

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: PLACE IN TIME: THE ROLE OF
ARCHITECTURE IN ESTABLISHING AN
EMOTIONAL CONNECTION BETWEEN
MAN AND TIME

Robert Dunn Kuentzel, Master of Architecture
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Thesis Directed By: Professor Brian Kelly, Architecture Department
Type Your Advisor's Title, Name, and
Department

This thesis explores the role of architecture as a means of reconnecting humans to the passage of time. A neglect of the temporal in our built environment obscures understanding of the human condition in all of its sensory aspects.

The exploration and design of a series of ritual engagements, both culturally, and architecturally, begin to offer a venue through which designers can engage human senses. Rituals act as a means of demarcating the passage of time. It is through the engagement with these moments that people can begin to gain a richer understanding of the ephemeral nature of their own existence.

The Pritzker Architecture Prize serves as the selected ritual of exploration because of its celebration of *humanity* and the *art of architecture*. However, the notion of ritual is explored down to the level of detail of engagement with handrails and door handles.

PLACE IN TIME: THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURE IN ESTABLISHING AN
EMOTIONAL CONNECTION BETWEEN MAN AND TIME

by

Robert Dunn Kuentzel

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Advisory Committee:
Professor Brian Kelly, Chair
Lecturer James Tilghman, Member
Associate Professor Isabelle Gournay, Member

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Preface

This thesis grew from interests in the full human experience of architecture. Rather than as a purely visual product, architecture has the potential to engage every aspect of life. Beyond even the classical senses, architecture engages humans in every sense, and this thesis hopes to inspire further exploration into the reality of humanity and its engagement with architecture.

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Chapter 1: Modernity and Humanity

“The inhumanity of contemporary architecture and cities can be understood as the consequence of the neglect of the body and the senses, an imbalance in our sensory system.”¹

Through the past century, the development and advancement of technology has proved countless times to vastly improve the lives of humans. From the discovery of countless life-saving vaccines to the advent of the Internet allowing us to communicate easily across the planet, technology has had countless positive impacts on our daily lives.

However, this new age of technology has not necessarily impacted architecture in a similarly positive manner. Where these new technologies have improved lives the world over, architecture has not followed suite in its development to a point where buildings and spaces too are being designed and built in a manner that contributes to daily life.

Technology has begun to displace space in several different fields. In terms of economic efficiencies, this has proved invaluable. The ability to work remotely with someone across the globe encourages intense cultural collaboration, however, it has downplayed the importance of our existence within the physical realm.

To ignore the physical and temporal aspects of our lives is to ignore the very nature of our being.

¹ Juhani Pallasmaa. *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2005), 21.

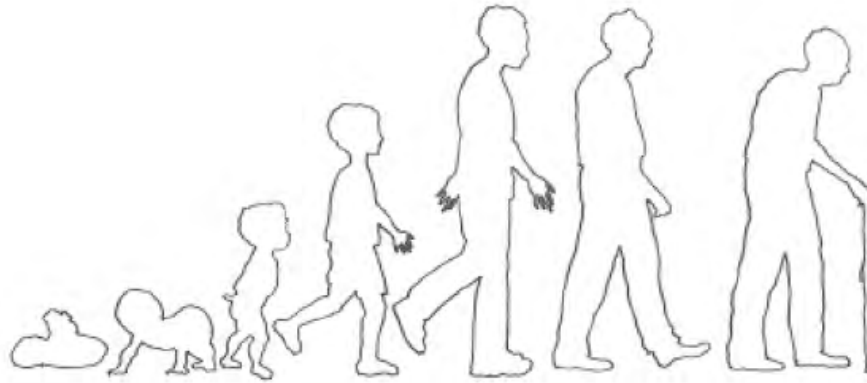


Figure 1: Lifespans of a human and the Parthenon. Image by Author.

Human Architecture

The subjection of architecture to the visual realm unconsciously limits engagement with the senses. This creates a physical disconnect between users and their environments. Numbing and downplaying our senses in architecture perpetuates vision as the hegemonic sense, and further disconnects us from our physical experiences. The marketing of architecture as a visual, and therefore formal commodity encourages the understanding of architecture to the general public as a purely formal thing, both literally and figuratively out of reach.

By negating human senses, we discourage human experience. As technology advances, and the employment of virtual reality begins to be commonplace, a further disembodiment will take place. This technological emphasis of the visual over the

sensual reinforces the fallacy that technological advancements that emulate or replace human action contributes to the human experience.

“The art of the eye has certainly produced imposing and thought-provoking structures, but it has not facilitated human rootedness in the world ... Modernist design at large has housed the intellect and the eye, but it has left the body and the other senses, as well as our memories, imagination and dreams, homeless.”²

Not only does the perpetuation of architecture as a primarily visual act disconnect us from our physical senses, it disconnects us from our mental senses.

“Buildings of this technological era usually deliberately aim at ageless perfection, and they do not incorporate the dimension of time, or the unavoidable and mentally significant processes of aging. This fear of the traces of wear and age is related to our fear of death.”³

The perpetuation of agelessness in modern design thought is a huge result of the notion of architecture as a visual creation. As images are frozen in time, so too is the architecture portrayed within them. Buildings are sold as they are presented, and the impact of time plays no part in the conversation, despite the fact that it, along with human use and weathering, most impact architecture.

This architecture perpetuates the notion of immortality and denies the human condition. This denial weakens our own experiences of our lives, limiting us to brief moments with no lasting impact on our memories. As we age, so too do buildings. We acknowledge our own growth, so why is the aging of buildings ignored? The impact of time, weather, and use provide the opportunity to design in a manner that utilizes these inevitabilities in a beautiful way. This could be taken advantage of so as to connect our constructed environments to the human condition. By engaging with

² Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, 22

³ Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, 34

the inevitabilities of our existence, and applying it to architectural design, the potential for truly human architecture can be explored.

“The weakening of the experience of time in today’s environments has devastating mental effects. In the words of the American therapist Gotthard Booth, ‘nothing gives man fuller satisfaction than participation in processes that supersede the span of individual life’. We have a mental need to grasp that we are rooted in the continuity of time, and in the man-made world it is the task of architecture to facilitate this experience. Architecture domesticates limitless space and enables us to inhabit it, but it should likewise domesticate endless time and enable us to inhabit the continuum of time.”⁴

The impact of time on ourselves, not only on buildings, greatly affects how we perceive space. While the argument is made that it is through our vision that we first encounter a space, what is it that we encounter about a space? We understand the spaces not only visually, but physically. We do so through our memories. The sum of our past experiences contribute to how we encounter the world that we inhabit. This is not limited to the memories of our lifetime, but the very genetic memory that shapes and evolves humans. Pallasmaa speaks in great depth about shifting from the ocularcentric society to one that engages all of our physical, but he also touches on how our memories affect our perceptions of space.

“[What] I am suggesting is that architectural emotion is bound to our former experiences. Architecture releases certain deep memories. Take for instance the power of fire. For about 700,000 years our forefathers have been sitting around the fire, feeling pleasure and experiencing collectivity. It is that genetic resilience that we unconsciously recognize, that we sense. I am critical towards the idea of architecture as a visual or aesthetic invention. Meaning has to come from somewhere; and it comes from life. These primary images have metaphysical power. For instance walking through a doorway has tremendous philosophical and metaphysical power. It embodies the transition from one world to another, from one space to another. What I am suggesting implicitly is that atmosphere may have to do with our unconscious recognition of such primary images.”⁵

⁴ Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, p. 35

⁵ Juhani Pallasmaa, Peter Zumthor, and Gernot Böhme. *OASE #91 - Building Atmosphere*. (Rotterdam: Journal for Architecture, 2013), 45

It is clear that our emotional understanding of space is through the lens of memory. Particular emotions are associated with particular memories, and these memories are associated with spaces.

Memory and emotion become ways of understanding, analyzing, and connecting to a building. It is the lens through which we experience our environments. How might these ideas be used not only as a means of analysis, but as a means of production? How can memory and emotion be utilized as the basis for a design methodology, rather than as a resulting understanding of architecture?

The Human Condition

To create spaces that truly speak to the human condition, one must first define the human condition.

Rather than imposing a particular definition upon such a broad, personal topic, the best way to understand the human condition would be to simplify it to how we engage with the world. It is directly related to events, emotions, and experiences. It is when we become aware of our own existence, and the idiosyncrasies of that existence. When architecture so grounds us in our reality that we find ourselves experiencing something unable to be articulated, then it has successfully spoken to, and engaged the human condition.

When architecture does not impose itself upon humans, but it becomes a blank canvas that encourages existence to interact with it, it creates endless potential to speak to the human condition. When a building, a place, an object, makes you feel something, that is when it is truly successful.

Peter Zumthor concerns himself greatly with exploring these ideas. His goals lie in the creation of places that people attach themselves to. Places that inevitably people remember, and people create feelings in. He finds that the most successful buildings that do this are the ones in which memories are made. However, rather than just mental memories, Zumthor proclaims that so too must buildings be able to absorb the memories of past events and people.

“I am convinced that a good building must be capable of absorbing the traces of human life and thus of taking on a specific richness. Naturally, in this context I think of the patina of age on materials, of innumerable small scratches on surfaces, of varnish that has grown dull and brittle, and of edges polished by use. But when I close my eyes and try to forget both these physical traces and my own first associations, what remains is a different impression, a deeper feeling, an consciousness of time passing and an awareness of the human lives that have been acted out in these places and rooms and charged them with a special aura. ... What matters now is only this feeling of deep melancholy. Architecture is exposed to life. If its body is sensitive enough, it can assume a quality that bears witness to the reality of past life.”⁶

It is in this special aura that he mentions that the human condition lies.

⁶ Peter Zumthor. *Thinking Architecture*. 3rd, Expanded ed. (Basel: Birkhauser, 2006), 26

Chapter 2: Modern Architecture – preoccupation with the visual and the problem of abstraction

Space as Abstraction

Volume

In the pursuit of architecture as a beautiful aesthetic image, the concentration on form, and thus the resultant volume, came to the forefront of the conversation. This is important as this volume is the space that we occupy. It is not the elements of enclosure themselves that create engaging architecture, but it is the resulting space created that moves us. Discourse regarding spatial quality and form encourage exploration in finding innovative methods of designing to create new spaces.

Construction

The construction and detailing of these spaces however, are how we begin to engage with spaces. As the human sees the space, it projects itself physically onto the vision. Vision in this regard is based on past tactile engagement. It is through this, through the understanding of how a space was created that we begin to genuinely understand a space.

While we understand and engage with the volume of a space, we do this through understanding how a space came together. Pallasmaa understands that it is through prior physical engagements with places and things that we relate to buildings. The importance of construction techniques cannot be understated in how they are used to form a space.

“I confront the city with my body; my legs measure the length of the arcade and the width of the square; my gaze unconsciously projects my body onto the façade of the cathedral, where it roams over the mouldings and contours, sensing the size of recesses and projections; my body

weight meets the mass of the cathedral door, and my hand grasps the door pull as I enter the dark void behind. I experience myself in the city, and the city exists through my embodied experience. The city and my body supplement and define each other. I dwell in the city and the city dwells in me.”⁷

Atmosphere

Embodiment of self onto a building contributes to the gestalt of architecture.

This is how we physically begin to engage with a building. It is through this engagement that we can hope to create atmospheres within space. Rather than simply formal, physical structures, the engagement of self with structure and space creates an emotional, mental connection to place.

By abstracting space to simply the result of form, one misses the opportunity to create an atmosphere that speaks to the human condition.

Scale

Mass

The lack of construction details in the exploration of space as purely space does not take scale into account. We relate our own scale to buildings, and connecting them to past experiences. If viewing a picture, our mind struggles with the understanding of form, and the understanding of scale. How then, do we understand space if we do not understand scale?

Somewhere along the development of design thinking, the eye level of design changed from the ground to the sky, encouraging designs based on exterior formal massing. As this is not a normally occupied plane of existence, nor how we tend to

⁷ Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, 43

experience architecture, the notion of massing buildings, while valuable programmatically, does not contribute to a design methodology rooted in the human experience. While it allows for us to construct a formal understanding of necessary spatial relationships, it does not allow us to construct the space itself.

Detail

The scale of the detail is one at which humans can immediately begin to understand space. As we project ourselves onto space, we recognize and attach to familiar elements. The door handle reaches to the hand, and we work our way from there in understanding the space. The texture of stone even speaks to our intuition regarding scale, allowing us to understand space intuitively at least at an elementary level. A brick, roughly hand sized, allows us to engage with the scale of a building, unconsciously taking part in the construction of the building, or understanding its process.

Understanding scale allows for us to comprehend space quickly, and in relation to our own bodies. This physical dialogue between body and building begins to lay framework for mental, emotional engagements as we recall upon past dialogues with buildings. President6

Materiality and Amateriality

Amateriality

The downplay of materials in favor of spatial exploration leaves out the richness of what makes space so engaging in the first place. One cannot discuss

spatial qualities without understanding how materials will affect space. Even concrete bears qualities that bring its austerity to life. The notion of amateriality encourages elementary intellectual thought over meaningful human engagement with place. It is these interactions that make people feel things that connect them with their environments.

Human Material

Our interactions with materials provide an important database of experiences which we can use to relate to our presence. Materials provide not only another scale of reference, but another set of characteristics and qualities that we relate to. The softness, rigidity, thermal qualities of objects create another level with which we engage our surroundings.

Feeling a tree after rain provides a different experience than picking up a stone on a hot day. These inanimate objects bear similar qualities to those of humans. The sharing of qualities encourages embodiment between object and human, strengthening the human condition.

Both human and natural materials weather appropriately through time and use, becoming embedded with history and memory.

“I would emphasize the history that is stored in the landscapes, in cities and buildings, stored in the objects we live with. When you ask me what comes to my mind when I think of the theme of atmosphere, it is this presence of history...”⁸

The qualities of materials, how they are affected, and their idiosyncrasies create opportunities for humans to engage with each particular component used. It is

⁸ Zumthor, *OASE #91 – building atmosphere*, 63

the gestalt understanding of each component as part of a whole that allows us to comprehend spaces and their qualities.



Figure 2: Patina on a copper planter. Image by Author.

The Human Touch

Machine

A standard often applied to clothes, the machine made garment is viewed as structurally and artistically inferior to that of the hand made. The machine made garment lacks soul. It lacks the human touch and effort that makes each hand-made

piece special. We appreciate the energy invested in each piece, and we appreciate the result. Each piece has been embedded with memory, the materials have been manipulated and affected to create a new whole.

This same principle applies to our own engagements with buildings. Our affects on buildings, on clothes, on objects creates a human connection to them. The machine does not allow this, and it is only once the whole has been made that we must impact it, creating a disconnected user experience.

Human

Our impacts on buildings allow for an incredible connection to them. We begin to consider the passage of time as we see the weathering. Rather than perpetuating timeless architecture built for only the time of completion, one could aspire to create an architecture that ages gracefully, that embeds memories, and that creates a dialogue between the user, the building, and time.

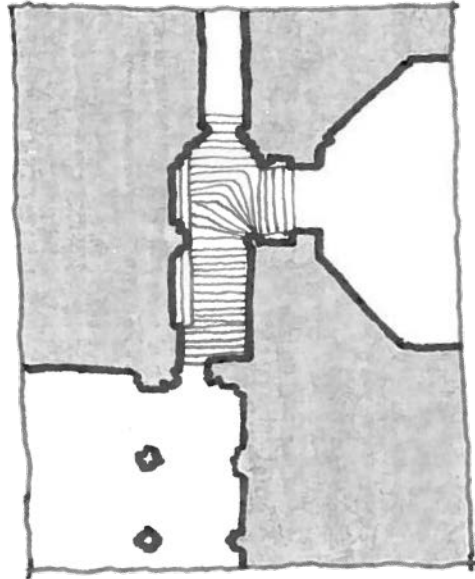
The stairway to the Chapel at Wells Cathedral is one such of these spaces that has created this connection with time very successfully. Rather than speaking to the present, or striving for the future, they create a space that places the user right where they are, but reaches far into the past, and far into the future.



Figure 3: Wells Cathedral Chapel Stairs. Image by Author.

The soft light that warms the stone interior creates an inviting feeling within the space. The soft curve that grows seamlessly from the middle of the stairs that lead to the chapel appears natural, and can be easily traversed. The wide proportions allow for ease of use, however it is clear where the preferred passage is. The soft dip of the

stairs on the left become the most inviting aspect of the space. It is the point where humans have interacted with the space that one finds most intriguing.



**Figure 4: plan of steps at Wells Cathedral.
image by Author.**

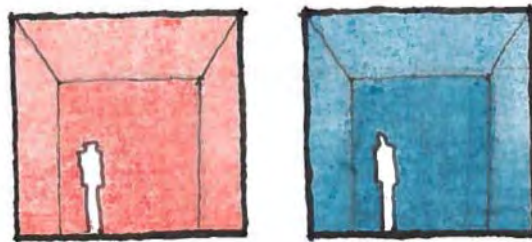
The impact of humanity upon them has enriched the steps with memory. Soft, warm human bodies have formed cold, unforgiving stone into a naturally smooth object. The form intrigues us because of the actions that shaped the stone. One begins to question what the stone looked like when it was first built, how many people have walked these steps, how many more people will walk them, and what will these same steps look like 1,000 years from now? The steps are not a fragment of time, but a piece of a conversation in time.

This dialogue of time and use between human and material became a notion of accommodation. The nature of the material allowed for change over time. The stairs were not designed to wear away, but were designed as a mode of movement. It

is the act of movement that shaped the stairs over time. This particular event, of ascension, created a piece upon which this conversation could take place.

Typology and Memory

Memory is embedded within typology. As each person understands objects and spaces differently, collective memory is embedded within typologies. When two people enter the exact same space with the same experience, they may understand it completely differently. The spatial and environmental qualities are the exact same, but the memories and experiences that led up to that event contribute to the differentiation in understanding.



**Figure 5: Differentiation of Understandings.
Image by Author.**

When a particular object is brought up, such as a table, a series of memories and events immediately come to mind. Different physical compositions of what makes up a table, different characteristics, materials, and forms rush to mind. However, we are all able to fundamentally understand what the table is, no matter which table came to mind. Our memories are able to distill the basic principles of typologies and scale to orient ourselves in the conversation of the table. These memories tell us what a table is. They tell us of the proper relative scale, flatness,

size, and material. We know when we see a table made of metal that it is sturdy, and that when we see one made from paper that it is not.

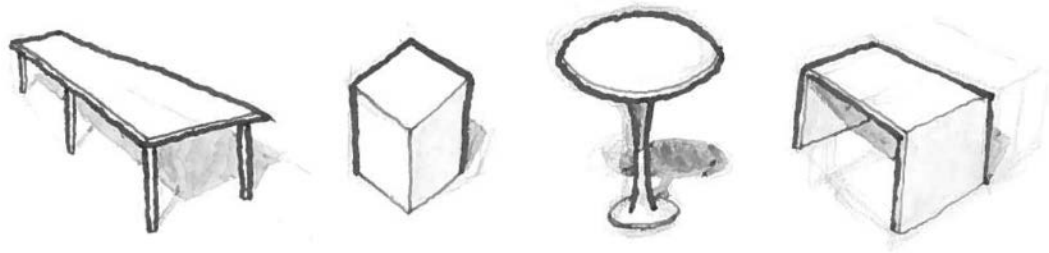


Figure 6: Tables. Image by Author.

We are also able to discern that when a table is three feet tall, it is a table, but when it is 12 feet high, it is a hut.

Memory and Emotion.

Function

Our memory serves us in a far more interesting manner than merely recollection of event. As each event occurs, there are a multitude of different factors that alter our remembrance of said event. It plays a crucial role in understanding our existence. As we interact with and experience the world, we engage with life.

Our understanding of elements, of materials, smells, sounds, is based on memory. We learn through experience, we store these experiences, and they mark our brains. Pallasmaa speaks in depth about the impact of sense memory as a method of understanding the world in *The Eyes of the Skin*. He postulates “Sensory experiences become integrated through the body, or rather, in the very constitution of the body and the human mode of being. Psychoanalytic theory has introduced the notion of body image or body schema as the centre of integration.”⁹ The idea that the body

⁹ Pallasmaa, *The eyes of the Skin*, 44

becomes the center of integration of experiences means therefore that it is through the body that all experience is stored. It becomes impossible to experience a new event without reconsidering past events stored in the memory. It is through the building of, and recollection of memories that we go through life. Our memories are employed in every aspect of life. They shape our personalities, our emotions, and our base of knowledge.

However, our memories are not static. They are not concrete pieces of time captured and rendered through the lens of fact. Memories overlap. The intersection and combination of certain aspects reframe views. These memories are embodied with much more than mere recollections of event. Our senses are engaged, and our emotions are engaged.

Emotion

As we recall events our emotions begin to skew the understanding of the memory. Emotional impact begins to translate to spatial understanding. We cannot disassociate emotions with spaces. Our recollection of a particular day in a particular place begins to question what is it that made us remember that moment. How were we feeling, was it the space that framed our memory, was it the space that framed the emotion? Was it the particular emotion being attached to a space that encourages our memory? Peter Zumthor questions this notion in *Thinking Architecture* as he recalls the intricacies of a public square and his remembrance of his experience.

““Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder” – this sentence comes to mind as I write. Does it mean that everything I experienced at the time was primarily the expression and the outflow of my state of mind, of the mood that I happened to be in at the moment? Did the experience ultimately have little to do with the square and its atmosphere? In order to answer that questions, I conduct a simple experiment: I dismiss the square from my mind and the moment I do so, a curious thing happens: the feelings evoked by the situation begin to fade and even threaten to disappear. Without the atmosphere of the square, I realize I would never have

experienced those feelings. Now it comes back to me: there is an intimate relationship between our emotions and the things around us.”¹⁰

Memory of Components

The relationship between our emotions and our surroundings, while close to a subconscious feeling, frames our existence. It is important then to begin to break down the space of the square that Zumthor felt so moved by to analyze and begin to utilize emotion as a design tool. One can assume that the gestalt of the square contributed to the feeling, but the gestalt is composed of a set of particular components, each with attached memories, each contributing to the feelings associated with the memory in a different way.

One can begin to dissect spaces, places, images, objects to parts, and begin to list memories or feelings associated with each piece. By identifying a collection of separate feelings and emotions, one could get closer to understanding the initial feeling.

¹⁰ Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture*, 84-85

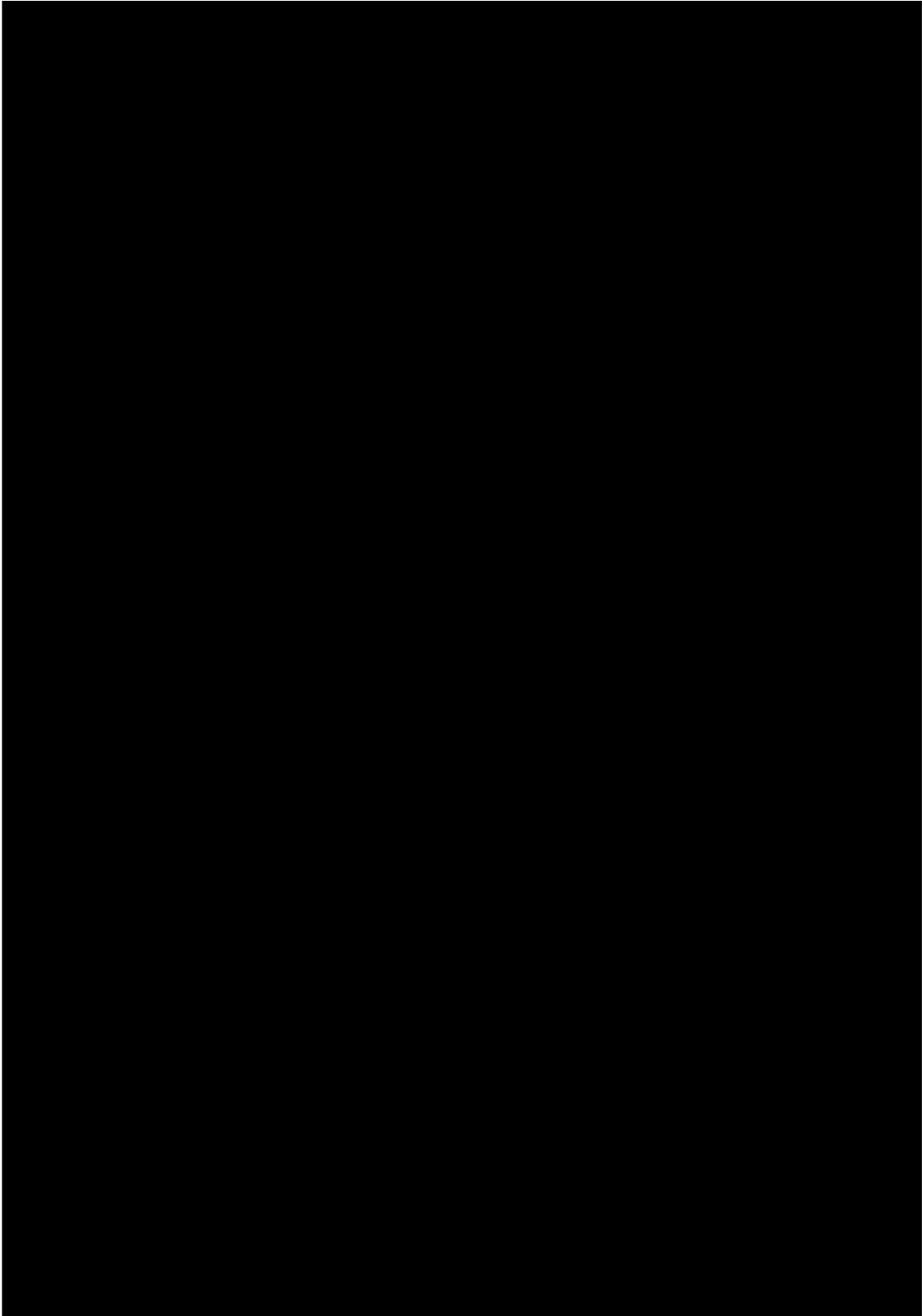


Figure 7: Monastery doorway. Image courtesy OASE #91

The above picture at a Monastery is an example of one image from a visual essay titled *Stepping Stones* in *OASE #91 – building atmosphere*, which was compiled as a basis for conversation with Zumthor and Pallasmaa for that edition of *OASE*. Each image tries to capture an atmosphere, or portray a space that had such particular atmosphere. This particular image is more engaging the more one looks at it. The rugged nature of the wooden door clearly shows age, to the point where it has developed a slight shine. Its metal hardware is imperfectly placed, indicating handmade craft. The doorframe connects to a kneewall, but brightens higher up as its structure is emphasized by windows. The bright sun outdoors on the trees suggest a warm breeze coming through that rustles the curtains.

This particular image stirs memories, whether particular ones, or merely past experiences with these components. The image engages the viewer in such a way that draws them in and invites them to the space. Each person engages with the image in a different manner, recalling different moments and emotions to reference as they observe.

Crafting a Dialogue with Memory

Humanity

It is this sense of awareness and engagement with our environment that makes our lives rooted in place and time. By recognizing the nature of our existence as one based in interactions with physical places and spaces, and as a finite time, we could use these inevitabilities to enhance our architecture, and our engagement with life.

Memory

Engaging with the passage of time, rather than with our present existence as a fragment in time, we are able to establish a sense of place in time. As our past experiences impact our presence, and in turn our future experiences, we begin to relate moments and objects to others. Memories are not a collection of sterile events, but relate to each other, and are impacted by emotions.

Emotion

The emotional impact of space on our well being has had little coverage in architectural discourse. Rather than discussions on formal design processes, discussion based on experiential design processes could lead to buildings shaped not only by how people use them, but by how people feel. As buildings, spaces, and moments can be described relating to feeling, the same language is used with people.

“as an expression of sensitivity, one would thus say I feel oppressed, I feel elevated, I feel expansive, I feel confined. Moving forward, one comes to a type of sensitivities that need not necessarily be construed spatially or rather whose spatial character is not immediately evident, such as serious, joyful, melancholic. ... These expressions for sensitivities can thus full well also be characteristics to describe spaces of mindful physical presence, namely atmospheres.”¹¹

Encouraging architectural discussion rooted in the emotional and sensual realm could produce buildings that suit the human condition.

¹¹ Böhme, *OASE #91 – building atmosphere*, 29

Chapter 3: Ritual as Demarcation of the Passage of Time

Ritual and the Passage of Time

Timelines

The very definition of a timeline portrays the image of a linear passage of time. Constantly moving forward, never returning to moments or events, time as a constantly forward moving construct neglects the reality of time. While we cannot revisit past memories, we can revisit particular events.

Each year, we return to the blossoming of plants in the spring, and the August season leaves trees bare. Spring turns to summer, to fall, to winter, and returns to spring each year. Similarly, the week begins anew every 7 days, and each day begins with the rising of the sun.

This notion of returning to events, but not specific moments begins to change the shape of a timeline. Timelines can be viewed as a more cyclical image rather than being purely linear.

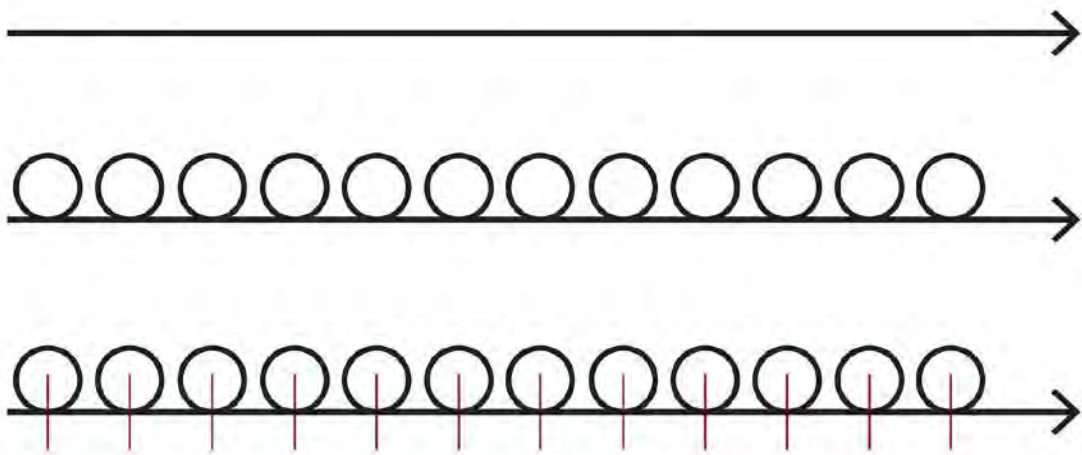


Figure 8: The passage of time not as a linear series of events, but as a cyclical series of events. Image by Author.

The temporal nature of these events begins to shape human life. Each year particular events begin to form around the passage of time. Human life takes shape around the passage of time and marks the passing of the years. However rather than as a strictly temporal construct, human life takes shape in social and cultural constructs rooted in the repetitive manner of a ritual. While these rituals are based on the passage of time, they are less rooted to seasonal, environmental conditions as they are in the socially established repetition of an event.

Experiential

While events become rooted in both time and society, the notion of ritual can be explored even in the everyday repetition of actions. While we view the act of making and drinking a morning cup of coffee as a ritual, the ritual can be applied to the most seemingly menial of tasks. Opening a door, traversing a flight of stairs, even sitting on a bench can begin to take part in the acts of a daily life, contributing to the notion of ritual as a marking of time.

Even in the design of a particular event one can heighten a particular experience in relation to the existing memory of an event.

When the word 'table' is brought up again, a particular image is recalled in the mind. However, this image is laden with much more than a series of visual cues, this memory recalls a plethora of understandings of a particular typology. While we all recall a different table, some perhaps more similar than others, we have this formal and functional understanding of an object. This allows a dialogue to occur around the idea of a table.

However more than simply the allowance of dialogue regarding typology, this reveals the typological memory that we all establish as we live. We recall upon our memories to enable us to understand particular places, spaces, or objects. We begin to compare our experiences to our memories, allowing for an analytical understanding of our environment, and a point of reflection on past experiences. A simple example, but as we have all grown over the course of time, this same understanding of a table has gone from a primitive notion of shelter to a socially instated idea of the table as a surface for working, or for social gatherings. We have developed this memory of typology over our existence.

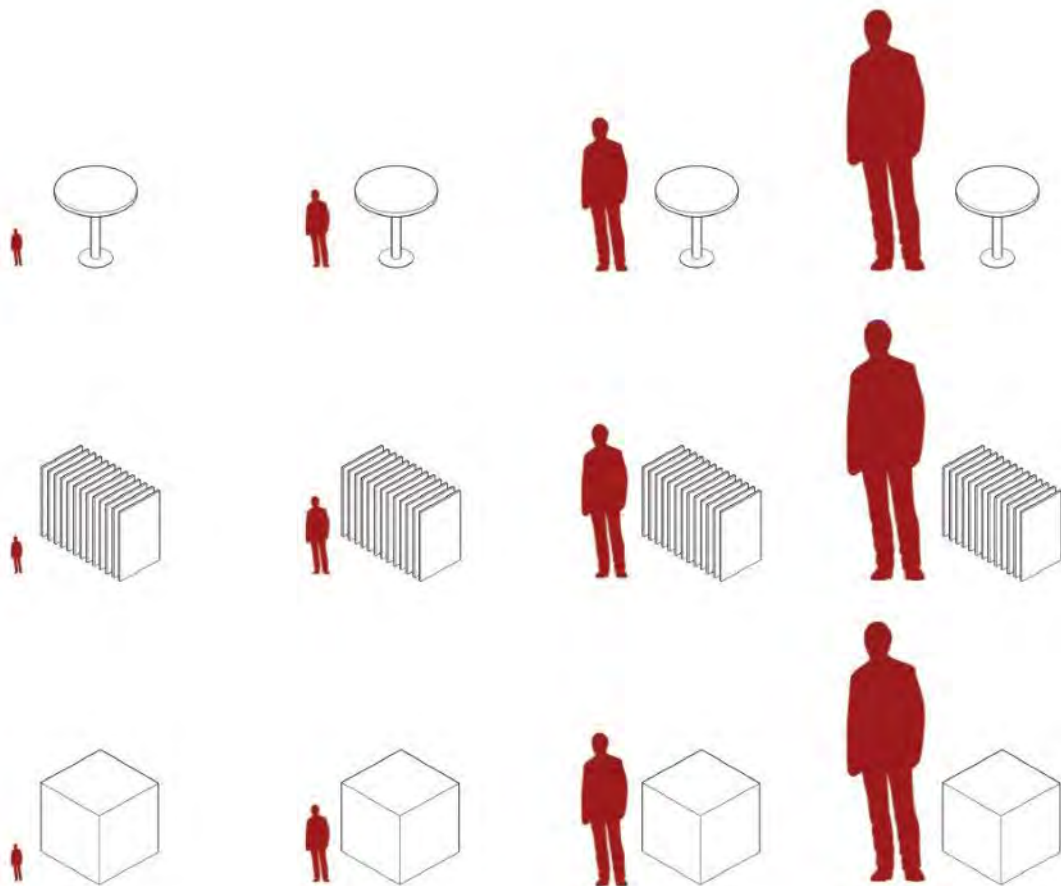


Figure 9: Human growth changes understanding of typology. Image by Author.

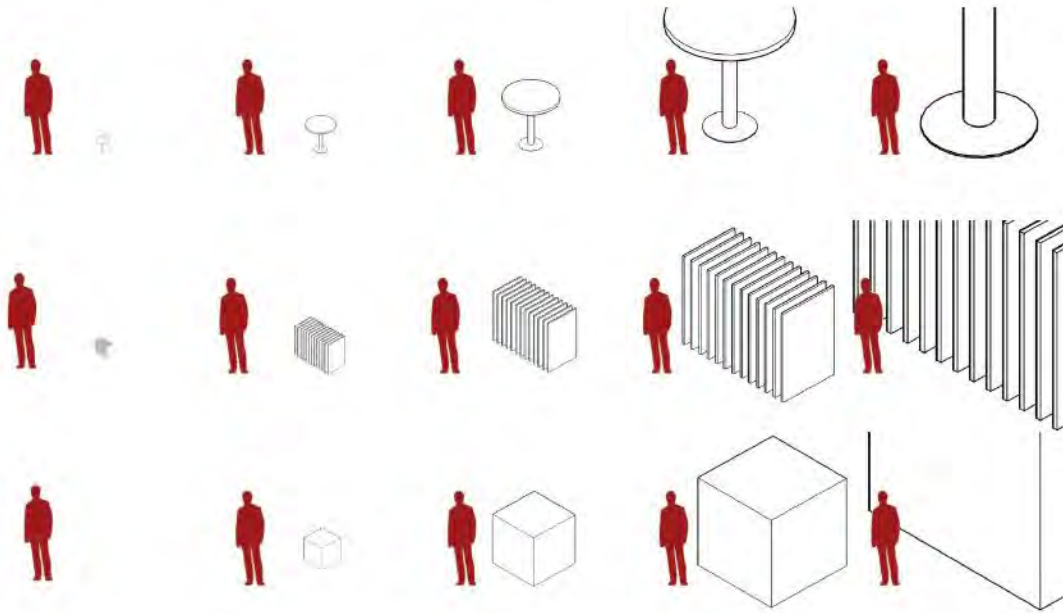


Figure 10: Altering a particular typology, in this example through scale, offers a new understanding of engagement with a typology. Image by Author.

When we begin to alter this typological understanding of particular events, we begin to heighten, or desensitize our particular engagement with an event. By simply shifting scale of a typology we begin to interact with it. Recalling our own shift of size and understanding of typology, as adults, when we change the scale of a table it can change between being a surface for work, or a stool, or a shelter. While this is a relatively elementary method of changing ones understanding of a typology, a simple shift in scale allows for a heightened experience.

As we live, we learn, and we develop a particular set of memories, a skillset, or a typological understanding. As we develop from birth to our present state, we have a variety of understandings of a series of typologies. One such example is our engagement with tables. For millennia mankind has engaged with the notion of shelter. We cover ourselves from the elements, creating this dialogue between our

human comfort, and the environment. This fundamental experience of shelter translates directly over to childhood understanding of space.

This heightened experience of a typology, or a detail inevitably heightens the entire architectural experience. The detail itself as a demarcation of time begins to assert itself as a potential moment of engagement by truly designing itself to create dialogue with the user. By encouraging engagement, the detail can begin to accept the embodied energy of use, creating dialogue between its user. While a perfectly new handrail conveys this sense of cleanliness and newness to its users, a worn and weathered handrail begins to convey its use. The understanding that people have been here, and that the passage of time and use has changed material evokes a sense of history in people.

The Experiential Ritual

Engaging the hand and the eye

The point of engagement with familiar typological designs offers a counterpoint to our experiential memory of a particular ritual. As we build a repertoire of experience, we measure events in relation to other events and place them within our own memories. When we encounter a particular event that should fit into a category of typologies within our memories, but that experience is unusual, we take note of this, and we engage with the event, or with the physical object, in a different manner. This heightened engagement with a moment allows us to consider a particular moment within time in comparison to the rest of our typological experience, typological experience allows for us to establish a particular moment within a series of other memories that allow for us to begin considering the passage of

time. Through a continual engagement with a building, this awareness can begin to trigger memories, and trigger ones sense of their place within time.

Chapter 4: Program

In the search for a venue to explore the human aspect of architecture, the Pritzker Architecture Prize and its principles became an appropriate foundation upon which to design.

In concretizing this ritual, a place is required to accept the energy of the event. This program creates a new center for not only the awarding of the Pritzker Prize, but also creates spaces to encourage interaction with the public. This center consists of not only a gathering hall for presentations, but gallery space for the display of architectural work, both by former laureates, as well as the current laureate. This would act as a public institution for people to engage with architecture and its impact on daily life. The building would also consist of office space for the foundation, and classroom space.

History of Organization:

The Pritzker Prize

Commonly referred to as the Nobel Prize of Architecture, The Pritzker is awarded annually to an architect whose built work has had a significant impact the art of architecture and its impact on humanity. The international award was established in 1979 to encourage public awareness of architecture, and is meant to inspire more creativity within the profession

The Pritzker foundation focuses on Modern architecture, promoting innovating thinking, and an approach to architecture that is concerned with use and experience rather than a particular style. The Pritzker Family is headquartered in

Chicago, the city where American Modernism grew most prominently. As the city where Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright began their careers, Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe flourished in his work, and in his academic career, it is appropriate that the Pritzker foundation is located there.

Awarding the Prize

The Prize is awarded annually around May at an architecturally significant site across the planet. Each year it is awarded at a new site. The choice of location reinforces the importance of architecture, and provides a fresh arena for the ceremony each year. The location is always a site that celebrates humanity, society, and culture. It has been held at historic libraries, museums, galleries, of capital buildings several times over the course of the Prize's existence. The site selection is not connected to the winning architect, but encourages experiencing architecture from other cultures and times.

The invitation-only ceremony is attended by guests from across the world, as well as those from the host country. It generally consists of introductory remarks from a representative of the host country, comments from the jury, then the presentation of the Prize, and an acceptance speech from the laureate. Following the ceremony, a dinner is held, and the next day a lecture is held in the location. However, at the completion of these events, every returns to their homes, and the embodied energy of the ritual dissipates. Most recently the event was held at the United Nations Building in New York City, awarding Alejandro Aravena as the 2016 Pritzker Laureate.

Relocating the Ceremony

By relocating the ceremony to Chicago and placing the annual ceremony in a fixed location, this would greatly improve the perception of Chicago as an international architecture city. Largely, Cities in the United States are not viewed with the same lens of great architecture as Europe or Asia. By placing the most important prize in Architecture in the city where the American Modern movement grew it would surely emphasize the importance of architectural design in the United States.

By creating this as an annual event in Chicago, the ceremony itself would be able to take advantage of the city, and spread across several days, rather than a several hour event. By assigning more time to the award ceremony, it would underscore the importance of the event, and the importance of design. Paired with the Chicago Biennial, with its inaugural event being held in 2015, the Pritzker award being located in the City would surely emphasize architectural design in Chicago, as well as throughout the country.



Figure 11: The breadth of locations at which the Pritzker Ceremony has been held. Image by Author.

Experiential Program:

Establishing the Functional

Programmatically, the building must be able to house the Pritzker Award Ceremony, however, it must also be able to house a gallery to showcase the work of the Laureate, as well as commemorate past winners. This will allow the space to be not only a place for ceremony, but a year round program that will house art and architecture in a setting that encourages public engagement. The Gallery would be open year round as a museum.

The Auditorium space would be available for lectures, meetings, concerts, and presentations. By creating a large multi-use space for a multitude of events, the Pritzker Organization would be able to reach out and contribute to the community by providing another new space for people. Offices and classroom space would also help to further activate the building.

Establishing the Temporal

An important aspect of the building is its ability to create a dialogue of time through the physical manifestation of the architecture. This is not to say then that the building must merely be constructed with materials that age gracefully, but it must also speak to its surroundings, to the passage of time, and to human occupation.

The building should reflect the passing of time at a variety of scales. From the passing of minutes and hours, to the passing of seasons, engaging with the annual scale of time, with the lifetime of a person, and with the lifetime of materials. This can begin to create a conversation between the occupant and their surroundings, both constructed and natural. It is through the celebration of time that the integration of

memory as a programmatic requirement comes to light. By stimulating the memory and imagination of an occupant, architecture can then stimulate emotions.

This can be accomplished through the sensitive design of light within the building. The sun provides a clear means of reading the passage of time throughout the day, as well as seasonally. By crafting particular moments within the architectural promenade that allow a specific light into the space the building can begin to alert people as to the passage of time.

Establishing the Emotional

As the building becomes a piece of constructed reality, it begins to have implications far more impactful than as a drawn idea. The simple program for this thesis allows for this articulation and development of not only a detailed space, but a space that can begin to speak to the human condition.

The articulation of program and time reveals a human connection in the building. As our memories inform our present, this begins to create a relationship between the occupant and the building, as memories begin to flow into the experience. By creating a building that can speak to time, that can speak to the human condition, one can begin to create an atmosphere that roots humanity in existence, celebrating the senses.

Functional Program:

Presentation Space

The simplicity of the program allows for only a few spaces, which will be developed to a high level of detail.

The main space will act not only as a place for the presentation of the Pritzker Prize, but can also be suited for musical events, lectures, dinners, and dances. The flexible nature of the space allows for a variety of events to happen, broadening not only the range of exposure of the Pritzker family, but the people that could be inhabiting the space.

The space would also require a preparation area, storage, and a green room for the person giving a performance, lecture, or receiving the Pritzker Award.

Gallery

The Gallery will act as a display area for not only each year's Pritzker Laureate, but for all Laureates, as a memorial to their achievements. This space will be adjacent to the Lobby and the Presentation space and can act as an extension of the lobby.

The main exhibition space here would be for the Laureate to display their collective body of work. This will allow for a legible reading of how their efforts have pushed architecture forward. The open gallery type nature will also encourage the general public to visit the building, not just architects. As the Pritzker Prize intended to expand the reach of architecture to the public, emphasizing its importance in humanity, creating a gallery that draws in the general public is incredibly important.

A Periphery Gallery will be for the permanent display of architectural artifacts and art collected by the Pritzker Family. This will broaden the range of artifacts displayed in the building, thus broadening the range of potential visitors that will visit.

Offices

To properly run this institution it would require a set of offices for a variety of administrative functions. Primarily, the office would need to house organizational staff for both the Gallery as well as events in the Presentation hall.

A Ticket Office is required for lectures, presentations, and any other events held at the building. This would also be used to confirm those guests invited directly to the Pritzker Presentation.

The Pritzker Organization must also have several offices for employees that run the center, as well as a meeting place for the Pritzker Jury to deliberate upon the awarding of the prize. Within this set of offices there must also be space for employees in charge of organizing and running the gallery.

Reception

The Reception Lobby acts as the gateway to the building. It is from this central point that all other spaces must be accessible. Rather than diminish the experience of the employees, the engagement with the building must be offered to all who use it, rather than solely elevating the status of the visitor. The space should act not only as a threshold between the exterior and the interior, but it should be a grounding space, one that roots a person in their reality.

The Lobby must also act as a gathering place prior to any events in the Presentation Hall, a space where one can stay comfortably, as well as move easily to the Gallery, Office, or Presentation Hall.



Figure 12: Program. Image by Author.

Chapter 5: Site

The Pritzker family has strong roots to Chicago. As the city where the family relocated, it has been the foundation from which their legacy has grown. Therefore, the proposal to have the Pritzker Ceremony in one place as a foundation for the Prize requires a site that acted as base for not only the family, but for Modern architecture.

The American Modern architecture movement sprang from Chicago. It was from the heartland of the country that modernism prospered. From the rolling hills and flat plains of central United States grew the typology of the skyscraper. Technological and Industrial developments allowed for architecture to flourish and spread throughout the country from the center.

As the proposed architecture of the thesis deals directly with time and typology, the location having a strong connection with the development of architectural design is incredibly important.

Both the programmatic requirements, as well as the temporal requirements make Chicago the logical location for this thesis.

In aligning with the Pritzker Organization, the site of this building must also speak to the Prize. This means the site must be located somewhere that can engage with the general public and encourage an architectural dialogue.

While the image recalled when Chicago is discussed is that of the Loop and the Miracle Mile, Chicago consists of far more than a central cluster of civic buildings and skyscrapers. Rather than the addition of a public, civic building that celebrates architecture and its role in human awareness to an already packed zone of

civic buildings, the site should create a new means of engaging the people, and the city itself.

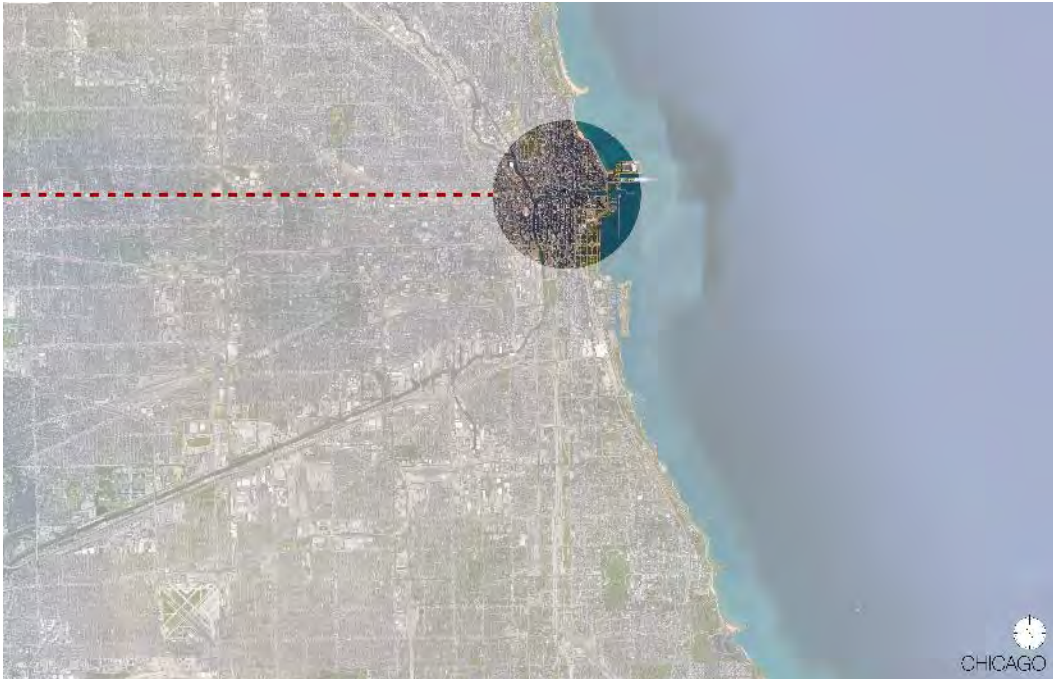


Figure 13: The Loop within greater Chicago. Image by Author.

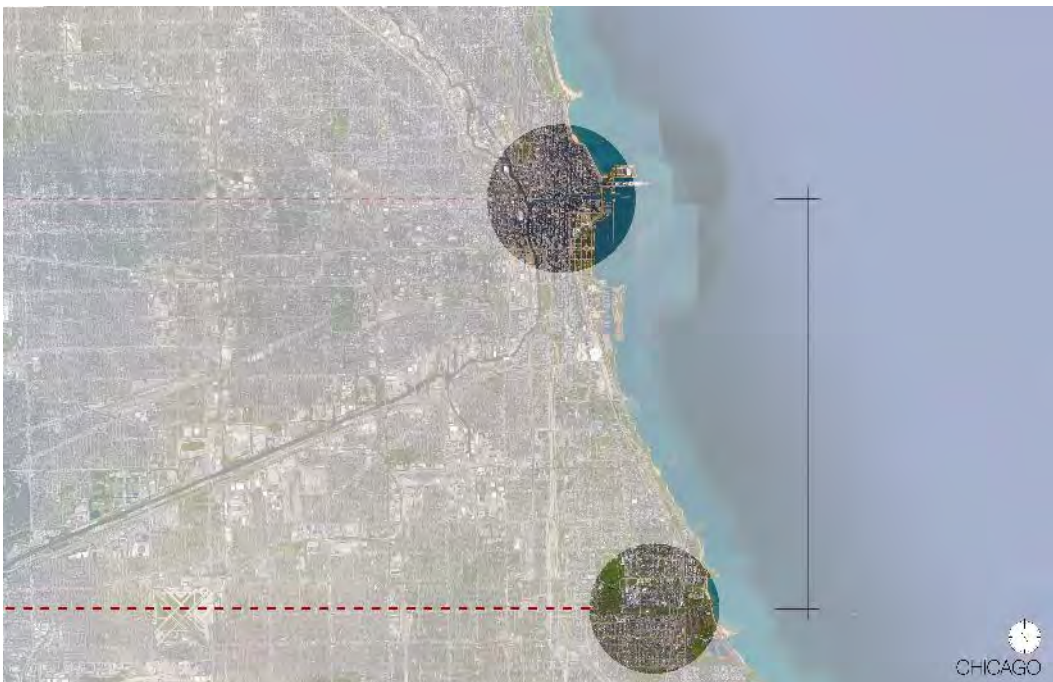


Figure 14: Midway Plaisance in relation to the Loop. Image by Author.



Figure 15: Hyde Park - Midway Plaisance - University of Chicago. Image by Author.



Figure 16: Lake Michigan borders the area to the east. Image by Author.



Figure 17: Jackson Park. Image by Author.



Figure 18: Midway Plaisance, similar to the University of Maryland's Mall, or the Washington DC Mall. Image by Author.



Figure 19: Washington Park to the West. Image by Author.

Hyde Park - Midway Plaisance – University of Chicago

By placing the building on the Midway Plaisance, both the building, as well as the local community benefit from the collective history of the surroundings. By creating a new civic building in Hyde Park on the Midway Plaisance, the building could contribute towards reactivating the urban area. Despite the relatively downtrodden area south of the Plaisance, the area has significant history, as well as a significant present.

The site is currently the home to the University of Chicago, a world class institution with a commendable collection of architectural works on its campus, and nearby. Tod Williams + Billie Tsien’s Logan Arts Center, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Robie House, Helmut Jahn’s Library Reading Room, Rafael Vinoly’s School of Business, Holabird & Root’s International House, Shepley, Rutan, & Coolidge’s Ida

Noyes Hall, Eero Saarinen's Law Quadrangle, and Mies Van Der Rohe's School of Social Service are among the many notable pieces of architecture on the campus.¹²

As the Pritzker Family has donated heavily to UChicago, they are familiar and comfortable with the establishment, and it is an establishment that will remain in perpetuity, so long as society maintains its positive course. This would provide a secure location for the site. There is also no School of Architecture at the University, meaning there would be no political or administrative interferences, allowing for the building to engage with the public, as well as the academic community without bias.



Figure 20: University of Chicago grounds. Image by Author.

¹² "Architecture at the University of Chicago." Explore Locations. Accessed May 18, 2016. <http://architecture.uchicago.edu/locations/>.

The Plaisance itself, as well as its accompanying anchor parks, was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. Aside from its relationship to the University of Chicago, Jackson Park to the east served as the grounds for the 1893 Columbian Exposition. While the Museum of Science and Industry is the only building to remain from that exposition, the framework, as well as history remains intact, activating the area as a place of historical importance.

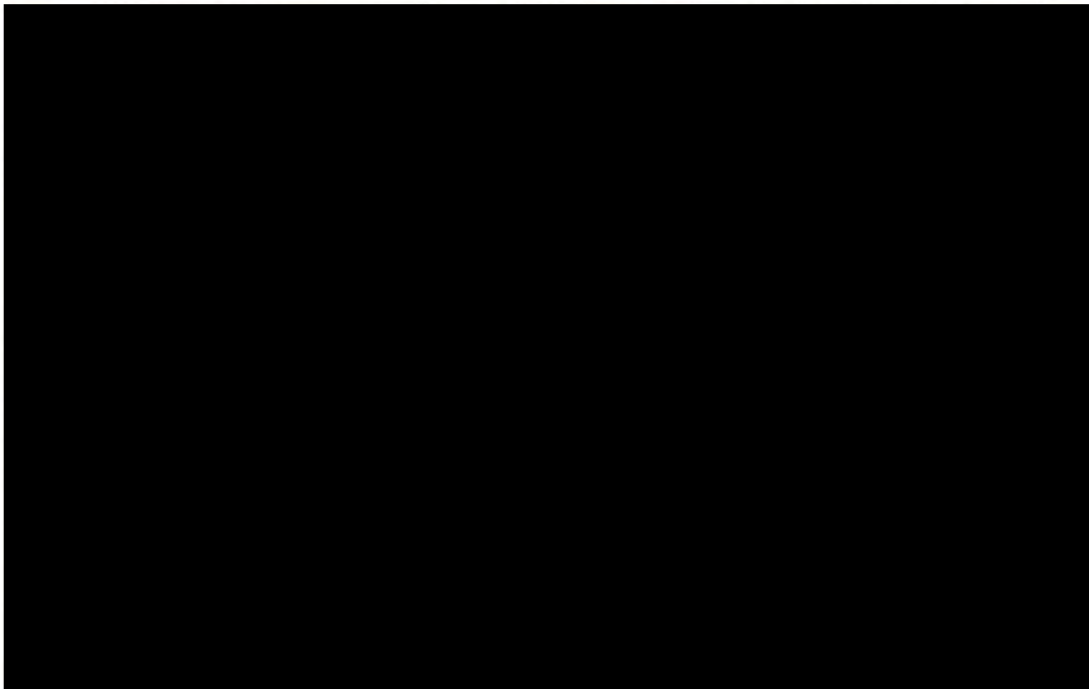


Figure 21: Plan of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Image courtesy http://dcc.newberry.org/system/artifacts/68/original/Rand_McNally_Expo_Map.jpg

The area is also playing host to the home of the future President Obama Library¹³. While the immediate site has not yet been selected, it has been narrowed down to two potential sites, one in Jackson Park, and another in Washington Park.

¹³ "University of Chicago Selected to Host Barack Obama Presidential Library." ArchDaily. 2015. Accessed May 18, 2016. <http://www.archdaily.com/627012/university-of-chicago-selected-to-host-barack-obama-presidential-library>.

One prominent aspect of this proposal is a cultural ribbon that runs through the aforementioned parks, the University Campus, and creates a path that connects a lot of the architectural history in the area.



Figure 22: The Jackson Park site for the President Obama Library, as well as the proposed Cultural Ribbon. Image by Author.

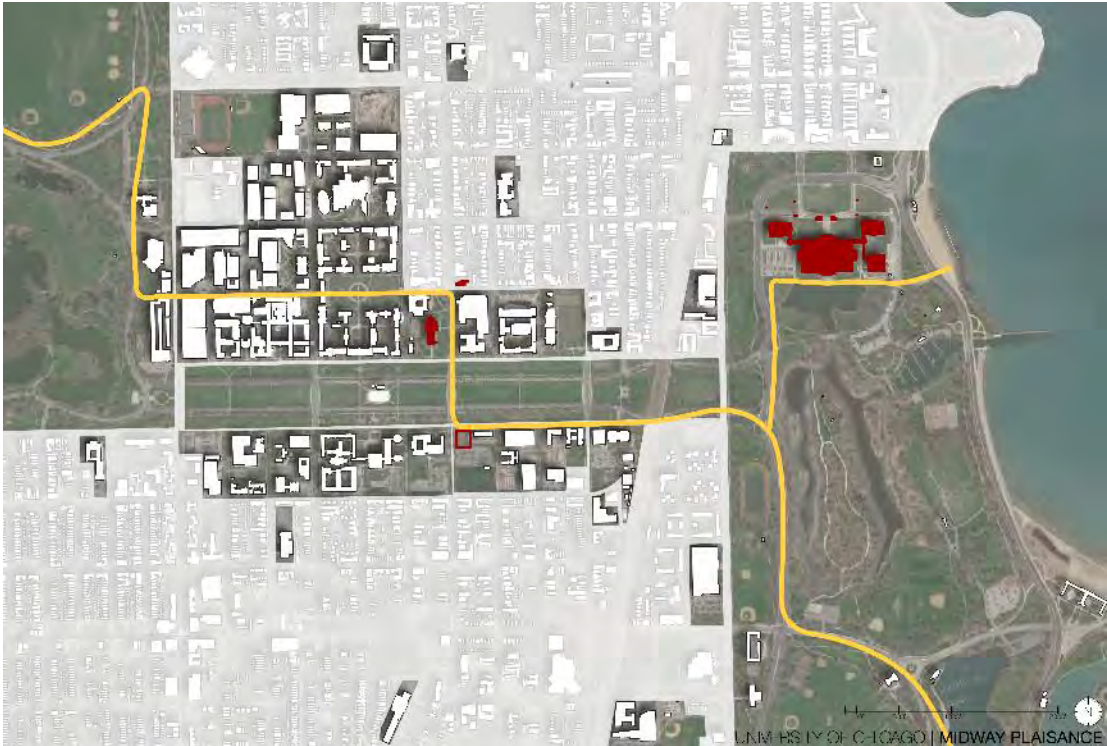


Figure 23: Plan showing the proposed cultural ribbon, University of Chicago's Campus, the Parks, and the proposed site. Image by Author.

The overall plans for the site include a wide variety of History, and with the plans to reactivate the area, the site is currently on the upswing.

The site proper lies on the Corner of 60th Street, which runs East-West, and Woodlawn Avenue, which runs North-South, and acts as one of the main points of crossing for the Midway Plaisance, demarcated by a series of 40 foot tall posts that light up at night. The site is flanked by the Aramark building to the East, and the School of Public Policy to the West. The site is one block south of Rockefeller Chapel, and two blocks south of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House. While it has been identified by the University as a site of future development, it currently lies empty.

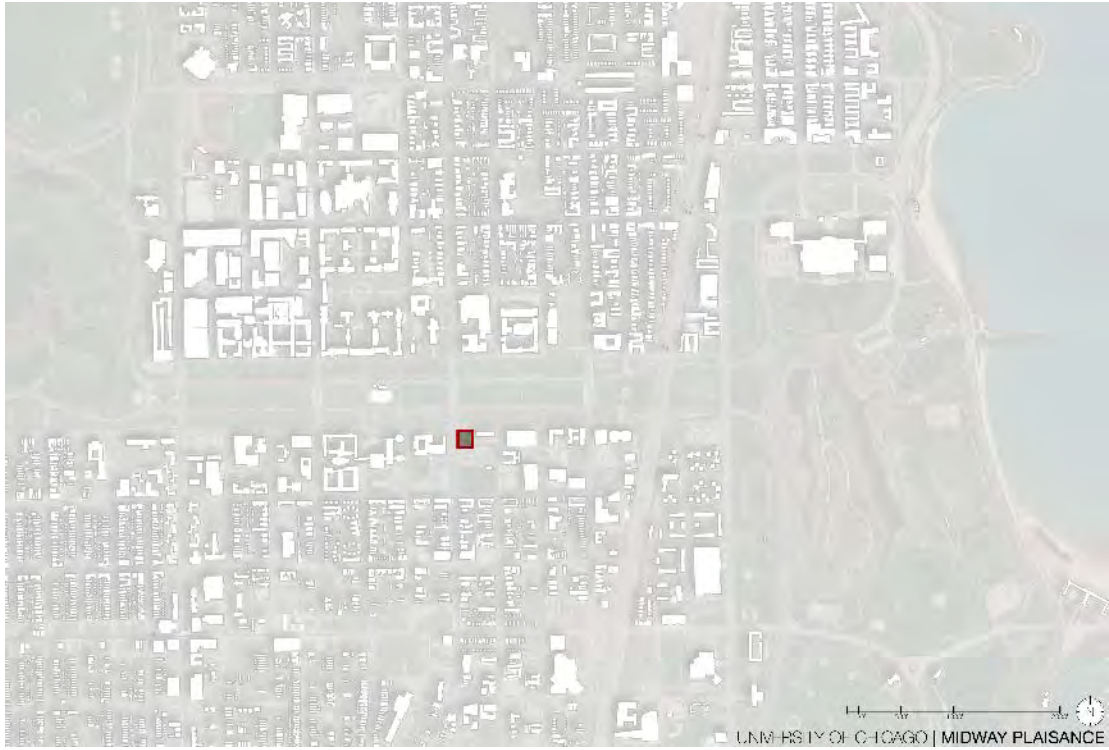


Figure 24: Site within context. Image by Author.

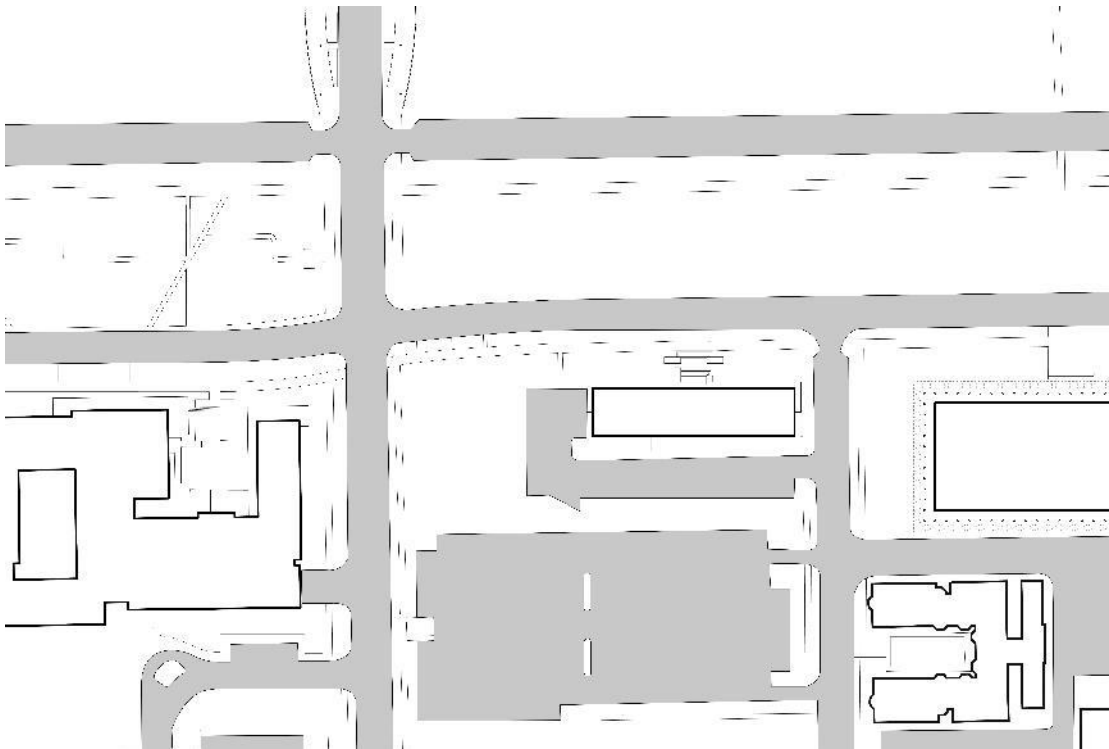


Figure 25: Diagrammatic Site plan. Image by Author.



Figure 26: The Site can be seen on the far side of the street, with the crossing posts seen illuminated to the left. Image by Author.



Figure 27: The selected site with the Aramark Building seen. Image by Author.



Figure 28: Rockefeller Chapel across the Plaisance from the site. Image by Author.

Chapter 6: Pritzker Hall

Design in Response to Site

In creating a place for quiet contemplation and making a person aware of the passage of time, reducing the amount of distractions from the outside city becomes important. As the site is located at the intersection of two relatively busy streets, a buffer is made to create a contained space.

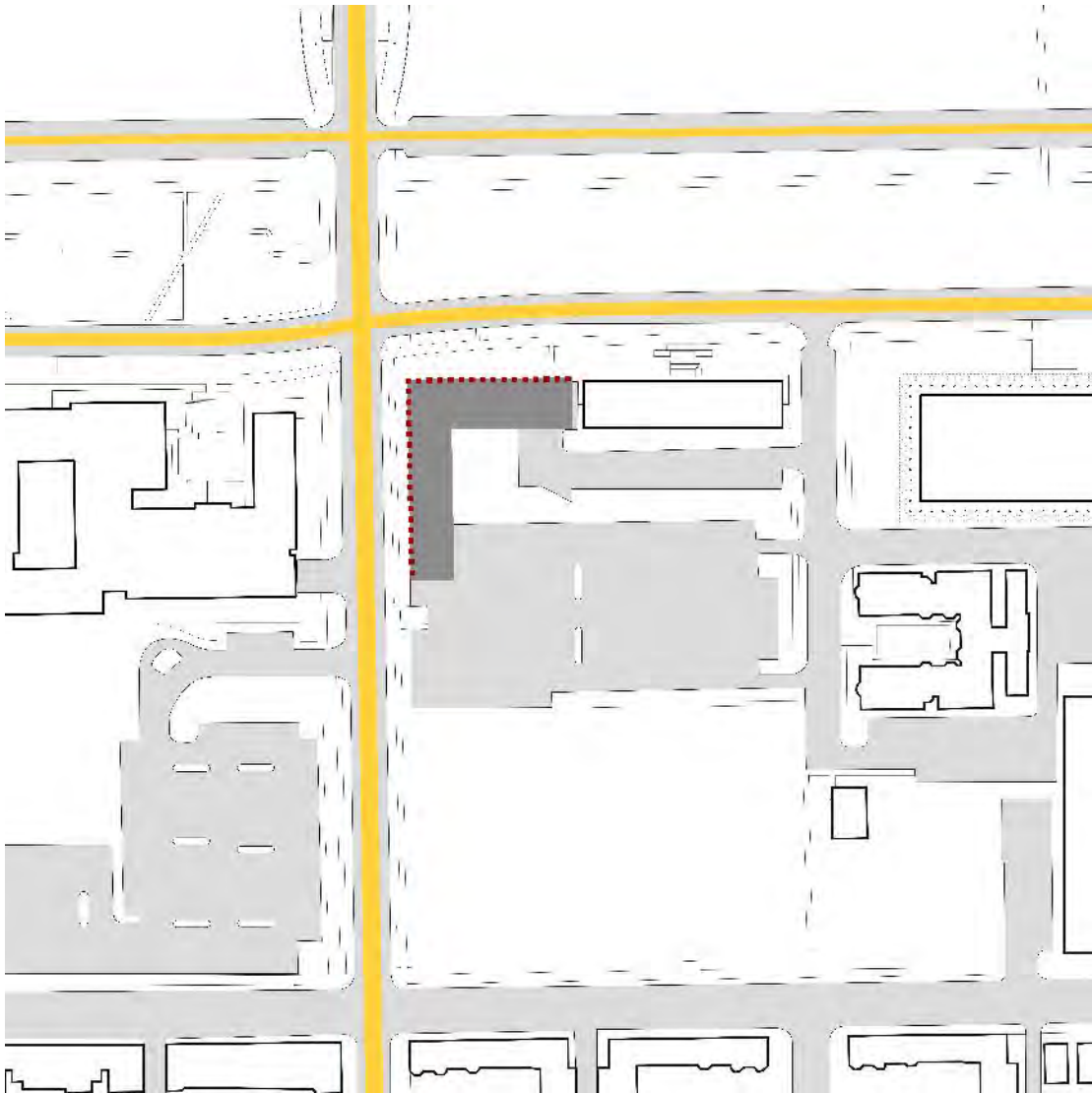


Figure 29: street buffer. Image by Author.

The site also must mediate a shift in the urban edge of the Plaisance. This shift can be seen reflected in the slight curve of 60th Street. Both of these edges continue off to the east and the west, which creates the opportunity for this building to mediate the edges.

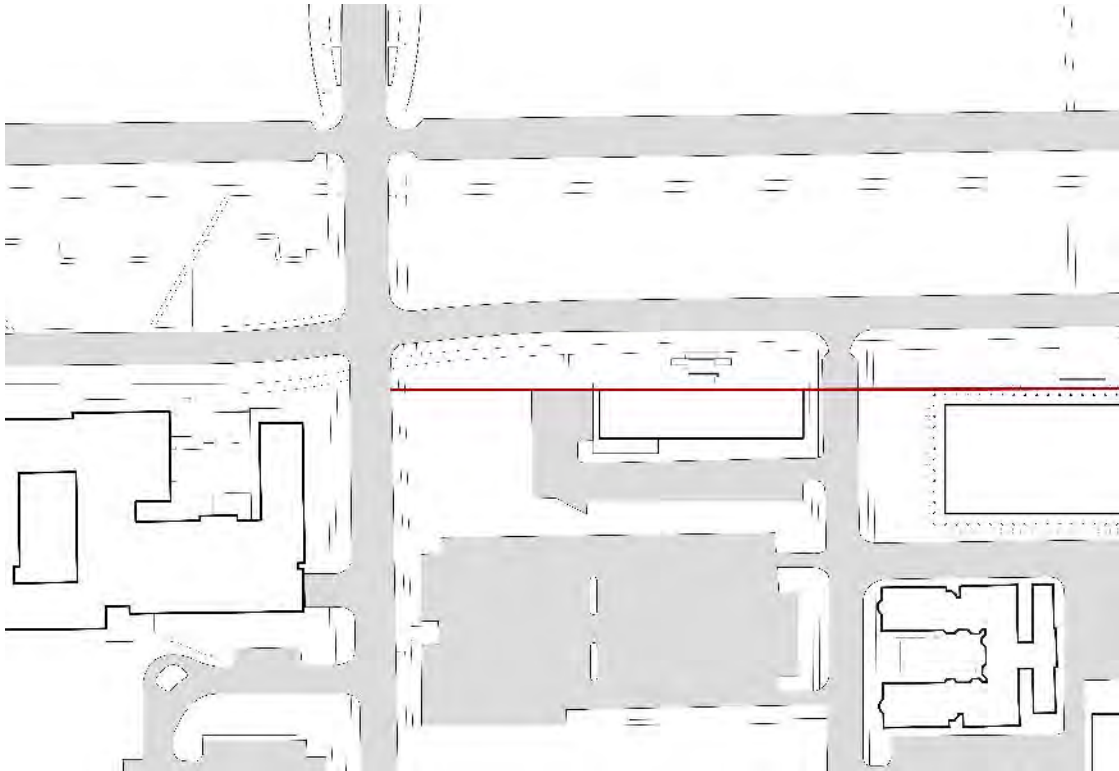


Figure 30: Urban Edge from the east. Image by Author.

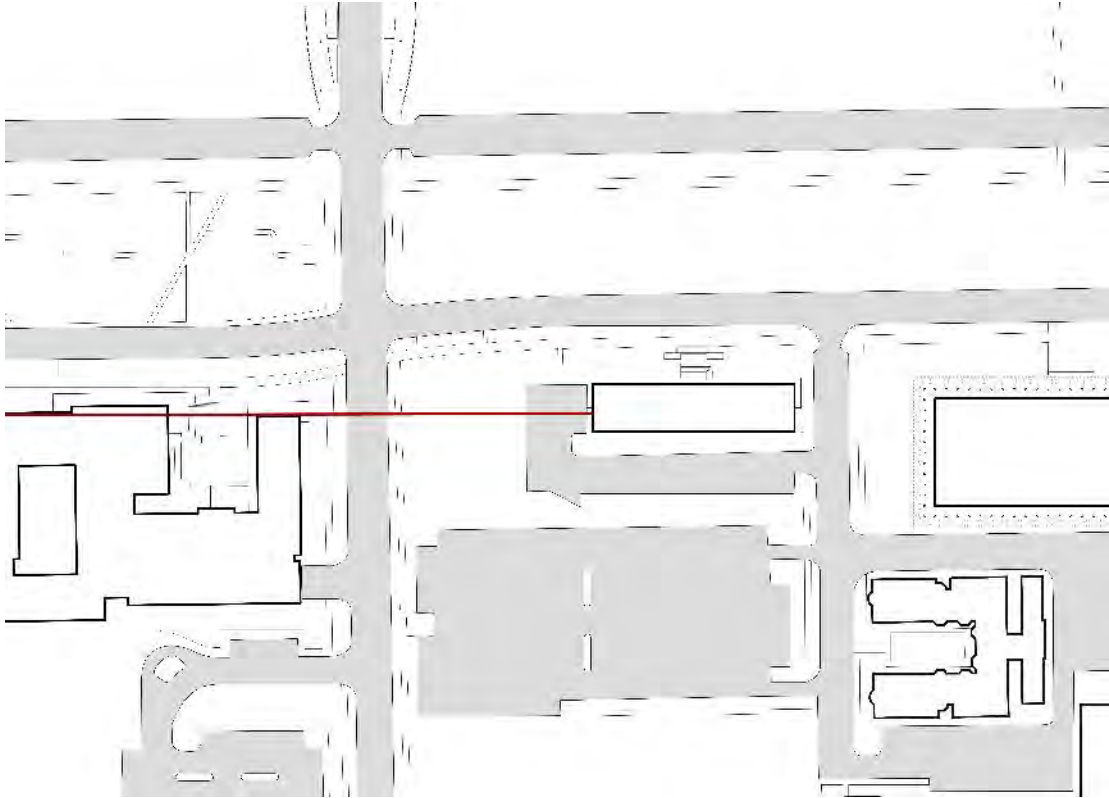


Figure 31: Urban Edge from the west. Image by Author.

By acknowledging these edges, as well as pulling massing from the context, one is able to establish a central courtyard around which the main program can focus.

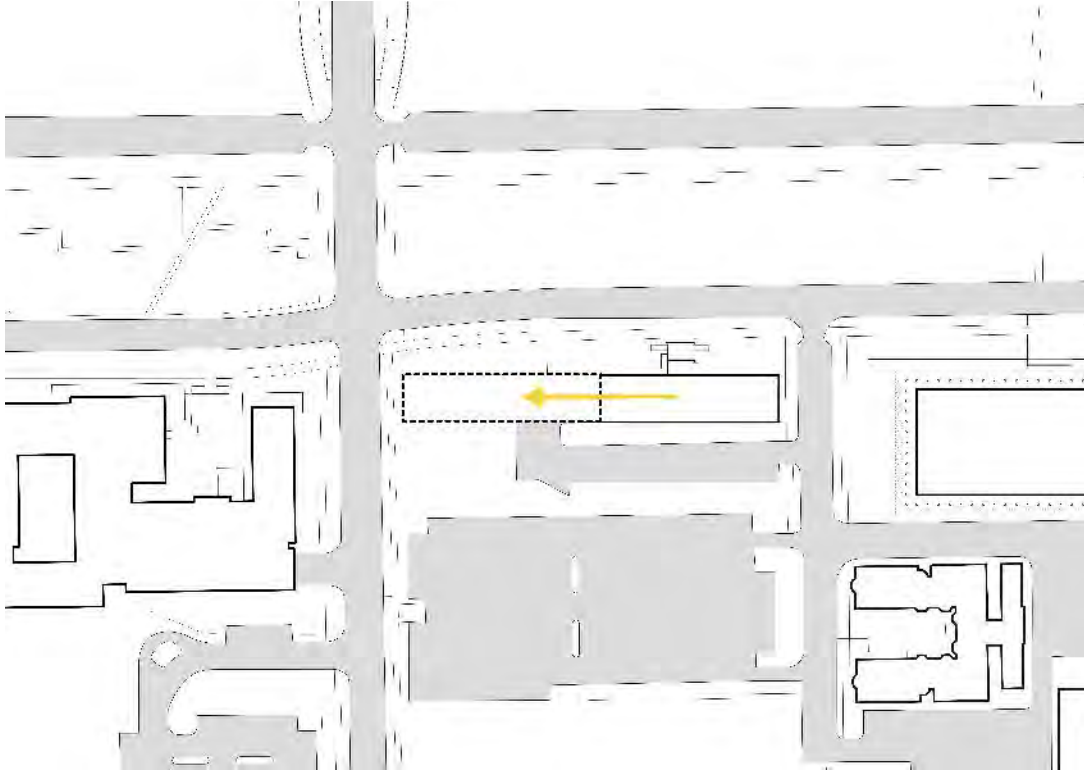


Figure 32: Massing from the Aramark. Image by Author.

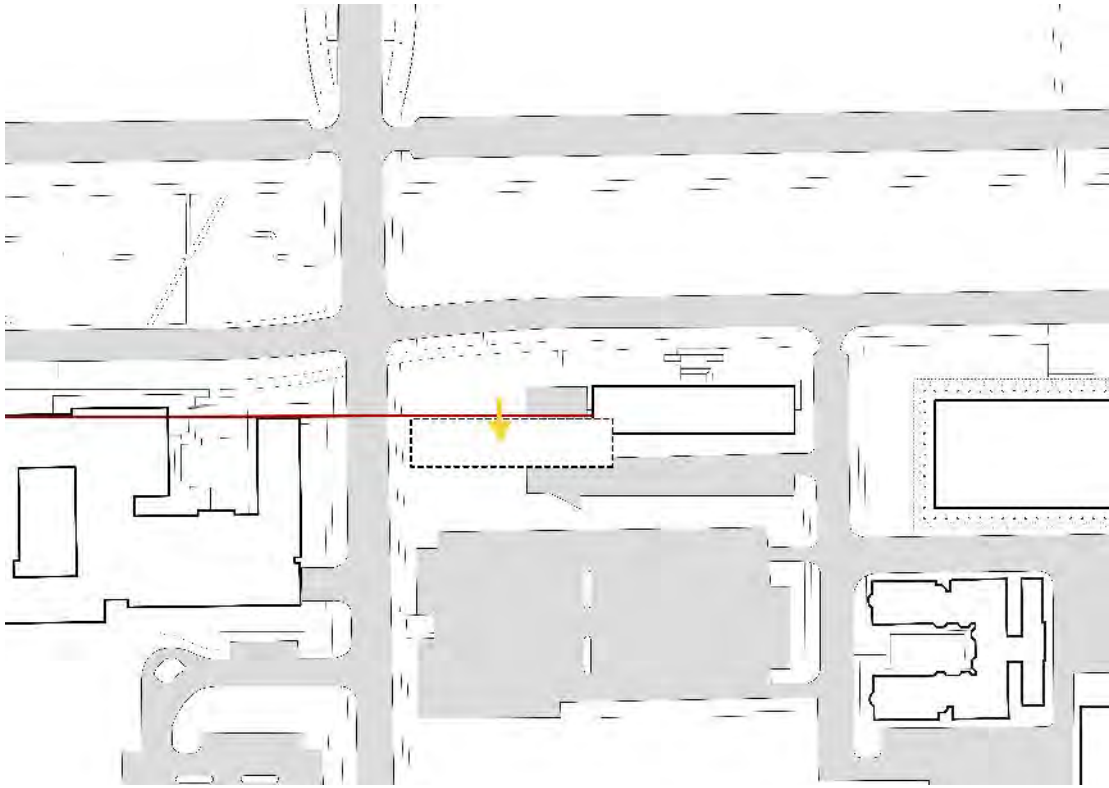


Figure 33: Shifting masses to meet edges, leaving the framework in the form of a screen. Image by Author.

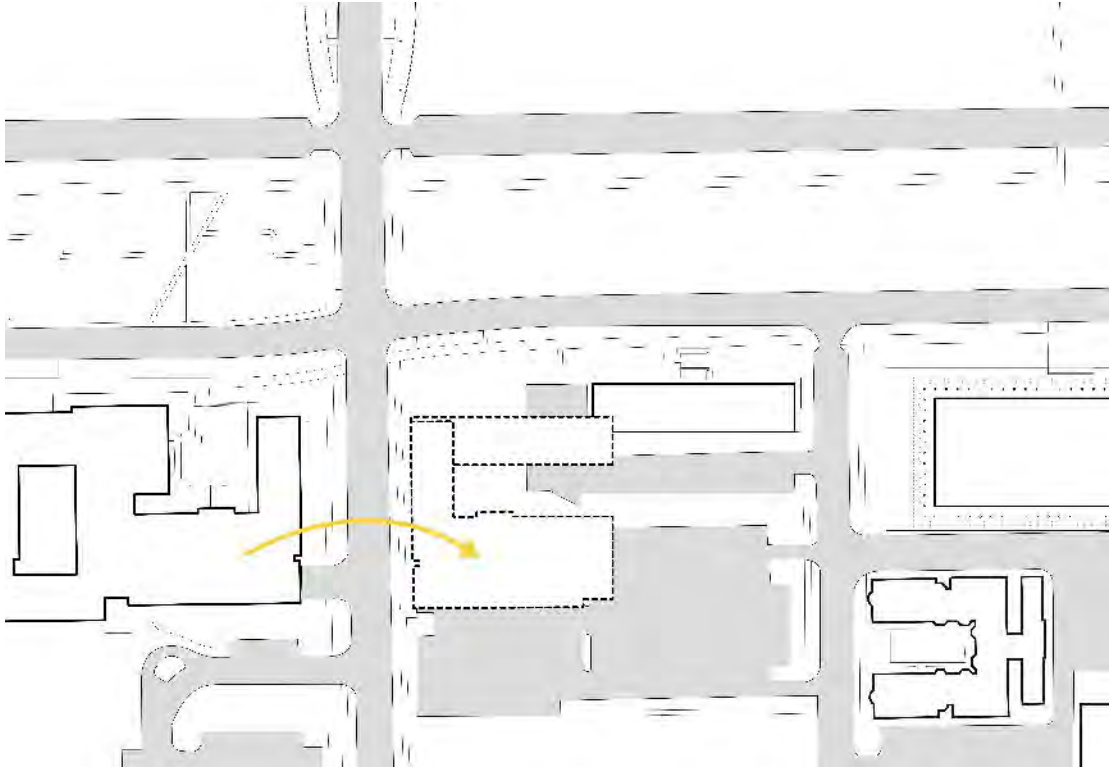


Figure 34: Massing from the School of Public Policy. Image by Author.

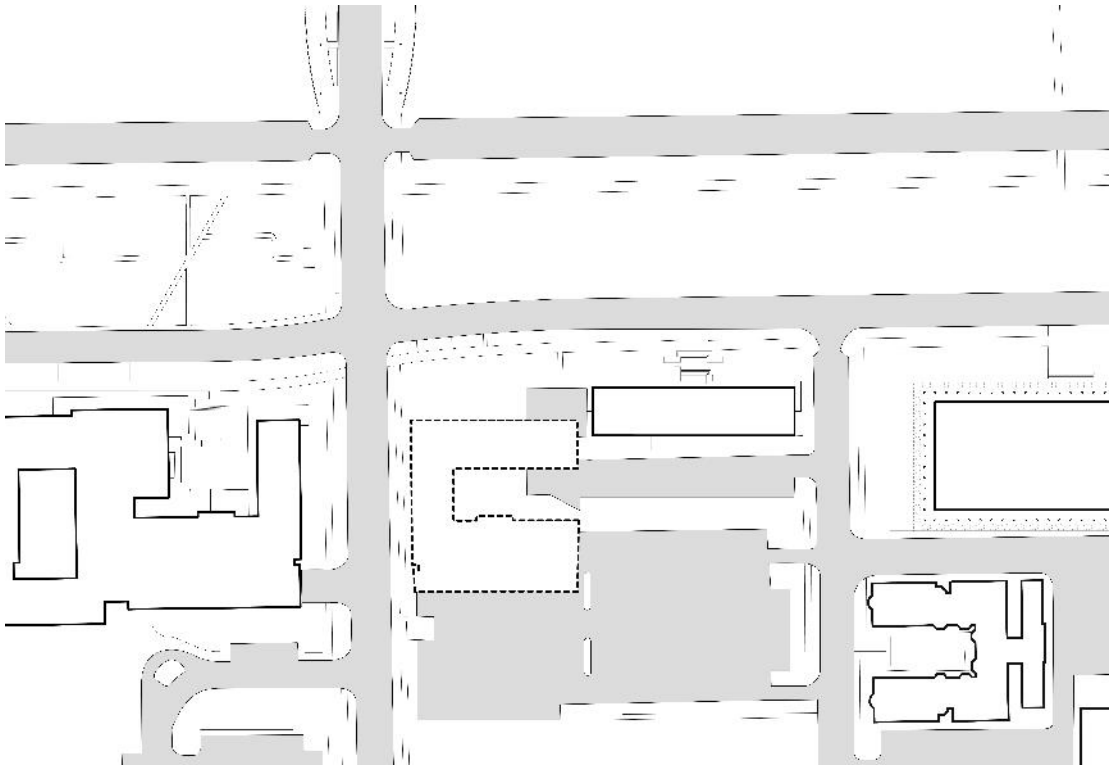


Figure 35: Cutting down masses to fit the program and site. Image by Author.

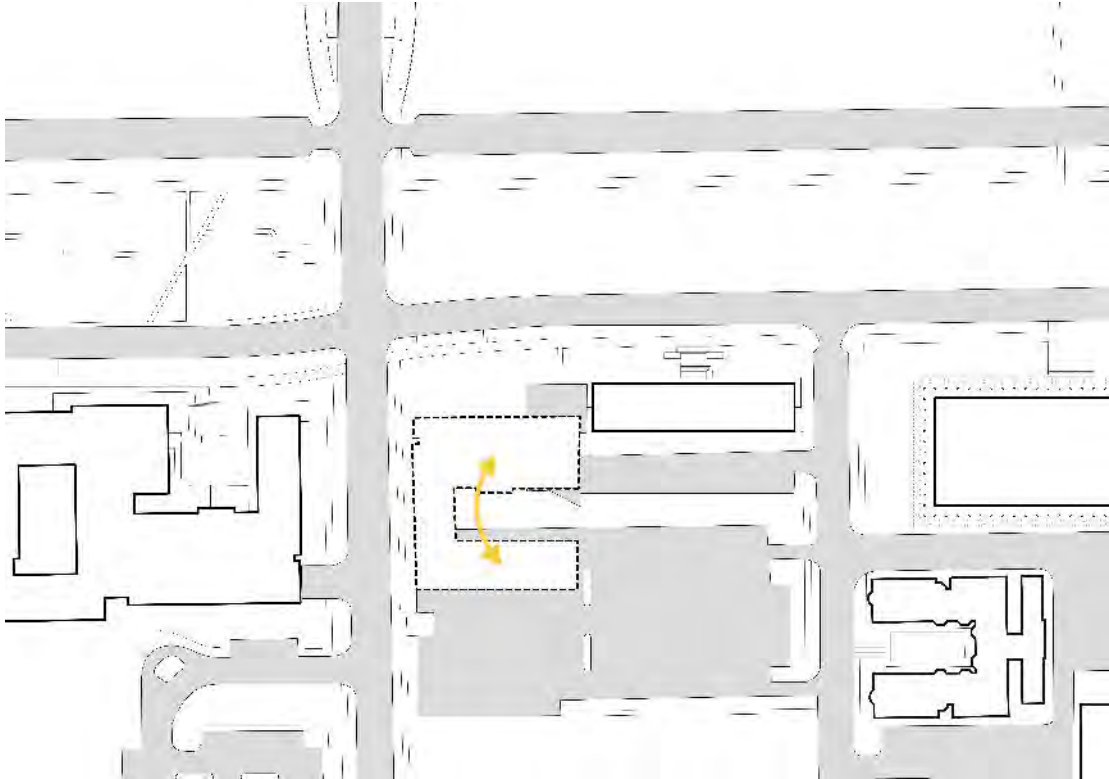


Figure 36: Mirroring the massing to place more importance on the Facade fronting the Plaisance. Image by Author.

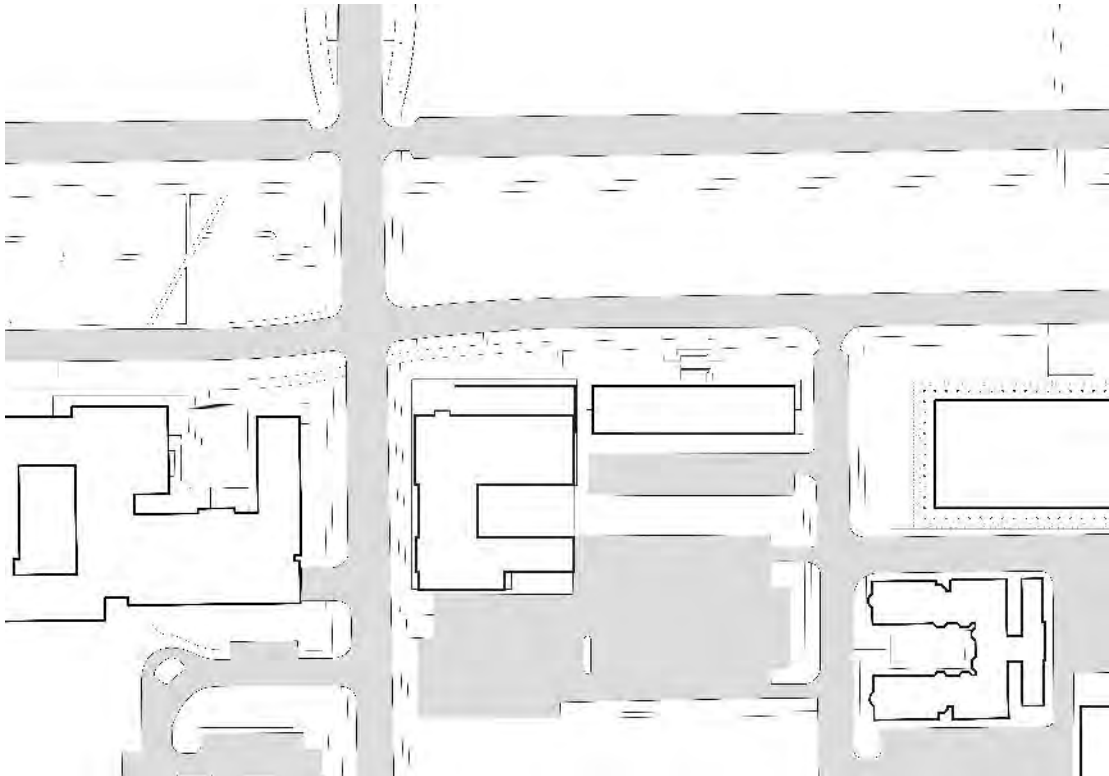


Figure 37: Final Massing. Image by Author.

Through a series of contextual moves, the building begins to form itself based on the notion of a separation from the city so as to delaminate the aspects of existence as is experienced by people, as well as to be a contextually appropriate piece of architecture within its surroundings.

Plans and Sections as Ordering Diagrams

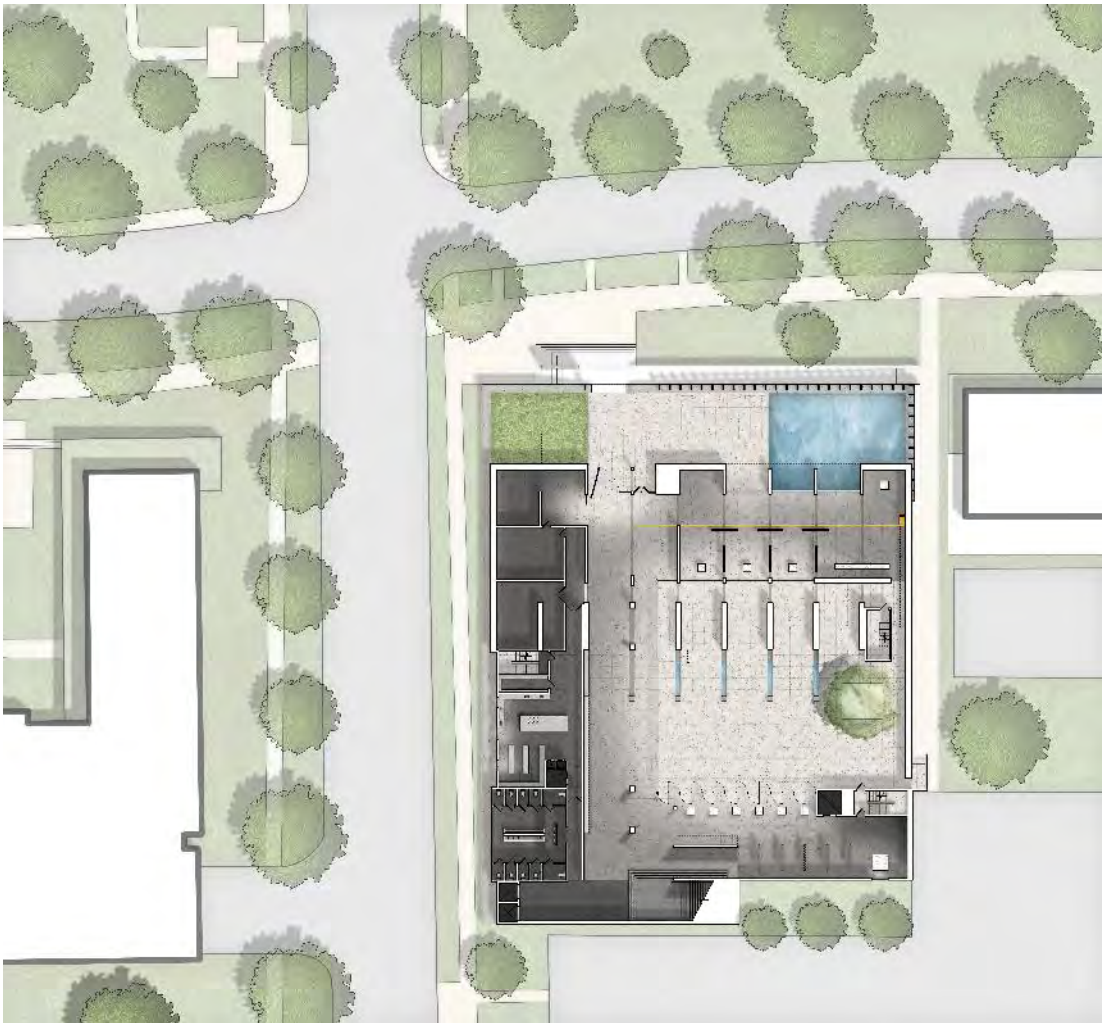


Figure 38: Ground Plan in relation to its immediate site. Image by Author.

As the building manifests itself as a series of selective heightened experiences within the city, it requires a gradient of engagement between the city and the building. One enters through a screen that creates an outdoor gathering place, as well as acts as

a celebration of the ground plane. By elevating the ground plane to eye height, one begins to engage visually, and then physically with the ground as they elevate themselves above the plane of the earth, which is incredibly flat all throughout the Midwest, especially throughout the site.

The ground floor consists of a memorial hall for the Pritzker Gallery, a central courtyard for gatherings, as well as for cocktails and snacks prior to presentations during the warmer months. Beyond this, a secondary gallery for the Pritzker Laureate caps the courtyard, and allows for people to engage with the work of the Laureate prior to moving to the stairs and elevator bank.

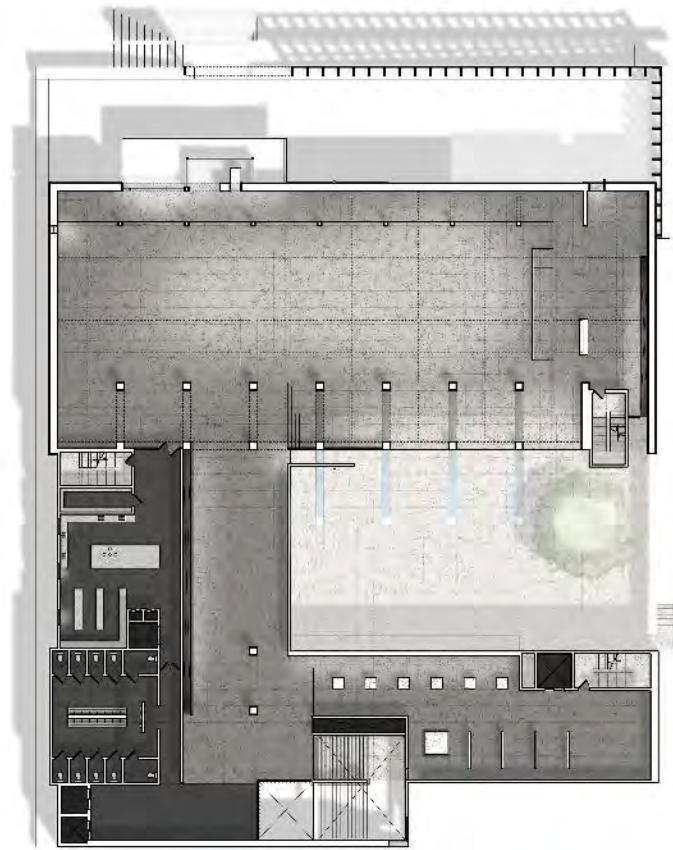


Figure 39: First Floor Plan. Image by Author.

The first floor above the ground provides more gallery space for the exhibition of architecture, as well as the main gathering hall. This floor acts as the Piano Nobile, as it becomes the main celebratory space elevated above the earth, and looks back upon the Plaisance, the University, and has glimpses of the skyline of Chicago.

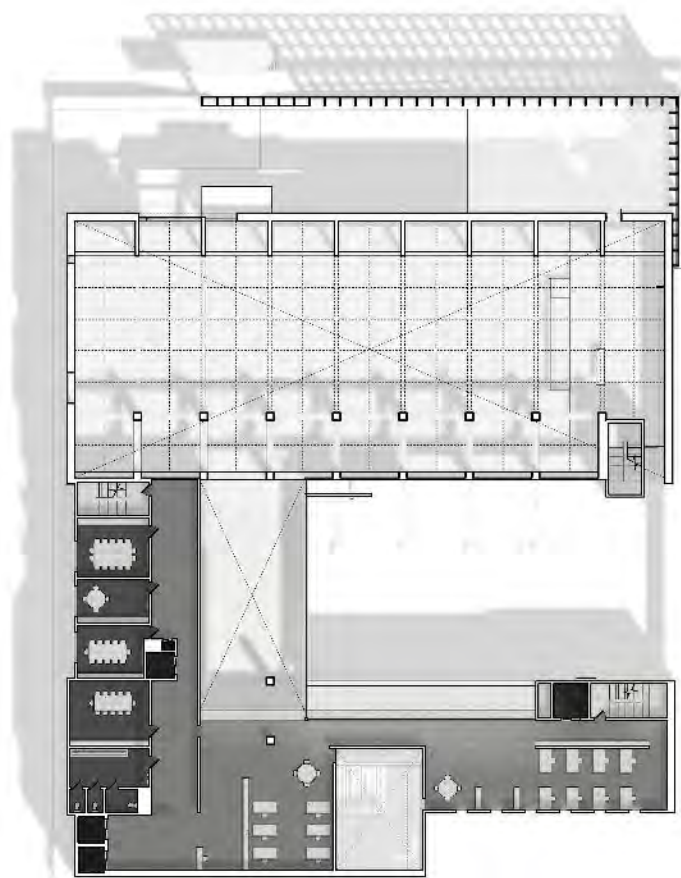


Figure 40: Second floor. Image by Author.

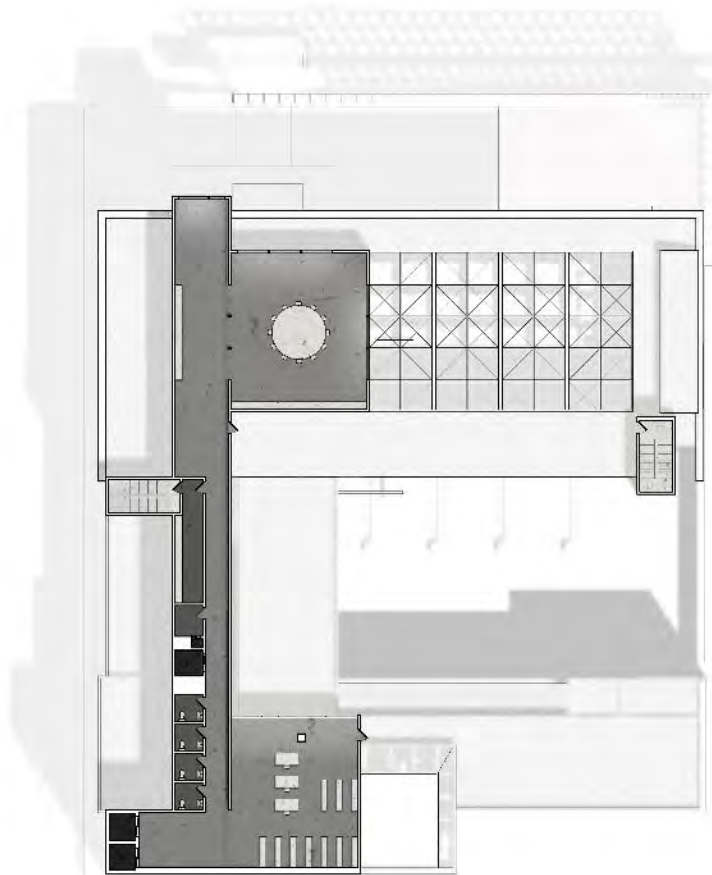


Figure 41: 3rd Floor and Roof. Image by Author.

The second and third floors provide office space for the Pritzker Foundation, as well as classroom and meeting space for the public and the University.

Procession and Experience

Moving from the City to the Building



Figure 42: The building as it sits on the corner of the site. Image by Author.

The building offers itself as an austere, but materially appropriate massing among its neighbors that invites people in through a large brass screen. This creates the first programmatic space, and buffer from the street. This space also acts as a means of mediating the shifting urban edge by creating an occupiable zone in between the city and the building itself.



Figure 43: engagement with the ground plane and front plaza. Image by Author.

Among a variety of concrete and limestone, the building begins to visually invite people from the street. By passing through the brass screen, one can begin to follow a thin brass strip inset in the concrete blocks that guides one to the front door. A layered variety of concrete types allows one to begin to consider the different textures in relationship to threshold, as well as offering recollections of past experiences with a particular type of concrete. This also allows for one to consider the process of how each element was actually constructed.



Figure 44: L exterior and R interior elevations of the ceremonial door to the building. Image by Author.

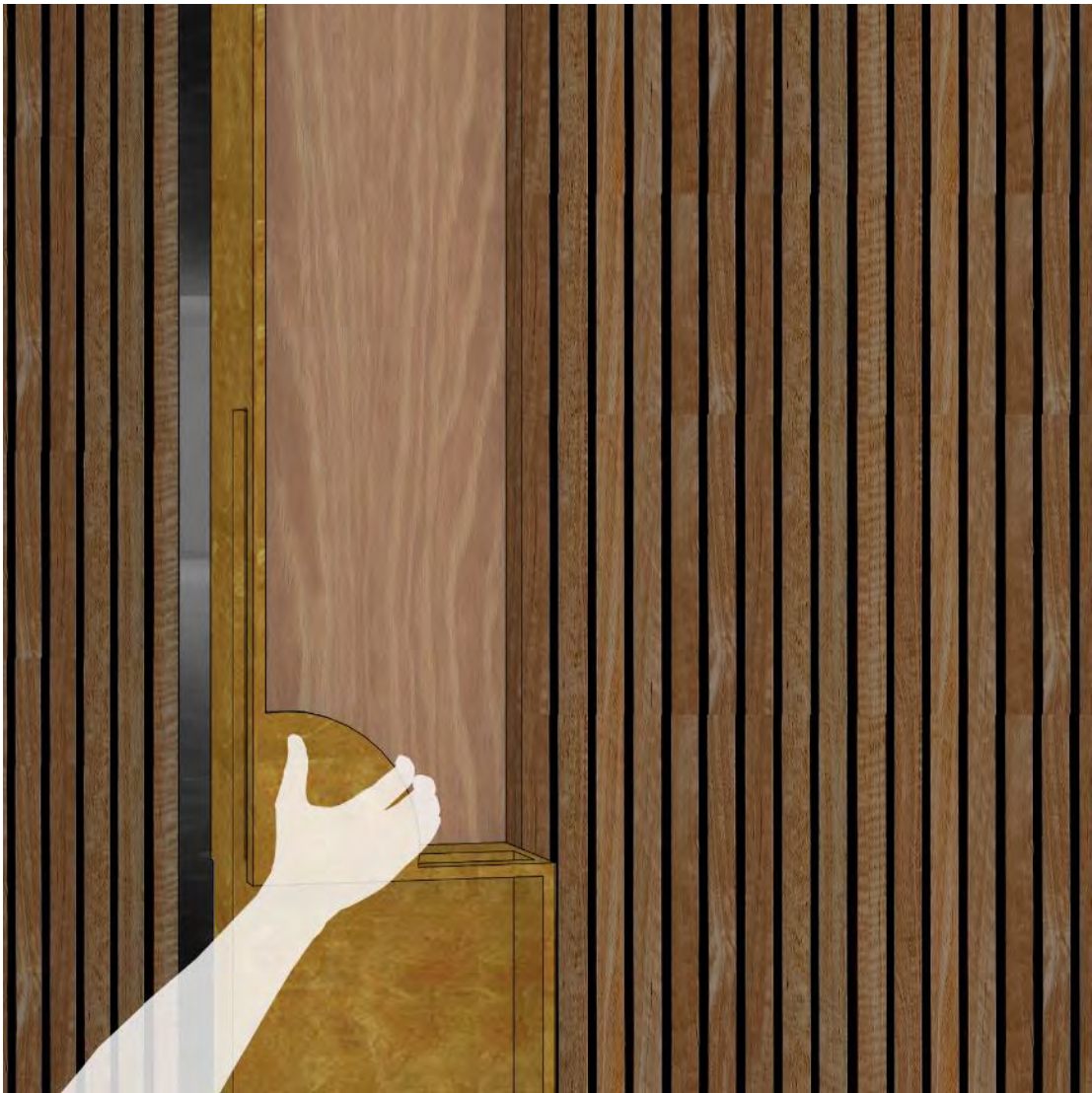


Figure 45: Initial engagement with the door, entering of the building. Image by Author.

The door offers a brass door handle that wraps around from the interior to the exterior. While creating a thermal break, this also allows for one to experience the interior, or exterior, as soon as they touch the door, creating a brief moment of surprise.

Engagement with the User



Figure 46: Entry lobby view towards Memorial Hall. Image by Author.

The brass strip first encountered on the floor leads ones eye, as well as their path, into the memorial hall, which memorializes former Pritzker Laureates and offers examples of their work. This area acts as the introduction for people to the Pritzker Prize, as well as why it is awarded, and how architecture can better people's lives. As the Prize moves on, each Laureate is given a simple plaque with their name engraved into it. As they become memorialized in the space their plaques become worn over time as they are tread upon, as the foundation upon which we walk, we live, and we learn.



Figure 47: Plaque for Alejandro Aravena. Image by Author.

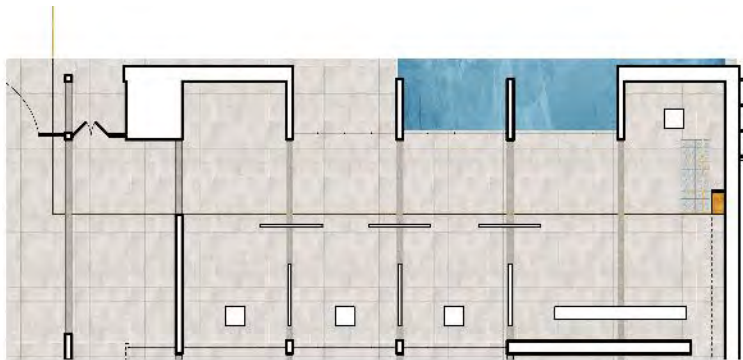


Figure 48: The floor of the Memorial Hall as of 2016.

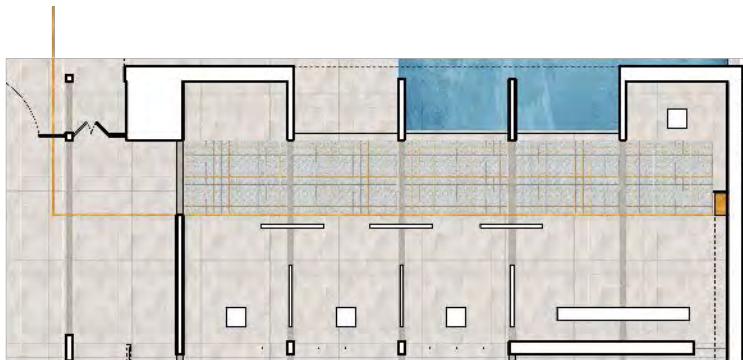


Figure 49: The floor of the Memorial Hall many years into the future. Image by Author.

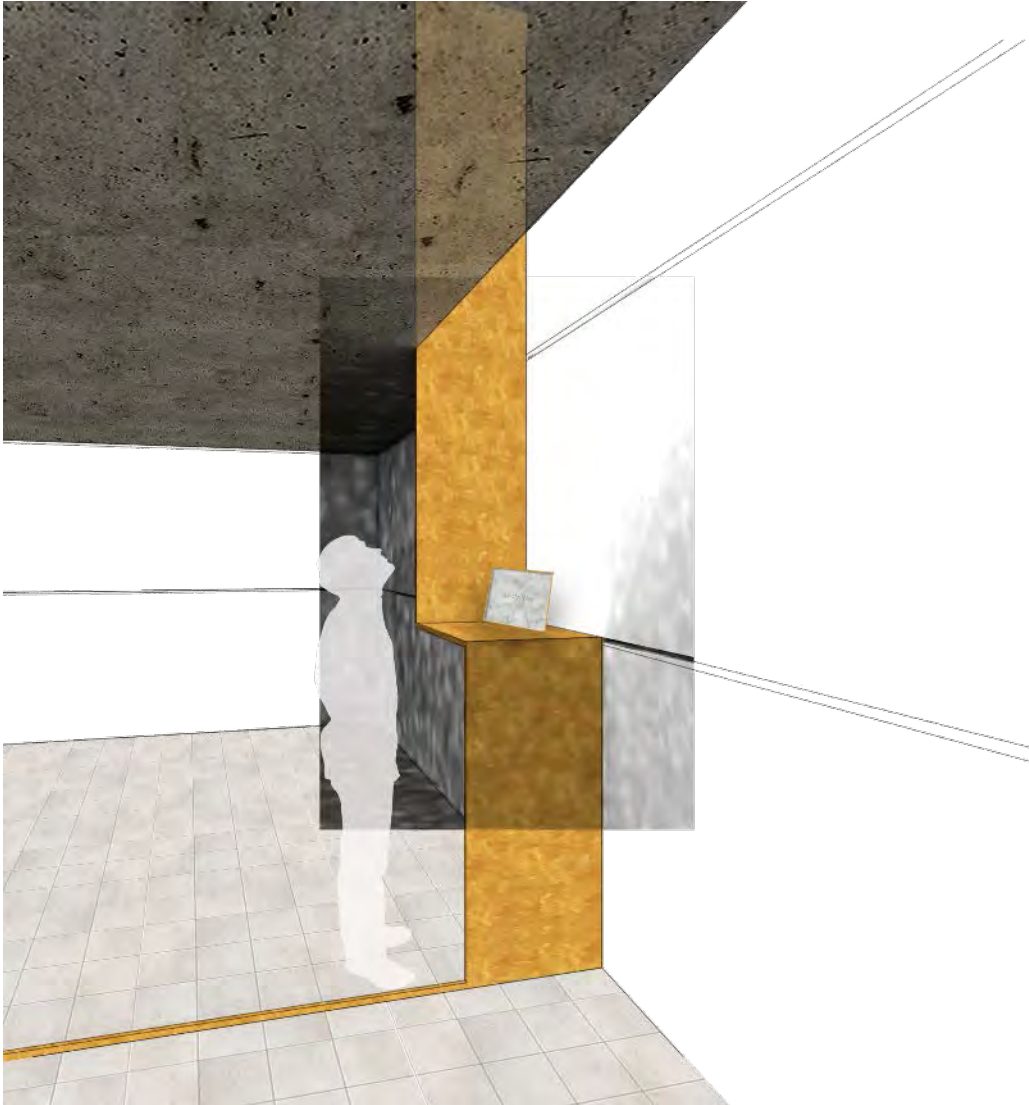


Figure 50: The brass strip in the floor turns into a pedestal for the plaque of the Pritzker Laureate, moving up into the main gathering hall. Image by Author.

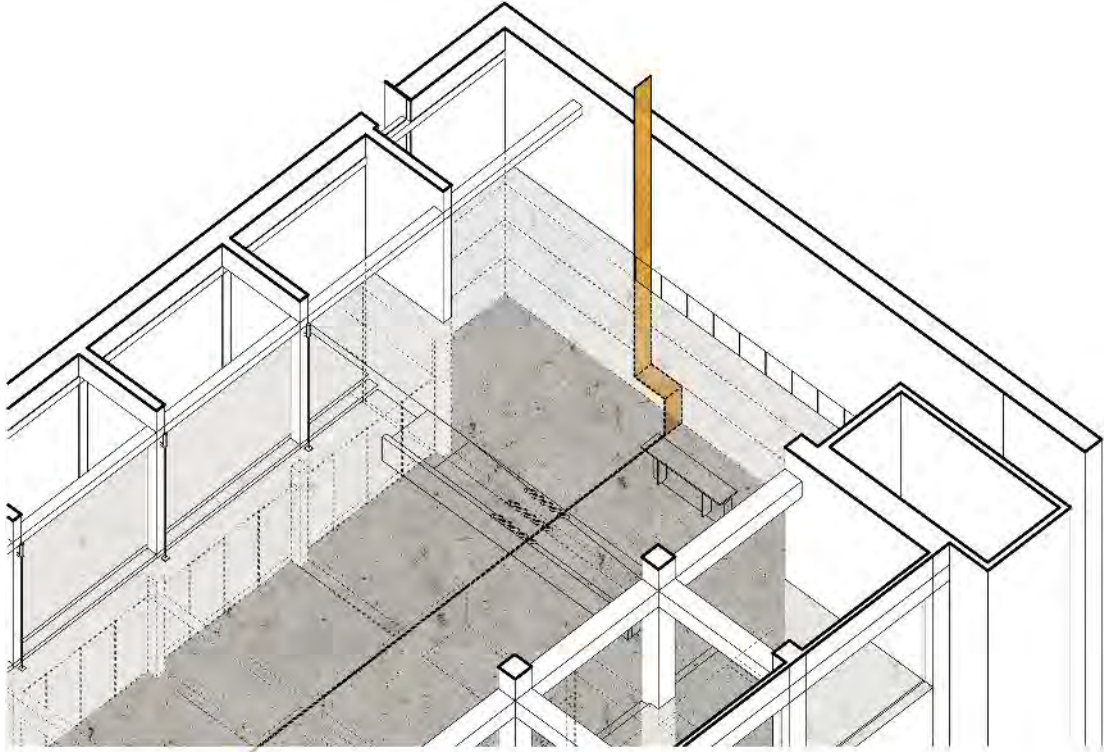


Figure 51: brass strip that connects the memorial hall to the main gathering hall. Image by Author.

This brass strip that guides people from the street into the building moves up through a cut in the floor to the main space. As people gather in the main hall they recall this detail from their first entrance into the building.



Figure 52: Hallway through the courtyard. Image by Author.

By highlighting the ground plane and disrupting visual connection to the courtyard, one becomes more aware of the ritual of walking along the ground itself. A moment of respite comes in the form of an angled bench that forces one to dig their feet into the ground to sit.

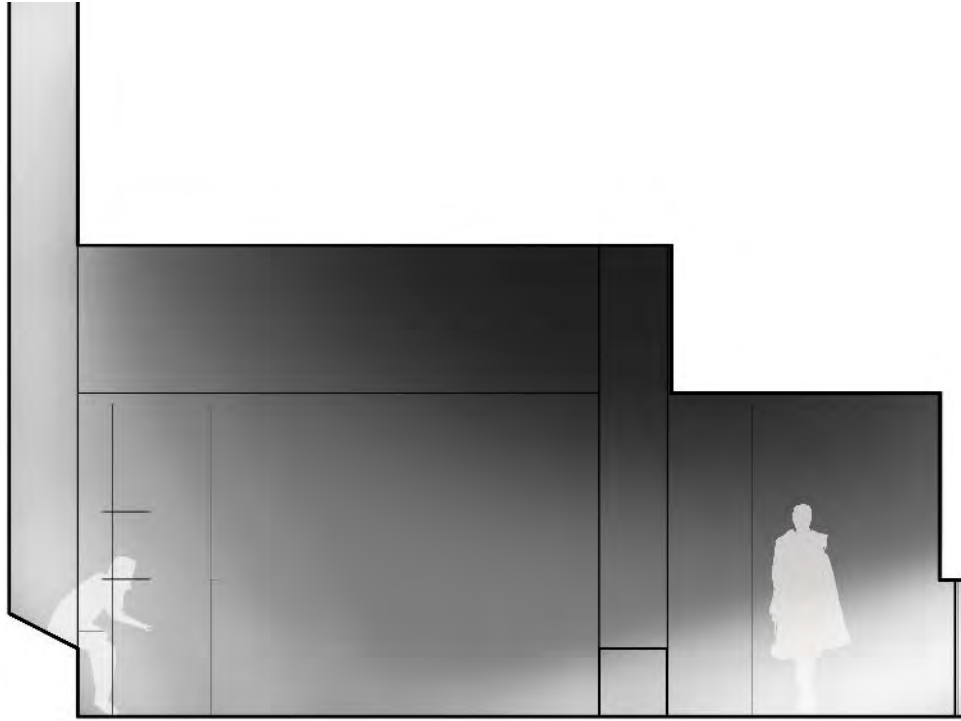


Figure 53: Seat and Hallway Section. Image by Author.



Figure 54: Hallway Seat. Image by Author.



Figure 55: Gallery space. Image by Author.

The gallery offers a space to show the work of the year's laureate prior to moving up to the first floor. This area also allows for access to the courtyard for gatherings, receptions, and offers a quiet retreat from the city for individuals during the warmer months.



Figure 56: Stairwell. Image by Author.

The stairwell creates a moment of lift where one leaves the ground plane, and elevates themselves into the sky, above the earth. This is highlighted both through the visual connection to the earth, the sky, and the void that opens upwards. The stair detail acts as a brass object that comes from the earth, and forms the structure for the hand and the foot as a means of ascending from the ground plane.



Figure 57: Stair details. Image by Author.

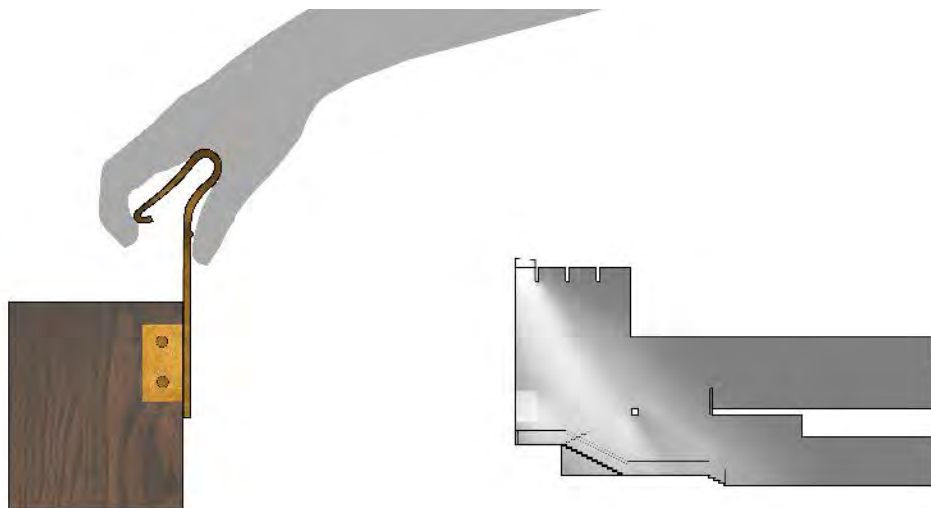


Figure 58: handrail section and Stair Volume section. Images by Author.

The handrail begins to take shape in a manner that offers a unique engagement with the human hand. By offering a full bent flange around which a person can fully wrap their hand, as well as engage their thumb, one feels connected to the ritual of ascension in comparison to other stairwells traversed. The section also shows how the

space moves from compressive to expansive, mimicking a departing from beneath the earth into the sky.



Figure 59: Views to the Hall. Image by Author.

The hallway reconnecting to the main gathering hall acts inversely to the hallway below, offering only views to the sky, as ones focus is drawn towards the picture window at the end of the hall, and the cased Pritzker Prize that terminates the axis of the hallway.

Reconnection with the City



Figure 60: Entrance to the Hall. Image by Author.

Upon entering the space of the Hall visitors are given a view not only of the Pritzker Prize itself, but are reconnected to the environment from which they came. As they have traversed from the city, through the building, and have been forced to confront, and engage with, the building, they are reconnected to the city at a variety of scales.

The Pritzker Prize sits in a case, reminding visitors of the architect's impact. Rockefeller Chapel is framed across the Plaisance, reminding visitors of their immediate surroundings, and glimpses of the Chicago skyline appear beyond the Chapel, reconnecting visitors to the larger city as a whole.



Figure 61: Pritzker Prize Case. Image by Author.

The case for the Pritzker Prize lies within the wall, connecting to the space beyond. It is both part of the building, and a visual connection with the built environment beyond, signifying the role of the architect in the creation of the built

environment. This allows for visitors to consider their own environments, their feelings in the environment, and the source of who makes the built environment.

The lasting imprint of the image of the city remains in ones mind as they turn and engage with the main event, the Pritzker Prize Ceremony, or other gathering.

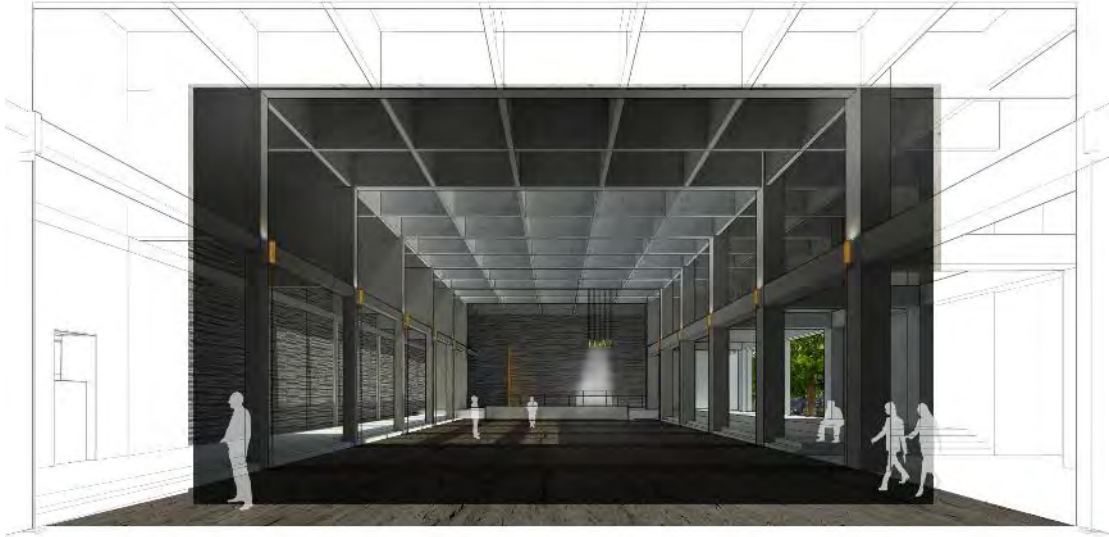


Figure 62: Daytime event space. Image by Author.



Figure 63: Nighttime event. Image by Author.

The main gathering hall offers a simple space reminiscent of a cathedral nave for presentations, or gatherings of any scale. The skylights allow for an understanding of the passage of time throughout the day, and a dark, but accurately lit space for use at night.

Procession Recollection

Throughout the Architectural Promenade, a series of moments and details offer engagement to the visitor. Over the course of time, these details will develop scars of their own, a patina that embodies their engagement. While they have been used at the present to make one aware of their engagement in consideration to other daily points of engagement, they will begin to convey this notion more with the passing of time. As each material develops a life of its own, those who engage with the material must confront this patina, considering the embodied energy. As we consider the hundreds of years of use, and thousands of visitors who have tread upon the stairs at Wells Cathedral, so too will these considerations manifest themselves upon the details in the Pritzker Hall.

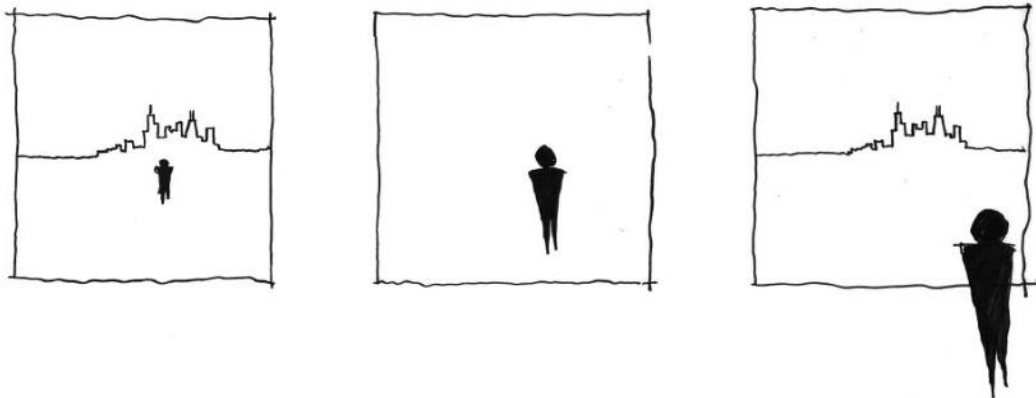


Figure 64: disengagement from the city, engagement with the self, re-engagement with the city. Image by Author.

Conclusion

The passage of time plays a fundamental role in both the understanding of human life, as well as in the development of new architecture. Without the acknowledgement of history and the passage of time, human life begins to separate from its own reality. As architecture perpetuates the notion of eternal newness, humans lose an appreciation for their own fleeting existence, and their engagement with life. Similarly, architecture loses the opportunity to engage with human life when it denies the passage of time. This disconnect between architectural design and the sense of human life misses an opportunity to move people's emotions.

This thesis illustrates a means of reconnecting people not only with their classical haptic senses of touch, taste, sight, smell, and sound, but with a broader sense of human life, that of their place within the passage of time.

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