

EXPLORING
LATENT
ARCHITECTURES

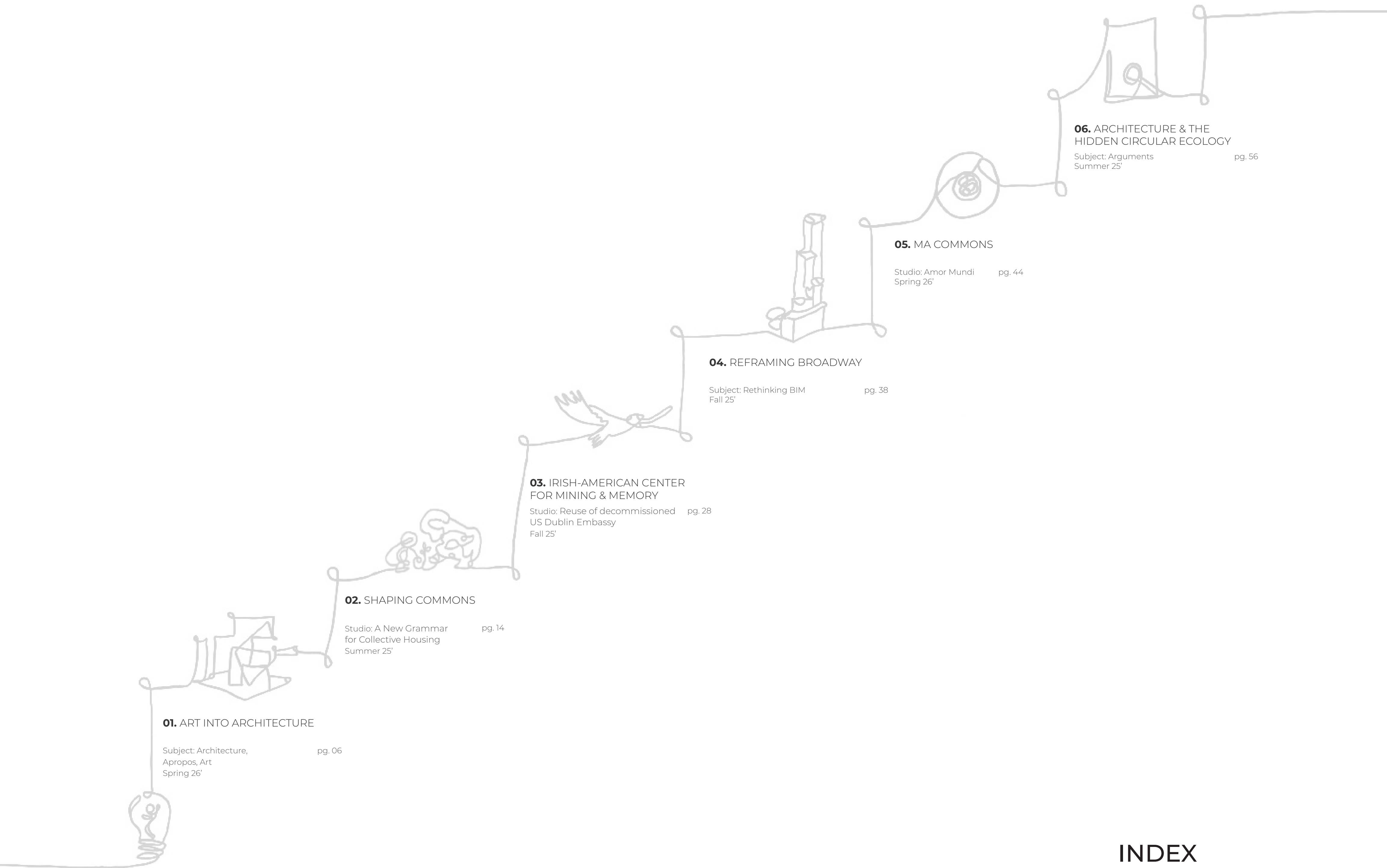
“What infinity is to time,
the aleph is to space”

(The Aleph, Borges, 1949)

Borges describes the Aleph as a point through which all spaces can be seen simultaneously: worlds within worlds, layered realities existing at once within a single moment. In a similar way, architecture contains invisible systems beneath representation infrastructures of care, material memories, environmental rhythms, and latent relationships that often remain unseen until closely observed.

These projects investigate the spaces between the visible and the concealed, understanding architecture not as isolated form, but as a convergence of temporal, social, ecological, and perceptual systems existing between the lines.





01. ART INTO ARCHITECTURE

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01. ART INTO ARCHITECTURE

A STUDY OF EILEEN GRAY'S WORK

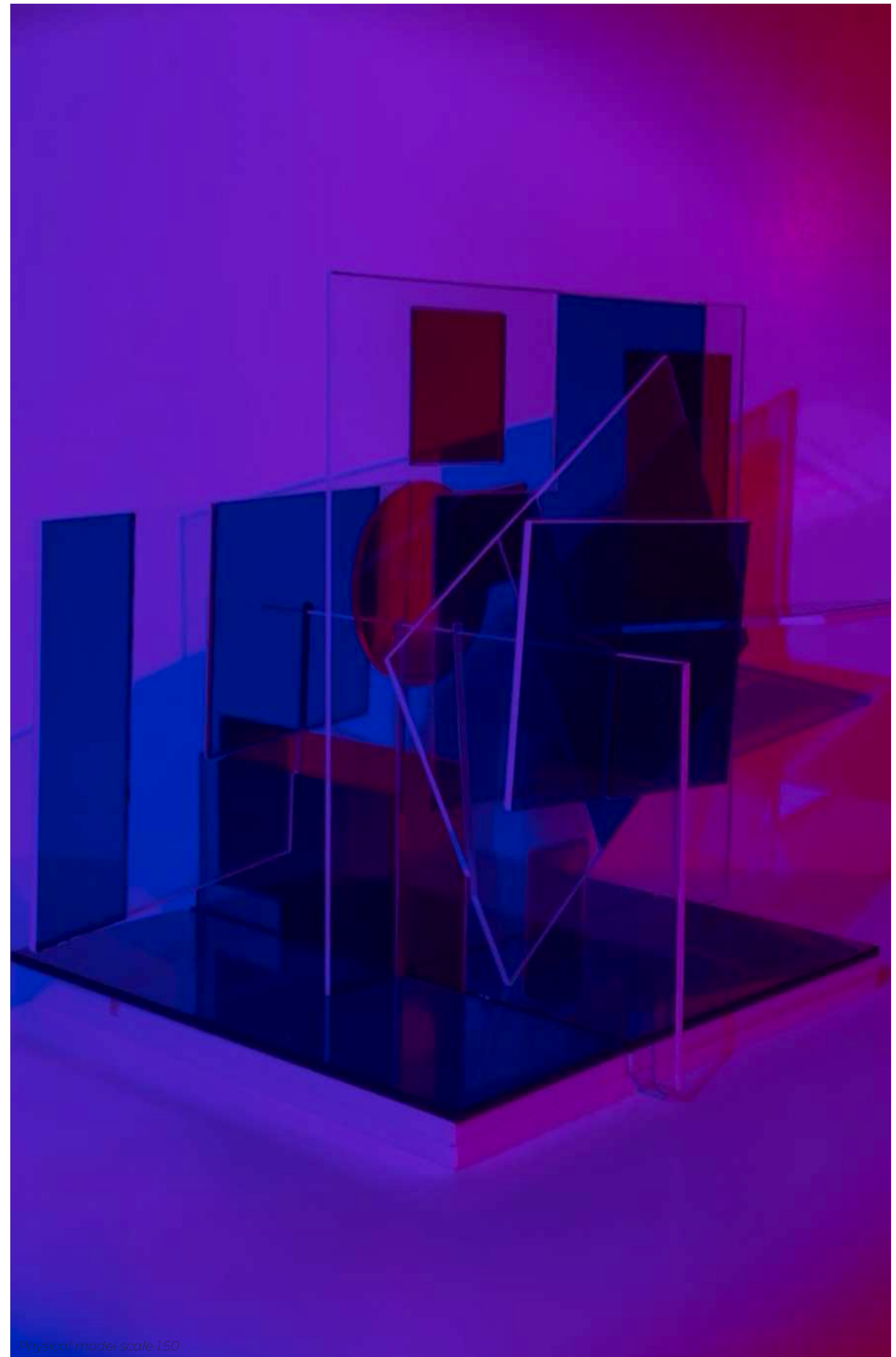
Seminar: Architecture Apropos Art
Professors: Steven Holl & Dimitra Tsachrelia
Author: Valentina Lizcano
New York City, US | 2026

This project investigates how Eileen Gray's architecture can be understood as the three-dimensional translation of a formal and chromatic language first developed through her paintings, rugs, lacquer works, screens, and furniture. Rather than treating color as decoration, the project examines it as an active spatial device.

Through the study of E.1027, the research identifies how geometric forms, linear elements, and layered color fields move from two-dimensional composition into architectural organization. Rugs become spatial diagrams, furniture becomes a form of linework, and color begins to structure relationships between planes, objects, and bodies.

The project focuses on the living space of E.1027, abstracting it into planes and chromatic layers. By removing and reintroducing color, it reveals how overlap, contrast, and interaction produce depth, atmosphere, intimacy, and spatial coherence.

Influenced by Julie Mehretu's layered mappings, the project also explores hidden visual systems, where overlapping colors generate new spatial conditions. Through drawings and physical models, the work argues that space is not fixed, but continuously produced through relational fields of color, perception, and atmosphere.



Physical model scale 1:50

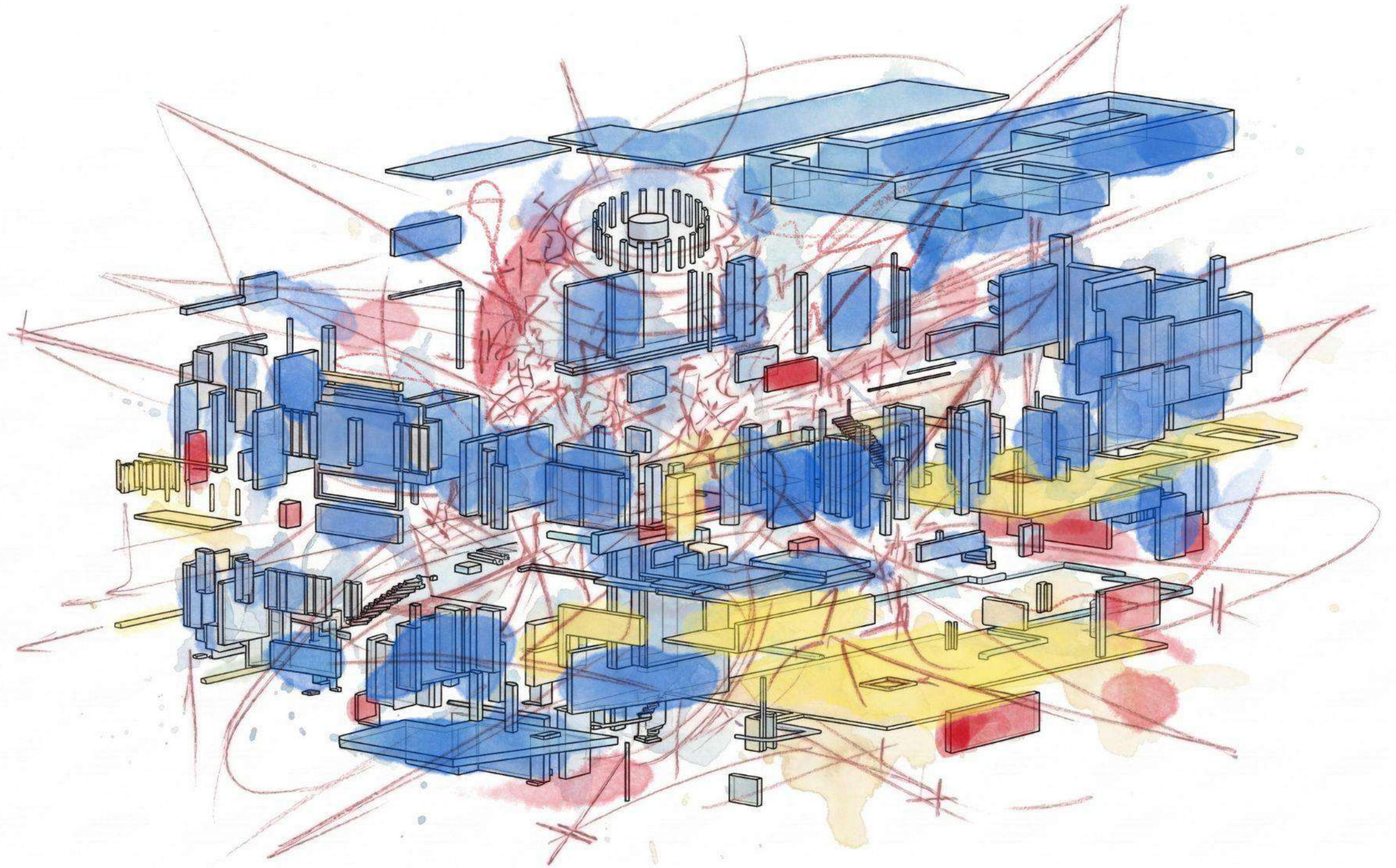
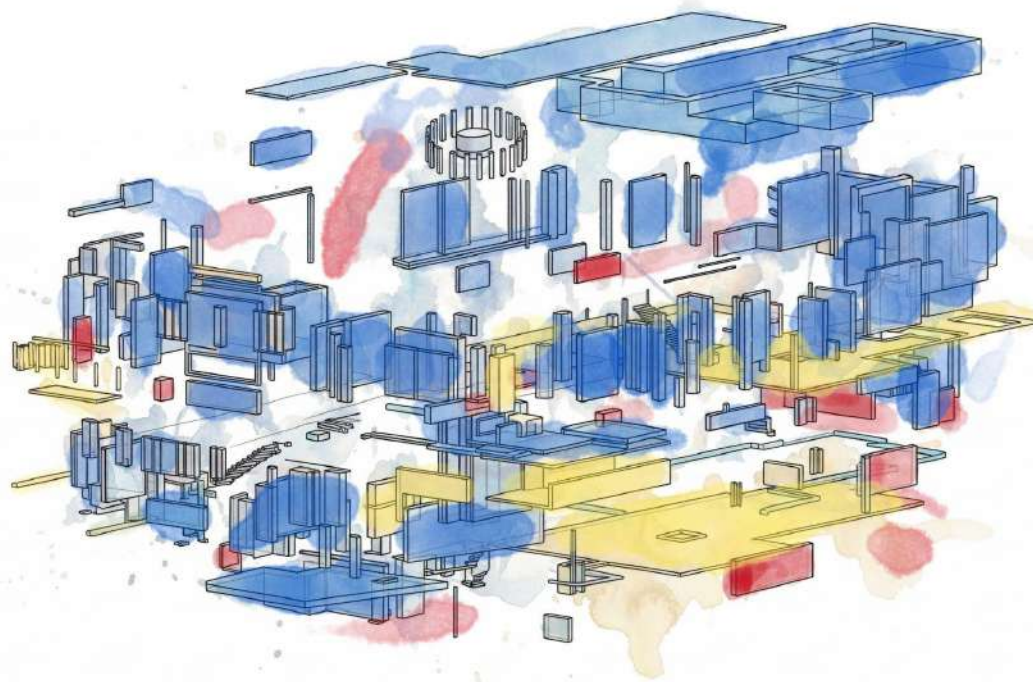
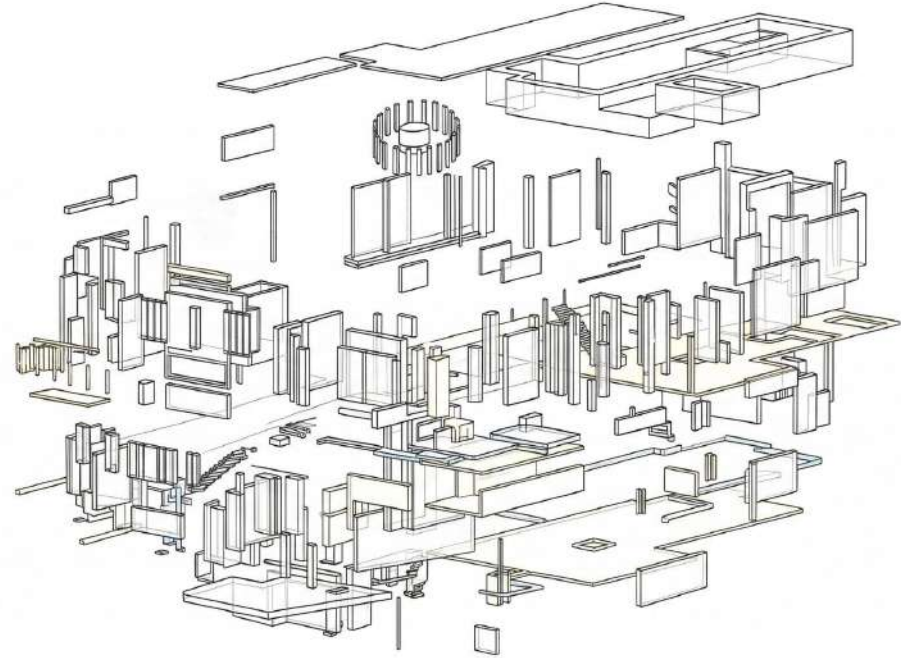
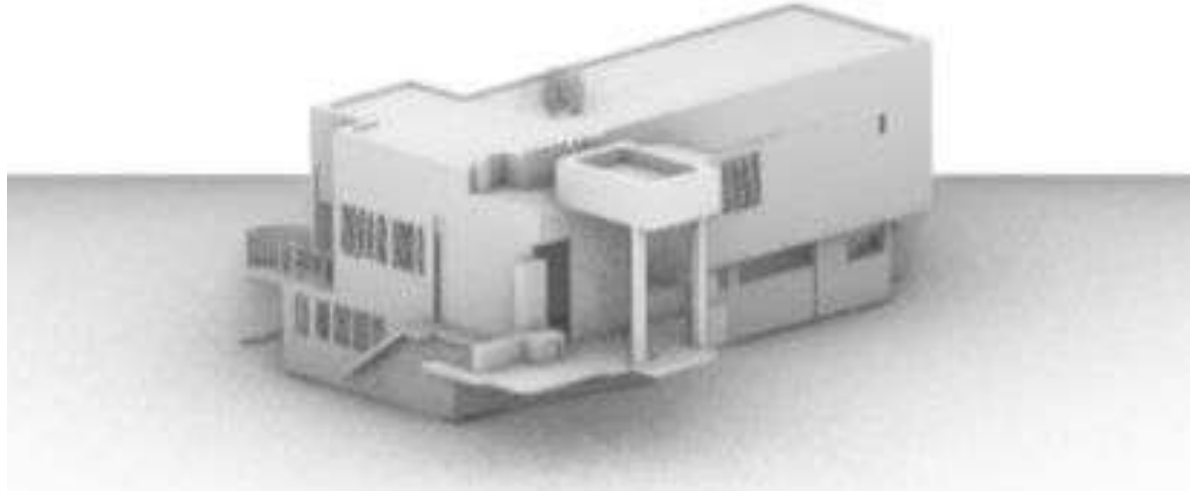
COLOR CONSTRUCTS SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

Analyzing Color Relationships Within the Plan Composition



COLOR CONSTRUCTS SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

Analyzing Color Relationships Within the Plan Composition in House E-1027



COLOR CONSTRUCTS SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

Analyzing Color Relationships Within the Plan Composition in House E-1027



Chromatic Reconstruction of Room in House E-1027



Planar Reinterpretation of the Room Through Chromatic Overlap and Emerging Color Gradients



02. SHAPING COMMONS: PLAY, PLUG, GATHER

COLLECTIVE HOUSING PROJECT

Studio: A New Grammar for Collective Housing

Professor: Neeraj Bhatia

Authors: Valentina Lizcano & Natalia Riba
New York City, US | 2025

What if housing could help raise a child, not just shelter them? In New York City, raising a child has become a privilege. Childcare costs often exceed rent, public support is limited, and single parents are pushed out of the city by a system that offers little structural care. This project begins with the recognition that the housing crisis is also a care crisis.

The proposal reimagines collective housing as an infrastructure for mutual support. It asks whether architecture can recreate the support system once provided by the extended family. Rather than isolating domestic life within private units, the project builds new forms of kinship through shared space, visibility, and spatial proximity.

The design begins at the scale of the minimal unit, studying what one person needs to live, care, and be cared for. Units are adaptable and evolve with changing family structures. By consolidating services in fixed cores, rooms can be added or removed over time, allowing the dwelling to grow from a single unit to a cluster and ultimately into a neighborhood system.

At the scale of the building, an X shaped aggregation strategy generates four interconnected courtyards that balance privacy and collective life. Shared spaces such as playgrounds, laundry areas, and coworking zones are positioned to enable natural supervision and interaction. Through repetition and mirroring, the architecture produces a communal ecosystem where trust, autonomy, and everyday care become spatially embedded.



Physical model scale 1:50

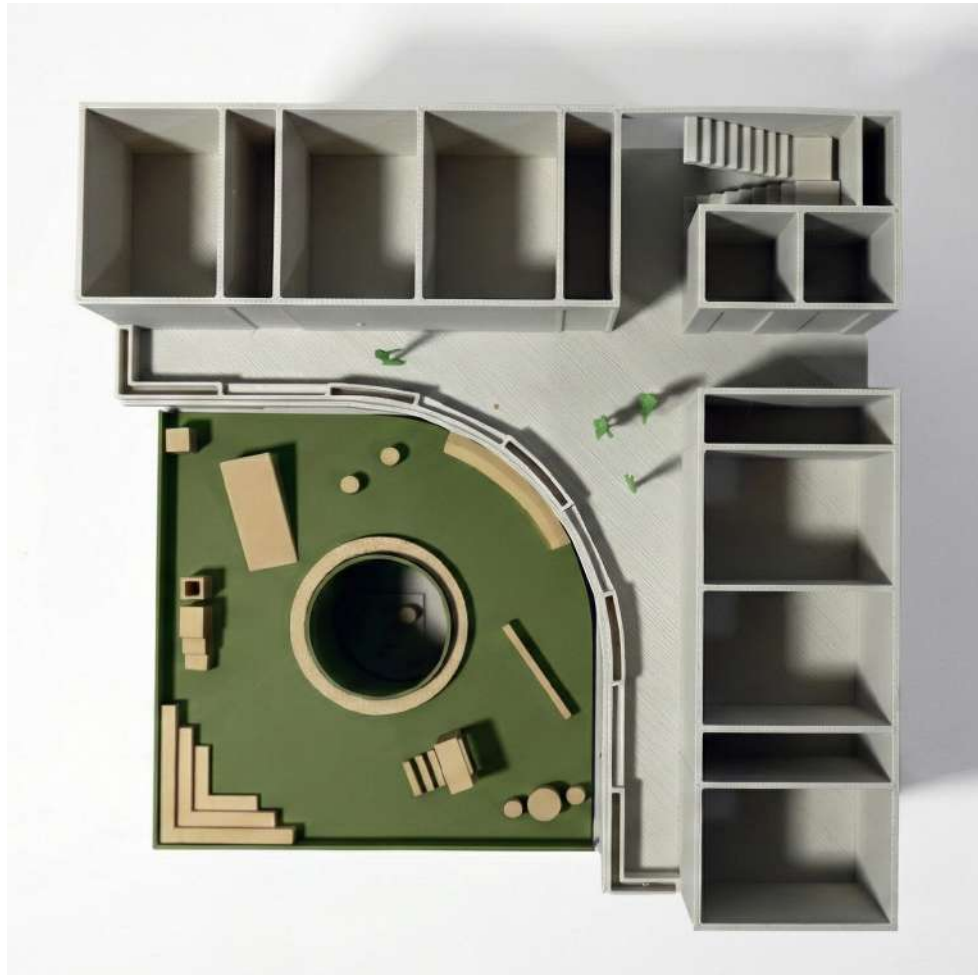
CAN ARCHITECTURE RECREATE THE SUPPORT OF AN EXTENDED FAMILY?



01 Flexible Housing Units: Simple modules adapt as needs change



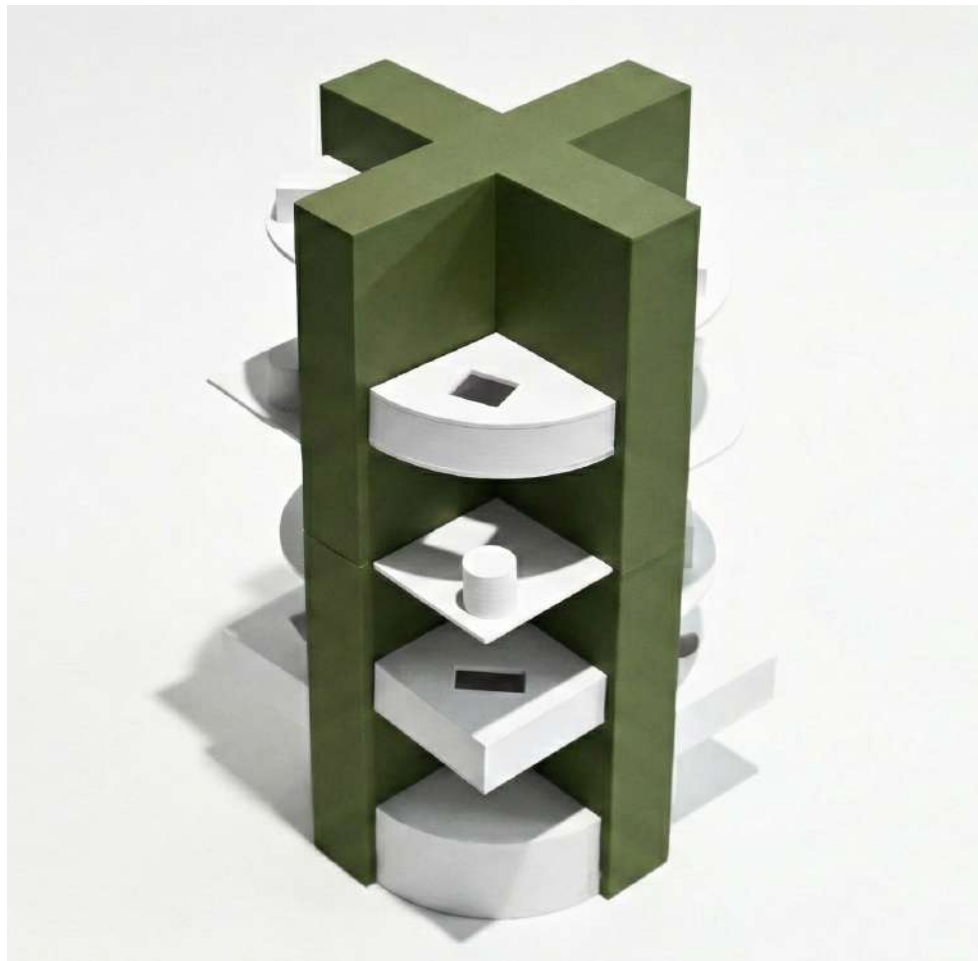
02 Aggregation: Growth happens individually and collectively



03 From the Unit to the Cluster: Designing the sub collective



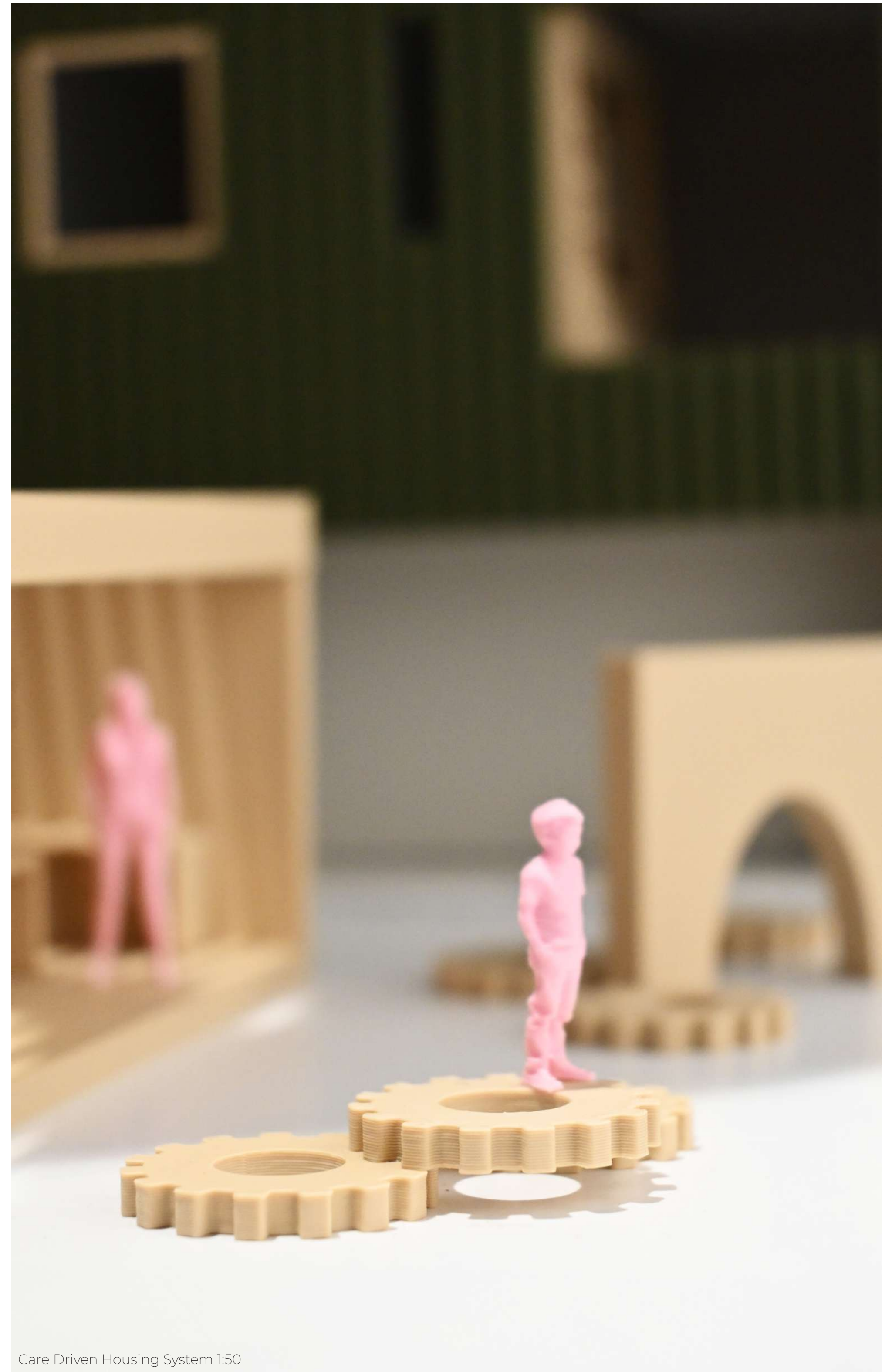
04 Scaling the Cluster: The L cluster scales into an X mass organizing four shared courts



05 Plug In Commons: Interdependent amenities plug into the X structure, generating a distributed communal system



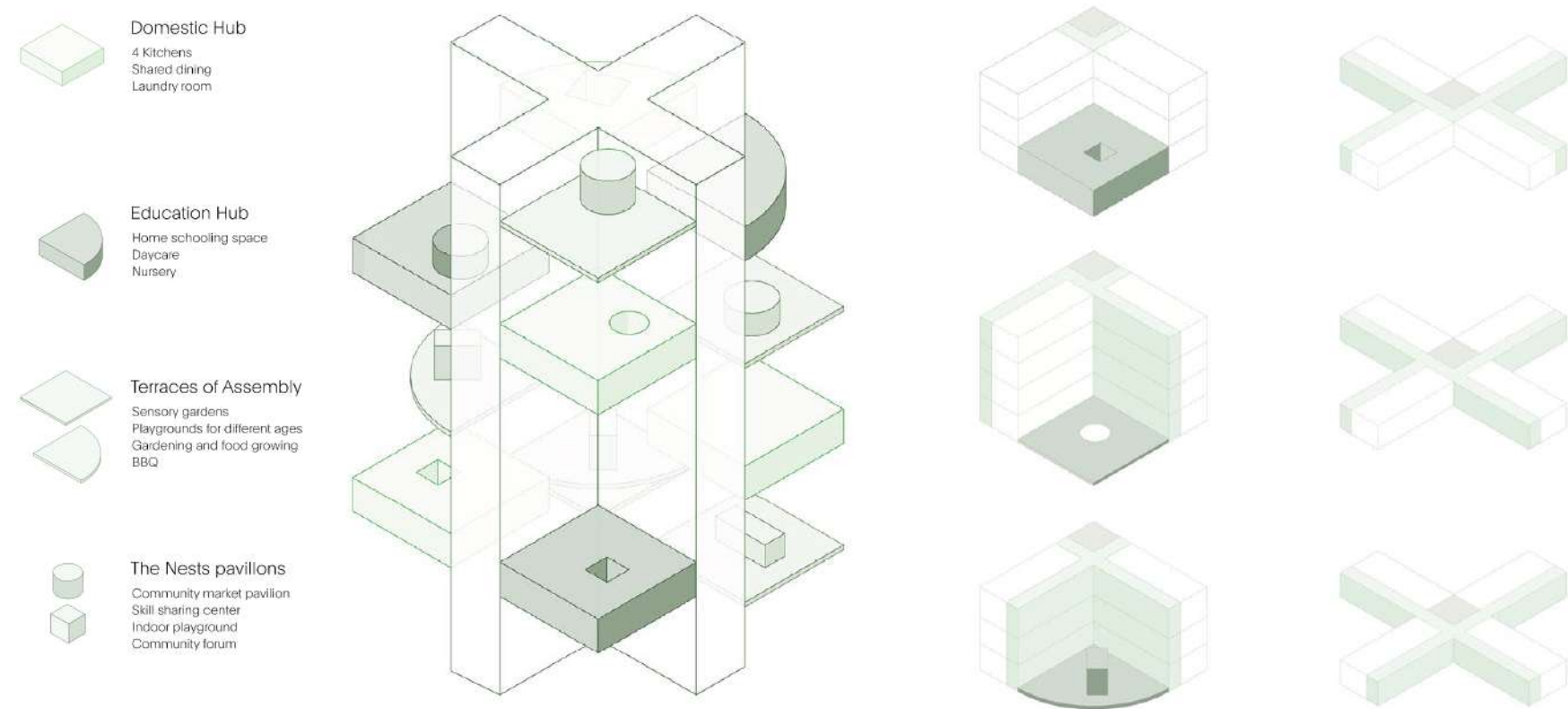
06 Urbanized Commons: As the X repeats, amenities align, linking spaces and communities



Care Driven Housing System 1:50

COMMUNAL ECOSYSTEM

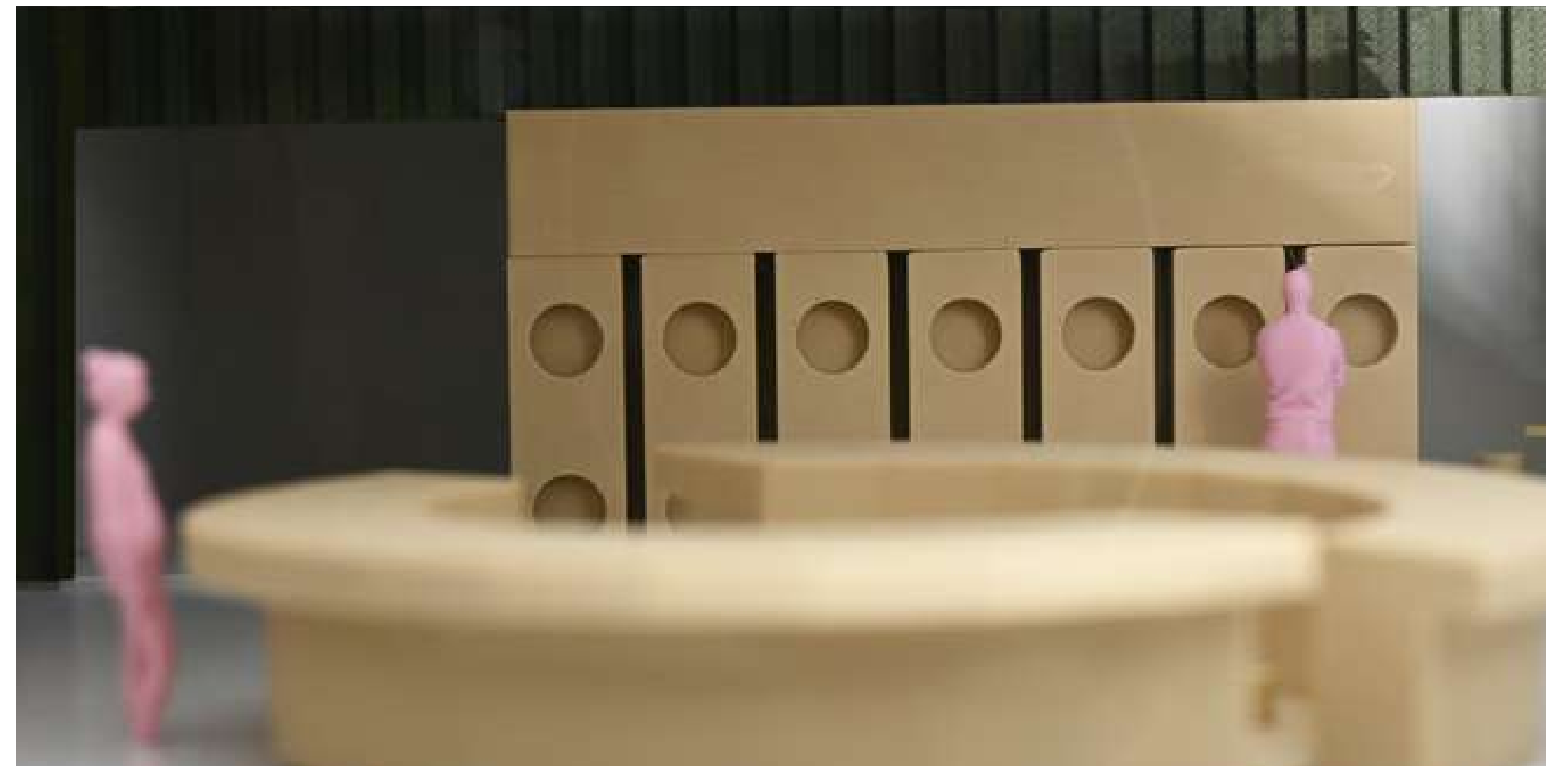
The X divides the plot into four courtyards that organize circulation, public space, and visibility



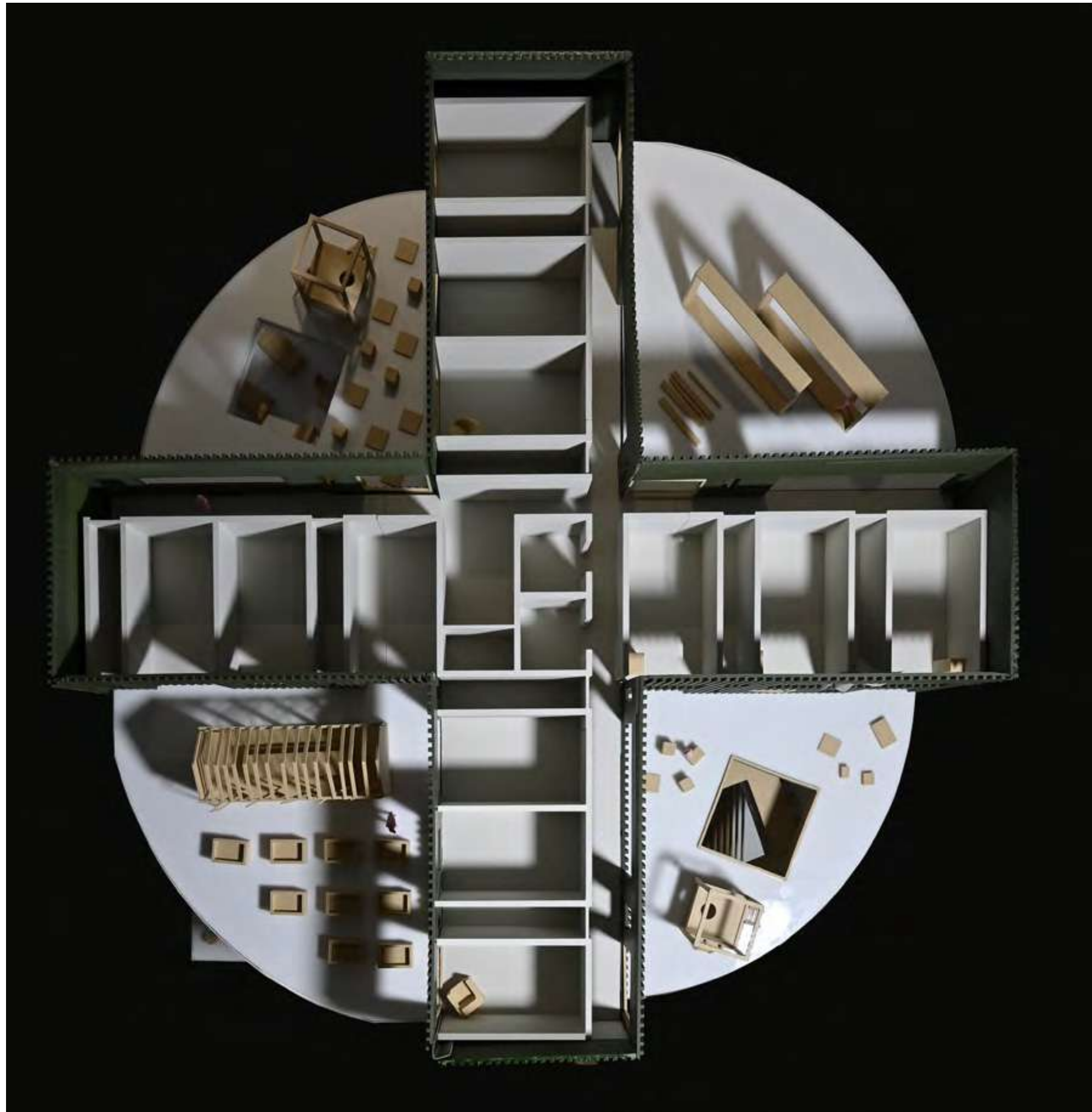
Communal Area: Early Childhood Play Space



Communal Area: Library



Communal Area: Laundry Room and Playground



Model from above

COMMUNAL ECOSYSTEM



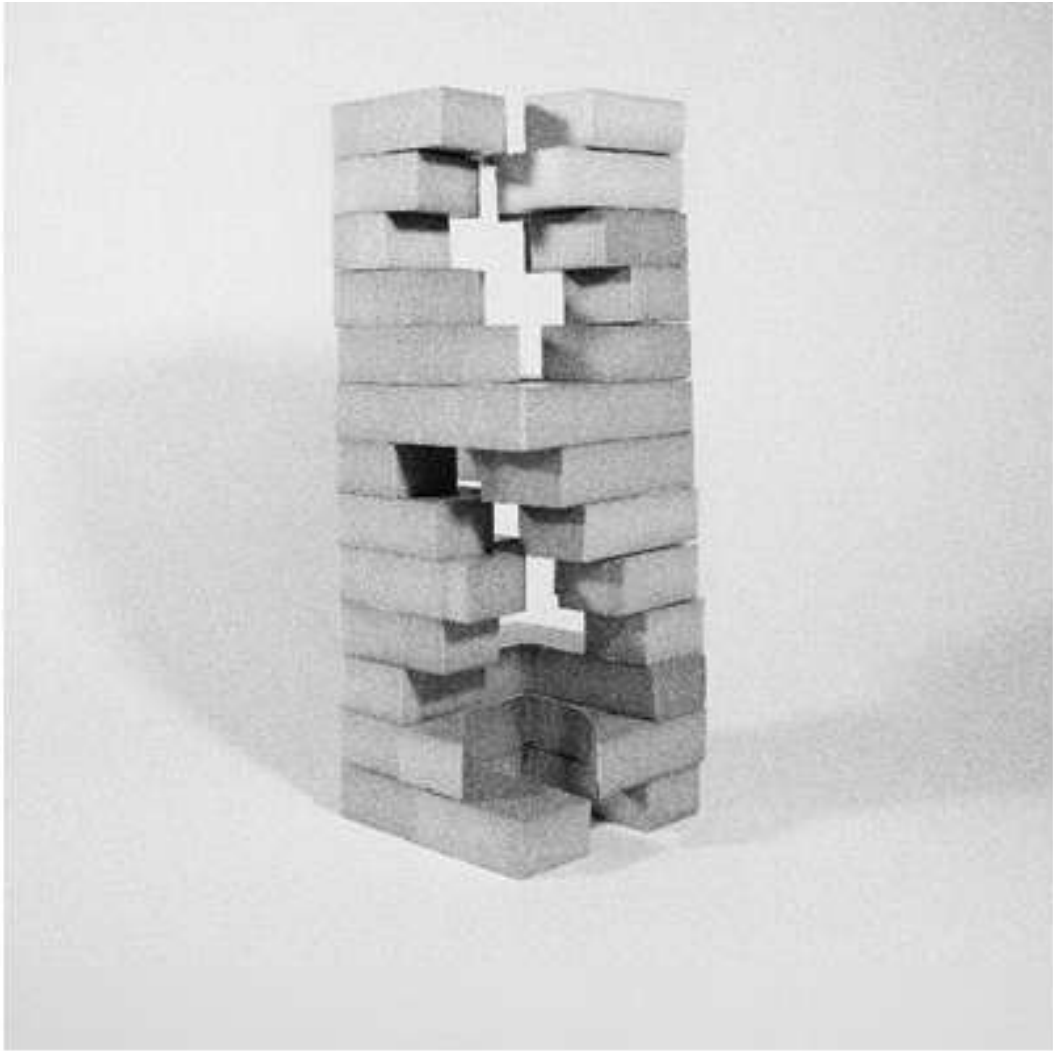
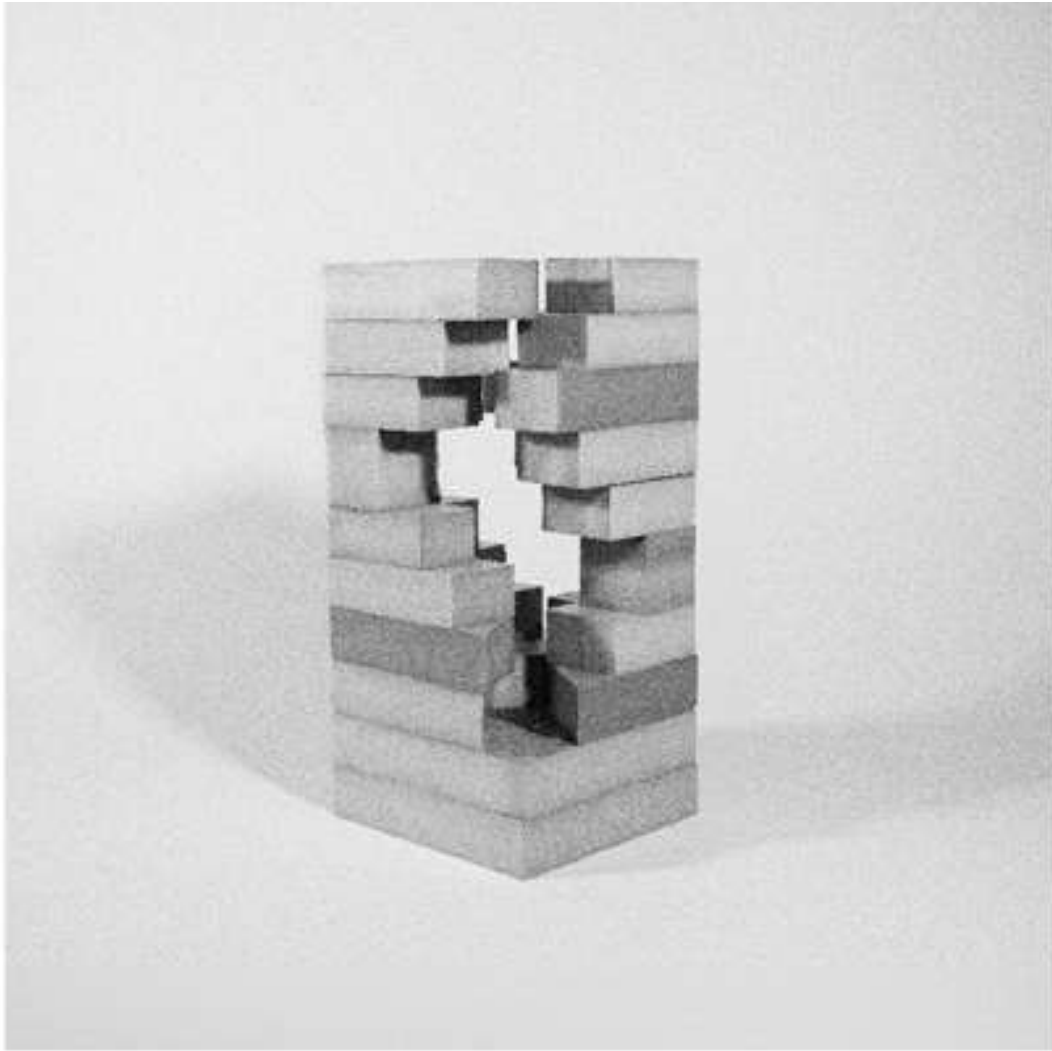
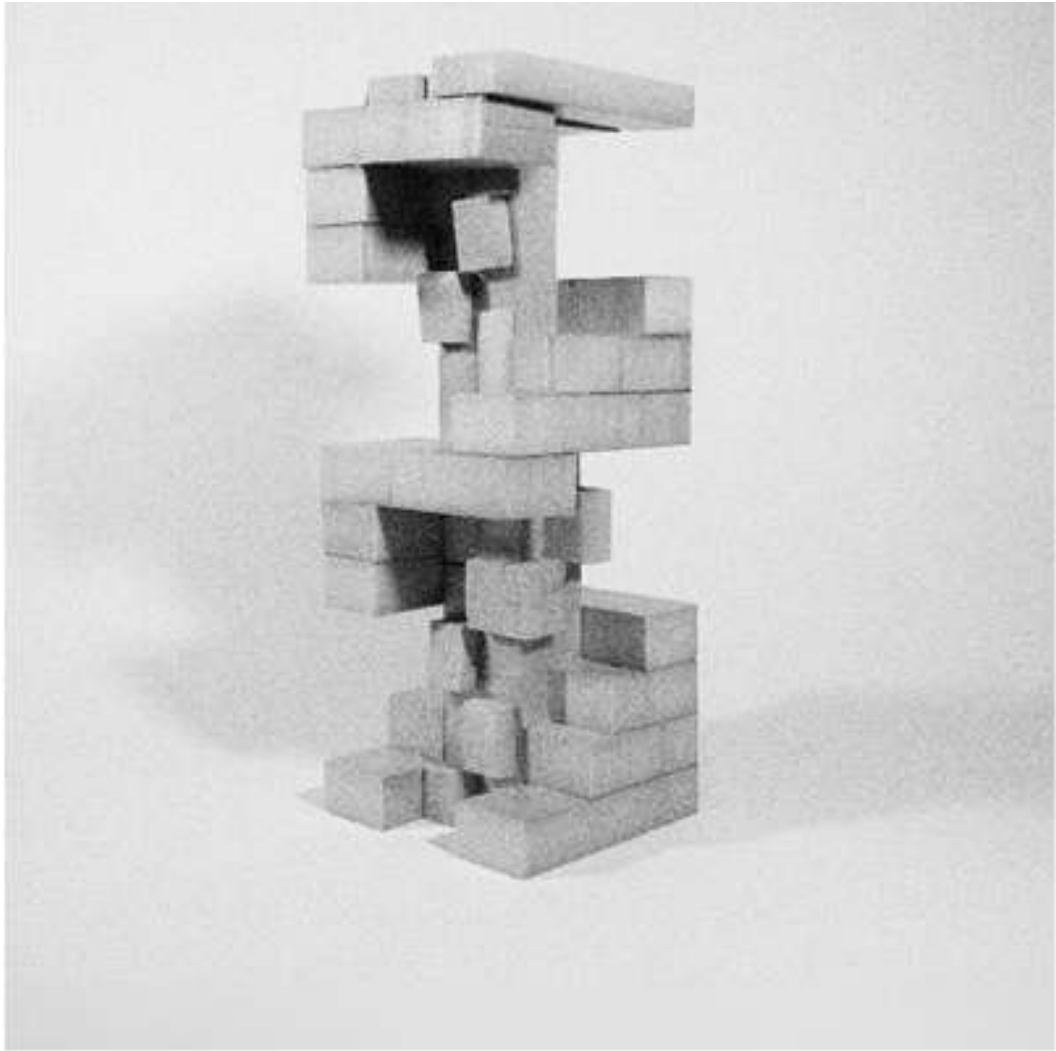
THE CLUSTER STUDY: The Introverted Courtyard

We also explored a range of spatial strategies to understand how different cluster typologies could generate new shared spaces at multiple scales, allowing community engagement to flourish within residential buildings.

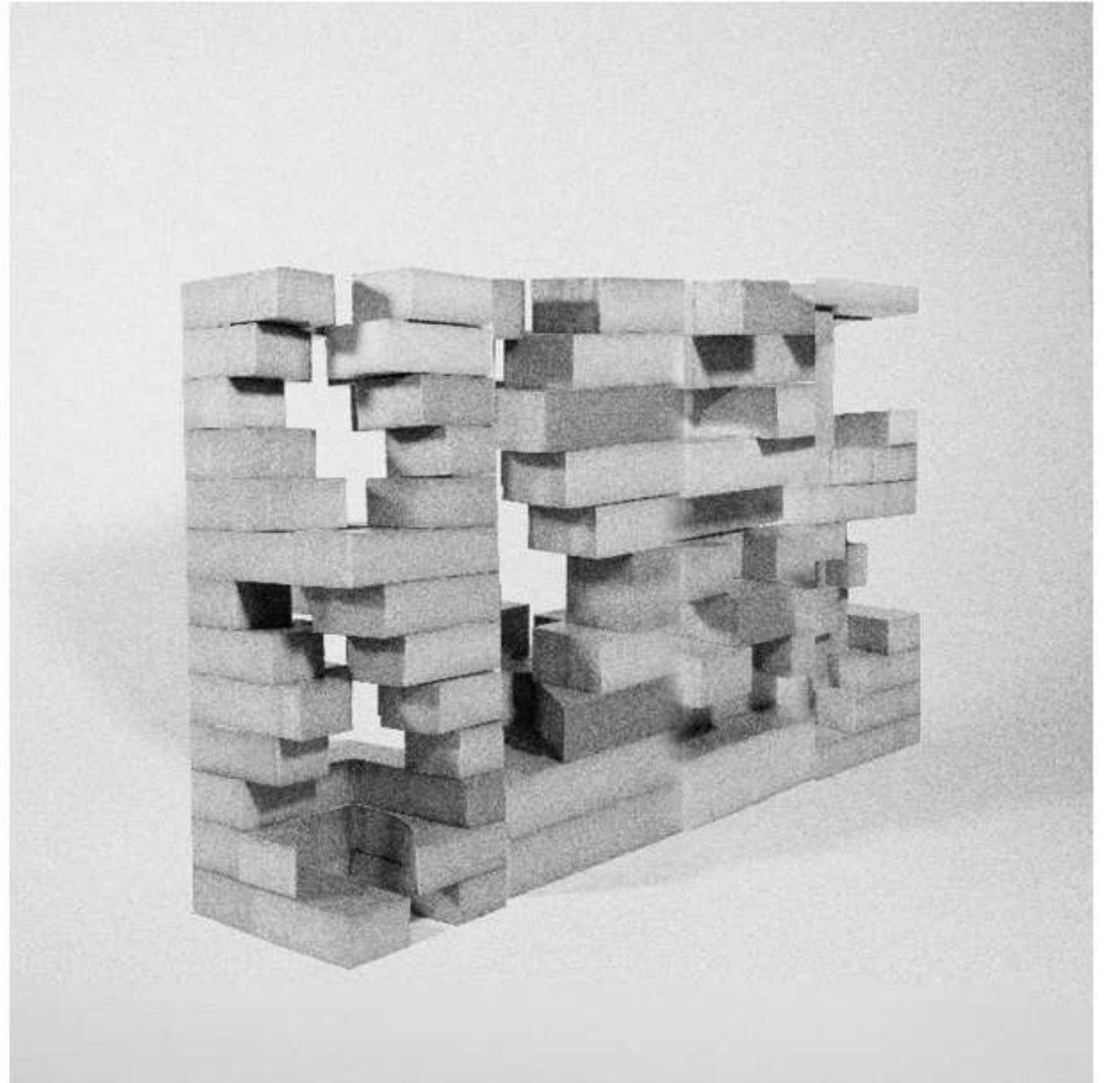
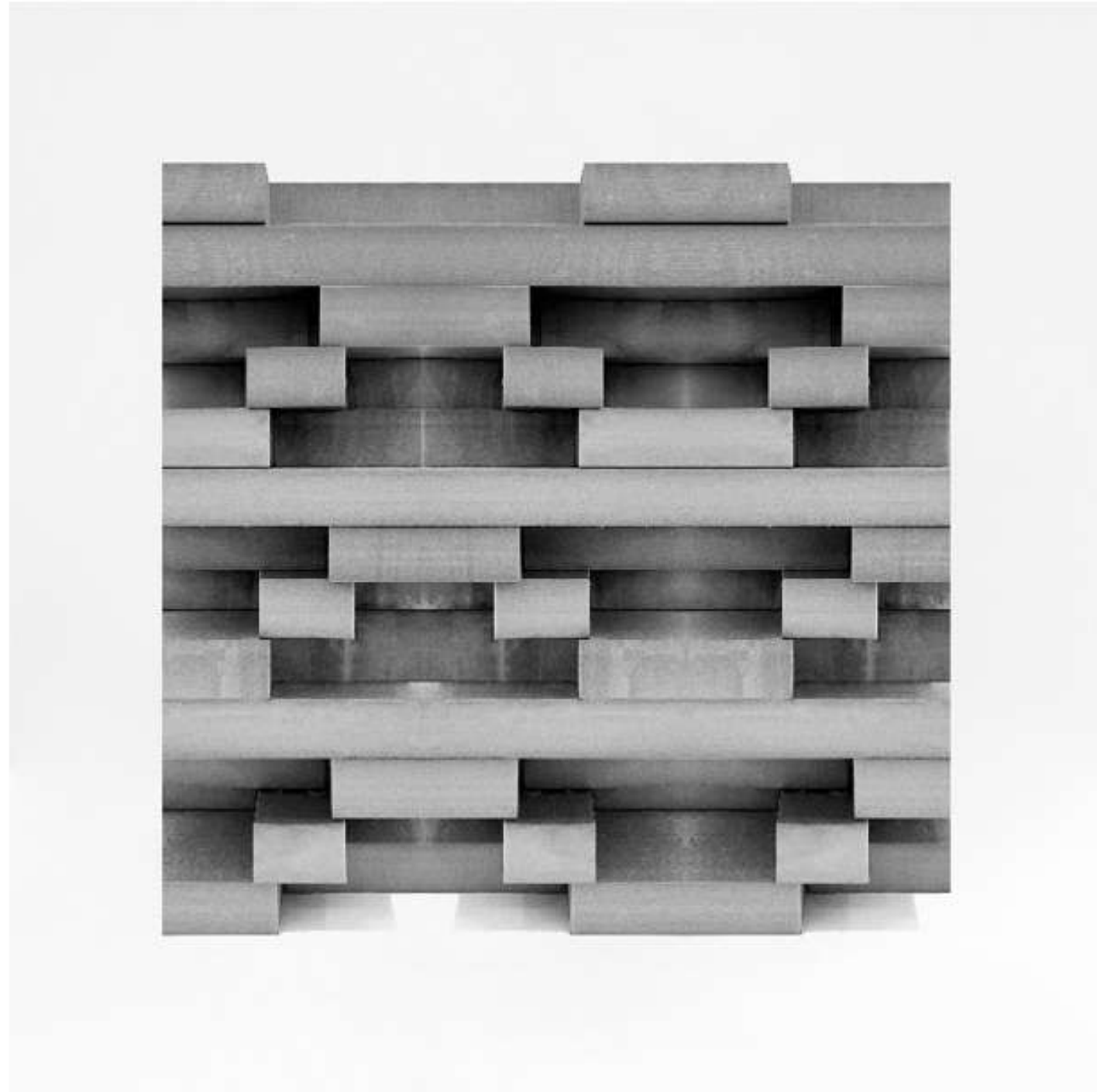
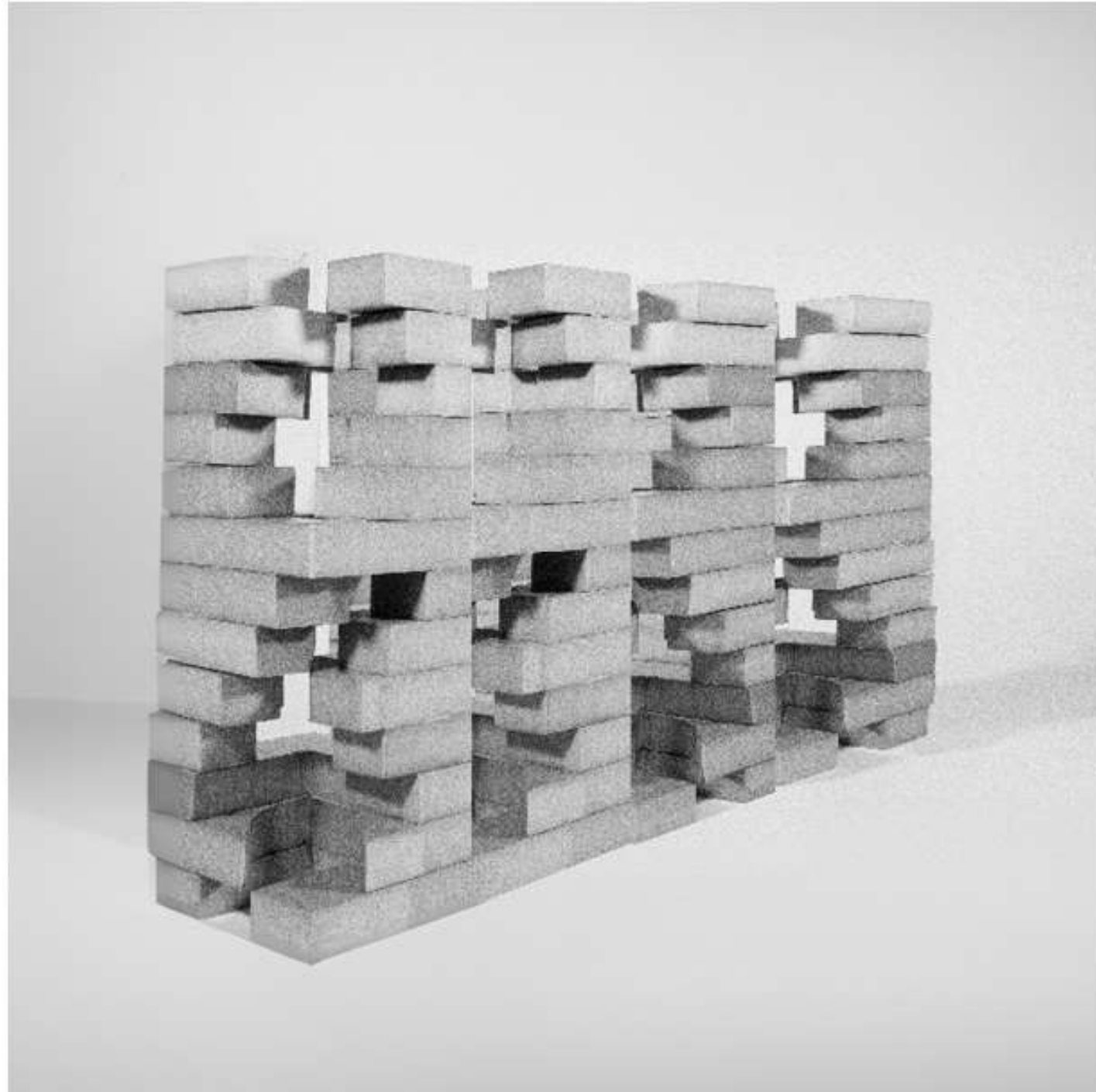
In our first exploration, we began with an “O” typology a continuous perimeter that naturally defined a collective interior courtyard. As the project evolved, this ring gradually transformed into two interlocking “L” forms, creating strategic voids that punctuate the massing. These openings are not residual spaces but intentional social condensers, designed to invite gathering, visibility, and interaction across different levels of the building.



FROM UNIT TO SYSTEM: Growth happens individually and collectively



FROM UNIT TO SYSTEM: How does community emerge through form?





03. Irish-American Center for Mining, Memory & Making

MUSEUM & ARTISTIC METAL WORK INSTITUTE
ADAPTIVE REUSE

Studio V: Reusing the decommissioned US Dublin Embassy
Professors: Jorge Otero-Pailos & Mark Rakatansky
Authors: Valentina Lizcano & Ellie Nolan
Dublin, Ireland | 2025

This project reimagines John Johansen's U.S. Embassy in Dublin through preservation and adaptive reuse as the Irish American Center for Mining Memory and Making. Mining operates as both a historical lens and a spatial framework to tell broader stories of immigration labor resilience religion and future craft. Rooted in the shared geological origins of Ireland and North America the project reveals how deep material connections became human ones through Irish migration into American mining industries.

The adaptive reuse strategy transforms the embassy into a vertical geological section where each architectural layer corresponds to a phase in the cycle of extraction memory and production. Descending into the building mirrors entering the earth. The basement preserves raw geological archives ores pigments and mining cores storing material memory. Just above the museum conserves and interprets Irish American mining histories through immersive material environments. Rising upward classrooms workshops and the library reactivate this inherited knowledge through contemporary craft research and making.

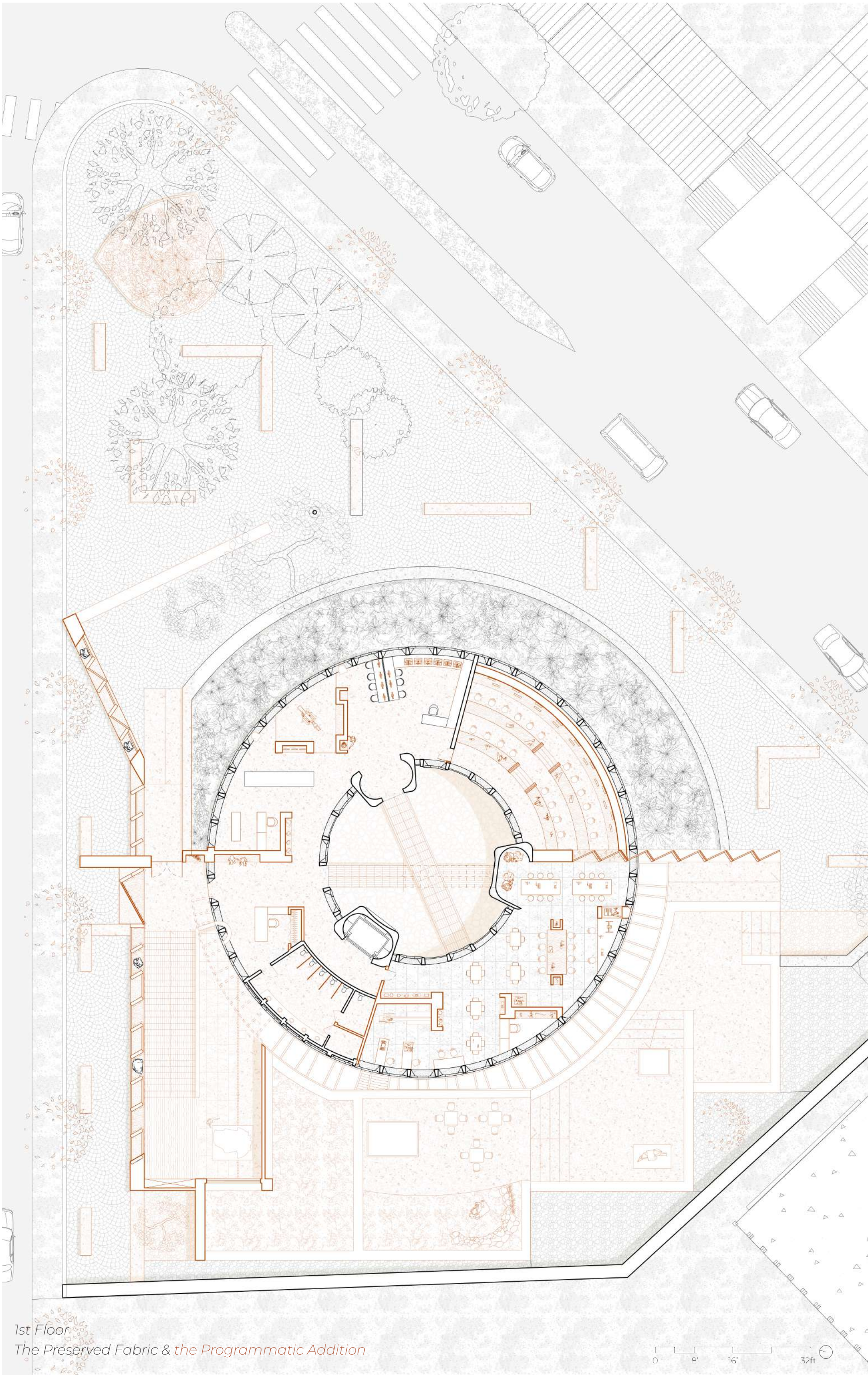
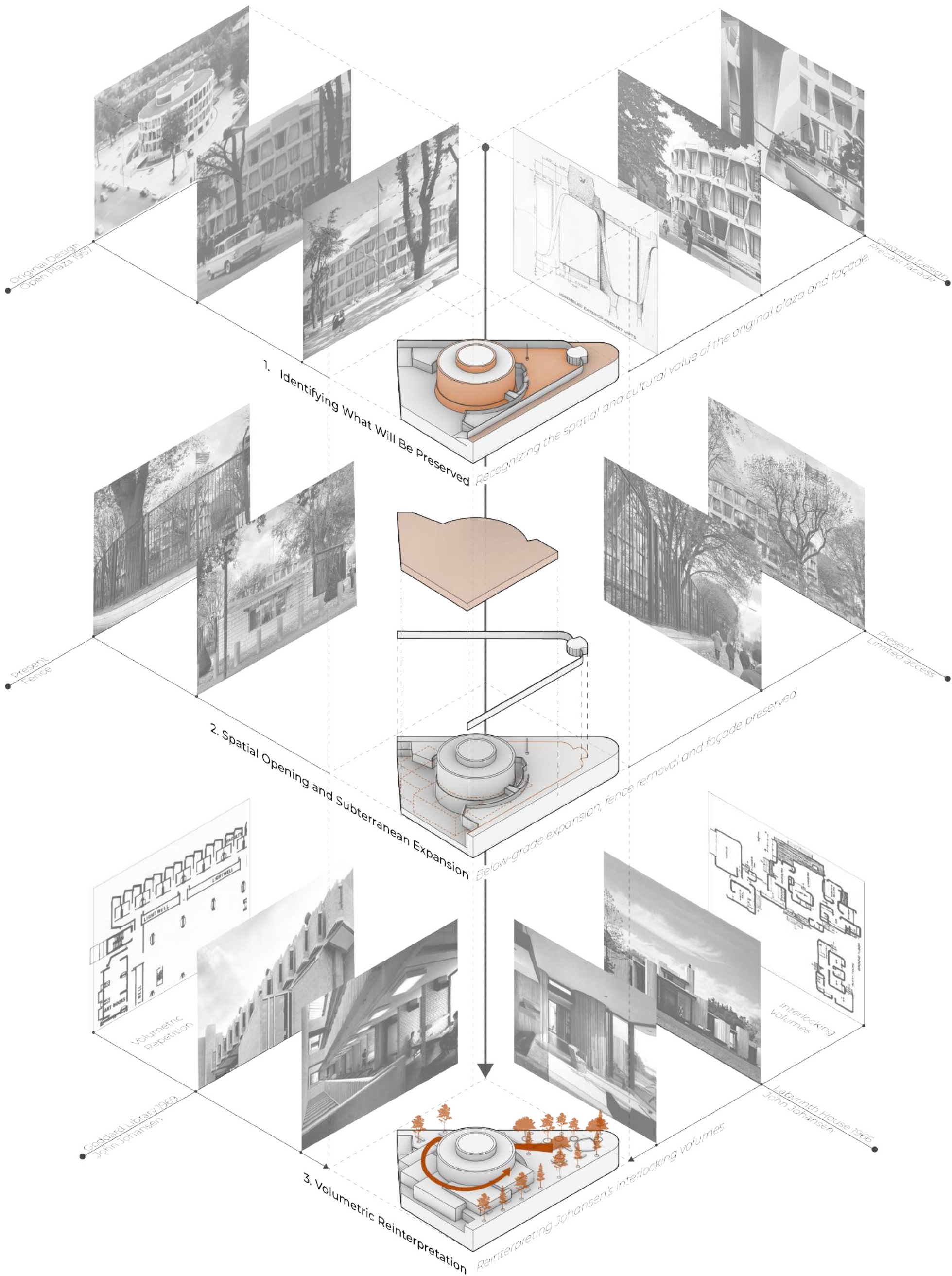
Material preservation reinforces this layered logic. Original embassy stones including limestone Connemara marble aggregates and terrazzo are carefully retained and reintroduced in finishes that move from rough quarry states to refined polished surfaces expressing increasing technological and cultural refinement. The preserved shockbeton façade stands as both artifact and structural frame anchoring the adaptive reuse between past and future. Together these layers transform the embassy into a living geological and cultural instrument that does not merely preserve memory but continuously regenerates it.



Exterior View: Nested pool area integrating indoor and outdoor spaces.
Programs used: Rhino, Grasshopper, Enscape, D5, Photoshop

CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM

The exploded diagram traces Johansen's formal vocabulary mass articulation, structural expression, and layered spatial sequencing and repositions it within a new geological and cultural narrative. Rather than preserving form as artifact, the project reactivates his language as an operative system for memory, extraction, and making.

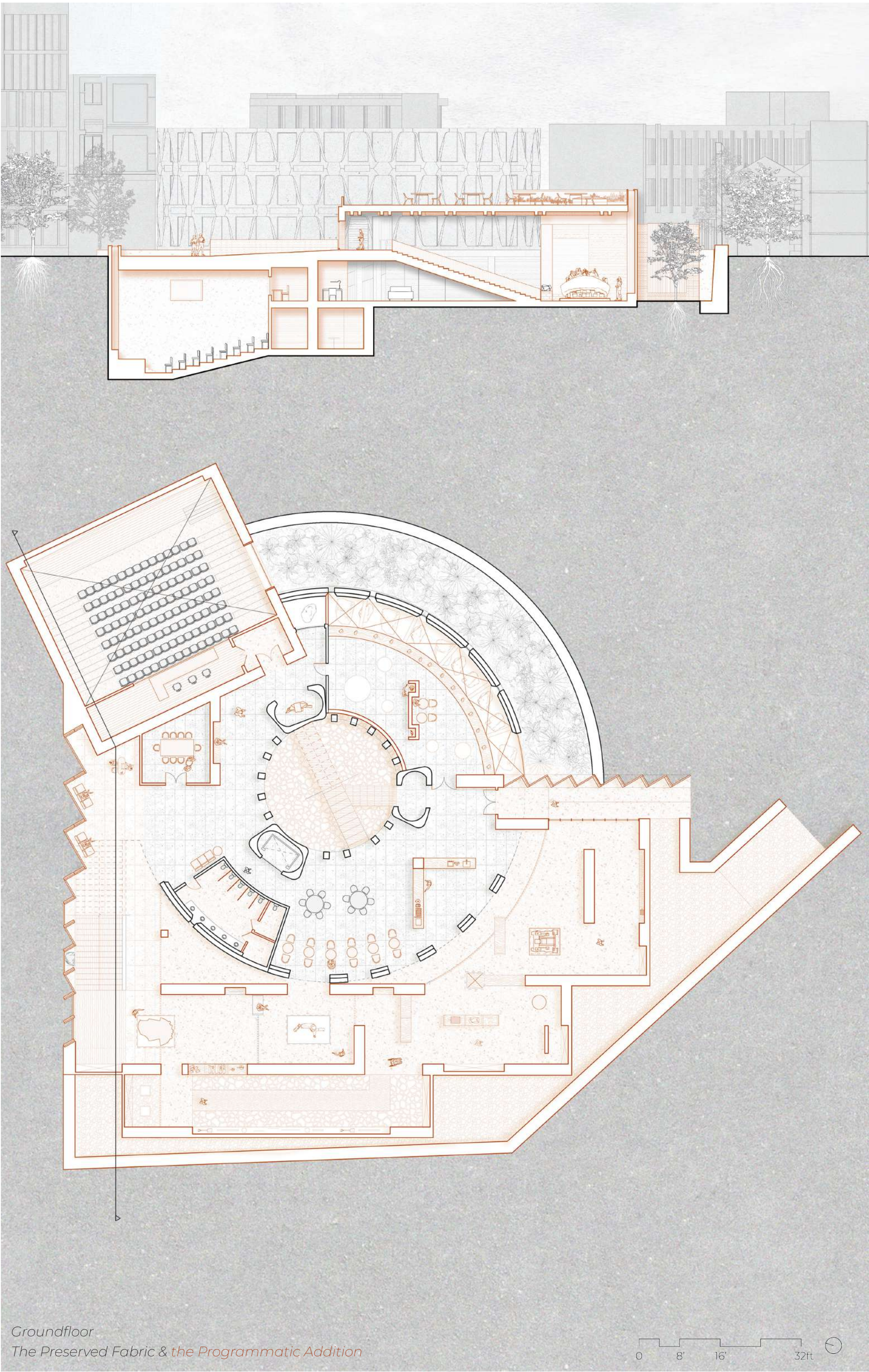




Adaptive addition in dialogue with existing fabric



Past anchored in stone; intervention emerging from the earth.

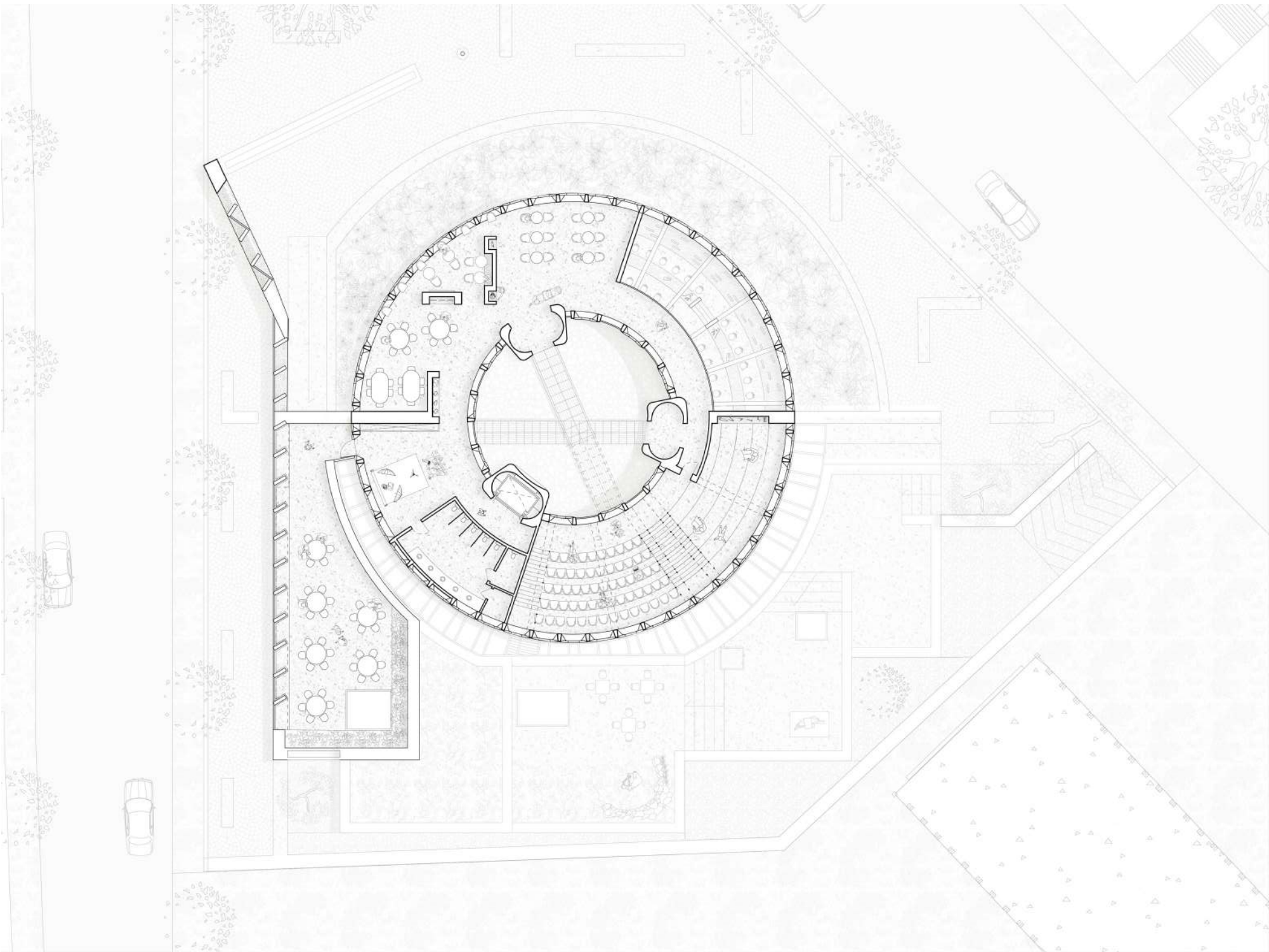


Groundfloor
The Preserved Fabric & the Programmatic Addition

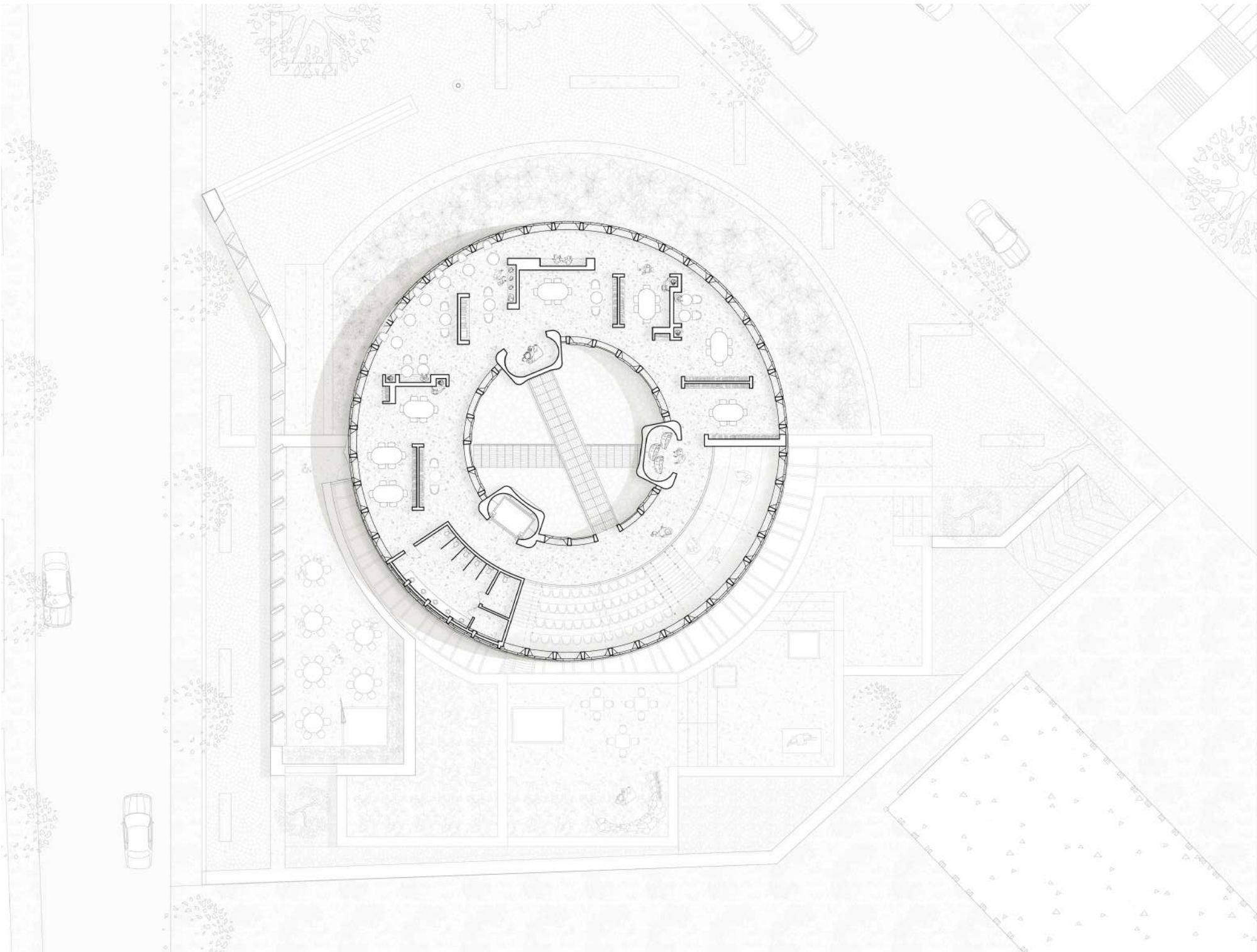
0 8' 16' 32ft



Past anchored in stone; intervention emerging from the earth.



2nd Floor: The Metal Workshops



3rd Floor: The Archive



01 Floor: The Threshold Entrance



Groundfloor: The Museum



02 Floor: Metal Workshops



03 Floor: The Archive





04. REFRAMING BROADWAY

MIXED USE COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL TOWER

Computational elective: Rethinking BIM
Professor: Joe Brennan | Group: (3)
Authors: Valentina Lizcano, Nicolas Garcia, George Koltiris
New York City, US | 2025

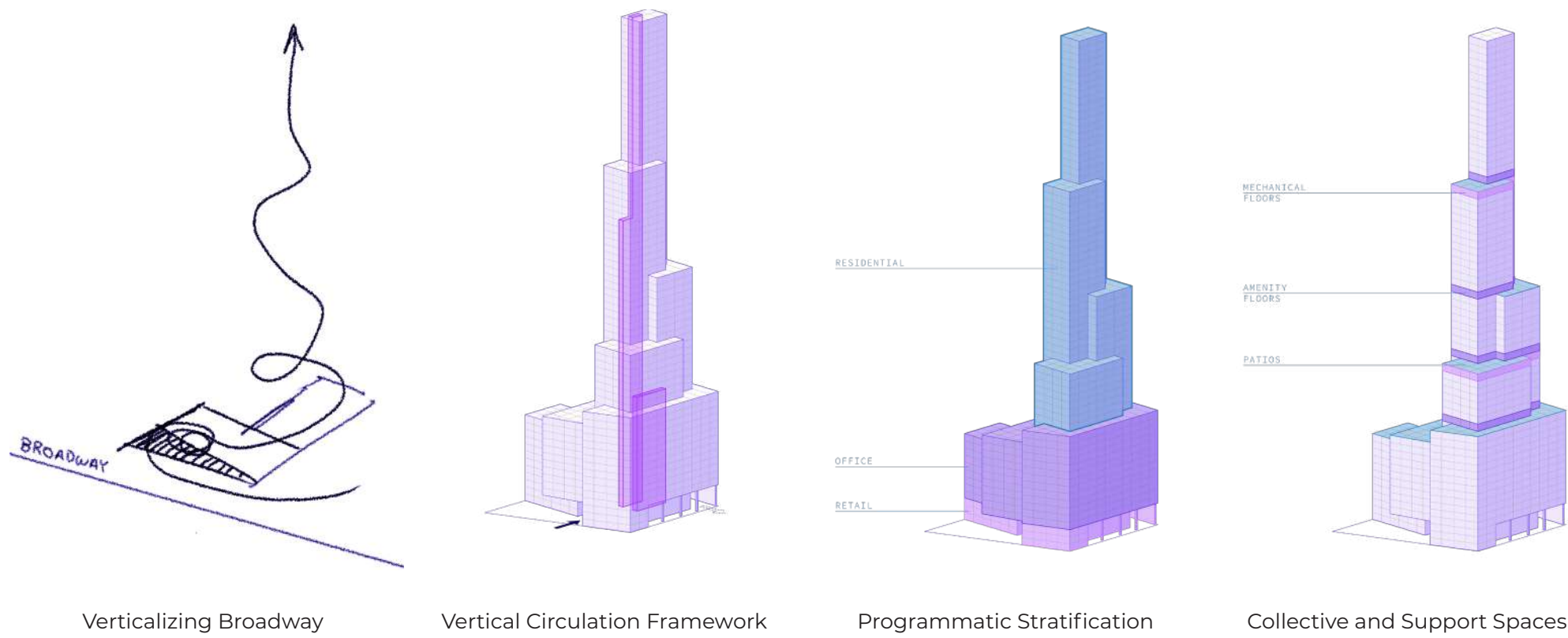
Reframing Broadway is a 70-story mixed-use high-rise located at 1227 Broadway in Midtown Manhattan, conceived as a vertically integrated response to zoning, structure, and environmental performance. The project translates Broadway's diagonal geometry into a stepped tower form that organizes retail, office, and residential programs through clear vertical zoning. Public and retail spaces anchor the base, reinforcing pedestrian continuity along Broadway, while offices occupy efficient mid-level floor plates and residential units rise above. Strategic setbacks generate terraces, improve daylight access, and mitigate wind exposure, producing spatial differentiation and environmental comfort across the building section.

The design process is driven by BIM-based analysis and parametric control. Custom Grasshopper scripts continuously verify FAR allocation, tower coverage above 350 feet, and program distribution within the M1-8A / R12 Special Mixed-Use District, allowing zoning compliance to actively shape massing decisions in real time. Annual solar exposure, wind behavior, and view analyses inform facade articulation, terrace placement, and unit orientation. A modular 33-foot structural grid coordinates structure, facade, and planning efficiency, while a prefabricated ventilated concrete envelope supports constructability, performance, and controlled repetition resulting in a rational, adaptable high-rise system grounded in measurable architectural logic.

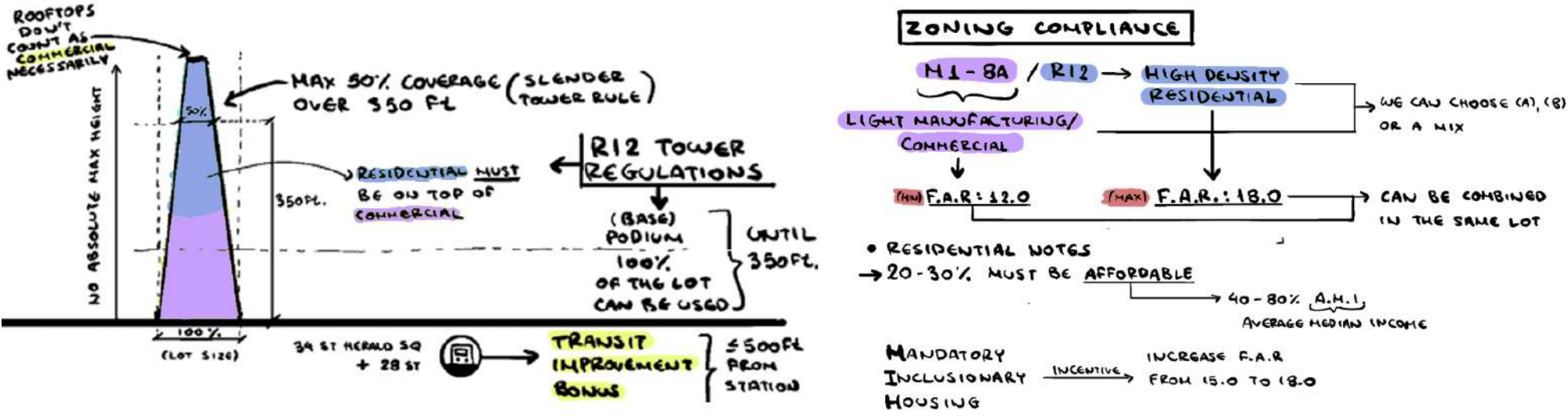


Pedestrian View from Broadway
Programs used: Revit, Enscape, Nano Banano, Photoshop

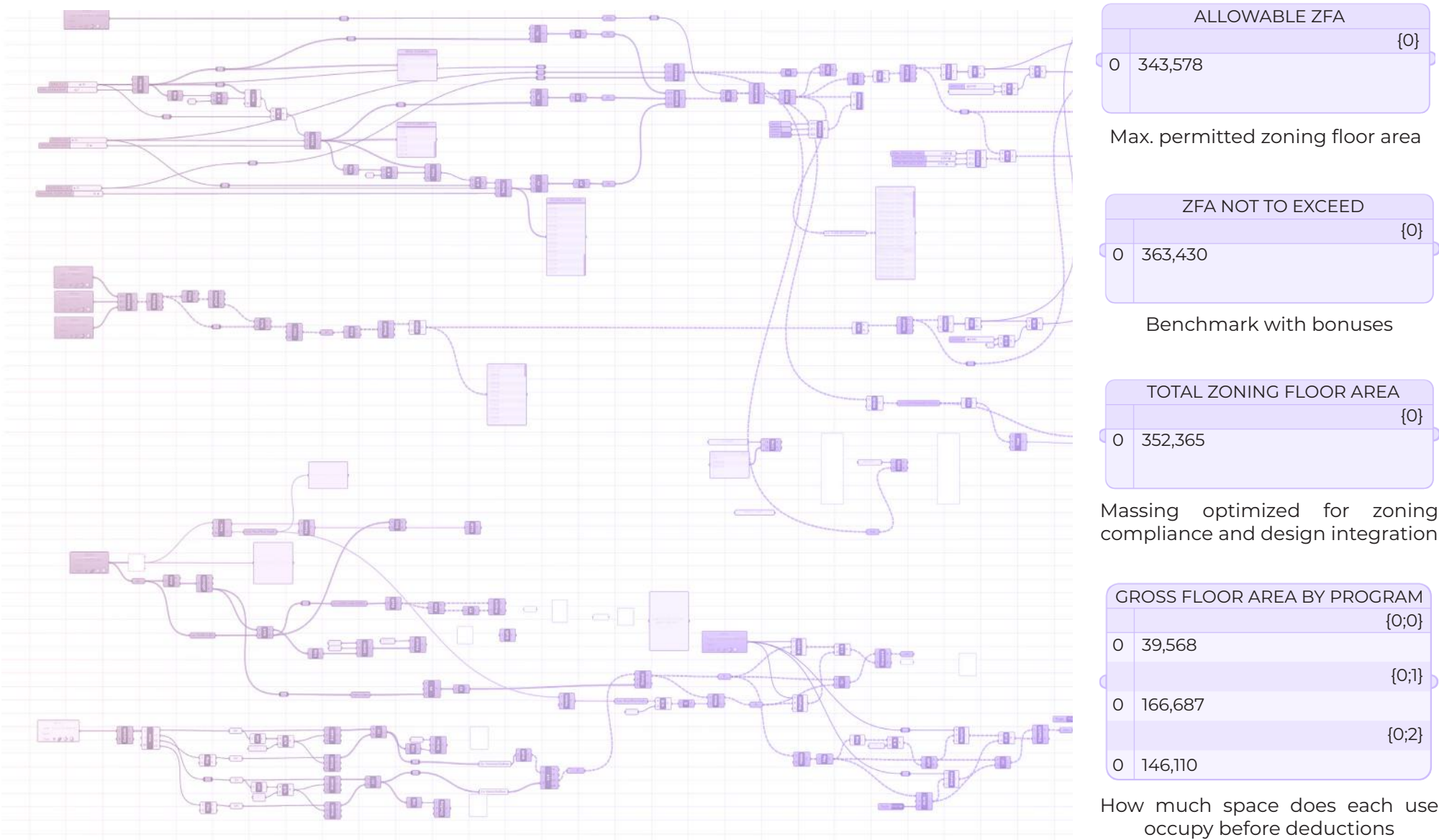
PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION & VERTICAL CIRCULATION



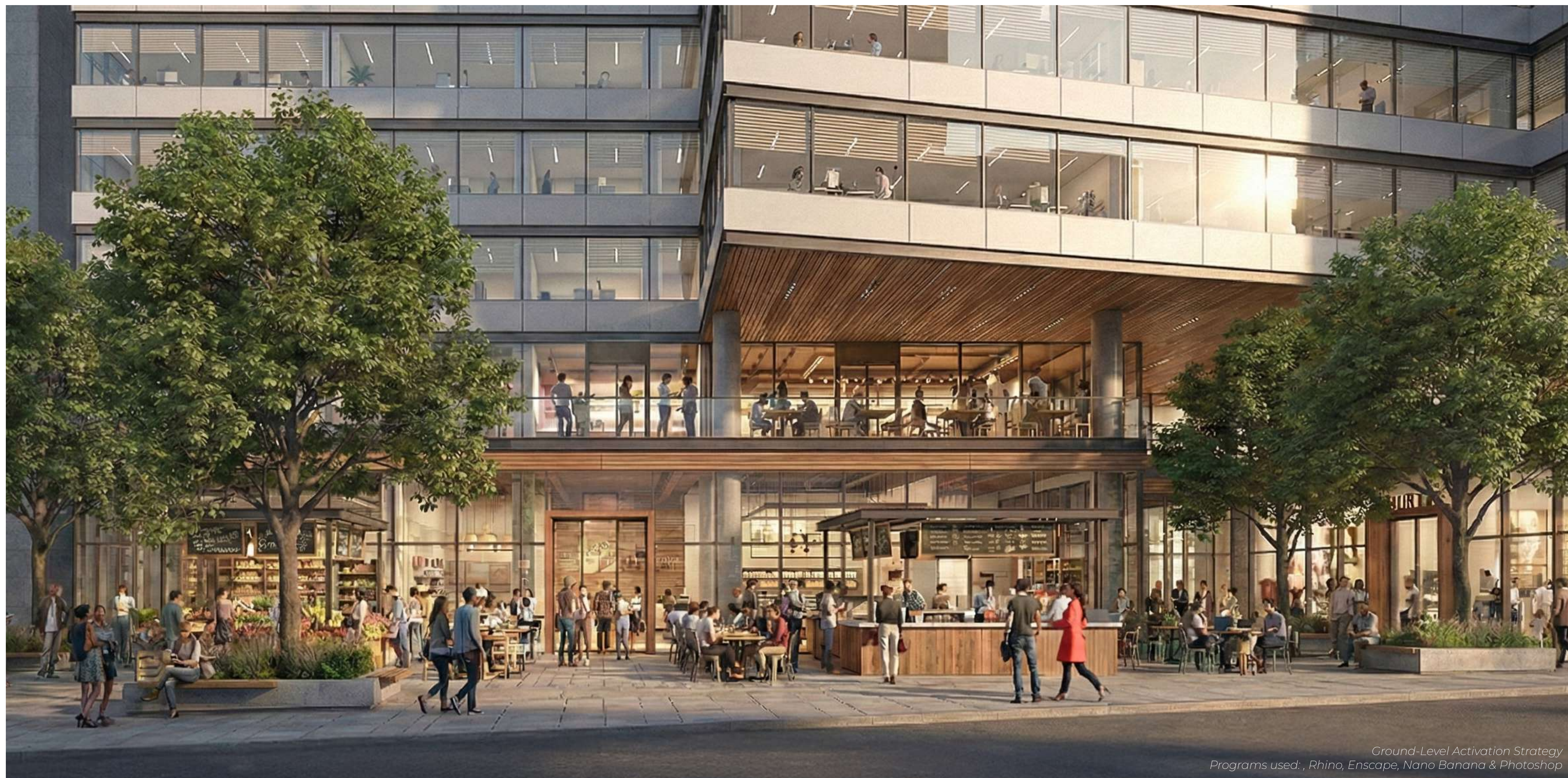
ZONING AS A DESIGN DRIVER



AUTOMATED ZONING COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

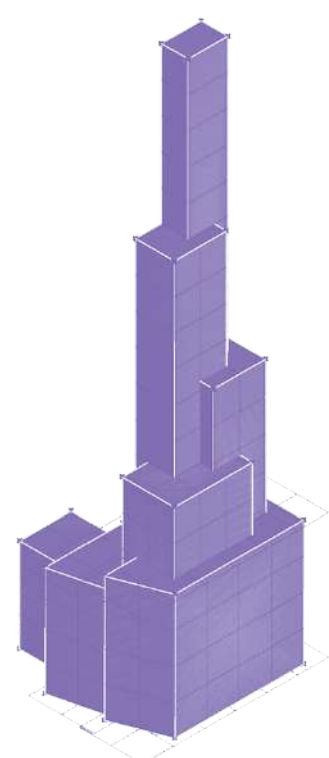


Physical Model in Urban Context
Programs used: ArcGIS, Rhino, Bambu Lab, Photoshop

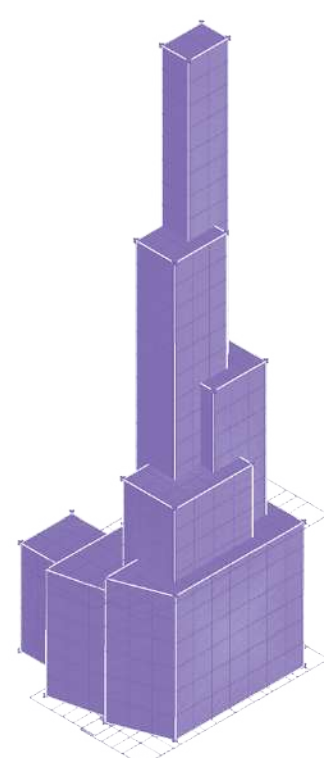


Ground-Level Activation Strategy
Programs used: , Rhino, Enscape, Nano Banana & Photoshop

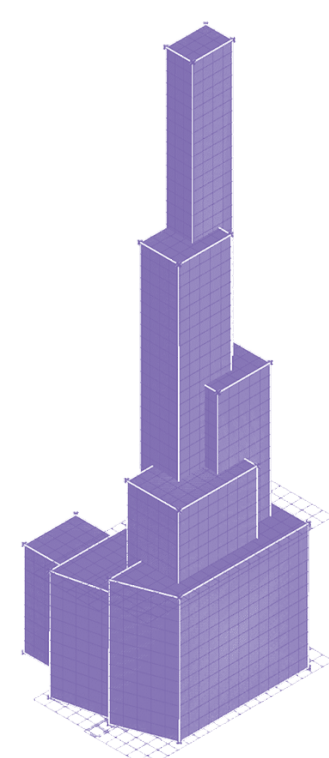
Automated Structured Framework



Primary Structural Grid



Secondary Façade Framework

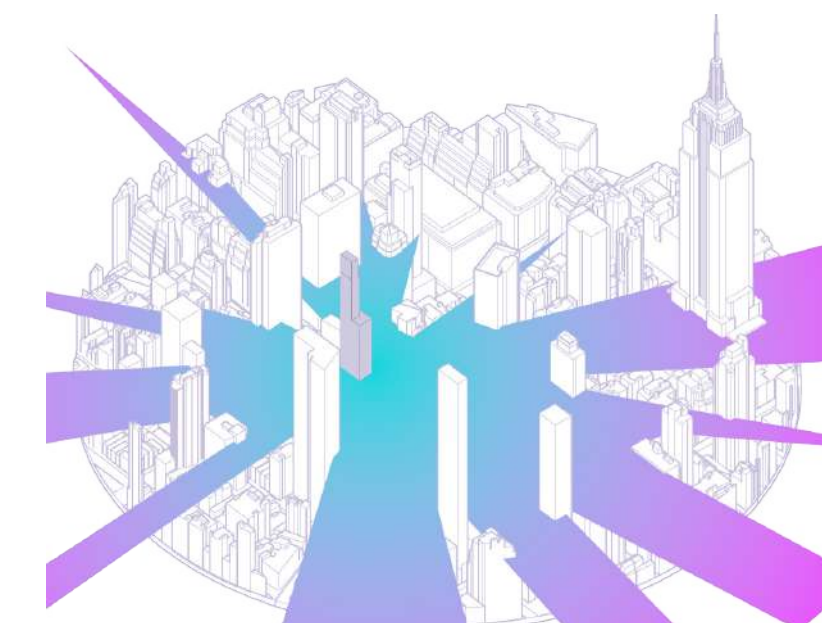


Parametric Panel System

View-Driven Program Calibration



Lower-Level Sightline Constraints



Program Allocation Based on Direct Sightlines



05. MA 間

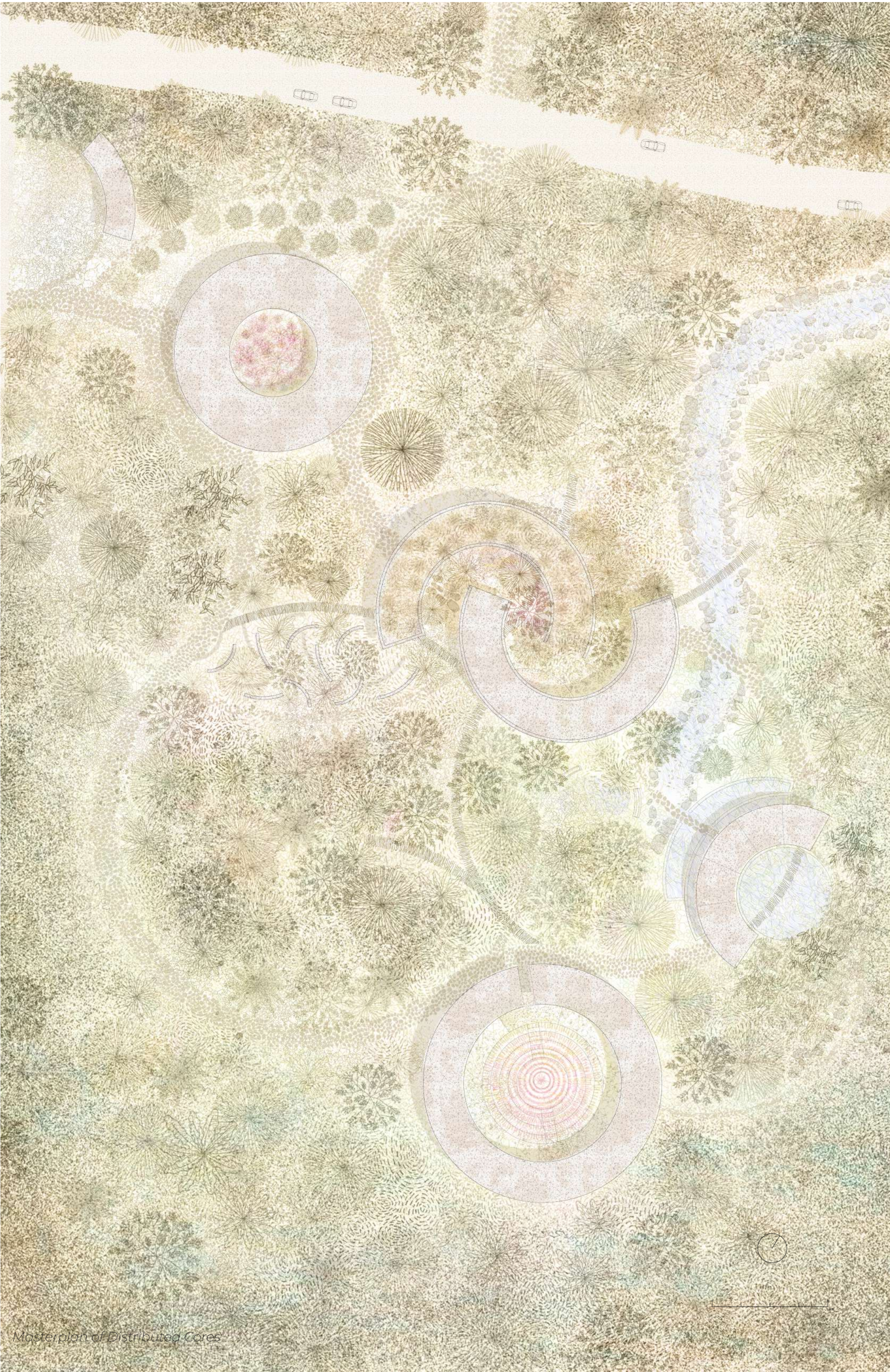
ECOLOGICAL & CULTURAL CENTER

Studio VI: Amor Mundi
Professors: Jing Liu & Alessandra Cianchetta
Author: Valentina Lizcano
Ishigaki, Japan | 2026

Ma understands rhythm as the bridge between nature and culture, a condition that is both perceived and embodied, yet often unnoticed. In the forests of Ishigaki, rhythm is observed through processes of decay, where leaves shrink, fold, decompose, and transform over time. Through this, rhythm emerges as a cyclical process that produces intervals: moments where space, light, sound, humidity, and air become perceptible. Rather than existing as static form, architecture becomes an instrument for registering these temporal transitions and environmental relationships.

Architecture translates this understanding into both form and organization. Circular geometries register continuity, repetition, and cycles of life, while their variation reflects the irregular cadence of natural systems and seasonal change. The project is conceived as a distributed system of circular cores embedded within the forest, each shaped by a specific material practice and its temporal logic. These cores are connected through pathways, moments of pause, and shared landscapes that reinforce collective interaction while preserving the autonomy of each programmatic rhythm.

In the getto core, the plant's cycle informs modularity and spatial sequencing, enabling cultivation, harvesting, crafting, fermentation, and teaching to unfold over time. Other cores similarly respond to distinct ecological and cultural practices, allowing architecture to emerge through processes of occupation, maintenance, and transformation rather than through singular monumental form. The project constructs a commons where rhythm becomes spatially legible, mediating between ecological processes and cultural practices while revealing the invisible temporal systems that shape everyday life.



Master plan of Distributed Cores



Outdoor View: Food Cultivation and Communal Gathering Core

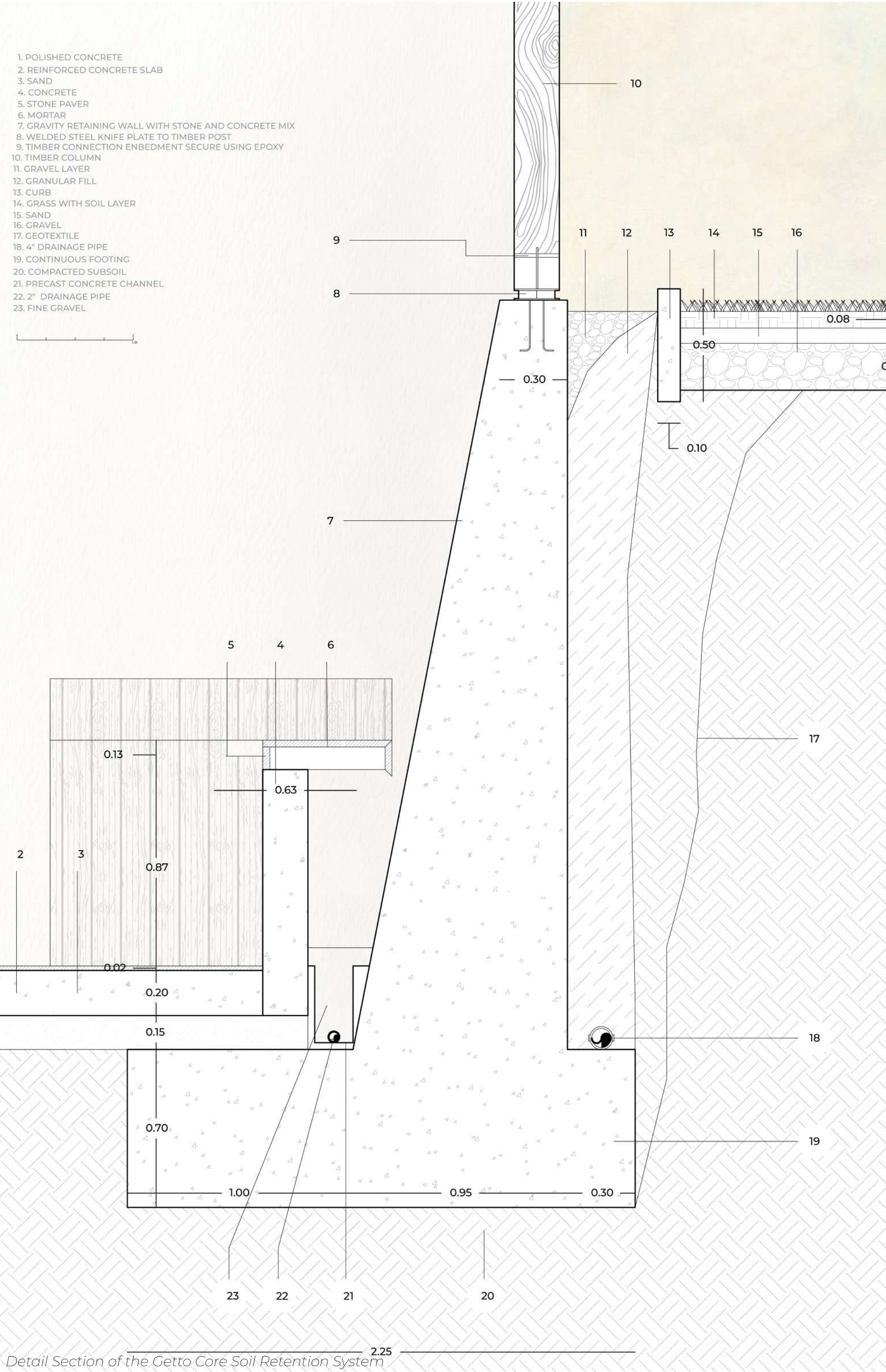


Main Longitudinal Section of the masterplan

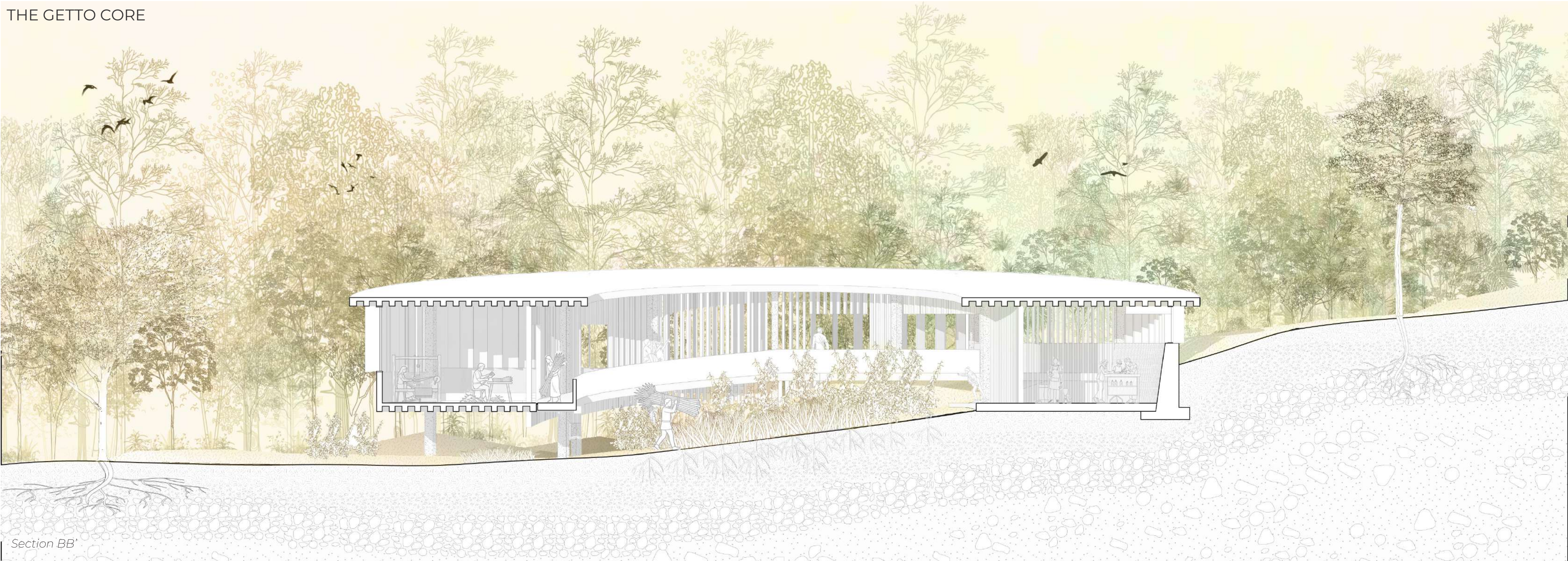
ON-SITE INTERVENTION:
Learning through material engagement



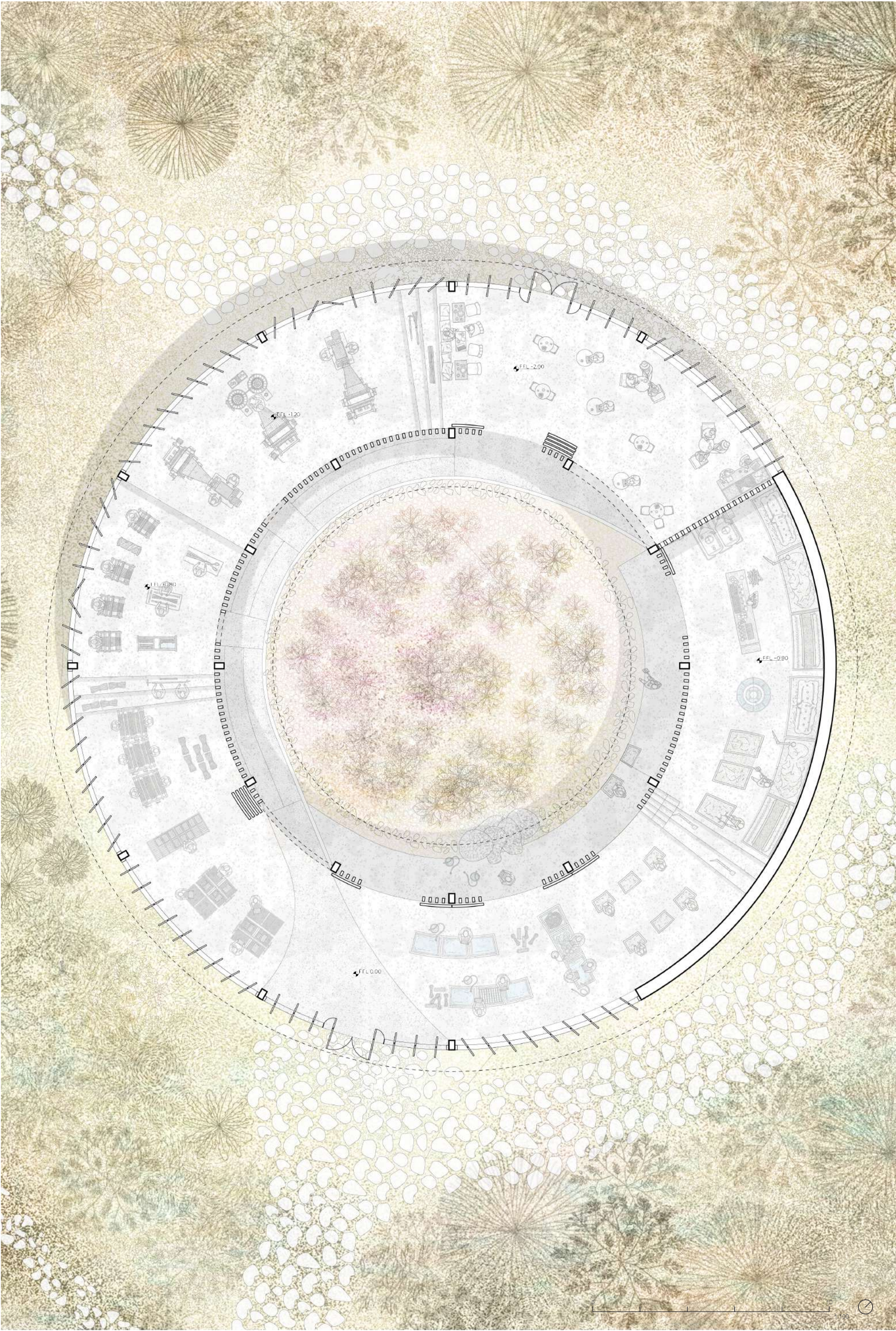
THE GETTO CORE



THE GETTO CORE



THE GETTO CORE



Floorplan of the Getto Core



Interior Garden as Space of Cultivation and Pause



Framing the Forest Through the Rhythms of the Core

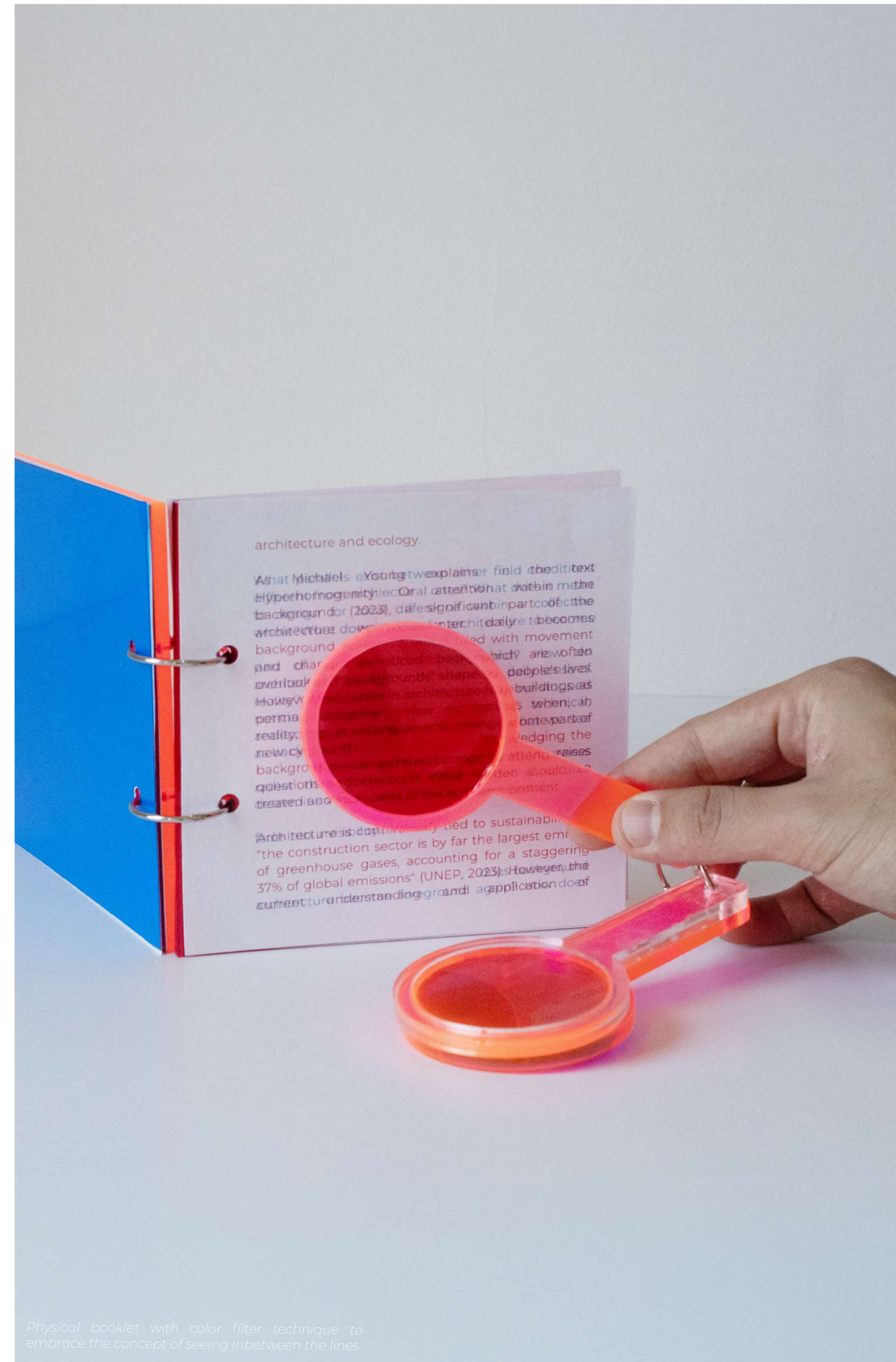
06. ARCHITECTURE & THE HIDDEN CIRCULAR ECOLOGY

TEXT ABOUT THE UNSEEN &
AFTERLIFE OF ARCHITECTURE

Course: Arguments
Professor: Foivos Geralis
Author: Valentina Lizcano
New York City, US | 2025

Architecture should not be treated as a fixed object, but as a living entity deeply interconnected within a broader ecology. The built environment, especially the architecture that forms our daily backdrop, is not just a permanent, immovable mass; it is a dynamic system that decays, adapts, and becomes part of new cycles. However, questions regarding the afterlife of architecture remain unaddressed at a broad scale, and their mapping is necessary to comprehend the complex interconnectedness of the built environment.

Indeed, acknowledging architecture as a living ecology per se means to see what is often illegible or hidden. The built environment is the result of the cycle rather than a part of a broader circular system. This idea is woven together by authors like Stan Allen, Michael Young, Jingru Cuan Cheng, Chen Zhan, and Areti Markopoulou, enriching the discourse on architecture and ecology.



Physical booklet with color filter technique to embrace the concept of seeing inbetween the lines

THE UNSEEN: Architecture and the Hidden Circular Ecology



As Michael Young explains in the text *Hyperhomogeneity: Or attention within the background* (2023), **a significant part of the architecture we encounter daily becomes background noise in a world filled with movement and change.** As if buildings, which are often overlooked, had little to no impact on people's lives. However, why do we insist on seeing buildings as permanent heavy background masses when, in reality, they decay, adapt, and should become part of new cycles? The importance of acknowledging the background, as suggested by Michael Young, raises questions regarding how this matter should be treated and integrated into the cycling ecology.

Architecture is continuously tied to sustainability as “the construction sector is by far the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, accounting for a staggering 37% of global emissions” (UNEP, 2023). However, the current understanding and application of sustainability in different disciplines, including architecture, may need to be redefined. The UN described sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UN, 1987). **What does this mean to architects and the built environment?** This is a question of highest urgency when we talk about the cycles of architecture.

In addition, Jermy Caradonna (2014) argued in the Oxford Press that sustainability might be a buzzword, as all groups aim to align with these principles, which affects its factual meaning (Caradonna, 2014). Similarly, in architecture schools, the broader and circular aspect of sustainability is not fully addressed, as the **afterlife** of architecture is a topic that is often

overlooked. Nevertheless, it is the missing piece of the whole cycle.

Furthermore, **viewing architecture as a part of a shifting ecology that regenerates socially, politically, and environmentally means understanding that sustainability is more than just a design principle.** It is about considering the afterlife of architecture and how architectural decay can be harnessed to sustain the cycle. This **perspective** challenges architects to think beyond the construction phase and consider the entire lifespan of a building in the context of sustainability. Areti Markopoulou argues that it is indeed possible to create ways in which waste is used to construct new beginnings and materials that are then offshored to fulfil different needs, as he did in his project *Livecycles*. Architecture understood as a living entity decays and should be connected to the rebirth of the cycle.

Indeed, the questions that arise regarding our vision of architecture and the end or continuing cycle that sustainability should address are deliberately **layered and partially hidden.** What people see depends on how people look at it, just as in the present medium of the text being read.

On the other hand, Stan Allen proposes a deeper understanding of such mechanisms in his *Field Conditions* theory, presenting an abstract understanding of how parts in a field correlate with one another. However, what is intriguing about them is the relationship within them. “Field conditions are bottom-up, not top-down. They work through local actors, relationships, and conditions, not imposed hierarchies or single forms.” (Allen, pg.124) **This implies that dynamics within the parts should operate within an ecological framework,** suggesting that the decay of architecture could be correlated with other actors in the field and potentially viewed as a foundational material or resource for initiating new projects. It could even evolve to new disciplines and **intercorrelate** with broader environmental systems.

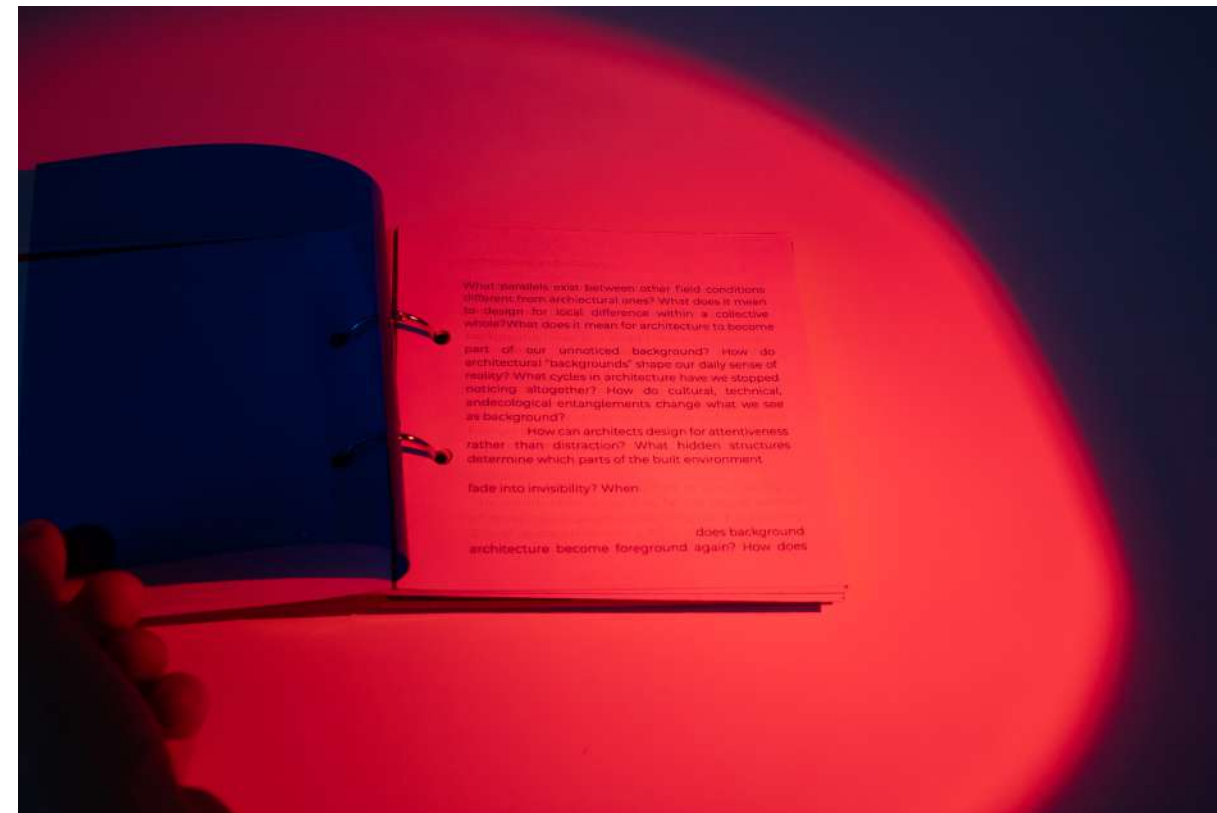
Nevertheless, many entangled relationships that claim to be sustainable have unseen parts to them. This aligns with the project “How Much Wattage is One Handbreadth of Water?” by Jingru Cuan Cheng and Chen Zhan, which highlights **the invisible infrastructures that sustain life.** It reveals the hidden story behind hydropower, highlighting how it is often marketed as renewable and sustainable energy, despite being a system that displaces communities and promotes landscape transformations. This is a direct example of how, within the architectural practice, many things are considered sustainable or reasonable. However, the implications and relationships in a broader field, entangled with **other agents, are not seen.**

A great example of this work is the project *Brickrock*, elaborated by the architect and scientist Wolf Hilbertz. In general terms, this project juxtaposes construction materials into the sea, creating a safe reef for corals. Reinforced concrete frames are taken into the sea, which creates a limestone coating that contributes calcium carbonate and permits Corals to thrive. (Global Coral Reef Alliance, 2002). Now imagine these types of systems and how other species could benefit from the demolition of decayed structures and the mining of materials into new environments where humans are not the center but only one more **part** of the **whole** ecology with other species.

In conclusion, **architecture is an ever-evolving narrative filled with unfinished stories and relationships waiting to be explored.** To thrive as a dynamic entity that decays and adapts within a broader ecological context, we must address the concepts of decay, afterlife, and rebirth. For architecture to foster a sustainable future through a fully integrated cyclic approach, practitioners must embrace adaptability and engage in material mining, while also giving significant attention to the decay and afterlife of built environments. A finished building with sustainable materials should not signify the end of a process; instead, it should mark the beginning of a continuous and regenerative journey.



Booklet & filters



Booklet under red filter: Reading between the lines



Booklet under blue filter: Reading the main text

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