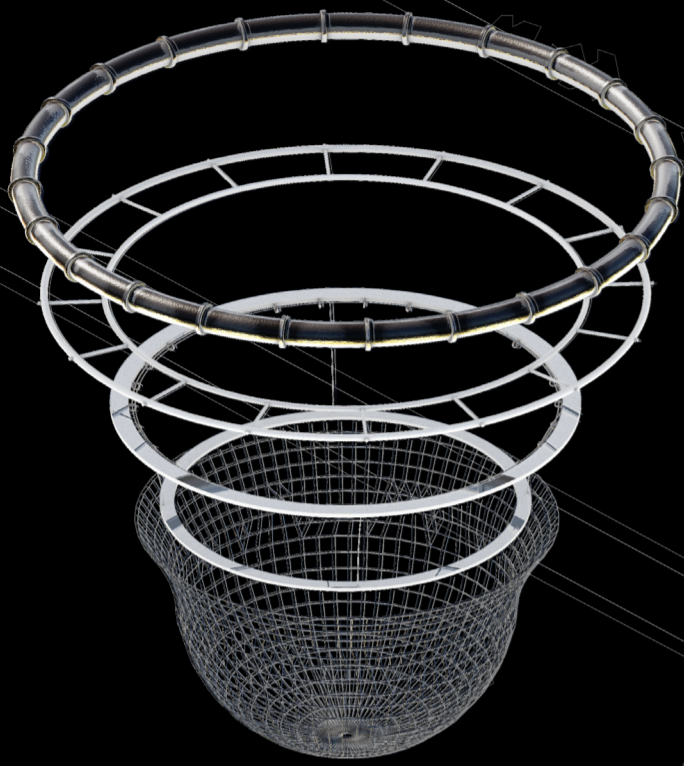


Flow - Glow

: Bioluminescent Waters at Bassin Peel



Module:

At night, water reveals what daylight conceals, flow-glow transforms Bassin Peel into a luminous nocturnal commons where movement through water becomes visible as light.

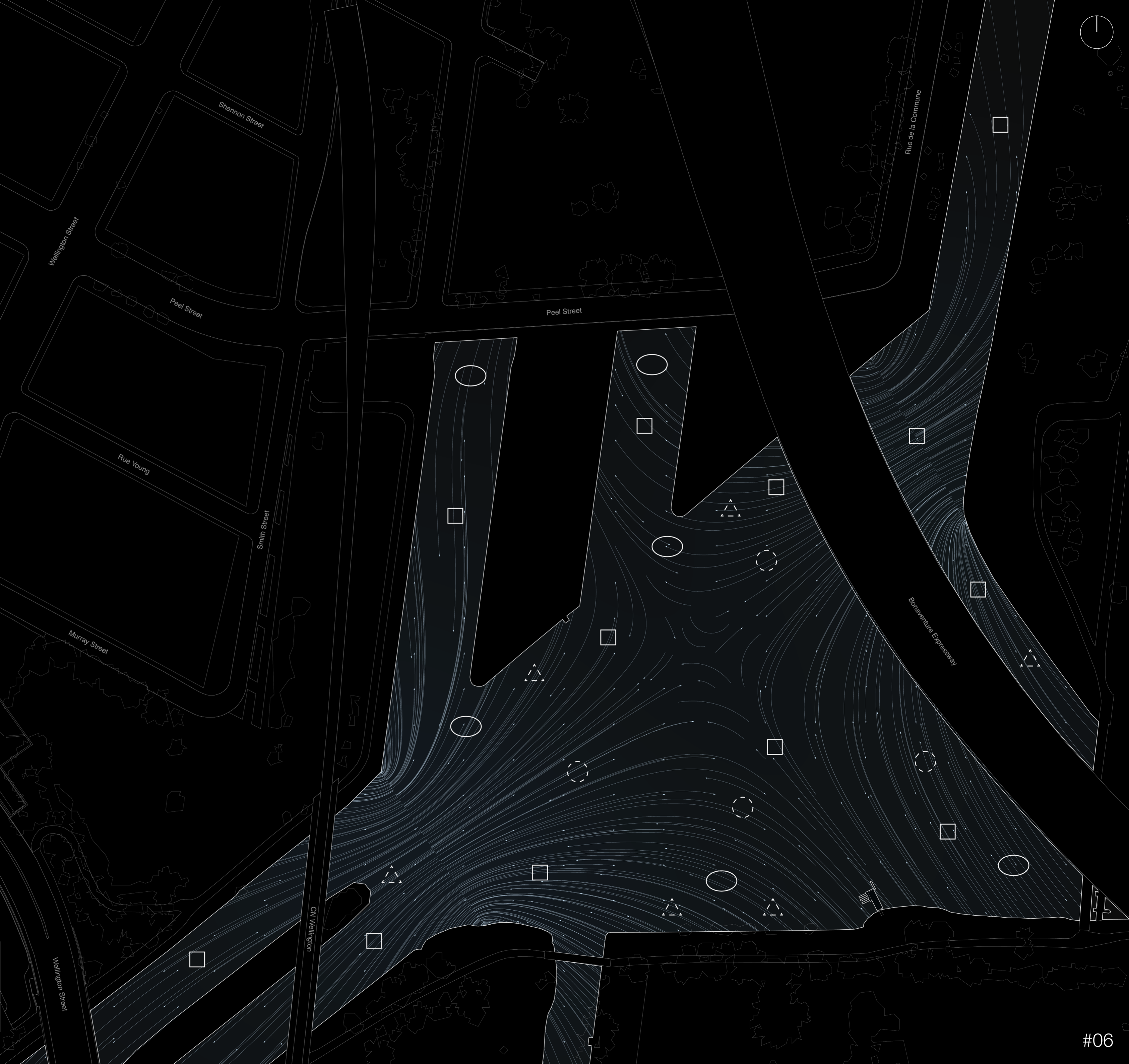
Part of the historic Lachine Canal system, Bassin Peel is a sheltered urban basin where the water often appears still. Yet beneath this calm surface, subtle forces constantly shape the basin: wind ripples across the water, boats pass through generating wakes, and fish move along the canal edges. These movements (normally invisible) form a dynamic hydro-social landscape where human and nonhuman activity continuously interacts.

The project introduces floating bioluminescent algae gardens that cultivate dinoflagellates, microorganisms capable of emitting light when mechanically disturbed. Within these floating pods, shallow basins create controlled micro-habitats where the algae can grow. During the day the organisms absorb sunlight and multiply within these contained environments. As water circulates through the pods, concentrations of microorganisms gradually disperse into the surrounding basin, creating a suspended field of bioluminescent life.

At night, simple swimming ladders along the canal walls allow visitors to enter the water. As swimmers move through the basin, the algae respond to turbulence by producing flashes of blue light. Trails of light also reveal currents produced by vessels and wind, as well as aquatic life. The basin becomes a living cartography of movement where wind, boats, fish, and swimmers co-produce a luminous landscape.

Rather than imposing large structures, the intervention works through minimal ecological infrastructure that amplifies the agency of water itself. Bassin Peel becomes a site for new nocturnal rituals where entering the canal reveals the hidden ecologies moving beneath its surface.

By cultivating bioluminescent organisms within the basin, flow-glow reframes an industrial water threshold as a multispecies commons where movement, light, and water shape a collective night experience.



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