

Biomorphed

Lunar Habitat Design

Computationally based Biophilic
Design for Astronaut Well-being

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Extra-/Terrestrial Architecture Graduation Studio

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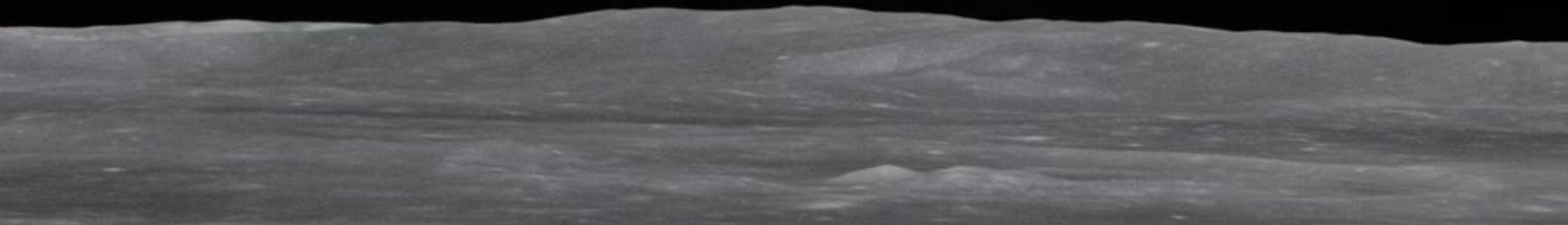
Index

1. Introduction → Problem Statement
2. Site Analysis
3. ISRU Construction Method
4. Mental Health & Well-being
5. Biophilic Design Systems
6. Programmatic Design
7. Fragment as Proof of Concept



INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

Return to the Moon



Why is this topic relevant?

- A second space race to put humans on the Moon again
- Involving many space agencies like NASA, ESA, ROSCOSMOS, CNSA, etc.
- Aim for longer term Moon missions
- Eventually leading to colonising of the Moon and beyond



NASA. (2026, April 7). [The Moon, backlit by the Sun during a solar eclipse] [Photograph]. <https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/nasas-artemis-ii-crew-beams-official-moon-flyby-photos-to-earth/>

Lunar habitation faces 3 main challenges

Hostile Environment



Transportation Costs



Mental Health



Hostile Environment

- Abrasive lunar dust
- Moonquakes
- Micro meteorites
- Radiation
- Solar wind
- Long lunar nights
- No atmosphere
- Extreme temperature fluctuations



NASA. (1969, July 20). Astronaut Edwin E. Aldrin Jr., lunar module pilot, walks on the surface of the moon near the leg of the Lunar Module (LM) "Eagle" during the Apollo 11 extravehicular activity (EVA) [Photograph]. <https://www.nasa.gov/mission/apollo-11/>

Protective Habitat

The habitat should be optimised to deal with the site conditions. Especially with pressurising the habitat and dealing with radiation.

Transportation Costs

- Expensive to launch rockets
- Price/kg has decreased with reusable rockets
- Building materials are heavy



In-Situ Resource Utilization (ISRU)

poses a solution by reducing the need for transporting materials from Earth.

Denko, M. (2018, November). [Photo-illustration of Mars rovers for the article "From Dust to Thrust"] [Illustration]. IEEE Spectrum.
https://read.nxtbook.com/ieee/spectrum_int/spectrum_int_november_2018/from_dust_to_thrust.html

Mental Health

- Stuck with the same people
- High stress environment
- Away from family and home
- Little privacy
- Confined indoors



Biophilia

poses a solution by adding more greenery and reminding people of earth. Biophilic design can improve mental health & well-being.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (2019, May 8). Expedition 59 crew members inside the U.S. Destiny laboratory [Photograph]. <https://www.nasa.gov/image-article/expedition-59-crew-members-inside-u-s-destiny-laboratory/>

UN Sustainable Development Goals

- Health & well-being → Biophilic (human-centric design)
- Innovation → Design-To-Robotic-Production and 3D printing advancements
- Sustainable cities and responsible consumption → ISRU to reduce pollution from transport



Government of the Netherlands. (n.d.). An overview of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals [Infographic]. <https://www.government.nl/themes/international-cooperation/united-nations/sustainable-development-goals>

Goals

- To design a functional, safe and effective ISRU Lunar habitat
- To explore the relationship between biophilic design and 3D printing
- To create a habitat with a healthy indoor environment for mental & physical wellbeing
- To contribute to the study of future habitats designs on and off Earth

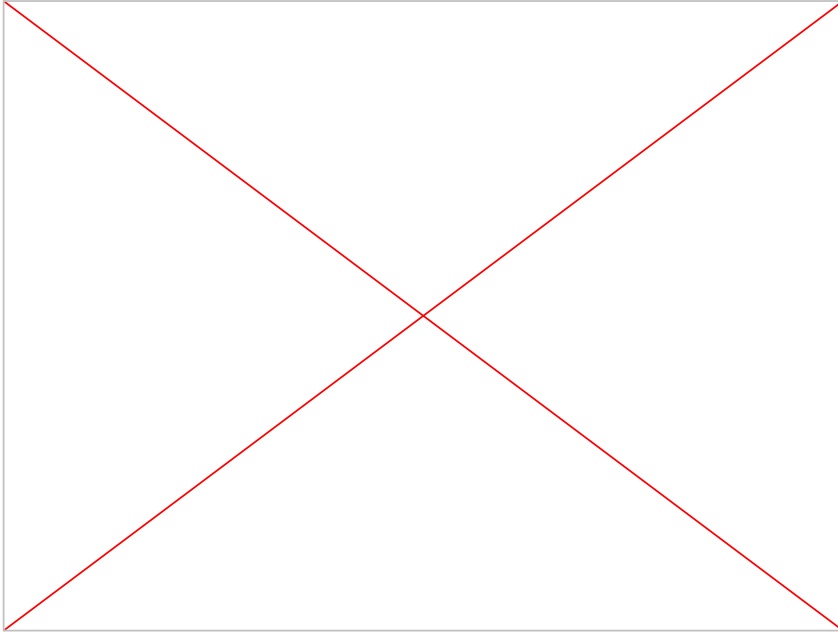
“How can **biophilic design** principles be adapted to a lunar habitat using **ISRU 3D-printed** architecture to support astronaut **mental health** and **well-being**?”

A black and white photograph of a lunar surface. In the background, a rover is visible on the horizon. The sky is dark with a bright, circular light source, possibly the sun or moon. The foreground shows a cratered and cratered lunar landscape.

SECTION

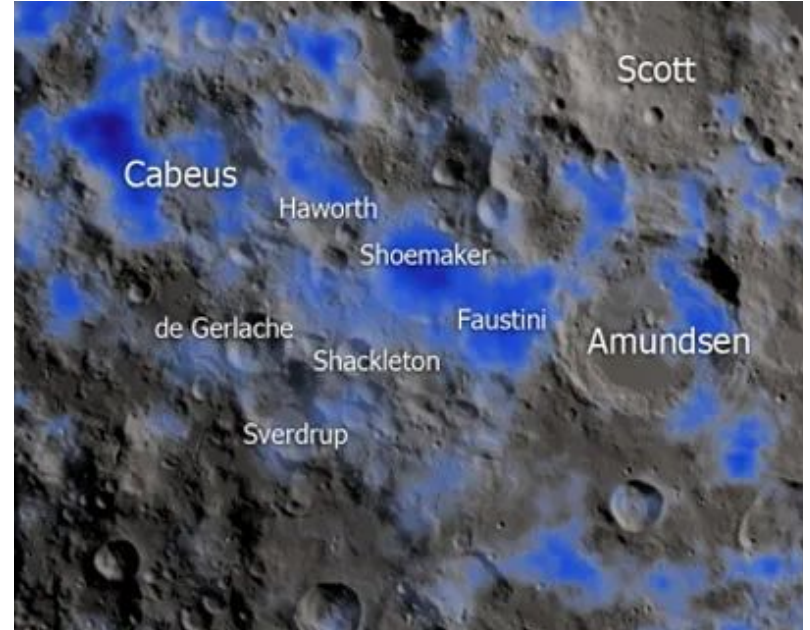
Site Analysis

Sunlight



Wright, E. (2022, October 5). Illumination at the moon's South Pole, 2023 to 2030 [Visualization]. NASA Scientific Visualization Studio. <https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/4930/>

Water Ice deposits

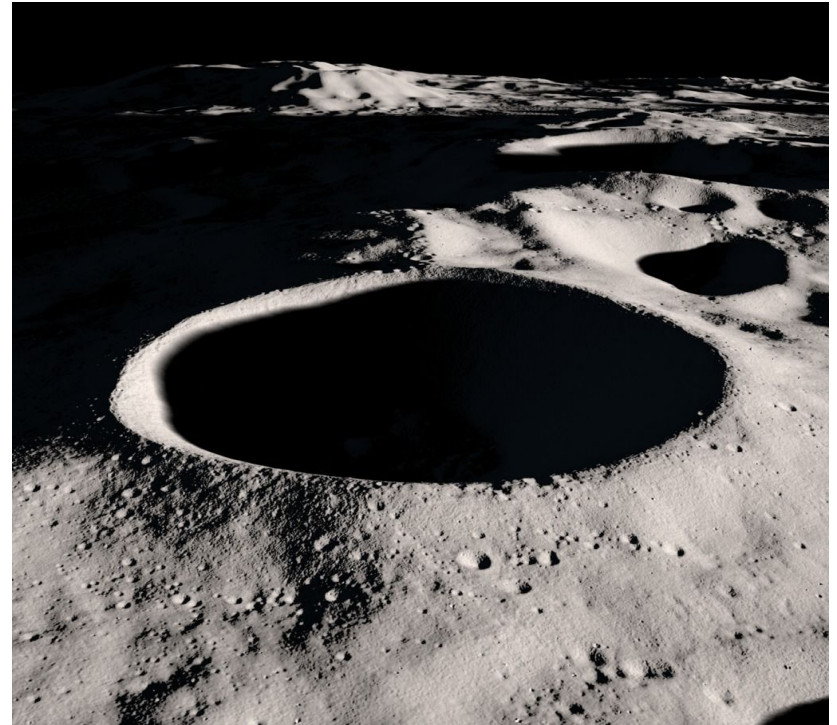


National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (2024, January 19). LEND water south pole [Image]. NASA Science. <https://science.nasa.gov/image-detail/svs-lend-20130601-580-2/>

Shackleton Crater



NASA/GSFC/Arizona State University. (2022, April 20). Shackleton crater's illuminated rim & shadowed interior [Photograph]. NASA Science. <https://science.nasa.gov/resource/shackleton-craters-illuminated-rim-shadowed-interior/k>



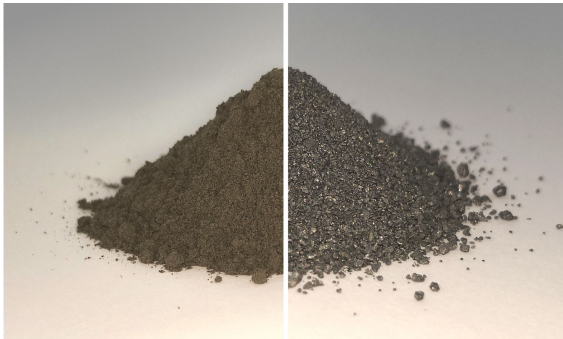
Wright, E. (2012, June 21). Visualizing Shackleton crater [Visualization]. NASA Scientific Visualization Studio. <https://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/4716k>

Section

Construction & Materialisation



Extracting Materials



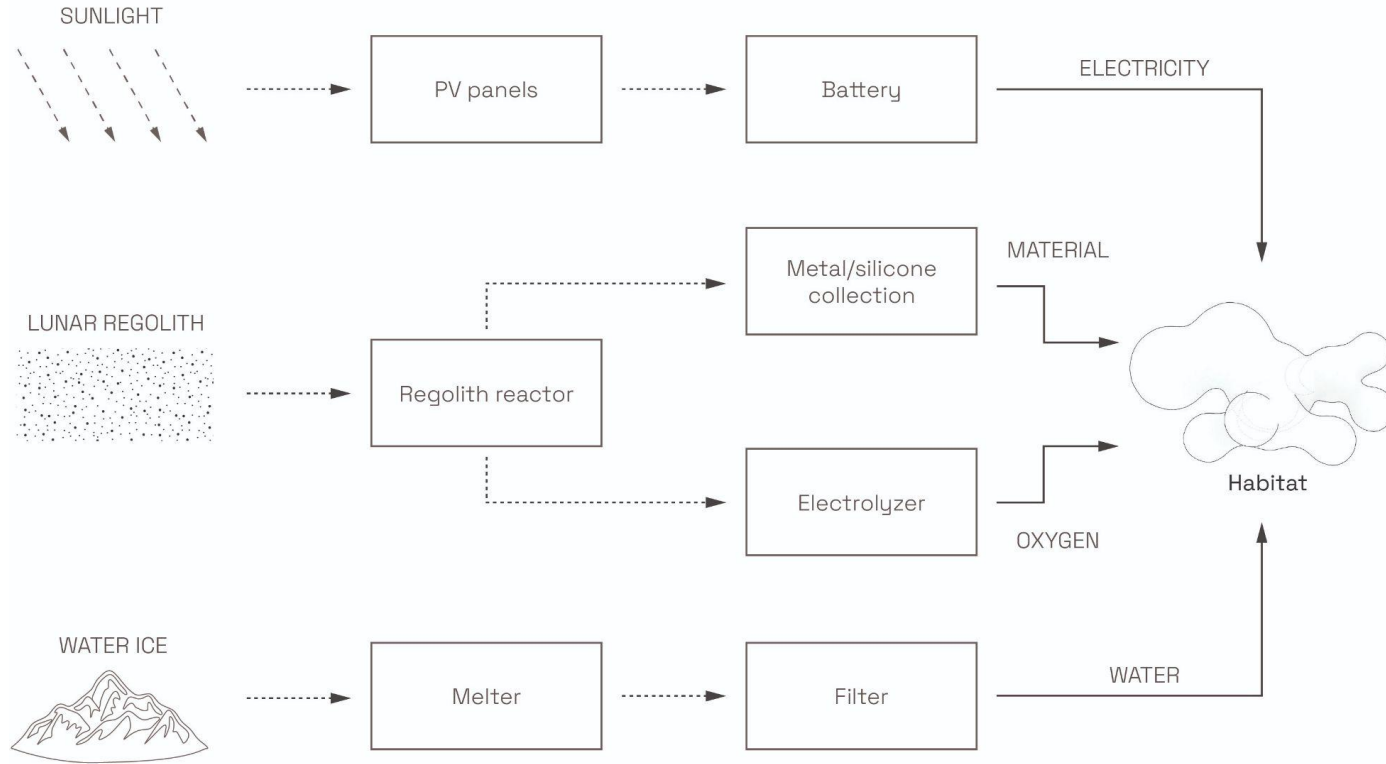
- Water (life support)
- Oxygen (life support)
- Silica (for glass)
- Metal (construction)

Lunar Regolith Composition

Element	Low-Ti Mare Soils	High-Ti Mare Soils	Highland Soils	KREEP Soils
O	60.26	60.30	60.82	60.47
Si	17.30	15.86	16.31	17.35
Al	5.56	5.70	10.66	6.48
Mg	5.53	5.70	3.84	5.39
Ca	4.44	4.60	5.92	4.43
Fe	5.85	5.29	1.90	4.47
Ti	0.66	2.01	0.17	0.62
Na	0.26	0.31	0.29	0.44
K	0.06	0.05	0.05	0.19
Mn	0.08	0.07	0.03	0.06

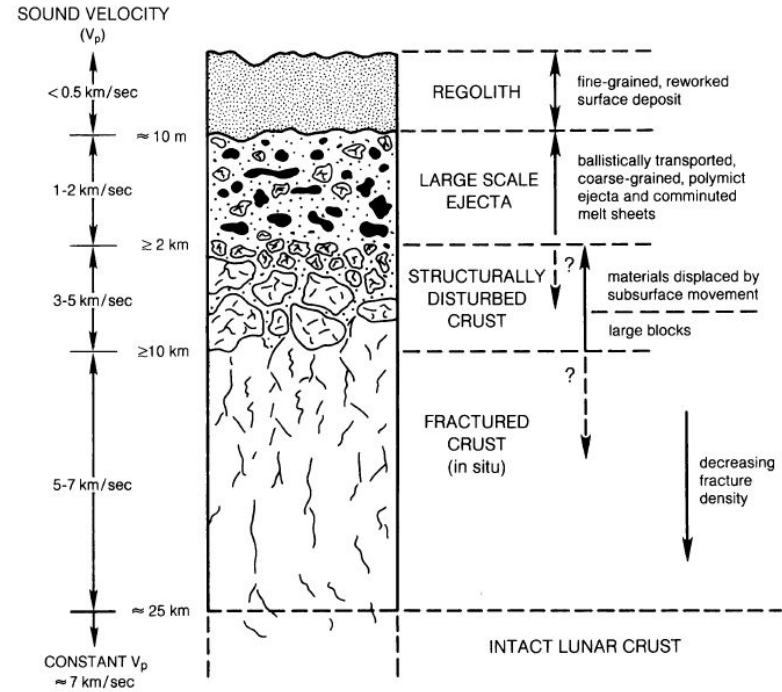
Sarantos, M., Killen, R. M., Glenar, D. A., & Stubbs, T. J. (2012). Assumed composition of the lunar regolith and variation across soil types a [Table]. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Assumed-Composition-of-the-Lunar-Regolith-and-Variation-Across-Soil-Types-a_tbl1_258661774

Sanders, G. (2025). Progress review NASA lunar ISRU [PDF]. NASA Technical Reports Server. https://ntrs.nasa.gov/api/citations/20250003730/downloads/Progress%20Review%20NASA%20Lunar%20ISRU_Sanders.pdf



3D Printing

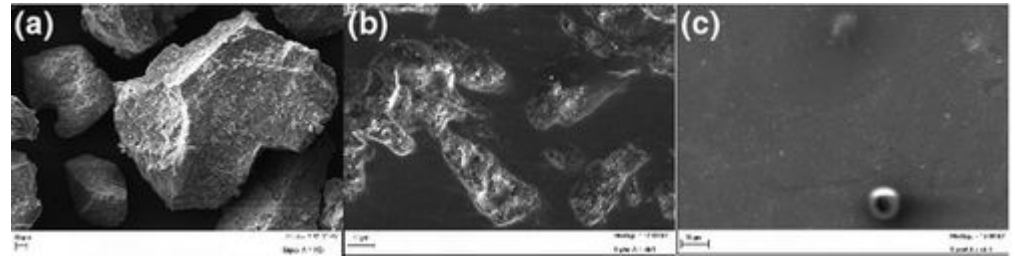
- Using the top layer of regolith
- Easy to mine with robots
- Need a way to 'print' the dust without additives



Heiken, G. H., Vaniman, D. T., & French, B. M. (Eds.). (1991). Lunar sourcebook: A user's guide to the moon. Cambridge University Press.

Selective Laser Melting (SLM)

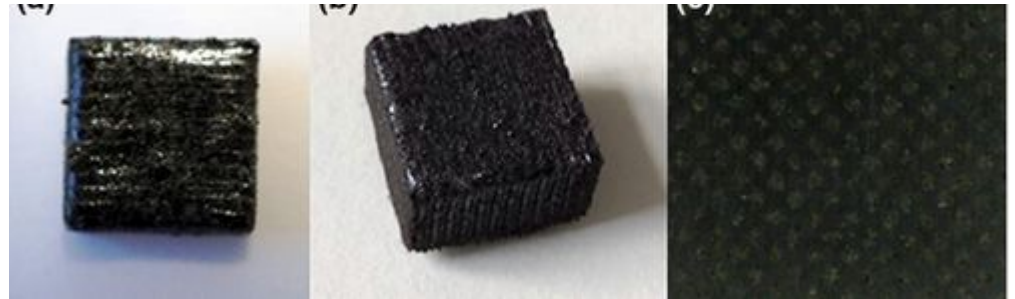
- Melts regolith into a glass-like solid
- No additives required
- Energy-intensive
 - 1500 degrees celsius
- Less porous than SLS so better structural integrity



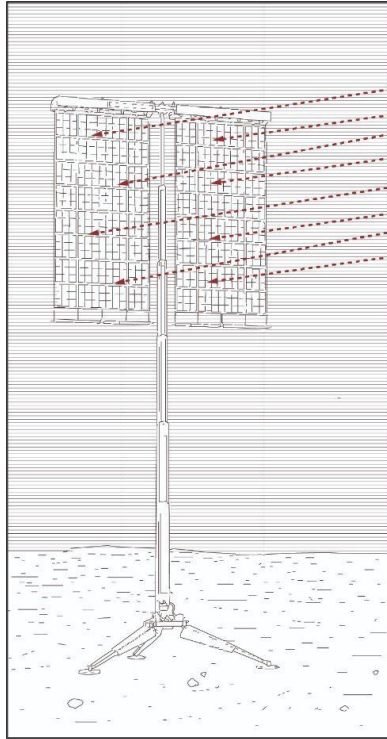
Powder

Sintered

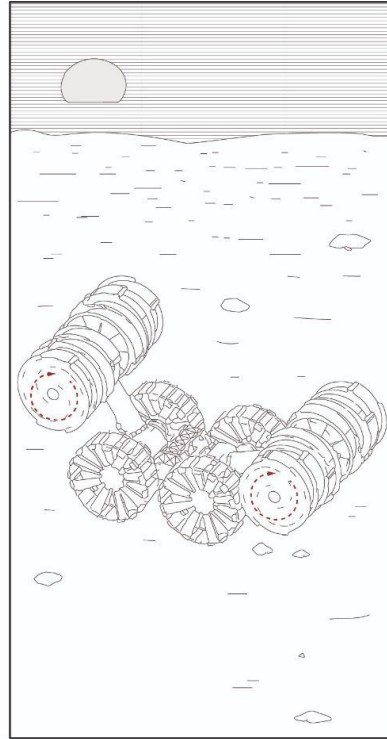
Melted



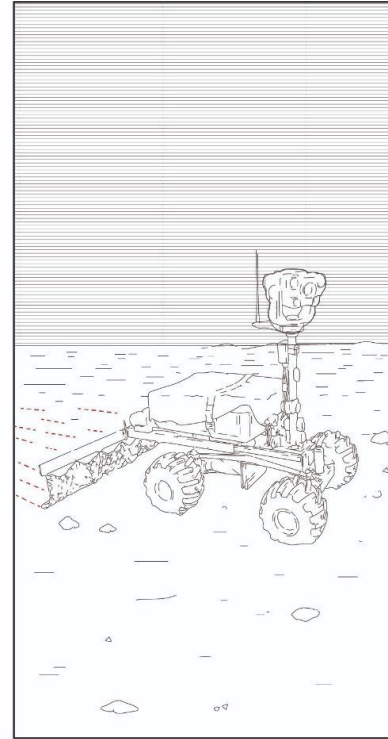
Fateri, M., & Gebhardt, A. (2015). Process parameters development of selective laser melting of lunar regolith for on-site manufacturing applications. *International Journal of Applied Ceramic Technology*, 12(1), 46–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijac.12326>



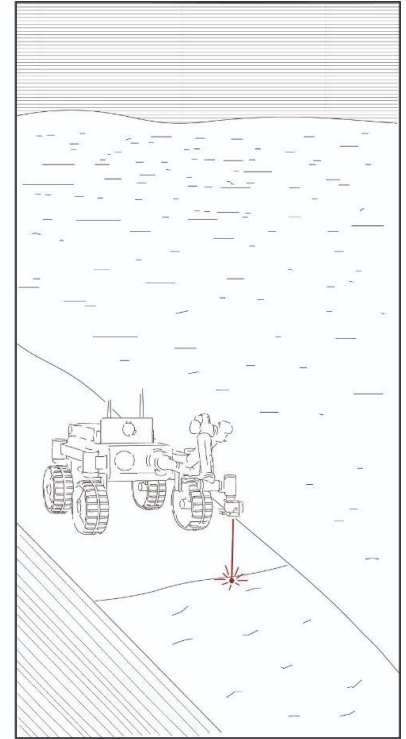
Collecting Solar Energy



Mining & Processing
Regolith



Flattening Regolith



Melting The Regolith
With Lasers

Case Study

TECLA by Mario Cucinella Architects

- Used material extrusion not SLM
- Organic shapes
- Custom unique texture on the exterior
- Integrated strip lighting
- Compressive dome shape



Mario Cucinella Architects. (2020). *TECLA: The first eco-sustainable housing prototype 3D printed from raw earth.*
<https://www.mcarchitects.it/en/projects/tecla-technology-and-clay>



Section

Mental Health & Well-being

Missions in Space

- Stuck with the same people
- High stress environment
- Away from family and home
- Little privacy
- Monotonous environment

Sick Building Syndrome

- Improper, harsh lighting
- Thermal/humidity discomfort
- Bad acoustic quality → noise
- Bad air quality

Biophilic Design Interventions Should Respond through:

- Non-monotonous, dynamic spaces
- Separation between public & private spaces → ability to retreat
- Lighting comfort
- Acoustic comfort
- Thermal comfort
- Good air quality

Section

Biophilic Design

A black and white photograph of an astronaut in a full space suit walking across a desolate, rocky landscape. The terrain is uneven with scattered rocks and a long shadow cast by the astronaut. The background shows rolling hills under a dark, clear sky. The overall mood is one of isolation and exploration.

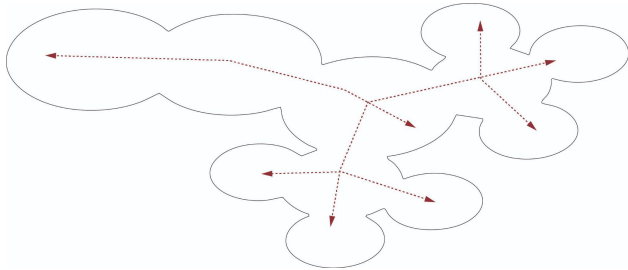
Definition

An approach to architecture and interior design that **connects people with nature** within built environments, using **natural elements, forms, and processes** to **improve human health**, well-being, and productivity, stemming from our innate **love for nature**

At the building level biophilic design comes through **2 main design systems**

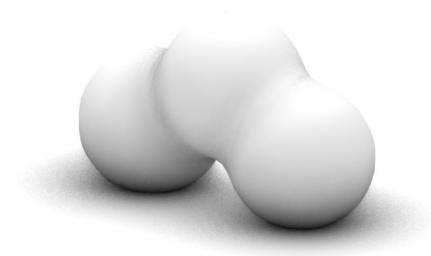
Lindemayers L-System


A mathematical system that describes plant growth and allows us to model it.



Metaballs

A modelling technique involving spheres to create organic looking shapes.





Nature

L-system

Why L-System?

1. Biomimicry → mimic plant growth
2. Modular design
 - a. Building can grow and branch out in the future
3. Efficient pathing
 - a. L-system branches create pathing for humans and LSS
4. Spatial Hierarchy
5. Compartmentalization (safety)



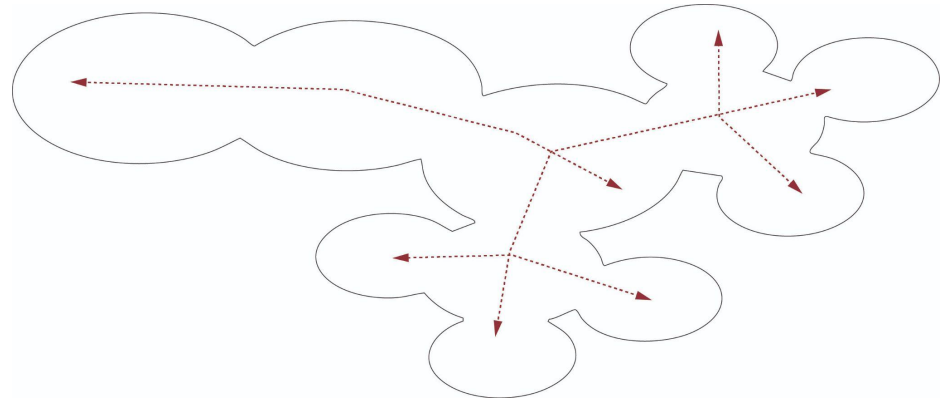
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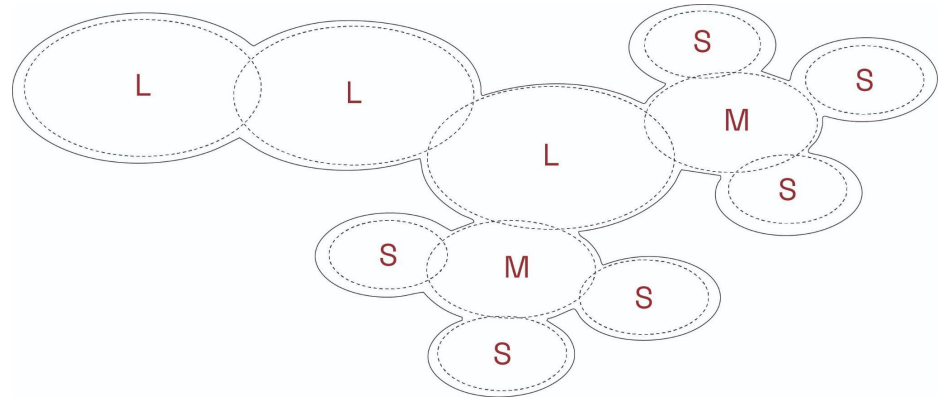
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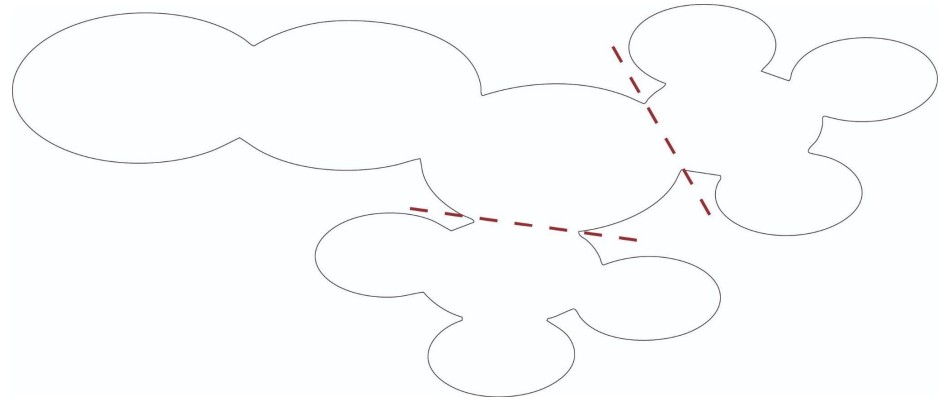
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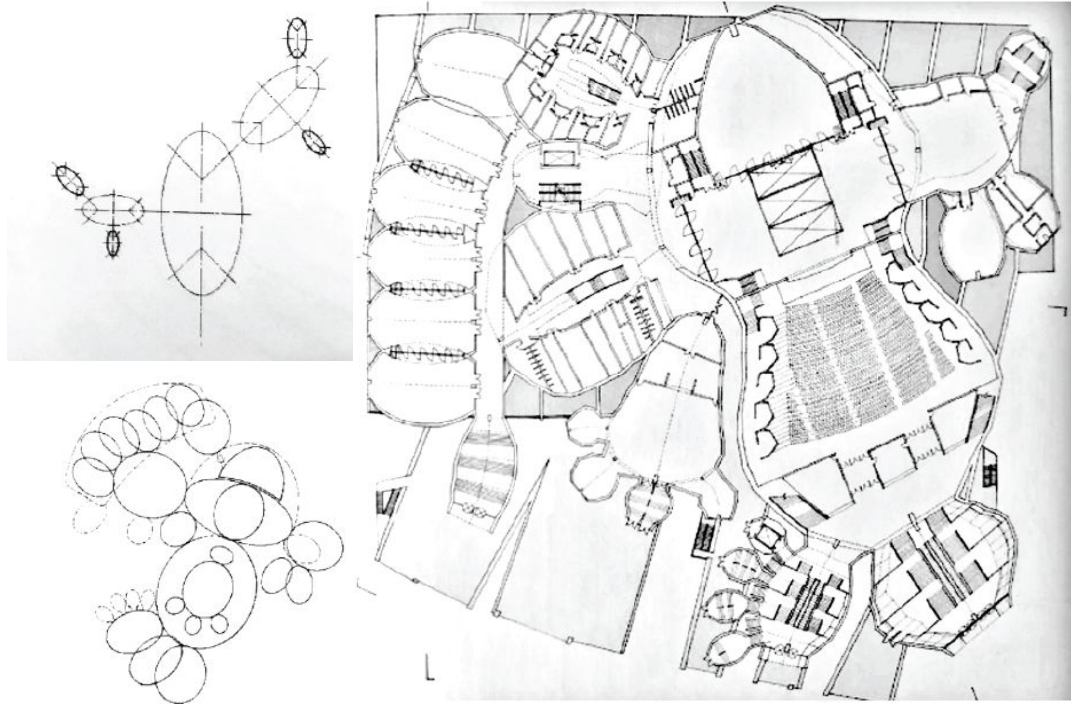
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Case Study

Cardiff Bay Opera House by Greg Lynn

- Precedent for designing with L-systems
- Uses the L-system to define the floorplan
- Clear spatial hierarchy through size differences



Lynn, G. (1999). *Animate form*. Princeton Architectural Press.

Nature

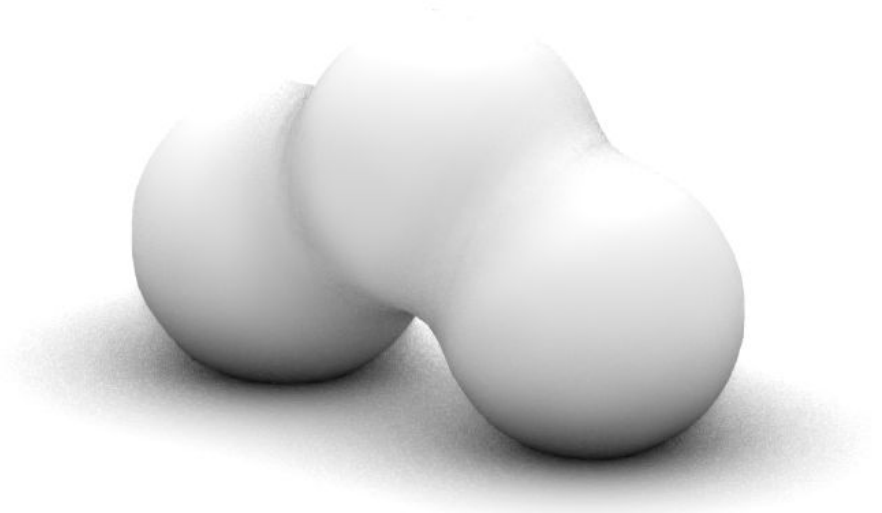
Metaballs

The image features two metaballs, which are 3D-rendered objects that deform and merge based on their proximity to each other. They are shown in a dark, atmospheric setting, possibly a laboratory or a futuristic environment. The metaballs have a complex, layered internal structure with various colors like blue, orange, and white. The overall aesthetic is high-tech and scientific.



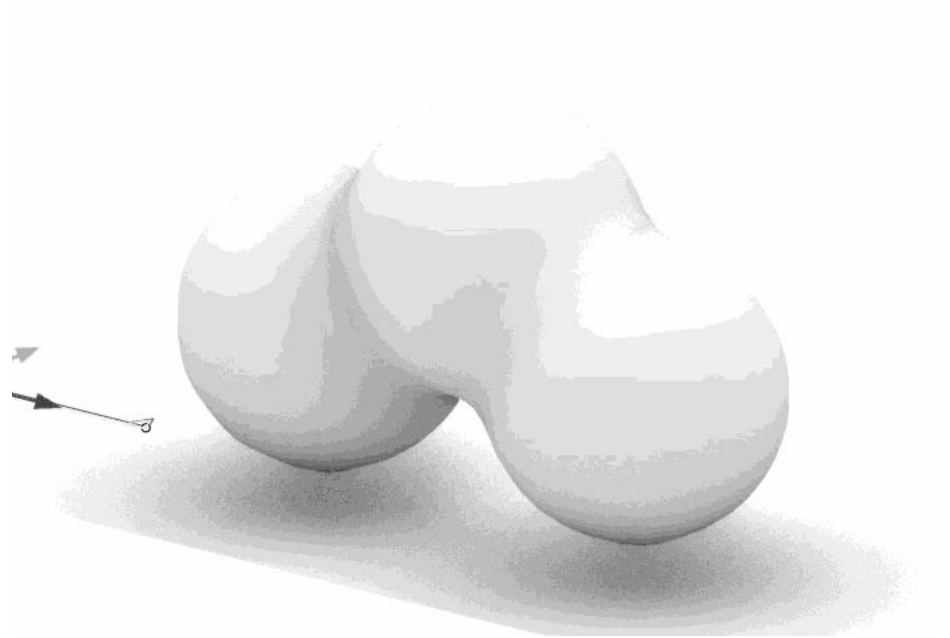
Why Metaballs?

1. 3D printing allows us to step away from more typical orthogonal architectural designs
2. Easy way to achieve an organic look
3. Spheres are ideal shapes when dealing with pressure
4. Domes work well in compression, ideal for 3D printing



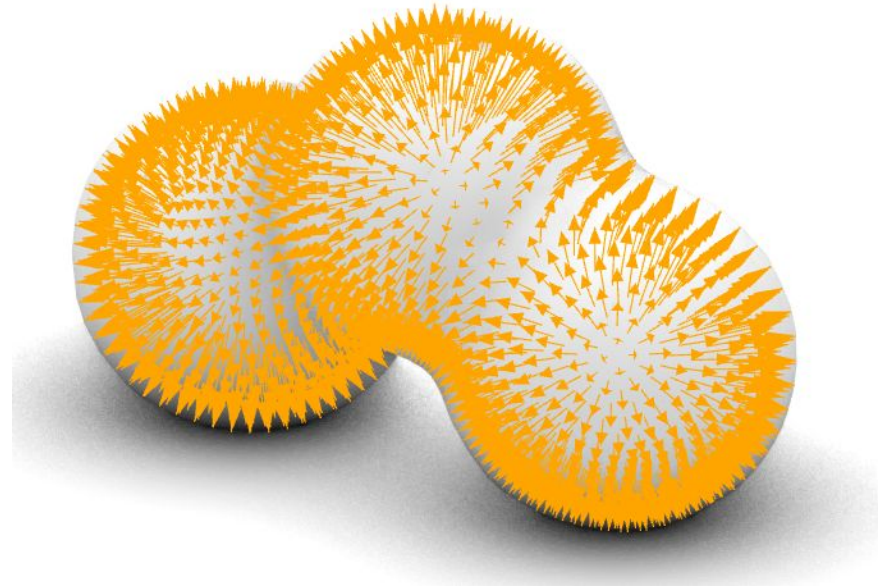
Why Metaballs?

1. 3D printing allows us to step away from traditional blocky looks you find on Earth at the moment
2. Easy way to achieve a dynamic organic form
3. Spheres are ideal shapes when dealing with pressure
4. Domes work well in compression, ideal for 3D printing



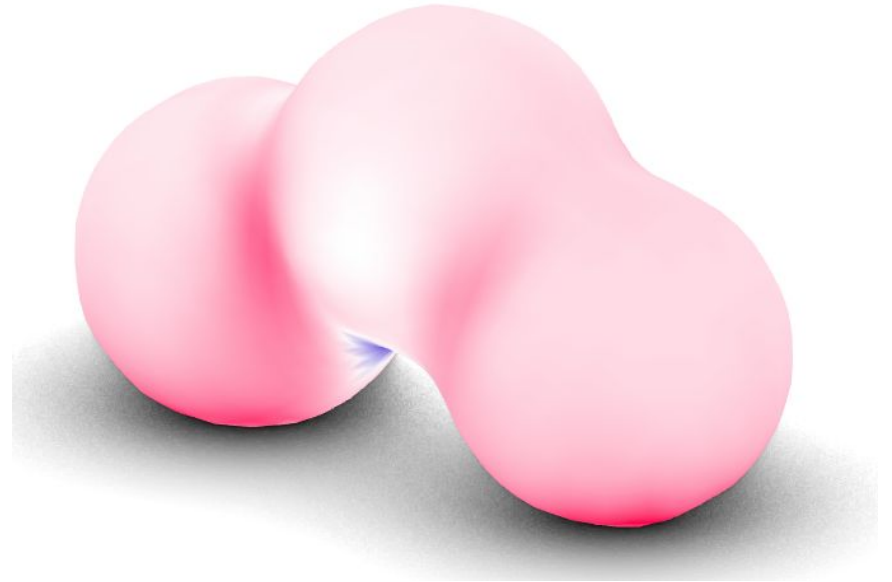
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A black and white photograph of an astronaut in a full space suit standing on the surface of Mars. The astronaut is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing slightly towards the right. The background shows the undulating, sandy dunes of the Martian landscape under a dark sky. In the foreground, there is a dark, circular shadow cast by the astronaut. To the right, there is a piece of scientific equipment on a tripod. The overall scene is desolate and emphasizes the isolation of the Mars mission.

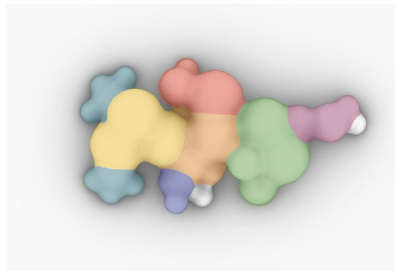
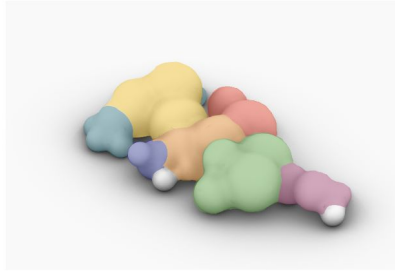
Section

Programme

Long-Term Research Mission For A Crew Of 6

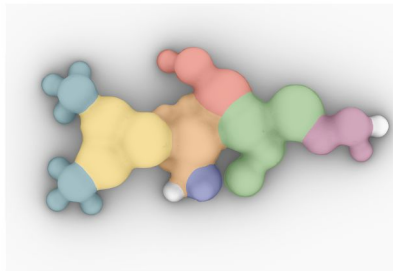
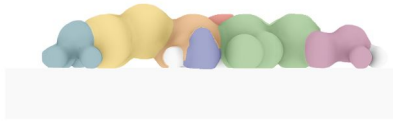
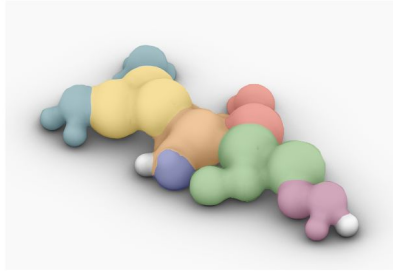
TYPOLOGY		SIZE							ACTIVITY			PRIVACY			EXTERIOR	
PROGRAMME	ROOM	AREA 1 Person (m2)	Max. Capacity	MIN. AREA (m2)	Number of rooms	Total floor area (m2)	% OF HABITAT	MIN. HEIGHT (m)	CATEGORY	CROSS-FUNCTION	Details	CAPACITY	VISIBILITY	ACOUSTICS	ACCESS	VIEW
Dirty Zone	Airlock (EVA Prep)	8	3	24	2	48	600.00%	3	Support	/		Small groups (2-3)	Enclos...	Neutral	Yes	No
	Lunar Soil Lab	12	2	24	1	24	300.00%	3	Work	/		Large groups (4-6)	Enclos...	Neutral	No	No
	Geology Lab	12	2	24	1	24	300.00%	3	Work	/		Large groups (4-6)	Enclos...	Neutral	No	No
	System Maintenance	8	1	8	1	8	100.00%	3	Support	/		Small groups (2-3)	Enclos...	Neutral	No	No
	Storage (outdoor equipment)	4	3	12	1	12	150.00%	3	Support	/		Storage	Enclos...	Neutral	Yes	No
Core Utility Zone	Life Support Systems	8	1	8	1	8	100.00%	3	Support	/		Small groups (2-3)	Enclos...	Sound ...	No	No
	Systems Maintenance	8	1	8	1	8	100.00%	3	Support	/		Small groups (2-3)	Enclos...	Sound ...	No	No
	Storage (food, water, oxygen)	8	3	24	1	24	300.00%	3	Support	/		Storage	Enclos...	Neutral	No	No
	Bathrooms	5	1	5	3	15	187.50%	3	Support	/		Individual	Enclos...	Sound ...	No	No
Personal/Quite Zone	Private quarters	8	1	8	6	48	600.00%	3	Personal	/		Individual	Enclos...	Sound ...	No	No
Social Zone	Kitchen	2	6	12	1	12	150.00%	6	Social	/		Small groups (2-3)	Open	Neutral	No	No
	Dining Room	3	6	18	1	18	225.00%	6	Social	/		Large groups (4-6)	Open	Neutral	No	Yes
	Living Room	4	6	24	1	24	300.00%	6	Social	/		Large groups (4-6)	Open	Neutral	No	Yes
	Social Space	4	6	24	1	24	300.00%	6	Social	/		Large groups (4-6)	Open	Neutral	No	Yes
Work Zone	Research Labs	10	4	40	2	80	1000.00%	3	Work	/		Large groups (4-6)	Hybrid	Neutral	No	No
	Agricultural Lab	10	4	40	1	40	500.00%	3	Work	/		Large groups (4-6)	Hybrid	Neutral	No	No
Command Zone	Command & Control	4	6	24	1	24	300.00%	3	Work	Support		Small groups (2-3)	Hybrid	Sound ...	No	Yes
	Radio Room	4	2	8	1	8	100.00%	3	Work	Support		Small groups (2-3)	Hybrid	Sound ...	No	No
Health Zone	Gym	8	6	48	1	48	600.00%	6	Social	/		Large groups (4-6)	Open	Neutral	No	No
	Meditation Room	8	1	8	1	8	100.00%	3	Personal	/		Individual	Enclos...	Sound ...	No	Yes
	Medical Bay	10	2	20	1	20	250.00%	3	Personal	Support		Small groups (2-3)	Enclos...	Sound ...	No	No

V1

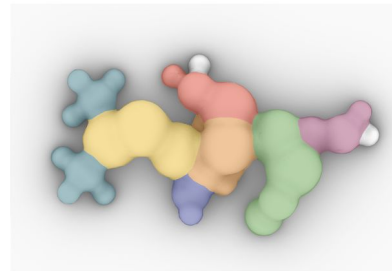
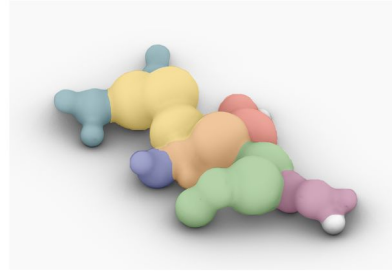


Compact
Low Branching

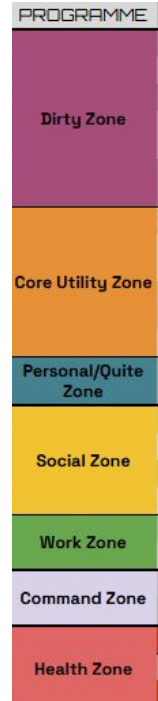
V2



V3

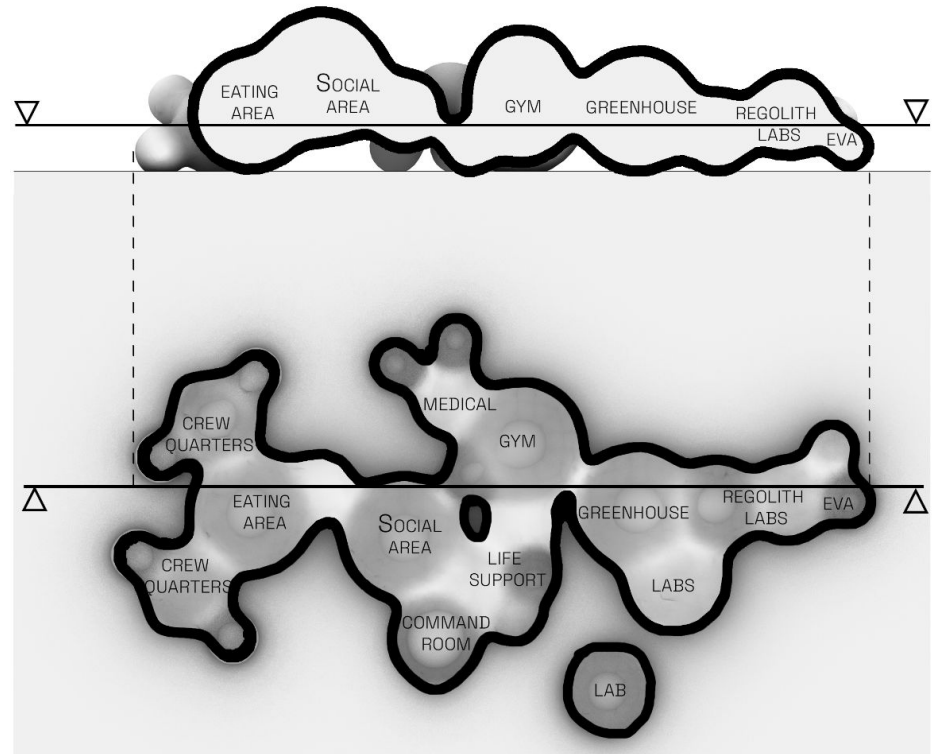
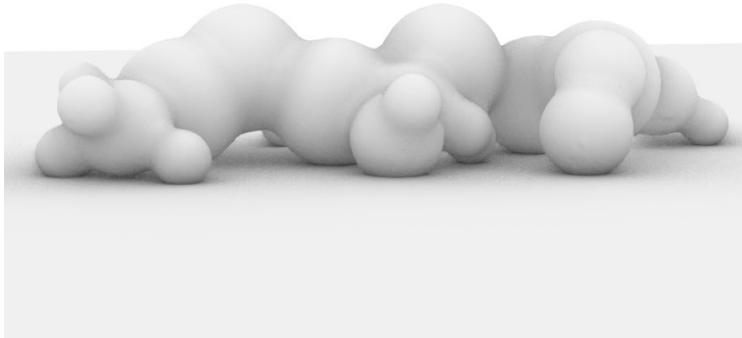


Spread Out
Clearer Branching



Distribution

- Clear separation between working area and leisure area
- Centrally placed LSS



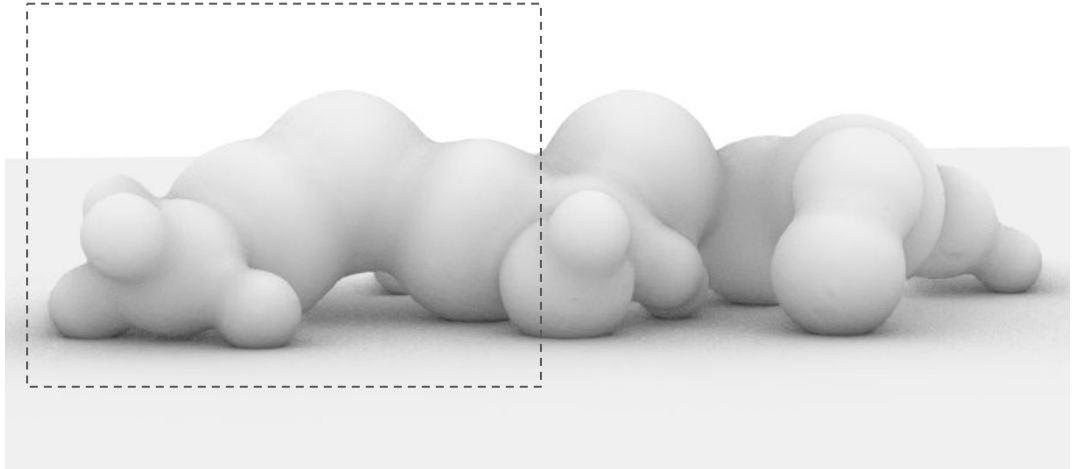
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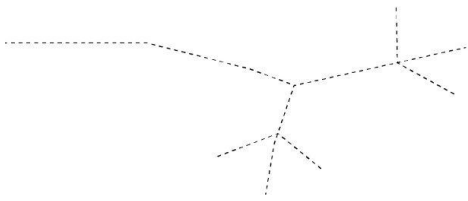
Proof of Concept

Fragment

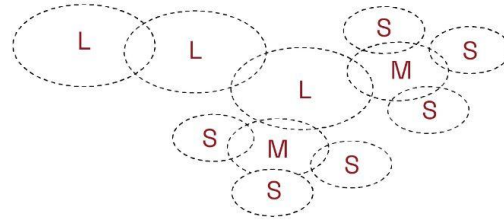
Chosen Fragment

- Crew sleeping and social area
- Proof of concept
- Biophilic design framework can be extrapolated to the larger habitat

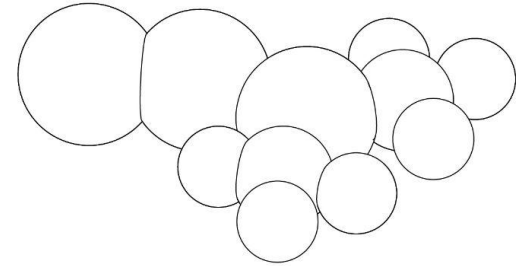




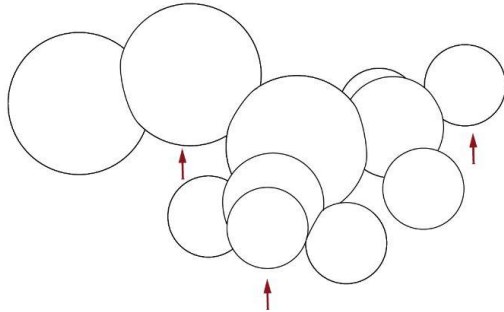
L-System



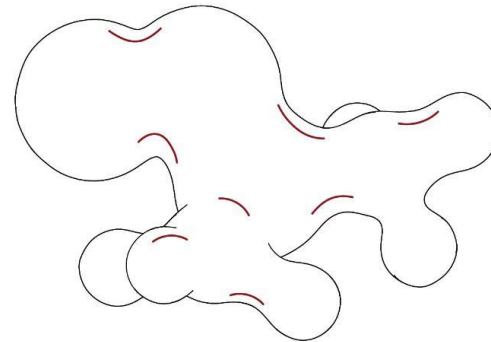
Bubble Diagrams



Volume



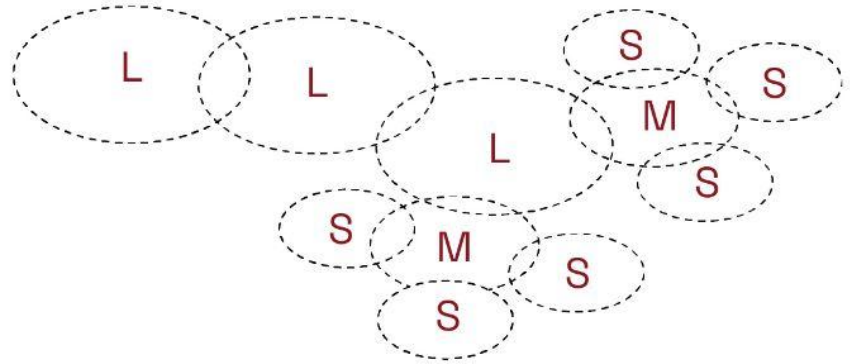
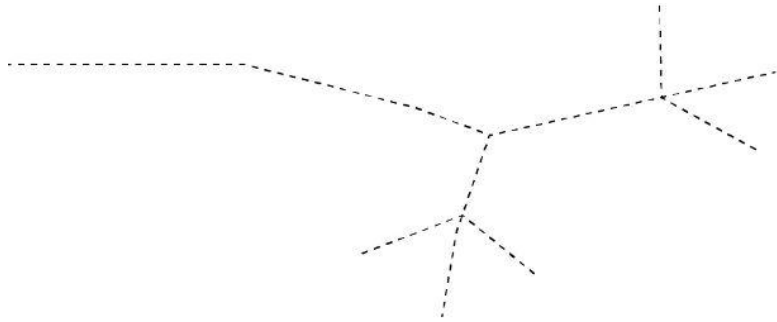
Dynamic Height Changes



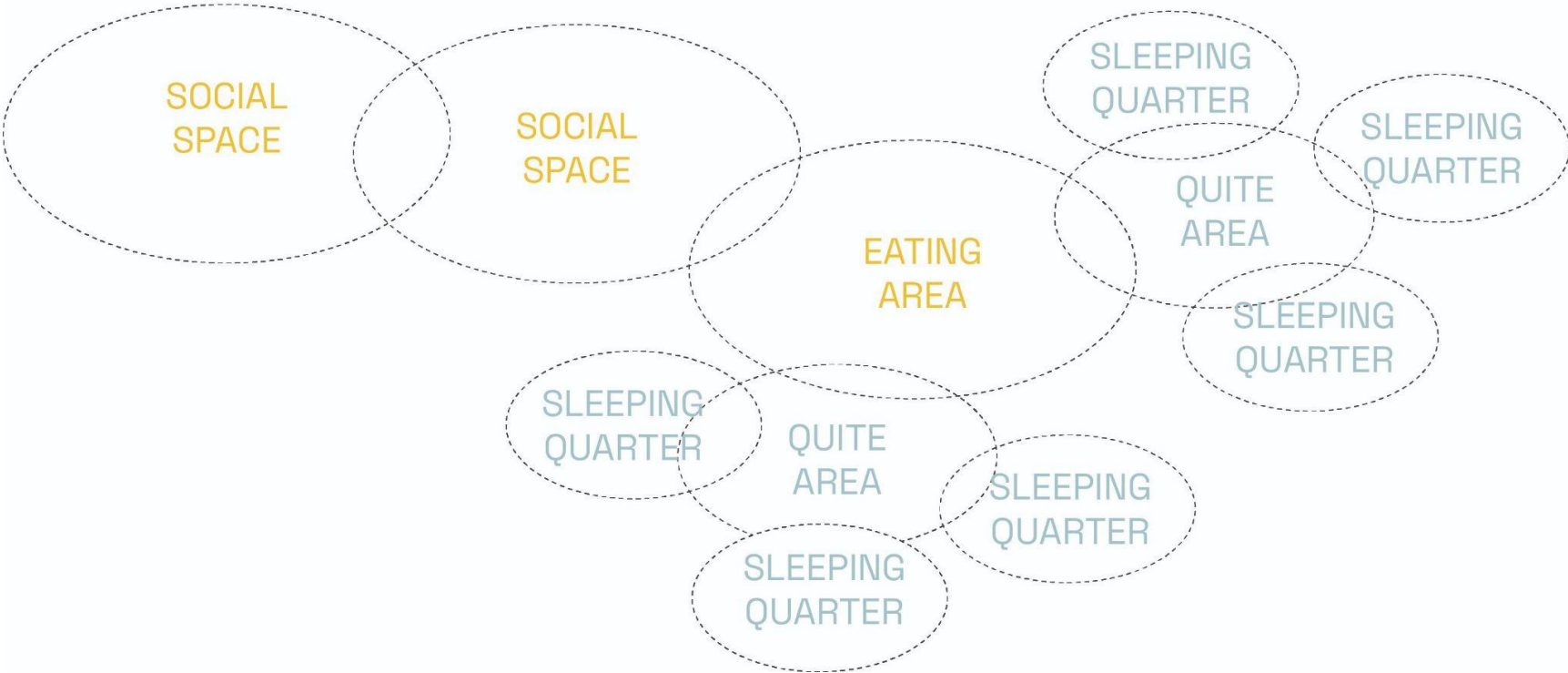
Creating Smooth Metaballs

L-System

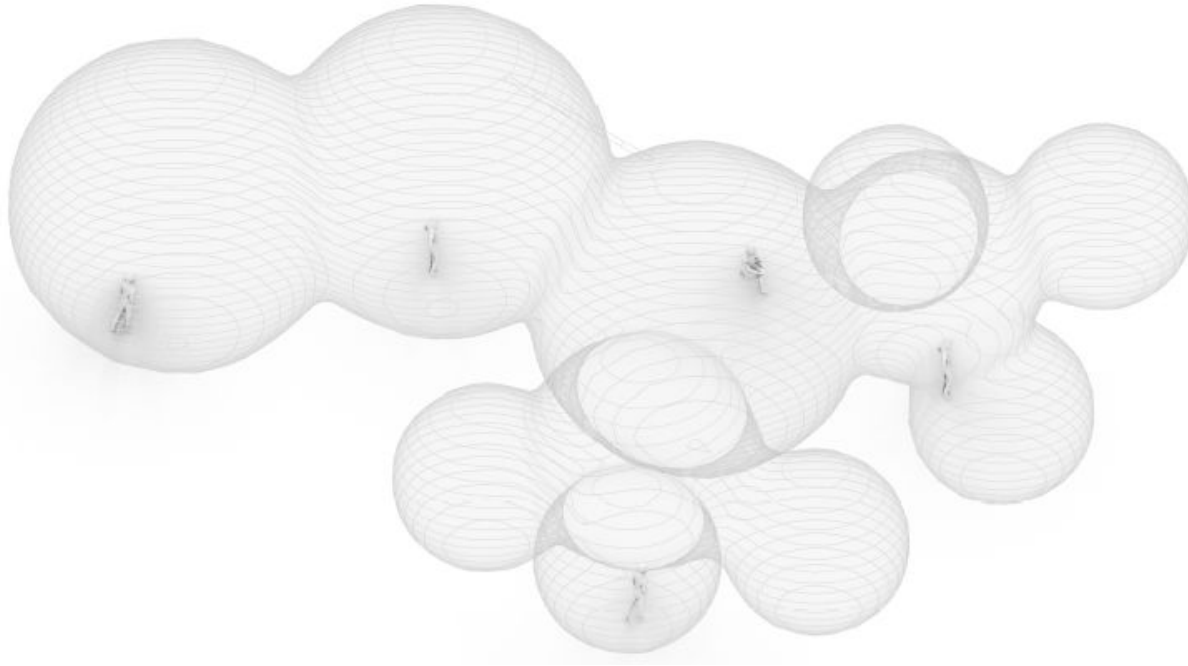
Fragment



Bubble Diagram

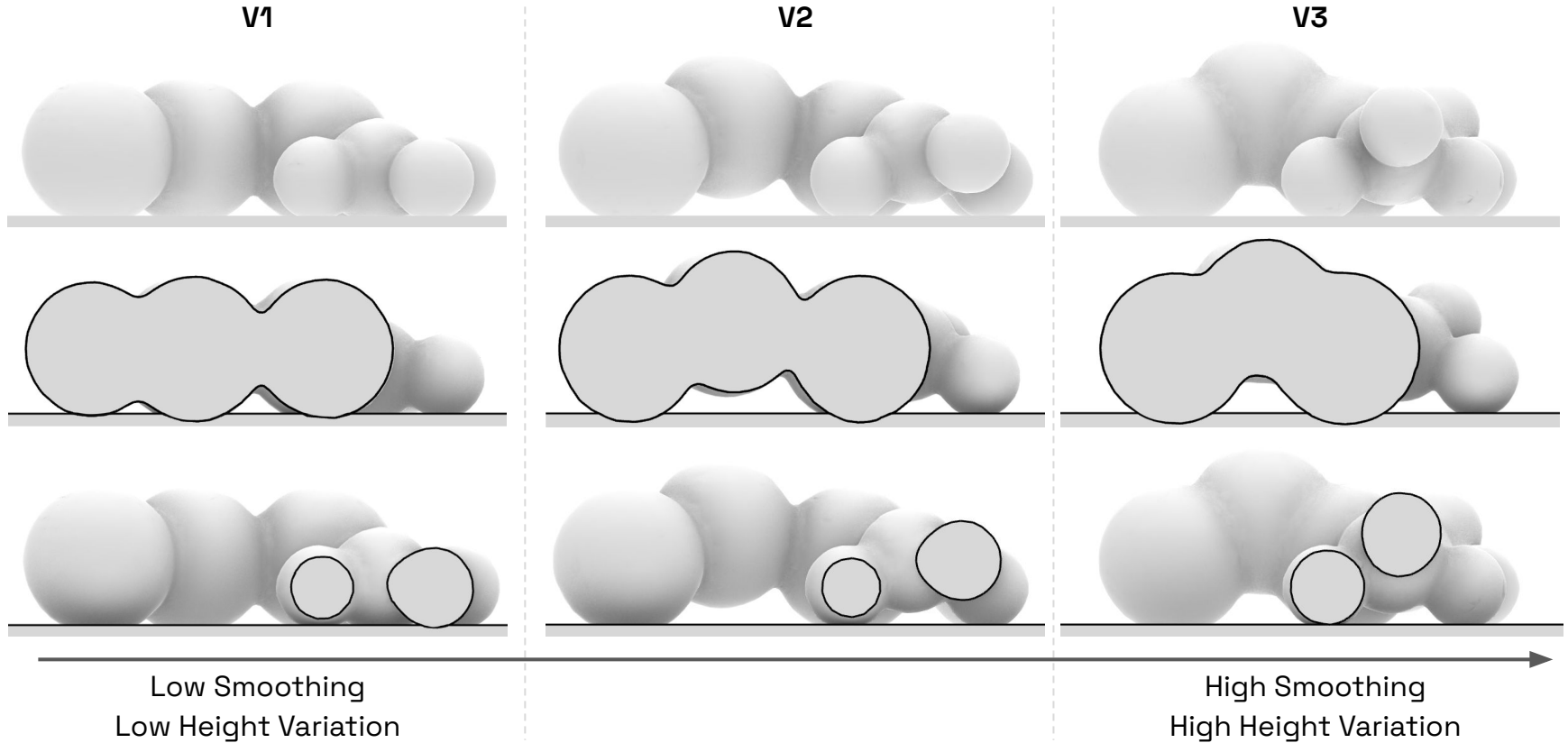


Bubble diagram → metaball volumes



Metaball Adjustments

Fragment



Fragment

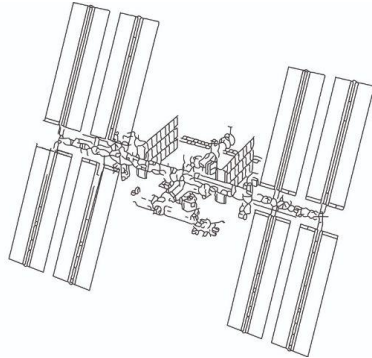
Structural Optimisation

Envelope Thickness

Radiation Exposure



EARTH
2.4 mSv/year



ISS
182.5 mSv/year



MOON
110 - 380 mSv/year



ESA Career MAX
1000 mSv

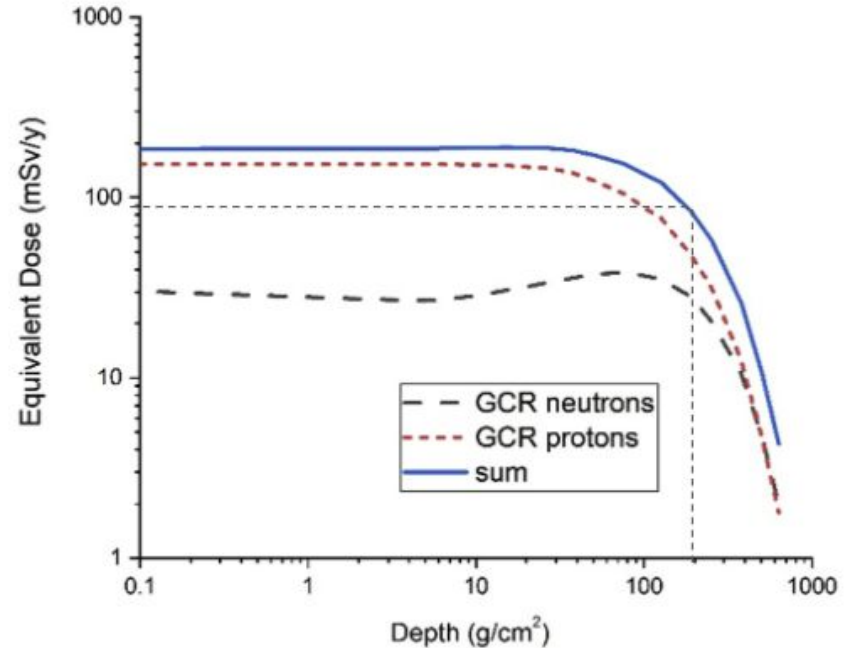
Envelope Thickness

Radiation protection

- ALARA Principle
(As Low As Reasonably Achievable)
- To reduce cancer and ARS risk
- Aim for around half of the exposure you would get on the ISS

90 mSv/year → ~ 200 g/cm²

→ **800 mm of regolith shielding**



Equivalent dose in the lunar environment for different thicknesses of regolith shielding (Adapted from Meurisse et al., 2020)

Design V1 - Force of Gravity

Max Compression
 $0.00869 < 9.250 \text{ kN/cm}^2$

Max Tension
 $0.00236 < 0.925$

Structure performs well in low gravity

Overengineered thanks to the thickness required for radiation protection

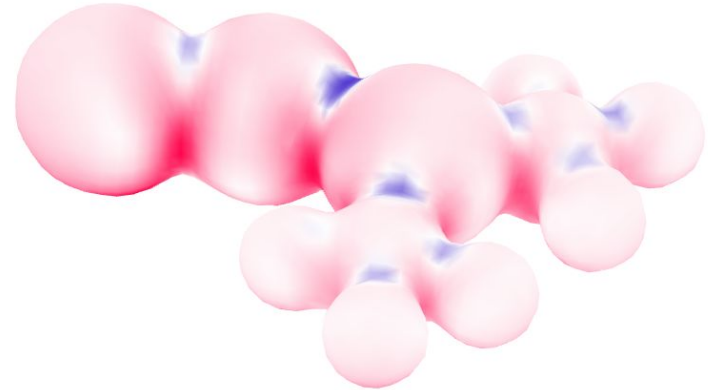
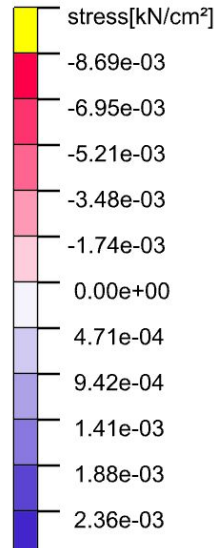


TABLE 4 Compression strength of samples solidified at different target temperatures.

Target temperature (°C)	1300	1400	1500
Compressive strength (MPa)	27.4 ± 2.6	118.2 ± 2.9	125.1 ± 18.4
Initial failure strength (MPa)	15.6 ± 7.0	65.5 ± 2.1	92.5 ± 16.3

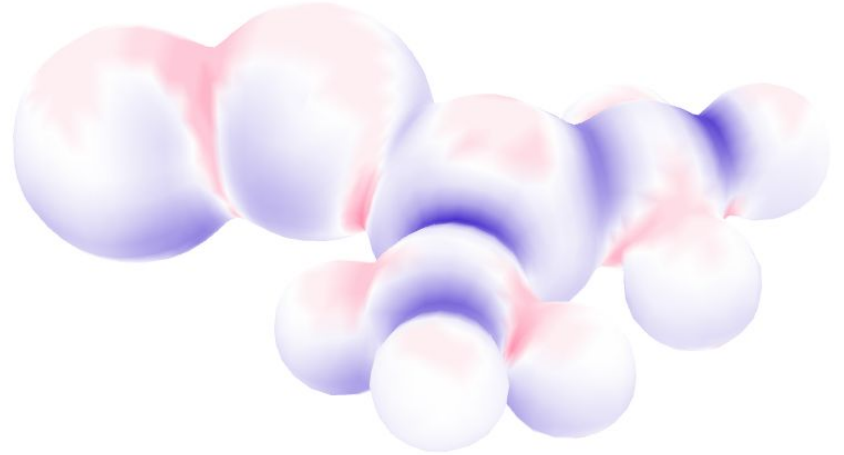
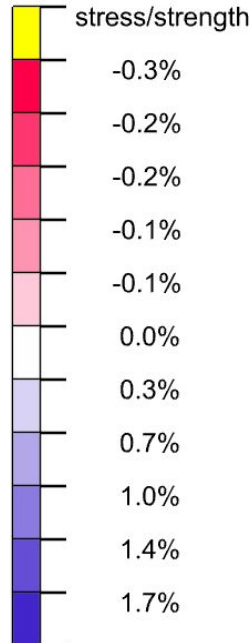
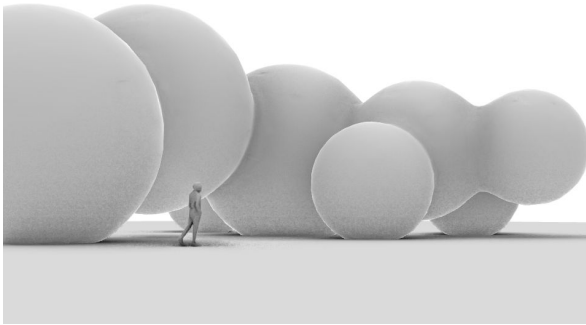
Forces: Gravity

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/390602870_Melting_and_solidifying_behavior_of_lunar_regolith_simulant_under_a_vacuum_environment

Design V2 - Cantilevers

Raising the metaballs

→ More variable interior
facilitating jumpy lunar
movement

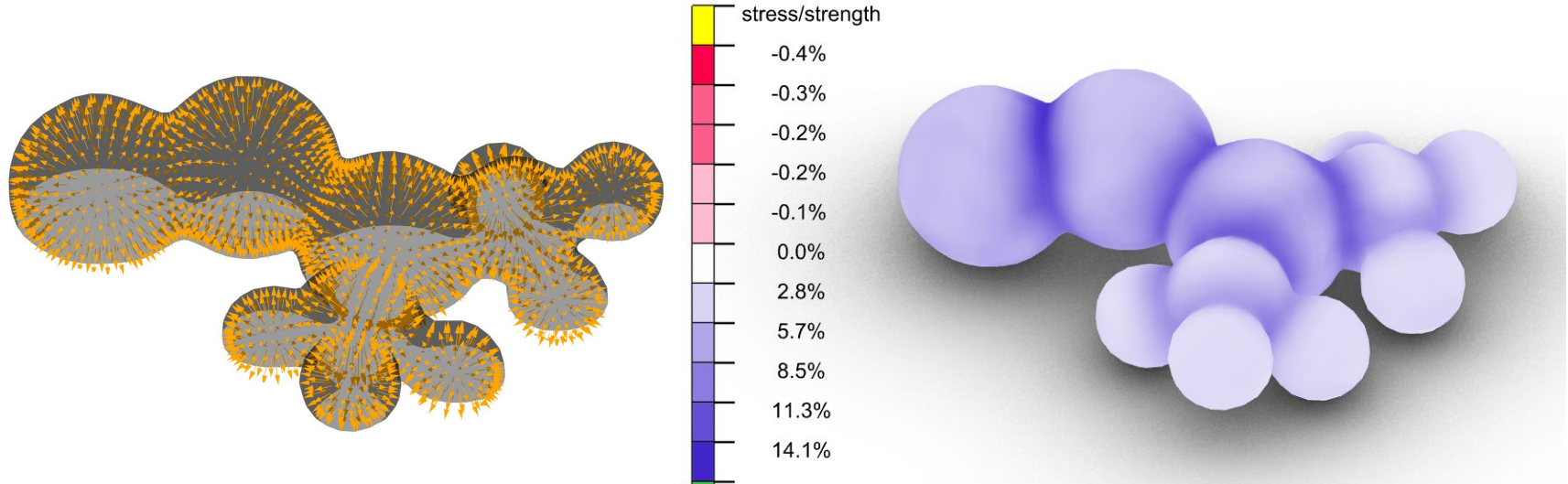


Forces: Gravity

Atmospheric Pressure

Fragment

Design V2 - Pressurised



Air pressure pushes the shell out

Peak tension 1.7% → 14.1%

Forces: Pressure

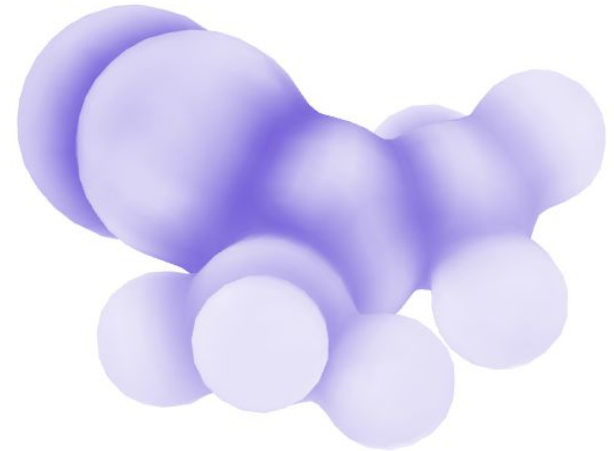
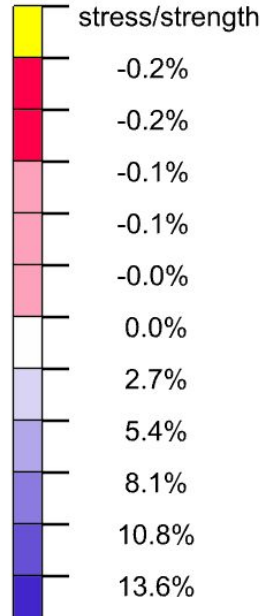
Design V3 - Metaball smoothing

Metaballs are moved closer together and blended

→ More efficient load path to the ground

→ 'necks' are reduced

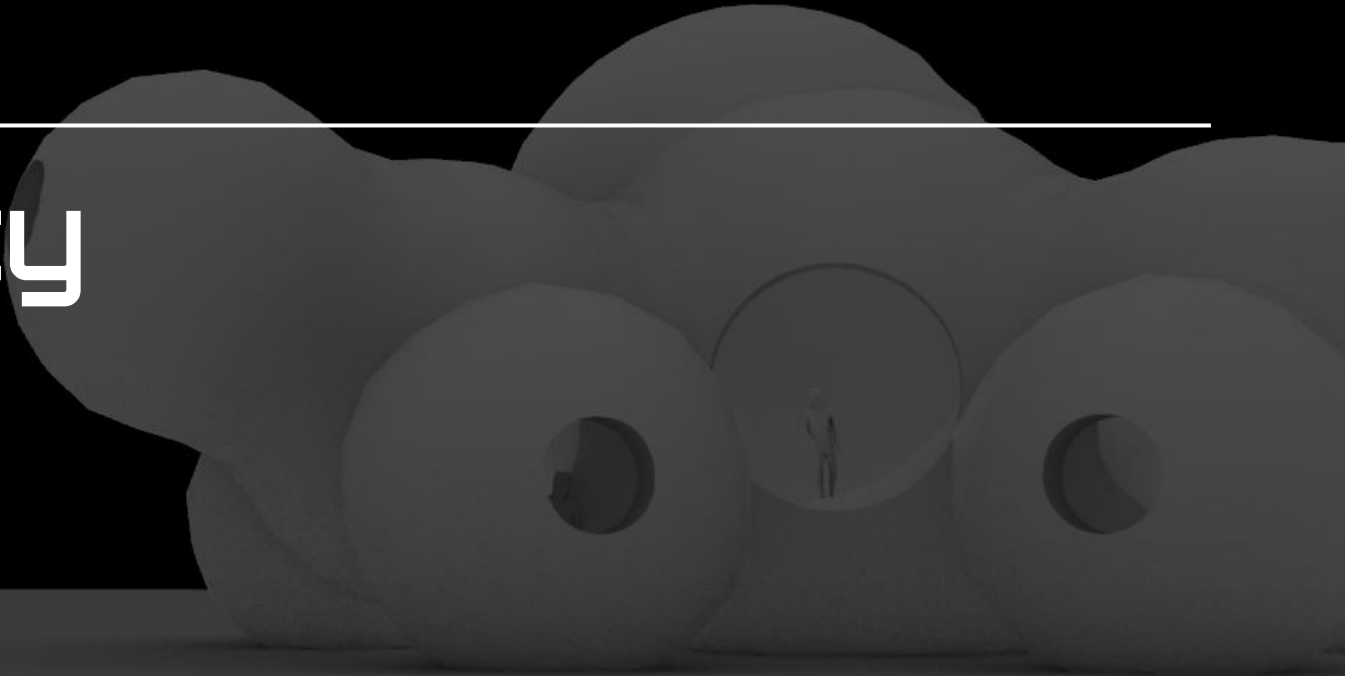
→ Reduce peak stress in the hotspots



Forces: Gravity + Pressure

Fragment

Porosity



Window Type Exploration



Round

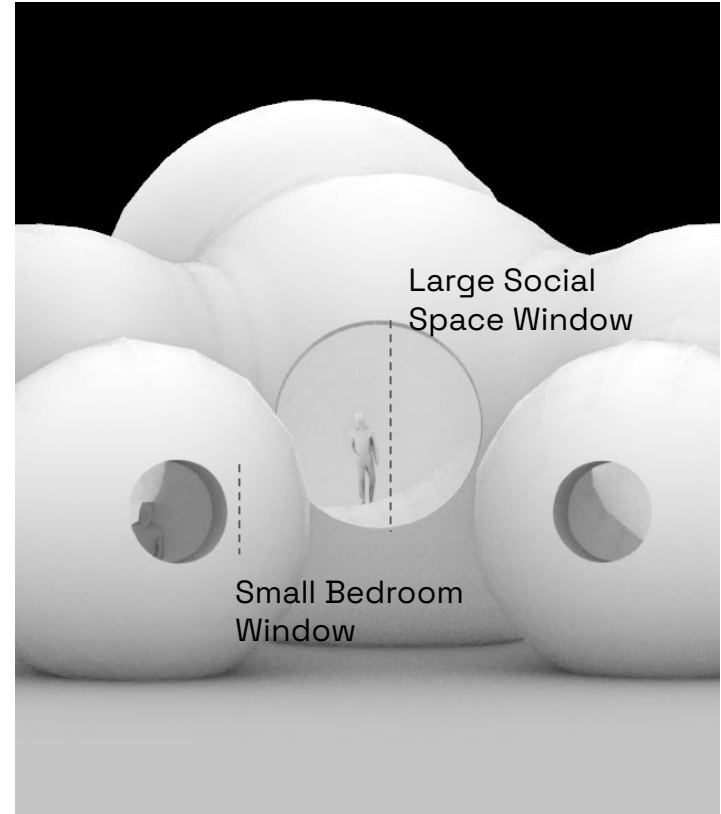


Metaball

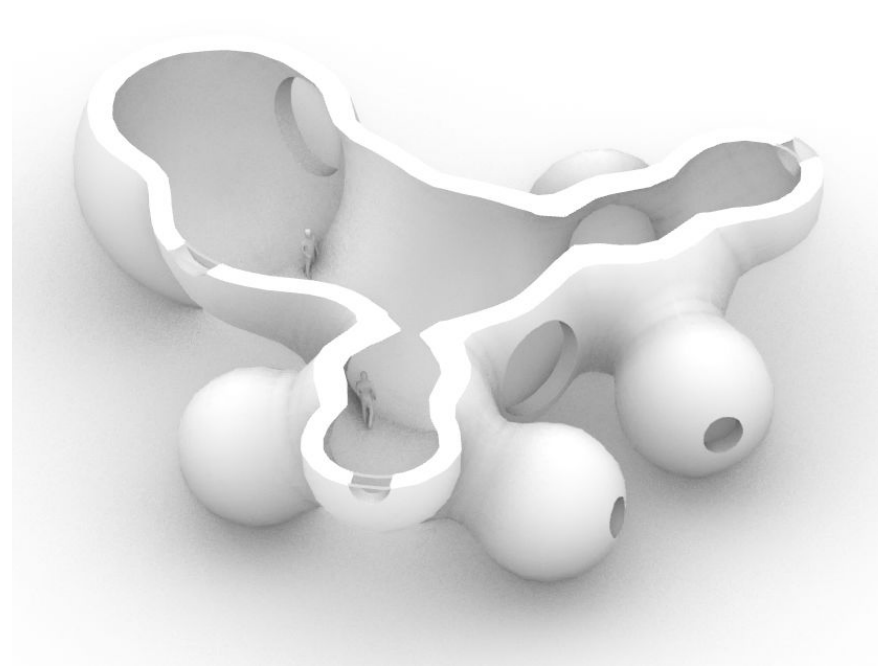
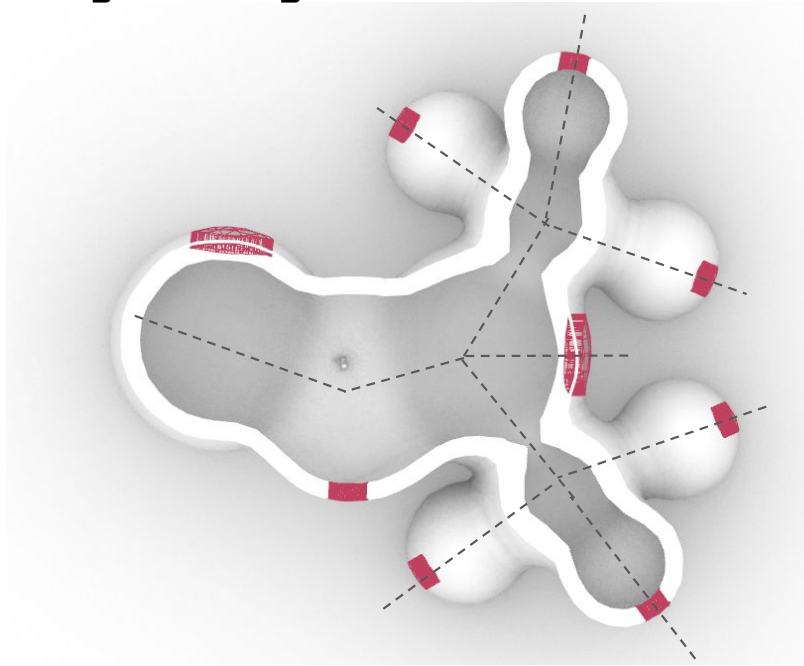
Porosity levels

	Function	Porosity Demand
	Private Quarters	Low-Medium
	Transition Space	No-Low
	Kitchen/dining room	High
	Social Space	Medium
	Living Room	High

- Dependent on function
- Private vs Public

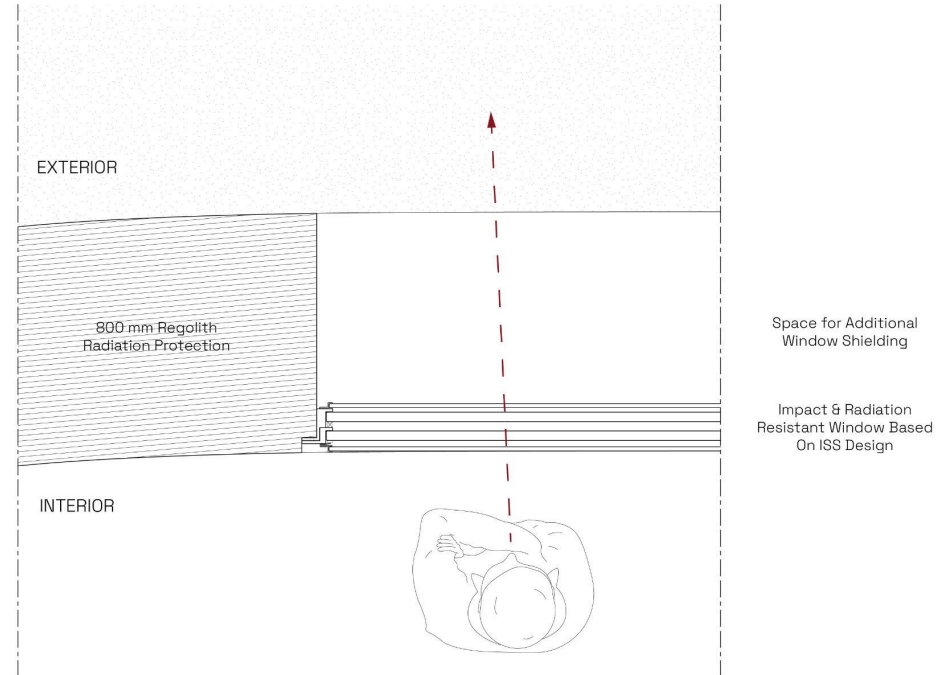


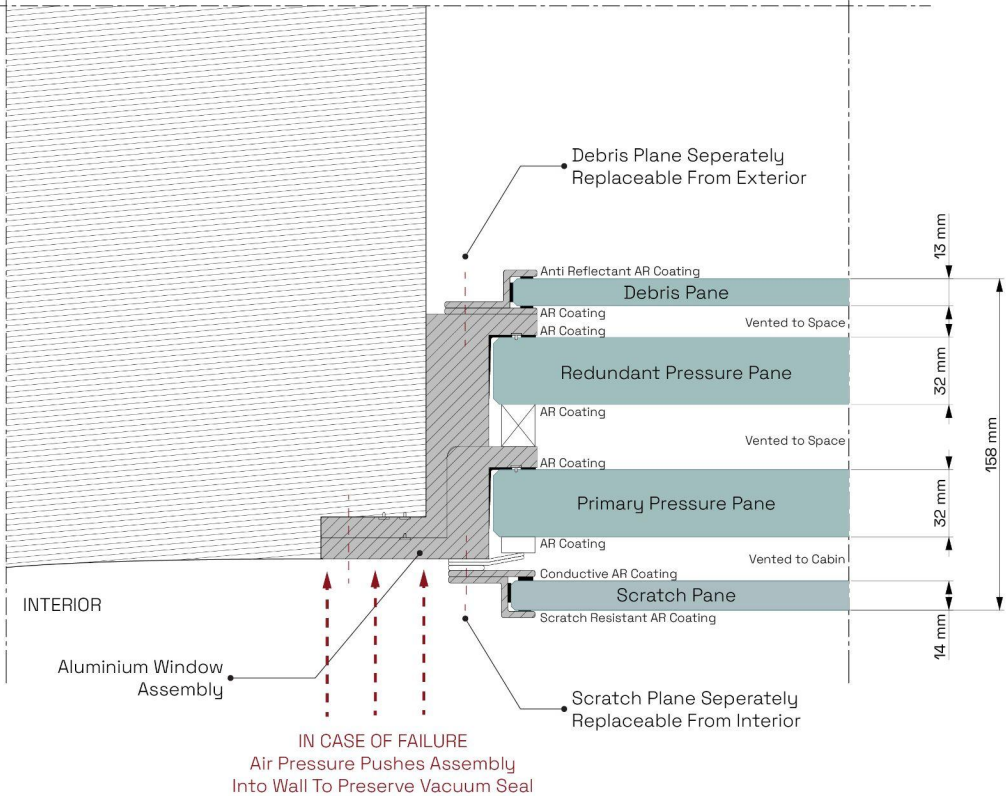
L-system Logic



Window Detail

- Flush with the wall
- Space for additional radiation shielding
- Views of the Lunar landscape

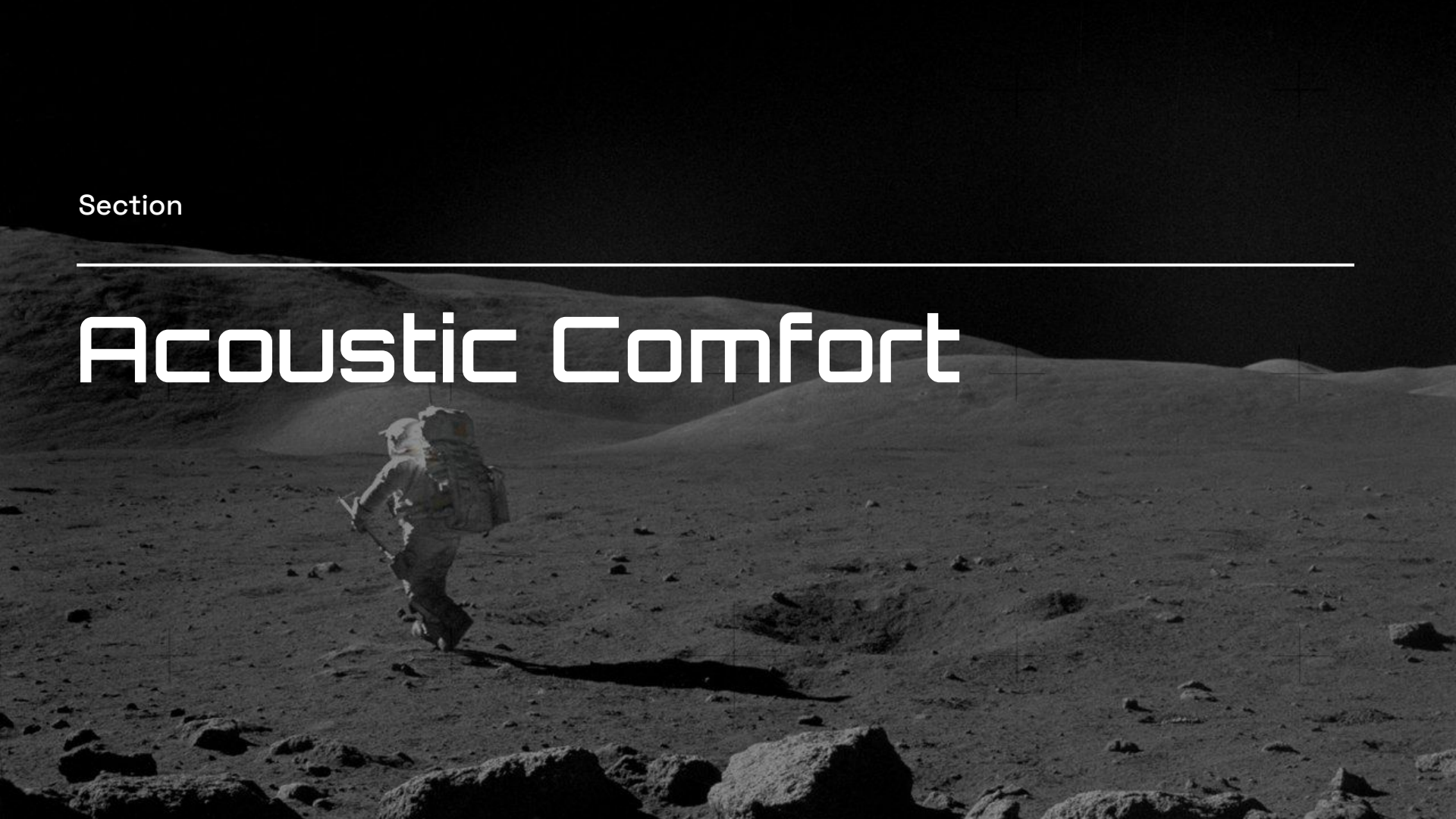






Section

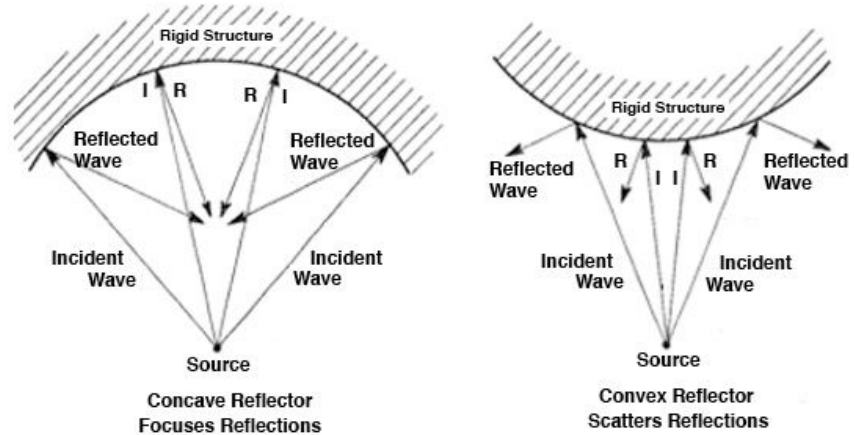
Acoustic Comfort



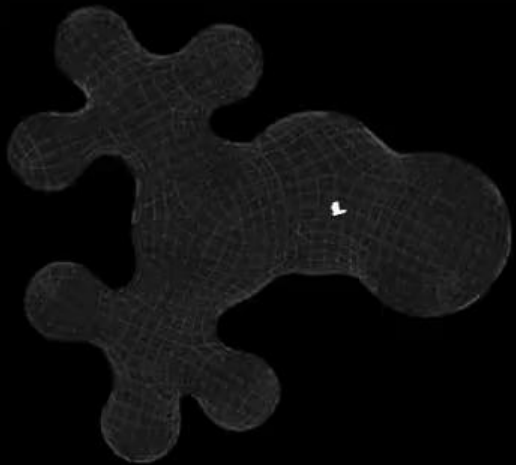
Acoustics

Metaball echo

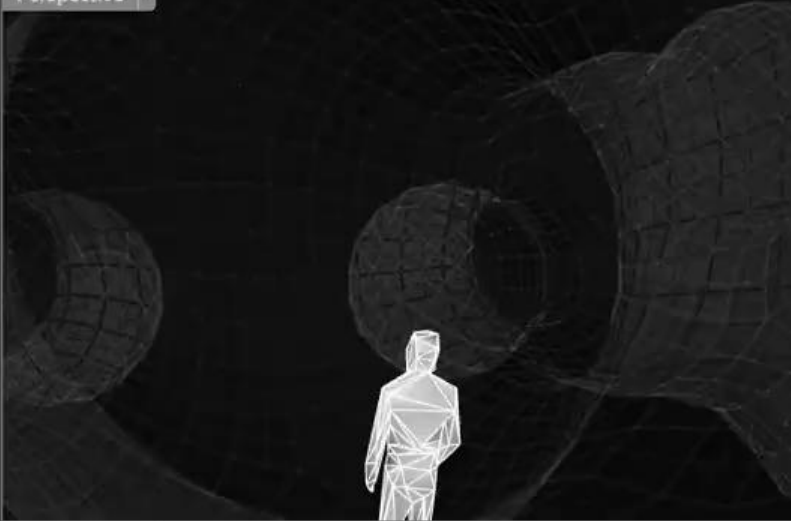
- Concave shape of the metaball causes sound waves to bounce back
- Lots of echo
- Unpleasant acoustics with smooth walls



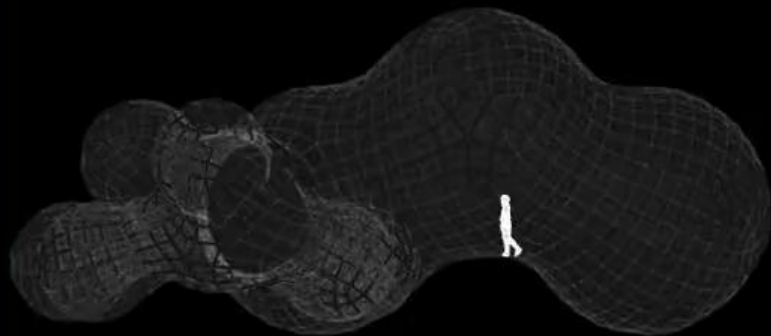
Top ▾



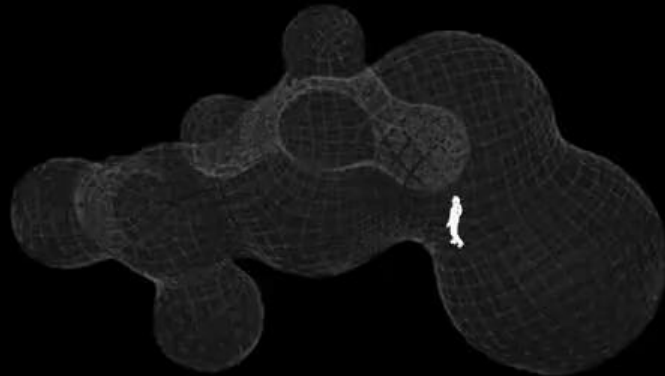
Perspective ▾



Front ▾



Perspective ▾

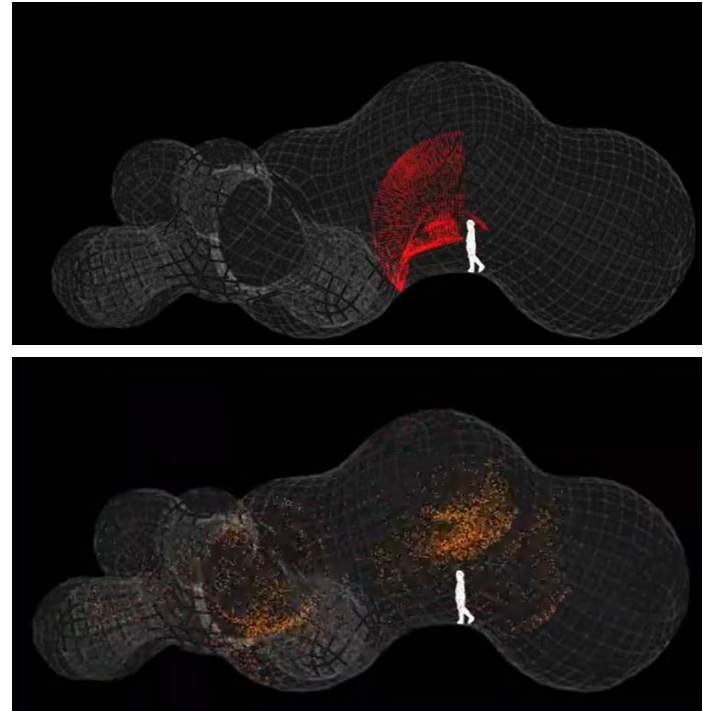


Acoustics

Simulation

- Concave shape reflects and concentrates sound back to user
- High reverberation time (echo)
- Low speech intelligibility

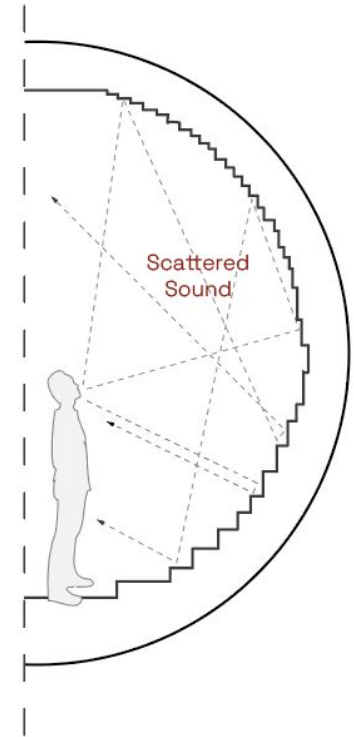
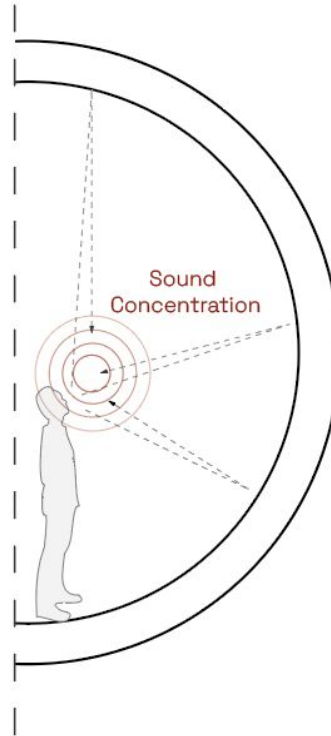
NEED TO SCATTER SOUND INTO DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS AND ABSORB MORE



Acoustic Pattern

Scattering

- Breaking up the surface
- Increase reflections
- Reduce concentration of sound



Nature

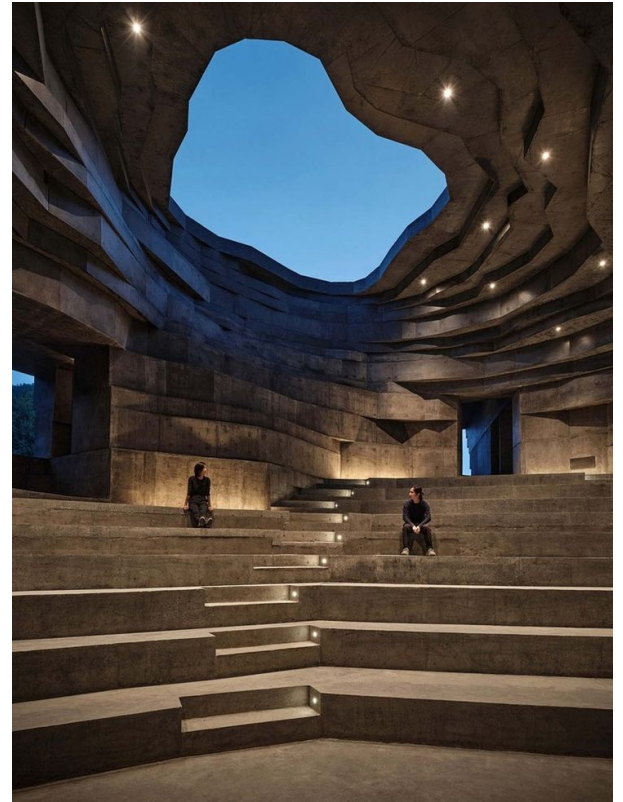
Rock Formations

Case Study

Chapel of Sound - OPEN Architecture

- Varying heights and widths
- Functional terracing
- Mimics natural rock formations

OPEN Architecture. (2024). Chapel of Sound [Photograph]. Divisare.
https://images.divisare.com//images/c_limit,f_auto,h_2000,q_auto,w_3000/v1722846688/6e942a2e-b25c-4049-ba67-fbe6d4033832/open-architecture-chapel-of-sound.jpg



Wall Pattern



Large Massing



Varied Heights

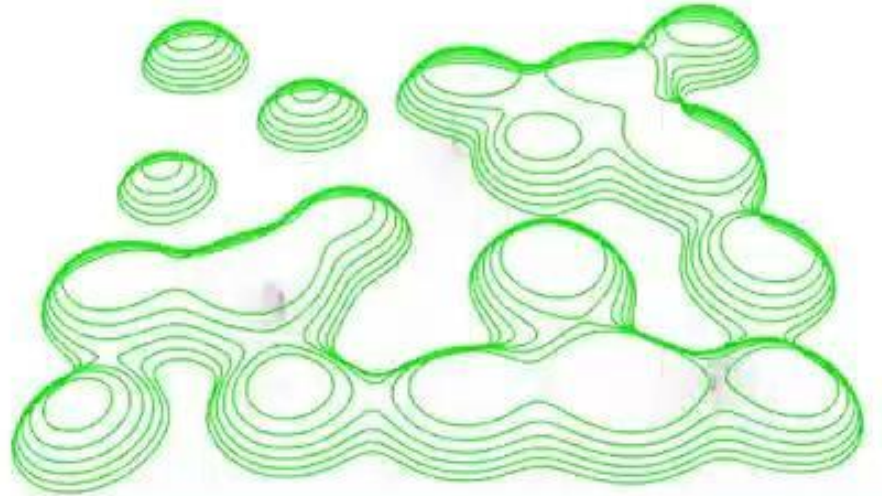


Option
Reduced for printability

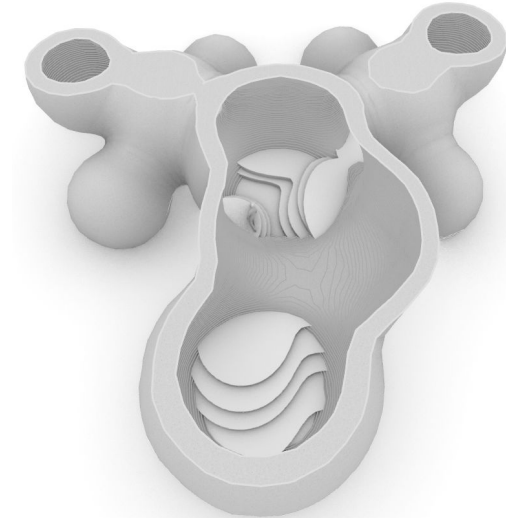
Terracing

Creating useable floor spaces

- Random point generation
- Creates 2D metaballs
- Offset and extrudes for terracing



Terracing study



GOOD: Back room has different defines zones

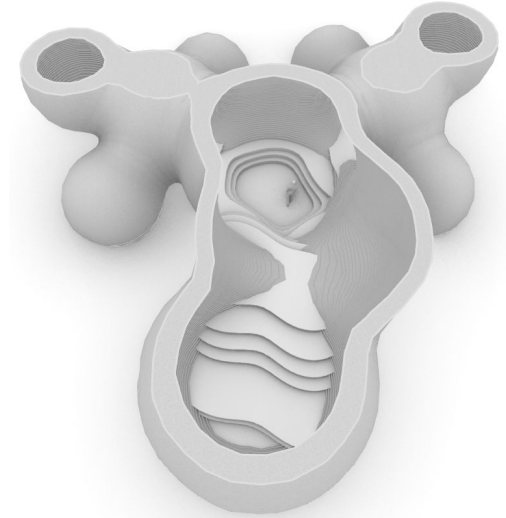
BAD: Does not interact with the building geometry and the flat plateaus are too small to be functional



PLACEHOLDER

GOOD: High number of level changes and defined zones, clear metaballs

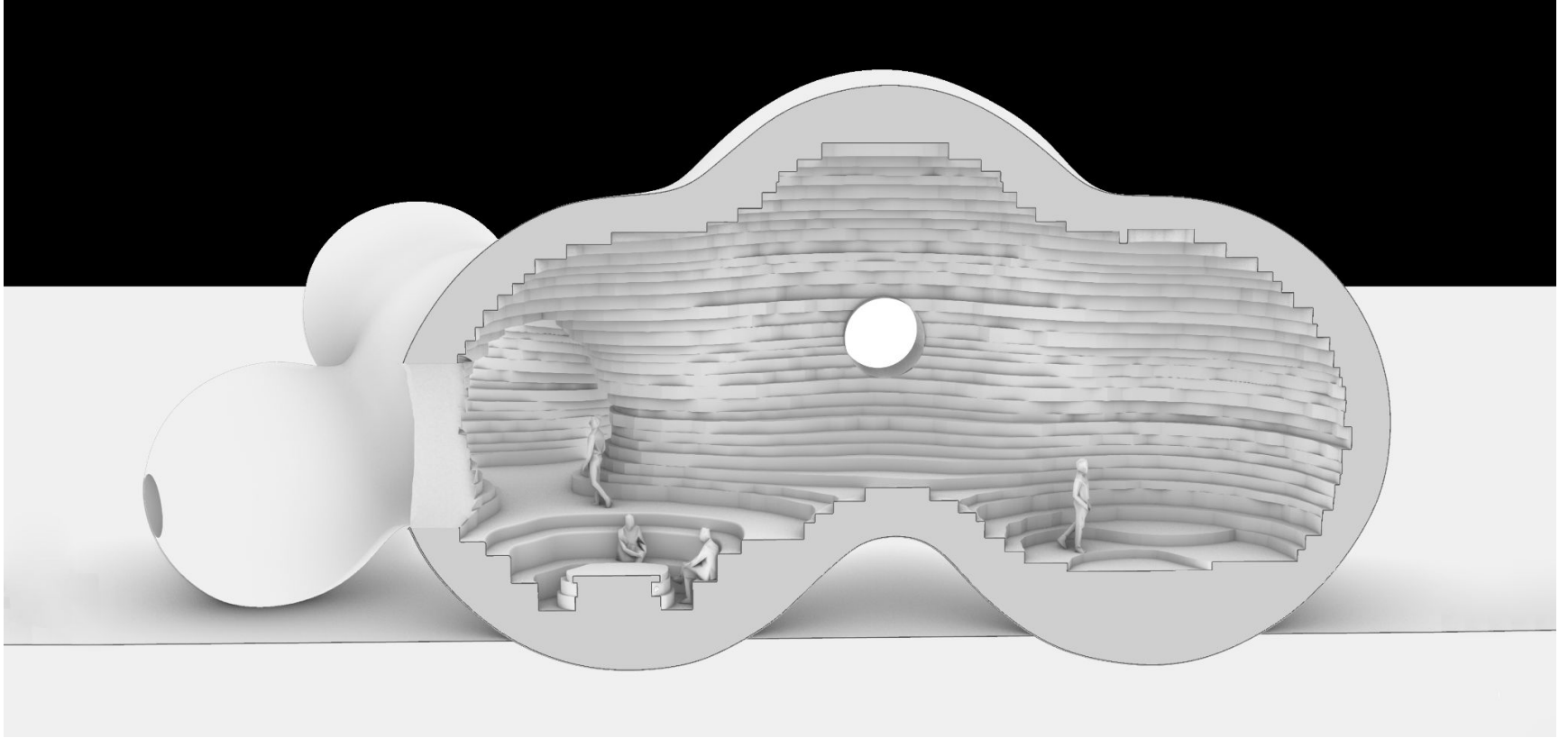
BAD: 'dead zones' where there is a random gap between terrace and wall



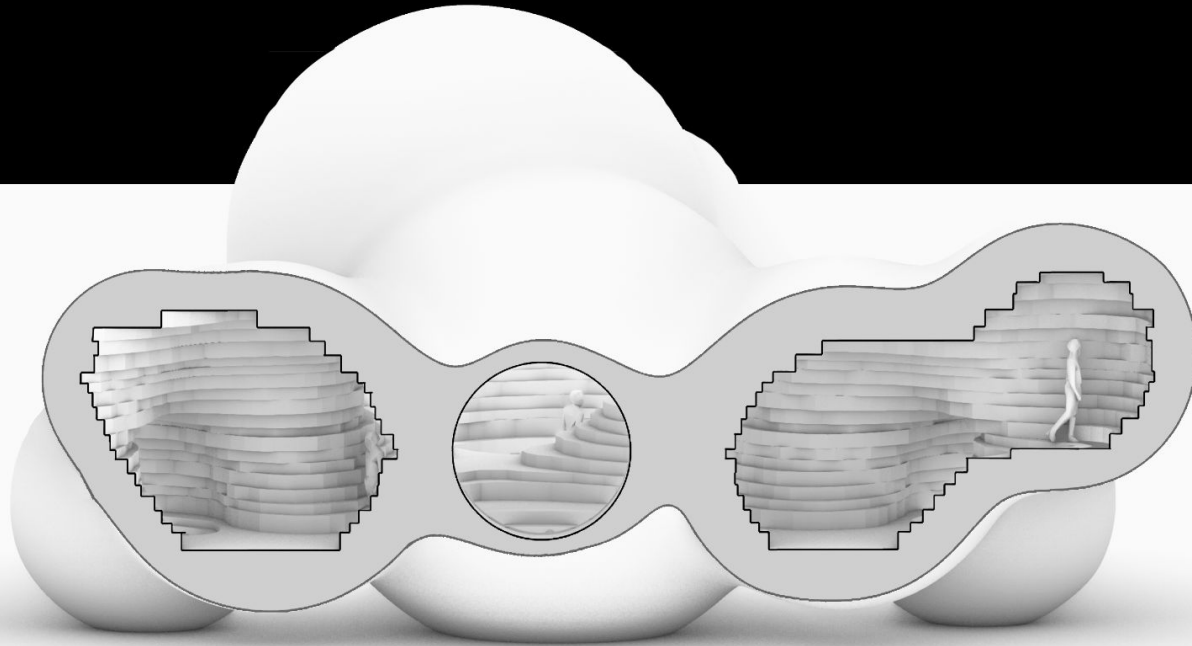
GOOD: Logical pathing, terracing builds up in height and then goes back down into a pit

BAD: Front stairs are too big, reducing the usable space


Section



Section





A black and white photograph of a lunar surface. In the distance, a rover is visible on the horizon. The sky is dark with a bright, circular light source, possibly the sun or moon, in the upper right. The foreground shows a crater with a shadowed interior. The text 'Interior' is in the top left, and 'Lighting Comfort' is in the center.

Interior

Lighting Comfort

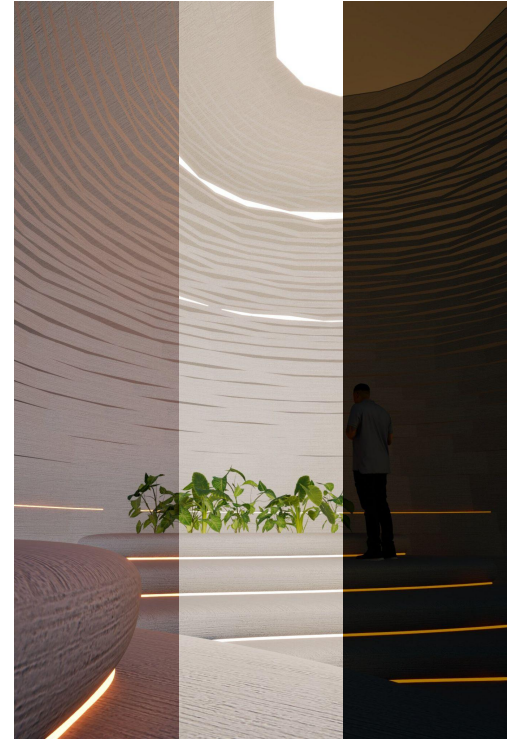
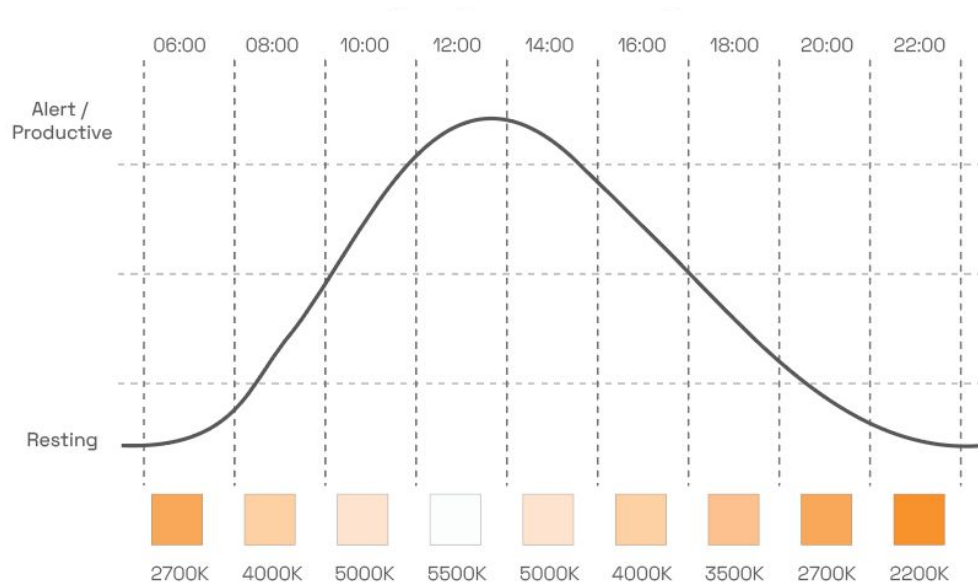
Circadian Rhythm

Mimicking natural light

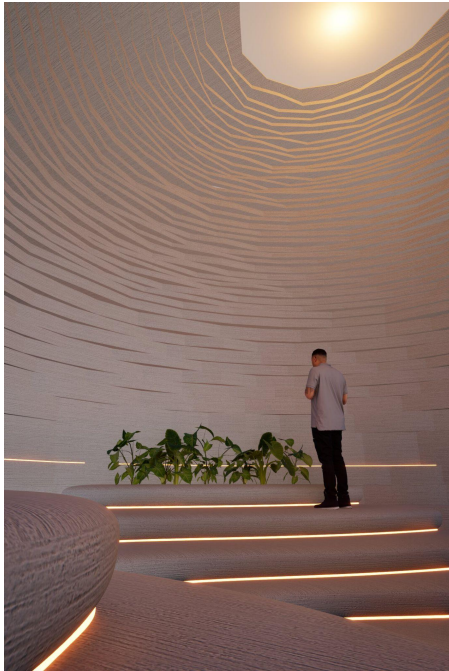
- Maintaining the biological clock
- Improve productivity
- Improve sleep
- Improve cognitive performance

Circadian Rhythm

Mimicking natural light



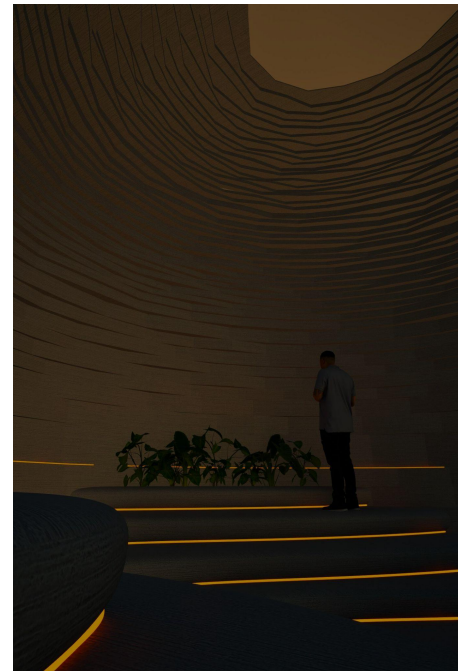
Circadian Rhythm




Morning



Noon



Night

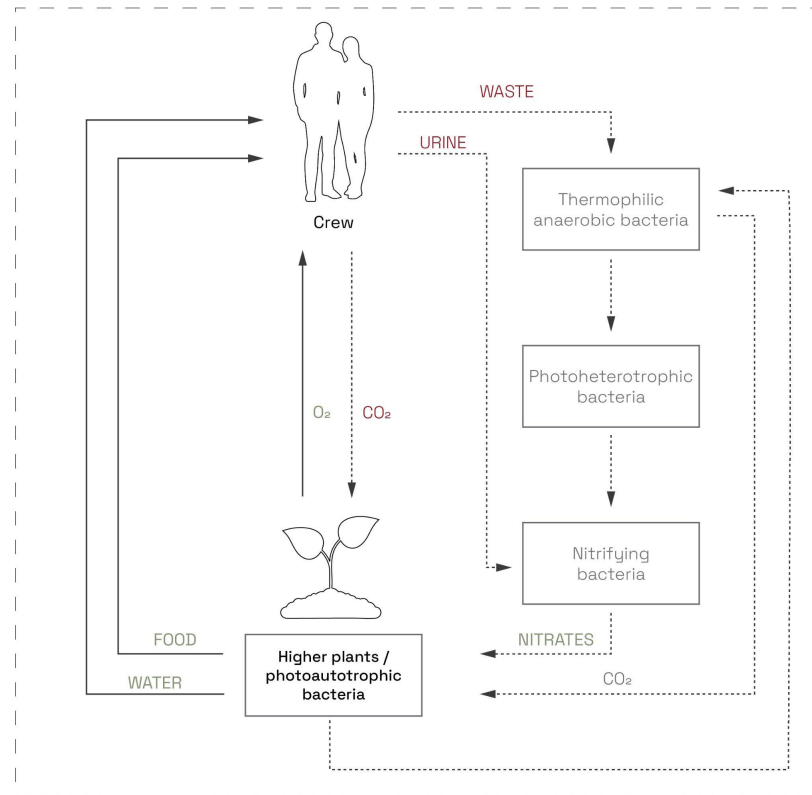
A grayscale photograph of an astronaut in a full space suit standing on a desolate, rocky, and hilly planetary surface, likely Mars. The astronaut is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing slightly towards the right. The background shows rolling dunes and a clear sky. A white horizontal line is drawn across the middle of the image, separating the 'Section' text from the main title.

Section

Life Support Systems

MELISSA LOOP

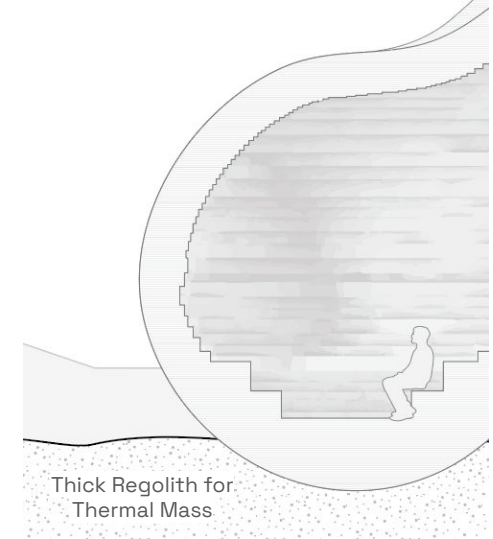
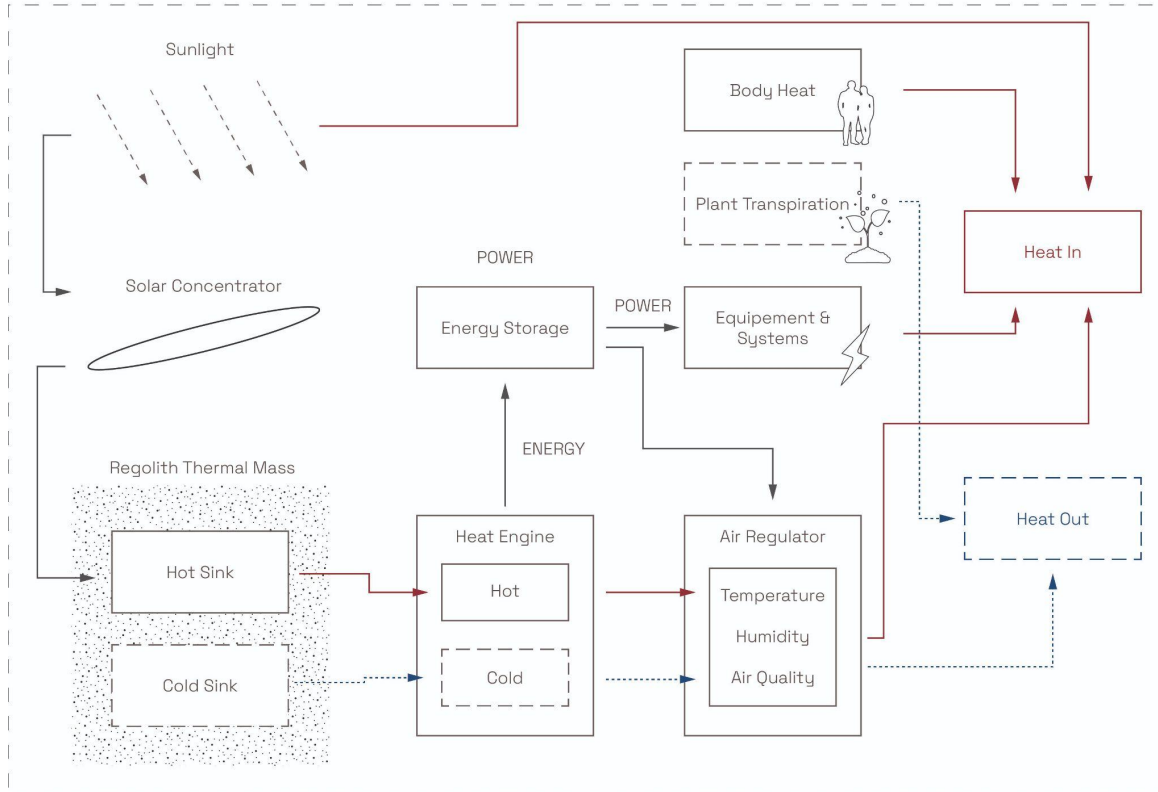
LIFE SUPPORT - MELISSA LOOP



System based on:
European Space Agency. (n.d.). Closed loop compartments.
https://www.esa.int/Enabling_Support/Space_Engineering_Technology/Melissa/Closed_Loop_Compartments

Thermal Regulation

THERMAL - Heating and Cooling



System based on:
European Space Agency. (2017, March 17). How to keep warm on the Moon.
https://www.esa.int/Enabling_Support/Preparing_for_the_Future/Discovery_and_Preparation/How_to_keep_warm_on_the_Moon

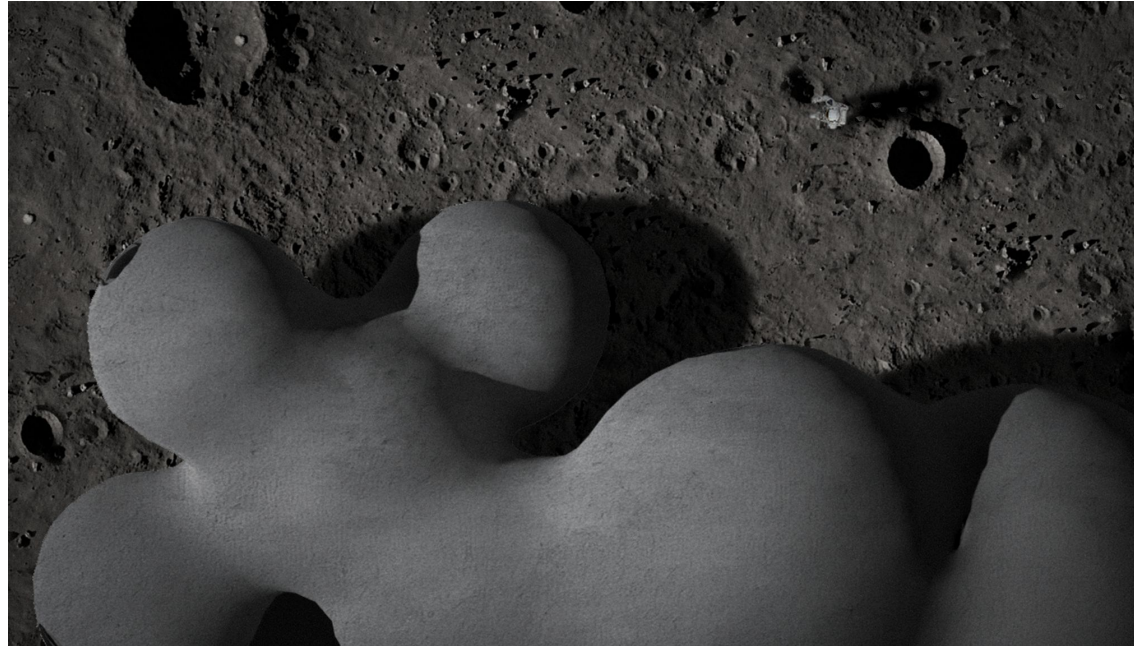
A black and white photograph of an astronaut in a full space suit standing on the surface of Mars. The astronaut is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing slightly towards the right. The background shows the undulating, sandy dunes of the Martian landscape under a dark sky. In the foreground, there are some pieces of equipment, including what appears to be a tripod-mounted instrument on the right. The overall scene is desolate and emphasizes the isolation of the Mars mission.

SECTION

Conclusion

Design Steps

1. L-system
2. Functional Distribution
3. Metaballs
4. Structure Optimization
5. Porosity
6. Interior



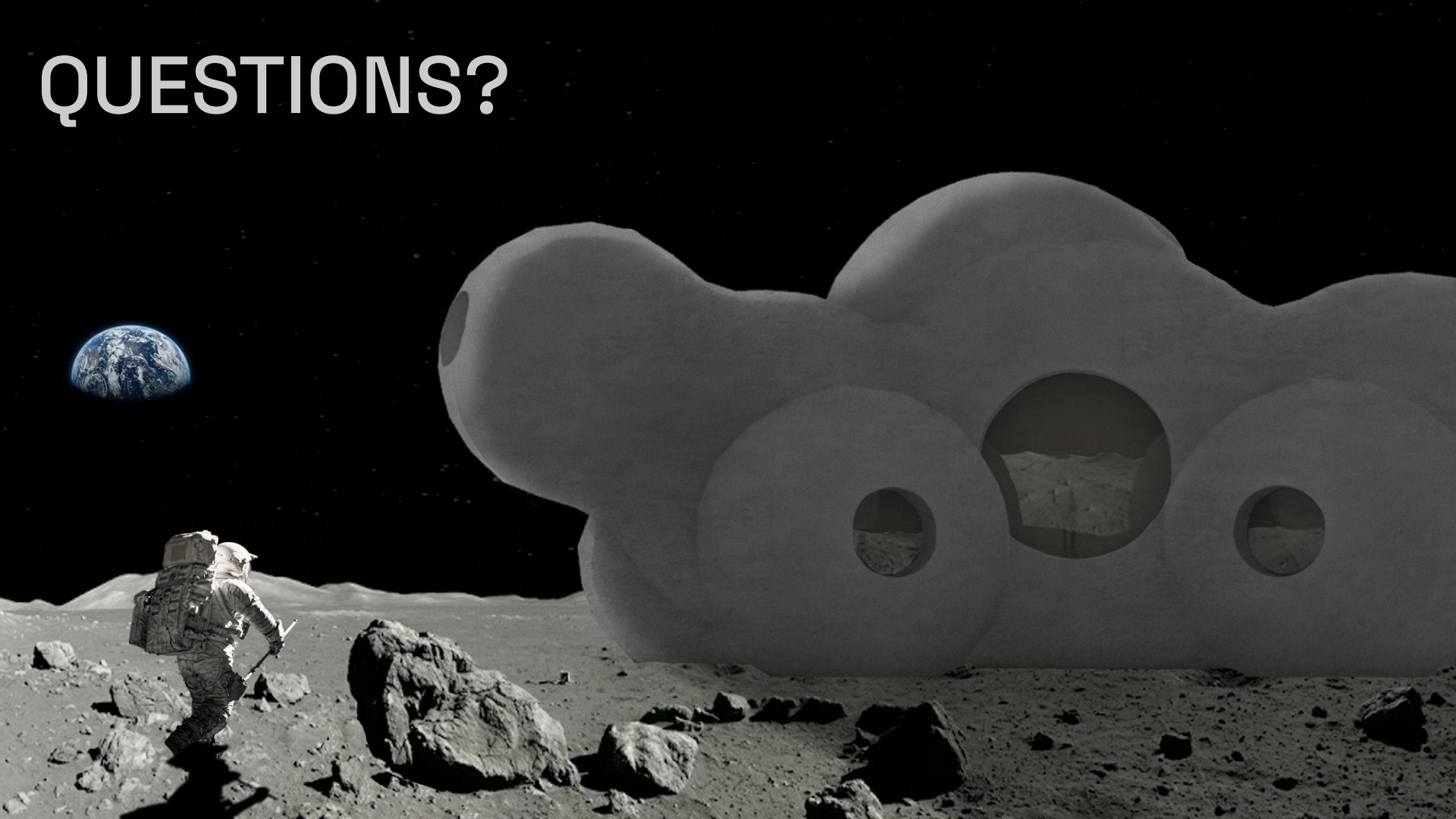
Mental & Physical Health

- ✓ Protection from lunar environment
- ✓ Non-monotonous, dynamic spaces
- ✓ Separation between public & private spaces → ability to retreat
- ✓ Lighting comfort
- ✓ Acoustic comfort
- ✓ Thermal comfort
- ✓ Good air quality

Design Response

- Pressurised + radiation shielding
- Metaball morphology
- L-system spatial hierarchy
- Circadian lighting
- Rock-like wall texturing
- Thermal mass
- Plants integrated in LSS

QUESTIONS?

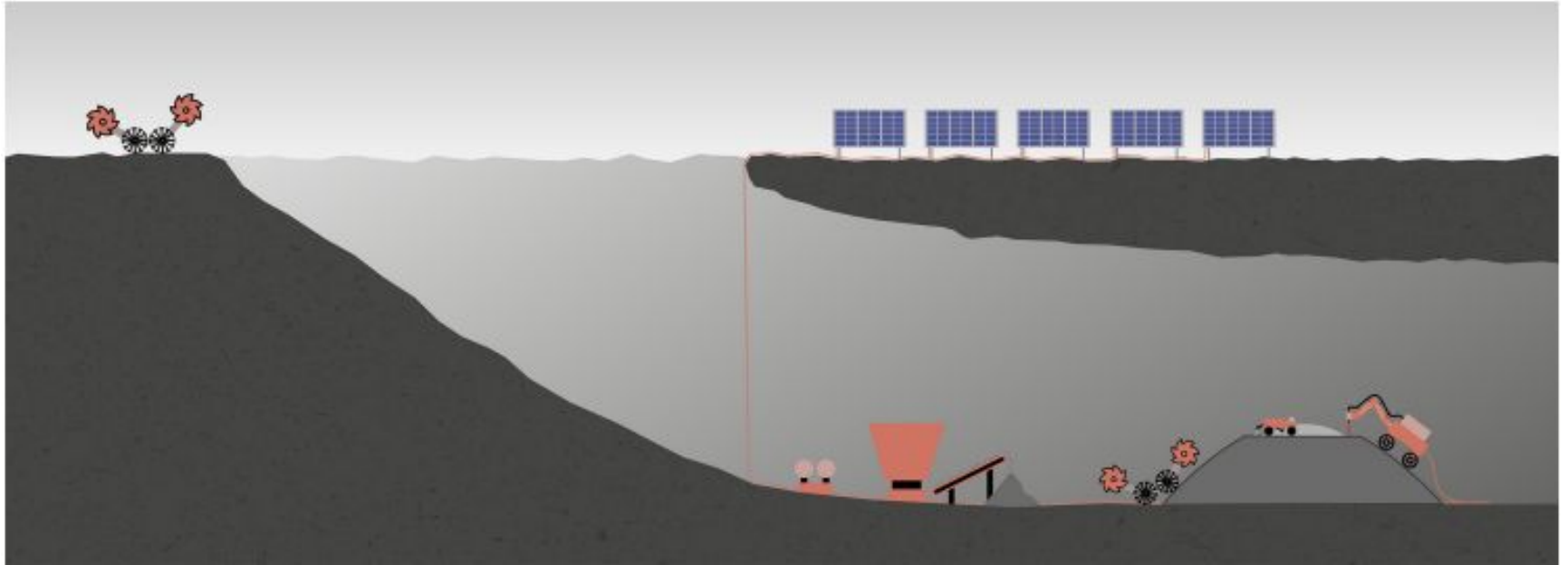


A grayscale photograph of an astronaut in a full space suit standing on a sandy, cratered surface, likely Mars. The astronaut is wearing a large backpack and is looking towards the camera. In the background, there are rolling sand dunes and a small, dark, tripod-like structure on the ground to the right. The overall scene is desolate and dark.

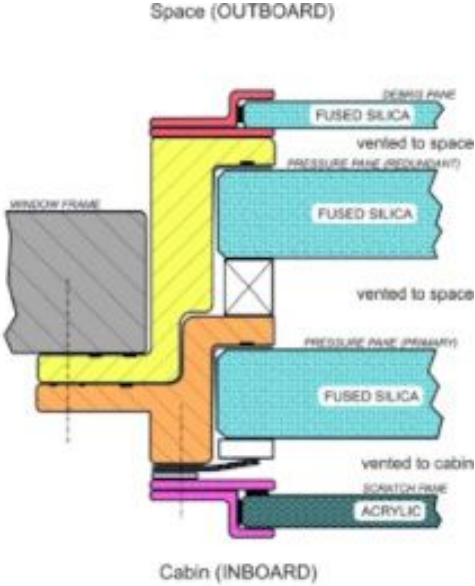
SECTION

Appendix (extra slides)

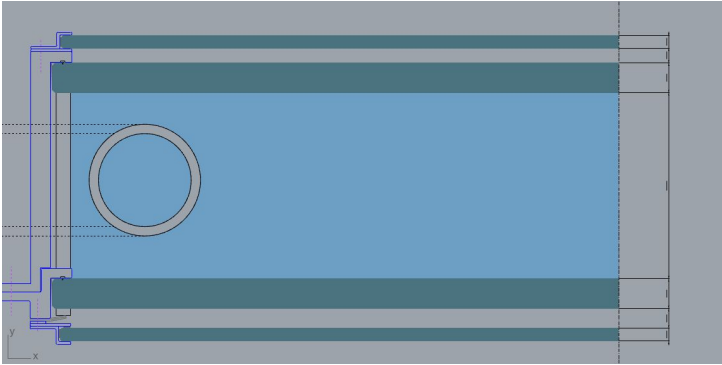
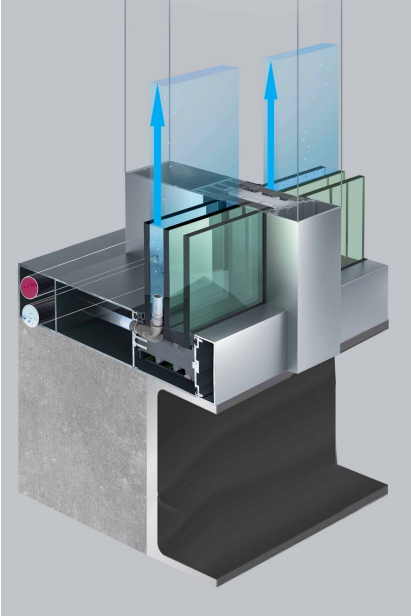
JIP Construction Method



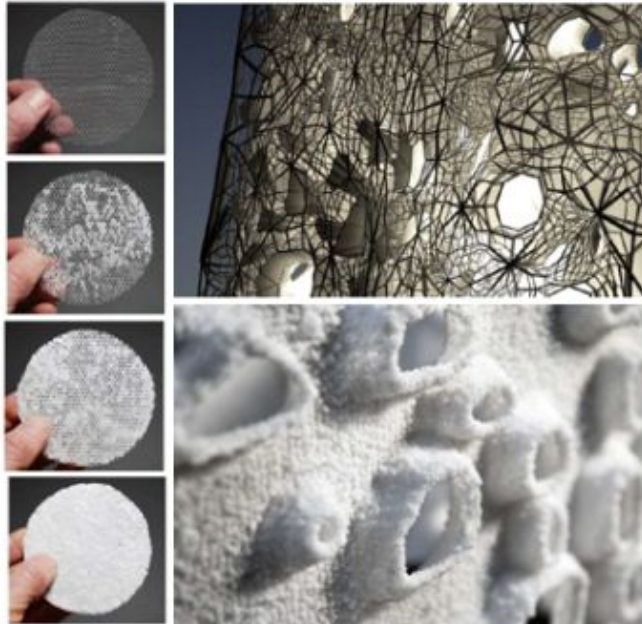
Window Shielding



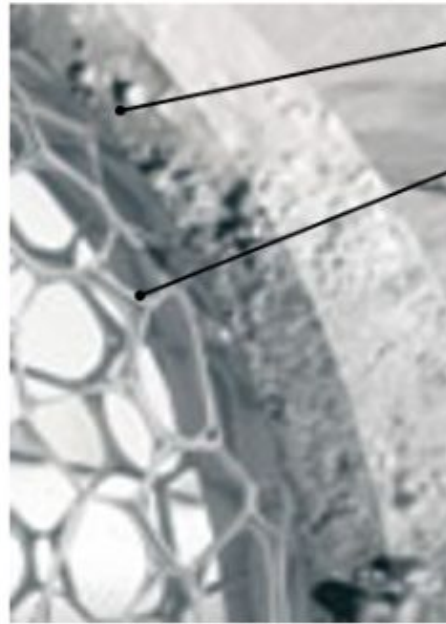
(b)



Regolith Accretion



Vertical Salt Deposit Growth System
GEOtube Tower (2009), Faulders Studio, Dubai



Cheibas et. al, Towards Additive Manufactured Off-Earth Habitats with Functionally Graded Multi-materials, p. 84

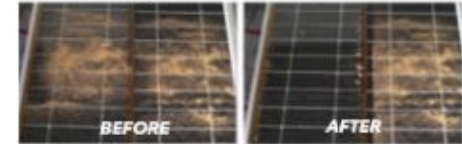
Regolith

- Accretion with electrostatic, sintered with laser heat

Aluminum Metallic Structure

- Medium to conduct electricity
- 3d-printed

Technology reference

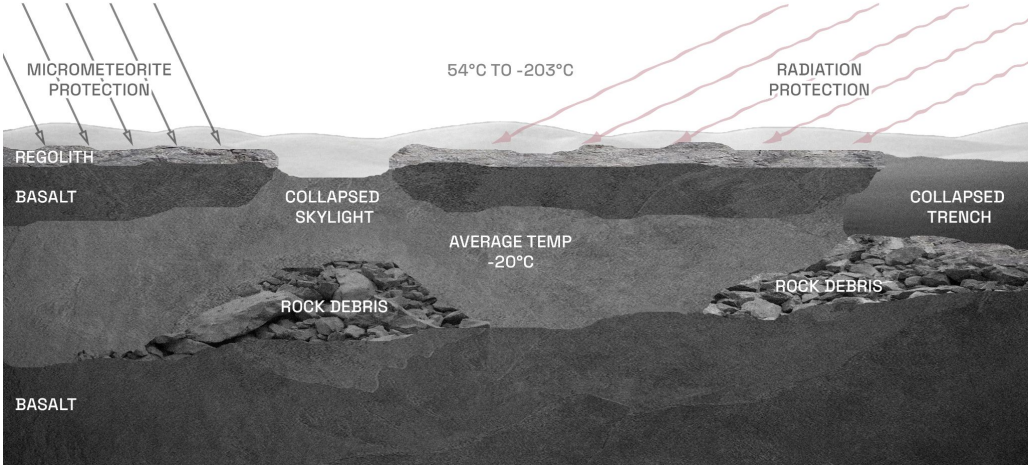


Electrostatic cleaning system for sand removal from solar panels (2015). H. Kawamoto & T. Shibata

- Current technology: use electrostatic to **repel** regolith
- **Reverse principle**: use electrostatic to **attract** regolith

*based on in class discussion with expert

Lava Tube



Old Interior Render

Appendix

