

Temporary / Permanent:

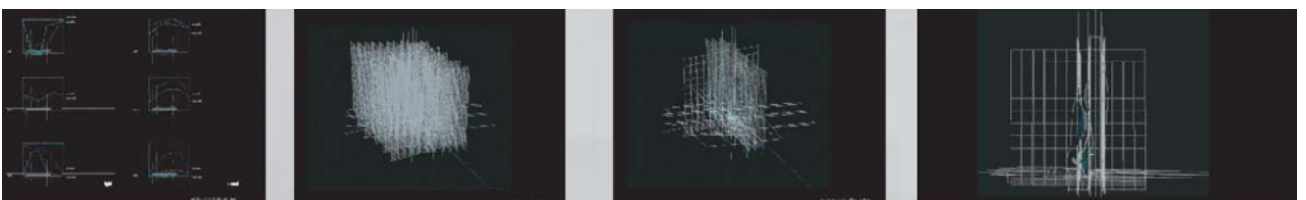
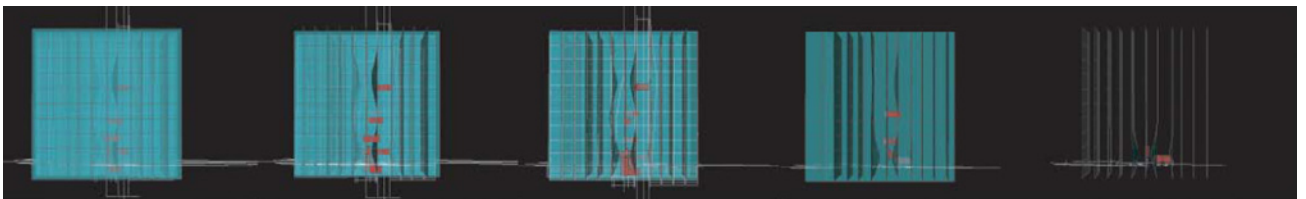
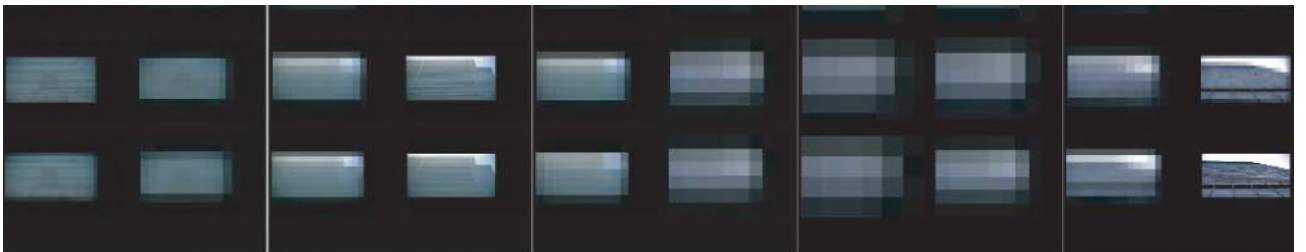
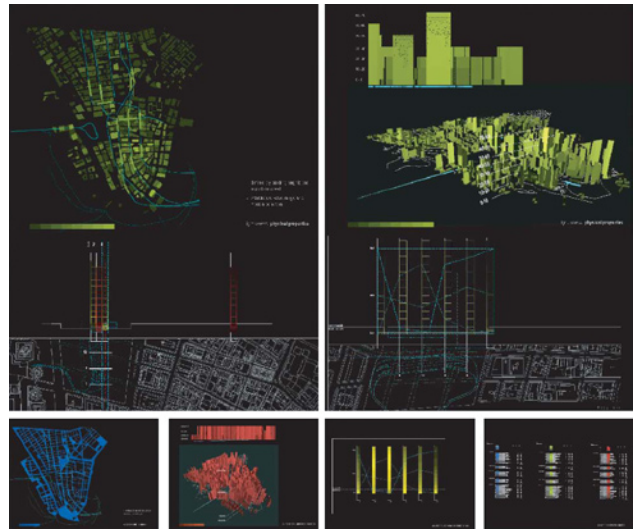
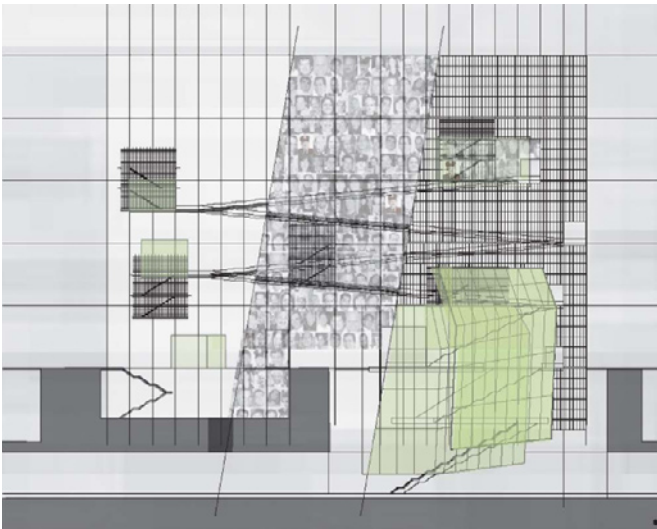
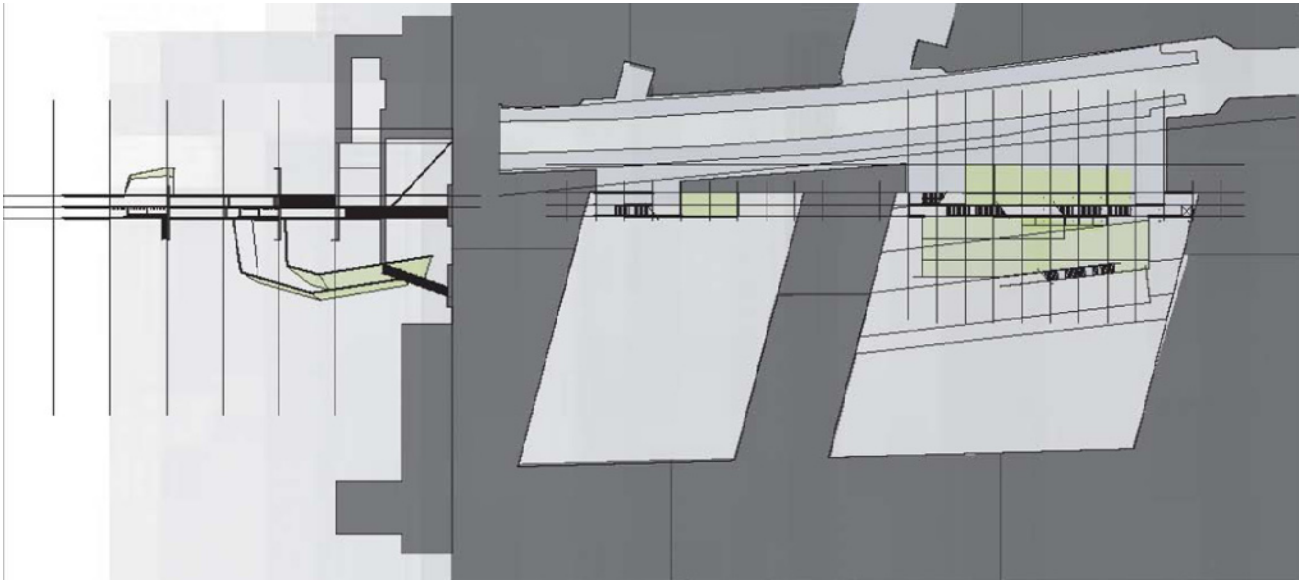
Public Space in the Aftermath of September 11th

As the effects of September 11th continue to unfold, architects, planners, landscape architects, policy-makers and civic groups have gathered in attempt to shape the rebuilding process. Largely, these efforts have been focused on the immediate needs of local residents and the victim's families, ignoring the more seminal questions of the changed role of public space after the attacks. Even within the conventional terms that these groups have functioned, the recommendations at best, are broad guidelines built around a consensus and nominal information in a highly contested site.

Perhaps more troubling is the parallel actions that the political, legal and financial systems have taken. Largely without involvement from the design community or general public, these sectors have moved swiftly predicated their success on the ability to pose tectonic solutions at a time that seems filled with questions and gaps. Already plans have been drawn up for much of the site resulting in an architecture that seeks to blend in rather than to distinguish—largely ignoring the acknowledgment of architecture's power as an evocative symbol.

This studio proposes to work within the existing geopolitical structure using the “temporary” as a means to an end. Predicated on a belief that the ground swell for civic change must come from public outcry, the studio will focus on the temporary (five year) solution as a tool to both envision the future and evoke debate. Questions that surfaced in the wake of the attacks have subsided in the urgency to move “forward.” On September 11th in four synchronized acts, boundaries irrevocably changed; global commerce took on new meaning, architecture became a target, definition of security was altered, and symbolic ownership became simultaneously local, national and global. These changes captured the imagination of a nation, and the world. In an effort to bring these issues and others forward into the “rebuilding” of this site the studio will focus on the development of both interior and exterior public space inside, and surrounding the World Trade Center.

Columbia University Spring 2002
Third Year Design Studio



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