

about

The starting point was the understanding that shopping malls are going into bankrupt. So the question was, how to foster that breakdown as you also give space to the rise of new spatialities? The best way to present the development of my graduation project was in a [book](#) where the reader is invited to make its own narratives.

what

A social-spatial study with conceptions of future scenarios (exciting and/or depressing) for the private space of shopping malls and its relation to the city.

where

I designed projects for the BarraShopping, the most popular shopping mall of Rio de Janeiro. Located in Barra da Tijuca, a region with beaches but lacking of public infrastructure, crowded with shopping malls and gated communities along its main avenue.

how

It consists on [three profiles of the architect with their particular interventions](#) in the manipulative and conditioned system and space of the mall. The profiles test the architect's position, trying to communicate with users and structures of power.

site: Barra da Tijuca, Rio de Janeiro

SCALE: 1969-2019

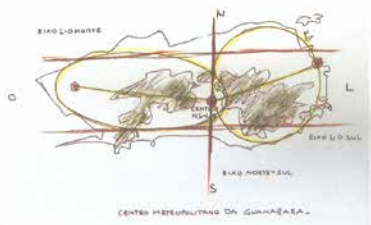
To get to the present, and to propose future scenarios, I presented a brief historical research that places different discourses for Barra da Tijuca and communicates with different cultures and worldviews. Therefore, I bring some excerpts from speeches about Barra da Tijuca - from the most visionary, like the planning of the area in 1969, to real estate propaganda and the region's response to the "Barra Pilot Plan" over time.

LUCIO COSTA, 1969

In 1969, Lucio Costa, responsible for the planning of Brasilia in 1960, was invited by the government of Rio de Janeiro to design an area of probable expansion of the city. In this context, he wrote the vision of his project for Barra da Tijuca.



Lucio Costa's drawing demonstrating Barra da Tijuca as the future centrality for the state of Rio de Janeiro



THE 70'S

Reports were clear that the future "metropolitan center" would be ordered by private sectors. Gated communities began to rise as the provision of infrastructure by the government didn't follow the pace. A - real estate - newspaper states, in this scenario of optimism and disappointment, writes that "Barra is the city's natural expansion path and where we intend to build the Rio of the 2000's".



"No one can hold back Barra da Tijuca" was the slogan of intense propaganda to populate the new developments in the region.

THE 80'S

Barra da Tijuca experienced a demographic explosion with most of the land along its avenues occupied by large residential condominiums, parks, supermarkets and shopping centers. Real estate speculation played a major role in praising the green and the proximity to the sea. Living in Barra became synonymous of living in gated communities and visiting the mall.



Publicity of the opening of BarraShopping in 1981

THE 90'S AND 2000'S

With the city expanding towards Barra da Tijuca, its urbanization showed concrete signs of exclusion, with the middle and upper class surrounded by walls and the low-income population gathering in hundreds of horizontal slums on the banks of streams and ponds. Real estate interests prevailed, altering policies and adjusting the space towards maximum profit.



Barra da Tijuca is divided by this avenue with mainly gated communities in one side and shopping malls on the other.



The area of BarraShopping complex: the site of my intervention.

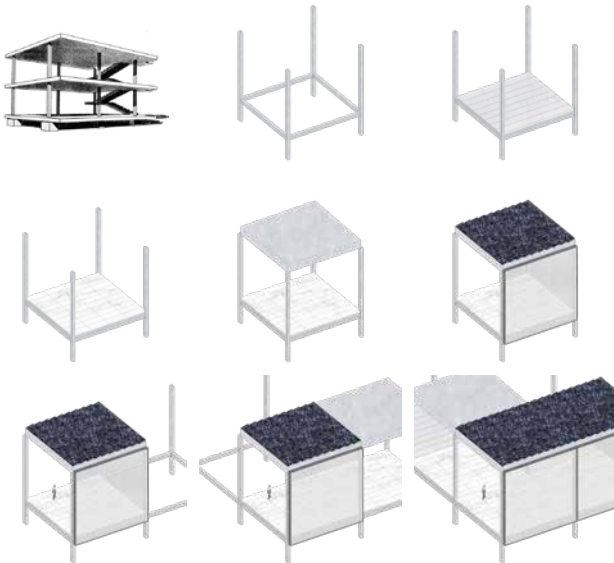
experimental barra da tijuca | in the visions of a cynical, devious and hacker architect

Final thesis graduation project at the Faculty of Architecture & Urbanism (UFRJ), 2017, individual project, tutored by Prof. Dr. Margareth da Silva Pereira (margaspereira@gmail.com)

profile 1: cynical, the designer

SCALE: dreams of infinite expansion

This scenario plays with the system itself by proposing something that will problematize it. Playing in the "in between", this scenario presents the architect's relationship with structures that have the power to enable his action.

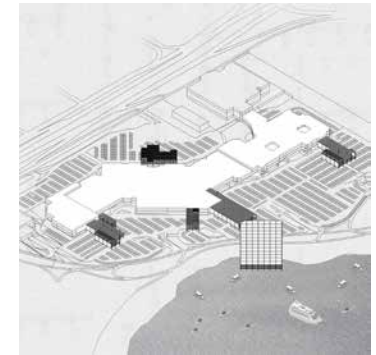


Building development of the expansion module.

A pre-molded metal structure with sustainable features, like solar panels and adjustable windows which sync with the sun. It has the technological appeal and inspires an atmosphere of equality and exclusivity - like an iPhone.



A proposal of loosen uses for the open and ever expanding space.



A possible outcome of the multiplication of the proposed structure attached to the current shopping mall and expanding infinitely, even to the waterside.

What is the thin line between a conservative flexible open plan and an open structured platform? For this structure, despite the environment set up for it, how much can a thick line on a paper represent and build freedom? This solution opens the space and points out to other ways of dealing with consumption and space itself by how it accepts unexpected situations without the pressing need to control. The design isn't for awareness, but to suggest other modes of dwelling in the present and future of this space.

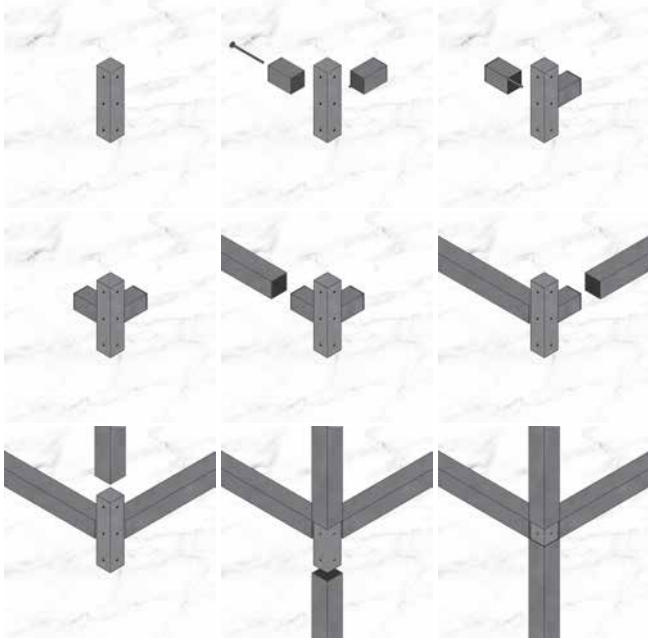
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profile 2: devious, the entrepreneur

SCALE: commercialisation of a culture of sustainability

The architect positions himself as someone who penetrates the city and its trends and wants to take advantage of them. For this reason, I designed a small piece that has infinite possibilities and can save lot of material.



Building development of the piece

The piece can be used to build light structures for setting up the stores. Its system emphasizes the process, the paths between head to hand, theory and experiment, idea and concrete. Following the trend, this could also mean more attention to other ways of building and sharing space.



Concept store for a sustainable fashion brand in the interior of the shopping mall only using the proposed piece for structure, wood for surfaces and fabric for transitions.

Imagine the trend to sustainability taking over more and more shops inside the shopping mall. Imagine them trying to coexist with other brands with practises that still ignore its consumerism consequences. Will this coexistence generate dialogue between people with different consumption-driven attitudes? Could this be already a initial crack in the mall's system?



The proposal of expanded use of a store inside the shopping mall. The brand sells also a lifestyle that is more concerned with sustainability - they screen films, have a cafe, start a small farm and sell their product.

This trend is like a trojan horse, the more it profits the more it shakes the idea of maximum comfort inside the mall; it brings conflict and different public, and can have unexpected consequences.

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profile 3: hacker, the anthropologist

SCALE: parking as the module for living standards

As anthropologist, the architect studies space as a context of interactions. He sees potential in the open parking lot. What could happen if motorhomes were allowed to dwell in the premises of the BarraShopping?



Dwelling development of open parking space (around 7000 parking spaces).

Predicting that the shopping mall should find new ways for profit, the owners make a business plan to expand parking time. This facilitates a longer stay for users. The hacker-architect designs infrastructure for people to dwell in motorhomes in the open parking lot. Interestingly, its inhabitants are some sort of mixture of nomads and locals. This provocation happens when they lazy themselves into the enjoyment of the services offered in the mall.



A new set of relations and a new kind of community can begin from the cracks in the systems of fading shopping malls.

It is some sort of ideal freedom stuck to the comfort of local facilities. Despite of authors who call airports, shopping malls and parking lots as "non-places", the motorhome become an act of inhabiting the movement. In the very instability of the conditions we live, dwelling becomes indeed a trace of resistance.



2069: a total take-over

How can we hack this complex condition with dwelling? Our squandering living modes made us build huge spaces for machines that are now left underused. This proposal occupies the space, formerly for the car, and builds a new set of relations towards the community and the built environment.

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conclusion: kaleidoscope, the architect and urbanist

SCALE: the city



Overview of all the proposals (Kaleidoscope, the architect and urbanist) added up and creating a completely new setting for the BarraShopping in 2019 or 2069 or further.

The kaleidoscope is a toy that develops different views each time it is turned or shaken. For this reason, in all its ambiguous actions, the architect treats the scenarios (cynical, devious and hacker) as fragments of a kaleidoscope. His job is to always turn the kaleidoscope, causing the fragments to collide and thus form new - social and spatial - configurations.

He does this in order to dig for opportunities for new approaches in the built environment, not only in the public space but also in the private one. I wanted to explore an alternative reality for the shopping mall and show that architecture is everything that happens in the process of a building, from conceptualisation to construction and use.

Furthermore, architecture and urbanism expand into building the imaginary of the city. It means it is the space to make realities sensible and foster new and important ideas that address sustainable practices, equality and the struggle of dwelling. This might be one facet of the architect's job.