

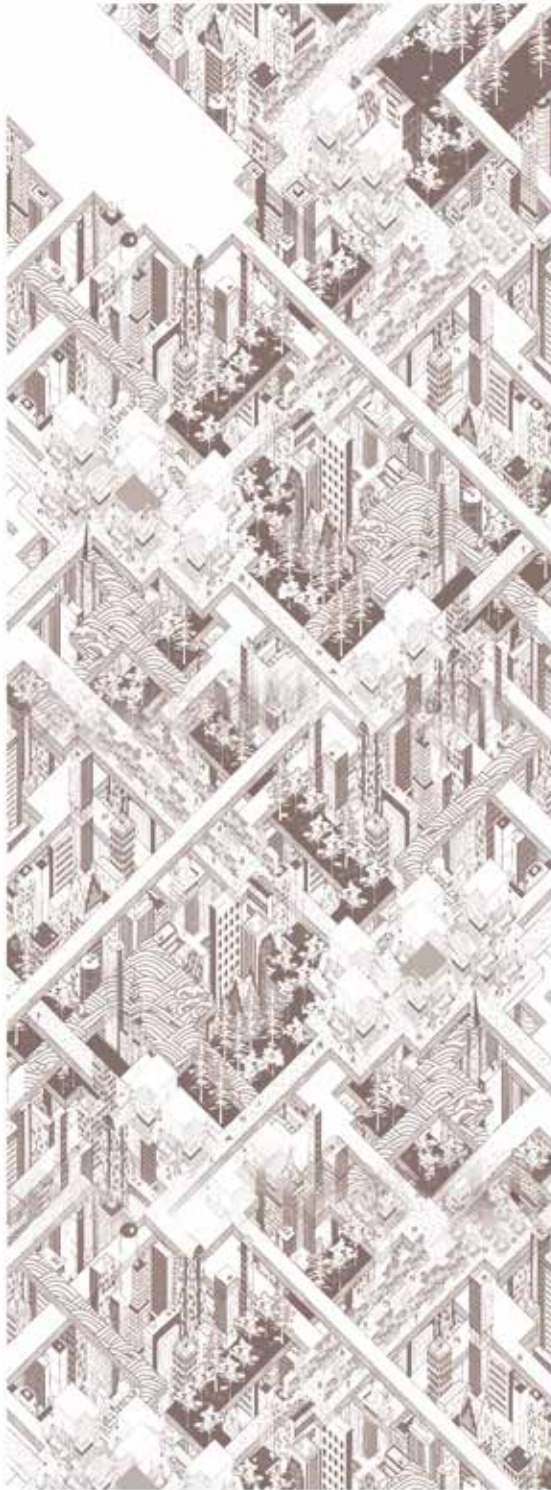
The *Fifth Region* draws its influences from a variety of sources. Firstly, its rich visual palette derives from popular culture and sci-fi cinema genres which project futures, such as the 1997 Luc Bresson film *The Fifth Element*. Also, one finds pointed references to films which use Hong Kong as a speculative context for futuring, such as the 2017 film *Ghost in the Shell*. Related influences are drawn from *Manga* or *Manhua*, the visually rich narratives of which have developed into a specific genre in Hong Kong over the last century. Kwok has combined these influences together with elements from traditional Chinese graphic paintings and landscape representations which depict mankind's relationship to mountains, the sky and heaven, in ways that allow him to reorder the man-made world of Hong Kong, re-imagining it for the purpose of telling new stories.

Secondly, Kwok has also linked his approach to a critique of present-day projected futures for the city. For instance, the contentious "Lantau Tomorrow Vision" of 2018 proposes a new area of Hong Kong to be built on artificial islands to address future needs that are possibly spurious, while constant urban renewal and the rapid densification of Hong Kong's older urban areas continue to ravage other parts of the city. As Kwok explains, the point of departure for the *Fifth Region* is that although the city's numerous tall buildings are apparently efficient, they still need to rely on the ground to connect with each other. The *Fifth Region* therefore questions what the phenomenological, social and psychological consequences might be if another new region were to be created above the city, one in which people no longer need to reach the ground but still form an active part of society. How would this define lifestyles, behaviours, social orders and environmental ecosystems? How can we unfold its implications in ways that speculate, narrate and explore future possibilities?

Thirdly, Kwok draws from spatial narrative, an increasingly popular field of critical work by architects and designers that shifts design-thinking processes from the projective design of a "real" object towards the speculative. Spatial narratives posit the construction of imaginary visual worlds that engage critical discourse on design-related issues. Such speculative practices have an important role outlining different socio-cultural narratives. This approach is not new—the history of spatial narrative in architecture encompasses architects including Antonio Sant'Elia's *Manifesto of Futurist Architecture* (2003), Cedric Price's Fun Palace, Nigel Coates, CJ Lim, as well as the Soviet revolutionary architects of the 1920s and the later Paper Architects in the former Soviet Union. The seminal work of Archigram in the 1960s and 1970s and Constant Nieuwenhuy's New Babylon explorations remain highly influential.

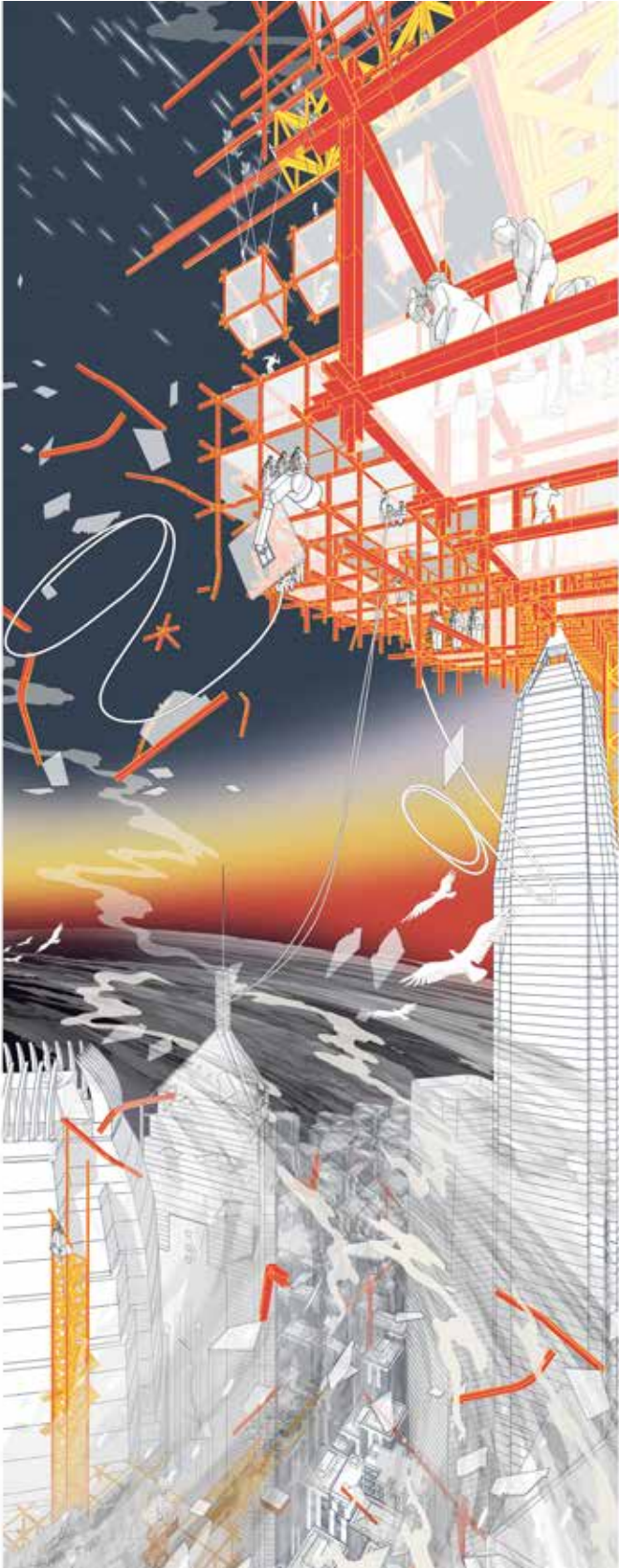
Spatial narratives – as Lucas Kwok shows us – function as ciphers for what cannot be expressed through conventional design processes and their necessity is inestimable in these current times.

The Imagination - Collage



**Figure 1:** Chapter 1, *Escape And Create*. The story outlines the beginning of the escape to the not-yet-existing Fifth Region from the chaos and darkness of the street. *Source: Lucas Kwok.*





**Figures 2-4** (opposite and this page): Chapter 2-4, *Migration; Challenge; Disaster, and Rescue*. Demonstrates a series of events and situations arising from living in the sky. These events highlight the wealth disparity between those on the ground and those in the sky; and give rise to new problems such as vertical littering as well as air and wind pollution as well as the safety problems that arise if there is an unexpected disaster up there. *Source: Lucas Kwok.*



**Figure 5:** Chapter 5, *New Region*. Shows the transition towards a new Fifth Region. This highlights the large scale and infrastructural necessities through a macro-scale view showing the older city landscape of the other four regions left behind. *Source:* Lucas Kwok.

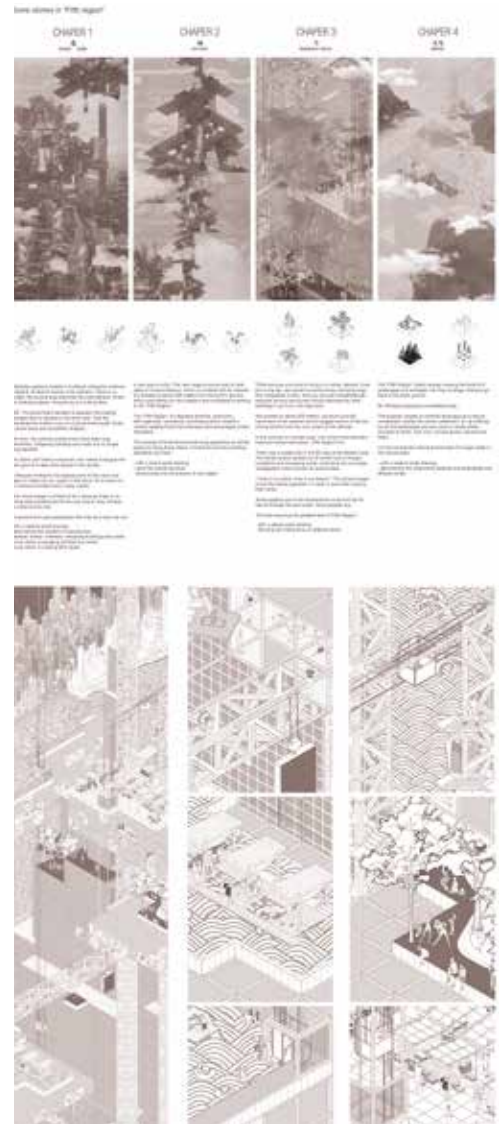


Figure 6 (top): Work in progress.

Figure 7: Chapter 6, *Artificial Nature*. Narrates the changing adaptation of the Fifth Region, highlighting how the people living inside the Fifth Region for some years already and how they are starting to yearn for a natural environment. This results in the formation of new modes of artificial nature and a new consciousness of how to construct nature. *Source: Lucas Kwok.*

Figure 8 (next page): Chapter 7, *Vertical Climate*. As the Fifth Region grows ever upwards an important part of the evolution deals with how a new vertical climate can be established to deal with living in the clouds, which includes for instance water harvesting from cloud water vapor. *Source: Lucas Kwok.*







**Figure 9:** Chapter 8, *Newcomers*, as the Fifth Region evolves, newcomers (migrants) become part of the Fifth Region coming from other regions. Over time

the adaptation highlights how the challenges and problems would be solved, and the change of human behaviour would be estimated. *Source: Lucas Kwok.*

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## Bio

**Peter Hasdell** is an academic at the School of Design, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He has taught architecture and design in the Bartlett School, KTH Arkitektur, University of Manitoba, Hong Kong University and others. He was formerly a researcher at Chora Institute of Architecture and Urbanism and is the founder and director of Architecture Structures and Technology and the Centre for Architecture Structures and Technology and Urban Research Lab (A+URL) and In-Situ Project. His research focuses on metabolic architecture on the scales of the city (city as a life form, urban ecology), and as architecture (interactive and responsive architectures).

**Kwok Chin-Fung Lucas** is an independent designer born and based in Hong Kong. Alumni of the Hong Kong Design Institute, he subsequently received his BA in Design (Honours) in the Environment and Interior Design programme from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Design in 2019 where he graduated at the top of his class. He currently works in a diverse range of interior, brand renewal, packaging, and graphic design fields. His work, which comprises of projects such as *Fifth Region*, *Be there*, *Soulscape*, and *Rays of Happiness* is reflected in careful and innovative work processes which have caught the attention of media including Soho House magazine, HKDIA, Perspective, RTHK, The Locals and Design Xcel.

#design futuring

#speculative visualisation

#spatial

#city

