

4a: The Albany Bulb Physical Endurance Camp (PEC)**Controlled and Uncontrolled Occupation - *program infrastructures***

The final project introduces a new set of systems, forces, and occupation territories into the existing ecologies of the Albany Bulb, materialized as a physical endurance camp. These past decades have seen an increased obsession with fitness, and with getting the body in shape. Departing from indoor aerobic classes and the mirror-clad walls of weight-lifting gyms, recent trends have fore-grounded various forms of engagement with the outdoors, and with that, have increasingly inserted physical exercise into the landscape: groups of joggers by the ocean, early-morning workouts with personal fitness trainers in urban parks, weekend outdoor weight-loss boot camps.

Physical exercise is inherently a spatial practice. With the increased popularity of exercise in relation to the outdoors comes the need for infrastructures supporting the desired activities. Many forms of activity take advantage of physical and spatial conditions in the landscape, but more often than not the form of exercise requires that the natural conditions/systems get manipulated in order to better enable the activities of the body in space. Through the interaction of activity with the existing ecologies of a site – through their overlapping and manipulation into a new infrastructure – the landscape becomes an active participant in the physical exercise.

“Working with and not against the site, something new is produced by registering the complexity of the given.”

Stan Allen

As has been investigated in previous exercises, the Albany bulb poses a terrain of landscape that can be conceived as set of ecologies – interdependent systems that operate in complex and fluctuating relationships with each other. The human body has contributed to shaping these ecologies, be it through the actual construction of the landmass, it's active transformation through artwork, it's spontaneous inhabitation through ad-hoc dwellings, or the repetitive and temporary occupation through various 'uncontrolled' activities, including walking, mountain biking, running, dog-walking, bird-watching etc. This new 'controlled' introduction of exercise activities - the infrastructure required to locate / anchor / organize / structure / distribute these activities, along with the increased presence of people on the site - will produce a set of forces that interact with / inform / transform the field of existing synthetic ecologies you have each identified in your mappings. Not unlike the manipulations of the human body through exercise (slimming, toning, desired changes to the size/shape of the body), this intervention into the ecologies of the Bulb instigates transformations to its physical, spatial and environmental conditions – transformations that result from the engagement and manipulation of the systems and processes that have produced its current state.

This final project of the semester focuses on re-conceptualizing the mappings from the previous assignment as generators of an architectural intervention. The site analysis, both through mapping and modeling, exposed how the conditions of a defined territory function: The site exposes process and fluctuations that co-exist in relationships rather than static matter; site formation is the outcome of inner and outer forces operating within the same field, therefore form is in continuous flux, evolving, and interdependent. The mappings traced the formation of such synthetic ecologies in order to reveal strategies of intervention that produce new or altered relationships and dependencies - extending / intensifying / dissolving / transforming current conditions. The goal now is to design a methodology based on the understanding of these processes, and to develop these strategies into an architectural intervention on the Bulb that produces the physical and programmatic infrastructure for the Physical Endurance Camp – addressing materiality, the scale of the body (how it occupies the site), as well as site systems that operate in dialog with the landscape at large.

program

As stated in the previous assignment, the program for the site is a physical endurance camp (PEC) that engages and formalizes three site conditions:

1. Bay insertion (activities engaging the waters edge)
2. Ground transformation/expansion (activities engaging extended flat/inclined areas)
3. Ground extrusion (activities engaging and requiring vertical surface/elements)

Controlled occupation - Three months out of the year the site operates as a strict boot camp for people trying to get in-shape. This includes fitness instruction, nutritional counseling and motivational training. The participants come to the site five days a week, three hours a day and have to participate in a structured and structure- dependent vigorous training program. Other activities on the Bulb should be selectively retained, and access to the end of the Bulb maintained.

Uncontrolled occupation - In the remaining nine months, the site becomes a public park. The infrastructure can be appropriated for extreme use and misconduct. Alternative uses of indoor facilities can be proposed.

specific program areas include:

- water access for swimming or boating, boating pier
- boat and equipment storage (kayaks, wetsuits, flotation devices - 300 sf)
- yoga space / indoor gym / pilates room (2000 sf)
- seminar room (350-400 sf)
- administrative offices / reception area (400-450sf)
- cafe/juice bar with small seating area (used by both endurance camp and the public – 600 sf)
- changing rooms with lockers, showers, and bathrooms
- bike parking area
- areas for outdoor in-place group activity (weight training, stretching, circuit training, jumping rope etc., partially covered for shelter against wind and rain)
- climbing wall (height min. 25 ft)
- observation/viewing platforms (integrated with either a pathway system, or other built program components)
- pathway dedicated for sprints (length 200ft, width 15 ft.), flat, looped or straight
- pathway system for running/jogging/walking (min. 1 mile, looped), inclined and/or stepped for hill running
- dedicated (mountain) bike loop
- vehicular access for service to buildings only
- wheelchair access to cafe area

- Site programmed elements should all be interconnected into a network of activity. This may be accomplished either through circulation connections, programmatic interlocking/hybridization and or visual connection between the defined parts.

- All site circulation will be designed with intent and conceptualized as performance promenades.

consider:

- connection to landscape (below, embedded, straddling, hovering, touching lightly, connecting, bridging, camouflaging)
- degrees of intervention in existing ecologies
- degrees of visual + physical connections to landscape / degrees of exposure + enclosure of activities
- territories / thresholds / boundaries / adjacency / connectivity
- interior to exterior relationship / thresholds
- access + constraint / separation between park landscape and endurance camp
- density of activity / progression / sequence / simultaneity
- transition + destination, hierarchy + equivalence
- degrees of interaction with landscape (fleeting, temporary, sustained, repeated, long-term, permanent)
- network / connection / speeds / flows / breaks / shifts / pause
- permanent intervention vs. designed process / stages / phases
- material organization at site/field scale vs. material tectonic at scale of enclosure

Objective 1**strategy drawings / diagrams**

Describe proposed interventions and their interactions with the systems + ecologies of the Bulb: what are the architectural elements/interventions accomplishing this? Produce a sectional or 3D drawing showing min. 2 ways in which an architectural strategy of intervention manifests itself. These can be zoomed-in iterations / translations of the 3 models produces in assignment 3b, operating on topography / bathymetry and any other subsystems you identified.

scale: 1/8"=1'-0" or 1/4"=1'-0"

Objective 2**site plan**

Produce a plan drawing at site scale describing the proposed/transformed field including location of interventions and program, and site circulation with program insertions, including 1. movement tracks, 2. seating, 3. viewing platforms. Proposals involving time will require more than one site plan to describe process and stages.

scale: 1"=200'

Objective 3**sections + partial plans**

Produce sections and plan drawings describing the 3 site conditions (bay insertion, ground transformation/extension, ground extrusion).

scale: 1/16"=1'-0" or 1/8"=1'-0"

Objective 4**sectional site model**

Construct a model of a critical slice of the site revealing existing and proposed ecologies, interventions, constructs, relationships (partial, strategic, organizational, more than one as necessary). Like the 3 models from the previous assignment, this model should demonstrate design intent through a manipulation of specific site conditions, transformed by the program/intervention.

scale/size: 4-6" wide 12-18" long at 1/8"=1'-0"

Objective 5**manifesto**

Title the project: "something" PEC. Revise your earlier manifesto to include both descriptions of site identity and site thesis from previous assignment, as well as a clear description of the strategy for intervention (500 words): What are the performative conditions of the site that establish the sites identity? How do these conditions operate as a system of relationships? What are the strategies for intervening in these systems?

Reading

tba

Schedule

F	10/23	Introduction of Project 4
week of	10/26	Objective 1+2 strategy drawings and site plan
week of	11/02	Objective 3+4+5
W	11/11	Mid-Review