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Britton Shepard

SITE 1121 - FIELD NOTES

Revealing Deep Form
as a Basis for Urban Landscape Design

Britton Shepard

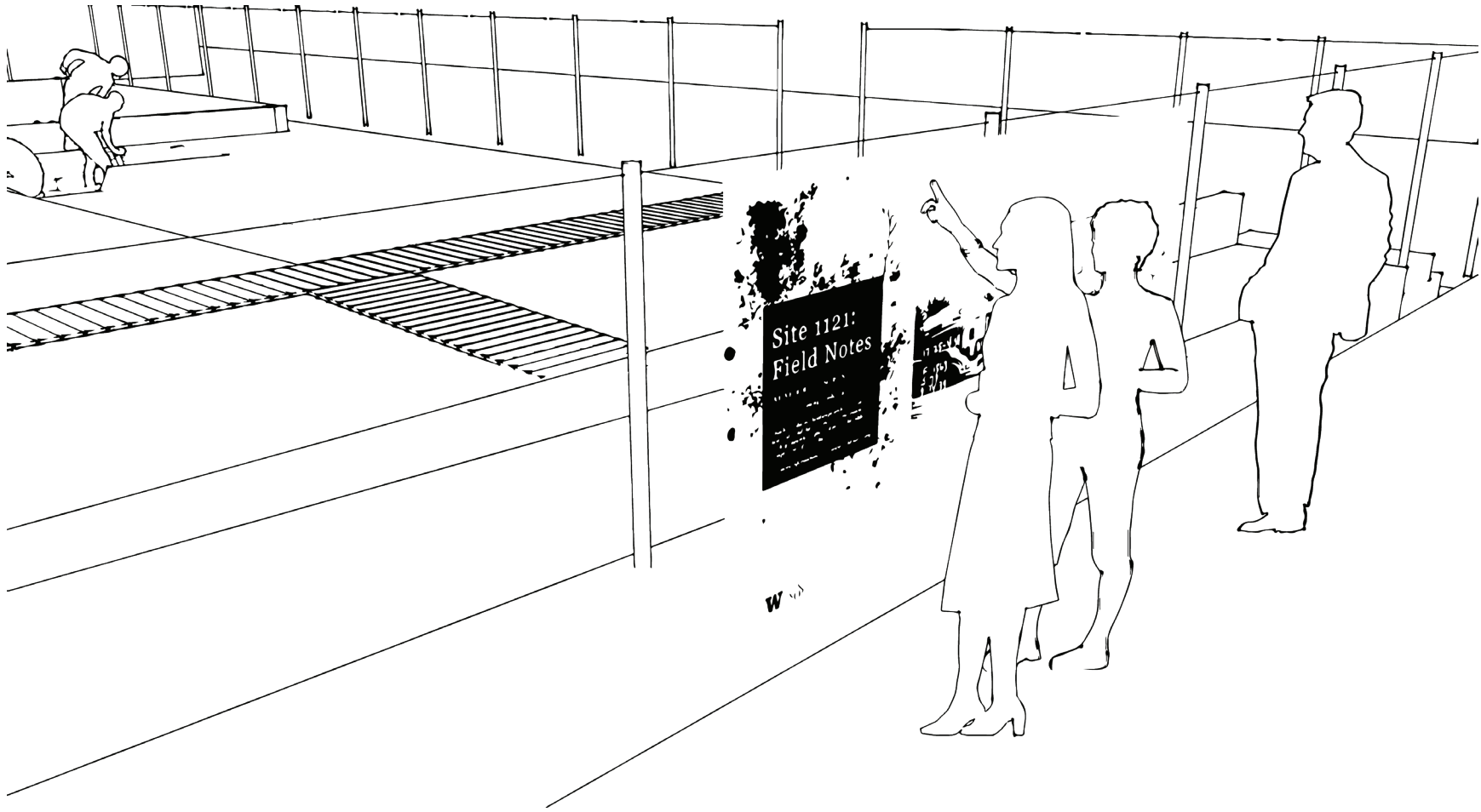
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Bob Mugerauer, Chair
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Site 1121:
Field Notes

W 1121

University of Washington

ABSTRACT

Site 1121 - Field Notes

Revealing Deep Form as a Basis for Urban Landscape Design

Britton Shepard

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What happens when you open the gate on an abandoned urban site and invite people simply to explore what is there? Site 1121- Field Notes establishes a unique landscape design method for immersive site investigation. The project focuses this method onto a vacant urban site, engaging the public and designers in an unfolding dialog that broadens the definition of Landscape Architecture to include temporary site installations.

This experimental site installation expands the normal stage of site analysis to include on-site exploration as a design approach. It incorporates craft, proprioceptive experience, and group dialog into design research, balancing art and science in a manner germane to landscape architecture. The more we understand the complex interplay between natural, built, and human conditions, the more landscape emerges as a profoundly meaningful *process* in which people bodily and purposefully interact with a site. Drawing from archaeological field methods, where the focus is on a narrative hidden in the very materials of a site, Site 1121 directs participants' attention to the revealed urban terrain as a source of wonder.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was powered by people, and I have many to thank.

Fellow students from the MLA program supported this project, showing interest and sharing feedback and enthusiasm during the many hours grad students spend together in studio. Those who contributed to the work on site truly brought the installation to life. Justin Panganiban, Katie Poppel, Rich Freitas, Coco Alarcon, Leann Andrews, and Will Shrader. Feifei Deng came and made field sketches of the site and people working. Arisa Nakamura put on rain gear and dug in the dirt with sincerity and a sense of humor, and made exquisite hand drawings of “artifacts”. Hailey Mackay curated the botany table for the Open House, and with charisma greeted visitors to the site. And Jennie Li was a believer and confidant from the start who came to the site often, sketching plants and talking with visitors, helping me to believe in the project even more.

I take my hat off to the group of seasoned friends who helped me to prepare the site, building boardwalks, shoveling dirt and debris into sand bags, putting up the rain tent, and moving enormous concrete slabs with hand tools: Andrew Johnston, Ian Christensen, Robert Cole, Mark Bourne, Matt MacDonald, and my best friend of twenty-four years, Natyam Schraven. Their know-how and energy imparted a playful and confident tenor to the installation from the beginning.

On an ordinary day last November I walked into the credit union and asked if I could talk with someone about a landscape project in the vacant lot across the street. I was sent over to see Trista Molé. She listened to my idea and smiled and told me she would send a message to the person who could help me. Two days later I got an email from Ann Flannigan. In the following three months of ongoing dialog about the project idea, I felt a creative camaraderie. I am grateful to Ann and the rest of the organization for their openness from the beginning.

It is extraordinary that WSECU was willing and able to make this project possible. It sets an important example for other public and private organizations to take risks and back new ideas with actions. I want to share with them every credit for embracing this project and for furnishing it with the funding and credibility it needed in order to succeed. In particular I want to thank the employees of the U-District branch whose participation in Site 1121 was so genuine and open-minded and made the site more accessible to the people of the neighborhood; Mike Sanders for providing level-headed, experienced support in site logistics; Trista Molé for being there that first day; Elizabeth Billings for being an able designer with a sense of humor; and most of all, Ann Flannigan for listening, for being a kindred spirit, and for having a killer instinct.

I must also express my gratitude to the faculty and instructors in the Department of Landscape Architecture. The values and rigor in Gould Hall have shaped my thinking in profound ways each day that I have been a student in the program.

I would like to thank Laura Haddad for believing in this project. She pushed me to think more deeply about the experimental garden. She also came out to the site and participated in excavation work and talked with visitors; and Iain Robertson, for advocating craft and originality, and for encouraging me to stick with my voice; and Bob Mugerauer, who understands the splendor of the ordinary and teaches like it. It was in Bob's Qualitative Methods course that I was first exposed to the idea that in cities old places never disappear, and so began to imagine the kind of project that Site 1121 would come to be.

My deepest gratitude is for my wife, Rachel, who took care of me like a midwife during every upside-down week of grad school. Not only did she work and support our family, she was a calm voice of reason who gave me astute design feedback, and with a sense of humor often reminded me not to be so serious all the time. She more than anyone else helped me to learn to stand up in front of people and tell the story I so badly wanted to tell.

A last note. I dedicate this thesis to my late grandfather, Jack Shepard. I did not know him well, nor he me. But we did have in common a devotion to work and craft. Money from his estate has paid for my time in graduate school, permitting my family and me a priceless freedom, and imbuing my studies with a deeper perspective. My thoughts turned to him many times as I worked, and I am grateful for his gift.



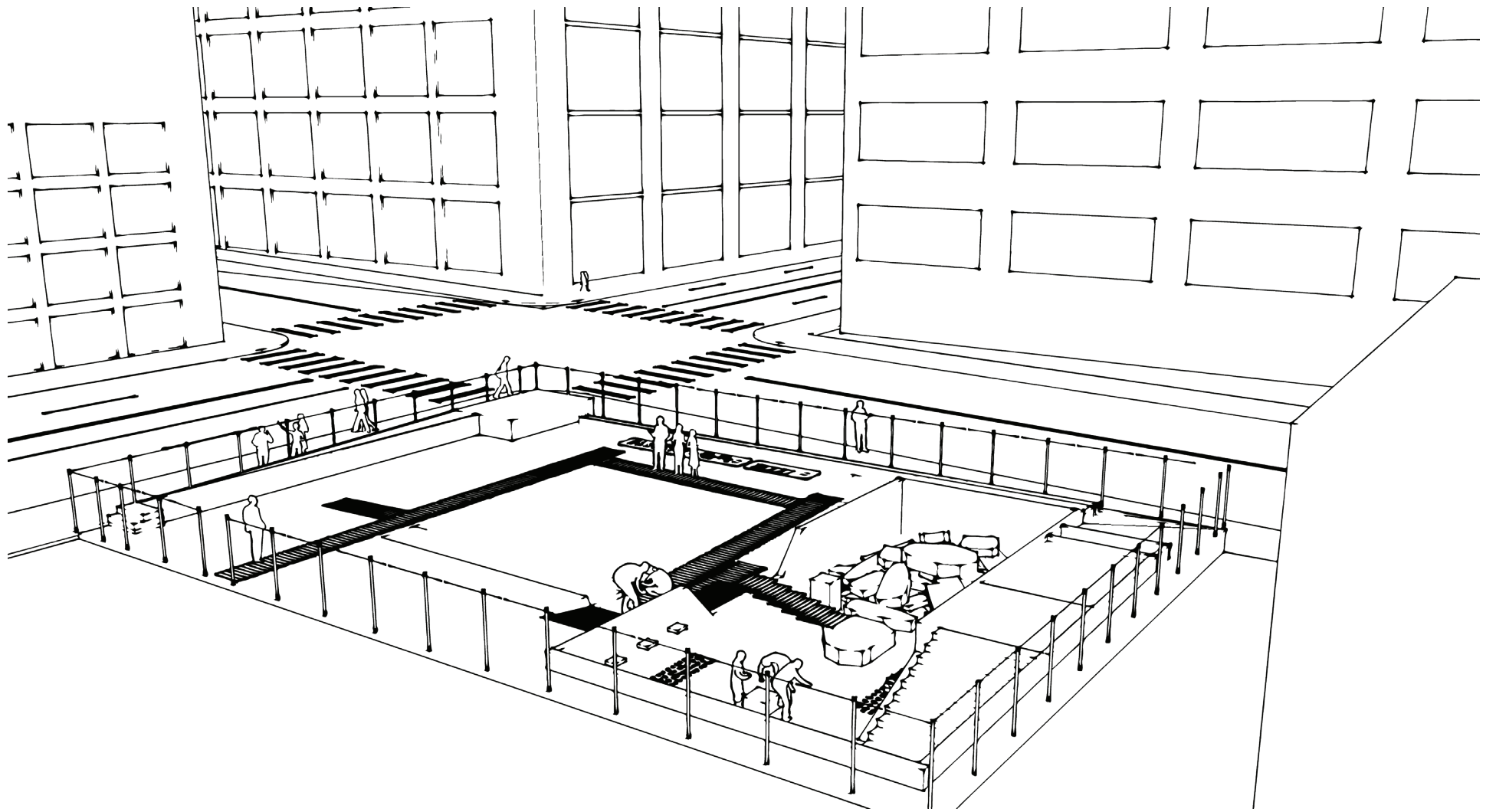


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INTRODUCTION

Site 1121 is essentially a field study of the urban landscape. It identifies urban sites in transition as openings — in time and in space — that permit a deeper, experiential engagement of the landscape.

In many ways, cities can be seen as great machines designed to prioritize and channel flows: of water, energy, automobiles; of people, money, and ownership. John Lyle understood cities to be surface machines, “shallow forms” concealing a rich underlying complexity that he called Deep Form. He wrote:

For a city to become a truly human ecosystem it must embody physical, emotional, and cultural realms in human terms. Such a landscape will have DEEP FORM because, underlying its surface and giving it deeper substance, is a cohesive, fundamental order.

Lyle’s call to make Deep Forms visible in the urban context was a foundation of Eco-Revelatory Design. It is also the contextual premise of Site 1121, which proposes that urban sites in transition are a kind of fallow ground where a valuable connection is hidden.

This project being a search for meaningful human connections in the landscape concealed by the urban grid, it was critical to realize it as a physical installation in an urban site, not just as an evocative studio exercise. And so, having identified an appropriate fallow site in the neighborhood, I engaged its owners in a dialog, earned their agreement to host and fund the project, and persuaded some of my fellow landscape architecture students to participate in an experimental field study. A collective effort involving many volunteers resulted in an innovative week-long landscape installation that transformed an overlooked vacant lot into an interactive art exhibit. Taking landscape to be a process more than an outcome, Site 1121 made a closed site open not only to the neighborhood community, but to the public imagination as well.



Demolition rubble rearranged to make foundation ruins into gallery space.

Design Statement

The working model for Site 1121 is borrowed largely from archaeological field methods. An archaeological dig site is one example of a *temporary* landscape installation. Its basic field methodology sets forth a wireframe structure for scientific inquiry, and it is within this framework that scientists carry out an experiential field study that is simultaneously data-oriented and intuitive. The methodology also outlines straightforward constructions that frame the working site as a place of organized human-scale exploration. The forms of grid, markings, sorting of materials, and documentation, are recognizable, and communicate our search for understanding.

Field methodology also furnished a framework for the design of the installation's process, not just its physical framing. As a hermeneutic discipline, field work involves the kinesthetic study of site materiality, followed by interpretation of how these findings both reveal and fit into a larger narrative. It is the "working" site where the process unfolds, and in this sense, Site 1121 was as much a performance piece as it was a physical site.

In addition, work on site involved a third phase: place-making. In this phase, the interaction with the site moved from the process of "knowing what is known" a step further to reassembly. This involved curating the site through editing and assemblage, transforming the humble site into a vibrant gallery of findings. The site itself was seen as an artifact. Following a response of understanding, participants created a new place amid the old, a garden immediately recognizable to others, though created from entirely uncommon circumstances.





Summary of Installation

During the installation week, the site was first prepared by laying out boardwalks and work tables, and raising a central tent in case of rain. This reframed the fenced-off parcel from a non-site to a place where something new was happening. Next, volunteers worked to clean up the site and make it more navigable, and then moved to the identification and sketching of the pioneer community of plants reclaiming the site. This was followed by laying out a grid for excavation work. Section trenches permitted closer study of plant roots as well as the material and cultural remains of the site. Students and volunteers engaged in a slowed-down process of sifting through material, sorting found items, and documenting their findings, and were encouraged to follow their intuition in getting to know the site and revealing its character.

As work on site unfolded, participants also curated the site by reorganizing its contents in preparation for visitors on the last day: artifacts arrayed on work tables, plant specimens identified and displayed, foundation ruins converted to a central gallery space. This process is known as assemblage, the simple act of rearranging found materials to tell a story that is present but not yet told.

Several volunteers also served as docents who greeted curious passersby, answering questions and inviting them to tour the site and to submit written comments and reflections.

On the afternoon of Friday March 25, the work culminated with an Open House reception, giving a diverse group of neighbors and community members a unique chance to tour the site and to have their own experience of its revealed characteristics.





| | | | |
|---|----------|---|---------|
| ✓ | Loggia | ✓ | Loggia |
| ✓ | Handwork | ✓ | Ed. Job |
| ✓ | Painter | ✓ | Painter |

sitting on the shoulder=Kash Lalatwobackcaps on the sides=cHálgWadee dropped down=qWátub mouth of
 top small lake=small grassy amount of water=XáNu7cHoo covered water=scHooxW7álgoo extended from the
 cd=soWáthús deep=TLup trail to the beach=scHáKwHud deep for canoes=TLupéel7weehL lots of
 koyáLwá=ack=CháTLA river other creek QoTLáHlgoo mouth along the side=seeláqWootSeed aerial duck net
 nólZáiláeH green=yellow spine qWáScéH

Outcomes

This experimental landscape installation was powered by people, and it was the curious people passing by the site, who were drawn in for a closer look, that turned out to be the valuable connection that the project revealed. More than a dozen MLAs from the program came out to work on the site, joined by a dozen employees from WSECU who volunteered their time as well. The mere presence of these engaged and curious people is what caused the transformation of the empty site into a vibrant museum and meeting place. The many-layered story of this site began coming to light through conversations *in situ*: about what used to be here, about what it might one day become; about shared impressions and conflicting views over how the neighborhood is changing; about contested meanings, expectations, and urban ecosystem services; and, most importantly, about memories and belonging, place making, ownership, and access to places not built upon. What emerged is a landscape that is truly a text to be read, continuously changing. Revealed along with the physical artifacts was a spectrum of viewpoints, meanings, interpretations, and realities: the human ecosystem.

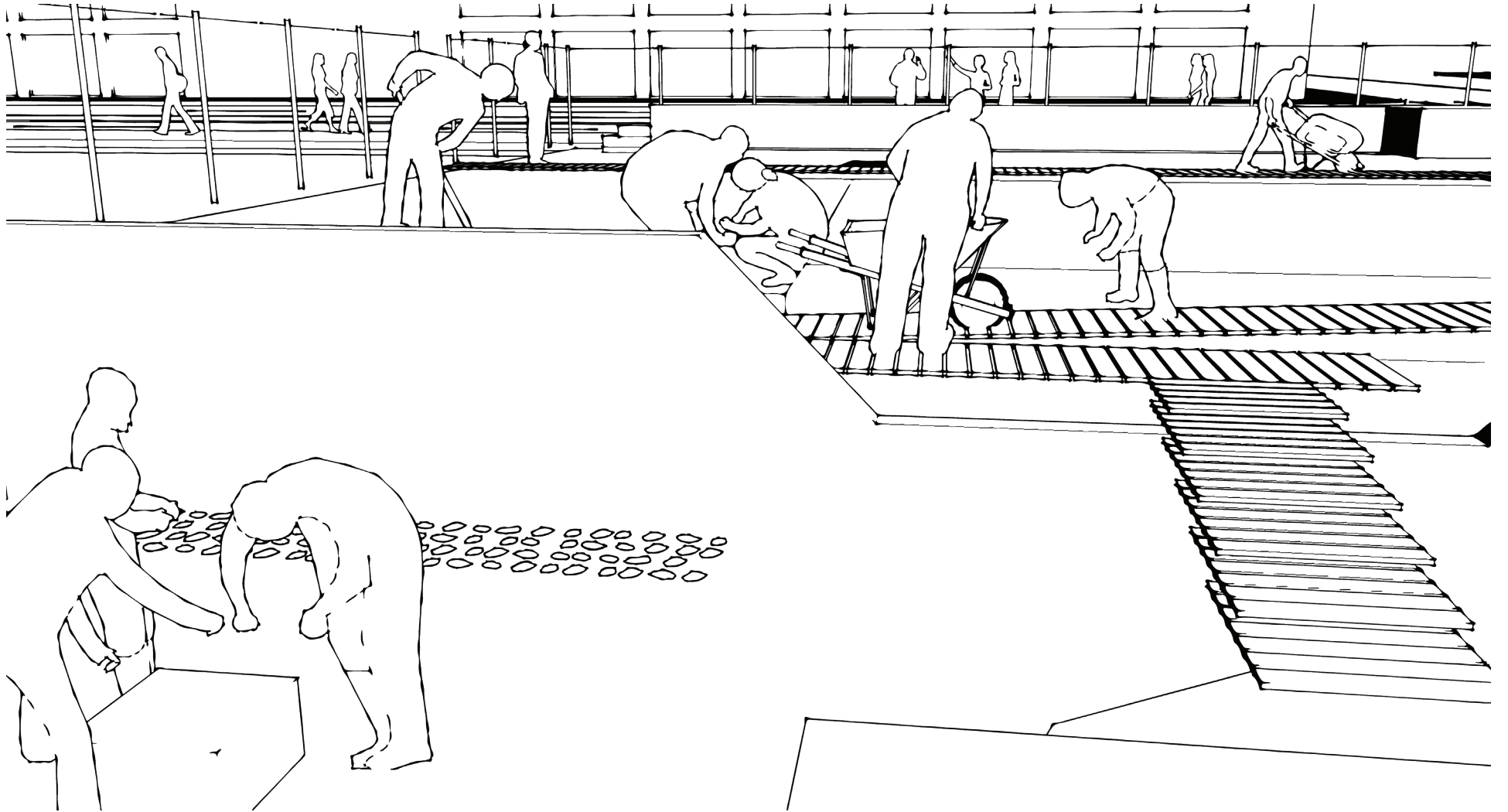
A landscape architect from the Seattle Parks Department who visited the installation had this to say:

Site 1121 peels back the layers, unveiling the secrets of history, infrastructure, and environment from which we are so often disconnected, as it is so often hidden by the many layers of urban fabric that weave together to form our cities. Site 1121 activates a space and brings a sense of wonder and discovery. Allowing the public to gain a personal up close view of the transition, if only for a brief moment in time, opens eyes and minds to reveal how our cities' infrastructure, environment, and history come together to form a space. This discovery reveals itself through materials, plants that found a home, and by the infrastructure that connects well beyond its footprint.



Visitors gather in the gallery space at the Site 1121 Open House.

Opposite: Thick Section of Site 1121 and an urban neighborhood in flux.



What Next?

The project's success brings up many questions and new directions for exploration. Could landscape architects and urban planners follow a similar method for engaging and maintaining landbanked sites? Perhaps this kind of site investigation, a hybrid between “archaeology, cultural anthropology and recovery of lost readymades, should be required at each site to assess its history, abuse, and resources for any new construction”, as Buster Simpson commented about Site 1121? Certainly this kind of frugal, people-powered temporary engagement with a site could enhance the community design process, reach and include more people, and unearth more accurate, egalitarian, place-based design solutions.

The following is a Field Report of Site 1121. Its outline is derived from archaeological field reports that organize and record all findings from the field so that they may be integrated with the larger narrative study. What comes to light in the Field Report is how landscape as a process reveals the human ecosystem within the deterministic urban form. The report is first a record of up-close exploration into the complex material and ecologic conditions of Site 1121. It also vividly documents a process of deeper, more poetic reading of what this materiality evokes culturally for people interacting closely with the terrain. Ultimately, it makes a case for an intimate design approach that reveals a site's *genius loci* as the source of Deep Form.



photo credit:
Holly Hughes

FIELD REPORT

- i. Location
- ii. History
- iii. Environment
- iv. Sponsorship
- v. Personnel
- vi. Site Layout
- vii. Field Notes
- viii. Review of Findings
- ix. Conclusions

URBAN SITES IN TRANSITION

Our cities are many-layered human places built over time by generations.

This making and remaking of the urban ecosystem is cyclical, begun but never finished. It is a choreography of regeneration where in time even permanent constructions give way to new forms.

In a city continuously remaking itself, urban sites in transition allow glimpses beneath the surface into the hierarchical order of the urban ecosystem.

At any given time, interspersed throughout the grid, there are sites being opened. These are opportunities for exploration, for an intimate, daily interaction with the landscape at a human scale.

The transitional nature of these sites reveals landscape as a rich ecological and cultural process.



i. Location

1121 NE 45th St. Seattle, WA
47°39'40.4"N 122°18'56.7"W

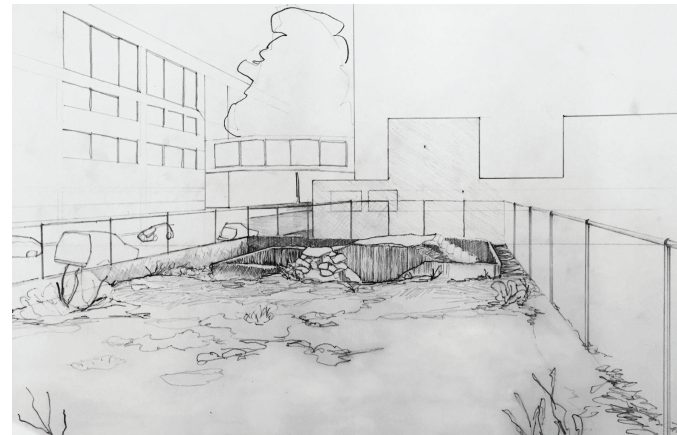
In one work day in June of 2014 the one-story building located at 1121 NE 45th St. in Seattle was demolished and hauled away. It had been built in 1937 and modified many times over the years. After the structure was taken away, the fill on site was graded flat and rubble from the concrete slab-on-grade was piled inside the walls of the remaining basement foundation. A chain link fence was put up to keep people out. And then this old site with its building taken away was officially in waiting for its next chapter: a new building that would be home to the local credit union. Until then, what would happen here?

The intersection of NE 45th St. and 12th Ave NE is a fairly typical Seattle arterial crossing. The streetscape is busy with vehicle and pedestrian traffic passing by. The site is in plain view from all directions. Mostly flat, visible, with open sight lines and little hidden from view. The northern half of the site is level, compacted fill framed by remnant concrete sidewalks and foundation walls, occupying a more or less square area 60 feet to a side. The concrete walls and floor of a basement remain on the southern half of the site, and contain a rubble pile of demolished concrete, presumably from an on-grade slab covering the portion of the flat ground to the north. In the late winter and spring of 2015 the ground was nearly bare with few weeds. Now, in the fall of 2015, a pioneer garden has sprung up. On one hand the sense you get is of a disheveled, even run-down nature. On the other, the plant life is thriving and requires a closer look. One at first might take the site to be static. However, there occurs a moment of uncertainty, then a curiosity about the unfolding complexities going on here.



Mouse-ear chickweed and mosses growing at Site 1121

Pencil sketch, fallow site.



FALLOW GROUND

“Here in this site lie vital forces left dormant by society.”

- Christoph Girot

Site 1121 is an urban site in transition, a bounded site in a moment of rest where we can see beneath the surface.

It is a non-site, an ellipsis in the urban fabric where weeds appear and garbage accumulates near the remains of an old building.

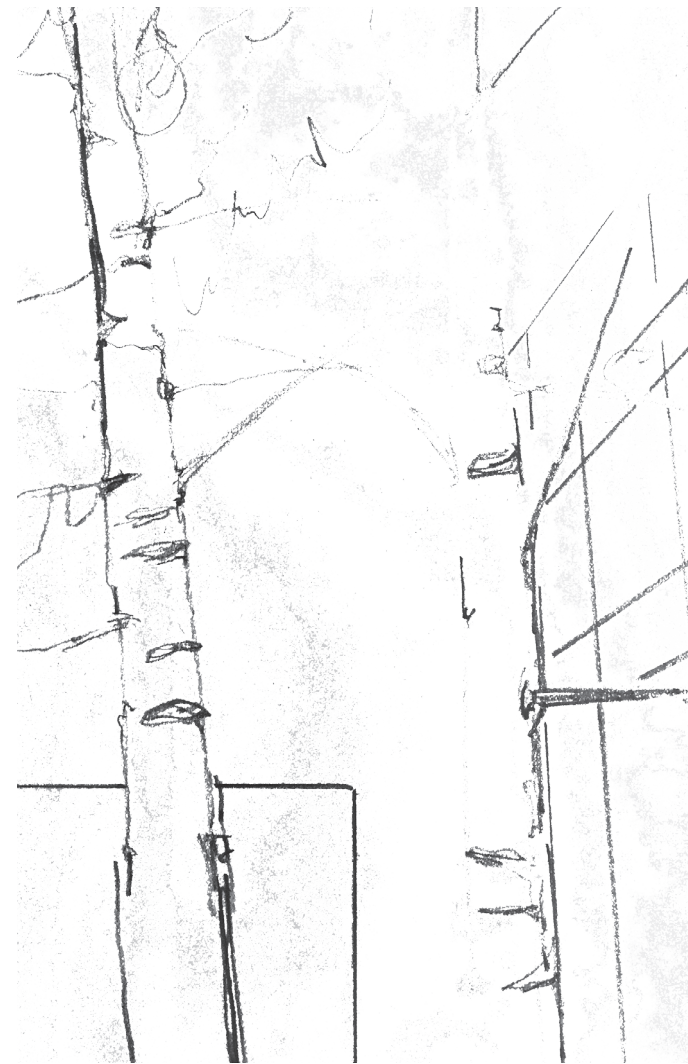
Here, the re-emergence of underlying ecological order expresses a harmonious aesthetic of sprouting seeds and evocative, diminishing human forms.



A family of crows seems to be resident nearby, and at times even to be guarding the site. When I climbed the fence to investigate and take pictures, they were perturbed, squawking and diving at me. I persisted and they removed to the nearby birche trees to watch and harangue. I could not sense why my presence could be a threat or inconvenience but it was spring time and maybe they were nesting and couldn't abide my being there on general principle. Over the next weeks and months, I would observe crows dropping in to the site to use the puddle of rain water near the spoils pile to wash things.

My first impression of the site is one of discovery. The missing structure, its foundation still intact, leaves open sight lines, a simple geometric framing, and a distinct stillness amid the noise and movement of traffic. People walk by on the sidewalk, going to work or school, and once in a while you will see the parking attendant making his rounds. Cars pull into the garage to the south, and across the street to the north, construction workers hand dig in the parking strip under scaffolding poles. Also across the street to the north, on the west end of the block, is the current location of WSECU. Climbing down into the foundation ruins you can look back up at the surrounding buildings making a giant amphitheater that lends a sense of intimacy and centeredness. I would later learn that many of the windows of these buildings are offices, many belonging to the University, full of working people who can look down into the streetscape and have become familiar with the site from this vantage too. The surrounding vertical walls are perched above the visible layers of nearby earth crumbling down into the foundation.

Modernity speeds things up, especially change in the urban construct. Yet here in this site is a brief moment of pause.



RECIPROCAL CONDITION

“The urban fabric breaks nature apart and recasts the pieces in forms that mask the landscape’s infinite complexity, losing touch with human perception.”

- John Lyle

“There is a reciprocal condition as well, as with the ruins of a shrinking city or decaying building, where nature erodes and transforms the human-made structures and functions and overtakes urban topography and built form.”

When abandoned, or when people can not afford to take care of the city, this will happen.

This condition indicates that you cannot separate culture from nature.”

- Kongjian Yu

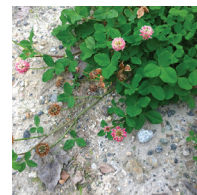


An informal inventory of plants found during first site visit:

- butterfly bush
- european white birch
- fireweed
- pearly everlasting
- tomato
- dandelion
- big leaf maple
- red clover
- blackberry
- wall lettuce
- thistle
- pansy

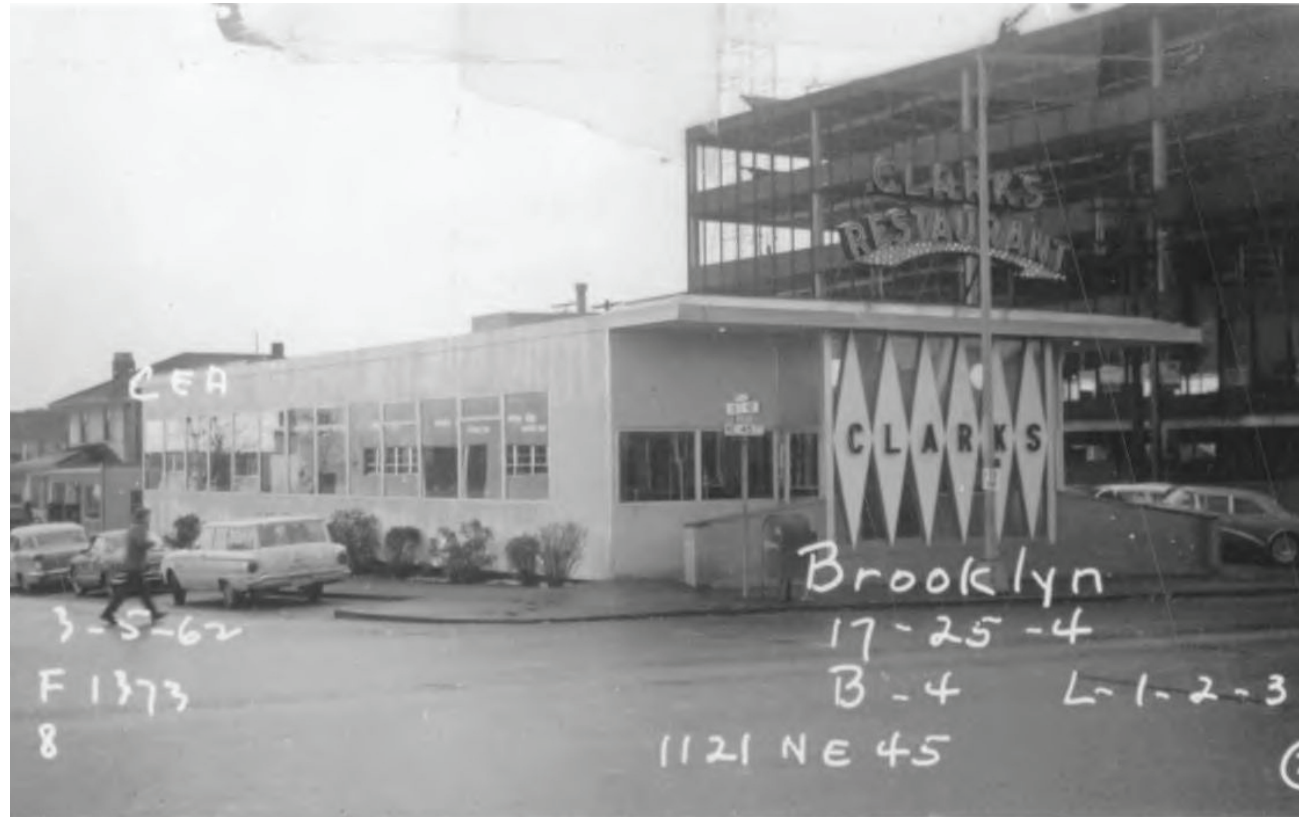
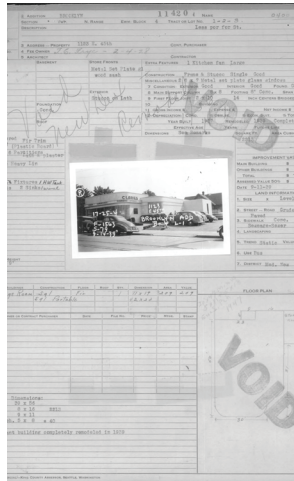


Site 1121: pioneer community of plants, spring 2015



This image from 1962 shows the University District Building next door to Site 1121 under construction. Today the UDB is part of the University's urban campus.

Small Commercial building permit, 1939



Record of appraised values, 1953-73

| Year | Assessed Value | Market Value | Ratio |
|------|----------------|--------------|-------|
| 1953 | 100,000 | 150,000 | 0.67 |
| 1954 | 110,000 | 165,000 | 0.67 |
| 1955 | 120,000 | 180,000 | 0.67 |
| 1956 | 130,000 | 195,000 | 0.67 |
| 1957 | 140,000 | 210,000 | 0.67 |
| 1958 | 150,000 | 225,000 | 0.67 |
| 1959 | 160,000 | 240,000 | 0.67 |
| 1960 | 170,000 | 255,000 | 0.67 |
| 1961 | 180,000 | 270,000 | 0.67 |
| 1962 | 190,000 | 285,000 | 0.67 |
| 1963 | 200,000 | 300,000 | 0.67 |
| 1964 | 210,000 | 315,000 | 0.67 |
| 1965 | 220,000 | 330,000 | 0.67 |
| 1966 | 230,000 | 345,000 | 0.67 |
| 1967 | 240,000 | 360,000 | 0.67 |
| 1968 | 250,000 | 375,000 | 0.67 |
| 1969 | 260,000 | 390,000 | 0.67 |
| 1970 | 270,000 | 405,000 | 0.67 |
| 1971 | 280,000 | 420,000 | 0.67 |
| 1972 | 290,000 | 435,000 | 0.67 |
| 1973 | 300,000 | 450,000 | 0.67 |

1948



1952



1967



1972



ii. History

A visitor to the Site 1121 installation reminisced that in the 1970's there was a diner here, an all night joint where you could always get a cup of coffee. The diner, Clark's, had been there since 1937 when the one-story building was built, but it became another restaurant some time later in the 1970s or 80s. More recently, it was Araya's, a vegetarian place known for its all-you-can-eat buffet on Sundays, and many visitors to the site, as well as volunteers who worked with us, fondly recalled eating there up until the owners moved the restaurant to another location in the neighborhood two years ago. This is when WSECU purchased the property, took down the building, and put up the chain link fence we see today.

That 1937 building was part of a local chain of restaurants owned by Walter Clark. One visitor to the site during the installation week recalled going to lunch at Clark's in the 1950s with her mother. Others remarked that it is interesting that a new building was built here during that year as it was during the Great Depression, and I find it interesting too. In 1936, the General Insurance Co. (later called SAFECO) moved into the eight-story building just across the street, where the UW Tower is located today. Perhaps there were enough insurancemen to walk across the street for lunch each day. In any case, Clark's became a neighborhood landmark, serving meals to patrons for thirty plus years. Research into the site history luckily turned up several photos of the restaurant that show how it changed through the years. The County Assessor's Office even had a few records of remodel permits.



1121 NE 45th st, Google Street View, May 2014

Clark's Restaurant, 1939





1856 map of Ravenna Creek area superimposed on field survey chart.

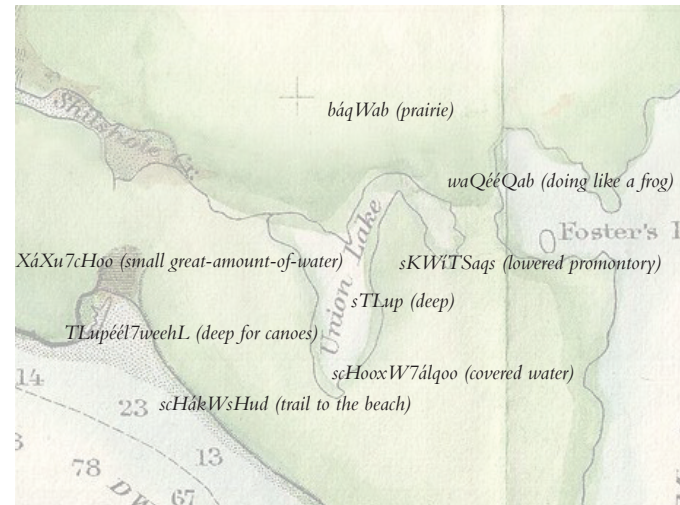
Even on maps, this site is in flux. A powerful tool for expressing meaning in the landscape, maps both record and project. Surveyors' field notes are translated into maps by cartographers as settlers clear land for farms and houses. The grid is a mental concept of transforming nature supported by a vast structural counterpart that spreads, tile by tile, across the surface of the landscape.

Beyond illustrating geographic information, maps authorize control of the landscape, its distribution into parts, and its ownership. We inherit this grid that was created by generations of decisions, cultural values, assumptions and transformations. The reality of control, ownership, and modality expressed in the urban grid is reinforced in maps that resemble evocative paintings of how we understand the world. We may believe that how we see the world is instinctive, but it is merely a gestalt, a condition of what we see around us shaping how we think. Urban form can take on new shapes as our understanding of nature evolves, but this happens more slowly.



1912 Baist Map indicates no building on Site 1121.

Duwamish place names.



Prior to 1937, there was a small craftsman house situated close to the street corner. At this time, electric street cars served 45th St. and University Way where a municipal center known as Brooklyn was growing alongside the University of Washington campus.

The University had been relocated to its present site in the late 1800s. The Brooklyn neighborhood, as the University District was initially called, had a business district and several platted additions, but only one streetcar line served the area and only one road – via the Latona Bridge – to Seattle. On the Brooklyn addition map, University Way -- aka the Ave -- is named Columbus Street, Brooklyn is called Broadway, 12th Avenue is named for the addition, and 45th Street is called Franklin. The neighborhood was incorporated into the Seattle city limits in 1891, along with Ballard, Fremont, and Wallingford.

In the earliest days of white settlers this location was a wooded hillside overlooking Lake Duwamish (later Lake Washington) and Lake Union. According to a surveyor's field notes, the land along the future 45th Street was "First rate [with] cedar, hemlock, maple and alder." Near the place that would become the intersection of 15th Avenue NE with 45th Street NE the surveyors described several fir trees with bases 10 feet around. About half a mile south of the future 45th Street, the surveyors crossed an Indian trail that connected two Indian camping sites, one on Portage Bay near the foot of present-day Brooklyn Avenue, the other on Union Bay near the present-day University of Washington power plant.

Before white people came, fir trees with bases 10 feet around were everywhere. This was the home of the Duwamish people for many many generations. Their name for Lake Washington was "great-amount-of-water" and Lake Union "small great-

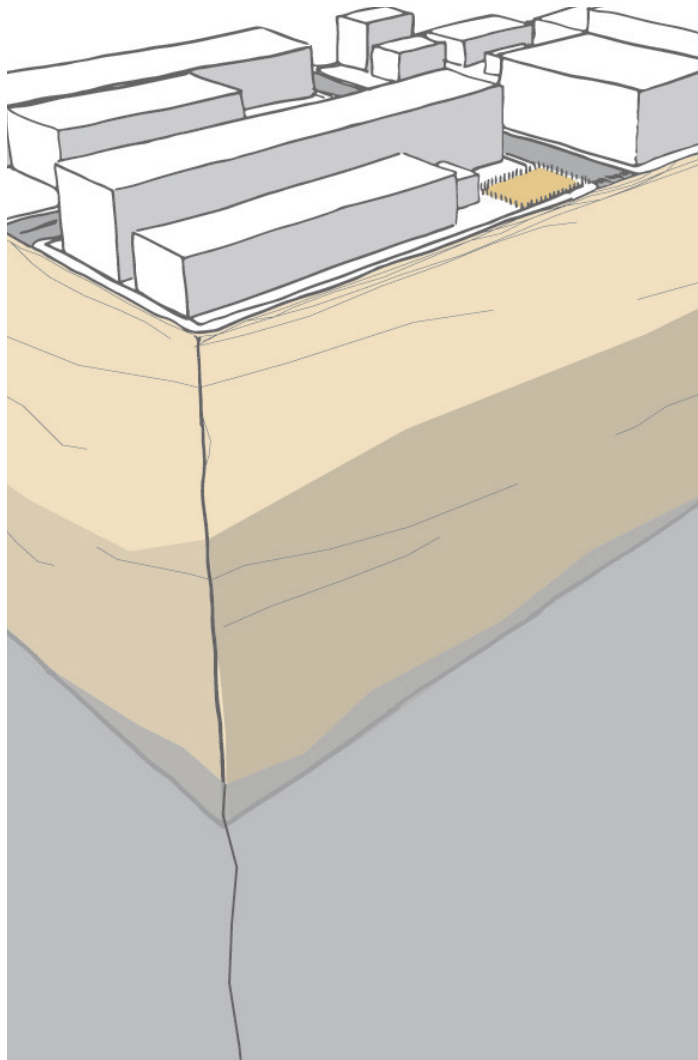
amount-of-water". It is unlikely that there was any significant Duwamish encampment near the place where Site 1121 is today, as these traditionally were found nearer the shoreline.

We can imagine, though, the old growth timber stands with shady sloping fern-clad terrain underneath. According to Colin Thrus's *Native Seattle*, there were camas prairies nearby on the north side of "small great-amount-of-water" that were kept clear and abundant with edible plants and game through seasonal burning by the Duwamish people.

Today, the shade once cast by immense conifers is cast by buildings growing taller. The UW Tower was designed by NBBJ and built in 2006. There are many other office buildings near Site 1121 that are home to University departments. Other neighbors include apartment buildings, a dentist office, parking garages, and of course WSECU across the street. Many visitors to Site 1121 first saw the project from their office windows and came down for a closer look.

1121 45th st, 1936 King County Aerial Map





Site 1121 - Geotech Field Data

Surface elevation: 179'

Depth to groundwater: 60.5'

Elevations and Material samples from hollow-stem auger:

- 1.5" Asphalt/concrete*
- 1.5" Coarse base rock*
- to 7' Brown silty fine to medium sand with occasional gravel and organic matter (roots) (medium dense,) (fill)*
- to 11' Brown silty fine to medium sand with gravel (dense, moist) (glacially consolidated soils)*
- to 18' Gray sandy silt (very stiff, moist)*
- to 23' Gray fat clay with pockets of gray silty fine sand (very stiff, moist)*
- to 28' Gray silt with sand (very stiff, moist)*
- to 40' Gray silty fine to medium sand (dense, moist)*
- to 48' Gray fat clay (approximate 2 inch layer of gray silty fine sand with clay layering) (very stiff, moist)*
- to 51' Gray silty fine sand (very dense, moist)*
- to 52' Gray fine to medium sand with silt (very dense, moist)*
- to 53' Gray sandy silt (hard, moist)*
- to 58' Gray fine to medium sand with silt (iron-oxide staining) (very dense, moist)*
- to 63' Brown fine to coarse sand with trace silt and occasional gravel (very dense, wet)*
- to 71' Gray-brown silty fine to medium sand with occasional gravel (very dense, moist) Grades to gray-brown silty fine to medium sand with gravel*

iii. Environment

In November 2015, WSECU hired GeoEngineers to perform a geotechnical evaluation of the site to verify its suitability for new construction. This required step in the planning and design process involves drilling two separate holes with a hollow-stem auger that pumps a slurry of excavated material back up to the surface where it is analyzed by field technicians. Distinct layers are identified and charted in a graph of soil horizons and compared to findings of similar corings made at other locations in the neighborhood.

Here are excerpts from the geotech report at Site 1121:

Introduction

This report presents the results of GeoEngineers' geotechnical engineering services for the development of the site located at the southwest corner of the intersection of NE 45th Street and 12th Avenue NE in Seattle's University District neighborhood.

Field Explorations

The subsurface conditions at the site were evaluated by drilling two borings, GEI-1 and GEI-2, to depths of approximately 70.5 and 50.7 feet below existing site grades, respectively.

Laboratory Testing

Soil samples were obtained during drilling and were taken to GeoEngineers' laboratory for further evaluation. Selected samples were tested for the determination of Atterberg limits, fines content and moisture content.

Surface Conditions

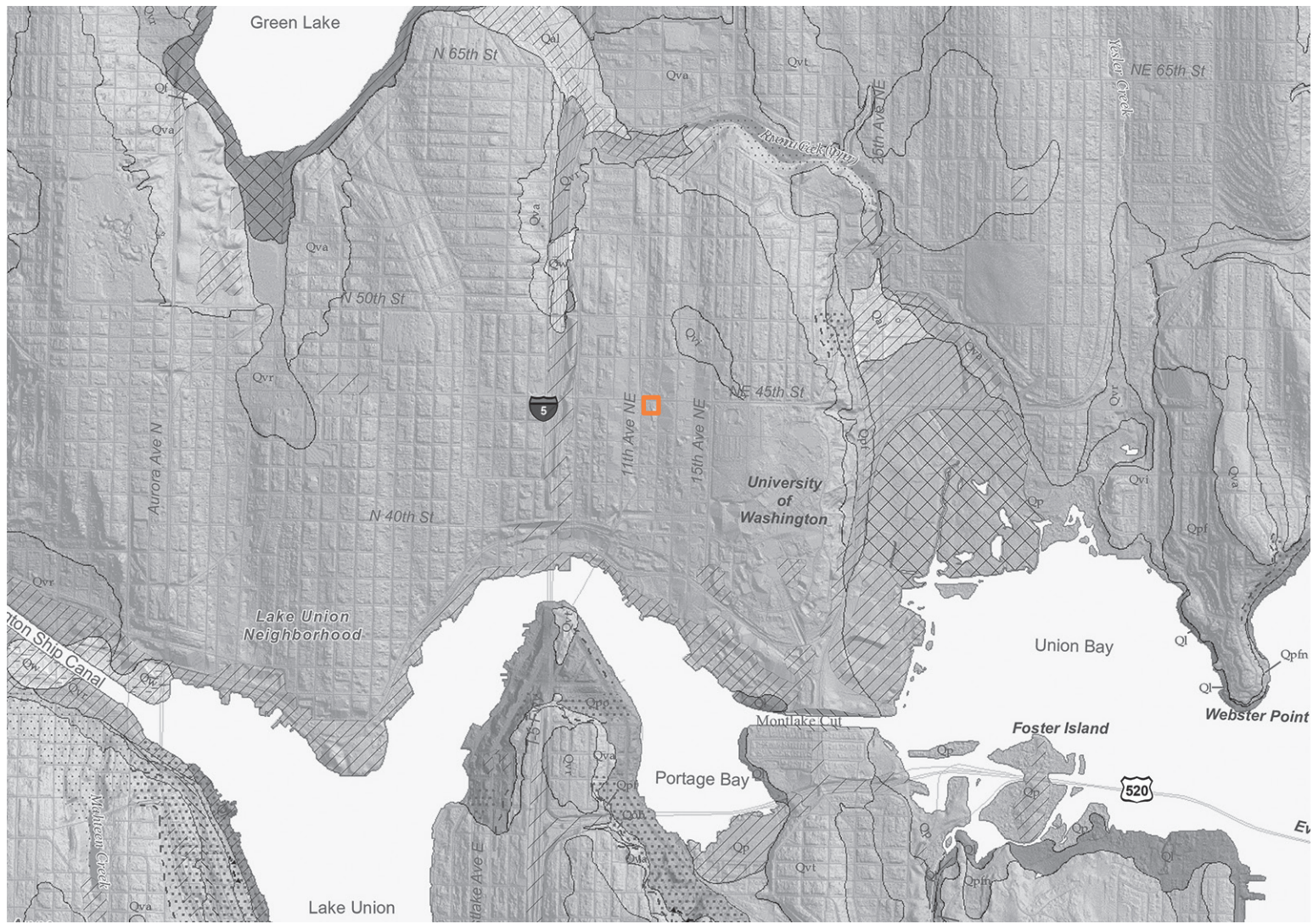
The site is currently occupied by surface parking in the western and south portion of the site. The site was previously occupied by a single story restaurant building that has been demolished above grade. The previously demolished building's concrete foundation elements are located in a fenced enclosure in the northeast portion of the site. The site gently slopes down from the northeast corner of the site to the south and west, with a total change in elevation of approximately 3 feet.

Numerous buried utilities are located within and near the project site and within the public right-of-way along the adjacent streets. These utilities include, but are not limited to, electrical, telecommunication, gas, water, and sanitary sewer and storm drain. Overhead power lines are located along NE 45th Street along the north side of the site.

Subsurface Conditions

The soils encountered at the site consist of relatively shallow fill overlying competent glacially consolidated soils. Fill was encountered in both borings and consisted of loose to medium dense silty sand with variable gravel content. The thickness of fill encountered in borings GEI-1 and GEI-2 was approximately 7 and 9-1/2 feet, respectively.

Glacially consolidated soils were encountered below the fill in both borings and extended to the depths explored. The glacially consolidated soils generally consisted of very stiff to hard silt and clay with varying sand and gravel content and dense to very dense sand with varying amounts of silt and gravel. Although not encountered during drilling, occasional boulders have been observed in glacially consolidated soils in nearby excavations and may be present at the site.



Excerpt, USGS map of Seattle.

Site Geology

To geologists, the layered volume of earth the geotech coring drilled down through is known as Vashon Till, a complexity of glacial recessional outwash deposited here in the Puget Lowland as the most recent ice age gradually ended, 10,000 years ago. Vashon Till is a mix of clay, silt, sand, and pebbles, deposited in broad lobes and subsequently shifted locally by sub-glacial riverine systems.

But the upper layer, 7-10' thick, that the geotech report calls simply "fill" is something different to just the surface layer of the Vashon Till formation. It is an urban-disturbed layer that in most cases defies geologic classification. The Soil Survey of King County avoids the formal mapping of Seattle proper because it is so disturbed by cut and fill operations associated with city building. Seattle is perhaps the most altered of any North American city through cut and fill, and Site 1121 very likely has an upper layer of imported fill put there on more than two occasions. In one test pit, a railroad spike was found.

The transience of occupation, or if you prefer, inhabitation, of this vacant lot by its various communities of creatures, plants, people, and cars, takes on a deeper meaning when we consider the vast scales of time and material deposition, erosion, and accretion that made the site. We might even understand that the vast terrain is itself in a continuous state of material flux. As this project unfolds, and we discover the layers of change and passing time in the site, we may become aware that the site itself is in motion, its physical location no more fixed in space than its myriad shifting meanings are in the public conversation.

Fleabane and mosses growing on Vashon Till spoils from geotech corings on site.



Site 1121 and WSECU

The original idea was for a temporary landscape art installation in a vacant urban site. It envisioned a simple, sculptural excavation modeled after an archaeological dig, with the intention of revealing the aesthetic and ecological qualities in the site. This idea was based on an instinct that people are very responsive to even small gestures of human caring and intentionality, especially in urban environments. As an art installation, it was designed to be an experiment that brings out this human response.

Having started a conversation with WSECU, the focus shifted somewhat to imagine the installation as part of a place-making opportunity. By “place-making” we mean expressing the goals and unifying vision of the credit union during the seminal time of building a new branch in the University District neighborhood. Curating a site as part of groundbreaking and “putting down roots” in the community has a lot of potential. A project at the site could involve credit union members and other stakeholders in a thoughtfully designed process. Beyond that, documenting the experience through images and storytelling could also be part of the “journey” of the credit union as it is described on the website.



Site 1121:
Field Notes

A TEMPORARY LANDSCAPE INSTALLATION

Stop by to observe landscape architects, artists, scientists, and the University District community, as they unearth, inspect and record the hidden complexities of this urban site.

March 21-25
10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Open House Friday March 25
12:00 PM - 5:00 PM

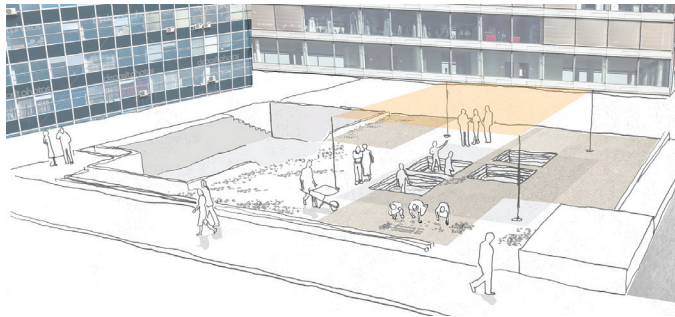
1121 NE 45th St
University District
Seattle

www.field-notes.org

iv. Sponsorship

Partnership with the Washington State Employees Credit Union made Site 1121 possible. Any field study depends not only on financial and logistical support, but must be given credibility as well. Often support of this nature comes from a University or similar institution. In the case of Site 1121, it was a shared concern for higher matters that brought the WSECU leadership to this sponsorship role, seeing an opportunity for community expression in an experimental landscape installation. Belief in the project on the part of WSECU leadership and employees gave the project credibility and elevated its appeal to a wider audience. As it is articulated in the field methodology outline, this kind of sponsorship is essential for a successful engagement.

The story of WSECU is one of local community and growth. The institution is founded on the premise that the group can help each individual with a need that otherwise could not be met. This core value found expression through Site 1121 in many ways, exemplifying the Unifying Vision which continues to sustain the growth and agency of the credit union.



In the early stages of the project, a brief property search online using the King County Parcel Viewer revealed WSECU as the owner of the vacant parcel. The WSECU website offers good information about the organization's commitment to community involvement and to cultivating volunteerism in its staff and membership.

A conversation with the credit union began with a visit to the branch location across the street from the site. My inquiry was warmly received by Trista Molé and we discussed the credit union's possible interest in a community design project. My inquiry was passed on to the leadership in Olympia.

A couple of days later I received an email from Ann Flannigan, Vice President of Public Relations, and we arranged a phone call for the following week. She listened to my idea for a temporary landscape art installation on the site and while expressing that the idea was unusual, she was curious to know more. It turns out that WSECU had been looking for some way to activate the site in response to questions on the part of stakeholders who have been submitting that the vacant lot is in need of some more intentional curating, something more befitting the organization's leadership role in the community.

As our conversation concluded, Ms. Flannigan said she would discuss the idea with board members and get back to me. Her response came November 11th that while the group had many serious questions about the legal and logistical feasibility of a temporary art installation on the site, they were still interested in pursuing the idea within practical limits. They were waiting for information and advice from their insurance agent before taking the next step. We discussed having another conversation involving board members, possibly leading to the chance for me to make a presentation.

LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

This Letter of Understanding records the agreement between Britton Shepard and the Washington State Employees Credit Union concerning the temporary landscape art installation at 1121 NE 45th St. during the month of March, 2016.

This letter sets forth a timetable for the project and details specific uses of the site. It is also meant to document the general nature of the understanding between Britton and the project representatives of the credit union: Ann Flannigan, Vice President of Public Relations and Mike Sanders, Real Estate Director.

The project being undertaken is part of Britton's master's thesis in landscape architecture at the University of Washington. For a synopsis of the project, refer to Appendix A.

WSECU and Britton agree that the project's place-making angle is a branding and publicity opportunity for the credit union. As a visible member of the University District community, WSECU is hosting the experimental garden in the vacant lot at 1121 NE 45th St., with a public Open House scheduled for the afternoon of Friday, March 25.

As sponsor and host of the project, WSECU will have editorial control over the project's branding, publicity, and coordination outside of the installation itself. Ownership of the project's design and creation, plus responsibility for coordination of the site installation itself, as well as the credit for the idea as intellectual property, belong to Britton Shepard.

This is a collaboration based on trust and dialogue. All decisions regarding project planning, including questions or problems that may arise, will be addressed between Britton, Ann, and Mike. As owner of the property, WSECU reserves the right to shut down the project for any reason, including but not limited to, issues of liability, safety and security, and/or risk to WSECU's brand or reputation.

AGREEMENT

A Letter of Understanding set forth the timetable and specific goals of the project. It also documented the general nature of the partnership founded on dialog and shared responsibility. The project design was tailored over time through this dialog.

Email from Ann Flannigan approving the project:

Britton:

Thank you for the all the thoughtful work you put into your presentation to us last week. It was great and really helped bring the project to life for the folks in the room.

I'm happy to say...Yes! WSECU will support the effort. We liked the way you've thought about it and agree it could be nice opportunity for us, too, as we transition this lot into a construction project and ultimately our new home in the U-District. We're fostering a spirit around here of trying new things – this is certainly a new thing!

Mike Sanders will be your main logistical contact related to the lot itself, access, scheduling, equipment, etc. I will focus more on the relationship side – who we want to be involved, what are the PR opportunities, connecting with neighbors, etc.

I think we have some more talking to do with the three of us. Probably smart to get a few things down on paper as a letter of understanding.

Maybe a conference call Friday or Monday?

Looking forward to working together.

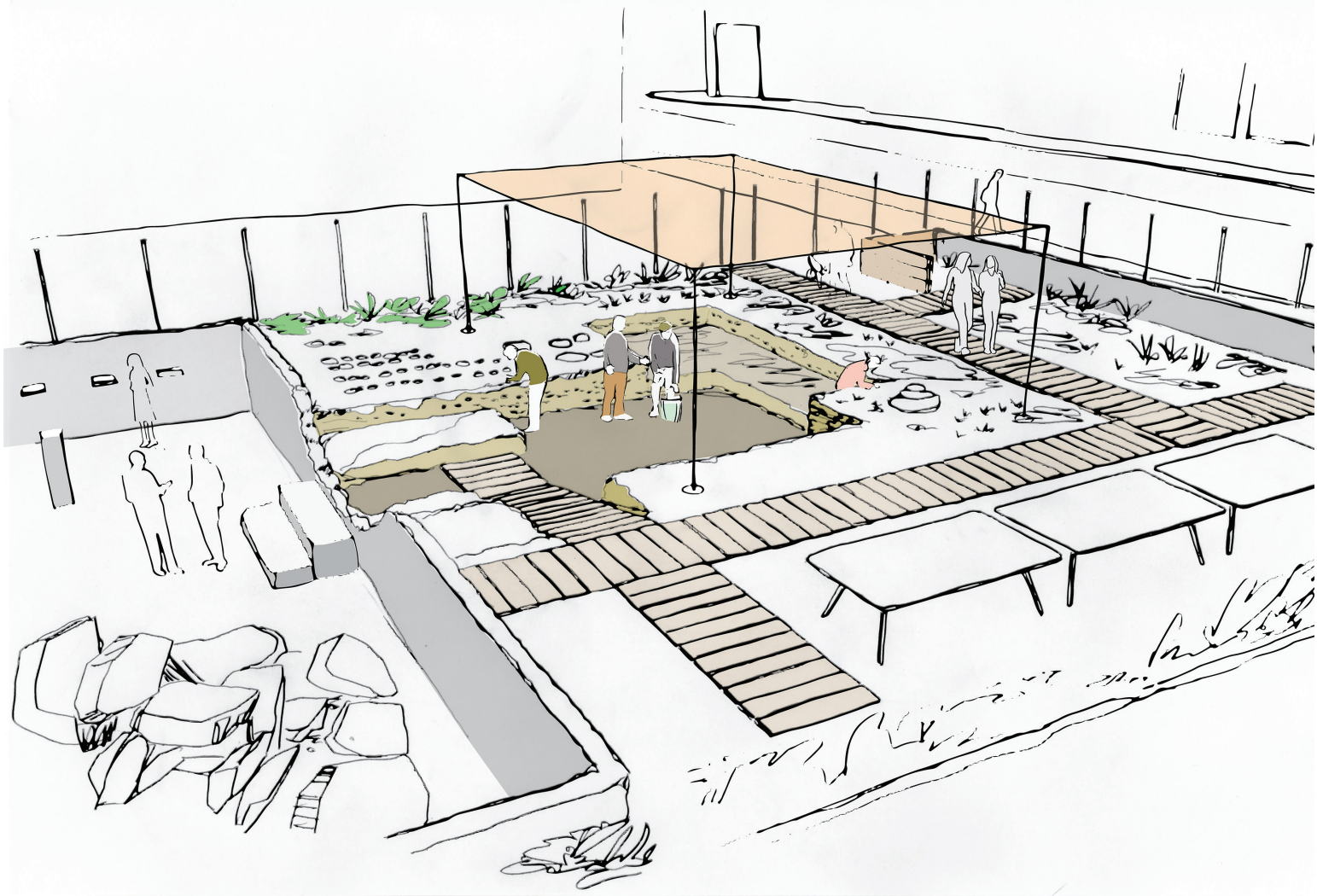
Ann

On January 28, I drove down to Olympia to present the project idea to Ann Flanningan, Mike Sanders, and two others on the Board of Directors at WSECU. In addition to describing the project from the point of view of deep form and urban sites in transition, I was careful to highlight the project as a community stewardship opportunity and an enriching way for the WSECU group to begin a new chapter in their growth.

The small group was particularly impressed by historic photographs of the old restaurant building that had occupied Site 1121 before, and agreed that the site had potential for an activation designed to tell the story of the place in a way that embraced change as an opportunity, and that made their plans visible and inviting to the neighborhood. For me, the most important thing about our meeting was the fact that all of us in the room saw eye to eye about the value of a thoughtfully designed collaboration.



This banner was posted on the fence at Site 1121 to announce the project and to encourage visitors to come into the site to see what was happening.



v. Personnel

Student and Volunteer Participation

The week-long installation was pitched to volunteers as a way to get involved in the neighborhood community in a light-hearted way that could lead to something unexpected. For landscape architecture students in particular, it was a unique chance to do site analysis on a closed site.

Here is how participation was proposed to volunteers:

Site 1121 is a temporary installation in an overlooked vacant lot here in the U-District that explores landscape as a process rather than the formal built outcome we typically expect. The goal of the project is to gain a deeper understanding of our urban habitat by working directly with a site in a new way. Throughout the installation week, we will employ methods of scientific field study, basic design and construction techniques, and the art form of assemblage, to re-imagine and re-invent this urban site that is taken for granted.

Each role is an opportunity for making a special contribution to the project whole. Above all, this is a participatory experiment, and the more we students from the MLA program get involved, the greater the project's success will be!

The idea is for each individual to choose a role and a date, and plan to spend 2-3 hours on site. There will be a brief questionnaire and task list for your role that you can use as the basis for your field work. Each person's participation is up to them, and we encourage your intuitive process in working with your findings on site.





WSECU VOLUNTEERS

Employees from the credit union made their own timetable to participate in the installation. One of the special roles WSECU played was to greet visitors to the site, answer questions about the project, and show people around.



ROOTS VOLUNTEERS

A crew of volunteers from the local ROOTS Youth Homeless Shelter also participated in excavation work. WSECU has been a supporter of the ROOTS mission for several years and Site 1121 was an opportunity to expand their partnership.

Each participant was encouraged to choose a Project Role from the following list and sign up for one 2-3 hour shift:

Site Preparation + Marking (March 17,18)
- labor (site cleanup, initial marking, signage)

Site Framing, Construction, Excavation (March 19,20)
- labor (digging)
- labor (driving)
- labor (site maintenance)

Site Documentation (March 21-24)
- field notes and observations
- sketching of artifacts, section walls, plants and roots
- photography of site, artifacts, personnel
- specialty field studies by archaeology, geology, botany
- selected interviews, recorded or transcribed

Site Materials Handling (March 21-24)
- light excavation
- sorting and cataloging materials
- curating displays and gallery space
- compiling field report

Site Curation (March 22-25)
- gathering documents in file
- reassemblage and gallery presentation of found materials
- receiving visitors and leading tours: docent
- on site image projection

Open House (March 25)
- planning and media feeds
- greeting, hosting, answering questions
- prepare pamphlet and signage

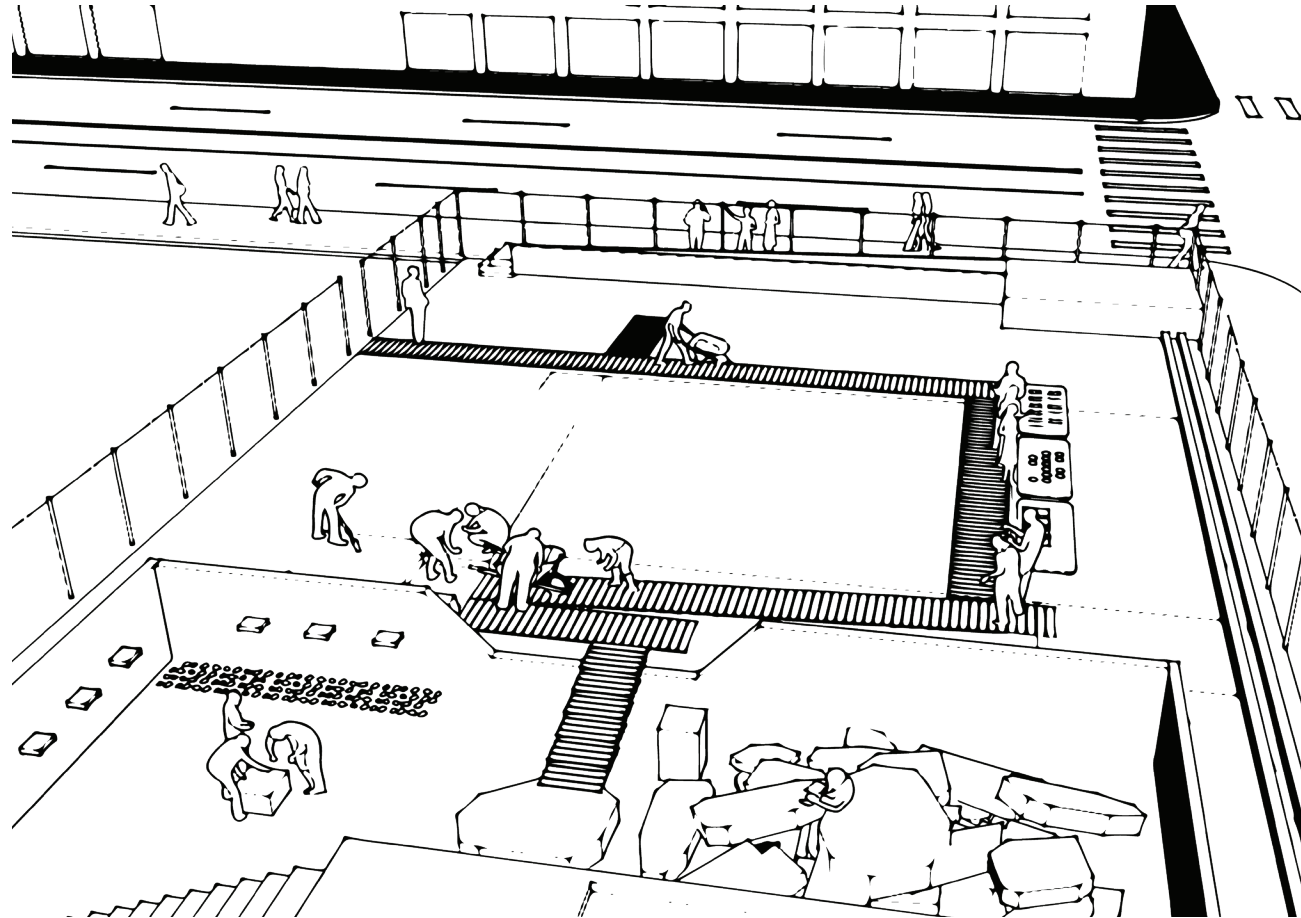


Simple framing can communicate powerful meanings. In the case of Site 1121, the chain link fence, for example, tells people “don’t come in here: this is a non-site, set aside for something else.”

The design of Site 1121 employs equally simple yet powerful communication tools to invert this meaning. This reframing announces that something new and interesting is happening here, and invites people to come in and take a look.

Our understanding of place in the urban context depends on this kind of language. As mentioned before, cities embody assemblages of materials and complex, interconnecting systems of exchange that have far surpassed the human scale. In typical urban sites, people are no longer able to perceive their own belonging there, largely because the framing of processes is not designed to communicate the human experience. The framing in a city street generally privileges automobile traffic, or stormwater control, or the kind of property ownership that excludes — this is the technoeconomic paradigm.

What we yearn for is a different sense of ownership, one that is inclusive, that we are able to recognize, to understand at a glance. This sense of recognition is familiar and innate to us, even when it is missing.



vi. Site Layout

The site layout minimizes the introduction of new elements and curates what is already there. The framework is merely a stage, inviting activity rather than installing it.

A requirement is the slow, in-depth site work that engages people in the process instead of just a designed product.

First, a plan for moving through the site is transposed onto the surface, beginning at the entry gate and traversing to the foundation ruins. Excavated materials can be wheeled to the spoils pile.

The forms cut methodically into the terrain create a textural, aesthetic quality that draw us in. These visible forms frame and organize the unfolding processes of the work.



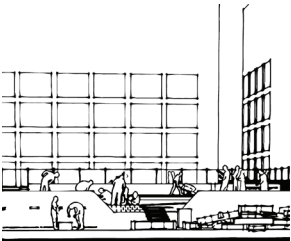
There was an interesting tension between the new framing and the old.

DEEP FORM

For a city to become a truly human ecosystem it must embody physical, emotional, and cultural realms in human terms. Such a landscape will have DEEP FORM because, underlying its surface and giving it deeper substance is a cohesive, fundamental order.

Thus, deep form is shaped by both the interactions of inner ecological processes and human understanding which can make the underlying order visible and meaningful in human terms.

- John Lyle

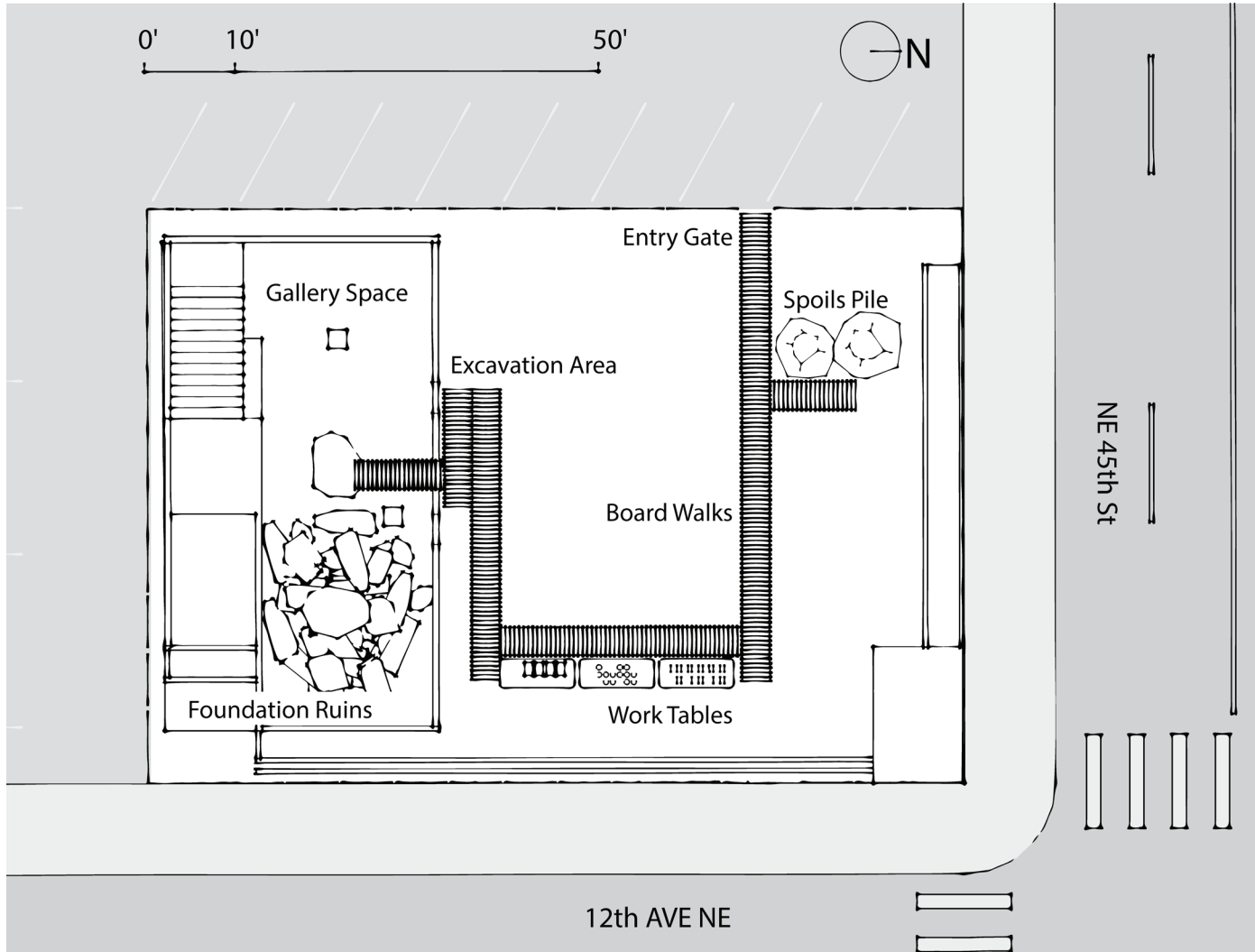


Deep Form requires a return to a relationship we had before, in which the visible forms of the landscape are manifestations of human understanding.

Places built around human reach and movement express a compromise between nature and human desires that allows us to reclaim deep forms in urban nature.

- Kongjian Yu





SITE PLAN

The site's physical framing derives from temporary constructions found on an archaeological dig site: signage, boundaries, walkways, and work tables. These forms are recognizable expressions of human curiosity. They reveal hidden connections and invite participation.



Foundation ruins during initial site clean-up. Sand bags containing dirt and rubble were later used to retain the excavated grade pictured here.



Boardwalk sections were prepared in advance and assembled on site.

vii. Field Notes

Saturday 3.19

Mobilize boardwalks, tent, and tools to site. AJ, Nats, Robert, Matt, Ian and me. Robert and I place hardware on poles, and pull the cable up, then hang tent using carabiners.

Nats, AJ, and Ian place boardwalks, screw them to wood stakes. Spoils from the geotech coring already piled near entry gate. We will add to this pile, and place a boardwalk 'offramp' for wheelbarrow dumping.

We also set about picking up garbage, and an interesting question arises as to what is it garbage or artifact? For now, we just say that anything mildly interesting we keep, the rest is garbage. It is Vice 101: cigarette packs, a can of chewing tobacco, energy drink and beer cans, a tiny liquor bottle, packaging from a single-smoke type of marijuana, plus a needle and even a glass crack pipe. These things we set aside for possible inclusion in our artifact array. We also keep a styrofoam cup-o-noodles cup, and a discarded food bank id card, a camping cup, hubcap, broken key chain, shaker of celery salt, faux leather belt, beef jerky bag, small bic lighter, aloe juice beverage container, a styrofoam take-out food box with smiley face embossed, and a blue ribbon. Among the things we decide are garbage are a potato chip bag, numerous beer cans and bottles, unremarkable scraps of paper or plastic, cigarette butts, and some kind of matted shirt or pants that just belong in the garbage. We also rake some leaves and small branches and set about tidying the place and restore a looked-after sense of neatness to the place.

In the gallery, we rake and sweep and scoop up the sand and dirt and debris, placing all into bright orange sand bags. These we set aside for using later in the framing of the site.



Sunday 3.20

Using a house jack, a round log section and a rock bar, move, centimeter by centimeter, the giant concrete wall slab from the rubble pile, and position as landing for stairs or ramp down into gallery space. Continue tidying gallery space, editing debris and rubble pile to invite wandering and looking around. The weeds found throughout the site sprout from the rubble pile too, and from all conceivable interstices in the joints and cracks of concrete where dust and dirt accumulate. There are artifacts too, including the basement window poured shut in concrete. This oddity suggests that the original grade along the W side of the existing foundation was 4-5' lower than now, probably matching the present sloping grade of the adjacent alley. There is a retaining wall running along the alley that levels the parking area up to the elevation of NE 45th st. The concrete stairs that hang in mid-air and are everyone's favorite feature here were likely poured with the stairwell and scabbed-on foundation extension that looks to have been done at the same time as the window pour. The cleanly-poured vertical edge of the wall midway through the N side of foundation corroborates that the grade was likely significantly lower. Wow would it be great to take our excavations down into this older layer!



Spontaneous Urban Plants

"The site lay open for awhile, then was fenced in. At first the site was all concrete steps and rubble, but just like Mt. St. Helen's after the blast, the vegetation and wildflowers started to come back."

- Comment from a visitor to Site 1121



Faculty from the Center for Urban Horticulture and Biology Departments assisted in identifying plants.



Sketching plants.

Monday 3.21

Arrive on site at 7:00. Solo. Morning light and light rain. Put up tent in 45 minutes.

Will comes to operate the ground-penetrating radar unit with some success. He placed three collinear marking flags within our prescribed dig grid.

Kern came by to look at the plants and later sent an email identifying 10-12 plants:

Quack grass, *Agropyron repens*
 Bluegrass, *Poa pratensis*
 Bentgrass, *Agrostis tenuis*
 White clover, *Trifolium repens*
 Red clover, *T. pretense*
 Sweet clover, *Melilotus* spp.
 Goldenrod, *Solidago Canadensis*
 Sow thistle, *Sonchus asper* (large composite with yellow flowers)
 Groundsel, *Senecio vulgaris*
 Horseweed, *Conyza Canadensis*
 Everlasting, *Gnaphalium chilense* (very fuzzy plant)
 Sagina, *Sagina procumbens* (small moss-like plant in pink family)
 Many mustards
 Mosses

Jennie comes too, stays a while sketching plants.

Gabriel has his tripod out, shooting as Will makes a few passes with the GPR unit.

With Mark's help we make some significant progress excavating to improve the grade transition down into the gallery space. Gabriel comes back; we finish the work day digging down to the foundation wall, then take down the tent and clean up the site. Mark is very excited about the tight vertical grain in much of the wood scraps we are finding. This indicates old growth wood. His enthusiasm is contagious and I am enjoying the digging and conversation as we reckon out just where in the building these pieces might have been used.

Earlier, Katie comes by and we look back at the geotech report; try to match some of the more distinctive spoils from the borings to the material types found at different depths. Katie takes samples and arranges a continuum of clay to sandy-clay variation.

Gapy from WSECU comes too. With Katie, the three of us discuss how we might arrange the site to have a better street interface for drawing in curious passersby and somehow recording their comments and perceptions. There is a lot of pedestrian traffic. Many show a curiosity for the project, and a handful want to discuss and even enter the site to find out more. Tom came back and took pictures. Beth from day before.

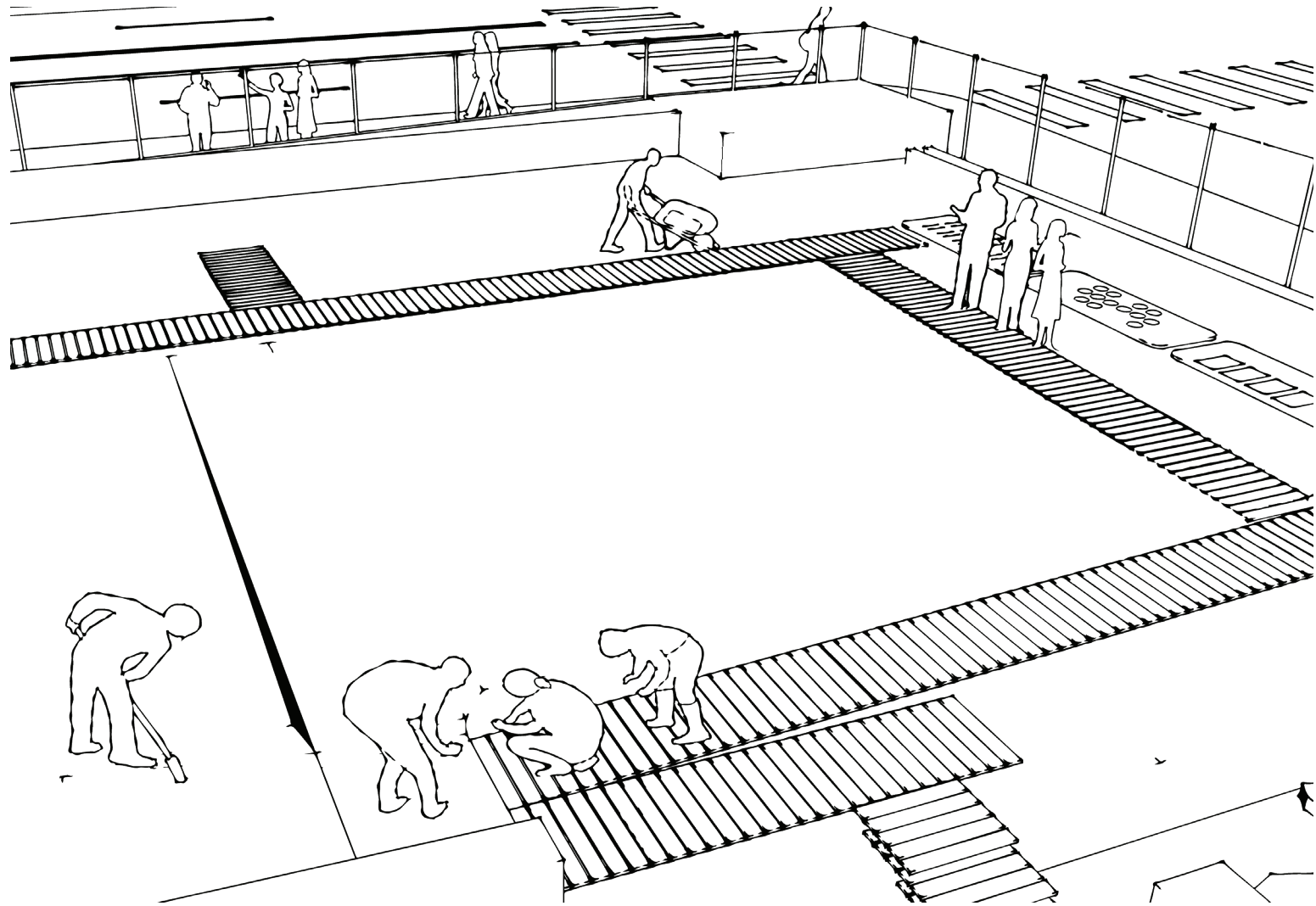
This "gallery space" is a tiny vastness of the reciprocal condition at work, and is perhaps the most rich place for assemblage and curating found materials on site. In one place, a pair of wires protrudes from a fragment of foundation wall (wood grain relief), indicating the form tying technique used in the '30s and before. It seems likely that chunks of terrazzo curbing piled in with the other concrete rubble remain from art deco walkway and parking edges of the 1930s construction. Twisted rusting rebar snakes in and out of the rubble pile.

Cantilevering concrete stairway with rusted skeletal rebar ground pins, builder's sand substrate spills from underneath onto gallery floor. Pioneer community of plants growing in cracks, and upon the eroding sand's angle of repose.

Sand, gravel, small debris go into orange sandbags. The floor is swept and garbage removed.

The yellow contraption pictured here is a ground-penetrating radar tool. It is used by making passes over the terrain as it sends out a signal that bounces off the material beneath the surface. The signal bouncing back reports differently to the receiving unit and variations displayed on the monitor indicate locations and depths of relative anomalies. We located a buried sheet of metal one foot square, among other items.





A note on excavations:

Placement of boardwalks begins at gate and moves directly across site, then turns 90° to south, following the project design. The intention is to establish direct access that goes around central area where the “dig” will unfold. Upon arrival to transitional area near middle of N foundation wall, there is approx. 60” of elevation change that needs dealt with. Using the slab positioned in gallery floor, and stacking boardwalk sections into stairway, something like 48” is gained, leaving about 12” to negotiate from the point where the boardwalk turns 90° back west. This is where our excavation work begins and moves westward.

Place the first string line here, along N edge of this E/W boardwalk section. Second string line placed at end of boardwalk section at 90° (see site plan sketch)

Excavation work tends to follow one of two methods. The first involves simply digging to make room for boardwalks. Work is unhurried, and many “artifacts” are discovered and set aside. Sorting begins informally as if by instinct: broken terra cotta drain tiles; electrical wires, conduits, etc.; pipe fragments, plumbing fittings, random bits of metal pertaining to buildings and their maintenance; wood fragments, exclusively from from the building (no ‘organic’ wood such as roots or branches).

The second method of excavation involves screening of dug materials using screen and wheelbarrow and workers “pawing” through the soil and rocks and setting aside anything “not-a-rock”. Here again sorting begins and for now the collection is placed in shifting piles of findings for going through later.

Work in both of these methods moves along slowly, a design of the project. It is interesting that the soil here where we have chosen to dig is darker than at any other spot on the site. Discerning from old photographs of Clarks, I chose this spot for the starting point of the dig as it had been outside the original building footprint. You can see from recent aerials, however, that its more recent incarnations (1970s? and after) covered the entire rectangle now enclosed by the fence. My guess is the darker soil is left over from the time when that soil was exposed and metabolizing. Anyhow, it does yield a lot of “artifacts”.

Tom Helleberg told me that the machine operator who demoed the building used a steel I-beam to scrape backfill and level and compact the grade. The entire building was brought down and hauled away in a single work day. Rubble from N foundations piled up in basement of S.





Direct experience in the field is how understanding begins as we translate the nature of things into language.



Tuesday 3.22

Tuesday morning again rainy. Attend to camera, unload tools, hoping for things to clear up and not require the tent. Do put up tent, but keep it drawn. Wait and see about the weather.

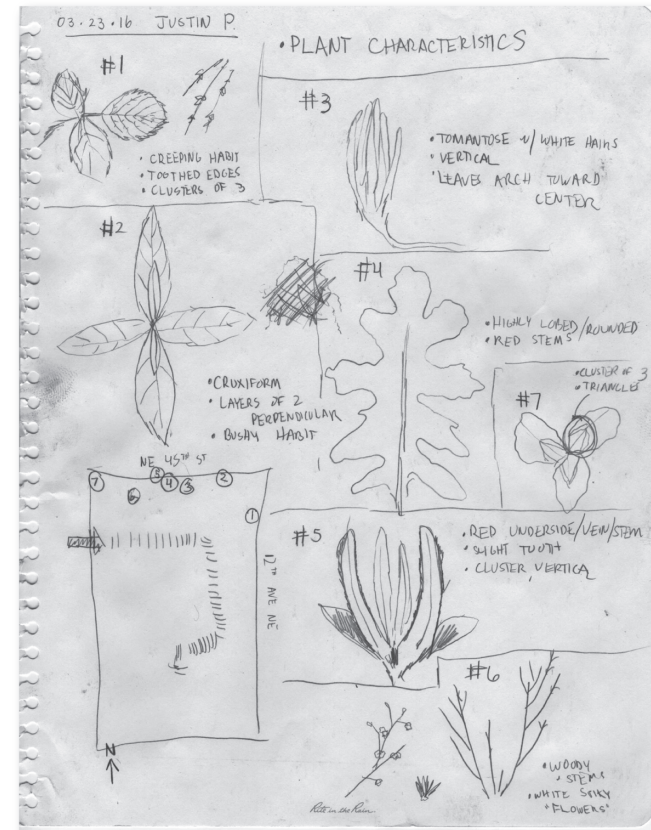
Arisa arrives. We set out all “findings” so far, she begins to sketch.

Christina from ROOTS comes with three volunteers, but not being ready for them — didn’t have the boots and rain gear I had vouched - ask, Could they come back in an hour?, giving time to run out and get the gear, which I regret because they don’t come back. Christina does return though; she and Arisa continue excavation and sifting through fill. Yana from WSECU comes to dig too. There was also Joe the wandering ROOTS guy who dug for a while and had pizza.

Dick Olmstead, UW Professor of Biology and Herbarium Curator, Burke Museum, comes by to assist with plant ID.



- Arabidopsis thaliana* – thale cress
- Betula pendula* – European white birch
- Brassica nigra* – black mustard (these are the dead stalks you have pulled into piles)
- Buddleja davidii* – butterfly bush
- Cardamine hirsute* – popweed; hairy bittercress
- Cerastium arvensis* – chickweed
- Cirsium vulgare* – bullthistle; common thistle
- Conyza canadensis* – Canadian fleabane
- Epilobium angustifolium* (= *Chamerion angustifolium*) – fireweed
- Hordeum murinum* – mouse barley
- Lactuca serriola* – prickly lettuce
- Poa pratensis* – blue grass
- Rubus idaeus* – red raspberry
- Senecio vulgaris* – common groundsel
- Sisymbrium officinale* – hedge mustard (I suspect this is what Kern called *Sonchus*)
- Soliva sessilis* – field burnweed
- Taraxacum officinale* – dandelion
- Trifolium pratense* – red clover
- Trifolium repens* – white clover



Field sketches.



Excavation crew sorting materials.



Leann and Coco also come, and there is quite a little work party going.

Arisa, Yana, Coco, Leann, Joe and I are digging just past where the boardwalk currently ends. This is the area in the site we had earlier identified as the main excavation square. From here we will continue the section walls following the string lines. We continue to find broken tiles and stucco, bright red, redder than terra cotta, almost maraschino, as well as glass bits. Sifting the excavated material through the screen also recovers rocks and pebbles which we place on a separate pile. Wheelbarrows full of screened soil are dumped on the spoils pile at the NW corner of site. This material is quite fluffy and fine after screening and would make a good base for topsoil, though we do not know about any pollutants it might contain. Smells good. We also find bits of flashing and some curious masonite “tiles”, each 6” square. There are numerous sections of pipe and plumbing fittings: pieces of copper and old galvanized steel waterline, also ABS drain lines; we find two rusty gate valves, and two heavy brass oil tank valves, with ½” soft copper piping stubbed out. A variety of nails and other fasteners

Weather turns pretty sunny.

Elizabeth Billings, WSECU in-house graphic designer and publicist, walks the site, taking pictures.

By end of day, boardwalks extend to “dig site”. Ready for connecting to steps down into gallery space.





Artifacts and conversations.



Wednesday 3.23

Wednesday's visitors to the site include Nats, Melody, Leif, Justin, the ROOTS boys, Gabriel M., Rich, Gabriel Campanario, Mark, and also Ann Flanningan.

The ROOTS boys make a modest work party, talking all the while, sifting through material and setting aside "not-a-rock"s, a term they coined. We have pizza for lunch and they split.

It makes sense to be digging here today. Boardwalks placed, tables arrayed with things we've discovered, there is a pulse going, a quiet and steady tempo, people engaged in tasks and conversing, people dropping by off the street to find out what's going on.

Mark and Nats are fascinated by the tight grain of some 2x4 fragments we find. There are two old oil tank valves, brass, heavy. The tables arrayed with sorted "finds" the centerpiece of the site this afternoon. Rich makes an inventory.

With each act of moving things around and straightening up, the gallery space grows into the "place for arriving". Following a moment of insight, we stack the sandbags to make a sofa, and it turns out to be quite comfortable for sitting. This view from the gallery up and out of the site a particularly privileged moment. The building across the street rises above the terrain visible above the crumbling foundation wall. Section wall cut into site fill reveals buried bits of rock and building debris. On the easy sloping boardwalk sits an empty wheelbarrow.

Last, Nats and I put up tools and repack all of the artifacts. Crates and buckets put in order, stray rocks or bits of wood are placed kind by kind, and we pull away for the night.



Thursday 3.24

First task this morning, after setting up work tables and boxes of sorted artifacts — some housekeeping in the gallery space. Continue placing concrete blocks as step down from giant slab landing, and single large block as plinth at center of gallery floor. Sweeping, editing, making room for walking and inspecting. Place railing posts (roto-hammered to foundation wall).

Next we place the last boardwalk sections to connect the boardwalk to the gallery stairs.

Two new helpers from WSECU, Jessie and Lai, join the excavation, digging into an interesting seam of bright red stucco fragments, crumbly like hard mud, and assorted bits of broken glass, tile, and rusty nails.

Rachel comes, walks around the site taking macro pictures. She insists on doing more to lightly edit the site for impressions of orderliness and visual clarity. She and Nats pick up more garbage, rake, and place found items on the large concrete landing in NE lot corner.

She also begins to sort the pile of screened rocks and pebbles that we accumulate in the space N of entry boardwalk. She makes a simple mandala.

Around noon. Sun coming out. We set the artifacts out on the tables.

The gallery space has come together nicely: commodious steps down to massive landing block with its rubblized broken edges — very heavy and static to stand on. Steps down from here

of smaller rubble pieces, and a rubble cube centered in floor space where we have started to place the best pieces of glass, broken mirror, and glass block from the original construction (you can see the glass block in two separate places in the 1939 photograph).

Gabriel is back. He plans to film for most of the afternoon but stay out of the way :) Later this afternoon he will interview Ann. She comes to the site too, around noon. For a time we are all content to stand around talking. A few folks from the sidewalk drop by too.

Patrick Pirtle stops by and we discuss the project for a time. He joins us for lunch: pupusas! from down the street.

Laura Haddad comes. We look around the site for a time, then start digging. She works on a small excavation pit right near the entry boardwalk where Will had placed a flag. And, turns out there is a large metal square buried right here, some sort of small hatch cover or panel, 12” square, 1/16” thick steel. Laura digs the pit and finds many bits of tile and glass, and an interesting metal fitting. An artist friend of hers stops by and we chat for a while as Laura digs about digging and Kurt Schwitters.

Jack Tomlinson of UrbanSparks happens by. He knows Laura and her artist friend and they talk for a while too. Rachel continues to work on the mandala.

Feifei is here. She sits on the boardwalk edge by Laura and sketches the site: weeds and broken walls, workers. She draws Laura digging. Later she draws me digging, as well as some of the artifacts.

Elizabeth Billings is back taking pictures. To me she seems quite proud of the project. I think this feeling has been growing within our core group all week.

Nats and I place the final boardwalk section above the main excavation wall, square to another and marking the corner of the dig site. Here is where we place items as we dig.

Now the gallery space is empty except the sofa, landing, and center plinth. The stair ruins now more captivating than ever with gritty underside and rust showing, moss and weeds retaking it through its slow cracking apart, layers of chipping paint exposed pebbles. This whole time I have been curious as to why the demolition of this wall section occurred at all. Glad the stairs were left. There is another set of stairs up on the other side of the wall, facing the back parking area. Now, it begins abutting the fence and ascends to a nice overlook of the gallery and site works.

Ann Flannigan comes back and we visit, look at the artifacts and the gallery space. Discuss plans for tomorrow morning and prep for Open House.

I refine the hole Laura was digging, making it crisply circular, and somewhat deeper. I carve and brush the sides to expose the rubble and remnants protruding from the walls. Gabriel places a camera at the bottom to capture looks down in. He also has his main camera on tripod out filming as we continue excavations. Rachel finds a rusty plumb bob point, a steel cone 1.5" tall with a small stem and black rubber gasket for fitting into the missing shaft. My favorite found item, it turns out.

Then LJ comes by, a twenty-something kid with a super fresh energy. He's curious about what we're all doing here, so comes in for a look. He is drawn to the collection of glass and mirror bits on the gallery plinth and begins arranging the pieces. We are all so pleased by his presence. He spends about an hour working silently, once in a while asking if there are any more pieces, which we bring. When he's finished, we talk a bit more then he speeds away on his bicycle. His composition gets the name *Milky Way Reflections*.



Around 4:00, we start putting away the artifacts and breaking down the tables. Rachel has finished the mandala, Gabriel moves about, filming. Put tools back in truck. Our friend, Chris, from Whidbey Island stops by. His office is across the street and overlooks the site.

By 5:00 the site is empty and still. We go home.



Friday 3.25

Matt comes to the site first thing in the morning to help Nats and me with the fine tuning of the gallery space. Unearth a few of the fluted curbstones and put up the railing, adjust a few sand bags.

Hailey is here and, working with our complete plant list, begins digging up specimens to arrange on the botany table in the gallery. A handwritten ID card is placed with each specimen. We hang the sieve above the table.

Rachel comes to the site with a poster showing the 30+ plant types from the site found and named so far. We hang this on the entry gate. She also has printed a selection of macro images which we hang from an orange string on the W gallery wall.

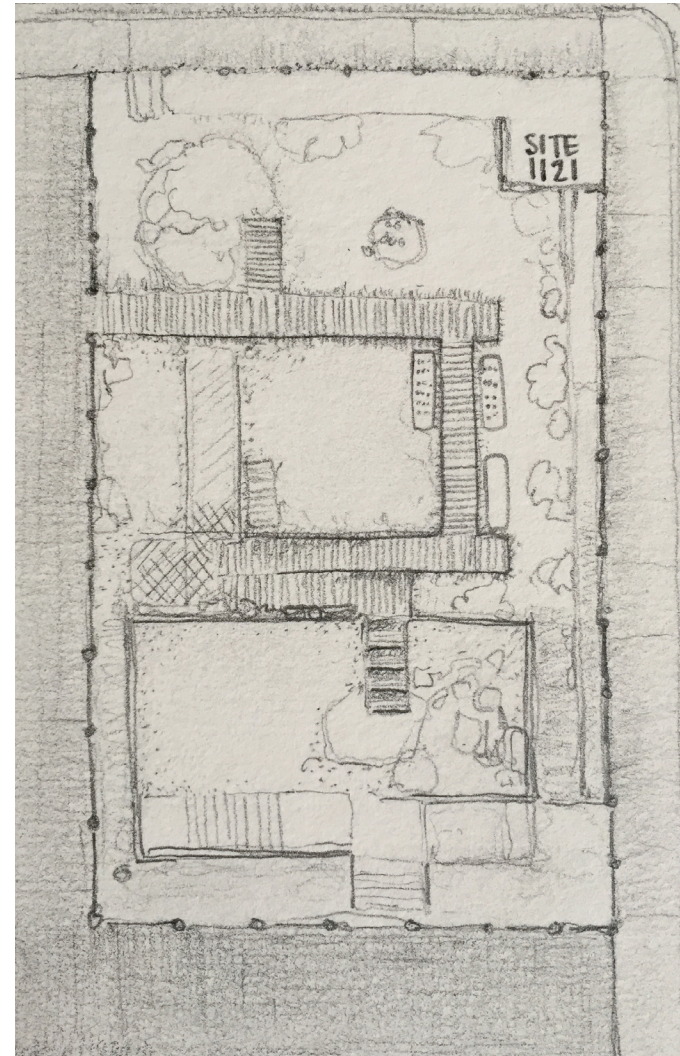
I spend the entire day talking with visitors to Site 1121.





At a stillpoint that afternoon, I sit with Ann and we reflect on the completeness of the project. She asks how I'm feeling about how the week's installation has come together, and I remark that it has in an almost eerie way all happened just the way I had envisioned. We made preparations, all those emails and conversations defining roles and entreating people to participate, knowing that it would be people convening here that would make this "temporary art installation" into something meaningful. We put up the banner, reached out for support, promoted the project as a community undertaking; signed up not-yet-sure people to dig and sift and set aside not-a-rocks, array them on tables for looking at, people we knew would become insiders; recruited landscape students to make sketches focusing on what was there, lavishing attention on dirt and weeds and garbage and remnants, sorting and naming and piecing together an understanding of what is here; built and stacked in the truck bed the boardwalks which we placed like a lego kit into the site to make a boardwalk such as you would walk on through a wetland park, or Yellowstone, a sturdy puncheon bridge that immediately made the vacant lot into a garden of specimens, not a garden set out by human designers, but rather one proliferating by a trustworthy unfolding process of incipient life always striving.

We sit on the concrete wall at the north end of the site looking past the boardwalks and artifact tables, over to where small groups of people from the neighborhood quietly talk. The foundation ruins we as a group came here to care about, tidied, organized, and inhabited, are now reclaimed as a meeting place. Yes, the idea all along had been to come here to this unique rectangular hole in the grid where the planet shines through for a short time, with its birch seedlings and carpeting of mosses, growing over artifacts buried in fill. Did these things change through our curiosity and wonderment, or did we?





viii. Review of Findings

Artifacts

With field study begins a poetic reading of the site as we discover and name the elements. We reflect on the nature of these elements and on our kinesthetic belonging to the place. The revealing of material and ecological richness of Site 1121 engendered for each of us a sense of continuity and coherence in the landscape. The word 'remember' means to 'put back together', and as we reassembled the contents of the site we became aware of the vaster scales of time and terrain that are the foundation of the city.

The collective imagination is rooted in a sense of belonging. Our understanding of place deepens when we recognize the things that people did here before, and it is through familiarity and direct experience that we create deep form. The site is a kind of material transcript, a landscape we read as text. Interpretation and representation are process tools of design that guide how we shape the landscape.



Milky Way Reflections
LJ's glass mosaic.



I happened on the site and was drawn in by the activity and the inviting walkways and monster shower curtain that turned out to be a tent. Walked around, observed participants, and asked Britton lots of questions.

I was very much intrigued by the goal of looking beyond the surfaces: the ground, the walls, and the veil of time. I'm both a people person and an engineer. So I enjoyed thinking about the people and the technologies that had been here before.

In the front of the site I imagined people working quietly in desks, separated from the street by only walls and windows. The building as a thin-walled box of people was a strong image.

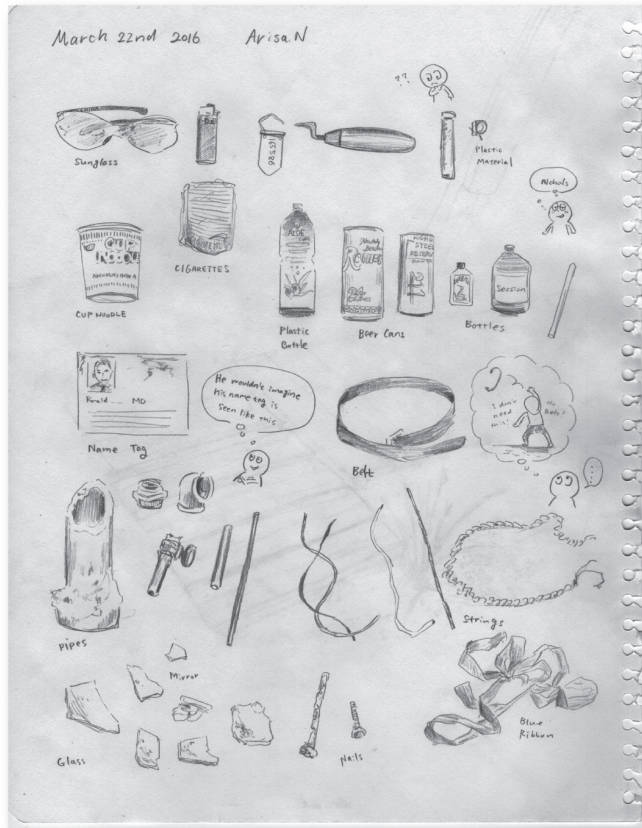
In the basement at the back of the site, I imagined dancers, musicians and patrons flowing in and out, energetically celebrating life in the massive anchoring corner of the building. On this side of the veil of time I found the sandbag sofa to be cool and inviting – beckoning visitors to sit and engage in a relaxed conversation. The stairs and walk ways similarly beckoned visitors to come and investigate the site and the activities of the project.

The engineer in me enjoyed seeing the corroding evidence of generations of technology in plumbing and construction debris. It appeared that the plumbing artifacts harkened from several different eras. The corroded chunks of metal felt like they had lifespans on the order of human lifespans, thus marking the generations of life that had occupied and will continue to occupy this place. While the people were gone the plumbing seemed to represent their moments in time.

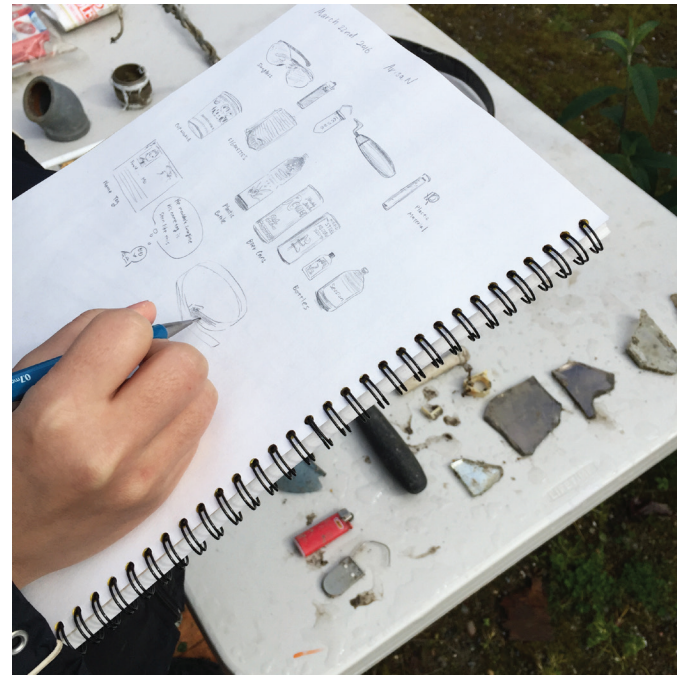
I imagined displays in the new building representing a timeline and stories that describe some of the history of the place and more importantly describing a way of seeing beyond the surface to the flow of humanity over time. I hope WSECU will incorporate a significant display in the public lobby of the new building.

Nice work Britton. By looking beyond the two dimensions and gentle flat curves that so often are the result of landscape architecture designs, you instead exposed gritty human frailty and created intimacies in the 3rd dimension of space and the 4th dimension of time. By inviting current participants to do as they would on the site, you again went beyond the surface of a plan and invited creative spontaneity to uncover what was in the human participants today.

- Jack Tomkinson, Urban Sparks



Artifacts sketch by Arisa Nakamura.



Arisa sketching artifacts.



Cut bell end of 3/4" soft copper pipe.



Restaurant spoon.



Plumb bob point.



Knob and tube electrical insulators.



Concrete.



Brass oil tank valve.



Artifacts sketch by Feifei Deng.

A Garden Revealed

Resembling a puncheon bridge crossing through a preserved wetland, boardwalks placed on site altered visitors' perceptions of the space, transforming the pioneer community of plants into a thriving garden.



Spontaneous Urban Plants

Reading the urban landscape as text involves interpretation. Among the many compelling narratives of Site 1121 is the cultural perception of weeds. Weeds grow where the landscape has been disturbed, where its ecological function has been disrupted or compromised or suppressed. When weeds grow in a garden they are often antithetical to it. In the case of a vacant lot, weeds mean neglect.

People relate to their environment through the perception of beauty, and in the same way that seeds awaken and plants grow in neglected sites, there is a similar hidden potential in the public imagination. Invisible seeds in the soil that spring forth when the lid is removed is a genuine expression of deep form, and has become a metaphor for Site 1121.

The field work of identifying and sketching the pioneer community of plants inverted our perception of them. Specimens arrayed on the display table was a key element in transforming the site through *assemblage*.



Botany table, Open House.

Plant Specimens

Faculty from UW landscape, botany, and urban horticulture departments assisted students in identifying and curating over 30 species of spontaneous urban plants, known also as ruderal vegetation, cosmopolitan weeds, or pioneer community.



SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Artemisia
Artemisia stenocephala **prairie weed**

SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants



SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Trifolium
Trifolium pratense **red clover**

SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants



SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Asteraceae
Achillea millefolium **spike-top yarrow**

SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants



SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Poaaceae
Poa annua **annual ryegrass**

SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants



SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Asteraceae
Achillea millefolium **spike-top yarrow**

SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants



SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Caryophyllaceae
Caryophyllus **stone-crop**

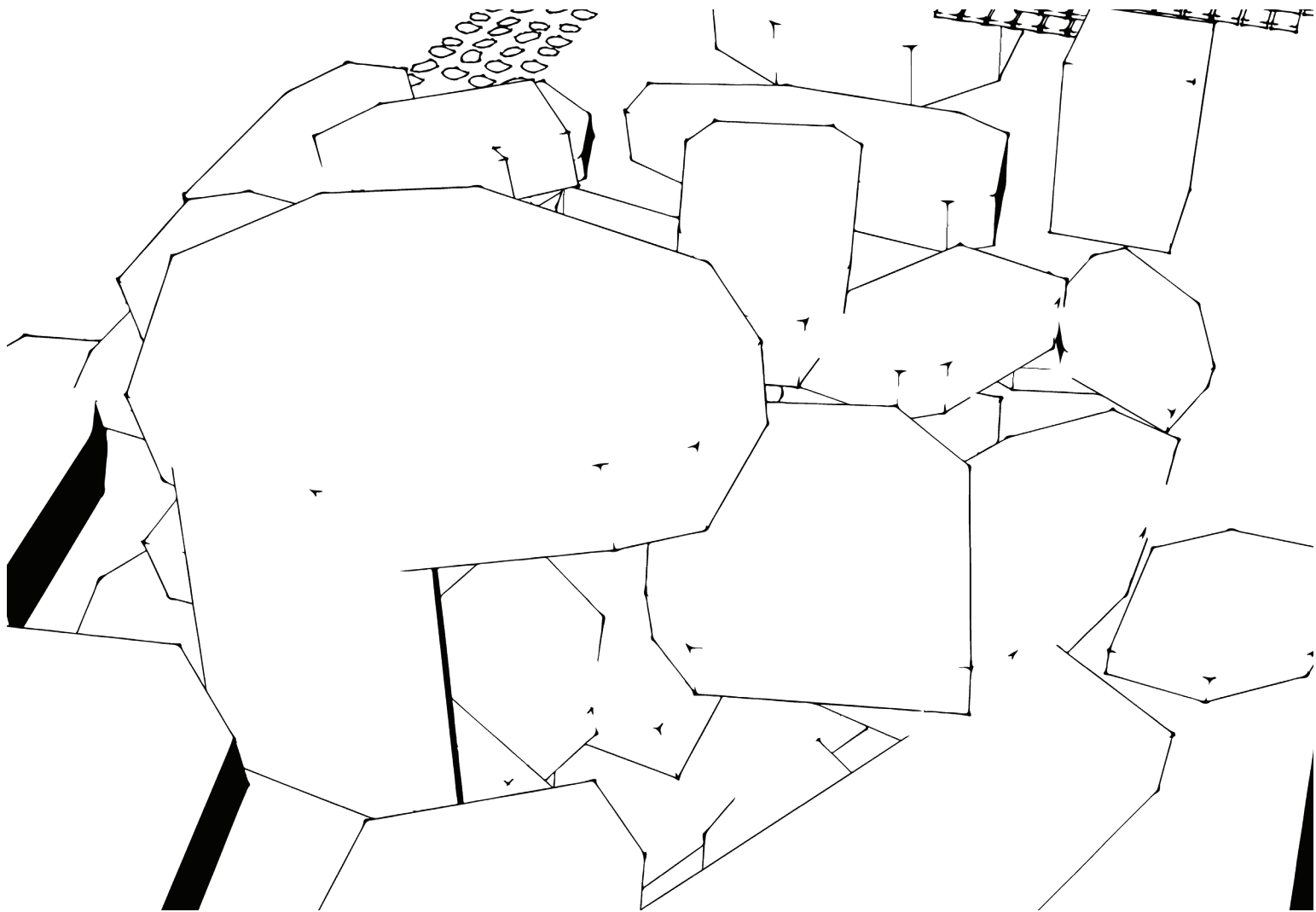
SIEM 1221 - Field Notes
Identification of Spontaneous Urban Plants

Site 1121 – Spontaneous Urban Plants

Agropyron repens – quack grass
Agrostis tenuis – bentgrass
Anaphalis margaritacea – pearly everlasting
Antennaria plantaginifolia – pussytoes
Arabidopsis thaliana – thale cress
Betula pendula – European white birch
Brassica nigra – black mustard
Buddleja davidii – butterfly bush
Cardamine hirsute – popweed; hairy bittercress
Cerastium arvensis – chickweed
Cerastium vulgatum – mouse-ear chickweed
Chondrila juncea – skeletonweed
Cirsium vulgare – bullthistle; common thistle
Conyza canadensis – Canadian fleabane
Epilobium angustifolium – fireweed
Gnaphalium chilense – everlasting
Hordeum murinum – mouse barley
Hypochoeris radicata – cat's ears

Juncus effusus – common rush
Lactuca serriola – prickly lettuce
Matricaria discoidea – pineapple weed
Melilotus spp. – sweet clover
Mimulus moschatus – muskflower
Poa pratensis – blue grass
Polygonum aviculare – common knotgrass
Rubus idaeus – red raspberry
Sagina procumbens – sagina
Senecio vulgaris – common groundsel
Sisymbrium officinale – hedge mustard
Solidago Canadensis – goldenrod
Soliva sessilis – field burrweed
Sonchus asper – sow thistle
Taraxacum officinale – dandelion
Trifolium pratense – red clover
Trifolium repens – white clover

Plus many worts, mosses, and grasses that eluded identification...



ix. Conclusions

A few people who came to Site 1121 asked, “Did you find anything valuable?” But we weren’t thinking in that way. Everything we found had at some point in time been cast aside. *Everything*. When you take things like garbage, weeds, or an abandoned site, and organize them, arrange them, a transformation occurs, and people who came into the site began seeing the stories behind these lost and found objects, began finding valuable connections they felt strongly drawn to.

Wabi-sabi is a Japanese term for the sense of beauty we find in objects or places that permits a glimpse into the impermanence of all things. It comes with a deep sense of recognition. One can experience a profound disclosure of truth in perceiving the wabi-sabi of the ordinary, and this was the essence of Site 1121.

Too often, designed landscapes furnish people with a finished product that does not meet the visitor’s arrival with this kind of deeper connection. Almost always, designed urban landscapes adhere to the treatment of surface conditions as is the norm in the city machine.

While the sensitive field study of plants, terrain, and artifacts at Site 1121 did reveal the ecological complexities and aesthetic character in the site, it was perhaps the mere contemplation of the space just as it was that had the more profound effect on people gathering there. The site design was meant to facilitate this experience. It was during the process of making the site accessible and tending to it that the *genius loci* was revealed. This is what design must do.



Molly bolt.

Comments from visitors to Site 1121:

I work in the building just west of the site, and my window looks over it. This project is very interesting - it has made me think about the history of this site, as well as its future, and how humans continuously rearrange molecules to suit their purposes on this planet. The categorization of the objects found made me unavoidably aware of the masses of plumbing and other sub-structures we are walking over at all times. I wish the project was longer - these few days seem too short. I imagine it will be a long time before anything as interesting as this happens at this location.

*Comment submitted to Site 1121
by Sheri Simonsen, Health Services Department, UW*



Site 1121 peels back the layers unveiling the secrets of history, infrastructure, and environment with which we are so often disconnected. Due to this disconnection, we as observers, often discount or disregard what is beneath the surface, as it so often hidden by the many layers of urban fabric that weave together to form our cities. Site 1121 activates a space and brings a sense of wonder and discovery as it transforms itself from one use to another in a time when, in most circumstances, the site is desolate. Allowing the public to gain a personal up close view of the transition, if only for a brief moment in time, opens eyes and minds to reveal how our cities infrastructure, environment, and history come together to form a space. This discovery reveals itself through materials found, plants that found a home, and by the infrastructure that connects well beyond its footprint.

*Comment submitted to Site 1121
by Katie Bang, PLA, ASLA, Capital Projects Coordinator Seattle
Parks and Recreation*



Regarding a few comments about Site 1121 -- for the last six years I have been driving the UW Health Sciences Express shuttle (those purple buses with the white DNA molecules splattered across the sides) between the UW Medical Center and Harborview. We also stop at UW Tower, and so I make that right-hand turn from NE 45th Street to 12th Ave fourteen times a day! With that frequency I couldn't help but notice the banner attached to the fence announcing your plans for the week of March 21-25. Since the writing was small and I only had a few seconds each time I passed to read it, I was first struck by the photo of Clark's Top Notch Restaurant. I love historic photos, and had no idea that this was one of the locations of Walter Clark's famous Seattle dining venues. Very fun to imagine its Art Deco architecture in the U-District! In recent years I enjoyed eating at Araya's Vegetarian Place which occupied that corner until 2013 when they moved to University Way. I watched the porch of the abandoned Araya's become a bedchamber for several homeless guests, and then finally their haven was torn down. The site lay open for awhile, and then fenced in for security. At first the site was all concrete steps and rubble, but just like Mt. St. Helen's after the blast, the vegetation and wildflowers started to come back. And that's when YOU stepped in!

Unfortunately I wasn't able to visit Site 1121 on the inside -- only fleetingly, traffic-permitting from the outside. However, due to your banner, my curiosity was piqued, and I made an effort to monitor your progress as the week unfolded. I used to visit active archaeological sites in Greece and Turkey with staff from the Smithsonian and the American Museum of Natural History (in my position as Cruise Director on small expedition ships) and I was impressed that you had set up Site 1121 similar to an archaeological dig... laying down safe walking platforms, sectioning off areas, setting up tables for assemblage, scheduling docents to welcome visitors, and rigging up shade and rain tarps (which were needed that week!) Even before I saw Campanario's sketch of you and the site, I knew that you were in charge of this project -- not only because you were the first to arrive in the morning, and at times, the only one at the site, but also because of the role you played with others who joined you. You seemed to be the quiet host and gentle director of an endeavor close to your heart. After reading your online Field Notes and taking a look at your Web site, I see now that was true. Even though I was merely an outsider looking in, I could tell this was an important undertaking filled with both philosophical and tangible intent. I don't know if your outcome was what you expected, but I congratulate you on an original idea that was executed in a meaningful way to your colleagues, volunteers, and those in the community who took notice. Being a UW employee, I find that it is interesting that this corner will soon become home to my credit union. I guess the tradition of this site being the purveyor of fine dining is coming to an end, but hopefully WSECU will manage to build a branch office which will complement the neighborhood around it -- maybe they will add a "Site 1121 Museum" in the basement!

*Comment submitted to Site 1121
by Carla Gifford, UW Shuttles Driver*

SOURCES

Aston, Michael and Rowley, Trevor. *Landscape Archaeology*, (Vancouver, 1974).

Describes the nature of the landscape and understanding it through amateur archaeology; describes fieldwork techniques including equipment, field walking, observation, recording, land typologies; particular attention is paid to mapping, marking, and place names studies.

Some narrative discussion about how we interact with and interpret the landscape. Furnishes basic guidelines — visual, textual, methodological — for the process of site exploration, interpretation, recording, depicting.

Atkinson, R.J.C. *Field Archaeology*, (London, 1946).

Source furnishes clear descriptions of common site excavation techniques and how to determine which technique best suits the project goals. Also provides clear instructions for accepted recording and visual presentation formats, including mapping, iconography, and section drawing. While perhaps not the intent of the author, images showing site excavation work reveals the unmistakable aesthetic qualities of these intentional interactions with the landscape and merit a deeper consideration.

Colton, Harold Sellers. *Field Methods in Archaeology*, (Flagstaff, Arizona, 1950).

This is a lovely, hand-made book. A distillation of the field experiences of a handful of professional archaeologists and museum staff, it offers a concise explication of proper field excavation techniques. The author's introduction is a particularly elegant description of the scientific method. In addition to the requisite steps of problem statement and observation, the author makes acknowledgement of the role imagination plays in forming a hypothesis to bridge from first observations to the detailed scientific rigor of the field expedition.

Compton, Robert R. *Geology in the Field*, (New York, 1985).

Elementary definitions and depictions of field work that adds perspective and detail to the field methods outlined in Colton.

Del Tredici, Peter. "Just a Bunch of Weeds," *scenariojournal.com*, Spring 2012.

The general argument is that by understanding novel urban ecosystems, landscape architects might embrace certain types of weeds and weedy urban environments as useful design tools. While the article is a report on wild urbanism, ecological services, and the effects of what he terms urban glaciation, it is also about a shift in judgment and perception. "For people who live in the inner city, mugwort is a sign that nobody is taking care of a place." And probably not the only sign. He follows this observation with the simple claim that people tend to be very responsive to the signs that a site is cared for. "Small gestures [of intentionality] make it easier for people to relate to a site".

He goes on to make the case that peoples' aesthetic judgments, and the kind of well being derived from the perception of beauty in our neighborhoods, are in fact an integral part of local biodiversity. He makes a connection between the value of urban biodiversity for its own sake and the high biodiversity that research has found in these "wild" urban sites, thus bringing together quantitative and qualitative site analysis.

Frodeman, Richard. *Geo-Logic*, (New York, 2003).

This source characterizes fieldwork as the true time and place where landscape is discovered and understood. The author argues that "geology is a deeply hermeneutic science" in which we gain a very special mastery through fieldwork by "organizing marks into a body of significant signs." Fieldwork is the embodied, kinesthetic, intuitive, experiencing of a site. It follows a clearly and carefully defined scientific method as other physical sciences do, yet it reflects a more intelligent, grounded, and incarnated proprioception in observing, testing, and recording data on site. Geology is the dis-covering and re-vealing of the particular in the unfolding context of the absolute. For the author, this is a dynamic feedback where the particular is revealed and understood as part of the whole, and the whole is enlightened and known through discovery of its details.

Frodeman's geologist-as-bricoleur, an adept synthesizer of information and context, suggests that the modern sculpture known as assemblage may have a meaningful bearing on the process and forms of fieldwork methodology. The most important aspect of *Geo-Logic* is Frodeman's portrayal of the narrative in geologic fieldwork. As a hermeneutic science, geology requires the study of the particular within and against the vaster story being told. This shines a light on my key interest in poetic site reading and revelatory design as core themes of Site 1121.

Lyle, John Tillman. "Can Floating Seeds Make Deep Forms?" *Landscape Journal*, Spring 1991, vol. 10.

In this article, Lyle proposes that landscape be redefined as simply "the visible manifestation of an ecosystem," describing urban systems as "shallow forms" that suppress ecological form and function, detached from nature. A complete human ecosystem, by contrast, is more holistically organized, reaching through these shallow form constructions into the underlying complexity of the ecosystem and manifesting understandable human-scale forms rooted in the terrain. Lyle uses the term Deep Form to describe this interrelationship between ecological order and human understanding. To generate deep form in landscape design "requires a rational understanding of natural systems in combination with intuitive imagery.... This interplay of creativity and rationality is the passageway to deep form."

Kongjian Yu builds on Lyle's deep form as it relates to human-scale daily practices in the landscape, and how this can be applied to design of urban ecosystems that create transformative deep forms.

Joan Nassauer, "Urban Ecological Retrofit," *Landscape Journal*, 1998, vol. 17, Special Issue: p.15.

Among the small group of landscape architects who founded Eco-Revelatory Design, Nassauer in this article makes the case for inserting innovations in stormwater infrastructure by having a sensitivity to 'resolving disturbance to the familiar, orderly patterns' in the tended landscape. She writes about the importance of recognition — the perception of something as existing or true — and that successful ecological design practices must reconcile improved biodiversity with the familiar forms and meanings in the built environment. The idea is to keep ordinary forms in the built landscape in use — fences, hedges, walkways, edges, plantings — as keys to successfully introducing an important new ERD practice such as managing storm water as a resource.

Nassauer's argument is that framing is a language that we require for understanding and relating to the land. It communicates that "a place has been invested with a great deal of continuous care." Fences and hedges clearly express ownership — not simply legal, but cultural — and that when "edges connect to make a fine-scale landscape network" people have a framework for understanding their environment. It is also the case that what people understand about a fenced-in vacant lot is that it is off limits. Nassauer believes that when work on a site meshes with the patterns of familiar order, the "cultural landscape language of a place" can communicate intentionality, caring, and worth, even if what is happening inside the framing is unexpectedly new.

Tandy, C.R.V. "Aesthetics and Landscape Design," *The Aesthetics of Landscape*, 1976, pp.85-89.

Who is the observer? This article's discussion of landscape and aesthetics touches on practical and ecological design. Hermeneutic readings of landscapes can have vernacular, historical, environmental, and aesthetic values. The author discusses subjectivity in both the design and appreciation of landscape aesthetics, identifying the act of interpretation of meaning in the landscape. Such a definition will help in establishing the value of field work as a means of access to something more abstract or absolute, even if detailed and grounded in the particular.

Kongjian Yu, "Designed Ecologies and the Creation of Deep Form", presentation at the University of Washington, February 2014.

One-hour video presentation that begins with the premise: "The science of ecology has been readily assimilated into urban landscape design, whereas transformative deep form needs to be created through design. This has been a more difficult task." Yu describes deep form, building on the work of Patrick Geddes, John Foreman, John T. Lyle, and Joan Nassauer. The term Deep Form comes from Lyle, and represents the physical manifestation of human understanding of the landscape through practices, primarily village scale farming. Yu shares his design approach in which deep forms is a reconciliation between a native ecosystem and human livelihood. He is telling us that transformative deep form is a conscious balancing between natural processes and cultural interventions involving intimate practices in the landscape. Landscape design must seek to discover and reclaim deep forms in urban nature.

Important to Site 1121 is the idea of the "reciprocal condition" between urban forms and nature, in which the wear, erosion and decay of the built environment is an axiomatic mirroring by nature of the human process of taking materials and rearranging them. Yu argues that the reciprocal condition is poetic evidence that the human ecosystem is never not a part of nature.

