



Noas Ark. Rudolf von Ems Hochschule 1511. public domain

## STUDIO ARK: New Center for Environmental Refugees

Instructors: B Hogan - F Bares.

Tues/Thurs

### The problem

The scientific community estimates that a total number of environmental refugees could reach 200 million people by the year 2050.

### The challenge

To anticipate the conflict, alternative solutions will be evaluated and creative proposals will be presented to improve the lives of millions of people from marginal communities, in the most vulnerable locations, with very little resources and minimal help from governments.

### The project

The objective is to imagine a contemporary ARK to shelter a community of environmental refugees from hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, etc.. Students will evaluate and propose:

What is a contemporary ARK? What other activities should be included?, How will the building be used while not functioning as a shelter? What symbolic and iconic value could be developed for the ARK?

### The site

The site is located in Loiza, Puerto Rico. A coastal town with a population of around 23,000, 60% of which lives under the poverty line. Concurrently, Loiza is one of the most prolific cultural environments in the island, with its music, artisanship, and dance etc., which make the town unique even in the context of Puerto Rico. Hurricane Maria had a devastating impact in this town, more than 3,000 homes destroyed and many lives lost. Moreover, the lack of preparation, poor logistics, and corruption at state level, were by far more damaging than nature.

The new Center for Environmental refugees will provide a model that could be replicated as a new solution to be prepared for the next catastrophe.