Putting a Mall to Sleep: Domestic Collectives Beyond (Sub)Divisions

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PUTTING A MALL TO SLEEP: Domestic Collectives Beyond (Sub)Divisions

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Architecture
Harvard University Graduate School of Design, by

JIANGPU MENG

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
[Master of Architecture]

MAY 24, 2021
(Month and Year Thesis Submitted)

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Jiangpu Meng

Prof. Oana Stănescu
putting a mall to sleep

domestic collectives beyond (sub)divisions
housing in suburban Atlanta ↔ arrangements of sleep and sleeping bodies
on sleep
The Nap Ministry (Tricia Hersey), *A Resting Place*, 2019.
Sun Ra, album of Sleeping Beauty, 1979.
Max Richter, performance of *Sleep* in Los Angeles, CA, 2018.
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**A Sleepers’ Manual**


“In the beginning there was a pile of leaves and a cave floor. Sleep was punctuated by an orchestra of nocturnal sounds: the murmuring, snoring, farting, rustling, and heavy-breathing of many bodies packed together in slumber. They emanated sweat and stench. But together they passed another night in safety. And it was good.

“Sleep has been a communal activity for millennia. In the days before central heating and alarm systems, bedmates were a necessity. Entire families would pack together on a single mattress (plus guests), servants often slept alongside their mistresses, and strangers frequently shared a bed while traveling.”


“While people have always needed a place to sleep, beds themselves are a relatively new concept. Beds remained glorified piles of leaves for a shockingly long period of time. This wheel was invented, animals were domesticated, societies were founded, and still, for most people, a bed was some meager bit of cloth providing the most basic level of separation between them and the cold hard ground. In the grand houses of medieval Europe, much of the household gathered in the great hall to pass the night on blankets or straw. If they were lucky, they literally hit the hay—which they stuffed into a sack and used as a mattress.” (Braun, 2017)

“In the earliest castles the family slept at the extreme upper end of the hall, beyond the doors, from which the sleeping quarters were typically separated only by a curtained or screen.”


100 situating the sleeping bodies a geography 101
on suburban housing
typical suburban multi-family apartment plan
3. housing in Greenbriar
isolated housing, suburban big objects, expansive woods

gif images of suburban landscape
START YOUR ATLANTA APARTMENT SEARCH!

Select how many bedrooms you want.

- Studio
- 1 Bed
- 2 Beds
- 3+ Beds

Next
Catching Up with Life
March 2021 to April 2022

As social structures evolve and the values, norms, and rituals that define them are in a state of flux, how is architecture keeping up?

Modern society once ascribed a clear role to architecture—or at least a role that is less ambiguous than that of the current moment. In the past few years, Western society
on housing in suburban Atlanta
243 Atlanta Neighborhoods (subdivisions)
Greenbriar Neighborhood

Based on US Census data from 2010.
housing for sleepers
an alternative imagination of a mall in suburban Atlanta
Interstate 285
"The Perimeter"

Greenbriar Mall, 1965-present
The Minority Community’s Shopping-Mall Hard Sell

Minority groups are often marginalized in the shopping-mall landscape, but some malls are trying to change that.

There’s Money to Be Made

Despite the challenges, malls are also looking to increase their profits. By attracting more minority shoppers, they can boost sales and revenue.

Macy’s store closures

The company announced dozens of new closures on January 6, 2021 as part of a previously announced plan to shut 125 locations by 2023.

SOURCE: Macy’s, Santa Monica, CA and Medinah Temple, IL locations are Bloomingdale’s stores, which are operated by Macy’s.
GREENBRIAR
Atlanta, Georgia
The shopping center with a bold-line spring. The main
malls is 3x3 long with a totally air-conditioned air
closed year round atmosphere. The full retail is a
transmitter, giving an indoor atmosphere retailer.