Domestic Grounds seeks to disclose the potential for tactile stimulation of floor design. Arriving home and taking off our shoes is not a random impulse. Walking barefoot is an ancestral human experience. In the shoeless paradise of the domestic environment, alternating rugs, wood boards and tiles: softness and hardness, warmth and cold, the floor plane is already a celebration of tactility. If we strategically reconsider the way we apply material and form in the design of floors and floor coverings, we can radically increase the performance of these surfaces to include restorative properties and amplify the sensory experience of domestic circulation.

There are multiple therapeutic advantages to walking barefoot on uneven surfaces, such as: reduced blood pressure, stimulation of the immune and lymphatic systems and lower anxiety levels among others.¹ According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), on average most sedentary individuals take from 1000-3000 steps per day. A lot of this walking can take place in the domestic environment, the goal of Domestic Grounds is taking full advantage of our household walking routine to invigorate our damaged feet.

This is the work of an ongoing investigation resulting in a moderate imprinted concrete topography. Ergonomic research informed the geometry. The abstract pattern, is composed of half cylinders of four different radii, corresponding to the ranging scales of the feet's sensory capability. The design was first modeled digitally and later partially casted at full scale (two tile samples).

Domestic Grounds advocates for a carefully designed and controlled return to our pre-shoe, barefoot walking origins. As Winston Churchill once said: "We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."

Notes:
Fig.2. Circulation study of corner Unit at 860-880 Lake Shore Apartments in Chicago by Mies van der Rohe.
Fig. 3. Color coded pattern proposed for corner Unit at 860-880 Lake Shore Apartments in Chicago by Mies van der Rohe. Darker tones correspond to higher cylinders.
Fig. 4. Concrete pattern proposed for corner Unit at 860-880 Lake Shore Apartments in Chicago by Mies van der Rohe.
Fig.5,6,7. Perspective view of pattern.
Fig. 10. Tile sample built at the University of Texas at Austin. Radii vary by quarter inch increments from $\frac{1}{4}$" being the smallest to 1" being the largest.