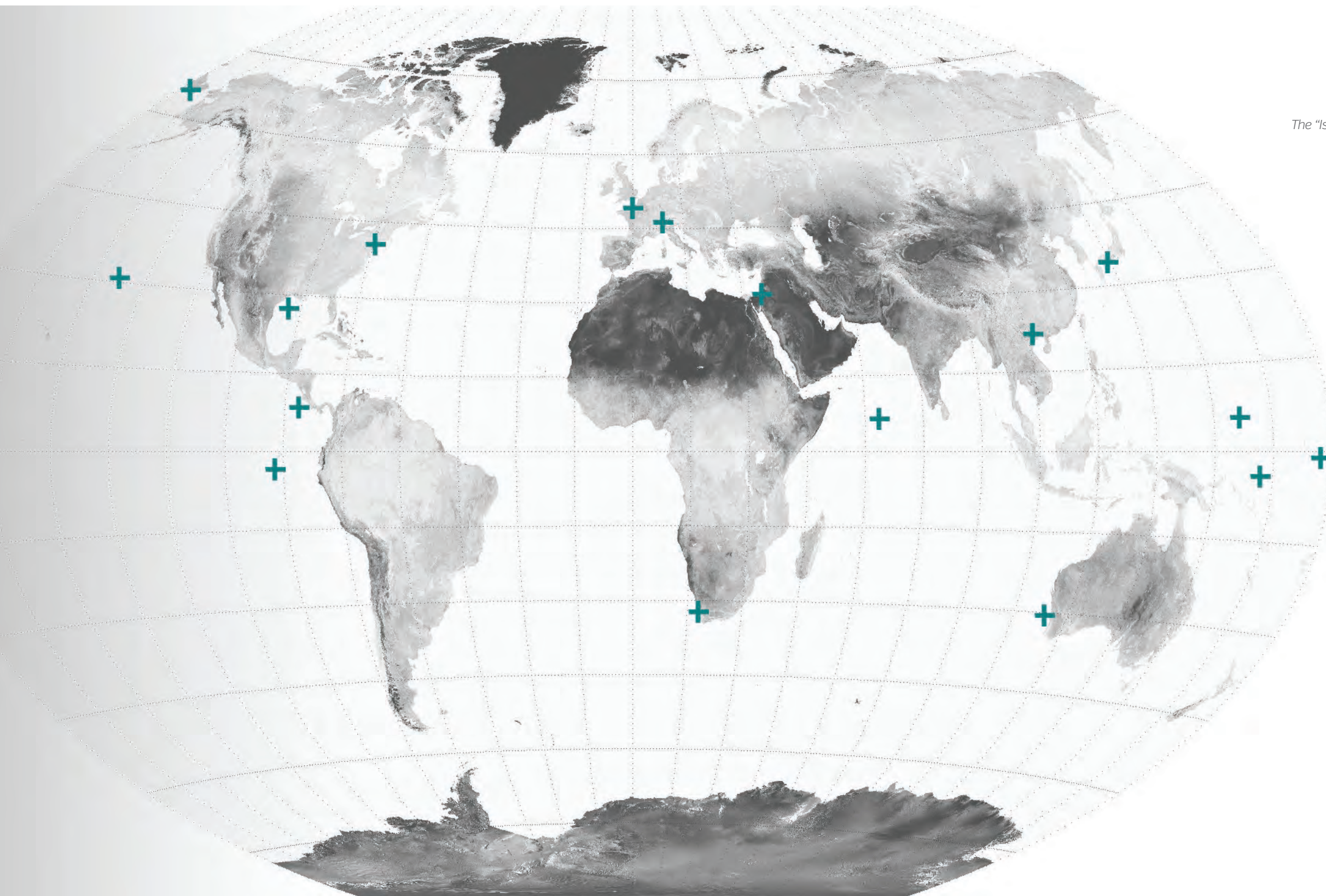


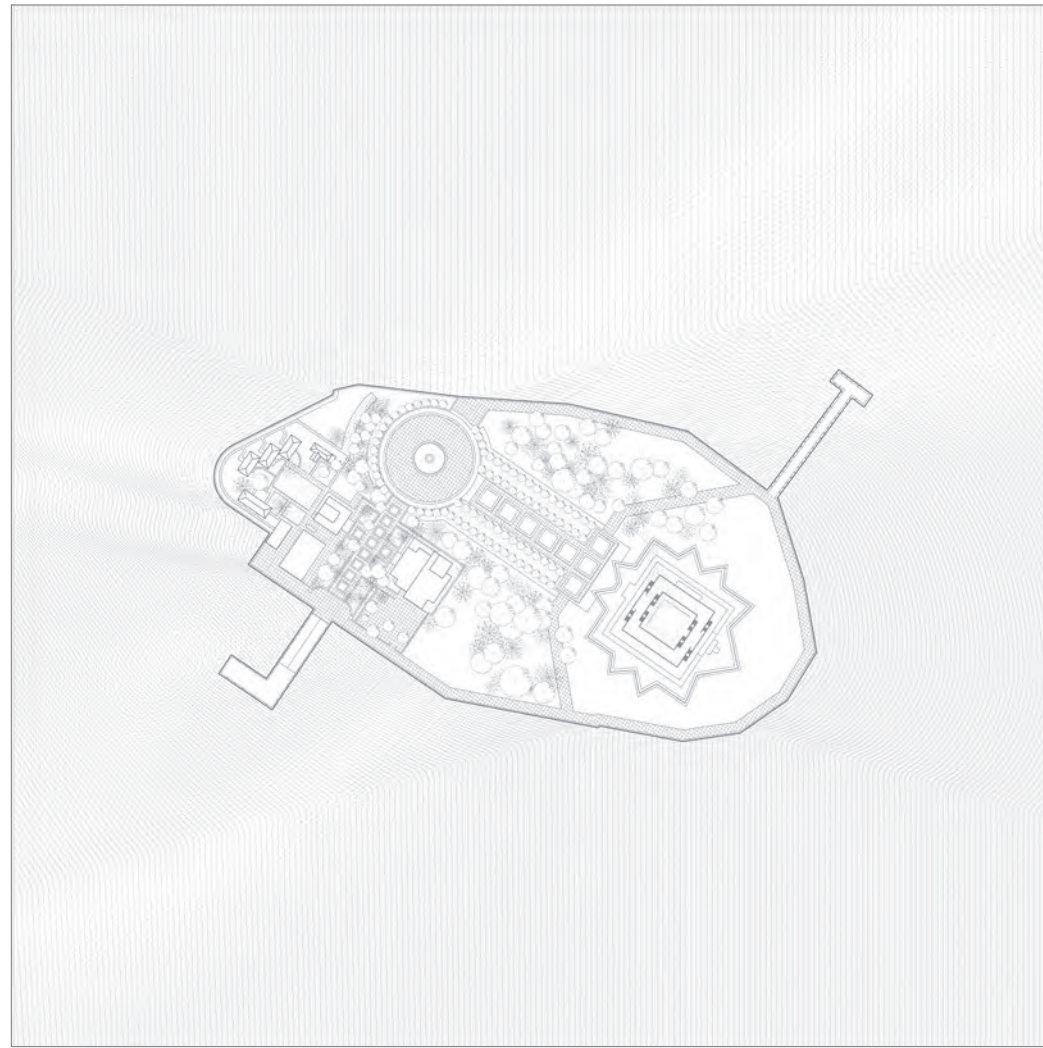
ISLAND LIBRARY

IMAGES LIAO ZHEXUAN + PRAKUL REDDY POTTAPU
TEXT RICHARD WELLER

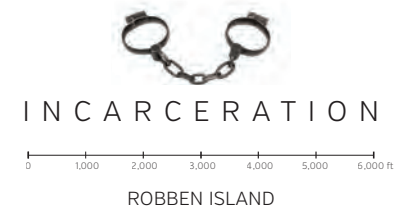
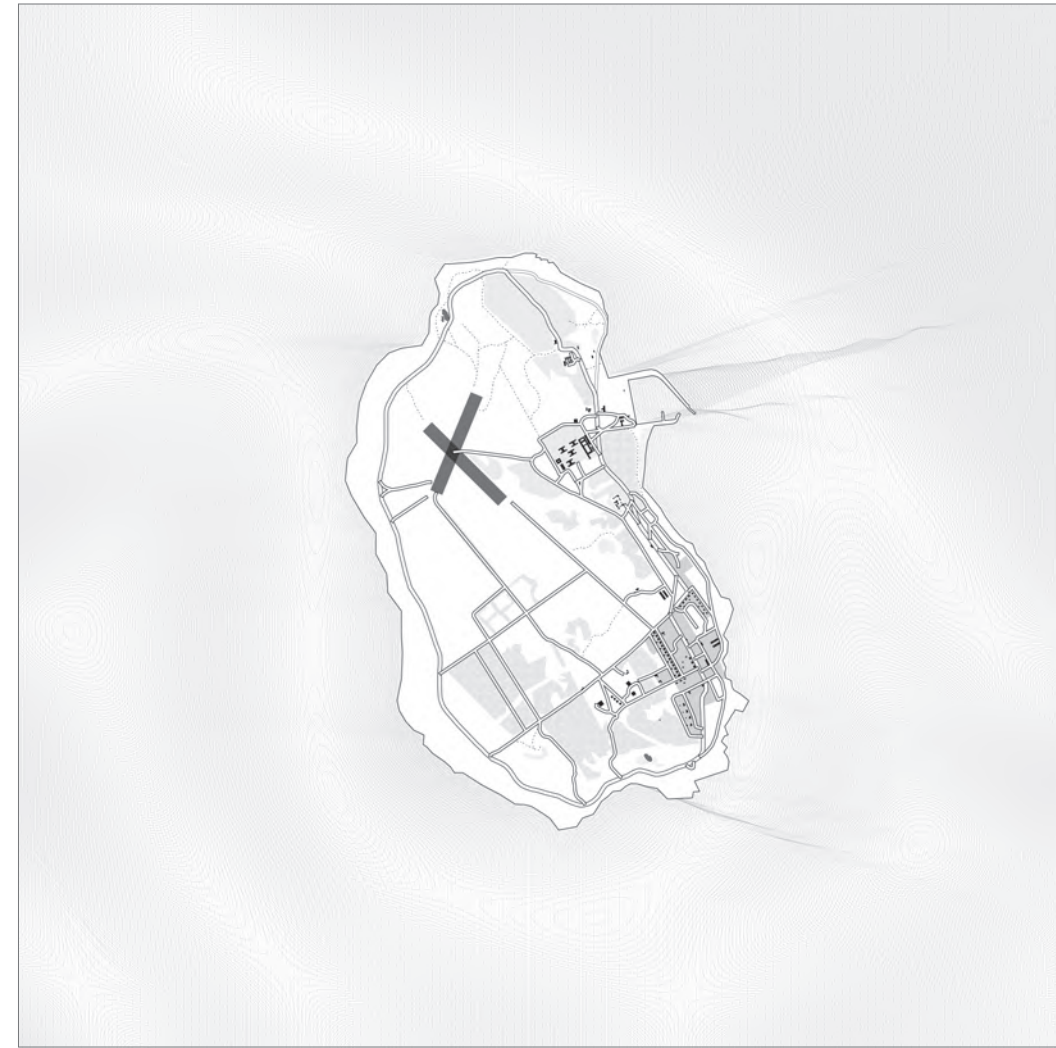


The "Island Library" is a collection of 20 archetypal islands chosen for their cultural, political, and mythological significance throughout time.

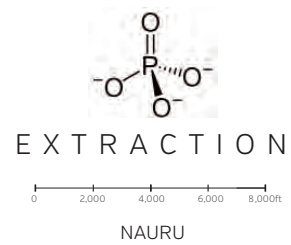
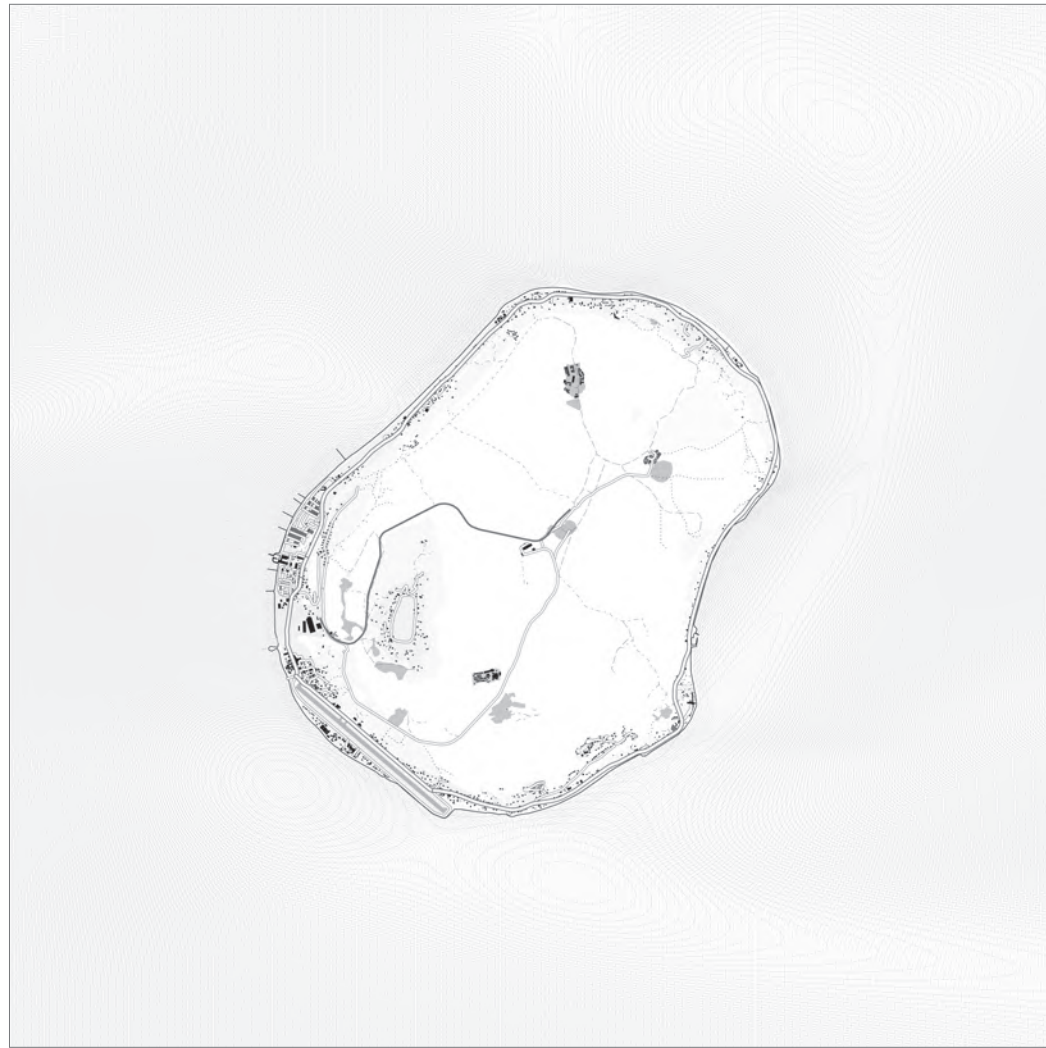
- LIBERTY ISLAND FREEDOM
- ROBBEN ISLAND INCARCERATION
- NAURU EXTRACTION
- CARNAC ISLAND COLONIALISM
- DIOMEDE ISLANDS TIME
- ÎLE DES PEUPLIERS DEATH
- GARDEN OF EDEN PARADISE
- RYŌANJI MICROCOSM
- THE FORBIDDEN CITY POWER
- TEMPLE MOUNT/HARAM ESH-SHARIF SACRED
- GALAPAGOS EVOLUTION
- ISLA NUBLAR SCIENCE
- UTOPIA UTOPIA
- ISOLA BELLA BEAUTY
- PACIFIC TRASH VORTEX WASTE
- PERDIDO ENERGY
- KIRIBATI DELUGE
- BIKINI ATOLL APOCALYPSE
- CRUISE SHIP PLEASURE
- SAN SERRIFFE SATIRE



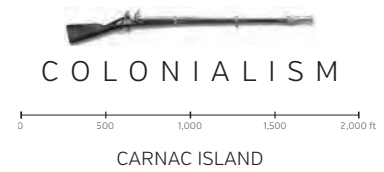
Originally an oyster bed nourishing the Lenni-Lenape of Mannahatta, Liberty Island in Upper New York Bay had incarnations as a quarantine station, an asylum, and a fort before becoming the site of the “Statue of Liberty” – an icon of freedom from political and economic oppression. The monument was to be a gift from France on the occasion of America’s 1876 centennial celebrations; however, it did not arrive in America until 1885, the project having been beset by funding difficulties on both sides of the Atlantic. Designed by French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, with structural engineering by Gustave Eiffel, the statue sits on a pedestal formed by the walls of the original star-shaped fort. At the time of its unveiling in 1886, suffragettes circled the island in a boat protesting the fact that the statue, formally titled “Liberty Enlightening the World,” was female and yet women did not yet have the right to vote.



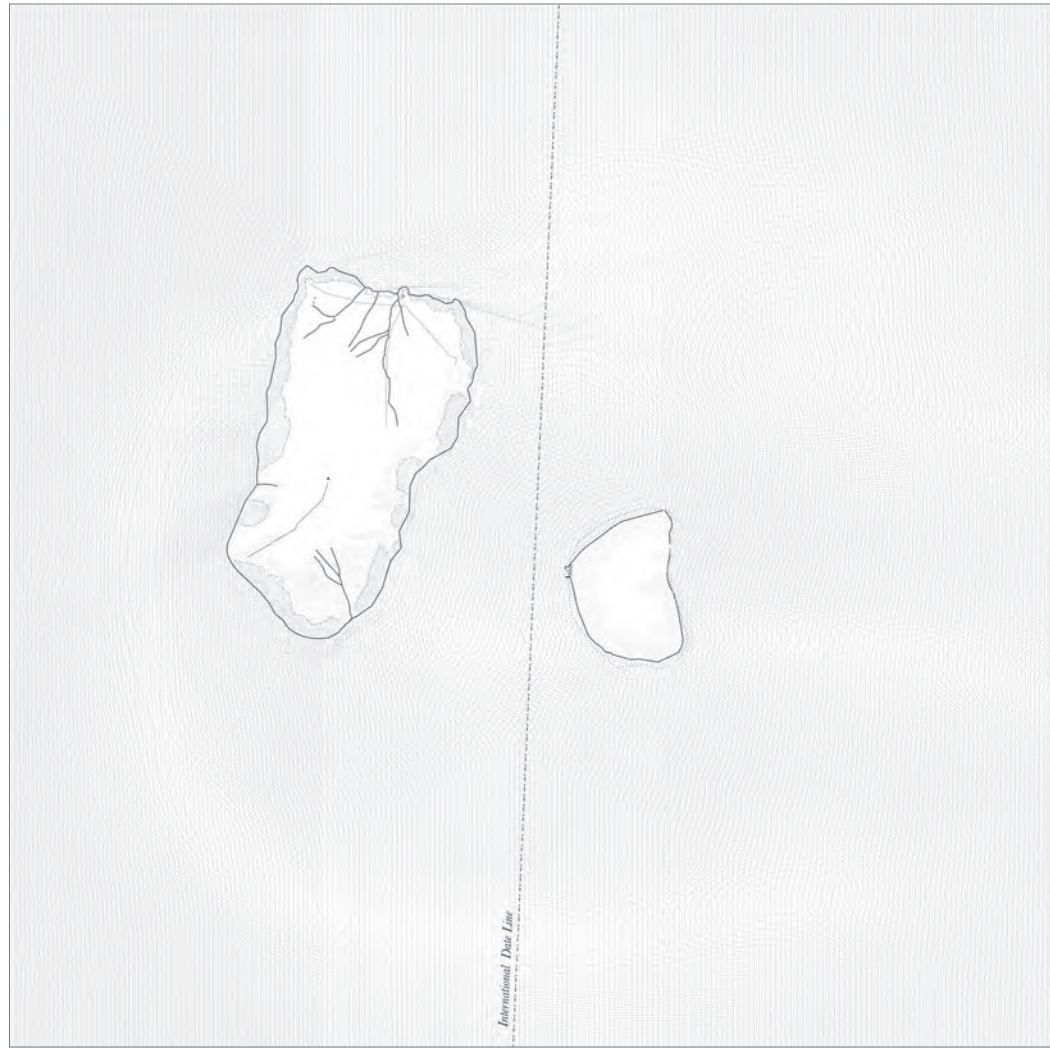
Islands have always appealed as prisons and Robben Island, off the coast of Cape Town in South Africa, is one of the most infamous of them all. Small and flat, Robben Island has been used as a prison since the 17th century, most recently and notoriously by the apartheid regime. The island’s best-known prisoner was Nelson Mandela, who was incarcerated there for the first 18 years of a life sentence for sabotage against the state. Mandela broke rocks during the day and spent nights studying law in a cramped cell. As a political prisoner, he was permitted only one visit and one letter every six months. In 1990, after having served 27 years of his sentence, he was unconditionally released and immediately set about securing the right to vote for the nation’s black majority. Four years later South Africa held its first democratic elections and inaugurated Mandela as its first black president.



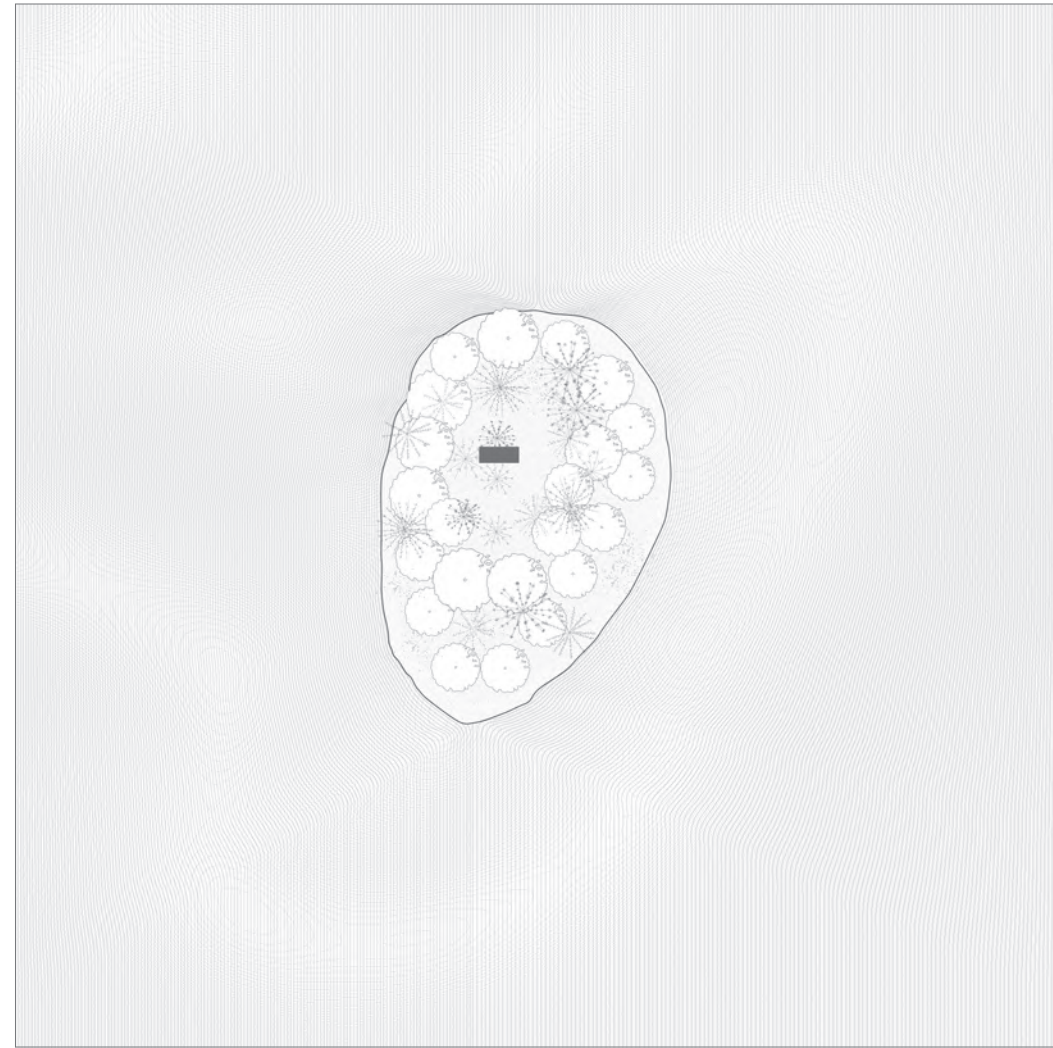
The Pacific island of Nauru is largely made up of phosphate rock, a non-renewable resource highly valued as a fertilizer to boost crop yields. In the late-20th century as the “green revolution” in agriculture gained momentum worldwide, Nauru enthusiastically extracted and exported its surficial phosphate. As a result, for some years Nauru had the highest per-capita GDP in the world, but this wealth has since been squandered through mismanagement. By 2011 the island was stripped of resources and 90% of its population of around 10,000 people was unemployed. Originally a healthy fishing and subsistence gardening culture, Nauruans have become accustomed to leading sedentary lives and are reliant on imported, processed foods. As a result, Nauru now has the world’s highest rates of obesity and diabetes. In a desperate attempt to boost its hapless economy, Nauru became home to a refugee processing facility for the Australian government’s highly controversial offshore refugee detention program.



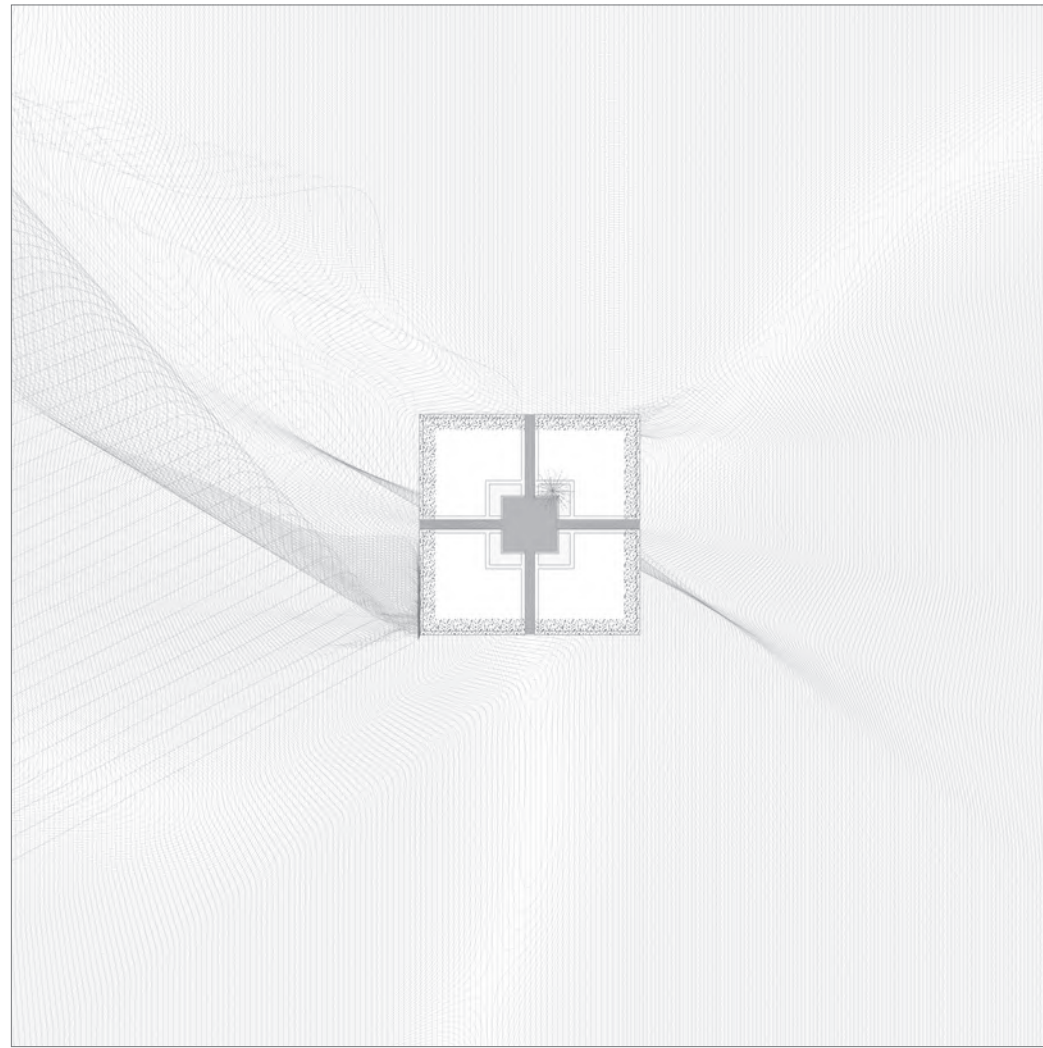
A few miles off the coast of Western Australia, lies snake-infested Carnac Island, a former prison for indigenous Australians exiled from the fledgling British colony. The island’s most famous prisoner was Yagan, a celebrated tribal warrior arrested for the retaliatory murder of a white colonist. After escaping from Carnac, Yagan was shot by a colonist who claimed the bounty with Yagan’s decapitated head. The head was later shipped to London and exhibited as a curiosity. In 1997, after years of negotiation by the Noongar indigenous community, Yagan’s skull was repatriated to Australia and ceremoniously buried. Within a week of its return, a sculpture of the warrior was decapitated by a British loyalist.



The Diomed Islands lie in the Bering Strait between Alaska and Siberia. Although under 4 km apart, the two islands are bifurcated by the international date line, therefore occupying different time zones. Big Diomed (Ratmanov) is almost a full day ahead of Little Diomed (Ignaluk), meaning that to look from one to the other is to literally see into the future (or the past). Indeed, from a boat with both islands in view, one can see both the future and the past in the present: something once only thought possible at the speed of light.

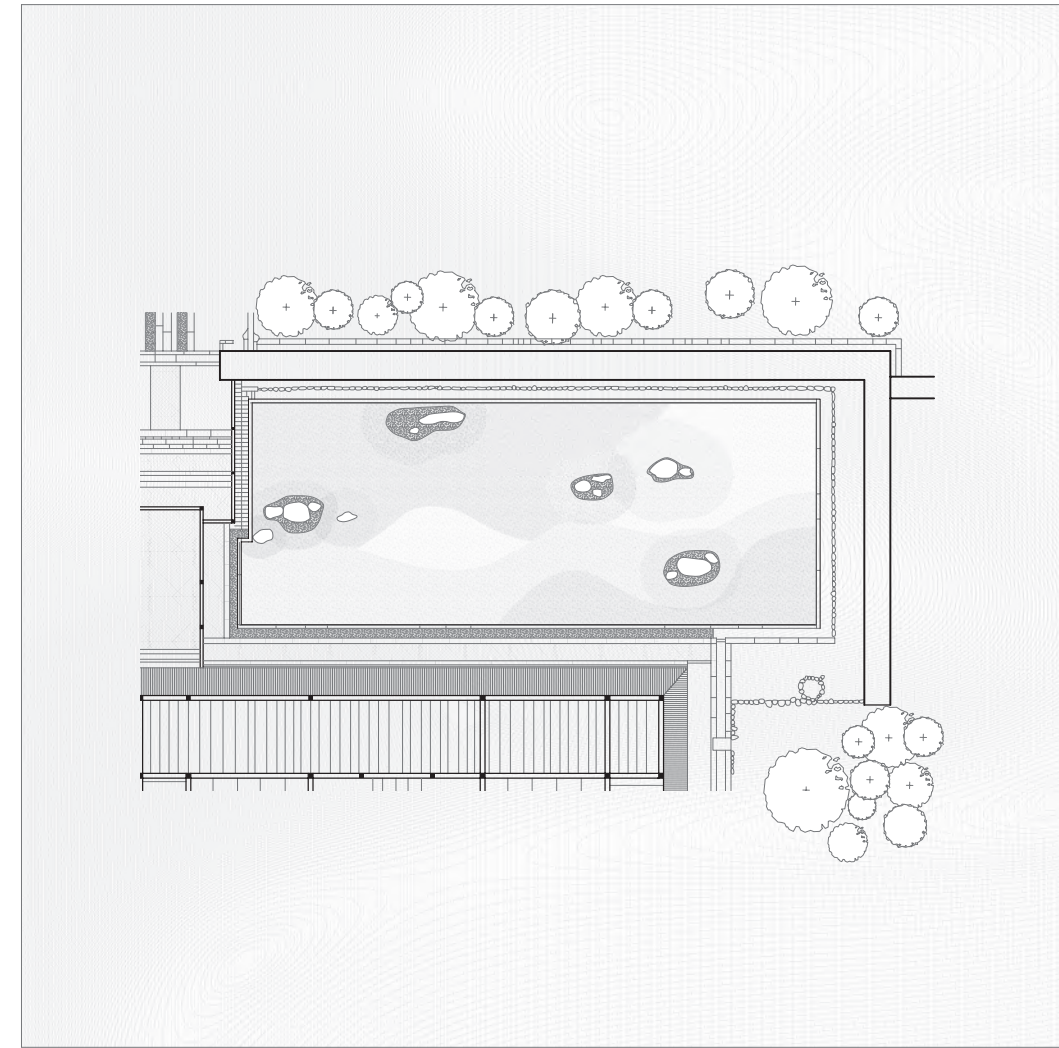



The philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau died while visiting friends at Ermenonville, France, in July 1778. He was buried on a small island of poplars in the lake of the estate gardens, inspired by the new English style that had become synonymous with the romantic spirit and enlightenment thinking that Rousseau personified. The English landscape style has various subtle denominations, but in general it can be understood as a form of landscape design that closely approximates natural scenery. In this way, the English landscape garden is a rebuke to the Baroque ostentation, Euclidean geometry, and Cartesian dualism associated with formal French landscape designs such as Versailles. Similarly rejecting the pretensions and strictures of French society around him, it is said, allegorically, that Rousseau stripped off his wig, his sword, and his watch and instead of the city, immersed himself in the natural and agrarian landscape. His poetic and political explorations in this regard served as a vital counterpoint to a scientific and mechanistic world view, but so too it began modernity's long and contradictory love affair with 'nature.'



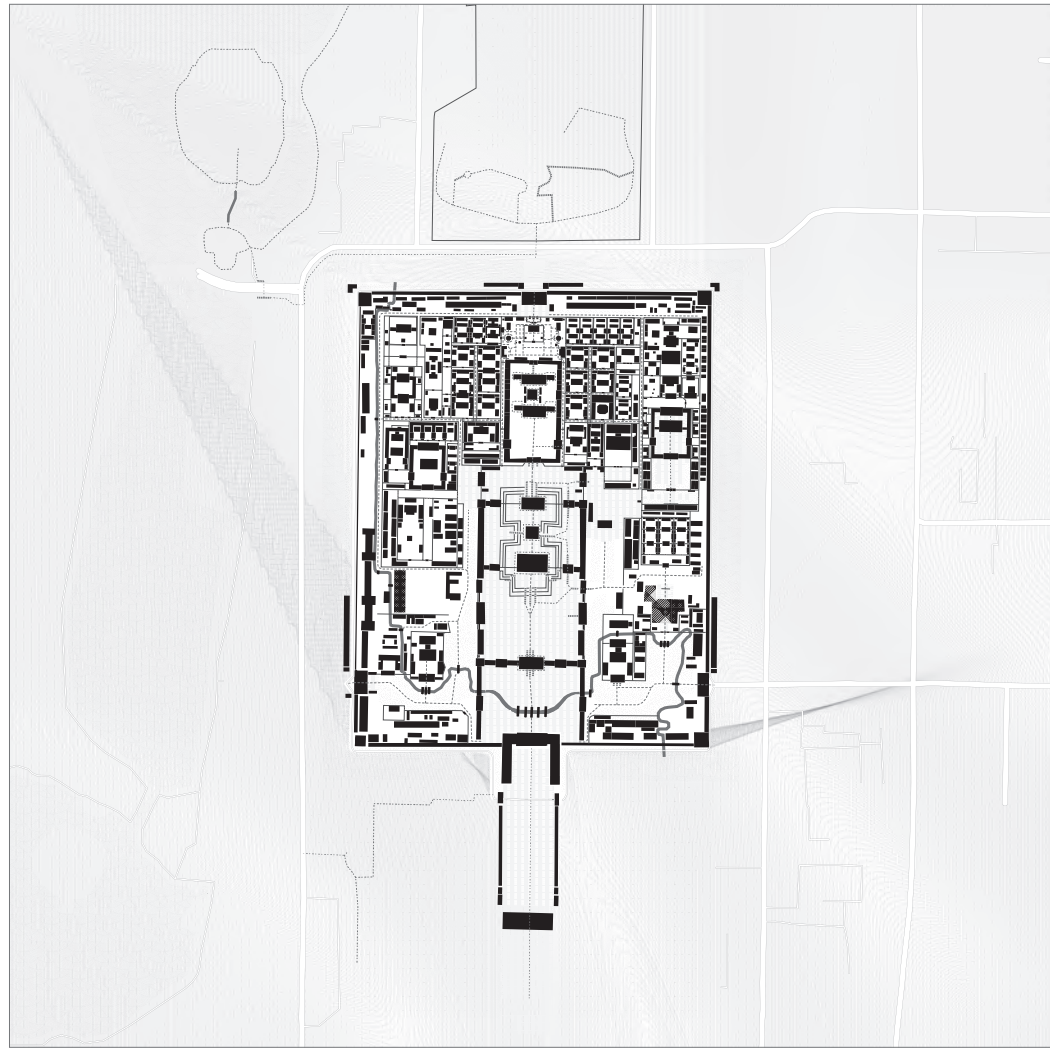

 P A R A D I S E
 0 ————— ∞
 GARDEN OF EDEN

Just as islands are other to the mainland, paradise is other to reality. Stemming from the age of exploration where paradise was hoped for over the horizon, and reinforced by today's global culture of tourism, islands and the paradisiacal have a long association. In the case of the Abrahamic religions, paradise is the archetypal setting for the original sin, when the allegorical figures of Adam and Eve transgress God's law and seek knowledge for themselves. Consequently, humanity is evicted from the garden and the unity of nature, humanity, and God is rent asunder. Whether the Garden of Eden is a metaphor for the whole world or an inaccessible island within it is a debate that has continued for centuries.




 M I C R O C O S M
 0 10 20 30 40 ft
 RYŌANJI

Both islands and gardens can be thought of as little worlds, microcosms of the whole. Nowhere is this more true, nor rendered more succinctly, than the 15th-century Zen Buddhist garden of Ryoanji in Kyoto, Japan. The garden comprises 15 stones arranged in groups, set within in a plane of white gravel against the backdrop of a blank clay wall. The gravel is raked to suggest wave patterns in water so that the stones become islands in the ocean. This intentional ambiguity of scale is assisted by there being no plants in the garden, except some small areas of moss at the base of some of the stones. The garden was designed to be viewed and contemplated by Zen monks from the verandah of the adjacent monastery; but no matter where one sits, the 15 stones can never be seen together.

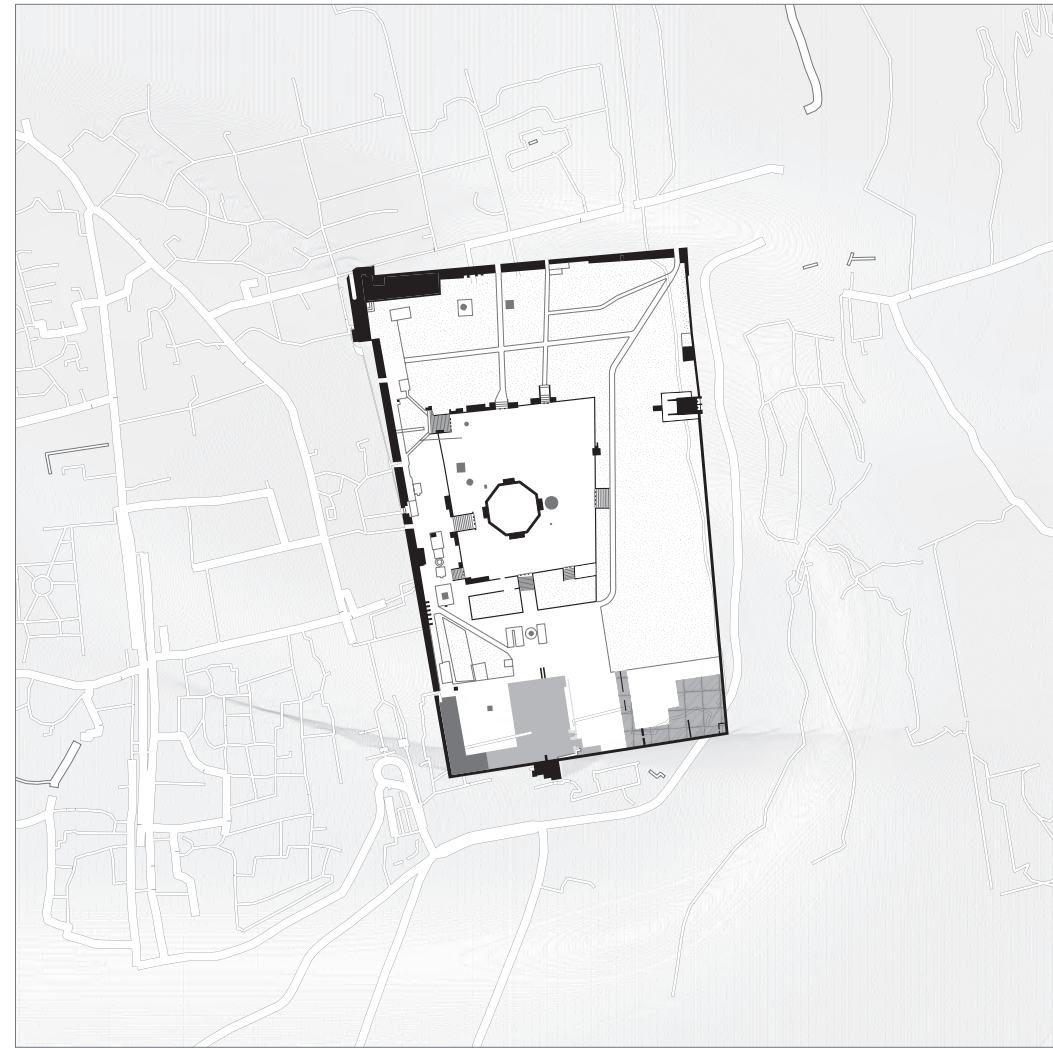


POWER

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 ft

THE FORBIDDEN CITY

In many of the cities of antiquity in both the east and the west, there was a mini-city or “citadel” within the city. The citadel was devoted specifically to the activities and rituals of the society’s political and spiritual elite. Starkly delineated from its surroundings by walls and moats and other high-security fortifications, the citadel is a form of urban island, and none more so than the Forbidden City in the heart of Beijing, China. The Forbidden City functioned as the court of the Chinese emperor from 1420 to 1912 and like most citadels, manifests in its built form alignments between heaven and earth as the literal embodiment of the Emperor’s divine powers. Drawing down on the heavens, the Emperor’s power then radiated outwards across the land, binding the nation together in unequivocal unity. Today, the axis of the Forbidden City spills into the vast empty space of Tiananmen Square from where the ruling Chinese Communist Party has turned the idea of the citadel inside out.

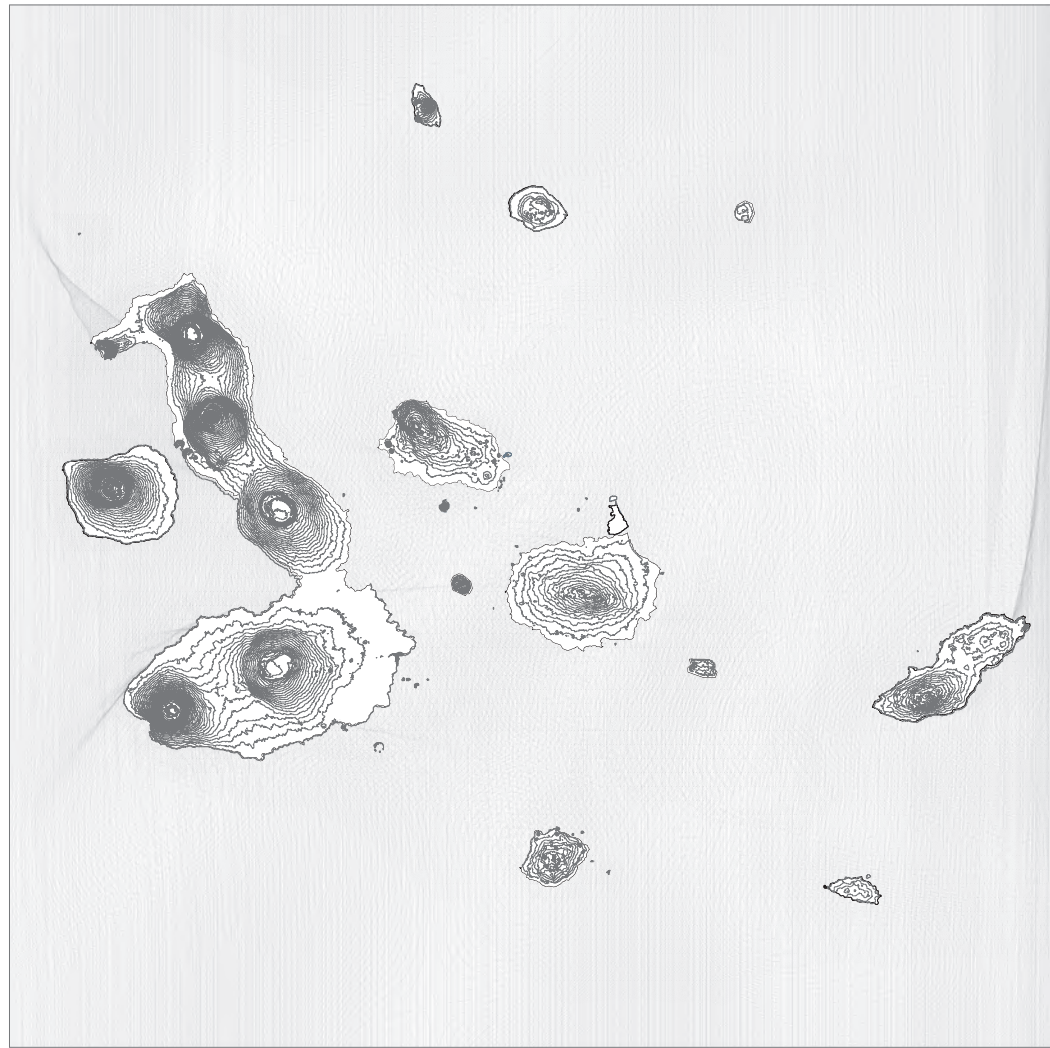


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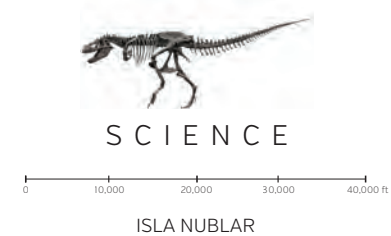
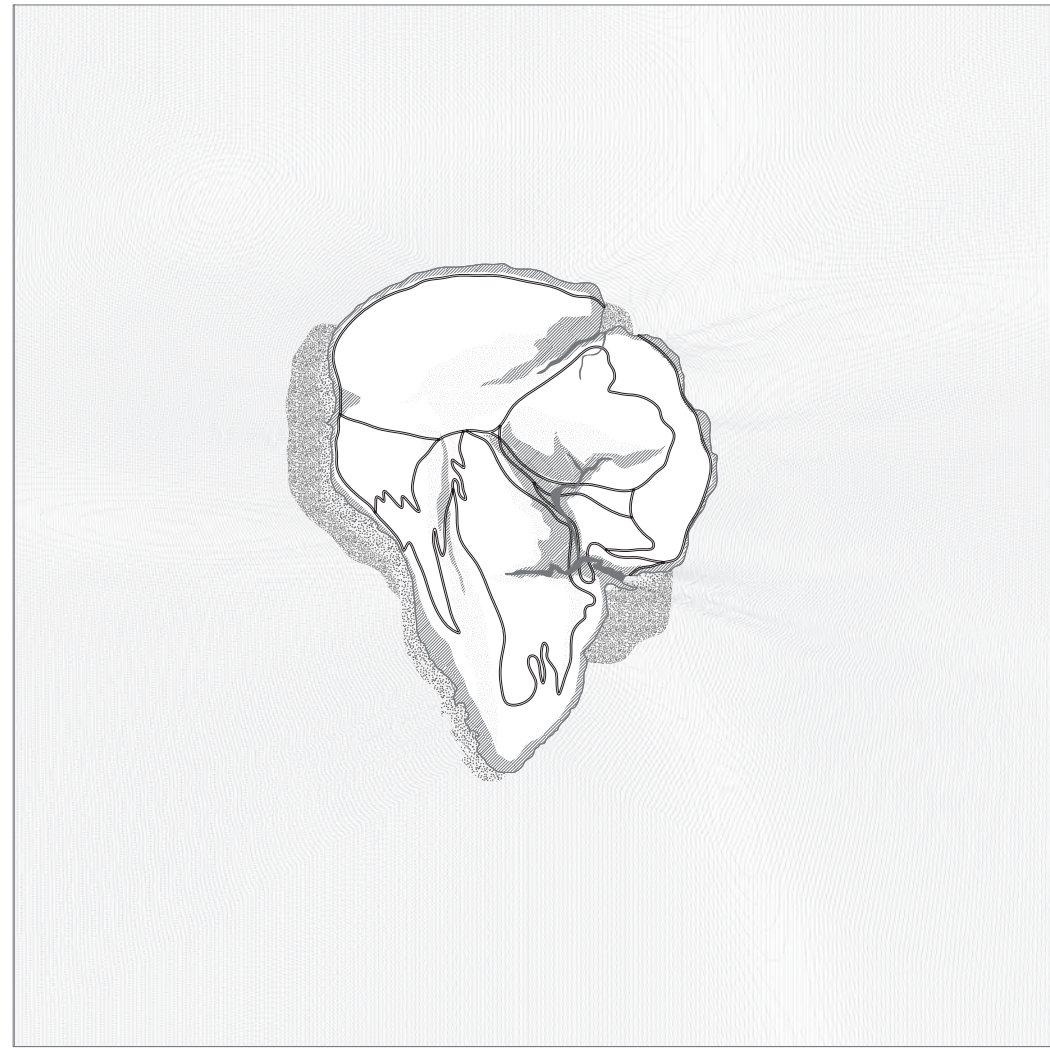
0 250 500 750 1,000 ft

TEMPLE MOUNT/HARAM ESH-SHARIF

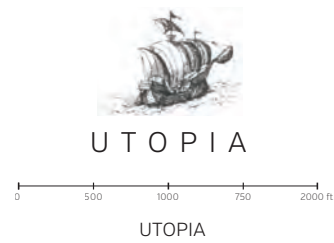
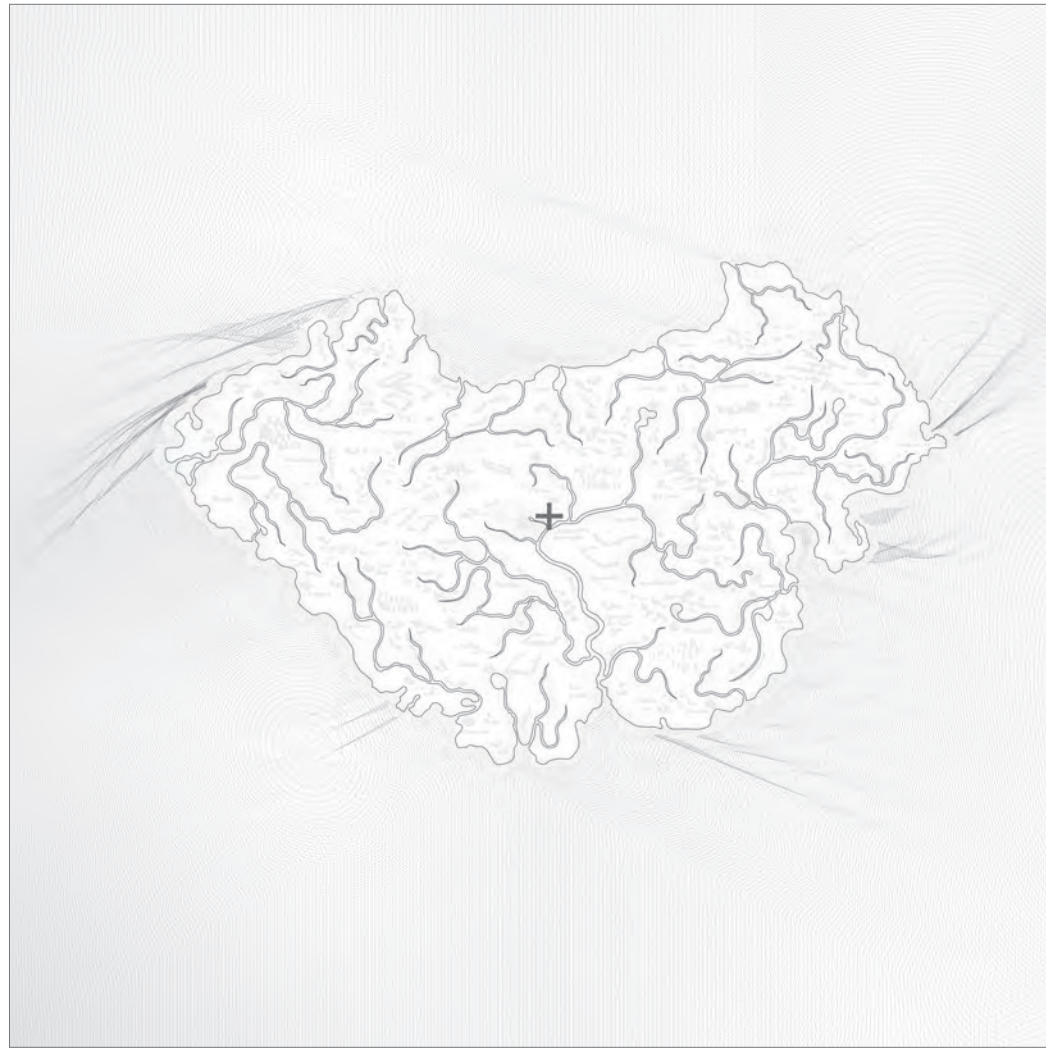
The Temple Mount in Jerusalem, known to Muslims as Haram esh-Sharif, is a sacred island in the sea of urbanity and politics surrounding it. A place where the three monotheistic religions of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity meet, it is perhaps the most contentious religious site on the planet. A site of spiritual significance from at least the 11th century BCE, the first Jewish temple on the site was built by King Solomon in 957 BCE to house the Ark of the Covenant. Destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BCE, the temple was rebuilt by Herod in 516 BCE, and destroyed again by the Romans in 70 CE. In 637 the Muslims pushed back the Byzantines, and constructed the Dome of the Rock on the site, marking the place from which Muhammad is believed to have ascended to heaven. In 1099 at the hands of the crusaders it became a Christian church, only to be retaken in 1516 by the Ottomans. Today, the modern state of Israel controls the surrounding city of Jerusalem, but Jews are restricted from entering the Temple Mount precinct for religious and political reasons and the site remains a place of Muslim worship.



Darwin famously arrived in the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador in 1835. The unusual fauna that he observed there strengthened his fledgling theory that life's diversity is shaped by the dynamic interplay between organism and environment. His observations and analysis of the differentiation of species across the islands helped form what would later become his theory of natural selection. Contradicting the theological orthodoxy that God had made all living things immutable, the evidence of life adapting to its circumstance without direction or design was as compelling as it was frightening. Today, surrounded by 70,000 km² of marine reserve, 97% of the Galapagos is National Park. But try as we might to retain its original ecology, the Galapagos are now riven with weeds and feral domesticates, all competing to survive and, in so doing, evolve into new forms.



By resurrecting dinosaurs through traces of DNA, Jurassic Park, set on the fictional island of Isla Nublar and based on the novel by Michael Crichton, focuses on the ethics of scientific manipulation of living organisms. From within the laboratory of the island's zoo the created turns on the creator and chaos ensues. Drawing parallels with scientific interest in rewilding landscapes with once extinct species, the film's message is essentially that we cannot recreate what has been, and nor can we control the world around us. The film concludes with the island's chief scientist telling us we should simply leave the dinosaurs on the island alone. In other words, the wild is best contained in high security parks and nature will self-correct if left to its own processes, free of human interference. As a mirror of the Anthropocene, this dystopian reiteration of scientific hubris seems prescient, but it also presents an ethical dilemma that can only be resolved through recourse to a reactionary subdivision of nature and culture.



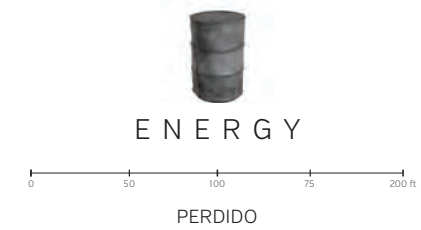
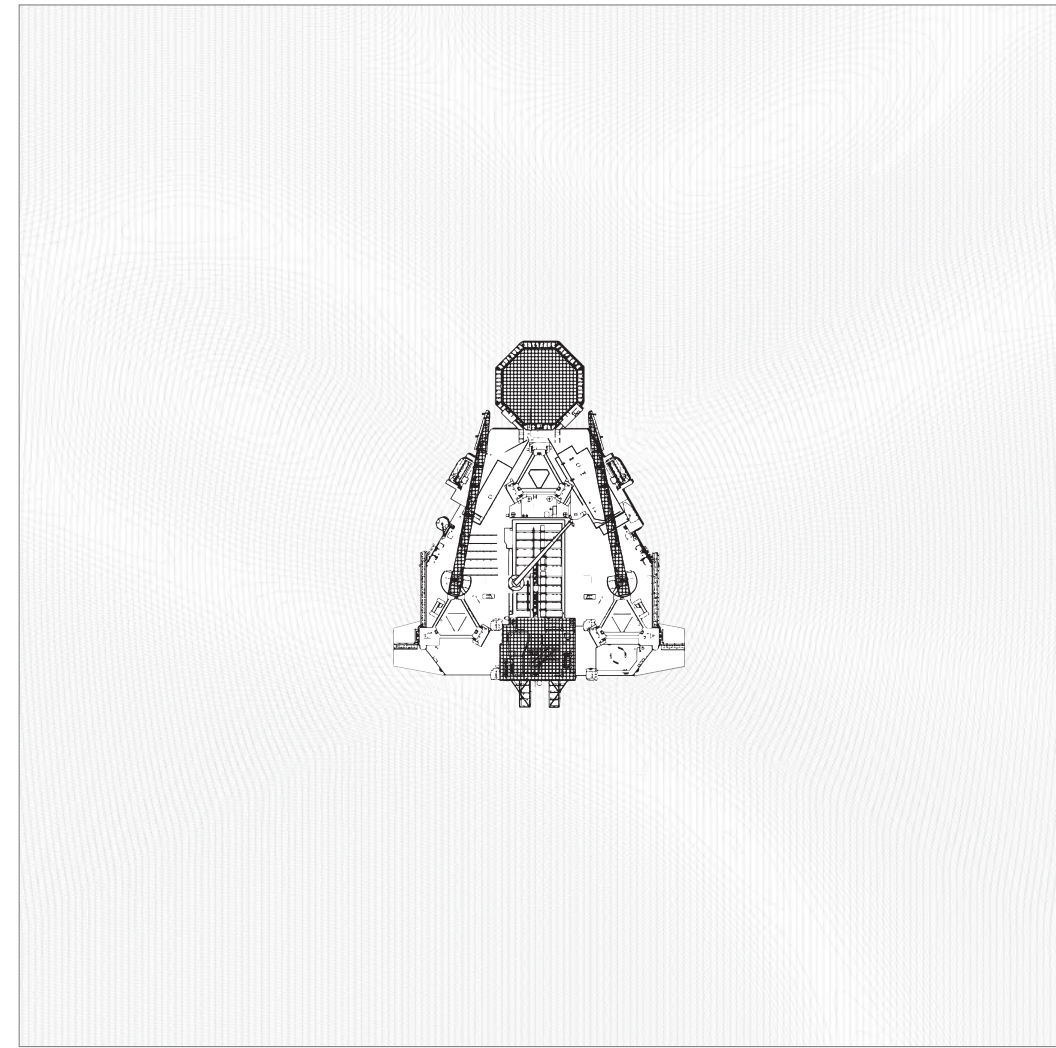
Derived from a combination of eutopos (good place) and outopos (no place), the neologism “utopia” was coined by Sir Thomas More in 1516. A fictional island, More’s Utopia was a critique of 16th-century English society and a practical blueprint for an improved, agrarian civilization. The island was included in the world’s first Atlas, the Theatrum Orbis Terrarum by Abraham Ortelius in 1570. Utopia has its roots in Plato’s Republic, a militant but theoretically perfect society ruled by philosopher-kings. During the 18th and 19th centuries, utopian thought sought primarily to harness the power of machines to bring about the ‘good life,’ but as the industrial revolution wreaked its havoc it was John Stuart Mill who, in 1868, coined the term “dystopia,” utopia’s alter ego. Whilst useful as critiques of the status quo, as history attests, when utopias become real they tend inexorably toward fascist states, for it is only through such absolute power that utopia’s planned perfection can be maintained.



With their dark waters surrounded by distant snow-capped mountains, the lakes of northern Italy have attracted the European aristocracy for centuries. Any island situated in such surrounds would be considered beautiful, but Isola Bella in Lake Maggiore is such by both name and design. Beginning construction in 1632 on an originally flat island surface, Isola Bella is famed for its terraced gardens organized to provide for a series of open-air rooms that frame spectacular views across the lake in all directions. Replete with peacocks, gaudy sculpture, and highly decorative planting, Isola Bella is a decadent, dream-like destination. Local legend has it that the ladies of the region’s ruling House of Borromeo petitioned Carlo III to build on the island so they could escape the screams of prisoners in the dungeons of his mainland palazzo – a reminder that beauty can also be wicked.



Functioning as vortices, the world's five ocean gyres naturally gather and concentrate flotsam and jetsam. The largest of these concentrations is the Pacific Trash Vortex, within the North Pacific Gyre, which accumulates debris from North America and Japan and maritime industries in the region. The Pacific Trash Vortex is primarily comprised of plastics that do not decompose, but break down to the molecular scale of polymers and remain suspended in the upper reaches of the water column where they enter the marine food chain. The plastics are toxic and often fatal to fish and bird life, but they can also be passed through the food chain and make their way insidiously back to their source – us.



For around \$45, a barrel of oil has enough energy to do the work that a horse would do in one year, or a human in 10. With oil and other fossil fuels we have literally become superhuman and constructed a global culture that is now utterly dependent upon high-energy input. Brutalist, pragmatic, and ingenious, the offshore oil rig is an architectural island and an icon of the late industrial age. Whereas a natural island is the small visible tip of an underwater mountain, the oil rig is connected to the ocean floor by the single thread of a drill, the longest of which, as in the case of the Perdido rig in the Gulf of Mexico, can now reach close to two miles in depth and suck out over 100,000 barrels of oil a day. There are around 1,500 rigs in operation worldwide, their precise locations determined by combinations of satellite imaging, shock wave registration, gravity meters, and so-called “sniffers” – sensors that can smell hydrocarbons in the earth’s crust.



DELUGE

0 10,000 20,000 30,000 40,000 ft

KIRIBATI

Kiribati has become an icon of climate change as its population of over 100,000 people become the somewhat innocent victims of rising seas, ocean acidification, and drought caused by the first-world's carbon emissions. Staunchly Christian, many in Kiribati believe God, having created their lands, will not now abandon them to environmental oblivion. Faith notwithstanding, under the aegis of a program titled "Migration with Dignity" the government of Kiribati has purchased a tract of higher land in Fiji as insurance. Clinging to land that is in fact the tip of ancient volcanoes, those choosing to stay in Kiribati are building seawalls, planting mangroves, and praying.

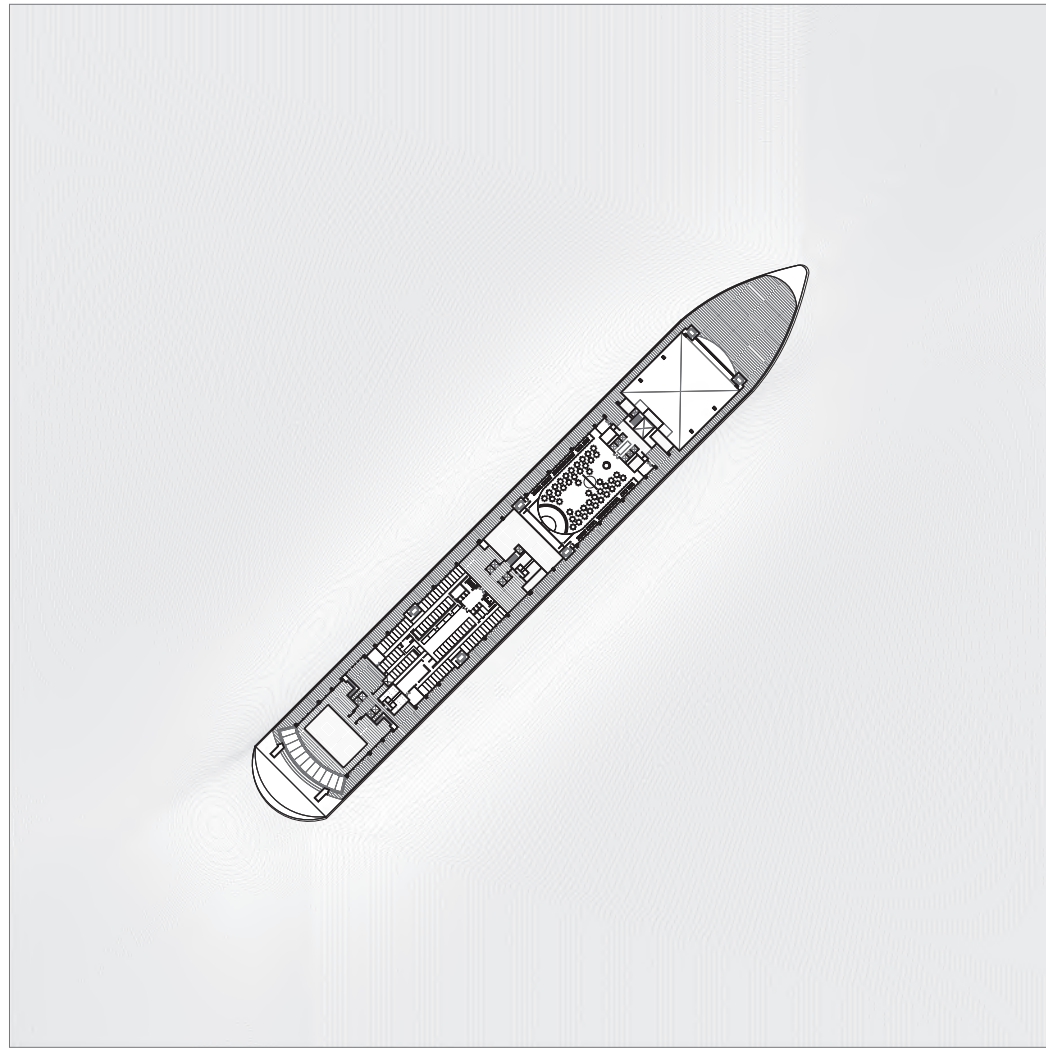


APOCALYPSE

0 20,000 40,000 60,000 80,000 ft

BIKINI ATOLL

Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands had been inhabited for over 3,000 years until the US government chose it as a site for testing its nuclear weapons. Between 1946 and 1958, 23 such tests were conducted, the largest of which was the "Baker explosion," 1,000 times stronger than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during WWII. In 1972, following years of near-starvation on nearby islands ill-equipped for sustaining human life, the Atoll's customary owners returned. Just six years later, French scientists concluded that the area was not safe for habitation and the population was relocated once more. To this day, Bikini Atoll is uninhabited and littered with the remains of the experiments conducted there.

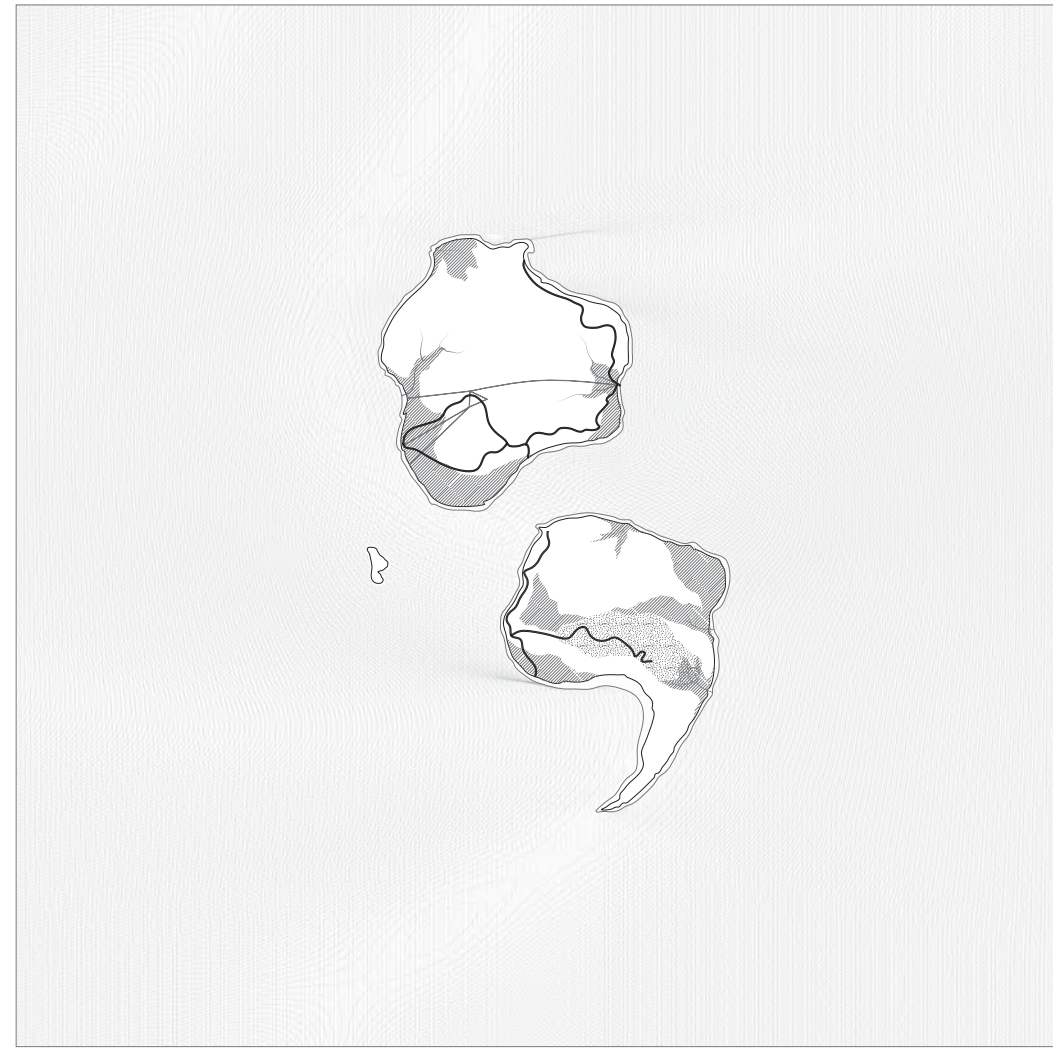


PLEASURE

0 100 200 300 400 ft

CRUISESHIP

Advertised as sun-drenched destinations in azure waters, islands are often synonymous with escapism and pleasure. As many stories attest, however, islands are equally the setting for misery and depredation. The appropriation of all that is desirable in the trope of the remote island, yet replete with all mod-cons, gives rise to the late-20th century invention of the cruise ship. Not to be confused with ocean liners which, prior to the phenomenon of cheap air travel, primarily facilitated the efficient transportation of people and goods, the cruise ship is a floating hotel, a moveable island utterly devoted to the hedonism of its guests. The cruise ship's genius is that it seamlessly combines three otherwise incompatible idylls: the island, the city, and the endless journey – each cancelling out the others possible negativity. And yet, by combining these three impossible desires the cruise ship is also a dream from which one cannot, for as long as the journey takes, awake.



S; SATIRE

0 100,000 200,000 300,000 400,000ft

SAN SERRIFFE

On April 1, 1977, *The Guardian* newspaper published a seven-page supplement commemorating the 10th anniversary of independence from Britain of the small island nation of San Serriffe. The supplement featured economic and political reports, tourist itineraries, and advertisements. It described the indigenous tribes of “Flong” people who practiced a ritual called the “Dance of the Pied Slugs”; referred to minority groups, the “colons” and “semi-colons”; and advertised a white Guinness beer with black froth, reportedly the result of the island's farmers planting barley seeds upside down. Despite such telltale signs, many readers were fooled by the April Fool's Day hoax and for some time thereafter, travel agents were forced to deal with irate tourists who refused to believe that the island nation of San Serriffe did not in fact exist.