Selected Work Ekin Bilal



2022-2024

| On View | 1 | Mutual Aid Mobiles Installation | |
|----------------------|----|---------------------------------|-------------|
| On View | 2 | ОоВоН | Research |
| 1-1 | | Sheddy | Residential |
| 1-2 | | Puffler | Systems |
| 1-3 | | RT4U | Systems |
| 3 | | Worlds of Bruce Goff | Research |
| 4 | | Stoop | Story |
| 5 | | Tray | Story |
| 6 | | Night Market Unfolding | Urban |
| Built | 7 | Kapok Retail | |
| Built | 8 | Mobile E Immobile Installation | |
| Built | 9 | House of Words Installati | |
| Complete | 10 | Victoriassecret Exhibition | |
| Construction | 11 | Village House Residential | |
| Complete 12 Cuteness | | Cuteness is the beauty | Exhibition |

Mutual Aid Mobiles

Interlocking Mobile Donation Units, 2024, Brooklyn

Hosted by Pratt Institute, Mutual Aid Mobiles are a fleet of five interlocking mobile units that gather and redistribute donations through a roaming street procession led by artist Alex Strada and her students. Rather than a static aid initiative, the project transforms distribution into a celebratory urban intervention. Yet the design of these units must navigate a fraught political landscape in which homelessness is increasingly criminalized, and those facing housing insecurity are subjected to surveillance and stigma. In response, the mobiles deploy color, mirrors, and playful creaturely forms to subtly mask their function-not advertising themselves explicitly as donation closets, but instead activating the streets as an uncanny, joyful procession.

Their route remains undisclosed to protect the privacy of shelter residents, but at each destination, the units unfold to reveal their purpose. In these moments, overlooked back alleys are recast as sites of solidarity, where students, mutual aid groups, city workers, and researchers come together in an act of care.

Designed with Alex Strada Fabrication: Yasu Izaki

Supported by: Pratt Institute CUNY

Exhibit: Pratt Institute DeKalb Gallery Recess Art The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center

Featured: Hyperallergic PIX11 News, TV 1 Steel pin joints, allowing for all units to be connected and moved at once. Also used to create room like configurations.





















2 Mirrored sides of mobiles camoflouge, while the color sides announce their presence.

4

- 3 Smaller mobiles holding supplies.
- 4 The additional rods stretching between units enable expanded display.





Office of Back of House (OoBoH)

MIT SMarchS Design Thesis, 2024

Office of Back of House (OoBoH, pronounced "ooh-boo"), is an architecture practice operating at the intersection of arts and culture ducts, conduits, scaffolding, custodial carts, mechanical rooms and sheds. OoBoH conducts design experiments in and around these maintenance objects and spaces typically separated from "architecture-proper." By looking at the regulations, funding initiatives, zoning amendments and energy consumption routines that rule these spaces, OoBoH questions the boundaries that separate them from the "front of house" to begin with.

These "back of house" spaces exist right inside the thick poché line that bounds what is thought to be the domain of design. Back of House (BoH) is dictated by an obscured regime of maintenance processes, and by leveraging these currently unexamined spaces, OoBoH believes that they can become the site for tactical design interventions and new visions of maintenance culture. OoBoH is an attempt at entering architecture from the back door, re-characterizing existing buildings as dependent on the spaces and labor often hidden behind pastiche and facade.

Advisor: Ana Miljacki Readers: Jaffer Kolb, Miho Mazereeuw

Supported by: Schlossman Travel Fellowship 2023 De Florez Fund for Humor 2024

Exhibit: Berggruen Arts & Culture The Next Earth. Computation, Crisis, Cosmology, Venice, 2025

- 1 Folder of custom-designed forms for BoH Observers to prompt deeper engagement with these often-overlooked sites.
- 2 Poster for enlisting BoH Observers featuring everyday maintenance objects that might signal an encounter with a BoH space.





2











3 Analysis Plates, selected from submitted observation forms (1). These plates document key maintenance spaces, mapping their materials in flux, dimensions, contents, and improvised uses.











Sheddy OoboH

Maintenance Shed Design, 2024, Richboro, PA

Sheddy is a design proposal for a family in Northampton, Pennsylvania, who have begun to outgrow their longtime home. If maintenance is extending a building's lifespan, in this case adding space becomes an act of maintenance-one often obstructed by permits and zoning restrictions.

By closely reading local, state, and international codes, Sheddy explores legal loopholes that allow for added floor area without triggering permits or taxes. It leverages the ambiguous status of "sheds," which:

Require no permits, allowing faster, cheaper construction.

Are not defined concretely as buildings or structures, enabling flexible height interpretations. Are classified as *de minimus*, insignificant, and thus not taxed. Have to be located on the "backside of a house."

Sheddy reframes adaptation as maintenance-quietly extending a home's life through legal gray zones that arise from the marginalization of maintenance within architecture and legislation.



2 Comic strip explaining the design impetus of

1

sheddv.





5

- ..
- 3 Exploded elevation oblique highlighting the inventory of items to be stored in the maintenance shed based on the client family's items currently stored in their garage.
- 4 Site Plan depicting expansion of Sheddy in summer months.
- 5 Plans, sections and elevations revealing the hidden living space and light condition.

0 10 ft | | | | | |







- 6 Oblique section depicting the afternoon cinema of maintenance objects.
- 7 Expanded use in the summer. To be collapsed back in case of an inspection, as one shed allowed per lot.









8 Though permit sets are not required per state code, in Northampton Township it is required to submit drawings of the shed. This set strategically mis-lineweights to present the shed as a single envelope, as only one shed is allowed per lot.

Puffler OoboH

Portable Waste Heat Harnessing Unit

Puffler addresses the decay of abandoned buildings, which are especially vulnerable to extreme temperature fluctuations. In winter, frozen pipes crack; in summer, water seeps into those fractures, fostering mold and accelerating structural deterioration. Puffler is a portable ventilation unit that creates a temporary thermal bridge—a form of "heat solidarity" – between an occupied and an abandoned building. By connecting to exhaust vents at the back of buildings, it redirects waste heat to gently stabilize internal temperatures, reducing thermal stress before it leads to serious damage.

Puffler is not a comprehensive solution for maintaining abandoned properties, but rather an experimentan attempt to imagine alternative solidarities through acts of care through resources already present in our systems.



- of the initiative reveals that heroic rebuilding is prioritized to repair "eye-sores" in "blighted communities" instead of prioritizing assisting in maintenance. After all no capital is generated, if no house is flipped.
- 2 Comic strip comparing status quo repair initiatives and puffler's method.
- 3 Solar collector on Puffler helps keeping the harnessed waste heat warm during its transfer.

2

INCREMENTAL MAINTENANCE IS RHYTMIC.

TEMPERATURE KEPT STABLE, HOUSE PROTECTED.

. . .



INCOMPANY DEPENDENCE

I LEEPERSON IN THE REAL PROPERTY INTERNAL PROPERTY INTERNAL



5 Sheet Q-901 of schematics of Puffler. Winter Operations

· Puffler connects two homes via 6" insulated flexible ducts (R-6 rated), <30 feet apart.

· Air is drawn from the HVAC exhaust vent (70 CFM, ~70 F) of the occupied house.

· Target indoor temperature of unheated home: 50 F to avoid material decay and pipe freezing. · Solar thermal collector: ~20.7 sq ft (3.5' 6'), south-facing, polyiso-insulated box with blackened absorber

· Daily outdoor temperature assumption: ~30 F (December in Massachusetts).

· Daily heat loss of target house (~14,400 ft3): 124,416 BTU/day.

· Heat contribution from HVAC exhaust (70 CFM): ~75,600 BTU/day.

· Heat contribution from solar collector: ~48,000 BTU/day.

· Net heating: Sufficient to maintain 50 F internal temperature in winter.

Summer Operations

· Day Mode:

- Solar chimney stack height: 4' with blackened steel inner liner and aluminum outer skin.

- Stack effect ventilation driven by temperature difference (~30 F) between inside and ambient. (assumed MA Temp differential)

- Solar chimney vents moist, stagnant air; replaces it with drier ambient air.

- Auto flap opens chimney outlet in morning hours. Chimney Stack Effect: ~40–50 CFM via 4' blackened chimney stack

· Night Mode:

- 12V mini fan (3W, 60 CFM) circulates air through internal copper cooling plates.

- Nighttime radiative and ambient cooling (air temp < 65 F) condenses internal humidity. -Dehumidification target: lower RH below mold threshold (~60% RH).

- Cooling plates: 8-16 ft2 of copper/aluminum, tilted to drain water into removable tray. Nighttime Air Processing: 28,800-57,600 ft3 per night (0.25–0.5 ACH)

Cooling Plate Heat Load: 1.08 60 10 = 648 BTU/

Water Removed: ~0.5-1 gal/night Fan: 3W 8 hrs = 24Wh

Battery: 600Wh capacity (50Ah, 12V) 25 days autonomy

Solar Input: 150W 3.28 hrs = ~490Wh/day





- townships identified in the "Request for Proposal" for Abondened House Initiative. Puffler uses its dolar chimneys in the summer,
- 7 Collaged ortographic drawing of Puffler across different time periods, depicting its maintenance.





RT4U OoboH

HVAC Rooftop Unit, 2024, Cambridge

Disguised as a rooftop HVAC unit, RT4U is a covert rest module for those who maintain the unoccupiable zones of the built environment. Rooftops filled with air handling units are officially off-limits to occupation except by those performing maintenance. RT4U exploits this legal loophole, offering a warm, ergonomic hideout for rooftop workers, complete with a solar-powered kettle and soft modular seating that doubles as a meeting table for the code-compliant few.

By occupying the shell of a defunct RTU, RT4U leverages how maintenance spaces are the perfect place to take a break, as they are not often watched. It proposes that if maintenance workers must inhabit these marginal spaces, perhaps they also deserve a break. And if RT4U must be maintained in turn, then maybe it can create its own caretakers— those who are willing to maintain RT4U in turn gain access to the unoccupiable maintenance spaces, per IMC.







2



- 1 IMC and IBC reveal occupancy permissions in the back of house. Close reading of the codes reveal these permissions are easy to interpret to expand access and question the boundaries of permission dividing the back from the front of house.
- 2 Comic strip depicting how RT4U is a air maintenance unit as it provides maintenance to the maintainers.
- 3 RT4U hiding with its counterparts.









Discovering the Wild and Expansive Worlds of Bruce Goff

Archival Research, Reconstruction and Representation, 2024

A student of Frank Lloyd Wright, Bruce Goff created some of the boldest, most expressive architecture of the twentieth century. Charles Jencks described him as "the Michelangelo of Kitsch" and critic Ada Louise Huxtable as a man fond of "peacock feathers and pink plastic." Openly gay, Goff 's architecture was Modernism in drag: hyperbolic, expressive, constructed with war industry excesses, dollar store trinkets, and material too cheap for minimal taste standards. His buildings seem to reach into the depths of Americana in material specifications, structural logics, and spatial organization.

The drawings shown reveal the material and social histories of three of his iconic houses: the Ford House (Aurora, IL, 1949-50), Shin'en Kan (Bartlesville, OK, 1956), and the Bavinger House (Norman, OK, 1955). They include references to industrial reuse and the quotidian products he transformed into architectural surfaces, and they reveal the networked and relational systems of invisible information that were deeply important to his practice. These are covers not just of buildings but of the instructions, means, and methods that produce them. The houses themselves may linger in the background like ghostly references or the circumstantial outcomes of an array of possible solutions-pink plastic and all.

Commissioned by: New Affiliates Team: Ekin Bilal, Ruby Kang Exhibit: Timisoara Architecture Biennial, 2024 Art Institute of Chicago Bruce Goff Retrospective, 2025 Text: Jaffer Kolb

1 Drawing of Bavinger House.

- 2 Drawing of Shin'en Kan and Ford House.
- 3 Close-up from the Ford House drawing. The steel ribs of the circular house are repurposed from WW 2 quonset huts.

















4 Drawing of Shin'en Kan (Bartlesville, OK, 1956) The composite drawing incorporates unfolded frontal oblique of the building, three shadow plans, repurposed material histories in different orthographic projection.

A

Stoop

Research and Animation, 2022

The animation cuts through different scales of time and traces four stories of different length taking place on the stoop of my home: a meet-cute in 2004, a squirrel family during the months connecting 1976 to 1977, a selfmotivated preservationist between 2042 and 2049 long after the stoop is no longer functional and finally a red oak forest across decades that once stood in the same place more than a century ago. Through a split screen, the animation experiments with the collaging of stories within a single space but across hundreds of years, bleeding and complicating, enchanting, suggesting a cyclical and synchronous gaze into depths of time.

The moment we whole heartily accept the notion of linear time that modernity professes, we lose agency over the historical imagination, the ability to question the causalities predominantly proposed in predominant narratives in history.

- Spans of time subdivide the frame—longer durations generate finer subdivisions, compressing layered temporalities into a single animated field.
- 2 Stoop shaped toy chest with hidden compartments that reveal elements from the different story lines. A chestnut, a bicycle bell, leaves collected from the stoop, nails removed during the repair of the stoop. (24"x27"x27")

| 410 Years | Red Date Forest | |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
| 41 Team | Lamase Panity | |
| 4 Years | Transace | |
| ***** | Bayline Family | |
| 4 Days | Bar Controllion | |
| 4 Minutes | Dooree | |
| | | |





Exhibit: MIT Weisner Gallery, *Deep Time: Taking the Long View*

https://vimeo.com/782728940

Tray Zine, 2023

The small zine centering on the daily cycle of a lunch tray at a university cafeteria is an investigation into spaces of labor demarcated within singular envelopes of architecture. The narrative follows the tray across the dining halls into the dishroom, rendering agents interacting with it illegible in so far as their modes of enacting onto the tray, eating, discarding and cleaning, caring.

As cafeteria goers are prevented from crossing the boundary into the dishroom while the tray is allowed to do so, the object becomes a bridge of care and comfort economies unfolding, hidden by boundaries enacted through architectural design.

Copies of the zine were left around dish conveyor belts across MIT cafeterias.











Urban Retrofit Design, 2020, Taipei, Taiwan

Now a part of the vernacular of Taipei, steel cages added to the windows, balconies, and roofs of buildings increase apartment sqm to respond to hyper-condensed living conditions in a city with exponentially growing real-estate prices. Arguing that these cages are 'eye-sores' and illegal, the Taiwanese government is dismantling these additions without addressing the underlying socioeconomic issues.

Though technically also illegal, the vernacular night markets in Taipei are one of the biggest attractions of the city. They generate a substantial amount of revenue, and in return are 'overlooked' by the government. Even when a stall owner is fined, all stall owners at the market share the amount amongst themselves. Drawing inspiration from collective solidarity of the night market, this project proposes to turn the cages on apartment facades into a vertical night marketscape, making use of the material and scalar similarities of both typologies.

At night, the cages will unfold to connect the staircases and balconies light up as night market stalls. They not only provide a new method of generating income and connectivity for the residents, they also challenge the government's existing perception of the balcony additions as 'eye-sores', giving them a chance at beauty.

Instructor: Jimenez Lai, Mark Acciari Featured: Honorable Mention, Non Architecture Award Best New Architects





TABLES













- 1 The Becher and Becher style photos compare scale and material similarities of window cages and night market stalls.
- 2 Site elevation and plan showing the same street during night and day the changing circulation patterns.
- 3 Model depicting two buildings on site connected through bass wood walkways and staircases gradually added. (10cmx10cmx8cm)



4 The isometric illustrations further visualize the connections between the two buildings examined through the model. The walkways create new neighbors across difference apartment buildings.

抑濃度源





disused temple in Da'an in reference to how Taiwanese night markets historically started in temple plazas.

6 The neighbors are no longer only the ones who live next door, but anyone who contributes in the vertical night-market. The continuity of the walkways is dependent on the unanimous participation of the residents in a collective manner.





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7 Sections showing domestic balconies turning into commercial stalls, apartments turning into restaurants.





9 Operable model showing transforming balconies with a plant store and a dumpling stall. (25cmx15cmx75cm)







Kapok K11 Musea

Retail, Hong Kong, 2019

The project is situated within a deep and low-ceilinged space inside a shopping mall-23 meters in depth, with a storefront that is only visible at an oblique angle. These constraints became the basis of the design strategy. A rotated floor plan redirects focus toward a central "forum," drawing visitors inward. Overhead, a custom one-piece open grid ceiling, fabricated in chromatized steel, functions as a striking and continuous lighting fixture.

The forum is designed to be flexible and ever-changing. It accommodates mobile units that slide in and out, allowing the space to transform-serving at times as a place to rest, to browse, or to host events and conversations.

Joining the project from the schematic design phase until completion, I was responsible for developing and resolving the 'forum' design, producing drawing sets for furniture millwork, signage, elevations, RCPs, and M&E plans. I also prepared render sets for weekly client meetings and participated in discussions with the contractor and suppliers.

As a designer for: **Collective Studio**

Design Team: Alex Wu, Ekin Bilal, Betty Ng, Juan Minguez, Katja Lam

Fabrication: EDM Construction









Mobile e Immobile

Installation Design, 2022

Mobile e Immobile is a story about the afterlife of office culture in the wake of Zoom and the slow-motion collapse of work-life boundaries. It takes place on an office floor with no walls—less a room than a field—where lines do the work that architecture once did. Some lines are crossed, others avoided. Together they propose a graphic system of thresholds that shape how we move, pause, gather, or withdraw.

Here, figure and ground flip and flatten, forming conceptual rooms that are never fully enclosed. The project asks what remains of the office when its walls fall away. Do we still need enclosure to focus, or can we work in a field of furniture? What defines a workplace—an ergonomic chair, a sense of privacy, or just a laptop and somewhere to plug in?

Blue and green patches gesture toward virtual backgrounds, the kind that flatten space while pretending to expand it. At its core, Mobile e Immobile is about the choreography of mobile furniture within immobile real estate—a flexible theater of work staged inside the rigid economies of the 21st-century office.



Design Team: Jimenez Lai, Ekin Bilal

Exhibit: Salone Del Mobile 2022







House of Words

Installation Design, 2022

An outdoor installation, functioning as an oversized musical instrument at the Grand Park in Los Angeles.

Like a friendly colossus that hovers over the public, this interactive structure listens to its visitors and re-state what it hears in its own gentle but deep voice. While standing underneath the belly of this behemoth, a person can whisper a secret into the receptors. However, like a bad secretkeeper, this creature carelessly echoes everything back into the ether, albeit very quietly and in a heavily distorted and unrecognizable utterance.

In the final scene of In the Mood for Love (2000), the protagonist whispers a secret into a temple wall and seals it with mud—a private act of healing through architecture. The House of Words offers a public counterpart: it scrambles spoken confessions like a shredder, releasing them as incomprehensible, birdsonglike sounds. This therapeutic transformation turns the structure into a speech monster—a listener that digests burdens, offering Angelenos a place to unburden their stories.

As a designer for: Bureau Spectacular

Design Team: Jimenez Lai, Ekin Bilal

Fabrication: Echo Projects and Alejandro Gadea







Victoriassecret

Exhibition Design, 2022, NYC

In collaboration with The Racial Imaginary Institute, Victoriassecret is an exhibition curated by Simon Wu for Helena Anrather Gallery, inspired by his eponymous essay reflecting on his relationship to his parents' belongings, contemporary art, and 'Asian American' identity. Presented in three parts, the exhibition brings together artworks, personal objects from his parents, and a new essay to explore 'the emotional landscape of class aspirationalism'-how the things that we value (and want to value) shape our sense of identity.

The exhibition design centers on questions of aesthetic clutter, identity, and what Wu describes as 'stuff' acting as padding for the internal organs to protect against the traumas of migration. Knickknacks from the curator's childhood home are treated with the same attention as the artworks, displayed on undulating cardboard pedestals that respond to each object's height and dimension. The design reinforces the exhibition's aim to stage a dialogue between art and aesthetics of home by adopting the visual language of clutter-evoking the layered, improvised quality of a garage used for storage.

Fabrication: Ryan Wolfe

Supported By: Helena Anrather Gallery The Racial Imaginary Institute

Artists: CFGNY, Judy Chung, Christine

Jung, Bob Lee, Maggie Lee, Maia Ruth Lee, Ken Okiishi, Stewart Uoo, Yoshiki Araki, Gene Moy, and Special Guests







Art in the Yard (I-III)

Exhibition Design, NY, 2021-2024

Art in the Yard is an annual outdoor pop-up art exhibition space commissioned by BAM Art in Larchmont, NY, designed to bring neighbors and friends together to enjoy art and celebrate summer. The architecture of the space takes a morphological hammer to the traditional white box art gallery. Freestanding, modular walls disperse into the landscape and blur the boundary between art and yard, creating a dynamic space for the community to experience art and reconnect.

The wall elements vary in height and length: Tall, simple surfaces are for hanging artwork; a long reception counter provides a place for greeting visitors and directing them to the art gallery; wall-like fragments dispersed across the yard provide seating. The walls, extending beyond the perimeter of the tented roof into the yard, lead visitors from grassy exterior to the exhibition interior.

The walls are easily collapsed for storage and re-installed for the annual exhibition.

- 1 Concept diagram: from art in the gallery to art in the yard.
- 2 Isometric showing curation plan and structure.







As a project designer for: Stephen Moser Architect Client: BAM Art Consultancy Fabrication: Barrios Quality Painting

Village House

Residential Renovation + ADU, Larchmont, NY Under Construction

This renovation of a 1915 house includes modern additions at both the front and rear, along with substantial interior expansion. New space was added by refinishing and extending the basement, enlarging the attic through a loft, and introducing a new lightwell stairwell that spans all floors—opening up previously compartmentalized interiors. The project also includes a new garage structure that doubles as an artist workshop and guest house, built on the footprint of a prior structure on the lot.

As an associate, I contributed to design studies for the attic expansion and the new garage structure, and was actively involved in preparing permit sets, contractor sets, and detailed construction drawings throughout the project.

- 1 Completed addition to the rear of the structure. The addition mitigates the ground line and the elevated main structure.
- 2 Construction of ADU and the expanded stairwell to the roof loft.







As an architectural associate for: Stephen Moser Architects

Design Team: Helene Lee, Alejandro Finol, Ekin Bilal





1 02 - SECOND FLOOR PLAN

3 ROOF PLAN

2 Plans and elevations of area of work. Additions to the front, rear, the roof and the basement of the 100-year-old structure.





 ROOF LEADER DRAIN TIED INTO STOPM DRAINAGE SYSTEM (SEE OVELDRAININGS). NEW WINTERS





BUILDING ELEVATION - SOUTH







12 GARAGE AXON



Cuteness is the beauty I can afford which is the beauty I deserve

Exhibition Design, 2024, NYC

An exhibition celebrating the launch of Simon Wu's book, *Dancing On My Own.*

The simple design for the display of plushies and clothing made by Wu and his mother echoes the cluttered yet intimate composition of Jarod Lew's photographs of Wu's family home. The artworks are suspended from two lines of steel cable stretched between four wall screws and hooks, accompanied by a roll of ribbons and key chains—all sourced from the artist's garage, which is visible in Lew's photographs. The hanging works frame the photographs, just as the photographs, in turn, contextualize the objects.









