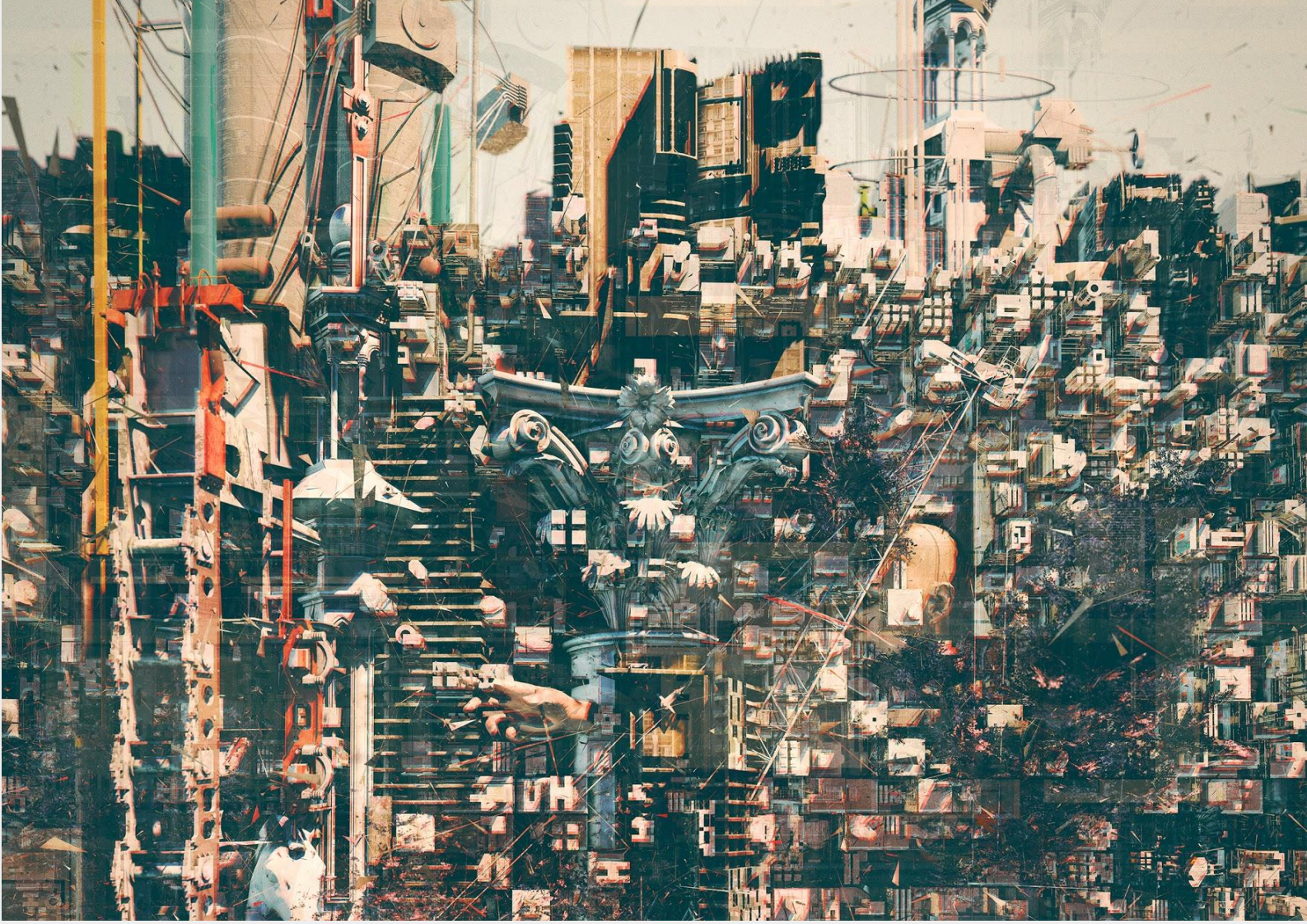

hybrid FUTURES
SUPER/IMPOSE
Design an overlay of two spaces:
a tangible reality & a virtual rendered world
https://competitions.uni.xyz
IMAGE: 'Deep - Surface Tension', Inferstudio, 2020



The Urban Palimpsest from 'Through Leviathan's Eyes', Nathan Su, 2017

Premise

Imagine a near future 'superimposition' - a collision or overlay of two spaces; one the tangible reality of a site, and the other a virtually rendered world.

The age of personalised media we are entering risks producing 'experience silos' - where each individual's tailored and self-affirming reality creates a condition of ever-increasing polarisation.

When the films we watch, the news we read, the people we meet, are suggested and surveilled by algorithms that are getting frighteningly good at predicting our preferences and biases, how do we as societies form common ground and establish shared realities?



The Room of You from 'The Middle Layer', Inferstudio, 2018

Hyper-mediation

Simultaneously, the way we navigate space is becoming **hyper-mediated**. Today's flaneur scrolls rather than strolls through the city; a scroll through city that is experienced as a set of hyperlinked virtual sites - **review boards, image sharing platforms and verisimilitudes.**

Our world is one where digital media can have a profound effect on the lived experience in a physical place.

What does it mean when the revenue of a cafe depends more on its trip-advisor reviews than the quality of its coffee or the comfort of its interior? What are the implications of urban Chicago's city wide network of acoustic sensors that automatically detect gunfire and route police toward sites of potential violence?



The Scaffold of a Machine-Readable Supermarket, 'Through Leviathan's Eyes', Nathan Su, 2017

Mixed-Reality

The notion of place is becoming increasingly virtual, distributed and temporary. This is leading to a fundamental shift in the relationship between media and fiction. Our technological trajectory has us on a path where virtual and physical realities are converging and may soon be totally co-incident.

The hybrid reality we are heading towards will likely see the fabricated realities of the internet composited in real time on top of our tangible world - ornamenting our buildings and inhabiting our streets. When **tangible space** and **virtual environments** are so connected, our **reality becomes one that is truly 'mixed'.**



Concept Art for 'xtended', Inferstudio, 2020

Technology

Photogrammetry, real-time raytracing, AI computer vision and classification, all of these are technologies of the now, not of science fiction. We are already almost at the stage where we can overlay **high resolution renderings of virtual environments,** objects and characters over the physical spaces we inhabit.

As architects, we are commonly tasked with **designing communal spaces and experiences.** Immaterial phenomena such as temperature, sound and light have long been within the architectural designer's toolkit and virtual overlays are just another medium through which to shape experience.



Still from 'X 1', Inferstudio, 2020

Brief

The brief is to imagine a near future **'superimposition'** - a scenario involving the collision or overlay of two spaces in a single site. **One of the spaces will be the tangible reality of the site, and the other a virtually rendered world.** The virtually rendered world could be a fictional one, or a digital reproduction of another 'real' place from somewhere else on the planet. Elaborate your the idea as a fictional narrative, rather than a proposal.

The potential concepts could (amongst many other possibilities) be **political** (for example the superimposition of a coral reef on political chambers during climate talks), **whimsical** (the superimposition of a fantasy game world in a domestic room), or **cultural** (the superimposition of two streets from different cities). Whatever you choose - **we are looking for scenarios where the superimposition has a degree of agency and in some way produces novel and operative experience.**



Awards

Grants of up to a total of **18,000$** can be won on this challenge. Learn more about the full conditions on the competition page here.

800
Words



A Narrative Story

Deliver this imagining of the future through a short parable; a narrative story of up to 800 words that occurs within your superimposition

X5
Images



Images

5 images that illustrate your scenario

1:00
Video

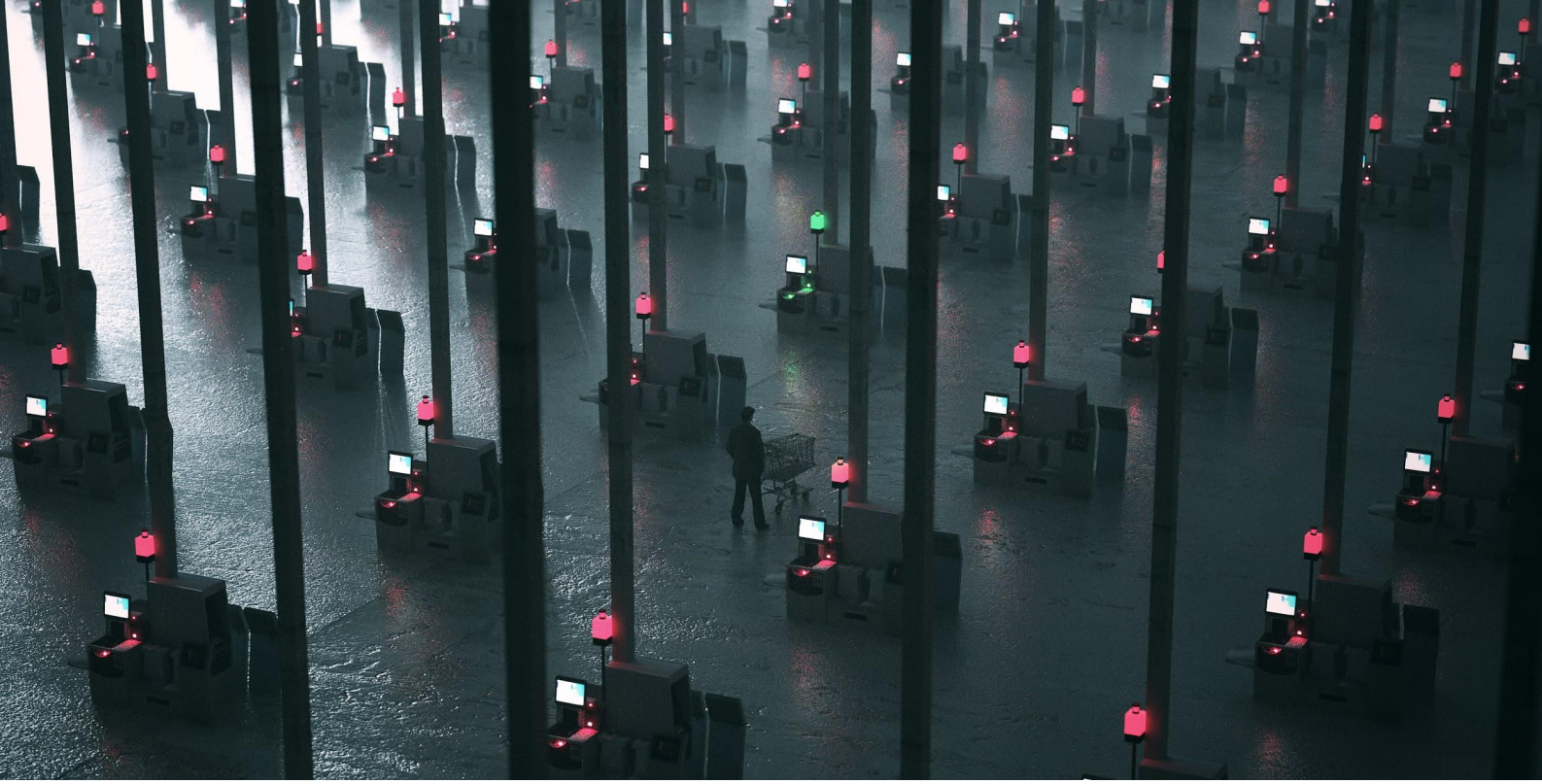


1 Minute Video

Optional but encouraged is a 1 minute video that explores a fragment of the future you envisage. You can choose the site, the scale and the time of your fiction.

Deliverables

Your **superimposition** is an opportunity to consider how virtual worlds might interface with tangible ones. Are intersections hidden or celebrated? Do the worlds exist at the same scale, or at the same time-speeds? As a tip for controlling the scope and scale of your work, let your fiction describe a particular moment within your speculation. Does it describe an event that lasts 5 minutes, a day, or even years? By describing a single moment within your world, you can imply a much broader reality with a more simple and manageable scenario.



Co-incidental Work, Inferstudio, 2018

Techniques

Just as **film-makers** edit experience of time and place through **jump-cutting, match-cutting, and juxtaposing symbolism** in adjacent shots, how might space-makers edit experience through the choices they make when **overlaying mixed reality environments.** Think about how your project could suggest new spatial equivalents to the cinematic tools of **'cutting', 'fading', 'double-exposing' and 'compositing'.** Consider whether your overlay of worlds is visual only, or whether it includes other senses - such as sound, or smell.

There is a tendency when framing conversations around our technically mediated futures to quickly fall into dystopias and cautionary tales. Whilst it is certainly an option for your scenario to warn us of the risks we face, **we encourage proposals to immerse us in worlds that carry a degree of optimism.** Think of how technology in these scenarios might extend what it is that makes us human, rather than suppress it.

For the purpose of your propositions, **you can assume that technologies for convenient and immersive Mixed Reality exist and are somewhat ubiquitous (unless it suits your narrative to change this condition).**

Guidelines

You have to deliver a **speculative fiction, delivered through the following media:**

COMPULSORY

5 Images of size **[2362px** x **3544px]** or **[400mm x 600mm** in **150 dpi]** in portrait or landscape digital format (**JPEG only**).

Each image should be less than **15MB.** (Do not submit PNG format)

Label the images with the following naming conventions:

Project Name_Image Number.jpg

1 Page of narrative text (max 800 words), submitted as a PDF labelled as follows:

Project Name_Narrative.pdf

OPTIONAL

1 minute film (1920 x 1080, 24fps, h.264 codec) in MP4 container, labelled as follows:

Project Name_Film.mp4

This is the link for new file sizes, here.

Deadlines

Discover the competition schedule and deadlines on the competitions page or on this link - Schedule.

Rules

+ The competitions is open for **students and professionals** from all disciplines of design.

+ The team limit for this competition is **4 members maximum per team.**

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+ You can register more than one team but they have to be registered separately.

+ Ensure that the final work submitted **does not include your name or any other mark of identification**. Your submission is linked to your user account which stands as your identification.

+ This is a design **ideas challenge only.** There is no built commission/realization associated with the problem.

+ In case of publication in yearbook we will reach out separately for selected entries.

Pro-Tips

+ Consider how the composition, framing and color of your images might suggest characters, actions, motivations and symbols.

+ Mention your image number on corner of every image.

+ Plagiarism of any idea / form / design / image will be disqualified with a notice.

+ All the sheets or images will be viewed on a digital device. **e.g.** Laptop screen or projector. Uploaded sheets or images will not be physically printed for evaluation. The submission hence should be prepared for digital viewing only.

+ Submit JPEG images only. (PNG will not function)



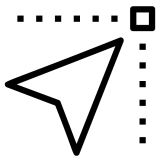
Curator | Nathan Su

Co-founder/Director of Inferstudio and Lecturer at UCLA AUD (Architecture and Urban Design)

https://www.inferstudio.com/

Nathan Su is a speculative designer who works between media and architecture. He is **co-founder of Inferstudio** – an interdisciplinary world building practice and is currently a **lecturer** in the **UCLA AUD IDEAS Entertainment Studio**. In recent years, he has worked as a project coordinator for **Forensic Architecture in London, UK.** He has also taught design and media studios for the **Architectural Association (London), and workshops for the Bartlett, UCL (London), and Strelka (Moscow).**

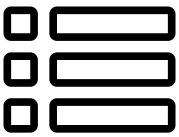
The entries will be judged by an international jury of the competition on the following criterions:



Presentation
How well formatted/edited are your images, text, (and film)?



Concept/Idea
How consistent and original is your fictional scenario?



Visual Storytelling
How well are composition, lighting, color, form, texture and sequencing used to deliver an emotive and clear story?



Relevance
How relevant is your fiction to issues faced in contemporary society?

Judging Criteria

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.

About



Hybrid Futures is a unit block for UNI in the field of Architecture that covers the field of near future architectural thought. It intends to break the barriers of design ideologies that are short sighted and aligns itself to futuristic thought. This arm of Uni banks on growing technological advancements to frame architecture in the megacities of tomorrow. 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 design thought process at a global level.

Queries: support@uni.xyz
Discover other competitions: https://competitions.uni.xyz
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/unidesigntogether/
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/uni.xyz/
Discover FAQ's about this competition on our help forum here: https://help.uni.xyz/



IMAGE: Still from 'X 1', Inferstudio, 2020