

EDENS ISLANDS ROOMS

THE PROJECT OF THE URBAN INTERIOR

by

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B. Architecture
University of Melbourne 2005

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE STUDIES
AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
JUNE 2011

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ABSTRACT:

The privately owned public interior, defined here as an enclosed urban space owned by a private entity, has been a recurrent character of many 20th century liberal cities. It has today found an epitome in the mega-structural urban enclaves of the developing world. The thesis seeks to challenge the idea of future within these forms. Developed as technologically deterministic, aesthetic totalities for a precise public in their present, they do little to anticipate the potential publics they may have to absorb as and when the fleeting conditions, which necessitate these forms have subsided into history. Herein, they reveal the comic tragedy of instating architecture with the design of the city, that most desired scope of work. The city, which by its liberal democratic definition is a creator of possibility, is thus reduced to a handful of variables in light of architecture's hegemony, and points once again to a recurrent disciplinary malaise for death by total design. This totality comes all too clearly at the expense of excluding a generous swath of a present and future public and the potential it offers.

Whilst the radical manifesto has become a thing of the past, the best means of contemporary attack is elective participation. By this I mean to acknowledge one's constraints within the market, and to deliberate over the potential agency of architecture through more operative means. Herein, a self-conscious sense of humor about the discipline's megalomania is paired with the sincere ideals for creating urban possibilities through architectural form within the structure of neo-liberal economics. This coupling is explored through the design of an enclave for financial services in Mumbai, India. As the breadth of what constitutes the Indian middle class encroaches monumentality, the possibilities for an inclusive, privately owned public interior are interrogated through a manifesto for its ideal spatial tool, the room. A product of both architecture and urbanism, the room mediates between both disciplines by standing as a definitive form through its enclavic walls and simultaneously creating urban possibility in its void.

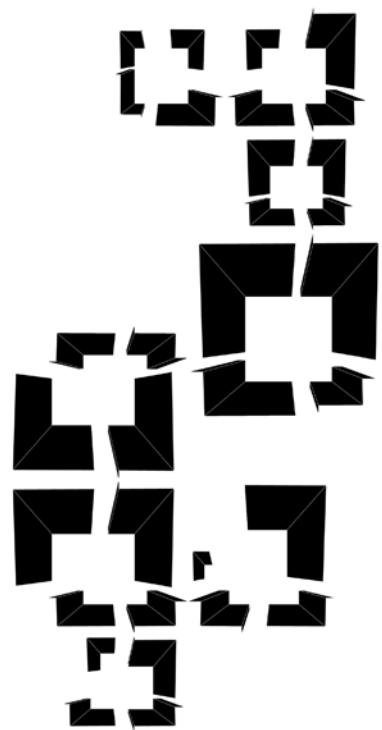
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EDENS ISLANDS ROOMS

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AMRITA MAHINDROO



'Marx lays bare the casual connection between economy and culture. For us, what matters is the thread of expression. It is not the economic origins of culture that will be presented, but the expression of the economy in its culture. At issue, in other words, is the attempt to grasp an economic process as perceptible ur-phenomenon, from out of which proceed all manifestations of life in the arcades (and accordingly in the 19th Century).'

Walter Benjamin, The Arcades Project

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend a very generous thank you to several people who provided invaluable advice in the production of this work. My advisors Alexander D'Hooghe, Arindam Dutta and Nader Tehrani, whose consistent and insightful input pushed this work beyond its very humble beginnings to quite the unexpected. Each brought to the table a different and essential critique, and saw in this project possibility, which at times I struggled to. I would also like to thank Alexander and Arindam particularly for encouraging me to be bold in shaping my argument, whether it be through words or architecture. Thank you also to Rahul Mehrotra and Nial Kirkwood at the GSD, whose initial input was fundamental to grounding this work within Mumbai. I would like to thank many of my colleagues at MIT, in particular Sagarika Suri for consistently asking the difficult questions. Many thanks to my family and friends for their unfailing support. To Alex Duncan, Alexis Taylor and Jonathan Crisman, for their editorial advice. To my partner Michel for his patience, consistent encouragement and his complete belief in my abilities. And finally, a very special thank you to Luca De Gaetano, without whose illustrative genius this work in its present form would not have been possible. Luca contributed invaluable advice and did the very challenging task of collaborating with me, by marrying my architecture and the satire in my words, with his wonderfully humorous drawings. In turn, this project has taught me that it takes a certain maturity to develop a sense of humour about one's own work.

ABSTRACT

The privately owned public interior, defined here as an enclosed urban space owned by a private entity, has been a recurrent character of many 20th century liberal cities. It has today found an epitome of sorts in the mega-structural urban enclaves of the developing world. The thesis seeks to challenge the idea of future within these forms. Developed as technologically deterministic, aesthetic totalities for a precise public in their present, they do little to anticipate the potential publics they may have to absorb as and when the fleeting conditions, which necessitate these forms have subsided into history. Herein, they reveal the comic tragedy of instating architecture with the design of the city, that most desired scope of work. The city, which by its liberal democratic definition is a creator of possibility, is thus reduced to a handful of variables in light of architecture's hegemony, and points once again to a recurrent disciplinary malaise for death by total design. This totality comes all too clearly at the expense of excluding a generous swath of a present and future public and the potential it offers.

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PREFACE



The New York Times Magazine - Cover Image November 20th 2010

'For the sake of the world economy and their own the Chinese need to start spending more like Americans. How hard could that be?'
David Leonhardt

The middle class in Asia is pointed towards in economic development literature as a sort of saviour of global capitalism, as per its current definition. Asia, alone among the developing regions of the world, has seen unparalleled growth across both the Liberal and Neo-liberal doctrines, and continues relentlessly with few signs of eminent collapse.

The Laissez-faire economics, which ensued in light of embedded liberalism¹, saw the developing world flourish on account of free-market oriented trade, as the regions were given control over the development of their own trade policies and political structuring, until such time as it collapsed in the 1970s. The hilarity of the logic for its resuscitation as Neo-liberalism was quite simply to make it bigger and freer in its second life. Neo-liberalism presented the re-structuring of global economies, in the interest of the market, with the minimum amount of public sector intervention². Backed by a strong western consensus, (i.e. Reagan and Thatcher governments) the developing world quickly became subject to a new definition of Laissez-faire economics, which Alice Amsden describes as 'do it our way' economics.³ Thus, under the watchful eye of the Washington Consensus⁴, much of the world shifted towards a fiscal policy, which gave the private sector greater power to ensure that the governments operated in the most market friendly manner. Neo-liberalism has been significantly less gentle in its Darwinian philosophy and has seen much of the developing world oscillate between the extremities of great growth and sudden depressions far too regularly to retain any kind of social or economic stability.

¹Embedded liberalism, as defined by David Harvey, was the prevalent global economic system outside of communist states between the end of World War II through to 1973. As per Harvey's definition, it came about to avoid the great depression of the 1930s and was characterised by a largely Keynesian model of economic governance, wherein a mixed economic system is created predominantly by the private sector, however the government/public sector retains firm control over fiscal policy, allowing for further control of macro-economics. Harvey, identifies the beginnings of its failure in the late 1960s and early 1970s on account of increased unemployment and inflation aptly termed as Stagflation in economic speak. This resulted in the global debt crisis of 1973.

² Harvey, David, A Brief History of Neoliberalism. Oxford University Press.(2005). pg.14

³ Amsden, Alice, Escape from Empire; The developing World's Journey through Heaven and Hell, MIT Press, 2007, pg.4

⁴ Given that the United States counted as the largest number of votes on the World Bank's board of directors, their sway over the Bank's decisions was very large. In early 2000, Anne Kreuger George W. Bush's appointee to the 2nd ranking position at the IMF orchestrated the informal 'Washington Consensus', which embraced the State Department, Treasury, Trade Representatives Office, NAFTA, World Bank, IMF, Inter-American Development Bank, Paris-based OECD, and the Geneva-based WTO. A general consensus was formed around Liberalization, deregulation and privatization. As Alice Amsden puts it very concisely, 'real debate became a thing of the past. Argument was reserved for the details' (Amsden. 2007. MIT Press. pg. 128)

Asia, however succeeded in maintaining a relatively stable growth pattern within both the liberal and neo-liberal doctrines. It elected to remain outside of certain forms of economic governance as stipulated by the Washington Consensus, and maintained a strong 'look east' policy for trade within the continent. The result has been two global economic giants, China and India⁵. The forecasts for the percentage of their economic growth is hovering close to 8.2% and 8.4% for India and China respectively⁶, and the dream of double figure growth seems a feasible reality in the coming years.

Whilst economic policies operate on a more macro scale, what is of greater interest is how they filter down to influence the more fundamental characteristics of cities, people and places. As economic development produces a rapidly growing middle class, which spans humble merchants to professional managers, the clearly defined black and white categories of the city's publics become increasingly diluted to form a new, vast spectrum of greys in which there are many publics. Today, India's middle class hovers around 50million people. McKinsey would have us believe that this figure is expected to grow 10 fold by 2025, forecast as 583 million⁷. Close to 291 million people are expected to go from desperate poverty to a more sustainable lifestyle by 2025. The average real household disposable income minus taxes, and averaged for inflation is expected to grow approximately 5.8% every year until 2025. India is expected to be ranked 5th as a world consumer market by 2025, just behind the United States, Japan, China, and the United Kingdom. India is currently ranked 12th. Within these 14 years, India's food, apparel, fuel, medical tourism, automotive and communications industries are all expected to see double figure growth, between 10 and 15%.⁸ As neoliberal economics encourage Asia's middle class to GROW GROW GROW, can these ambitions be questioned as yet another imposition of neo-colonialism? A sort of save us from the beast we have created.

5 Amsden, Alice, *Escape from Empire; The developing World's Journey through Heaven and Hell*, MIT Press, 2007, pg.149

6 Economist Intelligence Unit, January, 2011

7 McKinsey Global Institute: *The 'Bird of Gold': The Rise of India's Consumer Market*.

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What has been offered up as the middle class, is by no means a sociological category, rather it has a lot more to do with an aspirational standard. In India, this new class structure founded on a more democratic stratification based on wealth, is so unique to a country plagued with a classist history, not only because it anticipates but rather encourages a greater degree of porosity between the high and the low. The city too has to adapt to this structural porosity through spatial forms which aesthetize this shift. The intention then of the spatial is to create an urban counter-part to what is today a global aspirational standard, both a containing paradigm, and one which allows for a class producing machine. A machine, which captures the aspirations of a complex and perennially shifting public, and enables them with a sense of proprietary over their own futures through a civic form upon which to project that possibility. The core of these machines is then public space. The physical space of civic proprietary.

This standard is however schismatic by nature because it enables porosity and division in parallel and it cannot exist without a measure of interiority. A product of neo-liberalism, the spatial counter-part to this aspirational standard is tainted with the reality that it too can only exist as a privately owned public interior. It is an urban space which projects itself beyond the increasingly meagre reality of state space and buys into the possibility given to it by the private sphere. These machines thus emerge as porous and yet negotiated territories of possibility where the only agenda is the unification of the city's various publics based on their ambitions.

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INTRODUCTION



1



2

This thesis is about Money, People and Cities. More specifically it is about the space that embodies all three; the privately owned public interior. This space, which has been a recurrent character of many 20th century liberal cities, and has today found an epitome of sorts in the mega-structural urban enclaves of the developing world. This thesis seeks to challenge the idea of future within these forms as they are developed as a deterministic, aesthetic totality for a precise public in their present. However, they do little to anticipate the potential publics they may have to absorb as and when the conditions, which necessitate these forms have subsided into history.

Spatially selective liberalization has led to the formation of some 3000 special economic zones and urban enclaves across the world, ranging from free-ports to tourism and gambling zones. These are designed to attract investment and clientele, in exchange for infrastructure, in the hope that they will precipitate wealth into the state.

The Instant cities, which have ensued in light of the policies behind these zones, are developed as micro-urban edens which are hyphenated from their host cities. Heralded as the promised lands for the future of global capitalism, these zones find their most optimum homes in the developing world, and in particular in Asia and in parts of the Middle east where development and economic growth are rampant in today's global economy.

1. Zaha Hadid Architects, Stone Towers, New Cairo City
 2. Crystal Island, Moscow, Norman Foster and Partners, 2008
- Facing Page: Global distribution of Special Economic Zones

Generally designed as islands of instant infrastructure in remote sites, they rarely have to deal with the presence of a less than curated public. Here the thesis fast tracks their future integration by situating a speculative enclave in the centre of highly contested neighbourhood in Mumbai. The site, in question has been identified because of its propensity to culturally, politically and economically support an urban enclave, but also for the friction a development of this sort would create in this area. In addition it identifies a rare anomaly within Mumbai's urban fabric, where space is a scarcity and real-estate value is soaring, there is an emerging cluster of island conditions in the form of large urban footprints.



These islands are being formed as Mumbai's economy shifts very suddenly from its reliance on the manufacturing industry to trade within the service sector. Following the 1982 Bombay Textile strike, the collapse of the textile industry in Mumbai resulted in many of the mill sites being vacated. As the city rode the great wave of development, it mobilized a sizeable managerial class, and left a large working class unemployed. Whilst this collapse has been attributed in part to the demands of the trade unions, the root of the problem was the rising value of the land upon which the mills stood. Many of the mill owners found that the sale of mill compounds for real estate development was significantly more lucrative than rehabilitating the mills for continual use. And so began the great mill monopoly.

Today, almost all of the inoperative mills both public and privately owned are being disputed in ongoing court cases. The mill workers have fought a long, hard and in many cases futile battle against development of these sites in the interest of retaining a right to affordable housing and access to public amenities and above all a sense of proprietary over public space. The neighbourhood, which used to house a largely homogenous working-class, now encompasses a broader spectrum of social classes. The reality of this disparity is becoming inevitable in the physical form of the city.



1



2



3

1. Inoperative Madhusudhan Mill
Image: Kunal Ghevaria
2. Protesting Mill Workers
Image Courtesy: Times of India April 5th 1998
3. Sky Development by Indiabulls Real Estate
Formerly known as Jupiter Mills. Image courtesy; Indiabulls
Facing Page: Site Location in Mumbai



The site itself is laden with Mumbai's economic history. Located in lower Parel, it has for decades fed Mumbai's economy through the India United Textile Mill no. 1 owned by the National Textile Corporation and through the largest urban railway locomotive workshop in the city.

This 72 hectare island, presently employs over 5000 people, who will inevitably lose a voice in its development.

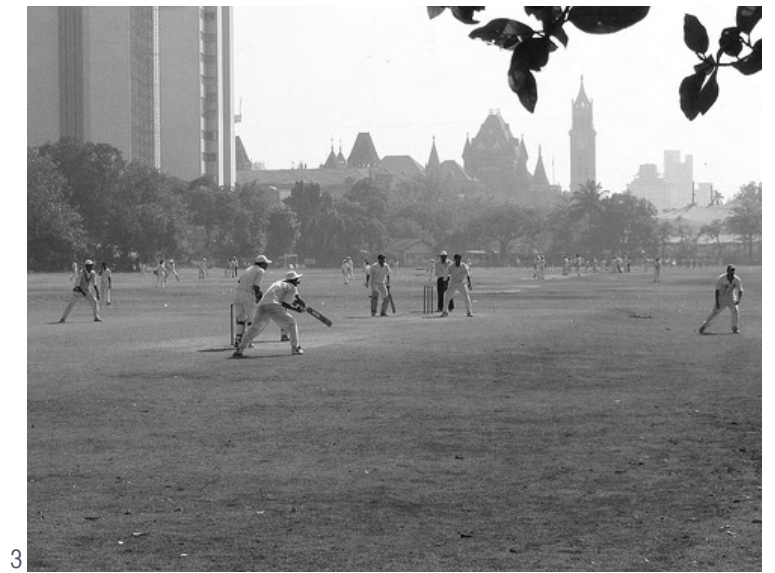
This page:View of United India Mill No. 1
Photograph:Swapnil Bohle Pukar
Facing Page: Site Located in Lower Parel



And so to have it heard, the project begins with 13 hectares of state space nested within the site. A 700m stretch, which levels the playing field with a monumental void, a Maidan.

Heralded as one of the most important types of public space within the contemporary Indian city, it is defined here as a type of lung for Parel. The Maidan is a space so firmly defined by the absence of an aesthetic that its democratic power lies in the sheer scale of its emptiness and lack of embellishment. Mumbai's major Maidans host a series of different programmatic functions, from the cricket pitch, to the political rally or a communal prayer space. It is embedded within the city's culture as the prime space of civic propriety.

According to the logic of neo-liberal economics, to create this void on terrain ripe with developmental potential, it would have to be paired with the walls of an enclave built by private enterprise. These walls represent the sad reality through which the city is increasingly having to barter territory in order to achieve many of its infrastructural goals. And yet in light of this dialectic, a new ground plane takes shape as a space of possibility. It is possible only because despite its vast scale, it is today designed as a room.



1. Oval Maidan Mumbai
 2. Political Rally on Oval Maidan
 3. Cricket on Oval Maidan
 4. Communal Prayers on Azad Maidan Mumbai
 Facing Page: Aerial of Mumbai

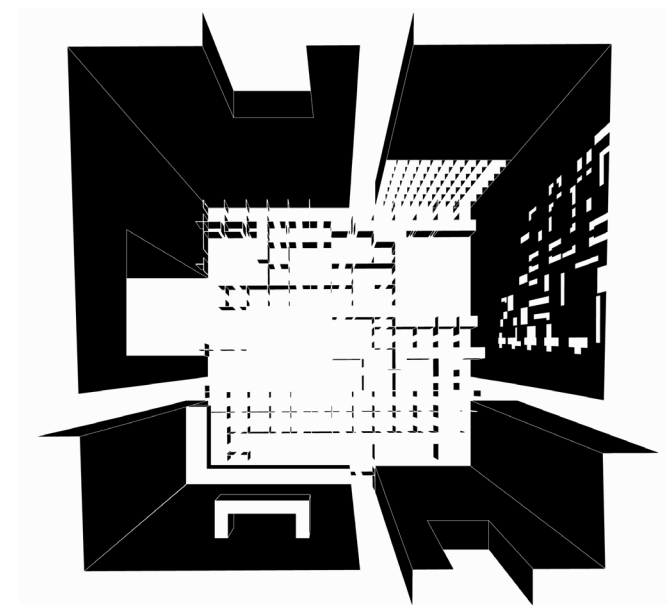
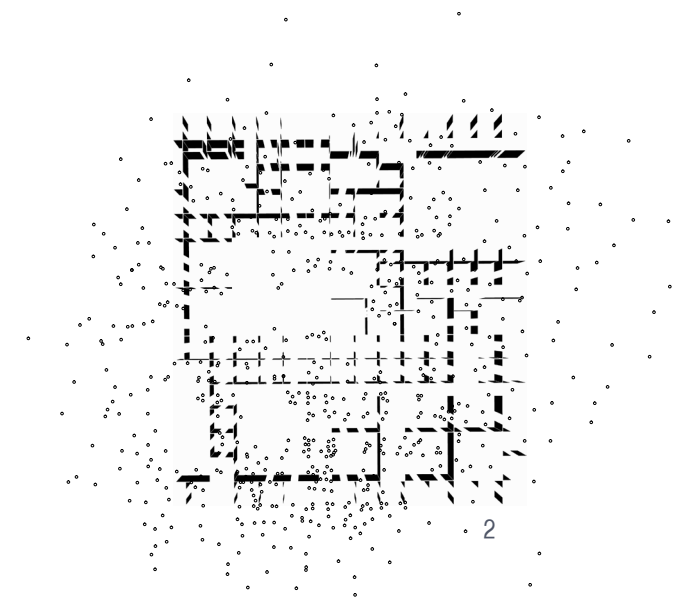
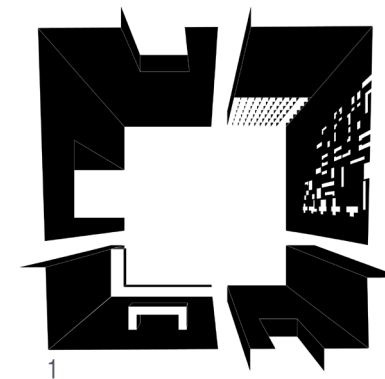
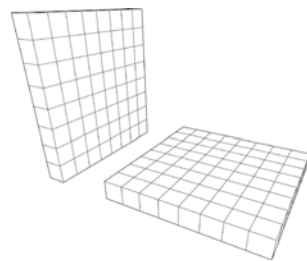
As Ideology has become a dirty word in Post modern society, the practice of a socially conscious architecture is open to so much subjective debate, as in for whom and as per whom is it socially conscious, that it is most effective when it is thoroughly disguised as a form of media. And so like overpriced organic food, the Neo-liberal city too has arrived at the necessity to pay for the absence of development.



The enclave, is itself organised as a succession of 8 urban rooms, held together by the 9th room of the Maidan. Each room is a typological interpretation of a series of public spaces, which hold relevance for a broad Indian public. The rooms are composed of two planes: the slab and the urban mat. A greatly misunderstood monolith of architecture's recent past, the slab is here exploited for the formal potential it presents, by fusing together various typological conditions along its length. It also allows for the feasible development of a contemporary urban room, with an FAR comparative to the plinth and tower typologies of Nariman Point, the city's present financial district. Whilst the walls house the curated public of the enclave, the urban mat is designed as a porous ground floor, which belongs to a much broader local public. It is a mechanism, by which to contaminate the detached interior of the enclave with a little 'Mumbai ness'. The room, thus compiled, reveals the total irony of the project. Wherein the perverse interiority of these walls, which have an anti-urban past, both on a formal and a socio-spatial level, allow for the production of public spaces, which currently the state struggles to produce of its own accord.

Each room sets the stage for a somewhat satirical dialogue about India's growing middle class, and the many spaces, which embody it. The 'Public', that all encompassing familial category that does the difficult task of absorbing the masses, represented by the state, enabled by the market, catered by and catering for the city, are interrogated here through spatial and aesthetic form, not as an equal homogenous mass, but rather as the complex, hierarchical, classist reality of democracy, in which there are many publics. Whilst the idea of state space is limited to the Maidan, each interior explores the potential for a privately owned public space to act as a mechanism for upward mobility. Reinstating the argument that the democratic proprietary of public space entails the shared ownership of space upon which some project aspirations and others the ambivalence of conquest.

The three chapters which follow are titled Edens, Islands and Rooms. Each represents the reality of the conditions, as they are understood, accepted, praised and resented and then attempts to engage these realities through the only medium which speaks the language of economics. That of Form. Edens will be a critical analysis of the conditions, which produce urban enclaves within neoliberal economies. Islands will introduce the particularities of this condition within Mumbai, in the interest of situating the manifesto within the narrative framework of the history of the site, and its projected future. Finally Rooms will entail two projects, that of the methodology for the design of the urban interior and the synthesis of this methodology through design.



1. Multiple typological conditions fused along the walls of the slab
 2. Porous ground floor mat
 3. Room compiled
- Facing Page: Slab and Mat



Albrecht Durer Adam and Eve

EDENS

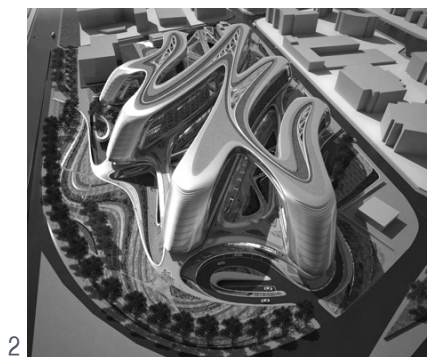
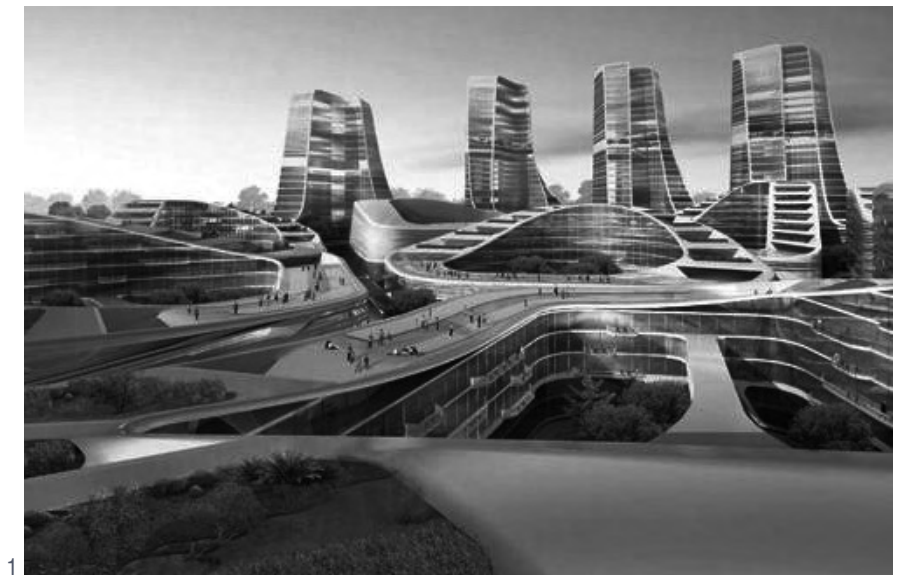
SAME SAME, BUT DIFFERENT

The recent global proliferation of megastructural micro-cities, technologically deterministic urban wholes, conceived and erected as a totality, bring to the forefront a discourse, which lay dormant in urban theory in recent decades. Situated on the contested terrain of scale and disciplinary boundaries between architecture and urbanism, these projects are in their most fundamental sense a total architectural vision of an urban utopia. Their emergence has a concrete and direct correlation to the complex and layered relationship between the built environment, economics and power. Like all utopias, it necessitates a certain acceptance that the city as it emerges as an architectural reality, is like perspectival vision. It has one point of origin, it is made in the image of one reality, one future, and subsequently one homogenised public.

As these micro-cities illustrate, this singularity of vision is entirely outside of a specific political ideology because it serves neo-liberalism just as effectively as it served the communist state and the anti-liberalist utopias of many a mega project past. Ranging from Corbusier's obus plan at Algiers to the numerous urban utopias of the 1960s and 1970s, such as those of Archizoom, Superstudio and Yona Friedman. These projects demonstrate that the megastructure is a malaise not of any particular decree of politics, but rather simply a malaise of politics in general. Wherein one hand is attempting to reduce the messiness of a striated public into a cohesive mass. Whether it be through exclusion, or excessive inclusion the city becomes an edited structure of limited variables, based on the Architect's own whim. This was their precise failing in the past, wherein liberal democratic conditions resisted this public flattening.⁹ Today however, as neo-liberal economics enables the swallowing of enough terrain for the conception of forms which exist somewhere between big architecture and small city, it allows for the the production of these structures entirely outside of ideological thinking. Therefore the Architect need not hold any reservations about constructing the city in the image of a singular and highly defined public, the client.

The inclination towards the contemporary megastructure is also something of a disciplinary malaise. It stems from two precise conditions, a generation of architects trained to produce the anti-participatory autonomous project, which serves real estate development all too well, and secondly because of an aesthetic training for total design.

⁹ Tafuri, Manfredo, 'Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1976, pg. 66



1. International Investment Square. UN Studio
Beijing China, 2009
2. Hongqiao Mixed use development for SOHO
Zaha Hadid Architects, Beijing China, 2009
3. Chaoyangmen Mixed use development for SOHO,
Beijing China, Zaha Hadid Architects, 2009
Image: Courtesy Zaha Hadid Architects

THE ART OF CURATION

The inability of the architect to allow for certain ambiguities, for the messy and sometimes ugly reality of the city to creep into his perfect form. The privately owned public interior of these micro-cities is compromised by this precise neurosis, the fear of losing absolute aesthetic control over its own edenic form. The challenge then rests on how to re-learn to participate and how to shape these developments so that the public space of the interior remains a coherent yet independant project. Thus allowing these developments to absorb a much broader and socially diverse public and giving them a more integrative present and a future beyond their temporal conditions as enclaves.

These micro-cities are always animated with the most idyllic conditions of life in the re-current imagery of these developments as they are presented in architectural press. Within the enclave, the urban environment takes on a vivid edenic nature, as these cities are the product of a manufactured 'urbanity'. A conscious distancing from the reality of their larger context, they are the curated Hollywood or rather 'Bollywood' version of the city. Here the greens are hotter, the pinks wilder and the reality of living in a metropolis tastefully curated so that it can be experienced from the comfort of the interior. A distinct variety of urbanity, which emulates the city with the most thorough form of editing so that the resulting forms are only the most heightened versions of the metropolitan phenomenon, that which is owned and shaped in part by all those who use it and never in its totality by any. This is then a story of the various publics for whom these cities are built and the malleable definitions of the spaces which embody them. It is a story of cities, citizens and clientele.

So to begin, let's start with Clientele. One of the primary characteristics of the enclave is the flattening of the public within to a fairly homogenous mass. This public is a select group of people who enter into a lifestyle contract, which allows them to retain their lives as foreigners within their host environment; foreigners not necessarily in a political sense (although this too is very possible) but rather in a social sense, in that they fall into a different 'public'. Their presence is perhaps most felt and most evident then, where there remain the largest discrepancies between social strata and the flattening of this strata into a collective is the least likely, which is today largely in the developing world.

1950s - 1980s

Jawaharlal Nehru the first prime minister of India created and oversaw economic policy during the initial years of the country's Independence. The policy was heavily driven towards the rapid development of heavy industry by both public and private sectors, and based on partial state intervention rather than the more extreme Soviet-style central command system.¹ It was largely dependant on the country's pre-war manufacturing experience and the established Railways and Textiles Industries.² During this period, these industries continued to flourish as more and more agricultural land was taken by the state to create mills and promote manufacturing.

¹ Datt, Ruddar; Sundharam, K.P.M. (2009). *Indian Economy*. New Delhi: S. Chand Group p. 976.

² Cameron, John; Nadhlovu, P Tidings (September 2001). 'Cultural Influences on Economic Thought in India: Resistance to diffusion of neo-classical economics and the principles of Hinduism' *Economic Issues* 6 (2). 2006-08-23.

1950s - 1980s

As the growth rate stagnated around 3.5% throughout the period between 1950-1980, it referred to as the Nehruvian Socialist rate of growth. This system was commonly referred to as the Liscence Raj, outlining the red tape, and regulations required to run businesses in India between 1947 and 1990.

1991

The collapse of the Soviet Union, which was India's major trading partner, and the Gulf war, which caused a spike in oil prices, resulted in a major balance-of-payments crisis for India, which found itself facing the prospect of defaulting on its loans.¹ India asked for a \$1.8 billion bailout loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which in return demanded reforms.²

¹ Ghosh, Arunabha. *India's Pathway through Economic Crisis*, GEG Working Paper 2004/06. Global Economic Governance Programme.

² *Economic Reforms in India*, Task force Report, University of Chicago. pp. 32. 1992

WHERE THE MONEY IS

More than 90 percent of urban growth is taking place in developing countries. By the middle of the century, Asia alone will host 63 percent of the global urban population, or 3.3 billion people¹⁰. It is estimated by the World Bank that in 2009 approximately 75 percent of the global economic production takes place in cities, and in the developing countries, the urban share of GDP already surpasses 60 percent¹¹. Cities then become the vehicles for State governments to facilitate economic growth.

This can take place in two predominant ways; the first being an extension of existing urban environments, as new industries are established within existing cities, and public infrastructure is extended so that growth is focused on improving the cities to support a larger public.

The alternative to this is growth/development in isolation through private investment in the form of economic enclaves. Globalization has resulted in the spatial boundaries of the post Keynesian competition state to transition from the physical space of territory to more abstract and discursive space of economics and inter-locality exchanges. As Inter-locality competition develops increasingly within neoliberal economies, states where the regulatory conditions are too constrictive seek out methods of creating archipelago economic conditions and subsequently archipelago territories in the interest of increasing their competitive edge. The Competition State seeks out ways through which to promote its economic generation or regeneration by emphasizing the global advantages of its territory. These advantages can include its major firms and companies, its labor force, its technological infrastructure and its most important cities, regions and industrial districts¹². Enclaves and Special Economic Zones are two examples of this kind of archipelago condition. Given their instantaneous nature and the need for a generous amount of up front capital these enclaves are rarely an independent state venture. They are often a collaborative effort between the state and private developers who bring with them a greater quantity of investment capital. These micro - cities are often developed as autonomous and yet hyphenated from larger existing cities, so for example they may share the major transportation infrastructure such as highways and airports.

¹⁰ UN-HABITAT, *State of the World's Cities, Bridging the Urban World*, 2010-2011

¹¹ World Bank demographic report, 2009

¹² Brenner, Neil. *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. 179

WHERE THE MONEY IS

Enclaves are a means through which the state can objectify part of its territory in partnership with new industries. These cities are not designed to serve as sustainable growth strategies for the existing urban environment, but are precisely designed to serve as ventures for sustaining economic growth for the state.¹³ They are a mechanism for generating wealth from above and the deflection of liability from the state, as the rules for governance and the pressures of infrastructure are alleviated through their privatization.

Whilst these zones are being developed globally, the highest concentrations are in Asia and the Pacific (largely in China), in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and in Central Asia. Even as the spatial delineation of territory remains invisible what is becoming increasingly visible in these regions are parks and ports of all sorts and their subsequent form. From fenced-in duty-free warehousing to the utopic technopole¹⁴ as extra-state urban structures, these zones are meant to exist more comfortably in a global landscape than their immediate surrounds. These are archipelago cities within archipelago economies, which means there is a finitude to their urban environment. A clearly defined edge which makes them exclusionary and influence is precipitated not through a physical transference, but rather through the very existence of these environments. Praised for the possibility they embody and critiqued heavily for the fact that they are a yet another form of neo-colonialism, SEZs are embedded within a love/hate relationship with the states in which they are situated. It is accepted that they enable certain possibilities for infrastructure, but they also divide the city into more apparent categories of publics.

¹³ Brenner, Neil. *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. 177

¹⁴ FIAS, Report on SEZs for the World Bank outlines what a number of these zones are and what form they take;

Free trade zones (FTZs; also known as commercial free zones) are fenced-in, duty-free areas, offering warehousing, storage, Export processing zones are industrial estates aimed primarily at foreign markets. Hybrid EPZs are typically sub-divided into a general zone open to all industries and a separate EPZ area reserved for export-oriented, EPZ-registered enterprises.

Enterprise zones are intended to revitalize distressed urban or rural areas through the provision of tax incentives and financial grants.

Freeports typically encompass much larger areas. They accommodate all types of activities, including tourism and retail sales, permit on-site residence, and provide a broader set of incentives and benefits.

Single factory EPZ schemes provide incentives to individual enterprises regardless of location; factories do not have to locate within a designated zone to receive incentives and privileges

Specialized zones include science/technology parks, petrochemical zones, logistics parks, airport-based zones, and so on.

1991

In response, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, along with his finance minister Manmohan Singh, initiated the economic liberalisation of India in 1991. The reforms did away with the Licence Raj, reduced tariffs and interest rates and ended many public monopolies, allowing automatic approval of foreign direct investment in many sectors.¹ Since 1991, India's liberalization policies have remained largely the same, however, no government has tried to negotiate with powerful trade unions and farmers on issues such as reforming labour laws and reducing agricultural subsidies.²

¹ Economic Reforms in India: Task Force Report. University of Chicago. pp. 32. 1992

² That Old Ghandi Magic. *The Economist*. 1997-11-27

2000

India had progressed towards a free-market economy, with a substantial reduction in state control of the economy and increased financial liberalization. This shift in the political economy is accompanied by increases in life expectancy, literacy rates and food security, although the beneficiaries have largely been urban residents.

April 2000

India launches a Special Economic Zone policy to encourage foreign investment. As of November 2000 through to September 2006 Special economic zones functioned in India under the provisions of the Foreign Trade Policy.

2003

India's Credit rating reached Investment level by S&P and Moody's standards.¹

¹ S. Venkitaramanan (2003-02-10). 'Moody's upgrade uplifts the mood but raises questions. *Businessline*.

2005

India's recently liberalized Foreign Direct Investment Policy (2005) allows up to a 100% Foreign Direct Investment stake in ventures. Industrial policy reforms have substantially reduced industrial licensing requirements, removed restrictions on expansion and facilitated easy access to foreign technology and foreign direct investment.

SAME SAME, NO DIFFERENCE

The failings of many of the early SEZs were on account of this schism. Whilst a large quantity of these zones are centered on manufacturing industries, especially in China, their proliferation within the service sector in India is instigating a generous shift towards knowledge based economies. These zones are often centered around 21st century industries, such as digital media, finance, or the emerging energy sector, which are designed to attract a very specific demographic, thus making a clear distinction between clientele and citizens as the city itself becomes a product to be consumed. The enclave brings with it a particular form of human capital, which adds a new layer to the already striated mass, with the rise of a new technical elite on account of knowledge based industries.

As speculative real estate ventures, these developments have their origins in the gated communities and company towns of late Western Capitalism, which peaked in the Post-war boom in the United States and England. These urban developments were strictly inline with the progress generation where there was a clear path for the urban future of these cities and states, and it was comfortably aligned with industrialization and economic growth. As with their earlier counterparts, social sameness remains of utmost importance because it enables the aestheticization of the city and its citizens in parallel. This is not only in the interest of their personal development and the development of an industry, but also to ensure that the private sector, or rather the real estate market has a monopoly on what is represented as a model lifestyle through these forms.

In light of this homogenous public, the form given to the city emerges with certain liberties, as the architect is able to envision it as an aesthetic singularity. A vision, which has repeatedly proven to be a failure throughout much of the 20th century, re-emerges as a plausible reality in the Neo-liberal political climate of the developing world. The architect is then once again enabled, under very different regimes of power and the elective submission of subjects, to re-make the city as a Utopia. Firmly situated in enclave theory, these utopias are so far outside ideological thinking that there is little comparison in their premise to those which originated during the Post-war boom in France and the United States, and well outside those conceived within the Soviet Bloc. The architects of the French Grands ensemble made many attempts at assembling a collective on the basis of social equity and yet it was proven time and again that any formal structure which does not recognize the embedded nature of social hierarchy of all democracies is a failure from the outset.

AESTHETISIZING PUBLICS

The enclave however, stands outside these pre-conditions. It is founded on establishing and emphasizing social hierarchies.¹⁵ However, what must be stressed is that whilst those within the enclave might be oblivious to the conditions that allow for its existence and the manner in which the city from which it is hyphenated feeds it, the city which hosts it is perennially conscious of its presence. And also of the fact that the enclave necessitates the insertion of a local public, which allows for its economic functioning. Many of the failings of the original SEZs were largely because of a lack of integration with its host environment. This integration does not constitute a generic formal integration, as it is understood in policy but rather a more complex social integration, which begins with the location of these zones. It begins with the hyphen between the two cities. This local public, made up of citizens, remains autonomous and distanced from the clientele of the enclave and is much harder to homogenize as it crosses multiple social and class boundaries and in very broad strokes collects a very sizable upwardly mobile middle class. And it is for the latter, a more loosely defined secondary public, who have a very significant role within these Special Economic Zones, that a new version of the privately owned public interior is shaped. Herein comes the influential role of design. Whilst the enclave might facilitate the formal singularity of architectural vision for its clientele, it is in the design of its public sphere that it is positioned to create a discourse around what the city is today; and where the city and the state hope to be in the near future.

Therefore, the market's gift to architecture (that of aesthetic control over the city), is one to be taken with a grain of salt. Long after the conditions which produce certain types of architectural forms fade into the city's history, forms relentlessly remain standing. These forms then have to find new relevance in a changed political or economic climate. Whilst the conditions are outside the Architect's control, forms are not, and so a great responsibility falls on the architect to conceive of urban forms, which must answer to the needs of the present and anticipate the needs of the future. The foundation of this urban resilience is the design of public space within the enclave. The aesthetization of this space as an independent project is fundamental to it maintaining a civic relevance beyond the conditions which facilitated its production. A space remains a whole even as the programmatic conditions of its walls come into question time and time again.

15 Jameson, Frederic, 'Critique of Ideology', Published in *The Ideologies of Theory: essays 1971-1986*, foreword by Neil Larson, University of Minnesota Press, c 1988

2005

In March 2005, the government amended the rules to allow 100% FDI in the construction sector, including built-up infrastructure and construction development projects comprising housing, commercial premises, hospitals, educational institutions, recreational facilities, and city and regional-level infrastructure.¹ The steady growth of the real-estate sector owes some credit to a booming economy and liberalized FDI structure.

1 Sushma Ramachandran (2005-02-25). 100% FDI in construction industry through automatic route. *The Hindu*

2008-2009

The total FDI equity inflow into India in 2008-09 stood at Rs. 122,919 crore (US\$27.29 billion), a growth of 25% in rupee terms over the previous period.¹ Over the course of the period from the year 2000 to 2010 India attracted \$178 billion USD as Foreign Direct Investment²

1 India Economic Fact Sheet 2009 p. 225. Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

2 India FDI Fact Sheet - September 2010. Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

2010

Currently there are 114 (as on Oct 2010) SEZs operating throughout India¹ in the following states:

Karnataka - 18
Kerala - 6
Chandigarh - 1
Gujarat - 8
Haryana - 3
Maharashtra - 14
Rajasthan - 1
Orissa - 0
Tamil Nadu - 16
Utter Pradesh - 4
West Bengal - 2

1 <http://sezindia.nic.in/about-asi.asp>

2010

As of October 2010, more than 500 SEZs are formally approved for construction by the Government of India in the following states.¹ Andhra Pradesh-109
Chandigarh - 2;
Chattisgarh-2; Dadra Nagar Haveli-4; Delhi-3; Goa-7; Gujarat-45; Haryana-45; Jharkand-1; Karnataka-56; Kerala-28; Madhya Pradesh-14; Maharashtra-105; Nagaland-1; Orissa-11; Pondicherry-1; Punjab-8; Rajasthan-8; Tamil Nadu-70; Uttarankhand-3; Utter Pradesh-33; West Bengal-22.

1 <http://sezindia.nic.in/about-asi.asp>

AESTHETISIZING PUBLICS

The Architect's roles thus varies from that of the author of elite lifestyles, which can be sold to those who can afford them in exchange for specific disciplinary training and a relatively high amount of submission to the aesthetics of an environment, to that of a visionary of a local urban future. As the architect oscillates between two scales of practice, he/she also oscillates between two very different audiences. These two audiences, are what Michael Warner refers to as multiple publics, both are an abstract fiction, which become so reified that their implications ripple to the fundamentals of how contemporary life takes shape¹⁶. This argument culminates in the idea of co-production between city and citizen making. The synthesis of these conditions into forms, which are valorized through the ideals collectively held by a society are ambiguous to say the least, however what the Architect is forced to acknowledge and design on account of his new sphere of practice, is the space between multiple publics, the urban space of the aspirational standard. Having shed ideology, with the very conception of its walls the public space of the enclave, is what Frederic Jameson would describe a Gramscian architecture. Frederic Jameson's essay on Architecture and the critique of ideology, makes a strong case for the role of architecture as a medium for the Gramscian theory of cultural hegemony. Gramsci discusses the social dynamics wherein certain social groups are better positioned to exact cultural influence over the masses on account of their social status. Capitalism for Gramsci exercised control through both apparent economic and political apparatuses but also through ideology. Ideology allowed for the hegemony of culture in which the values of the bourgeoisie became the 'common sense' values of all.¹⁷ The subsequent cultural consensus developed in which the masses identified their own good with that of the influential class. Today, as Ideology has become a dirty word in socio-political theory, Architecture has to reinvent itself as a cultural medium. Architecture, therefore like any other form of Media, through its very construction begins to create its own publics. It seeks them out in the same way billboards do, like text or packaging. It cannot cater for the established ideals upon which public space may have been defined through a more generic vehicle such as the state, and so it defines new forms of public space based on an understanding of the possible publics it wishes to engage, but more importantly on the basis of what they don't know they want yet. As with any other product to be consumed, its only hope of survival is that it casts a wide enough net.

16 Warner, Michael. *Publics and Counterpublics*,. Zone Books, New York, 2005, pg.19

17 Dante L. Germino, Antonio Gramsci: Architect of a New Politics, Louisiana Press University, 1990



MUMBAI, INDIA

ISLANDS

'The reason for the impersonality of the market is its matter-of-factness, its orientation to the commodity and only that. Where the market is allowed to follow its own autonomous tendencies, its participants do not look toward the persons of each other but only toward the commodity...Market behavior is influenced by the rational, purposeful pursuit of interests.'

Weber; *The Market: Its Impersonality and Ethic*, pg. 636

ACRONYMS:

BIR – Bombay Industrial Relations (BIR) Act
RMMS – Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh established in 1946 alliances with the Congress Party is a trade union for textile Mills established in Mumbai.
INTUC – India National Trade Union Congress
BGKSS (Band Girmi Kamgar Sangharsh Samiti) (Closed Mill Workers Action Committee)
NTC – National Textile Corporation - Government owned mills
GKSS – Girmi Kamgar Sangharsh Samiti - Unofficial Millworkers Union.
MMRDA - Mumbai Metropolitan Revelopment Authority.
Chawls – Workers Tenements

ARRIVALS

There is always little anticipation for the last of the arrivals. Arrival is perhaps not the right word, but it is in some ways the only word that could be used in this context. These arrivals are the 'coming soon' billboards, which plaster the remaining gaps in the city as they undergo an internal transformation. The anticipation is exciting when one is distant enough from the conditions, which necessitated this arrival. However, when one is not, the 'coming soon' means that something else which was once there has now permanently left. What is more, it has, in some respects been forgotten amongst the aspirations for the novel. Cities, like politics have that variety of convenient memory. The new forcefully implants itself within the old through a host of different mechanisms, politics, economics, technology, and usually in the interest of a 'greater' public. Everyone has walked by a hole in the city, several car-park levels deep, the concave craters, pregnant with the work in progress; which will emerge as the shiny new installment in the city. Everyone has at some point been so enamoured by that crater, that their memory of what stood in its place has been entirely obliterated by the immense possibility of a hole. In a city where gaps are hard to come by the old is then a space of great political debate. It carries with it a host of responsibilities towards several different types of publics, none of which can be easily assembled as a collective, because to act in the interests of one is often at the expense of another. As the state is faced with that fork, it naturally chooses to collate the public in the interest of creating wealth in a more global sense. Thus ensue decisions, which will trade the ground one public stands on so that wealth might be generated by another from above.

Of the 105 new special economic zones; which have been approved under the SEZ Act of 2005 for the state of Maharashtra, this chapter will speculate on the implications of one. A new financial centre to be built in the Island city of Mumbai, establishing itself as the South Asian bridge on the wall street clock. This centre will emerge as a microcosm of the city's future. It will be built as a co-productive exercise of identity formation both for itself as a new core and for the city as it sheds the last of its Industrial past in the interest of a new service sector future. Whilst the reality of this type of development is all too clear with many a precedent, the enclave in this case will be used simply as a vehicle. A means by which to speculate over how it might recover the cost at which its walls are erected, precisely by what it gives back to the city.

ISLANDS

In search of a feasible home for this microcosm the city had to be foraged for Islands. Urban Islands, are large gaps in the city's urban structure which present development opportunities as the programs which once accommodated these gaps become redundant. In Mumbai these gaps are particularly hard to come by, and for the better part, are extremely politically charged.

The Archipelago condition, is something of home territory for Mumbai.¹⁸ As the city developed in patches, it came to be strung together through a handful of major infrastructural arteries which carried the weight of the city's traffic resulting in a series of island type neighborhood clusters strung together along the length of the peninsula.

As India's most populated and wealthiest city, there is no shortage of people migrating from all over the country in search of their fortunes. The city thus continues to develop as one of India's most cosmopolitan centers. As it grows rapidly in both population and wealth, the land value of a number of central working class neighborhoods has been

18 With its beginnings as a humble fishing village, Mumbai (named after the goddess Mumbadevi) was an archipelago of 7 islands, Bombay Islands, Parel, Mazagaon, Mahim, Colaba, Worli, and Old Woman's Island (also known as Little Colaba). As it changed hands between one seat of political power to another through the centuries, the islands remained autonomous and were largely governed from a distance, until, during Mughal reign they were signed off to the Portugese as a trading port under the Treaty of Bassein, and re-christened Bom Baim, which literally translates as 'good little bay', in 1535. Whilst it was used actively as a trading port and a means by which the Portugese spread the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, the port remained largely undeveloped until the British arrived with the East India Company. The British began to develop a city around what was to rapidly become the largest trading Port in the Arabian sea, with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. The development of the city, was largely attributed to the Hornby Vellard Project, initiated in 1784 by the British, who had at this point, acquired most of Mumbai's 7 islands and re-named the city, Bombay. The project was largely a civil engineering initiative to amalgamate the islands, and develop infrastructural links between them. The British also developed the colonial part of the city on the Island of Colaba, which is where the neighborhood today gets its name. Mumbai's largest development boom came Post Independence during the post-World War II period of the 1950s and 1960s, when a generally strong economy, allowed for further reclamation and development of Nariman Point and Cuffe Parade. In January 1975, the Bombay Metropolitan Region Development Authority (BMRDA) was set up by the Government of Maharashtra to ensure controlled and organized development of the city, in light of its continual economic and population growth. Today this Authority, has been renamed the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA). In 1979, Navi Mumbai was developed as a sister township to the city of Bombay. Mumbai is divided into two regions, the Island city, and the Mumbai suburban district. Mumbai generates 5 % of India's GDP, and is home to India's major financial Institutions, including the Reserve bank of India, the Bombay Stock Exchange, the National Stock Exchange of India. Amongst many of its other prominent industries, is the Bombay Port, and India's film Industry, Bollywood.

January 1982

The Great Bombay textile Strike of 250 000 mill workers from 50 mills in the neighbourhoods of Girangaon (the textile village) district of Mumbai begins. The Strike was led by the trade union leader Dutta Samant, who led workers into a difficult conflict between the Bombay Mill Owners Association and the unions. The strike caused the textile Industry a back bone of Mumbai's economy to shutdown for almost 18 months.

1983

After a prolonged and destabilizing confrontation, the strike collapsed with no concessions having been obtained for the workers. The closure of textile mills across the city left tens of thousands of mill workers unemployed and, in the succeeding years, most of the industry moved away from Bombay after decades of being plagued by rising costs and union militancy. During the strike Mill owners had also begun outsourcing cheaper weaving production to the internal powerloom sectors of Bhiwandi and Malegaon to save on costs¹

1 Adarkar, Neera, 'The Lost Century: How the Textile workers of Mumbai Got Short Shrift', Published in the Mumbai Reader, 2007, Urban Design Research Institute, Mumbai, 2007, pg. 139

1983

The majority of the over 80 mills in Central Mumbai closed during and after the strike, leaving more than 150,000 workers unemployed¹.

1 Shiv Kumar. 'Maharashtra may give more mills' land for public use'. The Tribune. 2005

1984

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's appointees made a budget provision of Rs.400 Crores (89.2Million USD) for Mill owners to modernize mills. The funds were made available at very low interest rates, however the mill owners were reluctant to take them as they had already begun considering the real estate value of the mill lands.¹

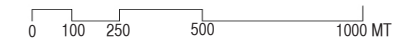
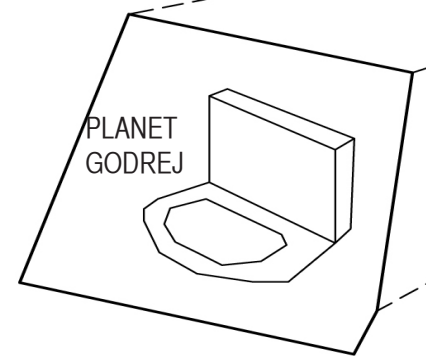
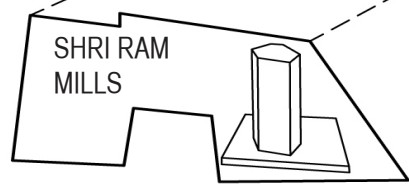
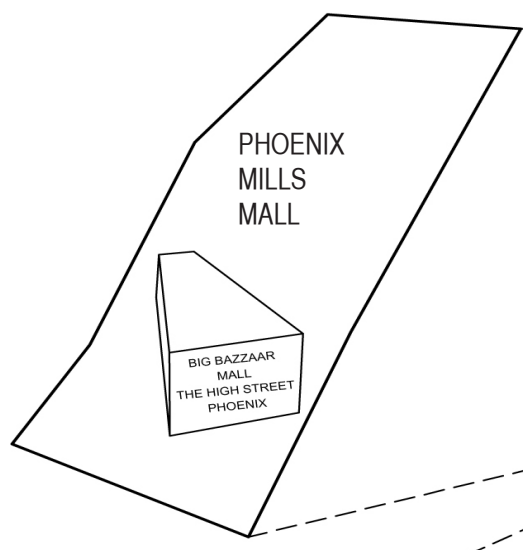
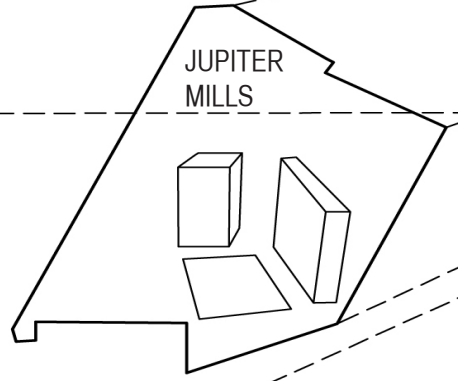
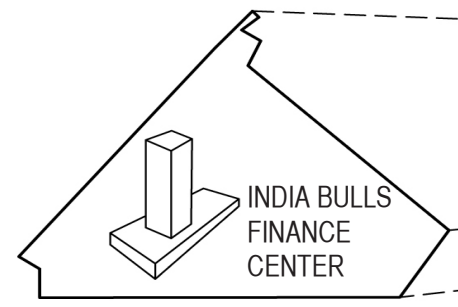
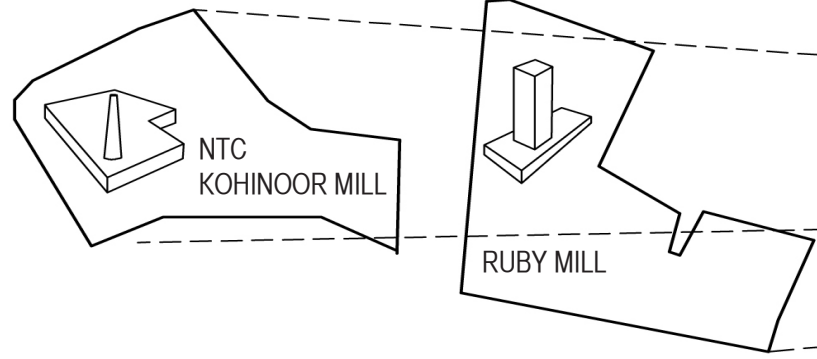
1 Adarkar, Neera, 'The Lost Century: How the Textile workers of Mumbai Got Short Shrift', Published in the Mumbai Reader, 2007, Urban Design Research Institute, Mumbai, 2007, pg. 139

THE MACHINES THAT STOPPED

rising steadily for the last 3 decades following the country's liberalization and the introduction of foreign direct investment policies into the real estate development markets. The new centre of real estate attention is the former home of the textile industry, the neighborhoods of Lalbaug and Lower Parel, which are rapidly becoming the secondary business districts of the city.

In Lower Parel, the erecting of the 'coming soon' sign had caused much distress a generation ago. It became evident that parts of the city which had always been the machines upon which the economy of Mumbai formed itself were braking to a halt, just as they had for many Western industrial cities. Mumbai too, was seeing this shift. These machines were not seen to play a significant role in the future the city envisioned for itself, despite their earlier instrumentality. These machines came to be seen as merely a land holding mechanism, whilst the city braced itself for the structural change its economy was about to undergo. Their shutdown had begun the overwhelming debate about what would come next, why this had to happen, and how the society would re-shape itself in light of this shift. The implications of the sudden futility of the machines in their abject locations would ripple through the walls of these factories, into the matter of the city, to the people that built their lives and fortunes on these machines and very suddenly to those who would no longer operate them. These were the publics who found themselves without a métier as the city choose to build itself on a different technology, that of money.

Like any metropolis, Mumbai too has been merciless in taking a new shape. As old factories became new gaps, new islands appeared in old islands. Old islands, which were considered to be the foundations upon which the city had built its wealth, were built on even older islands, and had swallowed greater terrains in their making. In the most Darwinian sense, the city not only sustained its development but repeatedly pursued futures, which would outdo its past. The adolescent fearlessness with which it embraces change situates it in many ways as a city still striving for its epitome, still waiting for its Babylonian moment. In anticipation of this epitome it retains a naïve belief that it will succeed. It is a poster child for the developing world today, enduring any number of growing pains and formal awkwardness to remake itself for the Nth time hotter, bigger, brighter and more powerful than its earlier self. As the World Bank and McKinsey applaud this resilience, it appears to be overseen that it comes at a great expense of the people that rarely find a voice in this collective moving forward.



MILL ISLANDS IN PAREL, LALBAUG AND WORLI

AS WE MARVEL AT THE SKYLINE

With the city's anxieties left to the wayside the first of the islands, the Phoenix Mills Compounds were boarded with the 'coming soon' billboards and the city anticipated the arrival of the first. The first of course brought about much distrust and uproar from one public and simultaneously a great deal of anticipation and a welcome reception from another.

The last of the arrivals however is somewhat like the last float in the parade. The great parade is largely over, the spectacle and the drama of the event has been experienced with no great surprises. Celebrities lined the carpet at the launch of each float, they skimmed shoulders with ministers of parliaments, real estate giants and the polished glitterati. Ribbons were cut, champagne cocktails were had, new deals were formed, and as the 'coming soon's' became 'here nows!' the city dressed in all its neon glamour decided to celebrate its new clothes.

And they were really new clothes. After all, how could it, as it re made itself without a meta narrative be more than that upon which it projected its ambitions. At one point in history the imposition of form and a certain aesthetic was considered to be an act of imperialism. At this point in history to deny the developing world the Western image of progress is also an imperial imposition. Therefore the skyline of Girangaon emerged, consistent with that of any other Mega-city in the developing world. Whilst there was much to be discussed and applauded about the skyline, it was the ground plane, that most valuable subject of terrain upon which two publics might face one another, that fell through the cracks of relevance. Many had made efforts to control development in the years that preceded the new skyline. These proposals often put pressure on the state to integrate the local public into the future development of these sites, which although well intentioned, was ambitious from the outset. The economics of the neoliberal state produced these new islands, and it was inevitable that therefore neo-liberal economics would also govern the subsequent forms these islands would take.

As the departure of the textile industry from Mumbai's Parel district became an accepted fact, the MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority) engaged a collective of architects and planners, led by Charles Correa to put together a report outlining concrete urban renewal strategies for the change of use of the Industrial Mill compounds to commercial and residential developments.

1991

As Mill closure paralleled government reforms towards liberalization in the early 90s. Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, pushes to end government investment in Public Sector Units in the interest of diversifying them. The Government developed legislation under the Development Control Regulation (DCR) 58, which allowed Mill owners to sell the Mill Lands. Mill Owners were allowed a change of use on the land from 'Industrial' to 'commercial and Residential' under the DCR 58.¹ The pre-conditions of the policy are that 1/3 of the land be surrendered to Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) for public housing and one third by given to the Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC) for open space. Mill owners would receive Transfer of Development rights (TDR) for the relinquished land, usable in the suburbs. Through a number of loopholes in the scheme, Mill owners were able to forgo the 1/3 rule, resulting in the demolition of a number of mills and the total sale of the land for real estate development.

¹ Adarkar, Neera, 'The Lost Century: How the Textile workers of Mumbai Got Short Shrift', Published in the Mumbai Reader, 2007, Urban Design Research Institute, Mumbai, 2007, pg. 141

August 1992

Indian National Government passes a major modernization policy the result of which is the forced retirement of 70000 millworkers nationwide.¹

¹ Winch, Peter. 'From Girangaon to Planet Godrej - How the Mill Lands Got Away', Published in Mapping Mumbai, Urban Design Research Institute in affiliation with the University of Michigan, 2005.

August 1992

Mill workers protest in their underwear on Mumbai's Kranti Maidan, the Jubilee of the Quit India Movement. The March became famous as the Chaddi banyan Morcha (the shorts and vests march).

1994

The Bombay First Initiative advocates deregulation of land development and the improvement of the business environment in Mumbai, as Mumbai seeks to reinvent itself from its industrial past, as the financial center of India.

THE VALUE OF LAND

Based on the general structure of the 1/3 rule of property division (see timeline 1991), the report went on to outline a series of plausible development proposals. The report made some very valid observations about the heritage value of some of the Mill structures, which they proposed be re-furbished into commercial office space where possible as per the regulations. It was proposed that all land, which was to be given to the city be used only for public open space. This was accompanied by a comprehensive survey of the locations of the public open spaces in Mumbai and how the neighborhood could benefit from large open spaces,¹⁹ or alternatively other 'social facilities' like schools, clinics or community centers.²⁰ The report proposed integrative planning between the City, MHADA and owners to ensure that the developments did not result in lop-sided infrastructural distribution and haphazard urban edges. And finally in light of the recent completion of the Bandra-Kurla complex, the report proposed increasing the global FAR of the neighborhood from 1.3 to 2 to establish a visible landmark skyline in the city.²¹

Whilst many of these proposals were fundamentally well-intentioned and logical, there were two critical flaws in the report's proposals. These were contradictory to the economic conditions, which had created the potential for these Islands in the first place. The first was the 1/3 rule, which proposed the distribution of the land, which otherwise belonged to the owners, in equal parts to the city, MHADA and the owner. An entire industry had collapsed due to the strength of the private sector and the lack of government interference. The chances of the owners of these mills putting forward land for the development of affordable housing seemed extremely altruistic in light of the city's recent history. The second flaw was that the land which was to be retained by the owner, be developed into a variety of uses, including housing developments, retail and commercial spaces but also high-tech industrial units, which would generate employment within the neighborhood.²²

¹⁹ Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, pg.13

²⁰ Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, pg.13

²¹ Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, pg.14

²² Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, pg.12

THE VALUE OF LAND

These sites went through a general shift of de-industrialization on account of the global economic situation and the escalating real estate value of the terrain. The re-introduction of proposed industry of any sort, which may limit the development of the sites to the base FAR at which these sites began, would appear counter-productive for the developer. Other suggestions for generating employment for unskilled and semi-skilled labour in the neighborhood were also in line with industry or manufacturing based developments, such as export industries for electronics goods²³, which would require a generous amount of warehousing, once again maintaining the minimum FAR on these extremely valuable sites. These proposals seemed contradictory to the proposed global FAR of the sites to 2.²⁴

Whilst these proposals were made in the interest of the working class public within these areas who had suffered great losses on account of the collapse of the textile industry, the report assumed that the neighborhood would remain occupied with unskilled or semi-skilled labor, despite the rapidly changing demographics. The second and third generations of the mill workers families had already moved into different forms of semi-skilled employment in the emerging retail and commercial developments within the neighborhoods particularly within the retail and hospitality industries. Although the report was very much in line with the policies established in the Draft Regional Plan of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (1996- 2011), they pushed forward strategies that would have applied very well in less centrally located neighborhoods, however Parel's strategic location as the remaining island presenting the possibility for development in the island city meant that it needed to be compared programmatically with neighborhoods such as Nariman Point, Ballard Estate, and Colaba. These neighborhoods, formed the core financial centre of the city, and are to date largely occupied by the city's major banks, commercial offices, and higher end retail developments and hotels. The average Plot FAR of these neighborhoods is between 1.8 and 2.2, with plot ratios varying between 2.5 and 4.5.²⁵

23 Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, pg.12

24 Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, pg.14

25 Correa Report, Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996,

Appendix 3

1990-1995

The skyline of Girangaon begins to change rapidly, with the opening of Phoenix Towers, Kalpataru Towers, Belvedere court. The issue expanded beyond the mill workers extending to a general issue of gentrification in the area.

1995

Launch of Girangaon Bachao Andolan (Save Girangaon Music Festival). An event organized in the Kamgar maidan at Parel, to protest against real estate development in the area. Several prominent Artists and cultural figures participated in the event.

'what we need is Shramapur (city of labour) and not Singapore'
(Poet Narayan Surve)

1996

Under pressure from the public, the Maharashtra Chief Minister Manohar Joshi announces cabinet decision to suspend DC rules, and appoints a conservation committee, headed by Charles Correa to design an integrative development plan for the Mill lands.¹

1 Winch, Peter. 'From Girangaon to Planet Godrej - How the Mill Lands Got Away', Published in Mapping Mumbai, Urban Design Research Institute in affiliation with the University of Michigan, 2005, pg.30

1996

Issuance of the Correa Report. The collective effort by Architects, Planners and Mill activists to issue a redevelopment strategy for the neighbourhood, which would protect the rights of mill workers and the working class of the area, as the neighborhood underwent gentrification. Some of the suggestions included giving 25% of mill lands to works to build their own tenements on them. Residential Tenants in the Chawls on Mill lands were to be protected before or after the proposed developments, and the extensive use of the Mill lands for the conversion into public infrastructure, such as the conversion of Kohinoor mills 1 and 2 into Bus terminals and the public plazas and Malls.

1998

Following the Issuance of the report the government finally acts on the requests of the workers. The textile workers Union, was assured by the Urban Development Department that regulations were being modified to include their demands. In the end, however only 50% of MHADA housing was reserved for textile workers.¹

1 Adarkar, Neera, 'The Lost Century: How the Textile workers of Mumbai Got Short Shrift', Published in the Mumbai Reader, 2007, UDRI, Mumbai, pg. 149

THE VALUE OF LAND

Despite its many efforts to be a projective report, it clung to the neighborhood's past. It is likely that this is largely because of the responsibility felt towards the estimated 100,000 people who became unemployed on account of the textile industry's collapse. In its efforts to offer concrete solutions for where the city was in its present, the report failed to anticipate where the city wanted to be in its future, which required a larger lens into the future of the city and India's economy at large.

India's ambitions as stipulated by several right wing pro-development journals, such as the Economist and McKinsey point repeatedly to the public sector and specifically its industrial past, as the parts which weigh down its economic machine. Statements like this, push for a blinkered growth which comes at a severe yet inevitable expense. This stream of laissez-faire, 'the do it our way' economics leave little room for debate as they use the economic media to impose ambitions upon the developing world. The potential is inevitably there, however, the more a state is subtracted from a development equation the more the private sector is better positioned to impose developmental ambitions upon the state through the potential it demonstrates.

THE IMPOSITION OF AMBITIONS

As Asia is moving head strong along that slippery slide, its end could have very drastic implications. So as long as McKinsey decides whether cities go upwards or outwards, the state will retain a very peripheral role in shaping the environment. This will reverberate across the many publics who will not take part in this decision making despite their democratic rights.

In 1992 a federal law was passed to simplify planning processes by the introduction of the 74th amendment, which would allow for local municipalities to take overriding planning decisions. Thus cutting through much of the red tape and bureaucracy in the system.²⁶ This amendment paralleled the major liberalization maneuvers, which took place at the Federal level, allowing for more efficient means through which development could take place. McKinsey's Vision Mumbai report stipulated that one of the necessary steps for the improvement of Mumbai's infrastructure would involve the streamlining of governance to make it more efficient and the further semi-privatization of large scale infrastructural projects, as was the example with the Dadar-Worli sea link.²⁷ Although the report is seen to be extremely biased, in that it is produced in accordance with the Urban Institute based in Washington, and is the vehicle for India to obtain development aid from the United States, it does situate Mumbai within a category of cities which are closer to its ambitions, and makes a strong case for the shift in the city's economy from manufacturing industries towards the service sector.²⁸

The positioning of these industries within the city, is the most important exercise in ensuring that each area is used to the best of its future potential. Mumbai's Island city is a thin peninsula surrounded by the Arabian sea. Whilst the suburbs of Mumbai continue to grow, the Island City has nowhere to go but up, and it is vital that the industries, which are located on the Island city, are in congruence with the land value. Given the City's ambitious economic projections, the dependence on the state for the development of sound infrastructure seems a far fetch, leaving aside the potential for it to develop public facilities such as community centers and public open spaces.

26 The Constitution (Seventy-Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992; <http://india-code.nic.in/coiweb/amend/amend74.htm>

27 Vision Mumbai, Report by McKinsey and Company, www.visionmumbai.org

1999

After years of Inaction on the Correa report it becomes evident that the State is unable to control the sale of the mill lands in the interest of the market. Reliance, the country's largest housing owner at this point purchases the development rights of three mills, adjoining Mahalaxmi railway station.

2001

State's Town planning department holds a public review of the new textile land policy. It is agreed that reviving the flaying industry within the city at this point is next to impossible. It is more a question of how the sites will be redeveloped. Maharashtra Chief Minister Deshmukh announces a new textile policy for private mills, which allows them to sell close to 30% of their land for real estate development. This policy change has severe consequences on many of the second generation residents of the workers tenements (chawls) on the mill lands, who would soon have to evict their homes.

2003

It was publicly made clear that the 1/3 rule was not taken into account by the UDD, and land which was otherwise meant to be public open space was given over to development authorities.

February 2005

Of the 170 Acres of private mill land sold for development, the BMC and MHADA receive a combined 6% or 10 acres as a concession for the plight of the mill workers, based on the revised DCR policy of 2001.

March 2005

Architect Neera Adarkar in association with Intach and the Urban Design Research Institute, present a number of preservation oriented proposals to urge the state government to reconsider the policy amendments for mill land developments.

May 2005

The Bombay Environmental Action Group (BEAG) filed a petition under the High Court to stop all construction of Mill lands pending investigation of issues such as ownership and validity of the 2001 DCR.

THE IMPOSITION OF AMBITIONS

A 2008 Macquarie Bank report, which gave a property sector snapshot of Mumbai, outlined the enormous potential for the mill sites of Lower Parel and Worli to become the secondary business districts of the city because of their proximity to Nariman Point, the present CBD. Many of the privately owned mill compounds came to be developed in precisely this manner. The developer relentlessly pursued the interests of the market, and mixed use developments were built, organized in fairly consistent plinth and tower typologies which absorbed the most rentable programs of the micro-city, these being; high end housing, office space, and a plinth full of retail space. A handful of Real estate developers including India Bulls Real Estate, DLF, and The Reliance Real estate group etc, had a strong monopoly on the development markets and pursued the most efficient and marketable developments for the neighborhood. The result was market driven typologies which isolated the publics either within the form or entirely outside of it. The overall figure grounds of many of the developments have been laboriously consistent in their ignorance. Beginning with a mass at the centre of the lot, surrounding it are parks of sorts, the type that cater for cars or trees, and buried in the mass a multi-storey mall. Resulting in a thoroughly interiorized privately owned public space for the select. Some key examples of these developments were Apollo mills, Kohinoor Mills, and the soon to arrive Avhingha tower.



Phoenix Mills Mall
Image:
Chirodeep Chaudhuri

THE GREAT MILL MONOPOLY

The great possibility which embodied these islands for urban renewal flat lined before it had begun because from the outset it was presented as an argument of either / or. The result was that the city was built anew with no new identity. The either / or solutions which were presented were always either driven solely towards the markets benefits (which the Supreme Court ruled in favor of) or alternatively in favor of the plight of the existing residents of the neighborhood, which put a large amount of pressure on the state government. The more fundamental questions of how a developer might benefit from the engagement of a more varied public in the development of these sites, was barely considered as an option. Economics produced these islands, and it would be economics that would then decide how these islands were to be filled.

The Correa report's primary objectives were to resolve two primary concerns for the neighborhood, that of employment for the masses and secondly that of public and civic space for the betterment of the neighborhood, in particular public open space. Whilst the problem of mass unemployment was far greater than could be tackled by direct zoning regulations and the introduction of new types of industry. The question of public space was one which could be addressed in direct correlation with marketable development strategies. It was never discussed how a privately owned public interior might take shape to include a much broader public. The key concern here was how to make this type of privately owned public space porous enough that it allows for a multitude of different publics to move through it and appropriate it in a truly civic sense.

June 2005

National Textile Corporation's Mumbai Textile Mill was sold for a staggering 160 Million USD to the Delhi-based DLF Group in one of the most established real estate deals in the country.¹

¹ShivKumar. 'Maharashtra may give more mills' land for public use'. The Tribune. 2005

March 2006

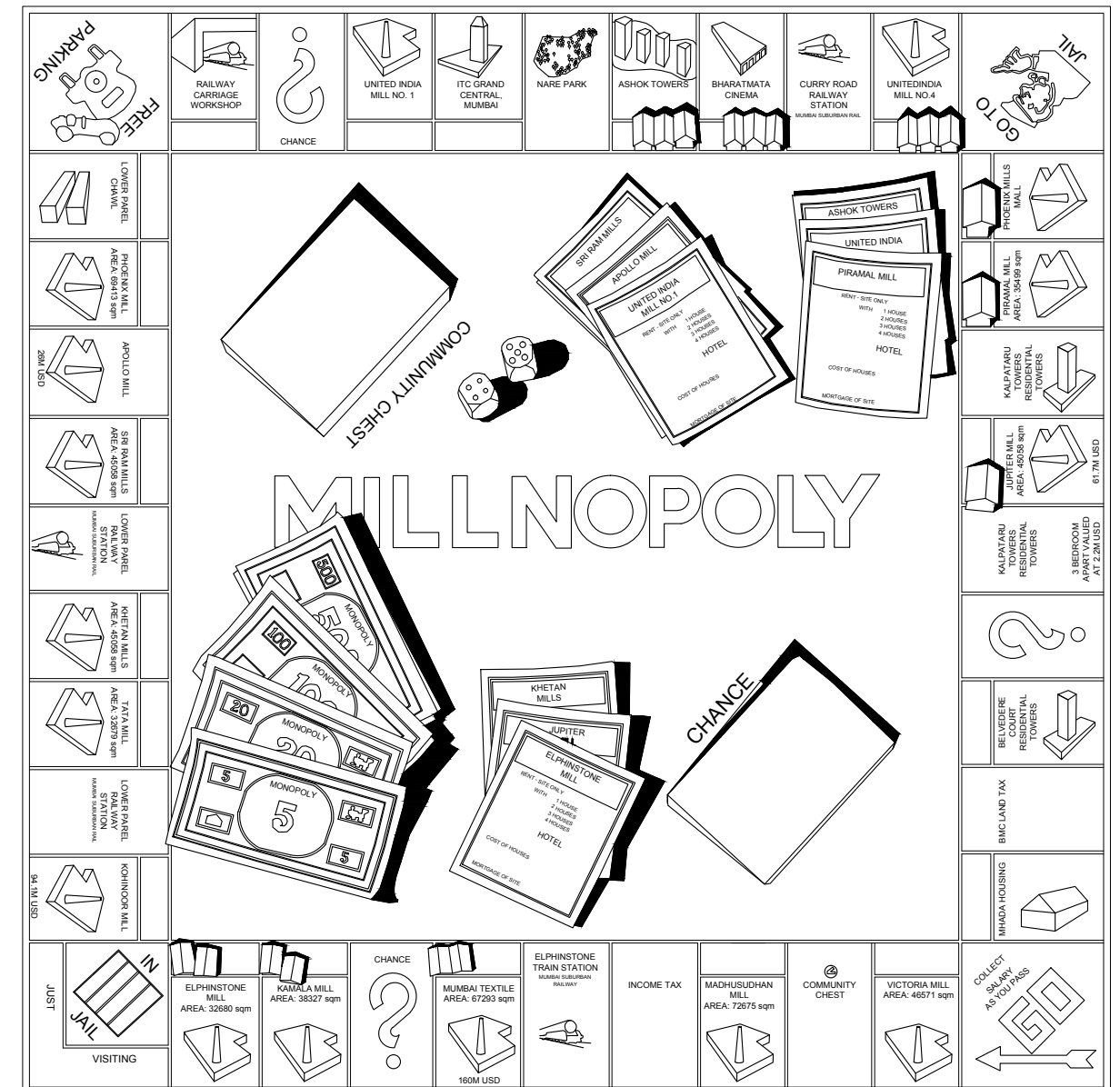
On March 7, the Supreme Court issued a decision on the BEAG petition. It decided that the changes to the BMC Development Control regulations to increase the percentage of sellable land was constitutionally valid, and that the National Textile Corporation had acted in conformity with the BIFR scheme, thus ruling in favor of the property developers.¹

¹ Winch, Peter. 'From Girangaon to Planet Godrej - How the Mill Lands Got Away', Published in Mapping Mumbai, UDRI with the University of Michigan. 2005.

2011

The Average 3 bedroom apartment (roughly 3000sqft) in Parel is today valued at 2.2 Million USD, arriving at 733 USD per square foot¹ compared to 2.4 Million USD in Midtown Manhattan.²

¹ Lodha Group Towers, Lower Parel
² www.citi-habitats.com



Mill Monopoly ISLANDS

MANUFACTURED PUBLICITY

There are as many types of public spheres and spaces as there are publics. The idea of a discursive space of the public as raised by Habbermas points to the possibilities of collecting a people in the interest of creating a type of mass subject towards whom literature, text, art and any other form of media may be pointed. This allows for the concerns of the publics to be discussed openly in democratic societies and thus generates the democratic public sphere. In India this public sphere is energetic and strong as activists, public intellectuals, and artists align themselves with the underprivileged masses in the hope of giving them a voice. However, as Habbermas pointed to Capitalism and mass media as both the onset and the collapse of the Öffentlichkeit culture (that of the bourgeoisie public sphere)²⁹, the tale of the Girangaon textile mills is very exemplary of how a strong voice might be heard but nevertheless struggles for recognition in the presence of consumer culture. Despite the fact that mass media is intended to be a public voice, it nevertheless becomes implicated by consumer culture and shifts from a vehicle for the representation of the public sphere to one which represents the market and thus aims to create its audience. Architecture falls into this category like any other form of media, the image of architecture can also become a vessel for what Habbermas calls 'manufactured publicity'³⁰, as it assembles through its aesthetics particular types of publics. We see this in the imagery of glossy architectural press everyday, as new monuments are erected in the interest of generating an audience to consume them. This fact has been deliberated time and again in Venturi and Scott Brown's lessons learnt from Las Vegas. This form of media is instrumental in eroding the memory of the public sphere as it clings to a painful past, which impedes its moving forward. In parallel with this erosion the media begins to project a future upon the publics, which the market uses to represent through its forms, swaying public opinion to concede on its validity. As the press shifted from telling stories of the plight of the mill workers, to telling stories of the glorious future of development, which awaited the neighborhood, public opinion around the development of these sites also began to shift.

29 Habbermas, Jurgen, 'The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere; An inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society', translated by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Freiderich Lawrence, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1991, pg. 2

30 Habbermas, Jurgen, 'The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere; An inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society', translated by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Freiderich Lawrence, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1991, pg. 211

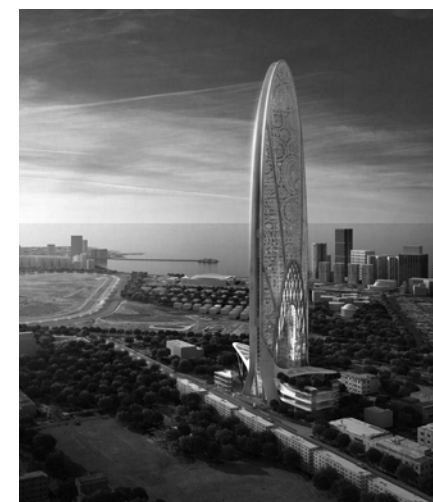


VT Station Mumbai

MANUFACTURED PUBLICITY

In a number of streets polls conducted by a variety of local newspapers, there was a consensus between some 70% of the neighborhood's population that they weren't opposed to the future development of the mill sites. Like most political dramas the city began to forget its past and move forward with its future. The single aspect, which remained a recurrent request by the public at large was the production of public open space in the city, as congestion continued to pose a real threat to the quality of space and liveability of the island city.

Public space in India is a complex issue. Whilst the citizens of Mumbai maintain a strong ownership of the public space of the city, the designed civic space of the state is much thinner. Public open space as defined by the informal, residual spaces of the city, the streets, lanes, roundabouts, alleys, footpaths, skypaths, underpasses, are all appropriated by the citizens in the most efficient manner. These spaces form the armatures of public activity which animate the city. Commerce, play and discourse all take place in these spaces as they come to be appropriated by the public. These spaces require little in the way of aesthetic definition as it is the programs which fill them that contribute the aesthetics. However, the civic space of the state, a designed space, which embodies the public at large, often struggles for an aesthetic where publics cannot be collapsed into a singular mass subject. At best it can be defined by the neutrality of its typological conditions or alternatively by the absence of an aesthetic altogether, as is the case of India's dramatic urban voids, known as Maidans. State space requires funding, first for its production and then subsequently for its maintenance. Where land value is high, and the monetary returns of civic spaces are limited, the state struggles to justify the creation of public facilities such as parks, gardens and plazas etc in light of more pressing concerns for public infrastructure. The pressure is then transferred onto the private sphere, to take on the responsibility for synthesizing new forms of public space. The state depends on the private sector to generate the income for the development of the more fundamental aspects of the city, such as roads and public transportation systems. The Neo-liberal state however, is increasingly depending on the private sector to not only generate the income for but rather to generate the public facilities themselves. Thus resulting in new forms of privately owned public interiors, which are by the Habbermassian definition a space of 'manufactured publicity'. They impose public opinion rather than create the space where it might be more democratically established. Public space, as produced by a private entity is of an altogether different form, more often than not it is heavily implicated by the market, and leaves little room for appropriation.



Namaste Tower for W Hotel, Lower Parel, Mumbai designed by Atkins Dubai, Image Courtesy of Atkins

THE ARRIVAL OF INTERIORS

It is however, in its secondary face the 'aspirational' space of the city; the space upon which the emerging middle class projects its ambitions. Privately owned public interiors are fast becoming an inevitability in many of the major urban centers of India, and so rather than hide from the reality of this space, it is better to embrace it as one of the primary challenges of contemporary urban design. In part, privatisation gives to architecture the urban realm. It has allowed for certain luxuries that did not exist prior to this moment, and so, after the battle is lost and civic space has been bartered for infrastructure, the question which remains, is what shape should it take once it belongs to a new entity. What does it mean for public space, in its distended version, to exist as an interior. It is also very important to note that the laws of ownership are volatile, and there are as many chances that these privately owned civic spaces might again be returned to the state. After-all, many a feudal palace was at some point appropriated by the democratic state and came to be public terrain once again, illustrating very clearly that spatial territories change hands time and again. Our role as designers is not to challenge, who owns what, but rather how it is designed so that even as it changes hands it might continue to retain its relevance for a new audience. The foundations of this resilience are based on the typological integrity of the form, so that it establishes a firm aesthetic and yet allows for enough variety or flexibility to change programmatically over time.

Therefore, rather than hide behind new clothes, it seemed indispensable that the last of the arrivals bring to the surface these questions of how a privately owned public interior might be shaped so that it maintains civic relevance in both its present and is projective about the publics who will continue to use it in its future. These publics, have been identified here as the rapidly growing Indian middle class, which is qualified into this category by a very broad economic definition at present. This definition might become more precise with time, but for the moment it is the one we have and will have to use in the interest of forming a meta-narrative.

THE ARRIVAL OF INTERIORS

The last of the arrivals was to be located on the last of the islands. The collapse of the textile industry had cleared one set of islands in the city and now the remaining adjacent sites, which were occupied by other industries had also come under the chopping block. The most prominent of the islands, was that used by the Indian Railways carriage workshop, the largest inner-city locomotive repair workshop in Mumbai. Its precarious location beside the NTC United India Mill No. 1, and the famous Bharatmata Cinema, had meant that within the whirlwind of political disputes surrounding them, it had managed to escape any forms of earlier 'manufactured publicity' which may have been cause for its evacuation. As the storm on these issues slowly began to settle, as deals were signed and land negotiated, the carriage workshop too was to become suddenly naked in the spotlight, and Indian Western Railways, one of the cornerstones of India's Industrial past, was to be pressured to re-assess the value of land upon which it operated.

The 70 year old Bharatmata cinema had been saved. An Institution of sorts, the cinema has a long history in the neighborhood as one of the largest cinema halls to show films in both the regional language of Marathi and in Hindi. The cinema continues to operate at affordable rates, and is one of the mainstays of entertainment for the local residents of the area. As the sensitivity around the issues of the neighborhood's gentrification escalated, the protection of the strongholds of public culture within the neighborhood became essential to maintaining control over the gentrification process. As the sale of NTC mill compound beside the cinema came into question, there was a general call to arms from the local residents to protect the cinema.

The 20 acres, which constitute the India United Mill no. 1 are located on the southern edge of the site, bordering Mahadev Palav Marg and Baba Saheb Ambedkar Marg (Ambedkar Road). The mill has a number of extraordinary industrial landmarks, which were identified in the extensive audits completed for the Correa Report. Each building was assessed for its adaptive use potential and the potential for the heritage value of the landmark buildings, such as the chimney stacks and some of the larger mill warehouses.³¹ The protection of these buildings has been high on the list of the Mumbai Heritage Conservation Authority, and they are encouraging the conversion of the major Mill buildings into a Museum on the history of the textile Industry in Mumbai.

31 Correa Report, 'Survey Sheet of N.T.C. Mill India United Mills No. 1 - Integrated Development Plan, - NTC Mills, 1996, fig. 2.2



Protestors outside Bharatmata Cinema
April 5th 2009.
Image Courtesy: The Hindu



Chimney Stack to be conserved.
NTC Mill
Image Courtesy: Outlook Magazine
ISLANDS

BALSHET MADURKAR MG - RAILWAY WORKSHOP

ADMIN BUILDINGS- RAILWAY WORKSHOP

RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION

JOSHI-RAILWAY ADMIN

PHOENIX MILLS MALL

LOWER PAREL STATION

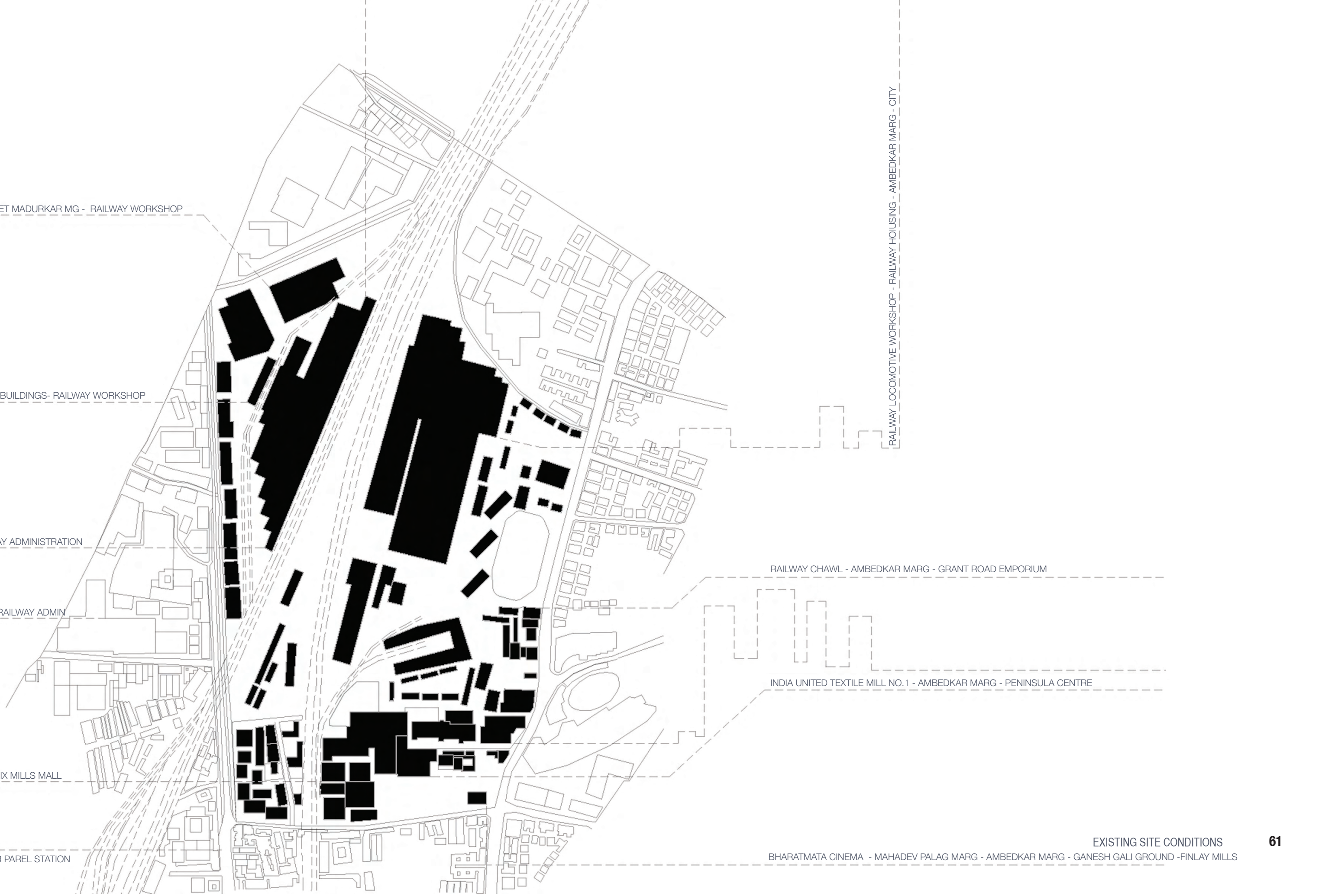
RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVE WORKSHOP - RAILWAY HOUSING - AMBEDKAR MARG - CITY

RAILWAY CHAWL - AMBEDKAR MARG - GRANT ROAD EMPORIUM

INDIA UNITED TEXTILE MILL NO.1 - AMBEDKAR MARG - PENINSULA CENTRE

BHARATMATA CINEMA - MAHADEV PALAG MARG - AMBEDKAR MARG - GANESH GALI GROUND - FINLAY MILLS

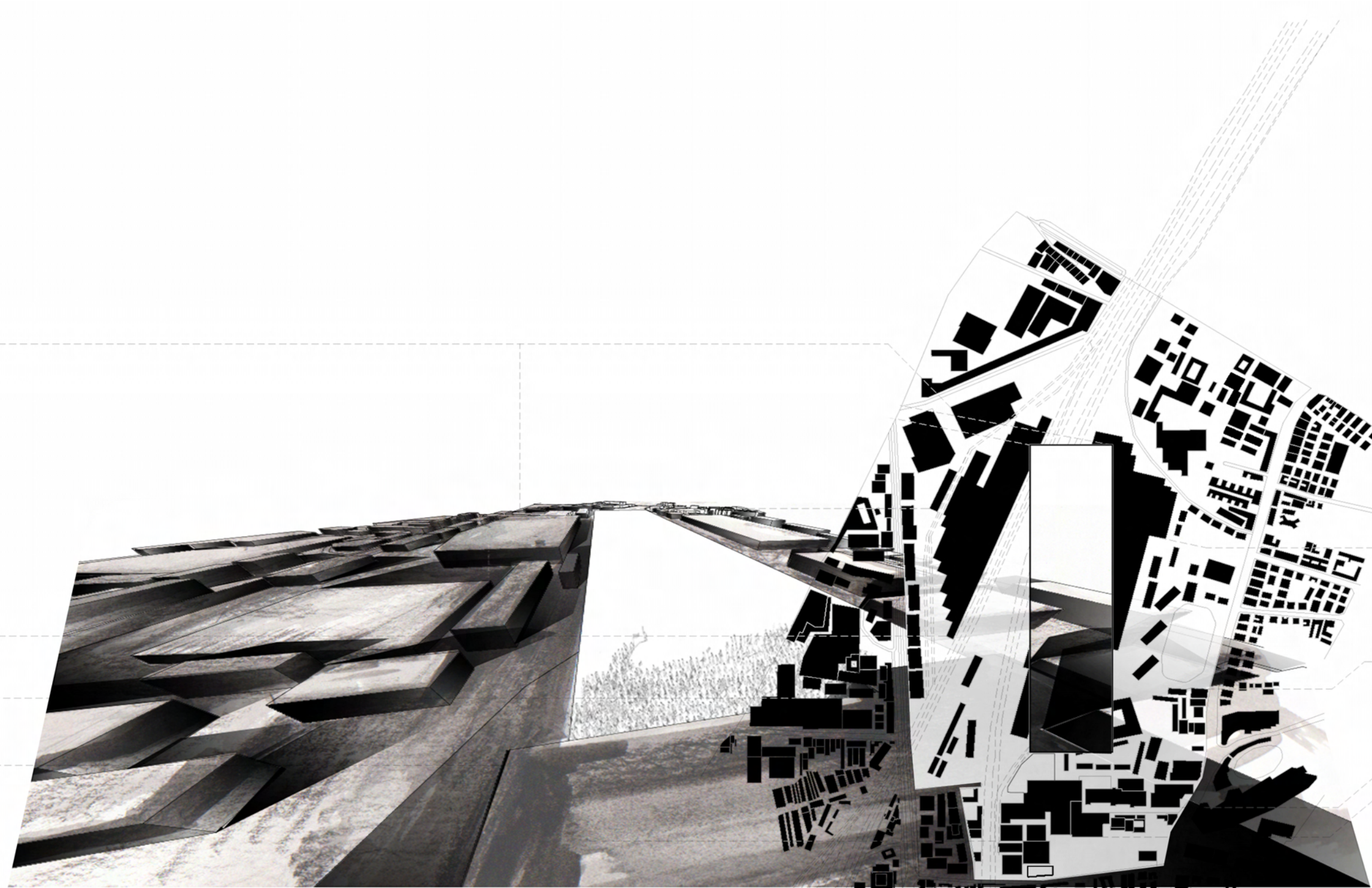
EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



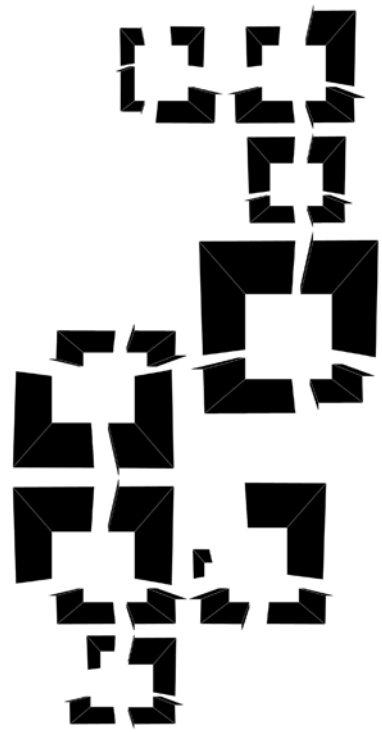
ARRIVALS

Many of the smaller buildings on this 72 Hectare Island, between Ambedkar Marg, Mahadev Palav Road, NM Joshi Road, Balshet Madurkar Road and Jaggannath Bhatankar Road, are affiliated in some manner with either the mill compound or the Railway carriage workshop of Lower Parel. The workshop was built by the Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway authorities, in 1870-76. It absorbed the largest volume of carriage repairs for the suburban railway lines, and was also used for the manufacturing of wheel sets and the general overhaul of the locomotive carriages for Western Railways. The workshop, has a covered area of 5500sqm, and close to 5.5km of track. Surrounding the workshop are a number of key administrative buildings for Western Railways, which have been pushed to the perimeter of the site, some of which have heritage value, including the Senior Railway Institute dating back to 1882. The site also has a cluster of Railway chawls (tenements) where the workers and their families live. As a government body, Western Railways has a firmly established Railway college and youth hostel located on the site's northern perimeter. Whilst all of these annexe facilities would suffer greatly from the departure of the carriage workshop, the redevelopment of the sites upon which the annexe buildings are located is too politically charged a debate to have been broached in one hit. Unlike the mill compounds, the railways carriage workshop and the buildings which house its community are all consolidated on one lot, and so any development on this lot would have to weave its way around many of the existing buildings, which house, school, and employ thousands of people. The advantage of the Industrial site however is that all of the annexe buildings, including the chawls and all administrative buildings related to the railways form the periphery of the island and create the urban edge of the city.

This 72 hectare island presently employs over 5000 people who will inevitably lose a voice in its development. And so to have it heard, the project begins with 13 hectares of state space nested within the site. A 700m stretch, which levels the playing field with a monumental void, a Maidan. Built on a platform safe above the brownfield land to hide the fork in the railway path, this blank democratic state territory within the neighbourhood's largest mixed use development was to become Lower Parel's Lung.



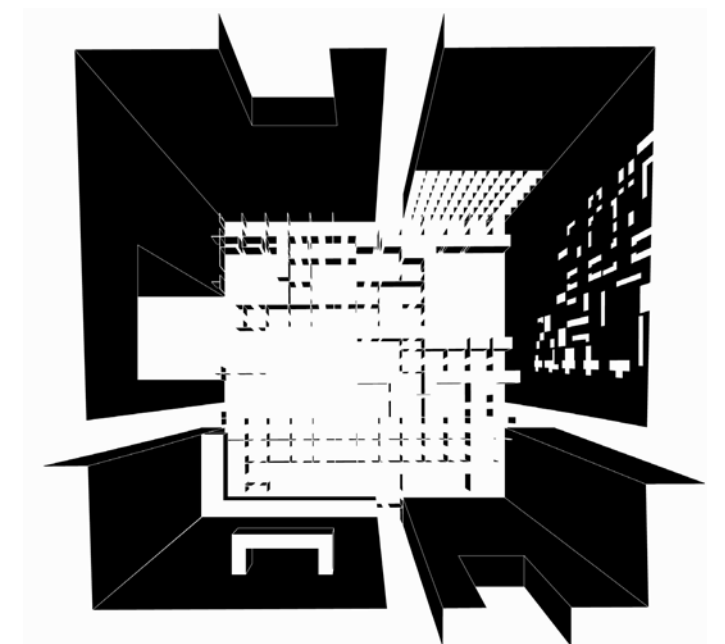
The Maidan,; A Monumental Void



ROOMS

'All at once, they were the hollow mould from which the image of 'modernity' was cast. Here, the century mirrored with satisfaction it's most recent past. Here was the retirement home for infant prodigies.'

Walter Benjamin, The Arcades Project



THE ARCHITECTURE OF MONEY

Le Corbusier's infamous modernist manifesto that architecture should be true to the technology of its time, made some broad assumptions that technological innovation existed within an ideological framework which promoted a common good, otherwise known as progress. Whilst we know that this is not always the case, it raises three distinct questions for the symbolic responsibilities of architecture; The first; that meaning is inherent to architectural form, the second; that there is an implied morality in architectural expression and finally, the assumption that the role of technological innovation on the evolution of typological form of the urban environment is extraneous to architectural expression. Therefore assuming that architecture merely represents the conditions at play, rather than defining what those conditions are. Whilst all three assumptions are of a somewhat generalist nature, there has been much critical discourse surrounding the first two. The third however is a far more imperative question to be asked of the current state of the art. The hinge upon which it rests is that of a distinction between architecture and building; architecture, the expressive art and building, the mundane organizational compound between need, economic means, and technology. The lucidity with which Manfredo Tafuri, anticipated this landscape in 1976, is quite remarkable, and yet we are still unsure what to make of it in our contemporary times.

*'What is of interest here is the precise identification of those tasks which capitalist development has taken away from architecture. That is to say, what it has taken away in general from ideological pre-figuration. With this, one is led almost automatically to the discovery of what may well be the 'drama' of architecture today: that is, to see architecture obliged to return to pure architecture, to form without utopia; in the best cases, to sublime uselessness.'*³²

Architecture from the outset thus has a diminished scope as both a discipline and political agent, because it is dependant on economic surplus to remain active. Buildings on the other hand, emerge of their own accord, as they are no more than the most basic formulaic results of the merging of economic markets and technological innovation. This union has seen many overtures throughout history; however the most obvious examples are in the evolution of urban form of the late 19th and 20th century capitalist city. As real estate development has rapidly shed architecture's ideological luggage economics began to produce new typological conditions, which established new cultural ideals.

³² Tafuri, Manfredo, 'Architecture and Utopia; Design and Capitalist Development', MIT Press, Cambridge, 1976, pg. 9

DATUMS

The epitome of this condition, has seen the liberal market give to architecture megastructural form, not on account of any utopian politics, but rather simply for the economic viability of large scale urban developments to be conceived of as a technologically deterministic totality, entirely in the interest of market efficiency. Whilst the capacity for this type of aesthetic and machinic determinism is wholly possible, it is nevertheless necessary to theorize the implications of this architectural possibility, so that there is a consciousness about what the future of these forms would be after the conditions which erected them have subsided into history.

Technological advances such as the automotive, the elevator and air conditioning have dramatically changed the urban landscape of the 20th century. The resulting typological forms have become pervasive in the global urban landscape, overcoming the environmental adversities of location, thus creating a global uniformity that prioritizes liberal capitalist markets. From towers to groundscrapers, these increasingly prevalent conditions direct us towards a singular observation, that the line between architecture and urban design is determined first and foremost by economics, and subsequently by a host of other entities including the state. Whilst urban design, the space of the city, remains defined by the few parameters which create urban datums, the rentable space of the city, the ground plane, the size of people, the size of trees, of cars, trains and buses; the scale of architecture is determined by the development of more inanimate technologies and the market, which heavily influence built form. These conditions illustrate how the forces of realty can architecturally absorb the entire autonomous discipline of urban design within the private sector. The result of this directive towards interiority is the phenomenon of interior urbanism; the internal assimilation of the traditional programmatic environment of the city.

It is in Architecture's diminished sphere, which Tafuri terms its 'sublime uselessness' that it also reveals its greatest power of expressive freedom, as it is no longer a prisoner of ideological criticism.³³ The megastructural form is as much an economic reality as is the privately owned public interior, which comes with it. It is for this reason free in many ways from the restraints of ideology. It exists regardless of whether it is desired or not and subsequently presents an opportunity for expression and theorisation beyond any ideological biases.

³³ Tafuri, Manfredo, 'Architecture and Utopia; Design and Capitalist Development', MIT Press, Cambridge, 1976, pg.20

THE DILEMMA OF AESTHETIC CONTROL

Despite what the mega-structure necessitates from an engineering perspective, (cities have always remained highly engineered built landscapes throughout history), the manner in which this subject of total aesthetics is broached is far more pertinent. Tafuri, has carefully pointed to the anxiety which came both with the political loss, and economic gain of aesthetic control over the urban environment. As the micro-city of the enclave becomes an autonomous sphere of urban practice, it presents itself not only as the new sphere of urban opportunity, but divorced from the residual exterior and its implications, it is a liberated space of design. This liberation offers both a return to formal control of the city and simultaneously a new anxiety of urban aesthetics, which become contingent on a new series of universals without the crutch of external structure or any sort of ideological belief. The structure, and subsequently the forms of the urban interior have to be the product of a self-referential process of identifying hierarchies from within. At their most reductive, these hierarchies themselves represent a retreat to more elemental principles of urban design, which are founded on the typological organisation of the city. This can be dealt with in one of two ways; as a completely auto-referential pursuit of form, or alternatively as a means by which to re-engage external conditions but without physical connection. Typologically, they insert possible programs within the form which hold relevance for its context. This directive towards a reductive architecture which assembles the city based only on type, begins to negotiate the scales at which total aesthetics compromise the urban character of the city. Rem Koolhaas has also raised this anxiety from an architectural perspective through his theory of Bigness. As architecture reaches a certain scale it inevitably endures an aesthetic dilution.

*'Although Bigness is a blueprint for perpetual intensity, it also offers degrees of serenity and even blandness. It is simply impossible to animate its entire mass with intention. Its vastness exhausts architecture's compulsive need to decide and determine.'*³⁴

This anxiety is because of the myopic tendencies for architects to see the large urban footprint as a singularity. The diluted architecture of Bigness as sought by Koolhaas, pleads to the potential of scale to maintain the relevance of a singular form. Koolhaas himself identifies, that architecture at this scale has to forego some of its most fundamental beliefs of aesthetic control and compositional coherence. This negotiation of levels of formal control is what catapults architectural bigness, into the terrain of urban smallness.

³⁴ Koolhaas, Rem, 'Bigness: or the Problem of Large', published in S, M, L, XL, ed. Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, Monacelli Press Inc (NYC), 1995

THE DILEMMA OF AESTHETIC CONTROL

It is here that Koolhaas fails to recognize the large urban footprint, not as a diluted version of architecture, but as an intensely concentrated version of urbanism, which comes with an embedded aesthetic DNA. The term 'Bigness' in itself identifies one of the biases of our age, as it presupposes that there is an optimal size for architecture. This optimum is perhaps the scale at which architecture is able to maintain its formal integrity. The scale at which it can be perceived as a coherent whole. Or perhaps it is purely relative to the conditions of another time. The primary difference between bigness and the megastructural enclave is that in the interest of absorbing the programmatic conditions of the city at large, these forms are an assemblage of the multiple typological conditions which make up the city. They are fused together into a new beast for a host of reasons including economics and/or material and technological efficiency.

These assemblages can be conceived of in themselves as a return to a condition of urban continuity which only politics was able to produce in the past, from Piranesi's Campo Marzio to the Hausmannian avenue, the sectional conception of the city remains the ultimate architectural conquest. It is the moment of conceiving the city as a spatial totality, and its module the room, wherein the designer controls the formal aesthetics of urban space as an entirety. The room can be classified as both a structuring element and a form at once. There are two important distinctions to be made here in the realm of classifications.

The difference between form and urban structure. Urban structure, whilst it has significant implications for form, it is distinct from form because it has a latent aesthetic, whereas form has a concrete aesthetic. The design of the modern capitalist city has been attributed to the design of urban structure, which is malleable enough to accommodate changing conditions, variations of forms, and above all variations of aesthetic outcomes. The design of buildings has traditionally been attributed to the design of form, which is founded on a specific aesthetic outcome. The difference between authoring an urban structure and authoring a form is precisely where the measures of aesthetic control lie. As Tafuri's history of urban architecture has illustrated, there is a very delicate balance between too much and too little control, and it is along this scale that the biases of our age have been established. One of the major failings of other utopian visions of the urban interior was that there was a distinct absence of hierarchies within them, largely because the projects sought equality over democracy and were therefore in search of 'optimums', which resulted in the architecture having a strong hierarchy over the urban.

GROSSFORM

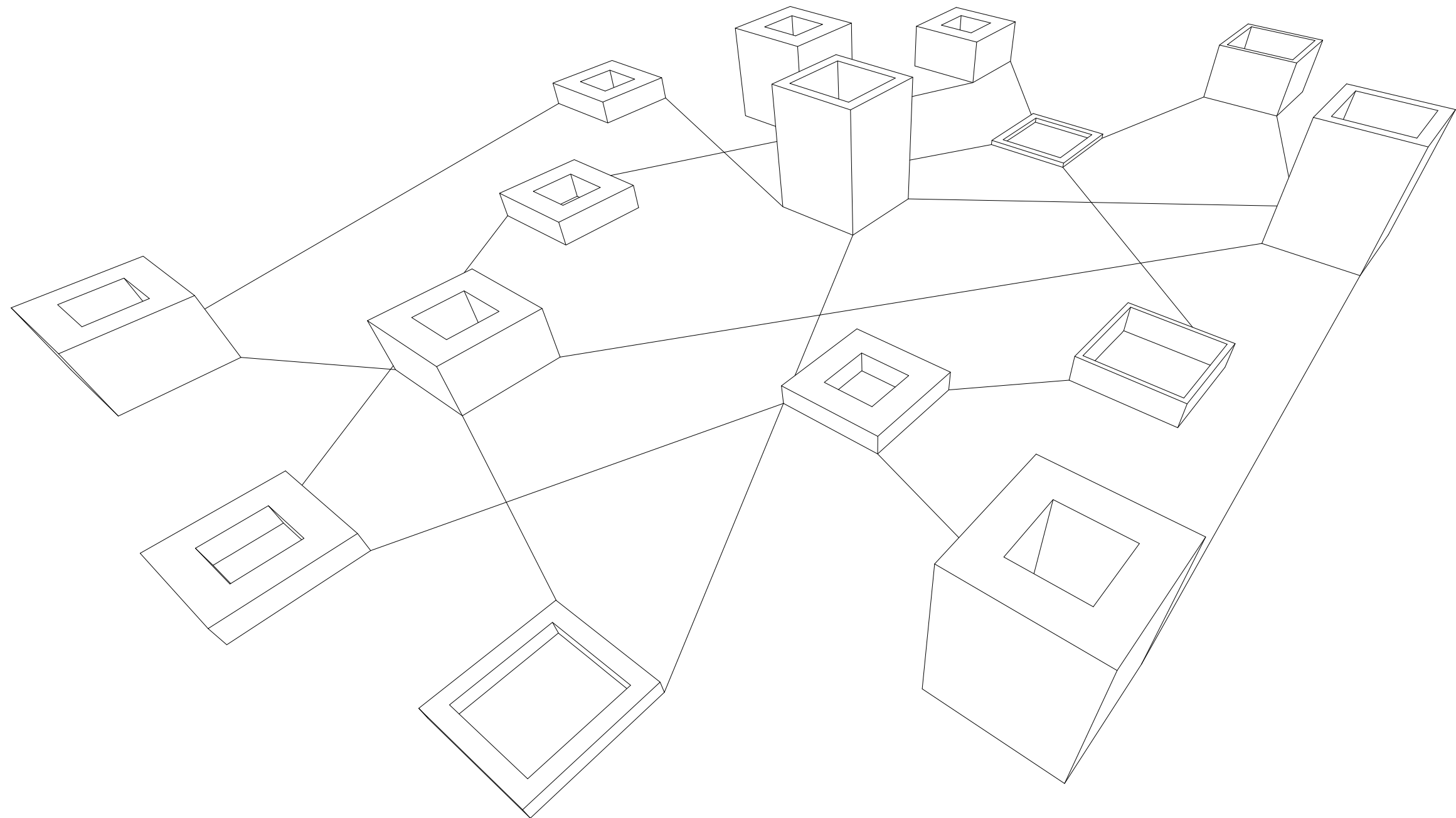
Oswald Mathias Ungers offers an alternative theory for the pursuit of architectural coherence of the city, through his identification of Grossform. Ungers's theory allows for the design of forms as precedents to urban structure. As per Ungers' definition, Grossform is a system for formal structuring, which is entirely extraneous to scale. Grossform allows for a shift from treating the city as an analogy of architecture towards the idea that the primary role of urban architecture is to have a morphological impact on the city.³⁵ In his essay titled *Grossformen im Wohnungsbau*, he is careful to stipulate that Grossform is not necessarily related to scale, but more to an expression of formal coherence.

'Only when a new quality arises beyond the mere sum of individual parts, and a higher level is achieved, does a Grossform arise. The primary characteristic is not numerical size. A small house can just as well be a grossform'³⁶

Whilst Mega-structural form is the reasoning of urban architecture through a singular scalar optimum, based on scientific or aesthetic rationale for the city as a totality. The Grossform, is a structuring principle, which distances itself, from the aesthetic hegemony of scale. As a Grossform, architecture remains within the zone of individual freedom, and is primarily predicated on a strong definition of form, which then allows 'life' to take place in the undefined spaces in between. As a Grossform, architecture does not attempt social engineering, as is the case of many Megastructural forms on account of their 'optimums' but is simply architecture as architecture, which allows for variations of urban conditions to emerge within the structure, based only on a formal precedent. Just as the grid allowed for individual agency within it, the grossform offers itself as the architectural canvas upon which the urban in all its animate diversity is applied. It also allows for a clear tension to remain between the configuration of a collective and the freedom of individual agency and in this manner it does not execute architectural hierarchy over the urban sphere.

³⁵ Ungers, Oswald Mathias, *Grossformen im Wohnungsbau*, Taschen, 1992, pg.22

³⁶ Ungers, Oswald Mathias, *Grossformen im Wohnungsbau*, Taschen, 1992, pg.24

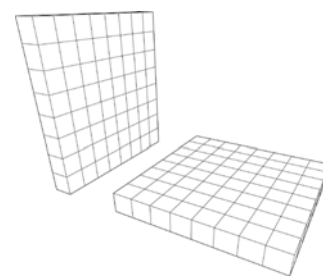


ROOMS

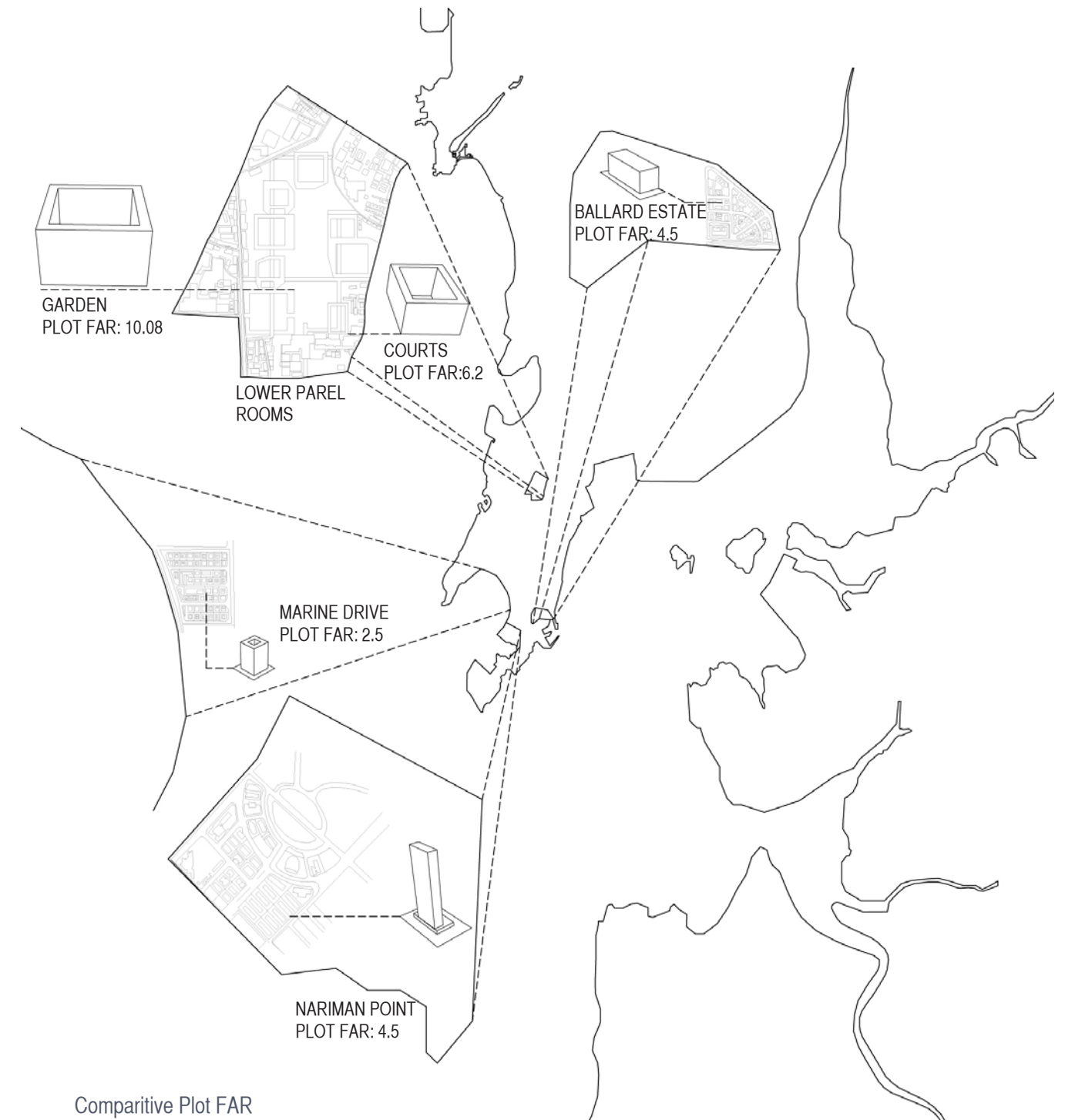
The Grossform, as identified in this project is the Room. The formal structuring system, within which each space exists as a totality, but only within the confines of its four walls. Following that the room can aggregate in any number of different typological, aesthetic and scalar solutions to create an enfilade. On the basis of the principles of the Grossform, the room can thus influence in a truly urban manner the morphological potential of the city.

What follows as the project will seek to test the limits of aesthetic and formal control of the city, from both the discipline of architecture and from that of urbanism, through the room, the spatial product of both. The room is defined as any distinguishable space within a structure, which is separated from other spaces or passageways by interior walls. This particularly baroque form of spatial continuation provides a foundation upon which a project of the Urban interior might begin to formulate itself based on a succession of typological hierarchies which fuse together along the length of the walls which create these rooms. As a compilation of slab walls and porous mats, the rooms also allow for the feasible development of the site, as a typological condition which well exceeds the plot FAR of various other neighbourhoods in Mumbai. This is most apparent in Nariman point, Mumbai's current business district.

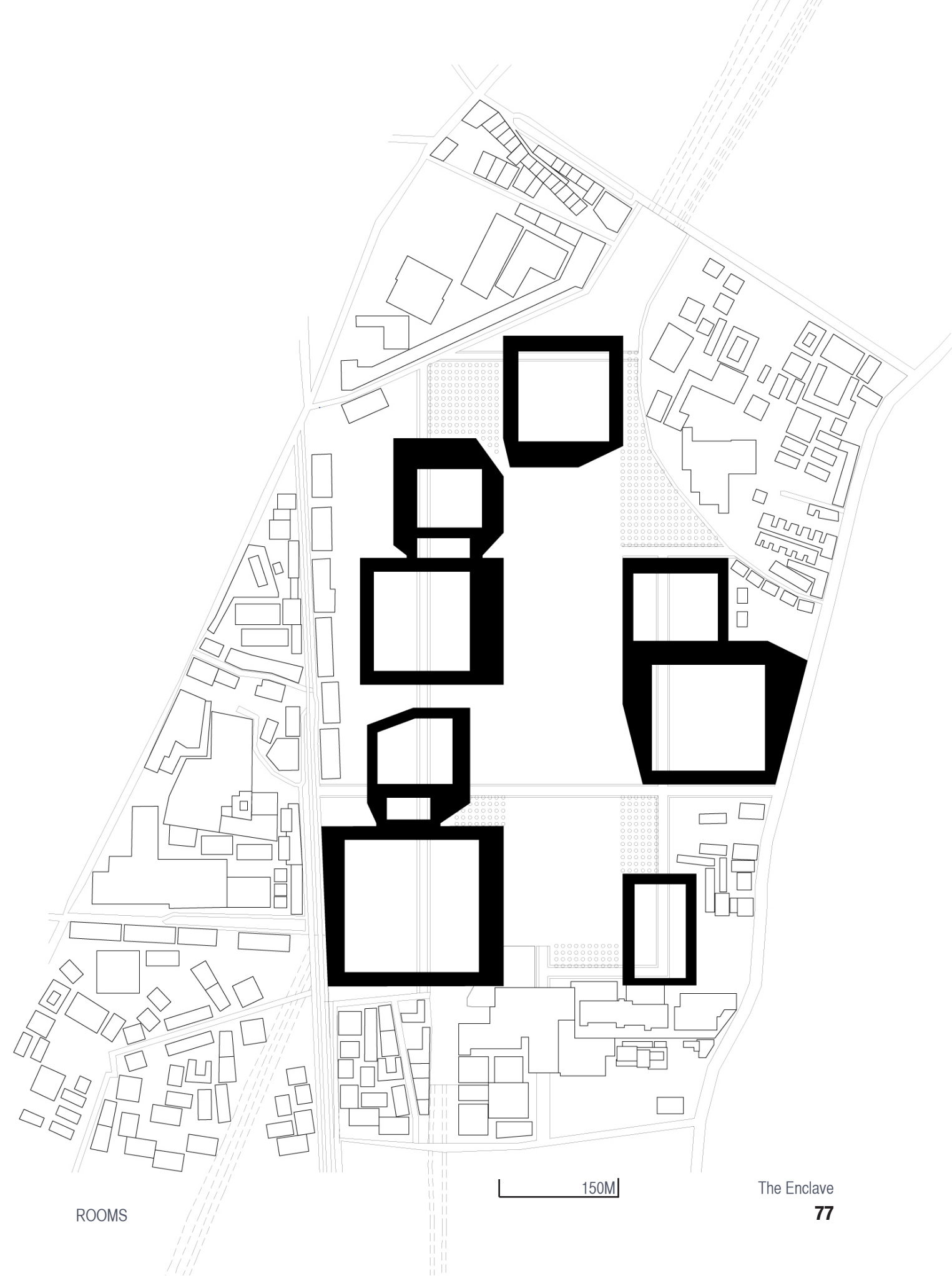
The enclave has been divided into a succession of 8 urban rooms, linked together by the open space of the urban lung, the 9th room of the Maidan. Each room is a typological interpretation of a series of public spaces, which hold relevance for a broad Indian public. These range from the typical market hall or wedding tent, to the polished porous hotel lobbies, and shopping malls, which corner a growing upper middle class. Each room sets the stage for a dialogue about the relevance of public space in the city today, the conditions under which it is to be produced. Each deliberates over the need to exist within the market and yet pursue typological conditions which retain formal relevance beyond the programmatic conditions which necessitated their production, thus aiming for a product which is quasi-autonomous, as it exists primarily as an independant form and yet engages its publics in a broader and subtle manner than standing simply as a transparent narrative statement. The project in its summation points to a formal structuring of the city in the interest of protecting the most valuable urban condition in the hyper density of Mumbai, the sanctity of the void.

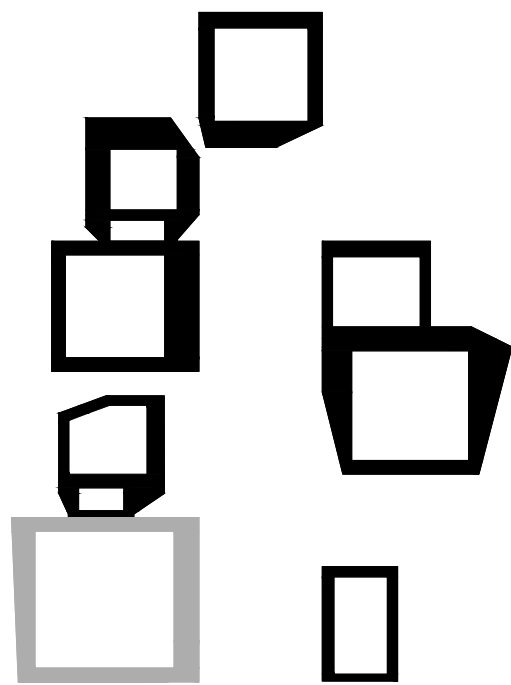


Slab and Mat
ROOMS

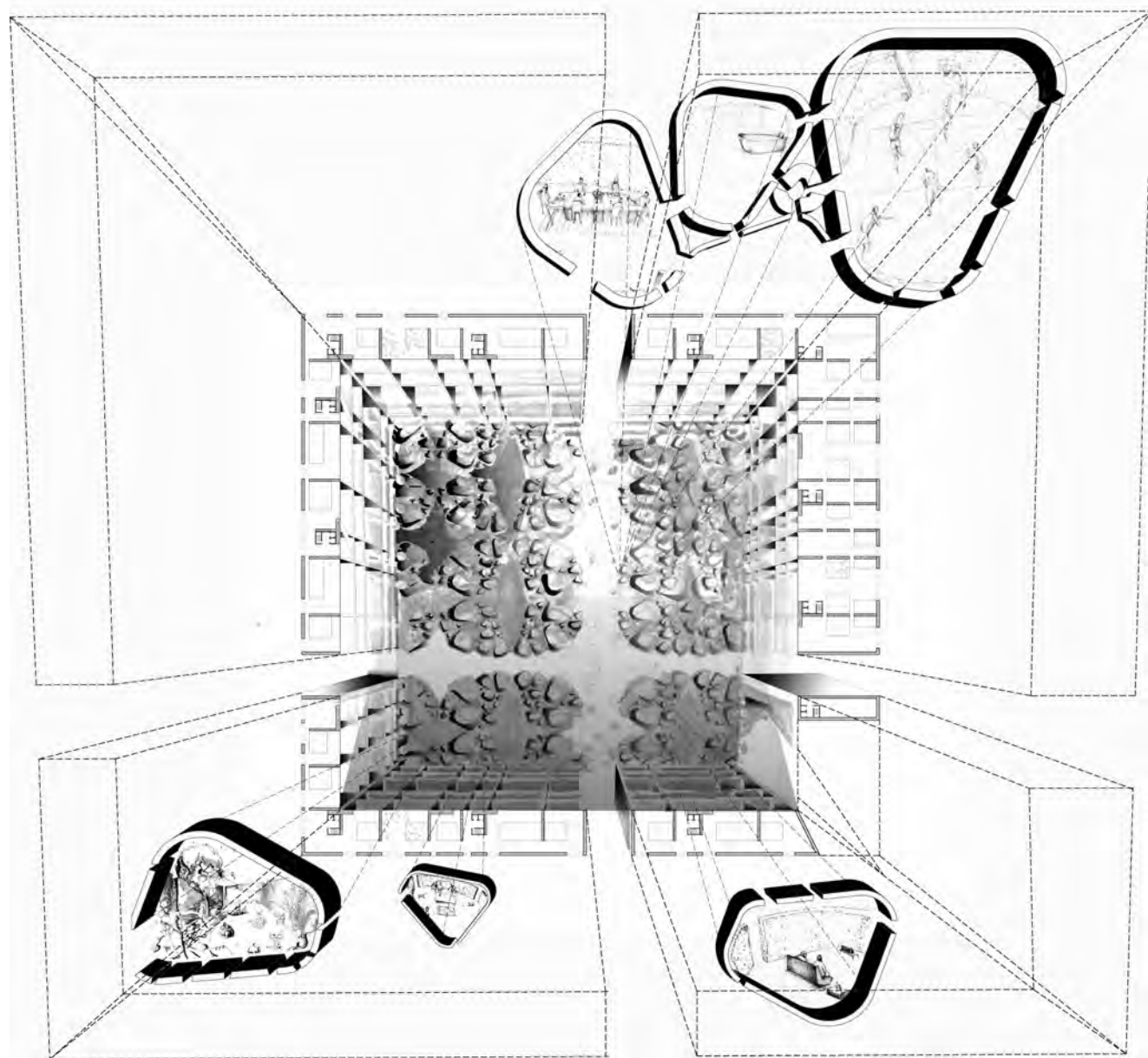


Comparative Plot FAR
ROOMS





THE GARDEN

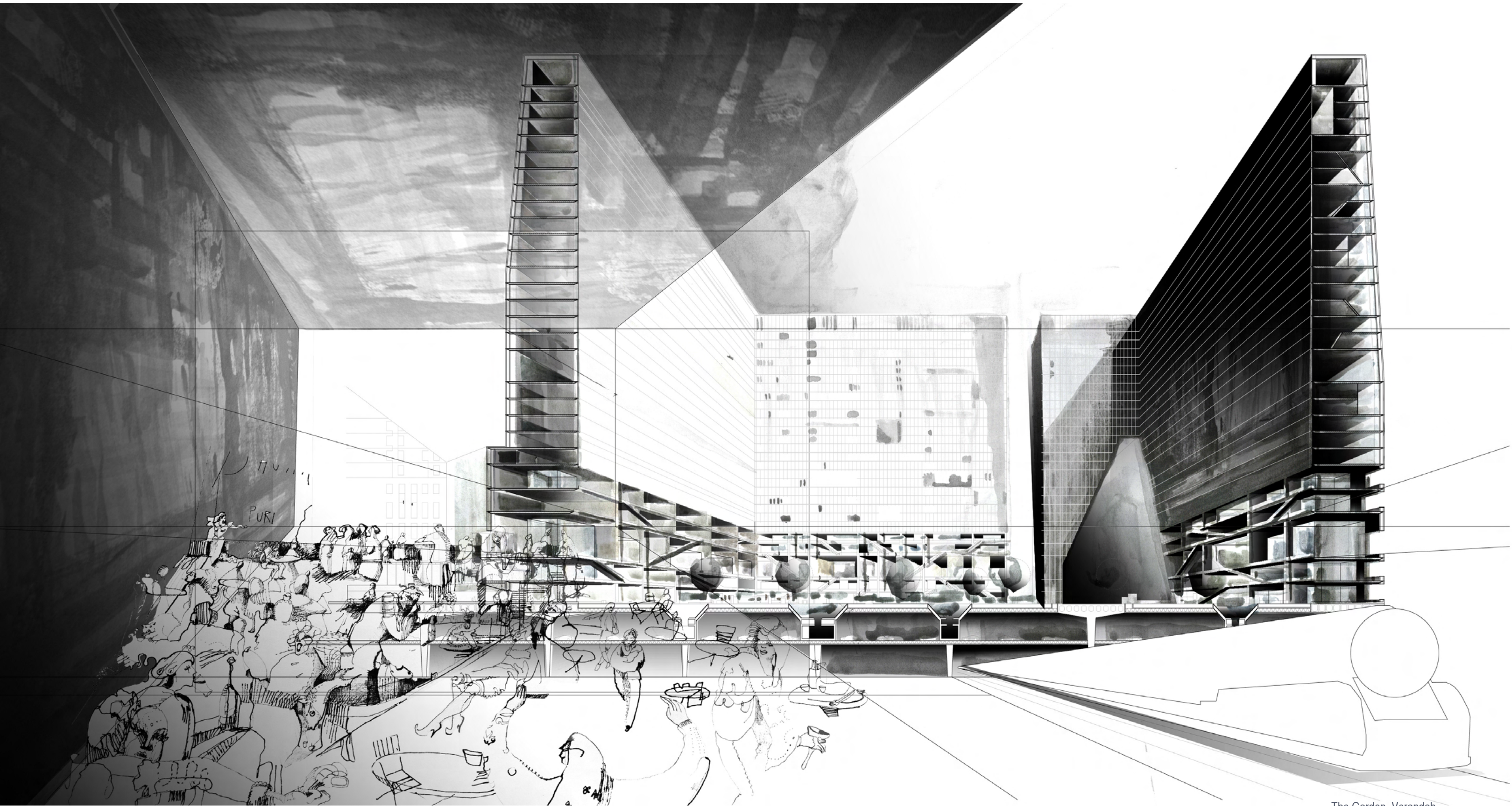


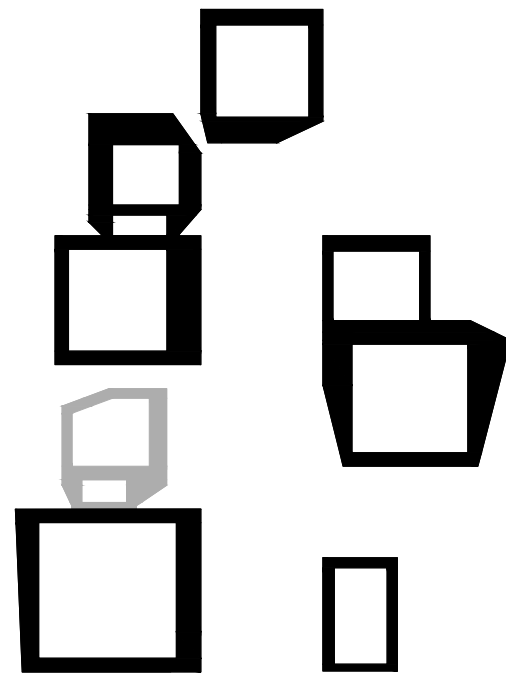
The Garden 200m x 200m
ROOMS

THE GARDEN

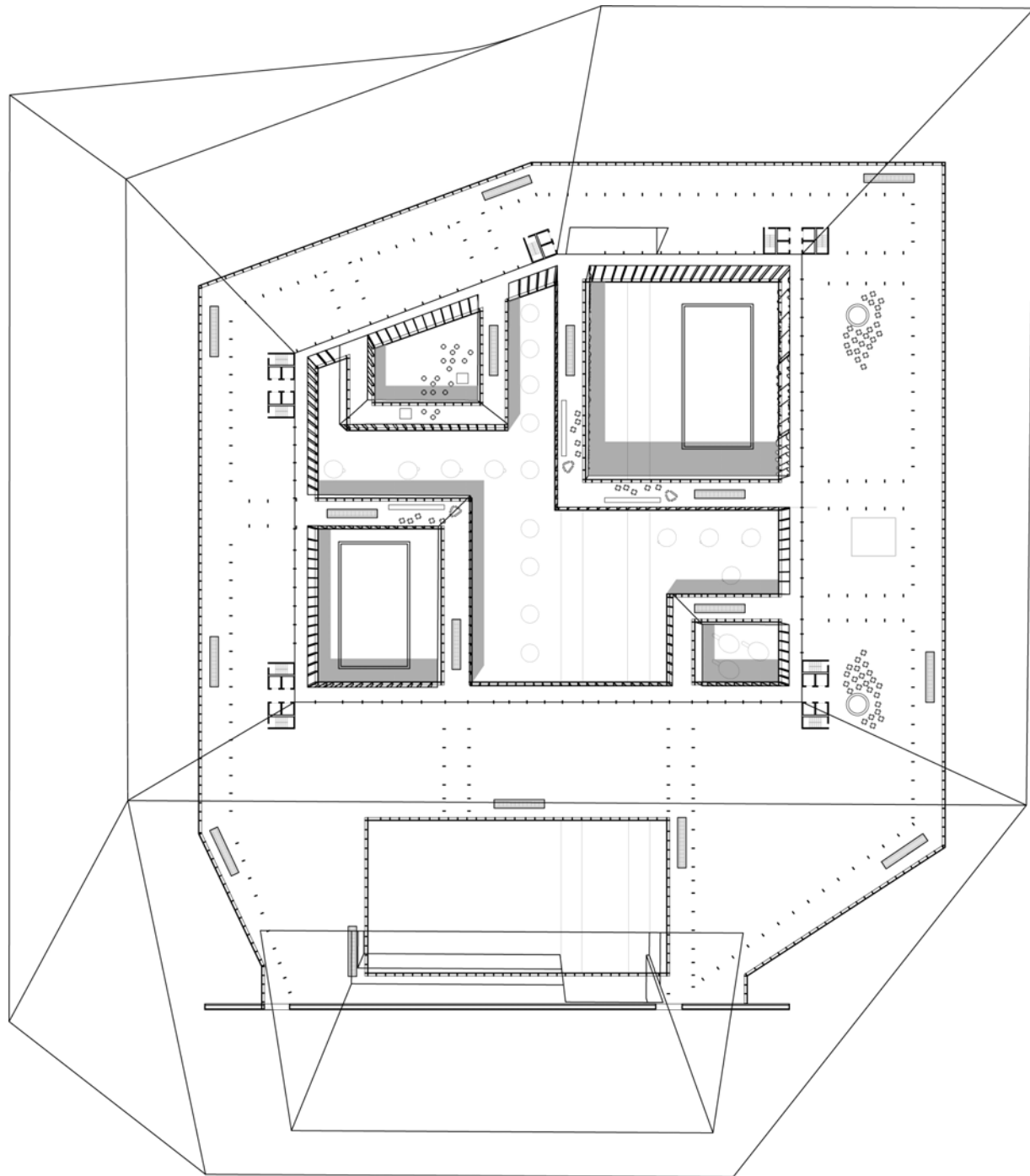
The first and perhaps most porous of the rooms is the walled garden. Based loosely at the intersection of the baroque garden and the Persian charbagh, it is a combination of two spatial typologies, that of hedged rooms and the verandah. The garden proper, a consciously artificial nature of material exuberance, reinforces the circular relationship between the private and public, through an embroidery of nested hedged rooms. Ranging in size between a bedroom and a basketball court, they offer a variety of programmatic possibilities, which create spaces for individual occupation within the larger structure. The mat uses the principles of the nested rooms within a field to re-interpret the principles of 'broderie', as defined by the traditional Baroque garden. The baroque garden has been chosen for its close affiliation with the design of nature as an architectural or urban space. The Baroque garden quantifies space through a series of hierarchical divisions, which both elaborate its scale and at the same time, allow it to be experienced as a succession of urban modules, which use the scale of the body as a datum. The second reason, is that its graphic complexity allows for it to be consumed as a visual tapestry from the occupied walls which surround it. It is also a method by which the enclave enforces a variety of surveillance over the garden, and points to the circular nature of spatial appropriation within the privately owned public interior. The basic principles involve creating a parterre; the axial division of the gardens into smaller parts by the major path or artery. This method for organising the garden also has its origins in the Char Bagh, the Persian garden, upon which many Indian gardens were designed during the Mughal Period. The Walled garden has a strong history in Indian landscape design and is thus museumified in some respects through the first room.

The first 5 floors of the slabs which surround the garden are defined by the concrete shelves of the verandah, which house hermetically sealed glazed containers. These host a range of commercial activities, from the popular fast food restaurants to the higher end boutiques, inviting a diverse public. The two major axis, defined by the walls, lead either into the following room or the Maidan, through porous internal walls. These axis provides the projection of a spatial plenitude beyond the reality of the plan.





THE HOTEL LOBBY

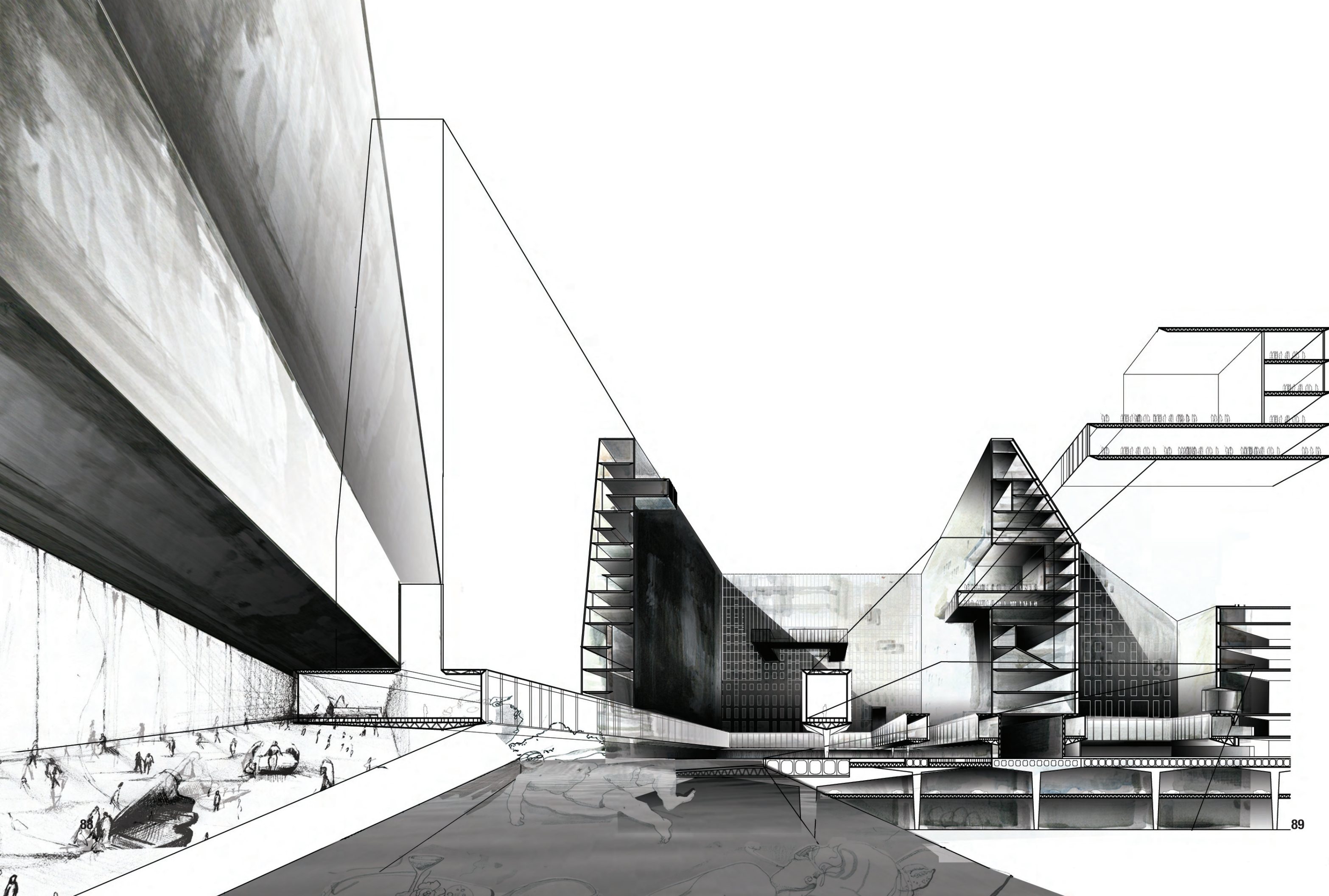


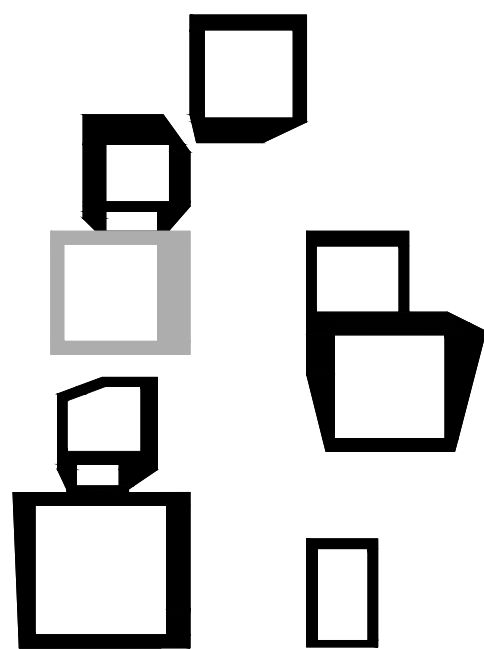
The Hotel Lobby 175m x 150m

ROOMS

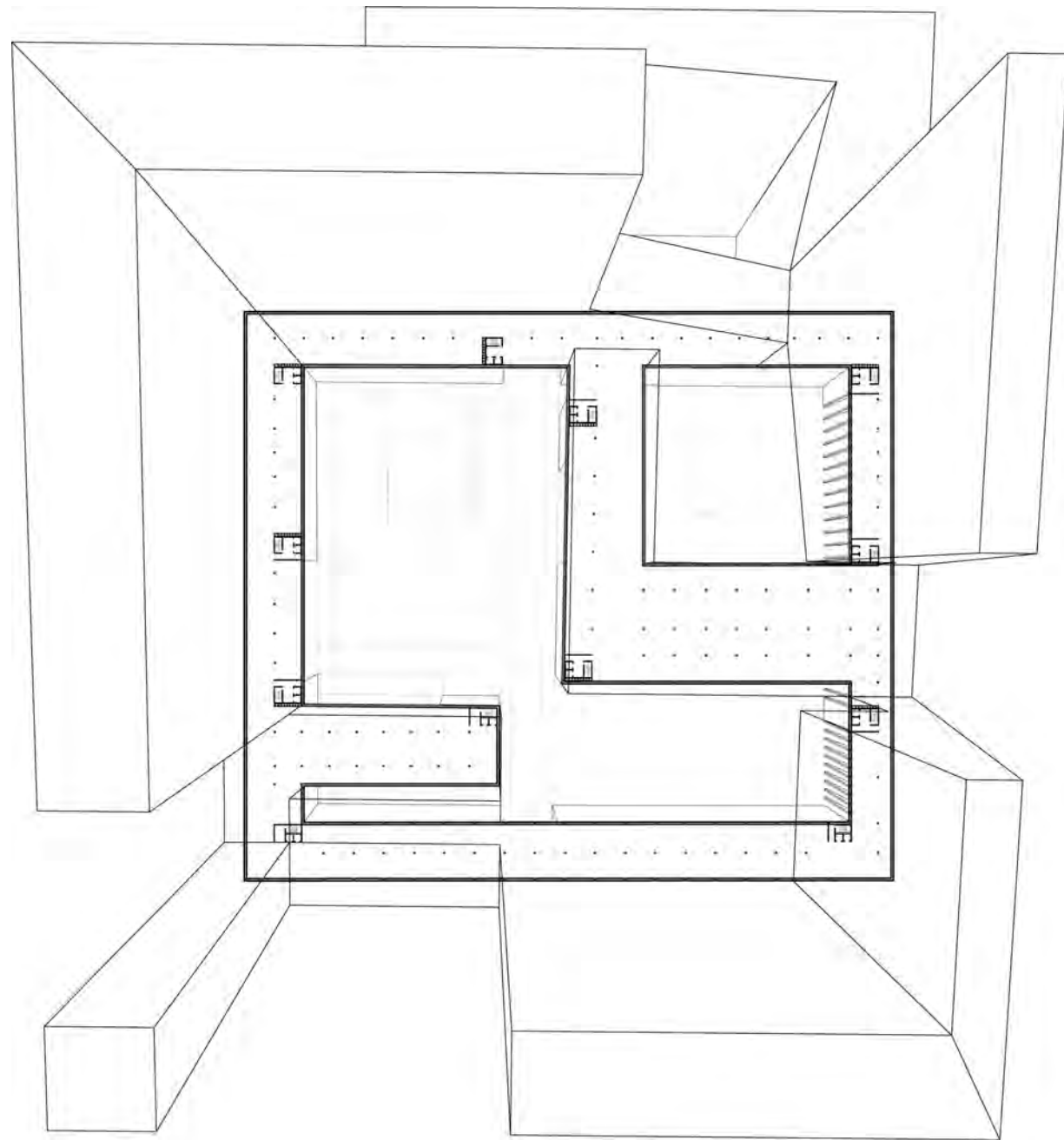
THE HOTEL LOBBY

Interiority raises important questions as to the weight placed on enclosure as a medium of control both environmental and social. As certain spatial conditions that exacerbate the division of two types of public are attributed increasing value, the space of the city also comes to exist as a structure of hierarchies, within which some are permitted and others are not. The Hotel Lobby is one such space. No other public interior is as definitive in pointing to social stratification in India as the 5 star Hotel lobby. The cafes, retail paths, piano bars and lounge suites, offers a locus for urban relief and simultaneously all contained in one space point to the horrors of our contemporaneity in their thinly veiled disney narratives. These are collated and organised into a continuous lobby space which itself forms the urban datum of the second room. Its typological form, a hybrid between a plinth and a path, echoes in the anti-urban sentiments of the hotel lobby as both a space elevated from the ground plane and untouched by the sufferance of the external city as it unites multiple buildings, and also contrived by the path, emphasizing it as a space of transition, which evades any sort of permanent occupation. As the plinth navigates the interior of the room, it creates a secondary layer of rooms, which are defined by the implied boundaries of the elevated plinth. These secondary rooms, exposed to the elements, absorb the external programs of the hotel from swimming pools to manicured lawns these follies are simply the plot lines for any number of extra-circular activities for the urban elite.





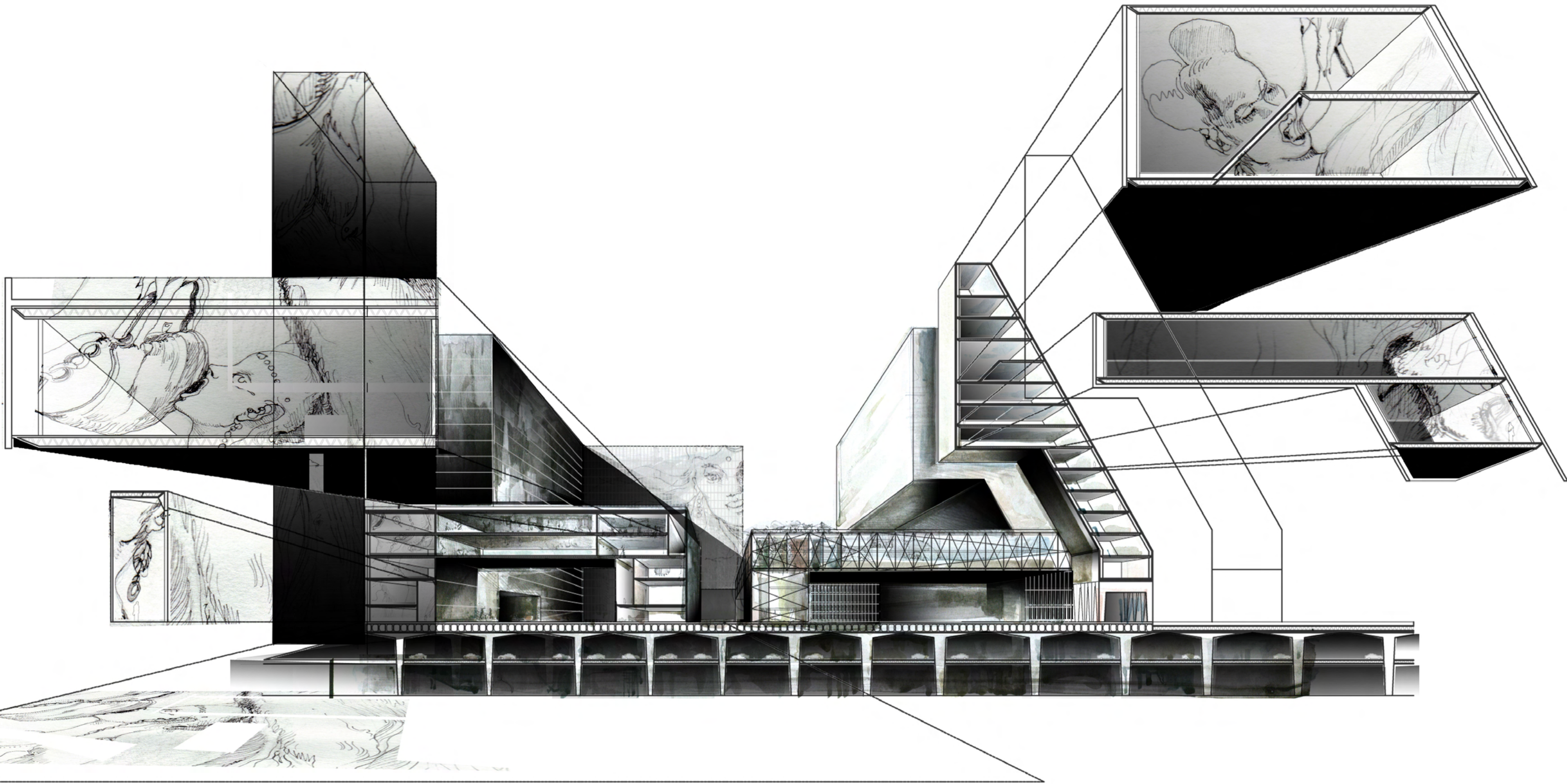
THE MALL

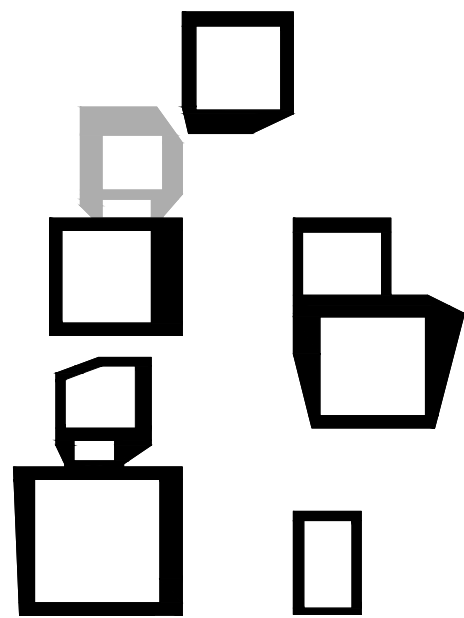


The Mall 215m x 190m
ROOMS

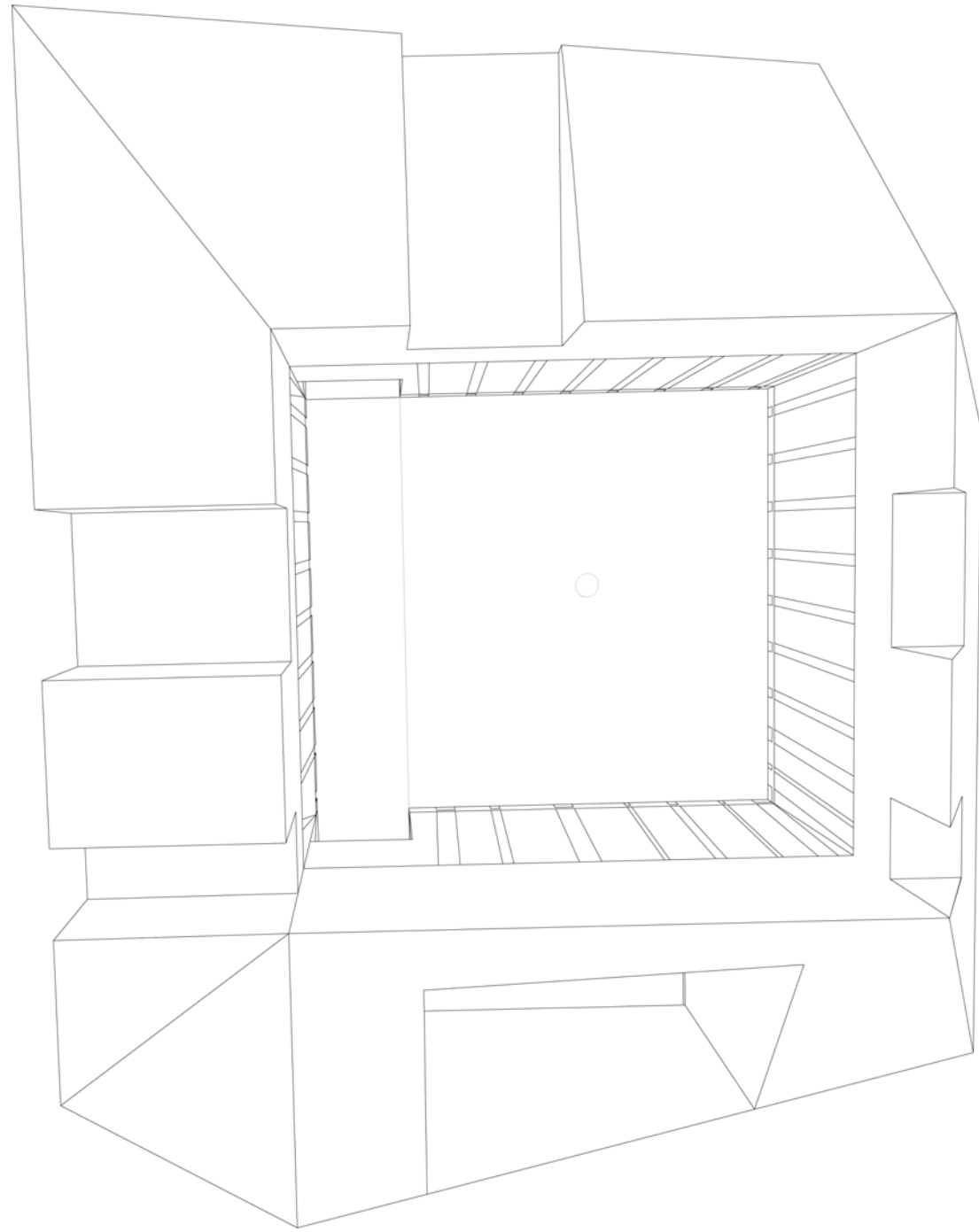
THE MALL

The mall, has maintained itself as the total expression of economy in contemporary Western culture. The Mall in India however, is a reasonably new phenomena. It has been traditionally defined by its horizontal spread as it maximises the labyrinthine path, which contains its audience for as long as possible. The path is also defined by its environmental totality, as itself a type of museum space within a hermetically sealed container. As the space, which is supposed to be the most analogous to the city street, the path is here represented as a mutated version of this linearity. Given its confined space it is forced to fold upon itself in the interest of retaining its audience, so that they may continue to CONSUME. The mall however, is also the most difficult typological condition to re-invent. As an age, plagued by the conversion of old urban relics of civility into one type of mall after another, it has to be assumed, that at some point in the urban future of our cities, the mall will also become a redundant program and its built form will have to find a new programmatic occasion for consumption. The most flexible typological conditions, which can be used and re-used time and again by any number of different programs, maintain two primary characteristics. The first is that the façade space is maximised so that they can easily be divided without the loss of access to natural light. The second characteristic is that the circulation allow for the maximum amount of loading along its length. The mall has therefore been organised as the re-configuration of the cube to maximise the amount of façade, whilst maintaining its interiority and pre-empting its possible re-configuration for future programs. The design of cities, is the design not of projective forms, which demystify the possibilities of the future, but rather forms which are firmly present in their aesthetic integrity and yet flexible enough to absorb programmatic redundancies.





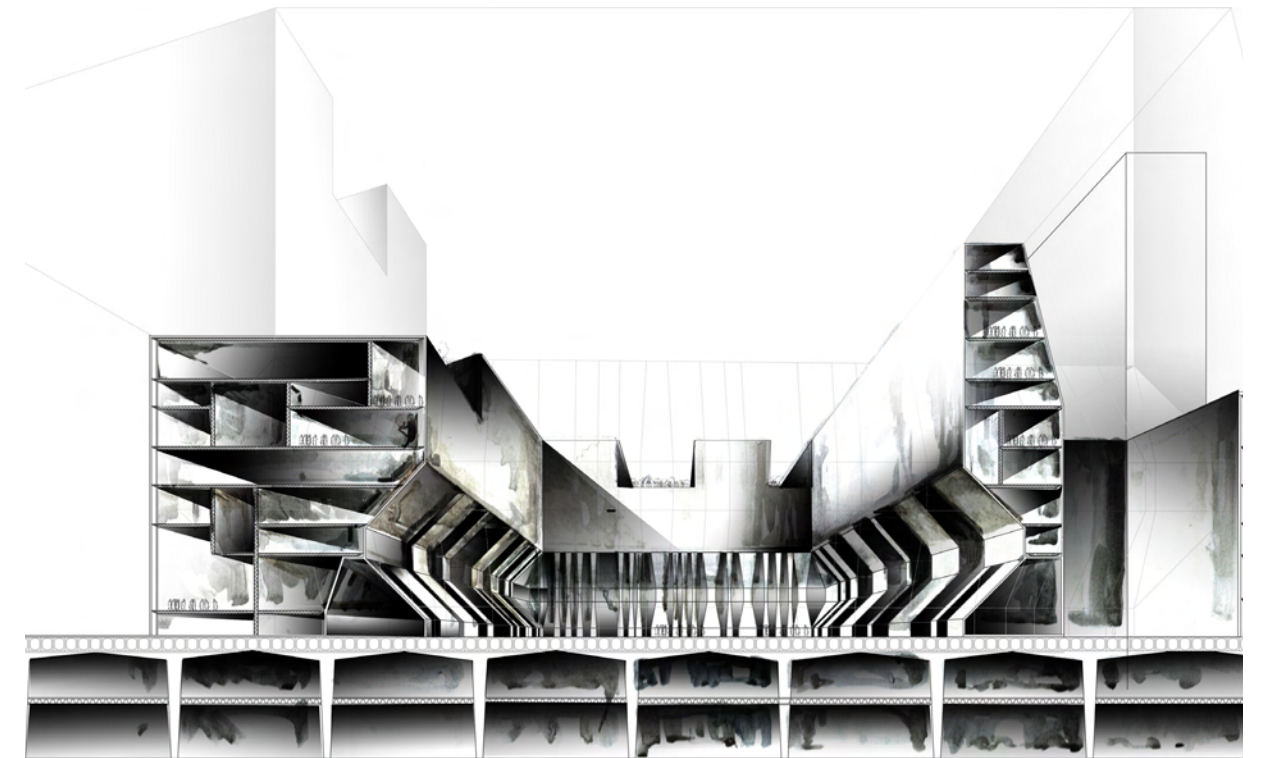
THE PLAZA



The Plaza 180m x 165m
ROOMS

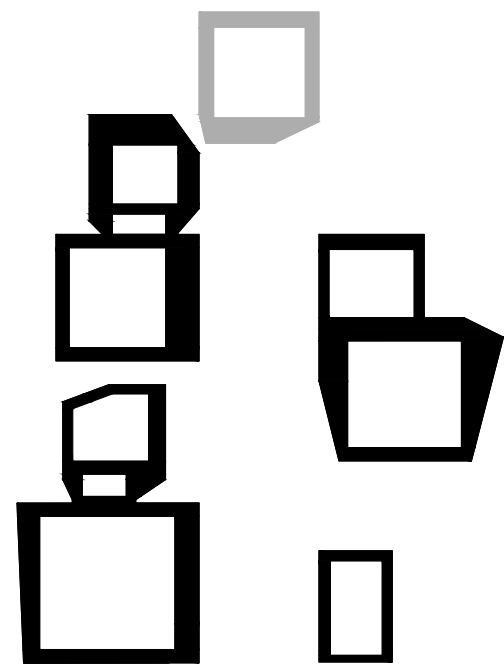
THE PLAZA

Whilst the market requests that each room be filled with rentable space. The city in all its complexity is as much about its voids as it is about its solids. The plaza, the traditional space of civic gathering, is defined not by the manner in which the void is filled, but rather by how its perimeter is defined. The aesthetic of this space emerges, solely from the relief of the solid. It is then a space characterized by the depth in its perimeter, in the most arcadian sense.

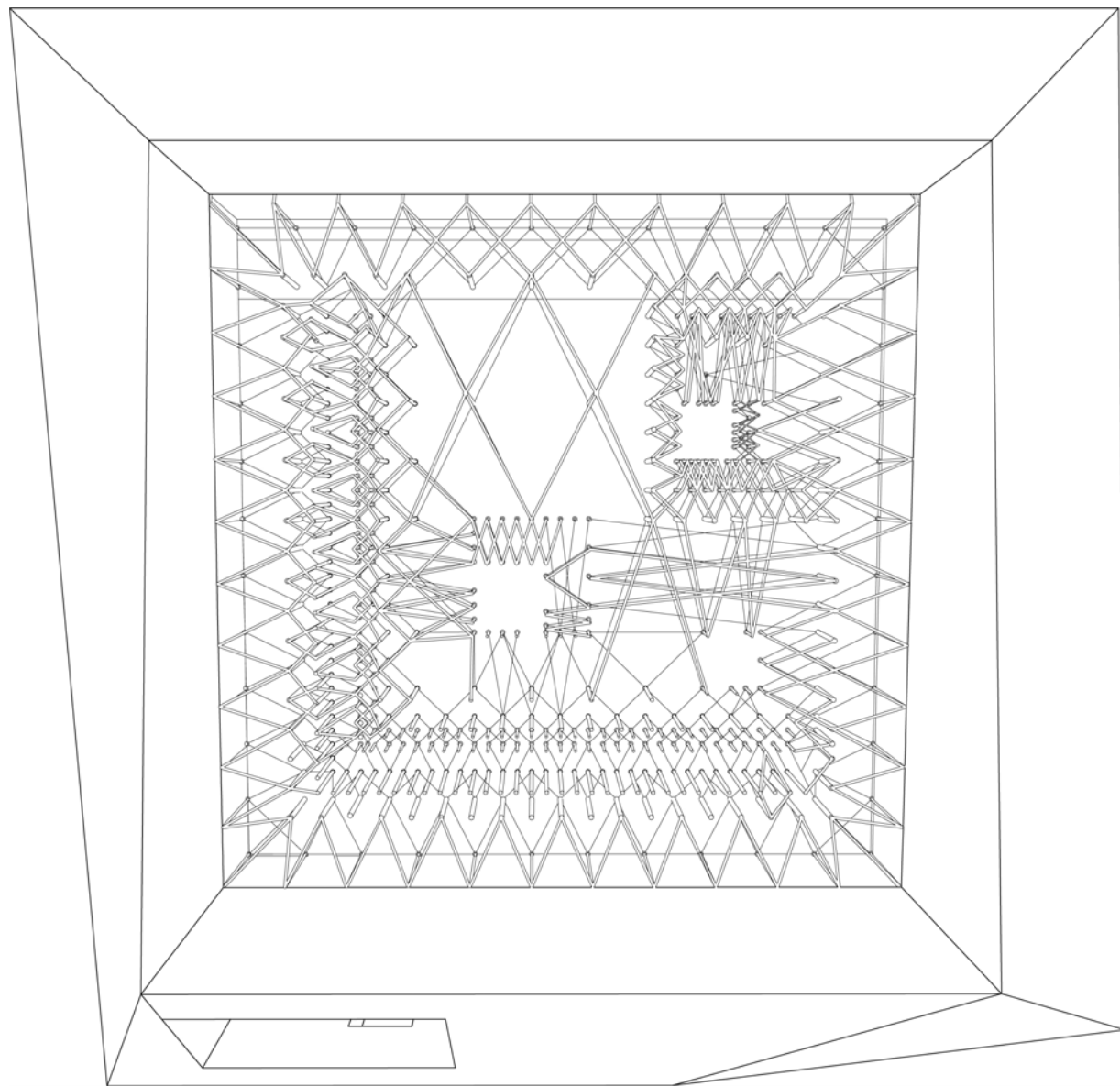


ROOMS

The Plaza
99



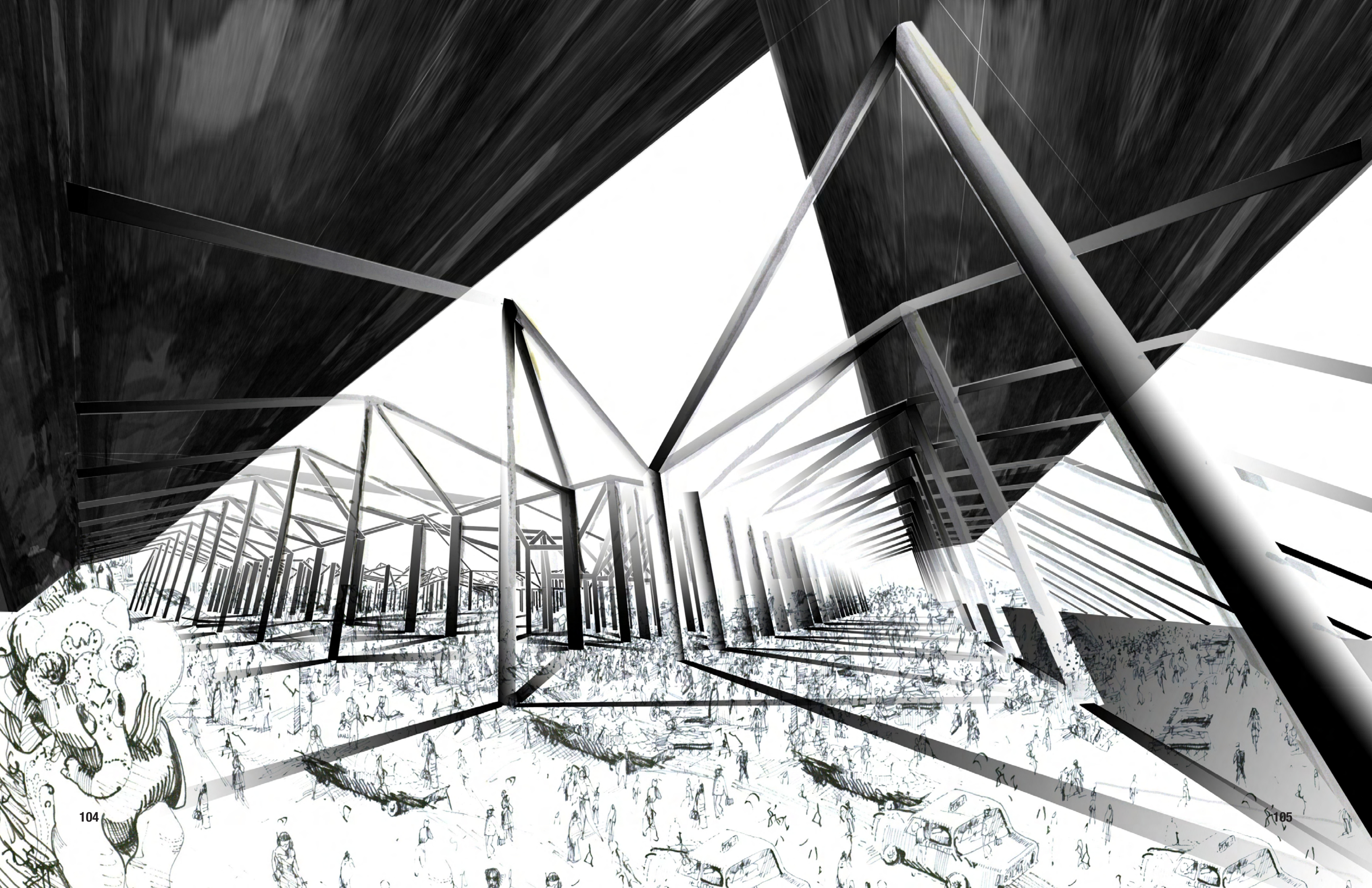
THE HYPOSTYLE HALL

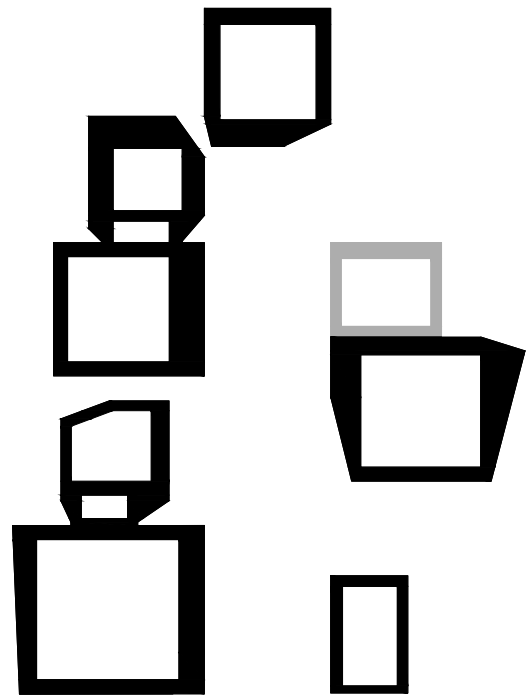


The Hypostyle Hall 180m x 200m
ROOMS

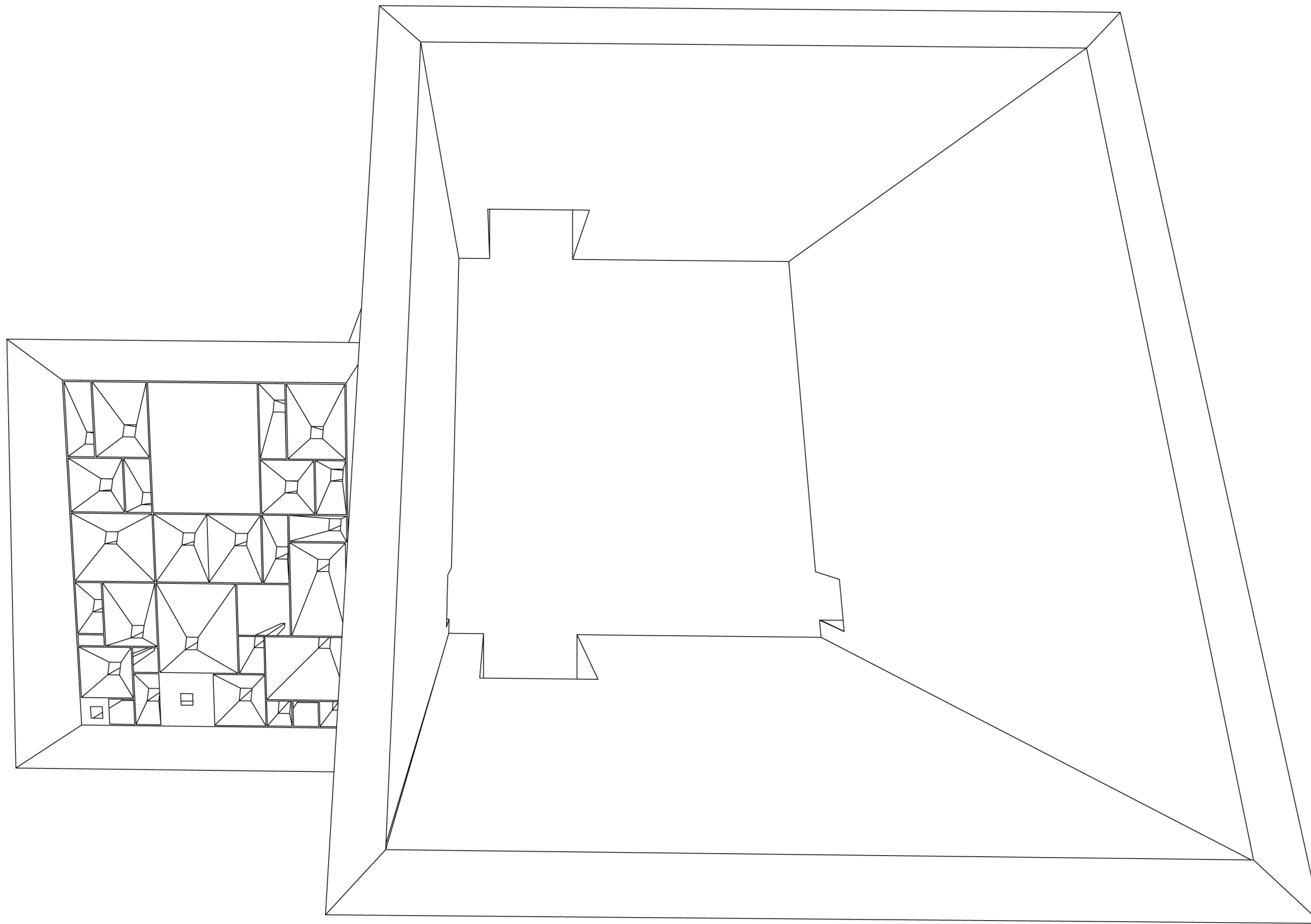
THE HYPOSTYLE HALL

Amongst all of the rooms, the hypostyle hall offers the most indiscriminate theatre for public use, from markets to public celebrations. The hall itself stands autonomous from the peripheral walls, which surround it. In India it finds itself a sure bet accessory to the business of weddings, a recession proof trade, which traverses all social classes. This type of typological condition, absorbs a host of different programs, from the market hall to the wedding tent, it is in many respects one of the most spatially flexible structures. It is however, usually defined by its homogeneity and uniform structuring. The sheer scale of this space within the project called for the exploitation of the grid to create hierarchies of different sized rooms, which allow for the hall to be occupied in parts. However, as the scale of wedding celebrations become indicative of the rising middle class, the scale of the space in all its monumentality becomes symbolic of the weight placed on these outward displays of prosperity.



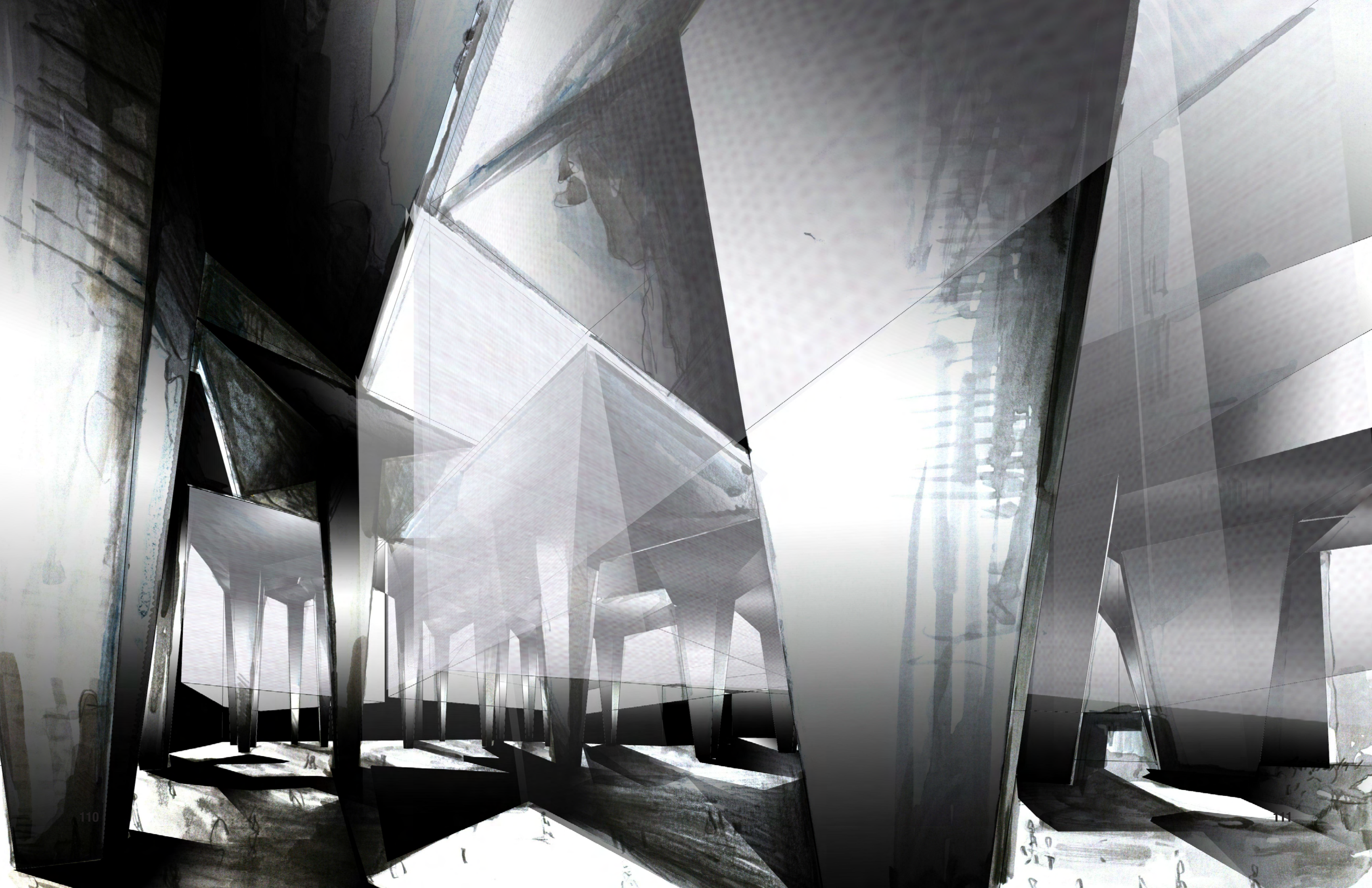


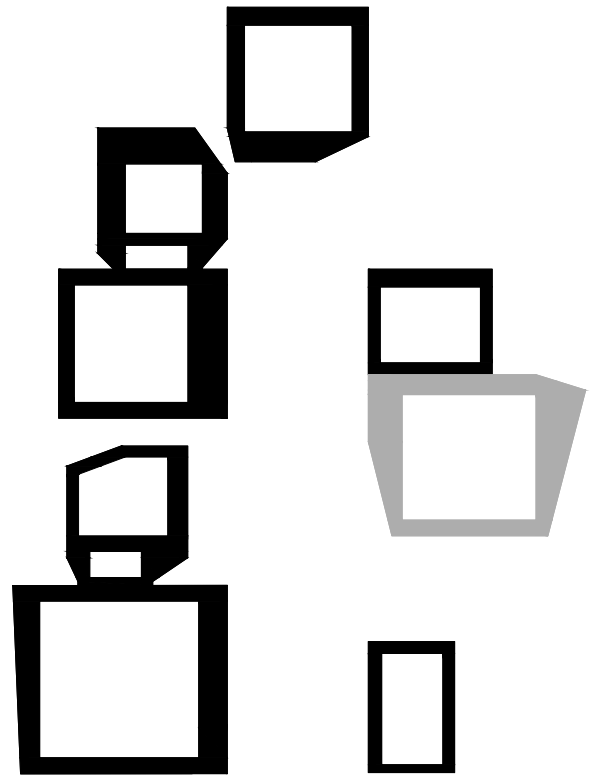
THE FOYER



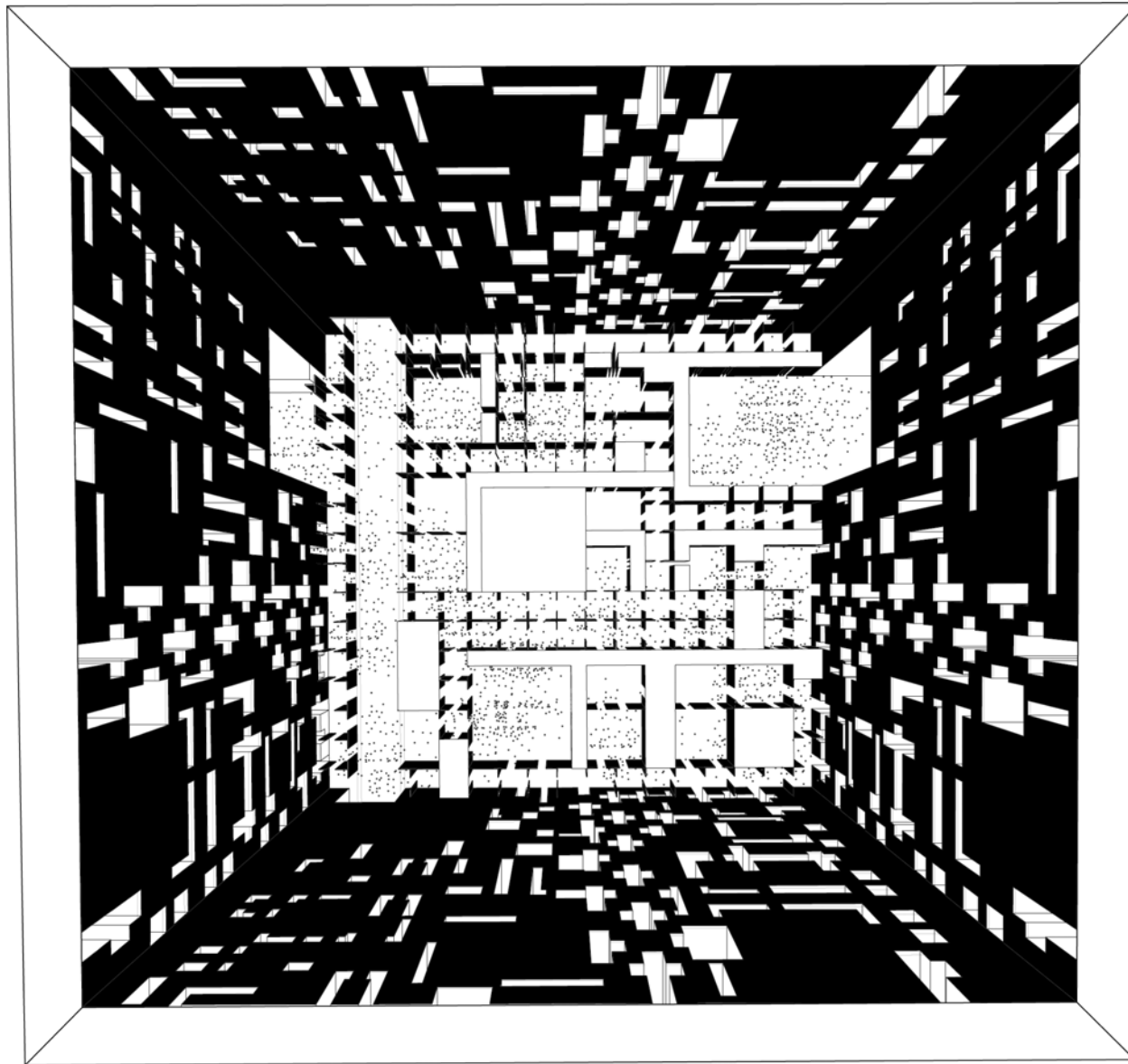
THE FOYER

The Foyer, as the anti-chambre to the theatre space is defined once again by the implication of boundaries. In this manner its scale is never diluted and yet its volume is nevertheless divided by a series of smaller containers. These containers are a stacked layer of curtain, which use the topography of the roof to divide the foyer into a series of upside down rooms. In this manner the foyer never overshadows the volume of the theatre, yet it remains nevertheless dramatic in its totality. The topography of the roof itself is structured to allow for a network of water harvesting facilities. The Foyer exploits its interiority in the most explicit sense. It contains each space, and yet retains its urbanity only by way of the visual porosity between each space, which offers the possibility of escape from the first.





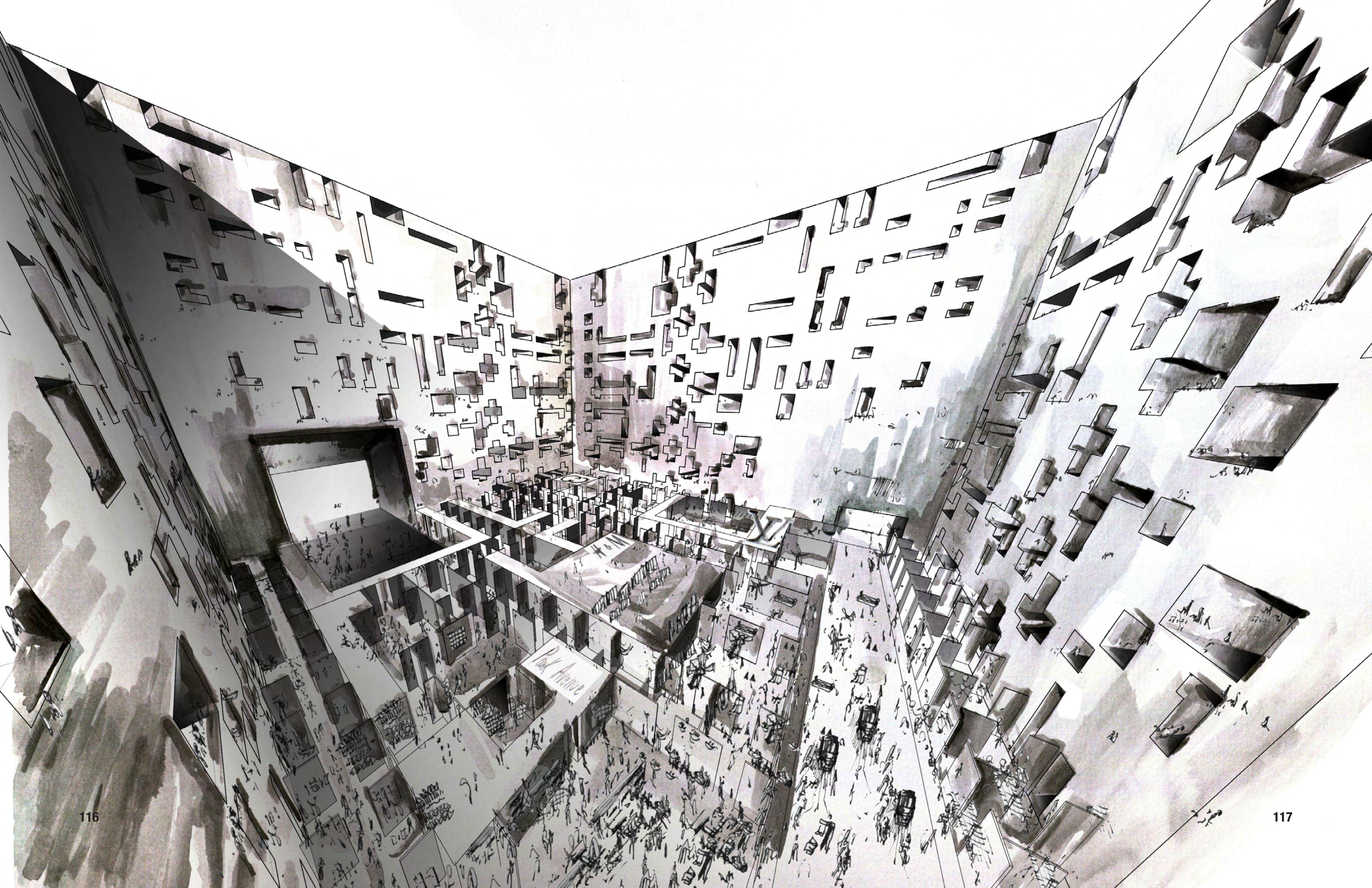
THE MUSEUM

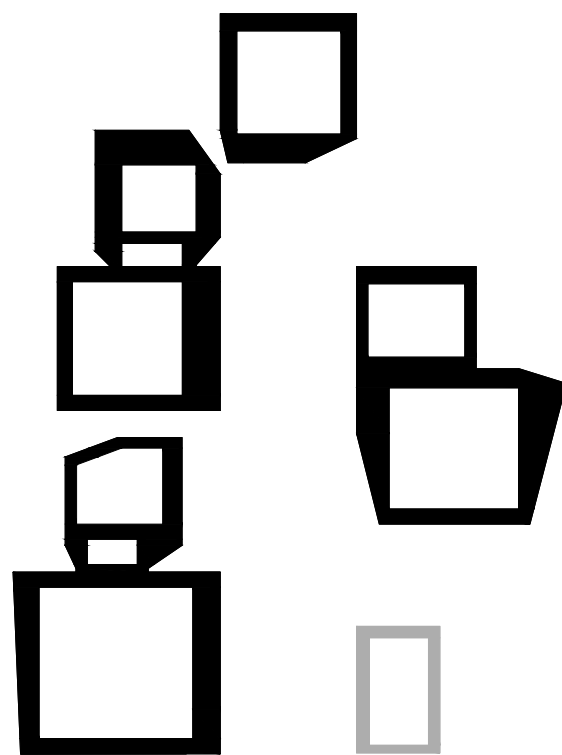


The Museum 250m x 215m
ROOMS

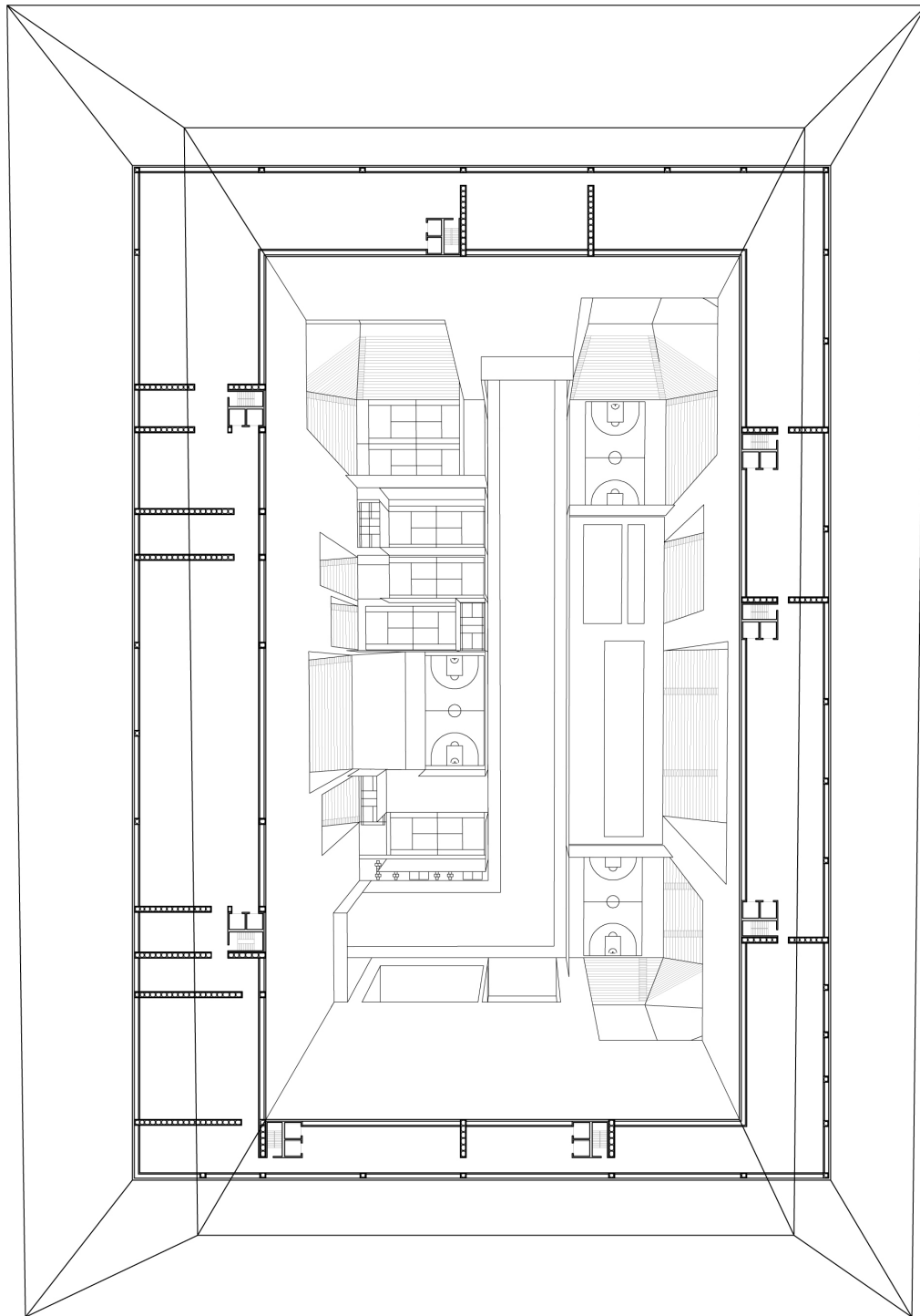
THE MUSEUM

The Museum is a synthesis of sorts of the city. A microcosm of enfiladed rooms, which as a typological condition are as much like an exhibition space as they are like Ikea, it is a hyperbolic example of the contemporary predicament, where the city as per its more traditional datums has been added to the list of themeparks for which we have nostalgia. With the abolition of corridors and passageways, each space from the smallest anti-chambre to the largest room become destinations, a succession of curated urban conditions, from squares to passages. The museum, is many ways also the summation of the thesis, where two entirely different typological conditions, the slab and the mat, can interface as a space of total design, but only within the confines of its own form, and still allow for different possibilities of appropriation and re-use to take place on the ground plane.





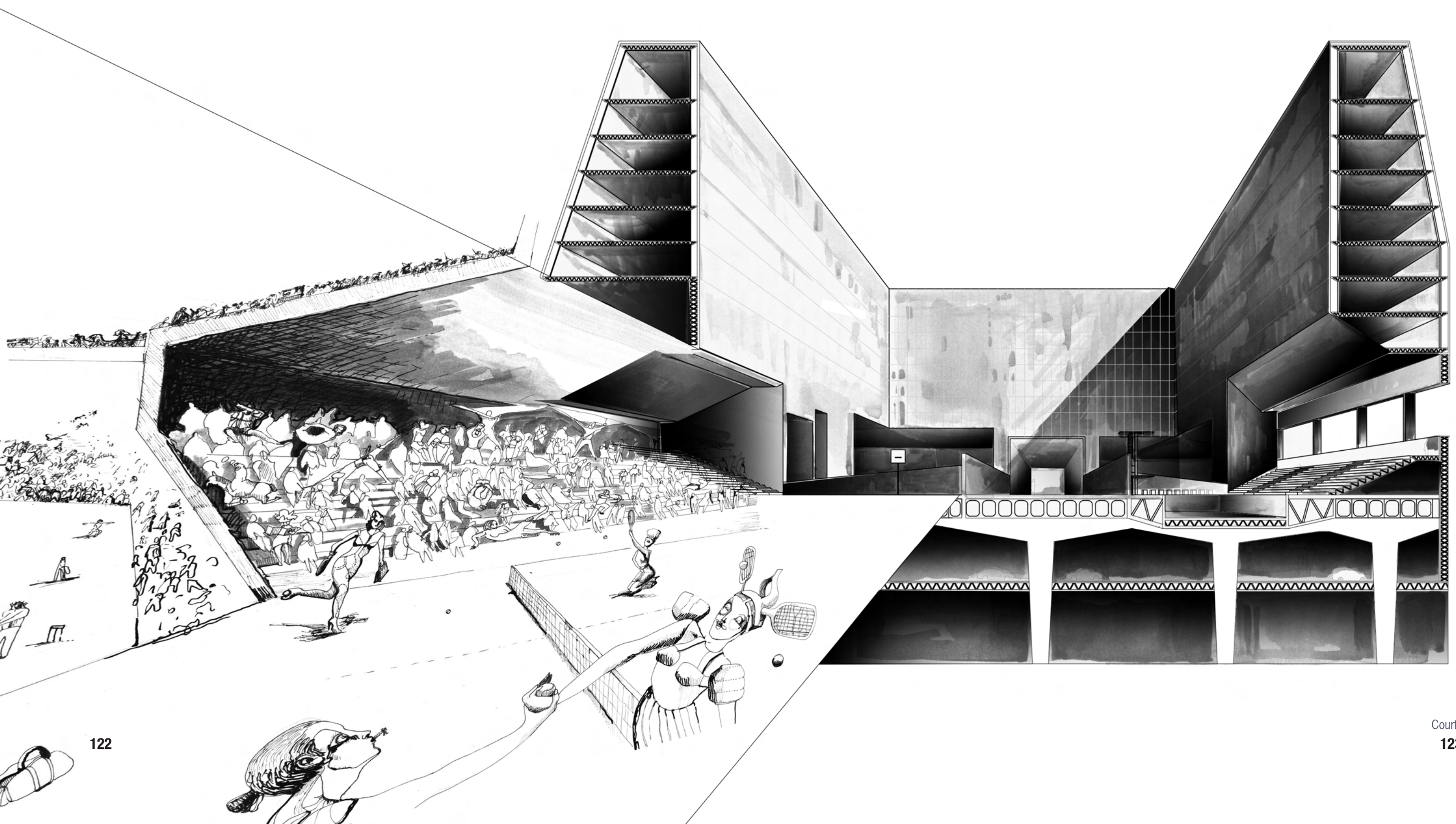
COURTS

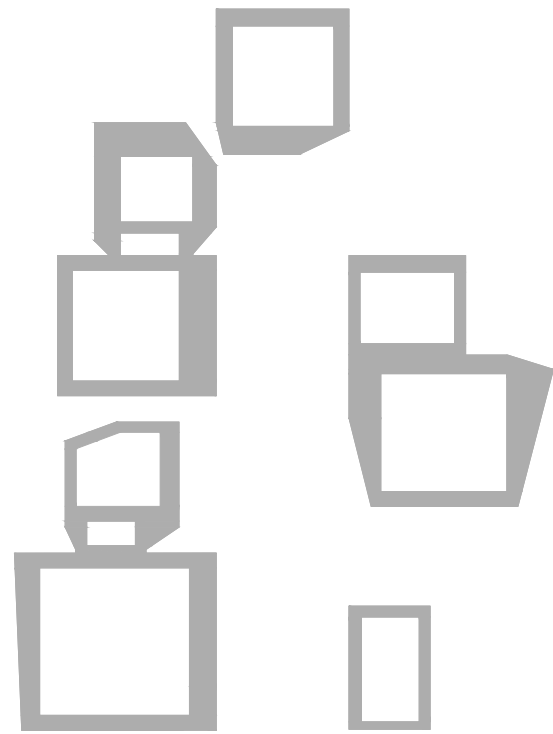


Courts 110m x 170m
ROOMS

COURTS

The 8th and last of the enclosed rooms is the playground, defined by another of the most fundamental systems for ordering space: The Court. Sports courts have historically always been distributed throughout the city as variety of urban void. Whilst the notion of play is very well established in congruence with the Indian street, more official sports facilities, tend to be few and far between and for the better part a luxury reserved for the upper middle class, in private clubs and hotels. The 8th room is therefore organised through a series of courts, the dividing walls determine the boundary of each court. The walls absorb the stadium facilities and seating for each space, depending on the sport and the size of the court. The pragmatism of this spatial structure, allows for a bridge condition to be formed by the program within the walls, which is elevated high above the large spans of the court facilities. The wall, which borders the Maidan also serves as a stadium facility in inverse, for the more informal sporting field offered by the maidan.





THE MAIDAN

MAIDAN

The 9th Room, for want of a better analogy is the Maidan. The Maidan, has been heralded as one of the most important types of public space within the contemporary Indian city. This space characterized by a generous untended field, a type of utilitarian void in the centre of the dense urban fabric of the city is a state space of civitas. It lies in stark contrast to the excesses of the individual rooms, and has a fundamentally more generous capacity to collate the public.

The Maidan has been theorised extensively by landscape Architect Anuradha Mathur. Mathur, traces the history of the Maidan to the Mughal Empire in India, at which point it was characterised as a vast open space, enclosed by a settlement. This form resonated in the colonial cities of India, such as Mumbai and Kolkata as a version of the British commons, which maintains a similar history of appropriation. Mathur classifies it as simultaneously a nomadic space and one of a collective.³⁷ She makes a concerted effort to define that despite its lack of embellishment and design the mere process of levelling the earth to create these vast plains within the city allowed the Maidan to rise as a designed civic space within the city. Its vastness resists domesticity within the urban, it is a landscape of immensity which does not lend itself to the characteristics of a singular spatial entity. In this regard it is what Mathur refers to as a nomadic space. And yet in parallel, this vastness and the absence of an aesthetic allowed for it to be owned by the collective. Mathur elaborates on the significance of these vast neutral planes in the future of Indian cities, as they flatten the public into a collective as no other state or media mechanism might be able to do, and it is in its expression of commonness that lies the real power of the Maidan.

*'In cities of increasingly circumscribed social, racial or economic enclaves, the Maidan has come to both symbolize and provide neutral territory, a ground where people can gather on a common plane. It is a place that offers freedom without obligation. This ability to accommodate a diverse range of social and political structures makes the maidan an extremely significant space in the city. It is a place where people can touch the spirit of commonness.'*³⁸

37 Mathur, Anuradha, 'Neither Wilderness nor Home: The Indian Maidan,' published in *Recovering Landscapes*, pg.207

38 Mathur, Anuradha, 'Neither Wilderness nor Home: The Indian Maidan,' published in *Recovering Landscapes*, pg.215



1.

1. Oval Maidan Mumbai
Next Page: Maidan within the enclave
700m x 150m

According to the logic of neo-liberal economics, to create this void on terrain ripe with developmental potential, it would have to be paired with the walls built by private enterprise. These walls represent the sad reality through which the city is increasingly having to barter territory in order to achieve many of its infrastructural goals. And yet in light of this dialectic, a new ground plane takes shape as a space of possibility. It is possible only because despite its vast scale, it is today designed as a room.



ROOMS

As a product of both the architectural and urban environments, the room presents itself as an abstract spatial tool through which to oscillate between the scales and mutually exclusive aesthetics of the two disciplines. Abstraction, as defined by Sigfried Giedion is 'a withdrawal from the particular in order to obtain the general.'¹ It allows for a form to carry an over-arching philosophy through artistic expression, making it significantly more conducive to transcendence through time, scale and iteration. Forms, which maintain a measure of abstraction in their representation of the machinic reality of building, develop a level of opacity through a veiled dialogue with the lay world. This veil is a sort of abstract media. It enables them to be read at multiple levels and forces the audience to question how they understand both the city and the building. The room is this variety of opaque form. It is the abstraction of the most fundamental spatial building block, which has been represented through a reductive architecture for the city, so as not to distract from the real project, the space itself. It exchanges the narcissism of the autonomous object for the monumentality of the void. The void as a collective space is then a vehicle for participation. It is a means by which the discipline can re-claim the right to an opinion. To a public sphere defined by architecture. A right which capitalist development took from architecture in the late 19th century. The great irony is that the void cannot exist without the walls which enable it, and it does not shy away from the reality that once established as a formal precedent the market can and will exploit it, through scale, shape and program, as has been demonstrated through each of the rooms. Its walls also distinguish it from the megastructure as complete geometric form they enforce space as a module of urbanism, rather than an island totality. What appears as an object type mass from the exterior, is hollowed to allow for a nested space of civility to emerge within. A space within which the enclavic walls and the porous ground floor meet as a two independant, yet co-dependant projects which intesect to create a complete space, but only within the confines of its own form. As each room aggregates it retains an aesthetic coherence of a larger form and thus allows both disciplines to begin broaching the task of negotiating the boundaries between the absolute form of the architectural object and the formlessness of the city as we have come to know it.

¹ Giedion, Sigfried, *Architecture and the Phenomena of Transition*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1971



View from N.M Joshi Marg

The concept of space links the mental and the cultural, the social and the historical. By reconstituting a complex process: discovery (of new or unknown spaces, of continents or of the cosmos) - production (of the spatial organization characteristic of each society) - creation (of oeuvres: of landscapes, the city with monumentality and decor). A process that is gradual, genetic (with a 'genesis'), but follows a logic: the general form of simultaneity; because every spatial mechanism rests on the juxtaposition in the intelligence and on the material assembly of elements from which we produce simultaneity.'

Henri Lefebvre, 1986, La Production d'espace, Preface to the new Edition

CONCLUSION

Henri Lefebvre's definition of a space is the construction of a bounded interior, it is the establishment of enclosure around a void upon which a social value is placed. Boundaries can be established at multiple levels, a state boundary, political borders or the structure attributed to the design of a city. Once again the co-productive nature of the built environment is revealed, in what Lefebvre terms simultaneity. That space, like artefacts, carries symbolic meaning, as social structures create the space of the city, and cities subsequently create new social structures.

Space, is a constructed ideal upon which certain values are imposed. Our perceptions of the value of urban space is fundamental to how it is produced and consumed. This perception has evolved dramatically over the course of the 20th century, and even more so in different parts of the world. From the territorial division of space for the production of the enclave, to the fences built around the urban or suburban home, the city is one of the most archaic sites of division. It hinges, as a collective form, on the spatial demarcations of who goes where, who stays in and who stays out. In the end it matters little what the conditions are behind this reality, quite simply what remains is that walls are built, and forms take shape to define the space of one public over another. Although the division of space is always a matter of social engineering based on politics, economics or any other governing parameters, to speak of forms as vehicles of social engineering is a more difficult question.

When Tafuri lay bare the complexities behind why the Utopian visions of a city which assembled a collective through the very nature of its form were impossible under any type of liberal democratic circumstances, he felt himself to be curing the discipline of the malaise, which comes with the belief that forms are a medium for social engineering. Tafuri's anti-participatory approach which later came to be defined as the project of autonomy has found a great following in the last 30 years and has paralleled global economic reforms very well. Or rather, it is Neo-liberal economics that have enforced the autonomous project onto the discipline, and participation has been left to the periphery of the discourse. Whilst its reign has been powerful, whether it will remain so is questionable. Today as the West sees a conscious shift of priorities following a major economic collapse, it becomes exemplary of what might readily happen in the developing world at some point too. As the ivory tower collapses around THE Architect, we are made all too aware of the discipline's sudden struggle for relevance. In light of this looming future this thesis sought to underscore why participation through a

formal discourse is still important. The methodology for participation is however, no longer the noisy radical manifesto which rarely receives a nod today. Rather, it is a question of how well one can bypass the rules unnoticed. Quiet participation, or what has been theorised as quasi-autonomy is a space of practice which re-engages the sociological conditions which the discipline has become so comfortable at ignoring. So whilst the project of autonomy may have found its counterpart in the organisation of the city as the clustering of introspective objects that stand as icons in the city. In this thesis the project of quasi-autonomy engages the city through a projective space, wherein the void is the icon, and the absence of development is attributed a new value. The price of this absence, has been shown to be the necessary construction of the enclave as a vessel for the void.

The sad contemporary reality is that the city as an enclave, even in its temporal condition, enables the production of some of the most valuable types of urban infrastructure, including designed public space. When these structures are built on islands within the density of the city, the space, which qualifies as a privately owned public interior has to cater in parallel to the city and the enclave. It has to therefore project a formal integrity, which dissociates it from the conditions which produced it and cannot thus assume the characteristics of total design. Characteristics which have come to be so revered in these developments; and even more so within the discipline in its contemporary state of introspection. When footprints offer the designer a scale which exists precisely at the intersection between a very large building and a small city, the designer is forced to walk the tightrope of death by total design, and to make a self-conscious effort to know where, when and for whom to hold back the pen.

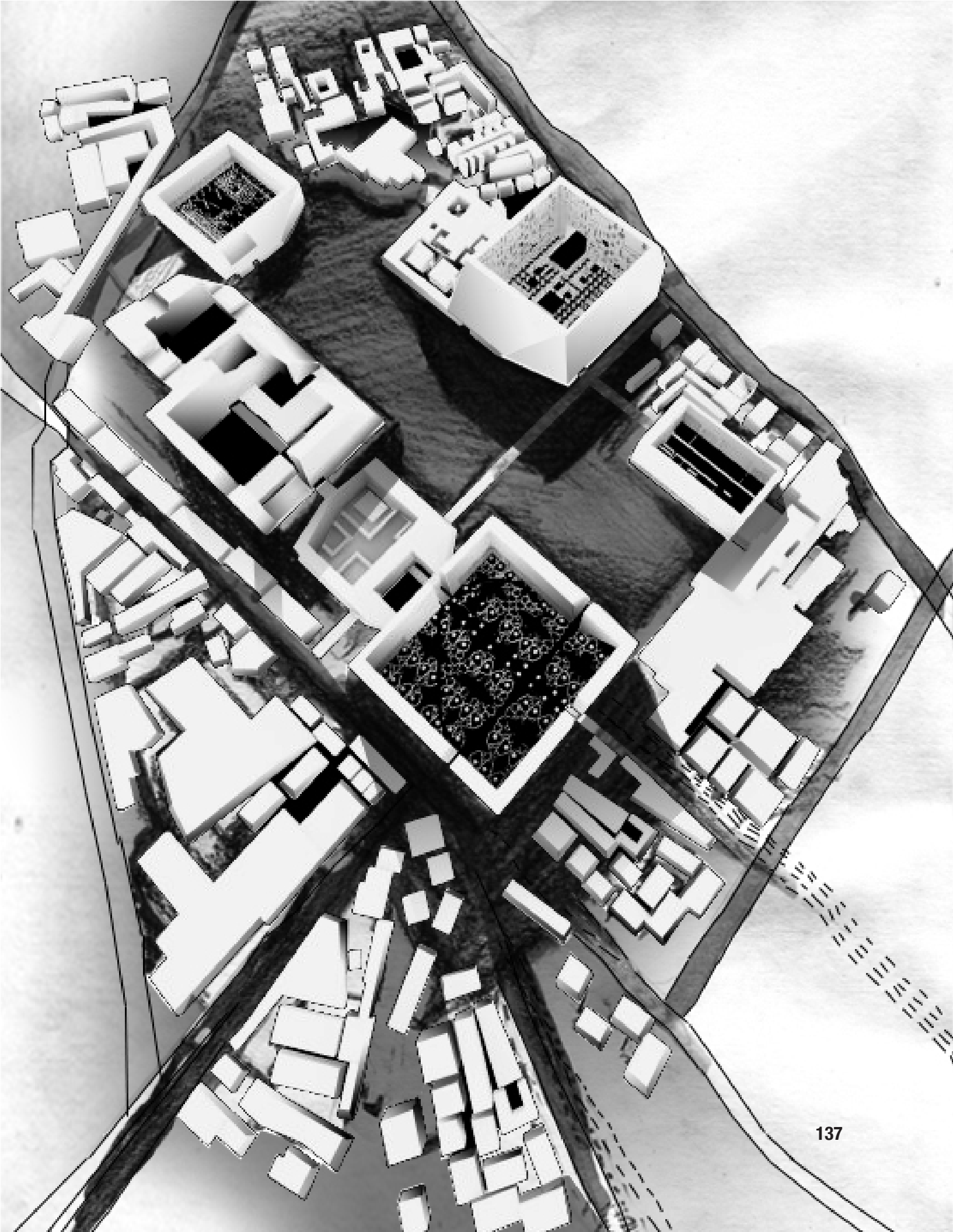
There are very few scales of urban practice at which normative statements about aesthetics can be made because of the political challenges of obtaining consensus. The discipline of urban design has leaned heavily on formal legitimisation through the sciences, through processes such as the functional planning of modernism, systems theory, or the cloaking of post-modern historicisms through the Vitruvian tradition of using the human body as a measure of scale and proportion. Rationalisation through the sciences is generally an attempt at finding consensus in an otherwise arbitrary discourse, and consensus can only be established through taking a position, and identifying a means through which to create certain universals. These universals are also an

opportunity for participation. In maintaining its subjectivity, the project of the urban interior is forced into an aesthetic decisiveness, which makes it primarily a project of form. As they straddle both architecture and urbanism in scale these forms need to project a clear aesthetic and yet remain the inert palaces that maintain a sense of formal integrity beyond their epoch and the technologies, which produced them.

This has been the reason for introducing the theory of Grossform, that differs so significantly from any type of theorisation of Megastructural form, which governs the city's aesthetics as a machinic totality from above. It resorts neither to nostalgia to revive an urban architecture of the past, nor to abnegation in its machinic authority. The Grossform is simply a theory for understanding how a form, a typological structure, might have a major morphological influence over the city. This form, which has been identified as the room, has been chosen for this very purpose. By defining a typological condition, which glorifies the idea of space (an enclosed entity) within the city, it too might have a strong morphological influence on how the city continues to develop. It also points to the somewhat extreme market friendly measures which have to be taken in order to achieve this simple outcome. The project is therefore both a manifesto for space and a satirical critique of its contemporary price tag.

As each room including the Maidan is rooted in the pragmatism of its typological condition these rooms come to resemble the urban artefacts, which emerge from the conditions of a particular epoch. They all carry meaning, they reveal the complexities of social conditions, technologies of the age, and the structures through which a society distributes value between its products.

What Benjamin saw in the Parisian arcades, and Koolhaas in suburban bigness was the expression of economy manifest in the culture of a society at a particular point in history. These rooms, these edenic islands of the much desired voids in the city are represented as an emerging expression of economy within the culture of Mumbai. They plea, perhaps too idealistically, to a variety of *do ut des* between private enterprise and the state, and in the process reveal the great comic theatre of neo-liberal economics. Nevertheless, as each room has been perforated, sliced, diced, nested, overlapped and strung together on an infrastructural platter, it seeks to provoke the collision of two distinct planes and of the respective publics they embody.



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