unfuse™

Switching × **Prisons**

A new age architecture to contain crimes of tomorrow.

Img 1: A connected world on web - A concept

Premise

The definition of **crime is culturally subjective**. This subjectivity used to help us define law and punishment in a more rational manner in the **past**. Today, this subjectivity placed against pacing **time** and increasing **globalization** is **not easy to rationalize anymore.**

We see this in many walks of life where **assets** like gold which used to be the driving force of an economy. Where trade and even countries were **valued** based on how much **gold** reserves they had in the past. In today's context, trade depends on **technology** and the currency here is **information**. The millions of gigabytes of data that flow over the internet fuels the economy today. Where stealing gold is deemed a crime and is identified by everyone as a crime. But when it comes to information, all the applications, internet service providers, devices like Alexa and corporations are running on this data.

If someone gets access to this information and they misuse it (For eg. sell someone's private images online), does that become a criminal offense? If yes, then how big is it?

Img 2: The mask of anonymity - A concept

Anonymity

People who never committed crimes before are tempted when they learn how easy it is to fake someone's identification by stealing passwords or fraud with someone on the web by impersonation, without ever having to confront a victim **face-to-face.** And that's why we see these news of data leaks and ransomware hacks that take over personal data very often these days. Many of these crimes go unreported or even do not pass the qualification of being a crime. In fact, their evasion from these crimes in the form of bail is cheaper than the prior forms of crime.

Law hence reframes itself from time to time, and in spite of these consistent reframing (Eg. GDPR) it still has to be on its toes to keep up with the evolving forms of crime. The problem is further exacerbated with our worlds erasing the lines between **digital** x **physical** contexts and finding more overlaps between each other. This leaves us more vulnerable and makes committing crimes more tempting.

Img 3: The chain of lag, Crime - Law and Architecture
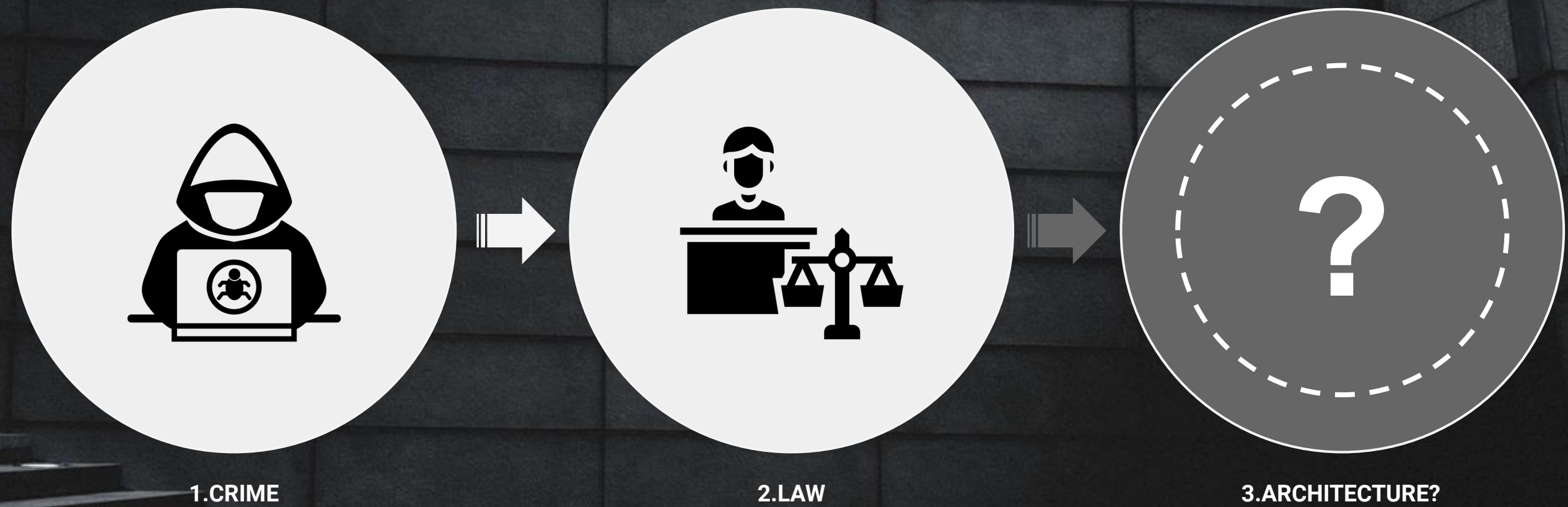
1.CRIME   2.LAW   3.ARCHITECTURE?

Issue:

The Lag

In a world of ever growing dimensions of crime, the law is pushing back in finding patterns and new ways to track/identify/persuade/reduce crime. **However, what is not keeping up is the infrastructure to punish/rehabilitate/imprison such criminals.**

The prisons which exist today are designed for containing criminals who are disrupting the society in the physical realm. These involve identifiable offenses that happen like murder, theft, robbery, vandalism, etc. that involve a perpetrator to use bare hands and can be seen. **But what about criminals who are disrupting our societies of tomorrow which are based on the web? Can prisons of today not be used for them?**

The prisons which actually exist today are built on various factors like cost, operational efficiency, staff, antiquated surveillance systems, crime rate and mostly by the kind of **punitive thought** they are based on.

PRIMITIVE

Physical Punishment

Prison as an institution is yet to be regularized in this era. Extreme human torture, labor or death was the form of punishment that was adapted from war to convicted.

MEDIEVAL

Lockdown / Incarceration

By the time human rights came into place in the 18th and 19th century, the punitive thought was directed towards confining freedoms instead of denying the choice to live.

MODERN

Rehabilitation

When prisoners started to become a burden on society a positive change was to bring them to some use inside the prison by creating small jobs while completing the sentence.

FUTURE?

?

What will be the future of confinement? Or what freedom could be deprived of against crimes that are in question? How much human rights will be preserved or given away?

Img 4: History of punishment in chronology

Evolution of Punishment

The formal definition of punishment can be stated as: "The conscious infliction of pain in retort to the wrong done by a perpetrator". In primitive times the punishment used to be of severe nature, as the prime focus of such infliction was to either cause deterrence amongst the like-minded individual or to wash off the sins of the wrongdoer. The punishment also took form based on religious norms and beliefs. As our societies progressed, the punishments became more rationalized and focal points of punishments moved from retribution/deterrence/incapacitation to rehabilitation/restoration. Punishment as an institution is so deep-rooted in the history of civilization that it is difficult to trace its origin and to imagine a functional society without it. This is where an institution like prison started to take shape.
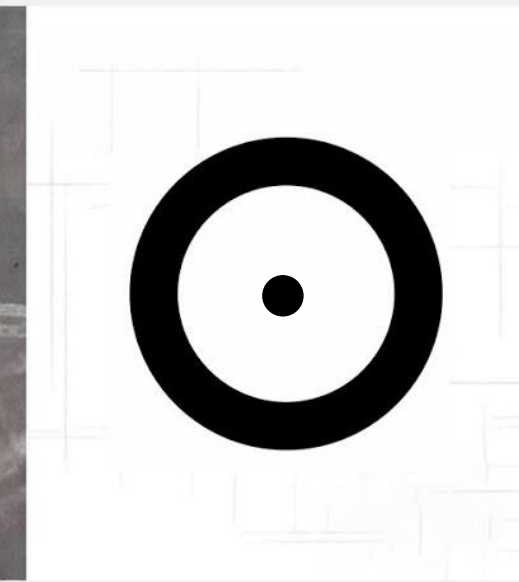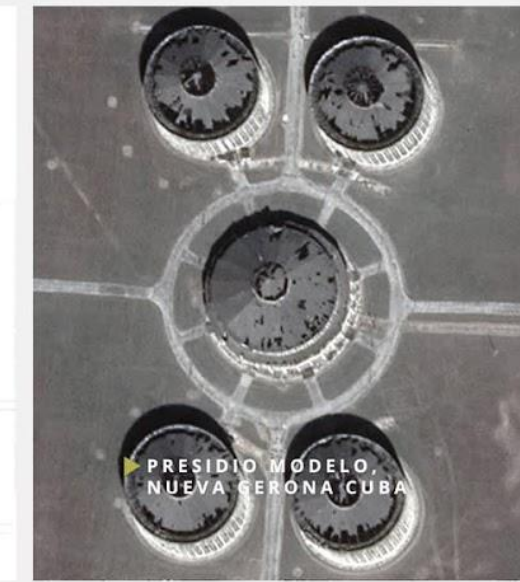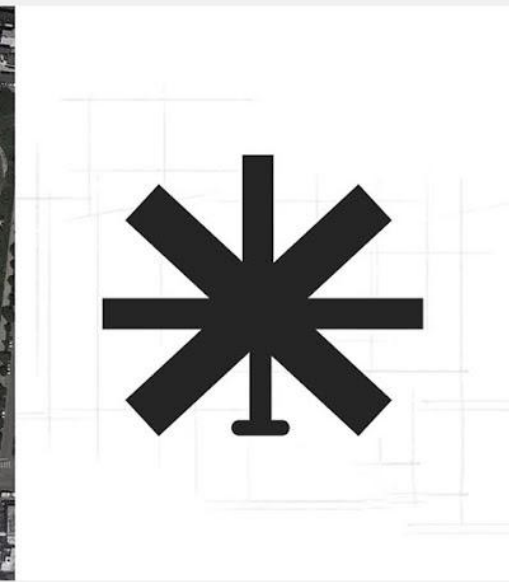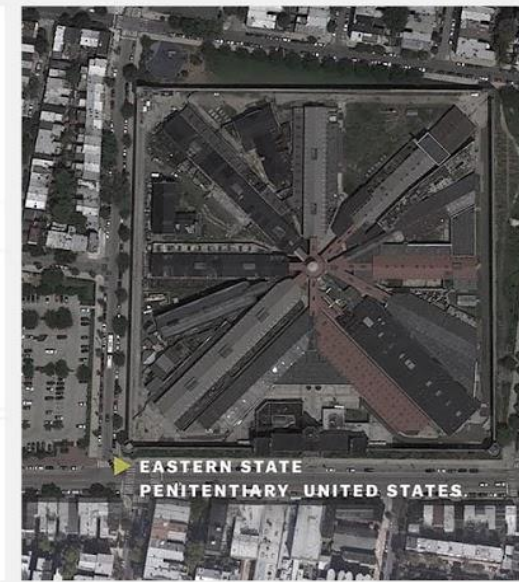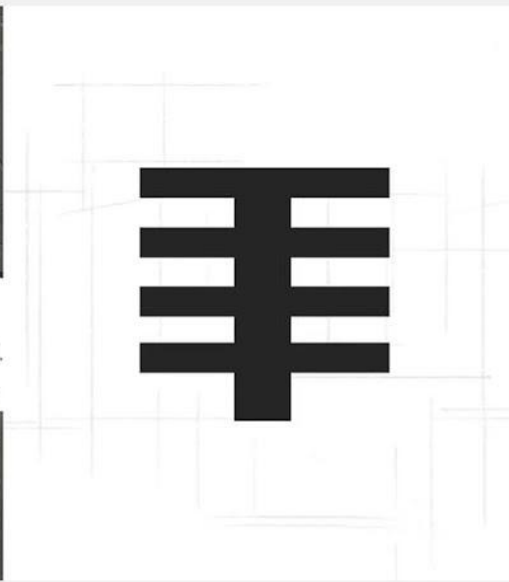
TELEPHONE POLE

RADIAL & ARMS

PANOPTICON
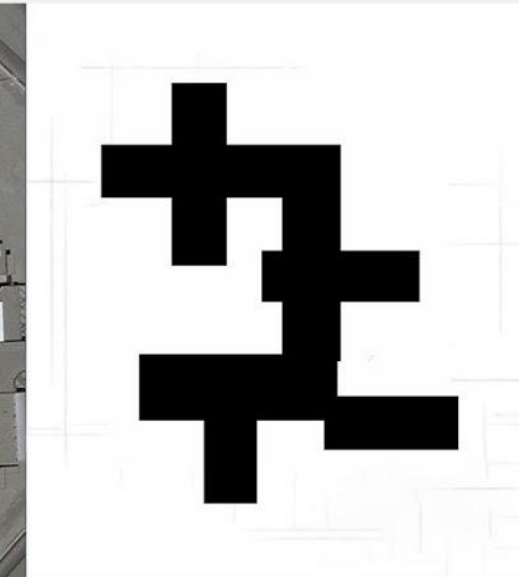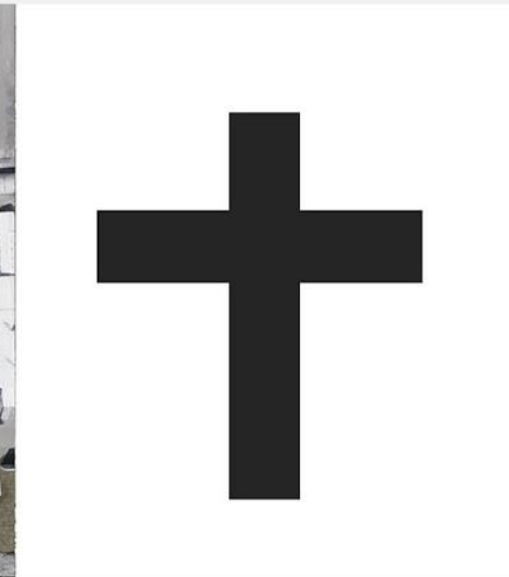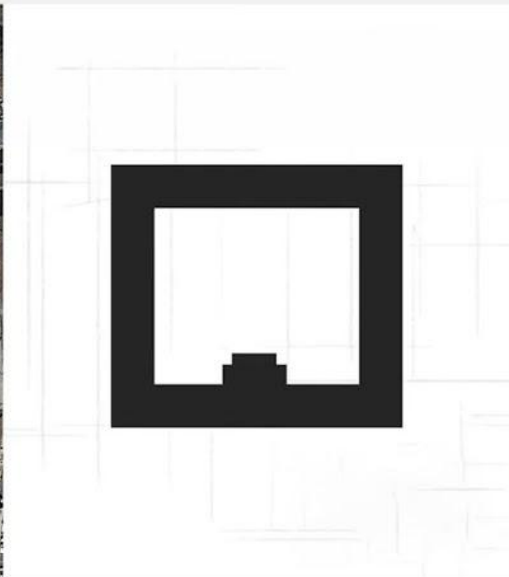
SQUARE PERIMETER

CROSS PLAN

COMPOSITE FORM

Evolution of Prisons

Our prisons have evolved from a similar notion of punishment. **The design priority is maximum security at a minimum number of deployed men, negotiated against the burden on taxes. Prisons** are **public institutions** that are fed by society and **looked down upon** unlike positive public institutions hospital, bank or a school which visibly contributes to the society. With our rapidly growing cities, almost every urban setting requires/contains a prison at a small or large scale. The architecture hence is a result of optimization and bare minimum infrastructure, with assumed users as perpetrators like murders or psychopaths. Crime in the **growing world of web today is committed by conscious adults as well as kids** who just learned some tech and are lured by making some easy money or just for thrill. Are these prisons are ready for people like us who are not in here because of violent crimes?
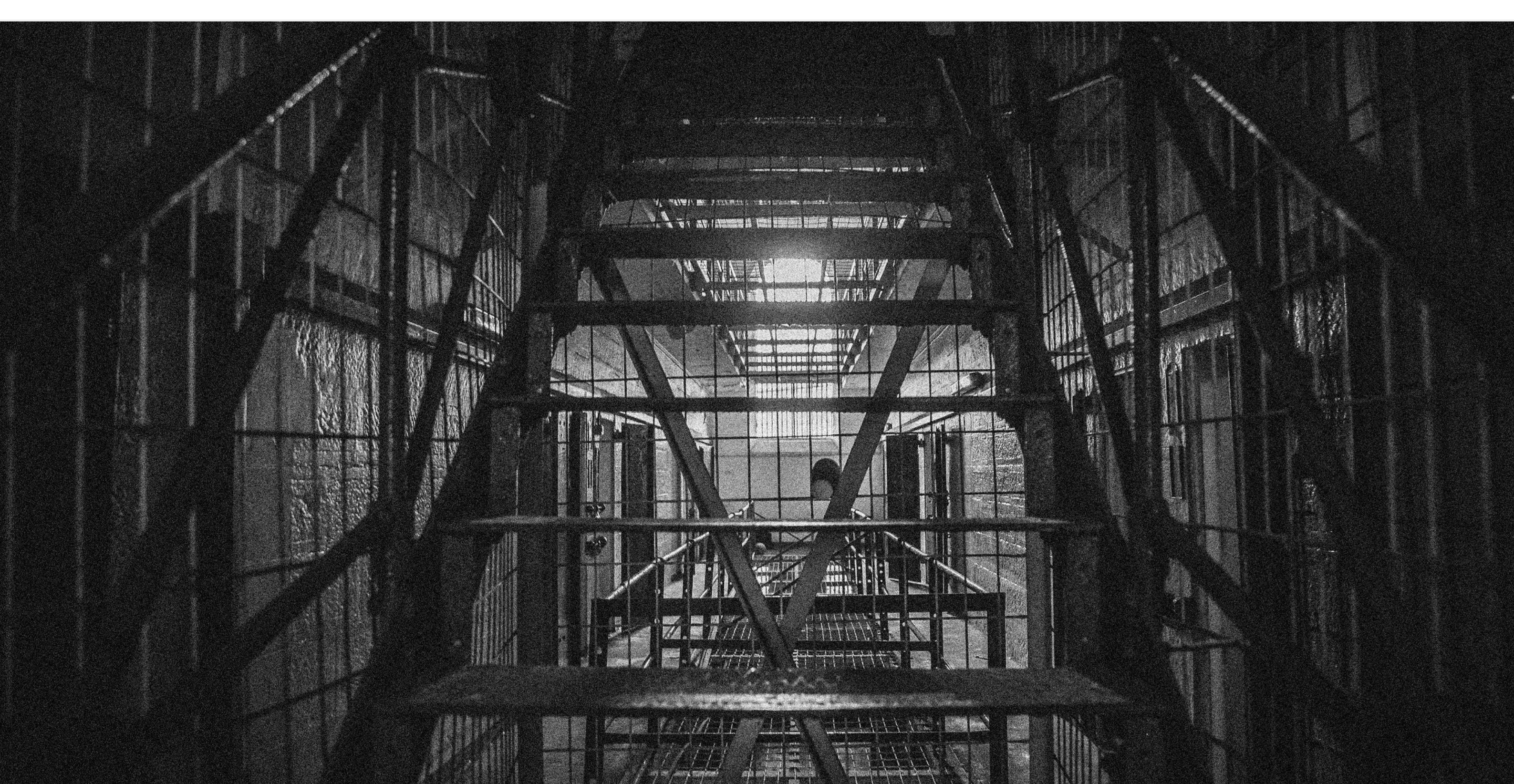
Do prisons really deserve good design?

or Alternatively, do prisoners deserve dignity of good design?

Prisoners are usually seen as expendables and deserve no better than what current prisons offer says a general perception. However, our human rights laws insist that prison conditions should not be an additional punishment to a prisoner. The **prison sentence is the sanction**: **it holds an individual accountable for their actions and protects society**. It **deprives someone of their liberty and impacts on certain other rights**, such as freedom of movement, which are the inevitable consequences of imprisonment, but people in prison retain their human rights and fundamental freedoms..
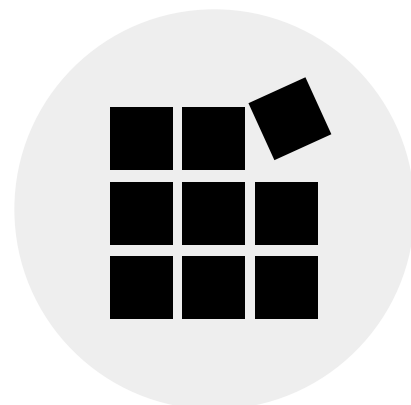
Brief & Objectives
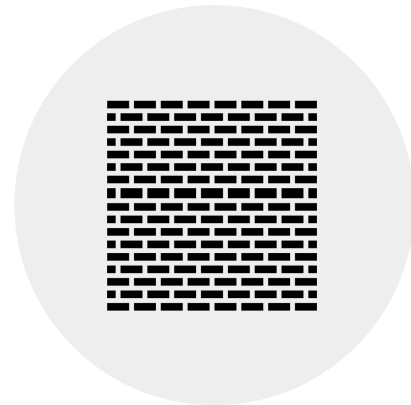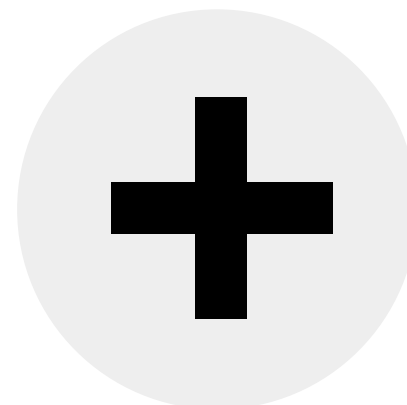
Security

A secure prison design is the primary objective.

Containment

Ability to contain various degrees of crimes and criminals.

Efficiency

Modular, quick & efficient design that is replicable

Rehabilitation

That actively fosters positive rehabilitation.

Brief: Design a model prison building for 500 perpetrators, who are sentenced for serving crimes that are non-physical/cyber/online in nature in the context of the present and coming future.

Like the previous models of the prisons discussed earlier, the answer has to be replicable considering the vast amount of population moving into cities and the increasing crimes relating to the internet. The prison may or may not be leaning toward humane prison design ideas, but participants may justify the kind of architectural decisions they took to foster a better prison design. Participants may use technology-oriented surveillance solutions - however, perpetrators being aware of exploiting its vulnerabilities can be complemented with analog security features as well.

The following objectives can be a point of beginning to conceive this challenge:

The Hague *(/heɪg/; Dutch: Den Haag [dɛn ˈɦaːx])*

Quoted from their official website: The Hague is known as the international city of peace and justice. People come to The Hague from all over the world to work together on solutions to global problems. With the Peace Palace at the center of it all, The Hague is truly the international city of peace and justice. The Hague is not only home to the International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court, but organizations like Hague Security Delta which is a network of businesses, governments and knowledge institutions that work together on innovative security solutions and knowledge development. In this network, security issues are discussed and knowledge is shared on cybersecurity, national and urban security, protection of critical infrastructures, and forensics.

Site:
125m x 125m

Site Plan

The placelessness of crime in web/digital/cyberspace fits very well with the futuristic definition of The Hague as an international city. The site chosen sits on the outskirts of Hague, southwards to the city center. The site is devoid of any buildings or other deterrents that will foster a much universal model prison which is applicable to fit around the world. As the design is considered as a replicable model, participants can create a prison design that is free from the model site first and then place it here.

Area: 15625 sqm
Location: 51.989877, 4.305808
Ground coverage: 40%
Max Height: 20m

Programme Outline

The area programme is indicative and ratios/activities can be modified.

Detention Center

Cells, Common Rooms,
Prison Services, Store
areas, Guard rooms,
Surveillance rooms, etc.

~45%

Common Areas

Sports and eating areas,
Recreational areas,
Working areas, etc.

~35%

Gate Keeping

Office, Watch areas,
Entrance, Storage, Visitors
room, Vault room,
Detention areas, etc.

~20%

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 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'.

+ 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

Submission Deadline: November 27, 2019
Submission closes this day.

Public Voting begins: December 07, 2019
Submitted entries are open for voting.

Public Voting ends: December 28, 2019
Voting ends on this date.
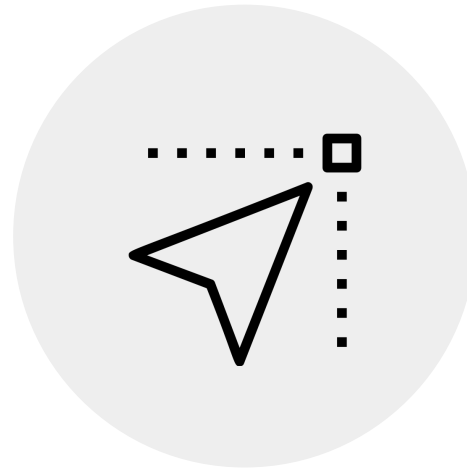
Result Announcement: January 08, 2020
Result day!

Rewards

Grants of up to a total of **15,000$** can be won on this challenge. Learn more about the full conditions on the competition page here.
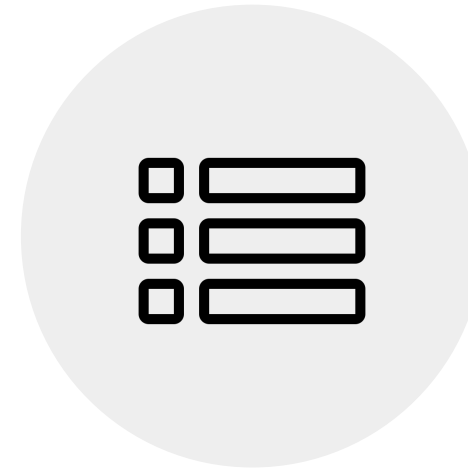
Judging Criteria

Presentation

The fundamental to a good
entry is a good presentation.

Concept/Idea
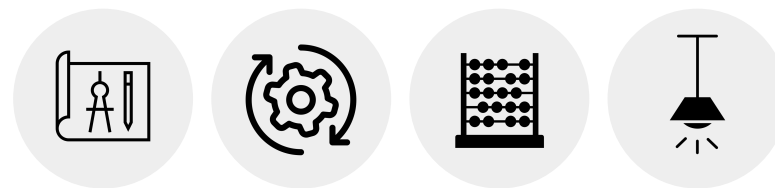
Quality of thought and
intent in pre-design phase.

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 criterions based on their internal discussions - which will be in line with the problem statement. **Eg. Scalability, Replicability,** etc. Participants are advised to fulfil above given criterions first in their design.

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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Switching ^unfuse × **Prisons**

Rethinking **correctional facilities** in context **of tomorrow**.

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