

# Edifice of Polyphonic Crescendo.

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authorisation of access | Is the city gated?

Source: Author.

precinct 02 | the Unseen Parasite. Station Deck

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## PRE-SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE OUTCOME LETTER

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Dear Lwanele Shabalala,

Your Ethics pre-screening questionnaire (PSQ) has been evaluated by your departmental ethics representative. Based on the information supplied in your PSQ, it has been determined that you do not need to make a full ethics application for the research project in question.

You may proceed with your research project titled:

Edifice of Polyphonic Crescendo

Please note that should aspect(s) of your current project change, you should submit a new PSQ in order to determine whether the changed aspects increase the ethical risks of your project. It may be the case that project changes could require a full ethics application and review process.

Regards,

Faculty Research Ethics Committee

# Contents

<b>Glossary</b>	8
<b>Discursive Methodology.</b>	9
<b>Preface.</b>	12
<b>Introduction.</b>	15
<b>Chaotic Polyphony.</b>	17
<b>Liminal.</b>	20
<b>Perception.</b>	23
<b>Paradigm Shift.</b>	26
<b>In[FORM]ality.</b>	29
<b>[FORM]ality as a Reaction.</b>	31
<b>Case Study : Sampling of Notes</b>	33
<b>Case Study 01: Locating Ideas.</b>	34
<b>Case Study 02 : Identifying Thresholds of [Liminality]</b>	39
<b>Case Study 03 : Transitions on a Grand Scale.</b>	44
<b>Isolating Points of Departure.</b>	49
<b>Recontextualising Cape Town.</b>	51
<b>setting the Stage for the Opening Act .</b>	64
<b>REVEALING THE EXISTING.</b>	72
<b>polyphony in the MAKING.</b>	82
<b>Closing Thoughts.</b>	112
<b>Bibliography.</b>	116



Source: Author.

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### **My Family:**

Zandile Chiliza  
Phelelani Shabalala  
Lwanda Shabalala  
Zime Shabalala  
Nothile Shabalala

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Lastly, I dedicate this thesis document to my late aunt, Thokozani "maShabalala" Hammond who had shown me nothing but love and support throughout my entire life. This one is dedicated to you.

## Glossary.

- **Edifice**
  - : a large imposing building.
  - a complex set of beliefs.
- **Polyphony**
  - : a musical term used to describe a texture in which two or more in-dependant lines are played or sung simultaneously. Each line has it's own unique melody, rhythm & harmony, and together create a **complex**, harmoniously rich musical composition.
  - | **Cantus Firmus**
    - : a pre-existing melody that forms the basis of a polyphonic melody used as a compositional tool.
- **Crescendo**
  - : the highest point reached in a progressive increase of intensity.
  - : gradual increase towards a peak in population density in the city with a rise in congestion patterns of oscillating diurnal migration. Culminating in a chaotically cathartic release.
- **Space Syntax**
  - : a set of techniques for analysing spatial layouts and human activity patterns in buildings and urban areas.
- **Liminal**
  - : of, relating to, or being an intermediate state, phase, or condition : **IN-BETWEEN, TRANSITIONAL**.
  - : of, relating to, or situated at a sensory threshold : barely perceptible or capable of eliciting a response.
- **Threshold**
  - : a barrier space that is located for separating the volumes.
  - : the place or point of entering or beginning.
- **Heterotopia**
  - : certain cultural, institutional and discursive spaces that are somehow 'other': disturbing, intense, incompatible, contradictory or transforming. Heterotopia are worlds within worlds, mirroring and yet upsetting what is outside.
- **Ephemeral**
  - : lasting a very short time.
- **Epistemology**
  - : the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge especially with reference to its limits and validity.
- **Neoliberalism**
  - : a political approach that favours free-market capitalism, deregulation, and reduction in government spending.
- **Infrastructure**
  - : the system of public works of a country, state, or region
  - also : the resources (such as personnel, buildings, or equipment) required for an activity.
- **Destratification**
  - : *the use of structure as space*, inverting the traditional full/empty categories, structurally using the discontinuity of matter.
- **Zeitgeist**
  - : the defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time.



## Axial ordering of space and hierarchy

**the Discursive Methodology.**

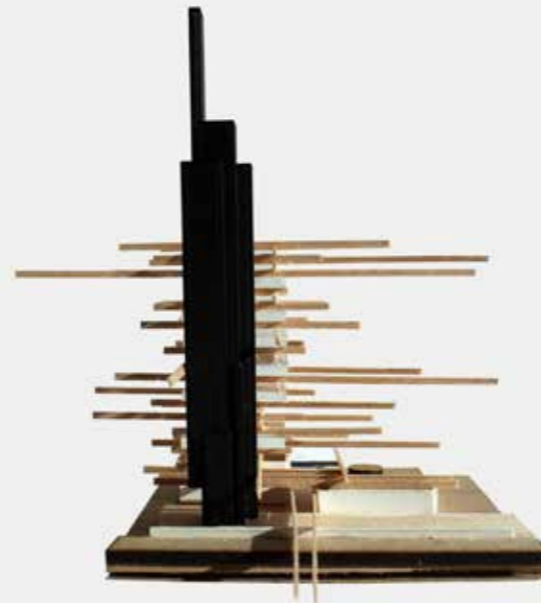
ABSTRACTION | architecture and by implication, space as a series of additions and subtractions towards a goal of creating meaningful spaces for-shadowed and drenched with light to the societal score of the city[people]



Source: Author.

### Photography [Moments captured in Time]:

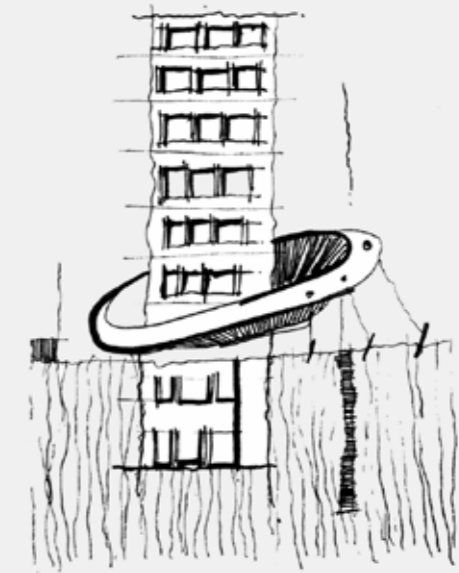
- Immersive locating of socio-spatial conditions.
- Revealing architectural devices underpinned by ordering and structure.
- Capturing ordered rhythms in the pursuit of an aesthetic composition in relation to time and place animated by programme.
- Locating of the dynamic social relationships.



Source: Author.

### Thoughts trapped in the 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension:

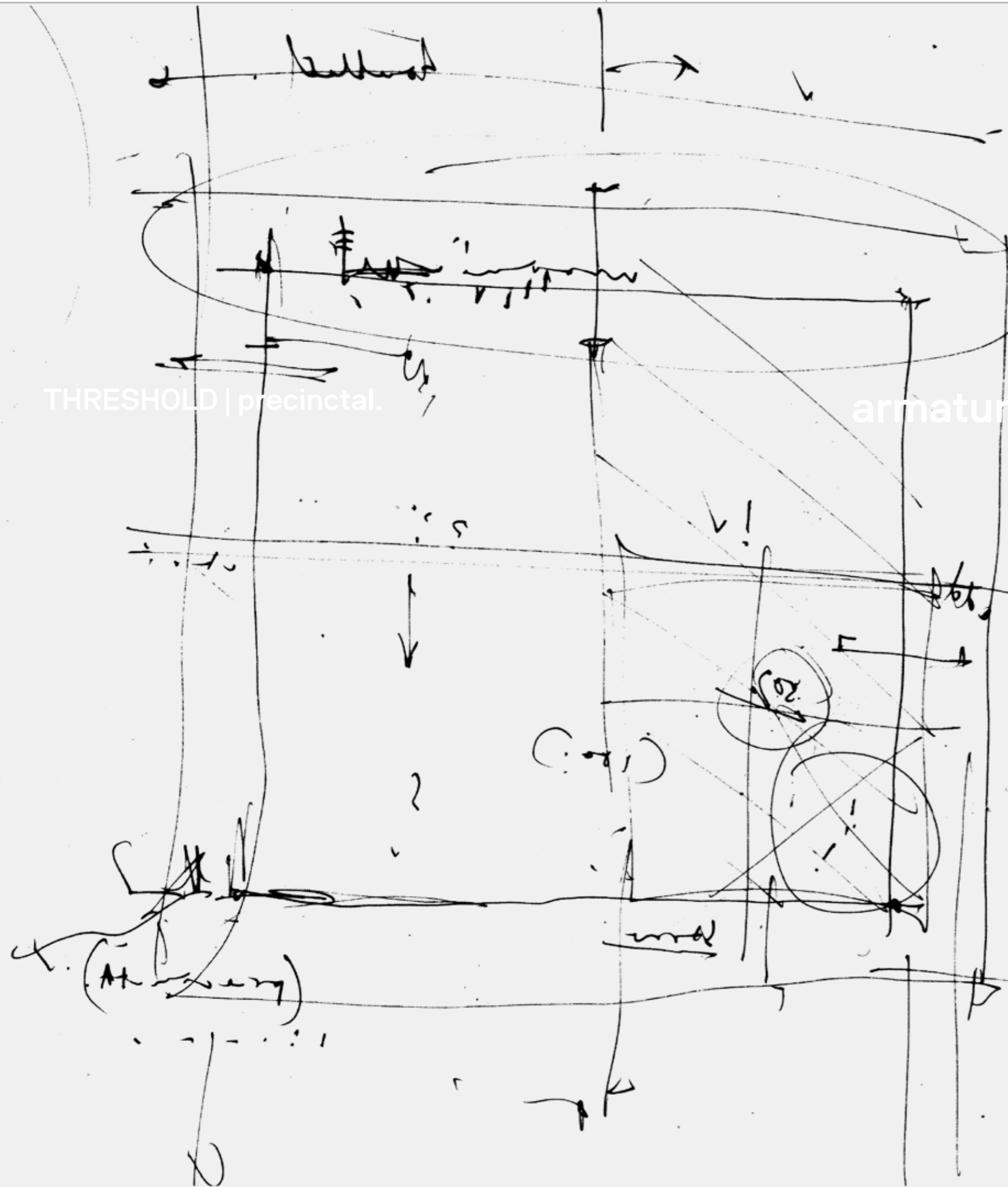
- Intuitive devices of research and speculative questioning
- Visualisation of concepts and ideas in 3D as an explorations of space and mass.
- Definition of spatial characteristics defined through connections and planes.
- Material composition and the associated perceptions in relation to their environments.
- Visualisation of **Volumes** v **Plane[area]** v **Tectonics**.
- Devices of arch. Language generation.



Source: Author.

### Speculative infractions on the continuum:

- Intuitive expression of ideas tied to the architectural narratives of space conditioning and development.
- Expression of unrealised[imagined] realities.
- Setting up of spatial and technology frameworks.
- Imagined possibilities in a vacuum realm as concept generation with context.



THRESHOLD | precinctal.

armature | REACH.

**This, in terms of that. | Relational qualities of spaces through architectural gestures.**

ABSTRACTION | the gaining of a contextual understanding of the far-reaching consequences of a single stroke on a page [[SCALE] vs [MAGNITUDE]

## Preface.

Cities have within them this ineffable composition that allows for a multitude of varying realities to co-exist simultaneously. This quality allows for cities to embrace and contain a massive intensity of dynamic social collisions that contribute towards the architect's attitude towards the built environment at various scales of architectural interventions.

A redefining of the built urban context in relation to the micro architectural devices implemented upon the city forms a robust intensity mediated through a series of thresholds and liminal spaces held together by a predetermined framework and artistic expression. These architectural devices set up conditions for contradictions that allow for spontaneous, *chaotic polyphonic crescendos* between social, economic, and infrastructural relationships. Importantly, these relationships within the context of cities cannot exist in isolation (Low, 2003) and form a complex framework in which we as the inhabitant assume to roles of actors, directors and set designers to collectively mould our environment (Harvey, 2003). A clear understanding of the reciprocal nature that exists between the human and the built form even though the latter can be argued not to overtly influence behaviour but rather a reaction towards it (Sfintes, 2012).

Exploring concepts of how people and spatial environments interrelate to define their attitudes towards the ephemeral spaces of occupation and transition guided by a historical overview reveals an engendered bias and subjectivity to the perception of these spaces and their potential (Smith, 2001). Festival(temporal), event(spontaneous), contradictions(disturbance), context and socio-economic pressures influence an architectural typology that shapes the urban landscape that then becomes the setting for inhabitation for the various social interactions that dictate our apprehension of space and its' architectural framework. Guided by this, an artist's expression can then be generated in the material composition and harmonic cacophony of fluid spaces (Smith, 2001) to provide a sense of place to a space.

Architecture and its perception through concrete[physical] manifestations of abstract ideas and the potential it has on the perception of seemingly inhabitable spaces and material consideration, create a hauntingly beautiful spatial challenge that this paper looks to expose through various lenses and how they all have agency in living independently yet influence one another profoundly traversing multiple scales. Polyphony! Architecture as permittance and opportunity for reaction. Infrastructure! *The architecture of the in-between*. Threshold! The architecture of nurturing a user's experience of the built form through chaotic collisions, forming a stillness in its disorder in the pursuit of a polyphonic expression.

contradiction.|confluence.

ABSTRACTION | you cannot have peace without [Khaos] and understanding and accepting that contradiction fosters and conducive environment for thought. | Converging at a point



Source: Author.



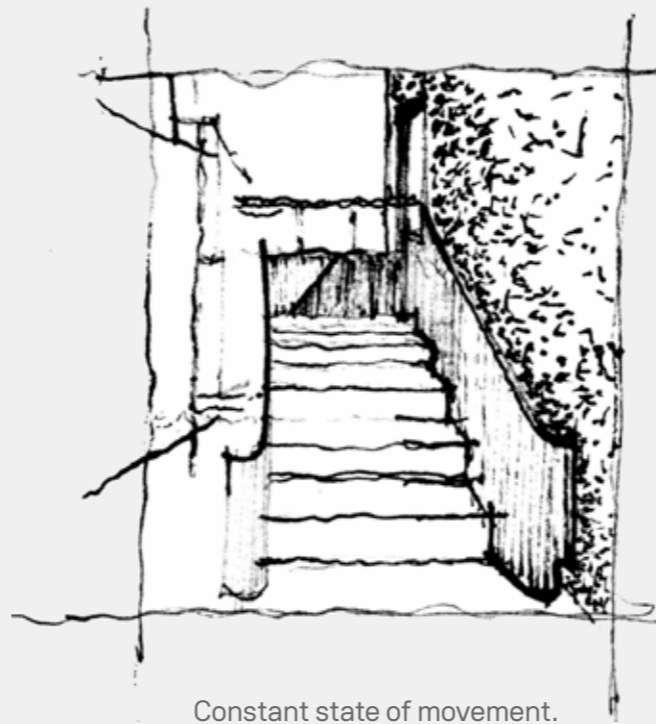
Source: Author.

precinct 01 | **under-ground City. Stand Str**

ABSTRACTION | the chaotic polyphony of a necessary conduit  
into the city relegated to the unseen experiencing a life of its own |  
CANTUS FIRMUS.

precinct 02 | **the Unseen Parasite. Station Deck**

Source: Author.



Fleeting state of security.

Source: Author.

Constant state of movement.

Source: Author.

## Introduction.

Spaces defined by architectural devices, underpinned, and supported by abstract ideas subject to the temporal nature of time – provide an energetic sense of kineticism that embodies the views of its societal environment. The constantly intensified contestation of the in and the out, the have and the have not, that static and dynamic, the heavy and the light, the then and the now. Abstractions of the *this...* in terms of *that*. This idea is abstracted architecturally to understand the human's reaction to the spaces they inhabit in aiding ourselves to classify and organise the fast-changing world we live in and to orientate ourselves towards a sense of order and organisation (Sfintes, 2012). Stating this alludes to the constant rhetoric that architecture transcends the need for structural shelter and social accommodation, but rather embodies an abstract life that's animated through the user's epistemological outlook.

This paper looks at intuitively theorising the method in which the city can be viewed as a culmination of a complex set of conflicting ideas and spatial abstractions. These look to expose the dynamic and ever-changing socio-spatial conditions determined by the prevailing social and authoritative ideologies that influence the environment that frames the setting of these architectural gestures (Hajer, 1999). These narratives have attached to them, pre-existing subjective ideological paradigms, and perceptions (Watson, 2009) that dictate how we relate to the city in its built form. Exploring concepts of thresholds and boundaries as architectural devices that shape the embodied spirit of the city in relation to its social event(action), is investigated through a robust collection of abstracted models that invite a level of interpretation that transfers subjective onus onto the reader(viewer).

Providing a volumetric investigation of space and its ability to translate place through the assertion of the subject's experience creates an exciting opportunity to develop a truly meaningful architecture supported by historical relevance. An active consideration towards exploring architectural frameworks that discourage the notion of becoming self-referential in their approach to developing spaces and material articulation forms a key point of departure, in the pursuit of a multi-varied architectural expression within the city.

Hypothesizing a discursive approach towards the way the multi-varied voices of the city, polyphonically culminate to produce spaces of occupation that are informed by the constant shift in power dynamics imposed on the city in its current context with reference to its historical condition. This has a salient impact on how the city functions as an urban setting for infrastructural, economic, and social interactions (Harvey, 2003). The city's spatial organisation and development over time express the concrete manifestations of these power dynamics. Moreso, it forms the backdrop for social relations of both the formal and informal realms of society and exploiting their relationships.

ABSTRACTION | finding the importance of one only through understanding the relationship it has with the other.

Source: Author.

Abstraction of concepts through space held by volumes.



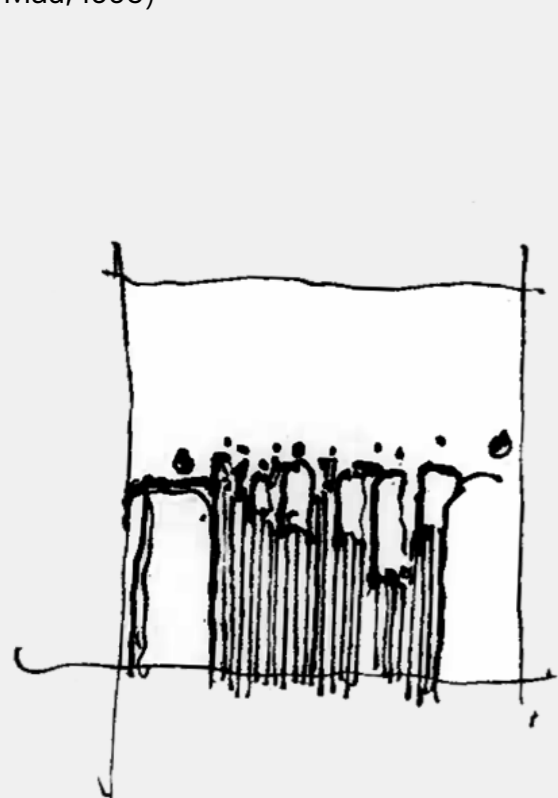
Conflicting realities.

Fundamentally, this paper will look at investigating concepts of liminality through thresholds, while exploring the architectural themes of MAKING and place occupation as a social tool for development and reactivation of the dead zone in the Cape Town Foreshore boundary to the city. Developing vocational skills toward the betterment of the human condition as a way of cultivating creative expression. The material composition of the building and how it relates to its surroundings for an important function in the investigation and creation of space and will be interrogated through a series of physical models to understand the built space.

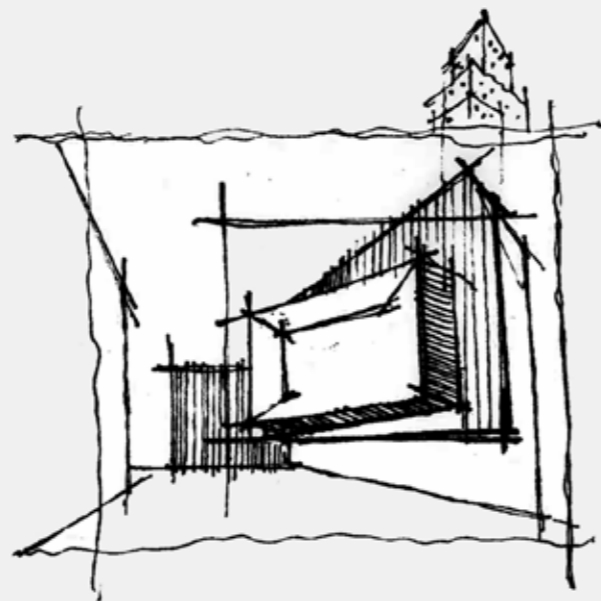
Supplementing this approach, the concept of thresholds on an urban scale and its linked relations with boundary and the demarcating of public territory to private space. Locating the inquiry within a context attempts to expose the current, wonderfully chaotic socio-economic dynamics that shape the Cape Town CBD with specific consideration being directed towards Cape Town Station and the Foreshore precinct towards the north. Architecturally, spaces that emerge from the needs of the context and how these needs inform material composition and architectural typology (Zumthor, 2010) to ground the artifact in its context with a rich embodied meaning and perception will form a vital component of the architectural attitude in the re-imagining and reconceptualizing of what the city can be. *Architecture, as a series of material components harmoniously coming together to set the stage with which the inhabitants animate.*

Furthermore, explorations into the Liminal threshold spaces that facilitate the fluid nature of transit and its far-reaching armature to control and regulate the fluctuating diurnal patterns of the city. Investigating the transitory spaces in the pairing of *pavement to edge, space to place and boundary to volume*. These concepts are held by oscillating harmonies in the compositional score of the city that dictates its spatial characteristics. The coming and the going [seen through epistemic grounding] (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995)

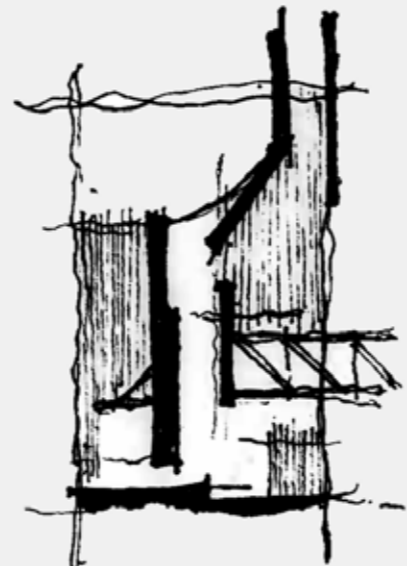
ABSTRACTION | the cinematic set-up



Cast(animators)



Back(ground) set



Backstage (production)

the **Setup**

Polyphony as a unifying concept has a unique ability to concisely summarise the method of how this paper will look at analysing the city. The term polyphony is a borrowed musical term distinguished as "Every voice is its own melody, but together in harmony." (Nymphomaniac, 2013). It entails a setting up of a musical composition by the merging of otherwise, perfectly harmonic individual melodies into a complex composition of musical expression to form a symphony of sounds. This polyphony of sounds creates a rich symphony that allows the listener to become fully immersed in the musical score through the manipulation of emotions and feelings. It's used as a concept that freely traverses the abstract and concrete realms of space production in the context of the city at various scales. It is used in the suggestion that architecture goes beyond the rules of material composition, but also translates to the intangible qualities that form symbiotic relations with the built form (Zumthor, 2010). In its assimilation with the spatial, it buffers the contrast of tensions held by the city's diurnal patterns and the temporal reactions

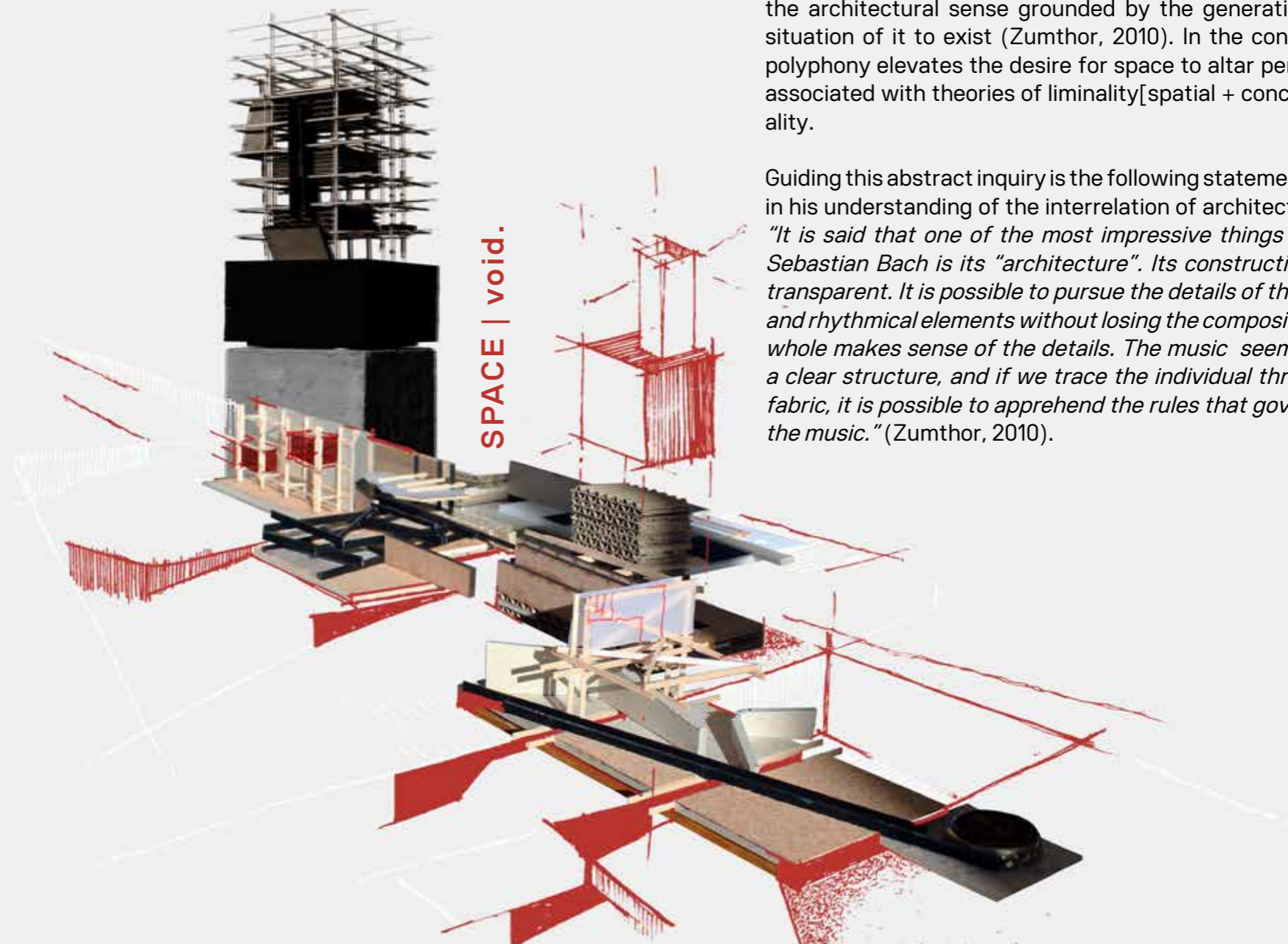
towards this. It hints toward an idealistic conception of architecture as both a precise art form that permits spontaneous acts of informality and intuition.

*"Every voice is its own melody, but together in harmony."*  
(Nymphomaniac, 2013)

This concept in music has an underlying structural framework that governs the fundamental notes brought together but allows enough room for the creative expression of the composer[arch-i-tect]. A key component of this concept is defined as Cantus Firmus. This is defined as a pre-existing melody that forms the basis of a polyphonic melody when used as a compositional tool. Importantly, rhythm in the musical sense oscillates and gradually or abruptly leads to an intense crescendo that embellishes the piece with drama[state of tension]. It unifies both the spatial and emotional realms to allow the listener to truly be. It allows for a level of emotive expression to assume a complex poetic quality in the architectural sense grounded by the generation of a meaningful situation of it to exist (Zumthor, 2010). In the context of this inquiry, polyphony elevates the desire for space to altar perceived connotation associated with theories of liminality[spatial + concrete] and in[FORM]ality.

Guiding this abstract inquiry is the following statement by Peter Zumthor in his understanding of the interrelation of architecture and polyphony: *"It is said that one of the most impressive things about the music of Sebastian Bach is its "architecture". Its construction seems clear and transparent. It is possible to pursue the details of the melodic, harmonic and rhythmical elements without losing the composition as a whole – the whole makes sense of the details. The music seems to be based upon a clear structure, and if we trace the individual threads of the musical fabric, it is possible to apprehend the rules that govern the structure of the music."* (Zumthor, 2010).

### Chaotic Polyphony.



ABSTRACTION |ideas and architectural ideas converging towards spatial definition| polyphony of the making - sketch - lighting - capturing and dissemination of space.

Source: Author.



ABSTRACTION | is the city gated and who does it cater for? | who do we really design for when approaching the city?

STATIC[permanence] | dynamic[OCCUPATION]

precinct 01 | under-ground City. life on Stand Str  
Source: Author.

The statement above, within the context of developing this inquiry, links architectural conceptions to the societal metaphysical qualities and voice that impinge upon the production of public space and consideration of architectural devices that define edge, plane and volume with their associated meaning of place and experience. Neither one nor the other, but rather the in-between.

These concepts of polyphony when applied to the larger urban scale of the city, allow me to approach my research in a non-linear and multi-centred way that can be related to the nature of the human condition in the city. Taken from the analysis of Mikhail Bakhtin's investigation of the writings of Dostoyevsky, (Belova, et al., 2008) posit that, the reason why Dostoyevsky's literary work was so culturally influential was because of a polyphonic motif to his writings. The stories very often show the presence of multiple independent voices within independent narratives, yet possessing unifying qualities that would propel the narration of the stories in a clear direction (Parks, 1991). These voices and narratives exhibit a lack of hierarchy and claim equal rights for their worlds that combine, but do not merge, into a climax of an event (Belova, et al., 2008).

These voices represented the embodied and expressive nodes of the novelistic structure, developed simultaneously, through intersection and clash with each other. Each voice with equal standing facilitates an explosive tension between the ends of the societal spectrum that engage with common space thus creating the idea of a third-space animated through experience that the appropriation of that commonality.

Fundamentality, it facilitates the question of the degradation of spatial typology and the development of a rigid programme[formal]. Applying the concept of polyphony as a framework when interrogating the city and its various multi-varied components that mould the urban context that we experience daily affords the freedom to objectively question its urban condition and positioning. An emphatic exploration of the spatial organisation of the city in relation to the formal and informal sectors of society will be expanded upon and the questioning of whose needs are catered for by the city (Harvey, 2003) will be decided. Which voice is heard the loudest doesn't necessarily mean it's more important. It does however acknowledge the presence of a voice.

Melodies of the past, the now and the future. How do they contribute toward the score of the city's spatial development and bias? It seems to raise questions towards the intermingling of social practices as organising components in the production of space and utilization thereof (Hajer, 1999) towards an attempt at blurring boundaries[both abstract + concrete] on an urban scale and almost as quickly, the intimate.

Spatial realities along with the often, conflicting ideological frameworks that form the backdrop on which the city operates, transform the city from merely just a one-dimensional setting to a complex dynamic urban landscape that's ever-changing (Charitonidou, 2020).



Source: Author.

Understanding this, gestures towards the concept of “conflicting rationalities” (Watson, 2009) that formulates a framework for understanding the gap between techno-managerial and market-related planning systems in the urban context of a city. The often present disconnect of authoritative bodies

from the communities they wish to impose upon. Applying these ideas towards the experience of space immediately shows the lack of understanding of one body towards the other. Often through this, an alien architecture is embossed on the fabric of a community that creates a disconnect with the built form. However, an argument towards analysing the in-between that subsequently survives, possesses an exciting socio-spatial composition through ownership and appropriation of that liminal space. It formulates an architecture that moves beyond the built form but is rather more invested in the idea of space (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995).

The different voices and the relevance of their relation to the city will encompass the social, historical, economic, and spatial components of what makes up a city in its relation to the human condition. These categories will naturally develop sub-elements and notes that within themselves, produce further sub-elements. The Russian Nesting Doll. But the focus of the paper will be to see how these voices come together to inform our perception of space within the city and how it can be manipulated. On the formulation of polyphonic backgrounding, careful attention will be given to expressing contradicting ideologies that lead to a dynamic and objective interpretation of both space and the power associated with it. To achieve this, one must acknowledge the consciousness and present forces of subjectivity. Edge conditions, boundaries, tectonics, and planes, held together by the human experience of space and its embedded meaning.

Stating this adds a layer of complexity to the perspectival perception of the research and transfers a certain level of the onus onto the reader while attempting to neutralise the authorial power (Belova, et al., 2008). The consideration of the subjectivity associated with the experience of spaces (Zumthor, 2010) and the power dynamics they keenly represent on varying scales of the spatial realm dictate the questioning of the ephemeral coming together of materials with their associated architectural expressions.

The temporal characteristic of spaces and their perceived meaning relies on the subjectivity of the user to inform the experience on an intimate scale (Zumthor, 2010). This statement emphatically supports the validity of architecture and the composition of materials and spaces on a small scale, but when analysing the context on a macro scale, an argument can be made for collective assumptions concerning the dissemination of space and its politics.

In voicing the architectural perspective, one can adopt positioning rooted in its context both within the physical and the metaphysical. “Irrespective of place or circumstance, good architecture transcends the confines of the stylistic, even the political. It synthesises the utilitarian, the

experiential and the beautiful – premise on universal canons.” (Joubert, 2009).

There persists this urge for an architecture that traverses the restrictive confines of structure(physical) and develops meaning through place and user! Grounding this aspect of the architectural inquiry is encapsulated in the translating of the abstract concept of de-stratification (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995) into the concrete world to achieve an attitude towards architectural devices that translates intention and the permissance of change. This piece firmly places the city as a collection of oeuvres, by innumerable architectural interventions over time with a rich tapestry of socio-political perspectives commanding its voices to be heard.

Dichotomies traversing both the spatial(physical) and meta add a level of intensity to understanding the way space is disseminated, conceived, and perceived (Steenkamp, n.d.). Understanding the relationships that occur between spaces held by the physical backdrop of the built environment then informs the human’s relation with that environment. Hidden within this production of space is the idea of simultaneous space and event (Charitonidou, 2020) in there lies an expression that is inherently user-specific. Consequently, the relationships between the space and the experience continue to inform the way we perceive and interact with the spatial realm (Steenkamp, n.d.).

*"In every dysfunction, there is a potential for new functionalities."*

Rem Koolhaas.



**Liminal.**

precinct 02 | the Unseen Parasite. Station Deck

ABSTRACTION | dead spaces in the city animated at fluctuating times embody spaces of liminality towards the disruption of social cohesion | degradation of functional infrastructure.

Source: Author.

*"In architecture, there are two basic possibilities of spatial composition: the closed architectural body which isolates space within itself, and the open body which embraces an area of space that is connected to the endless continuum." (Zumthor, 2010)*



As an architectural device that colours our attitude towards the production and experience of space, the concept of liminality holds a vital position in the social inquiry of the spatial dynamics of a city. Fundamentally, the concept of liminality is defined as a state or zone of transition (Smith, 2001), which when applied architecturally, naturally relates to the in-between space held by thresholds and boundaries[*edge*].

This abstract concept locates itself within the scope of inquiry, as it provides a setting that becomes animated through engaging with the human's perception of it. This idea goes further, in its ability to traverse scales in its application to the built environment and its ability to hold space in the social arena. Liminality is always associated with the ephemerality and transitional passage between alternative states for which the focus is more on the interrelation of these phenomena rather than their opposition (Smith, 2001). For this paper, this concept will be stretched to cover the scales ranging from the urban, through to the architecture[*building*], through to the intimate[*detail*] in an attempt to redefine our perception of space and how society perceives it.

Naturally, this concept brings about ideas of movement through space for which a person is engaged with edge, boundary, threshold, space, and the point beyond. It implies the 'this' and the 'other' because of... It holds a dynamic tension of occupying the third-space (Smith, 2001) that for a positioning of oneself within the discourse of the built and the space it defines for which it possesses space to be appropriated to the needs of the observer. The occupying of the nothing-zone as a space

Source: Author.

devoid of ownership. Secondary to this, for the objective of this analysis – the space it holds is managed through built planes and their qualities to control light and define a programme.

The concept of liminality in the built environment embodies a rich sense of ambiguity that can be described as a boundary, both separating two different states/spaces/realities while simultaneously providing connections through thresholds that link these states to one another (Sfintes, 2012). These qualities of liminality bring to question the nature boundary[*edge*] in its use in the built form and how it defines space and movement through it. In the attempt to emphatically channel the direction of the inquiry, the three types of thresholds will be derived from those established by Vlad Gaivoronschi. He defines the three types as thick(massive, opaque), thin(transparent), and multiple(in which the threshold becomes spatial, requiring more time for crossing the boundary). Having these as guides in the development of an architecture of receiving and releasing people in their state of movement through the city has a salient impact on the production of space and the connection to the other. Spatially, these can be perceived as dramatic, smooth or continuous in their accommodation of movement and thus the experience towards space and its characteristics.

In its abstraction, liminality offers a rich landscape in which dichotomies between states of being occur as transitions from one state to the other, held in space by architectural plans and devices. It allows for the opposing natures of realities and the virtual, the present and a state of



Source: Author.

ABSTRACTION | unintentional space of occupation | spontaneous opportunities of upliftment.  
That constant note playing in the background ever so slightly.

## STRUCTURES of animation.



precinct 03 | the Receiver. Old Marine Dr

timelessness for which timelessness is accessed through breaches in time on a linear path, to co-exist in a new definition of a new reality.

Often, spaces within the city relegated to liminal zones have a bustling state of activity that lasts for a short burst of time then dissipates again, later to be reactivated again. This abrupt dynamic state supplies a rich, dynamic, yet highly dramatic note in the polyphonic scoring of the city and its social scene. A diurnal fluctuation in the engagement of these zones often sees them transformed into dead spaces due to their lack of prolonged occupation (Sfintes, 2012). They serve the purpose of movement and not occupation. This calls into question the need for a re-conceptualization of what the city is and how it can be re-imagined through architectural devices. The redefining of typologies and associated programmes that support them. It seems to suggest polyphonic chaos towards tranquillity. "The ultimate oxymoron: chaos as a project." (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995). The re-establishing of the what if... and if so then what?

Essentially embracing the liminal as an experience in its own right.

Source: Author.

## Perception.

The inherent perception of our spatial condition and its development over time can intrinsically be understood from memories encapsulated through the forming of space and what it represents (Zumthor, 2010). Associating architectural devices and their embodied temporal progression over time, afford the user of that space to engage with the built form on a personal level that evokes a user-specific response. The emotions towards this built form are often triggered through a metaphysical engagement of space as a volume held by planes and details translated through finishes, connections, and a consideration of the space beyond (Zumthor, 2010). High, low, open, close, dark, light.

Experiencing these aspects of architecture and how they inform the attitudes towards the way space is produced in locating the users(actor) as part of, rather than posing as an imposition (Smith, 2001). Conversely meaning and place-making within the built environment can only be possible through the actor prescribing meaning to the space. This reciprocity creates a polyphonic tension that leads to the abstraction of seeing oneself in the architecture and the architecture as a stage of experience.

As touched upon previously, our perception of our environment has attached to it latent experiential qualities that colour the way we perceive and appropriate space (Zumthor, 2010). These qualities do however subscribe to the passing of time as they develop and manifest themselves externally from the personal to the collective. Tied to this concept is the societal Zeitgeist that forms the fundamental grounding of these beliefs. Socio-political activity guided by historical events, determines the economic landscape and so on and so on. These relations amongst these spheres of what dictate our everyday lives exist in such a fluid state, that it becomes difficult to find where the cycle starts and ends. All these, form very strong informants towards the way spaces are shaped and allocated (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995). The prevailing social ideologies of the time of conception of a particular world-view have the advantage in the way we historically move through time and space.

Translating these viewpoints onto the urban scale of a city, the statement by urban sociologist, Robert Park supplies a point of departure in saying: *"Man's most consistent, and on the whole, his most successful attempt to remake the world he lives in more after his heart's desire. But, if the city is the world which man created, it is the world in which he is henceforth condemned to live. Thus, indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself."* (Harvey, 2003). The current paradigm towards how space is fundamentally produced with its associated idiosyncrasy on the large scale of the city exhibits a bias towards those with the propensity to change it. This inherent characteristic then leads us to deduce that the meaning of justice and the perception of fairness is whatever the ruling class wants it to be (Harvey, 2003).

Locating the spatial underpinnings of society bound by the material[concrete – physical] setting of the city led me to investigate the theories formulated by Henri Lefebvre on the production of space and how this has a fundamental connection to the operating of the city and



Source: Author.



ABSTRACTION | flip the script. Perceptions of the unsightly, celebrated.  
bring it to the fore. Expose it, let it breathe

more importantly, the attitude towards public space. The theories examine how space becomes a product under state capitalism and globalization, leading to a devaluation of spaces as social settings (Coleman, 2014). (Koolhaus & Mau, 1995) supply and a critique of these phenomena for which they argue that it destabilises the production of architecture and subsequently the spaces it holds. Furthermore, there is an argument that it depletes the architectural imagination towards the context due to the abandonment of the regional unknowing, in favour of the international knowing that imposes spatial strain on the genius loci.

What's important to acknowledge, is the presence of a multitude of voices defining what the embedded meaning of space is and who it caters for. Understanding the ideologies embedded in the spatial realm and their implications on the functioning of our everyday lives, seem to have been overlooked in the planning of our contemporary cities (Odendaal & McCann, 2016). This further aid the concept of "conflicting rationalities" (Watson, 2009) that grow the divide between authority and inhabitant. The somewhat lack of interest among architects and planners in the socio-political issues that metaphysically underpin our planning conception and execution only seems to perpetuate the reproduction of neoliberal spaces in the city's public realm (Coleman, 2014). Understandably, the social implications that the economic sphere has on our social environment must be met with an objective lens that finds its validity in contributing towards the spatial discourse of our cities. Thus, acknowledging the capitalist socio-spatial environment that has been cultivated provides this inquiry with a nuanced note in the chaotically polyphonic composition of the city. However, this aspect of society will be explored in a non-hierarchical manner.

A clear argument is made for the analysis of the city in its ability to foster relationships and a critical outlook on the modes of production in relation to its revolutionary actions and everyday life (Charitonidou, 2020). The spatial realm holds the responsibility of producing thresholds through liminal spaces that hold these relationships and form a setting that becomes animated by the users through passive consideration of the associated function. Critical selection materials and architectural gestures in the pursuit of a unified design emerge from the context and understanding that it lies in a continuum affected by other socio-spatial mechanisms to function and impart a sensory experience. Intensifying the fluid characteristic of the contrast in occupied and unoccupied spaces and their relation to the forming of interpretations of space in our city will no doubt lead to new-found attention towards the use of architectural devices in the definition of space (Zumthor, 2010). Importantly, the concept of continuity through fluid space creation and the opportunities it presents for human animation should feature as a staple in the planning of space in the city.

Hence a call towards the re-imagining and re-conceptualising (Koolhaus & Mau, 1995) of what and how space is produced and how it facilitates diverging needs of city-scale surfaces. Conceptualising the new urban fabric within the paradigm of space development towards a more inclusive arena that holds the space for the tension of conflicting realities and needs of social activations (Hajer, 1999). This has a direct influence

on the attitude towards public space concerning the private. I posit that this change lies in the wholesale shifting in ideological paradigms towards and understanding of the other and from that, rises an opportunity for a more ingrained spatial condition towards its genius loci. An embracing of differences and finding positives in that.

*"If there is to be a 'new urbanism' it will not be based on the twin fantasies of the order and omnipotence; it will be the staging of uncertainty; it will no longer be concerned with the arrangement of more or less permanent objects, but with the irrigation of territories with potential; it will no longer aim for stable configurations but for the creation of enabling fields that accommodate processes that refuse to be crystallised..."*  
(Koolhaus & Mau, 1995)



Urban Periphery

precinct 01 | under-ground City. life on Stand Str

Source: Author.



Paradigm

Source: Author.

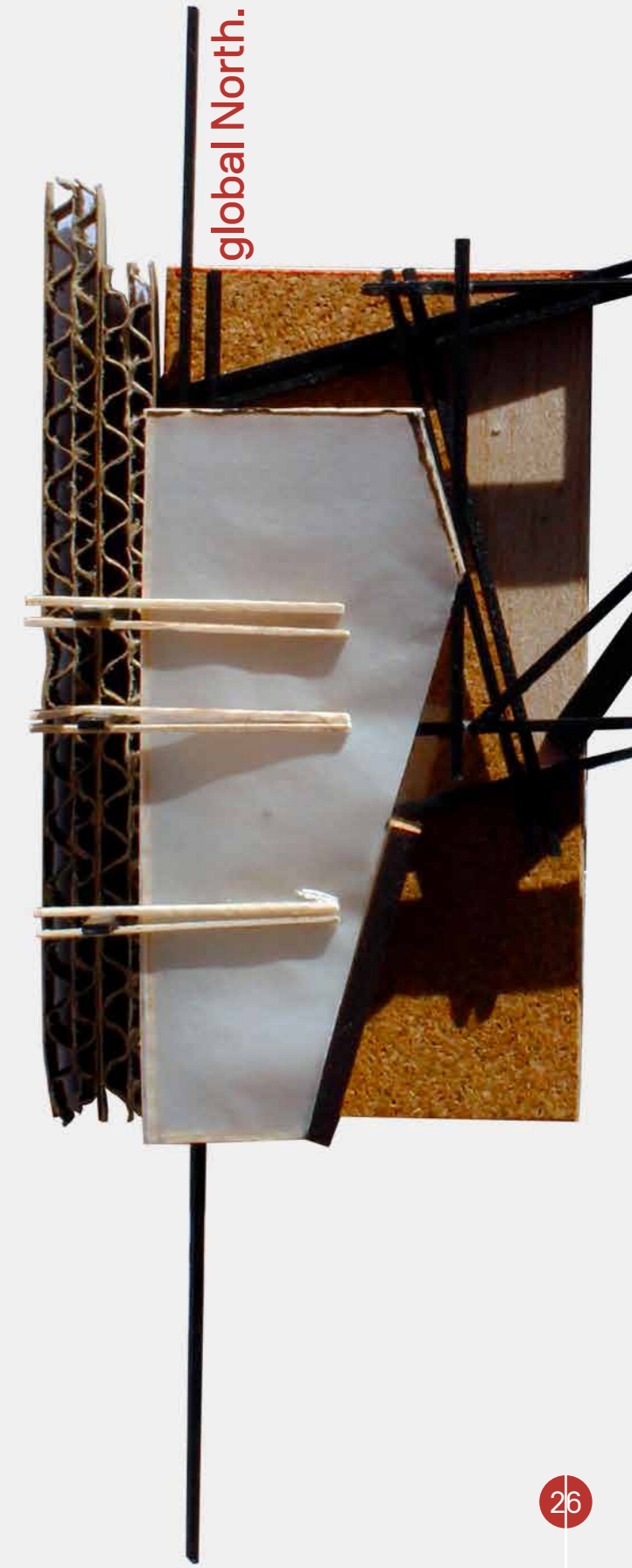
## Paradigm Shift.

The field of inquiry locates itself within the context of the global south, thus aligning and positioning itself with the problems and opportunities generally associated with this socio-spatial context. Contextualising this in relation to the concepts of globalisation and interconnectedness through the liberalisation of trade (Watson, 2009) allows for a better analysis of the fundamental ideologies and conditions that impinge on the general perception, production and occupation of space in the city (Watson, 2009) through infrastructural advancements and policies over time. This distinction in contexts allows for a more considered approach towards the way information is disseminated towards the production space that will service socio-economic conditions found in the global south while referencing conditions and approaches stemming from the global north.

This section will briefly attempt to dissect the relationships that the two contexts have with one another. The section attempts, through the theories held by (Watson, 2009) and (Odendaal & McCann, 2016), to expose why a shift towards looking at architecture and space planning from the lens of the global south has equal importance to that held by the north. These polar contexts face distinct socio-economic issues that have direct consequences towards spaces within the city and the attitude towards infrastructure provision and use (Watson, 2009). Socially, this has a great impact on the perception of what is considered a good or bad space. This formulates a connection with the way liminal spaces and architecture are appropriated in the city to suit the needs of the inhabitant as a tool for survival. Understanding the conditions associated with the global south formulates a better understanding of the concept of formality in the social arena of the city.

Urban planning in cities forms a vital aspect of the way cities are shaped and inhabited by users of these spaces. Whether through occupation or as transient in-between spaces, the city through its planning is fundamentally shaped and embedded with ideologies that either promote or hinder social inclusion in spaces[public or private] (Odendaal & McCann, 2016). Thus, the city can be analysed as an amalgamation of various aspects of life all coming together in a wonderfully chaotic

Source: Author.





## Global south.

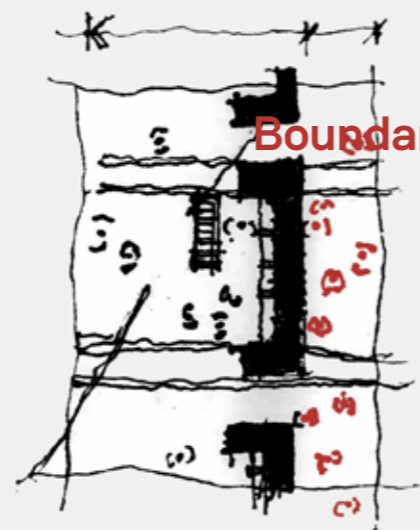
Source: Author.

musical score with oscillating intensities. The city's spatial formation is seen as a reaction to infrastructural planning that enables the stage for architectural and social activities to occur (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995). Conversely, the city also morphs in response to social programmes that dictate infrastructural interventions in support of the said activity. These relations differ greatly from the global north to south contexts, as they prioritize different aspects of society as more culturally important than others. Aspects such as mobility and access have become key informants in the way cities develop in the south due to their rapid population growth in urban areas and economic viability to sustain life (Watson, 2009), drawing both the rich and the poor. However, the phenomenon of rapid urban growth seems to increase the disparity between the rich and the poor.

Within the context of the global south (Watson, 2009) argues that the reason why the planning systems seem to fail to address issues of equality in the accessing of space and opportunities is tied to the holistic adoption planning systems that stem from the north with their conflicting ideologies that don't support conditions found in the south.

Often, these ideologies are taken as they are with very little contextual awareness and the socio-economic realities that prevail in these settings. Bleeding into and informing the spatial realm, these planning systems engender a new form of structured dominance of one over the other in favour of those with the power to shape the narrative (Harvey, 2003). In the context of the city, the power is often seized by capitalistic entities that demand a level of structured formality that inherently goes against the nature of cities in the global south (Skinner, 2008). This emphasizes the power dynamics in planning systems have on the accessibility of the city and how it relates to the individual inhabitant. Clear and careful considerations of context-specific needs remain an integral part of space production and meaning (Zumthor, 2010). Thus, a clear call towards a shift in the perception and production of space to embody its contextual conditions is highly important in shaping space(public+private) (Watson, 2009). Symbiosis through proximity.

ABSTRACTION | edifice of control & edifice of necessity symbiotically relating to the needs of society | contextualising the animator



Source: Author.

Boundary punctuation. | THRESHOLD penetration.



Source: Author.



## Neoliberalism [Concrete.] | Edifice.

The implementation of planning systems and their attitude towards space in the public realm with all the socio-economic conditions found in the global south thus must be extremely focused on developing conducive relationships between the formal and informal spheres of society. These two concepts are inextricably interdependent on one another for which one cannot exist in isolation. These notes in the development of the city occupy equal standing as a compositional tool in animating social relations and holding a space of containment for those relations. Potentially analysing cities and their in-between spaces as settings for spontaneous interactions between the built form and the creative ingenuity guided by the urge to not only survive but to thrive, set up the city as a stage for which both the formal and informal can relate albeit with diverging perceptions of the built fabric and its potential to animate the urban.

Aligned with the rapid growth in the south, a shift in the negative



repositioning of the order.

Source: Author.

ABSTRACTION | edifice of containment and destination for the flow of people in the city. Base note of the city. | Capitalism.

Source: Author.

connotations associated with congestion and the density of the city is called for. In line with the views posited by (Koolhaas, 2014), he too calls for a re-conceptualization and shift in the way urbanism is viewed. Using Manhattan as the main case study, he highlights a celebration for congestion as a cultural and social quality that provides a unique urban landscape that then informs the functioning of that context. The same shift can be made when looking at contexts in the global south through the celebration of their robust and dynamic informal life that enshrines a unique Zeitgeist in its social composition and order. Work with what you have and squeeze every ounce of it to celebrate even its flaws. It lies in the shift of perceptions!

This seems to be the opportune moment to introduce the section on In[FORM]ality and how these polar attributes relate to the production of space in the city.



ABSTRACTION | sole transition device from the Unseen towards the expanding Cape Foreshore precinct

## In[FORM]ality.

Source: Author.

Informality within the context of the urban environment of the city provides a robust dramatic note within the polyphonic composition of the city and its function as a stage of animation and occupation. Encompassing a rich fluid tapestry of sub-categories, the theories hypothesized look to find equal standing in the way they shape the architectural approach. This phenomenon develops a socially dictated production of space that establishes a diverse system of spatial characteristics that have to ability to morph over time to better suit the needs of the environment in its spatial form. Key to this section, in the greater scheme of the paper's inquiry, is a unique ability for informality to occupy and animate otherwise liminal spaces in the city thus re-imagining the latent potential that these spaces possess.

The categorisation of formality finds itself on a spectrum for which a clear and concise definition of the terms becomes difficult and deeply ingrained in its contextual setting. The fluidity associated with the concept allows for it to constantly traverse the framework of the structure while operating in a state of chaos and dis-[organisation]. This unearths a new perspective to approach and analyse the validity in classifying dynamic architectural events that change over time.

Societally, we view the classification of in[FORMal], as that which doesn't conform to dogmatic structures of what is perceived as [FORM]-al. The distinctions are somewhat always used in reference to one another. Just that explanation alone shows associated bias towards the formal with its set of frameworks and boundaries. However, the dynamically volatile nature of the informal by contrast seems to possess an energy a lot more suited to the social context of the South. Validity and equal standing should be afforded to both poles of the spectrum and a fundamental understanding that one cannot exist without the other becomes paramount. Spatially, the relationships that exist between these two categorisations, can positively shape space through the consideration of the other. Applying an empathic sensibility to the discourse creates an even ground and encourages interventions that cater for mutually beneficial gains.

It is within the global south, that the rigid dogmatic ideologies development in the global north, fail to adequately address the rapid urbanisation found in these contexts. This issue then leads to the rapid adoption of informality due to its fluid nature to fill the socio-economic gaps found in our urban setting with relatively less oversight of formality. Objectively, there is a strong correlation between informality and being poor (Skinner, 2008). Public space and its inherent "accessibility" thus form a crucial aspect in accommodating informality in its various forms. Conversely, due to the bias towards the formal establishment, the idea of informality in the public context is met with ambivalent resistance for which they are perceived as untidy and disruptive from the bureaucratic systems of urban city planning (Roever & Skinner, 2016).

The hostility with which the informal culture is met in our context through spatial practices at various scales in the city only exacerbates the lack of socio-spatial equality (Besteman, 2019). Comprehending the complex set of rules that frame informality in our urban realm context could shift the default perception of how planning systems cater for informality.

Locating the voice of the individual and their relation to their environment with their embodied outlook on spaces that they occupy, somewhat shifts the power dynamic that the author possesses from an authoritative to an empathetic one and thus a more meaningful space is created (Belova, et al., 2008) seemingly emerging from the context.

Acknowledging the contradictions that form the foundations of these concepts could lead to the better creation of symbiotic spaces that aim to bring architectural validity located in differences. The “established formal power” provides the backdrop for the informality to inhabit and animate.

Often found in our cities, is a divide between areas of affluence and Dead-Zones teething with informality with completely distinctive characteristics from one another (Doron, 2000). They seem to permeate at precinct scales, and they relegate social relations to diurnal travelling times. These areas in the city often fall victim to negative public perception through the lack of understanding that they represent a different form of order and civic responsibility.

Analysing the socio-spatial environment of these informal districts in our city and how they have been appropriated to accommodate the inhabitants (Doron, 2000), by the inhabitants provides a key insight into the inner culture of informality and how fluid and resilient it can be. These informal precincts function as cities within a city and exhibit a dynamic relation to the formal constructs of its surrounding. The nodes within the city function as a response to the economic exclusion of a population and a look towards securing a livelihood. Ironically, the same can be said for the fundamental underpinnings that are associated with the formal sector (Peck, et al., 2009). A right to create a livelihood and exploit opportunities.

Objectively, the need and social importance that the formal makes up of our city also as a validity to it that permits a set of conditions with which the informality can occur. As alluded to briefly, the nature of the informality and ability to thrive often stems from the societal framework established by the confines of formality.

Source: Author.



**Unseen realities in your backyard.**

In the context of the global south, when looking at informal markets as a case study, they are usually located in areas with high foot traffic and locations with high densities (Skinner, 2008). This density is highly conditioned by the formality of economic employment for which people travel every day. Studying the city's informal activity on weekends in areas with high employment density reveals the interesting correlating symbiotic relationships that could exist between the formal and informal. These areas tend to die and lack pedestrian movement over the weekend, thus leading to a lack of informal activity as a result. This study provides an interesting dimension to the way space is used and allocated. Occupation and appropriation of public space and its access then become pivotal in the pursuit towards an egalitarian social sphere.

The formality of cities and their ability to provide services and entice economic investment for the betterment of society also command equal standing in the voices that compose a polyphonic city. Within the framework that makes up the formal, attitudes of neoliberalism and capitalism dictate how space and its engendered power are perceived and moulded. This function of the formal locates the city in a global context in response to the rapid globalisation trends. Analysing the socio-economic concept of neoliberalism and its relevance to the urban landscape furthers the discursive nature of our city's makeup that shouldn't be analysed in isolation.

The relationships that exist in the in-between zones of the "spectrum of [FORM]ality", exploits the city's ability to generate density, exploit proximity, provoke tension and maximise friction (Hajer, 1999) for which the built environment plays a pivotal role in shaping. The city singing, through various scales and aspects of society through the holding and releasing of intensities.



Source: Author.



ABSTRACTION | the play on volumes and demarcation of space through light and shadow both physically and conceptually.

## [FORM]ality as a Reaction.

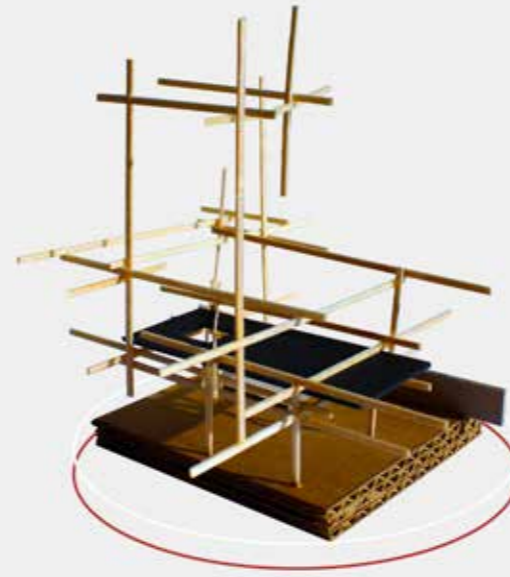
Source: Author.

As a concept, neoliberalism is rooted in the belief that open and unregulated markets are the optimal mechanism for socio-economic development in our cities (Peck, et al., 2009). The concept developed as a political response to the decline in profitability of industry as a call for the reduction in government spending. It is imperative that this concept be understood in relation to its context and that it follows a non-fixed(informal) set of rules. This concept thus adopts a multi-scalar demeanour that affords it the ability to reconstitute the relationship between the city and economic actors (Peck, et al., 2009). Furthermore, the contradiction of this aspect of society reveals the fluidity of the concept.

In essence, the neoliberal movement's pursuit of free markets and minimal state interference often rely on coercive state intervention and aid (Harvey, 2003). The movement, much like the informal characteristics alluded to in the previous section, look to exploit and manipulate the socio-spatial environment of the city. This happens on a larger scale than that of the informal sphere and has a structured framework in the development of the intended outcome with less room for discursive flexibility but accommodates lateral flexibility (Peck, et al., 2009). The neoliberalist movement, although under the assumption that it exists acontextually, relies greatly on the context it finds itself in. It would however be mistaken to omit inherent detrimental social practices that it promotes in our urban landscape.

"We live in a society in which the inalienable rights to private property and the profit rate trump any other conception of inalienable right you can think of." (Harvey, 2003). This statement in the context of the city supports the notion of capital accumulation under the capitalist society that shapes the social fabric and its built form. This is further supported by aspects of the neoliberalist movement of the commodification of space(public) for economic gain (Peck, et al., 2009), along with the privatisation of public space and service through the guise of expanding the free market with the aid of deregulated state control and reduction in corporate taxes. This phenomenon has an intrinsic connection with the rapid globalisation trend that compels cities in the global south to assimilate to ideologies of those in the north to position themselves as global players in the markets (Low, 2003).

The purpose of this brief argument is to provide a filter of validity of the concept embedded within the architectural discourse that shapes our city, and hopefully explore ways of using this concept to promote social inclusion through economic growth. On the one hand, there are techno-managerial and marketized systems of government administration and service provision inherited from the neoliberal contexts, while on the other hand, there is a rationality of survival shaped by efforts to cope with informality and exclusion (Watson, 2009).



Space held of occupation. | Forecourt.

Source: Author.



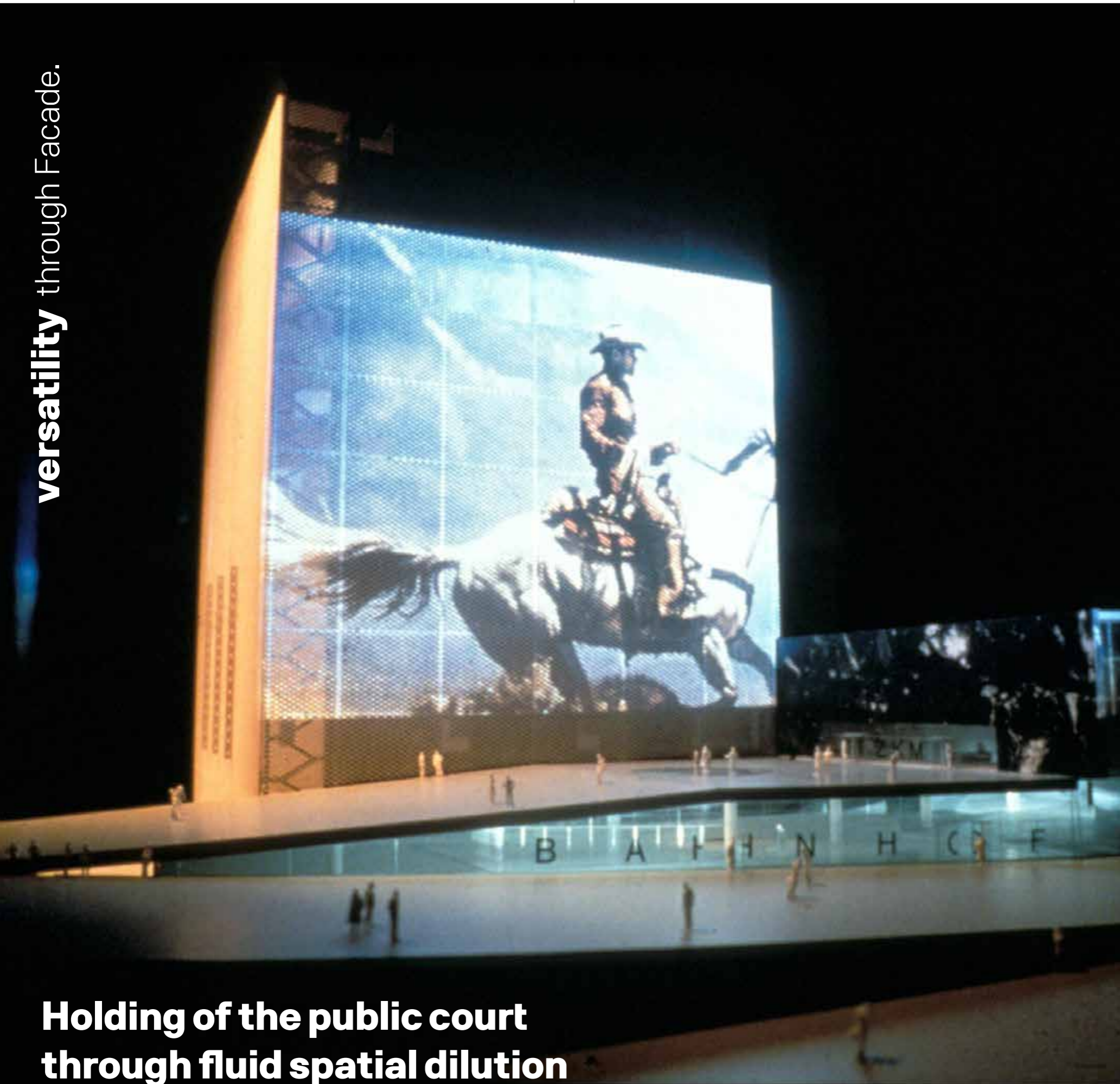
ABSTRACTION | is the ground floor really open, or should we gate-keep access?

Source: Author.



**Case Study : Sampling of Notes**

**versatility** through Facade.



**Holding of the public court  
through fluid spatial dilution**

### **Case Study 01 : Locating Ideas**

Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie[ZKM]

OMA

Figure 01  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

## Project Information:

**Name:** Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie [ZKM].  
**Architect:** OMA.  
**Location:** Karlsruhe, Germany.  
**Year:** 1989.  
**Status:** Competition.  
**Programme:** Gallery | Museum.

This project by OMA locates itself within a city undergoing a state of transition during the Germany resurgence to becoming a European power decades after the war. The city as a case, had undergone reconstruction and looking towards redefining its attitude towards stylistic architectural typologies more in favour of establishing a balance between history and modernity [contemporary]. Claiming maximum centrality in its geographical location, transport infrastructure formed a pivotal aspect in its everyday functioning social programmes. The town, as a collection of peripheries culminating through connection and transitions.

The spatial case study in question is the Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie [ZKM] located at the centre of major transport infrastructure such as the train station and the on and off-ramps to the Autobahn.

The project itself, for classification, can be identified as a museum, however, an argument can be made for the re-conceptualization of what that word, museum meant to OMA. The built form accommodates various fields of art [visual, contemporary, musical, video and virtual reality, theatre halls, media library and production facilities] all under one roof. This for the most part facilitates the functional needs of the city as good architecture should.

Analysing the **poetic composition of space** in relation to the ephemeral nature of the various arts and production needs of the building, OMA seem to re-conceptualise the perception of space in relation to the user. The building encourages a healthy sense of public engagement through the holding of space in the forecourt for inhabitation and occupation while serving as spill-out space for programmes held inside.

The project exploits its proximity, generates density [human + spatial] and provokes tension while maximising friction in its spatial composition and relationship to context. It spatially blurs the line of liminal spaces of no inhabitation to stimulating spaces that connect two points effortlessly. The re-conceptualising of the spatial typology of the building led to the spatial design which can be seen as creating a city within a city though translated vertically. The building as an artefact addresses both the periphery and centre for which it establishes the **in-between** relations (Koolhaas & Mau, 1995). *Caught between the this and the that.*

Architecturally, the building facilitates ephemeral change over time through the free plan typology cultivating a feature of the robustness of space. Concepts of **destratification** are embedded within the structural composition of the artefact that displays a keen level of architectural rigour in the satisfying of both the utility and aesthetic, necessity, and expression.

Figure 02  
Source: OMA (n.d.)

the vertical city. | Diversity of programme



Figure 03  
Source: OMA (n.d.)

Permeability | Composition | Typology.

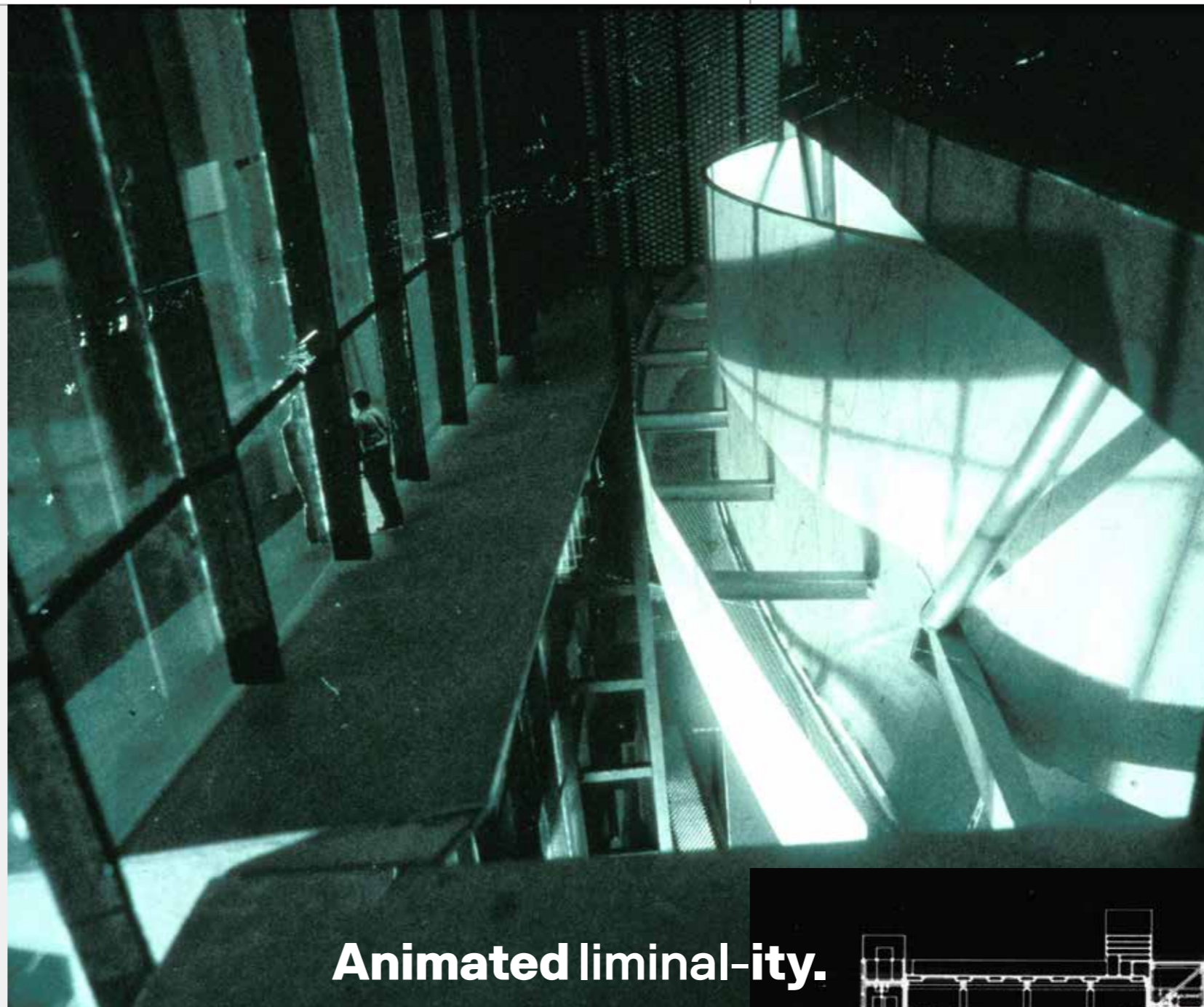
ABSTRACTION | Facade as a veil into the workings of the interior.

*Architecturally, ZKM is a manifesto for a new kind of deep/large building where the splintered elements of recent architectures can be reassembled in an organization which is not dependent on compositional or aesthetic criteria - a technologically sophisticated domain where complexity and freedom can be pursued at the same time.*  
(OMA, 2023)

Incorporated within the composition is the public void space in the atrium to the north as a dialogue with the historical city. The composition of space and its relation to other spaces elevates the mundane functions of circulation into an experience. The spaces created display a sense of immersive connection that engages the user as a participant in the architecture.

The principles and framework used to develop this architectural piece, if translated to the spatial reconfiguration of the urban landscape through the architectural conditioning of material composition, hold the potential to activate spaces in the city disregarded as liminal spaces and places of transition. This, when anticipating a sharp surge in density[congestion], reserves the potential of shifting preconceived notions of what space is and can be.

It relates to an architectural typology less concerned with the aesthetic, but rather it strives towards the production of good architecture. Potentially, to move towards providing an architecture of access and embracing an architecture of permittance.



**Animated liminal-ity.**

Figure 04  
Source: OMA(n.d.)



**programmatic cacophony.**

Figure 05  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

**public realm held in space & TIME formulated  
by the building as a backdrop to the public  
sphere**

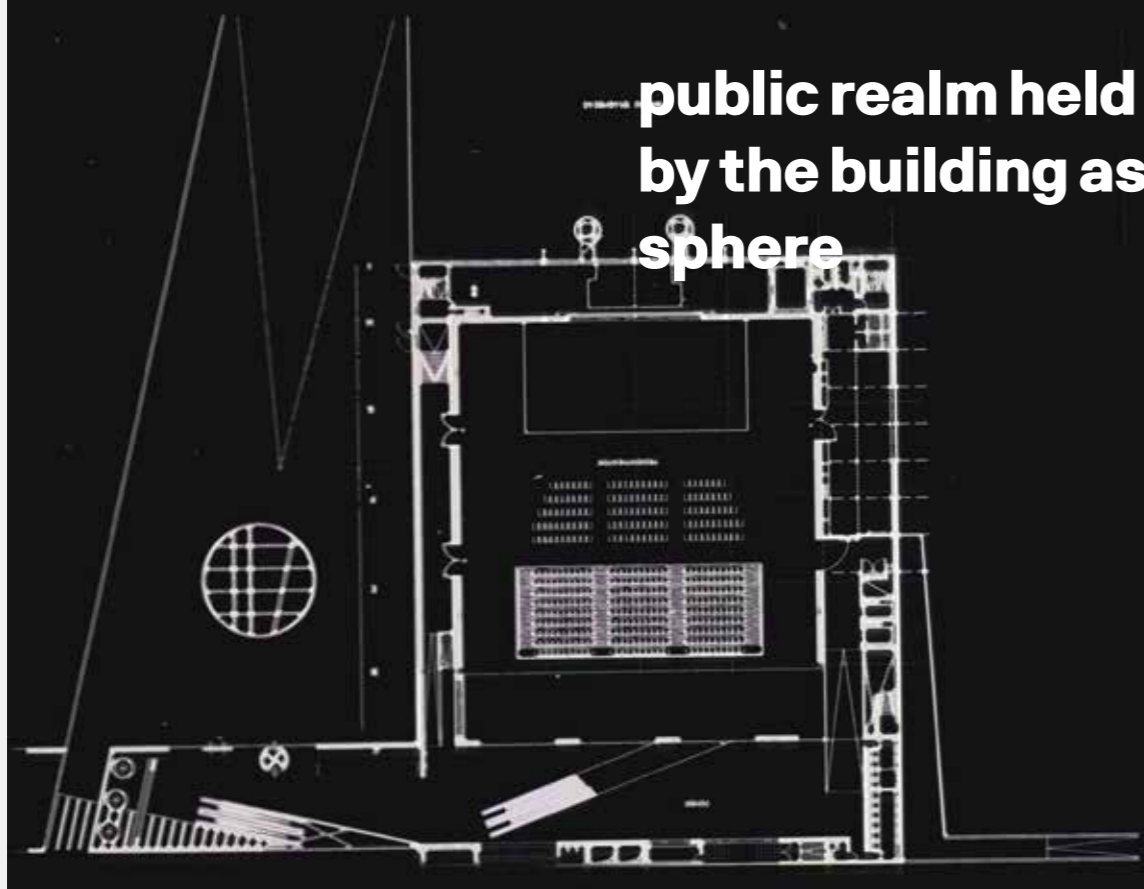


Figure 06  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

Figure 07  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

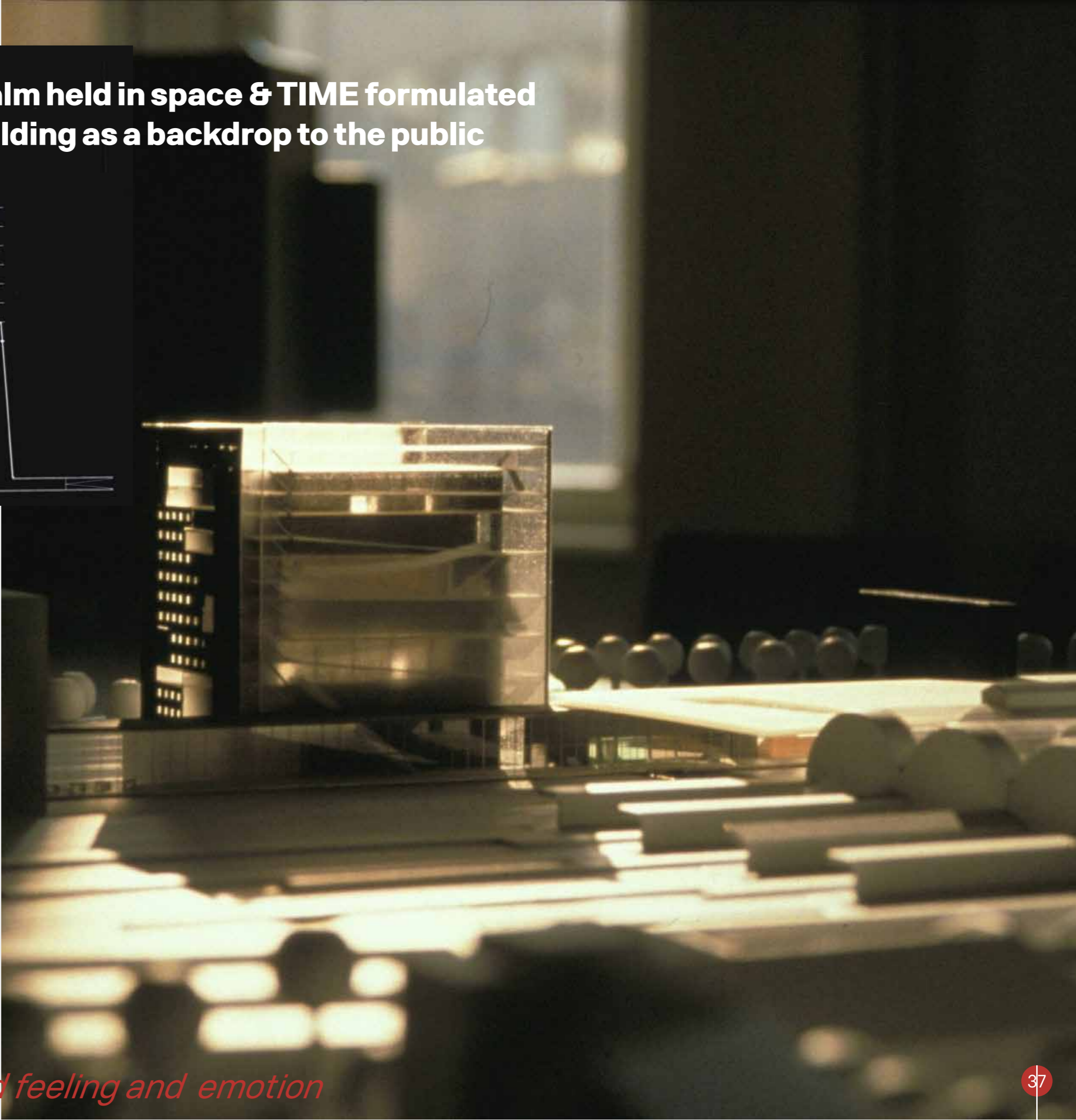


Figure 08  
Source: OMA(n.d.)



***destratification. with embodied feeling and emotion***



**Blurred bounds of THRESHOLD.**

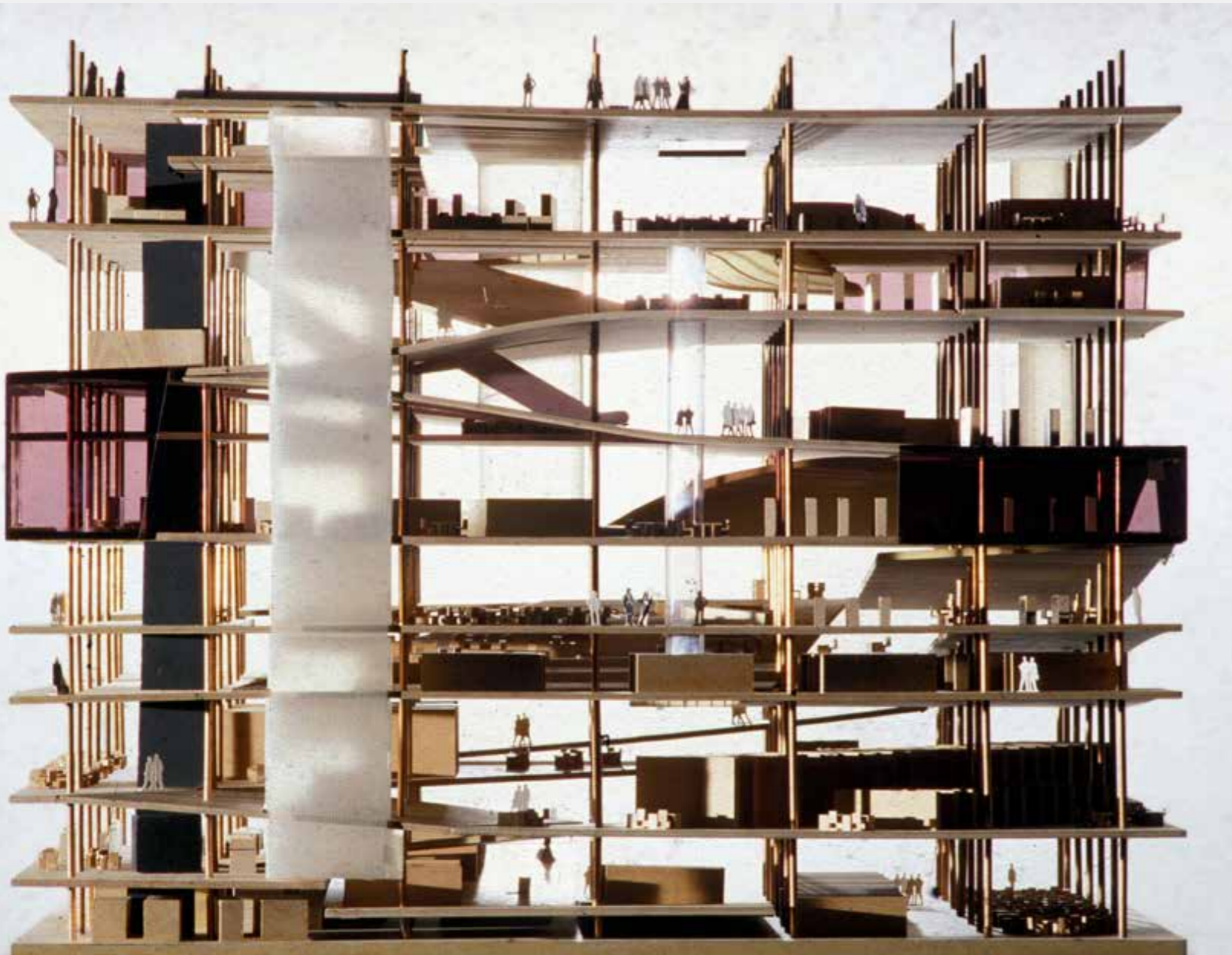
**Ephemeral transition spaces governed by architectural devices**



Source: Author.

Figure 09  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

**States of transition** held by architectural [dis]-ordering.



**Case Study 02 : Identifying Thresholds of  
[Liminality]**

Jussieu – Two Libraries

OMA

Figure 10  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

## Project Information:

**Name:** Jussieu – Two Libraries.

**Architect:** OMA.

**Location:** Paris, France.

**Year:** 1992.

**Status:** Competition.

**Programme:** Gallery | Museum.

The project entails the addition of a new core to a historical campus, aiming to seamlessly integrate with the original campus design. It goes beyond a conventional functional structure, instead forming a multi-dimensional network that blurs spatial boundaries. The design prioritizes open-plan flexibility, achieved through the innovative use of circular columns that facilitate interconnected spaces while maintaining structural integrity.

Moreover, the architecture seamlessly integrates conflicting concepts of movement and stillness. It provides ample room for fluid circulation and dynamic engagement, yet also offers areas for contemplation and repose along the vertical progression. This duality enriches the user experience, fostering a sense of harmony within the architectural space.

Contextually, the structure is strategically positioned to establish a dialogue with the surrounding environment. By connecting with the neighbouring church and the train station, the building serves as a cohesive element, harmonizing different forces and unifying the ground plan. This integration reflects a conscious effort to bridge historical significance with contemporary functionality. Contextually, the building also showcases how a project of this scale can influence a catalytic movement towards making the university building part of the public realm as a clear critique of the established modernist vision throughout the university. The project takes a novel approach to solve a complex problem of an architectural program and urban situation at once through the adaptation of landscape fundamentals into the building.

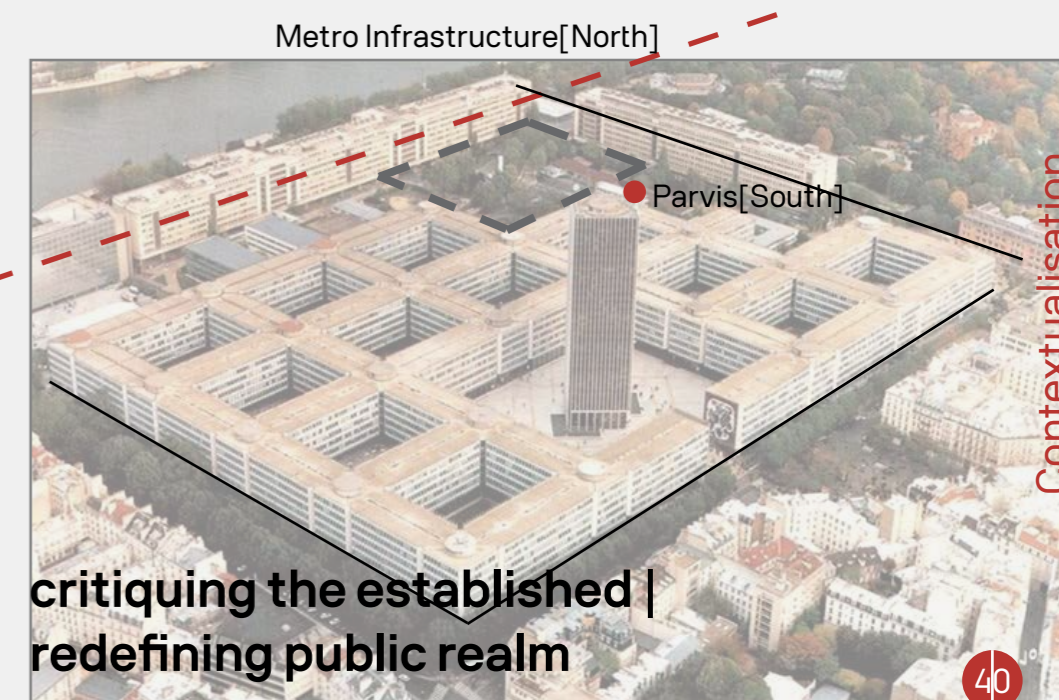
The building's design reflects a deliberate effort to assimilate elements of the library into the public sphere, redefining the boundaries of the

Figure 11

Source: OMA(n.d.)

Figure 12

Source: OMA(n.d.)



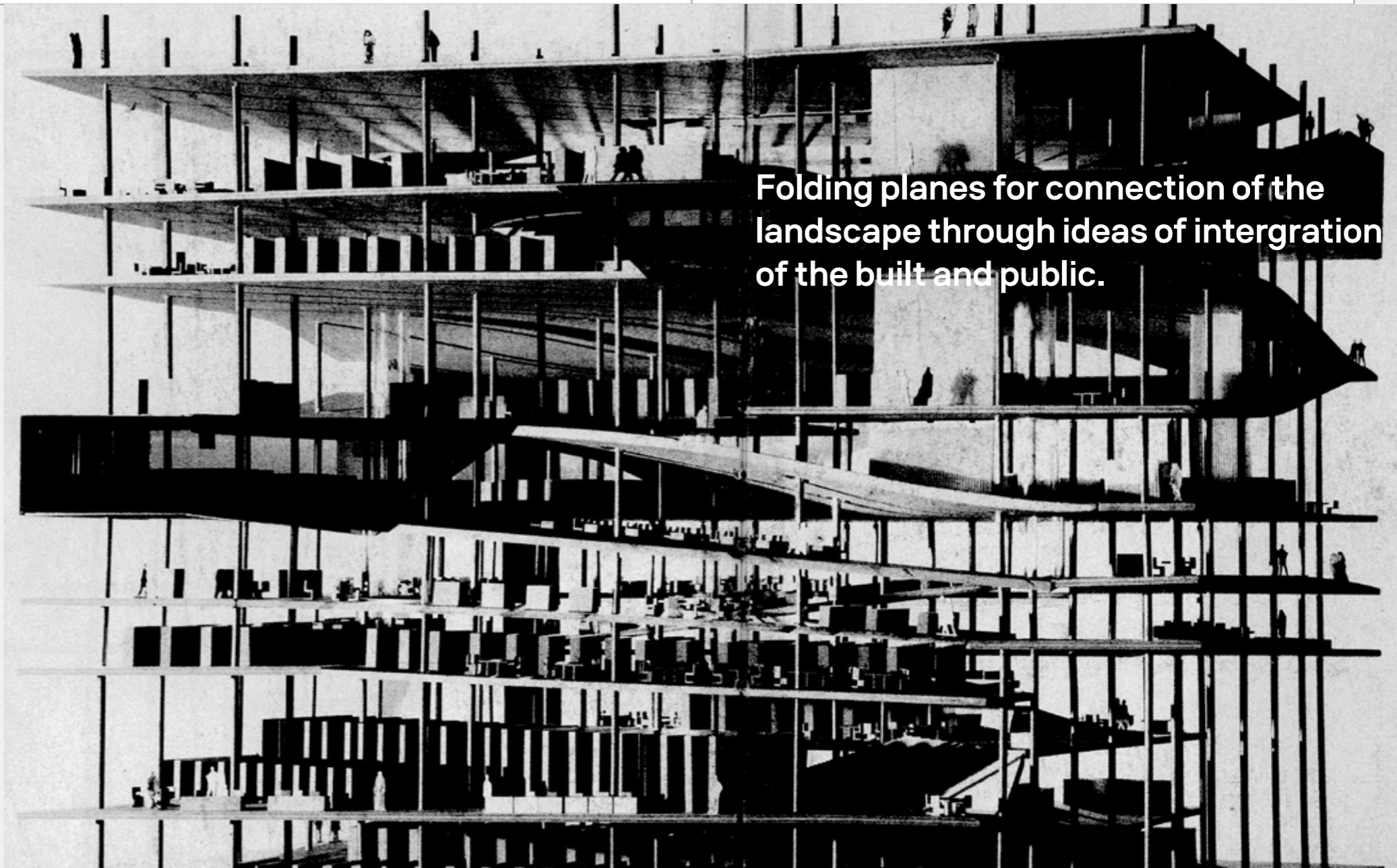
*Movement* | **STILLNESS**

evoking a sense of fleeting permanence through fluid spatial connection

conventional library setting. It's not just a stack of floors, but a complex interplay of interconnected sections that foster a sense of continuity and interactivity. The integration of escalators and elevators further reinforces the seamless user experience, facilitating effortless navigation across the various levels while enabling dynamic engagement with the different programmatic elements.

Ultimately, the architecture achieves a delicate balance, providing a serene backdrop that enhances the foreground of human activity. Its intentional design choices not only amplify the functional aspects of the building but also elevate the overall user experience, seamlessly integrating with the historical context while embracing contemporary for its time architectural sensibilities.

Figure 13  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

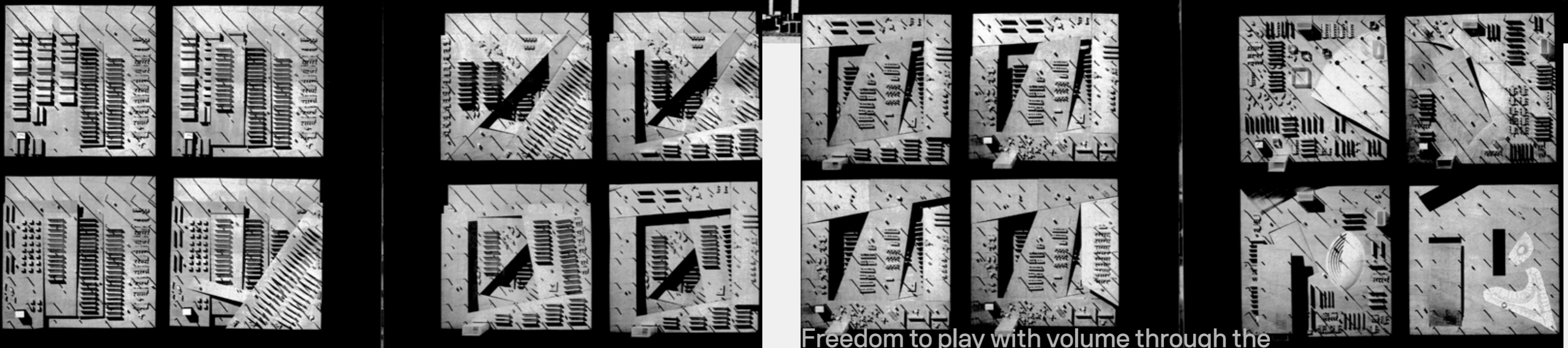


**Folding planes for connection of the landscape through ideas of intergration of the built and public.**

*"Instead of a simple stacking of floors, sections of each level are manipulated to touch those above and below; all the planes are connected by a single trajectory, a warped interior boulevard that exposes and relates to all programmatic elements."* (Koolhaus & Mau, 1995)

Figure 14 & 15  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

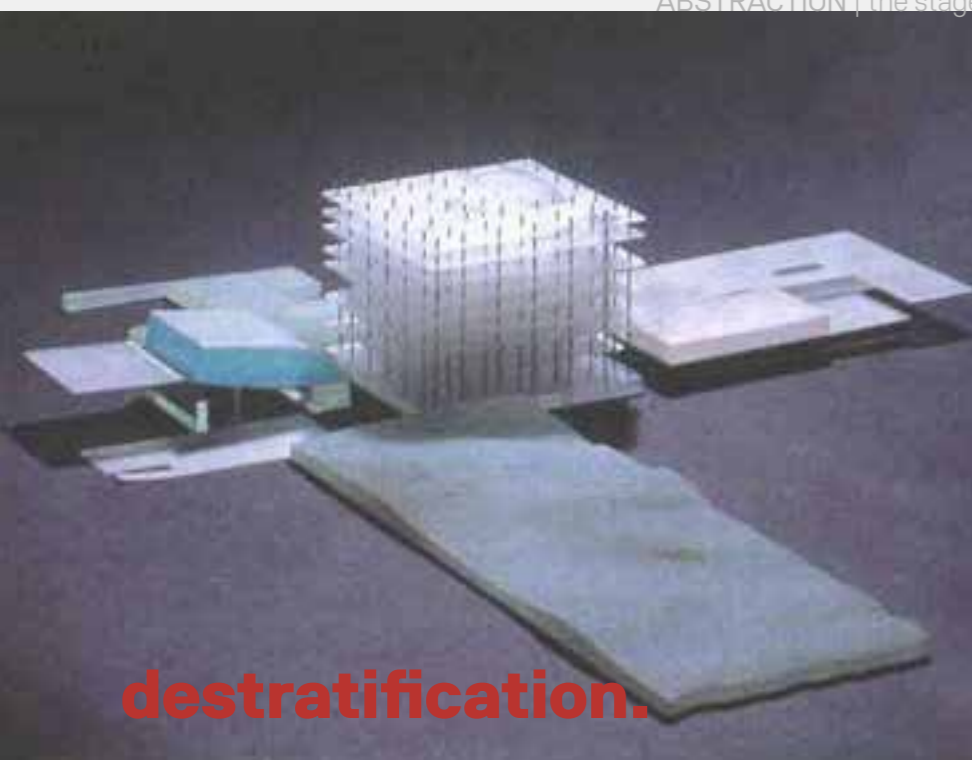
ABSTRACTION | Structured chaos unearthing simplicity through the polyphony of spaces.



**Balance of circulation and destination | reconceptualising LIMINALITY**

**Freedom to play with volume through the integration of structural elements as design components**

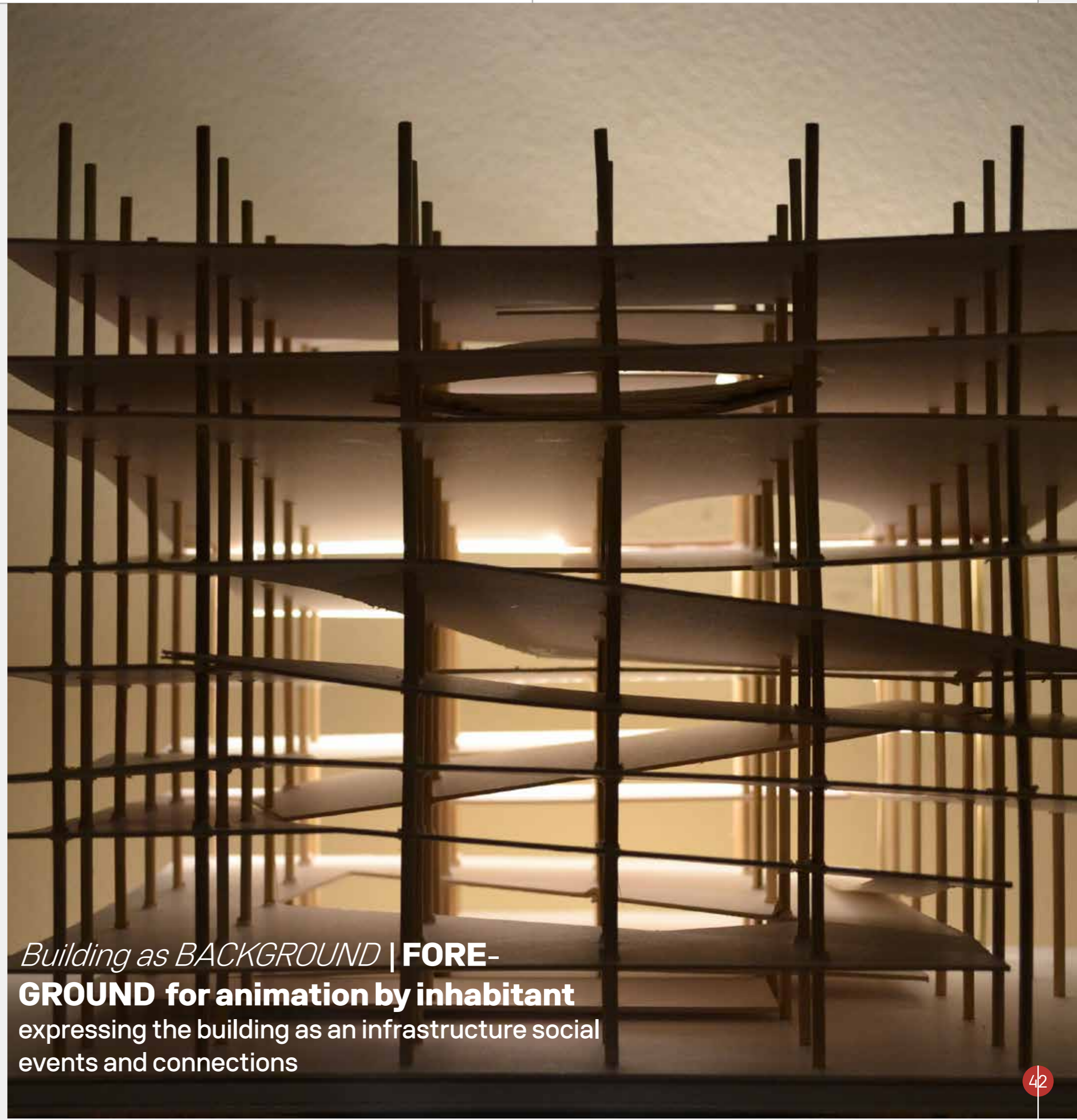
Figure 16  
Source: OMA(n.d.)



**destratification.**

Figure 17  
Source: OMA(n.d.)

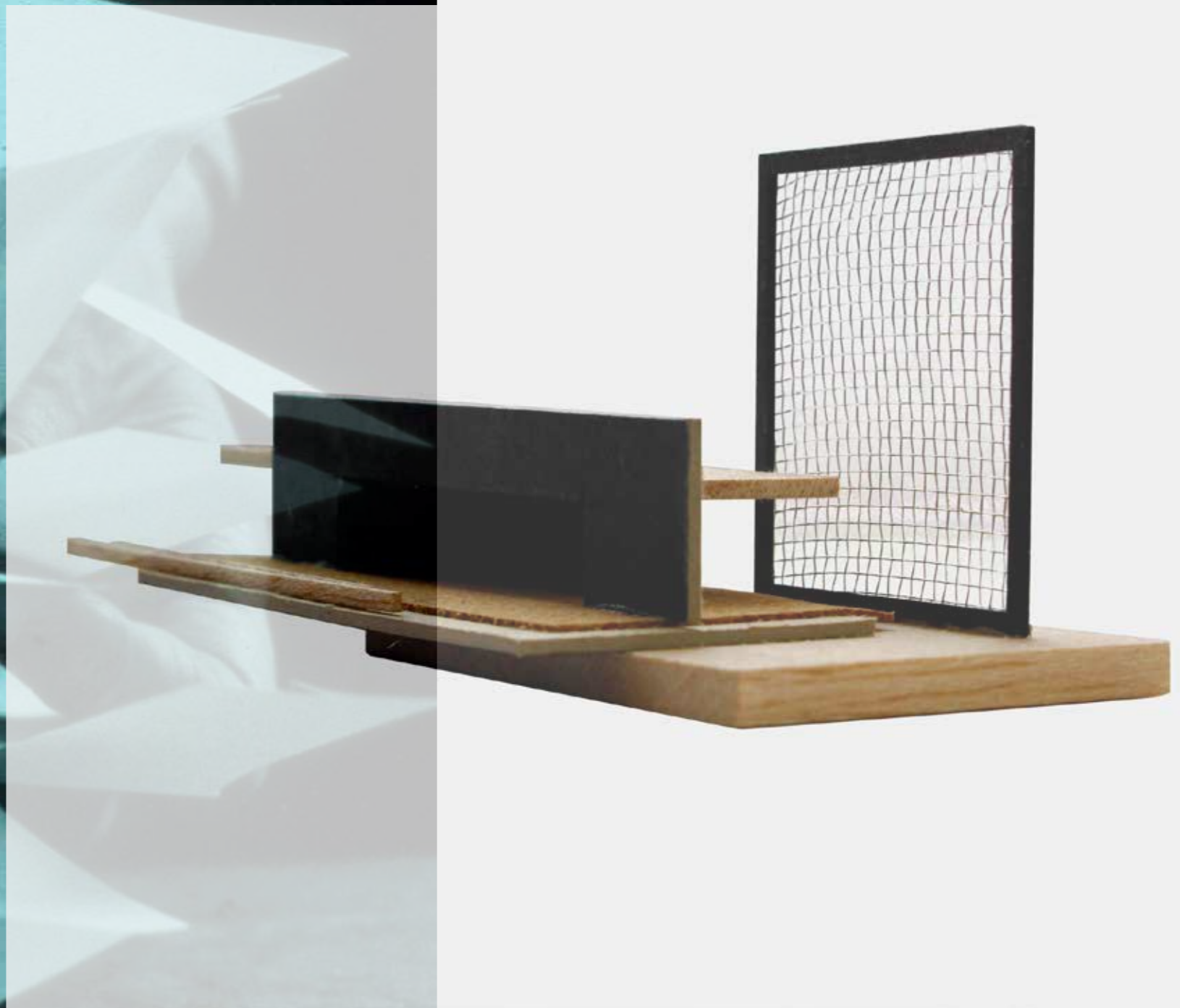
ABSTRACTION | the stage is set.



*Building as BACKGROUND* | **FORE-**  
**GROUND** for animation by inhabitant  
expressing the building as an infrastructure social  
events and connections



**folding of surfaces as a culmination of the Jussieu network**



Source: Author.

Figure 18  
Source: OMA(n.d.)



**architecture** of MAKING.

**Case Study 03 : Transitions on a Grand Scale.**

Orange County Museum of Art

MORPHOSIS

Figure 19  
Source: morphosis(2023)

## Project Information:

**Name:** Orange County Museum of Art.  
**Architect:** MORPHOSIS.  
**Location:** Orange County, United States of America.  
**Year:** 2022.  
**Status:** Built.  
**Programme:** Gallery | Museum.

This museum project is located within the rich art district of Orange County, California, on the campus of Segerstrom Center for the Arts. This context allowed for the architecture to respond to the rich diversity of culture within the district when looking to position itself in relation to its surroundings and looked at enhancing the context through a sculptural carving of the façade while serving a functional requirement of the museum.

The architecture achieved in this design looked at stimulating thought-provoking works of art from a wide range of mediums by artists of diverging backgrounds (Mayne, 2023). With flexible exhibition galleries, dedicated space for educational programming, and areas for public gathering the building facilitates a constant energy of cross-pollination of ideas and practical experience of art held within the building envelope. As a design decision, the building actively engages with its context through the strategic spatial ordering of spaces to have a constant dialogue with the streetscape. The integration of the public realm through the design of the public square anchored by a Richard Serra monumental sculpture affords a generosity toward the public sphere without the public having to enter the building. This gesture towards bringing the art out, for mass access reinforces the building's public engagement while creating opportunities for occupation.

Architecturally, the overall design of the building addresses the need for museum space to be both flexible and functional as well as inviting and memorable (Morphosis, 2023). The ground floor is dedicated to the primary programme, the exhibition of art, complemented by the mezzanine as a continuation of the ground plane. The first floor hosts the administrative programmes of the building, while a generous roofscape serves as an extension of the gallery as an open-air exhibition space for art or outdoor film. A sculptural wing hovers over the lobby atrium and creates a prominent location for the educational hall, an inspiring, artful,



street edge **DIALOGUE.**

Figure 20  
Source: morphosis(2023)

Figure 21  
Source: morphosis(2023)



gradual thresholds | **MEDIATING  
TRANSITIONS**



Figure 22  
Source: morphosis(2023)

and dynamic architectural space illuminated by a full-height window overlooking the terrace (Mayne, 2023).

The design of the grand public stair that holds the space towards the entrance of the building holds polyphonic dialogue with the monumental sculpture that anchors the public square and gradually bleeds the threshold into the building. The staircase allows the public to rest and admire the space, while the building acts as the backdrop.

Pivotal to this case study, is the rigorous iterative process of developing the final building design through the process of making. Thoughts Trapped in the 3rd Dimension. Central to the design development of the project was the quality and ability of the models to convey spatiality that could not be captured in the 2D realm (Mayne, 2023). The questioning of form and how it spatially relates to the occupant provides the models with a sensitivity that later informs the final building built. This method of design fast-tracked the design process as it allowed for a simultaneous study and reconciliation of the broader urban connections, programmatic adjacencies, and multiple circulation strategies (Mayne, 2023). Model-making as a tool for developing structural ordering and rhythm while having a profound impact on the overall form of the building and by translation, the context transcends the field of architecture towards art. Thus, combining the process to develop an architecture that seems to have been sculpted and unearthed from its surroundings.

Design through model-making allows for a more profound interrogation of the relationship spaces have with architectural devices such as walls, floors, and roofs and how these elements join or not join, to achieve the desired feeling. "These models were critical design tools that enabled us to study the project's overall massing in parallel with the interior space planning while cohesively on the several interdependent elements that traverse plan and section cuts." (Mayne, 2023)

This method when used during the collection and dissemination of ideas during the research period revealed an unknown bias toward particular aspects of the investigation and through that, stimulated a questioning

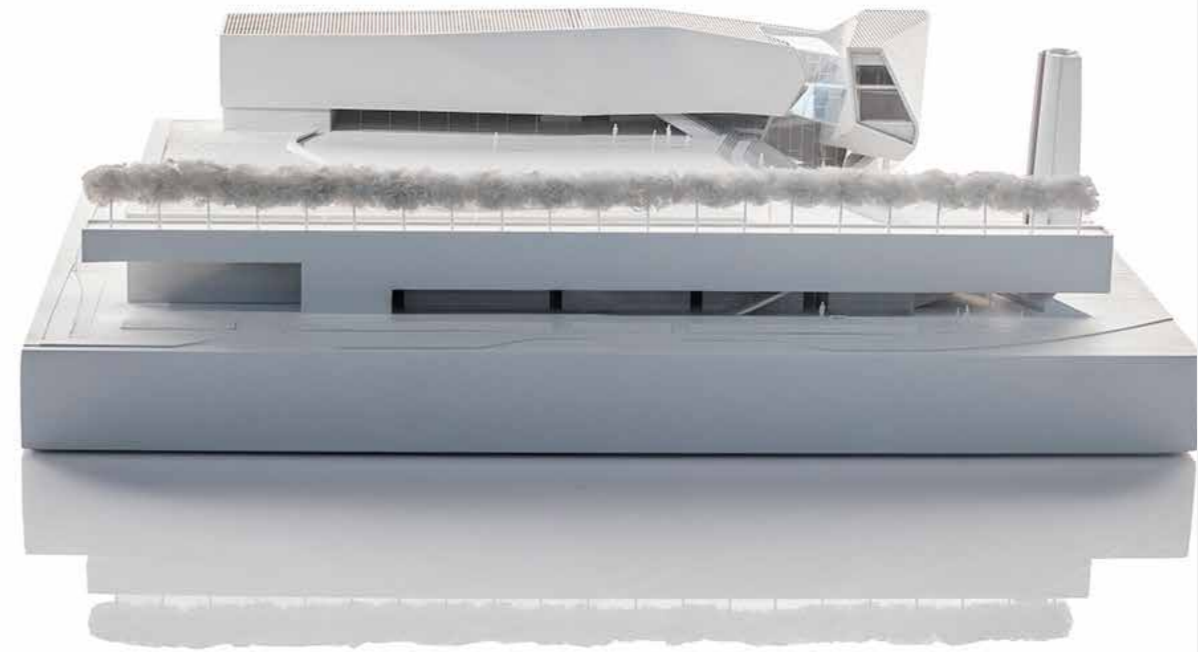
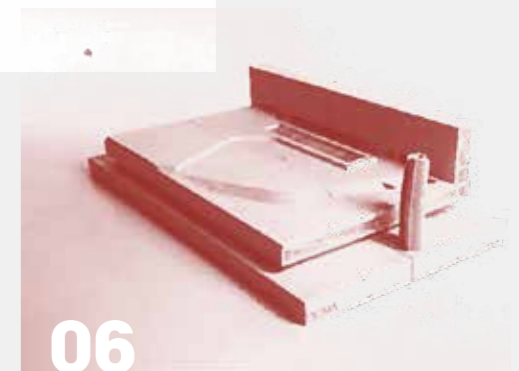


Figure 23  
Source: morphosis(2023)



iterative poetry.

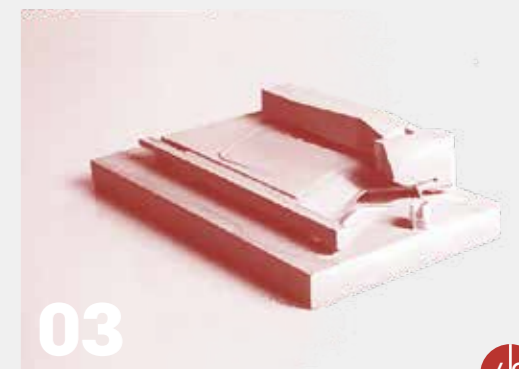


Figure 24  
Source: morphosis(2023)

of space and its make-up. Translating the series of models into the final design has elevated the spatial considerations and the treatment of EDGE towards a better resolution both in time and space. A conscious interrogation of the life of the model and how it would translate into the real world thus comes to the fore in determining the next move architecturally.

Thus, central to the design process of the final building produced in this architectural research are the guiding key concepts exhibited and used in the development of the museum building, and act as a design outlet guiding the process of developing architecture through [MAKING].

## elevation of the PUBLIC SPHERE

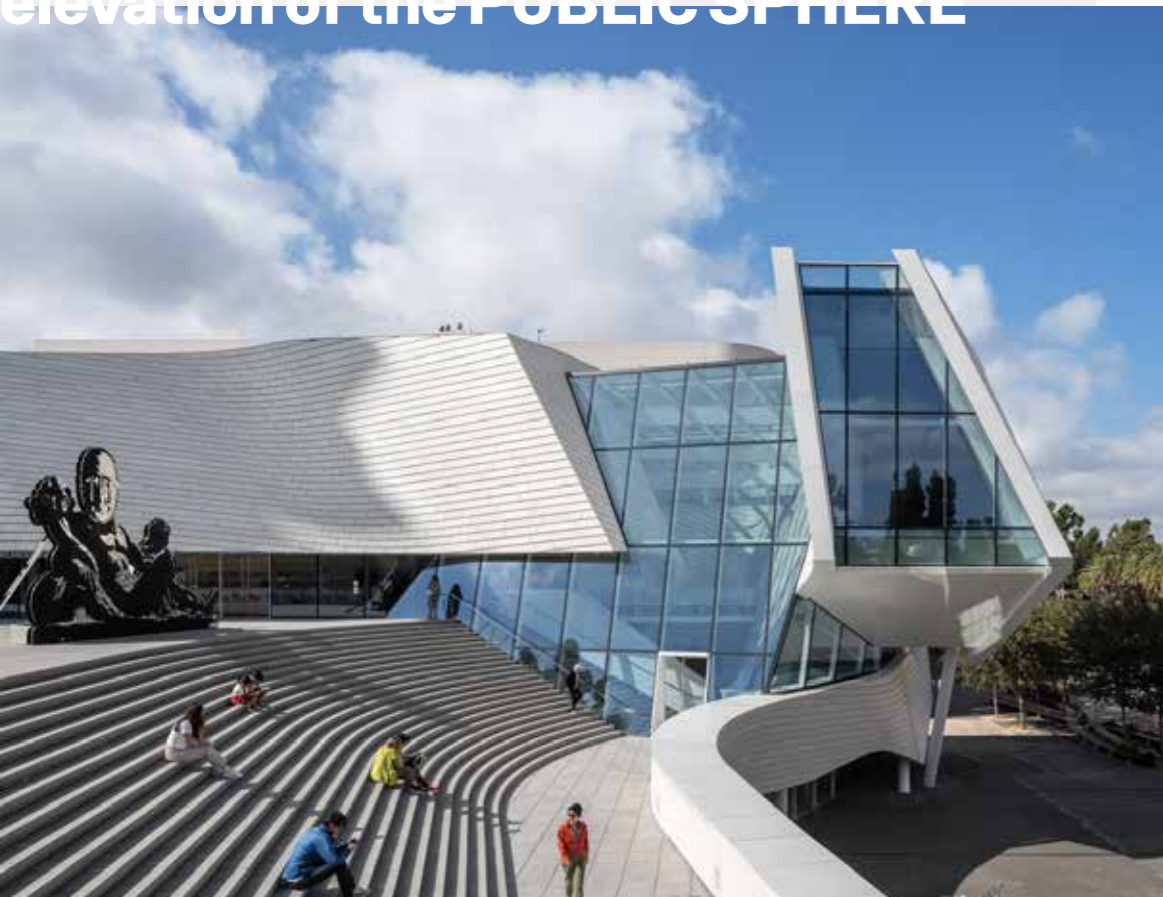


Figure 25  
Source: morphosis(2023)



Figure 26  
Source: morphosis(2023)



Figure 27  
Source: morphosis(2023)



**models** of FLUID THOUGHT interrogated.

Figure 28  
Source: morphosis(2023)

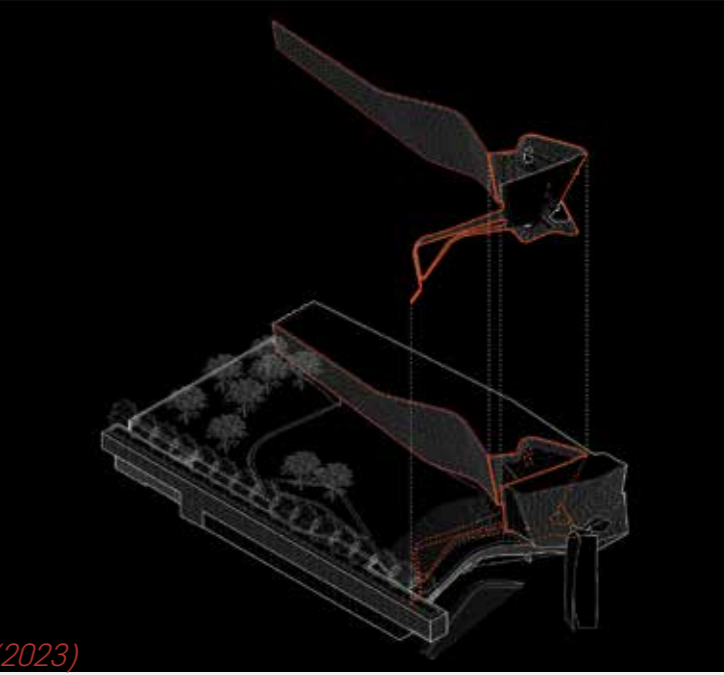
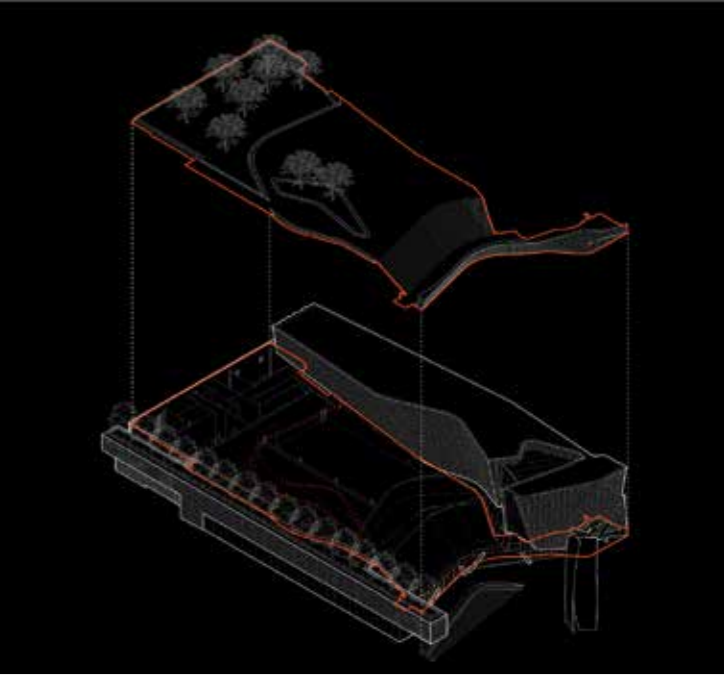
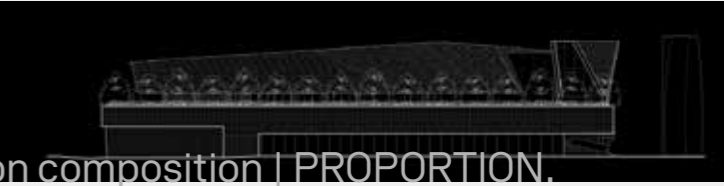


Figure 29 & 30  
Source: morphosis(2023)



LINEAR section composition | PROPORTION.

Figure 31  
Source: morphosis(2023)

**Isolating Points of Departure.**



Source: Author.





## EDIFICE of control.

ABSTRACTION | locating the powers that be and their policies.

Source: Author.

The city is this diverse melting pot that holds a plethora of conflicting interests and finds itself in a precarious position of having to facilitate democratic spatial planning policies and systems. Rather than perceiving the city as a singular monolithic entity, polyphony allows us to recognize and appreciate the diverse and interconnected elements that constitute the urban fabric. Understanding the city as an entity that's a culmination of bodies and materials that pulsates a gravitational pool of issues and possibilities (Simone, 2012).

This section of the paper looks to contextualise the research scope to the urban scape of Cape Town. The area of inquiry is one that locates itself on the urban scale in the attempt at providing a broad scope in which to ground the future architectural intervention. It will look to mediate various scales and points of reference in attempting to provide a more intimate understanding of the macro composition of the Cape Town CBD (the city) in relation to the relatively micro-scale of the Foreshore precinct. The direction will focus more on the city's attitude towards the rapid development of the Foreshore precinct with its continued intense densification. Space and occupation thus become key aspects of this spatial discourse development towards the future.

The discussions held in the previous sections provide a filtered lens with which to view the following section of inquiry. Coupling the historical progression of urban space with the ideological paradigms of space making through architectural gestures. The locating of liminal spaces in relation to transport infrastructure and the generous forecourts that hold the space adjacent. The continued intrigue held by architectural concepts of mass, void and the above as shaping the city.

The city, composed of various infrastructures and forms a dynamic interpretation of what space and place is perceived as. The historical layer grounds the future, however shifting perspectives call for a re-imagining of what constitutes a city. A celebration of congestion (Koolhaas, 2014) holds valid positioning in animating the city and its social activity.

Determining the city's attitude towards urbanism and the culture of globalisation posits a new challenge towards the production of space and the inhabitation of that space that which can be classified a product of authoritarian political culture (Koolhaas, 2014). However, a possible shift in thinking, surfaces a new planning outlook that embraces the chaotic life of the city. The study of the history of progression of the urban landscape affords a framework in which to work from yet brings to question, a remoulding of that framework.

"The past is too small to inhabit."  
Rem Koolhaas

Further, an attempt towards a re-imagining and re-conceptualising of what the city could be through targeted catalytic architectural intervention can shape the future of the Cape Town built and social fabric. Is there a future for the public beyond the historical city? (Hajer, 1999). Re-imagining the city as a series of nodal[precinct] gestures towards an equal occupation.

To better understand the existing urban condition of the Cape Town Central Business District (CBD), a look towards its historical development was conducted to provide a framework in which to understand how the spatial order of today came to be. This phase of the enquiry forms one of the harmonies that act on the city and how its legacy continues to shape our urban context today. To do this, a method of critically analysing the spatial development of Cape Town CBD coupled with the prevailing socio-political Zeitgeist was conducted through the mapping of the urban fabric over time. (Low, 2003) along with (Besteman, 2019) provide a brief historical narration of the formal formation of Cape Town from 1652 through to the post-apartheid era and how cities in South Africa and Cape Town still suffer from the pre-apartheid spatial planning.

Cities in South Africa still suffer from colonial constructs that have always been imposed on them (Low, 2003). This is mainly characterised by the lack of integration and transformation of the city centre of the general

population of Cape Town.

Having to reintegrate the people of Cape Town back into the city centre is a direct effect of the segregation laws that were imposed during the apartheid regime. These laws sought to sanitise the business districts of people of colour in favour of the white minority (Besteman, 2019). This would often negatively impact those relocated, due to the lack of infrastructure and economic opportunities on the city's peripheries. These forceful impositions have their roots firmly planted in the ideologies of the first colonial settlers. Important to note, is the import of foreign [global north] ideologies to suit the needs and wants of those colonising. This as a thread, in the history of Cape Town seems to be a recurring notion that still prevails today (Low, 2003).

These ideologies form the backdrop of the spatial organisation of the city and how it evolved to the current environment we inhabit today. As seen in the graphics, the city has gone through significant spatial organisation and changes since its inception. This research focused on the spatial progression of the city from the years 1926 through to the current day in an attempt to understand the underpinnings of the CBD's spatial parameters.

## Recontextualising Cape Town.

*Contextual understating of the historical landscape, both socially and spatially should be understood from an empathetic perspective to achieve objectivity.*





1926



1973



2009



1935



1980



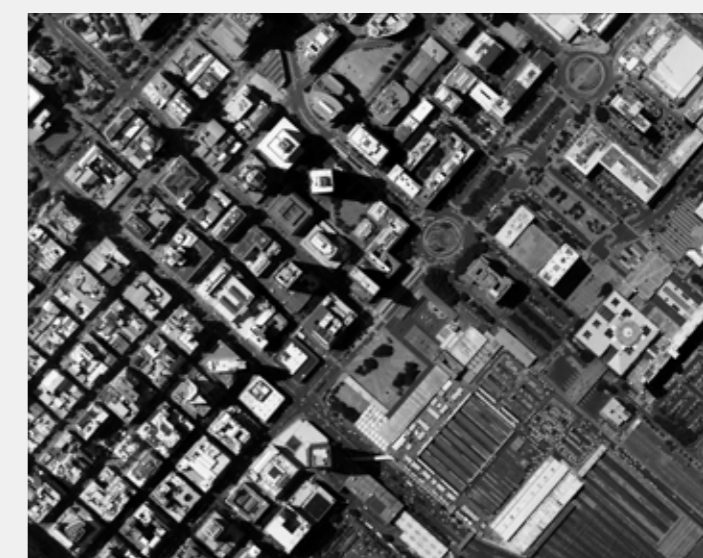
2012



1945



1996



2017

Infrastructural Expansion.

Intensification.

A New Cape Town?

## Infrastructural Expansion 1926–1945

This era is largely categorised by the Foreshore reclamation project that saw the expansion of the land mass of the city bowl and the defining of the shoreline back in the 1930s. This can be seen as the first significant large-scale public, private partnership (PPP) that would define the subsequent ideologies of the city (Low, 2003). The project was developed as a collaborative effort by the city of Cape Town and the South African Railways and Harbours (now Transnet). The expansion, on an urban scale, straddled the ideals of the modernist and traditionalist in reference to spatial planning, importing a spatial imposition on the landscape and forming the spatial foundations of the land parcels existing today (Low, 2003). The spatial framework adopted ensured a uniform aesthetic and monotony that has further been compromised by the bleakness of an unimaginative, windswept landscape.

In addition to the expansion of the land mass of the city, various public projects were also completed during this period that had a remarkable impact on the social functioning of the city (Low, 2003). It's worth stating that these large infrastructure projects made significant strides towards economic growth however exclusionary the access to that prosperity was. It is undeniable the spatial impact these projects have had on the Cape Town landscape today. Arguably, in setting up these civic projects, the socio-political authority at the time, propelled Cape Town towards being the global player that it has become today.

The original planning for the new Foreshore precinct had earmarked the newly expanded precinct as the civic hub of the city with strong connections to the established civic infrastructure of the Castle, City Hall, and Grand Parade. The reclamation of the harbour also allowed for the re-imagining of how transport infrastructure fed into the CBD. Ironically, with the expansion and the implementation of the new rail network, the connection between Table Mountain and the sea was severely compromised. The expansion project did however maintain the strong axial datum of Adderley Street as a spine that would connect the old with the new. Its worth stating the structured prowess of the urban planning strategies of this period is somewhat commendable. They exhibit an understanding of spatial gestalt in the way plan and execute the project to achieve a civic uniformity to which the inhabitants at that time would animate. However exclusionary the spatial organisation was, there was an evident ordering that governed the planning on a city scale.

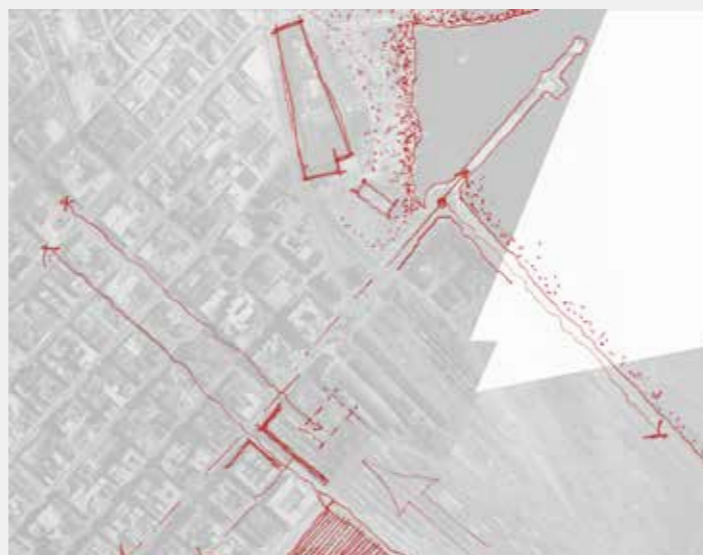
A strenuous consideration of the transport networks would formulate and how these would act as thresholds into the city and beyond clearly defined the spatial formations of the civic project. Connections to the new harbour for industry (Capital) and the diurnal influx of the labour force through public transport provision and where these terminated express a meticulous civic strategy that seems to have dissipated over time and replaced by self-referential planning ideologies underpinned by short-term capitalistic gains (Odendaal & McCann, 2016).



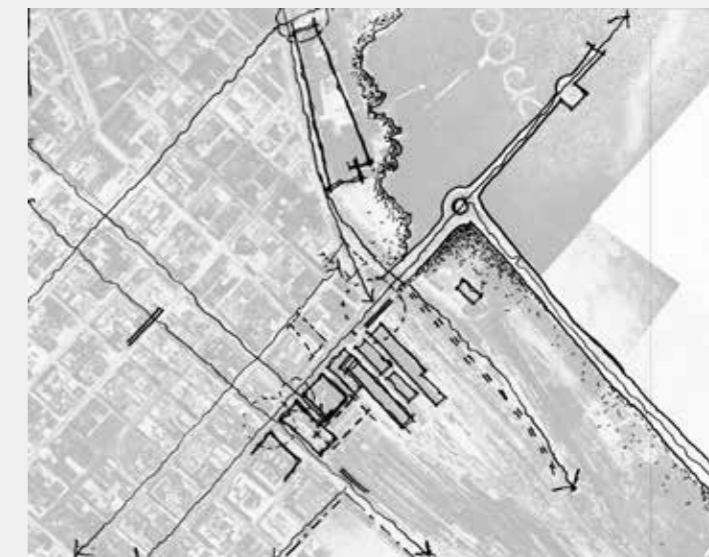
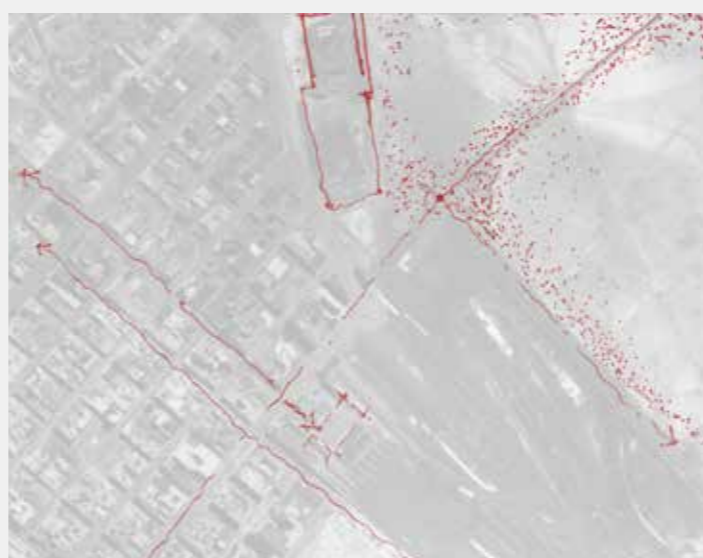
1926



1935



1945



## Intensification... 1973–1996

This period is analysed from the year 1973 to 1996. This era of the development of Cape Town becomes incredibly complex from a socio-political perspective as it sees a series of spatial and regime changes (Low, 2003). This period exhibits a drastic shift in the city's attitude towards the production and allocation of public space and development. It's suggested that it was during this era that the city intensified and cultivated its neo-liberal ideology towards its spatial planning and implementation (Low, 2003).

It can be seen through the graphics that the city had drastically densified since the completion of the Foreshore reclamation project, yet this intense densification occurred mostly in the old city to the south. The built fabric of the old city had developed a finer grain that served mostly an economic district. As suggested in the name, the main function of the CBD was to facilitate the needs of business interests while relegating the function of permanent accommodation to the suburbs. This within the parameters of spatial dynamics, saw a diurnal influx and exodus of people to and from the district daily.

The spatial practices of the forced removals of people while intensifying the concentration of economic development in the CBD naturally led to the formation of the "informal" taxi industry that serviced the need for mass transportation of people from their homes in the peripheries to their places of employment in the city (Besteman, 2019). The increased demand for transport coupled with the socio-economic dynamics that existed in the city, saw an increased need for harder-working infrastructure to ensure the smooth running of the city. Social civic spaces in the form of public parks and squares, would then form part of the new socio-spatial order regarding planning systems. This shift in the perception of space make is noticeable in the looser built fabric of the newly developed civic precinct of the Foreshore.

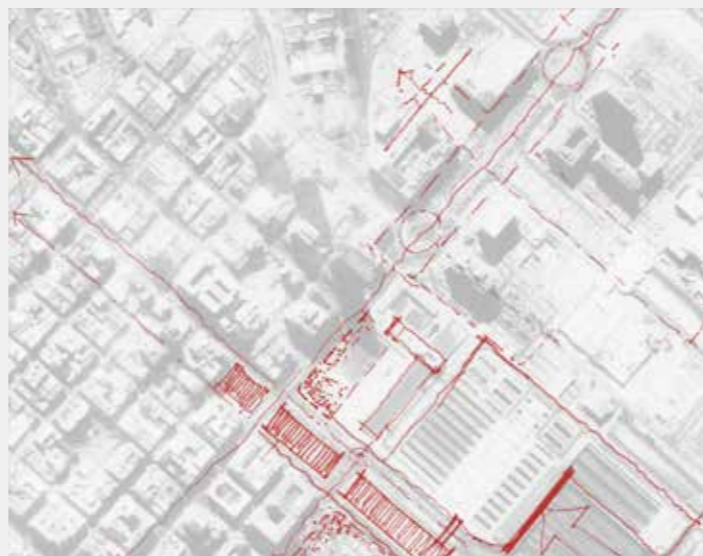
The great civic project of Cape Town was also marked by the relocation of Cape Town station from the corner of Strand and Adderley Street to the location it currently occupies on the other side of Strand and Adderley Street. This civic repositioning of major transport infrastructure on the back of the Foreshore reclamation completely altered the urban fabric of the city. The strong axis that connected the residential suburbs of Cape Town to the CBD shifted onto Strand Street which continued through to Seapoint and the other side of the mountain. This created a disconnect between the Old City and the mountain (Low, 2003). The site of the old Cape Town Station remained vacant for several years after the relocation, until the city decided to cede public land to the private sector in the form of the Golden Arce Mall.

It's with this move that the "jewel of Cape Town", the Golden Acre was conceived and constructed. This move in the eyes of (Low, 2003) was a physical manifestation of the city's neoliberal and political stance towards the development of the city. The building was also conceived as a marketing tool to compete economically on a global scale and place Cape Town as a city brimming with economic promise. This neoliberalist approach towards the shaping of cities is criticised by (Harvey, 2003) in that he alludes to the dominant rights associated with capitalism and how this normally occurs to the disadvantage of the public. Notably, it was also during this period that the Marine Dock Power Station was decommissioned, demolished and its land expropriated to private parties. Major civic projects like the Artscape and Cape Town Civic Centre were commissioned and developed with a generous provision of public squares as opposed to the Old City with very little open space. The planning attitude towards the Foreshore also provided a suitable environment for businesses to erect highly dense buildings that didn't only tower high above the Old City skyline but were also defined by their generous coverage on plan. This planning culture towards the development in the Foreshore precinct is one that still prevails in our current environment. This will greatly inform the way I potentially tackle the project further down the line.





1973



1980



1996



## The New Cape Town? 2007–2012

*“... what we in the government wish to see more in the planning and design of the built environment [is] the ability for African trends to reveal themselves, for Africaness to find expression in the physical environment around us. This is not the route of the copycat, it is the route of the artist, of the African that beats within all of us.”*

– Jeff Radebe

Reintegration and the opening up of the free market. The first order of business would be to spatially reintegrate the marginalised population of Cape Town Back into the CBD. The urban landscape was the setting of this spatial change and reconciliation through various inner-city transformation programmes (Low, 2003). However, due to the political instability and deeply embedded neoliberal culture of Cape Town management, this has been marred by further inaccessibility of those marginalised during the apartheid era (Besteman, 2019).

The Laissez-faire attitude adopted by the city towards development that favours big business at the expense of the public only seems to have been made clearer in the context of the CBD. This attitude seems to stem from the city being formed by a company, namely the Dutch East India Company back in 1653. The city's attitude towards the occupation of public space seems to be closely linked to the interests of the private sector. This bias towards one sector's interests over the social betterment of the city's population only seems to exacerbate the exclusionary practices of the apartheid regime in that it limits access to the city for ALL.

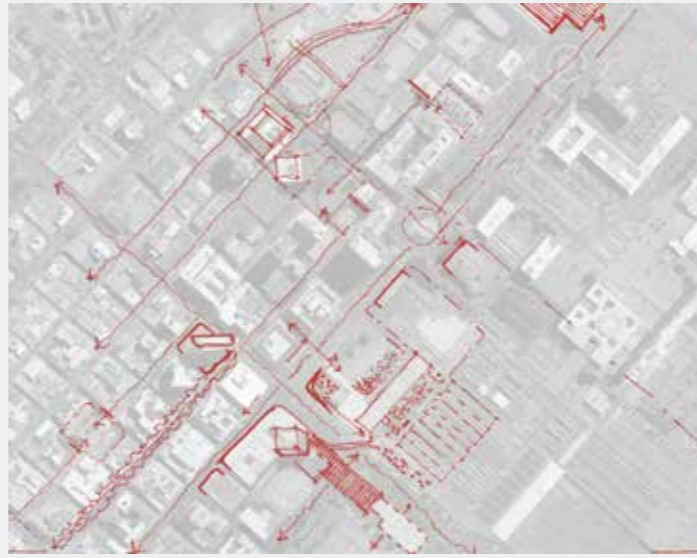
An example of this would be the hosting of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, in that large parts of the city were sanitised of the unsightly vagrants of the homeless population from the tourist hotspots to project an entirely fictitious perception of the social conditions of the CBD (Killander, 2019). Established informal traders were also relocated to designated trading spots dictated by the city's planning commission to control and dictate informality within the city. Often, the spaces allocated to informal trade were in areas with low to medium foot traffic patterns, which didn't cultivate a conducive environment for one of the fundamental aspects of informal trade.

It was also during this period that a sudden uptake in public/private partnerships (PPP) began across the country in an attempt to transform cities into more inclusive landscapes. The City Improvement Districts (CID) were adopted and modelled on the American urban movement namely, the Business Improvement Districts (BID) which established neighbourhoods that were ratepayer-based (Low, 2003). These partnerships were kick-started across all metros in the country, yet what makes Cape Town a unique case is the jurisdiction and control this CID partnership has in the CBD.

The adoption of the Cape Town City Improvement District (CCID) mandate has led to an increase in property valuations within the Cape Town CBD since its inception (Cap Town CCID, 2023) and has seen sharp growth in foreign economic investment which can be viewed as beneficial to the social capabilities of the city. However, this has led to the perpetuation of the pre-existing exclusionary issues that plague the socio-spatial composition of the city. The CCID have at heart, the protection and advancement of the members [private property owners] needs, for which the public generally draw the shorter straw. This partnership does however look to bring about social advancement through economic means.



2009



2012



2017



## Locating the present. 2023 – Beyond...

In recent times, there seems to have been a substantial uptake in large urban-scale projects in the CBD. Amongst these, is the continuous development at the V&A Waterfront, the Cape Town International Convention Centre(CTICC) and the restructuring and development of existing precincts such as Bree Street and Long Street into mixed-use precincts. These new redevelopment projects are typified by the city's somewhat loose arrangement with any willing party at the expense of public development (Low, 2003). These developments seem to occur in siloed vacuums that consider the needs of those with ample spending power and thus just compound the issues of the city's inaccessibility. These actions on a greater city scale showcase a lack of an ordered city planning system that once shaped the CBD into what it is now. It's suggested that these projects perpetuate the privatisation of the public realm in their approach to the production of space. Because of the capital pressure and capabilities that the private sector possesses and the city's desperate need for economic investments, these projects inevitably lead to considerable gains for the private sector at the expense of the long-term quality of public life in the city (Low, 2003).

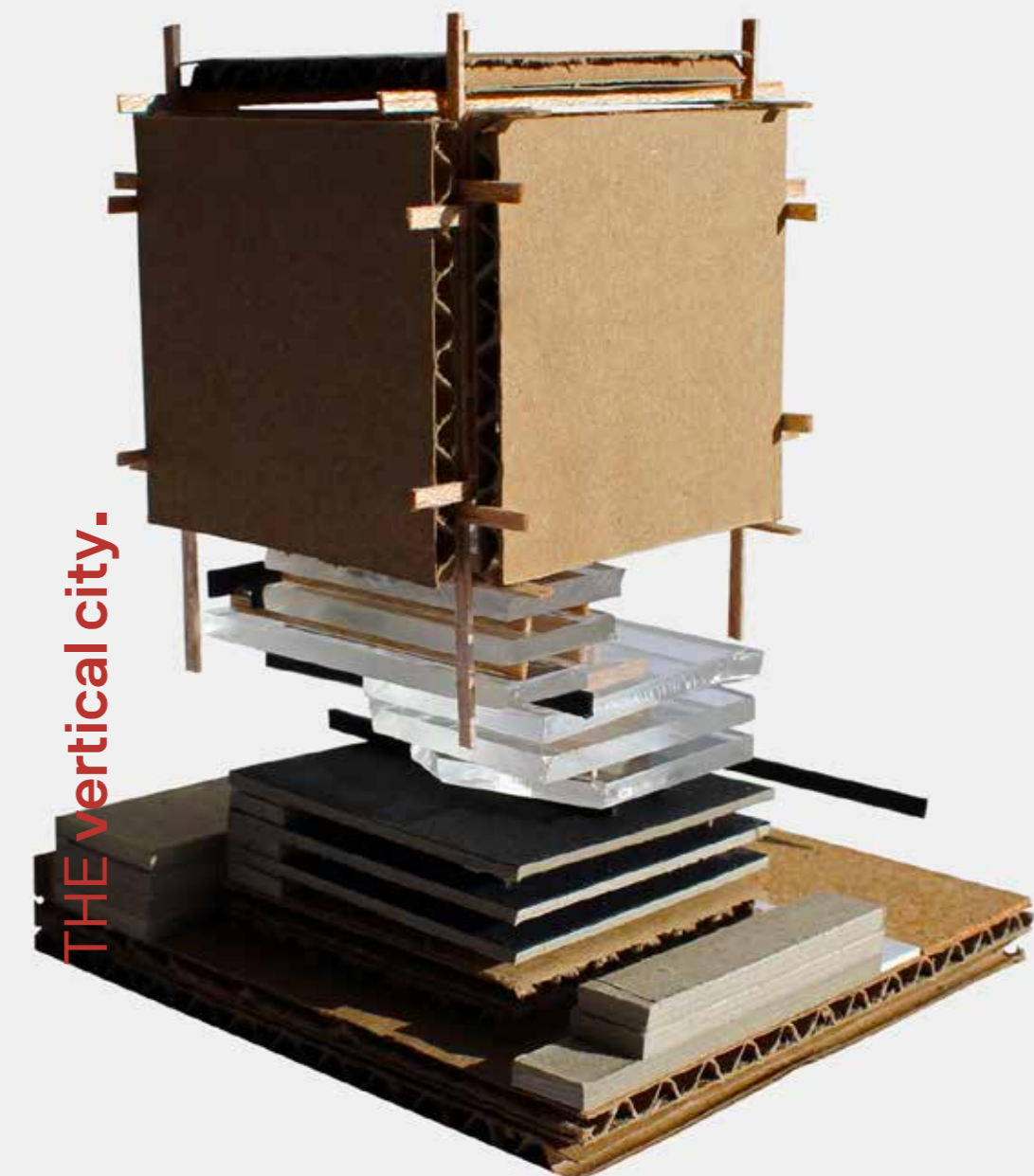
This comes in contradiction to the idealistic perception of the right to the city as proposed by (Harvey, 2003) in that he re-imagines a city based on new rights for all, regardless of class and race. There is a strong critique of the rights afforded to capitalism at the expense of social justice through inclusive legislation and policy. He goes on to posit that, it's the city's responsibility to protect a social society that also promotes economic development and opportunity for all.

It is this statement that leads me to believe that the city of Cape Town's deeply rooted neoliberal ideologies perpetuates the socio-spatial injustices that formed through the formative years of the city. Through political regime changes, the city continues to exhibit a bias towards economic investment at the expense of social transformation. A clear separation of class( although still deeply underpinned by race) now paints the socio-spatial composition of the city.

Large "public" projects such as the CTICC, exhibit an urban compromised urbanism that prioritises the development of alliances over the long-term quality of public life. The spatial consideration and composition of the project in relation to its context seem to be self-referential. It seems to formulate a perimeter block typology with limited access for those not directly associated with the programme being hosted at the time. Its location, although constrained physically by the environment, terminates the axial access connecting from Long St and beyond (Low, 2003). The spatial composition of the building severely handicaps public interaction through the internalisation of the public space in the form of a courtyard accessed only when attending an event. This in effect privatises public land (Low, 2003) making it only accessible through an inherent class barometer.

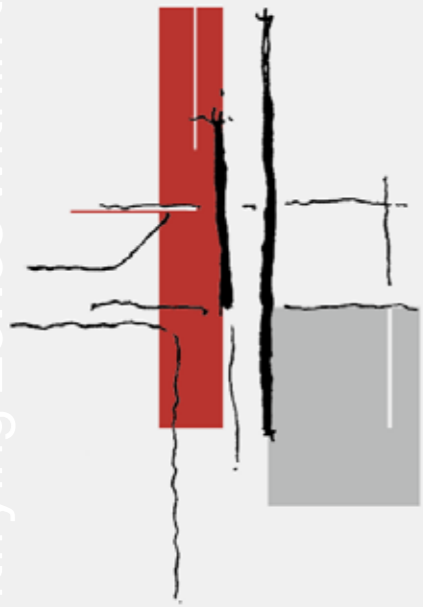
More recently, the development of the mixed-used student accommodation(Cape Station) on Adderley Street further shows the city's laissez-faire attitude towards public space. The development sets up an interesting condition as it looks to densify the city through the accommodation of 3040 students at a busy transport node, yet due to the well-established track record of these kinds of PPPs, one can only surmise that the private benefits disproportionately more than the public.

concentrated Densification.



Source: Author.

Identifying Zones within the [City]

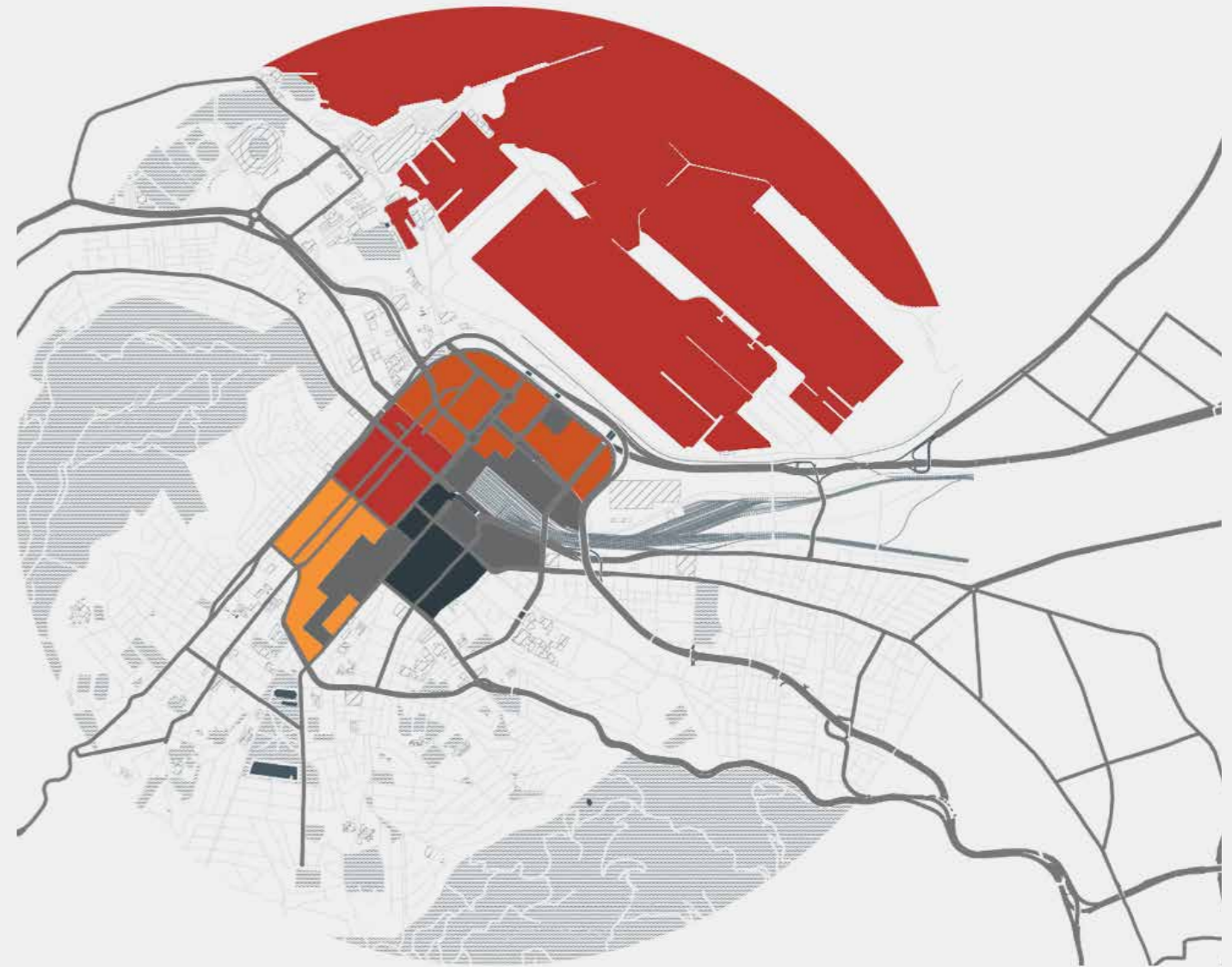


Source: Author.

- Precinct 01  
Conferencing, Hospitality & Financial
- Precinct 02  
Retail Hub/Heart of CBD
- Precinct 03  
Legal & Government
- Precinct 04  
East City
- State-owned Property



Figure 32  
Source: CCID(2023)



Source: Author.

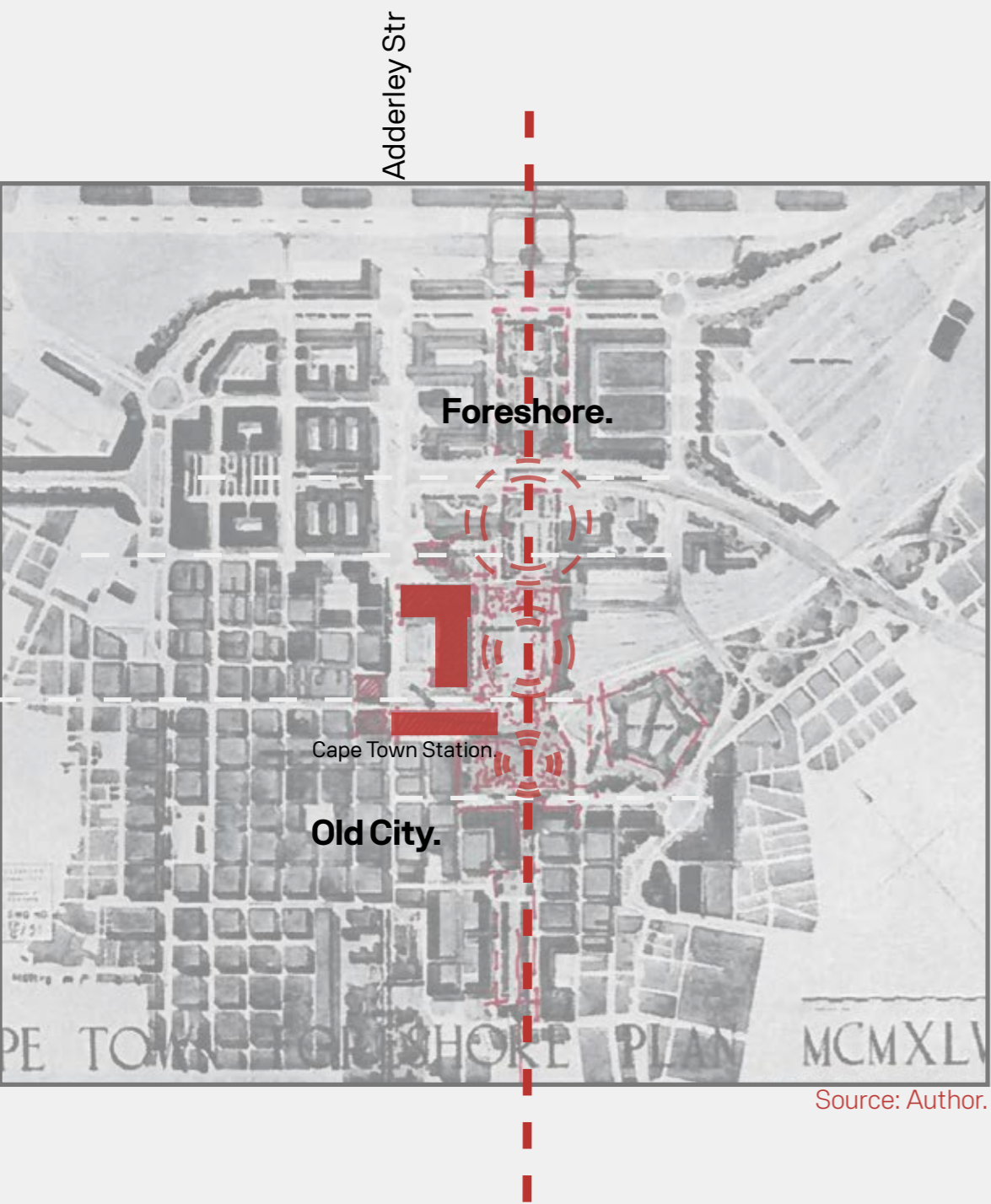
ABSTRACTION | CCID boundary of operations

public/Private partnerships.

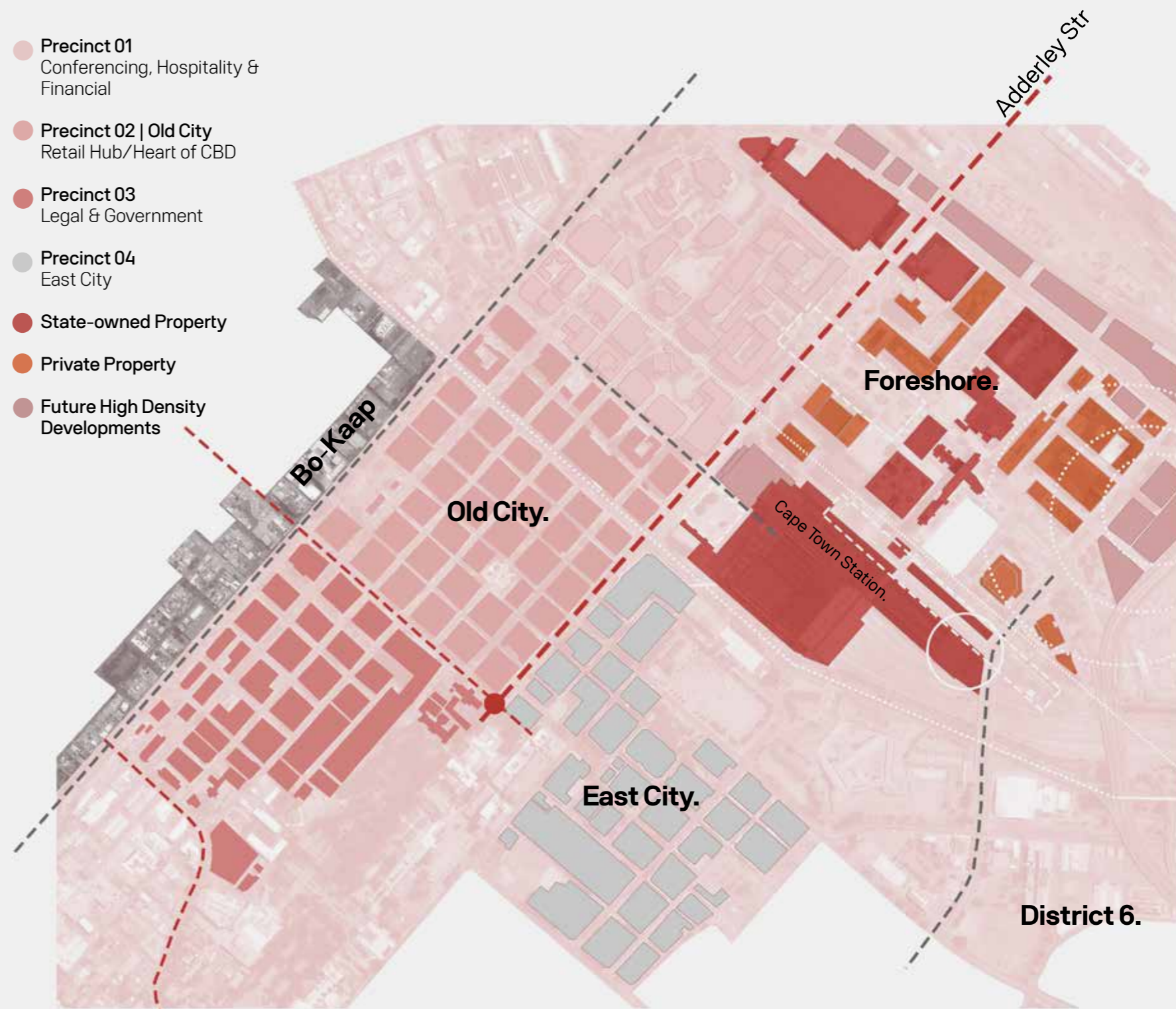


*A public-private partnership, the Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) was established in November 2000 by local property owners with a vision for the Cape Town CBD to rise from the “crime and grime” scenario it had fallen into, to once again become a safe, clean and caring urban environment. Today it is also a vibrant CBD for investment, and a world-class live, work, play and stay destination that is welcoming to all*

– CCID



Source: Author.



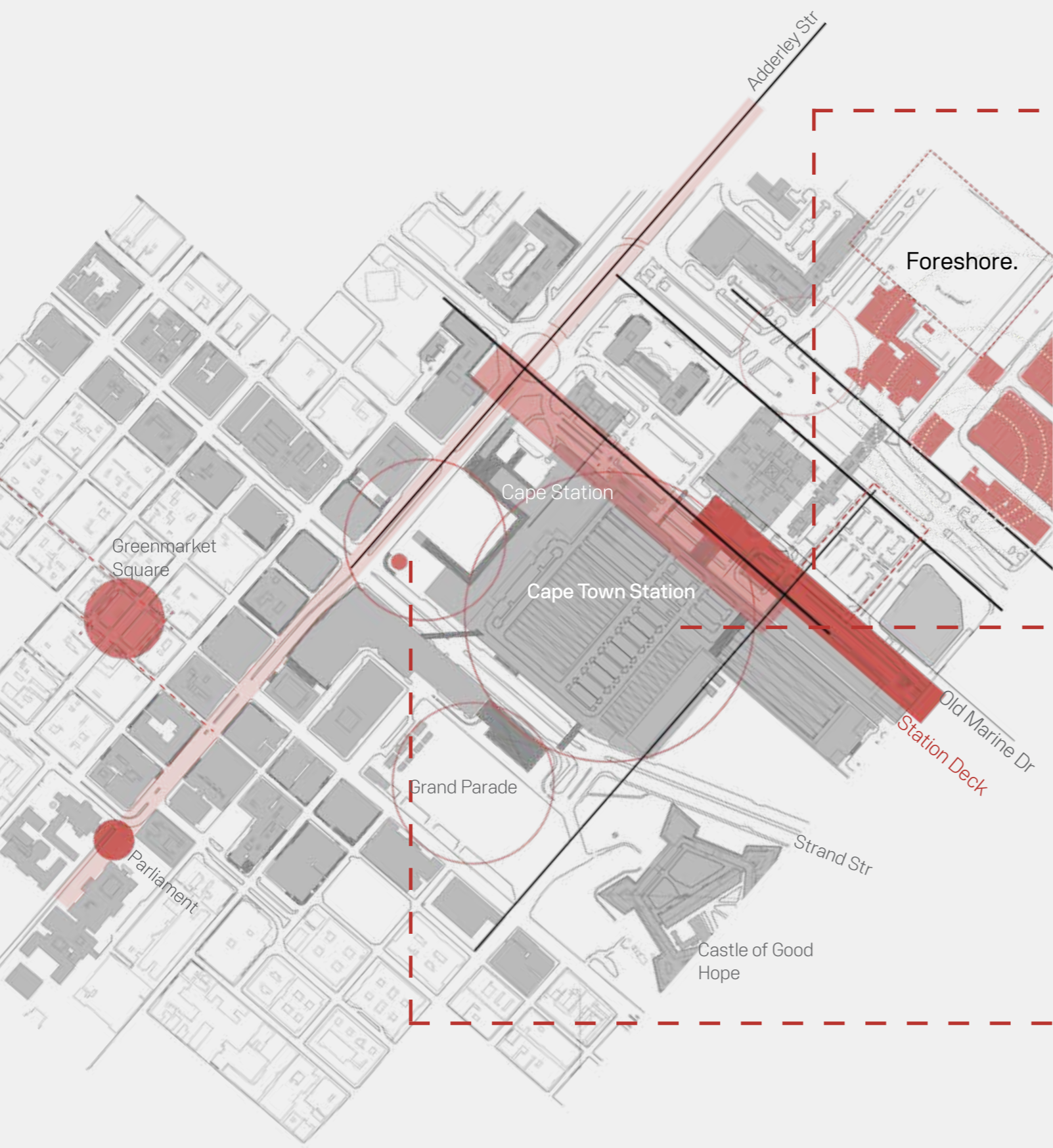
building Fabric intensity.

Source: Author.

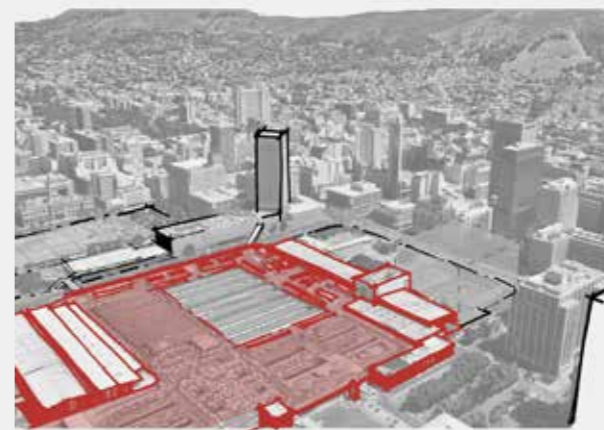
### Initial SPATIAL PLANNING.

Initial planning schemes showing connection and integration of the Old City to the south with the foreshore expansion to the north, through large civic projects and implementation of large civic squares and courtyards[Modernist].

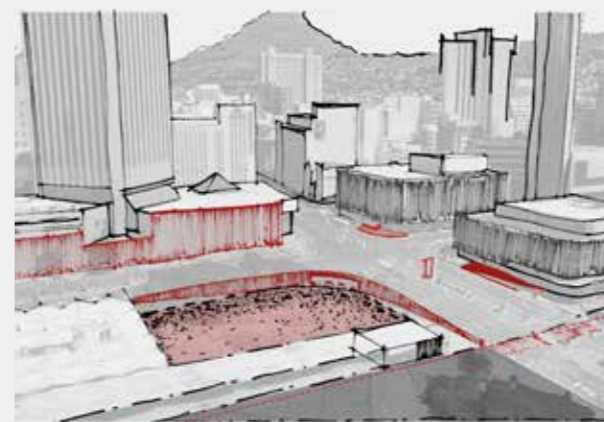




precinct **03** | **the Receiver.**



precinct **02** | **the Unseen.**



ABSTRACTION | Cape Town Station as the containment and reverberation of multiple precincts within a precinct.

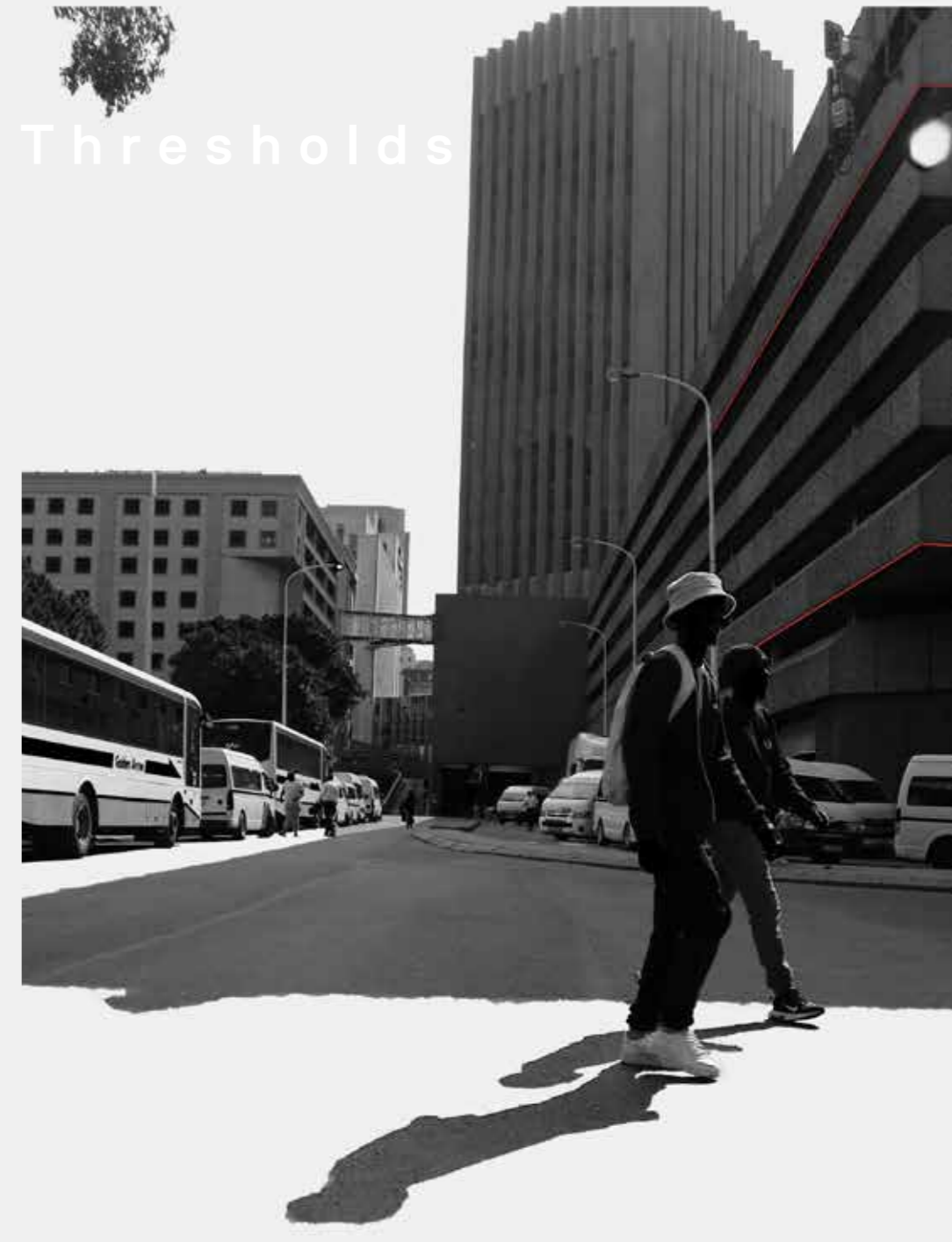
traversing the city at precinctal scale | **Thresholds**  
of release.



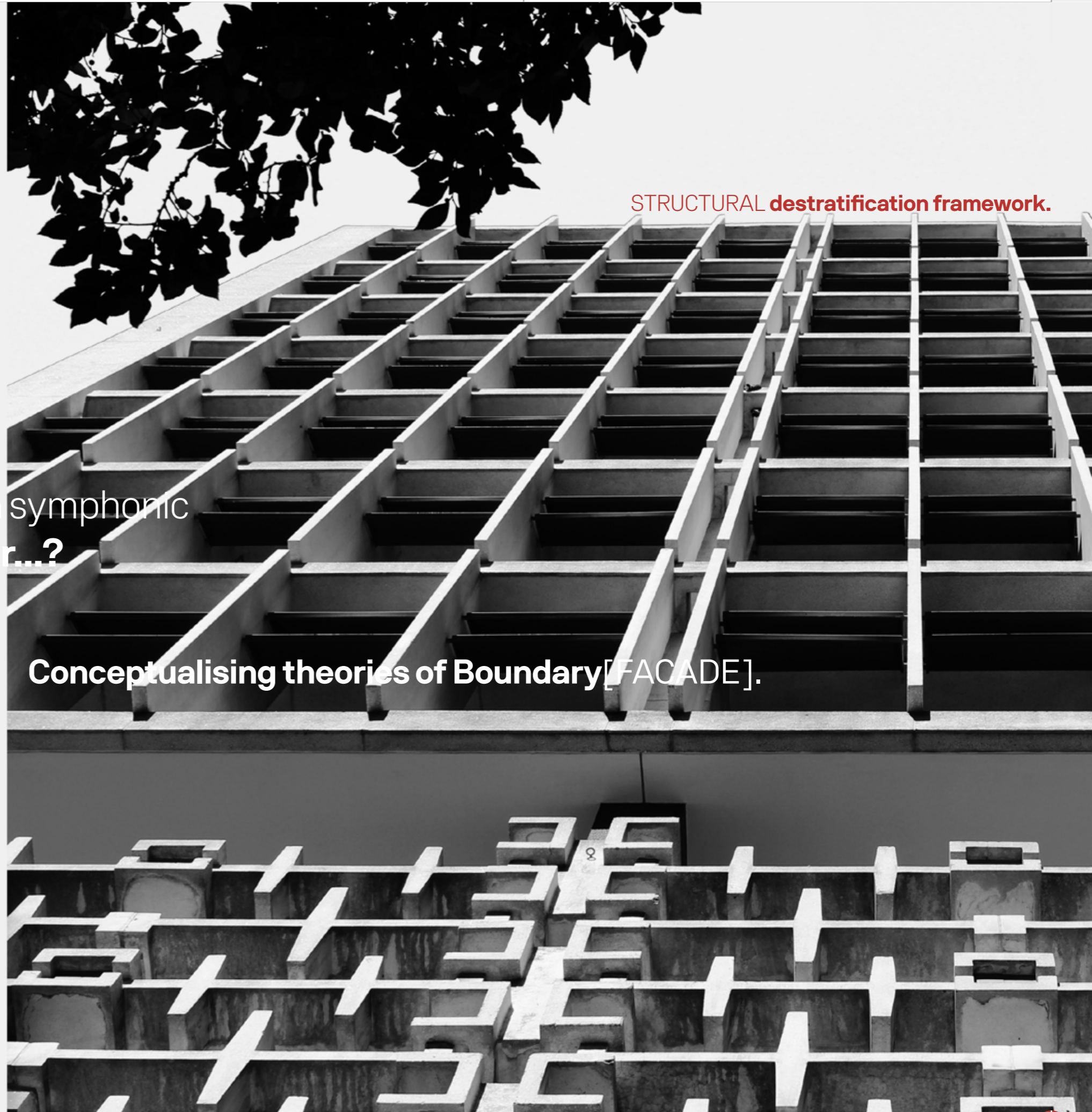
precinct **03** | **the Receiver. Old Marine Dr**



precinct **02** | **the Unseen.**



precinct **01** | **under-ground City. life on Stand Str**

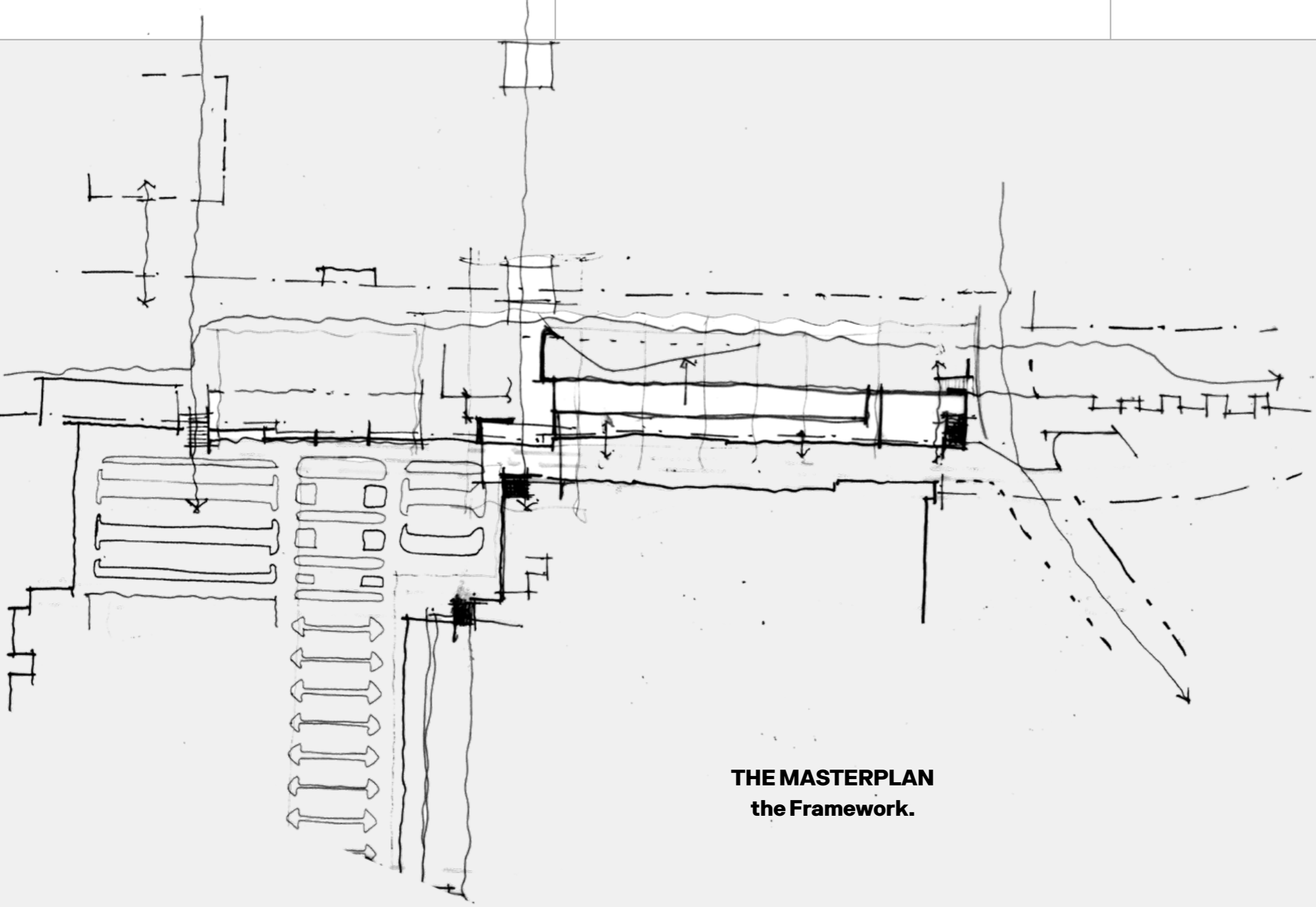


STRUCTURAL **destratification** framework.

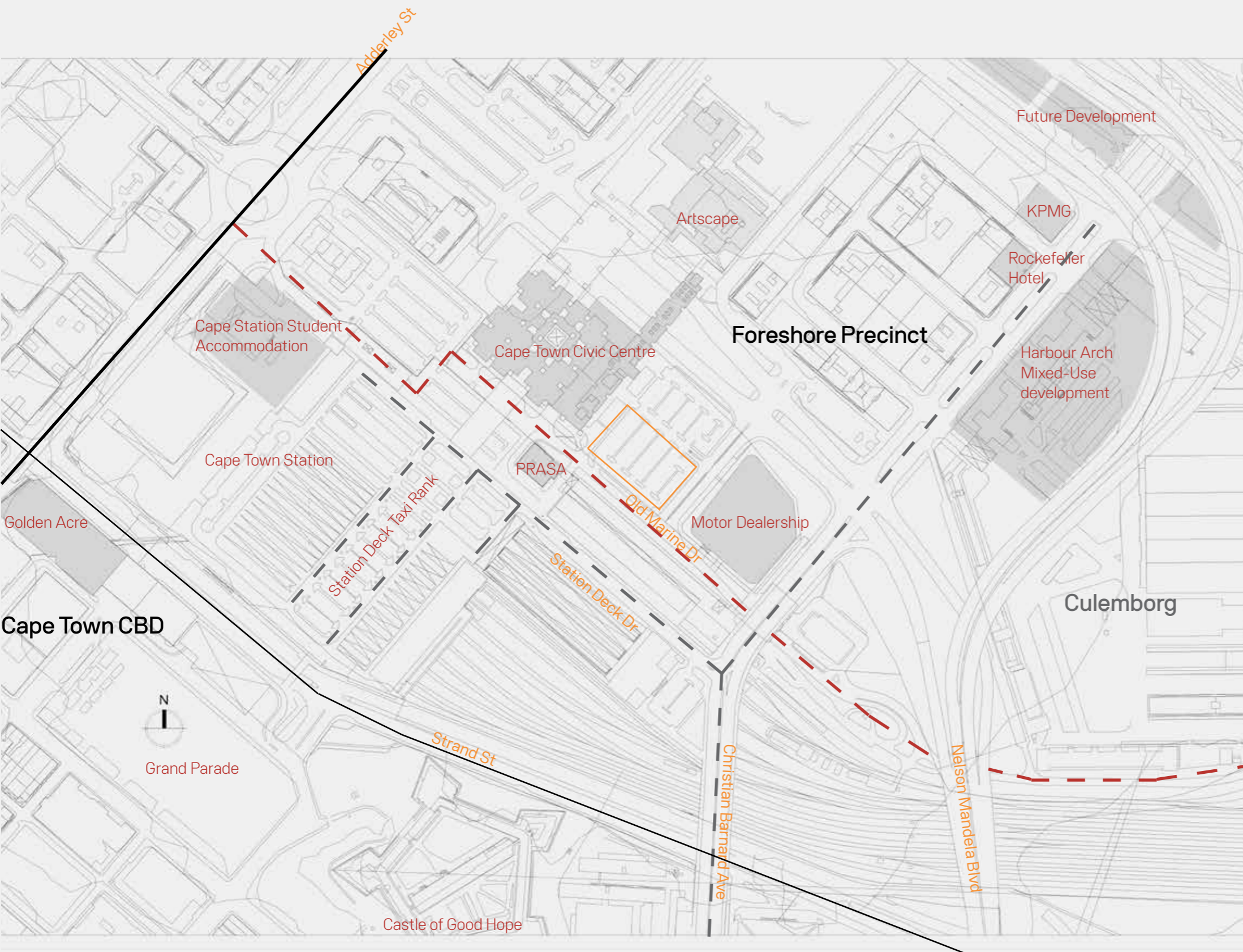
**setting the Stage for the Opening Act .**

facade as a symphonic  
sheet paper...?

**Conceptualising theories of Boundary [FACADE].**



**THE MASTERPLAN**  
the Framework.

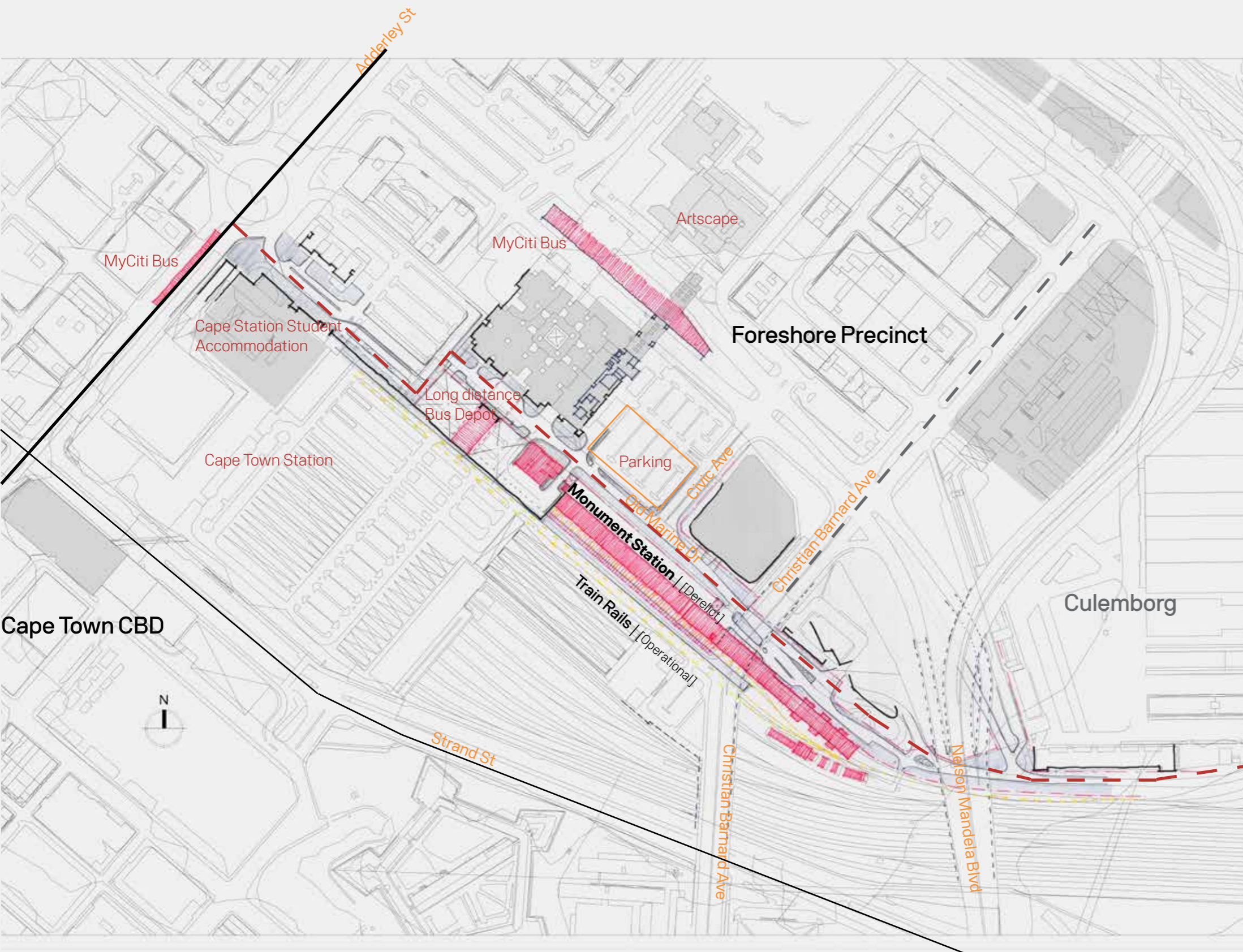


Existing urban condition with intense densification development in the Foreshore precinct.

Identifying buildings of interest in the attempt to respond pro-actively in absorbing and releasing of **dense movement** from the Foreshore towards the Old City and vis versa.

Locating key physical boundaries due to rail infrastructure and the division of the city.

Locating key spaces ripe for intervention.



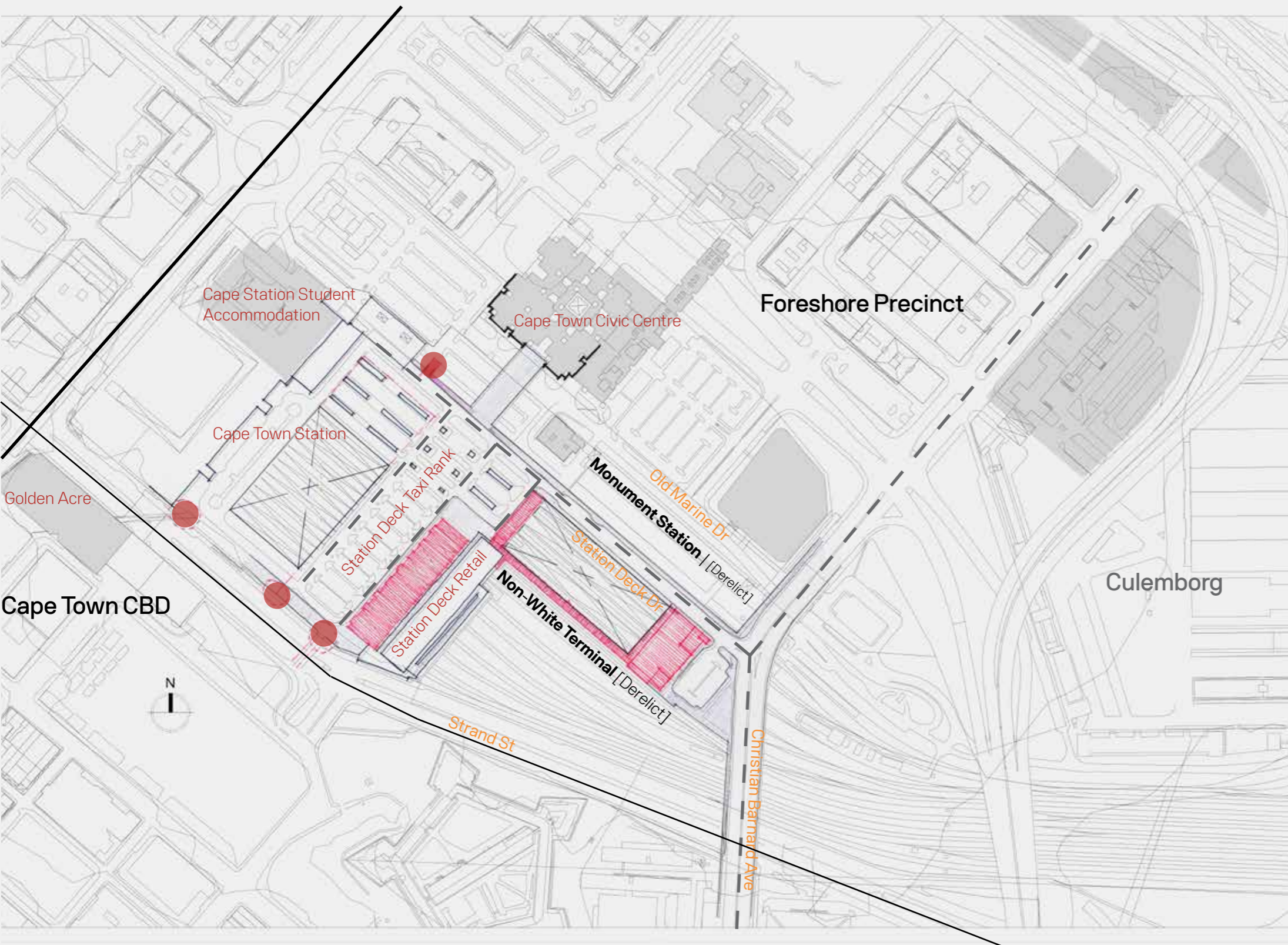
Targeted concentration, Dead-zone located along Old Marine Dr.

Identification of key buildings informing the current condition along Old Marine drive and how they can be optimised to reactive the street as a connector and **THRESHOLD** toward the expanding Foreshore.

Identifying high presence of **homeless occupation** in and around transport infrastructure and the robust living conditions.

Understanding the current street condition and life as a liminal space in the city.

Thoroughfare vs Occupation.



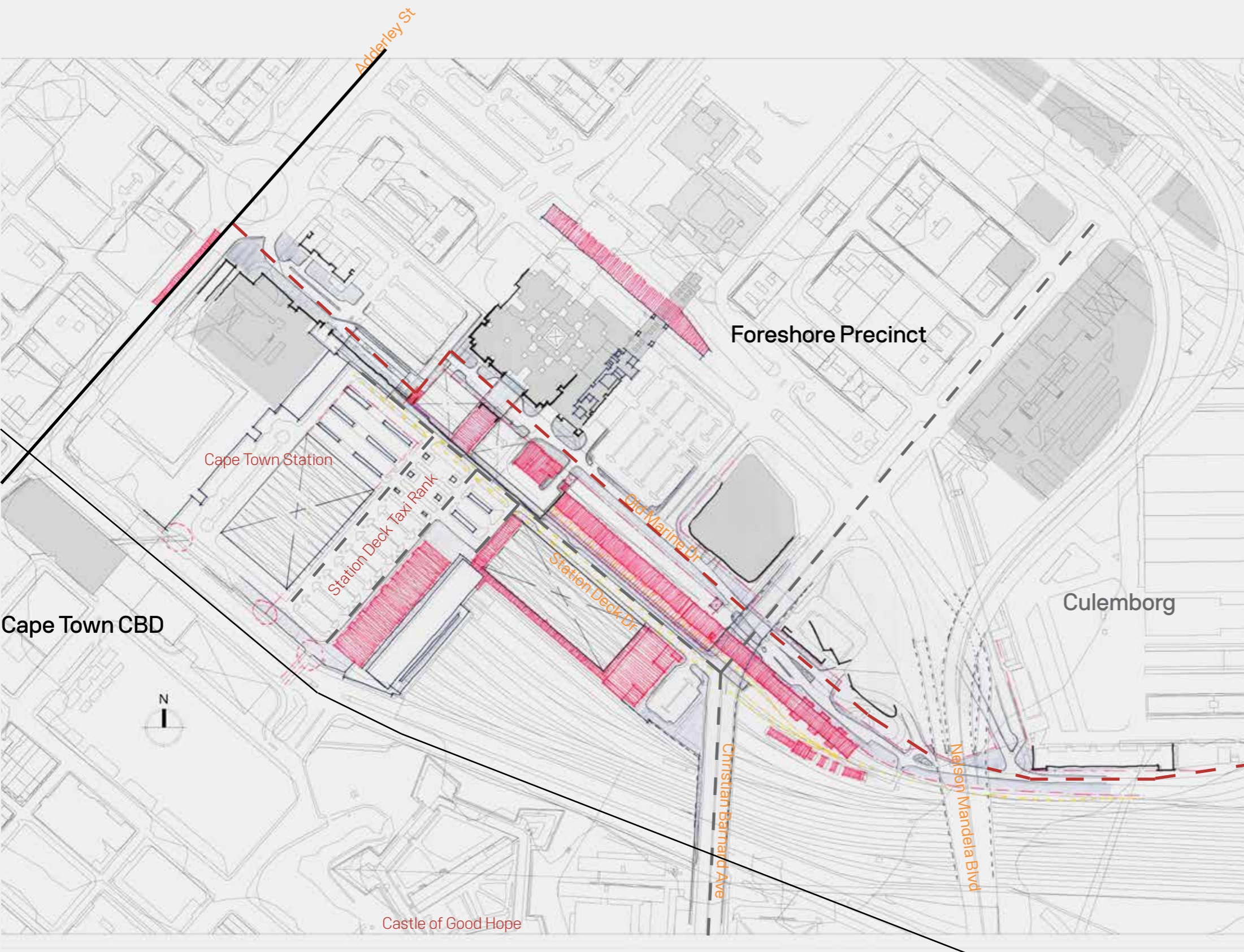
Locating the **UNSEEN precinct** as a key space in connecting the city.

Isolating existing circulation points from the South, to Station Deck towards the Foreshore.

Massive disconnect existing due to the level changes informed by transport infrastructure and connection.

Identifying key buildings for redevelopment on Station Deck to attract and hold people for extended periods of time. Activating dead-zone of an otherwise vibrant space.

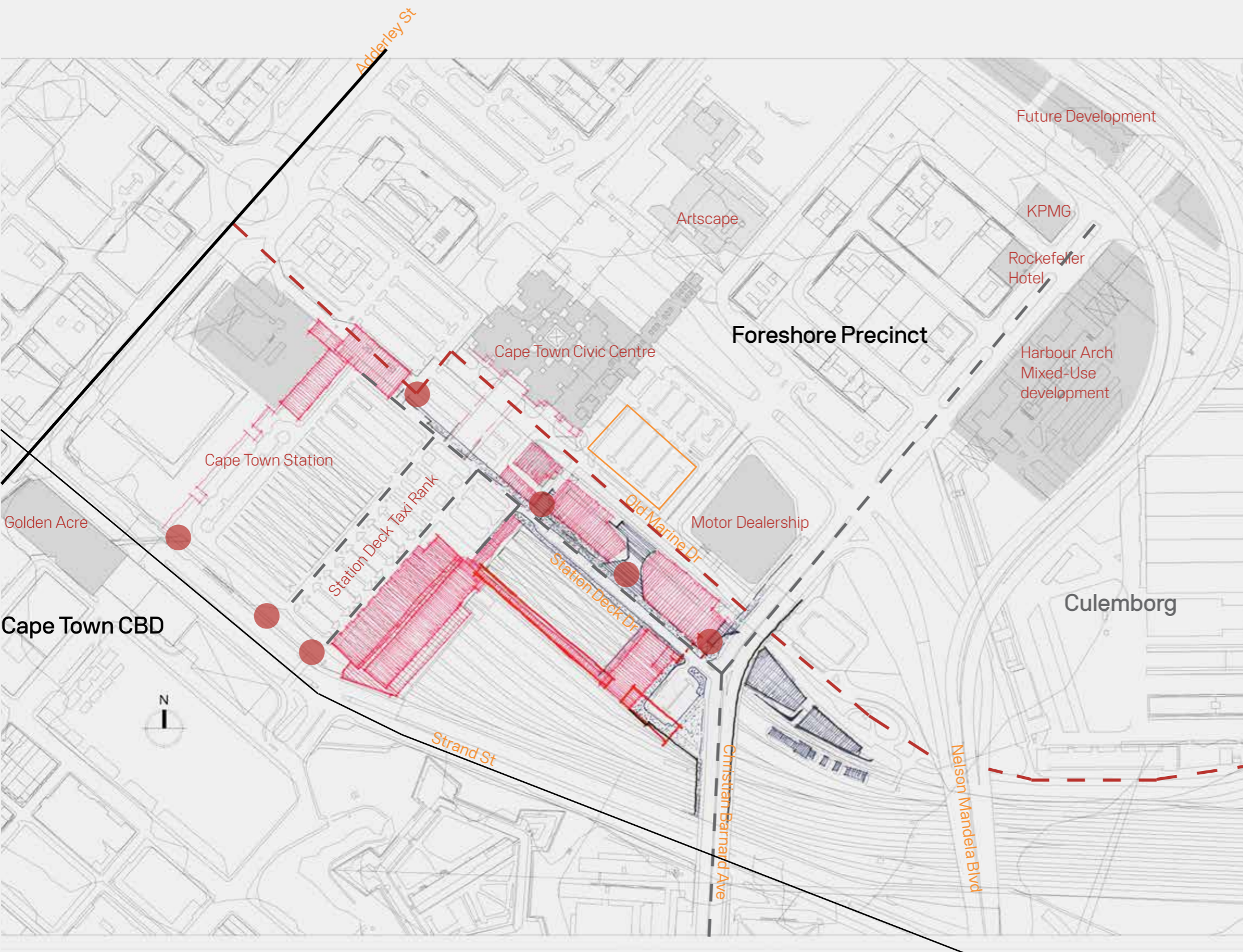
Locating opportunities for formal and informal economies to co-exist.



The full Score : the set-up for intervention.

Site Establishment.

Identifying connection points for development of economic and social realms.

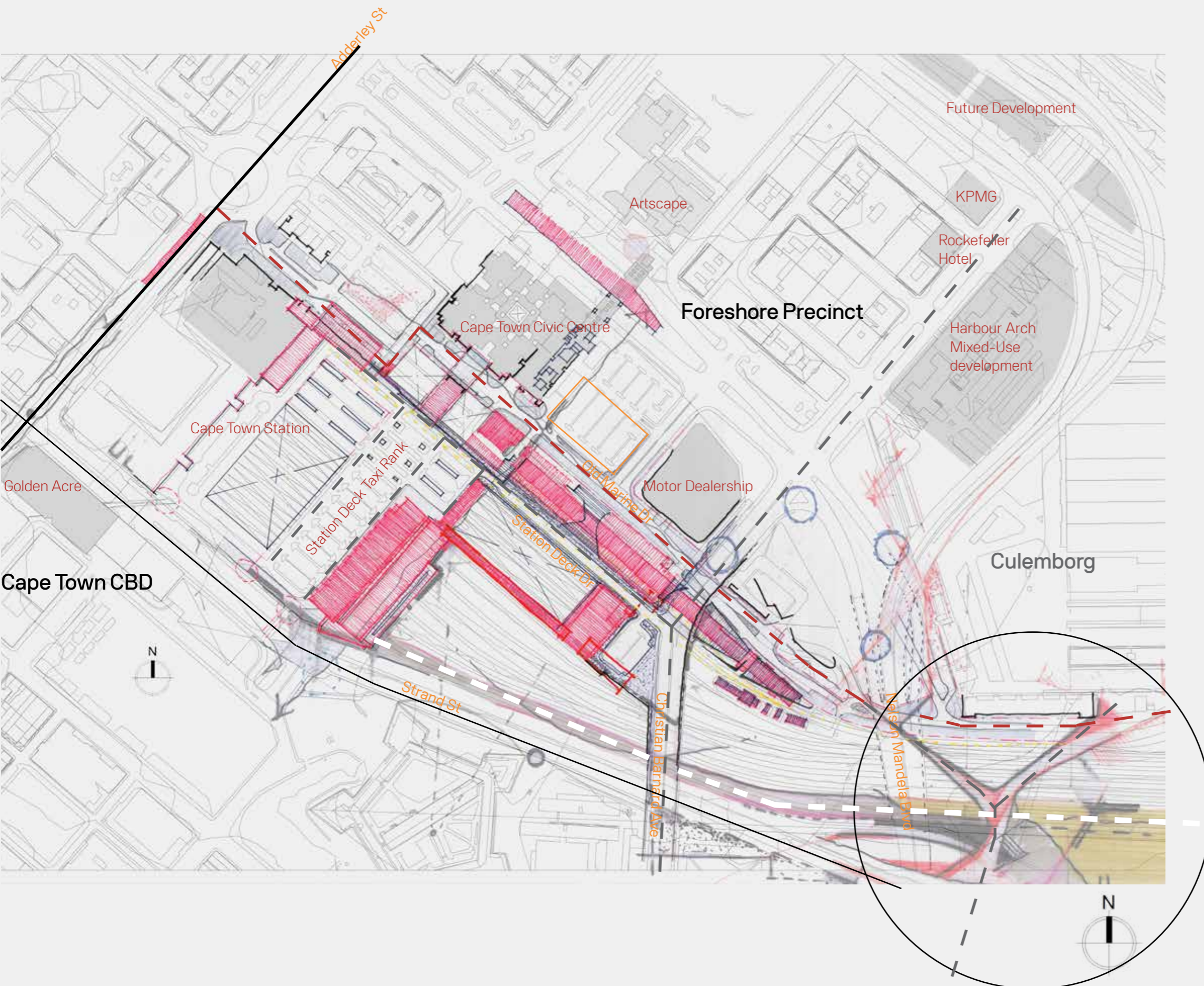


### The Urban proposal.

The first move in mediating connections in the city.

The activation of dead space and bleeding the vibrant nature of the nature of station deck onto Old Marine Drive and through to the Foreshore.

The connection of two precincts.



The MASTERPLAN.

Linking of the Foreshore, Culemborg and District 6 in an attempt at stitching the urban fabric divided by rail infrastructure.

Creating a larger precinct of free and fluid movement and creating opportunities for development both socially and economically.

A better connected city with vibrant spaces and social cohesion.

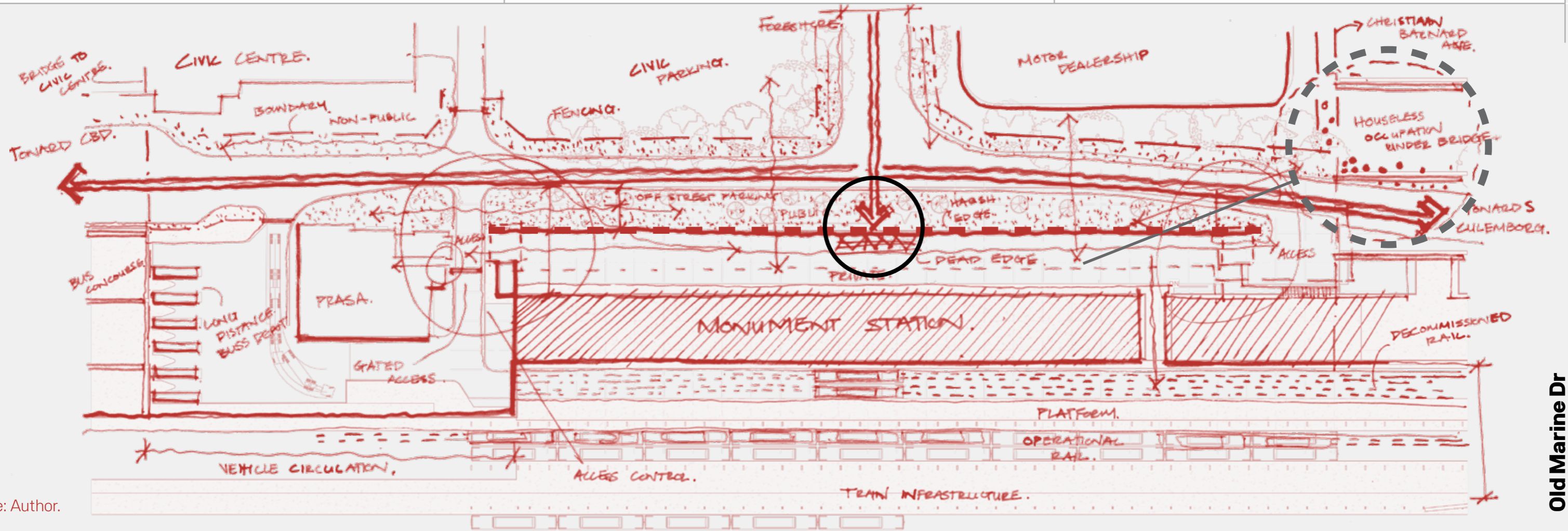
Source: Author.

**REVEALING THE EXISTING.**

**THE FIRST ACT**



**re-purposing of dead space in the City.**



Source: Author.

Old Marine Dr



devoid of Human movement.

Buffered [EDGE].

Developing an architectural response that engages with the existing spatial and social conditions along Old Marine Drive now becomes the main focus of the research enquiry. Considering the context in which the site is located, a plethora of programmatic and architectural informants presented themselves in aiding toward the reactivation of the Dead Zone.

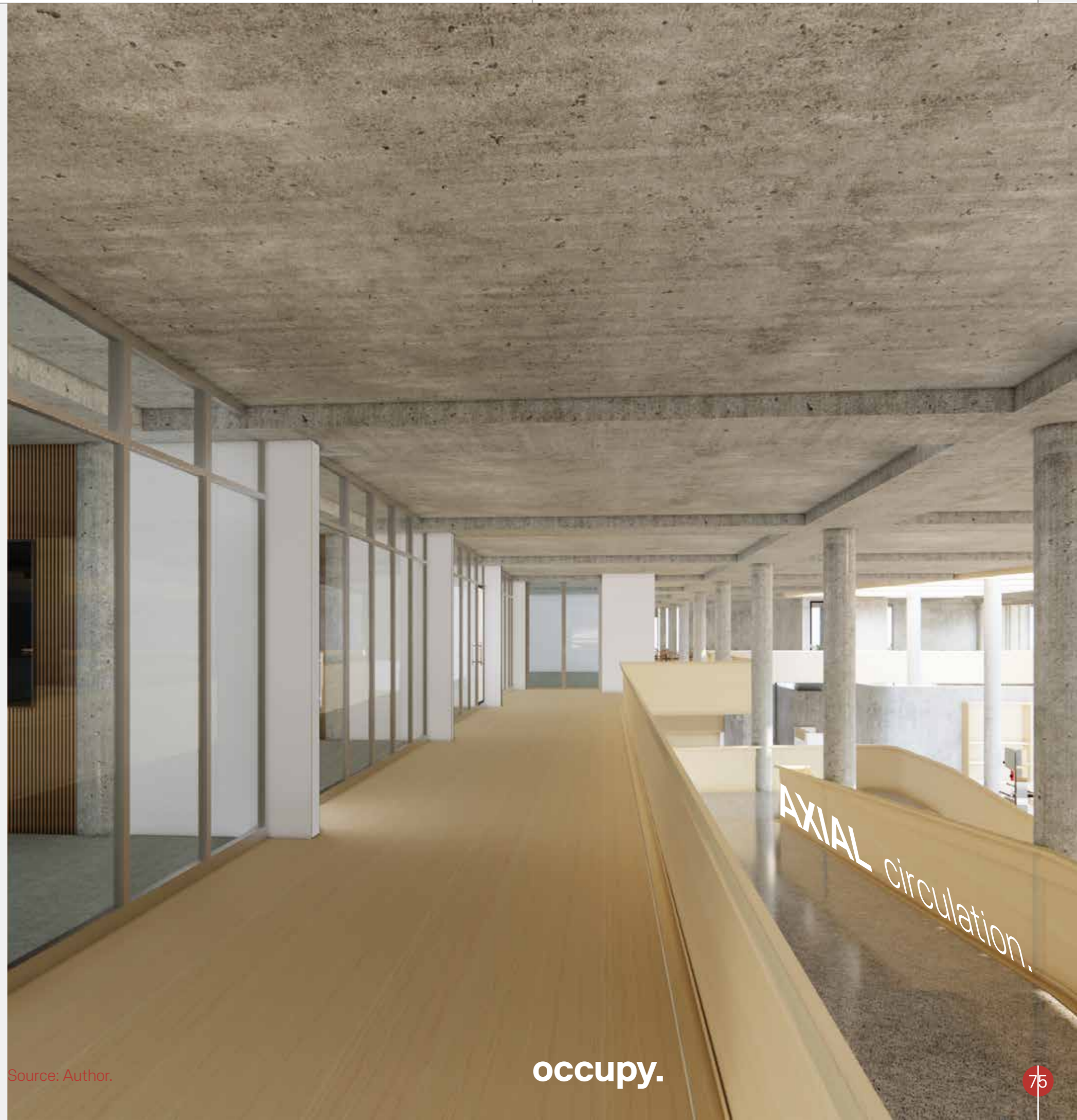
However, the direction taken in prescribing a programme to occupy the space proposed along this strip of the city, to a social route. The prescribed program informed by the process of MAKING and CREATING seems to transcend the mere action partaking in the process but also provides a sense of place-making and ownership of the space, and by extension, the building. The activation of this edge along Old Marine Dr through the introduction of a MAKER'S Space workshop carves a space for a population and programme that is often relegated towards the peripheries of the urban context.

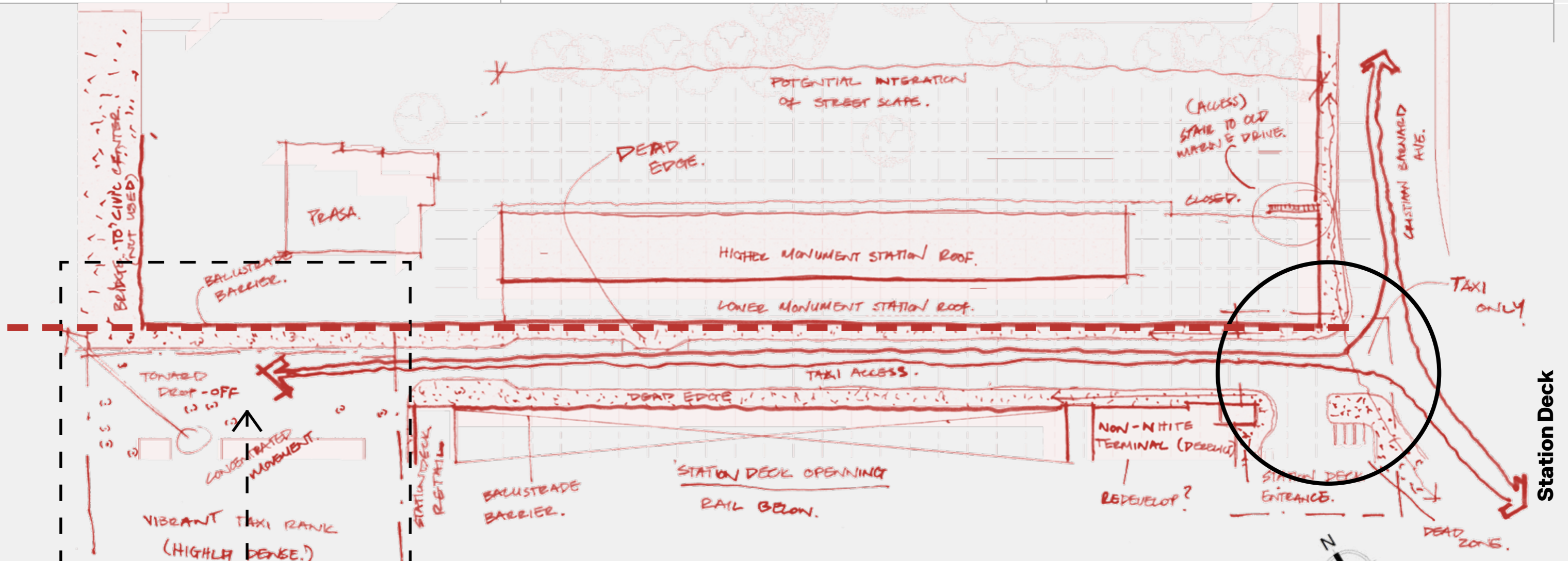
The art of MAKING as a skill that is transferable to all walks of life in the city holds a central role in the importance of providing such a space for animation. Vocational Training and engagement with the physical medium of making while having the ability to theoretically ground the work created. These spaces foster social interaction and an environment for the Cross-pollination of cultural and social backgrounds while the important economic consideration through the act of trade adds a level of sustainability to the public who engage with the space.

At this point, the creation of an infrastructural architecture in support of social needs and development becomes key in setting up circular social and economic cohesion. Being able to freely learn and transfer skills of making holds a key role in the dissemination of space and activation along this strip.

A key consideration is up-skilling the high concentration of HOUSELESNESS in and around the direct context in an attempt to provide opportunities for economic gain or the ability to transfer vocational skills learnt towards building more stable homes for themselves in the city.

The proposition of the generous programmed staircase connecting Station Deck towards the Foreshore also creates an endless array of opportunities for occupation, threshold and social interaction without becoming a liminal redundant space in the city. THRESHOLD THROUGH CONNECTION.





Source: Author.



precinct 02 | the Unseen.

Source: Author.



The mediation of the vibrant and dynamic Station Deck and developing a dialogue towards Old Marine Dr posed an architectural obstacle in determining a programme to not only animate the space but also provide contextual significance.

Listening to the needs of the UNSEEN precinct on Station Deck, the introduction of a taxi fitment centre to house and service the high concentration of taxis at the rank terminal. This facility will look to service both the vehicle, ensuring road-worthiness and safety, while providing space for drivers to rest and buy food from the informal stalls synonymous with these spaces. The facilitation of this symbiotic relationship between these programmes looks at shifting perceptions of what these spaces are and represent and moves the argument towards allowing them to evolve overtime to better suit the shifting needs of both the drivers and passengers.

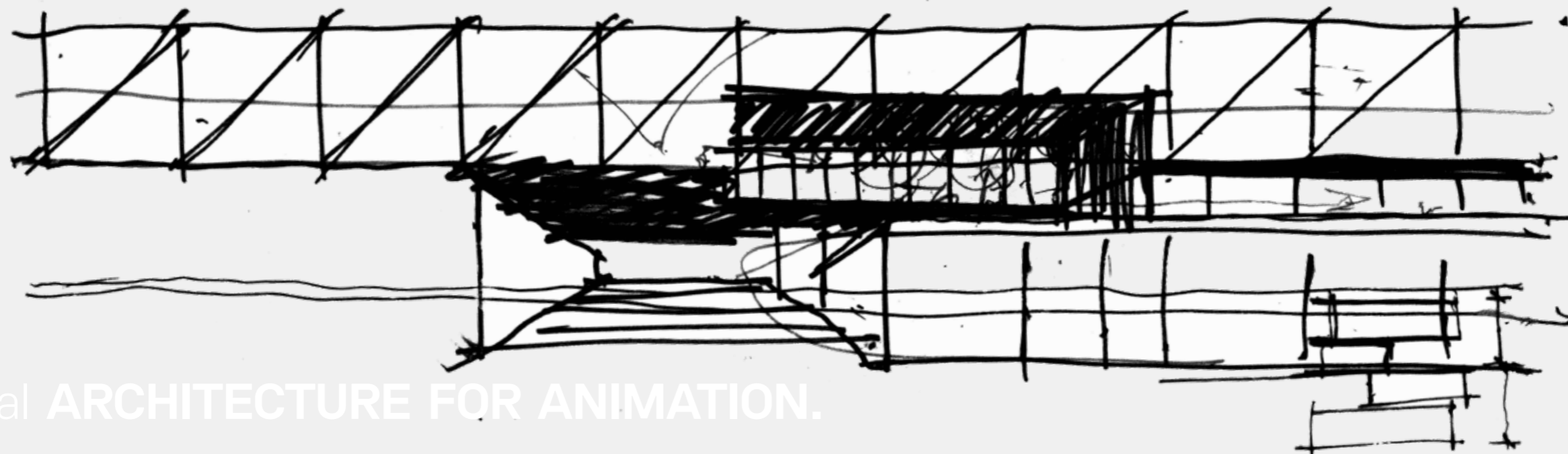
The Deck also proposes a retail wing in an attempt to further stimulate and attract more pedestrian traffic while providing more variety to those already using the space. Together with this, the stimulation of the relationships that exist between the formal and informal trading on Station Deck is re-imagined in an attempt at blurring the lines between the two and providing equal importance to both. The formal as holding the space of attraction with the informal benefiting from the increased traffic and incidental interaction that develops.

Locating this idea is the provision of water points along Station Deck Ave for informal car washing outside the fitment centre in an attempt at stimulating micro-economies that contribute toward economic gain for relatively unskilled workers. Ample ablution facilities and change-rooms have also been provided in serving the social need for a cleaner environment.

Pivotal to the approach of this entire scheme is the architecture as a facility that promotes social interaction across diverging cultural and economic backgrounds. BUILDING AS THE BACKGROUND.

Source: Author.

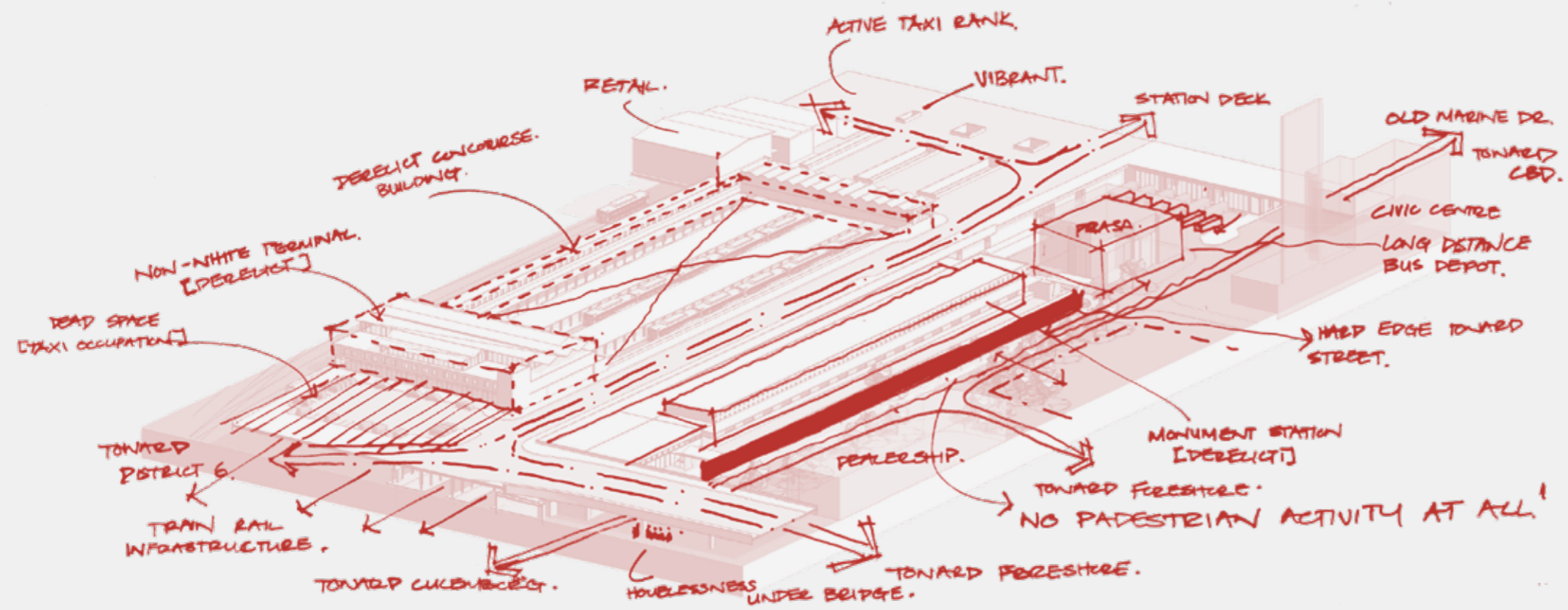
Speculative **INFRACTIONS ON THE CONTINUUM:**



infrastructural **ARCHITECTURE FOR ANIMATION.**

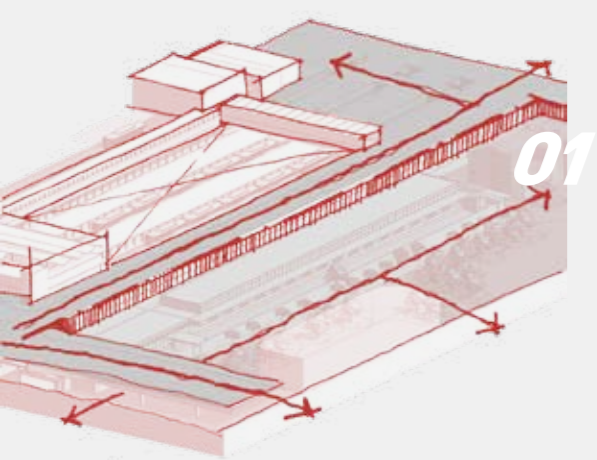
**the point of departure.**

ABSTRACTION: The initial sketch, depicting concepts and architectural language.

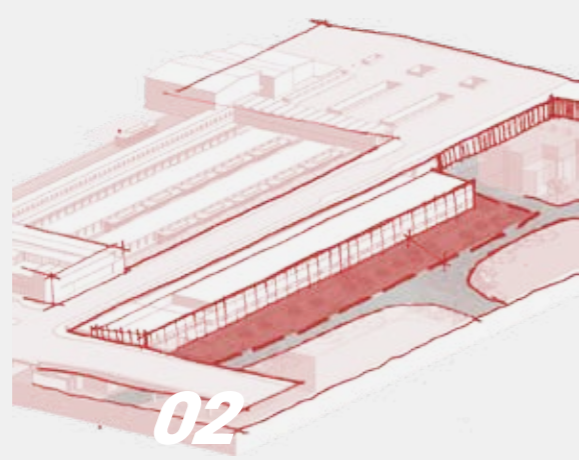


Source: Author.

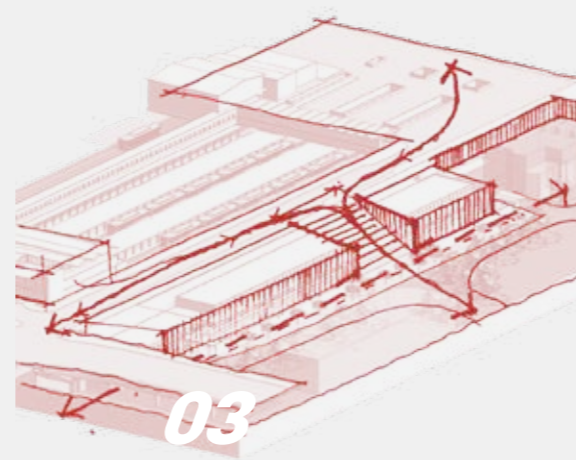
abstracted DESIGN FRAMEWORK.



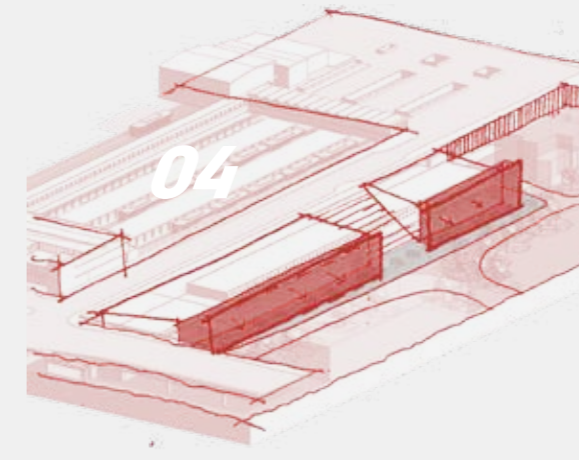
**the Planar Disconnection.**



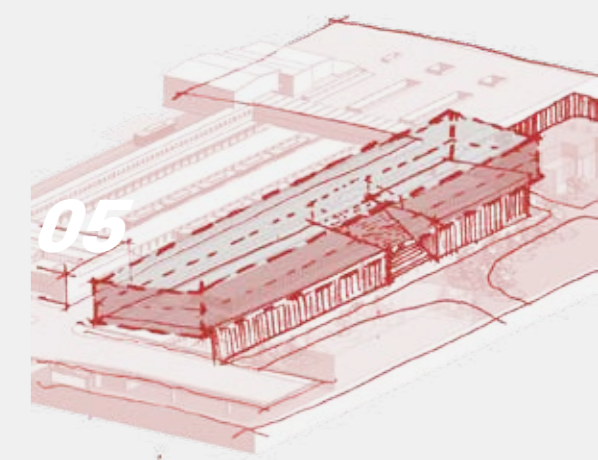
**the Liminal Dead-zone.**



**the Circulation Release . | Threshold**



**the Street Dialogue.**

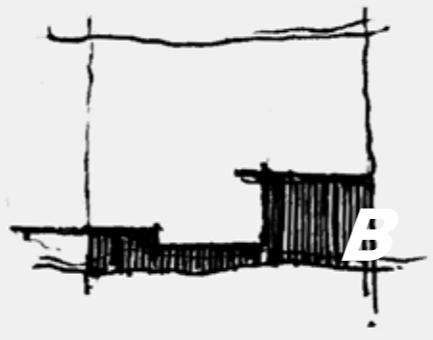


**the Densification.**

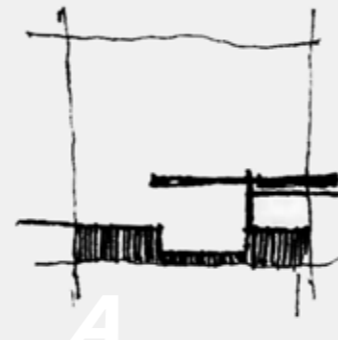
Source: Author.



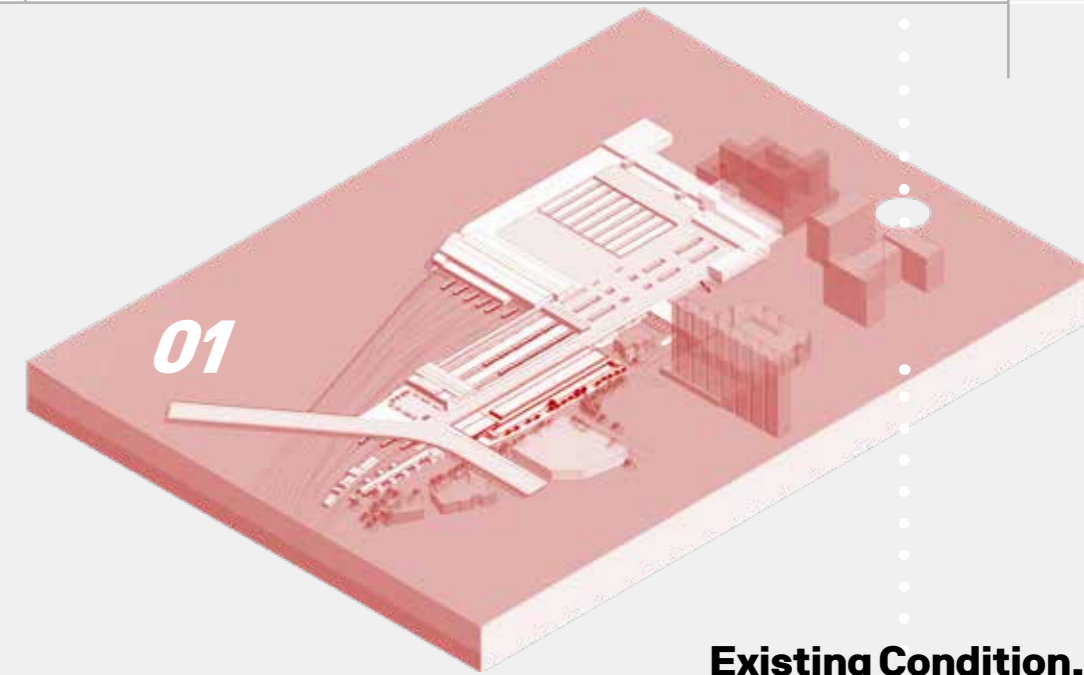
Surface | Groundscape.



Surface | Disruption.

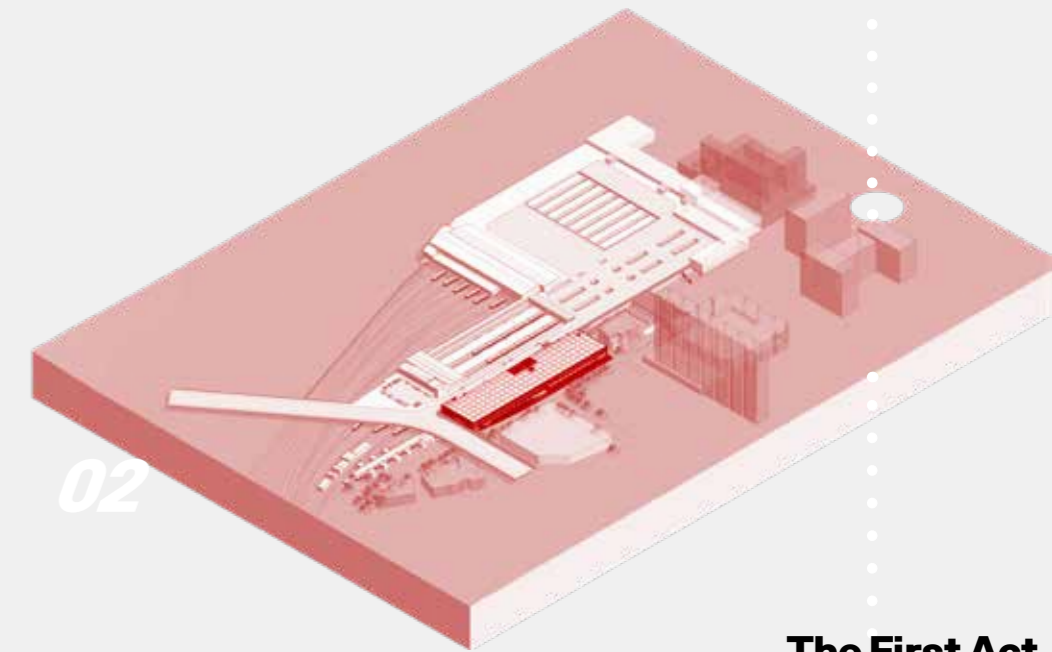


Surface | Extension.



Existing Condition.

Intervention of activation through occupation and connection.

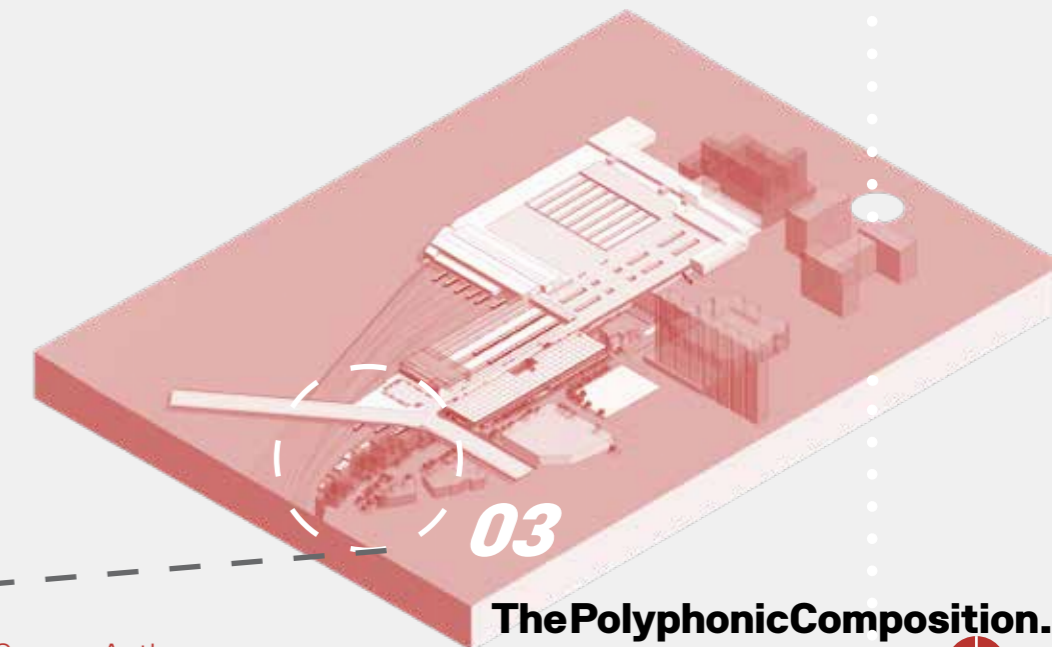


The First Act.

a VISION of the bigger picture.



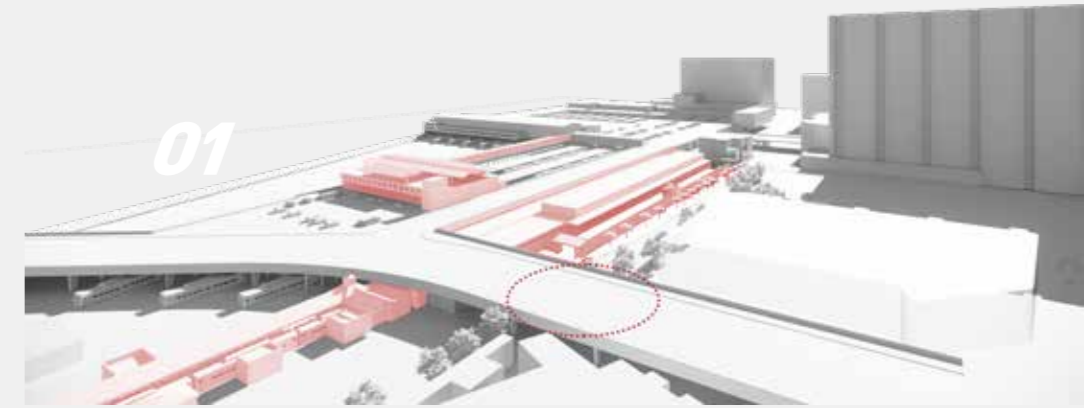
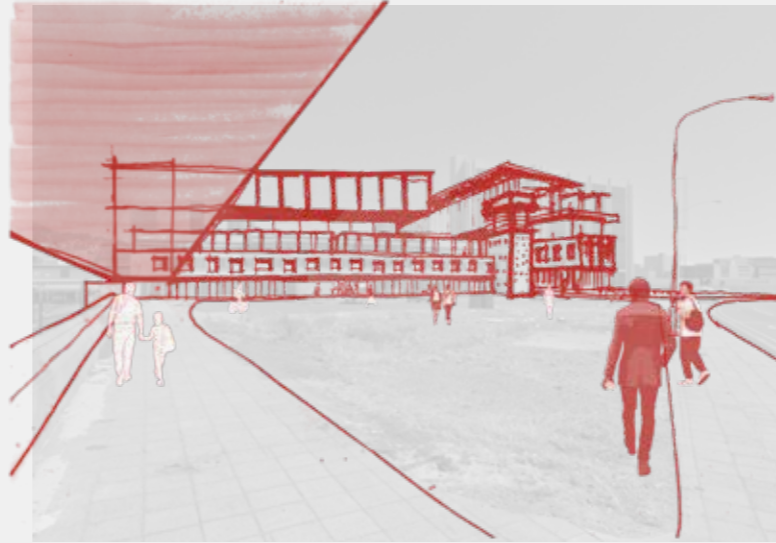
The greater development through integration.



The Polyphonic Composition.

Source: Author.

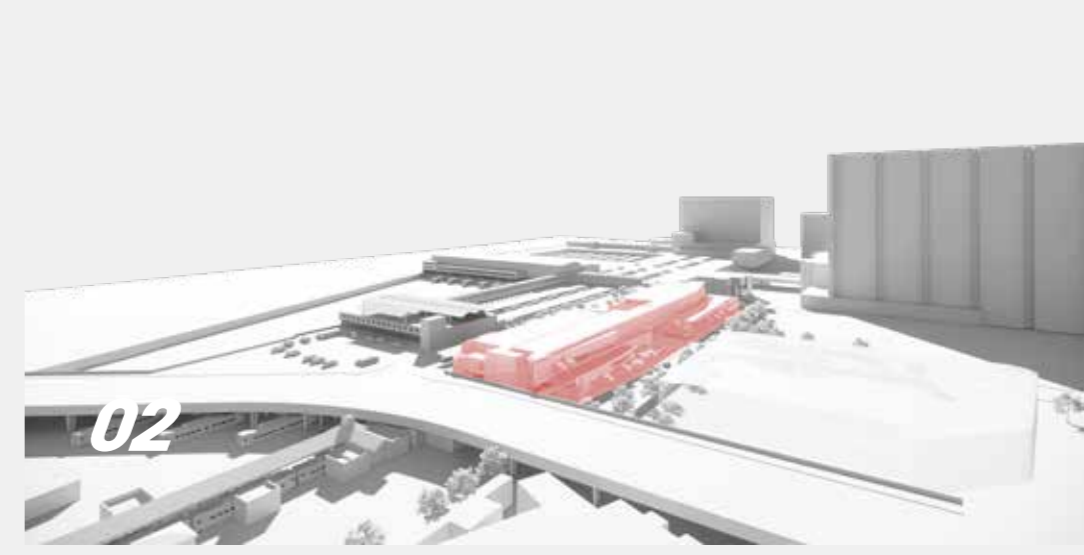
Re-imagining of the derelict Station Deck buildings towards densification and economic stimulation. Positing ideas.



**Existing Condition.**

## Speculative **INFRACTIONS ON THE CONTINUUM:**

Initial Station Deck Entrance speculative visualisation of what could become. Re-imagined derelict buildings announcing the precinct.

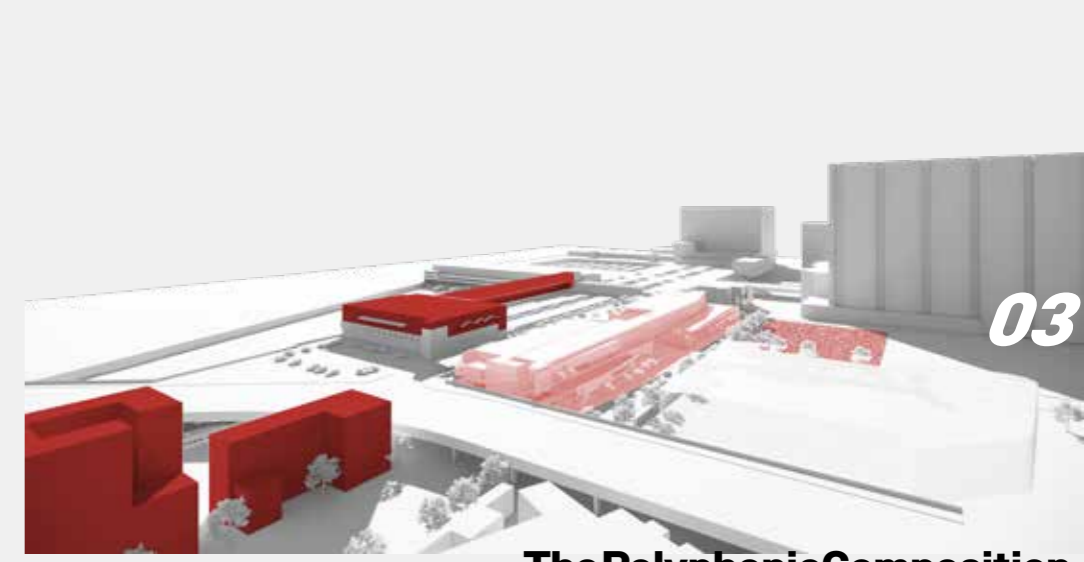
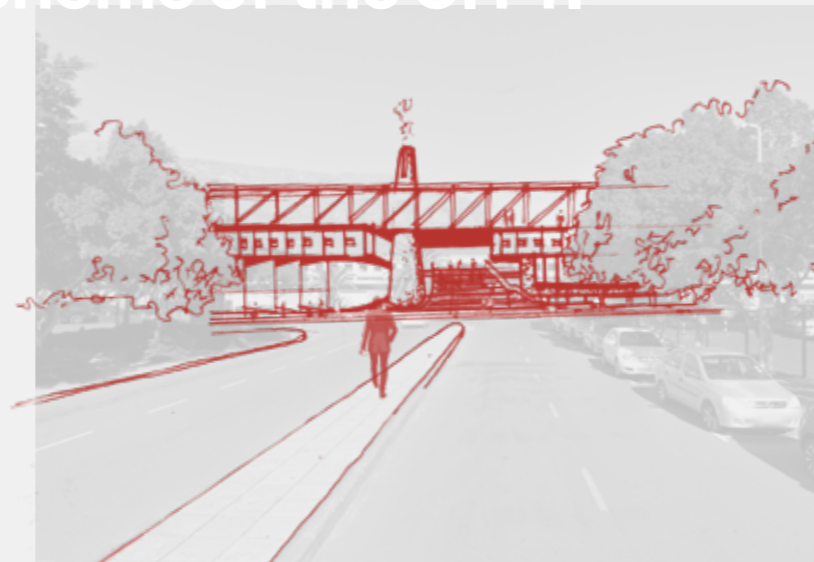


**The First Act.**

Initial speculations into what could become |  
Realising **POTENTIALS** on site...

## positing of **IDEAS** into the grander scheme of the **CITY.**

Initial Old Marine Dr speculative visualisation of what could become.

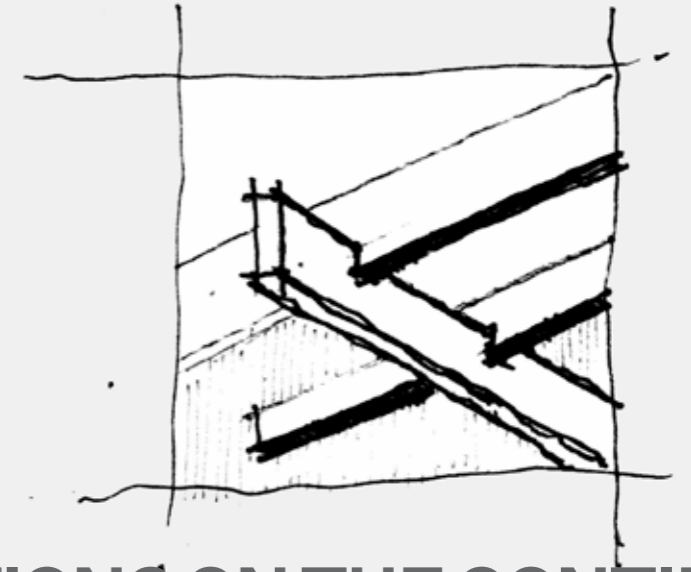


**The Polyphonic Composition.**

The greater development through integration.

Source: Author.

**polyphony in the MAKING.**



Speculative **INFRACTIONS ON THE CONTINUUM:**

**tectonic** [ordering] through ***Destratification***.



Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.

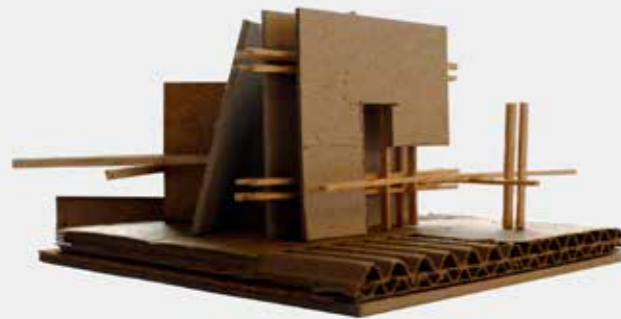




**Blurred bounds of THRESHOLD.**

Source: Author.

Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.



Source: Author.



Source: Author.



Source: Author.

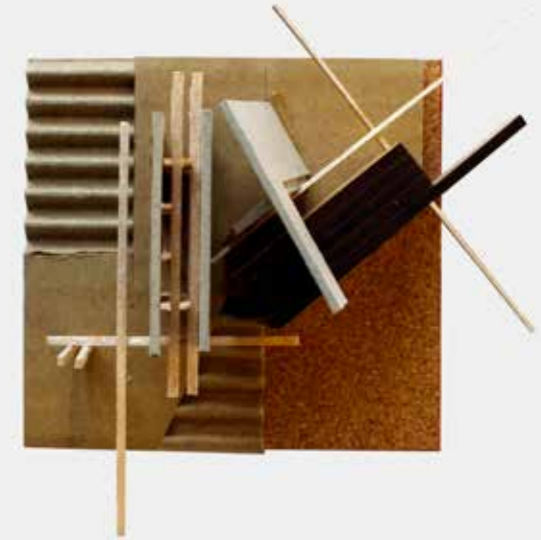


Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.

Structure as Exo-skeleton | **containing.**

Source: Author.

Source: Author.



Source: Author.



Source: Author.



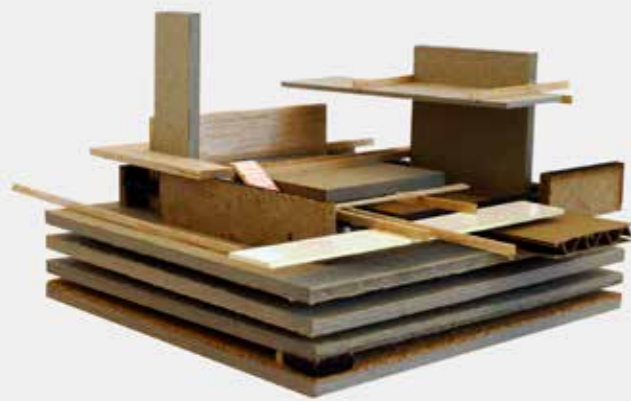
Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.

Gentle guided surfaces for circulation.

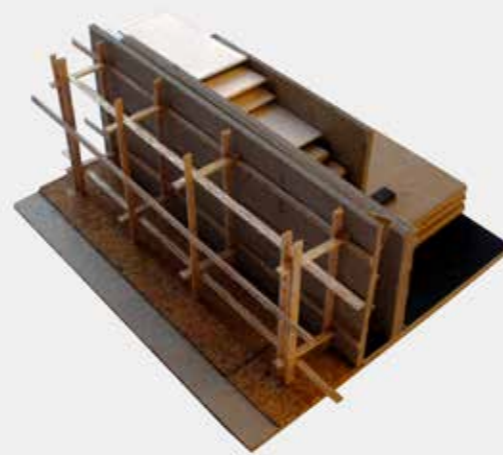
Volume held by tectonics.

**The feeling of arrival.**

Source: Author.



Source: Author.

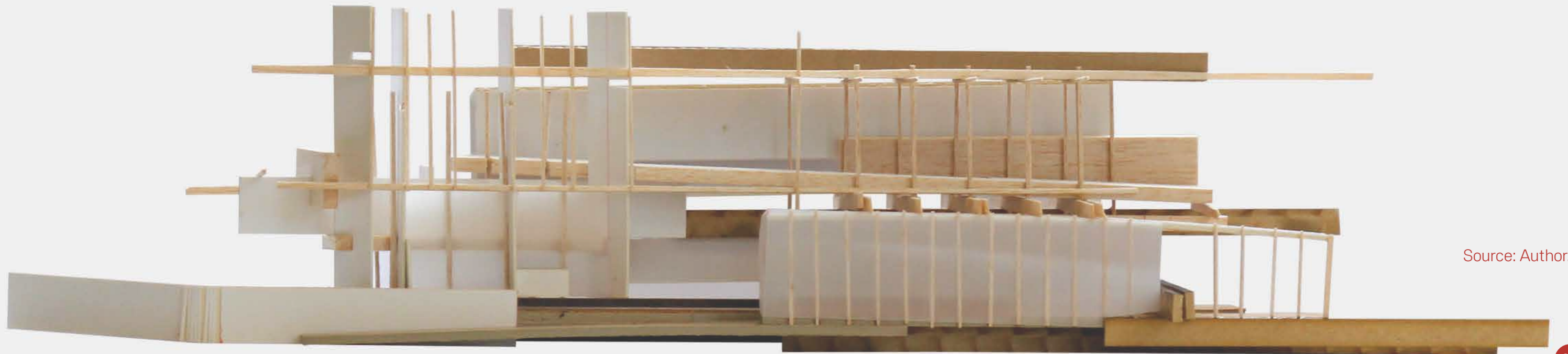


Source: Author.

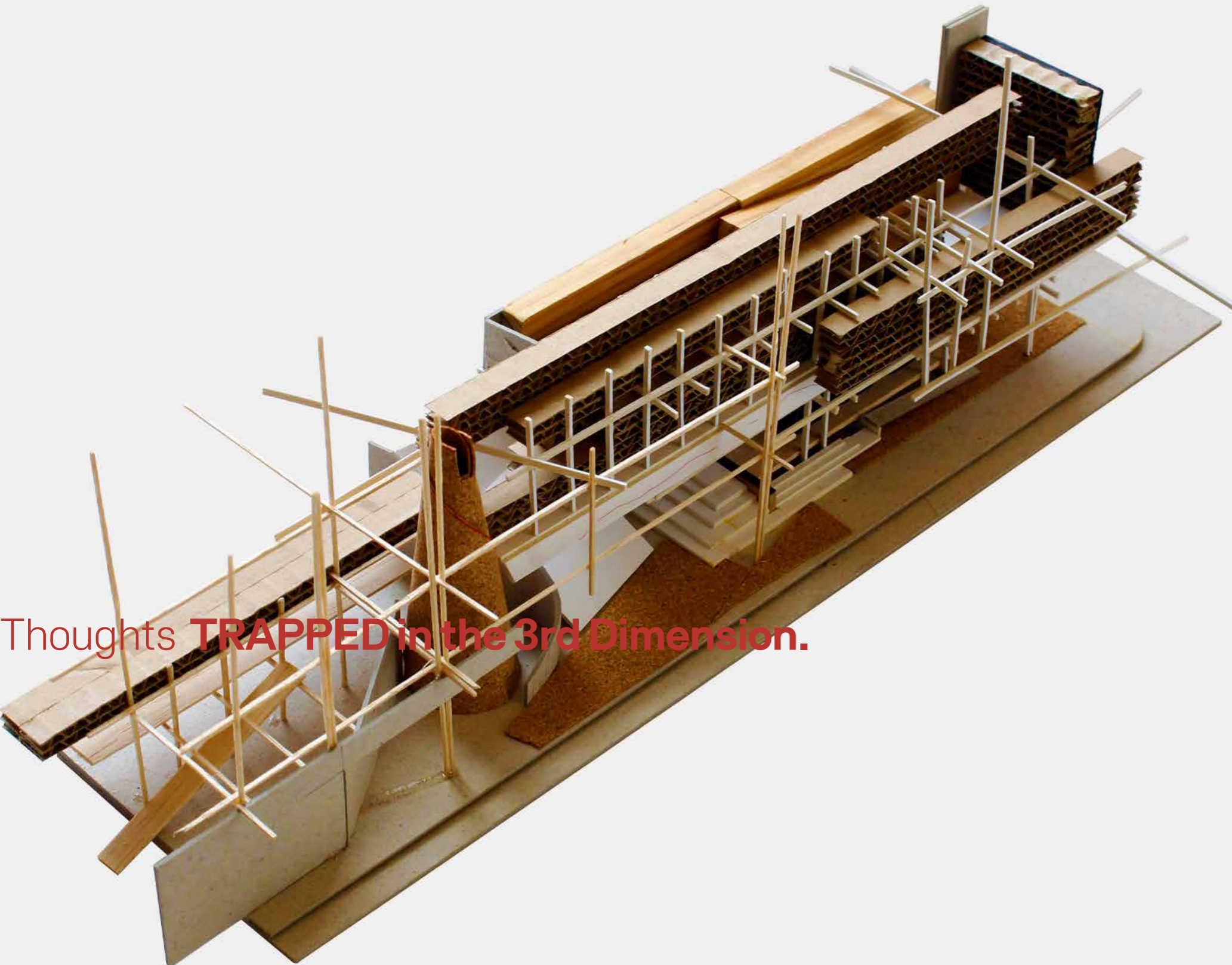


Source: Author.

# Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.



Source: Author.

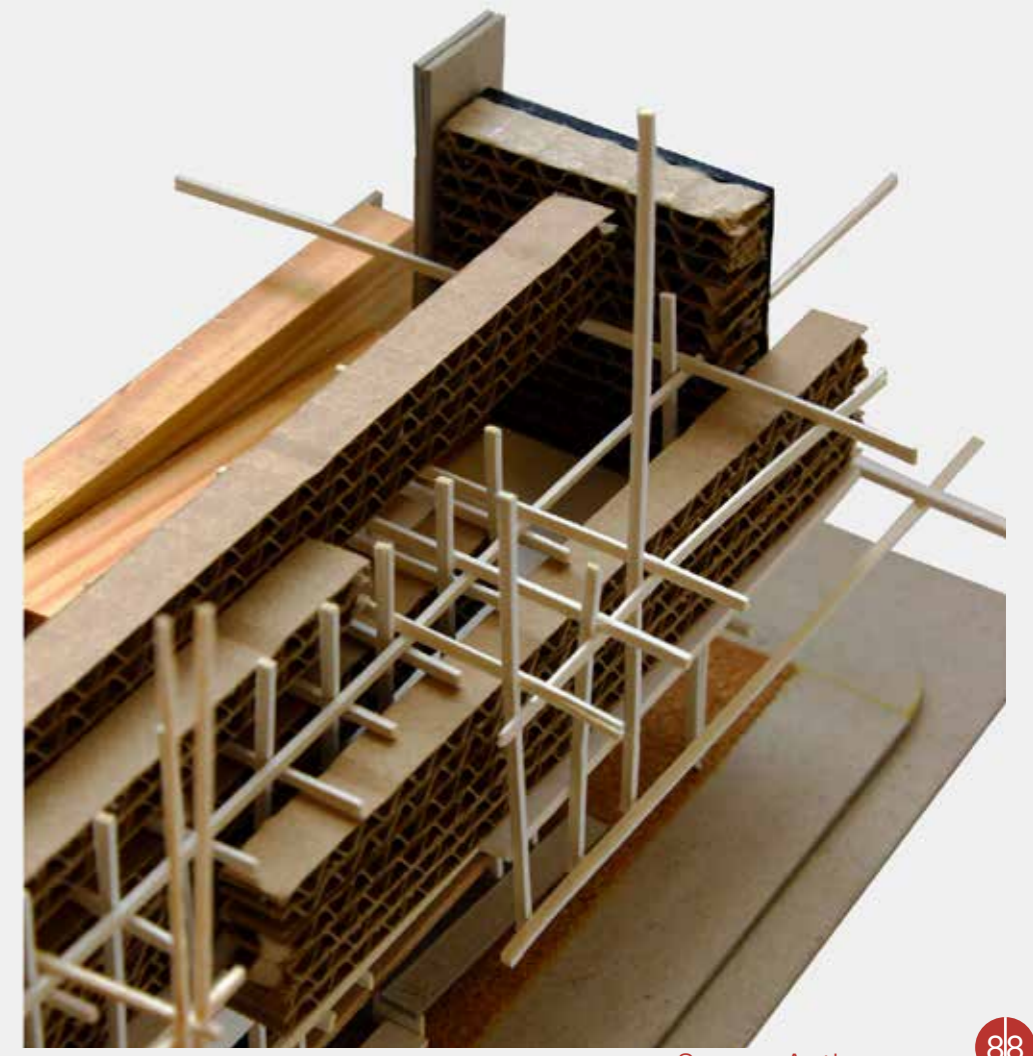


Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.

Source: Author.

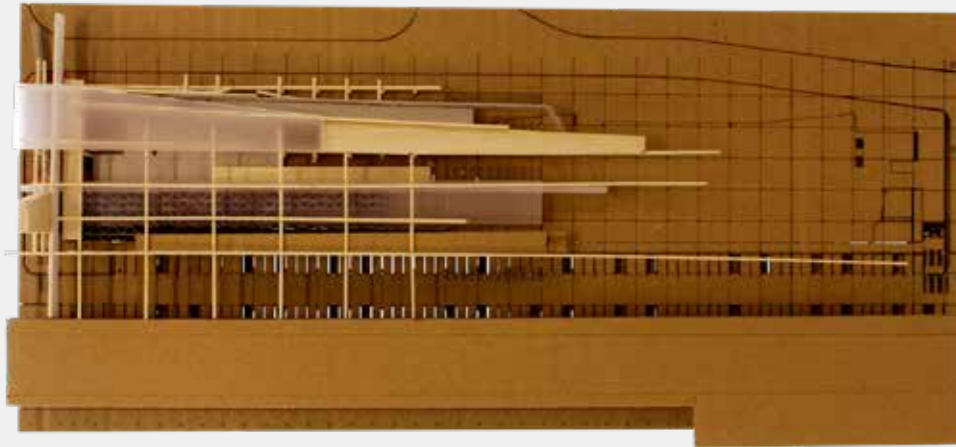


Source: Author.



Source: Author.

Source: Author.



Thoughts **TRAPPED** in the 3rd Dimension.

ABSTRACTION: The base model on which the entire architectural artefact that was developed. **DESIGN THROUGH MAKING.**



the First drop in the pond. | **THE FIRST ACT.**

Source: Author.

Roof.

First Floor.

Taxi Fitment Centre Parts Storage and Admin.

Taxi Fitment Centre.

Kerbside Car Wash.

Public Ablutions.

Station Deck.

Old Marine Dr - Mezzanine.

Parking & BOH.

Informal Traders Storage.

Workshop Space.

Old Marine Dr - Ground.

Driver/Trader Weekly Accommodation.

Public Ablutions.

Informal Trade Space.

Retail/Fast food.

Taxi Association/Union Offices.

**Programmed Staircase | The Connector.**

Classrooms and Admin.

Double Volume.

**Programmed Staircase | The Connector.**

Building Admin Office.

Cafe Space.

Informal Trade Space.

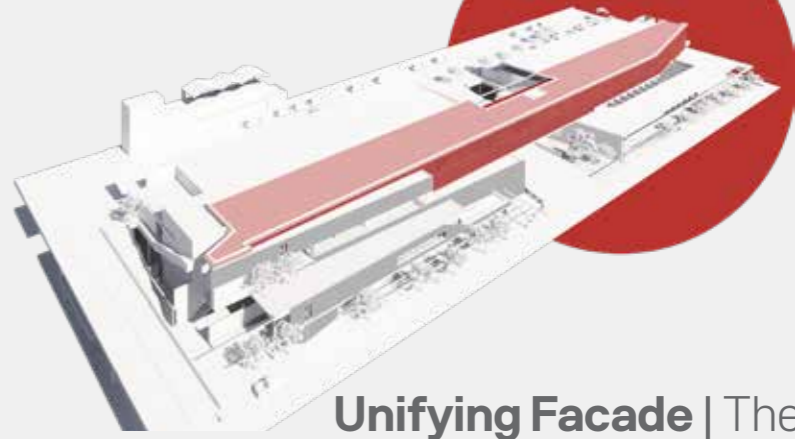
Workshop Space.

**Programmed Staircase | The Connector.**

Outdoor Workshop Space.

**programmatic Cacophony manifested in space.**

Source: Author.



**Unifying Facade |** The bridge.

Source: Author.



**VOLUME vs Void.**

Source: Author.

Source: Author.

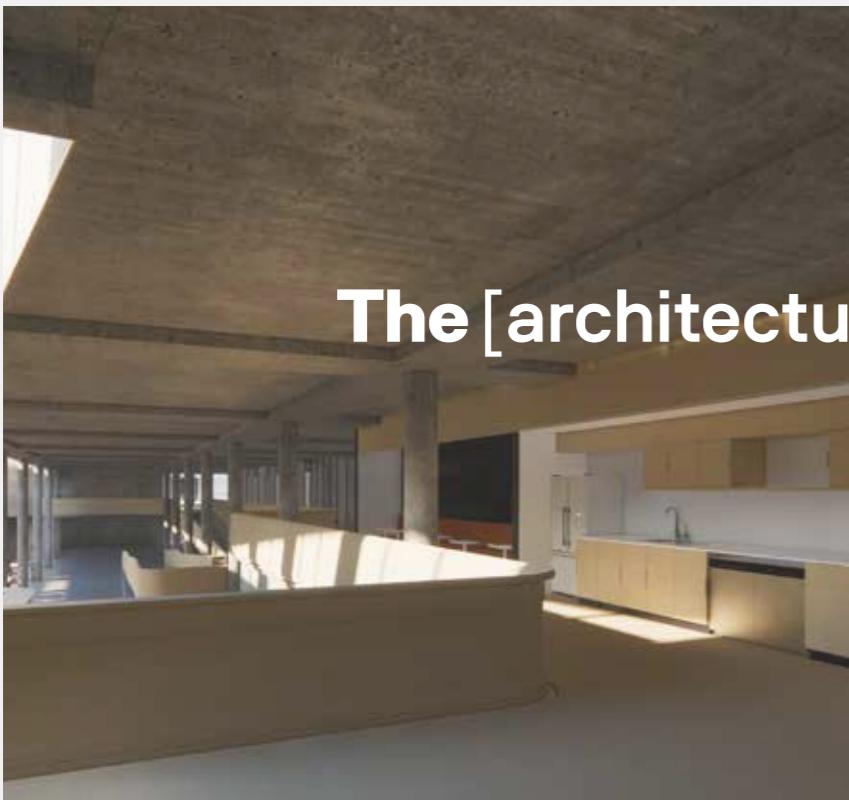
Contextual



RENDER: Workshop spaces on Old Marine Dr.

Source: Author.

back-ground set for animation.



Source: Author.

The [architecture] of making.

precinct 03 | the Receiver. Old Marine Dr

Existing PRASA Office.

Old Marine Dr

Programmed Staircase | The Connector.

Informal Trade.

Cafe | Eatery.

The Maker's Space | formal exhibition.

Storage.

Open-air Workshop.

Admin.

The Maker's Space | Workshop.

Service Hoist | Elevator.

Informal Trade Storage.

Service | BOH | Parking.

Existing Rail Infrastructure.

### Old Marine Dr - Ground

Source: Author.

The Maker's Space | Knowledge Space.

The Maker's Space | Knowledge Space.

Programmed Staircase | The Connector.

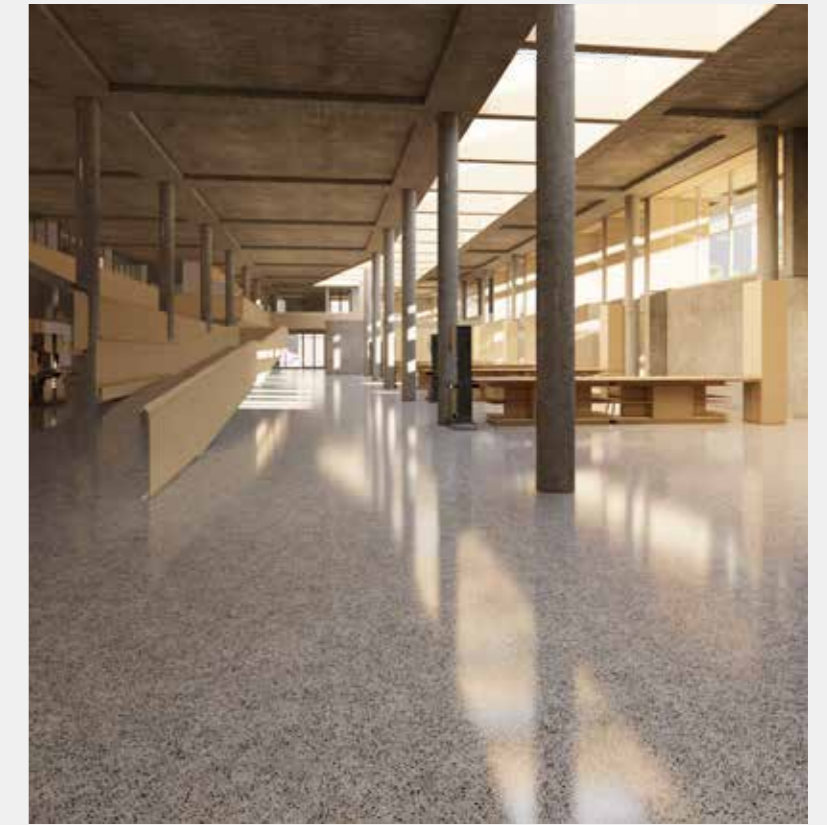
### Old Marine Dr - Mezzanine

Source: Author.





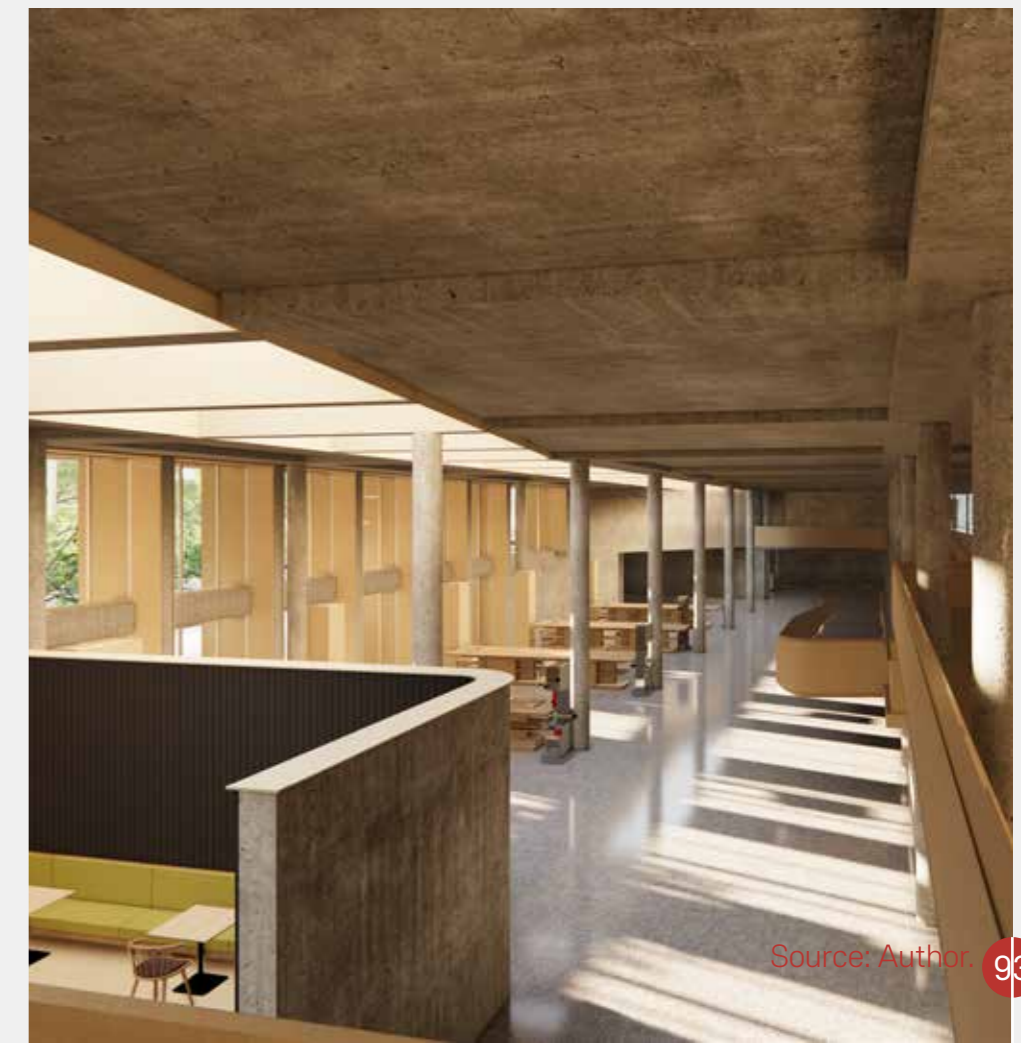
Source: Author.



Source: Author.



Source: Author.



Source: Author. 93

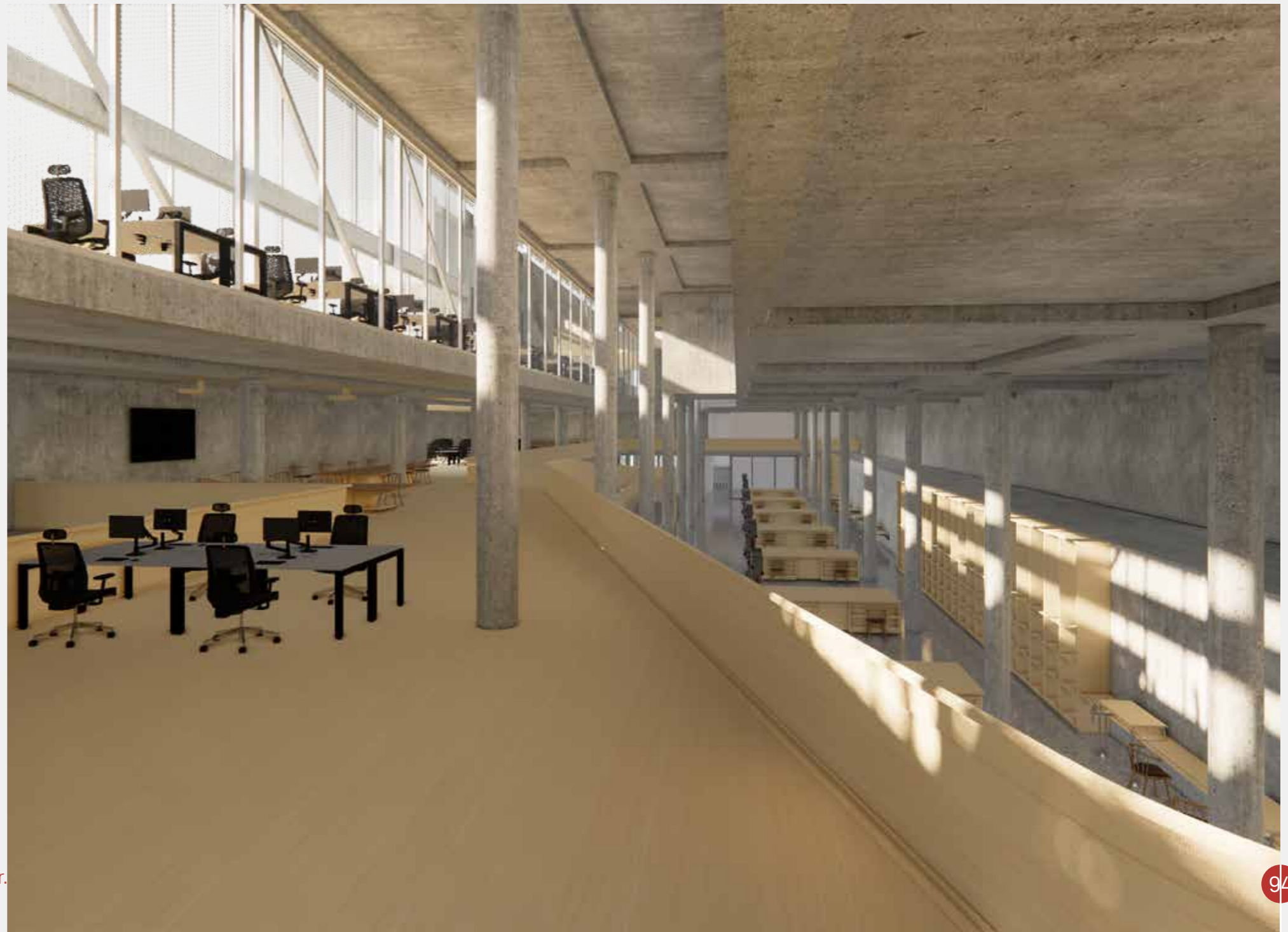


Source: Author.

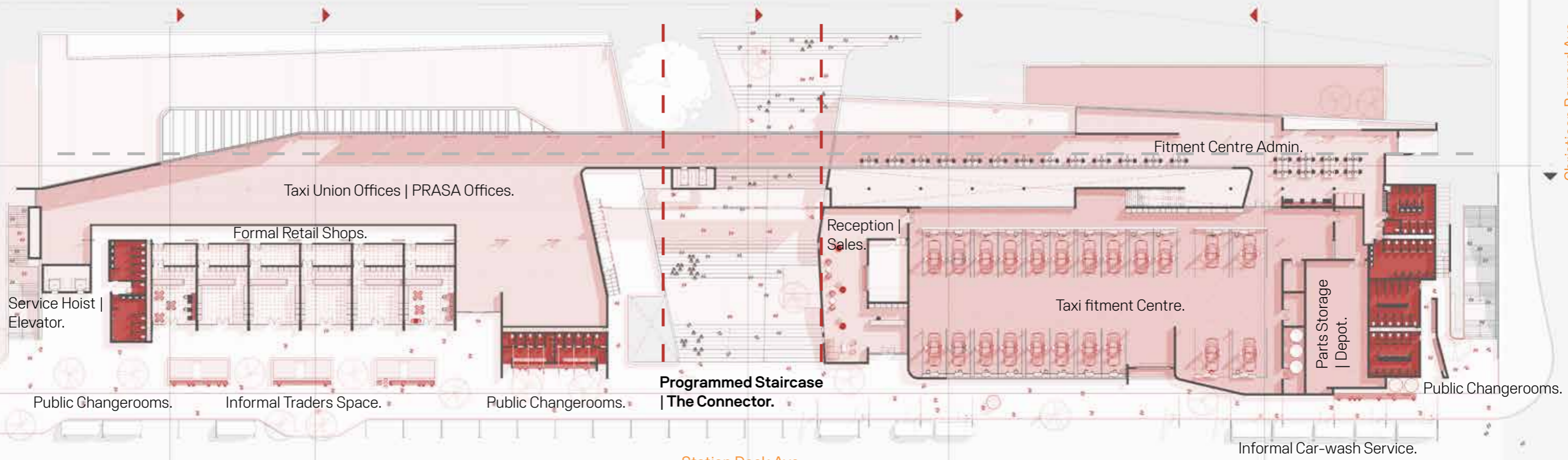


Source: Author.

RENDER: Collaborative educational spaces on Old Marine Dr Mezzanine.

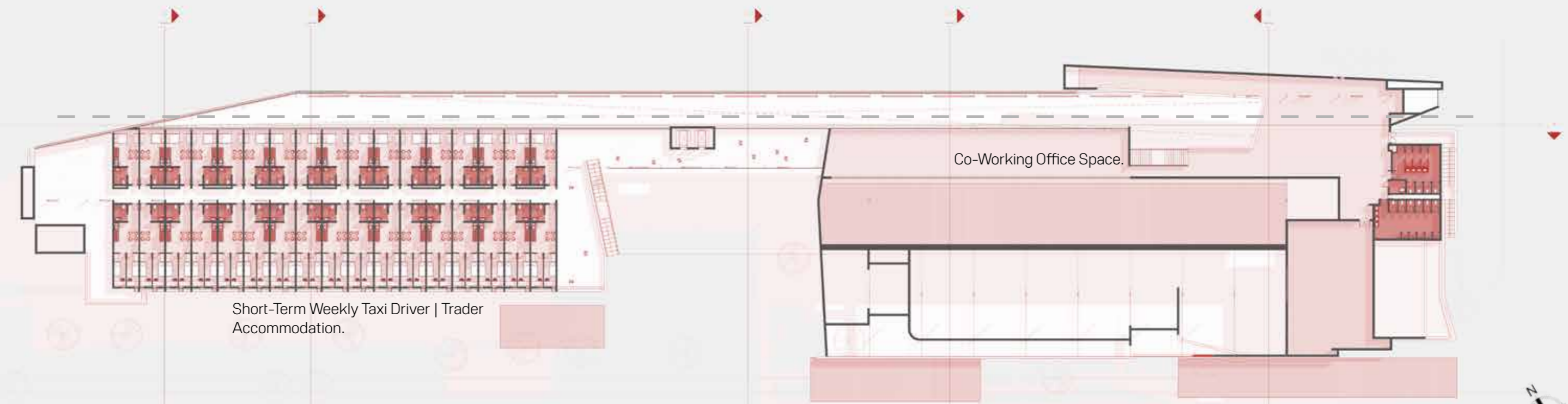


Source: Author.



**Station Deck Level.**

Source: Author.

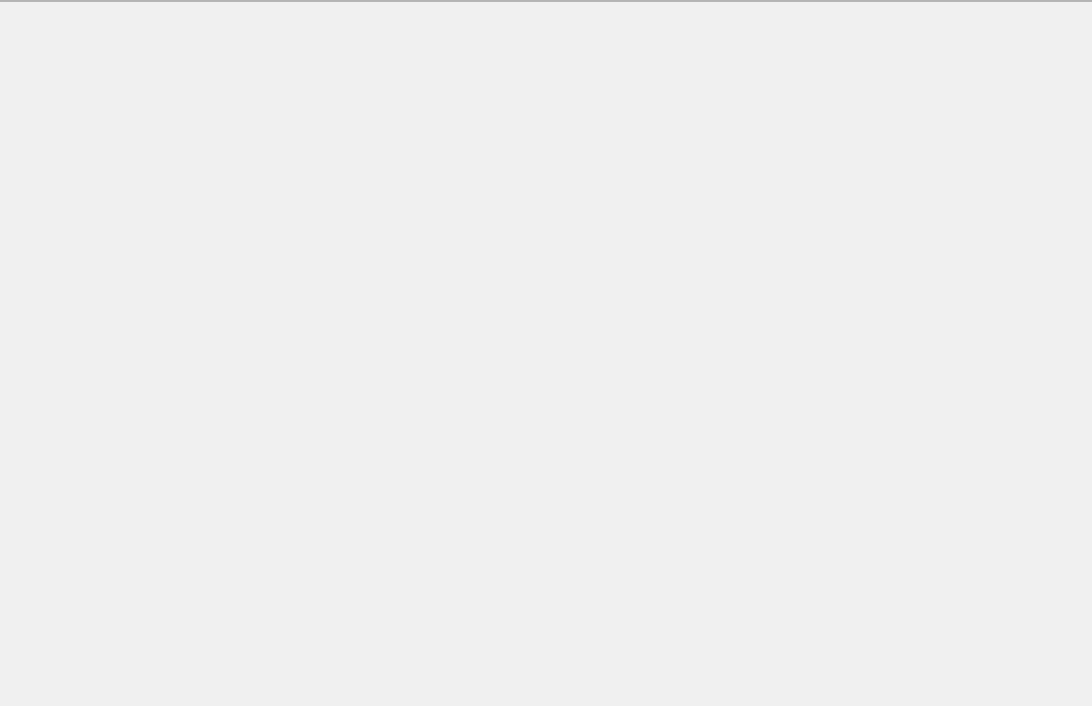


**Station Deck - First Floor.**

Source: Author.

Christian Barnard Ave.





Source: Author.

RENDER: Vacant flexible office space First Floor. Spatially dynamic.



Source: Author.

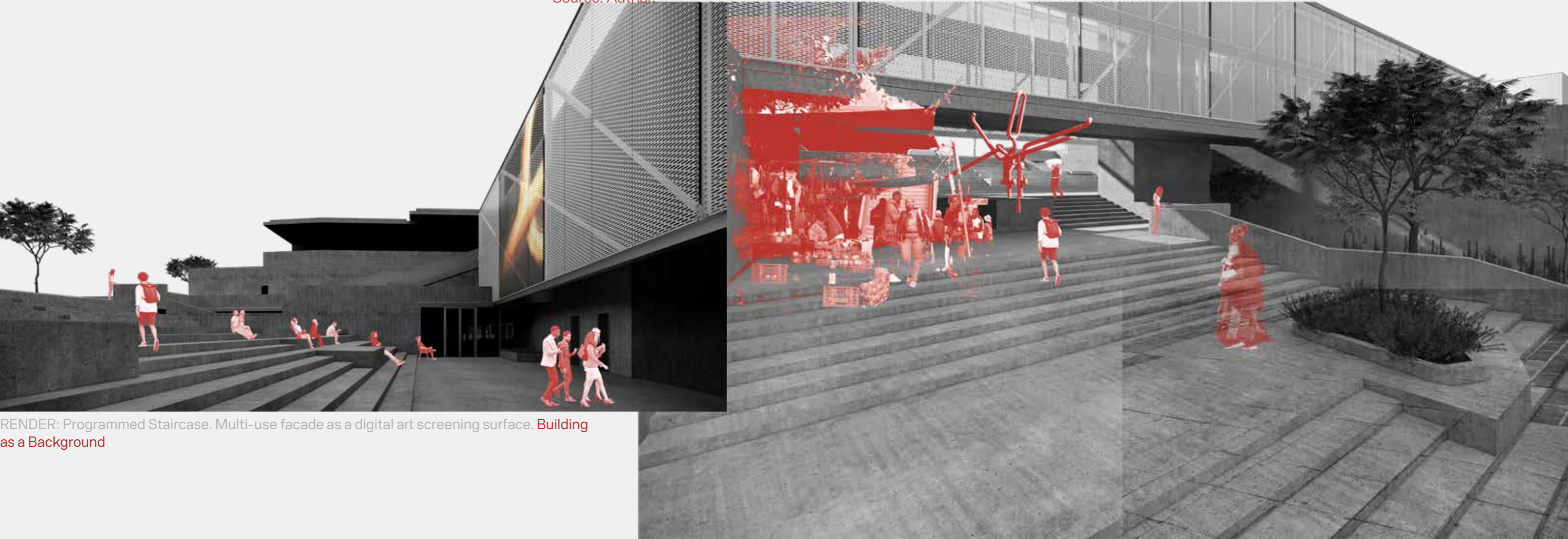
RENDER: Office space for Taxi Unions and PRASA on Station Deck Level.



Source: Author.

RENDER: Taxi Fitment Centre on Station Deck Level.

Source: Author.



RENDER: Programmed Staircase. Multi-use facade as a digital art screening surface. **Building as a Background**

RENDER: Programmed Staircase. Connections through informal trade, art exhibitions, places of rest and gatherings and a sculptural feature in the city.

Source: Author.



RENDER: Station Deck entrance. Informal car wash to enhance existing programmes on site and stimulate micro-economies and social relationships.

Source: Author.



RENDER: Station Deck public ablutions with spaces for waiting of your taxi. Formal and informal spaces symbiotically working together.

Source: Author.



RENDER: Old Marine Dr. Street interface providing spaces of occupation for informal traders and art exhibitions held in space but the Brutal building. **Building as Background to be animated by people.**

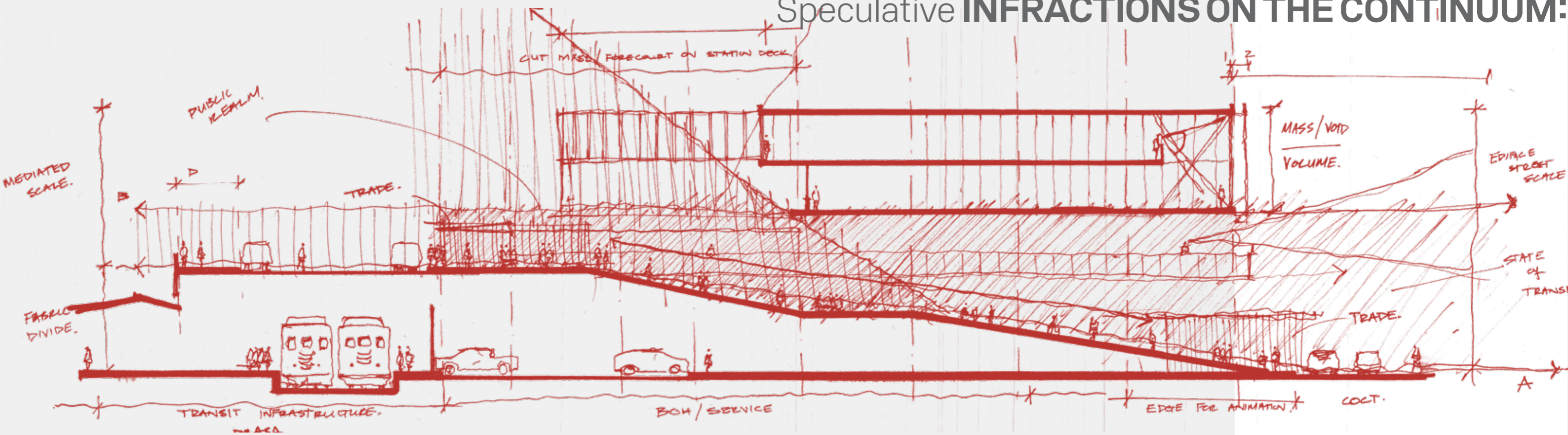


RENDER: Old Marine Dr. **THE CONNECTOR.**

Source: Author.

# State of perpetual **Transition.**

## Speculative **INFRACTIONS ON THE CONTINUUM:**



Source: Author.

ABSTRACTION: The initial spatial section of an idea of the connection of the two precincts.

**Speculative Cross Section.**



Source: Author.

Section - AA



Source: Author.

Section - BB



Source: Author.

Section - CC



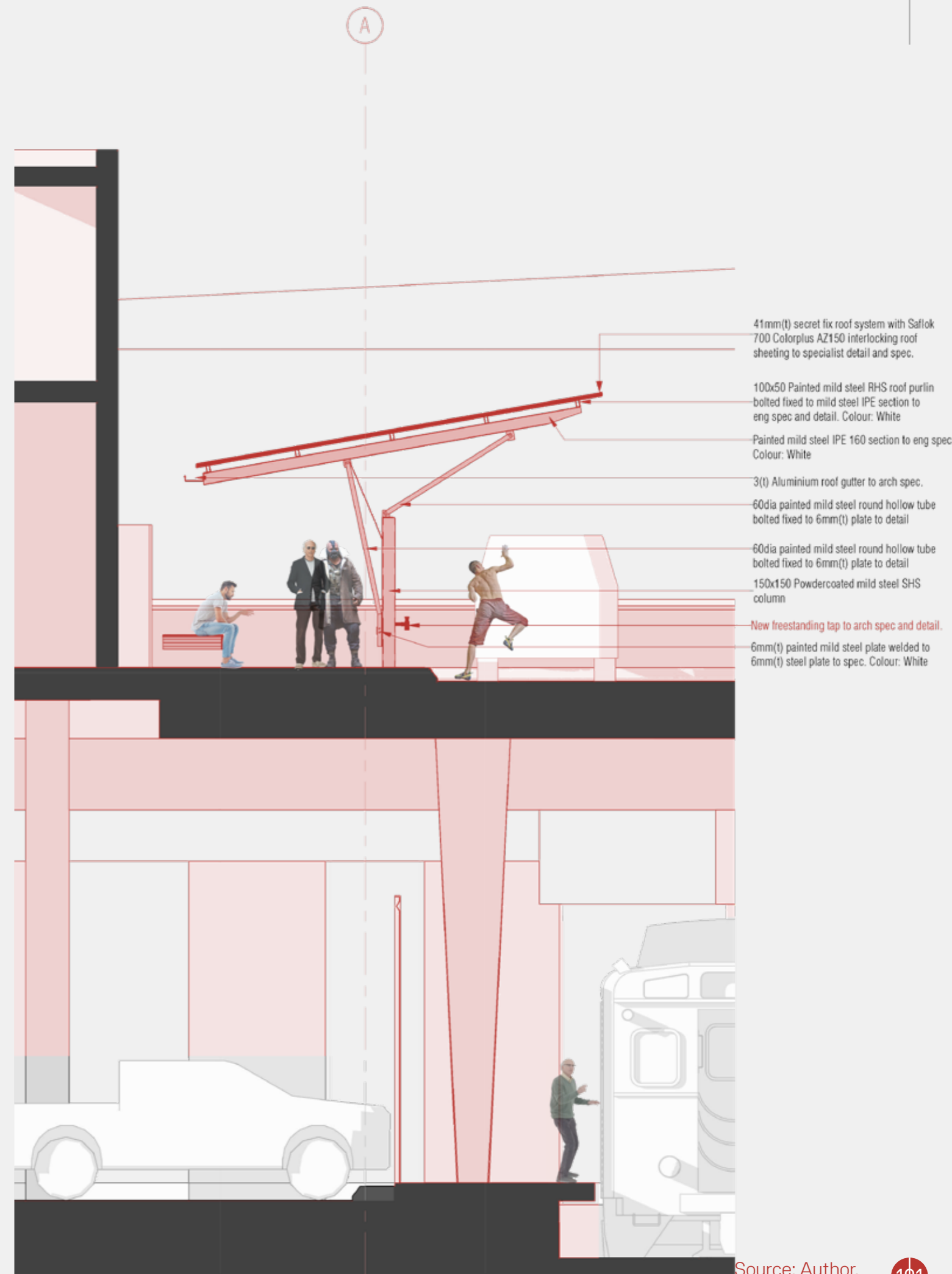
Source: Author.

Section - DD



Source: Author.

Section - EE



Section - Through Car wash.

Source: Author.



**Secondary Circulation | Station Deck Entrance.**

**Primary connector | Public Programmed Staircase.**

**Station Deck break-Out Space.**

**Secondary Circulation | Taxi Rank connector.**

a constant play on volume.



RENDER: View from Christiaan Barnard St.

Source: Author.



RENDER: View from Civic Centre.

Source: Author.



Source: Author.

RENDER: Station Deck retail Informal | Formal trading spaces. Accommodation on First Floor. Taxi parking and car wash. Various spaces for socio-economic interactions.



RENDER: Bird's eye-view of the Station Deck street interface in relation to the greater transport hub.

Source: Author.



RENDER: View from Old Marine Dr. approaching from CBD.

Source: Author.

Source: Author.





Source: Author.



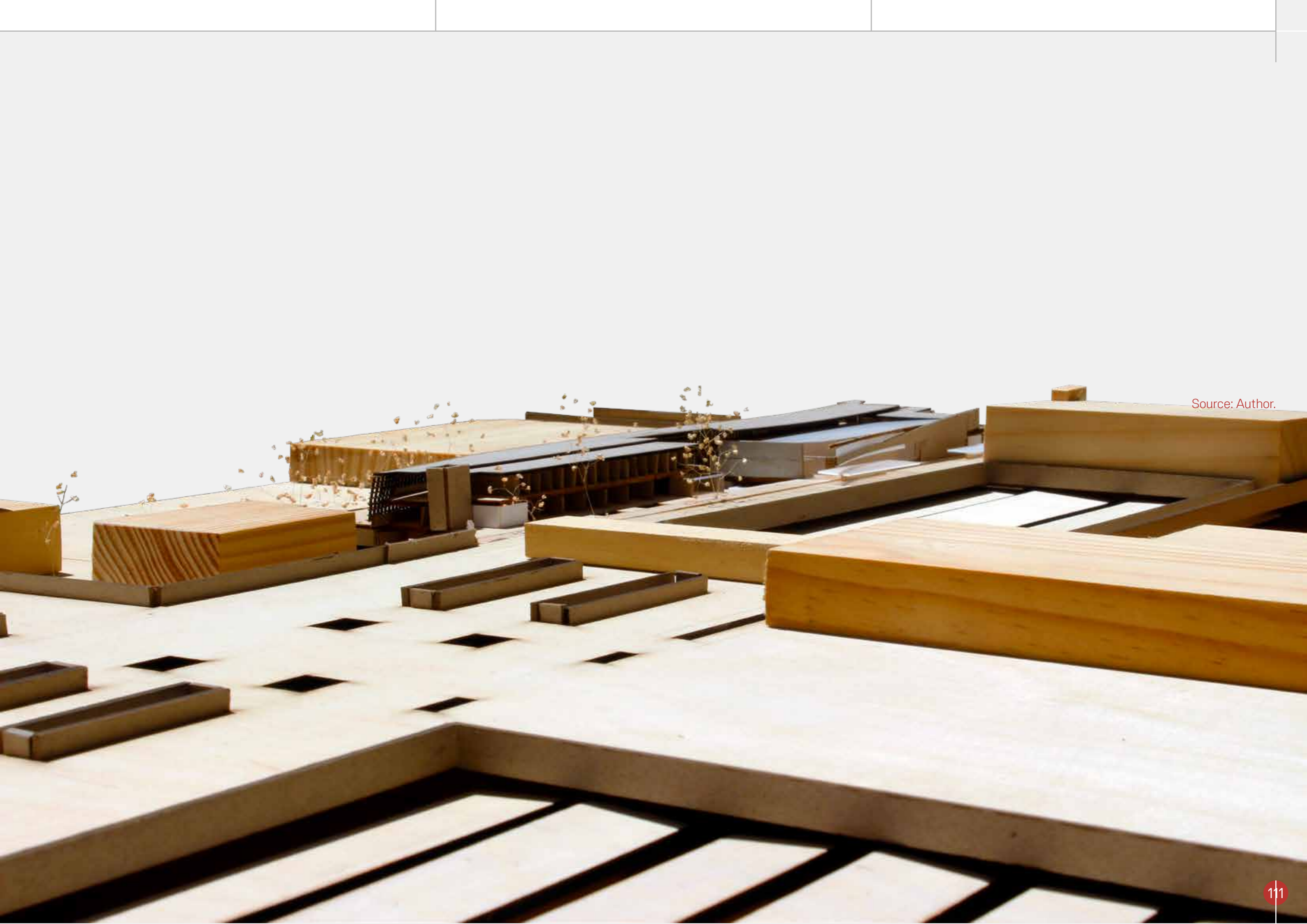
Source: Author.



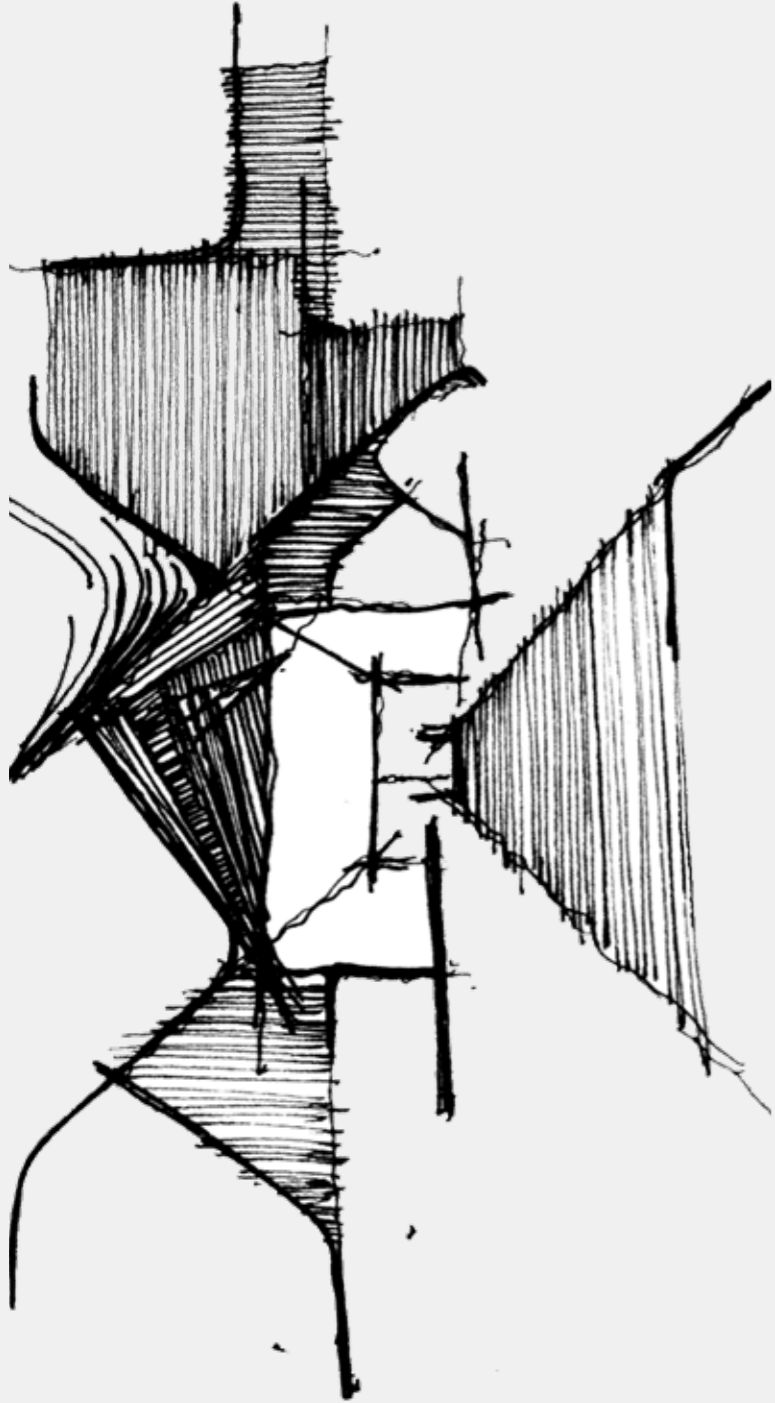
Source: Author.



Source: Author.



Source: Author.



**Closing Thoughts.**

The urban landscape as a holding mechanism for social engagement through spatial considerations lies in the embedded experiences had by the individual's epistemological positioning. Perception of space and the potential it has, to improve socio-spatial equality through architecture and planning locates the city as the ideal setting in which to mould towards cultivating spontaneous events of contradictions (Low, 2003). Facilitating the transients experience through thresholds and boundaries while grounding the permanent occupant in space[place] alludes towards an architecture that transcends the concrete[physical] while traversing the abstract in an attempt at formulating and grounding experience in their material composition. Thus architecture can be seen a collection of materials for which the user generates meaning and creates place from space (Zumthor, 2010).

This in the context of Cape Town will look to be achieved through the re-contextualising and re-imagining of what the city is and how it operates. Through the understanding of the formation of the current social order, the proposed architectural gesture will look at inverting these conditions to posit an alternative(Koolhaus & Mau, 1995). The redefining of the occupation of public space and how it is produced within the city will influence an architectural project's attempt at creating a place from space and encourage relationships from all walks of life.

The inhabitation of the in-between[liminal] both concrete and abstract, will shift the paradigm of the relation between the [FORM] al and in[FORM]al aspects of the city, back by transport infrastructure exploitation in the receiving and releasing of people in the city. Shifting conditions towards the anticipated increased density[congestion] of the city forms a vital part of creating spaces of inhabitation and economic sustainability within the Cape Town CBD and Foreshore precincts thus ensuring a thriving socio-economic environment. The purpose of this inquiry was that of gathering information through the testing of theories that will provide the framework in which to traverse when implementing a design on the city.

The development of set of contradicting ideas of equal importance(polyphony) has provided a unique springboard for which to develop a robust and agile architecture that potentially inverts the prevailing spatial paradigm of the city.

Developing a framework for which architecture, positively impacts the spaces in the city both, the in and out through a careful application of boundaries holds structured through material composition in the attempt at creating polyphony, personified.

The implementation of the theories discussed will look to spatially respond to initial statement posited below.

*"The right to the city is not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart's desire."*  
(Harvey, 2003)



Source: Author.



Source: Author.



Source: Author.

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**the END.**