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Application for MA Information Design  
at Design Academy Eindhoven  
2025



# PORTFOLIO



My name is **sharon haeun na** and I am curious about making sense of the cities and cultures I live in through the medium of design. Below are some questions that have framed my artistic work, in addition to specific *projects* through which I've explored these ideas.

HOW CAN EXPERIENCES BE UNDERSTOOD 01 | 02  
IN A CHANGING MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT?



HOW CAN DESIGN/ART 01 | 02  
HUMANIZE INFORMATION/DATA?

TACTILITY

WHO IS DESIGN FOR? 03 | 04



WHO IS SPACE FOR?  
DESIGNED 03 | 04

FRICTION

WHAT IS PUBLIC INFORMATION? 03

ACCESSIBILITY

MEMORY

01 RE:MEMORY pages 3 to 5

02 CORRESPONDENCE TO pages 6 to 8

03 INSTANT PUBLIC LIBRARY pages 9 to 11

04 PUBLIC PLAZAS pages 12 to 14

# RE:MEMORY

Re:memory is a sculptural collage that I fabricated in response to an assignment in my sculpture studio that prompted us to reflect on the theme of "connections and attachments."

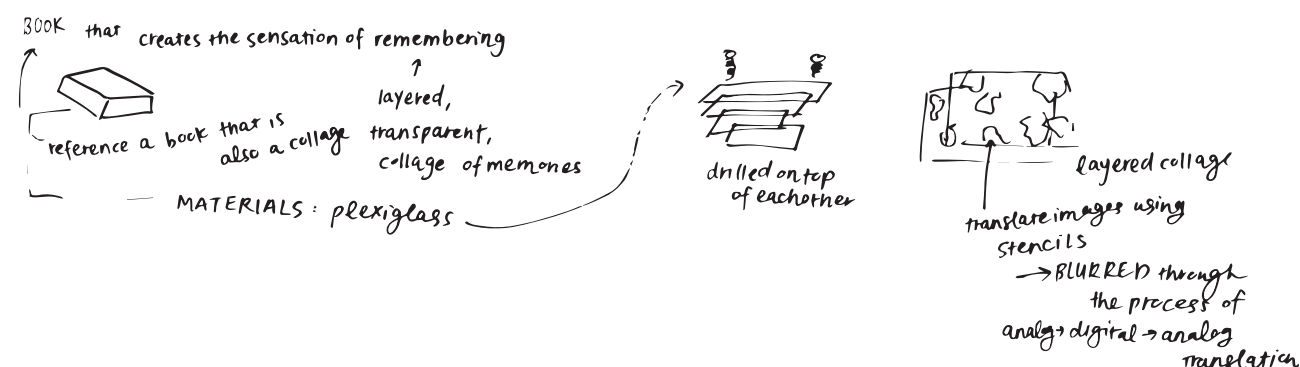
Collecting and gathering objects (that remind me of experiences and encounters that I have had) is a practice that I have maintained over time. With this prompt, I wanted to evoke the tactile sensation of remembering, through the visual manipulation of my personal documents/memorabilia.

## process sketch

**PART 1: Document 20 connections, conjunctions, attachments that you encounter in your daily life.**



**PART 3: Make a sculpture or sculptures in which connections and/or attachments are a central component. These could be physical connections/attachments, but could also include symbolic, metaphorical, emotional, or intellectual connections/attachments. This sculpture is an occasion to practice various modes of connecting materials as well as to develop your interpretation of how we make and do our connections. Connections are physical and material while also being social, emotional, and political.**



*"If it is a human thing to do to put something you want, because it's useful, edible, or beautiful, into a bag, or a basket, or a bit of rolled bark or leaf, or a net woven of your own hair, or what have you, and then take it home with you, home being another, larger kind of pouch or bag, a container for people, and then later on you take it out and eat it or share it or store it up for winter in a solid container or put it in the medicine bundle or the shrine or the museum, the holy place, the area that contains what is sacred, and then next day you probably do much the same again-- if to do that is human, if that's what it takes, then I am a human being after all. Fully, freely, gladly, for the first time"*

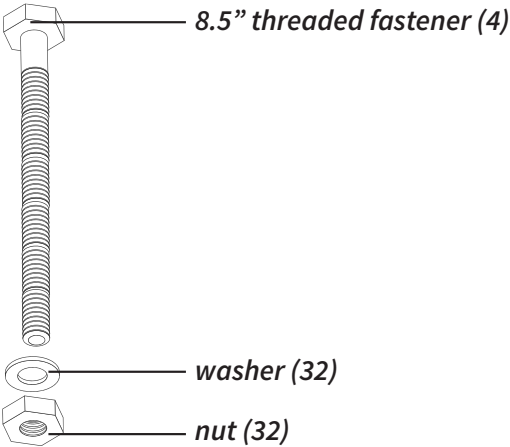
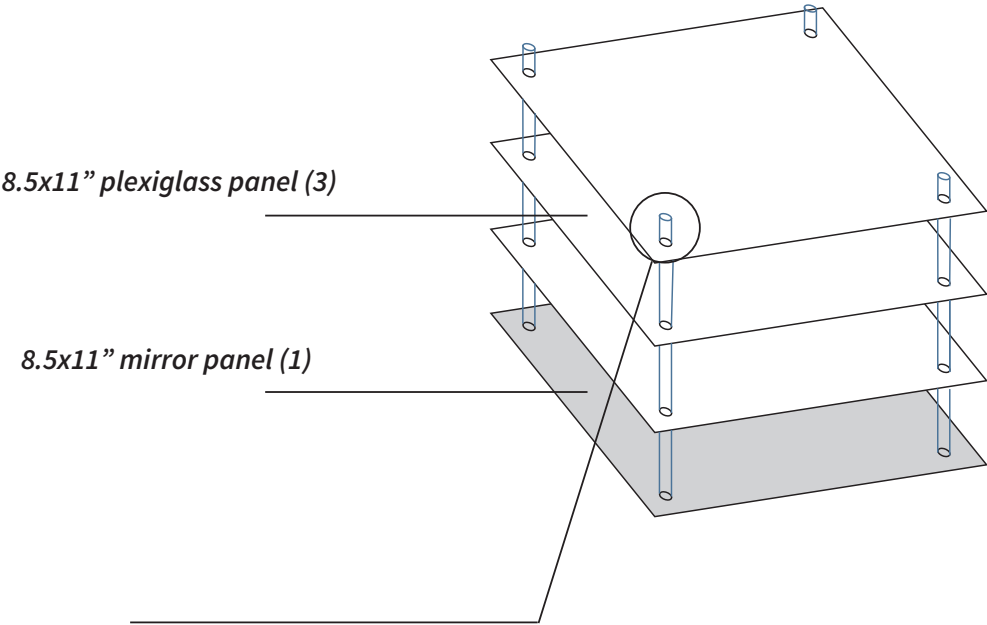
-Ursula Le Guin "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction"

**PART 2: Describe three connections or attachments from your life, focusing on how the connection is made and maintained. What does the connection feel like? How do you DO this connection?**



I created a series of collages, using documents that I have collected and archived to remind me of places (top left through transit documents), moments (top right through photographs), and people (bottom through letters).

schematic diagram

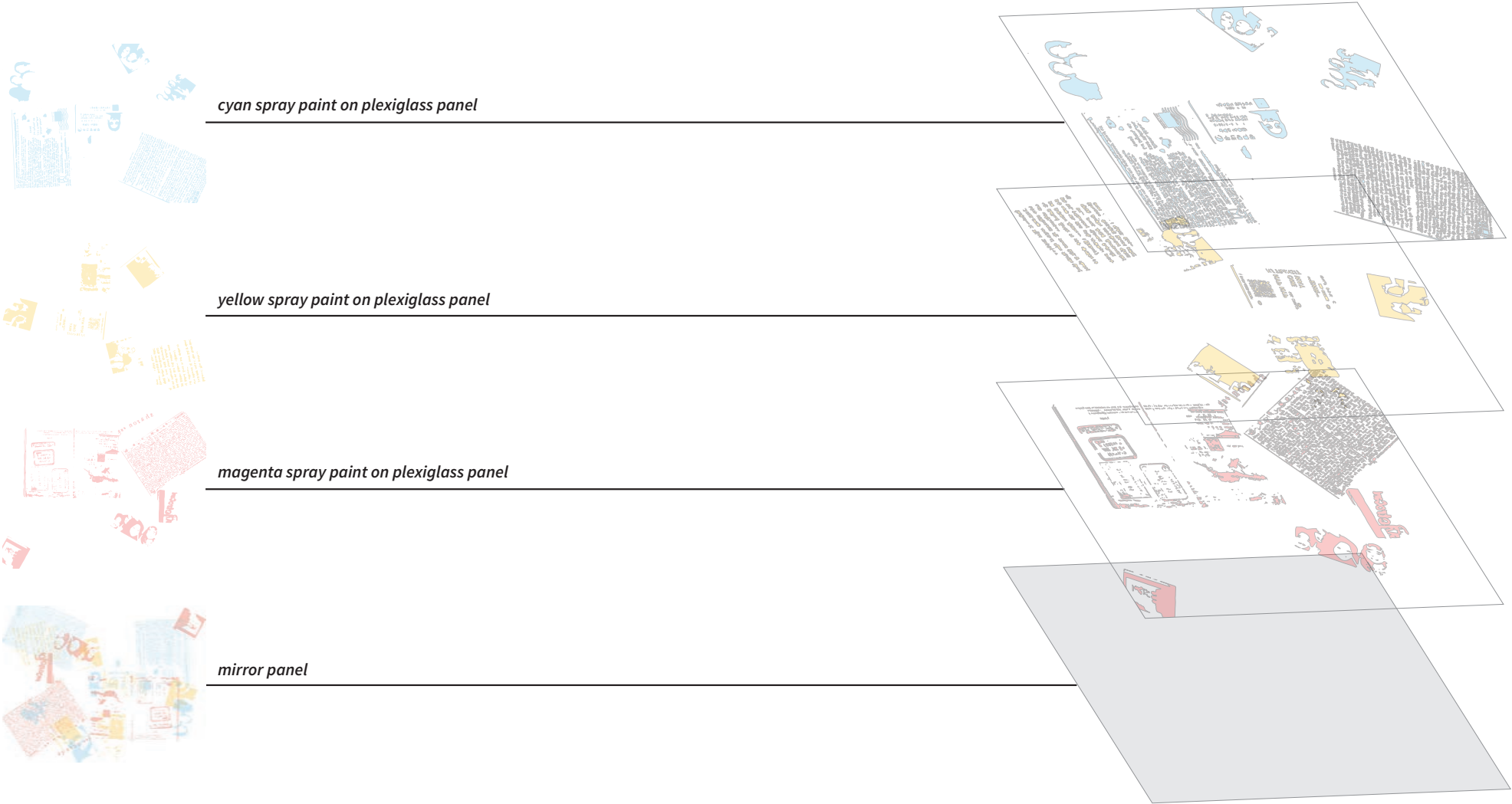


dimensions:  
8.5"x11"x11"

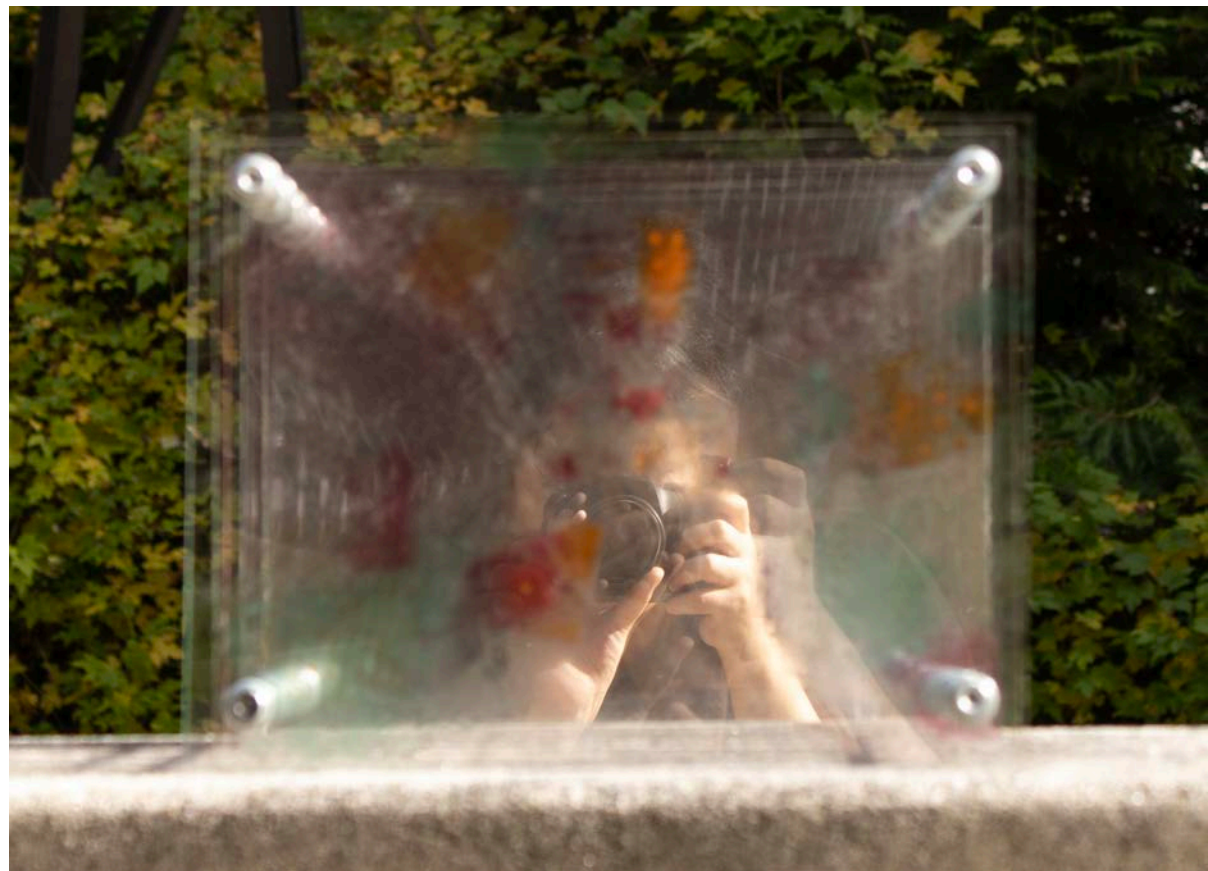
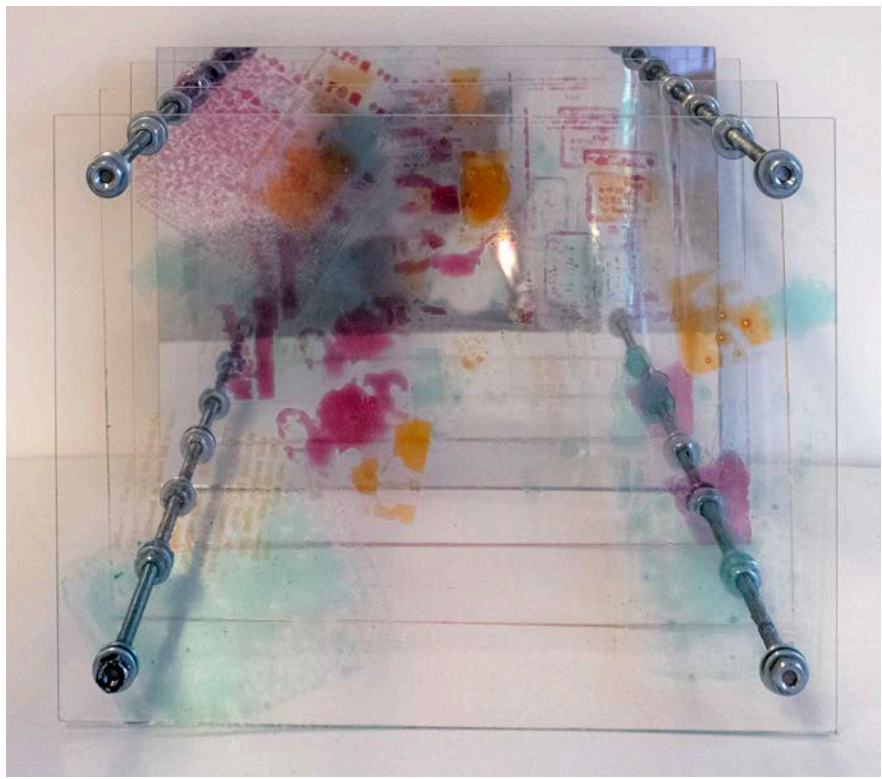
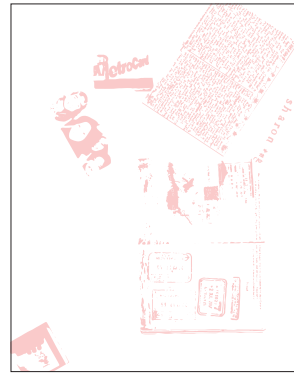
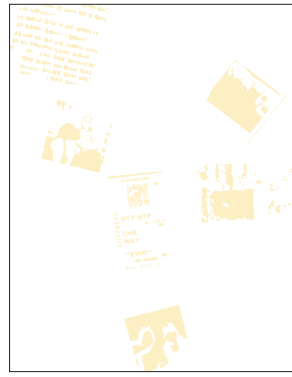
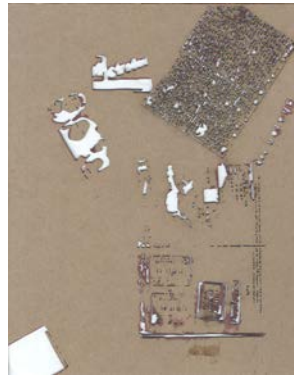
I wanted to collage and layer my “memories” together . I was inspired by the construction of a book, which tells a story through the mechanical and conceptual connections of parts to make a whole. I thought about the CMYK printing process that is typically used to print an image, and intentionally used this color palette to conceptually connect my collage of memories together. To create a layering effect, I drilled together three transparent plexiglass panels with a mirror panel. I used Illustrator to image trace and extract rough vector s of my documents and laser cut out stencils which I then spray painted on each panel.

I constructed the final piece by drilling four holes into each panel and layering the four panels on top of each other. I then assembled the sculptural structure with the following sequence (space is left in-between each panel so that panels appear to be “floating”):

(repeat from bottom to top x3)  
nut  
washer



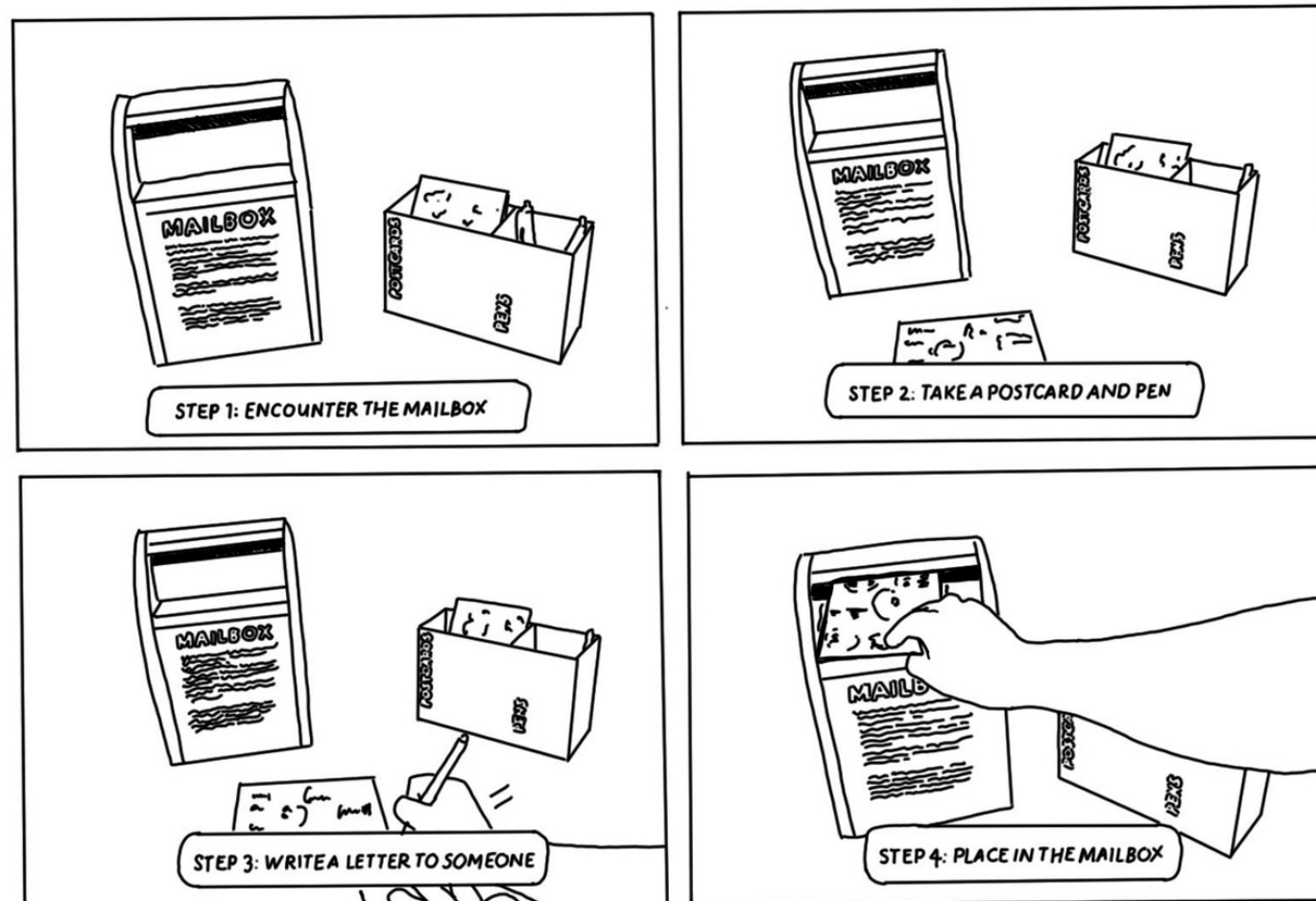






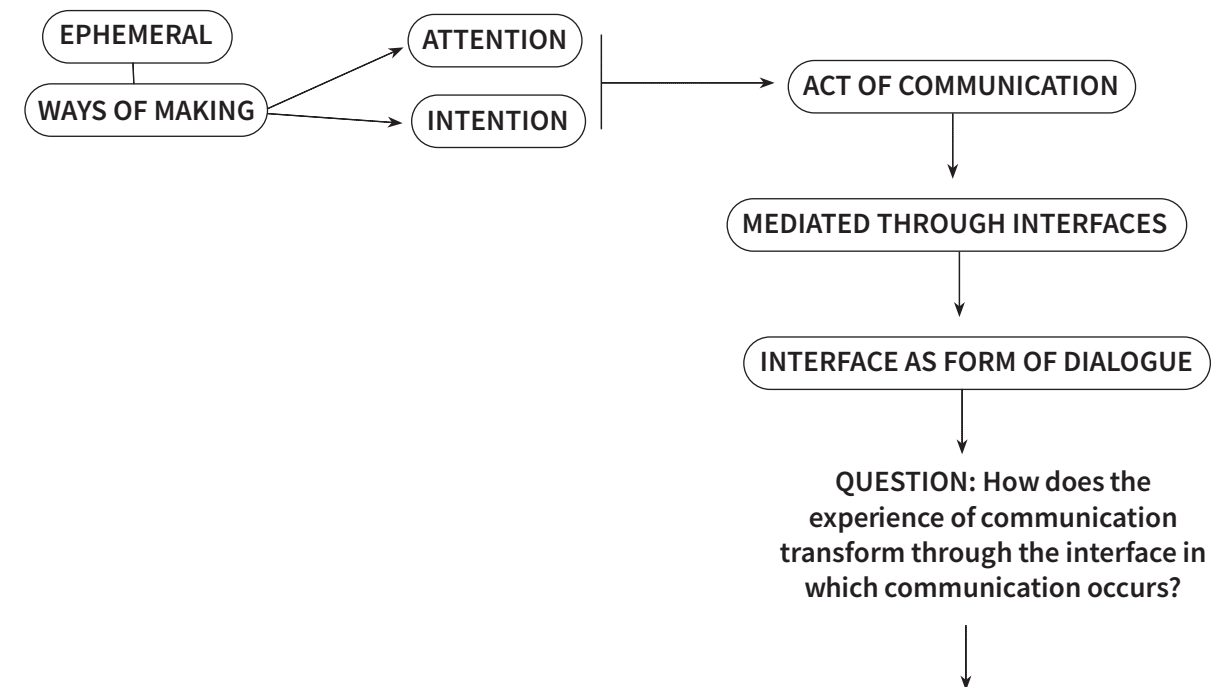
# CORRESPONDENCE TO

"Correspondence to" is a temporary installation in which I designed and created my own post office system by constructing three mailboxes with plywood, laser-engraving, and paint, and designing and risograph printing 150 postcards. I placed these three mailboxes and a collection of postcards in three different locations on a college campus for seven days. At the conclusion of the installation, I postage-stamped and mailed out (using the actual USPS) the postcards that people had left in my mailboxes.



*idea map*

**PROJECT PROMPT:**  
Create a site-specific sculptural intervention with a focus on ways of making that are ephemeral and fleeting.



**IDEA:** Design an analog communication network that prompts users to 1) reflect on the space and place in which they are actively situated, and 2) reflect on how the medium of communication transforms the act of communication.





The mailbox and postcards were placed in three different locations on campus.



text reads:

MAILBOX

this object is placed here, in this shared space of Vassar College, to ask you to immerse yourself in the practice of LETTER-WRITING. these days, everything is so instantaneous, smooth, efficient... what is lost when mediated communication becomes so seamless? letter-writing is a form of communication that is slow, uncertain, imperfect. its magic arises from its humanity.

at the conclusion of this installation, this object will be removed from this space, but the letters you write and leave in this object will pass through hands and systems to find their recipients at some point in the future...



I designed postcards using various locations on campus as a reference. I was inspired by the stamps collected within a passport, and I used Adobe Illustrator to design these stamp-like images.





I risograph printed the postcards using four colors, and hand-cut each postcard to size.



I fabricated each mailbox with plywood. I used a laser cutter to engrave text, and assembled the mailboxes together using a combination of wood glue and mechanical assembly.



At the conclusion of the installation, the mailboxes were filled with postcards that I mailed out to various cities across the United States and abroad.



A selection of postcards that were sent out through this installation.

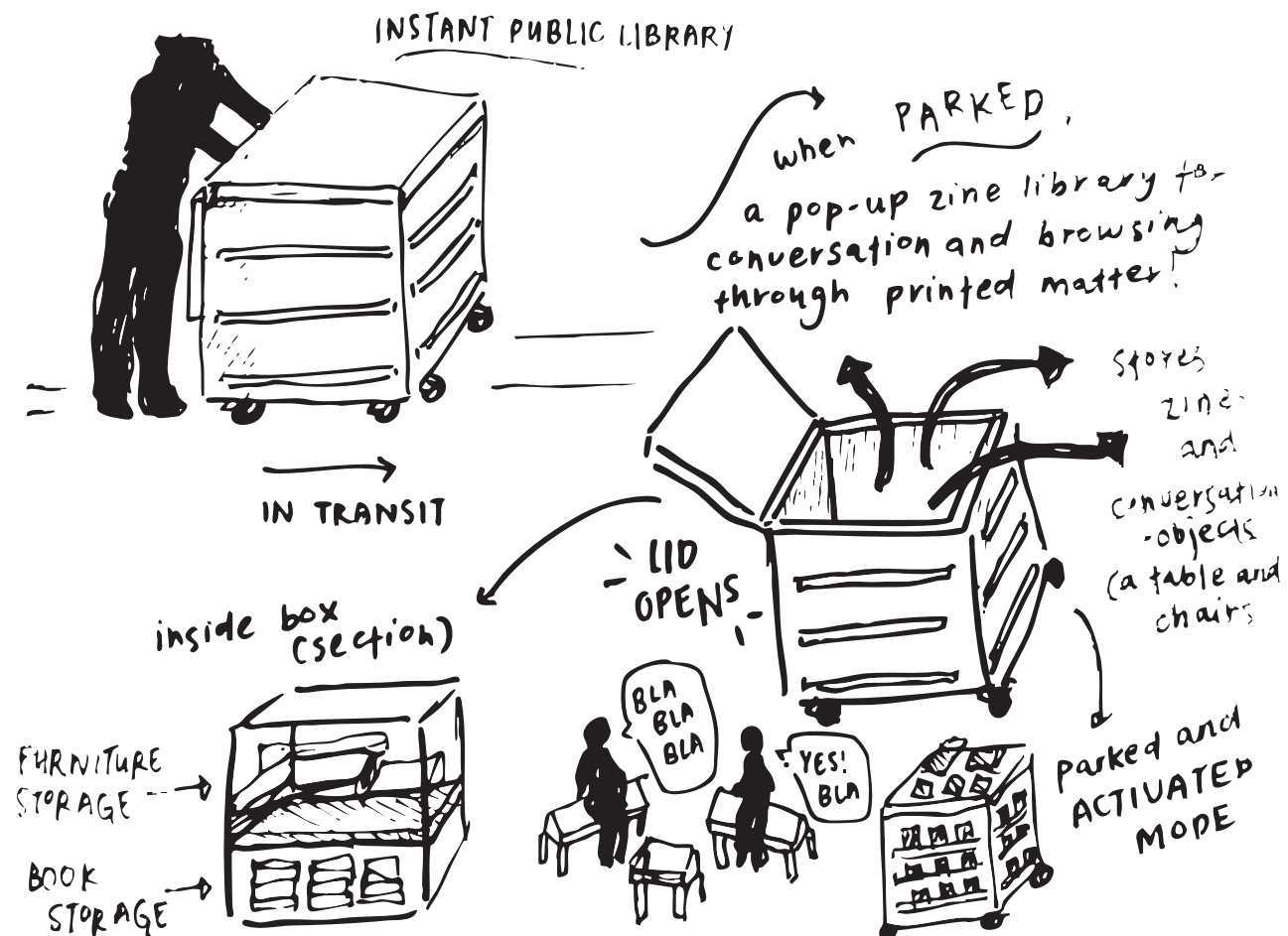


# INSTANT PUBLIC LIBRARY

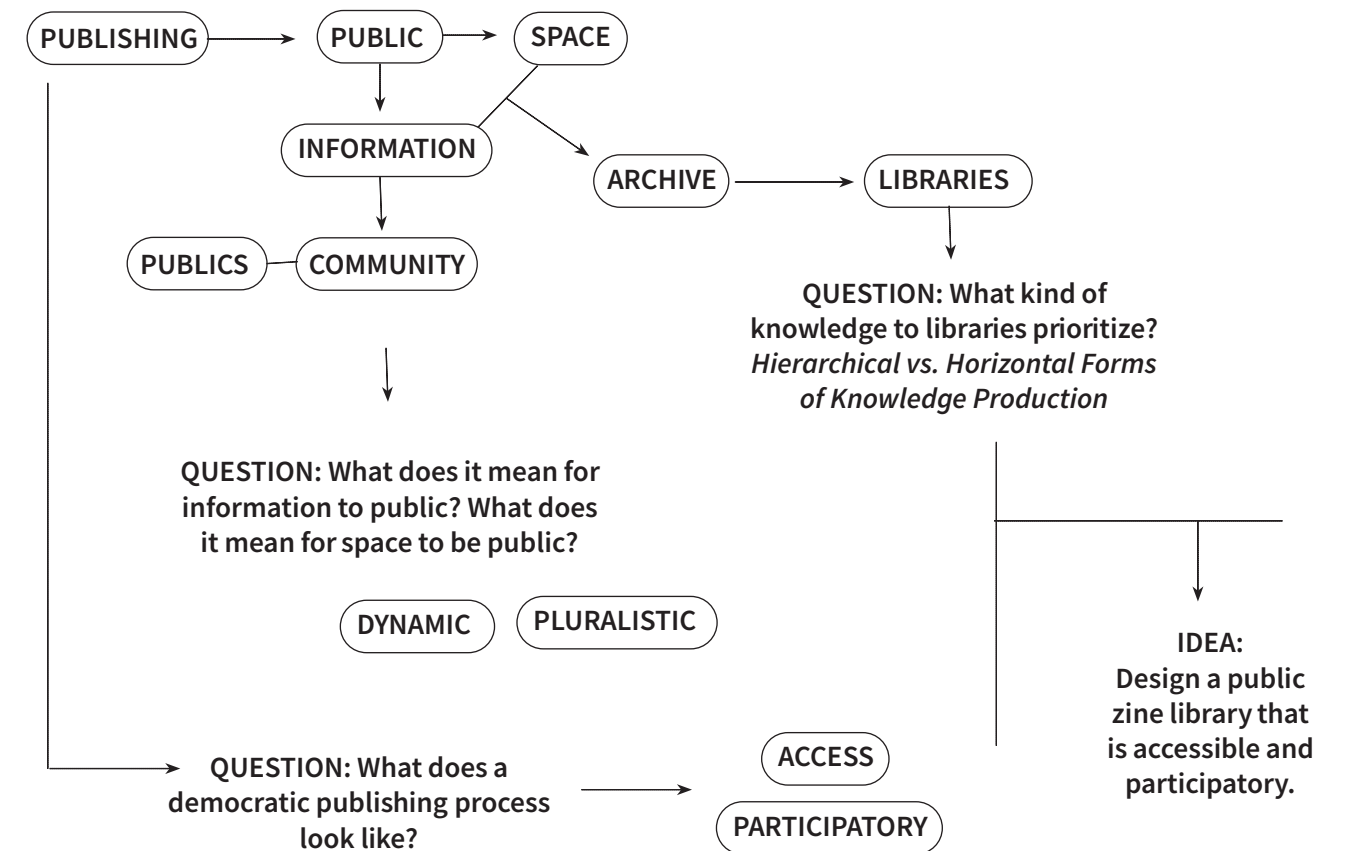
The Instant Public Library is a project that attempts to construct an "instant" public space through the form of an interactive object. As an object, it is a mobile and accessible cart on wheels that can be moved around flexibly. Inside, the cart houses a storage compartment for books and zines, and on the outside, text informs viewers of the contents inside, while simultaneously serving as display racks for when the cart is parked.

The Instant Public Library constructs a portable public space that is activated by people's meaningful interactions with the information housed within and displayed on the activated object.

sketch

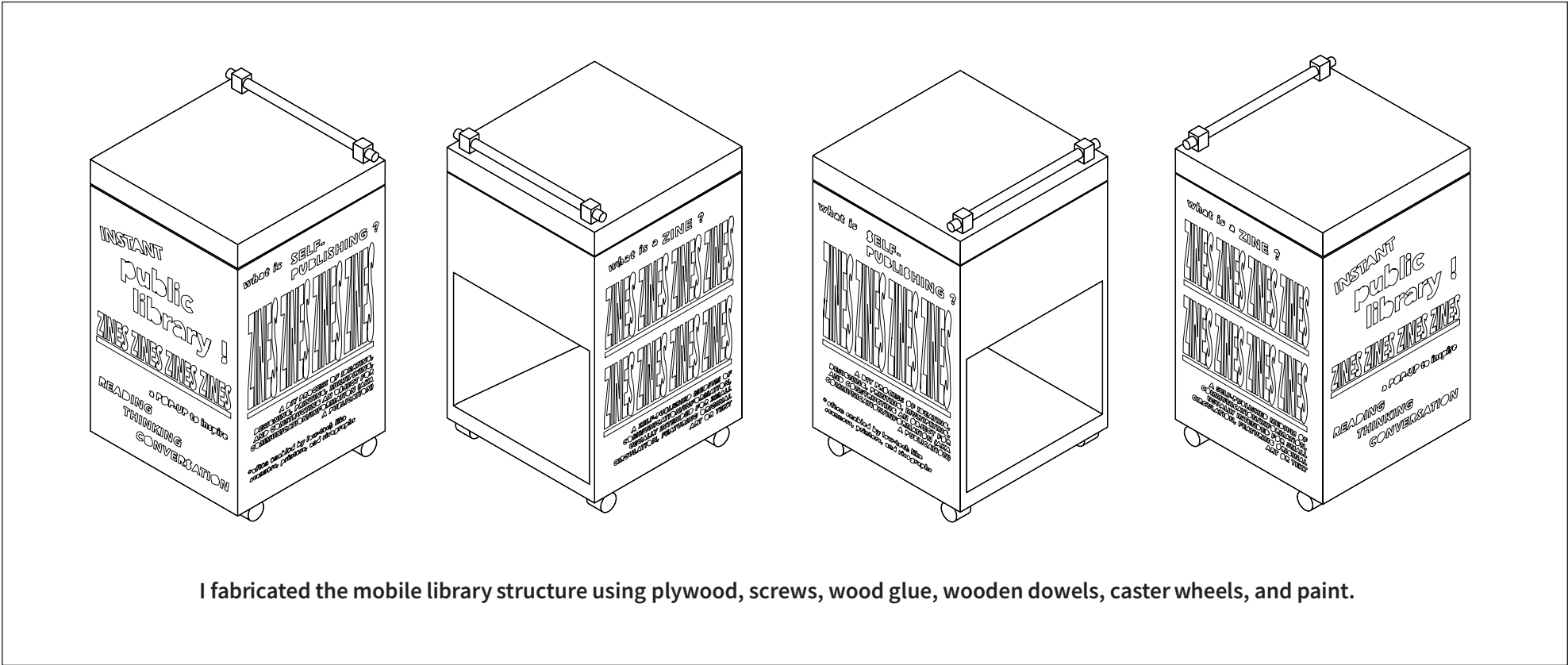
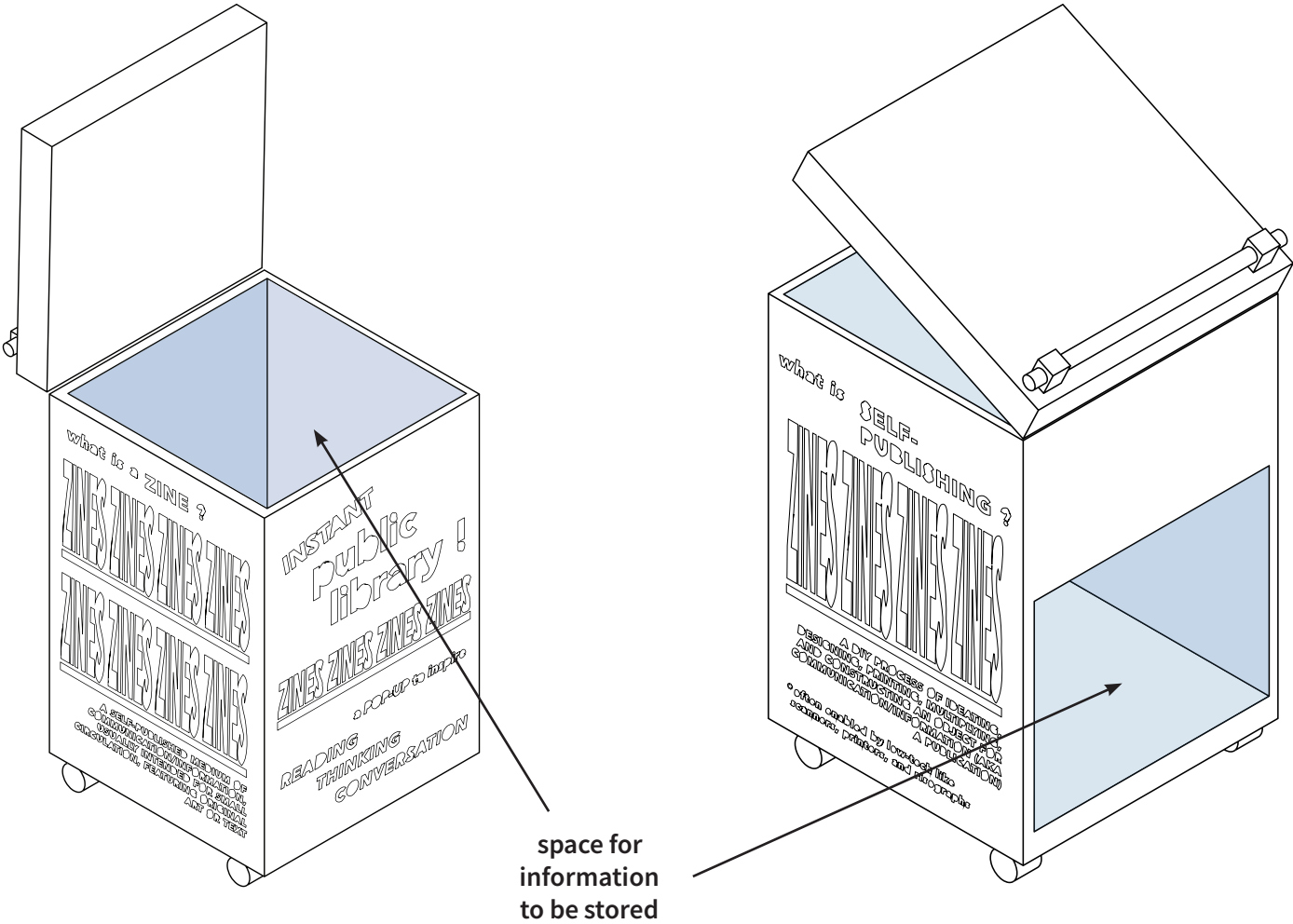


idea map





The outside of the library advertises its intended purpose: to serve as a pop-up to inspire READING, THINKING, and CONVERSATION, allowing space for horizontal knowledge production.



I fabricated the mobile library structure using plywood, screws, wood glue, wooden dowels, caster wheels, and paint.









# PUBLIC PLAZAS

In my sculpture seminar, we were asked to propose an imaginary monument in a specific real site of our choosing anywhere in the world. My public monument, "Public Plazas," features a landscaped series of engraved benches located in the only "public" green space in Koreatown, Los Angeles. Given the flexible guidelines of our assignment, I wanted to choose a site of personal and political significance that I possessed lived knowledge of. Having grown up as a Korean-American in Los Angeles, California, I chose the neighborhood of Koreatown, Los Angeles as the site of my intervention.

Koreatown is a neighborhood in central Los Angeles, encompassing around 115,000 inhabitants within its 2.9 square miles area-- which makes it the densest neighborhood in Los Angeles County. Demographically, Koreatown is a historically underserved area with a racial makeup mostly composed of individuals of Hispanic and Asian origin and a median income hovering at around 43,000 a year. At the built environment level, the historic underinvestment in the neighborhood of Koreatown has manifested in a severe lack of public amenities and green space. Despite Koreatown's high population density, there is only one public green space in the entire neighborhood-- yet in my most recent visits to Koreatown, I have noticed that even the "public" nature of this park, named Liberty Park, has been contested.

I decided that I wanted to design a public monument for this contested public green space in Koreatown, Los Angeles. In addition to thinking about how to enrich the environmental liveability of the space, I wanted my monument to also uplift the historic character of Koreatown, Los Angeles. In the past decade, I have observed how gentrification has transformed the perception of Koreatown from an undesirable space into a trendy neighborhood. These processes have begun to threaten the livelihoods of the existing working class and immigrant populations. With my monument, I wanted to question and respond to these phenomenon, by creating a piece that uplifted and honored the working class and immigrant public of the Koreatown neighborhood.

I thought about what form of visual representation could speak to the existing character of Koreatown, and looking back at my memories, I thought that this character was perfectly represented in the strip malls that saturate the Koreatown neighborhood. Named "plazas," these strip malls are commercial lots with a parking lot in the center and a single-story or two-story line of continuous buildings of multiple units with small immigrant businesses occupying each unit. Furthermore, when I was researching the specific site of Liberty Park, I found that it was located on a corporate "plaza."






















My monument, "Public Plazas" is a series of landscaped public benches that reclaim the green space of "Liberty Park" as a public space while also honoring the small businesses that make Koreatown the vibrant community that it is.





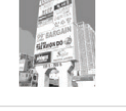











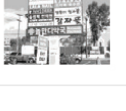






## sketch

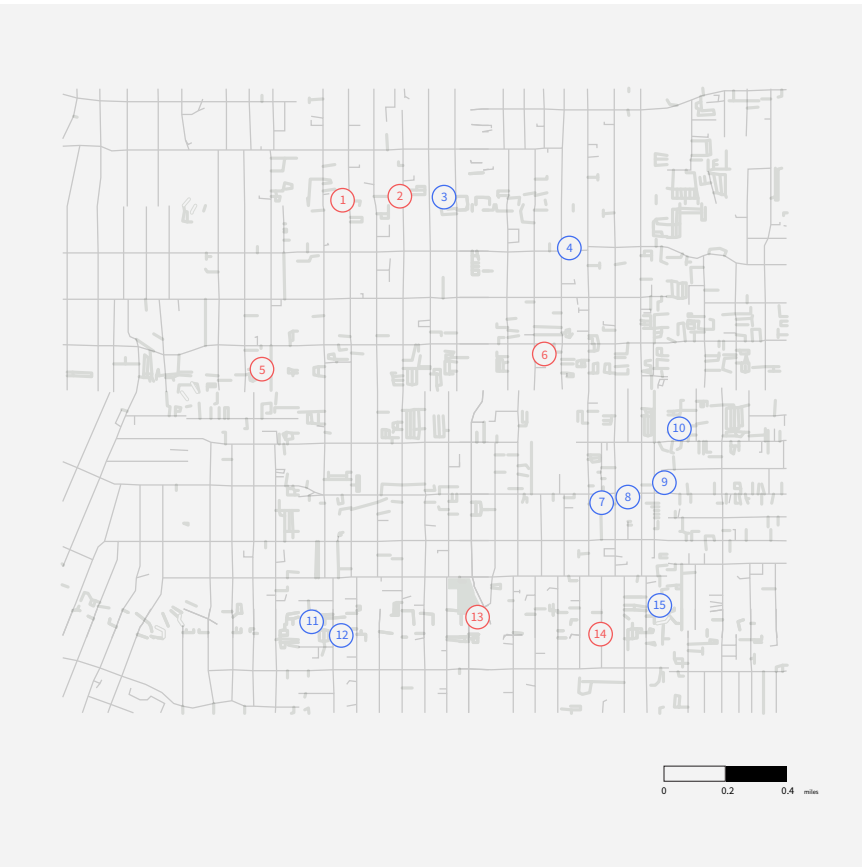




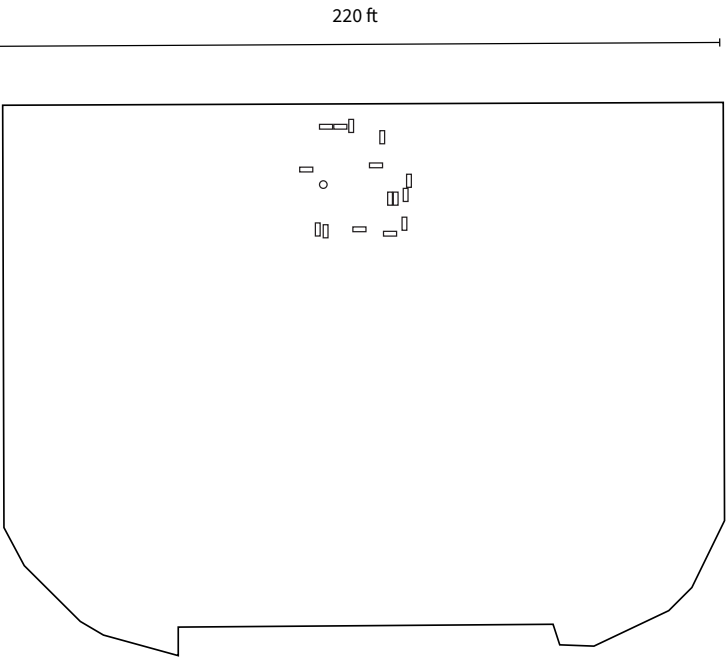
PLAZAS INVENTORY

1	Serrano Plaza			
2	Harvard Plaza			
3	Ardmore Plaza			
4	Vermont Plaza			
5	Wilshire Plaza			
6	Alexandria Plaza			
7	New Star Plaza			

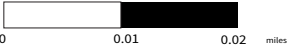
8	8th Street Plaza			
9	Sun Plaza			
10	7th & Vermont Plaza			
11	Olympic Serrano Plaza			
12	Olyford Plaza			
13	Chung Ki Wa Plaza			
14	J-Plaza			
15	Na Sung Plaza			



I mapped out each of these plazas within the neighborhood of Los Angeles.



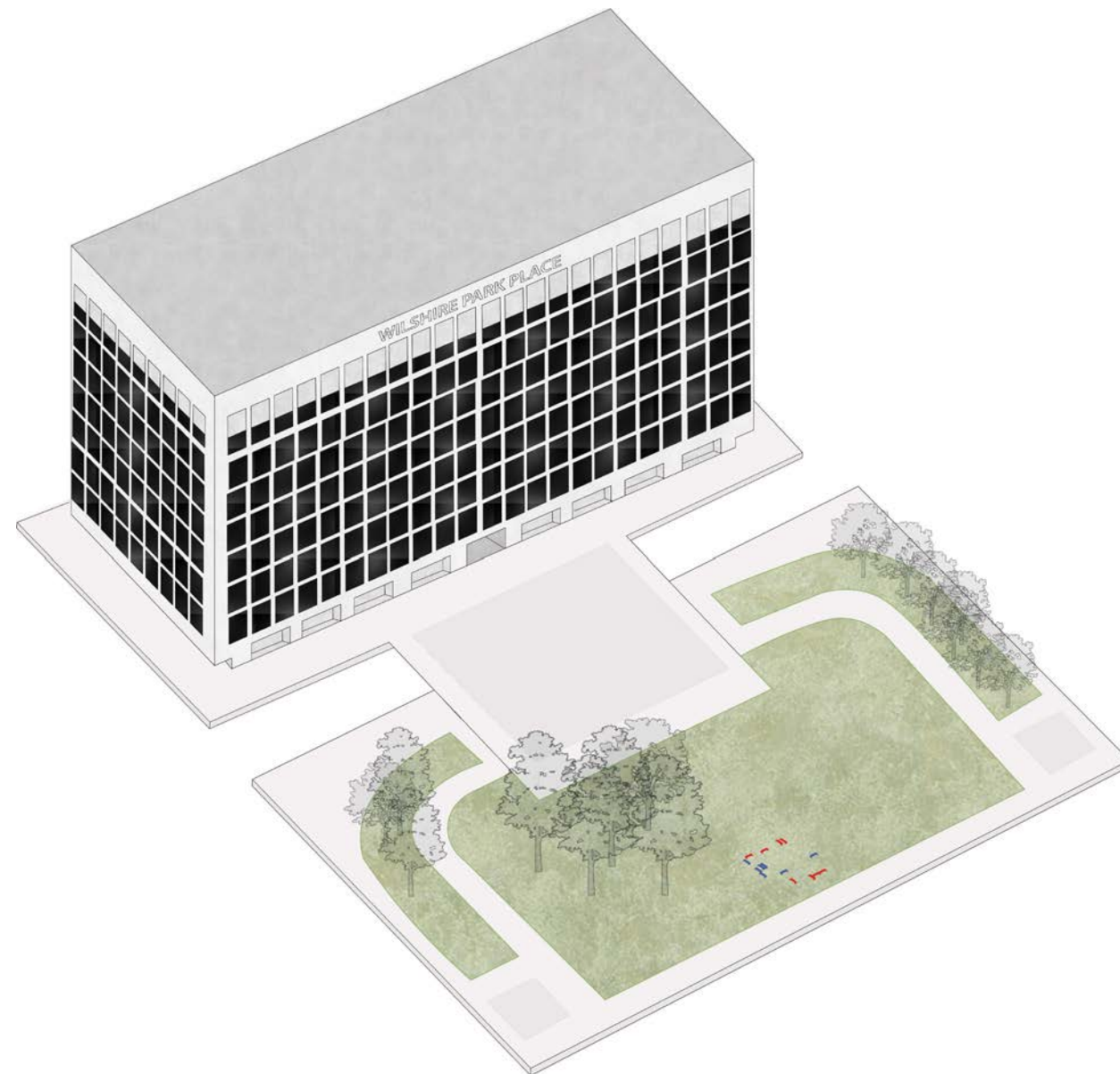
I used Google Street View to gather a dataset of all the strip mall “plazas” located in the neighborhood of Koreatown. Each of these plazas contained a large sign that clearly displayed the names of businesses located within the plaza. I created an inventory of these plazas, and designed benches that translated these plaza signs into monuments for the neighborhood small businesses housed within these spaces.



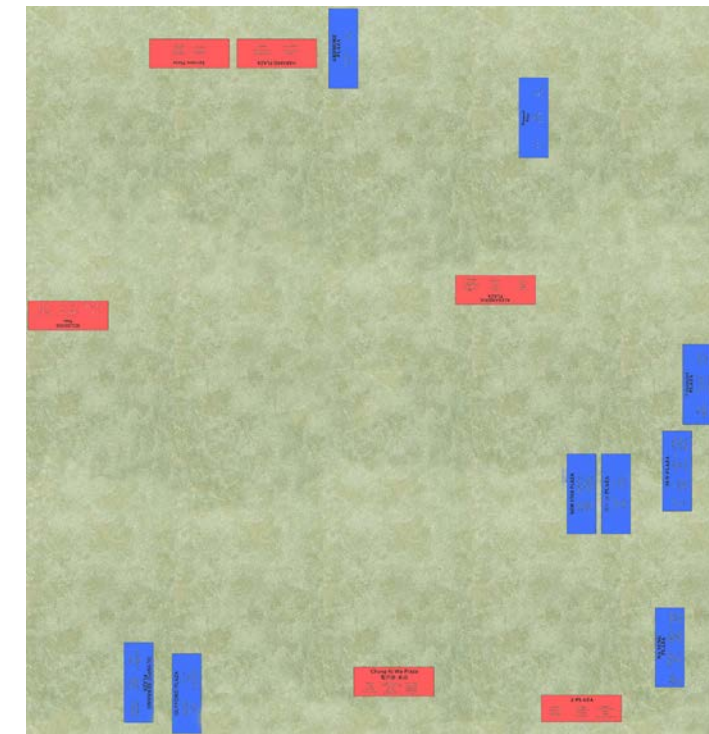




Photographs of Monument Site: Beneficial Plaza and Liberty Park



I used Rhineros 3D to render a drawing of the proposed monument placed on the site area.



The public benches on the park are arranged to spatially align with the actual placement of the plazas within the geographical neighborhood of Koreatown.



I laser-cut and engraved the benches, and 3D printed human models to scale, to model the prospective park.



MISCELLANEOUS

ADDITIONAL

The concluding pages are excerpted visualizations that I made for *completed* and *ongoing* projects. I organized these excerpts using two categories:

- 1. maps
- 2. inventories

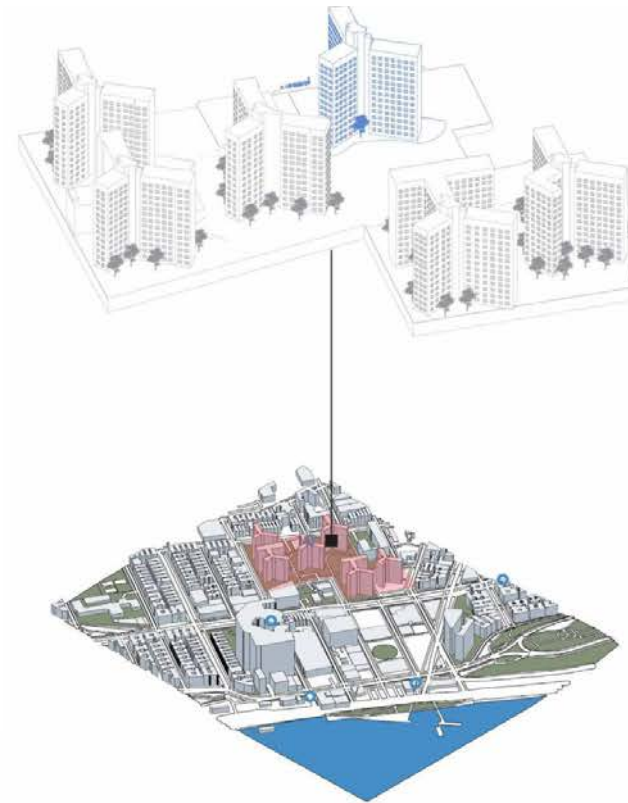


# maps

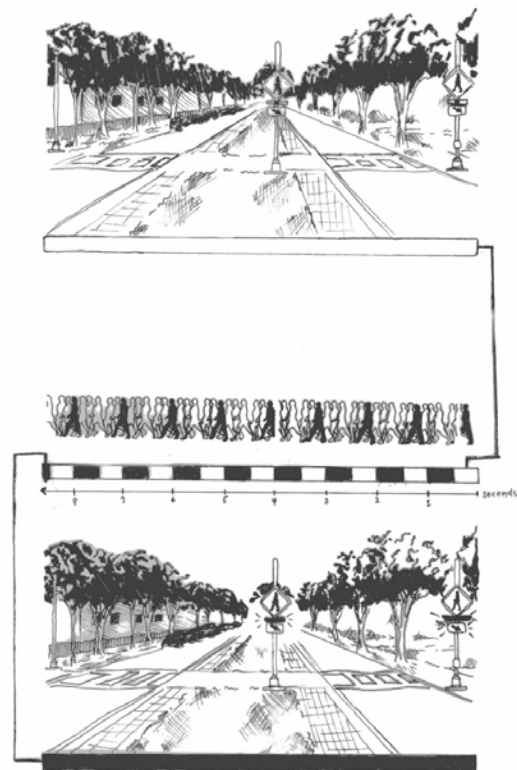
During my undergraduate education, I majored in Urban Studies in which I studied how space is produced, formally, socially, and historically. These studies took form primarily through written essays and analyses but also in the form of mapping studies.

On this page are various maps that I made to tell stories about a space/ a movement through the visual presentation of relevant data.

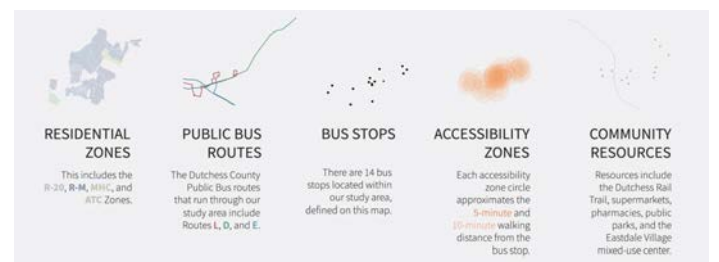
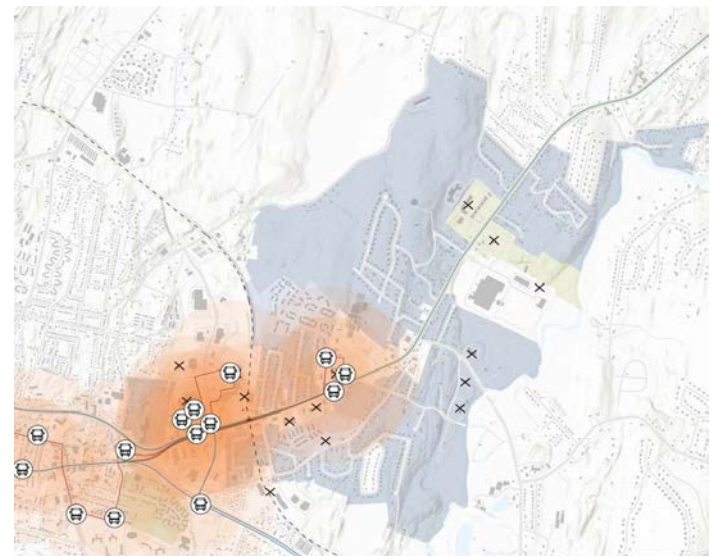
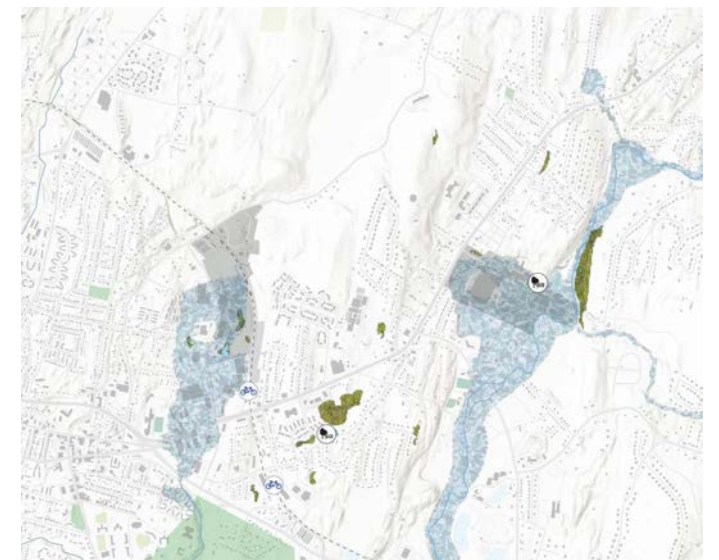
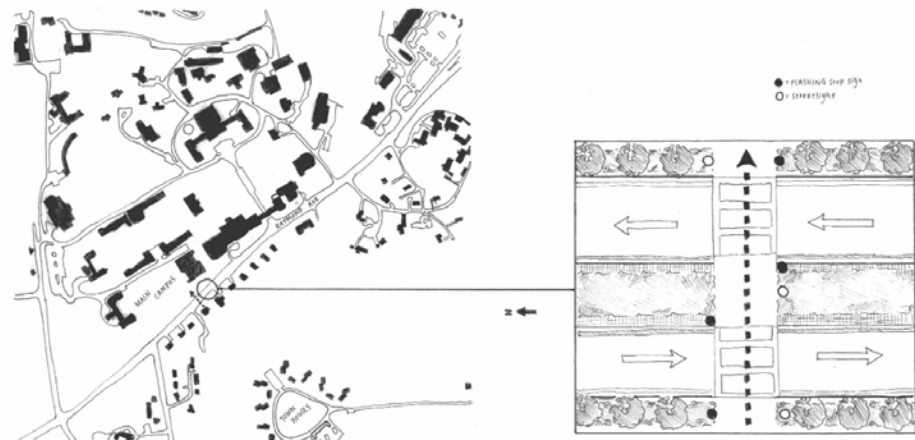
I enjoy mapping as a tool to read and parse through information, and I hope to continue playing around with cartography in future projects.



Map analyzing Manhattanville Houses in New York City for urban design study



Map analyzing my walk across an intersection to cross from HOME to SCHOOL  
(Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York)

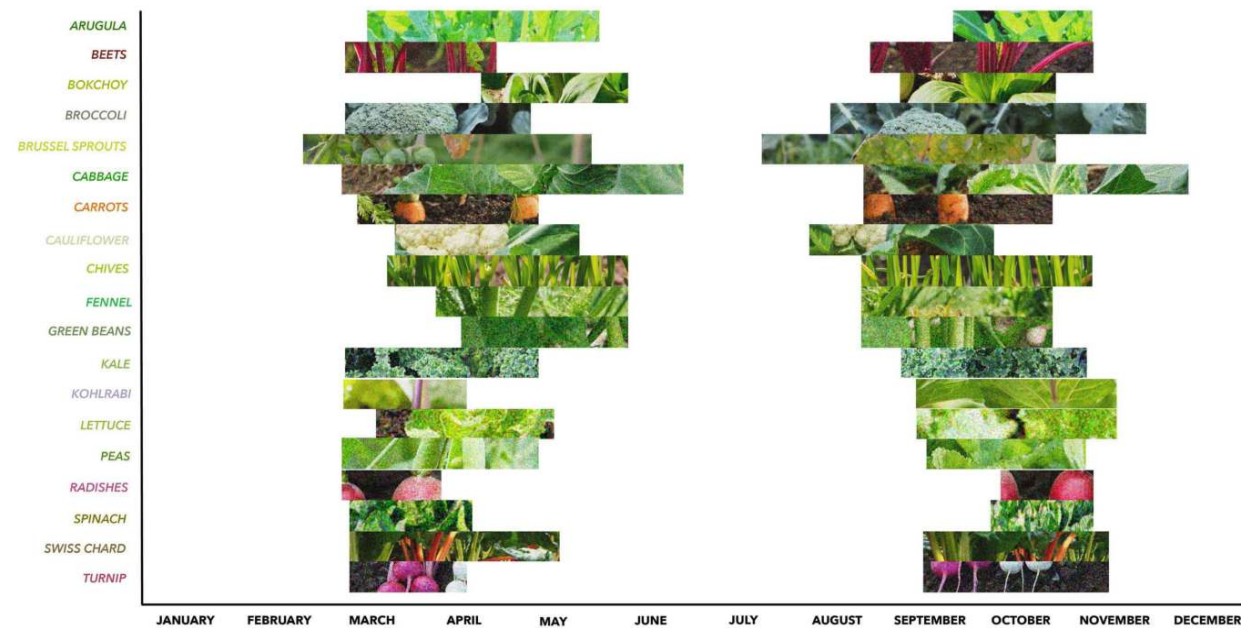


Map analyzing the environmental and accessibility conditions of Dutchess Turnpike neighborhood in Poughkeepsie, New York.



# inventories

Inventories are another visual medium which I like to design and analyze through. Gathering information and interpreting it holistically in the form of a visual artifact often reveals interesting possibilities.



For an urban design project investigating the potentials of food production in NYC open space, I created an inventory of edible plants that could be planted in New York City, according to growing season.



For the same project, I also extracted the shape files of every public housing development in New York City and visualized the open space for each of these sites within a cumulative inventory.



Are.na / Sharon Nahm / inventory project 2025

Info	Collaborators	This channel appears in	View
Started Length	about 2 months ago 27	<a href="#">Add collaborator</a>	<a href="#">Connect</a> → <a href="#">Grid</a> <a href="#">Table</a>
<a href="#">+ Add block</a>			
Content	Title		
	american-airlines-luggage-stickers.png		
	bagel-receipt-original-1.png		
	bage-receipt-carbon-copy-1.png		
	bagel-receipt-carbon-copy.png		
	brooklyn-bridge-postcard.png		
	cafe-con-libros-bookmark.png		
	cat-card.png		
	di-an-di-receipt.png		
	HUDSON VALLEY POSTCARD.png		
	in-our-day-vidiots-ticket.png		
	india-and-me-on-a-receipt.png		
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	nypl-postcard.png		
	nypl-bag.png		
	nypl-shop-receipt.png		



One project that I am currently working on is an inventory of all the documents (ranging from receipts, tickets, postcards, stickers, to misc. papers) that I have collected in the past four years. I scan the documents and convert them into pngs that I am amassing in an are.na page. I hope to use this collection of objects for a publication or digital interface once all the documents are digitized.



Another project that I am working on is a chronological and thematic archive of my grandparent’s family photos which I am scanning and actively digitizing to an inventory.

My father’s family immigrated to the Canary Islands of Spain in the 1970s and my mother’s family immigrated to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia around this same time. My research has found that there are few to no records / visual histories of these patterns of immigration, so I hope that I can convert my family’s photographic artifacts into mroe narrative documentation in the future.



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