FUTURES: Curatorial Statement
The Benjamin Menschel Civic Projects Lab 2024/25

This document sets the intellectual tone and strategic vision for the Benjamin Menschel Civic Projects Lab (CPL), and articulates and elevates the means and outcomes of its ongoing cultural, creative, and scientific outcomes and processes.

"I then saw that in great every city there would be a great many poor boys who would gladly turn in to an institution that would offer them instruction in the application of science to the necessary and useful purposes of life, something that I had felt the want of so much myself in all my business life that determined that if I could ever get the means, I would build an institution and have its doors open at night so that the boys no better off than I was could attend and get the benefit of such knowledge of science as would be applicable to trades and callings that they would fill in after life."
— from *The Autobiography of Peter Cooper*, dictated in 1882

*"Marking a significant step forward in its historic commitment to educating active citizens, The Cooper Union introduced its newest public space [in November 2021]. The Benjamin Menschel Civic Projects Laboratory will be an all-in-one classroom, workspace, and public showcase for interdisciplinary projects aimed at civic-focused issues. Designed to facilitate engagement with the broader New York City community, the lab can be viewed and entered from Third Avenue where it anchors one corner of Cooper Union's academic building, 41 Cooper Square. The Civic Projects Lab now provides a dedicated space for the kind of pedagogical undertakings that are foundational to **Cooper's mission of inspiring students to address critical societal challenges**."*—January 10, 2022 ("Unveiling the Benjamin Menschel Civic Projects Lab")

Vision Statement: FUTURES

Mission:
The Civic Projects Lab is committed to the shared pursuit of knowledge that is informed by and toward broader civic impact, import, and discourse that is inclusive of, but beyond the limits of, discipline constraints.

Purpose:
To build productive intellectual and creative processes and outcomes which are predicated on collaboration between academia and society on issues of civic concern for New York and its extended communities.

Values:
The CPL recognizes that education is broader than the confines of academia, and that, in keeping with Peter Cooper's legacy, education should be accessible to all, regardless of race, religion, gender, or economic status. This is complementary to the contemporary values of The Cooper Union.

The CPL incubates, facilitates, and integrates The Cooper Union community with public life beyond the classroom to promote commitment to active citizenship and contribute to an engaged community.

We support positive social change, and through our efforts, seek to bend the arc of history and learning towards a more perfect Union.

We take advantage of our location in New York City to make a difference in the civic life of local, associated, and global communities.

The CPL strives to center civic duty within the college while curating networks of thought and action with local and global communities to act collaboratively and respond to current issues.

The CPL holds that transdisciplinary pathways lead to the greatest social change and have clear, high, wide, and deep impact on education outcomes.

Reflection of the Curator:
For the CPL to reach its potential, it must secure and project a theory of praxis, which gives strategic shape and hierarchy to its content and how it projects itself to the Cooper community and society. The CPL can and should evolve toward a curated and strategic civic education resource. While the role of a director is administrative in nature, the curatorial act is an investment in coordinating the production of knowledge within a distinct thought frame. It is the duty of the CPL in The Cooper Union to infuse its higher education mandate with a deep and informed curiosity across multiple disciplines in conversation and in service of societies within and beyond academia.

While the role of the curator is an arbiter of content, it is informed by a structured engagement with the communities of The Cooper Union, the city, the world, and the Benjamin Menschel family.

FUTURES is the curatorial frame for the cultural production and praxis of the Benjamin Menschel Civic Projects Lab for 2024/25.

*The future is understood as an unfolding reality, indeterminate in nature, but proximate to what is known, a perturbation from the current moment, and an act of critical imagination. The motor and motto of this curatorial frame is **experimenta per disciplinam**, or "experimentation over instruction."*

Civic:
From the French word *civique* or the Latin word *civicus*, which comes from the word *civis* meaning "citizen," it suggests belonging to one or more communities, in which the actions of the individual or citizen are subject to and in support of a social compact with that community.

Project:
A discrete set of activities and or processes with specific outcomes, it comes from the Latin word *projectum,* which is the past participle of the Latin verb *proicere*. *Proicere* is made up of pro-, which means precedence,

and *iacere*, which means "to do". The word project originally meant "before an action." By nature, and desire, *projects are ideally speculative*.

Laboratory:

In the 14th century, the word "laboratory" was commonly used to describe a place where labor, under a specific set of controlled conditions, took place. In the 16th century, the term began to be used to describe the workplaces of physicians, alchemists, apothecaries, and others, working on the edges of known knowledge. The hallmark of the laboratory is the experiment to advance knowledge. *It is distinct but complementary to the classroom where the primary purpose is to transmit accepted knowledge.*

"It is said that the present is pregnant with the future… no given state is naturally explicable except by means of that which has immediately preceded it" — Leibniz.

Seized by the question of what we know, and what is possible, we as civic actors sit on the cusp of looking forwards and backwards, like the mythical Janus, who saw both beginnings and endings as an equal simultaneity. The CPL is a laboratory, a primary site of speculation and curated curiosity, where we will experiment, postulate, and observe on imagined FUTURES, looking inward and outward, to and fro, with civic society and academia in acute and urgent dialogue with the past and present.

Operating beyond the confines of the classroom model and eschewing the temptation to replicate established knowledge as the sum of our virtue, we recognize the spirit of discovery and evolution; we recognize the spirit of contesting civic ideas as vital to the pursuit of dialogues of civic virtue.

Experimenta per disciplinam

Experiments = Initiatives Workshops Research Symposia Publication Installation Project Grants

Nostra definitio:
A micro-glossary for the CPL. These experiments are to be seen as coterminous with the mission of the CPL.

Initiative:
A movement, concept, or proposal that may or may not "spinout" to become an independent entity to achieve greater societal and education impact. This is also inclusive of spinoffs, such as academic-based, public-private partnerships.

Workshop:
A workshop entails discussions and/or engagement that builds toward a broader body of work.

Research:
Critical enquiry into one or more curated issues.

Symposia:
Public roundtables to discuss a specific topic in conversation with society.

Publication:
Any and all media that captures and produces ideas for general dissemination as, for example, a book, journal, pamphlet, or piece of music.
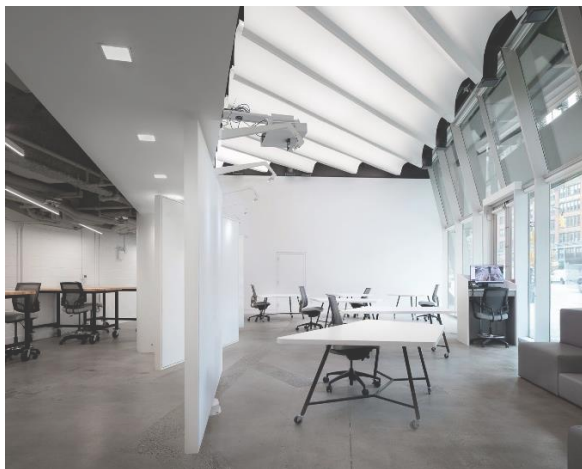
Installation:
Physical representation of a finite set of ideas for civic engagement.

Grants:
Endowments, sponsorship, fees for service, and donations, pursued alone or in partnership.

Geography versus impact

The physical extents of the CPL are modest, but the impact and reach of the CPL extends beyond its physical *terroir.* The CPL will consciously reach out across the footprint of The Cooper Union community in line with its civic mandate and construct new imaginaries and projects, initiatives, and alliances for the betterment of all.
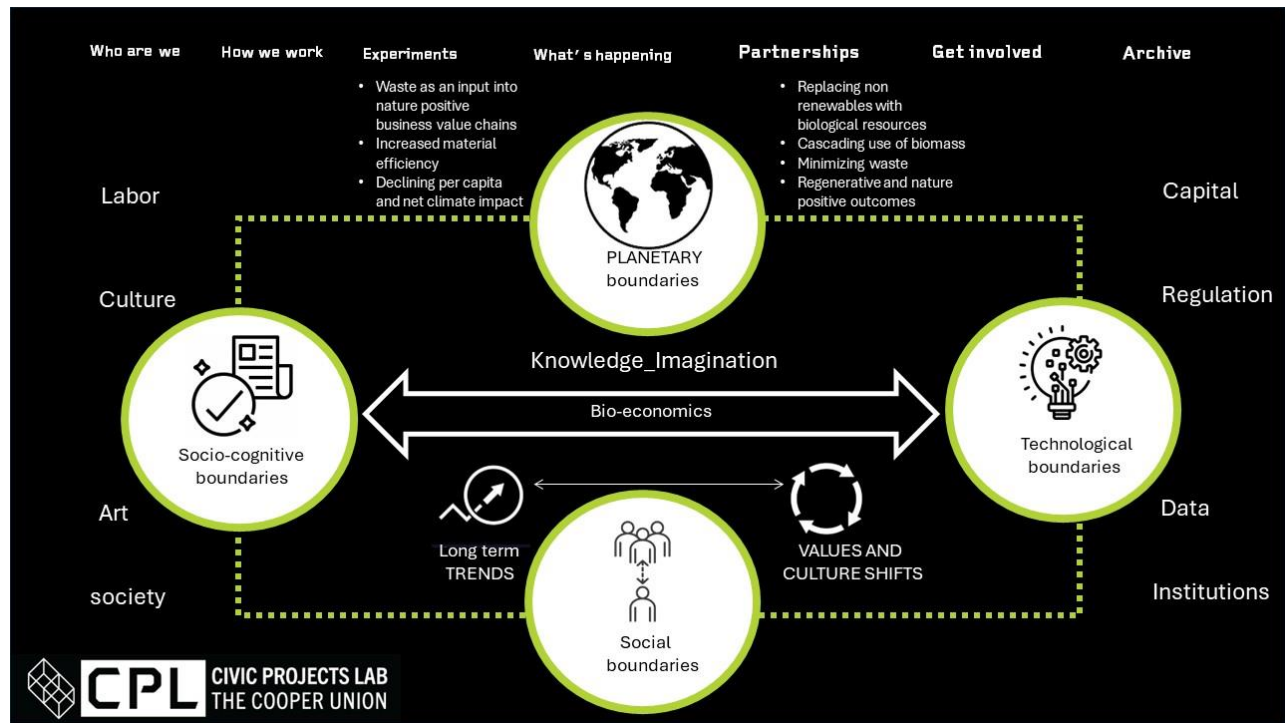
(1)   CPL, 41 Cooper Square

Argument: "Why FUTURES matter"

The world is in a polycrisis where anthropocentrism has created an interconnected web of climate and social shocks and risks, which cannot be adequately read or mitigated via purely local means. The polycrisis is a network of perils defined by the non-linear amplification of local predicament, and these aggregate to significantly degrade humanity's prospects for success in a pluralistic and nature positive world. The local

and the global are in this inescapable continuum' and the climate transition is just as much a political, technical, and innovation process and entanglement of anthromes.

Split between the tensions of climate denial and techno-optimism, and the paralysis caused by the seemingly insurmountable ecological stewardship this epoch requires, the world is at peculiar tipping point between progressive and conservative perceptions of the future. These splits are maintained by the notion that science alone, (or in relative dominance), can reconfigure reality and discover new efficiencies that will suppress the necessity to recast the relationship between body and earth, body and community, political economy, and various social constructs that shape who "we" are. Equally, a growing subsidence from fact has led to an increasingly unstable social and political discourse and the ascendancy of doubt. In addition, there is a reassertion of discredited tropes on social media platforms that are often mediated by the lowest common denominator of consensus, guised as bastions of free speech and independence of thought.

It is prudent to resist the framing of laboratory as indicative of empirical and replicable truth or objective data. Instead, it is the preoccupation of the CPL to equally include the subjective and non-linear outcomes of inquiry that are inherent to social investigations. The CPL argues for artistic and technical inquiry rooted in the unquantifiable question of society and its constituent communities. While the spirits of architecture, art, engineering, and human social sciences may differ, the CPL argues for a common supplication at the altar of inquiry to better the human and planetary condition. To do so requires active and curated "Encounters of difference."

(2) Cultural Flywheel, Makeka 2024

Encountering these socio-technological divides and their impacts on society is, in a manner, an act of civic duty and an acknowledgement that education, devoid of the social contexts or communities in which they operate, is a diminishing enterprise. To be civic is to engage in the public arena – *Civitas* indeed denotes belonging to community – with codified cultural rights and responsibilities which aggregate to a social construct of productive participation. Thus, to be civic is an act of citizenry and kinship, and the city remains the premier archetype and articulation of the multiple communities of citizenship and belonging; the city is the complicit and synthetic vehicle for the daily flow of goods, services, material, social and political practices. Accordingly, "rewriting the city" has civic implications, and conversely one cannot be civic without a cosmopolitan entanglement with the city and its cultural, social, ecological, and material boundaries. Accordingly, to be "civic" is to be engaged in the city, its milieu and metropolitan modernities, which are often both global and local in nature. Thus, the future of the city and its rural hinterlands are dynamic, porous, and precarious in cultural, geopolitical, and ecological terms.

New York

(3) Lower Manhattan, Creative Commons- Wikipedia

(4) What was once called "The Jewish Quarter" now the Lower East Side. Photograph by Lewis W. Hine in 1912. Photograph courtesy of the New York Public Library.

The City of New York has a strong unifying super culture that coexists with neighborhood subcultures and a wide variety of traditions; it stands out as a globally unique urban example of cosmopolitanism. It has always been a city of the "Other." In 1855, 51% of New York residents were foreign born, and it is no wonder that it earned the title of the great "Melting Pot," (Israel Zangwill, 1908) for its ability to provide an immersive and diverse experience of culture, religion, and traditions from all over the world. New York is the home of the United Nations, more than 800 recorded languages, and a global center of finance and commerce. This coupled with its culture, technology, entertainment and media, academics and scientific output, the arts and fashion, makes New York a unique laboratory. The thematic questions of migrant versus local, and the transition pathways have and will always be contested terrain between the aegis of incumbent communities and those which are fluid and emergent.

Cities and urban areas are responsible for 70% of greenhouse gases and causal to various negative outcomes such as biodiversity decline, anthrome expansion, increased inequality, and extreme weather patterns, to name a few. Global building floor area is forecast to double by 2060. To accommodate the largest wave of urban growth in human history, the planet will require an additional 2.4 trillion ft^2 (230 billion m^2) of new floor area to the global building stock, the equivalent of adding an entire New York City to the world, every month, for the next 40 years. Achieving zero emissions from new construction will require energy efficient buildings that use no on-site fossil fuels and are 100% powered by on- and/or off-site renewable energy, with vast labor relations, educational, and technical implications and dependencies. This urban demand will largely be in the so-called "lower-middle-income countries." Established cities of developed economies are not exempt from reimagination; ageing cities, the rise of AI, and its perceived threat to labor markets, food security, immigration and inclusivity, inequity in incarceration, insufficient access to affordable housing, and the need for renewable infrastructure are all palpable, to the point of being cyclically instrumentalized in political discourse. The city is often the frontier and the departure point for these oscillations.

"Cities are major contributors to climate change."According to UN Habitat, "cities consume 78% of the world's energy and produce more than 60% of greenhouse gas emissions." Yet, they account for less than 2%of the Earth's surface. By contrast, 47% of arable land is used in the production of food, suggesting that the planetary impact of cities far exceeds their geographic boundaries.

The sheer density of people relying on fossil fuels makes urban populations highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Fewer green spaces exacerbate the problem. According to the IPCC report, limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius would "require rapid and far-reaching transitions in uses of energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems."

An added challenge is the projection, in a UN report, that another 2.5 billion people will reside in urban areas by 2050: nearly 90% of them in cities in Asia and Africa. "The good news is that cities around the world have already begun to take measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and are putting policies in place that encourage the use of alternative energy sources. Efforts by policy makers and administrators to address climate change, however, will need to accelerate to keep pace with population growth and the rapid climate change" (UN, 2018).

Arguably, the polycrisis can be distilled into three primary areas. While doing so is a complex and subjective task as different experts and individuals may prioritize different issues based on their perspectives, some commonly cited challenges considered critical for the future of humanity are clustered as follows:

1. Climate Change and Environmental Degradation:
Climate change poses a significant threat to the planet and its inhabitants, leading to rising global temperatures, extreme weather events, sea-level rise, loss of biodiversity, and other environmental impacts. Addressing climate change and promoting sustainable environmental practices are crucial for the long-term well-being of humanity.

2. Global Health Pandemics:
The emergence of global health pandemics, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the vulnerability of human populations to infectious diseases. Ensuring global health security, strengthening healthcare systems, and addressing issues related to disease prevention, detection, and response are essential challenges for humanity.

3. Inequality and Social Justice:
Economic inequality, social injustice, and systemic discrimination pose significant challenges to human well-being and societal stability. Addressing issues related to poverty, inequality (data, AI, access to education, healthcare, etc.), and social justice are fundamental for creating a more equitable and inclusive world for all individuals.
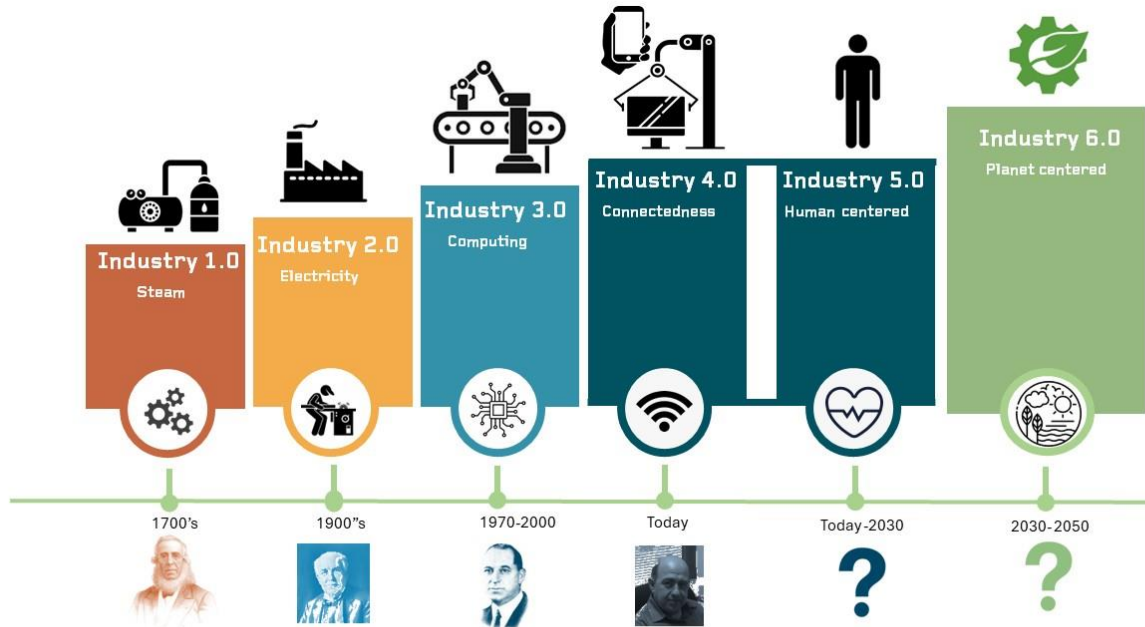
These challenges are interconnected and require coordinated global efforts, innovative solutions, and collective action to address effectively. Additionally, other critical challenges, such as technological advancements, geopolitical tensions, and ethical dilemmas, also play significant roles in shaping the future of humanity, and while we seek to shape the future, let us understand the past.

Olalekan Jeyifous, "Devotees of the Petrotopia 01," 2021; digital collage; 200cm x 125 cm.

In sum, the city as a construct, captures architecture, engineering, art, and the humanities and social sciences, all of which are ontologically engaged with the flow of goods, ideas, and social constructs and implicated by the city as the predominant stage for human behavior. To confront and orient civically grounded pedagogy is to work across, though, and with[in] disciplines in shaping FUTURES.

Accordingly, while we operate and conceive our actions in-loco, a cosmopolitan regard is required, and a deliberate rethinking of the centrality of monolithic human interests in the context of the planet. The Sixth Industrial Revolution (Makeka 2024) suggests a planet-centric approach to development, bending the current arc of the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR, the digitization of manufacturing, and the Internet of Things/IOT), and the 5th Industrial Revolution (5IR, the Internet of People/IOP) toward planet-smart, socio-economic development. It is our task to shape the next generation of thinkers and doers who will, in turn, shape a world that will ameliorate the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways. To nurture actors who are equipped to navigate and articulate a local and global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and eradicate poverty, the CPL must contribute to planetary impact through local action and partnerships.

(Makeka, 2024- the 6th Industrial Revolution)

Embedded within the construct of FUTURES is an inherent tension with the past, and the manner of social, spatial, and political practices that in association mediate these flows of labor, ideas, and being. Sir Thomas More's novel, *Utopia*, written in 1516, is an argument for a particularly regulated proximation of the perfect society where urbanization, economy, and governance are equally complicit and explicated. While the origin of the term "utopia" has its origins in Greek antiquity, it is a commune argumentum for many imaginary exploits in film, literature, architecture, art, and engineering to this day. When Fritz Lang's seminal silent movie, *Metropolis*, was released in 1927 on the eve of the Great Depression, the movie imagined a society in 2025, bifurcated by science and technology. It was further defined by high inequality, an obsession with mind-numbing resource extraction, a teeming multitude of poorly paid and downtrodden workers, toiling in anonymity all to the implied service of a skyscraper-dwelling intellectual elite. Its critique of modernity, infrastructure, and capital deployment is prescient of our contemporary world, where the details and the scale of Lang's politics have evolved from the factory to that of the city, and arguably the fractious relationships between nation-states and their institutions.

Metropolis- Maria Awakens- reimagined through Midjourney.com.

FUTURES is an invitation to redefine these and other social constructs, as sites of experimentation between the social, artistic, and scientific spheres of being. It is not a denunciation of the past, but rather a positioning of the imagination as an act of creating "future pasts" or plausible speculations of society as we know it.

FUTURES suggests that an intermingling of indigenous and scientific traditions, of the academic and speculative, of canon and the unknown may reveal fertile pathways to thread our way through the polycrisis.

One cannot imagine **FUTURES** without questioning what it means to be human through the myths, arts, science, and tenets of our time.

- ❖ What constitutes being?
- ❖ What does planetary stewardship entail?
- ❖ What must we ask to answer the questions of our time?
- ❖ What is the creative and social intersection between knowledge and inquiry?
- ❖ What is local and what is global?

As the CPL explores **FUTURES,** its purpose is far less about the secure transmittal of authoritative fact (the classroom in its narrowest scholastic sense), but rather as a thematic connective tissue between society and our imagination, exploring its tension and porosity as fertile grounds for reframed scholarship, partnerships, and discovery. It is more accordingly ontological than pedagogical, more interrogative than canonical, and

prioritizes speculation across disciplines over teaching within one discipline. The CPL should be the site of discovering anew.

FUTURES will deploy interdisciplinary tools within The Cooper Union community but pursue transdisciplinary methods in the interests of societal impact and comport with a view toward relevance and engagement beyond academic confines.

FUTURES acknowledges the polycrisis of the prevailing human condition and the unique confluence of the CPL and the City of New York, acting as a globally exceptional conurbation of communities, talent, and potential.

FUTURES is where the world meets our community, and our community meets the world.

FUTURES draws new lines amidst the old and seeks to describe the interstitial space and societal possibilities between, using past, present, and the future as complementary and indivisible areas of inquiry. The "Theory of Change" ideas flourish in a climate where they are gestated, nourished, and released into the lived world to reinform our thinking and to foster the generation of new ideas.

To achieve this ambition, the CPL will have three pillars, recognizing that a theory of change model for greatest impact and dialogue must:

- ❖ Incubate
- ❖ Facilitate
- ❖ Integrate

Incubate.

The CPL recognizes that it acts as a connective tissue between the schools of The Cooper Union and society, a laboratory for experimentation, and structured speculation. As such it can host initiatives, ideas, ventures, and pedagogical propositions which sit beyond teaching outcomes, but overlap with the learning intent of societal import. The CPL can also serve as a place where faculty, students, and society can submit experiments/initiatives for nurturing and hosting, subject to curatorial approval and alignment with thematic constraints.

Facilitate.

The CPL recognizes that building "thought bridges" between our faculties and society will require active curation and solicitation of content. While the work of transcending disciplinary boundaries is core to the ethos of Peter Cooper, it remains a work in progress at The Cooper Union. Interdisciplinary practice within the schools will be addressed in part by aligning interests to societal issues that will require collaboration between our faculties and civil society.

Addressing the polycrisis is the underlying tenet of the curatorial theme, FUTURES.

Complexity theorists Edgar Morin and Anne Brigitte Kern first used the term polycrisis in their 1999 book, *Homeland Earth*, to argue that the world faces "no single vital problem, but many vital problems, and it is this complex intersolidarity of problems, antagonisms, crises, uncontrolled processes, and the general crisis of the planet that constitutes the number one vital problem" (p. 74) (Morrin, Kern, 1999) ("Where did the term polycrisis come from? – Polycrisis.org")
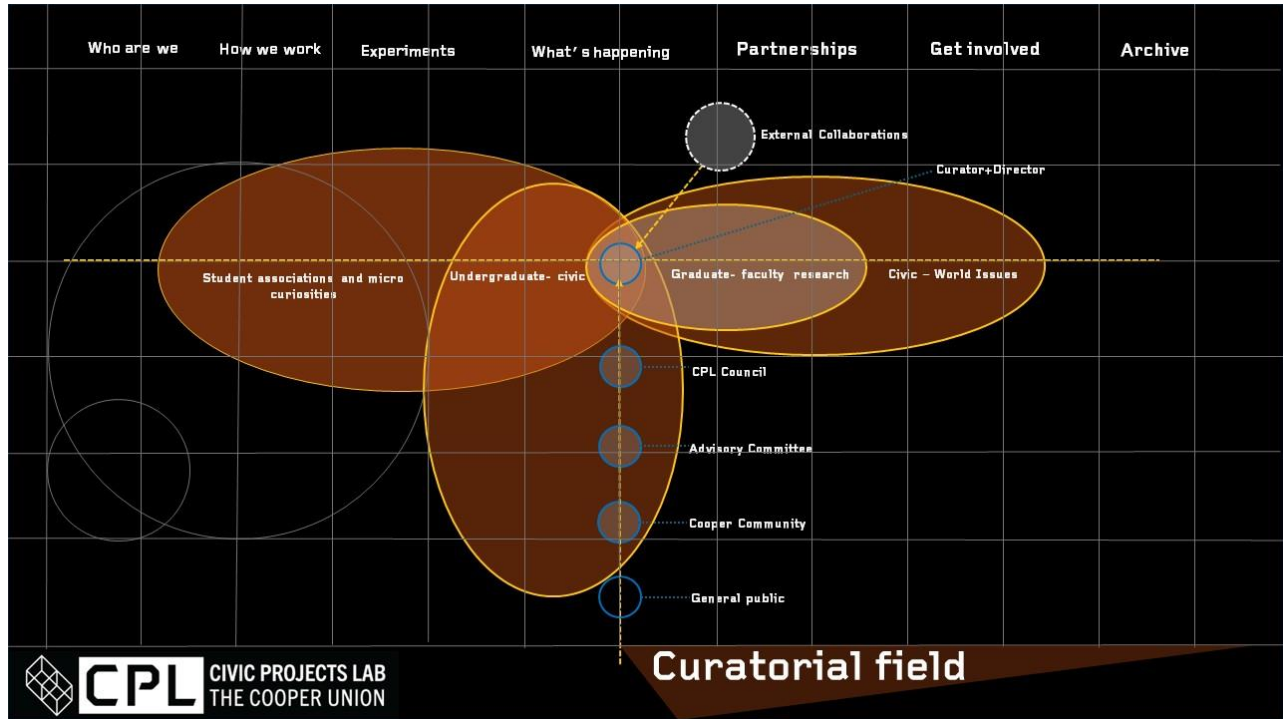
 "South African sociologist and sustainable transitions theorist Mark Swilling then adopted the term to capture "a nested set of globally interactive socio-economic, ecological, and cultural-institutional crises that defy reduction to a single cause" (2013, p. 98). ("Where did the term polycrisis come from? Polycrisis.org") Climate change, rising inequality, and the threat of financial crises interact in complex ways that multiply their overall impact (Swilling 2013, 2019).

Integrate:

The CPL shall play an active role toward influencing curriculum evolution, supporting enrollment, inspiring intra- and extra-civic discourse, and where necessary leading with agency on processes to secure and deploy resources, partnerships, and creating the necessary infrastructure to enable this.

The CPL is premised on a belief that project-level interventions can achieve impact at scale and at a policy and professional level where insights can be delivered across multiple civic spaces and communities. Policy- and practitioner-level interventions can also guide project practice and education, where solutions can be further informed by the realities and requirements of policymakers and practitioners and the insights of our community. Across all engagements, the user-centric insights collected within the communication and engagement workstreams can be further integrated into solutions that are activated to ensure as inclusive an approach as possible. Potential activation outputs include the development of progressive and inclusive policies to influence education through civic relevance: Leveraging the creation of data and knowledge to advise decision makers in communities of interest.

FUTURES is a curatorial commitment to creating knowledge that is civic in impact, technologically grounded, transdisciplinary in mode, and planet-smart.

Pedagogical Frames of the CPL:
These are a set of nested and complementary constructs, which reveal potential, specific areas of inquiry and interest at the micro frame level.

1. Meta Frame:
    ❖ Civic

2. Macro Frame:
    ❖ FUTURES

3. Meso Frame:
    ❖ Accelerating Inequality
    ❖ Biodiversity Decline
    ❖ Climate-Smart Urbanism
    ❖ Socio-Spatial Justice
    ❖ Bio-innovation

4. Micro Frame:
    Housing
    ❖ Affordable Housing: This area of research focuses on the availability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options for low-income households, including strategies for increasing

affordable housing supply and addressing homelessness.
- ❖ Housing Policy and Regulation: This area examines the impact of government policies, laws, and regulations on the housing market, including topics like rent control, zoning laws, and subsidies.
- ❖ Housing and Community Development: This research area explores the relationship between housing and community development, including the social and economic impacts of housing on communities, and strategies for community revitalization.
- ❖ Housing and Health: This area investigates the connections between housing conditions, quality, and health outcomes, including the impact of housing on mental health, physical health, and well-being.
- ❖ Sustainable Housing and Environmental Impact: This research area focuses on the environmental sustainability of housing, including energy efficiency, green building practices, and the impact of housing on climate change and the environment.

Migrants, identity, and demographic change: These areas of research explore the complex relationships between migration, identity, and demographic change, including the social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of migrant experiences and the impact on host societies.
- ❖ Acculturation and Integration Processes
- ❖ Identity Formation and Negotiation
- ❖ Cultural Heritage and Preservation
- ❖ Language Barriers and Communication
- ❖ Migration Policy and Governance
- ❖ Refugee Resettlement and Asylum Seekers
- ❖ Xenophobia and Discrimination
- ❖ Migrant Mental Health and Well-being
- ❖ Transnationalism and Global Connectivity
- ❖ Diaspora Communities and Homeland Ties
- ❖ Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Resolution
- ❖ Education and Cultural Diversity
- ❖ Labor Market Integration and Economic Mobility
- ❖ Political Participation and Representation
- ❖ Demographic Change and Social Cohesion

Living: These subsets of research explore various aspects of future living, including technological innovations, sustainable practices, social connections, and healthy environments. They can help shape the development of future living spaces that are equitable, resilient, and supportive of human well-being.
- ❖ Sustainable Urban Planning
- ❖ Climate-Smart Home Technologies
- ❖ Virtual and Augmented Reality in Living Spaces
- ❖ Aging in Place and Inclusive Design
- ❖ Community Engagement and Social Connection
- ❖ Healthy Buildings and Indoor Air Quality

- ❖ Autonomous Vehicles and Mobility
- ❖ Sharing Economy and Collaborative Consumption
- ❖ Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming
- ❖ Artificial Intelligence and Personalized Living
- ❖ Resilient and Adaptive Housing
- ❖ Circular Economy and Waste Reduction
- ❖ Digital Nomadism and Remote Work
- ❖ Virtual and Hybrid Communities

Climate-smart innovation: These areas of research focus on developing innovative solutions to address climate change, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to climate impacts, and promoting sustainable development. They span various sectors, from energy and agriculture to infrastructure and water management and involve interdisciplinary approaches to address the complexity of climate challenges.
- ❖ Carbon Capture and Utilization Technologies
- ❖ Renewable Energy Systems and Grid Integration
- ❖ Sustainable Agriculture and Climate-Resilient Farming
- ❖ Climate-Resilient Infrastructure and Urban Planning
- ❖ Electric and Hybrid Transportation Systems
- ❖ Green Building Materials and Energy Efficiency
- ❖ Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies
- ❖ Water Management and Conservation Technologies
- ❖ Ocean Fertilization and Marine Carbon Sequestration
- ❖ Bioenergy and Biochemicals from Renewable Biomass
- ❖ Climate Smart Agriculture and Precision Farming
- ❖ Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Resilience
- ❖ Climate Change Impact Assessment and Vulnerability Mapping
- ❖ Sustainable Water Management and Wastewater Treatment
- ❖ Circular Economy and Waste Reduction Strategies

Digital justice, data mapping and AI: These research areas cover a wide range of topics related to the intersection of digital justice and AI, addressing important ethical, legal, and societal implications.
- ❖ Bias and fairness in AI algorithms, data capture, and decision making
- ❖ Ethical implications of AI in the criminal justice system
- ❖ Access to justice through digital platforms
- ❖ Data privacy and security in digital justice systems
- ❖ Use of AI in predicting recidivism rates
- ❖ Algorithmic transparency and accountability
- ❖ Digital evidence admissibility in court
- ❖ AI-powered legal research and analysis
- ❖ Impact of AI on legal decision-making processes
- ❖ Algorithmic decision-making in social services

- ❖ Use of AI in online dispute resolution
- ❖ Digital divide in access to justice services
- ❖ AI in law enforcement and surveillance
- ❖ AI in legal aid and pro bono services
- ❖ Intersection of digital justice and human rights protection

In conclusion, the CPL welcomes applications for collaboration and access from the Cooper Union community and beyond. We prioritize applications which are civic in impact and involvement, speculative and exploratory in nature, and which engage the broad Cooper community in line with the prevailing curatorial statement. (Macro Frame).

We prioritize efforts that have a tangible impact and input upon and through our faculties and bias such efforts that engage multiple disciplines within and outside of The Cooper Union.

We encourage mixed media, and interactive, multi-sensorial experiments.

The CPL operates in a transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary mode.

Mokena Makeka

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Special Advisor to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, The Cooper Union

B'Arch (dist.)Hons, WEF YGL/ Archbishop Desmond Tutu Fellow, Aspen Fellow, Oxford Executive leadership, Harvard Kennedy school, Former President of the South African Institute of Architects, UIA