Meandering through Sponges

This project starts from the studies of retreatment and the movement of the meandering Mississippi river. It tries to focus on how a river morphs itself under a purely natural condition, and why is the impact that the movement brought to this river after it had been built along the Mississippi river.

The most obvious phenomena is that caused by the lack of the sediment from upstream. When the soft river banks totally covered by movements, the river will not meander anymore. At the same time, the soil and sediment from the erosion banks disappeared. Finally, the land along the fluid planet sinks more and more, so does New Orleans.

My strategy is to create a series of study models to simulate the changing sequence of a river, and try to bring positive effects and proposals to this sinking city. The most important concept generated from this operation is to set some spaces as sponges to absorb and bring back the water into this urban area that occupied by the city again, and the existing, trenches and canals can play the role to link and transport the great amount of water in between these huge sponges and direct it into the lake Ponchartrain or the Atchafalaya recovering field.

By doing this, the whole city can breathe a lot of water with Mississippi river and make it more resilient. Along the edges of canals and some high ground, the dredging boat can also take abundant soil and deposit them along the edge of canals and swampland. After first phaseing period, all the land along canals raised by the soil from dredging. In the mean time, the levees are not long thin walls along the water, but two or three block wide high ground.

For those who lost their homes during this disaster and want to come back to redevelop their communities, these high ground can be their first place to inhabit themselves. Four prototypes from conceptual drawings also offered four different possibilities to reoccupy this city from a variety of conditions. They are just like the seeds that can be spread throughout New Orleans and put themselves with the new context symbolically. Thus, a long-term perspective of New Orleans generated through out this proposal.