



FOLLY  
FUNCTION  
2016





**SOCRATES  
SCULPTURE  
PARK**



# FOLLY FUNCTION 2016

A project in partnership with  
The Architectural League of New York

**Socrates Sculpture Park**

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Long Island City, NY 11106 USA  
[socratessculpturepark.org](http://socratessculpturepark.org)

Socrates Publishing 2016

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# about FOLLY

The Folly program is an annual competition among emerging architects to design and build a large-scale project for public exhibition at Socrates.

The program is directed jointly by Jess Wilcox, the park's Director of Exhibitions, and Anne Rieselbach, Program Director at The Architectural League of New York. Socrates and the League launched the annual Folly program in 2012 to explore the intersections and divergences between architecture and sculpture. Through an annual juried competition, the program creates an opportunity for one emerging architect or designer to build a project in an urban, public realm.

Previous winning proposals include *Torqueing Spheres*, 2015, by IK Studio; *SuralArk*, 2014, by Austin+Mergold; *tree wood*, 2013, by Toshihiro Oki architect p.c.; and *Curtain*, 2012, by Jerome W. Haferd and K. Brandt Knapp.

# about FOLLY 2016 FUNCTION

Folly is a competition co-presented by The Architectural League of New York and Socrates Sculpture Park which invites emerging architects and designers to propose contemporary interpretations of the architectural folly, traditionally a fanciful, small-scale building or pavilion sited in a garden or landscape to frame a view or serve as a conversation piece. Folly was launched in 2012 by Socrates, in partnership with the League, to explore the intersections between architecture and sculpture as well as the increasing overlaps in concepts, materials, and building techniques between the two disciplines. On the occasion of the park's 30th anniversary in 2016, Socrates sought a more functional iteration for Folly. Socrates Executive Director John Hatfield writes:

For several years Socrates Sculpture Park and The Architectural League have jointly offered the architectural community a design/build opportunity for a Folly at the park. This year, the fifth iteration, we decided to do the opposite and harness the expertise and creative capital of architects *to address a compelling and much needed utilitarian project to improve the park's appearance and use of our outdoor education area.* The inversion from Folly to Function coincides with the 30th year anniversary of the park and embodies our continuing efforts to

realize inspiring projects through innovation, DIY work and imagination. There is no function without thought to design. This inherent relationship is illuminated by Hou de Sousa's *Sticks* project by exposing, amplifying and delightfully celebrating functional structure.

The 2016 Folly winner is *Sticks*, designed by Nancy Hou and Josh de Sousa of Hou de Sousa. The project was selected from over 70 submissions by a jury of architects and artists that included Jarrod Beck (artist and 2012 Emerging Artist Fellow), Stella Betts (LEVENBETTS), Lauren Crahan (Freecell Architecture), Giuseppe Lignano (LOT-EK), and John Hatfield (Executive Director of Socrates Sculpture Park).

This publication features an essay by Pasqualina Azzarello, Socrates Director of Public Programs through summer of 2016; a roundtable discussion featuring the architects; and a look at this year's finalists and other notable competition entries by Marta Elliott and Matt Ragazzo, Program Assistant and Program Associate, respectively, at the League.









# about *Sticks*

The Folly 2016 competition asked entrants to consider the issue of function and its relationship to the architectural typology of follies, while also solving a number of practical concerns at Socrates Sculpture Park. A priority was a durable replacement for an open-air educational facility, which had been damaged by a storm the previous winter. Equally crucial was for the structure to embody the mission of the park to provide opportunities for artists to create and exhibit artworks and encourage public interaction. In this spirit, Socrates hosts large cultural events and offers free art workshops for children and adults, which *Sticks* now houses.

*Sticks* is a straight-forward assembly of standard dimensional lumber interconnected to form a structural space-frame that acts as both a wall and roof system. While the project has been molded to fit the existing conditions of a particular site and program, the contextual adaptations extend beyond the realm of the purely functional, and are intended to ornamentally highlight the design strategies being deployed, as well as prototypically demonstrate potential implementations of this construction method at future locations.

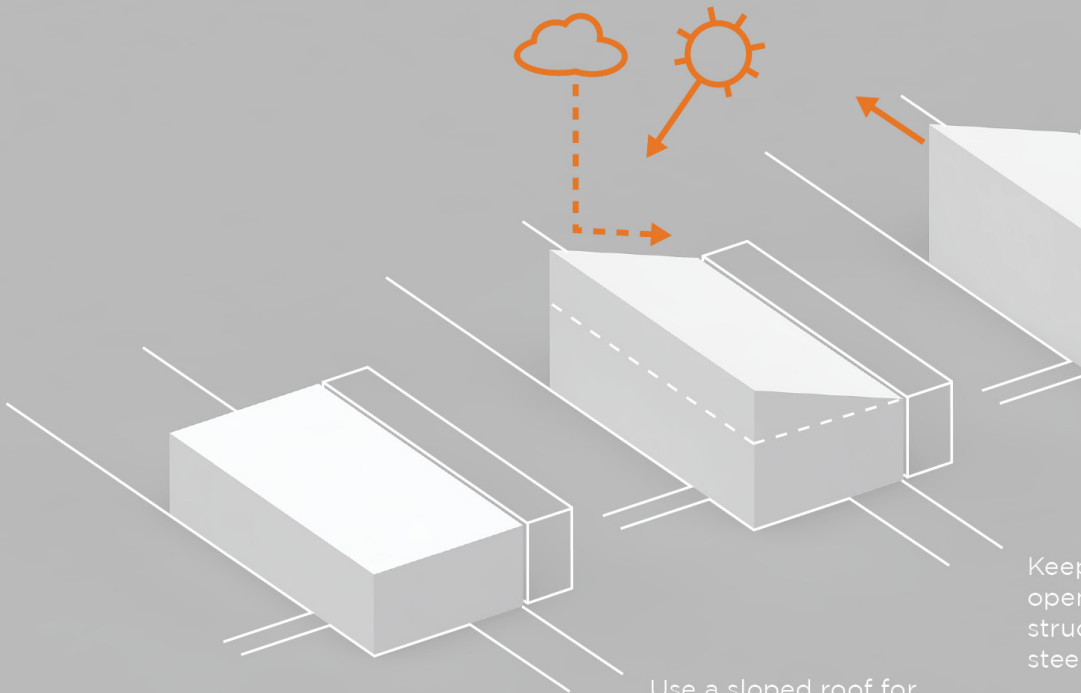
A number of specific site conditions provided advantageous design opportunities, including the proximity of several shipping containers used to store tools, art supplies, and shop equipment. The roof of *Sticks* envelops

a neighboring container, thereby transferring structural loads onto an existing feature and resulting in a trimmed construction scope of the new foundation, and a reduced budget. *Sticks* also surrounds and shelters a large wood deck which connects to a vehicular parking area via a cedar plank board walk. Not coincidentally, this circulation route closely aligns with the shipping container's access door. These critical points of entry were determined by years of use. The project splits, folds, and cantilevers in alignment with this inherited circulation axis, thereby preserving and celebrating the existing functional characteristics of the site.

In addition to providing a sheltered space, *Sticks* also serves as a storage and display system. The 18" width of the structural exoskeleton is capable of holding a substantial quantity of sculptural works in progress or acting as a display case for curated events. The 2x2 cedar webbing members that bind the truss chords purposely protrude outwards. This tolerance simplifies construction, ornamentally unifies the project, and visually masks the natural kinks and bowing of the lumber. At the façade this webbing extends out further still, transforming into a rack for scrap materials. In doing so, fragments of sculptures and follies of years and seasons past are archived at Socrates, but also simultaneously repurposed into a dynamic decorative element that shingles away precipitation along the outer wall. When placed within the roof trusses, these scraps can also be strategically located to diffuse sun light.



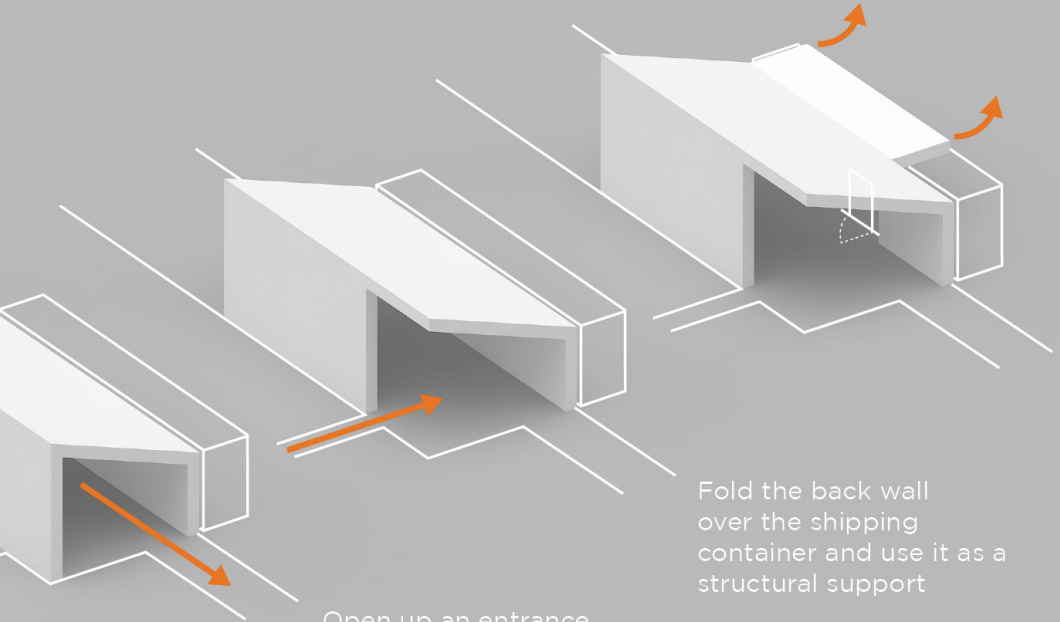




Build in same site as existing light frame steel structure

Use a sloped roof for improved water and snow run-off. Because the building faces south, it's ideal for future implementation of PV panels.

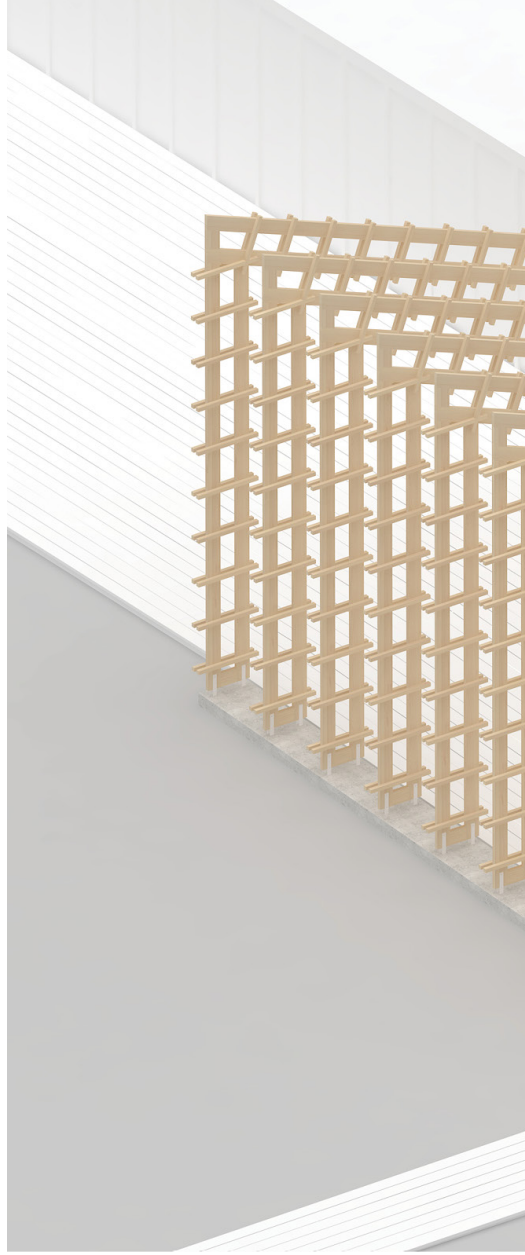
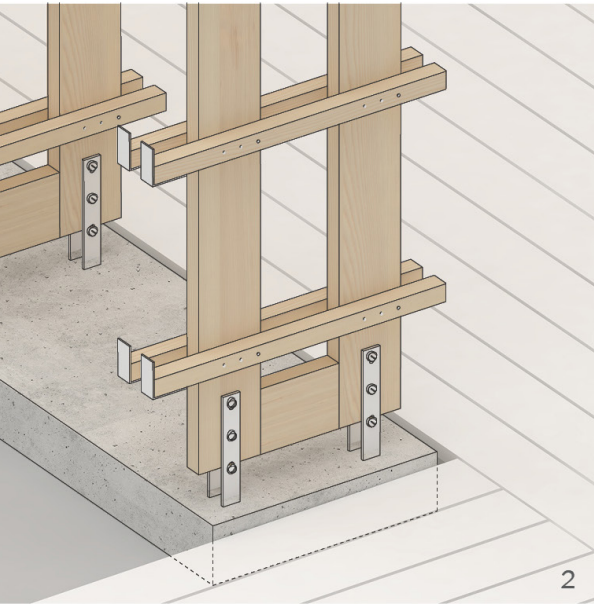
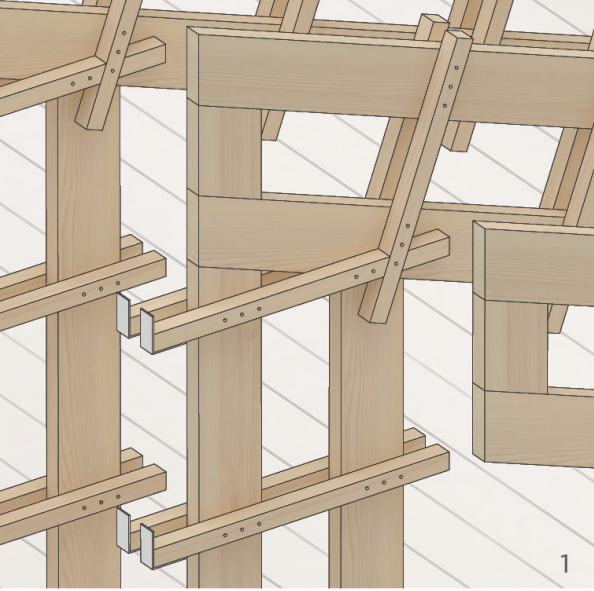
Keep open structure steel

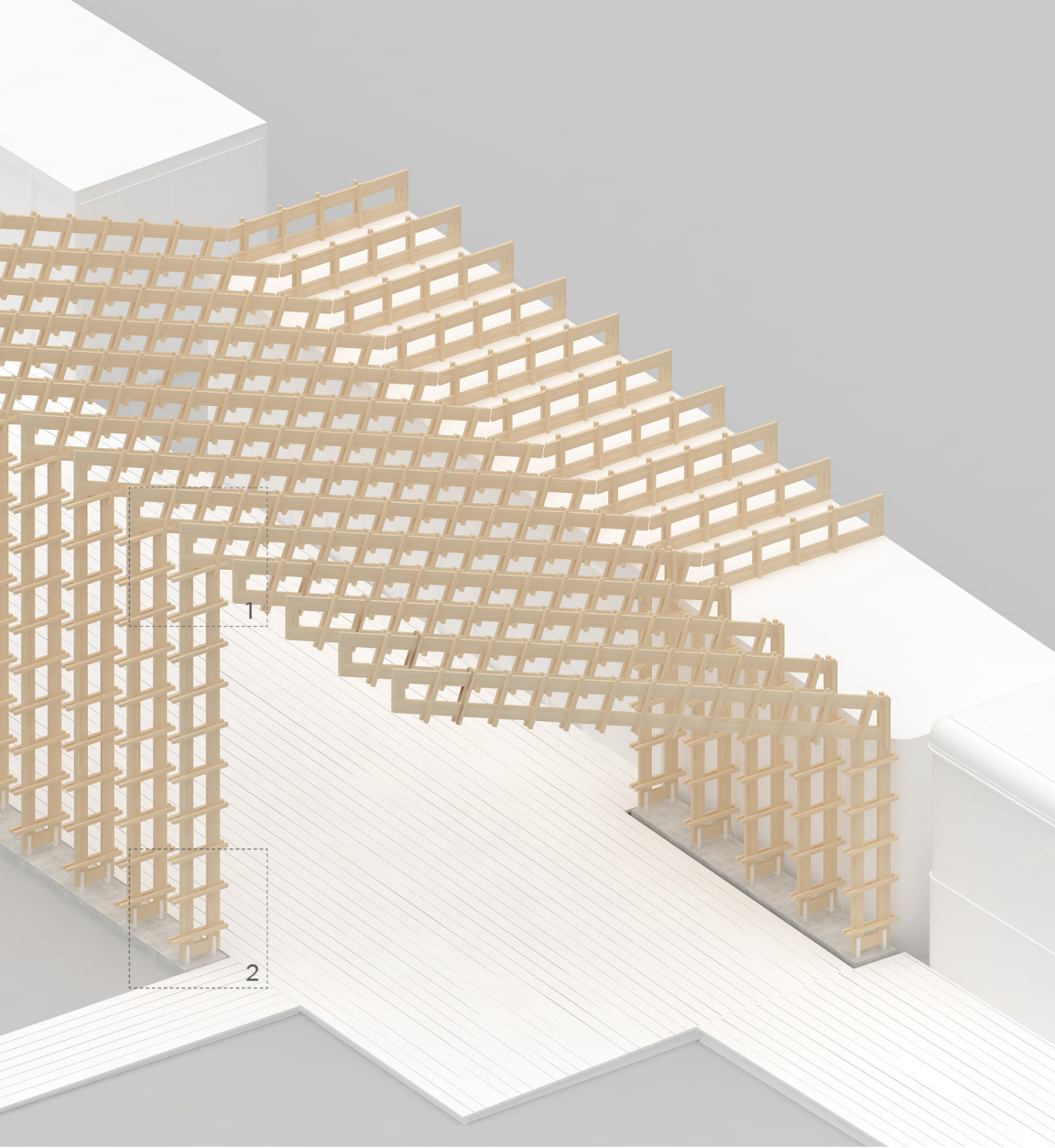


Open up an entrance for the existing wooden deck pathway

Fold the back wall over the shipping container and use it as a structural support

to circulation axis  
between the tent  
structure and the large  
hanger.















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# Sticks & the Activation of Place

As the Director of Public Programs at Socrates Sculpture Park, when I was first introduced to Hou de Sousa's rendering of *Sticks*, its permeability between inside and outside struck me. With its open-gridded cedar walls comprising shelves, topped by a translucent roof, I could imagine the park's flora and natural environs having a presence inside the space. And because *Sticks* would shelter the arts education programming, I was keenly interested in its potential to integrate and elevate the presence of children engaged in art-making into the greater atmosphere and daily activity of the park. Furthermore, I was curious to see how the formal design considerations of *Sticks* would translate into the actualization of the structure, the corresponding activation of the space, and the experiential implications for program participants.

For those of us who work on site, the building of *Sticks* felt like more of an emergence than a construction, growing up from the earth among the grass, trees, and outdoor workspaces of Socrates. Each day it appeared to gradually and organically take form. As the shelter neared

completion, the warmth of its cedar grid and sun-filtering roof all came together to establish and reveal a deeper, more meaningful presence in the park.

On its inaugural day, more than a thousand children entered into and moved through *Sticks*. A team of teaching artists led kite-making workshops for our annual Kite Festival among several tables set up inside the structure with craft-making materials and supplies. As children and their families entered the shelter, something quite striking took place. In addition to circling the tables to begin making their kites, participants immediately gravitated to the open walls, creating and activating multiple levels of natural “tabletops.” Even the youngest and littlest of artists had a area in which to create and they claimed it with gusto.

*Sticks* echoes the spirit of Socrates and has already begun to inspire our programs. Its design and purpose facilitate a relationship between the making that takes place within it and the natural environment it inhabits. More than 12,000 children will create sculpture inside *Sticks* each year, sparking imaginations and instilling a life-long love for art. The shelter’s profound expression of the park’s ethos serves to further elevate the work done within it and the wonder of this place.



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BOX FRAMES  
KITES

3



# ROUNDTABLE

## Participants:

Stella BETTS, *Partner, LEVENBETTS*  
Josh DE SOUSA, *Principal, Hou de Sousa*  
Marta ELLIOTT, *Program Assistant,*  
*The Architectural League*  
Jon HATFIELD, *Executive Director,*  
*Socrates Sculpture Park*  
Nancy HOU, *Principal, Hou de Sousa*  
Jordan HRUSKA, *Communications Director,*  
*The Architectural League*  
Matthew RAGAZZO, *Program Associate,*  
*The Architectural League*  
Anne RIESELBACH, *Program Director,*  
*The Architectural League*

RIESELBACH: John, could you talk about the genesis of this project, and how you identified the site and the program this year, with reference to the theme “function” in comparison with years past?

HATFIELD: In previous iterations of the Folly project with The Architectural League, we investigated the intersection between sculpture and architecture, sort of blurring the lines and distinctions often made between those two disciplines. When we started to think about the historic moment of the park’s thirtieth anniversary, we developed a programmatic and curatorial theme of the park itself. In other words, how the park specifically functions, what it is, the sort of landscape that we occupy, and what kinds of projects could amplify and address the park.

With that as a lens, we decided to take almost a 180-degree turn from the concept of a folly and harness the creative power of architects to solve a functional problem that the park had with its education space: an awning that had been there maybe 20 years and needed

to be removed and replaced. There was an opportunity for a creative solution, so that's the evolution of the idea, the program, the need, and the incentive to turn this into a "folly/function" knowing full well that nothing is purely functional.

ELLIOTT: A question for the architects: You've submitted an entry to the competition before, and we're wondering how designing for function is different than designing for a folly. How did your understanding of the park for your previous submissions influence your solution for the needs of the education corridor?

DE SOUSA: Even though they were both for Socrates Sculpture Park, they were two completely different projects. With *Mochi*, the submission that we entered for the 2015 Folly competition, we had an opportunity to continue ongoing material research regarding the up-cycling of plastic shopping bags. We applied this thinking to a temporary piece that would not necessarily be site specific but could engage the public in a sculptural way. But this year's proposal was intrinsically linked to the park itself—not only its physical context, but also its mission and educational program. What's really fascinating to us about Socrates is that it not only showcases art but also provides the facilities and resources for artists to produce these pieces.

HOU: Very early on when we came to visit the park we realized that it was a really dynamic place. It's always changing and we wanted our design to accommodate that. That was the seed for how we approached this project. We wanted the piece to be dynamic, to be something that people can interact with, and something that would evolve.

RAGAZZO: Looking at the theme of this year's competition can you describe how *Sticks* reinterprets the folly by adding function as a design component as outlined in the brief?

DE SOUSA: This year we honed in on the functional needs of the park itself. The relationship of this project to how follies are typically defined is a little loose. We could describe certain aspects of the design as being exuberant and unnecessary. But for the most part, things are pretty well defined and set to a certain system, strategy, assembly, and application.

HOU: There are certain moments that were included in the design that may not be necessary, such as the cantilever, or wrapping the wood trusses over the container. But we kept these moments in order to remain consistent with a set of rules and goals that we set for ourselves and, in a way, you could say that could be interpreted as being folly.

DE SOUSA: But even that strategy could function as a form of communication about the potentials and formal properties of the assembly system itself, in that the system is able to fold and split and shear off at certain moments. It communicates how the system works, and in that sense it's performing a type of function. It communicates how it was built, how it was conceived, and how it engages and integrates into its context. We could have kept things simpler and ignored most of the existing characteristics of the site but this would come at the cost of not fully illustrating the potential of the system.

BETTS: What was the criteria that shaped your decisions? The project is interesting in how it takes advantages of opportunities—site conditions, program, existing materials, existing structure. But what was the process of making decisions when there were multiple opportunities? Was it driven by program and experience or was it more driven by an idea, the structural system, or a kind of commitment to the materiality and the dimensions you were trying to get?

HOU: At the beginning we set some rules for ourselves. We wanted to work with dimensional lumber. Given the scope, budget, and many practical concerns, we thought this made sense, so we limited ourselves to it. We also wanted to address the existing location and take advantage of what was already



— *Socrates education studio before Sticks*

there—the deck and the shipping container. Those were some simple decisions that we made early.

DE SOUSA: There was a tug of war between pragmatic concerns and trying to push the design as far as it could go. We didn't immediately end up with this particular space, structure, and system as a design solution. We asked ourselves: How far can you push dimensional lumber? We designed organic and formally intricate schemes at first. The connection details were pretty complicated. But we began to question whether this approach could fully address program, use, the construction schedule, and the labor involved.

From there, we backtracked and asked ourselves, "What's the simplest possible thing we can do?", which was basically just a slanted roof that completely covered the site and shipping container. We went back and forth between simplicity and complexity, seeking out a balanced solution



— *Scrap materials rack that inspired Sticks façade*

that could incorporate as many functional characteristics as possible while using the fewest design elements. The breakthrough was when we realized that a space frame structure could double as shelving and that storing materials on both a wall and roof could have beneficial attributes. There didn't need to be a lot of formal complexity. We could just let the site dictate where the form should drop down, fold over, or open up. The spacing and size of parts could remain identical most of the time, allowing us to install the project relatively quickly.

BETTS: It's design too. But what's successful is that it's simple and it's still complex, but it's not complicated.

HOU: Since the subject of the competition was function, we also began by cataloging the various functional features at the park itself. We were inspired by a storage rack covered with recycled materials from previous artist projects. Our intuition was to make something out of the scraps themselves. We quickly realized it would be complicated for

such a large structure, but we wanted to incorporate those materials somehow.

DE SOUSA: We were intrigued by the idea of showcasing both raw materials and relics from projects past. But there was also something fascinating about giving away some of the design control to the park and to its users. Delegating this dynamic curatorial duty could actually result in a better project and allow us to focus on creating the scaffold itself rather than designating the location of hundreds of unique pieces of scrap material.

HATFIELD: You use “exuberance” and “may not be necessary” to describe the folly realm. In other words, you were contrasting what is the purest functional solution versus what you’ve created. It’s like it may not be necessary. I think that is the most interesting thing about design and about the Folly program. I’m curious about how you feel about having to satisfy a program versus our other calls for a folly, which could be characterized as “nothing about it is necessary” and “it’s all exuberance.”

DE SOUSA: We have asked ourselves whether this could be considered a folly or not. Once the user and a program are included, it’s difficult to describe this as a non-necessary space. It performs a task, a few tasks. So it does something. But at the same time, there are easier ways to serve these roles. And one could say that maybe there is a level of folly in the details.

HATFIELD: We know so many artists who started their careers as architects. Their evolution went from understanding program and designing towards solutions to the extent where they call themselves sculptors because they wanted to unfetter and free themselves of that kind of constraint. I wonder how this experience carries forward in your practice and thinking about function versus things that are unnecessary.

HOU: We love sculpture and art for its own sake, but also really enjoy working on projects that address very specific problems. We

look for the most pressing questions surrounding a project and aim for appropriate answers. It's satisfying because this process tends to instill a sense of objectivity. But nothing is completely predictable. We were surprised when *Sticks* first opened, by how people started to use it. We created a tiny piece of infrastructure capable of hosting a variety of activities but many utilizations occurred that were never foreseen. To see the project grow on its own, evolve, and work well, creates a great feeling.

DE SOUSA: This was a problem-solving exercise. There were so many factors involved that we were ok giving up a little of our personality and letting the assembly system run its course. Not that we were totally absent from how it ended up looking and working. For example, the project is basically a set of trusses consisting of chords and webbing. The webbing protrudes outwards a few inches. This detail provides a tolerance that visually masks the crooks and kinks of the chords, but we also didn't want to attempt to cut a bunch of lumber exactly to size. Otherwise they would either slightly overlap or it wouldn't overlap enough. Having the webbing extend forward allows it to look more precise than it actually is. This idea is pushed at the façade, where the webbing protrudes outwards, even further so that it then becomes a support structure for the scrap material. There are maybe only two or three rules that happen throughout the structure. They get broken where they need to, just so it can be playful enough.

BETTS: So were there surprises? Were there things that occurred that meant you then had to either adjust the rules or adjust the system? Were there unforeseen challenges that happened when you did the construction?

HOU: The biggest surprises occurred at the very beginning when we prepared the site. We knew that the container isn't perfectly straight, but it was difficult to know just how twisted and torqued it was until the old structure was removed. We ended up building wood brackets that individually secure and level each of the roof trusses that

rest on top of the shipping container. This detail had to be figured out on site.

BETTS: How could your system adapt to other sites? The project seems that it has an inherent DNA. Could you envision something similar in a different site, for a different project?

HOU: Definitely. Because *Sticks* can be deployed as both a wall and roof structure and makes use of standard dimensional lumber, it could foreseeably accommodate a variety of site conditions and spread across larger sites. The flexibility of the system could be ideal for connecting existing buildings. Another application could be for a program that anticipates future expansion.

DE SOUSA: While it took a while to demolish the existing structure and prepare the site, it was shocking how quickly the lumber trusses were assembled and erected. John [Hatfield] kept referring to it as “the barn-raising” and there was this incredible period of time when, in two weeks, all of a sudden everything went up.

BETTS: I think it was during a Kengo Kuma lecture that I saw a study of small pavilions that are studies for larger buildings. So you can imagine these systems in a larger manifestation.

DE SOUSA: Yeah, recently we’ve been looking at siphonophores. The most well-known is a Portuguese Man of War. They’re basically creatures that look like a single entity. Actually they’re a colony of small creatures that clump together, but some develop in a way that they end up being specialists. They’re either part of the tentacles that capture the food, or they are part of the sail that keeps it afloat. When grouped together into a larger whole the siphonophores assemble into an extremely intricate but also predetermined form. The arrangement is incredibly specific.

HRUSKA: It’s a question of seriality and repetition. I’ve noticed that a lot of your work has this quality, especially *Raise/Raze*, your project in Washington D.C. I wanted to hear about

how you thought seriality and repetition would relate to the design program and the education program at Socrates.

HOU: There are similarities between the two projects. With both we explore this idea of flexibility and dynamic structure. It's funny because they are inverses of one another. *Raise/Raze* consists of solid modules that can be moved around to create an infinite variety of sculptures versus, in the *Sticks* project empty pockets of space between the structure are entirely flexible and can be filled with artwork and materials.

DE SOUSA: We utilize seriality as a means of simplification. For *Raise/Raze* it was important that the public easily understand the mechanics of the design, because they were ultimately going to shape the construction of the sculpture. So we had initially begun by combining various platonic solids that resulted in complex assemblies. We also looked at molecular structures. These things came to mind when we were working with these plastic balls. But we realized that simplifying the unit so that could it be repeated easily in three dimensions was the approach that made the most sense. It allowed for the most flexibility, rather than taking a complex puzzle piece approach that few would understand. We found that it could be more intuitive and tactile simultaneously and would free up the public's imagination and effort and allow them to explore instead of trying to figure out what these wacky designers had set before them. We weren't interested in creating an IQ test.

HRUSKA: There's another interesting precedent in Enzo Mari's *Autoprogettazione* furniture with his idea of making furniture out of standard dimensional lumber, or offering people the opportunity to do that through blueprints that he provided for free.

DE SOUSA: Doesn't Socrates have some pieces by Mari?

HATFIELD: Yes, that picnic table is Enzo Mari designed and we ran workshops based on his open design program.

HRUSKA: This structure has a lot of the same kind of DNA in that it allows the public to see, as you're saying, the systems in play. They can see how the structural systems operate.

DE SOUSA: There was this aspect when we designed it, not only were we concerned that we would be able to execute this project in the amount of time we had, so we didn't want to overly complicate it for ourselves and make a really difficult carpentry task, because we're not carpenters. We knew this had to be within the limits of our abilities as well, but that the actual structure could be illustrative of how it was put together and that one could deduce really easily how the thing worked.

HRUSKA: Inherently it ends up being educational as an educational structure.



– A stack of 2"x2" dimensional lumber

DE SOUSA: With these last two projects, we've become more comfortable reducing tectonic complexity as a means of providing clarity to the users.

HATFIELD: Living with *Sticks* and seeing how it operates, we've seen mostly very positive unintended occurrences. Again, I can't help but think there's something about the openness, the use of materials. We watched as the shelves, within an instant, became desks. Because of their different heights, they just became workspaces. And then, I'm looking above us, we used pieces of the old awning—just cut up—to shade the structure. So while you may have meant it as a library of materials to then be used and recycled, I see it more as an archive, because we had such great fun recalling, "Oh, that's Noah's project, that's this person's, that's this person's."



— Captions

DE SOUSA: The scrap material that we illustrated in renderings in our proposal consisted of all the past projects we could find at Socrates. This spoke to what exists here with things like material racks and the repurposing of materials going on all the time, which is fantastic. It documents what happens here. Even though things are seasonal and projects come and go, the memory of them remains. There's a record of what's been here and the people who have been here.

RIESELBACH: We've been talking about all the pieces and parts, but we haven't been talking to the pieces as a whole, conceptually. We've referred to the cantilever. Could you describe it and just walk us through the structure as a finished piece?

HOU: We wanted to convey the potential of the system through a set of site specific moves. The roof is pitched for water drainage. The cantilever highlights the entry, lifting up where an existing pathway meets the space. The ceiling folds downwards in alignment with the shipping container doorway. And the ceiling folds upwards to rest on top of the shipping container. Then we wanted to maintain access longitudinally across the space. Those few very simple factors basically gave us the overall form of the building.

DE SOUSA: Utilizing a space frame system also allowed for a porosity and transparency that was great to maintain. One of the nice things about the previous structure that we replaced was the view out to the park. We didn't want to completely block that. The project could simultaneously act as a shelf, but be transparent and open. Anyone doing work inside *Sticks* is still visually connected to what's going on in the rest of the park and, conversely, visitors can observe the progress of art classes and engage with the activities occurring inside.

HATFIELD: There are also associations that I see now with the shape and form that you may have intended or not. Did you intend that the pitch be exactly the same pitch as the tent roof? Those angles are perfectly parallel to one another. Then in my other eye,

I see the coffers of the studio shed and those elements of that grid, and it's echoed here but in different ways. Because of that, contextually, *Sticks* feels like it's a part of the park. Those little cues ground it to the place.

HOU: When we began the competition phase we visited and documented the site extensively, including taking measurements of the large studio shed and the small tent. This information was incorporated into the 3-D model and it informed the scale of our proposal.

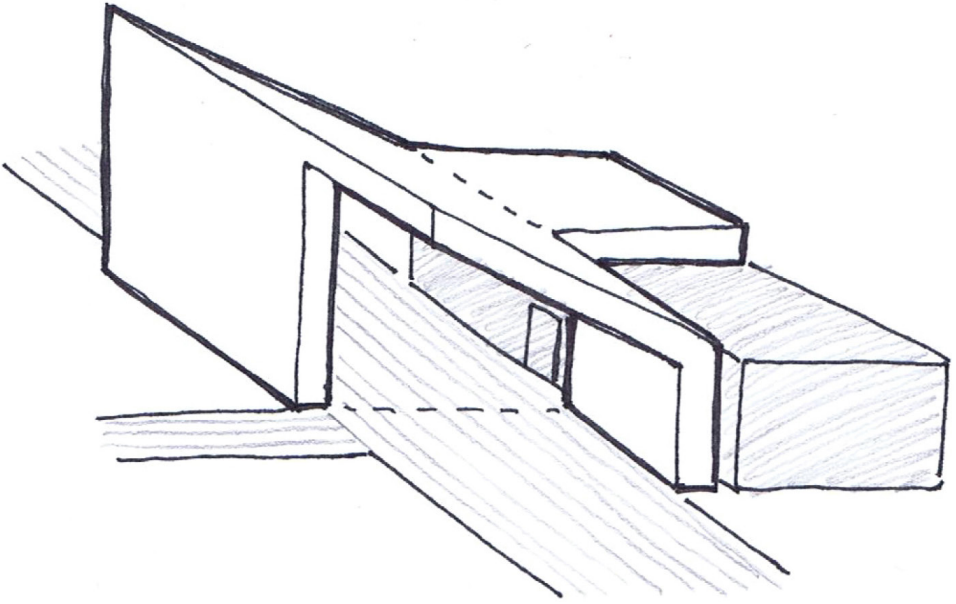
DE SOUSA: It also helped us align the roof pitch. When one first enters the park the studio shed is the most visually dominant object. You then begin to notice all the containers, which are relatively small in comparison, and the tent, and also the greenhouse. It's a park with objects and forms scattered across it. The space we inherited was sandwiched by a large and small object. It seemed natural to fill in the gap with a medium sized structure.

We also wanted to involve the shipping containers in some way. Some original ideas included moving them and all these crazy things. But taking advantage of their current locations, and the fact that there were these unique volumes occupying the site, we knew that would be a helpful challenge.

RIESELBACH: I just keep coming back to the question, follies can have activities, and still be follies, and in the end is this functional structure nevertheless still a folly? Can it be read on different levels?

DE SOUSA: The whole folly question is interesting to begin with because it's already this typology with a definition that's extremely broad and loose, so it's the perfect vehicle for exploring what something could be; what something could be defined as. It makes you wonder not only whether something's a folly, but whether it's a sculpture, whether it's architecture. We could also ask, why do we have architecture versus just engineering? Why don't we try to solve the built world in a way that's just as rational as possible? Because one could easily surmise that all of architecture in comparison to engineering is a bit of a folly. There's a bit of

the unnecessary in that activity, in that production. Of course it's beyond pure rationality as well. There's plenty of functionality to just having beauty, to all these things.



– Hou De Sousa drawing









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STAFF ONLY

folly 2016  
call for proposals  
a project organized by  
socrates sculpture park and  
the architectural league of new york

# folly function

# Finalists & Notable Entries

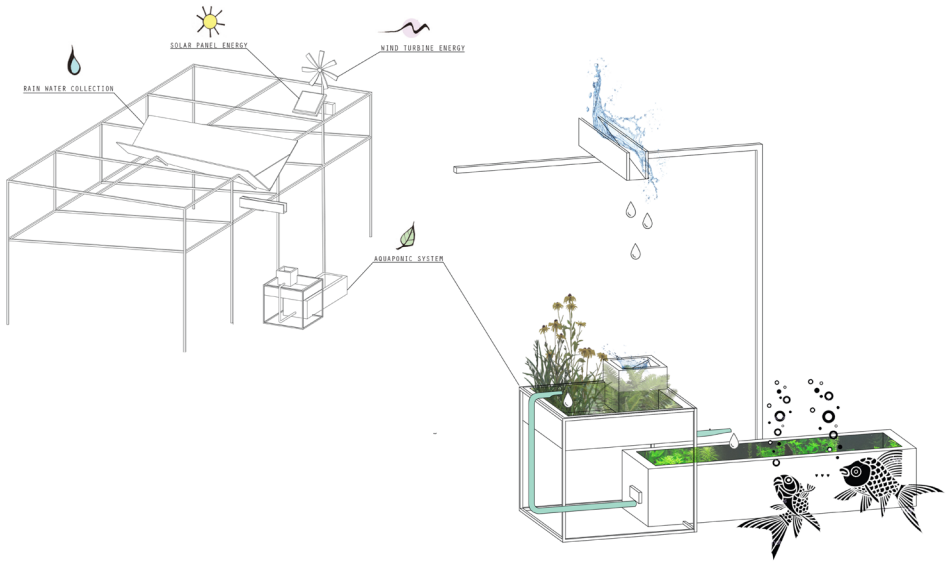
This year's Folly/Function competition attracted a plethora of unique proposals that fell along a continuum between folly and function. The following pages feature the two finalist projects selected by the jury as well as several notable entries. Among them a number of themes emerged among the approaches to the problem. The Architectural League staff has sorted through the group and highlighted several modes of working that coalesced, which are categorized under the rubrics of material exploration and experimentation, site narratives, activated roofs, and diagrams, modules, and repetition.



— The jury discussing proposals

# FOLLY FINALIST

*Jewel Box* by Mary Frisbee, Samuel Sutcliffe, and Seffi Min rides the line between architecture and didactic sculpture. The proposal reduces the substantial frame of the existing education structure to a “structural metal grid” with a new roof of corrugated metal panels. The designers interrupt the roof with a protruding V-shape that channels water to feed an aquaponics system below, uniting art and function. The project proposes to educate about the possibilities of nature with “an urban sculpture that connects the individual with the cycles of nature through the elements.” Structural and sheltering, the roof is an exposition on “the connections to our resources—water, food, electricity” that are all generated and collected by *Jewel Box*. The project designers “feel it is imperative that this generation is exposed to the dynamics and processes that allow the use of the described resources.”



# FOLLY FINALIST

John Bassett and Jonathan Benner's proposal, *Repeating Archways*, employs a series of "identical wooden frames that pivot and repeat down the length of the deck" with a simple, practical, and durable roof made of standard lumber and PVC panels. Economical and efficient, this structure is both functional and rhythmically dynamic. The repeating units compose a cadence that sets the stage and unifies the education corridor at Socrates. This entry's diagrammatic form, articulated by means of repeating modules, demonstrates a deep understanding of structure. Diagrams, modules, and repetition permeated this year's entries, and the jury identified *Repeating Archways* as the strongest in this trend.





# NOTABLE ENTRIES

## Material Exploration and Experimentation

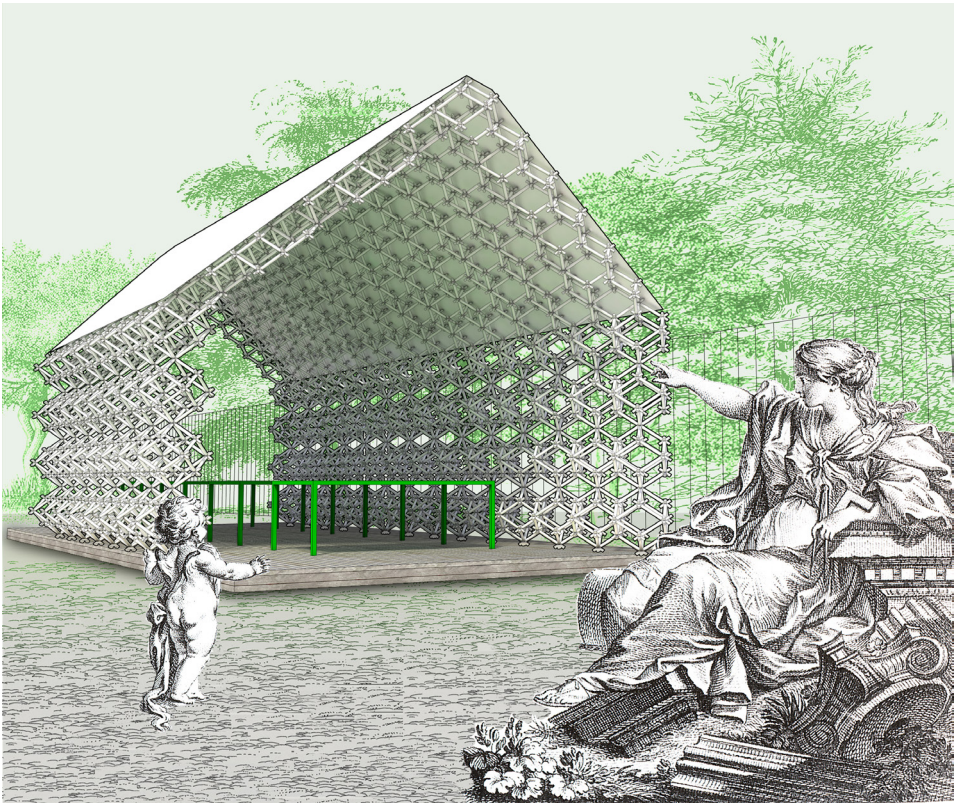
Nearly 600 pounds of discarded and repurposed paper forms a seemingly dense, yet deceptively light canopy of repetitive, conical shaped masses above the user in Myka Works' *Pulp Urchin*. This project investigates "the material paper that is generally considered highly-disposable with a short life from desk to trash bin," and repurposes it "to take on, instead, an indeterminate life span and to expose latent characteristics of cellulose not often leveraged beyond sheet material goods." In doing so, the resulting stalactite-like cones embolden viewers to rethink their own ways in which they contribute to waste.



*The Birds and The Bees*, a proposal by Harrison Atelier (a 2015 Folly notable entrant), uses a traditional material, cement, to create a rippled and perforated façade that acts as a co-habitable space for human and non-human users alike (the firm developed this form in partnership with Cornell Ornithology Lab). This eco-pavilion contains a rooftop rainwater catchment and a wall system, for which “one face is tiled in 2’x2’ hand-cast cement panels, designed to accommodate both small local cavity-nesting birds...and cavity-dwelling solitary bees.”



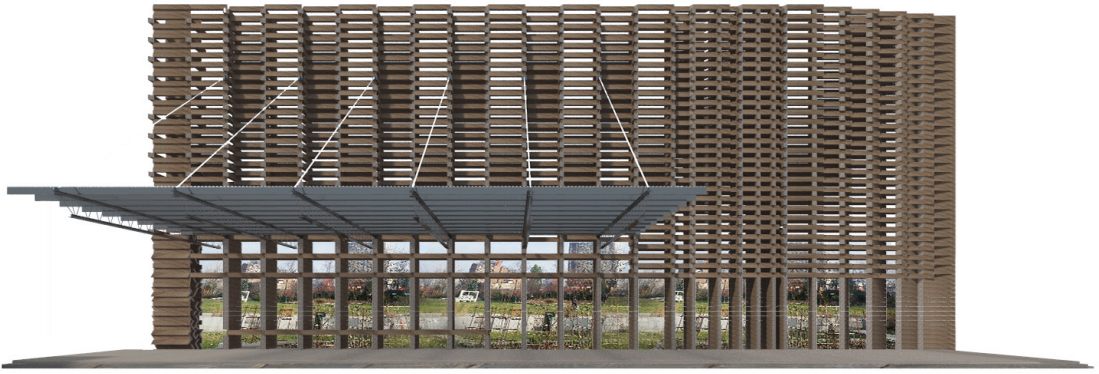
James Khamsi of FIRM a.d.'s proposal, the *Solid Primitive Hut* is "a reflection on architectural origins in the era of digital production," and uses a Solid Primitive (a native shape in AutoCAD) constructed of PVC pipe as the modular building block for the structure. The repetitive modules create a visually dynamic experience—when viewed perpendicular to the form, one can see straight through the structure, and when viewed from angles, the building appears as a solid. Described in Khamsi's words, "the contemporary, almost generically so, plastic nature of the material has a playful friction with the primordial themes of the work."



## Site Narratives

The eloquence of *Light Box* by Chat Travesio is not only found in the project's simple shed-like wood and polycarbonate structure that radiates a soft glow at night, but also in Travesio's insightful approach to program and place. Travesio believes "understanding the primary user of a space through conversation and engagement opportunities allows one to be more empathic to their needs and creates a stronger emotional and social connection between the user and the space." Embracing Socrates' mission, Travesio fuses educational programming and participatory design by transforming young people into makers during the construction process.





*Poly-Functional-Folly* by OAAA explores the relationship between object and site. A monolithic wall made from wooden railroad ties stretches along the park's entry, screening the view and allowing for a play between light and shadow. The shadow that the wall produces extends into the park and adds a third dimension to the structure, creating a new space. As such, the use of a monumental wall and "third space" allows for *Poly-Functional-Folly* to transform its relationship with the education corridor and park.



In addition to an expansion of the proposed education corridor, R.A.M.'s *The Pliable Parthenon* prompts a compelling conceptual dialogue between history and place through formal references to the Parthenon. The proposal "replicates the exact proportion of the [Parthenon's] main façade, but quickly subverts this homage both materially and formally." Extending towards the front of the park, the pavilion also "corrects the inherent folly of the original model" through the addition of a roof, and holistically addresses the site through an expansion of program.

## Activated Roofs

*The Hovering Garden* proposal by Fabian Busse, Leon Lai, Leo Mulvehill, Nico Schlapps, and Eric Tan conceals a complex program under a floating garden-roof that “allows nature to defy gravity.” This functional folly creates shelter by lifting a slice of the park above the heads of its visitors and caretakers that is “kept afloat and nurtured by those who would use it.” The garden-roof is both otherworldly and very much of this earth; it is both participatory and has a life of its own.



Primarily concerned with shading, *Under the Cloud* by Xiaofei Shen and Yiqing Zhao employs a circular plan that “introduces a more concentrated and effective communication mode.” Supported by a light open structure, *Under the Cloud* relies on its pleated roof for shelter to allow for “beautiful panoramic views like trees, riverbank, sculptures.” By day, this lightweight roof is reminiscent of a cloud; at dusk, it becomes a lantern floating above its inhabitants. While the entrants identify its purpose is to shade park-goers, this proposal’s seemingly diaphanous roof also provides substantial cover.

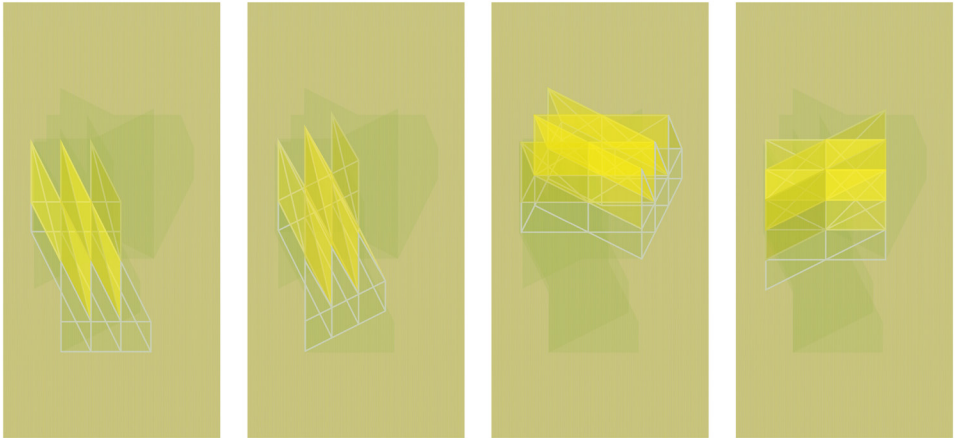




The *Flexiroof* project by Noah Wadden is comprised of large 10x20 flexitanks supported by a slender structure. Intended to shield from the elements during inclement weather and light a pathway for inhabitants at night, this proposal raises the pillow form to create a billowy shelter. Wadden explains: "what seems to be a balloon, perhaps the most ethereal of structures, provides shelter and a sense of interiority." Under this canopy of undulating pillows, direct light is diffused through the translucent roof that is supported on an otherwise open framework.

## Diagrams, Modules, and Repetition

In their proposal for *Folly No. 4*, Alfie Koetter and Emmett Zeifman invert the traditional relationship between drawing and information. In architecture, a drawing is usually the abstraction of a structure, while this proposal claims to tangibly “pull information out of a drawing,” communicating an idea that could not have existed before the act of drawing. This project “intuits volume and form from a drawing” to reconceive a working pavilion using diagrammatic information. The folly “learns” its form from the drawing that doubles “two rectangles, one skewed and one superimposed over the other.”





*The T and the Rock*, a project by Esteban deBacker and Cristina Liminana, employs modules and a calculated relationship between objects to define space. Their proposal for an education module (the T) and a topographical barrier (the Rock) call on “two artificial objects to define a programmatic landscape.” Simple, adaptable, and modular, the education module incorporates a repeating T shape that creates a space for “a platform of exchange.” Pairing the regular with the irregular, these two modules define the volume of the proposal for this site and remain adaptable to material and economic constraints of the park.



*Twins* by Christina Draghi and Andrew Kao employs opposition to create two paired sheds that are seemingly at odds with one another. The first is a large, open shade structure with a roof in the form of a valley that sheds water. The second is a smaller, enclosed greenhouse with a ridge roof that collects water for its plants. Diagrammatically opposite in form and intention, the sheds complement each other, operating together as architecturally dichotomous, dizygotic twins.



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# about Hou de Sousa

Hou de Sousa is a New York based architecture and design studio founded by Nancy Hou and Josh de Sousa that is focused on building culturally innovative and environmentally responsible solutions. The office's design process typically incorporates digital and analog tools, material research and physical mock-ups. Hou de Sousa has completed a wide range of work including restaurants, public spaces, art installations and private residences.

Recent honors and awards include the firm's winning entry for the Re!Ball International Design Competition, selection as Finalists for the 2015 City of Dreams Competition, a Notable Entry for the 2015 Socrates Folly Competition, and the Winning restaurant design for the IIDA's 2015 Best Interiors of Latin America and the Caribbean Competition. Hou de Sousa's work has been featured nationally and internationally in publications and media outlets including *Architectural Record*, *Domus*, *Dwell*, *Interior Design*, *NBC*, *NPR*, *PBS*, and *The Washington Post*.

Nancy Hou and Josh de Sousa received their Bachelor of Architecture from Cornell and Master of Architecture from Harvard. Both also teach at Parsons School of Design.

# about The Partners

The Architectural League of New York nurtures excellence in architecture, design, and urbanism, and stimulates thinking and debate about the critical design and building issues of our time. As a vital, independent forum for architecture and its allied disciplines, the League helps create a more beautiful, vibrant, innovative, and sustainable future. For more information, visit [archleague.org](http://archleague.org).

Founded in 1986, Socrates Sculpture Park is the only site in the New York Metropolitan area specifically dedicated to providing artists with opportunities to create and exhibit large-scale sculpture and installations in a unique outdoor environment that encourages strong interaction between artists, artworks and the public. The park's existence is based on the belief that reclamation, revitalization and creative expression are essential to the survival, humanity and improvement of our urban environment.









# Support & Thanks

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Socrates Sculpture Park's exhibition program is also supported by the generosity of Bloomberg Philanthropies, Charina Endowment Fund, Paula Cooper, Mark di Suvero, Sidney E. Frank Foundation, Maxine and Stuart Frankel Foundation for Art, Agnes Gund, The Kayden Family, Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation, Ivana Mestrovic, Nancy Nasher and David Haemisegger, Joel Shapiro and Ellen Phelan, Plant Specialists, Leonard and Louise Riggio, Silvercup Studios, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Smith, Spacetime C. C., and our generous Board of Directors.

Special thanks to the City of New York, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, and Council Members Jimmy Van Bramer and Costa Constantinides, and thanks the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, Commissioner Mitchell Silver.

*Sticks* was designed by Hou de Sousa and utilizes preexisting park resources, including scrap materials stored on site, which will continue to be incorporated into the structural grid of the walls and roof. The architects' re-use of existing resources to build *Sticks* is central to the sustainable ethos of Socrates. Fabrication by Josh de Sousa and Nancy Hou. With support from the Architectural League of New York.

Hou de Sousa would like to thank everyone at Socrates Sculpture Park and The Architectural League of New York, without whom the Folly program wouldn't be possible each year. We're especially grateful for the support and efforts of John Hatfield, Rosalie Genevro, Anne Rieselbach,

Jess Wilcox, Chris Zirbes, and Jordan Hruska. We'd also like to thank the fine folks at Spacetime for their assistance, particularly Mark di Suvero for founding the park 30 years ago and supporting it ever since, as well as Kent Johnson and Dan Roberts, Arup members Shaina Saporta and Daniel DiChiro, who were instrumental with their engineering expertise and a delight to collaborate with. We're thankful for the many volunteers who pitched in, particularly the super human efforts of Sumit Sahdev, Emily Orsburn, Iria de Sousa and Antonio de Sousa. Lastly, we'd like to thank everyone who contributed time, energy and belief in the positive role a small project can have on a community, whether hosting art workshops for students, supporting emerging artists, or simply providing a shelter during a rainy afternoon BBQ.

# Socrates Sculpture Park

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Folly is a partnership between Socrates Sculpture Park and The Architectural League of New York and directed jointly by Jess Wilcox, Director of Exhibitions, Socrates Sculpture Park, and Anne Rieselbach, Program Director, The Architectural League of New York, with the assistance of Matt Ragazzo, Program Associate, The Architectural League of New York.

Photographs, renderings, and images courtesy of Hou de Sousa, Nora Webb, Mark Igbinalolor, Laura Blaszcak and Socrates Sculpture Park.

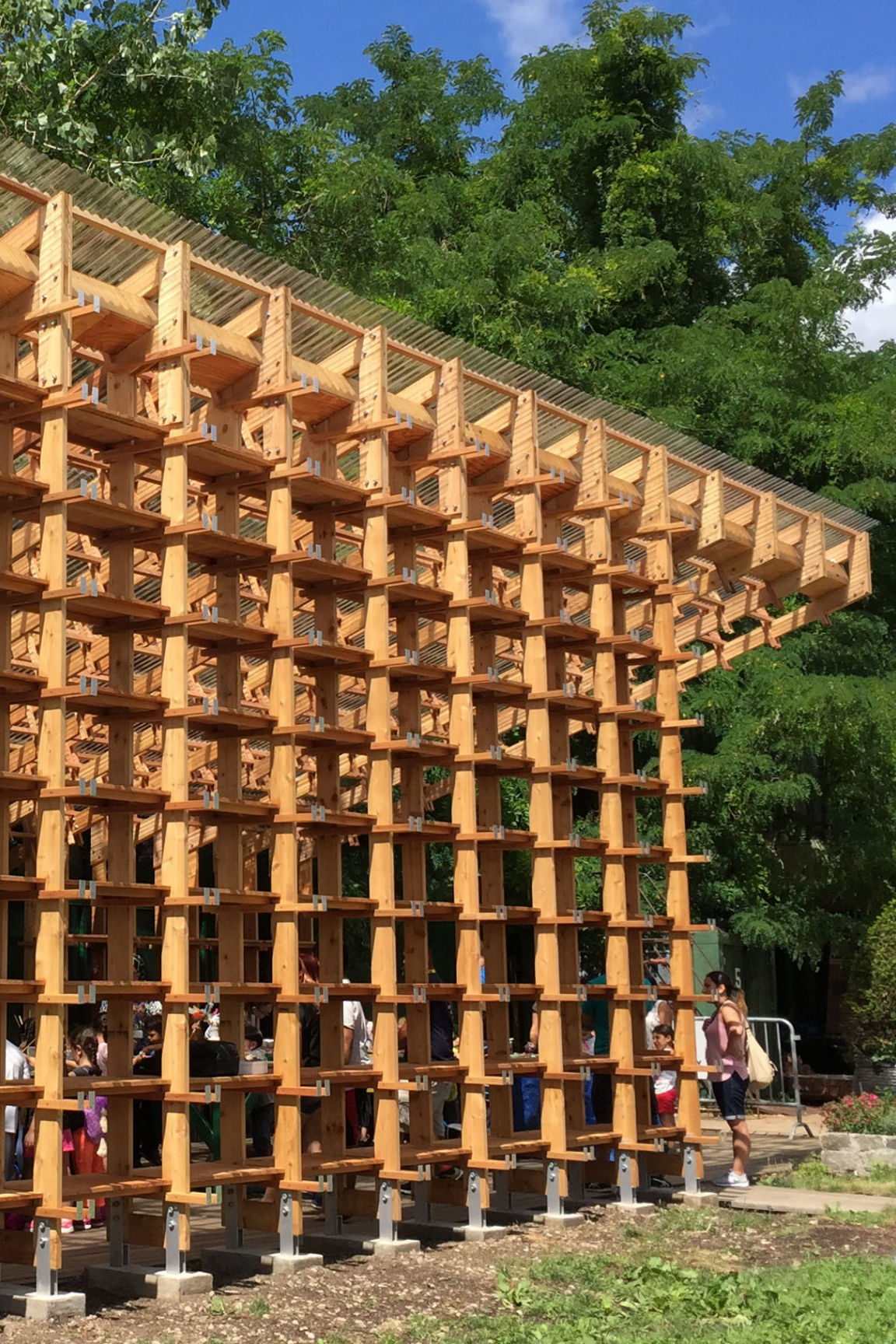
*Sticks*, first unveiled on July 9th 2016 at Socrates Sculpture Park in Long Island City, will provide a hub for Socrates Sculpture Park's Education Studio, which hosts over 10,000 students annually.

Folly catalog prepared by Jess Wilcox and Léo Serriere.

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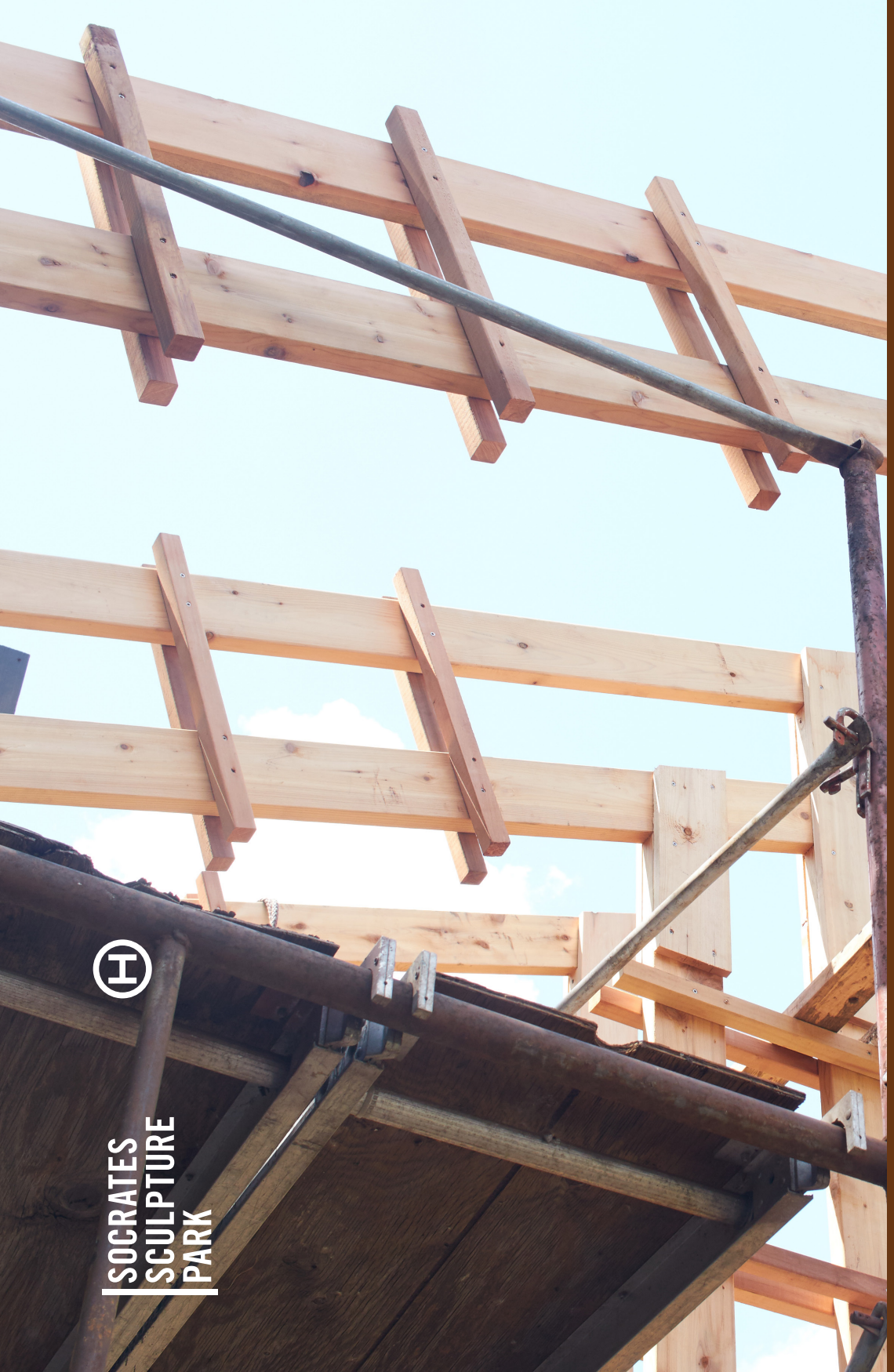
Open daily from 10 am until sunset  
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