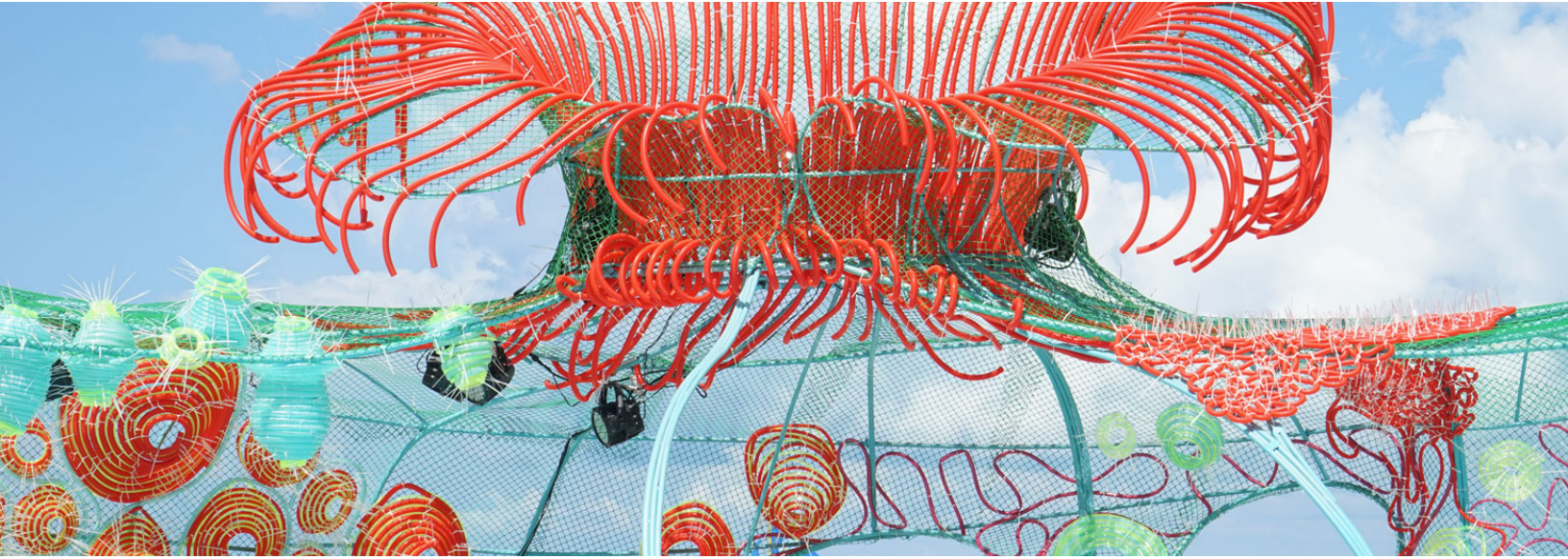


The Space of Water: Coloniality, Water, and Indigeneity (The Water Studio)



Leeroy New, "Polyp" installation. Borocay Island, Malay, Philippines, 2015.

01 before and after (Architecture)

In Michel Foucault's exegetical text on the power of space and architecture (*Space, Knowledge, and Power*) originally published in the architectural journal *Skyline* in March of 1982, Foucault explains that following the industrial revolution, the problem of space was not just the issue of controlling a territory and governing people within it, but now concerned the spatial relationships between the exercise of power and territory brought on by societal transformations and social phenomena resulting from new technologies and new economic processes. In the American mainland colonies, this coincided with the racialization of space, enacted through slave codes restricting the movements and gatherings of enslaved Africans. Laws were passed that overtly distinguished Black people from white people and that made the ownership of land property a prerequisite to the right to vote. In the Pacific archipelago of Hawai'i, the late 18th century arrival of the British followed by the early 19th century arrival of the Americans brought about the transformation of land tenure to private property that would be used to dispossess the indigenous inhabitants of their birthrights while establishing a plantation based economy. This led to the similar racialization of space with the overthrow of King Kalakaua's government and the establishment of an all-white *haole* self-titled "Hawaiian League" legislature whereby the electorate was severely restricted by income qualifications of \$600 or \$3,000 worth of property.

In response to the question of whether any particular architectural projects of the past or present act as forces of liberation or resistance, Foucault states that it is not possible to say that a thing is either of the order of "liberation" or "oppression" but rather he concedes that architectural projects are complicit in the reshaping of the public sphere as simultaneous forces of liberation and resistance.

I do not think that it is possible to say that one thing is of the order of “liberation” and another is of the order of “oppression.” There are a certain number of things that one can say... but one should still take into account—and this is not generally acknowledged—that, aside from torture and execution, which preclude any resistance, no matter how terrifying a given system may be there always remain the possibilities of resistance, disobedience, and oppositional groupings.ⁱ

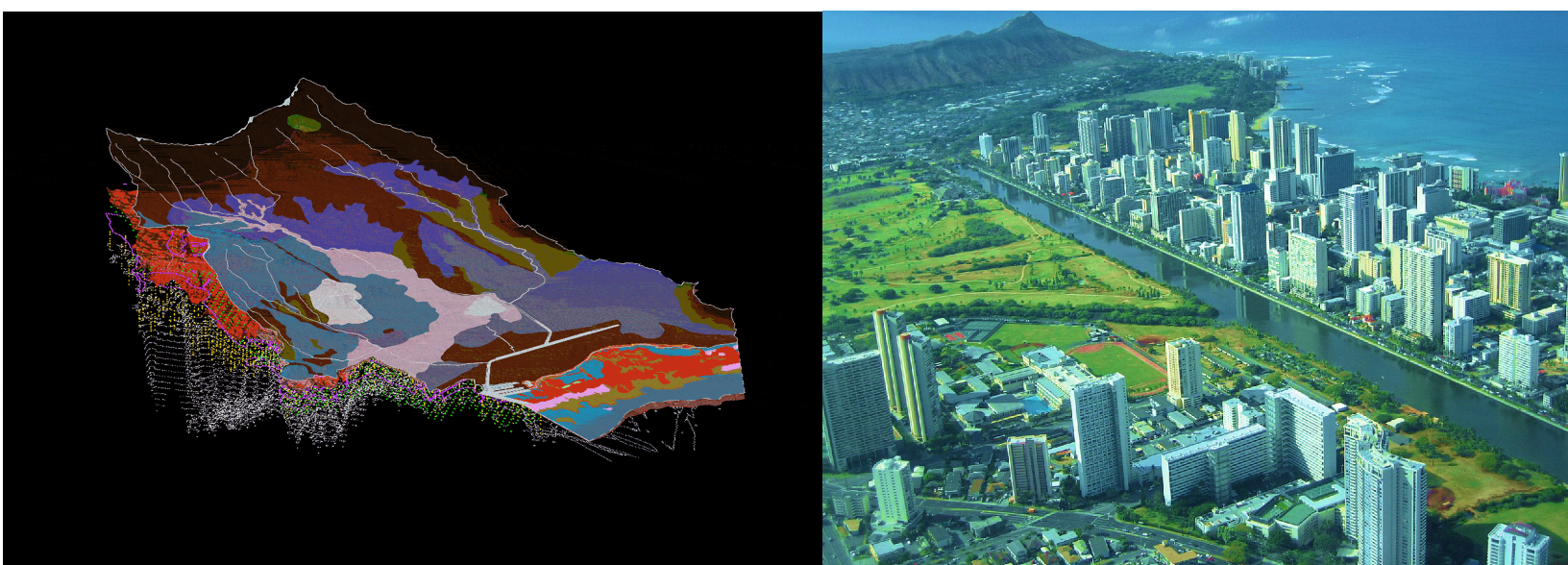
Foucault proceeds to state that Liberty is a *practice*. Liberty is never assured by laws and institutions and therefore *liberty* is what must be exercised. Reflexively, as acts of self-emancipation for Black and Indigenous people, liberation is a *spatial* practice. This turn on Foucault’s axiom points to how liberation is an action necessitated by the oppressive forces of political institutions, infrastructures, and—crucially—their resultant spaces. Yet, what are the spatial practices of liberation before the subjugating forces of property, capitalism, forms of enclosure, and architecture?

02 before (Property)

In *From a Native Daughter : Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii*, feminist author, poet and Hawaiian activist Haunani-Kay Trask, states that contrary to Hegel’s *Philosophy of History*, Native Hawaiian culture was in formation long before the establishment of European enlightenment epistemology. Furthermore, this was a culture that was antithetical to the European developments of capitalism, Christianity, and the predatory individualism that gave rise to the American doctrine of “Manifest Destiny.” In several respects, Hawaiian society had remarkably much in common with indigenous societies throughout the world. The economy of *prehaole* Hawai’i depended primarily on a balanced use of the products of the land and sea.ⁱⁱ Each of the eight inhabited islands was divided into separate districts (known as *‘okana*), running from the mountains to the sea. Each *‘okana* was then subdivided into *ahupua`a*, which themselves ran in wedge-shaped pieces from the mountains to the sea. Each *ahupua`a* was then fashioned into *‘ili*, on which resided the *‘ohana* (extended families), who cultivated the land. The *‘ohana* was the core economic unit in Hawaiian society.

Exchange between *‘ohana* who lived near the sea with *‘ohana* who lived inland constituted the economic life of the multitudes of communities which densely populated the Hawaiian islands. *Ahupua`a* were economically independent. Anthropologist Marion Kelly has written, “Under the Hawaiian system of land use rights, the people living in each *ahupua`a* had access to all the necessities of life,” thus establishing an independence founded upon the availability of “forest land, taro and sweet potato areas, and fishing grounds.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Writing in “Novel and History, Plot and Planation” (1971) Sylvia Wynter draws an analogous distinction between the settler colonial plantations of the Caribbean and West Indies and the indigenous autochthonous *plot* system. The forces that upheld the plantation were the capitalist forces of the market and of empire. On the other hand, ...”African peasants transplanted to the plot all the structure of values that had been created by traditional societies of Africa, the land remained the Earth — and the Earth was a goddess; man used the land to feed himself; and to offer first fruits to the Earth; his funeral was the mystical reunion with the earth. Because of this traditional concept the social order remained primary. Around the growing of yam, of food for survival, he created on the plot a folk culture — the basis of a social order — in three hundred years.”



The Ala Wai Centennial Project, dir. Sean Connelly, prod. After Oceanic, © 2008 - 2021

Ala Wei Canal, O'ahu, Hawai'i

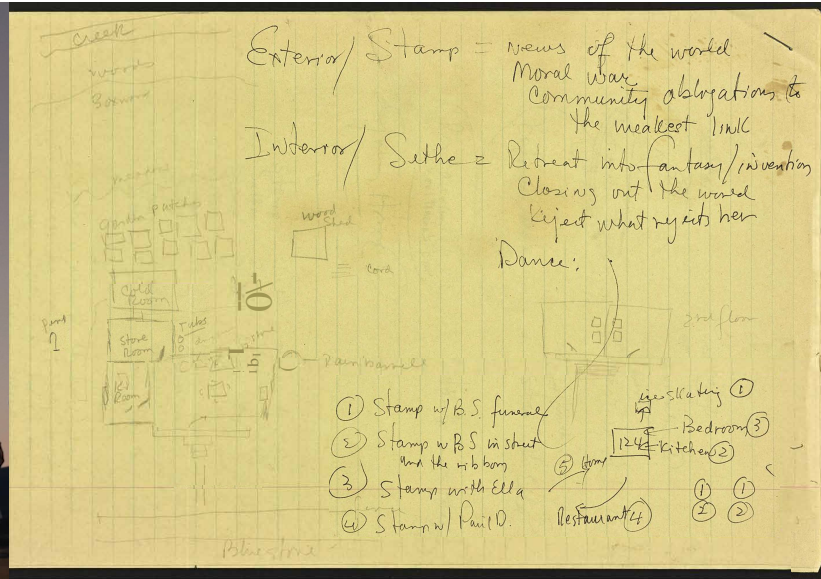
Hence, the studio will examine the transcultural connectedness of liberatory spatial practices with a focus on the ecological spatial practices of the Hawai'i *ahupua'a* system and the interdependent relationships between humans, land, water, and non-human species.

Tourists know Waikīkī to be a small stretch of hotels and beach, but it is also the name of one of the larger *ahupua'a* on the island of O'ahu. The *ahupua'a* of Waikīkī was once filled with agriculture and aquaculture, fed by the streams that flowed from three valleys – Makiki, Manoa and Palolo. This ecology provided an abundance of food that has now been replaced with a condition under which Hawai'i imports up to 90% of its food. The streams throughout the valleys have been seriously polluted by urban, suburban, and industrial 'progress'. According to Professor Eric De Carlo, of the Department of Oceanography at the University of Hawai'i, "As Manoa Stream flows through the Manoa Valley it accumulates pollutants from runoff. Anthropogenic activity in the valley center leads to pollution which is carried into the stream. Increased vehicular traffic and urbanization near the University of Hawai'i, in Kaimuki and in Moiliili, as well as channelization, lead to degradation of the waters of Manoa and Palolo streams." Furthermore, the parts of the streams that once flowed through the sub-section we now know as Waikīkī were completely severed by the dredging of the Ala Wai Canal that occurred over seven years from 1921 to 1928 and left incomplete.

With the area of Waikīkī in a state of environmental decline in 1906 due to poor civil engineering and the construction of predominantly *haole* owned hotels and mansions along the beachfront that disrupted the natural flow of water to the sea and exacerbated mosquito infection along with coastal erosion and flooding, the Territorial Board of Health declared the area unsanitary. The dredging of the canal was proposed in order to drain the rice paddies and the wetlands that politicians and businessmen had referred as a "swamp" and "worthless" in order to mitigate these issues. Yet in doing so, the canal displaced and dispossessed Hawaiians and other people of color who had abundantly cultivated and occupied that land for decades --- even centuries.



Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio: *This is the Way We Rise* (film, 2020) dir. Ciara Lacy



Toni Morrison, Drawing of 124 Bluestone for novel, *Beloved*, 1987

03 after (Colony)

Therefore the studio project is to develop an architectural / *counter-architectural* intervention along the Ala Wai Canal for the radical reclamation and reparation of the *ahupua'a* ecosystem as well as the radical transmutation of the canal – its spatial, material, and temporal conditions.

The initial phase of work in the studio will engage Native Hawaiian story-telling and entail alternative methods to investigative research combining narrative, memory, translation, drawing, and discovery developed by Torkwase Dyson and the *Wynter-Wells Drawing School for Environmental Liberation* as well as sound and story by poet, activist, and academic Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio and artist Kiluanji Kia Henda. The site work phase will include the use of multiple kinds of projected drawings and data analyses in a manner to rupture the Eurocentric perspectival gaze and to invent new ways of seeing.

In, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, leading theorist and scholar on decolonization of Maori in New Zealand writes,

From the vantage point of the colonized, a position from which I write, and choose to privilege, the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism.... When mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful. It is so powerful that indigenous people even write poetry about research.^{iv}

Therefore, the preliminary studio work will produce a new language for architectural design, representation, and architectural discourse. The final design proposal for Ala Wai Canal will carefully consider the use of architectural representations (drawings and models) and shall also be presented as a short film.

Schedule

01.19	Lottery
	Architecture Co-Lab: Deep Time (01.19 – 01.24)
01.24	Studio Introduction
01.27	Adv VI – Studio
	WATER: Story Drawing Memory
01.31	Adv VI - Studio
02.02	Adv VI – Wednesday Session: Discussions on Uncertainty
02.03	Adv VI – Studio
	WATER: (TBD)
02.07	Adv VI – Pinup
02.10	¼ Review – The Water Studio
02.14	Adv VI – Pinup
02.16	Adv VI – Wednesday Session: Discussions on Uncertainty
02.17	Adv VI - Studio
02.21	Adv VI – Pinup
	WATER: (TBD)
02.24	Adv VI - Studio
02.25	Mid Review – The Water Studio
02.28	Adv VI - Studio
03.03	Adv VI - Studio
03.07 – 03.11	KINNE WEEK – O’ahu, Hawai’i
03.14 – 03.18	SPRING BREAK
03.21	Adv VI - Studio
03.23	Adv VI – Wednesday Session: Discussions on Uncertainty
03.24	Adv VI - Pinup
03.28	Adv VI - Studio
03.31	Adv VI – Studio
	WATER: (TBD)
04.04	Adv VI - Pinup
04.06	Adv VI – Wednesday Session: Discussions on Uncertainty
04.07	Adv VI - Studio
04.11	Adv VI – Pinup (Draft Final Review)
04.14	Adv VI - Studio
04.18	Adv VI – Pinup (Short Film Rough Cut)
04.21	Adv VI - Studio
04.25	Adv VI - Studio
04.29	Final Review – The Water Studio

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ⁱ Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," Interview with Paul Rabinow in *The Foucault Reader*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984): 245.

ⁱⁱ The word haole means "white foreigner" in Hawaiian. "Prehaole" refers to the period before contact with the white foreign world in 1778.

ⁱⁱⁱ Marion Kelly, *Majestic Kau ** (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1980): vii.

^{iv} Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2012): 1.