This film will present a critical overview of themes that characterize Iranian desert architecture. No films exist that begin to capture the core thematic ideas in Iranian desert architecture. The need for exploring this specific vernacular architecture of Iran is great, given the growing local and global interests in critical regionalist design, sustainable architectural strategies, multi-culturalism and geo-political forces. Capturing these thematic concepts in film format offers an optimal strategy for reaching and impacting a greater audience.

Dr. Bozorgi (researcher and director of the film) is shooting a scene in central desert of Iran outside of the historical city of Yazd. October 2014

This short documentary will be used to educate students about core themes in Iranian desert architecture, promote the work of the Center for Middle Eastern Architecture and Culture (CMEAC) and the College of Architecture, and to support fund-raising and awareness efforts to help execute the subsequent yet separate full feature film.

Filming crew is helping the shooting of a scene in desert city of Yazd. October 2014
A shooting script is a conceptual map for this production. It consolidates research and outlines the film’s story, providing a visual guideline for the cinematography. The script for this film is more conceptual in nature; descriptive, but leaving room for interpretation. This script is important in order to conceptualize the intellectual aspect of traditional architectural space.

The focus of this film is to investigate The role of the courtyards and wind-catchers as passive/natural cooling systems on environmental-sustainability of Iranian traditional architecture.

Dr. Bozorgi is shooting a traditional courtyard and wind-catchers in historical desert city of Yazd. October 2014

The Unity of Being: The hidden manifestation of indoor-outdoor relationships in traditional sustainable desert city of Yazd.

In the compact city of Yazd, the high-density and the urban structures of mixed land-use are thought to promote walking and cycling as the main modes of movement. On an urban scale, the street appears as if it is carved out of a mass. In reality, the wall defining it is a thin membrane at the building scale. The concentrated urban texture diminishes penetration of dusty wind into the buildings as well as lowering the impact of heat on their surface.

Bird’s eye view of Yazd: Scene Captured in the film. October 2014
Central Iran has a very large day-night temperature difference, ranging from cool to extremely hot, and the air tends to be very dry all day long. The buildings are constructed of very local adobe with extremely high insulation values. Furthermore, towns centered on desert oases tend to be packed very closely together with high walls and ceiling, maximizing shade at ground level. The heat of direct sunlight is minimized with small windows that do not face the sun. The high radiation and temperature in the summer, seasonal variations from dry, hot summers to cold, dry winters, low humidity, limited water supplies and the dusty winds are the most important factors in forming such urban structures. When studying the massing concept of the City of Yazd, the significance of its planning is based on a correct response to the extreme climate of desert in winter and summer time. The use of the wind-catcher is an ancient technology to create natural air circulation and cool the inside of the buildings.

Covered passageways and narrow alleys with long walls of clay make the shade that provides thermal comfort in the hot summers. In addition, the buildings’ orientation is in a way to avoid hot summer sun rays and stormy winds.

*Scenes photographed and filmed in Yazd, Iran. October 2014*

*Vernacular Streetscape Scenes photographed and filmed in desert city of Yazd. October 2014*
Vernacular Earth Construction: Scene photographed and filmed in desert city of Yazd. October 2014

Geometry and Vernacular Earth Construction: Scene photographed and filmed in Yazd. October 2014