“Think of the manufacturing robots currently used on automobile assembly lines as the equivalent of yesterday’s mainframe computers” (Gates 2007).

White Water Reserve, part of the proposed Sand to Snow National Monument in Southern California, is a long river basin flowing down from the San Bernardino Mountains to the sun baked outskirts of Palm Springs. A ten-mile hike up the wash passes through at least three distinct eco-systems from low-lying sand dunes and dry grassland to wintry pine forests. White Water is the perfect environment for an ever-expanding retirement population increasingly intolerant of seasonally hot and cold weather. Our team planned a town for this site using bipedal, driverless homes powered by local wind farms. Moving these buildings between different climates ensures year round comfort, preserves wilderness, reduces construction costs and frees-up previously occupied land, while eliminating the need for roads, fixed public spaces and expensive heating and air-conditioning systems. Our peripatetic machines use their legs to both grasp and transport individual dwellings. Roughly the size of a Mac truck, they can haul a small subdivision from the desert to the mountains in under a month. During the year when not relocating people our robots become miniaturized...
units of urban infrastructure that can autonomously navigate the landscape and act as resupply vehicles, garbage scows and sewage transporters. During the endless migration of this city nothing is disturbed, not the low brush and wild flowers, not the shallow river basins nor the rugged hills and pathless vistas. As summer heats up the valley, your neighborhood slowly ascends into the cool hills and disappears. Tomorrow you wake up in different place, observe the changed view outside your bedroom window and rejoin citizens like you who have found a home in every robot.

WORKS CITED

MIKE SILVER is an architect, researcher and educator. He is currently a faculty in the Department of Architecture at the University of Buffalo. Mr. Silver currently directs a multidisciplinary design laboratory that explores emerging technologies like, humanoid robotics, automated fiber placement and mobile design apps for on site construction. His work has been exhibited at the New Museum of Contemporary Art, in Manhattan, the IDC in Nagoya Japan, the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., the Architecture League in New York and the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum. He built his first working robot out of Scotch tape and Spirograph parts at the age of 12.