

2019: A Space Odyessey.  
An Architectural Science Fiction Parody Poem (and also a thesis)

Christopher Lawrence Vander Haak

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master Of Architecture

University of Washington

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Committee:

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

Architecture

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**Abstract**

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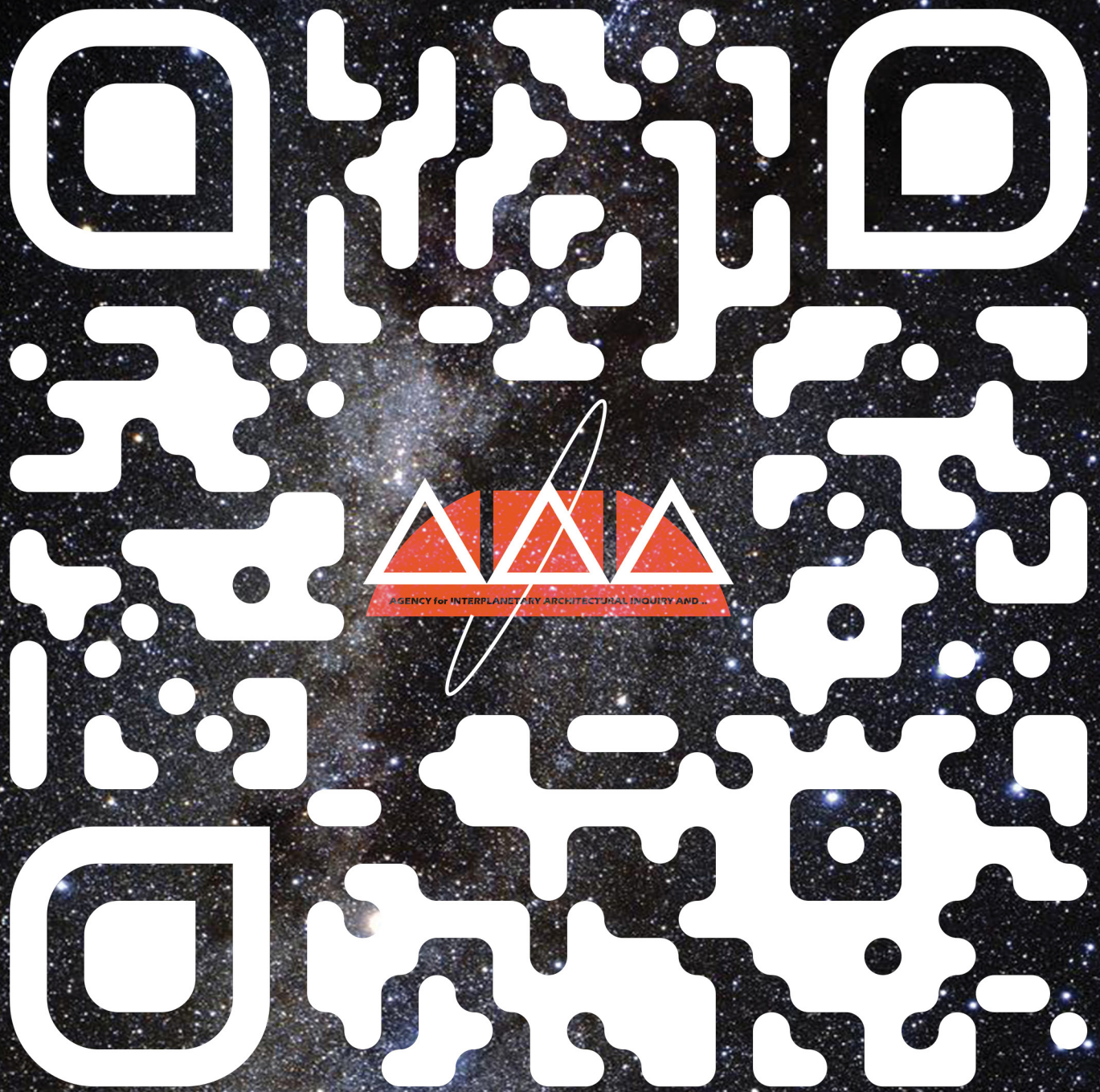
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Architecture

Yes, but abstract investigations are no less productive. Should we live on Mars? Absurd questions inspire absurd responses. Architects don't make buildings, we envision the future and find ways to bring others along. Satire brings criticism, but can also open wormholes to new design thinking. Imaginative practice is practice for imagination. Stay sharp, the future is coming.

This thesis engages in a new methodology to create collaborative, imaginative work around the idea of settlement on Mars. By parodying and restructuring the design process, using poetry as a tool and science fiction as an identity, this work intends to inject different perspectives into this exciting opportunity as it approaches reality, maintaining that design is improved when vision is replaced by conversation.



# 2019: A SPACE ODYSSEY

## AN ARCHITECTURAL SCIENCE FICTION PARODY POEM

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RINAH FIDL, EMILIA CABEZA DE BACA, MARSHALL FRIMOTH, JUSTIN LIND, AND...

(and also a thesis)

THESIS ABSTRACT:

Yes, but abstract investigations are no less productive. Should we live on Mars? Absurd questions inspire absurd responses. Architects don't make buildings, we envision the future and find ways to bring others along. Satire brings criticism, but can also open wormholes to new design thinking. Imaginative practice is practice for imagination. Stay sharp, the future is coming.



# FOREWORD

*(noun)* .....a typically short piece of writing sometimes placed at the beginning of a book or other piece of literature  
*(adjective)* .....bold or familiar in manner, especially in a presumptuous way  
*(verb)* .....to help promote or advance something  
*(adverb)* .....onward so as to make progress, toward a successful conclusion

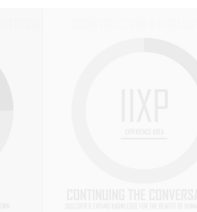
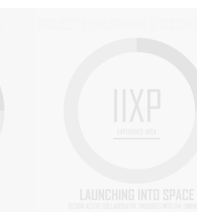
(OXFORD DICTIONARIES)

In literature, a forward is typically an introduction provided by someone other than the primary author<sup>1</sup> of a work, so I feel it is appropriate for me to start as such. The document you are about to read represents the culmination of the Masters of Architecture thesis investigation for one student, myself, but it is also documentation of a deeply collaborative journey that bends time, space and genre to arrive somewhere fitting the end of a (certain) education<sup>2</sup>. The aim is to show development of skills necessary to perform the occupation of Architecture, but also development of the mind to perform architecture beyond occupation. The Architect is no longer the Master Builder, nor are they the Visionary Artist, having given up ground in both construction and design to the general contractor and client developer. But to say the Architect deals in the commodity of the built environment is akin to defining the Writer by the implement of a pen and notebook, or the Artist by the material of their paint. The true asset of the Architect, as with the others, is the ability to access what is not yet there. The trade of Architecture is to bring others along into these futures.

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<sup>1</sup> Hello from the footnotes! Come hang out here with me if you need a break from all the blabbering... I'll give it to you straight! This paper is going to use big words and quote smart people to try and fool you, but it's really very simple: the author has no idea what they were doing or talking about. He'll dress it up to make it look like there was a plan, but it took a long time to get there. Most of this is just instinct and post-rationalization which, don't get me wrong, I think is totally ok. Just thought you should know...

<sup>2</sup> He means the literal Masters of Architecture education he has received at the University of Washington, but also is trying to imply that education or learning doesn't stop now, and that his experience within the program was particular to his experiences, and different choices or personalities can result in different educations. He does this a lot...uses vague language to try to say multiple things at once. I think that he thinks it's clever, but it gets convoluted fast. I'll try to help where I can.





To define Architecture in this way it can not and should not be a singular (personal) vision.

Collaboration is essential. I will merely act as guide and bricoleur,<sup>3</sup> perhaps also “a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities.” (*Deleuze, A Thousand Plateaus, p. 275*)

So let me then categorize this project as two multiplicities. One addressing what it is, and one where it belongs. The former is what you will encounter throughout this document. It is a collection of work produced for the larger ask of ‘performing a thesis’ and for the many small asks developed along the way. It’s a project about engaging in the conversation around the architecture of outer-space settlement. Yes, and it is about the importance of collaborative conceptual practice. Yes, and it is about parody, satire & wit as productive (not simply critical) framing devices for design thinking. Yes, and...

The multiplicity that will serve as our introduction is where does this work belong? Categorized as an ‘Architectural Science Fiction Parody Poem (and also a thesis)’ there appears to be some schizophrenia to it’s very genre, but there is no contradiction.<sup>4</sup> Despite this stated harmony, however, I will address each component of this both/and genre individually, a deconstruction of the assemblage, to illuminate the particular facinations that would not allow this project to align itself to a singular identity. And of course, I will work in reverse.

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3. What’s the Picasso quote? ‘Good artists copy, great artists steal?’ Well, the author must be a great artist because a lot of this project is stolen directly from American Bricoleur Tom Sachs... Sachs’s kind of had it coming though, being a victim of his own philosophy here. If bricolage is ‘construction or creation done out of a diverse set of available things’, Sachs work was available and the author appropriated it to his vision. More on this later...

4. Maybe if you declare it with enough confidence, nobody will question it? The truth is, this project is full of contradictions, but before you go writing your letters to the editor, let me own it and play my Jon Stewart parody-card to cover my sins. On the Daily Show, Stewart used to harshly criticize news entities for their contradictions and hypocrisy, but deflected when similar charges were turned on his comedy show. This is the sort of Masters level satirizing that we aspire to. Despite his claim, Stewart wasn’t above criticism, but he used hypocrisy as an instrument to not hold himself to the standards he applied to others concerning hypocrisy. Seriously genius. But that’s more or less a tangent... our contradictions mostly come from the fact that this work is representative of many contributing voices, who all may see the future a bit differently. This is a productive contradiction! It allows for the simultaneous exploration of multiple outcomes without disqualification, which connects to the purpose of using parody in the first place... but that’s a bit of a spoiler, so I’ll let you read on.





This is (also a thesis). A thesis must make a claim, and the one at the center of this exercise has evolved several times. It began as a pure investigation of space travel and settlement as a catalyst for imaginative practice. It proposes that as reality approaches imagination, it tends to phase out much of the imaginative energy that got it there for value-engineered rationality, which is a tragic loss. In other words, in the context of space settlement, if you remove the recent history that has put it on the precipice of possibility, it is a completely absurd notion. The importance of conceptual practice is that it allows for absurd (or unconventional) approaches and responses to (once) absurd questions, not to replace progress towards achievement but rather to preserve the presence of imagination in the conversation. The new claim is that this is a productive outlet for Architects to expand the scope of their services.<sup>5</sup>

The associated project then becomes less about investigating space settlement to flex imaginative muscle groups, and more about establishing a (not *the*) process and venue to perform these investigations. This is the birth of the *Agency for Interplanetary Architecture Inquiry And...* at an intersection of genre, where Architecture (activity) meets Science Fiction (content), Parody (tone) and Poetry (instrument)<sup>6</sup>. It is also essentially collaborative, from the influence of theorists, to the contributions of peers. This has placed me much more in the position of conductor than creator<sup>6</sup>, and illustrates my final claim that Architecture is bricolage, and the inverse is also true.

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6. Jack of all trades, Masters of Architecture?

5. Now if you could only figure out a way to get paid for it... I'm sure theres tons of people who would love a little more fun to be folded into the Architecture occupation, but the people who are hiring Architects are typically looking to get something built that can start bringing in money. Sorry for the reality check, but cash rules everything, bud. This is more of a structural/societal problem than a challenge to the fact that results from these types of practices do have value, both towards developing personal design chops and by bringing new visions and ideas into realspace, but I'm just saying... enjoy school because it's hard out here in the real world, dreamer.

4. Maybe if you declare it with enough confidence, nobody will question it? The truth is, this project is full of contradictions, but before you go writing your letters to the editor, let me own it and play my Jon Stewart parody-card to cover my sins. On the Daily Show, Stewart used to harshly criticize news entities for their contradictions and hypocrisy, but defected when similar charges were turned on his 'comedy show.' This is the sort of Masters level satirizing that we aspire to. Despite his claim, Stewart wasn't above clicism, but he used hypocrisy as an instrument to not hold himself to the standards he applied to others concerning hypocrisy. Seriously genius. But that's more or less a tangent... our contradictions mostly come from the fact that this work is representative of many contributing voices, who all may see the future a bit differently. This is a productive contradiction! It allows for the simultaneous exploration of multiple outcomes without disqualification, which connects to the purpose of using parody in the first place... but that's a bit of a spoiler, so I'll let you read on.





This is a Poem. You will find poetry throughout, written both by myself and others, and even this itself is a free poetry<sup>7</sup>. Poetry has been made an important instrument to investigate ideas relatively quickly as a form of ‘quick architecture.’ Like built architecture, poetry contains program in its subject, aesthetics in its content, and structure in its structure. As Gaston Bachelard explores in *The Poetics of Space*, a poetic image can also provide a pre-conscious understanding of the spaces that we occupy in a way that doesn’t necessitate knowledge, but rather channels a more innocent consciousness.

“Imagination augments the values of reality.” (*Bachelard, The Poetics of Space p. 3*)

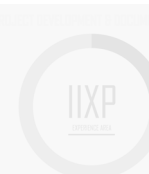
Poet and musician Leonard Cohen also understood poetry as reflective of something beyond purely observational, often describing his process of songwriting as an unceasing practice of writing and repetition until the song or the poem revealed itself. He even spatialized this wellspring as the ‘good song place,’ and claimed that “if I knew where good songs came from, I would go there more often.” (*Cohen, Leonard Cohen on Leonard Cohen, p. 271*) What is important about this is not how often he found himself there, but that he was always searching for it, a personal El Dorado. Architects should have similar lust for the ‘good place place,’ and my contention is this may be the same place Cohen longed for.

This is a Parody<sup>8</sup>. In evaluating what I wanted out of the culmination of my Masters of Architecture experience, it really is about becoming an Architect. After some quick calculation, however, even successful completion of this thesis will leave me several thousand hours and dollars short of achieving this goal. Therefore, I developed the character of the Satirist-Architect.

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8. I think talking about how your parody is a parody is kind of like explaining a joke... so I will say no more.

7. Again, you can’t just say things and make them true. At least not necessarily, but perhaps poetry is the exception? If poetry is stylized impressions on experiences, how is this thesis any different? Perhaps it’s in the necessitate to form an argument, and back up your claims, but it sounds more beautiful this way.



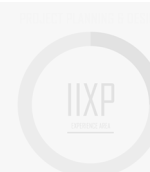


The Satirist-Architect is reactionary. They understand and evaluate their positioning within the current assemblage. As the Comic leverages personal, relatable experiences to find the humor in the subversion of the expected, the Architect sees the commonplace and begins to envision its transformation. The Satirist-Architect leads with the ear, rather than the eye or the voice. They understand reality as an accumulation, that things are not only as they appear, and that elements, equipment, bodies, even their own instincts and ideas contain histories and that their work exists in the translation, assembly, and communication of such. It is as a consequence of this history that the comedy is found, through challenges and subversions to the preconceptions of the audience.

There are many great Humorists to look to in constructing this character, but none has been as influential to this project as American Bricoleur Tom Sachs. Sachs is best known for his meticulously crafted and then recontextualized recreations of capitalist symbols, particularly fashion brands, megacorporations and high Modernist Architecture. By constructing these icons of success and complexity out of commonplace items such as tape, cardboard and found objects, Sachs achieves the simultaneous goals of developing his own obsessive craftsmanship, believing “the reward for work is more work,” (*Sachs, Surface Interview 2016*) as well as creating and possessing the things and spaces he desires, because “making it is a way of having it.” (*Sachs*) The humor of Sachs work is not so much found in a well constructed joke, but rather in the earnest presentation of his constructions and his expectation that the audience takes things at face value. This is epitomized in *A Space Program*, Sachs’ 2012 expedition to Mars<sup>9</sup>. Sachs’ deftly uses parody to execute an alternative vision of the familiar, and this thesis can be said to provide an additional iteration.

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9. Wait, Sachs literally did a project about going to Mars? Although I was not familiar with this particular project when beginning my own expedition, Sachs’ *A Space Program* became an important precedent as I set up my own. An important aspect of it, one that I imagine Sachs would point out himself, is that it is titled ‘A Space Program’, as in it could be one of many. This work is ‘Another’ one, I believe that looking at all of them together might give a more enriching image of what ‘The’ Space Program that physically gets to Mars first might encounter and produce.





Another important aspect of constructing a parody is determining which system to dismantle, not in a destructive way, but rather a deconstructive way<sup>10</sup>. The punchline lies in the reassembly. This project provides parody to Architecture practice and process. The Agency for Interplanetary Architecture Inquiry And... (AIAIA) forms an attention-grabbing acronym that uses its proximity to an familiar institution to hopefully inspire a curiosity in those who encounter it to uncover its meaning and purpose. If the purpose of this thesis is to bring a particular structure and opportunity to a conceptual practice, setting up the audience with an association to a very structured entity serves this mission well. Within this identity, the AIAIA then sets up a six-stage design process that parodies the six experience areas highlighted by testing and internships in traditional architecture process. These categorizations form the structure of this document. This is done not to humble conventional architecture practice, but rather to raise up an alternative by placing it in a familiar structure, to say 'this, too, is Architecture.'

To cite analogs in contemporary media, what voices like John Stewart, Stephen Colbert & Trevor Noah bring to politics, John Oliver to investigative journalism, Nathan Fielder to entrepreneurship and Saturday Night Live to culture is what I hope to bring to Architecture. It's about telling another side of the story in a way that engages the self-serious players in conversation, whether welcomed or not, because the more we keep talking, the more opportunity we have for others to overhear<sup>11</sup>.

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10. The author is covering himself a bit here. He still wants to get a job in the field of architecture, so raging against the institution does nobody any good. In fact, that is the opposite of a productive parody towards architectural revolution doesn't see the vocation shrink, but rather grow. Really, he wants to have his drywall and eat it too. The registration process, not without justification, boxes in the definition of what Architecture is like concrete walls. All I'm saying is, maybe we redecorate a bit inside that box and see how it looks.

11. It's about controlling our own news cycle. Where there's interesting debate, people pay attention. Don't be boring. But at the same time it's not about being antagonistic or simply going for impact. Maybe the inbetween lies in a little less editing. Everything builds through responses to what comes before. Not everything will be feasible, but everything inspires the next iteration or idea.



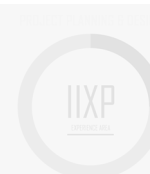


This is Science Fiction. It's visions of futures. In reality, all architecture is fiction, some of it just gets adapted into buildings<sup>12</sup>. The content of this particular investigation allows us to situate ourselves alongside great storytellers like Asimov, Clarke, Heinlein and Kubrick based on the questions and curiosities that drive our interest and inquiry. Science fiction is a powerful genre in its ability to situate fantasy somewhere that feels attainable, yet unapproachable. We cannot typically envision the necessary progression to see these accounts become nonfictional, but their settings are usually placed within a time and/or space distant enough that we can't say with certainty that they are impossible. There is an active participation from the reader, a simultaneous suspension of disbelief and extension of belief that allows them to immerse themselves in the environment. This is an uncanny valley where conceptual architecture should feast.

A seminal example of epic & productive Science Fiction is provided in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Everyone viewing the film knew it was not documentary, but Kubrick was able to capture such a sense of realism in the way it was filmed, that audiences were pulled in could not be dismissive of its message. The film is not necessarily intended to provide an accurate depiction of what Space Travel and society would be in 2001 (as projected in 1968), but rather provided an effective metaphor and setting for Kubrick to have a conversation on human origin, purpose and existentialism. "The most terrifying fact about the universe is not that it is hostile but that it is indifferent, but if we can come to terms with this indifference, then our existence as a species can have genuine meaning. However vast the darkness, we must supply our own light." (*Kubrick, Interview*)

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12. What if, instead of vessels for development, Architects were more like struggling screenwriters in LA, always trying to get their script picked up. There's no problem per se with designing for built architecture, but I think there is something lost by designing only for built work. This is a limiting and controlling way to think about design, and I think we shouldn't relegate ideas that don't fit into the buildable scope as worthless.



FORMING A SPACE AGENCY

IDENTIFYING A MISSION

WRITING THE RULES

BUILDING A NEW WORLD

LAUNCHING INTO SPACE

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

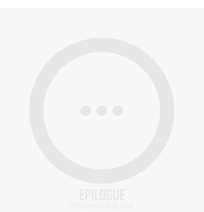
EPILOGUE



Finally, this is Architecture. If you can buy into my framing, Architecture really boils down to two things: Imagination and Communication. It's first about envisioning what is not yet there. This absolutely includes structures, but also an innumerable number of intangibles that influence or are influenced by these structures. We can design a house on Mars, but first we need to understand what living will be on Mars, what is society, climate, behavior like, or even the composition of our own bodies in this new context? "Empirically speaking, we are made of star stuff. Why aren't we talking more about that<sup>13</sup>?" (Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts* p. 49) Architecture must reconcile all these variables.

But Architecture is also very much about communication. It's not enough to simply construct these futures in our own mind. Where is the productivity in that? We must also bring others along into these futures. This thesis provided the venue to be very active and experimental with communication, something I have tried to embrace throughout graduate study. In this process specifically, by sharing work frequently online I was able to build a platform for myself to engage and eventually implicate others into the investigation from the beginning. Considering how the work would be encountered, generally quickly through social media, informed how it was constructed in order to work for that audience. Also, the medium was never predetermined. As the information or design was developed, a visual was crafted to fit that particular moment, be it drawing, model, diagram, collage, etc., instead of the discoveries being channeled into a wrote set of orthographics. This eschews the notion of a 'final set' of drawings. This being an inquiry based project, every stage is important, but none too precious.

The rest of this document will be an annotated journey through this process.





# CHAPTER I : FORMING A SPACE AGENCY

CREATE A VENUE FOR WHAT YOU DO



*The purpose of this code is to establish the minimum requirements to provide a reasonable level of safety, public health, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment and to provide a reasonable level of safety to firefighters and other emergency responders during emergency operations.*

*The lesson here is very simple. But it is striking how often it is overlooked. We are so caught in the myths of the best and the brightest and the self-made that we think outliers spring naturally from the earth.*

(MALCOLM GLADWELL, Outliers)



*primum non nocere*

It starts with the beginning of something.

In our case, an architecture practice and space agency named the Agency for Interplanetary Architecture Inquiry And... (AIAIA). Particularly when you are seeking to do something new,<sup>14</sup> you may have to create your own opportunity.

So we identified our opportunity and introduced it to the world via a corporate orientation style video outlining the definition and mission of the AIAIA, complete with our 10 Articles<sup>15</sup>

(borrowed and collaged from other voices, of course, and shown on the left of this and the following page), an in depth examination of our name, and a vague outline of our forthcoming mission (which, of course, developed into something completely different than what is described in the film). The film is archived online, and should be visible via scanning the QR code on this page so long as YouTube remains operational.



*Discover and expand knowledge for the benefit of humanity.*



*Karate is for defense only.*



*Honor thy Father & Mother*



15. Another direct appropriation of Tom Sachs, who runs his practice under '10 Bullets.'

14. There's really nothing new here... It's may be a unique presenting, but everything is taken from somewhere else.





This being an Architecture project, it was of course necessary to develop a site. Ours can be found at [www.aiaia.space](http://www.aiaia.space)<sup>16</sup>.



Instagram also proved to be a productive tool for the AIAIA, not only for sharing and marketing the work we produced throughout our

history, but also as an influence and facilitator for that work. The strengths and constraints of the platform determined some decisions on how work was formatted and designed, and the immediacy attached to social media inspired constant production. As soon as work is posted, it begins to age and lose its visibility on the application, so to continue to build exposure and excitement for the project it was necessary to share work as consistently as possible. The work will remain archived @the.aiaia so long as Instagram remains operational.

Effective communication is a crucial part of Architecture, and it was valuable to be able to practice that with the AIAIA body of work. By creating and formalizing a venue for the work of this thesis, and incorporating specific tools for the production and sharing of work throughout the process, we found our own balance between order and freedom in way that maintained productivity while allowing for consistent adaptability.



*[The AIAIA] shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the [AIAIA] for a redress of grievances.*

THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION BILL OF RIGHTS



*When one body exerts a force on a second body, the second body simultaneously exerts a force equal in magnitude and opposite in direction on the first body.*

NEWTON'S 3<sup>RD</sup> LAW OF MOTION



*Never let em know your next move. Don't you know Bad Boys move in silence or violence? Take it from your highness, I done squeezed mad clips at these cats for they bricks and chips.*

THE METROPLEX & C.E. (THE OTHER COMMANDMENTS)



*Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.*

REPUBLIC CLIMATE THREE ONE



**Work to Code.**  
*[Creativity is the Enemy]*

SO WHAT IF WE

THE SPACE BUSINESS

<sup>16</sup>. This website will not necessarily remain archived (in this location) so long as the internet remains operational... it is likely that the AIAIA will be assimilated into *Which Architecture?* In which case, we will make sure that the work is accessible through their website, [www.whicharchitecture.space](http://www.whicharchitecture.space).



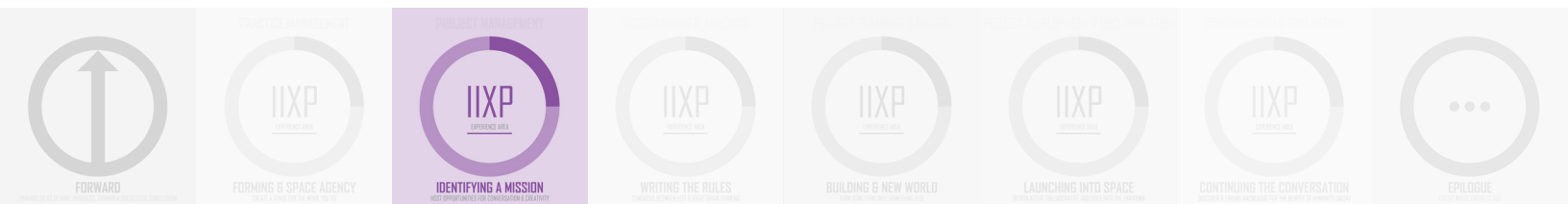


## CHAPTER II : IDENTIFYING A MISSION

*A concept is a brick It can be used to build a courthouse of reason.  
Or it can be thrown through a window.*

(GILLES DELEUZE, A Thousand Plateaus)

In order to get things in motion, we began with a hiring phase. Identifying A Mission, it was decided, meant to host opportunities for conversation and creativity. To ensure that the project did not turn into a singular vision, I found it important to begin to invite others to share and shape their own dreams, expectations and anxieties connected to Space and humanity's relationship to it.

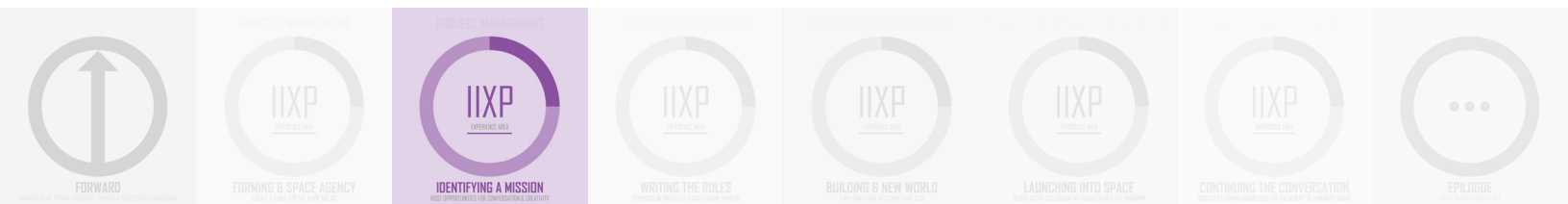




In a related move, I also hosted a collaborative serial worldbuilding exercise based on the game Dungeons and Dragons. The structure of the game meant that I had to form a skeletal understanding of the setting, but the details could then be illuminated by both myself and the players through role-playing, chance, and conversational prompts in gameplay<sup>17</sup>. What came out of this game essentially became the imagined 'site' for this project. Like a lot of science fiction, there was plenty of reality in the composition of the Universe, available resources and technologies, and an adherence to a fundamental understanding of physics, but by setting the event, and thus the site, 12 years into the future, the possibility was opened in both my own and the players minds that things could operate a bit differently now. I was fascinated with how they limited or freed themselves with this knowledge, and what they described when I would ask them to 'observe' the environment around them. I recorded this game and treated it as equivalent to observational site analysis for the purposes of my project.



17. In constructing this exercise, I attempted to remain as vague about the setting as possible. When asked for elaborations, I would improvise details and descriptions based on my instinctual understanding of this 'place', but I also tried often to turn it back on the players, forcing them to impose details on others, and allowing them to construct an environment that served what they wished to accomplish within the game. This is incredibly silly in a lot of ways, but if you step back from the fact that it's absurd, isn't this exactly how we should practice architecture? An honest question...

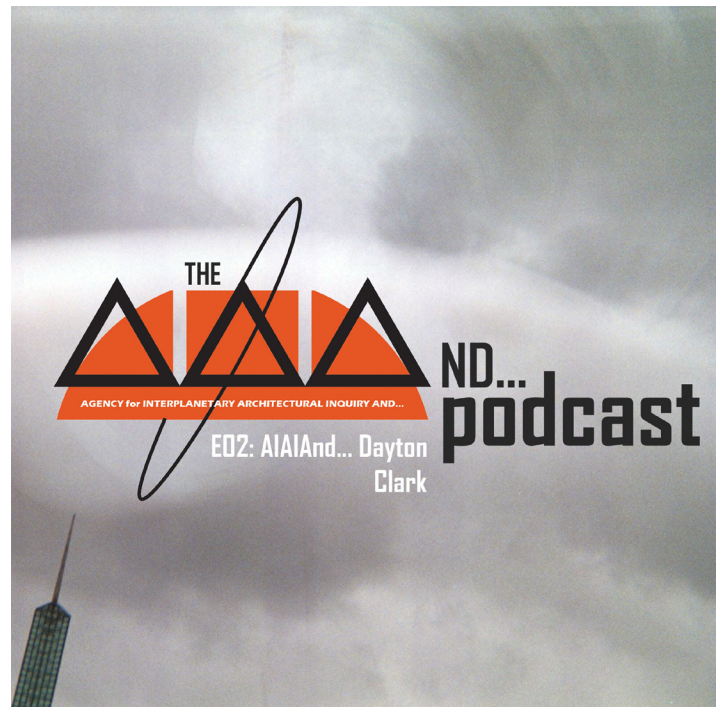




Beyond translating the content from this exercise into my design work, I wanted an opportunity to share the actual work of my collaborators as part of this collection. For this, I established a podcast which I would release weekly for the rest of the duration of my investigation. Beyond sharing segments from the game, I wanted to embrace the new opportunity of having an audio outlet for the work, so I began conducting recorded interviews with individuals and groups who were working on or interested in things that had a relationship to the project.

To establish the format, I first did an episode with the fictional director of the AIAIA. This allowed me to work out the system, as well as share some elements of the vision and manifest of the project in a new way and potentially to a new audience.

For the second episode, I interviewed Dayton Clark about Dungeons & Dragons & Architecture. Dayton, also an Architecture student, has both hosted and played the game for years and has interesting insights into it as a worldbuilding and design tool, which is why I turned to it initially.





In the third episode, I talked with music producer Marshall Frimoth, who sometimes goes under the monicker Stanley Market, about the relationship between sound, specifically composed, musical sound, and the perception of the body in time and space. Marshall has produced a piece of music in response to my call for poetry submissions, and so we also had the opportunity to break down that specific contribution and why he translated (or we could say designed) his ideas about Space into that particular composition the way that he did. The song is included in full.

Next I turned to Joe Graham, who was conducting his own thesis investigation on Skyport design, envisioning the future of air travel on earth as incorporating vertical take-off and landing which necessitates much less space for ports. I had previous conversations with Joe about how the history of flight specifically is so deeply tied to imagination, which intrigued me, and I had know that Joe had initially been considering siting his project in space. I drew from his ideas, and in turn asked him to extend his imagination into applications in space.





For the fifth episode, I consulted with three colleagues who had set up a conceptual venue of their own, 'Witch Architecture,' to engage in self-regulated projects for competition or curiosity. We discussed the importance of structuring the outlet for this sort of work, the specific meaning behind why they have identified themselves as 'witch,' and the value of collaboration when doing creative projects. Further, we have begun to make plans to continue creative collaboration as we transition out of graduate school and into the next phase of our careers.

In the final interview, I talked to 5 current members of the UW Architecture class of 2021 in an episode I titled 'The Next Generation.' This process has caused me to reflect a lot on my own education, and so to have a chance to intercept a few students at a point earlier on in the process with the things I know now felt like a time travel opportunity. Our conversation jumped through time as well. We discussed origins, education, and anticipations, and I invited them each to situate themselves in my fiction and describe how they would imagine contributing.





## CHAPTER III : WRITING THE RULES

*The cleverer I am at miniaturizing the world, the better I possess it.*

(GASTON BACHELARD, *The Poetics of Space*)

The next step is to write the rules, a transition from collection to transition. It is here that I also begin to employ that cliché Architecture skill set of symbiosis between right and left brain thinking. The first exercise was to create responsive collages to the poetry I had collected. As discussed previously, poetry can be considered a form of quick Architecture, so armed with 21 precedent works of space architecture, I took travel images from my own past, and cut/collaged them based on my reaction to each work of poetry. The idea was to take a specific (personal) place and time and reconfigure it into a shared vision of a future, channeling the ‘architecture’ done by the poet into my own design process with each exercise, and conditioning myself to develop the vision of this project as a collaborative/collective vision, that all these unique visions can inhabit.



### Reverse Supernova

BIG  
ideas make me feel

small  
like my place in the universe  
like pluto, no  
smaller, imperceptible like  
a speck of red dust on a red planet  
smaller, even like  
my own body in  
infinity

both impossible to perceive and impossible not to

Yet this statistically negligible frame  
contains a unquantifiable 'mind'  
with an immeasurable capacity

for

everything

that

ever

was

and room for more.





**Void**

the Void is nothing but a problem with variables popping up and I'm just guessing at something hidden in plain sight: the mise en abyme fractals from teeny-tiny atoms to abstract spirals in the night sky that we only see through refracted light  
 ~  
 demarcate human propensities from idiosyncrasies think like Einstein, it's all relative and depends on how you're moving to and fro' while swimming in waves of energy interfering did you know the faster you go the slower you move through time?  
 ~  
 the stars aren't really blinking, remember that the world is spinning so you ought to get dizzy waiting on an omen, like gravity, an illusion a divine aesthetic, a chaotic composition - I just don't get it.

Jacob Freid



**She dak fladaa**

"She dak fladaa."  
 I did it!

She replies, "Urnk bpla onte klimpoa."

All this time was not spent in vain.  
 That long, dusty journey,  
 That thirst on the surface of an unknown place.  
 That first encounter of wondrous...

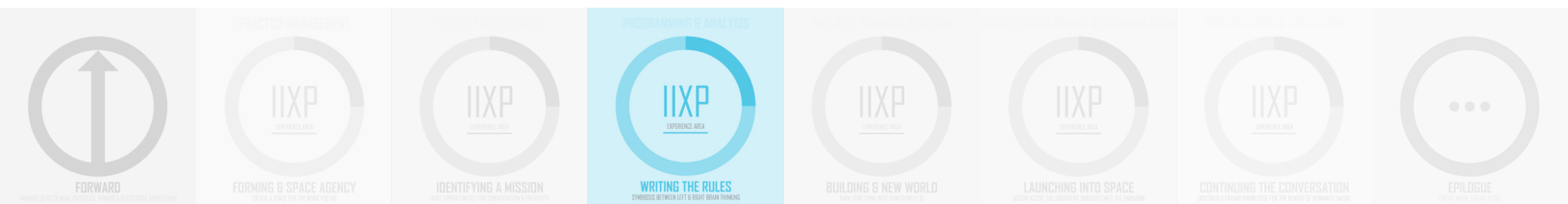
Oh! Does it matter now?  
 I have established a link,  
 we speak again and find  
 we both love  
 the same orange popsicles.

I ask if she plays with legos?  
 She does.

She asks if I like dresses?  
 I don't.

We laugh,  
 run to the swings,  
 and shoot into the cosmos.

Kayra Im





^ ^ ^  
 < space >  
 v v v

Andria Dierman



Space, looked upon with interest from afar  
 Painted with the brush of beauty and creativity  
 An endless blanket weaved together by galaxies and stars  
 Calling for exploration, with its  
 Endless mysteries, calling for knowledge beyond the minds of humanity

Andria Dierman





**Space (definitions)**

1. AN INFINITE VORTEX OF ACCUMULATED WORLDS, METROPOLES, CONSCIOUSNESSES, MEMORIES, DESIRES, SELVES, OTHERS. THERE ARE NO OBJECTS IN OUR EXISTENCE, ONLY WORLDS, ECOLOGIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS; EACH WITH THEIR OWN FUTURE AND IMAGINATION

2. (current working definition) the perception of difference, in position of self relative to other be it; social, physical, economic, gendered, racial, ethnic, agential or otherwise.

Sam Frenay



**Allusion**

The TV belted  
 "Space  
 The Final Frontier"  
 and distorted lights  
 tricked my adolescent mind  
 into warp speed. Time

passed. An awareness  
 that life did indeed  
 speed up and distort  
 dawned as for this man  
 -kind of a small step,  
 more schlep really.

I went into my own  
 where no man  
 had gone before. Far  
 from infinity and certainly  
 not beyond. Yet.

Sam Frenay



**Reality**

Space is not what I thought.

I imagined nebulas and shooting stars.

But what I found is an unfathomable vacuum of forsaken and quiet and dark.

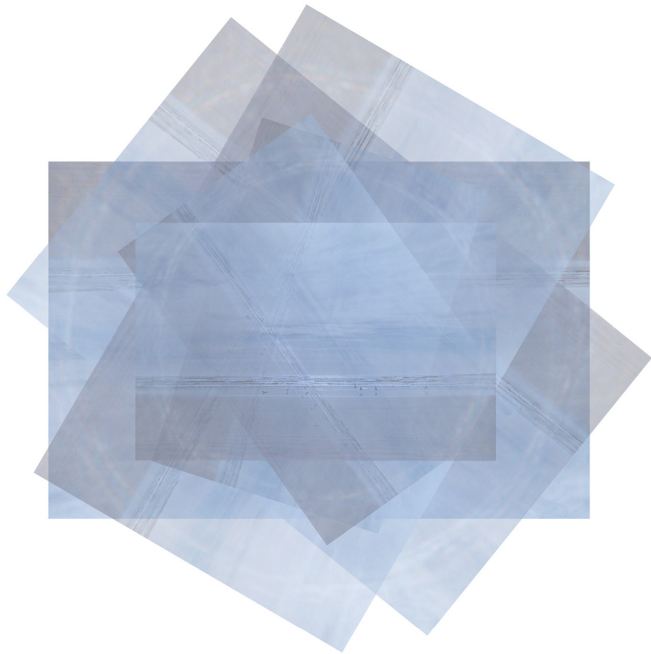
How could I know this place would be so cold?

I thought it would be light and weightless, bright and mystical, with the light of the distance-washed stars.

It's not.

How could I know space would be so heavy?

Karen Ho



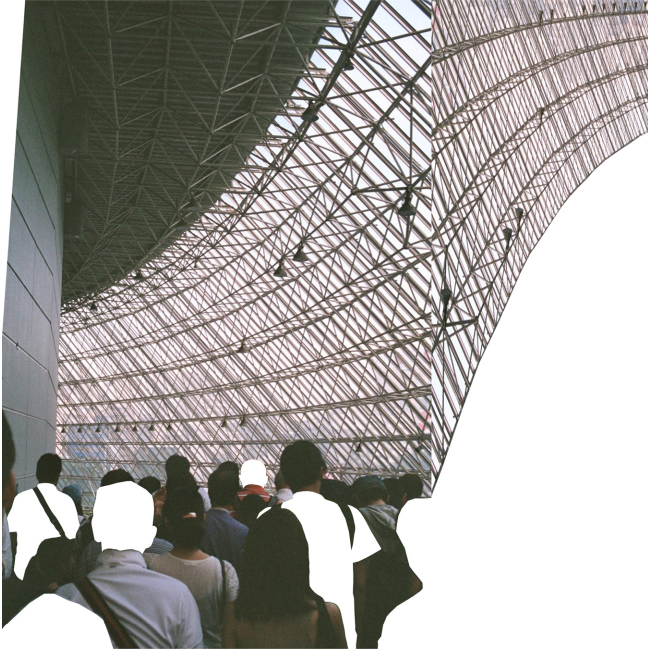
**Saturn**

Great, gassy giant in a midnight sea  
Pray tell, Who graced you with those rings?  
The Greeks christened you in Demeter's name  
Yet you embody so much more than "goddess of grain"  
Galileo's eye saw you and was confused  
He thought that your rings were two moons!

Great, gassy giant of outer space  
Pray tell, Whose hand most carefully traced  
and spread your face with vivid paint  
No Renaissance man in all his fame  
could recreate the colors of your delicate frame

Then Who -- Who formed you from dust and ice  
and hung you beaming in the sky  
Who gave you moons and rings and light  
and left His handiwork unfurled across the night?  
Great, gassy witness since the dawn of time  
who but God Almighty could've given you life?

Rachel Lee



**Alien**

Alone,  
 I finished the Discovery channel's third documentary on extraterrestrial life  
 Then stepped outside to fill my lungs with a breath of fresh  
 oxygenated air  
 Down to the subway, into the cold, dark, unfamiliar realm  
 we call home  
 filled with creatures about whom we know  
 next to nothing.  
 I took my place among foreigners  
 standing inches from a man with an onion breath  
 and a Hispanic mamá with a sobbing child  
 The otherwise voiceless vacuum illuminated  
 by little screens.  
 Every orbit towards that irresistible gravity  
 is another thousand light years between you  
 and me.  
 Home  
 on planet Earth  
 Dreary, dark, lonely frontier.  
 next to me  
 an elderly lady speaks  
 never have I heard such a blessed sound  
 as a fellow human voice  
 "Did you know, young man, they've just sent out another probe to Mars...but do you know what I think? I think, young man, that  
 the real aliens aren't deformed, three-eyed creatures dwelling unseen in uncharted territory...they are what others are to us,  
 and what we choose to be."

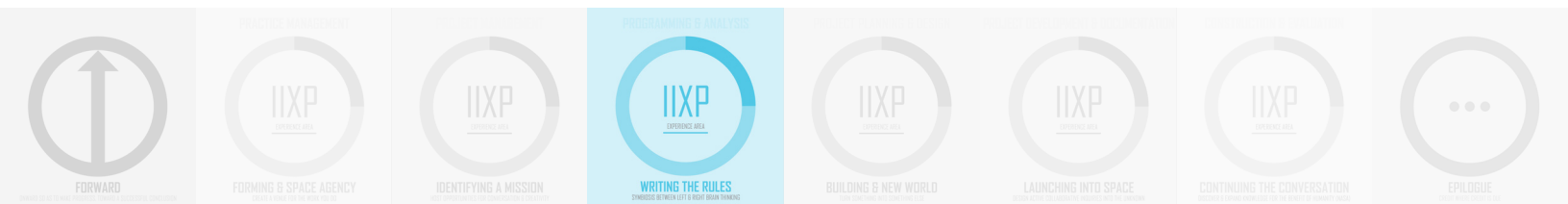
Frank He

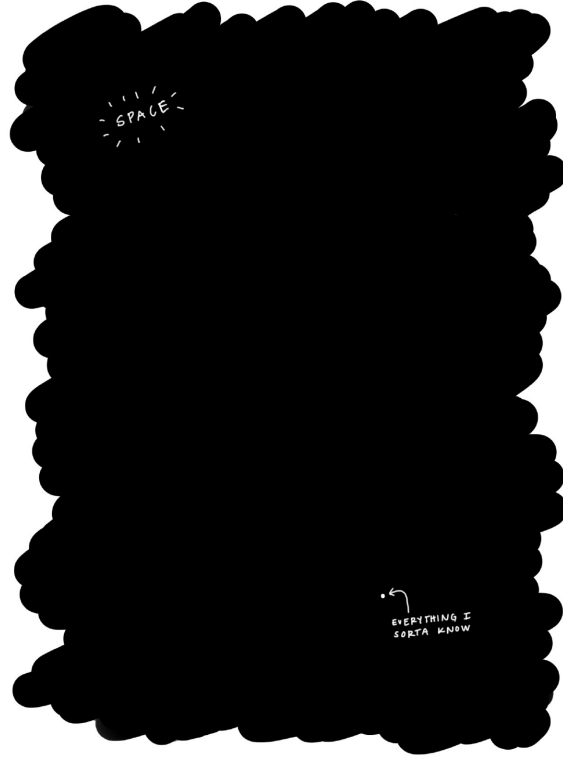


**A Warm June Night**

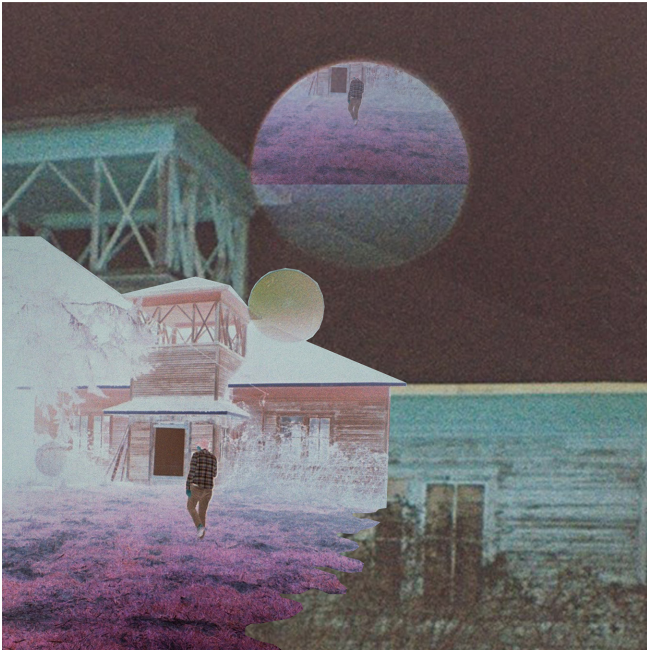
Zephyrus comes with a gentle kiss  
 Gossamer clouds carried by warm winds  
 Leave trails of heavenly tapestry where they drift  
 And the bone-white, tentative moon at its zenith  
 Peers out from behind cobweb fabric  
 Its face lit up with an unearthly glow  
 Alas, the heavens and earth thus meet  
 At the keen tip of a Divine bow

Frank He





Jan Lipman



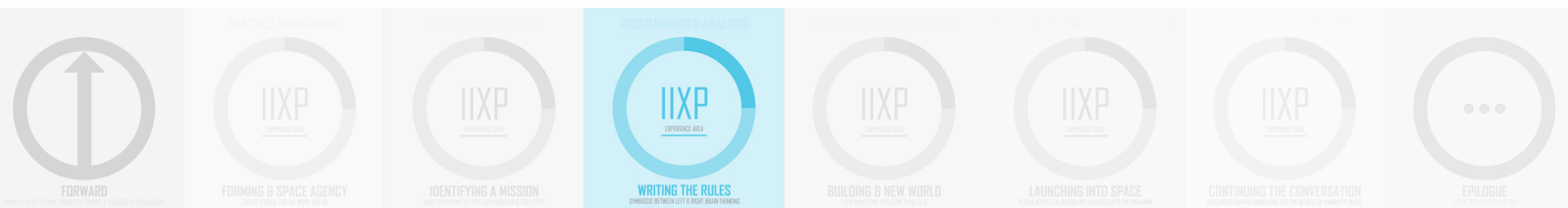
I often cannot sleep at night.  
 Knowing that we live in a world,  
 in which Matt Damon managed to play an  
 abandoned astronaut in two space themed  
 blockbuster films.. for TWO consecutive years.

The same exact character: Abandoned on  
 separate planets. This certainly couldn't have  
 been a coincidence.

Somewhere out there,  
 in the final frontier,  
 there is Matt fucking Damon.  
 Abandoned by mankind.

How do you like them apples?

Alexander Baran

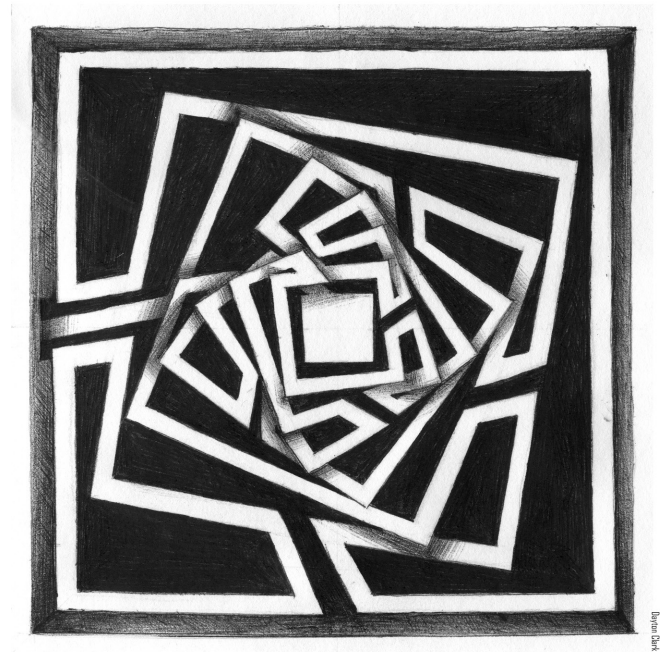
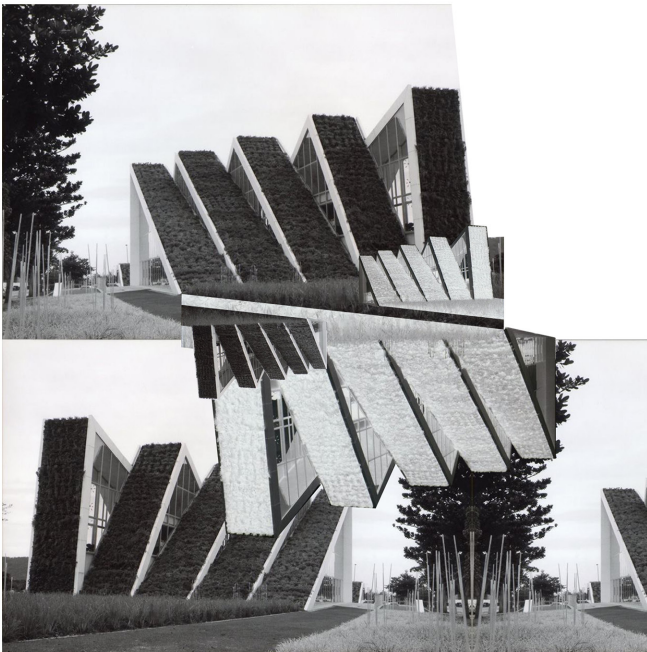




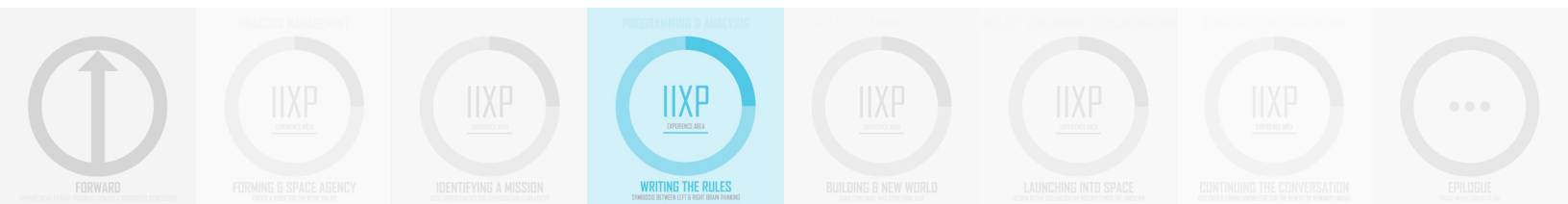
**Space Poem**

Brightness from the void  
 Hoping to see myself there  
 Thank the stars, it's you

Emilia Kachera de Bona



Dustin Blank





**SPACE THEME**

A fanfare for the solar system.

Each planet is given a theme with a duration proportionate to their orbit around the sun, forming eight musical vignettes ranging from 3 beats long (Mercury) to a few minutes long (Neptune).

These eight vignettes are bookended by short samples of the Shepherd Tone, a sound generated by ascending sine waves one octave apart constantly fading into one another, creating the illusion of infinite ascension.

Michael French



The space between  
Fells like galaxies  
That separate  
You and me

The more we reach  
The further it seems  
That this space between  
Keeps you from me

The stars at night  
Try to light the way  
A path that takes us  
Where our worlds collide

But space and time  
Show these Galaxies confine  
The space between  
You and I.

Paul Lutz



**FORWARD**  
FORMING & SPACE AGENCY



**FORMING & SPACE AGENCY**



**IDENTIFYING A MISSION**



**WRITING THE RULES**



**BUILDING A NEW WORLD**



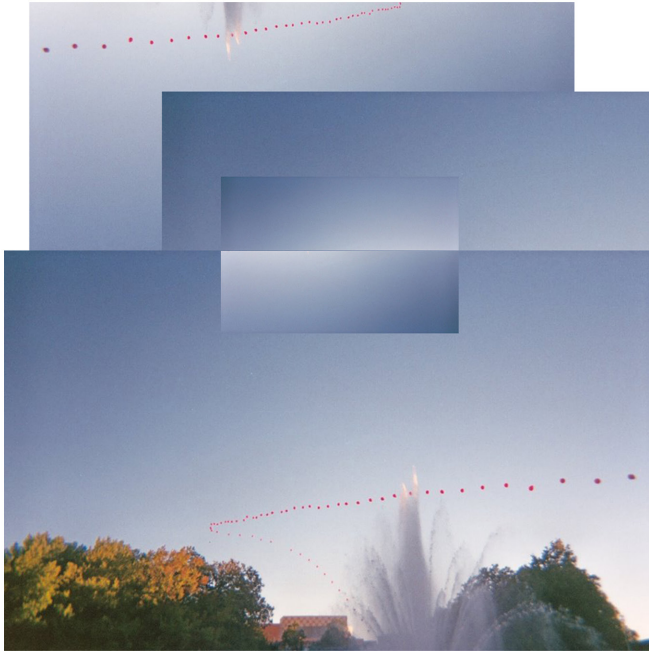
**LAUNCHING INTO SPACE**



**CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION**



**EPILOGUE**



**Untitled**

A poem of space.  
 A space of poems.  
 How do haikus work again?

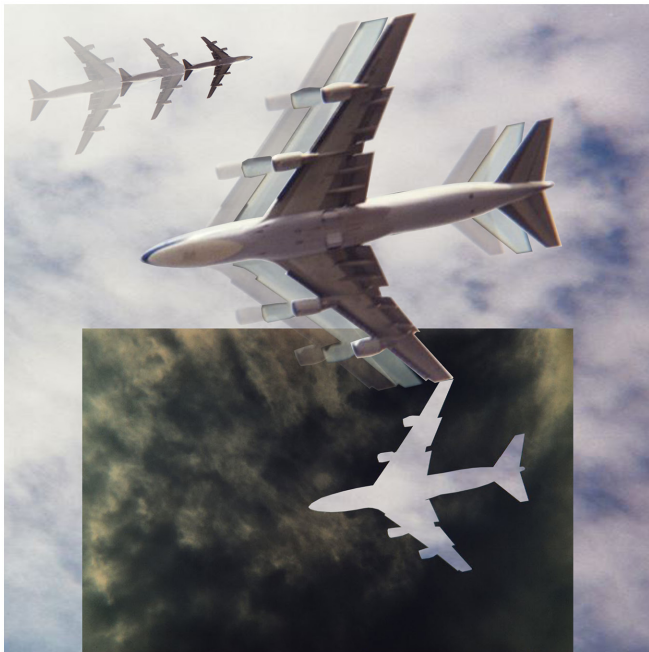
Hm, both are nice.  
 Which one is it?  
 Can it be both/and?  
 Sure. Of course. Anything can happen in space.  
 Not sound though.  
 100km above earth, sound disappears.  
 Screams disappear.  
 Music disappears.  
 Laughs disappear.

Maybe they just take different forms.  
 As vibrations.

Maybe it just stays in your head.  
 As imagined sounds.

We fill the void in our head.  
 We fill the void of space.

Michael Heise



**Why I left Earth.**

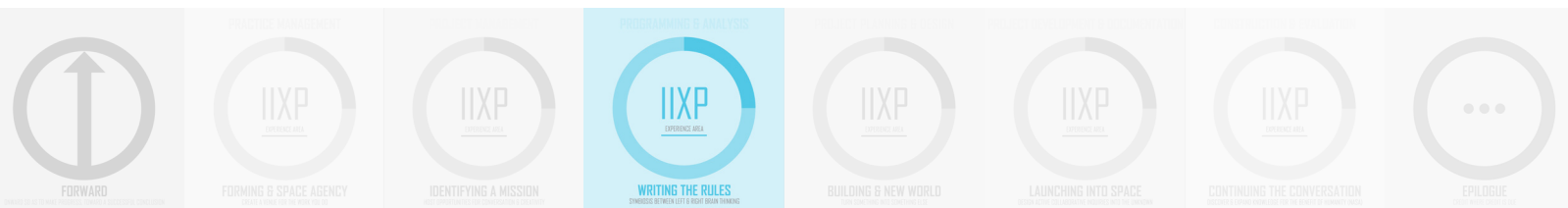
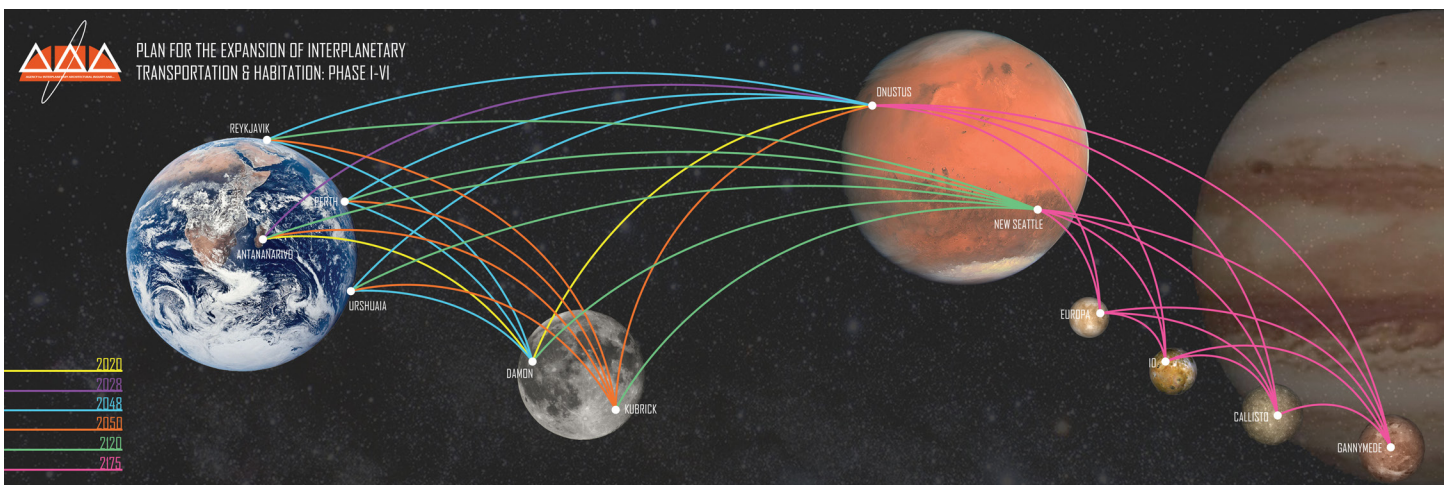
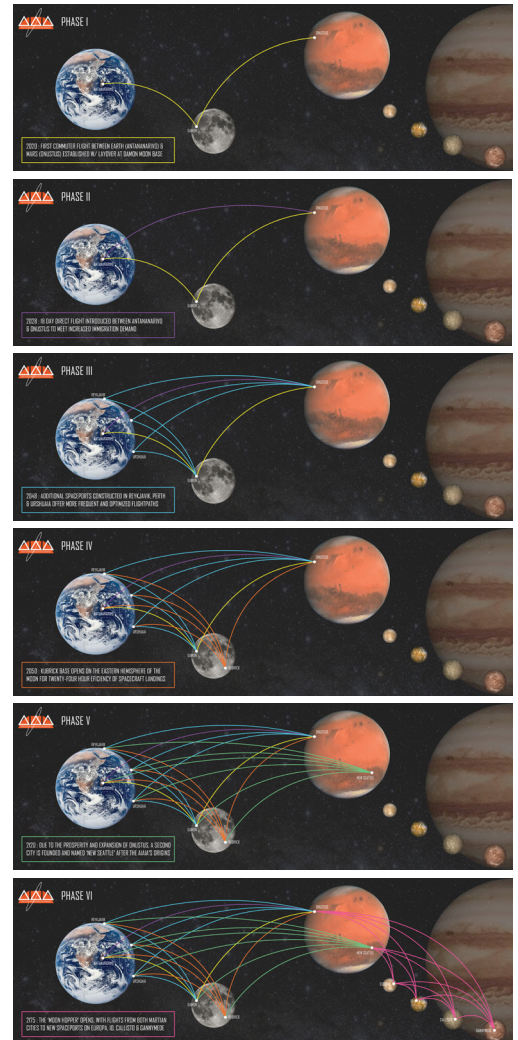
I am a dreamer.  
 I want to be a part of history.  
 I was curious.  
 I still am curious.  
 I will always be curious.  
 I believe in science.  
 I believe in God.  
 I believe in climate change.  
 I do not believe in our leaders.  
 I don't know.  
 I lost something.  
 I ran the numbers.

Chris VanDerHeide



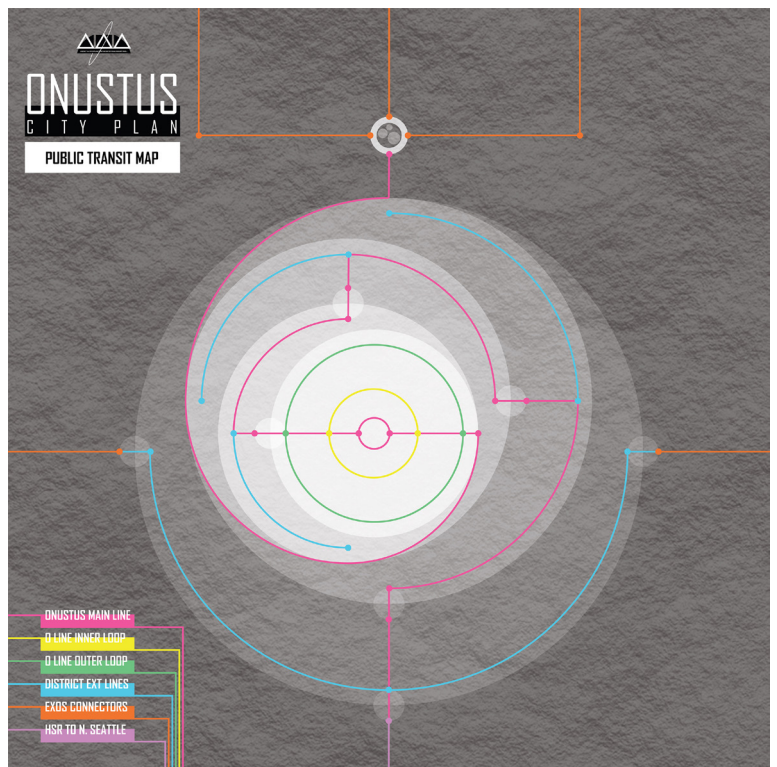
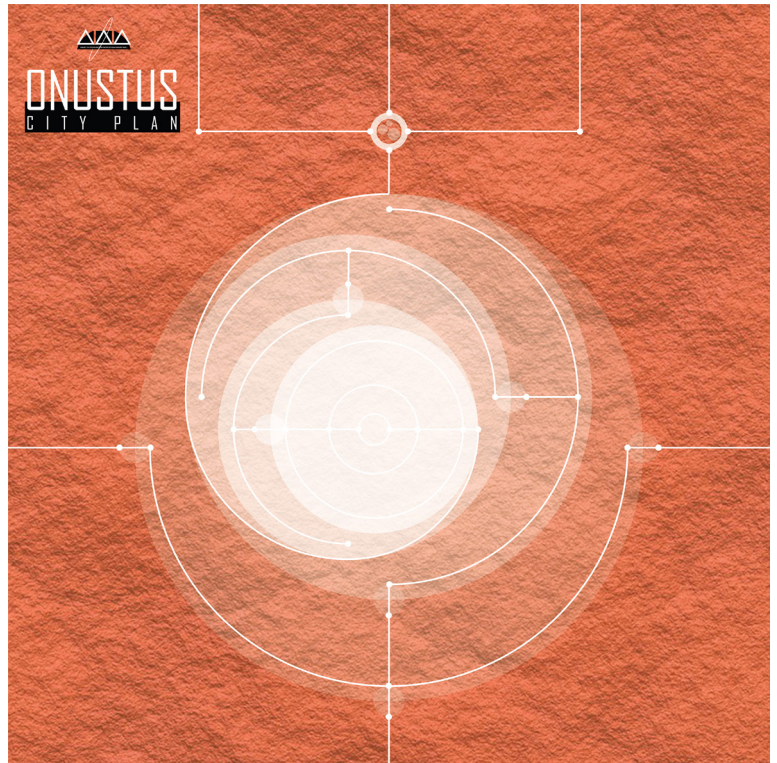
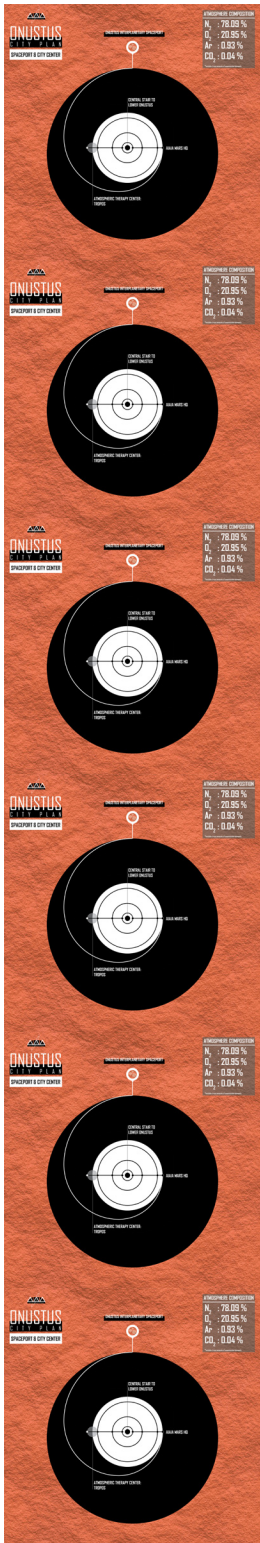
Simultaneously, I began to illustrate the site for this project through a series of maps and diagrams that establish certain important aspects of time and place that would allow the project to continue to develop in specificity. Inspiration was gleaned from the worldbuilding game, as well as details included that could be directly traced to a reference found in the poetry or interviews.

The first of these diagrams was a plan for the expansion of interplanetary transportation and habitation. This was an interesting diagram to create, as it reads like a historical account of a series of future events. By beginning to suggest a history of this project that extends from now to hundreds of years in the future, I had a timeline I could situate myself along to engage with the specific moments that I would eventually be designing for.



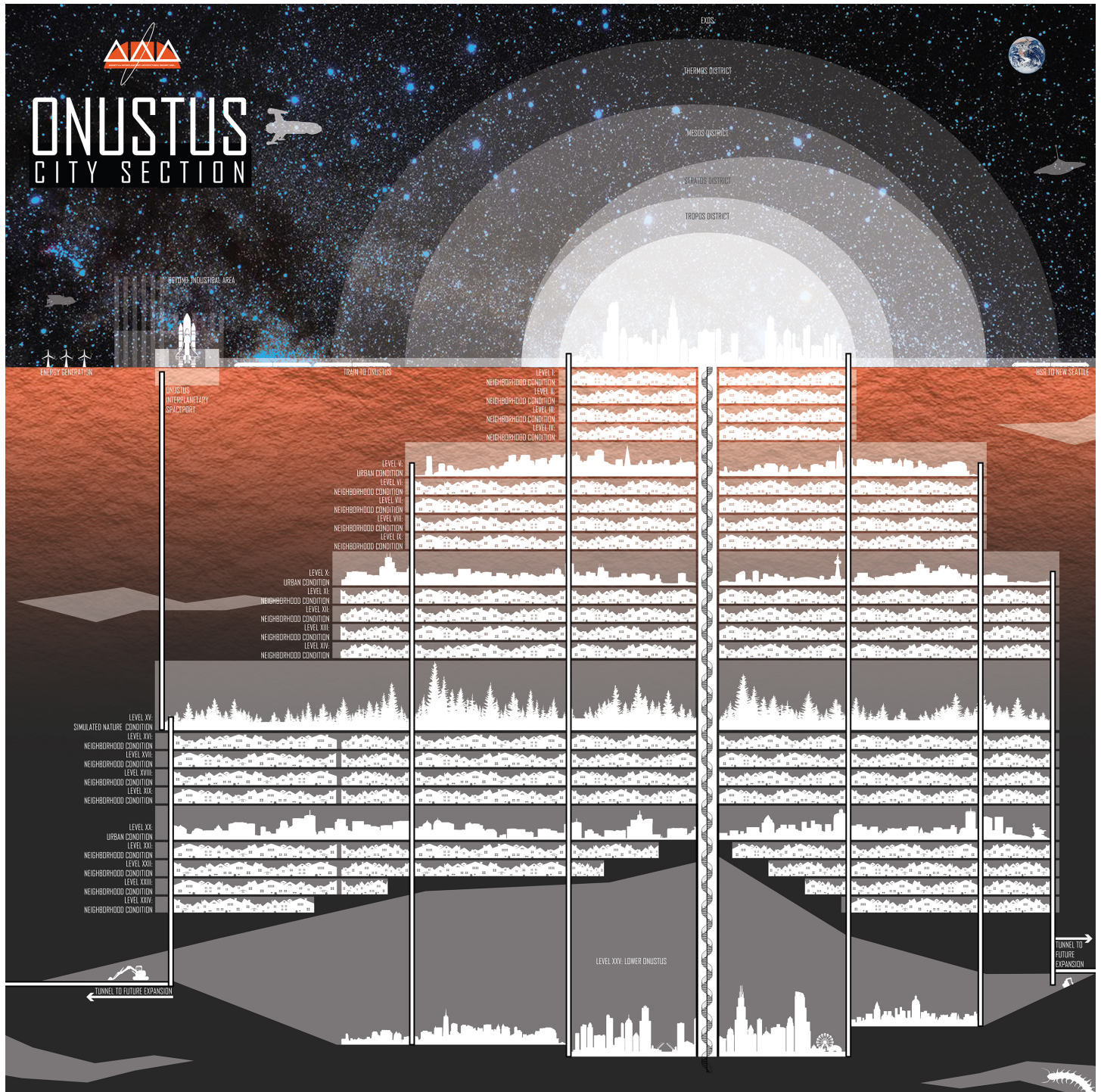


By this point, a specific city to be established on Mars had been conceived. Called 'Onustus,' latin for fullness, it was named to speak against a theme found in a lot of the poetry about the notion of space as emptiness, or void. There were two important ideas that the city was planned around. First, public transportation was prioritized to establish Onustus as a city free of personal vehicles. Secondly, the districts were organized as concentric domes, with the atmosphere graduated from typical Earth composition to that of Mars. Martians would move outward over time to catalyze evolution.





The final city scale diagram developed at this point was a section, highlighting how the city would expand underground. The diagram also makes suggestions at vertical circulation and zoning.

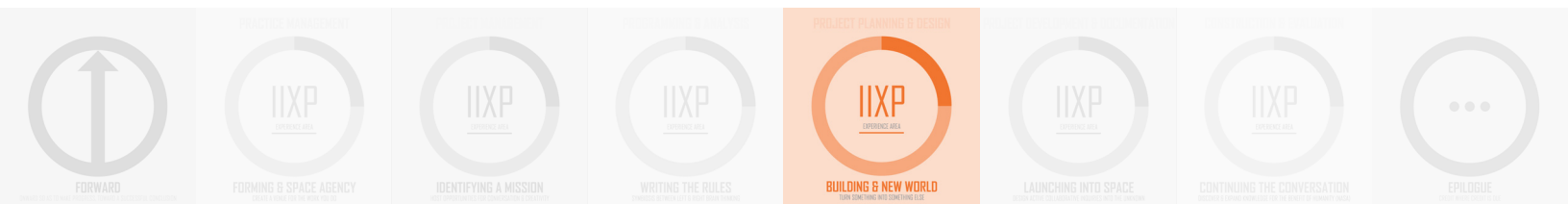
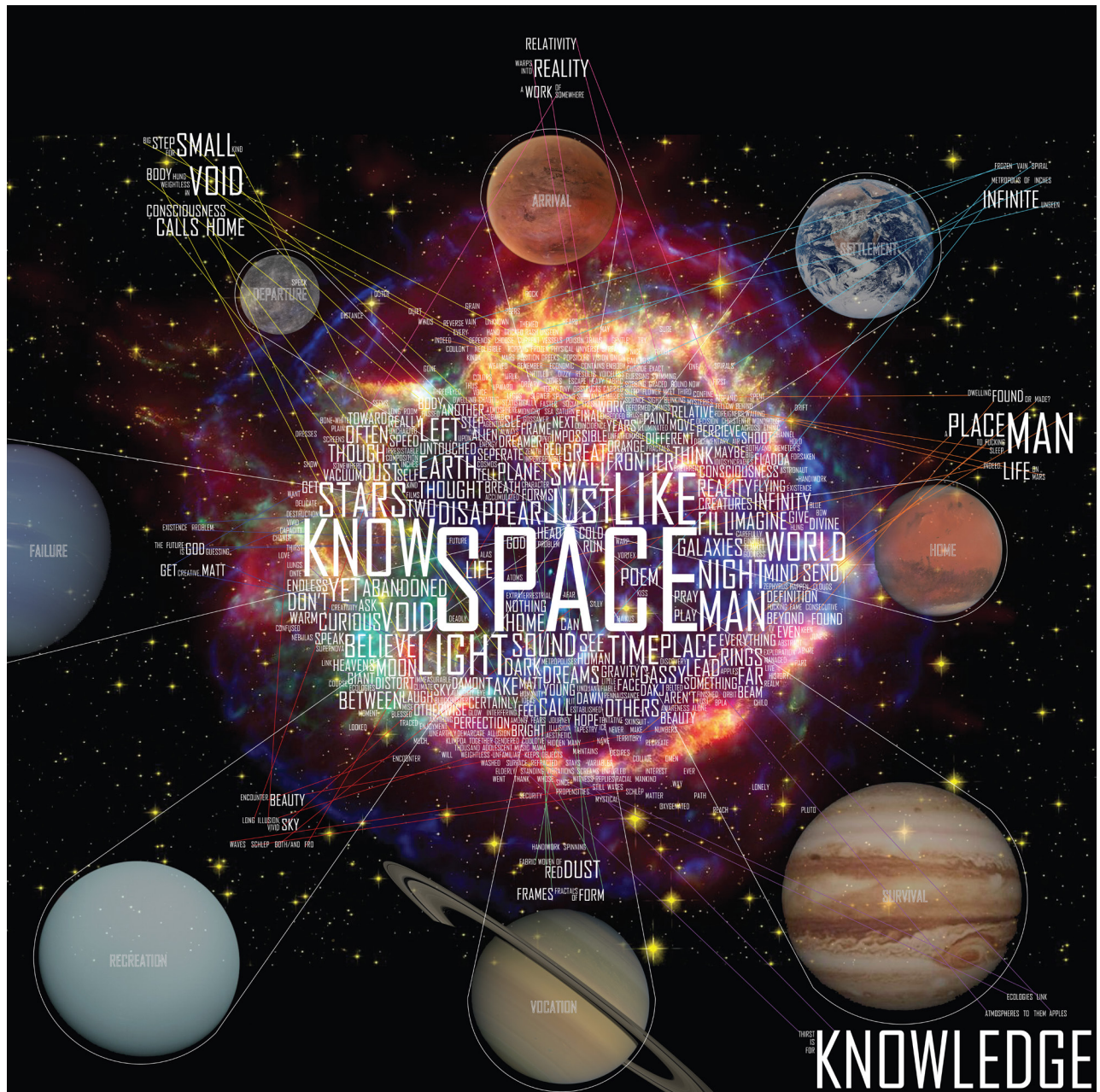








From the center of this catastrophic collapse, a new system emerges. A system of moments orbiting around a timeless center that demand the intentional attention of design. These are the opportunities that take this project into its final phase. To begin the process, we constructed a haiku, or very-quick architecture, recomposing the words chosen by the precedent designers to illustrate an initial idea about each moment.





## CHAPTER V : LAUNCHING INTO SPACE

TURN SOMETHING INTO SOMETHING ELSE

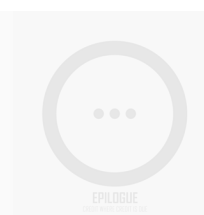
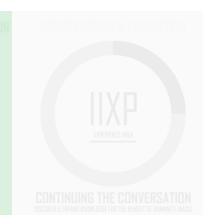
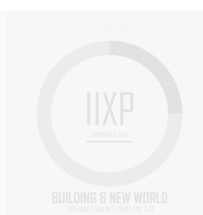
*I want labor to be the point, because everything in our lives is miraculously made with no idea of how it's done. As an active and critical consumer, and as someone who has attempted to make the flawless and failed, I wanted a transparency of construction here. If we know how it is made and how it falls apart, we will know how to rebuild it.*

(TOM SACHS, Interview)

It was time to get to work.

With very little time left, I had at last arrived at some level of specificity for what to think about in terms of design. The goal then became to take each investigation as far as I could with my remaining couple weeks. In order to increase productivity, I returned to the strategy that had launched this project back in its (more) conceptual stage, and decided to hire collaborators. For each investigation, I invited a peer who was working on or interested to something that I could connect thematically to what I was interested in, so I could benefit not only from their support, but from some level of expertise. I then designed a simple, conversational way to structure the collaborations.

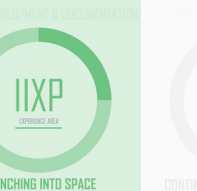
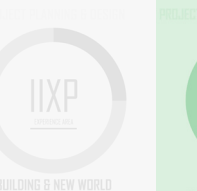
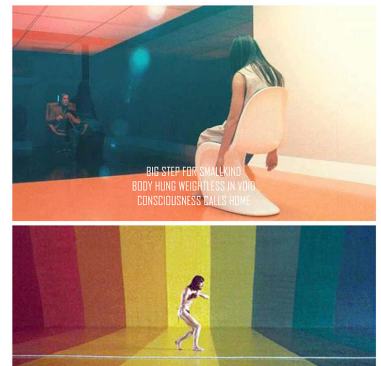
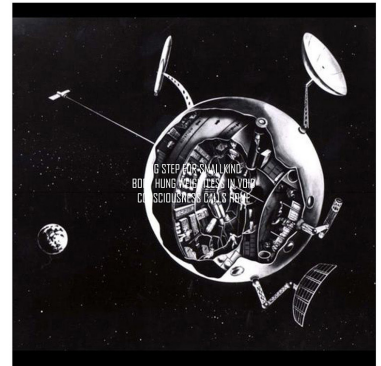
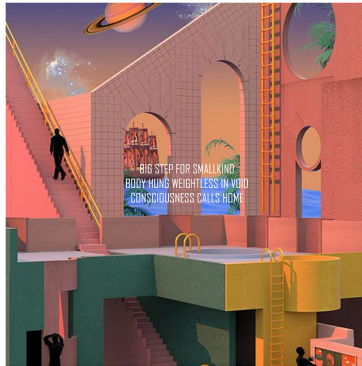
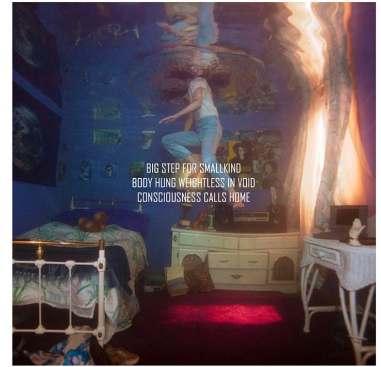
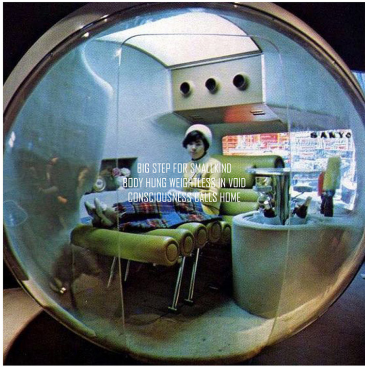
First I provided each collaborator with the haiku, the quick-design of what I sought to capture in each project, and answered any questions they had more specifically about what we would be working on. From there, I asked them to return to me with collection of precedent or inspirational imagery. Drawing from this, I then drew a quick napkin sketch as to what I was thinking for each design, which I then gave the collaborator a chance to red line, bringing their elaborations, corrections or other thoughts to the inquiry. Finally, I developed a graphic to communicate the design, experimenting with a different representation strategy for each and giving the collaborator final editorial control before sharing each, in whatever state of completion, at my final review and in the following pages of this document. I will now walk through these 8 Inquiries.





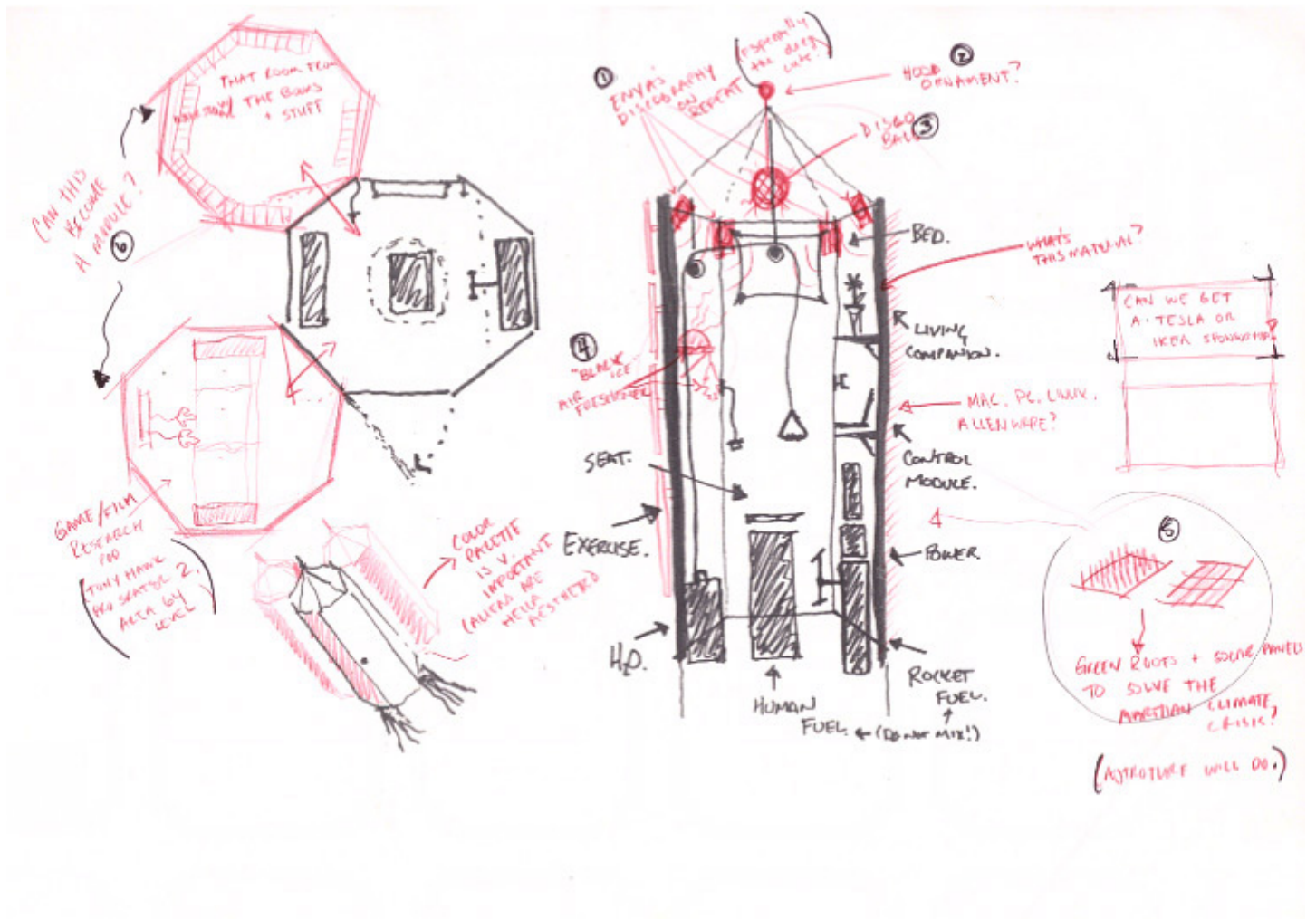
EPISODE I: DEPARTURE

*big step for smallkind  
body hung weightless in void  
consciousness calls home*





Departure was a collaboration with Alexander Barr. The prompt was to consider the vessel that would take us from Earth to Mars, focusing on the close-body experience of the space, and the necessities of dealing with the prolonged isolation. Drawing from Alexander's initial feedback, I produced a sketch for a full scale mockup (black lines) which Alexander then elaborated and expanded (red lines).





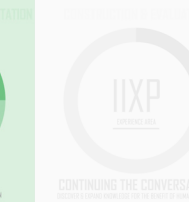
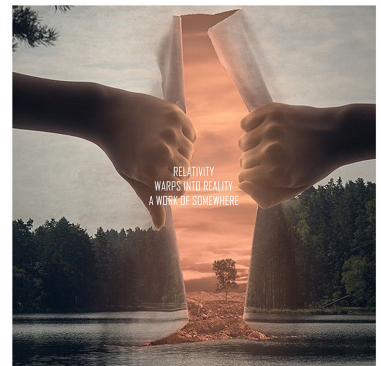
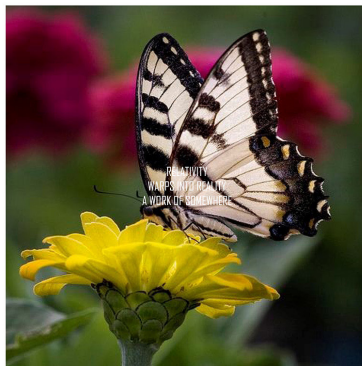
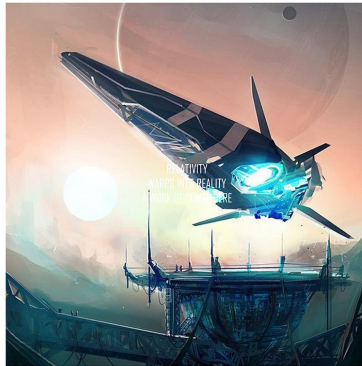
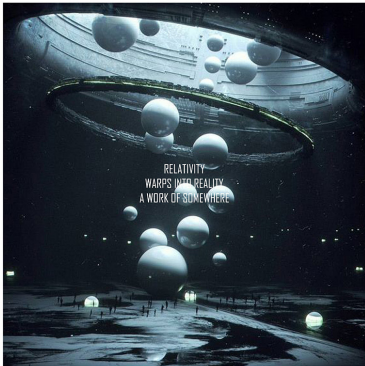
The final mock-up was constructed of cheap materials and found objects, meant to give a spatial impression of the space we would have to occupy for the pending long journey. After testing, the ship was repurposed as a museum, showcasing the visual work produced by the AIAIA.





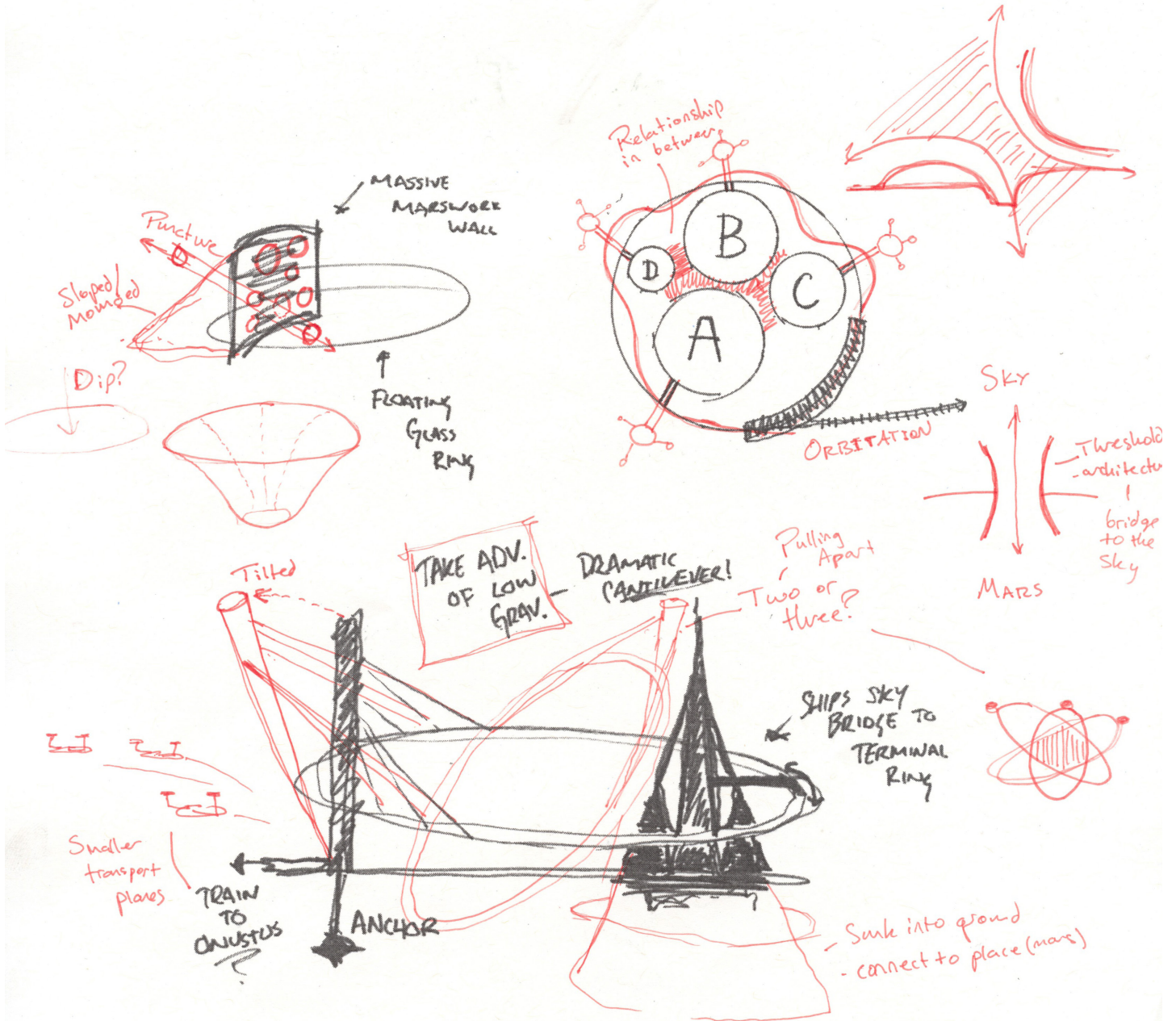
EPISODE II: ARRIVAL

*relativity  
warps into reality  
a work of somewhere*





Arrival was a collaboration with Joe Graham, who was designing Skyports for his own thesis project. Responding to Joe's initial contributions, I produced a sketch of a proposed port for Onustus, the Onustus Interplanetary Skyport, which I saw as an opportunity to make a dramatic gesture/entrance, capitalizing on the opportunities afforded by low gravity and the bounty of natural material.



FORWARD



FORMING A SPACE AGENCY



IDENTIFYING A MISSION



WRITING THE RULES



BUILDING A NEW WORLD



LAUNCHING INTO SPACE



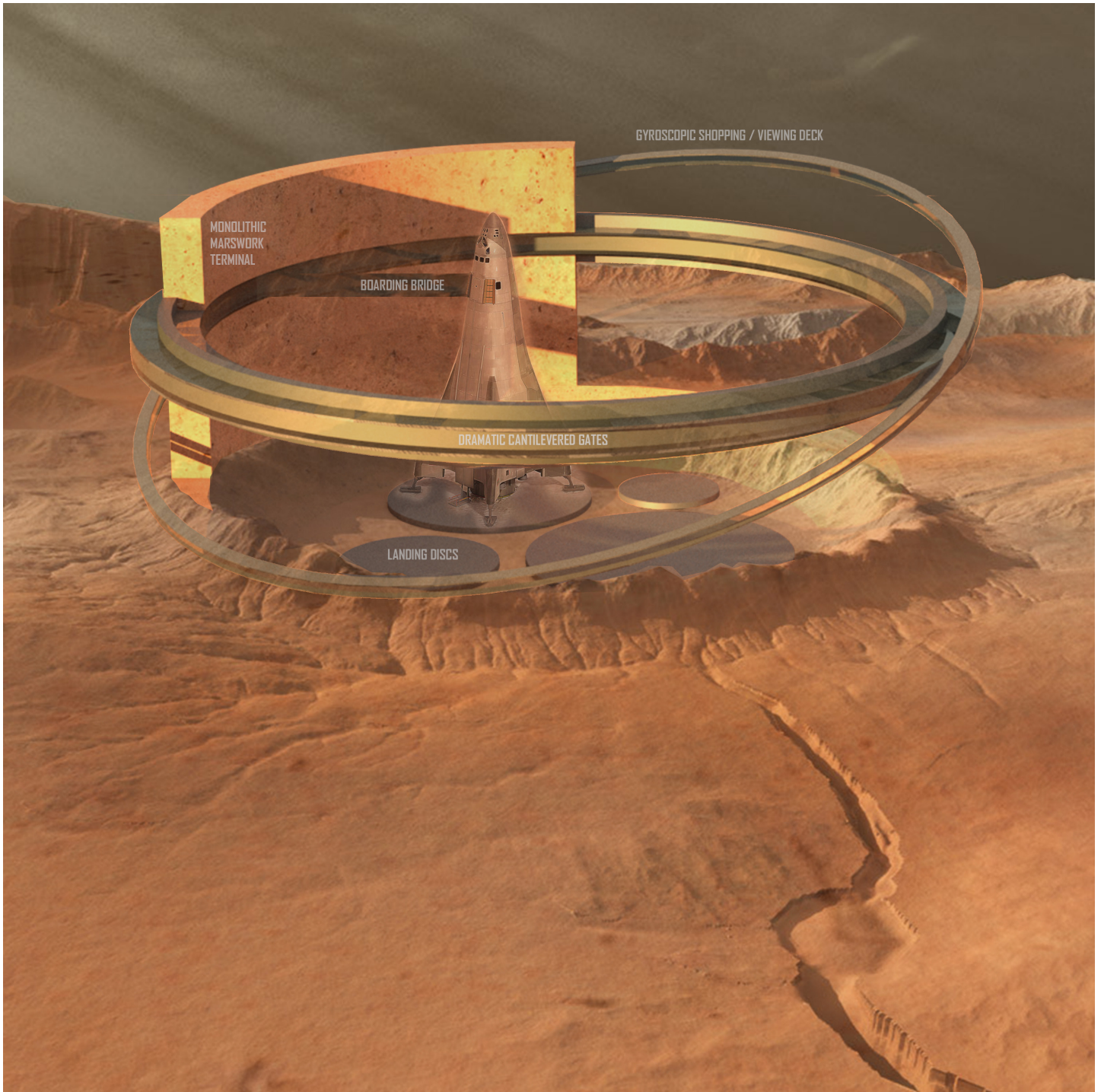
CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION



EPILOGUE



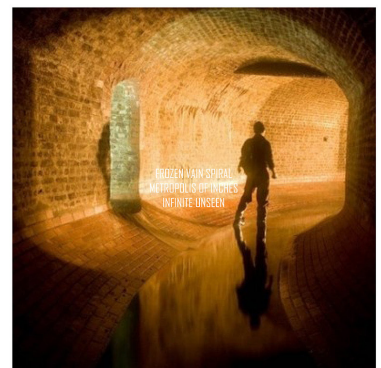
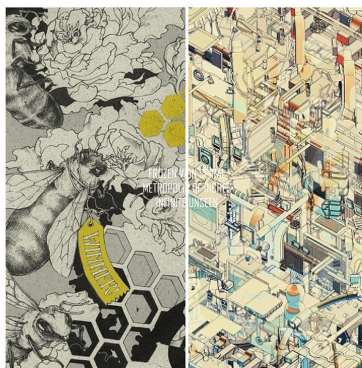
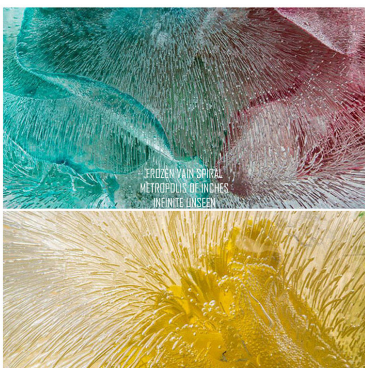
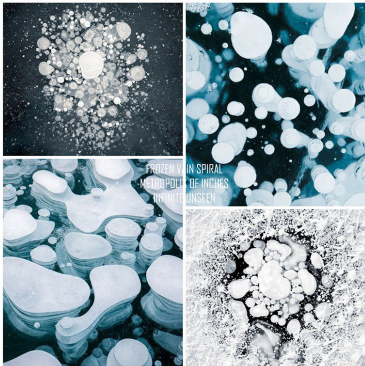
The final rendering shows a structure built around a natural landing crater, anchored by a monolithic Marswork terminal with a massive cantilevered ring of gates. An additional ring, with a viewing deck and supplemental program, orbits the structure in a gyroscopic rhythm.





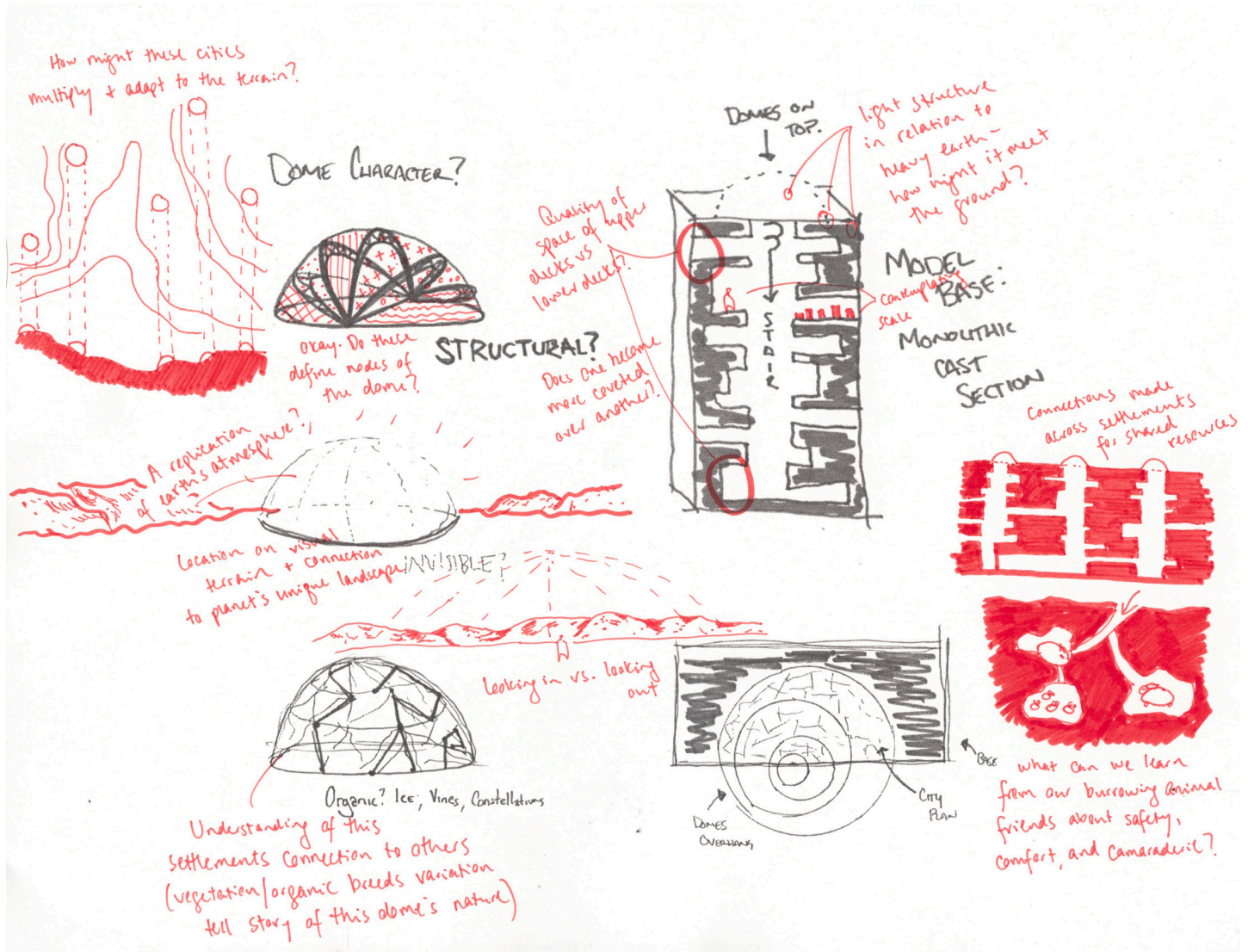
EPISODE III: SETTLEMENT

*frozen vain spiral  
metropolis of inches  
infinite unseen*





Settlement was a collaboration with Kelsey Pierson, who was looking at urban scale issues in Mexico City in her own work. After looking through Kelsey's early contributions, I was particularly interested in relationships between the surface and subterranean city. The city was the element I had most previously developed schematically, so I really wanted to focus my investigation to something specific.



FORWARD  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



FORMING A SPACE AGENCY  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



IDENTIFYING A MISSION  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



WRITING THE RULES  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



BUILDING A NEW WORLD  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



LAUNCHING INTO SPACE  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



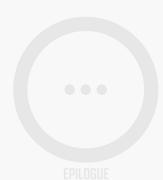
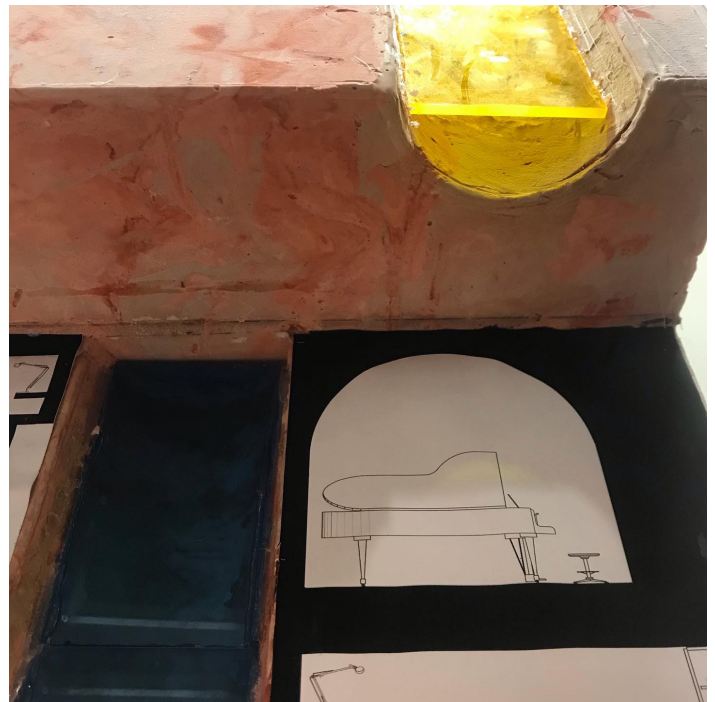
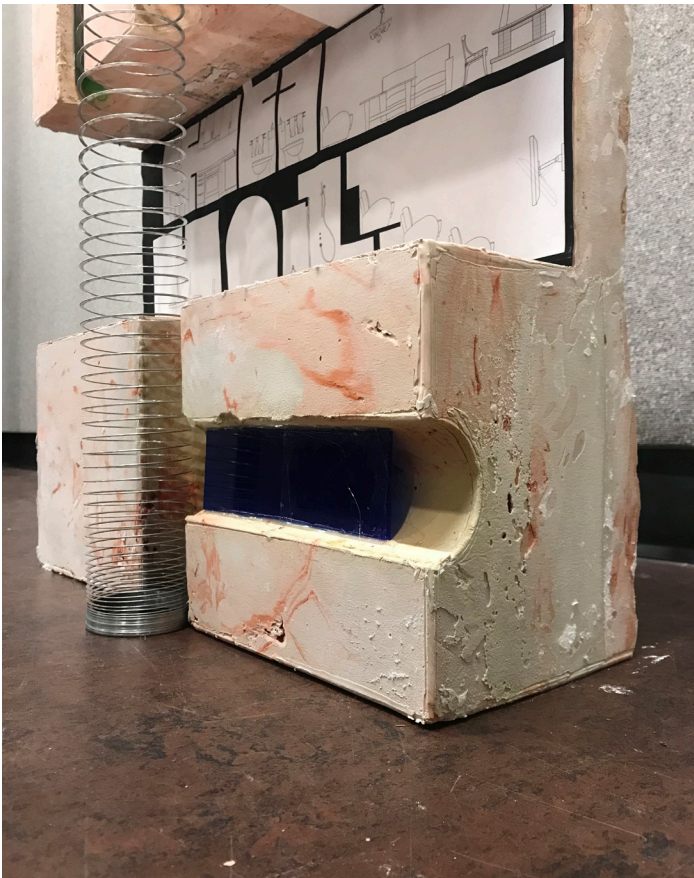
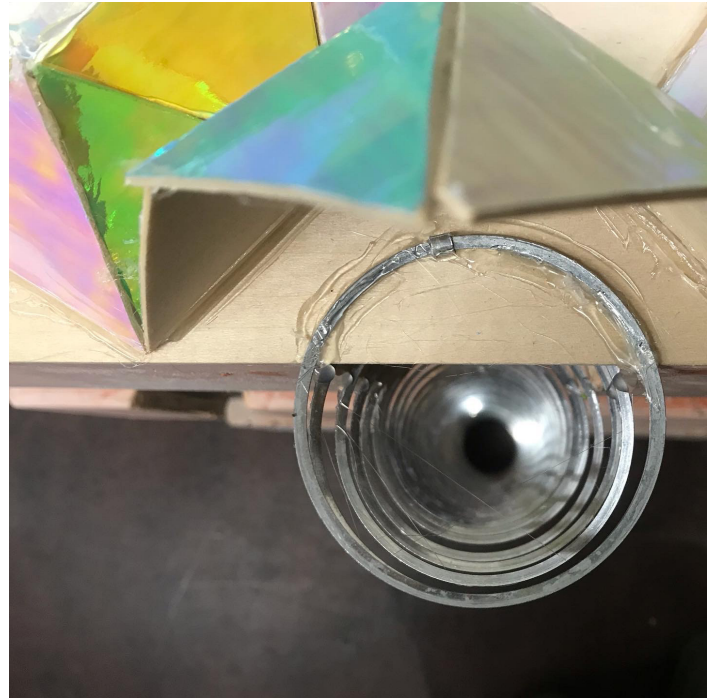
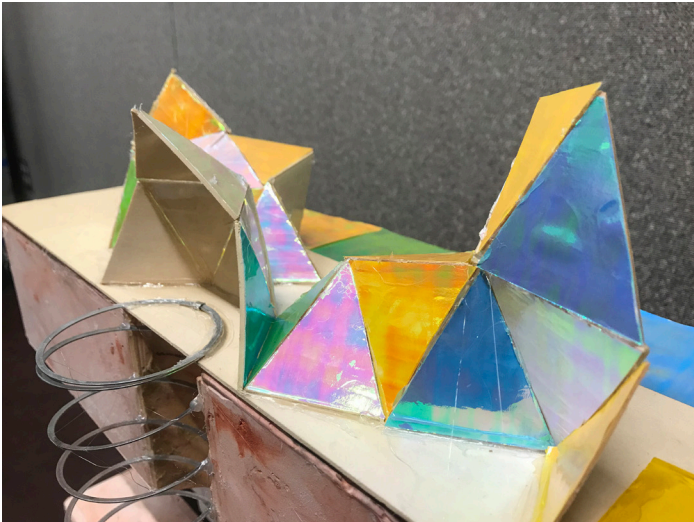
CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



EPILOGUE  
DESIGN & CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT



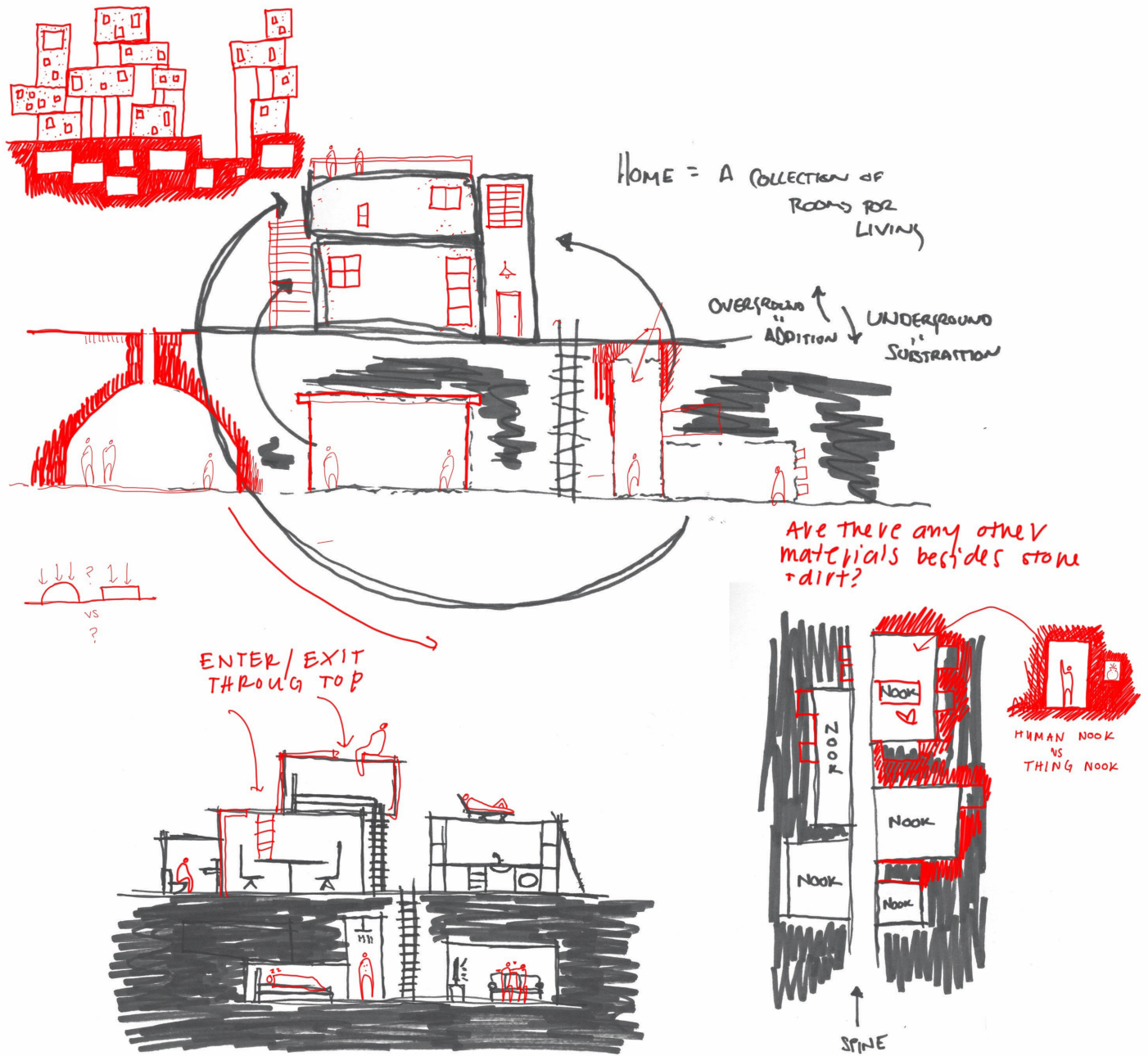
For the final piece, I constructed a conceptual model to explore and illustrate these insertions, required for the movement of people, light, water and food. I also wanted to highlight the paradox of contrast between surface and underground, one feels light and one heavy, yet both are completely enclosed.







Home was a collaboration with Tori Haynes, who was bringing a creative approach in looking at housing here in Seattle, and I wanted to begin with some of the ideas that she was proposing as crisis response. The strategy is to compose the home as an arrangement of nooks. Nooks for people, nooks for objects, nooks that are optimized to the specific demands of the domestic experience.



FORWARD



FORMING A SPACE AGENCY



IDENTIFYING A MISSION



WRITING THE RULES



BUILDING A NEW WORLD



LAUNCHING INTO SPACE



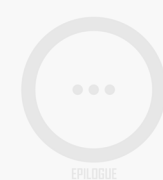
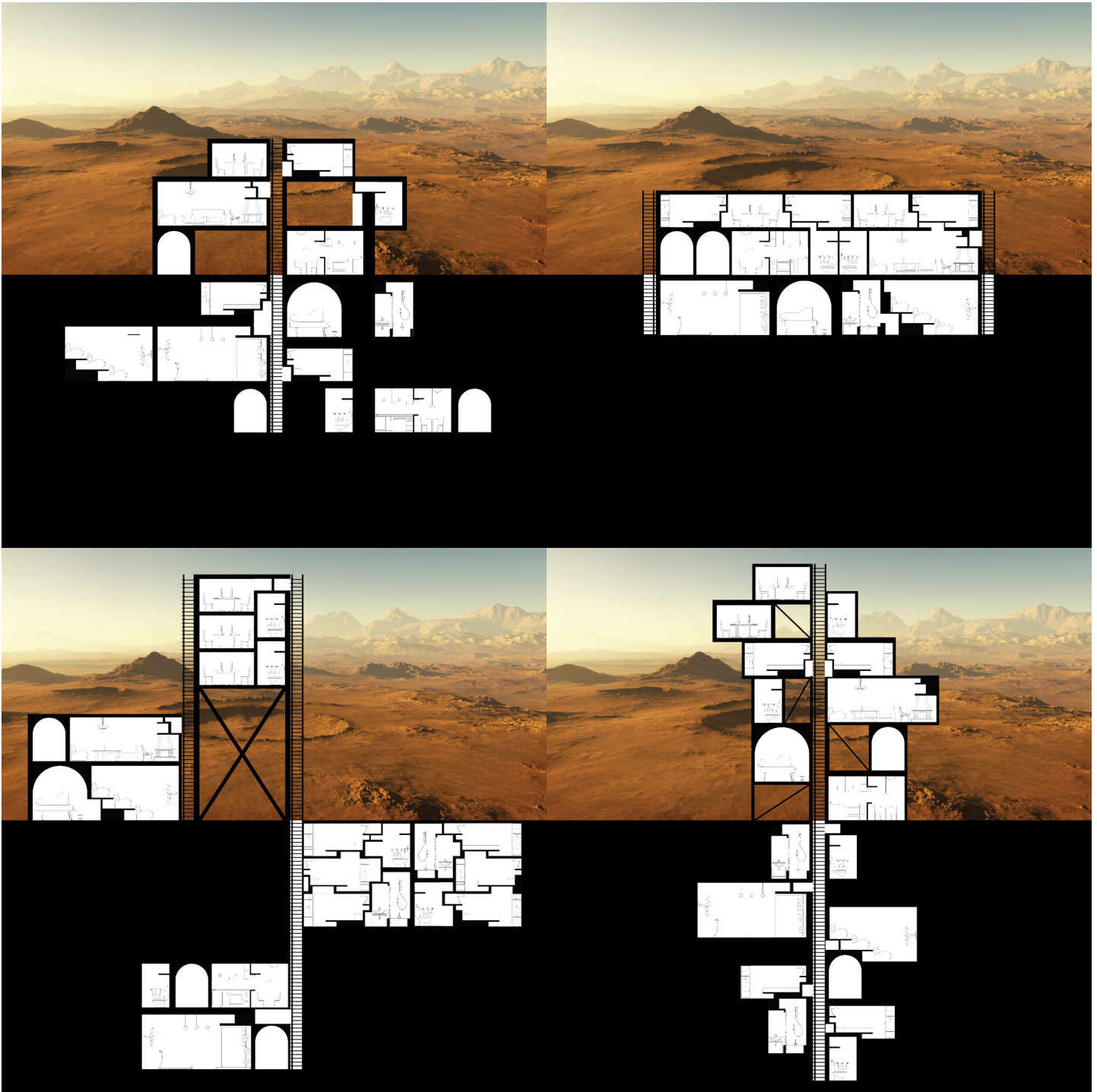
CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION



EPILOGUE



By establishing these nooks as modules, either subtracted from the mars or recomposed on its surface, we can build up our required dwellings quickly, while a sense of specific place can be achieved by manipulating the composition.



FORWARD  
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FORMING A SPACE AGENCY  
IIXP AGENCY

IDENTIFYING A MISSION  
IIXP AGENCY

WRITING THE RULES  
IIXP AGENCY

BUILDING A NEW WORLD  
IIXP AGENCY

LAUNCHING INTO SPACE  
DESIGN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH INTO THE UNKNOWN  
IIXP AGENCY

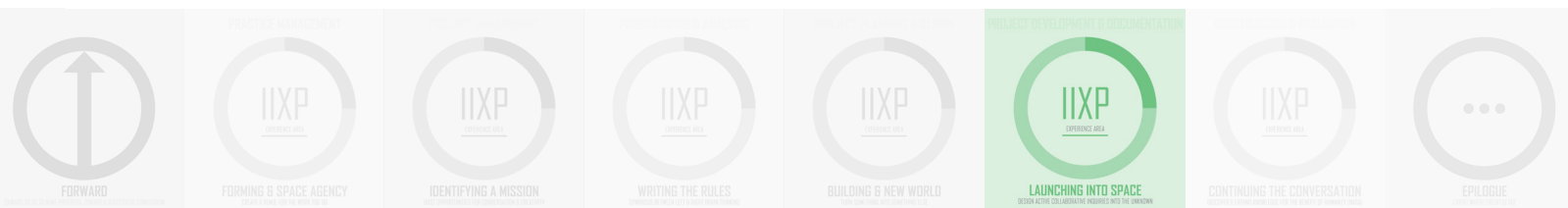
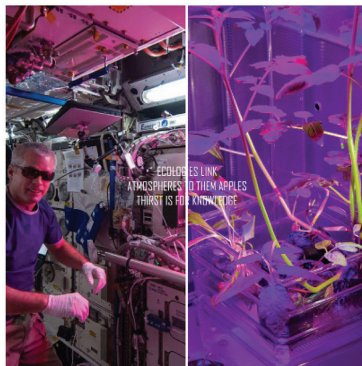
CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION  
IIXP AGENCY

EPILOGUE  
IIXP AGENCY



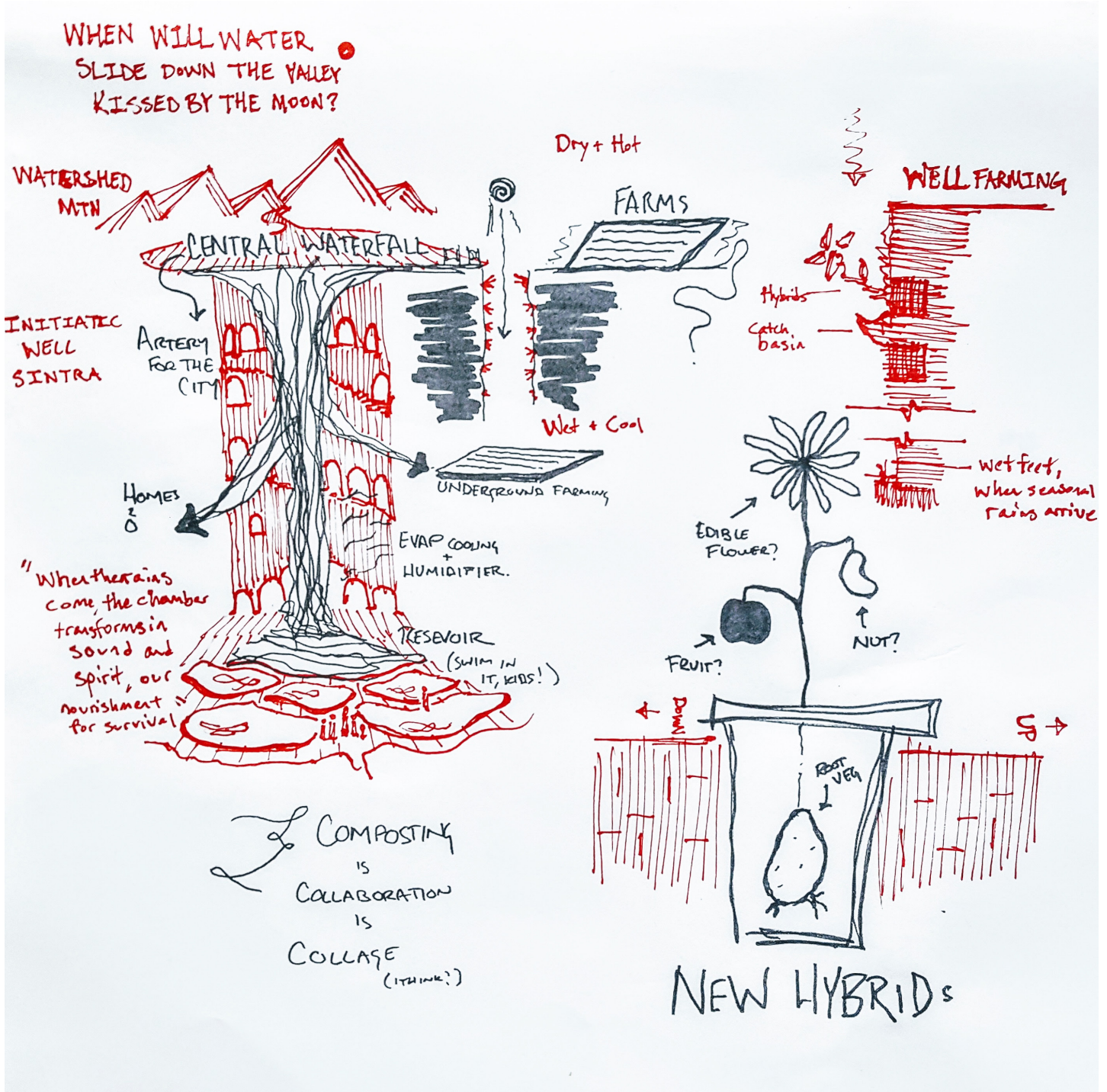
EPISODE VI: SURVIVAL

*ecologies link  
atmospheres to them apples  
thirst is for knowledge*





Survival was a collaboration with Brian Deck, a landscape architecture student who I knew would bring a blend of scientific and poetic approaches to the inquiry. As of now, our still-human bodies thirst for liquid water, vegetal food & oxygen rich air. To accommodate, we must turn to molecular reconfiguration, soil supplementation and selective quarantine.



**FORWARD**



**FORMING A SPACE AGENCY**



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**BUILDING A NEW WORLD**



**LAUNCHING INTO SPACE**



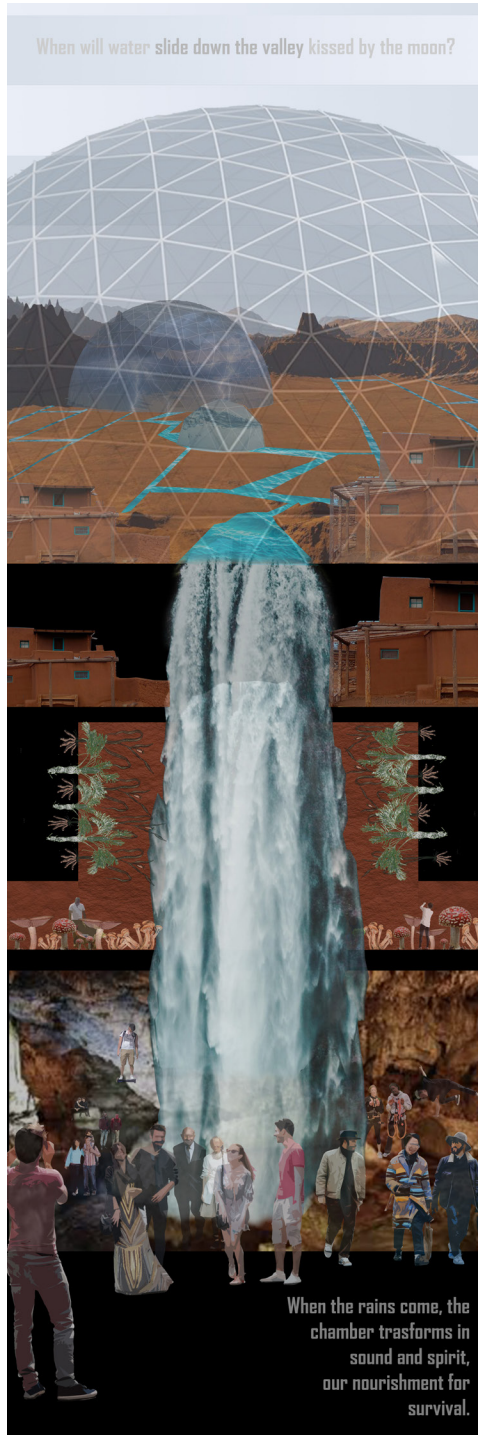
**CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION**



**EPILOGUE**



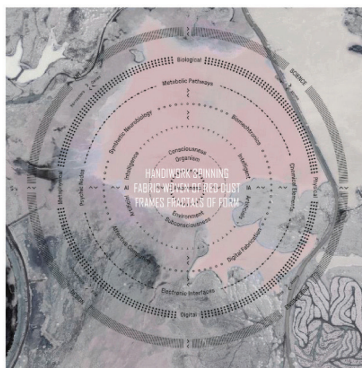
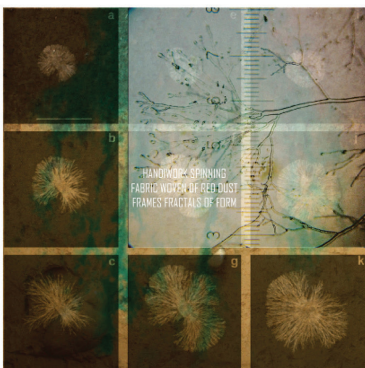
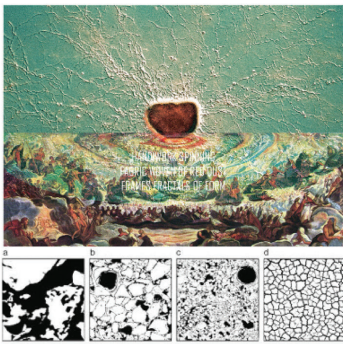
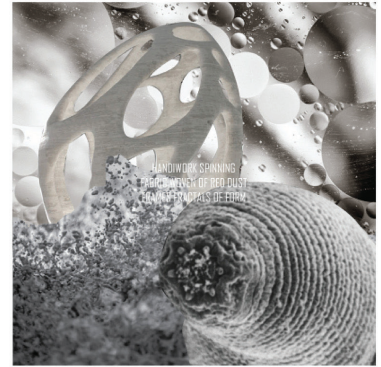
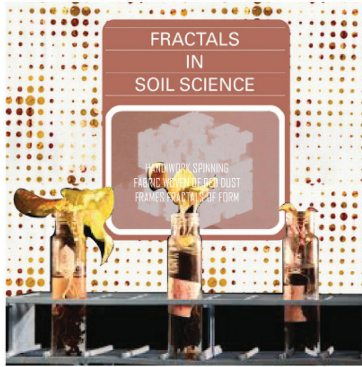
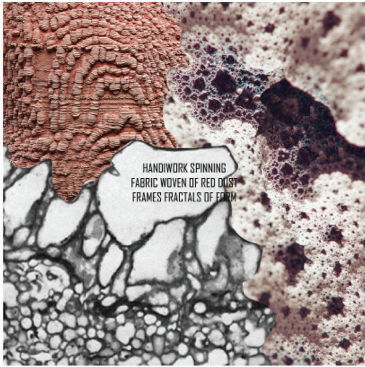
It is important to keep in mind that these are not inconsequential actions, but serve as disruptions to any number of other systems to appease our own requirement. The landscape has a spirit which must be respected and invited into the human myth.





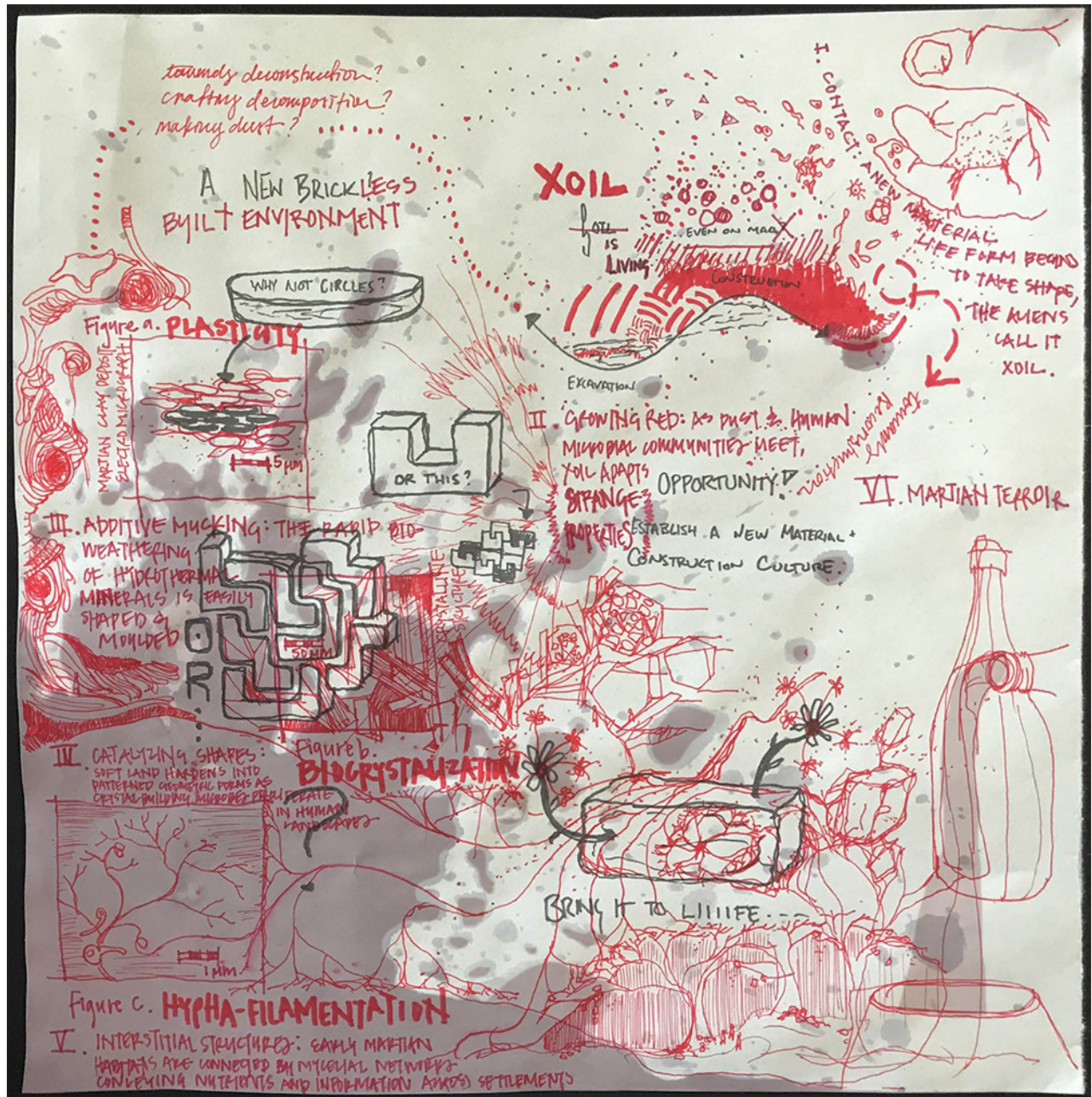
EPISODE VII: VOCATION

*handiwork spinning  
fabric woven of red dust  
frames fractals of form*





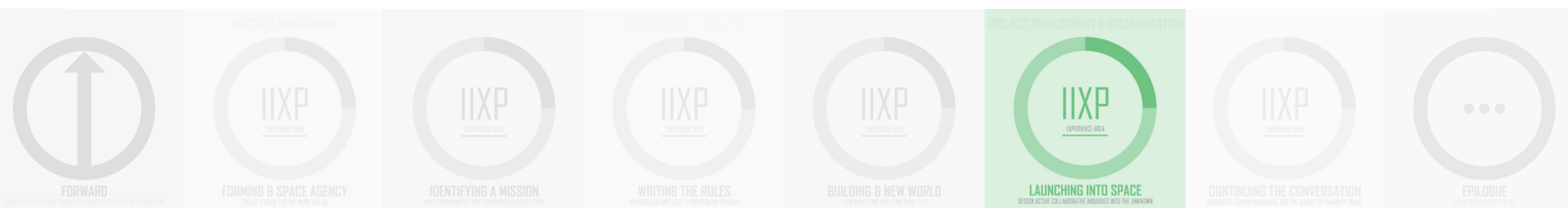
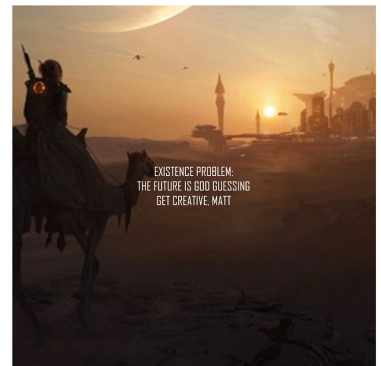
Vocation was a collaboration with Stevie Koepp, whose depth of knowledge about material is matched only by her passion for it. For this inquiry, I decided to focus on construction, and the opportunity to establish new traditions and culture around building. In the first stage, Stevie displayed this passion by constructing original collages as precedent imagery. As this collaboration developed, it illustrates something that was very important to us about designing this process. We did not inflict deadlines on any collaborators. Stevie brought incredible energy to her project, but the process did not pace out to be finished before this document.





EPISODE VIII: FAILURE

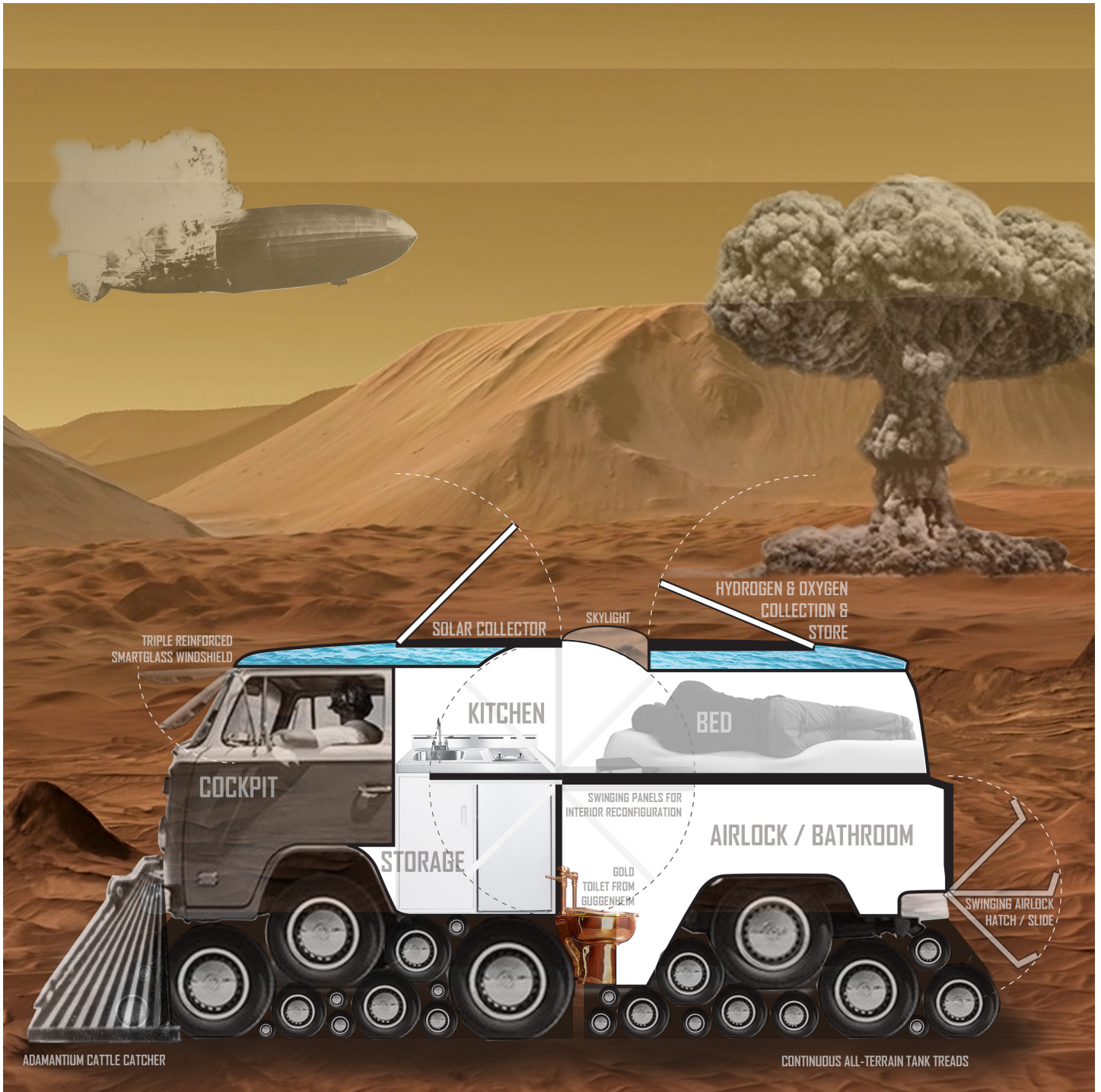
*existence problem:  
the future is God guessing  
get creative, Matt*







Through bricolage we can turn the once useful into the now essential vessels of our survival. We began by identifying certain disaster scenarios and designing responses into our exile dwelling machine (or EDM), but we know that the operator will need to continue to adapt the EDM to the specifics of their apocalypse.





## CHAPTER VI : CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

*Architecture is a fuzzy amalgamation of ancient knowledge and contemporary practice, an awkward way to look at the world and an inadequate medium to operate on it. Any architectural project takes five years; no single enterprise—ambition, intention, need—remains unchanged in the contemporary maelstrom.*

*Architecture is too slow.*

*Yes, the word “architecture” is still pronounced with certain reverence (outside the profession). It embodies the lingering hope—or the vague memory of a hope—that shape, form, coherence could be imposed on the violent surf of information that washes over us daily.*

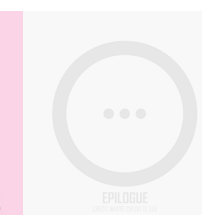
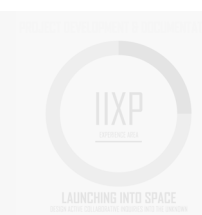
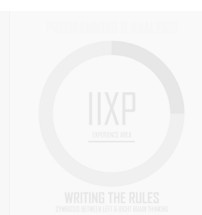
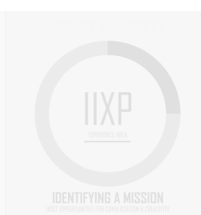
*Maybe, architecture doesn’t have to be stupid after all.*

*Liberated from the obligation to construct, it can become a way of thinking about anything—a discipline that represents relationships, proportions, connections, effects, the diagram of everything.*

(REM KOOHLHAAS, Content)

Like poetry, this thesis is ‘quick architecture.’ This is likely to serve as a full retrospective on the work of the AIAIA (2019-2019), but it is neither the start or end of anything. Hopefully it is apparent, but this is the part where I explain the joke. This is a project about methodology. It’s about the fact that Architecture is not one thing, and does not do simply one thing. It takes interest in the currently unknowable. It is science fiction. It uses references and exaggeration to make a point. It is parody. It constructs recklessly and preconsciously. It is poetry. But in all these ways it is also architecture, and this is the architecture I plan to continue to practice.

So it’s time to start again. To form a space agency. To create a venue for the work I do. If there is one thing this project has deeply ingrained in me, it is the importance of collaboration within this structure, so I am pleased to announce that the next iteration will be far less personally driven. Teaming up with some of the collaborators from this project and more generally my time in graduate school, a new system emerges...





# WHICH?

WHICH?Architecture.

An art and architecture collective based out of Seattle, and the legacy of my graduate education, and this thesis. There is productive value to imaginative, conceptual practice, and, just as in space travel, it

is important to maintain momentum. The intention is to continue to experiment with process and create architectural responses to questions of our own interest or derivation.

This thesis is a culmination, but it is also a moment to intentionally reflect, theorize and communicate along a more continuous narrative. It's both an end, a process and a beginning. It is the poetry, a quick-architecture, of this moment.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this work. This would be something completely different if produced in isolation. Let's continue to conversation.



FORWARD  
THESE QUESTIONS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK



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LAUNCHING INTO SPACE  
THESE QUESTIONS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK



CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION  
THESE QUESTIONS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK



EPILOGUE  
THESE QUESTIONS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK



## EPILOGUE

Credit where credit is due.

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