



In wonder lies the desire
for learning.

—Aristotle, Rhetoric 1371a32

...the morphine had its customary effect – that of enduing all the external world with an intensity of interest. In the quivering of a leaf – in the hue of a blade of grass – in the shape of a trefoil – in the humming of a bee – in the gleaming of a dew-drop – in the breathing of the wind – in the faint odors that came from the forest – there came a whole universe of suggestion – a gay and motley train of rhapsodical and immethodical thought...

—Edgar Allan Poe
Tale of the Ragged Mountains (1844)

PHANTASMAGORIA

What does phantasmagoria – with *fantasy + agora* as its roots – imply for architectural imagination? In an era of instant information, when everything seems to be explained away, is it still possible to genuinely wonder about the world, about shared human conditions, and about architecture? In what ways can architecture help restore place and time for genuine wonder?

This studio explored diverse ways in which architecture can deepen, heighten and extend our living engagement with the world. Students explored many **varieties of architectural imagination**: material & spatial, personal & collective, embodied & inhabitational, ethical & ecological, metaphoric & narrative, conjectural & historical, atmospheric & synthetic, poetic & cosmopoetic, tectonic & archi-tectonic.

We began by researching and reinventing a variety of **wonder-inducing devices** from across time: magic lanterns, camera obscuras, cabinets of curiosity, music boxes, perpetual motion machines, capriccios, follies, and grotesques. We engaged **serious play** with phantasmagorical effects and media, while designing a room for a wonderer within a multivalent world.

We traveled to New York City to participate in its **intimate immensities**, and developed comprehensive designs for public institutions striving to cultivate worldly wonder. These culminating projects demonstrated the exuberant imagination of each student and their **desire** to spark the imagination of others and release wondrous potential in the city.

Together with all the usual ambitions of architectural invention, three cultural and literary sources served as provocative guides:

- In 1798, Belgian stage-magician Étienne-Gaspard Robertson began performing wonder-inducing entertainments called “Phantasmagoria.” It is no coincidence that popular desire for such magical performances coincided with the world-transforming onslaught of the Industrial Revolution. When every aspect of daily life was being mechanically homogenized, quantified, commodified and controlled, there arose a **counter-desire** to re-endow life with immeasurable mystery, unexpected quality and delightful diversity – to generate more subtly unique phenomena and liberating experiences. This studio likewise challenged students to reclaim technology for poetic ends by harnessing technology’s magical potentiality for the social production of wonder.
- In his 1821 *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*, Thomas de Quincey described phantasmagoria as a condition of entrancing dreams, especially those “waking-dreams” occurring as one is half-asleep and half-awake, when prosaic reality mixes with memory and

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imagination in strange and inspiring ways. Philosopher Gaston Bachelard writes about such “waking-dreams” as states of “**reverie**,” where oniric and lived spaces commingle. Inspired by de Quincey’s testimony, this studio asked: What role do personal dreams and desires play in the public practice of architecture? How can we reconcile individual fantasies and collective fascinations with the prosaic concerns of socially and ecologically responsible design?

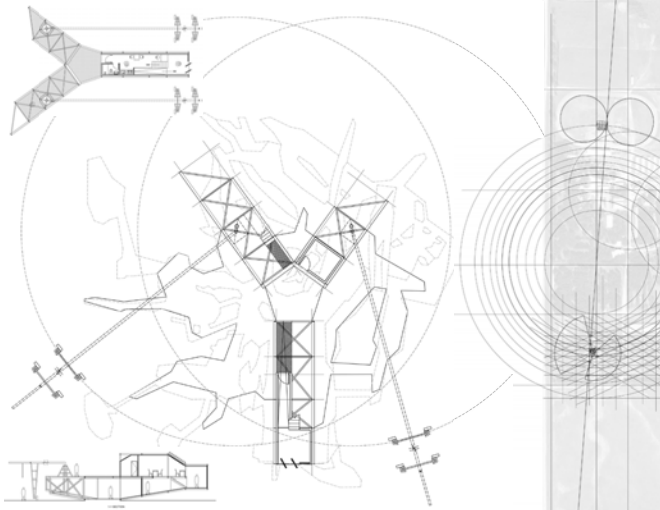
- In a short story entitled *Ligeia* (1838), Edgar Allan Poe describes a pentagonal chamber designed with a medley of architectural embellishments and captivating exotica, which recreate the phantasmagoric influences of a lover’s luminous eyes. Yet, **the strangest mystery of all**, the narrator admits, is that these same phantasmagoric influences were sometimes felt in common phenomena and metamorphoses: when contemplating a moth, a butterfly, a chrysalis, a stream of running water, a falling meteor, the sounds of stringed instruments and passages from books. This studio similarly sought to discover profound surprises in seemingly simple events, settings and phenomena, manifesting poetic architecture from the prosaic fabric of daily life.

Poe attributed the experience of phantasmagoria to hallucinations induced by morphine, strong wine, or opium. Students in this studio indulged in a medium **more powerful and transformative than any drug** (and I hope addictive): *architectural imagination*.

Xue Wei [Term 1, Episode 1]: *Farming Machines and Drawing Machines* - explorations in collage and capriccio, with a fantastical crop of geographic shadow studies.

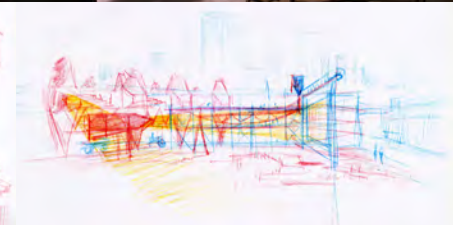
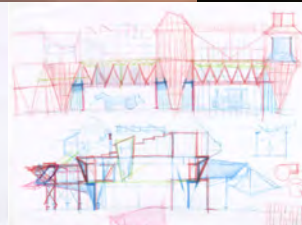
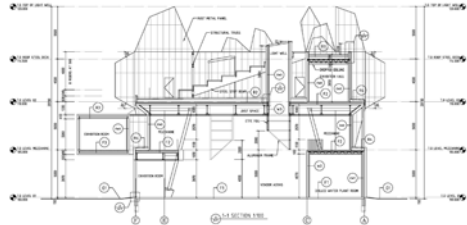
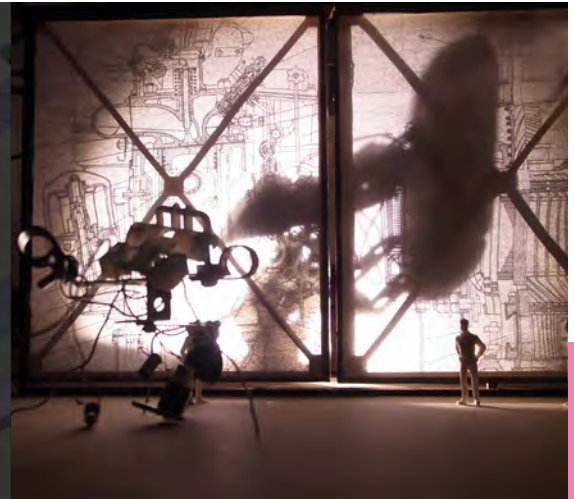
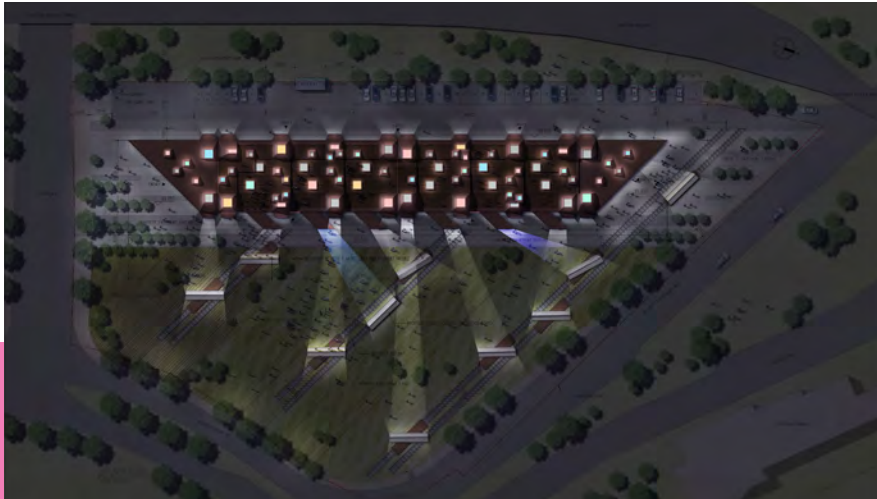


Xue Wei [Term 1, Episode 2]: A dwelling for a grounds-keeper, tucked within an irrigation system's pivoting armature and planted on the property of a rural agricultural museum. This machine for living gives order to a surrounding campsite, where thousands of visitors gather each year in a kind-of "Burning Man" farm festival. The dwelling also provides a place to contemplate horizons beyond the obvious fields.

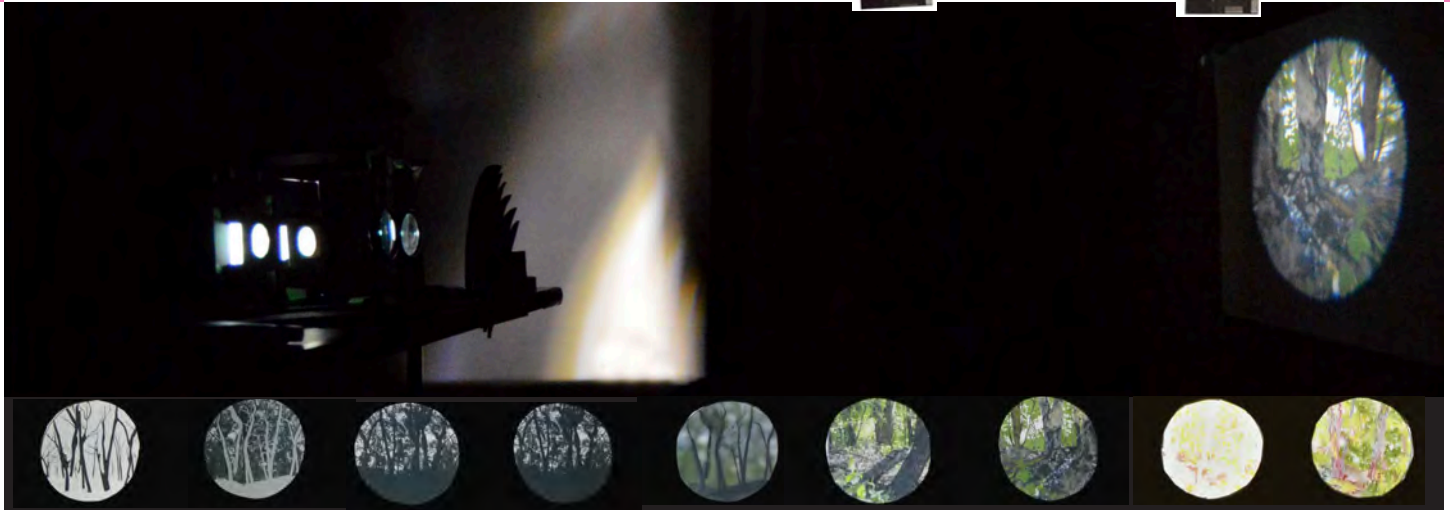
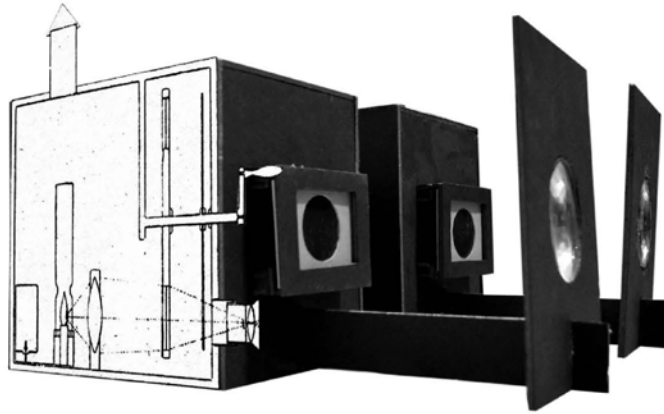


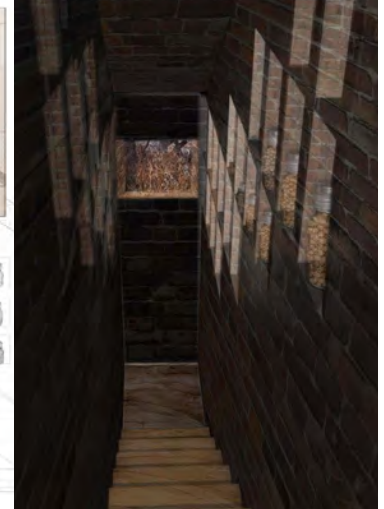
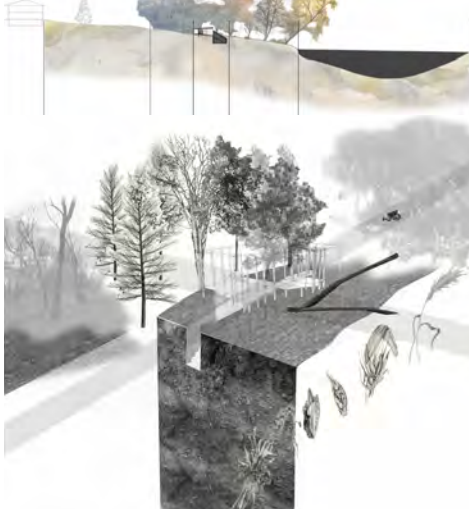
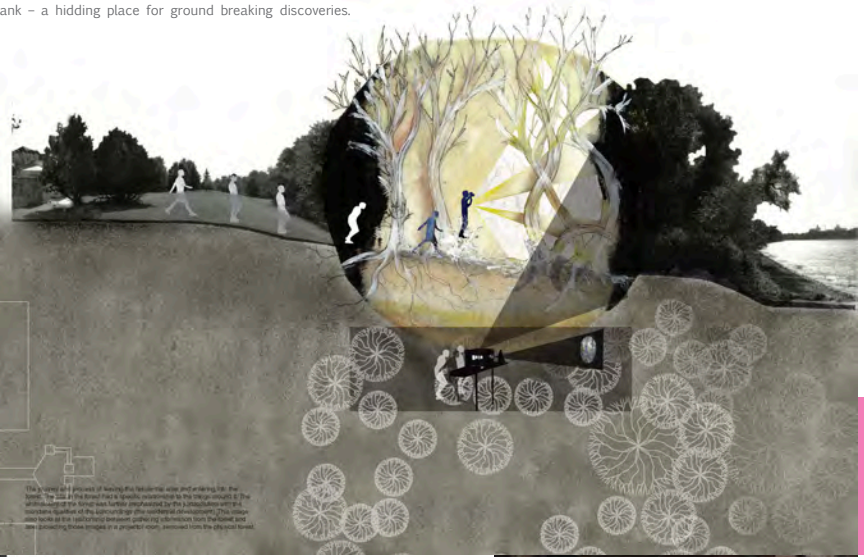
Xue Wei |Term 2| *The Machine in the Garden: Manitoba Agricultural Museum and Farmer's Market.* Sited at the Forks, between the elevated railway line and the Human Rights Museum, this design both accommodates and dramatizes agricultural history, bringing the marvels of farming infrastructure to the city's central festive plot of green.



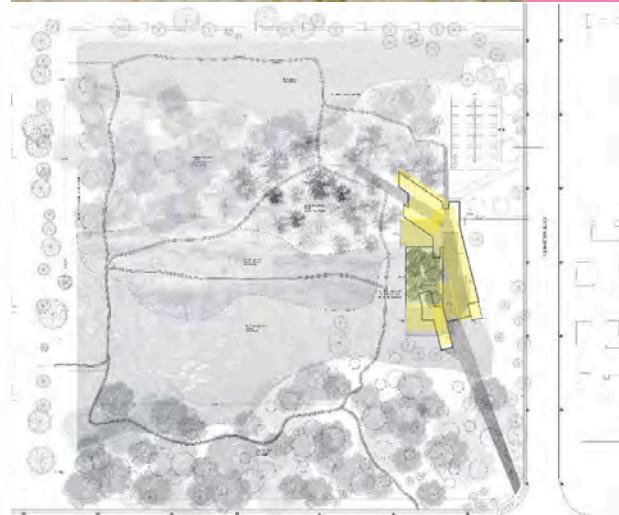
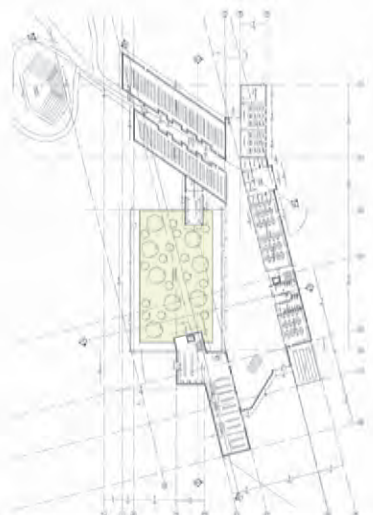
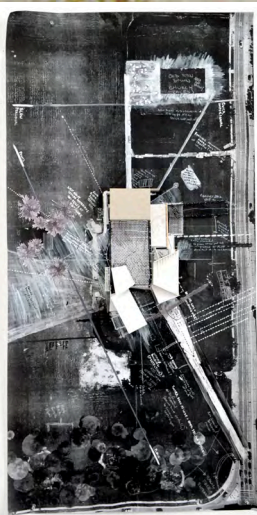


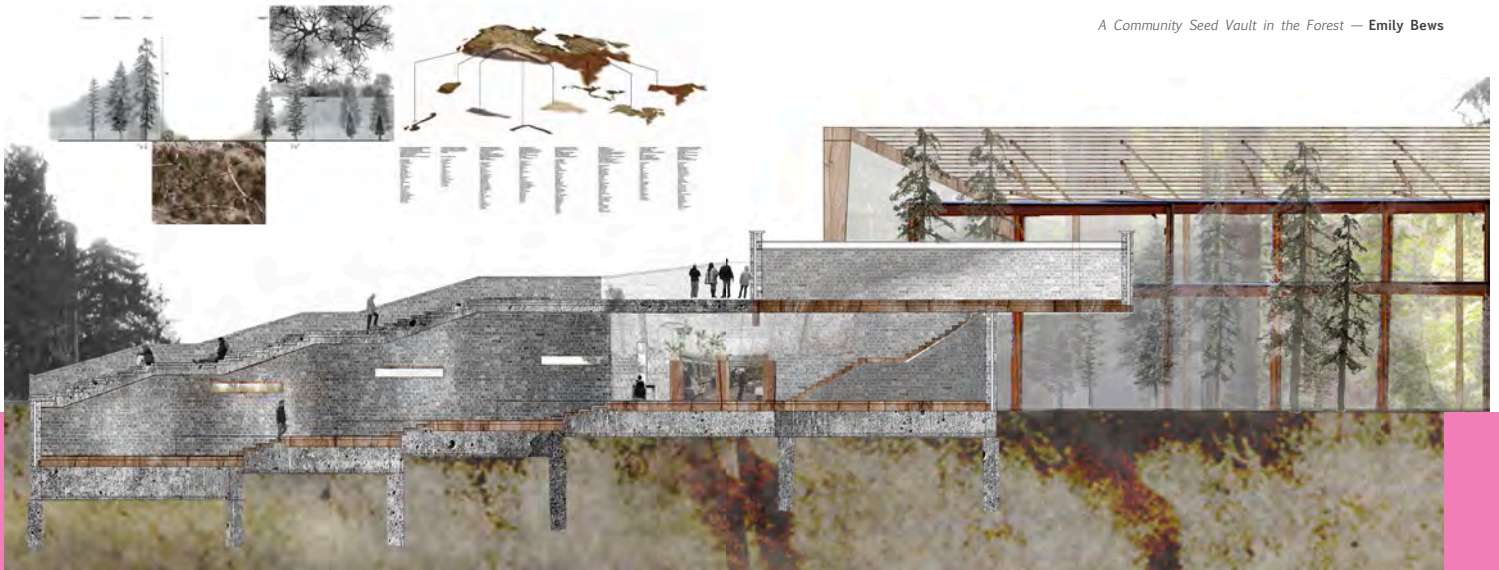
Emily Bews |Term 1, Episode 1): Ephemeral conjurings of the riparian forest and its cycle of seasons, with hand-painted slides and light experiments through a Magic Lantern.

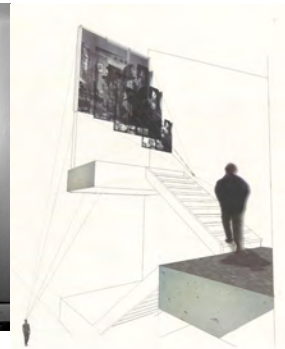
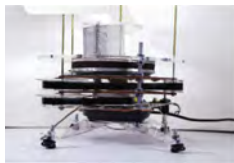
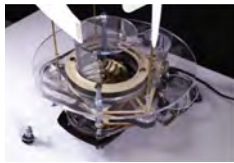
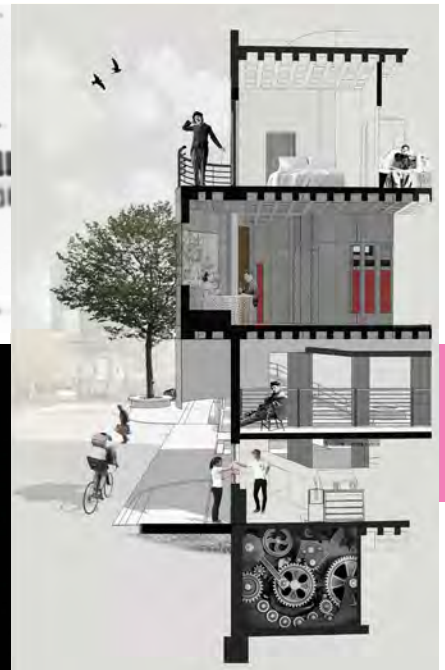
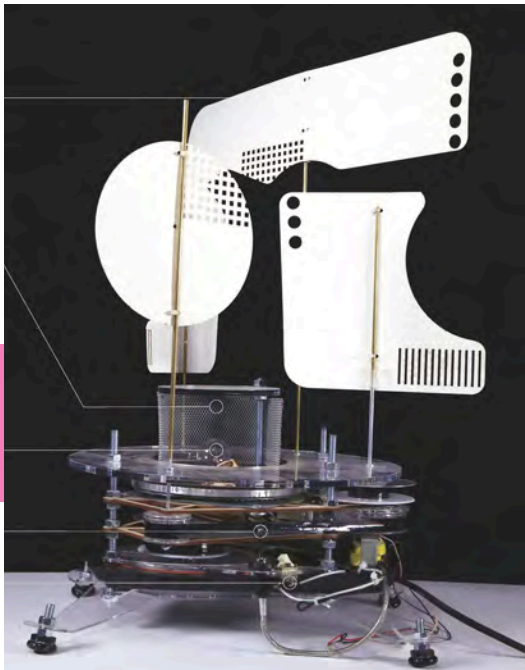




Emily Bews [Term 2]: *A Community Seed Vault in the Forest, a botanical garden and research institution within an experimental park (a transformation of Winnipeg's abandoned Kopyong Army Barracks). This layered structure unfolds through a sequence of material and phenomenal adaptations.*





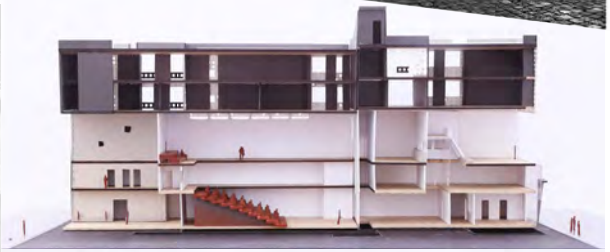








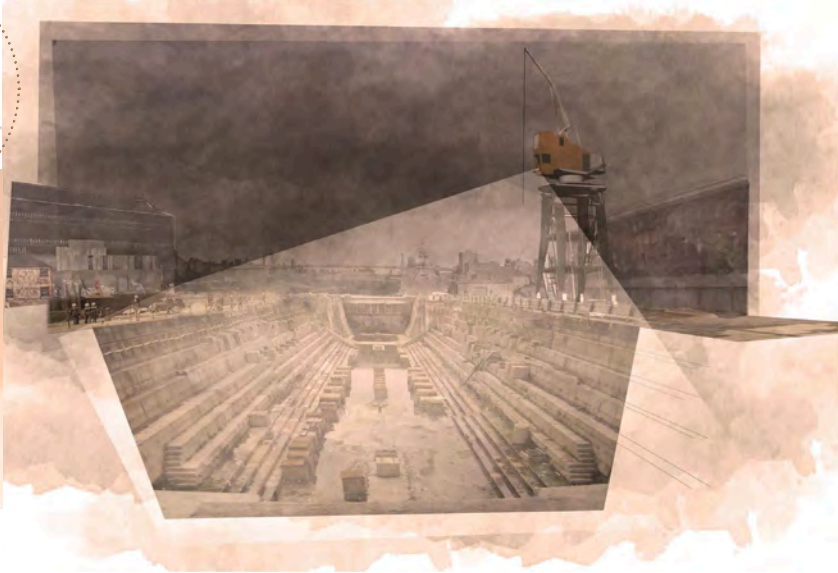
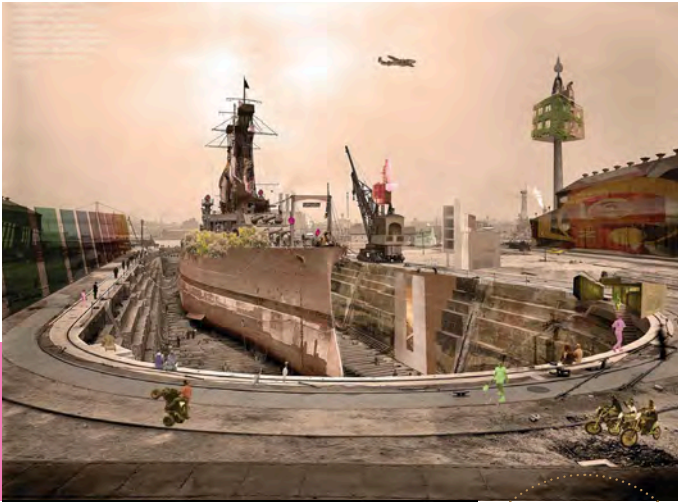
The Reading Room / The Stairs / The Change Rooms



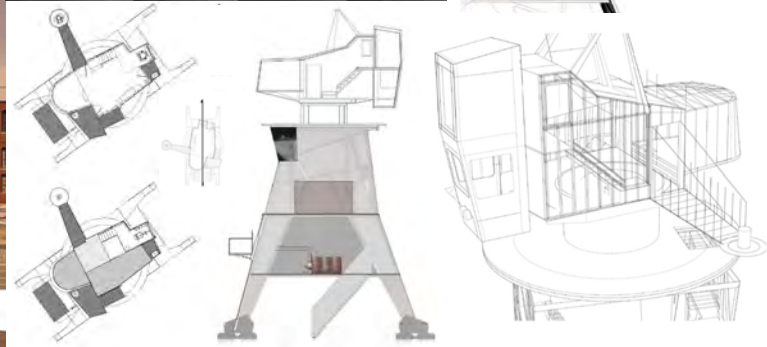
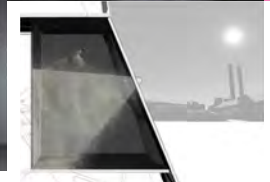
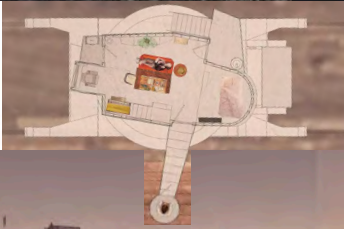
The Reading Room



Mac Sinclair [Term 1, Episode 1]: *Cabinets of Curiosities – mingled memories and anticipations, playfully packed into a mysterious suitcase.*

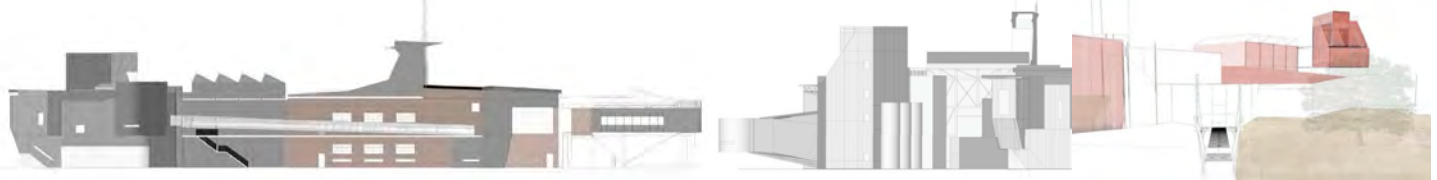


Mac Sinclair [Term 1, Episode 2]: Dwelling for a melancholy night-watchman, whose elevated room, built into an adapted shipyard crane, roams the Brooklyn Navy Yard on remnant rails, harvesting newly planted corn for the illicit production and sale of artisanal moonshine.



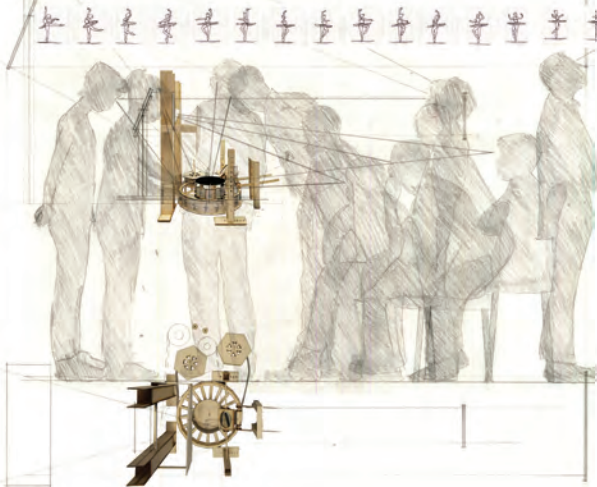
Mac Sinclair [Term 2]: Brooklyn Naval Yard Hibitions, a gin distillery, with tasting bar and museum of industrial alchemy.





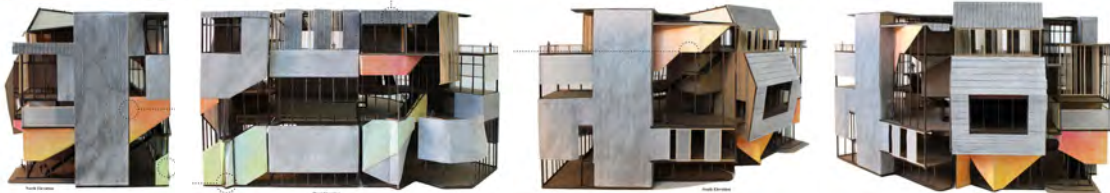
DESIGN THESIS

Sakshi Misra, *Architecture as Stage, Choreographer and Performer*. Advisor: Lisa Landrum.
 Beginning with interpretive studies of magical movement machines (zoetrope & praxinoscope), and classical Indian dance, this thesis explored how bodily interactions with space, drawing and cultural contexts can invigorate architectural design.

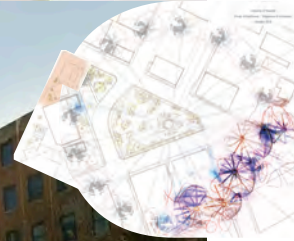
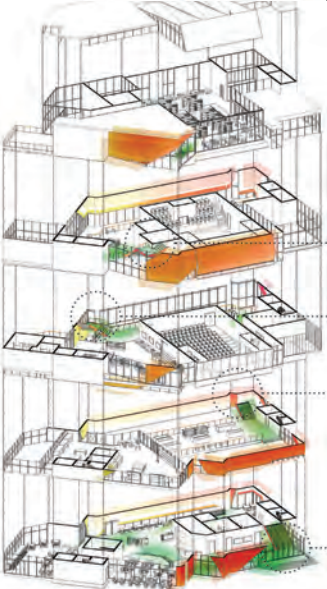
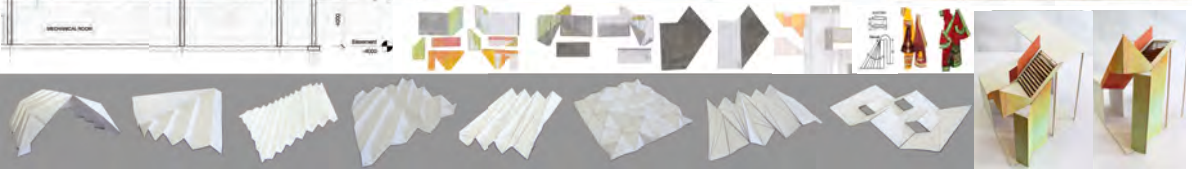
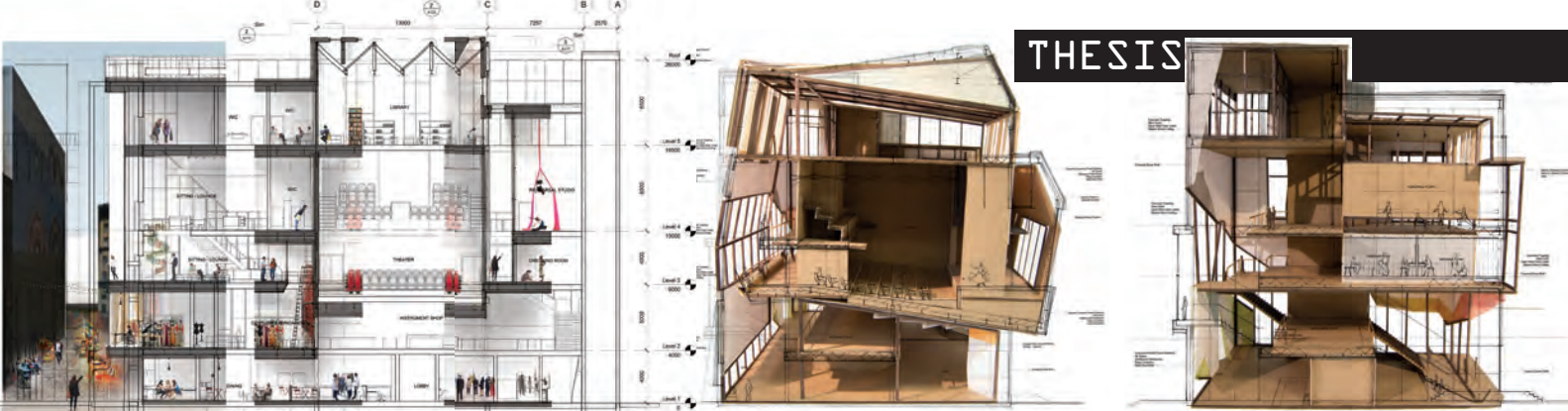


Theatre Optique

This thesis intensified performative interrelations between dynamic bodies and spaces by designing a multi-cultural dance school in Winnipeg's Exchange District. Just as classical Indian dance communicates character, narrative and emotion through nuances of bodily expression, this dance school creates spaces for learning, rehearsing, and performing by engaging corresponding subtleties of architectural form. The skin of the building acts like a dancer's costume, concealing, revealing and embellishing movements within. By re-imagining the context surrounding this dance school as an open-air stage, this project activates architecture's role in the dance of civic life.



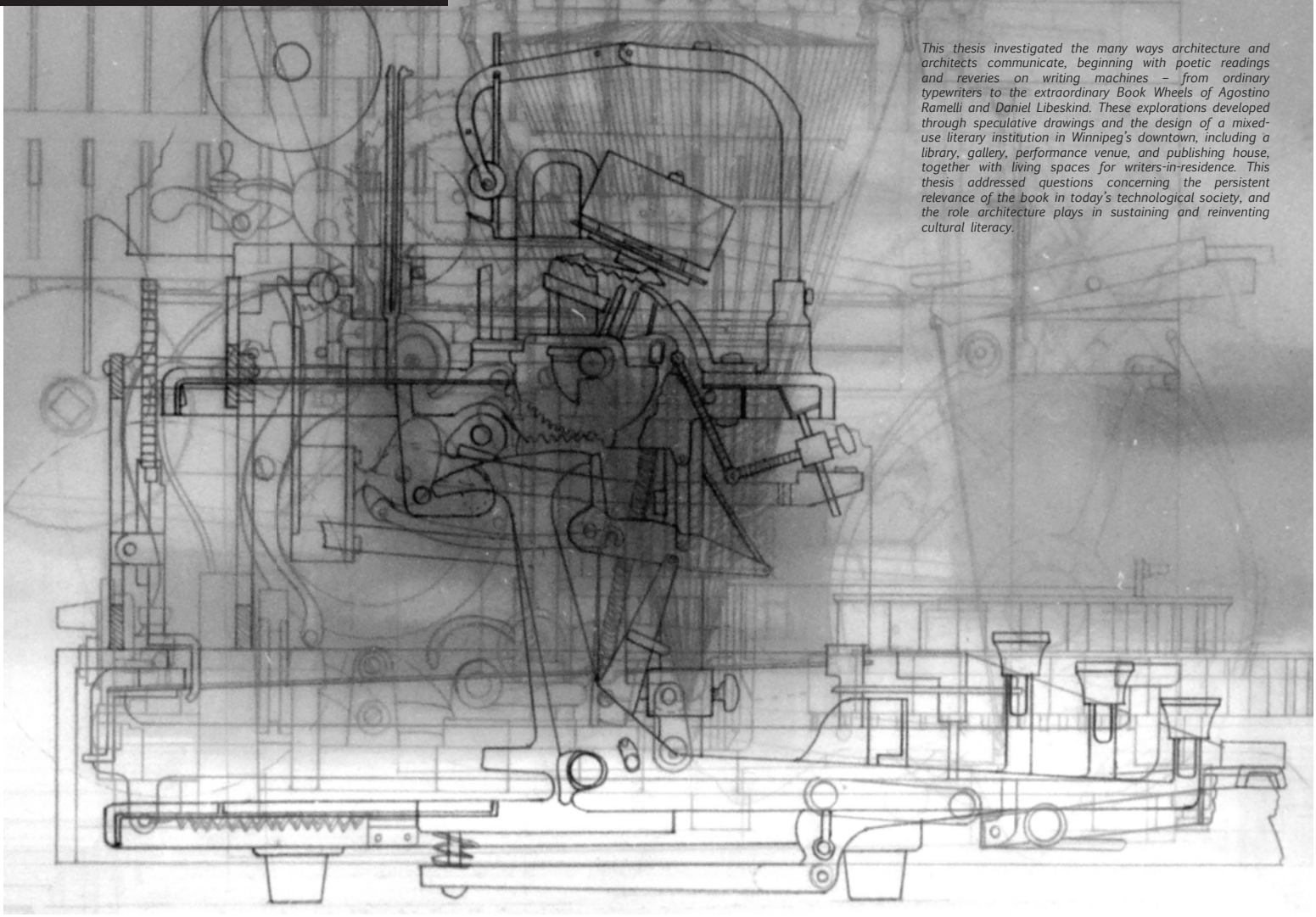
THESIS



Sakshi Misra, *Architecture as Stage, Choreographer and Performer.*

DESIGN THESIS

Sarah Stasiuk, *Writing, Reading and Remembering: architecture for the lifeworld of words*: Advisor: Lisa Landrum.
This thesis explores the act of writing, the event of reading, and the art of memory, together with their relation to architecture, dwelling and place.



This thesis investigated the many ways architecture and architects communicate, beginning with poetic readings and reveries on writing machines – from ordinary typewriters to the extraordinary Book Wheels of Agostino Ramelli and Daniel Libeskind. These explorations developed through speculative drawings and the design of a mixed-use literary institution in Winnipeg's downtown, including a library, gallery, performance venue, and publishing house, together with living spaces for writers-in-residence. This thesis addressed questions concerning the persistent relevance of the book in today's technological society, and the role architecture plays in sustaining and reinventing cultural literacy.

