Jahanara Nares

Selected Work: Systems, Space, and Human Experience

2026

Architectural Studio Project - Cooper Union _**Inner Library**

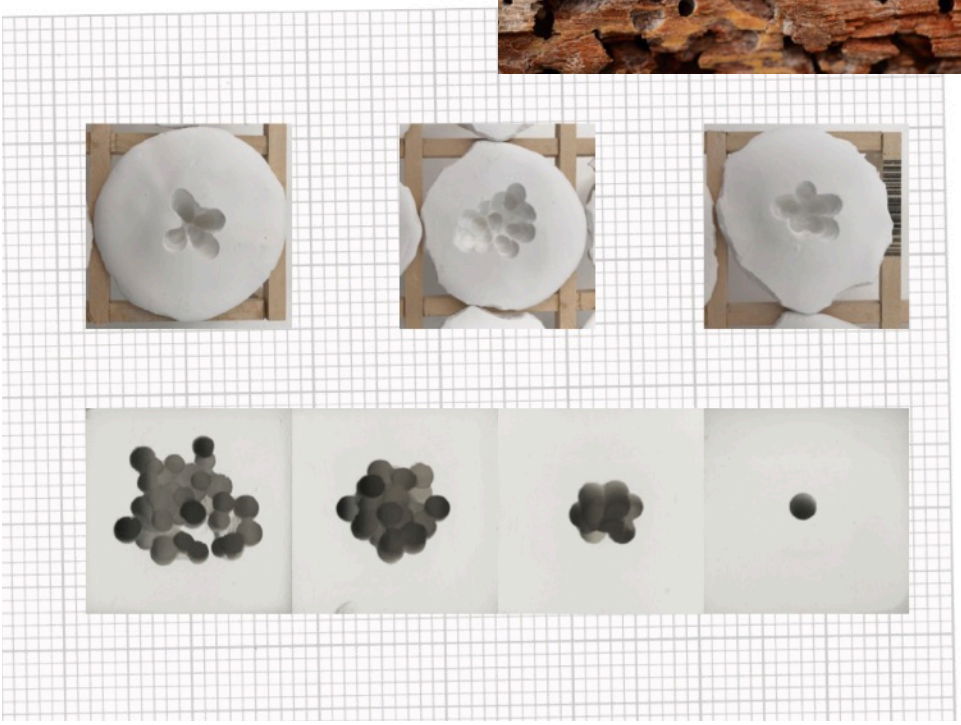
Inner Library is a ‘buried library’ concept inspired by termite cave systems. The project proposes a structure that moves downward into the earth, using depth, enclosure, and sectional variation to organize public, yet intimate spaces. The design creates a sequence of shared reading rooms interwoven with small, cave-like niches sized for one or two people, allowing moments of privacy to coexist within a collective environment.

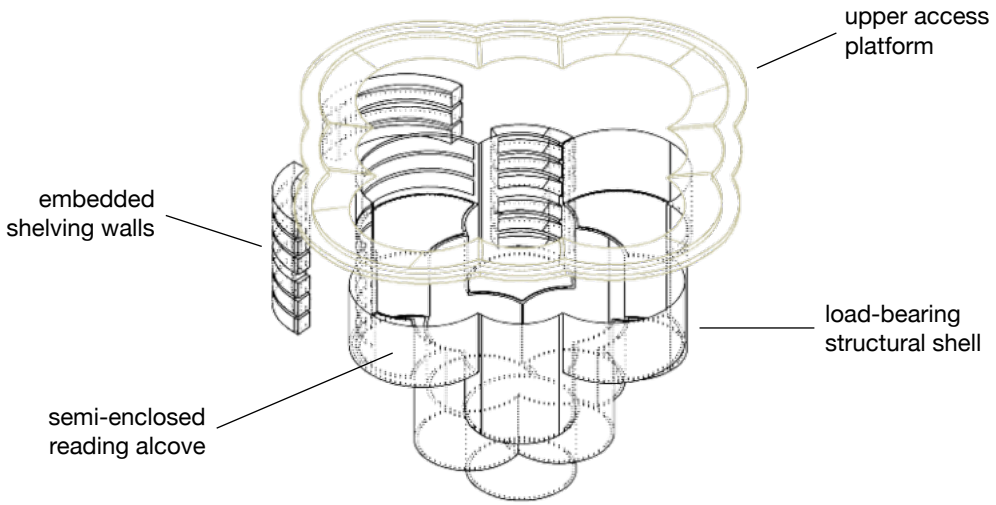
By emphasizing excavation, gravity, and interiority rather than vertical monumentality, the project questions dominant architectural narratives of boundless expansion, proposing instead an architecture oriented toward

reflection,

connection,

and inhabitation.



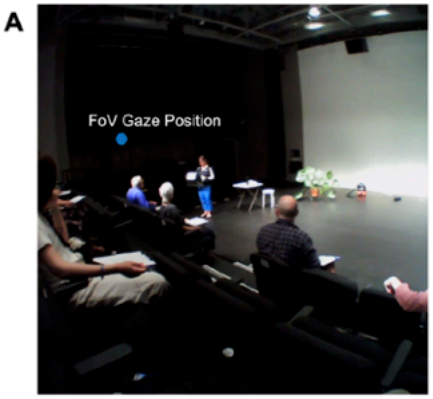


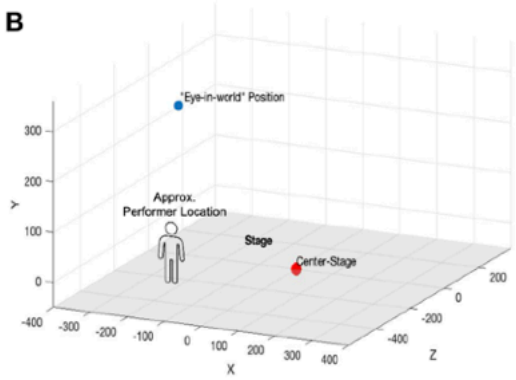
The library is conceived as a carved, load-bearing timber shell with a glass skylight enclosure (not shown), in which structure, furniture, and program are integrated into a single inhabitable mass.

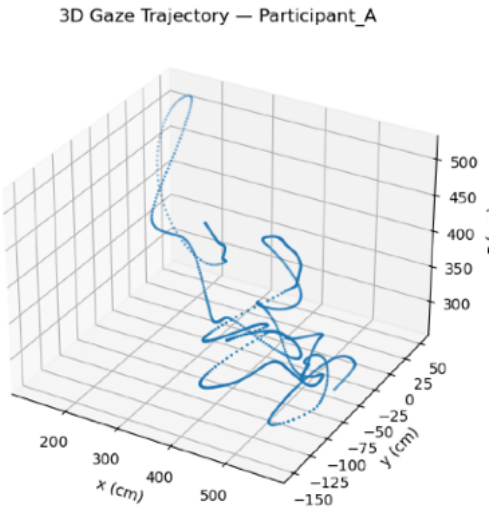
Design Research / Spatial Analysis _**Collective Attention in Performance Space**

This neuroaesthetics-research project examines how groups of people attend to space together during live performance. Using eye-tracking data collected from audience members, the work maps how collective focus converges and shifts over time in relation to spatial layout and performance movement dynamics.

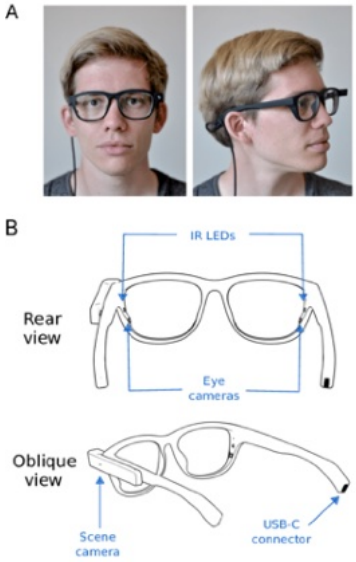
By translating gaze data into spatial and temporal diagrams, the project reveals moments of heightened synchrony, where attention aligns across the audience. These patterns suggest how sightlines, spatial configuration, and narrative cues which unfold over multiple temporal scales guide shared experience - insights relevant to the design of performance venues, exhibitions, and shared interior spaces.

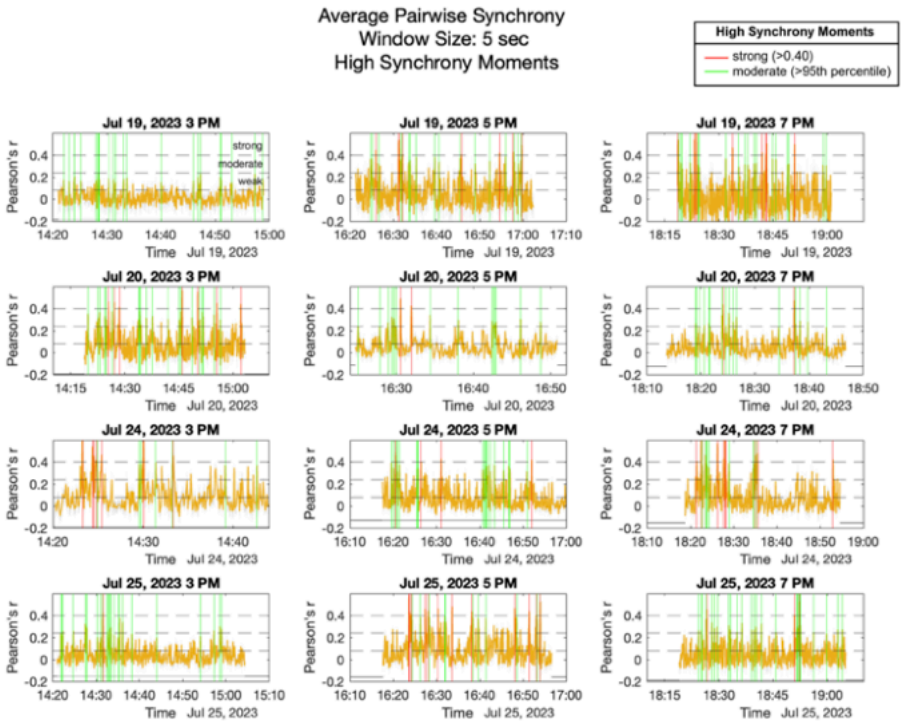






Moments of shared focus emerge across the audience over time





In collaboration with Neurolive (https://neurolive.info/), University College London

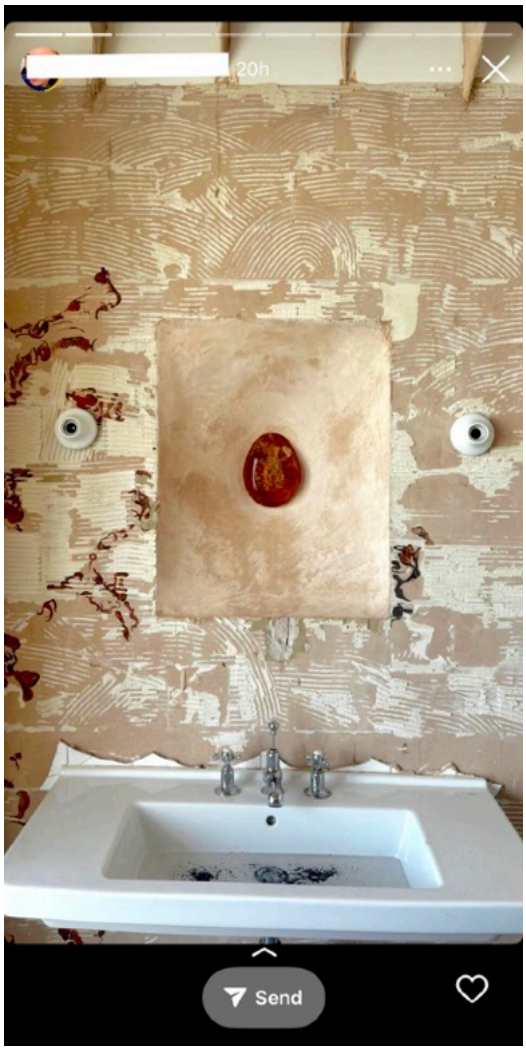
Analysis & code available on GitHub: https://github.com/17jnares/gaze-synchrony-3d-thesis

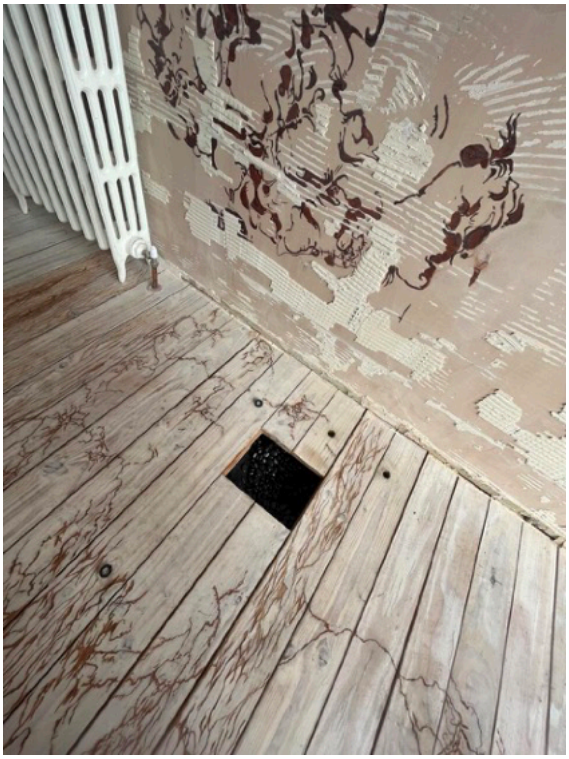
Built Installation / Spatial Experiment _**Rest Room**

Rest Room is a site-specific architectural installation situated within the master bathroom of a private residence in London. The project investigates the bathroom as a space of physical and psychological reset, a place where bodily function, cleansing, and privacy commune.

By intervening in one of the few available spaces of private withdrawal within public space, the bathroom installation explores how structural enclosure and surface texture shape experiences of innate resonance with spaces. Constructed over a six-month period, the work was realized through hands-on fabrication and installation, responding directly to the constraints of the existing space.

The project was presented as part of an exhibition distributed throughout the house, alongside other installations and live performances, positioning the bathroom as an architectural site rather than a purely utilitarian room.





This project was built while artist-in-residence
with Chelsea College of Arts in London.

Urban Spatial Analysis / Design Research _**New York City Rats**

This project investigates how urban wildlife navigate and inhabit urban infrastructure, using New York City rats as a lens into overlooked spatial systems. Drawing on NYC OpenData, subway entrance locations, and proximity analysis, the work maps potential movement patterns through underground networks.

The project reframes urban wildlife not as noise, but as spatial participants shaped by architectural thresholds, waste systems, and human circulation. By translating datasets into spatial diagrams, the work explores how data-driven insight can inform more ethical, inclusive approaches to urban design and infrastructure.

Inspired by the increase in rat sightings during the Covid-19 lockdown.
Built in 2021.

Selected months from 2025

March

April

May

June

July

August

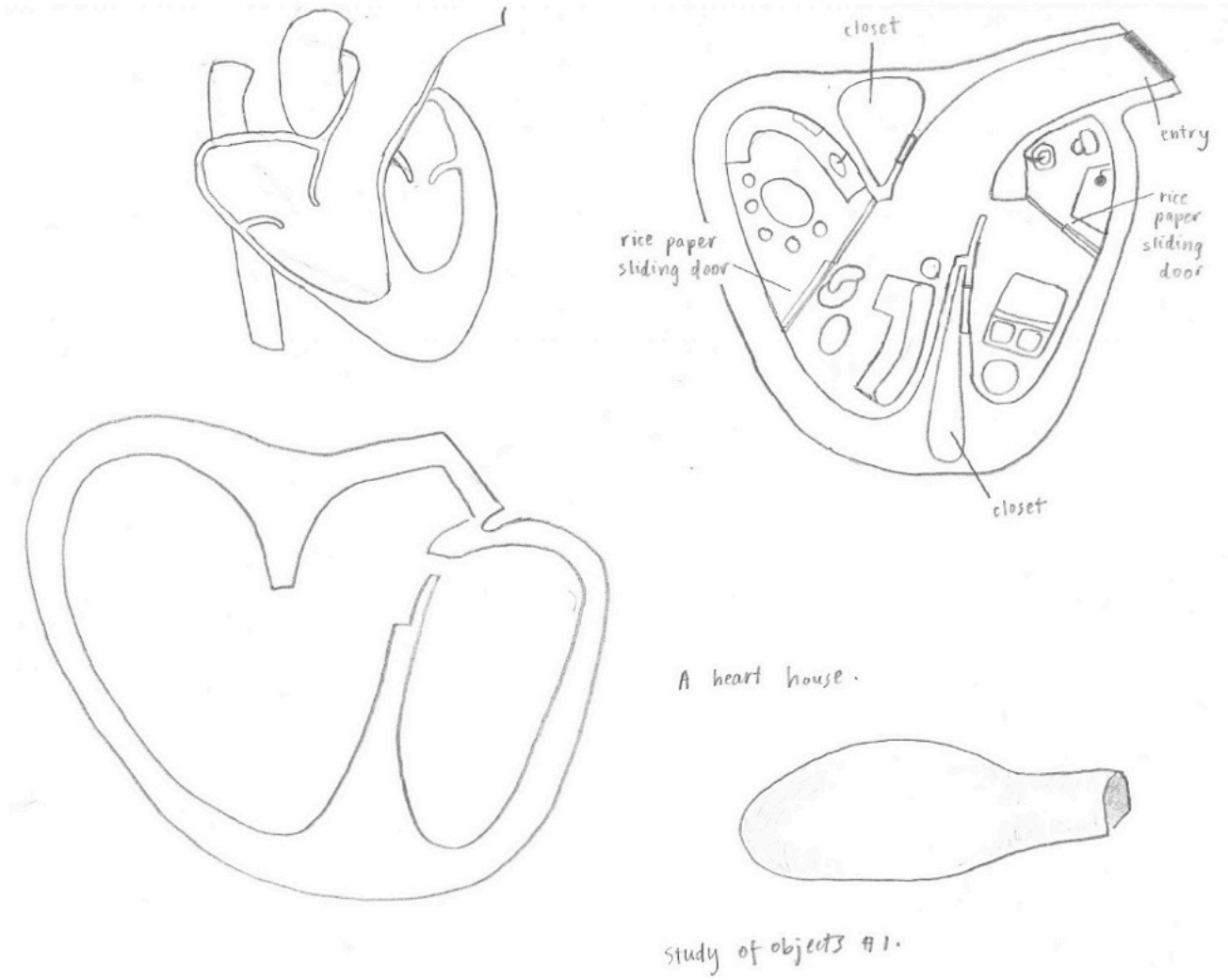
Analysis & code available on GitHub: https://github.com/17jnares/nyc-rats

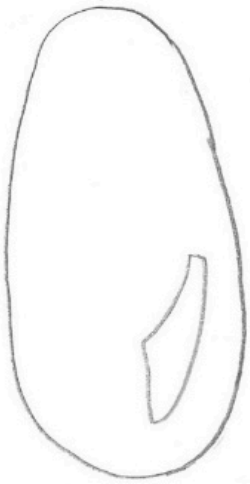
Spatial Conceptual Study _**Bodily Forms**

This project investigates biological forms as spatial propositions. Through drawing, familiar bodily forms are abstracted and reinterpreted as architectural volumes, exploring interiority, volume, and scale.

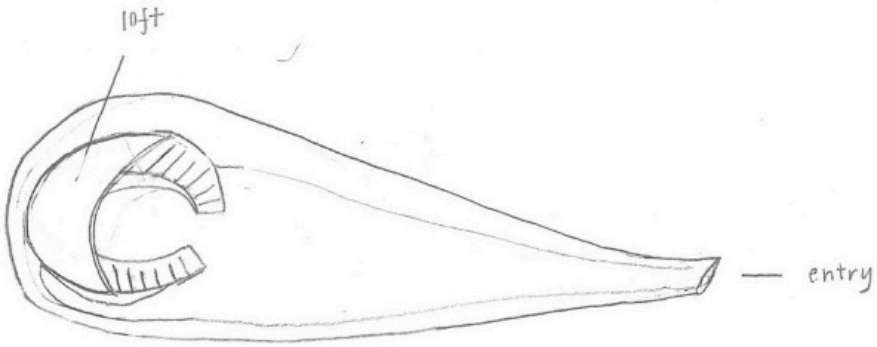
The work uses repetition and variation to test how scale shifts produce different spatial readings, emphasizing perspective and bodily imagination over function. The project operates as a conceptual exercise in spatial thinking.

The study of a heart.





A tear drop.



a glass tear drop.

as the water flows,
pull focus

Study of Objects #3

The study of a teardrop.

Additional context

My work sits at the intersection of architecture, computation, and cognitive science, with a focus on how spatial systems shape collective and individual experience.

The selected work involves conceptual design, computational analysis, design research, and conceptual spatial studies. Supporting material, including code and extended datasets, is available upon request or via GitHub (links included above).

I'm interested in applied design research roles supporting evidence-based spatial and environmental design.

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