



Mark-Making and Place-Keeping: Erasure, Emergence, and Imagination

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+ The Dark Matter University Network

Settlement areas along the Jangwani River, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania | Photo: unequalscenes.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Lenape People* on which we learn, work, and gather in New York and (and also virtually) at Columbia University.

*Source: native-land.ca





public (design/policy/planning/politics)



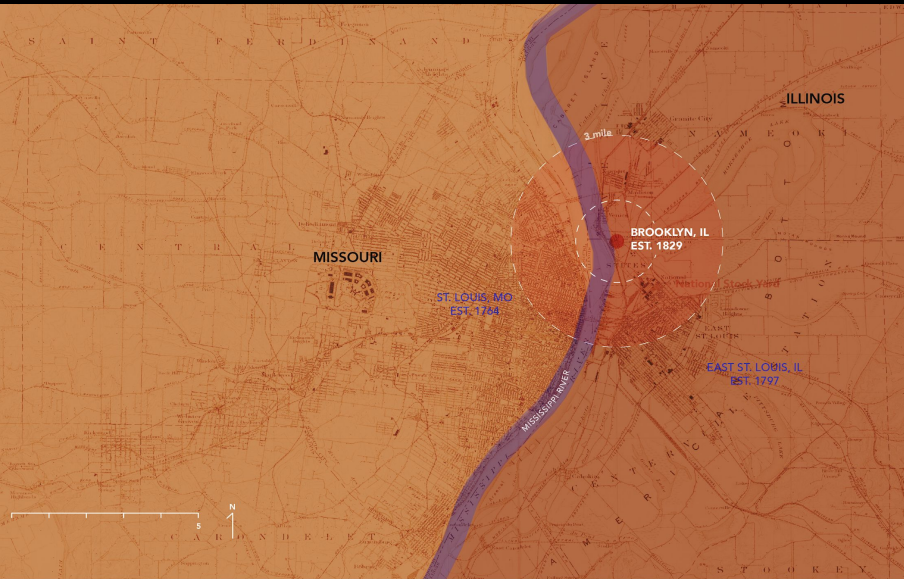
urban (design/research/development)



collective (practice/purpose/power)



community (building/leadership/care)



IN GENERAL

- The studio will be a hybrid - both virtual and in-person
- Our regular group meetings will be Thursdays 5-9 pm ET
- Individual discussions schedule is TBD (Monday/Tuesday)
- Students will define their own project sites (with faculty input)
- Students can work individually, in teams, or collectively
- The format and participants of our major reviews will be co-created/curated by the studio

COLUMBIA
GSAPP
BLACK FACULTY

We stand in solidarity with the Black Student Alliance at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation [BSA+GSAPP] and wholeheartedly support the concerns and demands identified in On the Futility of Listening.

Please contact us at gsappblackfaculty@gmail.com

To undertake this unlearning process GSAPP shall:

1. Conduct an inventory of the school's current and past work on race and the built environment and how to make that work more visible and representative of the field and society by the beginning of the fall 2020 semester;
2. Complete an assessment of each program in terms of its complicity with systems of white supremacy —identifying and understanding the work that whiteness does;
3. Develop a set of resources and readings for faculty and students on whiteness and white supremacy;
4. Develop pedagogical approaches and curricular content that no longer advance white supremacist values or practices;
5. Dedicate public programming to stimulate dialogue about whiteness and knowledge of its impact on our disciplines and the school's culture;
6. Allocate the necessary funds to initiate and sustain this effort, which should support those faculty and students engaged in this work, with the understanding that this must also be a school-wide undertaking; this will require support in the form of funding, human resources, decision-making power, and the time/space to achieve tangible outcomes;
7. Use GSAPP's influence and agency to engage and lead in the work beyond the school that is needed in the field and its practices and associations to unlearn and challenge whiteness and white supremacy;
8. Acknowledge and address GSAPP's role in the erasure, exclusion, and marginalization of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color's knowledge, work, and voices;
9. Actively transform the culture of the school into a culture that promotes safe, authentic, transformative care, practices and dialogue while dismantling white supremacist, patriarchal and ableist power dynamics at all levels;
10. Work to break down the barriers between GSAPP and the community, especially Harlem;
11. Make public GSAPP's work on unlearning whiteness at the end of the coming academic year;

Furthermore, we demand that the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation set precise goals for becoming an anti-racist institution. This includes increasing black student enrollment, black faculty and staff, financial support for black students, and pedagogical and curricular changes to each of its programs.



UNLEARNING

Kazimir Malevich, *Black Square*, 1915

WHITENESS

Alphonse Allais, *Combat de Nègres dans une cave pendant la nuit* (Negroes fighting in a cellar), 1897

ERASURE



Dwellings being demolished to make way for new development, Xi'an, Northern China



“DEVELOPMENT”

Dwellings being demolished to make way for new development, Xi'an, Northern China



Former site of Pruitt-Igoe, a public housing project in St. Louis, MO

A photograph of a narrow, overgrown path leading through dense green foliage. In the foreground, a chain-link fence runs across the frame. The path is flanked by thick bushes and trees, with sunlight filtering through the leaves. The overall scene suggests a neglected or abandoned area.

RACISM & INEQUALITY

Former site of Pruitt-Igoe, a public housing project in St. Louis, MO



Settlement areas along the Jangwani River, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania | Photo: unequalscenes.com



VULNERABILITY

Settlement areas along the Jangwani River, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania | Photo: [unequalscenes.com](https://www.unequalscenes.com)

An aerial photograph showing a dense, sprawling informal settlement along a river. The settlement is characterized by numerous small, closely packed buildings with corrugated metal roofs, many of which are rusted and brown. The buildings are interspersed with patches of green vegetation and trees. The settlement extends to the edge of a muddy, brown river at the bottom of the frame. The overall scene suggests a high density of population in a vulnerable, flood-prone area.

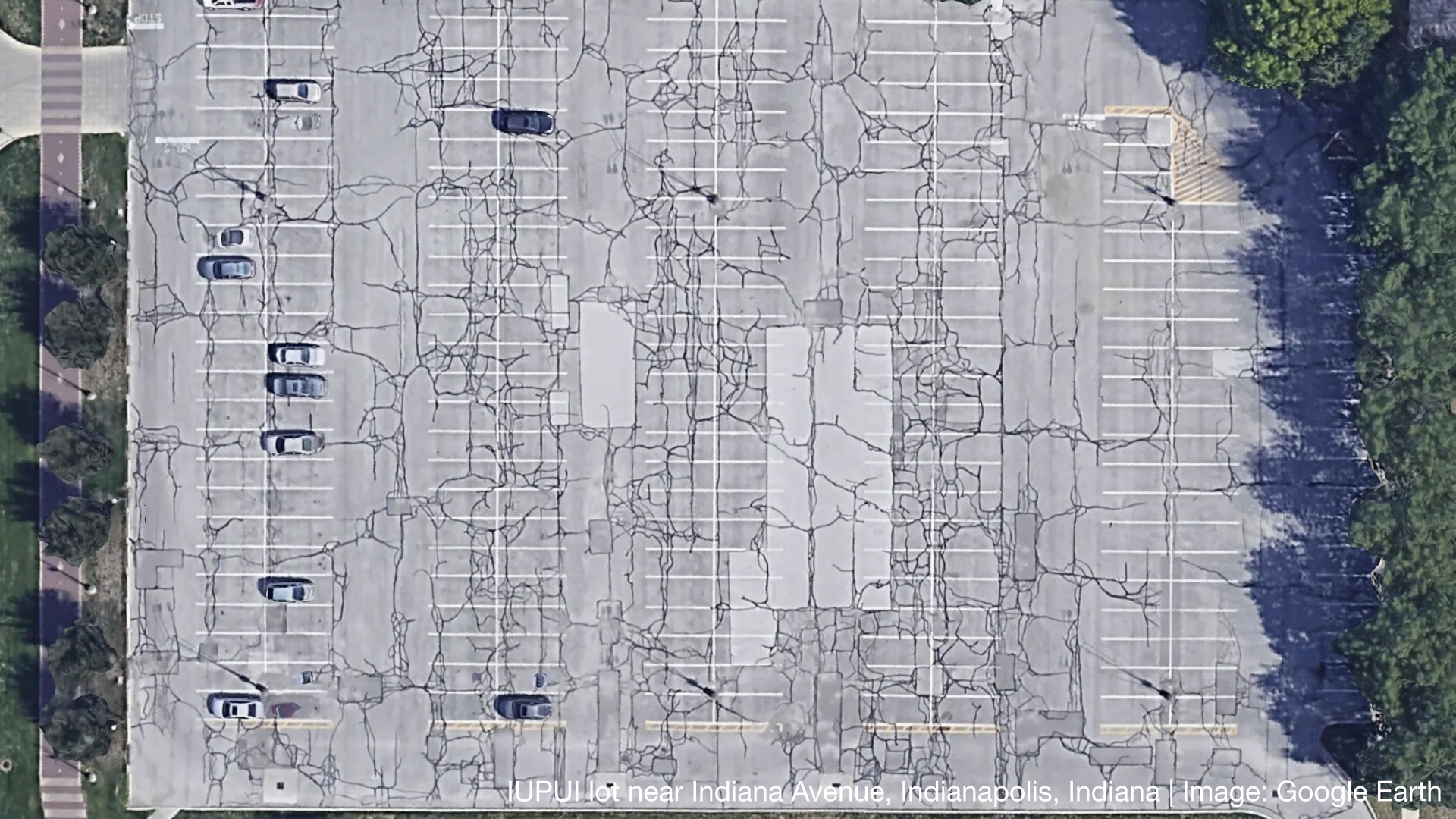
EQUITY & CLIMATE

Settlement areas along the Jangwani River, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania | Photo: unequalscenes.com

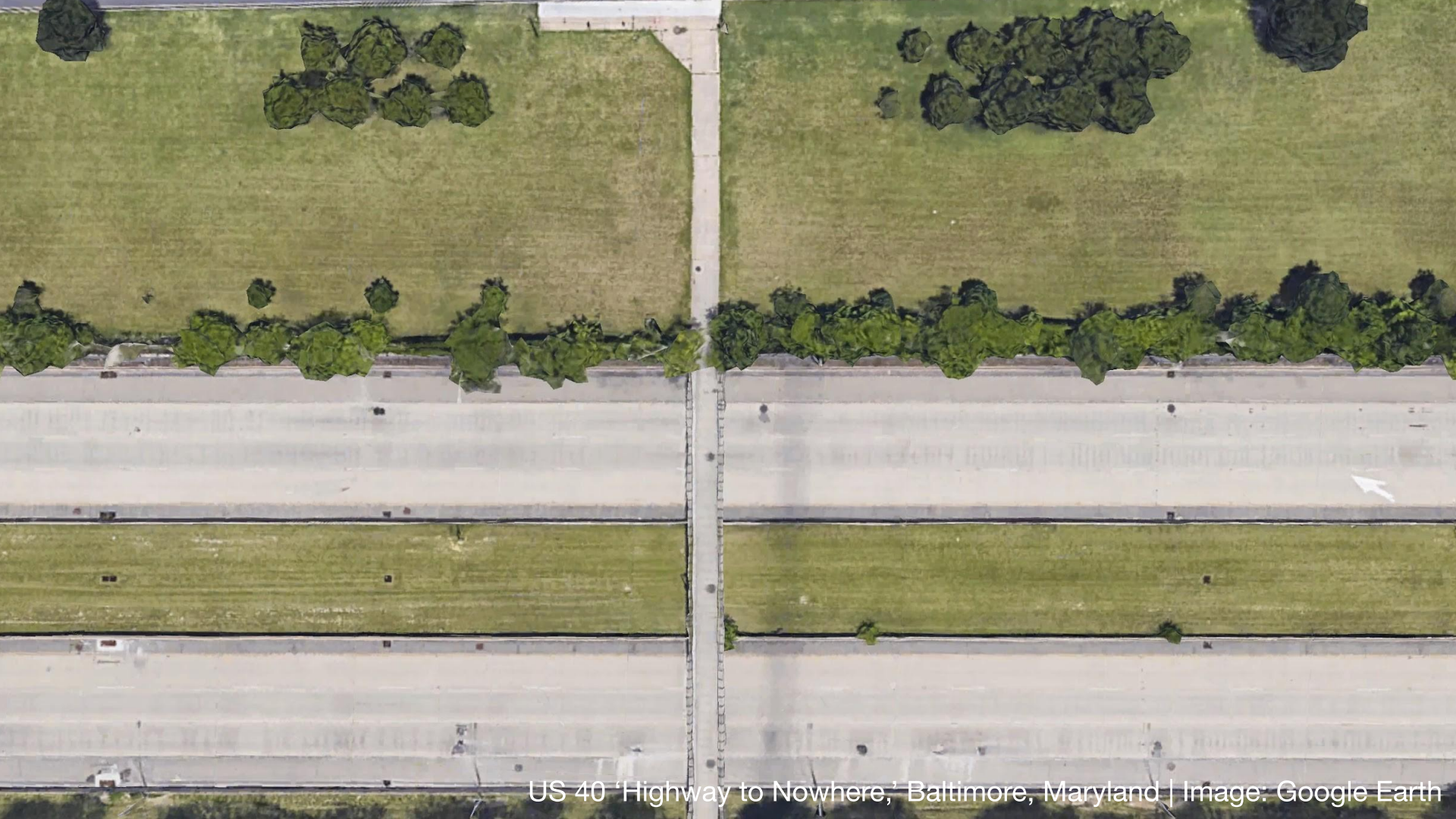
ETHICS & CARE

**Designers in the studio will reclaim, reimagine,
and reconstruct a place that has been erased,
suppressed, dispossessed, or colonized.**

PLACES MARKED BY ERASURE



IUPUI lot near Indiana Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana | Image: Google Earth



US 40 'Highway to Nowhere,' Baltimore, Maryland | Image: Google Earth



District Six development area, Cape Town, South Africa | Image: Google Earth

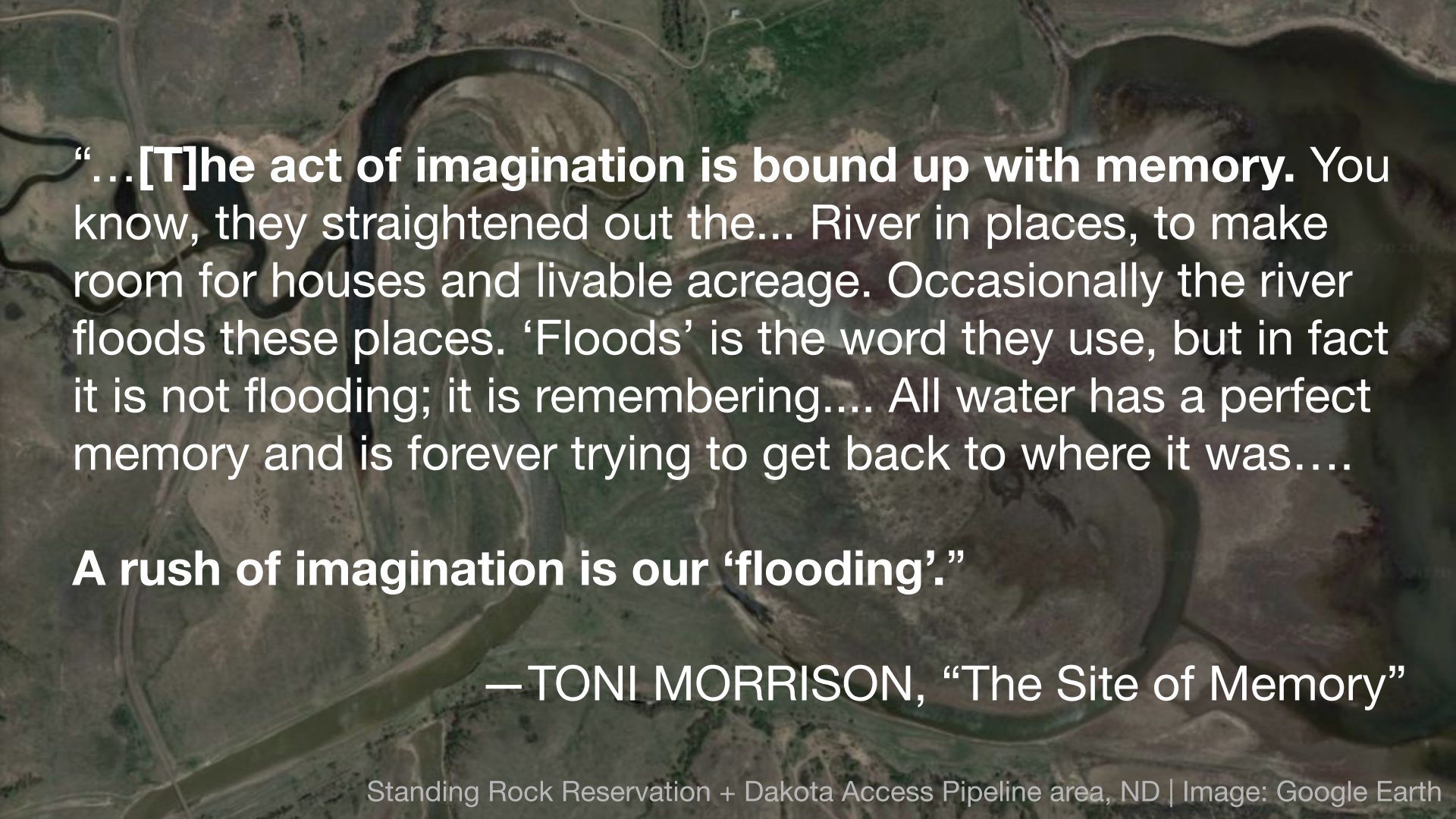


Standing Rock Reservation + Dakota Access Pipeline area, ND | Image: Google Earth

An aerial photograph showing a wide, winding river with a pipeline crossing it. The river has a dark, straight section where the pipeline is located. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green fields and brown, eroded soil. The word "IMAGINATION" is written in large, white, bold letters across the center of the image.

IMAGINATION

Standing Rock Reservation + Dakota Access Pipeline area, ND | Image: Google Earth

An aerial photograph of a river landscape, likely the Missouri River in the Standing Rock Reservation area. The river is shown with its natural meandering path in some sections and straightened segments in others, illustrating the concept of 'remembering' its original course. The surrounding land is a mix of brown, tan, and green, indicating different types of terrain and vegetation.

“...[T]he act of imagination is bound up with memory. You know, they straightened out the... River in places, to make room for houses and livable acreage. Occasionally the river floods these places. ‘Floods’ is the word they use, but in fact it is not flooding; it is remembering.... All water has a perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was....

A rush of imagination is our ‘flooding’.”

—TONI MORRISON, “The Site of Memory”

An aerial photograph of the Oceti Sakowin Camp at the Standing Rock Reservation in 2017. The camp is a large, sprawling encampment of thousands of people, primarily Native Americans, gathered on a dry, brownish landscape. The camp is composed of numerous small, blue and white tents and structures, densely packed in some areas and more spread out in others. A network of dirt roads and paths crisscrosses the camp. In the upper left, a body of water is visible, with a blue bridge or dam structure extending across it. The surrounding landscape is arid and brown, with some sparse vegetation. The word "MEMORY" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters in the center of the image.

MEMORY

Standing Rock Reservation Oceti Sakowin Camp, 2017 | Image: Reuters

An aerial photograph of the Oceti Sakowin Camp at the Standing Rock Reservation in 2017. The camp is a large, sprawling encampment of thousands of people, primarily Native Americans, who are protesting against the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. The camp is situated on a dry, brownish-yellow landscape. It is densely packed with numerous small, blue and white tents and makeshift shelters. A network of dirt roads and paths crisscrosses the camp. To the left, a body of water is visible, with a blue bridge crossing it. To the right, a river flows through the landscape. The overall scene depicts a large-scale protest and encampment in a remote, arid location.

IMAGINATION

Standing Rock Reservation Oceti Sakowin Camp, 2017 | Image: Reuters

An aerial photograph of the Oceti Sakowin Camp at the Standing Rock Reservation in 2017. The camp is a large, irregularly shaped area of dry, brownish-yellow earth, densely packed with thousands of small, blue and white tents and makeshift structures. The camp is situated along a river, with a bridge visible on the left side. The surrounding landscape is flat and arid, with some sparse vegetation. The text "MARK-MAKING / PLACE-KEEPING" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters in the center of the image.

MARK-MAKING / PLACE-KEEPING

Standing Rock Reservation Oceti Sakowin Camp, 2017 | Image: Reuters

An aerial photograph showing a vast, dry, brown landscape. In the center and left, there is a large, sprawling encampment. The ground is covered with hundreds of small, blue, conical tents or trailers, arranged in a somewhat organized but dense pattern. Several larger, white or light-colored structures are also visible. The encampment is situated near a body of water on the left, which is bordered by a concrete wall. A dirt road or path runs through the middle of the camp. The surrounding area is flat and arid, with some sparse, dry vegetation. The word "EMERGENCY" is superimposed in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

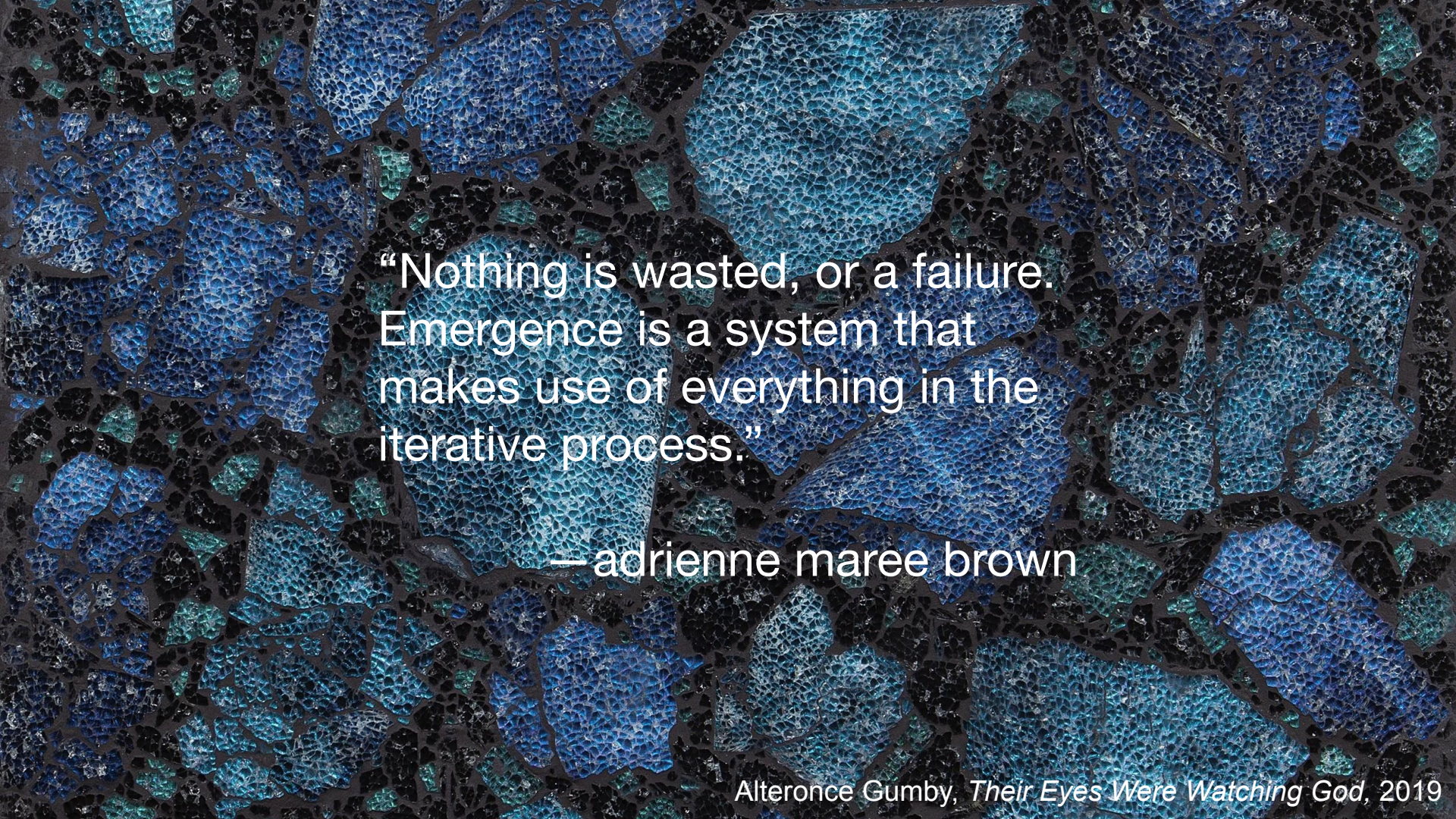
EMERGENCY

Standing Rock Reservation Oceti Sakowin Camp, 2017 | Image: Reuters

The background is an abstract artwork composed of numerous irregular, overlapping patches of a bright blue, porous, and textured material, possibly coral or a synthetic foam, set against a dark, almost black, background. The patches vary in size and shape, creating a complex, organic pattern. The word "EMERGENCE" is centered in the middle of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

EMERGENCE

Alteronce Gumby, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, 2019



“Nothing is wasted, or a failure.
Emergence is a system that
makes use of everything in the
iterative process.”

—adrienne maree brown

An abstract painting featuring a dense, textured surface with a variety of colors including greens, yellows, oranges, pinks, and purples. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of depth and movement. In the center, there is a dark, circular area with the words "BLACK LIFE" written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The overall effect is vibrant and dynamic.

PROCESS / PRACTICE

Painter Alteronce Gumby Sees Color Differently, 2020 | Image: Cultured Magazine

An abstract painting with a dark, textured background. In the center, the words "BLACK LIVES MATTER" are visible in a light, translucent font. The painting features a rich palette of colors including deep blues, purples, pinks, and yellows, which appear to be layered and blended together. The overall effect is one of depth and complexity, with the text serving as a focal point amidst the vibrant, chaotic colors.

WE WANT TO USE OUR TIME TOGETHER TO:

- **THINK**
- **LEARN**
- **MAKE**
- **FAIL**
- **SHARE**
- **GROW**
- **CARE**
- **CELEBRATE**



POTENTIAL SOCIAL DISTANCE FIELD TRIP

Weeksville Heritage Center | Architecture: Caples Jefferson Landscape: Elizabeth Kennedy Art: Chakaia Booker

THANK YOU.