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Blue Dunes: Resiliency by Design

Jesse Keenan and Weisz



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Blue Dunes chronicles a proposal for the development of barrier islands designed to protect the New York metropolitan region in the face of storm surges and rising tides. It is a narration of the complex research agenda of an unlikely team of scientists, actuarists, engineers, ecologists, and designers addressing climate change within the practical limitations of politics and economics. Led by the firms WXY Studio and West 8, Blue Dunes challenges the existing convention of small-scale, piecemeal interventions by promoting more regional concepts, in this case developing a series of barrier islands stretching from Long Island to New Jersey. The project highlights the real world connections between climate modeling, insurance underwriting, and infrastructure engineering, as mediated by design to advance resilient coastal habitats for natural and human ecologies. Blues Dunes challenges the complacency of overlooking and avoiding "big ideas" in favor of more localized interventions, setting forth an engaging process for future educators and researchers in advancing interdisciplinary work in urban and landscape design, ecology, finance, and risk management.

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