

INTO THE WILD

May-Aug 2021

Theme Three

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ISSUES OF TOMORROW

Our world is changing fast, while ambitions and challenges match in importance. In this context design can play a huge role. How do we imagine the world to be? What range of possibilities we haven't discovered yet? What could architecture become for a world in crisis? What is not architecture yet? In 2020 we started a second phase of competitions to address the **issues of tomorrow**.

In line with our style we propose 9+1 themes – ten critical topics to work on. They come with a framework to make sure that each theme is explored from different design angles. Rather than a program, a **research ecosystem** composed of various competitions running in parallel and exploring the same theme from multiple perspectives.

Our exploration journey continues now with theme three, a special step in our research program: **Into the Wild**

Theme Three:

INTO THE WILD

Nature is the designer of this world. We have always imagined and represented nature in a great many ways across history, painting it and worshipping it since ancient history. Today we ended up undervalued it.

Biodiversity is on a systemic level the very foundation of human survival. It comprises all species of plants, animals, microorganisms and other living beings in a specific region or time, all intertwined with our existence. Its importance is assessed on three levels: genes, habitats and species. One of the many things we've learned from the global shock of COVID-19 is just how intertwined humanity is with nature. Wildlife sightings increased, air quality improved and carbon emissions dropped, proving that one of the few positive aspects of the pandemic has been the environmental impact of lockdown.

The Anthropocene Epoch is an unofficial unit of geologic time, used to describe the most recent period in Earth's history when the human activity started to have a significant impact on the planet's climate and ecosystems. Human well-being and prosperity can be vastly improved by prioritizing nature-based solutions. Benefits are not only on a systemic level, but also on a more personal one, since many of us have turned to nature to reduce stress levels, improve mental health and stay physically active.

Humanity is dependent on a delicate environmental balance to survive, yet our society largely acts as if this is

not the case, resulting in biodiversity loss and contamination of natural habitats, including ours. The energy that powers our very cells, the nutrients that make up our bodies, the ecosystem services that clean our water and make our air breathable; these are all provided by nature from which we have evolved and of which we are a part of.

Architects and designers have control over our built environment; by changing the way cities and buildings are designed to empower rather than disconnect from ecosystems, we can change our proximity to the environment and change our physical relationship to it. Rekindling our relationship with nature is a task that architecture and urban design are well suited to tackle. Recognizing and making decisions based on nature's value will be essential for building a better world. Whether it's for our physical health or our fiscal health, it's clear that we need nature now.

Into the Wild series of competitions are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) number 11, 13, 14 and 15. While most of SDG might look distant from design, others are directly dependent from it.

Bringing nature back into our cities and enhancing existing ecological zones can deliver a truly impressive array of benefits, ranging from health and well-being to climate change adaptation and mitigation. However, reconciling city with nature requires more than just a scientific approach. How can we respond to the biodiversity extinction crisis? How can we re-discover a new balance between nature & progress?

Into the Wild is a compilation of design challenges that aim to approach the element of nature in different perspectives.



30 KEY WORDS

The question now is how to think the element of nature in the context of the urban living. In view of this, we are promptly questioning our lifestyle and the framework designed to support it. Non Architecture and its partners want to play their part by involving the design community in a series of explorative initiatives. By reflecting upon specific topics, we aim at generating dialogue and mutual inspiration on ideas.

In particular, Non Architecture and all the supporting organizations collaborated in identifying a range of 30 design issues related to the theme of Into the Wild.

In relation to **Ecology**:

1. Ecosystem restoration,
2. Repopulation & Endangered Species,
3. Desertic habitats,
4. Grassland habitats,
5. Water habitats & Deltas,
6. Tundra & Mountainous habitats,
7. Forests & Deforestation,
8. Re-wilding and natural reservoirs,
9. Agriculture & farming.

In relation to **Society & Culture**:

10. Natural heritage & Landmarks,
11. Musealization of nature: Zoos & botanical gardens,
12. Beautification & Public Space,

13. Support to mental health & stress reduction,
14. Physical Activities & Wellbeing,
15. Social Gatherings & Events,
16. Sense of belonging & Placemaking,
17. Art & Nature,
18. Eco tourism & Nature destinations,
19. Biotechnologies.

In relation to **Architectural Design**:

20. Green Roofs & Green Walls,
21. Vertical forests,
22. Biodiversity and Interior design,
23. Terraces & Gardens,
24. Artificial Ecosystems, House plants & Pets,
25. Cabins & Temporary Structures.

In relation to **Urban Development**:

26. Urban Parks & Community Gardens,
27. Planters, public furniture & urban décor,
28. Air quality & Heath Island control,
29. Smart Cities & Smart park management,
30. Abandoned buildings & sites.

For more insights on these topics you can subscribe to our [newsletter](#) or visit our [online journal](#).

Designers can address one or more of the aforementioned topics through 3 different competitions. Each competition frames a specific design approach. The Non Architecture Competitions for the theme of **Into the Wild** are the following:

- Remote Work Cabin
- Manhattan Wildscraper
- Re-Nature Rome

Remote Work Cabin

Participants of this Competition are asked to create a design concept around the theme of nature and remote work. This time we will challenge our designers to bring people back to nature, by designing their ideal workplace in a nature environment. The main topic of the competition is “Cabin”, and the complementary theme is “remote work”, and designers will be free to explore in a critical way the different interpretations of such topic, from practical approaches to more dystopian/utopian scenarios. No specific site will be given.

The “Remote Work Cabin” is a design competition developed to explore the creative potential of architectural design through one of the most iconic architectural drawings: the axonometric projection.

This competition is an opportunity to experiment how an axonometric can communicate a project today. What kind of design choices can better respond to the issues raised in the brief and how can one drawing communicate the concept in the most effective way? Participants have only one axonometric projection to answer those questions.

Deliverables: One image (axonometric projection)

Timeline:

Registration Period: 01 May - 22 June 2021

Submission Deadline: 15 – 22 June 2021

Winners Announcement: 12 – 16 July 2021

Manhattan Wildscraper

In this competition, we encourage participants to come up with visionary concepts for a green skyscraper – Only 3 drawings, absolute freedom of scale or program.

Participants are asked to propose conceptual ideas to bring biodiversity back to the New York City, more specific in Midtown Manhattan, through the design of a futuristic green skyscraper.

As the world becomes more urbanized, this competitions' purpose is to emphasise the importance of providing a synergy between architecture and biodiversity. By imagining a world where nature and people coexist as much as possible, it's up to the participant to come to a very high degree of interaction between these two entities in many possible ways.

As designers, how can we bring biodiversity into architecture through the use of new technologies, materials, programs, aesthetics, and spatial organizations?

Deliverables: three images (section + floorplan + presentation image)

Timeline:

Registration Period: 01 May - 15 August 2021

Submission Deadline: 15 August 2021

Winners Announcement: 06 – 10 September 2021

Re-Nature Rome

In this competition, we encourage participants to come up with visionary concepts to reinvent a urban hotspot for biodiversity, within and beyond urban parks - only 2 drawings, absolute freedom of scale or program. Participants are asked to imagine a new urban model, to promote biodiversity into the specific context of the city of Rome, Italy. Submissions can be ideas for new green infrastructure, parks, green buildings or any kind of strategy that would boost biodiversity while enhancing the urban experience of a historical city such as Rome.

Biodiversity hotspots promote cleaner air, introduce new plants into the local ecosystem, and provide a habitat for other creatures while improving life quality for local inhabitants.

Re-Nature Rome is part of the “Cities of Tomorrow” competition series, developed to reimagine urban life through a variety of creative design concepts and ideas. What kind of role can we play as designers in reimagining urban life? How can we produce new inspiring visions to trigger a discussion around alternative models of living?

Deliverables: two images (presentation image + concept image)

Timeline:

Registration Period: 01 May - 15 July 2021

Submission Deadline: 15 July 2021

Winners Announcement: 09 - 13 August 2021

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