LIMINAL INSTANT

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We invite to walk along the fringe – between life and nonlife, past and present, stillness and action, intensity and detachment. Along these thresholds, we trace a shared path across a vast and open site. These in-between conditions, where contrasts collide, become our field of attention.

Marked by industry, extraction, cyclical processes, and the disruptions of the present moment, places characterized by transformation and mutation. Rather than seeking stable definitions, we approach the vanishing points and gaps within the highly contrasted city as entry points. Here, infrastructure meets landscape, former industry intersects with domesticity, and fragments of different temporalities coexist. We embrace this entanglement as a source of knowledge.

Past, present, and future interweave, generating layered stories in which actors, places, infrastructures, architectures, memories, and desires participate equally. The site becomes both a record of the here and now and a projection surface for possible futures. Yet we recognize that many of these traces are subject to systematic erasure – through redevelopment, economic restructuring, political neglect, and the normalization of forgetting. Industrial histories disappear, informal practices dissolve, and lived experiences are overwritten by singular narratives of progress. Our work positions itself against this erasure. We seek to make visible what is at risk of being forgotten and to insist on the multiplicity of stories embedded in a place.

Usually our method begins with looking – with careful and attentive observation – We propose to shift this starting point. What if observation were replaced by experience?

Memory constructs realities that are simultaneously documentation and fiction. From these shared memories emerge initial positions – latent project ideas grounded in lived encounter. To give life to a site means more than filling a void; it means articulating a new narrative rooted in what already exists, including what is fragile or suppressed. A meaningful future begins with a precise engagement with the present condition.

We therefore propose gathering as method. Several people come together for a specific occasion – a walk, a shared meal, a performance, a temporary intervention – and encounter the site through a collective event. Surveying becomes an act of

ALIAS is an architecture practice founded by Lorenza Donati and Antoine Berchier, operating at the intersection of architecture, research, teaching, and cultural production. Their projects unfold as narratives, driven by a fascination with everyday conditions, the existing state of things, and environmental complexity, in dialogue with cross-cultural references. Focused on transformation, they pursue minimal intervention and architecture in deep synergy with its surroundings. They also teach at ETH Zürich (ETHZ) and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU).

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memorizing. Observation expands into participation. Through collective presence, movement, conversation, and action, the site is not only documented but lived. What emerges is a layered recording shaped by multiple perspectives. We propose this as a method of approaching a site: to gather, to experience, to record collectively, and to translate these shared memories into (architectural) thinking.

Through this process, the site reveals not only the contemporary, but what it might become. In creating shared moments of attention, we temporarily suspend processes of erasure and open a space that we can inhabit, where other narratives can surface and persist.