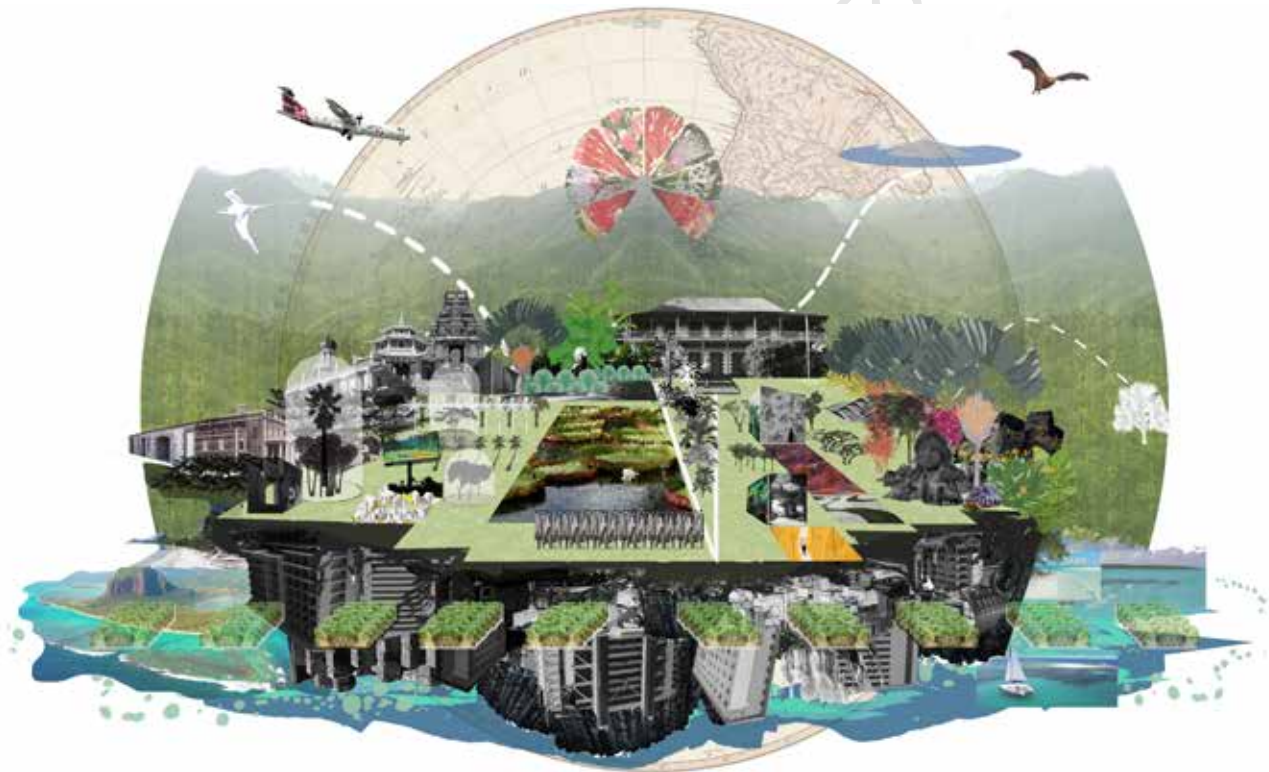


Yannick Michel Marie

Le Jardin des Pamplémousses

A case study into the role of botanical gardens in post-colonial Africa



Master of Landscape Architecture
School of Architecture, Planning & Geomatics
University of Cape Town, 2016

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Abstract

The Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden of Mauritius, commonly known as “Le Jardin des Pamplemousses” was founded during the French occupation in 1770. Then it was the first tropical botanical garden in the world in addition to being the first botanical garden in the southern hemisphere. “Pamplemousses” has been acclaimed for its wide collection of palms and spices, which have fascinated tourists and locals for centuries. However, the value of this botanical garden that was once a pearl of the Indian Ocean has depleted. The garden shows traces of neglect accumulated over decades, which has resulted in a typically negative reputation locally.

The botanical garden is a unique landscape typology. Primarily it can be understood as a natural theatre where items are collected and exhibited and secondarily as a laboratory where new techniques are explored. Today botanical gardens are faced with new challenges as the environmental crisis reaches new proportions. Furthermore, Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, established under French rule, is also confronted by the challenges that arise from its colonial identity in post-colonial Africa. The ‘botanical’ and ‘post-colonial’ can therefore be understood as the 2 main identities of the garden – ones that should be interrogated symbiotically in order to uncover the garden’s development and future.

This Research Project is an investigation of the past role, current state and envisioned future responsibility of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses based on a critical interrogation of its botanical onus and its colonial legacy. The investigation is supported by an inventory of the botanical gardens of Africa which acts as a contextualizing benchmark study, a literary review, in addition to specialized and public interviews carried out on site which aim to unpack the contemporary perception of the garden, and finally a mapping exercise which facilitates an assessment and evaluation of the present state of the garden. The Research Project condenses and resolves this information to allow for an informed interrogation of the future of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, both as a botanical garden and as a remnant of colonial infrastructure in post-colonial Africa.

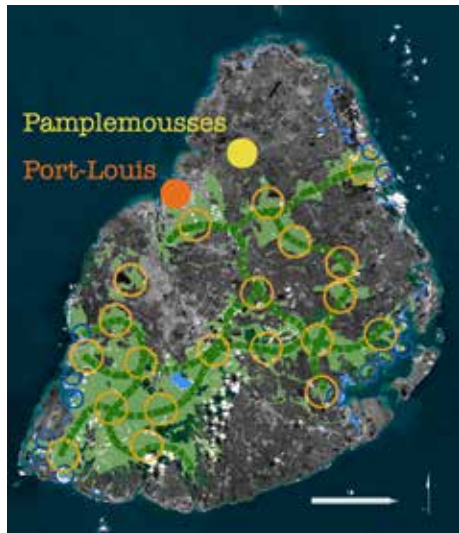


Figure 01: Map showing Mauritius, the Protected Areas Network, Port-Louis and Pamplemousses
Generated by Author

Methodology

The first part of this Research Project is a literary review which explores Botany and Post-Colonialism in relation to Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, based on a number of oeuvres consulted at the University of Cape Town Libraries, the National Library of Mauritius and online. These contributed to the orientation of the second part of the Research Project that consists of (1) an in situ mapping exercise, and (2) a series of specialist and general public interviews that aim to evaluate the contemporary state and appreciation of the garden. Combined, the total of the parts allows for the creation of guidelines and priority areas pertaining to the future role of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses.

Colono-Botany

John Dixon Hunt states “it is not enough to look at gardens for their style, nor even enough to assess their visual appearance. We need to understand why they came into being, [...] and how and why they have survived, changed or vanished.”¹ This statement promotes the need to contextualize the establishment of each garden and the acknowledgement of recurring typologies at different times and places. Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, the first botanical garden in Africa, was established under colonial rule. This is also the case for 38% of the 140 (of a total of 162) botanical gardens of Africa mapped on the timeline Figure 02.

“Colonial botany – the study, naming, cultivation, and marketing of plants in colonial contexts – was born of and supported European voyages, conquests, global trade, and scientific exploration.”² Indeed, during the 17th and 18th centuries and since the earliest voyages of discovery, naturalists sought profitable plants for king and country, personal and corporate profit.³ At the time, costly spices and valuable medicinal plants – nutmeg, tobacco, sugar, peppers, cloves, cinnamon, tea – ranked prominently among the motivations for explorations.⁴ In an attempt to capitalize on spices, colonial endeavors moved plants and knowledge of plants promiscuously around the world.⁵ During this early modern period, the larger European commercial enterprises were setting up victualing stations in proximity to the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, with the Dutch installed in Cape Town, the Portuguese in Mozambique and the British in Saint-Helena. The French did not escape this rule and needed to establish a secure location in the Indian Ocean.⁶

French science from the line of Louis XIV onward, was largely initiated and financed by the king and his ministers and has previously been described as a “scientifico-colonial machine.” [...] The government and its naturalists coordinated bioprospecting around the globe to advance the colonial, national, and dynastic interests of the Bourbon monarchy.⁷ Simultaneously, in France, gardens were playing “key roles in political culture as acquiring and controlling territory became central to state government. Formal gardens such as Versailles were laid out over vast areas around royal residences as symbols of territorial domination and exemplars of orderly land management. These [designs] demonstrated and experimented with the French capacity to control land and its resources, and to use them for advantage. In this context, the collection and display of rare and exotic plants took on strategic significance. Colonial botany became embroiled in state politics.”⁸ Gardens, at a more symbolic level, became a display of the intelligence in use of territorial resources.⁹

Mauritius came under the rule of the French in 1715, following the Dutch’s desertion of the island due to strong cyclones in 1710.¹⁰ Then known as “Ile de France”, Mauritius was a strategic emplacement in the Indian Ocean and offered much safer natural harbors than Reunion Island (then Ile Bourbon) where numerous vessels had been lost to cyclones, and Madagascar, where tensions had arisen between colonizers and the indigenous people.¹¹ In 1734, the direction of the Compagnie des Indes confided the management of the Mascarene Islands to Francois Mahe de Labourdonnais, founder of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, in order to “develop Mauritius, to the best of his abilities, in order to exploit all possible advantages, mostly to form a harbor where sailors could find remedial to any sort of event.”¹² In the following 5 years, Labourdonnais created a veritable naval base, which was his personal accomplishment. Cossigny, one of the engineers working with Labourdonnais stated “there is no rest with him”¹³ and further added “M. de Labourdonnais cares very little about the legacy he will leave to whomever replaces him next as Governor of Mauritius, as long as he impresses the Compagnie des Indes during his reign.”¹⁴

It is in this colono-botanical context, where land management in the colonies was perceived as a profitable legitimating principle of power and a measure of moral foundation, that Mahe de Labourdonnais began the construction of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses.

Contemporary Botany

Succeeding directors include C. Meller (1866-1869) who introduces various sugar cane varieties and eucalyptus plants to combat the malaria epidemic then striking Mauritius, J. Horne (1869-1892) who introduces lawns and starts the plant labeling process, J. van Keirsbilck (1897-1903) who creates rose gardens, P. Koenig (1903-1913) who builds the old stone tortoise pen and C. O'Connor (1913-1944) who creates the famous water lily pond, repairs the lotus ponds, and introduces the dwarf Pemba palm. The first 'Talipot' (*Corypha umbraculifera*), the plant with the largest inflorescence in the world, flourishes in the garden in 1929.²⁹

On the 12th of March 1968, Mauritius gains independence within the British Commonwealth, and 24 years later, is proclaimed a republic.³⁰ Since the independence, the garden has been trusted to different functionaries of the Ministry of Agriculture without any discussion of a long-term director such as in the colonial days.³¹ The garden was renamed Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden in September 1988 in remembrance of the first Prime Minister of Mauritius, who was cremated on site, at the Samadhi adjacent to the chateau Mon Plaisir.³² As from 2000, a Trust has been formed under Act No.10 of 1999 to manage the Garden. The objectives of the Trust are to manage the buildings and monuments, care for the collection of plants, disseminate knowledge with respect to plant life, encourage visits and establish linkages with similar bodies and research institutions.³³

Le Jardin des Pamplemousses employed no qualified gardeners or nursery staff from 2002 to 2012. This led to the complete disappearance of the water lilies and to its contemporary local bad reputation. The garden is currently undergoing a "pseudo-rehabilitation" phase where priority lies in improving cleanliness and the aesthetics of the garden – mostly short-term remedial solutions.³⁴ This is managed by the current team which, established in 2014, consists of an Officer in Charge, a Botanist, a Publications and Liaisons Officer, an Accounts Officer, 4 Technical Officers and 4 Technical assistants. It is important to note that the garden has no formal Director. The maintenance (12 employees) and security teams are subcontracted. The team presently works with a 5-10 year vision plan³⁵ that does not seem to state a clear future vision or incremental development objectives. However, there is a strong position against the garden being developed into a recreational area with shops, play spaces, zip lines or animals.³⁶

Challenges facing the current Trust and professional team are the strongly political agenda of government officials, and minimal collaboration on behalf of the Ministries of Environment, that of Agriculture and the local District Council. These unfortunately only promote the garden as a recreational venue where mostly mediocre activities that seldom pertain to botany are hosted. Indeed, government has no clear programs that would encourage Mauritians to connect with nature or to learn about and appreciate the value of plants. There is also a lack of qualified professionals available in Mauritius, and efforts are being made to equip the staff with appropriate knowledge and skills, through training initiatives and the recruitment of foreign experts.³⁷ The garden, which is financially autonomous, completely relies on entrance fees to provide for employee and contractor salaries, maintenance, and water and electricity expenses among others. This leaves almost no budget for the acquisition of valuable plants or the enrichment of the garden's value.

There is an urging need to define and address practical and systematic issues, in order to delineate and facilitate a future vision of the garden as well as a return to its original value. To do so, it is fundamental to question and explore the possible roles of botanical gardens today.

There are currently around 3000 botanic gardens and arboreta in existence in 180 countries around the world. Collectively, they cultivate over 300,000 taxa, representing around 100,000 species, almost one third of all known plant species. "However, although as many as half of all botanic gardens in existence today have been established in the last 50 years, there is still a need for more botanic gardens."³⁸

Le Jardin des Pamplemousses is a registered member of the worldwide membership organization "Botanic Gardens Conservation International" (BGCI) which was established as the Botanic Gardens Conservation Secretariat by IUCN in 1987 and which became a separate entity in 1990.³⁹ The BGCI established an African Botanic Gardens Network in 2002, whose aim is to promote and support the work of botanical gardens and associated institutions through education, conservation and the promotion of sustainable use of plants for development, poverty alleviation and halting biodiversity loss.⁴⁰ Their vision states "African botanical gardens will be integral and valued partners in the conservation and sustainable use of Africa's unique environmental, botanical and cultural heritage."⁴¹ Indeed, driven by the main assumption that "without plants, there is no life. It is clear that the functioning of the planet, and our survival, depends upon plants. The strategy therefore seeks to halt the continuing loss of plant diversity."⁴²

Botanical gardens undeniably have the ability to contribute to the compilation of baseline data on African biodiversity and its conservation: through research on medicinal/ethnobotanical plants and their uses, the introduction and preservation of plant collections, national biodiversity assessments and projects in conservation, education and sustainable use. However, in order to fulfill these objectives, "botanic gardens have to broaden their audience, enhance relevance to communities, educate, conduct research that has socio-economic impact, contribute to public debates on the environment, model sustainable behavior and actively change attitudes and behavior."⁴³ The social aspect involved in the potential success of botanical gardens is often problematic, despite efforts to increase social relevance and engage with communities and contemporary concerns.

Societies today "have largely become disconnected from the natural world. Botanic gardens have the potential to be places wherein that connection is re-established, benefiting the audience personally through a connection with nature, providing education and physical activity. Botanic gardens can also contribute to wider action upon worldwide moral issues."⁴⁴ "Whilst many botanical gardens are well established as educators in a formal sense, their role as informal learning environments is less well documented. But by their very nature, as places which physically, directly, display plants to people, often in an informal, relaxed way, they are perfect places to demonstrate how important plants and people are to each other. Thus they can 'act as a metaphor' for the complex relationships that humanity has with the environment."⁴⁵

As the loss of biological diversity becomes the biggest global problem of the rest of the 21st century and while balancing the thousands of people who die from hunger daily against the thousands of plants whose properties have not yet been explored⁴⁶, botanic gardens are braved to consider their social role. Indeed, there is a pressing need "to increase public sensitivity to environmental and development problems, and foster a greater sense of personal environmental responsibility, motivation and commitment towards sustainability."⁴⁷ Indeed, it is only by finding the most fruitful balance of recreation, education, research and conservation, that botanical gardens, such as Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, will rise to their intrinsic value⁴⁸, one that promotes a "positive, sustainable future where human activities support the diversity of plant life and where in turn the diversity of plants support and improve our livelihoods and well-being."⁴⁹

Eco-Mauritius

"The Republic of Mauritius comprises a group of islands in the South West Indian Ocean, consisting of the main island Mauritius and the outer islands of Rodrigues, Agalega, Saint Brandon, Tromelin and the Chagos Archipelago. The total land area of the Republic of Mauritius is 2040 km² and the country has jurisdiction over a large Exclusive Economic Zone of approximately 2.3 million km². The population, estimated 1.3 million, is composed of several ethnicities mostly people of Indian, African, Chinese and European descent. Most Mauritians are multilingual and speak and write English, French, Creole and several Asian languages."⁵⁰

The flora and fauna of Mauritius have a relatively high level of diversity and endemism as a result of the island's location, age, isolation and varied topography. Mauritius has 691 plant species of which 315 are single island endemics and another 150 are Mascarene endemics⁵¹. However, the forest of Mauritius, which covers around 25% of the land area, only contains 2% of native forest.⁵² Inopportunately, "Mauritius has been ranked by the IUCN as having the third most endangered flora in the world. Around 200 of the 315 endemic plant species are threatened and Mauritius may already have lost as many as 70 plant species."⁵³ In terms of protected areas, the island has 2 national parks, 7 nature reserves, 2 Ramsar Sites and 1 national protected area, as well as 2 World Heritage Sites – the Aapravasi Ghat and Le Morne Brabant.⁵⁴

Mauritius is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). The concept of sustainability is very important in SIDS as typical vulnerabilities arise from a number of physical, socio-economic and environmental factors. "SIDS' small size, limited resources, geographical dispersion and isolation from markets, place them at a disadvantage economically and prevent economies of scale. Furthermore, in SIDS, the following natural resource base: energy, water, mineral and agricultural resources, are limited and resources extraction tends to quickly meet the carrying capacity of the smaller islands."⁵⁵ In order to protect and manage its natural resources, Mauritius adopted the "Vision 2020: The National long-Term Perspective Study" in 1997, as the core development strategy to promote sustainable development in the country. It set out the scenario for promoting development based on gains in agricultural efficiency, tourism, industrial production and development of financial and value-added services. Furthermore, in 2008, government adopted "Maurice Ile Durable" which is considered to be "the ground-breaking, unique, innovative milestone project leading to a reinforced integrated, participatory approach to sustainable development and which seeks to include each and every citizen of Mauritius."⁵⁶ The action plan focuses on the 5 E's: Energy, Environment, Employment/Economy, Education and Equity; and prioritizes the building of ecological resilience, the increase of connectivity and the mainstreaming of biodiversity issues.⁵⁷ Mauritius also ratified the Nagoya Protocol in 2013.⁵⁸

Le Jardin des Pamplemousses however, appears in no Government publication pertaining to the environment, nor is it protected. Its revitalization is only mentioned in the Ministry of Arts and Culture's plans to re-imagine the capital, Port Louis. The lack of environmental responsibility of the garden is indicative of its perceived national function as a "tourist destination." Despite the government's desire to move towards the "greening" of the tourism industry⁵⁹, there is a clear lack of synergetic linkages between tourism and the agricultural and environmental sectors. It is crucial for Mauritius, which is predominantly a beach holiday destination, to reconsider the methods of implementation of its environmental priorities and the possible contribution of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses to the promotion and preservation of the island's environmental, botanical and cultural heritage.

Afropolitanism

The current perception of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses and its apparent inaction may be by-products of its colonial identity. Essentially, in our connected world of globalized cultural influences, Africa can no longer be perceived as a product solely of colonialism or in terms of the continued presence and influence of ex-colonial powers. "Yet the dominant culture forms remain prevailingly occidental, reflecting the economic political and cultural dominance of the Western world. Many of the racial and colonial stereotypes remain embedded in contemporary discourses, perhaps most notably those of tourism and travel."⁶⁰

"In its multiple shifting realities, the postcolonial encompasses struggles for authority in public life."⁶¹ This unease between colonial and post-colonial identities, manifested itself mostly in the heady days after independence, when it was believed that distance to colonialism could be taken, and that new cultural and social values free of colonial influence could be articulated and adopted.⁶² Effectively, "after independence, despite the end of direct colonial rule, the modernist vision of a rationally professing universal history persisted, which considered all nations were heading for the same destination; some arrived earlier than others. With the acute self-awareness of the temporal lag turned into a nationalistic aspiration for development, an all-encompassing project of modernization was at the top of the national agenda of many Third World countries. New infrastructure, housing, administrative and education buildings were constructed to accommodate new functions, new organizations, and new citizens."⁶³ This supports the claim that "some of the most radical changes to the globalizing world are not expressed in the language of law and diplomacy but rather in the language of architecture and urbanism."⁶⁴ In this context, colonial infrastructures, such as Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, either get excluded from modern visions of the future in independent Africa or they are re-appropriated or re-branded. Both providences are arguably experienced in the case of "Pamplemousses".

"The fact that the postcolonial is a postponement, at once a presence and an absence, the now in tension with the not-now, is a politicized reality."⁶⁵ While the 1950s and 1960s were concerned with confronting and combating the cultural oppression that accompanied the imposition of colonial rule, the 1990s, focused on issues thrown up by a consideration of the theories of post-colonialism.⁶⁶ "But within both sets of concerns and issues the question of identity is paramount. It is the search for a critical understanding of identity in Africa that links the colonial and the post-colonial eras, their concerns and their projects."⁶⁷ For Fanon, post-colonialism, colonialism and empire are not just a matter of territorial occupation, but of consciousness, how the colonial subject is constructed both in mind of the subject culture and the hegemonic culture.⁶⁸ Le Jardin des Pamplemousses therefore has to reinvent itself in the social consciousness to become unrestricted by its colonial identity – the main cause of its contemporary dormancy.

An influential idea is the one of Afropolitanism, which "constitutes a significant attempt to re-think African knowledge outside the trop of crisis. The term Afropolitanism can now be read as the description of the phenomenology of Africanness – a way of being African in the world. Afropolitanism has been prompted by the desire to think of African identities as both rooted in specific local geographies but also transcendental of them. To be Afropolitan is to be connected to knowable African communities, nations, and traditions; but it is also to live a life divided across cultures, languages and states. It is to embrace and celebrate a state of cultural hybridity – to be of Africa and of other worlds at the same time."⁶⁹ Reinterpreting Le Jardin des Pamplemousses through the lens of Afropolitanism would "transcend binary oppositions such as modern/traditional and core/periphery while still recognizing the ongoing making of global modernity."⁷⁰ More importantly, this could lead to the revitalization of Le Jardin des Pamplemousses as a pro-active beacon of sustainability and research, while promoting a unified and prosperous identity in terms of national culture.

The Plants

Map 01 shows Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, and presents a comparison of the plants present today, to that featured in the 1729-1979 Inventory published by Rouillard. Although the majority of plants are still present, there has been a significant amount of plant loss. The mapping exercise indicates plant loss along pathways which were recently widened. Plants have also been lost in the middle of blocks where taller trees planted on the periphery shaded out the ones located in the centre. The majority of larger trees are located within the southern half of the garden with some of them estimated to be more than 300 years old. The northern portion comprises mostly lawns, ornamentals and the recreational precinct which encompasses the stag park, tortoise pen, Grand Bassin and Mon Plaisir. The new plants introduced in the garden do not have strong botanical value and are ones that are readily available at local nurseries. There is no apparent mid-canopy/ small trees, as mentioned in Gilles Clement's report, conducted in 2000. This indicates the lack of plant introduction of the past decades. The majority of trees present are however in a good state, as reflected by the interviews where 100% of participants said that they found the plants to be in good condition. The interviews also revealed that the Giant Amazon Lily (P1), lotus plants and Palm trees (including the Palm avenues, P2) are among the visitors' favorites

The plant families the most represented in the garden are Aracales (palms) and Fabales (legumes). The ancient Spice Corner and the more recent Medicinal Garden are the only two themed areas. Some parcels are planted with orchards of Mango and Litchi trees (P3) which present a more agricultural facet of the garden. There are also patches of endemic vegetation that have been introduced, however these are still in very initial states. With the majority of plants being centenary and with continuing plant loss, it is crucial for the garden to plan the introduction of new plants. The garden would greatly benefit if these were planted following a thematic where similarities between plants can be observed. There is also a strong demand for winter florals as the garden is mostly green, without flowers during winter. New plants should comprise mostly of useful, edible and indigenous plants. Such plant collections would promote sustainability and act as educational environments.

AQUATICS

Giant Amazon Water Lily - *Victoria amazonica*
Asian Lotus - *Nelumbo nucifera*
Water lillies - *Nymphaea sp.*

SPICES

Clove - *Syzygium aromaticum*
Nutmeg - *Myristica fragrans*
Jamaica Pepper - *Pimenta officinalis*
Cinnamon - *Cinnamomum verum*
Coconut palm - *Cocos nucifera*
Sugar palm - *Arenga pinnata*
Betel Nut palm - *Areca catechu*
Raphia palm - *Raphia farinifera*

PALMS

Acanthophoenix, Borassus, Calamus, Caryota, Chamaedora, Chrysalidocarpus, Cocos, Euterpe, Hyphaene, Licuala, Phoenix, Ptychosperma, Rhaphis Roystonea, Thrinax, Zalacca

EDIBLES

Cassave Manioc - *Manihot esculenta*
Bread Tree - *Artocarpus altilis*
Breaf Fruit Tree - *Artocarpus heterophyllus*
Bengalese Ficus - *Ficus bengalensis*
Vacoas - *Pandanus heterocarpus*
Indian Mango - *Mangifera indica*
Litchi - *Litichi chinensis*

ORNAMENTALS

National Flower of Mauritius - *Trochetia boutonianazygium*
Talipot palm - *Corypha umbraculifera*
Flamboyant - *Delonix regia*
Collvillea - *Collvillea racemosa*
Bauhinia - *Bauhinia sp.*
Frangipani - *Plumeria sp.*
Rose of Venezuela - *Brownrea grandiceps*
Cannonball tree - *Couroupita guianensis*
Lipstick palm - *Cyrotachys renda*

OTHERS

Blue gum - *Eucalyptus globulus*
Live Sausage - *Kigelia africana*
Pilgrim's Tree - *Ravenala madagascariensis*
Camphor - *Cinnamomum camphora*
Mahogany - *Swietenia mahagoni*
Tropical almond - *Terminalia catappa*
Resinous tree - *Agathis robusta*
Porcelain Rose - *Nicolaia elatior*
Hindu Holy Tree - *Ficus religiosa*



P1

P2



P3



PALM AVENUES

Blue Latan (endemic) - *Latania loddigessi*
Yellow Latan (endemic) - *Latania verschaffeltii*
Hurricane Palm (endemic) - *Dictosperma album*
Palmiste Gargoulette (endemic) - *Hyophorbe lagenicaulis*
Bottle Palm (endemic) - *Hyophorbe verschaffeltii*
Red Latan (Mascarene endemic) - *Latania lontaroides*
Seychelles Palm - *Verschaffeltii splendida*
Palmiste Bambou - *Chrysalidocarpus lutescens* + *Chrysalidocarpus madagascariensis*
Royal Palm - *Roystonea regia* + *Roystonea oleracea*

The Infrastructure

Le Jardin des Pamplemousses possesses various types of built infrastructure, constructed at different times. The Pont des Soupirs (P4), the Main Gate (P5) and Mon Plaisir (P6) are the best kept colonial infrastructures. There are however also benches (P7), small buildings (P8), a series of rockeries and stone ponds from the colonial days that are presently derelict. The 3 streams that cross the garden and feed the Grand Bassin (P10) are occasionally directed by rock channels built in the colonial days. The Samadhi and SSR Memorial (P9), recently built in direct juxtaposition to Mon Plaisir create an aesthetic contrast and introduce a lack of coherence in the garden. Despite their emotional and cultural value, these should idealistically be relocated in order to liberate the lawns that surround Mon Plaisir. Another problematic space is the Smith Monument, adjacent to the Giant Amazon Lily Pond. The former has water circulation issues, due to design miscalculations, and ends up accumulating falling leaves which eventually lead to algae growth.

The garden has a number of kiosks, the majority of which consist of a concrete base mounted with timber and tin sheet constructions. No kiosks have been introduced in the recent years, although general public opinion demands for more. The interviews also revealed a need for more seating. At the moment this is offered through the old concrete benches and recent cast iron benches which are aesthetically questionable. There is also a need to redevelop the ablution blocks which, despite being modelled in a colonial style, fall short due to poor material choice and constant vandalism. The pathways which were once made of lava stone or compacted earth, have recently been widened and covered in tar. At a similar time, new nomenclature signs were introduced resulting in a mix of cast iron and stone signs present in the garden today. The bins which were made of barrels are now replaced by large metal bins painted in bright green.

The current incoherent mix of infrastructure calls for an evaluation and possible replacements and relocations based on ecological suitability, colonial character and modern efficiency

• **CHATEAU MON PLAISIR** - est. 1820
The colonial residence is currently under renovation and could be re-invented as a conference venue, museum and/or projection venue.

• **PONT DES SOUPIRS** (Stone Bridge)

• MONUMENTS

- _ Lienard Obelisque - est. 1860
- _ Monument de la Victoire - est. 1919
- _ Bernardin de St Pierre Bust - est. 1937
- _ Old Sugar Mill - est. 1953
- _ Renaming Plate - est. 1988
- _ Paul & Virginie Monument
- _ Pierre Poivre Monument - est. 1993
- _ Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Memorial
- _ Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Samadhia (Funerary)

• **MAIN GATE** - est. 1862
Gained the 1st prize at the International Horticultural Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, UK. On each of the pillars is found the Coat of Arms, with a lion, a unicorn and a crown on top.

• WATER FEATURES

- _ “Grand Bassin”
- _ Giant Amazon Lily Pond
- _ Lotus Ponds
- _ Bassins Jumeaux - est. 1968
- _ Bassin Smith - est. 1979

• OTHERS

- _ Tortoise Pen
- _ Stag Park
- _ Rock ponds (abandoned)
- _ Rockery (abandoned)
- _ Fernery (closed)



P4



P5



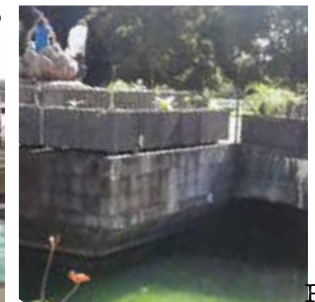
P8



P7



P6

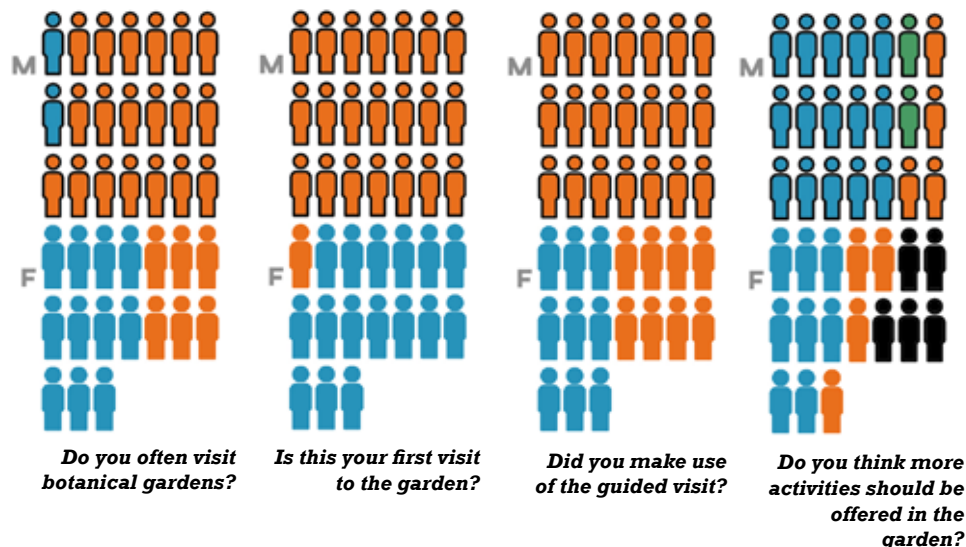


P9

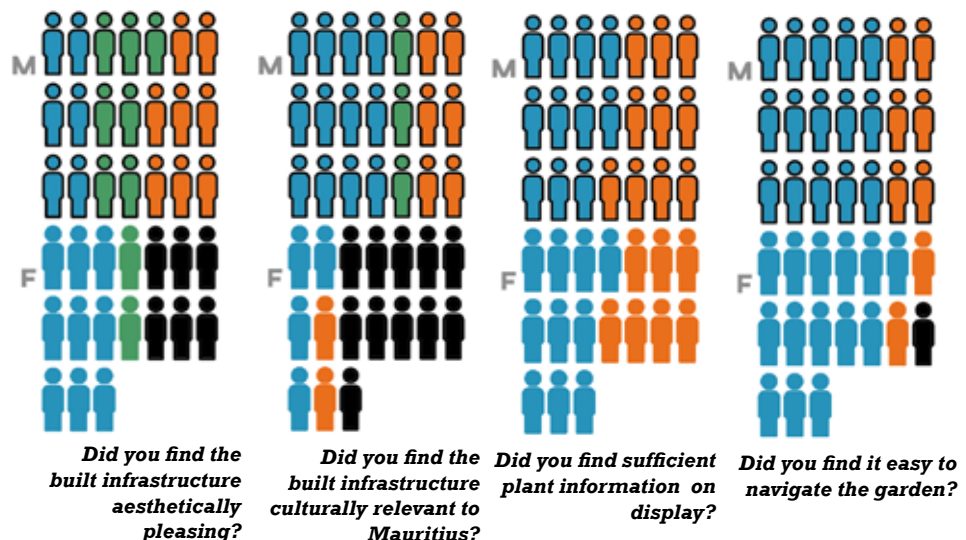


P10

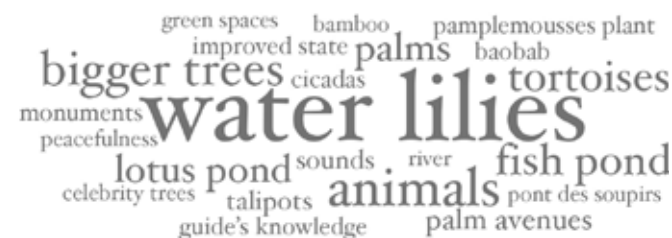
Interviews



Interviews were carried out on site in order to understand the contemporary perception of the garden. The information gathered presents the views of a sample of 38 people, who voluntarily took part in the interviews, after visiting the garden during the months of June and July 2016. The 38 adults include 21 Mauritians and 17 foreigners. All the Mauritians interviewed had already been at the garden before, with frequency varying from weekly visits to an occasional visit once every 5 years. The interviews revealed that Mauritians visit botanic gardens much less than foreigners do, and that botanic gardens are generally less popular than museums and recreational parks. About half of the foreigners made use of the guided visits while no Mauritians did. This finding was observed on site when comparing how Mauritians use the garden as opposed to foreigners. Mauritians do not take the guided visits and therefore meander freely through the garden, usually picnicing on the lawns or relaxing by the main lake. Among the recreational attractions preferred by Mauritians were the fish ponds and deer and tortoise pens. Foreigners tend to do the hour long guided tour which takes one along the garden's "star plants" - these include public favorites such as the water lilies, lotus ponds, the talipot trees, spice trees and baobab. Most people found the garden easy to navigate although there were requests for more maps to be made available. Mauritians shared mixed views about the built infrastructure, both in terms of aesthetic and cultural relevance to the island. When it came to plants, most people found that they were in a good state and that the plant collections were diverse. People however complained that the collections were not easy to identify and that there was an overall lack of colour and florals. Half the people interviewed found the amount of plant information available insufficient. On a very positive note, and opposing the typical local reputation, all the people interviewed said they enjoyed their visit and most enthusiastically said they would return to the garden based on their day's experience.



How would you describe your visit of the garden today?



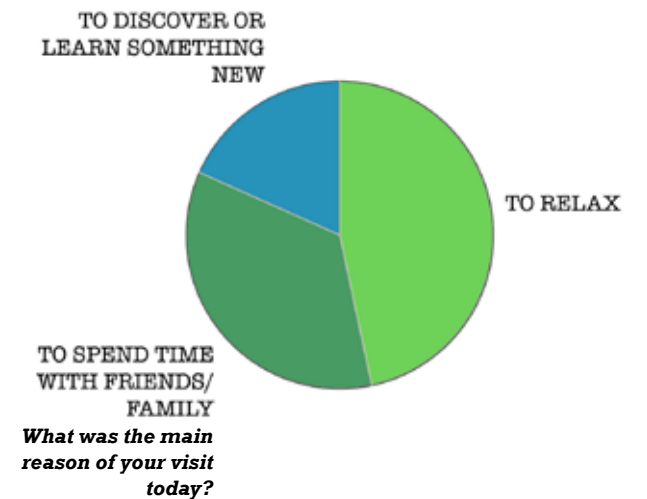
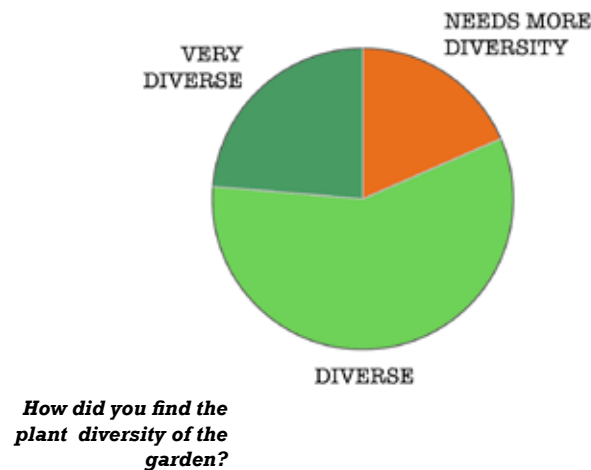
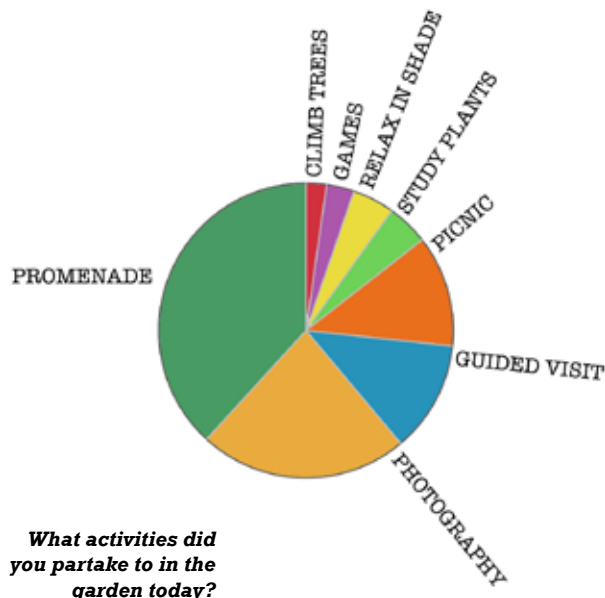
What captured your attention the most?



Conclusion

As botanical gardens today are challenged to engage with communities in order to promote environmental awareness and sustainable living, Le Jardin des Pamplemousses is invited to re-invent itself into the future. The garden has the potential to become a prime attribute in the conservation of biodiversity in Mauritius and Africa through the introduction of new significant plants, adequate identification and monitoring, conservation action and research, ecological restoration, capacity development and technology transfer. It is also fundamental to establish synergies with the conservation communities and relevant ministries and government programmes. The garden can also overcome its post-colonial dormancy by securing social relevance through the development and implementation of a range of activities, an environmental education strategy and the establishment of marketing and communication skills. The garden which already has a steady flow of 250,000 visitors annually, should also cater to both its local and foreign visitors more equally, by offering a variety of informal education opportunities that target a broader audience by incorporating diverse interests, using holistic and experientially based techniques that aim to achieve practical outcomes. This is possible today, more than ever, considering the current loss of trees in the garden and the newfound available spaces.

Le Jardin des Pamplemousses, once a Pearl in the Indian Ocean, already possesses numerous qualities in terms of cultural relevance, plant material and built infrastructure. By reviewing and improving on those, and introducing modern and productive technologies and practices, it could return to its former glory. Indeed, by balancing its ecological role with regards to biodiversity threats, and its social role, with regards to its post-colonial identity and existing role as a park; Le Jardin des Pamplemousses could once again become a performing and successful entity, and furthermore, become a model of sustainable development and cultural emancipation for colonial botanical gardens in tomorrow's Africa.

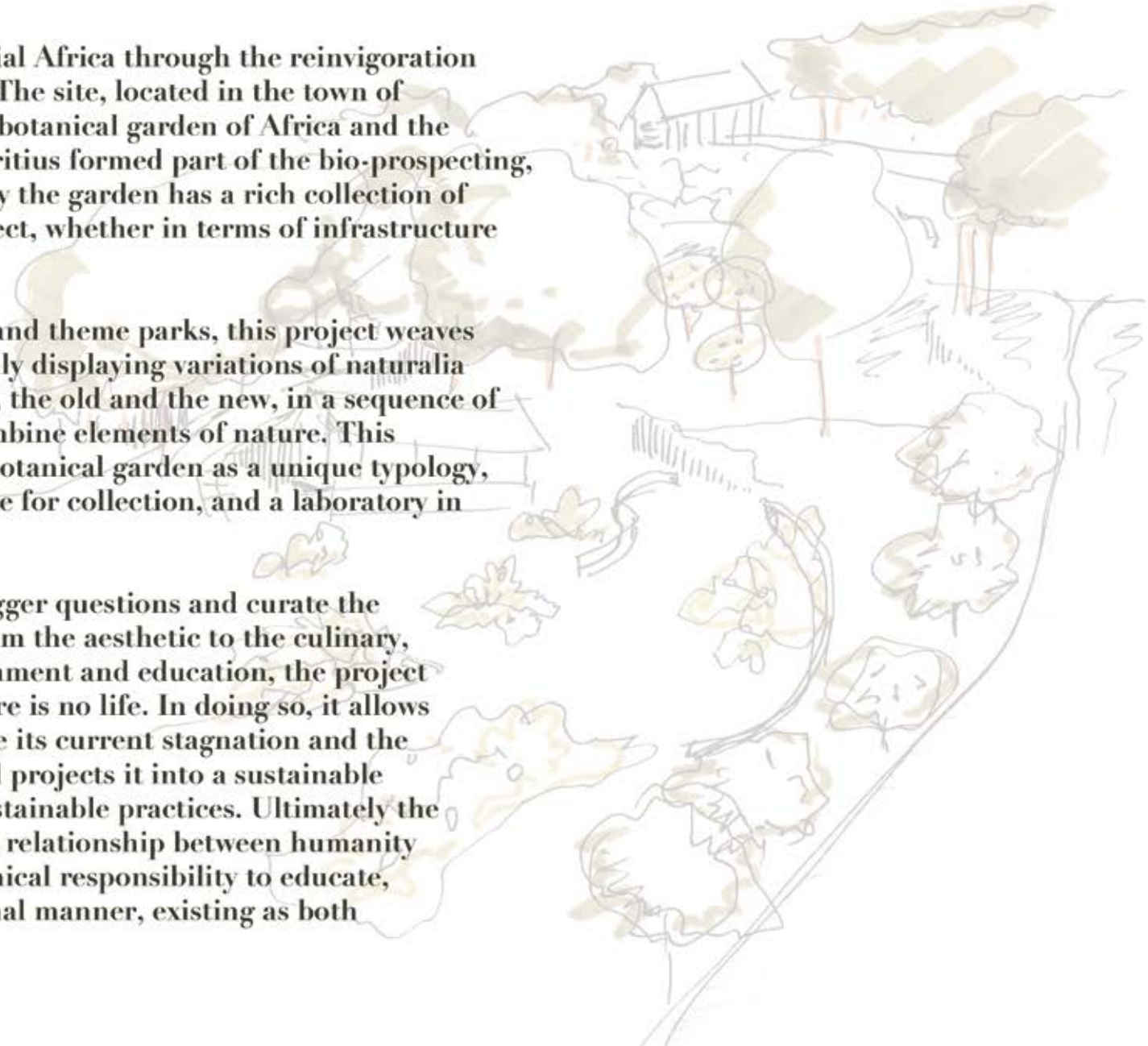


Project Abstract
LE JARDIN DES PAMPLEMOUSSES:
A POST-COLONIAL BOTANIC GARDEN IN MAURITIUS.

This project explores botany in post-colonial Africa through the reinvigoration of a colonial botanic garden in Mauritius. The site, located in the town of Pamplemousses, became home to the first botanical garden of Africa and the Southern Hemisphere in 1770, when Mauritius formed part of the bio-prospecting, French scientifico-colonial machine. Today the garden has a rich collection of palms and spices, but shows traces of neglect, whether in terms of infrastructure or of its place in local consciousness.

Inspired by the science of shopping malls and theme parks, this project weaves new experiences into the garden by playfully displaying variations of naturalia and artificialia, the exotic and the endemic, the old and the new, in a sequence of spaces that deconstruct, juxtapose and combine elements of nature. This re-imagining of the garden promotes the botanical garden as a unique typology, one that is simultaneously a natural theatre for collection, and a laboratory in which to explore.

The project intertwines narratives that trigger questions and curate the relationships between man and nature: from the aesthetic to the culinary, medicinal or literary. By merging entertainment and education, the project promotes the idea that without plants, there is no life. In doing so, it allows the Jardin des Pamplemousses to overcome its current stagnation and the conservativeness of its colonial nature, and projects it into a sustainable future of environmental awareness and sustainable practices. Ultimately the project acts as a metaphor for the complex relationship between humanity and the environment. It takes on the botanical responsibility to educate, conserve and secure diversity, in an informal manner, existing as both educator and entertainer.



“Whilst many botanical gardens are well established as educators in a formal sense, their role as informal learning environments is less well documented.

But by their very nature, as places which physically, directly, display plants to people, often in an informal, relaxed way, they are perfect places to demonstrate how important plants and people are to each other.”

-BGCI



“I’m excited by the tension between entertainment and education, in the idea of the marvellous, especially in pre-Enlightenment collections like curiosity cabinets and wunderkamers.”

-M. Dion

“Rather than a place where one might go to explore some complex questions, the museum now simplifies the questions and gives you reductive answers for them. It does all the work, so the viewer is always passive. A museum should provoke questions, not spoon-feed answers and experiences.”

-M. Dion

Conceptual Artist

Explores the roots of epistemological discourse through the representation of nature and culture by looking at the classification systems that govern them.

“Afropolitan-
a way of being African in the world. Prompted by the desire to think of African identities as both rooted in specific local geographies but also transcendental of them. To be Afropolitan is to be connected to knowable African communities, nations, and traditions; but it is also to live a life divided across cultures, languages and states. It is to embrace and celebrate a state of cultural hybridity - to be of Africa and of other worlds at the same time.”

- J.K.S. Makokha



01 PLAY SPACE



02 COMMERCIAL NODE



03 PASSIVE AQUATIC PLAY



04 AGRI EXPERIMENT



05 INTERACTIVE AQUATIC



06 DRY SCULPTURE/ EXHIBIT



07 BUILT EXHIBIT



08 SEASONAL FISH POND



09 CONTAINED TOPOGRAPHY



10 WILD



11 FLORAL DISPLAY



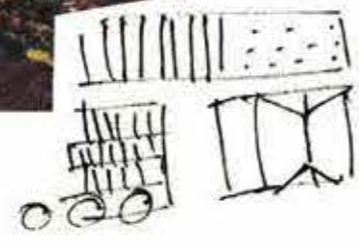
12 FISHING DECKS



The Stone Ponds



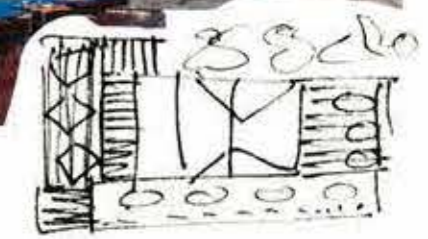
01 EDUCATIONAL NODE



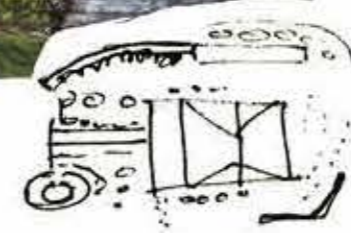
02 ANIMAL SANCTUARY



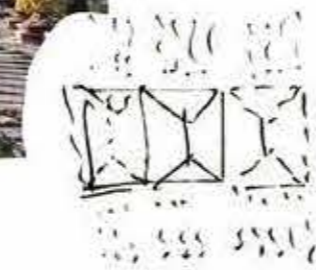
03 EATERY



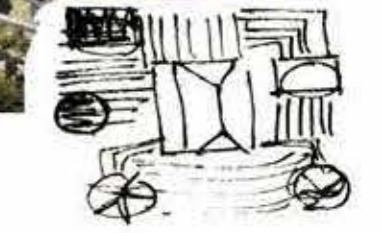
04 ROCKERY EXHIBIT



05 LINEAR EXHIBIT



06 INTEGRATED GREENHOUSE



La Petite Maison



01 SEASONAL EXHIBIT



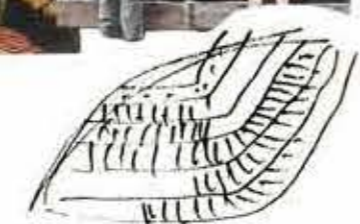
02 MIXED MASS PLANTING



03 TERRACED EXHIBIT



04 TERRACED AGRICULTURE



05 WATER EDGE PLAY SPACE



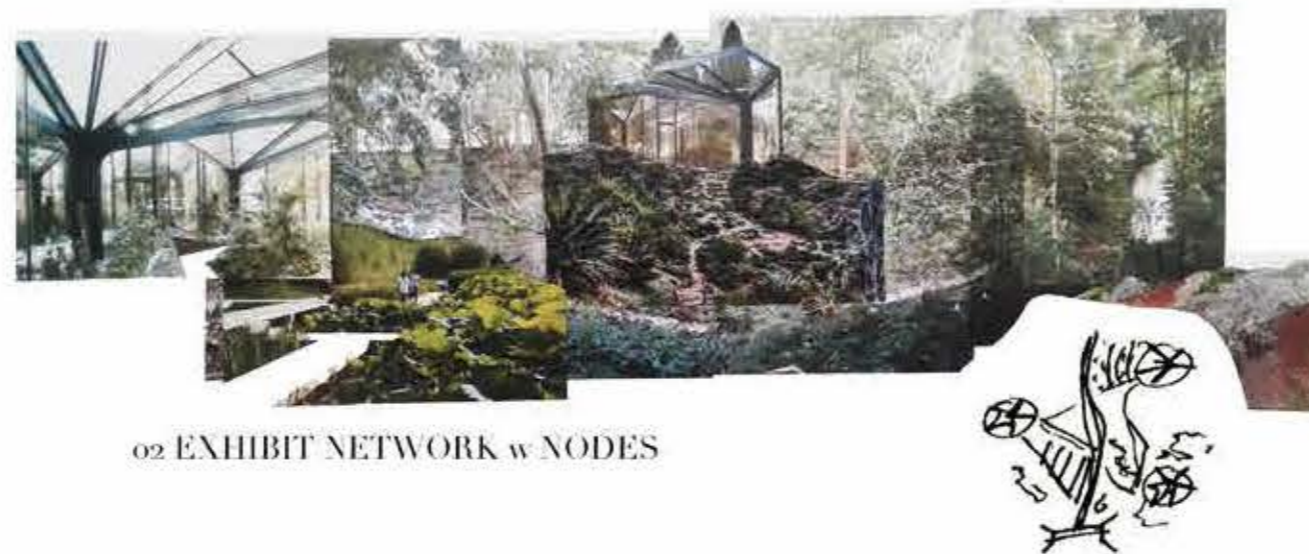
06 EXPERIMENT LAB



The Orchards



01 TOPO EXHIBIT



02 EXHIBIT NETWORK w NODES



03 ADVENTURE PLAY



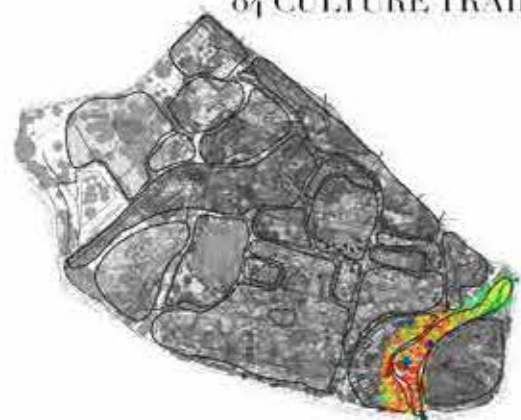
04 CULTURE TRAIL



05 AQUATIC DISPLAY



06 PERFORMANCE SPACE



La Riviere Citron



01 GEOMETRICAL PLANTING



02 MIXED FLORAL



03 GRID, COLONADES & HANGING PLANTS



04 RECREATION/ RELAXATION



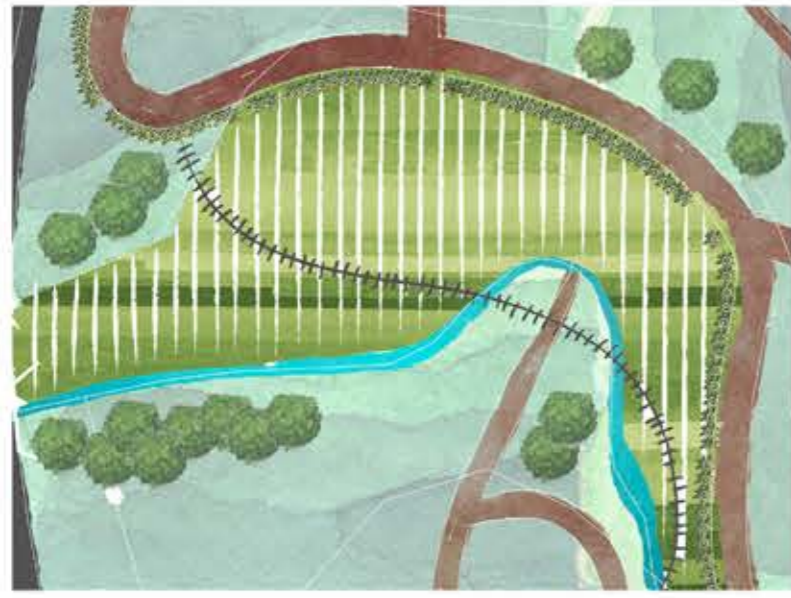
05 EXPANDING HYDROLOG



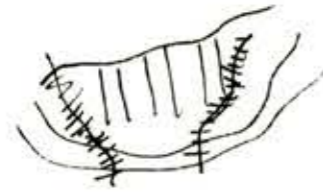
06 WILDERNESS & HABITATS



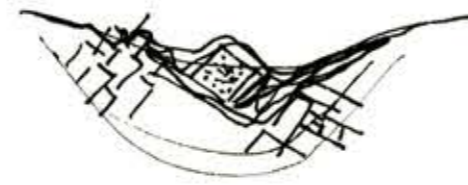
The Vegetation Grid



01 AGRICULTURAL
DISPLAY SEEN FROM
ABOVE



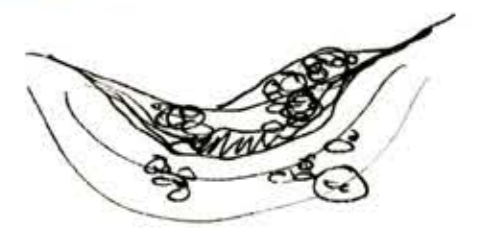
02 FORMAL DISPLAY



03 AQUATIC FLORAL



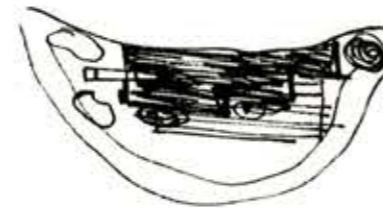
04 DRY & WILD



05 TOPOGRAPHIC
WATER EDGE



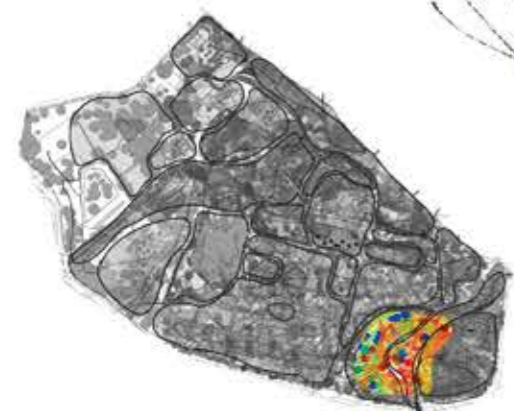
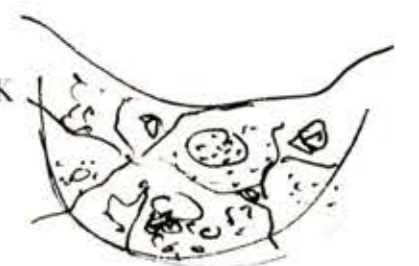
06 GEOMETRIC INTERFACE



07 VALLEY HIERARCHY:
BUILT VIEW POINTS ABOVE
PLANTS BELOW



08 ROCKERY NETWORK



La Vallee Citron



01 ROCKERY w WILDERNESS



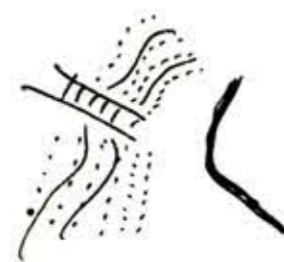
02 DRY PLAY SPACE



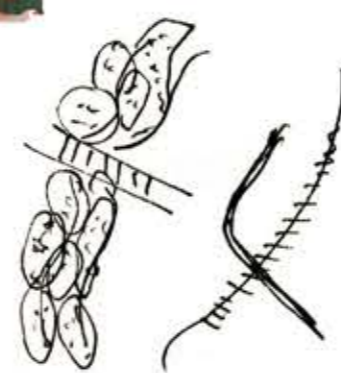
03 FORMAL TOPOGRAPHICAL DISPLAY



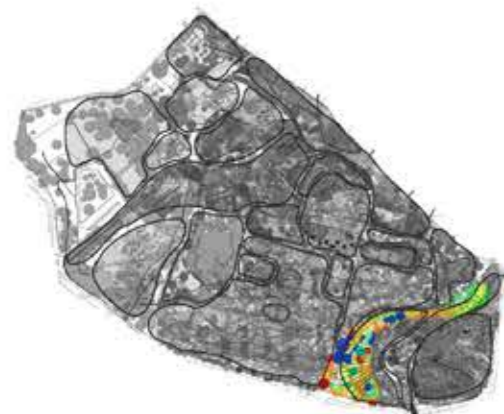
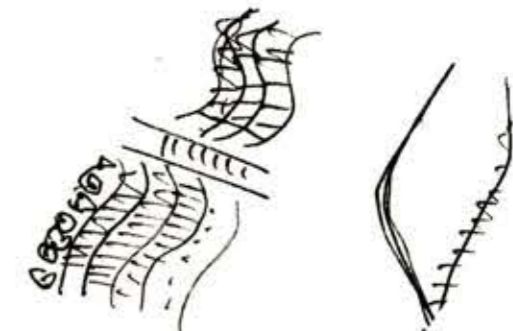
04 HANGING DISPLAY



05 MASS FLORAL DISPLAY



06 AGRICULTURAL DISPLAY



The Slopes



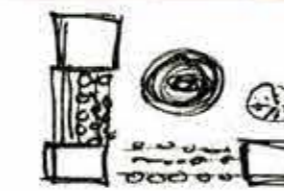
01 ROCKERY NETWORK



02 ROCK FLOORS & DECKS



03 BUILT SPACES



04 TOPOGRAPHY & HANGING PLANTS



05 DRY PLAY SPACE



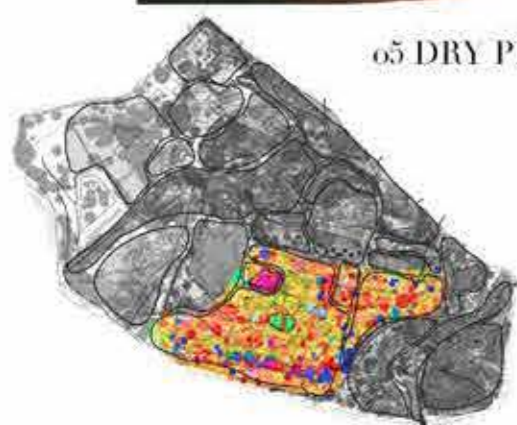
06 MASS FLORAL PATCHES



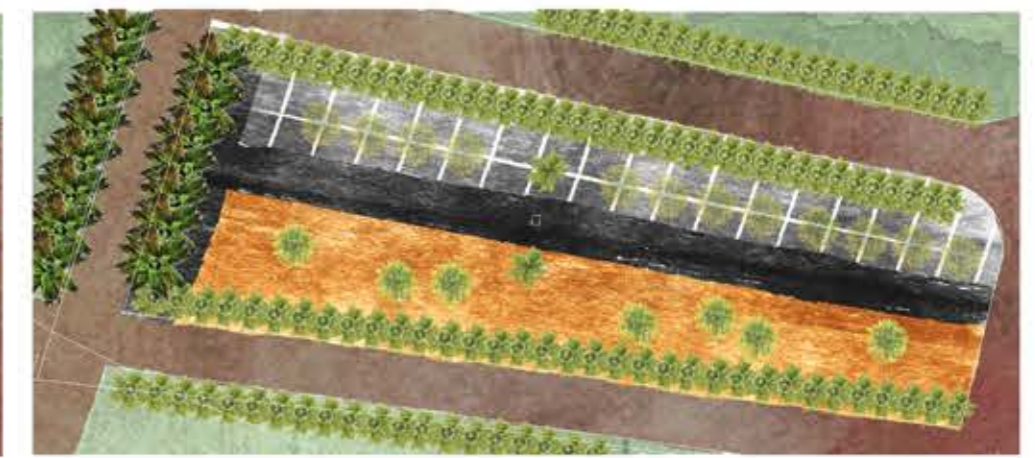
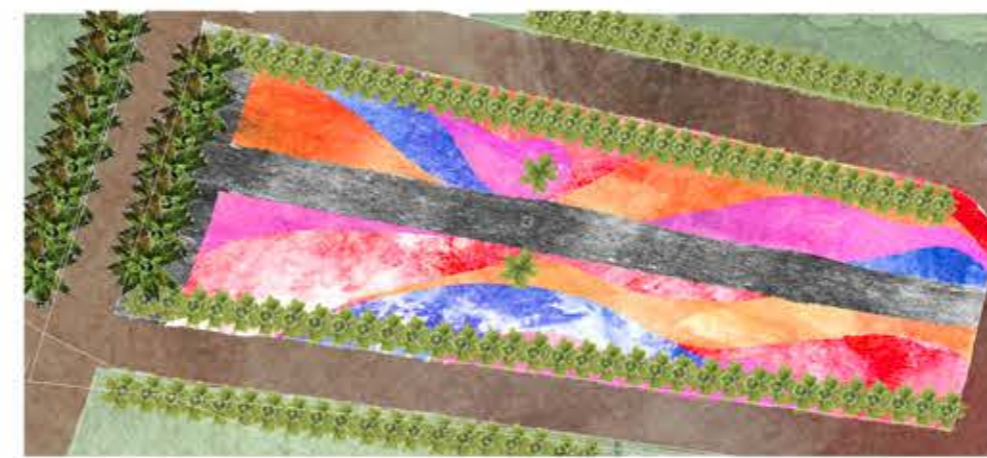
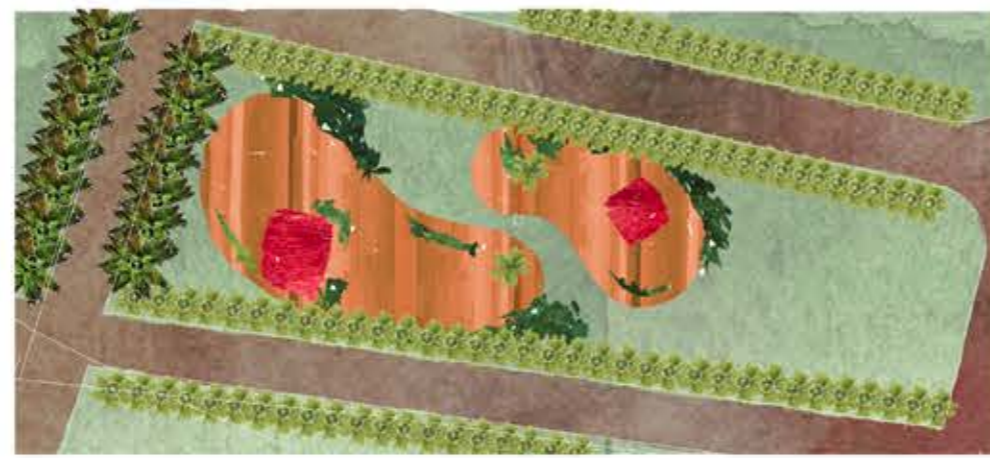
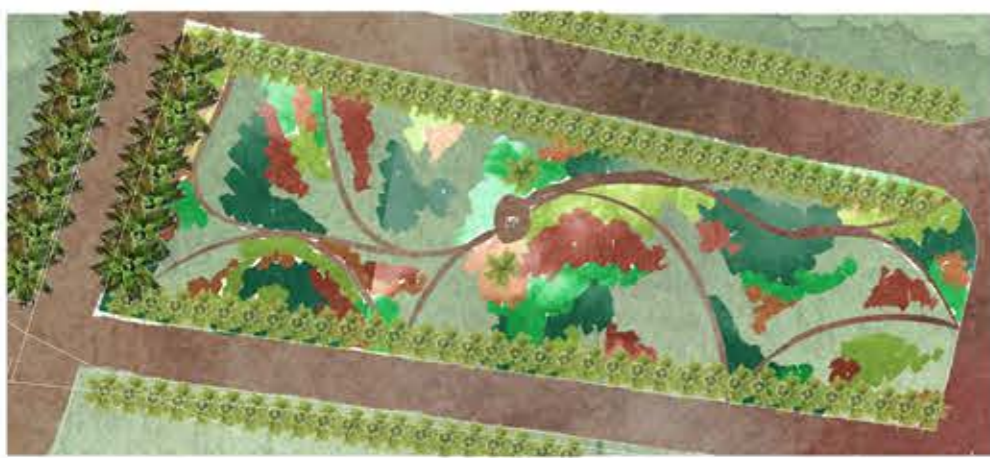
07 GRASS GRID



08 DRY GARDEN: THE VOID



Beneath the Canopy



01 WILDERNESS CONTAINED



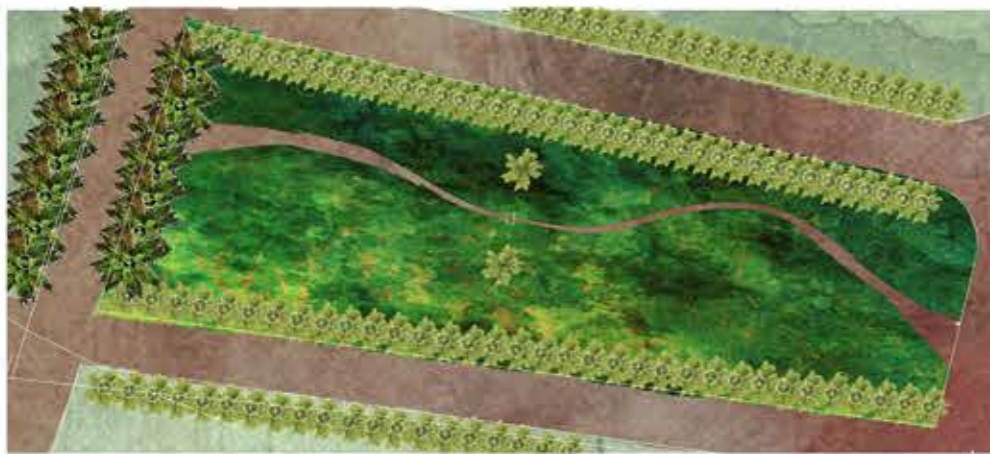
02 LAWN, DECKS & SOCIAL SPACE



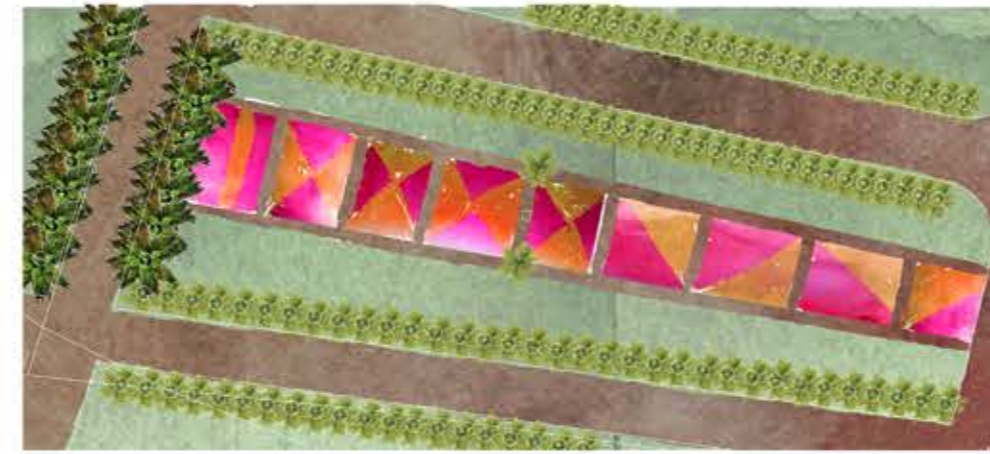
03 FLORALS ALONG DRY AXIS



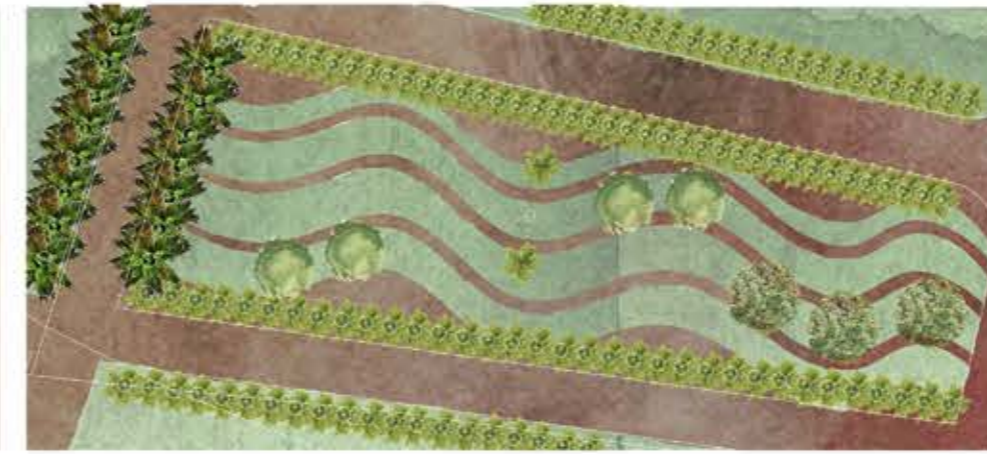
04 DRY AXIS WITH PLANT DISPLAY



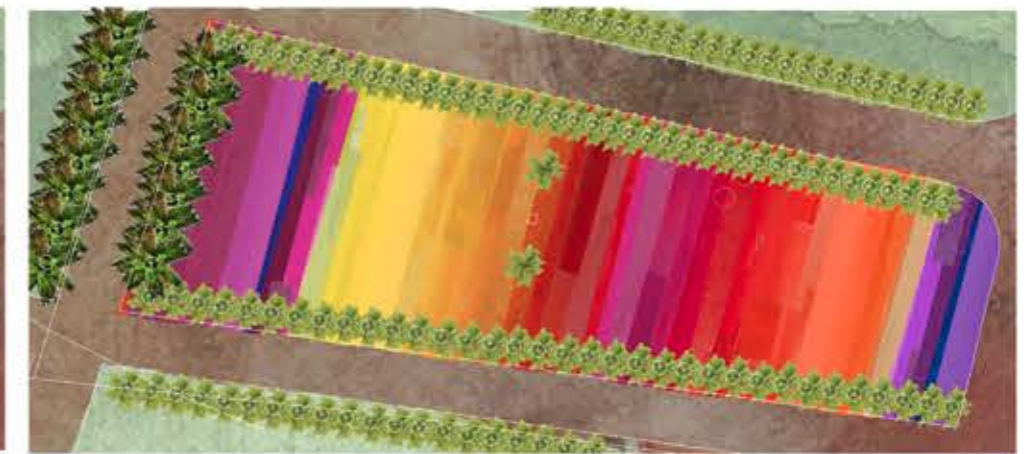
05 TROPICAL WILDERNESS



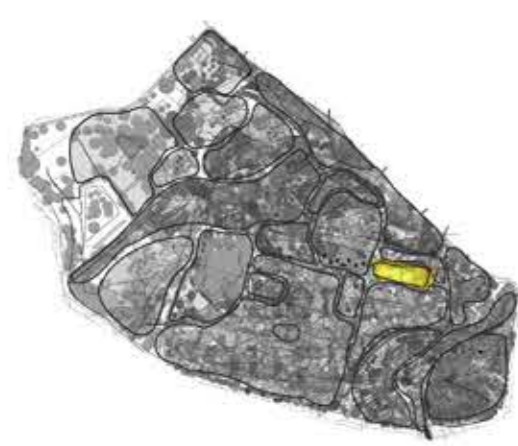
06 FORMAL FLORAL GRID



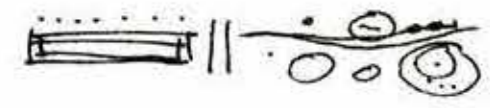
07 DISPLAY AXIS



08 MASS FLORAL DISPLAY



Square de la Victoire



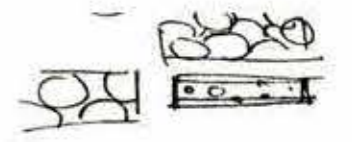
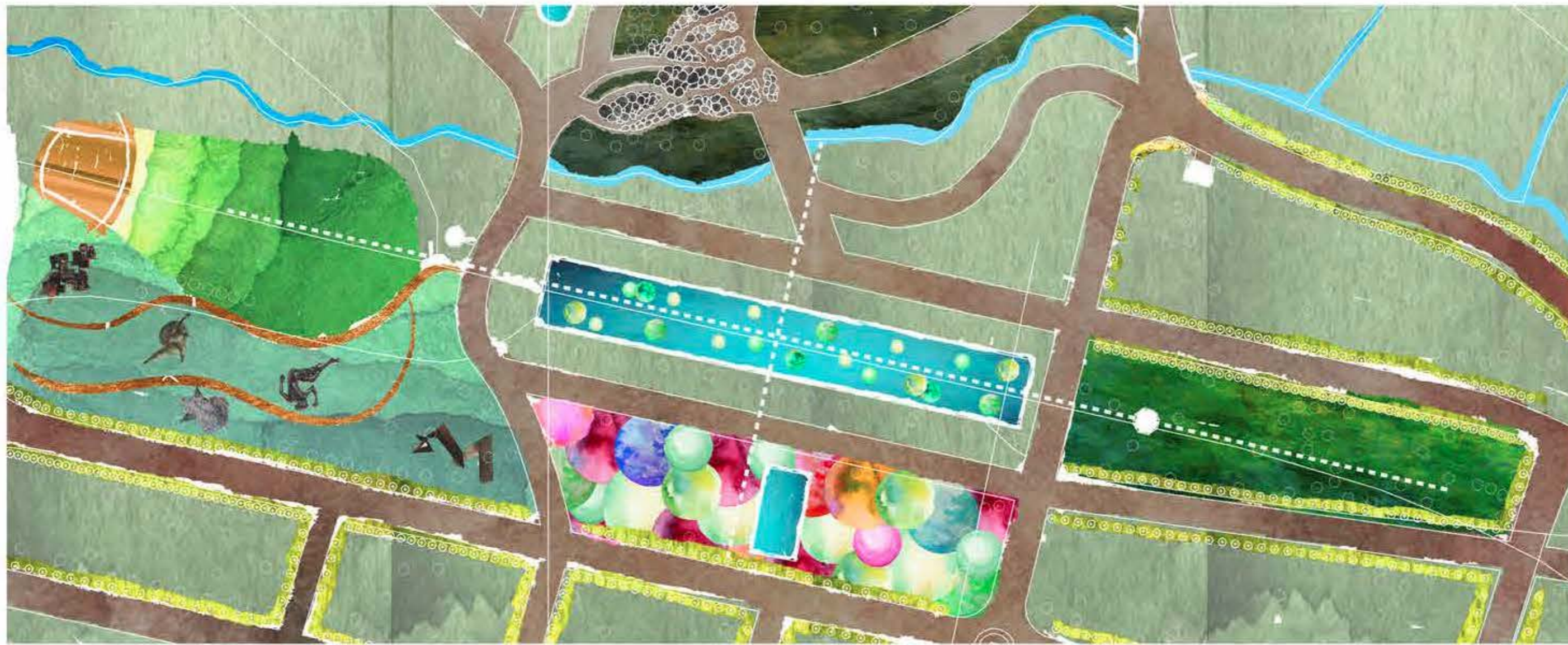
01 ART TRAIL



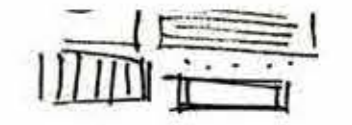
02 PERFORMANCE SPACE



03 PERFORMANCE SPACE VAR.



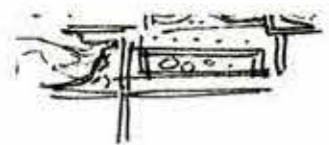
02 MIMICING VICTORIA



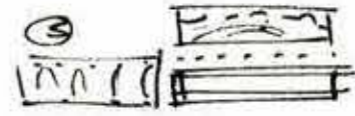
04 AGRICULTURAL LAB



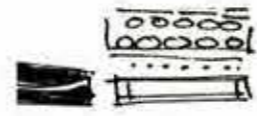
06 WILDERNESS



04 FLORAL PERIPHERY



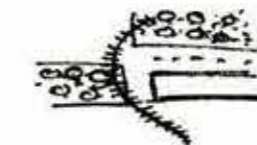
05 PASSIVE RECREATION



06 POND AS INTERSECTION



07 BUILT RECREATIONAL SPACE



08 ROCKERY & BRIDGE



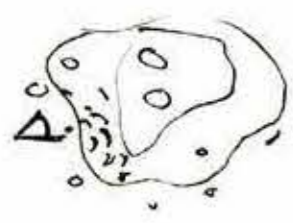
09 COMMERCIAL NODE



Victoria Amazonica



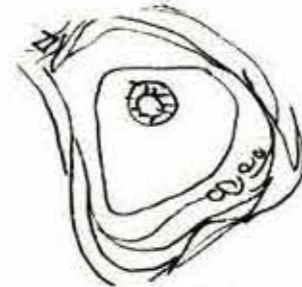
01 LAWN EXHIBIT ISLAND LINK



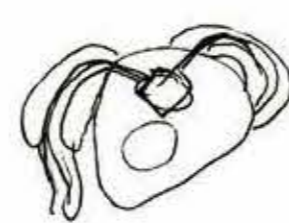
02 LAWN EXHIBIT



03 FLORAL EDGE



04 LINEAR DENSE EXHIBIT



05 SHADED ISLANDS & PATHS



06 WILD ANIMAL HABITAT



07 ISLAND PLATFORMS



08 KIOSKS IN DENSE PLANTING



09 OUTDOOR ROOMS



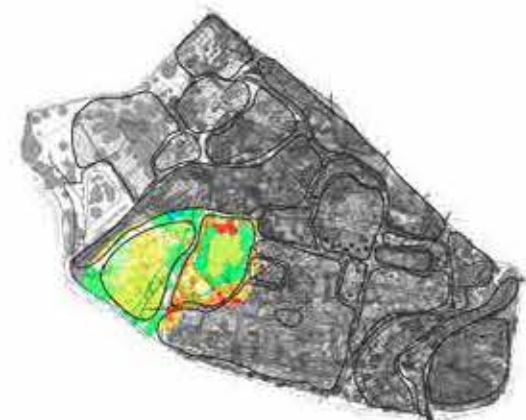
10 ANIMAL PARK



11 EXOTIC ZOO



12 MODEL FARM



Le Grand Bassin



“The realm of needs becomes identical with the range of possible objects, while the nature of the object itself becomes largely a function of the psychological state of those who desire it.”

The shopping mall prolongs this exchange by offering a plethora of possible purchases that continuously accelerate the creation of new bonds between object and consumer.

-M. Crawford

The World in a Shopping Mall



#DodoDays

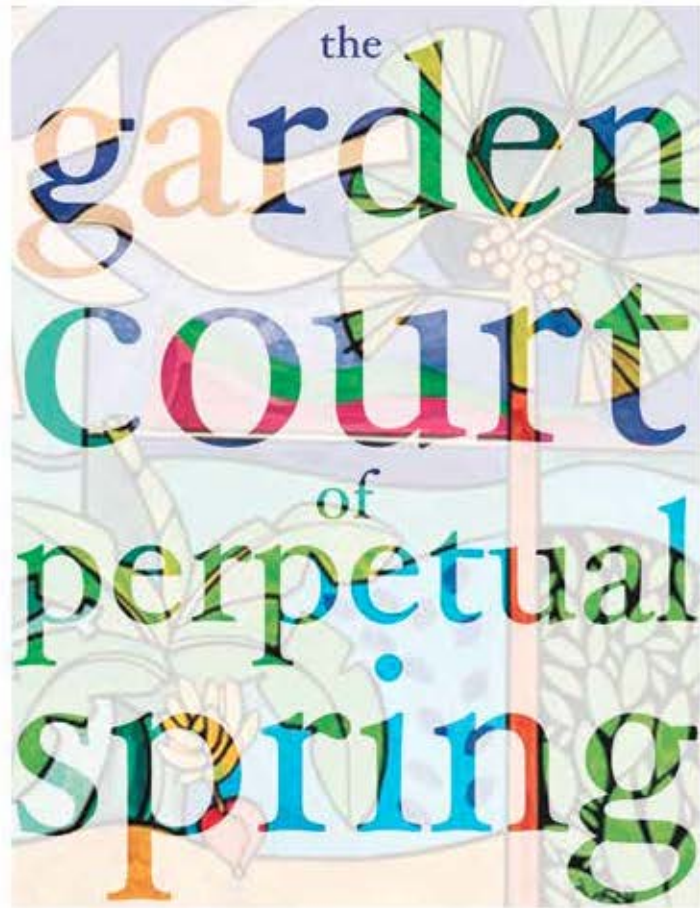
The Endemic & The Indigenous. When the Mascarene Islands had not yet been discovered and dodos roamed the island.



Vernacular Fiction

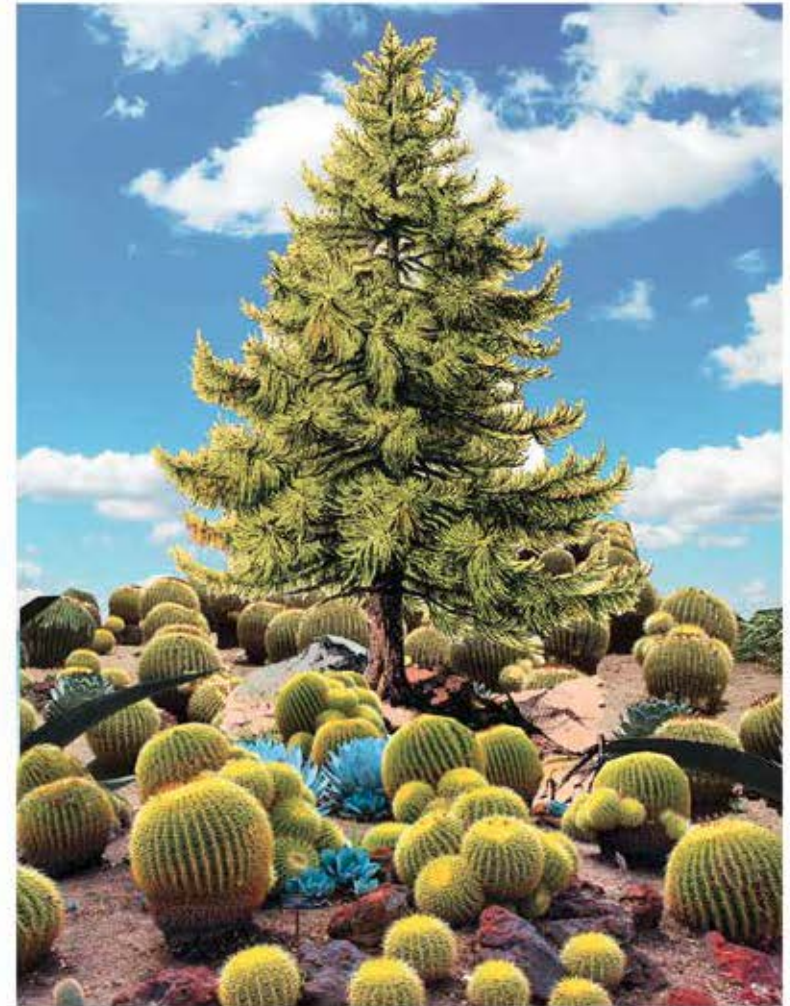
Mauritius, nature & culture.

“Mauritius was made first and then the heavens”
Mark Twain



The Garden Court of Perpetual Spring

Eternal blossom and colour within formal spaces.



Exotica

The Foreign collected & displayed in naturalia & artificialia.



(dis)Assemble

Deconstructing ecosystems and assembling units of nature.



#nofilter

We are the Selfie Generation. #backdrops #angles # composition



Cyburbia

Nature is ordered and displayed.
Hierarchies are reinforced or concealed.
The garden is a microcosm.

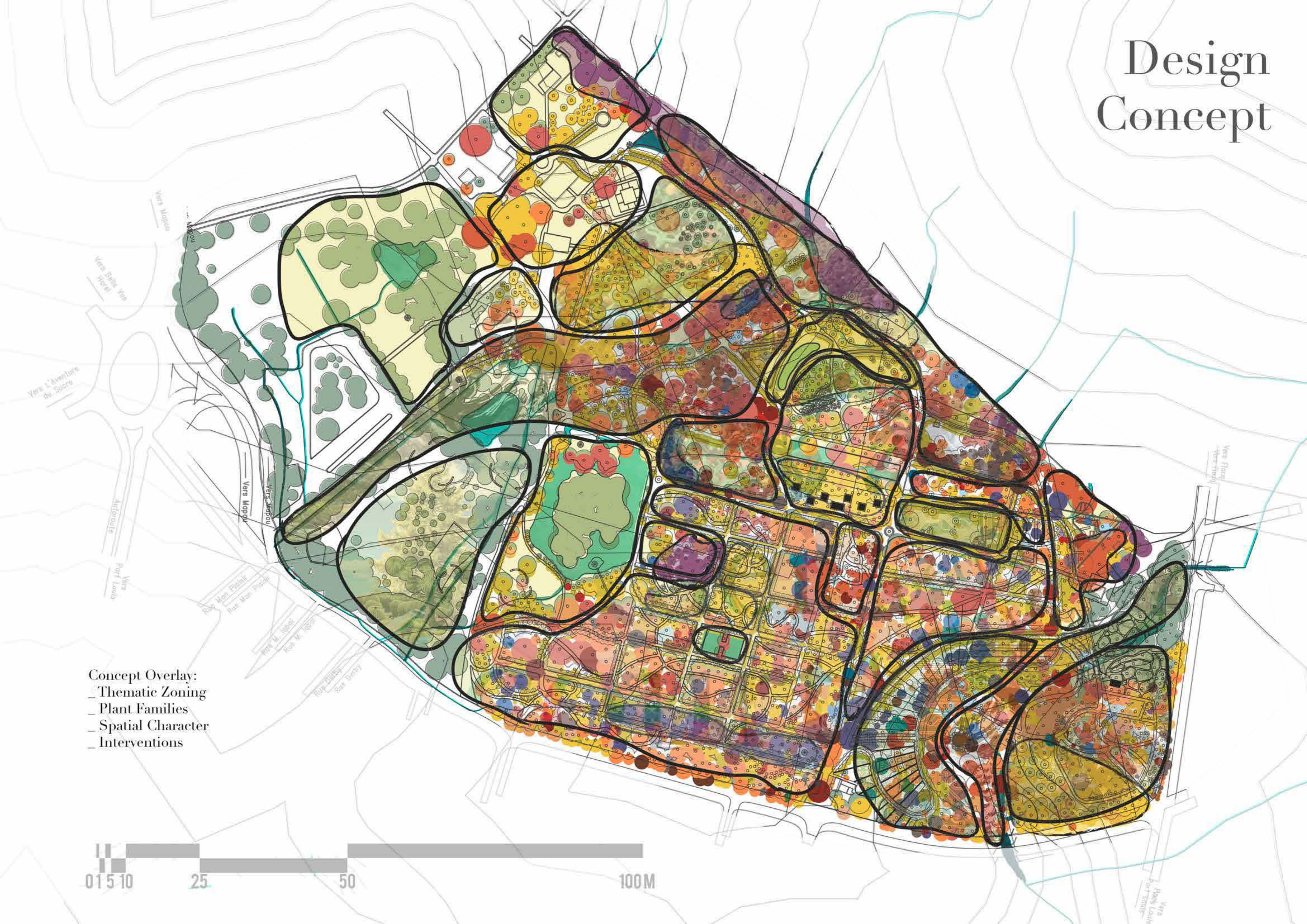


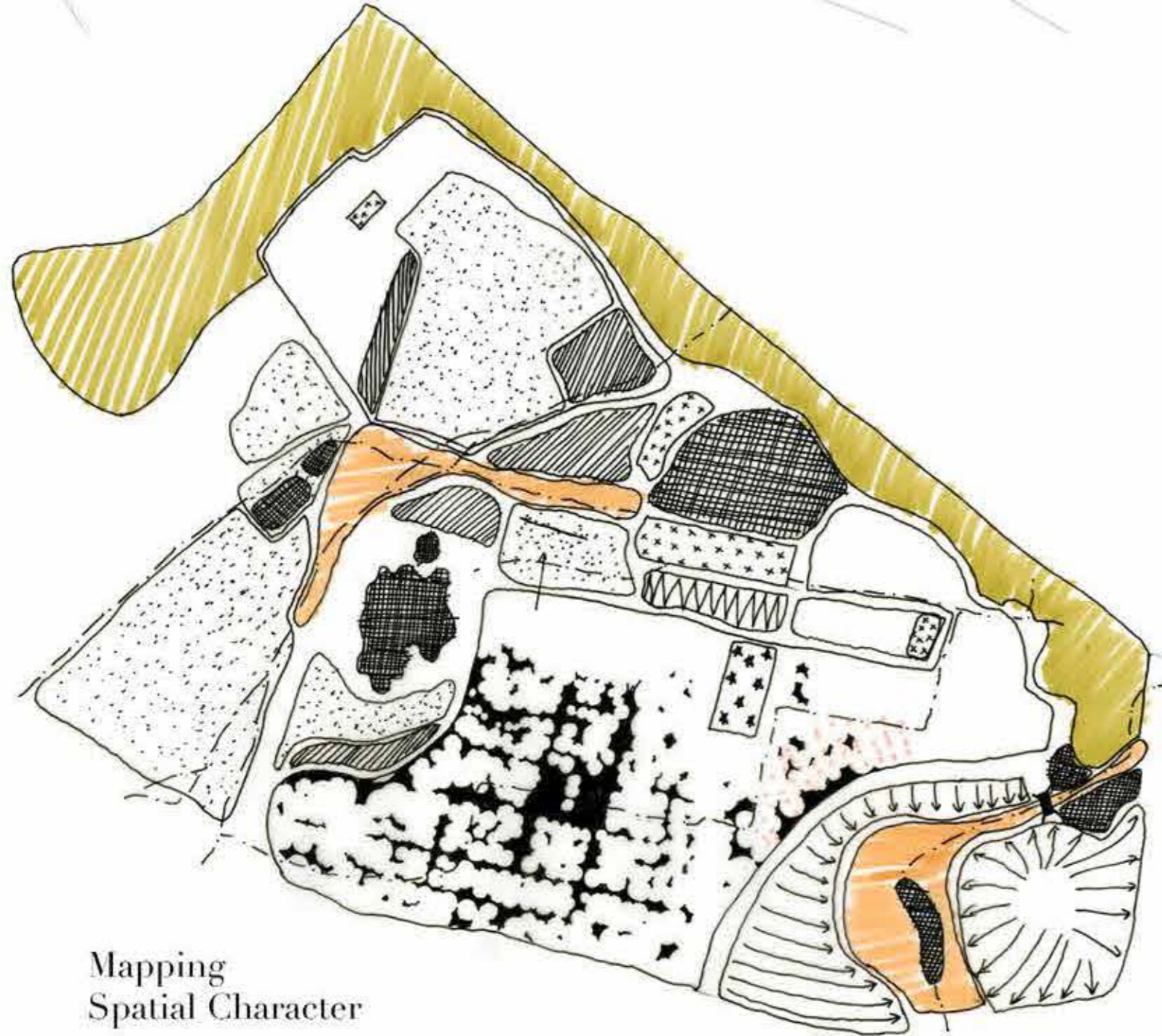
The Absolute Fake

Nature contained, imitated & re-imagined.

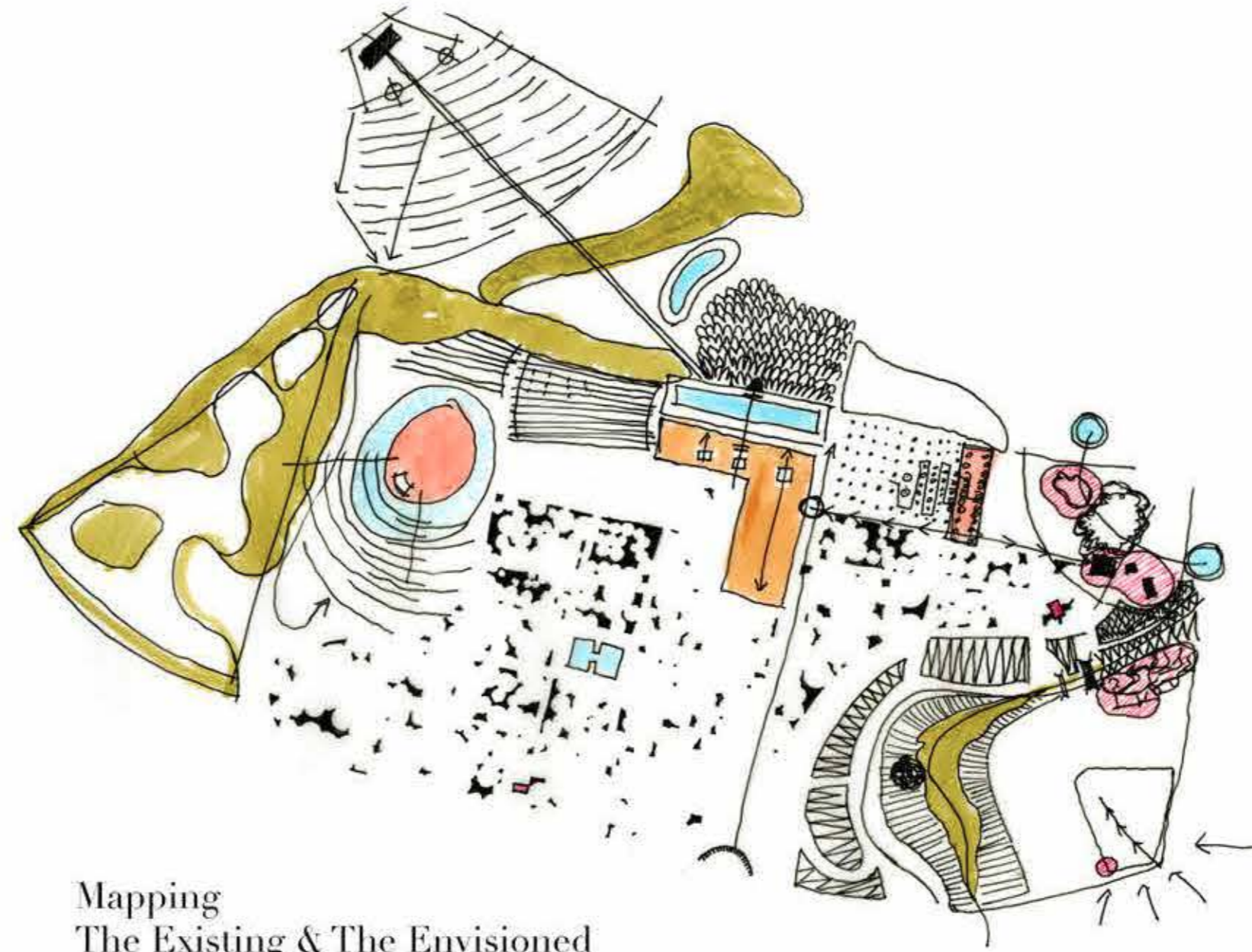
Design Concept

Concept Overlay:
_ Thematic Zoning
_ Plant Families
_ Spatial Character
_ Interventions





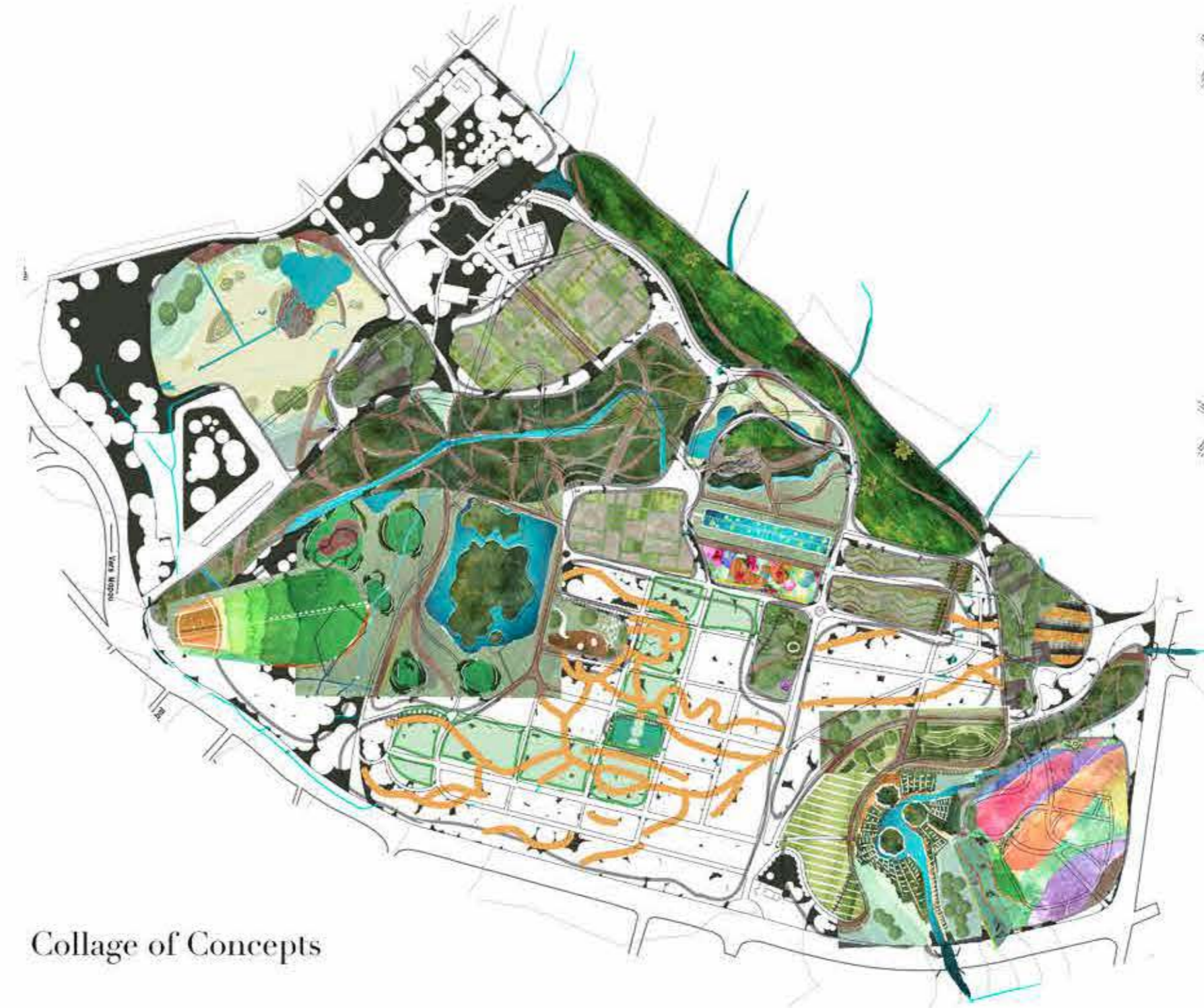
Mapping
Spatial Character



Mapping
The Existing & The Envisioned



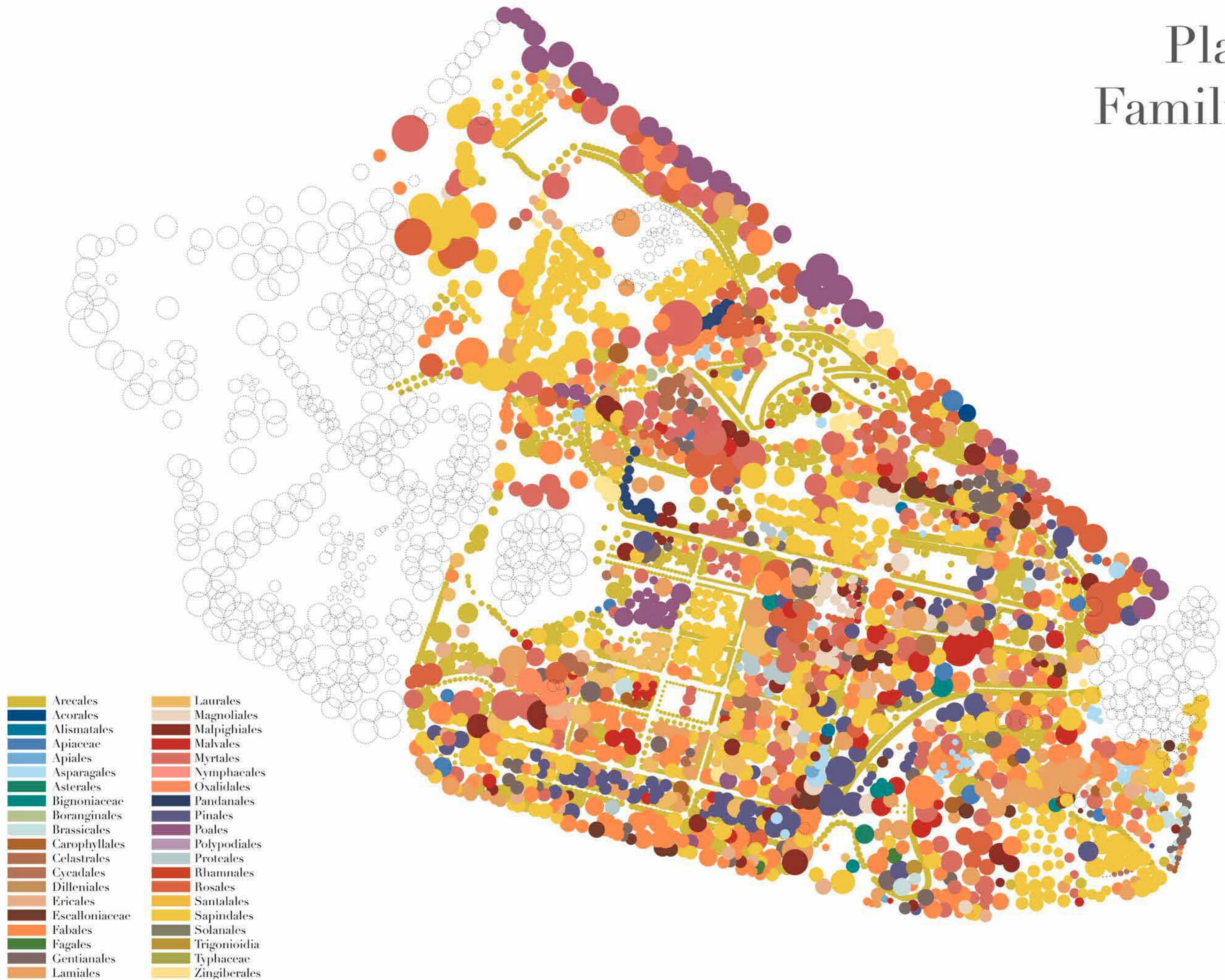
Mapping
Thematic Zoning



Collage of Concepts



Plant Families





01. Fabales

72 species

Acacia, Albizia, Bauhinia, Caesalpinia, Cassia, Delonix...



02. Arecales

70 species

Areca, Bismarckia, Cocos, Hyophorbe, Latania, Phoenix...



03. Lamiales

45 species

Clerodendron, Gmelina, Jasminum, Tabeouia, Vitex...



04. Sapindales

43 species

Citrus, Litchi, Mangifera, Spondias, Swietenia, Quassia...



05. Myrtales

38 species

Eucalyptus, Lagerstroemia, Syzygium, Terminalia...



06. Malvales

26 species

Dombeya, Hibiscus, Malvaviscus, Pterygota, Thespesia...



07. Gentianales

25 species

Coffea, Fagraea, Ixora, Mascarenhasia, Rondeletia...



08. Ericales

23 species

Barringtonia, Chrysophyllum, Diospyros, Mimusops...



09. Malpighiales

23 species

Clusia, Dovyalis, Garcinia, Ochna, Scolopia...



10. Escalloniaceae

16 species

Acalypha, Aleurites, Codiacum, Excoercaria, Jatropha...



11. Pinales

13 species

Agathis, Araucaria, Juniperus, Podocarpus...



12. Rosales

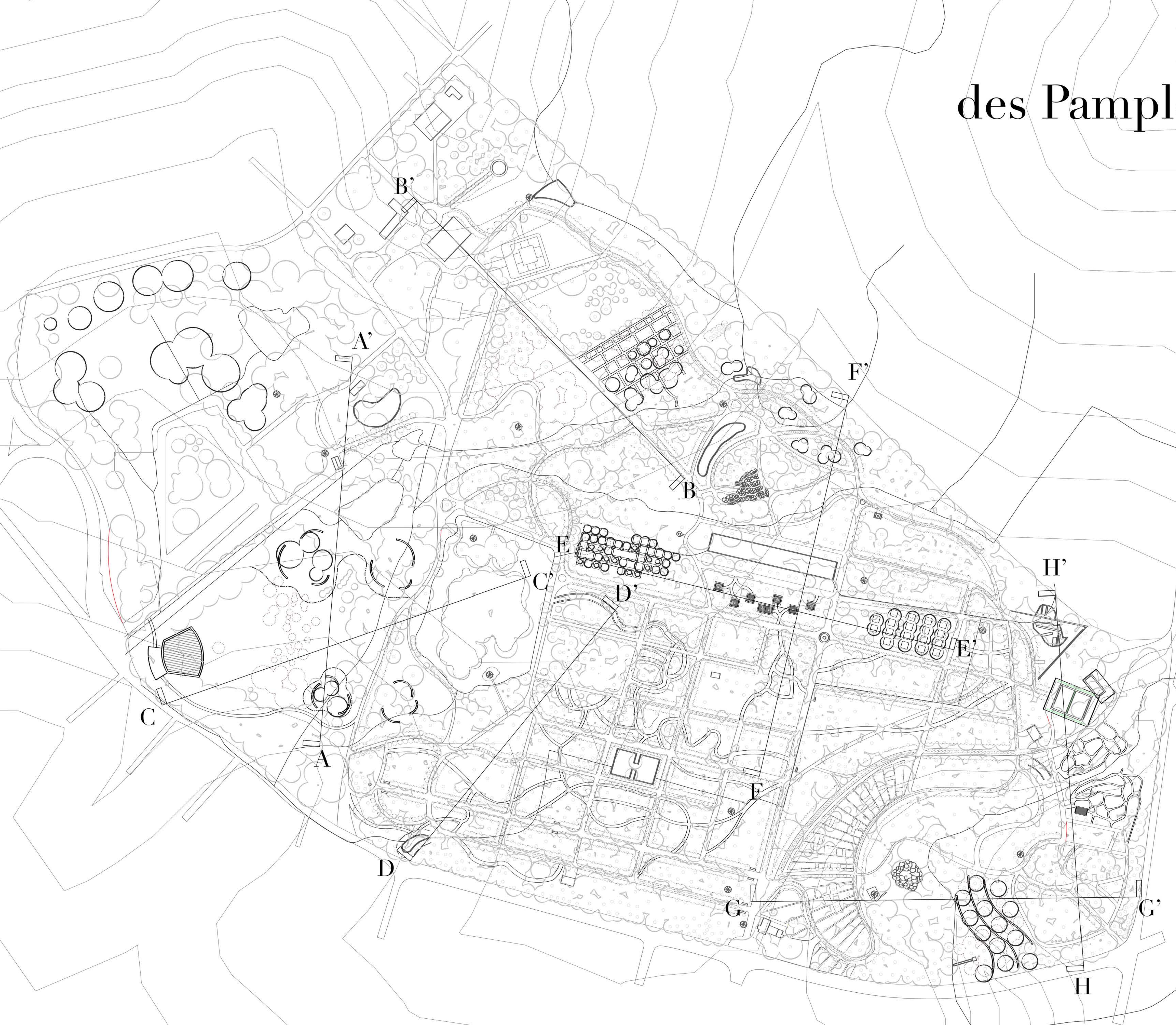
13 species

Artocarpus, Ficus, Raphiolepis, Ziziphus...

- 13. Asparagales: 11 sp.
- 14. Apiaceae: 9 sp.
- 15. Carophyllales: 8 sp.
- 16. Laurales: 8 sp.
- 17. Magnoliales: 8 sp.
- 18. Poales: 7 sp.
- 19. Zingiberales: 7 sp.
- 20. Alismatales: 5 sp.
- 21. Boraginales: 5 sp.
- 22. Typhaceae: 5 sp.
- 23. Cycadales: 4 sp.
- 24. Pandanales: 4 sp.
- 26. Proteales: 4 sp.
- 26. Apiales: 3 sp.

- 27. Bignoniaceae: 3 sp.
- 28. Oxalidales: 3 sp.
- 29. Solanales: 3 sp.
- 30. Asterales: 2 sp.
- 31. Brassicales: 2 sp.
- 32. Celastrales: 2 sp.
- 33. Fagales: 2 sp.
- 34. Nymphaeales: 2 sp.
- 35. Acorales: 1 sp.
- 36. Dilleniaceae: 1 sp.
- 37. Polypodiales: 1 sp.
- 38. Rhamnales: 1 sp.
- 39. Santalales: 1 sp.
- 40. Trigonoidia: 1 sp.

Le Jardin des Pamplémousses



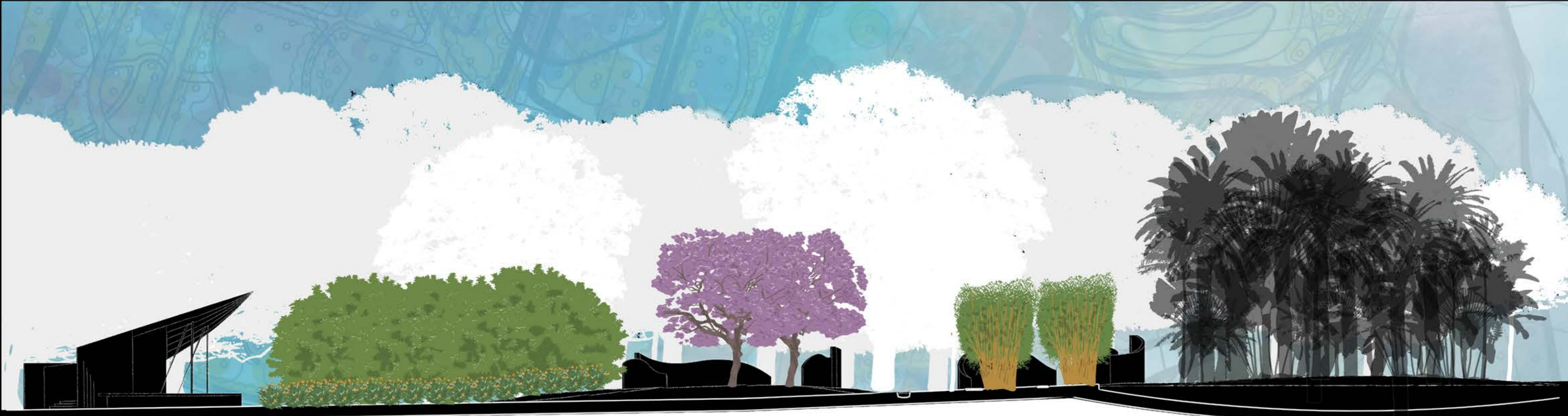
Master Plan
1:250



Section AA'
1:200



Section BB'
1:200



Section CC'
1:200



Section DD'
1:200



Section EE'
1:200



Section FF'
1:200



Section GG'
1:200



Section HH'
1:200

LE JARDIN DE PAMPLEMOUSSES: An investigation of the role of botanical gardens in post-colonial Africa.

LE JARDIN DE PAMPLEMOUSSES : Une investigation du rôle des jardins botaniques en Afrique postcoloniale.

Date:

REF #:

• **ON-SITE INTERVIEW** •

GENERAL INFORMATION *INFORMATION GENERALE*

1. Nationality

Nationalité

2. Age group

<i>Tranche d'âge</i>	18-28	29-38	39-48	49-58
	59-68	69-78	+79	

ABOUT GARDENS *LES JARDINS*

3. Is this your first visit to the SSR Botanical Garden? YES NO

Est-ce votre première visite au Jardin Botanique SSR ? OUI NON

4. If "NO", how many times, and when, have you visited the garden?

Si « NON », combien de fois, et quand, avez vous visité le jardin ?

5. What was your main reason for coming today?

- a. To learn and discover something new?
- b. To spend time with friends or family?
- c. To relax?
- d. To have something enjoyable to do?
- e. Other:

Quelle est la raison principale de votre visite aujourd'hui ?

- a. Pour apprendre ou découvrir quelque chose de nouveau?
- b. Pour passer du temps en famille/ avec des amis?
- c. Pour vous détendre?
- d. En quête de plaisance?
- e. Autre :

6. Do you often visit botanical gardens? Why? YES NO

Visitez-vous souvent des jardins botaniques ? Pourquoi ? OUI NON

7. Do you often visit parks & gardens? Why? YES NO

Visitez-vous souvent des parcs et jardins ? Pourquoi ? OUI NON

8. Do you often visit museums? Why? YES NO

Visitez-vous souvent des musées ? Pourquoi ? OUI NON

9. What is your preferred type of venue for outdoor recreation? Why?

Quel est votre type d'endroit favori en terme de récréation en plein air ? Pourquoi ?

10. What is your favorite outdoor venue in Mauritius? Why?

Quel est votre endroit en plein air favori à Maurice ? Pourquoi ?

YOUR EXPERIENCE *VOTRE EXPERIENCE*

11. How would you describe your visit of the SSR Botanic Garden today?

Comment décririez-vous votre visite du Jardin Botanique SSR aujourd'hui ?

12. Were there things that drew you in and captured your attention?

Il y a-t-il eu des choses qui vous ont attiré(e) et captivé votre attention ?

13. What is your opinion regarding the VARIETY of plants present in the garden?

Quelle est votre opinion concernant la VARIETE des plantes présentes dans le jardin?

14. What is your opinion regarding the PLANT COLLECTIONS in display in the garden?

Quelle est votre opinion concernant les COLLECTIONS DE PLANTES exposées dans le jardin?

15. How did you find the STATE of plants present in the garden?

Comment avez-vous trouvé l'ETAT des plantes présentes dans le jardin?

16. What were your favorite plants/ spaces?

Quels étaient vos plantes/ espaces préférés?

17. Did you find it easy to navigate through the garden?

Avez-vous trouvé cela simple de naviguer à travers le jardin ?

18. How would you rate the information displays of the garden?

a. Plant names:

b. Maps:

c. Pamphlets:

Comment considérez-vous l'information disponible dans le jardin?

a. Noms de plantes:

b. Plan:

c. Pamphlets:

19. What is your opinion regarding the functionality and quality of built infrastructures present in the garden?

Quelle est votre opinion concernant la fonctionnalité et la qualité des infrastructures bâties du jardin ?

20. Did you find the built infrastructure aesthetically pleasing?

Avez-vous trouvé les infrastructures bâties esthétiquement plaisantes ?

21. Did you perceive the built infrastructure as being culturally relevant and appropriate to Mauritius?

Avez-vous trouvé les infrastructures bâties culturellement appropriées et pertinentes à l'île Maurice ?

22. What ACTIVITIES did you partake in during your visit of the garden?

A quelles ACTIVITES avez-vous participé(e) lors de votre visite du jardin ?

23. What ACTIVITIES do you believe could be provided in order to create a better appreciation of time spent in the garden?

Quelles sont selon vous, des ACTIVITES qui pourraient être offertes afin de créer une meilleure appréciation du temps passé au jardin ?

24. Did you make use of the guided tour services available at the garden? Why?

Avez-vous fait usage du service de visite guidée disponible au jardin ? Pourquoi ?

25. If "YES", how would you rate the quality of the guided tour?

Si « OUI », comment avez-vous trouvé la qualité de la visite guidée ?

26. Do you find the entrance fee reasonable in relation to your experience of the garden today?

Trouvez-vous le prix d'accès au jardin raisonnable en terme de votre expérience aujourd'hui?

27. What did you not enjoy about your visit?

Qu'est-ce qui vous a déplu lors de votre visite ?

28. In general, how do you think the garden could be improved?

De manière générale, comment pensez-vous que le jardin pourrait être amélioré ?

29. Would you return to visit the SSR Botanical Garden again? Why?

Retourneriez-vous visiter le Jardin Botanique SSR dans le future ? Pourquoi ?

30. Would you recommend friends/family to visit the garden? Why?

Recommanderiez-vous une visite au jardin à vos amis/familles ? Pourquoi ?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS :

AUTRES COMMENTAIRES :

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION!

MERCI D'AVOIR DONNE DE VOTRE TEMPS ET POUR VOTRE PARTICIPATION!

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