SELECTED PROJECTS

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4. XHOLOBENI YARDS. Titanium and the Planetary Making of SHININESS / DUSTINESS

1. Being Silica

51-minute multimedia performance on top of the Rockefeller Center, New York.

Commissioned by Performa Biennale 2021, performed on October 29th, 30th and 31st at 6 am EDT

BEING SILICA
51-minute multimedia performance on top of the Rockefeller Center, New York.
Commissioned by Performa Biennale 2021, performed on October 29th, 30th and 31st at 6 am EDT

A work by:
Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation
In collaboration with **Paula Vilaplana** and **José Luis Espejo**
With the special participation of **Doug CrowGhost**, **Ray Kemble**, **Vera Scroggins** and **Simone TwoShields**

Curated by **Charles Aubin**

Research:
Andrés Jaque
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Ryan Schultz

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José Luis Espejo

Music:
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Seismic Records:
Wojciech Gajek

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Esa Nickle

Technical Direction:
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Producer:
Joanna Cohen

Scenic Lead:
JD Fontanella

Audio Engineer:
Vincent Dee

Lighting Technician:
Edward Charrette

Assistant Audio Technicians:
Heidi Lorentz
Mike Nelson

Stage Hand:
Corey Hucks

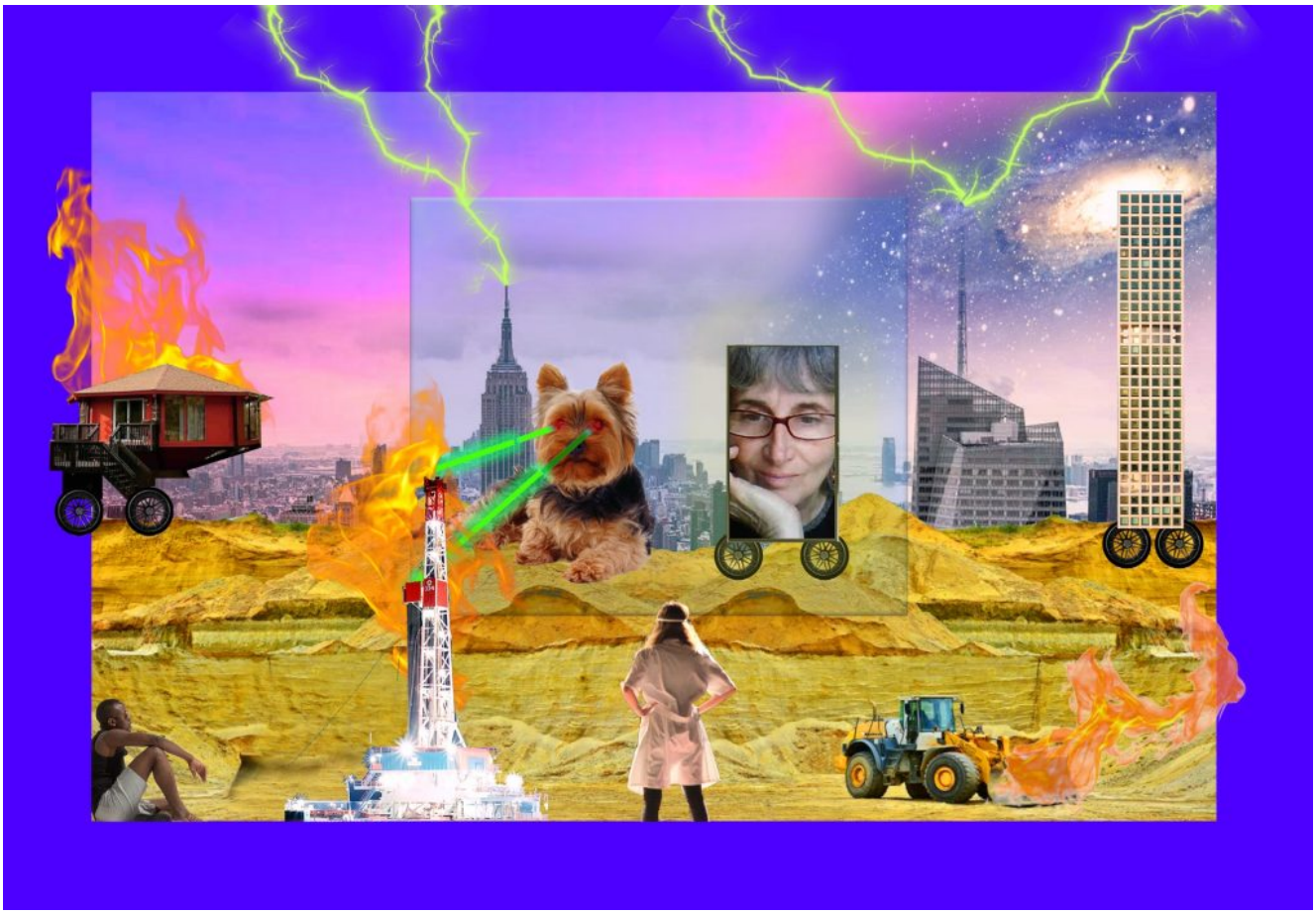
Production Assistant:
Andres Barbosa

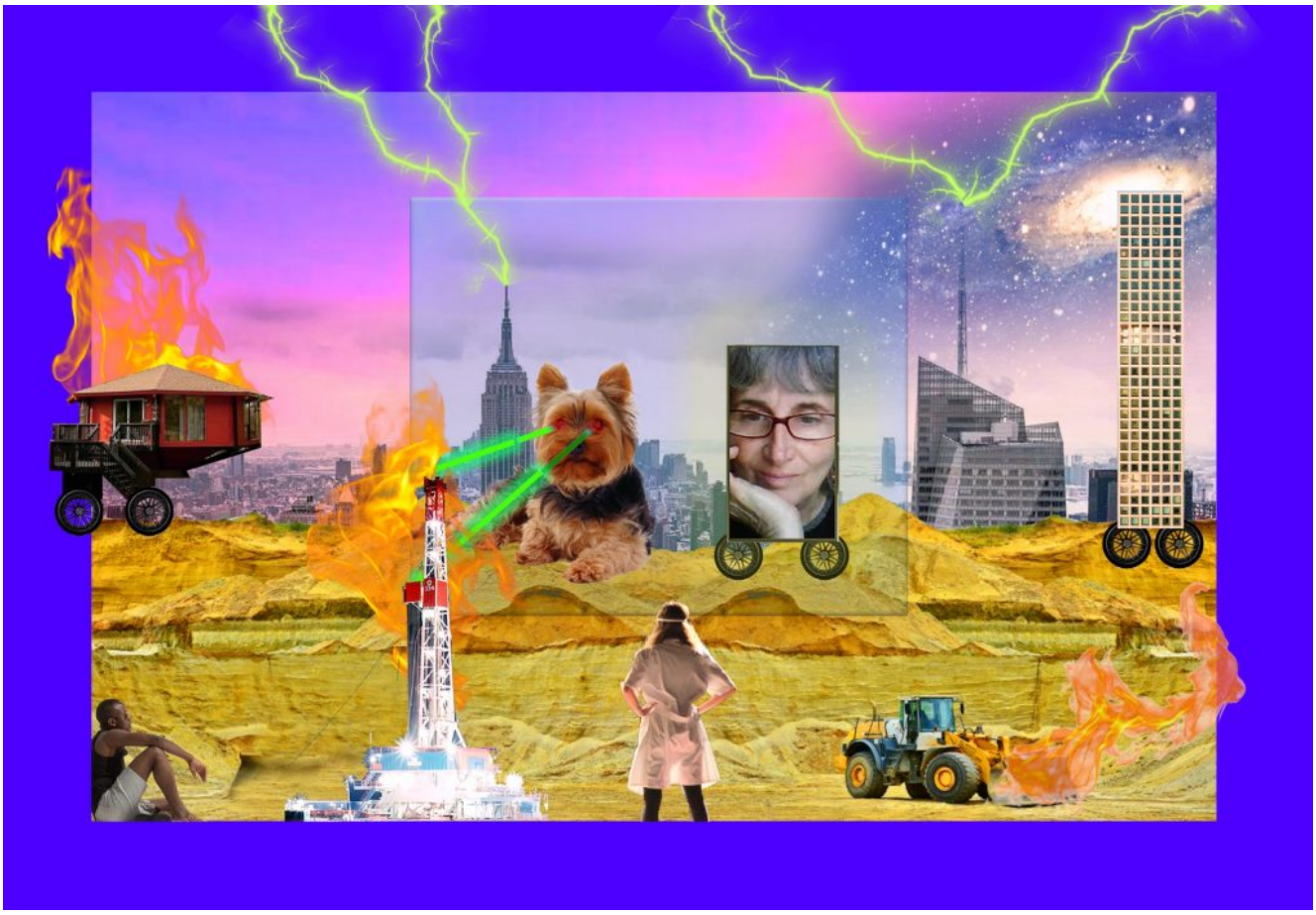
For architect, writer, and curator Andrés Jaque, architecture is first and foremost a political activity, with every aspect of the discipline shaped by conflicts, negotiations, and compromises between stakeholders—whether city council representatives, real estate developers, construction workers, actual or prospective residents, squatters and bystanders. Since he moved to New York in 2010 Jaque, with his Office for Political Innovation, has built a body of work that examines the invisible networks which structure the city: from nail salons administering the social lives of their often undocumented employees to neighborhood funeral parlors competing to create personal bonds with local families in order to keep business afloat. Jaque's new performance for the Performa 2021 Biennial, Being Silica, addresses the codependent relationship between New York City and its neighboring territories encapsulated in UltraClear™ glass, a new building material that became a fixture of new towers across the city in the past two decades.

Unlike standard clear glass which, if viewed from an edge appears green in hue, the edges of UltraClear™ glass are seemingly transparent with a 91% light transmission rate. Made of silica, a low-iron mineral, this new type of glass aligns with Michael Bloomberg's ideals of a pollution-free city, in which skyscrapers residents enjoy expanses of clear blue skies. The highly sought-after Silica, however, is produced through horizontal fracking—a highly toxic process that is banned in New York State.

Being Silica engages with how much the previous major's clean air project for New York happened at the expense of peripheral areas such as Illinois, where silica is extracted, and Pennsylvania, where fracking takes place to produce the energy required to manufacture the new glass. In a 51-minute-long multimedia piece performed for a small group on three consecutive mornings, Andrés Jaque and his Office for Political Innovation invited spectators to physically experience the unsettling sound and vibrations emitted from deep within the earth during the process of fracking. Set in a Manhattan skyscraper, Being Silica invites the audience to draw their attention to what is usually transparent and unexamined: the glass that separates them from the exterior. The performance reveals the complex trail of damage behind technologies of civic beautification. Comprising a sound installation interspersed with conversations with anti-fracking activists, the performance unpacks the intertwinement of political, economic, and social questions in construction today.

'Being Silica' Looks Hard at the Environmental Cost of Supertall Views by Whitney Mallett (*Curbed*)
Andrés Jaque Discusses His Latest Performance, Being Silica (*Metropolis*)





2. Rambla Climate-House

Molina de Segura, Murcia

2018-2021

Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation + Miguel Mesa del Castillo

Team
Roberto González García, Nieves Calvo López, Joan Fernández Linares, Ana Fernández Martínez, Marina Fernández Ramos, David Gil Delgado, Marta Jarabo Devesa, Jesús Meseguer Cortés, Laura Mora Vitoria, Paola Pabón, Belverence Tameau

Quantity Survey: Francisco de Asís Pérez Martínez
Estructural Engineering: Qube Ingeniería (Iago González Quelle)
Edaphology Consultant: María Martínez Mena
Ecology Consultant: Paz Parrondo Celdrán
Planting Consultancy: Viveros Muzalé (Rubén Vives)
Topographical Survey: Fulgencio Mª Coll Coll
Geotechnical Report: Forte Ingeniería
Quality Survey: Ingeolab
Photography: José Hevia
Drones Operator: Juan José Rojo Albadalejo

MATCOAM Sustainability Award 2022
Living Places – Simon Architecture Price 2022

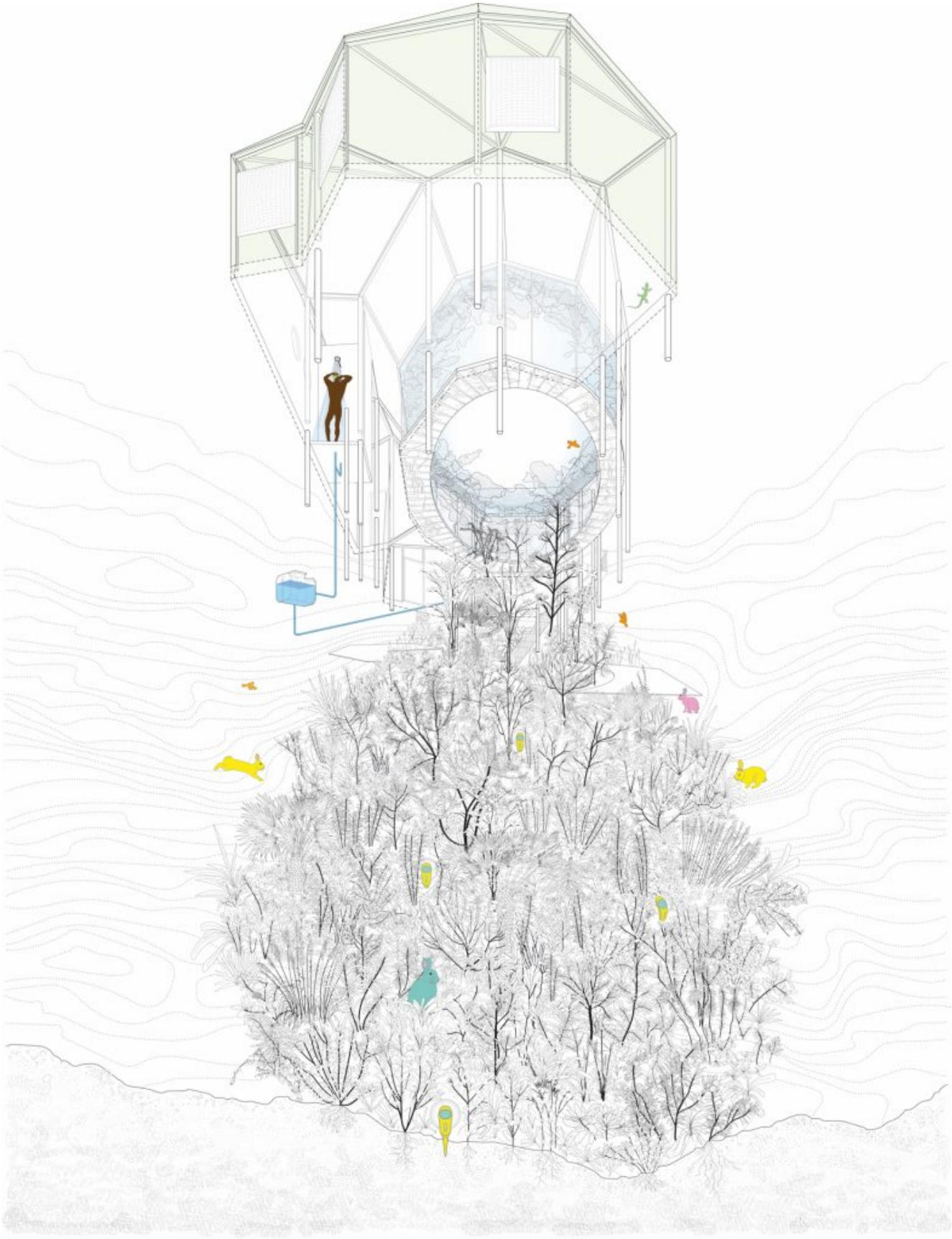
Since the 1980s, vast stretches of land in the formerly-rural county of Molina de Segura (Murcia) have been exploited to create suburbs. The result of this exploitation is a flattening of the land's topographies and the destruction of its territorial system of ravines (*ramblas*). *Ramblas* constitute a fabric of veins carved by seasonal rainfall in the dry steppe landscape. In them, humidity accumulates and biodiversity flourishes. They constitute corridors of freshness, carbon fixation, and ecological entanglement that play a crucial role in the climatic and earthy stability of Molina de Segura's ecosystems.

The Rambla Climate-House works as a climatic and ecological device. It is part of a series of associative initiatives, developed at the scale of independent citizens, to contribute to reparations for the environmental and climate damage caused by over-urbanization in Molina de Segura. The Rambla Climate-House collects pooled rainfall from its roofs and grey water from its showers and sinks to spray onto the *rambla*'s remains and regenerate their former ecologic and climatic constitution. Humidity and conductivity Netro-sensors activate an automatized meteorology that escapes the control of humans to reach the requirements of the reparation process. The house is organized around this elliptical section of *rambla*, as an observatory in alliance to this reconstructed landscape and as a sequence of interconnected spaces of different widths.

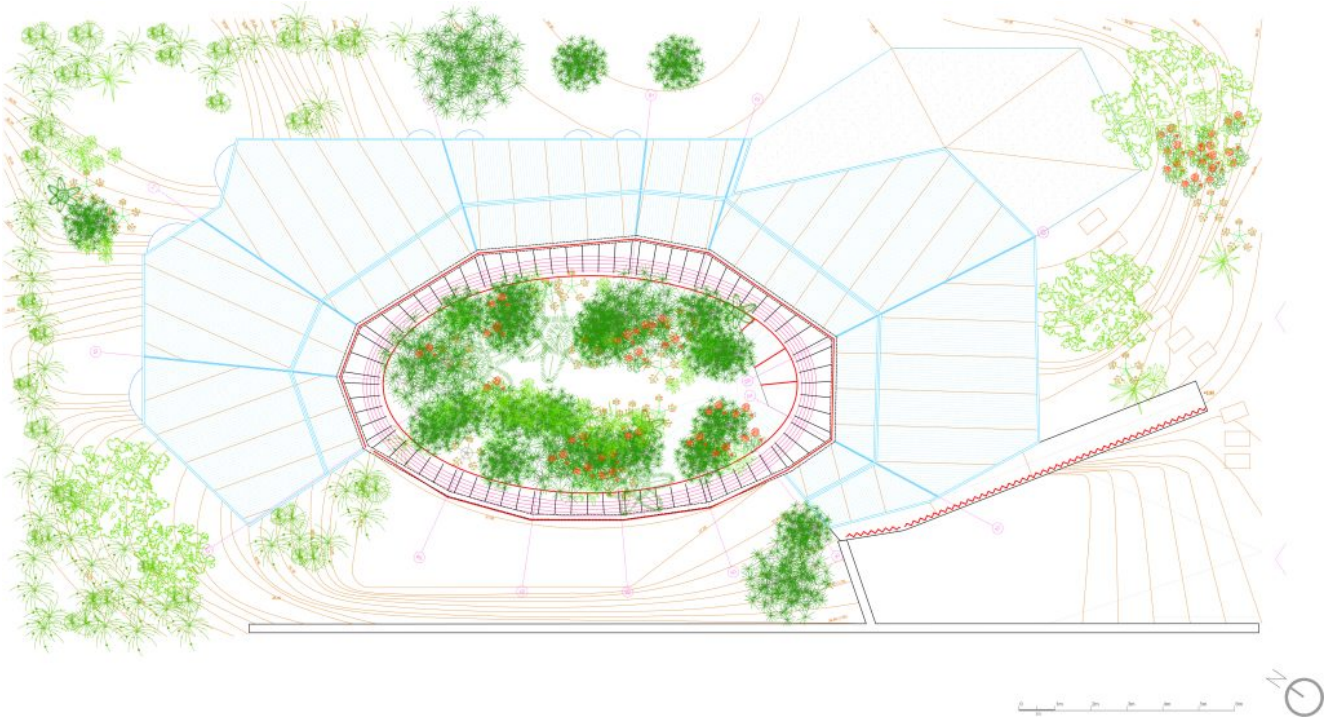
Following the reparation of the hydro-thermal conditions of the *rambla*, glimpses of its former more-than-human life have rapidly re-emerged after a one year period. Now, brachypodiums, myrtles, mastic trees, fan palms, oleanders, and fire trees grow in the elliptical section. Insects, birds, and lagomorphs find shelter in it.

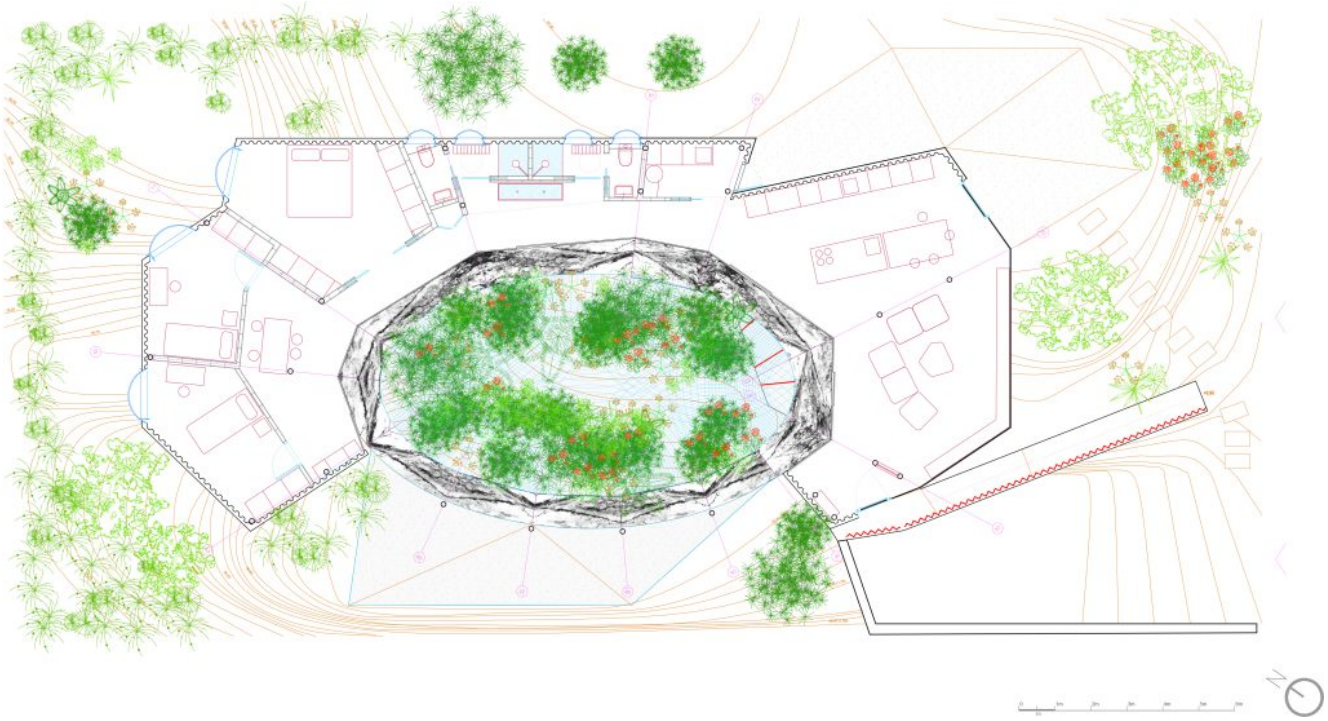
Thermally, the construction of the house tests unorthodox ways to maximize energy efficiency. A marble bench around the elliptical section allows residents to cool off by allowing direct contact to the house's thermal inertia. A coil exposed to the sun, crowning the elliptic section, provides passive hot water during the entire year.

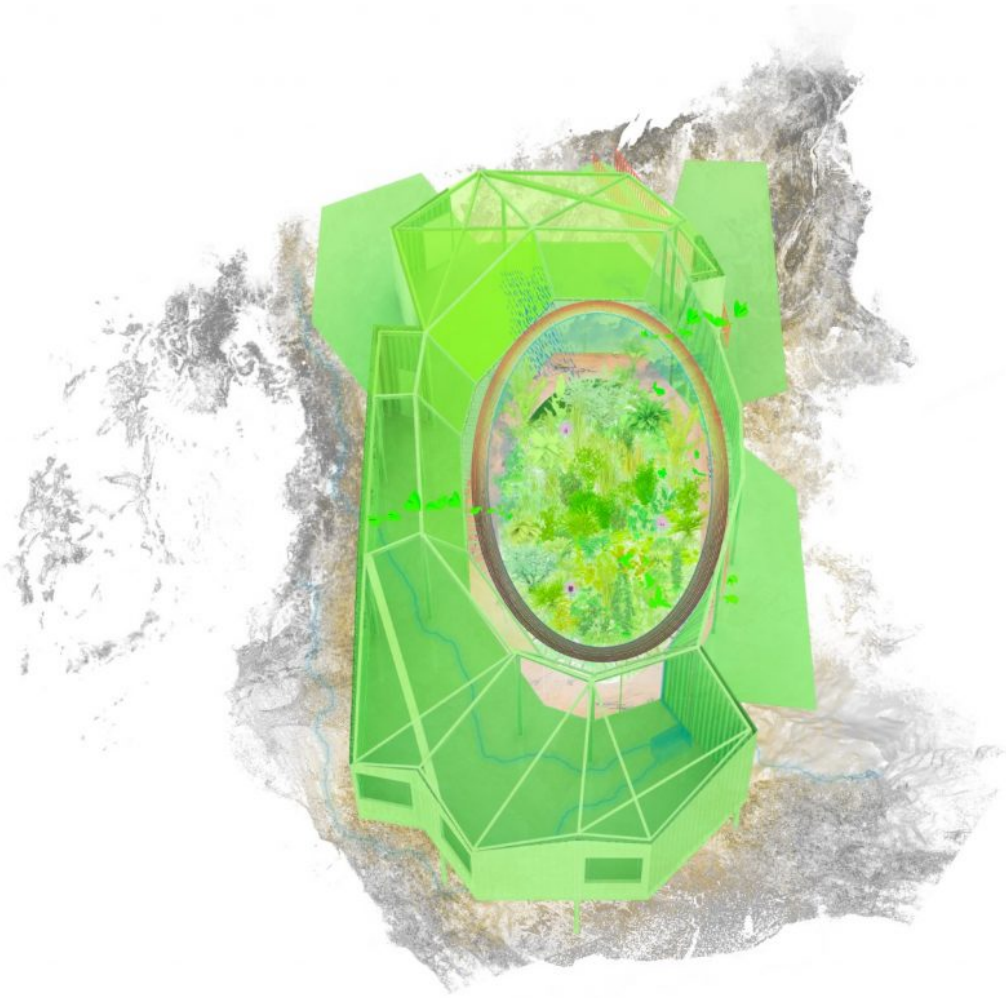
The Rambla Climate-House is the result of a collaboration between architects Andrés Jaque/Office for Political Innovation and Miguel Mesa del Castillo; the edaphologist María Martínez Mena; and the ecologists Paz Parrondo Celdrán and Rubén Vives. All are committed to contributing to the growing grassroots movement claiming climate reparation in Murcia. Since its completion, the house has became a demonstrative device. Gatherings with neighbors and members of the extended Molina de Segura community are organized to share insights and experiences on a collective effort to reground Molina de Segura's urbanisms.

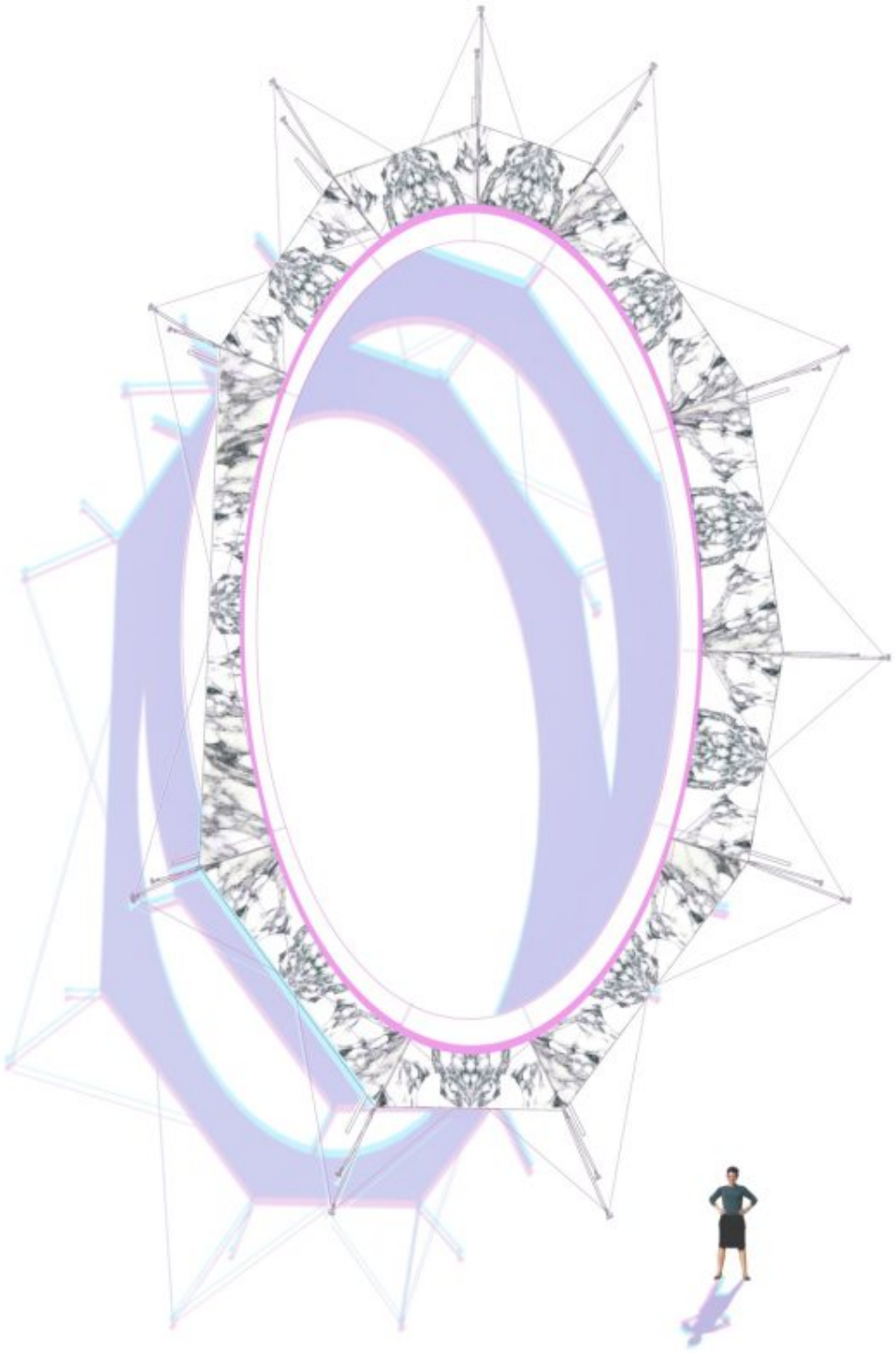



TRANSSPECIES
JUSTICE!!!









3. Reggio School

El Encinar de los Reyes, Madrid

Completed

Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation
Team
Roberto González García, Luis González Cabrera, Alberto Heras, Ismael Medina Manzano, Jesús Meseguer Cortés, Paola Pardo-Castillo, Rajvi Anandpara, Juan David Barreto, Inês Barros, Ludovica Battista, Shubhankar Bhajekar, Elise Durand, Drishti Gandhi, Maria Karagianni, Bansi Mehta, Alessandro Peja, Meeerati Rana, Mishti Shah, Saumil Shanghavi
Structural Engineering
Iago González Quelle, Víctor García Rabadán (Qube Ingeniería de Estructuras)
Services Engineering
Juan Antonio Posadas (JG Ingenieros)
Quantity Surveyor (Project)
Javier González Nieto, Javier Mach Cestero (Dirtec Arquitectos Técnicos)
Construction Management
Ángel David Moreno Casero, Carlos Peñalver Álvarez, Almudena Antón Vélez
Ecology and Edaphology
Jorge Basarrate, Álvaro Mingo (Mingobasarrate)
Photo
José Hevia

Project of The Year Award 2022, Architects Newspaper
Best Façade Award 2022, Architects Newspaper
Bienal de Española de Arquitectura y Urbanismo XVI BEAU Award
FAD Architecture Award 2023
IV Premio Mini de Diseño 2024
Included in the list of the most impressive buildings to be finished in 2022 by *El País ICON Design*.

The design of Reggio School is based on the idea that architectural environments can arouse in children a desire for exploration and inquiry. In this way the building is thought of as a complex ecosystem that makes it possible for students to direct their own education through a process of self-driven collective experimentation—following pedagogical ideas that Loris Malaguzzi and parents in the Italian city of Reggio nell'Emilia developed to empower children's capacity to deal with unpredictable challenges and potentials.
The design, construction and use of this building is intended to exceed the paradigm of sustainability to engage with ecology as an approach where environmental impact, more-than-human alliances, material mobilization, collective governance and pedagogies intersect through architecture.

The stacking of diversity as an environment for self-education

Avoiding homogenization and unified standards, the architecture of the school aims to become a multiverse where the layered complexity of the environment becomes readable and experiential. It operates as an assemblage of different climates, ecosystems, architectural traditions, and regulations. Its vertical progression begins with a ground floor engaged with the terrain, where classrooms for younger students are placed. Stacked on top of this, the higher levels are where students in intermediate classes coexist with reclaimed water and soil tanks that nourish an indoor garden reaching the uppermost levels under a greenhouse structure. Classrooms for older students are organized around this inner garden, as in a small village. This distribution of uses implies an ongoing maturity process that is translated into the growing capacity of students to explore the school ecosystem on their own and with their peers.

A more-than-human assembly as the school's heart

The second floor, formalized as a large void opened through landscape-scale arches to the surrounding ecosystems, is conceived as the school's main social plaza. Here the architecture encourages teachers and students to participate in school government and to interact with the surrounding landscapes and territories. This 5,000 square-feet central area is over 26-feet high and conceived of as a cosmopolitical agora; a semi-enclosed space crisscrossed by the air tempered by the holm oak trees from the neighboring countryside. A network of ecologists and edaphologists designed small gardens specifically made to host and nurture communities of insects,

butterflies, birds and bats. Here, mundane activities like exercising coexist with discussions about how the school is run as a community and what is the way to relate to the neighboring streams and fields. Ultimately, this floor operates as a more-than-human summiting chamber where students and teachers can sense and attune to the ecosystems they are part of.

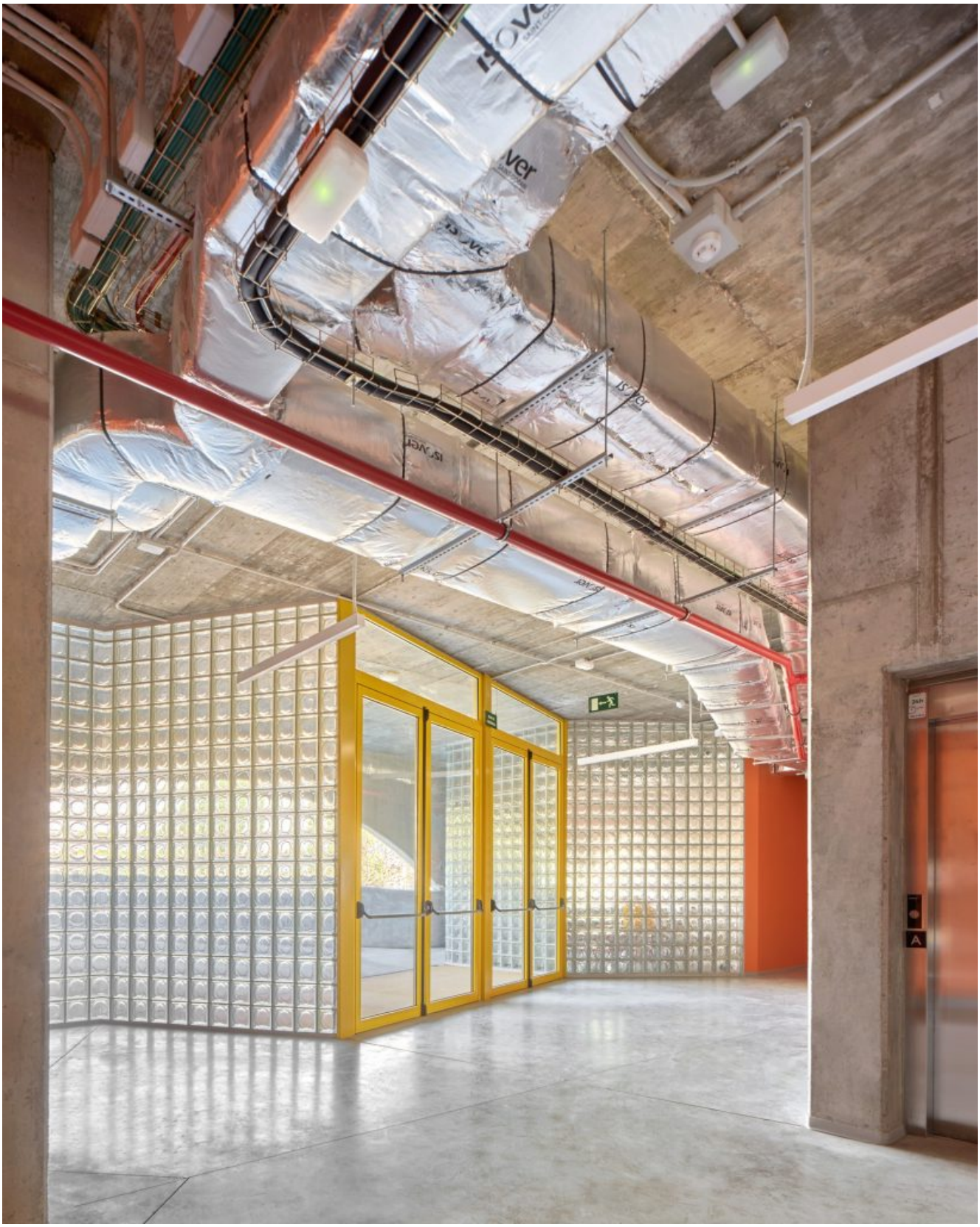
Visibility of mechanical systems as a pedagogical opportunity

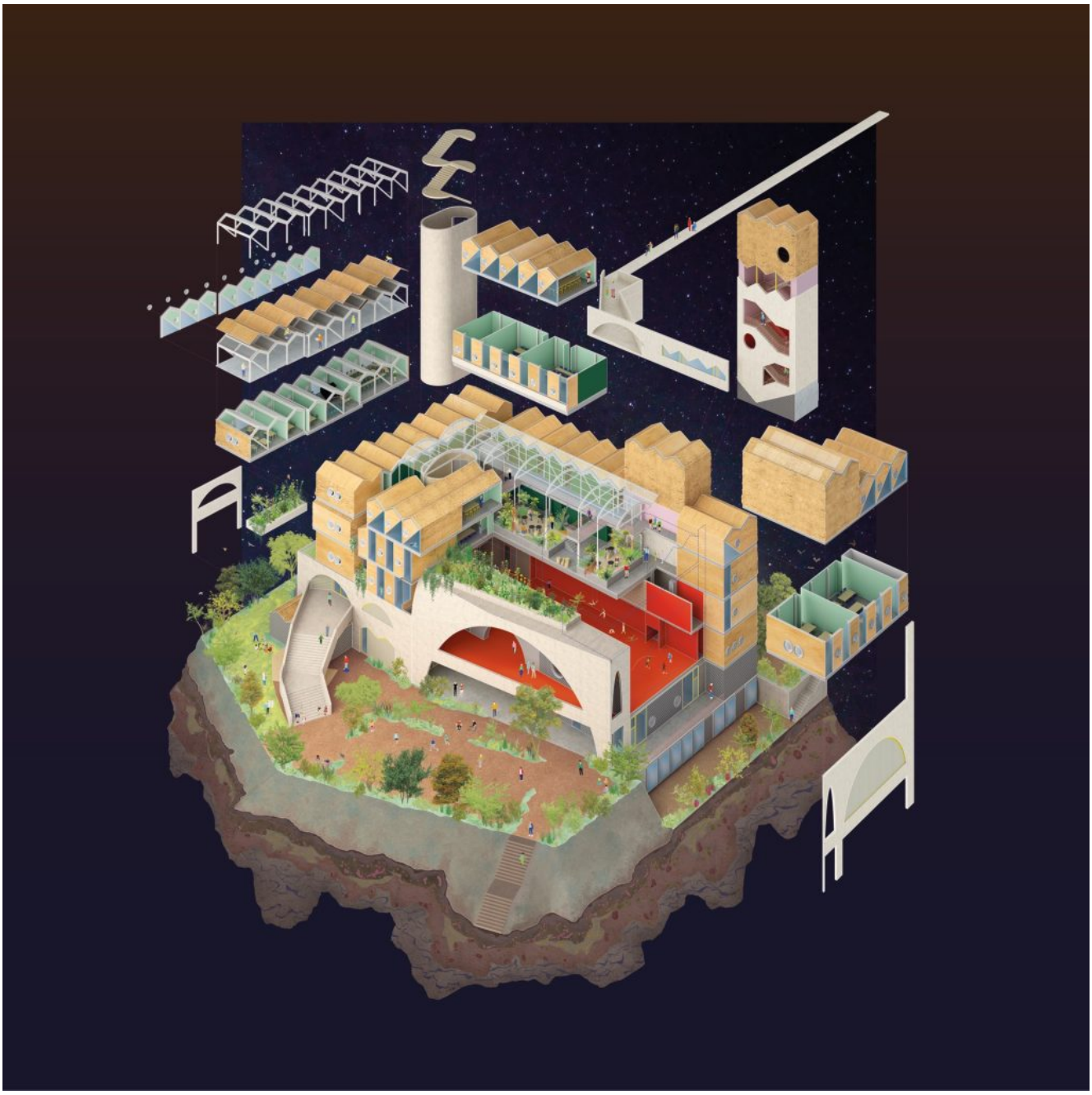
As an alternative to architecture's common efforts to hide mechanical systems, here all services are kept visible, so that the flows that keep the building active become an opportunity for students to interrogate how their bodies and social interactions depend on water, energy, and air exchanges and circulations. The building unapologetically allows pipes, conduits, wires and grilles to become part of its visual and material ecosystem.

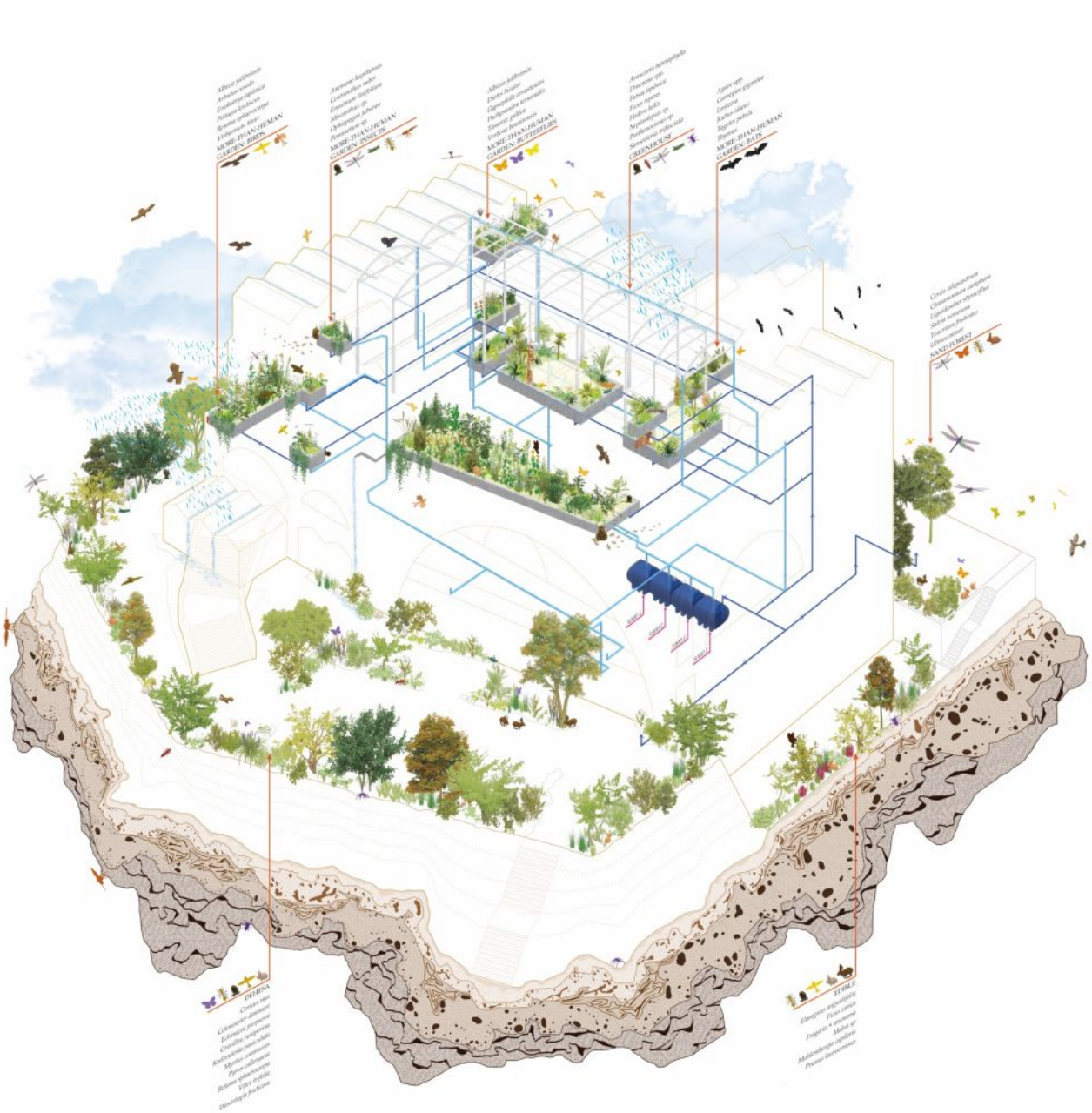
Thinning, skinning and make fluffy as an affordable environmental strategy

In the context of Southern Europe, where high-tech sustainable solutions are only available to high-budgeted, corporate or state-promoted buildings, this building develops a low budget strategy to reduce its environmental footprint based on the following design principles:

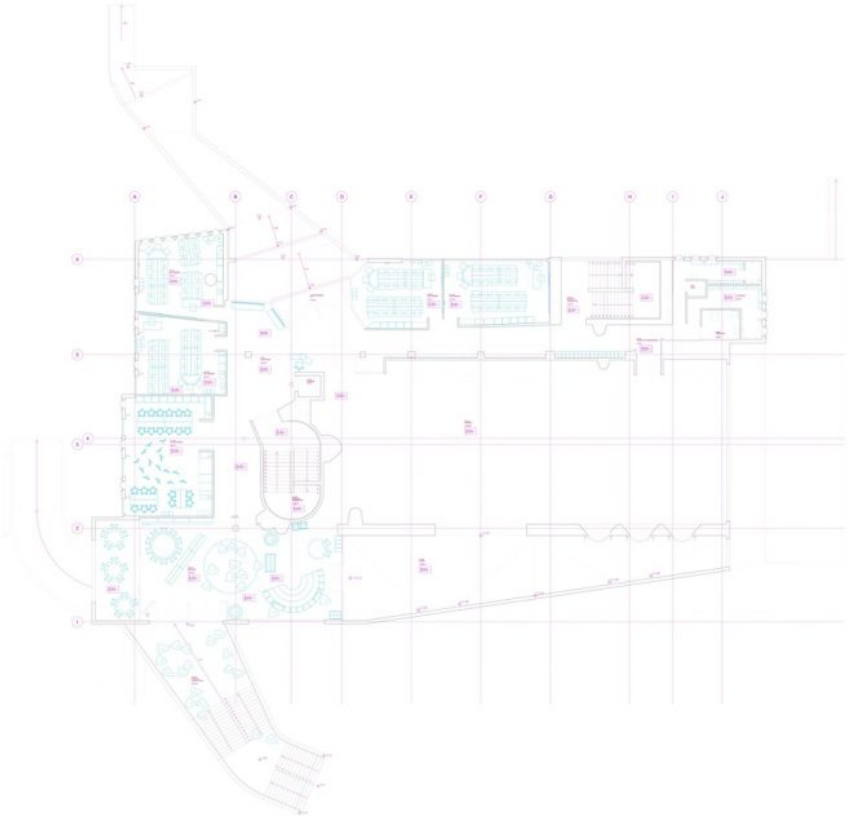
1. **Verticality to reduce land occupation.** Instead of opting for a horizontally-expanding land-occupation – as is the case for 90% of school designs – Reggio School is a compact vertical building. This design decision minimizes the building's footprint, optimizes the overall need for foundations, and radically reduces its façade rate.
2. **Radical reduction of the construction.** No claddings, no drop ceilings, no raised technical floors, no wall lining, no ventilated façades are used in this building. The overall amount of material used in the facades, roofs and interior partitions of the building has been reduced by 48% just by replacing a big part of the construction by simple strategies or thermal insulation and mechanical systems distribution. The result presents a naked building where the non-edited visibility of its operating components defines its aesthetics.
3. **A thick wrapping of living isolation.** Cork wrapping as both thermal isolation and support to more-than-human life. 80% of the envelope of the building is externally covered by a 14.2 cm of projected 9,700 Kg/m3 dense cork. This natural solution, specifically developed by the Office for Political Innovation for this project, is used both in vertical and pitch parts of the building's external volume to provide a thermal isolation of R-23.52, double that what Madrid's regulations require. This adds to the passive 50% reduction of consumed energy when heating of the school's interiors. Beyond this, the irregular surface of the cork projection is designed to allow organic material to accumulate, so that the envelope of the building will eventually become the habitat of numerous forms of microbiological fungi, vegetal and animal life.
4. **More thinking, less material.** Led by researcher and structural engineer Iago González Quelle, the team has shaped, analyzed and dimensioned the building's structure so that the thickness of loading walls can be reduced an average of more than 150 mm compared to conventional reinforced concrete structures. Overall, this implied a 33% reduction in the embedded energy of the building's structure.







REGGIO SCHOOL. EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
SECTION



REGGIO SCHOOL. EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
FLOOR PLAN. LEVEL 3.

REGGIO SCHOOL, EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
FLOOR PLAN. LEVEL 4.

REGGIO SCHOOL, EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
FLOOR PLAN. LEVEL 5.


REGGIO SCHOOL, EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
FLOOR PLAN. LEVEL 4.


REGGIO SCHOOL, EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
FLOOR PLAN. LEVEL 2.

REGGIO SCHOOL, EL ENCINAR DE LOS REYES, MADRID
ANDRÉS JAQUE / OFFICE FOR POLITICAL INNOVATION
FLOOR PLAN. LEVEL 1.

4. XHOLOBENI YARDS. Titanium and the Planetary Making of SHININESS / DUSTINESS

18th International Architecture Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia
2023

XHOLOBENI YARDS. Titanium and the Planetary Making of SHININESS / DUSTINESS
A work by:
Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation
With **Nohnle Mbthuma Forslund, Siyabonga Ndovela, Margie Pretorius, Sinegugu Zukulu, ACC (Amadiba Crisis Comittee) and SWC (Sustaining the Wild Coast), Steve Hoffe**

José Luis Espejo, sound research and direction
Farah Alkhoury, research and field recordings
Roberto González, coordination and design
Vivian Rotie y Pablo Sáiz del Río, fabrication
Jorge Cañón, AV consultant
Ignacio Farpón, lighting consultant
Wojciech Gajek and Michal Malinowsky, seismic recordings
Walter Ancarrow, text editing
Joseph Hazan, studio recordings
Imagen Subliminal (Miguel de Guzmán + Rocío Romero), photographs in Venice
Farah Alkhoury, photographs in Xholobeni

With the support of:
Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
TBA21–Academy
Acción Cultural Española (AC/E)

'XHOLOBENI YARDS. Titanium and the Planetary Making of SHININESS / DUSTINESS' is a research-based installation presented at the Arsenale of the 18th Venice Architecture Biennale curated by Lesley Lokko. It is a collective effort by a network of activist and community representatives from Xholobeni (South Africa), experts in seismographs and transduction from Poland, researchers, sound editors, prop makers and the New York and Madrid teams of the Office for Political Innovation led by Andrés Jaque; to intervene the very problematic addiction to SHININESS in architecture now. This transnational distributed alliance has been needed to respond to a reality that gains its extractive capacity from its geographical and scalar distribution.
The SHININESS of the Hudson Yards in Manhattan is the result of TITANIUM-made coatings, being applied on self-cleaning glass and facades to enact the immutability of corporate global hegemonies, both aesthetically and through societal, material and ecological extractivism. The SHININESS of the global north is at the expense of Xholobeni, a small area on the East Coast of South Africa, where titanium can be found. By removing the titanium from the sand in locations like Xholobeni, the sand becomes light and volatile, making dusty the sites of extraction. DUSTINESS affects humans' and more-than-humans' health, makes farming impossible and, ultimately, forces communities and ecosystems to migrate and die. But the Xholobeni people resist extraction by singing together songs where they celebrate their entanglement with lands and ecosystems. This installation mobilizes architecture's capacity to allow human bodies to feel the violence other bodies sense through human extractivism and to provide material and societal settings for mutual care and resistance to extractivism. The dissident temporary, ecological and spatial constructs these songs are part of, are the architectures where the future, a desirable future, resides.

About us

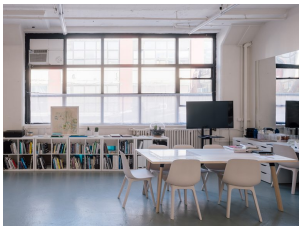
Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation (OFFPOLINN) is an international architectural practice, based in New York and Madrid, working at the intersection of design, research, and critical body-environmental practices. They have been awarded with the Frederick Kiesler Prize for the Architecture and the Arts, the SILVER LION for Best Research Project at the 14th Venice Biennale, and the Dionisio Hernández Gil Award. OFFPOLINN's work is part of the collections of MoMA and the Art Institute of Chicago, among many others.

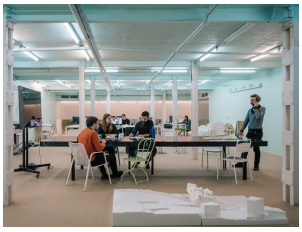
The office has a broad portfolio of **awarded projects**, that includes the Babyn Yar Museum of Memory and Oblivion in Kiev, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Ocean Space in Venice, Reggio School in El Encinar de los Reyes, the Clergy House at the historic center of Plasencia, COSMO MoMA PS1 in New York, Escaravox at Matadero Madrid, Transvector at Lafayette Anticipations in Paris, Rambla Climate-House in Molina de Segura, House in Never Never Land in Ibiza, Ròmola in Madrid, Hybrid Infrastucture: RUN RUN RUN, TUPPER HOMES, Rolling House for the Rolling Society, among others. All these projects are part of a critical practice that the office has developed as well through the revision of architectural formats in **performance projects** that include: Being Silica (Performa NY, 2021), IKEA Disobedients (MoMA, 2012), Superpowers of Ten (Lisbon Architecture Triennial 2013; Chicago Architecture Biennial 2015; Jumex Museum, Ciudad de México, 2016; ZKM Karlsruhe, 2016), 12 Actions to Make Peter Eisenman Transparent (Cidade da Cultura, Santiago de Compostela, 2004), 1L Oil Banquet (Madrid, 2007); and **research-based installation projects** including: Spirits Roaming the Earth (Whitechapel Gallery, London, 2018), Pornified Homes (Oslo Architecture Triennial, 2016), Intimate Strangers (London Design Museum, 2016), Sales Oddity. Milano 2 and the Politics of Direct-To-Home TV Urbanism (14 Venice Biennale, 2014), PHANTOM. Mies as Rendered Society (Arts Institute of Chicago, 2012), Fray Foam Home. When Decoration Becomes Political (12 Venice Biennale, 2010), among others.

OFFPOLINN's work has been the object of solo exhibitions at MoMA, MoMA PS1, MAK Vienna, Princeton University, RED CAT Cal Arts Contemporary Art Center in Los Angeles, the Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine de Paris, and Tabacalera in Madrid; and it also been exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago, Zentrum für Kunst und Medien ZKM (Karlsruhe), London Design Museum, Whitechapel Gallery (London), Z33 (Hasselt), the Schweizerisches Architektur Museum (Basel), Lisbon and Oslo architecture triennales, and the Venice, Chicago, Gwanju, São Paulo, Santiago de Chile, and Seoul architecture biennales.

The books of the office include: *Superpowers of Scale* (Columbia Press, 2020), More-Than-Human (with Marina Otero and Lucia Piestroiusti; Idea Books, 2020), Mies y la gata Niebla. Ensayos sobre arquitectura y cosmopolítica (Puente Editores, 2019), *Transmaterial Politics* (MCD, 2017), *Transmaterial / Calculable* (ARQ, 2017), *PHANTOM. Mies as Rendered Society* (ACTAR, 2013) and *Different Kinds of Water Pouring into a Swimming Pool* (CalArts, 2013).

OFFPOLINN was founded and is lead by **Andrés Jaque**. Andrés Jaque is an architect, writer and curator. He is the Dean and Professor of Architecture at Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. He has also been Visiting Professor at Princeton University and The Cooper Union. He has been an Alfred Toepfer Stiftung's Tessenow Stipendiat and Graham Foundation grantee. In 2018 he co-curated Manifesta 12 in Palermo, *The Planetary Garden. Cultivating Co-Existence,* and he is the Chief Curator of the 13th Shanghai Biennale, *Bodies of Water*.





Andrés Jaque / Office for Political Innovation