

RESILIENCE ON WALL STREET

A THESIS BY
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Resilience on Wall Street

A Thesis

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Masters of Architecture
in the Department of Architecture of the Rhode Island School of Design

by

Rahul Ghera

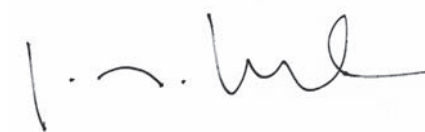
Rhode Island School of Design
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Examination Committee
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What's News

Business & Finance

- ◆ Statue of Brave Girl Installed in Front of Wall Street Bull in Celebration of International Womens Day.
- ◆ Trump Moves to Roll Back Obama-Era Financial Regulations.
- ◆ World Economy Fears Contagious Trump-Slump on the Rise.
- ◆ Trump Meets with United States Community Bankers, Pledges to Scale Back More Regulations.
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- ◆ Performance Coach and Hedge Fund Psychiatrist, Ari Kiev Makes Air on Billions.
- ◆ Concerns About Riskier Mortgages are Sprouting.
- ◆ Somalia Declares National Disaster After Drought.
- ◆ Benie Madoff and Dick Flud Selected as First Rehab Candidates.

Rehabilitation Wall Proposed for Wall Street



Model of Rehabilitation Wall on Wall Street

On October 29th, 2019, the most substantial economic depression of the modernized world abruptly began, as the international financial market and the global GDP took a plunge. Over the course of the next decade, all that continued to rise were unemployment and suicide rates.

The Wall explores the question of what happens when the lights go out on a society that is irrevocably halted. Questions of responsibility, reparations, and conviction are all weighed as 'Wall Street' is revealed as ground zero, and the once-powerful bankers are uncovered as the addicts who

have gone too far, gambled too much, and are in need of vital rehabilitation. The dichotomy between primary user groups, 'the powerful' and the 'powerless' - the tourist and the banker, the public and the addict, still remain heavily apparent on Wall Street.

Exposing Wall Street's Insecurities

A Review of Karen Ho's *"Liquidated: An Ethnography of Wall Street"*

Trained as an anthropologist, Ho brings new light to the ongoing discussion of banker-culture, providing an analysis of the creatures that occupy the endless hours that culminate into the United States economy. Elitism, success, and exclusivity are perceived less as aspirations and more as expectations from hiring firms. As Ho points out, the incessant crave to be the best and the richest, is far more ingrained than the monotony expected from cliché work-office mentality. Ho suggests that this obsession can be directly linked to the 2008 financial crisis. The

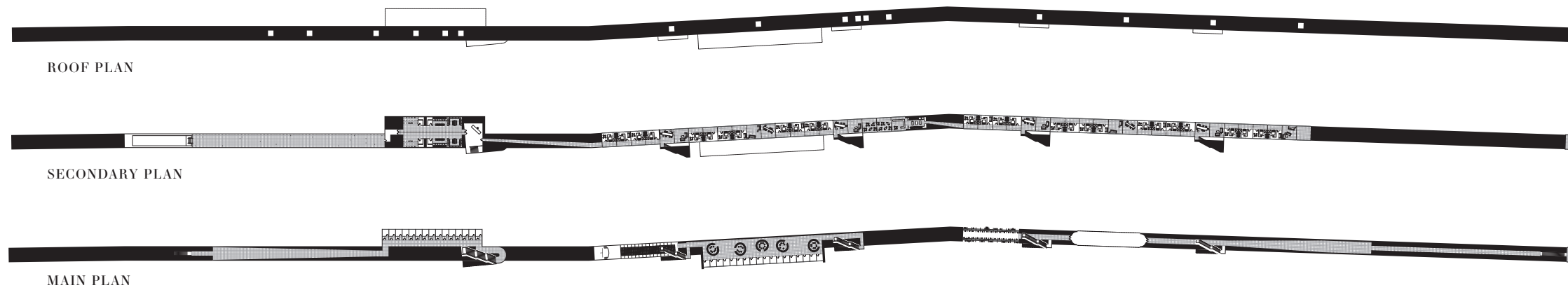


Courtesy of Princeton Alumni Weekly

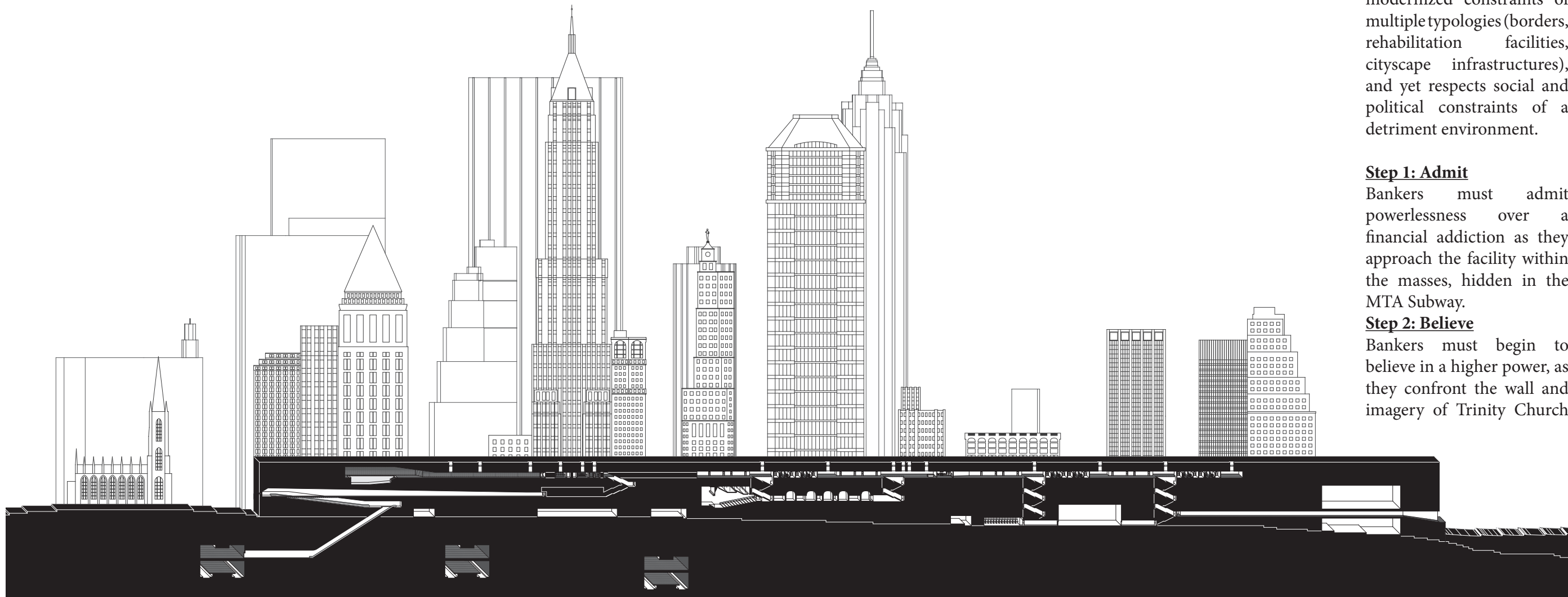
unstable environment fostered in investment firms directly impacts the risk behavior that led to major losses during the market crash. As job retention liquefied, employees projected insecurities onto the market, as well as their clients. Ho successfully provides a primer on how minds work on Wall Street; she falls short on explaining a key factor: *Why?*

Ho leaves a plentiful amount of questions waiting to be answered. We can pull general norms and behaviors, but no cause of methodology. With statements as picturesque as "Wall Street bankers are a lot like cannibals - except with better suits and less impulse control." Ho leaves us craving answers that she desperately seeks to avoid, possibly in order to maintain confidentiality for her informants. Thankfully, Ho provides us with a prominent base. Hopefully someone will continue this exploration that is waiting to be discovered.

Rehabilitation Wall Proposed for Wall Street Bankers



Floor Plans of Final Wall Proposal



Axonometric Section of Final Wall Proposal

The Wall proposes a twelve-step program, realized as a series of spaces and paths that intend to aid a banker through rehabilitation. Emptiness, solitude and feelings of confinement consume bankers within the vast edifices of program, leaving them no choice but to surrender. The Wall addresses tourists as an impenetrable object, plugging streets, blocking forms of public interaction. The invasive wall challenged modernized constraints of multiple typologies (borders, rehabilitation facilities, cityscape infrastructures), and yet respects social and political constraints of a detriment environment.

Step 1: Admit

Bankers must admit powerlessness over a financial addiction as they approach the facility within the masses, hidden in the MTA Subway.

Step 2: Believe

Bankers must begin to believe in a higher power, as they confront the wall and imagery of Trinity Church

on Wall Street.

Step 3: Surrender

Bankers must surrender will to the care of the facility.

Step 4: Assess

Bankers must make a moral evaluation while inspecting the remanence of Trump Tower on Wall Street.

Step 5: Declare

Bankers must admit wrongdoings to another human.

Step 6: Cleanse

Bankers begin the rehabilitation process through a bathing ritual.

Step 7: Support

Bankers may seek strength through motivational talks and support groups.

Step 8: Amends List

Bankers must make a list of all people harmed by their addiction.

Step 9: Confront

Bankers must make direct amends at the will of people harmed.

Step 10: Inventory

Bankers must continue to assess wrongdoings while developing a list of amendments for future growth.

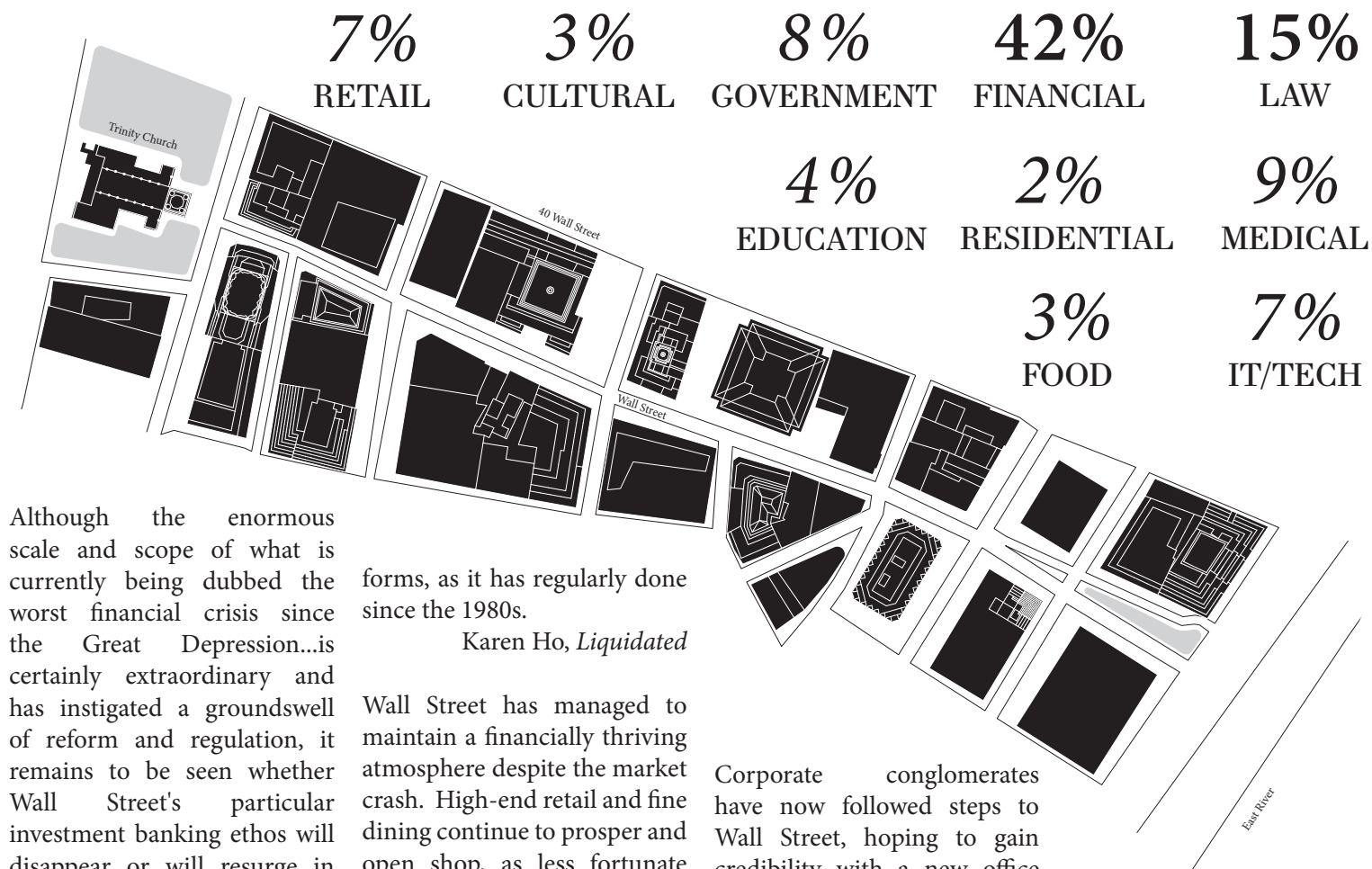
Step 11: Rumspringa

Bankers can leave the wall for a period of time in order to evaluate their progress through the rehabilitation program.

Step 12: Awaken

Bankers carry along their spiritual awakening as they board the MTA Ferry.

Business Trends Prevail Post Financial Crisis



Although the enormous scale and scope of what is currently being dubbed the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression...is certainly extraordinary and has instigated a groundswell of reform and regulation, it remains to be seen whether Wall Street's particular investment banking ethos will disappear or will resurge in new and varied institutional

forms, as it has regularly done since the 1980s.

Karen Ho, *Liquidated*

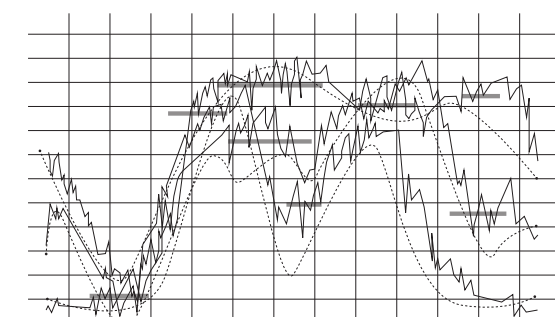
Wall Street has managed to maintain a financially thriving atmosphere despite the market crash. High-end retail and fine dining continue to prosper and open shop, as less fortunate businesses shut doors.

Corporate conglomerates have now followed steps to Wall Street, hoping to gain credibility with a new office address.

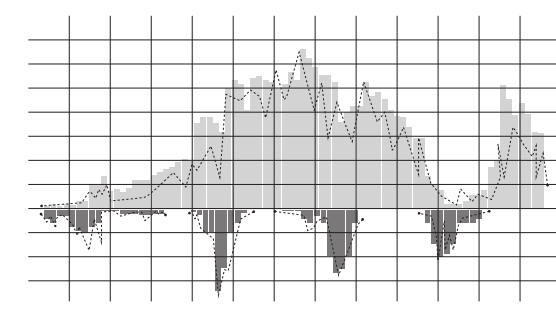
Taking on Tourism *by the Balls*



HOURLY OFFICE ANALYSIS



BANKER VS. TOURIST PRESENCE



Wall Street: New York's Very Own Alcatraz

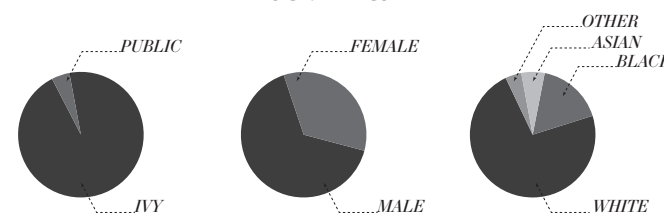


Courtesy of San Francisco National Park Service

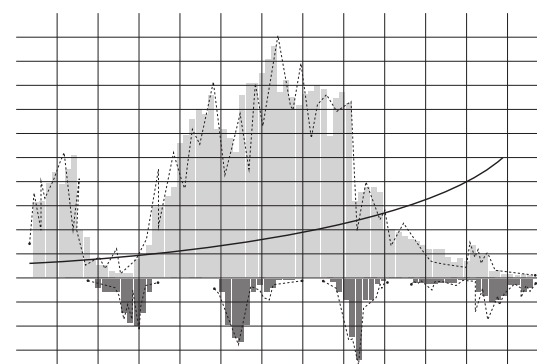
A parallel can be drawn when comparing the strict lifestyle to that of Entry-Level investment brokers on Wall Street and prisoners sent to Alcatraz. In addition to the daily schedule, its isolation from societal norms further develops a sense of reclusion. Immersed in an environment based on gambling and greed, bankers hold the fate of global citizens within their cliff dwellings. Alcatraz prisoners, similarly, coexisting in sheer ignorance of a city thriving less than a

mile away. With amenities and programs provided on campus, prisoners on Alcatraz are encouraged to forget the outside world and focus on their sentence. Bankers on Wall Street find themselves solely focused on the job at hand, as the surrounding buildings are outfitted with programs in order to ease life. Dry cleaners, barista's, tailors and shoe-shiners are but a floor away, ready to aid the Banker. Wall Street has this all figured out... sadly, sleep gets in the way!

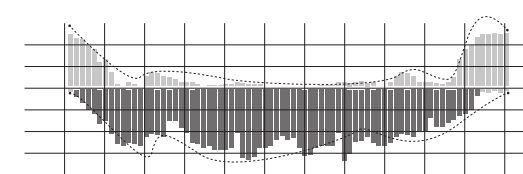
DEMOGRAPHICS



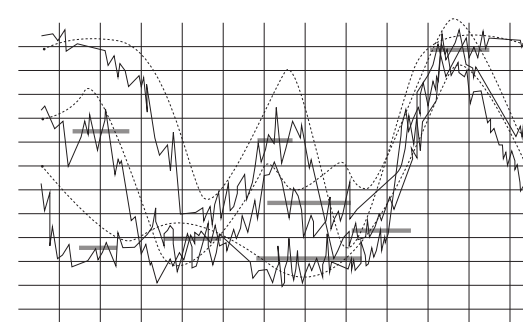
JOB RETENTION RATES



PURPOSE OF BUSINESS



HOURLY SITE ANALYSIS



The First Border Wall



Courtesy of New York Public Library, Digital Gallery

Dutch-named "de Walstraat" got its name from an actual wall (wooden palisade) on the northern boundary of the New Amsterdam settlement. Built to protect against Native Americans and the British. From 1640 to 1710, the wall transformed from a basic picket fence to a strengthened, 12-foot fortified wall. Spanning

from Pearl Street to today's Trinity Place, the wall catered to local merchants and traders looking to buy and sell bonds. Wall Street had always been a main economic contributor to New York City, for its ability to collect significant funding through taxes.

Trump Wall, in effect.



Courtesy of JuneJuly - Jonathan McIntosh

On February 24th, 2017, The Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection, sent out a request for proposals to all American citizens. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) continues to support President Trump's effort in expanding job markets for architects. However, the architecture community has spoken against said allegiances. In search for a humanitarian future, young architects respond to President Trump's RFP with solutions that can maintain the integrity of the architectural profession,

along with the set agenda of his administration. President Trump appears to be desperately proving his dominance and stability within the country by having a wall built. Much could be associated to the Cold War. The Berlin wall was built to contain an incipient revolt - a mass emigration that threatened to expose the Soviet System as inferior to the West. East Germany became an oppressive dungeon that its' most educated young people yearned to escape from. As history repeats itself, tensions amongst young designers are running high, threatening the integrity of an architects ethical code. As a result, the stature of professional AIA licensure is weakening, casting doubt on the profession's credibility.

Google Street View Within Wall Street's Canyons

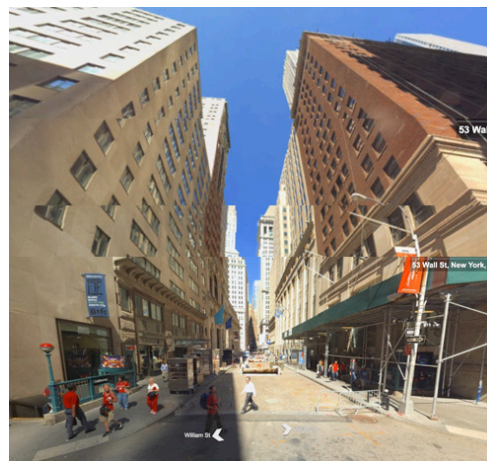
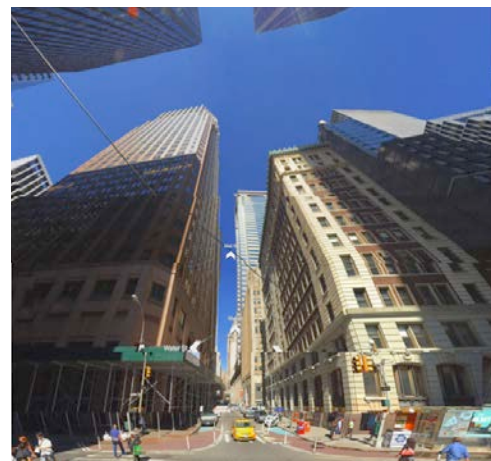
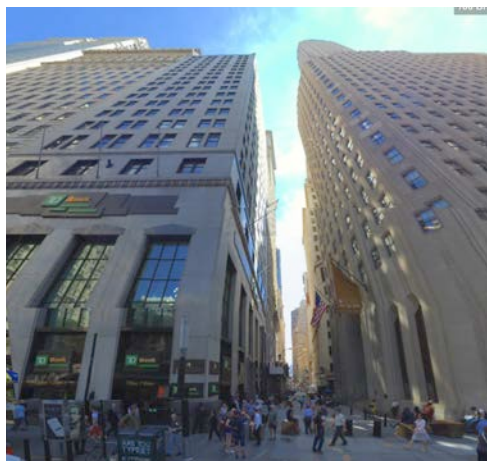


Photo Montage of Google Street View: Wall St.

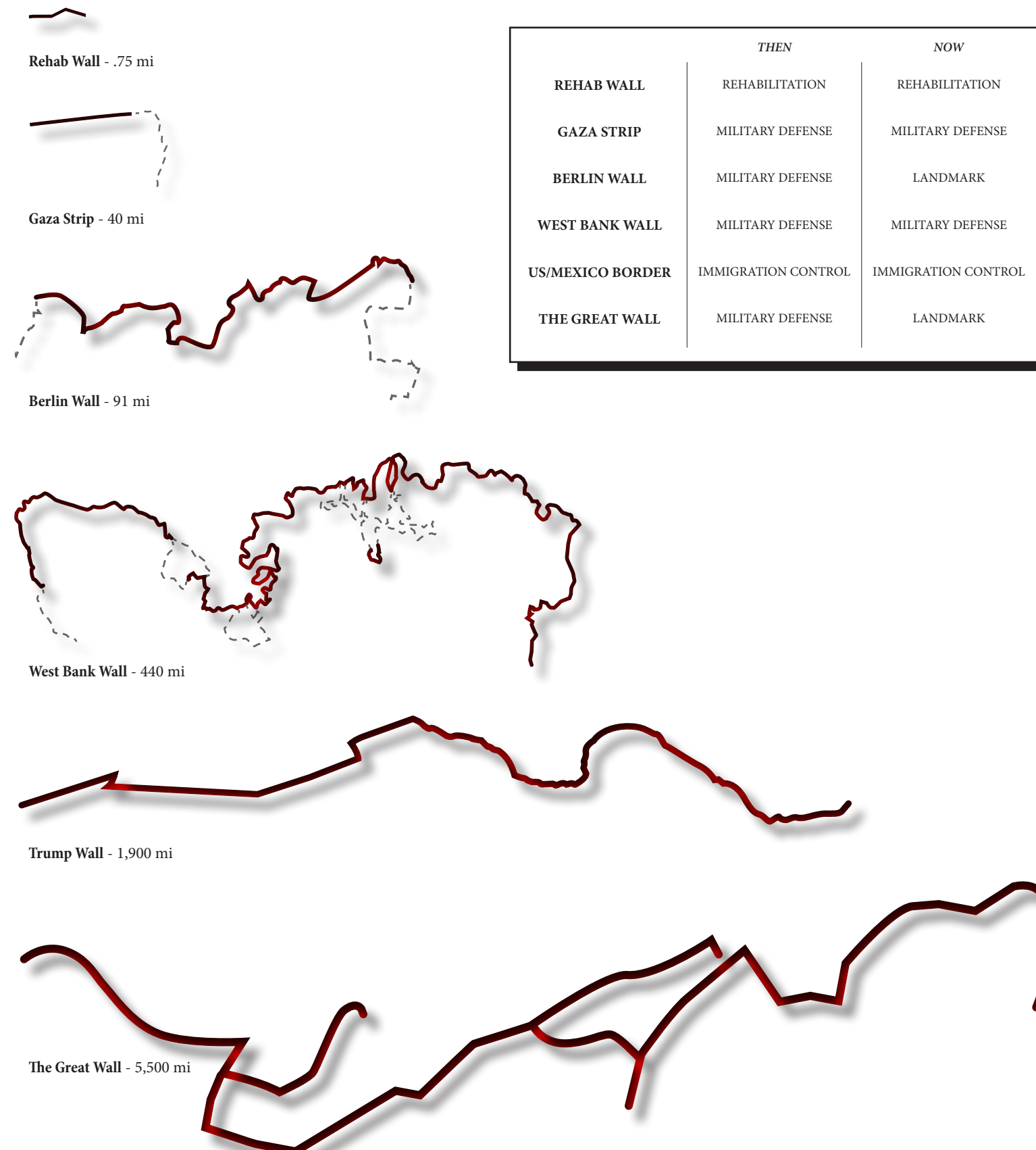
Wall Street's architecture is rooted in the Gilded Age, through there are also some art deco influences in the neighborhood. The streets in

the area were laid out prior to the Commissioner's Plan of 1811, a grid plan that dictates the placement of most of Manhattan's streets north of

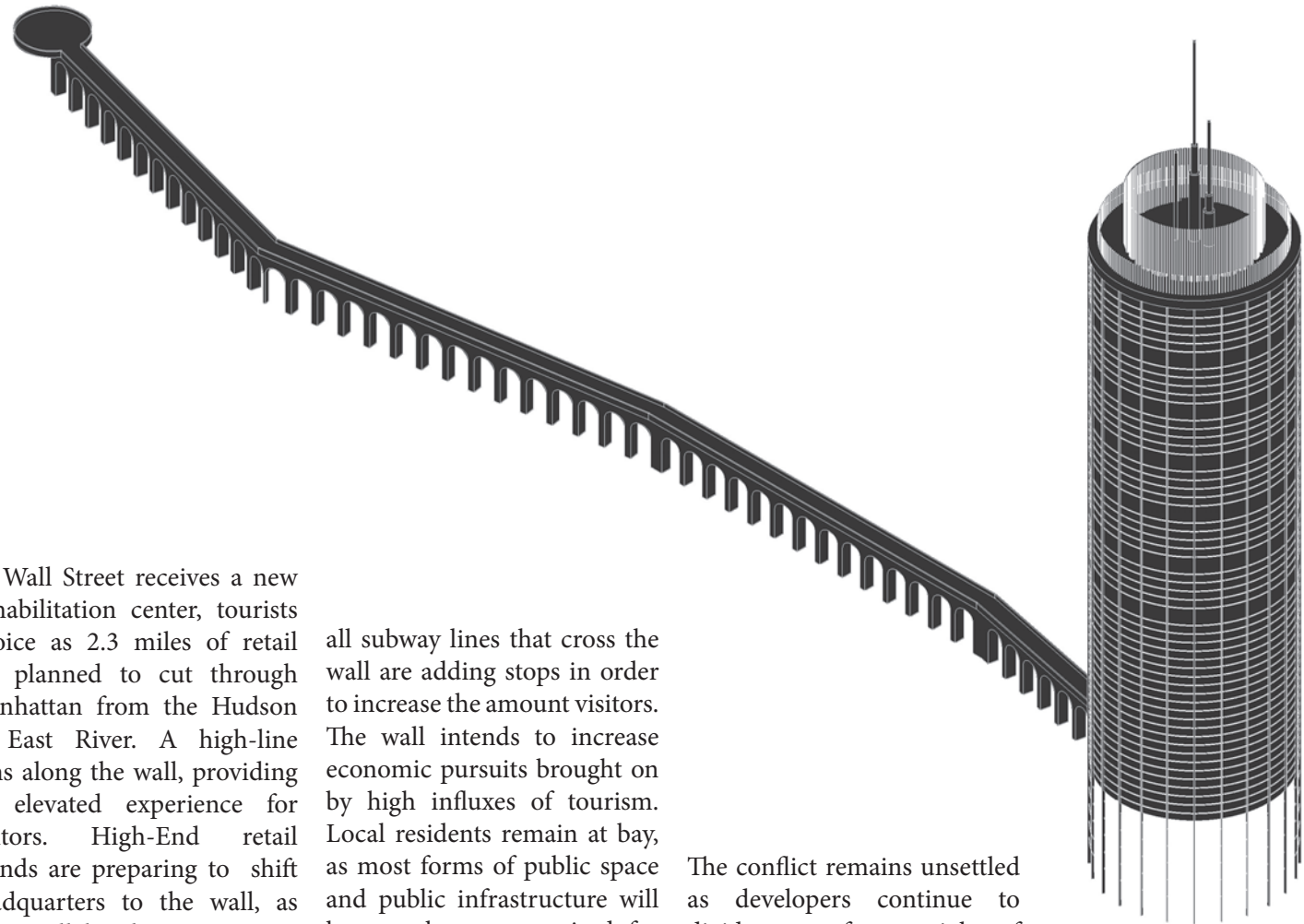
Houston Street. Thus it has small streets "barely wide enough for a single lane of traffic are bordered on both sides by some of the tallest

building in the city", according to one description, which creates "breathtaking artificial canyons" offering spectacular views in some instances.

International Walls Sized Up



Manhattan Divided by Commerce Wall



As Wall Street receives a new Rehabilitation center, tourists rejoice as 2.3 miles of retail are planned to cut through Manhattan from the Hudson to East River. A high-line runs along the wall, providing an elevated experience for visitors. High-End retail brands are preparing to shift headquarters to the wall, as these will be the most active with foot traffic. Additionally,

all subway lines that cross the wall are adding stops in order to increase the amount visitors. The wall intends to increase economic pursuits brought on by high influxes of tourism. Local residents remain at bay, as most forms of public space and public infrastructure will have to be compromised for such a large scale intervention.

The conflict remains unsettled as developers continue to divide square-footage rights of the wall.

Tower and Wall Oblique Drawing



Aerial view of Marbled Wall Crossing Wall Street



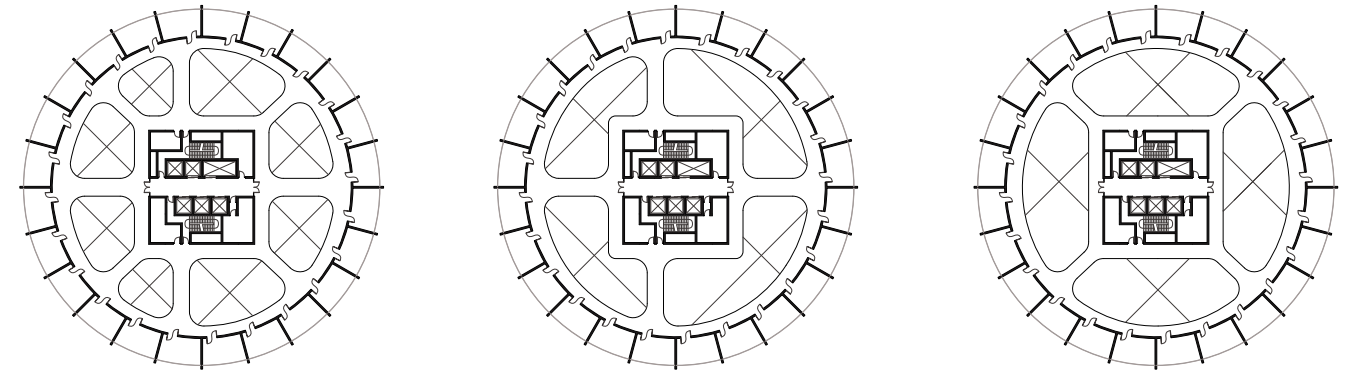
Pedestrian view of Marbled Wall Crossing Wall Street

Groundbreaking Set for Rehabilitation Center

The facility offers a range of programs, depending on the admitted patient. Marketed to workers on Wall Street, the tower aids in occupational, drug, and neuropsychology and penology forms of rehabilitation. With a panoptic design, the center aims to recall humanitarian approaches in terms of group surveillance and trust-based systems. The rehabilitation and correctional programs mostly focus on providing respite from information, allowing the patient to identify self goals and futures, undisturbed from current news. As inmates serve sentence floors above, bankers are invited to work and play on the floors below, fully unaware of their possible fate.

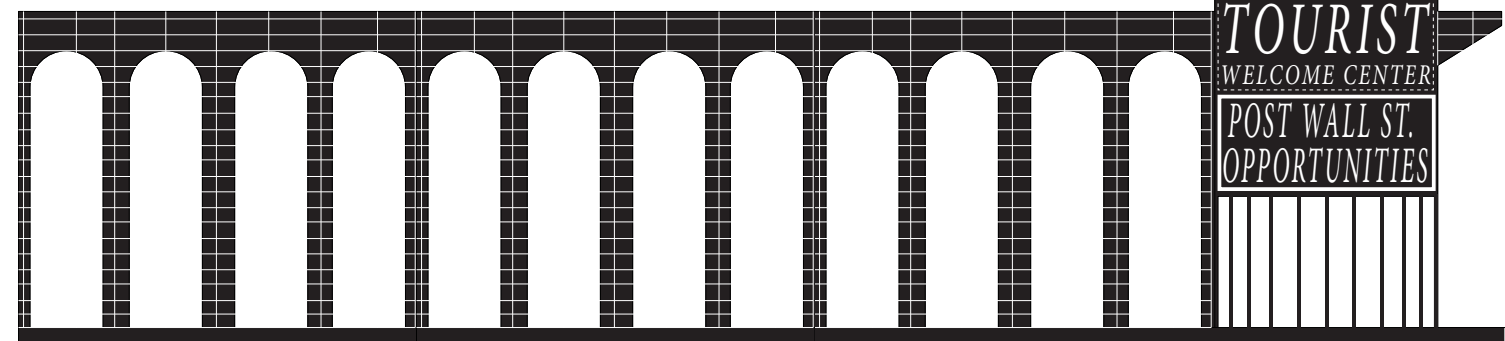
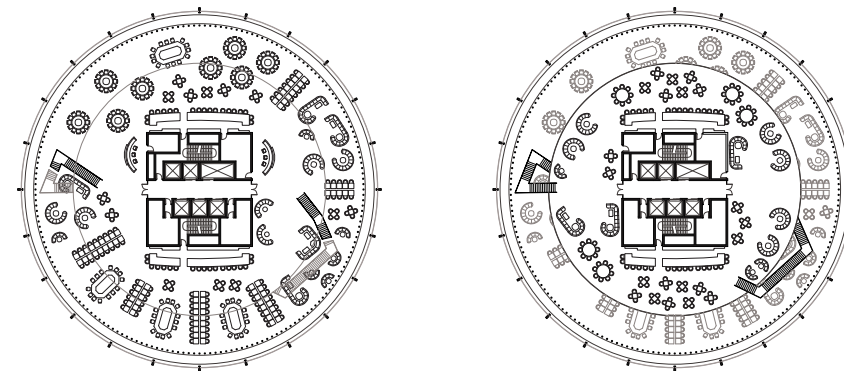
REHABILITATION FACILITY

Plans of Panoptic Tower



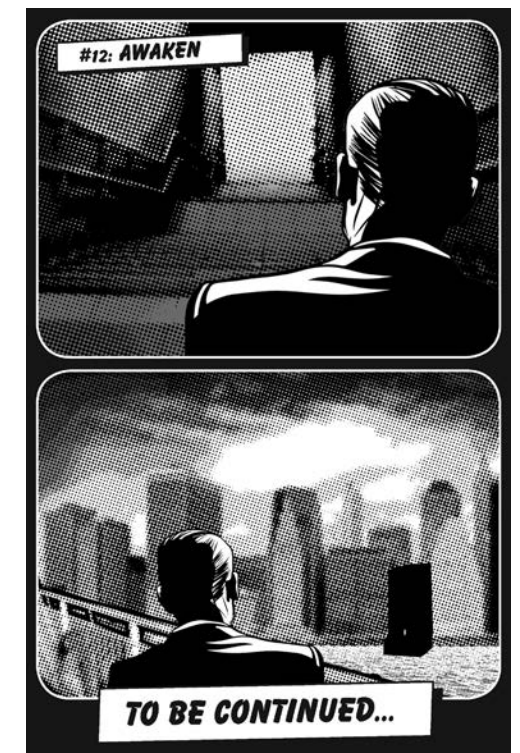
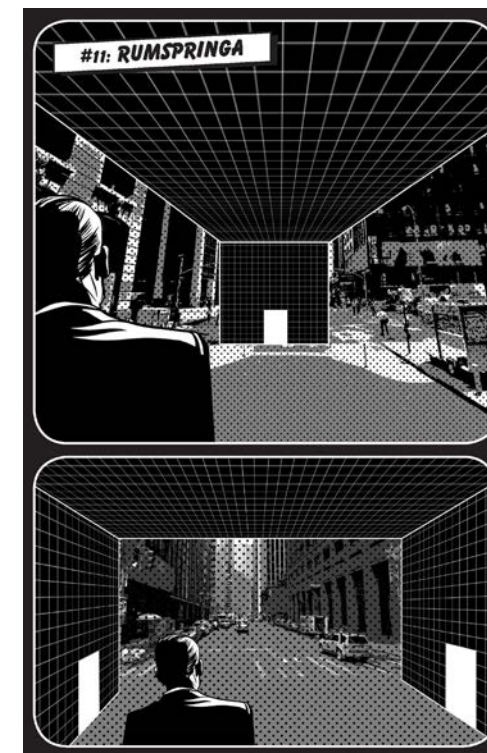
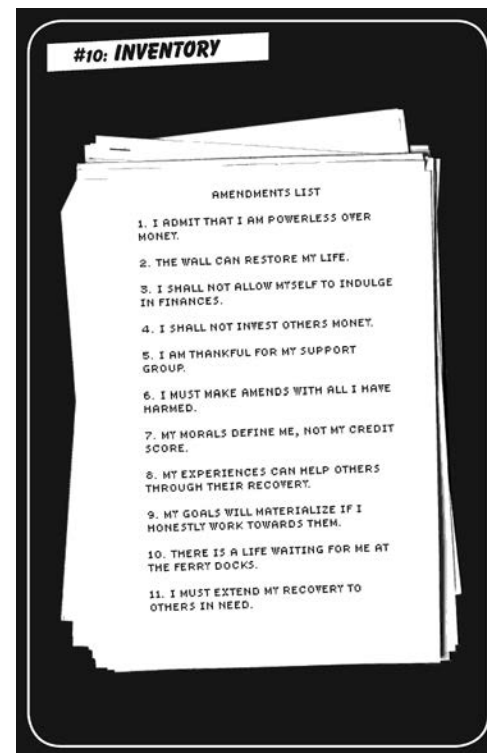
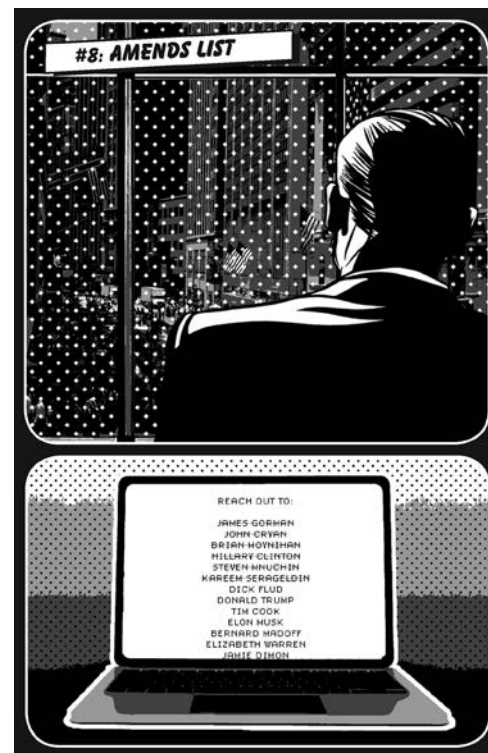
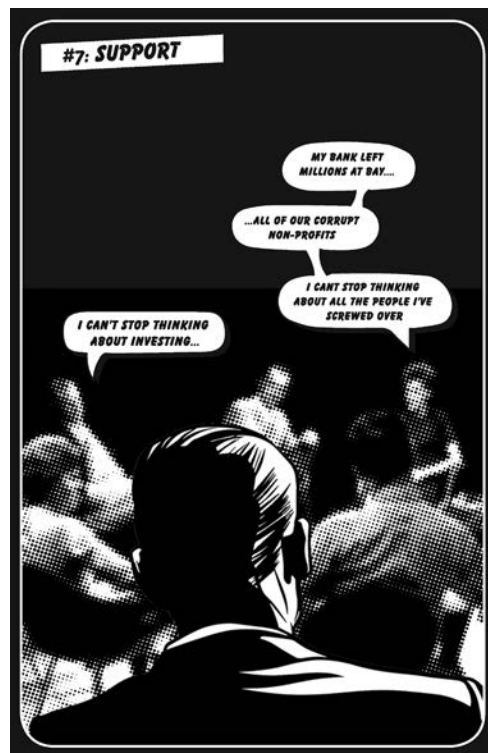
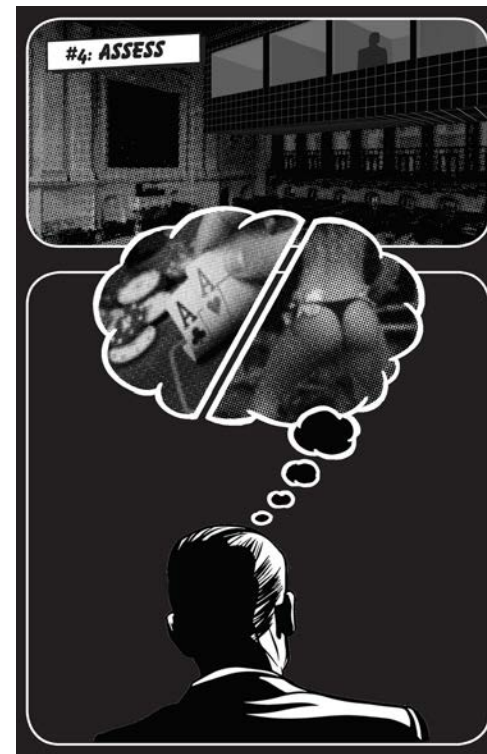
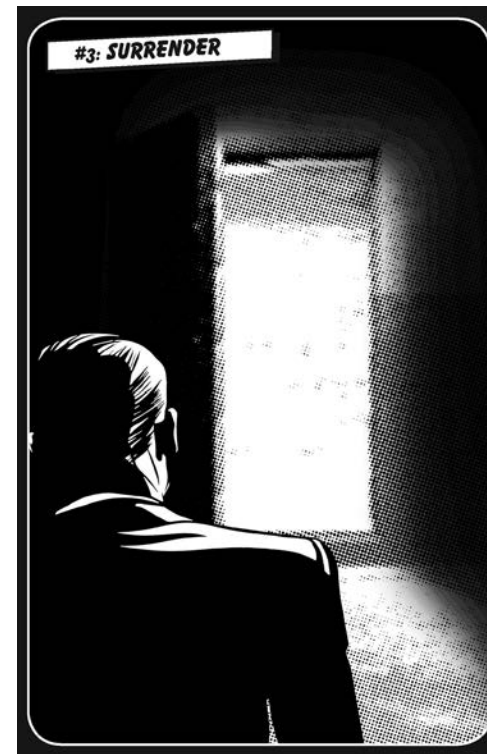
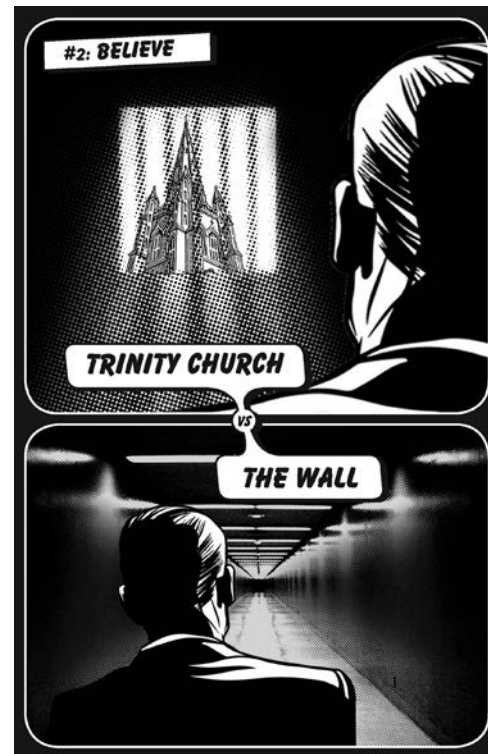
WALL STREET CASINO

Plans of Panoptic Tower



Diagrammatic Program Section of Tower and Wall

Rehabilitation Twelve-Step Program Narrated Through Comic Strips



Twelve-Step Rehabilitation Program as Comics
[From Left to Right] Step 1: Admit, Step 2: Believe, Step 3: Surrender, Step 4: Assess, Step 5: Declare, Step 6: Cleanse, Step 7: Support, Step 8: Amends List, Step 9: Confront, Step 10: Inventory, Step 11: Rumspringa, Step 12: Awaken.

Escapism Within a Woven Utopia

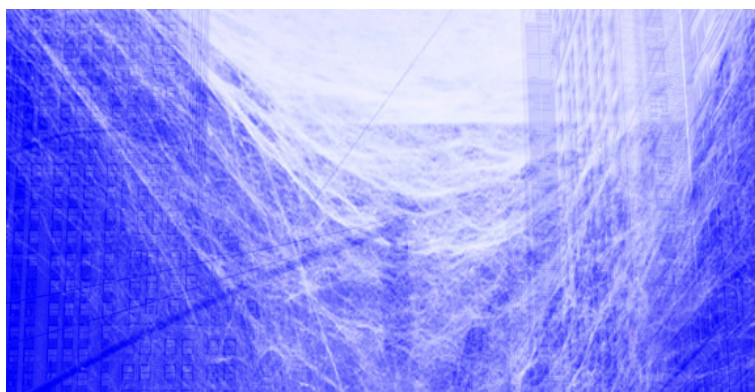
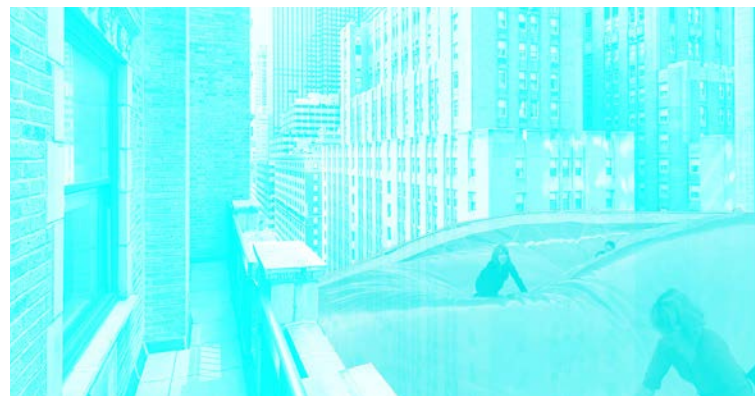
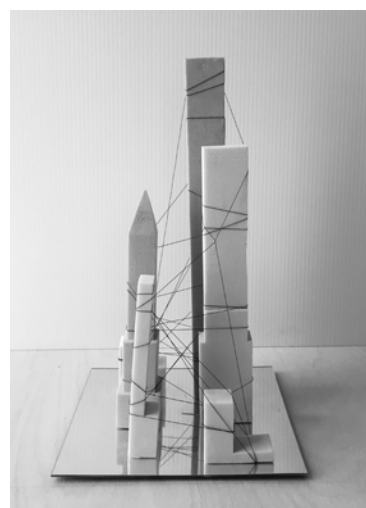
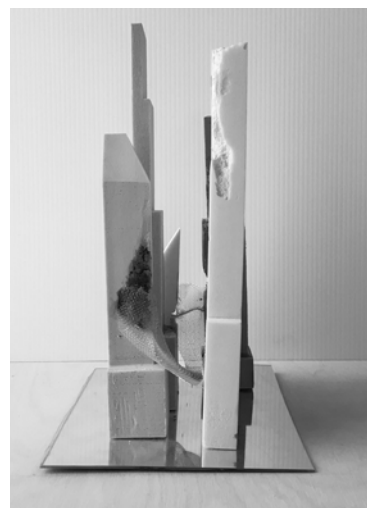
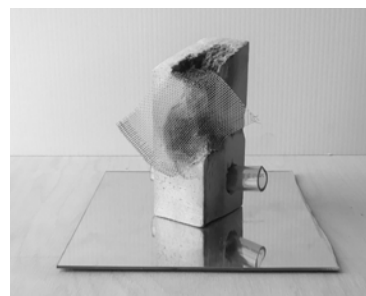
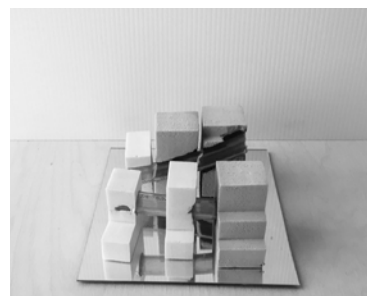


Photo Collage of Thomas Saraceno's work in New York City

A Utopian realm hovers above the bustling streets of New York City, offering refuge from day-to-day routines. The network provides a space for interaction-based communication and social enrichment, amongst data consumed societies. Similar to *Exodus, or the Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture*, by Rem Koolhaas, it creates a journey for residents to reach a point of ultimate segregation from the city. Society is given another chance to realize their identity within an urban realm, one that relies solely on circulating along unknown paths. The network acts as a symbiotic environment that can react to, respond to, and learn from the user, while



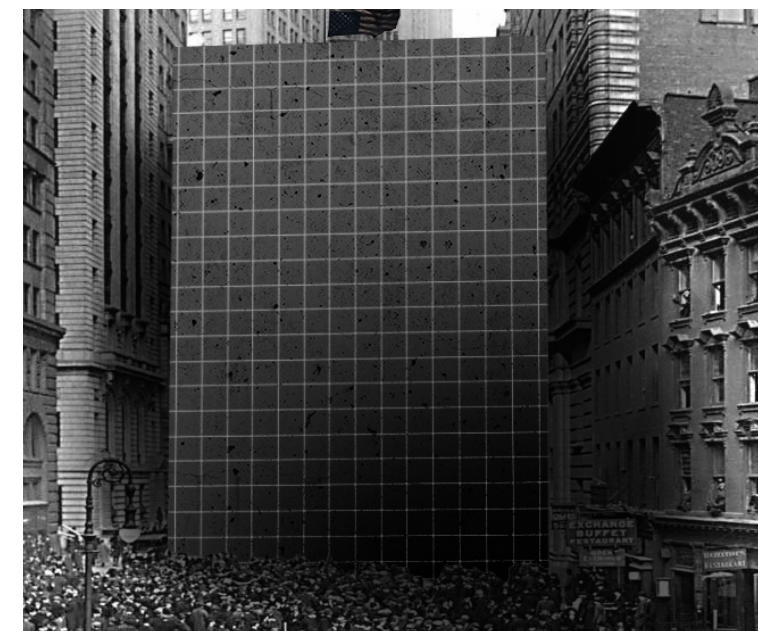
Models Weaving New York Interactions

allowing them to do the same. Shared architectural spaces are becoming less social as technology dominates the way we interact with one another. New Yorkers have been setting their navigation and sensory systems on auto-pilot as they move from space to space, glued to their devices. These devices are rendering social interactions anonymous, acting as a safety mechanism for societies, buffering from any actual human contact. Our emotional and spatial understanding begin to blur within the virtual realm. The Utopian realm floating above disguises interaction within its paths. The space responds to every user, making them aware of their presence.

Ominous Wall Violates Wall St. Public Space

Public spaces near Wall Street has been an integral factor between tourist, banker, and protester. During the Occupy Wall Street Movement, thousands of protesters inhabited Zucotti Park, spending numerous days and nights. Zucotti Park is one of many spaces, publicly known, where protesters are still permitted to exercise their civil rights. However, the conflict between protesters, bankers, and police officers has now been brought to an abrupt halt, as the streets on Wall St begin to fill. Bankers have plugged

any space for public interaction with a Wall, dominating all forms of public discourse. The elitism and significance of a banker in society has come to an extreme showdown, against all others that deny it. The Wall reduces any space down to narrow sidewalks, where commuters must now squeeze between.



Cartoon Montage of Wall Proposals

Linking New York Through Series of Paths



Photo Collage of City Connections

New York City residents face the longest commute times amongst workers in the nation's 30 largest cities - an average of 6 hours, 18 minutes per week. In common cases, some

workers never step outdoors when commuting from home to work. Residents remain anonymous as they disappear within the masses during daily routine. Most methods of

commute condemn residents to dark, humid, rat-infested tunnels. New York's current infrastructure can permit for potential paths that connect commuters above ground.

New York's multi-faceted infrastructural system shows opportunity and growth, allowing for a series of paths linking commuters to public plazas and urban city centers.

Follies Designed For Affective Breaks Within New York City Commotion

ruminate
/rome, nāt/

(v.) think deeply about something

touch
/teCH/

(v.) have an effect on; make a difference to

impinge
/im' pinj/

(v.) advance over an area belonging to someone else

mirror
/'mirer/

(v.) correspond to

desire
/de' zi(e)r/

(n.) strong feeling of wanting

alienate
/ālye, nāt/

(v.) to deprive of reason

drain
/drān/

(v.) deprive of strength or vitality

vibrato
/ve' brādō/

(n.) a rapid variation in pitch, producing a stronger tone

sink
/siNGk/

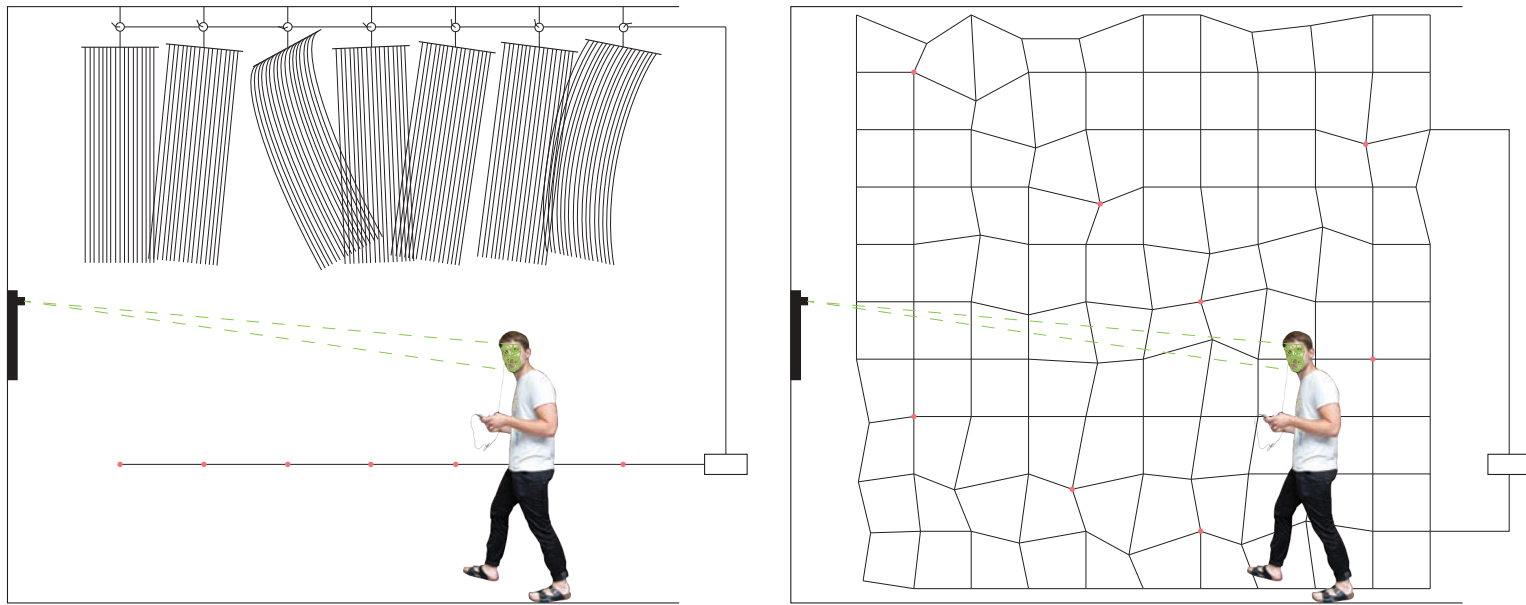
(v.) go down below the surface

bor
/bōr/

(v.) uninterested by dullness



Responsive Spaces Alerting Users Through Use

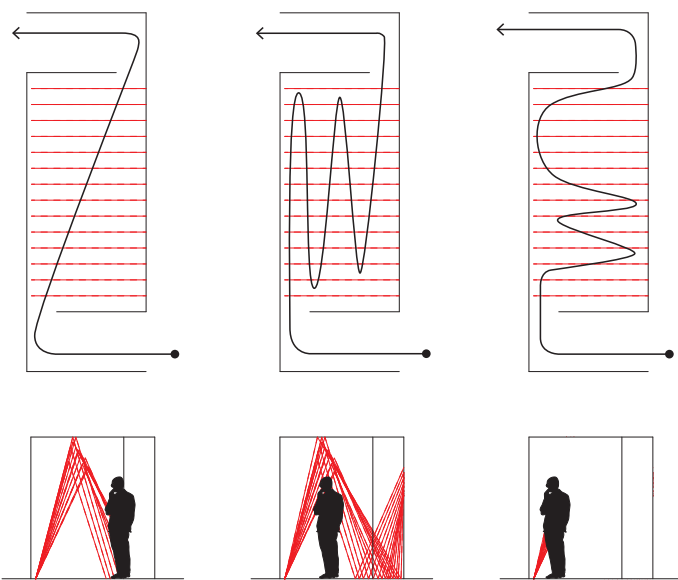


High-tech companies have been investing in user-responsive interiors, aiding Artificial Intelligence data research, specifically in user recognition. As users confront these spaces, a series of functions alert motors for dynamic spatial changes. Users are confronted with mechanical facades that respond to their movement between rooms. Aesthetically, the mechanical systems mimic traditional interior finishes, in efforts to disguise it's functions.

Specific systems are set to control thermal and acoustic balances within spaces, in order to manipulate expected means of space usage. Users must then reconfigure, as they adjust to a newly defined space. This phenomena urges

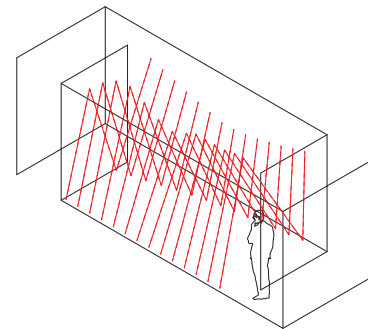
users to detach from societal media tools, making the spatial experience the foremost importance. As multiple users enter the space a dialogue forms between groups and artificial architecture.

Smoke and Mirrors... and Lights



Installation Usage Diagrams

These installations are beginning to pop-up all around MTA Subway stations. The installations monitor unique commuter pathways as they pass through the subway. Most commuters breeze past, maintaining standard rush-hour speedy momentums, while a few others peel away from the masses to explore the installation. Many meander within the implied spaces created by light paths, slowly realizing they have the ability to manipulate it. As users block light paths, use shiny



Installation Axonometric Drawing

objects to continue refracting paths, and enter the space in crowds, the autonomous architecture begins to receive authorship with each new user. These installations begin to slow down commuter paths, allowing spatial recognition, as commuters auto-pilot through to their destinations.

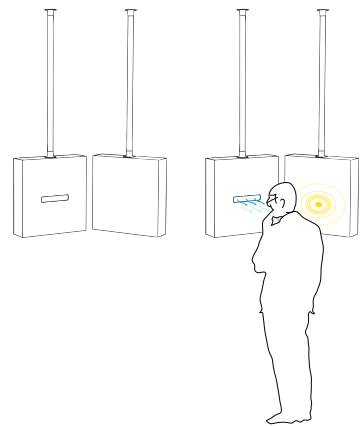
Affective Machines



Probe: Exhibition Gallery, Bayard Ewing Building

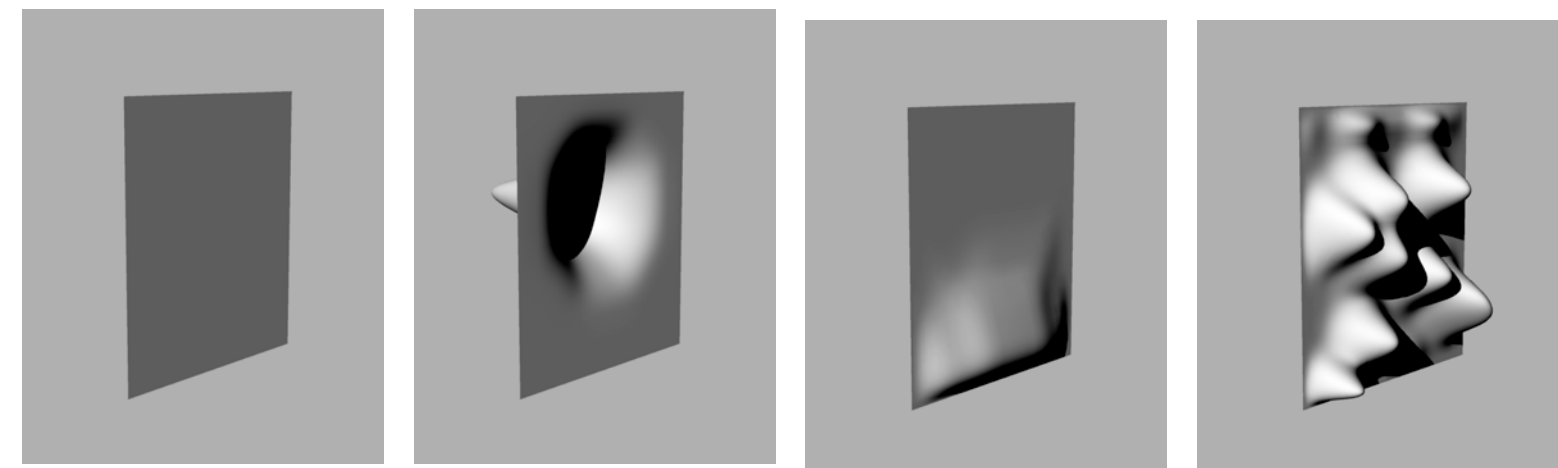
A series of machines have been installed in day-to-day spaces, allowing users to observe their own affect. Every form of communication where facial expressions, respiration, tone of voice, and posture are predictable, is a way we as humans transmit affect. The machines convert humanistic traits through digital responses, learning the user through this process. The awareness of spatial presence and change of environment can aid users in understanding the affect built environments

have the potential to impose. These machines challenge social norms, providing new methods of interaction, allowing a user to hold a dialogue with built space.



Probe: User Diagram

One on One Conversations With Emotional Walls



Three-Dimensional Phase Modeling of Emotional Wall

Designed as a prototype to monitor human interactions with a static wall, the Emotional Wall masks it's technologically advanced tectonic as a simple surface one can interact with. While monitoring distance,

As users continue to confront the object, they soon realize the wall has an agenda of its own.

heart rate, respiration and acoustic tone, the Emotional

Wall begins to respond in its own calculated way. At times, the wall shows excitement to users, encouraging them to touch, interact, and play with it's features. While at other times, the wall repels from

users, completely denying a conversation. The culminating goal has been to catalog artificial stimuli that humans respond to. Thus developing a catalog of artificial affect.

Seeking Rehab Within a Concrete Jungle

A commute can foreclose on any set of human functions. New Yorkers seek respite after an overflow of social exchange in a fast-paced, multi-faceted, urban environment. Urban infrastructures for transportation and economic program reject New Yorkers from a space for uninterrupted, human interaction. Streets flow with commuters fixated on information transfers via social media and plastered advertisements within a concrete jungle. The artificial lives New Yorkers have been condemned to, has reached its toll. Now more than ever, urban rehabilitation centers are sought out in hopes of escaping from information overload. New Yorkers are desperately seeking emotional reform, amongst the artificial. Twelve step programs have been ingrained in the series of spaces and paths in which

New Yorkers must follow. The program outlines a course of action for recovery from addiction, compulsion, or other behavioral problems. The process involves admitting a loss of control, recognizing a higher power of strength, examining past errors, making amends with regrets, learning a new code of behavior, and lastly, extending aid to those who suffer from similar addictions or compulsions.



Ink Transfer of City Futures



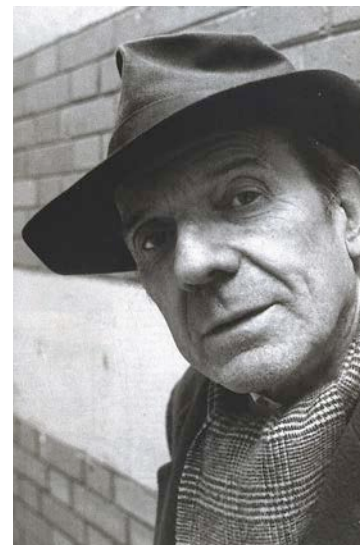
Courtesy of Arch Daily

“Break Point”

Darrell Godliman, from Riach Architects, wins ‘Architecture and People’ category for the Architect’s Eye 2013 Competition. Godliman describes his photo submission as “a social commentary about the pressures of modern life, the wistful look of the central subject maybe implying a wish to escape.” The efforts of this competition seek to encourage photography by architects, specifically in two categories: ‘Architecture and Place’ focusing on the

aesthetics of a building and how it shapes the location, and ‘Architecture and People’ focusing on the interaction of people in relation to architecture. The field of architecture has been at a crossroads between reality and representation. Photo’s similar to Godliman’s uniquely express the true friction between Architecture and People, in conjunction to the potential dialogue held between the two.

Are Institutional Spaces *At Risk?*



Courtesy of Babelio Images

“Control is not discipline. You do not confine people with a highway. But by making highways, you multiply the means of control... people can travel infinitely and “freely” without being confined with being perfectly controlled.”

- Gilles Deleuze

Our institutional spaces are beyond “at risk” of being consumed by numerical, code-defined corporate powers, trying to singularize masses, rather than the individuals

within them. “Discipline” will come to take over, disregarding any and all programmatic established environments. Our societal norms in which we learn, work, heal, and reform are being taken over by highly calibrated corporate mindsets. This phenomena is developing a conformed and homogenized lifestyle, one as extreme as glorifying cultural celebrations. “Marketing has become the center of the “soul” of the corporation. We are taught that corporations have a

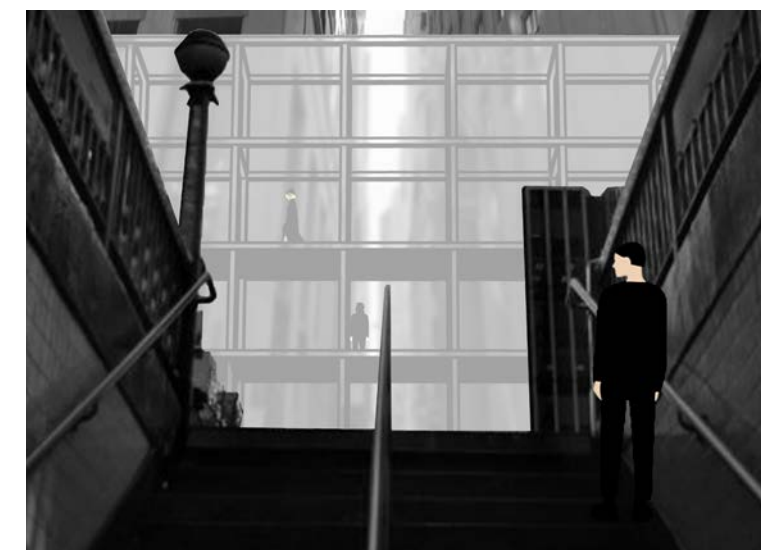
soul, which is the most terrifying news in the world.” For the sake of corporate consumerism our individuality has been robbed in order to feed the greedy pigs of Wall Street. We are at the strings of the Corporate Puppeteer. Delusive societies of control cautions us that the freedoms promised by such mobilities are perhaps much less freeing than we initially think or are led to believe.



Hipsters and Cartoons

Young architects have been catching wind of the rumored fortification of Wall Street. As speculation of crimes against the social and humanitarian aspects practiced on Wall Street, many young designers have been submitting counter proposals, in hopes to raise awareness. Many of whom have been reimaging a sustainable approach, allowing a unified use of Wall Street, rather than

the proposed deletion and segregation of public space. Unfortunately these views are the minority when related to the conglomerates that form Wall Street. Masses are beginning to revolt the fortification proposal, yet the construction remains ongoing. Extreme social and urban ramifications are to be expected as Wall Street ultimately closes down.



Cartoon Montage of Wall Proposals

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