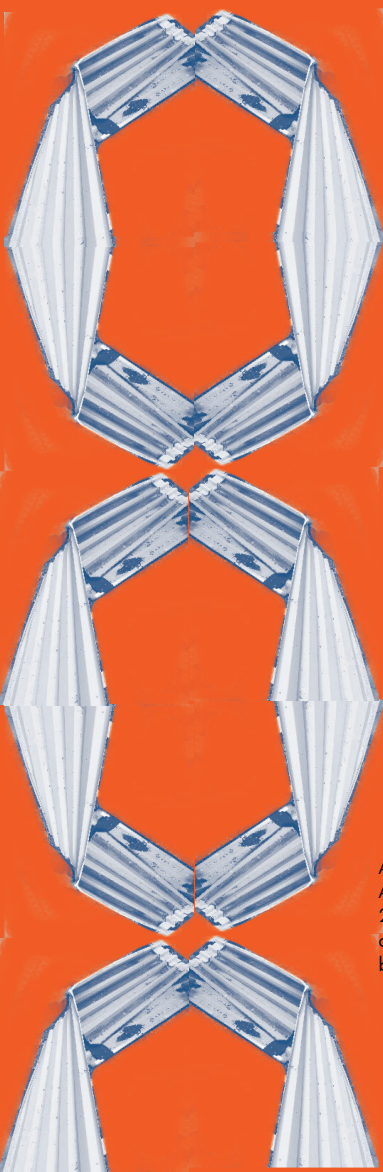


EN PERSONA

Entrevista al biotecto Michael Reynolds, 25 de enero de 2018
/ Interview with biotect Michael Reynolds, January 25th, 2018 por Yara Maite Colón Rodríguez y Omayra Rivera Crespo

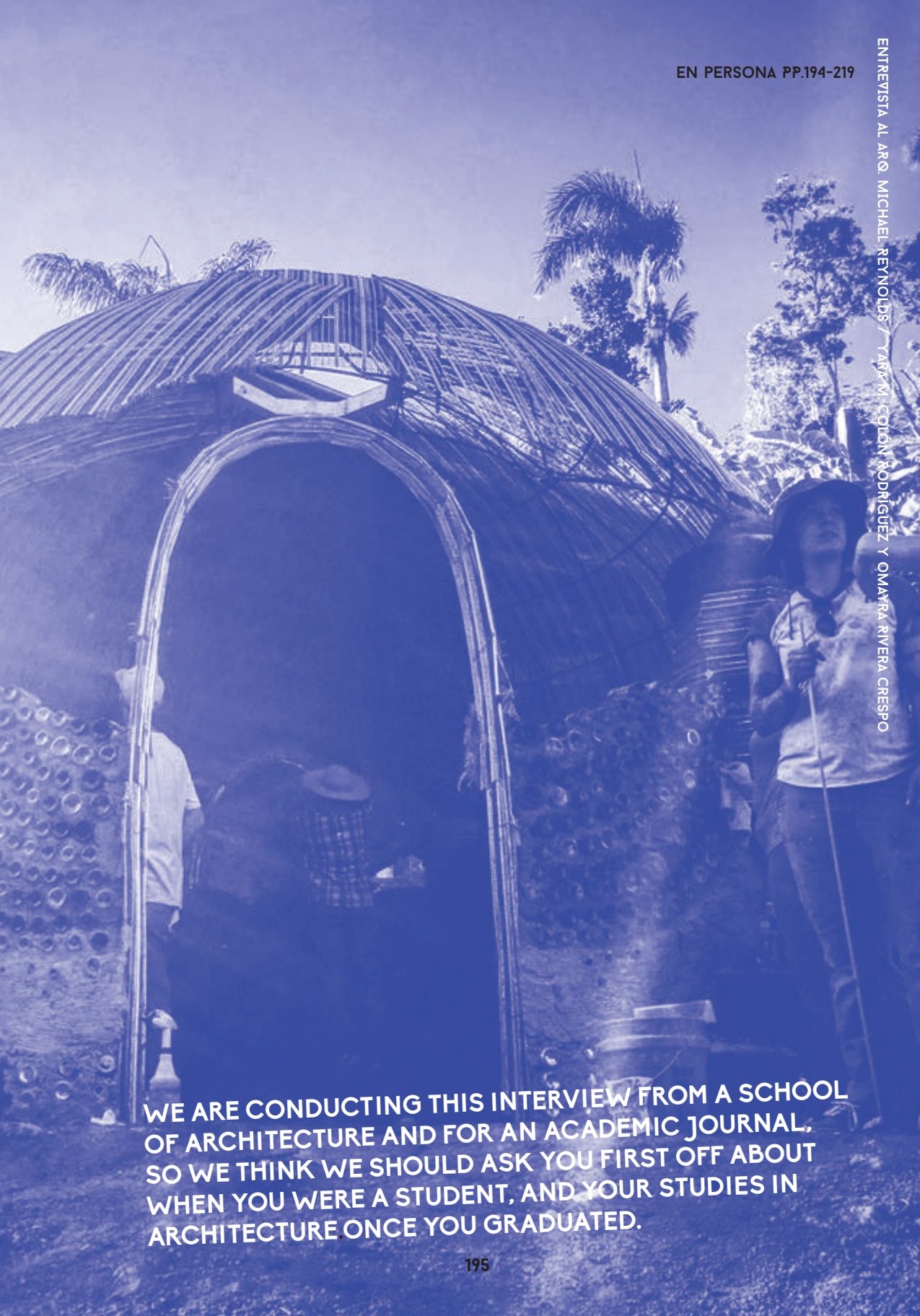
NOTA DE LA EDICIÓN

Esta entrevista se realizó por videollamada justo antes de la visita del arquitecto o biotecto estadounidense Michael Reynolds a Puerto Rico. Luego de dar comienzo a la construcción de la "earthship" o navetierra Tainasoy Apiario, en el municipio de Aguada, Reynolds estuvo de visita en ArqPoli. El día 5 de febrero de 2018 ofreció una conferencia sobre su obra.



All the photographs are of Tainasoy Apiario, in Aguada, Puerto Rico, February and September, 2018. (Source: Biotope Planet Earth —picture at the right and drawings— and the rest taken by Dra. Yara M. Colón Rodríguez)





WE ARE CONDUCTING THIS INTERVIEW FROM A SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND FOR AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL, SO WE THINK WE SHOULD ASK YOU FIRST OFF ABOUT WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT, AND YOUR STUDIES IN ARCHITECTURE ONCE YOU GRADUATED.

What would you say was the most important thing you learned, and what would you have liked to learn that you did not?

That's a good question. I do remember, it was good to get the knowledge of Structure, and History and things like that of Architecture, but since I have been out, and as I look back, the architectural programs –and I have done lectures in a lot of architectural schools too–, [...] in general, is kind of introverted in its evolution. In other words, it's studying the History, and we sometimes mimic the History, and it's all about architects and architecture, and for me, it wasn't enough about the Earth and the people. After I got out of my School, I wanted to take care of myself and be friends with the Earth in the process. That's what I have to learn on my own. I didn't learn that in the architectural school. A lot of times in lectures they've asked me "what courses do you recommend", and I say Biology and Physics. Those are the first and foremost for an architect, in my opinion, and they aren't even in the architectural program. You get those in high school and that's it. Would they were to really take architects into Biology and Physics as much as design... Design was too "woo-woo", hypothetical, opinionated too... What good is a boat that is beautiful if it doesn't float? I think, what makes the boat float is Physics and Biology, and then, make it pretty. There was not near enough of what we need to take care of the people and the planet in the Architectural Education System.

What was the most helpful thing you learned and what was missing from your education?

In the School that I went to (which was the University of Cincinnati) they had what they called the Coop Program. It took me six years to get through, and the reason it took so long is because, every three months, you could go to school three months, and then you could work in an architectural office for three months. So, it's two things, one: it let you pay your own way through school, 'cause you were earning money all along the way, which I needed to do because my parents had no money. And, the other thing was: it immediately (after the first year) got you in touch with what was going on in the architectural world, and what you were learning [...] And I'll tell you what I've learned: I learned that I didn't want to be architect in that sense of the word. I didn't like what they were doing. Even back then, I didn't had it in context as I do now, but even back then I was saying "architects are not doing anything for people and the planet". They are teaching both in the offices and in the schools how to make buildings and how to make money making buildings, and the economy of making a building not cost much money, and repetitive, and the codes and the rules were all developed around this. It was kind of an introverted thing. It wasn't inspiring! I did go about almost immediately trying to find another architecture that was more about people and the planet, and over the years I have and I called it biotecture, because architecture is not currently addressing the issues at hand.





Your ideas have been gaining more attention over the last decade, but they were not always accepted. What are the most important differences between an architect and a "biotect"?

I have to invent a whole new profession I called it biotecture that does address those issues at hand. Those issues, I had learned over the decades, are 6 issues that humanity—both undeveloped world and developed world humanity, trapped in the Amazon and people living in New York City— all need: they all need comfortable shelter that doesn't use fossil fuels of any kind, they all need water, they all need electricity, they all need to contain and treat human sewage and on site, they all need food, and they all need to do something with your garbage. You can't really live unless

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and treat human sewage and on site, they all need food, and they all need to do something with your garbage. You can't really live unless you are addressing those things. Your garbage would stack up, your sewage would go in a hole and start causing people to have cholera. You have to address those things either on your own, or you have to have the municipalities address it for you, and the municipalities are doing it very poorly and in destructive ways, so we need an architecture that address those 6 things, and I called that architecture biotecture, because what it does, it encounters the phenomena of the planet to provide those things, and that's how easy it is. We do not need the municipality to do it for us, each building can do it for us.

You mentioned Physics and Biology, but you did not mention other disciplines (from the Humanities, for example) that could help to build this sensibility that architects are lacking. Do you think the Humanities are a crucial part of the architect's education, in order to achieve solidarity, for example?

Well, that's a good question also. I think that, if you talk about Humanities in terms of the social structure, the humanist aspect... I think (this is just my opinion) that the foundation of biotecture, that provides 6 issues for

people, all people, if that is made available to all people, and essentially is free (because the sun is free, the rain is free, the thermal mass qualities are free, Biology is free, Physics is free), if we can, as architects, make this 6 things available, and easily available, to all people, my feeling is a humanness, a social structure will evolve out of that, because I have not seen any doctor [...] that really addresses humanity in an unselfish way. I think if everybody is happy and healthy physically, that there will be a natural flow of humanity coming out of that. Right now, the opposite is occurring: a lot of people in the

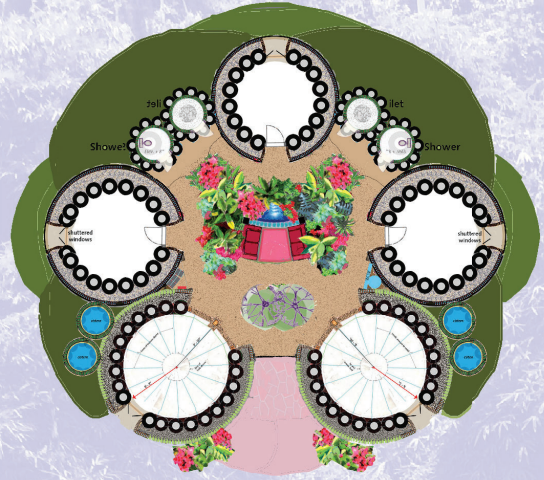
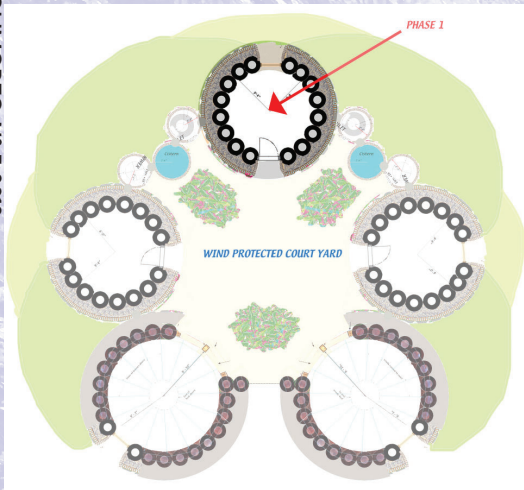
cities are one paycheck away from being homeless because of utility bills and mortgage payments, so they are under stress, and they're reacting as if they were under stress. They are short-tempered; [...] there is war, whereas if everybody is happy, and comfortable and secure, they'll naturally treat each other better and community centers around that, very much like as all the animals in the jungle. The deer and the lion come to the water hole. If the water hole is there, they all come. They have that in common. So biotecture, in my opinion, is the water hole. It brings people together, and there will be an emergence of a social structure around that.

The methodology you use integrates communities and is participatory. Why do you use this specific approach and how has it worked in your projects?

We have been learning this on our builds, for instance. When we go and do a build, on this island in Indonesia, for instance. We had like a hundred people there. There was nothing else on the island. Nothing, no buildings, no nothing. And we have to settle the island and make an earthship there that address all 6 points and provide it for people. Those people (they were men and women, old and young) those people (different countries, different races, different religions). Their desire and the excitement and the inspiration from all of them, to do this one thing all together, overpowered everything, and there was such a social bonding that they didn't even want to leave at the end of the month. And we see that a lot. We see that, not many people, if any, are capable of saying what our social structure should be, but I think [in] the way a magnet underneath a piece of paper with iron shavings on it, a magnet organizes those iron shavings by the natural magnetic field [...]. I think, providing for people a sustenance would organize them in their own natural way because, one, they are going to be so happy in their hearts that they are going to be flowing with things a lot better than being forced by politics, rules, regulations or religion. They are going to [go] to the water hole, and they are going to be glad they have it, and that is going to make them "happy".

How do you incorporate traditional and cultural aspects from the different places where you build your designs?





I am a little bit harsh on that, and the reason is... let's say you have a traditional architecture, let's say you have a traditional pagoda and, you imagine the traditional architecture of Japan. But let's say the Japanese are going into space. Does their spaceship look like a pagoda because that's their culture? No. The spaceship is going to do whatever it has to do to keep them safe and alive. In that way, I see tradition and culture as inhibiting our evolution on this planet because we are going into a time when nothing is important as us staying healthy and happy and the Earth staying healthy and happy, and pagodas don't necessarily do that.

What keeps us healthy and happy is no nuclear power plant, no black coal, no power plants dirtying up the sky, no gas fracking. That's what keeps us healthy and happy. And if in the end it does flow, and it works, yeah, put a little decoration of [...] anything. Culture must be second to survival. Survival on the planet and the way

that nurtures people and its planet is the most important, and that fits into architecture in general, because architecture in general tends to put culture, tradition, rules, regulations, "good design" first, and people and the planet second, and it should be the other way around.

Why do you think these cultural aspects are necessary or important?

I think survival of those humans and the planet, and the animals, and the plants is such a severe issue right now, that culture, tradition, politics, everything must come second to that. And again, if you are going to space, your first issue is to keep oxygen and water and food and comfort in protection from the space itself. So we need to address staying alive and our sustenance in the most important way, and everything else then follows. I have nothing against tradition and culture if it follows keeping a person happy and alive.



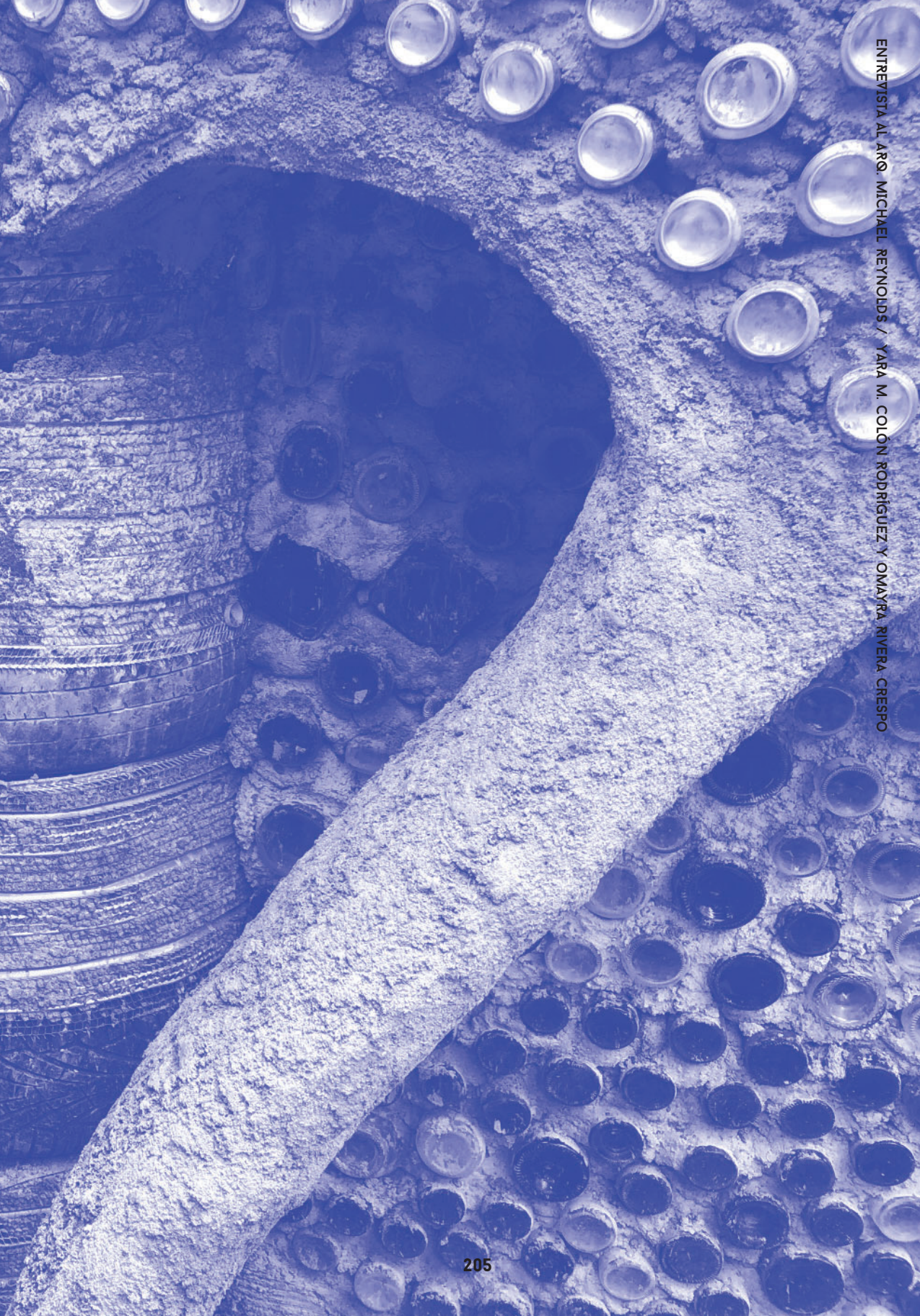
Your designs could be interpreted as ecological manifestos. Nevertheless, one aspect of sustainable design is adaptability (because people and their lives change). How do you incorporate adaptability in your designs? Is it possible to see earthships growing or adapting?

Yes, I think adaptability is the key issue. A building has to adapt to different climates first. A building has to adapt to a global situation. One of the reasons we use automobile tires rammed with earth, is that they are indigenous to the entire planet. They are a material that everyone on this planet, even in the city, on the globe, they can find tires and they can find dirt to put in the tires. If you add that the Physics aspect that dirt be into rubber tires is a fantastic thermo-mass and structural unit... So there, there was no culture, there was no tradition, there was simply absorbing the logic, as if I came here from another planet. Absorbing the logic that tires grow on the Earth, and is present everywhere on the Earth. And the Physics of it is that we need thermo-mass to stabilize temperatures in buildings, and of course we need structure. After that, you want a building that is not going to blow away in a hurricane. It's an ideal natural, but there is no tradition or culture in it, and that gave it a bad beginning, because it is not traditionally correct or culturally correct in any country to build out of tires. Yet, if you came here from another planet and didn't know traditions and cultures, and only knew logic, you would do it. And so that's the way that I look into a lot of things: I have to pretend that I came here from another planet, to get free!

The majority of your earthship projects are suburban single dwellings. How do you reconcile your ecological vision with the buildable footprint of your projects? Have you considered designing housing projects with more density (low rise, high density)?

Yes, there are lots of them rural. But the same system can apply to what we call a colony, where they're all close together and stepped up a hill, we even have design on top of a six-story tower in New York City, that is actually being drawn and looked up by the council, and we have generic earthship designs built into concrete superstructures, like parking garages, where they're all very close. The answer being that dense clusters and colonies of buildings that use all 6 of these principles are in the design phase and being illustrated and will be implemented. So there is no difference between this method of construction and any other method: they can occur in dense applications. High density, low rise, and there is no reason why it couldn't be taken

to high-rise as well. You can take a high-rise building and orient it towards the sun in a certain way and have it receive water and have it treat sewage. You can take these principles and use them. I think what is most important about what we call the earthship concept is not necessarily the designs that I put out there. They are not as important as the concept. The concept that every building should encounter the moisture on





this planet, the precipitation, and get its water for its people, it should encounter the sun or the wind to get its electricity for its people, it should encounter the biology of this planet to treat on site the sewage and the human waste of these people, and so on. In other words, each building is an individual vessel that provides everything for people.

I'll tell you something that I see, still see it everyday almost, that is ridiculous. We have many people on this planet, like Al Gore for instance, who is going around the planet showing the nuclear power plants melting down, and how much damage they're causing, and then he shows fields of solar panels saying "this is the better way, this is the new way", and I agree, but I would rather see the fields than the solar panels. We are taking the new ideas of solar and delivering them in same old way [...] and destroying the fields that could be beautiful and with trees, when really every home can be shaped and built and designed to encounter the Earth's phenomena to give the sustenance to the people that inhabit the building (be it commercial or residential). We're half way there with solar panels, but we only half way because we are still delivering it in a network of ugly wires that fall apart and break down, and [lose] resistance, and so on.

Even for today's students of architecture and design your work has a very singular and uncommon aspect/appearance (if we ignore

Antonio Gaudí, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Hassan Fathy or Paolo Soleri's work). How can they learn to see the value of your work?

I think that it will take disasters. [...] It is a matter of how desperate we are. I look at Puerto Rico and Haiti and all the others as a hole in dogma. Puerto Rico has created a hole in dogma. That means traditions, culture, looks, aesthetics, everything is second to those people that live in Puerto Rico having water, having shelter, having shelter that they know is not going to blow away in the next hurricane. I know that our build there will not blow away in the next hurricane, it will not. It's going to stay, it's going to have water, it's going to be comfortable, it's going to have electricity. It may be not perfect. People may argue about what it looks like. I want it to flow. I want it to take care of people first. I have done buildings that I don't care what they look like. I want them to work. Then, after they work, then I do play with them. I like to sculpt. I like that. But again, what good is a beautiful boat if it sinks? People are the priority, that's the point.

When there has been a sudden disaster, people/villages/communities count on you. Why? Are you not concerned about the possibility that people could relate/see your projects just as provisional solutions (as something that is not as good as what they might think is "normal architecture")?



I think that we have learned to do this. I think we are still learning to make the plans—say when we went to Haiti after the Earthquake or in Puerto Rico after the hurricane—. I think of it as a plant. If I were to go somewhere, and plant a plant that I really knew was a good plant that makes food or whatever... Planting the plant is not good enough. I need to plant the plant and I need to plant many of them, and I need to show the people locally how to nurture them, and keep them alive, and keep them coming back the next year and so on. That's the new part for me. That's the new part I'm still learning. In other words, I have succeeded a few times. I made a School in Sierra Leone. It was an eight-room school. We built three of the rooms with our team, and taught them, and work with them diligently to work with us on those three rooms. Six months later, they had completed the other five rooms the same way. That's what I am after in Puerto Rico, and the design has to be, has to lend itself to that. It has to be user-friendly and simple. The design has to be something that you don't have to be an architect or an engineer or even a builder to do this. You have to be able to learn it very simply, and replicate it, gather the tires, put the dirt in them, understand the physics and the biology of the six points, and make an architecture that reemerges out of a place like Puerto Rico that's of the people by the people and sustains the people, and doesn't depend on billionaires and countries to put in the infrastructure and sell the infrastructure. The sustenance of people should be available to every man, woman and child on this planet

with their own encounter, their own empowerment to achieve this. And right now I see a lot of Puerto Ricans being powerless, because the power lines are down, because the sewage lines are not working, because there is no gas, because there is no comfort to keep cooler, because food may be hard to find, and water. I am saying that a vessel, just like a spaceship in space, can be provided for every building circumstance that provides everything for the inhabitation of that building. And it simply does away with infrastructure. No infrastructure is needed, which means, politics and corporations, we are not dependent on them. We are dependent on our friends: the sun, the wind, the Earth, the biology, and their physics. They will understand.

But we don't seem to notice the imbalance and inequality of the previous state before disasters, that is, of the so-called "normal" state of things.

I agree. [...] Here is what I see: right now [in January], Puerto Rico, just like Haiti before it and a few others, is a disaster area. And the people in that disaster area, what do they need? Shelter, water, electricity, sanitation... Those are the same things the richest people in the world need. But the richest people in the world have it given to them right now but not for long. The disaster in Puerto Rico is a mini version of the disaster that is about to affect this whole planet. That is why I go to places like Puerto Rico, to continue learning how to integrate this into the people and the planet. We know how to do it for ourselves, and for people individually,

but to do it for a massive quantity of people... we are learning. We will go to there, there will be a hundred people there, if not more. We used to have to say "no more". We will have people from all over the world there, would have a lot of people from Puerto Rico there, and a building that will take care of people will emerge, and there will be things to encounter, and things to overcome, but we know that we can do this because we have done it before. For me, this is a dress rehearsal for the entire planet.

In your community projects in Taos, New Mexico, you challenged several planning and architecture laws and regulations, and even proposed changes to the principle of private property. What advantages does this alternative land occupancy have?

When I first started doing the communities decades ago I have learned from my architecture experience that -and all developers agreed- that one half of the cost of housing in the world today is wrapped up in the development of the land (putting in the infrastructure, putting in the sewage, putting in the power lines, putting in the roads, putting in everything). That makes the land be very expensive, the fact that you add in the cost of the house, and the house gets very expensive. Well, I was already building houses that didn't need any of that. I didn't want to have to do that and make the house cost more, so I said: "Why don't we look at that land as a parking garage?" We all own the garage at the same

time, but we each own our own car. And we can do whatever we want to our car, we just have to share the maintenance of the parking garage. So I took a big 600 acres track of land and I said: "it's a parking garage!, let's park our earthships here!". We all own our earthships, but we own the land in common. That it isn't democracy but it isn't socialism. It's logic! It's just logic! And I fought, and I got almost thrown in jail for that. I don't care about the ownership of the land. This building that we are going to build in Puerto Rico, I don't care who owns it, I don't care whose land is on. We're giving it away! I want people to have sustenance on this planet. Then the planet will be a lot better for me if everybody is happy. If everybody is at war and insecure and [arguing] over things on this planet, these are not very happy things for me... This planet is a lot more healthy and safe for me if everybody on it is happy and has everything they need. And I don't care who owns it.

I think that [a new social order] will come from people being taking care of. In other words, if everybody has everything they need, a social order will develop from that, if they all realize that they all have to come to the same water hole. Being around a water hole, there are different rules. We are all creatures that want water. I don't care about religion, I don't care about the ownership. [W]e get lots of people that will try to own the water hole and sell the water... That's wrong! But water comes from the sky. They'll never going to own the sky. They can own the Earth, and pieces of it, but they can never own the sky. And if we can get that thinking out there... For me, to have a villa, a beautiful villa



in Puerto Rico, is not as important to me as having everyone in Puerto Rico have a comfortable home that takes care of them (and maybe one of them will let me stay in one of their rooms sometimes!).

In your book *Earthship Wizards* (2012), you talk about the need to "break out" and "the prison of the human condition".

What would be the prison of architecture or architects?

How do you define what should be the consciousness of an architect? What should architects be aware of?

There is a corral [...] that defines architecture, that defines our life, that defines all of humanity in a lot of ways, and I'm looking at this being a way to just break out of that corral. There is a world out there that doesn't exist inside the corral, and we need that corral right now. Our definitions and our dogma simply restrict our evolution. We are going to have to evolve on this planet if we are going to stay alive. We will always have to evolve, and so we always have to have the only rules, what I call the unarguable rules. They are like: no one argues with the sun. I love the sun, because it's hot. It will kill you. It will kill me. If I go naked in the sun for five days in the Sahara desert, the sun will kill me. But if I dig myself a snow cave in Canada facing south, the sun will save me. It's my method of relating to the unarguable and honest and truth of the sun that will take care of me. Those are the things that we have to try, and let ourselves get to, and our dogma, our belief system, our religions, our rules, our regulations,

our politics keep us from that, and I'm trying to make an architecture, which I call biotecture, to give people that freedom.

What have been the most challenging (technical) aspects of making earthships?

It was done: to learn how, to harvest water, and getting it clean, and learn how to contain and treat sewage with biology, and get it clean, and make it produce food. We are constantly learning how to produce more food, more and more food, because food is really worthless these days because they sell it for money. They put dyes and chemicals and everything in it. Having your own tomatoes? There's nothing better than your own tomatoes! Those things were fun. They were challenges, but they were fun. It is a challenge to try and get affordable in a price range where people can afford it. Everybody can do it themselves, if not physically adapt to do that, so they have to be able to purchase it. I can buy, you can call this communist, probably, but in my way, the government would provide a vessel for every person to live in, and then, having that, you have nothing to lose, you will always have that, it will always keep you alive without utility bills because it encounters the Earth to take care of you. Then you can play the capitalist thing, then you can play Monopoly or whatever, you can buy and sell in the stock market or do whatever, but your sustenance, your sustenance is separate from the monetary... from the economics. Right now, sustenance is only attainable through the economics. You see all this countries around the world; they



are rioting and protesting for a better economy. They don't even know what they are talking about, but they've been told that that's what will give them sustenance. I want sustenance to occur in spite of economy. The economy can go up and down and do whatever it wants. Sustenance should always be available first and foremost. Sustenance is the purpose of architects, in my opinion, and then, from that sustenance, people will emerge that are different, and yes, and after that sustenance economy can do whatever it wants. I call it an insignificant economy. That's what we want for the future. We don't want this outlaw economy. We can't do that. We want an insignificant economy. Right now the economy is god, it really is, because if you don't have money in your pocket, you cannot live. I want sustenance to be available. I want to empower people to extract sustenance from the phenomena of the Earth and then play the economy game.

We have seen your work and its effects all over the world, but you have expressed that in Latin America you found more receptivity and openness to your architecture. What do you think is the reason for that?

I think that the cloak of dogma might be a little thicker in North America and Europe, (it's my experience, I've been there!) whereas in Latin America they are still closer to the truth in a lot of ways. Now, a lot of Latin America has adapted this cloak from North America and Europe (I've seen a lot of that), but mainly the development,

the technical development of these other [places] like Europe and North America has actually gone further and separated people from the Earth more than they are separated in the Southern Hemisphere. [...] I have nothing against technology. I want to use technology in a more intelligent way. Right now we are using technology to replace nature. And I think technology [should be] combined with nature, creating what we call Biomimicry, and things like that [...] I want to be humble enough to know that I cannot change, reinvent or change, gravity. Gravity is a force. It's here and so is the sun, you get into Physics, you get into the magnetic force. That is one of the four forces, electromagnetic. It is a force. We can't invent it. All we can do is understand it enough to let it take care of us, let it help us. Make a perpetual motion machine, whatever. But let us be humble enough to learn and use this thing that already exists. We are very arrogant, we humans. I think that North America and Europe are more arrogant than Latin America. I think that's the problem. They think they can recreate the world, and it's blowing up in their faces! The nuclear plant in Japan is still ruining the Northern Hemisphere as we speak. Black coal is ruining... everywhere. This thing is due to reinvent the Earth... are all backfiring. We need to be humble enough to listen to these unarguable forces that can take care of us. It's nothing difficult: it's eight-grade Biology and Physics and all of the sudden we can still live.

Do you find it useful to study the History of Architecture? Which aspects of it do you use in your work?



I think studying the History, being aware of the history of any part of civilization, is good. Yes, History of Architecture is good. Yes, History of

Architecture can teach us, show us, what we have been through before. We can go all the way back to Stonehenge and the Pyramids. That's architecture! They were relating to the solar system and the universe.

Some woman architect, she might have been a historian, once wrote a piece [...] she was relating to the ancient architects that were priests. They were aligning with the forces of the solar system and the universe!

They were aligning with the forces of the Earth, they were aligning with the solar system and the universe, and fantastic things were happening that we still do not know how to do today, like the great pyramids and so on, and Stonehenge. So, she was saying that the ancient architects were priests, and the modern architects were impotent slaves of the economy. And I agree with her.

Modern architects [...] the few of them will get lucky breaks and get to do fantastic sculptural stuff (that still takes fifty thousand dollars worth in utilities a months to operate it), and they get into magazines and things like that, and they became famous, and rich, and so on. To me, they are more artists than architects, and they are not helping sustain humanity. So yes, History is good to study all of that to see what it's going to do us some good in the future, what is going to take care of us in the future. With study, we are going to see that the impotent architects, the impotent slaves of economy, they are not going to help us. We're going to see maybe that the "priests" that are

trying to align with the universe and the solar system could help maybe give us a broader view of how to live in this planet. I take the history out of the human realm. I like the history of animals. There is a book, *Architecture without Architects* [written by Bernard Rudofsky in 1964 followed by *The Prodigious Builders* in 1977]. To me, that's one of the best History of Architecture books I ever know of. Now, they tell so much more. The architecture of animals and plants is certainly the history that should be incorporated in the History of Architecture.

You studied in a context when modernist architecture in the U.S.A. was realigning itself with more progressive objectives, methodologies and parameters (during the 1970's). What architects from that period do you admire?

Well, I have been asked that question a lot! I think the only human that I ever did admire in terms of... things like that, would be Noah. Noah was inspired, whether you believe in god or not, Noah was inspired to build a boat in the middle of the desert and everybody called him an idiot, but he in his heart or mind or vision or something, saw clouds were coming, rains were going to fall (and they did), and he had a boat. I can relate to that right now in this planet. I want to build boats that will take care of humanity in the future. But even more than that, if I really went to the thing that inspires me, the creature that inspires me more

than anything, it would be a tree. Because a tree encounters the sun, with photosynthesis, encounters the rain, with leaves and its nourishment, and transpiration through the roots. A tree puts out oxygen for us creatures to breath, and takes in the carbon dioxide that we breath out... A tree sits there, all by [itself], and encounters the phenomena of the planet to stay alive (and some of them have been alive for thousands of years...). If we are going to need a model, as mentor for our lives, as humans and as architects: look at a tree! [...] I like some of Frank Lloyd Wright stuff... I like different things here and there, but it was all architecture, and I see architecture as inhibiting evolution of humans in this planet the way it stands now.

What could be done within the context of a School of Architecture in Puerto Rico in order to change the way in which we produce architecture and urban space?

My architectural school in University of Cincinnati, it had this program called the Coop Program, where you can work, you can go to school for three months, a quarter, and then you could work in an architects office for three months. That taught me a lot:

it taught me that I didn't want to be an architect. I think what we do is (our company) what we do around the world, we're always going to a different country, half the time after a disaster, to just try and apply what we know and learn and help, all that together... people want to do that. I see that if architectural schools would adapt a program like that where, yes, we'll teach you what we professors think are the things you should learn and we are going to try and get that curriculum to be as wide and broad and Earth-encompassing as we can, but still, we are going to throw you every three months into the world, and let you try do something with people. That's going to teach you humanity. That's going to teach you the strengths of building and construction. That's going to teach you the thinking of the sun, and the wind and the trees and so on. In other words: throw them out there, right in the beginning, every three months into the reality of the planet, and then, every three months give them your curriculum. That's kind of what our school is doing, we have the Earthship Academy. The Earthship Academy has a curriculum, has courses, classes, lectures, labs, all of that, but the Earthship Academy puts people out on the planet, in Puerto Rico, in Haiti, doing it! I think they [learn] a whole lot of other stuff way beyond our curriculums. I think architectural schools ought to do that.

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