

2013 MERIT

Julia Chang

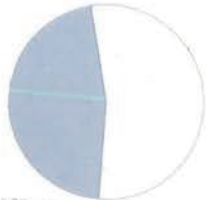
LYCEUM

A traveling fellowship in Architecture

REFABRICA(C)TION

THE RISE AND DEMISE OF THE GARMENT INDUSTRY IN MONTREAL BRINGS TO LIGHT SEVERAL UNSUSTAINABLE ASPECTS OF THE CURRENT CLOTHING PRODUCTION SYSTEM, A LINEAR MODEL WHICH EXPLOITS IN BOTH THE LOCAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXT, THE DISTANCE BETWEEN GARMENT WORKER AND CONSUMER EXPANDS IN A WAY THAT CHEAPENS LABOUR AND CLOTHES.

STATISTICS OF GARMENT INDUSTRY IN CANADA



47% OF JOBS IN CANADA IN GARMENT MANUFACTURING IS IN MONTREAL.



2000: SOURCE OF CLOTHING IS 65% IMPORTED.



33% DROP IN EXPORTS TO THE USA BETWEEN 1990-2000.



41% DROP IN DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING BETWEEN 2003-2006.



55% INCREASE IN IMPORTED CLOTHING BETWEEN 2003-2006.

MONTREAL EMERGING AS AN INTERNATIONAL FASHION SCENE IN RECENT DECADES



TIMELINE OF MONTREAL'S GARMENT INDUSTRY

1800



APOGEE OF FUR TRADE IN THE MONTREAL REGION FROM IN THE 18TH TO EARLY 19TH CENTURIES.

1920



TEXTILE FACTORY IN THE 1920S.

1960



1960S: MAJORITY OF CANADA'S CLOTHES ARE MADE IN CANADA, 47% OF JOBS IN GARMENT MANUFACTURING IS IN MONTREAL.

2010



2000: MAJORITY OF MONTREAL'S GARMENT PRODUCTION RELOCATE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

CURRENT GARMENT CHAIN

FASHION DESIGNING IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES



MANUFACTURING SENT TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



CLOTHES SHIPPED TO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FOR SALE



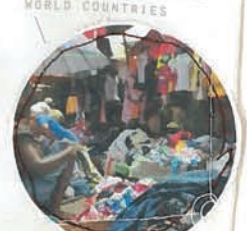
OUTDATED CLOTHINGS RESOLD IN DISCOUNT OR THRIFT STORES



UNSOLD CLOTHES STORED IN BALES



UNWANTED CLOTHING BALES SOLD TO THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES





DISTRIBUTION OF FACTORIES AND STORES IN MONTREAL

CLOTHING STORES: EXCESS = SUPPLY

GARMENT FACTORIES: ABANDONMENT = OPPORTUNITY

REFABRICA(E)TION:
SYSTEM FOR SUSTAINABLE CLOTHING

IN FASHION



CLEARANCE



REFABRICATION



RECONSTRUCTION



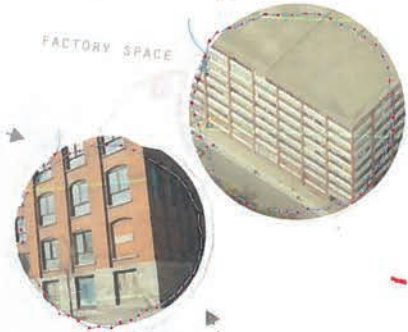
REDESIGN



DESIGN



FACTORY SPACE

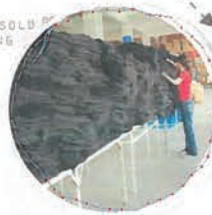


PRODUCTION



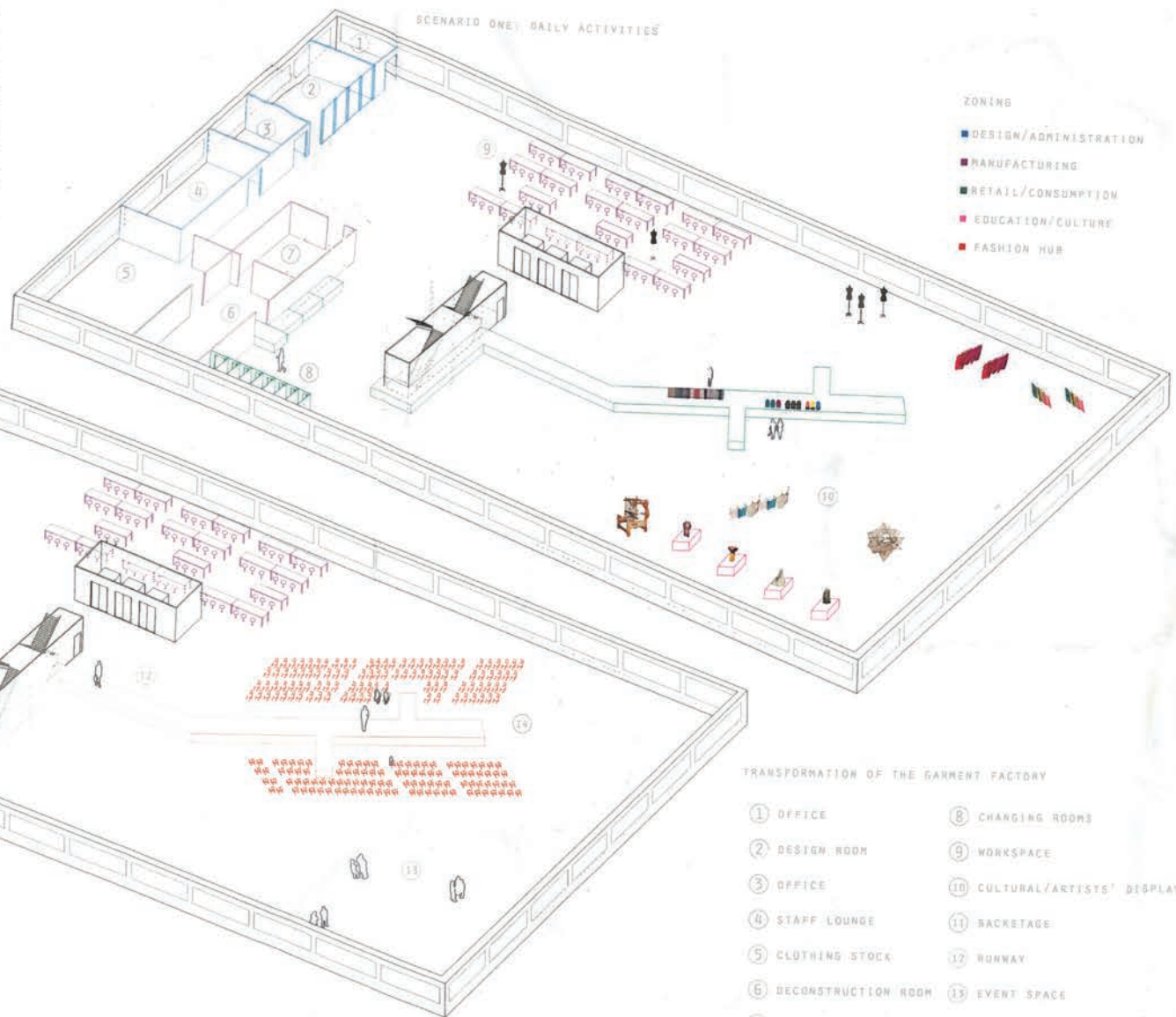
CYCLE AND GROWTH OF REFABRICA(C)TION

UNSOLD OR
CLOTHING



EDUCATION CENTRE AND FASHION HUB

MY PROPOSITION TO THIS PHENOMENON AIMS TO RECTIFY ITS EFFECT IN THE CONTEXT OF MONTREAL BY PROPOSING A MODEL THAT CAN BE ADAPTED TO OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. THE CITY IS SATURATED WITH CLOTHING RETAIL STORES, RANGING FROM MASS-PRODUCED BRANDS (H&M) TO LOCAL (TRISTAN), FROM HAUTE COUTURE DEPARTMENT STORES (GILVY) TO DISCOUNT (WINNERS). THIS IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR TO RECTIFICATION, AS THE DENSE COLLECTION OF STORES TRANSLATES INTO LARGE QUANTITIES OF UNSOLD CLOTHING. TAKING THIS AS OUR PRIMARY MATERIAL, WE CAN REINVENT THE SYSTEM OF GARMENT PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION, SHORTENING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN STAGES, REAPPROPRIATING VALUE TO CLOTHING, BY RECLAIMING ABANDONED GARMENT FACTORIES AND REDESIGNING THEM TO HOUSE CONTINUOUS CYCLES OF DESIGN, PRODUCTION, MARKETING, AND SALE. LOCAL EMPLOYMENT WILL BE STIMULATED WITHOUT ADDITIONAL BURDEN TO THE SYSTEM. A NEW HUB FOR FASHION WILL EMERGE FROM REFABRICATION BY RECYCLING CLOTHES, JOBS, AND ARCHITECTURE.





REFABRICATION IS AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF MONTREAL'S VANISHING GARMENT WORK FORCE, BUT THE UNDERLYING PURPOSE OF THIS PROPOSAL IS TO GENERATE CONSUMER AWARENESS, AND EDUCATE PEOPLE TOWARDS THE TRUE VALUE OF AND RESOURCES REQUIRED TO PRODUCE CLOTHING. IT IS ONLY THROUGH EXPOSING THE PUBLIC TO THE HISTORICAL, ECONOMICAL, AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GARMENT-MAKING THAT WILL INSPIRE A WILL TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE EXPLOITIVE PRODUCTION CHAIN.

SIMILARLY, I WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO PUSH FORWARD WITH THIS PROPOSAL IF I WERE TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE MULTIPLE FACETS OF THE GARMENT INDUSTRY, FROM THE HARVESTING OF RAW MATERIALS, WEAVING OF FABRICS, MANUFACTURING, TO DESIGNING. MY ITINERARY FOR TRAVEL WILL HOPEFULLY BRING ME TO EXPERIENCE SHEEP SHEARING IN AUSTRALIA, SILK HARVESTING IN INDIA AND CHINA, COTTON PRODUCTION IN TEXAS, AND FASHION DESIGNING IN PARIS AND ITALY. I ALSO PLAN TO VISIT CITIES HISTORICALLY DEPENDENT ON THE TEXTILE AND GARMENT INDUSTRY, SUCH AS LEICESTER (UK), LOWELL (MA), AND GUTHARDES (PORTUGAL), WHICH WILL HELP ME ADAPT REFABRICATION TO FIT THE NEEDS OF THE CITY. IT WOULD ALSO BE OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR ME TO TRAVEL TO SOCIETIES THAT VIEW CLOTHING AS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITY.

IT IS MY HOPE TO ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE FROM MY JOURNEY TO SUCCESSFULLY DESIGN A VIABLE CLOSED-LOOP GARMENT PRODUCTION SYSTEM, WHICH WILL COMBINE VERNACULAR AND CULTURALLY RICH TEXTILE WISDOMS WITH CURRENT TECHNOLOGICAL ABILITIES. IN FACT, OUR CURRENT SYSTEM OF GARMENT MAKING IS CONSIDERABLY NEW IN RELATION TO THE LONG HISTORY OF CLOTHING PRODUCTION, WHICH VALUED THE PEOPLE WHO UNDERMENT THE TASKS. IT IS ONLY IN THE RECENT CENTURIES THAT, THROUGH INDUSTRIALISATION AND GLOBALISATION, CLOTHING HAS BECOME DISPOSABLE TO US AND THE WORK FORCE HIDDEN. AN ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTION FOR RECTIFICATION CAN HAVE VERY MINIMAL IMPACT, BY REUKING THE ABANDONED FACTORY SPACE LEFTOVER FROM THE DECLINE OF MANUFACTURING IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. AS WE IN OUR PART OF THE WORLD LEARN TO REDUCE OUR OWN CLOTHING WASTE, WE CAN REDESIGN THE GARMENT PRODUCTION CHAIN TO BE SUSTAINABLE.

