M.Arch Portfolio
Columbia GSAPP

15 Questions from an Architecture School in New York City

Levan Kiladze
2023-2026

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by Levan Kiladze in New York
Columbia GSAPP M.Arch 2026
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15 Questions
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With gratitude to
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With my cohort and many others, including friends who have shaped every step of my learni

This book brings together fifteen questions I have been asking across three years at GSAPP.

As a student new to architecture studios but open to asking questions, I have stayed in conversation with my professors, my peers, and the work, through desk crits, reviews, and the small discoveries made together along the way.

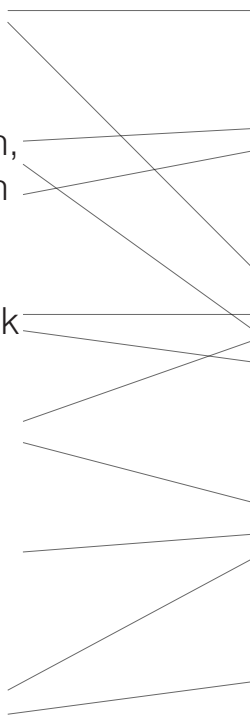
Each of the first six questions is followed by the artefacts of a research and design, in the order they were made. Then, the projects follow, not as answers, but as what raises the questions.

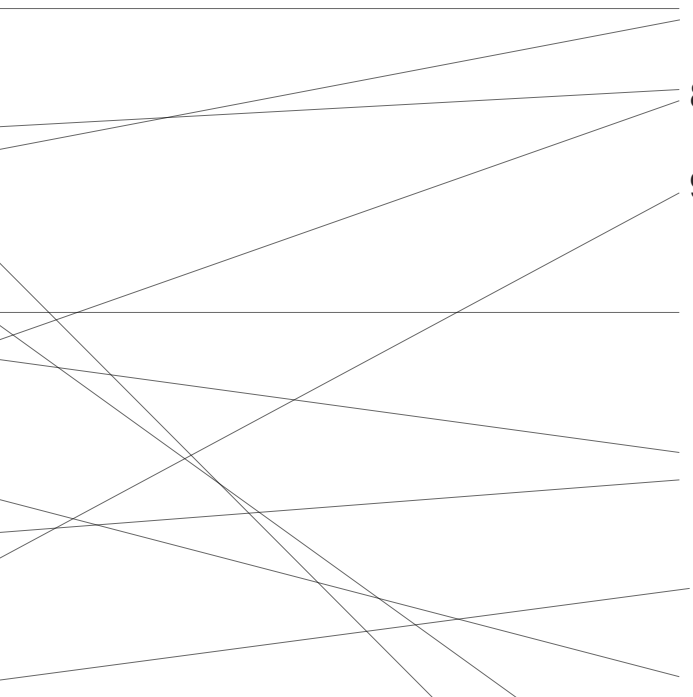
Alongside the studios, nine further questions emerged across the curriculum. Each is followed by a series of writing, research, and making that has consistently informed my work and thinking.

ng here.

Contents

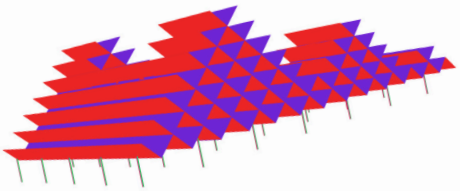
Question	Studio	Project
1. How do parents and children learn from public space?	ADV VI	School in the Attic
2. What does it take to unlock a space for trans-species living?	ADV IV	Communal Kitchen, Communal Garden
3. Can human body be the forensic space for transscalar witnessing?	CORE II	National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik
4. Can every home become a garden? (and how to learn to work with a friend?)	CORE III	Every Room is a Garden Room
5. How can a future museum produce culture?	ADV V	Museum of Arab Prints / Works
6. How does architecture education begin? (or my first architecture project)	CORE I	Leaning Wall, A Bench





Question	Format
7. How to hatch a house?	Writing
8. How does form follow climate?	Writing
9. How many cosmopolitical realities can a construction detail hold?	Writing
10. How does a camera flatten a mountain?	Writing
11. What cultural knowledge does geological display communicate?	Workshop
12. How to reuse?	Reuse
13. How to live in the former wine warehouse?	Reuse
14. What did encounters on the land within the Americas look like?	Research
15. How to reimagine New York with Michael Sorkin?	Restoration

1 How do parents and children learn from public space?



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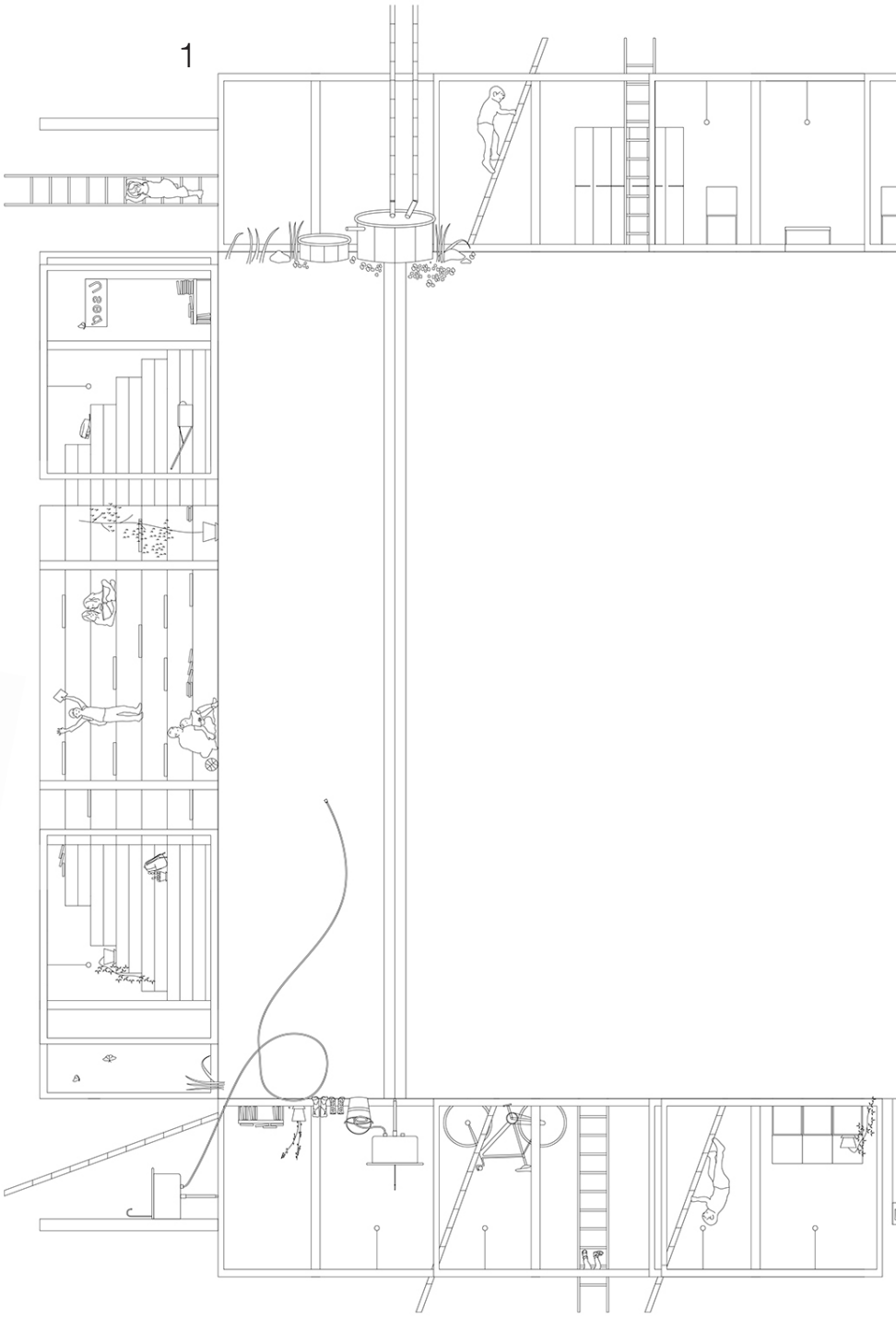

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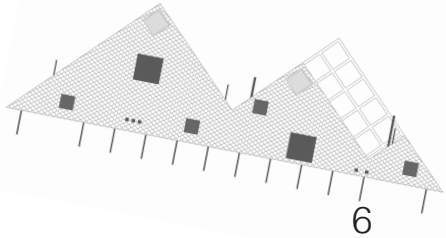

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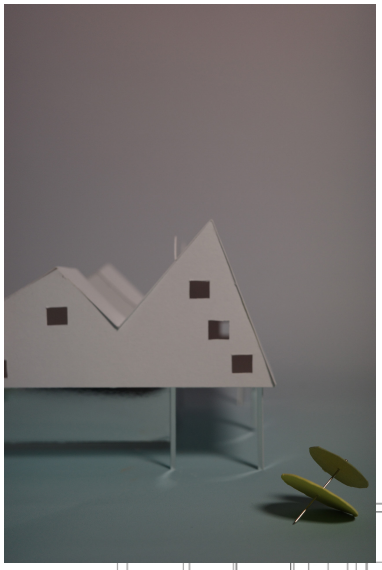

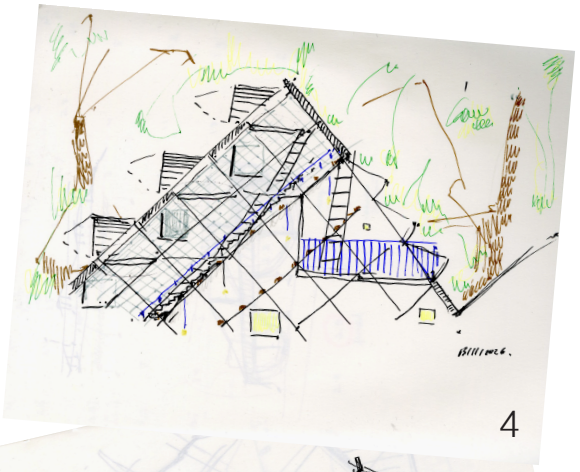

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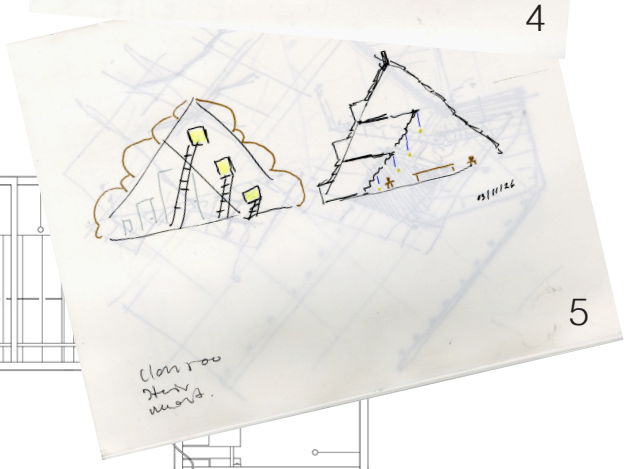

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1

ADV VI
School for Sharing

School in the Attic

Instructors:
Tezuka Architects and
Abraham Murrell
Site: New York, NY

Individual Work
Spring 2026

LEVAN KILADZE

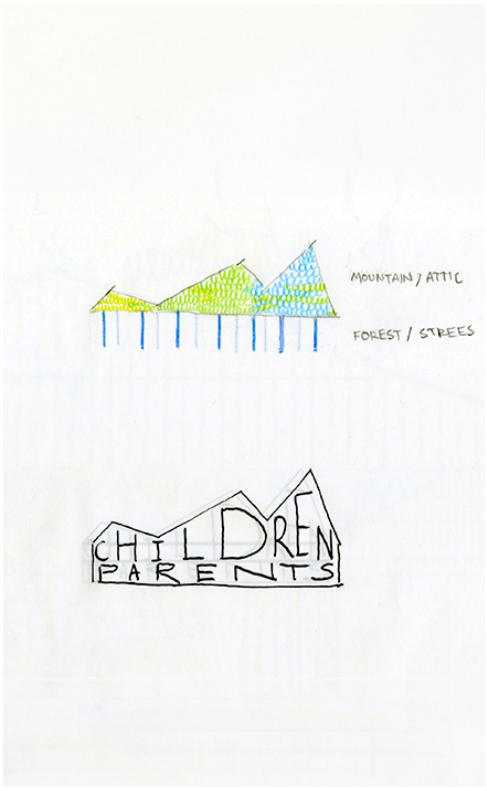
A School in the Attic is a school for children and their parents under one roof with six peaks. The ground floor is an **indoor cloister** facing a courtyard: coworking, cooking, a bookstore, reading. A child can steal a book and bring it up to the attic, or watch people come and go through the windows in the floor.

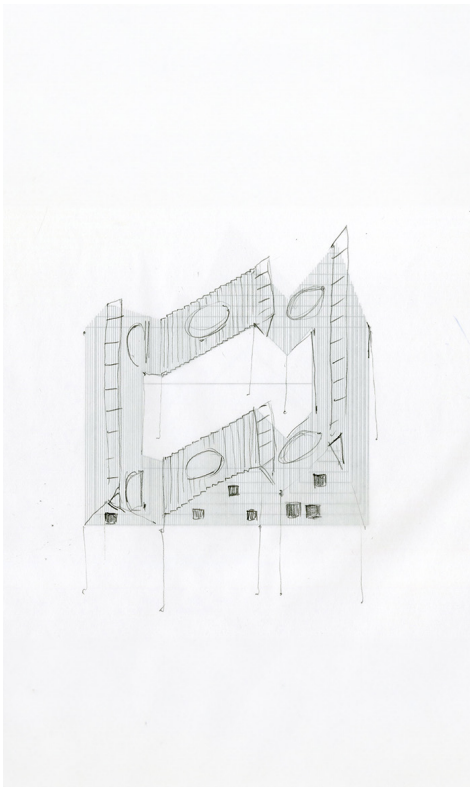
Ladders climb between floors. Parents have lunch with their children. **Children watch their parents work, and parents watch their children learn.**

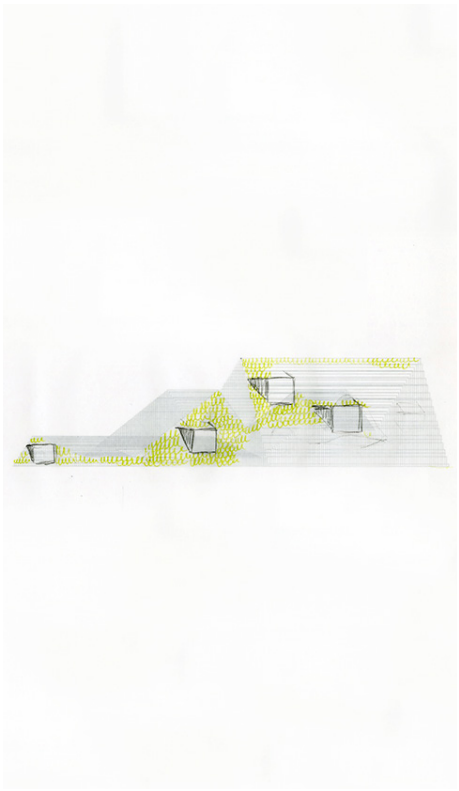
The site is 5th Street Park in Manhattan's East Village, where an H-shaped school once stood, and women later attempted an unrealized **feminist school.** NYC's **cooperative preschools** already place parents in the classroom. But what happens when parents simply have their own day there? The massing reads as two figures: a forest at street level, mountains above. Inside is the attic, where children watch the city.



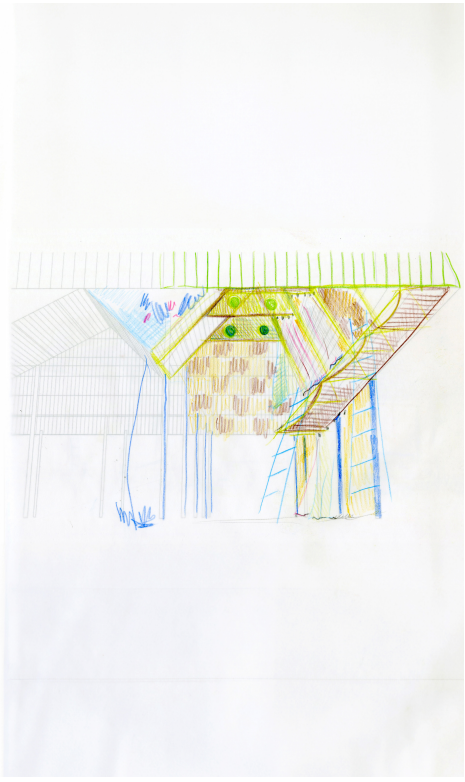
How do parents and children learn from public space?













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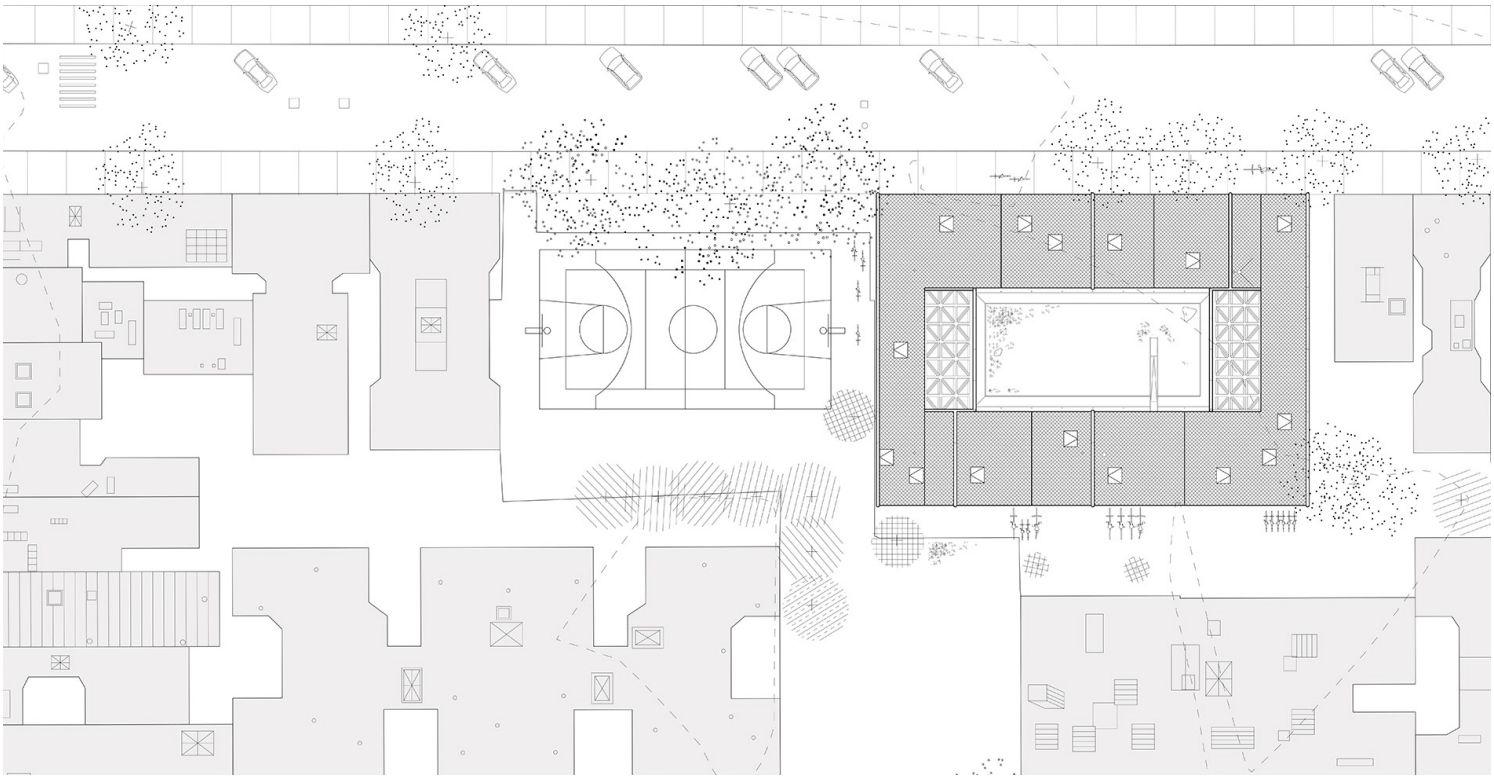
The project begins by asking what **role parents** play in schools today.

Domestic moments of intimacy are gently reintroduced to the school.

The project also asks how the **city participates** in children's education.

School in the Attic

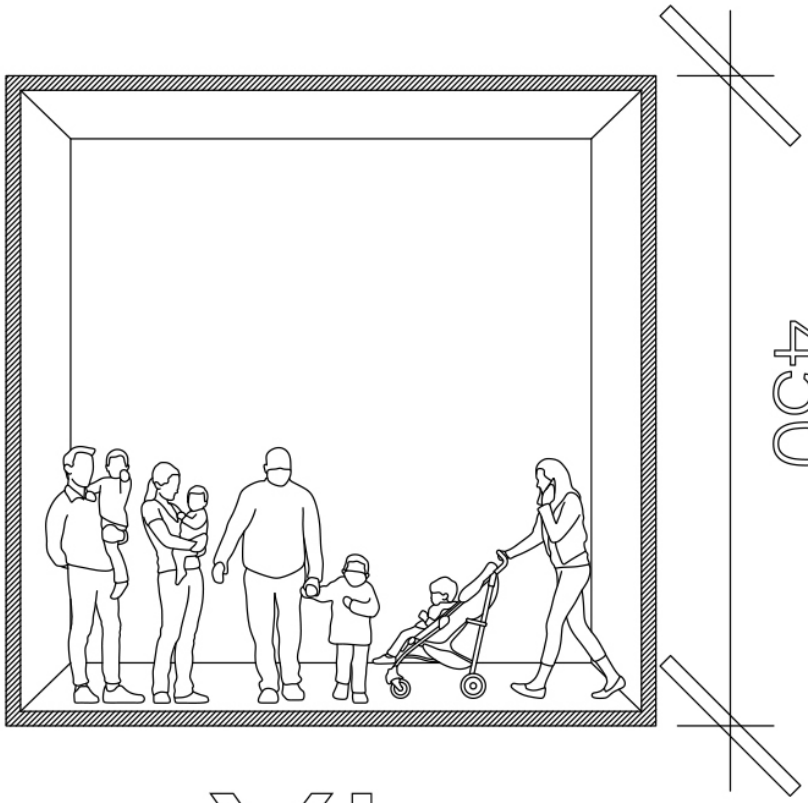




The courtyard is a public space where a playground for the children meets a series of programs for parents and for the city on the ground floor.

School for Sharing

LEVAN KILADZE



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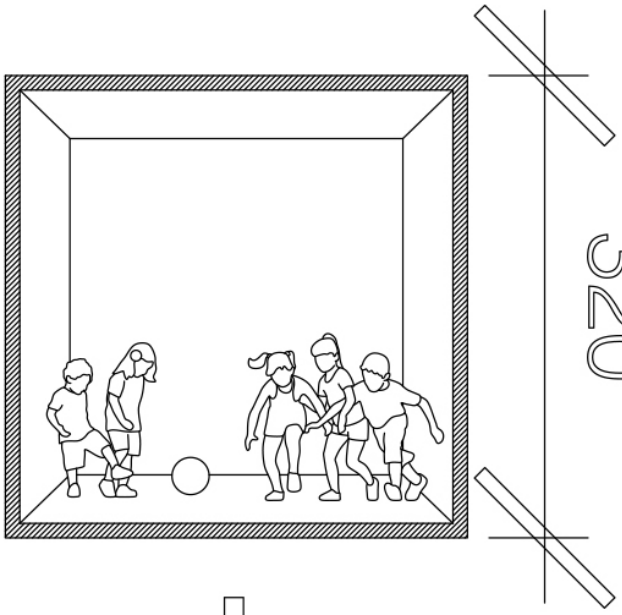

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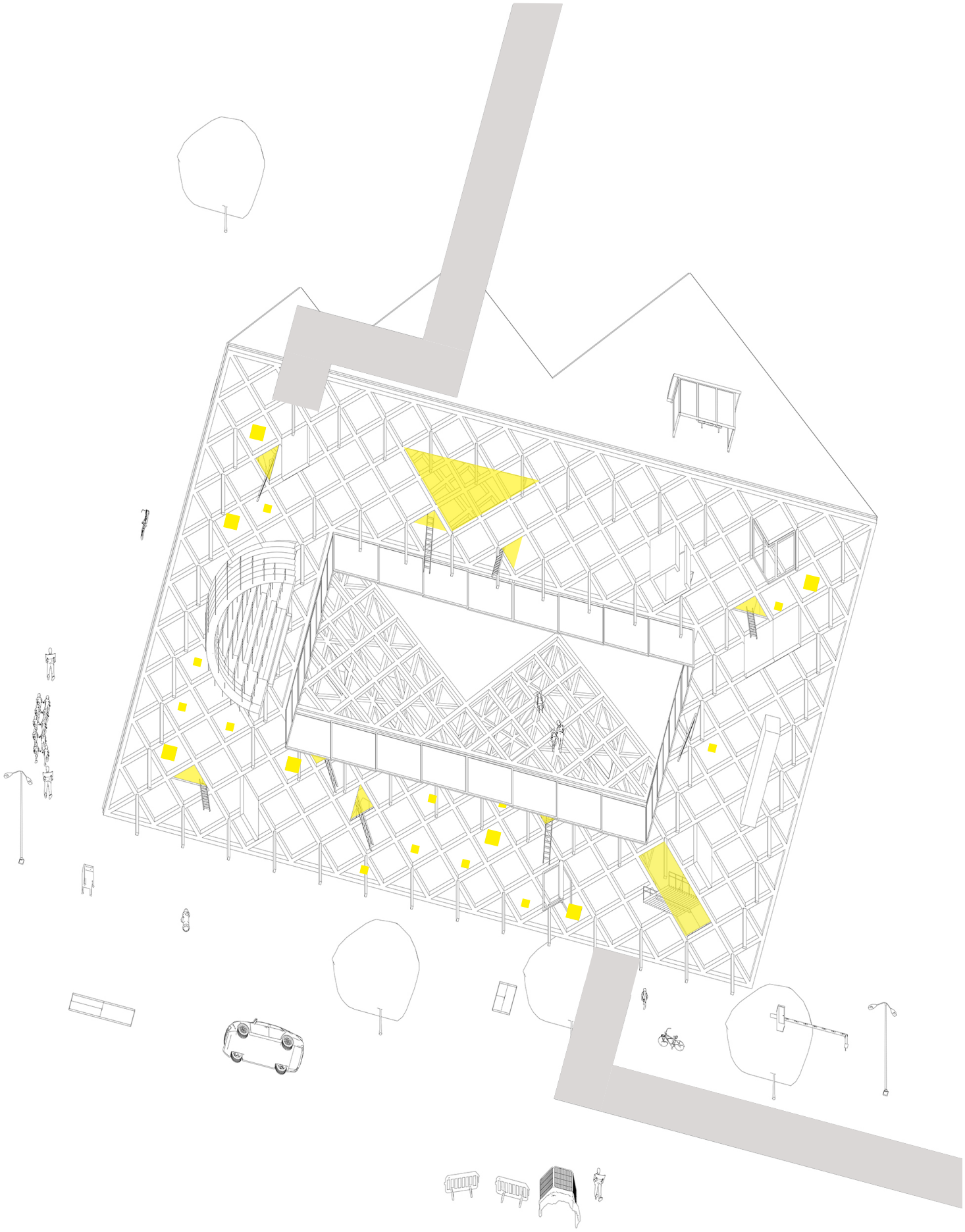
Like *Alice in Wonderland*, children learn about themselves through scale. The project thinks through **scales of sharing**: 100 children of different ages share space at different levels of intimacy. Giving parents a place in school enlarges the range.
(in cm)

15 QUESTIONS

How do parents and children learn from public space?



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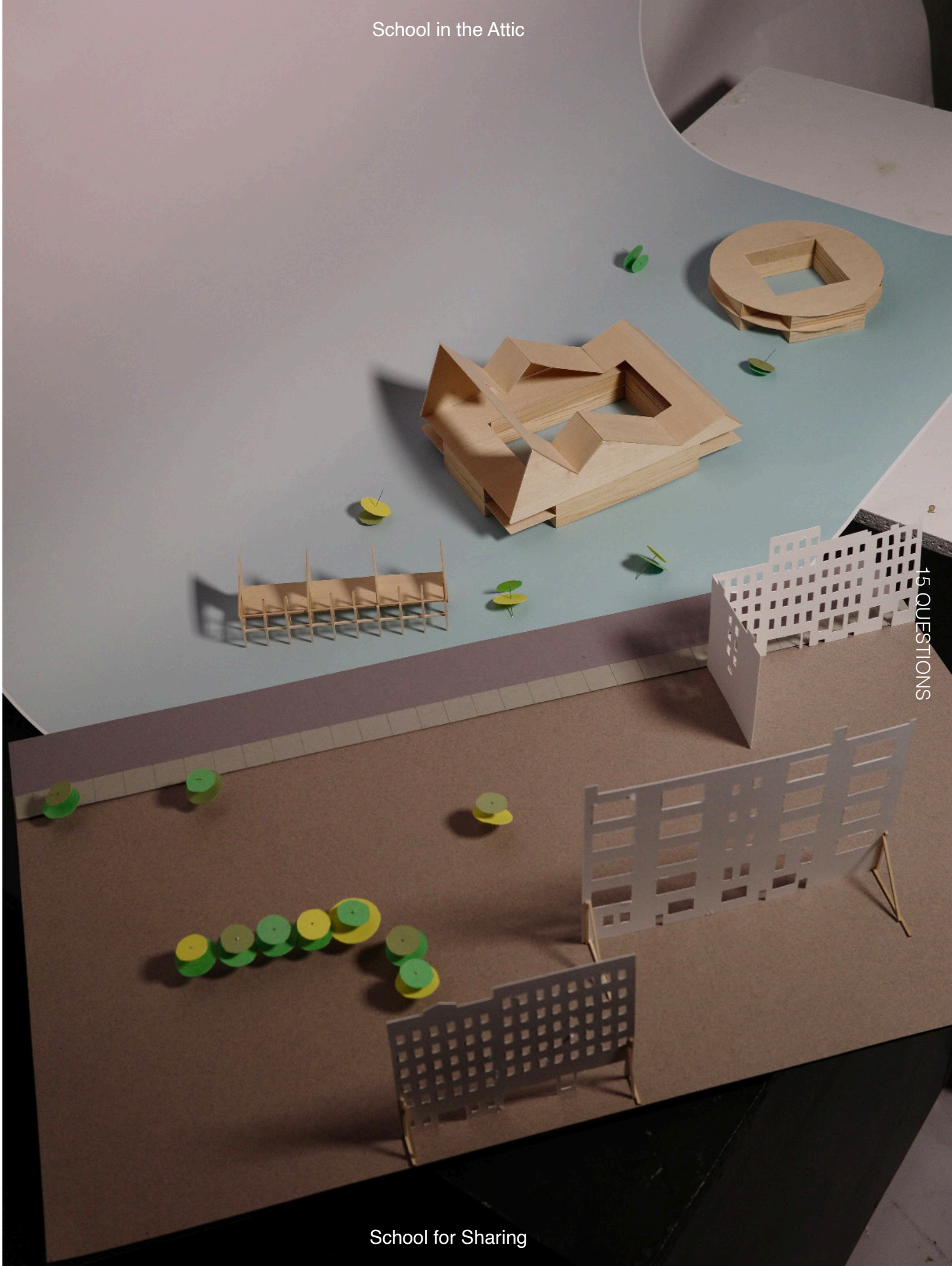
ADV VI

School in the Attic



15 QUESTIONS

School for Sharing

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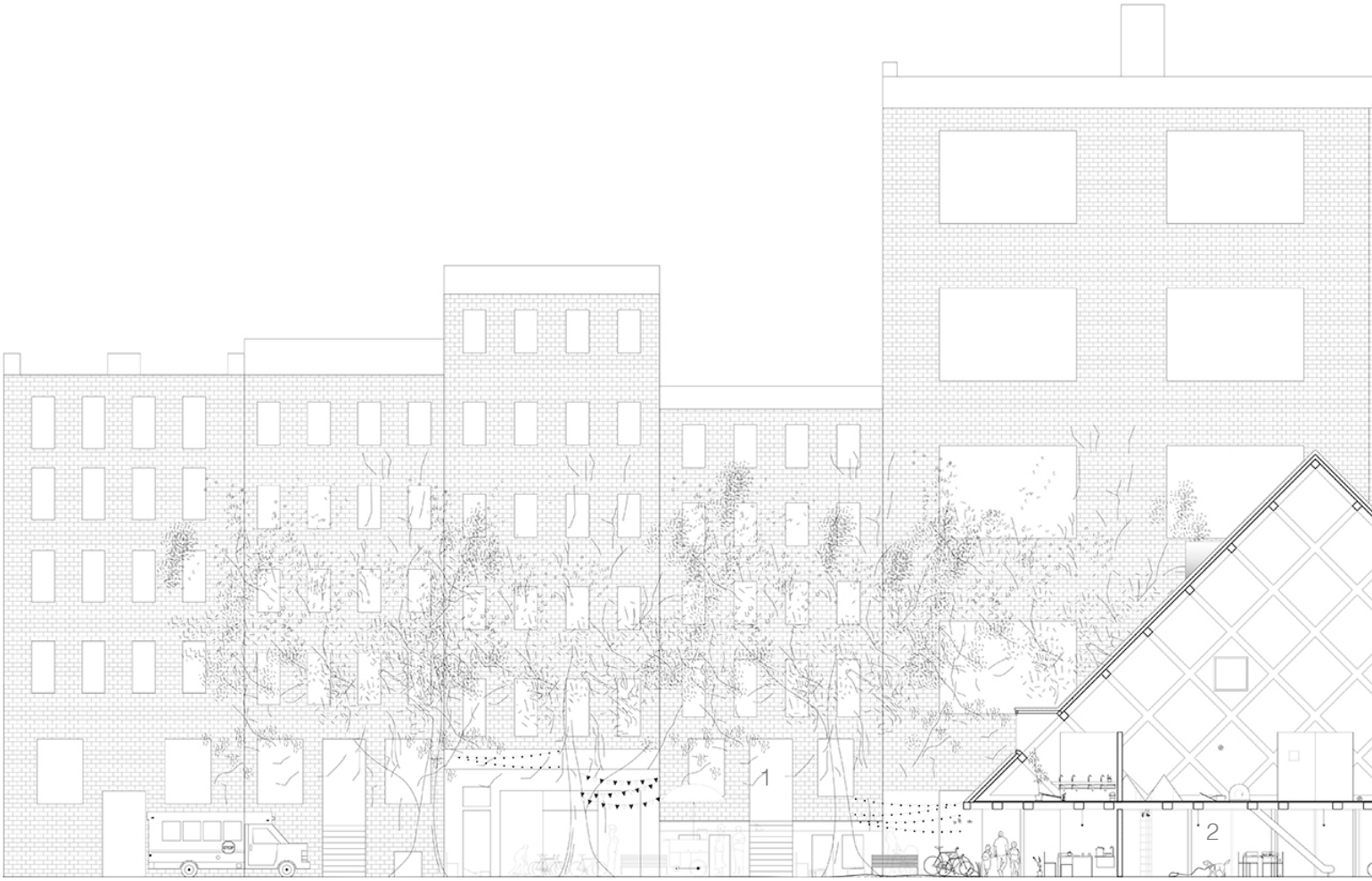

1. The school spills onto the street.
2. Children **move freely** between programs in designated areas.
3. The volumes on the second floor are **climbable**, and let children look out to the city.
4. The niche between the sliding glass doors and the coworking space inside becomes a **storage for parents**.
5. Self-supporting plywood walls create storage for breakout learning.
6. The layered facade allows for customizable openings.


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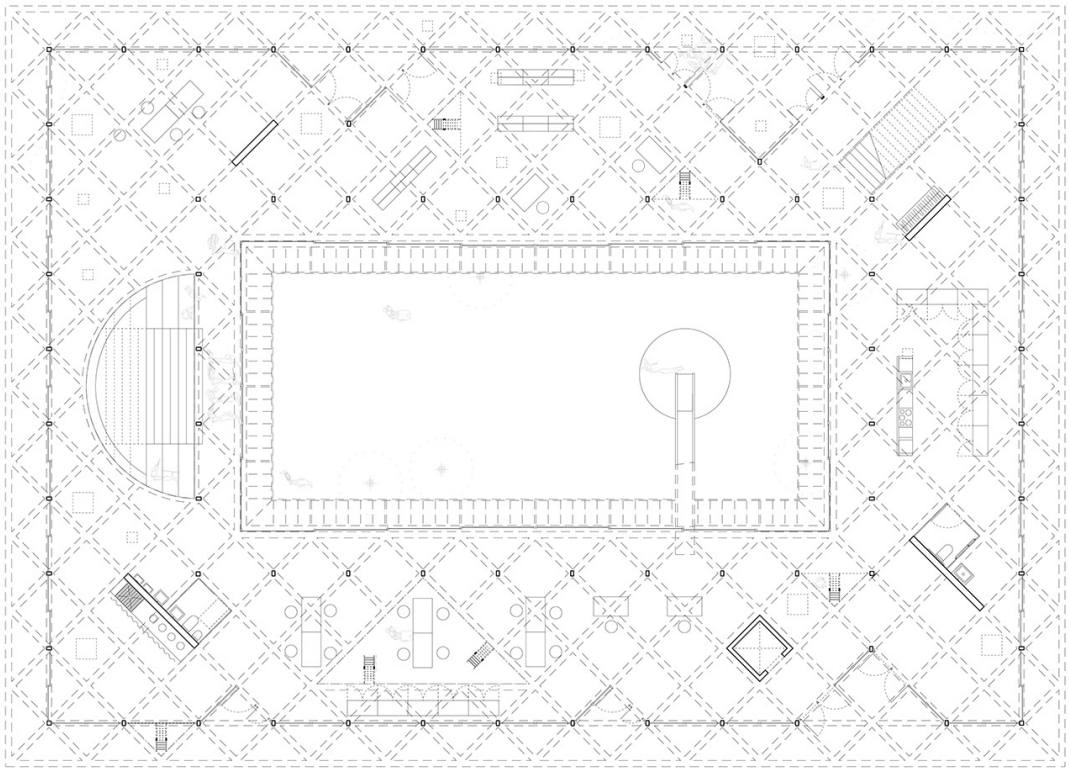

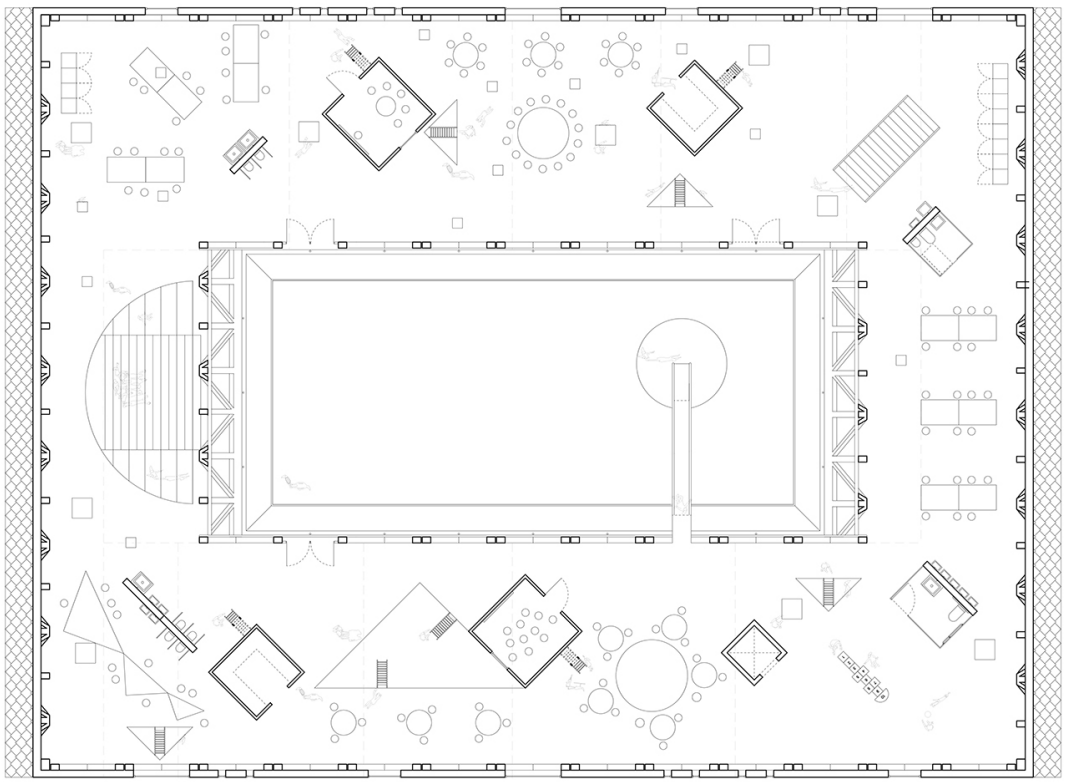

The floor between the two programs is punctured at three scales: SMALL **peepholes** for children to look through, MEDIUM openings for ladders between programs, and LARGE **loft openings** for a **semi-public** area for parents and children.

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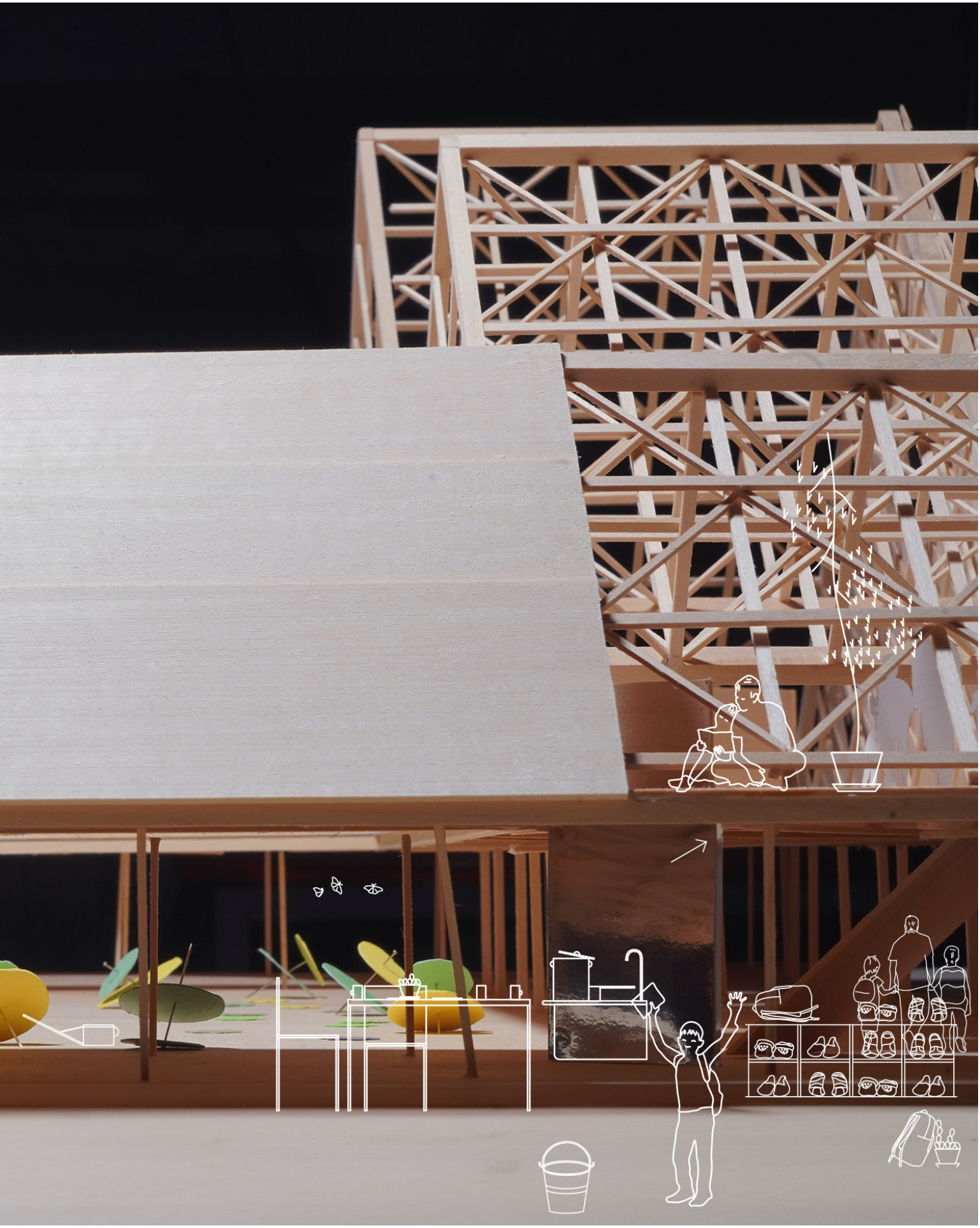



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How do parents and children learn from public space?







The building is conceived as a **unimaterial wall section**: structure, enclosure, and interior detail all built from the same combination of glulam and plywood. The result is a soft environment where architecture is flexible and acts as a backdrop. The wall itself becomes something to learn from.

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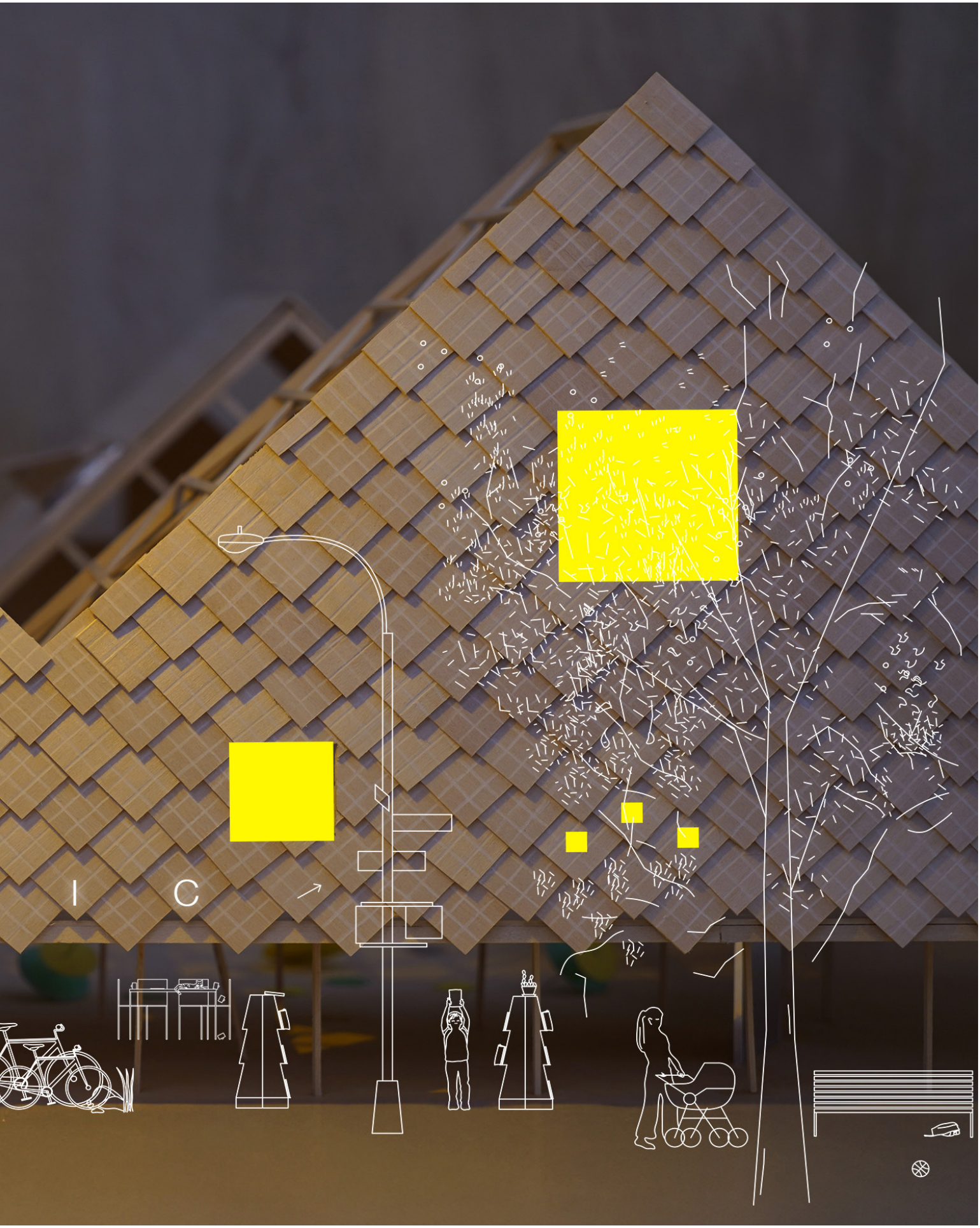
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2 What does it take to unlock a space for trans-species living?

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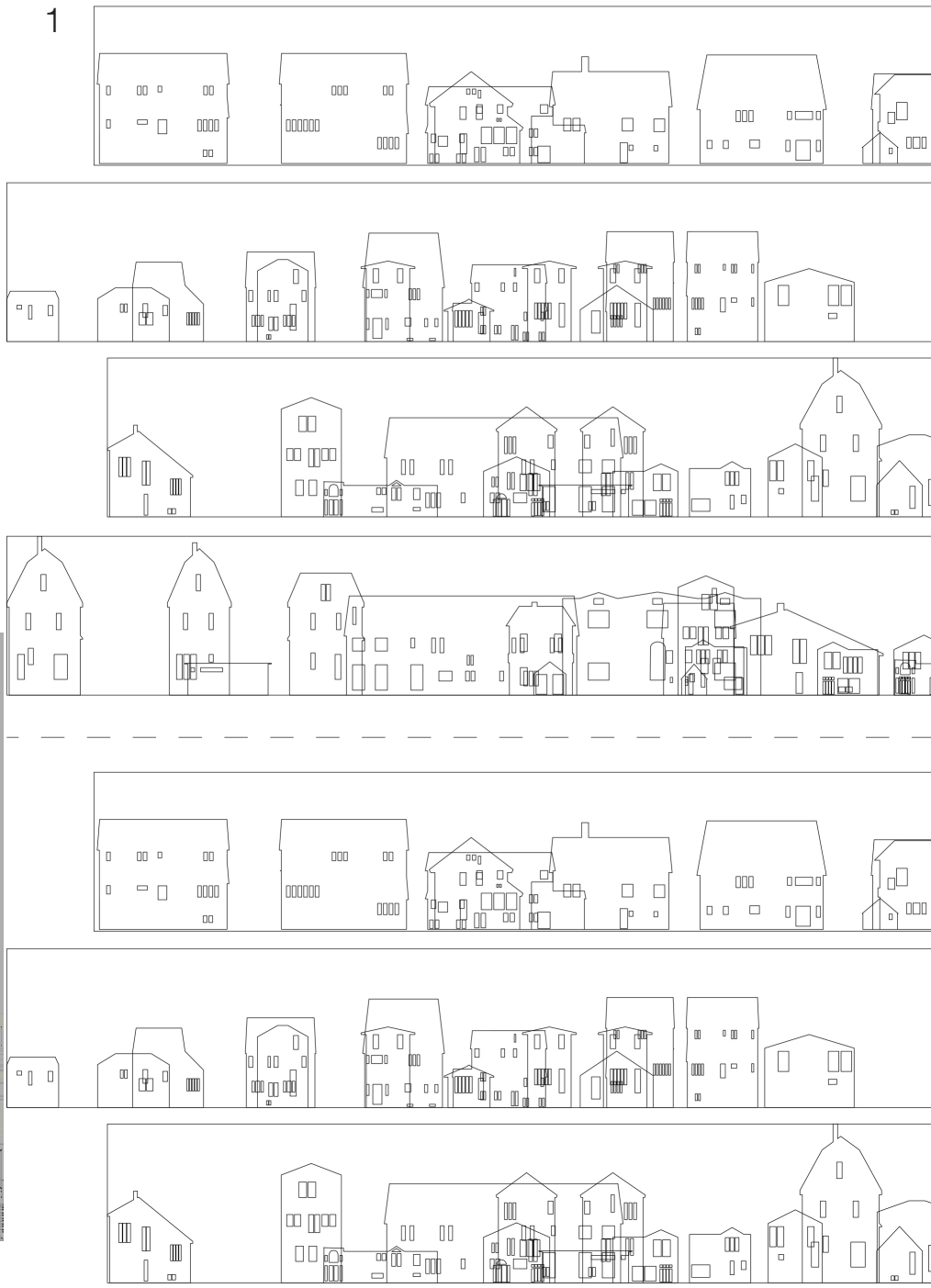

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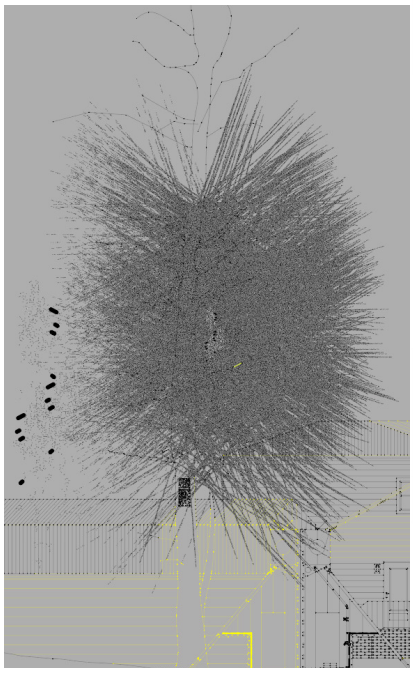

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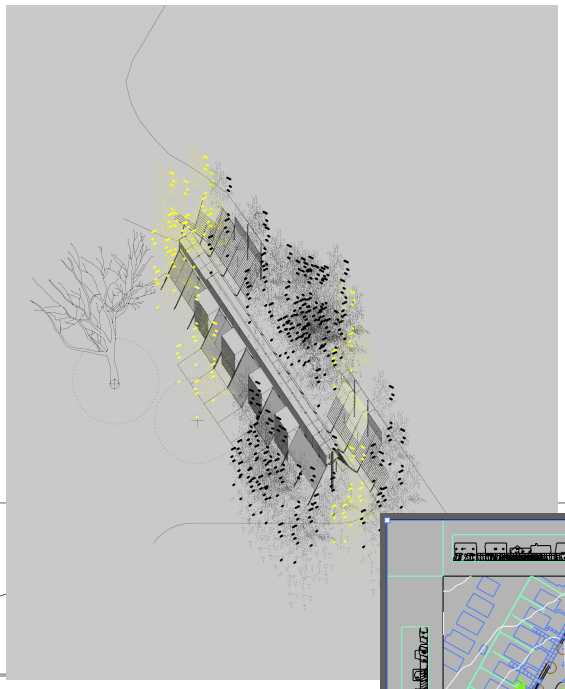

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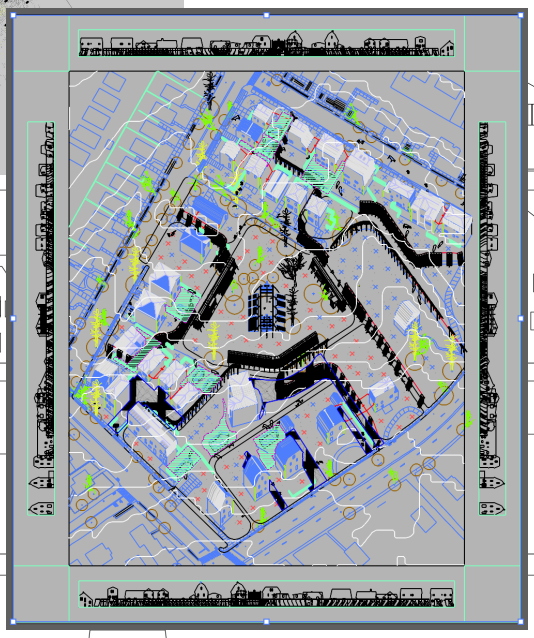

2

ADV IV
Waqf for Staten Island

Communal Kitchen, Communal Garden

Instructor:
Ziad Jamaleddine
Site: New York, NY

Individual Work
Spring 2025

LEVAN KILADZE

The project reclaims east, south, west, and north elevations of the three-floor house formerly owned by Frederick Law Olmsted, the surrounding garden of 1.3 acres with 4 birdhouses, 1 Cedar of Lebanon tree (trunk diameter 46 in.), 1 Black Walnut tree (trunk diameter 52 in.), 1 curved driveway as a waqf, **a charitable landscape** held in trust. Bounded by Hales Avenue (NE), Hylan Boulevard (SE), Woods of Arden Road (SW), and Kings Street (NW) — neighbor to 1,209 detached homes in R1 and R2 residence districts — the design negotiates **permeable edges** to neighboring parcels by routing **wildlife corridors** for migrating deer, turkeys, and migratory birds.

A network of birdhouses, **right-of-way paths**, and planted zones support new uses: 1 communal kitchen, 1 long plant nursery, 2 classrooms that transform into 1 prayer space, and 11 Wudu basins for youth from the Islamic School and the Muslim American Society of Staten Island. In return, the students provide water and food for every stray and undomesticated animal that crosses the land. The garden, long neglected by the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, is reactivated through this **reciprocal model** of social and **ecological care.** Hardware salvaged for pathways and communal furnishings can be redeployed on adjacent vacant lots, reinforcing a context-sensitive model of seasonal landscape stewardship.


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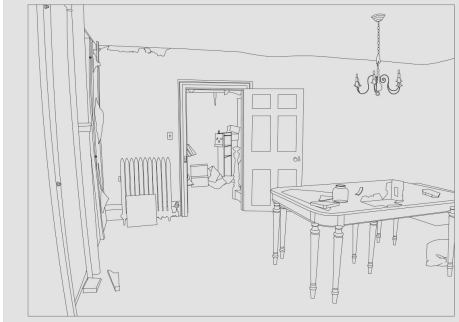

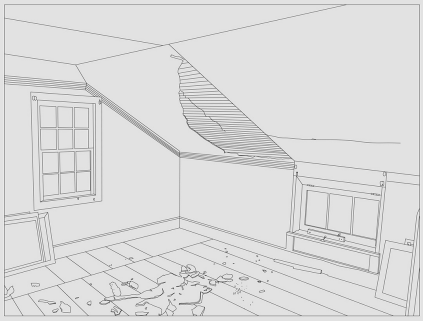



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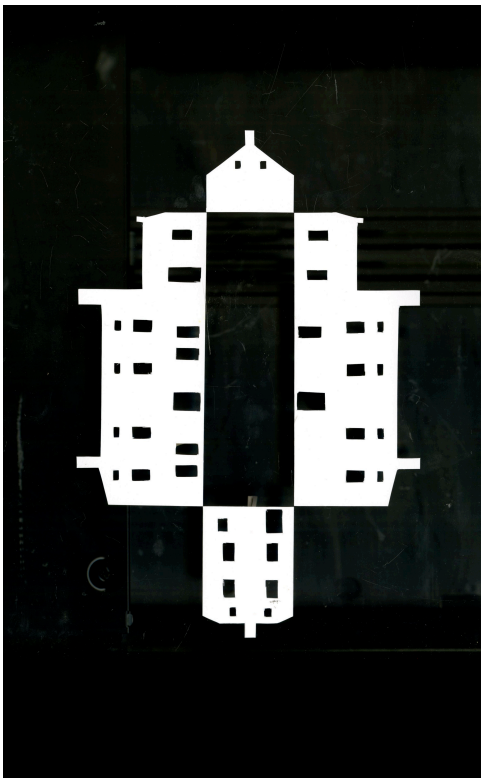
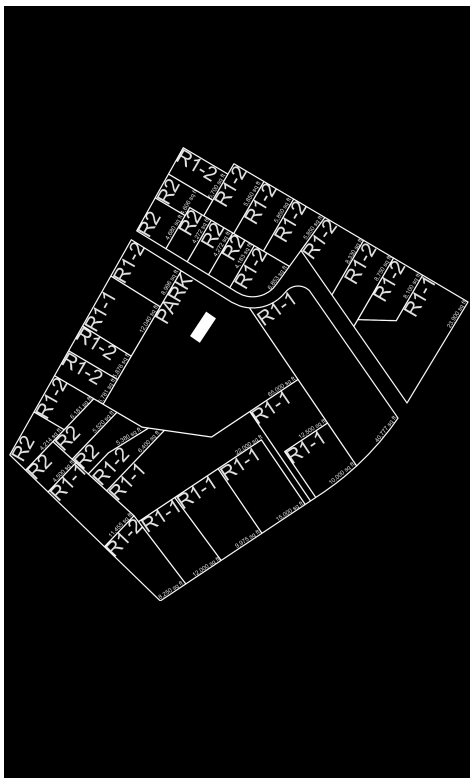
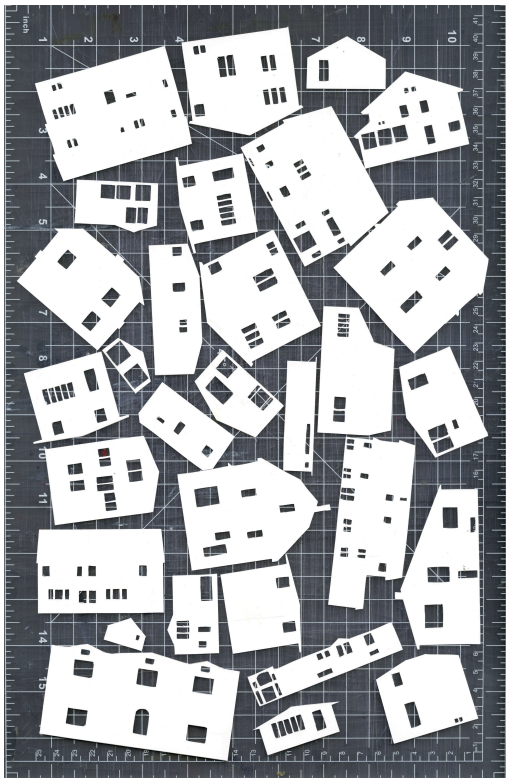


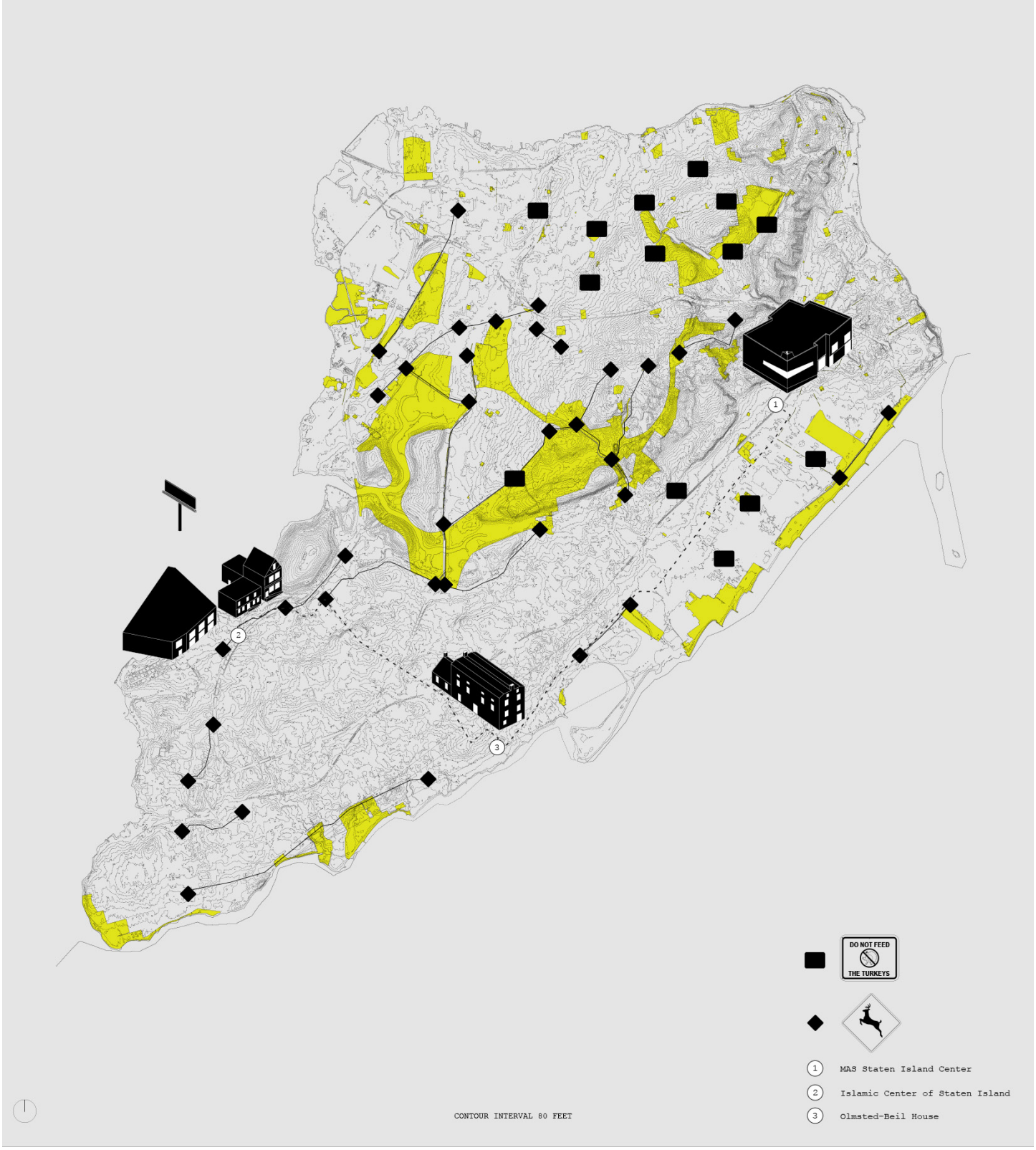
Objects belonging to the two landscape architects in the house are **inventoried**, removed, and stored.



The project leverages zoning laws to open up a **landlocked** park.



Existing elevations of the Olmsted-Beil House and the surrounding residential houses are preserved.



Staten Island's urban **stray network**: site's entry point for integrating animal movement into the landscape design. Neighbouring detached houses are linked to these corridors, treating punctures as thresholds for **animal circulation** between inside and outside.

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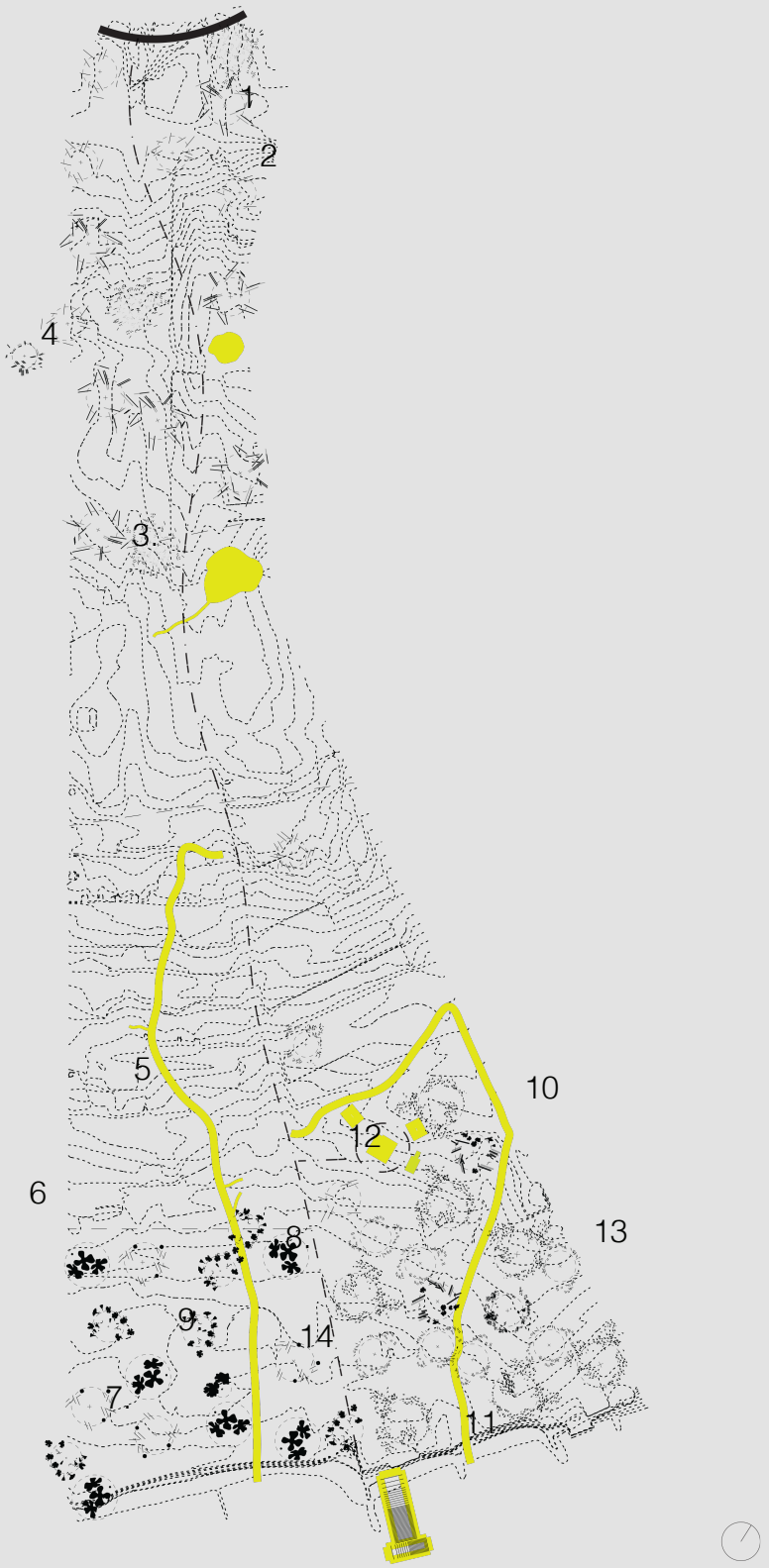
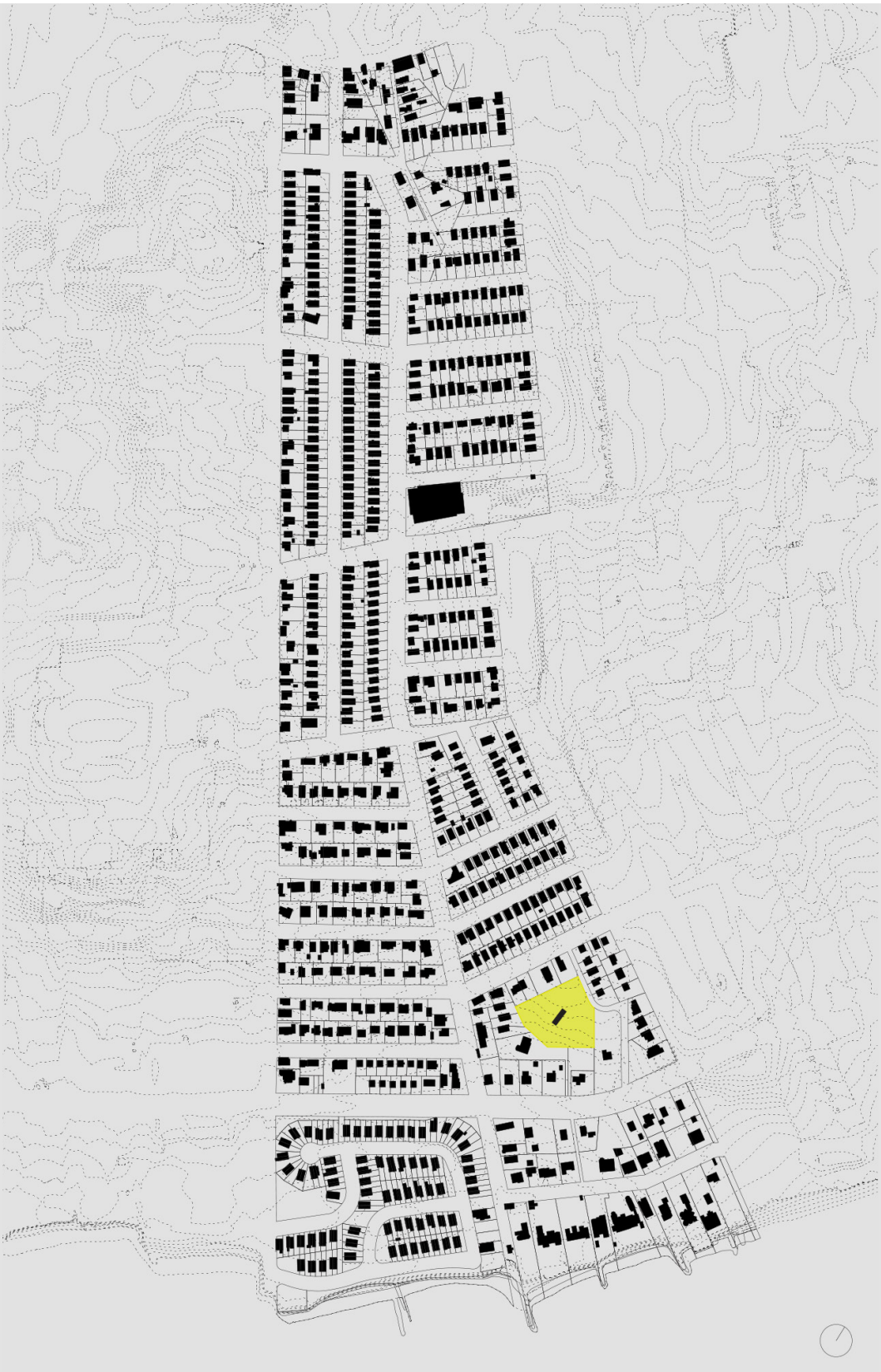
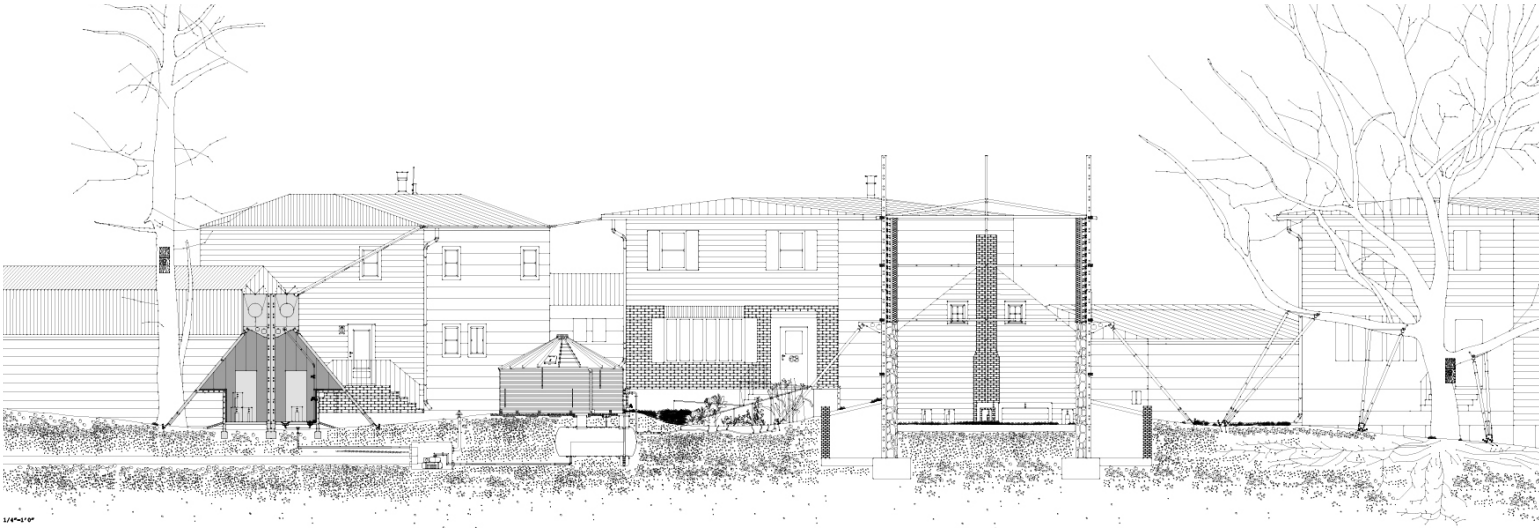


1. Maple
2. Sweet and sour gum
3. Sassafras
4. Holly and white oak
5. Hay
6. Cabbage
7. Tomatoes
8. Corn
9. Wheat and barley
10. Cedar and Lebanon trees
11. Pear
12. Peach
13. Quince
14. Osage orange

By transforming his Staten Island farmland into a **living laboratory** for trees, flowers, and fruits, Olmsted pioneered horticultural experiments that underpinned his enduring legacy across all boroughs.



The 130-acre farmland owned by Frederick Law Olmsted today is a **parcellated landscape**.



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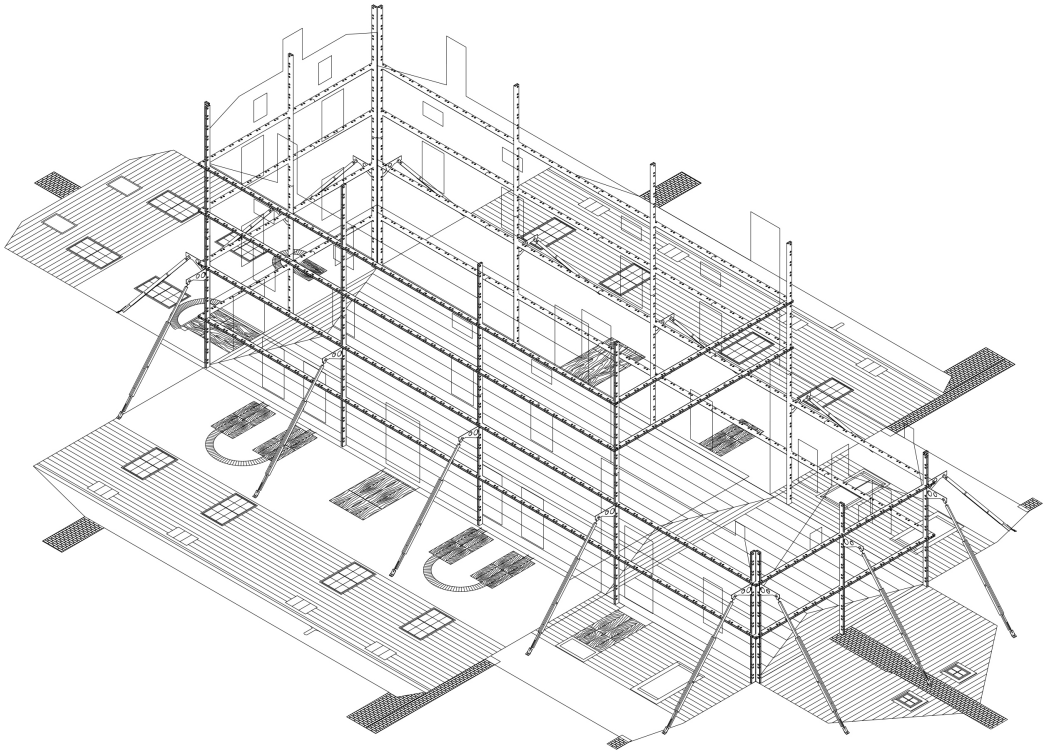
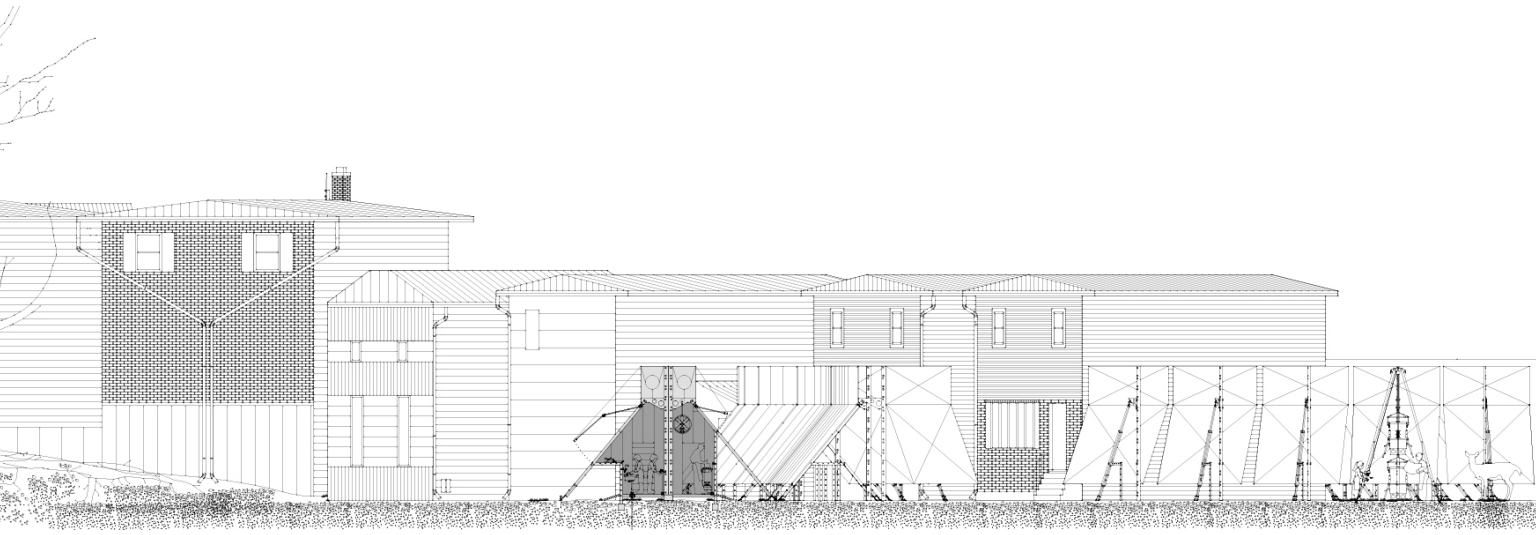
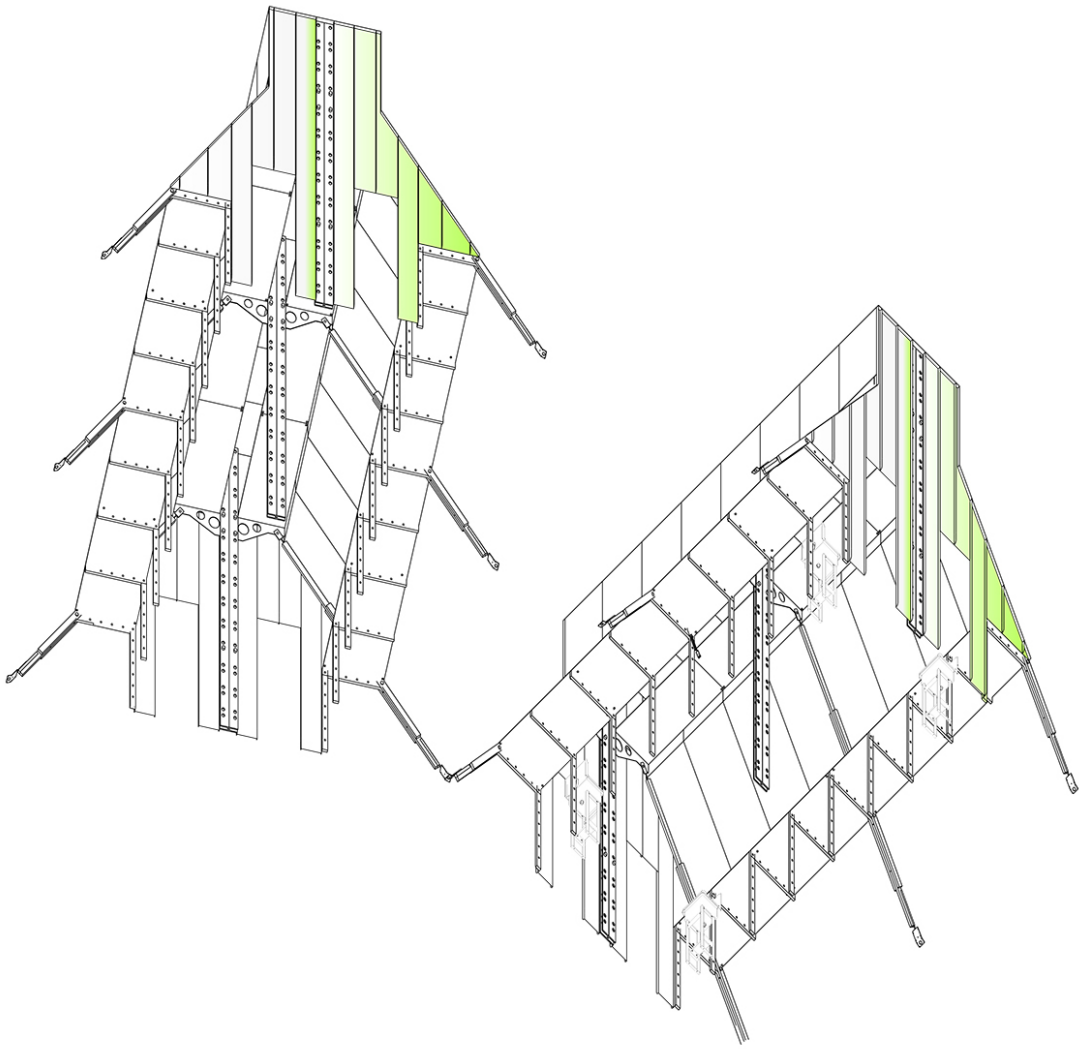
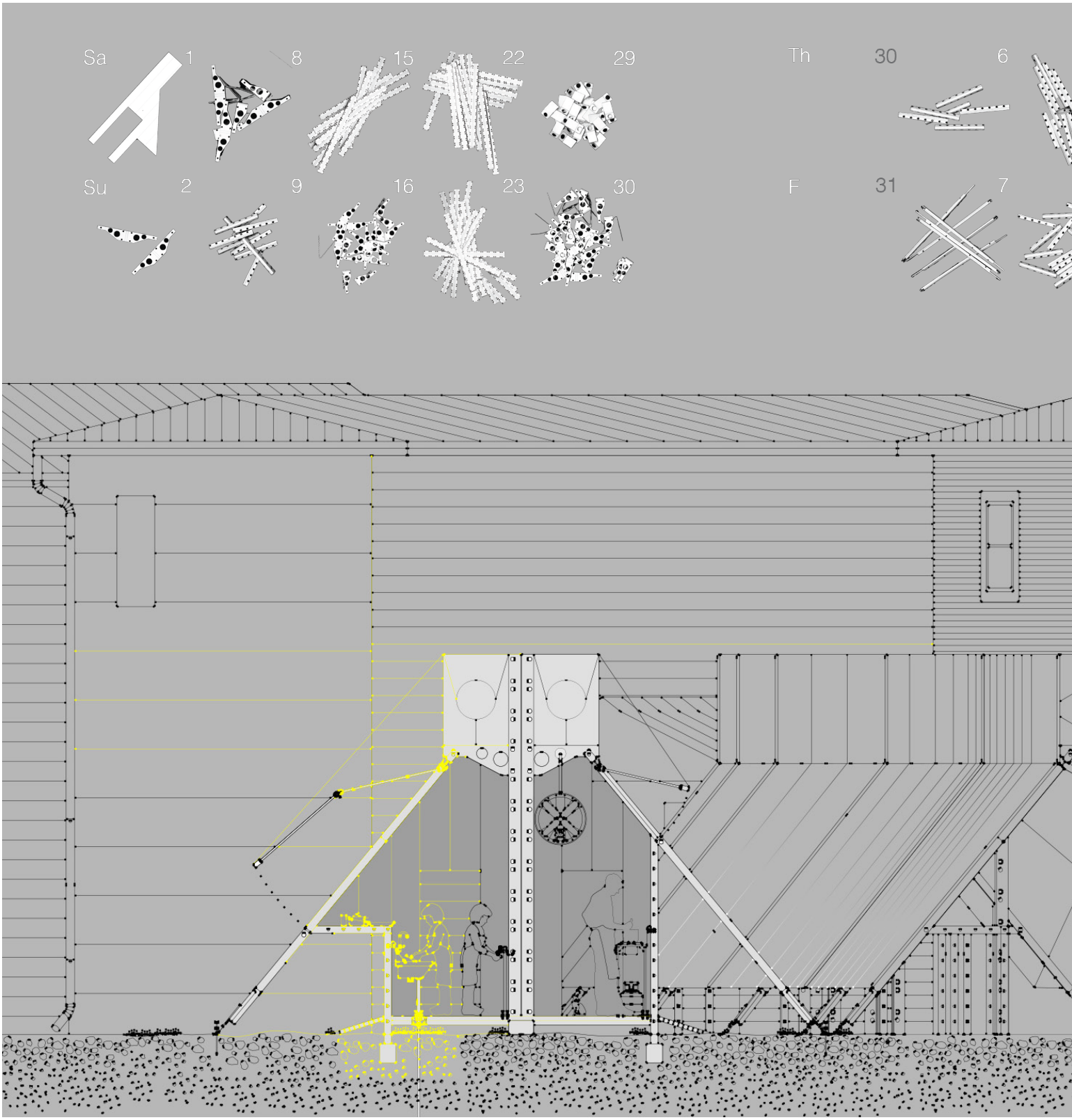


Original elevations are reinforced with a **hybrid** steel-and-timber bracing system, also utilized in the new additions.





The new volumes are **modular and linkable,** each housing counter-height storage and sink or cooking units.



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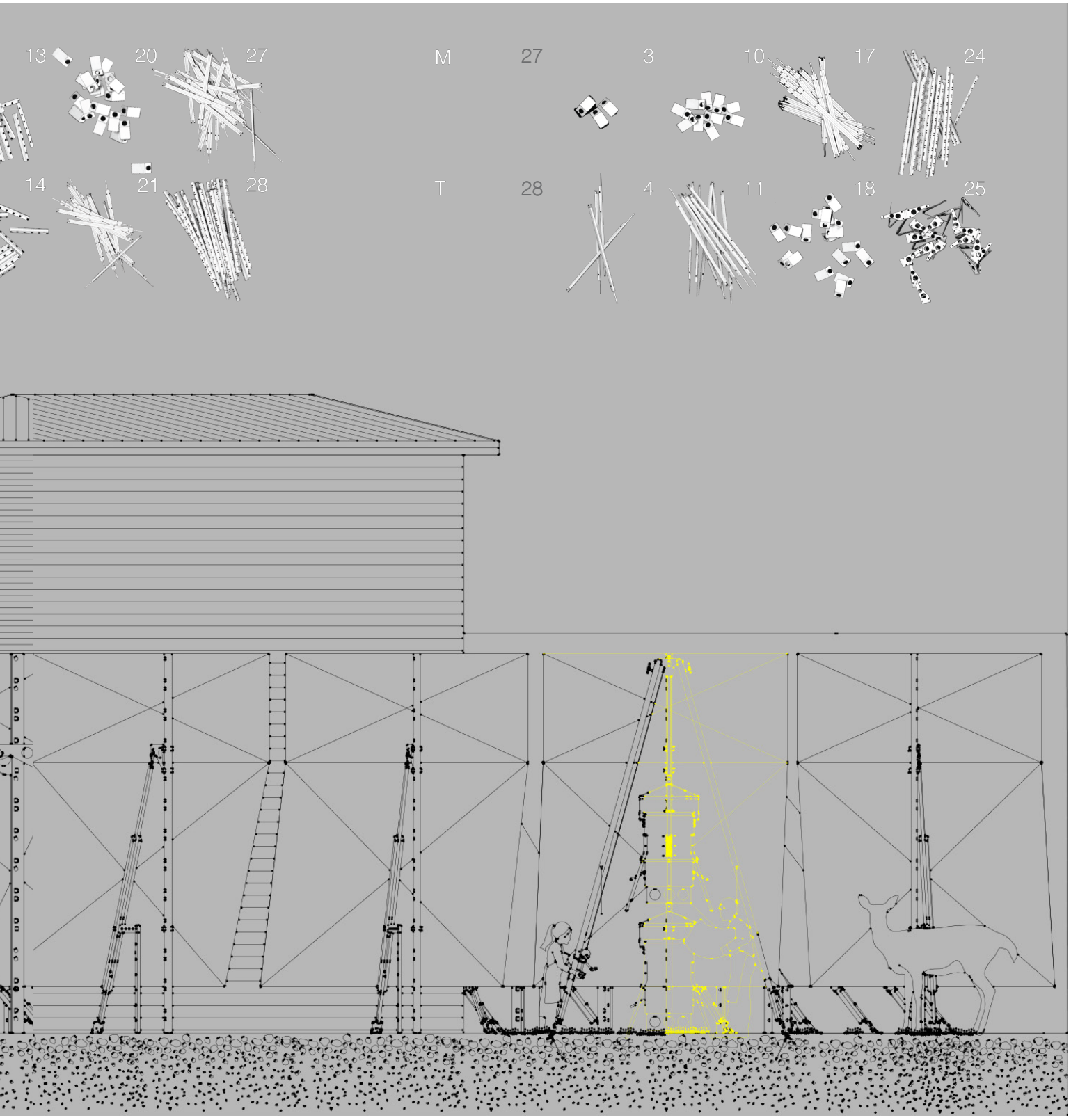
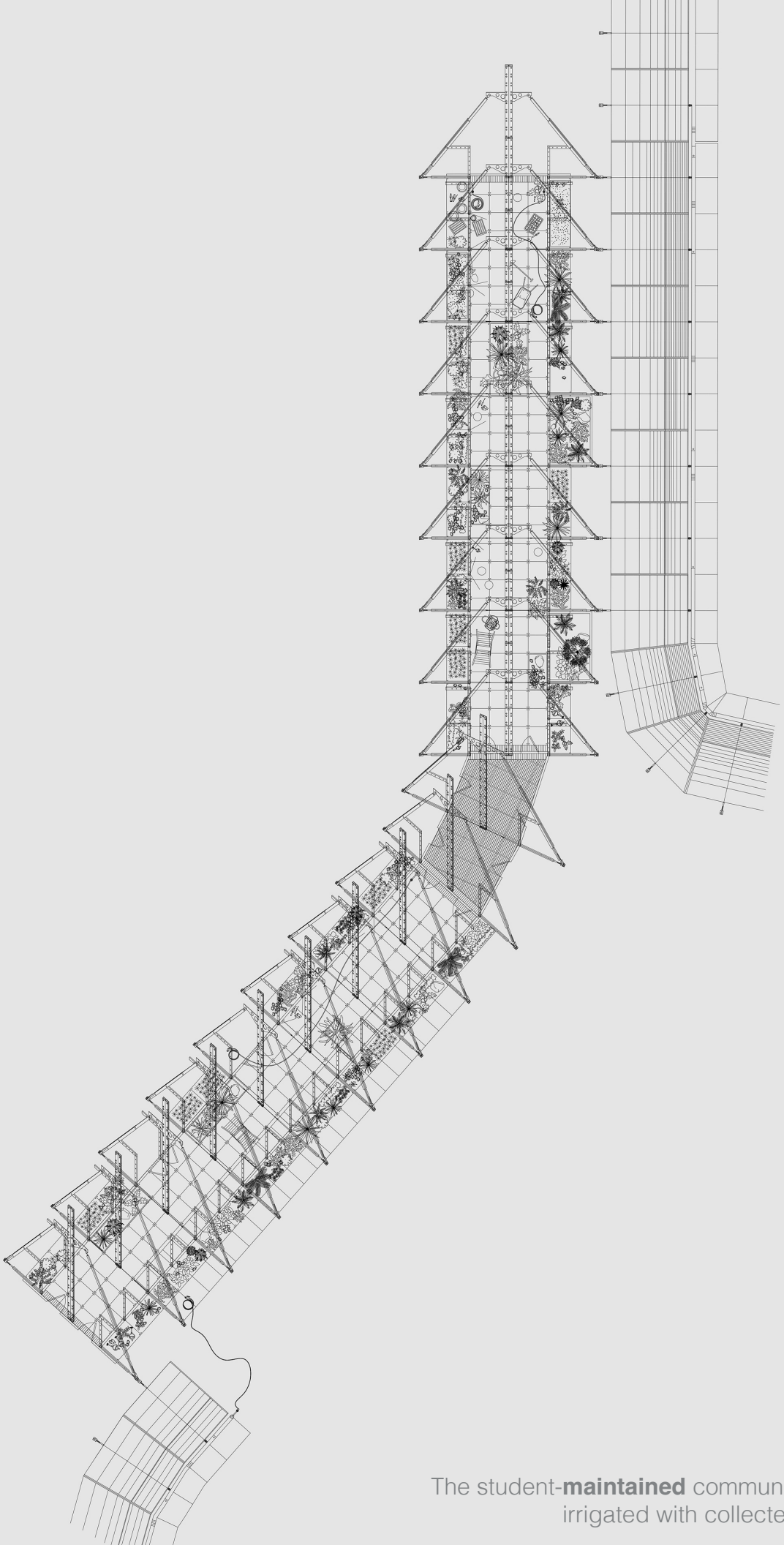
Perforated metal studs create a **modular** frame, support adjustable countertops for children and adults, and enable cross-ventilation with **integrated fans**. Rainwater is harvested and routed through the roof.



Modular pathways feature **animal feeders** at varied elevations for multi-species, all maintained and refilled by the students community. A shared calendar concept integrates land and building maintenance in the youth **education curriculum**.

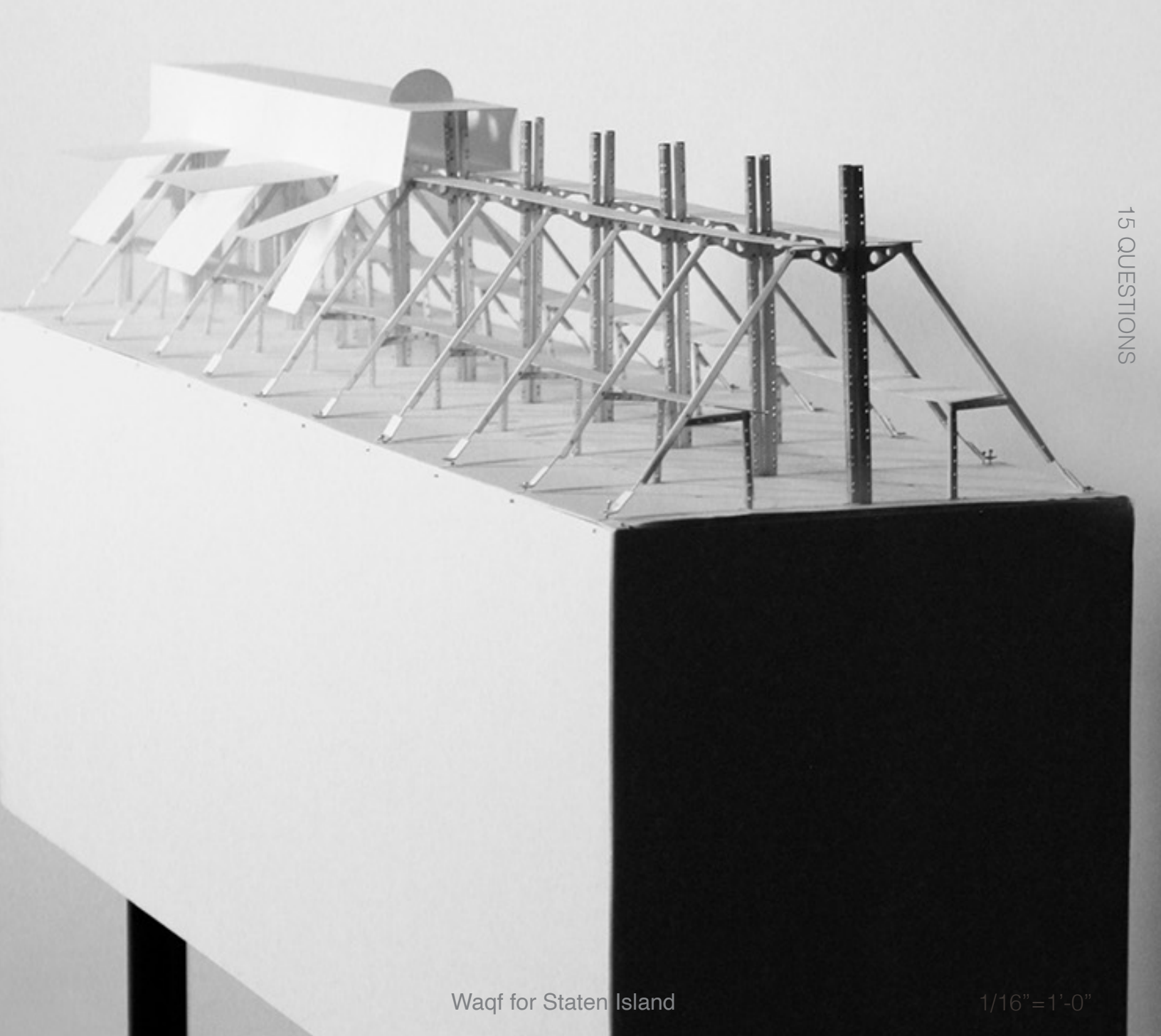
LEVAN KILADZE



The student-**maintained** communal nursery is irrigated with collected rainwater.

Communal Kitchen, Communal Garden





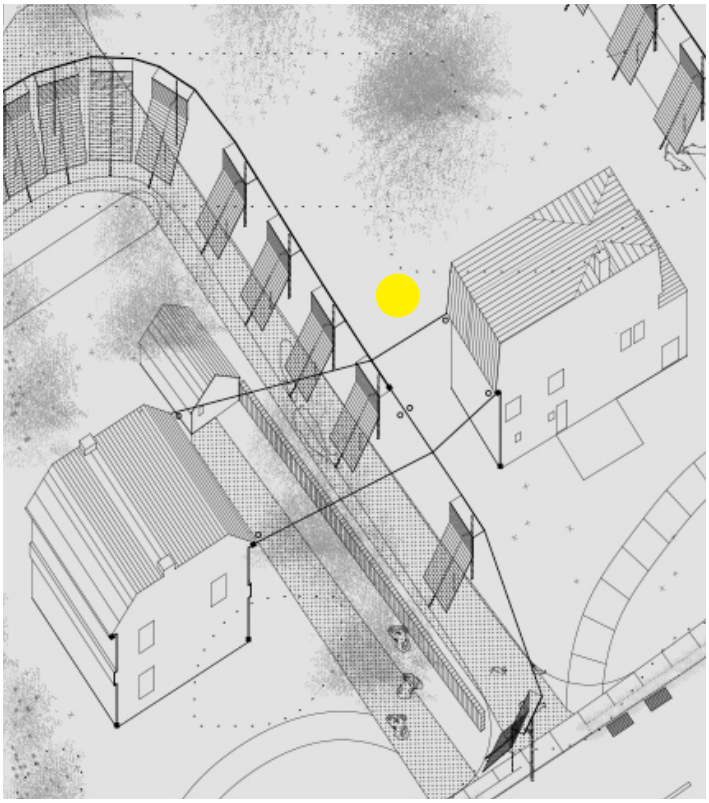
15 QUESTIONS

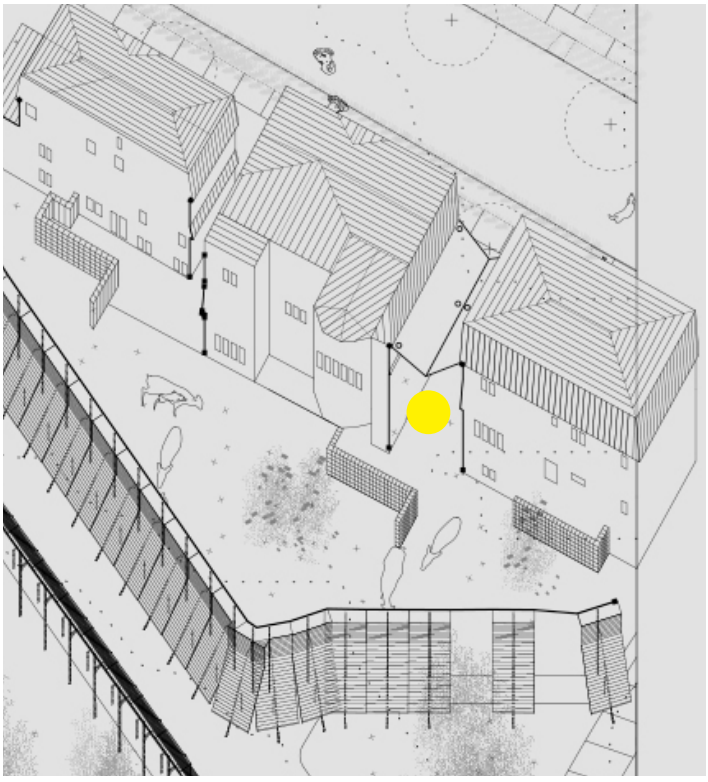
Waqf for Staten Island

1/16”=1’-0”

LEVAN KILADZE









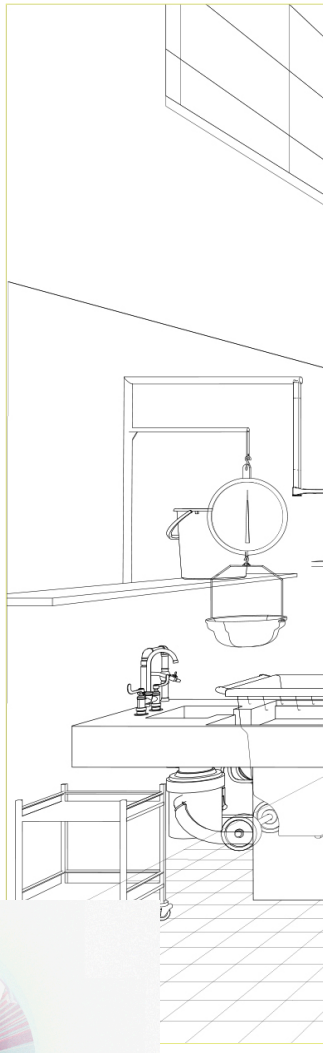
Right-of-way pathways bridge R1 and R2 zones, creating new clusters of the commons. **Shaded pathways** negotiate permeability between private property boundaries, transforming fences into **shared access routes**.

A **network of roofs** provides extra shade for people and animals while channeling rainwater. The design prioritizes **street connectivity** and integrates existing water and vehicular infrastructure.



3 Can human body be the forensic space for transscalar witnessing?

1



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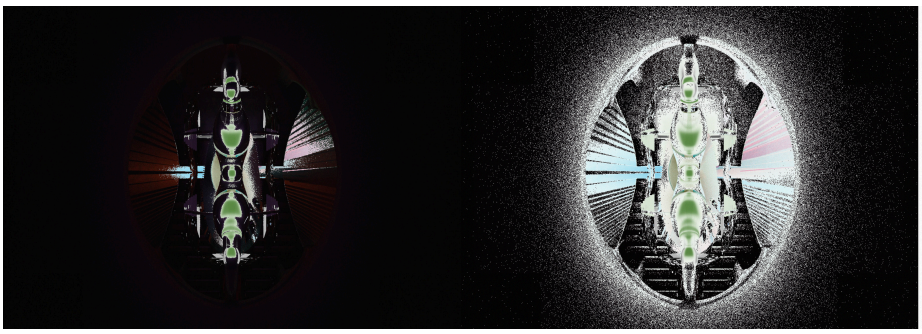



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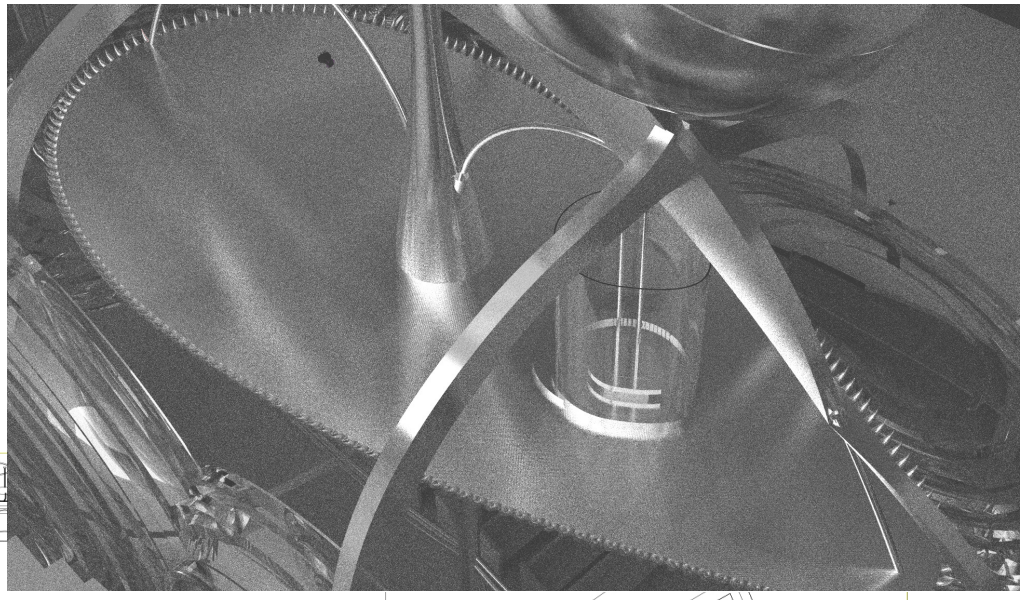
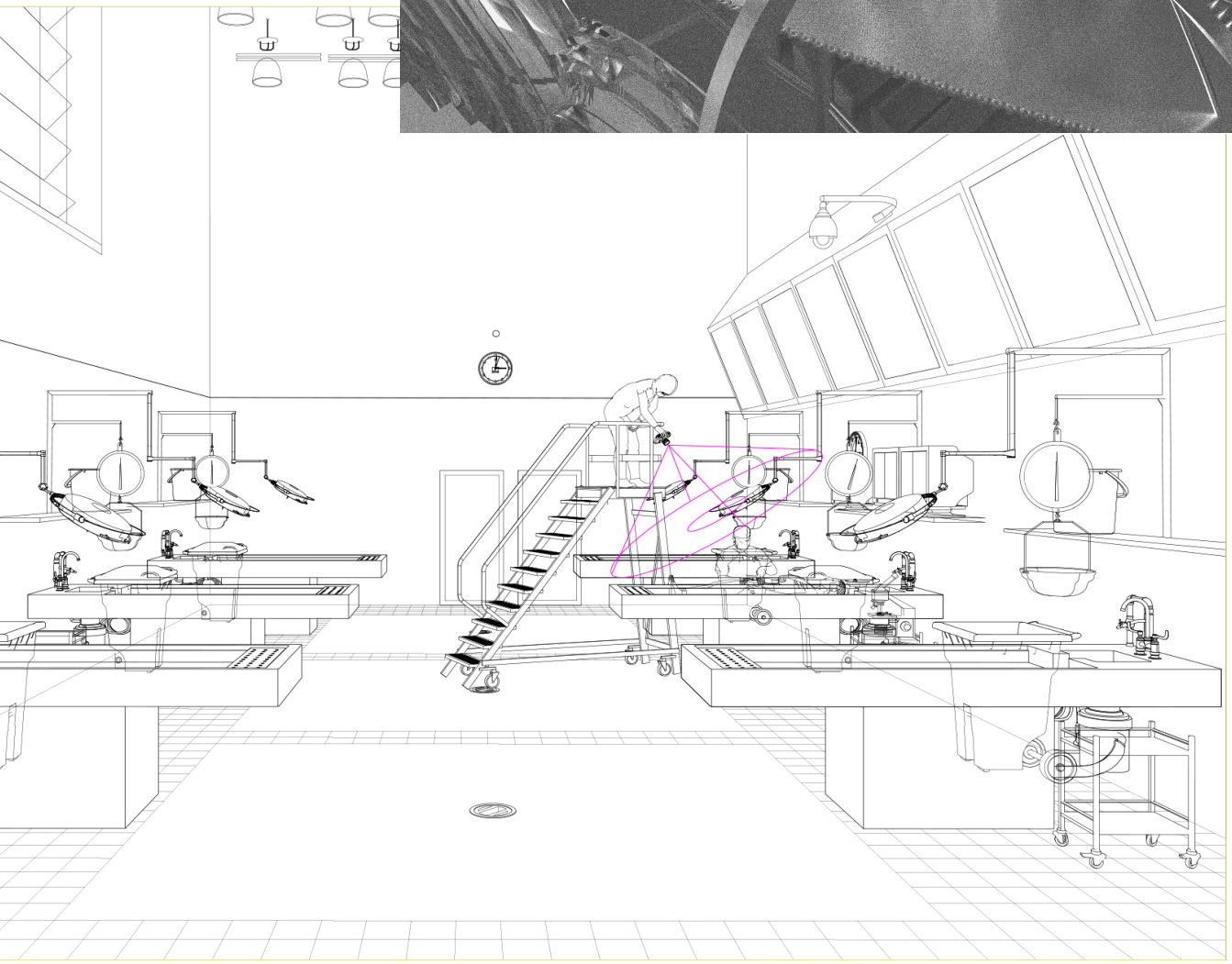




3

CORE II
Damage Control

National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik

Instructor:
Jarrett Ley
Site: Baltimore, MD

Individual Work
Spring 2024

LEVAN KILADZE

The project reimagines the Co-cathedral of Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore, known as Baltimore Basilica, as The National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik, whose murder was **covered up** by the church because of her knowledge of sexual abuse within ranks.

Proposed design rewires the logic and technologies of f**orensic investigation, pathology, and autopsy** combining them with the aesthetics, rituals, and architectures of catholic relics to calibrate new forms of witnessing that grapple with Cesnik's murder. It is centered on three relics designed for **forensic and religious witnessing.**

The relics reorganize the church around the forensic evidence discovered on Cesnik's body which links her murder case with the sexual abuse cases in the school where Cesnik taught. Her embalmed trachea, mouth, and the maggots found within the organs are distributed along the axis of the church and **preserved** according to the catholic tradition and autopsy protocols. The three relics are integrated within the catholic rituals of blessing by the holy water and communion at the altar. They provide observation points for the ceremony as well as the preservation process.

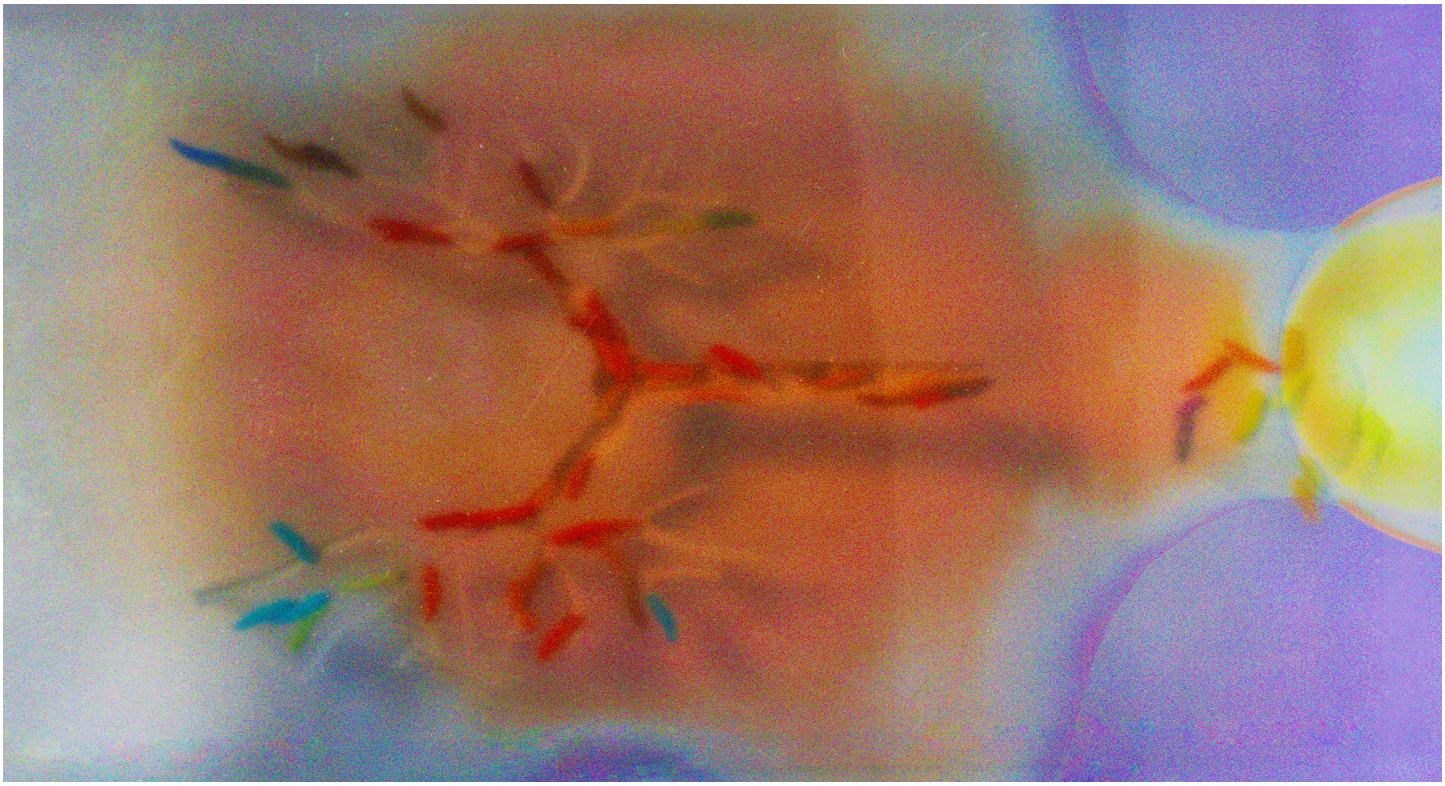
National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik



15 QUESTIONS

Damage Control

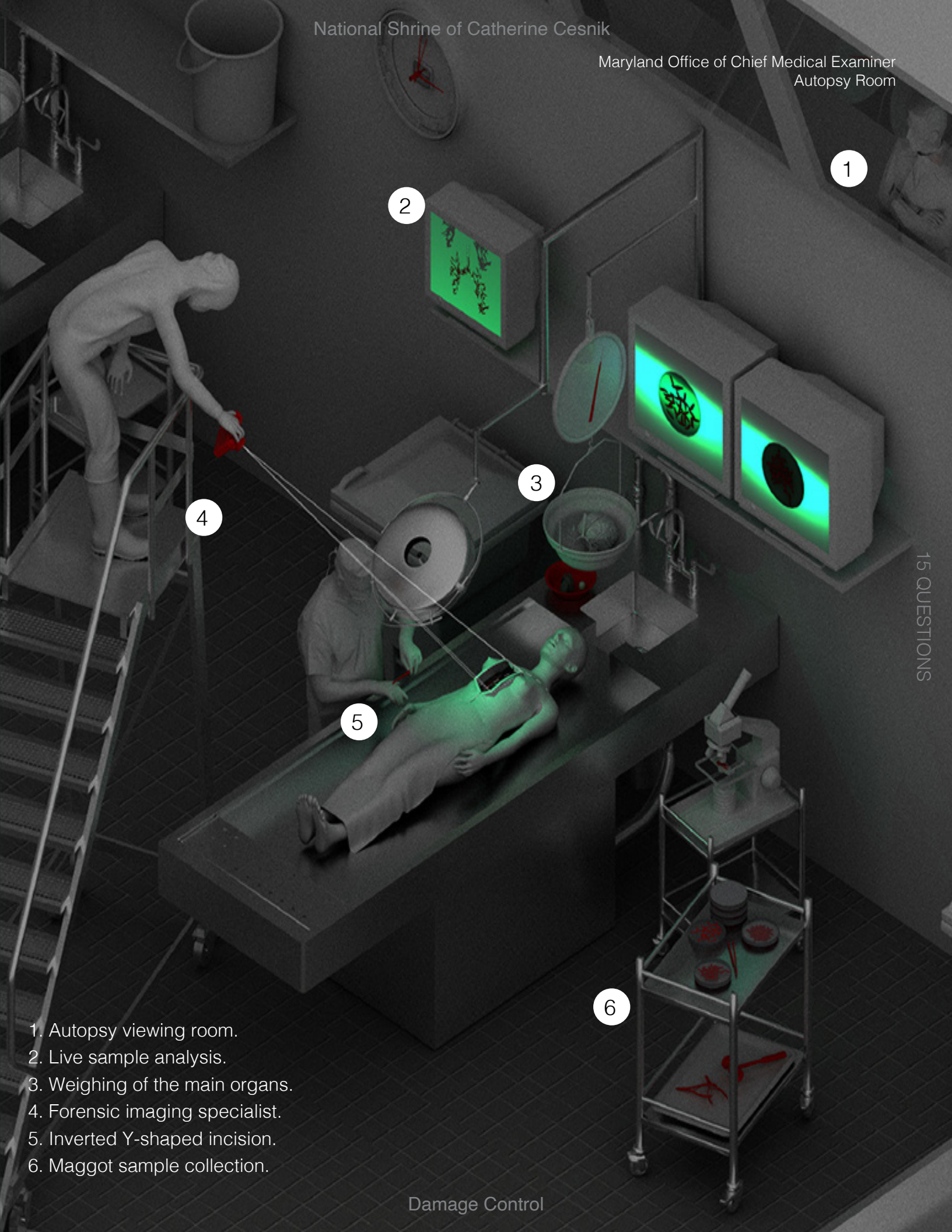




This duration model reconstructs a **forensic evidence**: had the thermal image been taken on site at the moment of the testimony it would have captured the m**aggots' passage** from Cesnik's mouth to her trachea. The two moments are superimposed, with the soil's temperature also rendered.
18.5"x12"x12"

National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik

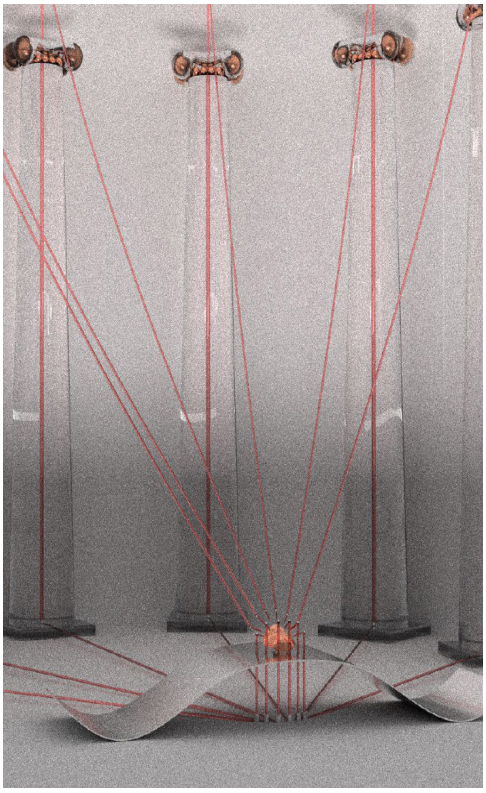
Maryland Office of Chief Medical Examiner
Autopsy Room

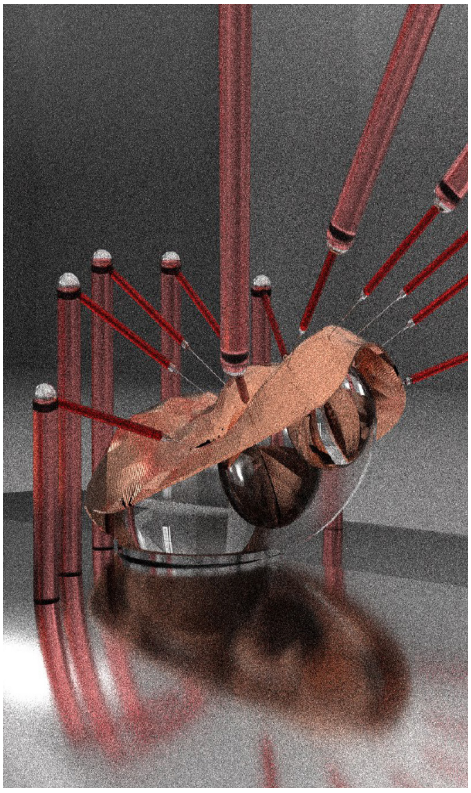


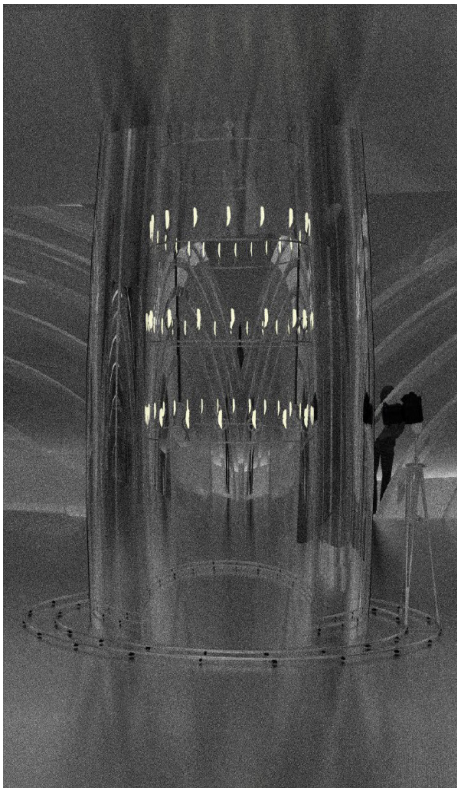
15 QUESTIONS

1. Autopsy viewing room.
2. Live sample analysis.
3. Weighing of the main organs.
4. Forensic imaging specialist.
5. Inverted Y-shaped incision.
6. Maggot sample collection.

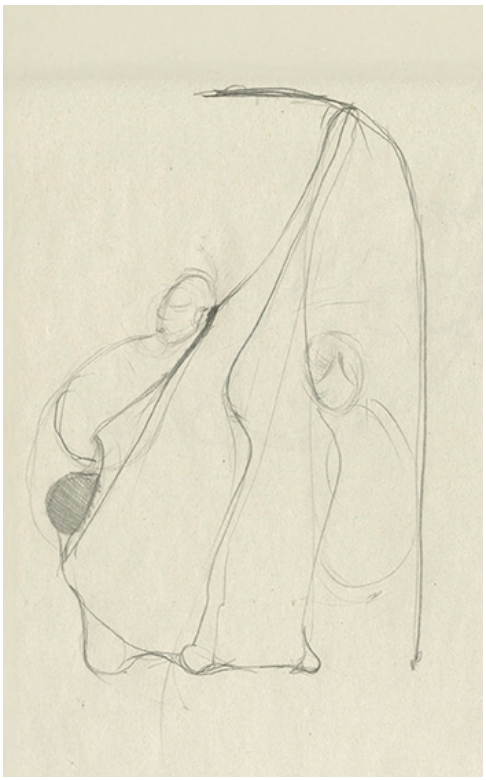
Damage Control

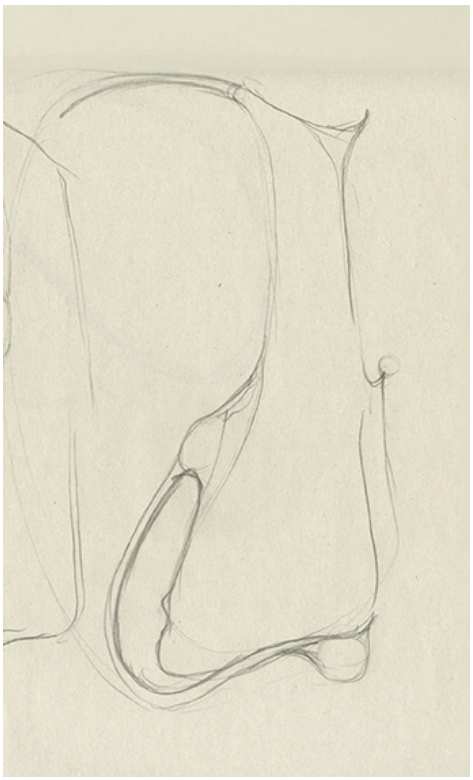


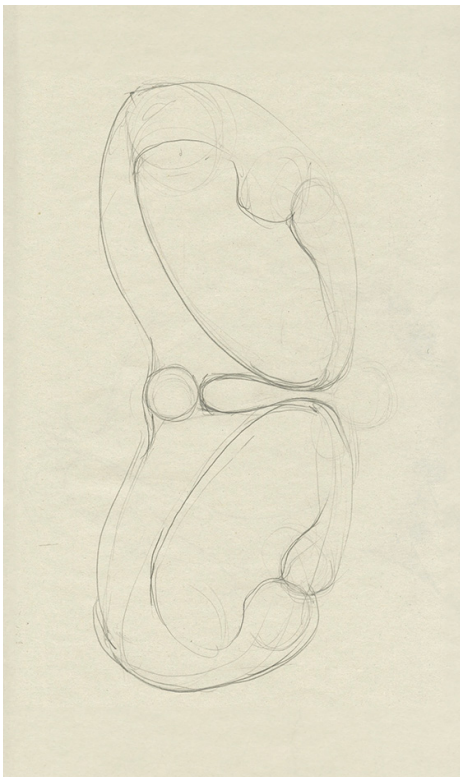




LEVAN KILADZE







Authenticated relics of a martyr placed within the altar's stone or tomb (sepulchrum) is replaced by a forensic evidence.

Altar's existing columns are redesigned to host a **synthronon**, the tiered semicircular bench set into the apse, historically reserved only for the bishop and clergy

The intervention builds upon an idea of a relic bank, usually **maintained by churches** and diocesan repositories.

National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik



15 QUESTIONS

Damage Control



1. The first ritual is of **blessing by the holy water**. The visitors witness the annual chemical process of preservation of Cesnik's trachea.

2. A series of **sacrarium** sinks are connected to the first relic channeling the holy water through the relic.

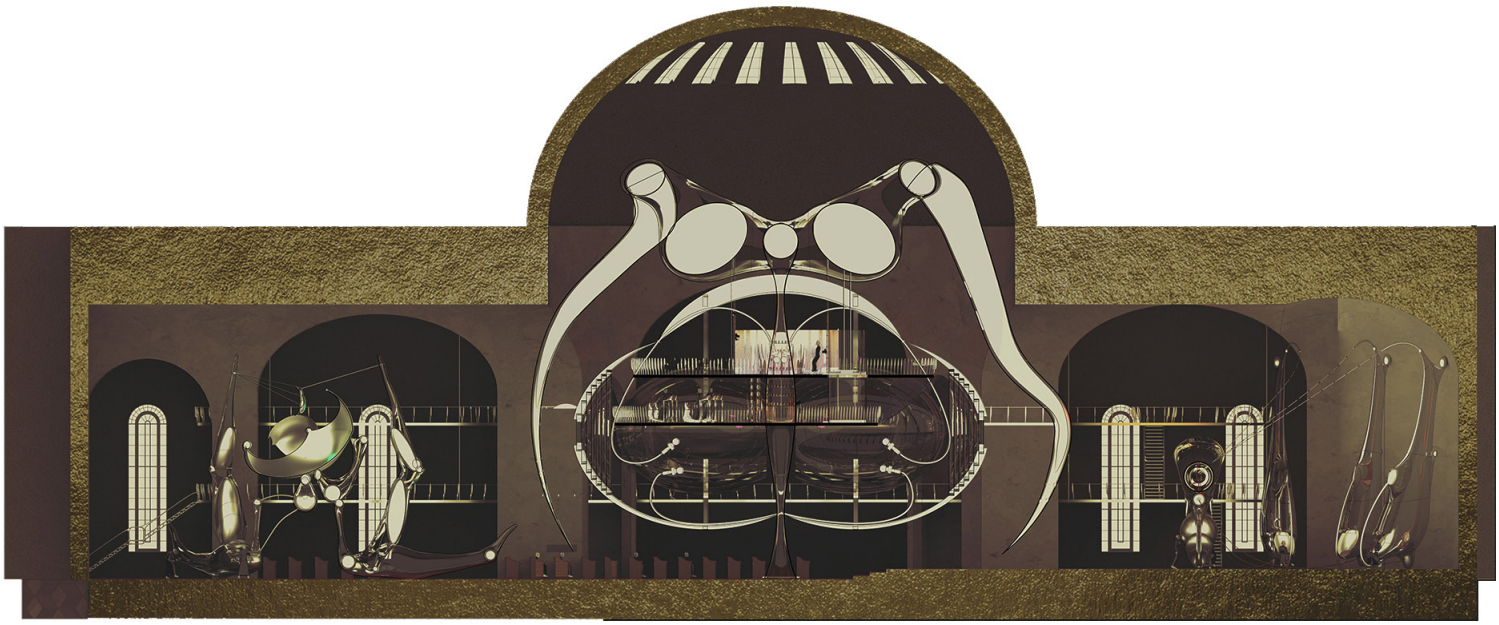
3. The second ritual is a prayer. The visitors witness the maggots preserved at the exact **temperature** they were found on Cesnik's body.

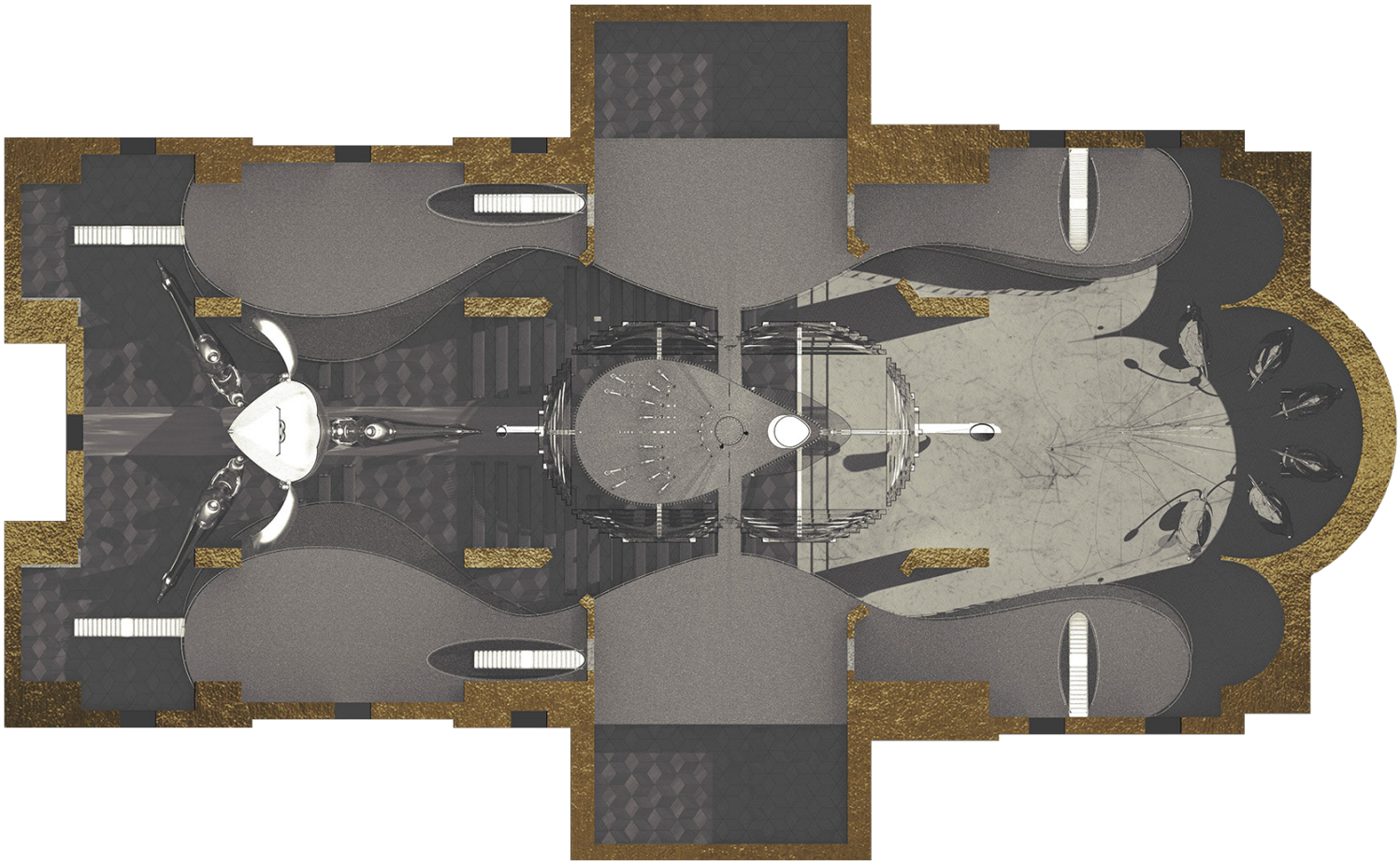


4. **Fresnel prisms** project lights from cameras and sensors from the second relic where maggots are preserved.

5. The third ritual is **communion**. The visitors witness Catherine Cesnik's blood mixed with the communion wine.

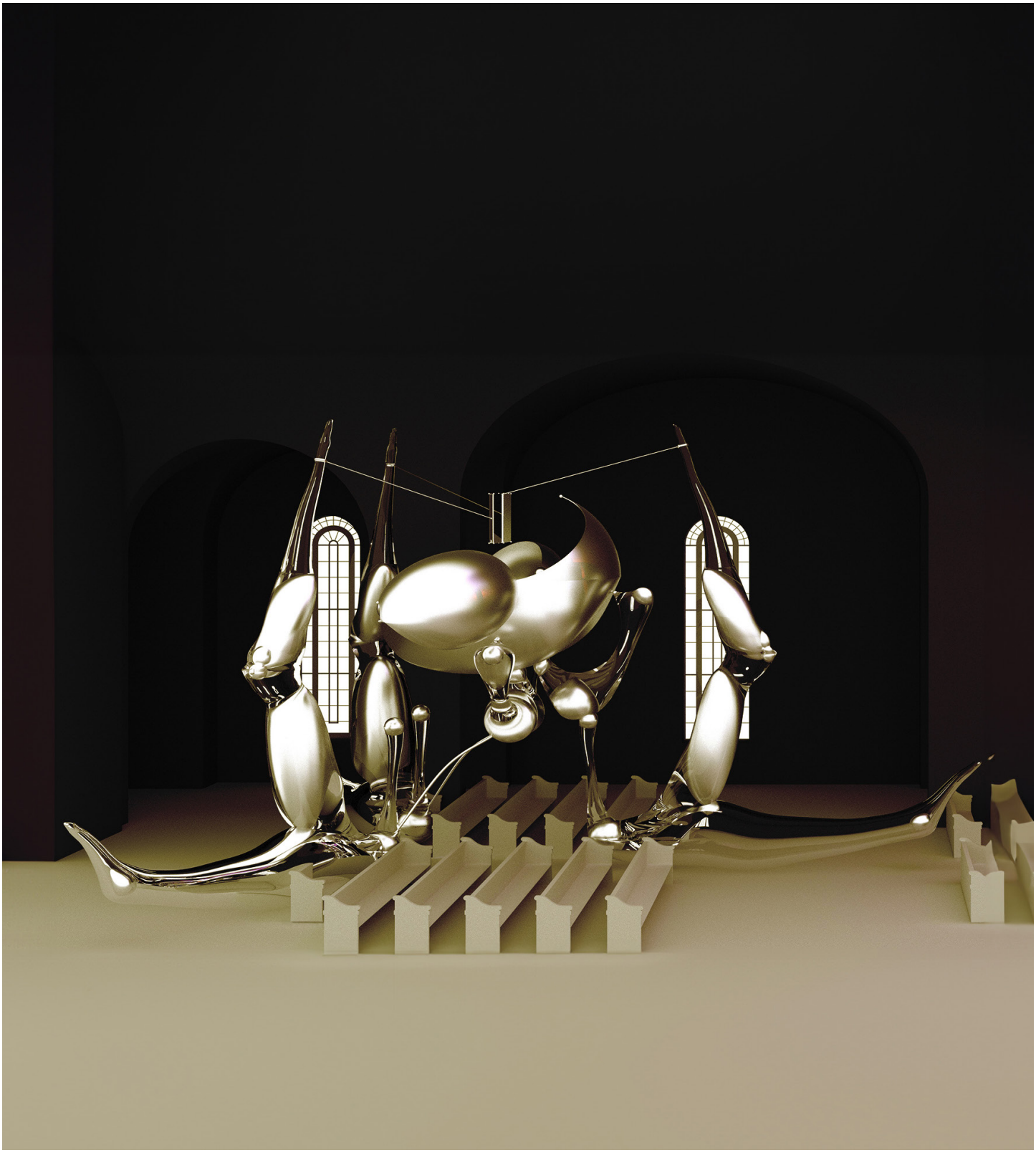
6. The three relics articulated through forensic and liturgical forms of witnessing are framed as a triptych.





LEVAN KILADZE

The relics reorganize the church around Catherine Cesnik's embalmed trachea, mouth, and maggots found in her body, which are distributed along the axis of the church. They are integrated within the **catholic rituals** of blessing by the holy water and communion at the altar.



Cesnik's trachea is **preserved** at the basilica entrance, annually soaked in a chemical solution. The chemical process links the catholic treatment of relics through **plastination** with the **autopsy protocols** of treating body organs of the deceased.



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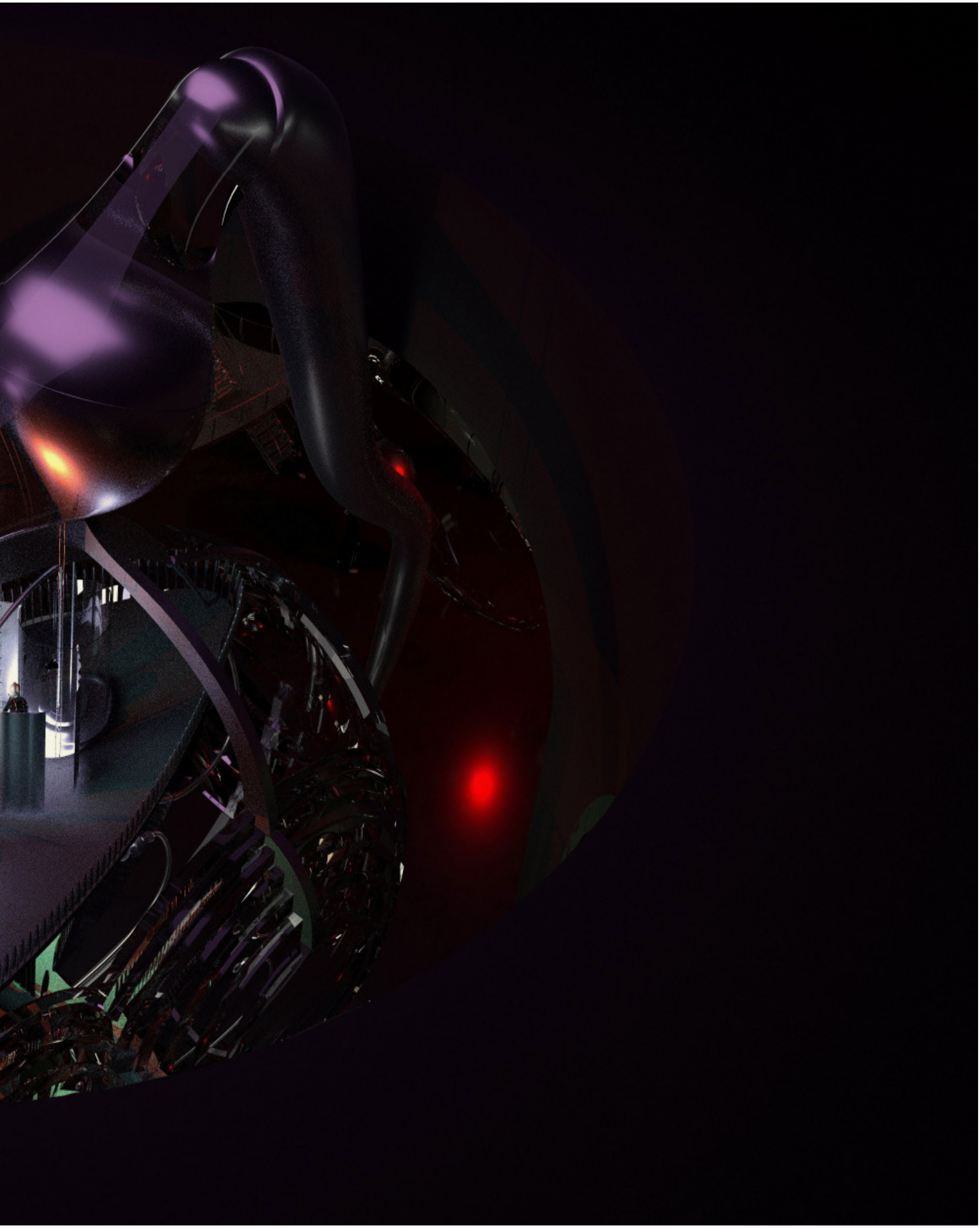
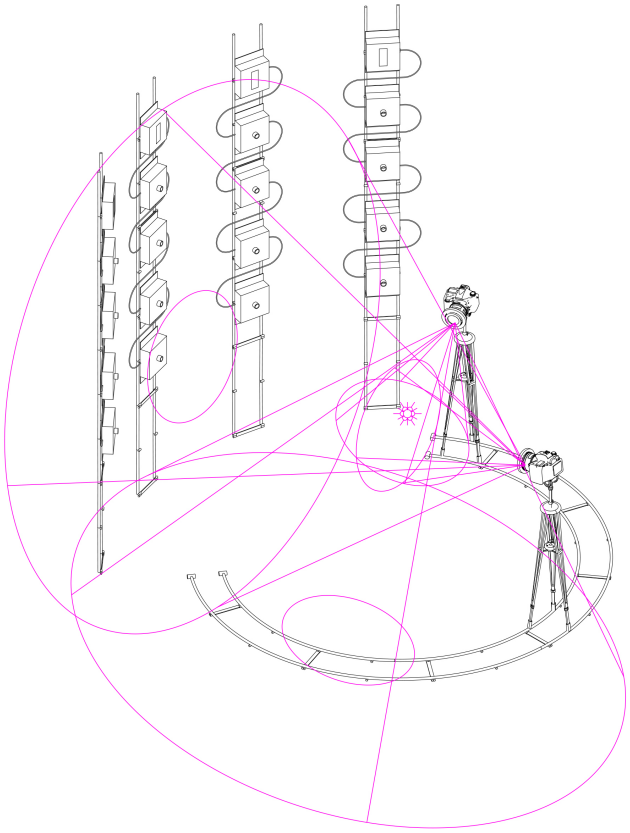
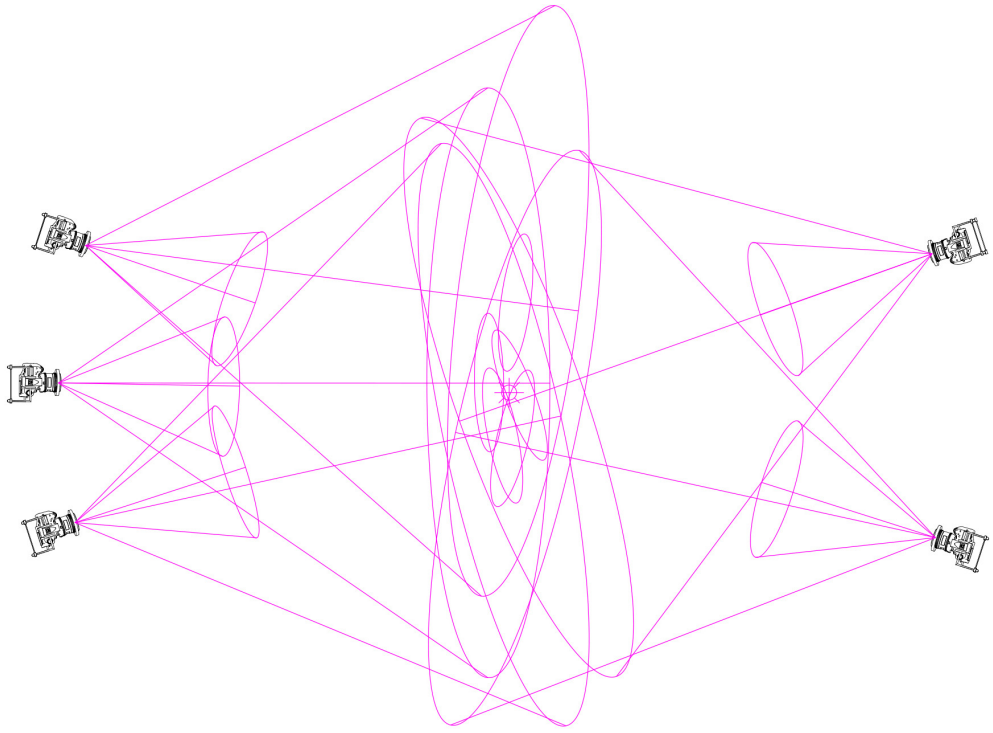
CORE II







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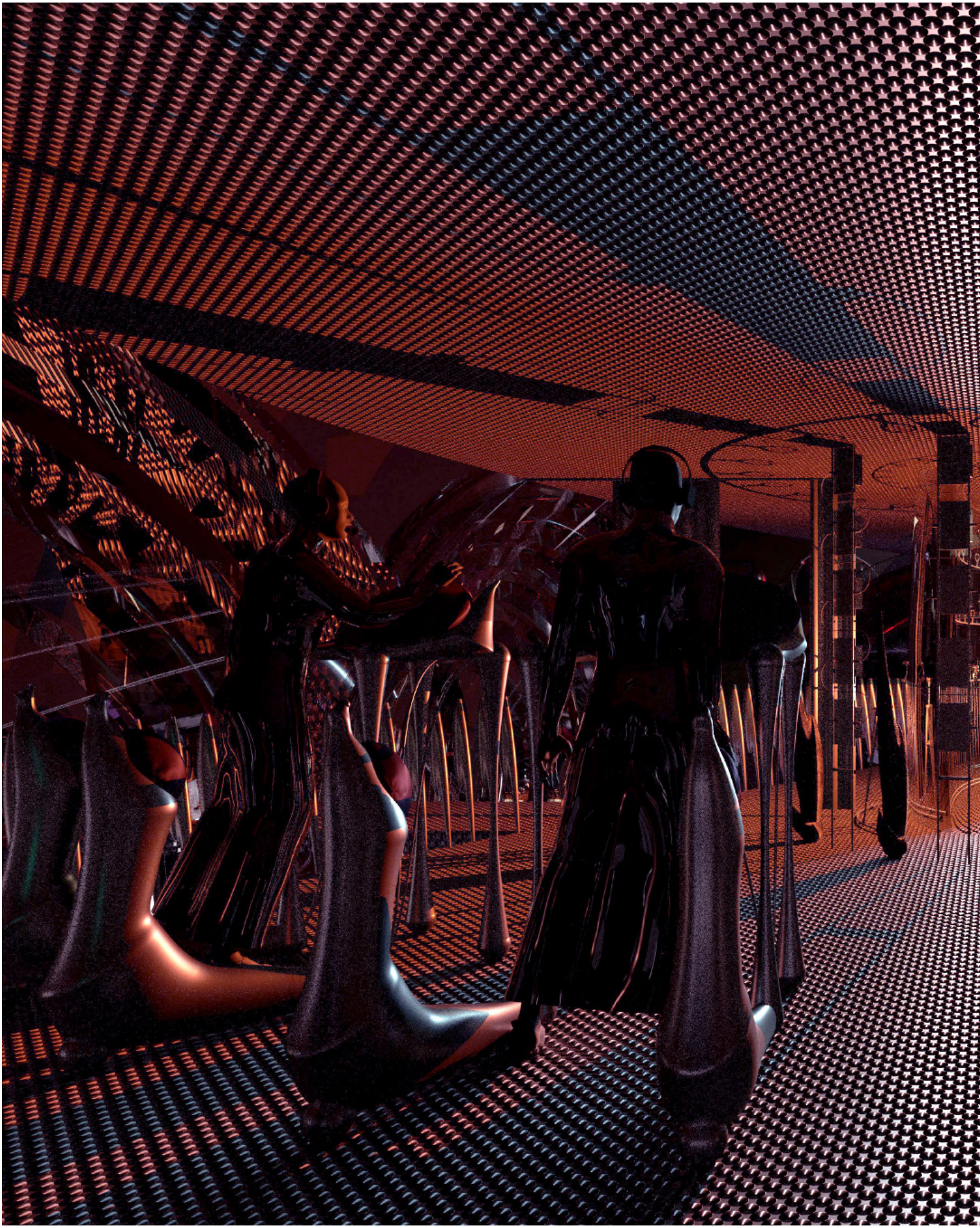
Forensic tools, such as cameras and **infrared sensors** constantly monitor the preservation process of the maggots both as a piece of **evidence** and an object of religious value. These moving tools embedded within the space reenact stages of forensic inspection and observation.

National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik

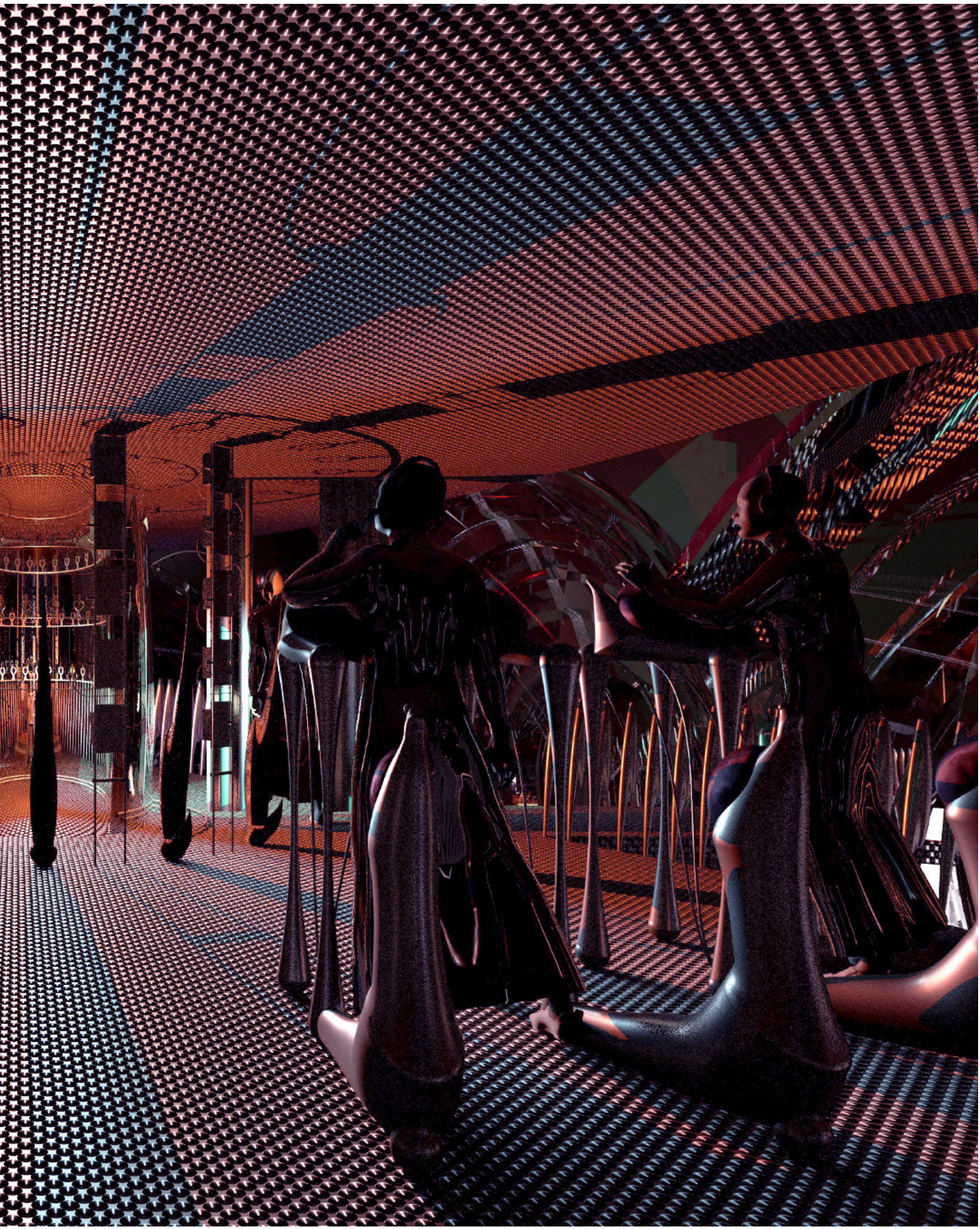


15 QUESTIONS

Damage Control



LEVAN KILADZE



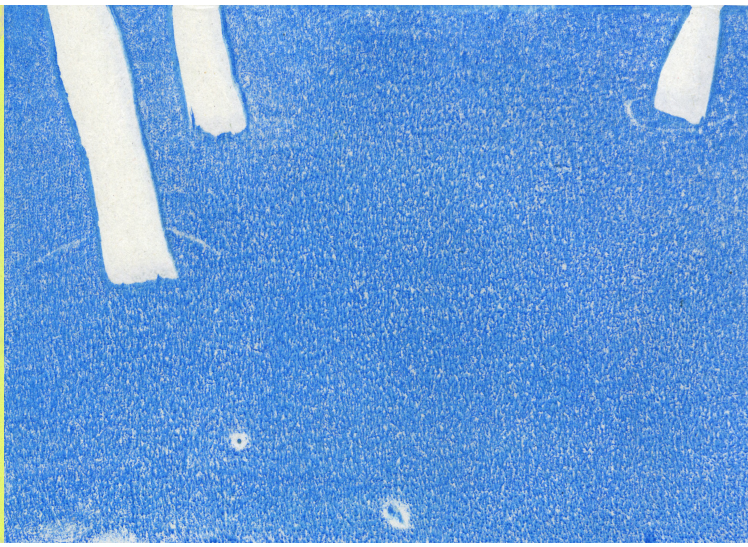
4

Can every home become a garden?

1



2



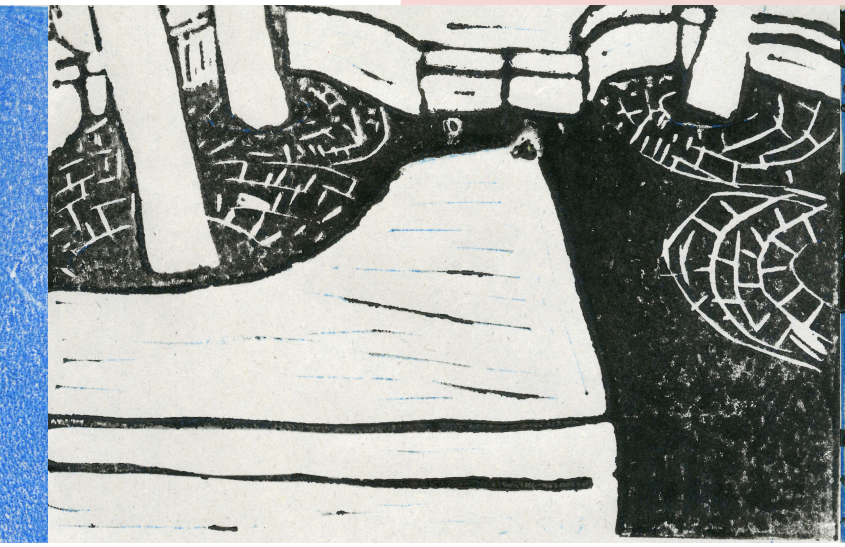


6

5



3



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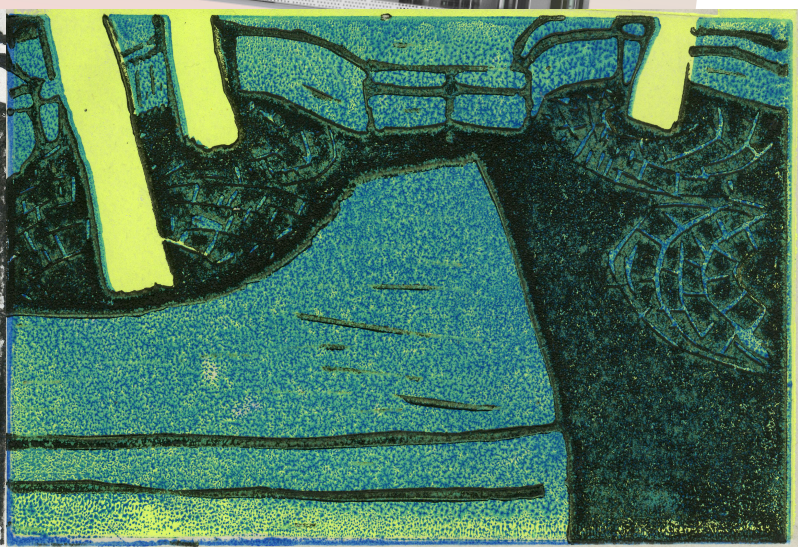


(and how to learn to work with a friend?)

CORE III
Affordable Housing,
Incomplete Block

Every Room is a Garden Room

Instructor:
Hilary Sample
Site: New York, NY

Project & Lunch Partner:
Maya Yildirim
Fall 2024



LEVAN KILADZE

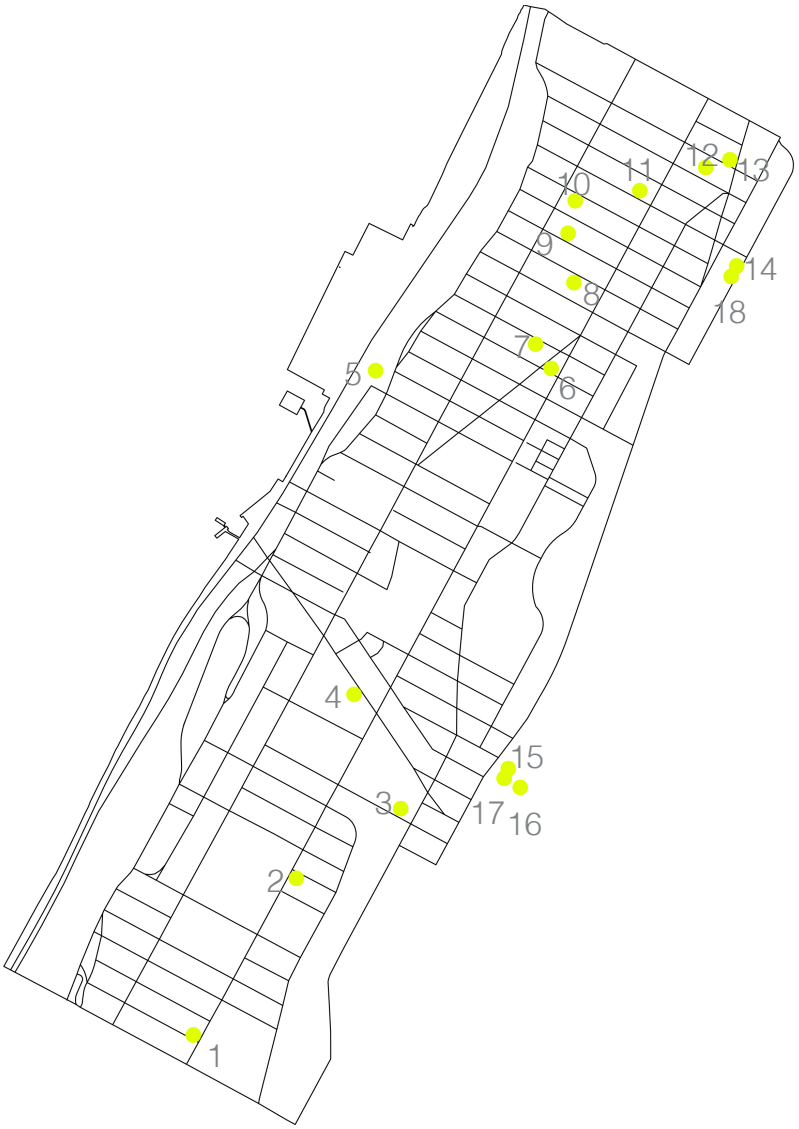
Our project begins with the Garden Room Book, a multi-media exploration of the site, 128th St. and Convent Ave. The Book searches for gardens in the dead-end street, an **overgrown hill**, two parking lots, and the surrounding block.

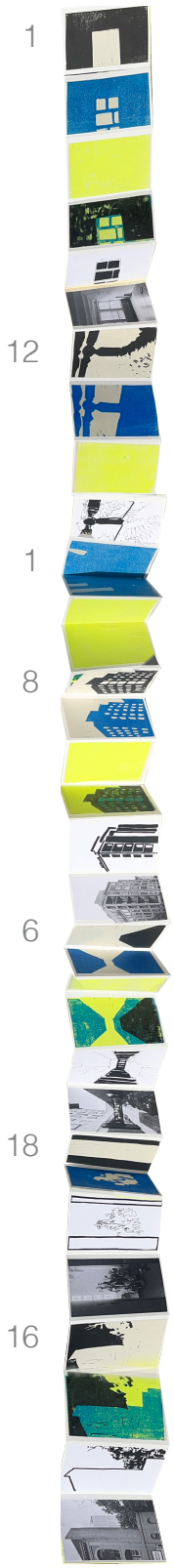
By understanding the living things that compose a garden and their relationships, we understand what makes it a space for **cultivation, growth, and nourishment.** To reimagine affordable housing as a garden, the environmental and social conditions of the site were examined.

The building **filters** the natural elements of the site, with water, light, and air influencing the form and infiltrating the private spaces. Varying scales of privacy are spread throughout the building, with a performance space on the ground floor projecting out to the slope of the site, artist residences and studio workspaces on the second floor, and residential floors that layer the most private core wall between communal outdoor circulation balconies. To create a shared intimate space with neighbors, each pair of units shares a **small porous courtyard in between** with rooms that could belong to either unit or serve as a communal space. Ultimately, every room is a garden room, and the building functions as a community garden.


Every Room is a Garden Room
15 QUESTIONS
Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block

Can every home become a garden?

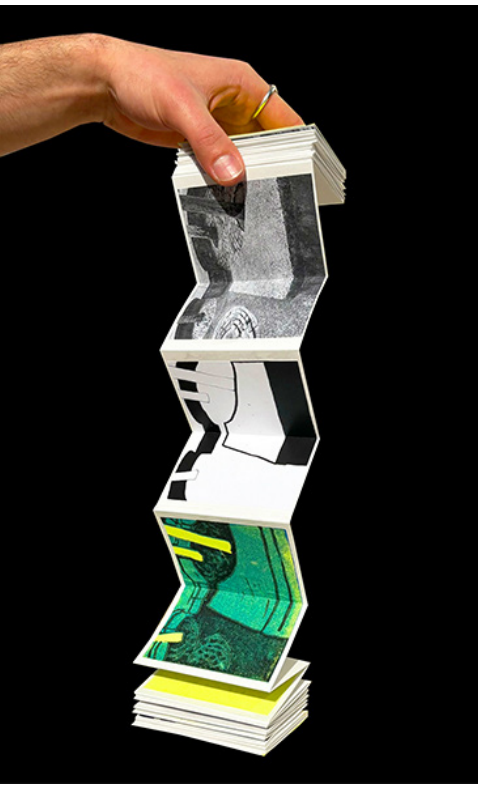


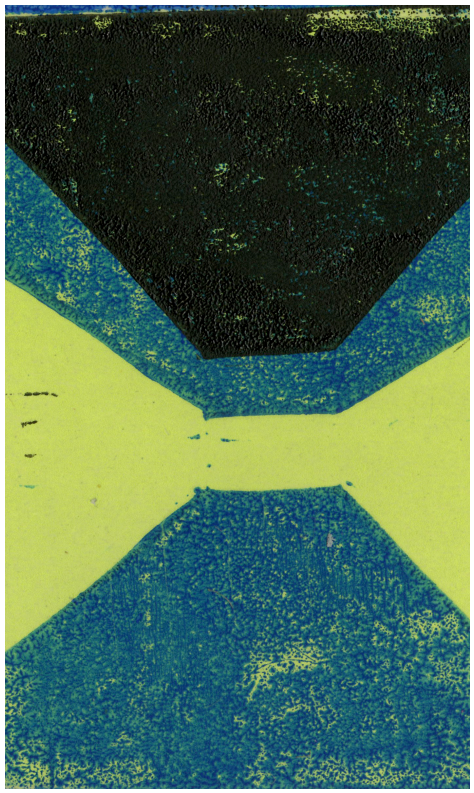


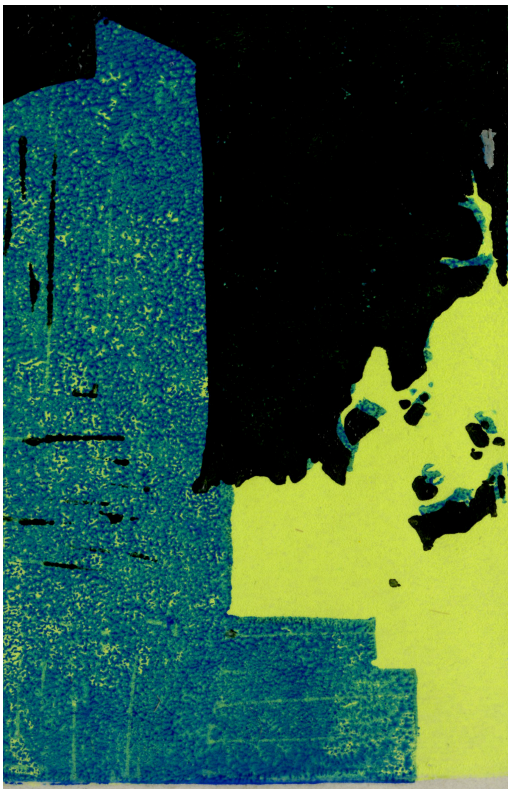
LEVAN KILADZE

COMMUNITY GARDEN	OWNER	AREA (sqft)
1. Sugar Hill	NYC Parks	2895
2. The Julia Gabriel People's	NYC Parks	4841
3. Gatehouse	NYC Parks	6350
4. Harlem Grown	Jointly Operated	3300
5. Grant Shade	New York City Housing	1296
6. Jenny's	NYC Parks	4800
7. Hope Steven	Manhattan Land Trust	3421
8. 7 Frank White Memorial	Department of Parks	5624
9. Serenity	Manhattan Land Trust	3766
10. Mo' Pals	Manhattan Land Trust	1944
11. Maggie's	NYC Restoration Project	3417
12. Lucille McClarey Wicked	NYC Restoration Project	1499
13. Sugar Hill Hope	Parks & Recreation	17831
14. William A. Harris	NYC Parks	4605
15. Edgecombe Avenue	NYC Parks	4874
16. St. Nicholas Miracle	NYC Parks	1595
17. Clayton Williams	Department of Parks	5587
18. William B. Washington	NYC Parks	3720

CORE III

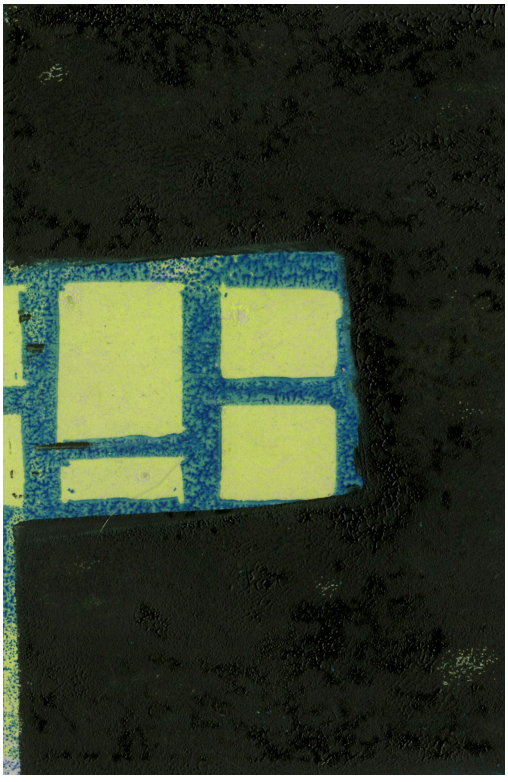










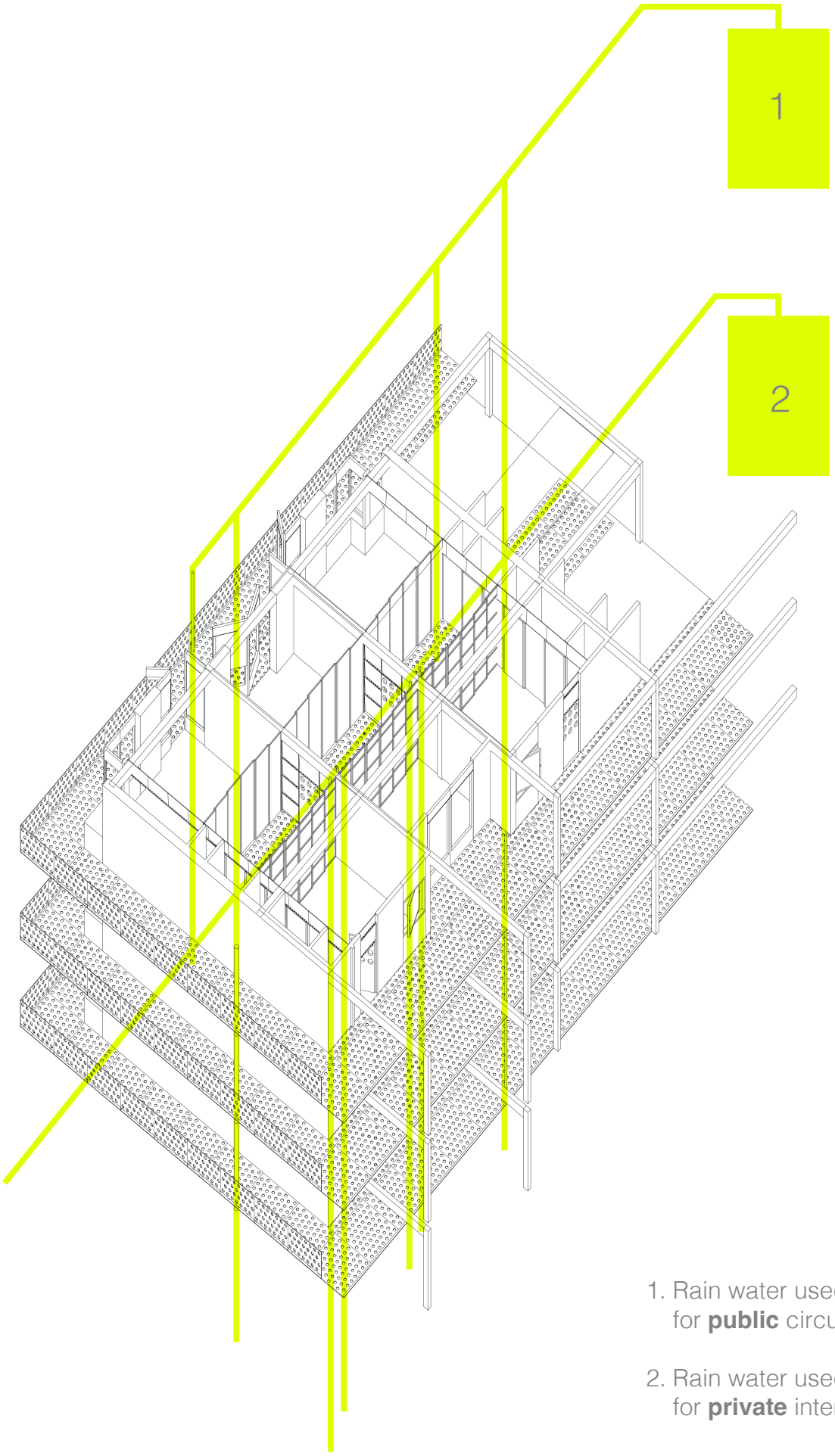


The book is a **collaborative** process of site photography, line tracing, and ink layering to construct spatial readings.

Layers of prints help us understand layers of gardens: life (yellow), **infrastructure** (blue), and architecture (black).

Layers of gardens respond to **layers of living** of openness and privacy. Different **surfaces** and openings coming together.

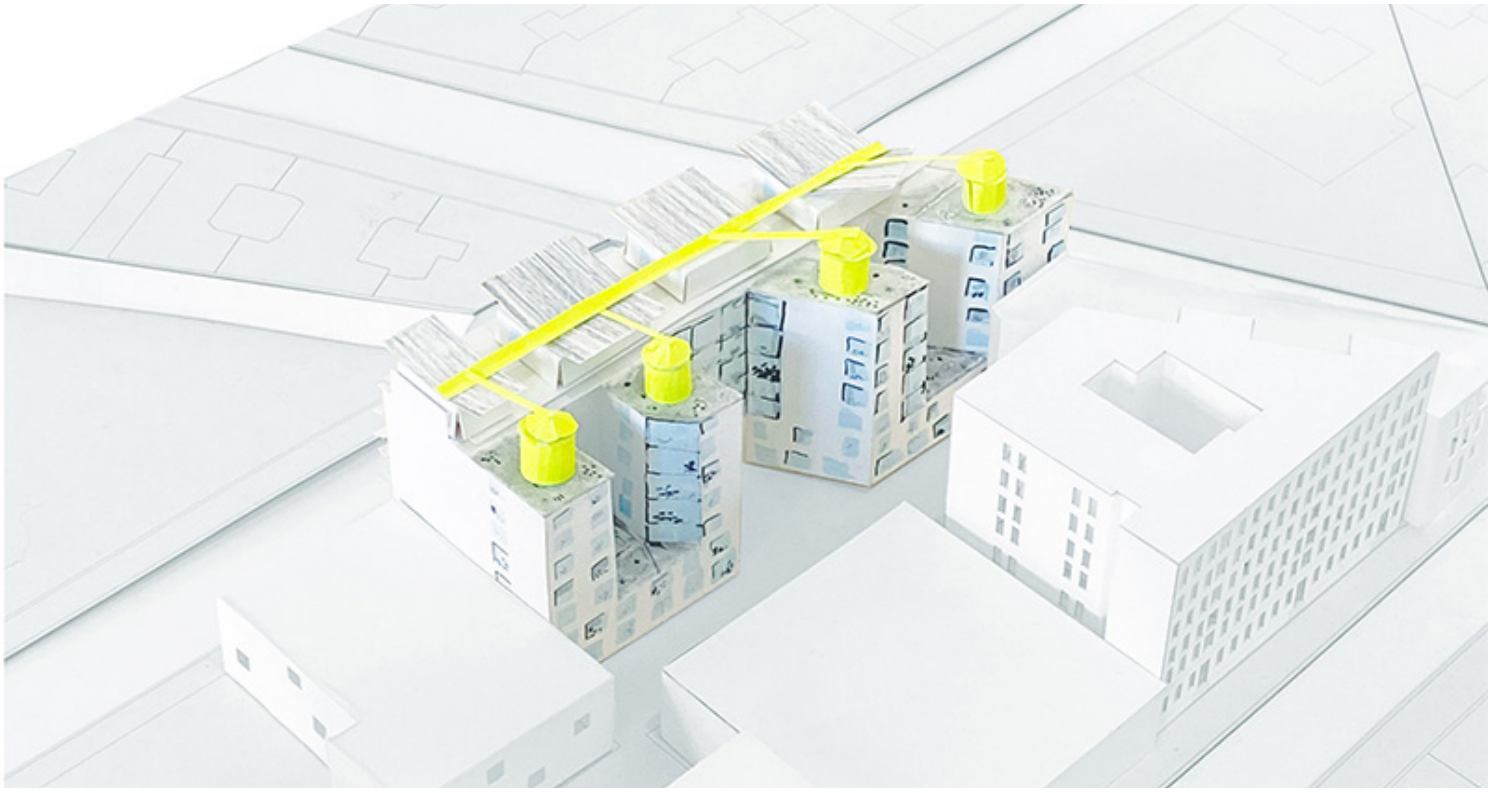
LEVAN KILADZE

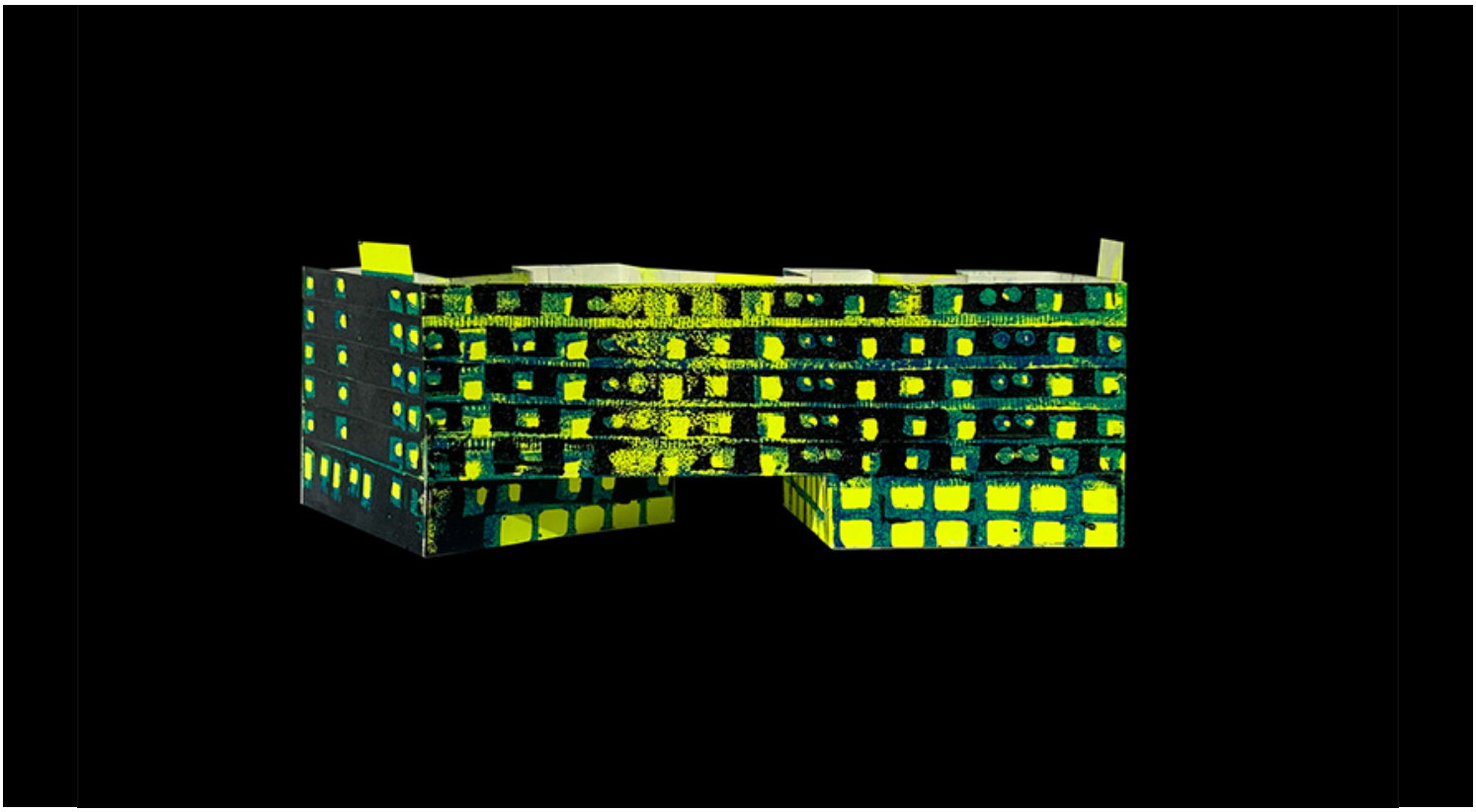


1. Rain water used as **graywater** for **public** circulation gardens.

2. Rain water used as graywater for **private** interior gardens.

Every Room is a Garden Room

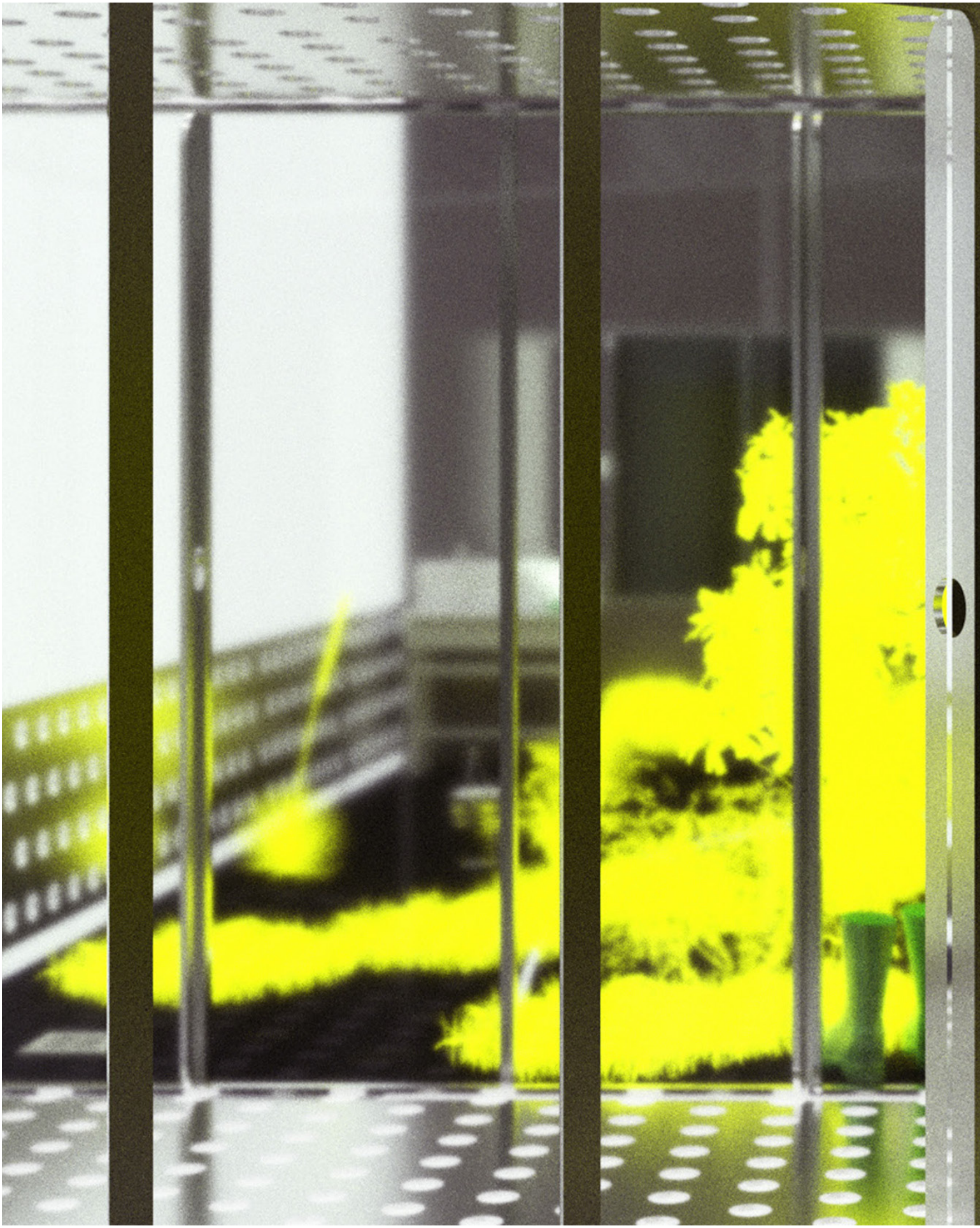




To think through the garden is to think through water: its circulation, its **storage**. Reservoirs sit on the roof. Plants are **tended** by day and by night.

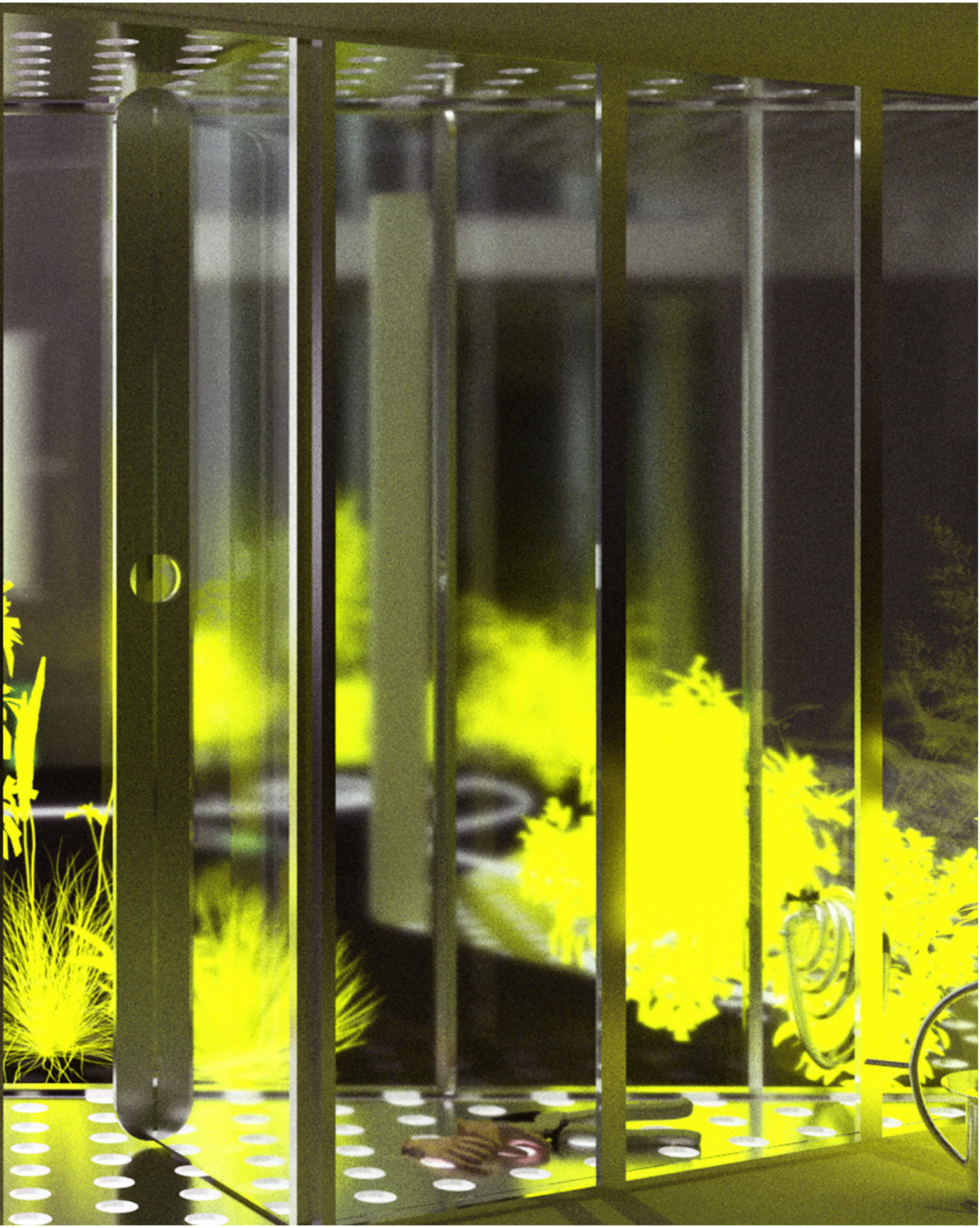
Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block

Can every home become a garden?

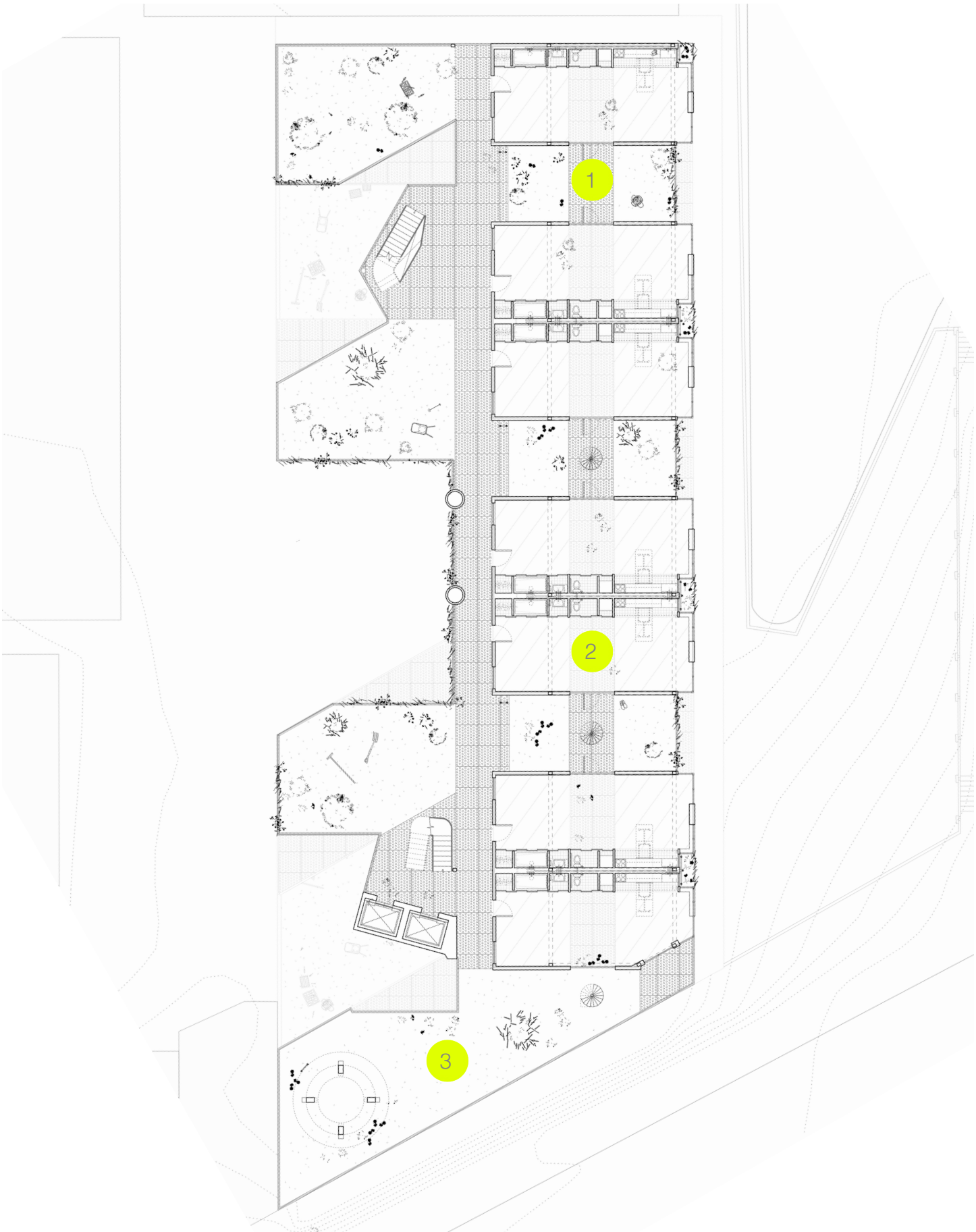


LEVAN KILADZE

CORE III



Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block



LEVAN KILADZE

1. Yellow room: **open to the elements**, can be **shared**, between a room, two rooms, floor, or multiple floors.
2. Gray room: **insulated**, belongs to one room.
3. Private balconies, public circulation, and gardens are a continuous space.



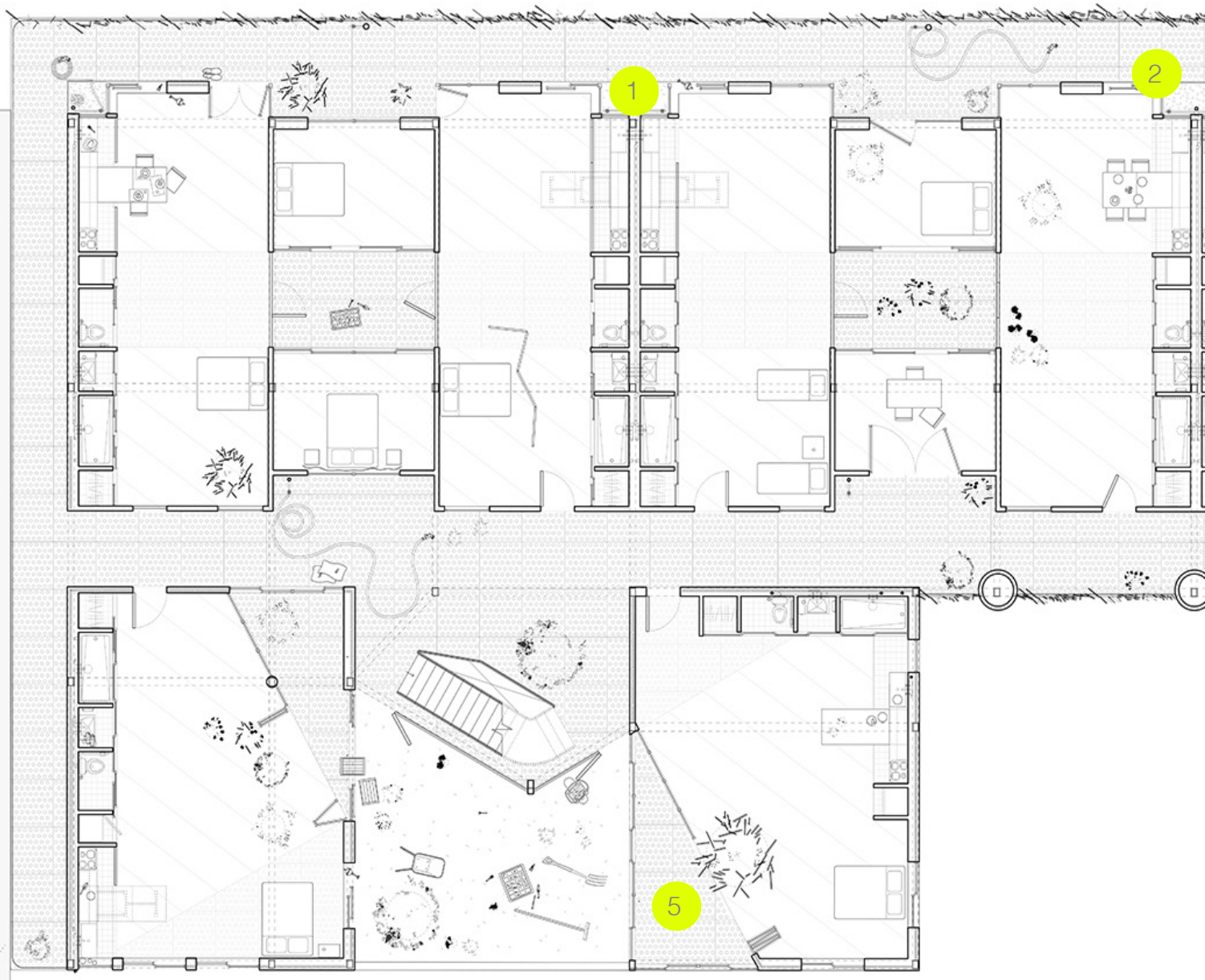
Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block



The ground floor plan has space for a courtyard garden between the **community use** performance space and the **long gallery** facing 128th st.



Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block



LEVAN KILADZE

1. Raised edible gardens.
2. Linked balconies become a **public** circulation space.
3. **Semi-private** shared garden.
4. **Private** winter garden.
5. South facing greenhouses channeling the light through the corridor.
6. Roof garden.

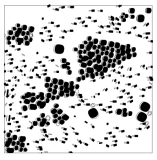


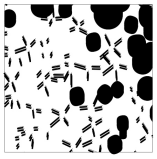
The seven residential floors have 80 kitchen and bathroom cores. These cores are laid out along one wall, continuing across the room. The north-facing residences have a door to the balcony and to the hall, which together create a continuous circulation path and area for **communal gathering.**











LEVAN KILADZE

1. Green & Gold
2. Wild Pink
3. Creeping Phlox
4. Heath Aster
5. Woodland Stonecrop

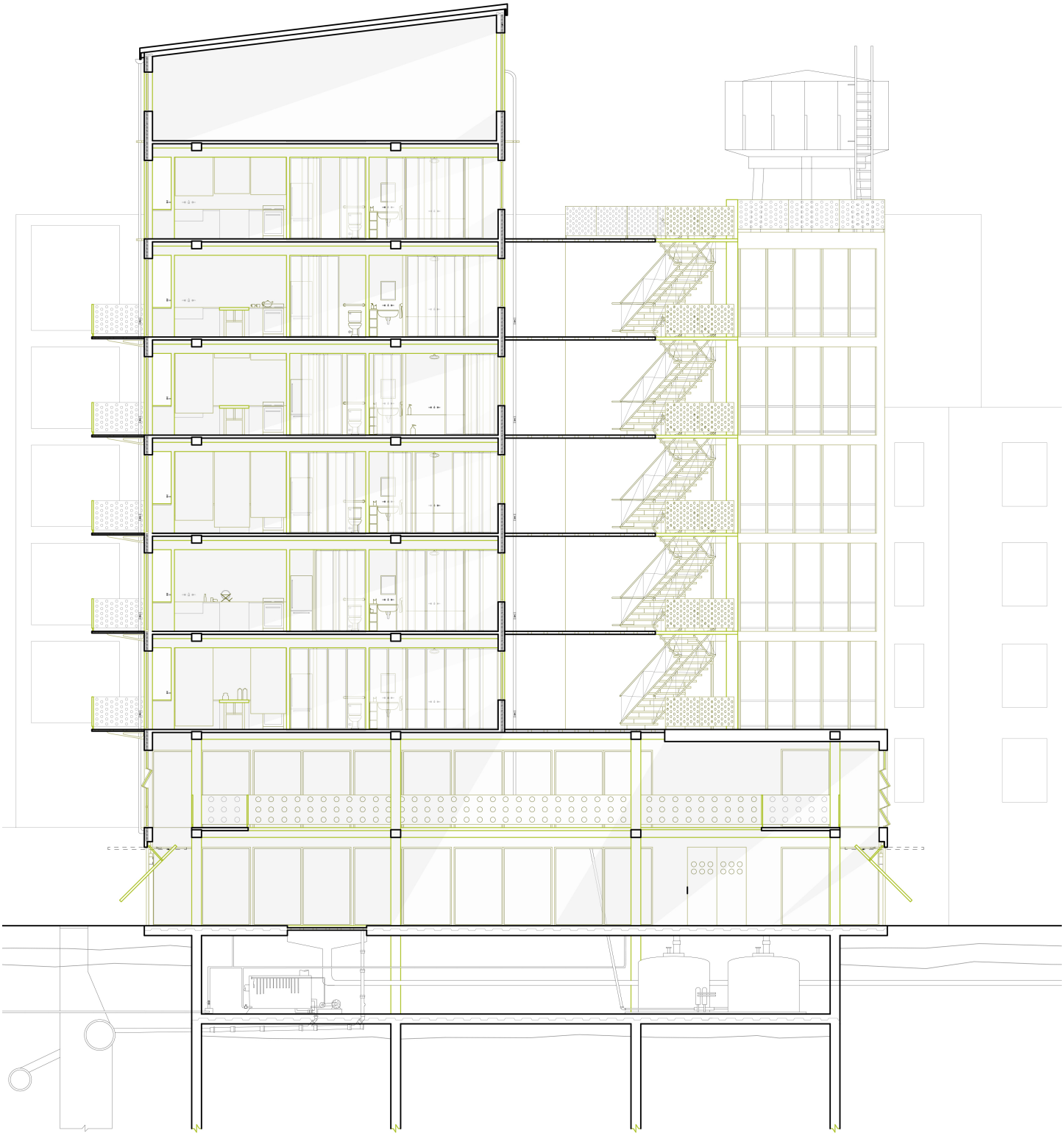


A raised edible garden shared between neighbours.





Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block



The roof has a garden and a water tank for **municipal water**. Rainwater is directed by the roofs towards a longitudinal pipe that brings the water down to the **irrigation system**. The water also filters through the public theater on the ground floor.



South elevation.



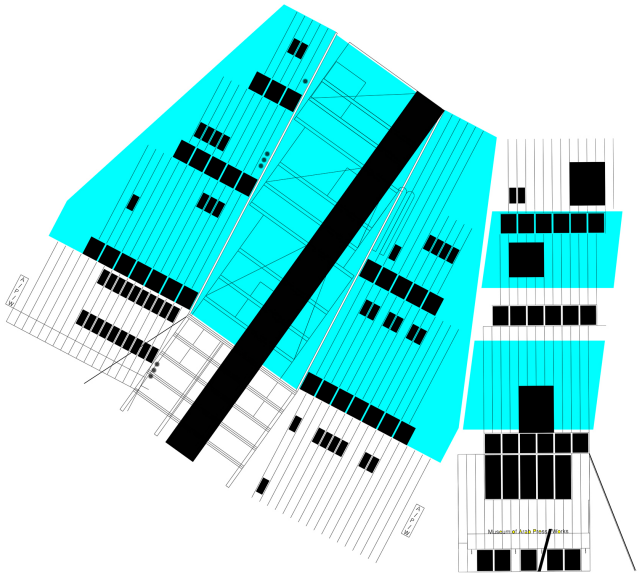
LEVAN KILADZE

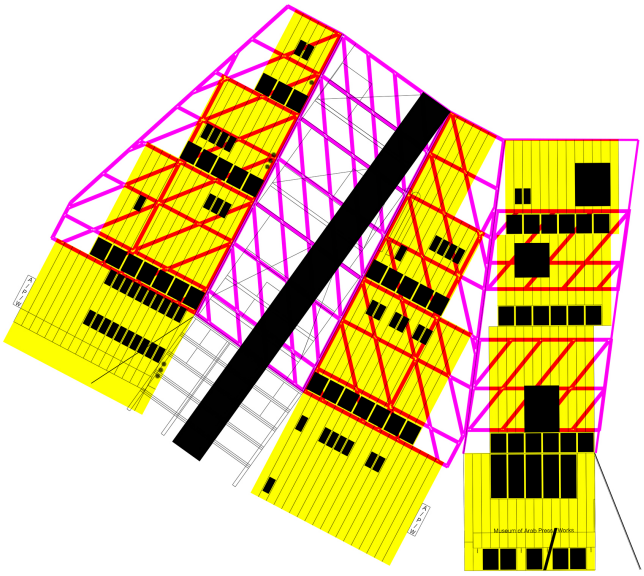


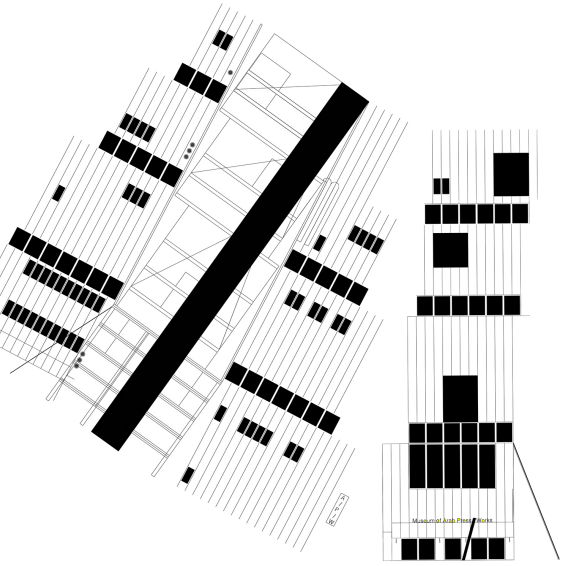
Affordable Housing, Incomplete Block

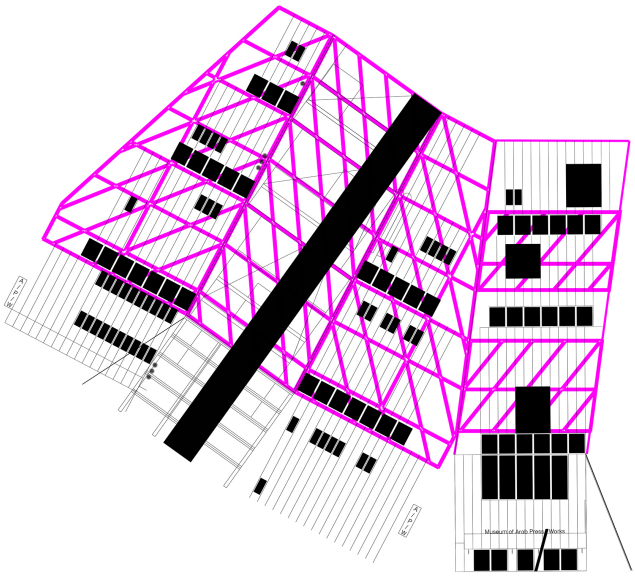
5

How can a future museum produce culture?






Museum of Arab Print Works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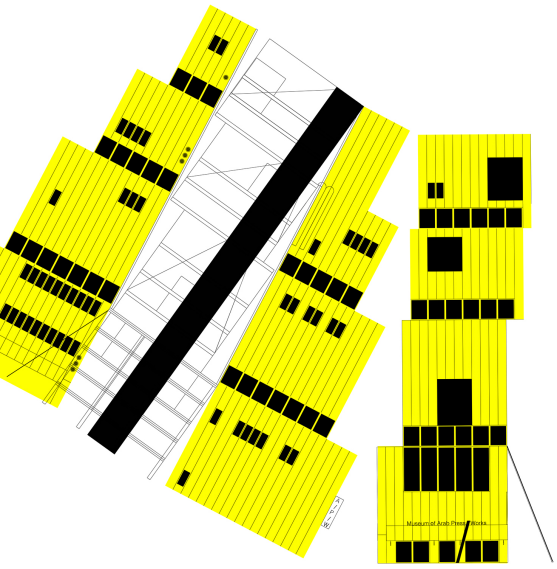
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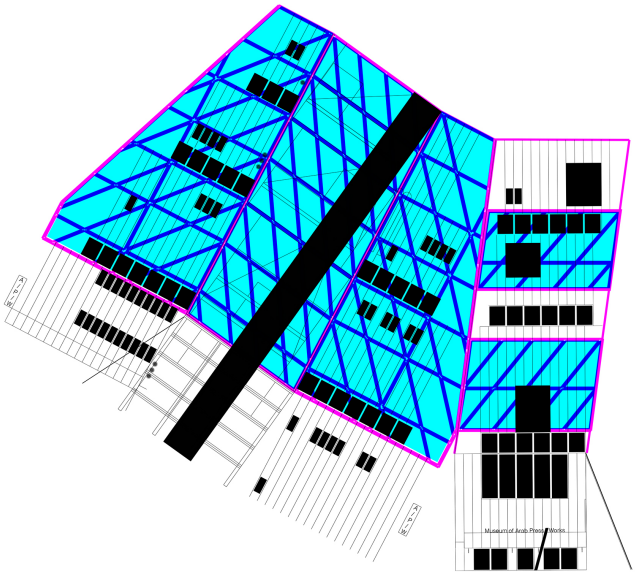
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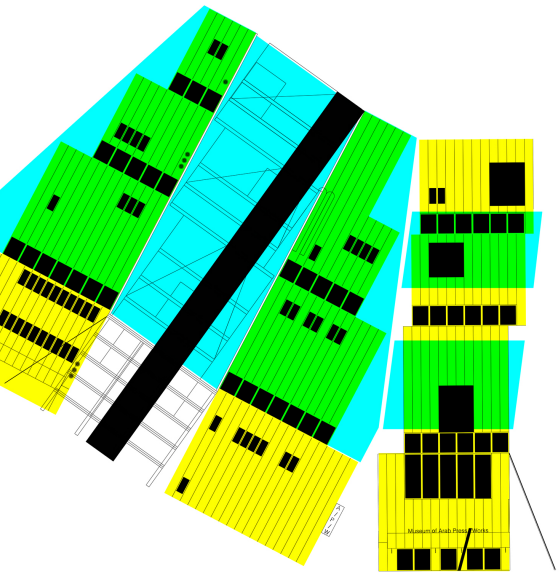
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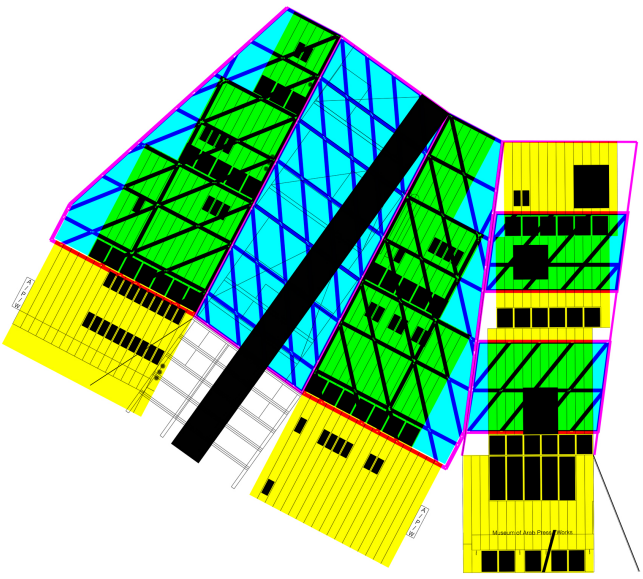

Museum of Arab Print Works

5

ADV V
Museum of the Future
in Little Syria

Museum of Arab Prints / Works

Instructor:
Amale Andraos
Site: New York, NY

Individual Work
Fall 2025

LEVAN KILADZE

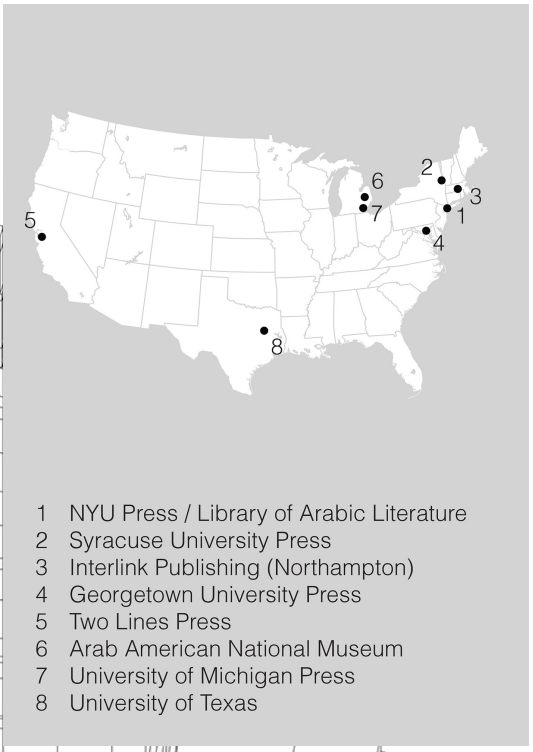
/////// Museum is a platform that situates printing as both an **architectural and political act**. The project takes as its entry point the history of Arabic press production in Little Syria, foregrounding print as a means of creating a **network** within the urban fabric. Language, translation, reading, and archiving become spatial drivers, organizing the building through a CMYK logic of overlay, or **bleed**.

Three primary programs, museum, library, and printing, intersect to generate hybrid spaces of archive, publishing, and workshop. These overlaps structure the building vertically, producing double-height sections that allow continuity between **reading, making, and exhibiting** while maintaining layers of public and private spaces.

The façade operates as a layered surface, translating interior programmatic overlaps into degrees of transparency and opacity. Conceived as a **slash**, the massing frames the historical context while projecting into the future. The building ultimately acts as a printer itself, imprinting the legacy of the Arabic press onto New York's contemporary cultural landscape.



Museum of the Future in Little Syria



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x 4

x 1

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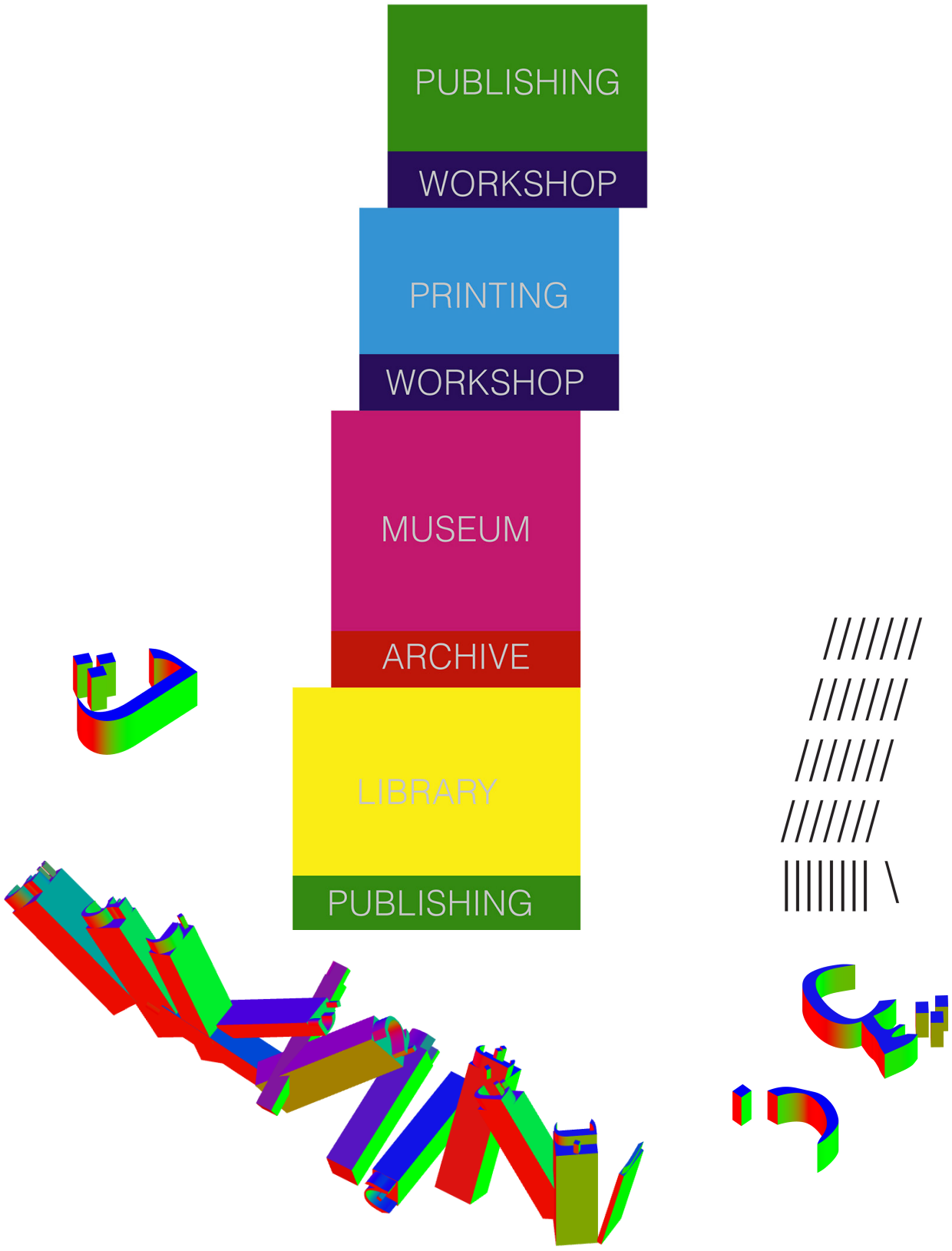
Museum of the Future in Little Syria



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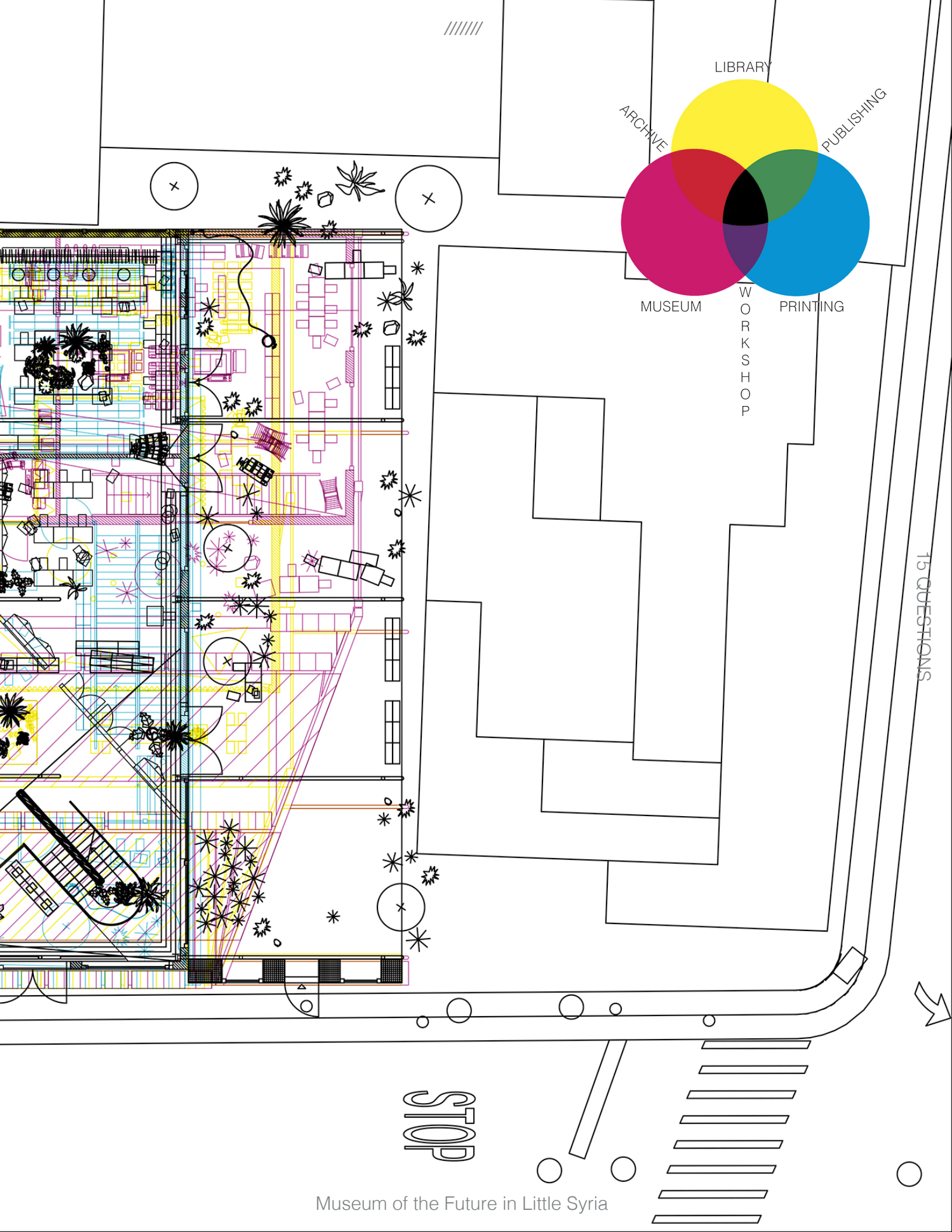
The project starts with an investigation of **kerning**, the typographic process of adjusting the space between two specific, individual characters, which helped develop typesetting for the **first Arabic Linotype** in Little Syria, 55 Washington Street, 1912.



The idea of *kerning*, conceived as an **overlapping void** between two type metals, is translated into **structural voids** within the massing. Interwoven throughout the building, particularly in moments where two main programs meet, the voids become a **public space:**
Library + Museum = Hybrid Archive.

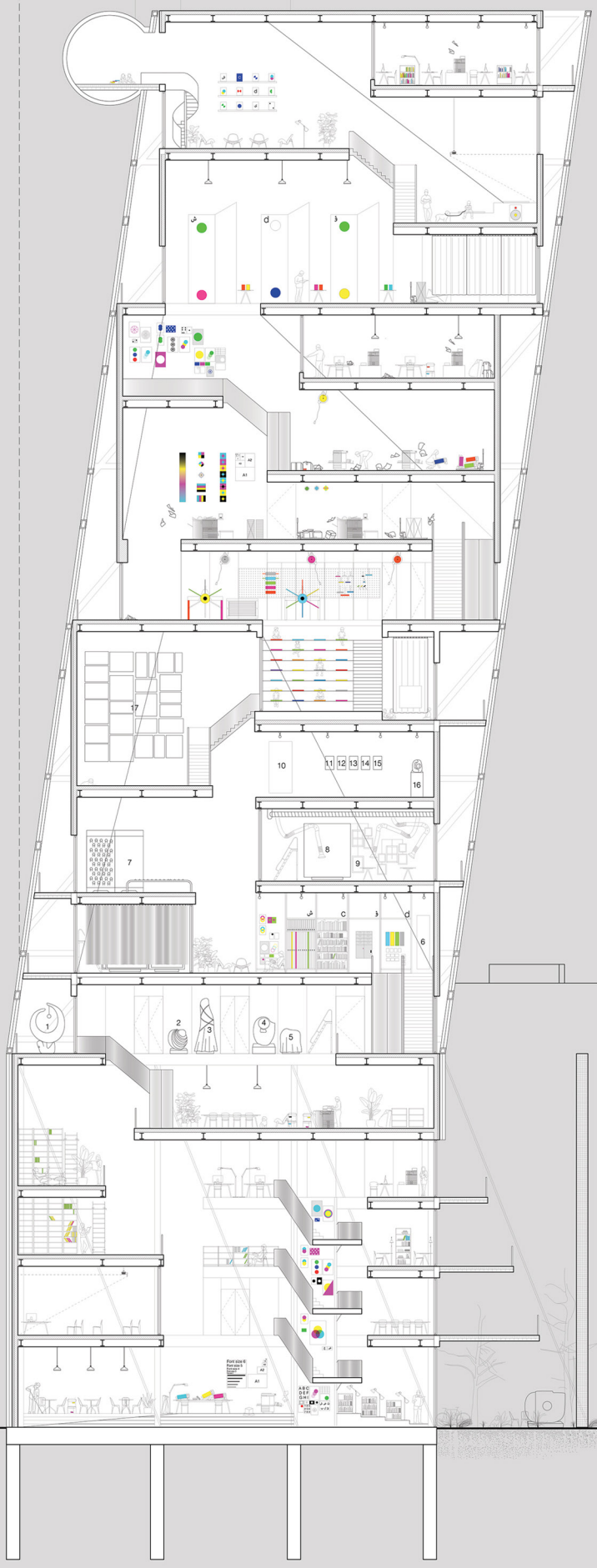
Museum of the Future in Little Syria





Museum of the Future in Little Syria

How can a future museum produce culture?



LEVAN KILADZE

ADV V

1/8”=1’-0”



Museum of the Future in Little Syria

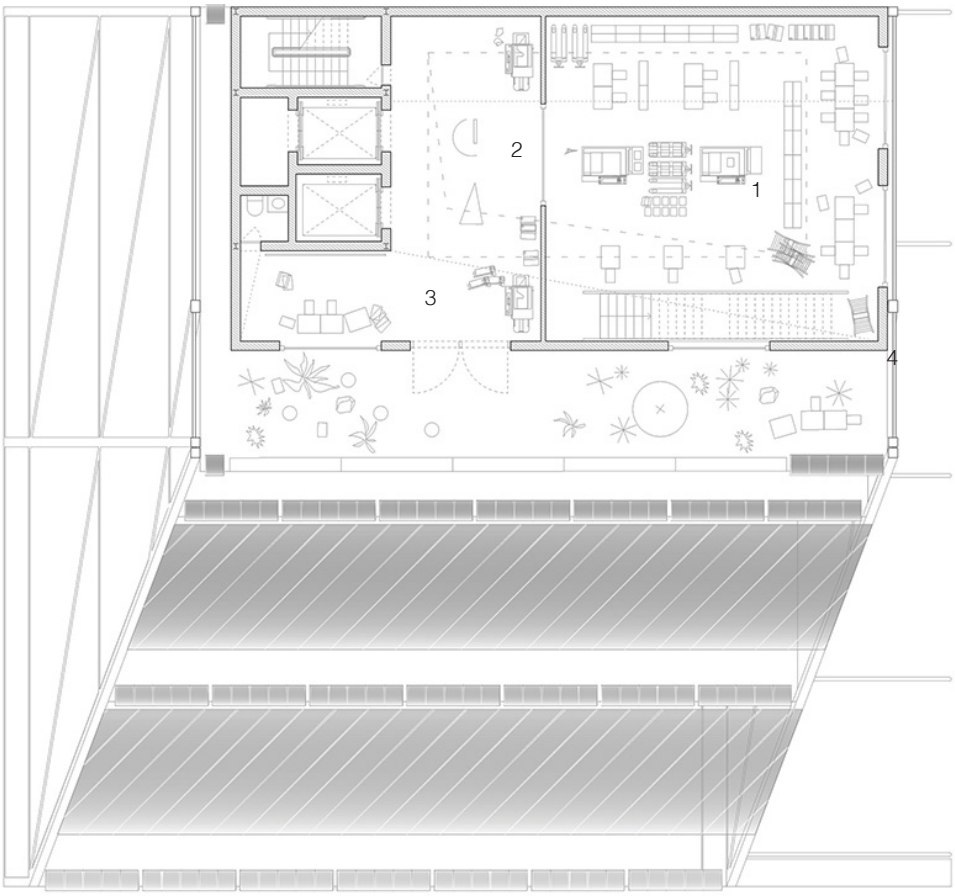
1/16”



LEVAN KILADZE

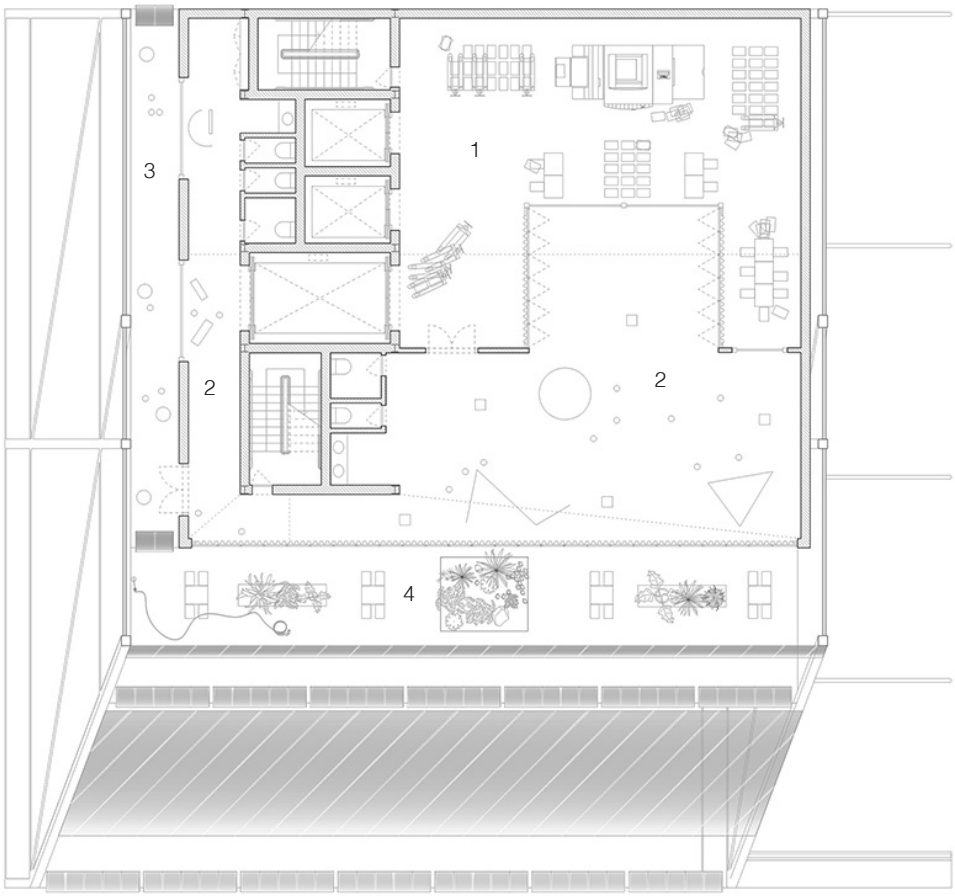


Museum of the Future in Little Syria



15th Floor,
Publishing / Community

1. Publishing Offices
2. Temporary Exhibition
3. Riso printing for Visitors
4. Garden for Reading



10th Floor,
Printing Workshop / Gallery

1. Print on Demand
2. Permanent Collection
3. Outdoor Sculptures
4. Gardens for Reading

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Museum of the Future in Little Syria



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Museum of the Future in Little Syria

6 How does architecture education begin?

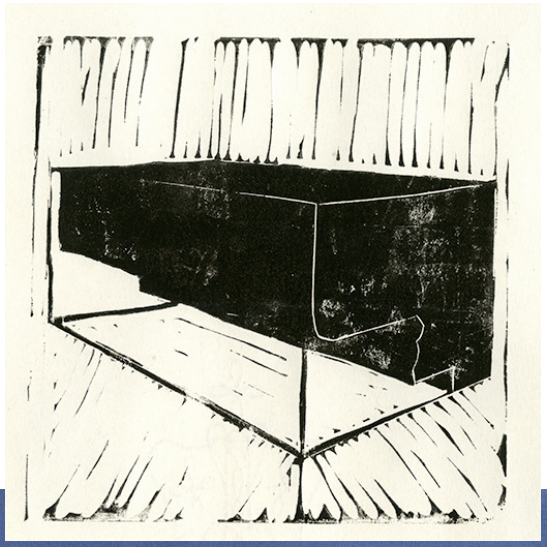
3



1



2



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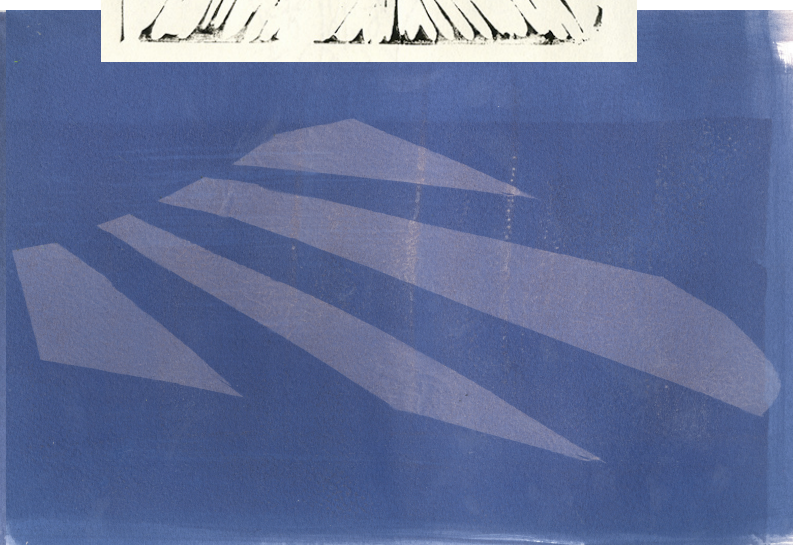


(or my first architecture project)

6

CORE I
Fugitive Mobilities

Leaning Wall, A Bench

Instructor:
Gregory Melitonov
Site: New York, NY

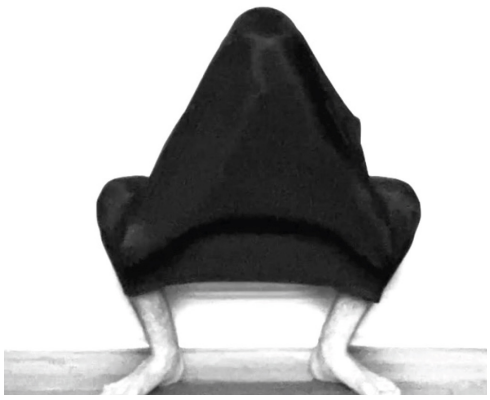
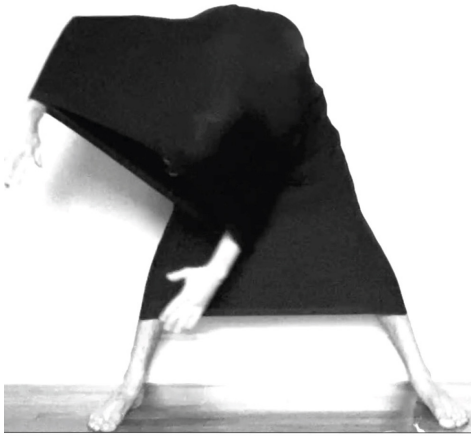
Individual Work
Fall 2023

LEVAN KILADZE

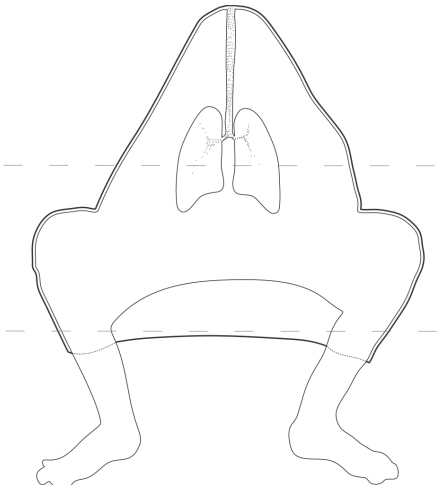
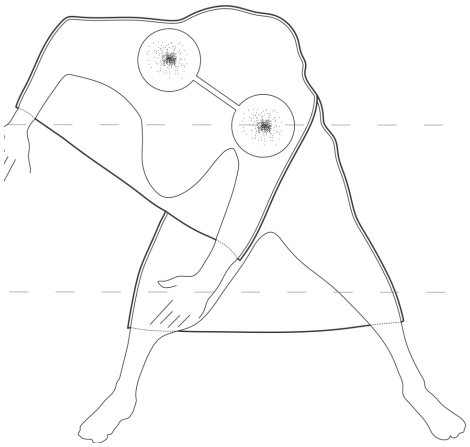
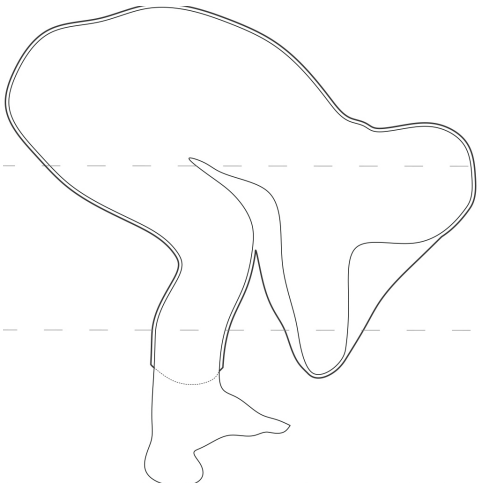
Manhattan Bridge Approach is located at the intersection of multiple mobilities. Traffic and people constantly move around the Plaza designed by Carrère and Hastings in 1912 as a **public space**. Throughout the day, the Plaza remains mostly empty. However, the slowly fading monuments of the City Beautiful movement, are occasionally **reclaimed** by various communities, such as delivery workers who can often be seen leaning against the colonnade while waiting for their next order during the unpaid hours of work.

The installation is a tribute to the **unseen labor** of the “deliveristas.” Just like the fragile wall built on the location of a historic fence is held up by a precise network of wires, New York’s food culture and economy are sustained by “deliveristas.”




LEVAN KILADZE

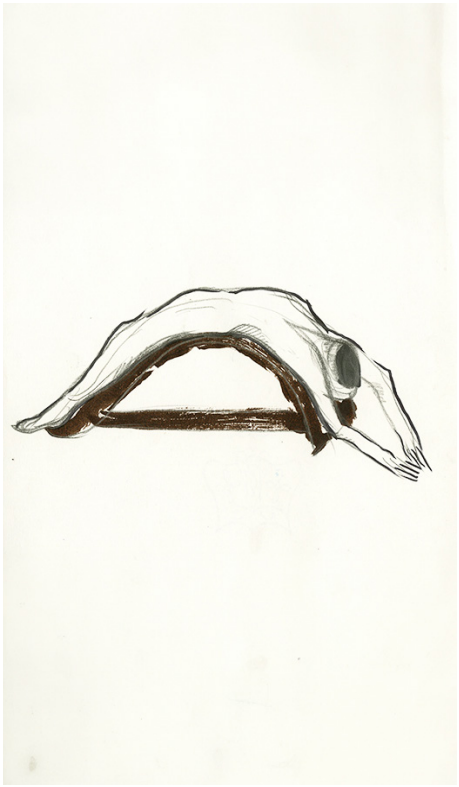




The design exploration began with an analysis of a personal ritual, stretching, prompted by daily bodily discomfort and **constrained positions**. Three natural elements, water, air, and earth, were examined and diagrammed through the ritual, represented by perspiration, breathing, and grounding.

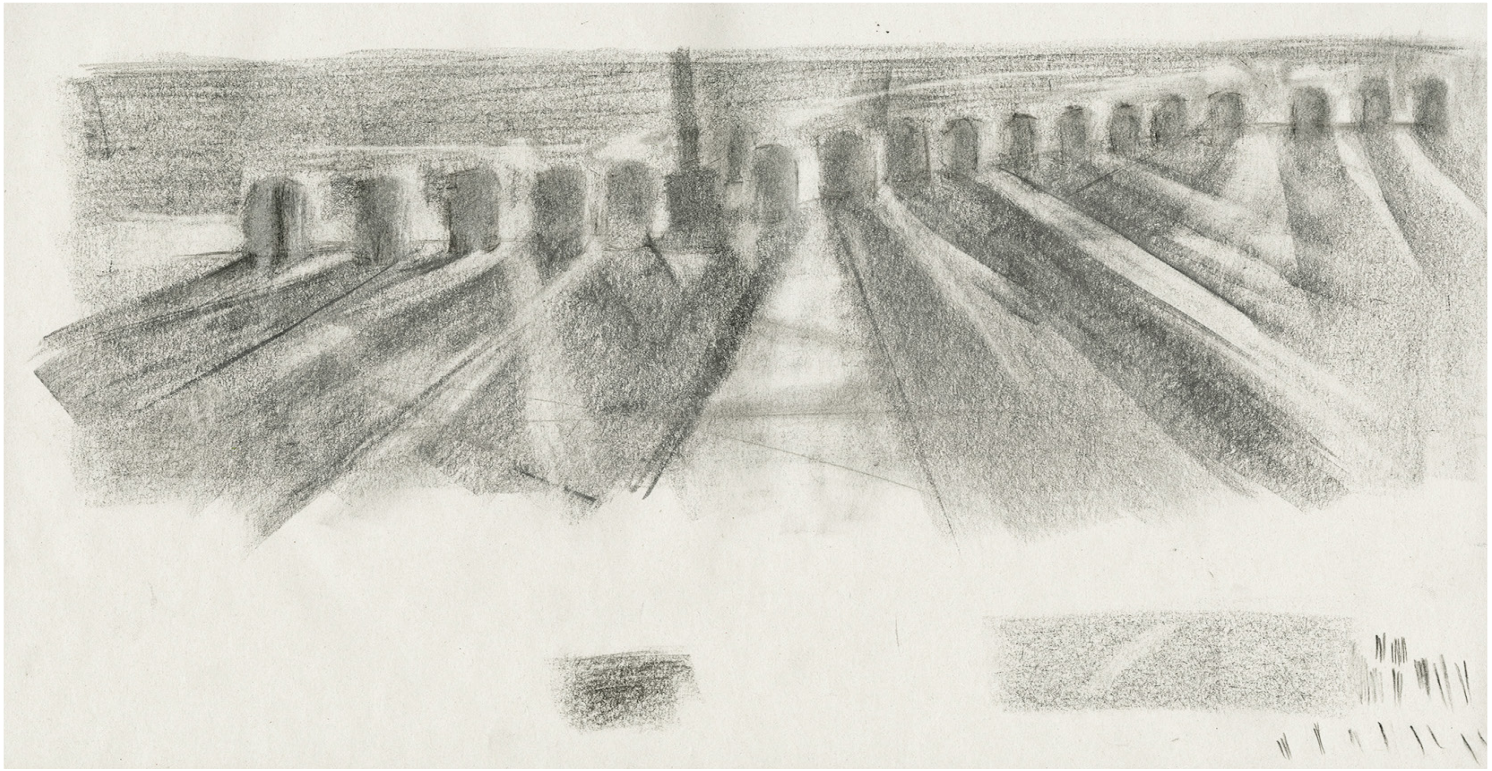








LEVAN KILADZE



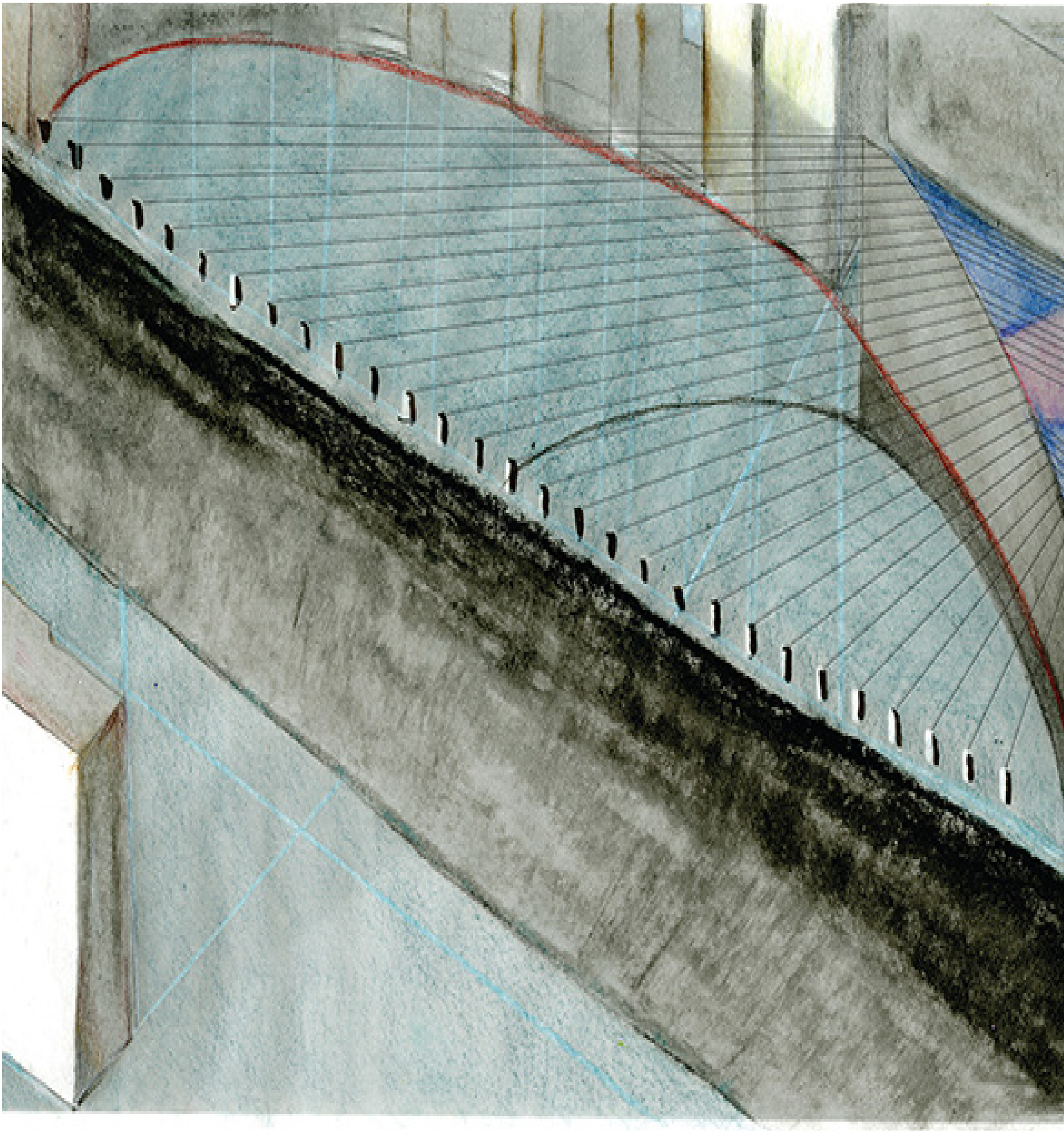
This line of thinking was brought to the site through a study of **vacant benches** and their arrangement within the monumental colonnade. The leaning wall acts as a pause amid chaotic traffic, providing acoustic insulation and shaded respite for **deliveristas** as they wait.

Leaning Wall, A Bench



15 QUESTIONS

Fugitive Mobilities



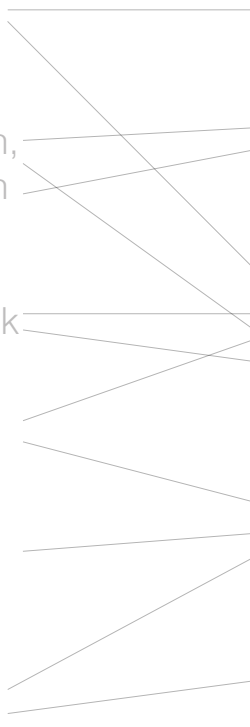
LEVAN KILADZE

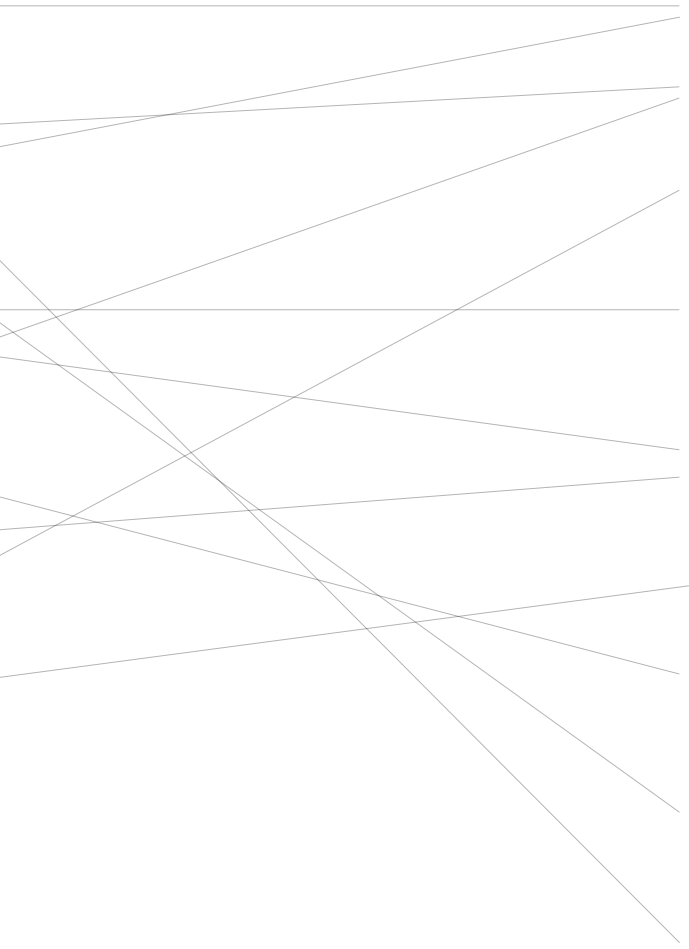


The proposed public space intersects **multiple mobilities**, negotiated through an introduced wall placed where a historical fence once guided horse traffic through the colonnade in the early 1900s.

Contents

Question	Studio	Project
1. How do parents and children learn from public space?	ADV VI	School in the Attic
2. What does it take to unlock a space for trans-species living?	ADV IV	Communal Kitchen, Communal Garden
3. Can human body be the forensic space for transscalar witnessing?	CORE II	National Shrine of Catherine Cesnik
4. Can every home become a garden? (and how to learn to work with a friend?)	CORE III	Every Room is a Garden Room
5. How can a future museum produce culture?	ADV V	Museum of Arab Prints / Works
6. How does architecture education begin? (or my first architecture project)	CORE I	Leaning Wall, A Bench





Question	Format
7. How to hatch a house?	Writing
8. How does form follow climate?	Writing
9. How many cosmopolitical realities can a construction detail hold?	Writing
10. How does a camera flatten a mountain?	Writing
11. What cultural knowledge does geological display communicate?	Workshop
12. How to reuse?	Reuse
13. How to live in the former wine warehouse?	Reuse
14. What did encounters on the land within the Americas look like?	Research
15. How to reimagine New York with Michael Sorkin?	Restoration

7

Writing
Information Richness

Once Upon A Command

Visual Elective
Instructor:
Amelyn Ng

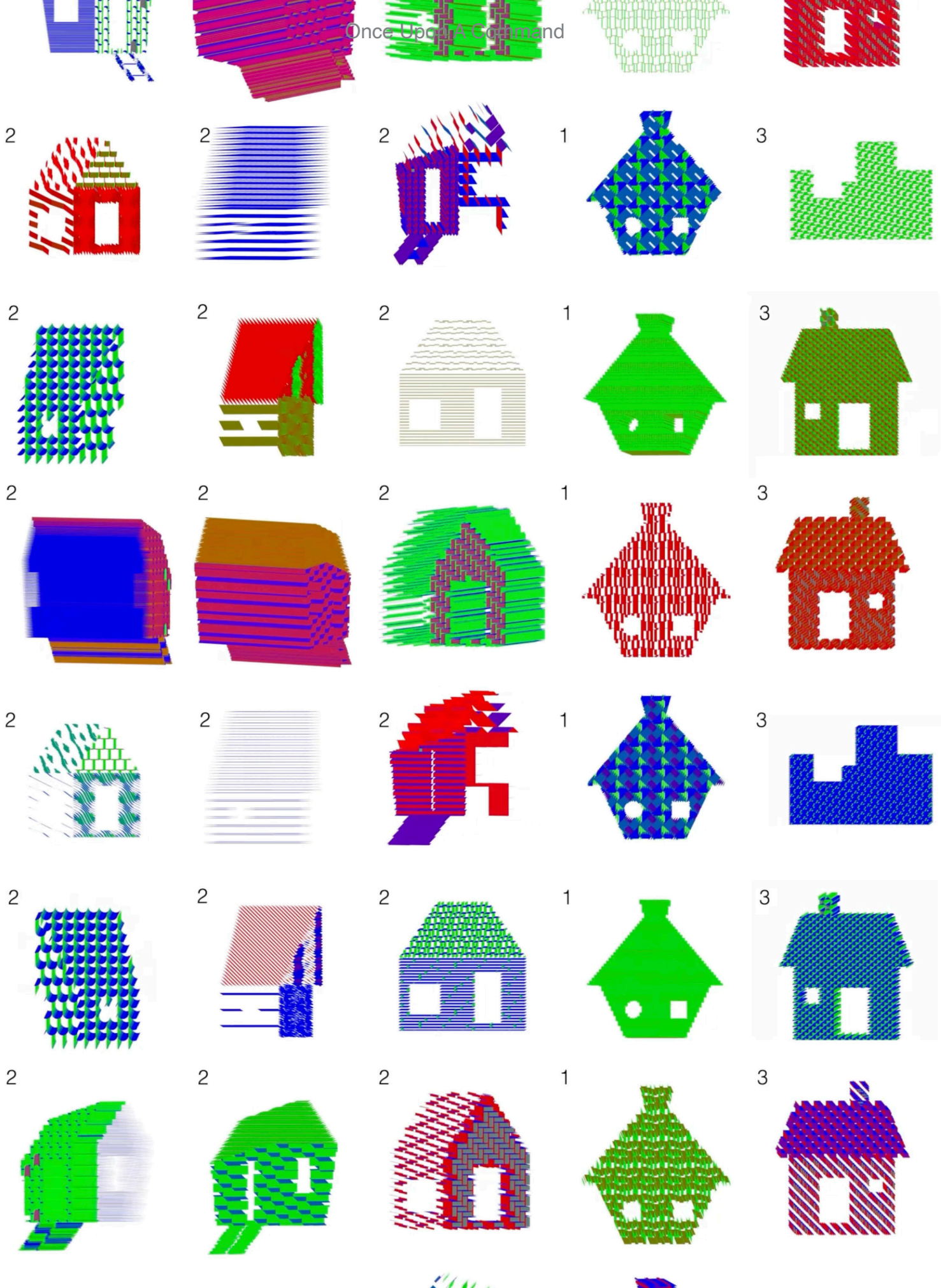
Fall 2025

LEVAN KILADZE

I don’t remember whether Marc Tsurumaki made this reference or if I was just diverting from one of his lectures on **biogenic materials**. I thought the way of organizing the class around houses built from straw, brick, and wood resembled the fairy tale of **“The Three Little Pigs,”** and I giggled.

Around that same time, I started drawing **hatches** for construction materials for studio work and had one of those common realizations that architecture students often have: instead of touching any of the materials, I was drawing lines that represented them. Drawing lines can be just as demanding. Rhino requires measurement, scale, precision, trimming, repetition, and variation; Illustrator requires attention to line weights, brushes; sometimes the **programs crash**.

The project rewrites the fable through the lens of the history of **digital hatching and hatch libraries**, portraying the three pigs as architecture students working toward a final review. Instead of construction sites, the pigs are situated at three desktops. The story of the three pigs prompts discussions about **digital labor**.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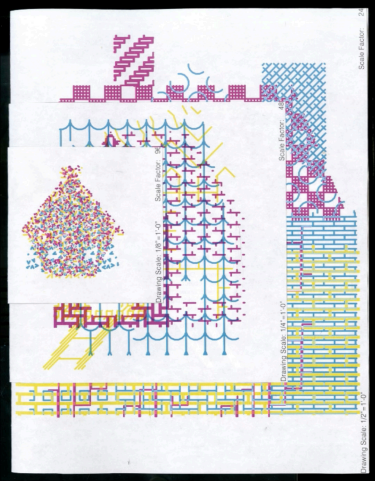
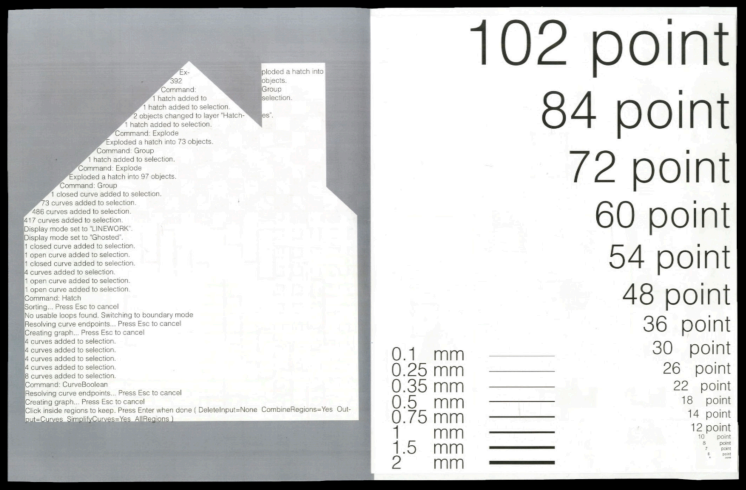
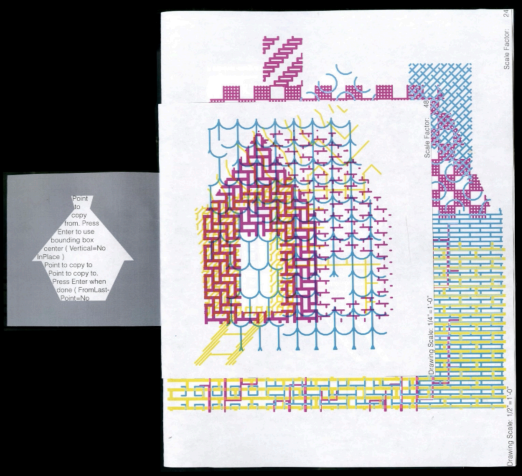
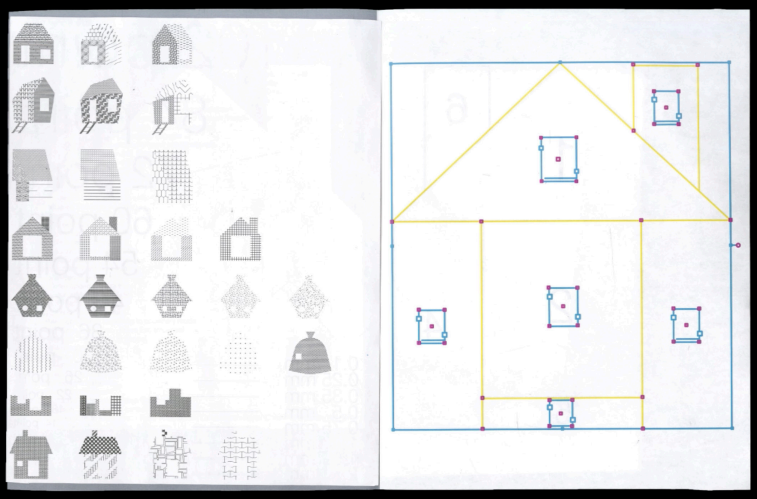
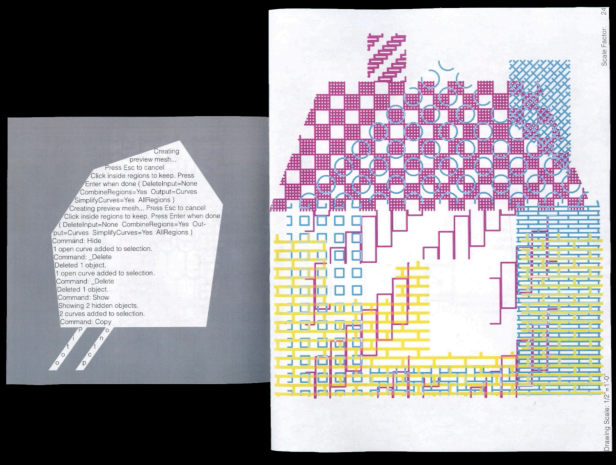
How to hatch a house?

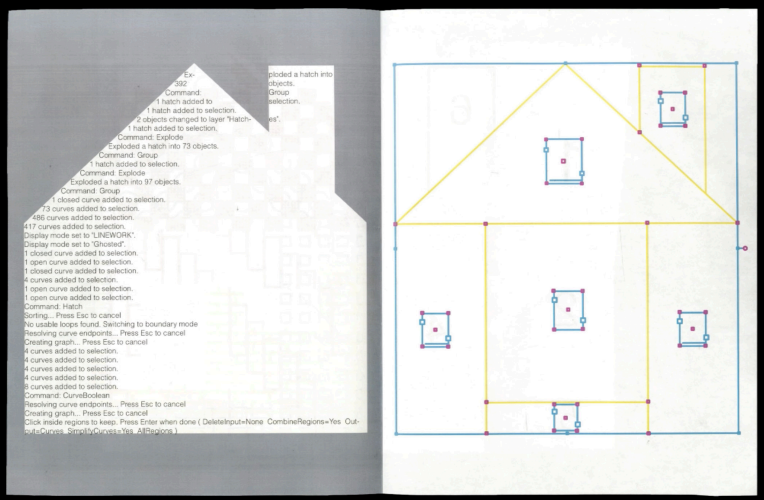








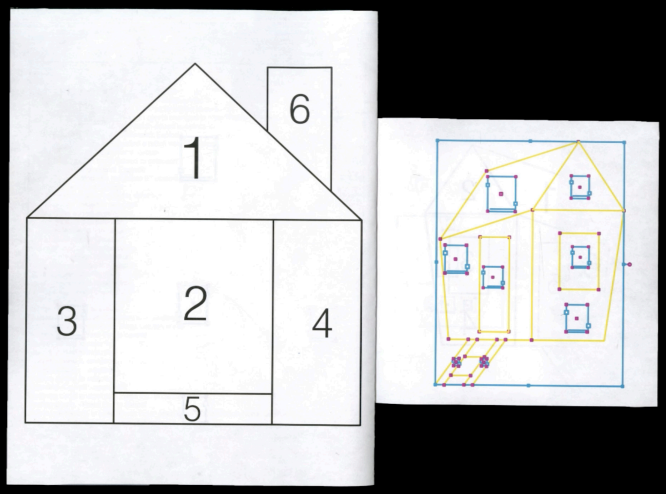


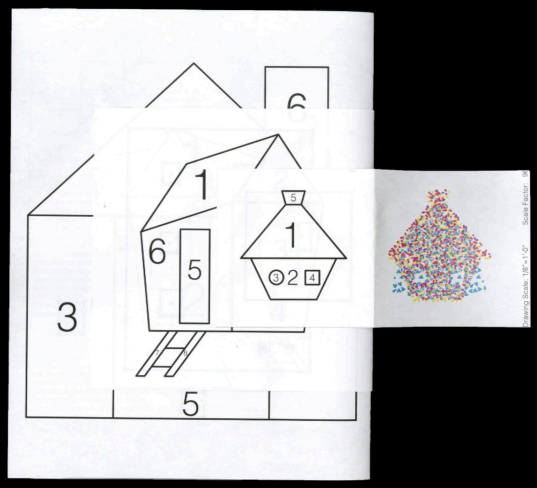


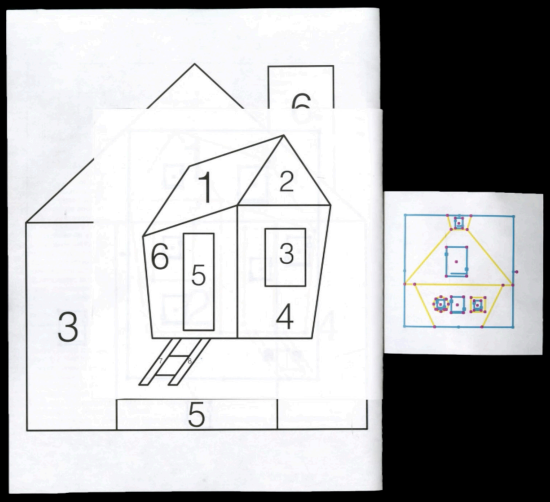
LEVAN KILADZE

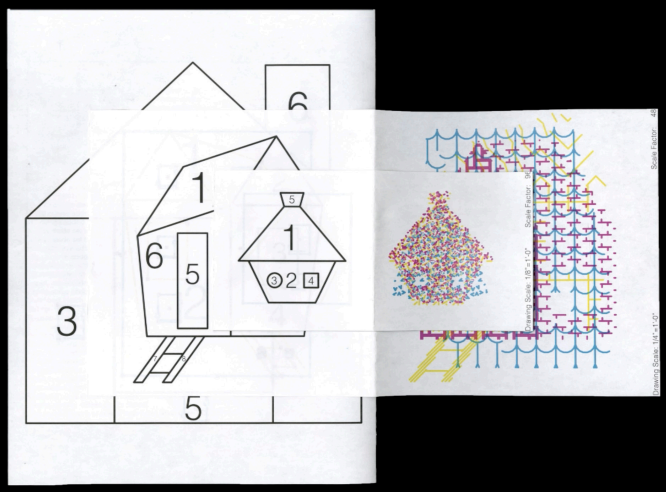
Information Richness

Once Upon A Command

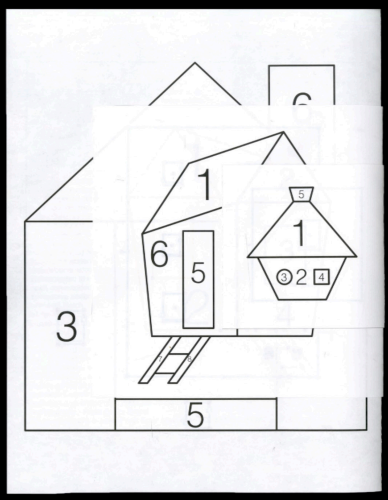


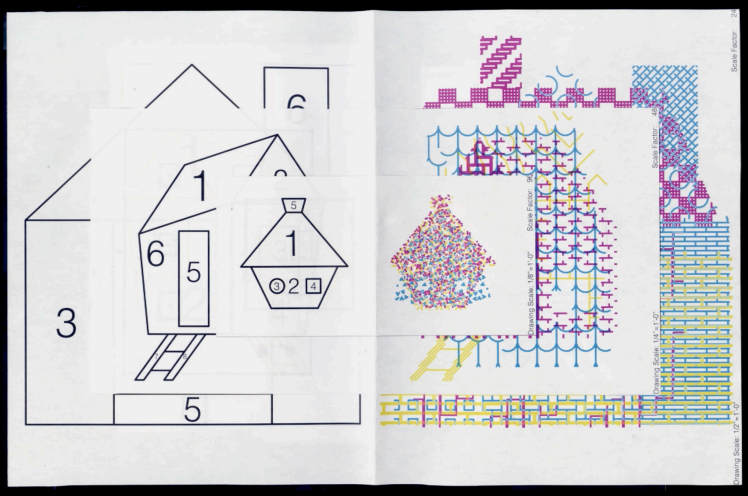






15 QUESTIONS





Information Richness

How to hatch a house?



Once Upon A Command

Once upon a command, three little pigs opened up their desktops.

On a bright evening when screens start to light up the studio, each pig decided to start drawing a house for the final review. The wolf loved giving crits to the little pigs. He gave them full freedom in terms of scale, layout, and deliverables as long as they came up with a strong design for the house.

1

The first pig started gathering hatches of straw only to find, after 21 open tabs and a half hour of scrolling, that .pat files of straw in section plan or even elevation were not readily available on the internet, and that he would have to trace high-quality vector drawings of seemingly random-looking lines from freepik.com.

Unlike the widely accepted interpretation of the fable, the first pig wasn't lazy. He traced and traced with no limit on time or space. He hallucinated lines in places where there were no lines, and soon his hatches took over his lines.

The woolf huffed and puffed, and talked, and drew over every line of the pig in red, in green, in blue until the first pig decided to team up with the second pig on the studio project.

2

The second pig was almost done drawing sticks. She had been a long-time user of CADhatch.com where she had promptly found 25 AutoCAD wood hatch patterns for free download (no registration required). The selection includes Plywood hatch patterned, end grain, adh, hardwood, Floor, MDF Hatch Patterns & Wood Grain Hatch Patterns.

The sticks like stripes, thought the second pig, are more legible than straw, and the wolf cannot huff and puff at them with his talks on legibility and lineweights. But as the second pig was importing her hatches in Rhino 8, HWOD20E1, HWEND1N0, HWEND2N0, so helpfully titled, they seemed impossible to fit into the shapes she had drawn. She trimmed and extended and curvebooleoned, but the lines were curving and the fuziness of wood took over her structure.

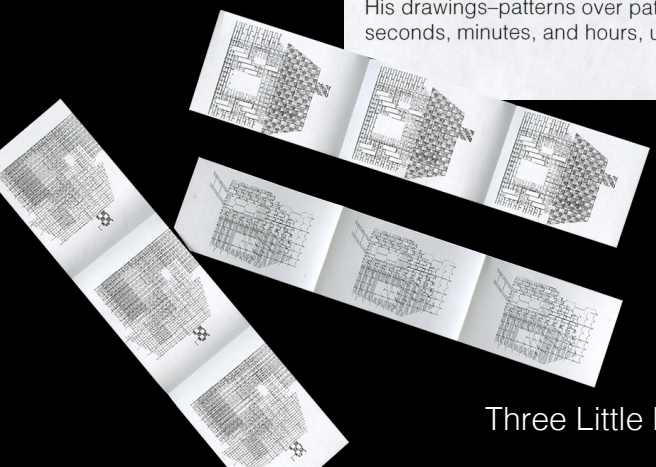
The woolf huffed and puffed at her drawings. She drew in red, green, and blue, and the drawings went nowhere, so she offered the three pigs to form a team and work together.

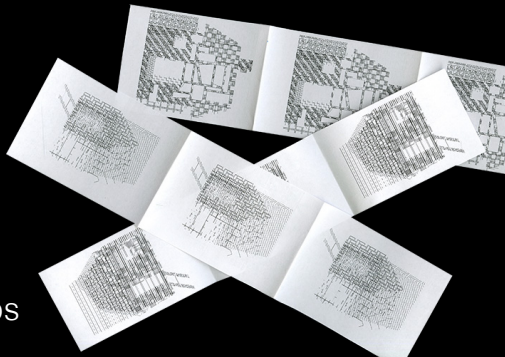
3

Meanwhile, the third pig knew that the wolf had a soft spot for patterns; the patterns fit together and created an illusion of rigidity, so he started drawing bricks. Hatching, lining up, and scrolling through 3" Spline Limestone, Adobe Brick, Belgian Brick, New England Brick, and Sculpted Brick, the bricks had subtlety, and they never lied.

After unzipping more than 12 files, he started testing what looked more rigid. And Hatched everything in brick–different types of brick to show he had looked into options. His drawings–patterns over patterns over patterns hypnotized the wolf, who stayed quiet for seconds, minutes, and hours, until he fell asleep–the faculty burnout.

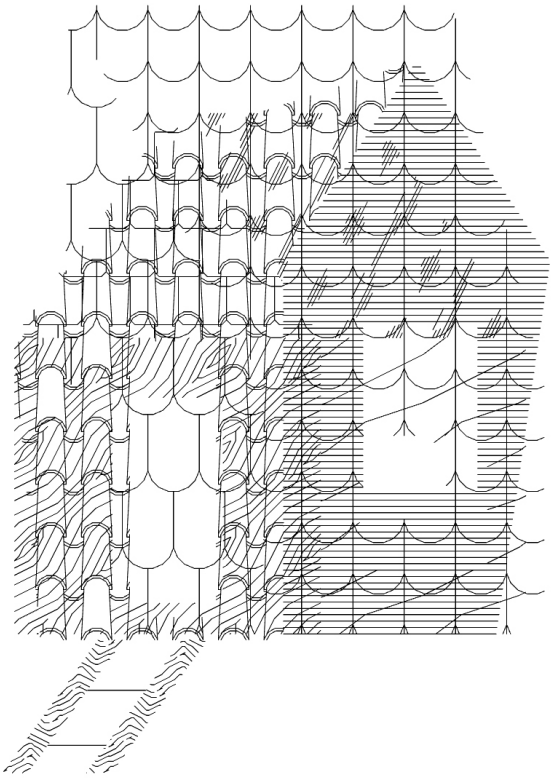


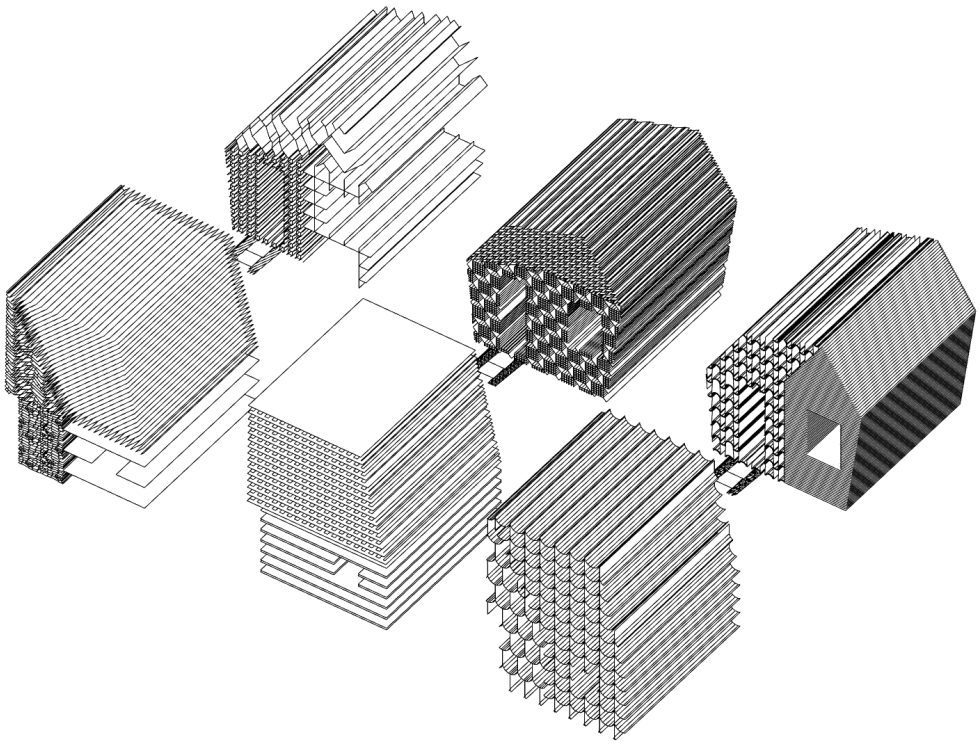




LEVAN KILADZE

Three Little Pigs Reimagined at their Desktops







Hatch houses are hypothetical material experiments in which the digital process of exploding, trimming, extruding, cataloguing, and rendering hatches become the material of the house itself.

Writing Repetitions

The Contemporary: Architecture Concepts from 1968 to the Present

History/Theory Seminar
Instructor:
Bernard Tschumi

Spring 2026

LEVAN KILADZE

'FORM FOLLOWS CLIMATE'

10 FOR

"A theory of integrity lies latent in this Swedish cutting scheme, a theory found not in the doctrinal pronouncements of conservationists, but rather in the salvage apparatus that they were forced to use — the technologies for surveying, cutting, moving, and reconstructing the temples, which formed a complicated assemblage of humans and nonhumans, ancient materials and modern machines."

Allais, Lucia. Chapter 5 "Integrities: The Salvage of Abu Simbel, 1960-1980" (2018): 221-224, 228-236, 251-254.

At Abu Simbel, integrity was manufactured through the apparatus that made the salvage realizable. Each national team proposed a different definition of wholeness, none of which preceded the technical operation that prevailed. The definition that held was latent in this cutting scheme. Ecological coherence, applied analogically to climate and landscape, operates by the same logic. The stability of a watershed or the functioning of a climate system is the residue of technical and institutional decisions about what to sustain and what to sacrifice, a product of governance rather than a prior condition that governance discovers.

Philippe Rahm's Jade Eco Park in Taichung (2016) makes this production explicit. The park's atmospheric conditions, temperature differentials, humidity distribution, are derived from meteorological calculation and solar geometry. Rahm engineers climate as an architectural parameter, and the environment's coherence is a design outcome sustained by the infrastructure beneath it. What this reveals is that every managed landscape performs the same operation, only less candidly: the apparatus produces the natural condition it appears to be protecting, and the integrity of the environment is coextensive with the integrity of the system maintaining it.



Philippe Rahm Architects, Jade Eco Park, Taichung, 2016.

The park's atmospheric conditions are engineered from meteorological data, making ecological integrity a design parameter rather than a prior condition.

AGAINST 10

"If I were forced, I would choose Maple Nation. If citizenship is a matter of shared beliefs, then I believe in the democracy of species. If citizenship means an oath of loyalty to a leader, then I choose the leader of the trees. If good citizens agree to uphold the laws of the nation, then I choose natural law, the law of reciprocity, of regeneration, of mutual flourishing."

Kimmerer, Robin Wall. "An Offering" & "Maple Nation: A Citizenship Guide," 33-38, 167-174.

Kimmerer's argument is structurally compelling: the maple's contribution, carbon sequestration, habitat, shade, syrup, is ongoing and unconditional, constituting a political order that precedes any apparatus claiming to protect it. The reciprocal economy of giving is real, and the moral intuition behind it serious. Yet her ontological claim, that natural law is primary and self-sustaining, cannot account for the conditions under which that law becomes binding on human behaviour Reciprocity requires recognition, and recognition requires a framework. Without one, the gift remains indistinguishable from mere occurrence.

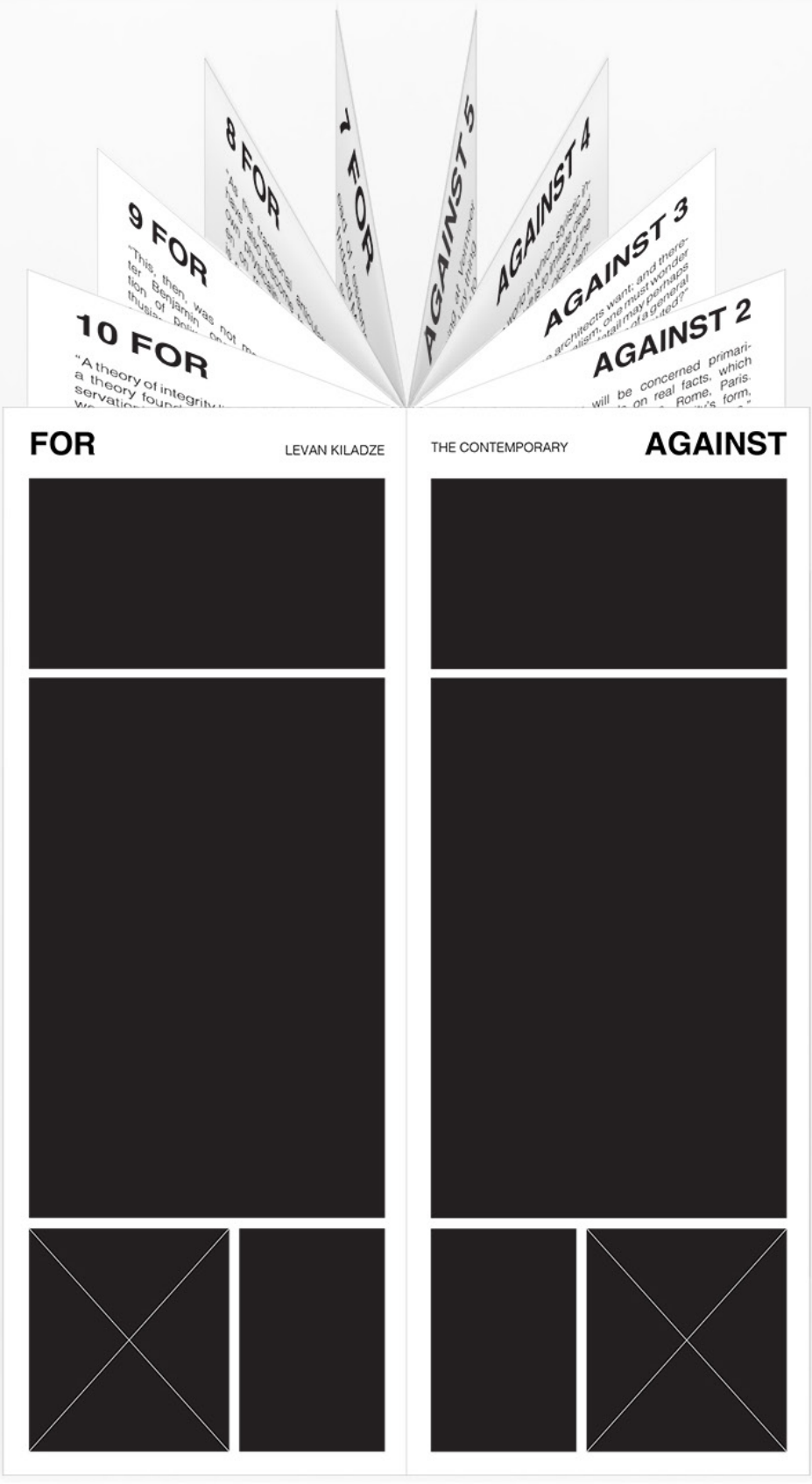
DS+R's Canal Café at the 2025 Venice Architecture Biennale is where this distinction becomes visible in built form. The project claimed to make Venice's lagoon drinkable to establish a reciprocal relation between city and ecological infrastructure. Yet at the press preview, the machine served regular coffee. Italian authorities had not yet approved the canal water for consumption. The canal was always giving its waterand ecology, but its giving only became legible as a relation through the apparatus the project assembled. The gift was indistinguishable from tap water until the institution decided otherwise.



DS+R, Canal Café, Venice Architecture Biennale, 2025.

Kimmerer's gift economy requires more than the gift. It requires the institutional and technical conditions under which the gift can be received.

'FORM FOLLOWS CLIMATE'


8 FOR
9 FOR
10 FOR
7 FOR
AGAINST 5
AGAINST 4
AGAINST 3
AGAINST 2
FOR
LEVAN KILADZE
THE CONTEMPORARY
AGAINST

Writing

“Something Worth Having”

Transscalar Architecture: Construction Details as Cosmopolitical Enactments

Design Seminar
Instructor:
Andrés Jaque

Spring 2026

LEVAN KILADZE

“We do not have to court a Muse to produce detail for our stable door. We will make them without ‘em.”
Darwin D. Martin, letter to Walter Burley Griffin, Wright’s project architect, 1904

“Furniture drawings and gas fixture details are my daily trouble—dream of them at night!”
Frank Lloyd Wright, letter to Darwin D. Martin, 1905

“Something Worth Having”: Design C, Drawing 0405.125

$4.50 per single pane of glass. Roughly $164 today. The number sits circled and underlined on a pencil sheet dated 1904, added after the geometry was already drawn: a fabrication quote from the Linden Glass Company of Chicago, checked against a design decision under pressure. Buffalo, New York, 1903. Frank Lloyd Wright is building Darwin D. Martin a house. Approximately two hundred letters were exchanged between them during construction. The correspondence shows a client tracking every expenditure and an architect who kept insisting on the expensive option.

The word bursar comes from the medieval Latin bursarius: keeper of the purse. Martin was secretary-treasurer of the Larkin Soap Company, one of the largest mail-order businesses in America, and this room was his private financial workspace, tucked into the southwest corner of the ground floor, away from the street, behind the reception room. Wright extended the full art glass program into it anyway.

Drawing 0405.125, held at the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, is a single pencil sheet measuring 13¼ by 7¾ inches. Three things coexist on it: an undetailed elevation of glazed bookcases for the end of the library, a fully resolved frontal elevation of corner cases for the bursar room, and a circled detail study of the glass pattern labeled Design C, annotated with that price. A freehand arc zooms in on the pattern. Is Design C an alternative option for the same cases, or a different glass for a different surface within the same room? We are confranted with a working document holding more than one reality at once.

Two different scripts on the same sheet. “DESIGN C.” in deliberate block capitals. “Light unit” in loose cursive. Possibly two different hands, certainly two different moments of inscription. The word light here is a glazier’s term: a single pane within a frame, a unit of count. Six of them per case door. Wright called his windows “light screens” elsewhere, but the annotation prices not just the glass, it specifies the came: brass, brass plated. Wright wrote that the glass was just the insertion. The glazier’s unit and the architect’s argument share the same page.

The pattern is a compressed diamond with chevron forms above and below, set within horizontal bands: a variant of the wisteria pattern, an abstraction of the plant growing on the pergola outside, translated into came geometry. The diagonal construction lines used to locate the center are still faintly visible beneath the finished linework, partially erased. The geometry was constructed, and the traces of that construction remain in the paper. Wright called this organic, even “native.” What is he actually imposing here, on a cabinet door in a room most visitors to the house would never enter?

Brass came, brass plated. The came is what is specified, what is priced, what is invented, and annotated. Wright and Linden Glass developed rigid brass caming as a deliberate departure from the soft lead came of the traditional stained glass window, from Tiffany, from the pictorial tradition entirely. The Martin House got solid brass. The Barton House next door got copper-plated zinc, Wright’s standard specification. The came arrived by traincar from Chicago.

On the same sheet, the library elevation is an empty rectangle. Dimensions, a label, nothing resolved inside it. Two adjacent rooms, one sheet, two entirely different states of completion. Wright called his buildings portraits of their clients. And this drawing, unfinished as it is, holds more than any finished window: a private room built on soap money, a plant abstracted into brass geometry, a material called “native” and shipped by a traincar, and somewhere between the resolved and the unresolved, an architect who dreamed of furniture details at night and an impatient client who threatened to build without him.

“We do not have to court a Muse to produce detail for our stable door. We will make them without ‘em.”
Darwin D. Martin, letter to Wright’s project architect, 1904

“Furniture drawings and gas fixture details are my daily trouble—dream of them at night!”
Frank Lloyd Wright, letter to Darwin D. Martin, 1905



Wright, Frank Lloyd. Bursar Case Glass Design Details. 1904. Pencil on paper. Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Archives, Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University. 0405.125.

Writing

Jim Shvante: Mountain as Ethnographic Propaganda

Topographic Modernism

History/Theory
Instructor:
Lucia Allais

Spring 2025

LEVAN KILADZE

Jim Shvante: Mountain as Ethnographic Propaganda

Mikhail Kalatozov's (Kalatozishvili) film *Salt for Svanetia* or *Jim Shvante*, in the Svan dialect, opens with a quote from Lenin: "The Soviet Union is so vast and so varied that every kind of social and economic way of life can be found within it" (Lenin), which is followed by two maps. Russian labels on a black and white image of flattened topography point out the names of mountains, rivers, and villages drawn in plan view as white squares: (Image 1) (Kalatozov 1930, 0:46)[1]. The second zoomed-on image reveals the architecture of the white squares in an isometric view: (Image 2) (Kalatozov 1930, 0:48). As we zoom in on the village of Ushguli, located at an altitude of 6,900 feet, a topographic plan is spatialized to reveal "Koshki"—defensive tower houses built with local stone between the 9th and 12th centuries (Image 3). Though I have not had a chance to trace down the context of Lenin's quotation, its precise placement in the opening of the documentary sets the tone of Kalatozov's film as a case study for the society, economy, and architecture that make the Soviet Union "diverse" and "varied." But this invocation of diversity quickly folds into a narrative of deficiency. While Lenin's quote implies inclusion and recognition of multiplicity, the film ultimately treats geographic and cultural variation as a problem to be solved. Rather than documenting Svanetia as one of the many valid expressions of Soviet life, it frames the region's difference as a threat to national coherence.

The brief glance at the maps introduces the main subjects of Kalatozov's film: topography, rivers and mountains of Ushguli, and architecture, the castles of the Svan people. The film is roughly structured around first introducing the two subjects and how the locals produce and mediate them. The architecture and the topography become the main setting for the story that occupies the second half of the movie.

The maps do not merely orient the viewer geographically; they preemptively reframe Svanetia as a site of intervention. Soviet cartography, particularly in the early 20th century, was deeply embedded in efforts to render the empire's vast, multiethnic territories into administratively manageable and symbolically unified space[2]. As scholars of Soviet geography have noted, maps served not just as instruments of knowledge but as tools of power, flattening cultural and ecological differences into a standardized framework of governance. Kalatozov's use of cartography in the film aligns with this project: his maps abstract Svanetia's unique geographic and architectural features into symbols, making the landscape appear both knowable and subordinate to state logic. The maps foreshadow the film's larger aesthetic operation, which transforms topographic specificity into a problem to be corrected through industrial means. In this way, the documentary begins not with a celebration of diversity, but with its containment.

It is highly likely that the maps from the film belong to Davit Kakabadze, who worked on the production of the film, a Georgian avant-garde artis and set designer, also an author of the painting *Protest in Imereti* (Image 5), depicting the socialist demonstration of the workers with red flags and posters of the leaders–Stalin, Lenin, and Beria. The

[1] "Salt for Svanetia (1930) - Mikhail Kalatozov." *YouTube*, uploaded by Russian Film Hub, 10 Apr. 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPXkL-tyydg. Accessed 9 May 2025.
[2] Please refer to a pre-Soviet map of Svanetia (Image 4) by Vakhushti for comparison.



"Salt for Svanetia (1930) - Mikhail Kalatozov." YouTube, uploaded by Russian Film Hub, 10 Apr. 2020. Accessed 9 May 2025.

11

Workshop Catalogue of Displays

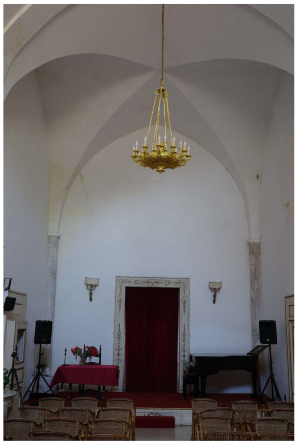
Revisiting Volcanology in Southern Italy

Workshop Instructor:
Mark Wasiuta

Summer 2025

LEVAN KILADZE

1



1



Musée Ignazio Cerio

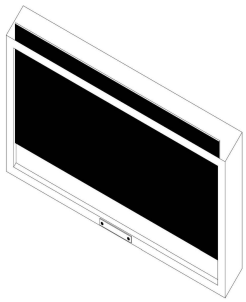
9



4

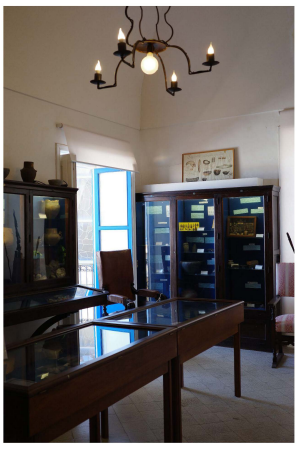


4



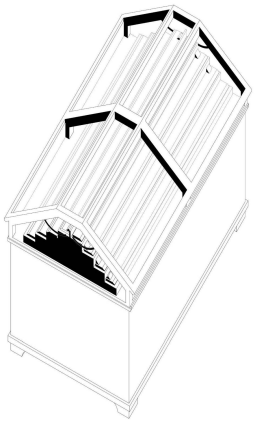
National Library, Naples

2



Catalogue of Displays, a guide to guides, documents the vitrines, tables, shelves, and reading machines through which volcanic rocks and antiquities are staged for the public. Across the Real Museo Mineralogico, the Vesuvius Observatory, the Musée Ignazio Cerio in Capri, the Pompeii Archaeological Park, the National Library, and the streets of Catania, the same volcanic material appears in radically different conditions of display: lit, labelled, mislabelled, leaned against a wall, sold next to socks.

9

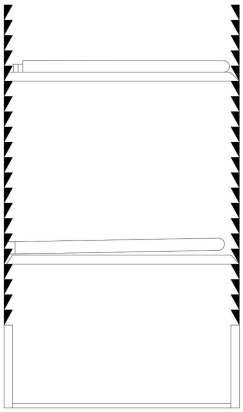


Real Museo Mineralogico, Naples

8



8



Real Museo Mineralogico, Naples

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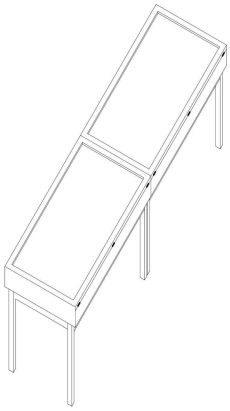
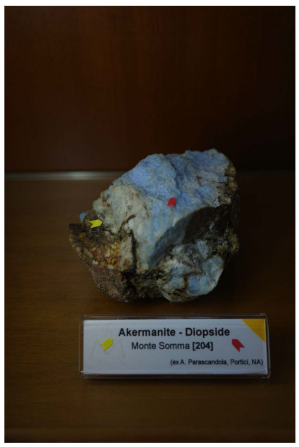


Musée Ignazio Cerio

6



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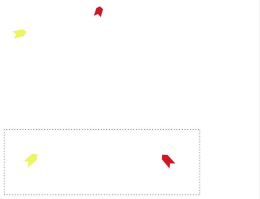


Vesuvius, Observatory

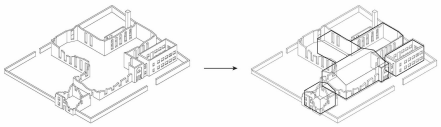
12

Building Tech.
III

Old Essex Community
Reuse

Instructor:
Gabrielle Brainard

Team:
Levan Kiladze
Maya Yildirim
Esther Su
Fall 2024



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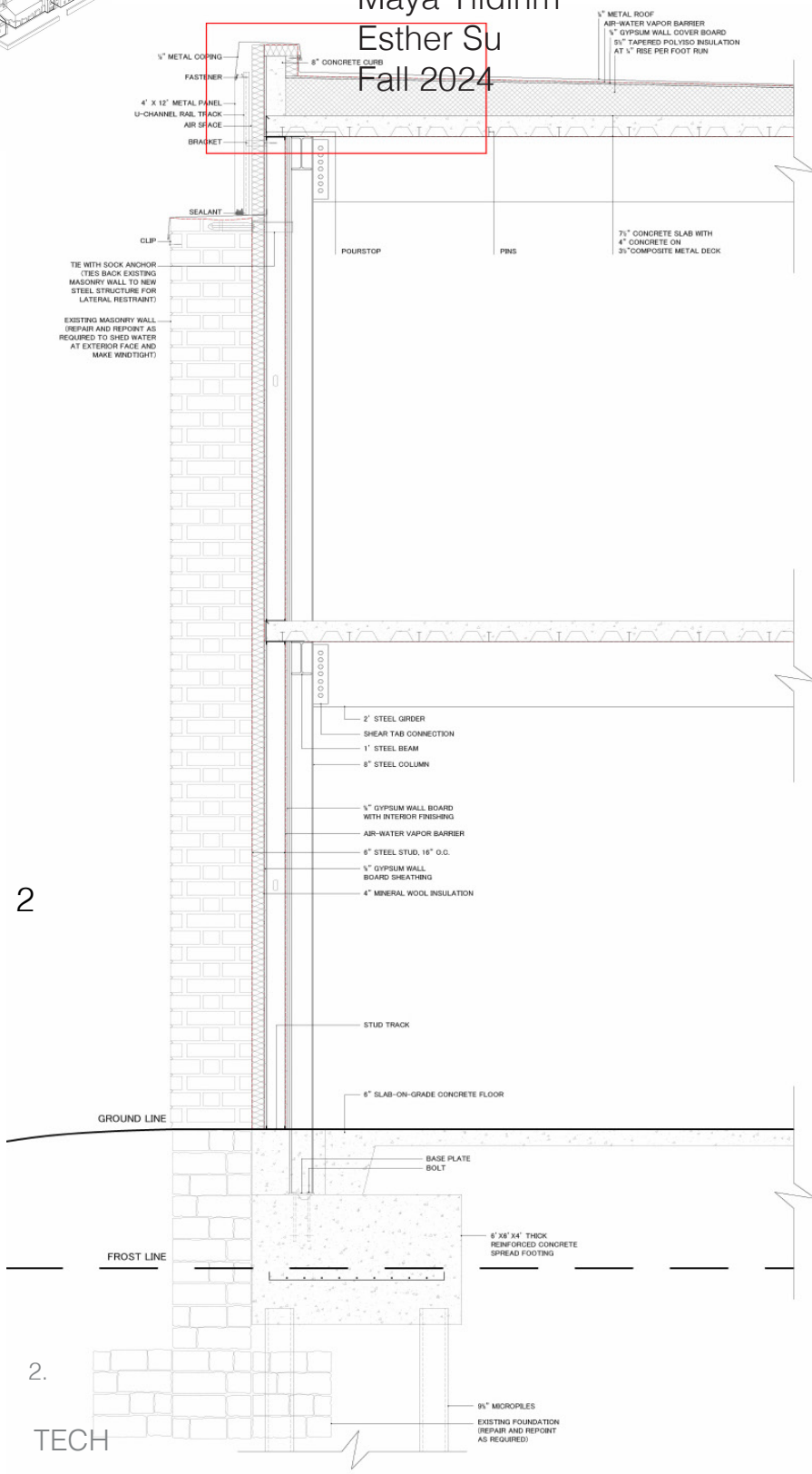


2

1. A **full reuse** of the Old Essex County Jail in Newark, New Jersey as a Rehabilitation Center for the local community.

A series of wall sections at 3/8”=1’-0” was drawn to set new structure **inboard and inline** from the existing brick masonry.

2. Existing Wall (Inboard): Counselling Room.

2.

LEVAN KILADZE

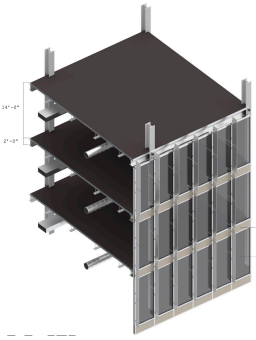
Building Tech.
V

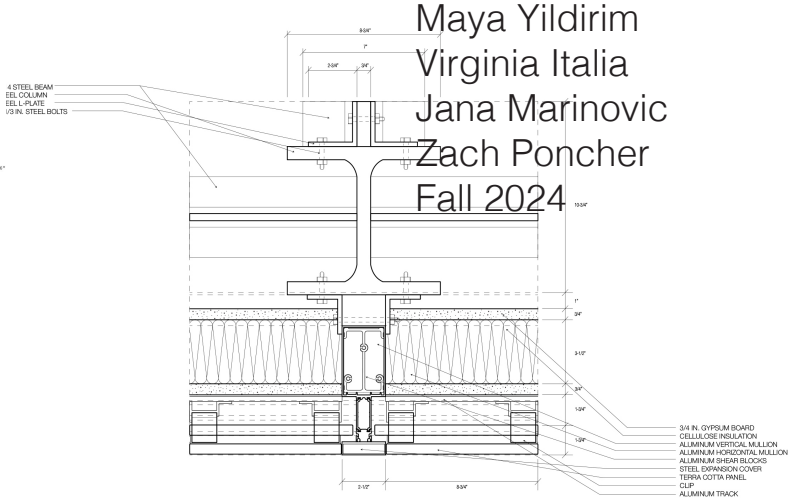
Fertile Crescent
Design for Disassembly

Instructor:
Tommy Schaperkotter

Team:
Levan Kiladze
Maya Yildirim
Virginia Italia
Jana Marinovic
Zach Poncher
Fall 2024

1

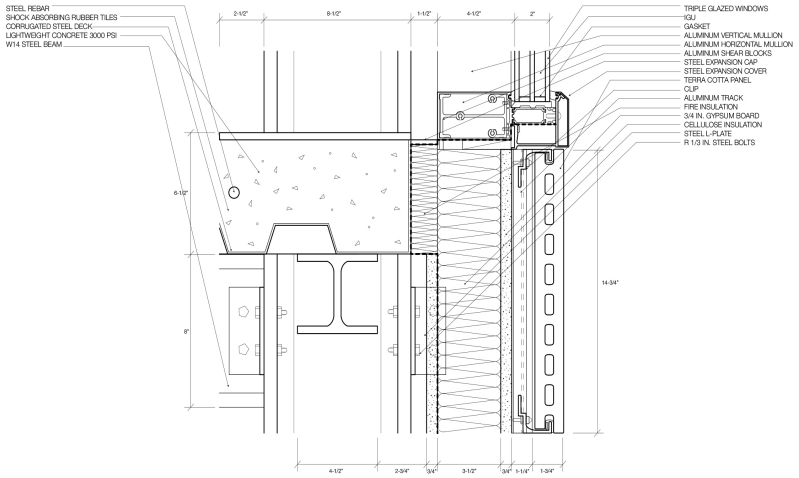




1. Built on a **former parking lot** in Los Angeles, organised around a 30’ x 30’ steel grid of W14 beams with lateral cross-bracing.

2. A 1:1 scale detail captures the junction of W14 beams, corrugated steel decking, and a terracotta-clad spandrel within the gym.

3. The 1:1 model uses **salvaged materials** combined with **custom fasteners** to emphasize reuse, adaptability, and longevity.



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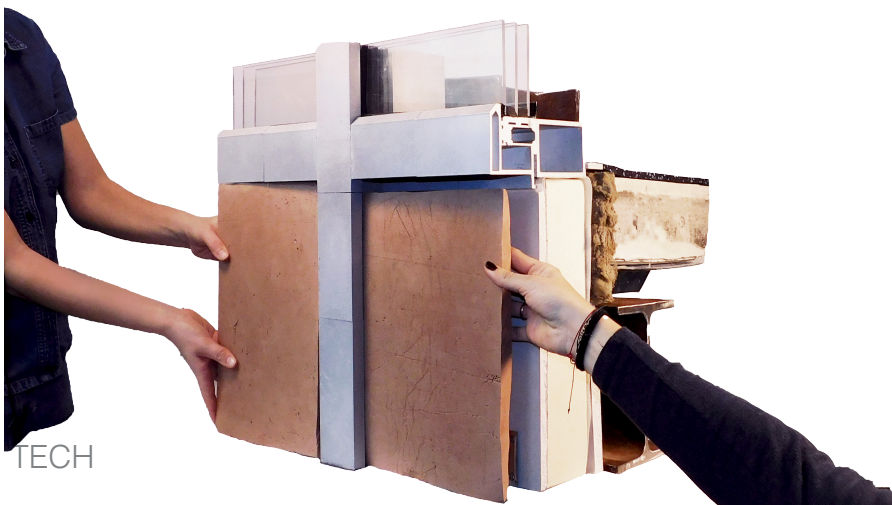


3

13

Section

Living in the Former Wine Warehouse

Seminar of Section

Representation Elective
Instructor:
Marc Tsurumaki

Individual Work
Spring 2025

LEVAN KILADZE

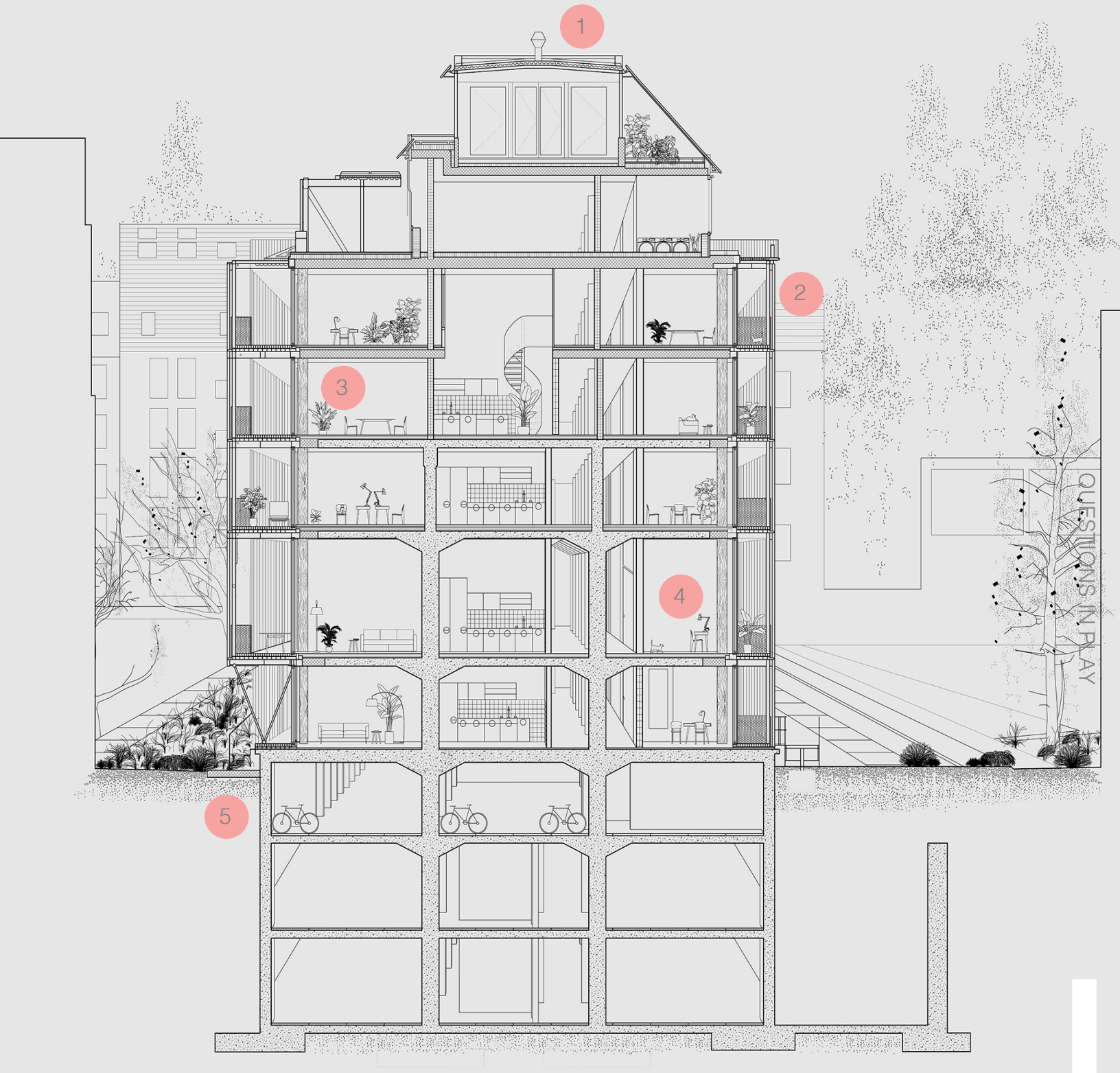




Sectional case study of an **affordable housing** project by Esch Sintzel Architekten in Basel, Switzerland. The project **converts** a 1955 wine warehouse into housing by retaining its iconic mushroom columns, cutting **grey-energy** use by 45%, and inserting spruce columns to take over structural loads, freeing interior walls for flexible layouts. Screw-together balconies boost daylight and allow for easy **future adaptation**.

Image: Paola Corsini, courtesy Esch Sintzel Architekten.

Image: Philip Heckhausen, Esch Sintzel Architekten.



1. Efficient 40 square metres per resident layout is compensated by generous communal spaces.
2. The depth of the building is carved away from 19 to 16.5 metres, allowing more sunlight.
3. 200 massive spruce wood columns were inserted into the building.
4. None of the interior walls need to be load-bearing.
5. The heart and foundation of the original 1955 building are maintained.

14

Research & Graphics

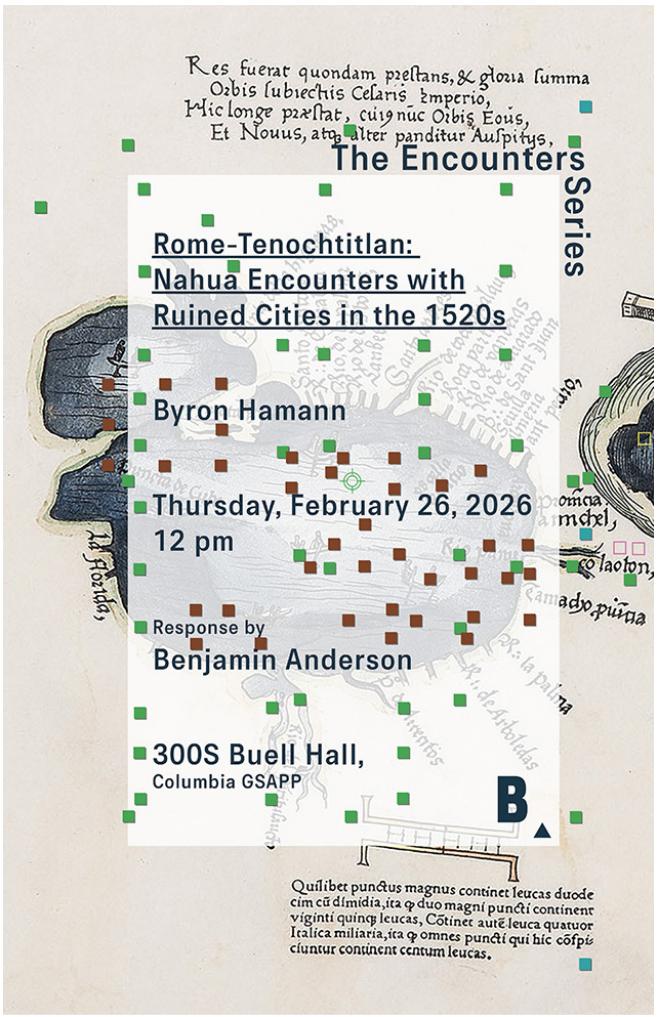
Encounters Series
Temple Hoyne
Buell Center

Research Assistant
Supervisor:
Lucia Allais

2025-2026

1. Poster design for Encounters Series, Talk by Byron Hamann, February 26, 2026
2. B-side of the same poster.
3. Research Drawings: Jesuit Mission Plans in Bolivia.

LEVAN KILADZE



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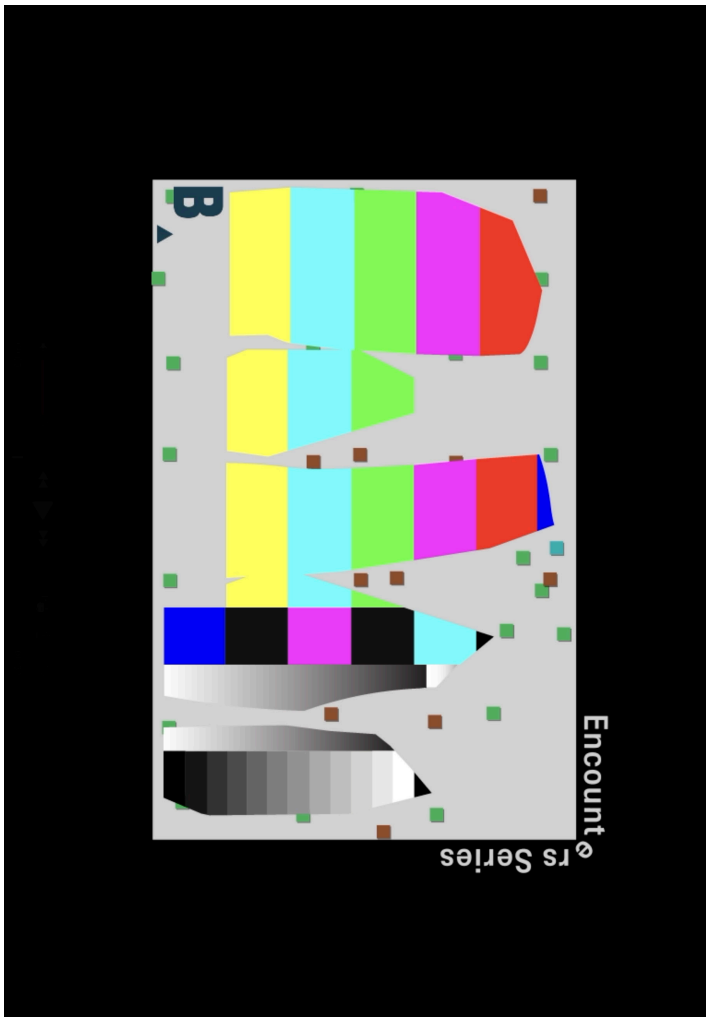

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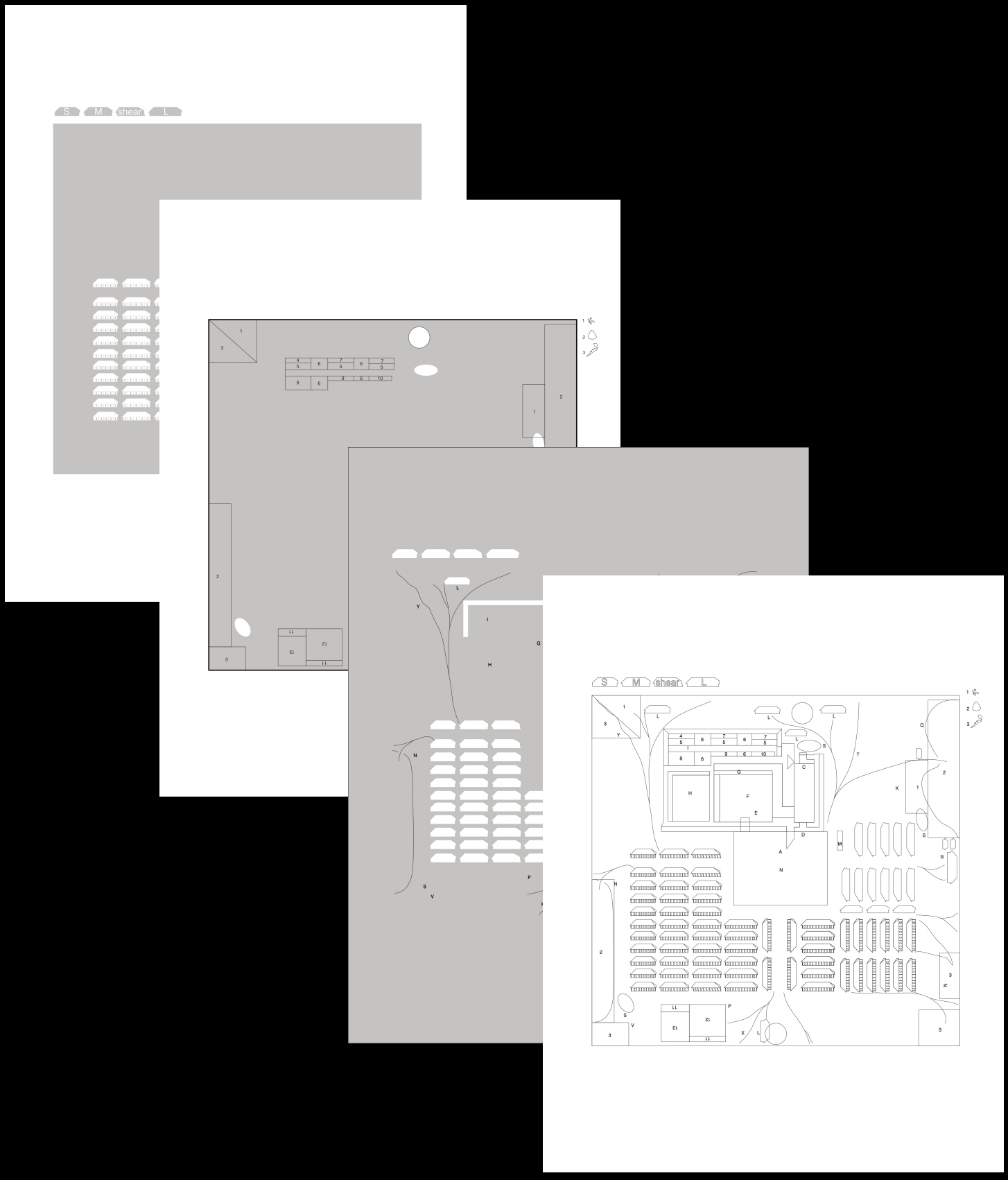
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15

Model Restoration

PEOPLE CROSS AGAINST THE LIGHT: Michael Sorkin's New York

Arthur Ross Architecture Gallery

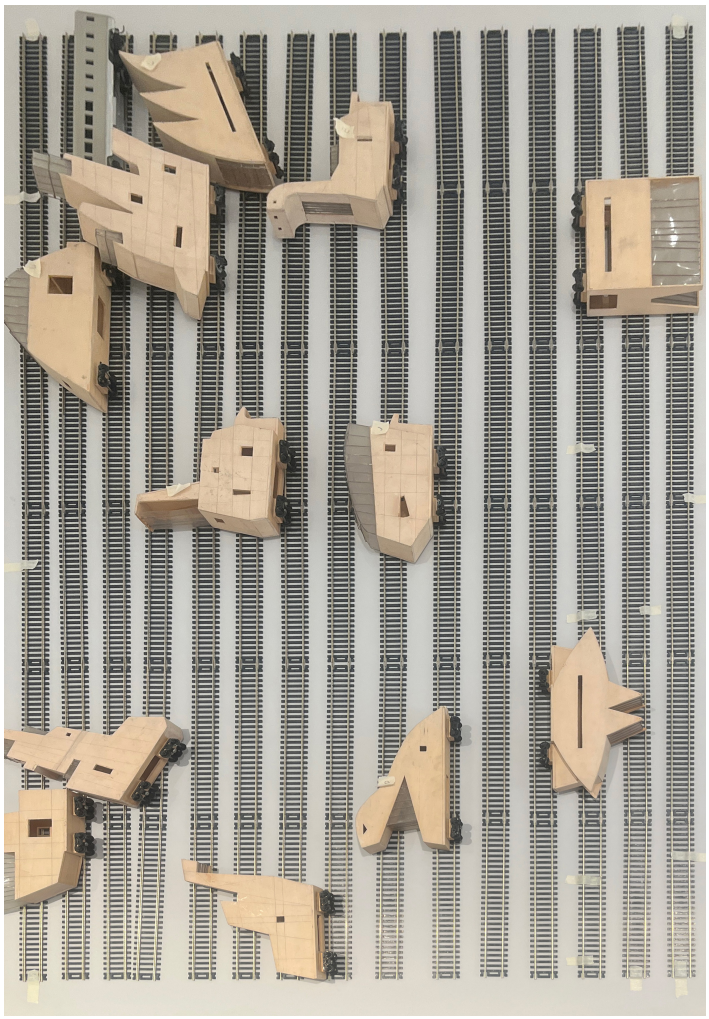
Director & Curator:
Bart-Jan Polman
Jean Im
In collaboration with
DJ Fan
Kent Hikida

1. Michael Sorkin, Study Models for Animal Houses, 1993
2-3. Michael Sorkin, Tracked Houses, 1990
4. Michael Sorkin, Animal Houses (Sheep), 1993

LEVAN KILADZE



1



2



3



4

3,4 Photo Credits: Timothy O'Connell

1 How do parents and children
What does it take to unlock a s
3 Can human body be the fore
witnessing? **4** Can every home
to learn to work with a friend?)
produce culture? **6** How does a
(or my first architecture project
How does form follow climate?
realities can a construction det
camera flatten a mountain? **11**
does geological display comm
13 How to live in the former wir
encounters on the land within t
to reimagine New York with Mi

n learn from public space? **2**
pace for trans-species living?
nsic space for transscalar
become a garden? (and how
5 How can a future museum
architecture education begin?
) **7** How to hatch a house? **8**
9 How many cosmopolitical
ail hold? **10** How does a
What cultural knowledge
unicate? **12** How to reuse?
he warehouse? **14** What did
he Americas look like? **15** How
chael Sorkin?

Thank you.

Levan Kiladze