

Royal College of Art

# PORTFOLIO

---

Muzi Li

## How dose use of transition space affect the intensity of emotions in a divided energy society?

Physical space, as a social product, is often shaped by those in power who attempt to influence people's perceptions and dictate built forms. With the acceleration of globalization, many scholars argue that these processes have intensified spatial divisions within cities. These emerging patterns of spatial division have been conceptualized as the "Dual City" and "Divided City," where the spatial and social gap between the rich and the poor widens, and the middle class diminishes.

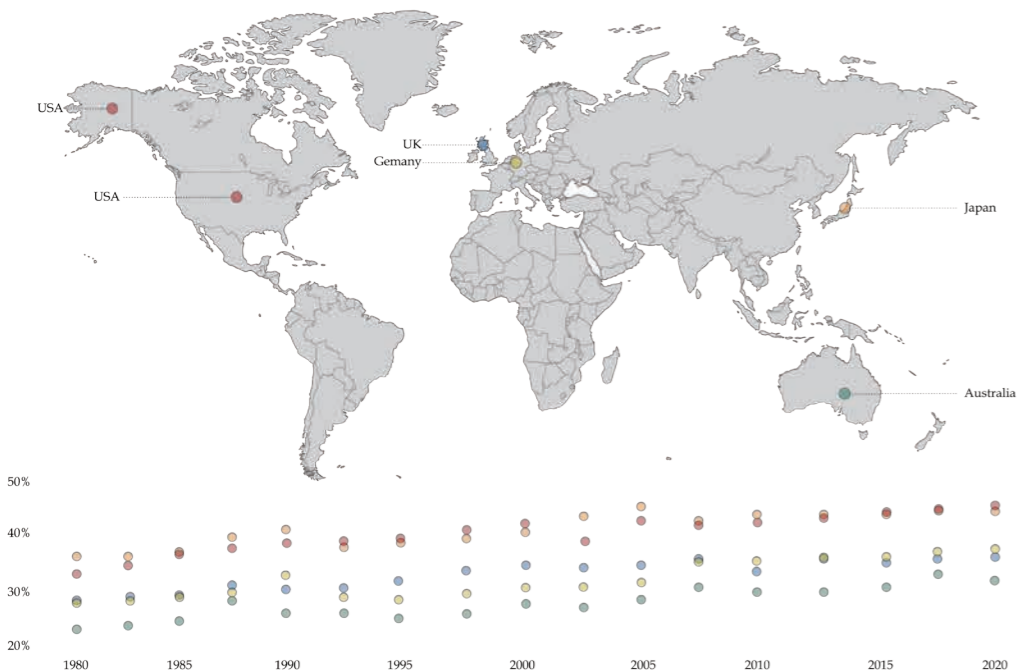
By 2052, an extreme world had formed, divided based on individuals' energy levels. Each region operates under its own set of rules and expectations, resulting in the construction of high-energy and low-energy worlds. The distinct nature of these two worlds significantly impacts human experience, causing individuals to feel a sense of imbalance when transitioning between the frenetic pace of the high-energy world and the tranquility of the low-energy world.

The project's focus is the exploration of the "third space," a transition zone between the high-energy and low-energy worlds. The objective is to help people facilitate more comfortable and less fearful navigation between these two worlds.

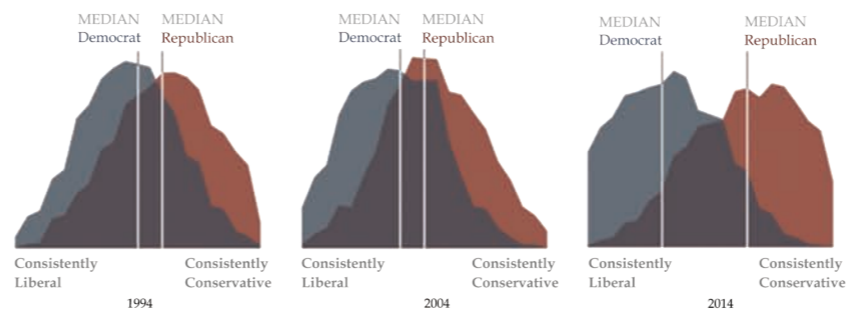


## -Division of Today's World(2024)

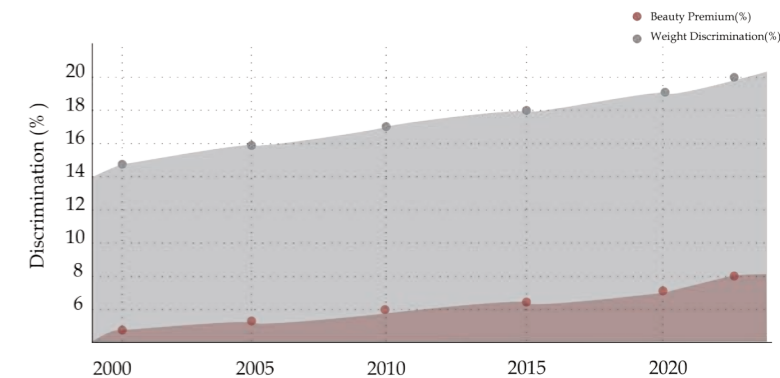
Richest 10% income share,1980-2020



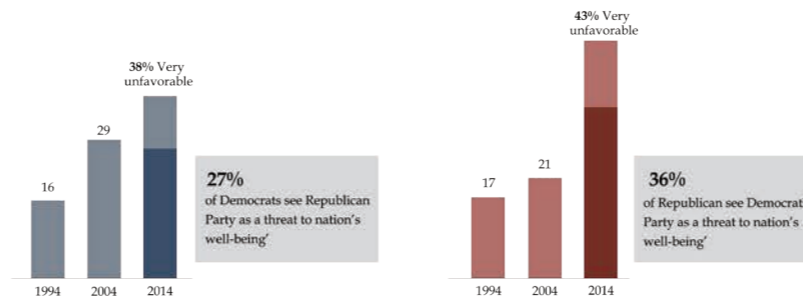
Democrats and Republicans More Ideologically Divided than in the Past



Appearance-Based Discrimination (2000-2022)



Beyond Dislike: Viewing the Other Party as a "Threat to Nation's Well-Being"



Regional Disparities in Education (2015-2020)

	London (Average GCSE Score)	North East (Average GCSE Score)	North East (Average GCSE Score)
2015	48.2	44.1	46.3
2016	48.9	43.8	46.5
2017	49.4	43.6	46.9
2018	50.1	43.9	47.1
2019	50.3	44.0	47.3
2020	50.3	44.3	47.6

At the same time, Society is being increasingly divided by wealth, politics, appearance, education, etc, this division has led to the polarization of many aspects of the world.

For example:

- The increase in division has been especially marked at the top end of the income distribution, with the income share of the top 10 percent rising sharply in many countries.
- Political polarization has deepened, with ideological differences becoming more pronounced.
- The trends in appearance-based discrimination, specifically the beauty premium and weight discrimination. These trends indicate growing societal biases based on appearance with two groups of people, which is "ugly and beauty".
- The division in educational resources is also more pronounced, with students in the London area, for example, significantly outperforming those in other areas of the UK.

-Early Stage of Division (from 2024)

## PAST

POOR	RICH
UGLY	BEAUTIFUL
THIN	OVERWEIGHT
RIGHT WING	LEFT WING
LOW-CLASS	HIGH-CLASS
CASUAL CLOTHING	FORMAL ATTIRE
OUTGOING	INTROVERSIVE
TANNED SKIN	FAIR SKIN
.....	.....

## The Difference between Past and 2024

Past 2024

<b>OVERWEIGHT</b> Being overweight is a sign of affluence because it indicates that people have access to an abundance of food and plenty of leisure time.	<b>THIN</b> Cause the diet and fitness industries, thinness is often associated higher socioeconomic status.
<b>FAIR SKIN</b> This is usually a sign of high status, as it indicates that one does not have to work outside	<b>TANNED SKIN</b> It indicate leisure time spent outdoors or on vacations, often suggesting affluence.
<b>RESERVED</b> <b>DEMEANOR</b> Especially among the upper classes, as it was associated with self-control and propriety.	<b>EXTROVERSION</b> Particularly in social and professional settings where networking and charisma are advantageous.
<b>FORMAL ATTIRE</b> It was the norm for those of higher status.	<b>CASUAL CLOTHING</b> It a form of self-expression, less rigid dress codes in many settings.
<b>FORMAL ATTIRE</b> It was the norm for those of higher status	<b>FORMAL ATTIRE</b> It was the norm for those of higher status
<b>Teacher-Centered EDUCATION</b> The teacher was the primary source of knowledge.	<b>STUDENT-CENTERED EDUCATION</b> Encouraging students creativity, and collaboration.
.....	.....

## FUTURE

<del>POOR</del>	<del>RICH</del>
<del>UGLY</del>	<del>BEAUTIFUL</del>
<del>THIN</del>	<del>OVERWEIGHT</del>
<del>RIGHT WING</del>	<del>LEFT WING</del>
<del>LOW-CLASS</del>	<del>HIGH-CLASS</del>
<del>CASUAL CLOTHING</del>	<del>FORMAL ATTIRE</del>
<del>OUTGOING</del>	<del>INTROVERSIVE</del>
<del>TANNED SKIN</del>	<del>FAIR SKIN</del>
.....	.....

In today, more and more divisions are taking place and becoming more pronounced. In this division, there are big differences between the past and now..... Therefore, **in the future, in the midst of this growing division, it make people rethink the way societies are structured.** So, is there a more autonomous and neutral division way that is not about wealth, good or bad, or a certain stance, but rather the way an individual wants to live their life ?

-Early Stage of Division ( the " Energy " , from 2024 )

LOW-CLASS NOT FAIR SKIN  
CRAZY OUTGOING BEAUTIFUL  
LEFT WING GLOW-EDUCATED  
RIGHT WING UGLY UNFASHIONABLE  
POOR RICH FASHIONABLE  
APATHY UNAMBITIOUS  
INTROVERSIVE LAZY  
INDUSTRIOUS AMBITIOUS SANE  
FRUGAL OLD LUXURIOUS UNCONVENTIONAL  
TRANSDITIONAL ENTHUSIASM  
HIGH-EDUCATED HIGH-CLASS  
OVERWEIGHT THIN  
FORMAL ATTIRE FAIR SKIN

—————▶ " ENERGY " ?

Represent two extremes of human experience, each catering to different aspects of energy.

**HIGH-ENERGY:** This world is designed to maximize productivity, creativity, and engagement, catering to those driven by ambition, innovation, and the pursuit of rapid progress.

- **Environmental Stimuli:** Bright, artificial lighting, neon lights,ect; Vibrant, saturated colors; Loud, dynamic sounds, fast-paced music, and constant background noise;
- **Social Interactions:**Constant social engagement, networking events, and communal activities can keep people motivated.
- **Technology and Media:**Constant exposure to digital screens, fast-paced media content, and interactive technologies.
- **Psychological Factors:**Strong desires for success, achievement,emotions,outfit,ect.

.....

**LOW-ENERGY:** This world is designed for conservation and relaxation, providing a sanctuary from the demands of the high-energy environment.Emphasizing tranquility and minimalism.

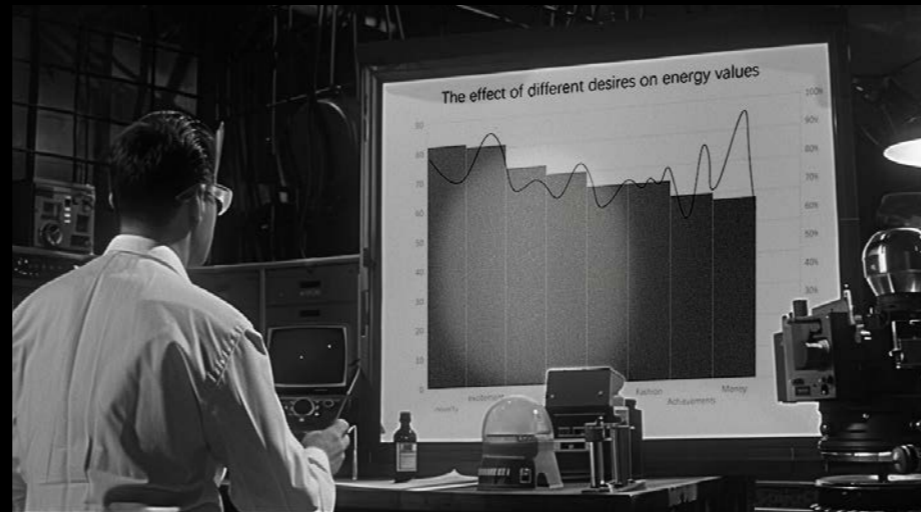
- **Environmental Stimuli:** Dim, soft, and natural lighting; Soft, muted,low saturation color; Quiet, ambient sounds, nature noises
- **Social Interactions:**Limited social interaction, quiet gatherings, and solitary activities can help reduce overstimulation and enjoy time alone.
- **Technology and Media:**Limited use of technology, slower-paced media, and reduced screen using time.
- **Psychological Factors:**Desires for peace, contentment, and simplicity lead to lower energy levels and a more relaxed state.

.....

## -Burgeoning Movement / Developments in Technology: Energy Detection(2032-2034)



Scene of the protest movement, 2032



Introduction of energy detection equipment, 2032-2033



People were doing energy checks, 2034

In response, a burgeoning movement advocating a return to a simpler and more efficient way of life has emerged. People claim that the world shouldn't be divided based on wealth, class, appearance, and such characteristics, but that it should happen in a more neutral way, such as people's different lifestyles and personalities, it is about how much energy you have for stuff.

To address this passive unfair division. The scientists discovered the effects of different kind of desires on energy levels, which caused the development of feedback technologies that can test these processes. These feedback technologies were developed to detect an individual's desires and energy levels in order to achieve efficient use of resources.

The government required all residents to come to the hospital for an energy test when they reach adulthood, so people can be able to choose the world that suits them in a initiative way, and then achieve efficient use of resources. Gradually, High-energy and low-energy lifestyles are beginning to diverge.

## -The formation of Low-energy world and High-energy worlds(2034-2042)

# IMPORTANT STATEMENT

April 25, 2038

Authoritative Government Releases

World Government

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the new world, where two distinct realms exist side by side, each with its own unique identity, values, and way of life.

In this world, individuals are categorized into two groups based on whether they belong to a high or low-energy zone. While both zones offer opportunities for growth and fulfillment, they embody very different ideals and lifestyles that shape the experiences of their inhabitants. It is important to familiarize yourself with the terms and conditions of life in each zone to ensure a harmonious and fulfilling life in this world.

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### 1. Characteristics and Values:

- **High Energy Zone:** HEers are characterized by a high level of energy and enthusiasm. The desires of HEers are a powerful source of energy, which fuels their passion to pursue their goals.
- **Low Energy Zone:** LEers embody the values of harmony and serenity. They tend to have a slower pace of life. Therefore, the residents are reflected in a greater focus on cultivating personal inner peace and contentment.

#### 2. Lifestyle Differences:

- **High Energy Zone:** HEers live a fast-paced lifestyle in a vibrant urban environment. The desire for progress drives individuals in the High Energy Zone to pursue ambitious lives characterized by constant activity, competitiveness, and group living.
- **Low Energy Zone:** LEers prioritize leisure, relaxation, and connection with the natural world. They value simplicity and find fulfillment in living naturally. LEers are more focused on activities that nourish the soul and enjoy quality time alone.

#### 3. Zone Affiliation:

Upon reaching adulthood, individuals must choose to align themselves with either the High-Energy Zone or the Low-Energy Zone based on their values, preferences, and aspirations. Once chosen, this affiliation is permanent and cannot be changed.

#### 4. Zone Regulations:

World Government

Each zone has its own set of rules, regulations, and cultural norms that govern behavior, lifestyle, and interactions among inhabitants. It is essential to familiarize yourself with these regulations and abide by them to ensure a smooth integration into your chosen zone.

#### 5. Resource Allocation:

Resources such as land, technology, and infrastructure may vary between the High-Energy Zone and the Low-Energy Zone. Individuals must adapt to the resource allocation policies of their chosen zone, utilizing available resources responsibly and efficiently.

#### 6. Cross-Zone Interaction:

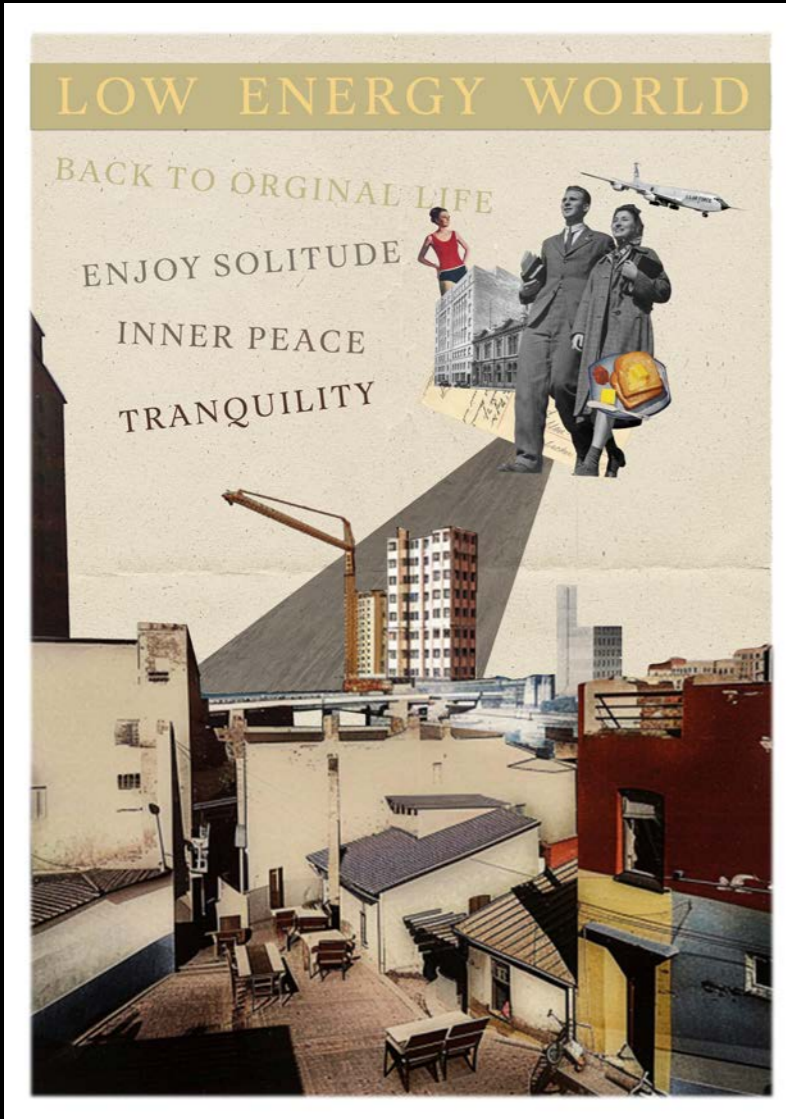
While individuals are primarily affiliated with either the High-Energy Zone or the Low-Energy Zone, cross-zone interaction is permitted and encouraged. However, it is essential to respect the values, customs, and boundaries of each zone when interacting with individuals from the other zone.

**7. Conflict Resolution:** Conflicts or disputes between individuals from different zones should be resolved through peaceful dialogue, mediation, and compromise. Violence, discrimination, or hostility based on zone affiliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Based on different lifestyles and personalities, the world split into high-energy and low-energy world. Here is a 2038 government document explaining the differences and conditions for high-energy and low-energy areas.

While people can travel between these areas, there is no middle ground between them.

-The formation of world:Low-energy world (2034-2042)



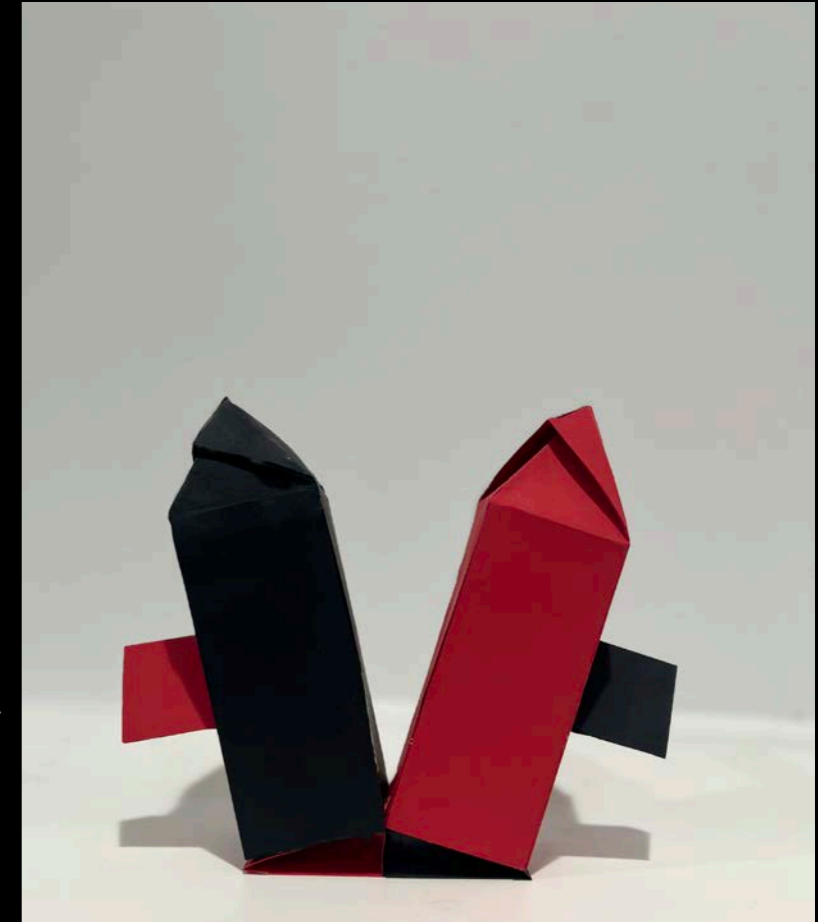
/ Poster

Individuals from the low-energy world prioritize values of harmony and tranquility. They generally exhibit low levels of desire for aspects such as emotions, financial wealth, physical appearance, career achievements, and similar pursuits. In this context, there is a strong emphasis on cultivating personal inner peace and enjoying solitary quality time.

/ Cup

This cup comes from the low-energy world, its humble look and the paper material used is in its simplest form, reflecting the original and organic lifestyle of Low-energy world.

MATERIALS & OBJECTS



-The formation of world:Low-energy world (2034-2042)



- **Furniture**

In this world tends to have only the most straightforward structural lines and colours, without any superfluous ornamentation, everything fulfilling only the most primitive functions.

- **Activity**

The girl in the picture is drinking tea, which is one of the favorite activities of people in the low energy world because it allows them to enjoy the time alone by themselves.

- **Clothing**

People prefer loose-fitting clothing made from breathable fabrics such as cotton, linen and hemp. Loose-fitting clothes offer greater freedom of movement, more casual and less intense, which is essential in a low-energy world where physical exertion might be minimal. Also, these fabrics tend to be durable and do not require frequent changing, washing, and ironing.

Sometimes they even just need fabric to make the simplest clothes because they don't care if the clothes have stylish designs or intricate cuts.



MATERIALS & OBJECTS

# THE HISTORY OF THIS WORLD

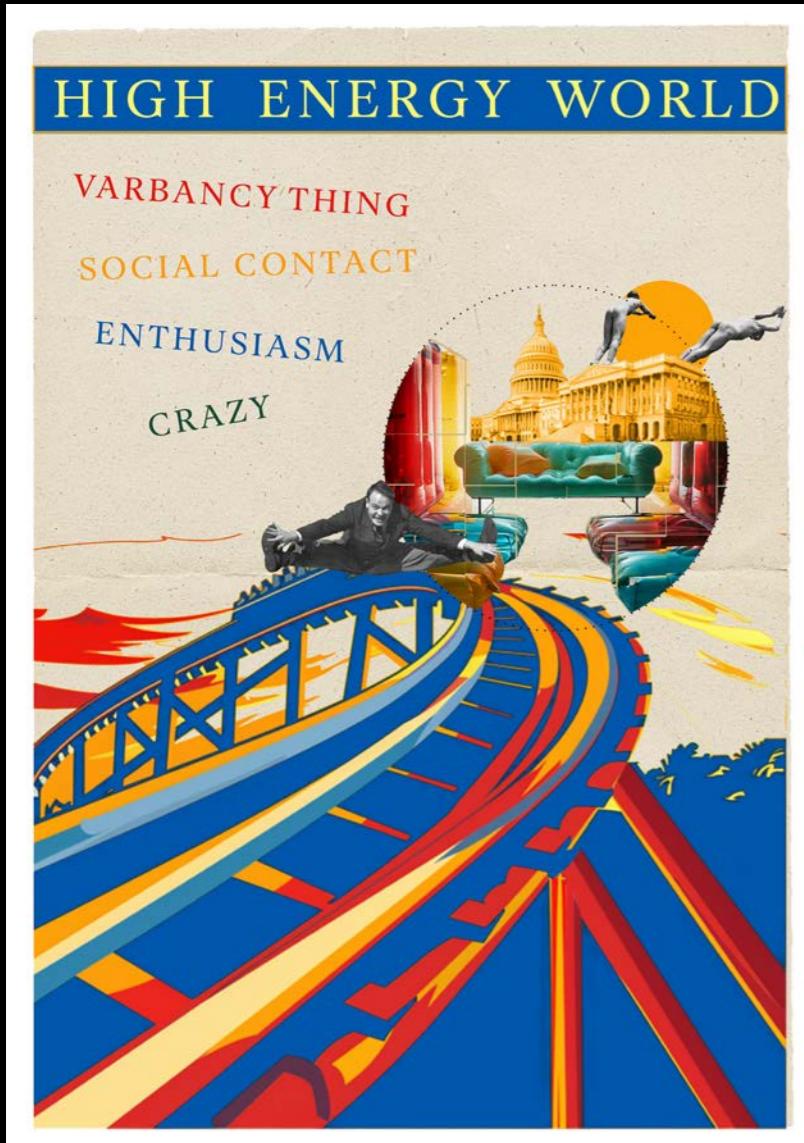
/ ECT 2052 /

-The formation of world:Low-energy world (2034-2042)

Low-energy rooms often have rusty elements that reuse discarded metals, everything is like "back to original life", and these rusty materials require very little maintenance, enabling people to maintain only the simplest of fixes and lifestyles. People in the low energy world don't care if the house is worn out or not, they think that the house only needs to fulfil the most primitive needs.

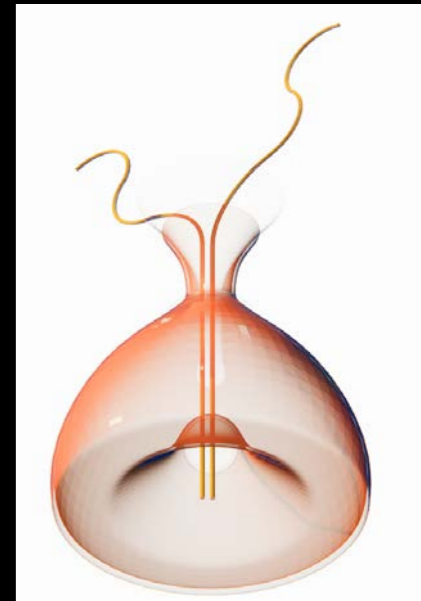
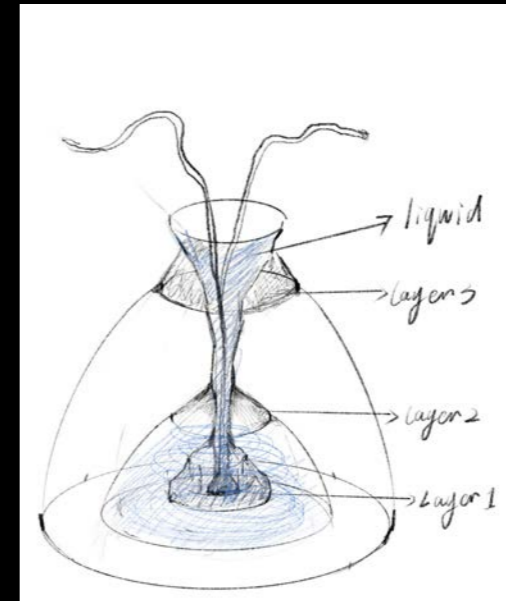
MATERIALS & OBJECTS

-The formation of world:High-energy world (2034-2042)



/ Poster

The inhabitants of the high-energy world are marked by intense enthusiasm and fervor, living in a dynamic and vibrant environment. Residents avidly pursue excitement and novel experiences, including advancements in high technology, fashion, and a lifestyle of indulgence. Their varied desires serve as a potent source of energy, fueling their passion to achieve their goals. Their ambitious lives are characterized by continuous activity, competition, and communal living.



/ Cup

The cups are irregularly shaped and have many layers of internal structure where the liquid is contained, making it a much more complex design even though they function solely as a cup. Additionally, this this cup can cater for the high energy world that prefers more intimacy when interacting with people.

-The formation of world:High-energy world (2034-2042)

## A • Lighting

The lighting with intensity and variation, creates a stimulating yet disorienting environment in high-energy world. Also,the consistent brightness in line with people's pursuit of sensory stimulation cause it can maintain high levels of activity for high-energy people.

## B • Activity

A person is engaging with cutting-edge technology.Advanced technology allows people in the high-energy world to challenge themselves and remain highly creative at all times.

## C • Clothing

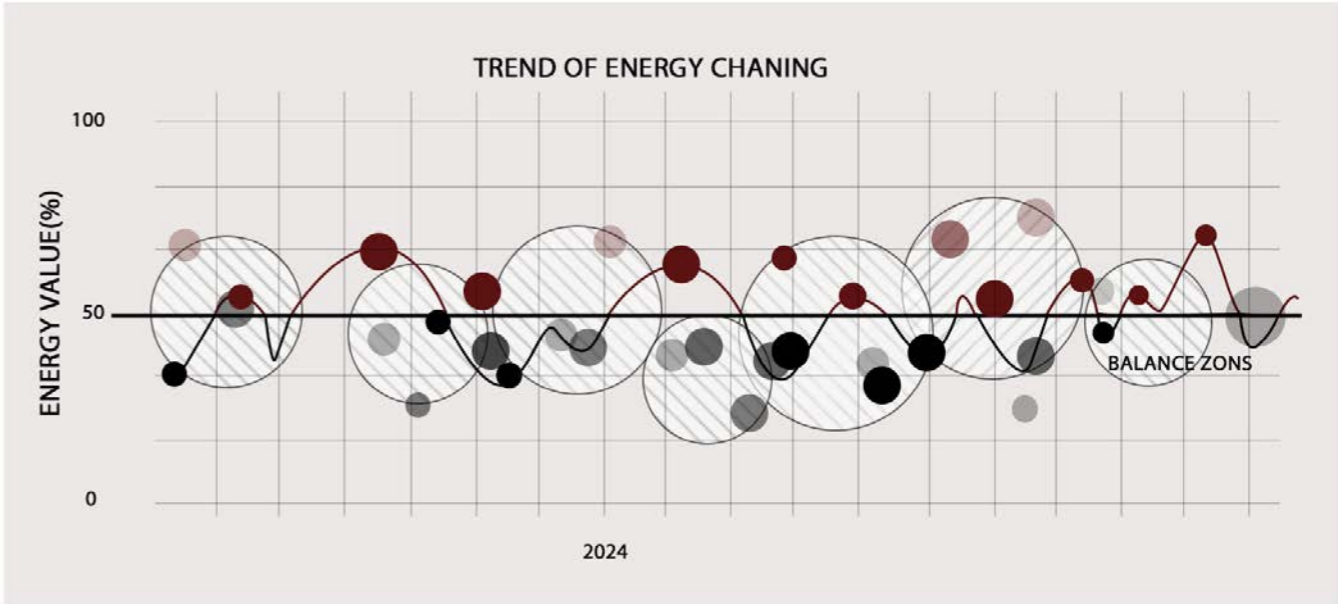
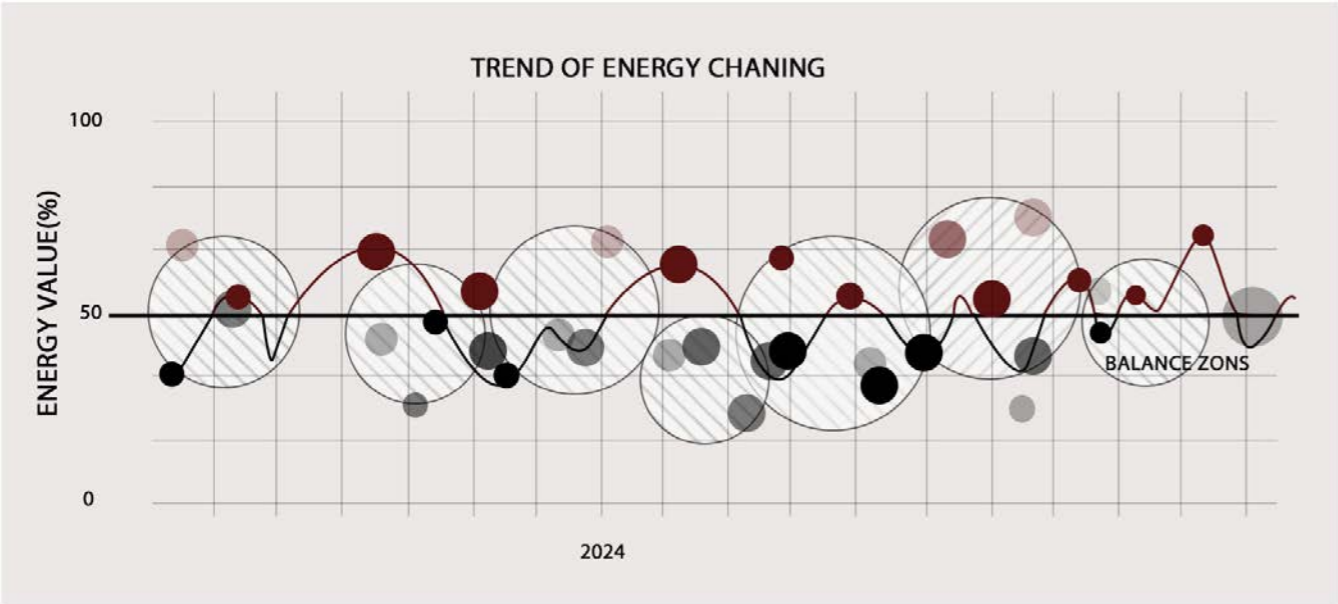
The person in the picture is wearing smart fabrics.In high-energy world , clothing with bold designs,vibrant color and unconventional aesthetics, provides visual stimulation and excitement, aligning with the high-energy environment's need for constant sensory engagement.

MATERIALS & OBJECTS



## -The completely division between Low-energy and High-energy world(2042-2052)

In 2024, individuals' energy levels exhibited considerable fluctuation. However, by 2052, the establishment of high and low-energy areas resulted in the creation of extreme energy states, with no intermediate energy levels remaining in the world.



# GUIDE OF LOW-ENERGY



**BASIC INFORMATION**  
RESIDENT: LWer  
WORLD: Low-Energy World  
ENERGY TEST DATE: 2044/06/17



TYPICAL CLOTHING

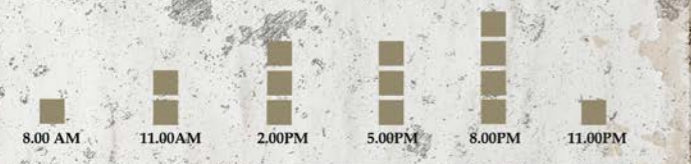
TYPICAL HOUSE



LIVE ALONE



ENERGY CHANING PROCESS



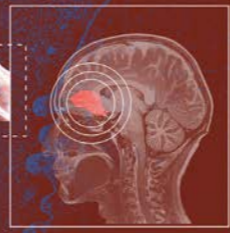
# GUIDE OF HIGH-ENERGY



**BASIC INFORMATION**  
RESIDENT: HWer  
WORLD: HIGH-Energy World  
ENERGY TEST DATE: 2046/04/08

Perceptual system: High sensitivity to the senses leading to easier excited.

TYPICAL HOUSE



GROUPING LIVING



TYPICAL CLOTHING



ENERGY CHANING PROCESS



# THE HISTORY OF THIS WORLD

-The completely division between Low-energy and High-energy world(2042-2052)

-The Problem of both Worlds/ Why need a 'transitional space?'

" TV News from Low-energy World "



" Warning in the high-energy world everywhere "

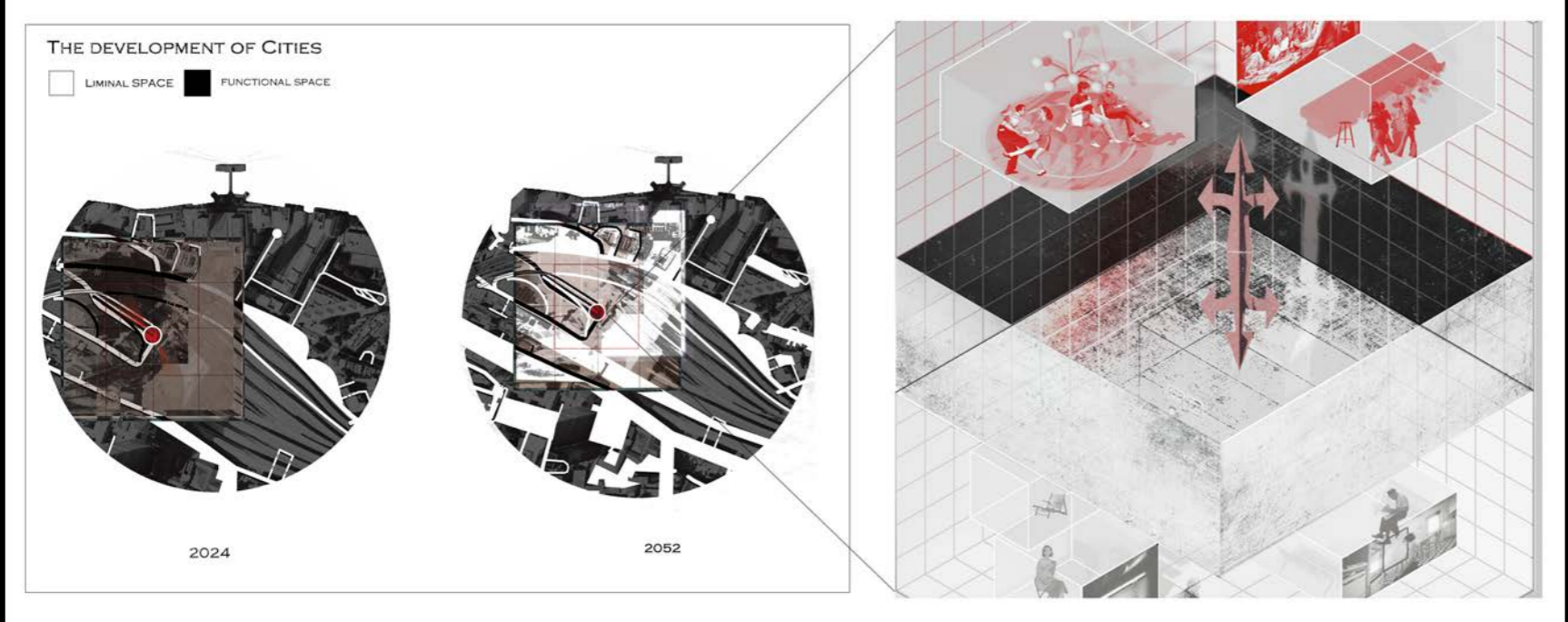


The problem occurs, however, when people travel to another world, and in the absence of any buffer zone and sufficient experience, people in low-energy areas often face sensory overload when arriving in high-energy worlds. And vice versa, people from high energy areas also face unbearable uneasiness, isolation and stagnation when they arrive in low energy worlds. These problems create a severe sense of imbalance, causing people to feel cut off and shocked when travelling to each other's worlds.

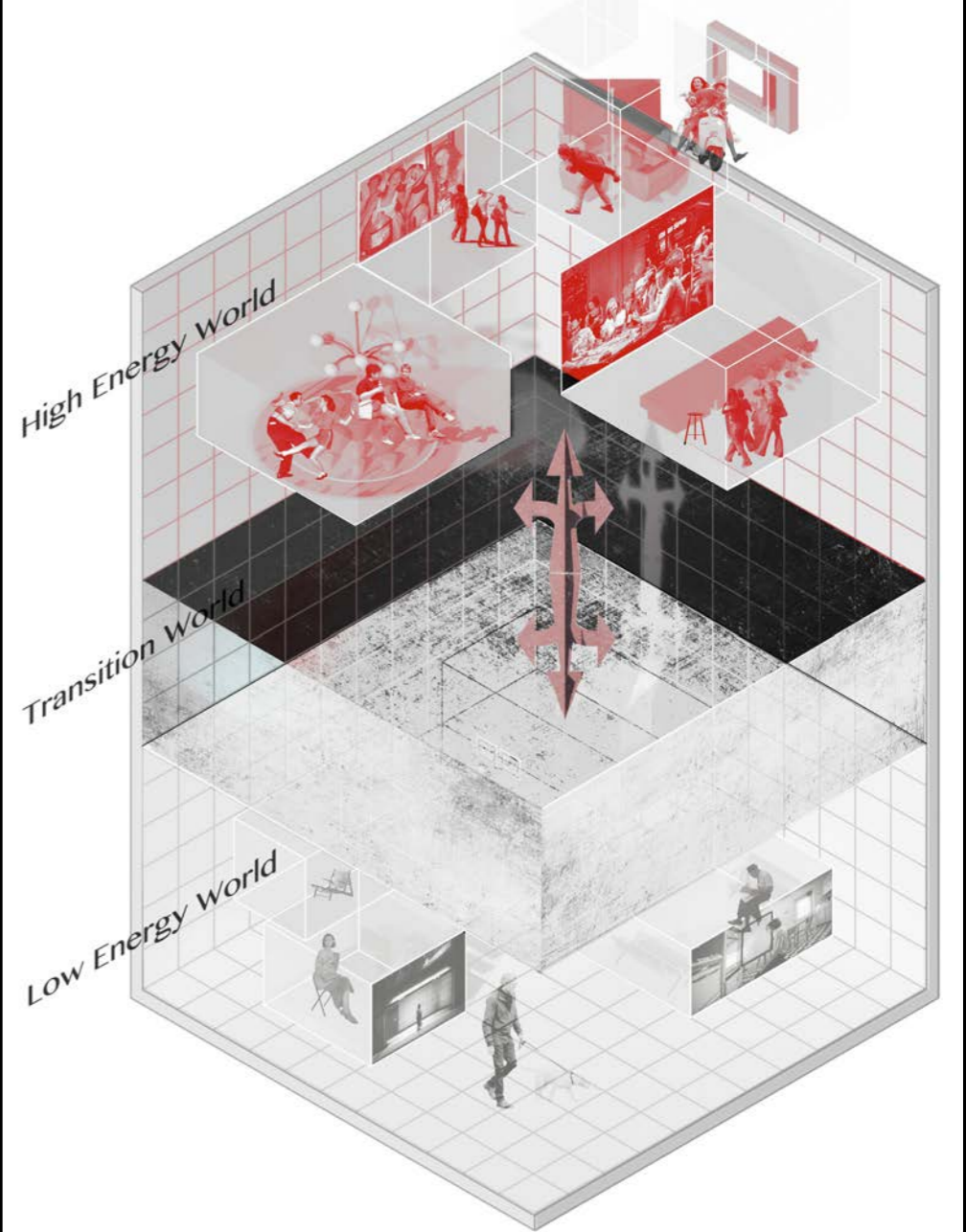
# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-The initial conceptual plan (2052)

Because these two worlds gradually encountered significant issue, people have become trapped in a cycle of dissatisfaction and are seeking a more balanced way of living, the government proposes a place to ease people from one side to the other side so that there's not much shock.



As a result, Transitional Space was proposed to help individuals adapt when traveling between the high-energy and low-energy worlds. It is a space where people from both worlds can converge, explore their emotions, reconcile differences, and seek balance.



# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-Short film concept(2052)  
/ *Storyboard*

Part 1 Scene 01



A person turned on his computer, He looks sad.  
Medium shot

Part 1 Scene 02



People in the clubs are drinking, all the people looks really exciting.

Part 1 //



Gradually,the world is divided into two seperate area.

Part 2 "Low Energy World" Scene 01



At noon,a girl sitting alone on a park bench.  
Medium shot

Part 2 "High Energy World" Scene 01



At noon,People toast in the restaurant.  
Medium shot

Part 2 "Low Energy World" Sence 02



At night, a girl opens the door of her home  
Close-up

Part 2 "High Energy World" Scene 02



Evening,people are dancing in club, and the atmosphere is really chaotic and full of desire.

Part 2 Scene 03



People can only travel between two extreme world,coming up or coming down.

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-Short film concept(2052)  
/ *Storyboard*

Part 2

Scene 03



Lift buttons. Only the first and top floors are lit.  
close-up

Part 2

Scene 03



People can only press these two buttons and  
circulate between these two areas.

Part 1

Scene 03



One day, all the buttons in the lift lit up.  
"What do these buttons mean?"

Part 1

Scene 03



Charcters from two different energy areas  
pressed buttons on the same level at the same  
time.

Part 3

"Transition Space"

Scene 01



They came to a transition area.

Part 2

"Low Energy World"

Scene 01



The charcter from the high energy area stands in  
the transition space,he is full of energy and looks  
excited.

Part 2

"High Energy World"

Scene 01



The charcter from the low energy area stands in  
the transition space,she looks quiet and introverted

Part 2

"Low Energy World"

Sence 02



People from two energy areas are conversing  
while their energy values gradually converge.

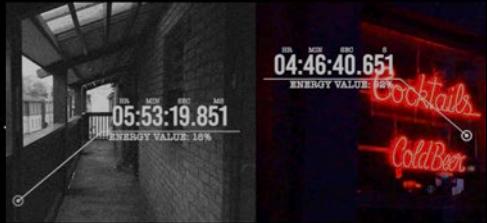
# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-What Happened to My Energy?(2052)

/ 90SEC FILM



Gradually, the world is divided into only two separate areas.



The film depicts how in the year 2052, people's energy are gradually going to extremes and there is no in-between, they have to cycle between these two extremes of energy. However, one day, an energy-balanced area emerges.....



The only way to get to another area is ....



People can only travel between extreme two worlds



UNTIL...



The Film Link:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1krTlx7UdymG5uwCtItB7IbJxb1UON6\\_k/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1krTlx7UdymG5uwCtItB7IbJxb1UON6_k/view?usp=drive_link)

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-London as a pilot (2052)

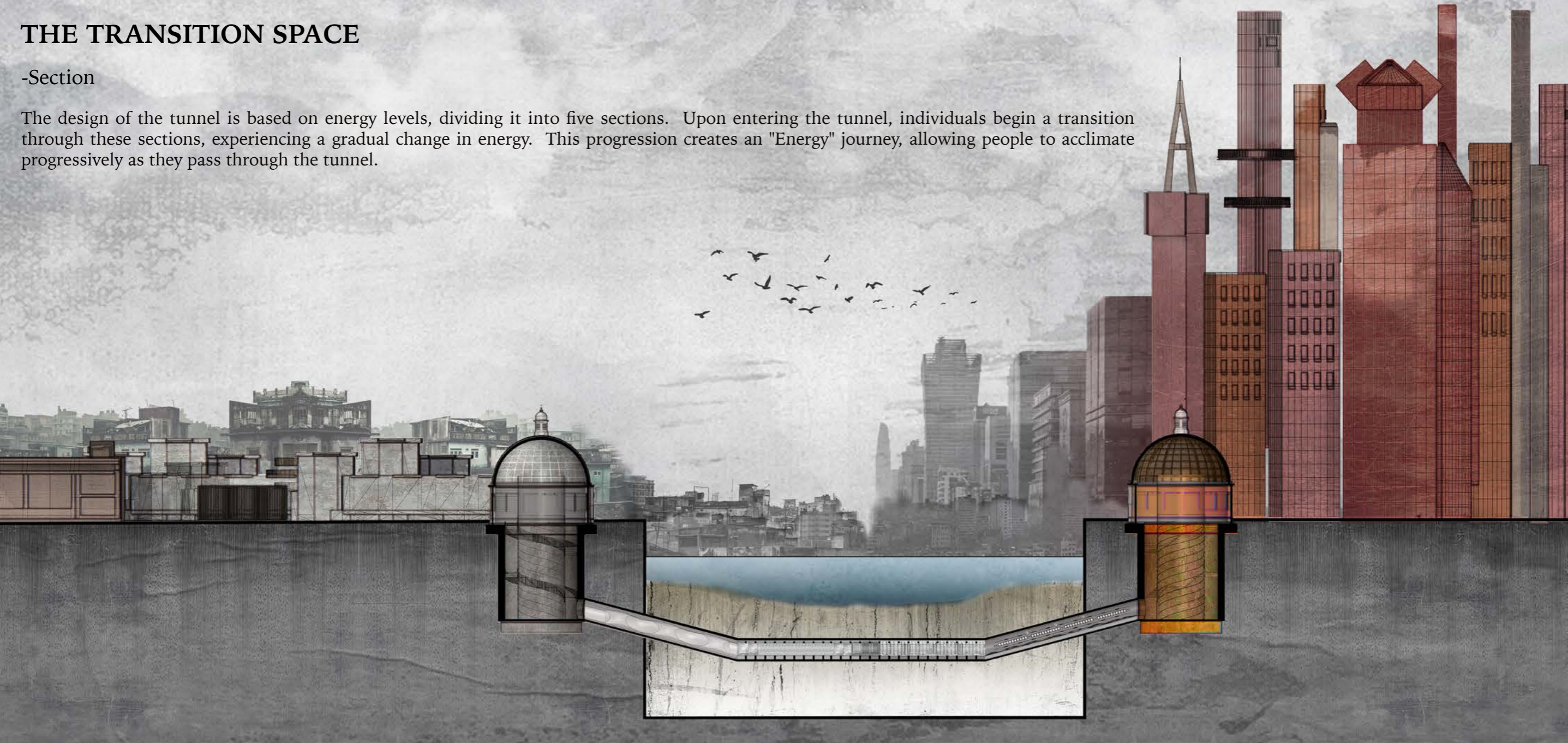


After decades of division, London is now bifurcated by the River Thames, with the high-energy world situated to the north and the low-energy world to the south. The sole passage between these two worlds is the Greenwich Foot Tunnel. This tunnel aim to function as a transitional space where individuals can acclimate to differing energy levels, facilitating greater comfort and adaptability, reducing fear and shock when traveling between the two worlds.

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

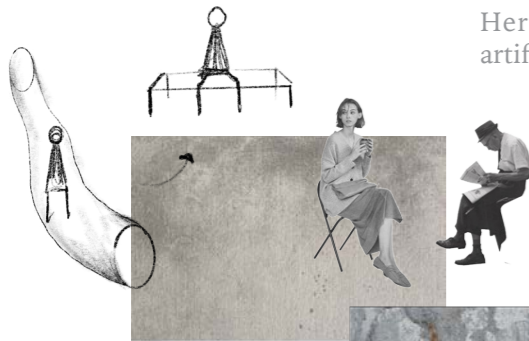
-Section

The design of the tunnel is based on energy levels, dividing it into five sections. Upon entering the tunnel, individuals begin a transition through these sections, experiencing a gradual change in energy. This progression creates an "Energy" journey, allowing people to acclimate progressively as they pass through the tunnel.



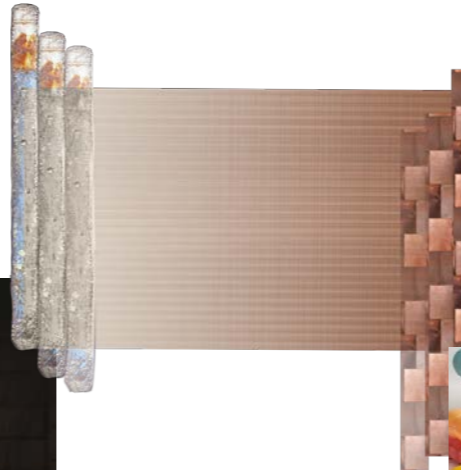
## -Space Strategy

### 85% Low Energy



With the gradual increase in energy, some of the finely crafted materials begin to be used, like the aluminium on the wall, it comes from some construction waste materials in the low-energy world. Here, the space is start to use some artificial, low saturation lighting.

### 50% Energy



Some deformable materials are decorated in floor and wall when reaching high-energy regions, caused with the increase of energy, engagement and interaction with one's environment are highly valued and this material can be easily changed in shape by touch.

Here, artificial lighting becomes the main lighting resource. Also, some highly reflective metals are used to manipulate light and energy in space.

### 85% High Energy



It's close enough to a high-energy world that the design here enhances some of the sensory experiences, such as some materials that can amplify sounds, and chaotic lighting. There will also be 'steep ramps' in this section, designed to allow access to highly dynamic environments and energetic states.

This is the area closest to the low energy world, so it uses one of the most common materials in the low energy world, organic fabric. Here, the space relies on natural lighting.

Also, since people in the low-energy world prefer to be alone, the passages here only allow one person to pass through at a time. In addition, simple seating is designed in the passageway, as people in the low-energy world are more likely to get tired.

### 65% Low Energy



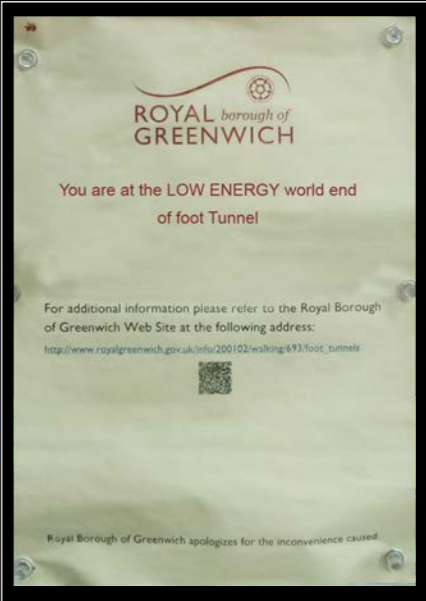
In this area, the features of the two energies are equal. So here, all the things are in gradients. People can experience a change in perspective when coming from two directions.

### 65% High Energy



# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-Entrance Stair(From Low-Energy World)



# THE TRANSITION SPACE

/ ECT 2052 /

-85% Low Energy / 15% High Energy



As individuals from the low-energy world value solitude, there are two passages available where they can choose to travel alone. The interior of the tunnel is devoid of extraneous design elements, utilizing breathable natural materials, which are the most common and primitive materials in the low-energy world.

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

/ ECT 2052 /

-65% Low Energy / 35% High Energy



As the energy grows, the lights are getting brighter. This area gradually begins to use some metal materials, however, the metal here is discarded and rusted, it comes from some construction waste materials in the low-energy world.

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-50% Low Energy / 50% High Energy



# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-65% High Energy / 35% Low Energy



This is the fourth area where the high energy continues to increase consistently and to show the fluidity and changeability of the high energy world, I use deformable materials that are oddly shaped and brightly colored.

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

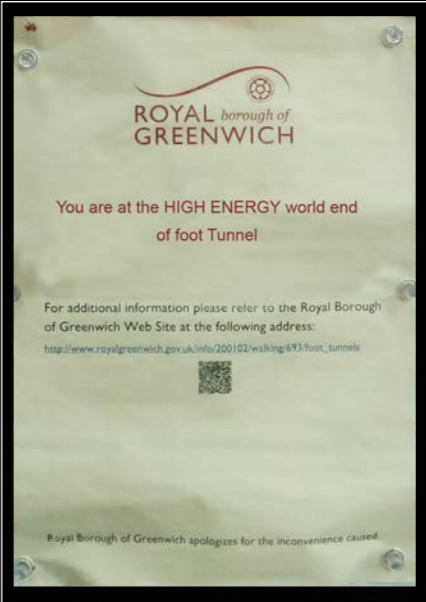
-85% High Energy / 15% Low Energy



In this area, all senses are amplified to reflect the dynamic, intense, and vibrant nature of the environment. Materials that enhance and represent sound are used, such as horn-shaped polished coppers on the ceiling to add to the effect of the changing noise, and here the effect of light is also more pronounced and getting even more chaotic.

# THE TRANSITION SPACE

-Exit Stair(Reach High-Energy World)



## CONCLUSION OF PROJECT

In my undergraduate studies, I was better at doing some 'traditional' interior design, so for me, superFuture was a big challenge in a direction I hadn't experienced before. After this project, I was taught sequence and consistency in design, learned to question my design choices by consistently asking "why," which has enabled me to establish a more comprehensive and coherent logic chain in my work.

The project was initially born out of an exploration of 'liminal space', a transitional space between two spaces. In order to find the entry point for the project, I did some research and found that in today's society, the gap between many phenomena is getting bigger and bigger, such as the poor and the rich, the beautiful and the ugly, politics, etc. The division between them is growing while the 'in-between zone' is getting smaller and smaller. In many countries, there is even a 'Divided City', which affects people's experience and perception of the 'outside world'. And there are differences between past divisions and present divisions, such as the way people define about wear, appearance, etc.

As a result, I predict that in the Second-world future, as the division grows and the 'in-between' decreases, the division in the world will no longer be based on class, wealth, beauty, ugliness, etc., but on energy. The world splits into a high-energy world and a low-energy world, with no in-between world, and these two worlds have completely different characteristics, experiences and perceptions.

In order to address the problems faced by the people of these two worlds in their journey to the other world, I designed a 'tunnel' based on the different materiality of the two worlds. I extracted the characteristics of the low-energy world and the high-energy world that can be transformed into a design element, so that the tunnel can form a space of "energy transition", so that the people of the two worlds can be more comfortable and acclimatize when travelling to each other's world.