unfuse

Tropical House

Designing a music retreat center

https://**competitions**.uni.xyz

Michael Jackson- a global icon, performer and musician

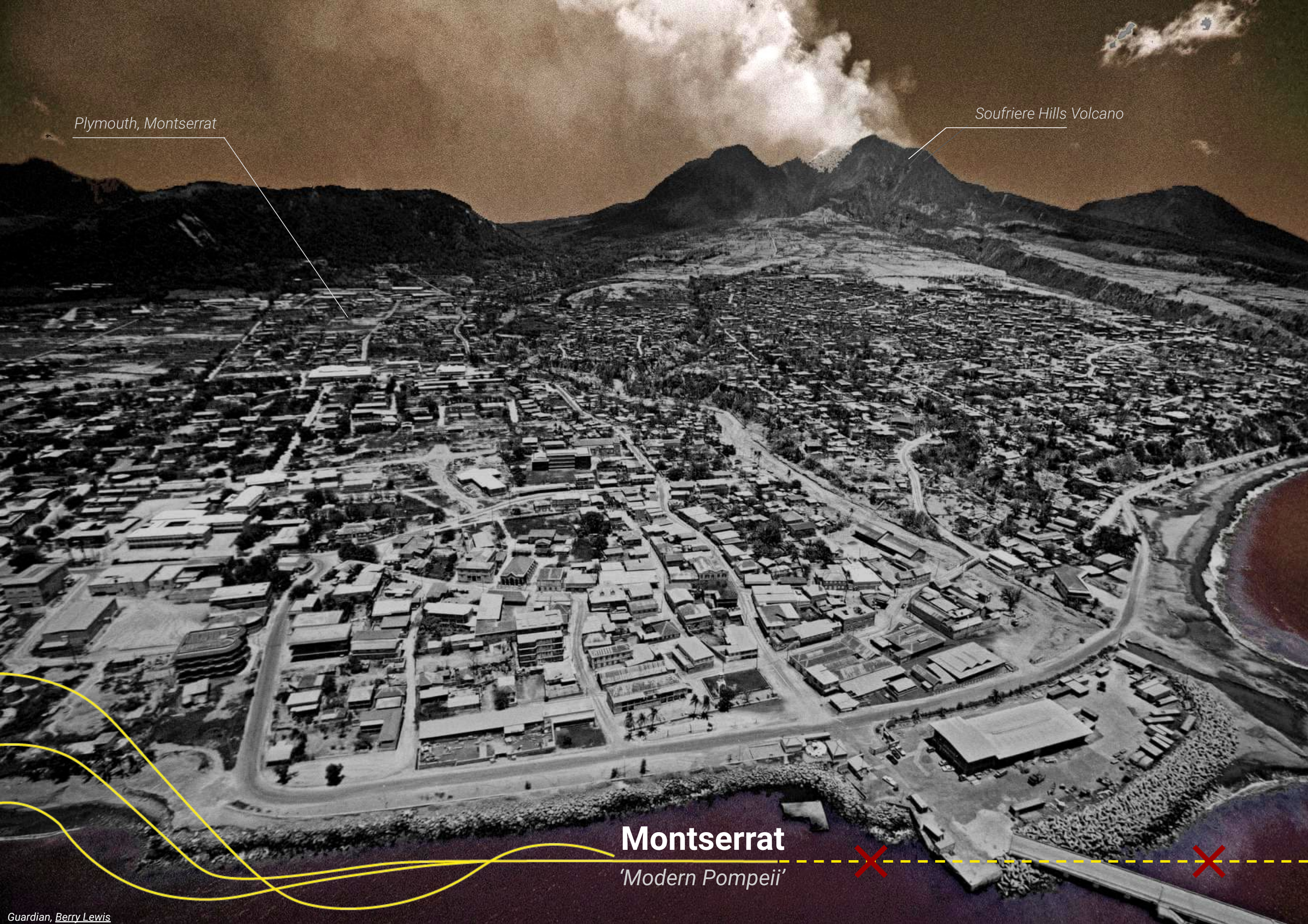
Introduction

Music is an indispensable part of our lives. Whether it's the beatbox in someone's car, the coffee house you going to, the mall, the road - it's everywhere.

So, every possible culture has something like music. A platform that connects a community of people and binds them through their shared experiences, even if there is nothing common at an individual level. A sense of homogeneity prevails among the diverse class of individuals and with time, becomes synonymous to their identity.

Music is universal. Despite it’s diversity influenced by countless cultures, human nature underlies basic musical structures. (Source) It is a language that transcends all barriers of caste, class or colour.

That’s how Montserrat, a small island in seas of the Caribbean looked like in 1970s.



Montserrat

'Modern Pompeii'

Guardian, Berry Lewis

Right - Building in Plymouth. Left - Hi-Tech Air Studios in Raymond Road. Source: Shane Thomas

Background

Montserrat, an overseas territory of the United Kingdom is a small island in seas of Caribbean. In 1970, George Martin (The Fifth Beatle) commissioned a studio. It later became the epicenter of the international music scene where musicians like Michael Jackson, Paul McCartney used to record their albums. Music maneuvered a communal experience and an unspoken bonding between the artists and locals.

But what happens when a place accidently losses it's status symbol?

On July 18, 1995, Soufriere Hills Volcano in Montserrat erupted after 1500 years. In 1997 the southern portion of the island including *Georgian era capital Plymouth* was evacuated and labelled as an exclusion zone. The music studio, once a landmark, lies abandoned as a ruin being swooped by vegetation.

Brief

After 20 years, things are changing for Montserrat. With the island of 11km being inhabited by it's locals again, the government is busy planning ways of turning 'ash into cash'. Plans are afoot to explore the potential of volcano value chain. Drilling of three geothermal wells, animal husbandry, increase in population by 6.2% and several business enterprises investing for a property - the place is slowly being revived.

With Montserrat finding its ground, can the culture of music, once a landmark, be resurrected?

Challenge is to design a music retreat center that functions as a studio for artists. Also creating a public platform for local community activities. Aim is to revive the 'status symbol' in a different language that promotes the culture of music, an element the place was once associated with.

Objectives

Precaution

Though volcano is in an excluded zone, it is active. Design for a possible uncertainty

Nature

Respond to the nature and fabric of context. Design should be part of it, rather than overwhelm it

Adaptive

Spaces that can be used for variety of activities beyond performances

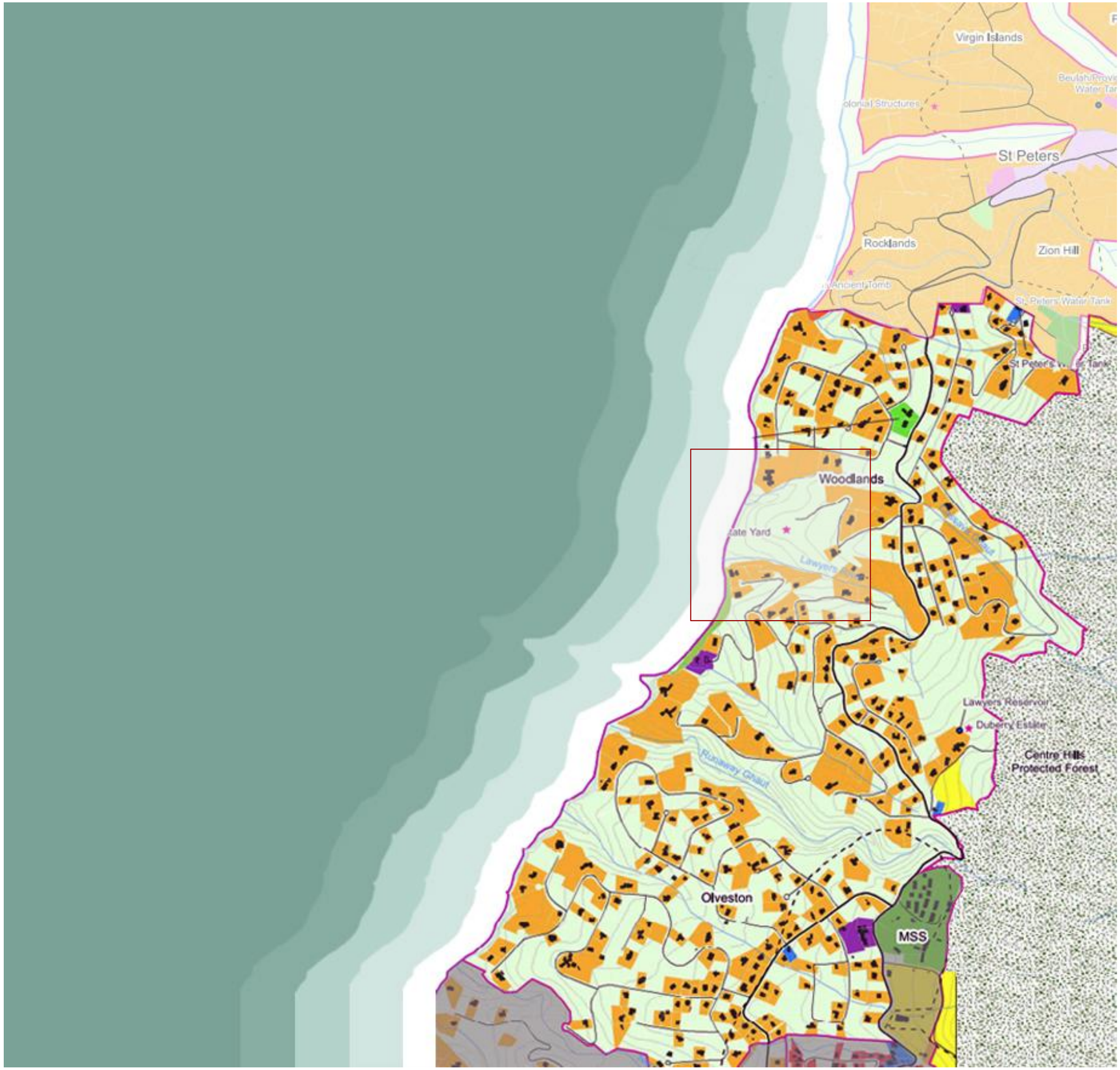
Inclusivity

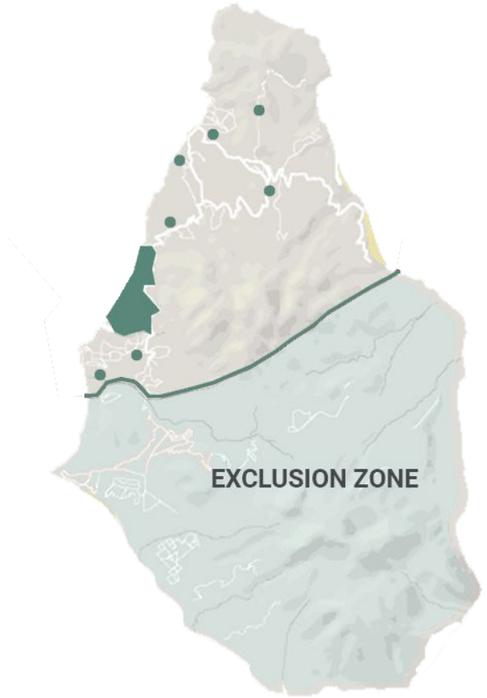
Enabling dialogue between locals and artists coming to Montserrat to record, stay or perform.

The following objectives can be a point of beginning to conceive this design.

The proposal can be conceived as an artist retreat center center along with performing stage which could be used for community activities like music performances, festivals etc.

It will further act as a gateway for the old and new. Exchange of knowledge and ideas that initiate dialogue, in regards to the future of Monstreet.





Above - Plan of Montserrat.
Left - Land use plan of Woodland with site demarcated

Woodland Area

Woodland created during the 1960s, covers 446 acres of the island. Majority of land is occupied by residential units and undeveloped lots.

Today these villas are owned by a mixture of locals and expatriates. These residences make an important contribution to Montserrat's economy. Villa construction, upgrades and maintenance employ a wide range of people. Other land uses in the area include offices, St Augustine's school, a pre-school nursery, several guesthouses, and three restaurants.

Woodlands beach is an important feature of the area and provides one of the Montserrat's most attractive and well serviced beaches. Many recreation and social activities are held here

Site Plan

Design site is right next to Palm Loop, Woodland, Montserrat. The place is known for its villas and properties owned by many business enterprises. The place is known for its resemblance to coastal Ireland and Irish ancestry of many of its inhabitants. Amidst the moist tropical climate of Caribbean, it has *Tabebouia*, a native broadleaf evergreen tree and *Swietenia*, an endangered mahogany tree. For design purpose, data can be assumed wherever necessary

Site Area: **33700.72sqm**
Site coordinates:
16°45'55.8"N 62°13'15.6"W

Climate: **21-30°C**
Ground Coverage : Maximum **14,000 sqm**
Built up Area: Maximum **20,000 sqm**
Height limit - **15m**
No design setbacks/site offsets.

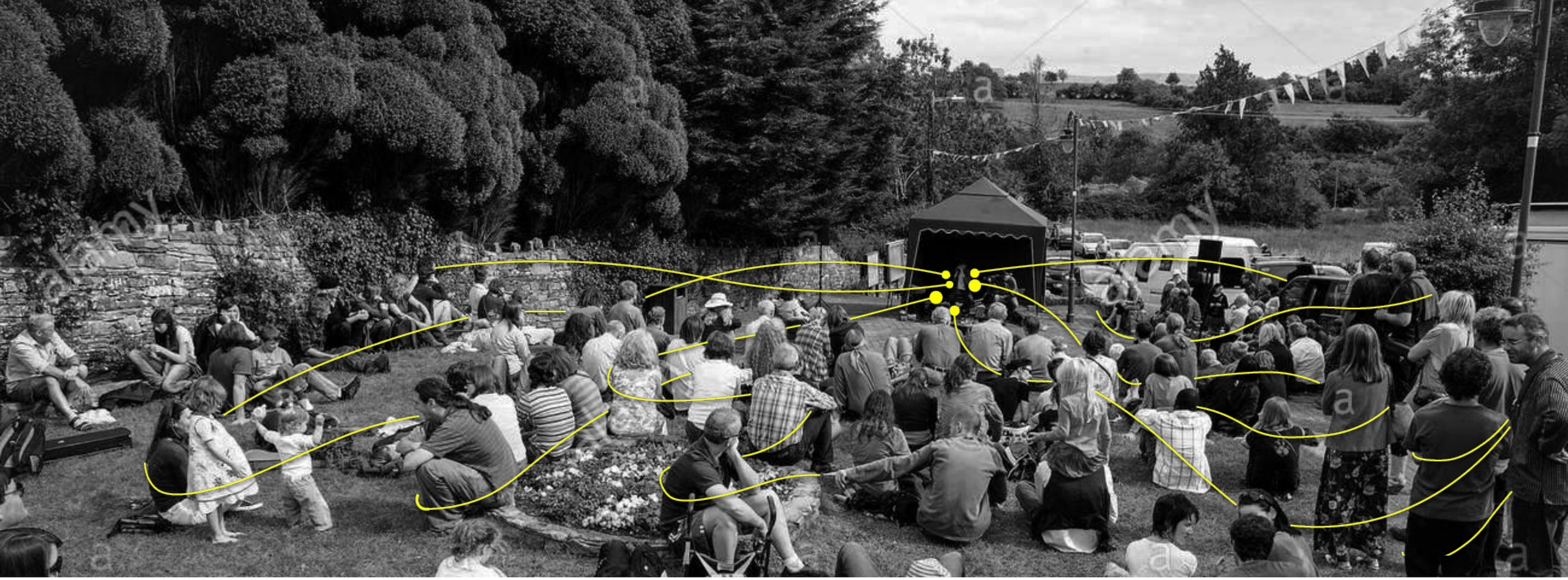
*VIEW **A***

*VIEW **B***

*VIEW **C***

WOODLANDS BEACH

Refer to previous page



Small scale music performance being held for local community, Source: Source

Program Outline

The following programmatic outline is recommended for this challenge. Participants are recommended to craft a schematic programme based on these given segments or they can propose something altogether new.

40%

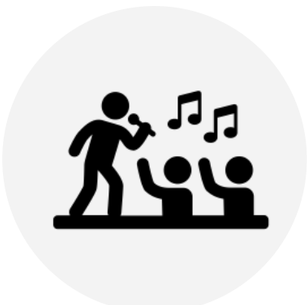
Space to Stay/Retreat

A holiday home for 15 people (about 3-4 families, solo artists or combination of these)

5%

Space to Rehearse

Minimum 2 rehearsal rooms. One for music, another for theatre and dance.



25%

Space to Exchange

Stage for small performances for close and open audiences.

30%

Services

Recreational spaces, Restaurants, Storage space, Office area, etc. - based on design.

Submission

You have to deliver an architectural outcome on the following site, based on the given outlines.

• A maximum of 4 boards / sheets. – **[2362px** x **3544px]** or **[400mm x 600mm** in **150 dpi]** in portrait digital format (JPEG).
• Each image should be less than **15MB**

This additional resources folder contains: FAQ Questions, High Res maps, Sketchup Model of the terrain and CAD file of the site plan.

Minimum requisites in the sheets are 3 sheets/boards + Cover image containing:

This is the link for new file sizes, here.

• Site plan (Compulsory)
• Key conceptual sections x 1 (Minimum)
• 3D views x 4
• Cover image/Thumbnail of size 2000 x 1000 px or larger in aspect ratio 2:1.
• Floor plans, images, sketches (if any) can be added to support the entry in the form of additional images.
• Answer 6 FAQ questions in the discussion section as given on the 'additional resources folder'.

+ The team limit for this competition is 4 members maximum.
+ Use exploded views to discuss multi levelled conceptual models better.
+ Ensure that the final sheets which are submitted do not include your name or any other mark of identification.
+ Mention sheet number on corner of every sheet.
+ This is a design ideas challenge only. There is no built commission/realization is associated with the problem
+ Plagiarism of any idea / form / design / image will be disqualified with a notice.

Registration page here: https://competitions.uni.xyz/tropical-house

Discover the competition schedule and deadlines here: Schedule

Judging Criteria

The entries will be judged by an international jury of the competition on the following criterions:

Presentation

The fundamental to a good entry is a good presentation.

Concept/Idea

Quality of thought and intent in pre-design phase.

Spaces/Programme

How the spaces are calculated and ordered.

Design Output

The final architectural outcome of the solution.

The judging panel can also add other criterions based on their internal discussions - which will be in line with the problem statement. Participants are advised to fulfil above given criterions first in their design.

(Ad) Institutional access:

We believe in a world more collaborative.

And we think academia is where it can begin.

Institutional Access™ is world's only cross institution competition programme. You can make this challenge more meaningful by bringing it to your classmates and professors working together. There are a lot of perks by entering this challenge with your institution. Follow the link to learn more.

Institutional Access™

Rewards

Grants of up to a total of **20,000$** can be won on this challenge. Learn more about the full conditions on the competition page here.

About unfuse

Unfuse serves as a unit block for **Uni** in the field of Architecture. It intends to break the fusion of traditional design barriers and methodologies by making it a platform for experimentation and conceptual exchange of ideas in architecture, urbanism, society, culture and ecology. It is a research initiative dedicated to providing opportunities for designers from all domains to explore ideas that go beyond the boundaries of architectural discipline and enrich our built environment; thereby opening up possibilities for promotion of architectural thought at a global level.

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Tropical House

Exclusion Zone - Present Day Plymouth, Montserrat

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