

A game of resource negotiation

DSGN AGNC

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Palabras clave

Arquitectura

Juego

Agua

Arena

Negociación

Keywords

Architecture

Game

Water

Sand

Negotiation

The question of how to make architecture an instrument of awareness has been wandering around the discipline for decades. This project, a temporary pavilion in the city of Dallas, presents a new answer to this question. Through an architectural game, in which participants must negotiate within a finite space and limited resources, architecture becomes an instrument to raise awareness about planetary resources scarcity.

[The] sovereign art, of course, will be the one whose laws rule over the relations among men in their totality. That is, Politics. Nothing is alien to Politics, because nothing is alien to the superior art that rules the relations among men. Medicine, war, architecture, etc. – minor and major arts, all without exception – are subject to, and make up, that sovereign art.

Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed*, 1973

There is perhaps no aspect of architectural and urban design more satisfying than the ability to envision and communicate visions that change the built environment. To do this we have a set of go-to tools: plans, sections, models, renderings, etc. Many of our tools, however, are famously not so good at expanding the conversation, allowing non-architects to join and even question and rework proposed visions. This becomes even more difficult when wanting to engage a broader set of stakeholders who may not understand architectural conventions. This is why I have become increasingly interested in how games and



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gaming can supplement other design tools to broaden the socio-spatial imagination and conversation. The potential that games bring to architectural production is an open-endedness that seeks to not simply validate a preconceived idea but instead tests it and creates opportunities for change.

It is in this context that I built Sandboxing, a pavilion/ game designed for the New Cities Future Ruins convening in Dallas: a four-year curatorial initiative inviting artists, designers, and thinkers to re-imagine and engage the extreme urbanism of America's Western Sun Belt.

Sandboxing asked participants to playfully negotiate two key resources for the future of the southwestern city: land (sand) and water. This all happens in a pavilion made up of a sandbox designed to change as players negotiate space and a structural dew-catcher canopy – a passive system used in arid climates to extract water particles from the atmosphere. Without any outcome prescribed, players are left to make the choices of sharing collectively or further restricting access to ever diminishing resources.

Axonométrica /
Axonometric
S. E. / N. S.

El juego: Movimiento de piezas de madera y arena para negociar la disposición espacial del arenero y el agua acumulada por la malla atrapaniebla.

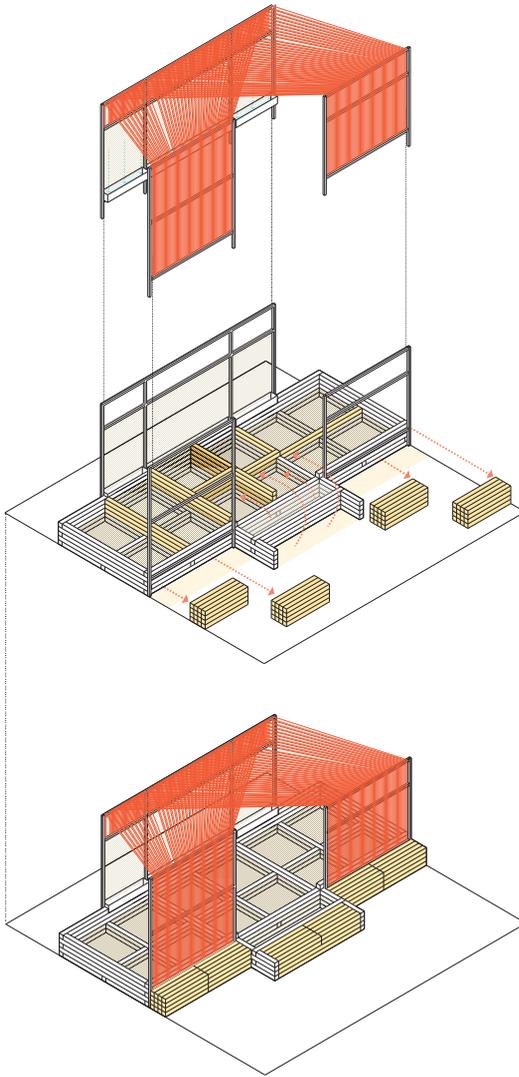
Elementos del juego:

- Caja de arena
- Piezas de madera móviles
- Cubierta atrapaniebla
- Áreas de asientos

The Game: Moving pieces of wood and sand to negotiate the spatial lay out of the sandbox and the water collected by the dew catcher.

Full game elements:

- Sandbox framework
- Movable wood pieces
- Dew catcher and canopy
- Seating areas



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It is perhaps in this last point, which proposes that critical games can create the conditions for ongoing negotiations and shaping of space, that games may be able to have their biggest impact in design. In order to shape space, we need to be able to negotiate space and the flexibility to envision change. When treated as a game that does not necessarily assign winners and losers, the negotiations can be rehearsed and the changes can be piloted. This transforms designers into facilitators, guiding more robust processes that accommodate the diverse publics that are the primary users and potential beneficiaries of the spaces and urban conditions we help design. **ARQ**

SANDBOXING

Arquitecto / Architect: DSGN AGNC

Ubicación / Location: Jubilee Park & Community Center, Old East, Dallas

Cliente / Client: New Cities Future Ruins

Construcción / Construction: Ash studios

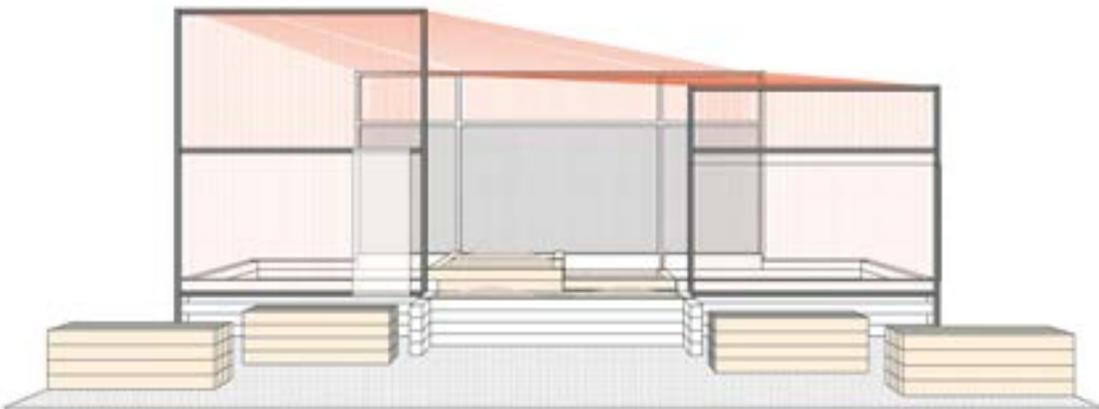
Materiales / Materials: Arena, madera, metal, malla atrapaniebla. / Sand, wood, metal, dew catcher mesh.

Año de proyecto / Project year: 2016



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Elevación / Facade
S. E. / N. S



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DSGN AGNC is a collaborative design/research studio based in Brooklyn, New York, exploring political engagement through architecture, urbanism and art. Its founder and principal, Quilian Riano, is Master in Architecture, Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Has been the recipient of the Vilcek Prize for Creative Promise as well as awards and residencies from Harvard University, the Boston Society of Architects and Queens Museum. DSGN AGNC's work has been featured at the Venice Biennale, Harvard University, the World Urban Forum, Cornell University, New York's Center for Architecture, The Van Alen Institute, Parsons The New School for Design, The Queens Museum, The Boston Society of Architects, among others.