

Art, Entertainment and Commodities:

Eroded Boundaries in a Mixed-use Building in SoHo, New York

by
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Master of Architecture

ABSTRACT

SoHo, in New York City, is a neighborhood with an intense mixture of diverse activities. However, its character is changing as more shops are moving in and forcing existing galleries out of their street level spaces or out of the neighborhood altogether.

This project proposes a mixed-use building on an infill site in SoHo that condenses a mix of programs currently dispersed throughout the neighborhood and puts them into a single building. By integrating these diverse programs into a single design, the project confronts contemporary questions about the distinctions between art, entertainment and commodity. Within the thesis, unified modes of display, programmatic and spatial overlaps, and visual sequences are the means of architecturally eroding these boundaries.

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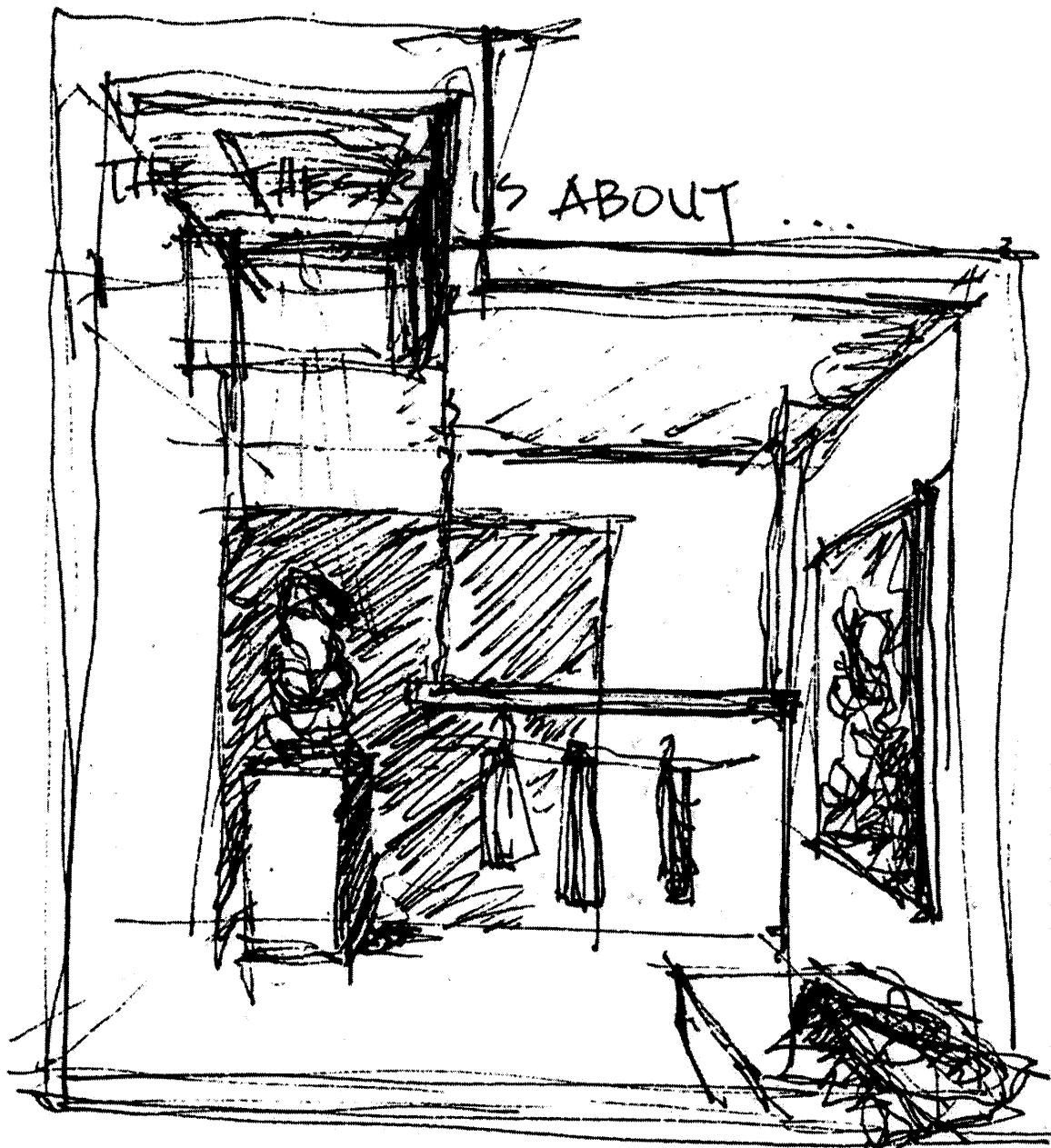


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fig. 1. 2: View of Broadway looking north from Spring Street in 1997.



fig. 1.3: View of Broadway looking south from Prince Street.

what was there before, mainly light industries and galleries, it also changes the characteristics of the neighborhood from a mix of commercial, industrial and art production to mostly commercial shops particular on street level. While the new up-scale stores and restaurants bring in economic growth to the neighborhood, but it also means the characteristics of once the center of art world is shifting to become a commercial district. The consequence is that SoHo is losing its unique characteristic and becoming like elsewhere despite the cast iron facade which most people identify with the area.

The characteristic of historical SoHo is completely disparate from the present-day dense and chaotic scene. In the 1600s, Manhattan was an uncultivated landscape filled with hills, streams, meadows, forests and marshes. There were six Native American Indian villages settled in this landscape while Dutch settlers occupied the southern tip of Manhattan. Within their confined territory, these Dutch settlers not only started to plan roads and construct buildings, but also began to cultivate land. However, in 1728, the characteristic of SoHo which was outside of the Dutch Settlement still remain rural, and the topography of the area was not as level as today's. There were vegetation along Broom Street, between Thompson and Green Streets. While Spring, Broome, and Grand Streets were swampland, west of Broome Street was the highest point in Manhattan. Settlement did not occur in the SoHo area until after 1775, when the Dutch settlers extended Broadway to the north of Canal Street because natural boundaries prevented them travel northward.¹

In the past century alone, SoHo had experienced several transformations. The neighborhood used to be one of the trendiest in New York City in the middle of the nineteenth century. People came to SoHo to shop at the department stores, to dine at the restaurants, and to stay in hotels. There were also many high-income residents living in great wood frame houses at the time. These residents were drawn to SoHo because of its close distance to downtown, a major employment center. However, SoHo lost its attraction as a desirable place to live after twenty years. One of the reasons is that streetcars and subways became increasingly convenient for people to commute a longer distance from home to work. Another reason is that many wholesalers were expanding into SoHo because of its convenience to the South Street ports. These businesses brought in entertainment, hotel, and red-light industries which catered to potential buyers further lessen the desirability of SoHo as a residential neighborhood. Middle-class residents began to migrate toward



fig.1.4: The “Danckers” or Visscher” map. A 1660 view of new Amsterdam.

1. Helene Z. Seeman and Alanna Siegfried, *SoHo*, pp.5-7.



fig. 1.5: Commissioners' Plan, 1811.



fig. 1.6: Ratzer Map of New York, 1766.

fig. 1.7: View of Broadway, looking north from Canal Street in 1835.



midtown Manhattan while the affluent moved to Fifth Avenue.²

By 1870s, the characteristics of SoHo had transformed from a residential neighborhood to a manufacturing district. The manufacturers displaced the deteriorating housing with mass-produced cast-iron loft buildings. Iron foundries, metal shops, glass manufacturers, textile factories and musical instrument makers were the major industries in SoHo. These industries took advantages of SoHo's close proximity to Hudson River docks as well as cheap labor from immigrants living in the lower East Side tenements.³

After a period of twenty to thirty-year-boom as a manufacturing center, SoHo suffered yet another alteration as the garment manufacturers and retail shops migrated up to the current garment district in the upper Thirties along Broadway and Seventh Avenue. The manufacturers were encouraged by the 1904 opening of new subway lines started from City Halls to the West Side and by the 1912 opening of Pennsylvania Railroad Station. Workers living in the Lower East Side could take subway to the new factory location while the railroad enabled out of the state buyers to come in freely and sellers to transport their goods more expeditiously.⁴

After War World II, SoHo continued to decline as a vital commercial and industrial district after the garment manufactures left the area. This was caused by the move of shipping port from Manhattan to New Jersey and new Manufacturing technology favored one-story steel-frame building with larger horizontal spaces over SoHo's vertical and densely packed structure.⁵ The manufacturers also preferred large horizontal factory because it was easier for them to organize production spaces. Therefore owners of SoHo's cast-iron buildings were unable to acquire new industrial tenants as replacement for their vacated buildings. This situation induced land value to drop and buildings to deteriorate further.

2. James R. Hudson, *The Unanticipated City: Loft Conversions in Lower Manhattan*, pp.21-22.

3. Greg Sargent, "Visible City", *Metropolis*, 1994, Dec., p.40.

4. James R. Hudson, *The Unanticipated City: Loft Conversions in Lower Manhattan*, pp.22-23.

5. Greg Sargent, "Visible City", *Metropolis*, 1994, Dec., p.40.

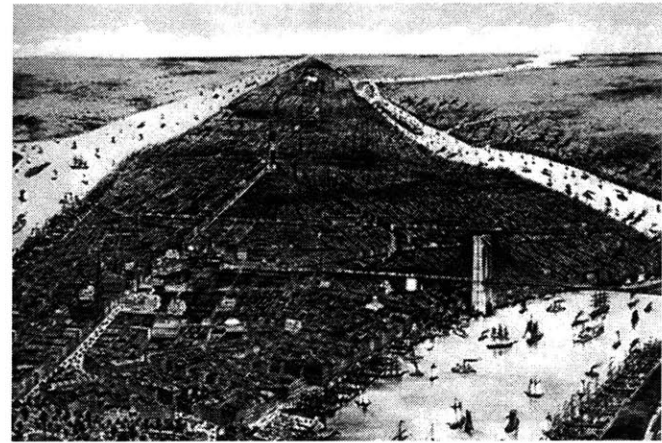


fig. 1.8: Manhattan in 1860.



fig. 1.9: Broadway and Spring Street in 1867.



fig. 1.10: Manhattan, north from Upper New York Bay, 1976.

By the 1950s, the only businesses left in SoHo were minimal. Buildings were either abandoned or left with few tenants. Some buildings were burned down and replaced by parking lot instead of being rebuilt. Some developers perceived the area's declining land value and anticipating SoHo as potential neighborhood for providing middle-and upper-income housing in Lower Manhattan for the population working in near by newly constructed World Trade Center. In the early 1960s, a group of developers attempt to have the city government declare SoHo as a slum, in order to acquire federal and state "slum clearance" funds to finance their project. Another developer proposed to construct an expressway connecting Manhattan to Long Island across SoHo and other residential neighborhoods. This plan would force while-collar jobs to displace blue-collar industries out of Manhattan to the outer boroughs.⁶ In addition, both proposals would transform SoHo; the former would have changed SoHo from a marginal industrial area to a high-end neighborhood while the later would have demolished the physical form of the area. At the end neither plans were carried out because it did not pass the independent surveyor who valued SoHo's existing industrial activities over the proposed plans.

The developers' proposals were further opposed by surrounding neighborhood organizations and artists who had secretly lived and worked in SoHo. In the early 1960s, SoHo encountered an underground transformation when the first residential populations occupied the abandoned factory loft buildings illegally. These people were mostly artists who were attracted by the spaciousness of cast-iron loft buildings for low or no rent. The lofts ranging from 1,500 to 2,000 square feet per floor were used as both for living and working space. The attraction of loft building as living and working space for artists was increased as more artists working on large sculptures or paintings which need larger space. In 1969, these artists and other concerned neighboring groups prevented the proposition of the expressway to be realized.

As a result of this conflict, SoHo was given its name and in 1973 was designated as a historic district. In the early 1970s, the city legalized the conversion of smaller manufacturing loft buildings into residential dwellings for artists only. This situation did not remain for long, because very soon lawyers and stockbrokers who valued SoHo's proximity to Wall Street started to inquire for

6. Ibid.

the loft buildings. Galleries also moved into the district from midtown. Consequently, many artists and manufacturers who could not afford rent increase were forced out and be replaced by high income tenants. By the mid-1980s, the artists and galleries that had elevated SoHo from a slum into a cultural center started to lose their position. They were forced to move out of SoHo or into less expansive upper floors. Boutiques, restaurants, and shops thrived to become a dominate presence in SoHo. This trend had continue till today. Currently, though the city restricted southern half of SoHo to remain a mixture of art and manufacturing activities, in the northern half where without such zoning restriction, at least two-third of the street-level space in upscale retail, chain stores, and restaurants.⁷

The above stated trend of commercialization and the likely deprivation of SoHo's artistic characters which is unlikely to be reversed or stopped, allowing nature to take its course. This change most likely will harm soHo's prosperity, because without its unique characters, a commercialized SoHo would be undifferentiated from the rest of New York and lose its "competitiveness" against the commercially better developed neighboring areas. Based on this conclusion, the thesis project is an attempt to preserve SoHo's unique characters through architectural design intervention.

7. Ibid.



fig. 1.11: Manhattan, 1997.

2:

SITE

The building site is located at Lower Manhattan in New York City. The neighborhood, SoHo, consists a wide range of cast-iron architectures which are under historical preservation. SoHo is also filled with a mixture of diversity activities, ranging from art, commercial to industrial and residential. Besides the architectural style of the area, many visitors come to SoHo for viewing museums or gallery shows, shopping and dining. It is a unique community surrounded by neighborhoods such as Greenwich Village, Tribeca, Chinatown, Little Italy and NoHo.

The site of this thesis project is on a L-shape infill lot in between two twelve-story buildings. One side of the building lot is facing Broadway while the other side is on Mercer Street and Prince Street. Broadway is a major commercial strip which extends across Manhattan Island. In SoHo, many national chain stores, such as Banana Republic and Pottery Barn are on Broadway. In addition, there are three major museums in SoHo, Museum for African Art, Guggenheim Museum of SoHo and New Museum of Contemporary Art, they are also located on Broadway. The building site is in the adjacent block of Guggenheim Museum of SoHo, and it next to former Little Singer Building designed by Ernest Flagg in 1904.

Unlike Broadway, Mercer Street and Prince Street, on the other hand, are narrower streets paved with cobblestone. Smaller designer boutiques, shops, cafe, restaurant, galleries and loading docks sporadically filled these streets. The streets seem calmer and quieter as compare to the busy Broadway street scene. There is a subway station underneath Broadway and Prince Street.



fig. 2.1: View of Broadway looking north from Spring Street.

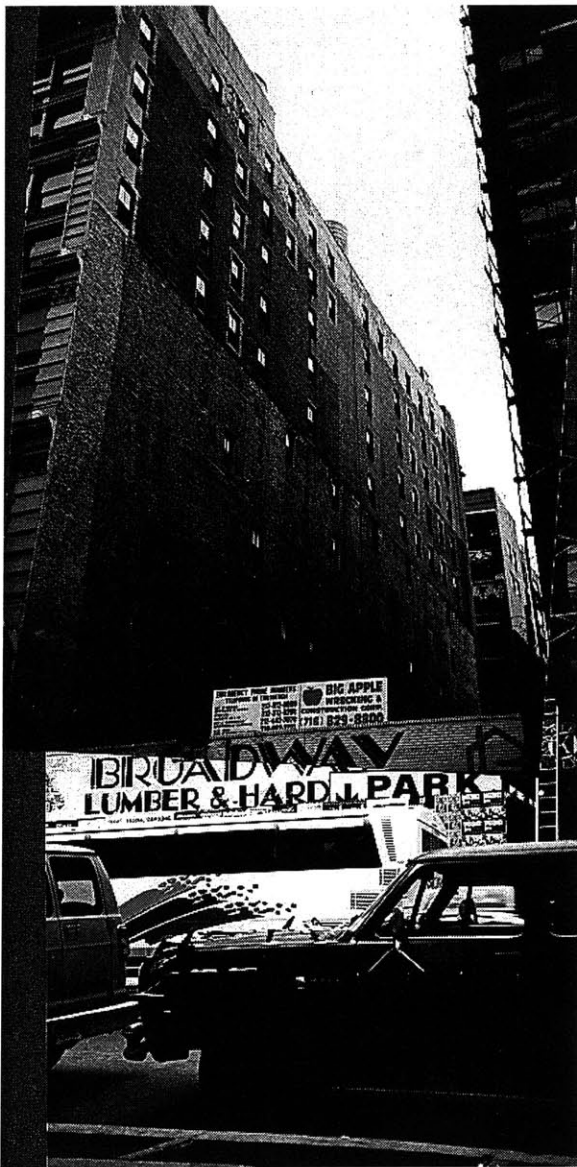


fig. 2.2: View of the site from Broadway.



fig. 2.3: View of the site from Prince and Mercer Street.

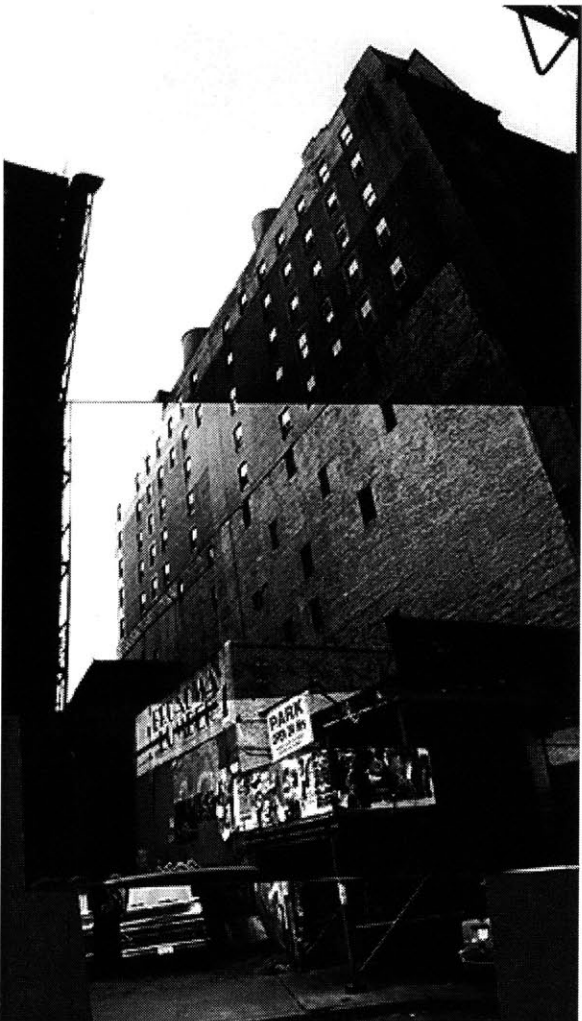


fig. 2.4: View of the site from Mercer Street.

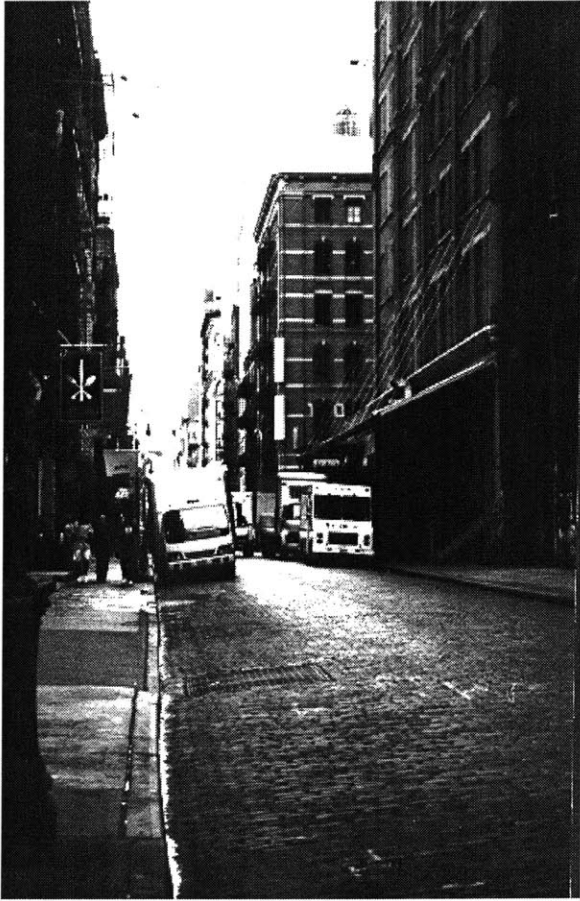


fig. 2.5: View of Mercer Street from looking north from Spring Street.



fig. 2.6: View of Chrysler Building from Broadway and Spring Street.



fig. 2.7: View of World Trade Center from Broadway and Spring Street looking south.



fig. 2.8: View of Broadway looking south from Houston Street.



fig. 2.9: View of the site from Prince Street looking east.

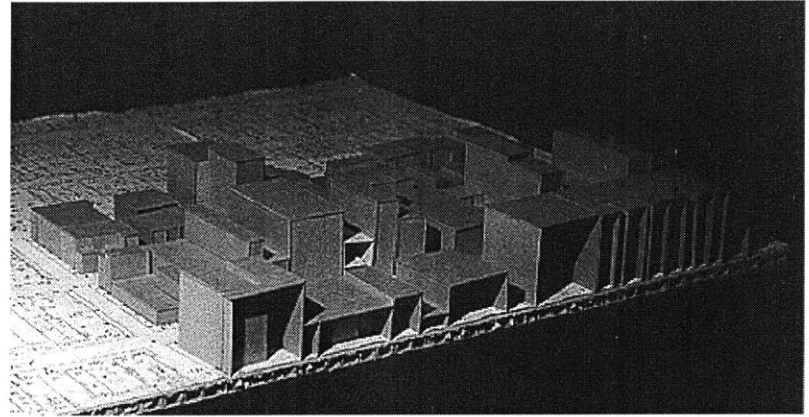
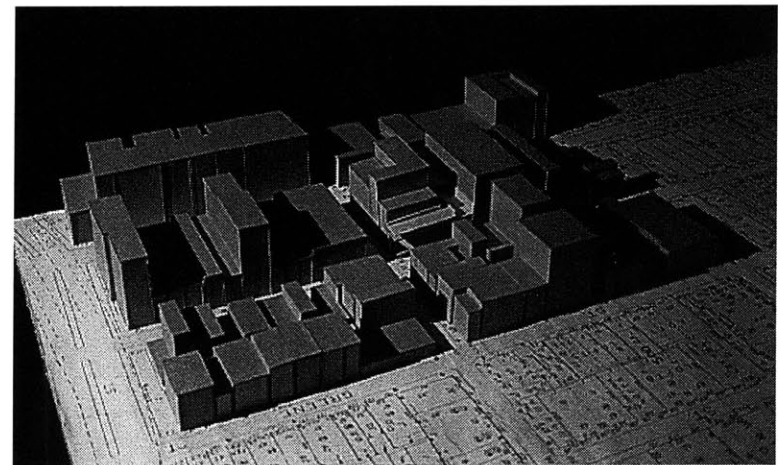


fig. 2.10: Site Model at 1" = 40'.

fig. 2.11: Site Model at 1" = 40'.



3:

PROGRAM

The thesis project proposes to condense a mix of programs which are currently dispersed throughout SoHo into a multi-story building. These programs include boutiques, a restaurant, a cafe, gallery spaces and cinemas. The intention of integrating these diverse programs into a single design is to confront the distinction between art, entertainment and commodity.

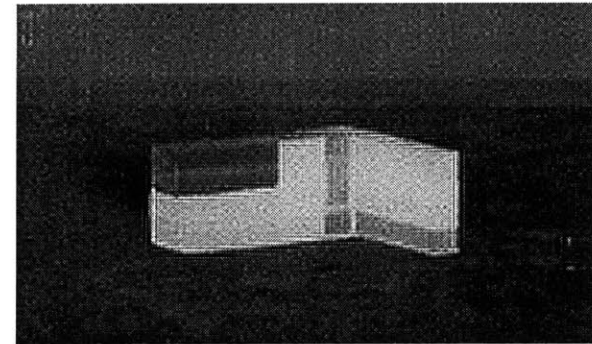


fig. 3.1: Use diagram 1.

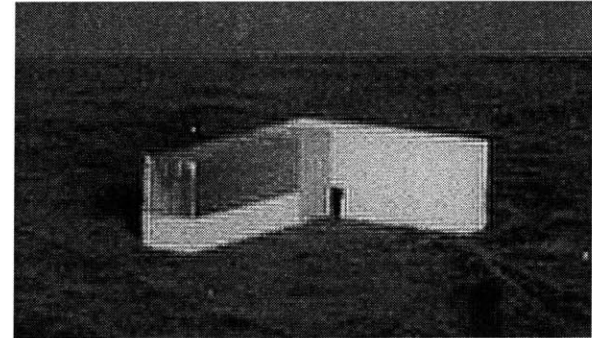
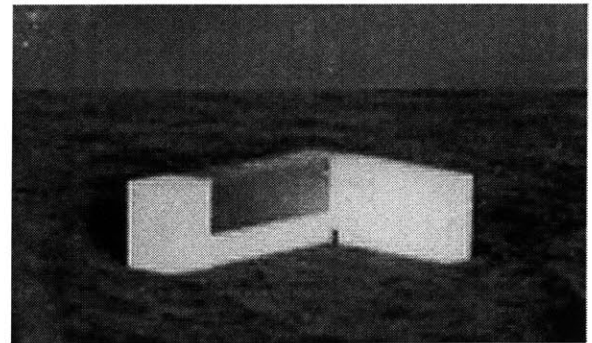


fig. 3.2: Use diagram 3.2.

fig. 3.3: Use diagram 3.3.



4:

CONCEPTUAL STAGE

The conceptual stage is the initial period of investigating a number of design concepts that can represent the objective of the thesis project. In the beginning of the project, I tried to explore different possibilities of organizing these mix of programs-- cinema, gallery, boutique and restaurant, and the spaces needed for these activities on the infill site. How should these mix of programs and spaces be organized? How will the organization affect the experience of the architecture from the street or inside the building? What is the logic for a particular organization? Such were the questions and issues generated during this conceptual stage. Sketch models and perspective drawings were methods for the exploration of space organization, and color block models were means of investigating use organization.

SPACE ORGANIZATION STUDY

MODELS

At 1": 40'

1. THE GENERIC TYPE

The sketch model in Fig. 4.1 follows the existing building type of Cast Iron architecture. Horizontal floor slabs stack one on top of the another creating not a spatial and functional equality but stratification. In the present real estate market condition, the ground floor on Broadway attracts both retail use and will have high ceiling for displaying products. The middle floors which are more identical in height and use, will be for offices or galleries. The top floor is smaller and could be for more private use. In the basement level, large cinema space could be buried underground because it does not need for natural light.

In this conceptual model different spaces and activities are been segregated and stratified because of the floor slabs. There is no spatial interaction among various programs. This design does not allow the users to experience an intense mixture of diverse activities in the building nor to perceive the ambiguity between art and commodity. However, the model does suggest the possibility of having the horizontal slabs on the narrow side of the lot to continue the surrounding condition.

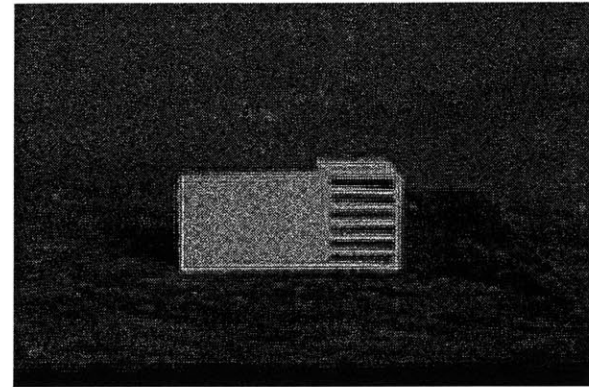


fig. 4.1: Scheme One, Model view from Mercer Street

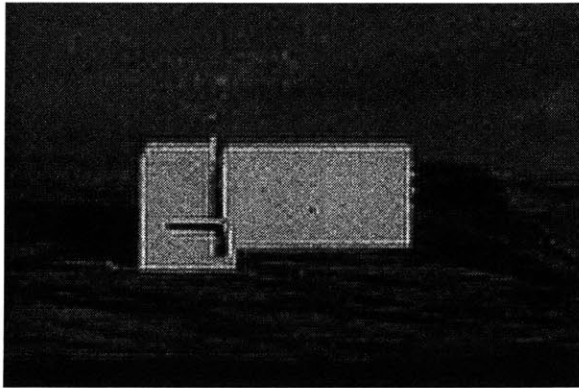


fig. 4.2: Scheme Two, Model view from Broadway.

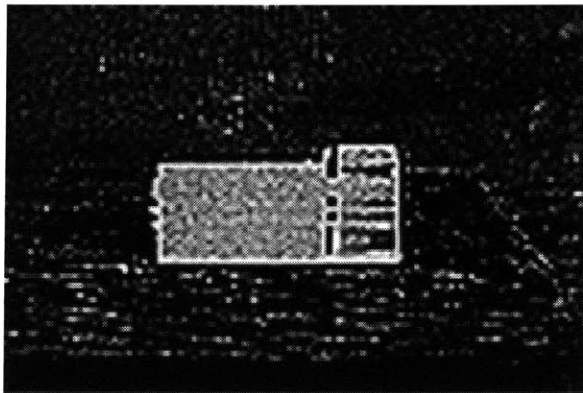
2. THE SPACIOUS LOBBY SCHEME

In the second scheme, the narrower side of the building follows the same horizontal form of the first conceptual model. On the side facing the major commercial street, Broadway, a six-story high atrium serves as the threshold between the outside environment and the interior spaces. The atrium lobby is also intended to be a gathering space for moviegoers and an exhibition space for both art works and commercial merchandises.

Inside the building, a slit is also carved out from the roof to the ground floor, allowing diffuse natural light to indicate primary circulation. The slit hallway is also a gesture of connecting the large urban street, Broadway, and the small neighborhood street, Mercer.

The cinema space is elevated up from the ground floor, and it is located in the wider and longer section of the site because of the space requirement. As a result, the middle section of the building becomes a darker space as compare to the front section of the building where the atrium is located. During the day, the atrium, becomes the in-between zone for the light outdoor and the dark cinema space. Thus, the experience of the building is about transition from light space to dark space, inside and outside, reality and imagination.

fig. 4.3: Scheme Three, Model view from Mercer Street.



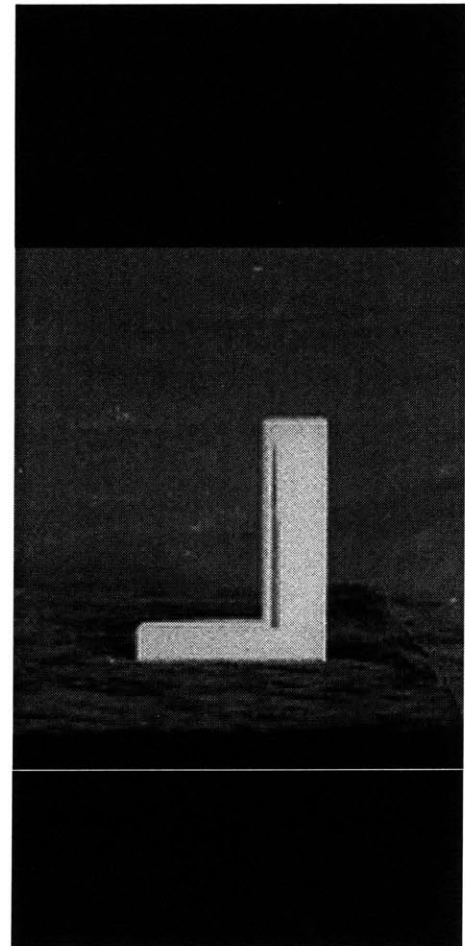


fig. 4.4: Scheme Three, Model view from

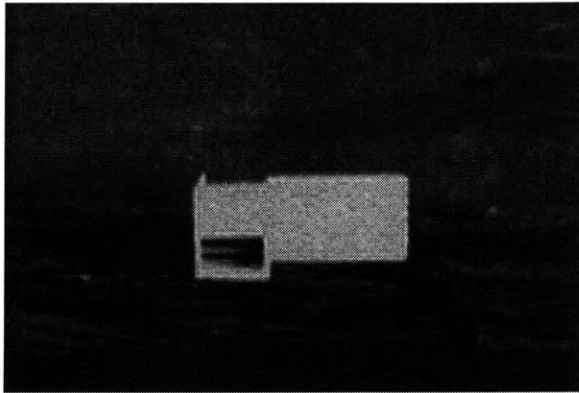


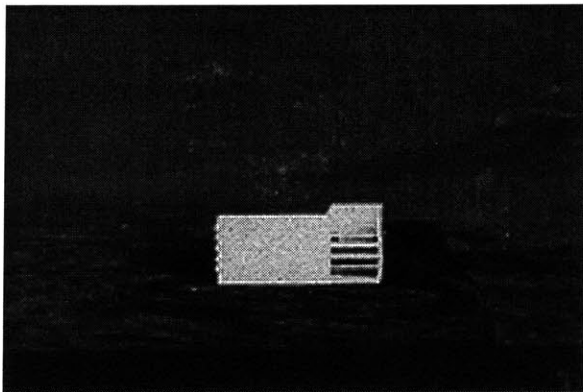
fig. 4.5: Scheme Three, Model view from Broadway.

3. THE CENTRAL LIGHTCOURT SCHEME

The third sketch model reverses the concept of the second scheme by placing the elevated cinema to the front of the building and leaving a light court in the middle. The light court which allows natural light from the center of the building, also puts more emphasis towards the internal side of the building than the previous schemes. The architectural experience is focus on the inside than the relation between exterior and interior.

The central courtyard separated two different kind of spaces, one dark with large volume, the other horizontal and regular. The two spaces also are united by the light court where the open area encourages visual connection between users of each space. In this scheme, however, there is no physical connection between the part of building on Broadway and that on Mercer Street. Therefore, the design suggests disparity between the large urban scale and small neighborhood scale.

fig. 4.6: Scheme Four, Model view from Mercer.



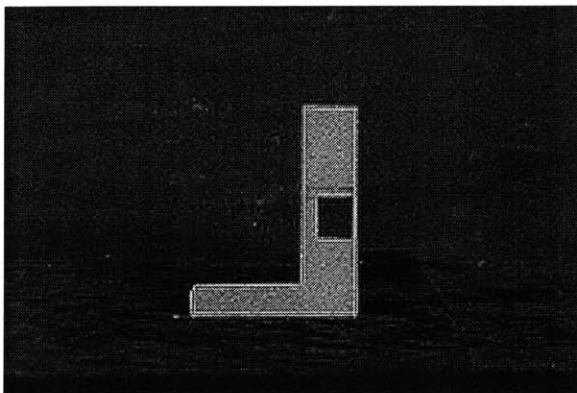


fig. 4.7: Scheme Three, Model view from above.

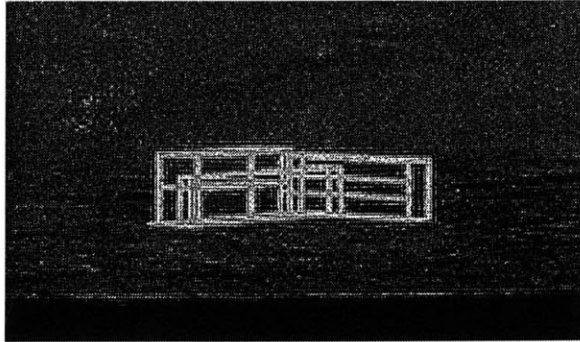
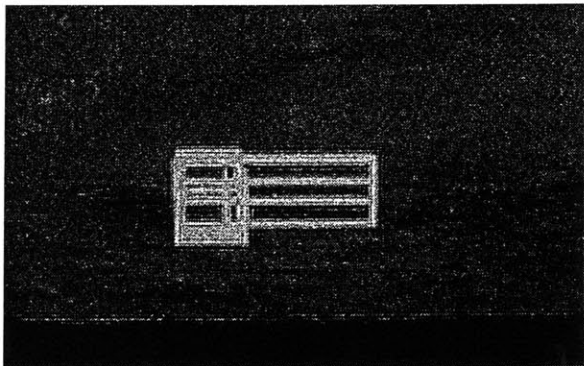


fig. 4.8: Scheme four, Model view from Broadway and Prince St.

4. THE COMBINATION SCHEME

The fourth study model for space organization combines concepts preferred from the previous schemes. First, Uniform horizontal spaces are located at the shorter and narrower side of the L-shape lot. Second, the slit hallway physically connects Broadway and Mercer Street. Third, large cinema is elevated to the front of the building while central light court provides light, physical separation and visual connection between different spaces.

fig. 4.9: Scheme four, Model view from Broadway.



PERSPECTIVE SKETCHES

As mentioned in the previous section, perspective sketches are part of the methods used in the design process to conceptualize space organization.

In figure 4.10, the perspective drawing tries to depict the spatial quality inside the building. The sketch follows the idea of a slit hallway with natural light flooded from above indicating the connection between Broadway and Mercer Street. On one side of this primary circulation hallway is the wall which attaches to the adjacent building. The wall catches the sunlight and reflects it to below. On the ground floor of the other side of the hallway are a number of columns supporting a large cinema above. The columns separate the physical space underneath the cinema and the hallway, but allow for visual continuation within the two spaces.

In figure 4.11, the drawing shows the idea of continuation between different spaces and programs. The boutique is a continuation of the gallery space. It is separated by an architectural element, a partition wall. The boutique could be just another gallery space which display objects. This sketch begins to investigate spatial differentiation and similarity between different programs. It represent a concept of how to juxtapose art and commodity in a single design.

The perspective sketch in figure 4.12 continues to explore the idea of organizing a mix of program in one building. Restaurant, boutique, cinema and gallery are all condensed in a large open space with skylight above. This drawing is similar in concept with the third study model. The central light court unified and allow visual connection among all the spaces and programs. This perspective became one of the major concept in the final design.

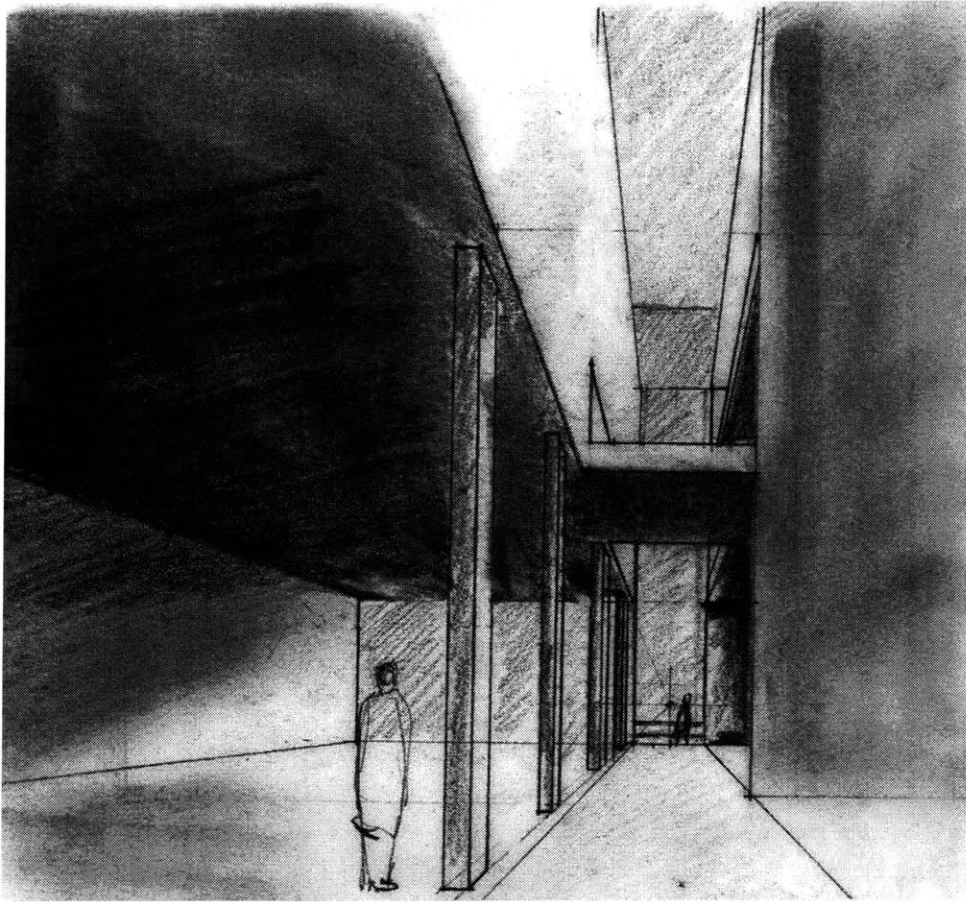


fig. 4.10: Conceptual Scheme, Perspective through slit hallway looking at Mercer St. entrance.

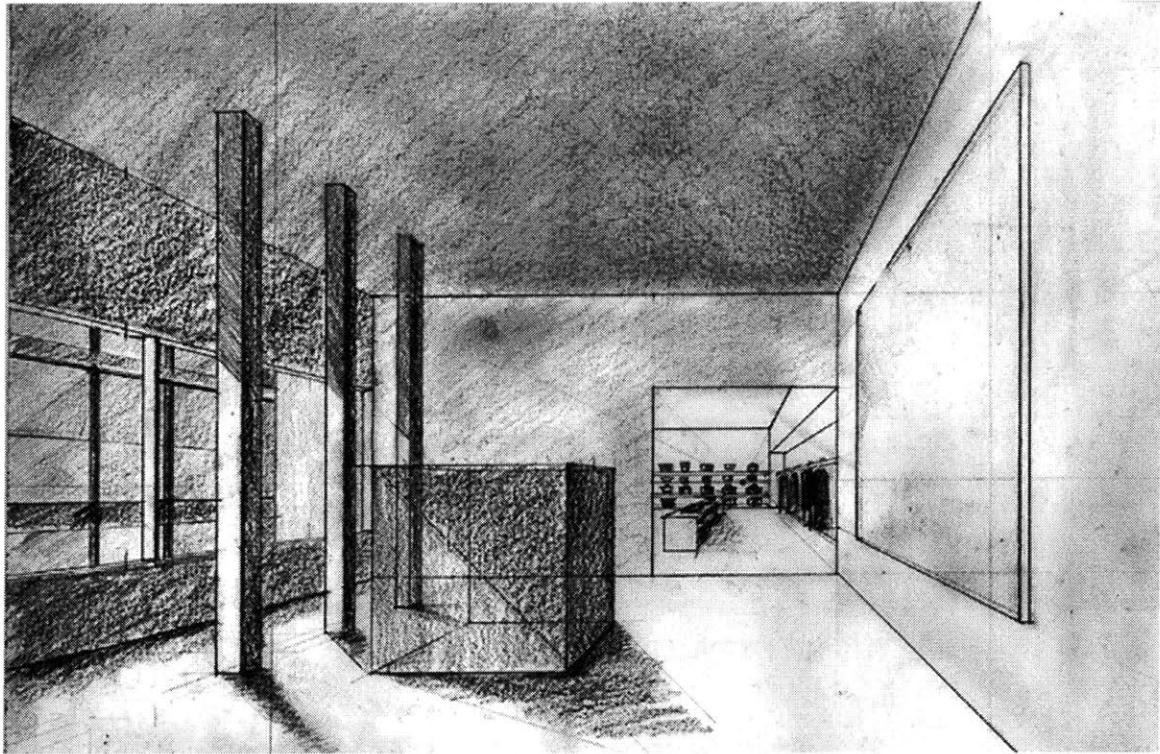


fig. 4.11: Conceptual scheme, Perspective through art gallery to boutique. space.

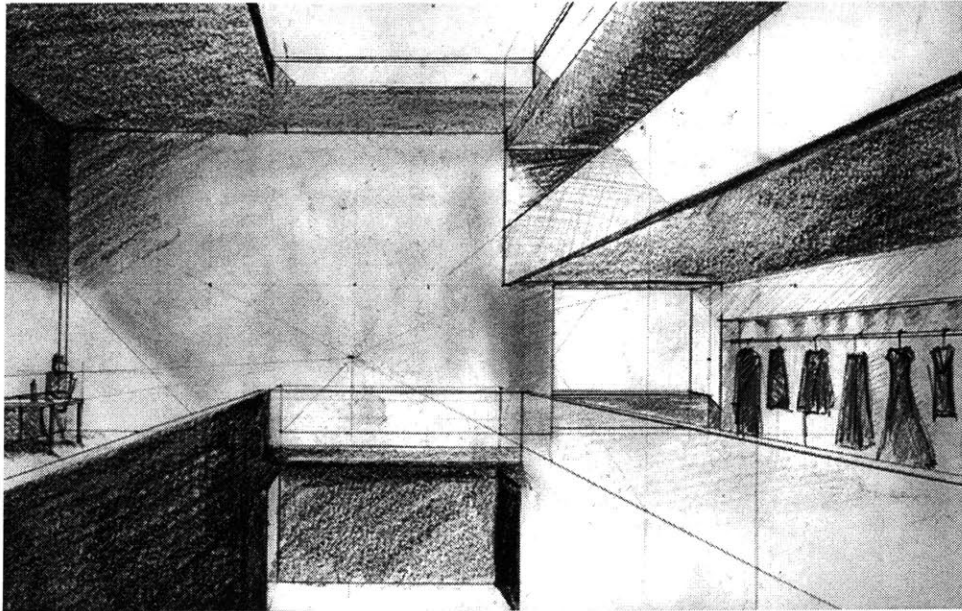


fig. 4.12: Conceptual scheme, Perspective through central light court.

5:

DESIGN INTENTIONS

The design intentions for the thesis project were consolidated after the conceptual stage when both ideas about both space and use organizations were formulated. Fundamentally, the design intentions are about how to integrate various art and commercial spaces, and displaying their similarities and differences into one single building.

SPACE DIFFRENTIATION

The existing condition in SoHo is a mixture of functions in similar spaces. Various types of functions, such as restaurant, boutique and gallery have converted Cast Iron loft buildings to fit their space requirement. The space and function inside the flexible loft building become interchangeable. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish which is the boutique and which is the gallery.

Although the flexibility of loft building space is part of the reason which makes SoHo a mix-use neighborhood, the thesis project, anticipating the eventual disappearing of such characteristic on the street level, attempts to create the experience of intergration in a building design. The thesis design does not intent to repeat the interchangeable space existing in SoHo. The project is set out to be more deliberate in assigning each functional type a particular space. For example, in figure 5.1, cinema is a large volume with slope floor. Figure 5.2, gallery space has higher ceiling than boutique or restaurant, and has diffuse natural light. In figure 5.3 and 5.4, both boutique and restaurant are more intimate than cinema or gallery space. Boutique has display windows while the restaurant has a view towards the street. Such method of assigning is to create spatial differentiation among various functions.

When the spaces are differentiated, intergration or juxtaposition among various function would be more dynamic. The spatial differentiation is also intended to represent distinction between art and commerce. Spatial differentiation achieves one of the objective of the thesis project which is to generate users' awareness of the similarities and differences between art and commodity. In this case, the project attempts to demonstrate their differences in the spaces they inhabit.

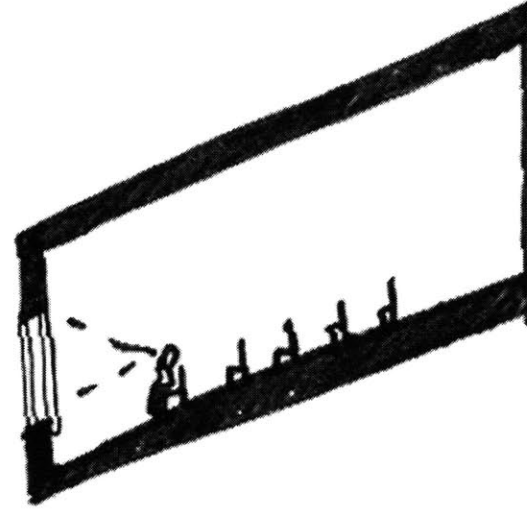
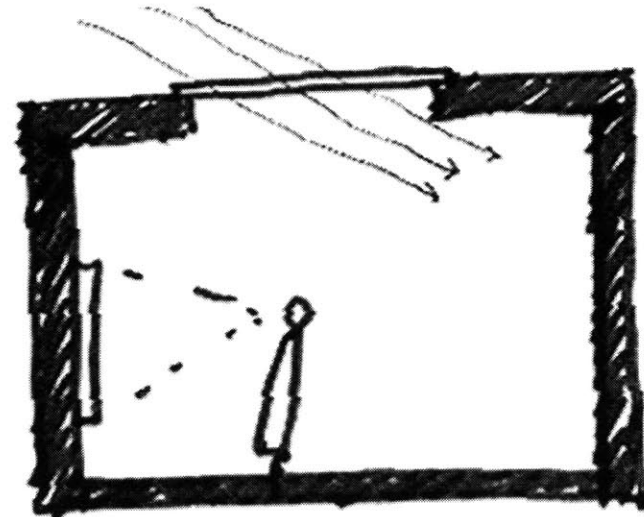


fig. 5.1: Cinema space.

fig. 5.2: Gallery space.



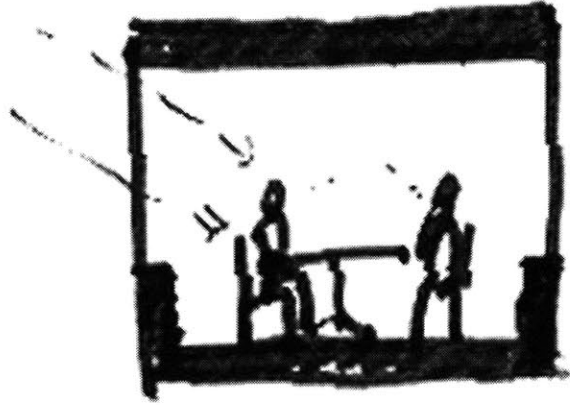
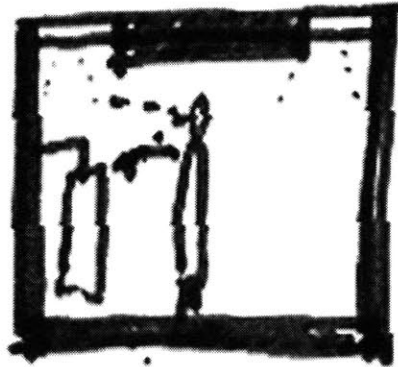


fig. 5.3: Restaurant space.

fig. 5.4: Boutique space.



SPATIAL AND FUNCTIONAL OVERLAP

The second design intention is to create an overlap of differentiated spaces and functions. The idea is to bring a mix of spaces and functions together for integration. The intention of the concept is to create an interaction between art and commercial spaces. Each individual space or function with its own unique identity would be brought under comparison when overlap with one another. The concept of overlapping spaces and functions also attempts to suggest the similarity between art and commodity.

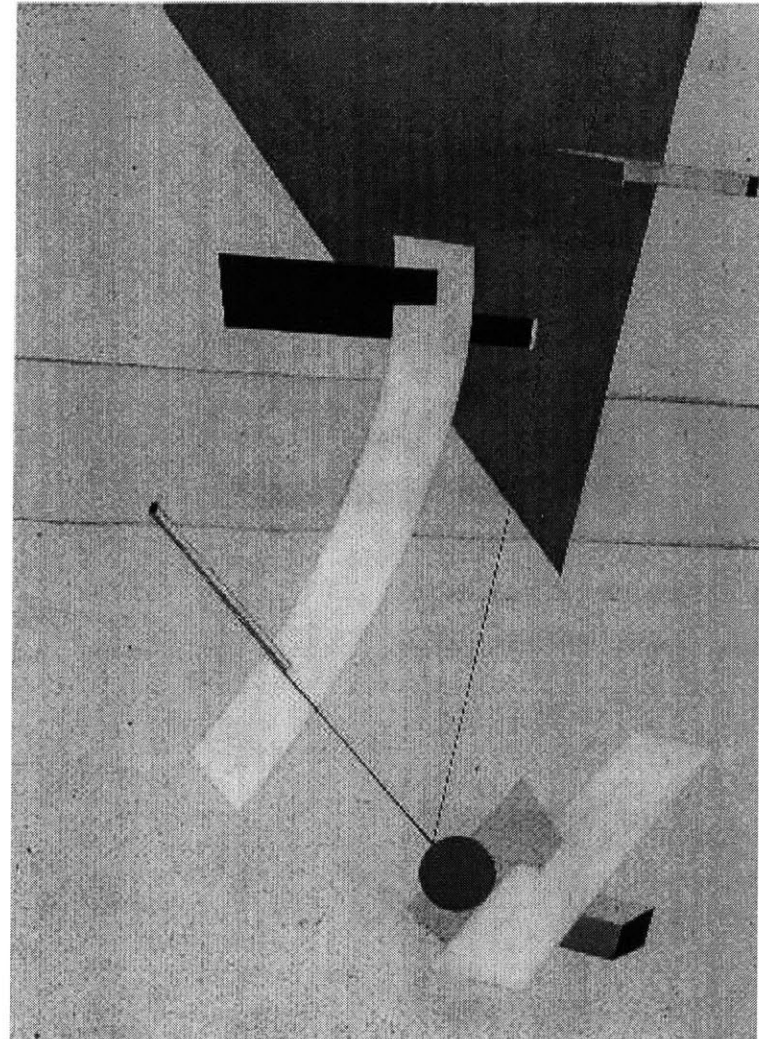
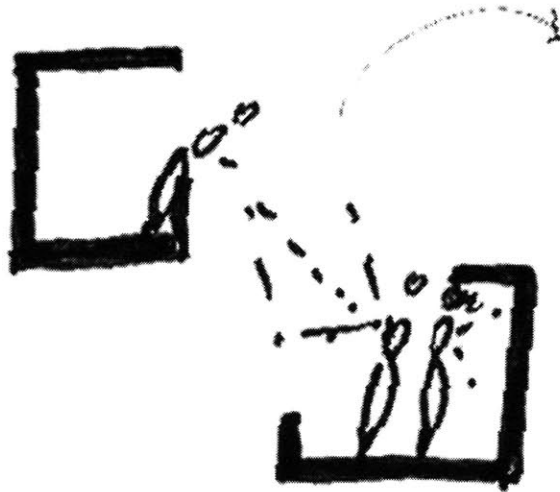


fig. 5.5: Inspiration for spatial and functional overlap.



fig. 5.6: General visual connection.

fig. 5.7: Specific visual connection.



VISUAL CONNECTIONS

Creating visual connections between spaces and functions is the third design intention. Visual connections is established in a large jointed volume at the point where separate spaces and functions are overlapped. The intention of establishing visual connections is to further bring users' awareness to the similarity and difference between spaces and functions when they can see into one space from the other. Viewers in the gallery can exchange eye contacts with the shoppers in the boutique. This visual engagement is to extend users' perception on the similarities and differences between art and commodity.

The concept of visual connections is divided into categories of general and specific. General visual connections occur in a large volume where all spaces are in view at one station point. Each individual space can also look into this general space. Though each space and function is unique in character, none is specifically stand out in the space for general visual connection.

Unlike the scenario in general visual connection, specific visual connection is established between two individual spaces. For example, when an art gallery goer at a specific stationary point exchanges view with a shopper, it is a specific visual connection. The station point is particularly designed for this purpose at the exact space.

SIMILAR MOTIFS FOR DIFFERENT SPACES

The fourth design intention is to create similar motifs for different spaces and functions. The idea is about connecting diverse spaces and functions through similar furniture motifs to demonstrate their similarity in character. The furniture motifs varied slightly according to the space and function. For instance, all the cash register counters where money exchanges take place have a curve shape. Figure 5.8 to figure 5.10 show details of this furniture motif in boutique, cafe and gallery.

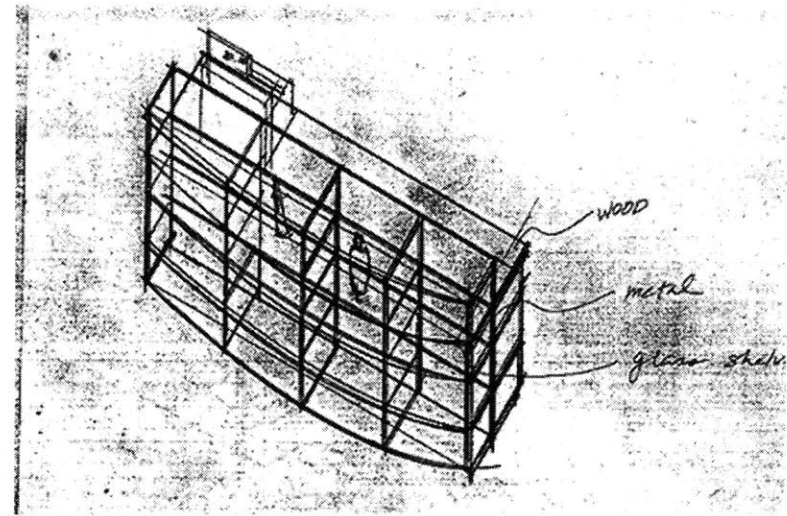
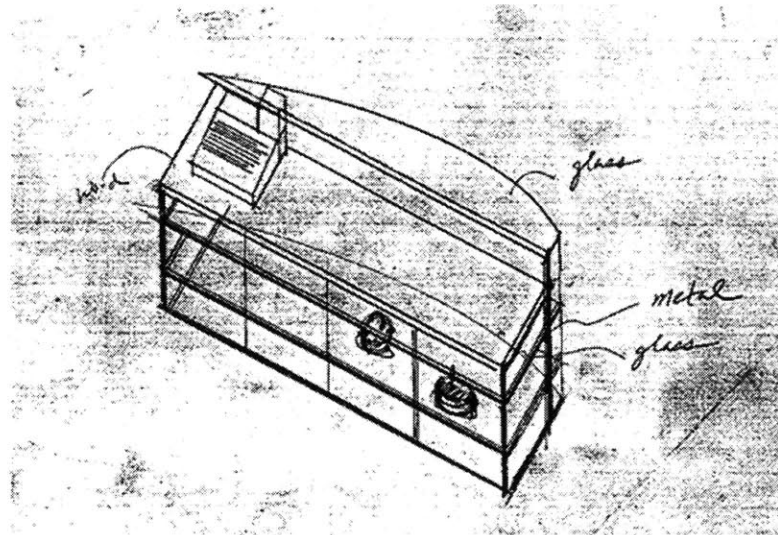


fig. 5.8: Boutique cash register and display counter.

fig. 5.9: Cafe cash register and display counter.



6:

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

After the development of conceptual models at 1" = 40'-0", the next stage of design development includes a series of larger scale models to further investigate spatial organization among various programs, circulation and visual sequences.

STUDY MODEL 1

Figure 6.1 to 6.3 show an early study model at 1" = 16'-0". The emphasis of this study model is on relationship between different spaces and functions. Concepts of programmatic and spatial overlaps, and visual connections are the main focus.

In the model, each function is color-coded by different color cardboard. The boutique, indicated by the color orange, is located at the first and second floor on Broadway which is the major commercial strip in SoHo. The cinema, in black, is located above the boutique. The model continues the early concept of connecting Broadway and Mercer with a slit hallway which is the main circulation path. The hallway leads to the middle of the building where the main vertical circulation stairs, elevators and ticket booth are situated. The hallway continues to Mercer Street where the cafe and the restaurant, both indicated in yellow, are at either side of the path. Above the restaurant and the cafe is the gallery space which overlap with the dining room to establish visual connection.

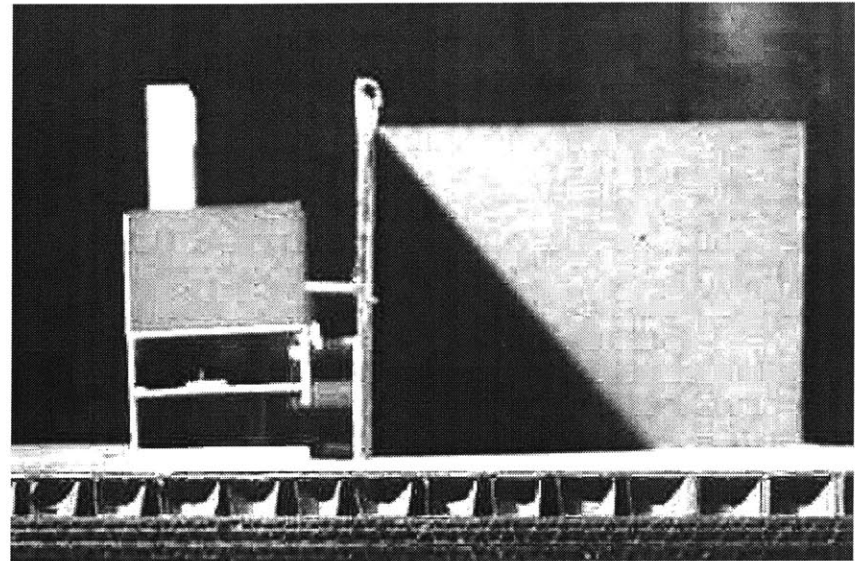
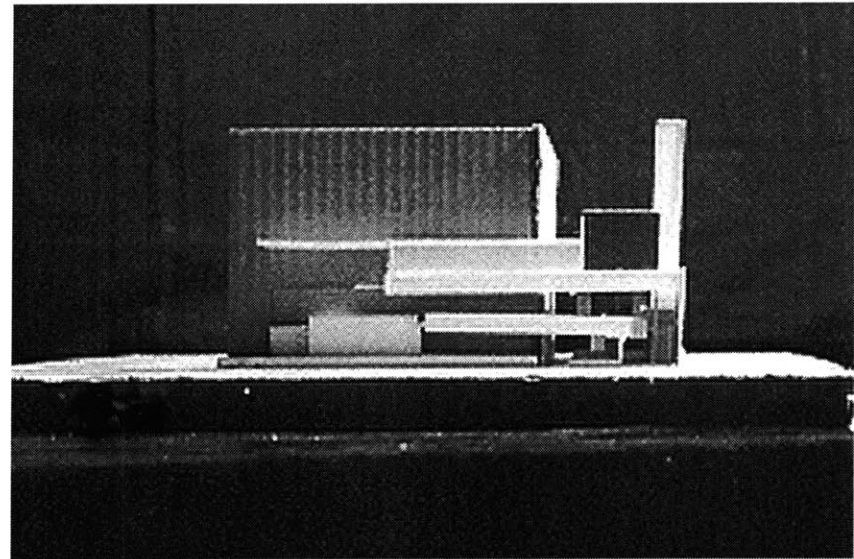


fig. 6.1: Model View from Broadway.

fig. 6.2: Model View from Mercer Street.



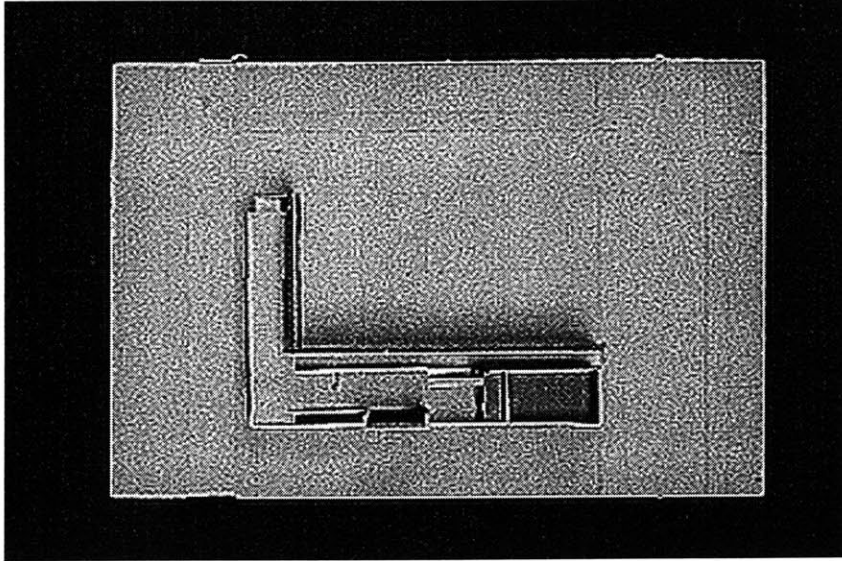


fig. 6.3: Model view from above.

STUDY MODEL 2

The second study model continues the investigation carried out in the first study model. At this stage, there are two cinemas stacking above the boutique. The slopping floor which indicates the presence of the cinema is the ceiling of the boutique.

Structural walls are the supporting elements for the longer section of the building, and steel columns supports the shorter and narrower section of the building. In this scheme, on the side of Mercer Street, different scale of cellular spaces are on display behind curtain wall and rigidly spaced columns. On the first and second floor level is a restaurant with dinning booths. Smaller screen rooms are on the third floor, and gallery with regularly partitioned wall is on the fourth. Fifth floor is for offices, and they are cellular as well.

In this model, however, visual connection is not sufficiently established between different spaces or functions. The building is covered with floor slabs stacking one on top the other. Thus, there is not enough opening to allow visual exchange.

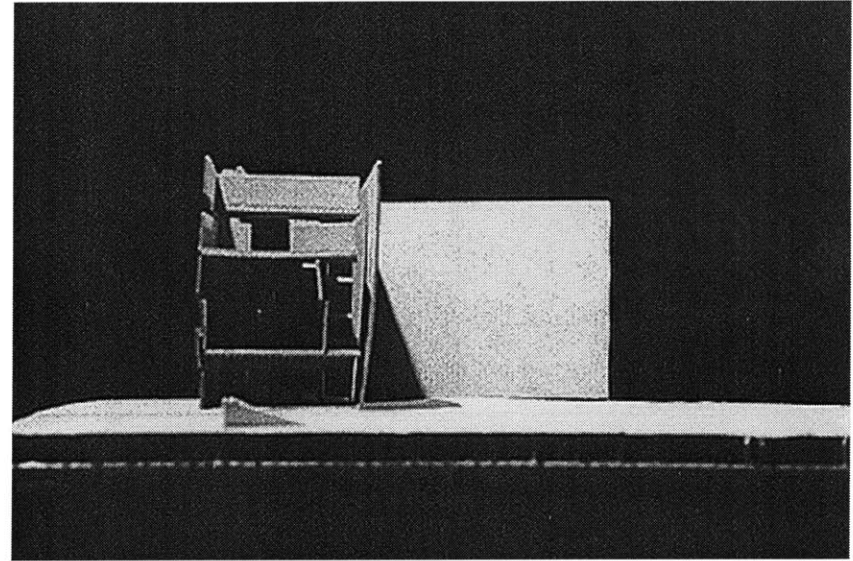
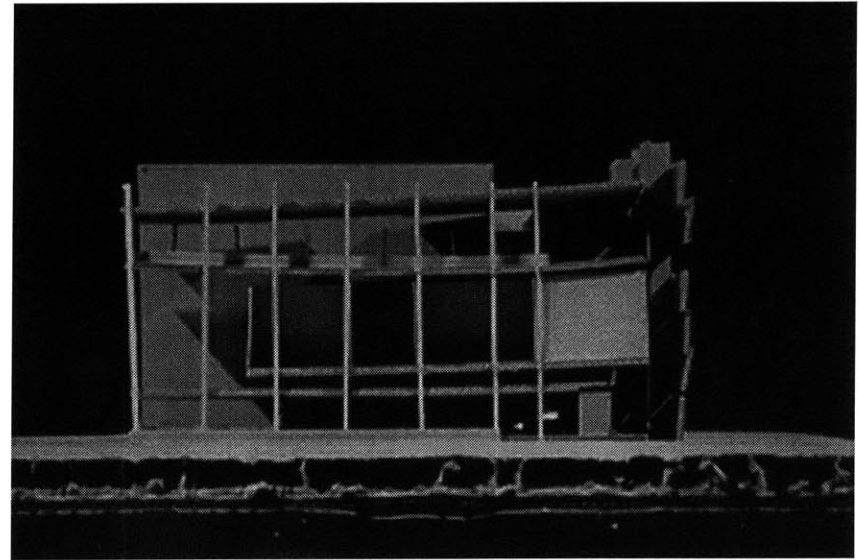


fig. 6.4: Model view from Broadway.

fig. 6.5: Model view from Mercer Street.



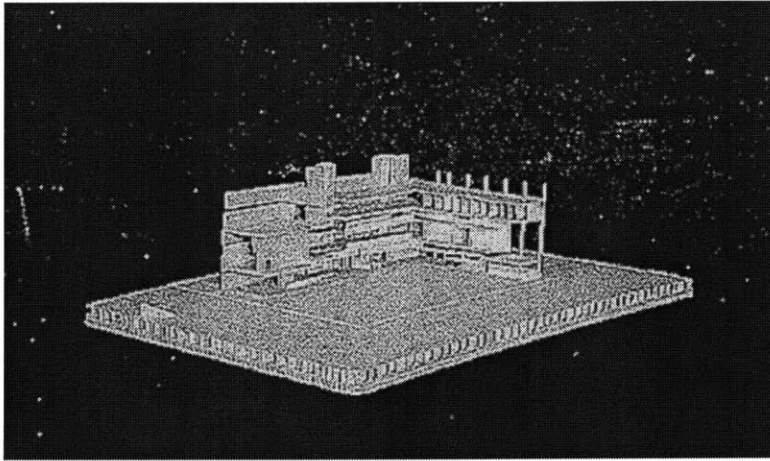


fig. 6.5: Model view from Broadway and Prince Street.

STUDY MODEL 3

The aim for this model is to explore the concepts of overlapping and creating visual connection between space and function. Color is used discriminatingly in this model to suggest space, and is not applied throughout the building as in the first model. In figure 6.6, the perspective sketch study the spatial quality of the hallway near the front entrance. This section of the hallway is narrow and is enclosed by colored walls on both sides and by ceiling sloping upward towards the light court in the center of the building. The intention of the design is to create a dark compressed space in the first section of the building to emphasize the significance of the central open space where light, circulation and everything else come in to view.

Circulation is another focus of this model. A major ramp connecting first and second level boutique replaces previous centralized stairs. The ramp indicates the spatial and functional connection between the two floors, and represents the extravagant aspect of retail industry. The study model also investigate spatial flow between different functions to suggest eroded boundary between art and commercial spaces.

The spatial organization in this model, however, is not clearly defined. There are too many small openings, created for visual connections, the overall spatial organization of the building becomes fragmented. Furthermore, the building lacks spatial differentiation because most of the spaces are small and similar.

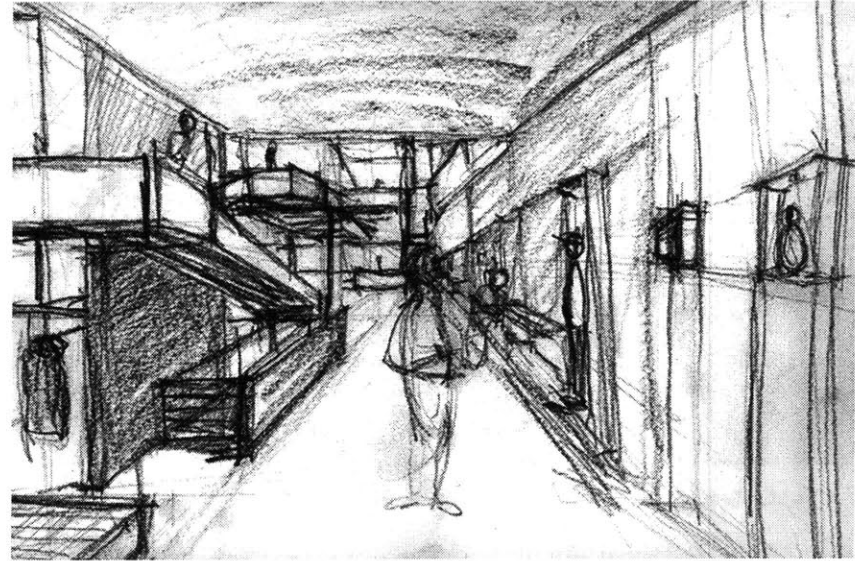


fig. 6.6: Perspective through main hallway looking towards central courtyard.

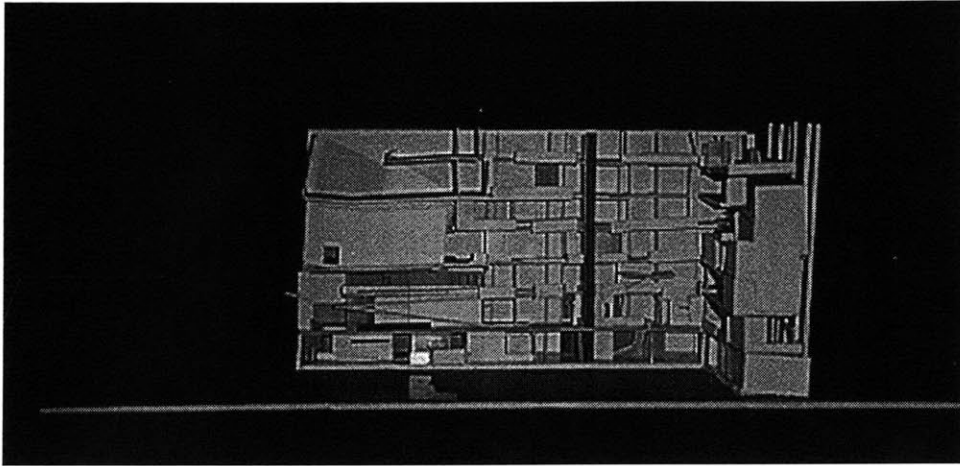


fig. 6.7: Model view of interior space at 1" = 16'.

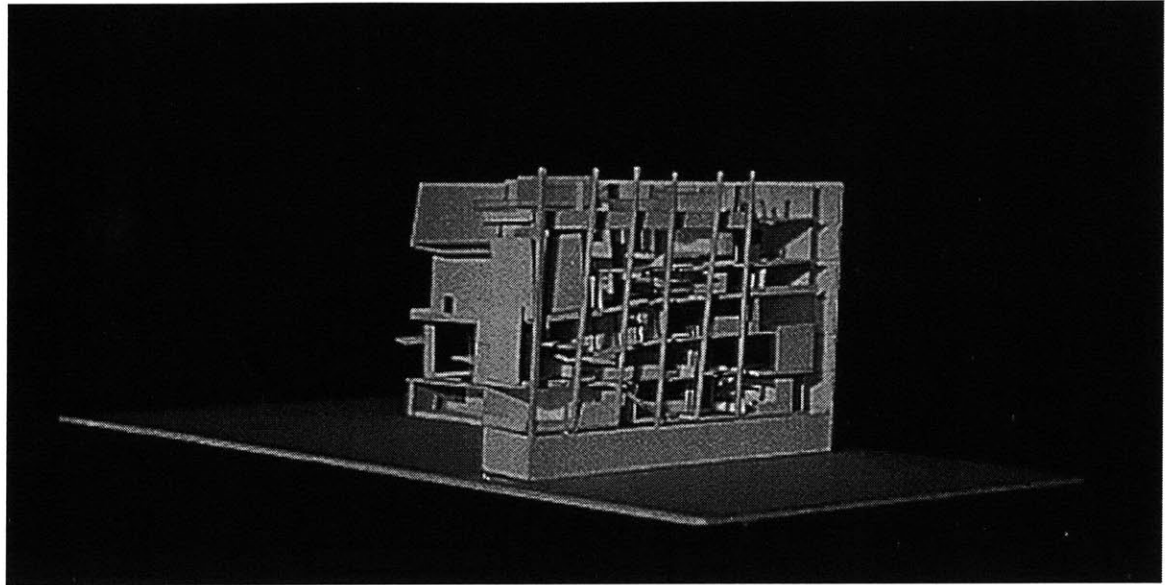


fig. 6.8: Model view from Mercer and Prince Street.

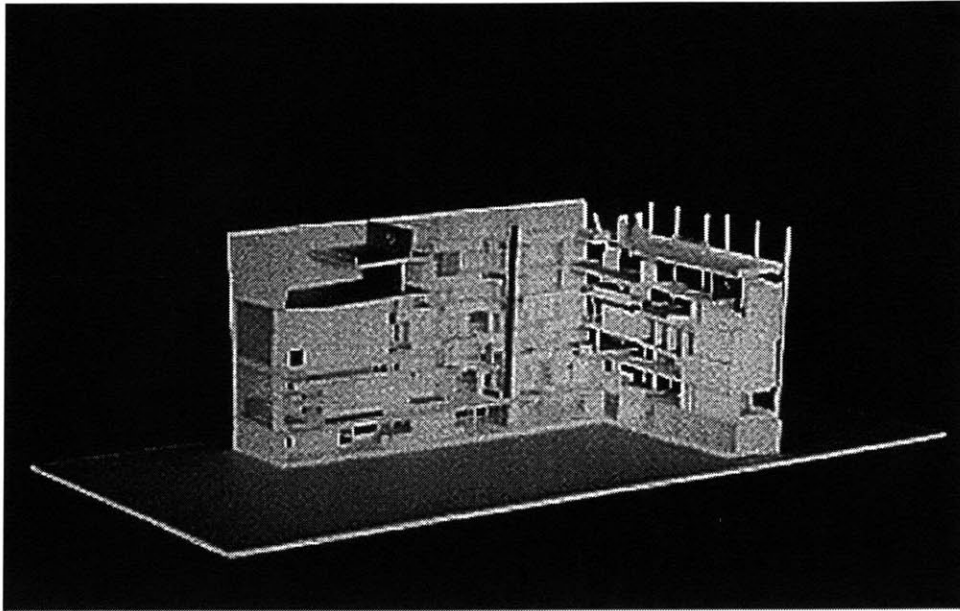


fig. 6.9: Model view from Broadway and Prince Street.

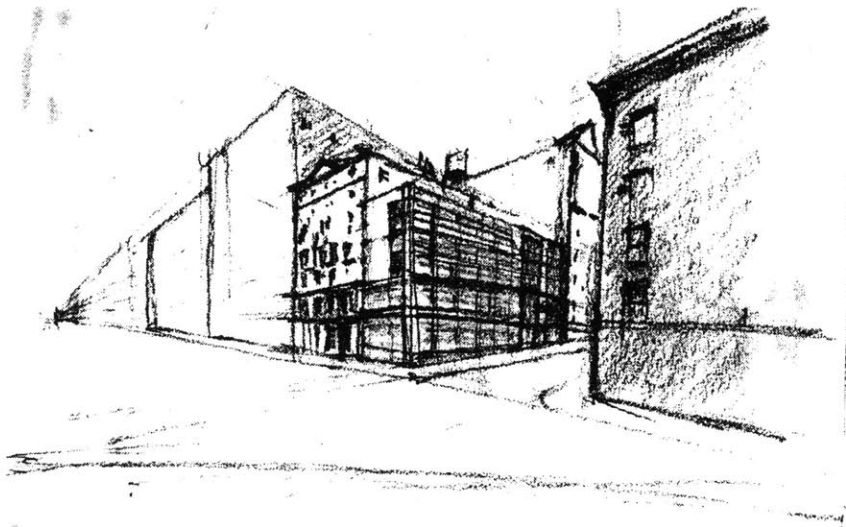


fig. 6.10: Elevation study, Perspective from Broadway and Prince Street.



fig. 6.11: Elevation study, Perspective from Broadway.

7:

FINAL DESIGN

REORGANIZE, CLARIFY, EDIT, DIFFERENTIATE SPACES AND IDEAS

After the third study model, the first priority is to reorganize both spatial and functional layouts. Much of the efforts are devoted to clarify the scheme by editing out some of the programs, by differentiating spaces, and unifying modes of display.

SPACE DIFFERENTIATION VS. PROGRAMMATIC AND SPATIAL OVERLAP

In this mix-use building, spaces are differentiated by assigning a specific type of space to a particular function. As mentioned in the Design Intention section, cinema is a large dark box with slopping floor, galley is a large open-plan space with skylight, boutique and restaurant small space with open plan. The generic type of these space becomes broken up and less defined when two spaces overlap and the boundary between them erodes to create opportunity for visual exchange.

COLOR

Color is used to activate the space. It defines spaces or serves as the background of complicated architectural elements, and it is no longer used to indicate functions. As in the third study model, the narrow hallway is enclosed by colored walls on both sides. Warm color tone imbued the light court as the natural light coming from above, the vertical color wall also suggest vertical circulation is located in this zone, the center of the building.

VISUAL CONNECTION: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC

General visual connection is designated at the central light court where spaces are open for viewing. There is a specific visual connection moment in the courtyard. The platform at the end of the ramp which leads to the boutique and the stair landing on the fourth floor to the gallery face each other in the light court. This also visual connection also represents the exchange between art and

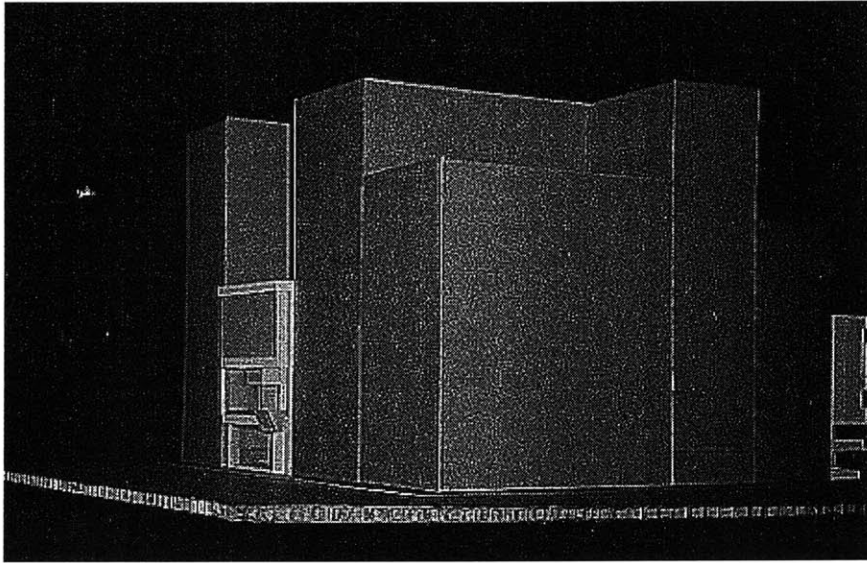


fig. 7.1: Model View from Broadway and Prince Street.

commerce.

TRANSPARENCY

The concept of transparency is carried out in multiple dimensions. One is as a mean to distribute natural light to this long and narrow building. Because the building is situated in an infill site, natural light comes only from the two shorter sides of the building and from above. Transparency also carries out the design intention of visual extension and connections, and enhances idea of spatial flow between two programs.

SCREEN AND LAYERING

Some of the spaces are defined or layered by screen to create some degree of transparency with spatial definition. Screening and layering methods further convey the concept of spatial flow and continuation between programs. The display wall in between the ramp and the staircase serving the side of the building on Mercer Street are both screening and layering devises.

DISPLAY

Unified modes of display, such as display windows and walls is about making commercial objects transparent. Exposing projection rooms and kitchen displays the production process and makes it transparent. Thus, the intention to display both art and commercial objects and make them transparent to the viewers confronts contemporary questions about distinctions between art, entertainment and commodity.

The facade of the building continues the idea of transparency between inside and outside, and of display. The facade of the third floor cinema is opaque when the movie is showing. The glass panels will project and advertise movie to the pedestrian on the Broadway like a display window of the boutique below. Once the movie ends, the glass panels become transparent and the buildings across the street in the real world appears in front. The intention is to make the connection to the street and reality and imagination transparent

MONEY EXCHANGE

Unified modes of money exchange counters for boutique, restaurant, cinema

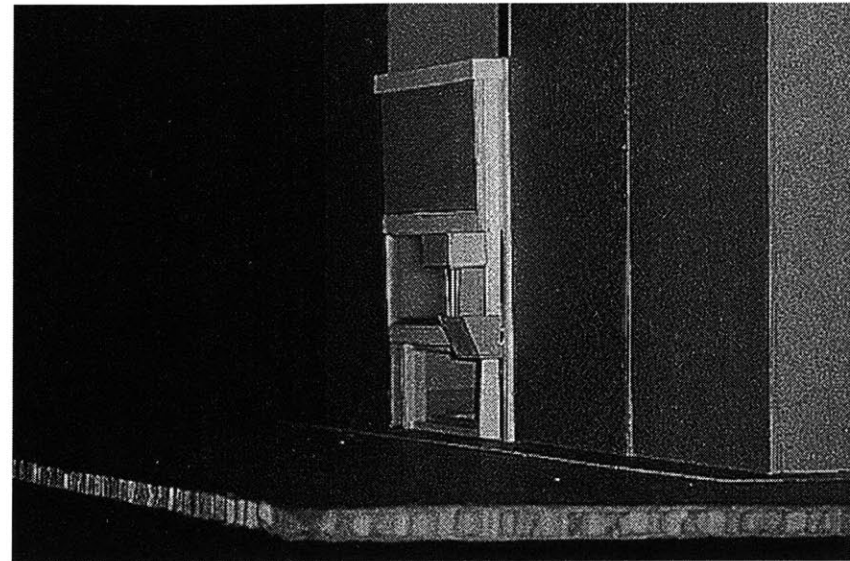


fig. 7.2: Model view of entrance facade on Broadway.

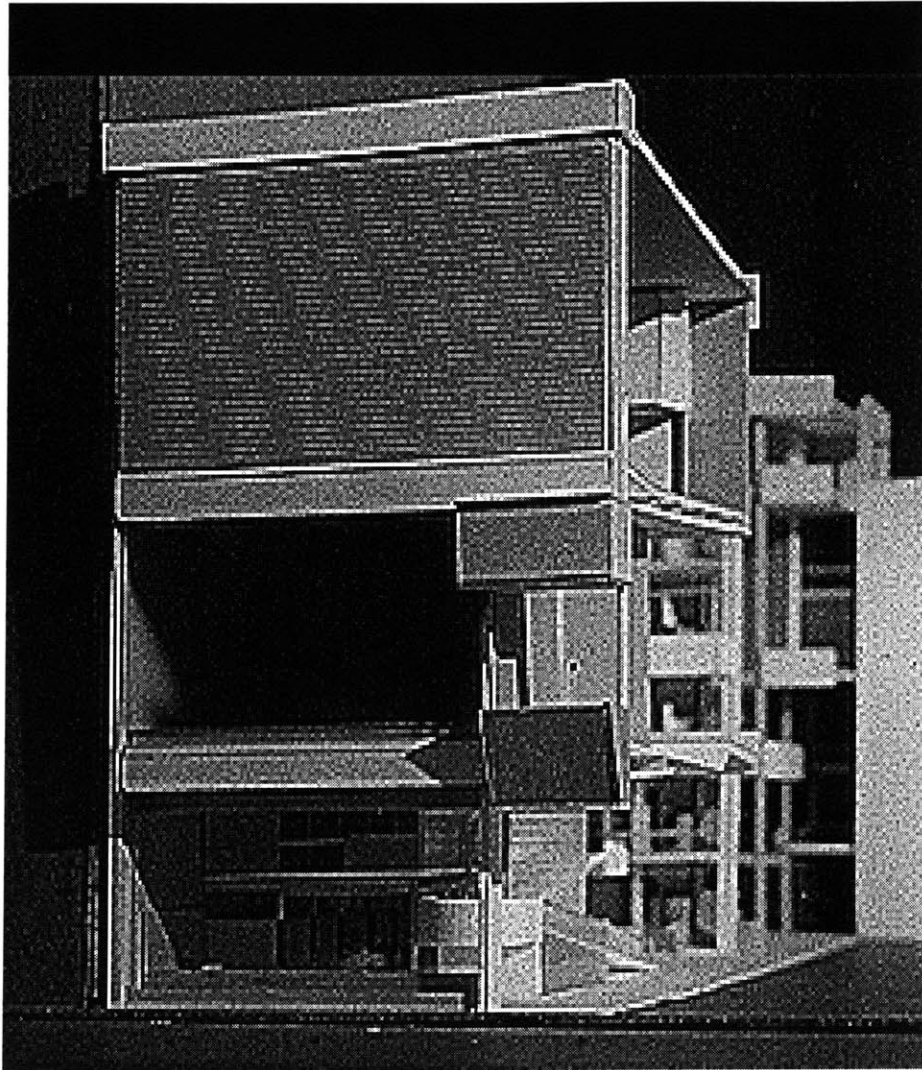


fig. 7.3: Model view of entrance facade on Broadway and interior space.

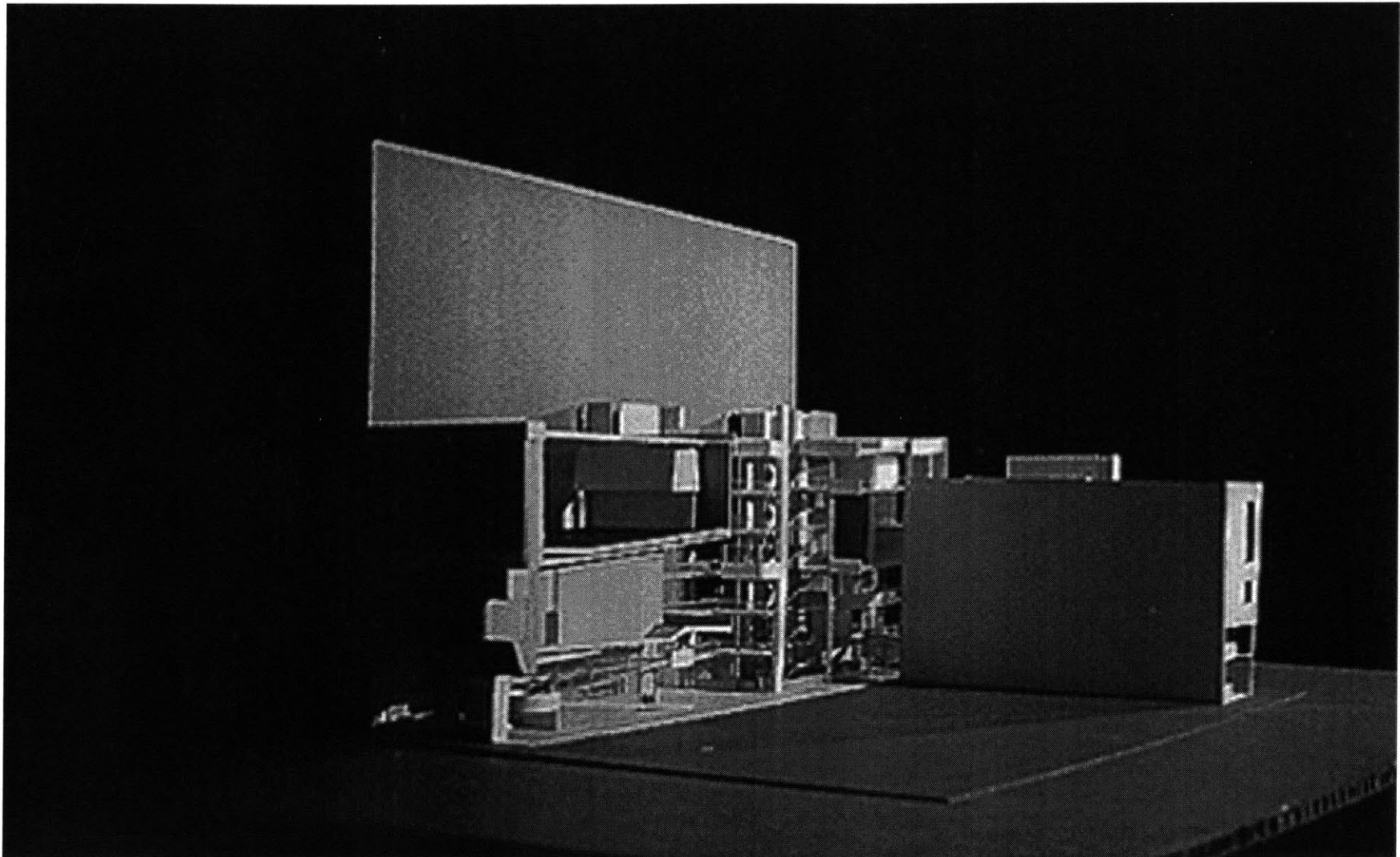


fig. 7.4

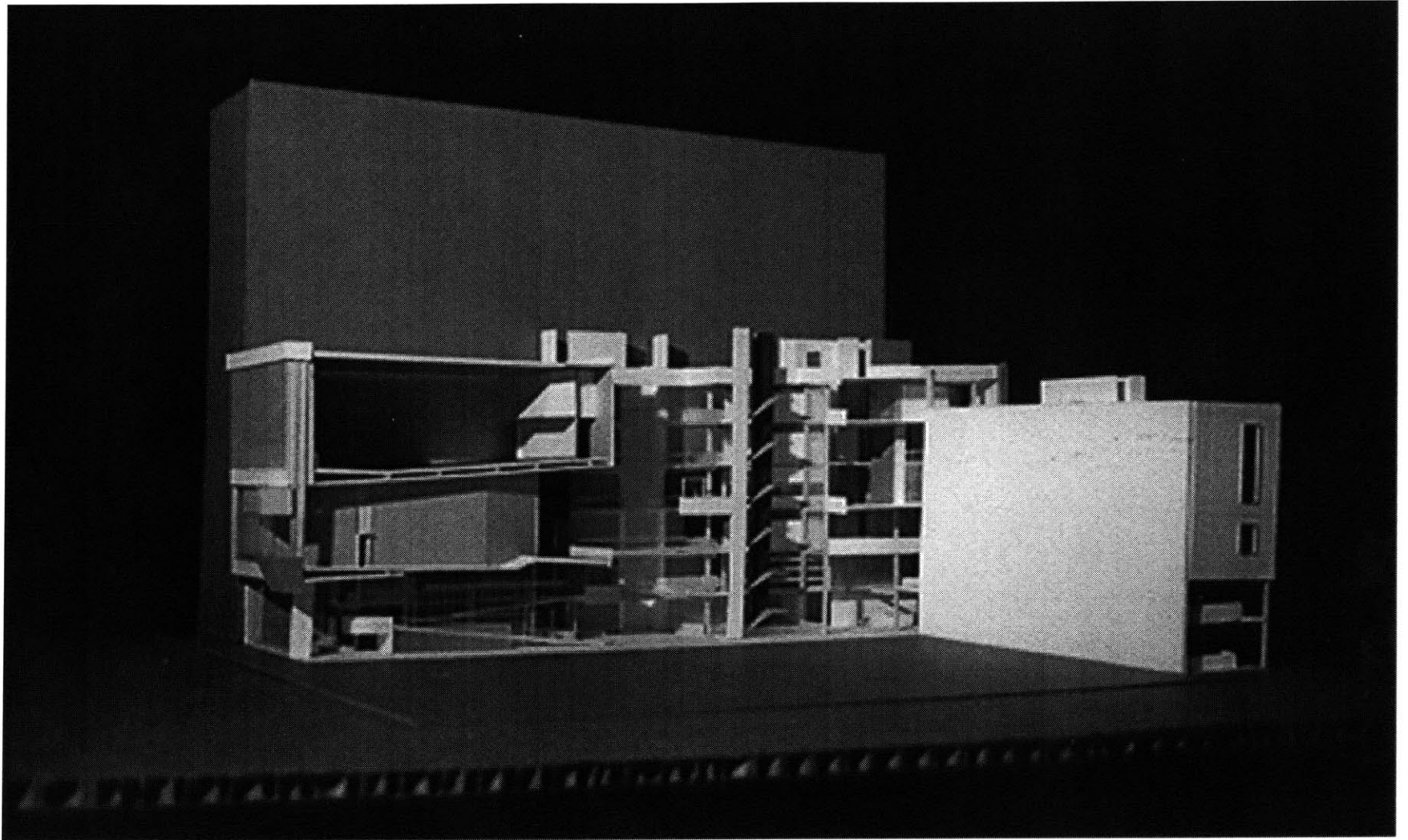


fig. 7.5

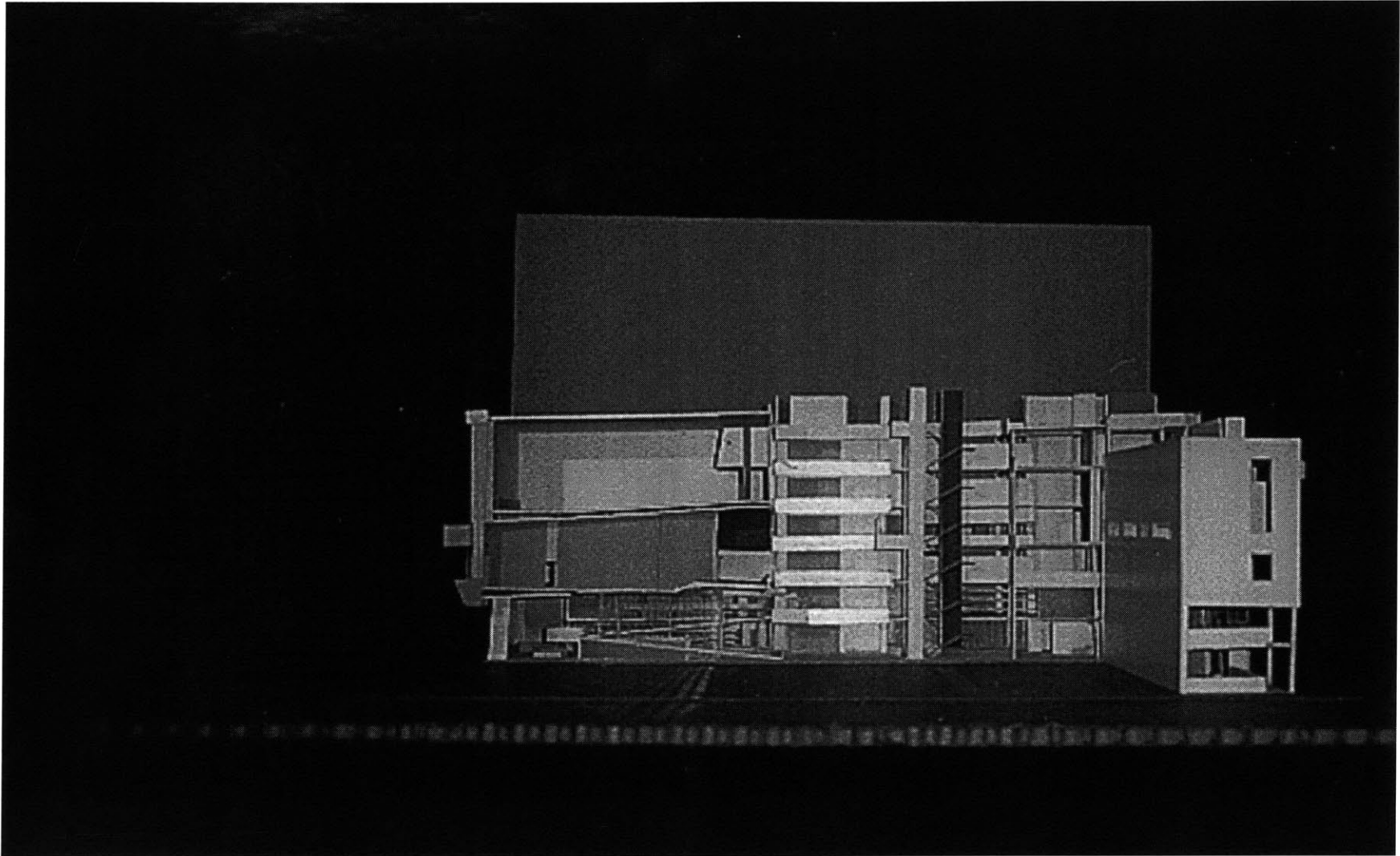


fig. 7.6: Model view of interior space and Prince Street facade.

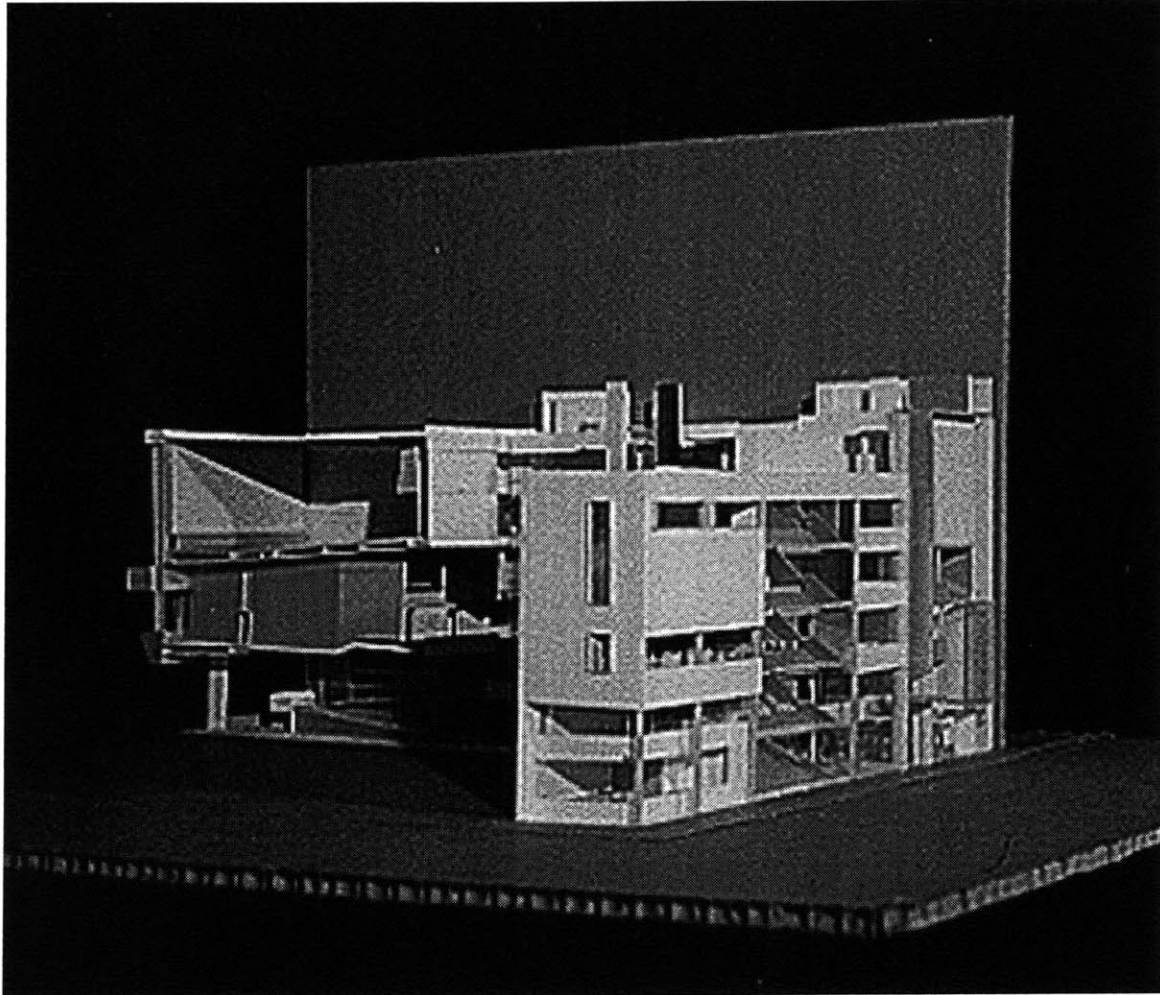


fig. 7.7:

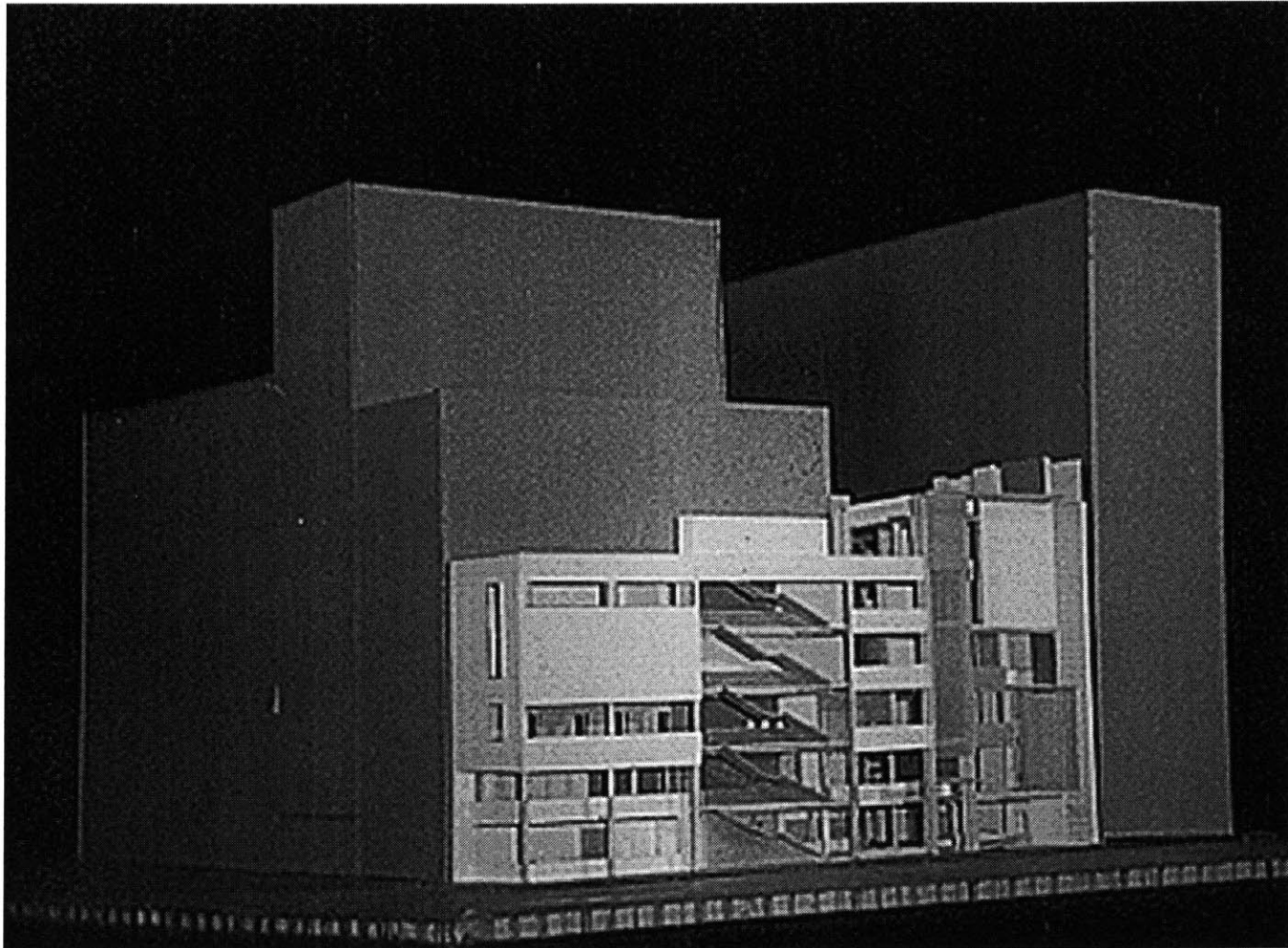
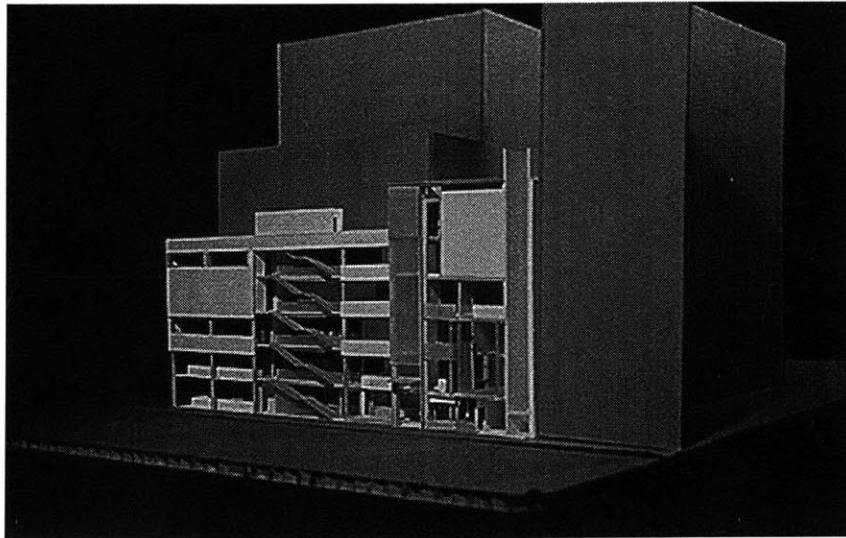


fig. 7.8: Model view of Prince Street and Mercer Street facade.



and gallery indicates the similarity between art, entertainment and commodity. These money exchange counters are also visible and transparent for such comparison.

fig. 7.9: Model view of Mercer Street facade.

1. Broadway Entrance
2. Hallway
3. Boutique
4. Light court
5. Ticket booth
6. Cafe
7. Restaurant
8. Kitchen
9. Gallery display space

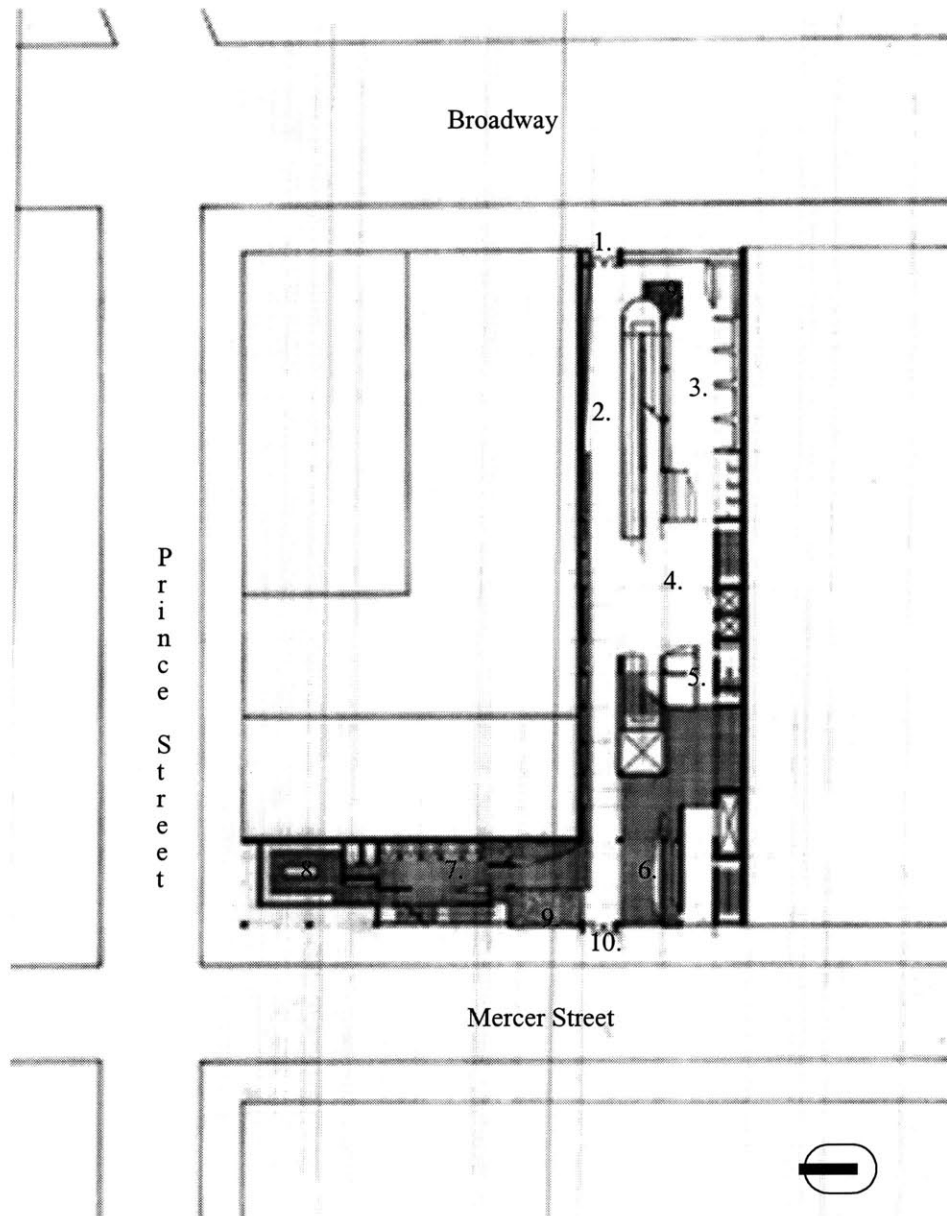
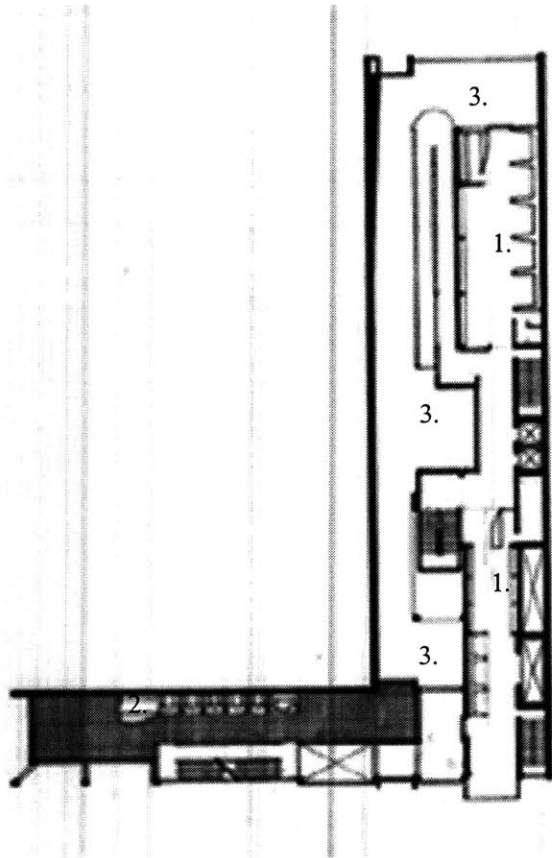


fig. 7.10: Ground Floor Plan. 1" = 16'.



- 1. Boutique
- 2. Restaurant
- 3. Open to below

fig. 7.11: Second Floor Plan.

- 1. Cinema
- 2. Balcony
- 3. Video Store
- 4. Video viewing rooms
- 5. Open to below

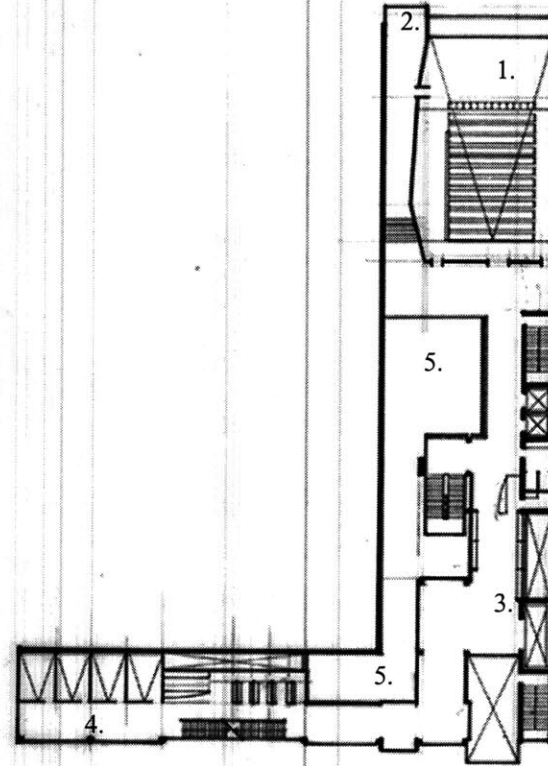
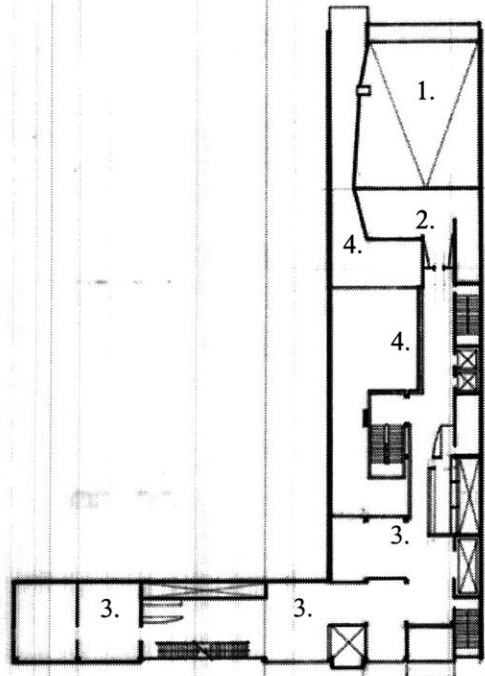


fig. 7.12: Third Floor Plan.



- 1. Cinema below
- 2. Projection room
- 3. Gallery
- 4. Open to below

fig. 7.13: Fourth Floor Plan.

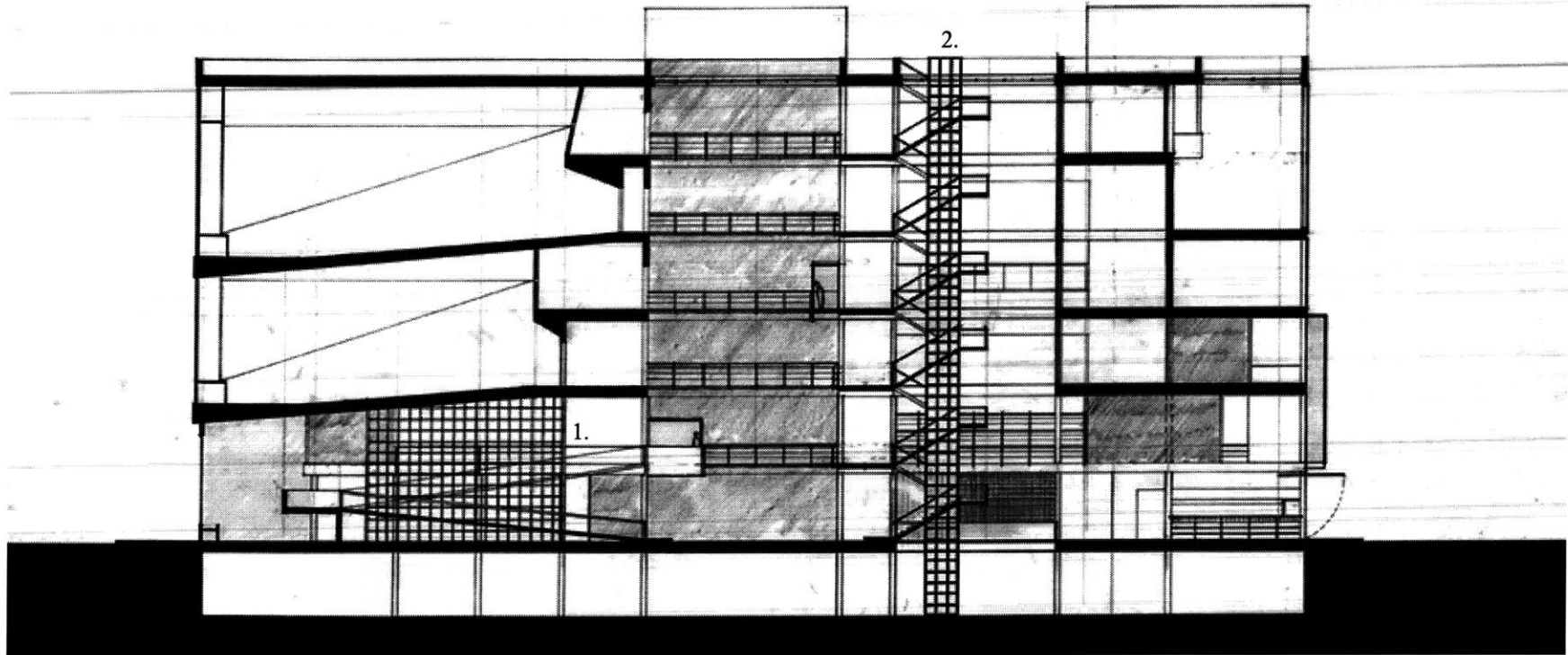


fig. 7. 14: Section. 1" = 8'.

- 1. Display wall
- 2. Video tower

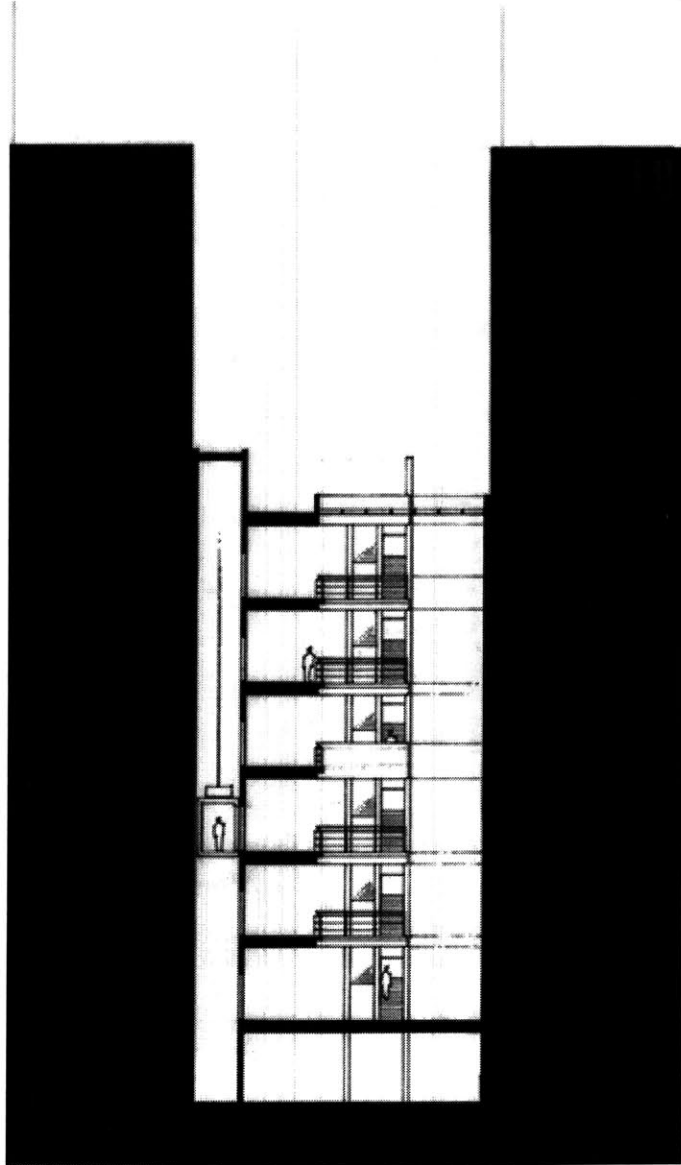


fig. 7.15: Section.

CREDITS

All illustrations and photographs are by the author unless otherwise noted.

- fig. 1.1 Hudson, The Unanticipated City: Loft Conversions in Lower Manhattan, The University of Massachusetts Press, p. 20.
- fig. 1.4 White, New York: A Physical History, Atheneum, p. 2.
- fig. 1.5 Ibid., p. 90.
- fig. 1.6 Ibid., p. xxxii.
- fig. 1.7 Block, New York- Downtown Manhattan: SoHo, Akademie der Kunst, p. 110.
- fig. 1.8 Ibid., p. 4.
- fig. 1.9 Ibid., p. 119.
- fig. 1.10 Fried, New York in Aerial Views, Dover Publications, Inc.
- fig. 1.11 Map: New York State Manhattan, MapArt Publishing Corporation.
- fig. 5.5 El Lissitzky, Proun 12E, 1923. Busch-Reisinger Museum, Harvard University of Art Museums.

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