

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Network within Grey Space

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LINGFEI LIU

Thesis Proposal Book
MDes 2017, Interior Architecture
Rhode Island School of Design

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Network within Grey Space

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree Master of Design in Interior Studies (Adaptive Reuse) in the Department of Interior Architecture of Rhode Island School of Design.

By Lingfei Liu
2017

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ABSTRACT

Buildings constitute the city, but at the same time isolate people from the action of the city by delimiting the activities within. Considering the relationship between buildings and public urban areas, is there a missing characteristic which could blur the boundary and create a smooth transition, a grey space gradually mediating between the outside and the inside, exterior and interior? Perhaps a type of connection within the city which contains more flexibility and accessibility would reduce the isolation of people from the activities of their own cities.

Isolation of this type exists on the urban scale, but also affects institutions hidden within the urban landscape. One such institution is the Rhode Island School of Design. Although RISD buildings spread over most of the downtown area of Providence without a concrete division, there is no such grey space mediating between the private interior and streetscape, to the urban environment of Providence and activities of RISD. Beyond architectural divisions, student work habits intensify the effect of isolation and result in poor work-life balance.

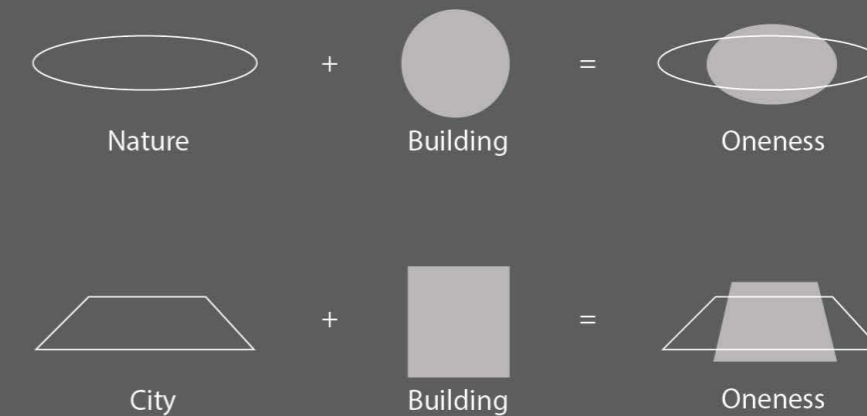
In order to break the negative effects of isolation created by RISD buildings both from their context in the city and from one another, it is necessary to build one solid connection between RISD and urban environment of Providence. Considering this, an additive, dependent network interlocking with the existing fabric is needed to encourage engagement between RISD students and citizens in Providence. A prototype of this network is placed at the center point of both the RISD campus and urban area of Providence. The network unites RISD buildings to define a community which contains multiple programs within grey space, providing opportunities for interaction between students and citizens of Providence. Through the unity of campus and city, isolation will be decreased and coherence between buildings and the overall fabric cityscape will be achieved.

INTRODUCTION

"Impermanence"

"Time, in Japanese culture is a precious entity that forces every candle, every being, every entity to fade at one point in time. The idea that buildings and cities should seem as natural as possible and that they should be in harmony with the rest of nature, since it is only temporarily there, helped create the tradition of making buildings and cities of "temporary" structure."

-----Kisho Kurokawa



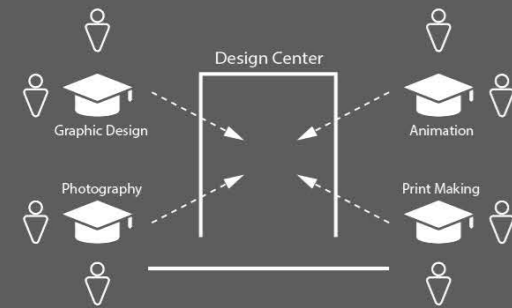
The "Impermanence" of buildings and cities indicates a coherence of the transforming process in which they should eventually fit into "Oneness".

Existing Problem of RISD Campus

At RISD:

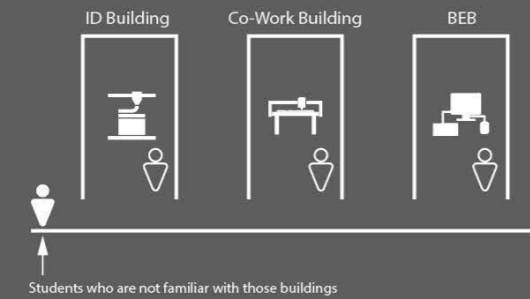
Major-associated Building

In RISD, different types of major has its own associated building. For example, BEB for Architecture major, Design Center for graphic associated major, ID building, etc.



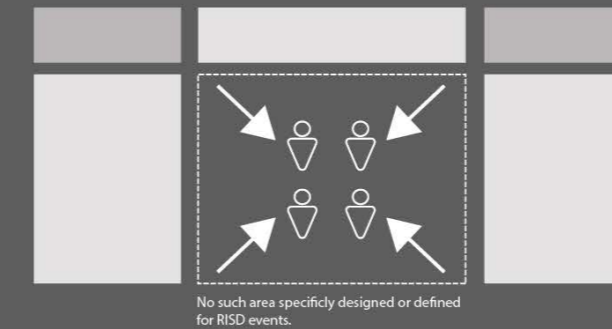
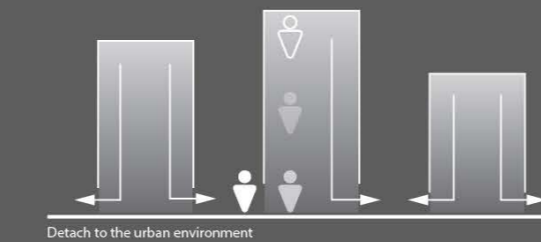
Special Lab & Machine

There are certain professional labs and machines in each major associated building such as Laser Cutter in BEB, machine for cutting wood and metal in ID building, dark room in Design Center, etc. Though it is convenient for students who belongs to those building to use the lab and machine, other students from other departments will have the opposite situation.



Isolation

Since too much assignment is a tradition for RISD students which draws much of their attention, it could be seen as they are being locked inside their major associated building. Isolation of each building result in the detachment between students from different departments, as well as between students and the local people and culture.

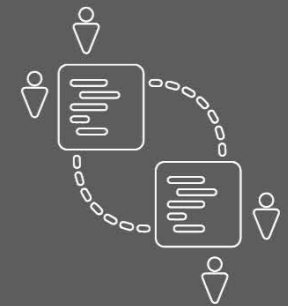


Special Events

There are RISD events happening in the city which interact not only RISD people but also citizens in Providence, such as RISD Art Sell, "Eat the World", etc. Currently there's no certain places for to hold those events. As a result, public area has been occupied, streets has been blocked. There could be a solution which preserve the interaction but avoid negative factors.

Information Sharing

Students have elective classes at RISD. Since there's difference between each majors and there's little connection between different departments, it is hard for students to choose their elective class only according to the short introduction on Web Advisor. Students need to talk to those who have taken the class before in order to get more useful information.



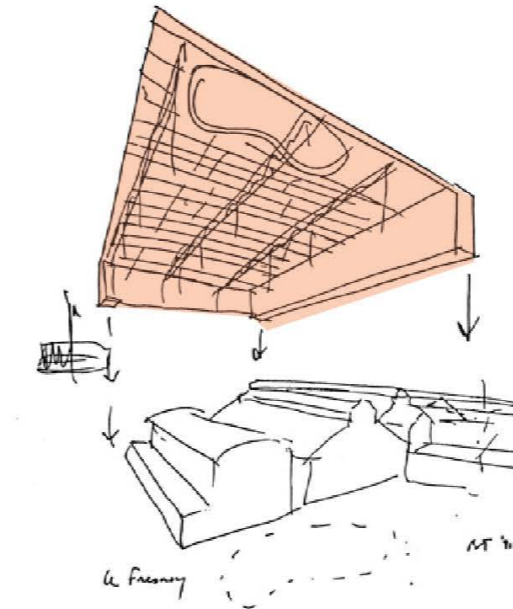
01 THEORETICAL PRECEDENTS

Bernard Tschumi

National Studio for Contemporary Arts/Le Fresnoy, France

Le Fresnoy was built in 1990s, a post-graduate art school and art research center which contains multiple artistic disciplines, ranging from video, visual arts, performing arts, ect.

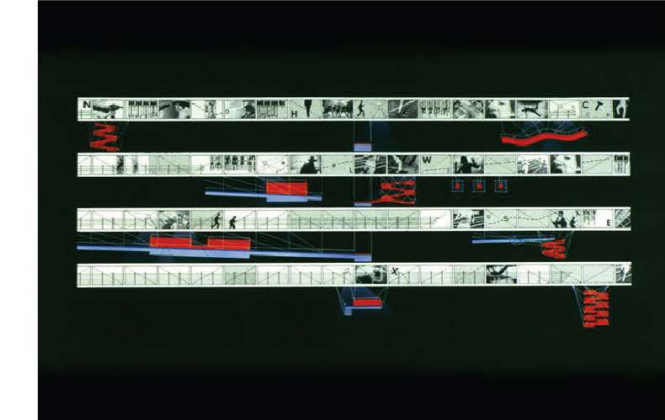
90s is digital age, the aim of this project is to build a postindustrial and internationally ambitious Bauhaus in this digital age.



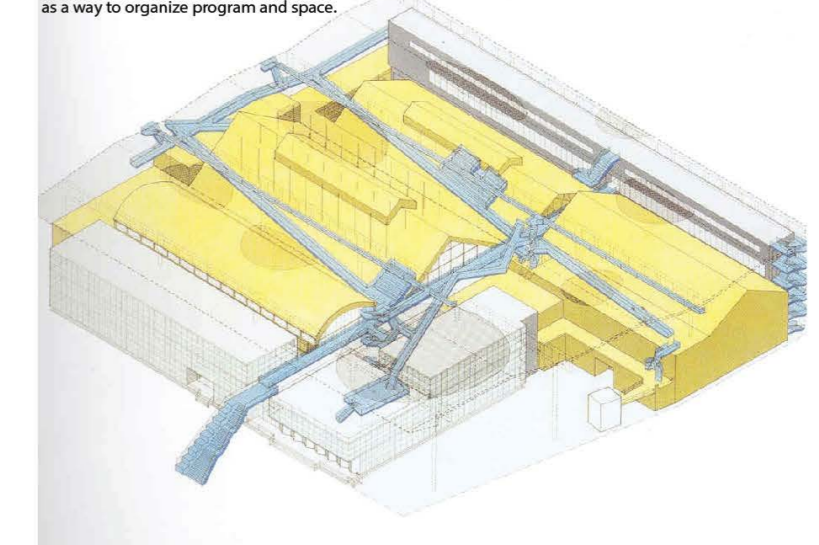
Concept Sketch

It was originally coming from a simple idea: creating an "umbrella" to protect the existing building from rain and snow.

Diagram of "Event Montage"



Tschumi is unique with the use of event montage, a special diagram related to film, as a way to organize program and space.

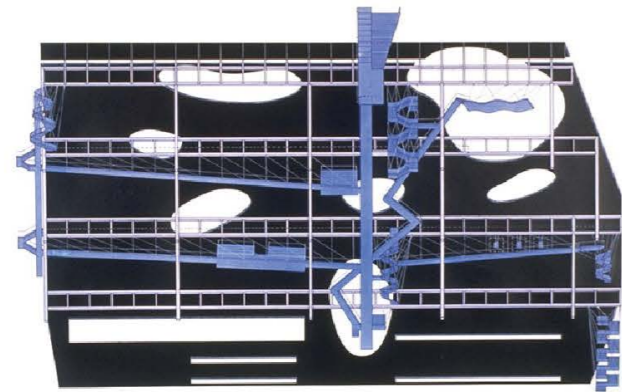


Axon Drawing

This whole building can be described as "boxes inside a box".

Four components: the new constructions with façade that enclosed the space, the huge steel roof, meanwhile the umbrella, existing buildings, and the in between space

Image Credit: Bernard Tschumi Architects

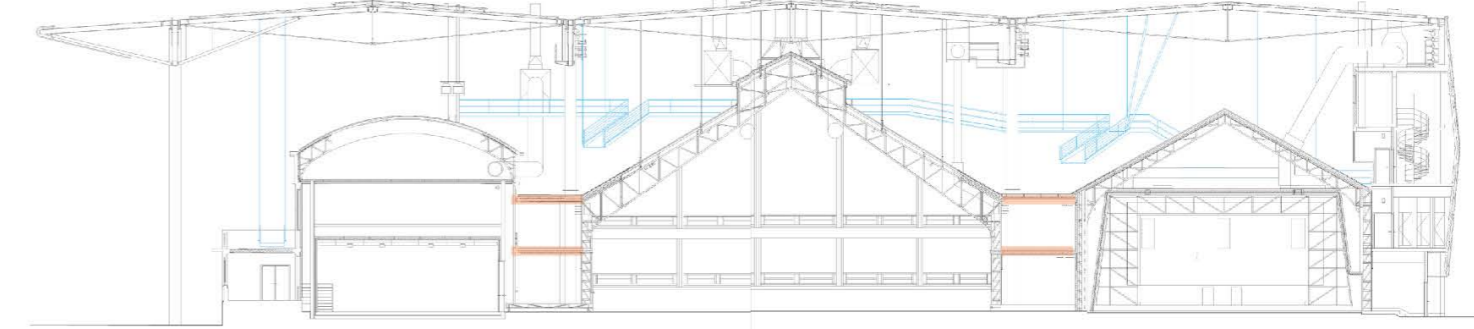


In this "in-between" space, a web of blue-painted catwalks as well as staircase are inserted. They wind their way below the giant roof, and gap between the existing buildings. Functionally, it interconnect the various areas. Conceptually, they make this undefined space functional.

As a non-programmed space, the system of hanging catwalks provides views into the various spaces as well as landscape of the city, giving the visitor the experience of city within a city.

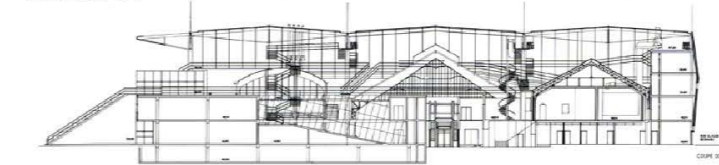
Image Credit: Bernard Tschumi Architects

Section 01

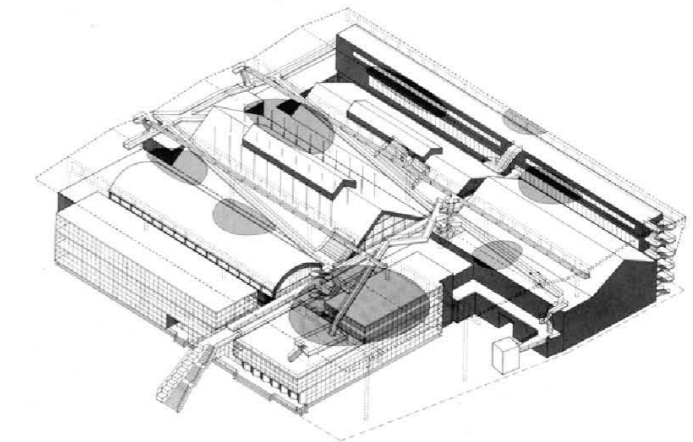
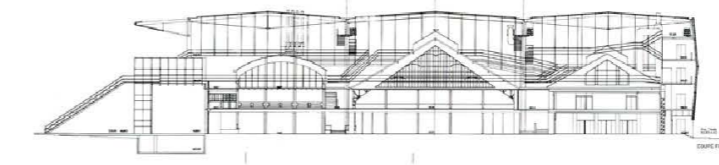


- Below the old roof level, the existing buildings are also connected by the floor decks. In that way, this buildings are truly united as a whole, rather than separated components.
- When you Step on the circulation, a dynamic show begins, feel the City within a city, feel the Contrast between old and new.

Section 02

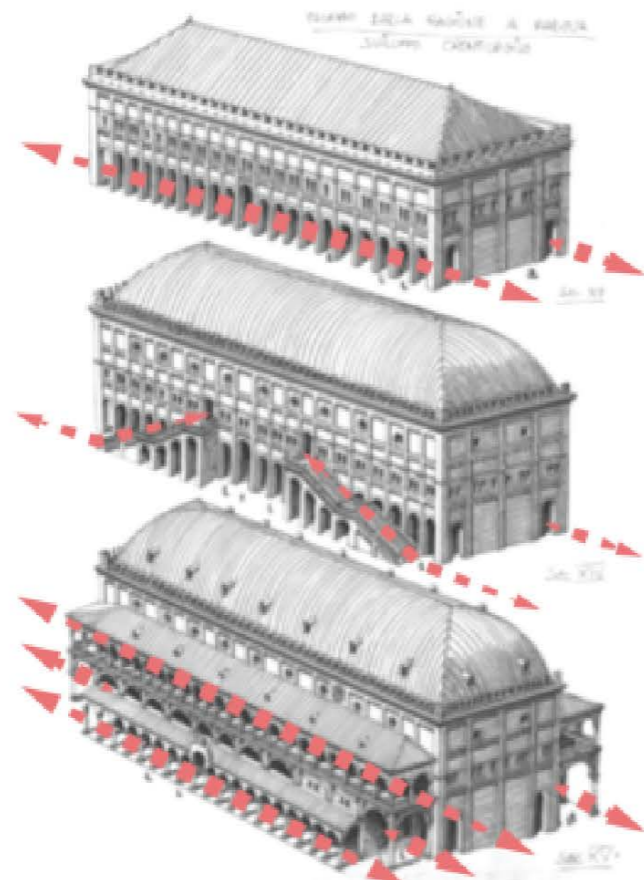
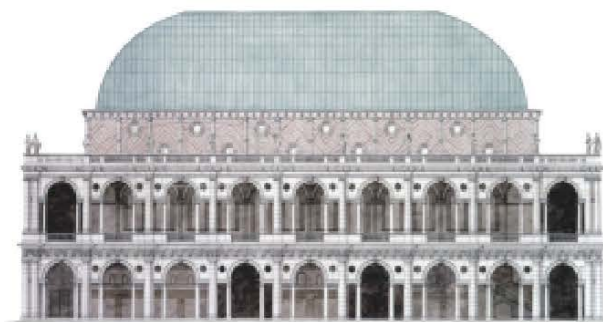
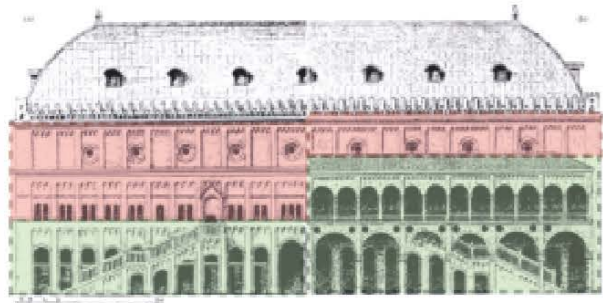
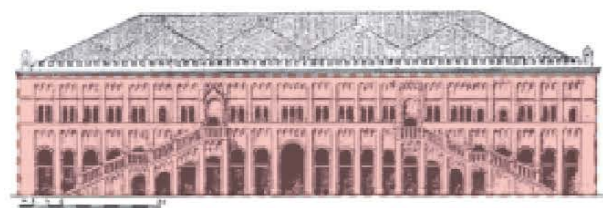


Section 03



- The catwalk are totally separated from programs as pure circulation, therefore it is best way to allow users to experience the comparison between the old and the new.

Image Credit: Bernard Tschumi Architects



Basilica Palladiana

“Merging”, “Boundary Dissolution”

When looking at the whole historical transforming process of the architecture, the building mass became bigger while the form changes in a typology that could be seen as “merging”. Each time the new structure either connects or add on and embraces the old which result in the “dissolution” of the solid boundary between the building and the city.

“Inside Out”


The loggia became an extension of the existing, it also connects the inner space to the outside environment meanwhile the city. Those arches of the loggia are morphologically offsetting the inner window shapes, indicating an “inside out” typology.

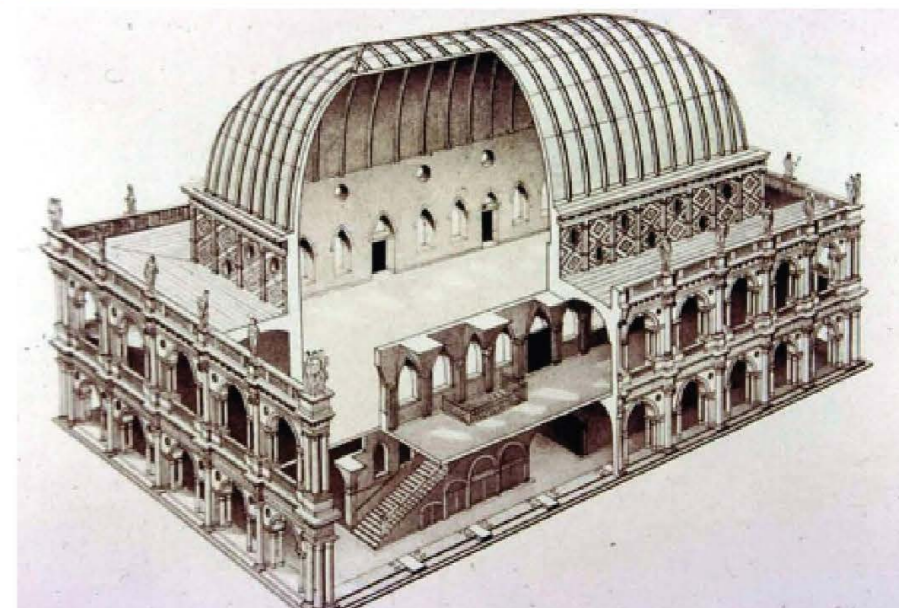
“Grey Space”

Under the loggia are the “grey space”, inviting people from the outside public area to go into the original main space. When people stop and stay under the loggia, they could feel both the inside and the outside but in an indirect and gentle way.

From the “Basilica Palladiana” presentation of 2015 fall RISD course “History of Adaptive Reuse”



The result of Google Search
Basilica Palladiana 



02 SITE OVERVIEW

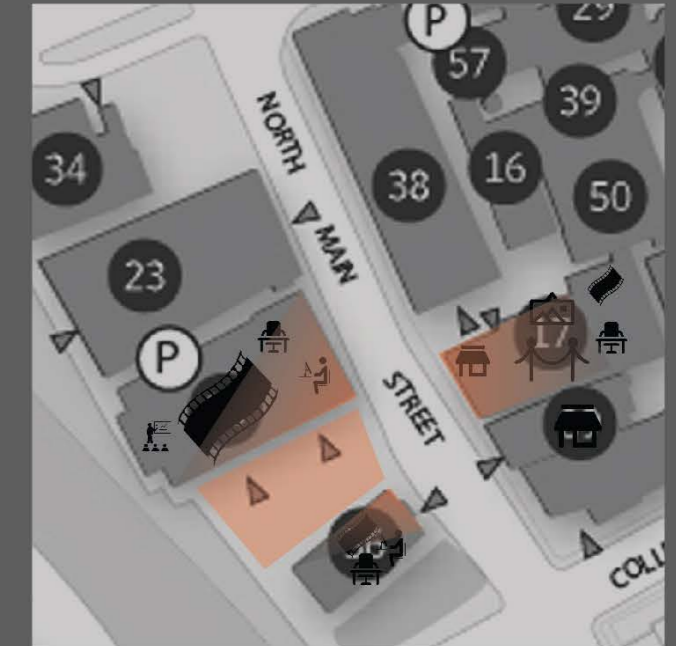
Why Market Square



Building within certain programs that gather up RISD people mainly located around market square.



The most convenient spot for RISD people to gather up should be located on the center of all RISD areas which is approximately near the market square.



Therefore, market square and part of the RISD buildings around it is the best choice for my site.

Comparison Between Now and the Past



MARKET SQUARE.

"Market Square, **always a site for news, gossip, and shopping**, was the site of a colonial tax protest against the British on March 2, 1775 when the people of Providence burned tea. On September 7, 1897, Emma Goldman, a noted anarchist and feminist, was arrested for unlawful "open air speaking" and charged with attracting a crowd in Market Square. Nowadays you are more likely to encounter a RISD student's art installation."

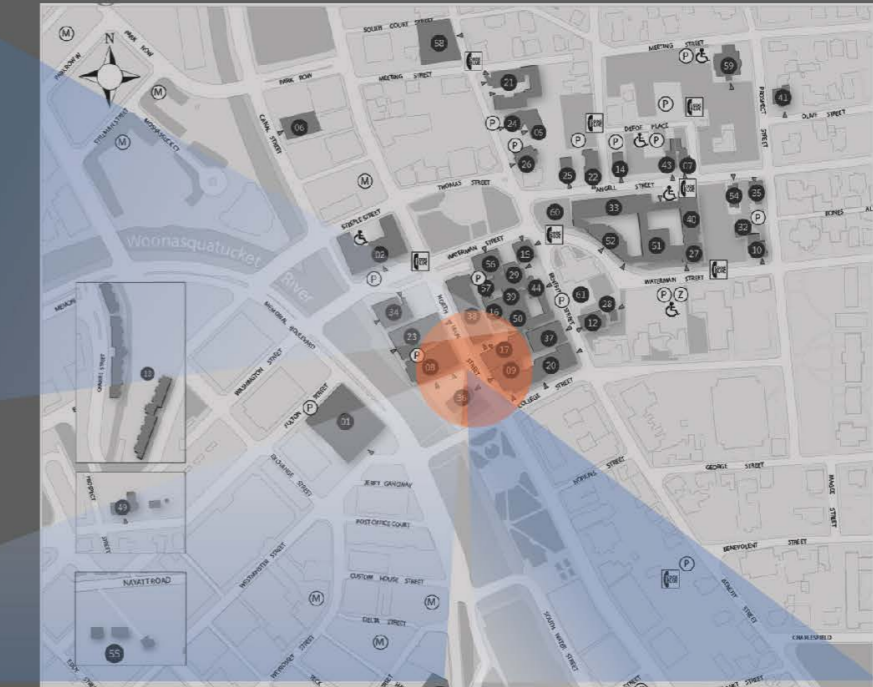


Market square **originally belongs to the citizen**, now it seems only the local skateboarders could enjoy themselves there, means that although the square is still located on the center of providence, the situation that it **being surrounded by multiple RISD buildings** make it **substantially a RISD area**.

On Spot Condition



Potential elements that could form enclosed space



Temporary RISD events such as **installations** or **parties** are happening on market square.



Only skateboarders, **a very small group of local people** interact with market square.

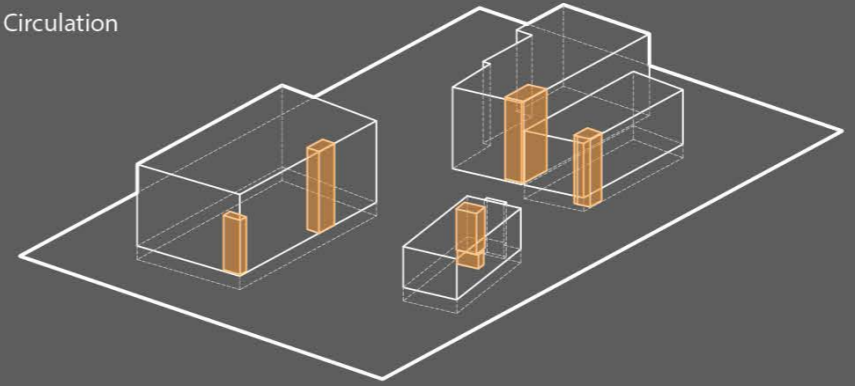


Potential elements that could form enclosed space

03 PROGRAM

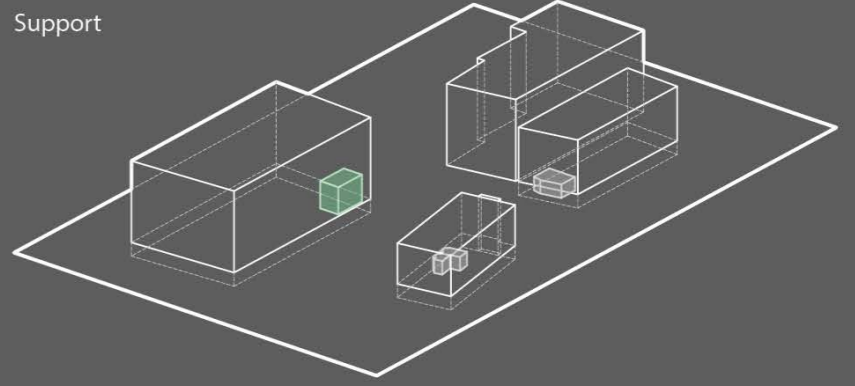
Four Types of Existing Programs

Circulation



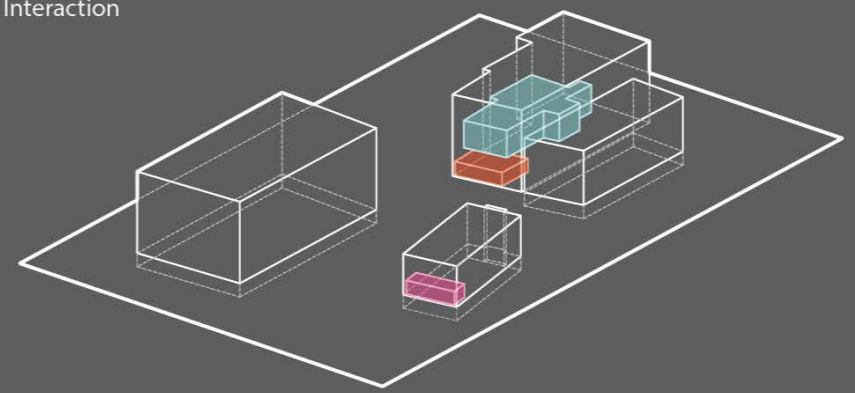
Orange Circulation

Support



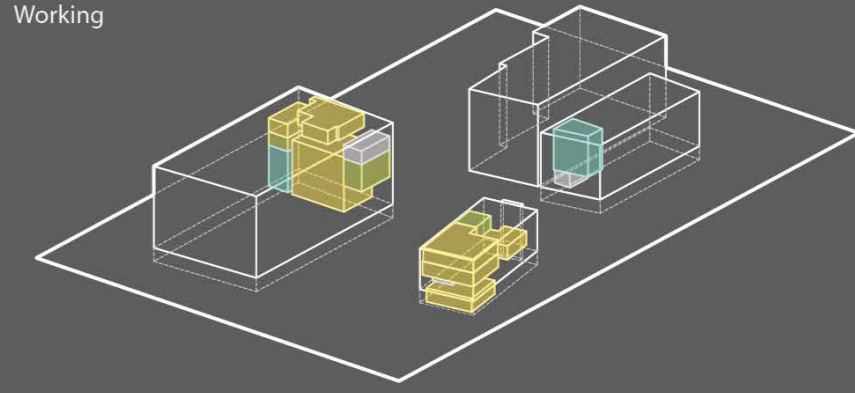
Green Equipment Grey Building Service

Interaction



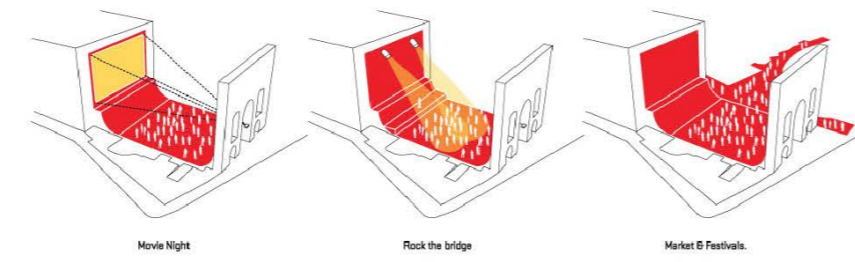
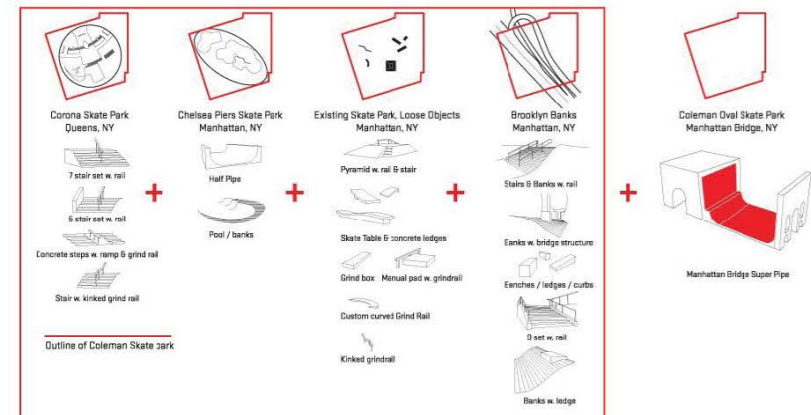
Cyan Gallery Red Store Pink Conference Room

Working



Yellow Studio Cyan Workroom Green Classroom White Office

PROGRAM PRECEDENTS: Master Planning and Re-design of the Coleman Oval Skate Park

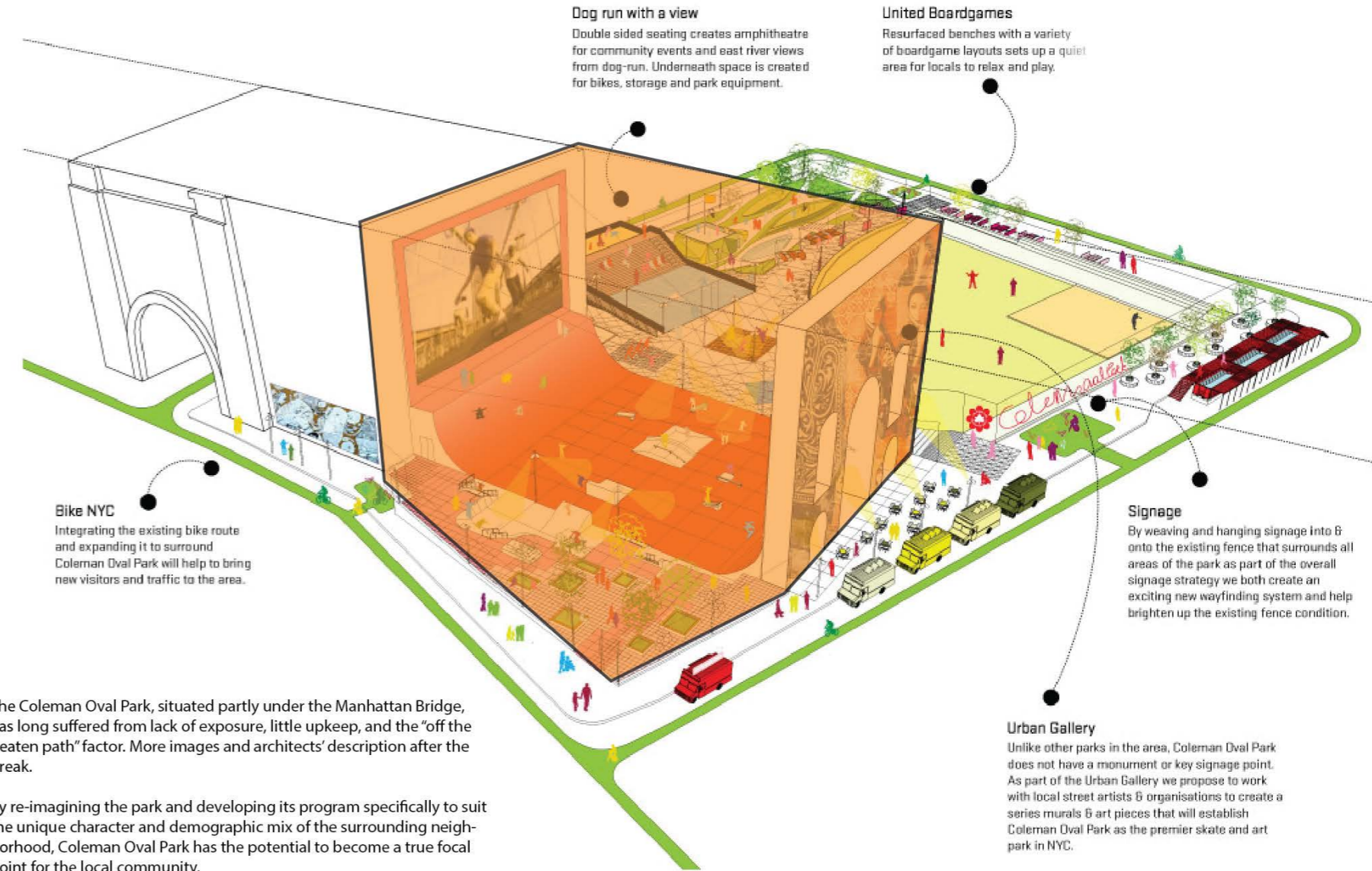


With the new skate park as the cornerstone of the revitalization of the Coleman Oval Park, designers propose a **plug-and-play design strategy** that can be developed in phases while still establishing a strong overall, comprehensive design strategy.

The ground was occupied by **flexible skate pieces** which can be re-arranged to adjust, create new challenges over time or be removed for **movie night, market or concerts**.



Image Credit: Archdaily.com



Dog run with a view
Double sided seating creates amphitheatre for community events and east river views from dog-run. Underneath space is created for bikes, storage and park equipment.

United Boardgames
Resurfaced benches with a variety of boardgame layouts sets up a quiet area for locals to relax and play.

Bike NYC
Integrating the existing bike route and expanding it to surround Coleman Oval Park will help to bring new visitors and traffic to the area.

Signage
By weaving and hanging signage into @ onto the existing fence that surrounds all areas of the park as part of the overall signage strategy we both create an exciting new wayfinding system and help brighten up the existing fence condition.

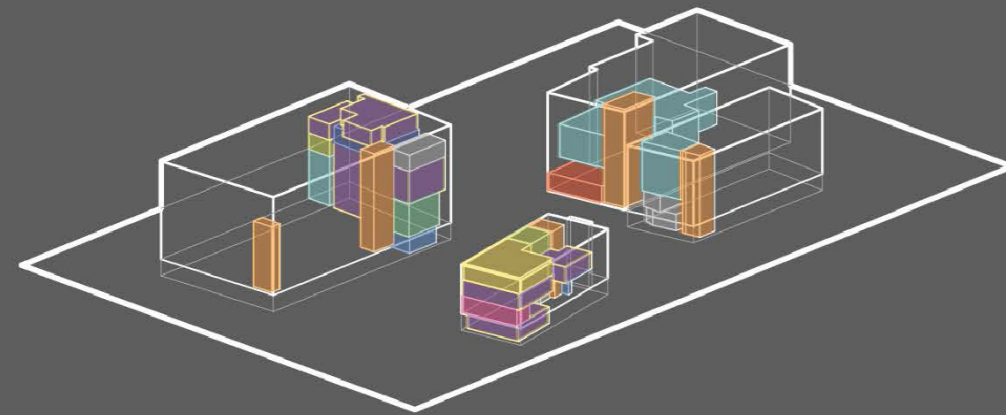
Urban Gallery
Unlike other parks in the area, Coleman Oval Park does not have a monument or key signage point. As part of the Urban Gallery we propose to work with local street artists @ organisations to create a series murals @ art pieces that will establish Coleman Oval Park as the premier skate and art park in NYC.

The Coleman Oval Park, situated partly under the Manhattan Bridge, has long suffered from lack of exposure, little upkeep, and the "off the beaten path" factor. More images and architects' description after the break.

By re-imagining the park and developing its program specifically to suit the unique character and demographic mix of the surrounding neighborhood, Coleman Oval Park has the potential to become a true focal point for the local community.

Image Credit: Archdaily.com

Existing and Potential Programs



Programs Attach to Building Facade

■ Circulation	■ Computer Lab
■ Storage	■ Office
■ Equipment	■ Building Service
■ Studio	■ Conference Room
■ Workroom	■ Store
■ Classroom	■ Gallery

Programs on Market Square

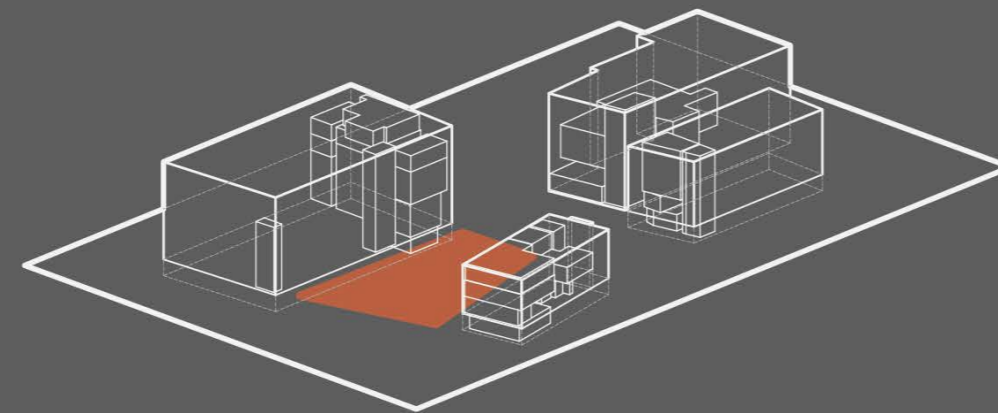
RISD:



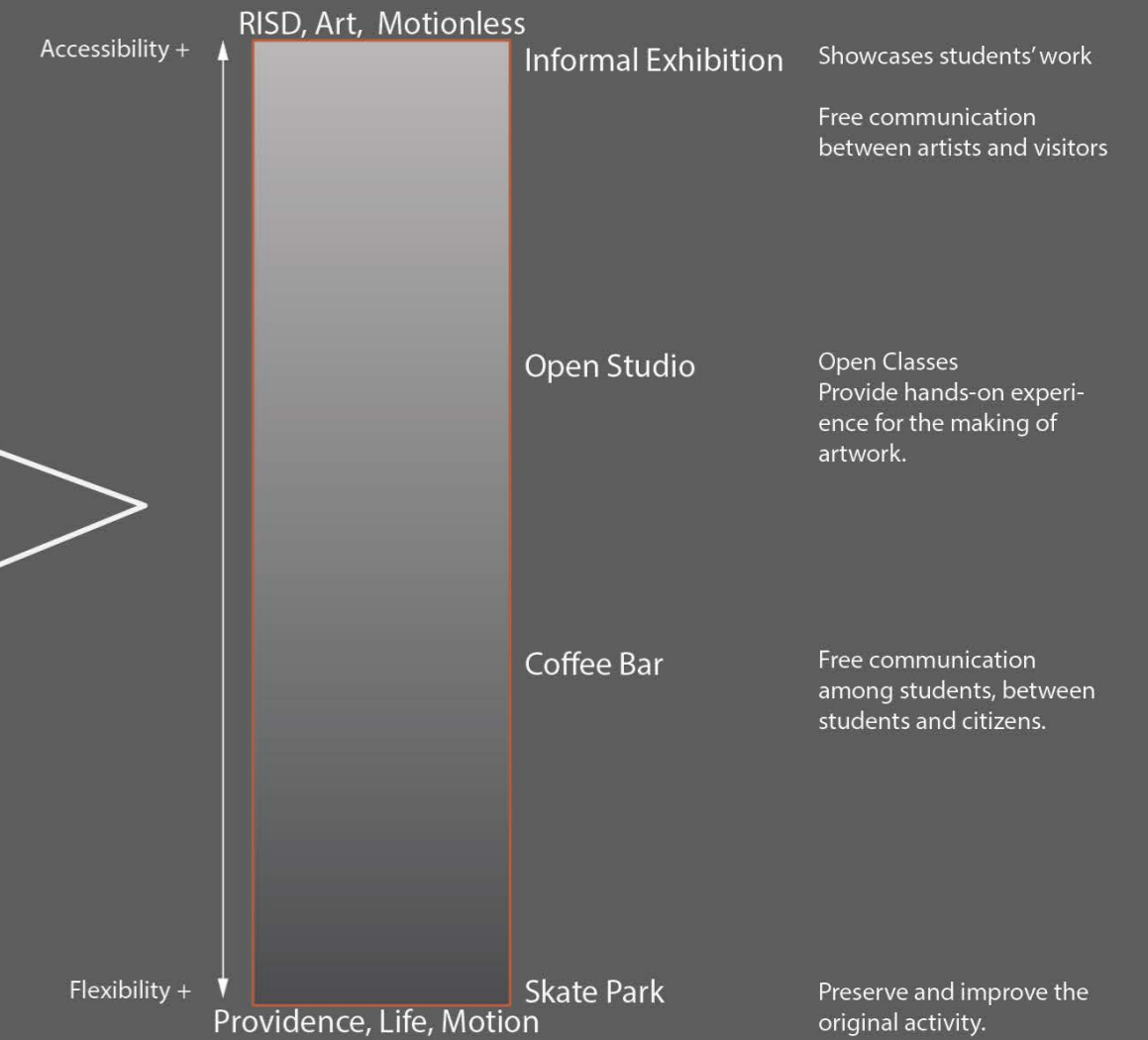
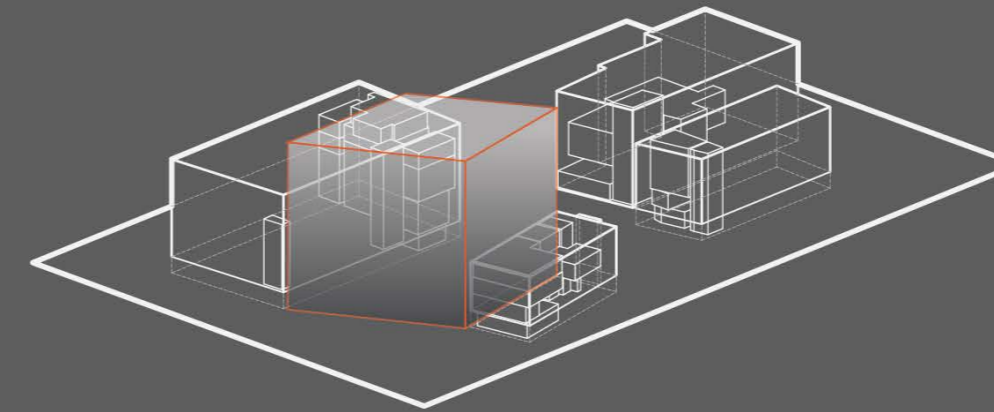
Local:



Potential Programs Interact RISD with Local People:



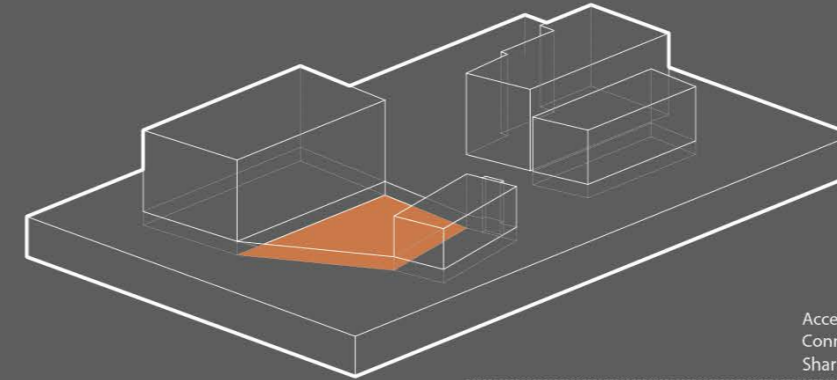
Program Hypothesis



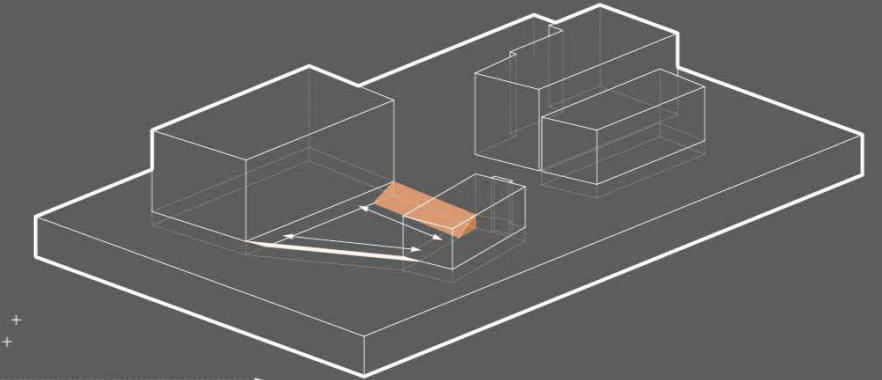
04 FRAMEWORK FOR INTERVENTION

Preliminary Design Diagram

Lower the Ground to Reveal Basement

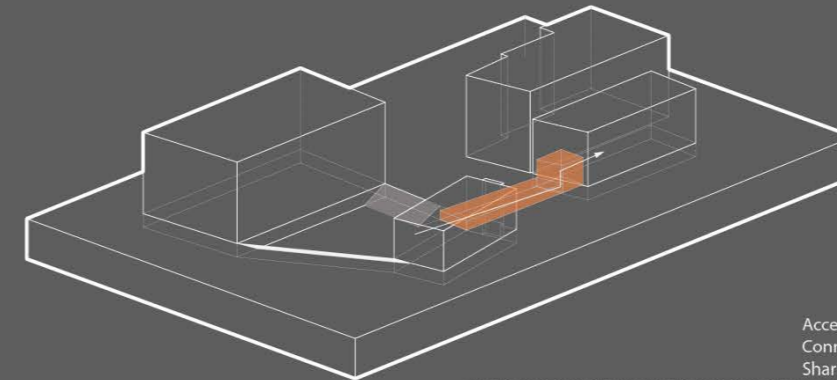


Use Stair and Ramp to Connect

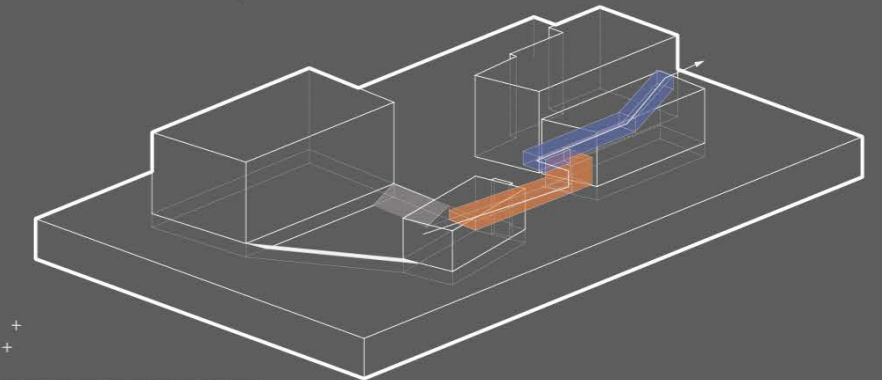


Accessibility +
Connectivity +
Sharing +

A Turnal Connect to the Other Side of Street



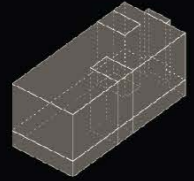
Further Extend the Grey Space Inside Building



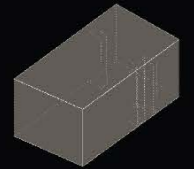
Accessibility +
Connectivity +
Sharing +

Space Logic Analysis
Based on Degree of Engagement

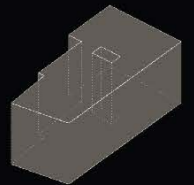
Market House



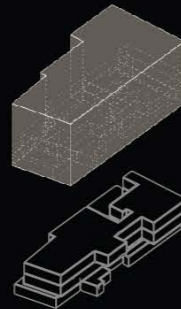
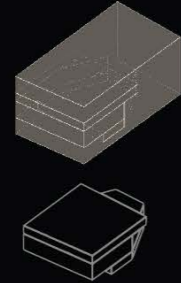
Auditorium Building



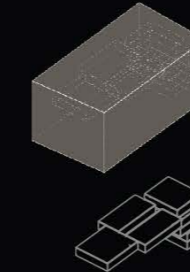
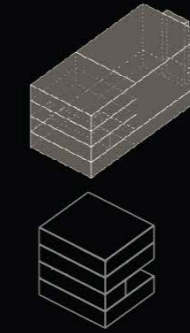
Chace Center



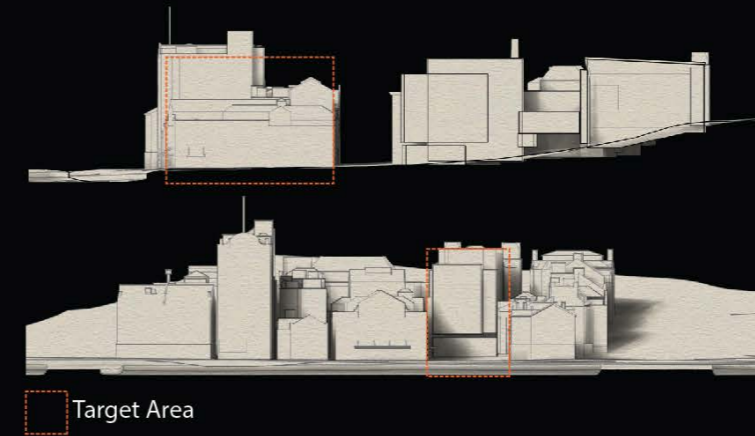
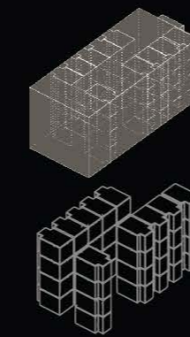
Tier 1
Auditorium
Gallery



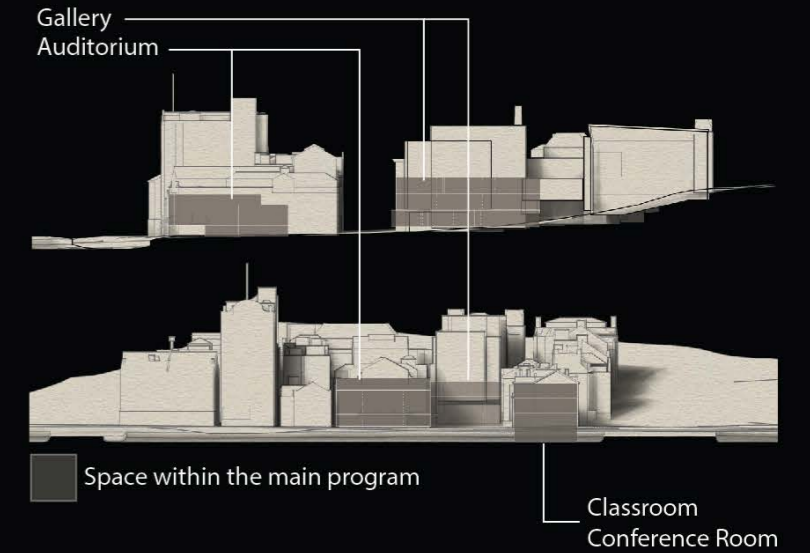
Tier 2
Conference Room
Classroom



Tier 3
Small Studio

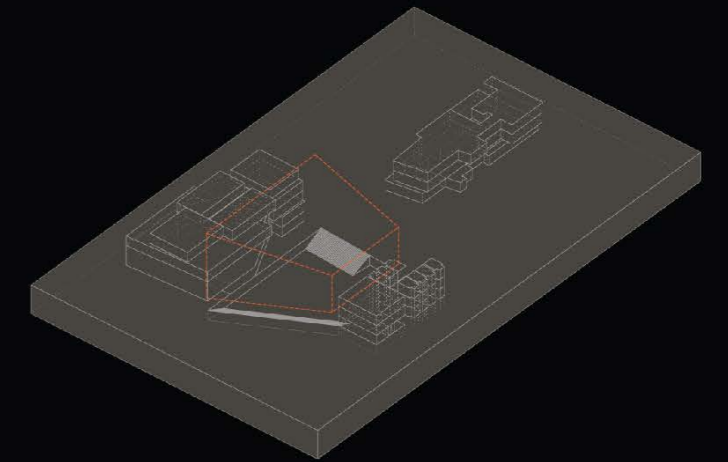
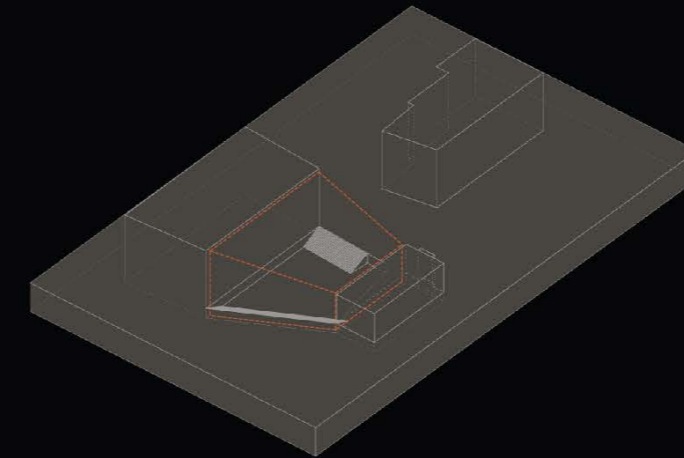


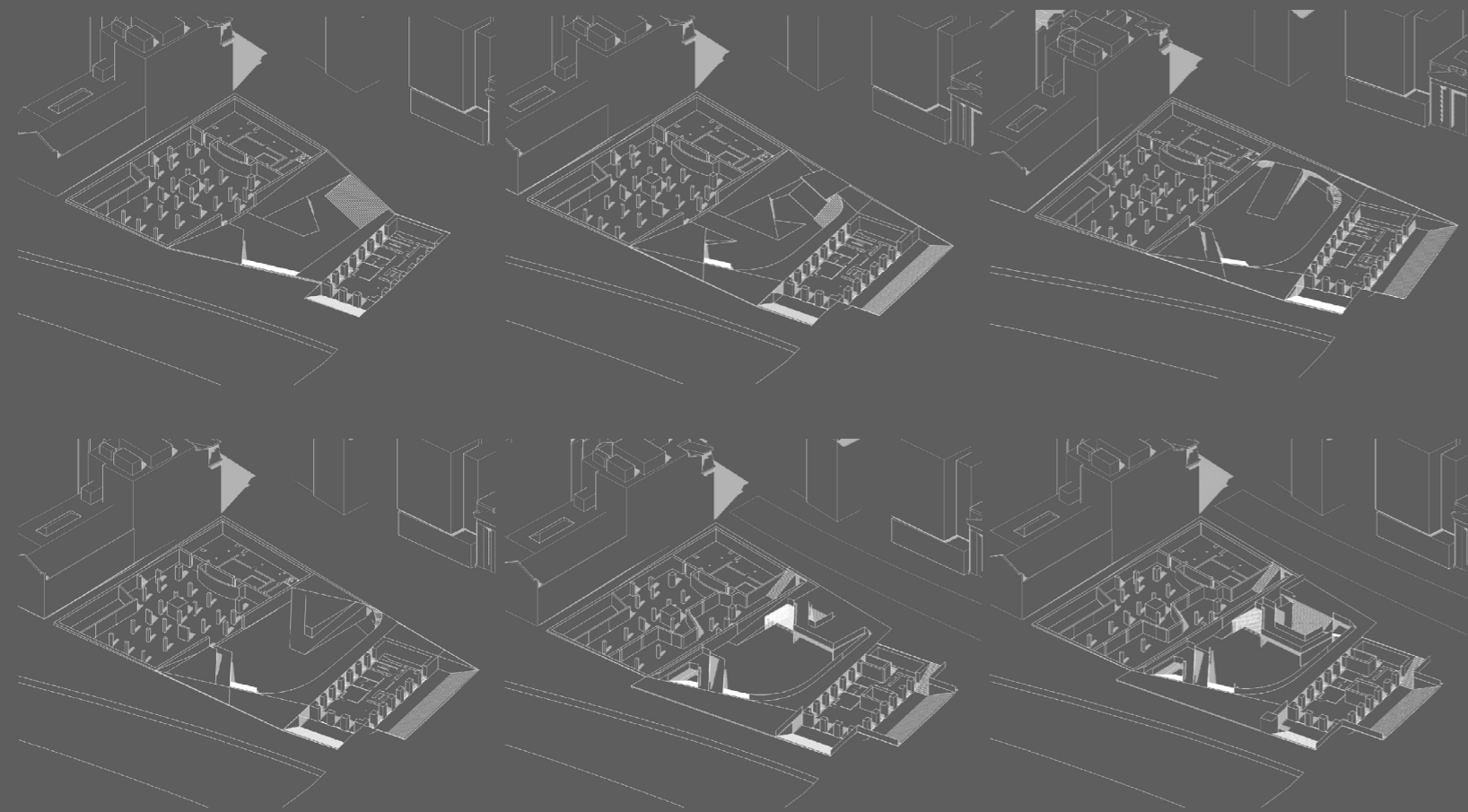
Target Area



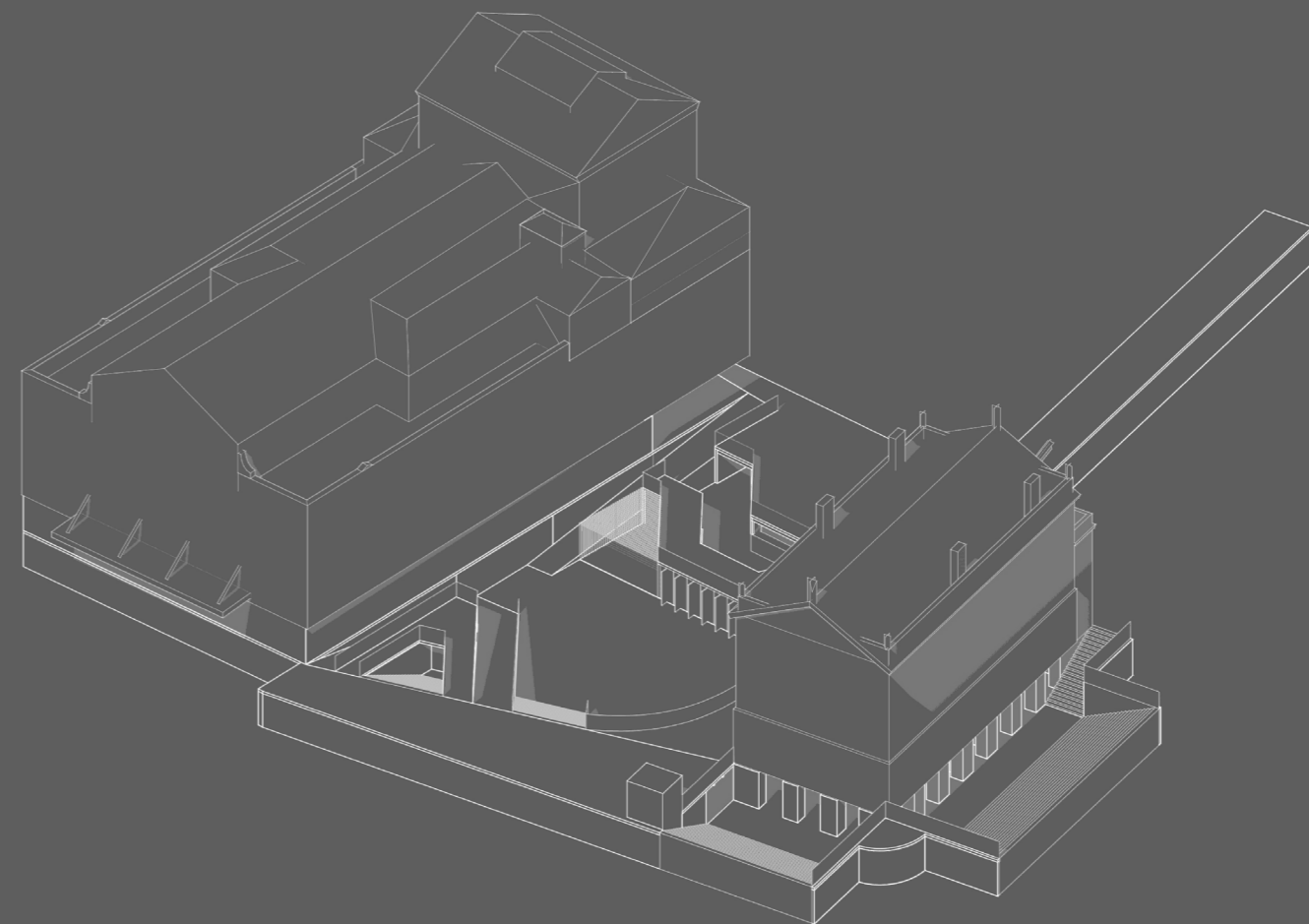
Space within the main program

Classroom
Conference Room

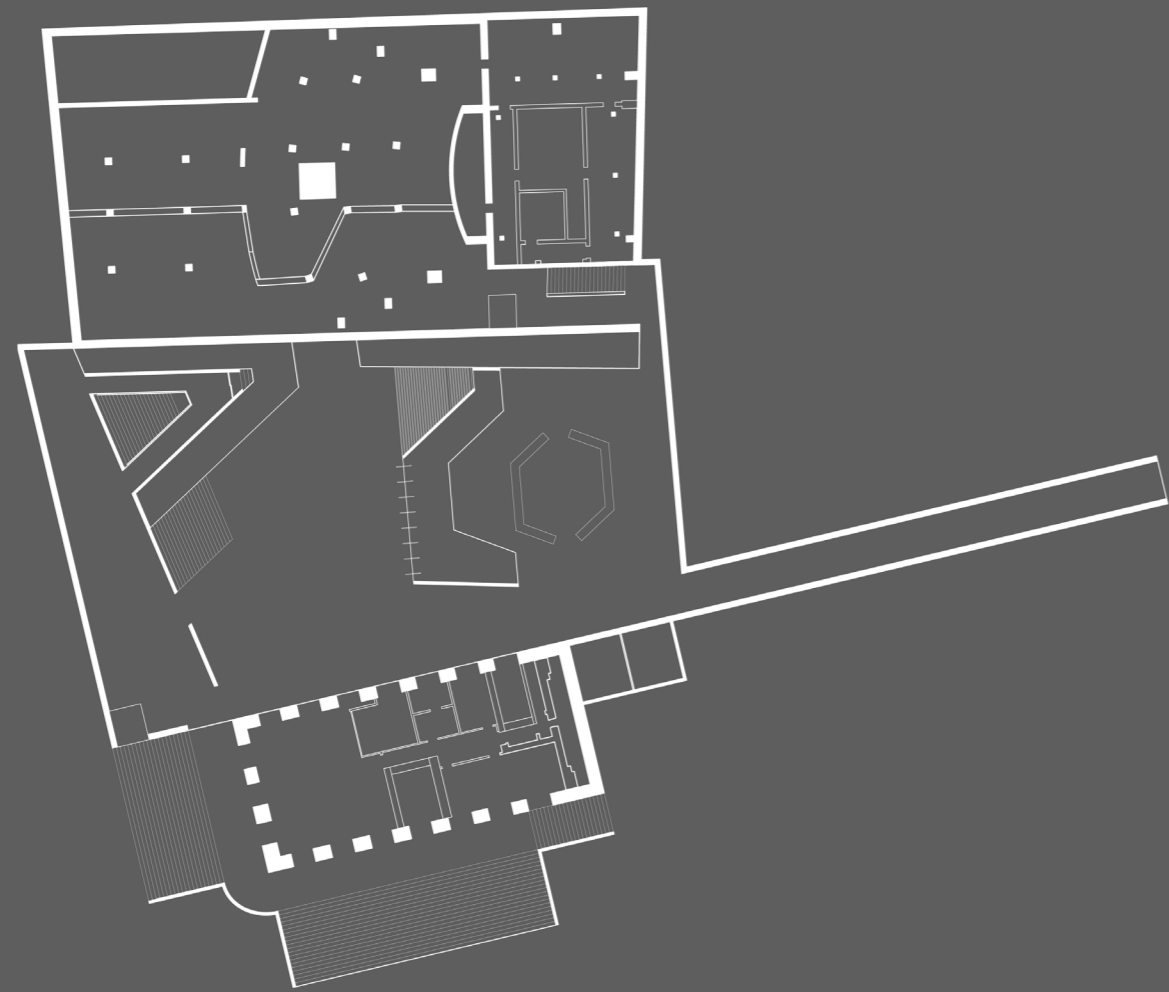




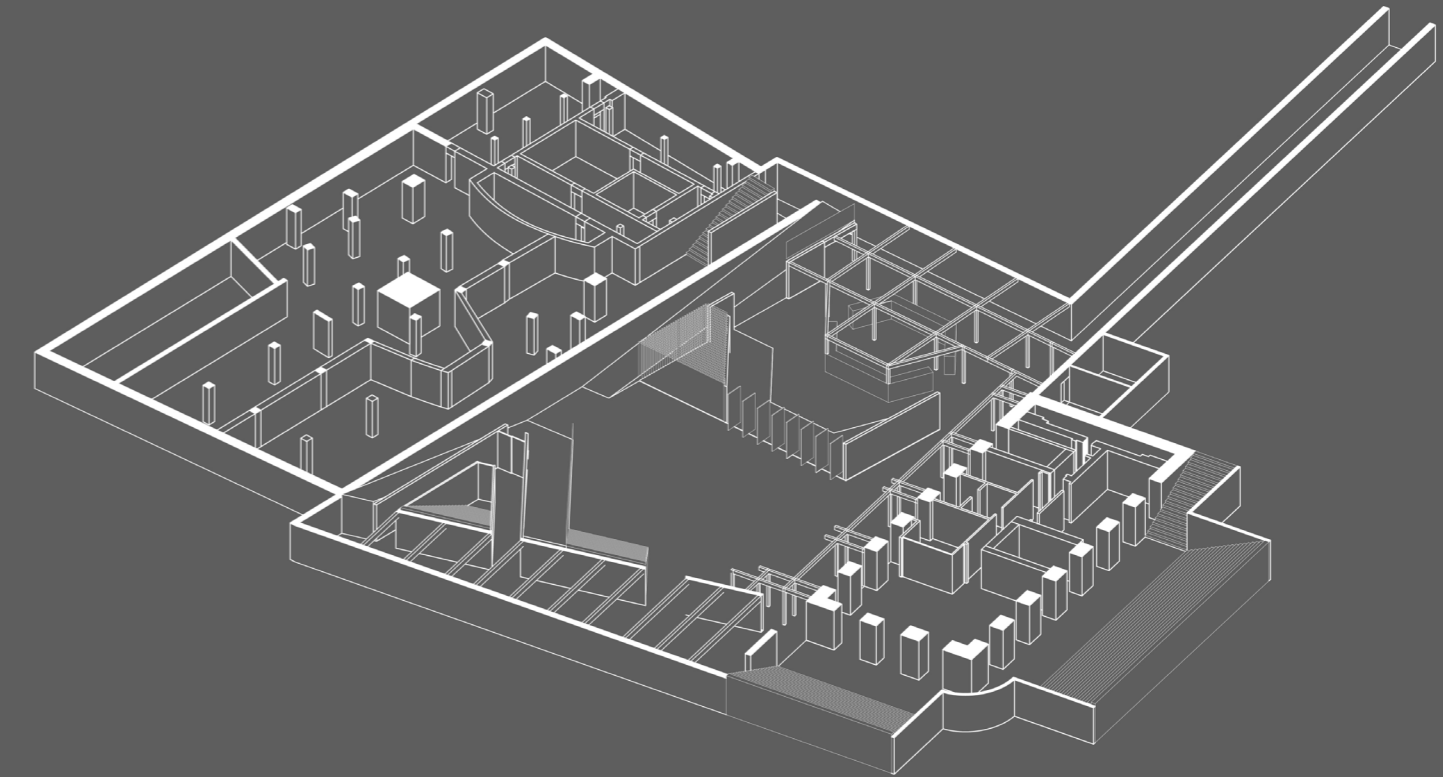
Transforming Process



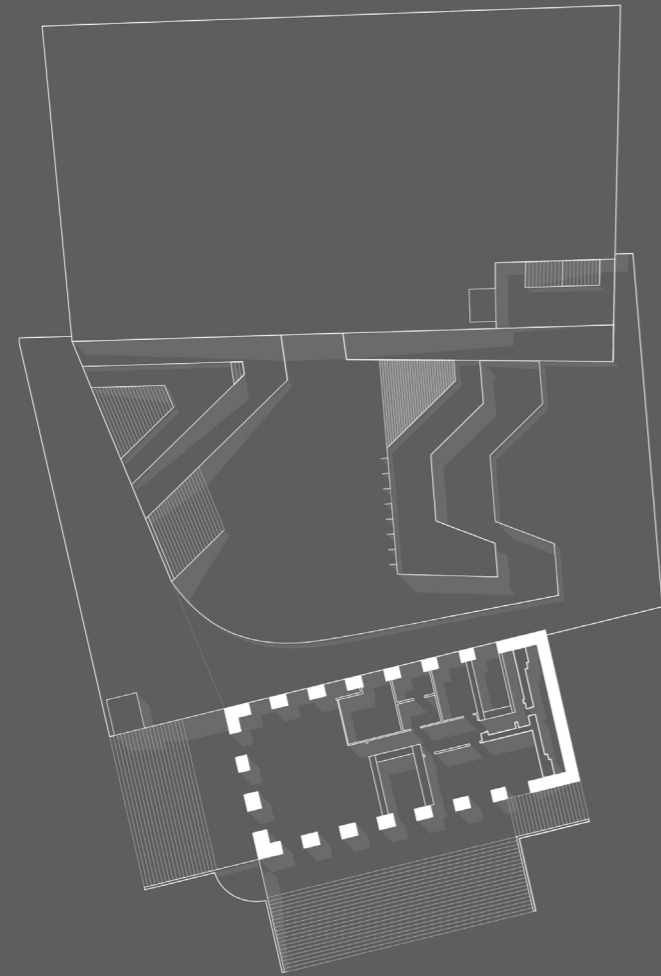
Axon



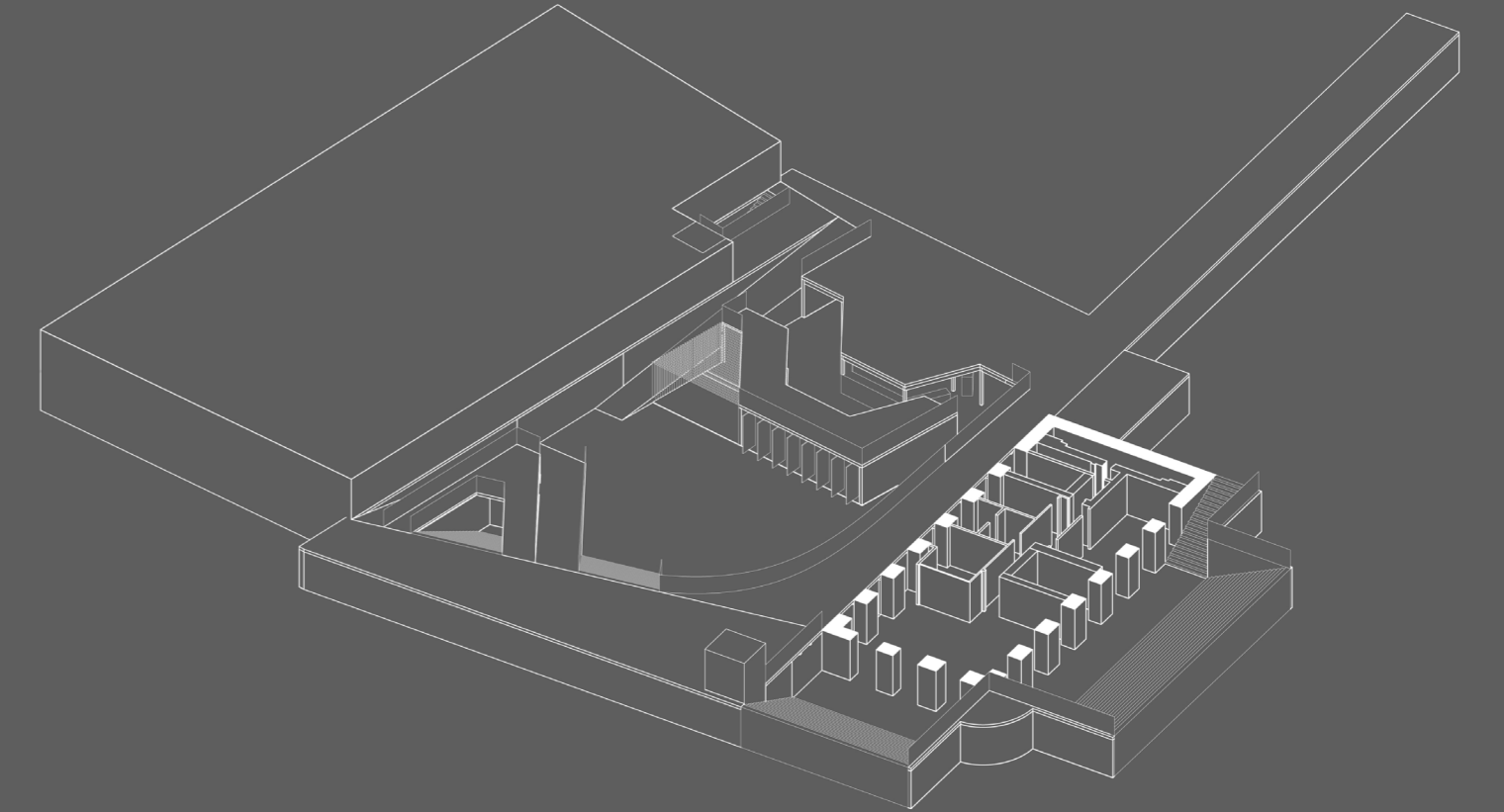
Basement Level Plan



Basement Level Axon



Ground Level Plan



Ground Level Axon

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