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A Guide to Combustible City
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A Guide to Combustible City is made of five printed tours of New York City which illustrate Michael Serres' thesis that "objects are flames frozen by different time-scales". These tours demonstrate, at four different spatial scales, the agency of combustion in shaping the city's architecture, infrastructure and imaginary. The tours traverse, for instance, the perimeter of the great fire of 1835, exemplary sandstone buildings, the former sites of fire towers in Manhattan, the banality of fire prevention in the everyday, the regional water system, and fire-prevention models at Randall's Island. Additionally, the tours recount the history of the fireproof building, the epistemological relationships between panoramas, hot air balloons and fire towers, the changing shape of water in the city, and the hyperreality of prevention. Together, these tours reveal another city nested within New York City, a city in plain view but rarely considered; this city is constituted by and through the management and care for its own inherent fragility, this city is named Combustible City.

The five tours will be on display at common room 2. A limited number of copies will be available to take away.

Adam Bobbette is a landscape architect based in Hong Kong. He is currently assistant professor in the Faculty of Architecture, Division of Landscape Architecture at the University of Hong Kong. He has published widely and his work has been included in exhibitions at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, The Graham Foundation, The Architectural Association, The San Jose Biennial, Storefront for Art and Architecture, and Eyebeam, amongst others. Currently, his research focuses on comparative histories and theories of civic infrastructures and the urban ecologies of contingency, care and danger. He is a co-founder and editor of the journal Scapegoat: Architecture / Landscape / Political Economy.