

ON THE **C**

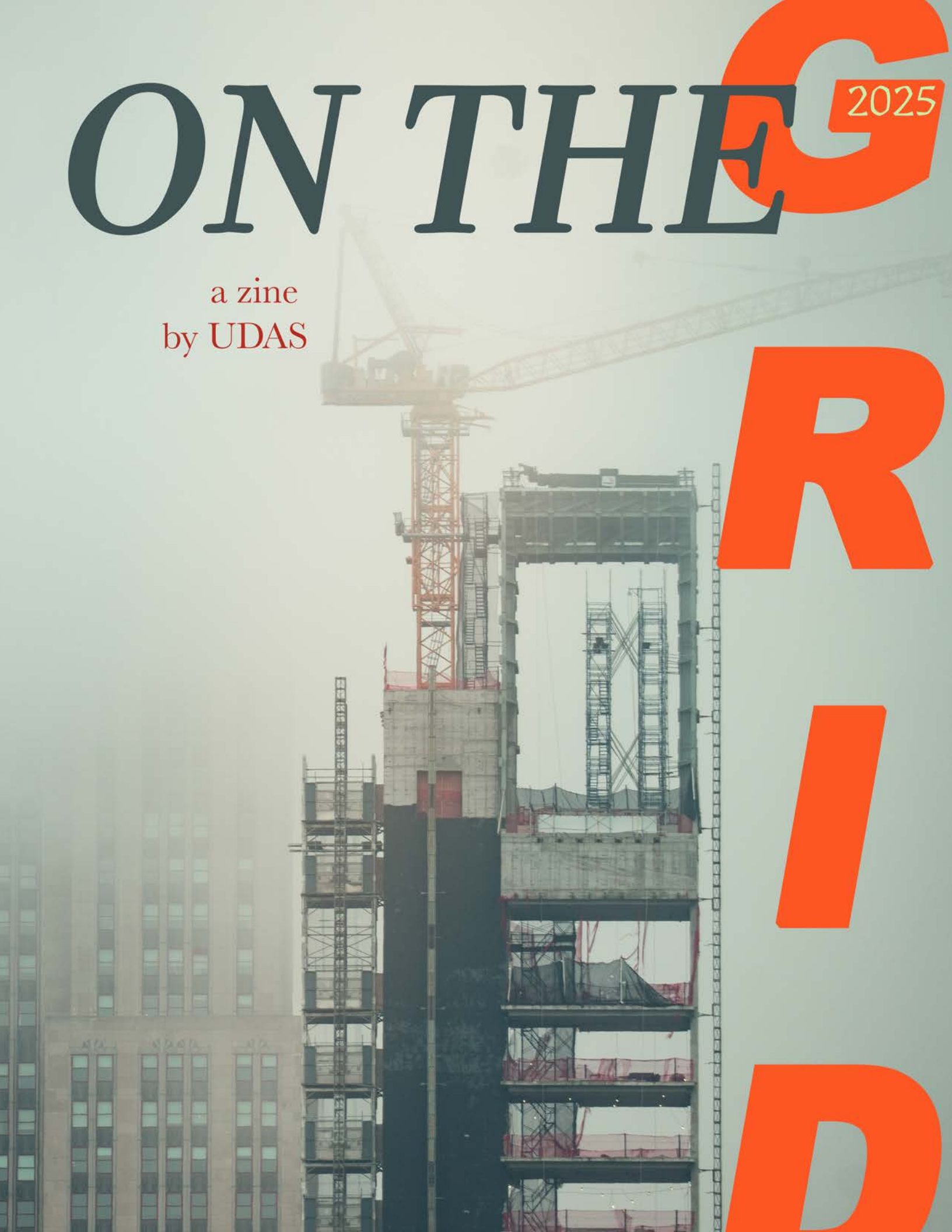
2025

a zine
by UDAS

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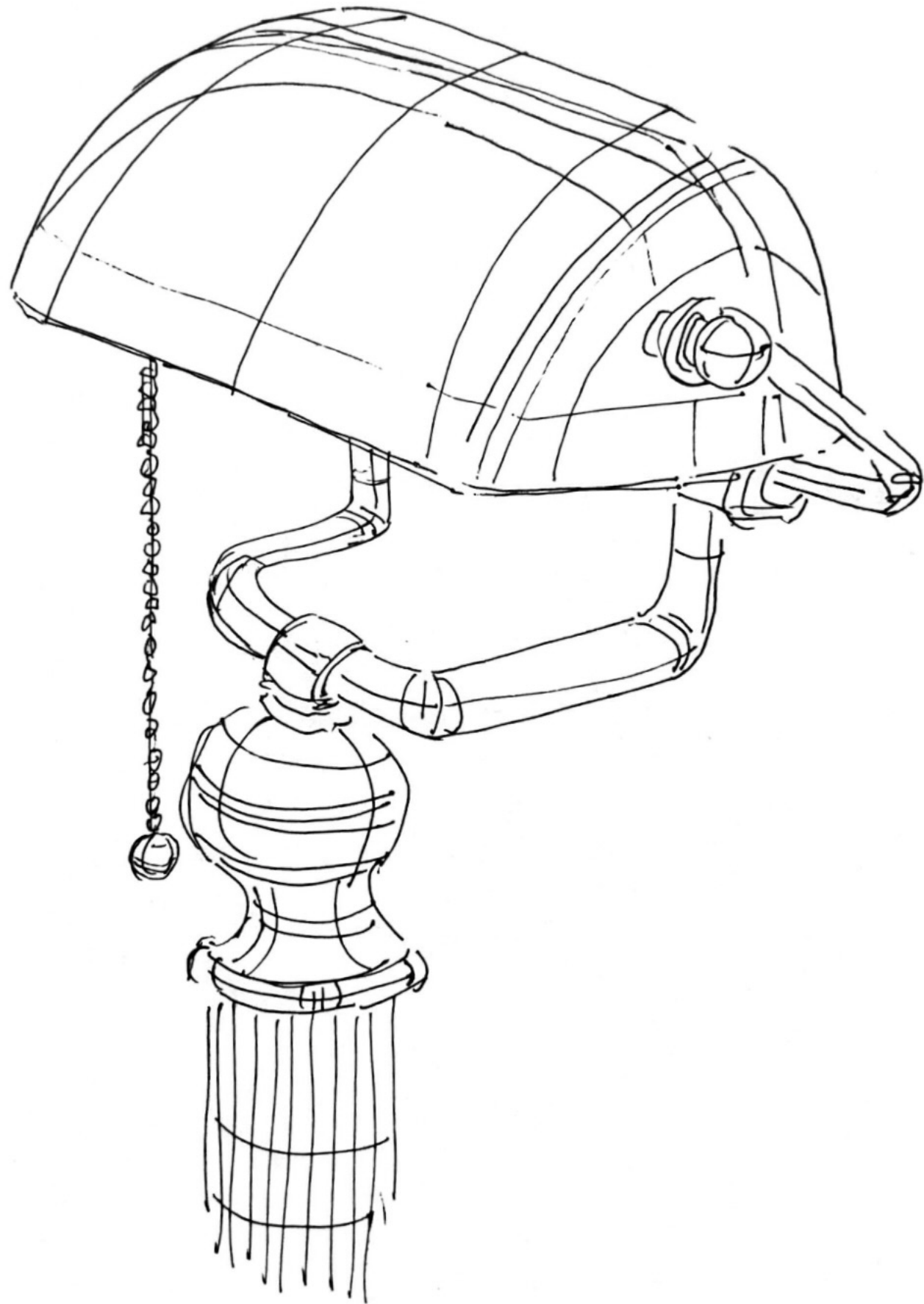


“A Society for those who
recognize Architecture
as Invention”

Dylan Turner

Cover by Nicholas Chan





EDITOR'S NOTE

We proudly introduce the 2025 edition of *On the Grid*, New York University's very first magazine within the Department of Urban Design and Architecture. Within New York University, several Urban Design and Architecture students find themselves magnetically drawn to Manhattan, affectionately known to us as the grid, where every block and avenue holds a colorful history of transformation, ambition, and cultural exchange.

This magazine seeks to showcase the best and brightest of New York University's Urban Design and Architecture students. Highlighted in this magazine are works that inch forward towards contributing to the future of architecture and urban planning.

Through design work, essays, and projects, *On the Grid* seeks to capture the rich tapestry of New York University's innovative students. We invite you to trace the lines with us as we uncover the narratives behind innovation and curiosity.

Welcome to the grid.
Sincerely,

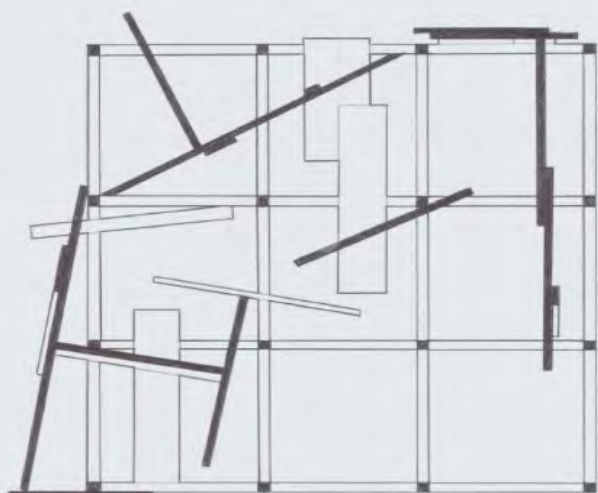
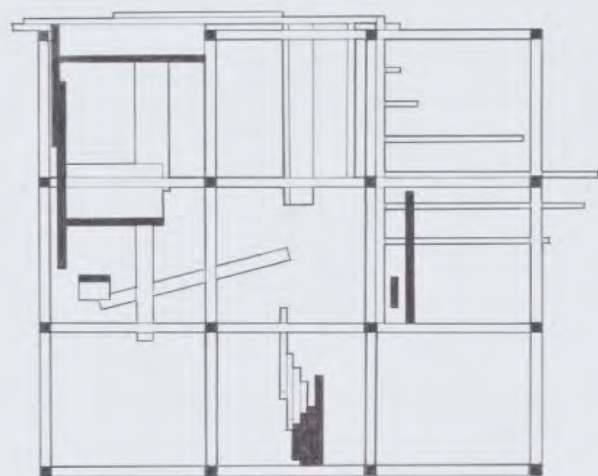
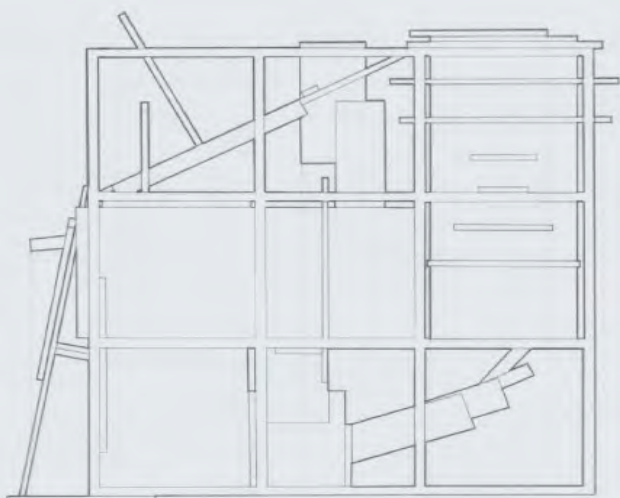
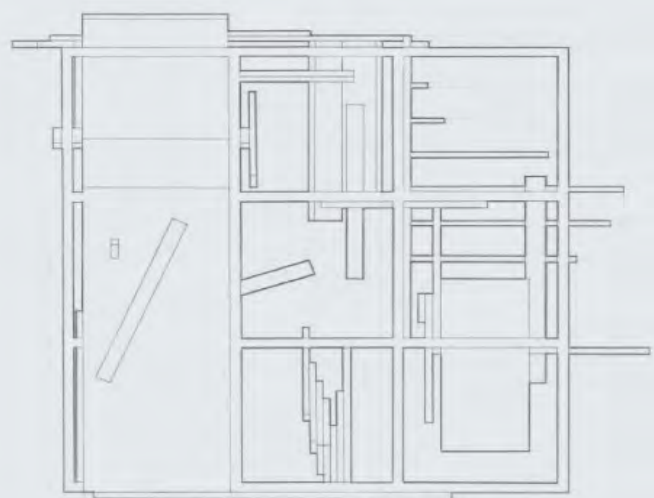
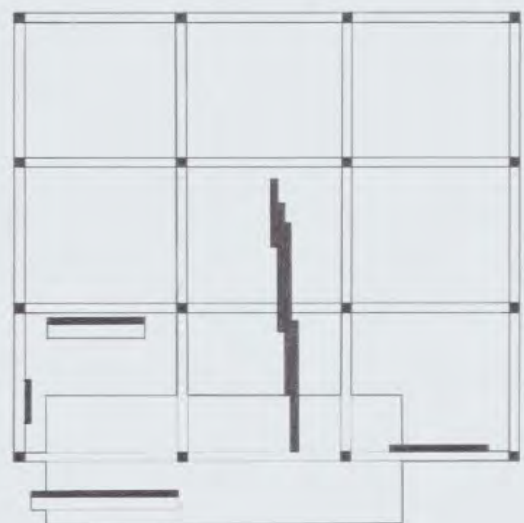
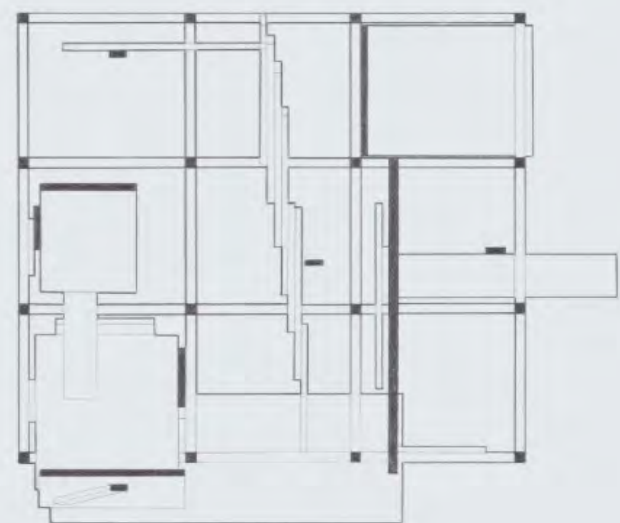
UDAS
Editor in
Chief

ISABELLE CAO

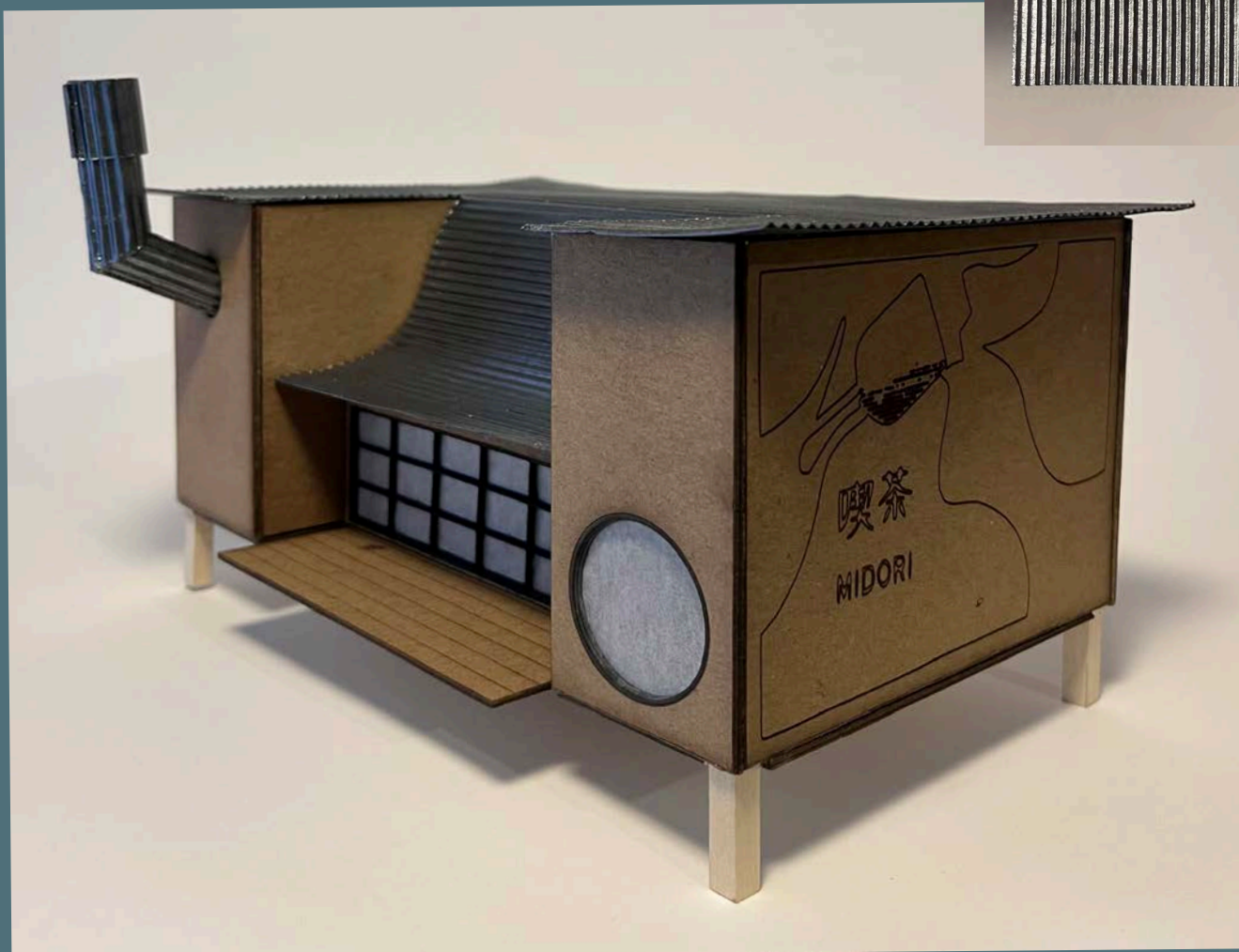
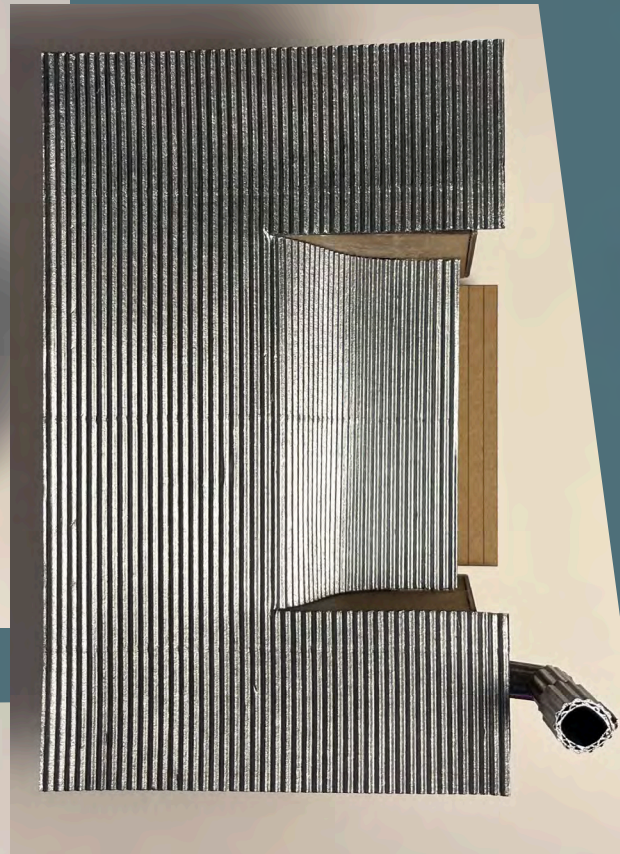
UDAS
DIRECTOR OF CAREER
DEVELOPMENT

MARINA ONGARO









Trans World Airlines Terminal: Modernity & Imagination

Tianna S. Gonzales

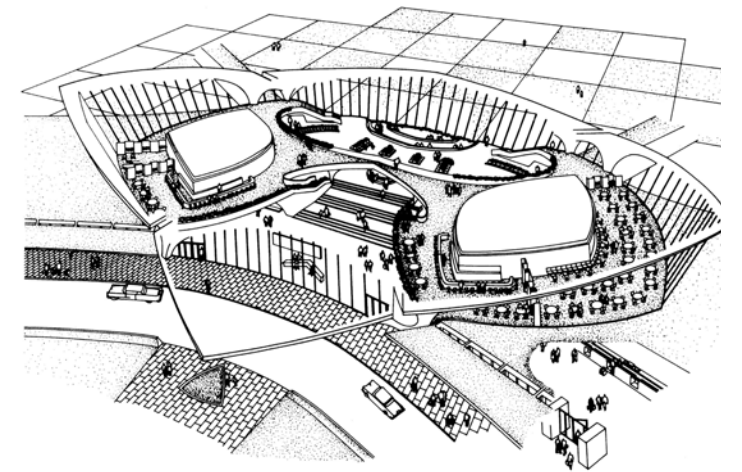
We live in an era where long-distance travel often implies a reliance on busy airport terminals and massive commercial aircrafts. However, mid-20th century concepts of flight were not nearly as ambitious. As the accessibility and popularity soared in the 1950's, the hunger for exploration and efficiency met untapped imaginations of modernity and human ingenuity resulting in Eero Saarinen's 1962 terminal. Eero Saarinen's Trans World Airlines Terminal at John F. Kennedy Airport, New York stands today as an unparalleled addition to United States airport architecture.

Its space-like bird shape, complete with symmetrical wings in flight and an overwhelming display of glass windows testifies to the excitement behind endeavors following dominantly historicist eras. Every design choice in the terminal anticipates and reimagines the future—from the overwhelming use of stark white to the elimination of right angles throughout the building.

At its height, this multi-use structure attracted both travelers and spectators alike, fueling amusement-park-like excitement in experiencing its many spaces for socialization and exploration. The terminal nonetheless closed in 2001 due to the functional failures related to these same innovations, eventually reopening as a hotel in 2019. As the last standing original terminal in JFK, the structure was preserved through the contention of architects and enthusiasts alike, pressing against the ever-expanding transportation center.

Both the previous airline terminal and current hotel embrace modernity and maintain a semi-timeless elegance, even today. However, the push for new construction materials, shapes, and heights allowed the early structure's unique form to counterbalance its original function. TWA terminal's inability to adapt in a time of rapid expansion enabled its unintended inelegance, leaving behind a soulless shell. The present day hotel introduces functionality to the features which formerly generated excitement, committing to the vision to construct an organism in motion.

The original TWA terminal bears the image of a bird in flight with its wings spread out, soaring above a 1960's tarmac. Red accents bounce off of a



white interior, radiating from chairs, carpets, and amenities-perpetually reinforcing its iconic bold brand theme. A 2018 interior commentary on the TWA hotel by Jane Margolies associates this colorful excitement with the “romance of the jet age”. Eero Saarinen's romance with modernism motivated him to build countless other historical landmarks before his untimely death in 1961 including Dulles Airport in Washington, D.C. and the St. Louis Gateway Arch.

Saarinen's simplistic playfulness with modernism enabled a magnetic gravitation of the public eye, motivating its preservation despite becoming obsolete in an age of progress. Eric Willis' 2019 historical analysis of the former airport and current hotel nods to the confidence Saarinen embedded in the terminal, documenting his final statements before his death, comparing the structure to the “Baths of Caracalla”. Saarinen appeals to international modernism, stretching the terminal's elegant glass window panes past the original boldness of German-American architect Mies van der Rohe. Soft curves are intertwined with jutting points and are lifted off the ground at peculiar angles. Additionally, no crevice of the exterior is perfectly flat or perpendicular, expressing a rebellion against orthogonality. These curves and angles are enabled by the use of thin shell concrete poured over a carefully framed steel mesh.

The interior atmosphere of the TWA terminal is aided by this eccentricity. Flares of red hint both at the reserved experimental nature of modernism while shouting with a humane excitement

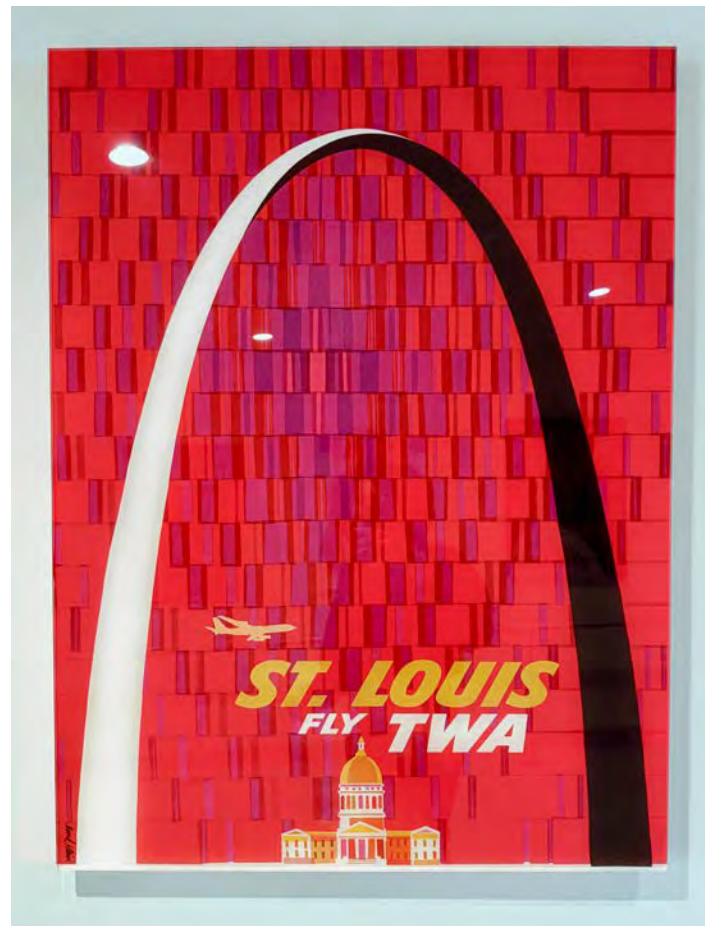


at the present signs of ingenuity, novelty and progress. A grand set of steps rise from the hidden ground level check-in area. The event of the terminal is not the logistics of baggage claims and ticket purchases, but instead the theme park-like conglomeration of shops, and diners located around the upper levels of the atrium.

Rather than designing an unending labyrinth of corridors and antisocial waiting nooks, continuous curves built within the interior provide spaces for relaxation. Visitors could choose to indulge in various comforts, including grabbing a bite to eat while reclining in the iconic bright red, soulful lounge chairs. They held an unobstructed view of the tarmac and encouraged unity and the formation of community. Paths within the space curve, vanish and reappear around mysterious corners—encouraging mobility and exploration. Dining areas were elevated to add charm and continuity while providing balance for the theatrically large windows.

Eero Saarinen envisioned an organism in flight, powered by the life and energy of eager travelers. Every detail of the structure would work together to immerse travelers into the world of aviation, especially the two iconic boarding tunnels. The tunnel tubes ascend out from beneath the wings as long arms, forming a dramatic and memorable procession up to the aircraft with the continuing red carpet and concealed mood lighting. No space open to the public could resemble the historicist reproduction of tradition as created from Saarinen's terminal tunnels. The novelty of these architectural choices applied a human appeal to the aviation masterpiece, attracting leisurely behavior and rejecting the typical “chamber of chaos” critics often expected of airport terminals.

Unfortunately, the unique and specific form of the terminal quickly undermined its functionality. Saarinen's focus was on establishing a stunning object of movement rather than a facility that could breathe and react to the changes of a growing aviation industry. As the public adjusted to the daring nature of cross-continental and international air travel, airline competition increased, propelling upgrades in aircraft size and quality. The introduction of the Boeing 747 and other wide bodied aircraft



extended beyond the TWA terminal's margin for adaptation. External innovation could not be accommodated in such a specifically designed space which had merely anticipated the launch of low capacity propeller planes. As the years proceeded, the terminal's atmosphere shifted from welcoming the excitement of new, adventurous passengers to lacking reasonable space to adequately entertain the influx of travelers.

In an extensive documentation on the use of art to facilitate this reflection, Researcher Nina Murayama categorizes Saarinen's terminal as an object awkwardly distant from the public and a figment of the past. Murayama breaks down the use of art within airports as a constant reflection of the heart of the public. The historical art in JFK airport often fights to encapsulate the minds and motivations behind people in motion. According to Murayama, the terminal's “awkwardness” results from an inability to react to true public needs. Its commitment to modernism, without the evolving nature of human motion in mind rendered this structure effectively soulless.

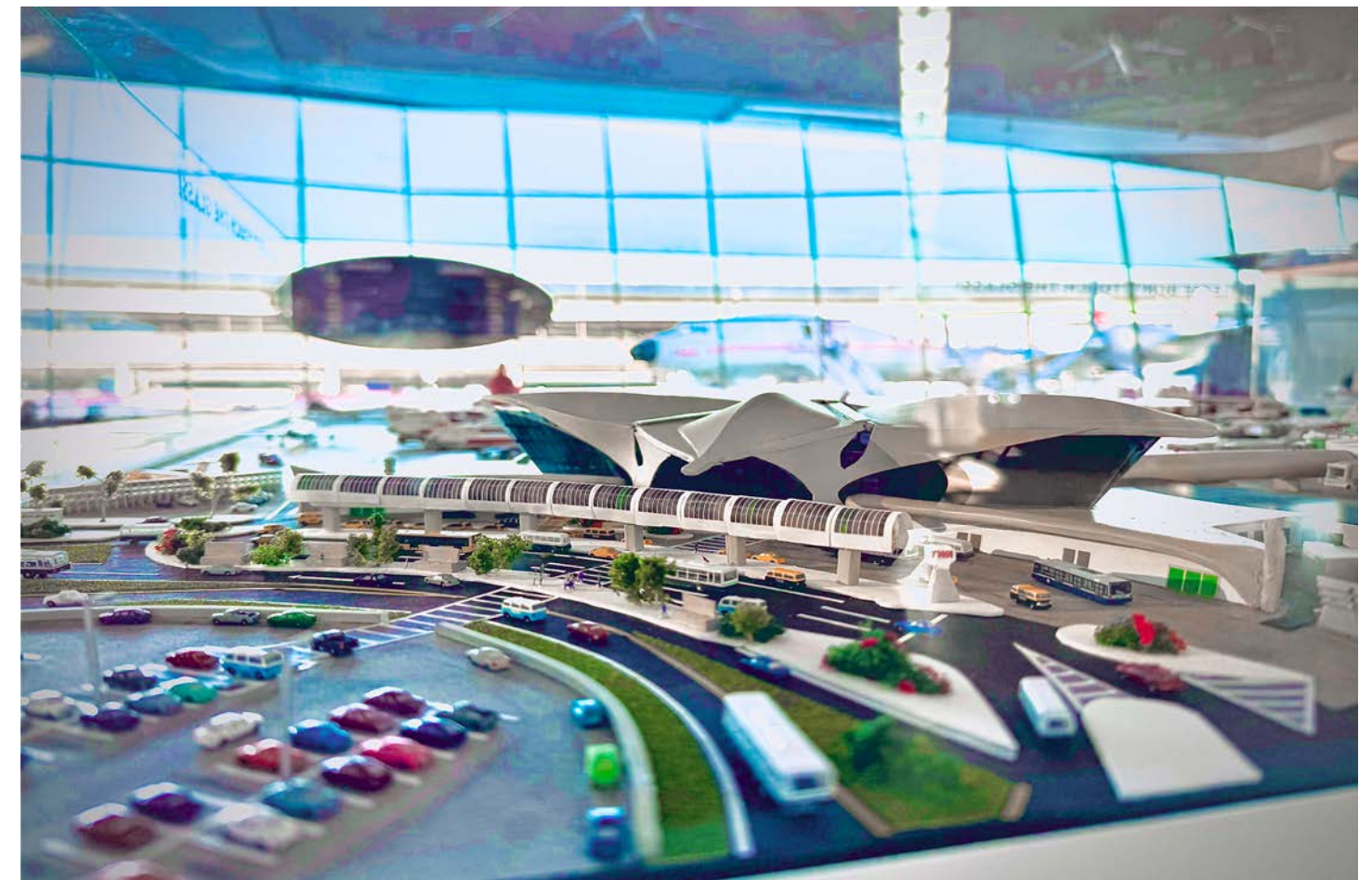
Late 1960's photos document overcrowded guests packing into spaces of relaxation and sitting in the pathways intended for mobility, such as the ascending tubes. Saarinen's terminal, though daringly futuristic and well-suited to the modernist image, was simply unable to anticipate the ongoing expansions following rapid human invention. Finally becoming obsolete in 2001, this modernist image was reduced to an impractical “jewel in a display case” rather than a soaring symbol of new found mid-century architectural freedom.

As a result of the unending fights from airport developers and preservationists, the terminal has since been revived into a functional state. In 2019 MCR Developers solidified its new purpose as a fully operational hotel. The historically landmarked original design endured minor fixes, bringing the building up to code. This included repairing the cement ceiling, removing the baggage claim and other impracticalities, and updating the lipstick red seats in the sunken lounge. All notable visual aspects of the hotel have successfully been preserved, or enhanced. New gathering and dining facilities

were also added to the interior of the terminal.

The 1960's charm of the building works its way into the newly constructed towers adjacent to each of the terminal wings, combining classy wood furnishings with exciting red and gold accents. Throughout both the old and new structure, guests can tour a museum-like display of former TWA items. Still, what separates the hotel from the status of a glorified museum or an occupied shell of what was once mid-flight is MCR's vision of a functional development? While Saarinen designed his terminal as a standalone building without room to expand to accommodate growing passenger traffic and operational needs, modern architectural designers perceive the necessity of expansion before high demand arrives.

With these modifications in mind, the hotel serves as a space with flourishing room to grow and profit as a commercial center, largely due to the creation of additional modernist spaces. Complementing the overall fluidity of the main terminal, lacking dominating right angles or clear parallel lines. The black glass towers serve as further social



and residential quarters for the hotel, compacting over 500 rooms within a sleek incognito design.

The towers' completion with a pool, restaurant, and observation deck reflect Saarinen's intentions of fully integrating leisurely activity into the affairs of the greater airport. The building also boasts its multi-use nature to attract the public both as a historical art piece. As an unintended conclusion to the story of the TWA terminal as a bustling airport, one standard propeller plane-turned-restaurant is stationed alone on the preserved tarmac as a showpiece. With the terminal's adaptive reuse, the major facets of the spaceship-esque flying jewel are still used for the purposes which Saarinen had designed them for, but perhaps at the cost of the building's soul.

MCR's willingness to hide its new towers along a silent non-visually jarring curve enables a landscape that highlights the terminal's continued relevance as a historical landmark. Still, these towers reflect an aspect of logic that seemed unnatural to the heart of Saarinen's design. In a building created to represent the fantasies of modernity resting on the precipice of future invention, Saarinen found function satisfactory irrespective of the structure's capacity to expand. MCR follows the thought that expansion sits at the core of human ingenuity, embracing simplicity over unapologetic organic creativity.

Significant portions of the structure, namely the boarding docks, were demolished in the face of new construction. In that manner the modernist terminal, though carrying the presence of an imaginative life-filled hub of transportation, behaves in a



non-human sense, stuck in the past rather than dialoguing with the present. The flow of traffic, both human and machine, becomes hindered by the deceptively futuristic walls of the functionless bird-like shell. As a result, the terminal morphed into a space of rest rather than an engine of movement.

The Port Authority has borne the responsibility of running multiple transportation hubs in the New York-New Jersey area since the early 1920s, leasing out terminals to private companies to be renovated and maintained. Eero Saarinen's vision to revolutionize the way the mid-20th century public utilized airport space prioritized comfort and sociability in a space of mobility.

The Port Authority worked around the landmark's continued presence in JFK through years of dysfunctionality in favor of the attractive and unique form. Still, this form held little contribution to public needs for more rapid, accessible transportation methods. Leisure, though healthy for the functionality of any airport, requires ample space to be effective. The TWA terminal closed itself off to further construction, later welcoming two entirely separate buildings to encircle its stagnant white wings.

Despite its grand and modernist appeal, the form of the TWA terminal detracts from its original function, forcing the major aspects of mobility in the building to become lifeless and obsolete. The terminal's adaptive reuse required the construction of additional edifices which prioritized function while nodding at the semi-timeless design choices of the past.

Future inquiry should be taken into the efficiency of comfort in airport design when combined with the necessity of travel. Adequate use of space is necessary to establish rooms of relaxation and entertainment to create a public space that serves the public, a quality defined by Murayama. The failure of TWA airport occurred in contrast to the prosperity of numerous airports around the U.S. highlighting a deficiency in adequate airport planning.

As U.S. airports are seeing signs of age, developers continue to face these questions of adaptation and the effective incorporation of leisure and commercial space. Functionality should be priori-

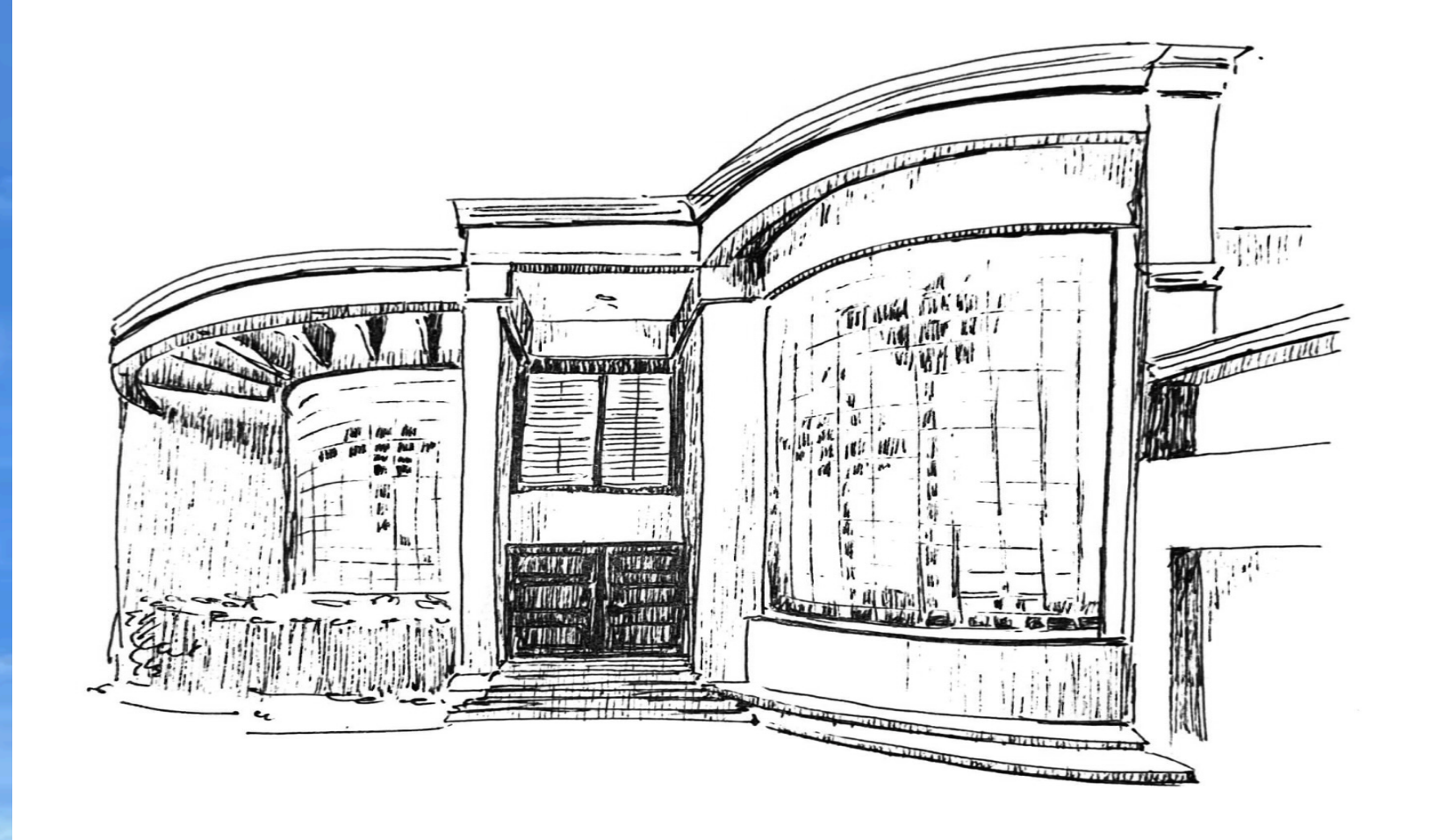
tized for stability and sustainability in the years to come. Still, Saarinen's bold and unapologetic commitment to form as a means of stimulating human imagination and the desire to explore will establish a sense of place and purpose for travelers even before they reach the tarmac.

This includes the use of organic and fluid structures with adequate places to socialize and recharge for the journey ahead. Saarinen's attention to integration outside motion with interior stagnation will prevent travelers from being boxed in. In

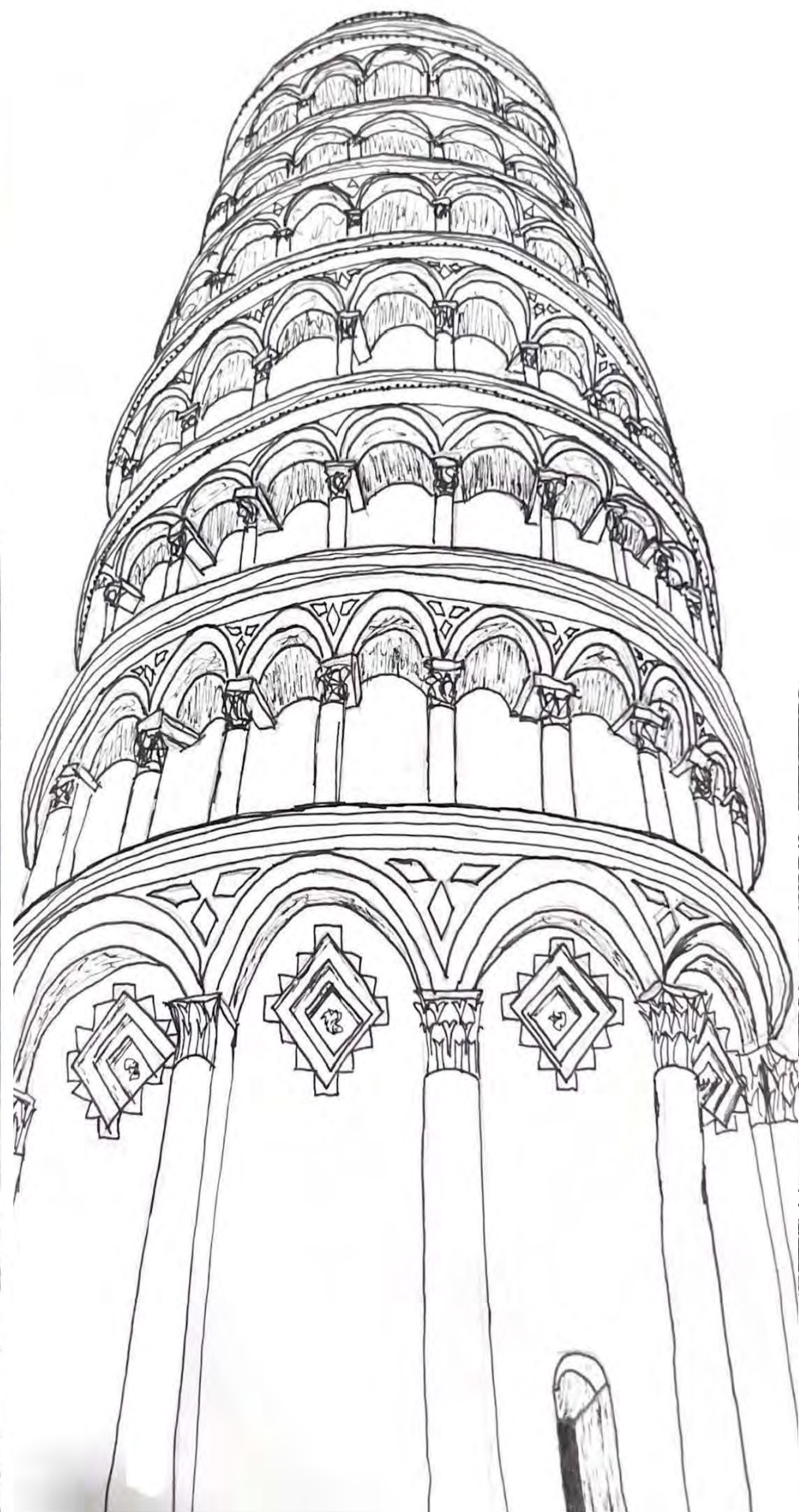
addition, accent colors, themes, and fixtures should hold a special relevance to the people which rely on the space most. By following Saarinen's standards set with the original TWA terminal, the staccato heartbeat of standard aviation practices can seamlessly blend into the timeless excitement for exploration. Despite the era in which it was constructed, Trans World Airlines terminal continues to set the bar for the effective means to express motion through form for today's U.S. airports.







SEEING
LONDON'S
ARCHITECTURE





THE WINDOWS

Windows fascinate me; they are a way to let only colors and light pour in, a selfish filter we use to curate our world. They allow us to admire the flowers and greenery outside, connecting us with the beauty we desire while shielding us from what we reject—the chill of the wind, the insects, the imperfections. A window is a result of human choice, a structure that lets us believe we have the power to choose between “nature” and the “artificial.” I capture the colors of the window, preserving these carefully selected fragments of beauty, chosen and framed as we wish to see them. leaving it all in a hazy, half-remembered dream.

Lindsay Liang



Murmurs of Horonai

A study by Loke Zhang-Fiskesjo.

Murmurs of Horonai is an investigation into the Horonai Coal Mine, one of Hokkaido's first coal mines. Horonai's architectural layout was pivotal in proliferating mines across the new colonial landscape. The mines were a vehicle for forced assimilation of the Ainu people, and the post-war resettlement of thousands of displaced Japanese & Koreans. Through working in traditions of documentary, archives and, ruinology – the work is a forensic architectural investigation of the afterlives of Hokkaido's ruined spaces, and confronts their pivotal role in shaping Hokkaido, and Japan, in the 21st century.







Lotus Dream

Agua NYU BUENOS AIRES

Age transcends water. Its arms are wide like a grandmother who hasn't seen you since last week.

These eager arms share the rhythm of the tide: in, out, in, out. Holding you so tight and barely wanting to let go.

The bouncer (tide) is on a permanent sabbatical. The bebé with the diaper and a binky barely holding onto its mouth? You can come in. The elderly man with the potbelly and skin that resembles a "Pancho"—Por favor.

You know that the first thing I sought out was a pool. Its arms are more minor and lay dormant on its side. When I hug it, it awakes the sophisticated lady reading her copy of Zama by Antonio Di Benedetto. The heat invokes an impulse that cannot be tamed. When I leaped into its arms, I was met with a sensation similar to a cool sip of water on a humid day. It engulfed me and didn't attempt to throw me out. The plants here take after animals.

The older lady sits between a snake and a spider(plant).

The Ceibo tree maintains its dominance by occupying the northeast corner of the pool.

Chlorine (the usual suspect) was nowhere to be found.

My feet scrape the popcorn bottom. I hold my breath as I compete against my record (4) of how many lengths of the pool I can swim without breaking. The first gasp of air is always satisfying when you accomplish a feat like this, like turning in an assignment at 11:59 and getting an A.

My age showed better than crow's feet when I left the pool like Tom looking for her Jerry (my laptop).

My assignment was overdue, and there was blood on my hands.

Samantha Burge







Walking the Waterfront

AN EXPLORATION OF FLOOD INFRASTRUCTURES IN NEW YORK CITY

Jan Matis Jurgensen

“Walking the waterfront - an exploration of flood infrastructures in New York City” is a photographic exploration of New York City’s waterfront.

In response to the transformations observed along the way, the project investigates the impact that different types of flood infrastructures have on the landscape. Thus, it questions the complementarities and frictions arising from the co-existence of varied strategies for flood-risk reduction.

Although representing only a fragment of the vast waterfront, the work aims to display the principal types of flood infrastructure deployed in New York City. The resulting photographic tapestry is based on intensive research and a typology of flood-mitigation systems, ranging from floodwalls and elevated parks to oyster reefs and restored wetlands.

The linear sequencing of the images conveys the experience of walking along the waterfront. It invites the viewer to explore the continuities and divides, uses and voids, materialities and ideas that shape this unique geography.







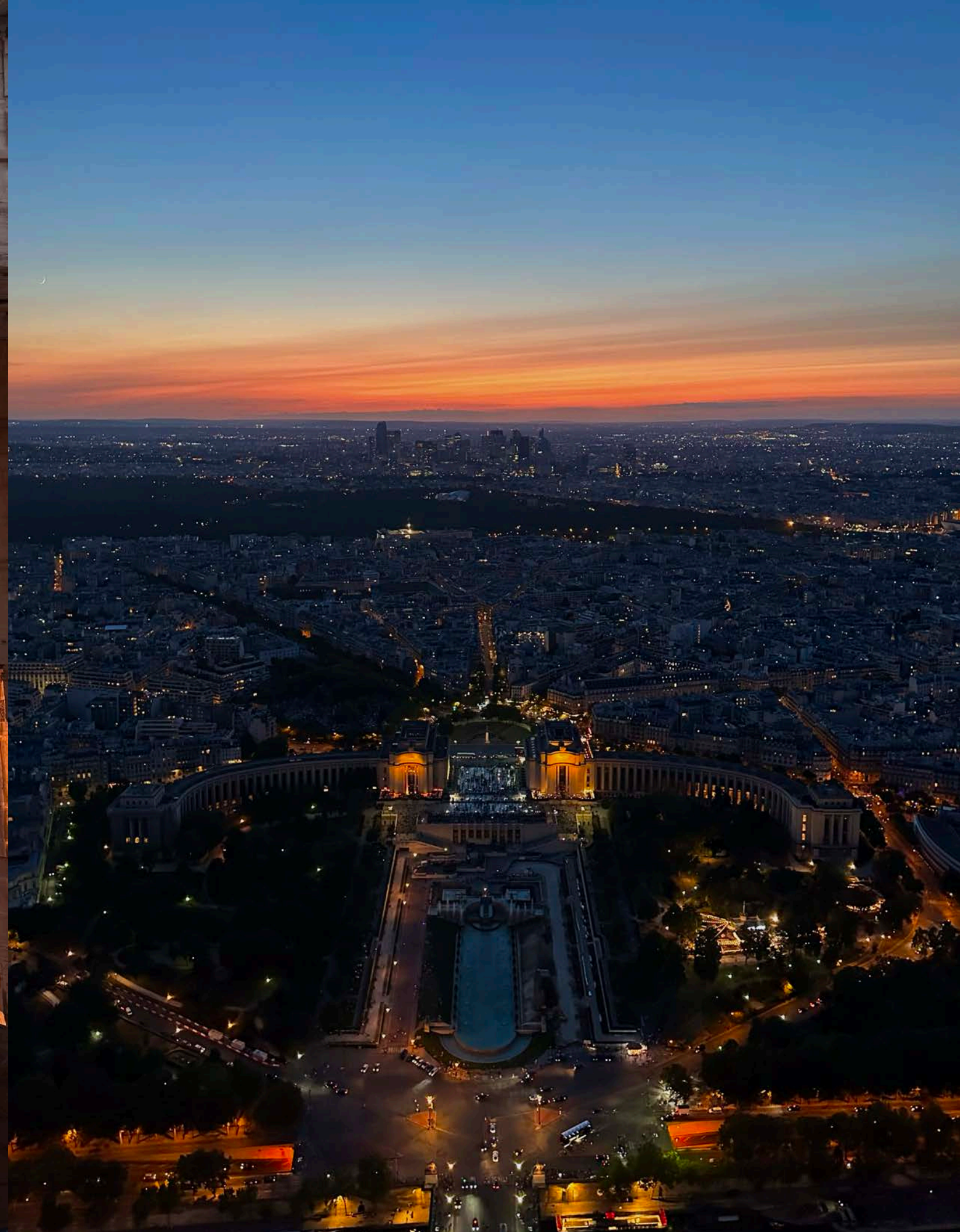




NEW YORK WATER TAXI

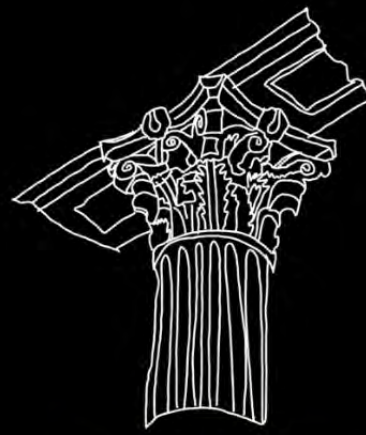
SAM HOLMES





HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE



OF



&

SKETCHES



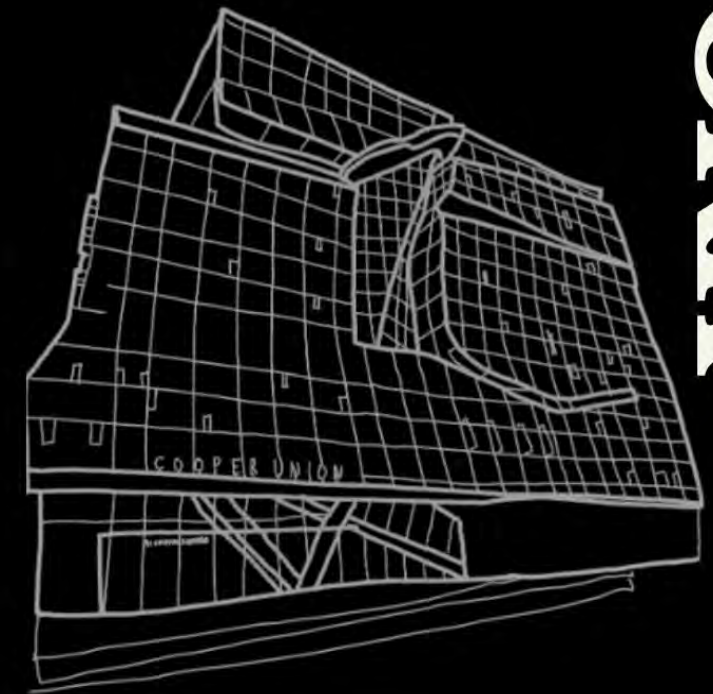
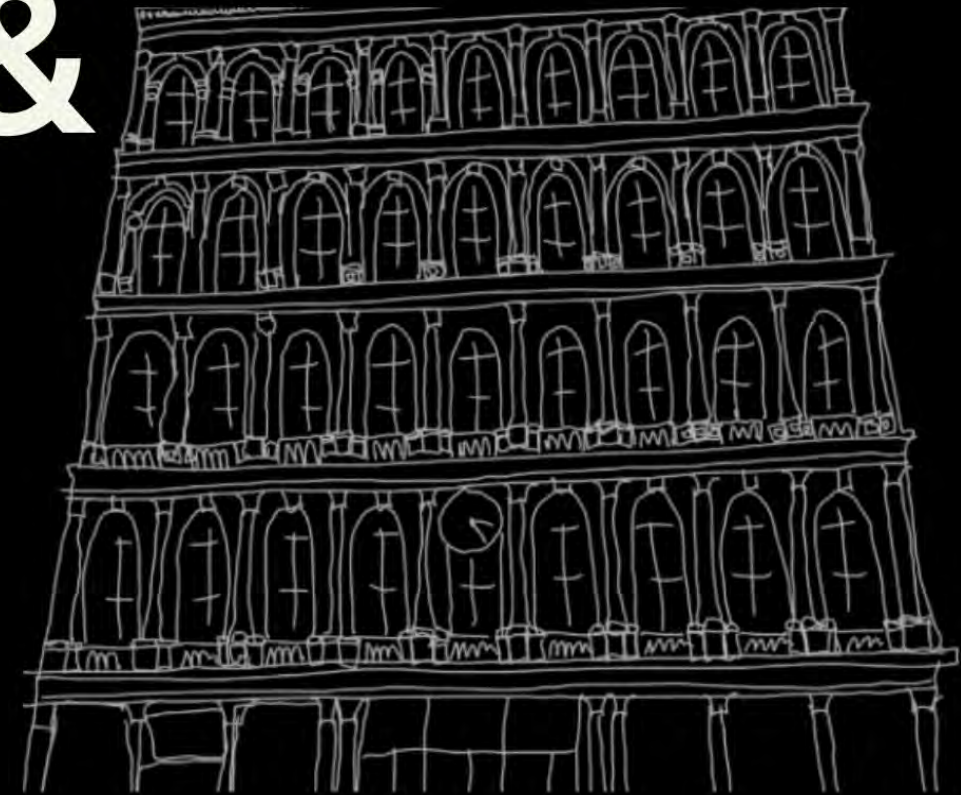
60 Center Street: New York Supreme Court (Guy Lowell, 1927)
facade + detail

Grace Church (Broadway & 10th Street), James Renwick, 1843-1846
facade + perspective

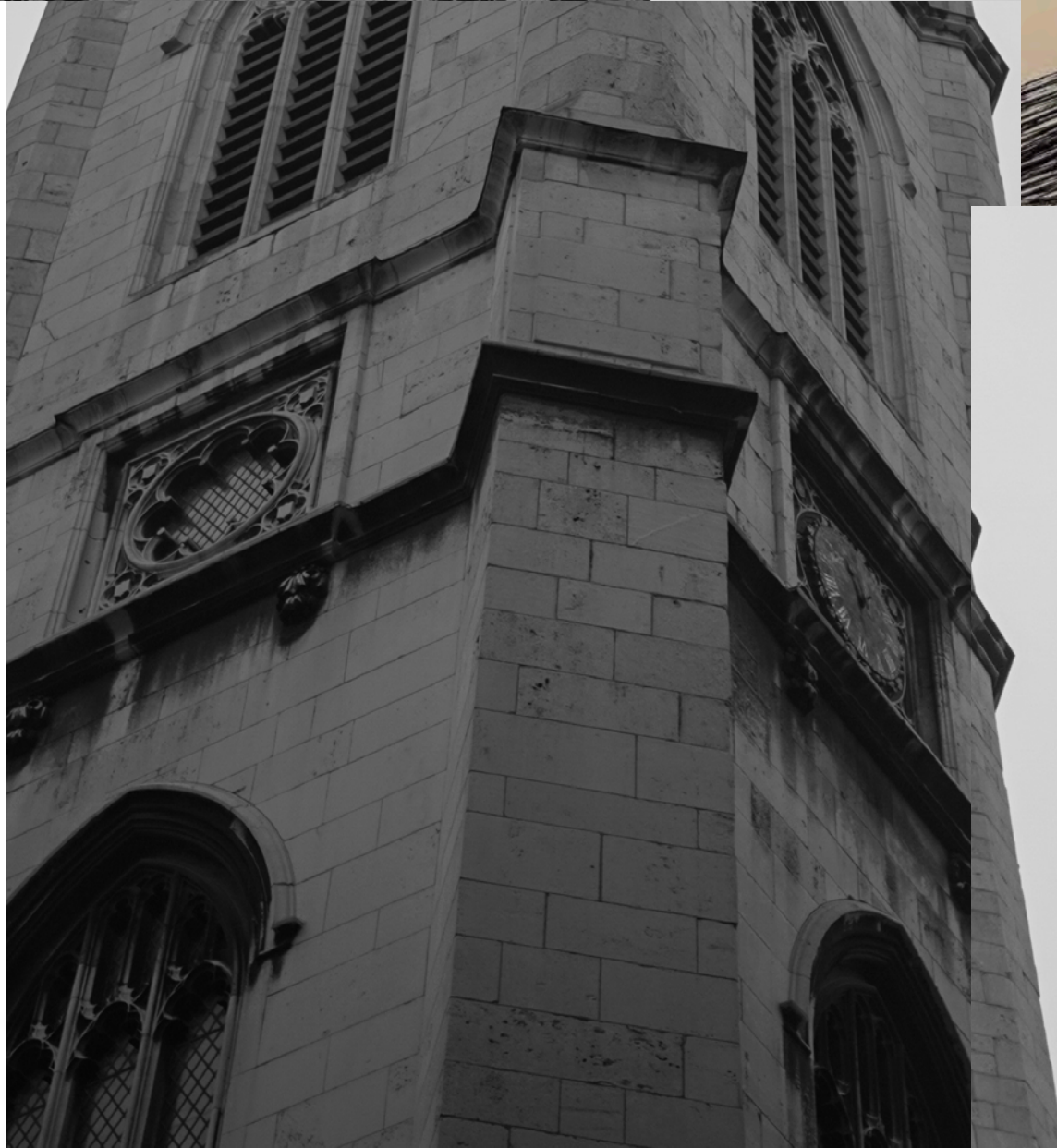
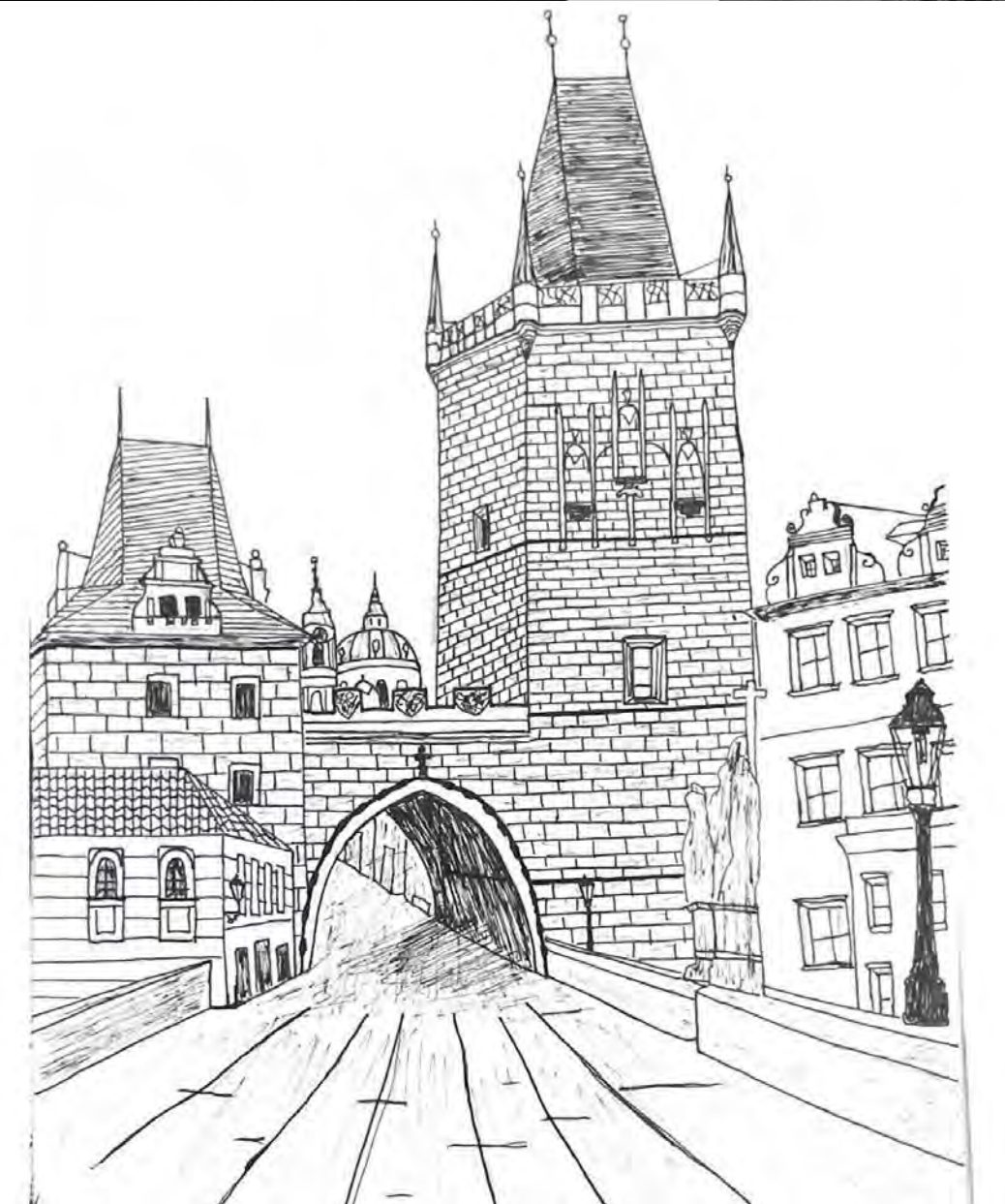
Racquet & Tennis Club, 370 Park Avenue, McKim, Mead, and White, 1918
facade

E. V. Haughwout Building, John P. Gaynor, 1856 (488 - 492 Broadway)
facade

Cooper Union Building, 41 Cooper Square, Thom Mayne/Morphosis, 2009
structure



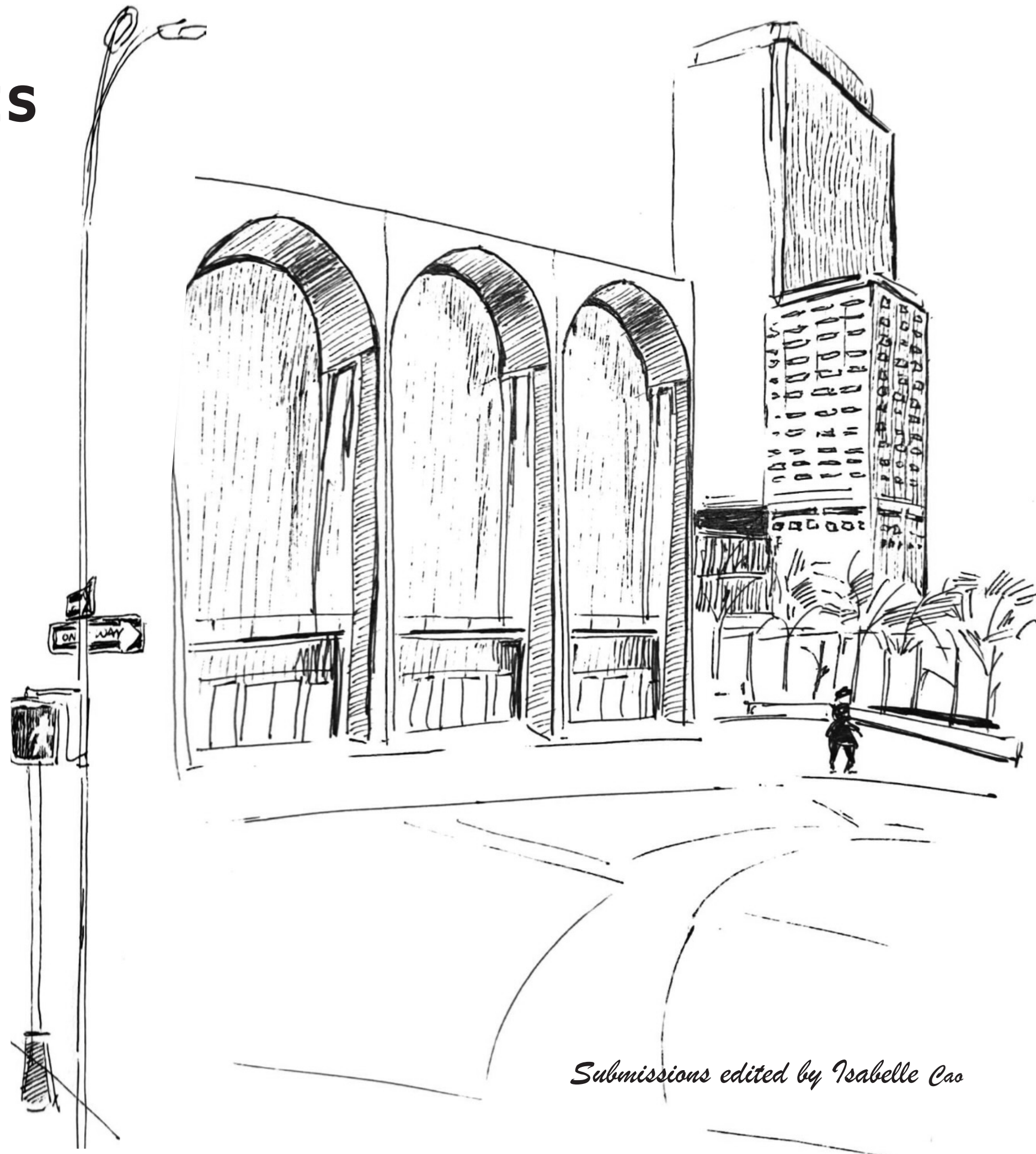
FIELD WORK





Contributing Artists

Derek Li
Ellery Ibo
Franziska Rauch
Gaia Rillosi
Isabelle Cao
Jan Matis Jurgensen
Jasmine Greenblatt
Julia Sy
Lily Burris
Lingsay Liang
Loke Zhang-Fiskesjo
Nicholas Chan
Samantha Burge
Samantha Ngai
Sophia Musahl
Tianna S. Gonzales
Ujji Bathla
Xander Singh



Submissions edited by Isabelle Cao

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY'S

Urban Design and Architectural Society

NYU UDAS is an all inclusive society catered towards enhancing the bright careers of our future architects, urban planners, engineers, and environmentalists. Encompassing a variety of students from the College of Arts and Sciences, Gallatin, Tandon, and Steinhardt, NYU UDAS provides a collective platform for students to seek a community passionate about design, cities, and the built environment. UDAS hosts a variety of events including but not limited to: lectures, sketching sessions, walking tours, professional workshops, and social events. In the past, UDAS has explored both the best New York City has to offer as well as introduced members to some of its hidden gems. Visit nyuudas.com or Instagram [@nyu.udas](https://www.instagram.com/nyu.udas) for more information.

ON THE GRID 2025

ON THE GRID 2025 is the inaugural zine by UDAS, spearheaded by Founding Editor in Chief, Isabelle Cao. With a mission to showcase NYU's most compelling works in architecture and urban planning, ON THE GRID serves as a platform for refined innovation, creativity, and the highest level of student excellence. Special thanks to the 2024-2025 UDAS Executive Board for their support and contributions, including Director of Career Development Marina Ongaro. Stay tuned for [ON THE GRID 2026](#).



