THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF PLACE:
A BOAT MAKING AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITY IN THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES

by

Bernardo Terán II

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Approved by:

Susannah Dickinson, RA
Assistant Professor, School of Architecture
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This Architecture thesis proposal explores issues related to place-making and connection of local phenomenological aspects to the human. The program of the project was developed in order to reflect this, with it being composed of four different blocks: housing, education and research, public use, and boat making. The specific phenomena of light, wind and water are the organizing principles that drive the project, aiming to better connect the desolate site and users to these unique qualities. The site of this proposal is in the Port of Los Angeles, a contrasting place that is known for its transient nature and man-made environment.

Reacting to today’s thinking and implementation of architecture with no place, it has become the main ambition to design an architecture that will be connected to its place, keeping the human and its interaction with place and senses as the focus. This will be explored through the testable investigations of light, material, and time in connection with the human. These issues, ideas, and interests will develop into an architecture that will respond and benefit both built and natural environments along with the surrounding local communities and the diverse range of facility users.
001. EXISTING PORT OF LOS ANGELES SITE / 2015

The existing port's layout consists of two warehouse buildings adjacent to the harbor — a short but intensely used stretch of land directly beneath the bridge at the port's end, where the city's commercial infrastructure was historically located.

002. TRADITIONAL WAREHOUSE TYPLOGY

The traditional warehouse typology found in the Port of Los Angeles, with its wide-spanning building trusses, is a symbol of the industrial history of the area. The design endorses these traditional objects, making the architecture appear to occupy the landscape, existing alongside the warehouse buildings.

003. OPENING UP TO THE ELEMENTS

As the shorelines at both ports and the open sky around them expand for the exploration of the project, the study of the varied contexts of the sites is essential. The contextual approach to the reorganization of the architecture space above the waterfront buildings encourages the participation of the architectural space.

004. PROPOSED PROGRAM

Program planning is done in three parts: the construction of the building, the re-organization of the community, and the creation of an open space network. The proposed program is strategically located on the waterfront area, creating a new landmark for the site.

005. FOLIATION OF PHYSICAL / EXPERIENCE

The scheme allows for vertical connections to specific moments within the program, giving rise to new public spaces. The dynamic and porous spaces allow for a transition of different phenomenological experiences in the site.

006. PROPOSED SITE PLAN

The proposed site plan is designed to highlight the waterfront area, maximizing the daylight and views of the surrounding environment. The plan is designed to enhance the connection between the public spaces and the waterfront.

007. PUBLIC INTEGRATION

The public is meant to interact with the project at multiple levels, from the decks at the main levels to the pedestrian spaces adjacent to the education and research spaces.