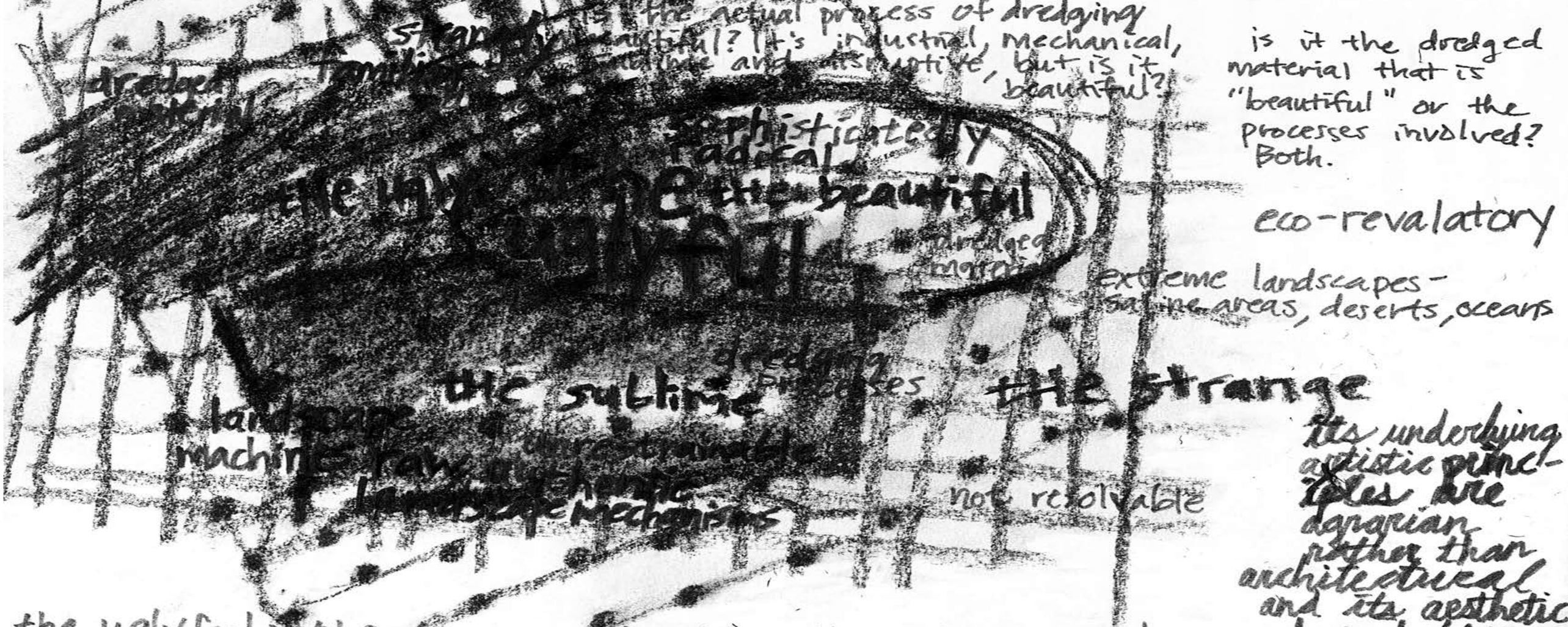
LANDSCAPES OF THE UGLYFUL

Rachel McGraw


dredged material
the actual process of dredging
is it the dredged material that is "beautiful" or the processes involved? Both.
sophisticatedly radical
the beautiful
dredged marsh
eco-revalatory
extreme landscapes - saline areas, deserts, oceans
the sublime
the strange
its underlying artistic principles are dangerian rather than architectural and its aesthetic foundation is more sublime than beautiful.
not resolvable
the uglyful: the bizarre juxtaposition, the random shift in scale, the unexpected combination of materials, the unconventional function, the iconographic image, the astounding moment brought about by the untrained hand, the disruption of the ordinary, the awkwardness of the contradictory moment.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my loving and supportive family. To my mother and father- Thank you for everything and for making this possible. And a special dedication to my grandmother, Dixie McGraw, for her constant encouragement and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to the entire Auburn Masters of Landscape Architecture faculty.

Michael Robinson, Jacqueline Margetts, Jocelyn Zanzot, and Charlene Lebleu, thank you for your essential roles in my journey into the profession of landscape architecture.

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To professor David Hill, thank you so much for everything you have taught me and for your continued dedication and support during this Thesis year.

CONTENT

[01] Schtick

Landscape architects can use new radicalisms to move away from the ingrained and the habitual. There is an opportunity to push the boundaries of aesthetics and abandon inefficient design norms that are fixed in the realm of “perfected decorums” (Scogin and Elam, 2012). We can design landscapes to be more than high-maintenance copies of ecological systems (Roncken, 2011). Instead of using an overly aesthetic design framework we can evoke a set of qualities of landscapes of the Uglyful. This framework will be used to uncover hidden ecological, aesthetic, and social nuances of two sites- both a large and a small scale site. Under the framework of the Uglyful these designs aim to evoke the strangely familiar, the sublime, and the unresolvable qualities of these places. Can the new radicalism of landscapes of the Uglyful be applied to landscape systems in order to make them more economically, ecologically, and socially eco-revelatory and resilient? This research question is valuable as an element of postmodernism that can be used in the design of emergent and resilient landscape systems. Conventional landscape design is often fixed in a reliance on aesthetic norms and ill-perceived social values (Roncken, 2011). This project seeks to describe the significance of using new design frameworks such as landscapes of the Uglyful. The success of the framework has been analyzed and will be discussed. This project situates itself amongst postmodernism as a new design thinking that can be utilized in landscape architecture theory and practice.

We can advocate for new frameworks that push the boundaries of modern landscape design. This research is situated in strict studies of ecological, social, and economic systems of two sites. The goal was to identify how these systems could be re-designed to become more resilient, adaptive, and eco-revelatory. Elements of the Uglyful that stem from the original concept developed by architects Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam will be translated and combined with elements that have been proposed to evoke the Uglyful or the “strangely familiar” in landscape systems (Scogin and Elam, 2012). This framework will be used to uncover ecological, aesthetic, and emotional nuances of a place and highlight these through design. This research question

will be tested at two different scales: a regional scale of a coastal landscape system and a suburban scale of a residential landscape system.

This project seeks to engage unconventional design that addresses issues at the forefront of contemporary landscape architecture practice and theory. Conventional landscape designs have often been criticized for being based on a "perfected decorum" (Roncken, 2011). This leads to disconnected experiences between humans and landscapes. It is not always beneficial to create landscapes that are picturesque or versions of an ingrained set of symbolic images of landscape. These symbolic images often have a preoccupation with projected appearances (Roncken, 2011). Barthes describes a public that is "interested in its own projected desires" (Roncken, 2011). We cannot continue to base our designs on these "disproportioned beautifications" that require large amounts of maintenance to keep up the projections of what landscapes should be because these projections are often based on ill-perceived aesthetic and social values. This can be problematic as there is often a large amount of "Botox" needed to maintain these projections (Roncken, 2011). We should seek to benefit from living mechanism instead of "imitating them" (2011).

Designers often try to downsize nature into a human scale. We sometimes attempt to fit ecological systems into in high-maintenance copies of themselves (Roncken, 2011). We can instead engage design that addresses suburban, regional, and global needs. By employing design frameworks such as landscapes of the Uglyful we can create landscape systems that are no longer fixed in aesthetic classifications but instead privilege ecological processes. Landscape architects have the opportunity to better connect the parts within these systems to coexist with one another and can re-establish a lost experience of humans as part of these systems. Landscapes of the Uglyful provide the ability to do these things for many reasons. The qualities that two landscape designs evoke will be described in detail as components of landscapes of the Uglyful. Both Gaillard Island and Dixie's Backyard uncovered successes as well as critiques of this design framework. These critiques will be reflected on and included in the theoretical framework of this design research. Concluding the investigation of the framework, these design iterations will be analyzed to determine their overall success in uncovering new territories in practice and theory.

This project seeks to address current issues that are faced when designing landscape systems. We often engage ecological systems as if their features are disconnected (Roncken, 2011). Landscape systems are actually a set of "disparate elements that are phenomenologically connected" (Barnett, 2013). Some conventional design practices have been criticized for focusing too much on trying to control the circumstances within these open systems. Creating designs that are not defined by conventions of aesthetics and social normalities but are instead informed by ecological processes can reveal new opportunities in landscape design. The first task will be to describe the landscapes of the Uglyful framework. The original concept of the Uglyful has been translated to landscapes of the Uglyful, a framework that tests elements of postmodernism specific to landscape systems and evocative of the Uglyful. After discussing these investigations it will be necessary discuss possibilities and uncertainties related to this research.

The scope of this project reaches into discussions of postmodernism. Foster describes postmodernism as "a break with the aesthetic field of modernism" (Foster, 1998). He states, "This questioning of cultural codes sees to investigate social and political affiliations rather than conceal them"(Foster, 1998). Landscapes of the Uglyful involves making revelatory these hidden or under-valued ecological and social nuances. Deploying this framework of landscapes of the Uglyful requires strict research and scientific studies of ecological processes that are inherent to a site. It is beneficial for a landscape architect to study the patterns, fluctuations, and processes of ecological systems as a starting point. This allows the designer to privilege ecological processes within the creation of new open systems. If we engage these systems based on the ecological changes and disturbances that define them we can make them more adaptive and resilient. We will be able to do more for these systems by approaching them in a new way. Instead of trying to control ecological and social circumstances that take place within these open systems we can seek to build on existing nuances and make important ecological processes revelatory to the public. By making these processes more legible to people we can approach these changes and disturbances by stimulating new social, ecological, and environmental interactions and connections. Exploring landscapes of the Uglyful requires us first to define the Uglyful as it is described by architects Mack Scogin & Merrill Elam.

[02]

DEFINING LANDSCAPES OF THE UGLYFUL

[02] Defining Landscapes of the Uglyful

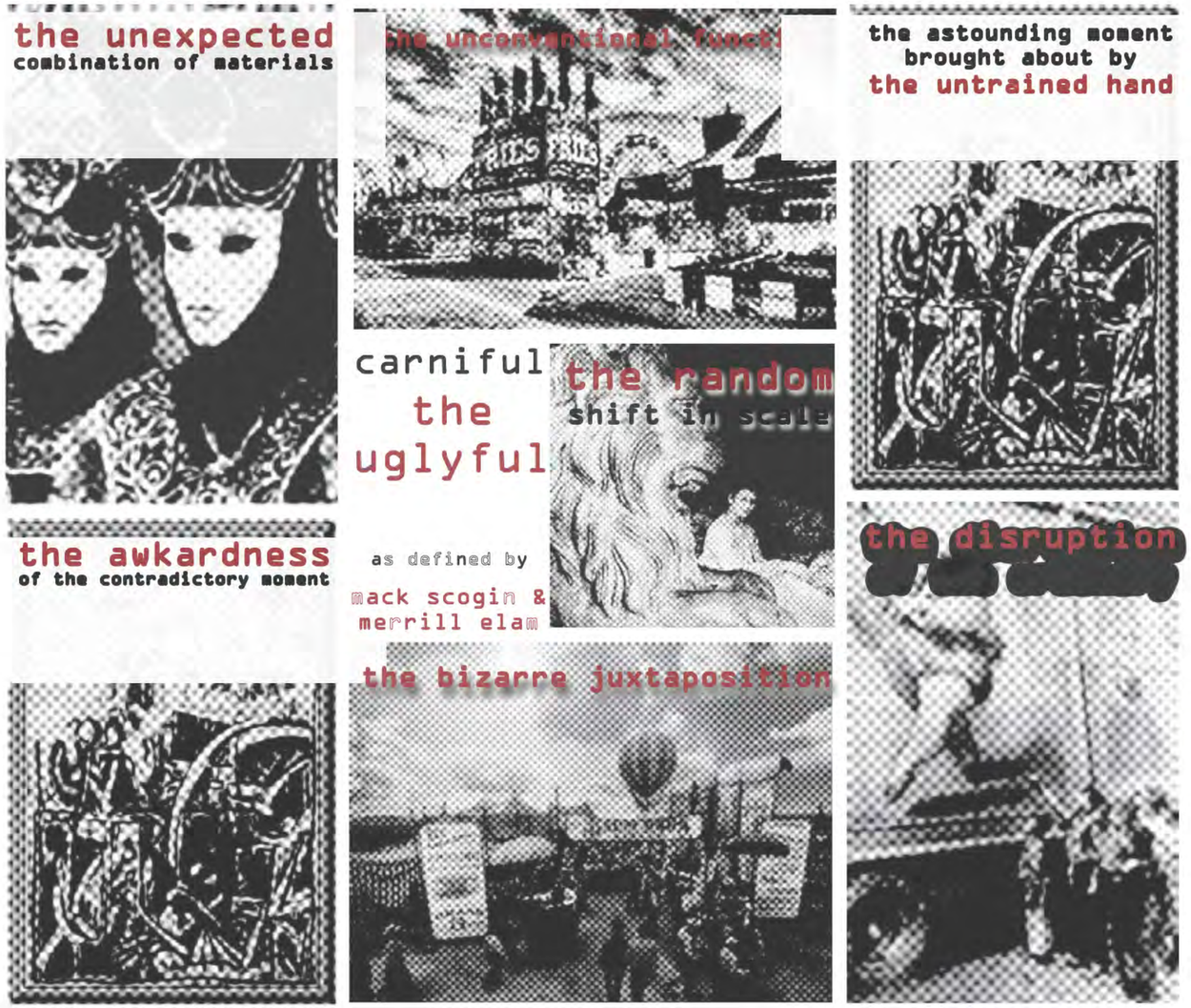
The Uglyful is said to evoke the familiar and make us uncomfortable, pulling us away from the "ingrained and the habitual" while stimulating interaction spatially, environmentally, and socially (Scogin and Elam, 2012).

The Uglyful is a term coined by Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam that is often used in reference to an architectural aesthetic. It is described as having qualities of "the strangely familiar" and is said to be expressive of a genial innocence, "embodying the instinct of the child" (Scogin and Elam, 2012). The Uglyful is a sophisticated radicalism that encourages designers to question origins and move out of the ingrained and the habitual and into new territories of design. It is less concerned with values and conventions and more concerned with evoking inherently strange yet familiar qualities of place. We often define the world in declarative terms of "the pretty, the banal, the grotesque, the ugly, the idiosyncratic, the beautiful, or the sublime" (2012). The Uglyful seeks to move away from these terms and into the territory of "the strange" or the unresolvable (2012). It calls for the embodiment of a consciously rogue aesthetic that can be "understood to mean not simply a theory of beauty, but also a quality of feelings" (Scogin and Elam, 2012).

Often, though, many fundamental dispositions of the strangely familiar have come to be considered as more liabilities than assets (Scogin and Elam, 2012). Occasionally, however, architecture is said to evoke the strangely familiar in a way that emerges as a sophisticated radicalism- the Uglyful (Scogin and Elam, 2012). The Uglyful gets to the heart and soul of things rather than affecting the extremes (Scogin and Elam, 2012).

The Uglyful includes common characteristics such as: the bizarre juxtaposition, the random shift in scale, the unexpected combination of materials, the unconventional function, the iconographic image, the astounding moment brought about by the untrained hand, the disruption of the ordinary, and the awkwardness of the contradictory moment.

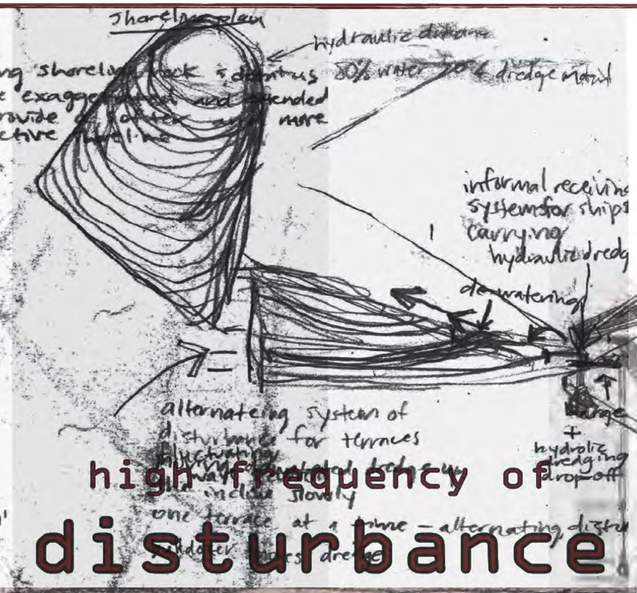
Through the exploration of this radicalism, a new concept of the Uglyful has been developed that is specific to landscape systems. Inspired by these original qualities of the Uglyful, a new framework for landscape systems has been developed. This framework notes the importance of: celebrating existing conditions, making ecological processes revelatory, creating isolation within a landscape, engaging waste, highlighting anthropogenic disturbance, addressing the sublime scale of ecological and industrial processes, engaging the aesthetics of industrial machinery, and allowing untamed ecological processes to runamuck.



t h e u g l y f u l

This framework notes the importance of celebrating existing conditions, making ecological processes revelatory, creating isolation within a landscape, engaging waste, highlighting anthropogenic disturbance, addressing the sublime scale of ecological and industrial processes, engaging the aesthetics of industrial machinery, and allowing untamed ecological processes to run-amuck.

celebrating existing conditions



high frequency of disturbance

ecological processes made revelatory

untamed ecological processes run-a-muck

isolation within landscape

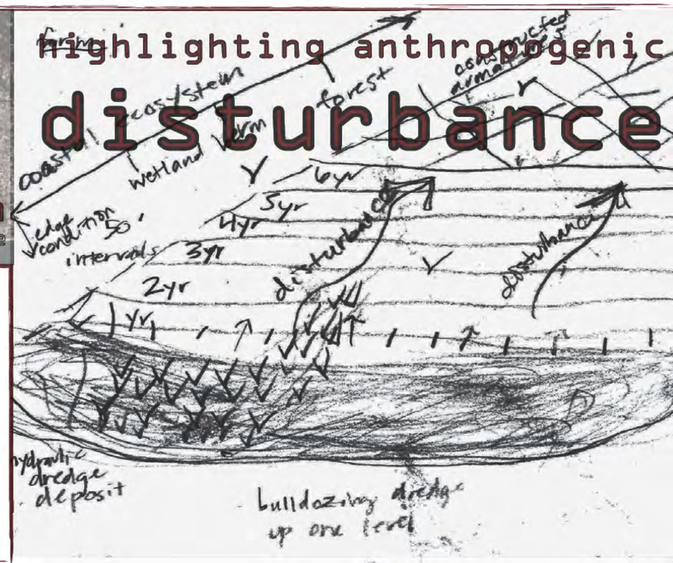
aesthetics of industrial machinery

as defined by

rachel mcgraw

engaging waste

highlighting anthropogenic disturbance



sublime scale

of ecological and industrial processes

These two design frameworks have been combined to develop a new concept of the Uglyful, one that can be applied to landscape systems. As a result, a series of characteristics has been developed that can help to create landscapes of the Uglyful. This list of qualities will be referred to throughout the design process. The goal is to create landscapes that are more resilient, adaptive, and eco-revelatory by utilizing this design framework. The successfulness of these explorations will be analyzed and conclusions will be drawn about the implications of this framework to landscape design.

UGLYFUL LANDSCAPES

the strangely familiar

the random shift in scale

the astounding moment brought about by the untrained hand

the unexpected combination of materials

the bizarre juxtaposition

the awkwardness of the contradictory moment

the unconventional function

the celebration of existing conditions

the engagement of waste

the sublime scale of ecological and industrial processes

the high frequency of disturbance

the untamed ecological processes running wild

the ecological processes made revelatory

the highlighting of anthropogenic disturbance.

[03]

EXPLORATION 1: GAILLARD ISLAND

Image Retrieved from: Digital Elevation Models of Mobile, Aalabama: Procedures, Data Sources , and Analysis [Map]. (2008). Retrieved October 15, 2013, from: http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/inundation/vdatum/vdatum.html

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[03] Exploration 1: Gaillard Island

Dredge in the Delta

The first exploration of this research question was conucted at a regional scale of design in coastal Alabama. Mobile Bay is a complex system of estuaries and sub-estuaries. There is a strong presence of ecological processes and factors such as change in water quality and sediment quality and fluctuating rates of erosion. These non-human ecological systems are met with the effects of anthropogenic disturbance taking place in the coastal ecosystem. This disturbance can create a lack of balance amongst the ecological processes taking place in the Bay, thus leading to ecological and social disruption and disarray. Specifically, the anthropogenic disturbance explored here is that which stems from the hydraulic dredging of shipping channels throughout the Bay and the disposal of this material to off-shore sites. The installation of shipyards and ports causes these waterways to be carved out by an increasing rate over decades. This leads to watershed damage, forest loss, and shoreline erosion. This exploration seeks to improve this system of dredging and disposal in order to create a more resilient and adaptive landscape within the Bay.

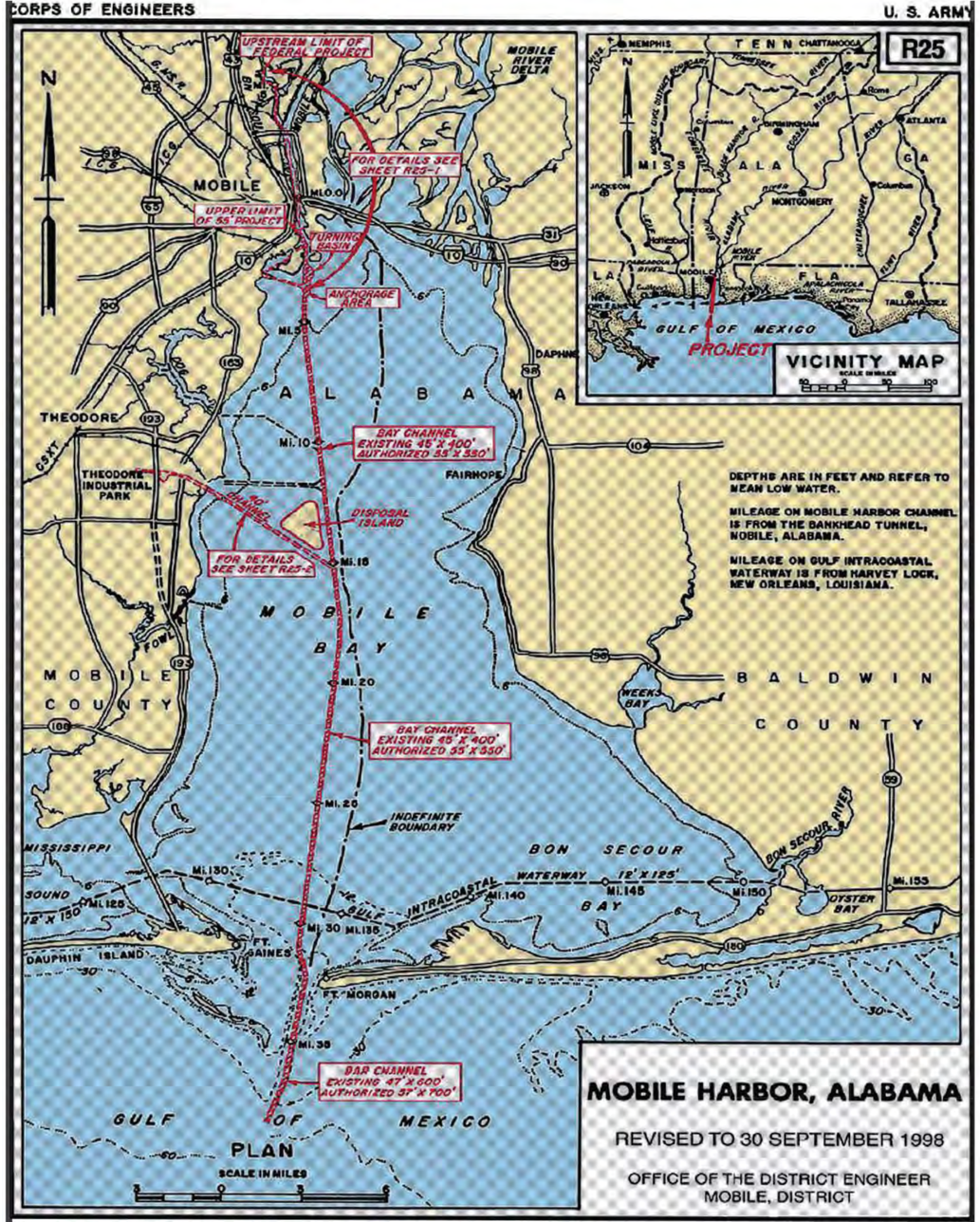
The site chosen for the first design iteration is Gaillard island. This man-made "dredge disposal island" exists in the middle of the Bay and is an extreme representation of the dredging processes and the environmental and social effects on the Bay. It is important to analyze the qualities that this exploration possesses in order to determine if the newly ecological version of the Uglyful can be proven to be a successful framework for the design of landscape systems. It is important to study Dredge Disposal Island but first we must take a closer look at hydraulic dredging and dredge disposal processes.

[highlighting existing conditions]

This design seeks to highlight existing conditions at both a regional and suburban scale. The existing system of hydraulic dredging and disposal that is present in Mobile Bay was the first condition to be studied. An analysis of the innovative ways of utilizing disposed dredge material on Gaillard Island revealed important existing conditions on the island. The relationship of the dredging system to the bathymetric depths, tidal fluctuations, and sedimentation levels of the Bay was studied extensively. The existing systems and processes in the Bay were studied first.

The first system studied was the hydrologic dredging of the two main shipping channels. Engaging this system of dredge and disposal is important and can be made more revelatory to the public. This can create more interest in these processes and encourage people to become involved in how the Bay is affected by the human population within it. Making these processes more revelatory can create a better relationship between the components of this system. The goal is to make this system more resilient. The question is, can the landscapes of the Uglyful be used as a design framework to accomplish this? The exploration begins with site analysis of the Bay and focuses on the dredging processes taking place here.

Image Retrieved from: Digital Elevation Models of Mobile, Aalabama: Procedures, Data Sources , and Analysis [Map]. (2009). Retrieved October 15, 2013, from: http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/inundation/vdatum/vdatum.html

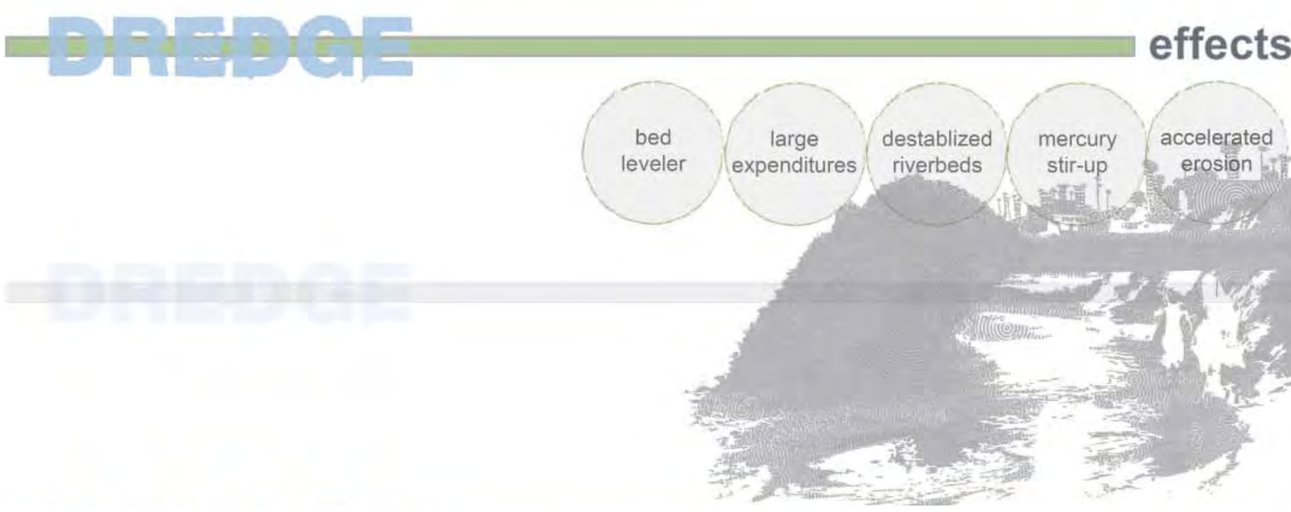


[highlighting anthropogenic disturbance]

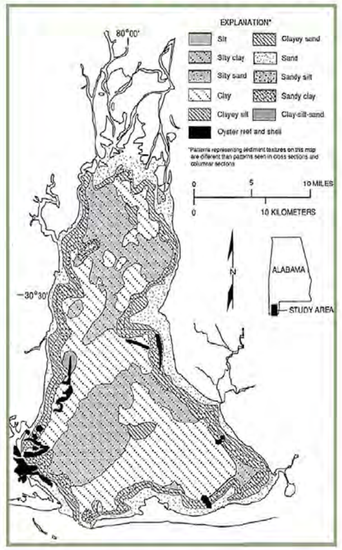
Within these systems, anthropogenic disturbance is a factor that landscape architects must address when engaging a site. Often, we view anthropogenic disturbance in a negative manner and even try to conceal it. Making landscapes of the Uglyful means engaging these systems of disturbance in a new way. We have the opportunity to make anthropogenic disturbance within these systems legible to the public. By making these factors inherent to systems of dredge disposal we can improve the part humans play here.

Highlighting anthropogenic disturbance is one of the components involved in the design of landscapes of the Uglyful. We can create more interest and awareness of issues within the dredge disposal system.

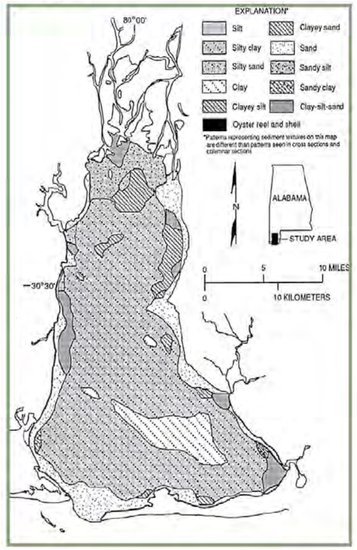
The industrial system of hydrologic dredging and disposal is a system that entails large amounts of disturbance to the ecological processes of Mobile Bay. This design seeks to engage this system and the relationship between the functions of its human and non-human components. It does not seek to advocate for dredging processes to be stopped but instead focuses on making these processes revelatory to the public.



sediment change



bottom sediment texture 1979



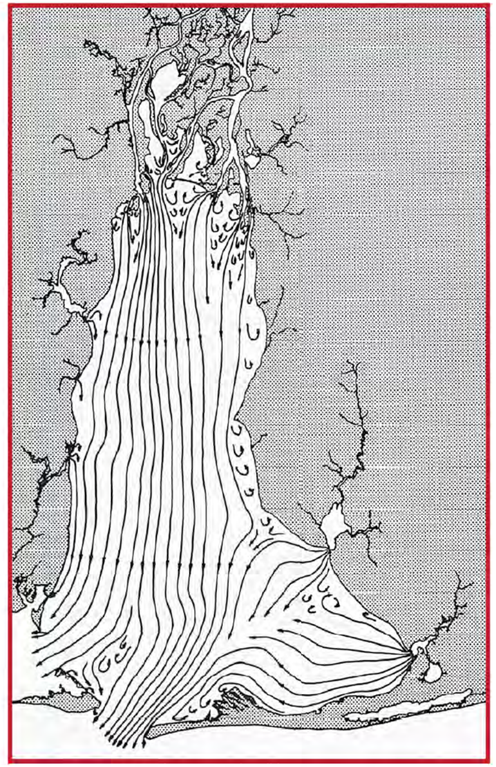
bottom sediment texture 1988-89

Mobile Bay is part of a large-scale system of hydraulic dredging of the shipping channels that stretch from the Mobile River Delta into the Gulf of Mexico. These channels are dredged deeper and deeper as more shipyards and ports are installed to accomodate increasing international and local trade. This system directly affects water and sediment quality, erosion rates, and wildlife habitat within the bay.

Images Retrieved from: Digital Elevation Models of Mobile, Aalabama: Procedures, Data Sources , and Analysis [Map]. (2009). Retrieved October 15, 2013, from: http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/mgg/inundation/vdatum/vdatum.html

tidal flux

flood tide surface currents 1952



ebb tide surface currents 1952

DREDGE responses

design responses-

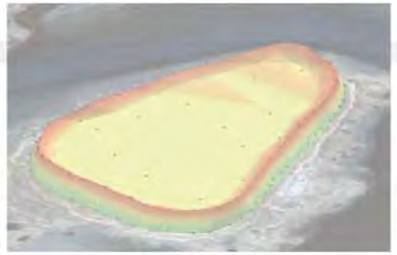
cellular confinement systems

ringnets

silt fences

sandbags

detention basins



Dredge Research Collaborative

DREDGE disposal

containment

cap and burial

DREDGE re-use/placement

fish and wildlife habitat

wetland restoration

land creation

berm creation

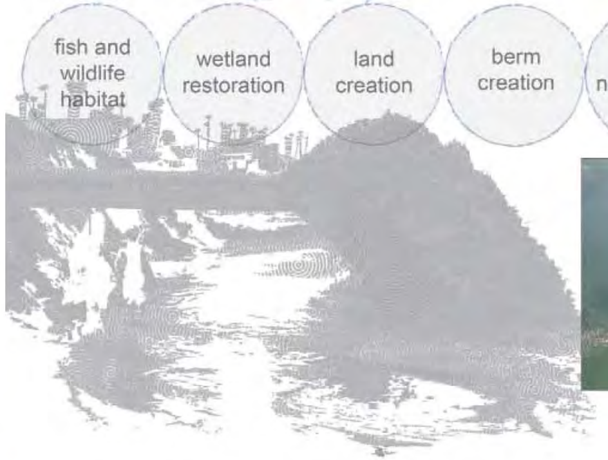
beach nourishment

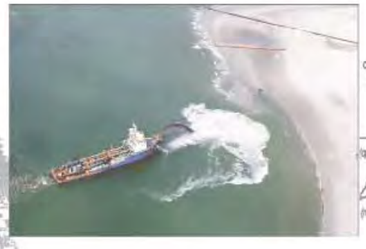
topsoil

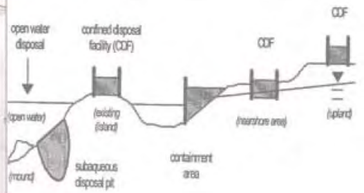
decorative landscape products

construction materials

containment area aquaculture

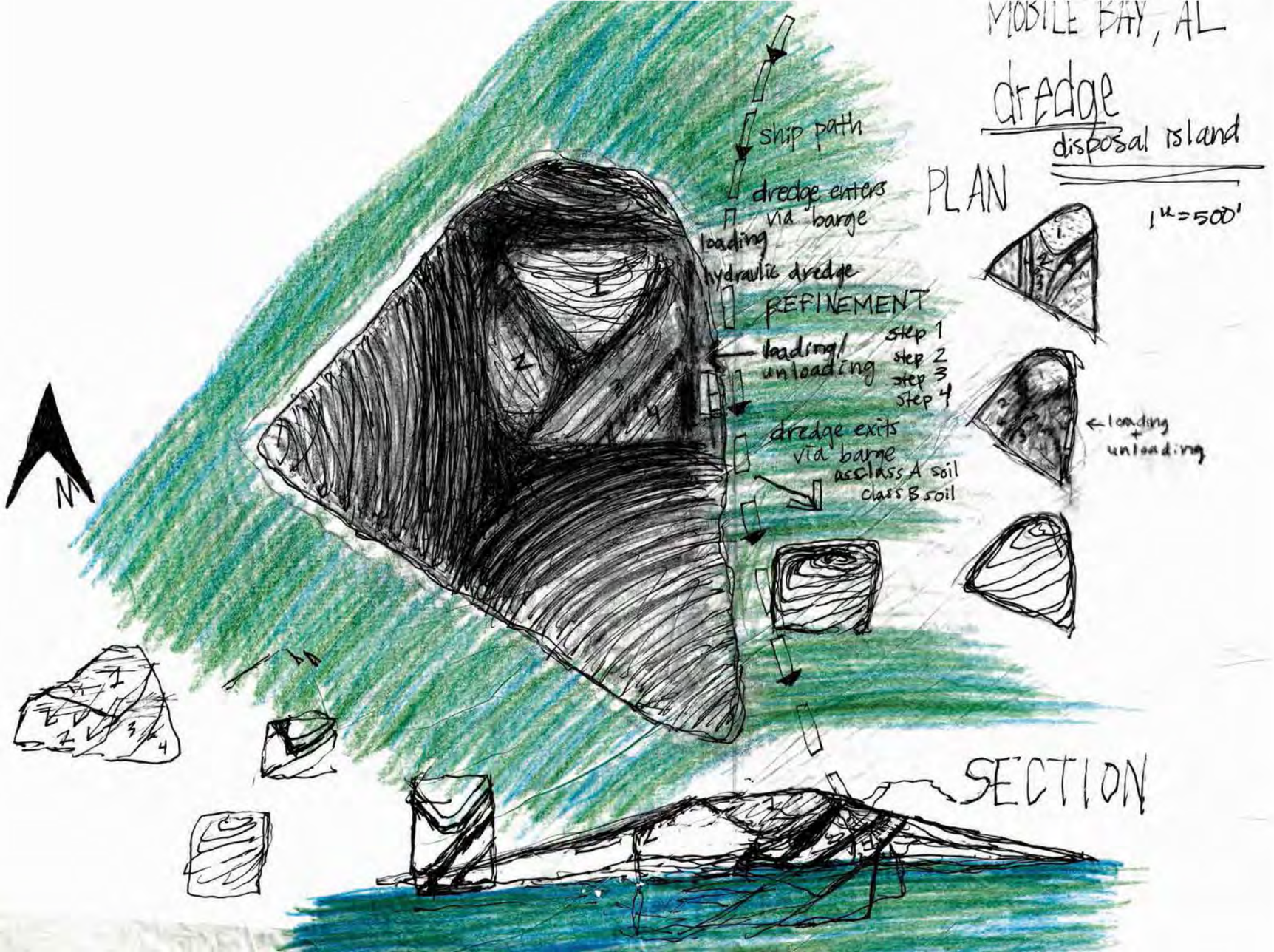






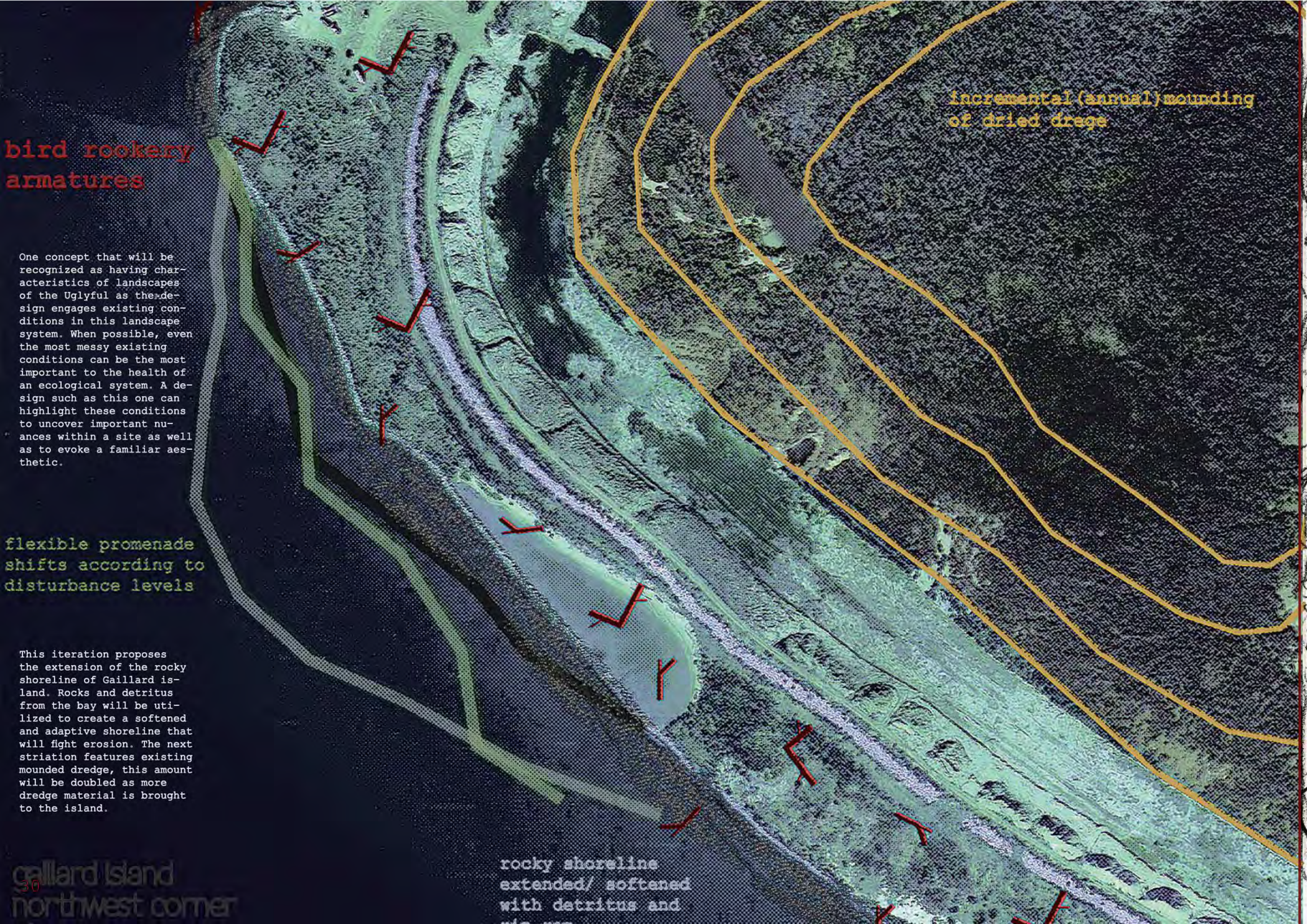
In order to explore this research question through design a site was chosen in Mobile Bay. Gaillard Island engages the systems of dredging as it is built from material that has been dredged from the two shipping channels. The processes of disposal are still taking place at this site as material is brought to the island via a barge or dredger and is then hydraulically pumped on to the island where it will sit in a de-watering stage and eventually dry into a flat, desert-like soil. This design seeks to engage the functions of this process. There is a goal to uncover ecological, emotional, and aesthetic nuances on this site. Qualities of landscapes of the Uglyful have been identified as being inherent to this site and these have been explained and analyzed.


dredge disposal island
hydraulic dredge deposit
rocky berm
rocky shoreline
dried dredge
mobile ship channel
elevated salt shrub
interior dredge wetland
theodore shipchannel
vegetated birm
de-watering / de-watered dredge
island access
vegetated shoreline
mobile bay
alabama
gaillard island
existing conditions
1"=100'
0 100 400
bird species
brown pelican
royal tern
cattle egret
white ibis
laughing gull
mallard duck
black-necked stilt

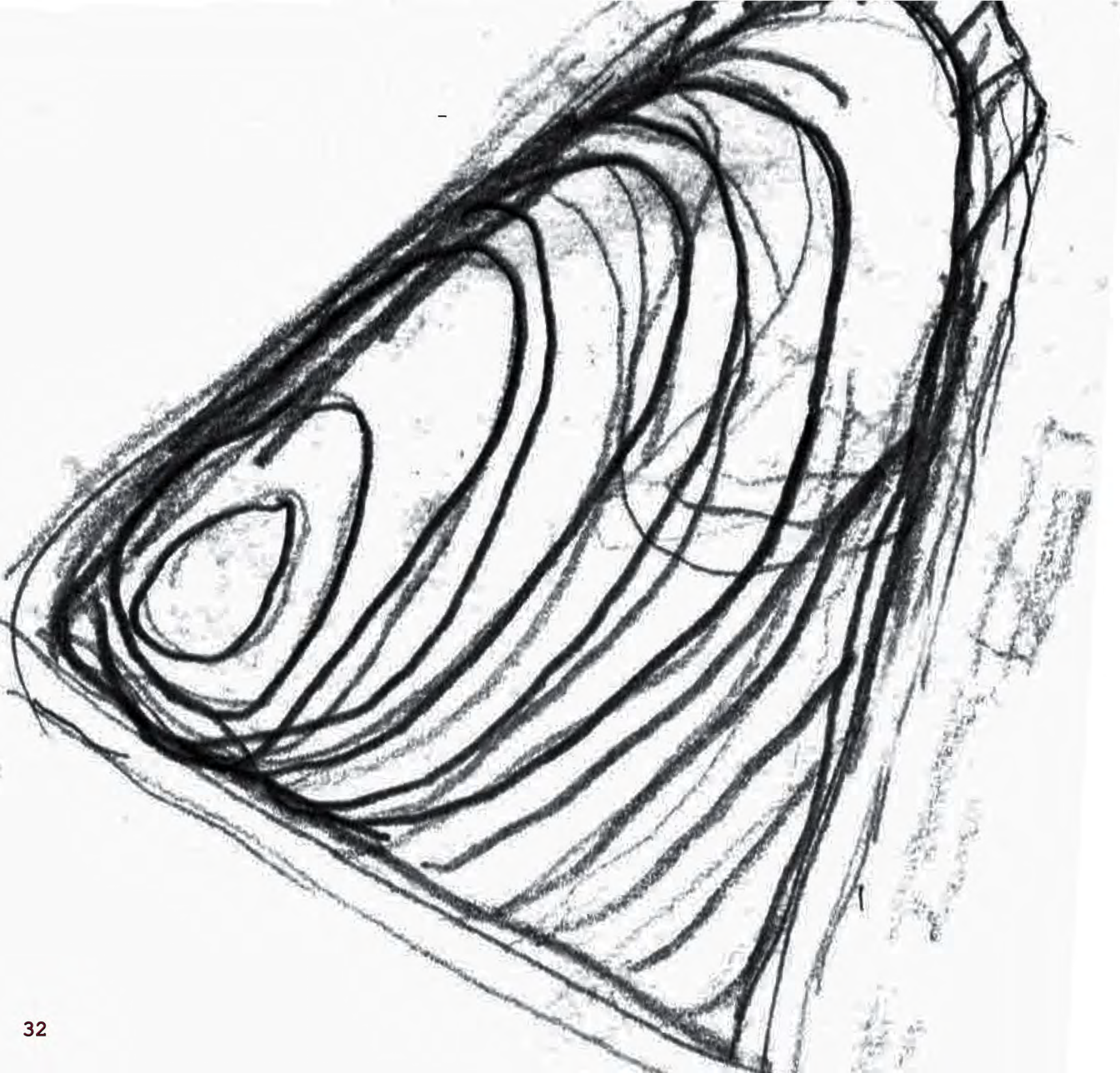


An important part of engaging raw authentic landscape mechanisms through the lense of the Uglyful is to engage the sublime qualities of these open systems. This can be done by addressing the sublime scale of ecological and industrial processes present within a landscape system. Instead of downsizing nature to the human scale we must engage "machines, synthetic fertilizers, and advanced means of transportation" (Roncken, 2011). We can benefit from increasing the scale of industrial, ecological, and agricultural systems to fit our current global needs. A perfect example of a project that engages the sublime scale of ecological and industrial processes is the existing design on Gaillard Island created by the Army Corps of Engineers. This project engaged the sublime scale of dredging and disposal processes.

This iteration seeks to further highlight the large scale systems involved in Mobile Bay and build on what has been initiated at Gaillard Island. This project will seek to evoke the Uglyful.`The scale of the processes taking place here is almost unresolvable. Landscape architects do not usually engage systems at such a large scale. Roncken states that the aesthetic foundation of landscape machines should be more sublime than beautiful (Roncken, 2011). We can intellectually stimulate people by designing landscapes that engage the sublime scale of processes. By undertaking Gaillard island as the site for this design, we are engaging an extremely large scale and dealing with the industrial and ecological processes that occur within it. This goal is to push the boundaries of design for landscape systesm. This design will seek to lead to the creation of landscape machines that, with the qualities of landscapes of the Uglyful, are inherently defined by the processes that take place within them. This design framework can be used to create more resilient landscapes that engage regional and global needs.

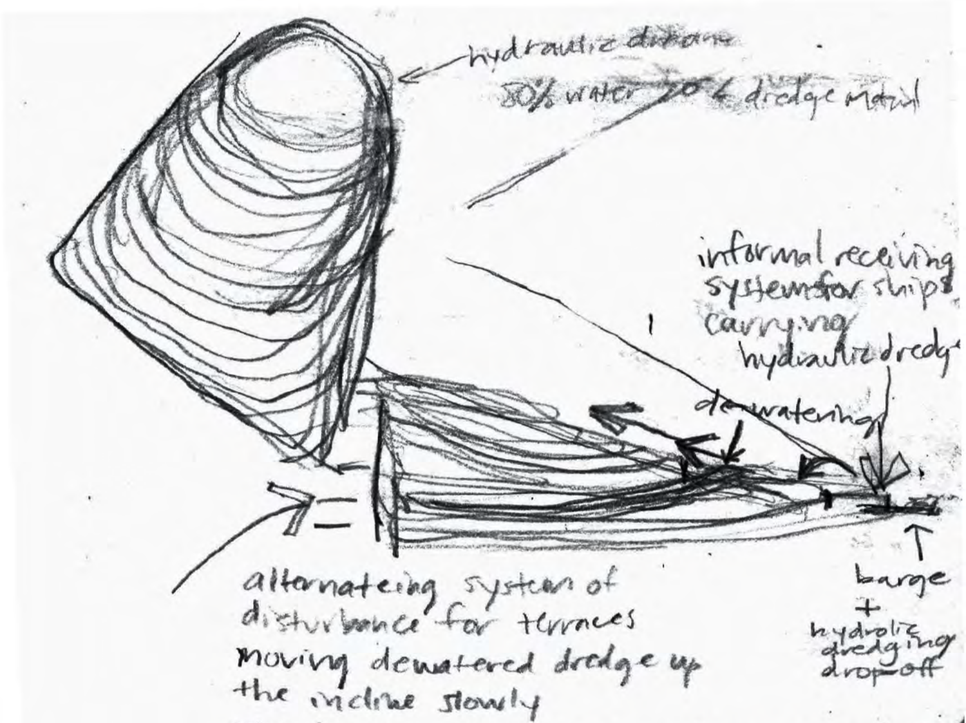

bird rookery armatures
One concept that will be recognized as having characteristics of landscapes of the Uglyful as the design engages existing conditions in this landscape system. When possible, even the most messy existing conditions can be the most important to the health of an ecological system. A design such as this one can highlight these conditions to uncover important nuances within a site as well as to evoke a familiar aesthetic.
flexible promenade shifts according to disturbance levels
This iteration proposes the extension of the rocky shoreline of Gaillard island. Rocks and detritus from the bay will be utilized to create a softened and adaptive shoreline that will fight erosion. The next striation features existing mounded dredge, this amount will be doubled as more dredge material is brought to the island.
incremental (annual) mounding of dried dredge
rocky shoreline extended/ softened with detritus and
gaillard island
northwest corner
30

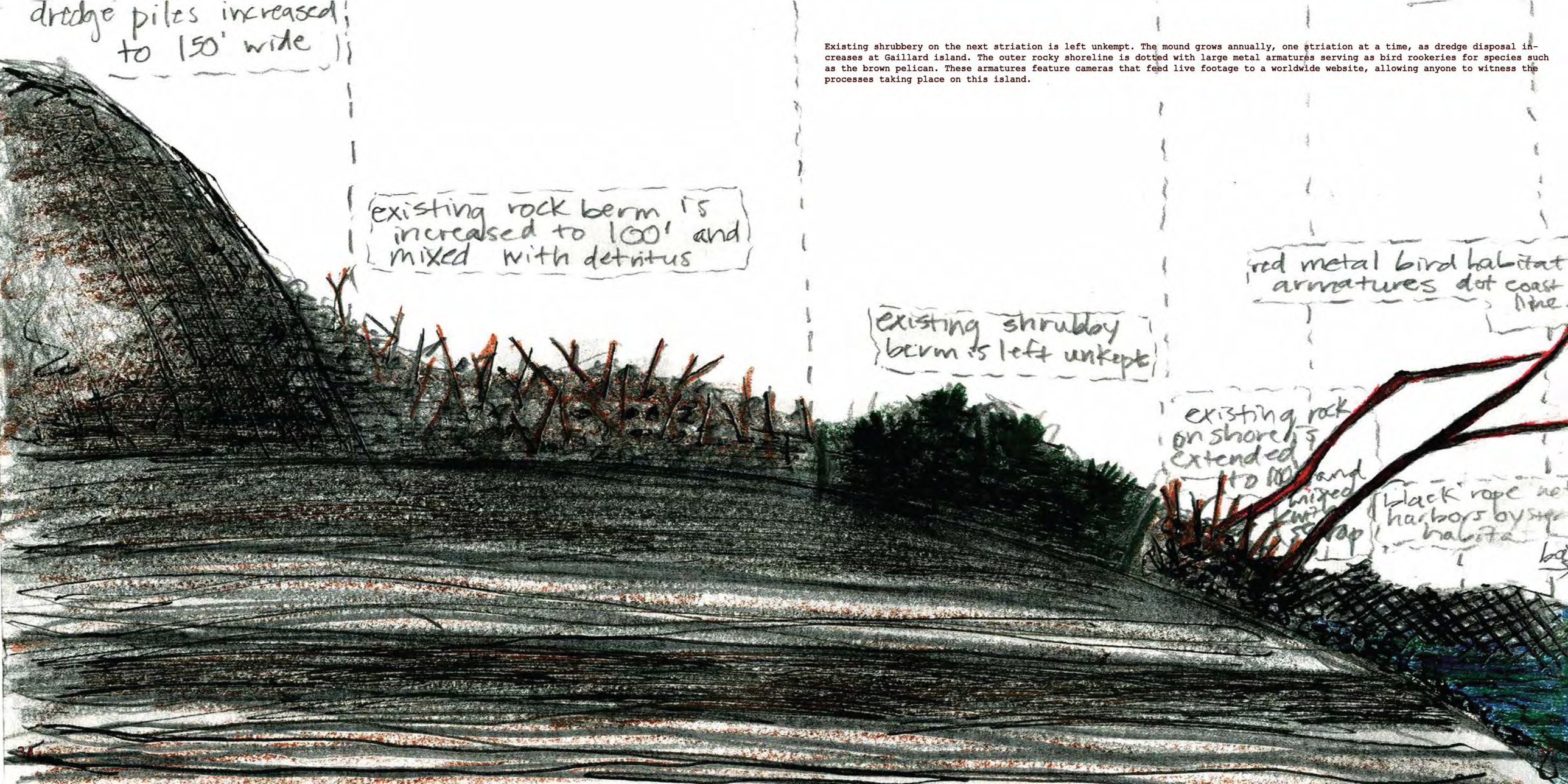

existing shoreline rock & detritus to be exaggerated and extended to provide a softer and more protective shoreline
existing rock area extended and mixed w/ shipyard scrap
fluctuating wave & current
existing dredge piles are increased in size
existing berm of shrubs



The system incorporates a hydraulic dredging area at the northern tip of the island. The island design features an alternating system of disturbance for terraces that restricts mounding of dewatered dredge to one striation or terrace at a time. The dredged material will be mounded up the terraces at a slow incline, one terrace at a time, as the bulldozers push the material up the mound.

This iteration is accounting for a high frequency of disturbance which is an important characteristic of landscapes of the Uglyful because it allows landscape systems to engage anthropogenic disturbance while them more resilient and revelatory. This is done by choreographing where and when this disturbance takes place.





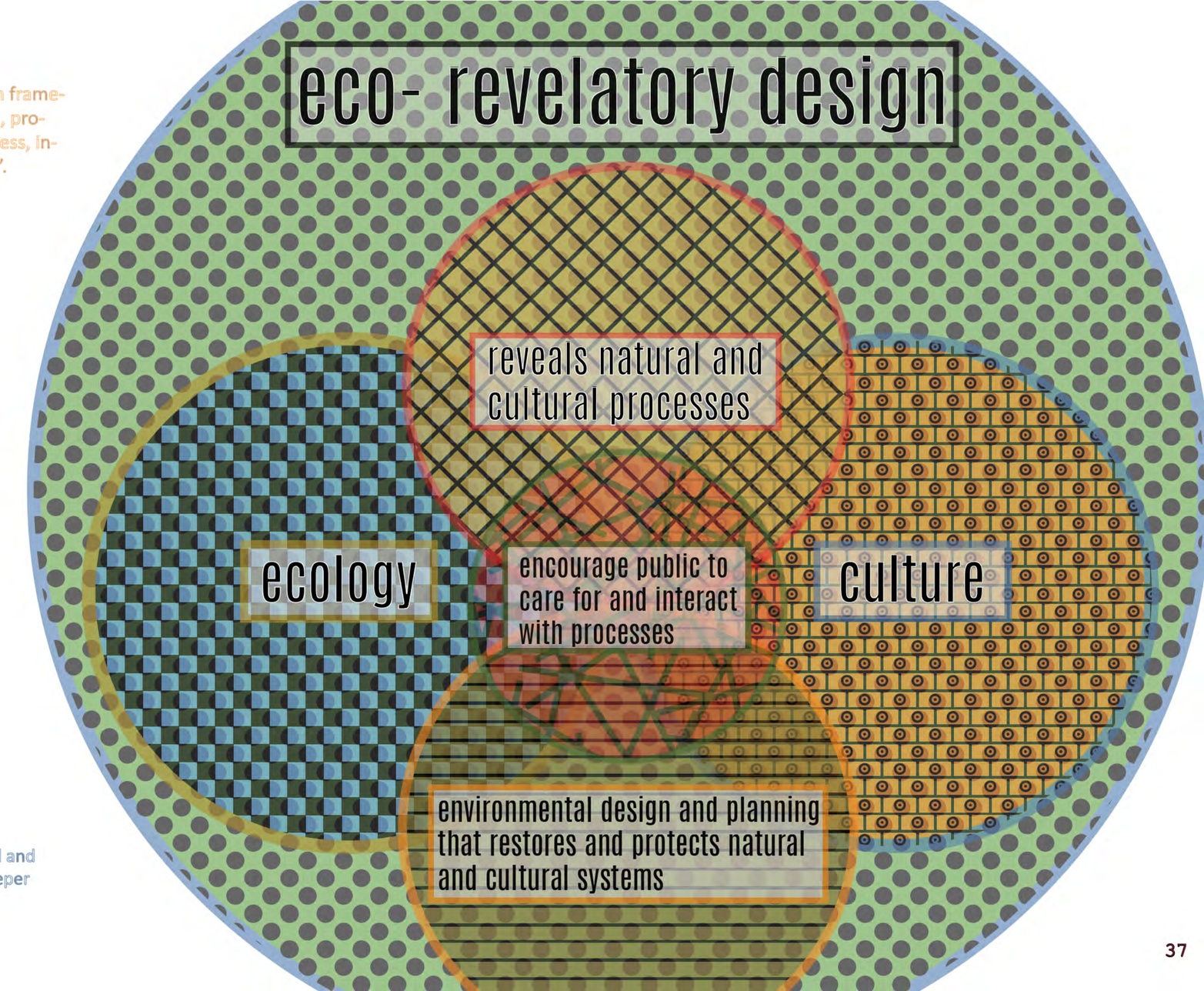
Existing shrubbery on the next striation is left unkempt. The mound grows annually, one striation at a time, as dredge disposal increases at Gaillard island. The outer rocky shoreline is dotted with large metal armatures serving as bird rookeries for species such as the brown pelican. These armatures feature cameras that feed live footage to a worldwide website, allowing anyone to witness the processes taking place on this island.

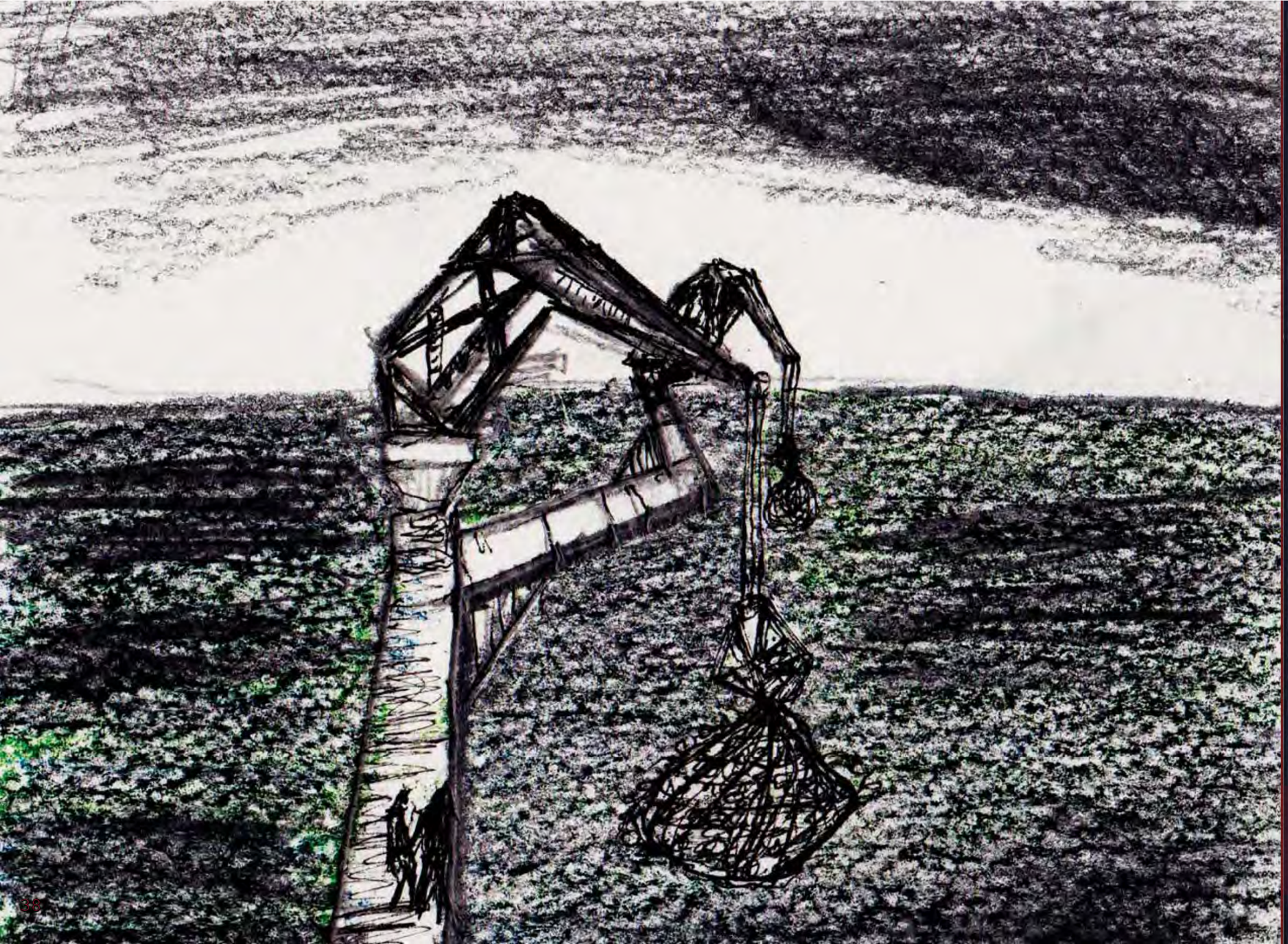
Landscape architecture should include an eco-revelatory design framework that seeks to "reveal and interpret ecological phenomena, processes, and relationships" in ways that increase "public awareness, interest, and participation in environmental design and planning".

Landscapes of the Uglyful as a design framework seeks to make ecological processes revelatory to the public. Landscapes that are eco-revelatory can activate awareness and consciousness of people (Brown, 1998). Some claim that ecological design often neglects issues of transparency and interpretation and that designers who often advocate transparency or are talented at symbolic expression and sophisticated "art" aesthetic often "neglect grappling with ecological issues" (Brown, 1998). An alternative is suggested that involves making the environment, ecological conditions, and ecological processes the subject of such art. Ecological design is defined here as "that which considers issues attendant to the interactive processes and dynamic balance among organisms and their environment" (Brown, 1998).

Eco-revelatory design is an important part of designing landscape systems that evoke the Uglyful. Landscape design based on this framework can provoke people to become more aware of how their actions affect the environment and can encourage them to make changes. This calls for design that seeks to "activate awareness and consciousness of lost multisensory experiences" (Brown, 1998).

Eco-revelatory design directs human experience while making natural and cultural processes transparent for interpretation and encouraging deeper caring for and interaction with these processes.





bird rookery armatures

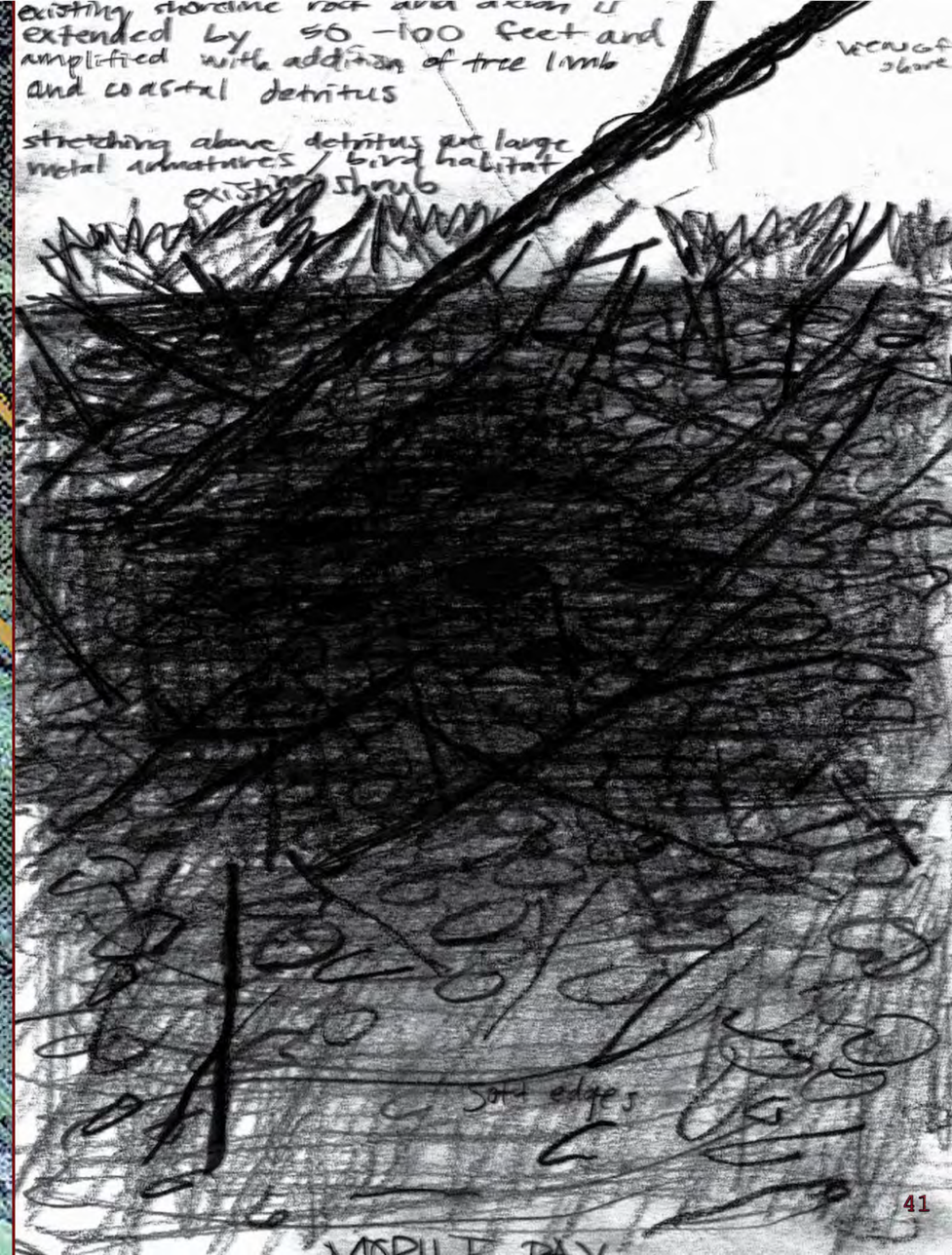
This new promenade stretches out from the island and provides a way for visitors to see the processes taking place along the shoreline. It uses old dredgers to suspend netted oyster habitats over viewers. The public will be able to see the oyster habitats that are filtering the sediment around the island. This is a vital ecological process that can be made revelatory to the public to increase awareness and interest in these processes taking place in the Bay.

flexible promenade shifts according to disturbance levels

bird rookery armatures

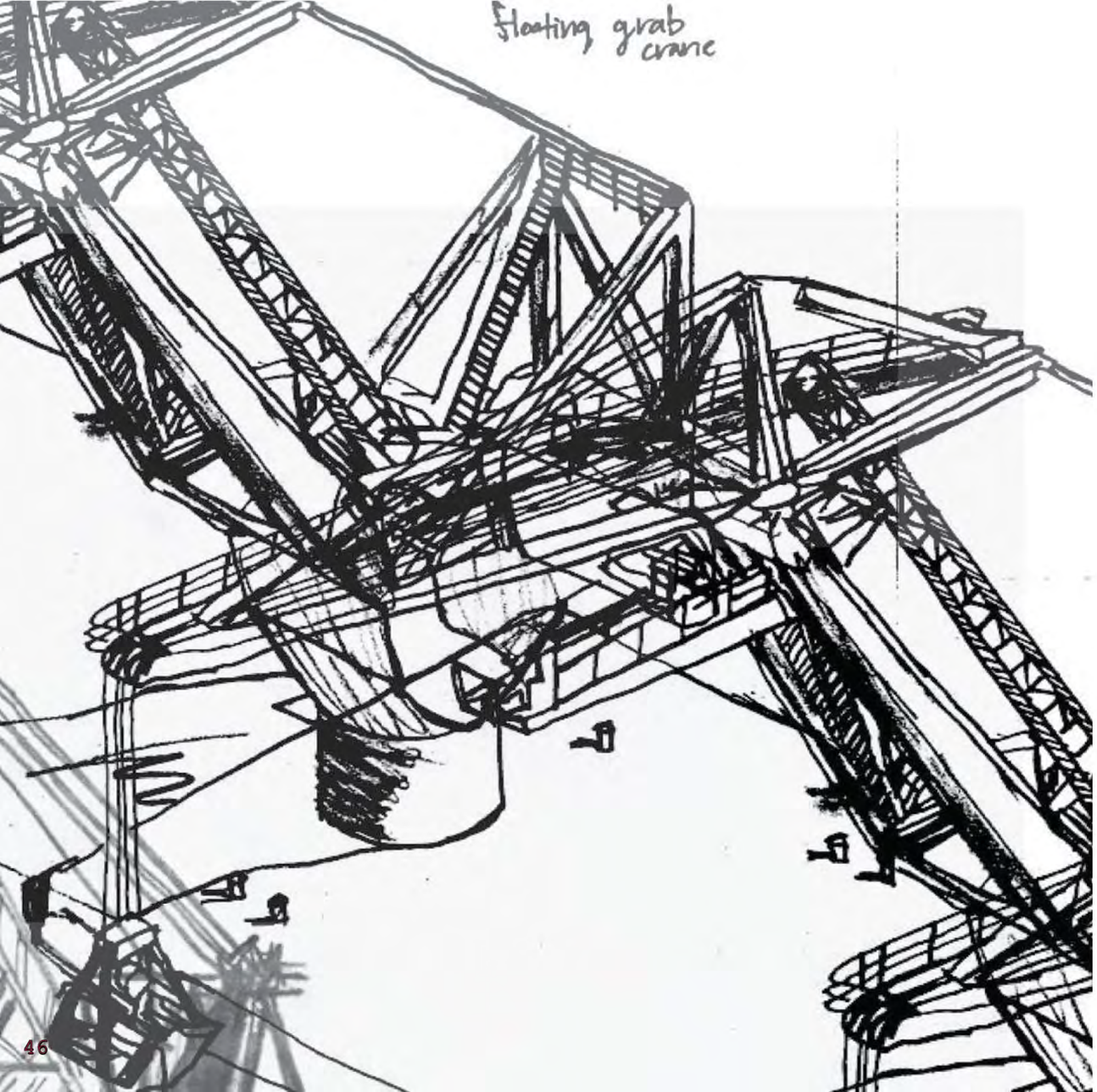
Other ecological processes that are being made revelatory in this design are the migration and nesting of sea birds and shore birds on the site. The existing shoreline features striations of piles of tree limbs that serve as rookery for birds such as the brown pelican. This existing condition is highlighted and evoked with exaggerated replicas of these tree-limb forms. Leaning red metal armatures are introduced, dotting the shoreline with a familiar form that can be seen from miles away. This adds interest to the island and also serves as valuable rookery for the thousands of visiting birds.

flexible promenade shifts according to disturbance levels



These structures are revelatory not only in their size, form, and color, but because they take "engaging the public" to a world-wide level. These armatures will be equipped with video cameras that will stream a live feed of the island to anyone with internet access. Viewers can observe the processes taking place with the disposal of dredged material and the migration of birds. This will help to increase public awareness and interest in the site and encourage a deeper caring for and interaction with these processes.


existing shrubby berm is left unkept
existing rock on shore is extended to
black rope



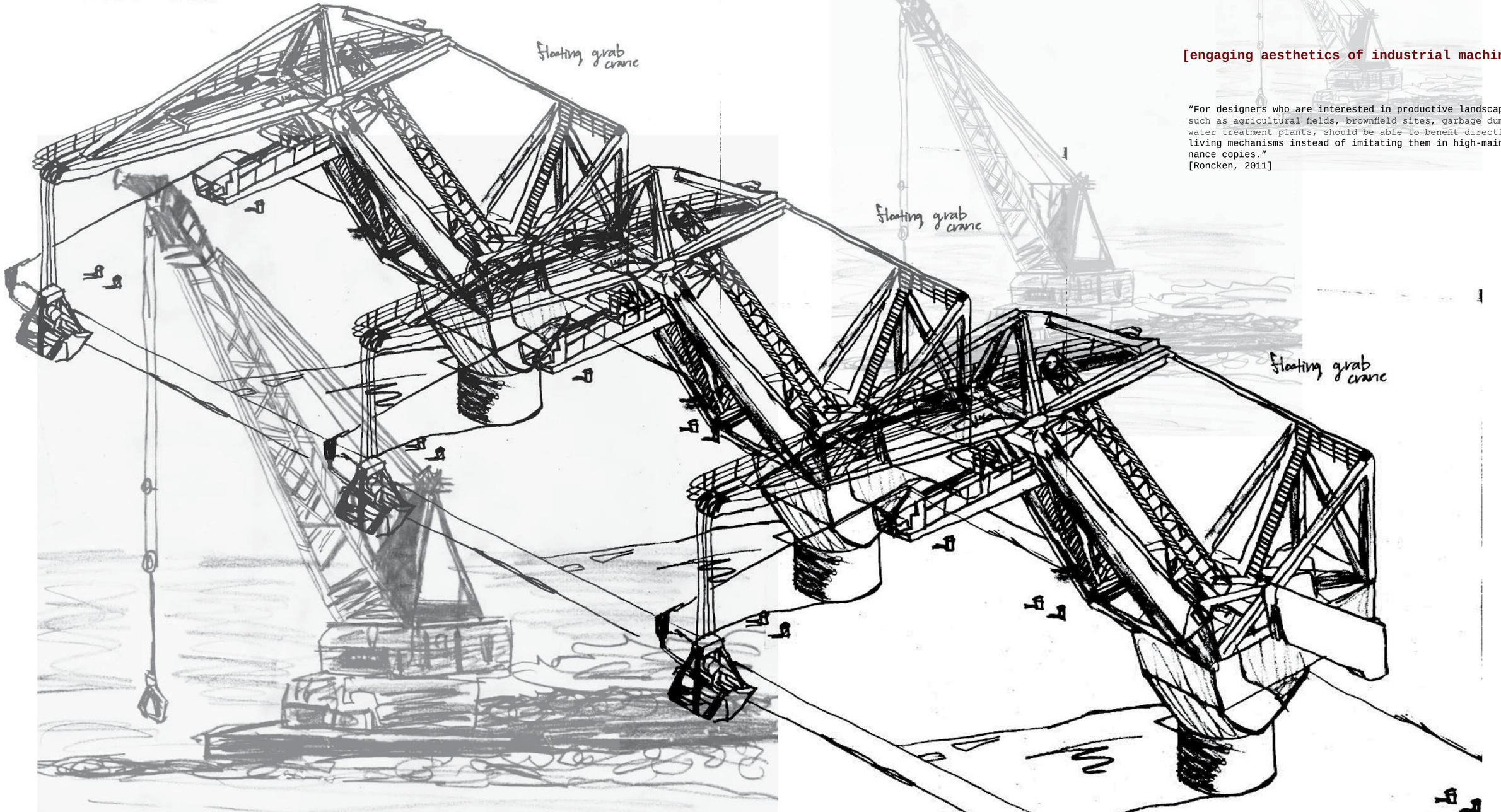
[addressing aesthetics and function of industrial machinery]

Roncken advocates that designers can learn from early settlers of landscapes that used agrarian rituals and techniques. However, he states that these early socio-biological rituals and routines have been "depersonalised by the introduction of agrarian machines, industrial fertilizers and large-scale greenhouses" (Roncken, 2011). We must embrace that agriculture is no longer natural but now includes highly artificial methods of natural processes (Roncken, 2011). Humans have always downsized these systems to our scale. But through the introduction of machines and large scale agricultural systems as well as the advancement of transportation we have begun to engage landscape systems according to global needs. We can now engage this sublime scale of systems such as the dredging and disposal processes. We must accept that landscapes have become mechanistic instead of agrarian. We have the opportunity to embrace both the aesthetics and the functions of the products of industrialization. By addressing the aesthetic qualities and productive functions of industrial machinery while also designing to sustain natures resilience the framework of landscapes of the Uglyful can be used to create resilient landscape systems.

This is being explored at a regional scale of an "extreme landscape", a category in which Roncken lists saline areas, deserts, and oceans. We can bridge the divide between nature and urban and industrial life through design if we increase the scale of agrarian techniques to these extremities. This is said to be possible through the creation of "landscape machines" a category described as an inherent paradox (Roncken, 2011).

Student projects from Wageningen University in the Netherlands studies the production of these more resilient landscape systems. Many of these experiments contained both elements of a machine and elements of a natural ecosystem, merging the technosphere with the biosphere (Roncken, 2011). The mechanical character of these "landscape machines" is said to make them predictable, production oriented, and efficient with inputs and outputs (Roncken, 2011). The elements of the natural ecosystem are what will make these systems more recognizable as landscape. These landscapes pride themselves in being productive. They can produce food, accumulate energy, clean dredge, and decontaminate soil and water (Roncken, 2011).

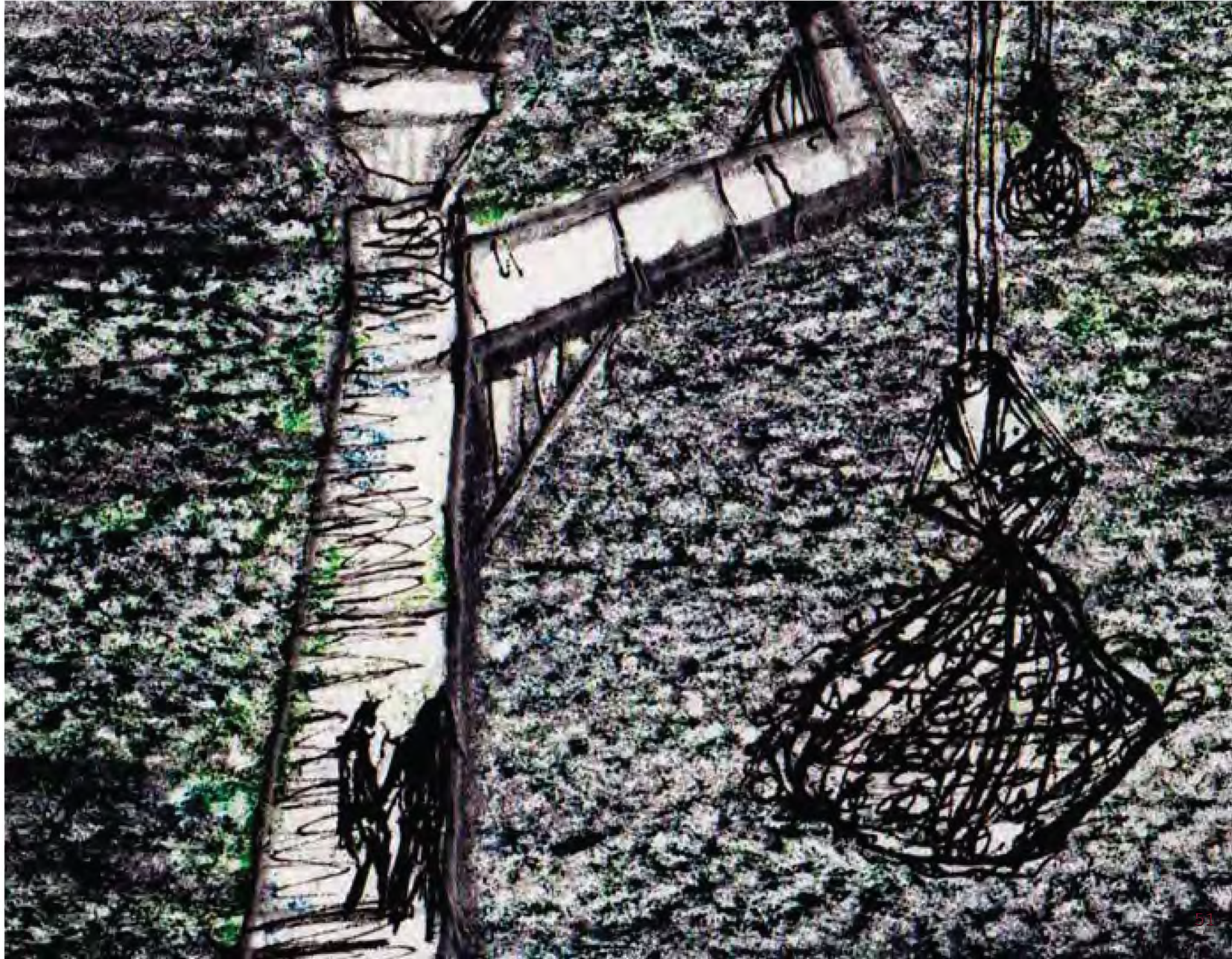
"For designers who are interested in productive landscapes such as agricultural fields, brownfield sites, garbage dumps and water treatment plants, should be able to benefit directly from living mechanisms instead of imitating them in high-maintenance copies."
[Roncken, 2011]



creating machines that privilege ecological processes

Introducing large-scale agricultural and industrial technologies into a landscape also creates aesthetic nuances that are to be noted. The materials introduced here add variety of color and interesting reflections of sunlight, creating rich effects. But machines are often seen to be threatening and can easily cause a landscape to be perceived negatively. They can evoke the threat of "limitless domination" (Roncken, 2011) of globalizing technology. It is hard to successfully introduce machines into the pastoral landscape. There has been a stigma of familiarity put on to our imaginations of what machines should look like. But we can make machines that are driven by landscape processes and productivity. By addressing the aesthetics of industrial machinery and privileging ecological processes when designing the form of these technologies we can create "landscape machines" that are wildly resilient and productive. This is an important element of creating landscapes of the Uglyful as it pushes the boundaries of how we engage landscape systems. We can engage the landscapes of the new 21st century in these ways that address increasing populations, artificiality of agricultural systems, anthropogenic disturbance, and climate change. Through the lense of landscapes of the Uglyful we can create more resilient "landscape machines".

The promenade that has been added to the shoreline addresses the industrial processes of the bay and is also designed to privilege ecological processes that make the bay more resilient and productive. The large machinery of the dredging processes and its constant presence in these coastal landscapes can be very intimidating and is generally perceived negatively by the public. However, if the processes of responsible dredge disposal and habitat cultivation on the island can be made revelatory to the public, it is possible to successfully engage the aesthetics of industrial machinery while also privileging ecological processes. Re-furbishing old dredgers to match the painted red metal armatures on the shoreline can add color and interaction with light to the promenade. Utilizing industrial machinery in this design evokes the Uglyful as it creates an uncomfortability and reminds of us strangely familiar images of landscapes.



net of frayed black rope to be layed over rock and detritus shoreline in selected areas.

rope has been cultivated to provide habitat for oysters and molluskts - process takes 3 years prior

oyster and molusks filter silt in water surrounding gaillard island shoreline

[04]

EXPLORATION 2: DIXIE'S BACKYARD

126 pearle cove dr.

- brick
- shaped shrubs
- manicured lawn
- old swing
- forest
- kidney shaped planters

huntsville, alabama

- proportional lots
- driveway + garage
- sidewalk
- coldesac
- forest
- proportional houses
- fences
- forest

existing conditions

- swimming pools
- manicured lawns
- coldesacs
- few yard trees
- standard lot size
- standard house design
- similar planting plans

[04] Exploration 2:

Dixie McGraw's Backyard

This design framework was tested on both a regional scale and a suburban scale. Exploring how a residential site can become a landscape of the Uglyful will help to determine the benefits and limitations of this framework and its components. A shift in scale is made from a sublime scale of an industrial system to a familiar scale of a small-town suburban backyard. My grandmother, Dixie McGraw, lives in Madison, Alabama on a lot that exists in the middle of a sea of suburban neighborhoods that have been sprawling across the town for years. This project was based on the exploration of existing conditions and the strict research of ecological processes on this site. There was a goal to uncover the strangely familiar qualities of a typical suburban residence by uncovering the ecological, aesthetic, and social nuances that are inherent to this site. Examples of these strangely familiar qualities include: the dark red brick, the typical white concrete sidewalk, the rickety metal swing, the patchy lawn, the existing forest that lines the back of the yard, and the small white mushroom toadstools that arise seasonally. This design seeks to highlight these existing conditions that are so important to landscapes of the Uglyful.

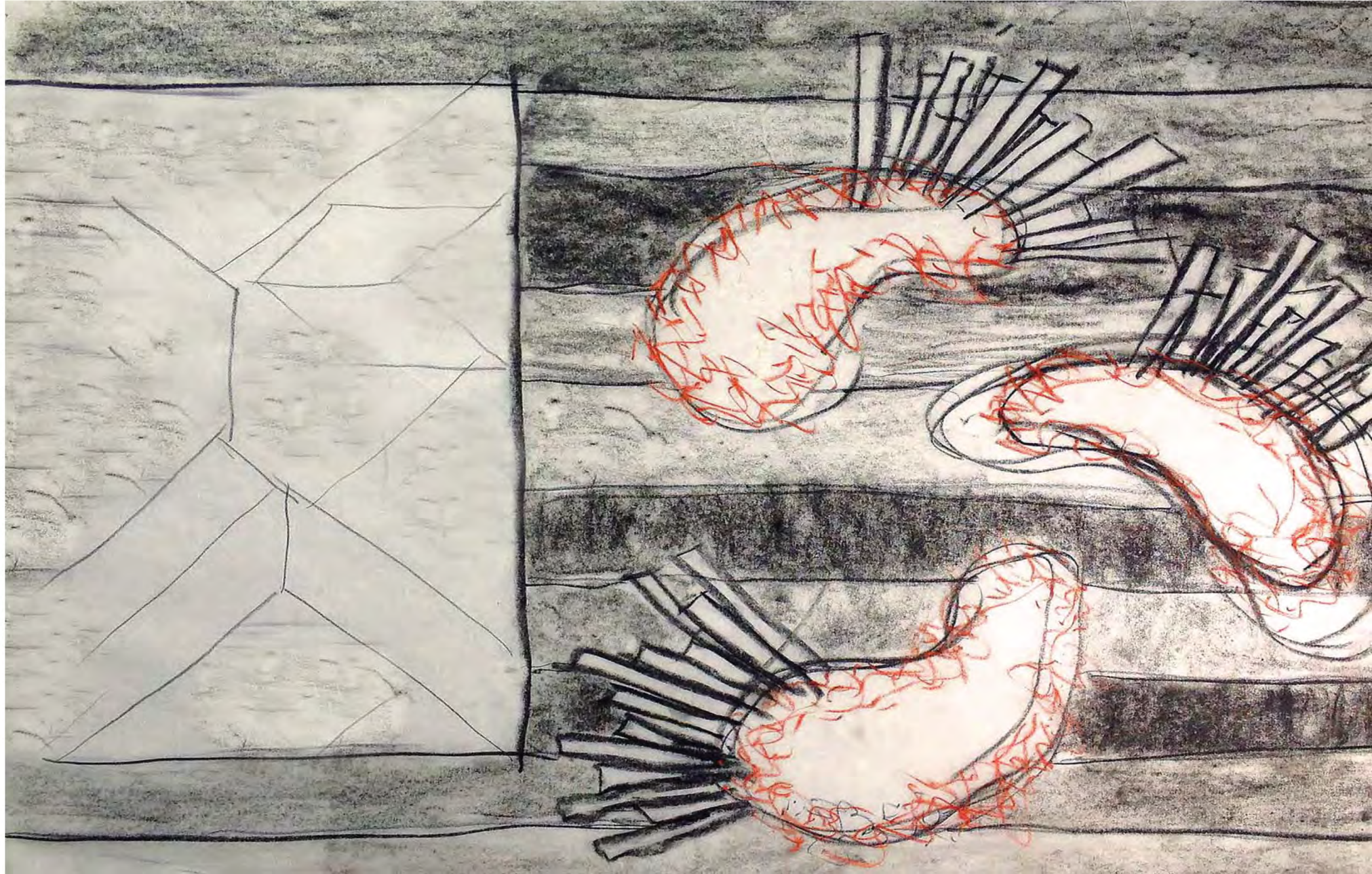
There will also be a focus on engaging waste. At this scale, this includes the waste that a typical American in the suburbs produces. A system of compost and mushroom cultivation is created that utilizes the by-products of our highly valued suburban systems and reveals their potential as a resource. These system is then made to be eco-revelatory by the creation of small grow-kits that can be distributed to the surrounding public. Neighbors and visitors can cultivate their own edible mushrooms and then add the leftover compost to their gardens. News about the progress of the system on this site will also be updated to an online blog created by the designer. This exploration will test this design framework in new ways and will further address the research question at hand.

[highlighting existing conditions]

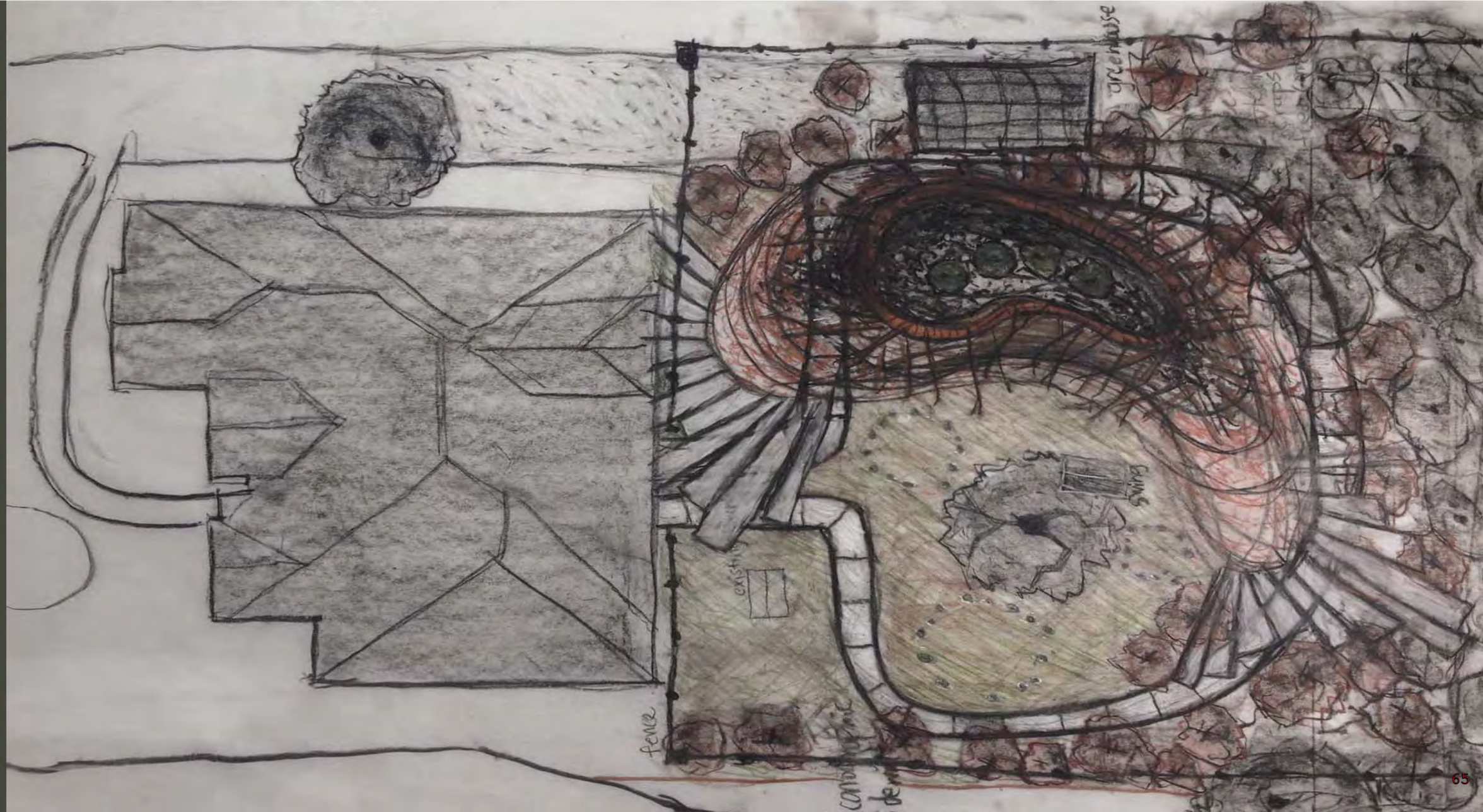

XXX PEARLE COVE DR.

[highlighting existing conditions and evoking the strangely familiar]

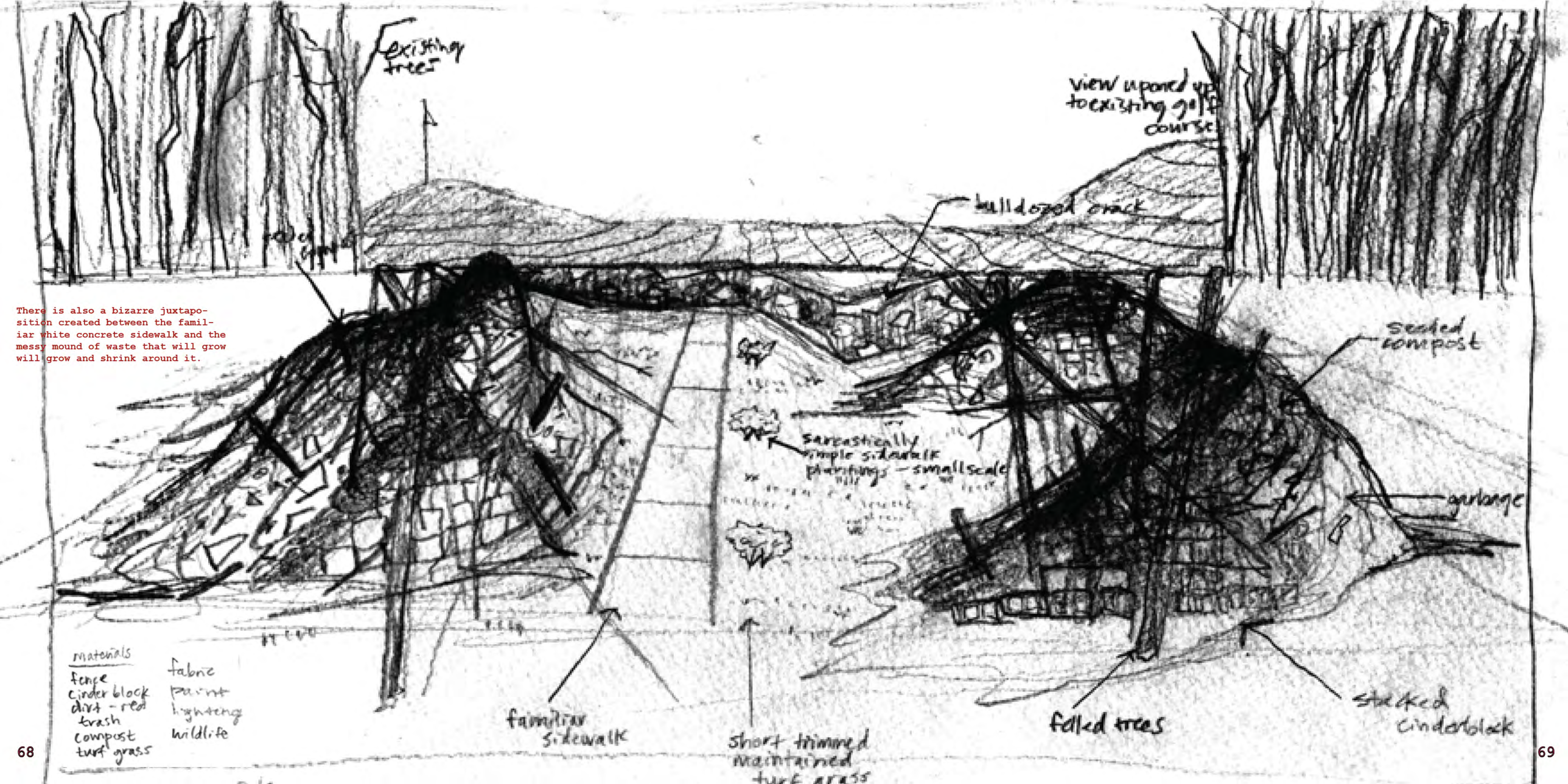
This design exploration sought to highlight existing conditions in the suburbs. It also seeks to evoke the strangely familiar qualities of a place and uncover ecological, aesthetic, and emotional nuances. There are many strangely familiar qualities of a typical small town suburban residence. The dark red brick that lines everything, including the compartmentalized beds of plantings that can be evoked through a familiar kidney bean shape.



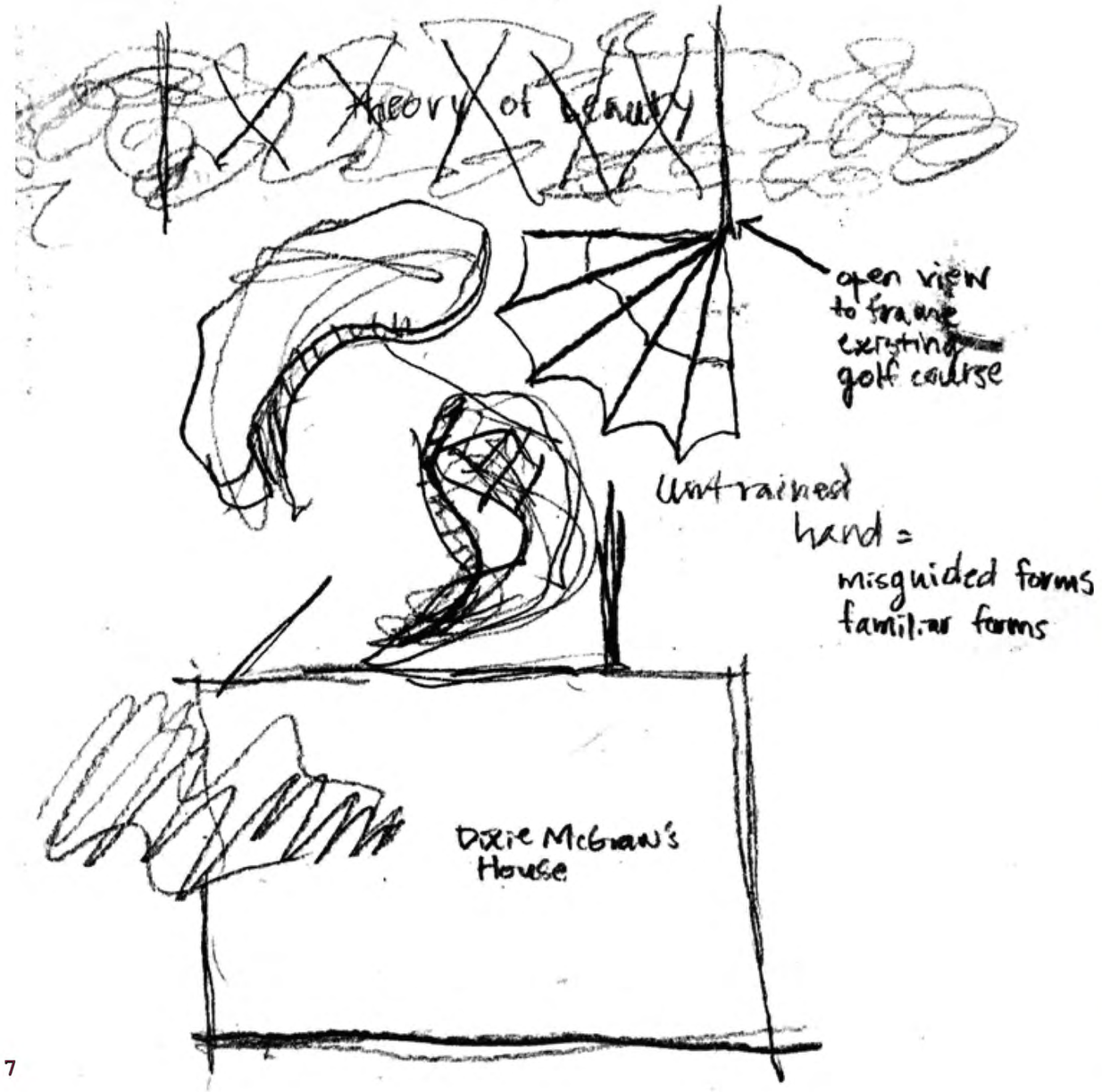
Another strangely familiar quality present on this site is a rickety metal swing. This old swing is a glimpse into iconographic suburban images. This swing will be framed by this design as a valuable emotional nuance that is an important existing condition to this place. The nuances provided by this swing evoke qualities of the Uglyful in this landscape.

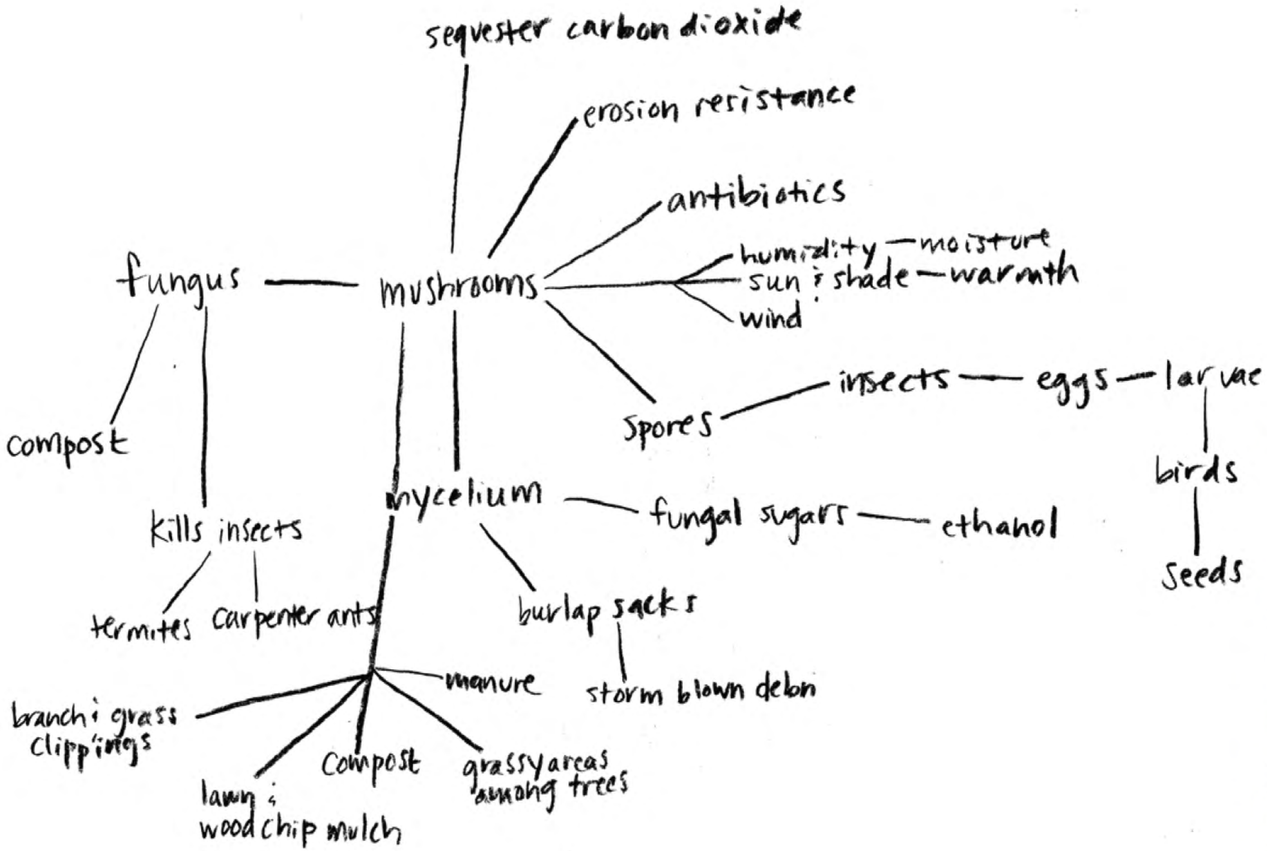


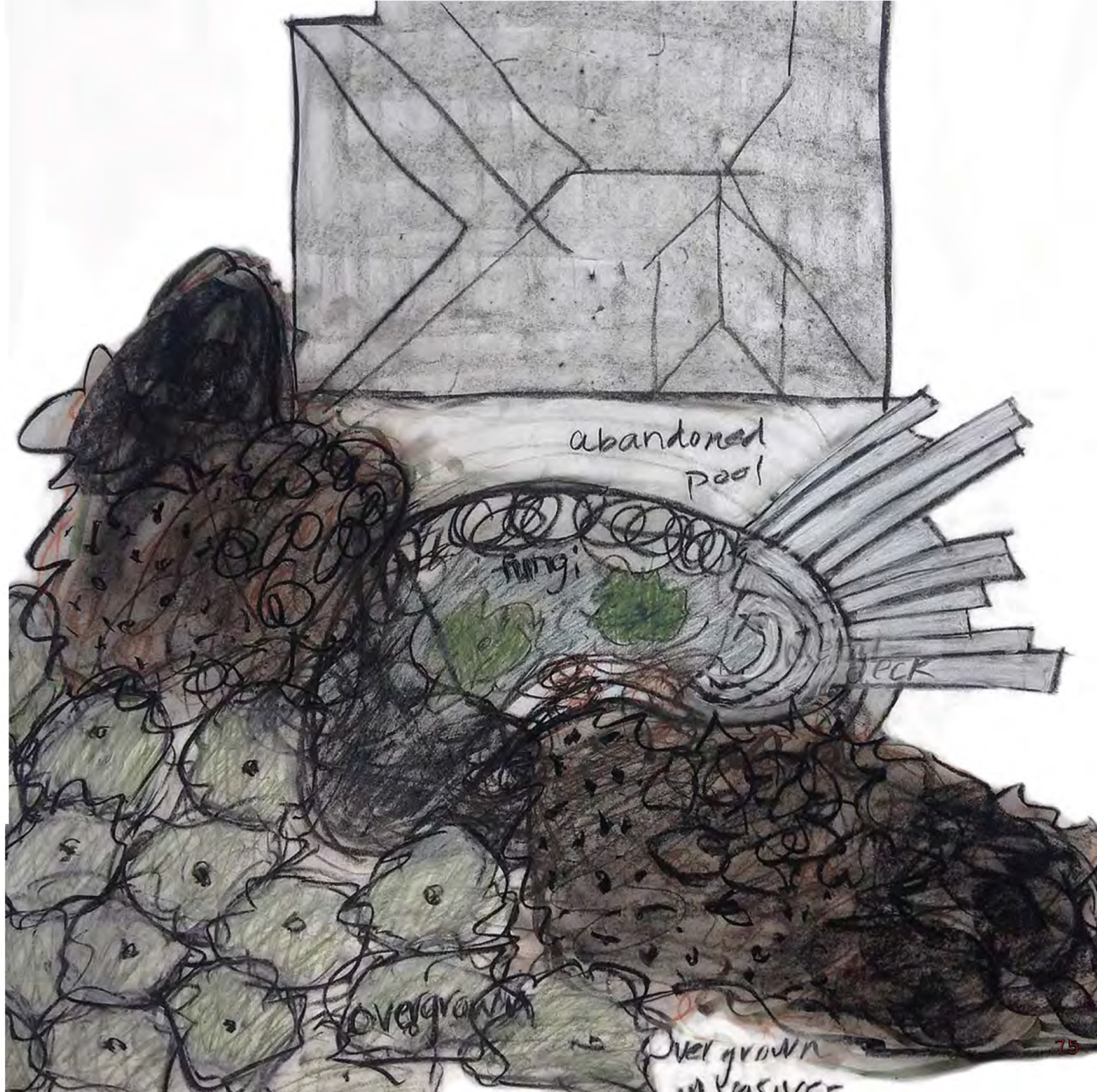
Ecological processes are allowed to runamuck in this design as a living breathing mound of waste is created. This mound shifts and grows according to the amount and type of waste that has been added to it. This combination of different kinds of waste and materials evokes strangely familiar qualities of the suburbs while also privileging ecological processes. Instead of being fixed in aesthetic and architectural value systems, this mound becomes a living, breathing landscape machine.


existing trees
view upon
to existing golf
course
bulldozed crack
There is also a bizarre juxtaposition created between the familiar white concrete sidewalk and the messy mound of waste that will grow will grow and shrink around it.
seeded compost
sarcastically simple sidewalk plantings - small scale
garbage
materials
fence
cinder block
dirt - red
trash
compost
turf grass
fabric
paint
lightening
wildlife
familiar sidewalk
short trimmed maintained turf grass
felled trees
stacked cinderblock

In new living landscape systems it is possible to address complexities and the "unresolvable", elements of the Uglyful. However, it is hard to predict what form or shape an element of a design will need to be in order to perform a service (Roncken, 2011). We **cannot guarantee architectural and fixed qualities but can instead** engage agriculture and environmental processes. Roncken argues that it is a " sublime design process can become an experiential **research method to find the balance between processes that nurture** a living system" (2011). We can create these living systems to be emergent and productive landscape machines. In order to do this we must engage the sublime during the design process. This can help a landscape to become experiential and educational (Roncken, 2011). To this degree, the sublime is "an experiential learning theory and not just another stylistic or artistic form principle" (Roncken, 2011). We often engage aesthetics on a plane that is strictly architectural in compositiion. Engaging the sublime can create a system of experiential learning that unconvers new information about living landscape systems (Roncken, 2011). Blending imaginative and ingrained images with sublime processes is said to create landscape machines that re-connect humans with environmental processes. It is this joining of characteristics that can produce landscape systems based on more than a theory of beauty.


Theory of Beauty
open view to frame everything golf course
Untrained hand =
misguided forms
familiar forms
Dixie McGraw's House


sequester carbon dioxide
erosion resistance
antibiotics
humidity — moisture
sun ; shade — warmth
wind
fungus
mushrooms
compost
spores
insects — eggs — larvae
birds
seeds
kills insects
mycelium
fungal sugars — ethanol
termites
carpenter ants
burlap sacks
storm blown debris
manure
branch ; grass clippings
compost
grassy areas among trees
lawn ; wood chip mulch


abandoned pool
fungi
overgrown
overgrown

This iteration also seeks to be eco-revelatory by producing grow kits that can be transported off site to anyone who wants to grow their own edible mushrooms. For the first species, the chestnut mushroom, compost is cultivated in a heap and then transported in plastic buckets via crane across the site and into the hands of people who will be able to see these processes taking place on this site and can also take home a product of this process that they can engage with and learn from. The second species of mushroom, the Mitake mushroom, can engage anthropogenic disturbance related to tree felling in suburban neighborhoods. Trees can be cut into 3-4 foot segments that can then be cultivated with mushroom spores. Basing the design of this landscape on these ecological processes can start to help us classify places not based solely on their conventional beauty but on the way they function and produce resources.

[mushroom mania] the edible ugly ful

innoculating trees + logs with mycelium spores

Maitake (Hen of the Woods)

Chestnut Mushrooms

Maitake (Hen of the Woods) Plugs

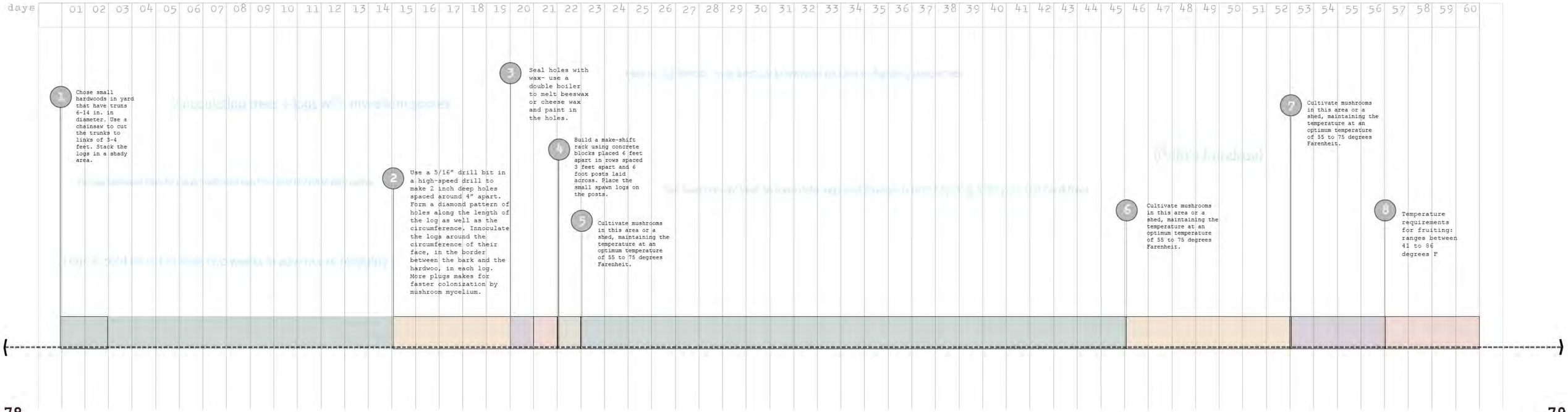
a naturally occurring ring or arc of mushrooms

fairy circles

Oyster (Blue + Brown) Plugs

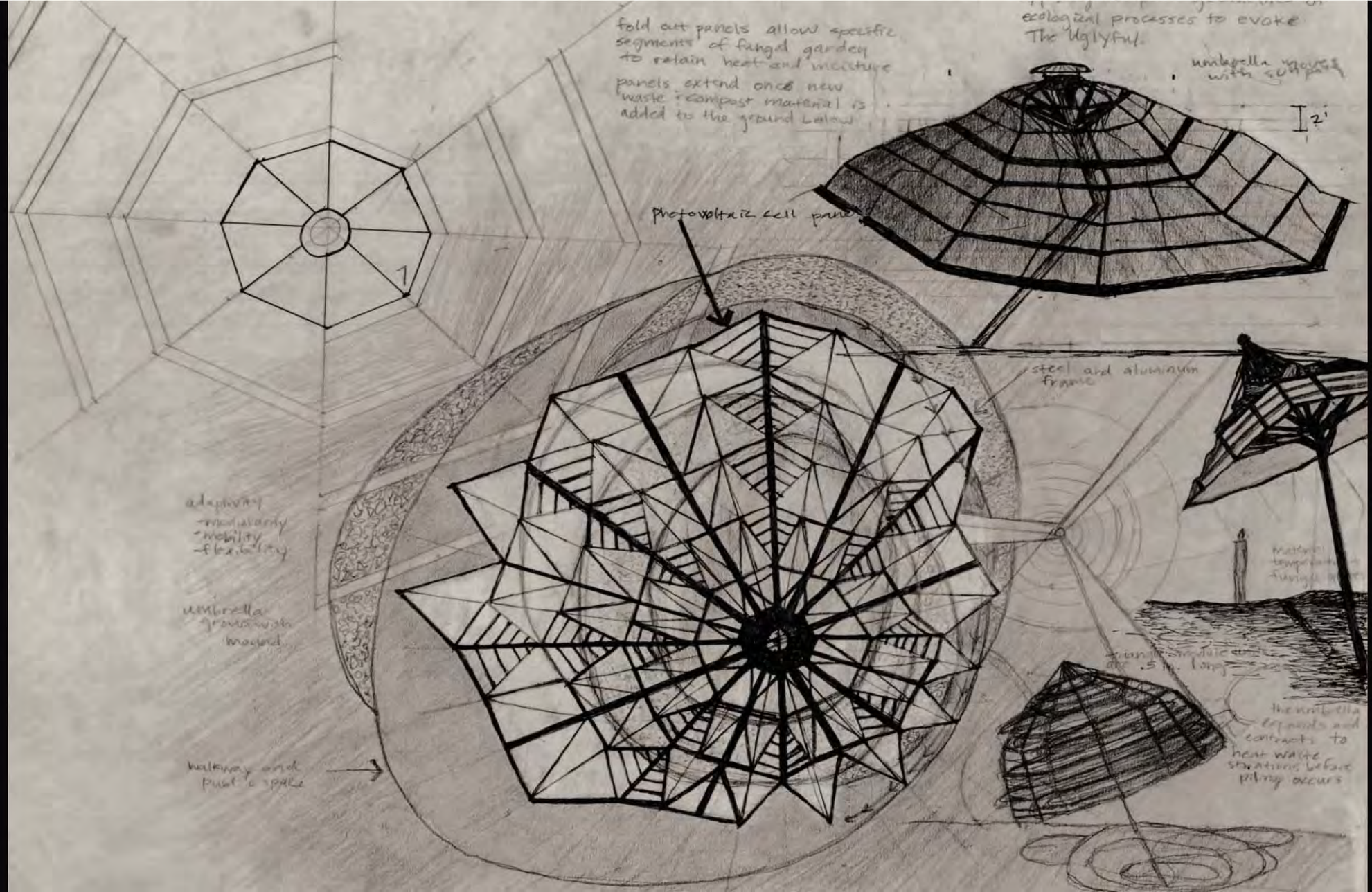
Chestnut Mushrooms

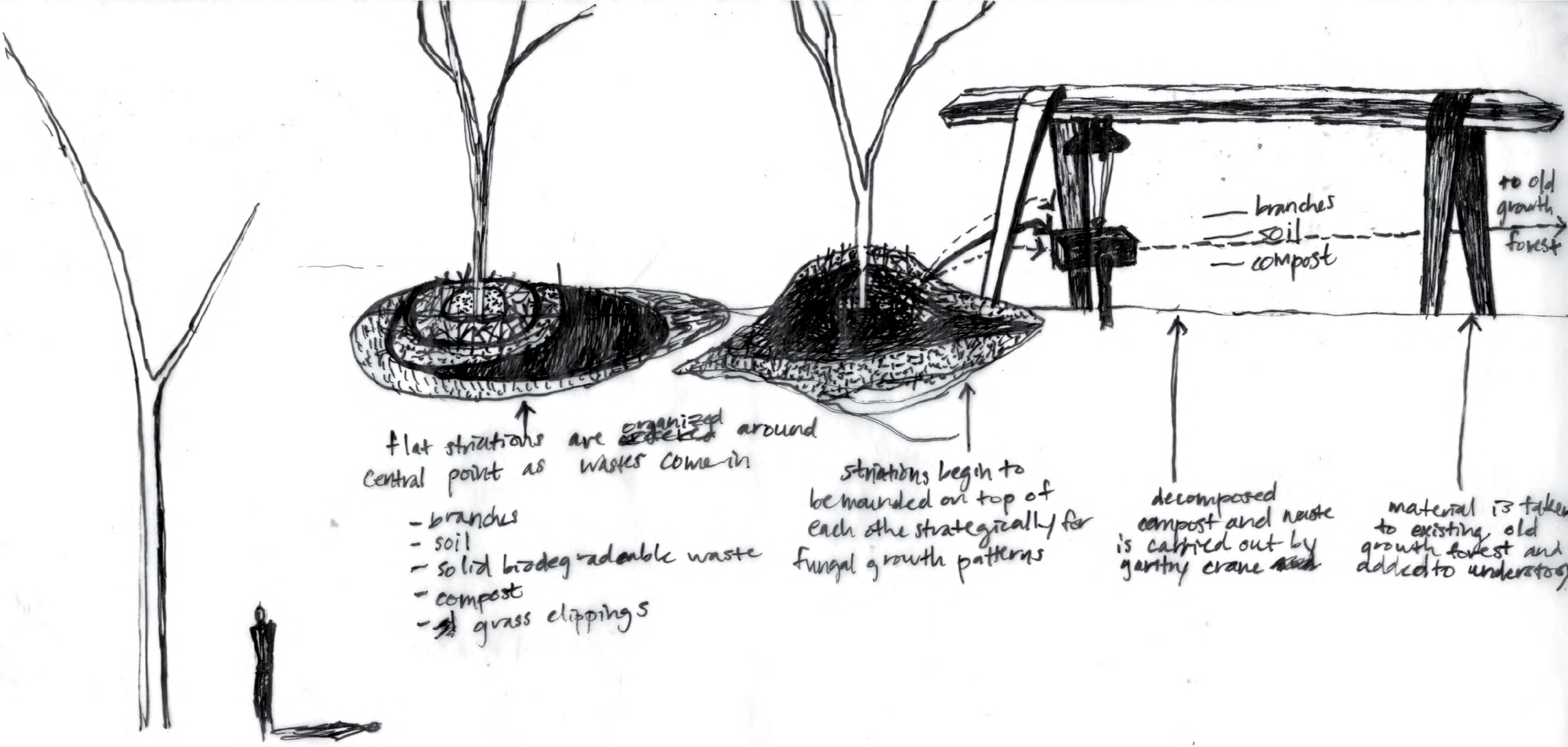
Shiitake Plugs



The addition of the greenhouse in this exploration made the cultivation of Chestnut mushrooms from a compost heap possible. The temperature in the greenhouse can be regulated to meet the 70 degree Farenheit optimum level for mushroom spore growth. The greenhouse evokes the aesthetics of industrial machinery. It has a metal form and fold-out plexiglass panels. This mechanistic form is also allowing the structure to be expanded and contracted according to how large the heap being cultivated is at a given time. It has a strangely familiar umbrella-like form that gives it mobility and adaptability. This is engaging the strangely familiar while also providing adaptability.

The form of this greenhouse was questioned by reviewers. Some found it to be too complicated, too artsy, or too fussy. It was evident that this form had become too idiosyncratic. The suggestion was made that the greenhouse be a more recognizable form. Perhaps it should even be a strangely familiar replica of a long rectangular greenhouse- a metal and plastic form that we so often see. This takes the pressure off of the form and aesthetics of the greenhouse and instead focuses on its purpose in the ecological processes of the cultivation of the compost. It needs to serve its purpose no matter what it looks like. This is still engaging the aesthetics of industrial machinery but in a more recognizable way and in a way that focuses attention on the ecological processes instead of the form and beautifications of the structure.




branches
soil
compost
to old growth forest
flat striations are organized around central point as wastes come in
- branches
- soil
- solid biodegradeable waste
- compost
- grass clippings
striations begin to be mounded on top of each other strategically for fungal growth patterns
decomposed compost and waste is carried out by gantry crane
material is taken to existing old growth forest and added to understory

[05] REFLECTIONS:

Overall, I believe that both of these site designs embodied many of the qualities of landscapes of the Uglyful. This framework helped to uncover ecological, social, and emotional nuances of these sites. This work seems to privilege ecological processes in a way that can make open systems more resilient. With these two explorations, there were several questions and critiques of these designs that came up.

It was determined that the Pearle Cove iteration struggled more with engaging existing conditions. The ecological and social processes on the site were less evident and tangible than at the Gaillard island site. While the Gaillard Island design took an existing condition and ecological processes and highlighted these, the Pearle Cove design fought to uncover small ecological and emotional nuances and then create a system out of these. This seemed more forced and less of a manifestation of the existing qualities of the site.

Both designs allowed ecological processes to runamuck and put aesthetic ideologies aside when determining form. These iterations show that we can create living, breathing landscapes that are not high-maintenance copies of ecological processes but are instead derived directly from those processes. It seemed that it was much easier to engage industrial processes at the scale of Gaillard island. These processes were already systematic drivers that defined this site. It was harder to engage industrial processes and aesthetics in Dixie's backyard as this required more formulation and creation of these processes on this site. I do believe that both sites captured the importance of engaging industrial machinery.

Questions also came up about the significance of engaging waste and whether this was a pertinent component of landscapes of the Uglyful. This design research question seeks to push the boundaries of conventional landscape design and change the way we view these systems and our roles within them. This is why it is important to change the way we view the under valued by-products of our highly valued systems. These could be vital resources that can make these landscape machines more productive and resilient.

There were questions raised about how many of these components are required to be present for a design to be classified as a landscape of the Uglyful. Many of these questions were explored when the scale of the project was changed from a regional scale to a suburban scale. Qualities of landscapes of the Uglyful were able to be evoked in both designs, creating more adaptable systems that moved away from the ingrained and the habitual and inton strange, sublime, and uncomfortable territories of design. These qualities should be considered when designing a landscape machine or an eco-revelatory place but it should be noted that not all of these characteristics necessarily have to be present to make a design a successful landscape of the Uglyful.

By improving the revelatory and educational aspects of these places as well as by creating new connections between people and productive ecological systems, we can question conventions in landscape architecture that focus too much on aesthetics and architectural compositions and not enough on the value of the sublime, the strange, and unconventional beauties of landscape systems.

This framework can be used to uncover nuances of a place and exaggerate these in a way that is revelatory of existing ecological and social processes. This project seeks to situate itself amongst contemporary design theories and practices that push boundaries and take risks, questioning our traditions and conventions and privileging more of the efficient, emergent, and emotional components of landscape systems. By utilizing a rogue aesthetic we can take our design explorations into new territories of perception. We can use this framework of landscapes of the Uglyful to create living, breathing landscape machines that are productive and revelatory.

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