Since the 1970s and the rise of environmentalism, most forestry operations have moved from the Pacific Northwest to the South. Counter-plots unnoticed by design scholars and profession- 
als alike. A blind spot is due in part to the "natural" appearance of the forest industry, suggesting an ambivalent entanglement of nature and resource.

Overcoming this disciplinary distance would involve a recognition of forests as artificial environments, planned and managed with the same degree of spatial design attention given to cities. This acknowledgment entails a conscious abandonment of the mystification of nature that typically envelops the subject.

Attempts by architects at literal expression through the design of structures that resemble forests, or the design of actual forests for pure aesthetic appreciation do nothing to clarify this situation. In addition, recognizing that most of the forest areas harvested throughout the continent are not old-growth, but rather recently afforested landscapes foregrounds an ecological history tightly linked with resource extraction. Once the issue of representational formalism is cleared out of the way, we have to tackle one more preconception: the assumption of a postindustrial society and its underlying networked organization, which have become a hegemonic metaphor of contemporary design discourse and an alibi for a broad assault on discrete architectural and urban form. In contrast, American forests, strictly associated with the rationale of form, are massively scaled, designed environments with distinct material imprints. As such, they make a case for an urban physicality irreducible to a single economy, and can, almost paradoxically, acquire once again the status of a prototype for contemporary cities.