COMMUNION COMPOSED

FOSTERING UNITY THROUGH A NOURISHED ARCHITECTURE
COTENTION:

Utilize food and its inherent social properties as a medium giving architecture greater agency in the unification of people, more specifically, distressed communities. Guatemala, a pillar of central American culture, is the chosen zone of exploration where such a collaboration will be implemented through an intervention of three scales: utilizing techniques and methods found in ecologically efficient urban food cultivation, intimate domestic food consumption, and marrying them to methods of engaging ceremonial food preparation to create a new form of socially sustaining architecture.

PREFACE:

This contention was born from a desire to challenge architecture to better serve the communities and people in which it inhabits, an increasing fault in architecture today which lacks the ability to represent what today is a more diverse, although fragmented, cultural society. In order for architecture to better serve its people, it needs to more deeply and comprehensively engage in the unique culture and context in which it is placed. A not so easy feat for architecture to do alone. Therefore, it is through the integration of architecture and another facet of culture that is as strong, or perhaps stronger in terms of its ties to history, rights, power, and life, that food, that can allow architecture to better function as a social tool for communities.

The marriage of food with architecture brings with it the social properties that food naturally instills by being a necessity for both the sustainment of life and the sustainment of culture. Food and the act of dining inherently recreates that primal sense of sharing which in turn activates social, economic, and cohesive social networks. The act of breaking bread with your neighbor can begin to suppress qualities of isolation, closure, and marginality that plagues many communities and cultures today. Food can begin to fill that gap and shift architecture back into the service of the people and to itself; an architecture that is living and humanized and not only promotes, but produces a healthy cultural and natural environment.
Throughout history, communal dining practices have fed into the symbiotic, cultural, political, and social evolution of society, an active player in articulating and transforming relations among those involved.

The modern kitchen tended to be delegated to the back, hiding the mess of food preparation, while spaces deemed more acceptable for social interaction, such as the dining room, were more publicly presented. Over time, the preparation and consumption of food became accepted as a performance, enforced by changing social conditions, where the prepared, the cook, and the diner each perform a distinct role as actors in the performance.

The idea of the border condition is also explored between the three scales of food systems where the home as a process in which raises the user/inhabitant as the architect of his/her own way of life, is translated into a context and scale beyond the domestic and the individual.

Nurturing elements of domestic consumption, ceremonial preparation, and urban cultivation into a cohesive system can allow individuals to become co-producers rather than consumers of a public environment. Where intertwining such a system can improve lives through positive health, job opportunities, social renovation, and strengthened social collaboration.
GUATEMALA

“YO SOY TÚ, Y TU ERES TÚ”

LA LIMONADA

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR:

Guatemala was chosen as the zone in which to explore this condition because one, it is a dining culture deeply rooted in Mayan ideologies of sharing food and resources among one another where the elaborate process of cooking and eating provides spiritual, emotional, as well as nutritional sustenance. Secondly, Guatemala was chosen because unfortunately there is also deep rooted disparities within the population which have developed over time, where external influences from the standards to the United States, have continuously put the indigenous population of Guatemala at a disadvantage and established a large cultural and wealth gap within the country.

Once a lush green valley in the center of Guatemala City, its natural irregularity and left over nature, was prone to unregulated settings. La Limonada became an unofficially established community in 1995 due to the mass displacement of indigenous people who sought refuge. Lack of urban planning coupled with government disengagement (e.g., destruction of homes into the river) has made La Limonada a red zone. Although they lack proper nutrition, sleep, comfort, and opportunities, the people of La Limonada still care for one another despite their dangerous environment. Over the years they established basic services such as schools, hospitals, and stores which have begun to further highlight an unacknowledged level of community. The site specifically lies along 23 Calle which borders La Limonada as well as the National Stadium of Guatemala.
The intervention as a performative space firstly harks back to the memory of large family kitchens typical of central America that functioned as informal communal spaces for preparing and enjoying. The intervention as a performative space secondly looks to evoke the method in which mayans engaged in community-wide performances and rituals in their urban spaces in order to foster greater union within their people.

The community rituals which transform the site into a performative space require the involvement of various ritual elements in the form of monuments, and platforms in which to place these monuments. There are three monuments at play which are the kitchen, the food preparation monument, the table, the food consumption monument, and the market, the food and cultural exchange monument. Each of these monuments uses a primary material which speak to the weight and permanence of these monuments. The platforms consist of both a permanent platform which uses a limestone framework placed on a extended street curb side and a temporary platform which consist of a mobile stage to be placed along the streetscape.

**PERMANENT MONUMENT PLATFORM**

**KITCHEN**
Food Preparation Monument

**TABLE**
Food Consumption Monument

**MARKET**
Food and Cultural Exchange Monument

**TEMPORARY MONUMENT PLATFORM**
STAGE 0: RITUAL STEPS

STEP 1: ESTABLISH PERMANENT PLATFORM

STEP 2: ESTABLISH RITUAL FRAMEWORK

STEP 3: ESTABLISH RITUAL GATEWAYS
This intervention will be an **active** and **living** adaptation of what architecture can be, feeding off of the discourse, relations, and response of users who participate in said intervention.
STAGE I: PUBLIC FOOD BANQUET

SUNDAY (1) allows for larger levels of activity within the community and within farm households, and thereby will be the days when food is cooked. This is a stage that is COMMUNITY-BASED where common grounds is established within the council, making use of the two stages above. This stage allows for a pretexting of the site, which will be used for communication between the main area of use that resides in the ground level and the neighborhood. This community-based interconnection to the site's residents is to enhance the interaction and the neighboring zone's commercial district users to the site. This stage isest for the creation of a community of internal actors and networks that will help the neighboring community to be included in the overall performance.

STAGE I: RITUAL STEPS

1. EXPOSE DOMESTICITY

2. FRAME KITCHEN

3. GATHER AVAILABLE PRODUCE

4. CULINARY GATEWAY

5. PLACE TABLE ON TEMPORARY PLATFORM

FEASTI
STAGE II: COMMUNITY SUPPER

Weekends in which time dedicated for culinary functions as a community activity is within the city, and days in which stage II of the injecting city are advantage of the relationships established in stage I. This stage is where domestic spaces, where the homes and businesses by time associations up and transform into places in residents of a local market, correct city, and the informal act of breaking down within city where spills out into the streetscape where the dense area is created in which a more public form of domestic cooking is performed. This stage provides the collaboration of internal agents and nonlocal goods to serve in social acts.

SUNDAY  MONDAY  TUESDAY  WEDNESDAY  THURSDAY  FRIDAY  SATURDAY

STAGE II: RITUAL STEPS

STEP 1: EXTEND BEVERLY CITY

STEP 2: ZOOM WITH AVAILABLE PRODUCE

STEP 3: PLACE TABLE ON ELEVATION PLATFORM

FEAST!

STEP 4:
STAGE III: CULTURAL FOOD FESTIVAL

Celebrate the vibrancy of this place by engaging STAGE III of the intervention. A stage that is more urban focused and prominent as a celebration of the underlying energies at play in the previous two stages, acting as an extension by exploring celebrations that now gravitate around thematic focus groups, highlighting individual activities, and celebrations, a celebration of guanahani and the mythology and local economy that forms across the urban space, the goal being to establish community, to foster collaboration, and connect the people beyond the borders of the site.

STAGE III: RITUAL STEPS

STEP 1: EXTEND CONNECTIVITY

STEP 2: REFRAME KITCHEN

STEP 3: COOK WITH AVAILABLE PRODUCE

STEP 4: PLACE TABLE + MARKET ON TEMPORARY PLATFORMS

STEP 5: SET UP OPEN PLATFORMS FOR COMMUNITY USE

STEP 6:
STAGE 0

STAGE I

STAGE II

STAGE III

MAIN COURSES

ARROZ CON FRIJOL

TAMALES

CALDO DE POLLO

PUPUSAS

KAK’IK

EMPAÑADAS “DOBLADAS”

PEPIAN

TOSTADAS

SIDE COURSE

PLATANOS

ELOTE

CEVICHE

DESSERT

CHAMPURADAS

ARROZ CON LECHE