



unfuse™
Echo of Civilization

Re-Coding Post-War Syria.

<http://competitions.uni.xyz>

REPARAMETRIZE
studio



United Nations reports death of 400,00 people in Syrian war. Image courtesy of reparametrize studio

Description

The **Syrian Civil War is one of the worst humanitarian crises, that has entered its eighth year.** There are a lot of plans for post-war reconstruction, and most of these plans are for the complete demolition of the existing damaged fabric by replacing it with a new urban fabric. **But in the process, the participation of the community in these reconstructing plans is completely missing.**

Post-war effects are widely spread and can be long term or short term. Meaningful post-war redevelopment should consider the balance between architectural infrastructure, public health provision, and social order. Reducing the importance of one of these three axes can lead to a collapse of social structure, services, education, health care and also has a long-term impact on society.

The main focus should be on understanding how **communities can be involved in the rehabilitation of these aspects.**



Major destruction to archaeological and cultural fabric of the city. Image courtesy of reparametrize studio

Premise

"Throughout the millennia, urban civilizations have left behind traces that besides being recognized as heritage of their country, are also an extraordinary contribution to the whole world. Cities that were born well before the Roman colonisation, and that survived well after its end; living cities and dead cities that both share the presence of ruins created by time, and rubble produced by war." Syria – The Making of Future- From Urbicide to The Architecture of The City Book – Universita luav di Venezia

When we look at the image of the ancient cities in the Middle Eastern regions, we see the urban texture that extends horizontally according to the needs of societies. If we bring the image closer, we see the paths that extend like veins reaching to the unit that forms all this beauty. **At center stage of this discovery often is the ancient mud house.**

Ancient mud houses are the basis of societies in these regions. Especially since they are built by the inhabitants, from their land, and to serve their environment. **It is a sustainable urban social and functional fabric that varies between cities and rural areas.**



"Only complete destruction can allow a new existence, a new state of things, by preventing evolution and promoting revolution" Syria – The Making of Future

Build up

Urban studies and architecture are focusing recently on solutions and rethinking ways to serve affected communities. This has led to the removal of old formulas like ancient mud houses and vertical expansion, their presence and the knowledge of their techniques and affection has become very rare.

If we went a step back and shed light on the remains of these old houses that are precisely the ancient mud houses between residential buildings in towns and neighborhoods, we find that they give scale to these areas. But there is an arid assumption that life will not return to it and we have to remove it. Why can't we say that it is a center of life and that there is a great tangency for it's a function to be restructured?

How can a flower grow out of the rubble?

How can local communities participate in the rehabilitation process?



Image courtesy of reparametrize studio

Brief

The cost of war cannot be quantified but the price Syria has to pay now is much more than it can afford. And even if we assume that the conflict is solved, still the daily life they used to live is impaired. It is the community of people in Syria that have suffered the most and without including them, the significance of the place will perish.

Challenge is to create a space that acts as a vessel in reviving the destructed neighbourhoods and encouraging inhabitants to come back. A space that respects the past, responds to present and incorporates the possibility of a bright future of Syria.

A space that reinterprets the ancient mud house and uses it as a tool for a cultural revival.



Zamalka ,Damascus
[33° 31' 31" N, 36° 21' 10" E](#)

Digital map of Zamalka, Damascus courtesy of reparametrize studio

Zamalka, Damascus

The **Ancient City of Damascus** is the historic city center of Damascus, Syria. It is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, which contains numerous archaeological sites. Many cultures have left their mark in Damascus, especially Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic. Damascus was considered a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Zamalka is a town in Duma region in the province of Damascus. It is very close to the capital Damascus, 10 kilometers east of the capital. It is part of Al Ghouta (the urban extension of the capital). Zamalka was one of the most beautiful cities of the Damascus countryside, which was almost completely destroyed during the war. Around 150 thousand people inhabit the place.



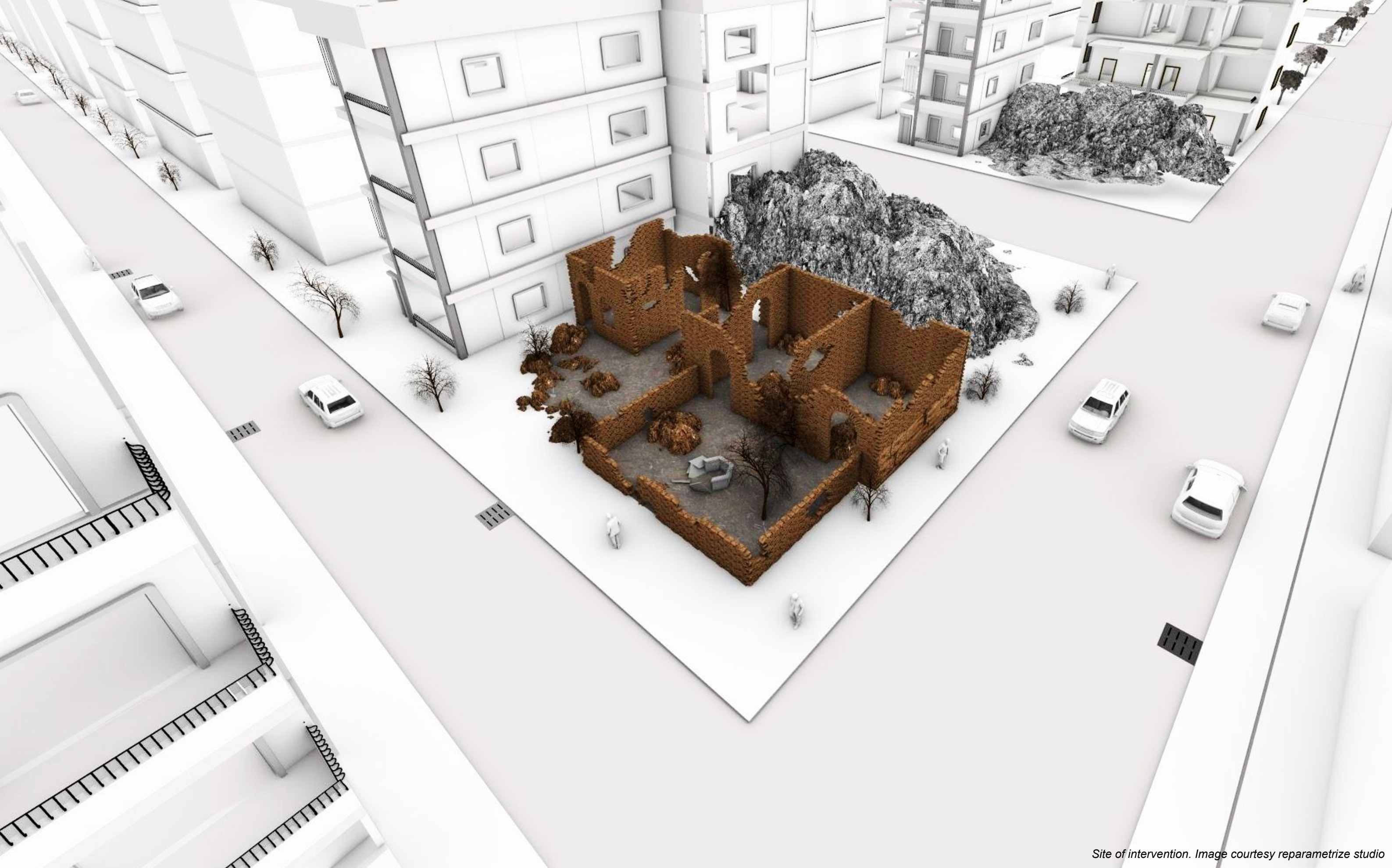
Life style, needs and aspirations of the neighbourhood, inhabitants. Image courtesy of reparametrize studio

Context

Freedom of movement and access to services remain extremely limited and challenging. The majority of the inhabitants are women, kids and old men. Shelter and infrastructure damage has taken place on a massive scale. Syrian heritage and cultural legacies like The Old Zamalka Bath and Grand Mosque got destroyed. These acted as community spaces where people met for Friday prayer. A social point of interaction.

On the other hand, a significant number of inhabitants were able or would like to return to their communities of origin. In areas hosting a large number of displaced people or returnees, community-based support to facilitate access to basic services and livelihood opportunities will be needed.

Relief Organizations provide fresh water for inhabitants. Electricity lines destroyed everywhere. Some inhabitants manage to secure their necessary needs by crossing between neighborhoods. High Percentage of repairing work is being done by locals.



Site of intervention. Image courtesy reparametrize studio

Site of Intervention



3rd model of design site detailing elements of mud house (Intervention to be held here) courtesy of reparametrize studio

A Typical Mud House

The old mud houses are characterized by adjacent surfaces for easy communication between neighbours. The number of rooms in a house depends on the size of the house, and each wall in it consists of two opposite walls called "two pills" filling the space between them with a quantity of mud bricks or small stones. As for the threshold, it is built over the door with long stones or a long piece of wood. Arches are built on top of it forming the "Arch".

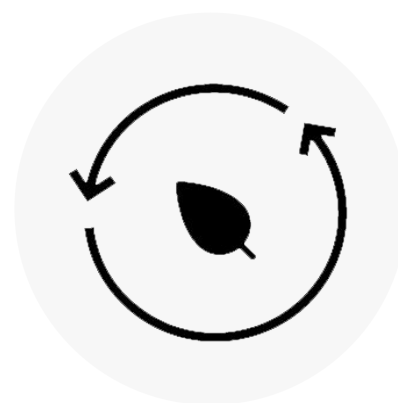
In the center or out of the house is the "The Courtyard" which is the most important part of the house. It uses a unique cooling system using plants, the water fountain in the center and sunlight. It can be used for several functions such as family gathering and social occasions, so it is considered as the main place for in the house. Furthermore roof is structured from thick solid wood forming beams and a mixture of hay, mud, white sand and water is installed on top of it.

Mud is cost effective and has lower maintenance compared to various other building materials. It is long lasting, it absorbs heat in summer, it is also a sustainable material as it uses components from nature and it can be recycled as well.



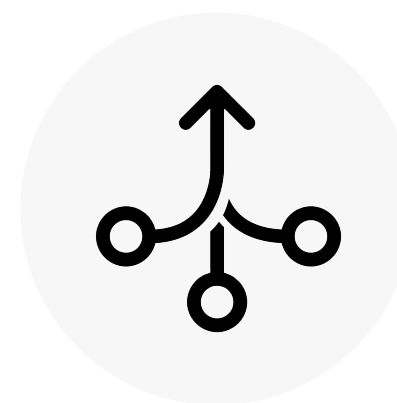
Objective

Participants are required to design new spaces taking into consideration convenient solutions, and also create new links with the destruction around. The design should incorporate safety and it should be adapted to the context in a way that it revives it.



Self-Sufficiency

The design should use materials from the context (recycling debris and rubble) Techniques that use the skills of local inhabitants



Integration

Using old mud houses as a bridge between the deconstructed buildings and community .



Optimization

Optimum the function of old destructed houses to serve community in new ways.



Evolutionary

The structure should be evolving with time and people

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**
- You can find the preset PSD, AI and INDD template files in the 'additional resources folder'.

This additional resources folder contains: FAQ Questions, High Res maps, .3D model of the site, Site Images and CAD file of the site plan.

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

- 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'.

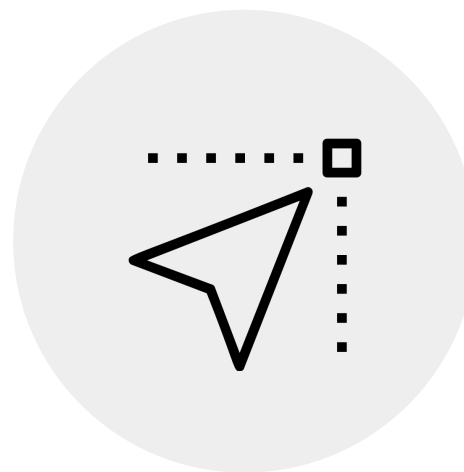
-
- + The team limit for this competition is 4 members maximum.
 - + Use exploded views to discuss multi levelled conceptual models better.
 - + Ensure that the final sheets which are submitted do not include your name or any other mark of identification.
 - + Mention sheet number on corner of every 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: <http://competitions.uni.xyz>

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 criteria:



Presentation

The fundamental to a good entry is a good presentation.



Concept/Idea

Quality of thought and intent in pre-design phase.



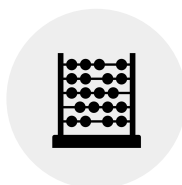
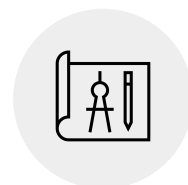
Spaces/Programme

How the spaces are calculated and ordered.



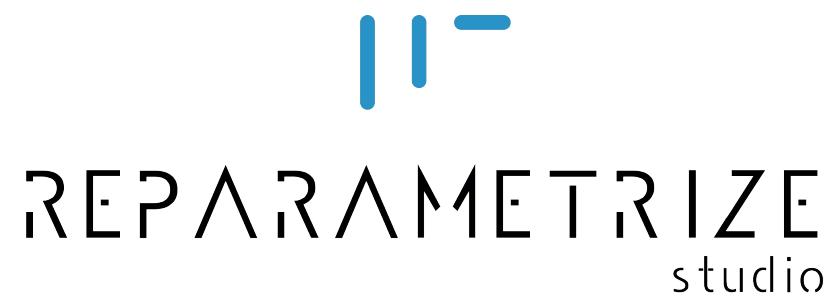
Design Output

The final architectural outcome of the solution.



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

About



The Reparametrize Studio span from design, research, consultancy, publication to project realization. Reparametrize states the attitude and core value of the practice that the research is not just accept what it is in the state of art design manner, it practices parametric design but reorganize and reinvent the value judgment, it reconstructs the design process in order to response to more complex question in realistic condition, it reunites the innovative mind and practical hand to work together in order to make new contribution to the profession.

With the help of advanced **parametric design, VR/AR enhancement, and rapid prototyping technology**, the studio established an innovative, integrated, articulated design methodology, aim to improve rapid development and coexistence in new era of technology. Based on the design principle, the studio dedicated to solve side effects and problems caused by the constantly changing of the world.

The studio work as an equal, flat decentralized system with interdisciplinary cooperation, strong reasoning procedural and rigorous research system. It is a strong network of architects, researchers, experts and partners. Together the multiple objective of design could be taking care of and making a new alternative to the future.

Website : <http://reparametrize.com/>

Queries: support@uni.xyz

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Curator



Ziwar Al Nouri

M.Arch / PhD Candidate

Founder of Reparametrize Studio

Mohamad Ziwar Al Nouri is an **Architect** and **Computational Designer** with expertise in **Parametric Design**. He holds **two masters' degree** –one at **ELISAVA** specializing in **Advanced Design and Digital Architecture (ADDA)** at **2012**, and the second one in **2014** at **Studio Zaha Hadid** at the **University of Applied Arts in Vienna (IOA)**. Studying under the mentorship of the late Dame **Zaha Hadid** and **Patrick Schumacher**, he developed great understanding of parametricism and its capabilities to define space and form. He later on studied under Studio **Kazuyo Sejima** as well. Furthermore, he has lectured as main Tutor of both Studios, contributing greatly to a rich international environment of Computational Design and exchange of knowledge.

In order to enhance his skills in Computational tools he extensively used programs and control processes such as **Rhino, Grasshopper, Python scripting, Rhino- Cam, and Kangaroo**

Ziwar Founding Partner of **“Reparametrize Studio”** which is established with his partners at 2017 which is span from design, research, consultancy, publication to project realization, with the help of advanced parametric design.

Currently Ziwar is a **PhD Candidate** at **Universitat Innsbruck**; he is developing his Master's thesis (**Damascus Re-Coding**). Which achieved an excellent grade, his research is based on find **new typology of strategies concept build for the Post-War Syria**.

Furthermore, Ziwar is a **collaborator** of **The Lab of Emergency & Sustainable Settlements (LESS)** that is based in **Ottawa, Canada**, a Non-profit organization that works on developing new models of **emergency settlements for future refugee crises**, and has been a **lead assistant** in **Global summer school** in **IAAC 2014**.

Curator



Bilal Baghdadi
Arch Co-Founder
Reparametrize Studio

Bilal Baghdadi (Beirut, 1989) is the co-founder of **Reparametrize studio** and the Director of the **Lebanon office**.

Bilal Baghdadi studied architecture at **the International University of Science and Technology** (B.Arch. 2011).

Prior of **RPZ studio** he worked in various architecture firms for several years. He is a **Computational Designer** with expertise in **Parametric Design** with interest in **innovation, materials and new building techniques**. **Bilal** has expertise in **Education** and **Research**.

Over the past **2 years**, he has developed an international reputation and a significant diverse portfolio of projects both locally and abroad.

Credits

Sara Faraon
Architect
Reparametrize Studio

Mohammad Jumaa
Architect
Reparametrize Studio

About unfuse



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.

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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Can Ancient Mud Rubble Restore Lost Culture ?

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Digital map of Damascus, Syria

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