Contemporary Urban Frontiers

by

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Bachelor of Science in Design with a Major in Architectural Studies
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Submitted to the Department of Architecture in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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Signature of Author _____
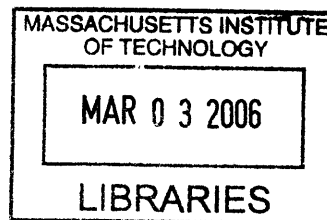
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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a provocation; to the profession of architecture at large and every person who reads it. In reading this work, the manner in which our profession functions in society should be questioned. Architecture affords us the opportunity to conceive beyond the confines of formal design, tectonics, and technology. In it we may find the ability to significantly engage with culture, to comment, and to influence change. If we neglect this capacity, we are assured to continue on the path of a formalistic tradition set before us by so many others.

This thesis studies the benign, the ubiquitous; considers it as a vehicle of change. In doing this, an alternative to the prevalent stylistic driven methodology of architecture is presented. The typology of retail presents itself as a beginning, a gestation point from which a new mode for consideration of design is born. Discovered is a new trajectory of thought, one capable of taking a common cultural circumstance and re-conceptualizing it as social progress. In this, a new paradigm for architecture is conceived. One less concerned with how something is made or what it represents, and more concerned with what architecture may accomplish on a variety of scales; from the individual, to the community, to culture as a whole.

Thesis Supervisor: Ann Pendleton-Jullian
Title: Associate Professor of Architecture

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Little Rock Nine, 1957

Introduction

Design / Culture

What place does design have in the contemporary world? Do we as architects serve society by generating beauty? Do we provide shelter, devise cost effective building strategies to provide for the public good? Do we invent new technologies allowing us to achieve greater building complexity? Do we create identity, for cities, institutions, corporations? Do we simply untangle conflicting programs in innovative ways to render legible diagrams? Do we do more? Should we do more?

Are we not in positions to direct our own efforts? Can we not decide how to address problems in a manner previously un-conceived? Do we not pick and choose what to design and why we are doing so? Can we not attempt to influence society inventively, using the exigent vehicles of commerce and production as tools to re-define the means in which they are employed?

Motivation

This project began with these questions and a desire to seek out ways in which design may impact culture, not only via the design itself, but also via the choice of what to design. An initial observation was made concerning our world. This project followed as an attempt to strategically situate an architecture as response.

Observation

The observation was that society is growing ever more anxious and fearful of 'the other'. This condition has negative impacts on all of our day to day lives.

Intervention

How may design counter this cultural anxiety? What, if anything, may we as designers undertake as a means to affect culture beyond its surface- its appearances.

To deconstruct this task, one has to understand our anxiety, our culture's fundamental mistrust of itself and others, questioning its existence and causes. This 'problem' is less tangible than most architectural challenges, far more difficult to define than a traditional program. Here, this undefined program shall become the vehicle for intervention, the place where cultural attitudes are addressed, or forgotten?

In our fear based culture, where does one begin to encourage tolerance? Difficult questions for a designer to address. I accept that there will be no instant solution. This will not be possible thru any means: policy, revolution, nor design. I also accept that design has a responsibility to make gestures within the public realm that lead to a questioning of issues, of ourselves, our perceptions, our stereotypes, and our misgivings. In doing this, the stage is set for evolving the discussion, which won't be the solution but will aid to expose the problem. We must propose designs that alter the norms of civil interaction, designs that may change the way our culture proceeds. I set out to generate a design proposal that will not only alter the way in which people interact with the built environment, but also alter the way in which they interact with each other in society.

Methodology

The vehicle for discovery is two-fold. First, there is a deconstruction of American culture, or the 'problem', as I have referred to it. These observations provide the motivation for the work as well as assist in the defining of the 'program' for intervention. Secondly, the concept of public space is deconstructed: its purpose, its existence, its possibilities. For the arguments that I shall put forth, public space shall be presented as the battle ground of thought. This is often a hotly contested place, sometimes intimate and sometimes grand; but as we shall discuss, scale has little to do with being public. The presence of public conditions is sought out as the contemporary atmosphere of daily life in America is further interrogated. Research leads to a focusing of where design culture may interact with the populous in the most public of atmospheres.

These studies provide the place setting for the design that follows.
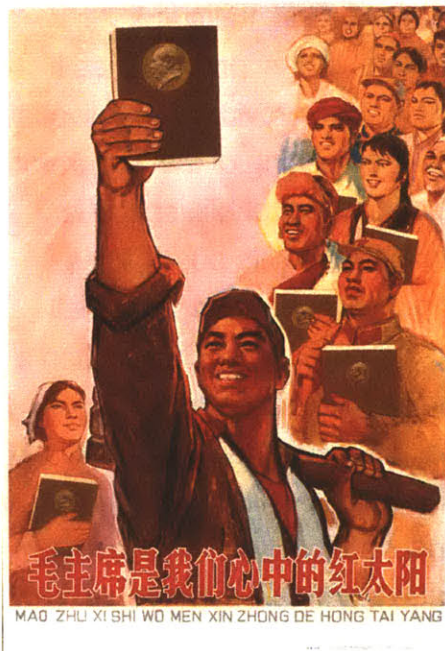
Hu Zhenyu Shanghai, *Chairman Mao is our Heart's Red Sun*, 1967. Propaganda posters like these were used by Mao during China's cultural revolution. Here, a worker holds up Mao's book with people representing various countries in the background illustrating the people's unifying support of Chairman Mao.

Gay and Lesbian Parade, Sydney, Australia. 1996 Celebration as act of defiance and demand for recognition and fair treatment

Culture of anxiety

History has witnessed many periods of cultural revolution. We have seen revolution ranging from American to sexual, industrial to cultural. All these hard fought efforts have been undertaken to work towards an open society of equality and opportunity. We have integrated the school systems and diversified our neighborhoods. Yet our culture still fails to see past surface representations of self, judging one another based on cultural associations and outward appearance.

Recently this attitude has become pandemic as we have become increasingly territorial of our land and our safety, becoming ever more suspicious and fearful. This type of sentiment is not without precedent, but it has exploded within our culture with the paranoia of terrorism. Patriotic fires are fueled by a constant media barrage; reporting potential threats and their possible sources. At the same time, our government is actively tightening our borders and constricting the flow of emigration. These actions are portrayed as vital for our safety, and most of us believe them to be.

There is a cultural fall out associated with these policies from above. Isolationist agendas and their accompanying justifications are engendering an '*us* versus *them*' attitude, leading us further toward fear, racism, hatred, and violence. This has simply worsened the element of the human condition that all our revolutions have been unable to surpass. That is our tendency to live in cultural isolation and to fear the unknown.

The 'Other'

Who is the 'other' in today's world? I suppose it is different for everyone. Some people's other may be a differing religious group, some racial, for some it is a nationality. More commonly perhaps it is one from a different economic background. Someone who can not afford the same car you drive, or can not belong to the same club or can not vacation at the same resort. Who the 'other' is varies with cultures as well. Certainly somewhere in the world, you would be considered the 'other'. It is less important to define who fits this profile, but rather to understand that the term refers to all peoples whom are outside of your cultural comfort zone.

Territoriality

Territorialism and protectionism are inherent traits of human behavior. We can witness these behaviors in the manner in which children play and in the way we cultivate our hedges and build our fences between our suburban homes. Our individual psyches are inexorably linked with our sense of boundary and safety, and our affiliations with whichever cultural sub-set we identify with. This is not entirely a bad thing, as it allows us to identify with a portion of society and feel a part of a certain type of community. Whether this community is manifested through a boundary of a neighborhood, a social class, a religion, or a common patronage to a specific bar, these communities have purpose and are necessary. But what of the 'other', do we simply avoid them, cross the street if we see them heading our way? Avoid the communities where the 'other' lives?

This does nothing but worsen the situation, but we can not expect it to change easily. In reality, people do not find many opportunities to cross these cultural boundaries.

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Unless someone makes it a personal mission to embrace communities other than their own, they most likely will not leave the safety of their own. As a result, we harbor stereotypes of the 'other'. These stereotypes and negative associations will not change as long as the parties holding those opinions never intersect with each other. In an absence of friction, of overlap, the cultural momentum of fear will not be slowed.

Moments of intersection

In accepting the cultural realities of society and its peoples, one must re-examine existing conditions and seek opportunities with latent potential for change. These moments become the venue for intervention. In these areas of cultural overlap, we as designers may find the opportunities to affect culture.

No design for any single constituent community will change the way in which the larger community interacts or views each other. It will be in the places of exchange, the places of intersection, where the revelations occur.

Public Space:
A Contemporary Battleground of Thought

The establishment of certain space in the city as 'public' is a reminder, a warning, that the rest of the city isn't public.

-Vito Acconci

A field in tension, evident in social space as the encounter, assembly, (and) simultaneity....of everything that is produced... by society, either through cooperation or through conflict

-Henri Lefevbre

Contemporary modes of research and representation in the design of public spaces often rely on a matrix, which supports articulation of a project's identity as a complex weave rather than a singular whole.

-Linda Pollack

Public sphere

The public sphere, the place of cultural overlap. It is the venue where a public voice is heard, where a public body may exercise its rights. But what does the term 'public' mean for this discussion? To use this idea of a public venue as the generator for friction, for overlap, for conflict, we must pinpoint what exactly the term means and we must then uncover the opportunities within culture for it to exist and the places where it perhaps already does.

The word public of course refers to the people as a whole, everyone, all of us….you and I. The term more specifically implies that a said group of people have common interests or goals, seen as a collective. (one might hope that the American public holds some common beliefs) Public also means that which is of the public, implying that it is used by or belongs to all of us….you and I. This usage of the word is used to refer to many things, television networks, news stations, libraries, transit systems, and of course, spaces.

As architects, we are normally concerned with the latter, the 'spaces'. What do we normally conceive of in our minds when considering a public space? We traditionally envision places that are accessible to all, city parks, town squares, etc. While these places are accessible and available for all members of society, they serve only a specific public function. They provide the venue for public protest, for leisure, even for city wide celebrations….but on an everyday level, how much interaction occurs amongst the public within these spaces. People of course may see others, pass each other on the street, etc….but little significant public discourse transpires.

In searching for the 'public' in culture, one must remove the

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Piazza san Pietro, Bernini, 1667. One of our world's most enduring public spaces.

Boston City Hall Plaza, Super Bowl Celebration 2004
This public space is notoriously underutilized and reviled
by residents, but on one day of the year it serves the
perfect venue for a 'public' gathering.

In a quintessentially public act, Daniel Thomas Hogerty on Friday March 15, 1974 led a St. Patrick's Day parade of secretaries, businessmen and shoppers on what would become a Kansas City Tradition. This first in a long series of St. Patrick's Day parades was born out of frustration for the lack of civic response to the holiday. The block long parade route led from the Continental Hotel back to Hogerty's lounge. Billed as "the world's shortest and worst parade" it drew hundreds of people to what became a downtown tradition.

Sandwich Board Man, London.
In an opposite scene, this sandwich board man fails to perform a public act if he garners no attention from those in the square, despite diplaying a public message in a public place.

limitation of thinking only of public space, and consider the notion of public as an autonomous, abstract concept. At this point, the definition of what public *is* may change in the mind of the Architect. We then apply this new abstract of public to 'space' and arrive at a very different notion of what is public space and why. If one does this in earnest, then the parks, libraries and museums that we oft consider to be the realm of the public hardly seem public at all.

To understand this better, we must come to a clearer understanding of the concept of public. The term is a loose one in many minds, and it should remain that way in configuration…as it has many meanings. But, let us define some of its more fundamental characteristics. Firstly, it means that one is not alone. To be alone in ones beliefs, dislikes, or spatial dimension, does not allow one to be part of any 'public'. In other words, one has no public discourse if you talk to yourself. You may be speaking, you may be in a public venue, but it is not a public discourse. Secondly, one must be exposed to others, conspicuous. If you are on main street USA at 3AM, and there is not a soul in town awake, you are not on public display. Thirdly, the activities within which one is engaging must be shared by others. This refers back to the notion of a collective. If you are protesting outside city hall alone, you are not really staging a public protest; it is a private protest perhaps staged in a public place.

Fundamentally, these examples demonstrate the difference between the notion of 'public' as sharing with others, and 'public' as being shared by others. The latter, possessive terminology does little to imply any interaction, any friction among the participants. In fact, 100 people could share

ownership of a public company and yet have never met each other at all. On the other hand, the more active definition of *sharing* something with others does imply interaction among the participants. It is clear that to even arrive at a shared understanding, there must have been some debate over an issue, which is a public discourse.

These characteristics portray the beginnings of public as a concept. Now if this concept is re-applied to the notion of space as indicated earlier, can a public park any longer be seen as a public space? No. This new qualification for public no longer rests upon the manner in which the space is designed or how its use is regulated. Our new definition of public begins to hinge on a more temporal dimension, a floating qualification that may no longer be constantly applied to any single place. Central Park is considered a great public park, but does it cease to be on a late January night when no one is there to occupy it? If one begins to apply this new set of criteria to our now considered public venues, many of them fail in their public-ness. Such is the case with many of our public amenities, parks and institutions.

Degrees of Public-ness

We can now see how varying spaces may be evaluated as to their degree of public-ness. This concept is critical for determining where a designer may best have an impact on our cultural conscience. The aim is to produce works that may alter the way in which people view each other, their values, and their own actions towards others. To best accomplish this, one must seek out the areas of opportunity, the a priori conditions that provide the most fruitful canvas within which to work. In other words, those spaces within

culture that already have a high degree of public-ness, even though the potential for such has been overlooked.

There would be the option to program a fictitious space such that it could maximize the degree of public interaction. This is not of my concern within this study. Instead, I am considering exigent culture and its places of missed opportunities. This is being done in an effort to reflect upon ways in which designers may have an impact within our existing practices and our existing world.

Many such moments in the city already exist that are ripe with latent public-ness. Just as there are many places that remain public, but fail to accomplish the civic goals of a public space. We must now differentiate these categories and attempt to understand what makes some instances more beneficial for a designer to study.

Park Bench

Consider the park bench. This ubiquitous piece of street furniture manages to accomplish so much with so little. Its design is intended to encourage people to sit, take a moment and enjoy their surroundings. It has a horizontal surface at seating height, often times accompanied with a back to lean against. Sometimes one may find benches ergonomically designed to accept the curve of a persons back. These elements of the design all indicate to the viewer 'seating'. But what was un-envisioned by its designers is perhaps its best asset. Imagine a day in the life of a park bench. Greeting the morning with a person waking up from a nights sleep, perhaps someone sitting to read the paper on the way to work, another stopping to feed the pigeons for a bit, co-workers eating lunch using the empty portion of the seat as a table, children abusing its edges in violent acts
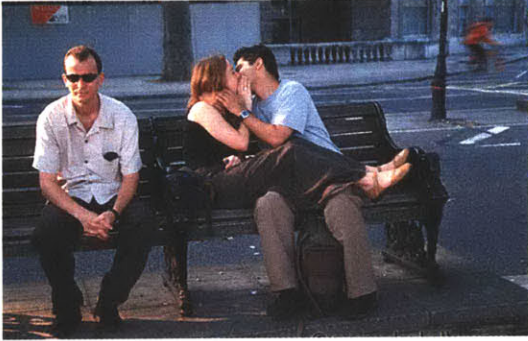
Variety of experiences seen on park benches. Despite the public venue, rarely does public interaction occur.

of recreation involving wheeled modes of transport, lovers engaging in an after dinner moment, and then back to bed with its favorite patron.

What is remarkable about this day's events is the variety of people who will find use in the bench, and the varied manner in which they will appropriate it for their purpose. The location of the bench has much to do with this of course. It needs to reside in a place that allows all of these constituencies to engage with the piece. Assuming that is the case, we should appreciate the benches ability to allow for the un-prescribed behavior, understanding how we may not program nor predict everything that will occur within our designs. What allows the bench to perform such a versatile public function is its ability to be appropriated for nearly any use conceivable, and the allowance of such within the space.

These are crucial elements in maintaining a high degree of public-ness, versatility in usage and patronage.
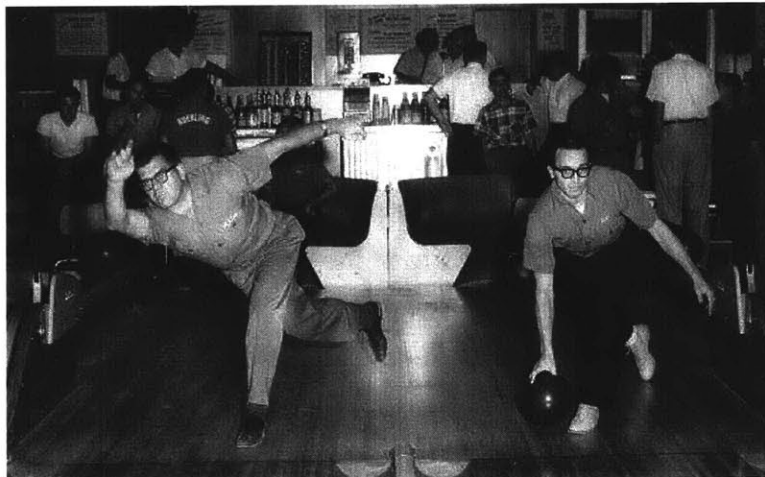
Event

What is lacking in our bench's story is the togetherness, or shared experience, needed for public interaction. Many people may use it, but not many of these users do so collectively in a manner which brings them together. There is no event that engenders collective behavior, debate, nor interaction.

In comparison, consider the permanent chess boards built into many parks seating arrangements. They provide a vehicle that engenders a successful public experience. What transpires is an event of competition and entertainment. People gather for periods of time, some short, some long

Chess players in Central Park face-off. Events such as these generate communities of desire where participants engage in a community revolving around a shared event or goal. This provides an opportunity for substantive social interaction. This event also attracts a wide variety of backgrounds to the table, as well as being situated in a public setting.

Bowlers from the Roebling Bridge division team compete in New Jersey, 1959. Much like the chess match, a community is formed around the event. Here the setting is private, requiring some expendature, and the participants are likely to be from similar social class.

in what should be recognized as a temporal community. They form relationships and encounter a variety of human interactions across a spectrum of duration and significance. And perhaps most importantly, the nature of the venue (as with the bench) attracts a variety of people, rich, poor, black, white, catholic, protestant, gay, straight, etc. The event has no cultural affiliation and harbors no agenda which excludes anyone.

Communities of Desire

The event spontaneously generates a community. This temporal community comes together due to a common desire, that of participating in the game of chess; whether thru competing or viewing. This *community of desire* reveals intriguing insights as to where we may successfully engage with culture as designers.

Certainly there are many such communities thriving in our world. These span all forms of media and social context. Think of the urban basketball court, the bowling alleys, bingo parlors, computer gaming chat rooms, video arcades, film clubs, etc...... The list is endless, but not many of them provide a high degree of public-ness nor reach a large percentage of the population. Examine the community revolving around a bowling alley. It will more than likely entail a group of self-selected individuals whom come from similar economic and geographic backgrounds. They will no doubt be varied peoples, but their ages and life experiences will not be vastly different. Participants become members of a community of desire, yet that community will more than likely not include the 'other' that is critical for this thesis to address. As well as if one were to consider a venue of bowling as an area for study, one would have to ask just

what percentage of the population actually participates in the event? Just as with the chess players, it is a successful example, but it does not affect a large percentage of the population. The same is true of many such communities. They may be successful as implements for inter-action, but they self-select a demographic that negates the communities' potential for public discourse and benefit, or they simply do not reach a large enough audience to merit substantive study.

Communities of Necessity

Another form of spontaneous and temporal community may be examined, the *community of necessity*. Much in the same manner as that of desire, people are brought together through a shared event. In this case, it is not an act of leisure or shared interest such as a hobby or passion. Here, it is an event or experience that one has no option of participating in. An example of this would be a disaster relief center like that set up for Katrina refugees at the Astrodome in Houston. Here, many people were brought together for a period of time in a shared event, most certainly not by choice.

These communities are not dissimilar from the previous in that they may range vastly in scale, duration and significance. A small town with a single post office will host a community of necessity revolving around that institution, a workplace break room, even an elevator lobby in a high rise office building. Depending on the circumstance, these communities may be even more apt at coaxing people into confronting the '*other*' in society. Certainly traumatic events have historically brought communities together and brought out the best of people. But more often than not, these communities exist for the duration of necessity and

Wedding photo of Rebecca Warren and Joseph Smothers. The couple was married in the Astrodome with fellow Katrina refugees in attendance. They, along with thousands of others, had been living at the Astrodome since being evacuated from their homes in New Orleans.   September 14, 2005

then its members recede into the norms of their cultural experiences. Unless the necessity is an on-going event, the significance of this community for this study is limited. Another limitation of these phenomenons is their scale of impact. Events like Katrina of course impact significant portions of society, but this is a temporary event. If we consider continuing communities of necessity, then their reach becomes limited on a society wide scale. For the most part, these communities born of necessity relate to smaller sub-sets of people and do not have the ubiquitous nature of the previously discussed park bench.

Adding to this, the necessity limits the ability for people outside the community to join by choice, or to participate in the event once it is witnessed to be gaining cultural momentum. In other words, the impact of a community of necessity becomes limited to that specific group and may not be expanded or grown as easily. A cultural movement may not be as easily born from necessity in comparison to that of desire.

Opportunities for Intervention

Where does one uncover the appropriate moment for experimentation. We must seek out the opportunities within culture that allow the public to interact, to discover, to have the critical social intercourse that allows them to see each other as human beings. These events should not be fixed in time nor location, but be scalable, transportable as concepts for implementation. What this study searches for is the events that invite a broad array of peoples, from all walks of life, for a seat at the table of discovery. The situation should be far reaching, inclusive, and entail an event to serve as a catalyst for discussions and chance encounters.

Shining Hours / Forgiving Rhyme :   Dave Hickey

On a Saturday morning when I was eight or nine years old, my dad and set out in our old Chevrolet to play some music at a friend's house. Actually, my dad was going to play music, but he let me carry his horn cases, and both of us were decked out in jazz-dude apparel: penny loafers, khakis, and Hawaiian shirts with the tails out. First though, we had to pick up our new neighbor, Magda, who had only moved to Texas about three months before. We had become friends with her because people left their windows open back then, and we heard eachother playing Duke Ellington 78's. Now, Magda and my Mother went shopping together and hung-out, so I knew her as this nice, relaxed German lady who sat around in the kitchen with Mom dicing things.

When dad beeped the horn in front of her house, however, a different Magda came out. She was all gussied up, with her hair in a bun, wearing this black voile dress, a rhinestone pin, and these little rimless spectacles that I associate to this day with "looking European." She was also carrying an armload of sheet music, and as she approached the car I whispered to my dad that this must be Magda's first jam session-because nobody looked at sheets at a jam session. Dad said to shut up, dammit, that Magda was a refugee, that she was a jew who fled the Nazis, first to London, and then, after the war, down here to Texas. So cool it! He whispered, and I cooled it. Problems with the Nazis were credentials enough for me. I hopped into the back seat, let her ride up front with dad.

Then we had to stop and pick up Diego, who worked at the Jiffy dry cleaners where we took our clothes. We beeped, and Diego came trotting out with his bongo drums in a paper sack-a really cool looking guy, I thought, with his thin black mustache and his electric-blue fitted shirt with bloused

sleeves. Usually, Diego played percussion in Latino bands on the North Side, but he loved to sing jazz, so he was fairly bouncing with excitement as he ducked into the back seat beside me. Then all the way out to Ron's, he flirted so outrageously with Magda that my dad and I kept cracking up.

Magda blushed down into her dress, but she seemed to not mind Diego's attention. At one point, she turned around and scolded him good-naturedly: "Her Diego," she said, shaking her finger at him, "You are a stinker!" And that cracked us up too, so we laughed all the way out to South Fort Worth where Ron lived in his redneck sub-division, an a ranch style house with a post-oak in the front lawn. As we pulled up in front, two black guys, Butch and Julius, were advancing warily across the lawn. They were dresses in white dress shirts and high-waisted zoot-suit slacks, carrying instrument cases, and glancing around them at the neighborhood.

Butch and Julius were beboppers, like my dad and Ron, they played pick up gigs with dance bands around town, so I saw them all the time. I waved, and Butch, who was carrying a guitar case, waved back. Julius was lugging his stand-up base, so he just grinned, and Ron, who stood at the front door holding the screen, waved too. Ronno was my dad's best friend, and as usual, he was barefoot, wearing a sleeveless Marine Corp T-shirt and camouflage fatigues. "Not many jazz fans in this neighborhood," Butch remarked when we all in the living room. Ron allowed there weren't, but the VA had approved his loan so he took it. Julius just smiled and took his bass out of its case. Then he took a Prince Albert tin out of the string pocket inside it, flopped down on Ron's easy chair and began rolling a joint.

Magda's eyes got big at this, but I could tell she wasn't upset. She was tickled to death. You could almost hear her thinking, "Oh boy! I have made it all the way from Birenstrausse to this! I am out in the Wild West-at an

American jazz session with Negroes smoking marijuana!"
To cover her excitement, she marched over to Ron's baby
grand, set her music on it and began striking octaves and
fifths, checking the tuning. Butch gave her an appraising
sideways glance. Julius just grinned and lit up his reefer.
After he had taken a couple of hits, Ron's wife Mary stuck
her head out of the kitchen, sniffing the air. "Guess y'all are
gonna be wanting cookies," she said. "I am!" I said, and
everybody laughed.

Ron took a hit from Julius' reefer and climbed behind
his drum kit, clanging his ride cymbal as he did. Butch
and Diego took up positions on the couch-Butch with his
Gretsch guitar, Diego with his bongos between his thighs.
My dad opened his horn cases on the floor. He fiddled with
the saxophone, then took out his clarinet, wet the reed and
leaned back against the piano with the ankles crossed,
examining the instrument, blowing lint of the pads. They all
tweaked and twanged for a minute, getting in tune, then Ron
counted off Artie Shaw's "At Sundown." Magda was really
shaky at first, pale with fear, but Diego just kept grinning at
her and nodding, and she started to firm up.

Then, Dad swung around, aimed his clarinet at her, and
she seemed to wake up. In less than a bar, she found herself
and started hitting the note, crisply; and the lady had some
chops, you know. She could play jazz music, but it was
strange to watch, because here in this smoky, shadowy
room full of swaying, agitated beboppers was this nice
German-Jewish lady in a black viole dress with her back rigid
and her eyes glued to the sheet, her wrists lifted in perfect
position, playing in such a way that, if you couldn't hear the
music, you would have guessed Schumann or something
like that. But Magda was really rapping it out, and she had
such great attack that Diego had to sit up straight to sing
the choruses. Mary even came to the kitchen door to listen,
which she rarely did.

After that, Magda got into it, even bouncing her bottom on the bench once or twice (much to Butch's whimsical delight). But she wouldn't solo. They would give her the space, nod in her direction and say, "Take it, Maggie!" but she would shake her head and vamp through her sixteen bars. Then Butch or dad would come in and solo. But I was really proud of them. They always gave her the space-in case she changed her mind. And I was proud of Magda too, for getting her confidence up, and letting it build, so the best thing they played all afternoon was the very last thing: "Satan Doll" by Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and Johnny Mercer.

By this time, the room was very mellow and autumnal. Ruby light angled through the windows, glowing in the drifting strata of second hand ganja as Ron counted off the song. He and Julius started alone, insinuating the Duke's sneaky, cosmopolitan shuffle. Then Magda laid down the rhythm signature, Butch and my dad came in, and they played the song straight, flat out. Then they relaxed the tempo, moved back to the top, and let Diego croon his way through the sublime economy of Johnny Merver's lyrics-calling up for all of us (even me) the ease and sweet sophistication of the Duke's utopian Harlem, wherein we all dwelt at that moment:

Cigarette holder,
Which wigs me,
Over her shoulder,
*She digs me,*
Out Cattin'
That satin doll.

Contemporary conditions:
The Urban and the (sub)urban

The city should function as a stimulant for the greatest number of meetings, encounters, and challenges between varied persons and groups, providing as it were a stage upon which the drama of social life may be enacted, with the actors taking their turn, too, as spectator.

-Lewis Mumford

(metropolis)....its architecture promotes a state of congestion on all possible levels, and exploits this congestion to inspire and support particular forms of social intercourse that together form a unique culture of congestion.

-Rem Koolhaas

the Promise of
PUBLIC HOUSING
1936-1983
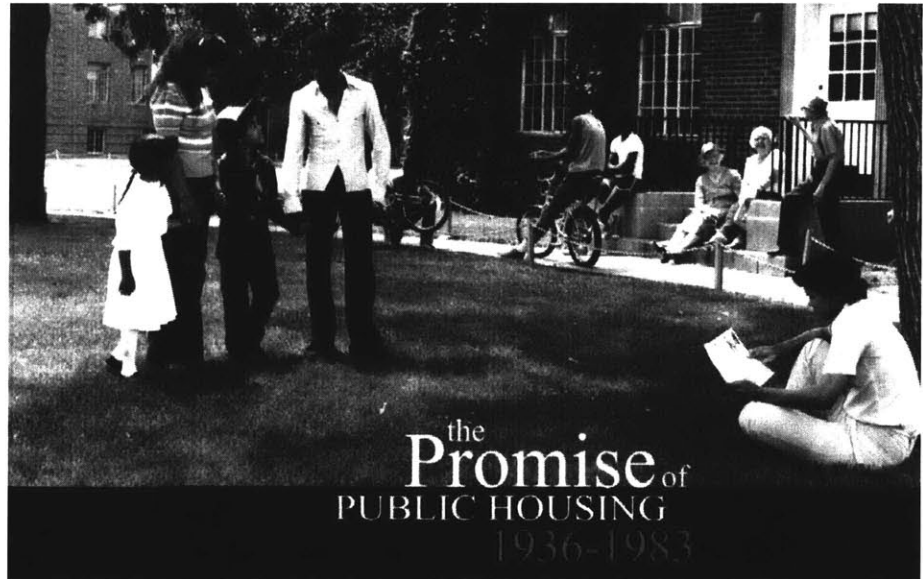
Chicago Housing Authority Archives, cover of a compilation of photographs depicting life in Chicago public housing. This publication was produced by the housing authority, and not unsimilar to the cultural revolution propaganda poster, its image depicts people of varying races living harmoniously as neighbors. Public housing programs in Chicago are not historically viewed as such.
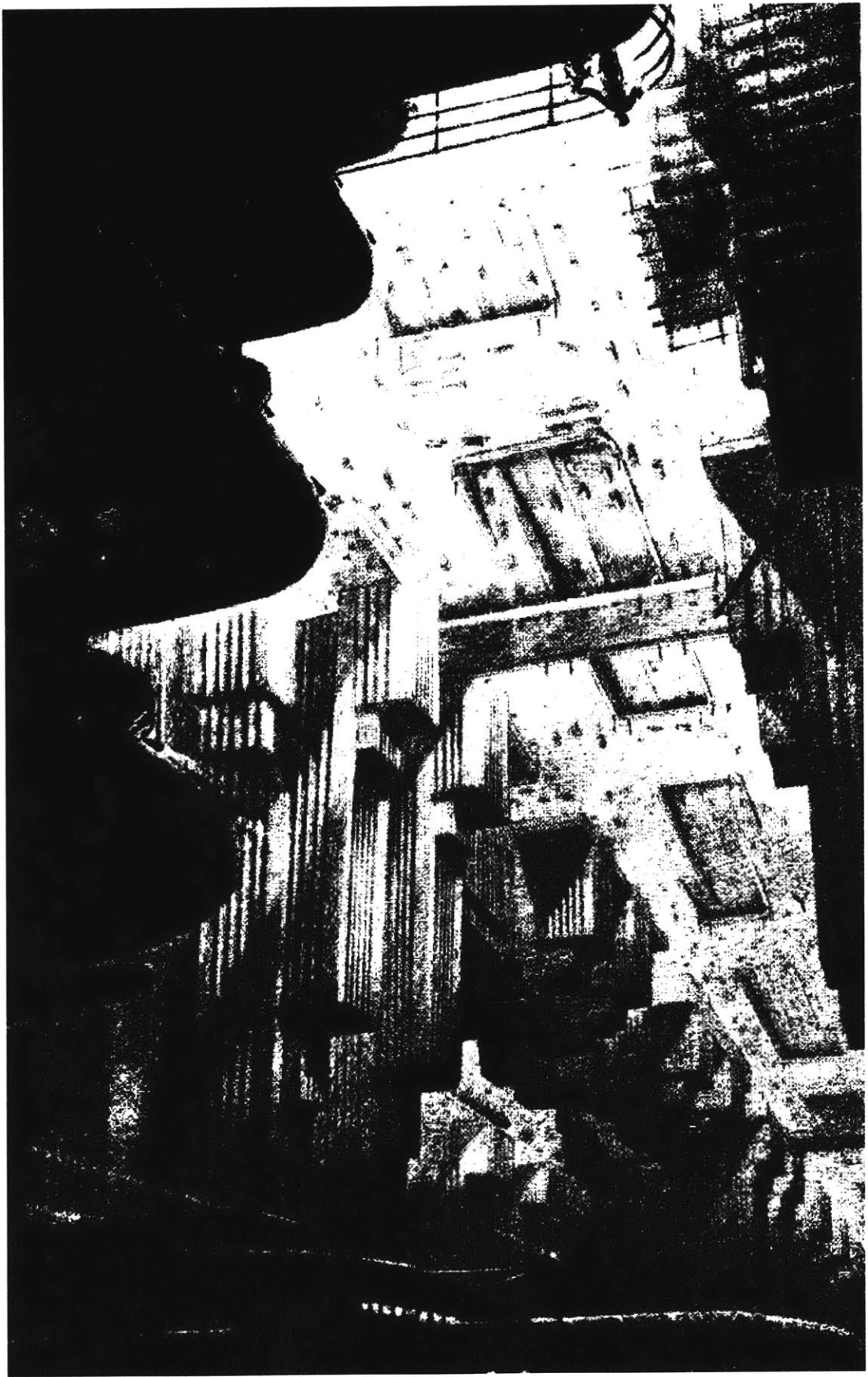
Metropolis

The main attraction, the capital city, the place where we all want to be. This is the place of wonder, of dreams; it contains everything one could want, all elements of desire. As Frank Sinatra bellowed, "if you can make it here...." And somewhere in our souls we all believe that. We all want to try it on, test ourselves against the great city. Society's fascinations with the metropolis are obvious, if for no other reason than it is so vastly different from the majority of our realities. But the world is not a metropolis.

Proximity

What is it of the metropolitan that we Architects admire so? Why is it that we collectively perceive this as the venue worthy our efforts?

It is the fabricated, the designed. It is the place where we re-create reality in a new and inspiring fashion. Here all aspects of the human condition coalesce to create a new hyper-reality. We enjoy this fantasy, and we revel in its enduring power of suggestion.

Somewhere in this fantasy lies a latent utopian dream. An image of all the peoples of the world working alongside one another, living as neighbors, and accepting one another in the joint act of competition. It becomes an image of propaganda for capitalism not unlike Mao's posters of the Cultural Revolution. We daydream of the New York cab driver shuttling the attorney to work, the high rent apartment looming over the corner bodega that serves the working class. Somehow, we envision a better world through proximity. We imagine that if the rich and the poor live within a one block radius of each other, and there is no class

warfare, then society must be on its way to that metropolitan dream of equality and opportunity.

The mistake is made in focusing on the planning strategies. We examine these conditions at an urban level, arranging the spaces and program, assuming that the interactions will take care of themselves. The events are not coordinated, but left to be interchangeable, seen as flexible links in a chain. The argument is made that the versatility of function, the allowance of variation, will attract a variety of people, encouraging the social congestion and overlap.

Mixed Use

We witness the phenomenon of the 'mixed-use' development, this miniature extension of the *'culture of congestion'* into the world of the benign. But what does the provision of high-end housing above a Wal-Mart change in the way society interacts? Does having an employee of the gap pass the condo resident on the elevator to the parking garage encourage tolerance, breed understanding, or unite a community in any way?

No. We expect that by placing as many conflicting programs in a tighter proximity that this will be enough. But these elements will remain separate, people will self select which of the programmatic elements they will participate in, and they will not overlap in any way other than shared tenancy. What must be examined is how these events may be considered on a human scale of interaction to provide for the friction. What happens inside the programmed spaces becomes more critical to the success of urbanity than how they are arranged. The right programming and design of a stand alone general store in a small rural town may produce more of an 'urban' condition than the most diverse arrangement of

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program in a downtown center.

Failed adjacencies

A landmark example of this school of thought resides here
in Boston, a city known (*as of late*) for its efforts to integrate
communities and provide affordable housing alternatives for
the poor. Many housing developments have been integrated
into the urban fabric as an attempt to diversify the city. The
most glaring of contradictions is seen at what is referred
to as 'tent city' on Dartmouth Street in downtown Boston.
Here, a new public housing development was constructed
immediately along side the new Neiman Marcus store (with
no intended irony). These two entities co-exist peacefully
enough, both successful ventures in their own right. The 'tent
city' development has an appreciable community, providing
after school education, day-care services, and various social
programs for its residents. Just as the retail location of
Neiman Marcus has an appreciable community of its own,
providing a location for people to get together and share in
the splendor of our commodity driven culture.

But the location of one neighboring the other has not
engendered a cross-fertilization of cultures in any manner.
The residents of 'tent city' (*I would suggest*) never venture
into the Neiman Marcus without arousing suspicion, and
the patrons of the Neiman Marcus would certainly arouse
the same if they visited 'tent city'. Hence, neither ventures
outside of their known territory, despite the prevailing
metropolitan condition of congestion. Cultural territories may
border each other, but they do not overlap in a significant
manner.

How then does this alignment change anything in our lives?
Yes, those visiting the Neiman Marcus may pass the 'tent

city' residents on the sidewalk, and one may hope that by doing so enough times and not being mugged one's acceptance of the others existence is heightened. But other than that, not much has changed from the typical (sub) urban condition of seclusion and stereotyping.

With this limitation of the metropolitan, how do we begin to surpass proximity and allow cultures to do more than co-exist, but instead, foster significant interactions that will engender the understanding and sympathy that we metropolitanists would ideally like to see diverse communities have.

(*sub*) urban

America (and increasingly the world) is becoming more suburban. The term has become synonymous with Americans the world over. Its usage is not only meant to define the physical landscape in which most of America lives, but also the attitudes and character of our society. When the term is used in this way, it implies disengaged, middle-of-the-road, without opinion or regard, safe, guarded, unadventurous and protectionist.

Our profession views suburbia in this way, lacking content, an expanding sea of grey goo to be avoided. Its planning limits interaction, separates functions, hampers creativity, and nearly all but kills spontaneous public intercourse. So we focus our attention on the urban, the metropolitan, the core, and the creation thereof. Our profession envisions the cosmopolitan as '*the*' place for a public discourse. '*The*' opportunity where peoples may come together in acts of civic discourse, '*the*' realm where design may escape its boundaries of formalism and leverage its creativity in a

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Typical suburban housing development, land ownership demarcated by fencing.
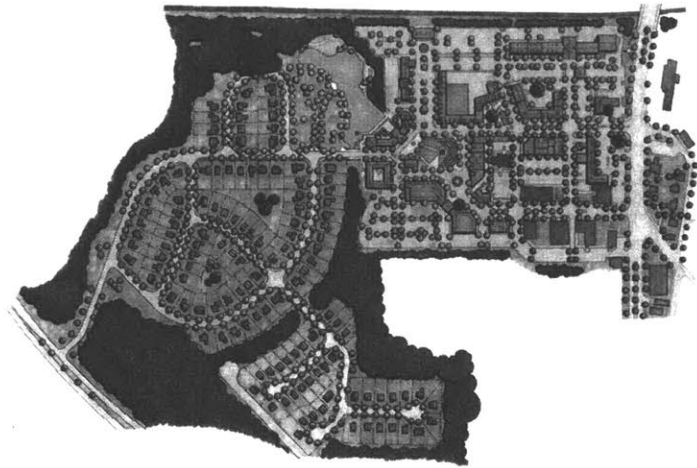
Suburban master plan for the Chesterfield Greens development in Virginia

gesture that affects the culture at large.

From Sert to Koolhaas, we have striven for the metropolitan, all the while ignoring the realities of culture. The reality that the world is substantially suburban, increasingly so, and is most likely not to change. So who are we working for.....ourselves? In a self-gratifying manner to which we may unveil our master plans and decry, 'here, this is how we should live!' When do we realize that amidst our most prescient observations, the world may just not come along? And if so, where do we turn our attention? What would we do if we were to witness the realities of our world and work accordingly to improve it from within? Not to topple it like so many bricks, but to improve upon it, allow it serve those elements of society we seem to enjoy loathing so. This study interrogates this condition of suburbia as a reality to work within.

(sub) urban - this place we enjoy avoiding, this place that so many live.

(sub) version

Where urban proximity may only place people in contexts that allow reinforcement of stereotypes, overlap may place people in situations that counter them. Are there not opportunities within the suburban condition that provide for this overlap. In suburbia's planned configurations, its zoning ordinances, we find such opportunities,

Sub-division and gated community life styles may foster inclusive mentalities and closed cultural affiliations, but their reach within the paradigm of living is limited by their planning. Development and marketing strategies in America have created the opportunity of overlap for us through the

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evolution of regional centers for commerce. Our suburban edge city developments are often contemporarily criticized for having no centralized moments of congestion, no neighborhood unity nor identity, yet they provide a new mutation of the concept of *neighborhood* that may be subversively taken advantage of.

This mutation is the development of the shopping center. It has replaced our downtowns as our new core. What previous generations of Architects and Planners looked to centralize in urbanity, our commercial economy has fragmented, multiplied throughout suburban reality. Masses of housing developments with little small scale commercial services and little programmatic diversity feed the malls of America. The neighborhood bodega has been replaced by the regional Wal-Mart. Culture has opted for the regional Home Depot in lieu of the corner hardware store. Main Street America has disappeared and been reformatted as the regional shopping center.

The opportunity this provides has been overlooked. In our criticisms of the lack of urbanity, we have failed to recognize the opportunities for its replacement. Suburbia is normally abhorred for its separatist life style, but our commercial centers draw together multiple suburbias into one place. People may live in homogeneous neighborhoods, yet these neighborhood's constituencies overlap at the mall. Where the local store services a discrete community that may be homogeneous, the regional mall services multiple communities of diverse constituencies.

Consumerism:
A Manifest Identity

We need to see commerce and commodification not as inevitable, one-directional controlling processes but as a complex condition that can be partial, temporal, and even reversible, creating situations of decommodification.

-Margaret Crawford

In an increasingly diffuse and customized post-industrial world, we cling to the last vestige of industrial thinking: the presumption of mass-produced identity and ready-made experience – a presumption that makes the expression, appreciation, or even the perception of our everyday distinctions next to impossible.

-Dave Hickey

Junkspace is like being condemned to a perpetual Jacuzzi with millions of your best friends…..

-Rem Koolhaas

Tourism group of foreign vacationers posing at entrance to the Mall of America. Many similar images have been taken, as popular a photo location as any historical monument.

Roger and Stephen Downs had these shirts made at Crossgates Mall in New York, but Stephen Downs was arrested when he refused to take his off and leave the mall. He was charged with trespassing at a *public* mall. The case is awaiting trial, Mr. Downs, a lawyer, is fighting the charges.

Ubiquitous Commerce

The potential in harnessing the power of commerce is exponential in its unavoidable pervasiveness. Centers of commerce provide a setting that is replicated all across our country, and the world. No district, town, county, city is not serviced by some form of a mall, whether local or regional. In it we discover a venue where our visions may truly affect culture at large, for this is where they are to be found. We need not build new cities or tear down neighborhoods of blight. We simply need to re-envision what already exists, what the *public* has already embraced.

There exists an uncomfortable, undefined region of unrecognized public space in America's commercial centers. Here we find the confluence of social groups, all ages, religions, ethnicities. They come from diverse areas of the city, region, to consume. But to consume what exactly.... product, experience, identity?

The Ready-Made

Our culture has bought, wholeheartedly, the sales pitch of commodification. Our identities are branded, bought, ready-made for our consumption. From the Hello-Kitty t-shirts of youth to the established attire of Prada, we are what we buy.

Mallspace

As soon as we enter the mall, our psyche is delicately transported away from reality. Not unlike a gambler in a Vegas casino, one partially loses touch with the here and now. It is not that one is completely unaware of its existence any longer, instead a distraction is offered. Known as *nonspace* or *mallspace*, this distraction is one of familiarity and comfort. It allows a mental auto-pilot to take over and

ones mind to wander onto other things; televisions, pots and pans, how good you would look in that dress, etc. The consumer accepts this, plays along, and embraces it. The distraction is comforting, allowing oneself to imagine another life, one not there own.

This quasi-escapism is enforced through a mall's design. It is no mistake that most malls are segregated from their contexts, usually equipped with a vast spatial buffers cushioning them from the noise, traffic, and other realities of the world. These conditions provide a physical, psychological, and temporal distancing from reality. On arriving at a mall, the visitor usually has to make a series of confounded turns and round-abouts to even enter the parking area, which then must be traversed at a slow speed while considering ones parking options. This transition is undertaken prior to exiting the vehicle, at which point one proceeds on foot through another series of scalar and sensual transitions from the outside world into mallspace. *(Newer malls have even taken to playing music in their parking lots nearer to the structures. This is done for no other purpose but to aid in this transitory event.)* All this takes but a few minutes, but it is long enough to slow one down and separate oneself from the world left behind. At this point, one has become detached and more susceptible to the distractions inside.

Once there, one discovers navigation easy. Signs direct you where to go and how to get there, such that one doesn't have to think about anything other than the purchase. Wayfinding is always straight-forward and direct, as your eyes shouldn't have to pay attention to anything other than the advertisements and signage. The outside world is concealed from view, other than the sky. This is done simply to let in natural light, preventing any feelings of confinement. And the marketers know that natural

Typical mall parking lot, Dallas, Texas. Most cemmercial centers are separated from their urban contexts by vast seas of parking, retainage basins, and landscaping.

light makes shoppers feel more at ease, more open to new experiences.

Consider your last visit to a mall *(statistically, it could not have been that long, as nearly the entire population of the US over the age of 8 visits a mall at least once a month)*. What are the things you remember about it, did you notice anything at all? Or simply focus on the products that were on display? Is this because there was nothing to notice? This is hardly the case, as there was everything to notice. You were just unexpectedly lulled into *nonspace* and weren't paying attention.

Co-Optation

These elements of consumer society must not be taken at face value. We can choose to embrace them, reject them, or co-opt them for our purpose of subverting society's normal patterns of behavior and exposing our everyday distinctions as character traits that make us human, defining our differences while bringing us together as a culture.

Mallspace offers the designer an opportunity. Just as we are more susceptible to marketing ploys when in this distracted state, we may also be more susceptible to encounters outside our accepted value systems. We may be much more willing to encounter the 'other' in society inside the fantasy world of retail than we would be on a city street, or in the confines of our suburban worlds.

The ready-made may also be employed in a strategy for cultural overlap. The embracing of branded identities may often separate people, as with explicitly exclusionary retailers like a Neiman Marcus or Luis Vuitton. But a brand identity may also become associated with principles of inclusiveness and acceptance. Benetton successfully navigated this as

a marketing strategy in the late 1980's, with advertising campaigns depicting diversity and acceptance. But these strategies had no implications for the design nor program of the stores themselves. It does show us though that a brand can be seen as universally accepting and accessible, influencing the diversity of its patronage.

Lastly, the universal appeal of consumerism, the fact that it draws in all members of society, most certainly may be employed in a strategically thought out project. With the intent of the project being to impact culture's attitudes concerning each other, and foster a greater understanding of diversity and its necessity and benefits, we may use commerce as the vehicle whereby large constituencies are found in a pre-packaged mix of diversity. The mall in this manner becomes the societal opposite of the opera, museum, or half-way house.

Consumption / Production

The traits of consumerism look to be employed as tools to assist in a production. Not the production of goods nor services, but instead the production of a community. Within this subversion of our consumer based system, an attempt is made to create a community of desire, not unlike that of the chess tables in the park. The event of consumption becomes the vehicle and the place of consumption, the mall, becomes the site.

Created is a new typology of retail, situated subtly between the single-mindedness of commercialism and the open ended usefulness of the city park bench. This new typology becomes a new form of public space, not publicly owned nor policed, but used by the public in a fashion that allows for *public*, social interactions of the everyday.
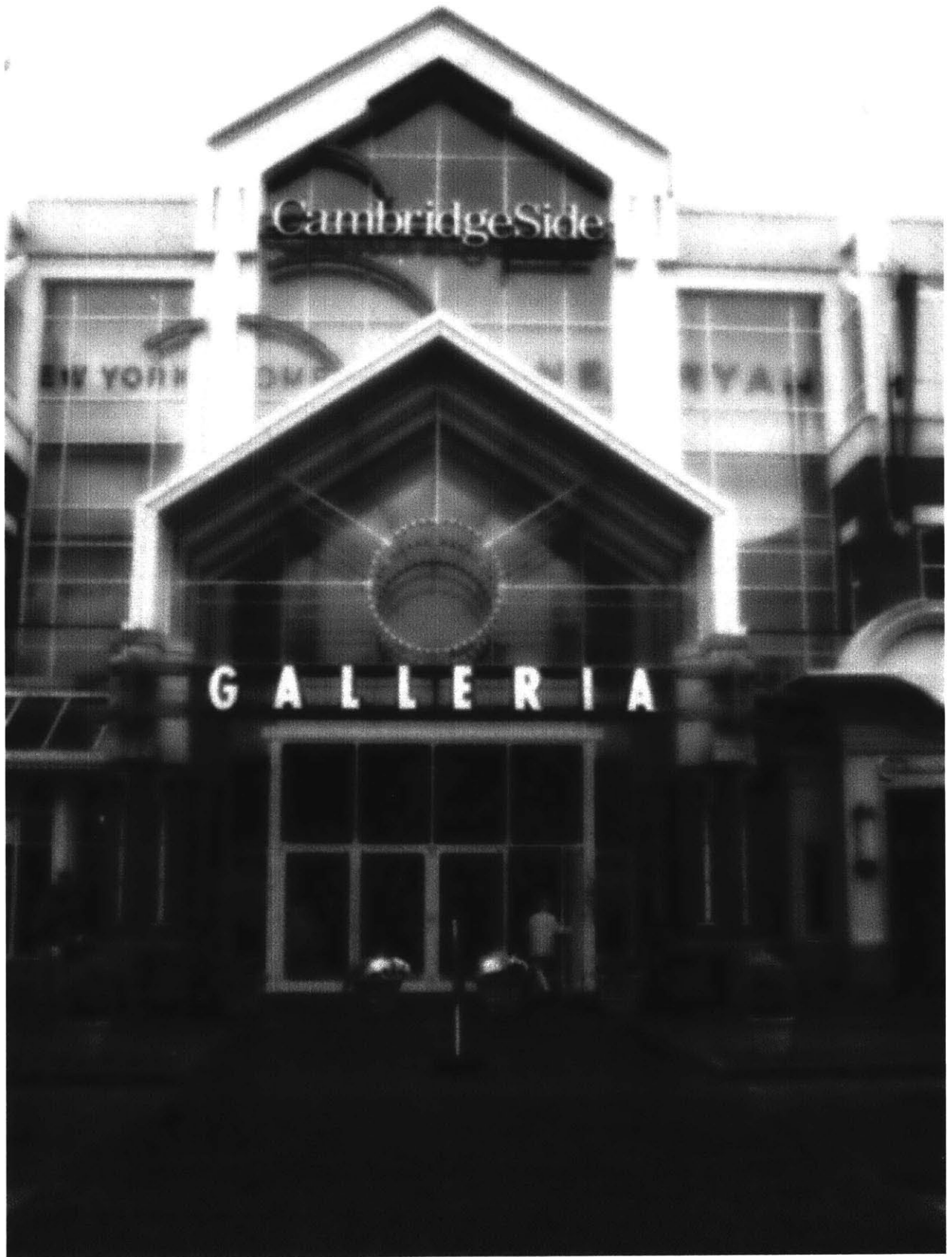
CambridgeSide Galleria:
Site of Intervention

Mall Typology

We take the Cambridge Side Galleria as an example for investigation of mall culture and its diversity. This mall is located in East Cambridge, Massachusetts. It is not unusual in any particular way, not traumatically different from any other, it serves as a typological study. Here we find all the usual amenities of commerce, the atrium, the food court, escalators, elevators, promenades, retail tenants ranging from Best Buy to Victoria's Secret. Here we also find the usual consumers of goods, the public as we know it.

Cambridge Side Galleria consists of

379,326 square feet of retail space.

America contains 46,990 malls of substantial size. 1

7,760 have over 100,000 sqaure feet of retail space.

On average, every state has 355 shopping centers w

ith a minimum of 100,000 square feet of retail space.

The US boasts 18 malls that have over 2 r

Cambridge Side Galleria in comparison to Boston Commons, Massachusetts

million square feet of retail space, each.
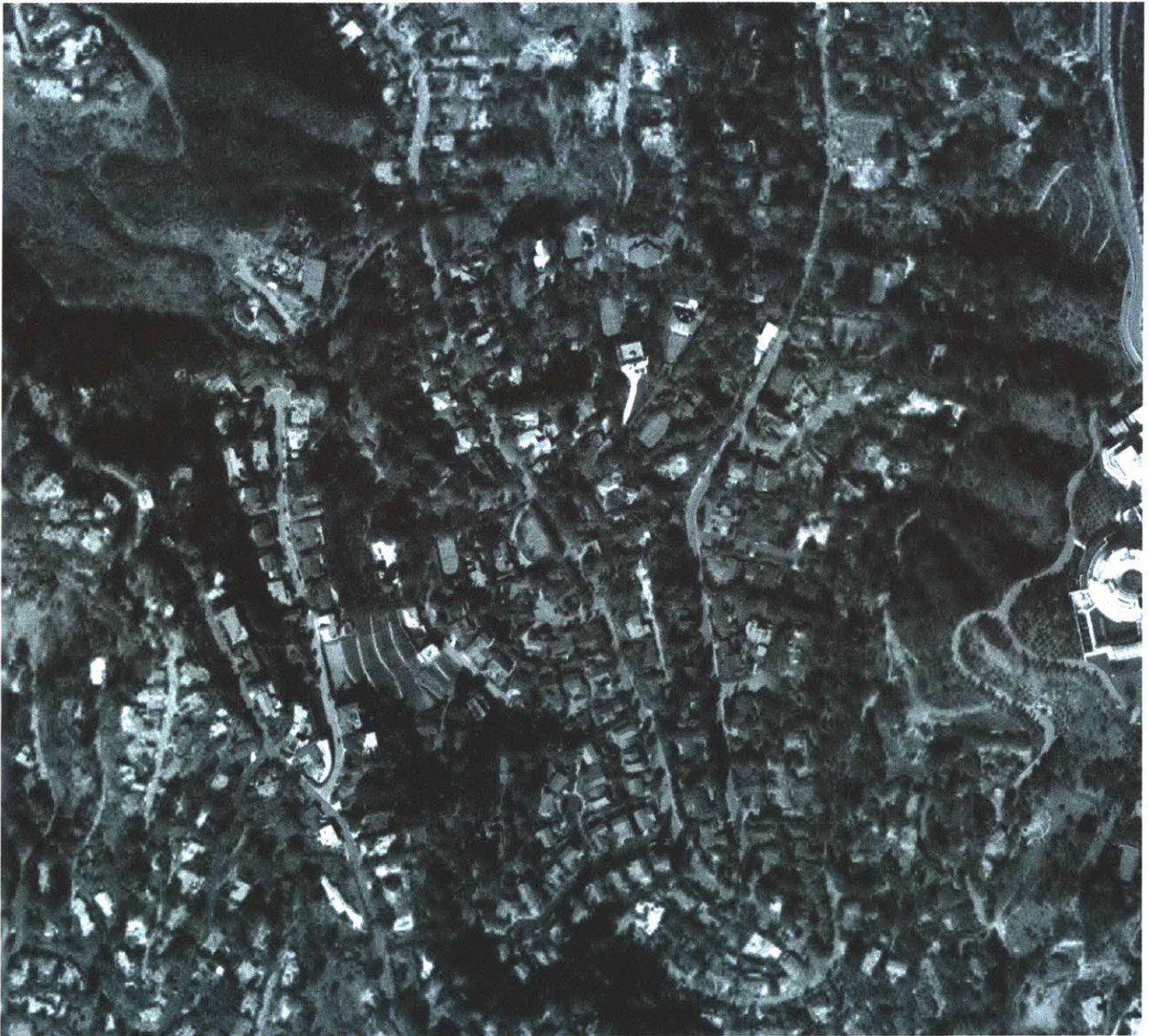
In the last 3 years, China has constructed the world's 4 lar

Cambridge Side Galleria in comparison to Getty Center, Los Angeles, California.

gest malls totaling 14,000,000 square feet of retail space.

In the last 30 years, mallspace has more than triple

Cambridge Side Galleria in comparison South Central Park, New York

d (1.79 billion sf in 1973 to 5.86 billion sf in 2003).
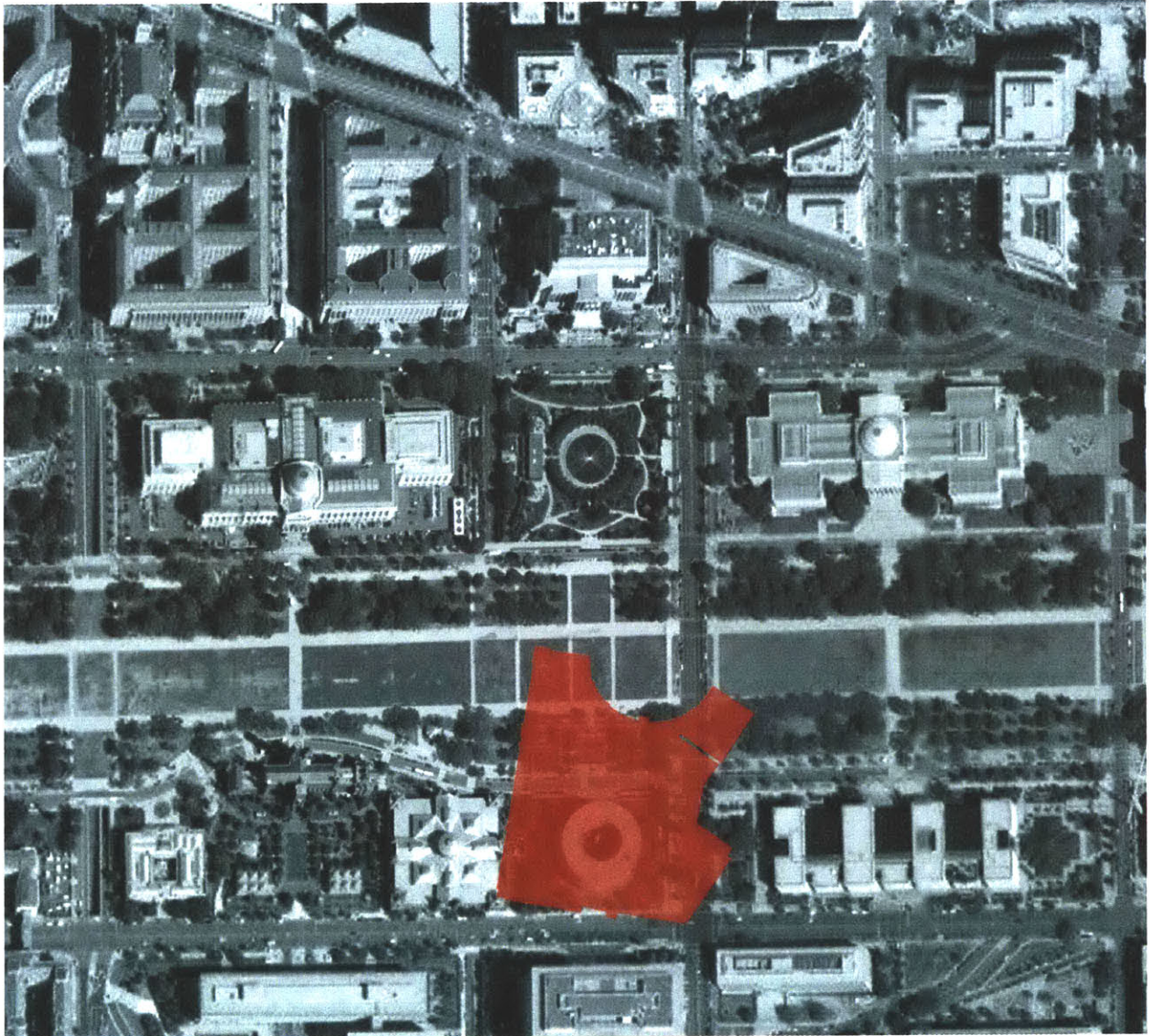
Malls provide employment to 12.5 million Americans, a

Cambridge Side Galleria in comparison to Capital Mall, Washington D.C.

pproximately 1 in 20 Americans is employed at a mall.

Per month, it is estimated that over 203 m

Cambridge Side Galleria in comparison to St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, Italy

illion Americans visit a mall at least once.

Cambridge Park on Saturfay afternnon with empty seats, unused playground equipment and vacant basketball court. This space is walking distance from the mall, which was teeming with people at thie time this photo was taken.
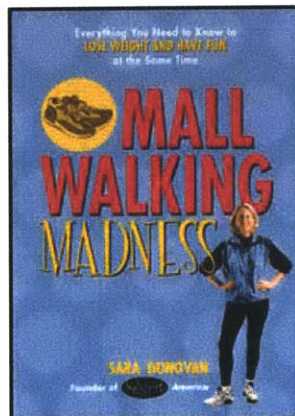
Guide to mall walking written by Sara Donovan, 2002

Image of mall walkers in a guide for starting a mall walking club for senoir citizens, printed by the National Diabetes Education Program

Demographics

In concerning myself with the mall as a place for intervention, much time was placed into documenting the exigent mall community. I set out to observe its patrons and compare the populations of mallspace to that of its surrounding communities. I choose multiple locations of public activity in and around the East Cambridge area for study, comparing park spaces to that of the mall.

A vast under-use of Cambridge's park system was observed. In visiting multiple parks on weekend days of amiable weather conditions, very few people were seen. In some cases, an hour was spent in a specific location, and perhaps one or two people would be observed. These would usually be instances of someone walking through the park on their way to some other destination or a single person walking a dog. When groups or activities were seen, these usually entailed a set group of people of similar age and background engaged in an event which negated their possible interaction with others. This may be a group of children paying soccer or a couple jogging or a group cycling.

The mall on the other hand contained vastly larger amounts of people of varied backgrounds, in close proximity with each other. In one 30 minute study, 540 people were observed passing by a specific location. Their gender, age and ethnicity were recorded in order to compare to the demographic make-up of Cambridge as a whole. What was discovered was a more diverse mix of people at the mall than even the surrounding neighborhoods enjoyed. The white population was still in the majority, representing roughly fifty percent of those seen, but compared to the
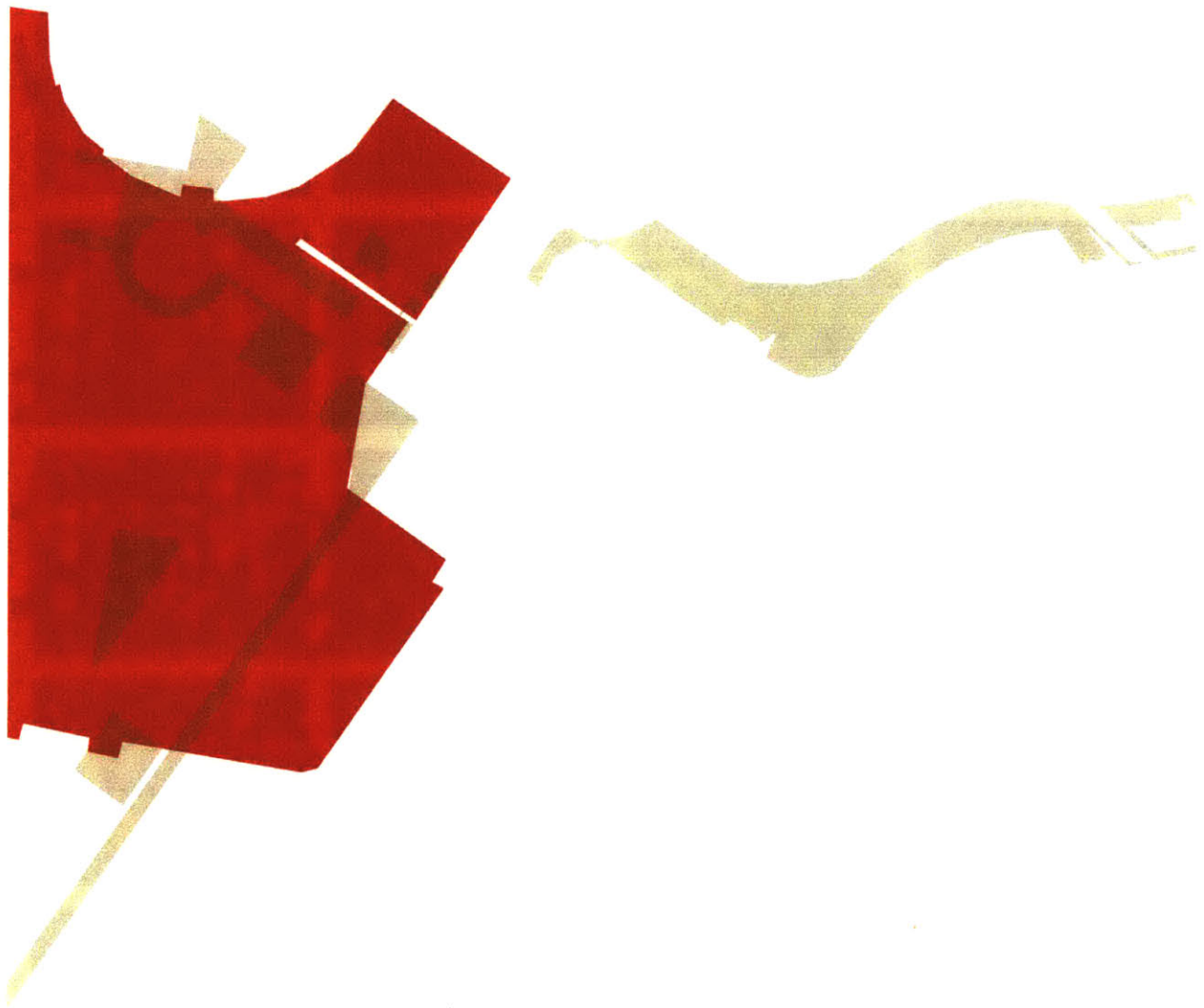
The footprint of the Galleria is equivalent to 70% of t

he public green space East Cambridge has to offer

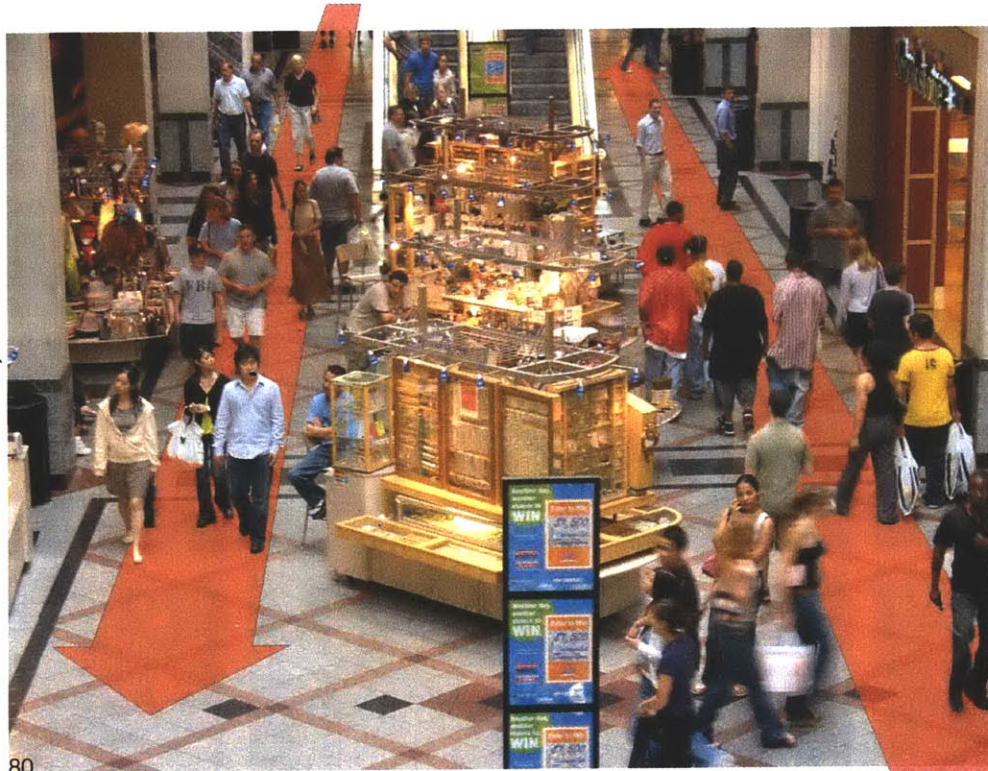The total square footage of the Galleria is 210% the

size of all of East Cambridge's public green space

Store window display at Galleria location of J. Crew

Main atrium of Galleria

census data which has the white population at nearly seventy percent of the population of East Cambridge, this was fairly surprising. And outside of the statistical categories allowed through the government census, the mall population entailed multiple nationalities, age groups, races and religions.

Limitations

The limitation of this exists in the fact that the public may be there, but they simply pass each other in the atrium on the way to their store destination. Just as with the Neiman Marcus next to the Public Housing project, there is little reason for them to interact, and virtually no place for them to do so if they were to have such a reason. This presents two issues relating to retail strategies that must be somehow overcome. First, is the targeted marketing of most retailers. We see each store reaching out and appealing to a sub-set of the mall population. A certain demographic will head towards the foot locker and another group will be drawn to the J. Crew location. The close proximity of these stores in the mall does little to encourage any discourse between these separate groups. Secondly, the retail strategy of continuous circulation and navigability must be addressed. In an attempt to maintain a perpetual flow of consumers, retail strategists avoid all opportunities for potential stoppages in their designs. When a mall is looked at closely, it should be noted that there is almost always a complete absence of horizontal spaces on which to set down bags, to lean against, or to sit. This is a very deliberate act on the part of mall's developers, as the enemy of retailing is loitering and stoppages in the flow of pedestrian traffic. The normal storefront of a mall retail window has even eliminated any window ledge or sill which may invite people to lean or set down a drink for a moment.

Strategic Implementation

The strategy of this study is not to re-envision the mall in its entirety. We look not to re-design the places of commerce from the ground up. These institutions already exist. Decades of time and billions of dollars have been invested to create these centers. Using these places as a ubiquitous site for engagement, we instead envision a means for altering their existence whereby they may become a vehicle to a new public space. A new use is imagined, one that may be implemented throughout mallspace, not in a manner that rejects the system of malling and retailing, but instead examines these normative practices as a means for delivery of this new cultural product.

Tenant Improvement

Our malls are constantly changing, being re-dressed, transformed. Not unlike a gallery with rotating exhibitions, we see the complexion of the mall change with its superstructure remaining intact. The process by which these changes occur is the tenant improvement.

With each new retailer, changing trend, or new hot commodity, stores are stripped down to their dividing partitions and regenerated anew. The infrastructure for these processes exists as common practice within the commercial industry. This mode of transmutation offers the means by which we deliver our new public being.

New Typologies

Each brand or company develops a unique typology for their locations. These design strategies are then reproduced the world over, mall to mall, without concern for their context. After all, they are being implanted within mallspace, the non-contextual. What is of importance is what is *inside* the store. The stores identity becomes married with this branded space. Within the psyche of retailing, this model of design is crucial to the success of a retailer. The design of the space becomes the association for what the product and franchise is about. Just as a consumer projects their identity with a choice of brand identity, so too does the retailer project an identity in their choice of store design.

This paradigm allows this study to consider a single retail event, its function and design, as a typology for deployment. Envisioned will be a new type of store, whose design is not seen as a stand alone intervention, but instead an example of how the retailer may strategize all their locations. With this, the conceptual premise of the store becomes a means of affecting a community much greater than that of any single mall, suburb, or region. It may become the vehicle to impact culture the world over.
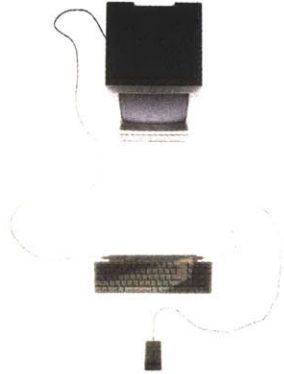
Apple advertisement from 1982.

Since the companies inception, part of its goal has been to look for ways that personal computing and technology may be employed to improve the life of its customers. The original mission statement included the heading *Change the World*. The invention of the Apple Store becomes an extension of this philosophy, utilizing the companies products to produce a positive impact on culture.

Implementation:
Design(ing) for Change

Apples and Oranges

At this point, the selection of a known brand or company becomes a very important question. The product being marketed must have a wide demographic appeal, unlike a specialized clothier or a toy store. It must draw from the broad spectrum of the mall audience if it is to have an ability to bring people together and allow for the desired confluence of interaction. The product must also support an event, if not multiple events. A shoe store, for example, does not offer many events to participate in. It simply allows one to browse and try on the shoes. The more events that a single retailer may be able to support the more success this idea may have.

The Apple Store is chosen to complete this exercise as the vessel for experimentation. As a retailer, this company's product line offers a diverse selection of applications and allows for the use of technology to be integrated as support for the event. The Apple store also appeals to a large audience. Its exigent marketing strategies and consumer audience reaches across all age ranges and socio-economic strata. In an Apple store, one sees children, business men, retirees, urban youth, suburban moms, doctors and plumbers, the lot. It is this diverse public body that this project aims to reach, and here in this specific retailer, they are already to be found.
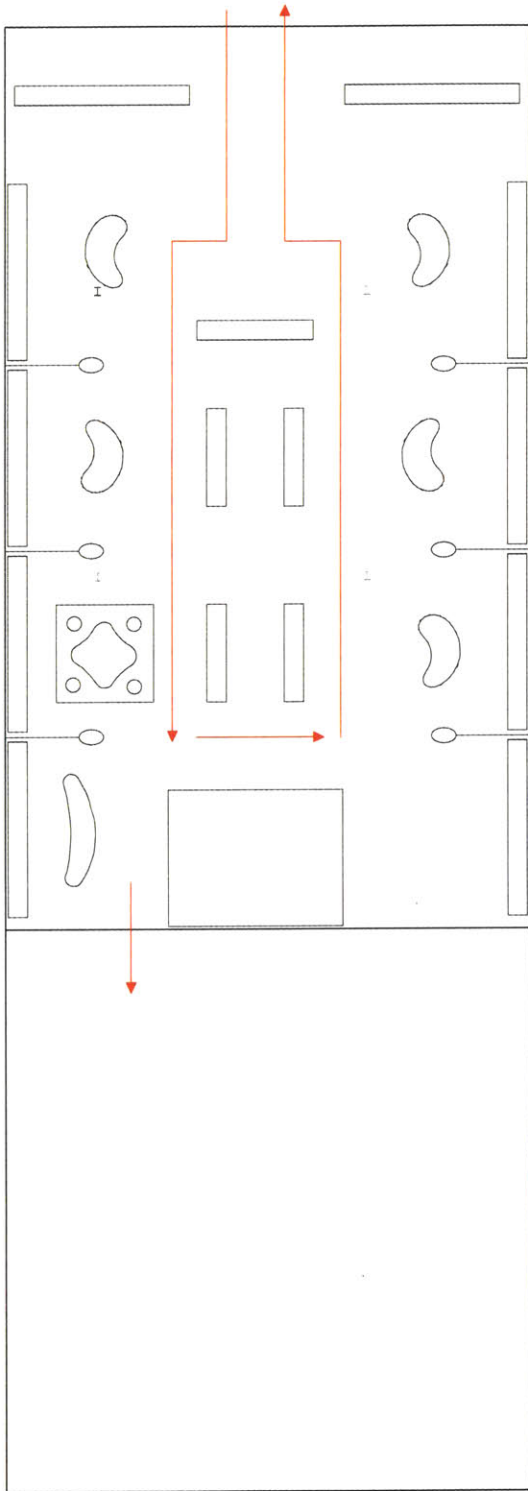
Typical Apple Store design typology-
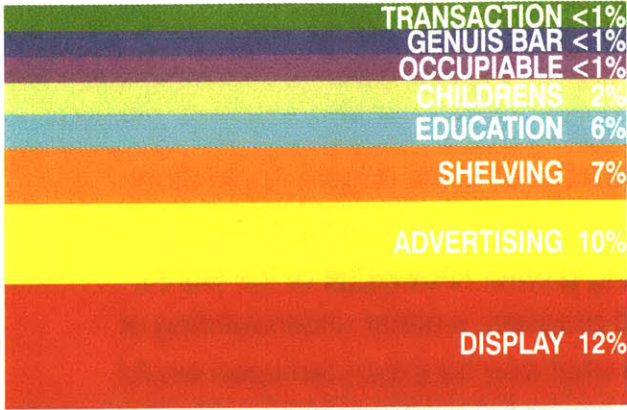reproduced in locations all accross America.

Exigent Strategies

A starting point for understanding the exigent Apple Store was to break down the current design typology being deployed. In developing greater knowledge of the stores, their use, function and program; a better understanding of what was lacking and what may be expanded upon would be seen.

What is shown in the diagram on the left is the existing Apple design typology. It holds true to the retailing paradign of moving people through a space fluidly, without interruption, in a manner to ensure that all merchandise is seen in the least amount of time. These typical spaces were then aggregated based on program, examining the amount of square footage used for graphic ad space, genuis bar function, product display, storage, etc. *(shown on the following pages).*

What seems obvious in retrospect is the dramatic disproportion seen in where the store dedicates its space. If one removes the storage and circulation space from consideration, it is revealed that nearly all the remaining space is dedicated product display and advertising. This appropriation of space is completely rational, as the intent of the store is to sell products. Imagined is what would result in the space if these appropriations of space were re-adjusted, tweaked ever so slightly.

In a diagrammatic sketch of the store, we see a suggestion of a space which breaks all the paradigms of retail thought. The circulation becomes fragmented, program redistributed throughout the space, and occupiable areas increased as spaces of gathering begin compete with spaces of commerce.
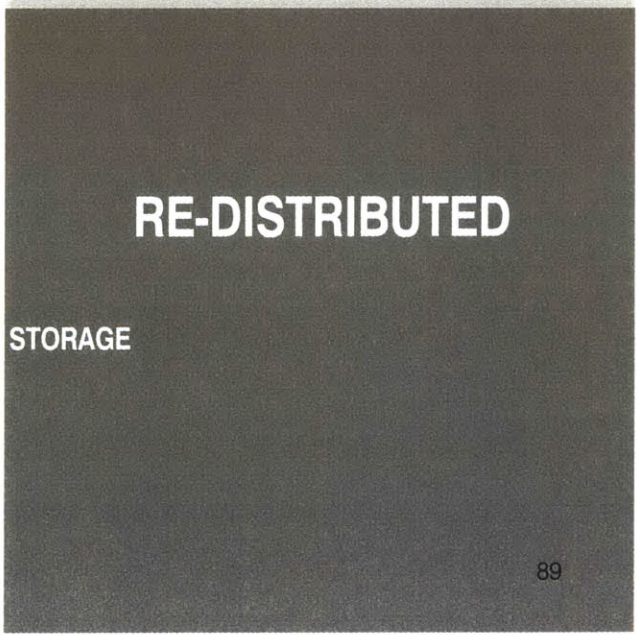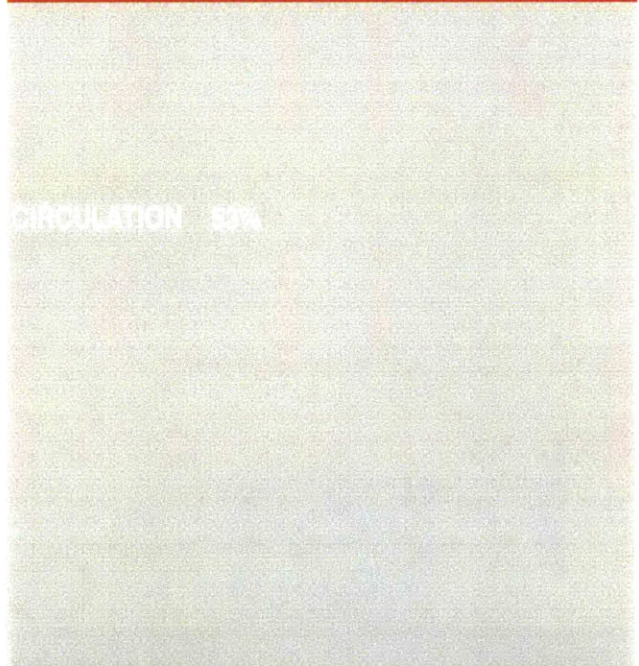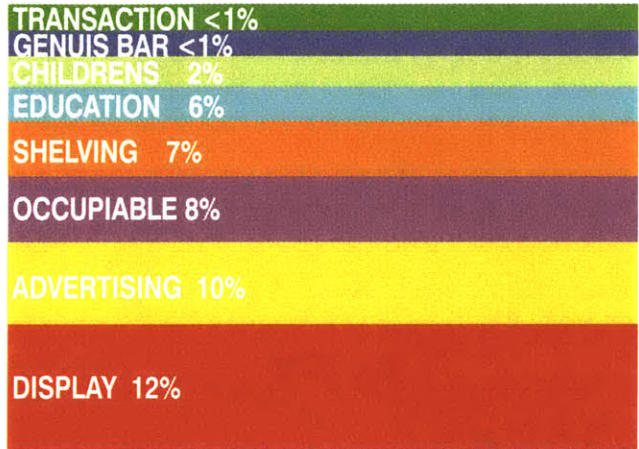
TRANSACTION	<1%			
GENUIS BAR	<1%			
OCCUPIABLE	<1%			
CHILDRENS	2%			
EDUCATION	6%			
SHELVING	7%			
ADVERTISING	10%			
DISPLAY	12%			

■	transaction surface	024sf	horizontal	00.55%
■	genius bar	028sf	horizontal	00.64%
■	occupiable areas	036sf	horizontal	00.82%
▦	chindrens space	100sf	floor	02.39%
░	education space	250sf	floor	05.74%
■	shelving stock display	320sf (80sf of floor area)	horizontal	07.36%
▨	advertising	450sf (75sf of floor area)	vertical	10.34%
■	product display	500sf	horizontal	11.49%
┈	free circulation space	2642 sf	floor	60.74%

total square footage 7450
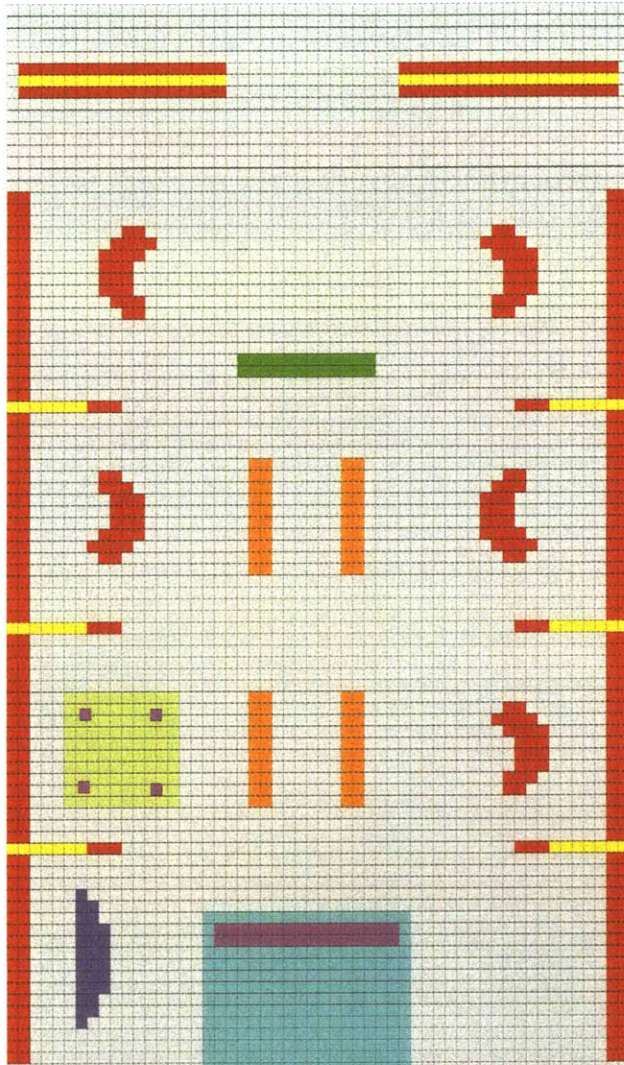retail floor 4350
storage/admin 3100

EXISTING

STORAGE

program

TRANSACTION <1%
GENUIS BAR <1%
CHILDRENS 2%
EDUCATION 6%
SHELVING 7%
OCCUPIABLE 8%
ADVERTISING 10%
DISPLAY 12%

CIRCULATION 53%

RE-DISTRIBUTED

STORAGE

■	transaction surface	024sf	horizontal	00.55%
■	genius bar	028sf	horizontal	00.64%
■	chindrens space	100sf	floor	02.39%
■	education space	250sf	floor	05.74%
■	shelving stock display	320sf (80sf of floor area)	horizontal	07.36%
■	occupiable areas	360sf	horizontal	08.27%
■	advertising	450sf (75sf of floor area)	vertical	10.34%
■	product display	500sf	horizontal	11.49%
■	free circulation space	2318 sf	floor	53.29%

total square footage 7450
retail floor 4350
storage/admin 3100

comparison

🟩	transaction surface	024sf	horizontal	00.55%
🟪	genius bar	028sf	horizontal	00.64%
🟫	occupiable areas	036sf	horizontal	00.82%
🟨	chindrens space	100sf	floor	02.39%
▫️	education space	250sf	floor	05.74%
🟧	shelving stock display	320sf (80sf of floor area)	horizontal	07.36%
🟨	advertising	450sf (75sf of floor area)	vertical	10.34%
🟥	product display	500sf	horizontal	11.49%
▫️	free circulation space	2642 sf	floor	60.74%

total square footage   7450
retail floor   4350
storage/admin   3100

EXISTING

layout

🟩	transaction surface	024sf	horizontal	00.55%
🟦	genius bar	028sf	horizontal	00.64%
🟨	chindrens space	100sf	floor	02.39%
⬜	education space	250sf	floor	05.74%
🟧	shelving stock display	320sf (80sf of floor area)	horizontal	07.36%
🟪	occupiable areas	360sf	horizontal	08.27%
🟨	advertising	450sf (75sf of floor area)	vertical	10.34%
🟥	product display	500sf	horizontal	11.49%
	free circulation space	2318 sf	floor	53.29%

total square footage	7450
retail floor	4350
storage/admin	3100

RE-DISTRIBUTED

91

comparison

LECHMERE

Service Court

TENANT

ARCADE

TENANT

HOUSING PARC
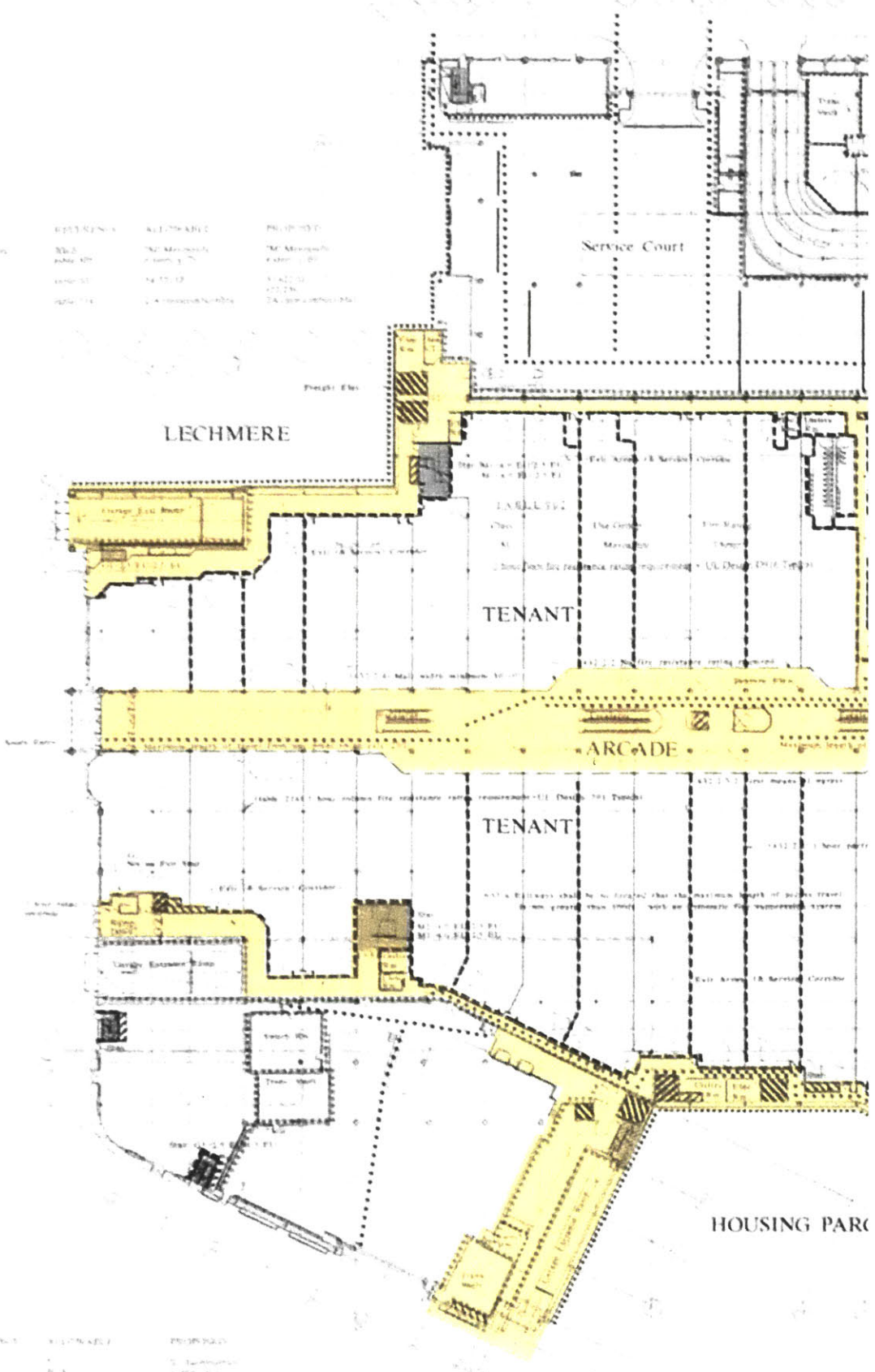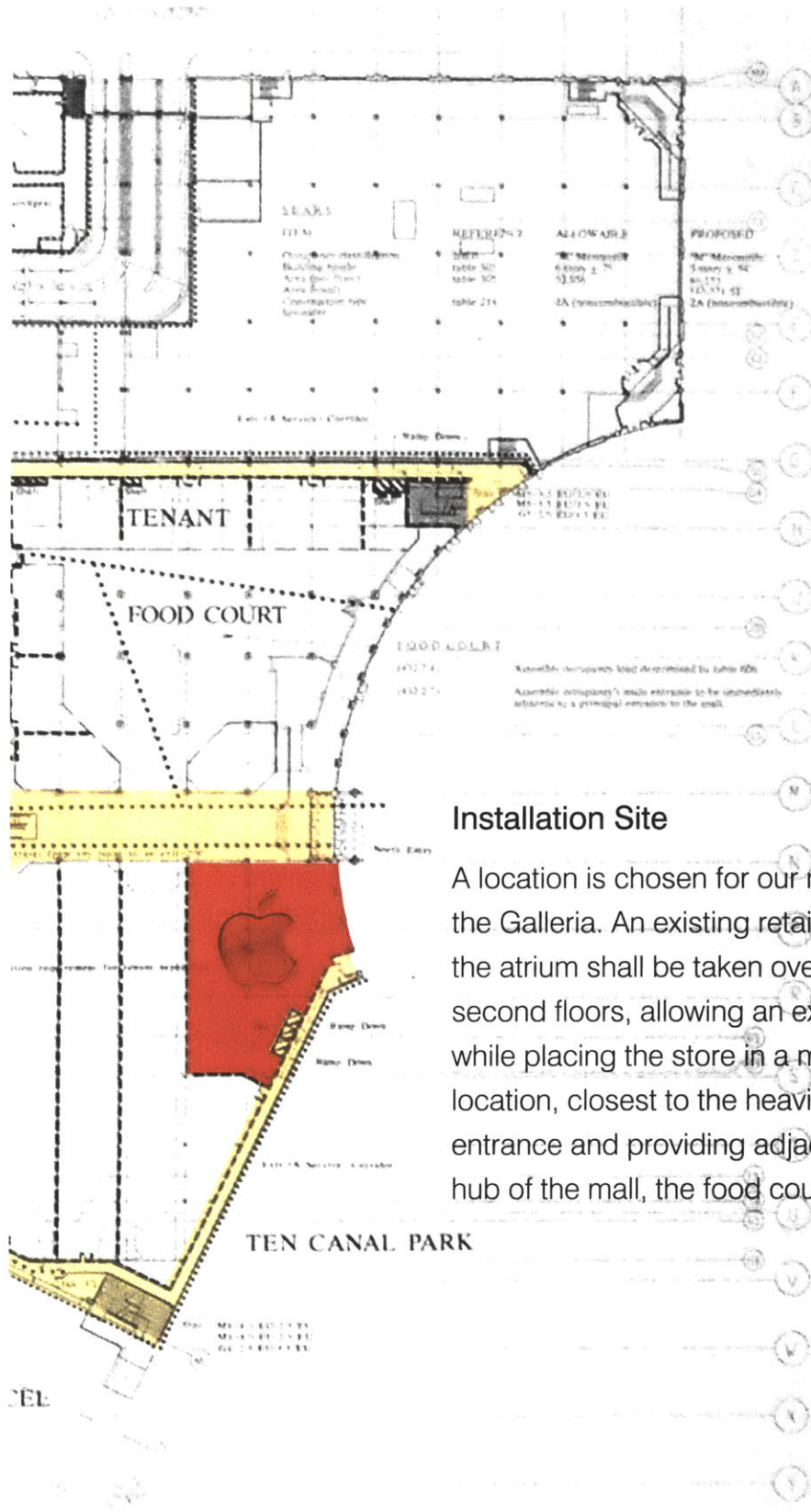
Installation Site

A location is chosen for our new Apple store within the Galleria. An existing retail parcel at one end of the atrium shall be taken over on both the first and second floors, allowing an exterior edge condition while placing the store in a more accessible location, closest to the heavily trafficed pedestrian entrance and providing adjacency to the social hub of the mall, the food court.
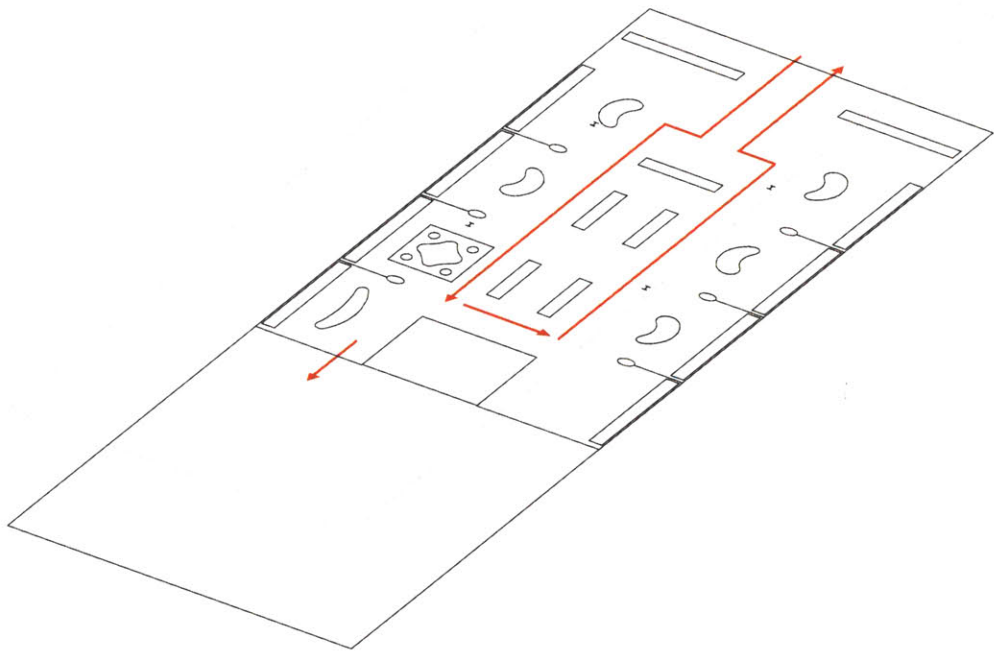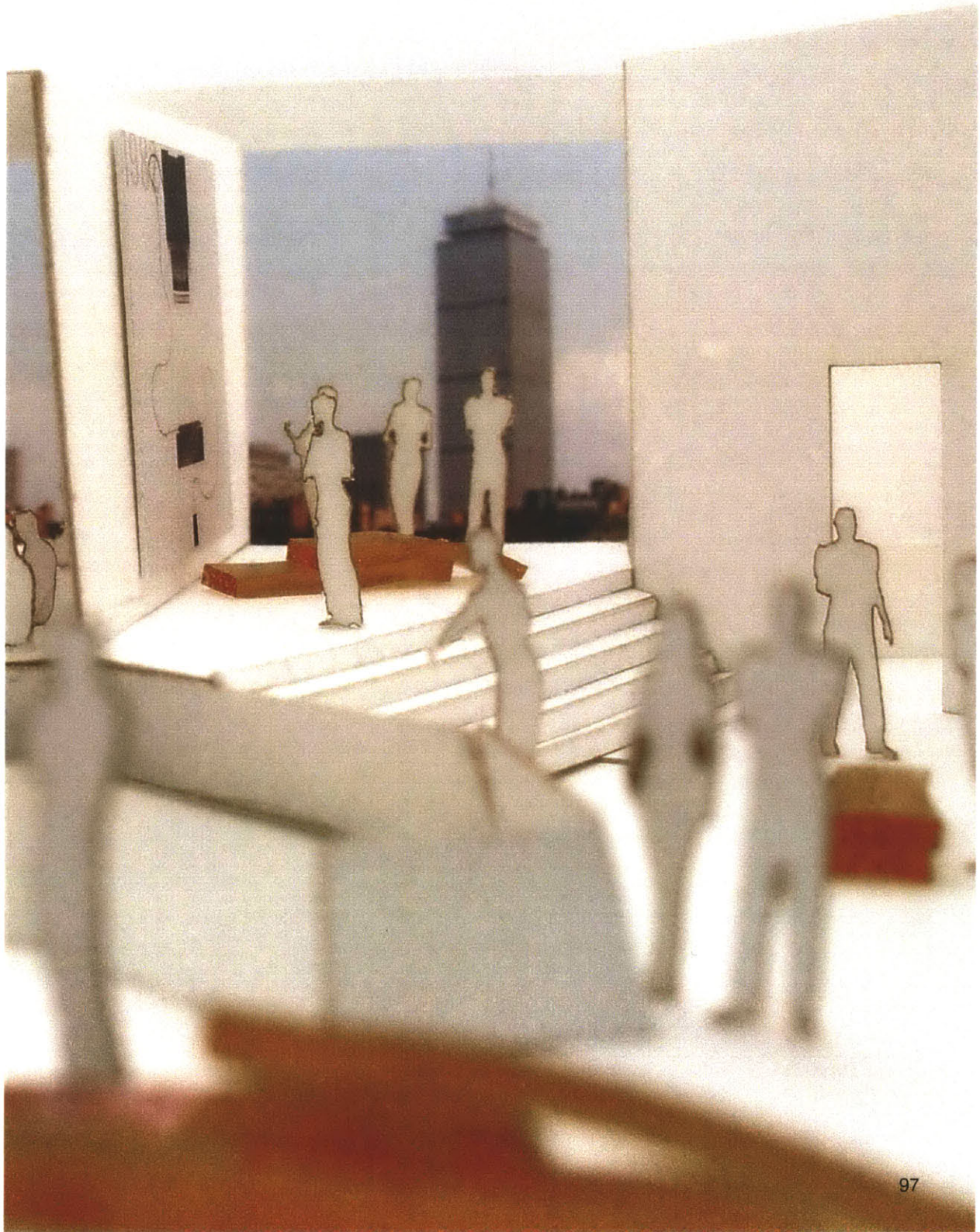
consumer experience in existing store
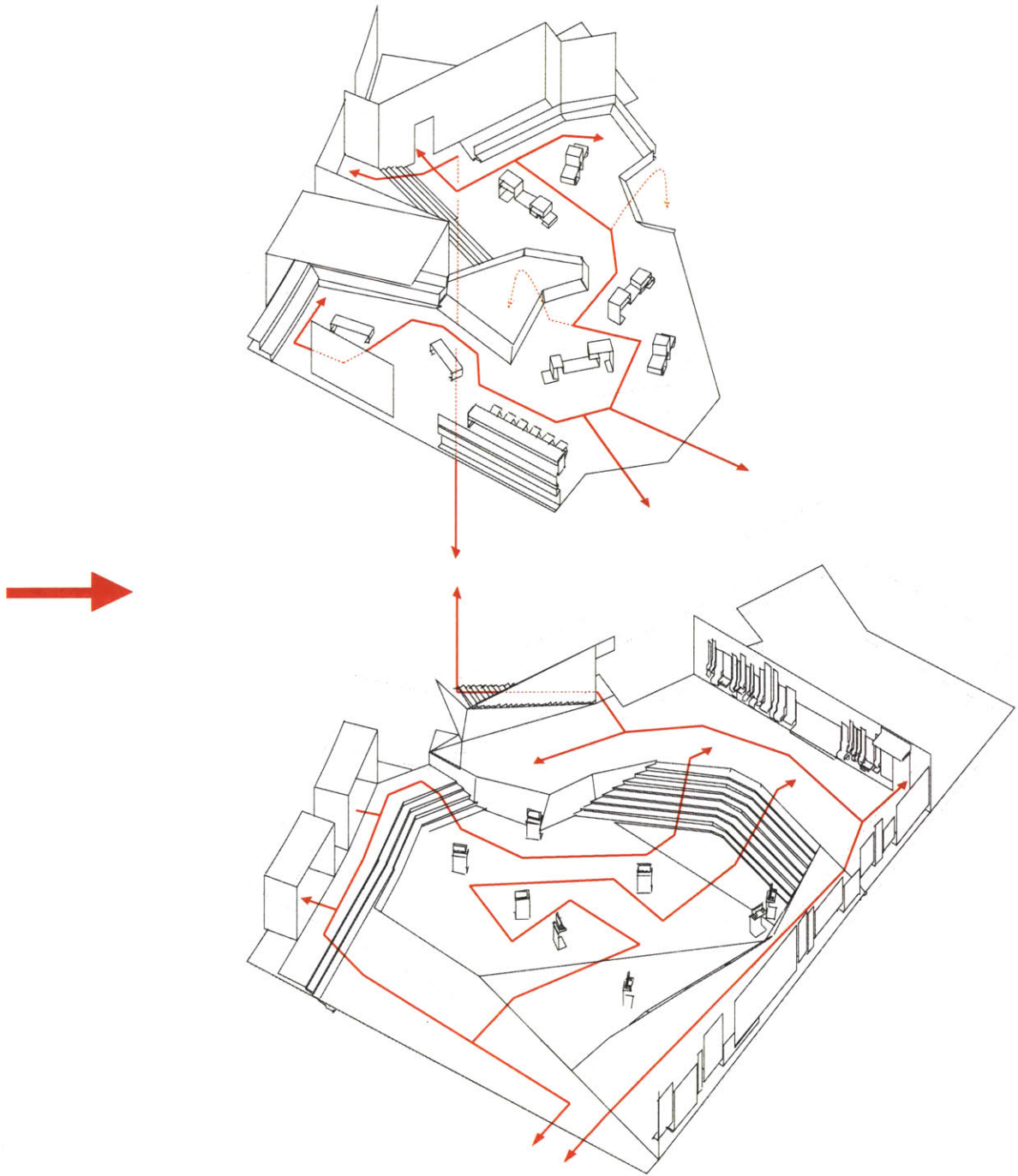
consumer experience in re-designed space
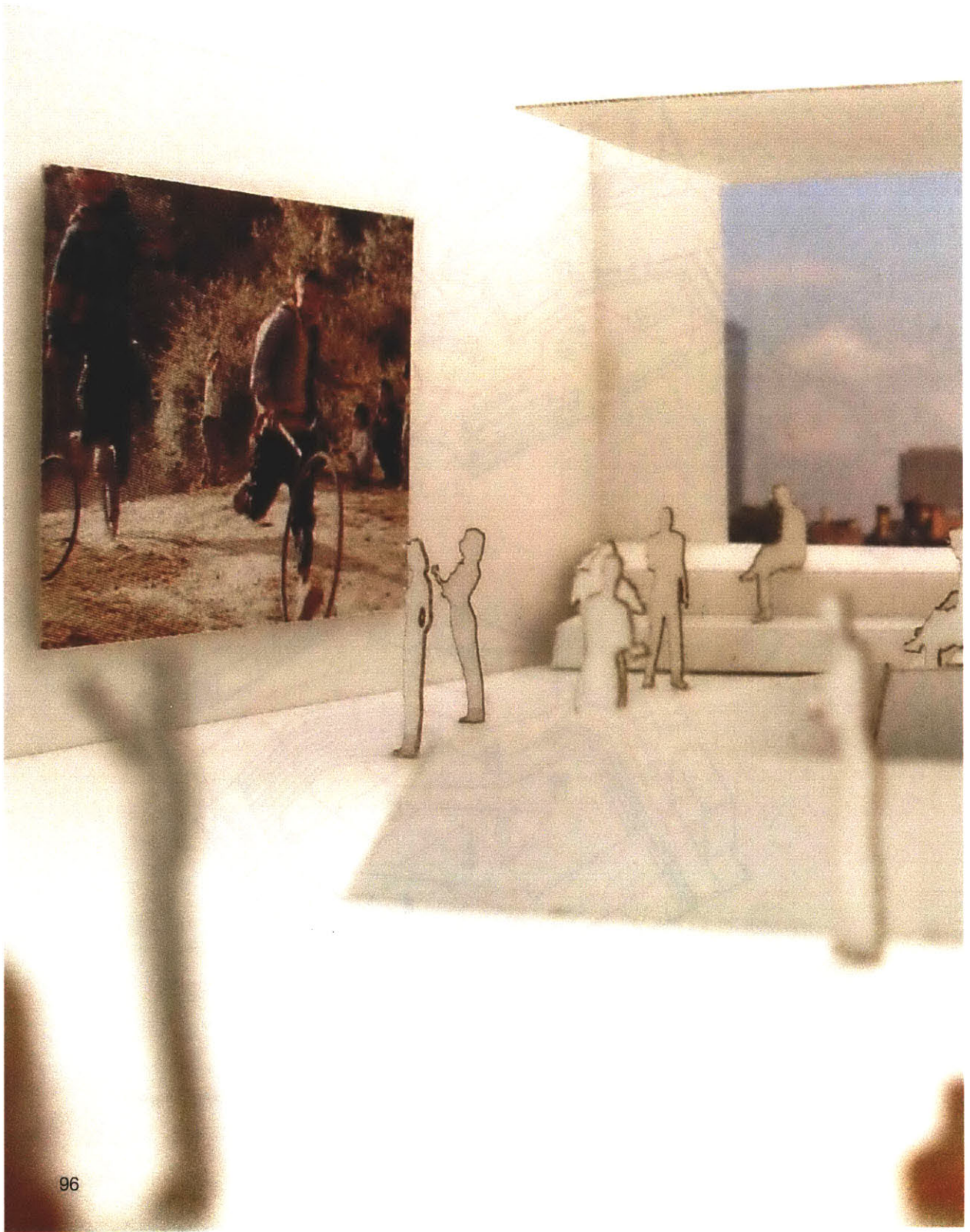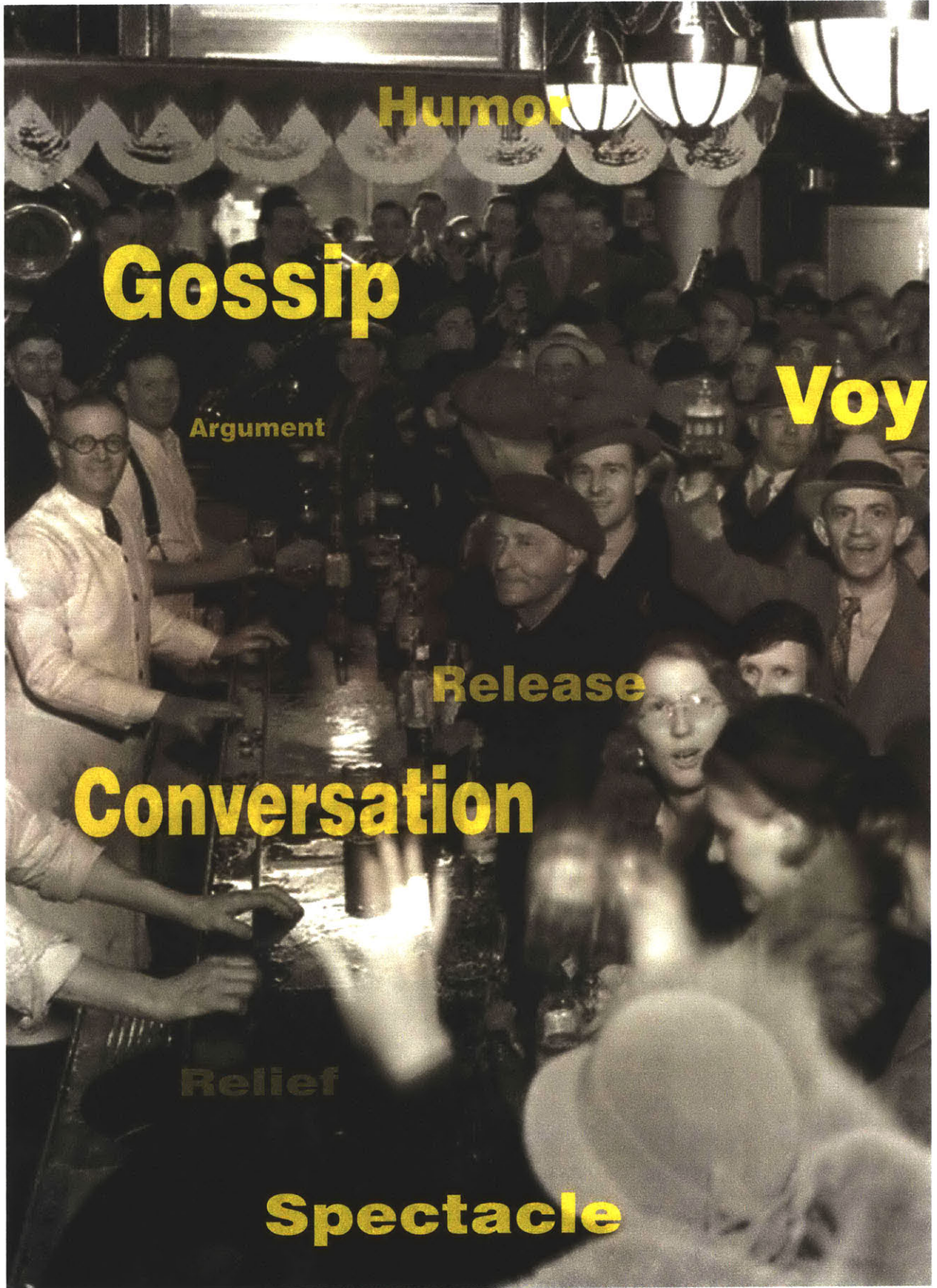
Community

Discussion

In considering this retail venue as our new form of public space, the character of its community and the space that holds it must be considered. Where do we already witness functioning mico-communities of desire. What makes these spaces successful, what traits allow the user groups to engage in acts of community, and what types of events foster such interaction.

Beauty Parlor
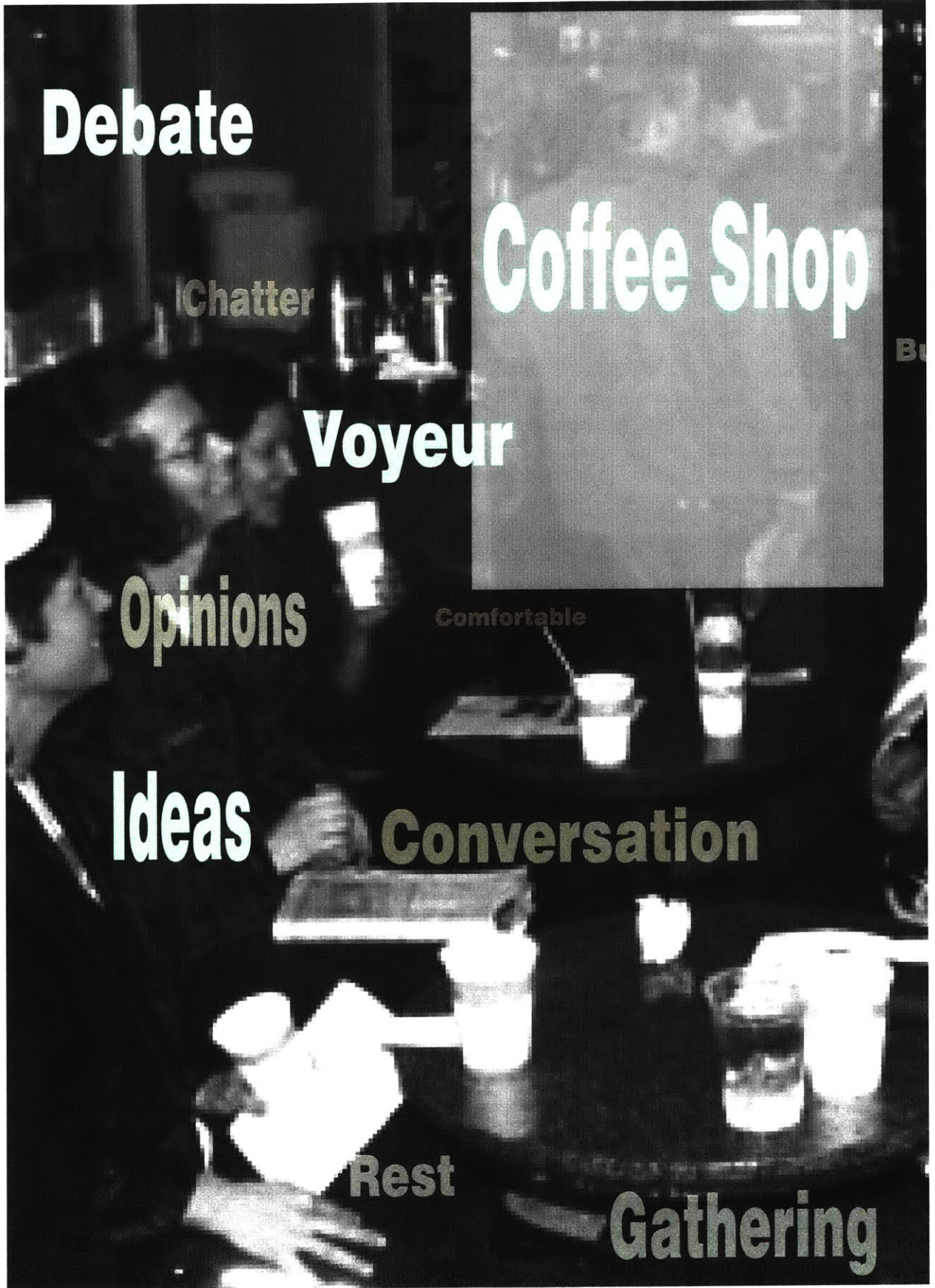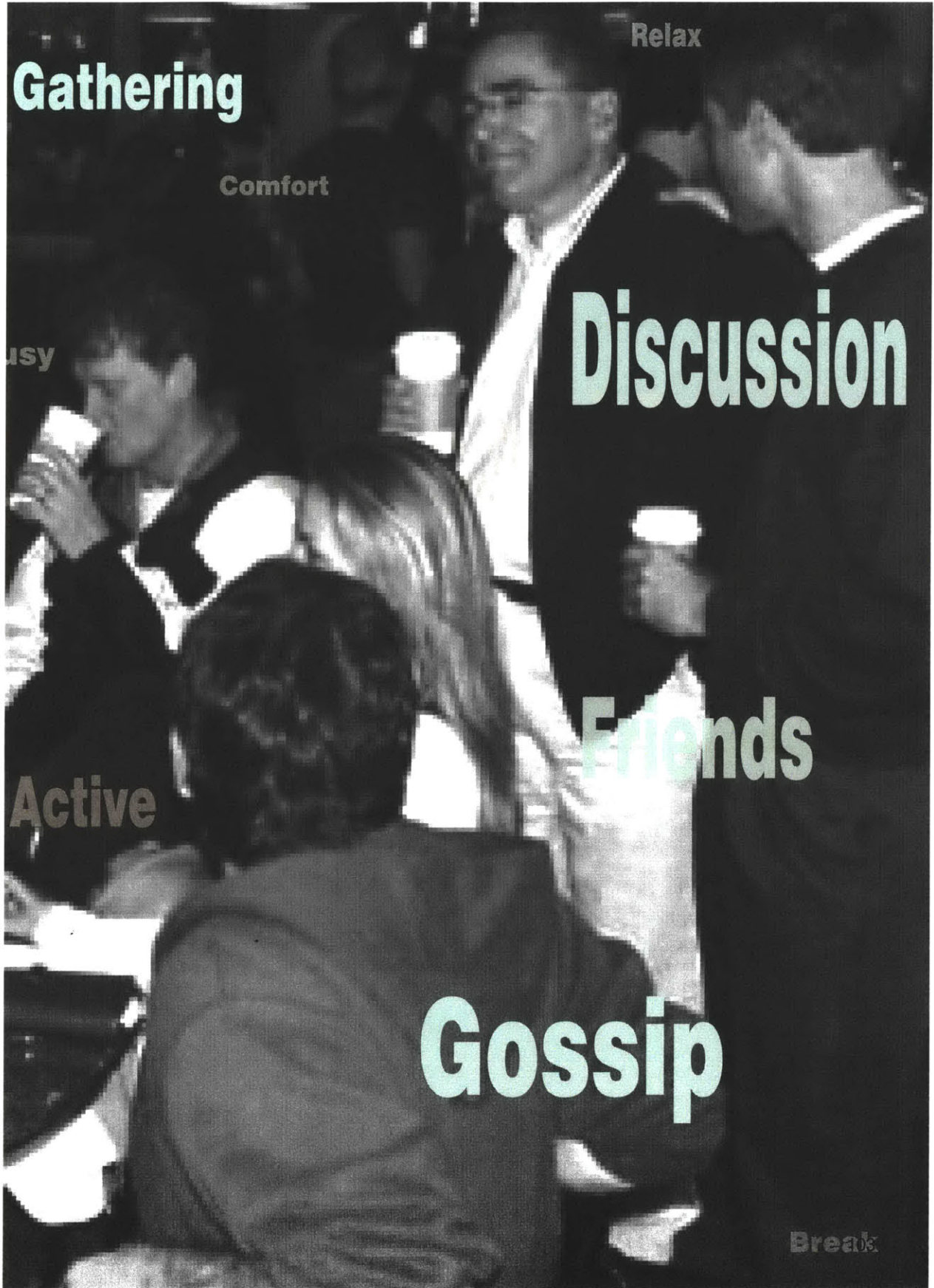
Sexy

Consumption

Political

Engaging
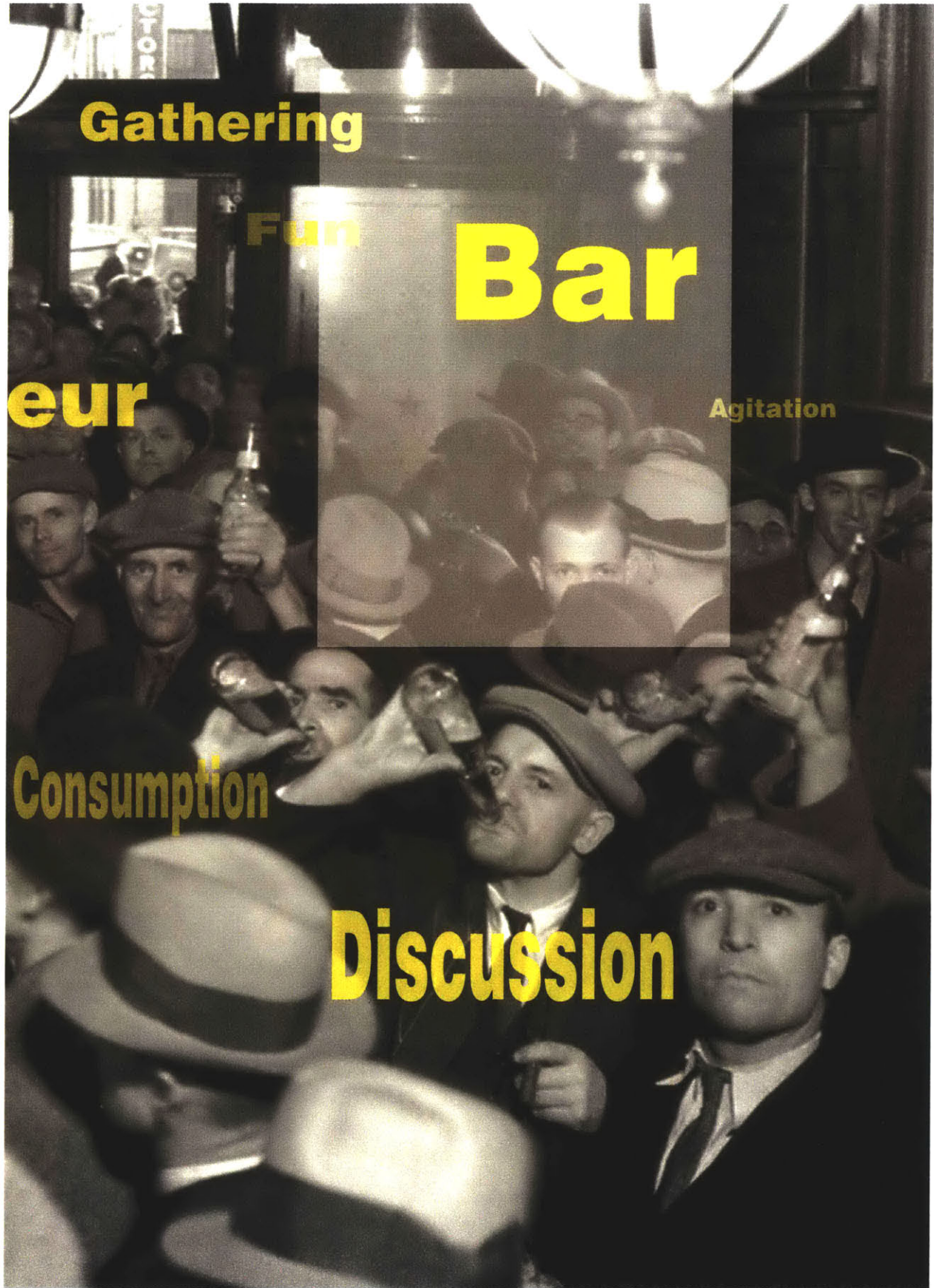
Theater

S

Distraction

Community

Show

Narration

Voyeur

Je

Gatheri

Catharsis

Opinions

Debate

Stories

Spectacle

Auditory

Humor

Entertainment

Communication

deas

Romance

Friendship

ng

Voices

Freedom

Dire

Voyeur

Bureau

Dirty

Place

Advertising

Change

Pavement

Surprise

C

Urban furniture

Motion

Discussion

Threshold

MUSEUM

BEAUTY PARLOR

STREET

SALES FLOOR

MARKET

COFFEE SHOP

THEATER

CLASSROOM

BAR
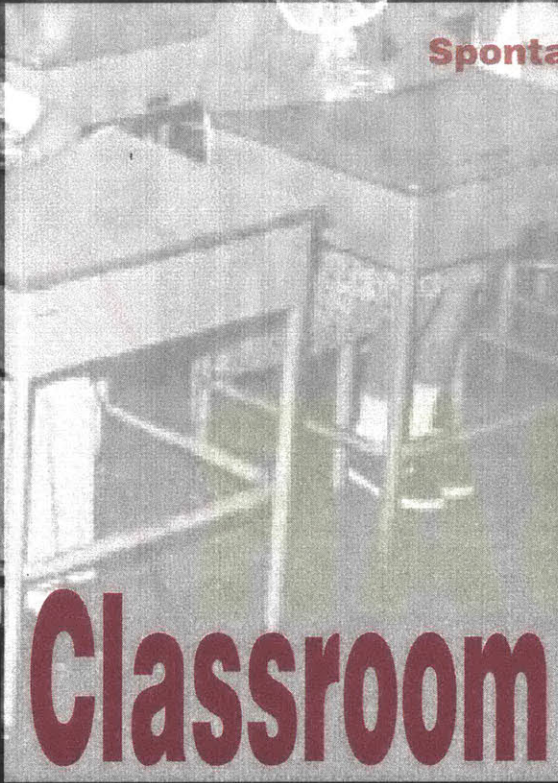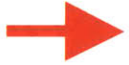
DISCOVERY
GATHERING
VOYEUR
COMMUNICATION
OPINIONS
SPECTACLE
DISCUSSION
GOSSIP
COMMUNITY
DEBATE
IDEAS

Instruction

Freedom

Direc

Commu

Voyeur

The Desire

Com

S

Dirty

Place

Potential   Advertising

Community   Pavement   **Surprise**

Improvement

Urban furniture   **Motion**

Discussion

Liberate   Voyeur

Active   **Discussion**   Gatherin

114 Threshold

Spatial Character

These character traits of our bars, coffe shops, classrooms, etc. represent the vitality and desired character of this new Apple Store. In looking for a means to foster these traits, the Apple store had to be re-programmed, re-envisioned as an event generator, capable of bringing these characteristics out in people and delivering them into the new space.

In order to re-program the store, every component within the Apple product line is reconsidered. Every item on the shelf *has* a potential for sponsoring an event. In re-addressing the display and function of the products, new events are imagined that employ each products' media related capabilities in a new manner, fostering engagement and discussion amongst the shoppers, locally and remotely.... generating a temporal community, initially led by the desire to engage with the products, then developing a life of its own?

The following matrix describes a product's level of interactivity as currently utilized in the exigent store typology. It then imagines the potential for interactivity, describing a potential new use for each product, then tying that use to a generalized program that may be employed in the generation of design.

These programmatic typologies are compared against eachother for their public attributes in a consideration of where they may be integrated into a new store design. They are then examined against the exigent store program to determine where potential overlaps in program occur. It is these overlaps that direct our new program.

individual

products

Column headers:
- Isolated use / stand alone product
- Affiliation thru shared product (no immediate interaction)
- Text based connection (no immediate interaction)
- Auditory connection (no immediate interaction)
- Visual connection (no immediate interaction)
- Shared digital media (audio) (no personal interaction)
- Shared digital media (video) (no personal interaction)
- Shared digital audio (remote / web based)
- Shared digital video (remote / web based)
- Sha...

Row labels:
- MAC's
- Displays
- Ipods
- Ipod Accessories *wearables
- Digital Video Cameras
- Digital Cameras
- Web cams
- Laptop Bags *fashion
- Software
- Games
- Printers
- Scanners
- Digital Media Storage
- Printing Supplies
- Accessories
- Instructional Print Media
- Digital Voice Recorders
- Digital Instruments
- Palm Pilots / Blackberries
- Speaker systems

Legend:
- degree of interactivity via current store programming and display design
- potential degree of interactivity via re-conceptualizing store programming and display design

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t y

Shared digital audio
(personal interaction)

Shared digital video
(personal interaction)

Shared learning process thru usage/instruction
(remote / web based)

Shared learning process thru usage/instruction
(personal interaction)

Shared ideas / discussion

Shared creative process

MACS should not just be display but may also participate as part of the stores learning environment. Each MAC display should be des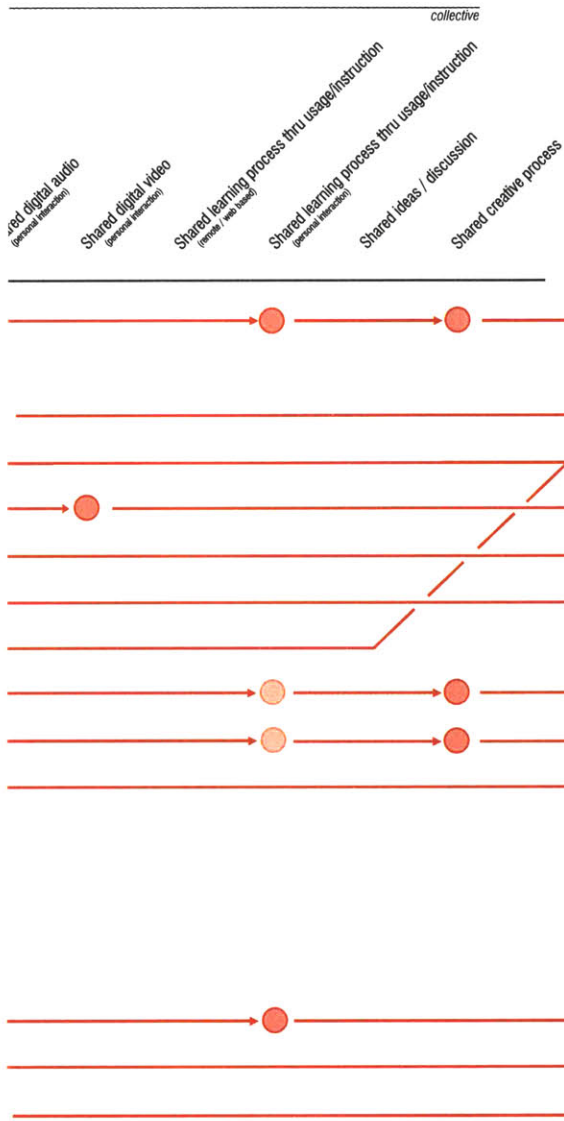igned to allow usage in clusters or independantly during various educational events. Some as store-wide scheduled classes, others as one on one training sessions, and others as impromptu discussion or questions amungst shopper culture.

IPOD display as hooka bar.....Devices displayed in center of seating....customers may come with their own IPOD and tap into 'hooka' platform, reviewing music from all other users linked in at all other Apple stores. Arrangement will allow for discussion of what people are listening to in store and discoveries via other users sources

WEARABLES on fashion runway, associated with a performance stage. Shoppers need mirrors to see items in use and may move accross the shopping area in a manner that allows others to view them displaying the products. The event of trying out accessories becomes a participatory moment within the entire location. This may be captured on video within the store and projected elsewhere.

DIGITAL CAMERAS should allow their use and make available downloading to the MACS, sending to printers, e-mailing....etc. The encouraged use of the cameras will instruct people while also generating uses of the MAC stations. Images could be stored and projected within store and out to others of shoppers, providing a visual description of store community.

DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERAS may be used in conjunction with other store elements to engender atmosphere of voyeurism and participation. Live video feeds from one stores wearables dance floor will be projected into a diverse location. Soho's storefront may be projected as display in Austin Texas location, etc. These video links should be made available as library within various locations and on website.

WEB CAMS to be employed at computer terminals to provide live connections to other Apple stores globally. Voice recognition and translation software would be developed to allow communication between linguistic barriers, provide digital connection to areas not traversed by most consumers (urban to suburban, rural to metropolis, east to west)

SOFTWARE is currently available as a curiosity on is store computers. Clusters should be dedicated to various programs, providing an intimate space for discussion and questions regarding various programs. Store employees with specific expertise may choose a cluster to monitor, fellow shoppers may share ideas and find common interests by sharing these clusters.

GAMING software as arcade. Clusters to be designed into the space allowing shoppers to test various games, discuss gaming tactics and just play. Clusters allow shoppers place to linger and a means to participate in a group event, compete. This arcade could become spectator sport where friends of players take sides and cheer, space for competing/viewing to overlap with other stages.

PRINTERS as photolab. Shoppers shall be allowed to print photos taken in store of eachother, souvenires if you will. This engages shoppers in the use of equipment, encourages them to generate the images for user gallery (documentation of store community) at the same time as having them bring an object home to allow the visual idea of store community to travel out of the retail location.

INSCRUCTIONAL PRINT MEDIA should be housed in a library setting, encouraging people to come in and research software problems/challenges. Thought of a physical BBS, a place where users can come to de-bug their software problems. Employees are all experts in one program or another, provide venue for their talents to benefit social aspects of space.

DIGITAL VOICE RECORDERS as confessional or protest device. This technology can be utilized to allow shoppers to share beleifs, frustrations, opinions....etc. Perhaps designed as a private confessional where playback is controlled by visitor and recordings allowed. Catalogues of audio recordings would be created and shared accross various regions.

DIGITAL INSTRUMENTS conceived as part of a stage/performance space. DJ attitude for hardware, display users and encourage the display of talents and coming together of those who share a passion for various forms of digital music. These stations may take a visible place within the store, allowing them to even shift function for alternate uses outside of retail hours; for community events

Apple Products Re-Interpreted

MACS_ The original Apple product, the computer. These should not just be displayed; made available for a 'test-drive'. The Mac can also participate as part of the stores social and learning environments. The displays should allow usage in clusters or independently during various educational events. Some displays may exist in conjunction with stores educational component, allowing product display when there are no classes taking place and allowing follow along instruction during class. Small clusters of computer displays provide space for one on one training sessions with employees, and others as impromptu discussion and questions amongst shopper culture.

IPOD_ Perennially the most sought after piece of electronics. Those who don't have one, want tone. They come in and look. But they should also be able to play. The displays for the IPOD are re-envisioned as a hooka bar, a space that allows seating around a common table. The store's devices are displayed on this table, all linked into the Apple music network. This would be closed server, to prevent pirating, which allows a listener at any apple store across the world to listen to the music stored on any other IPOD plugged into the apple network. Every Apple store around the globe would be part of this network, and any consumer who plugs in a member. One could listen to local country music from Austin while in a store in Pittsburg. Check out music from Thailand while in Portland. Consumers who come in and take a seat can browse music libraries and chat about what they have discovered there.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRINT MEDIA_ The storage and display of this media should be housed in a micro-library setting, encouraging people to linger and research software problems/challenges they may be having. Thought of as a physical BBS, a place where users can come to de-bug their software problems, this would offer a venue where customers may cross paths with others who share common software usage. Fellow Photoshop aficionados may discuss imaging tricks, etc. The store employees, whom are all experts in one program or another, may converse about their personal work with customers, adding to the social element of the store.

DIGITAL INSTRUMENTS_ These are conceived of as part of a stage or public performance space. Much like a piano in a hotel lobby, it would invite customers to display their talents and provide a venue for the coming together of those who share a passion for various forms of digital music. These stations may take a visible place within the store, allowing them to even shift function for alternate uses outside of retail hours; for community events, gallery showing, etc.

DIGITAL VOICE RECORDERS_ These little devices are generally not noticed by customers unless one is looking for them. The new store would showcase them as a digital confessional or protest device. This technology can be utilized to allow shoppers to share beliefs, frustrations, opinions....etc about current events, political scandals, and Supreme Court justice nominee hearings, whatever. Designed as a private confessional, playback is controlled by each visitor and recordings allowed. Catalogues of previous audio recordings from stores everywhere would be housed and replayed across various regions. What do the Apple customers in south Texas really think of our president? One might be able to find out at the new Apple store in Seattle.

WEB CAMS_ These devices should be employed at computer terminals to provide live connections to other Apple stores globally. Not unlike the digital video cameras in sharing image of community, but the web camera offers a two-way live link between stores everywhere. This allows for a digital connection between areas not traversed by most consumers (urban to suburban, rural to metropolis, east to west). One can chat to a fellow consumer elsewhere with the added safety of a digital divider. Would people be more likely to have an impromptu conversation about politics with someone in a store in Minnesota?

SOFTWARE_ Programs are currently available on store computers as curiosities. They are there, but no one feels comfortable using them in the existing store design. Clusters of computer displays should be dedicated to various programs, providing a smaller scale space for discussion and questions regarding specific programs. Store employees with expertise may choose a cluster to monitor, fellow shoppers may share ideas and find common interests by sharing these clusters.
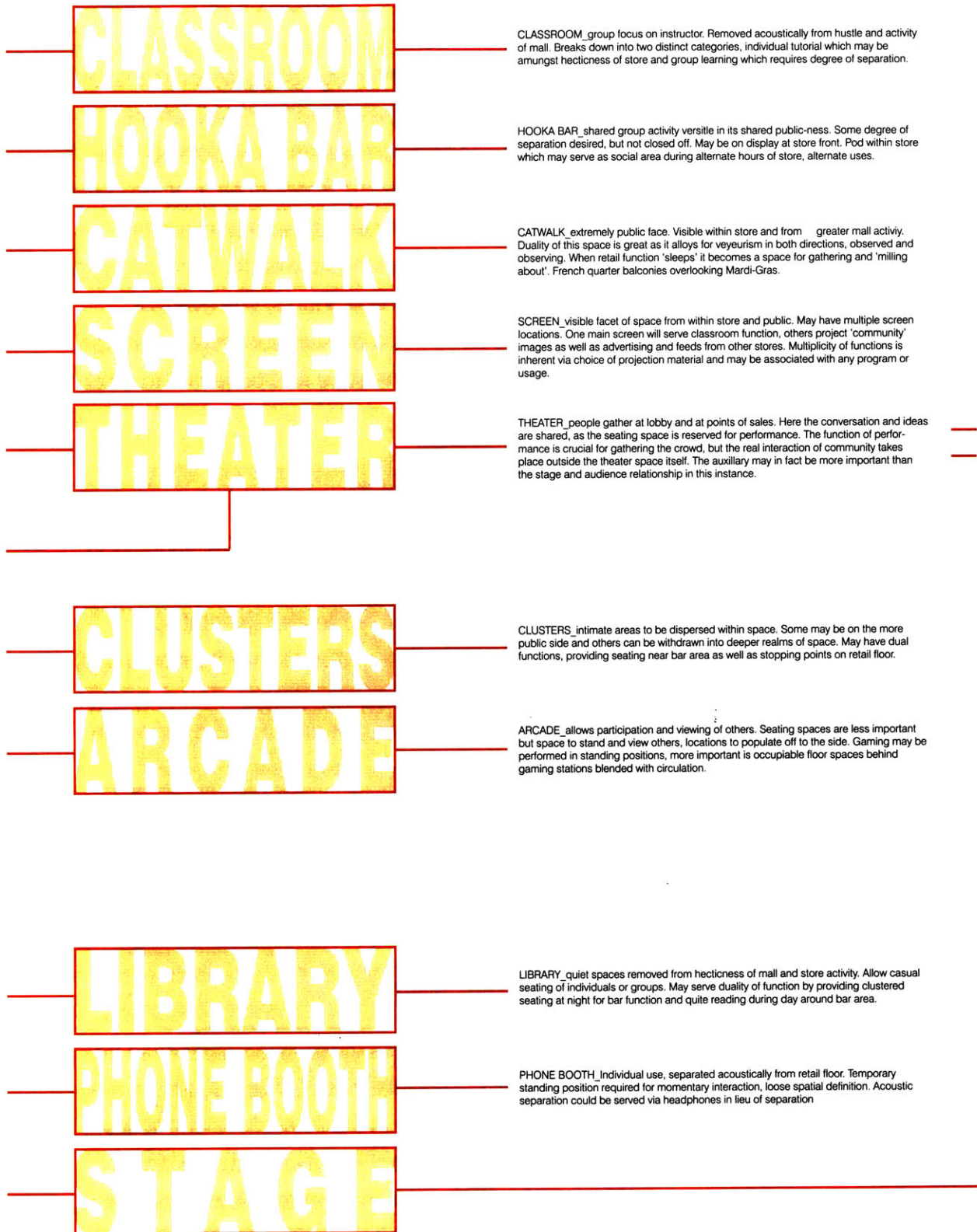
GAMING_ Clusters of computer displays should be dedicated as gaming stations. Customers can hang out a these stations and discuss gaming tactics and just play. This would encourage shoppers to linger and even compete in an event. This idea of arcade could become spectator sport where friends of players cheer for their competitor.

PRINTERS_ Store printers could be displayed as a usable photo lab. Shoppers are allowed to print photos taken in the store of each other, souvenirs of the store experience if you will. This engages shoppers in the use of equipment, encourages them to generate images for use in store community gallery while at the same time transports the idea of a store community beyond the boundaries the specific retail location.

WEARABLES_ This includes the range of accessories that are offered within Apple locations. Everything from headphones to laptop bags, IPOD cases and perhaps one day clothing. This area is set up like a fashion runway. Shoppers browse the items at one end, and in order to view themselves in a mirror they have to traverse the walkway, moving across the store, allowing others to view them displaying the products. The event of trying out accessories becomes a participatory event, perhaps even captured on video within the store and projected to other locations

DIGITAL CAMERAS_ Instead of these items just sitting, dead on a shelf, allow shoppers to use the devices and make available downloading of the images to the MACS, sending to printers, e-mailing....etc. The encouraged use of the cameras will instruct people on the product while also generating alternate uses of the MAC stations. Images may be stored and later projected within the store on large screens. This provides a visual description of each store community over time, which should be shared and projected at other Apple locations. Wouldn't it be interesting to see the crowd in London, Milan, even the next town over.

DIGITAL VIDEO CAMERAS_ These products may be used in conjunction with other store elements to engender atmosphere of voyeurism and participation. Not only should consumers be encouraged to use the devices, there would be live video feeds from one store's "wearables dance floor" that would be projected into another store's retail floor. Soho's storefront may be projected as a digital display in the Ft Worth Texas location, etc. These video links should be made available as a digital library within store locations and on website, allowing people to browse the Apple store community around the world.

CLASSROOM CLASSROOM_group focus on instructor. Removed acoustically from hustle and activity of mall. Breaks down into two distinct categories, individual tutorial which may be amungst hecticness of store and group learning which requires degree of separation.

HOOKA BAR HOOKA BAR_shared group activity versitle in its shared public-ness. Some degree of separation desired, but not closed off. May be on display at store front. Pod within store which may serve as social area during alternate hours of store, alternate uses.

CATWALK CATWALK_extremely public face. Visible within store and from greater mall activiy. Duality of this space is great as it alloys for veyeurism in both directions, observed and observing. When retail function 'sleeps' it becomes a space for gathering and 'milling about'. French quarter balconies overlooking Mardi-Gras.

SCREEN SCREEN_visible facet of space from within store and public. May have multiple screen locations. One main screen will serve classroom function, others project 'community' images as well as advertising and feeds from other stores. Multiplicity of functions is inherent via choice of projection material and may be associated with any program or usage.

THEATER THEATER_people gather at lobby and at points of sales. Here the conversation and ideas are shared, as the seating space is reserved for performance. The function of performance is crucial for gathering the crowd, but the real interaction of community takes place outside the theater space itself. The auxillary may in fact be more important than the stage and audience relationship in this instance.

CLUSTERS CLUSTERS_intimate areas to be dispersed within space. Some may be on the more public side and others can be withdrawn into deeper realms of space. May have dual functions, providing seating near bar area as well as stopping points on retail floor.

ARCADE ARCADE_allows participation and viewing of others. Seating spaces are less important but space to stand and view others, locations to populate off to the side. Gaming may be performed in standing positions, more important is occupiable floor spaces behind gaming stations blended with circulation.

LIBRARY LIBRARY_quiet spaces removed from hecticness of mall and store activity. Allow casual seating of individuals or groups. May serve duality of function by providing clustered seating at night for bar function and quite reading during day around bar area.

PHONE BOOTH PHONE BOOTH_Individual use, separated acoustically from retail floor. Temporary standing position required for momentary interaction, loose spatial definition. Acoustic separation could be served via headphones in lieu of separation

STAGE

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LOBBY

STAGE

LOBBY_points of gathering before and after programs of shared experience. Need not be defined spatially but should provide loose defined areas for gathering. Small groups of two up to eight in clusters within larger crowd. Half walls to lean against, signifiers of spatial consumption, no seating or formal areas of occupation.

STAGE / AUDIENCE_critical to performance and relationship between actor and audience, less crucial to function of community within store. Need to provide space for this, but not on any significant scale and it need not be secluded as a traditional theater. May overlap with an auxillary group education platform.

private / quiet / backroom

CLASSROOM
HOOKA BAR
CATWALK
SCREEN
LOBBY
CLUSTERS
ARCADE
STAGE
LIBRARY
PHONE BOOTH
SALES
COFFEE SHOP
MUSEUM
PUB
MARKET
STREET
PAMPHLET
MARTINI BAR
SALON

DM

HOOKA BAR

CATWALK

SCREEN

LOBBY

ERS

ARCADE

AGE

range within which store may best play dual role of comsumption and production

SALES

E SHOP

PUB

MARKET

STREET

PAMPHLET

NI BAR

LON

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Event Spaces

As each product is re-envisioned in its use, a program is associated with it as an event. These become the generators of the new program, lending themselves to the design, giving it purpose, defining how and where consumer culture will be coaxed into the production of community. Some events become implemented in the new store while others are deemed less integral to the success of the store typology, remaining as spatial concepts on a less specific level.

CLUSTERS_ This spatial platform would accommodate multiples of our re-interpreted product usages. Some would be dedicated for gaming, others for software instruction as private lesson, others for groups of consumers just to surf. Scales vary as one cluster may be arranged for two people at a time to share while other clusters may be for groups of four or six functioning as mini-classrooms or mere retail display. Some clusters may be associated with the retail floor area, while others become spatially bound with other areas of the store, a pair in the genius bar, one in the children's section, etc....

HOOKA BAR_ Service space for the Apple music network. This area will accommodate a number of individuals around a common table. It should not be part of the main retail floor, but have its own spatial identity. The 'back room' feel as if it were a club of some sort. If the store serves alternate functions as after hours nightclub, this space becomes semi-private. The appeal of this program element would merit its close proximity to the store entrance, but it should be maintained as separate from main retail floor.

CATWALK_ This would be part of the store's public face for the wearables component. It should have visibility from within and the greater mall activity outside the confines of the store, alloying voyeurism in both directions, observed and observing. When the retail functions 'sleep' it becomes a space for gathering and 'milling about'. Spatial associations with French quarter balconies overlooking Mardi-Gras.

PHOTO LAB_ As part of the program, this area appeals to a sub-set of the Apple community, those with an interest in digital imaging techniques. It is removed from the main retail floor to allow for those with these common interests a semi-autonomous area for discussion and practice. Should provide a central station for displaying and using printing and camera equipment, downloading and reviewing the image gallery of various Apple communities from around the globe.

LIBRARY_ Provides a quiet space removed from the main retail floor. This function houses all the print material of the store in a manner similar to the photo lab. It is semi-autonomous, providing a venue for those consumers who may find common interests here. Allow casual seating of individuals and groups.

PHONE BOOTH_ May or may not be a literal interpretation of the phone booth typology, similar to a confessional but the listener is the digital recorder not another person. Provide for individual use in an acoustically sealed environment, a standing position for momentary interaction with voice/confession library. This platform may be highly visible within the store, as it is sealed off from store acoustically. Visibility would raise curiosity over function and draw people into the event.
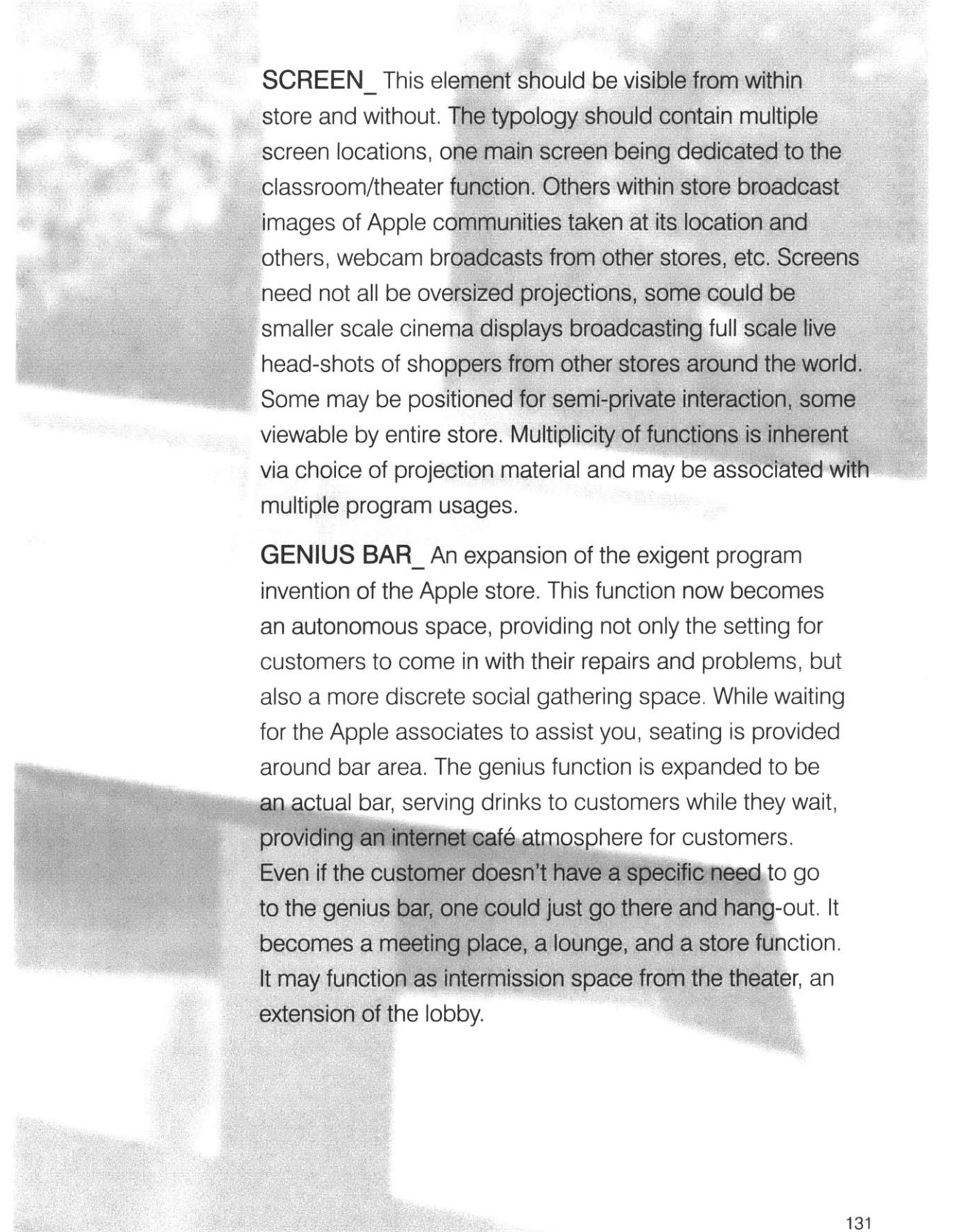
Retail Showroom Study _Ground Floor

ARCADE_ An area allowing participation and viewing of those playing. Seating is less important than spaces to stand and view others, locations to populate off to the side of the retail floor. Gaming may be performed in standing positions, more important is occupiable floor spaces behind gaming stations blended with circulation.

THEATER_ Major element of program as its function is varied. This space accommodates the larger scale educational component, classroom function, of store and would also house evening lectures, community meetings, fashion shows etc. Its presence should be felt from retail floor, whether spatially fore-shadowed or having some level of transparency, but it should remain somewhat autonomous from the main retail function. When not housing an event, the theater should serve the dual function as an extension of the retail sales floor, displaying product and perhaps having additional Mac clusters that are mobile or fold-out from risers of seating.

LOBBY_ Points of gathering before and after programs of shared experience. The function of the theater is crucial for gathering the crowd, but the real interaction of community takes place outside the theater space itself. In this instance, the auxiliary function may in fact be more important than the main stage/audience relationship. Here the conversation and ideas are shared, as the seating space is reserved for performance. Need not be defined spatially but should provide loose defined areas for gathering, accommodating small groups of two up to eight in clusters within larger crowd. Half walls to lean against, signifiers of spatial consumption, no seating or formal areas of occupation.

SCREEN_ This element should be visible from within store and without. The typology should contain multiple screen locations, one main screen being dedicated to the classroom/theater function. Others within store broadcast images of Apple communities taken at its location and others, webcam broadcasts from other stores, etc. Screens need not all be oversized projections, some could be smaller scale cinema displays broadcasting full scale live head-shots of shoppers from other stores around the world. Some may be positioned for semi-private interaction, some viewable by entire store. Multiplicity of functions is inherent via choice of projection material and may be associated with multiple program usages.

GENIUS BAR_ An expansion of the exigent program invention of the Apple store. This function now becomes an autonomous space, providing not only the setting for customers to come in with their repairs and problems, but also a more discrete social gathering space. While waiting for the Apple associates to assist you, seating is provided around bar area. The genius function is expanded to be an actual bar, serving drinks to customers while they wait, providing an internet café atmosphere for customers. Even if the customer doesn't have a specific need to go to the genius bar, one could just go there and hang-out. It becomes a meeting place, a lounge, and a store function. It may function as intermission space from the theater, an extension of the lobby.

relation between exigent store function and envisioned program character

genius
transaction
chindren
sh
occupiable
storage

STAGE CATWALK SALES COFFEE SHOP MUSEUM PUB MARKET STREET HOOKA BAR SCREEN THEATER ARCADE CLASSROOM PAMPHLET PHONE BOOTH LIBRARY SALON

education

elving

advertising

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administration

event duration study

event duration in minutes

120 minutes+

90 minutes

60 minutes

40 minutes

20 minutes

5 minutes

GENIUS BAR_

SCREEN_

LOBBY_

THEATER_

ARCADE_

PHONE BOOTH_

LIBRARY_

PHOTO LAB_

CATWALK_

HOOKA BAR_

CLUSTERS_

e v e n t   s p a c e s

expected average time spent through customer participation

expected maximum time spent through customer participation

Organizational Strategies

Once the programmatic content of the store had been studied, a methodology for how to organize this content had to be created. In re-visiting the accepted methods of retailing organization, a more fluid concept of movement within the store space was conceived, taking into consideration programmatic relationships to one another, the store at large, and the context of the Galleria.

A study of the duration of events was made, understanding that some products and consumers are not easily wedded with events related to communities within the Apple audience. For example, while many return users may find the Hooka lounge an amenity that they revisit and discuss with fellow like-minded individuals, other shoppers will just want to step in and check out an IPOD or buy one as a gift. These temporal differences in the retail experience came to affect the organizing strategy for the design.

Products and spaces of 'quick-turn-around' would have to congregate near the mall entrance to the store. From this point, the path of movement would lead a shopper through the space, remaining easily navigable as a continuous flow of movement, bringing one back full circle to the entrance. Along this trajectory, there would be eddies of movement accessible from the main path. These spaces are where the longer duration events are created. The photo-lab becomes one of these sub-spaces, less retail/marketing oriented and thought of as specified in use, directed at the audience that will meet there and linger, discussing the processes and techniques employed in digital imaging. The print media library, the children's space, Hooka lounge, and Genius bar are other event minded spaces outside the main retailing floor and movement.

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generative study considering movement pa

.ths of store
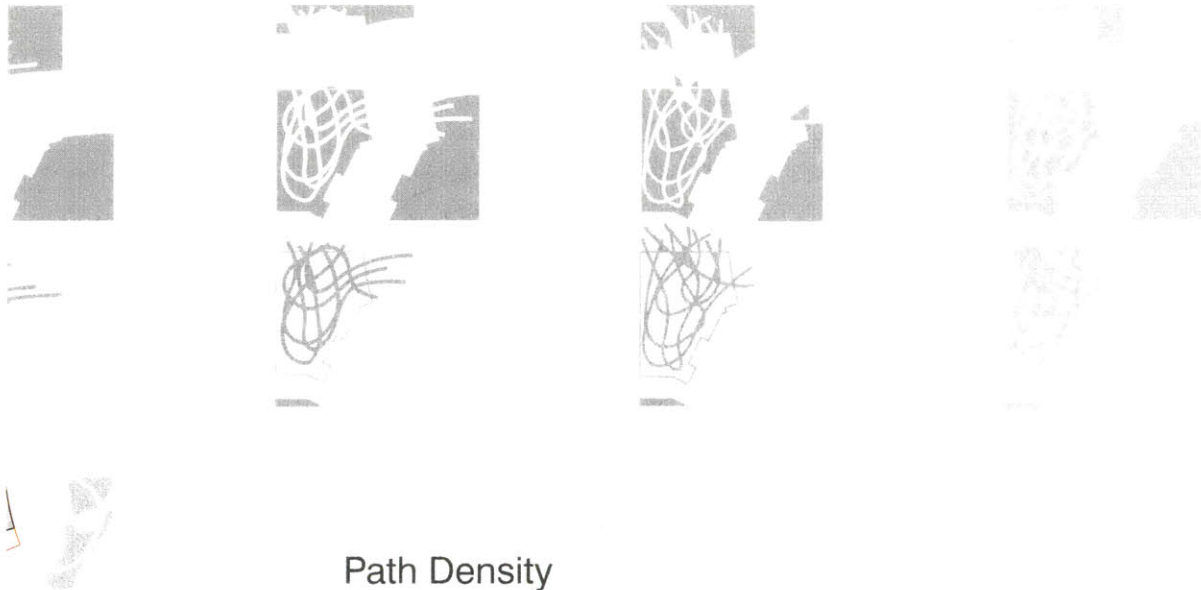
Path Density

With multiple events combined into a single store venue, how one circulates within the space was considered as a vehicle for generating the geometric constraints of the store design. If event spaces were to be seen as semi-autonomous zones within the store, the question of how many events may coincide within the space before creating chaos had to be asked. Studies such as these helped visualize the amount of activity the exigent store volume could contain before it would begin to overlap itself in contradictory ways.
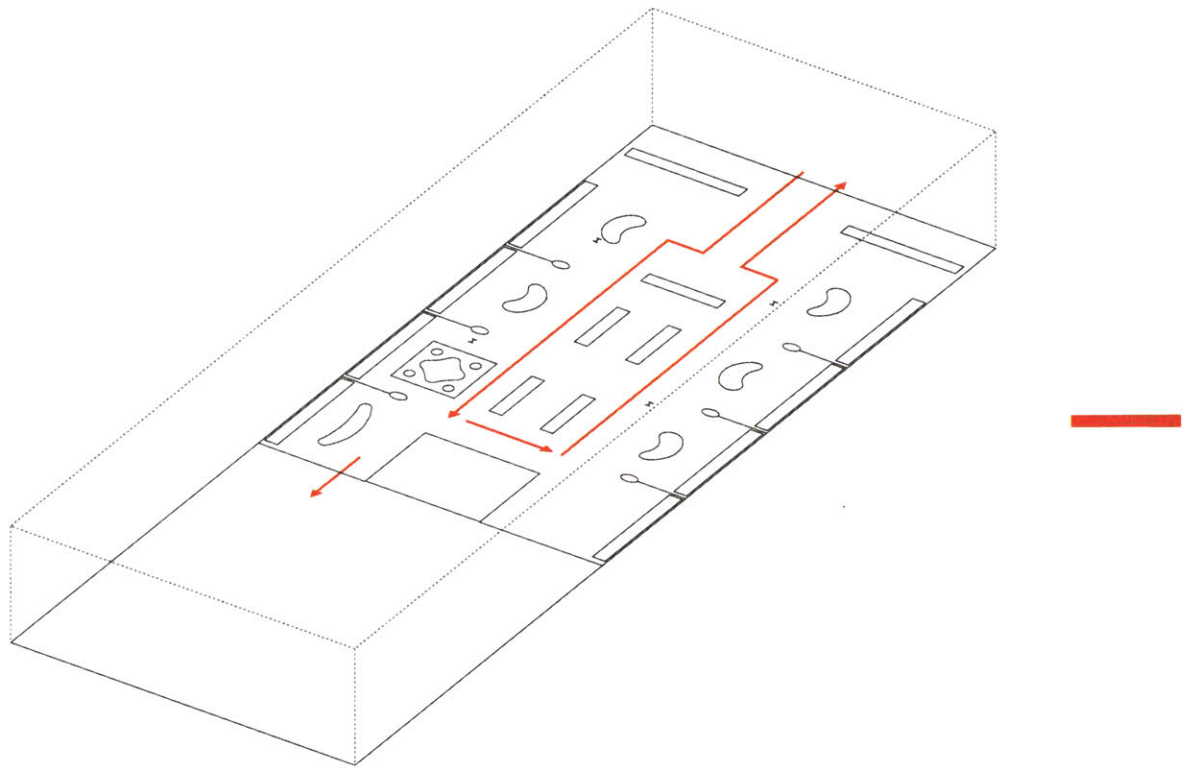
Exigent organizing stretegy and strategy re
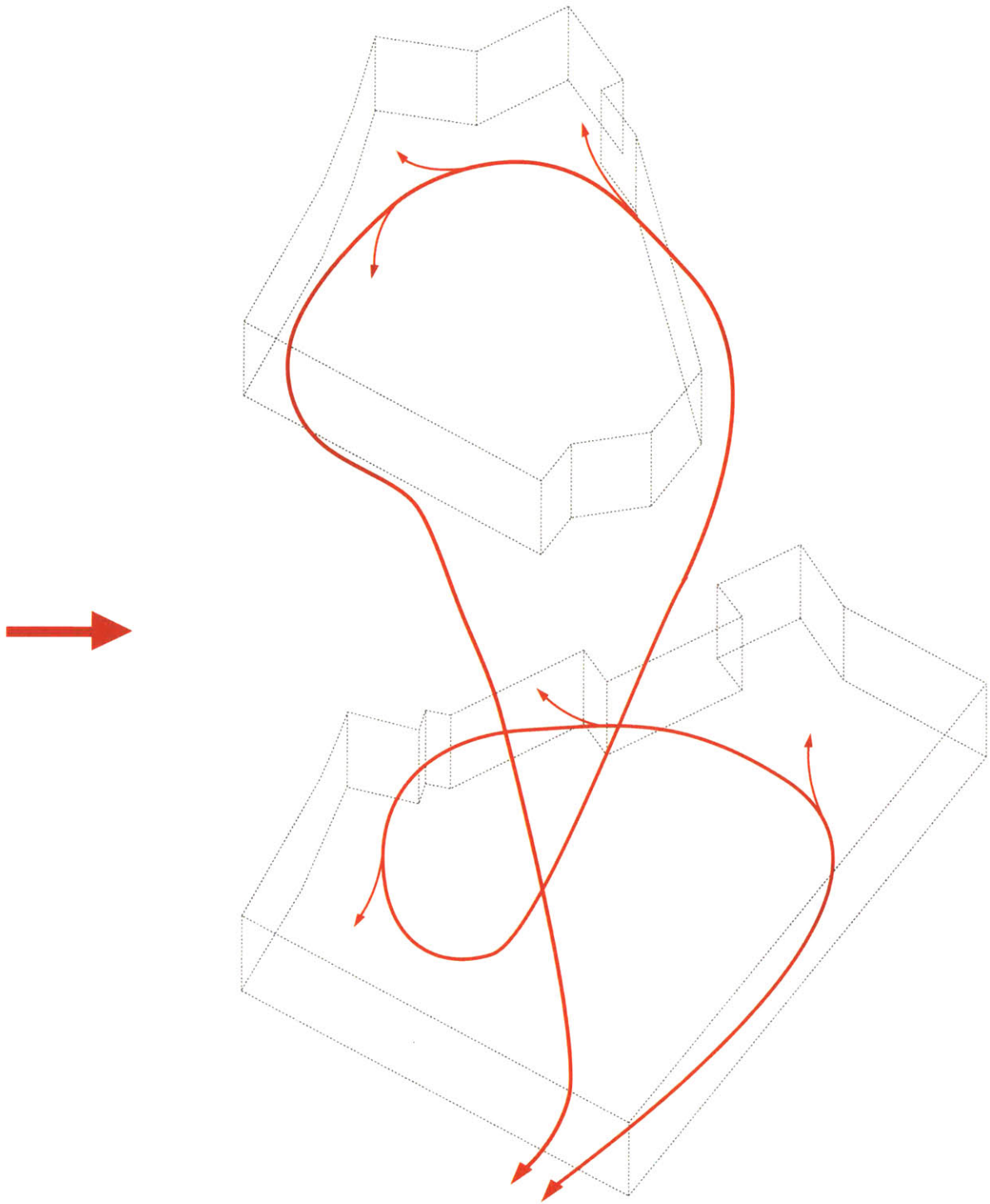
interpreted after event duration considered
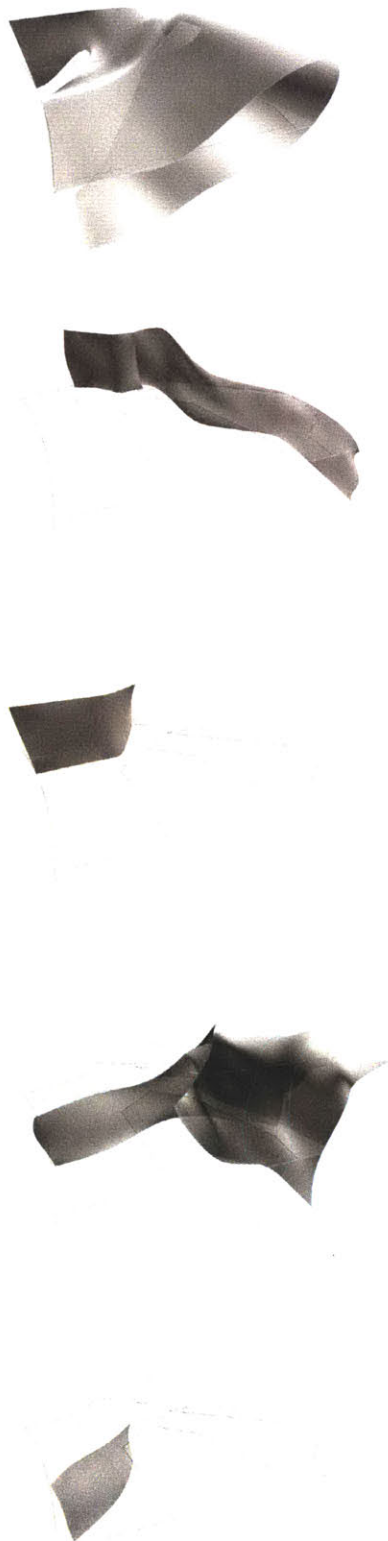
Conceptual dia
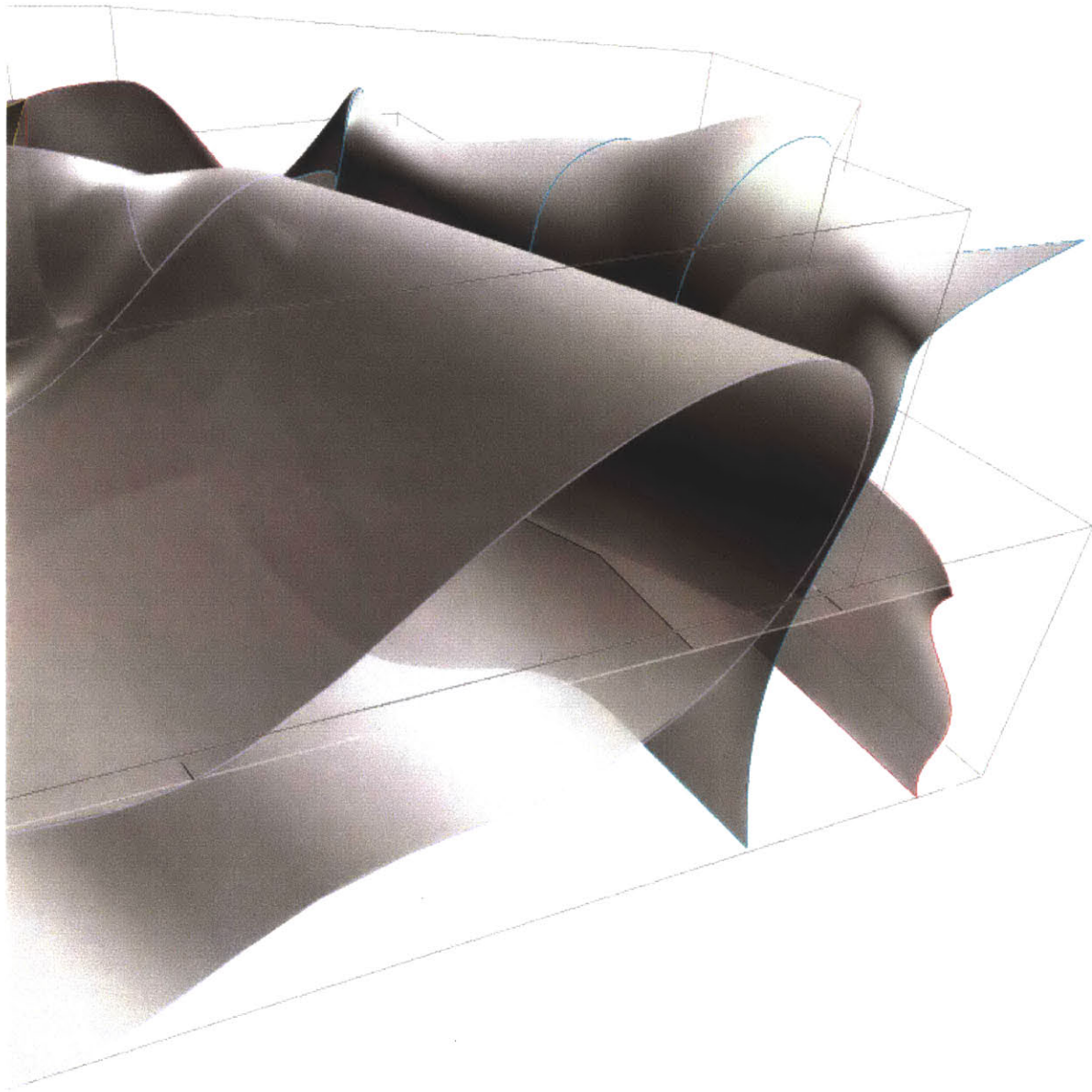
agram developing interlocking retail veneers
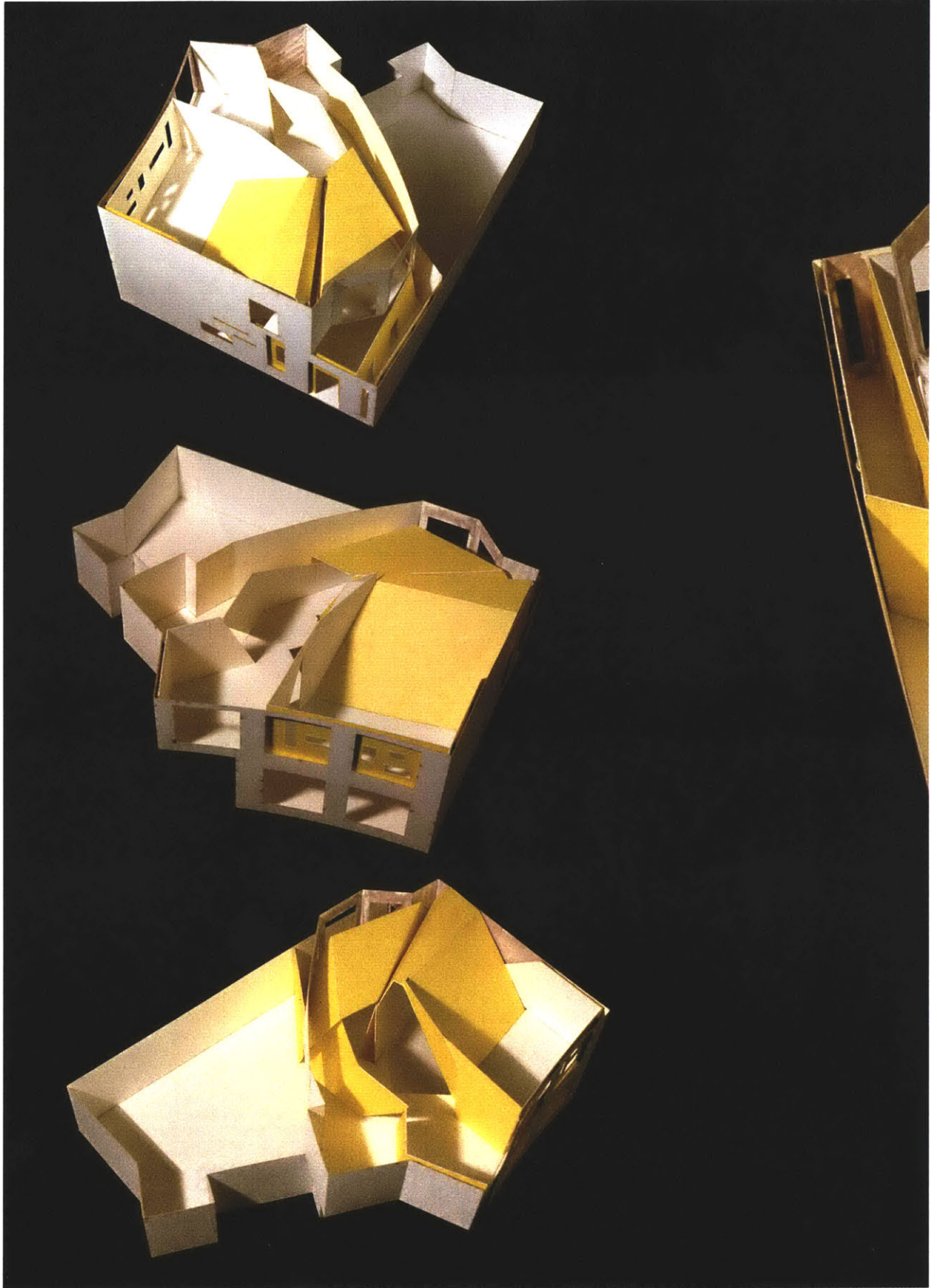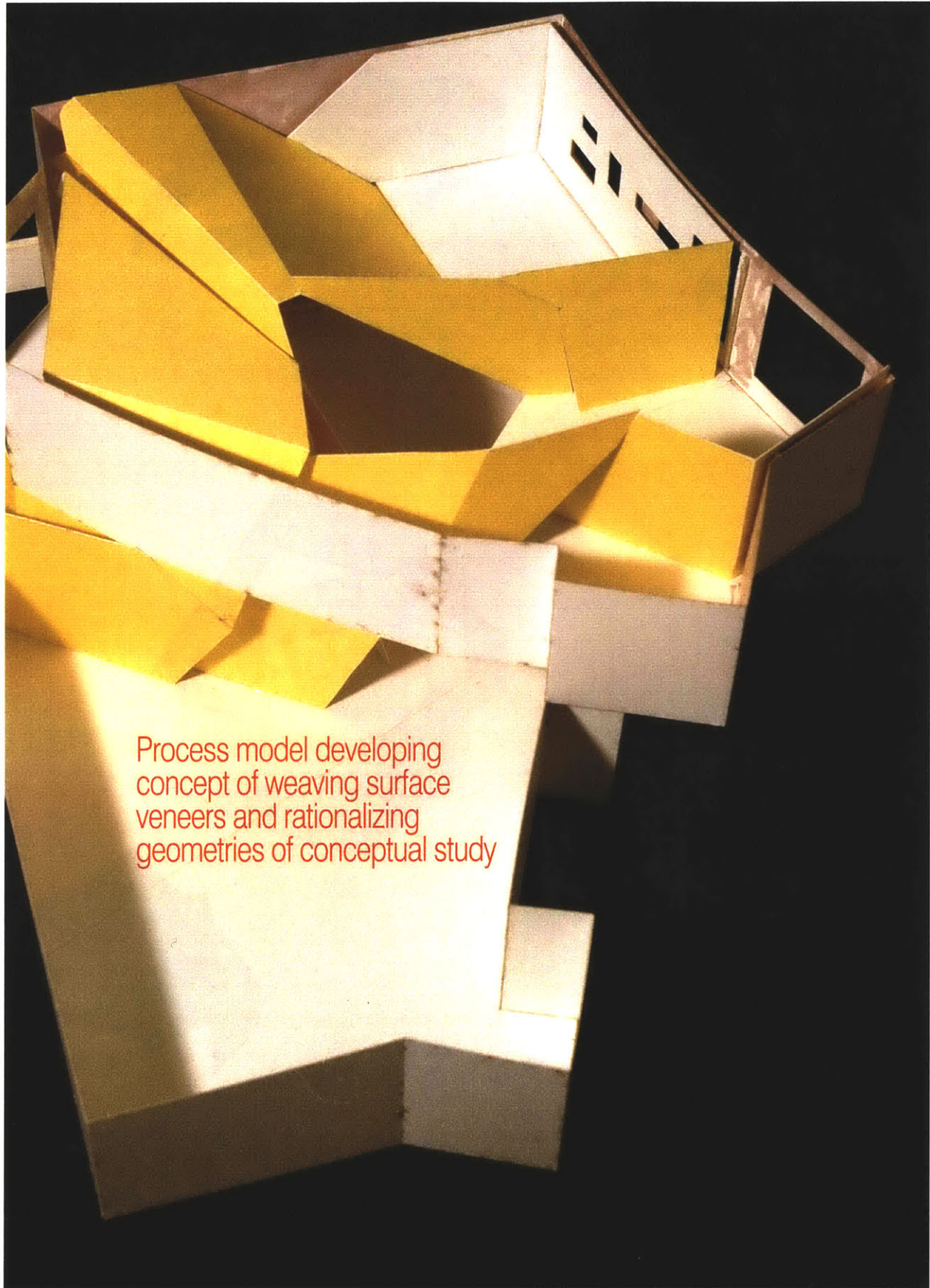
Process model developing
concept of weaving surface
veneers and rationalizing
geometries of conceptual study
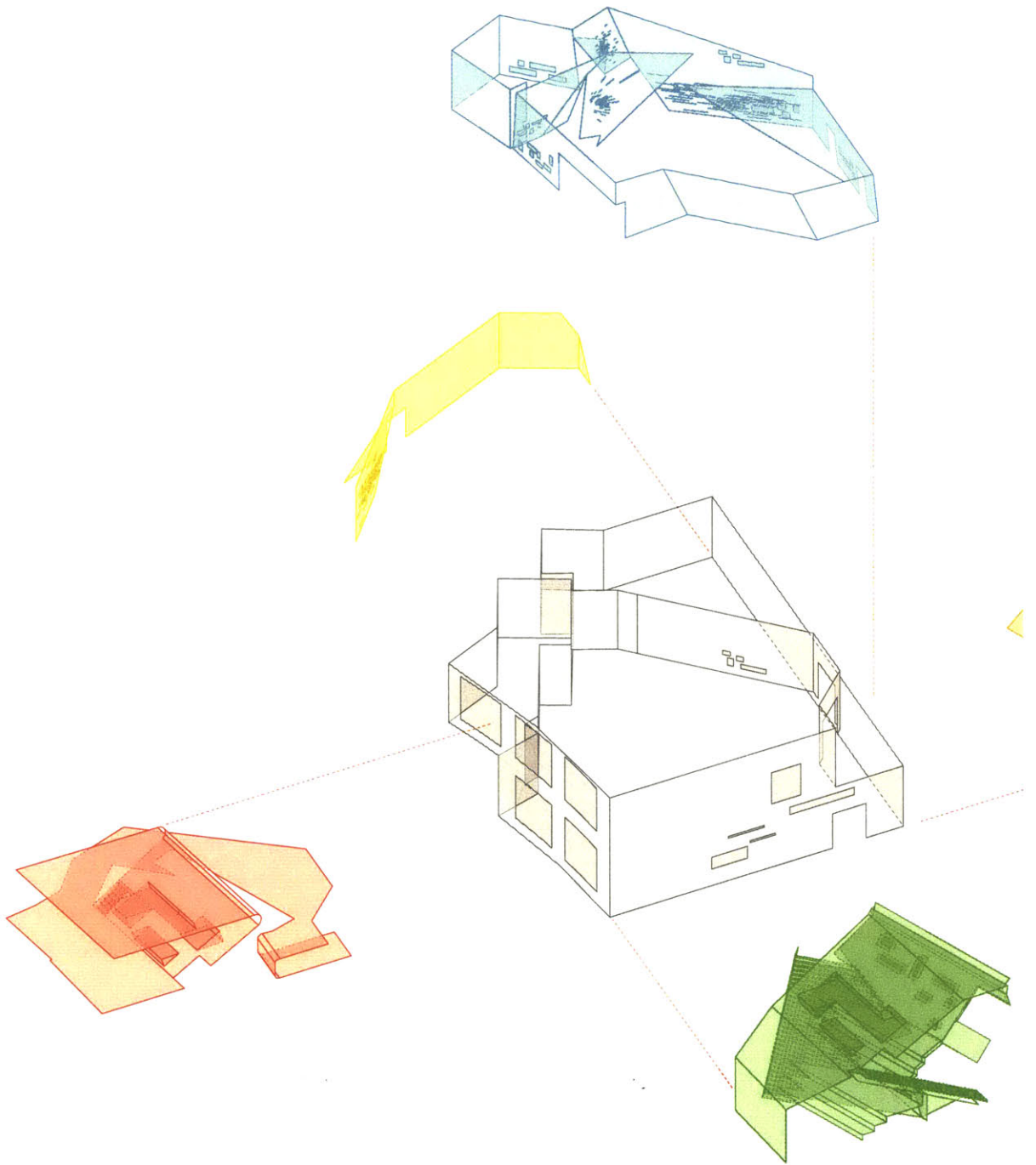
Organizing veneers shown as autonomus bodies outside of exigent retail sheel

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Veneers of Content

In deconstructing the methodology of 'tenant improvements' as found event, an opportunity became apparent to comment on the fictional environment created by mallspace. This architecture as commentary would also become a means by which the varying complexions of event would be perceptively communicated and the organizing structure of the events would be spatialized.
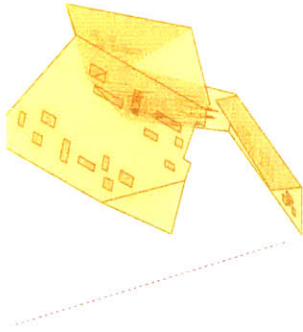
This strategy begins with some fundamental observations of the false realities created within the world of retail. The images and lifestyles of consumer desire are transmitted through visual stimuli, finding their architectonic device in surface. The surface, or veneer, of a retail space is not that of architectural substance, or structure. Retail veneer is instead comprised of a temporary sheath, concealing the architecture and the support services that provide retail its life's blood of commerce. The veneer is that of the un-noticed, the invisible. It is a sea of gypsum and paint, wallpaper and print ads. Removable, disposable, and never re-usable. As readily as it is produced, it is consumed, used up, removed and replaced by the next tenant's projected image.

With this design, the paradigm of this veneer is reconsidered. Within its surface, the skin and armatures that provide support are thickened. They become free-standing surfaces, no longer subject to the geometry of their greater superstructures which they are so often subservient to. With this, they are freed to move, bend, intertwine themselves, generating interstitial moments woven between multiple veneers. The voids left when these veneers peel away from their superstructure articulate retails' main agent of
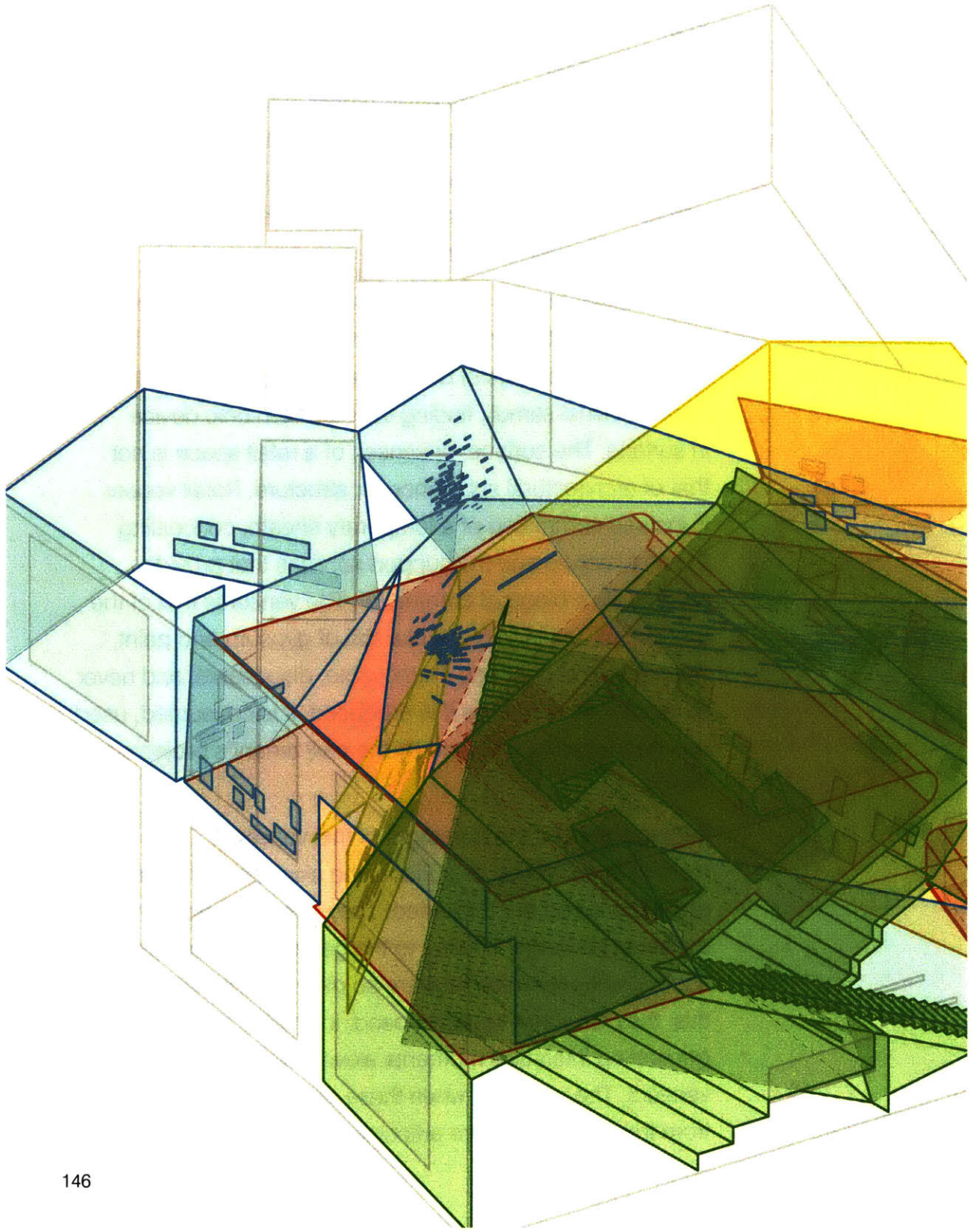
propaganda, the veneer. The un-veiled spatial moments offer the platform for events that escape the normative function of consumption and may pervert the systems of commerce by generating a production of community through event.

This is revealed to the consumer as the spatial sequencing unfolds. Upon entering the store, the 'quick turn-around' items of retail are found in a fairly normalized commercial space that houses the retail sales floor. This space offers geometric hints at what lies beyond its surface, generating intrigue and beckoning the shopper to explore. As one begins to navigate the sequence, the store's program becomes more event-minded as the deeper recesses of the store are reached. The veil of retail becomes penetrated, the space rendered un-polished. Armature is exposed as the language develops a dichotomy between the retail veneer and the spaces of occupation. These 'back-room' spaces for gathering are seen as being behind the stage set of retail. Walls would remain unfinished, concrete floors uncovered, structural ceilings, ductwork and conduit exposed.
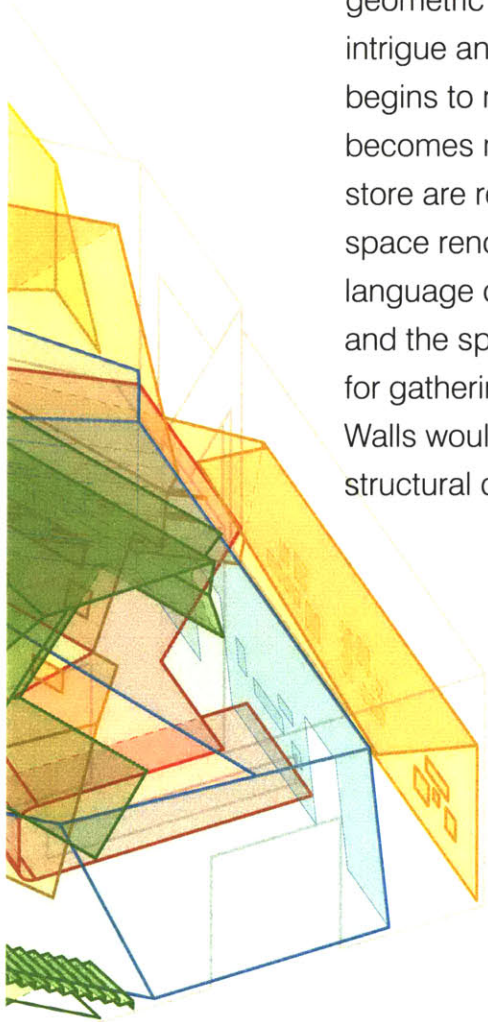
Wall study

Shown on opposite page are studies of the surface articulation within the space. Above the study is seen from the retail veneer side of the assembly, surfaces are 'polished', refined. The translucent nature of the paneling would allow a ghosting of the armature the skin attaches to. Below is the back side where the armature is exposed to view. Passage is provided through a tearing of the skin, providing slots of space through which movement is allowed without breaking the continuity of a continuous surface.

It is when these surfaces have passages by one another that a wall cavity is created. This cavity is utilized as container for the display devices of retail. Glass cases and display shelving is suspended within these cavities, connecting the retail and communal spaces, visually and perceptively, through the product itself. The Apple merchandise is seen as the binding agent that allows these two counter programs of consumption and production to co-exist and function in a reciprocal manner.

Context Plan level one of mall

mall and neighborhood
site for installation highlighted
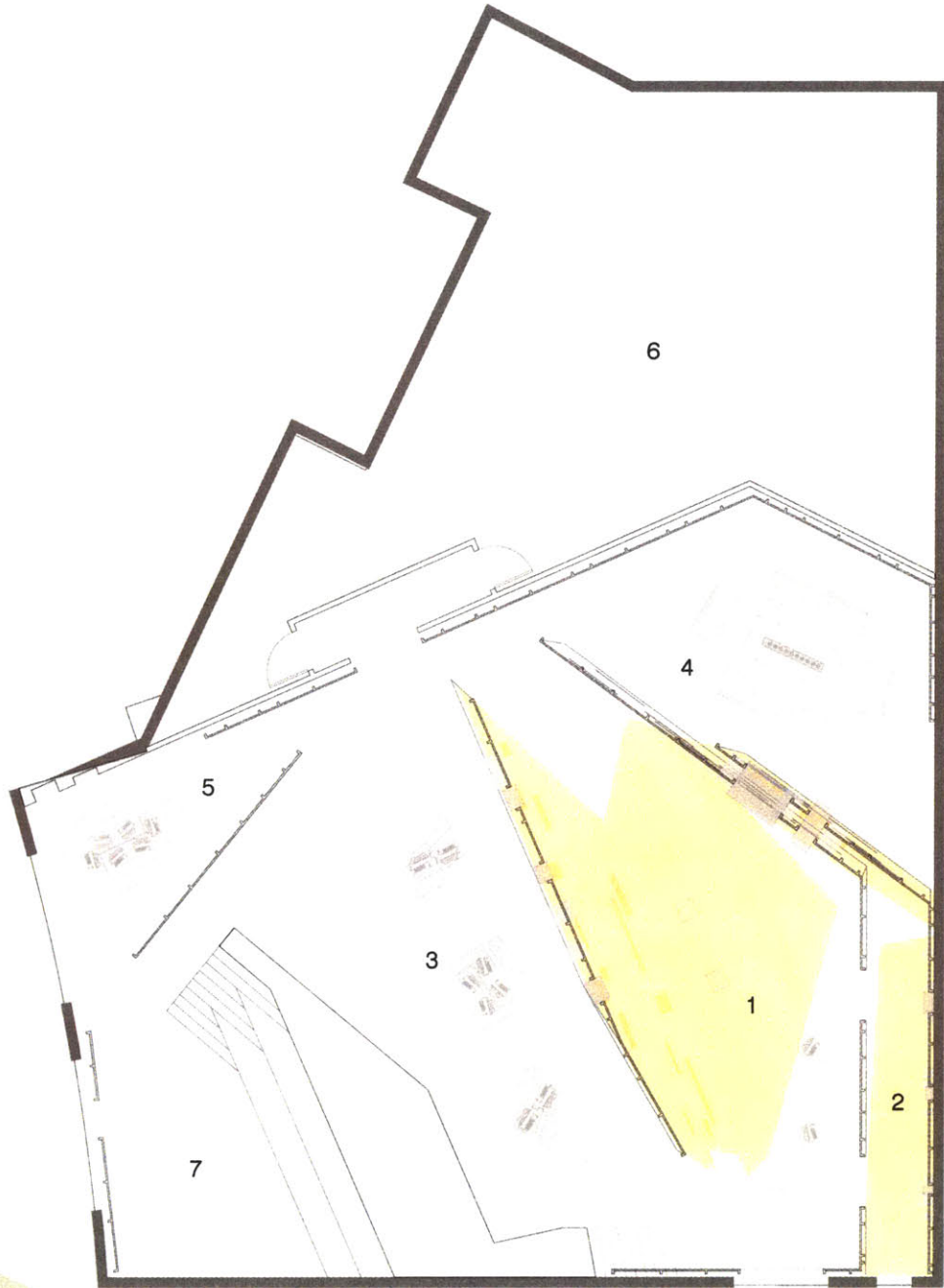
Level One Plan not to scale

mall entrance →

1   Retail Floor
2   Audio Devices
3   MAC Clusters
4   Hooka Lounge
5   Children's Learning Center
6   Storage / Administration
7   Education Theater
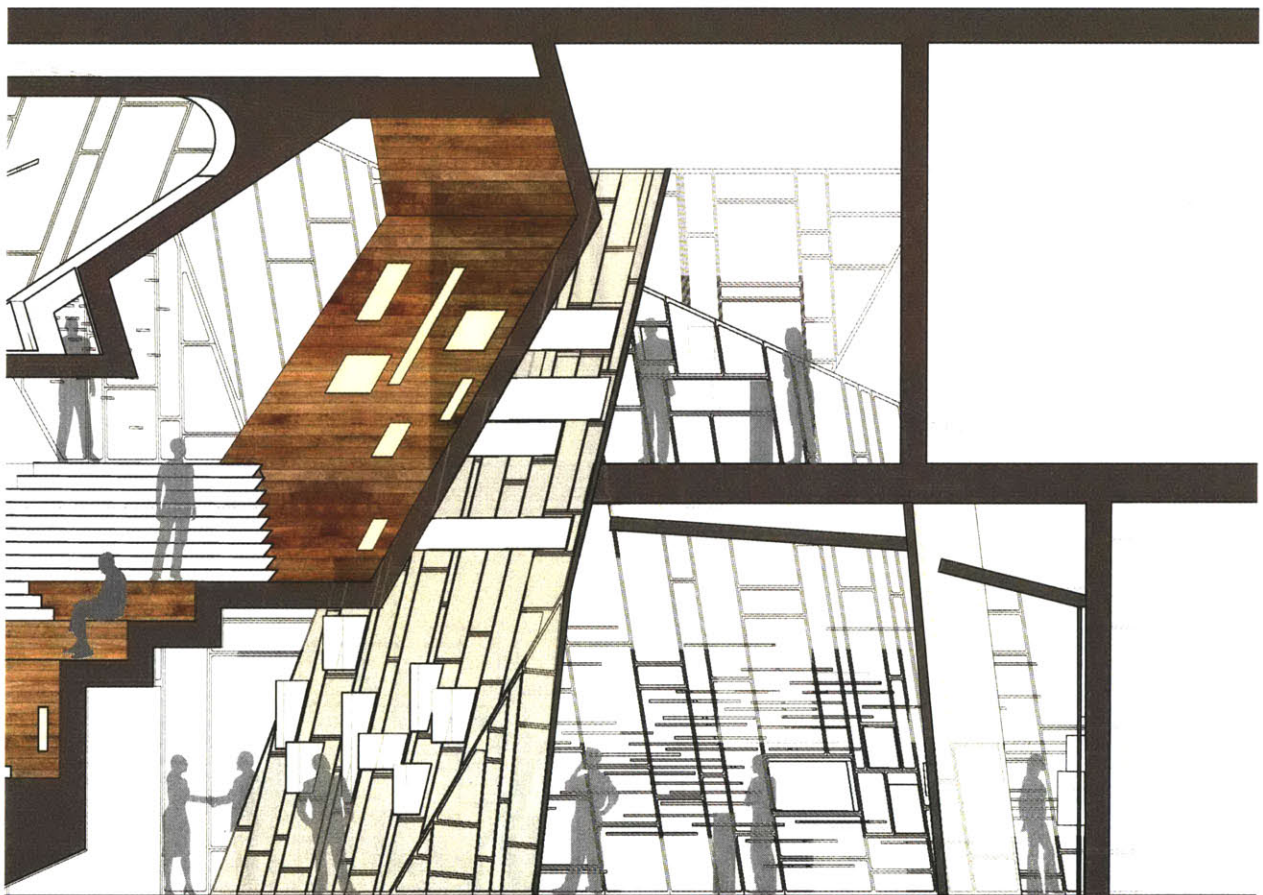
6

4

5

3

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1

2
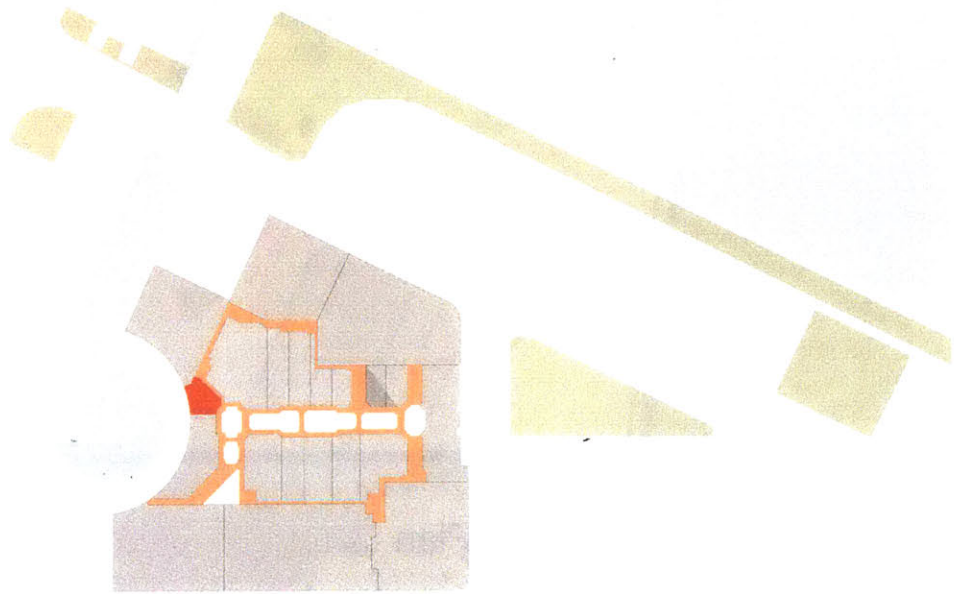
Context Plan level two of mall

mall and neighborhood
site for installation highlighted

3

4

6

5

1

← mall entrance

← mall entrance

2
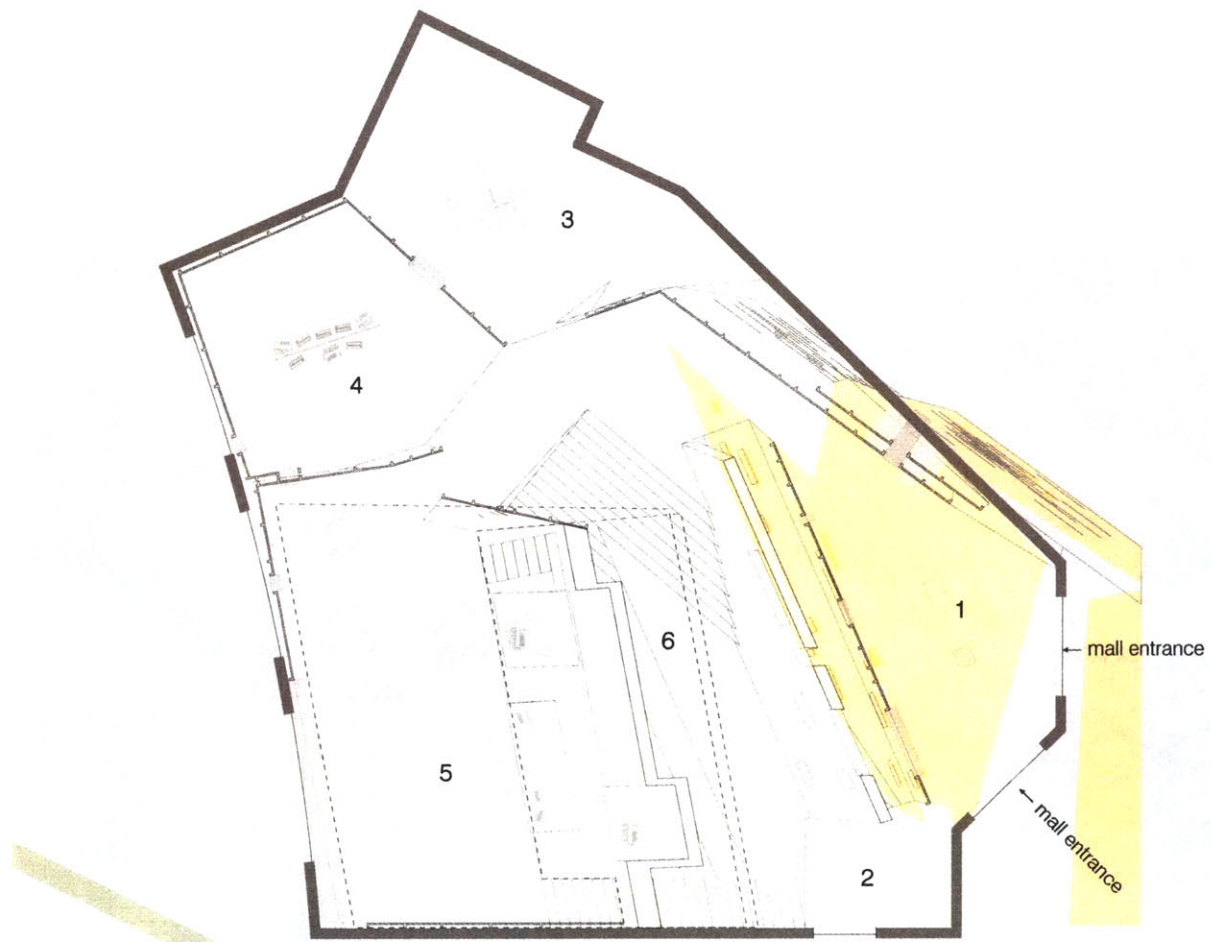
Level Two Plan not to scale

1   Retail Floor
2   Digital Audio Devices (phone booth)
3   Library
4   Photo Lab
5   Genius Bar
6   Education Theater (below)
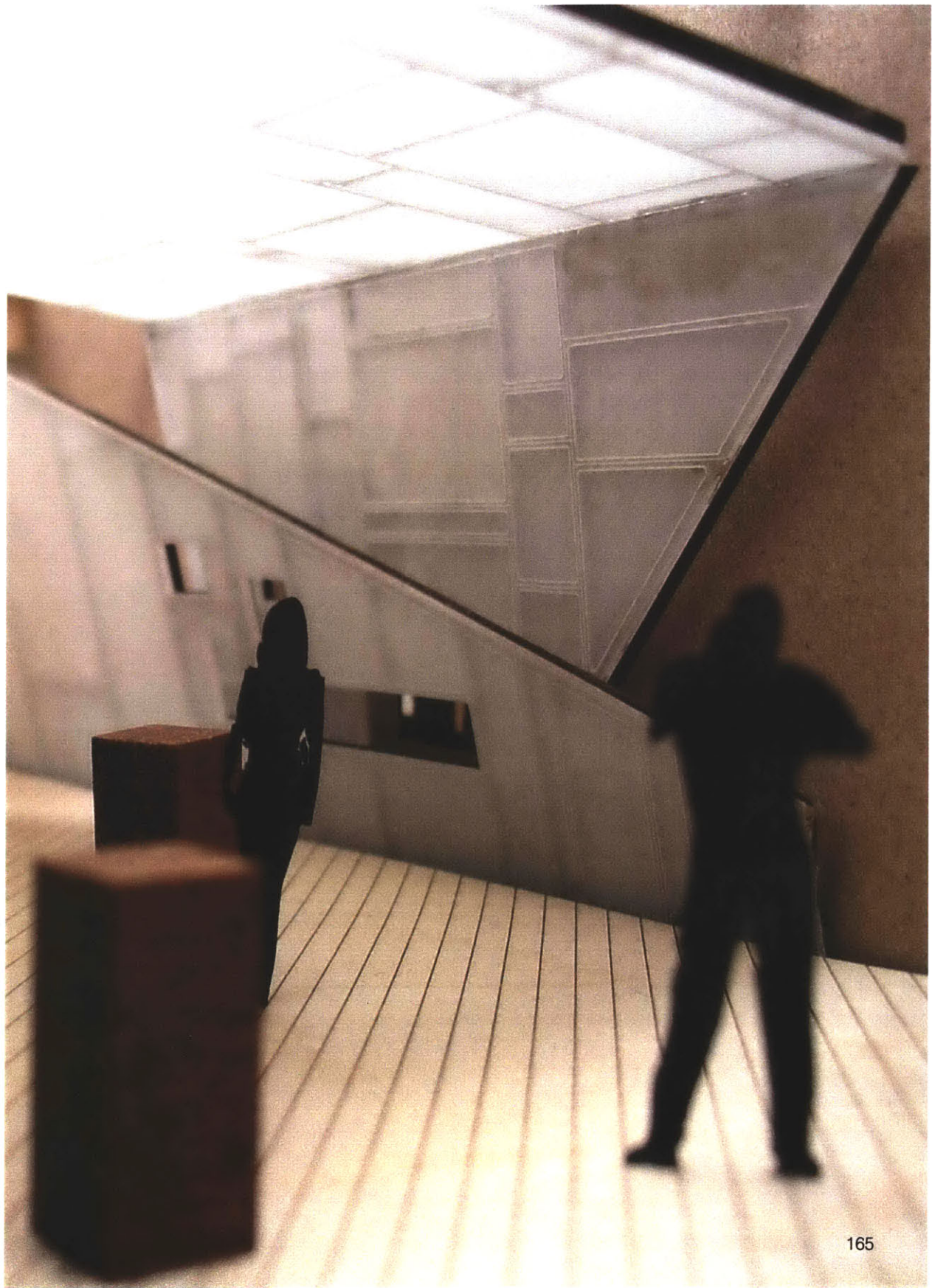
Section 0_0
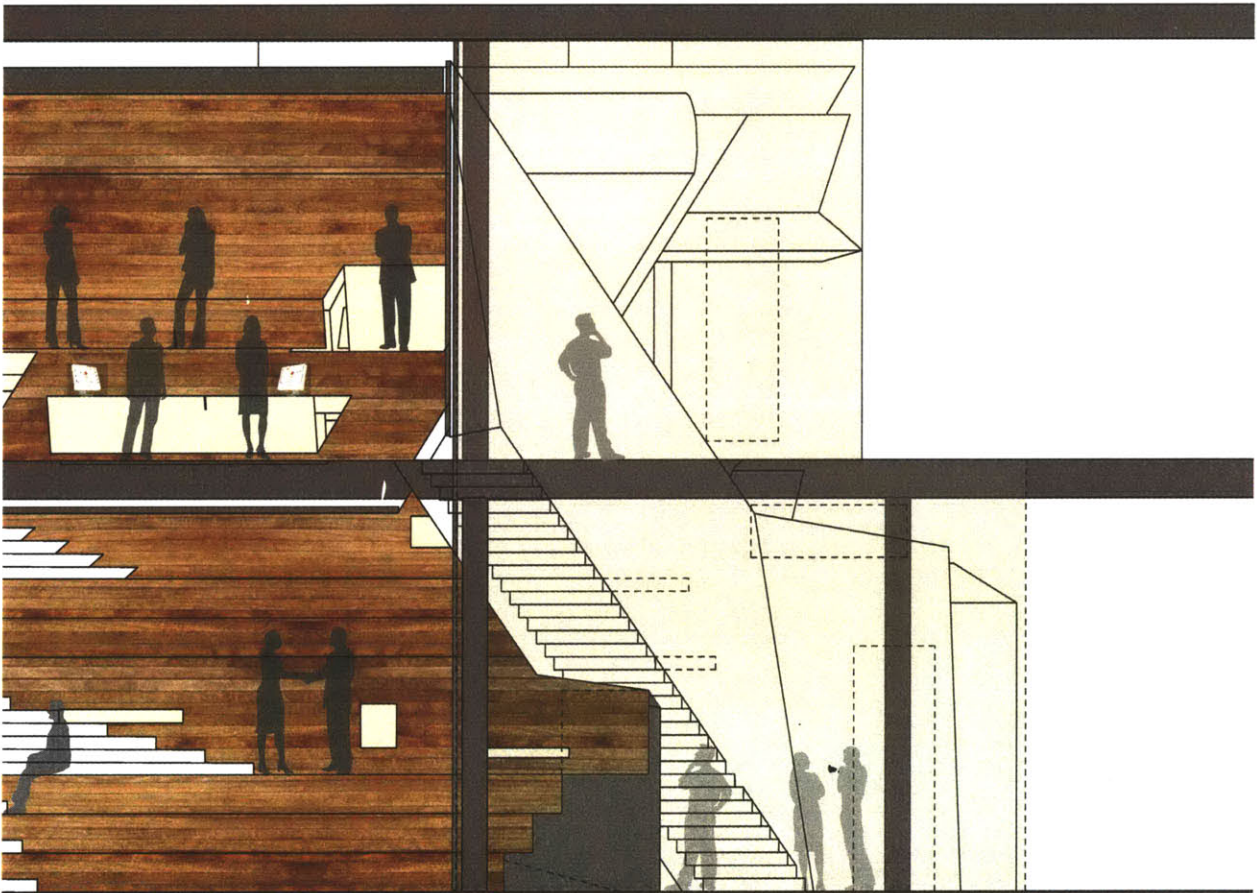
Section 0_1
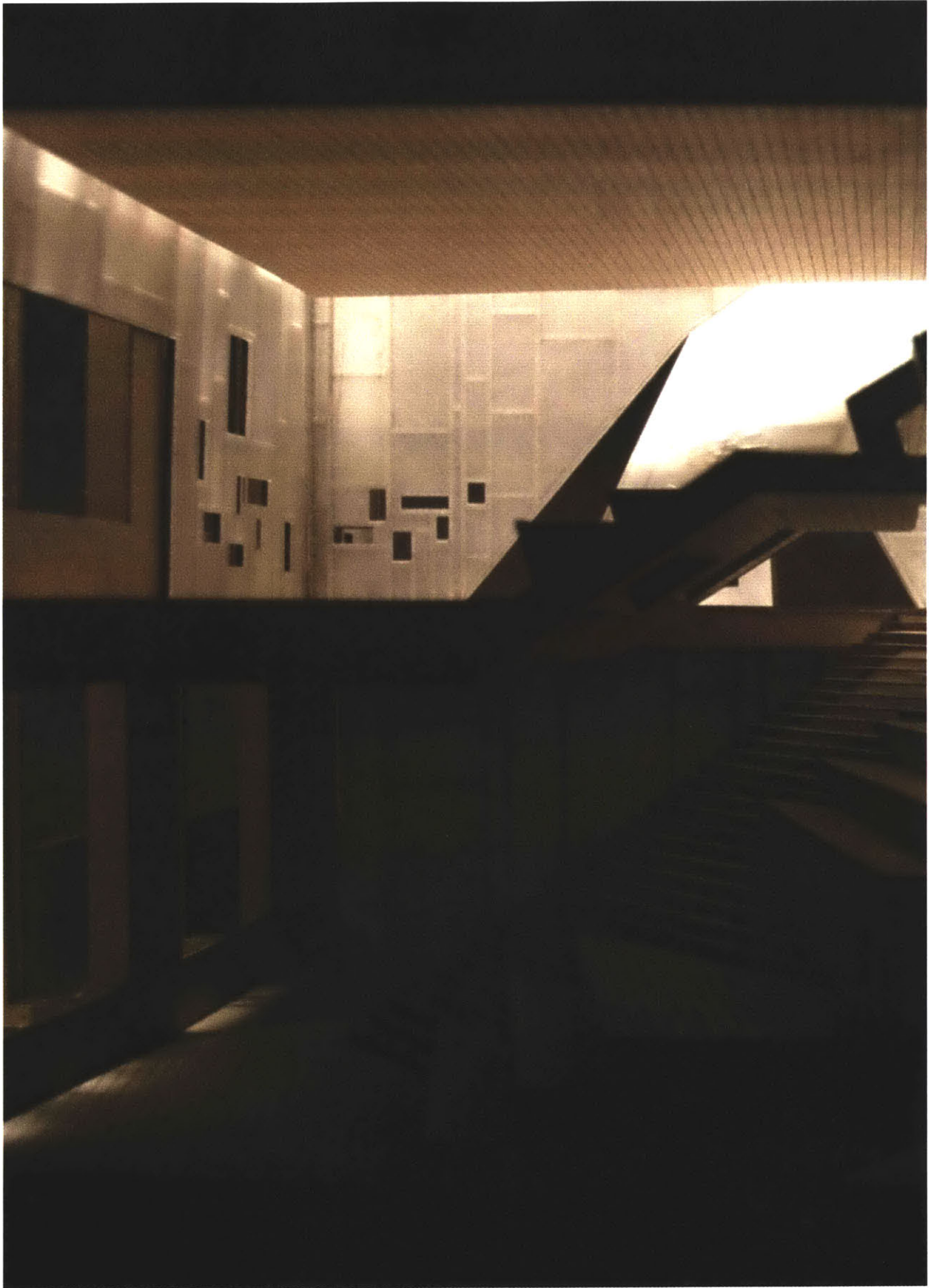
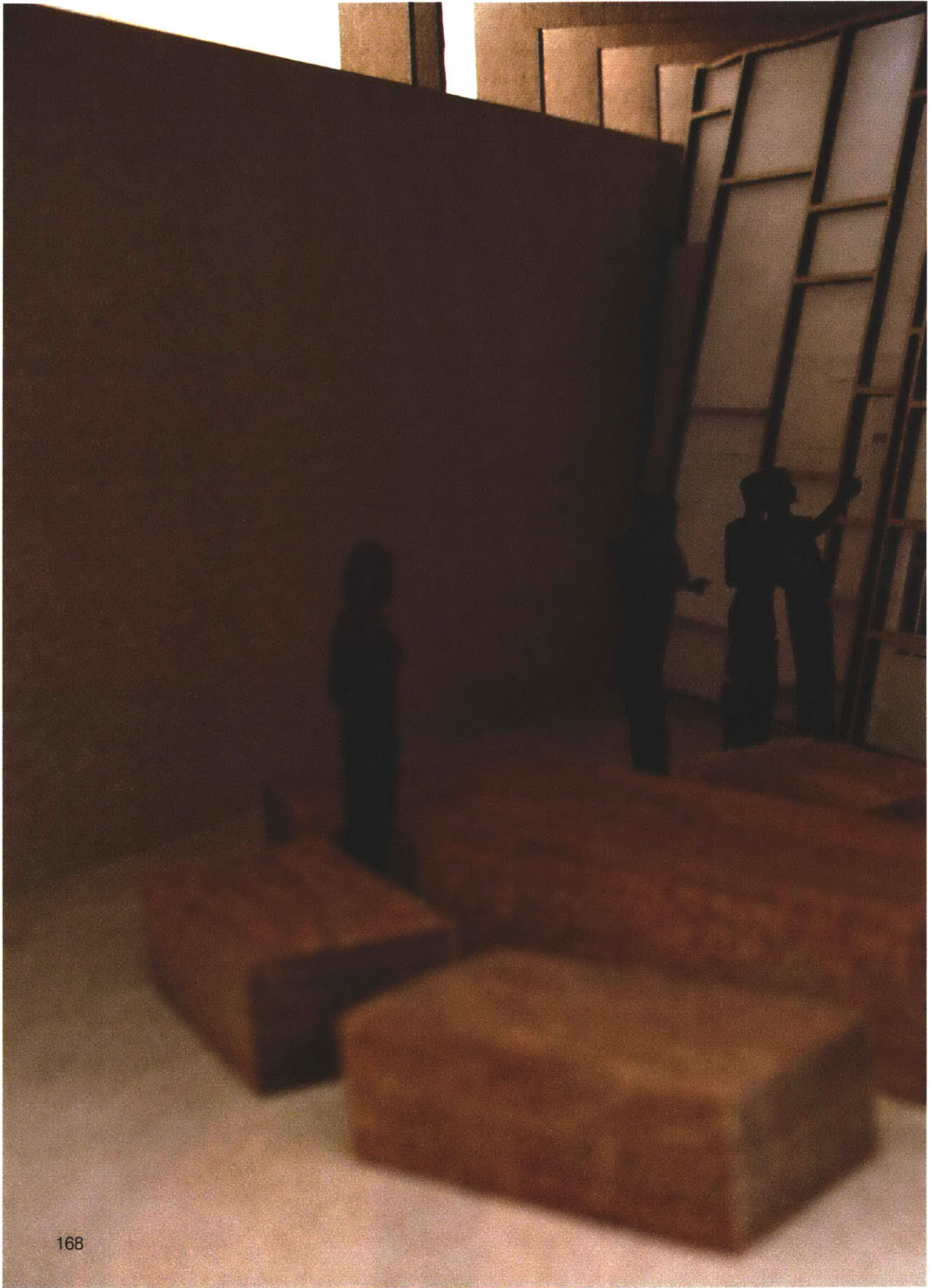**Retail Showroom _Ground Floor**
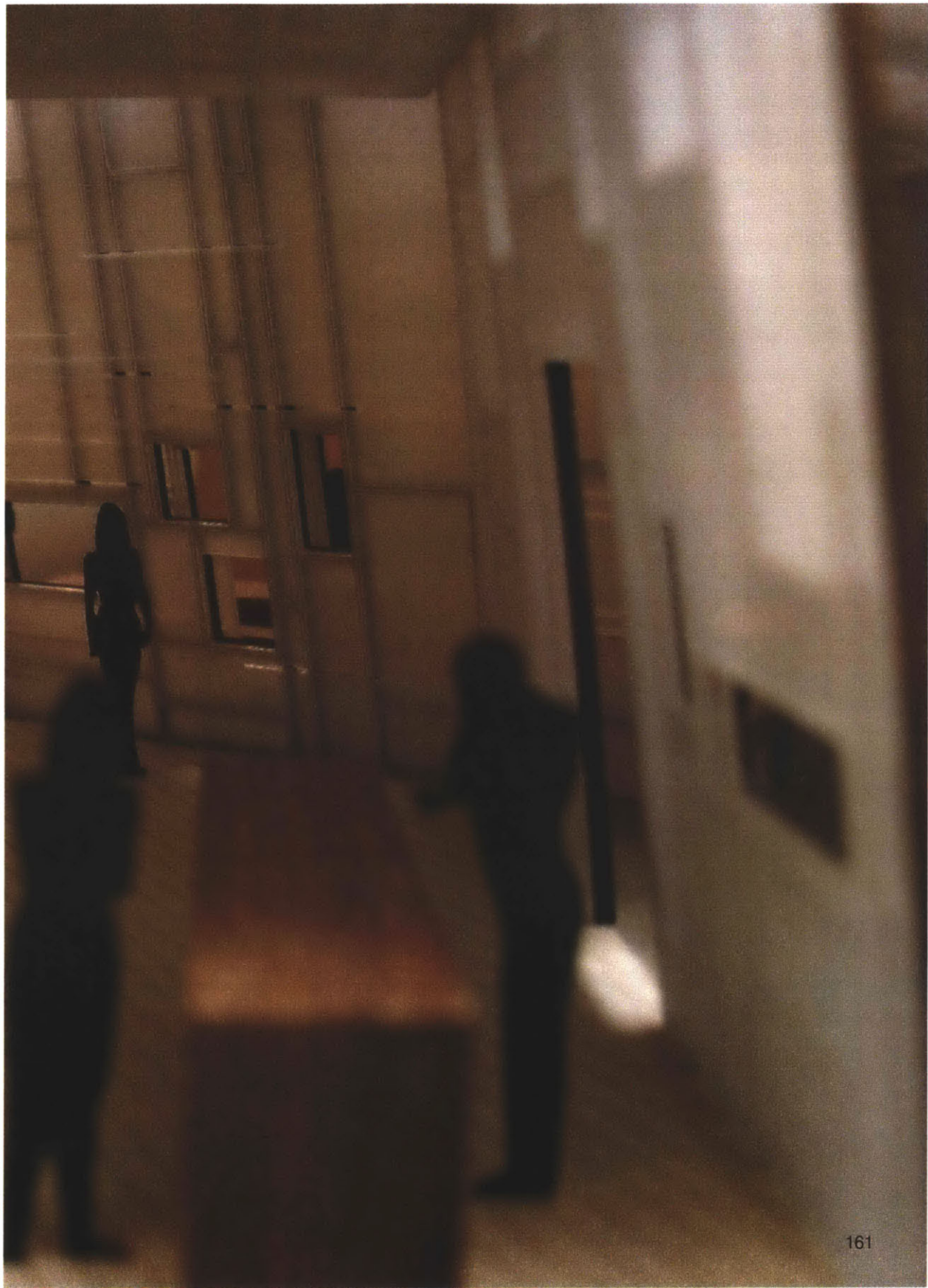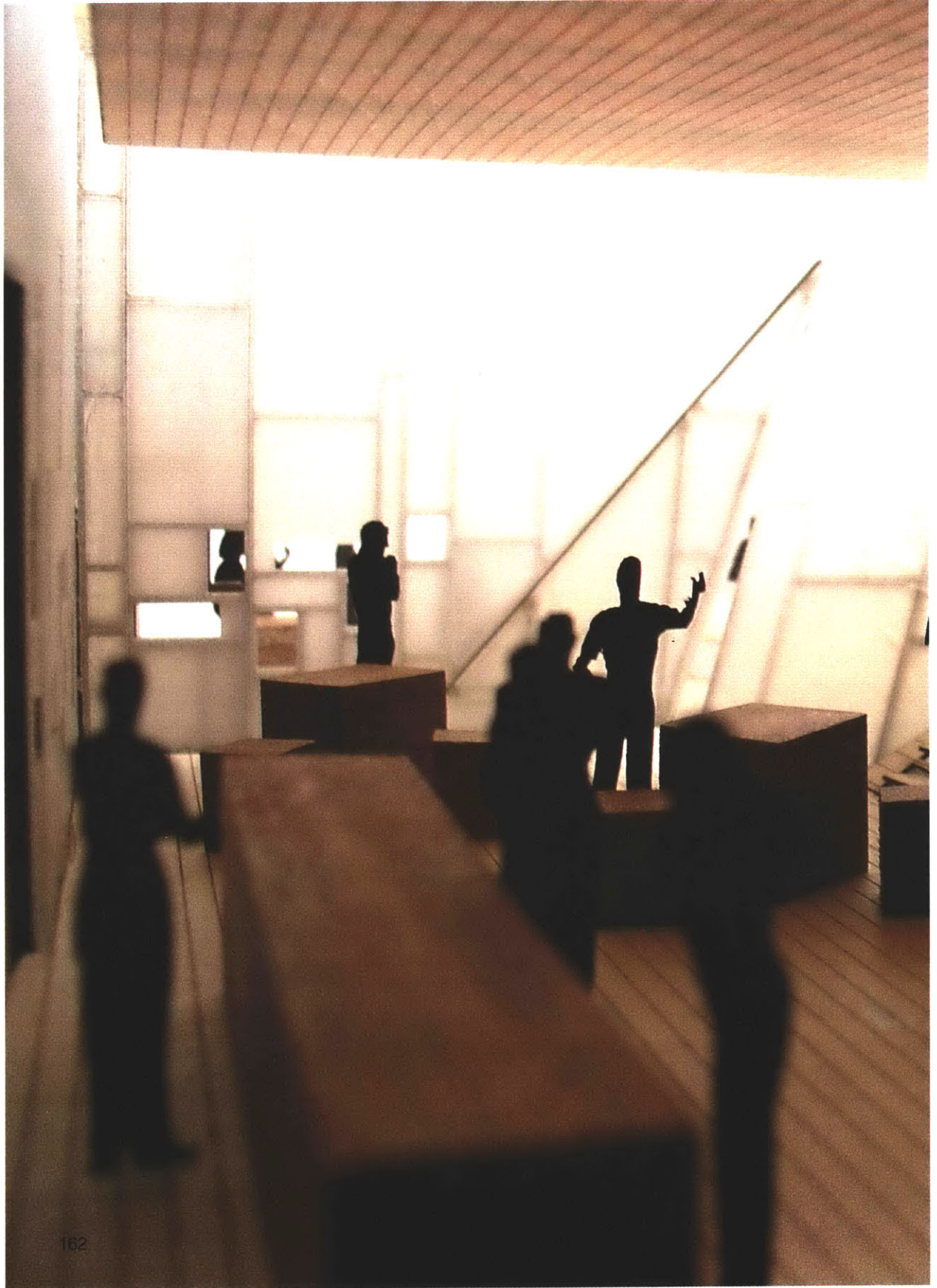
Genuis Bar _Second Floor
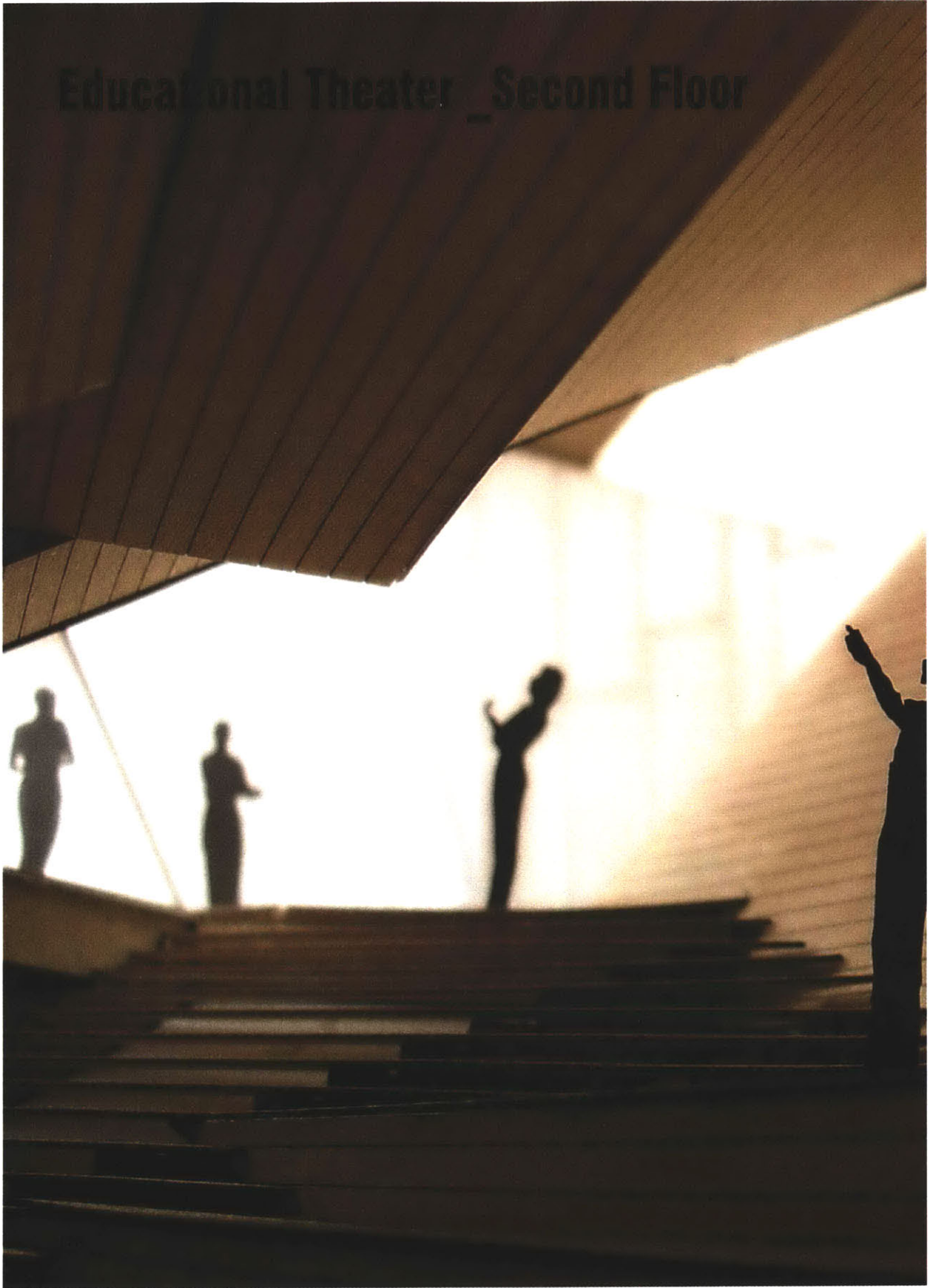
Retail Showroom _Second Floor

MAC Clusters _Ground Floor

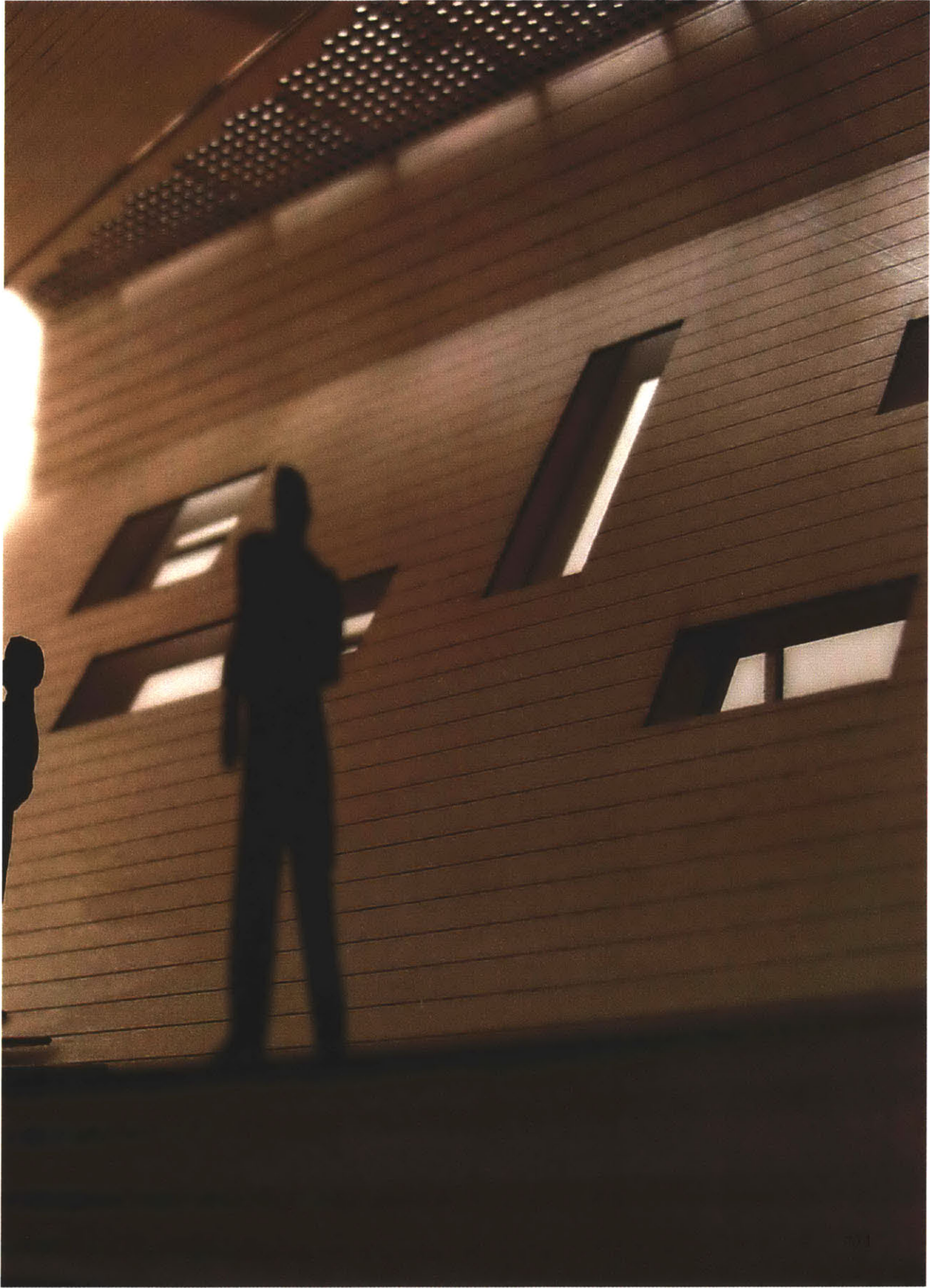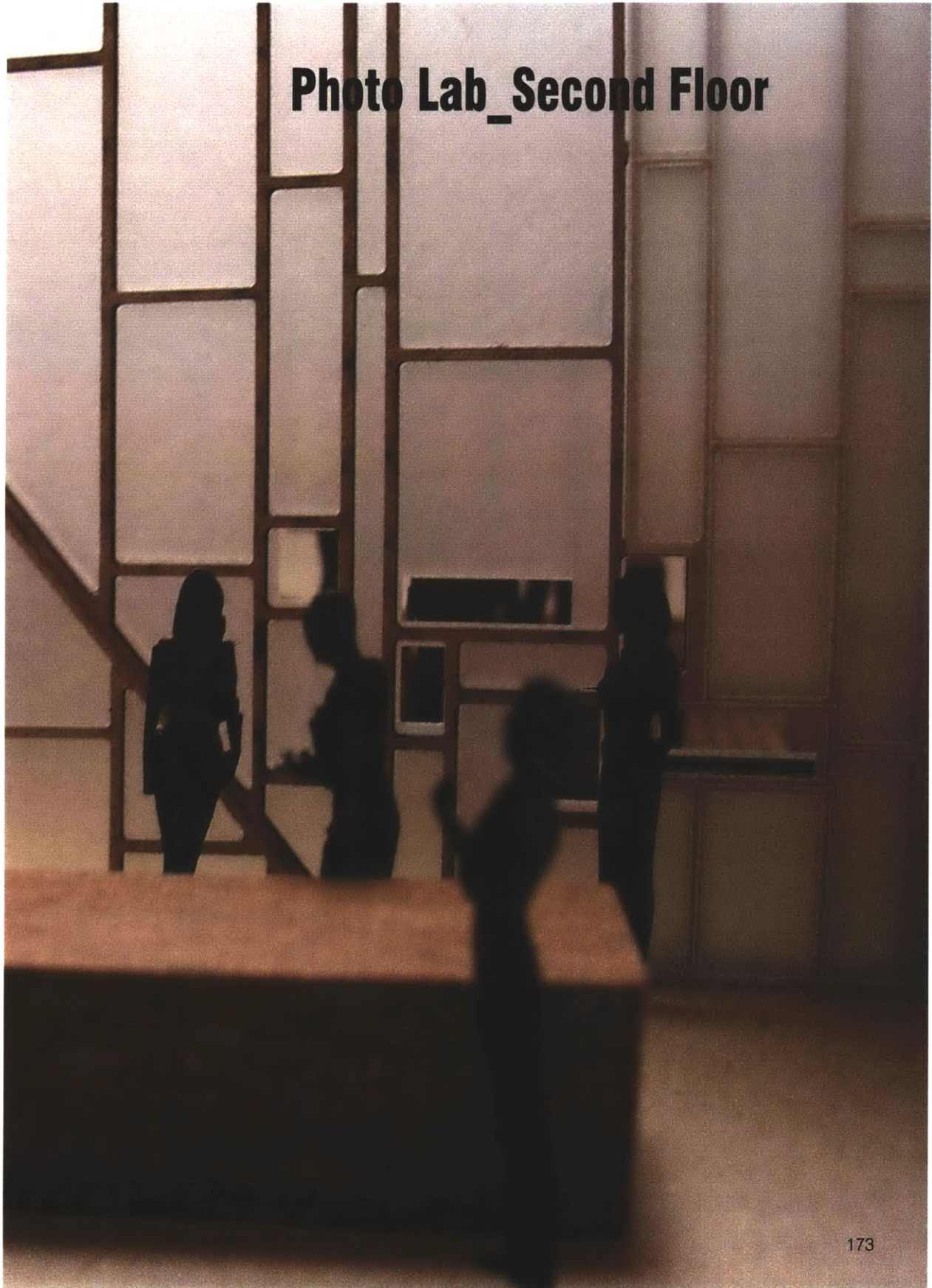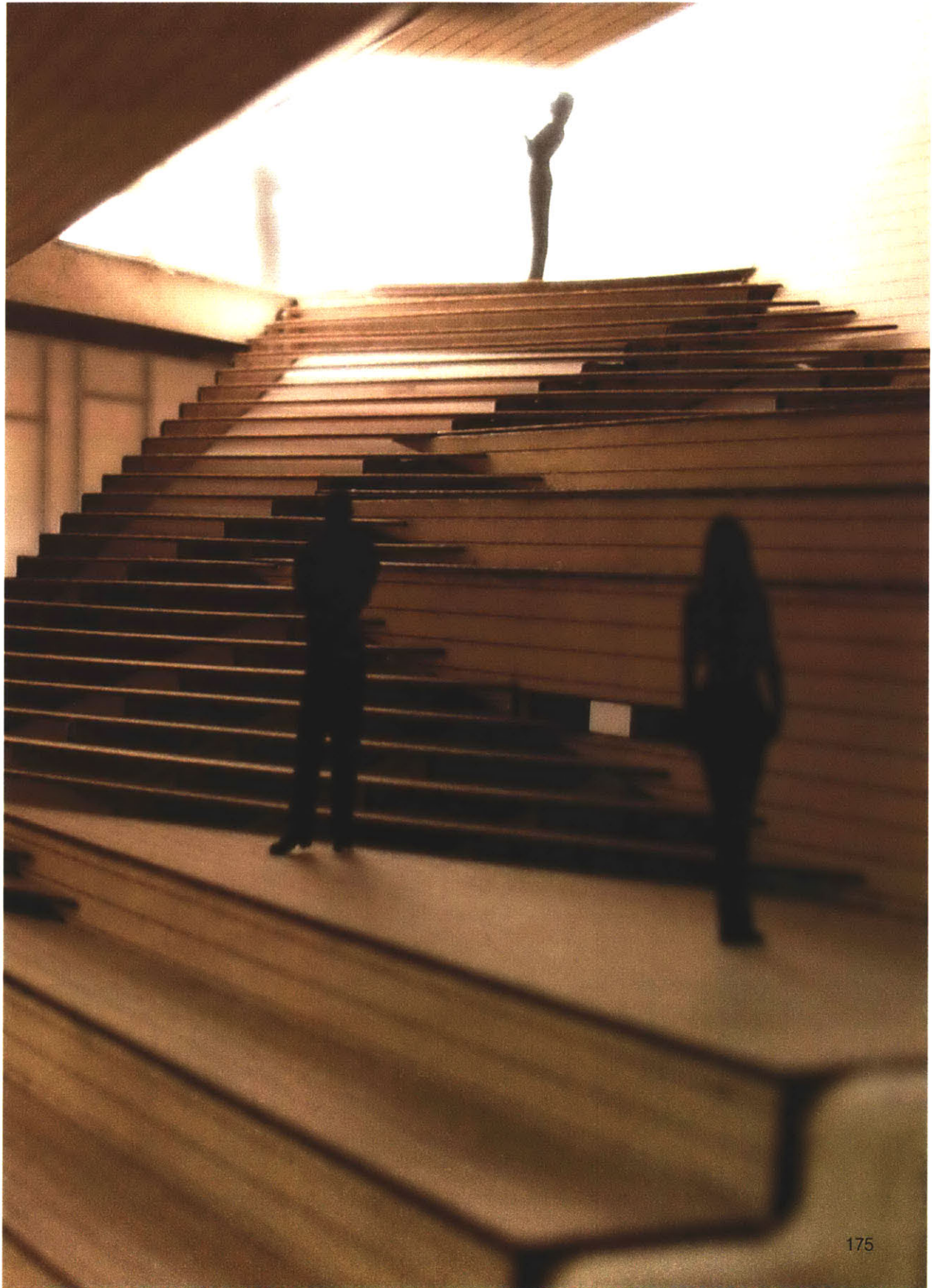**Ipod Hooka Lounge _Ground Floor**

Educational Theater _ Second Floor

Photo Lab_Second Floor

Educational Theater _Ground Floor

Children's Learning Center_Ground Floor

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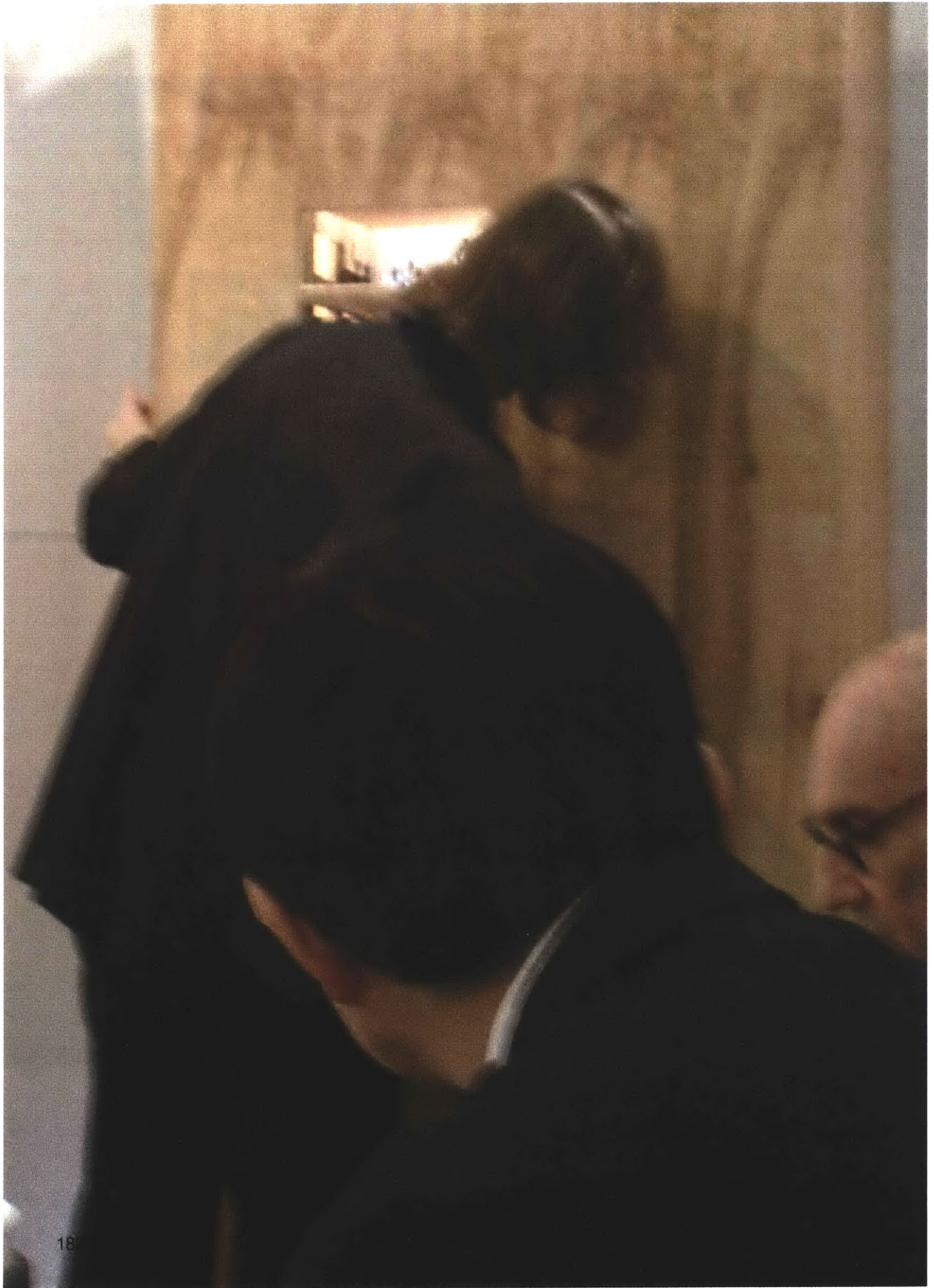Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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