PORTFOLIO FOR THE BRANNER TRAVELLING FELLOWSHIP 2013
APPLICATION  | UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY

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Towards a Utopia of the Real*

This project was a collaboration with fellow CED Master of Architecture students Caitlin Alev and Karen Gates for a city for 100,000 inhabitants in Seoul, South Korea responding to the prompt “Everyone Ages.” The project was presented at the Vertical Cities Asia competition at the National University of Singapore in July 2012.

Each member of the group worked on every aspect of the project with an area of special interest during the early development of the design. My area was the conceptual development of the proposal and orthographic projections.

The history of Seoul has many layers that constitute a rich and diverse urban ecosystem. The extensive damages that WWII wrought on the city’s ancient urban fabric called for a reinvention – almost from scratch – of what the city of the latter half of the twentieth century would look like. Today, the distinct mélange of modern mega-structures, post-modern tower-UFOs and sexy-sustainable post-office buildings forms an image a city in constant flux. The economic boom of the end of twentieth, beginning of twenty-first century meant that old buildings (with a life of thirty to forty years) are razed to make place for new developments, always better, always taller.

Our project questions that apparent necessity for urban renewal through demolition and proposes an infrastructure that will allow the city to grow incrementally. As the citizens grow older, so does the city with them. There is no preconceived image of the city in one hundred years. It will be denser, for sure, with more layers - horizontal and vertical - it will have wrinkles that will betray its age and it will receive aesthetic treatments. It will adapt and learn to control its breathing. It will conserve energy as it grows older. It will sometimes put make-up on and occasionally wear its scars proudly as testaments to its resiliency: its cycles as a system made up of the peoples’ work and dreams.

The MEMORY embedded in the morphology and materials of the new city establishes a sense of historical continuity. The city ages alongside its population, but there is always the memory of the previous generation built into the system: strong foundations allow for sustainable change to occur.
**Time is the MASTER**

Everyone ages: as urban populations become older, cities need to develop strategies to adjust to the needs of the citizens. The city itself ages as infrastructure becomes inundated and there is a growing need for housing and other amenities to fulfill the needs of the ever-increasing urban population. There is an urgent need for the management of waste. This is an exciting moment in history. Modernist attempts to re-invent urban life, pushed aside for a few decades as unyielding, too prescriptive for our contemporary taste are coming back with vengeance in the form of urban masterplans under the guidance of the invisible hand of sustainability. Inevitably, time will determine the fate all these projects: how are they going to age? Nonetheless, what excites the urban dweller and the visitor in Seoul is the face of this city of juxtapositions, of shifts in scale from the little markets and news-stands to the nondescript hundred-meter-tall hotel façade, the old temples and the high-tech train stations. There is excitement and a sense of time – duration – embedded in this fabric.

But we have a **PLAN**

We activate this diverse urban fabric through focused interventions in Yongsan district, between Seoul’s historic center and the high-end neighborhood of Gangnam, on the north bank of the Han river. Yongsan has a rich history as first an agricultural land on the banks of the river, then site for the encampment of various occupation forces in Seoul, mass housing projects, a vibrant electronics market, low density housing and commerce and the city’s largest train station that serves as an inner city and regional transportation hub. Our analysis of the site looks at how these forces have shaped a diverse set of neighborhoods, each with specific characteristics.

We propose a system of infrastructure corridors that respond to and activate each one of these neighborhoods, and the site as whole, enabling vertical growth. The proposed structural and energy/waste management system allows for adaptive growth though time, following specific guidelines built within it to maintain access to light and air. These guidelines are based on a set of parameters different for each neighborhood, encouraging growth in areas that can easily absorb it and discouraging growth where it would detract from overall quality of life. The corridors respond to site specific conditions, serving as a catalyst to activate the existing city and encourage a reciprocal relationship between the old and the new. They supply the raw material to encourage growth by attaching structures to them, feeding off of them.

Looking at the **PLAN** imagining the **SECTION**.
NEIGHBORHOOD TYPOLOGIES

ONE STORY   TALL - LOW ADJACENCY   MID-RISE COMMERCIAL   HIGH-RISE

EXISTING PLAN

PROPOSED PLAN

EXISTING SECTION

PROPOSED SECTION

DESIGN STRATEGIES

ACCESS TO LIGHT AND AIR

BRIDGING OVER SITE DISCONTINUITIES

CONNECTING TO EXISTING TRANSPORTATION LINKS

RESPONDING TO THE CITY GRID

ACCESS TO LIGHT AND AIR

BRIDGING OVER SITE DISCONTINUITIES

CONNECTING TO EXISTING TRANSPORTATION LINKS

RESPONDING TO THE CITY GRID
WATERFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

LOW-RISE 2020

CIRCULATION 2030

WATERFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

WATERFRONT NEIGHBORHOOD 2050
**Mobility**

Centralized access: single transportation hub

Multiple access / transportation nodes: walking distance radii

**Community**

Isolated apartments in large towers: lacking sense of community among elderly

Identifying and encouraging inner city diverse neighborhoods

**Connectivity**

Large streets, uniform buildings: lack of connectivity

Path networks, diverse building scales: encouraging urban exploration

**Sustainable Infrastructure Closed Loop System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Energy</th>
<th>Waste</th>
<th>Transportation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Collect</td>
<td>Reuse</td>
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Diverged into different module scales: aggregation over time

Image source: http://www.globaltrashsolutions.com

MFO Park, Zurich, Switzerland (Burckhardt+Partner, 1998-2002)

Image source: http://www.urbanrail.net/eu/de/w/wuppertal.html
Adapting an existing building in Oyster Point, an office park close to San Francisco International Airport, for flexible office spaces. The project defines work space as the access to a power outlet, where one can plug their laptop. The traditional office layout of desks and cabinets, then, is transformed to an indoor sandy beach. The desks can be mechanically lowered from the ceiling according to the need. The perimeter of the building has operable French doors that can open the whole floor up four cross ventilation. A ramp - bicycle boulevard traverses the building and directs movement to and from an observation deck on the roof.
This project is an exercise in subtraction. A remnant of the mass of the existing building remains in the middle section of the new.

The first and fourth floors are stripped bare of their original envelope allowing the offices to breathe.

And a new boulevard is inserted taking the office worker for a walk—or bike ride—through the building to the roof, ready to take off. Observing the planes leaving for their distant journeys, she escapes the microcosm of her work-cubicle to connect to the natural elements and the social conditions that are the real creators of space.
Rooftop Slope
To Collect Manageable Portion Of Rainwater To Flow Through Building

Accessible Roof Access
Indoor/Outdoor Social Areas
Steep Roof Access
Indoor/Outdoor Social Areas
Mezzanine Access
Ramp Access To Second Floor

Existing Column Grid
Existing Shear Wall
Existing Shear Wall
New Shear Wall To Add Stiffness

Site Strategy: Boardwalks Over Existing Landscape (Parking Lots) That Will Gradually Turn Into Marshes With The Removal Of Asphalt - To Recycle As Boardwalk Walking Surface.

The Work Benches Also Touch The Sandy Floors and Hide Into The Ceiling. They Double As Lighting and Heating Fixtures.

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BATHROOMS

BATHROOM AND STAIR DETAIL

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Inviting / Averting the Gaze: The Domestic as Spectacle

Mixed use residential - performance/art venue
Downtown San Francisco, California.

Architecture 200B, Spring 2011 // Jill Stoner, Danelle Guthrie, Raveevam Choksombatchai

The notion of the street and the public square as performance venues, the choreography of volumes in space to create compositions, and the design of residences’ interiors as stage sets are strategies that architects and urban designers borrow from the language of theatre. A systematic exploration of that language in design can address the larger issues that performance theory identifies at the level of the domestic unit, the building block and the city as a whole.

One of the most fortunate moments in twentieth century history, for its symbolic and critical potential, is when ‘high art’ burst out of its bubble and took the streets, by means of performance art. The nineteen-sixties realized the implicit historical engagement of theatre with activism with a definitive focus on the nature of social and personal relationships, as identified, represented, and re-worked in experimental performance. The cultural laboratory of the artistic avant-garde, together with contemporary academic thought revealed the constructedness of social relationships and paved the way for a radical rethinking not only of the ways we make art, but also the ways we relate to societal systems, and each other. Performance discourse is no longer limited to theatre; it offers essential research tools both for the arts at large and the humanities.

This project proposes a housing complex that takes up the idea of performance to address issues of composition of building volumes within the dense city fabric, the flexible use of public space, and the conditions of seeing and being seen, the spectacle of domestic life as performance. A mixed-use residential tower becomes the “stage,” literally and figuratively inviting other residents, as well as the public to observe, reflect, and participate.
A. Studio Units Plan - Lower Level
Scale: 1/8" = 1'

B. Studio Units Plan - Upper Level
THE BATHTUB AS ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE FOR UNIT LAYOUT

A. Second Floor Plan
Scale: 1/16" = 1'

B. Third Floor Partial Plan

1BR
2BR
Studio Studio
San Francisco Kayak Center:
The garden entering the sea
(ODYSSEAS ELYTIS)

Architecture 200A, Fall 2010 // Mark Anderson, Ron Rael, Richard Fernau

A proposal for a kayak center on Embarcadero, adjacent to the ferry building in San Francisco, is conceived as an extension of the land into the water. The recreational spaces for the center and kayak fabrication shop are housed between a water-level platform that is partly submerged, depending on the tidal change, and the planted roof deck, which extends the waterfront plaza inside the water gesturing towards treasure island in the distance.
Hanging in There: Observation Deck study

Architecture 1250, Fall 2011 // Gary Black
This was a three week collaborative construction project with fellow CED Master of Architecture student Hien Vuong.

Our design for an observation pier on the Columbia river gorge finds its inspiration in the practice of “wake-kiting,” the newly popular extreme sport in the area.

A stair hanging from a light structure, two thin trusses extending one hundred feet into the void. At either end they are connected with additional members that create a large inhabitable platform with a void in the middle.

A stair with a viewing platform at the end of it hangs in the middle void. As the visitors walk down the wooden steps suspended by metal cables, they appear themselves suspended in mid-air, hanging from an overhead structure. This brings to mind the feeling of the kite-boarder flying away under her plastic wings.

We used ½” ring to connect members at each joint because it allows for a relatively easy to build true three dimensional pin connection between members coming from different planes.

To compensate for the deflection due to forces of the eyelets at the connections (lack of wiggle room), we ran another steel cable through the eyelets to tighten the connections. The added steel cable also improves the connection’s tensile strength.
Smaller Projects

Pop-up trellises for Wurster Hall.

Architecture 1(2)50, Fall 2011 // Gary Black

This is a one-week collaborative project with fellow CED Master of Architecture student Hien Vuong.

Casting Machine
(Homage to Rebecca Horn)

Architecture 200A, Fall 2010 // Ron Rael, Mark Anderson, Richard Fernau

The plaster tiles are traces of an even that included a household appliance with sharp edges and soft malleable material mounted on metallic extensions.

nothing.much.happening

Architecture 269, Spring 2012 // Mark Anderson

Collaborative project: class of 15 students, I was involved in the conceptual stage, drawings and construction.

The full-scale built project in Wurster Hall’s courtyard is the outcome of a semester long exploration of architectures of gathering and practices of public protest, in light of the Occupy Movement in public squares and university campuses across the United States in 2011-12.