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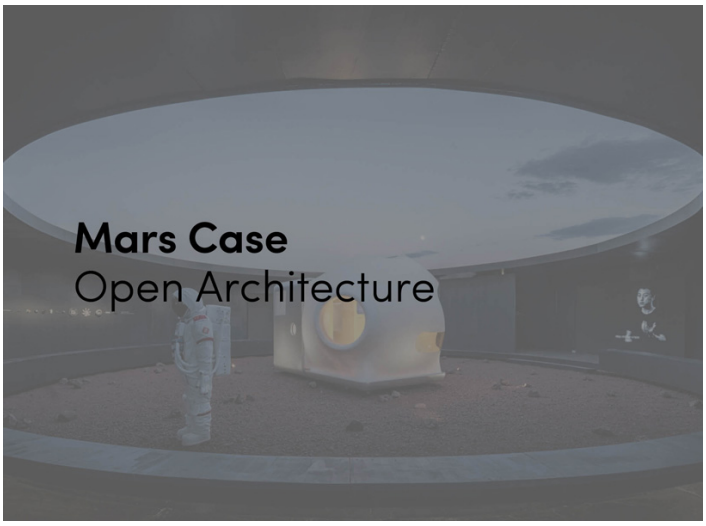

MARS CASE: RETHINKING THE WAY WE LIVE TODAY

Posted on August 19, 2021 by martabuges

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When humanity is forced to settle on Mars, might we at last rethink the way we live today?

In 1845, American poet and philosopher Henry David Thoreau withdrew from society and moved alone to a remote forest. There, he lived in self-sufficient seclusion for two years, reflecting upon the nature of simple living. In his book Walden, Thoreau wrote: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life.” Today, as we live and get lost in a world of consumption and environmental crisis, we too must ask ourselves: What are our essential needs? Provocatively addressing what it might take for us to reduce our reliance on natural resources, MARS Case is a minimal housing prototype questioning the very essence of modern living.

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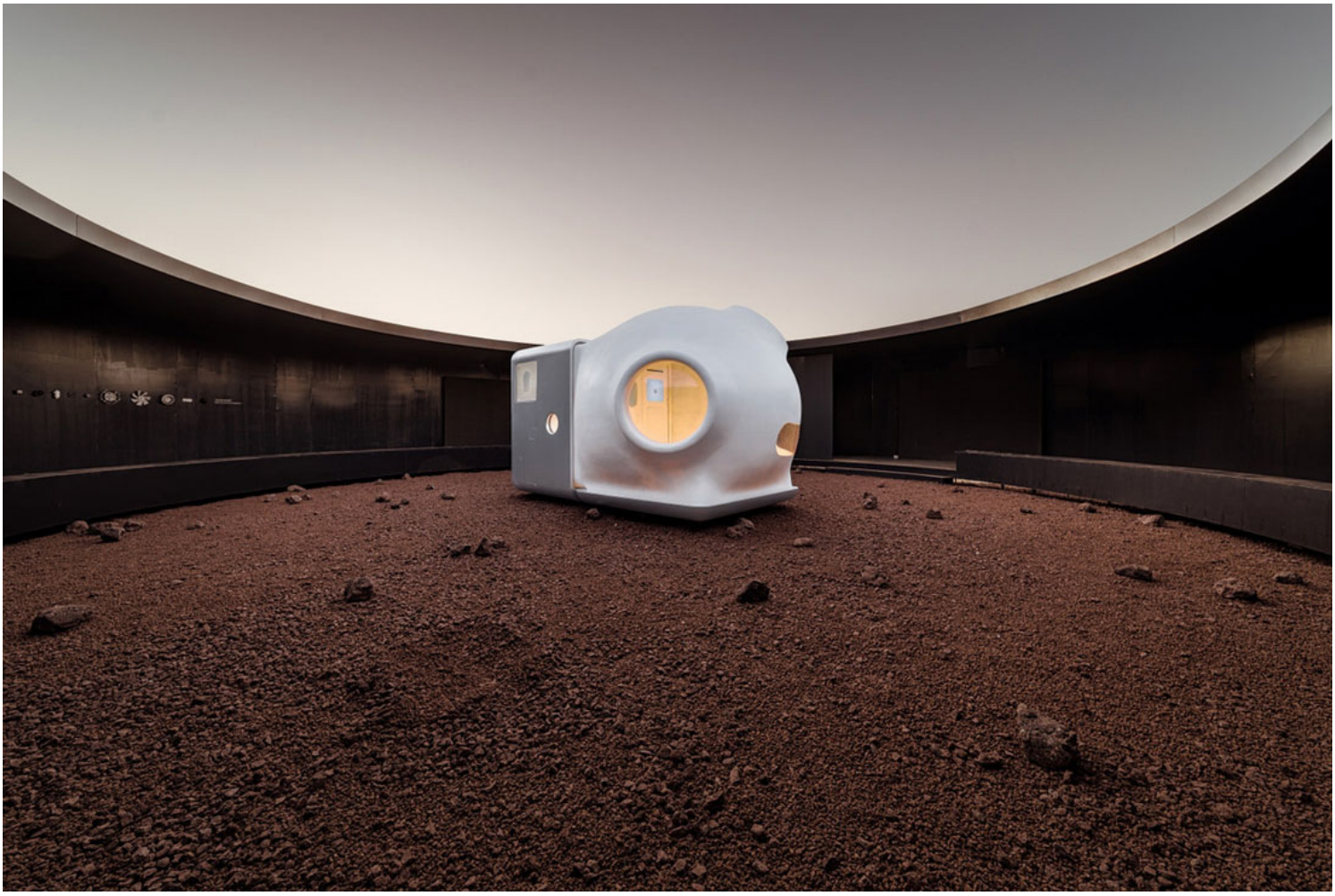

On Mars, the project's hypothetical starting point, we cannot rely on natural resources, as we have done for so long on Earth. Recycling air, water, food, and even waste will no longer be a choice, but a necessity. Reducing the consumption and materialism of our former lifestyles will be the only way we survive. As we find new appreciation in every drop of water, every bite of food, and every breath of air, will we at last discover the nature of truly simple living? Is this what we should define as the ideal house of the future?

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Developed with the support of Chinese electronics giant Xiaomi, OPEN's MARS Case seamlessly merges technology, product design, and architecture, integrating domestic appliances into one synthesized product: The Home. Harnessing and recycling the heat, exhaust, condensation, and other byproducts generated by each appliance, MARS Case feeds energy, air, and water back into an integrated ecosystem, minimizing the consumption of resources.

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A lightweight, compact 2.4 meter x 2.4 meter x 2 meter service module accommodates kitchen, bathroom, and mechanical service components, doubling as an airlock and storage space. When the service module is “opened”, a second inflatable module is released, expanding into a spherical living space for reading, thinking, resting, and other more spiritual pursuits. When the house is in transport, the inflatable module can be deflated and folded back within the service module. In this way, the service module acts much like a suitcase—inspiring the prototype’s name.

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Together, these two modules make up MARS Case: a place of self-circulating energy and minimal waste, compact and mobile, within which all of our essential living needs are contained. In an era marked by consumption and environmental crisis, the project thoughtfully pushes us to re-evaluate our definition of an ideal house, ultimately offering powerful implications for contemporary as well as future living.

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