

Texto introductorio sobre Los indocumentados: La arquitectura de la detención migratoria

Introduction text about *Undocumented: The Architecture of Migrant Detention*

Durante este tiempo, más de 100.000 personas fueron encarceladas en Canadá, sin imputación de cargos ni juicio y sin un final a la vista. En Canadá, la inmigración se considera un asunto de derecho administrativo, en vez de penal, del mismo modo en que recibir una multa de estacionamiento constituye una infracción administrativa. Esto significa que las personas recluidas en los centros de detención –hasta un tercio de ellas en “camas alquiladas” en las cárceles de máxima seguridad– están detenidas sin cargos ni juicio. Algunos eran trabajadores migrantes, detenidos después de que no se renovaran sus permisos; algunos eran refugiados cuya identidad no pudo ser confirmada en los lugares a los que huyeron; algunas eran trabajadoras domésticas arrestadas en un control de identificación aleatorio cuando tomaban el transporte público. Son muchas las historias, y las voces comparten un mismo hilo conductor, de personas pobres y trabajadores, en gran parte del sur global, de las “naciones más oscuras”.

Esto incluye a los niños que se encuentran detenidos o que han sido separados indefinidamente de sus cuidadores. Esta es la realidad de la detención de inmigrantes en Canadá, una realidad que se hace violentamente invisible. Los migrantes son detenidos principalmente porque son indocumentados. Asimismo, estos lugares de detención apenas dejan rastro: los planos y las fotos son clasificados y el acceso es extremadamente limitado. Los centros de detención tampoco cuentan con documentación.

La “novela gráfica” de no ficción documenta la banalidad y la violencia de la arquitectura en contraste con las historias de resistencia diaria entre los inmigrantes detenidos. El 17 de septiembre de 2013, 191 detenidos en el Centro Correccional Central East en Lindsay, Ontario, realizaron la mayor acción colectiva conocida entre los detenidos por inmigración en Canadá. Se rehusaron a entrar en sus celdas, a comer, a asistir a las audiencias de revisión de detención para poner fin a la detención indefinida.

Es importante tener en cuenta este último punto. Contrariamente a la imagen de amor por los derechos humanos y por los inmigrantes que le gusta vender, Canadá practica la detención arbitraria e indefinida: no hay límites de tiempo. Algunos habían estado recluidos durante casi una década en centros de máxima seguridad, sin imputación de cargos ni juicio.

A partir de esta huelga que tuvo lugar en 2013, surgió una campaña nacional que hacía un llamado a poner fin a la detención indefinida, de la cual yo hice parte. Esta obra se basa, entonces, en ese trabajo de organización colectiva de la época, dirigido por No One is Illegal (Toronto) y la End Immigration Detention Network, y todos los ingresos provenientes del libro se destinarán a la organización del trabajo en solidaridad con los migrantes detenidos.

En este contexto, *Undocumented* explora los centros de detención de migrantes en Canadá, un sector importante del complejo industrial penitenciario del norte global, y cuestiona el papel del diseño arquitectónico en el control y gestión de los migrantes en dichos espacios. Desde el plan maestro hasta las perillas de cada celda, se toman decisiones de diseño y dichas decisiones se materializan y tienen consecuencias humanas. Este libro es un mosaico investigativo basado en testimonios de los detenidos –que mapea los espacios en donde fueron detenidos y los procesos por los que pasaron–, solicitudes de Acceso a la Información, guías de diseño arquitectónico y requisitos internacionales sobre detención y más. En conjunto, la investigación, de la que aquí se presentan unos fragmentos, muestra el diseño de un centro de detención utilizando un programa de modelado arquitectónico, a partir del cual se crearon estos dibujos. Es una obra de ficción basada en la realidad.

Mediante el uso de las herramientas arquitectónicas convencionales de representación, traté de situar, espacializar y confrontar las voces silenciadas de los detenidos y los individuos anónimos que diseñan espacios de encierro.

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latibus et esequi ipsaperatur
Alissit iossit, commo officae

_DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18389/dearq30.2021.10>

Este extracto es del libro, Los indocumentados: *La arquitectura de la detención migratoria* (The Architecture Observer 2014, Ad Astra Comix 2017), que surgió del trabajo e investigación sobre la justicia migrante y los centros de detención canadienses entre 2006 y 2013.

An undocumented woman seeks shelter while fleeing domestic violence, a mother attempts to enroll her non-status child in primary school, a failed refugee claimant goes to a food bank, an overstayed visitor walks into a medical clinic. For undocumented people in a city, simply carrying out one's daily life is a challenge to borders that every day threaten detention and deportation.

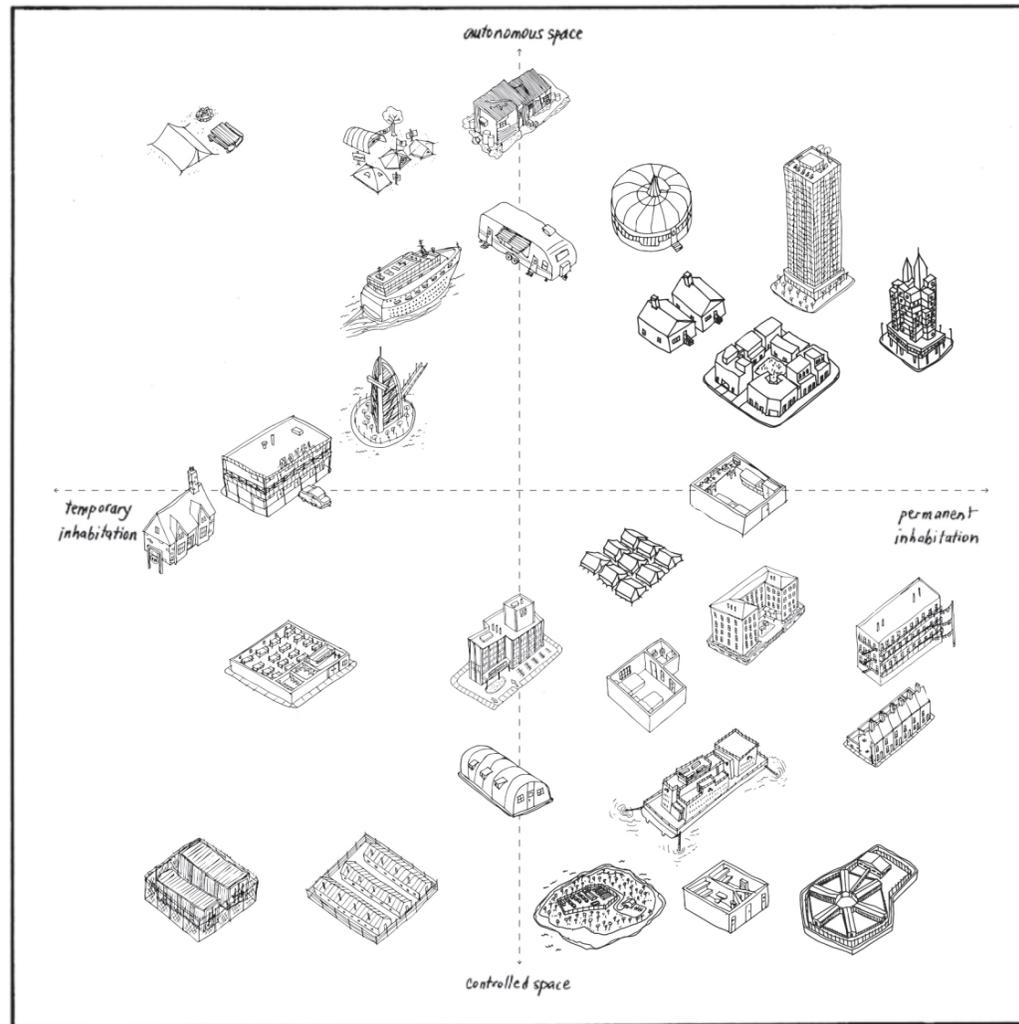
We live in an era of unprecedented human migration. Mass migration (or mass displacement) is both a process and a condition, driven by global capitalism, neo-colonialism, war and imperialism, and environmental destruction. Borders, material and immaterial ones, are proliferating around and between us.

As the world has become borderless to "flows" of capital, the movement of migrant bodies is restricted as never before. And so, millions of migrants live precarious lives as precarious labourers, as refugees, and as undocumented people.

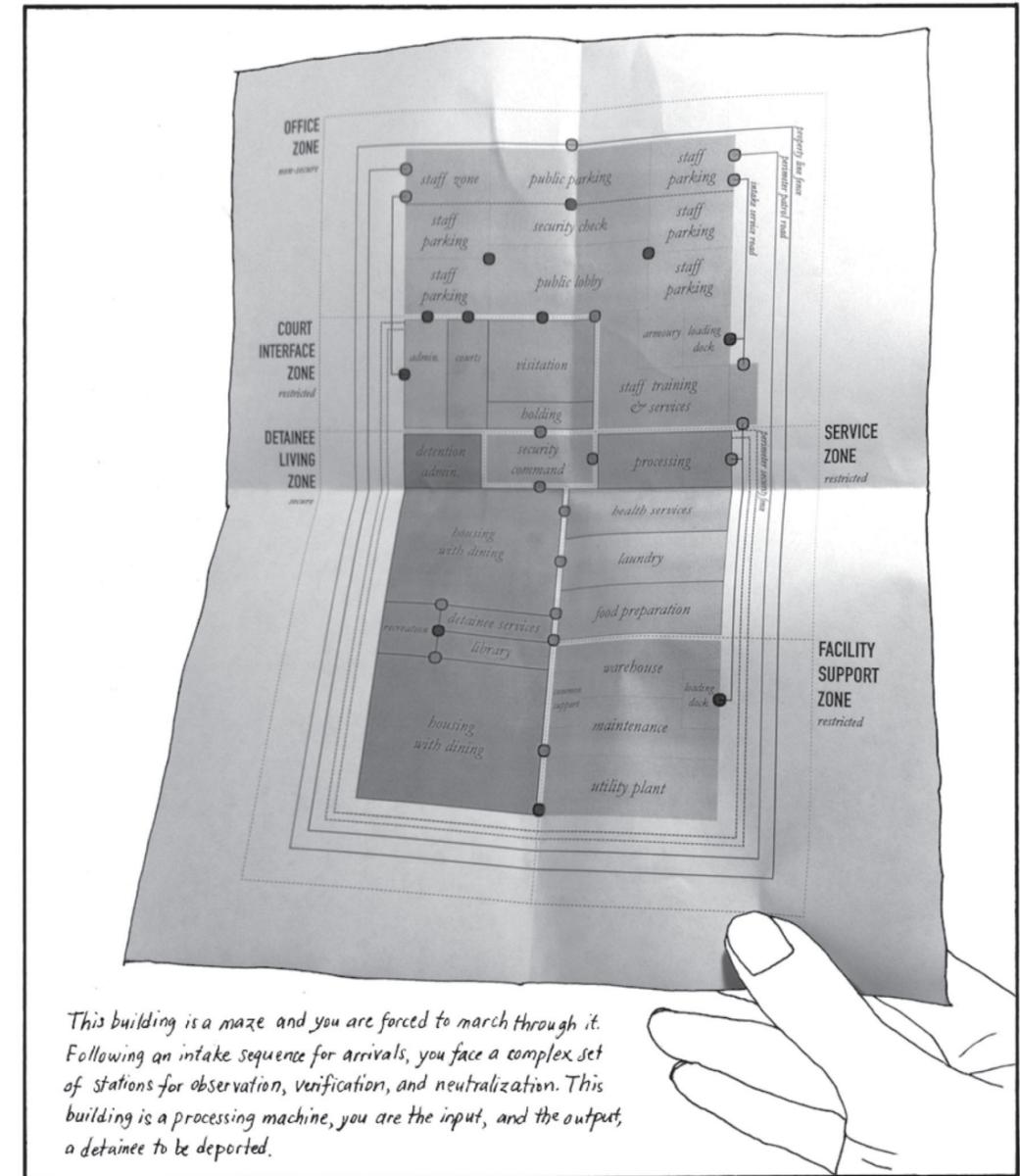
Migrants' journeys are commonly portrayed as linear progressions from home to host nations, but in reality they are replete with interruptions and discontinuities, occupying spaces of hiding, waiting, diversion, escape, settlement, and return – spaces which are largely invisible to the public. Among those are spaces used for mass detentions and deportation.

In these pages you will find an incomplete view into the world of migrant detention in Canada, explored at scales descending from physical landscapes to the human body. This illustrated documentary is an ongoing project developed through reading, listening, organising, writing, drawing, and imagining. The stories are borrowed from the lived experiences of anonymous individuals and all figures are taken from official sources.

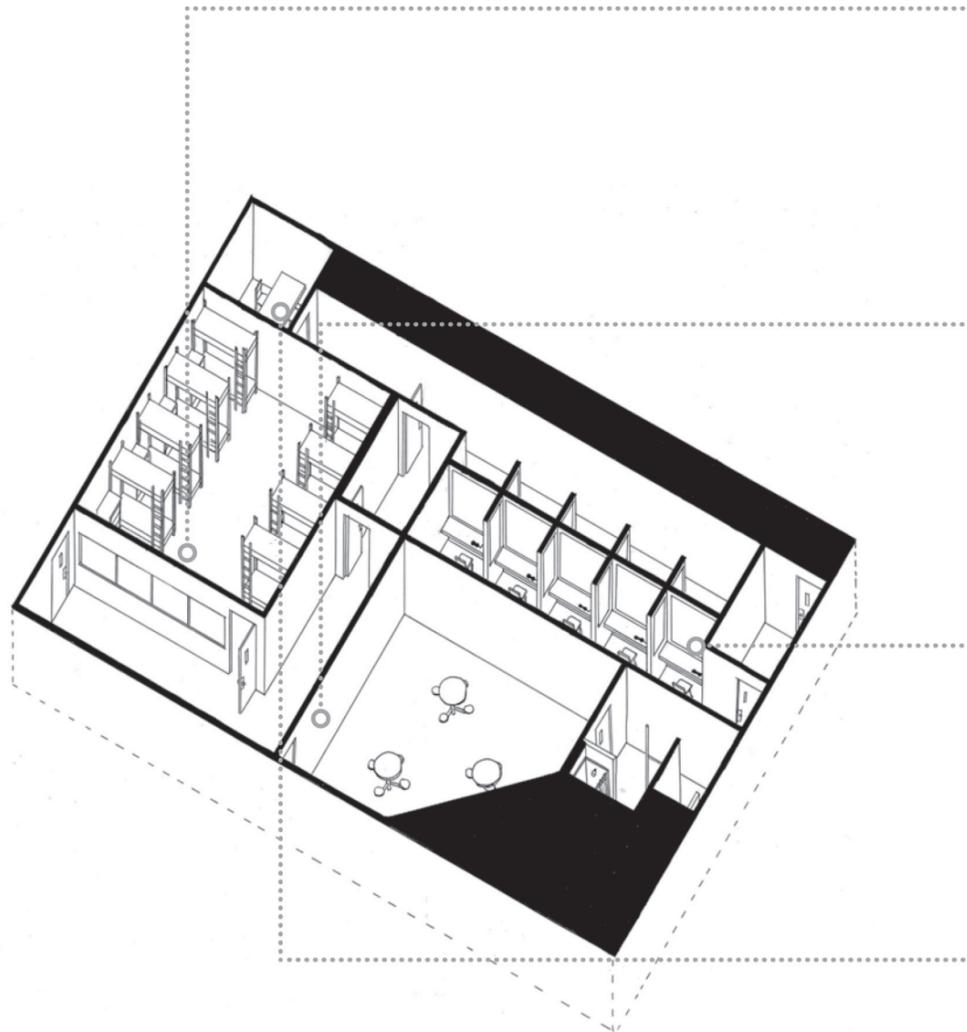
to the people who have resisted, and continue to resist, borders everywhere.



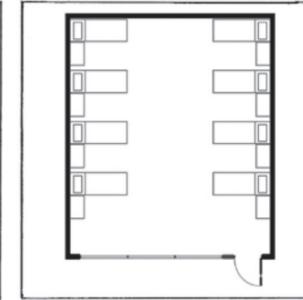
Spaces of incarceration just may be the mass (ware)housing solution of our time, where those who are deemed undesirable and dangerous are caged. In a securitized world, the gated community mirrors the detention centre, the micro-condominium isn't so different from the cell, they are sites of exclusion and seclusion. Sometimes it's difficult to tell who is being protected from whom.



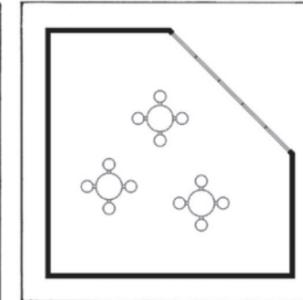
This building is a maze and you are forced to march through it. Following an intake sequence for arrivals, you face a complex set of stations for observation, verification, and neutralization. This building is a processing machine, you are the input, and the output, a detainee to be deported.



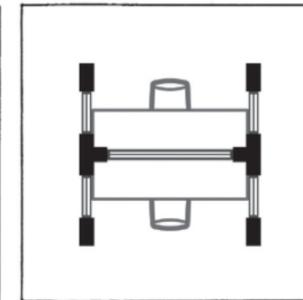
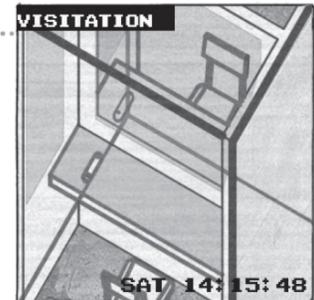
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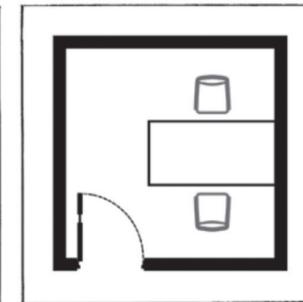
DORMITORY
 DIMENSION: 7.3 X 8.5 M = 62.1 M²
 WALLS: REINFORCED CONCRETE BLOCK
 FLOORS: SEALED CONCRETE
 CEILING: DETENTION CEILING
 DOORS: HOLLOW METAL W/VISION PANEL
 GLAZING: 7/16" GLASS CLAD POLYCARBONATE
 PLUMBING: FLOOR DRAIN
 HVAC: TYPICAL W/EXHAUST
 LIGHTING: RECESSED FLUORESCENT
 SECURITY: ELECTRONIC ACCESS CONTROL, VIDEO SURVEILLANCE
 SURVEILLANCE: ABILITY FOR LOCK DOWN
 COMMUNICATIONS: N/A
 NOTE: CAPACITY OF 16 IN DOUBLE BUNKS, 2 DRAWERS PER DETAINEE



COMMON AREA
 DIMENSION: 8.5 X 8.5 M = 72.3 M²
 WALLS: REINFORCED CONCRETE BLOCK
 FLOORS: SEALED CONCRETE
 CEILING: GYPSUM BOARD
 DOORS: HOLLOW METAL W/VISION PANEL
 GLAZING: 7/16" GLASS CLAD POLYCARBONATE
 PLUMBING: FLOOR DRAIN
 HVAC: TYPICAL W/EXHAUST
 LIGHTING: RECESSED FLUORESCENT
 SECURITY: ELECTRONIC ACCESS CONTROL, VIDEO SURVEILLANCE
 COMMUNICATIONS: N/A
 NOTE: COMMON AREA W/COLOR TELEVISION W/ OPTIONAL: PRAYER AND LIBRARY AREA



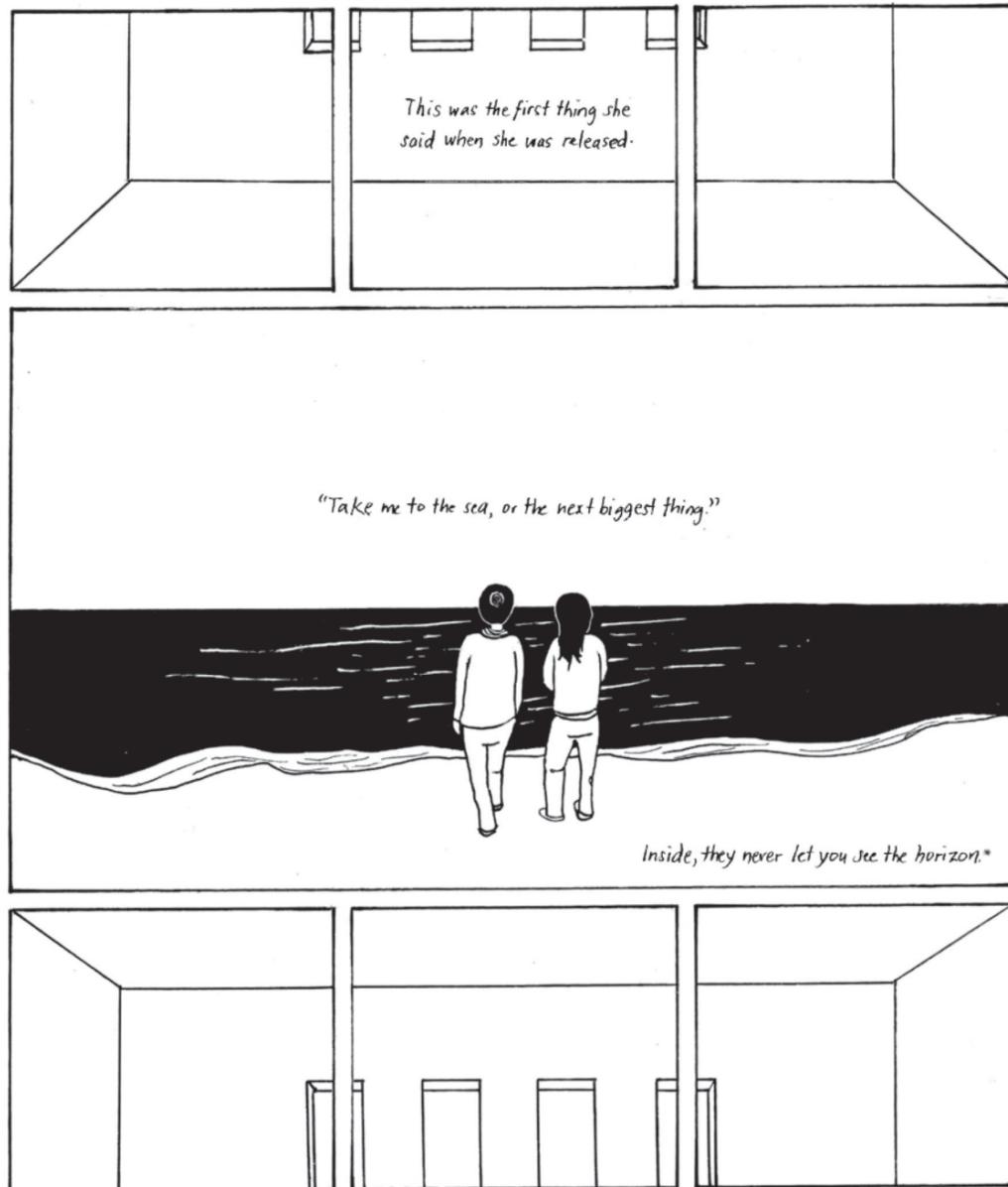
VISITATION
 MINIMUM SIZE: 1.9 X 1.9 M = 3.6 M²
 WALLS: REINFORCED CONCRETE BLOCK
 FLOORS: SEALED CONCRETE
 CEILING: GYPSUM BOARD
 DOORS: N/A
 GLAZING: 7/16" GLASS CLAD POLYCARBONATE
 PLUMBING: N/A
 HVAC: TYPICAL W/EXHAUST
 LIGHTING: RECESSED FLUORESCENT
 SECURITY: VIDEO SURVEILLANCE
 COMMUNICATIONS: 32" ARMOURD CORD HANDSET
 NOTE: 30 MIN NON-CONTACT VISITATION ACCOMMODATE 10 PERCENT OF DETAINEES



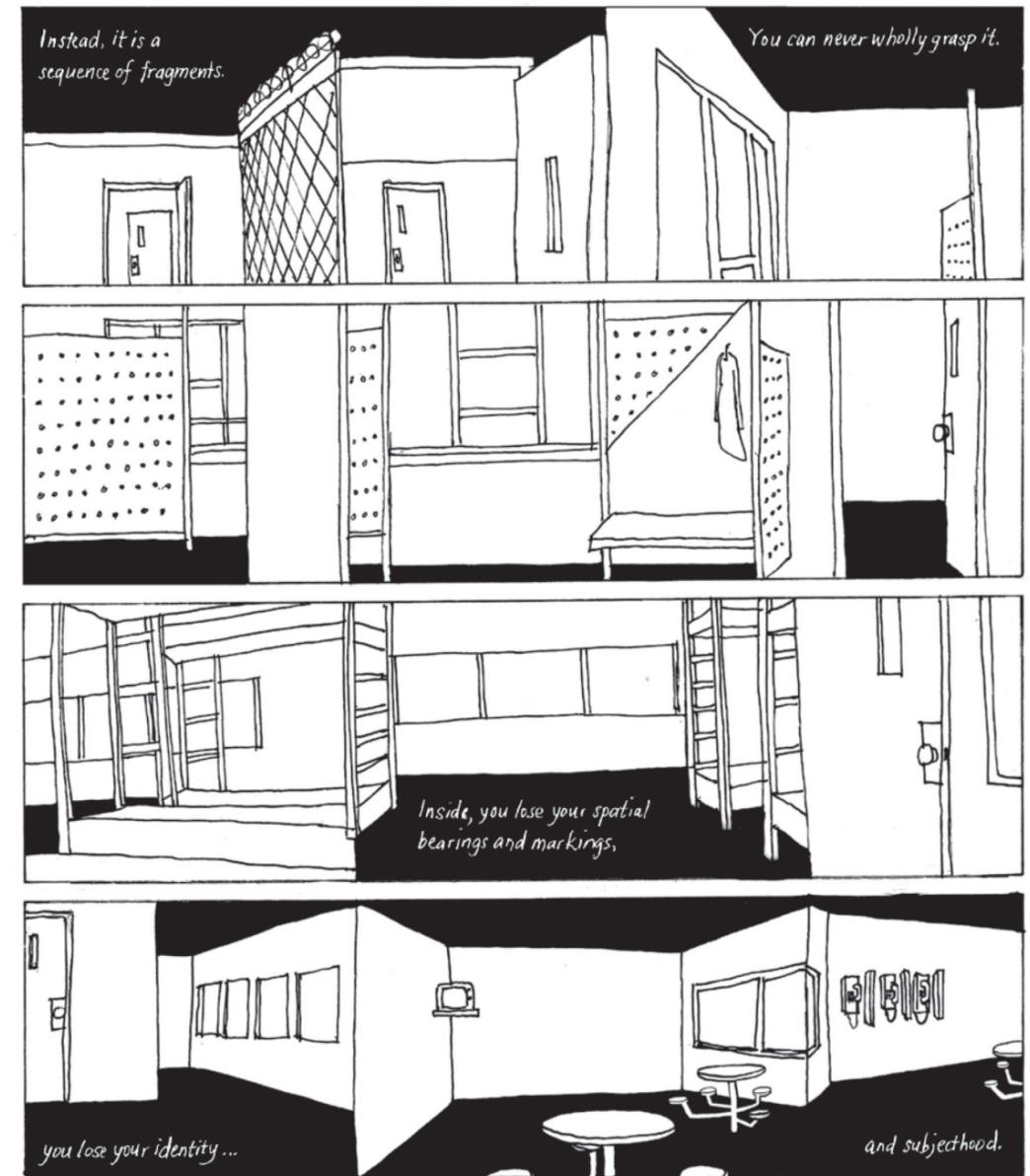
COUNSEL VISITATION
 MINIMUM SIZE: 3.0 X 3.0 M = 9.0 M²
 WALLS: REINFORCED CONCRETE BLOCK
 FLOORS: SEALED CONCRETE
 CEILING: GYPSUM BOARD
 DOORS: HOLLOW METAL W/VISION PANEL
 GLAZING: N/A
 PLUMBING: N/A
 HVAC: TYPICAL W/EXHAUST
 LIGHTING: RECESSED FLUORESCENT
 SECURITY: VIDEO SURVEILLANCE
 COMMUNICATIONS: N/A
 NOTE: ATTORNEY VISITING ROOM

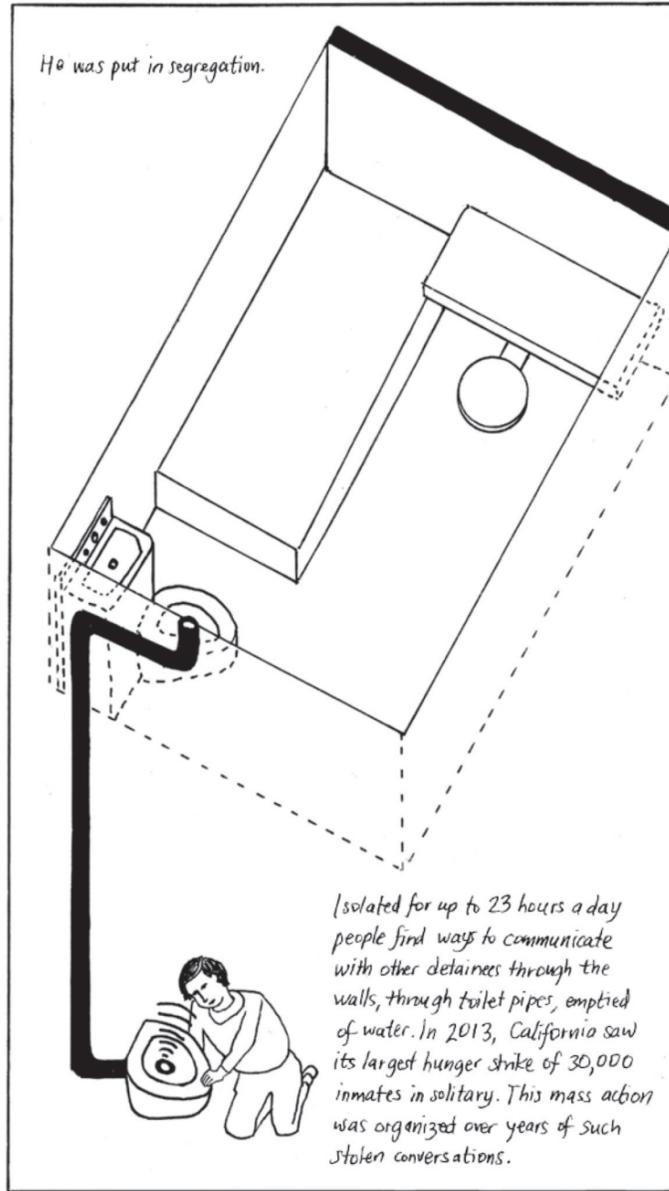


*How do landscapes and objects, bodies and narratives build space and make architecture?
How does architecture inflict violence on human bodies and minds onto our physical environment?*



*BASED ON DESCRIPTION BY SUSAN ROSENBERG, INTERVIEWED BY BRETT STORY IN CBL IDEAS "ALONE INSIDE" (2013)



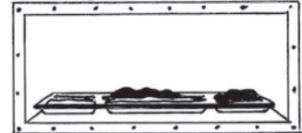


He was put in segregation.

According to Corrections Canada, solitary confinement is euphemistically called "administrative segregation," used to ensure the "safety of all inmates, staff, and visitors," rather than for punitive reasons. In the control of bodies, architecture manages risk, so that the system never has to confront the aggregated power of inmates.



Prisoners held in prolonged segregation speak about the feeling of merging with the walls."



07H: WAKE UP

22H: LIGHTS OUT

where the distinction between an individual's body and self becomes indistinguishable



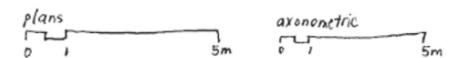
from the individual cell itself.

Isolated for up to 23 hours a day people find ways to communicate with other detainees through the walls, through toilet pipes, emptied of water. In 2013, California saw its largest hunger strike of 30,000 inmates in solitary. This mass action was organized over years of such stolen conversations.

*LISA GOENTHER, INTERVIEWED BY BRETT STORY IN CBC IDEAS "ALONE INSIDE" (2013)

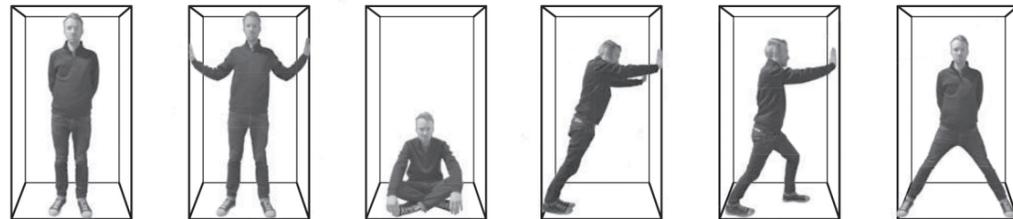
<p>LONG-TERM CARE MULT. OCCUPANCY A = 9.3M²/PERSON V = 18.1M³/PERSON NATURAL LIGHT = 0.9M²/PERSON</p>	<p>LONG-TERM CARE SINGLE ROOM A = 11.2M²/PERSON V = 21.8M³/PERSON NATURAL LIGHT = 1.1M²/PERSON</p>
<p>RESIDENTIAL SINGLE ROOM A = 6.0M²/PERSON V = 8.7-11.7M³/PERSON NATURAL LIGHT = 0.3M²/PERSON OR EGRESS WINDOW 0.762M WIDE</p>	<p>RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE OCCUPANCY A = 4.0M²/PERSON V = 5.8-7.8M³/PERSON NATURAL LIGHT = 0.2M²/PERSON OR EGRESS WINDOW 0.762M WIDE</p>
<p>RESIDENTIAL SINGLE ROOM DWELLING A = 26M²/PERSON V = 37.5-50.7M³/PERSON NATURAL LIGHT = 2.3M²/PERSON</p>	
<p>RESIDENTIAL SINGLE ROOM DWELLING - ADVOCATED FOR ROOMING HOUSES A = 14M²/PERSON V = 20.2-27.3M³/PERSON NATURAL LIGHT = 0.7M²/PERSON</p>	

The bare minimum defines what is "habitable."

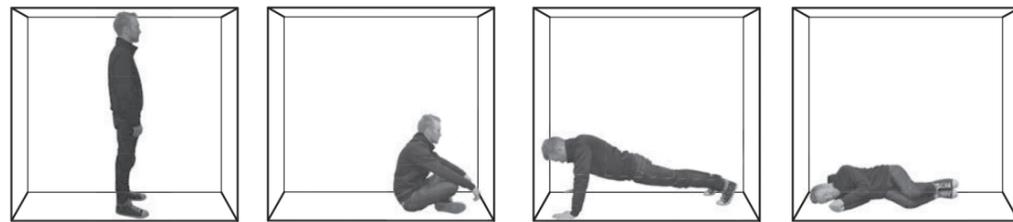


SOURCE
1. IMMIGRATION DETENTION: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT / DESIGN STANDARDS FOR IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (2007)
2. PRISON: INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS / JAIL SANITATION, HYGIENE AND HEALTH IN PRISONS (2009)
3. FEDERAL JAIL SYSTEM: FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION / FEDERAL JAIL SYSTEM (1997)
4. FEDERAL JAIL SYSTEM: FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION / FEDERAL JAIL SYSTEM (1997)
5. LONG-TERM CARE: MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE / LONG-TERM CARE HOME DESIGN MANUAL (2009)
6. CAMP: UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES / A HUMANITY GUIDE TO UNICEF REFUGEE STANDARDS AND INDICATORS (2009)

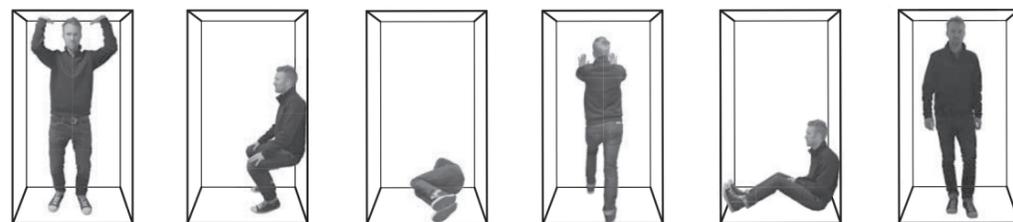
According to the International Red Cross,



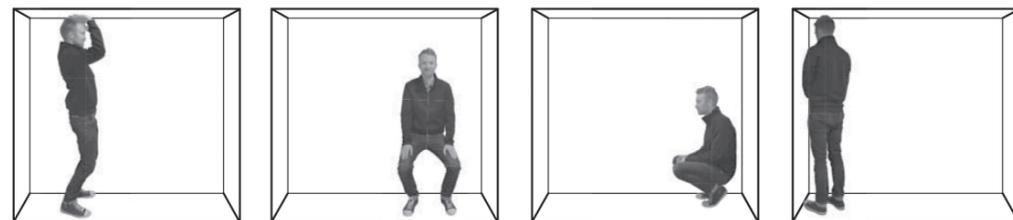
the minimum habitable space for an incarcerated individual is measured.



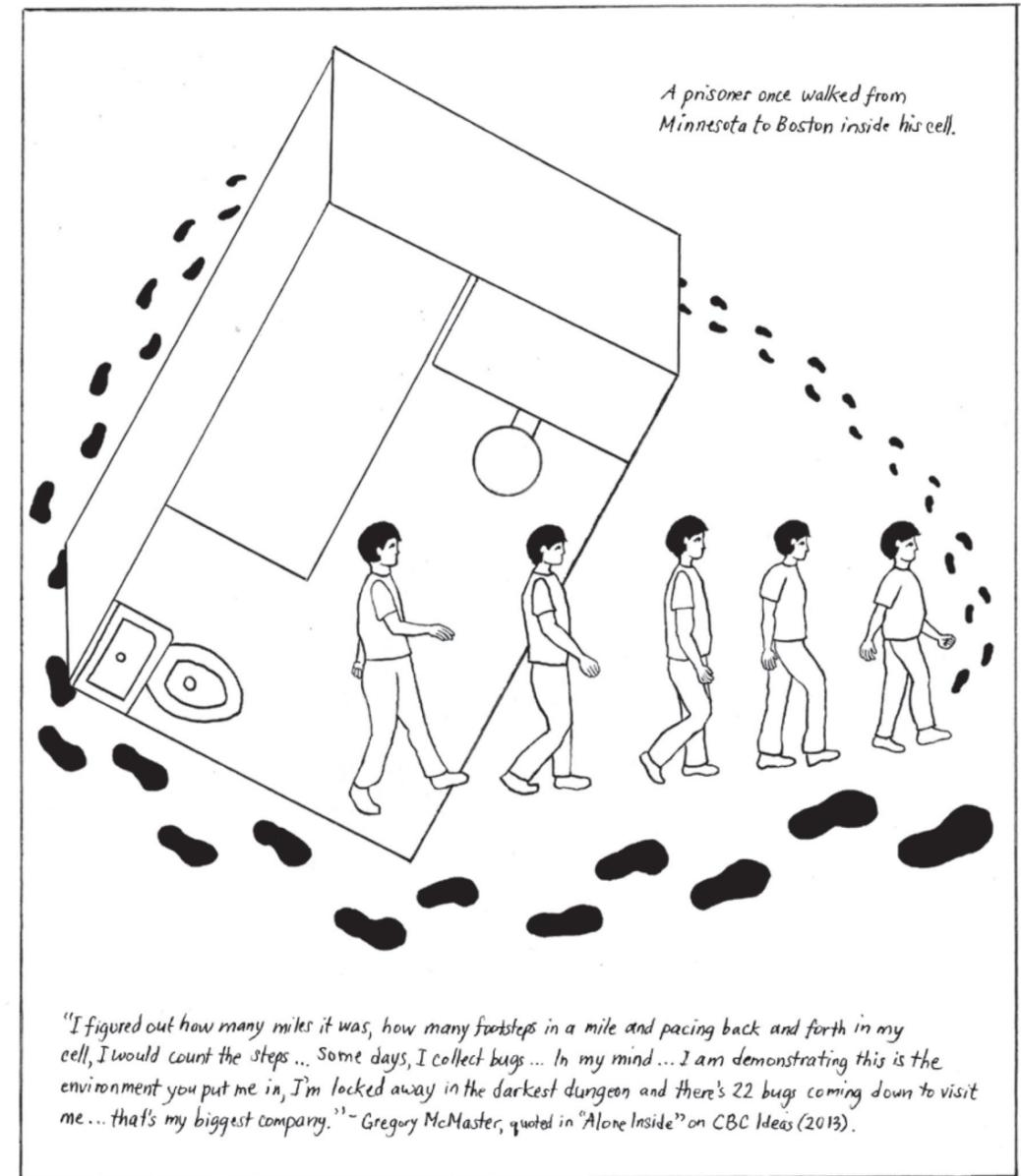
2 square metres of floor area



and 3.5 cubic metre of air space.



In this volume, the contents of your life are caged. But not every human action can be programmed or predicted, our bodies always find ways to carve out space, to refocus our attention from the geometry to the lived experience, from the container to the contained.



Amongst bolted down stainless steel furniture, cold concrete floors, frosted narrow windows, and under a routine as fixed as the fixtures embedded into the walls, detainees find ways to make space.

