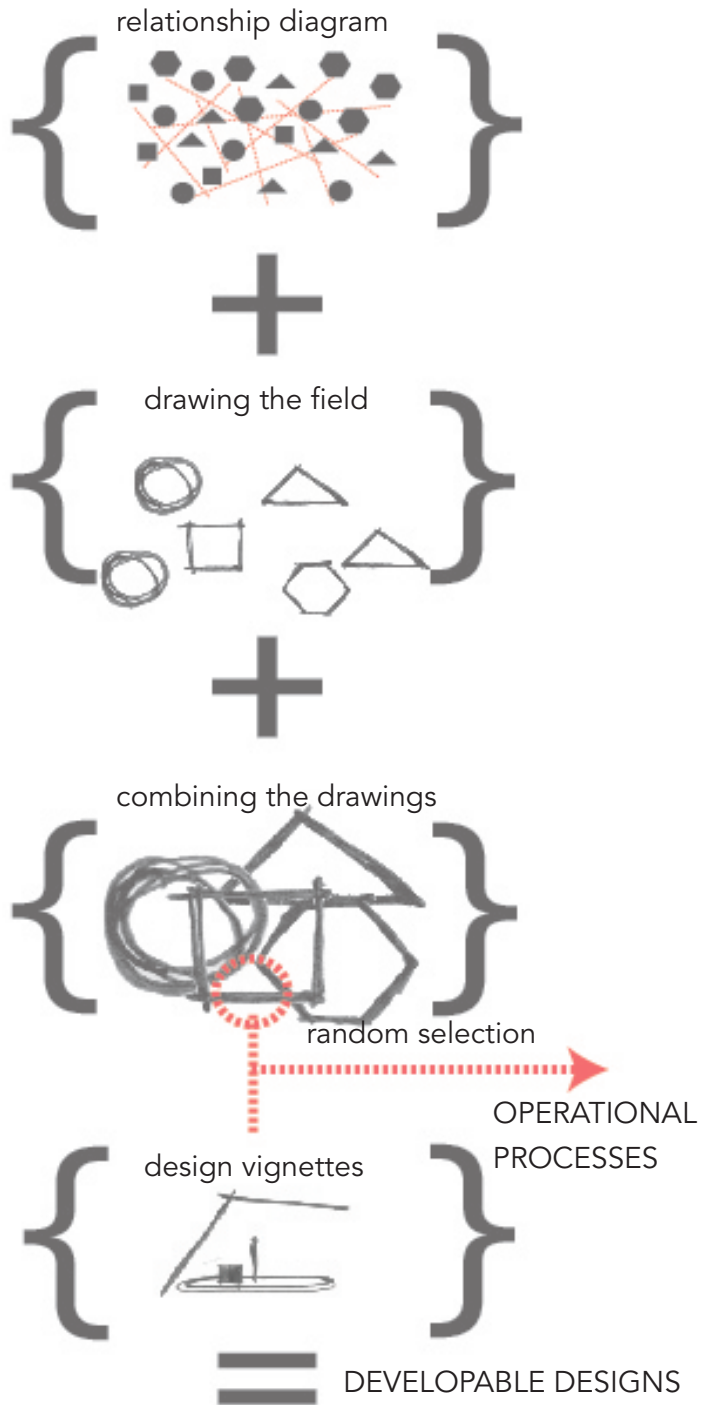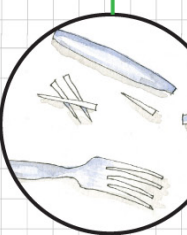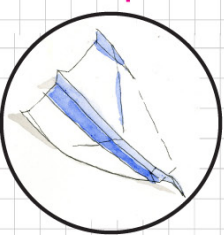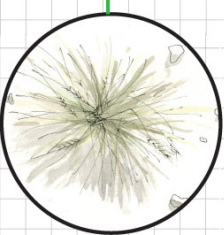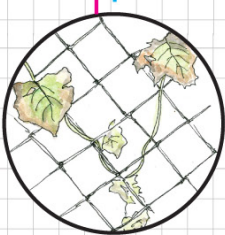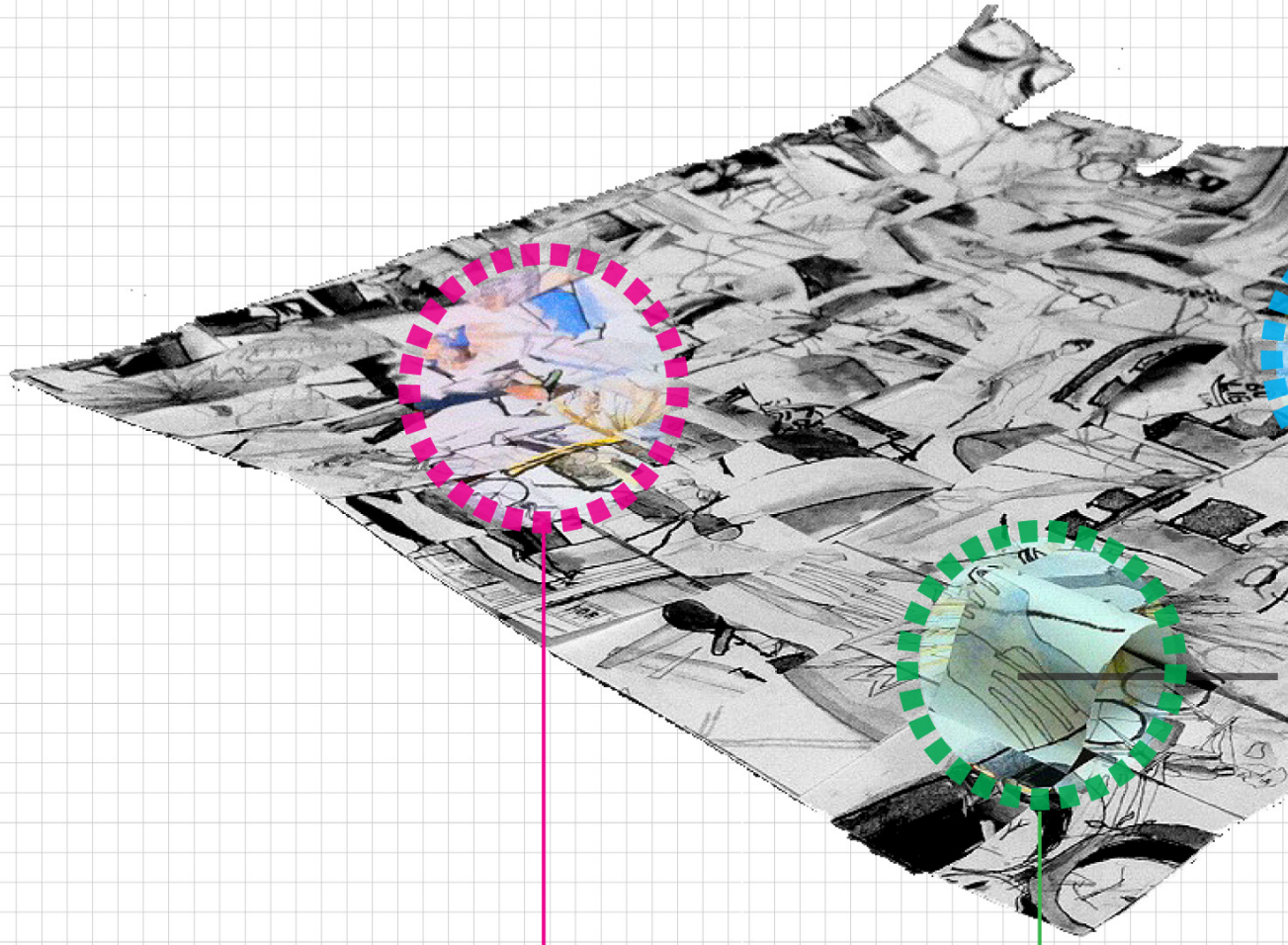
In an attempt to explore the combination of elements in a way that allows each one to escape its embodiment, the watercolors are sliced up and woven together. The quality of the interaction between these field conditions is no longer defined by the plastic fork competing with the traffic light, but the hard particles which make up the fork overtaking the rusted metal of the traffic light. The elements are therefore exploded so that the designer can avoid relying on preformed associations or assuming that the category of plastic fork is distinct from the field when it is a composite of it. The weaving is a technique of actualizing the idea of forces being knitted together. Competing interactions are investigated by means of extrusion – the pink, green and blue lines indicate the connective nature of the given.

I

[dallis grass + plastic fork]
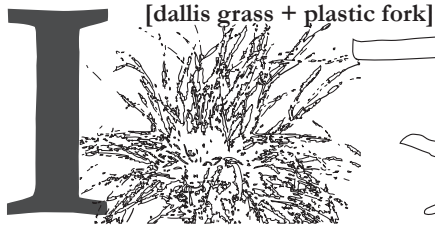
LITERAL

physical + formal associations derived

from elements of the given

II

walking + dallis grass
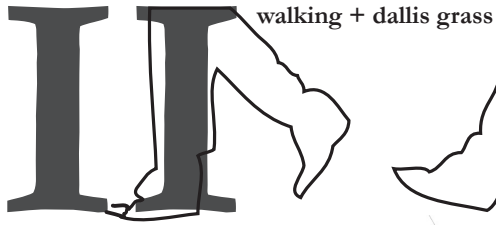
AFFORDANCES

elements of the given afforded through

provision of requirements

III

[powerlines + walking]
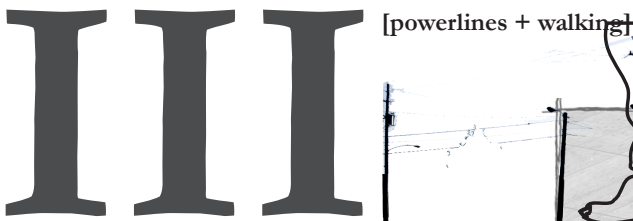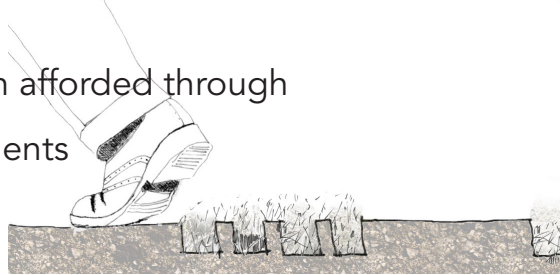
BLURRING

physical, formal + conceptual associations

blurred to present an embedded signifier
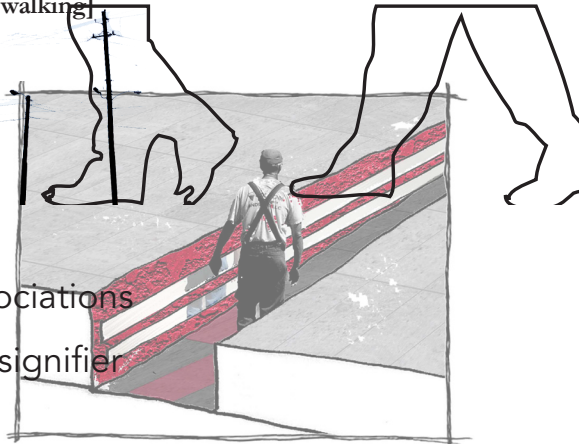
Once the observed elements are exploded and their interactions identified, the designer looks for different approaches to translating these phenomena into designed landscape features. This is possibly perceived as one of the most enigmatic phases of design process, due to the subjective nature of the interpretation involved. It is this sentiment which perpetuates the myth of the "architect genius." Design does not need to be an act made solely of intuition, and the nature of interactions can guide decisions informed by imagination but grounded in reality, through the use of appropriate visual imagery. Katherine Moore claims "the understanding that even the most intimate, seemingly magical elements of the design process are based on knowledge and knowledge alone, prepares the ground for a fresh artistic and conceptual approach to design…" (Moore 2013: 6). The investigation of blurring object and field attempts to unpack the repercussions of designing without the opposing categories of figure and ground, landscape and architecture, natural and artificial.

The translation of extrusions from the woven field into physical, designed landscape expressions features three main approaches. The purpose is to scrutinize the moments of decision in order to illuminate the multiple interpretations and outcomes available, a nonlinear quality of design that is itself reflected in landscape systems. Interactions can be distilled literally (I) through the transformation of physical and formal qualities of the given into commonly designed elements. The relationship between dallis grass and plastic forks is therefore converted into a seating formation which resembles the physical appearance of a fork and enables grass to inhabit the surrounding area. Affordances (II) were also seen as an option for translating design ideas into built elements; here the action of walking is combined with the colonizing nature of dallis grasses. The provision of channels scraped out of the groundplane in patterns which resemble the spikes of a fork allow the plants to populate and multiply. Lastly, there is the notion of blurring (III), which involves combining the physical, formal and conceptual characteristics of the interaction so they become a fused interpretation of associated concepts. It is the layering of meaning to presence the conglomerated intensification of the field; here the extruded intersection includes powerlines and a person walking. Rather than literally translating the physical appearance of these elements, the designer accepts these formally bounded associations as fragments of the field itself. The powerlines indicate the transmission of energy, and the person walking signifies movement. The vignette illustrates an excavated path which will allow for movement across the site, mirrored walls to make this visible and a lighting system which is motion activated and powered by solar energy. The signified is thereby embedded within the designed elements but not overtly referenced.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS_003
EXPANSION

noplaceness

feb 17
westside arts district atl
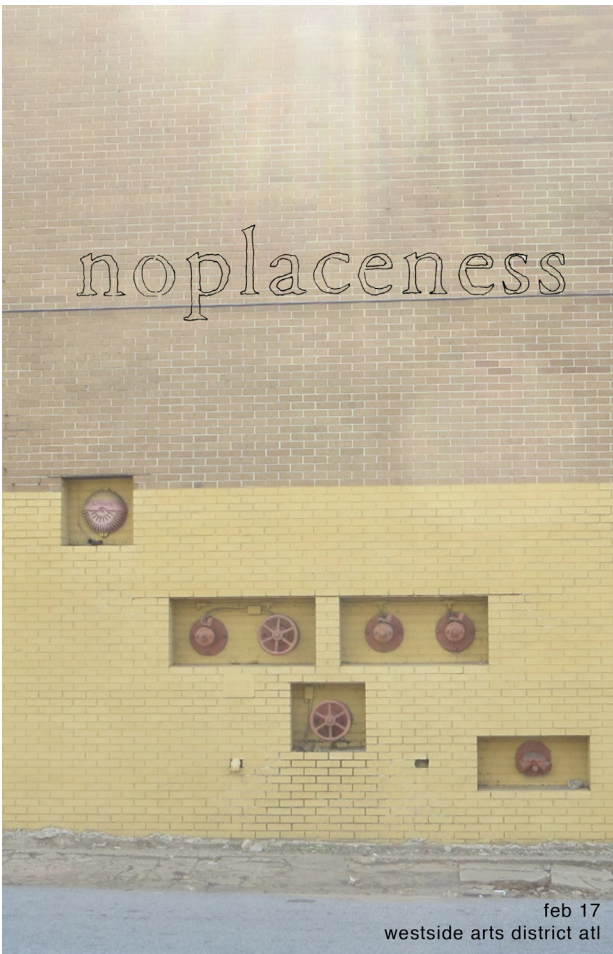
average rainfall 50.20" annually

vacant brownfield site

sto rmwater direction

specialist retail

old oaks

successional 2 ruderal species

gravel road

territorial graffiti

reusable onsite materials

bring

soils / grasses /
rocks / air /
asphalt / water /
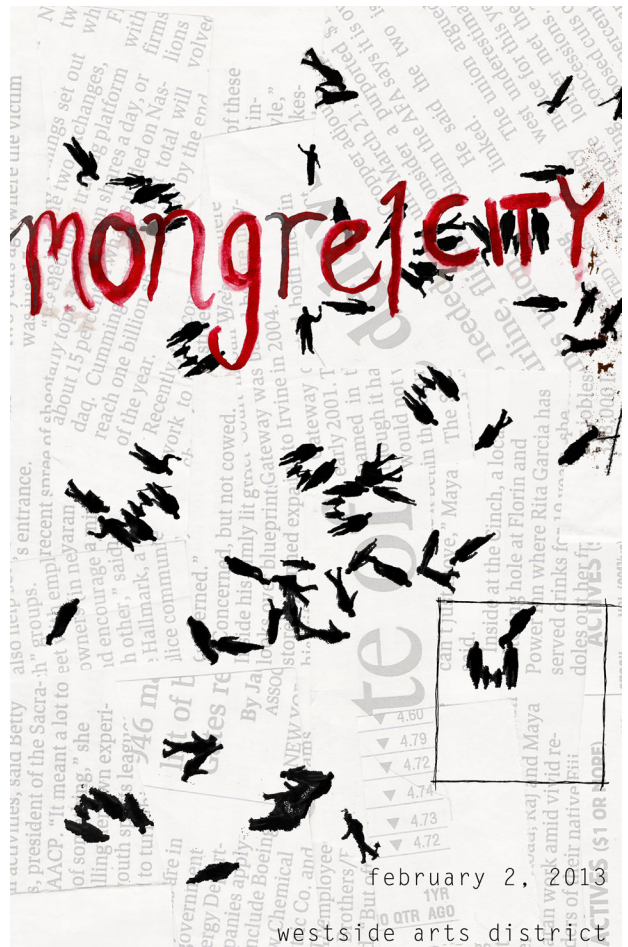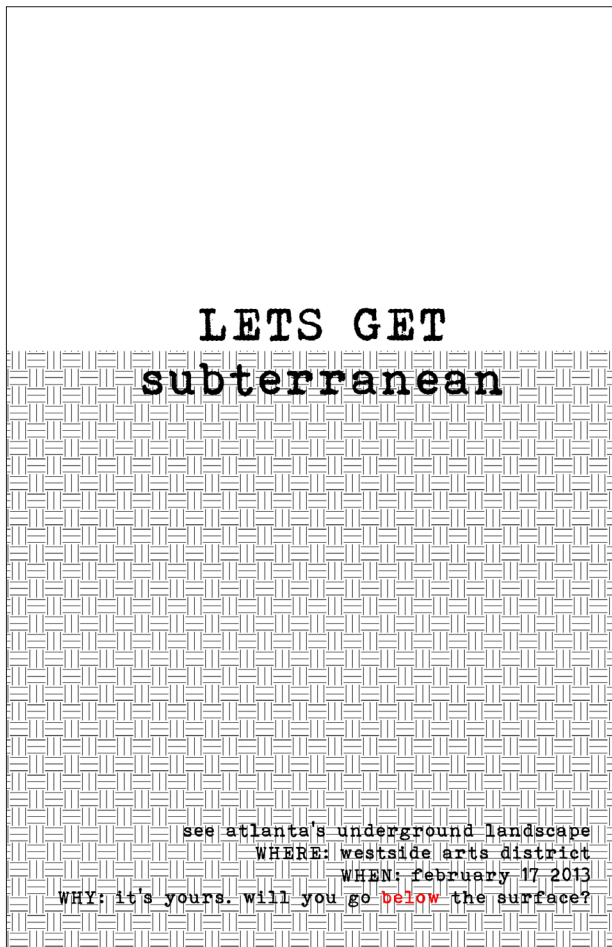dirt / cement /
asphalt / glass /
matter

from your place.

make this *your* place

project cube
february 17, 2013
westside arts district, atlanta

The field is expanded through opening up the parking lot as a collaborative public art event, demonstrated by these posters which would be posted in the Westside Arts District.

LETS GET
subterranean

see atlanta's underground landscape
WHERE: westside arts district
WHEN: february 17 2013
WHY: it's yours. will you go below the surface?

mongrelcity

february 2, 2013

westside arts district

A. figure

B. strategy

WESTSIDE ARTS DISTRICT | ATLANTA MAKE THIS YOUR PLACE

BRING MATTER FROM {your} PLACE

TRANSITORY ROUTE

LANDSCAPE??

SEEDS

SOIL

AIR

LOCAL CRAFT BEER SCENE

ROCKS

D

STUFF

HOMELESS POPULATION

ART STUDIOS + GALLERIES

TOOLKIT

A

THE CUBE EXHIBITION

local galleries ○
sandler hudson, atl contemporary arts, emily amy get this!

art schools ○
atlanta arts institute, SCAD, Georgia tech

assemble cube

art blogs ○
creative loafing, arts atl, burnaway

WEEKS PRIOR   THE DAY

CONTINUOUS PLACE

sponsors   posters
around wed
universities
local bars/coffee shops

COLLABORATION
participants contribu

disassemble + reassemble ○

PROJECT TIMELINE

C. materials

CROSS-COLLABORATIVE LANDSCAPE

GLASS SHELL

OBJECTS

RELATIONSHIPS

LIGHTS

MEMORY

landscape outside

landscape inside

D. review

Fig. I   Fig. II   Fig. III

take home: collaborative landscape

blogs

CONVERSATION

photos

publications

A participatory art event is imagined for the parking lot. It intends to raise questions about the extent of landscape and the cocreative nature of place through the request for participants to "make this your place" by bringing matter that they think could contribute. A transaction occurs when they come away from the even with a piece of the "made" place, thereby continuing the "place-making" and surrounding discourse, which is the component considered as the expanded field.

documentation

pack up + leave

EMAKING + DISCUSSION

THE OUTCOME

TRANSACTION

te their place

begin take-home cube creation

allocation of cube-space

food + conversation
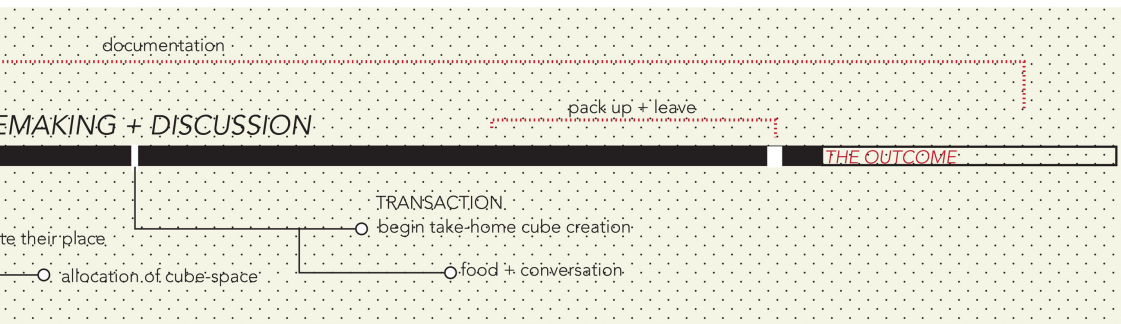
Figure 19: Nathan Coley, *In Memory,* 2010
7.5 m x 7.5m x 2.4m
Poured Concrete, Grass, Gravel, Steel, Dead Tree, Recycled Headstones

The expansion of the field is not a literal extending and outreaching of landscape conditions, because the field is continuous regardless of designerly input.   Instead it is the recognition that while landscape is not confined to an imposed site, it is also not purely a physical and visual entity to be actualized only in practice. It is affective in its presence in human and nonhuman life and contains connections to all facets of understanding on all dimensions. Art practices have been discounting the importance of the art object for decades in favor of the idea that art is not necessarily differentiated from life. A similar notion could be absorbed into landscape architecture to deemphasize the fetishizing of "site" and "place," and show that landscape pervades everything, is within everything and is indeed constructed by its occupants, so it is a field. "What exists in the space between the words public and art is an unknown relationship between artist and audience, a relationship that may itself be the artwork" (Lacy 1993: 105). The relationship between everything is itself landscape.

In Memory, an installation by Nathan Coley (figure 16), refers to these dialectics of place and site with a subtlety of intention. A concrete cube-like structure is placed within a forested area. It appears to be entirely enclosed, except for a slit which has been measured to fit the width of a person's shoulders. The seemingly unassuming walls are situated within a verdant forest, contributing to a sense that it is specifically attuned to its surrounding conditions, but also strangely out of place. Upon entering, one finds it is a graveyard, filled with blank headstones. The constructed cemetery can be said to be a gathering of collective memory; the absence of names on the headstones either causes one to remember those who have passed, or think about their own impending passing. It is not the site specific conditions which cause this reaction, nor the object itself. The artwork is found within the collection. It is also a space within a space; it is a defined area through the demarcation of tall concrete walls, and causes one to look inward, but in its concentration of thought and intensity of conditions it defers to the surrounding landscape for support.

A space within a space,
glass and found objects,
Westside Arts District, Atlanta
Georgia
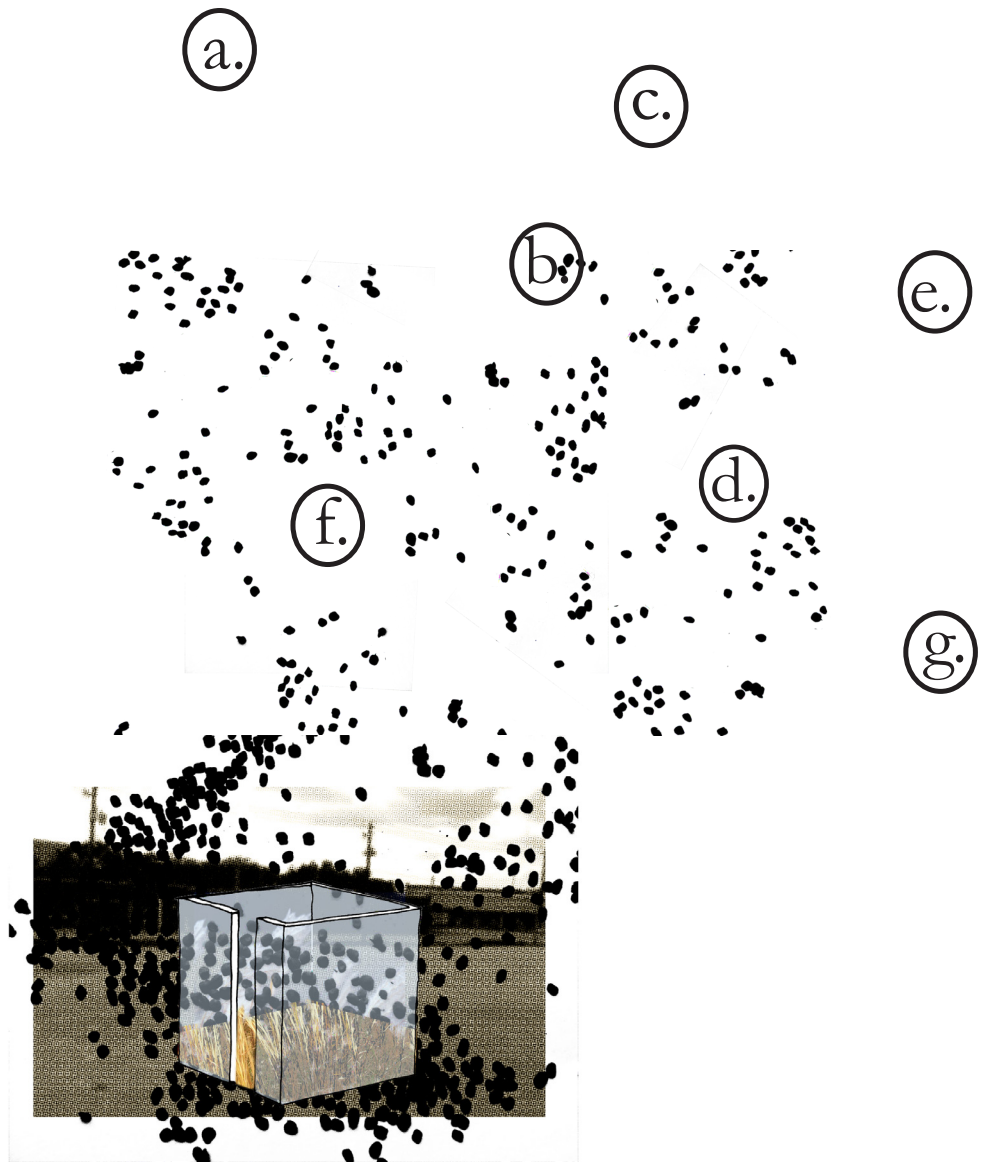
(a.)

(c.)

(b.)

(e.)

(f.)

(d.)

(g.)

A participatory art event is imagined for the parking lot in the Westside Arts District of Atlanta. The intent is that interested parties bring aspects from what they deem to be their place to be inserted within a glass cube that simultaneously contains and reflects the surrounding field. The idea of "making your own place" is really just a tangible assertion that this is a process which already occurs. It acts in a similar way to *In Memory* because implies to the participant that place is not held within the empirical identity of a specific location but is formed through subjective perceptions and attitudes. The intervention presences this notion through the actual collaborative making of a place within the cube, but it also redirects this energy to the place outside of the defined area, calling the participants to question the possibilities for the parking lot. This reflection is aided by the glass materiality of the structure, and is propelled by the transaction involved in the process – each place-maker will come away with a miniature box containing a part of this collaborative landscape. The intention is that the relationship between the self and landscape is continually reviewed from that point on, either internally or in the form of conversation, blogs and photos. The strategy and timeline is mapped out to create the best conditions for continued discourse, which is in itself, the landscape.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS_004
DISRUPTING SURFACE
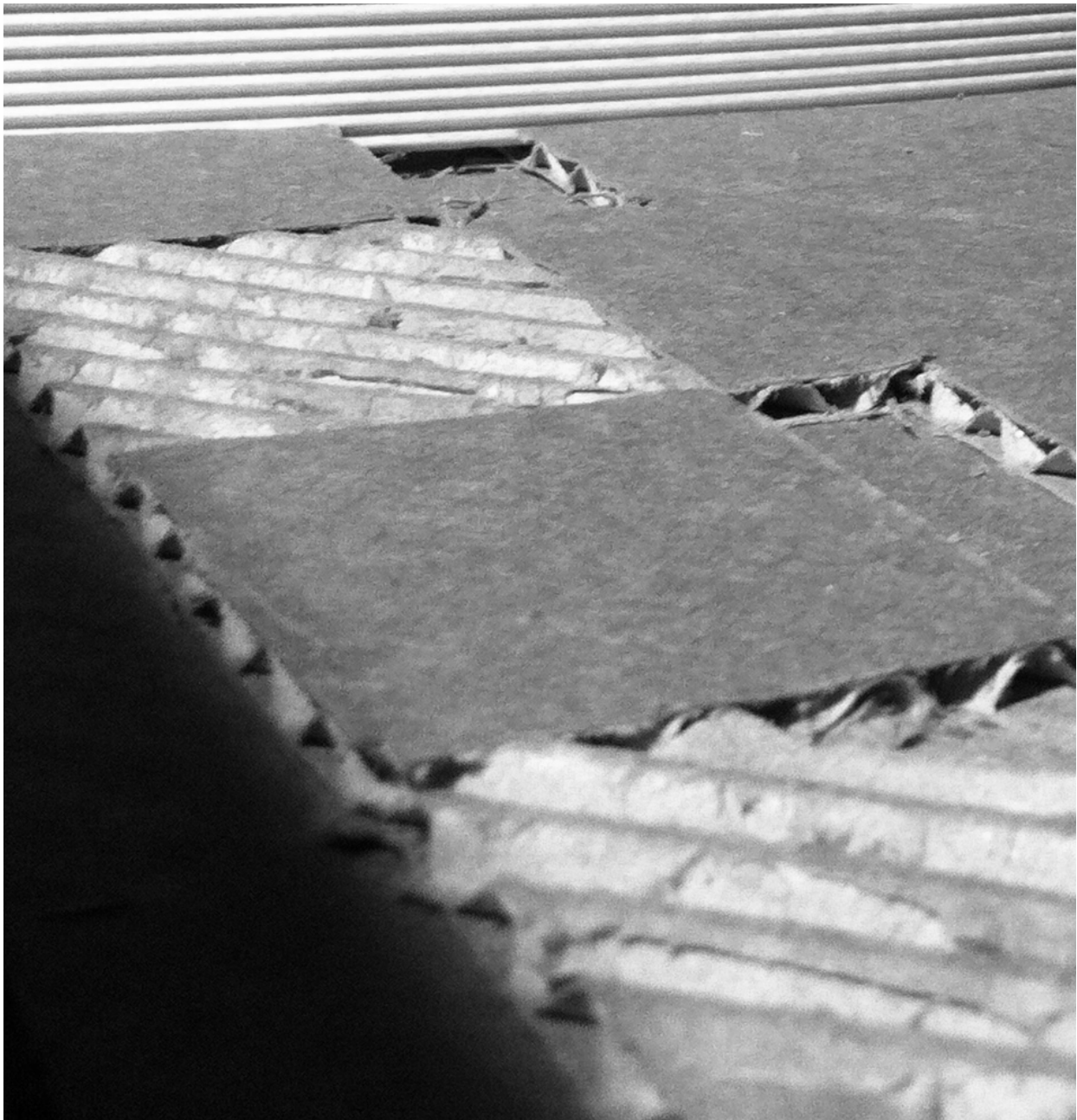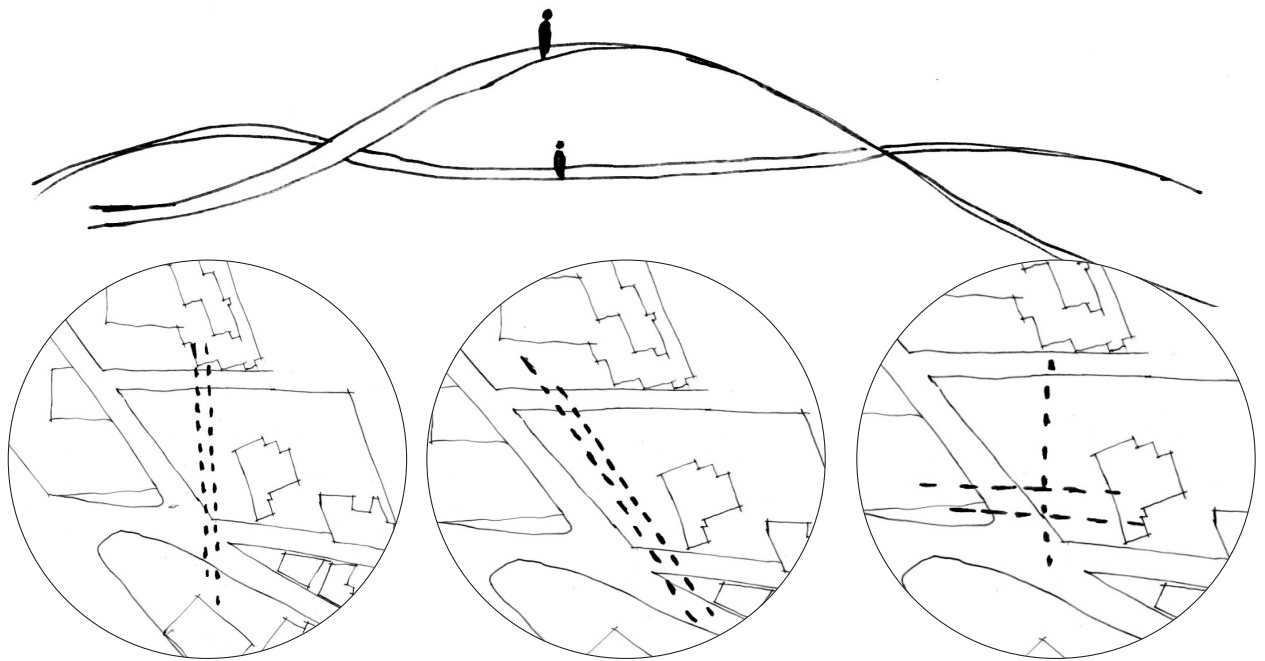
The disruption of surface is instigated by the eradication of the ground plane: the field is not a horizontal plane on which interactions take place but rather it is the substance itself to be explored on all dimensions
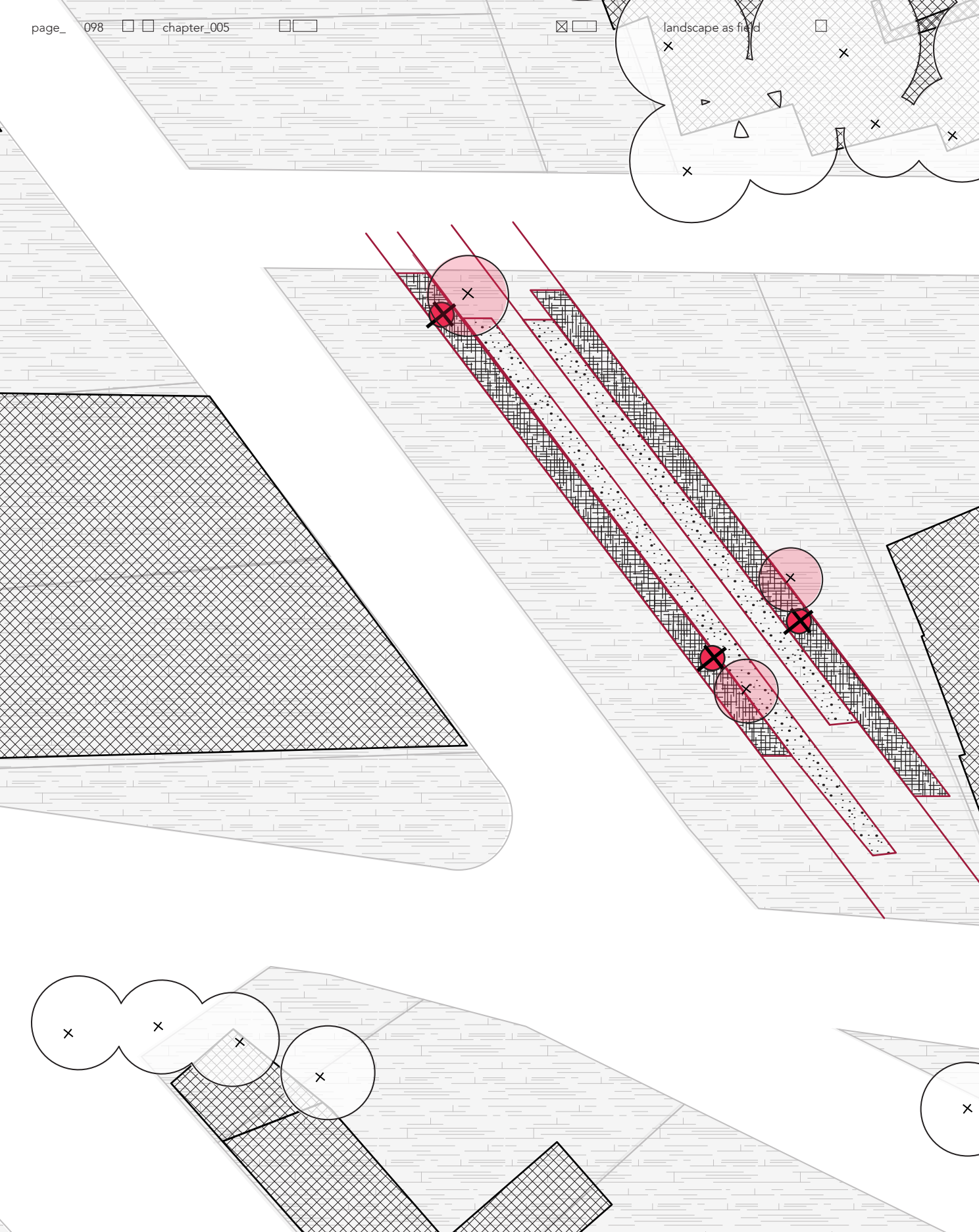
Striating lines dissect the parking lot, simultaneously elevating and submerging the ground plane. The lines act as intensifications of the existing field, by bringing the subject into contact with the multidimensional nature of the field; they can experience the subterranean layers of the city while they see the rooftops. Key points of intensification are demarcated as glass tubes intended to gather the shifting field by collecting the material instances of uncertain processes such as leaves, rain, pollen and urban debris.

9th St NW

1" = 10'
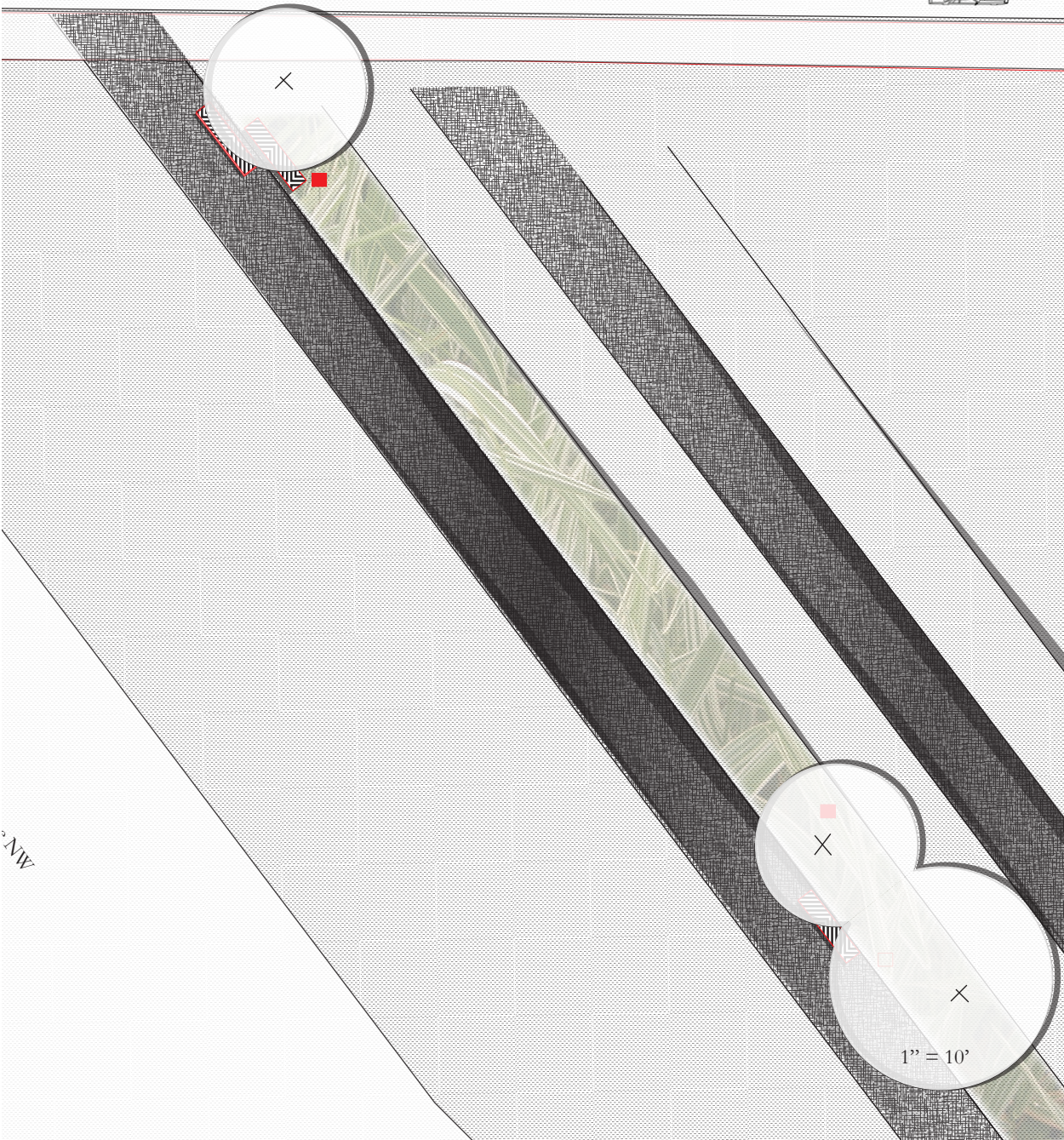
The operation of disrupting surface is derived from the rejection of the horizontal plane. The purpose is to move past the field as a surface on which actants interrelate and into an understanding of field as multidimensional. This is an important step towards the acceptance that the full range of possible competing interactions and relative effects are beneath the ground and in the sky. These spatial dimensions are just as much a part of the field as those which occur on the same physical plane as humans. There is a unique quality of interaction that can be brought about through the revelation of the processes which are constantly occurring on all levels. The intervention consisting of peeled lines penetrating the imagined surface is a way of opening up perception of landscape to wider possibilities. Surface is a porous construct, dependant only on the embodied scale of the perceiver.

The most obvious result of this insertion into the field conditions is the overturning of field as horizontal, an association it seems to carry with it from its instance in agriculture. Corner does little to dispel this interpretation with his frequent references to the urban field as "horizontal surface, the ground plane, the field of action," which he claims constitutes the primary concern of landscape urbanism (1997: 30). He certainly broadens the surfaces available through the inclusion of streets and roofs and infrastructural matrices, but all the same they appear to be horizontally determined, and if they do appear on multiple levels it is not in a connective and continuous manner. Allen too assigns field a spatial dimension, explaining it as "any formal or spatial matrix capable of unifying diverse elements while respecting the identity of each" (1997: 24). While he does not explicate that it exists on a singular plane, the absence of temporality and continuation within this definition makes it sound as though a site as a politically or economically bounded entity may be understood as a field. This suggestion in conjunction with the common plan view representation of site will indeed render field as flat and horizontal. This investigation hopes to interrupt that assumption.

GLASS COLLECTION TUBE
AND LIGHT

SEATING

50
48
46
44
42
40
38
36
34
32
30
28
26
24
22
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
-2
-4
-6
-8
-10
-12
-14
-16
-18
-20
-22
-24
-26
-28
-30

EXPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE   EXISTING STRATA

intensification I.
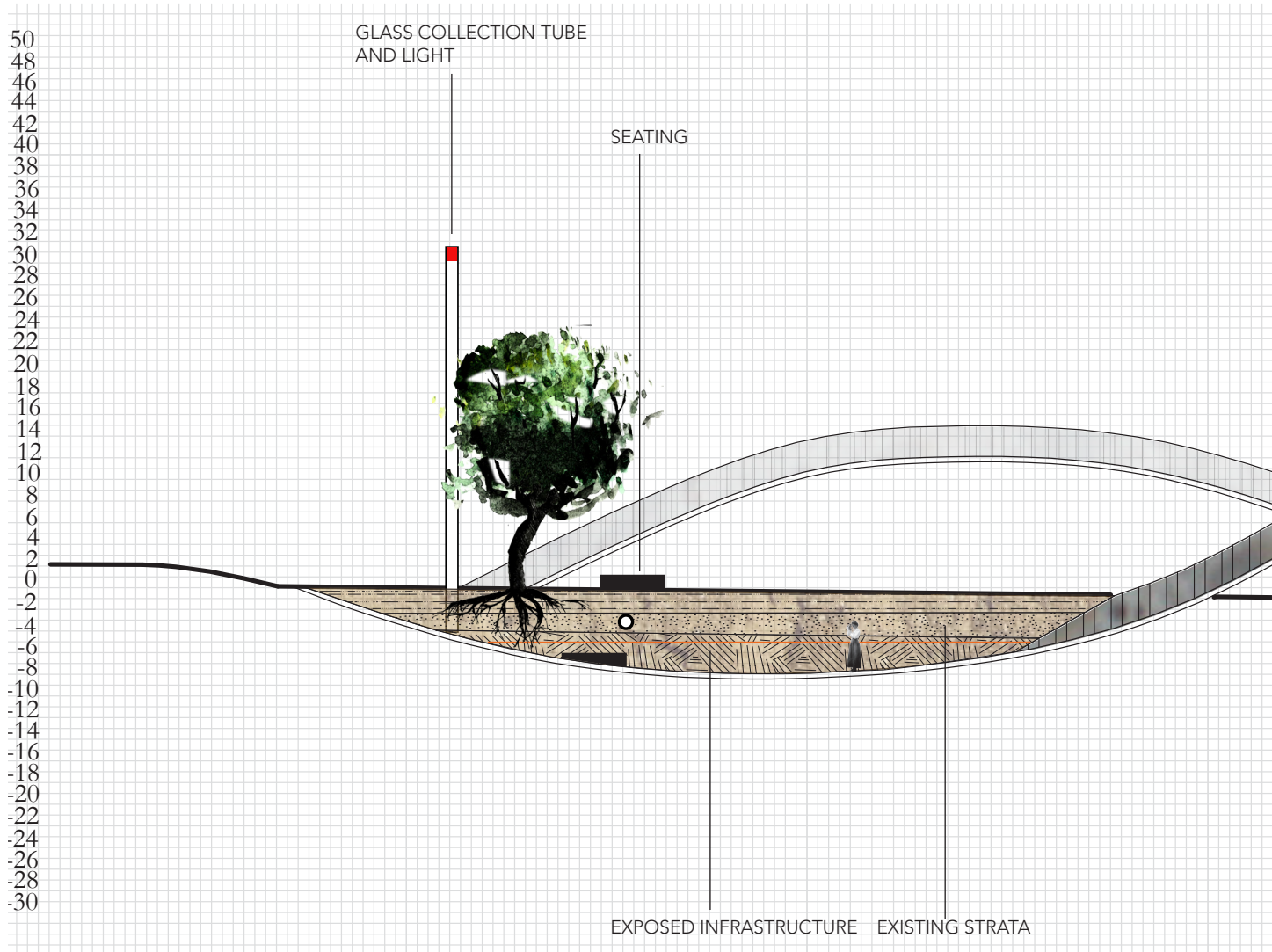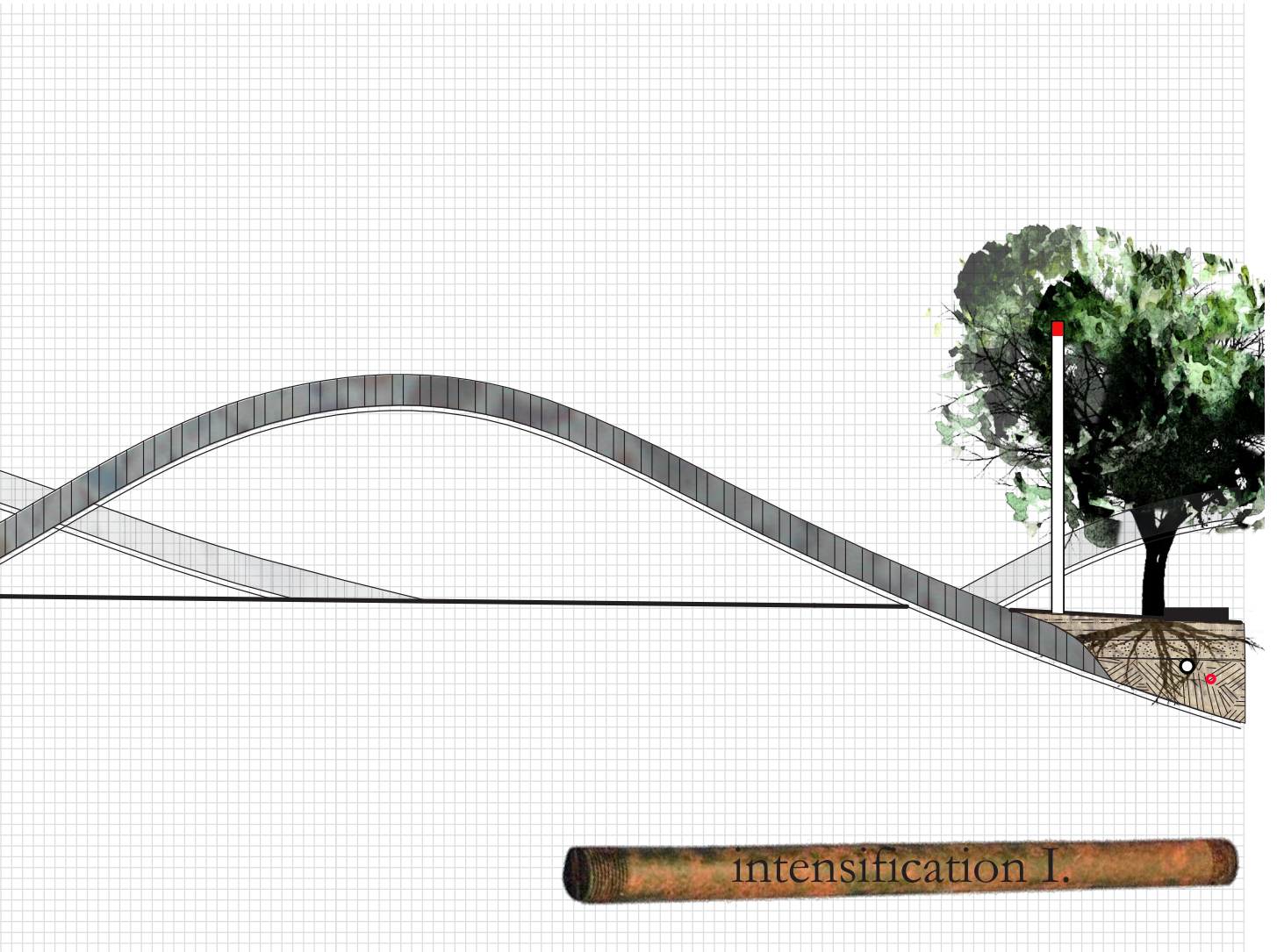
The field is a terrain that includes every level of living systems, so the anthropocentric ground plane surface is broken by competing path systems.
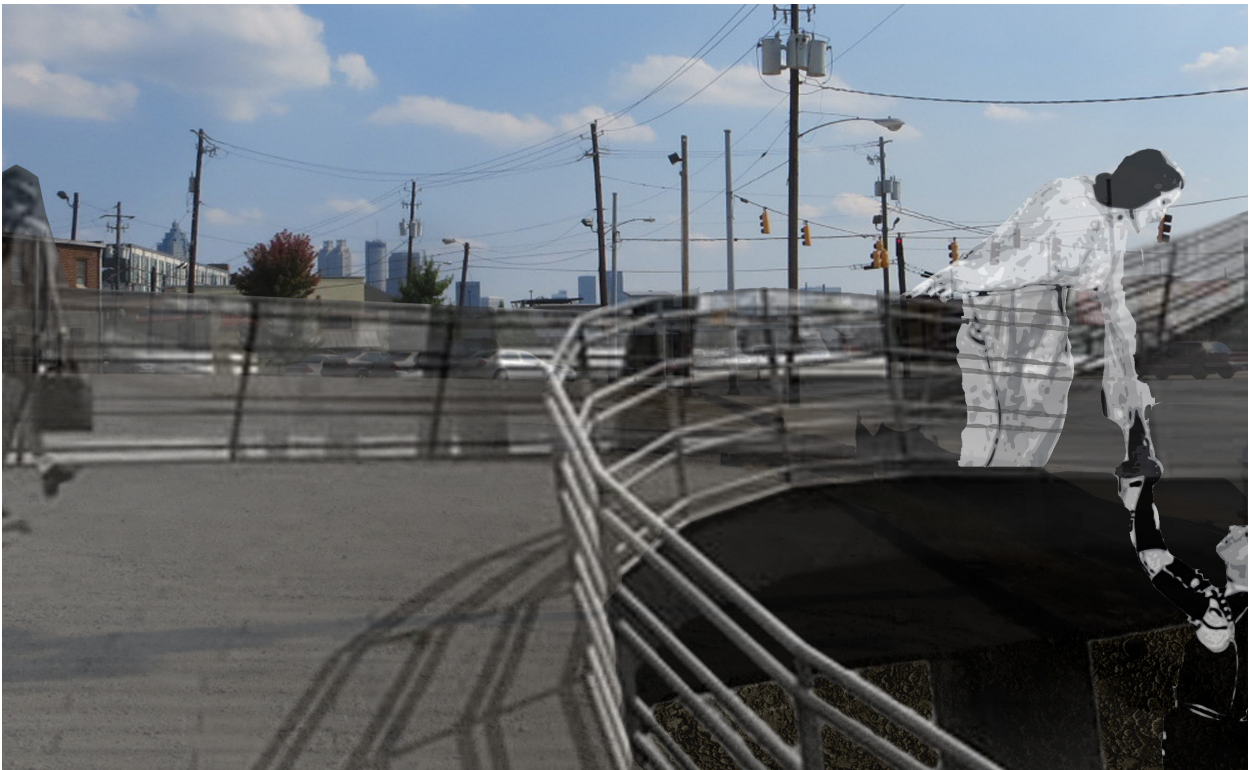
Unique encounters are
afforded through the
experience of the field's multi-
dimensionality.

Glass collection tubes pierce the multiple strata as collection points for all components on all dimensions of the field. They are envisioned to gather particles, water, matter, debris and illuminate it with subtle lighting to presence the becoming situation of this intervention as an accumulation or intensification of field conditions. A condition is created where people can interact with each other and other field components on multiple levels. It may be argued that this is merely a reenactment of an engagement with the external environment that occurs on a continual basis, due to the fact that humans are constantly either above or below ground. The purpose of the intervention therefore, is to make this dimensionality of landscape legible, through creating opportunities for interaction.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS_005
SUBJECT VS>OBJECT
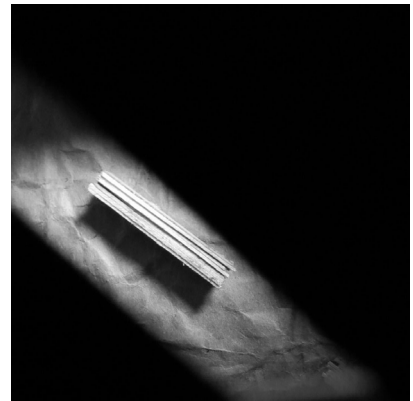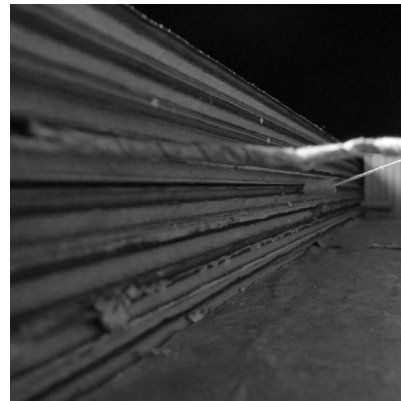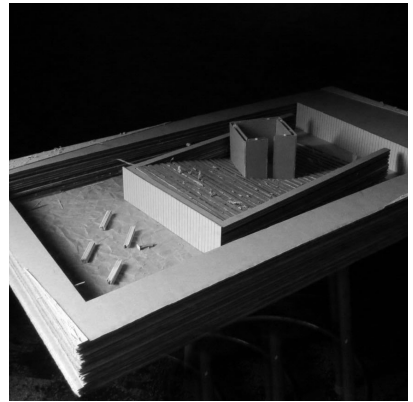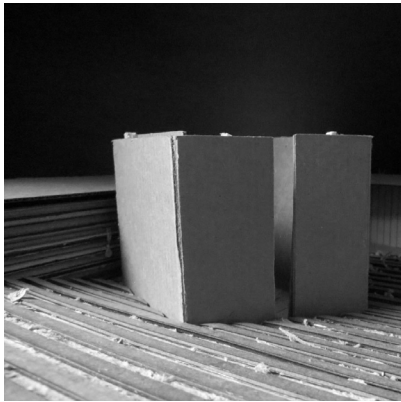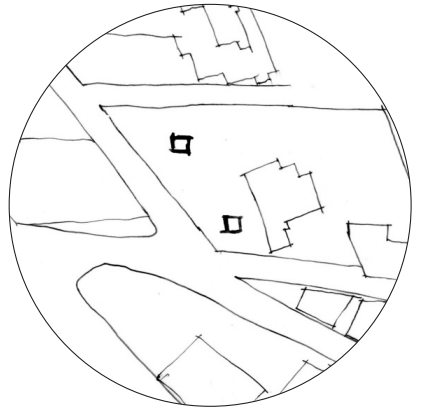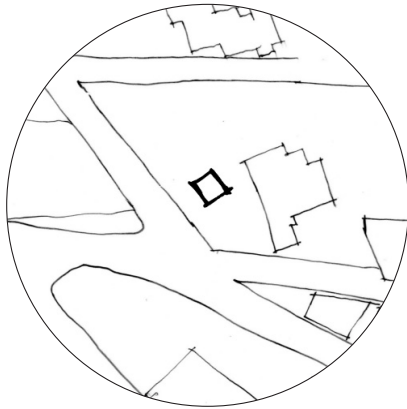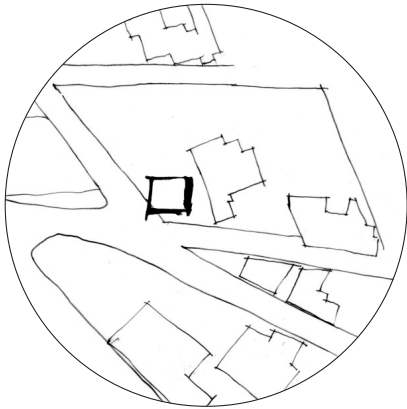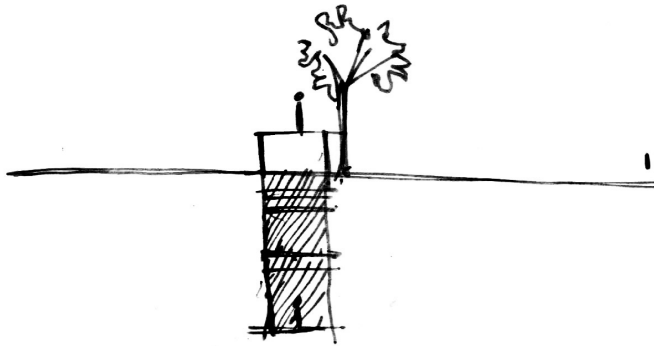
The subterranean component
of field is further explored as
uniquely experiential.
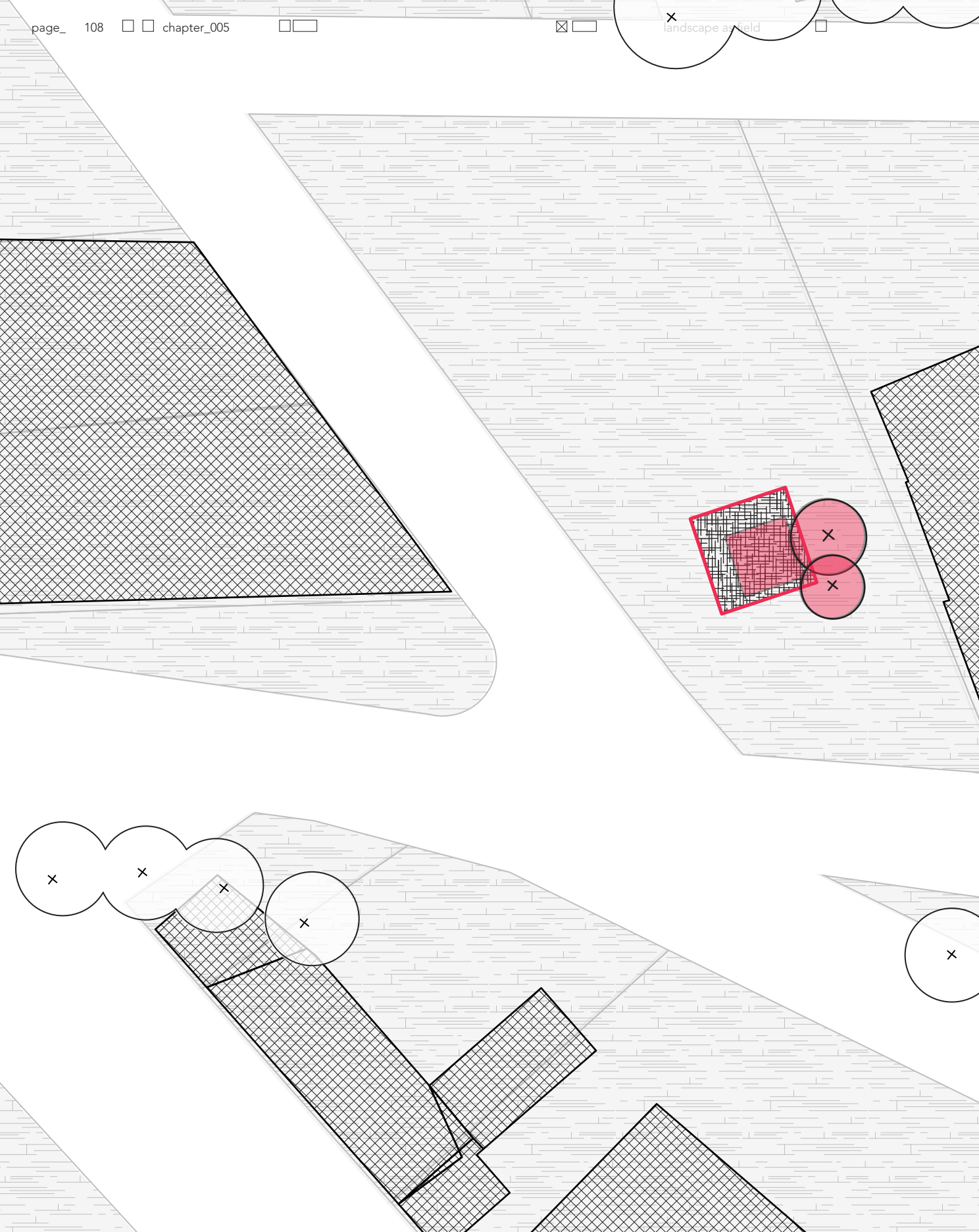
A subterranean intervention serves as an intensification of the field and provides opportunity for an immersive experience that is an exaggeration of the surrounding landscape. It is an intentionally modest area of coverage to further exemplify the notion of a concentrated aggregate of conditions and the designer's role in orchestrating these.
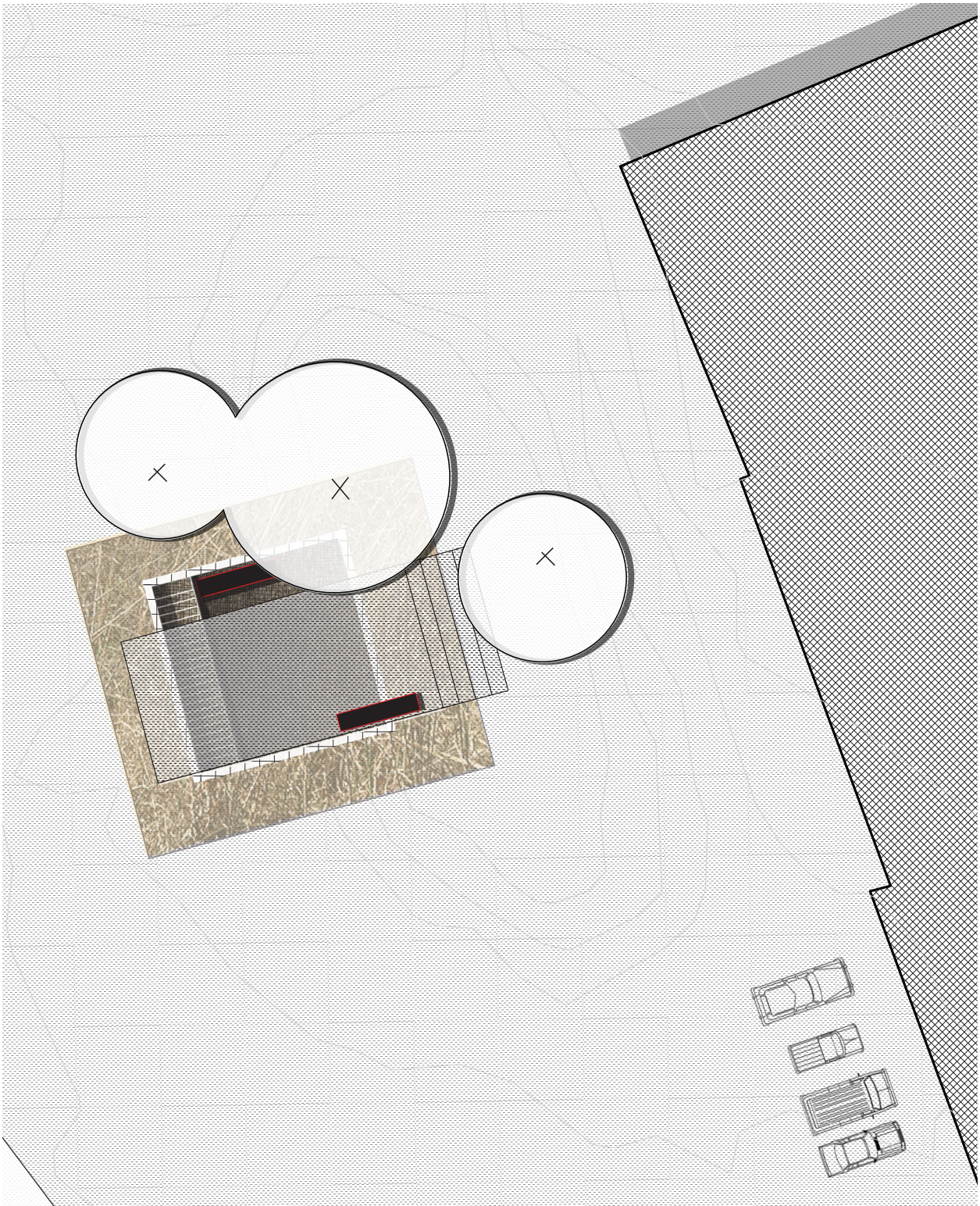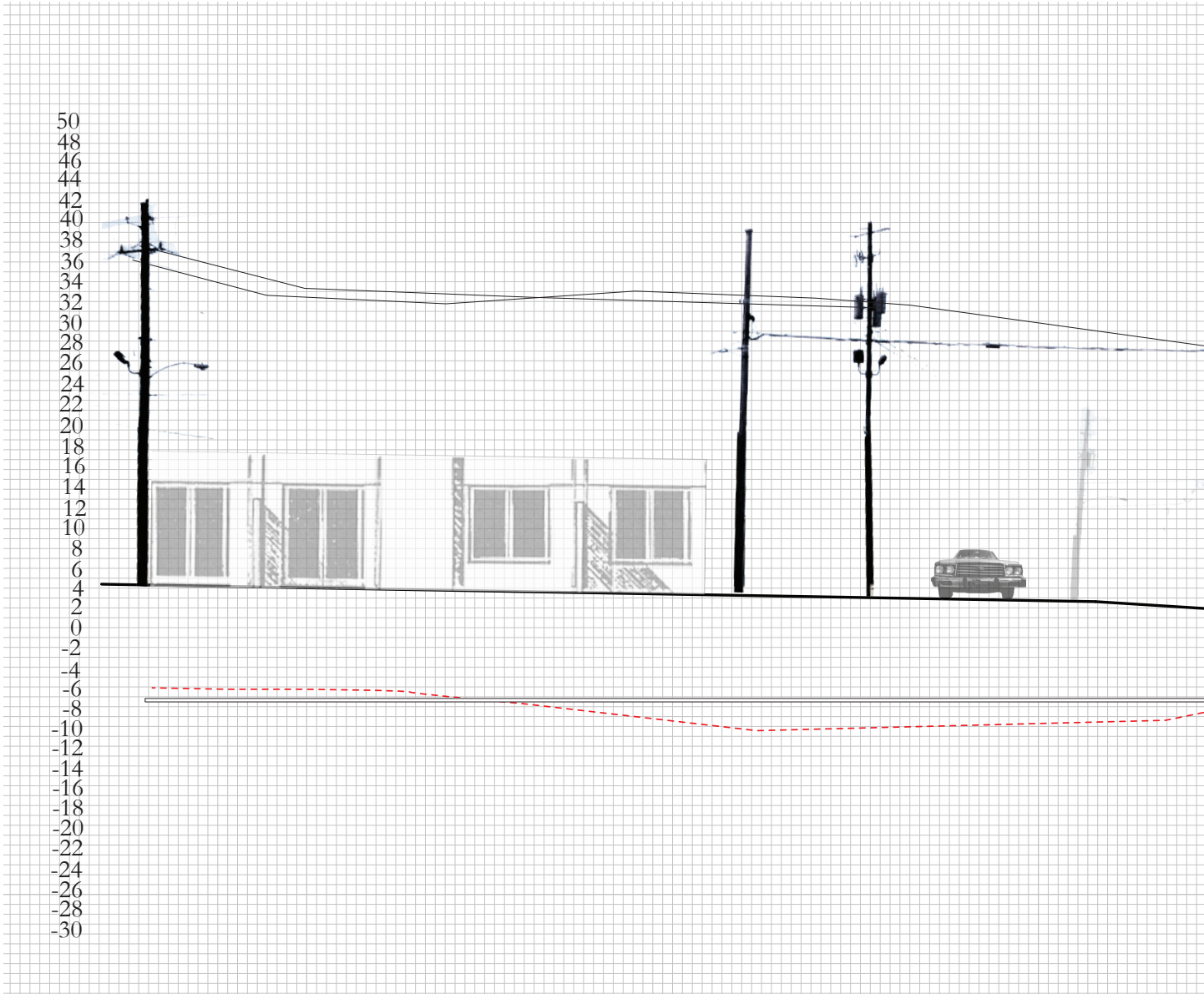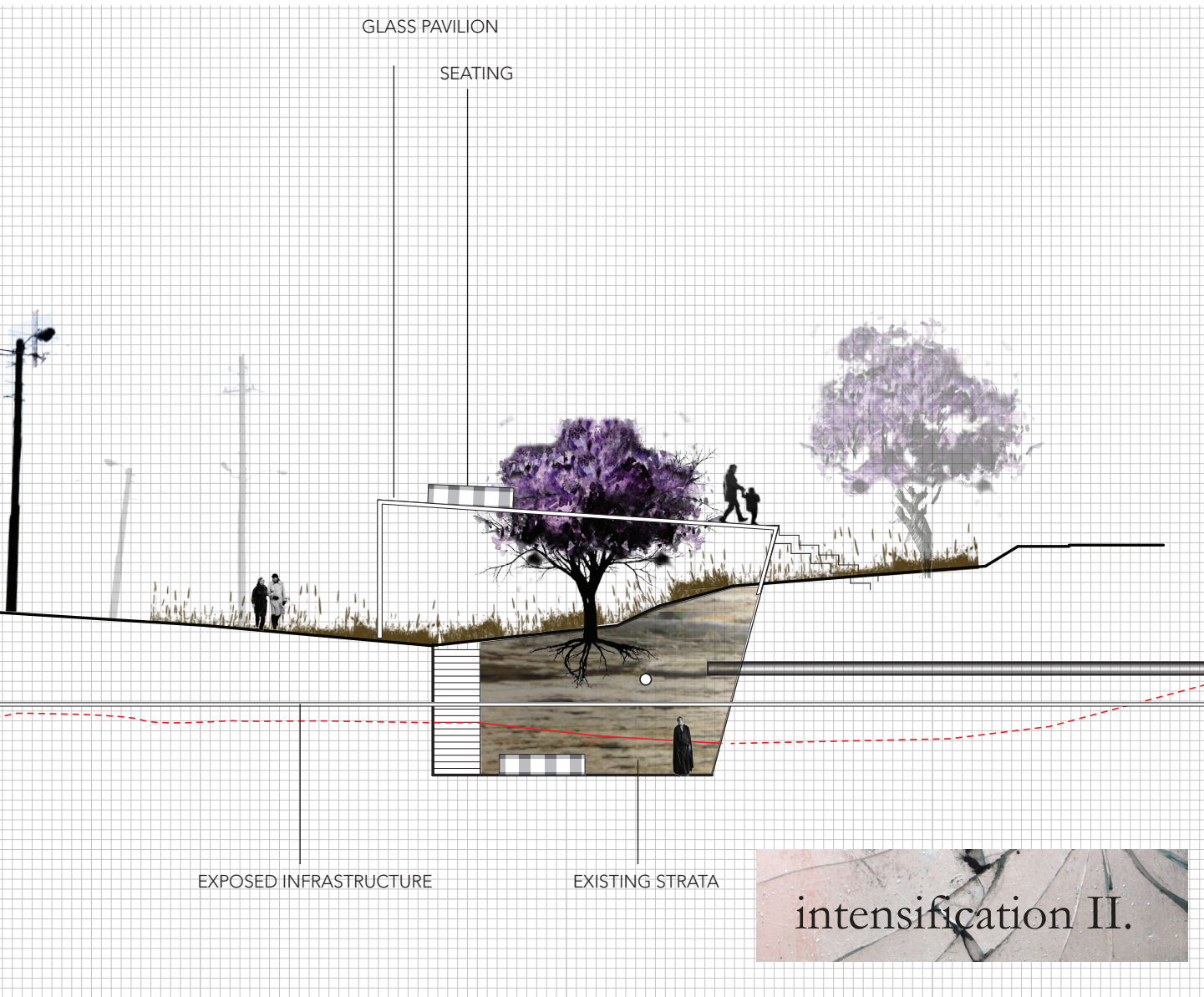
The final investigation cumulatively contains all of the preceding ones, with the added dimension of human experience. The guiding vigor behind the resulting journey into subjectivity and objectified landscape is formed upon the comprehension that landscape will never be understood as everything it really is; dynamic, fluctuating, uncertain, connective and continuous, a field, unless humans place themselves within it. A physical placement of the self within an intensification of the field can raise awareness of this fact, but there is also a mental shift which must occur within the subject. The following design explorations are attempts to stimulate the departure from any form of binary understanding – they span the borders of landscape and architecture, indoor and outdoor, above and below.

The intervention is similarly subterranean but in this instance it is an even more dramatic intensification of the surrounding landscape conditions. It could be asserted as an "intensification of specifically urban phenomena – density, accumulation, verticality" (Allen 2012: 78). The multiple layers of the city are revealed through excavating an area – part of which is open to the sky and part of which is completely enclosed underground. The intervention is likely to interrupt the existing subgrade infrastructure of the parking lot – wastewater pipes, electrical wires, communication cables. Instead of pulling these out in the construction process they will remain visibly severed as a symbol of what it means to exist in a connective field. The excavation may or may not hit bedrock, the underlying geology of the city taking the form of biotite gneiss. The underground strata illuminate temporality in a sense other than that governed by the clock, if it were to be revealed it could encourage the understanding of the geologic foundations of the city and region, and consequently the intervention's position as an interaction in space and time.   Over time the subgrade area may be colonized by humans and nonhumans, and may also succumb to the processes of erosion and siltation. The parking lot insertion gathers landscape processes as evidence of the shifting field and strives to make them visible.

Ascending to street level there is a perforated ground plane populated by opportunist species and disrupted by the excavation and a glass structure. The structure reflects the city itself but also concentrates the space within to make it more intensified.   A third level of experience is discovered at tree height, on the roof of the structure. The idea is to bring people into contact with the entire spectrum of field in one location – the actant can inhabit multiple dimensions through the intervention's interruption of the groundplane and sky space. At once they can feel what it means to be a component of a larger system of the city through a sense of continuity between human experience and the strength of the landscape condition. The designer's role is as conductor of the material details and choreography of the journey through space. The intervention aims to "necessitate a parallel shift from appearances and meanings to more prosaic concerns for how things work, what they do, how they interact…a return to complex and iinstrumental landscape issues…" (Corner 1997).

GLASS PAVILION

SEATING

EXPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

EXISTING STRATA

intensification II.

The subterranean intervention acts as a concentration of the landscape conditions.

The excavated area hopes to compel a reaction in the actant that allows them to experience a moment of unification with the objectified field. Through immersion in the strength of the landscape condition the subject and object are merged to harness the sense that they are a part of all the systems at play. This exploration is brought about through the close study of the haptic realm.   Maurice Merleau-Ponty refers to the significance of sensorial experience of the built world and emphasizes the holism of the senses in human interface the external world, "My perception is not a sum of visual, tactile, and audible givens: I perceive in a total way with my whole being: I grasp a unique structure of the thing, a unique way of being, which speaks to all my senses at once" (1964: 18). With this in mind the subterranean insertion is intended as a way to make visible the temporal nature of field with the inclusion of more than the sense of sight – the exposed earth walls will erode texturally in juxtaposition with the cool, smooth concrete. The accumulation of these experiential sensations all serve the purpose of the encounter – a simultaneously sublime and consolidated moment of interaction.
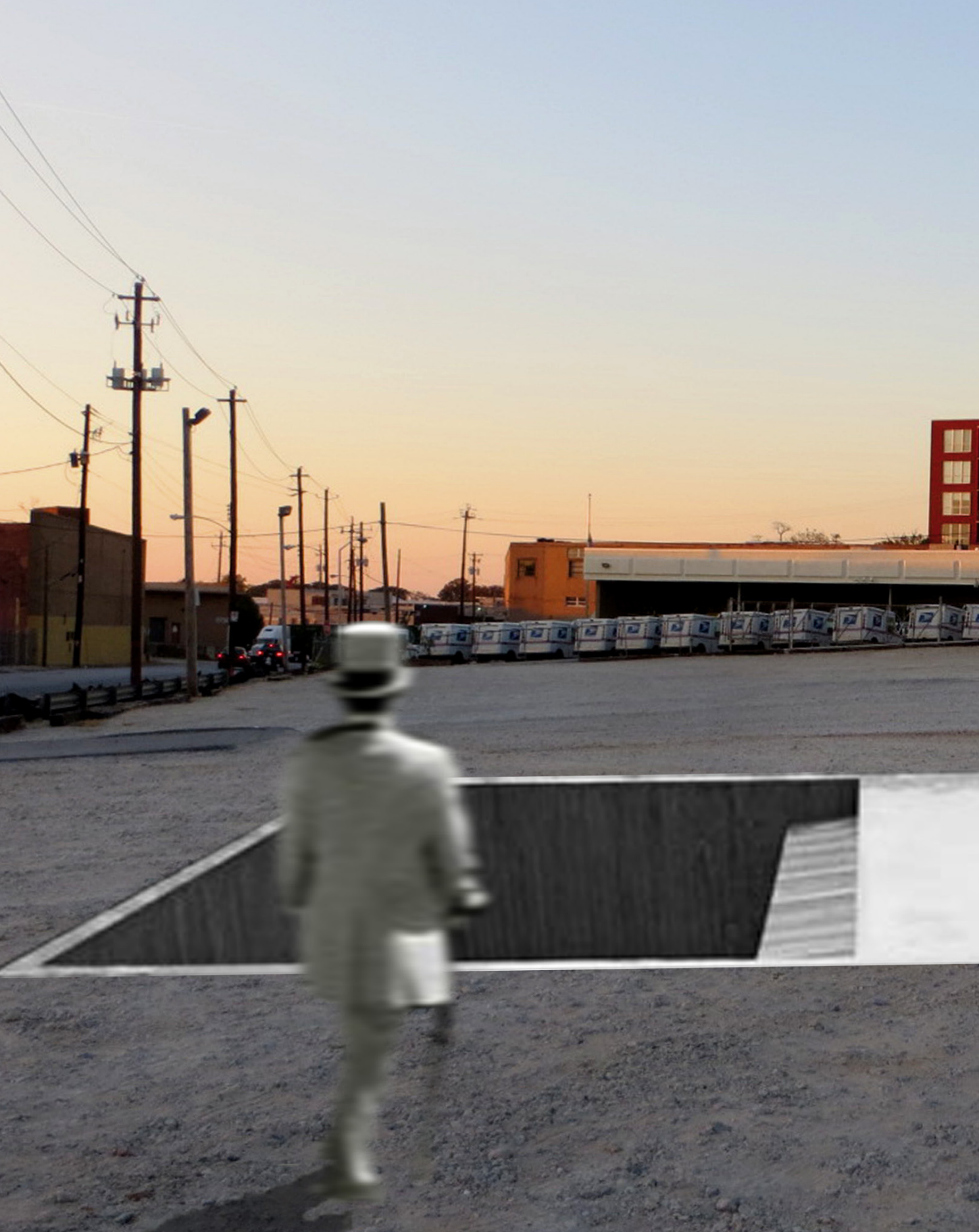
The potentials born from the incorporation of all aspects of human experience are echoed in the graphic representation of the field. The agency of design as the "physical and rational manipulation of an objectified reality" can be heightened when one considers the phenomenological experience of the field (Bullivant 2007: 82). These eidetic images are populated by fictional characters, artists of the dérive who appropriate the space in a manner which unveils it creative energy. It is vital that the thinking subject's merge with the surrounding systemic conditions is understood as open to the multiplicities of possibilities that the field offers, magical, real or otherwise. It cannot be reduced to generic imagery for the fear of flattening the accumulated forces into a pictorial plane. The imagination therefore, plays a large role in the assertion that landscape architecture is not just the built project but an expanded matrix of discursive opportunities. "The landscape imagination is a power of consciousness that transcends visualization," (Corner 1997: 167). The imaged presentations of the intervention are intended to open up potentials, whether they exist in external reality or within the subject – the proposal for a field-empowered landscape is a envisioned as a collective endeavor seeded in the mind of the individual.

Figure 20: Michael Heizer, *Levitated Mass,* 2012
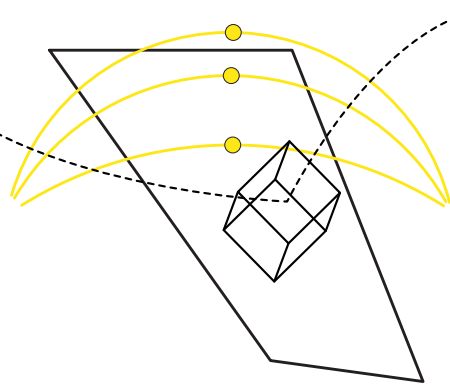Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Figure 21: James Turrel, *Meeting,* 1986
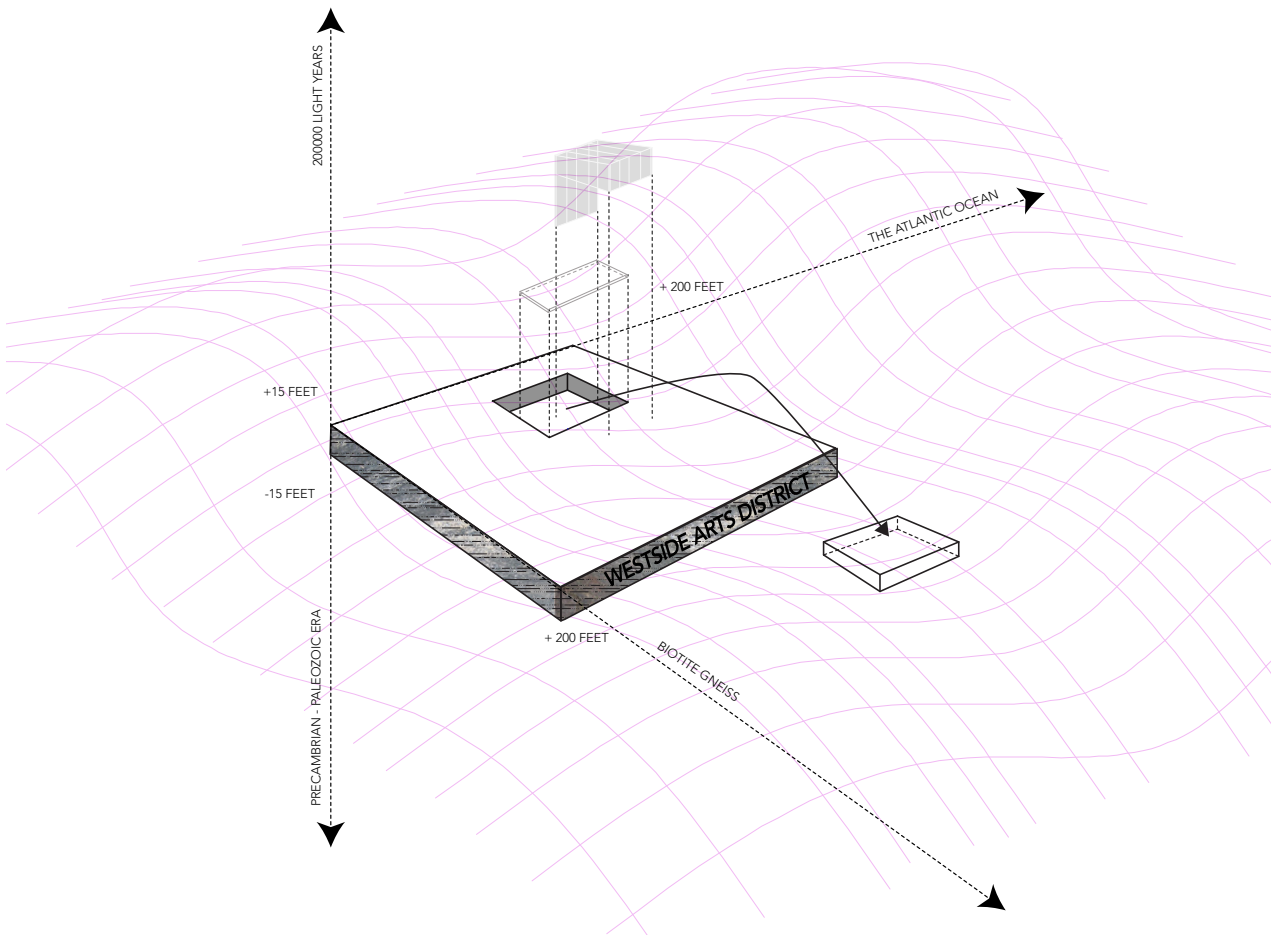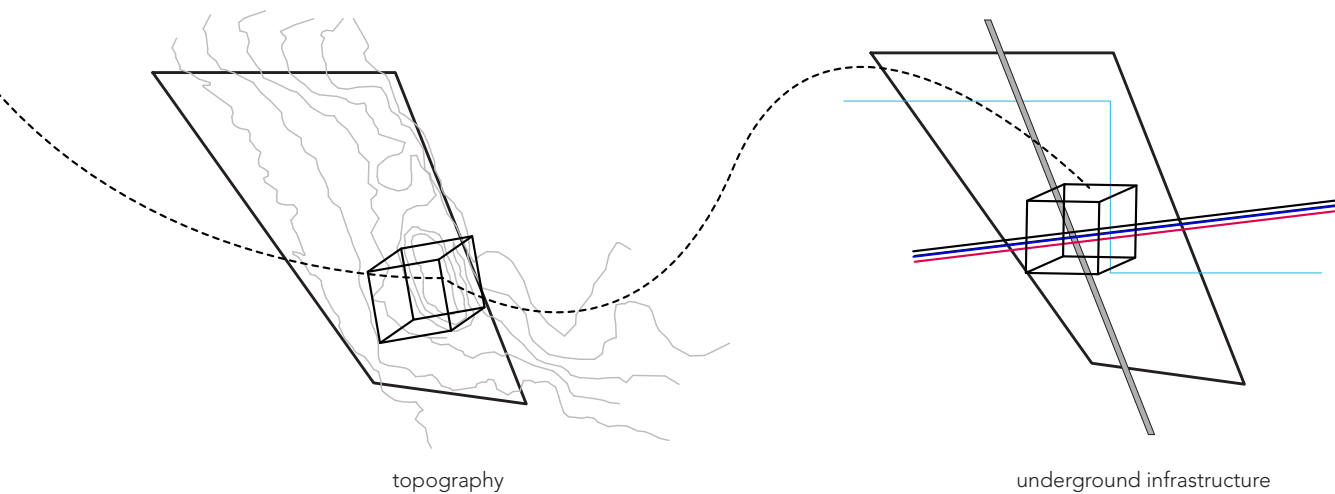MOMA PS1, New York City
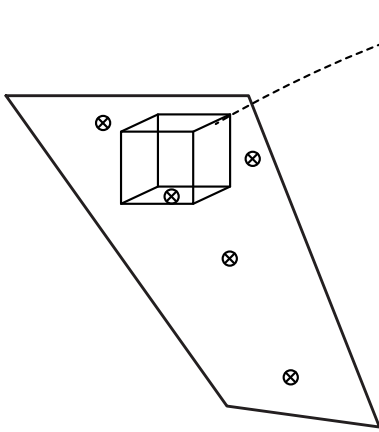
bedrock depth

sun orientation

200000 LIGHT YEARS

PRECAMBRIAN - PALEOZOIC ERA

+15 FEET

-15 FEET

+ 200 FEET

THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

+ 200 FEET

WESTSIDE ARTS DISTRICT

BIOTITE GNEISS

topography

underground infrastructure

Where the intervention lies within the field is dependent
on multiple variables. The depth of the bedrock performs
a significant contribution to the gathered field because the
revelation of geologic processes brings with it a diverse range
of effects and interactions. The orientation will be guided by
the angle of the sun and the topographic conditions so that the
experience of the entirety of the field is heightened through
light, warmth and aspect. The placement of underground
infrastructure on-site is uncertain, but maximum visibility of
this component is desired to reveal the intricacy of the city's
connective form.

As an effect of the field the intervention engages the
Precambrian era and the Atlantic Ocean. This is because
everything is connected in space and time. Every breath taken
contains the atoms of some other breath taken by humans and
nonhumans. Biotite Gneiss was formed in the Preambrian -
Paleozoic eras and is a metamorphic rock found in the Piedmont
region of Georgia. Its contribution to the field is just as valuable
and performative to the field as that of the abandoned paper
plane or the urban nomad. The field is continuous and through
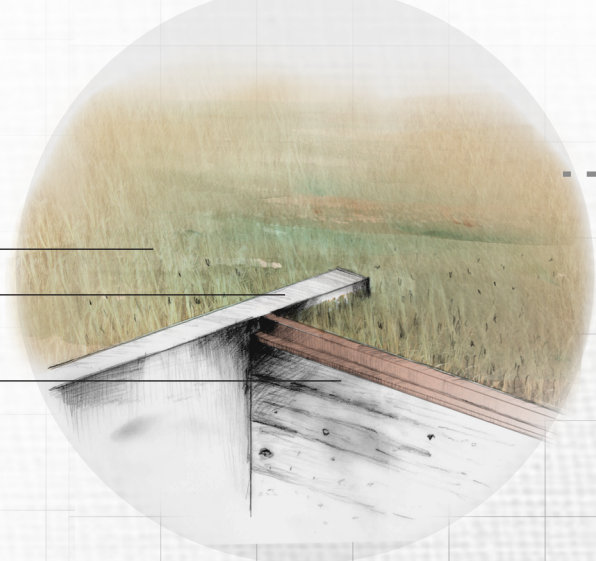the visibility of geology the attempt it made to presence this.

OPPORTUNIST GRASSES

POLISHED CONCRETE
WALL

EXPOSED EARTH

WEATHERING STEEL RIM

CORRUGATED STEEL
ROOF
12MM CLEAR LAMINATED
GLASS
STEEL BEAM
STAINLESS STEEL FORMED
CHANNEL
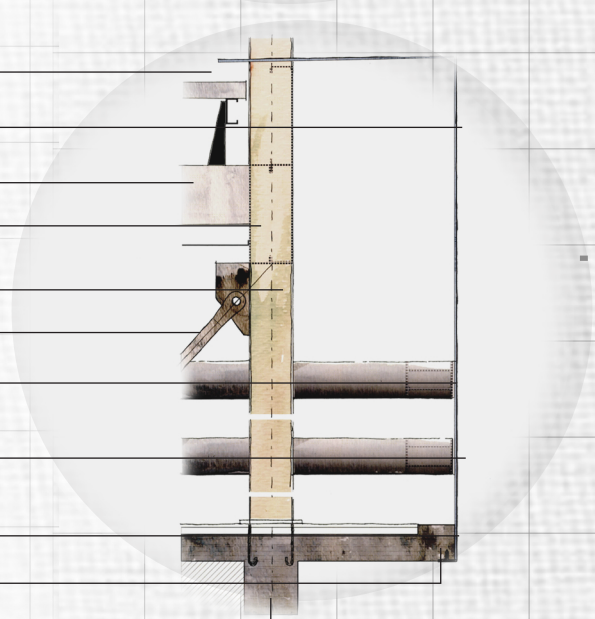STEEL COLUMN

CROSS MEMBER

STEEL TRANSOM

SILICON

3/8" STEEL BOLT
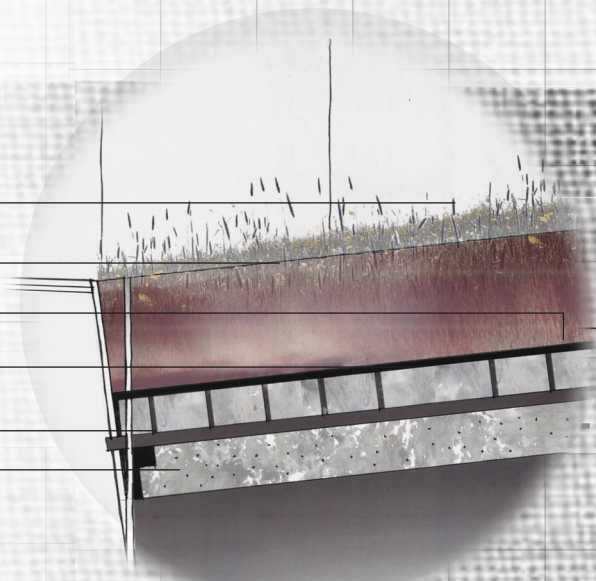
STEEL PLATE

150MM CONCRETE SLAB

OPPORTUNIST GRASSES

GROWING MEDIUM

DRAINAGE, AERATION, WATER
STORAGE
MEMBRANE PROTECTION +
ROOT BARRIER
ROOFING MEMBRANE

STRUCTURAL SUPPORT

The phenomenology of urban specificity is made legible to the human actant through close attention to materiality and construction. The moments where materials meet are recognized as key contributers to the overall experience of the field, as it operates between simultaneous scales. The exposed strata wall is edged in unfinished metal to register the patina of time. A concrete retaining wall extends beyond the bounds of the excavated area to act as a scaffold for future erosion. The glass structure is constructed from light metal beams to maintain a sense of airiness and lightness that can absorb the changes of the field and reflect them at the same time. It is understood not as architectural, but as a conglomeration of the gathered field. The perforated ground plane permeates the structure, and is intended as a living system so necessitates the thickness of the ground plane supported by underground beams. It includes drainage and a growing medium to allow for maximum capacity of planted material.
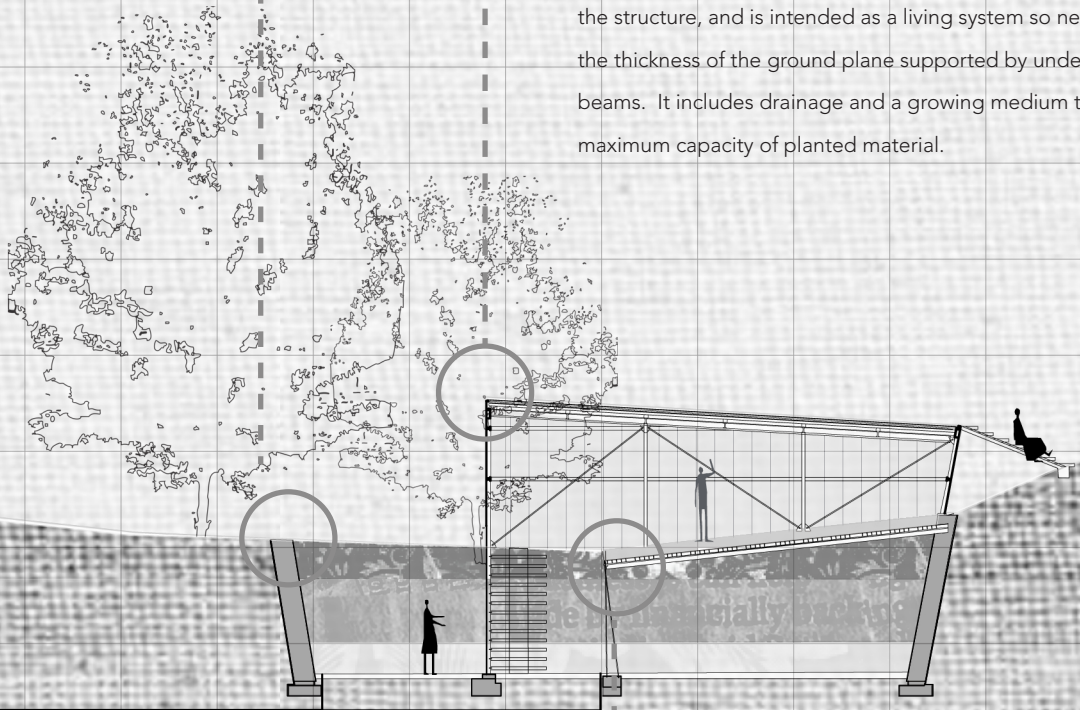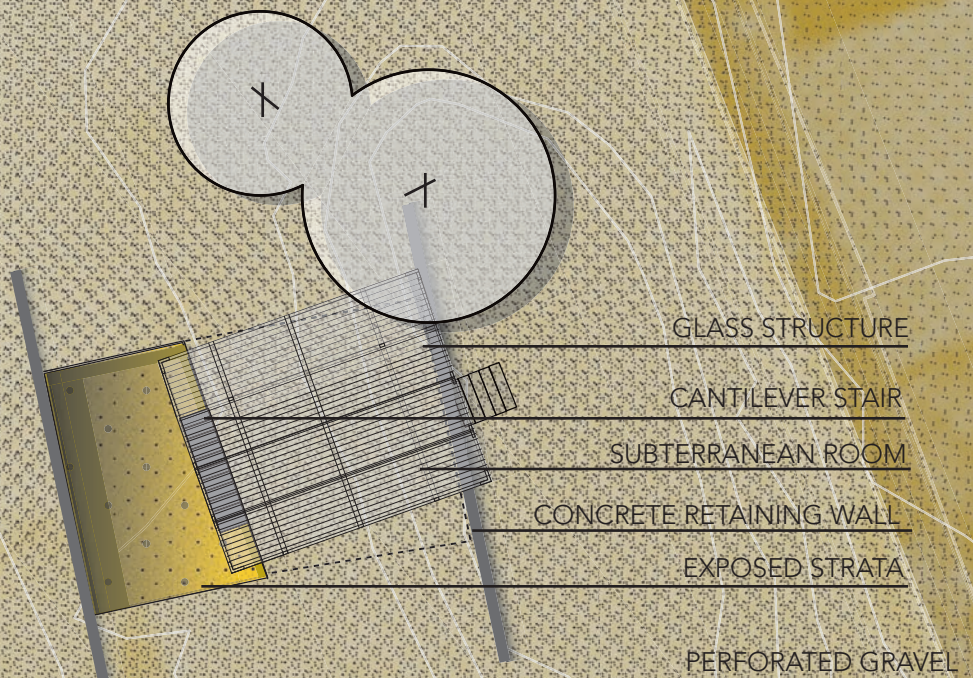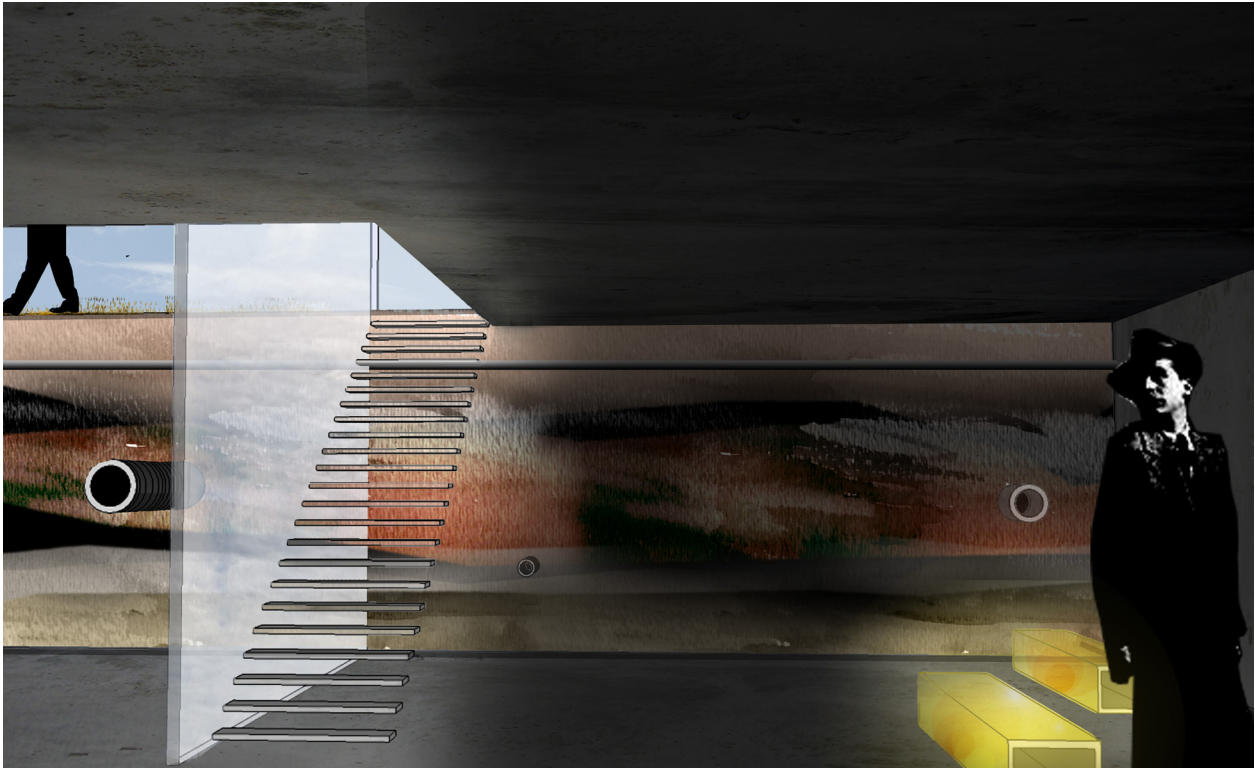
FIELD
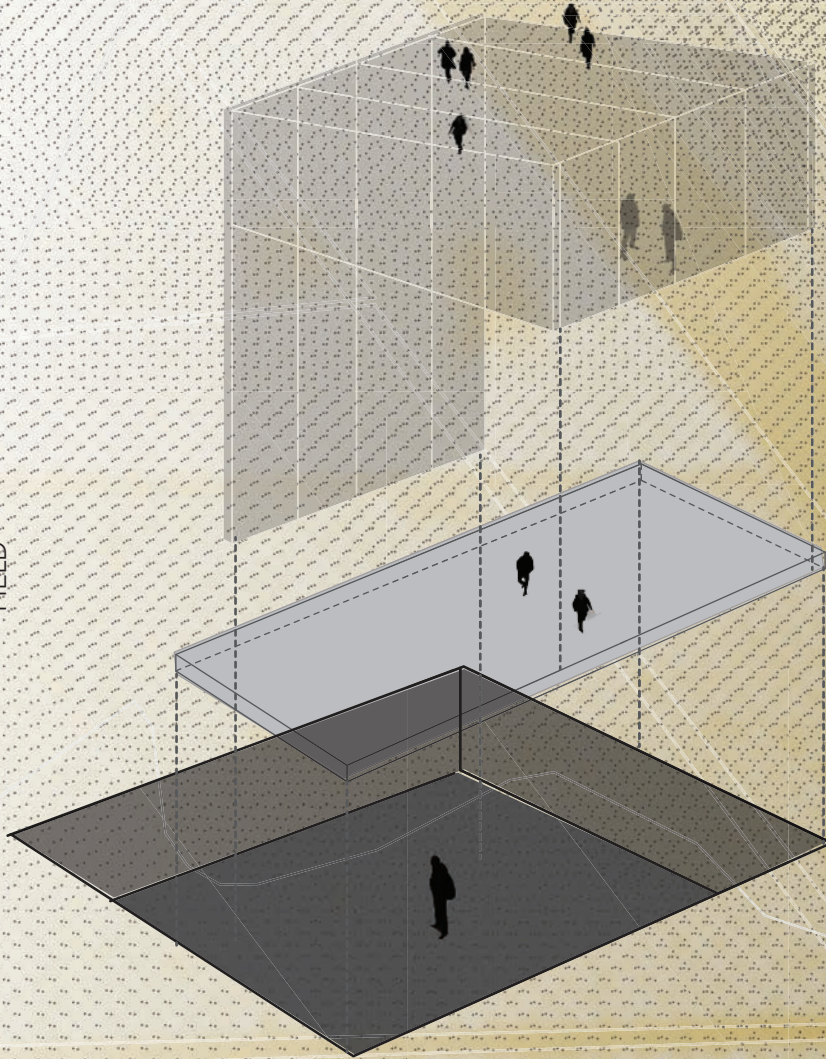
Participants in this place can experience the entirety of the field in one location. The insertions are intended to contrast against the urbanity of the surrounding context in their minimalism but also appear as a concentration of what already exists there.

GLASS STRUCTURE

CANTILEVER STAIR

SUBTERRANEAN ROOM

CONCRETE RETAINING WALL

EXPOSED STRATA

PERFORATED GRAVEL

The action of descending underground provides unique opportunities for exploration. These images illustrate how the material details such as the exposed earth juxtaposed against heavy concrete or polished glass can allow actants to create their own narrative which question the agency of public space. Instead of the generic grade level landscape features, this intervention is intentionally provocative in its extreme approach to heightened experience.

The subterranean cavern may be uncomfortable at times - the walls could be oppressive in their textural grain, the ceiling low and heavy. A damp smell may be a byproduct of rain and uncontained soil, and the sound of the city could be muffled in an unsettling way. The norms of public space are challenged here through a playful interference with human hapticity.

SILTATION

COLONIZATION
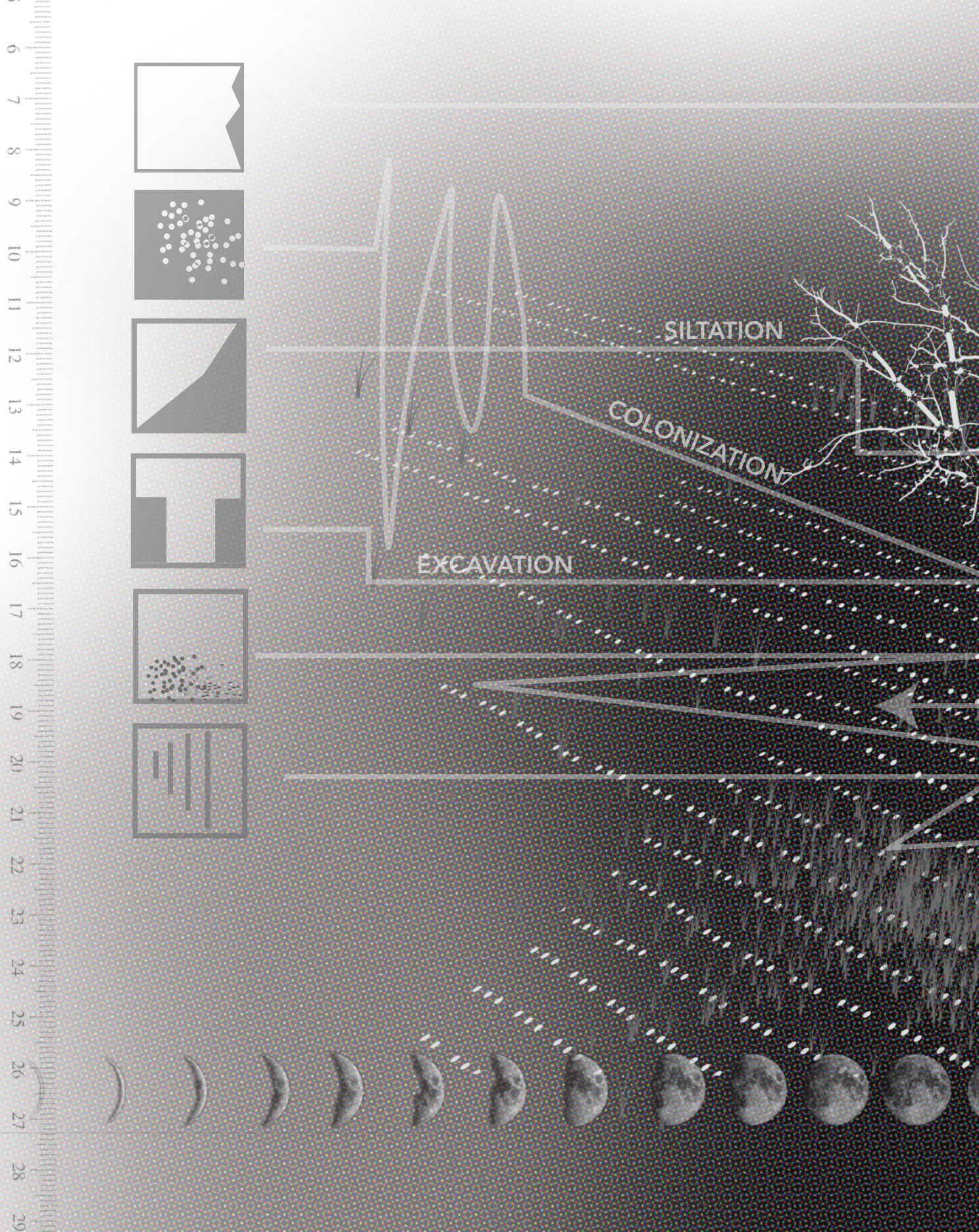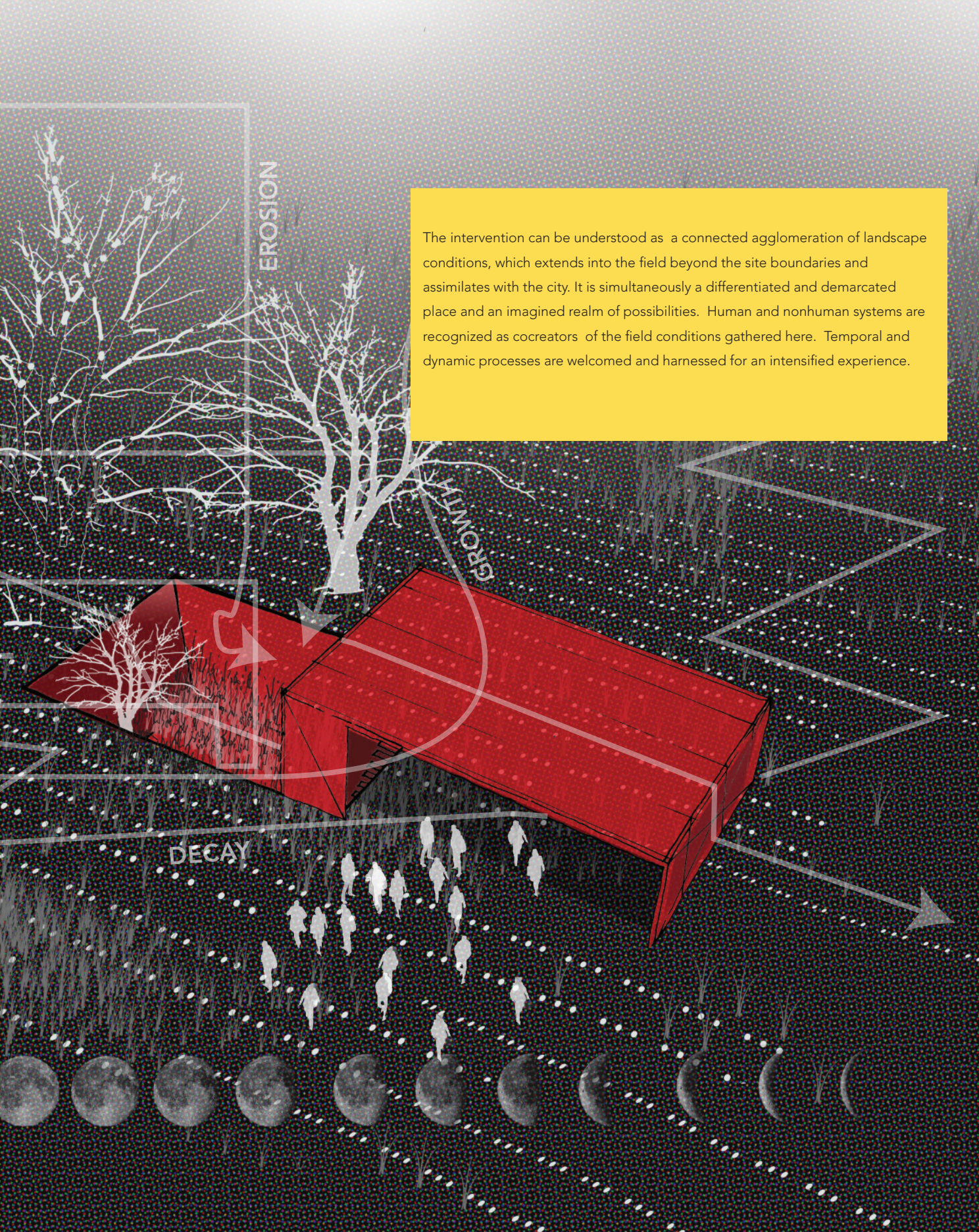
EXCAVATION

The intervention can be understood as a connected agglomeration of landscape conditions, which extends into the field beyond the site boundaries and assimilates with the city. It is simultaneously a differentiated and demarcated place and an imagined realm of possibilities. Human and nonhuman systems are recognized as cocreators of the field conditions gathered here. Temporal and dynamic processes are welcomed and harnessed for an intensified experience.
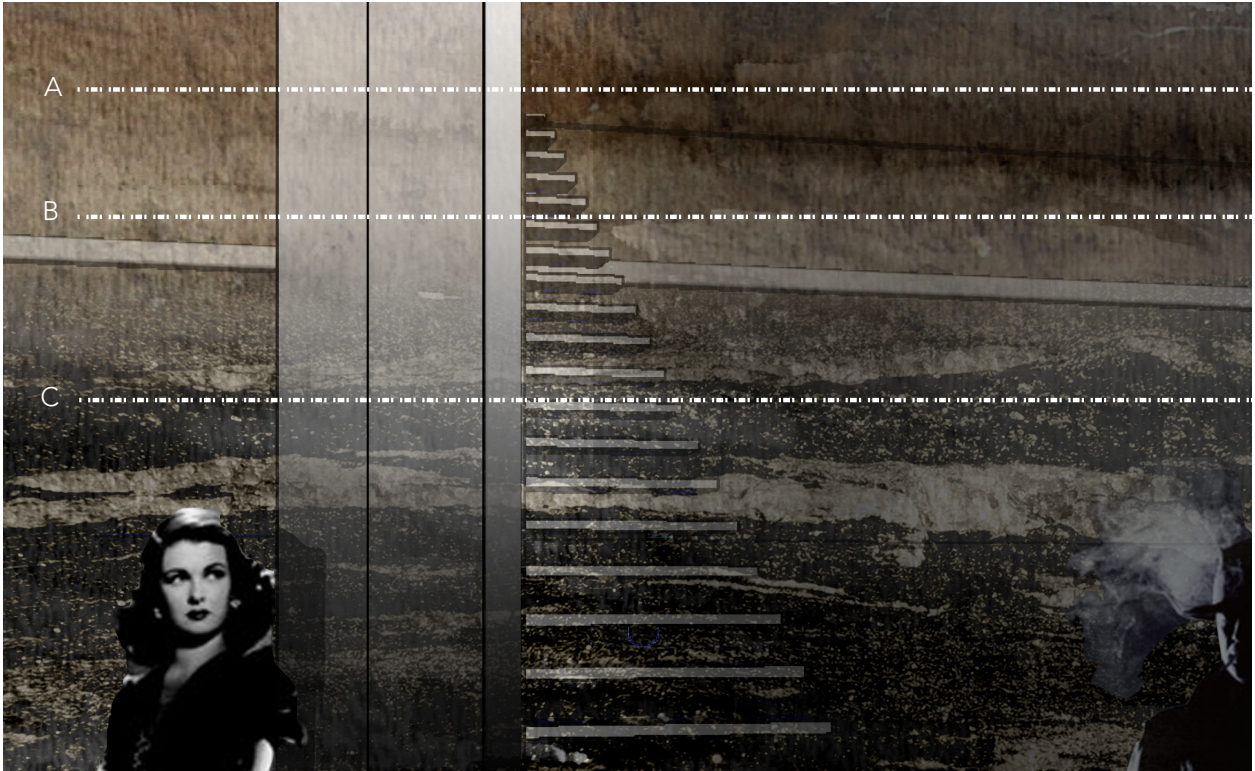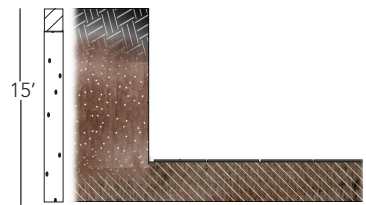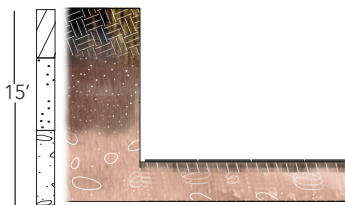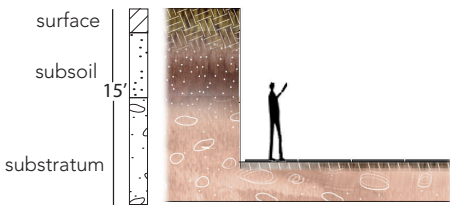
The subterranean strata
are identified as significant
contributors to the
recognition that landscape
is constructed on fluctual
relationships rather than
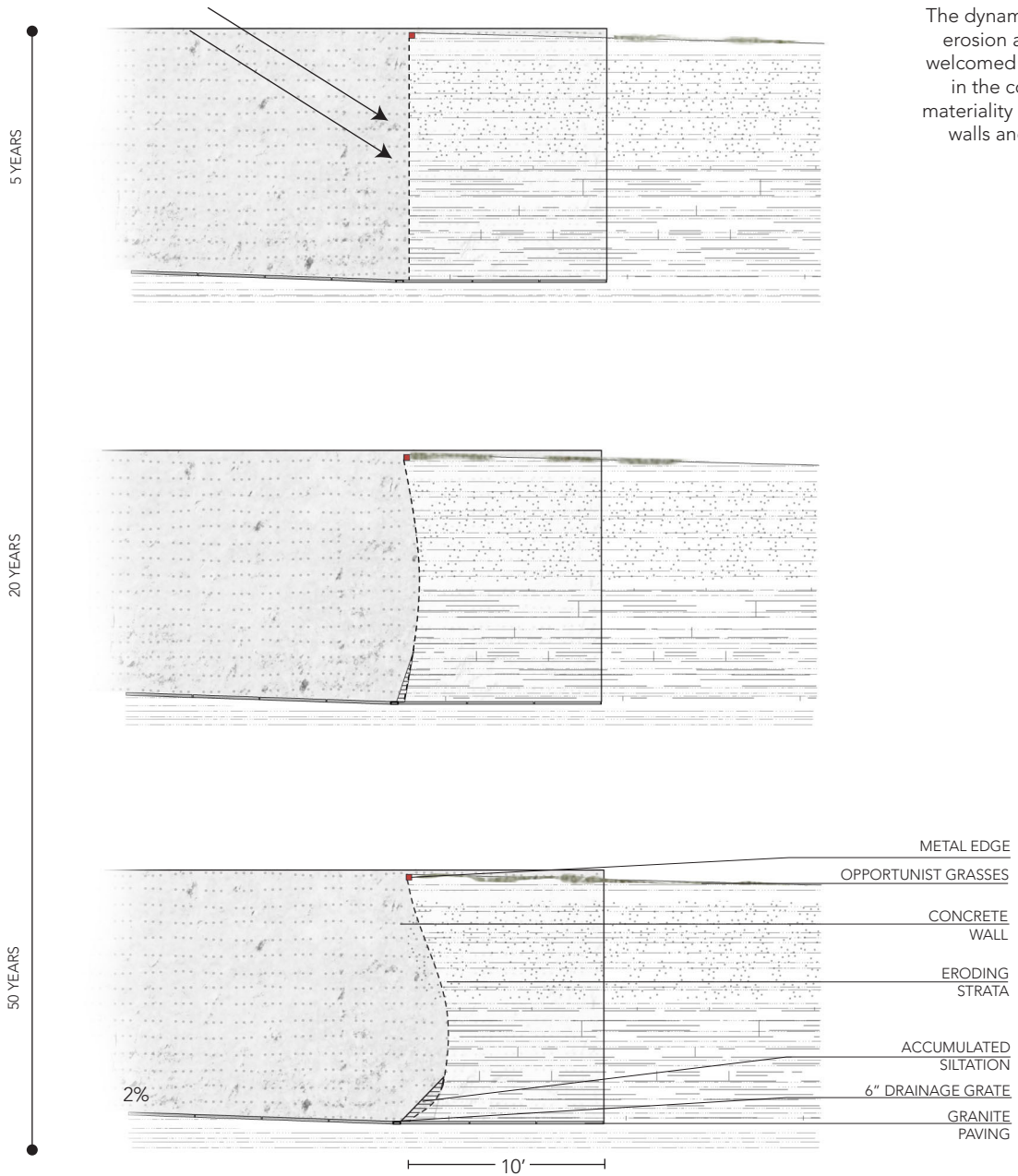permanent ground.

Whether or not the
excavation will reveal bedrock
is uncertain.

5 YEARS

20 YEARS

50 YEARS

The dynamic processes of
erosion and siltation are
welcomed and presenced
in the construction and
materiality of the retaining
walls and groundplane.

METAL EDGE
OPPORTUNIST GRASSES

CONCRETE
WALL

ERODING
STRATA

ACCUMULATED
SILTATION
6" DRAINAGE GRATE
GRANITE
PAVING

2%

10'

EROSION FROM WATER HITTING VERTICAL SURFACE OF EARTH WALL

The intervention offers up possibilities for multiple uses as the field changes, dissolving the distance between subject and object and encouraging the acceptance that humans are themselves accumulations of the field.
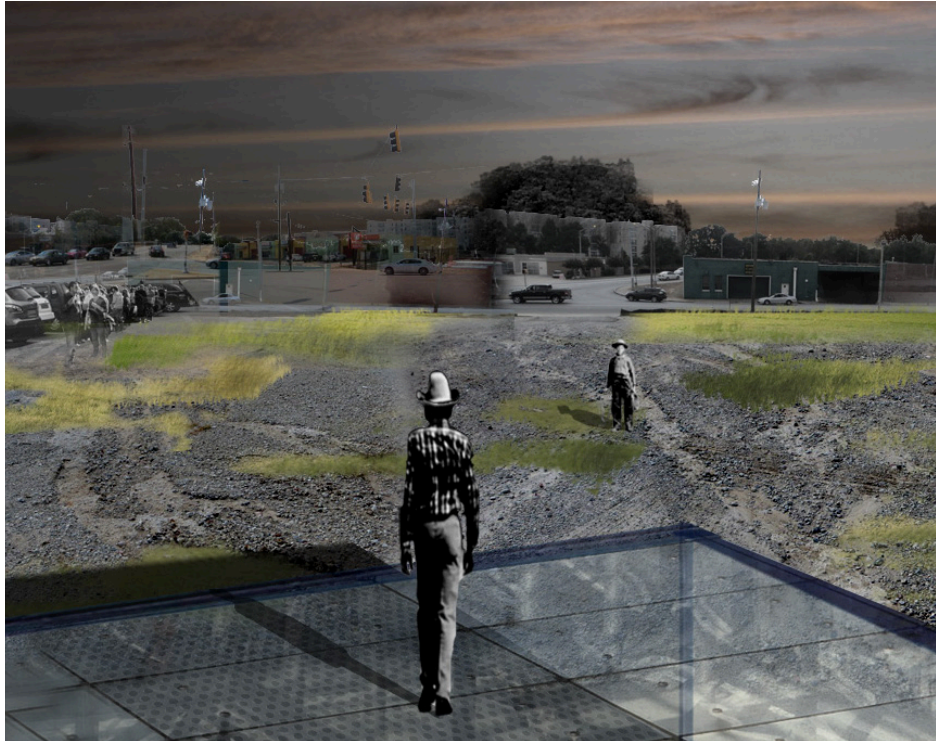
The structure is assembled from glass to reflect the changing conditions of the field, and create a space within a space.

Opportunist plants are invited to occupy the excavated area, developing uncertain encounters between landscape systems

Landscape as field is a way of understanding living systems as rich in diversity and complexity, with constantly changing and uncertain futures. It means little without the emotive qualities of human experience, and this investigation into merging subject and object attempts to uncover the poetics and mystery to be discovered in the context of field conditions. Rather than an overarching masterplan, or strategy for urban fields, this intervention is a local exploration of how field can be exemplified in the parking lot of the Westside Arts District of Atlanta. It is humble in size and scope, but if it has the effect of adjusting a conception of landscape as vital, dynamic and multidimensional , then it has reached profound depths.
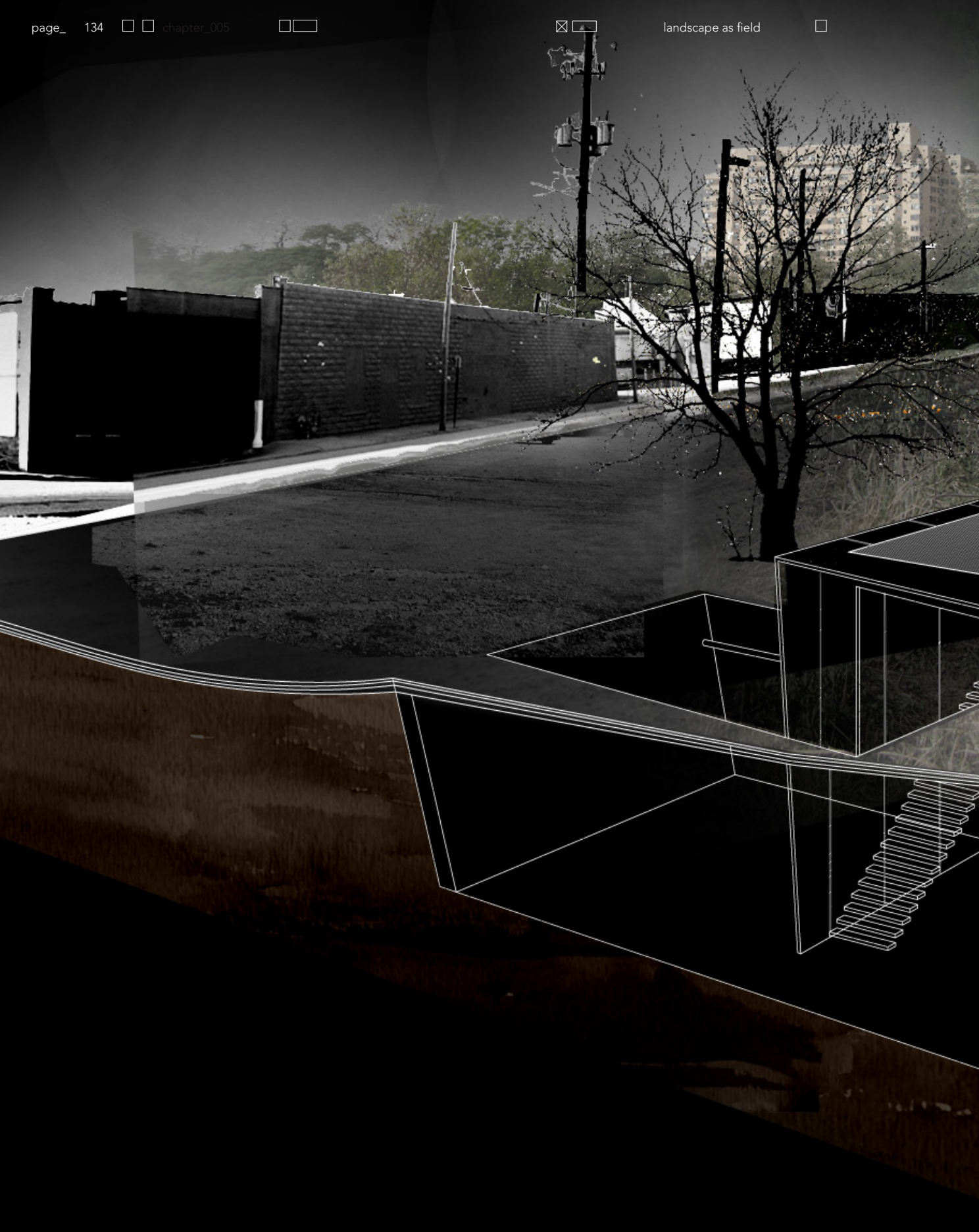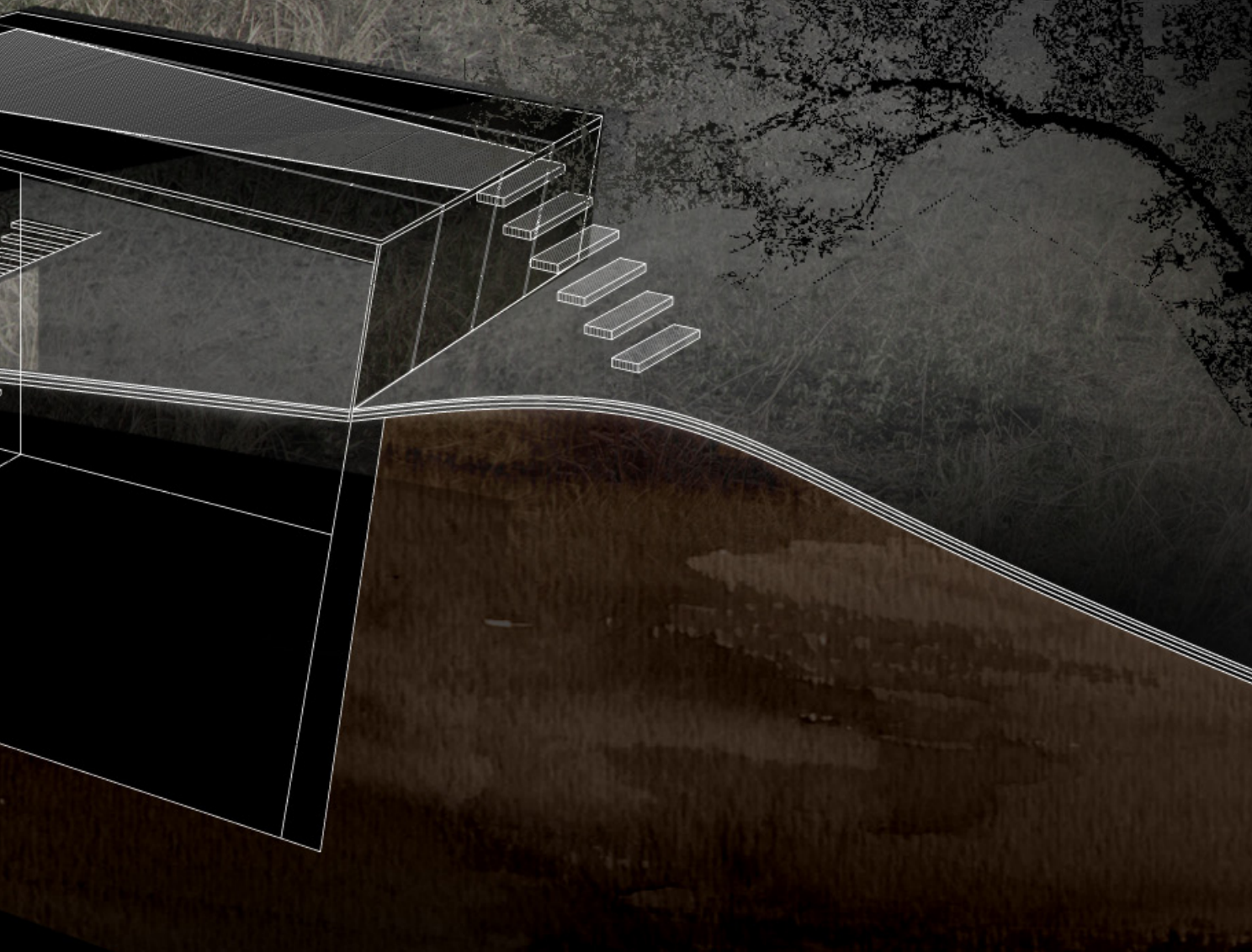
6. the way forward

x_REFLECTIONS

"You can find out how to do something and then do it or do something and then find out what you did." (Isamu Noguchi).

It is through the spirit of exploration heralded by the likes of Noguchi and solidified into research by design methodologies, that the continued process of discovery was enabled within this thesis project. The process has been fruitful for yielding design ideas that interrogate the designer's assumptions and preconceptions. The lack of defined outcome took the project to uncharted territories and afforded the discovery of a new way of understanding and designing landscape. A byrproduct of the research into field is the possibility that a hybrid language for landscape should encompass that of other designed modes like architecture. To avoid the binary between the built and non-built or natural and artificial it seems that the distinction should be downplayed. The parking lot intervention appears to be formally structural and architectural but it should be understood only as the way the field conglomerated.

A missed opportunity within the research project was the decision for the design to remain within the boundaries of site. If the time allowed, the potentials of eradicating the parking lot would be further explored. There exists an interesting tension between the fluid notion of landscape as field and the static and bounded entity of site. The field is continuous, and "site " implies borders and permanence. Site-specificity and locational identity seem to act as impositions in an understanding of landscape as consisting solely of relationships. The role of the designer could be interrogated further too. While she can be assigned as an orchestrator of landscape conditions, or a choreographer of tangible contact with processes, it is unclear to what extent she can enable interactions. The traditional part played by the designer has been top-down, so the nature of bottom-up design based on uncertainties and relationships requires further research within this project.

There are problematics bound up in the notion of field itself to do with humans' inherent nature to categorize and define things. The valuation of one thing over another is inevitable, so to design with a collection of relationships and interactions without generalization or objectification can seem an impossibly daunting task.
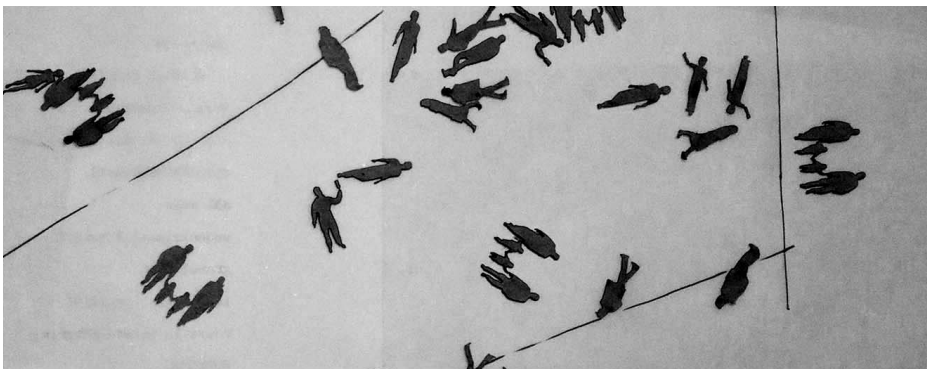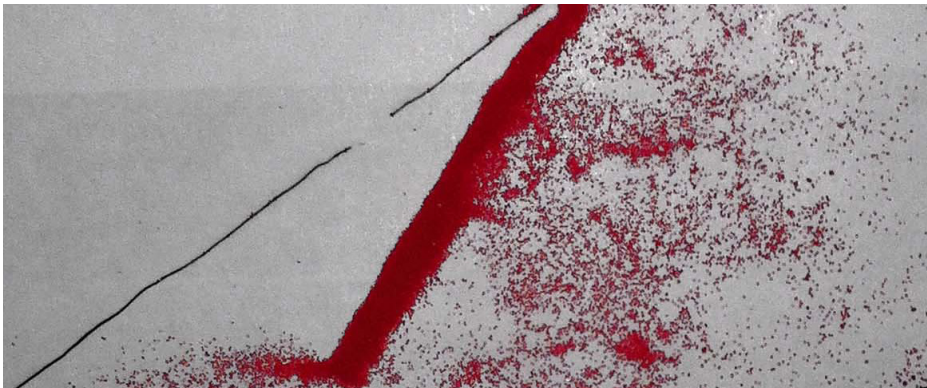
y_ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. Goicolea, Anthony. 2005. *Tree Dwellers*. Retrieved from http://www.anthonygoicolea.com/

Figure 2. Broken City Lab. 2009. *Naturalized Area*. Retrieved from http://www.brokencitylab.org/

Figure 3. Smithson, Robert. 1970. *Spiral Jetty*. Retrieved from http://www.diaart.org/sites/main/spiraljetty

Figure 4. Wei Wei, Ai. 2010. *Sunflower Seeds*. Retrieved from http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/unilever-series-ai-weiwei-sunflower-seeds

Figure 5. Hans Arp. 1933. *Selon les lois du hasard (According to the Laws of Chance)*. Retrieved from http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/arp-according-to-the-laws-of-chance-t05005

Figure 6. Enric Miralles and Carme Pinos. 1984. *Igualada Cemetery*. Retrieved from http://www.landezine.com/index.php/2009/08/cemetery-design-igualada/

Figure 7. Bernard Tschumi 1982-88. *Parc de la Villete*. Retrieved from http://gunborgmartinablom.blogspot.com/

Figure 8: James Corner Field Operations. 2003 -- *Fresh Kills*. Retrieved from http://bettercities.net

Figure 9. Sam Durant. 2005. *Proposal for White and Indian Dead Monument Transpositions, Washington, D.C.* Retrieved from http://samdurant.com/

Figure 10. 1994. Martha Schwartz, Ken Smith, David Meyer Landscape Architects, *Village of Yorkville Park*. Retrieved from http://landscapevoice.com/the-village-of-yorkville-park/

Figure 11. On Kawara. 1966-- *Today Series*. Retrieved from http://www.walkerart.org/collections/artworks/today-series

Figure 12. James Corner Field Operations, Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and Piet Oudolf. 2009. *The Highline*. Retrieved from http://www.thehighline.org/

Figure 13. Unknown. (Diagram of electromagnetic field). Retrieved from http://teledataschool.com/bc/wavepropagation.php

Figure 14. Unknown. (Photograph). Retrieved from http://www.trade.gov/press/publications/asset/image/water_0909.jpg

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Figure 18. Richard Long 1984. *A Seven Day Circle of Ground.* Retrieved from Corner, James. (1999) "The Agency of Mapping," in Mapping, Denis Cosgrove (ed.), London: Reaktion Books.

Figure 19. Nathan Coley. 2010. *In Memory,* Retrieved from http://studionathancoley.com/works/in-memory/images/2

Figure 10. Michael Heizer. 2012. *Levitated Mass.* Retrieved from http://www.theartworlddaily.com/2012/06/24/540/#.UV5SHat35hM
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Figure 21: James Turrel. 1986. *Meeting.* Retrieved from http://momaps1.org/exhibitions/view/170

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