

https://dspace.org/

Urban body space

Eklektos, Natalie

2012-08-27
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/11835

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

URBAN*BODY*SPACE

Natalie Eklektos

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In completing this thesis I would like to thank my family – Mom, Dad and Nikki – for their continued support and encouragement.

My sincerest thanks go to my advisor Jonathan Noble for his input and assistance throughout the year.

To my classmates, thank you for making the past few years bearable.

To my dearest friends – Mandy, Alexia, Jessica and Victoria - thank you for putting up with my extended absence, cancelations and all the moaning.

DECLARATION

I, Natalie Eklektos 0506723A am a student registered for the course Master of Architecture [Professional] in the year 2011. I hereby declare the following:

I am aware that plagiarism [the use of someone else's work without permission and/or without acknowledging the original sources] is wrong. I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have stated explicitly otherwise. I have followed the required conventions in referencing thoughts, ideas, and visual materials of others. For this purpose, I have referred to the Graduate School of Engineering and the Built Environment style guide. I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my unaided work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my own work.

.....

Natalie Eklektos 31 October 2011

This document is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree: Master of Architecture [Professional] at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, in the year 2011

CONTENTS

005
Introduction

008
The Theory
Bodies / Cities

025
Site Analysis

059
Programme & Accomodation
Case Study: New Media

067
Design Exploration
Case Study: The Theater Box
Case Study: Lincoln Centre

085
Technology
Case Study: Architecture/Technology/Voyeurism

095
Design

115
Bibliography

INTRODUCTION

004INTRODUCTION



'In writing the city, I am writing myself...'

(Rendell, 2000, p. 130)

At the start of her book *The Sphinx in the City* Elizabeth Wilson (1991) recounts her earliest experiences of exploring the city of London, first as a child with the guidance of her mother and later - in the 1950s - as a young adult. She parallels her experiences with those written by Walter Benjamin of his childhood introduction to Berlin. Wilson, although at the time ignorant of Benjamin's work, states that she 'intuitively identified with an urban consciousness of which his *(Benjamin's)* reminiscences are one of the most beautiful examples'. (Wilson, 1991, p. 5) In embarking on my research for this thesis I too was unfamiliar with many of the fascinating theorist that I would encounter, but also felt an 'intuitive' and immediate connection with idea of *experiencing* the city. Wilson's description of the city as a place of 'pleasurable anarchy' (Wilson, 1991, p. 8), 'dreamlike and magical, yet also terrifying' (Wilson, 1991, p. 3) resonated deeply with me, and inspired my **curiosity in how we all, as distinct individuals, encounter and experience the city in different ways.**

Discourse on the city and the human body is multifaceted but mostly fluctuates between ideas regarding isomorphism, gender and fictional dialogue. Most studies on gender and the city focus on the city as a place of danger to women, or as a place where women have continually been denied

access in comparison to the regular freedom that men experience. This thesis discusses some ideas of gender, and the literal connections (isomorphism) of body and city, but the primary focus is that of experiencing the city through **spectatorship and spectacle**. Once you step away from comparatively negative (and gendered) discourse on our cities, and decide 'to respond to them as to nature or dreams: as objects of exploration, investigation and interpretation, settings for voyages of discovery' (Wilson, 1991, p. 11) **new spatial explorations are possible**.

Through my research it quickly became apparent that in discussing bodily encounters with the city – and exploration - you would inevitably come across the literary figure of the *flâneur*. The *flâneur* and examination of the city go hand-in-hand as the character is seen as 'an emblematic representative of modernity and personification of contemporary urbanity' (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 22). In many cases the character symbolizes a much deeper commentary on capitalism and modernity, but on the other hand, *he* also represents the wonder offered by the enchantments of the city. Thinking of the *flâneur* as the 'secret spectator of the spectacle of the spaces and places of the city' (Tester, 1994, pg. 7) highlights the pleasure that is to be gained from the **visual display** (of places, things and people) **in the city**. Based on my research it is my belief that as individuals in the city we become the spectacle, a commodity to be consumed, for the entertainment of others. Our encounters in the city are ultimately **voyeuristic**, where everyday occurrence become performances for unknown audiences.

The ensuing architectural resolution engages with this topic through the design of a **mixed-programme public facility**. The building is located in inner city Johannesburg in Marshalltown. The building primarily houses a emerging media (digital) art centre – with a cinema and auditorium – as well as retail, office and dining facilities. The development of the street edge as well as the vertical movement through the building is of primary importance as a key component of the theoretical background. The programme aims to provide **arts entertainment** but ultimately engages with the enjoyment that is gained from the urban spectacle and considers what it is (how one feels) **to become the spectacle**, to be an actor in the performance of urban existence. The intension of the creative process is to design for an urban experience which steps beyond the confines of the building (skin and programme), or the city, and engages with the experience of feeling **'enclosed by a space whose limits are defined by a gaze'** (Colomina, 1992, p. 128)

THE THEORY

BODIES / CITIES
Bodily Awareness of the City

Architectural theory and practice have a long standing relationship with the human body. At its most fundamental level the objective of architecture is to house and protect people; sheltering the body from the elements and harm. The examination of bodies located in space evidently brings about many enquiries regarding these occupied spaces and the consequential relationship. Subsequently, the relationship between people (bodies) and the city - and often more specifically women and the city - has become of great interest to architectural theorists and commonly researched in various fields, such a geography, feminist research and social sciences. Merely acknowledging that the city is built by the body – based on human needs, desires, design and construction – overly simplifies the true relationship. With commonly accepted belief that 'built form both affects and reflects social relationships' (McDowell, 1999, p. 65) it becomes necessary to explore the true fluidity of the relationship.

In order to address this relationship body-city theory will be studied from three differing approaches: Firstly the literal, isomorphic connections that are well established in architectural history, secondly ideas regarding embodiment and gender in identifying with the city, and thirdly – the primary focus of the research – the literary character of the *flâneur* and the notion of experiencing a city observed. Finally architectural and spatial lessons will be drawn from the theory of the *flâneur* and the arcades:

The City and the Body: Literal Analogies

Various precedents exist where the form of the body is seen to have a literal relationship with urban and architectural structure. The study of ergonomics (which is solely focused on how bodies fit into specific spaces, equipment and furniture), proxemics (the study of the closeness of strangers in public spaces), and the theory of *hexis* (the social significance of how people physically place themselves in spaces) have all emerged surrounding this topic. (McDowell, 1999, pp. 40 - 41) Politically, the image of the body has been used by the state in attempts to encourage social order with a notable paradigm being the image of the *body-politic*. This metaphor has various forms but constantly displays a hierarchical relationship where the ruler is represented by the head, the general population by the body and the law as the nervous system. Further, the military forces are represented by the arms, trade by the stomach or legs and menial labourer as the feet. (Grosz, 1998, p. 46 - 47) Political philosopher Thomas Hobbes used this analogy - in his book Leviathan - to rationalize his views on the omnipotent rights of monarchy. (Grosz, 1999, p. 47) John of Salisbury, a philosopher, extended this correspondence into a plan for a city - where the church was considered a head, the marketplace an abdomen and the houses were placed at the hands/feet. (Sennett, 1994, p. 22) This exact interpretation of town planning may seem impractical today but various instances of such thinking exist. In his book *Flesh and Stone – The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (1994) Richard Sennett traces various examples, through the history of cities, in an attempt to argue his belief that 'urban spaces take form largely from the ways people experience their own bodies' (Sennett, 1994, p. 370).

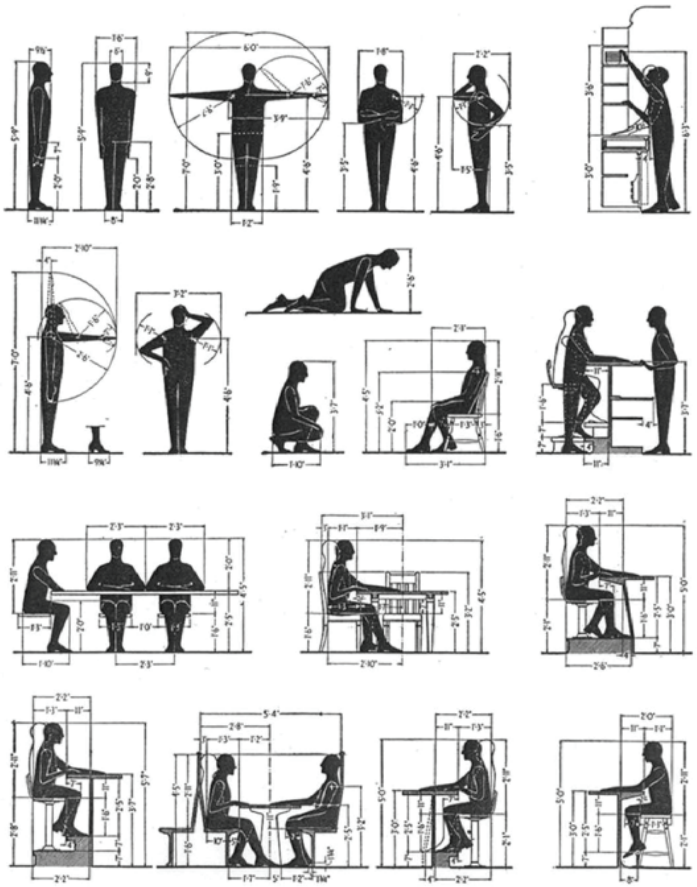
Sennett's discussion spans from ancient Athens to modern day cities exploring how body image, norms and stigmas, and medical understanding of the body have impacted Western urban form. In the same way that we understand the Vitruvian man and Le Corbusier's Le Modular, Sennett examines the influence

that Roman belief of perfect bodily symmetry had on the urban planning during the time of the Emperor Hadrian. In more contemporary examples he demonstrates how developing scientific medical knowledge impacted the design of traffic circulation and the development of public open spaces for healthier living conditions. (Sennett, 1994, p. 22 – 23) Similar notions are highly evident in our cities and suburbs today with Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement (which promoted ideals such as low density housing, separation of industry from housing and increased plot sizes) having gained support, in the beginning of the twentieth century, in reaction to the unhealthy slum conditions in industrial urban centres . (Roberts 1991: 32)

In terms of gender, these analogies are often limited to the use of masculine imagery. Elizabeth Grosz (1998), in response to the body-politic in particular, finds fault with this 'phallocentric' approach as it tends to associate humanity or, the universal representation of a body, as masculine (Grosz, 1998, p. 46). The danger with this oversimplification, as Richard Sennett also acknowledges, is that when a generic idea of body is accepted any bodies that do not fit this category tend to be forgotten or deprived. (Sennett, 1994, p. 23) Lance Hosey's article Hidden Lines: Gender, Race, and the Body in Graphic Standards (2001) offers a relevant view on the theme of anthropomorphic diagrams in the popular book *Architectural Graphic Standards*. In this book, and most others like it, the ideal human specimen is considered as the white male. Hosey believes that this gender and racial specificity reflects the belief of the architectural and larger community and ultimately 'men are offered as the image of perfection, which suggests the imperfection of women'. (Hosey, 2001, p. 101 – 102). In contrast it is not uncommon for cities to be associated with feminine virtues, Paris is considered to be unquestionably female - often compared to a prostitute (Wilson, 1991, p. 47) – and New York and Los Angeles are also regularly referred to in the feminine. In these instances women are either entirely excluded from urban theory or incorporated in an erotic/sexualised manner. In her book *The Sphinx in the City* (1991), Elizabeth Wilson discuss-

es the body-city relationship into terms of gender. In literal terms she associates characteristics of the city with either (by her own definition of) *feminine* or *masculine* qualities – associating the order, routine and 'triumphal scale' of the city with male qualities and pleasure, disorder and 'embraces' of the city as female. (Wilson, 1991, p. 7)





> Original cover illustration from Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan (Hobbes, 1991, p. 1))
>>Illustration from *Architectural Graphic Standards* (Hosey, 2001)

The City and Self: Our inner and outer worlds

In order to fully develop a debate around body-city relationships, and their various corollaries, it is necessary to step away from the simplistic and one-directional associations discussed thus far and deal rather with a fluid, two-way relationship. Firstly, human body needs to be understood as a place: body-as-place. The body has a specific geographic location (it occupies space), an impermeable boundary (a shape and size) as well as a cultural and historical significance. Above and beyond *belonging* to the individual, the body is the primary site – the most direct place of *being* - of the individual. (McDowell, 1999, p. 34) Secondly, the discussion has to be expanded away from literal analogies - instances where the body is seen a cause and the city as effect - and rather towards experiential and metaphorical encounters. For instance Wilson (1991) writes of the intuitive difference women and men may undergo when encountering the city. She believes that women escape the preconceived notion of the city being dangerous for women and rather find it a place of fascination, opportunity and freedom. Whereas men feel a sense of discomfort and unsettled by the cities inherent 'disorder'.

In a short exert entitled *Knowledge* – in the book *City A-Z* - Jane Rendell (2000*a*) writes of her desire, as a (female) historian, to 'know' the city. She proposes that in the pursuit of knowledge of the city a complex and 'dialectic' relationship emerges between the subject and their subject matter where ' 'knowing' the city invites, and invokes, a need to know the self'. (Rendell, 2000*a*, p.130) Further, she deduces that this quest for knowledge - and the ensuing dialogue between the city and self - not only brings about a significant enquiry regarding spatial knowledge, but also 'tantalising glimpses of the relation between outer and inner worlds' (Rendell, 2000*a*, p.130). Similarly, Elizabeth Grosz's (1998) outlook extends this notion into a physical experience, she believes that the body and its surroundings transform 'into the image of the other: the city is made... into the simulacrum of the body,

and the body ... is transformed, 'citified', urbanized as a distinctively metropolitan body'. (Grosz, 1998, p. 43) Undoubtedly, this brand of thinking discards theories of the parallel co-existence of bodies and cities and rather promotes the notion of a true *interface* existing between the two. (Gross, 1998, p. 50) In this instance the use of term *embodiment* would hold particular value as it refers to the union of the body and social aspect of the city while capturing the flexibility and the sense of performance inherent in the relationship. (McDowell, 1999, p. 39)

The exploration and discovery of urban spaces, and narratives of the city, are increasingly significant in architectural discourse. Accounts of figures who 'traverse space' and act as 'spatial metaphors' (Rendell, 2000*a*, p. 129) can be used as a tool to further understand the exchange between bodies and the city. In addition to chronicles of detectives, spies and prostitutes, literature provides us with a truly 'metropolitan body' with the character of the *flâneur* – who in general tends to be cited as a representative of modernity and urbanism (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 22). The *flâneur* and the architectural manifestation of his practices – the Parisian arcades - come about frequently in research concerning the human experience in cities and thus provides an ideal avenue for investigation and exploration.



The City Observed: The Flâneur and the Arcades

The *flâneur* is not necessarily a specific person, but rather a character, who repeatedly occurs as a 'motif in the literature, sociology and art of urban, and most especially of the metropolitan, existence'. (Tester, 1994, p. 1) The *flâneur* performs the act of *flânerie* – a detached wandering and observing of urban life – developing a metropolitan awareness. The act of *flânerie* is not merely a leisurely walk but rather a precise spatial and social study of specific sites in order to decipher *secrets* and gain perspective (Shields, 1994, p. 65). It is difficult to ground the character of the *flâneur* in any reality, or indeed specifically name any examples, as the individual is seen as literary - almost taking on a 'mythical' quality (Shields, 1994, p. 62). In attempting a definition a repetitive redundancy occurs 'the *flâneur* is the man who indulges in *flânerie; flânerie* is the activity of the *flâneur*' (Tester, 1994, p. 7). The character originated in Paris during the nineteenth century, and features predominantly in texts by Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin, but has since been reinterpreted and adopted by various writers and theorists. Benjamin believed that nineteenth century Paris provided a new merging of the public street and home life that fed the emergence of the *flâneur.* (Benjamin, 1999, p. 423)



Illustration from Louis Huart Physiologie du flaneur, 1841 (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, 24)



Illustration from Louis Huart Physiologie du flaneur, 1841 (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, 24)

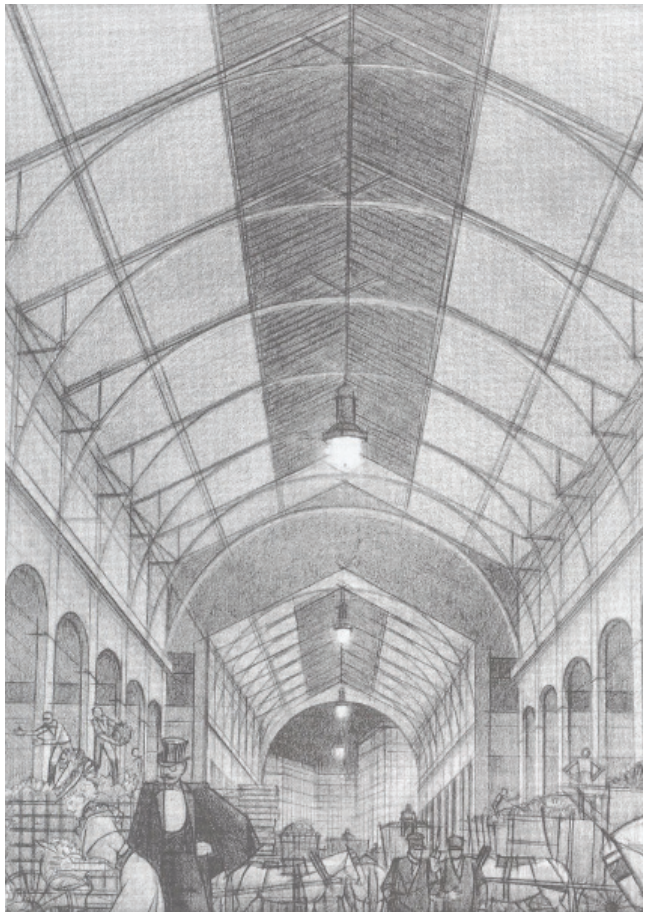
Through the character of the *flâneur* the interplay and interdependence of bodies and cities becomes apparent. On and off the streets of Paris the *flâneur* becomes a part of urban life and thus he needs an urban setting (the city) and its masses (bodies) in order to partake in his task of observation, even if disengaged from them. In her essay on the *flâneur* and Paris, Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson (1994) states that '*flânerie* urbanizes observation by making the observer part of the urban scene'. (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 27) In Walter Benjamin's (1999) notes on the passages of Paris he often makes the comparison between the *flâneur* and a detective, which is essentially his relationship with the individuals he observes. Through inspection, 'perusal of their gait, build, and play of features' and the social scene the *flâneur* reads peoples' nature and history (Benjamin, 1999, p. 430). The *flâneurs* actions extend beyond mere observation – or that of the simple, idle gaper (*badaud*) – and can be seen as a skilful *reading* of the city, and its populace, as if it were a text. (Frisby, 2001, p. 28) Ultimately, he pieced together the 'fleeting, fragmentary' scenes that make up modern urban existence. (Wilson, 1991, p. 54) Walter Benjamin's 1926 essay *One-Way Street* could be seen as a literal manifestation of the *flâneurs* behaviour. The essay is made up of a collection of observations that seemingly occur to Benjamin as he walks along a city street. The intended result is to surprise the reader with ideas just as a person, walking down a typical

city street, would be surprised by the unexpected things they observe. (Frisby, 1994, p. 101)

Jane Rendell (2000*b*) refers to this urban wandering as 'rambling'. By examining eighteenth and nineteenth century texts Rendell notices an intriguing transformation in the intent of the rambler. Originating from spy/detective texts, the initial voyeuristic and secretive visual connection between the viewer and the city evolves to emphasize 'the pleasure gained from visual display' and 'promenade'.(Rendell, 2000*b*, p. 197) These urban figures find a new enticement in the 'obvious display of body and clothes' and 'views of the urban designed to be seen as spectacle'. (Rendell, 2000*b*, p. 197) The spaces in the city where these activities occurred were the established places of entertainment and relaxation – parks, theatres and bars – as well as the 'emerging spaces of commodity capitalism' arcades, bazaars and shop lined streets. (Rendell, 2000*b*, p. 197) The arcades of Paris provided the ultimate backdrop for the *flâneur* in that they are neither public nor private and house a chief intention of visual display (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 35).

Essentially, an arcade is a long glass-covered passageway or street housing shops, the precursor to the department store. They appeared in the early nineteenth century - with the *Paris Passages* being some of the first examples (Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 3) - with their intention being the display and trade of luxury goods. The typology stemmed from the need to create an accessible yet semi-private retail space where a certain class of consumer could be sheltered from the public street (Rendell, 1996, p. 223) as well as, from the developments in the iron construction industry which allowed for various applications of glassing - including the roofs of the arcades (Benjamin, 1999, p. 4). The arcades also represented the separation of the production of goods and their sale. This allowed the shops to be smaller with narrow dimensions but also wide windows for the presentation of goods for sale, these windows not only allowed for the shopper to visually consume the commodities on display but its reflective nature also provided a sense of mirror for

customers to view themselves. These elements combined to create a novel city space, shielded from the weather, for 'agreeable promenade'. (Rendell, 1996, p. 223) The typology of the arcade spread throughout Europe, and to more distant cities with examples found in South Africa, Argentina and Turkey, and may be considered the original international style of architecture, forming part of the urban experience of a universal generation. (Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 39)



>Illustration of Les Halles, Paris (Zaborowska, 2010, 60)

In regards to architectural style and design the arcades were, to a large extent, far more than enclosed streets or boulevards. In many cases the arcades were designed to provide an intimate experience, creating a place where people could loiter and not use merely as thoroughfares. The shop exteriors were embellished and miniaturised - with intricate windows and small doors - and their interiors contained fireplaces and household furnishings, this aesthetic aids an understanding of Walter Benjamin's description of the arcades as 'bourgeois interiors forced outwards'. (Rendell, 1996, p. 221) At its core, Benjamin's writing on arcades, shows his views on the space as a cross-breed, both (drawing) room and city simultaneously, fundamentally ambiguous.

(Zaborowska, 2010, p. 59) In fact, in the Burlington Arcade, each shop was built with living quarters on the first floor, creating a *mini-home* of sorts. These aesthetic references served two main objectives. Firstly, the imagery of home allowed the arcades to be seen as a respectable place for the female consumer as well as a place of safety for women in a *dangerous* city. (Rendell, 1996, p. 227) Secondly, the arcades (with the help of the filtered light from the roof) adopted a theatrical and exaggerated character which removed them from the everyday and created a *feminine* 'world of fantasy, desire and seduction'. (Rendell, 1996, p. 227) This sense of whimsy and mystery is exemplified by Walter Benjamin's original, but discarded, title for his arcades project – 'A Dialectical Fairy Scene'. (Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 49)

Walter Benjamin's fascination with the arcade came about through his association of urban objects with dream images; furthermore he believed them to be precise reproductions of the 'unconscious of the dream collective' (Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 39) comparing the arcade to 'houses or passages having no outside – like the dream' (Benjamin, 1999, p. 406). Through his research, covering a variety of themes, he points out various characters (prostitutes, gamblers, *flâneurs* and shoppers) and shortcomings (commodity fetishism, fashion, prostitution, gambling and boredom) of the arcades. Benjamin saw the arcades as a church to capitalism, consumerism, commodity consumption and fetishism where the structure becomes 'a street of lascivious commerce only; it is wholly adapted to arousing desires' (Benjamin, 1999, p. 42) housing the temptations of food, liquor, entertainment (theatre and gambling) and sexual pleasures (prostitution). The other temptations of the arcades, the mass produced objects for sale and fashion, are likened to prostitutes in Benjamin's texts. The prostitute becomes a 'mass article', packaged as a commodity by fashion and makeup, in essence 'woman-as-commodity' (Buck-Morss, 1989, p. 191). True to Benjamin's observations, the arcades provided a place of work to many prostitutes looking for wealthy clients and *shop-girls* were know to perform acts of prostitution in or-





Leadenhall Market in London (1881), showing ornate detailing and an intimate character

der to earn additional money. (Rendell, 1996, p. 227)

At their core the fundamental nature (and design) of arcades is to offer the gratification of looking; selling sights to people. They create a spectacle based on commodities, drawing in consumers, but ultimately the distinction becomes vague. Commodity, consumer and spectator begin to merge until it is no longer clear who are the consumer and who or what is being consumed. (Bauman, 1994, p. 146) The display of goods (or people) for voyeuristic pleasure was seen by Benjamin as the origins of commerce advanced by advertising based on 'spectacle and fantasy' – an illusion - in order to influence the wishes of the masses. (Mc-

Dowell, 1999, p. 159) As recently as the 1960's social theorist Guy Debord (1994) wrote of the advancement of consumption and advertising in *The Society of the Spectacle* stating that 'commodity fetishism' is 'the domination of society by things'. (Debord, 1994, p. 26) Herein lies the paradox of the *flâneur* and essentially Benjamin's criticism of modernity in the nineteenth century. For Benjamin the *flâneur* represents the 'bad faith of the commodity', he is 'duped by the spectacle of the public' just as the consumer is 'duped by the glittering promises of consumerism'. (Tester, 1994, p. 14)

Ultimately we can consider 'commodity consumption as the dominant spatial practice of the arcades' (Rendell, 1996, p. 223). Here Elizabeth Wilson's statement that 'leisure and consumption must cease to be treated purely as commodities' (Wilson, 1991, p. 9) suggests the possibility of starting to see leisure and consumption as a spatial practice, with an architectural manifestation. This notion can be linked with the philosopher Henri Lefebvre's work on the making of space. He acknowledged our experience of spaces as a development of awareness, where the lived experience of space is in fact separate to the built-material form (and function) of the space. (Rendell, 1996, p. 222) Lefebvre's views complement Benjamin's thought on the arcades of Paris, as simultaneously object and metaphor. The arcades possess material form and (architectural) space as well as a literary form as a metaphorical space. (Zaborowska, 2010, p. 58 – 59)

Spatial Lessons

In examining the *flâneur* and the arcades of Paris we ultimately endeavour to gain the perspective that 'considering different experiences of occupying architectural space may suggest new ways of designing architecture' (Rendell, 1996, p. 231) In the context of this thesis the study represents a search to uncover an architecture that allows for the exploration of themes surrounding bodies and cities. The following are some of the separate but applicable insights into the city and lessons learned:

The typology of the arcade holds a particular spatial lesson, not only in regards to gender in public spaces, but in terms of the nature of certain spaces in the city. The arcade, and later the department store, was one of the first places where women were free to wander the city unaccompanied without fear of ridicule or danger. Thus women became more active in public life either as consumers/shoppers or were even able to gain employment as *shop-girls;* a newly available positions of employment. In her study of the Burlington Arcade - *Subjective Spaces: A Feminist Architectural History of the Burlington Arcade* - Jane Rendell (1996) identifies the arcade as a space where the preconceived and academically accepted system of separate male and female domains may be challenged. Western, capitalist and patriarchal societies customarily operate under a set of *binary divisions* that structure our understanding of male and female spaces and spatial separation (McDowell, 1999, p. 12) with the most perpetuated of these divisions being women with the private domain (home) and men with the public (cities). These binary divergences are numerous and can be simply demonstrated in a table:

Masculine	**Feminine**
Public (City)	Private (Home/Suburb)
Culture	Nature
Work	Leisure/Pleasure
Production	Reproduction
Dominant	Subordinate

(McDowell, 1999, p. 12)

Rendell believes that there are built spaces in the city that displace these *binary* divisions, places 'which are neither wholly private nor public, male nor female, urban nor domestic' and in its historical context the arcade is such a place - as it is a privately own public space focused on *consumption* rather than *production/ reproduction*. (Rendell, 1996, p. 221-222) Hotels and their lobbies can also be found in this category. They act as transitional zones, neither public nor private, forming simulated homes for nameless visitors. (Wilson, 1991, pg. 59)

2 ‘Examining the relation between the figures and spaces of the ramble enables us to explore the production, reproduction and representation of space through pleasurable leisure activities – consumption, exchange and display, and through looking and moving.’ (Rendell, 2000*b*, p. 198)

The natural ebbs and flow of urban life, coupled with the maze-like quality of the city grid, unsurprisingly are a cause of unease to many people in the city. The study of the character of the *flâneur* suggests a different approach to urban life where instead of apprehension one approaches the city with curiosity, developing - what Elizabeth Wilson calls - a ‘sophisticated urban consciousness’. (Wilson, 1991, p. 5)

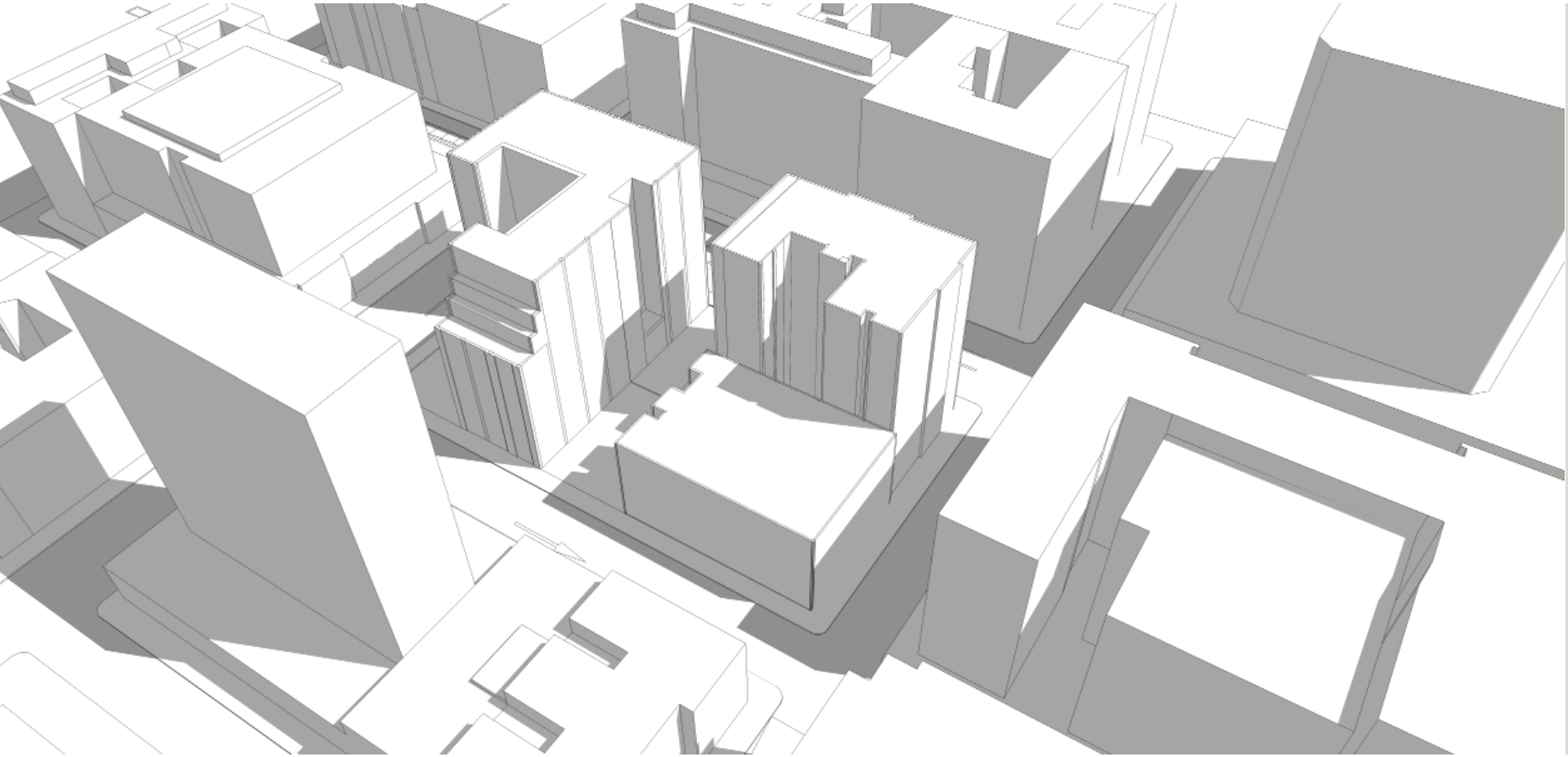
The *flâneur* finds pleasure, not distress, in the constant shifting of the urban spectacle dealing with the disorder by reducing it into a captivating performance or a new story. (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 31) This approach to the urban and unknown is novel and exciting as it allows people to read the city as more than a series of enclosed spaces. As Jane Rendell (2000*b*) explains: ‘...rambling represents the city as multiple and changing sites of desire. In traversing the city, looking in its open and interior spaces for adventure and entertainment, the rambler re-maps the city, both conceptually and physically, as spaces of social interaction, rather than a series of static objects’. The spatial practice of a place becomes its defining feature rather than its appearance and size.

Ultimately it is important to acknowledge that the practices of figures that traverse the streets hold spatial relevance.

3 '...the city offered an intensity of joy that was never, somehow, fulfilled. The spectacle melted away just as you felt you had reached its centre; the bubble burst when you touched it.' (Wilson, 1991, p. 55)

The city, like no other place, offers a life of extremes; wealth and poverty, pleasure and despair, excitement and fear. Rather than being discouraged by these extremes we may acknowledge that this is exactly where the city gains it captivating character. The experience in South African cities, including Johannesburg, may be compared to anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss's experiences when visiting South American cities in the 1930's where he found 'exaggerated and surreal contrasts'. (Wilson, 1991, p. 5) In these cities the contrasting conditions and derelict aesthetic of the structures 'constituted its seduction, its peculiar beauty'. (Wilson, 1991, p. 5)

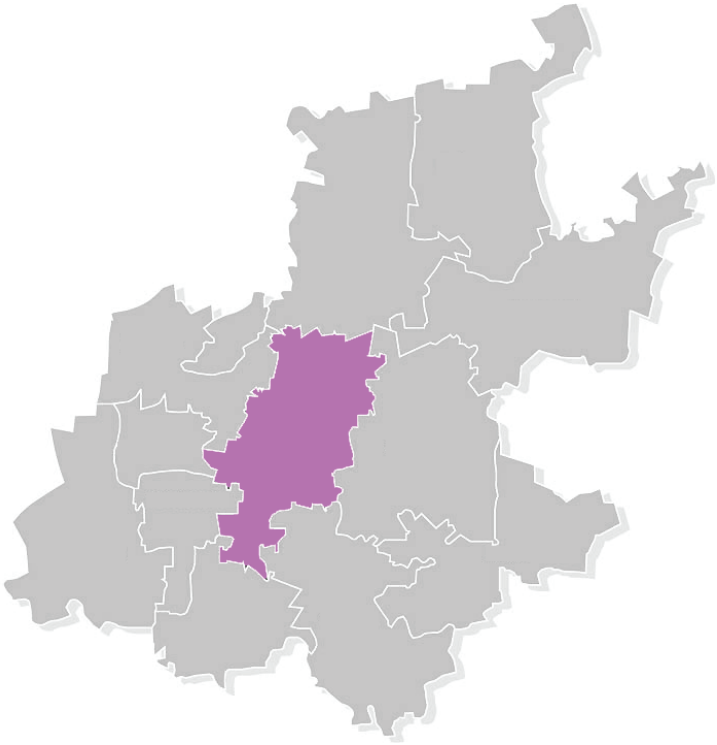
The *flâneur* was not fascinated by the great monuments and building of Paris but rather the everyday Paris; the streets, the cafes and the arcades. It was the street scenes of everyday life that captivated him, and his act of observation ' 'makes strange' the familiar and disregarded aspects of city life'. (Wilson, 1991, p. 5) In doing this, and obtaining the necessary separation, the *flâneur* becomes an alien in his native city. So perhaps, the best piece of advice the *flâneur* offers is 'not to overlook the obvious in one's own city' (Frisby, 1994, p. 92) as well as the disregarded and 'ugly' aspects.



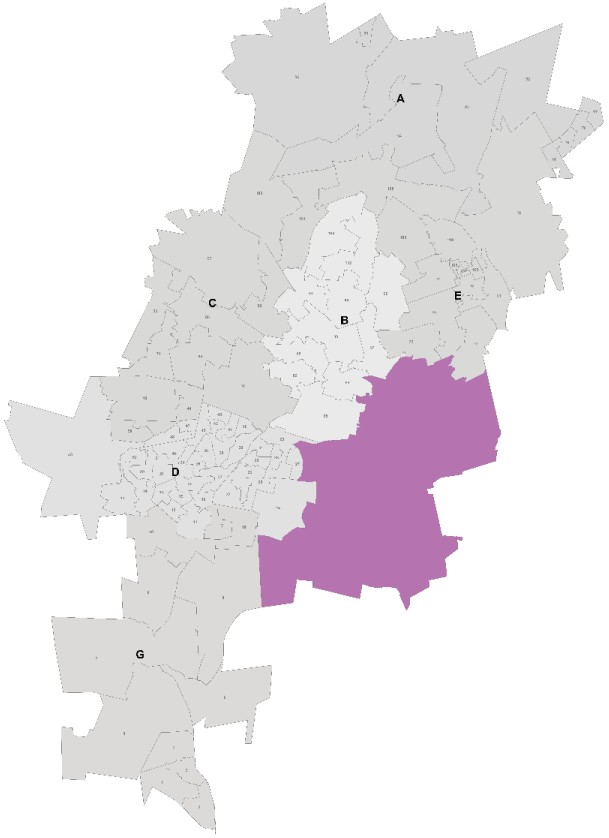
SITE ANALYSIS



GAUTENG PROVENCE

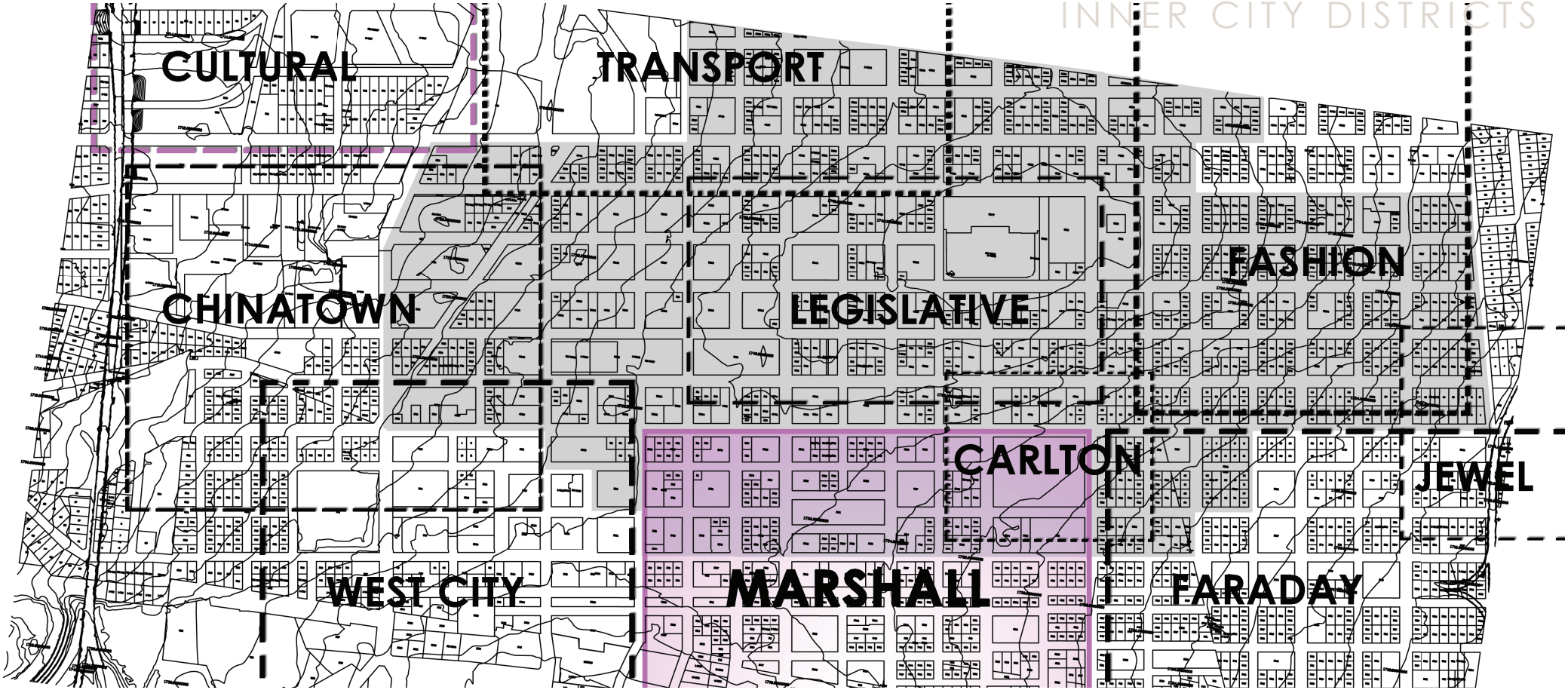


GREATER JOHANNESBURG



REGION F: INNER CITY

INNER CITY DISTRICTS





CHOOSING A SITE

The chosen site, in Marshalltown Johannesburg, is made up of two remaining pieces of infill land. The inner city block is bordered by Commissioner Street to the north, Fox Street to the south, Rissik Street to the west and Joubert Street to the east. The block is made up of the two empty sites as well as three unoccupied heritage buildings – Shakespeare House, the CNA Building and the New Kempsey Building. The site was chosen as it offers the opportunity to thoroughly explore the theoretical foundation of the thesis. As the site is in a well populated area of the inner city it offered the truly urban nature necessary for the theoretical exploration. Fox street provides the perfect location for the design for street activity as its southern edge is inhabited, well-used and extremely active; the northern edge alongside the site is completely devoid of development

and activity. Additionally the north-south orientation of the central infill site – and its frontage onto Commissioner and Fox Streets – creates an 'internal' street and the potential for the passage of people through the scheme.

The location of the site, within its greater context, will allow the development to entice visitors from various locations within Johannesburg central. The influential immediate surroundings are:

- The Ghandi square bus terminus to the south of the site, and ultimately the volume of pedestrians moving between the square and Johannesburg Park Station to the north
- The Carlton Centre and the retail activity of Von Wielligh Street
- The civic spine along Market Street, namely: The Johannesburg Public Library, the newly redeveloped Library Gardens, City Hall (currently acting as the home of the Gauteng Provincial Legislature) and the Rissik Street Post Office
- Rissik Streets' connectivity with the N1 highway to the South and Braamfontein to the north, and its general volume of use as a 'bridge' in the city
- The mixed surroundings of the area including residential, commercial, civic and public amenities creating a diverse yet well utilized part of the city.

The site offers:

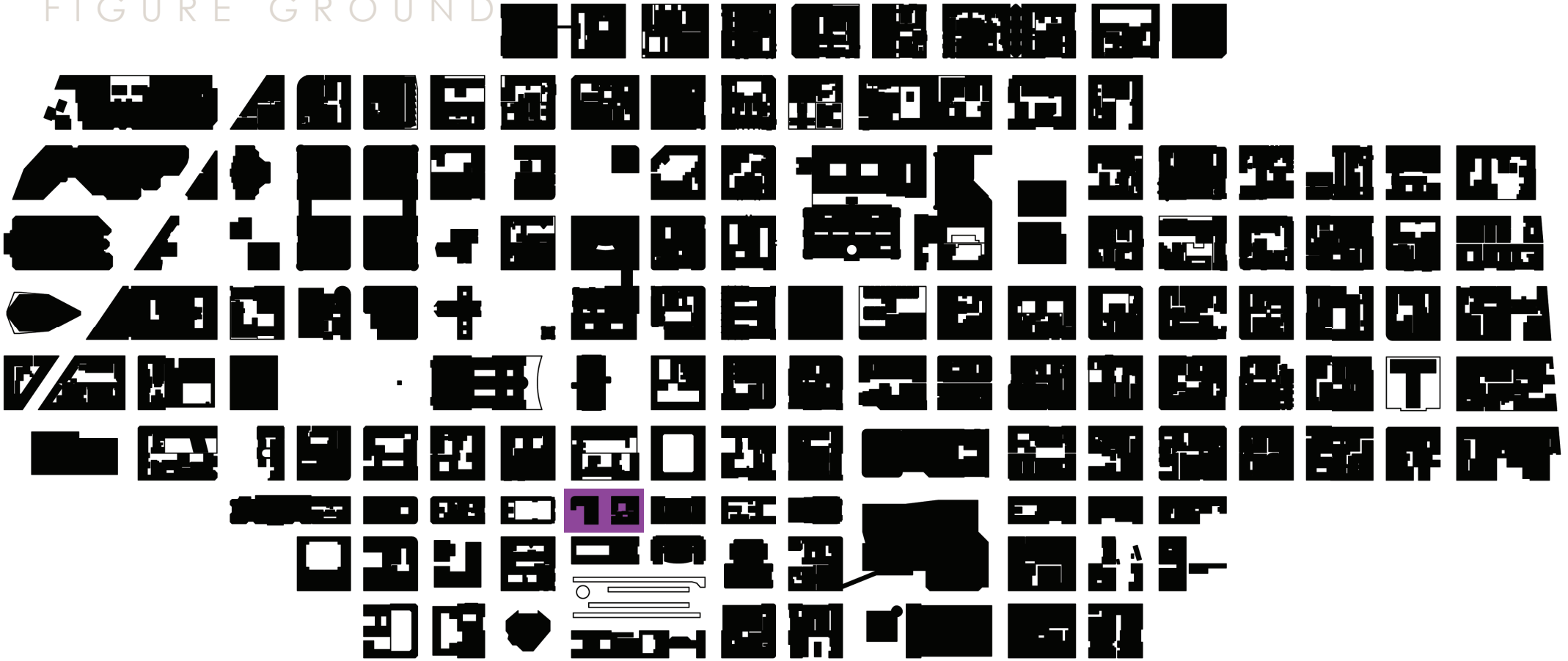
- Vast access to public transport and thus accessibility
- Ample pedestrians traffic to aid the exploration of 'the street'
- A diversity of building use in the surrounding buildings thus ensuring a diversity of people in the area

The combination of these factors will ensure a large amount of foot-traffic and a diversity of people in and around the site. It will also allow the site to be accessed by a variety of users who may engage with it at varying levels – whether just in passing on their daily commute, as a shortcut through the city block, for the retail and dining facilities or to use the entertainment facilities – allowing the scheme to perform as intended and become a comprehensive public facility.

Beyond the logistics of the chosen site the general context, constrained proportions and verticality promised to provide motivating parameters in which to design a building. Instinctually the site evokes the theoretical background and, although not as narrow as an arcade, calls to mind how the typology of the arcade 'allowed narrow strips of unusable urban land to be economically developed.' (Rendell, 1996, p. 223)

030SITE ANALYSIS

FIGURE GROUND



VEHICULAR MOVEMENT



032SITE ANALYSIS
PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT



MOVEMENT ROUTES

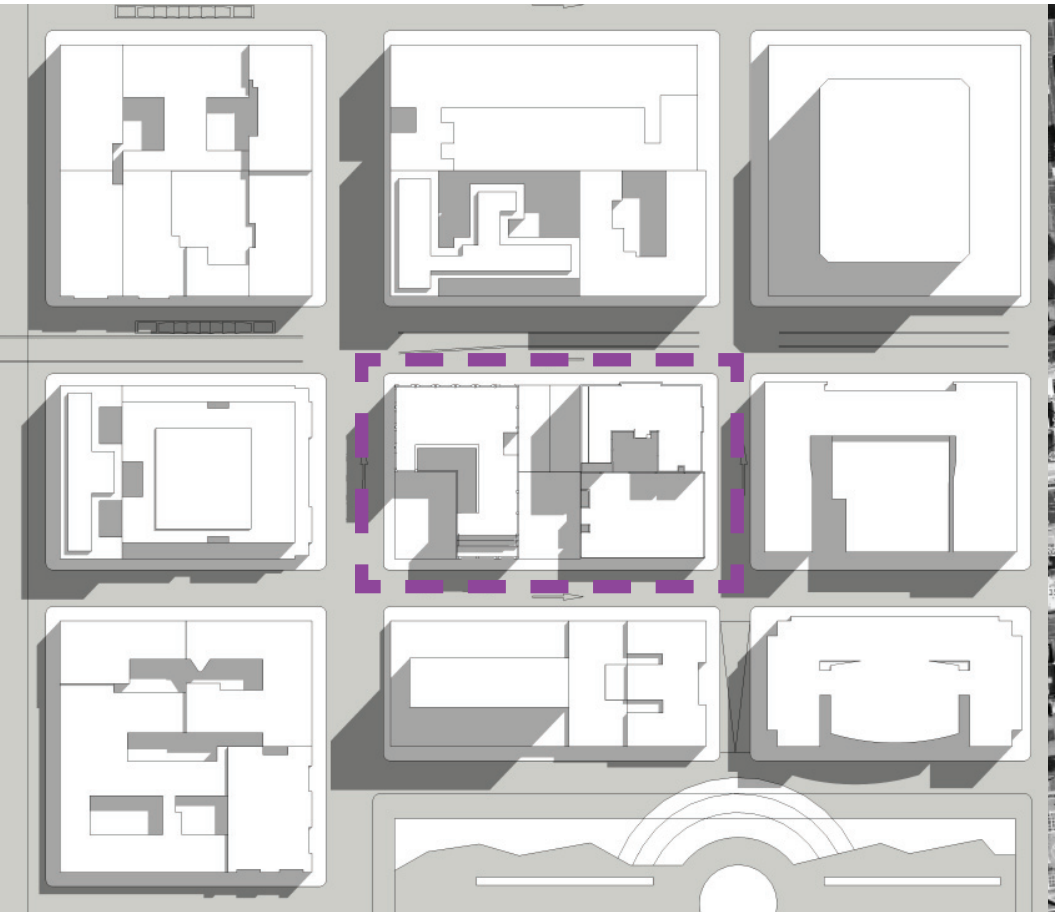


MOVEMENT

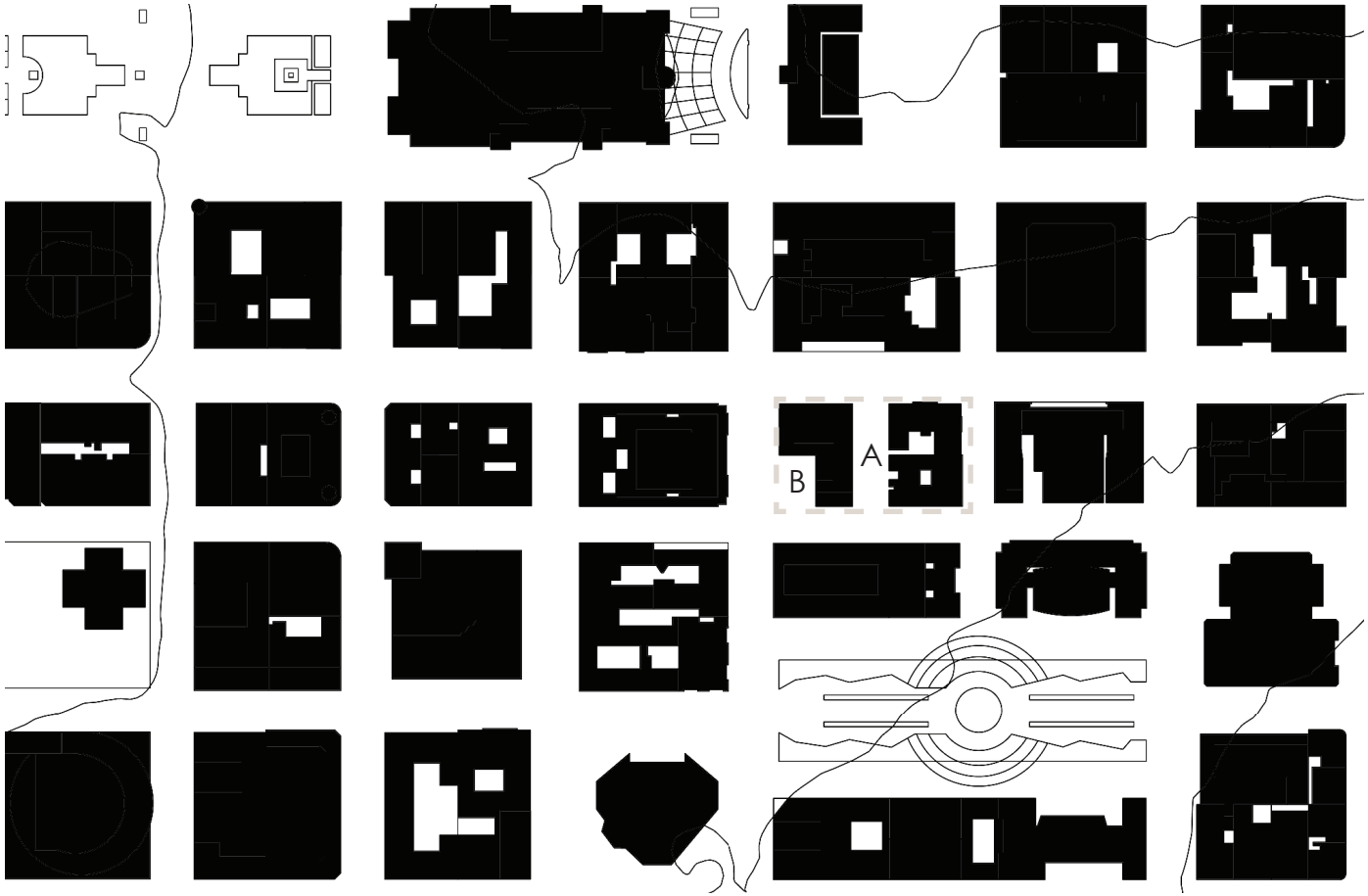
The public transport connectivity of the site is exceptional. Ghandi Square Bus Terminus hosts an extensive Metro Bus service with routes throughout greater Johannesburg. The BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) System runs adjacent to the site along Commissioner Street and Rissik Street. As with most parts of the city mini bus taxis have a large presence around the site. Additionally, Johannesburg Park Station is within walking distance of the site.

Busses to/from Ghandi Square:

- Parkhurst via Oxford Road
- Rosebank via Highlands North/ Bramley
- Sandton City/ Sunninghill via Hillbrow, Rosebank, Illovo
- Leeuwkop Prison via Woodmead, Sunninghill, Petervale
- Midrand, Midrand Extension, Centurion, Pretoria
- Linbro Business Park
- Lonehill via Kramerville
- Glenhazel, Lyndhurst, Kew, Bramley via Highlands North Terminus
- Yeoville
- Townsview, Oakdene, The Glen, Bassonia
- Towerby
- Mulbarton/Glenvista
- Rand Water Board
- Meredale via Ridgeway, Southgat
- Naturena
- Crown Extension
- Melville
- Parkhurst
- Randburg
- Fourways/Dainfern
- Witpoortjie
- Roodekrans
- Lindhaven/Roodepoort
- Weltevreden Park/ Strubens Valley
- Heldekruin
- Davidsonville via Fleurhof
- The Glen Centre/ Sandton City
- Bellevue/ Haddon
- Elands Park/ Parkhurst
- Bedford Gardens/ Northgate Centre
- Eastgate Centre




JOHANNESBURG
MARSHALLS TOWN



SITE STATS

The chosen site is a consolidation of 4 stands. Site A is a consolidation of Marshalltown stands 273, 747 and 1182. Site B is the remainder portion of stand 1274.

Site A: Measures 44m x 15.7m resulting in an area of 690.8m²

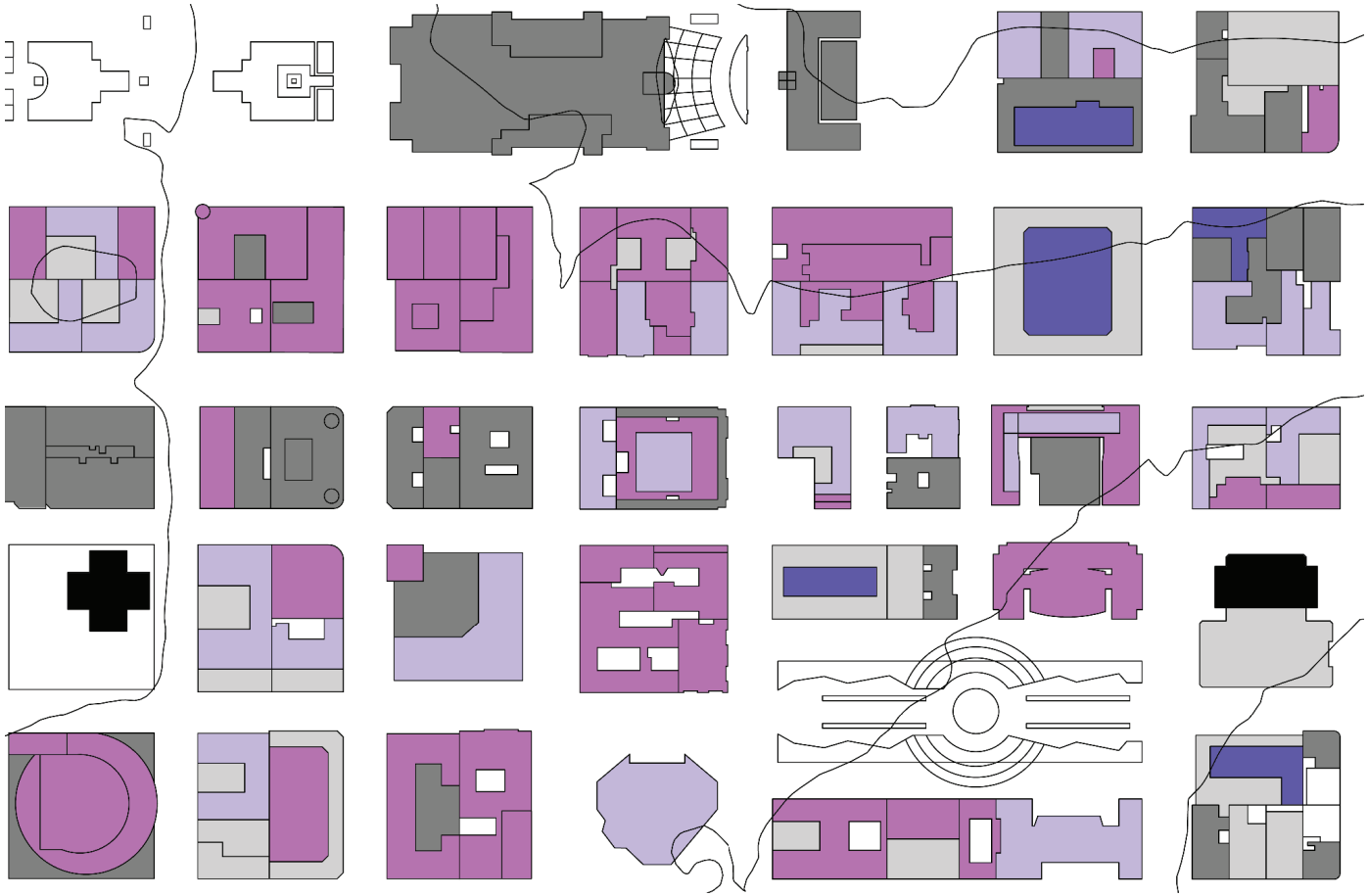
Site B: Measures 22m x 15.

Totals Area: 1036.2m²

< Figure Ground Drawing of the Site and Surroundings


Newtown
Precinct


082 905 5866
www.jhbartcity.org.za
P
60 min
WEEK
08:00 - 18:00
SAT
08:00 - 13:00
P Gandhi
Square



BUILDING HEIGHTS

1 - 3 FLOORS

4 - 6 FLOORS

7 - 9 FLOORS

10 - 12 FLOORS

14 - 22 FLOORS

34 FLOORS

NOTEABLE FEATURES

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

CIVIC AMMENITY

PUBLIC TRANSPORT HUB

HERITAGE BUILDINGS

MARKET

BRT STOPS

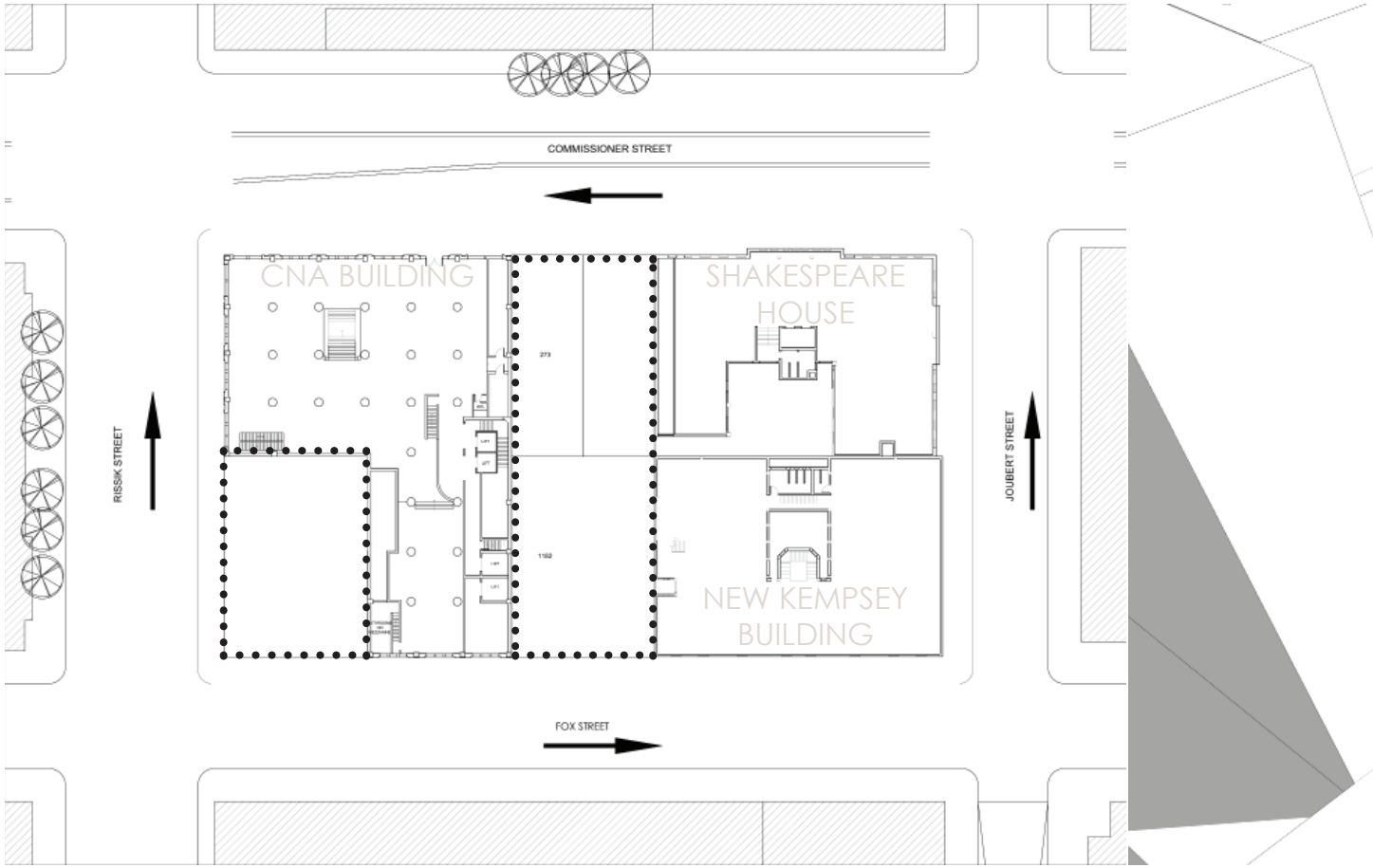
BRT ROUTE

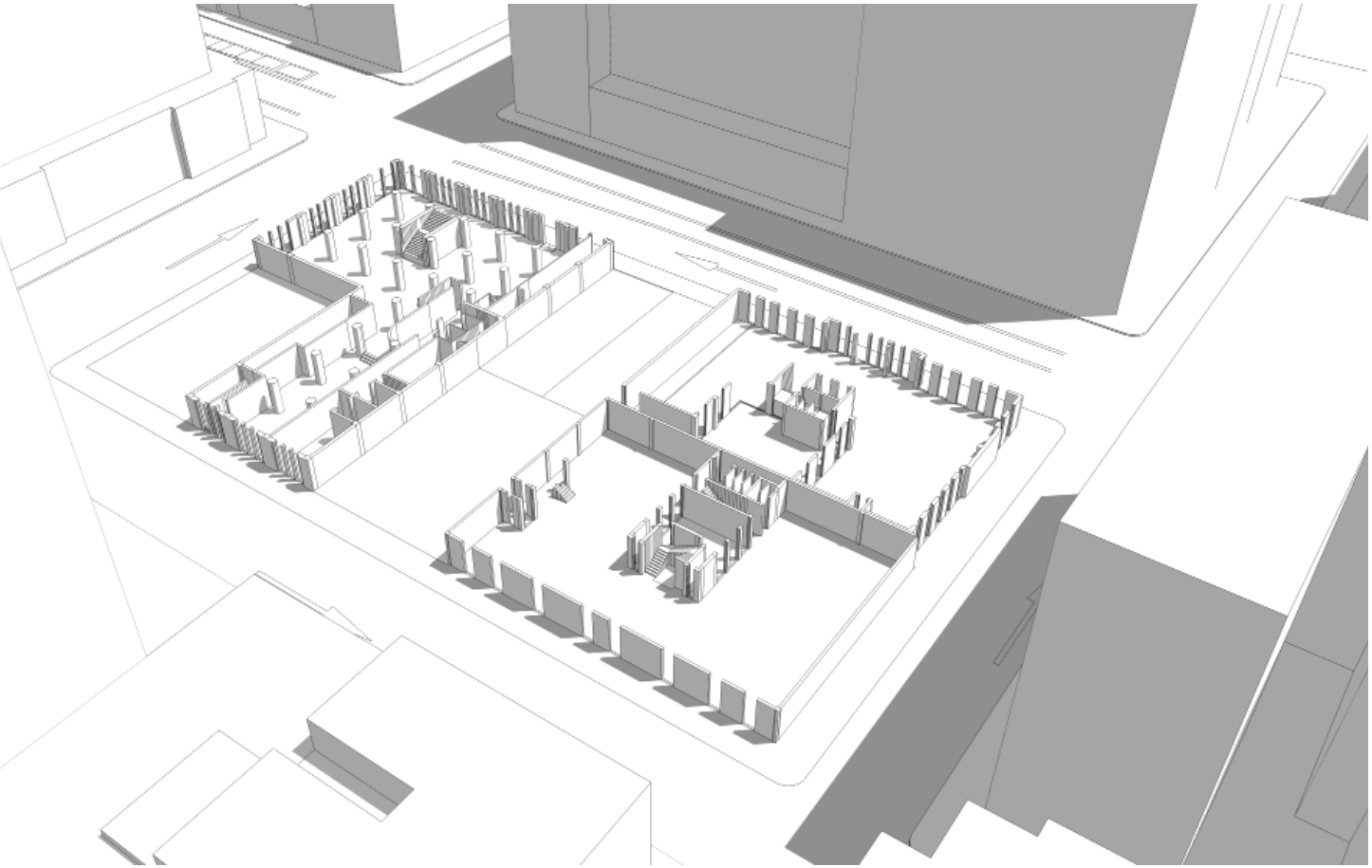


040SITE ANALYSIS
IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Heritage Buildings

The Status Quo:

The two chosen sites exist on a city block surrounded by three heritage buildings designed in the 1930's: The New Kempsey Building (1930), the CNA Building (1935) and Shakespeare House (1935). All three building are currently owned by property development company Urban Oceans who have a large portfolio of buildings in Johannesburg and South Africa. The company intends to develop the buildings into residential and office schemes, but the plans seem to have been hindered by the recent economic slump in the building industry. Currently the buildings have been secured with the lower floor windows and doors being sealed with brickwork but both the exterior facades and the interiors of the buildings exhibit a great deal of damage.





THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT: Johannesburg Architecture in the 1930s

The 1930's was a hugely progressive time for architecture in Johannesburg, with many of the buildings constructed during this time still existing today. Johannesburg was emerging as a 'world city' and benefited from a post-Depression building expansion. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 90) There were various influences at the time which spurred commercial architects in Johannesburg to disregard established forms of architecture and search for a new style. The work of the Bauhaus, the publication of Le Corbusier's book *Vers une Architecture* (Towards a New Architecture) in 1923 and the formation of the Transvaal Group of architects promoted the ideal of the modern movement. This coupled with technological developments in concrete, steel and glass construction resulted in an

overwhelming transformation in the style of new buildings in Johannesburg. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 89) Other influences include the 1922 discovery of the entrance to Tutankhamen's tomb, the geometry and simplicity of the ancient structure was said to have influenced architect worldwide. (Chipkin, 1993, pg. 90) Ultimately many of the commercial building of this time were labelled 'modernistic' – not adhering to the rules of the International Style promoted by the Bauhaus but still distant from traditional architecture – and were later regarded as Art Deco. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 90) The influence of New York architecture is evident in the popularity of Art Deco buildings favoured in the 1930s. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 92) The New Kempsey Building (1930) designed by J. C. Cooke & Cowen shows particular reference to the motifs found on buildings constructed in New York. Other examples of this style of building are Astor Mansions (1931) by



Above Left: Detail of Manufacturers Trust Building (1928) New York, similar to those on seen on the New Kempsey Building (Chipkin, 1993: 91)
Above Middle: Detail of Deak Perera Building (1930) New York (Chipkin, 1993: 90)
Above Right: CNA Building in *The Times* special edition on the Empire Exhibition (Chipkin, 1993: 111)

Obel & Obel on the corner of Jeppe and Von Brandis Streets and Ansteys's (1937) on Joubert Street. (Brodie, 2008, p. 78) The quantity of buildings constructed in this style resulted in Johannesburg being referred to as 'Little Manhattan' during this era. (Brodie, 2008, p. 78)

The CNA – Central News Agency - Building (1935) is classified as Empire Exhibition Style by Clive Chipkin (1993) in his seminal book *Johannesburg Style*. The style stemmed from the architectural exhibition taking place in Johannesburg and

was characterised by large, simple, rectangular buildings with simple plaster facades ('modulated with repetitive vertical elements between the windows like giant columnar orders') and flag masts. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 110) Another popular style at the time was influenced by the geometry of aircraft, boats and race cars exemplified by streamlined fins similar to racing stripes. The CNA building shows the strong vertical elements of this style as well as fourteen flag masts. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 111) Shakespeare House (1935) by Cook & Cowen shows the same 'vertical modularity' and simplicity of the CNA Building. (Chipkin, 1993, p. 112)



New Kempsey Building and Shakespeare House from Joubert Street



CNA Building from Fox Street

FUNCTIONAL MAPPING

Inspection of the buildings immediately surrounding the site shows a wide range of diversity in functions. While the upper floors of the buildings mostly house office and residential functions the lower retail levels are varied. Various clothing stores, hair salons, fast-food restaurants and small convenience stores surround the site. Two banks, a music store, shoe repair store, optometrist, doctor's surgery, internet cafe and tavern border the site. The retail functions of the CNA Building, New Kempsey Building and Shakespeare House have been removed in the process of securing the building. Informal trading is not prevalent on the pavement surrounding the site, as they are demarked as non-trading streets, and due to the market further north on Joubert street, but

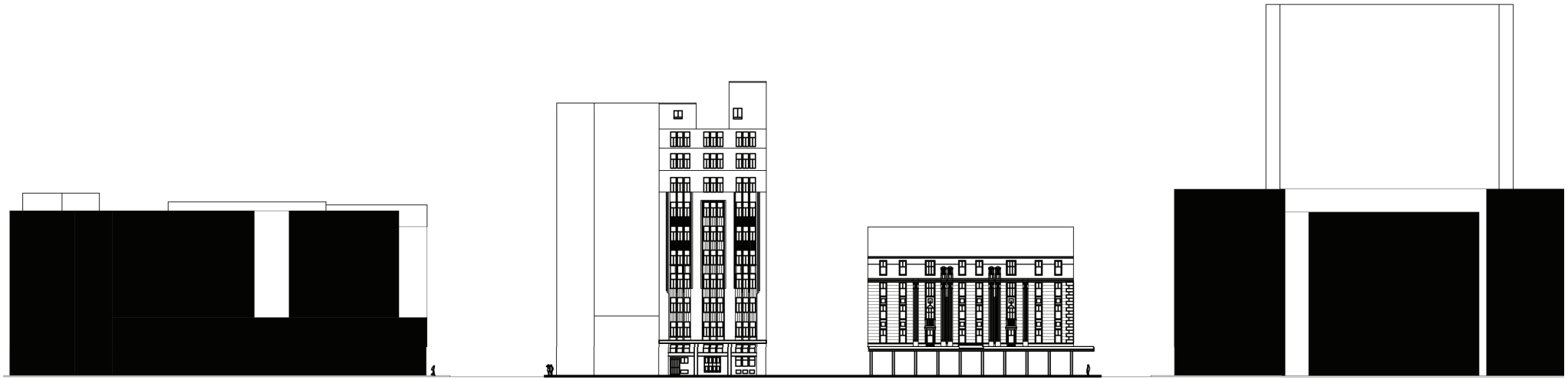
there is an informal pubic telephone stall. Additionally the nearby Ghandi provides a diversity of functions, along with various food outlets.



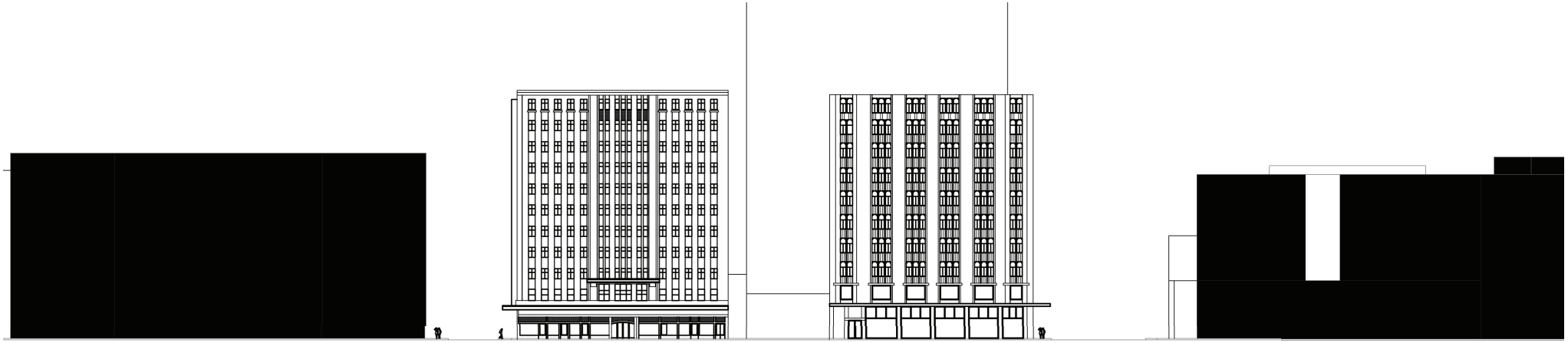
New Kempsey Building from Fox Street

Shakespeare House and CNA Building from Commissioner Street





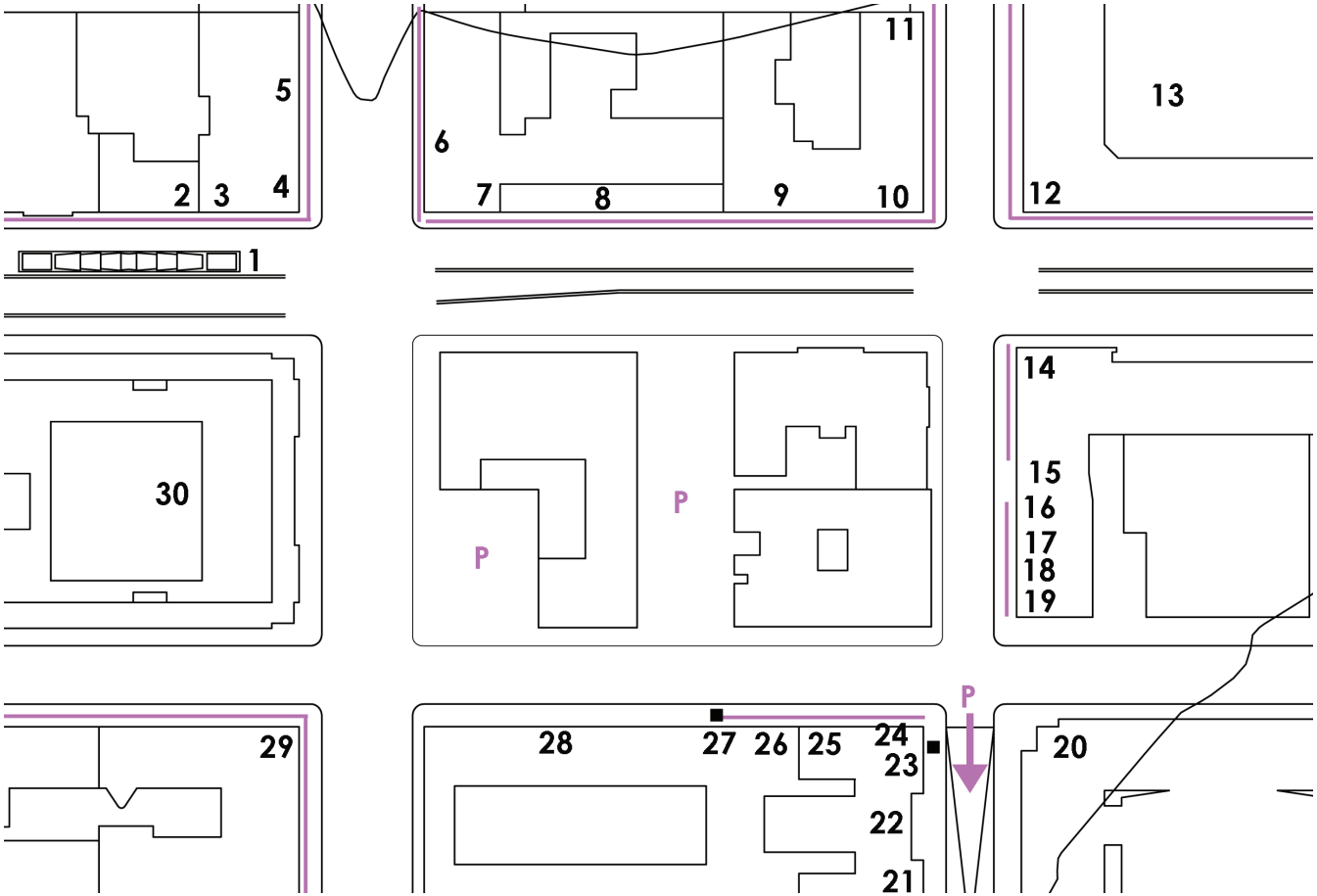
South Sectional Elevation
through Fox Street >



North Sectional Elevation
through Commissioner Street >



East Sectional Elevation
through Joubert Street >



IMMEDIATE CONTEXT FUNCTIONAL MAPPING

1. BRT Stop
2. Coffee Shop
3. Scooters Pizza
4. Sports Fashion Boutique
5. Doctors Surgery
6. Optometrist
7. Music Shop
8. Bidvest Bank
9. Ladies Fashion
10. Euro Fashion Boutique
11. Pep Store
12. Ladies World Fashion
13. Office Building
14. Fashion Shop
15. His Majesties Office Building
16. Hair Salon
17. Fashion Shop
18. Shoe Clinic/ Repair Shop
19. Tavern
20. 120 Fox Street Office Building
21. Fast Food Outlet
22. Hair Salon
23. Convenience Shop
24. Hair Salon
25. Convenience Shop
26. Halaal Take Away
27. Hair Salon
28. Metropolitan Life Office Building
29. Bidvest Bank
30. Surrey Office Building

IMMEDIATE CONTEXT MOVEMENT STUDY

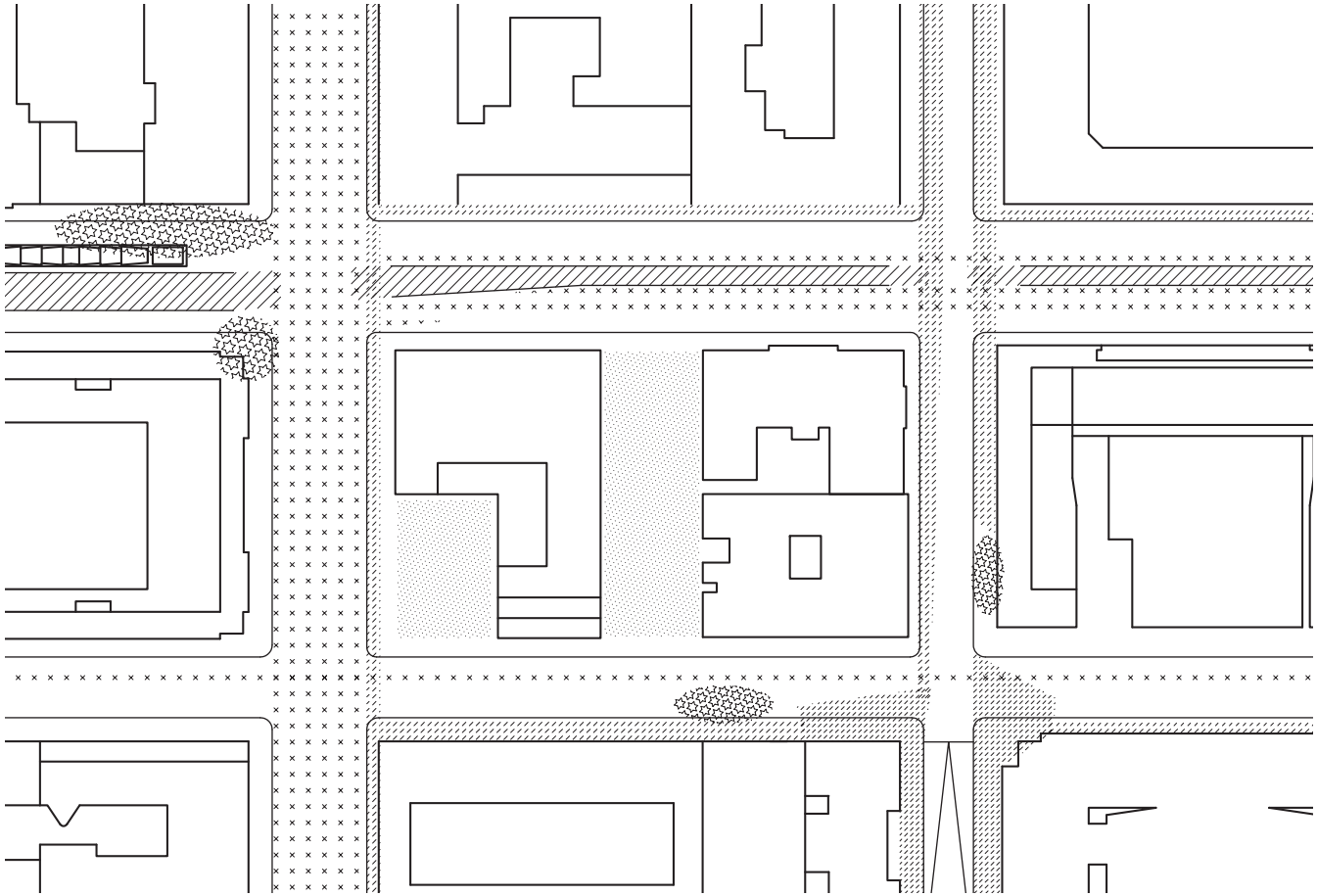
BRT MOVEMENT

VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT INTENSITY

PEDESTRIAN GATHERING

PARKING AREAS



PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

The Johannesburg Inner City Traffic and Transport Study (JICTTS) was completed by Arcus GIBB (Pty) Ltd – with Albonico, Sack, Mzumara Architects - for the JDA (Johannesburg Development Agency) in March 2010. The annexure on Pedestrian Assessment places Marshalltown in the sector of the city with the highest volume of pedestrian movement in the city. In the report Joubert Street running to the east of the chosen site is identified as a direct route between Ghandi Square and Park Station and is suggested as 'a high pedestrian priority street'.
(JDA, 2010, p. 12 – 16)

PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

As the street plays a significant role in the theoretical context of the thesis the following is a photographic walkthrough of the current conditions. Starting at Fox street (the focal street for the design intervention) and circling the block to Rissik street, then Commissioner street and finally Joubert street.



> Existing Street Condition: Fox Street




METROPOLITAN



< Existing Street Condition:
Rissik Street



> Existing Street Condition:
Commissioner Street




BUS







> Existing Street Condition:
Joubert Street

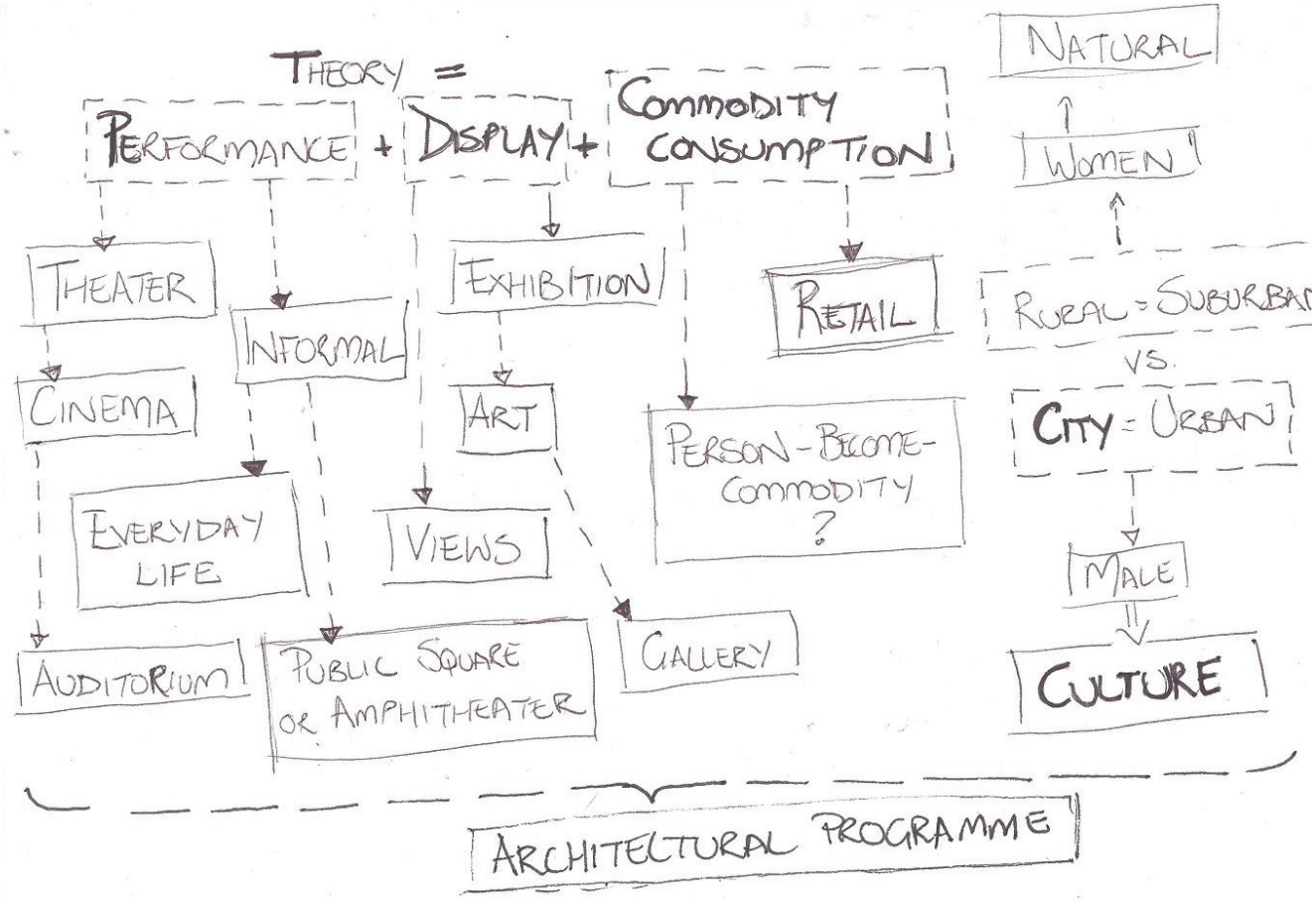


PROGRAMME & ACCOMODATION

< Witness (2000) by Susan Hiller (Shanken, 2009, p. 115)

INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest challenges of the thesis was to establish a building programme that relates to the theoretical foundation. The themes of bodily encounters with the city, voyeurism and observation do not lend themselves to an obvious building type or function. An early idea stemmed from the concept of body-become-commodity, prostitution and brothels. Ultimately this idea was not suitable as it was the spatial practice and not the act of prostitution that is relevant to the thesis. It also moved into a niche practice that did not address the everyday urban experiences of a visitor to the city. A similar consideration dealt with the practice of ethnography and the primitive notions of *'freak shows'* but ultimately the idea fell short as it did not hold enough relevance in contemporary society.



Eventually the programme was derived by exploring themes directly from the theory. If we consider the preconceived binary (gender) divisions previously discussed one of the associations that stands out if the link of the city with culture. An extract from Elizabeth Grosz's essay *Bodies-Cities* (1998) perfectly describes this relationship:

> '...the city is ... the site for the body's cultural saturation, its takeover and transformation by images, representational systems, the mass media, and the arts – the place where the body is representationally reexplored, transformed, contested, reinscribed. In turn, the body (as a cultural product) transforms, reinscribes the urban landscape...' (Grosz, 1998, p. 51)

This extract not only reiterates some previously discussed notions but also points out the absolute relevance of a cultural (art) institution within this theoretical context.

Further, the theory surrounding places of commodity – 'consumption, exchange and display' (Rendell, 1996, p. 221) - was explored. Zygmunt Bauman (1994) describes the arcades as 'spaces designed to offer the visitor the pleasure of looking; to attract the seekers of pleasure... these spaces sold pleasurable views to look at' (Bauman, 1994, p. 146) Thus the notion of entertainment was integral to the thesis. The intended programme aims to do create a building that provides a spectacle other than that of the mass of people/ urban scene. Ultimately the programme needs to allow for the activities and occurrences discussed in the thesis: A place to practice *flânerie*; develop an urban awareness; a place to observe - art and people - and to be observed; a place to consume - art, entertainment, food, commodities, and the urban spectacle.

THE PROGRAMME
A Building Designed for Visual Consumption

The intended building scheme is a mixed-programme public facility. The intension is to create a homogeneous environment that incorporates the arts, entertainment and leisure within an urban context. The primary function of the building is an arts centre, focused on new media (digital) arts, with an auditorium, cinema and retail facilities.

New media or emerging art is based in technology and digital formats. It has varying forms but performance art, installation, film, video, audio, animation, fashion, robotics and virtual reality are common examples.

DISPLAY:
Emerging/New Media Arts

- Exhibition/Gallery Space – with consideration for the particular needs of new media artworks
- Art Lab – digital lab with educational resources
- Workspaces – for artists in residence
- Administrative – Offices, Receptions, Storage
- Public Ablutions



COMMODITY CONSUMPTION: Retail

- Retail Stores – reestablishment of the existing retail spaces on the ground floor of the New Kempsey Building
- Restaurant
- Bar/ Night Venue
- Public Ablutions

< Woman admiring the window display at a luxury goods store in Paris

PERFORMANCE: Cinema and Auditorium

- Cinema – to accommodate 100 people, with projection room
- Auditorium – to accommodate 100 people, with projection room

The cinema and auditorium can act as independent entities screening commercial films and hosting events but can also serve for the display of art projects ultimately bringing together the art and commercial programmes.

- Foyers
- Food and Drink Provisions
- Public Ablutions

TRAVERSING SPACE: The Street Edge & Public Gathering

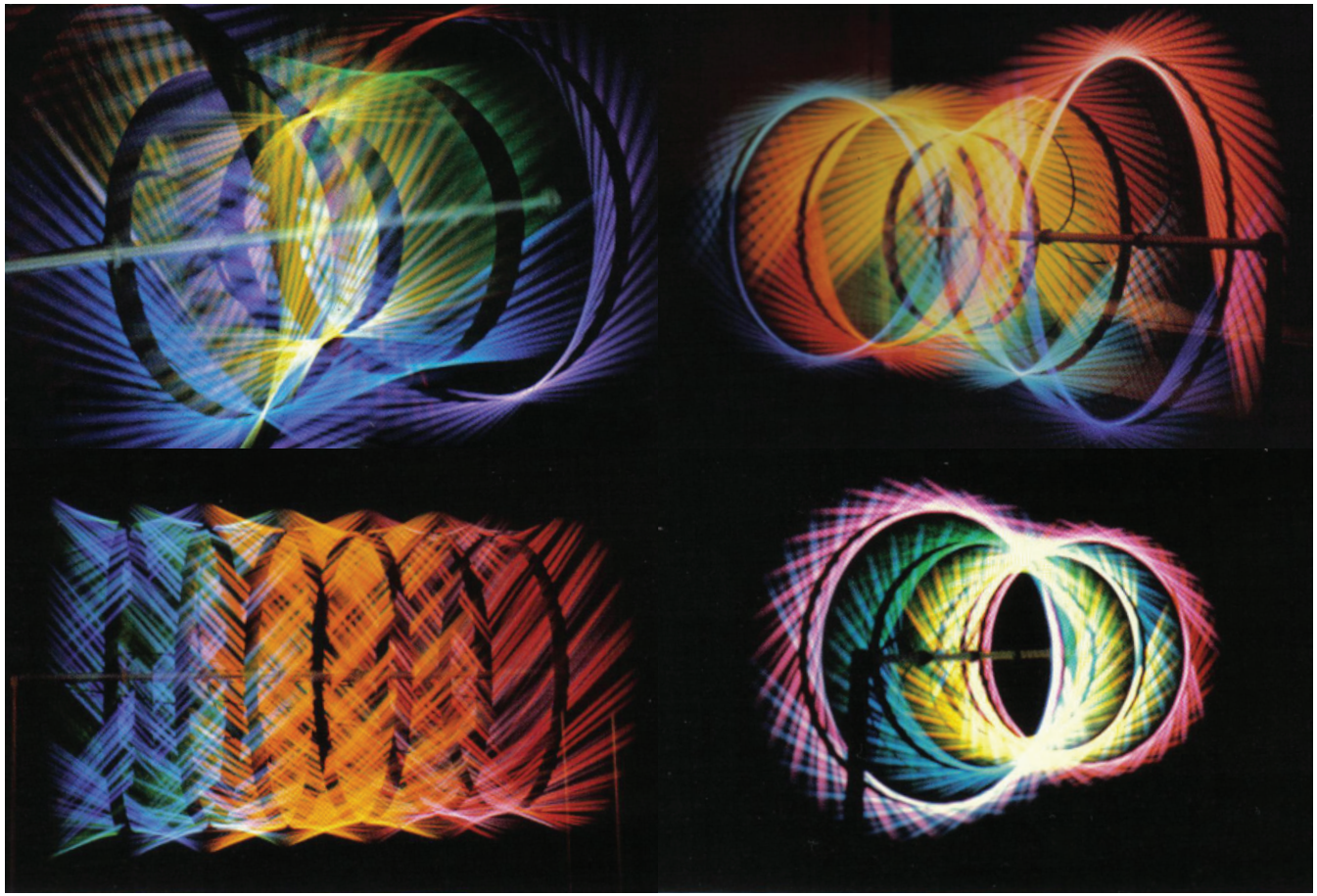
The theoretical context calls for a space which allows people to gather and watch, either the urban scene or impromptu performances. Normally this would take place in a public square or amphitheatre, but in this context the ground floor thoroughfare and street edge will serve this purpose.

'...the crowd as a theatre and the freedom of the stroller as the script-writer.' (Bauman, 1994, p. 147)

'*Flânerie* is thus a crowd practice.' (Shields, 1994, p. 65)

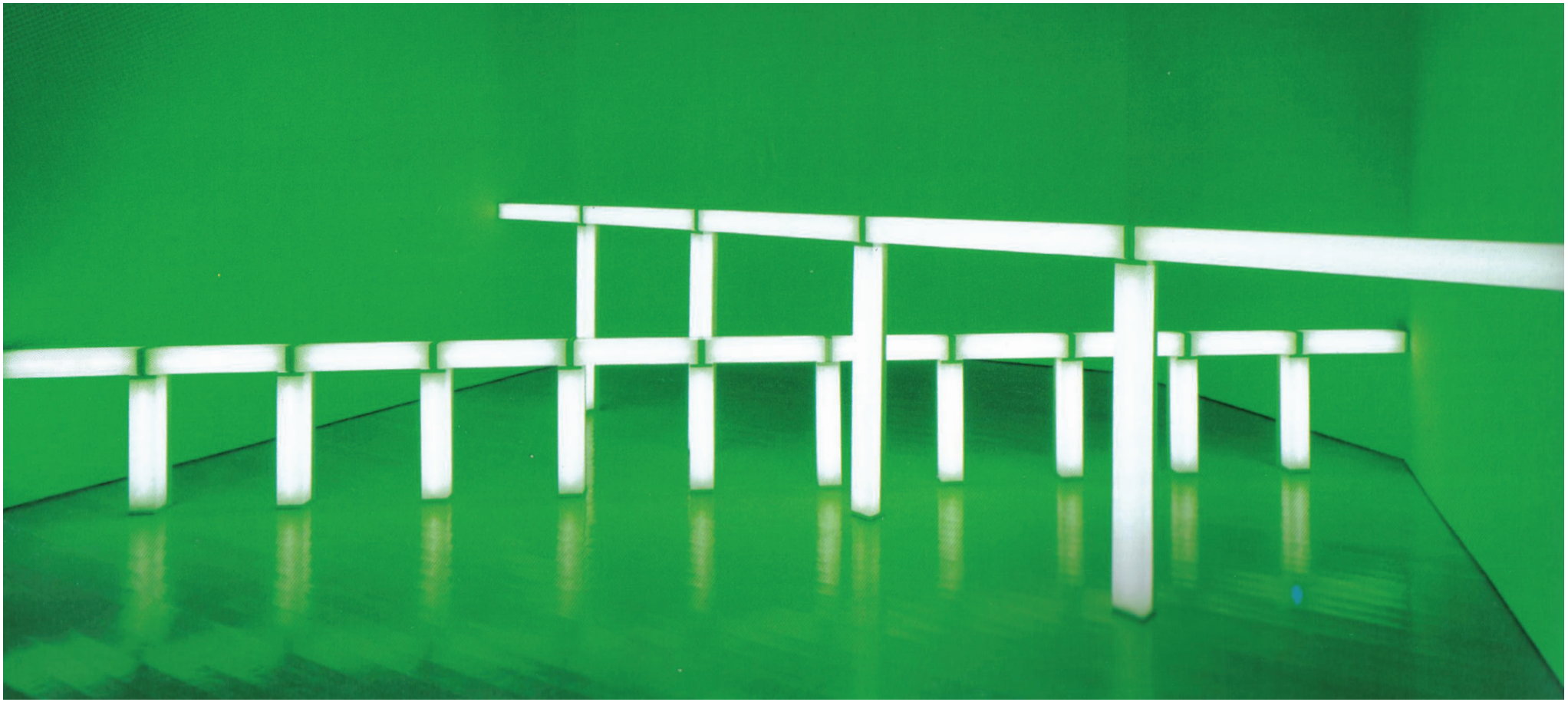
Case Study: new media art

'As accessibility and understanding of electronic media grows, its use by artists has become both widespread and increasingly instrumental in the latest developments in contemporary art.' (Shanken, 2009, p. 1)



>Alejandro and Moira Sina - Spinning Shaft (1978)
Neon lights and electronic components
(van Uffelen, 2008, p. 17)

>>Dan Flavin - Greens Crossing Greens: to Piet Mondrian Who Lacked Green (1966)
Fluorescent lights
(van Uffelen, 2008, p. 64)





DESIGN EXPLORATION

< (van Uffelen, 2008, p. 17)

INTRODUCTION

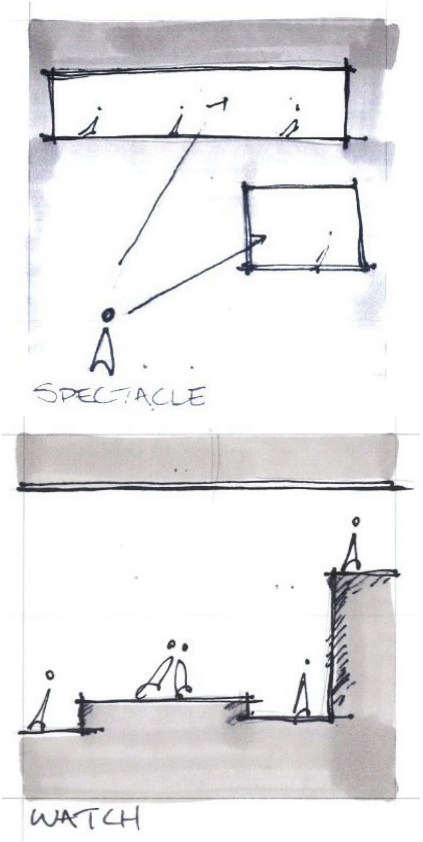
This thesis engages with the bodily experience of the city and voyeurism, thus it is pertinent that the resulting design is largely concerned with the experience (and feelings) of a visitor to the building. In *The Principles of Cladding* Adolf Loos writes: 'the artist, the architect, first senses the effect that he intends to realize.... he senses the effect that he wishes to exert upon the spectator'. (Loos, 1988, p. 135) In this excerpt Loos is suggesting that the architect feels the intended space before visualising it, in essence he 'privileges the bodily experience of space' (Colomina, 1992, p. 91) over its physical manifestation. The challenges of the design surpass simply accommodating the programme on the fairly constrained site. In embracing the theme of voyeurism, the crucial challenge is how the idea of people-as-(visual)commodity can be conceived spatially?

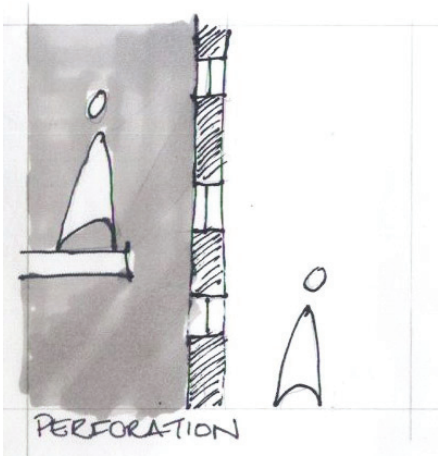
THEORETICAL THEMES

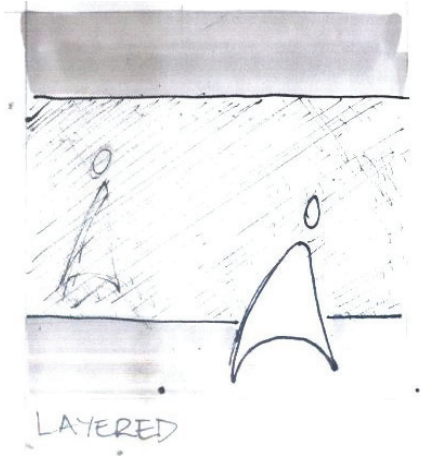
The early design stages began with explorations (visual and physical) of the recurring themes in the thesis:

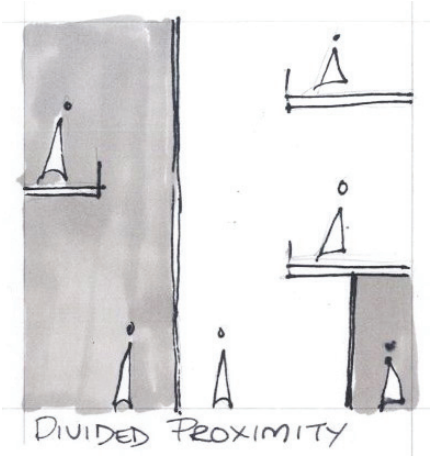
- Observation and Event
- Passage and Transitions
- Public Perforation

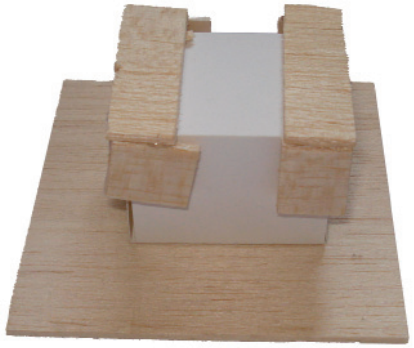
OBSERVATION & EVENT

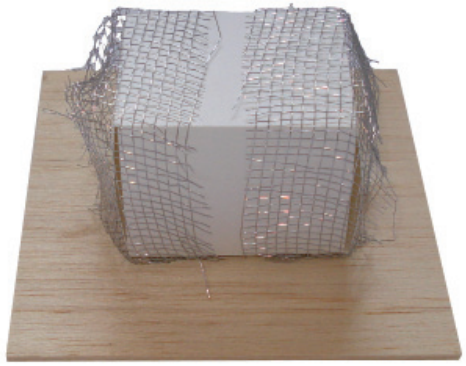


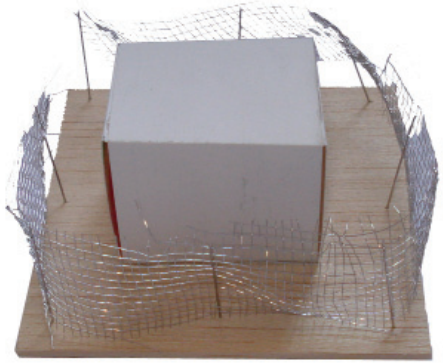

PERFORATION


LAYERED

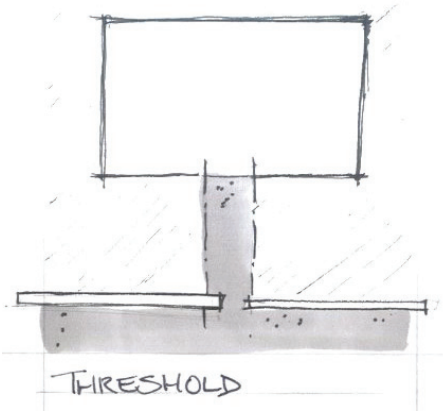

DIVIDED PROXIMITY

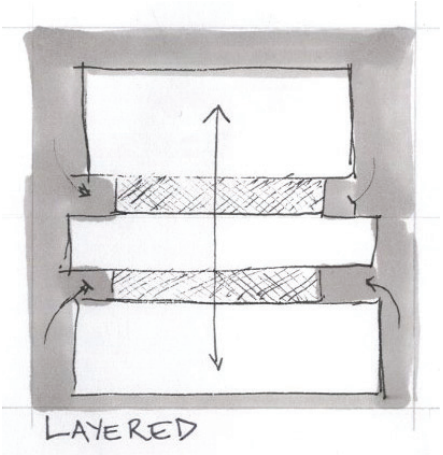




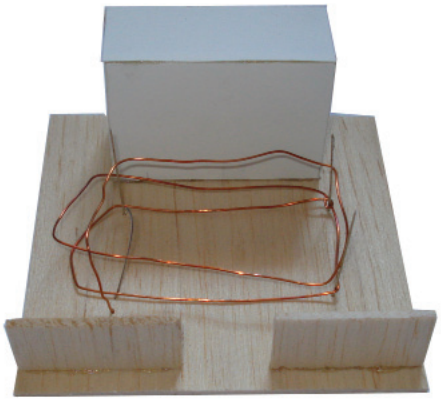


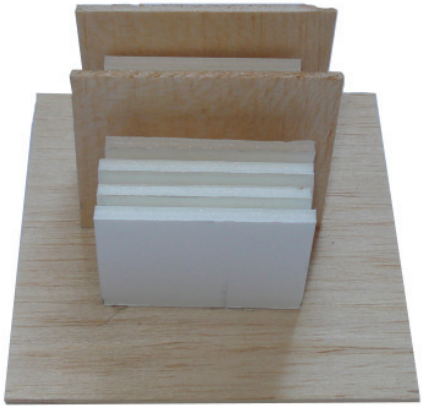
DESIGN EXPLORATION
PASSAGE & TRANSITION

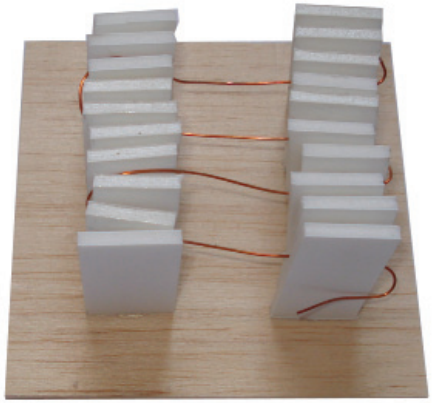




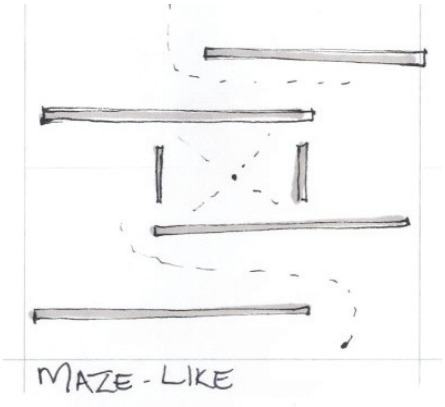


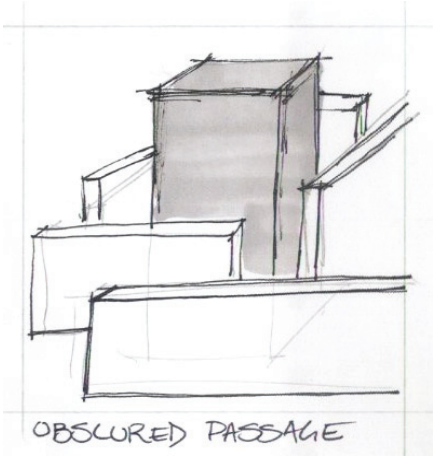


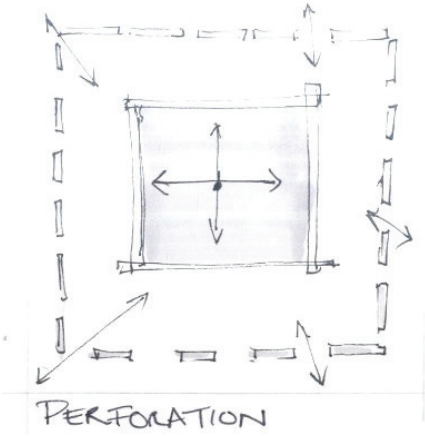


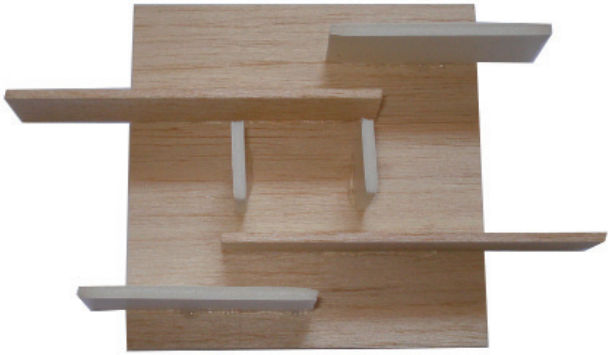


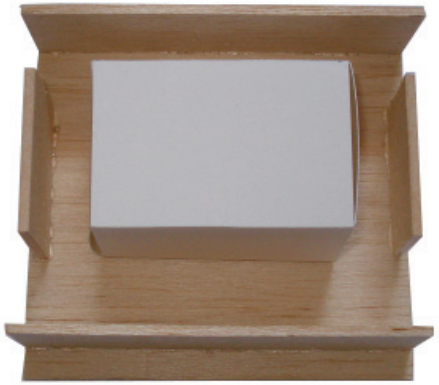
PUBLIC PERFORATION







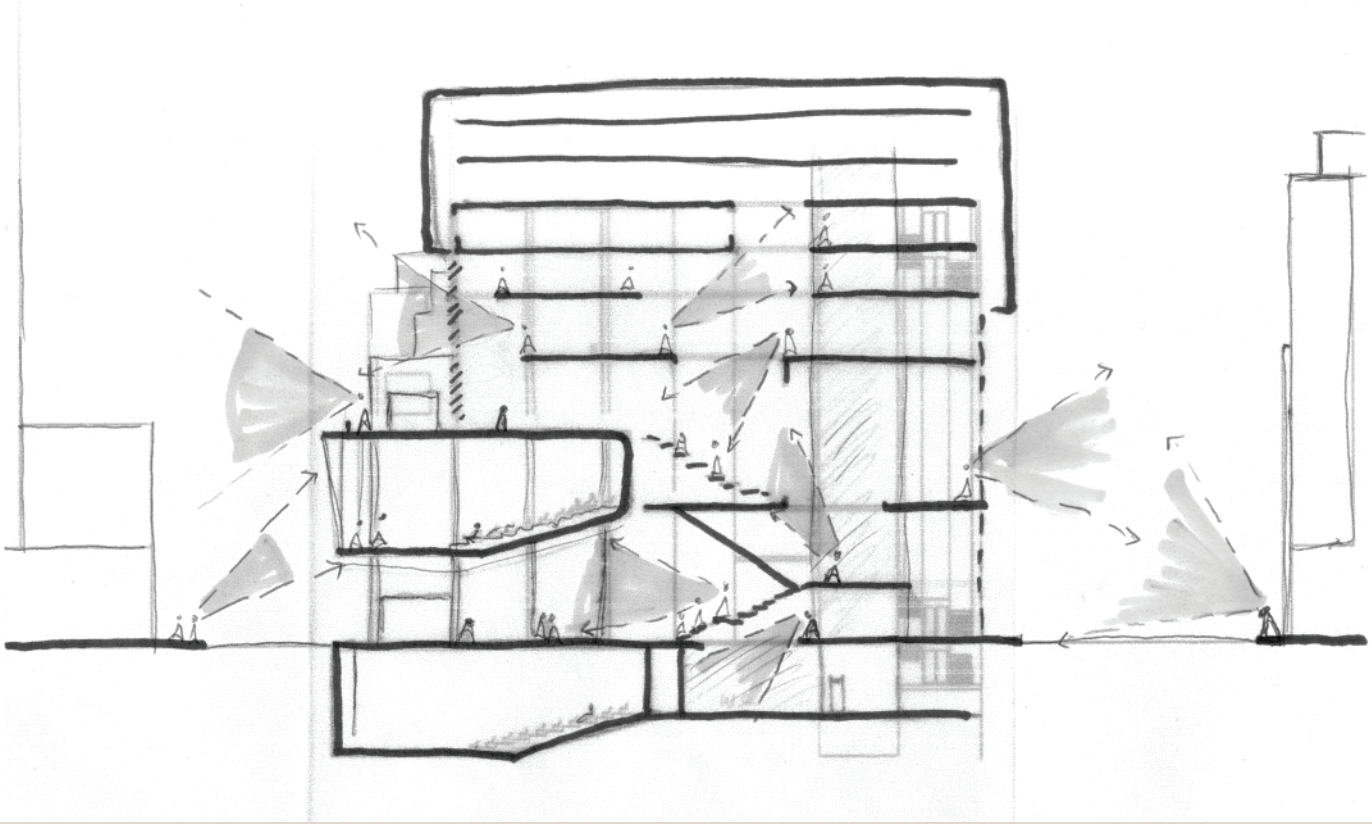






DESIGNING FOR THE GAZE

In her essay *The flâneur on and off the streets of Paris* (1994) Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson writes: 'If, by chance, the *flâneur* turns up at the theatre, it will not be for the drama on stage but for the crowded, bustling 'street scene' in the corridors where the real drama takes place'. This statement highlights the objectives (and intricacy) of the design process. Although an auditorium and cinema are included in the programme, as a traditional form of entertainment, the spaces that link these functions – the foyer, the circulation, and the passages – are of great importance as the platform from which to observe the mass of people and the spectacle of the urban scene.



Sketch showing the intended design approach of visual connectivity as well as physical





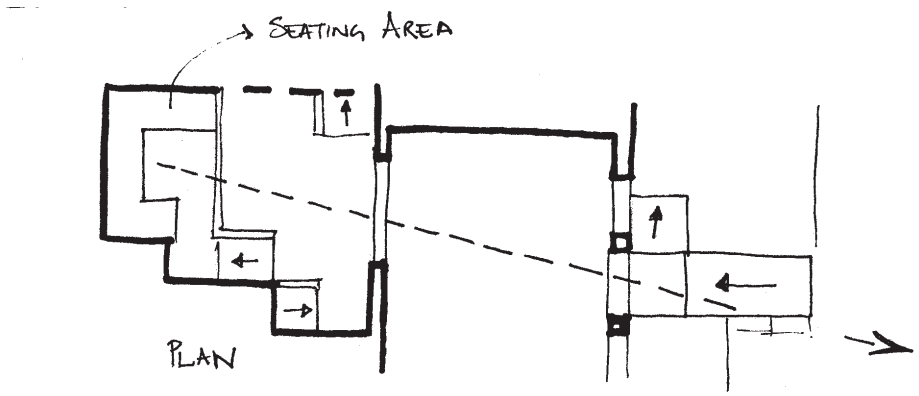
> MoMA, New York
>> Musee d'Orsay, Paris

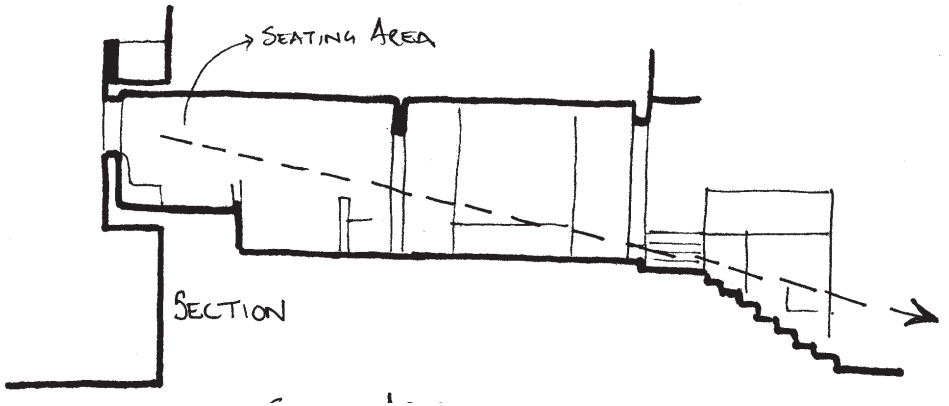
Case Study: The Theatre Box

Objectives: Designing spaces as a viewing platform, emphasising visual connections

One of the chief characteristics of the flâneur is his apparent incognito, unseen yet seeing. In mastering the art of looking without being caught the flâneur gains a perceived sense of control, acting - in a sense - as a 'perambulating Panopticon'. (Mazlish, 1994, p. 50) Similarly, in Adolf Loos' domestic architecture his principle of the theatre box becomes a spatial mechanism for the concept of control and power within the house. This concept stems from actual seating boxes at the theatre which given their size, Loos notes, would feel exceedingly claustrophobic if the inhabitants were unable to look out towards the open space of the theatre hall. (Colomina, 1992, p. 76) The Moller House (1928) in Vienna is a prime model of this notion.

The house contains a raised seating area, located in a bay window overlooking the street. The occupant of this seat would immediately become aware of any person who entered the living room, while remaining obscured due to the backlighting of the bay window. The psychological condition created by this space is obvi-





ous. The occupant of the raised seating area takes command of the household and 'comfort in the space is related to both intimacy and control'. (Colomina, 1992, p. 76) The space becomes a control tower (a panopticon of sorts), suspended in the house.

Equally, the theatre box can act as a frame drawing attention to its occupant and inverting the object and subject in the voyeuristic encounter. (Colomina, 1992, p. 82) The design practice of 'framing' occurs frequently in Loos' domestic architecture where he separates the physical and visual links between rooms. An occupant is able to see a space before they are able to decipher a route to the space.

< Plan and Section of the Moller House showing the sight line that exemplifies the *Theater Box* concept (after Colomina, 1992, p. 79)

'Architecture is not simply a platform that accommodates the viewing subject. It is a viewing mechanism that produces the subject. It precedes and frames its occupant.'

(Colomina, 1992, p. 83)

Case Study: Lincoln Centre Alice Tulli Hall

Objectives: Strategies in emphasising a visual connection between interiors and exteriors (the arts and the public)

The Lincoln Centre in New York is a collection of buildings and public spaces that from a cultural campus in the city, housing various facilities. The collection of buildings can be generally described as Monumental Modernism or Brutalism and their overall effect is alienating, elitist and uninviting. (Diller, n.d) The practice of Diller, Scofidio and Renfo were appointed to implement and large scale masterplan, renovation and extension project on the Centre. On their website the Diller, Scofidio and Renfo state that the project will 'turn the campus inside-out by extending the spectacle within the performance halls into the mute public spaces between the halls and further into the surrounding streets'. (Diller, n.d) The first of the building complete is the Juilliard School Building containing the Alice Tulli Hall. The building was originally designed by Pietro Belluschi in 1969. (Lubell, 2004, p. 28)

The Alice Tully Hall is a venue for concerts and theatre, with the associated Juilliard School located above it. On their website the Diller, Scofidio and Renfo state that the project will 'turn the campus i**nside-out by extending the spectacle within the performance halls into the mute public spaces** between the halls and further into the surrounding streets'. (Diller, n.d) At street level the architects have attempted to give the building more presence, with new glazed entrances and seating areas (Kolb, 2009, 54-59), creating a previously denied link between the inner and outer worlds. Another feature which exaggerates this new visual relationship is a projecting dance studio on the south-west corner of the building. (Kolb, 2009, p. 54-59)

Ultimately, the architects planed an 'an **architectural strip-tease** that exposes theatres and activities buried behind opaque ... street walls' (diller, n.d) blurring the boundaries between the public and private spheres. The overall effect is that the architects designed '**an experience rather than a form**' – similar to the previously discussed ideas of Adolf Loos - and have created 'an experiential sequence that structures a kind of narrative'. (Kolb, 2009, p. 54-59

> 3-D representations of the interventions at the Lincoln Centre, New York (Diller, *n.d b*)



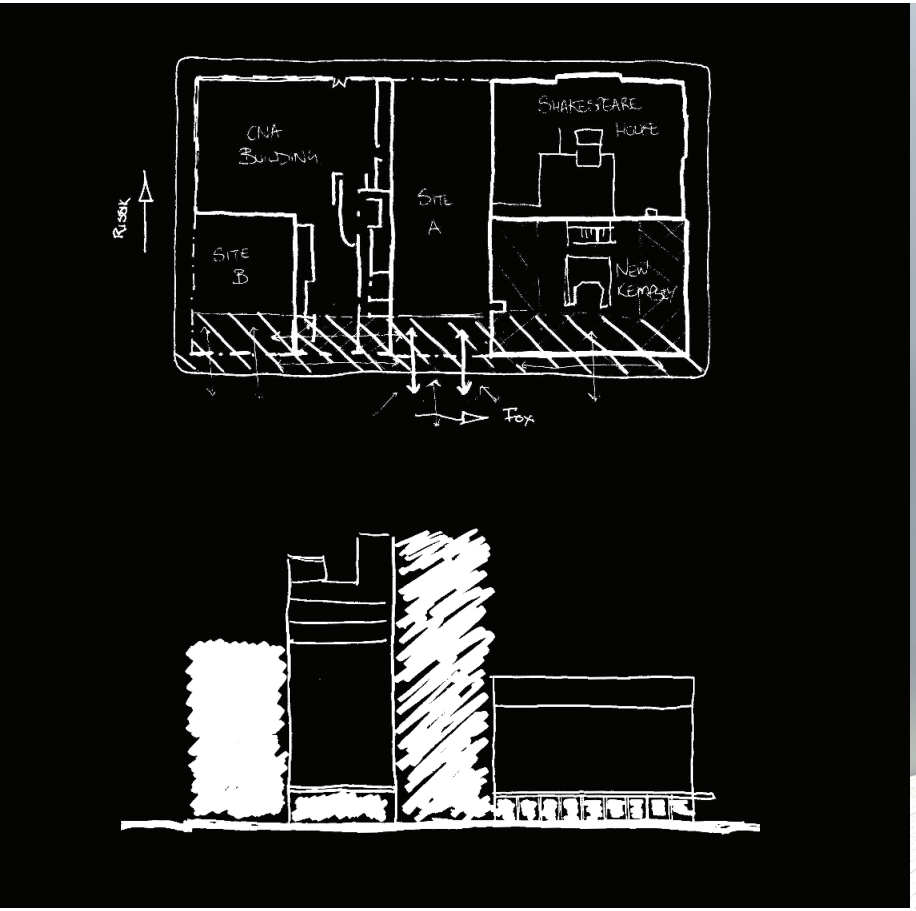


DESIGNING THE STREET SCAPE

1. ACTIVE STREET EDGE

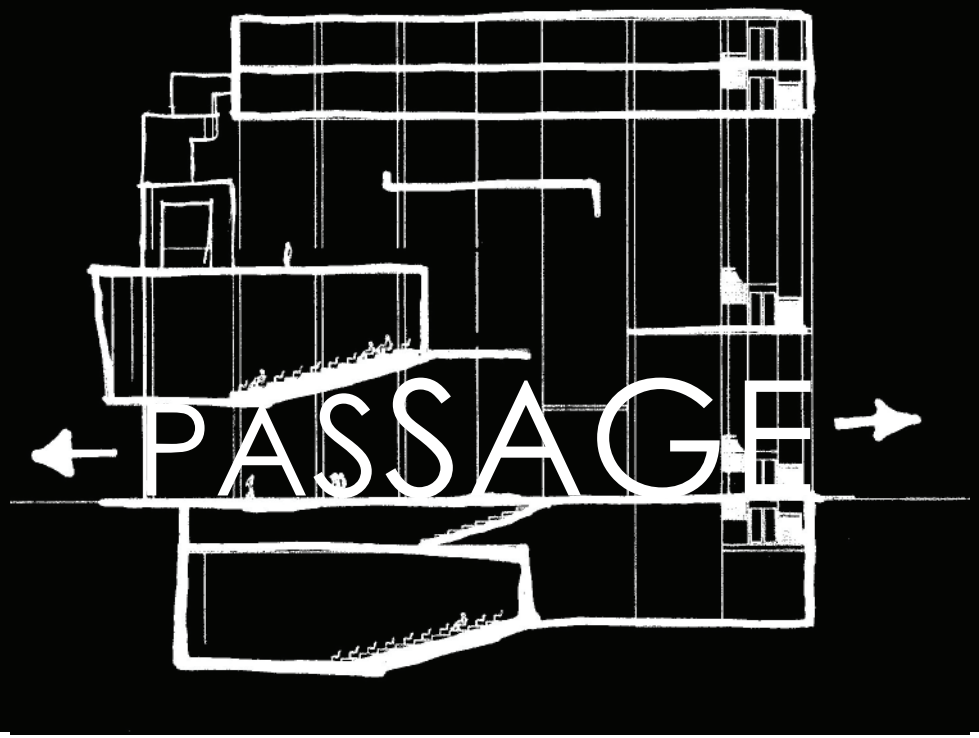
The flâneur is defined by 'mobility'. (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 32) He is a character concerned with traversing space, as Elizabeth Wilson writes, 'the flâneur lived on the boulevards, and made the streets and cafes of Paris his drawing room'. (Wilson, 1991, p.54) In a densely packed urban environment the streets become an extension of life; a place for informal trade, socialising and movement. In the context of this thesis developing the street edge is of great importance, but other conditions of 'street' exist within the building. The ground floor 'passage' and the vertical circulation must be treated accordingly. Essentially, it is important that the design strives to provide 'urban explorations, passages of revelation, journeys of discovery' (Rendell, 2000, p. 129)

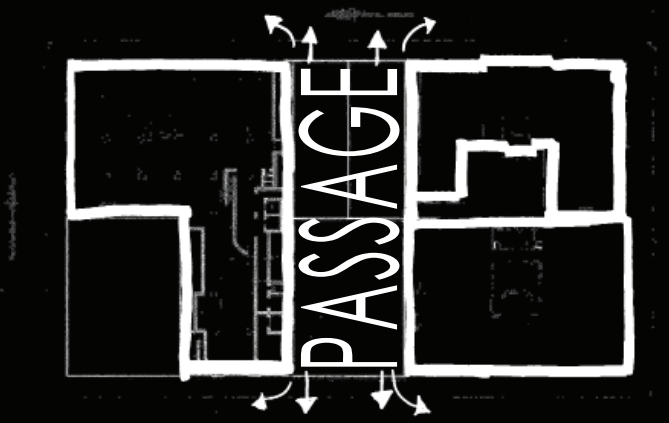



CNA
BUILDING
SHAKESPEARE
HOUSE
SITE
A
SITE
B
NEW
KEMPSY
RUSSELL
Fox

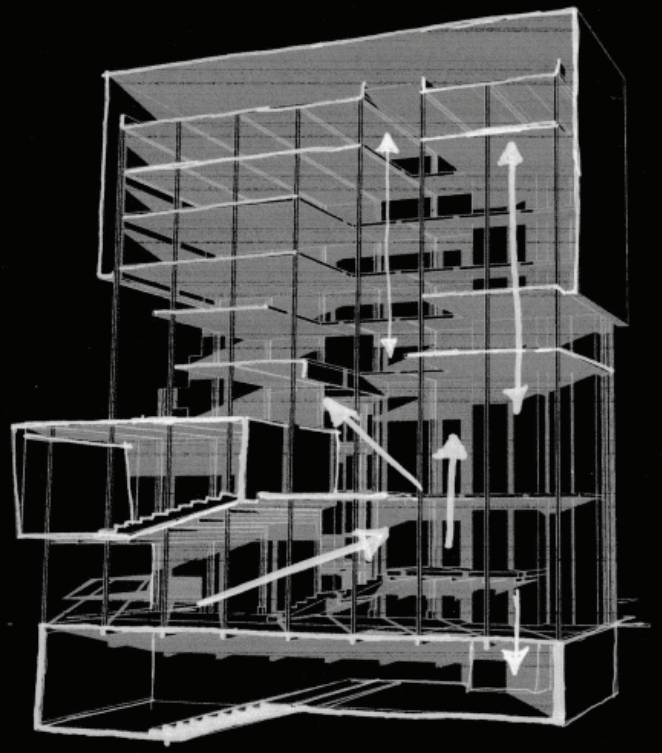

NEW KEMPS
boutique
RESTAURANT

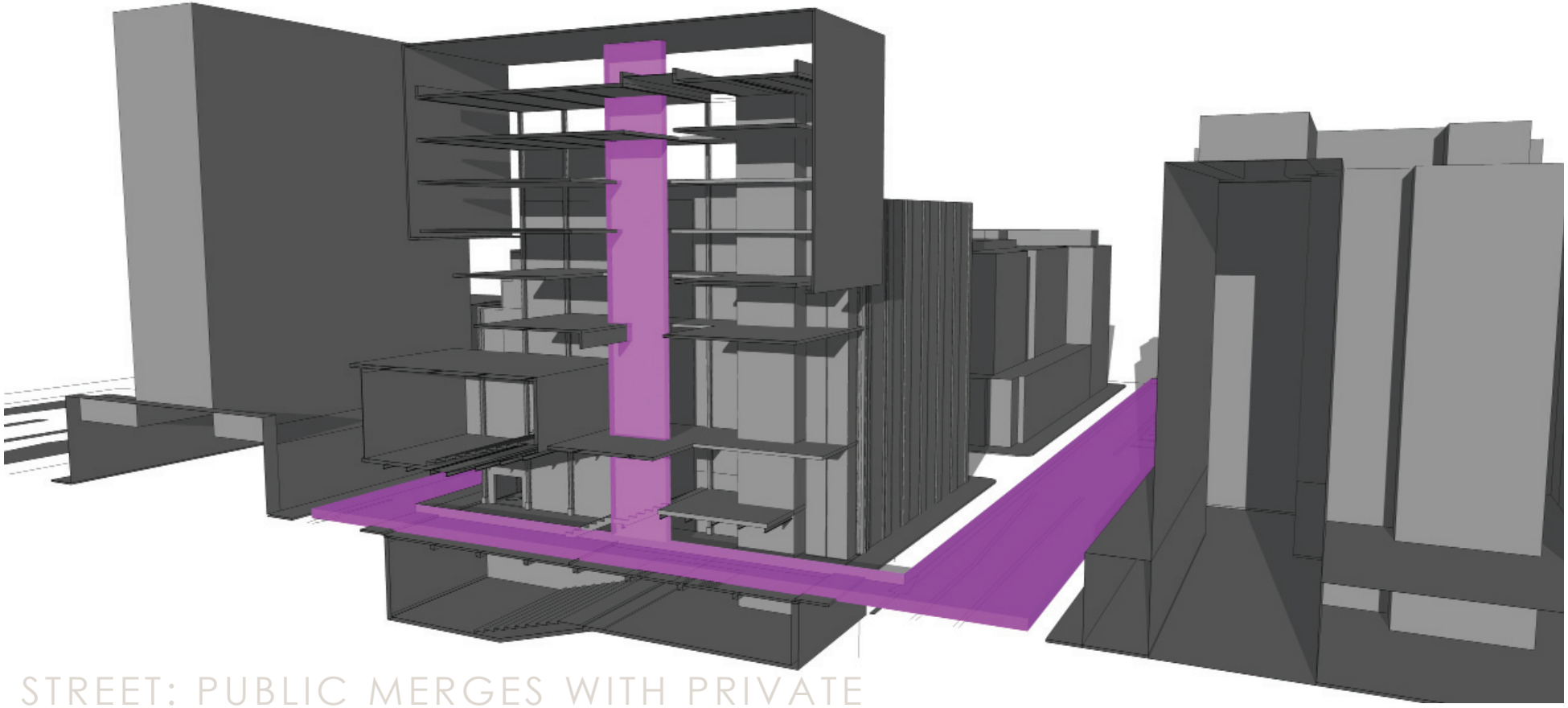
2. GROUND FLOOR PASSAGE





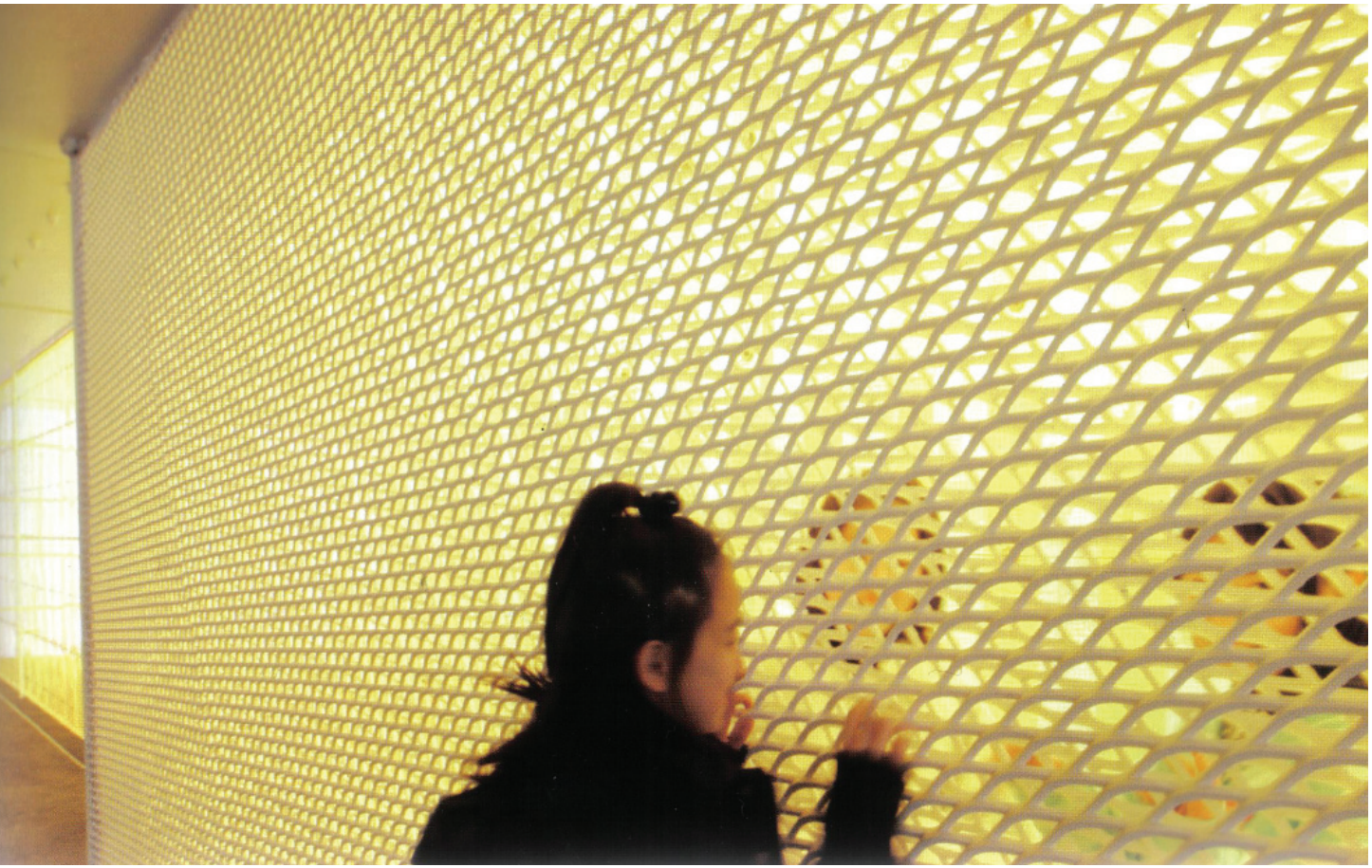
3. THE VERTICAL STREET





THE STREET: PUBLIC MERGES WITH PRIVATE

MATERIALITY



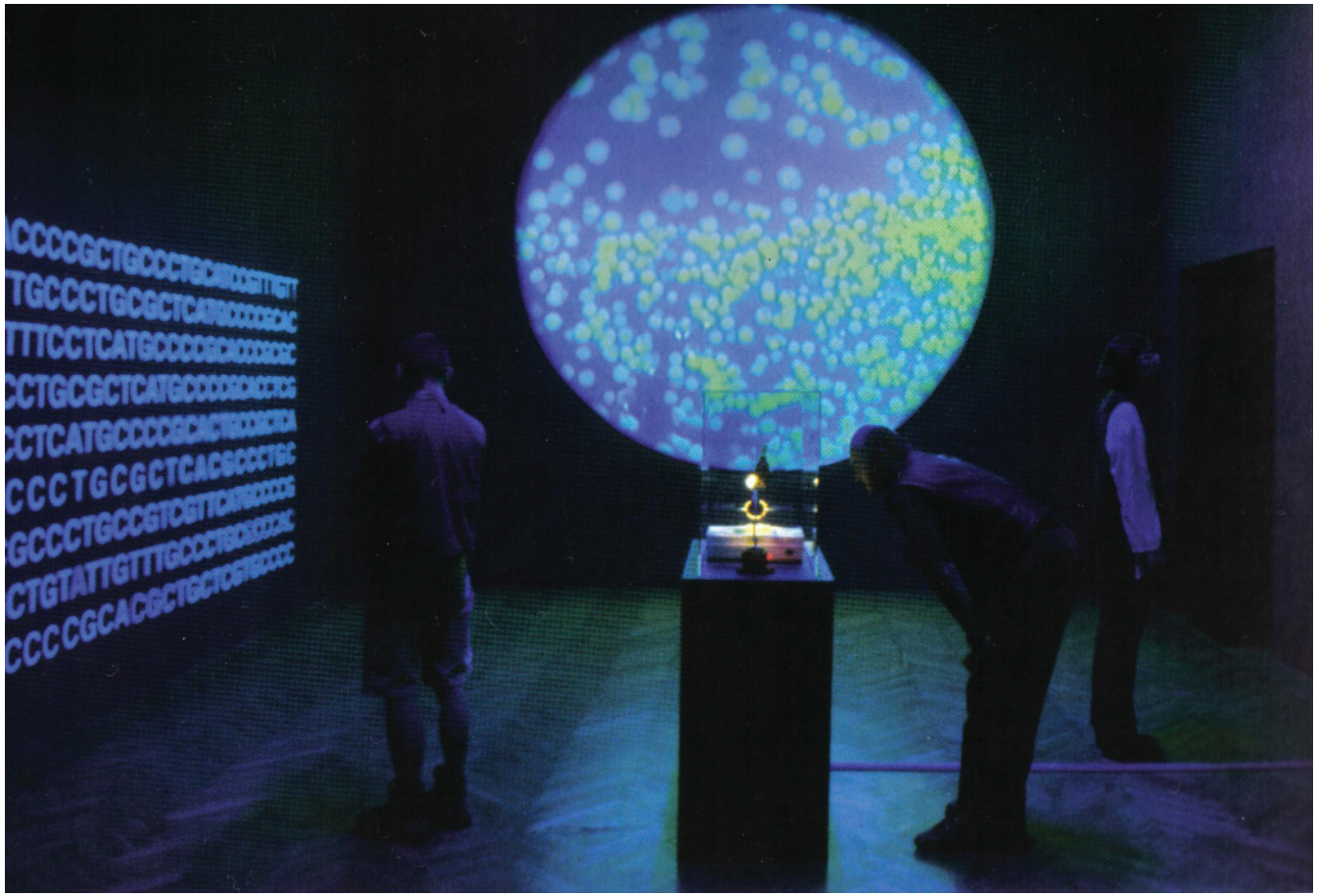
The materials used in this project are of particular significance. On the facades the materials will determine how the building reacts to its urban context, whether it is in variance to the heritage buildings on its flanks, or creates a sense of union.

In the internal spaces, particularly, the materials will have an obvious link to the theoretical context. The translucency, opacity and reflectivity of the finishes will determine the user experience, as well as, form or break visual connections.

< Fukusaki Hanging Garden (2005) by Kengo Kuma and Associates (van Uffelen, 2008, p. 10)

DESIGNING FOR EMERGING MEDIA

All art has particular requirements of the spaces it is housed in. Generally direct light is excluded and large, clean wall space required in galleries. The variety and scope of emerging media art means that it is extremely difficult to design a universal space to house it. In general it is suitable to have large open spaces that are adaptable to various situations and can contain a variety of work. There are some specific considerations when designing for digital art, namely the accessibility of power sources, the ability to enclose spaces and shut out light and acoustic considerations for audio artworks.



> Genesis (1999) by Eduardo Kac (Shanken, 2009, p.158)

TECHNOLOGY

Surface: Clothing, Bodies and Buildings

'...fashion is an inescapable part of the urban scene' (Wilson, 1990, p. 234)

In the discourse of the *flâneur* and gender much debate arises around the possible existence of a female *flâneur,* or the *flâneuse*. One of the debates against the existence of the *flâneuse,* though with little factual support, is woman's supposed inability to maintain the appropriate level of disconnection and aloofness while travelling the city. In the nineteenth century shopping was seen as the primary activity for women in the city, thus women were seen as unable to resist the goods on sale and the general allure of the city. (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 27) In fact, the advancement of the department store was seen to modify and feminize *flanerie* (in removing the distance between the observer and the objects or commodities on display) to such a degree that they are credited with the demise of the *flâneur*. (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 35) An added argument against the female *flâneur* is the perceived role of woman within the urban spectacle acting as sights to be 'consumed' and 'enjoyed' (Parkhurst Ferguson, 1994, p. 28). Elizabeth Wilson (1991) considers the possibility that prostitutes - with their 'intimate knowledge of the dark recesses of urban life' - may be seen as the *flâneuse*. (Wilson, 1991, p. 55) This association is problematic as it tends to glamorize prostitution and disregards the significant differences between prostitution and those who walk the city for leisure and entertainment.

George Sand – a nineteenth century French writer and feminist – may be one of a few women who were able to experience the city as *flâneur*. Sand was known to occasionally dress in men's clothing in order to explore Paris freely in a manner that was prohibited to most women. (Wilson, 1991, p. 52) George Sand's accounts highlight the importance of dress (fashion) in urban life not only in the nineteenth century, but also today. In her essay *These New Components of the Spectacle: Fashion and Postmodernism* Elizabeth Wilson writes that fashion played a 'central and indispensible' role in the spectacle of urban life. Clothes were seen as tools used to signify class, status and gender ensuring appropriate behaviour and etiquette were followed. (Wilson, 1990, p. 211) Fashion also plays a significant role in the, previously discussed, concept of the urban spectacle, the narcissistic promenade and the *performance* factor of urban existence and can be seen as 'the costuming of the daily theatrics of social life' (Wilson, 1990, p. 221) On the other hand dress could be seen as a disguise, allowing people to escape unnoticed into a crowd, and enhancing the 'anonymity of urban life'. (Wilson, 1991, p. 50) The signifi-

cance of clothing and fashion in how we experience the city, and conversely how the city responds to its guests cannot be disregarded – ultimately it is the surface that mediates between our being and the outer world. The relationship is similar to that of a building skin (facade) and the occupants of the building.

Adolf Loos wrote of clothing in a similar context. The occupiers of Loos' buildings were urban beings engaging in a complex association with the city, struggling with their individualism and independence within the public realm. In essence he felt that 'fashion is a mask which protects the intimacy of the metropolitan being' (Colomina, 1992, p. 93). Le Corbusier wrote of fashion in terms of gender. He acknowledged that men's dress had had little advancement over time and was uncomfortable but it also provided men with the neutrality and dominance to command a voyeuristic stare, whereas



women's fashion – in constant progress and more comfortable – produced her as the subject of the gaze. (Colomina, 1992, p. 128) Loos praised men's suits and wrote of them as an analogy for his domestic building facades. Comparing the facade to a dinner jacket Loos makes the distinction between the stoic, reserved and *masculine* public face of his buildings and, conversely, the intimate and protected interiors. (Colomina, 1992, p. 94) As Beatriz Colomina writes, 'for Loos, architecture is a form of covering...the spaces of Loos' interiors cover the occupant as clothes cover the body' (Colomina, 1992, p. 91-92). These examples express the importance of surface, or the 'fetishization of surface' (Colomina, 1992, p. 98) – whether clothing or facade – as a site of cultural communication, as well as its voyeuristic qualities.

< Portrait of George Sand 1830 (Maurois, 1953:1))

Case Studies: Architecture/ Technology/Voyeurism

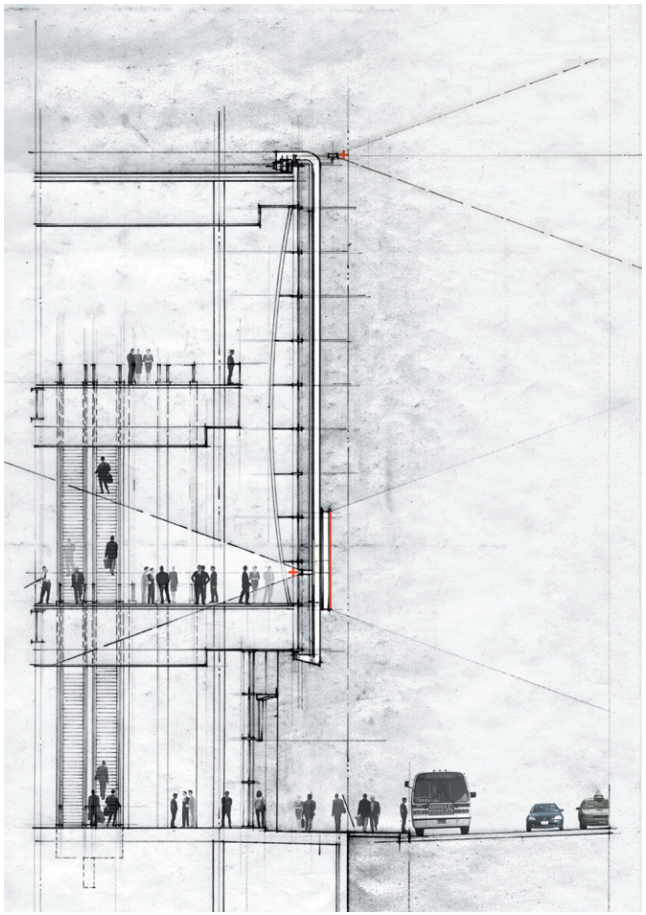
The work of practice Diller, Scofidio + Renfo can be used as a contemporary precedent of similar ideas regarding surface and voyeurism. This interdisciplinary practice works with performance art, electronic media and print, as well as architecture and interior design. A study of the practices body of work clearly suggests an interest in examining the divisions of public/private, inside/outside and reflection on performance.

The Facsimile (2002-3) project by Diller, Scofidio + Renfo is the model amalgam of architecture, technology and voyeurism. The Facsimile installation entails a large screen suspended over the glazed facade of the Moscone Convention Centre in San Francisco. The screen - approximately 5 meters high by 8 meters wide - has a video camera attached to its back

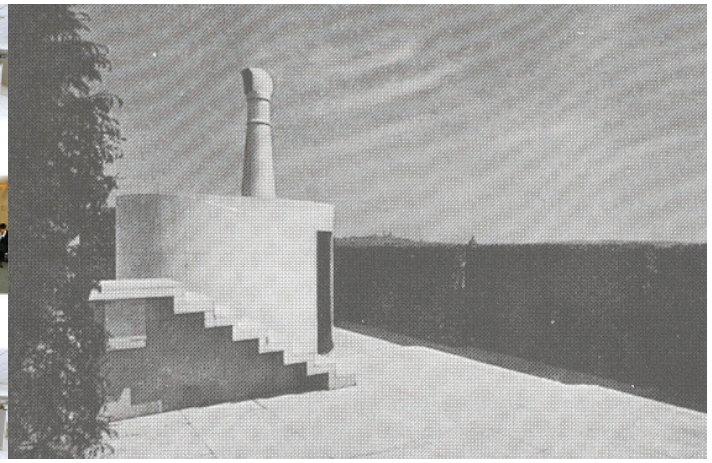


3-D visualisation and section of the Facsimile project (Diller, *n.d a*)

pointing towards the building interior, as the screen slowly traverses the surface it films the interior and broadcasts live footage to the public. As stated on the practices website the effect created is 'the transparency of the glass building is enhanced through this virtual transparency' as the screen acts as a travelling magnifying lens. The screen also has a mislead-



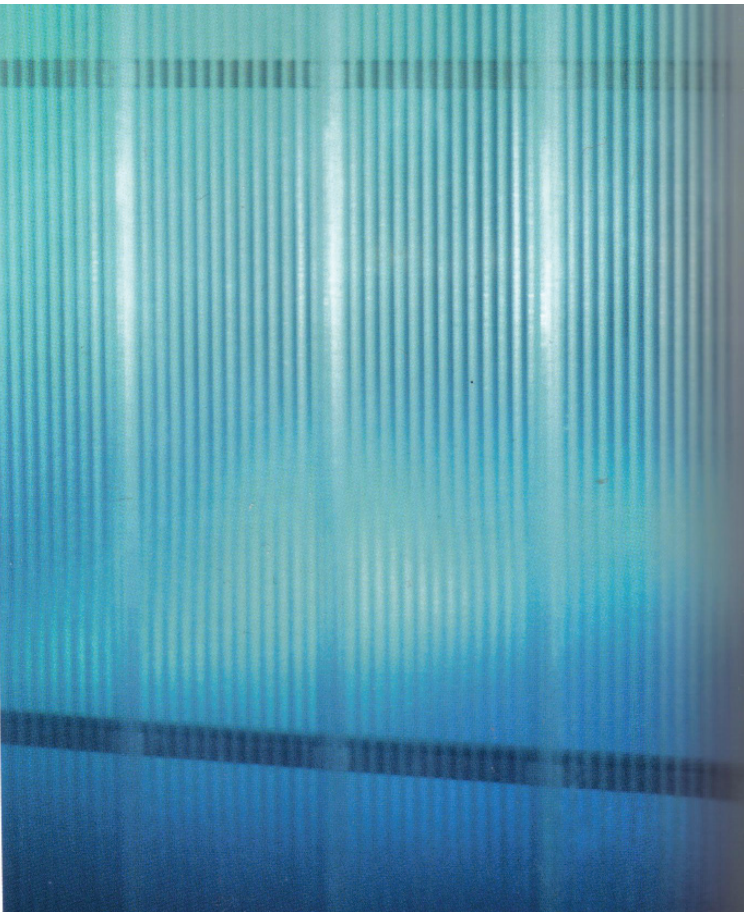




Top left and middle: Example of pre-recorded scenes from the Facsimile project (Diller, *n.d a*)
Top right: The camera obscurer at the Champs-Elysées penthouse by Le Corbusier (Colomina, 1992, 109)

ing quality. The screen broadcasts pre-recorded scenes, which appear to be the buildings occupants, but are in fact actors performing scripted tasks. (Diller *et al*, *n.d*) In this project the individual on the street gains the privileged view, becomes voyeur, of the interior scene. There are case studies which invert this dynamic and allow the inhabitants of a building to become the secret spectators of the public street.

One of these examples is the penthouse Le Corbusier designed for Charles de Beistegui in Paris on the Champs-Elysées (1929-31). On the upper levels of the roof terrace Le Corbusier employed high walls to obscure the street-scene below and only allow for a partial view of the skyline - including just the very top of Parisian landmarks like the Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe. The inhabitants of the apartment must make use of technology, a periscope camera obscurer, in order to view the busy goings-on or spectacle on the street below, and ultimately 'the distinctions between outside and inside' become vague. (Colomina, 1992, p. 109 – 110)



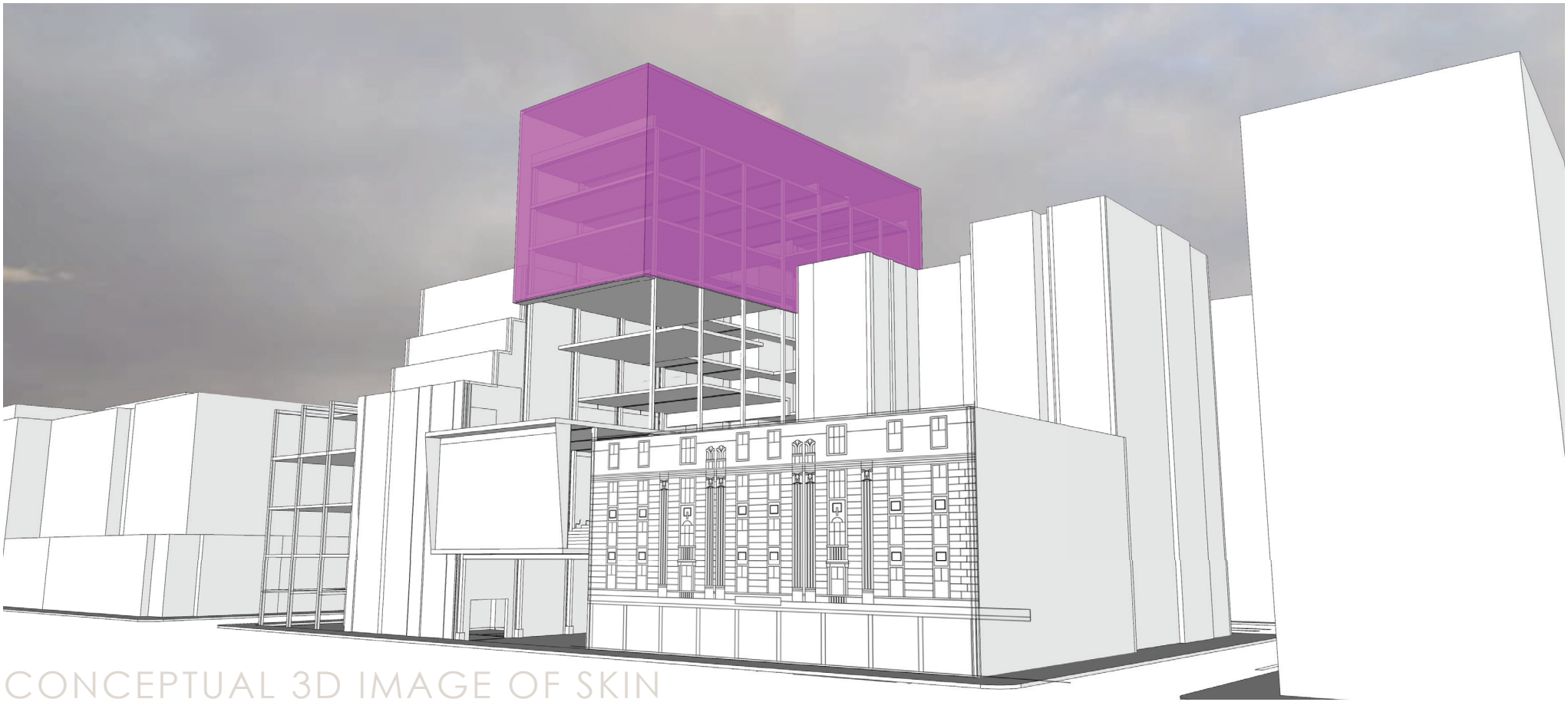
THE BUILDING SKIN

The chosen building skin, intended to encase the upper floors of the scheme, is polycarbonate sheeting suspended by a steel frame. The motivation for this choice of material is both functional and thematic.

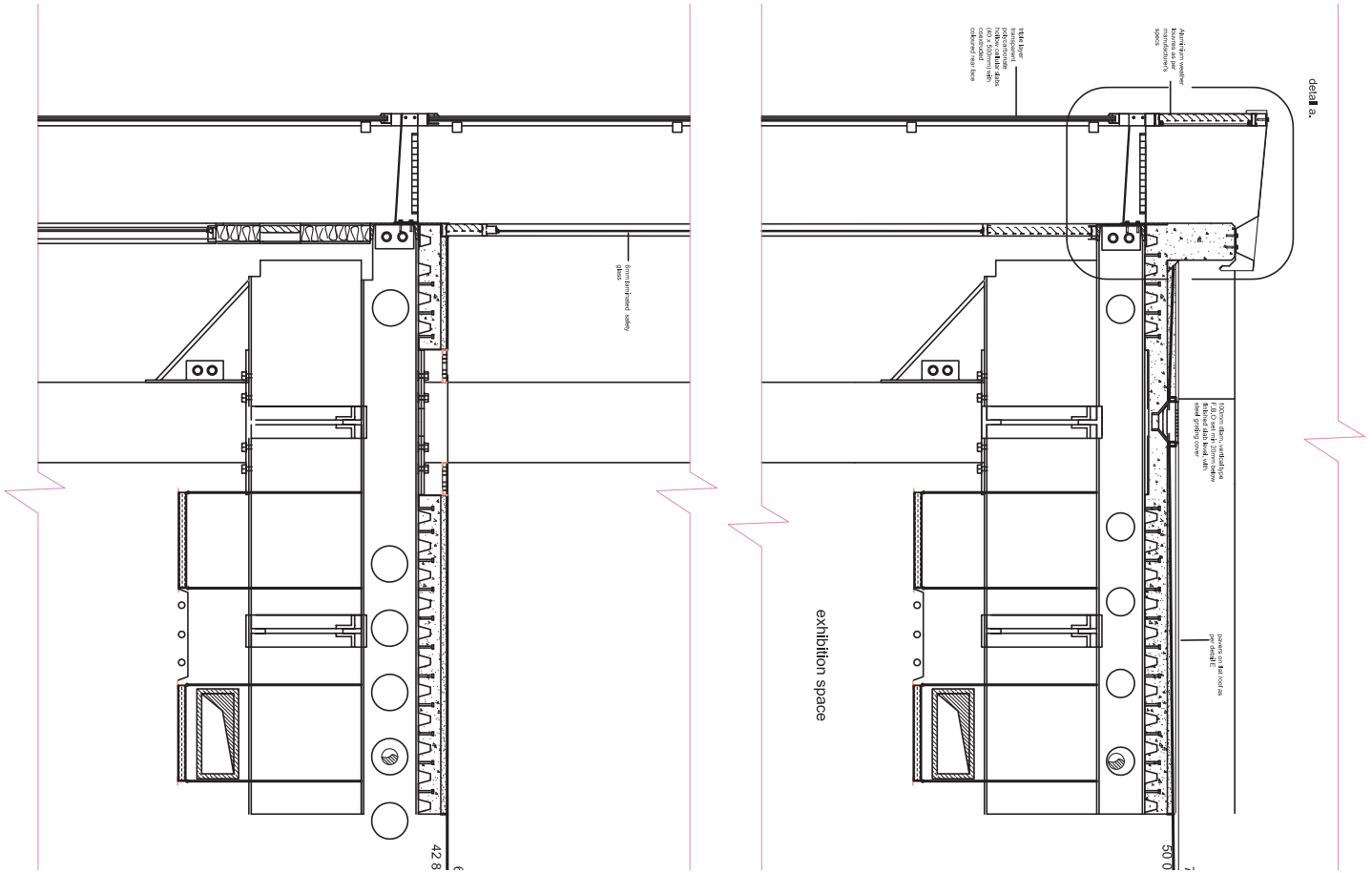
The upper tier of the building houses the gallery component of the programme. The polycarbonate skin provides natural, yet diffused, light to the interior – protecting any sensitive exhibitions from direct sunlight. Additionally the ability to light the skin at night, with various colours, or project onto it will allow the skin to be used as a form of new media art.

Thematically the properties of the skin have a strong association with voyeurism. By day the skin is opaque yet with enough translucency to provide a suggestion of movement to the outside observer. By night the nature of the material undergoes a transformation. The lights within the building interior cause the material to become transparent providing a clearer view to the activity inside the building.

< (van Uffelen, 2008, p. 58)

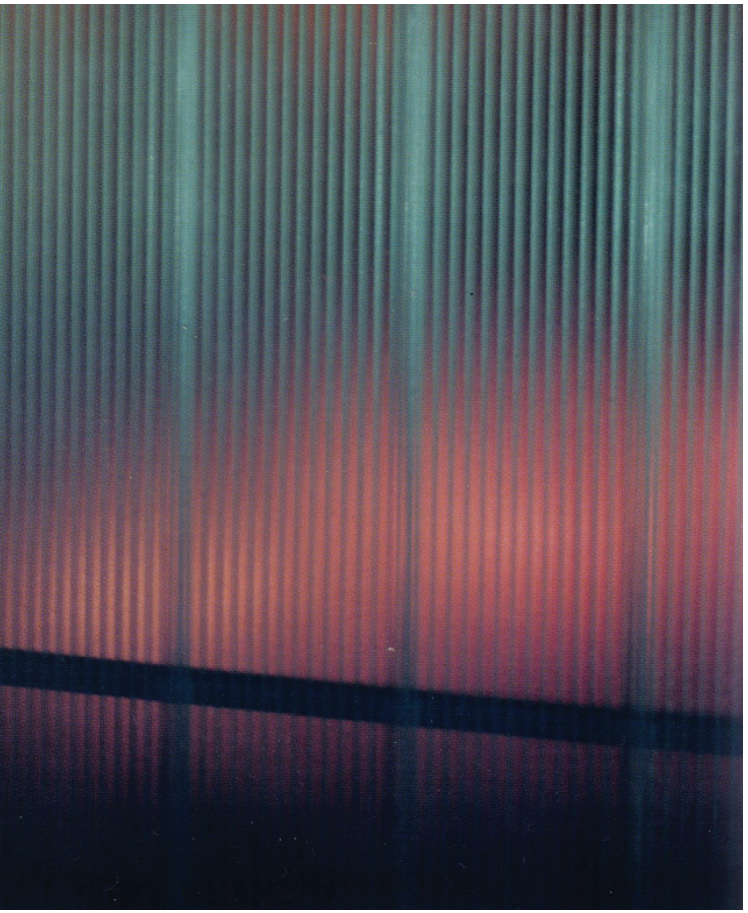


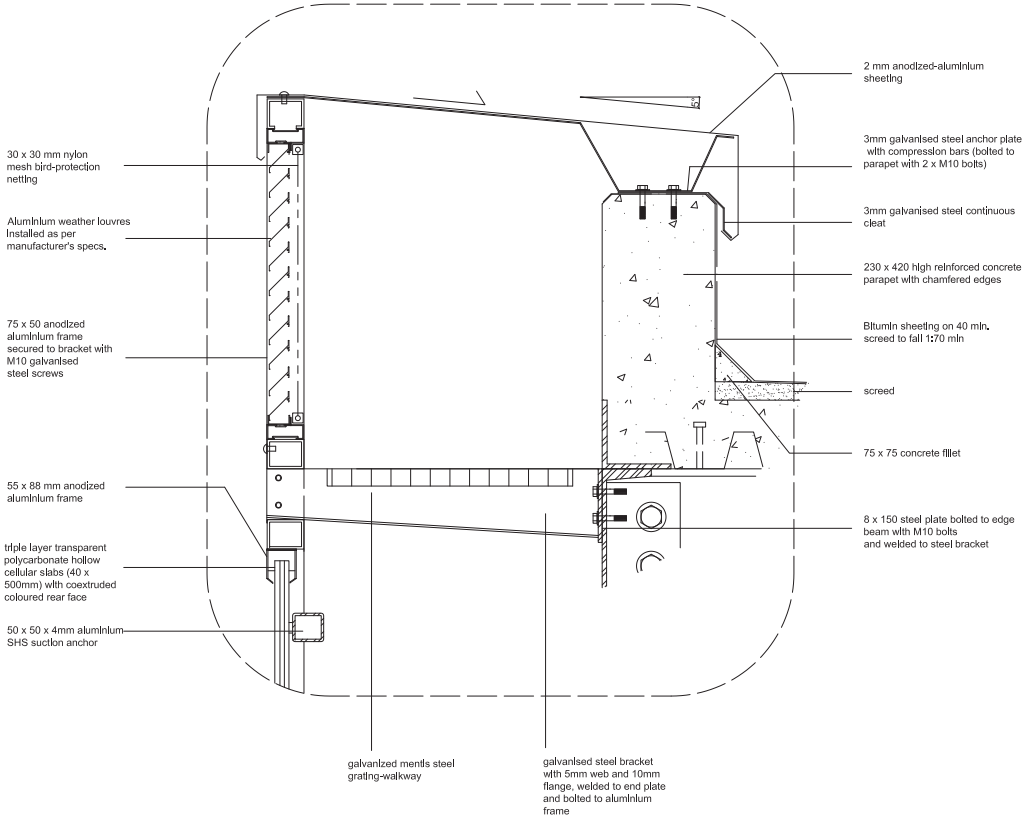
CONCEPTUAL 3D IMAGE OF SKIN



> (van Uffelen, 2008, p. 59)

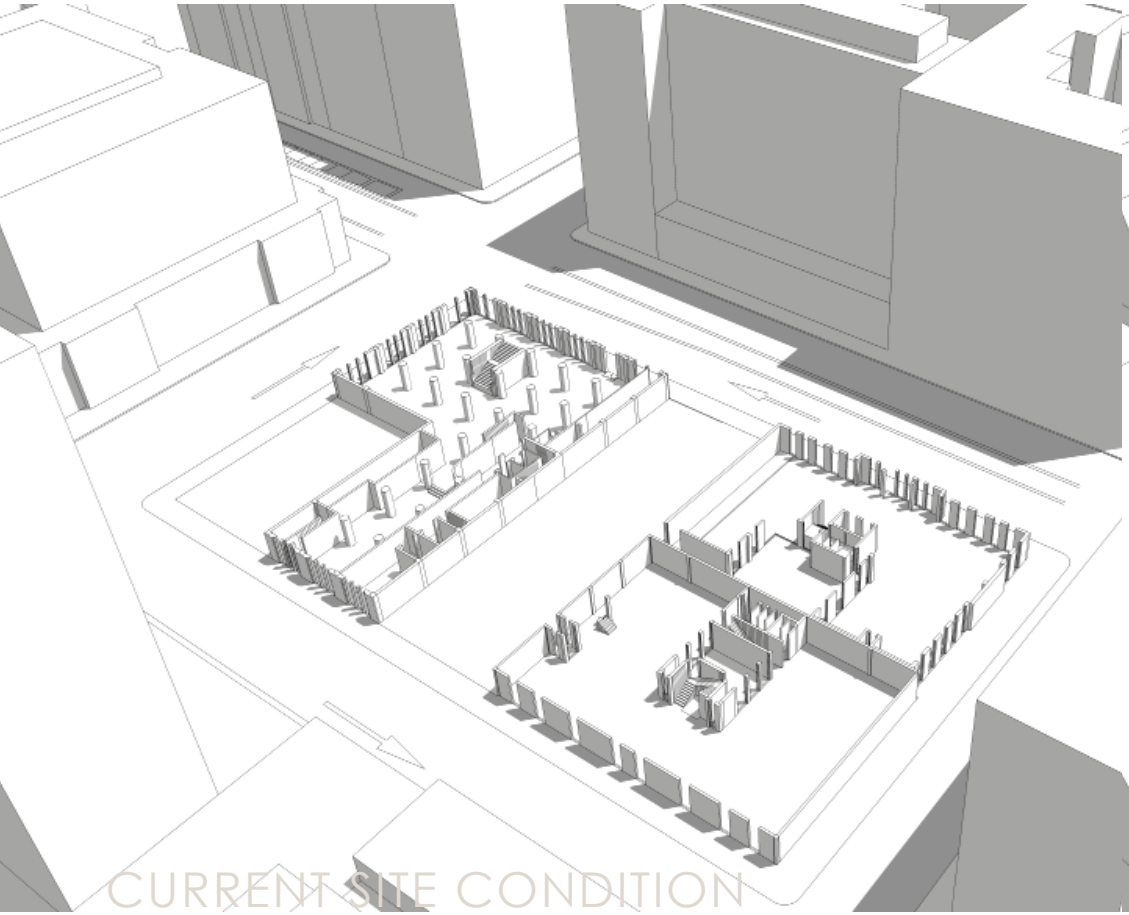
< section through building skin



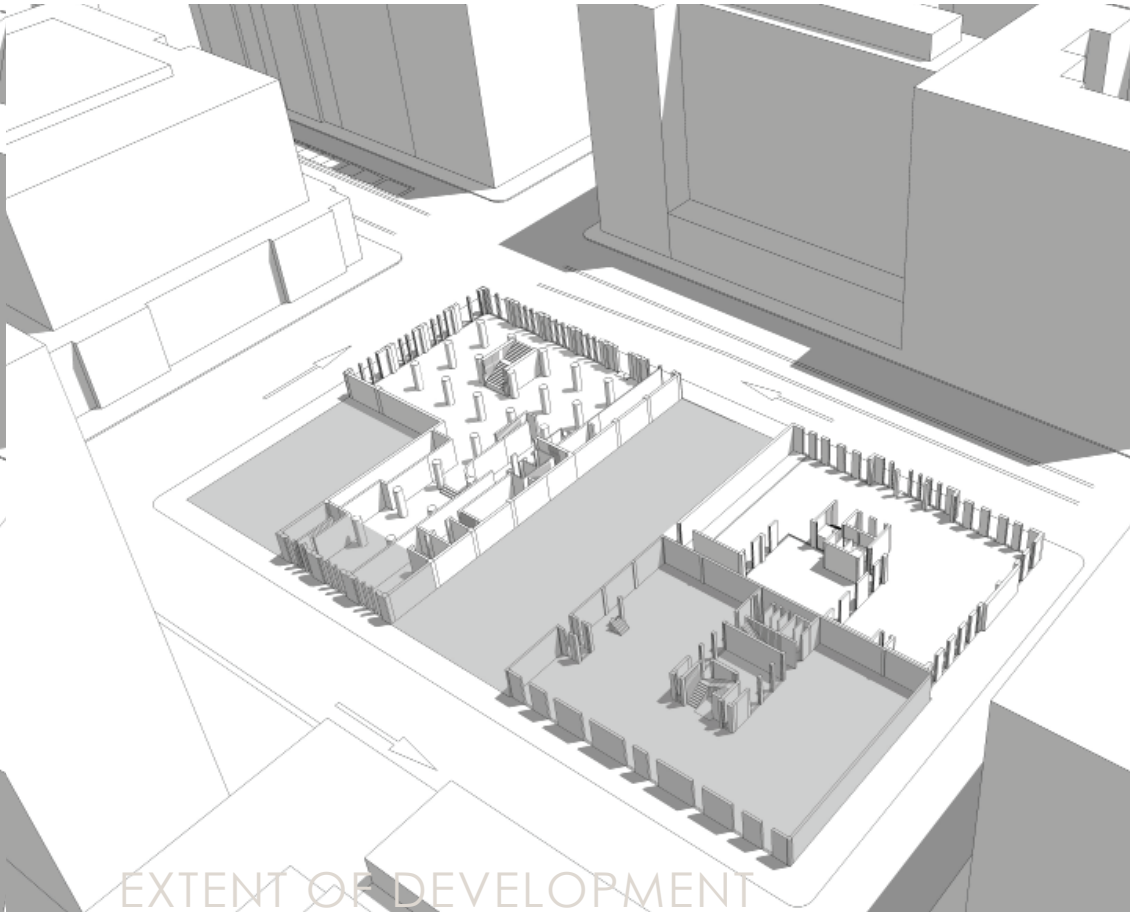


< detail showing skin connection to structure

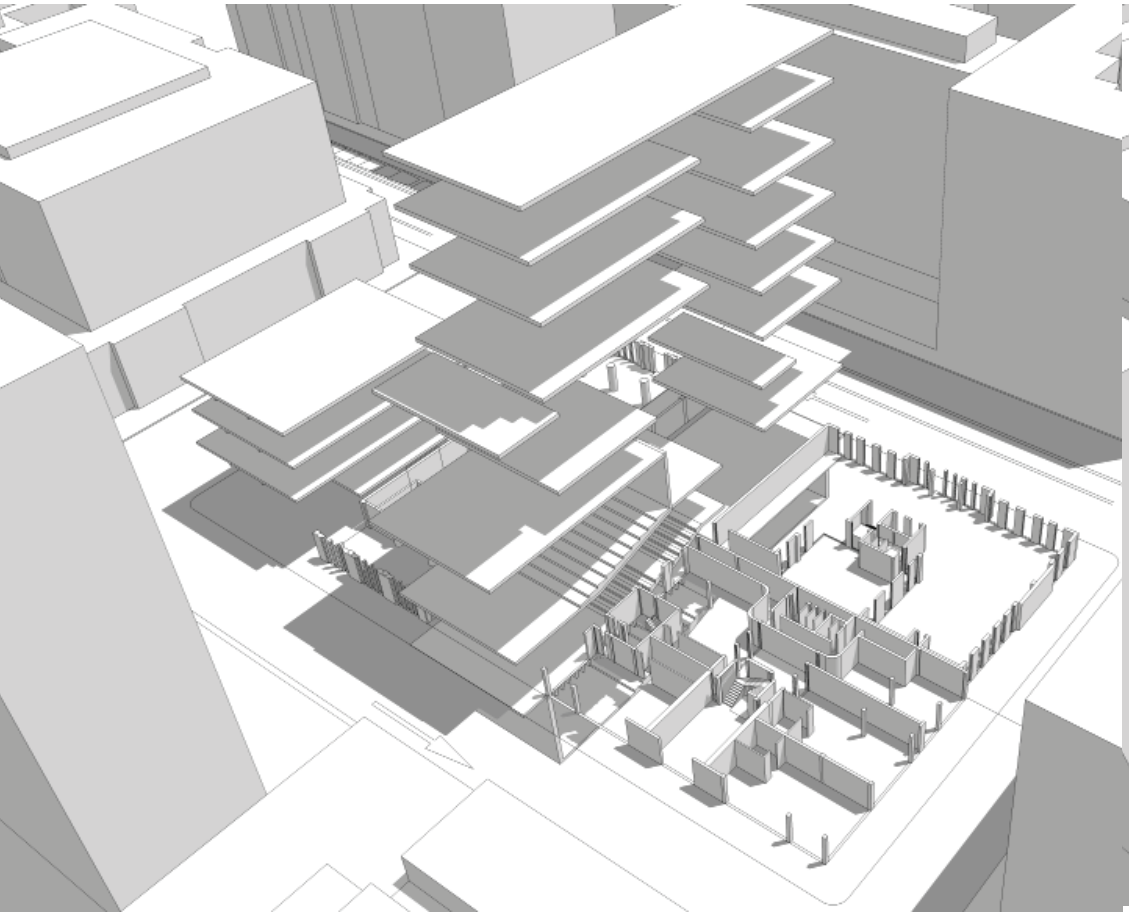
DESIGN

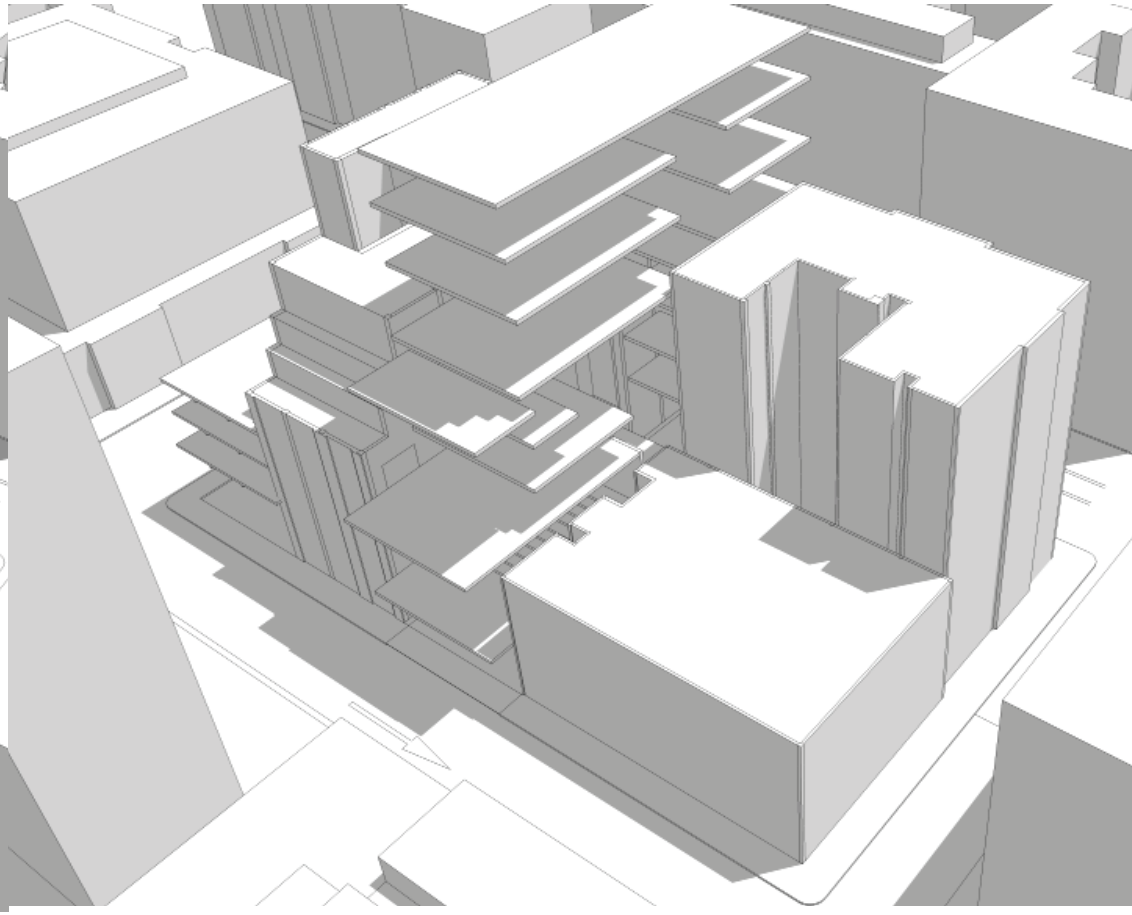


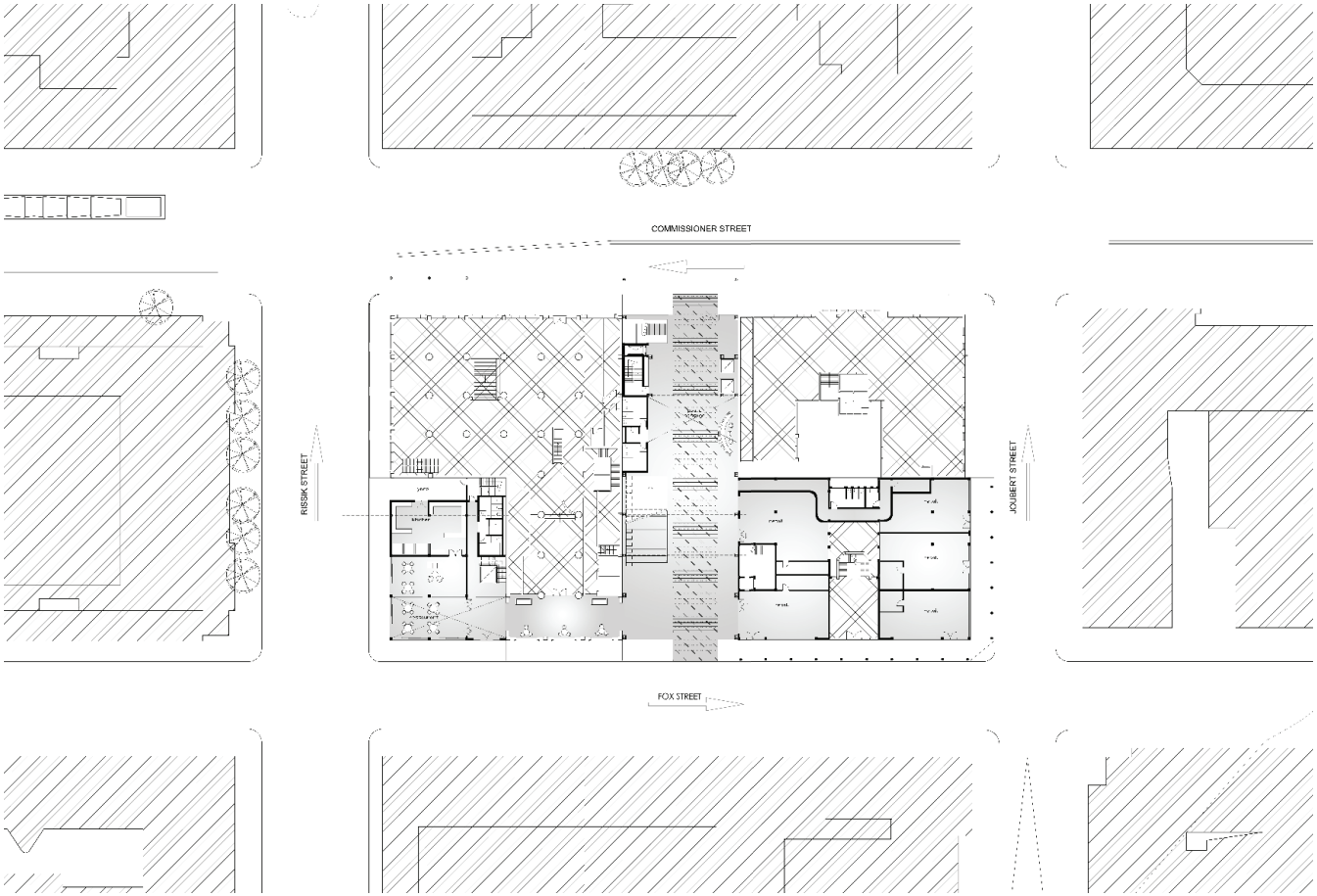
CURRENT SITE CONDITION



EXTENT OF DEVELOPMENT

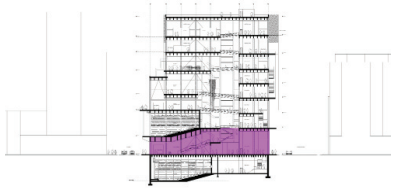




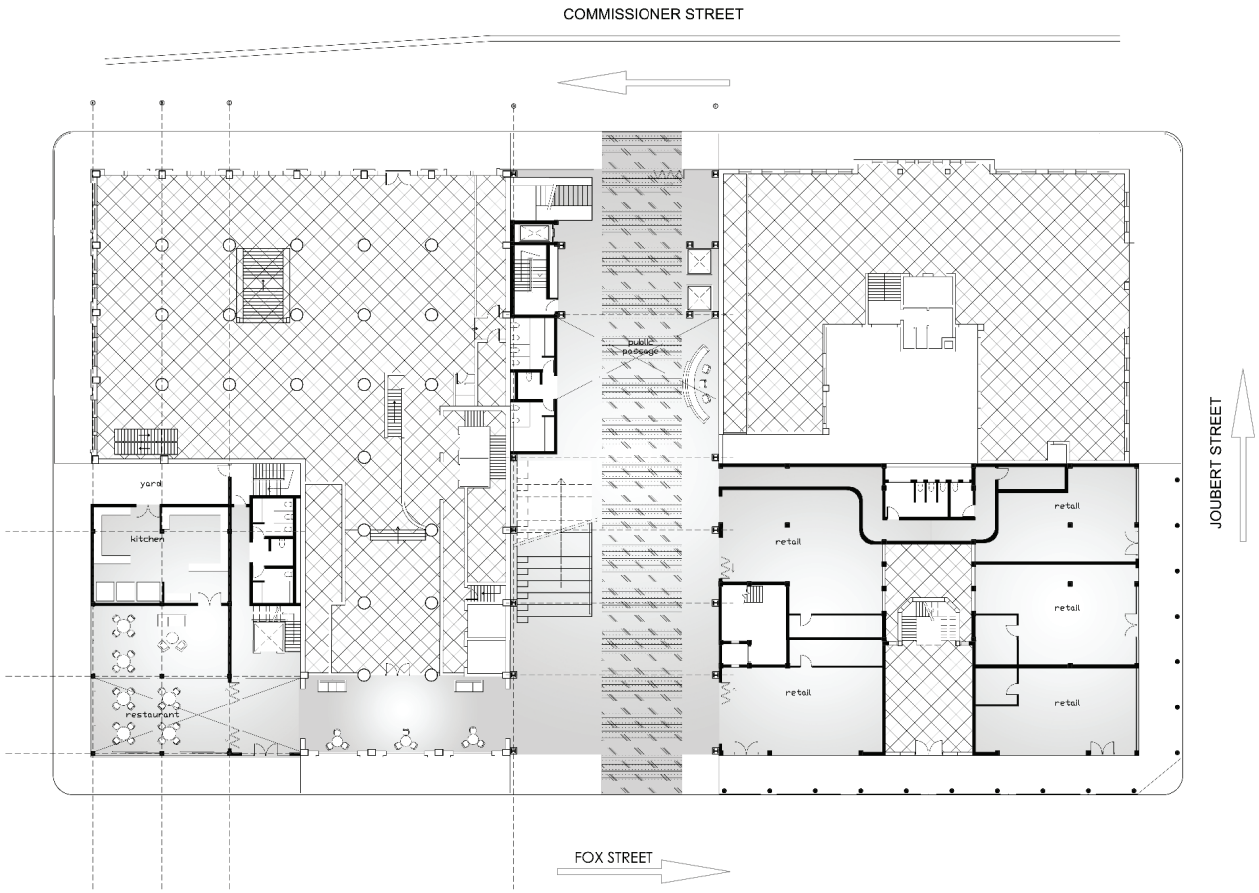


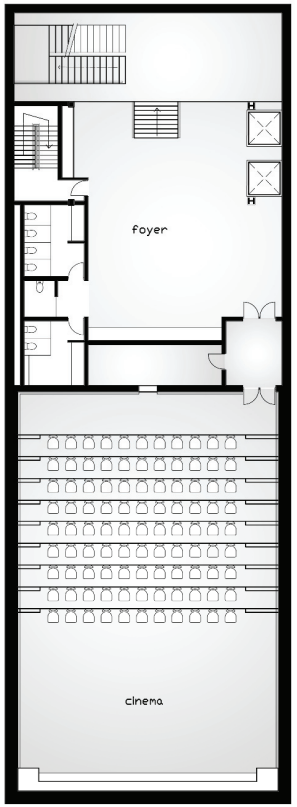
>BASEMENT PLAN



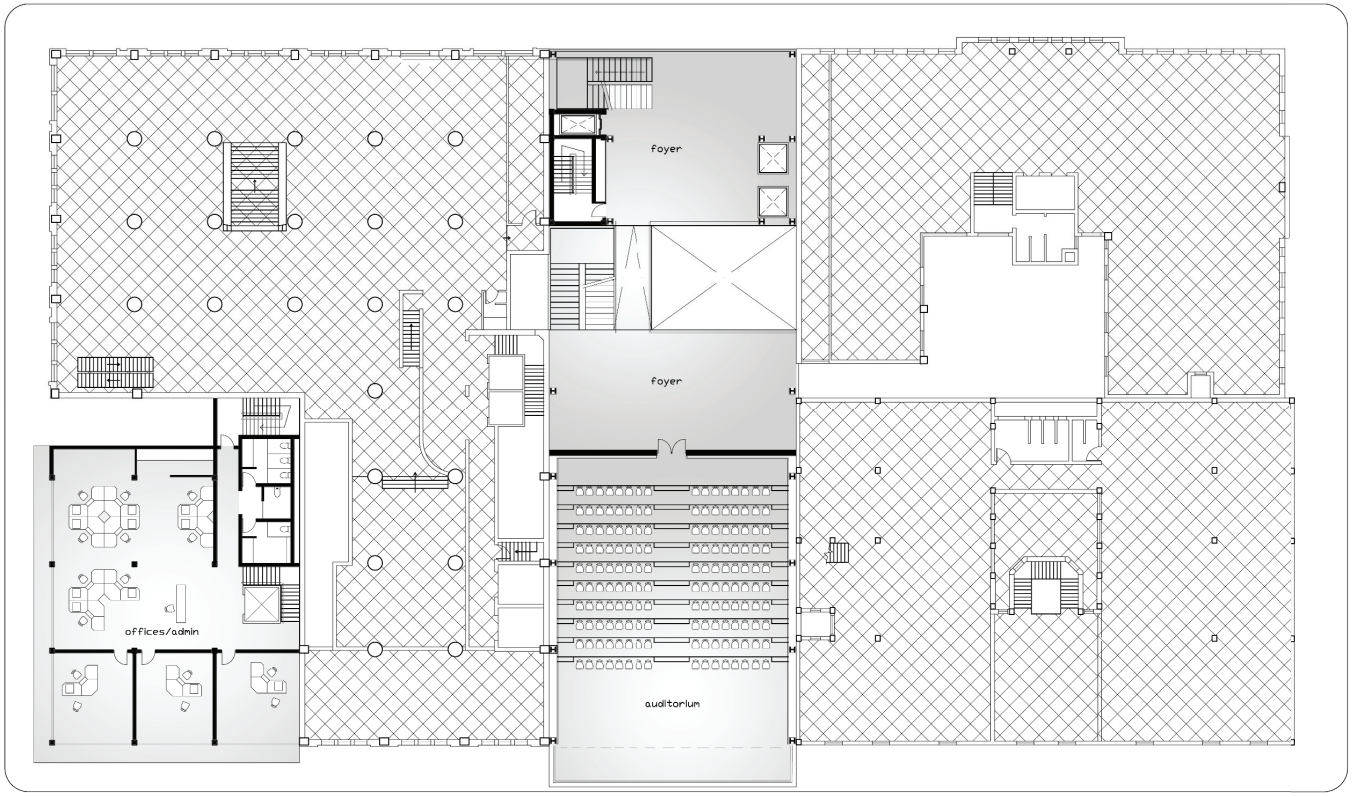


<GROUND FLOOR PLAN

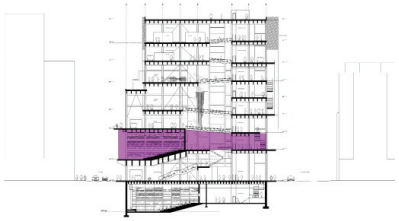

COMMISSIONER STREET
yard
kitchen
restaurant
public passage
retail
retail
retail
retail
retail
JOUBERT STREET
FOX STREET


foyer
cinema

basement

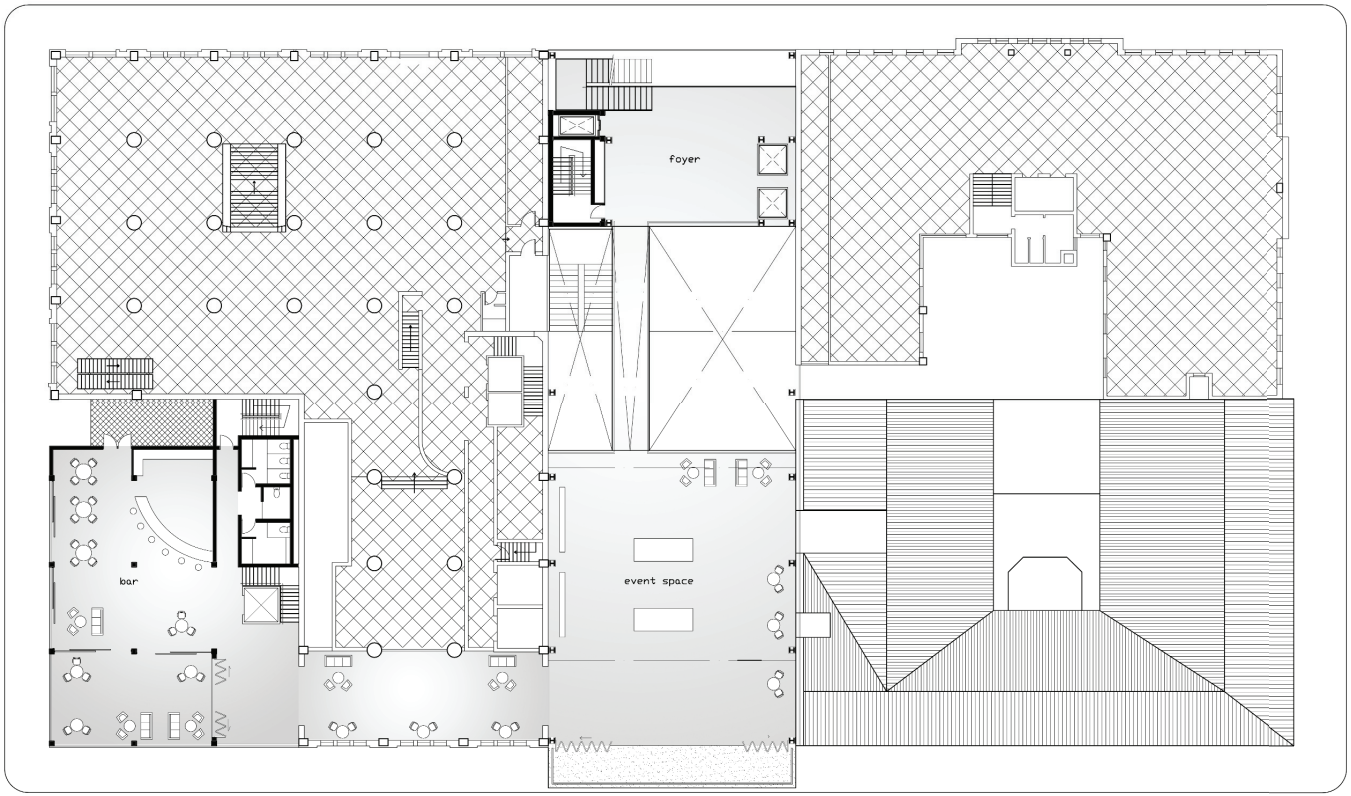


2nd floor



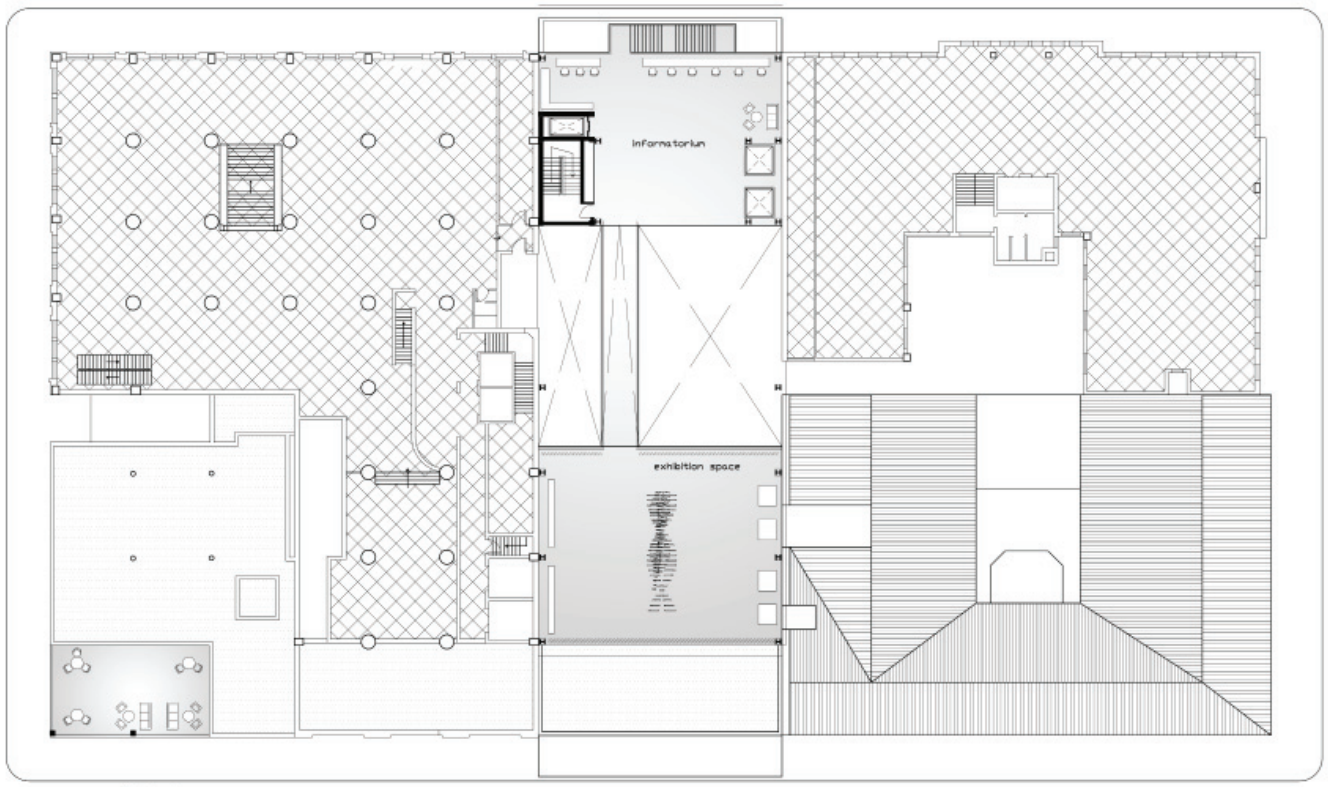
<2ND FLOOR PLAN





3rd floor

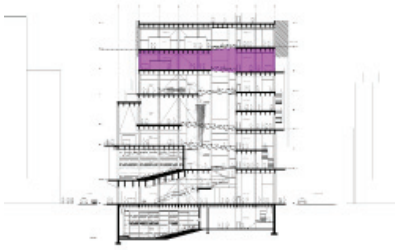
>3RD FLOOR PLAN

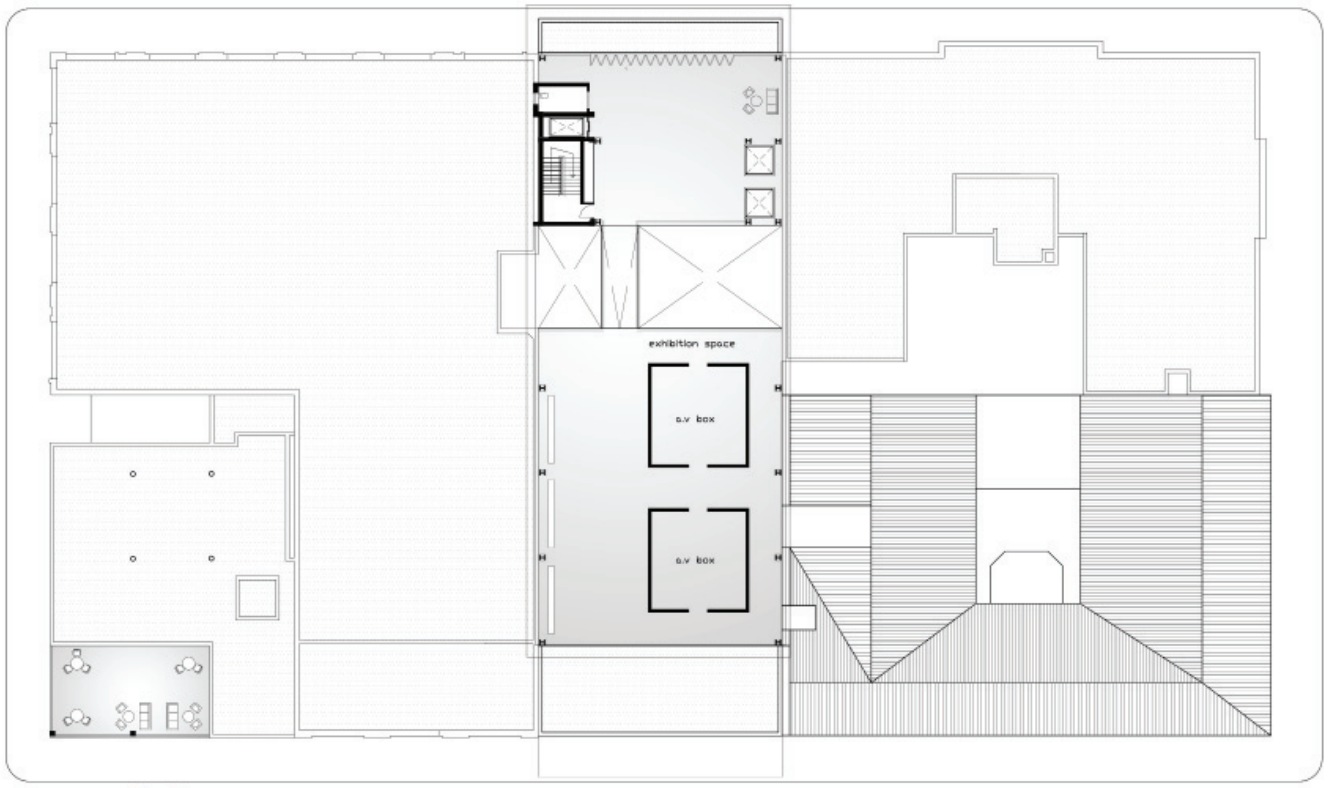


5th floor



< 5TH FLOOR PLAN





6th floor

> 6TH FLOOR PLAN



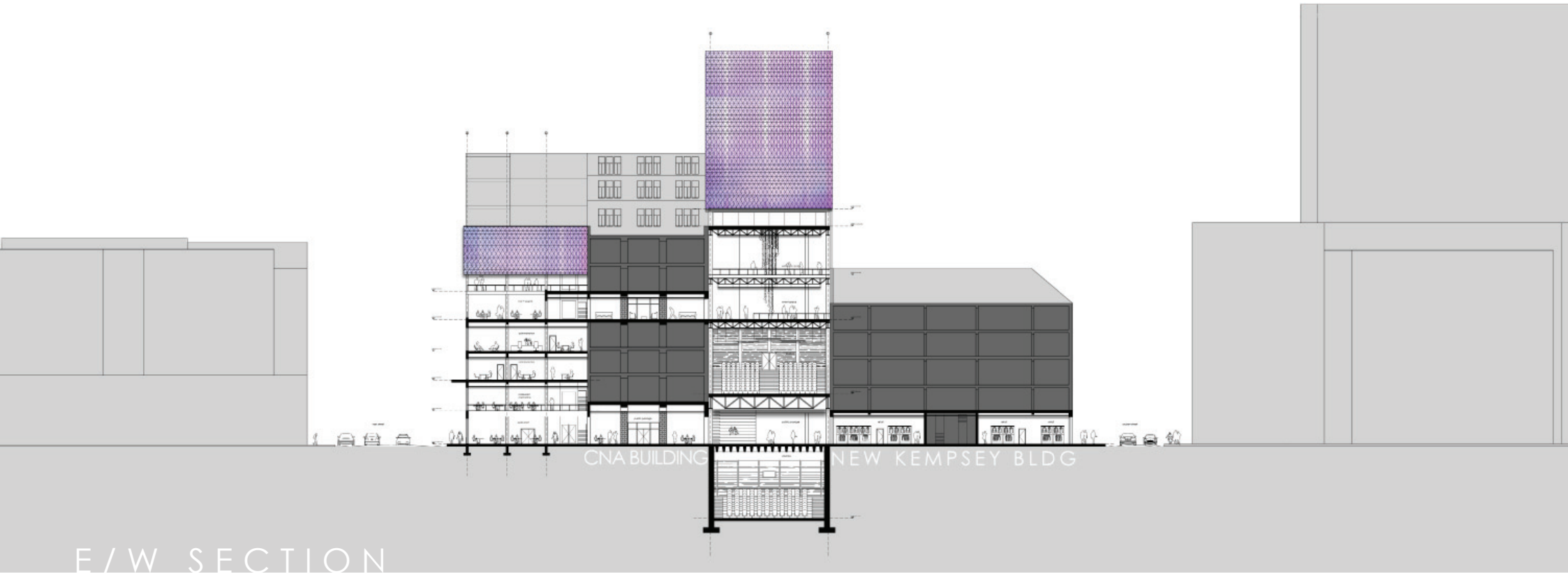
NORTH ELEVATION



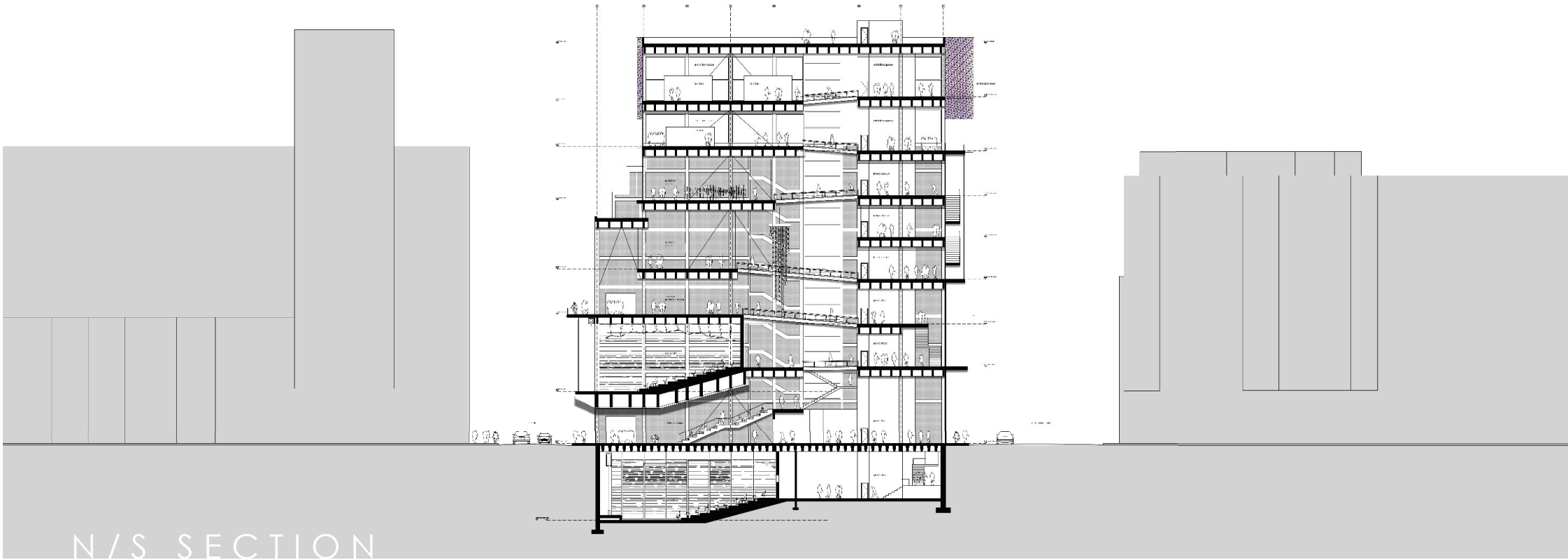
SOUTH ELEVATION



FOX STREET ACTIVITY



E/W SECTION



N/S SECTION

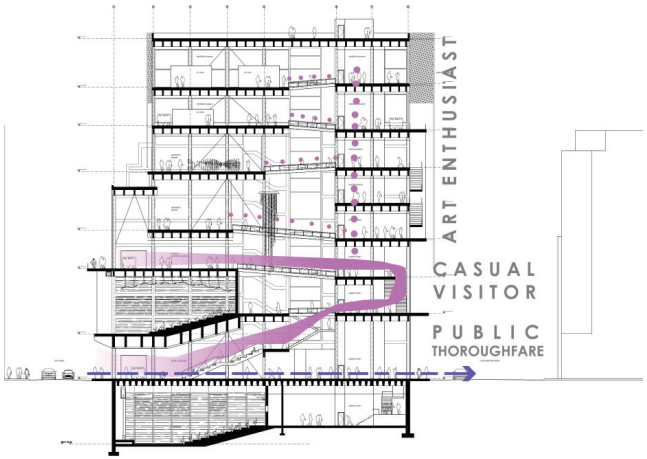
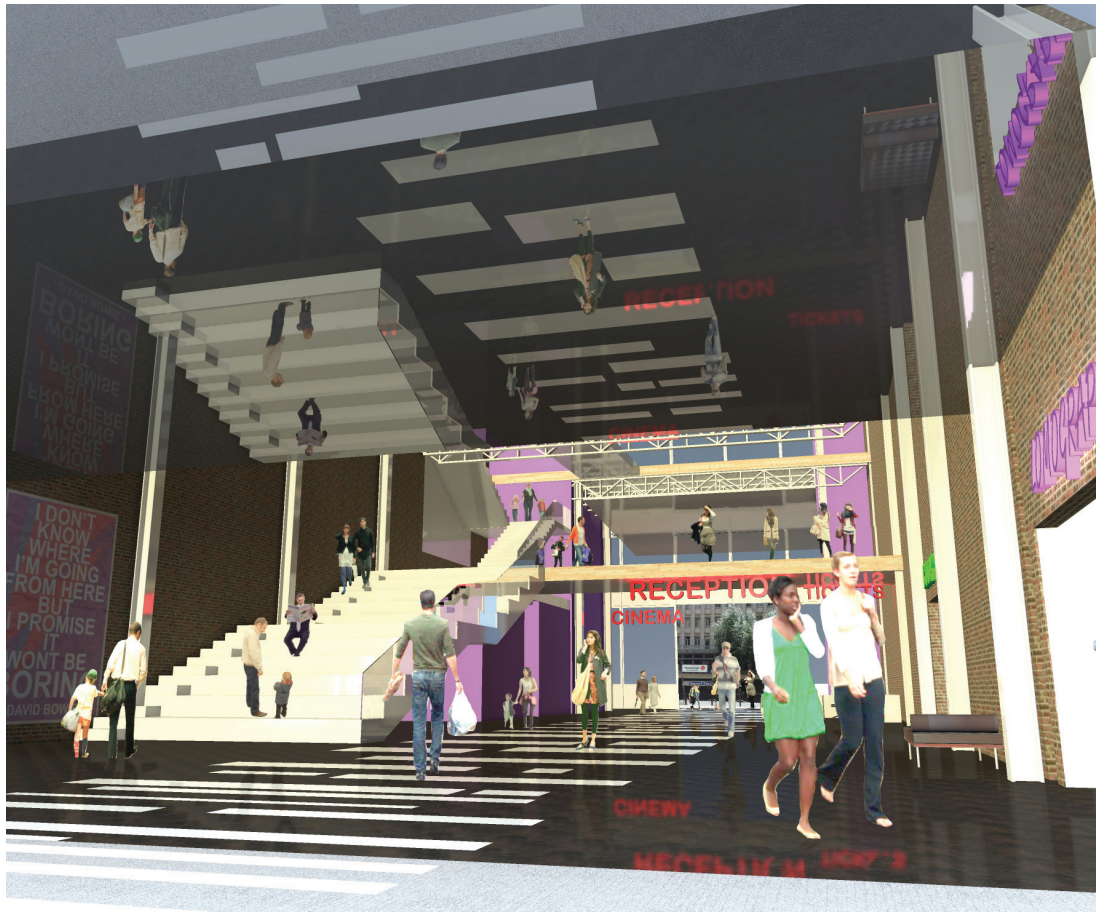
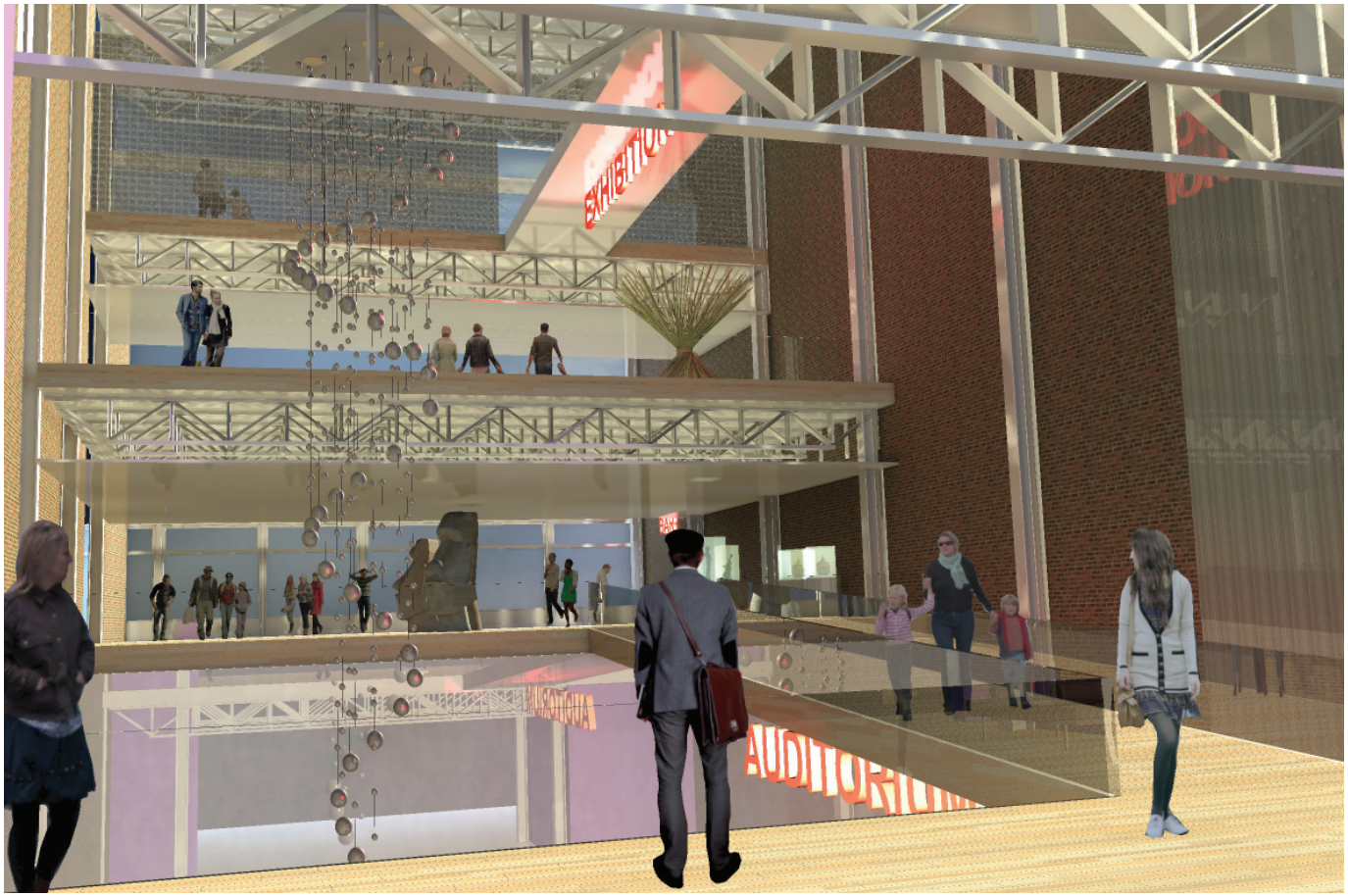


DIAGRAM OF
PUBLIC PERFORATION



>INTERNAL STREET



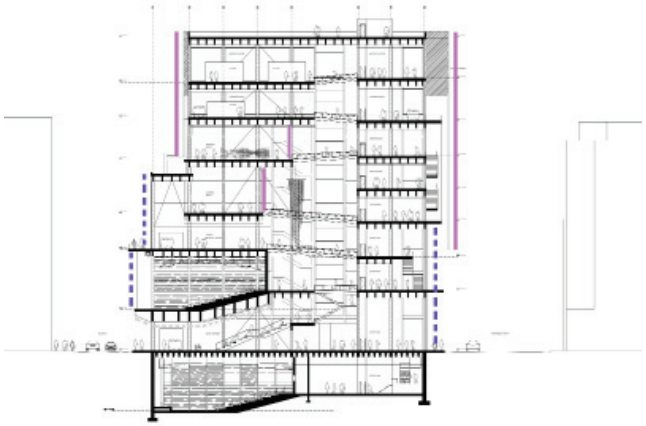


DIAGRAM OF
OPACITY & TRANSPARICY

<CENTRAL ATRIUM

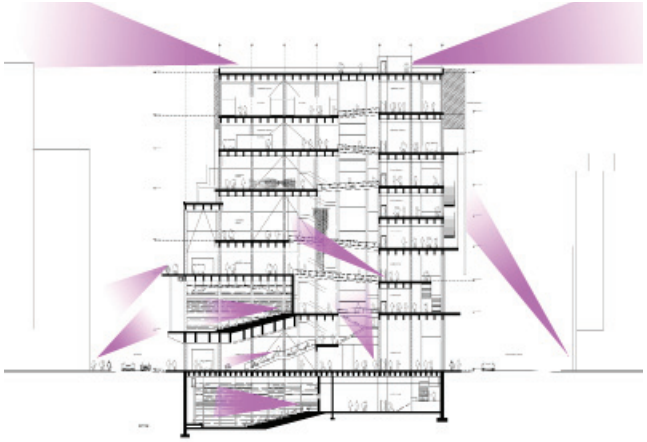
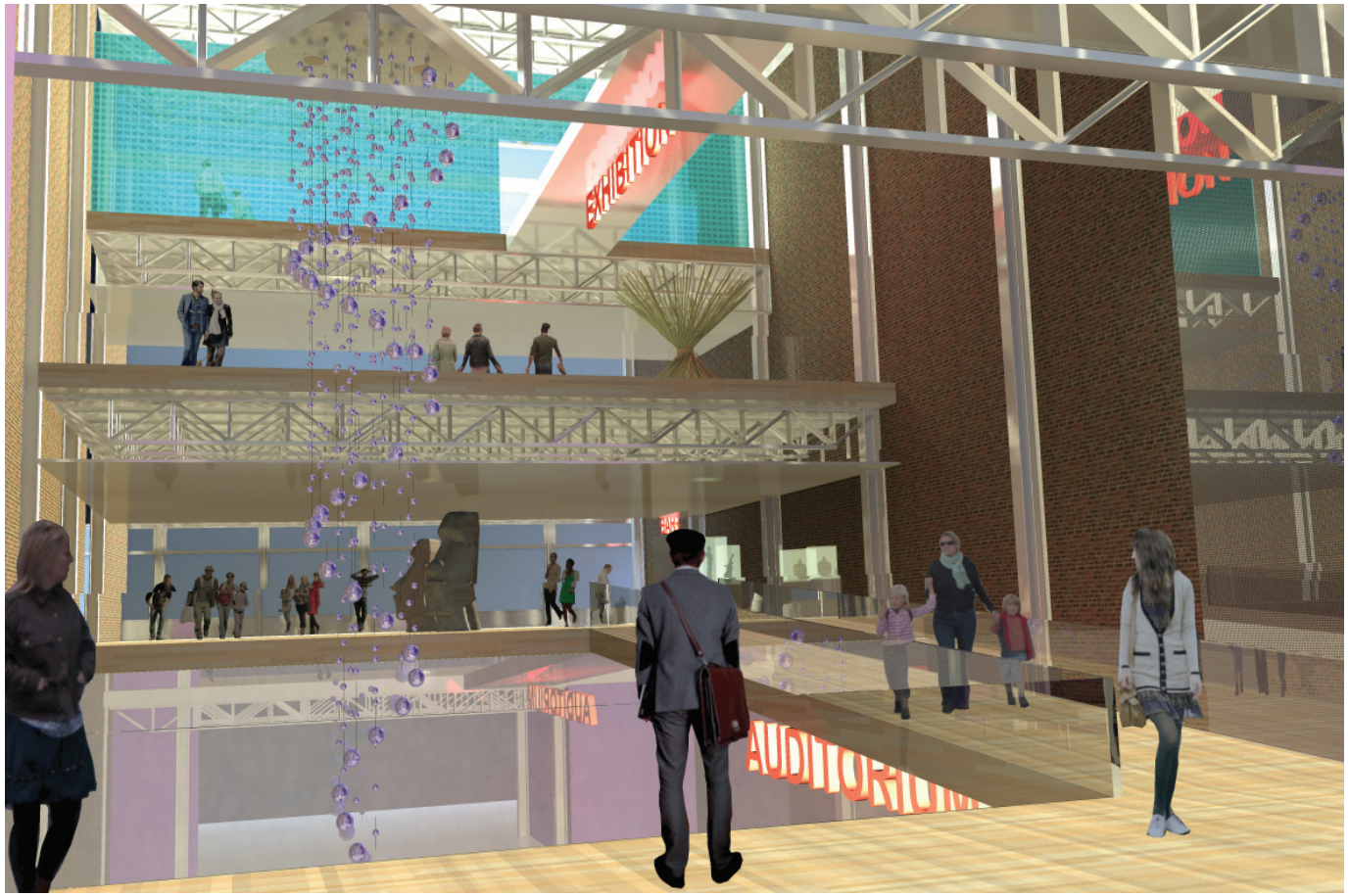
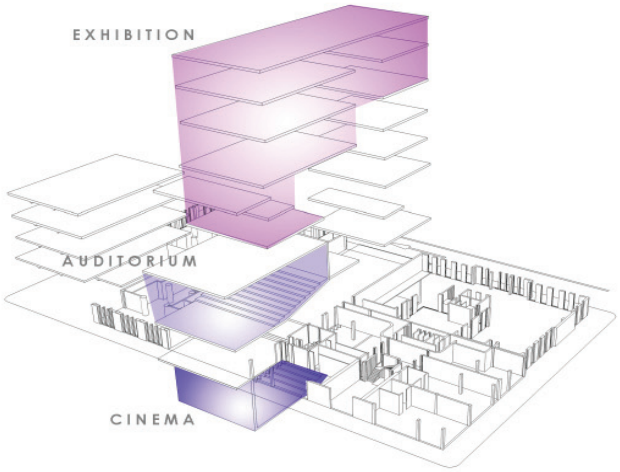


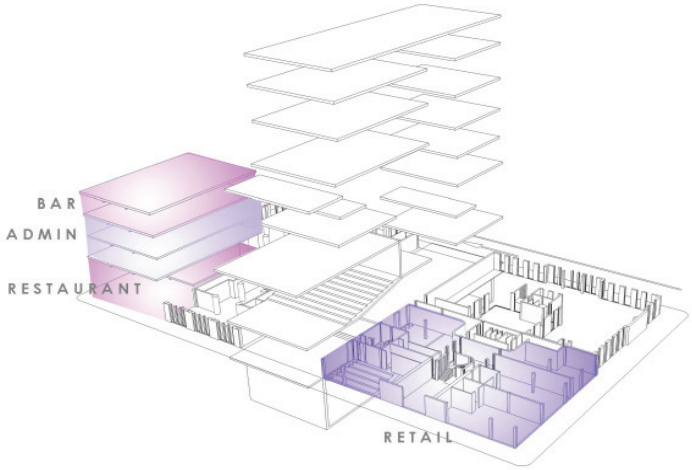
DIAGRAM OF
VISUAL RELATIONSHIPS

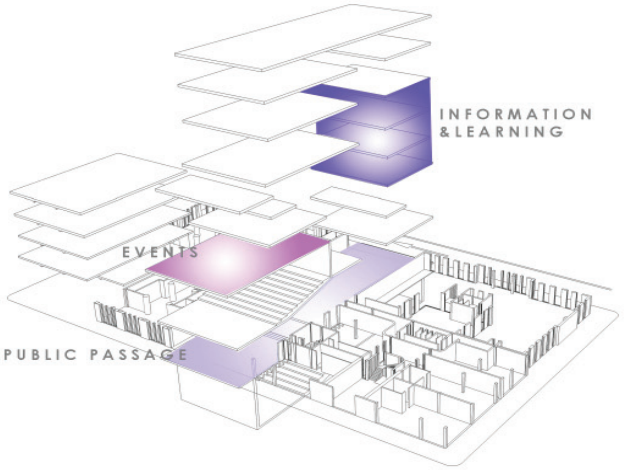


>CENTRAL ATRIUM

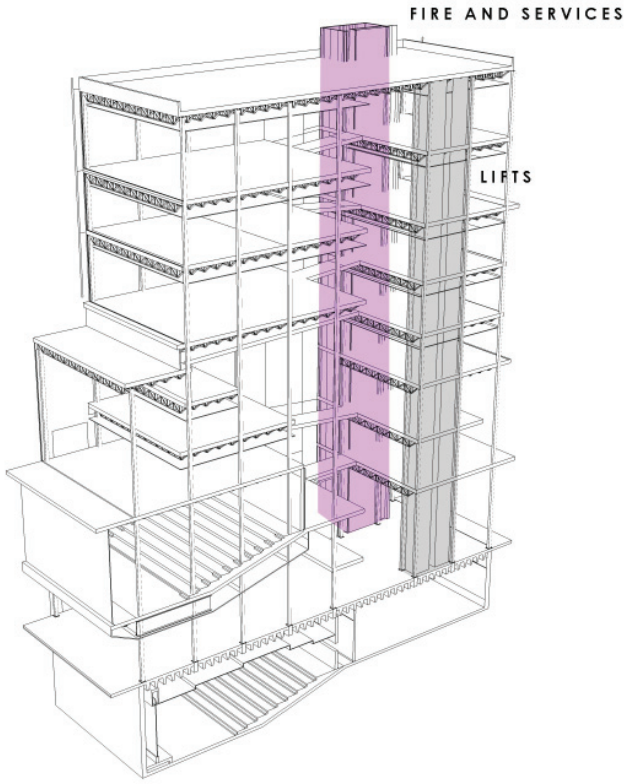
111DESIGN
P R O G R A M M E



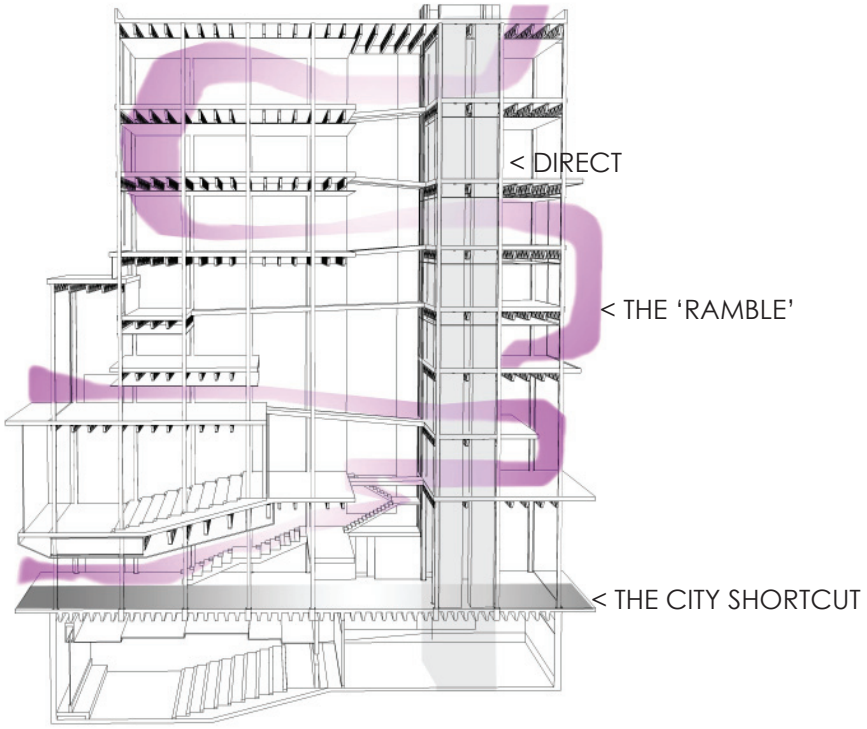


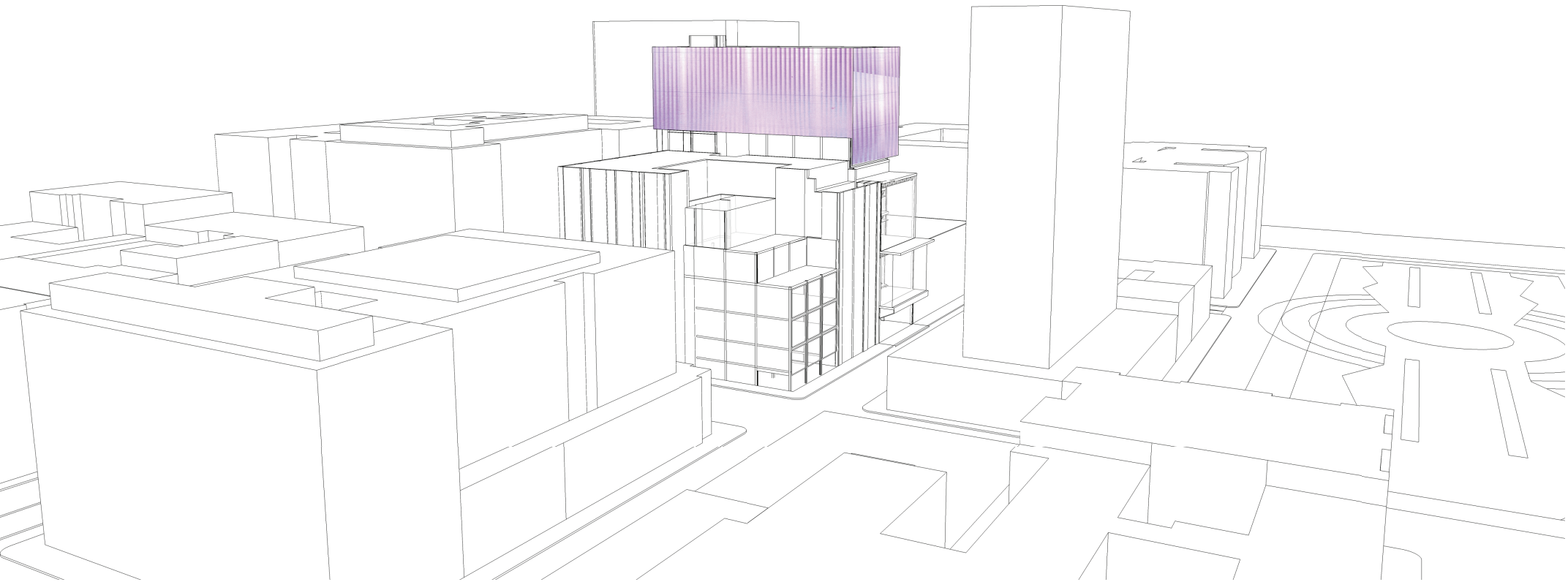


CORES



CIRCULATION





BIBLIOGRAPHY

115BIBLIOGRAPHY

R E F E R E N C E S :

Bauman, Z. (1994). *Desert Spectacular*. In: Tester, K (ed). *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge

Benjamin, W. (1999). *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge: Belknap Press.

Brodie, N. *ed*. (2008). *The Joburg Book*. South Africa: Pan Macmillan.

Buck-Morss, S. (1989). *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Chipkin, C M. (1993). Johannesburg Style: Architecture & Society 1880's – 1960's. Cape Town: David Philip.

Colomina, B. (1992). *The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism*. In: Colomina, B (ed). *Sexuality and Space*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Debord, G. (1994). *The Society of the Spectacle*. Translated from French by Donald Nicholson-Smith. New York: Zone Books.

Diller, Scofidio + Renfo Website. (*n.d a)*. *Facsimile.* [online] Available at: <http://www.dillerscofidio.com/facsimile.html> [Accessed 10 October 2011]

Diller, Scofidio + Renfo Website. (*n.d b)*. *Lincoln Centre for the Performing Arts.* [online] Available at: <http://www.dillerscofidio.com/lincoln-center.html> [Accessed 10 October 2011]

Frisby, D. (2001). *Cityscapes of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Frisby, D. (1994). *The flâneur in social theory.* In: Tester, K (ed). *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge.

Grosz, E. (1998). *Bodies-cities.* In: Nast, H J and Pile, S (eds). *Places through the body*. London: Routlege.

Hobbes, T. (1991). *Leviathan*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univeristy Press

Hosey, L. (2001). *Hidden Lines: Gender, Race, and the Body in Graphic Standards.* Journal of Architectural Education. [e-journal] Available through: Avery Architectural Database.

[Accessed 10 October 2010]

JDA (Johannesburg Development Agency). (2010). *The Johannesburg Inner City Traffic and Transport Study (JICTTS): Annexure 6.2 Pedestrian Assessment*. [pdf] Johannesburg: JDA. Available at:

[Accessed 10 October 2010]

Kolb, J. (2009). *Alice Tully Hall, New York, USA: Diller Scofidio + Renfro*, *Architectural review*, 225, 1346, pp. 54-[59], Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, EBSCO*host*, viewed 24 October 2011

Loos, A. (1988). *The Principle of Cladding.* In: Risselada, M (ed). *Raumplan versus Plan Libre*. New York: Rizzoli.

Lubell, S. (2004). *A new, but still recognizable, face unveiled for New York's Lincoln Center*, *Architectural record*, 192, 5, p. 28, Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, EBSCO-

host, viewed 24 October 2011.

Mazlish, B. (1994). *The flâneur: from spectator to representation*. In: Tester, K (ed). *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge

Maurois, A. (1953). *Lelia: The Life of George Sand*. Trnaslated from French by Gerard Hopkins. London: J Cape

McDowell, L. (1999). *Gender, Identity and Place - Understanding Feminist Geographies.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Parkhurst Ferguson, P. (1994). *The flâneur on and off the streets of Paris.* In: Tester, K (ed). *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge

Rendell, J. (1996). *Subjective Space: A Feminist Architectural History of the Burlington Arcade*. In: McCorquodale, D *et al* (eds). *Desiring Practices: Architecture, Gender and the Interdisciplinary*. London: Black Dog Publishing

Rendell, J. (2000*a*). *Knowledge*. In: Pile, S and Thrift, N (eds). *City A-Z*. London: Routlege.

Rendell, J. (2000*b*). *Pursuits*. In: Pile, S and Thrift, N (eds). *City A-Z*. London: Routlege.

Roberts, M. (1991). *Living in a Man-Made World – Gender Assumptions in Modern Housing Design.* Routledge: London.

Sennett, R. (1994). *Flesh and Stone - The Body and the City in Western Civilization.* New York: W. W. Norton Company.

Shanken, E A. (2009). *Art and Electronic Media*. New York: Phaidon Press Limited.

Shields, R. (1994). *Fancy Footwork: Walter Benjamins's notes on flânerie.* In: Tester, K (ed). *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge

Tester, K. (1994). *Introduction*. In: Tester, K (ed). *The Flâneur*. London: Routledge

van Uffelen, C. (2008). *Pure Plastic: New Materials for Today's Architecture*. Holland: Verslagshaus Braun.

Wilson, E. (1991). *The Sphinx in the City.* London: Virago Press.

Wilson, E. (1990). *These New Components of the Spectacle: Fashion and Postmodernism*. In: Boyne, R and Rattansi, A (*eds*). *Postmodernism and Society.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Zaborowska, M J. (2010). *From Baldwin's Paris to Benjamin's*. In: Hartoonian, G (*ed*). *Walter Benjamin and Architecture*. New York: Routledge.