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## Contradiction and Duality within the City: the House of Arts and Culture

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# CONTRADICTION AND DUALITY WITHIN THE CITY **ANDREI SDRULA**



ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY GRADUATE THESIS PROJECT SPRING/FALL 2009



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# **A PERSONAL MANIFESTO**

Building art is a synthesis of life in materialized form. We should try to bring in under the same hat not a splintered way of thinking, but all in harmony together. -**Alvar Alto**

Architecture is a great paradox in itself: it makes the entire world a stage for good and evil behavior intentionally and accidentally. At the macro scale it is the thread that holds the fabric of civilization together, and at the same time a sort of masochistic joke that we play on ourselves because it accelerates the eventual demise of the planet. At the meso scale it is the manifestation of our ambitions, pretty and ugly, despairing and uplifting, spoken all within the same breath. This dual natured role lies within the altered environment and not the profession itself which is why I categorize anything that is made by man to be architecture on some level; lasting or finite, it does not matter because our environment is comprised of both. From the banal to the extravagant, and the macro to the micro, these contradicting and dual implications are always present.

Contradiction in architecture is a double-entendre itself because it allows intention to denounce moral duty and at the same time it provokes emotions of excitement and feelings of joy. Can the true power of architecture lie in its ability to contradict itself, as well as its surrounding environment? When architecture approaches its trajectory with multiple concerns and is cognizant of its contradicting implications it has the potential for greater benefit. This is duality at work because we long for the lasting and the changeable at once. Our global civilization has become a present day Athens, constantly in flux. Rather than the Nile or Indus Valley civilizations which were permanent and stagnant, we are constantly innovating, duplicating, and evolving all aspects of society. We are now left longing for stability while unable to stop the momentum of change and it has left us schizophrenic.



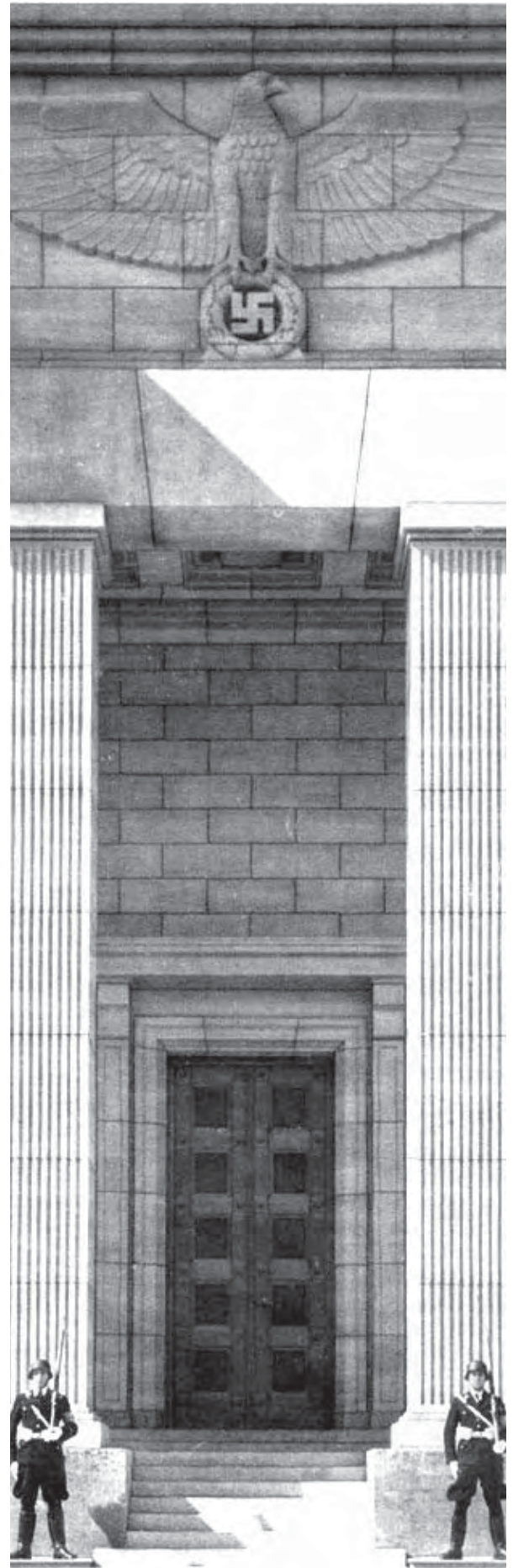






In the Neue Reichskanzlei Albert Speer designed the marble gallery leading up to Hitler's office to be extra polished, extra luxurious, and extra grandiose. The intent was to make the incoming emissary walking through it feel uneasy, intimidated, and uncomfortable; thus enabling architecture to become the instrument once again, one of anguish, a false facade that was facilitated by luxurious material and classical order. Architecture can unfortunately bring as much sorrow as it can joy; furthermore one cannot understand its implications without also analyzing the outside influences on the profession and product. There are so many forces at work in architecture that it cannot be analyzed as a singular entity because its very manifestation is the work of contradicting forces. Politics, economics, and material allocation are not always in line with the utopian ideals of the architect, so one almost always has to bow to the other.

If architecture is inherently associated with ethics, morals, and values (the good ones) then why does it have a double-edged sword reputation? It is not always mere naïveté that propels man to wreck elevated aspirations, yet it is sad when architecture becomes the tool for this. So can these unethical scars be undone through auspicious intervention rather than a quick tabula rasa? The answer is an unequivocal yes. Architecture can in fact contradict its environment where it needs to and it must, to undo the blunders of the past. This not only reinforces the sublime power of architecture but also our acknowledgement of the battles we have dealt with, are dealing with, and will need to deal with. Architecture is left incomplete when it doesn't take full advantage of this puissance because it is the supreme physical manifestation of all possible hopes, ideals, and aspirations; good and evil, untaught and premeditated. The built environment that suggests fear, ignorance, and submission can be confronted with architecture that implies understanding, freedom, and transparency because contradiction is the spark of dramatic interaction and thus the precedent to excitement.



**DUALITY**





Can a dual role be brought into the final product known as architecture so that it fulfills the comprehensive vision of a harmonious environment? If so, can architecture anticipate issues of the perpetual flux and desired constancy? Can the duality of architecture lead to universal parameters being set at the same time as maintaining specific principles that address the issues of context?

From the shack to the castle, architecture has metaphysical properties at all scales. All the intervention by man carries psychological weight because it has a fundamental allegorical duality. The notion of duality does not only lie in abstract comparison but it is applicable to concrete logistics as well. The power of architecture is thus measured through its dual nature because we acknowledge that it has a commitment to universal and specific parameters. Following this method, architecture must take a holistic approach: one that analyzes and takes into consideration all the possible aspects of the situation before embarking on any journey of form or function. This way we can truly understand what is feasible and influence architecture that transcends its physical properties and begins to facilitate economic, ecological, and social innovation while sparking new thoughts and feelings into its inhabitants. So its metaphysical qualities are acknowledged and its responsibility to the earth and people is established.

Duality must also play a role in the actual space created by architecture because it is applicable to the many levels that need to be addressed: when the individual components work with a dual logic the whole building and its surroundings benefit. In a time when space and resources are being depleted at an increasing rate it is the architect's duty to facilitate more inventive, witty, and multifaceted ways of creating space.





# PRINCIPLES OF THE **MANIFESTO**

The background of the slide is a detailed engraving. It depicts a classical scene with several figures. In the foreground, a young, winged figure (likely a cherub or putto) is shown in profile, looking towards the right. Behind them, a group of figures, including a man in a long robe and a woman, are seated or standing in a landscape with large, gnarled trees. The style is characteristic of 18th or 19th-century engraving, with fine lines and cross-hatching for shading.

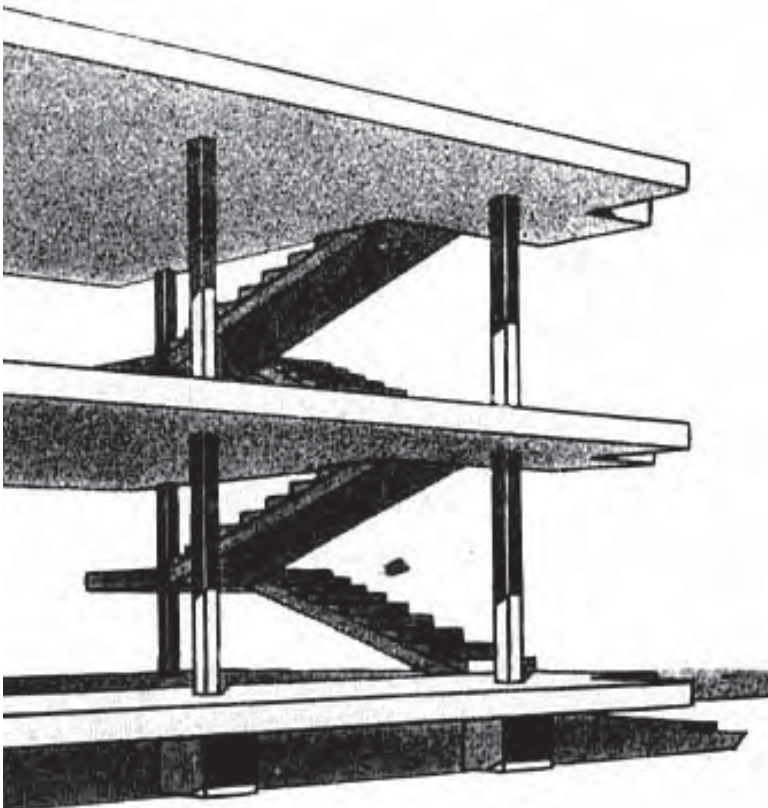
The most important question that probably exists in architecture today is how to change the role of this discipline from an affair of the elite to the satisfaction of mediocre needs and the happiness of the masses. The coming era will be crucial for the classical role of architecture because it will have to transcend its conceptualization from the artistic and have a more positive social impact since it is the convergence of the debate on political, economic, ecological, and societal demands. Can architecture have a dual role as the social art, something that generates a specific direction rather than just a just reaction? Using the notions of contradiction and duality universal parameters can be set, informing and being informed by the contextual:





- Ethical environments take into account the whole population, making decisions based on the inclusion of the whole rather than the exclusion of many with values that everyone can relate to: elegance, strength, lightness, heaviness, purity, transparency, suspense, and engagement. A synthesis of contradicting motifs that dually reinforce different aspects of the project express greater levels of inclusion.

- It is important not to put a happy face on post-modernism, so trends and fashions should not dictate the form; a dismissal of unnecessary characteristics and layers leads to an accurate experience of the space and reveals the true nature of the space. To contradict the intentions of the primitive hut is to pervert what is sustainable.



- We must not waste our time, energy, and materials trying to make up for qualities the space itself does not already possess. Instead we can learn from proven measures of acceptable complex human interfacing; take the city for example: a building can take on the same exciting intentions as the street.

- Every unnecessary addition disables opportunity and each architectural event leads to the reduction of possibility. Thus, order and hierarchy should stem from the programs ability to reinforce, balance, or defy itself with as little effort as possible.





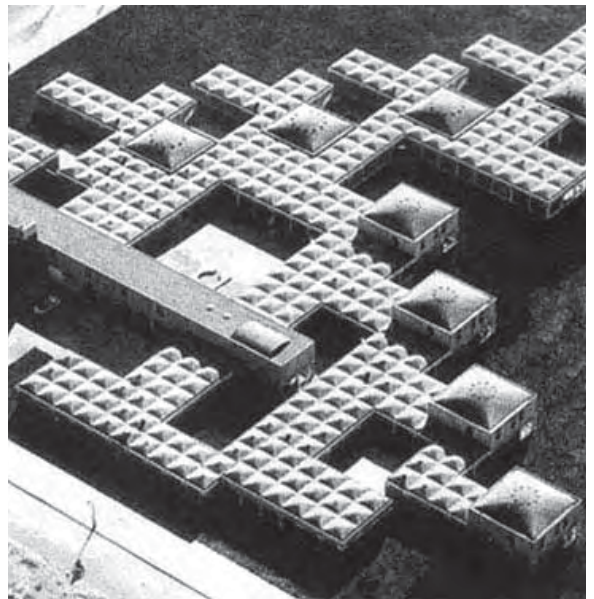
- Flexibility should be a key component within a building itself because a change in condition implies unpredictability, chance, and thus: excitement. The most complex aspects of a project can be the extent to which programmatic, metaphoric, and formal intentions coincide with political, economic, and social issues. Program can be the catalyst for hybridization, proximity, friction, and overlap: all instruments of contradiction and duality.



- A building should supply the occupant with natural light and air over artificial substitutions in order to facilitate our physical and psychological needs because we are biological creatures and a connection to the organic world is essential for complacency. The acknowledgement of nature as a critical aspect of any project is crucial to its success.

- Sublimely articulated structure should become the signature of a building's dual intent, where structural form shows the clear hierarchy and interconnected network of the project's social capabilities.

- o The structure of a building can represent the complex parts of society through its arrangement and integration. The parts inform the whole and vice versa, thus the metaphor implies unity rather than segregation.



- Larger projects should be divided into smaller components to reestablish the human scale, thus becoming less bureaucratic, alienating, and rigid; and more understandable and transparent through the contradiction of unethical practice.

## **STARTING** POINT(S) OF INVESTIGATION:



*Lebbeus Woods: Columbia Master Plan Proposal*





Architecture has always tried to provide answers to questions that are unanswerable; another route could pursue architecture that asks questions through its very manifestation. Architecture could contrast its surroundings for a positive impact like a virus is used to combat an illness. By leaving projects open to questions through dual intentions that potentially contradict each other we inject a sense of possibility that can contrast the stable core of the project's more stagnant characteristics. The results are left open-ended and based on contextual specifics, thus the needs inform the intervention.

# HISTORY & IDENTITY: **PERSPECTIVES** ON A CITY



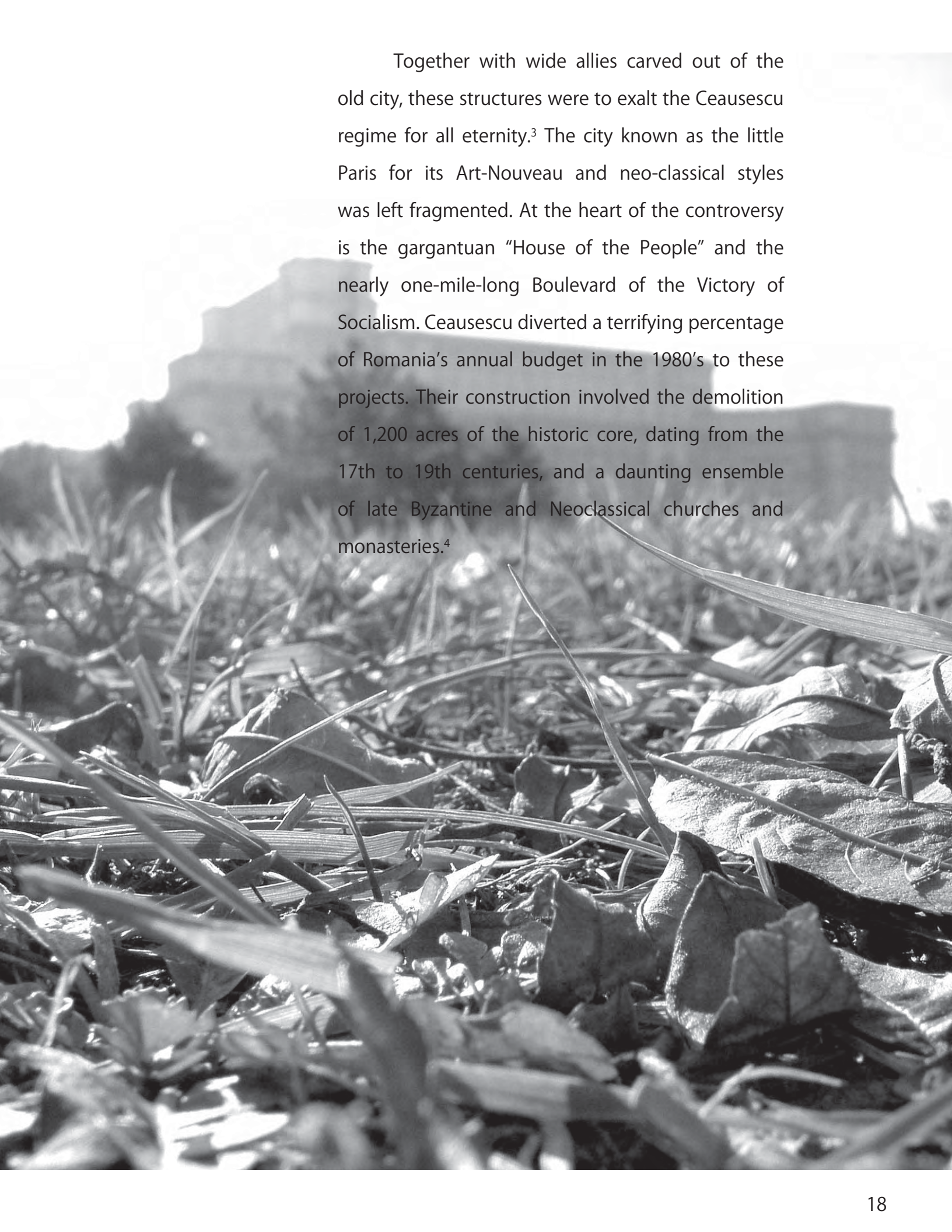
The truth is our master, we do not master the truth.  
-Mihai Eminescu

# THE FORMER **PETIT** PARIS

In post-WWII Europe, Bucharest, of all the capitals of the countries belonging to the former Soviet Eastern Bloc, Bucharest was the only city which exhibited a total disregard for its urban tradition. Only the rulers of Romania forged ahead in the 1980s with a megalomaniacal building program which suggested that Stalinism – at least in its symbolic form – was not really dead.<sup>1</sup> The totalitarian political system imposed through a gesture of force and strength, the most drastic remodeling truly known in a large city in order to create a singular initiative was undertaken. Foreign to the spirit and needs of the region and having only one goal: glorifying excessive power.<sup>2</sup> Old structures were swept away by the Communists to make way for new palaces.

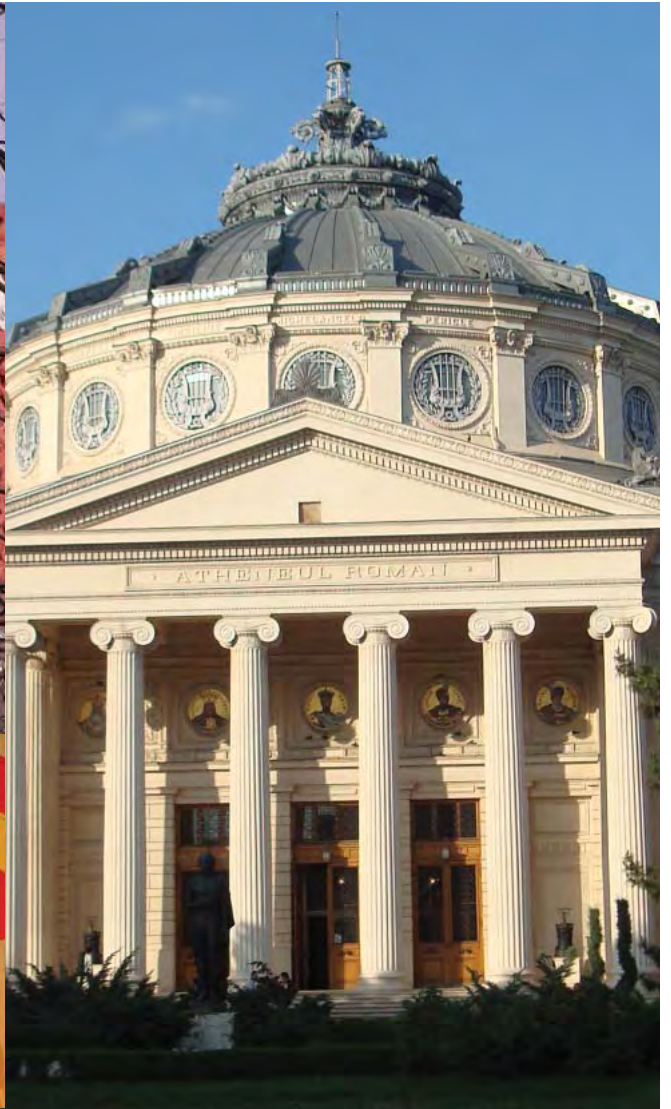




A black and white photograph showing a field of dry grass and leaves in the foreground. In the background, there is a large, dark, rectangular structure, possibly a building or a monument, which is slightly out of focus. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Together with wide allies carved out of the old city, these structures were to exalt the Ceausescu regime for all eternity.<sup>3</sup> The city known as the little Paris for its Art-Nouveau and neo-classical styles was left fragmented. At the heart of the controversy is the gargantuan “House of the People” and the nearly one-mile-long Boulevard of the Victory of Socialism. Ceausescu diverted a terrifying percentage of Romania’s annual budget in the 1980’s to these projects. Their construction involved the demolition of 1,200 acres of the historic core, dating from the 17th to 19th centuries, and a daunting ensemble of late Byzantine and Neoclassical churches and monasteries.<sup>4</sup>







The appropriation of religious monuments for political purposes was neither new nor unique to Ceausescu. Such strategies have been more generally characteristic of totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century, although often the appropriation of sacred value has taken the form of symbolic appropriation, without the actual destruction of physical buildings. Ceausescu did both.





By seizing on this aura of spirituality and destroying a large number of churches in the surrounding region, Ceausescu infused his new building with sacral authority and ensured the absence of any competitive spiritual authority.<sup>5</sup> This project was of such vast dimensions and soulless ambition that its cruel reality can only be compared to the death-worshiping pyramids of Egypt.<sup>6</sup>



*Map of destroyed urban fabric with Communist interventions outlined in black.*







A fifth of Bucharest's urban fabric had been destroyed by the end of the communist regime in 1989. Thousands of Romanians were left displaced from the demolition. The Grand Boulevard to Socialism was used as a plinth on which the main facade of the House of the People would be seen specifically. A method of destruction and rebuilding resulted in a complete shift of the city's fabric as well as the construction of one of the largest buildings in the world.



**THE COMMUNIST INTERVENTION**

The construction of the palace required 20,000 workers, 700 architects, and 200 specialists. After the revolution in 1989, the palace became open to the public, and then converted into the House of Parliament. Many Romanians still find the achievement of the building admirable, but the image of the palace still holds horrific memories and negative connotations despite the building's current function.



The socialist boulevard, now referred to as Unirii Boulevard, is a distinct and deliberate East-West cut through the center of the city. The idea was that the Boulevard would act as a wall shielding views of the ancient tissue of the city. The Socialist regime wanted to put an emphasis on the new Communist era while hiding and resenting any historical notions of a Romanian legacy.





# BUCURESTI 1927

APPROXIMATE  
LOCATION OF THE  
HOUSE OF THE  
PEOPLE TODAY





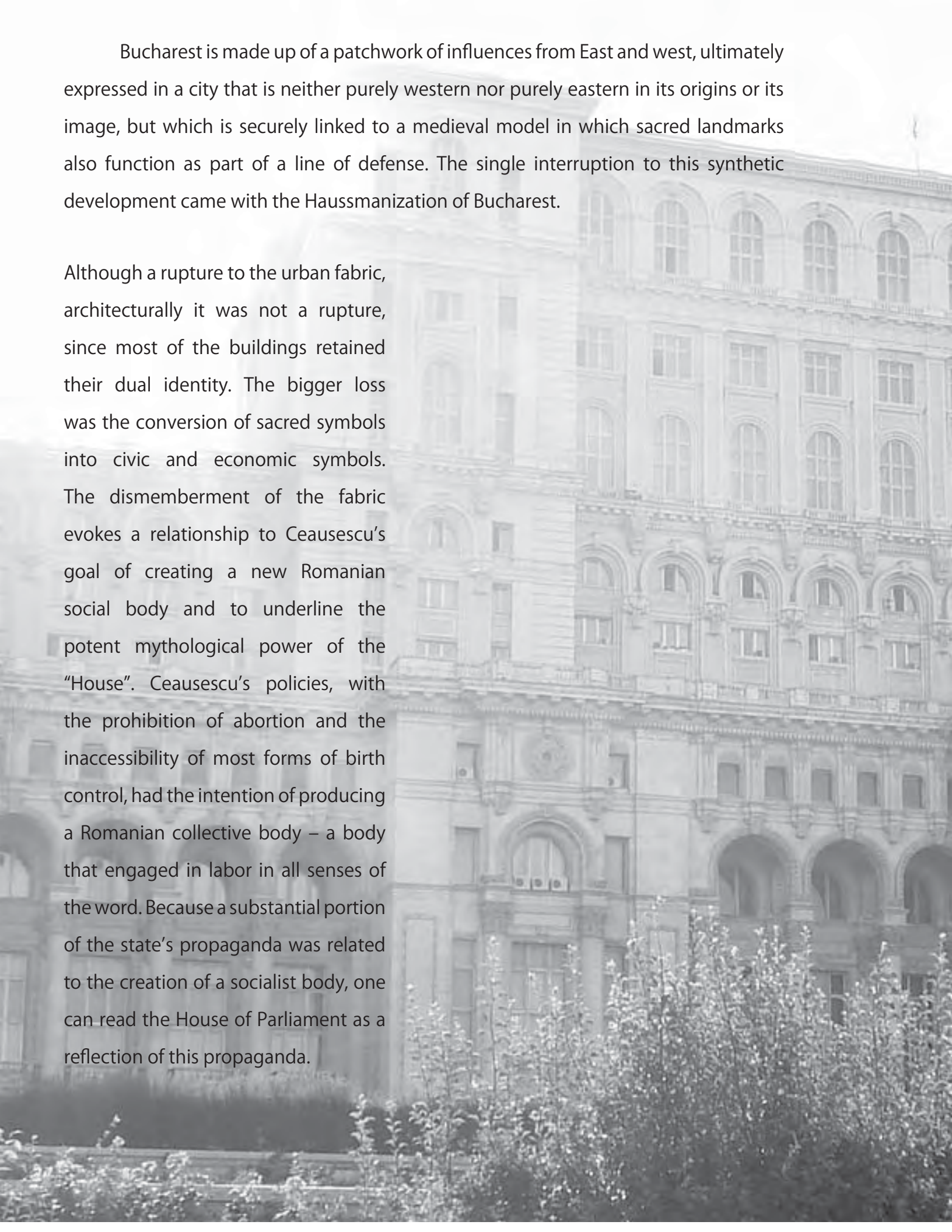


Residents had one days notice to evacuate before their homes got razed to make way for the House. This, plus a no animal rule in the new Communist apartments explains why there are so many stray dogs in the city.



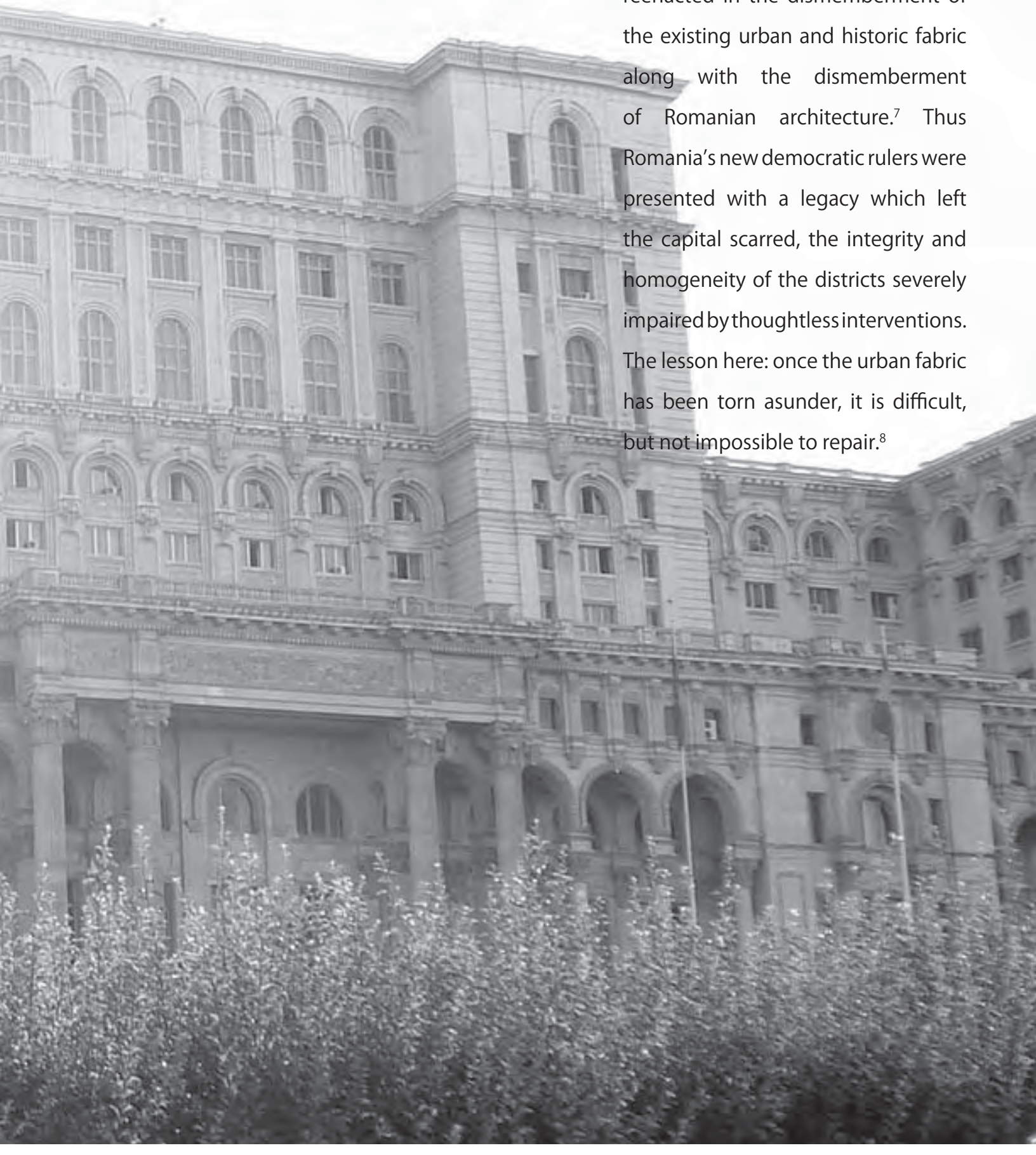
Bucharest is made up of a patchwork of influences from East and west, ultimately expressed in a city that is neither purely western nor purely eastern in its origins or its image, but which is securely linked to a medieval model in which sacred landmarks also function as part of a line of defense. The single interruption to this synthetic development came with the Haussmanization of Bucharest.

Although a rupture to the urban fabric, architecturally it was not a rupture, since most of the buildings retained their dual identity. The bigger loss was the conversion of sacred symbols into civic and economic symbols. The dismemberment of the fabric evokes a relationship to Ceausescu's goal of creating a new Romanian social body and to underline the potent mythological power of the "House". Ceausescu's policies, with the prohibition of abortion and the inaccessibility of most forms of birth control, had the intention of producing a Romanian collective body – a body that engaged in labor in all senses of the word. Because a substantial portion of the state's propaganda was related to the creation of a socialist body, one can read the House of Parliament as a reflection of this propaganda.





The state's metaphoric destruction and reconstruction of the Romanian family is then matched or reenacted in the dismemberment of the existing urban and historic fabric along with the dismemberment of Romanian architecture.<sup>7</sup> Thus Romania's new democratic rulers were presented with a legacy which left the capital scarred, the integrity and homogeneity of the districts severely impaired by thoughtless interventions. The lesson here: once the urban fabric has been torn asunder, it is difficult, but not impossible to repair.<sup>8</sup>





# A SCHIZOPHRENIC IDENTITY

The difficulty in understanding the specificity of Eastern European countries within the larger context of Europe is a result of the complexity of their context. Related to the same criteria and the condition of an incomplete modernity, a “mirror culture” complex is apparent in most Eastern European countries, dominating, at least in recent history, their self-image and placing them in a constant state of struggling to prove their “Westernness”, in spite of obvious differences. Although the national cultures often boast a rich heritage of poetry, literature, and music, their achievements have gone relatively unrecognized on the world stage, particularly in comparison to those of the Western European nations...The Romanians must therefore stand up for themselves, for their own values and traditions, rather than allow some foreign power to dictate their destiny.<sup>11</sup>

The specificity of a context in which religion is revived as a public value after 45 years of official denial; where people tend to look abroad for models and those provided by frenetic consumerism become new collective symbols of power; in which collective concerns are often sublimated into nationalism; in which daily life happens in the shadow of the explicit (built) or implicit (felt and acted) legacy of communist totalitarianism, translates into incredibly complex practical and philosophical constraints. However, the complex and difficult context does not necessarily equate with the lack of architectural value, and one should be aware of the inherent richness of such cultural conditions which can result in new ways of making buildings.<sup>12</sup>





*Images of the city from the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*











The ethical content of architecture in Romania is more obvious as it painfully raises questions on the value of the outcome and consequently on the enabling or disabling potential of the Romanian order of complexity. This specific complexity attaches some value to all architectural strategies, rejecting attempts to achieve an ideologically-free efficiency like the one exercised by Western architects in complex post-capitalist conditions. In a country where everything is judged in an attempt to recover a lost morality and civic structure, the kind of architecture which I propose is firstly an ethical and political issue before it becomes architectural. In modern societies where collective consciousness has been replaced by subjective judgments and beliefs, the architect's only possible role is that of a mediator of the social context into an architectural social content. The project can thus acquire a cathartic power and illuminate the understanding and experiences of other people, to ultimately make "ethics visible in space". In Romania the architect has the power to say what is right and what is wrong, even if this judgment falls within ideological discourses. In this sense, the architect is entitled to, and required to create a vision in the sense of reciprocity between reflection and praxis.<sup>13</sup>





*The former Communist security building, destroyed, and converted into offices.*



In Bucharest the architectural approach must be articulate, intelligible, communicable, and debatable, such that it becomes part of a collective endeavor. To better facilitate these concepts the architectural form could account for both the specific complexity of the context and the possibility of exchange with the rest of Europe by using Romanian synthesis after the concept formulated by historian Nicolae Iorga. In several instances, the architecture of Romania has adopted a synthesis of foreign influences which have been adapted to suit the local needs by means of mutation within the vernacular. As in previous instances of Romanian synthesis, the vernacular can offer the core on which international models can be grafted and accommodated. It is not in the formal outlook of the tradition but in its content, in its way of living and operating that the project can find a core to support the complex requirements of the contemporary context and the necessary exchanges with the rest of Europe. This architecture can go forward, or go backwards. Or perhaps it could go elsewhere?<sup>14</sup>



*and neo-classical villa next to a modernist apartment from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and from the 21<sup>st</sup>.*



# A SUBLIME PRESENCE

The Socialist stage was never to serve; for the uprisings of December 1989 and the televised trial and execution of Ceausescu and his wife took place against the backdrop of the older public squares of the city.<sup>9</sup> Slavok Zizek begins his Critique of Ideology with a reference to the Romanian flag:

The most sublime image that emerged in the political upheavals of the last years – and the term sublime is to be conceived here in the strictest Kantian sense – was undoubtedly the unique picture from the time of the violent overthrow of Ceausescu in Romania: the rebels waving the national flag, the Communist symbol cut out, so that instead of the symbol standing for the organizing principle of the national life, there was nothing but a hole in its centre.

Zizek introduces the image as a representative of an “open” situation, when the old order having lost its hegemonical power has not yet been replaced by the new one:

*...and what really matters is that the masses who poured into the streets of Bucharest “experienced” the situation as “open”, that they participated in the in the unique intermediate state of passage from one discourse (social link) to another, when, for a brief, passing moment, the hole in the big Other, the symbolic order, became visible.*

Here the system of the social link was suspended as the hole was cut, allowing and demanding the intellectual reflection and occupying both the place of the hole and the time, all the time. Zizek continues:

*The enthusiasm which carried them was literally the enthusiasm over this hole, not yet hegemonised by any positive ideological project; all ideological appropriations (from the nationalistic to the liberal-democratic) entered the stage afterwards and endeavored to “kidnap” the process which originally was not their own.*





The historical moment of change was marked by the hole on the flag. It was of course sewn together fairly quickly, but surely this is not the only hole to need mending.<sup>10</sup>







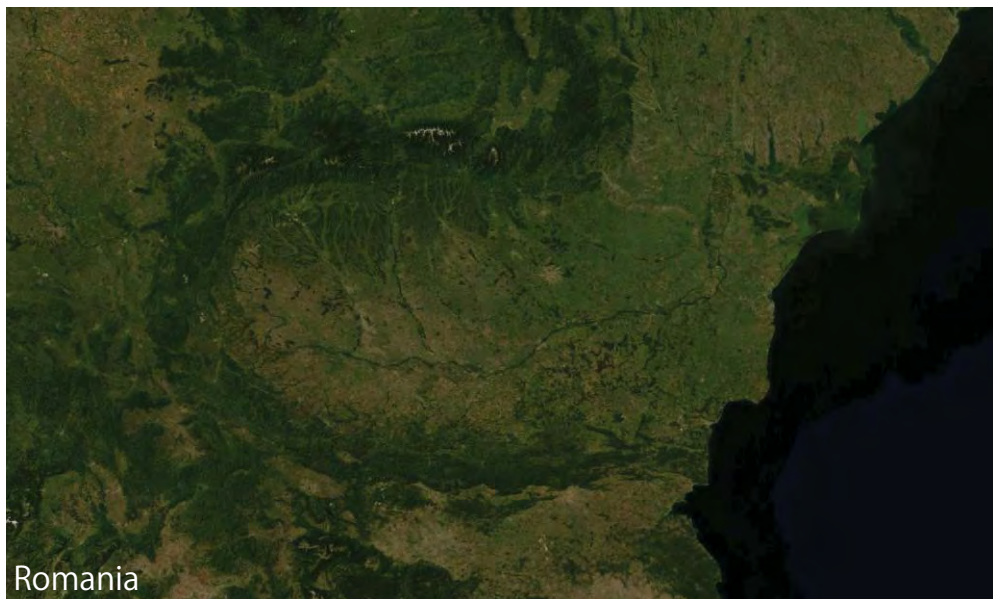
# **PROPOSAL:** HOUSE OF THE ARTS & CULTURE

If artists use art to make political statements, is it legitimate to understand the blatantly political actions of politicians as performances and art?

If in some sense it is, does that allow us to see the performances of artists as models for the performances of ordinary citizens in their everyday lives, and can we then see both of these performances as the completion of or response to the performances initiated by a political ruler?

-Roann Barris







# PROJECT INTENTIONS

Healing the wound inflicted by Ceausescu is a top priority and must deal with a long standing debate over the origins of a Romanian national essence and the success of the totalitarian government in creating a “political theocracy” in relation to its eventual overthrow.<sup>15</sup> The aim of this project will be to reestablish a sense of interweaving urbanity focused on architectural reflection, highlighting the architectural vestiges of the past, confronting the Communist interventions, and providing space that is sublime for future development. A flexible urban network of buildings could come together to create pedestrian paths that weave through the streets erased by Ceausescu’s bulldozers and spaces highlighting traces of “historical memory” could be interconnected with green spaces.<sup>16</sup>

The goal being to revitalize a part of the heart of Bucuresti, to integrate the area into the dense urban fabric, and to offer program that can be utilized at all hours of the day and night because there is almost zero steady social activity in this area. The site borders dynamic, developing, and exciting areas to the northeast so pulling some of that energy to this vast gap in the city will play a crucial role in the project’s success. Contrary to the lively center: Unirii Boulevard to the East is largely unused by pedestrians and business struggle to stay open here because it is not visited. The intervention aims to positively affect this zone as well.



Because a contradiction is desired between the Communist project and this new one, it is important to make comparisons on various issues that will help direct the final outcome.



The symbology of the House of the People was that of one; one state, one leader, one type of peoples. That clearly was not representative of the country, its heritage, or its people which is why this new intervention will embody the meaning of many ideas. This will commemorate the city's eclectic architectural presence and the country's dialogue with the rest of the European Union.



Bucuresti

## House of Parliament

Singular Idea  
Imposing  
Stagnant  
Rigid  
Open to a select few  
Unquestionable  
Unwelcoming  
Meant to be feared



City Center

## House of Arts & Culture

Multiple Ideas  
Delicate  
Dynamic  
Flexible  
Open to all  
Debatable  
Inviting  
Meant to be embraced



Sector 1



# SITE INTENTIONS

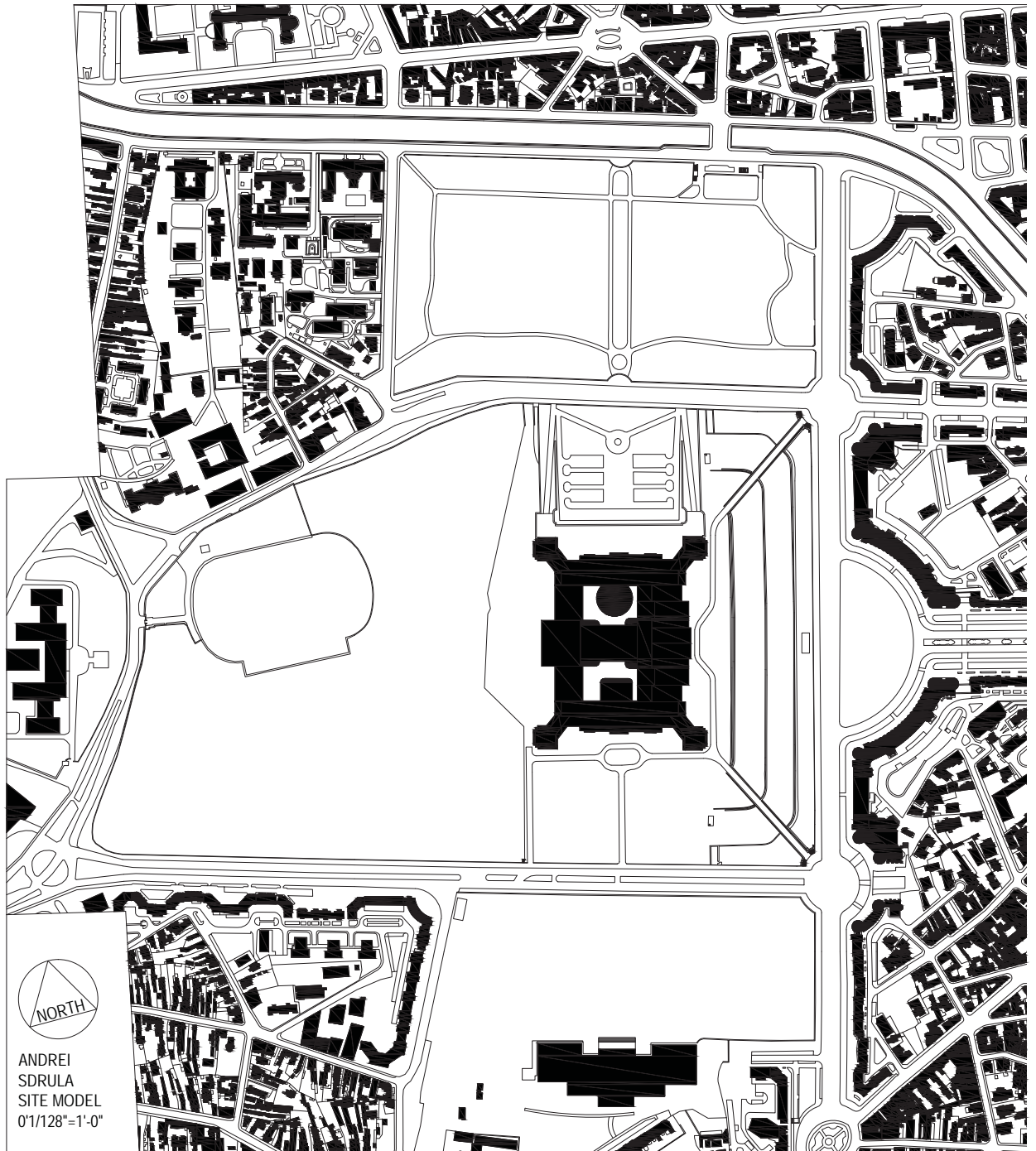
Since it is not possible to compete with the size of the House and its monumental presence an intervention that fulfills the objectives stated could be achieved by doing the complete opposite of Ceausescu's team. First: a single building or object cannot fulfill the requirements of this agenda. A masterplan for the entire area around the House of Parliament is needed for several reasons:

To reconnect this void to the rest of the city via vehicular and pedestrian arteries. To redensify the void with urban fabric in order to integrate the House thus defeating its symbolism as a stand alone object that is untouchable. This will also be done by knocking down the walls that enclose the House and its front and back lawn. And most importantly: to provide the space needed for life to return to the area vis-à-vis parks, civic buildings, residential, commercial, and office typologies.

After analyzing the site I have decided that the best location for fulfilling the many requirements of the project (Besides the virtues of the masterplan intervention) would be on the hill in front of the house. This allows for the best possible dialogue between my civic building and the House, as well as the best possibility for activating this empty, dead space. After speaking to the architect of the House: Anca Petrescu, she told me that a building could be imagined on the hill in front of the House. Her original plans called for a circular drop off in this area but plans were scrapped for a speedier solution: two roads that flanked the hill and made it into a large trapezoidal slope. There is also an underground tunnel that travels from the basement of the House to a garage like opening at the sidewalk at the base of the slope. This sort of underground gate at the street is flanked by two large halls that were meant to be restaurants under the Communist regime.

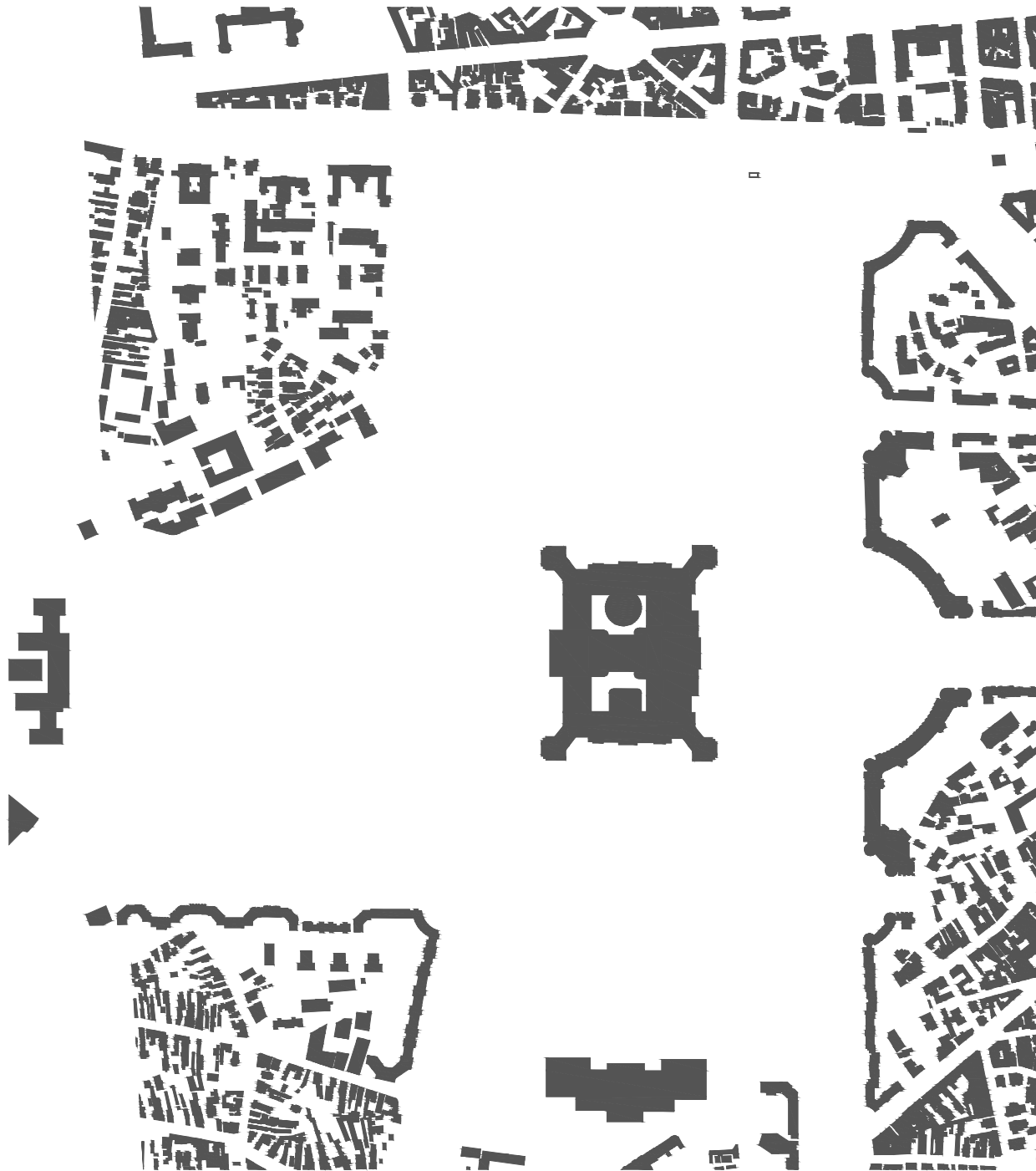






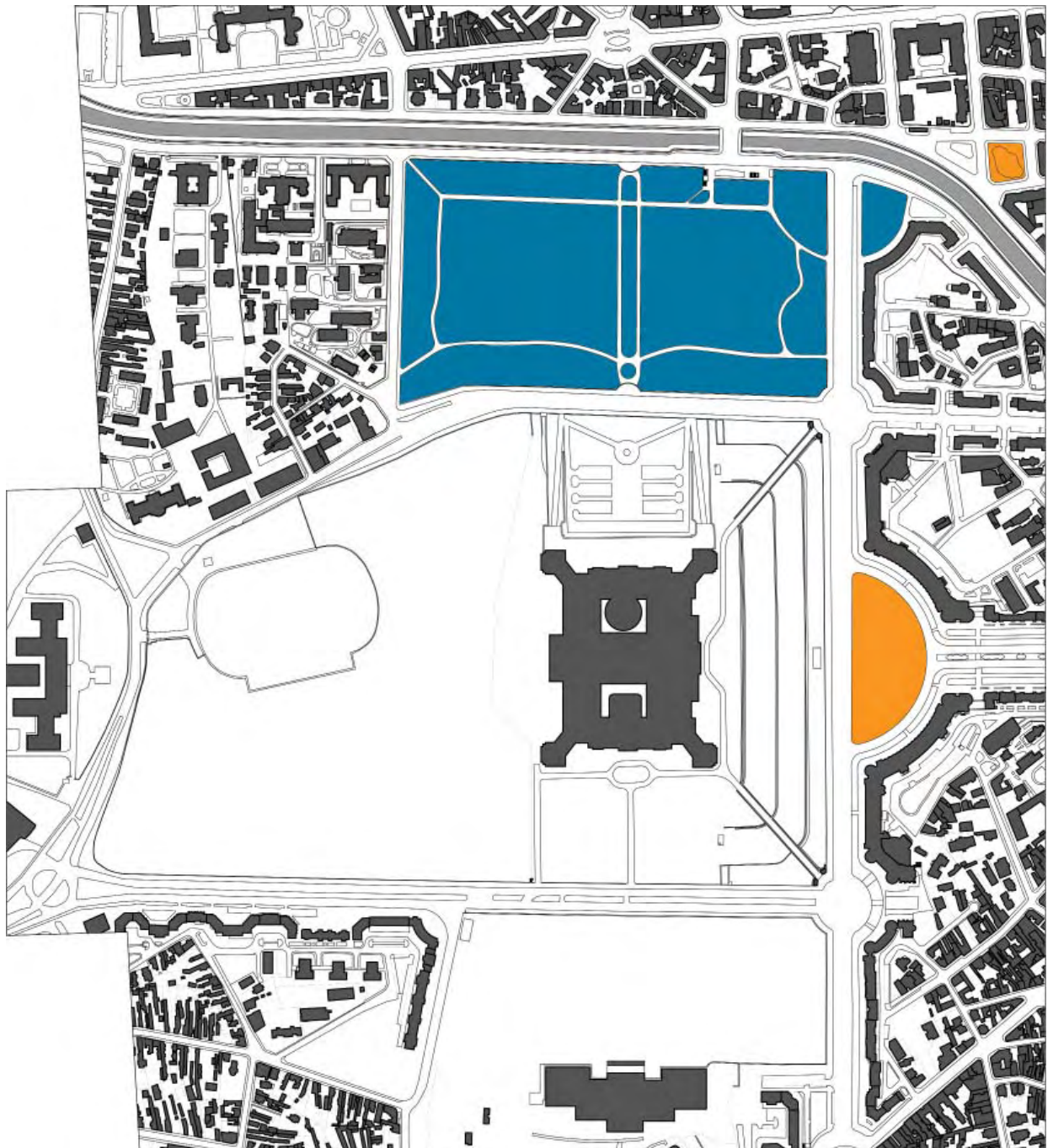
Existing Masterplan of Area





A figure ground diagram of the area shows the extent of the destruction in comparison to the dense surrounding fabric. The wall-like residential and administrative buildings that line the perimeter of the destroyed area to the East and South indicate a clear disregard for the traditional morphology of the area.



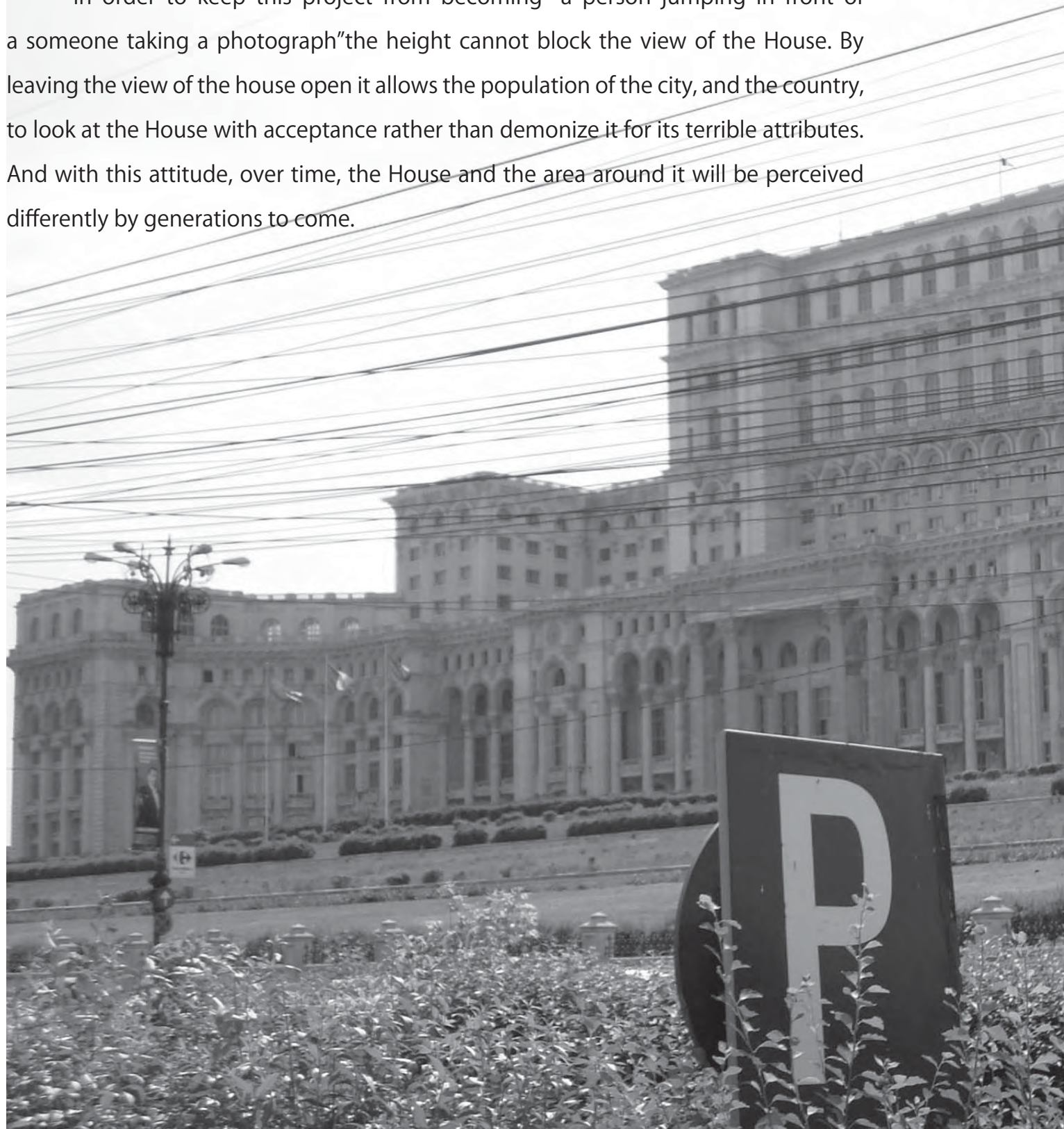


The blue area is the usable public green space while the orange is the usable hardscape. As one can see: it is very lacking in character and size, especially for the amount of green space that there is in the entire area. Since the semi-rectangular area around the House is walled off, none of that space can be used by the public, including the remnants of the destroyed stadium to the West.

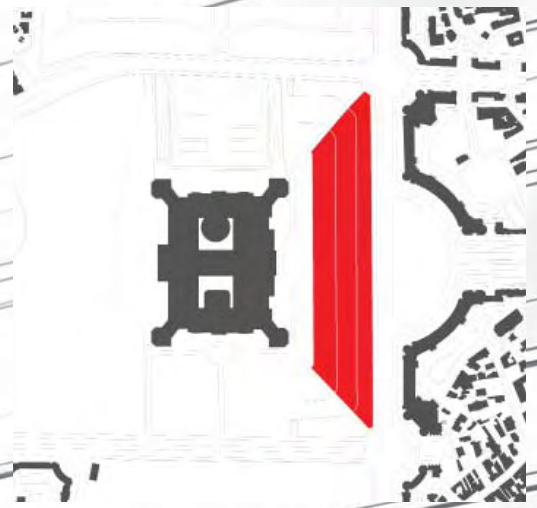


The program that lies within the hill will fulfill the democratic requirements necessary to the revitalization of the area. It will be the mediatheque/museum that encourages cultural activities in this area.

In order to keep this project from becoming “a person jumping in front of a someone taking a photograph” the height cannot block the view of the House. By leaving the view of the house open it allows the population of the city, and the country, to look at the House with acceptance rather than demonize it for its terrible attributes. And with this attitude, over time, the House and the area around it will be perceived differently by generations to come.











The hill is currently cut off from the street by a wall that wraps itself around the house and its immense, unused backyard. I propose to tear down the wall in front of the House in order to let the hill become accessible to the public. Ceausescu viewed this wall as the dividing element between himself, his palace, and the rest of the country. Now that the House is used for the present day parliament and the hill will be a new cultural center, it is crucial that the symbolic and physical representations of the old wall are destroyed.

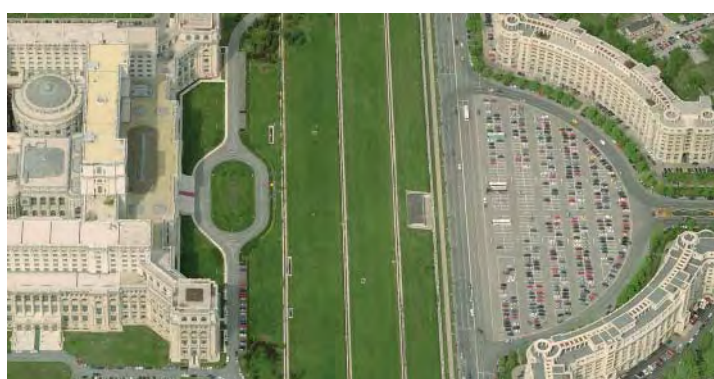
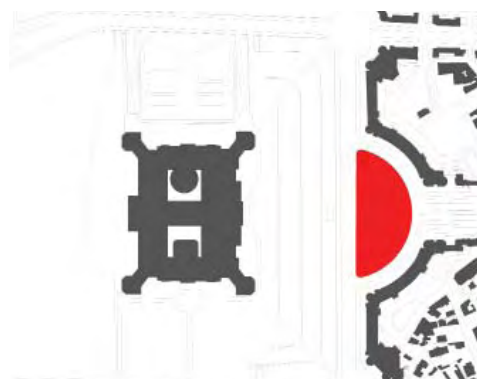








# PIATA CONSTITUTEI







Another major part of the intervention will be the revitalization of the Piața Constitutiei, the massive half-circle piazza that is directly in front of the House. It is currently a parking lot most of the time but sometimes is used for events such as concerts, New Years celebrations, food & drink festivals, car shows & races, etc. This piazza is one of the only flat and open spaces in the city so its typology has to be maintained. At the same time it is a waste of space most of the time so its adaptive reuse will solidify its position as a much needed place of rest and relaxation for the residents, and visitors of the city.



Also by opening up the hill to pedestrian use, concerts will have a larger viewing capacity. It is also possible to place a lot of subterranean parking under this piazza which would be a great benefit because Bucharest is one of the most congested cities in the world and parking is always hard to come by. This new cultural center would attract many by car so additional parking is crucial.



View of the House from the East / Piata Unirii



Pedestrian Approach from the East



View of Piata Constitutiei from a balcony within the House of Parliament.





Looking South from the Piazza



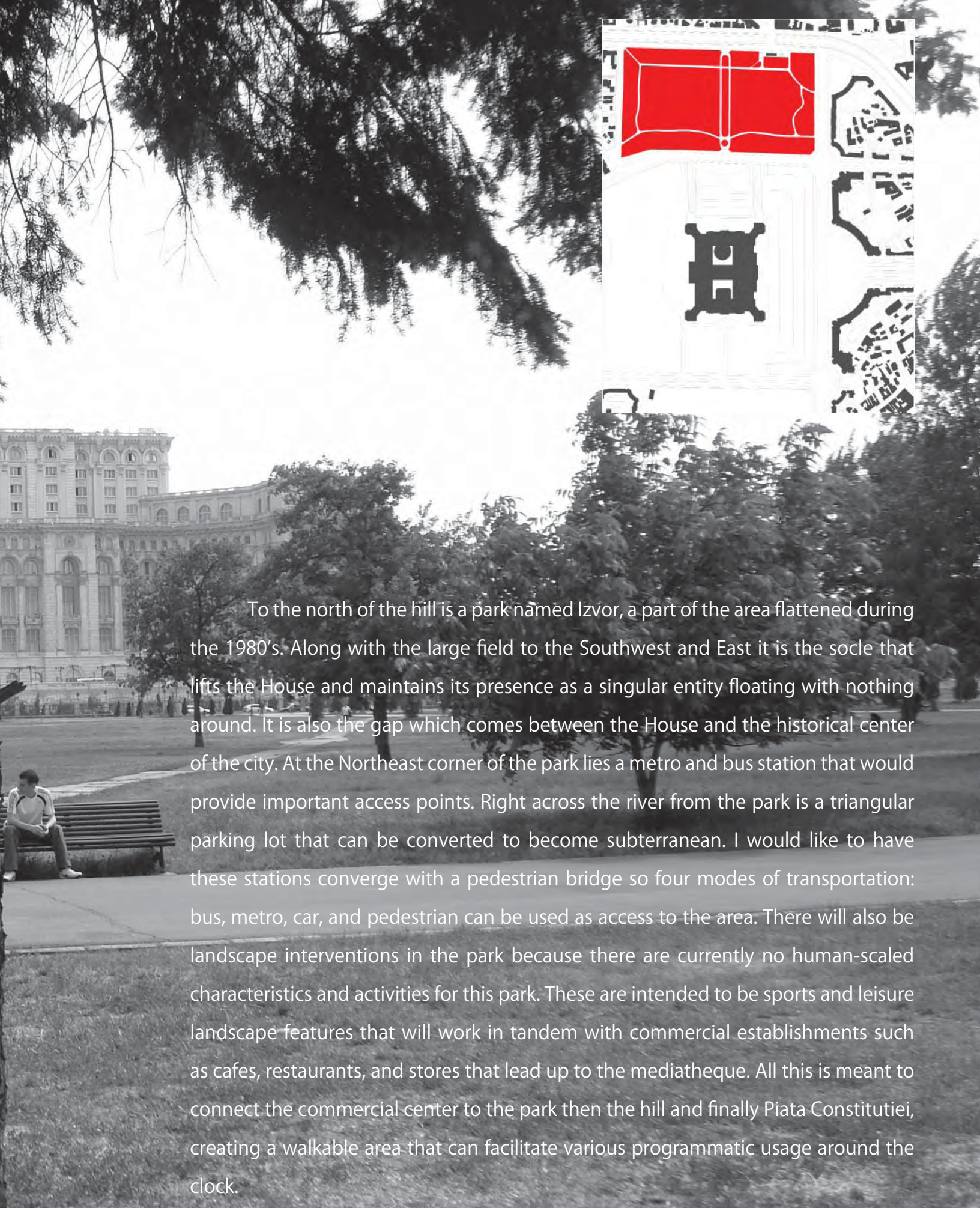
Looking North from the Piazza



# PARCUL IZVOR







To the north of the hill is a park named Izvor, a part of the area flattened during the 1980's. Along with the large field to the Southwest and East it is the socle that lifts the House and maintains its presence as a singular entity floating with nothing around. It is also the gap which comes between the House and the historical center of the city. At the Northeast corner of the park lies a metro and bus station that would provide important access points. Right across the river from the park is a triangular parking lot that can be converted to become subterranean. I would like to have these stations converge with a pedestrian bridge so four modes of transportation: bus, metro, car, and pedestrian can be used as access to the area. There will also be landscape interventions in the park because there are currently no human-scaled characteristics and activities for this park. These are intended to be sports and leisure landscape features that will work in tandem with commercial establishments such as cafes, restaurants, and stores that lead up to the mediatheque. All this is meant to connect the commercial center to the park then the hill and finally Piata Constitutiei, creating a walkable area that can facilitate various programmatic usage around the clock.





The park is used for concerts from time to time but besides that the only main activities are running, biking, roller-skating, and dog walking so it would be ideal to preserve these activities as well as introducing new ones. There are also apartments on the other side of the street (to the East) so a low height would maintain their view out over the park. The Northeast corner of the park is also an important transportation hub for the area because there are subway and bus stations.



A view of one metro entrance.



A view of one bus stop near the metro and a snack stand.





Looking towards the park and House from across the river.

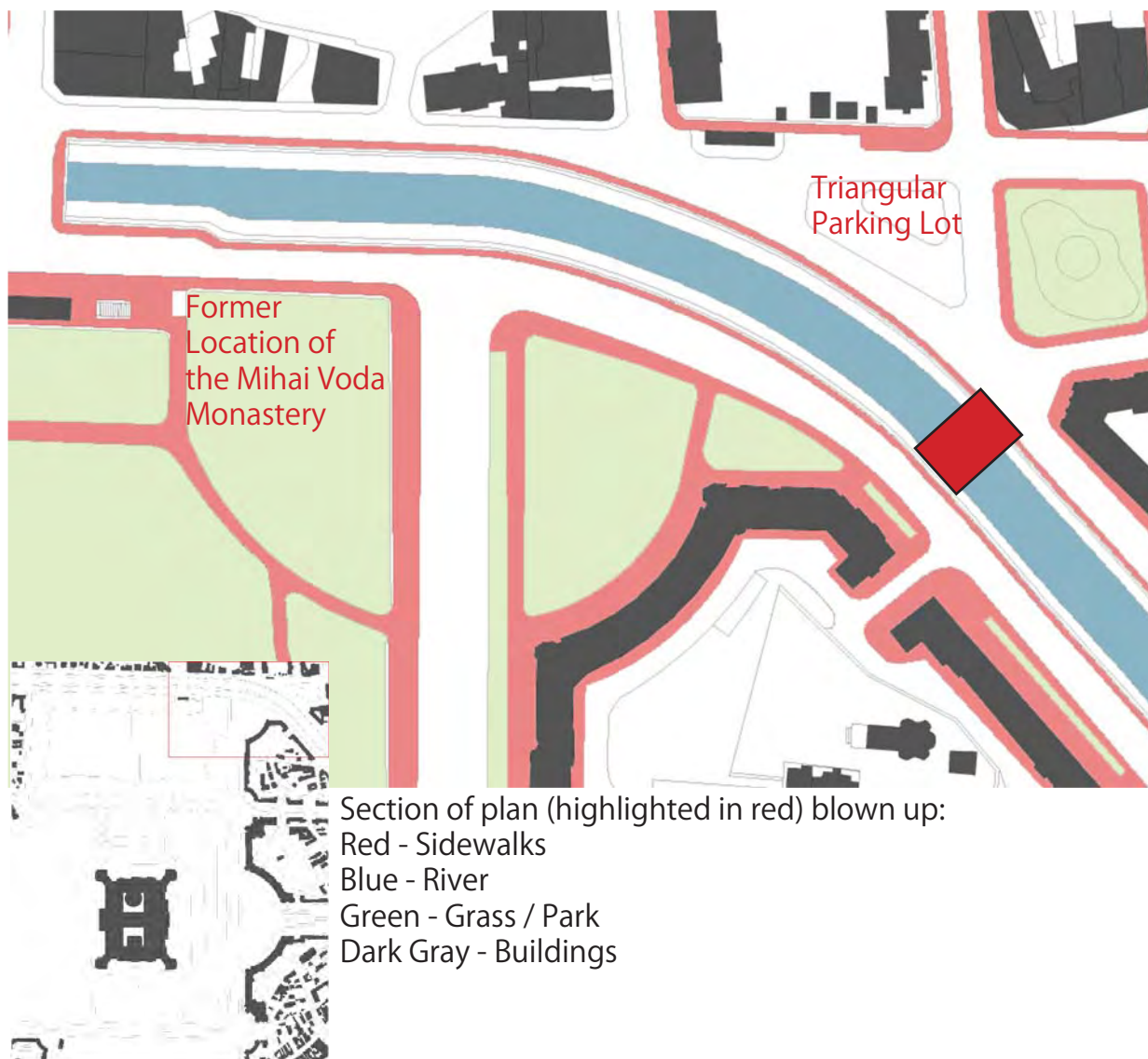


The vast and empty park.



# BRIDGE: MIHAI VODA

There was a bridge named Mihai Voda in the location of the red rectangle on the map below. When the Communist masterplan was put into motion it had to be destroyed because it carried a tram across the river and as you can see from the map below it was going to run right into a new building. There was also a monastery near by, highlighted on the map below, that was demolished in the 1980's. There are currently proposals for a new bridge in this area since pedestrians have to go out of their way to cross the river if they are coming from the Lipscani area which is to the north. My proposal for a bridge will begin in the triangular parking lot that shall be reconfigured so parking can be moved underground. It is to the West of a park that is currently being rehabilitated. From there its course will take it south to the Northeastern corner of Parcul Izvor where a pedestrian friendly area will carry people to the slope in front of the House. The mayor of the city has already called for proposals for a pedestrian bridge in that area.



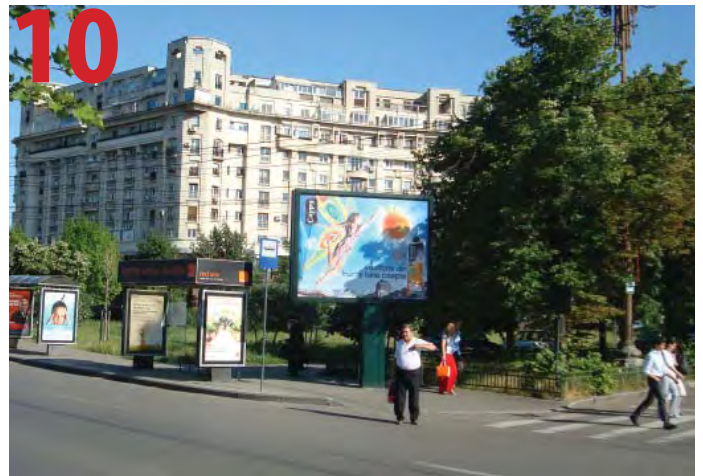




Two views of the former bridge.



## PHOTOGRAPHIC SEQUENCE OF PROGRESSION



This sequence aims to show the way a pedestrian moves about the site; and to obtain eye level views of the surrounding area and destinations that people will be seeing. It will begin where the bridge crosses the river and end in Piata Constitutiei.

An architect once told me that the hardest thing to do with urban architecture is link two objects. One building responding to specific site conditions making a link to another that must do the same. In the middle there is a precarious situation that must be dealt with very carefully in order to be viable.

*The legend for the numbered views is on page 58.*



## & **VIEWS** THROUGHOUT THE SITE





15



16



19



20



23



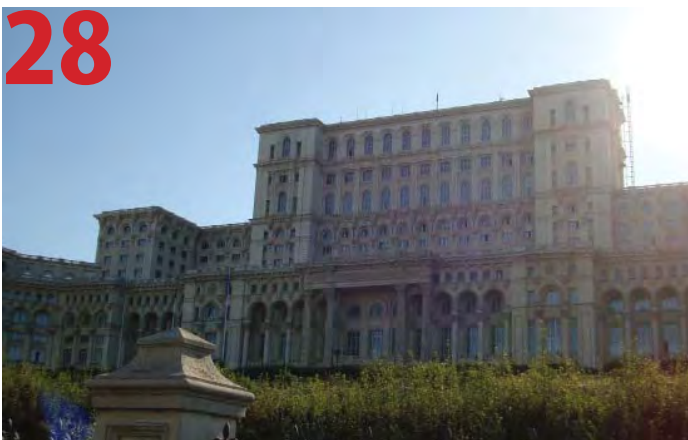
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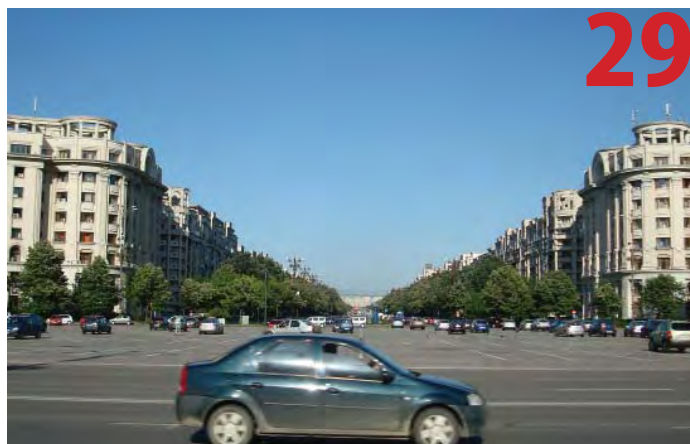
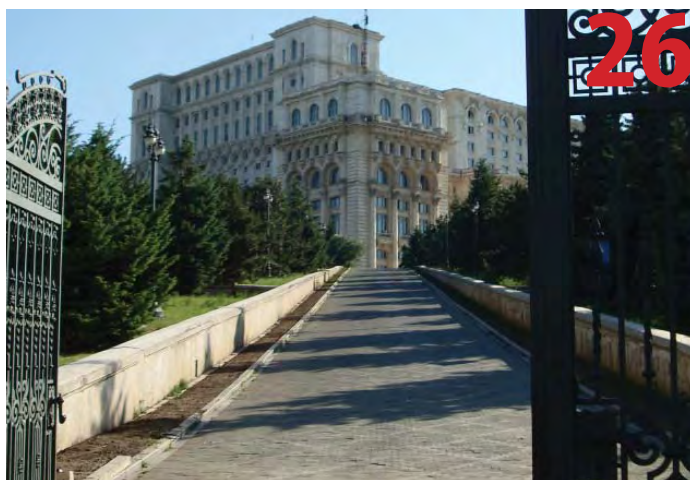
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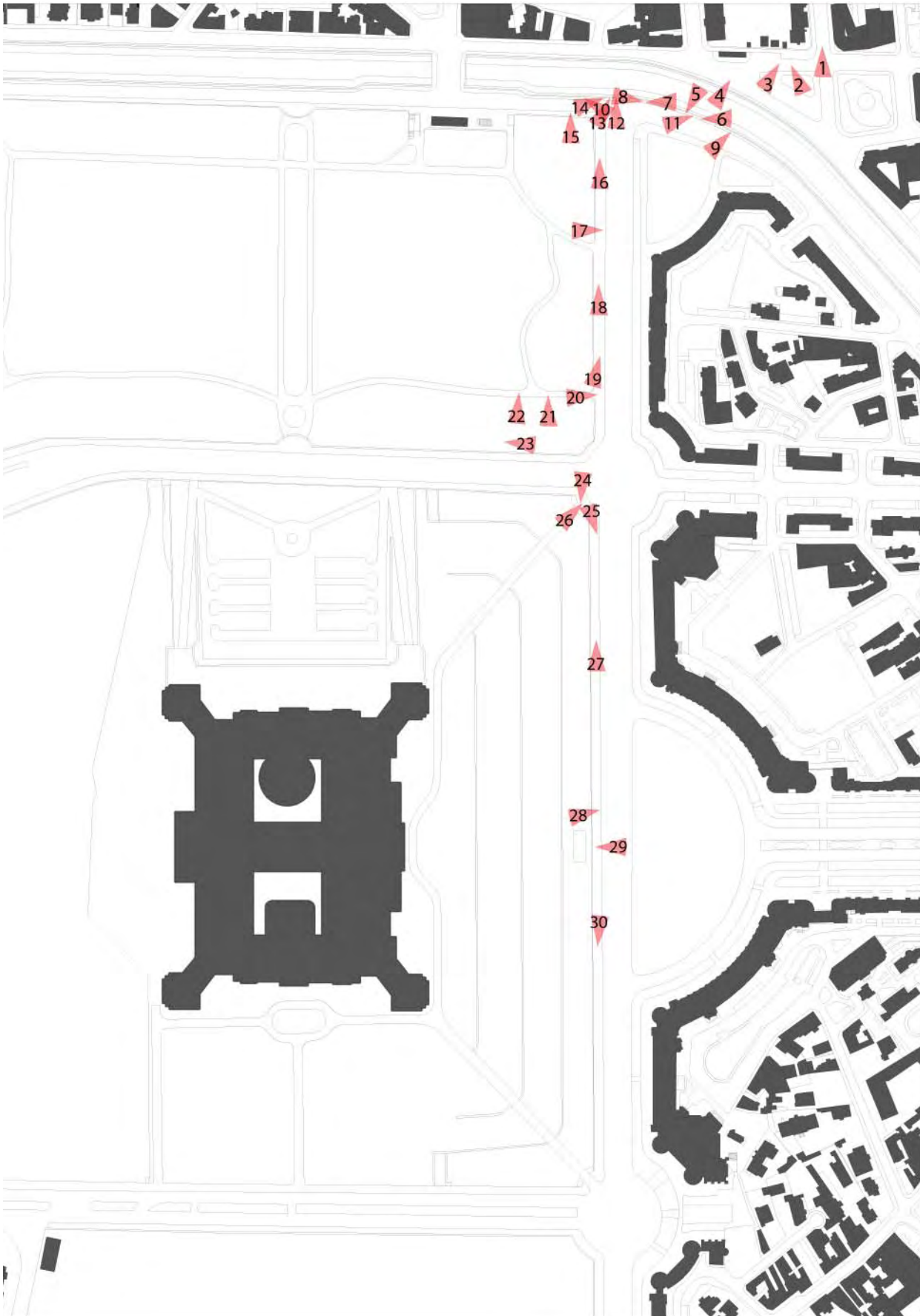
28











Legend of Views

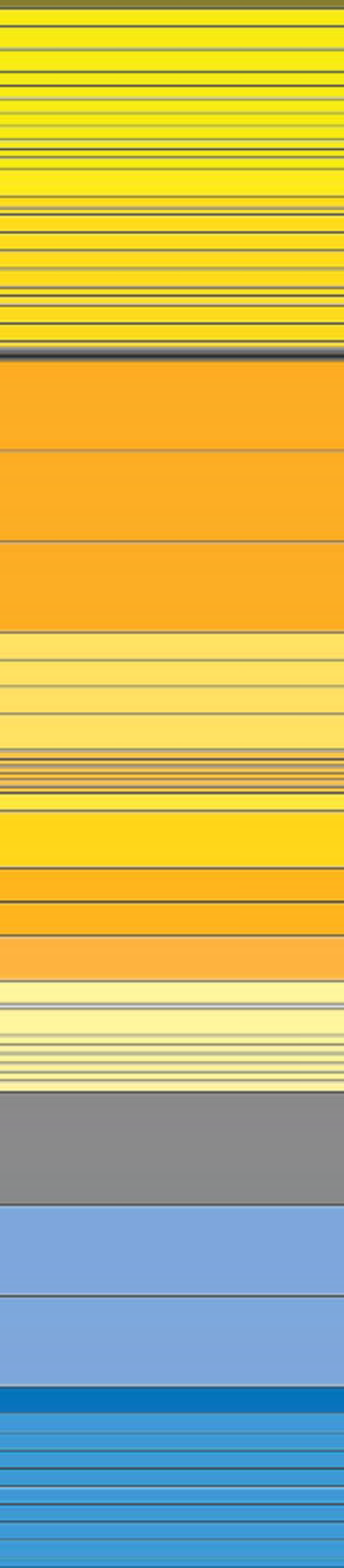




## PROGRAMMATIC INTENTIONS

The program of this intervention must be varied yet consistent in the sense that an overarching theme will be present. In order to attract all types of people at various times throughout the day a Pompidou center effect must take place where typologies can be mixed together yet accessed independently. Because of the prominent site and its inherent touristic characteristics I feel as though it is important to bring cultural elements that challenge the notions of museum and cultural typologies. One analogy could be of a “cultural mall” where various zones of interest are organized around a central or several circulation system(s). This circulation system is an important element within the final product because it will be paying homage to the nearby historic center with its narrow pedestrian only streets.





The program of this intervention has a crucial role in transforming this site into a stage where actors perform truthfully and without fear. A mix of scales will allow for interchangeability that is firmly anchored to logical permanence. The project will play contradicting and dual roles because on one hand it will recognize and emulate the strict geometrical order of its Communist surroundings but on the other it will corrupt and transform this order by embedding it with the historical themes of the city's urban fabric.

*The zone of demolition typified characteristics of the old Bucharest: serpentine streets full of greenery, houses with spacious courts, and varied architectural styles reflecting the dual influences of East and West- Ottoman- or Turkish-inspired courtyard housing and German-influenced mercantile structures, both united with a French Neoclassical influence in the nineteenth century and assimilated into a form of national romanticism by the end of that century.*

*Source: artmargins.com*

The banal and extravagant are meant to be intertwined into one; so allowing users to place their own habitats into the project means that the order of the area will be diminished by Free Will and enthusiasm for unpredictability. This alone mixed with the life that will be brought to the area will begin to contradict the harsh totalitarian tone of the site. This order and dis-order can only be achieved with the masterplan and the careful zoning of this masterplan in order to be viable, humane, and exciting. While this implies infrastructure and a utilitarian attitude, the result is not meant to denounce moral, social, and civic duty. The changeable and lasting will be together and they will create a marvelous environment for the users.

For all this to happen: retail, office, residential, culture, entertainment, and leisure must come together. The mediatheque aspect will be a special condition because it will be on the hill and have a direct connection with the piazza and at the same time interact and connect with the masterplan. The cultural aspect will be the magnet that aims to draw upon the values of education and the pursuit of intellect, while the masterplan will mainly deal with memory and the sites past, present, and future significance.



## **CULTURAL EXHIBITIONS: PERMANENT & TEMPORARY**

These exhibition spaces are integral to any project that pursues intellectual enlightenment. They will be filled with resources used to inform the public of architectural, artistic, political, economic, and ecological issues.

Working in tandem with the large scale of the masterplan this will allow the intervention to pertain to topics of national self image, heritage, values, traditions, reciprocity through reflection, influences, vestiges of the past, confronting Communist interventions, and a Romanian national essence.

In addition to permanent exhibitions there will be an assortment of flexible space that can be rented out for various cultural, educational, or other private uses. This will include lecture halls, classrooms, seminar rooms, and large space(s) for temporary exhibitions or banquets, etc. This program will touch upon cultural conditions (current and developing), flexibility for future development, reciprocity through practice, and an exchange with the rest of Europe.

## **MEDIATHEQUE & ENTERTAINMENT**

The other component to this sort of culturally themed entertainment will be a mediatheque where media can be lent and bought. This will be accompanied by several theaters. In addition there will be restaurants, cafes, shopping, bars, clubs, and lounges distributed strategically throughout the masterplan.

## **MASTERPLAN CIVIC BUILDINGS**

I will be developing the House of Arts & Culture that is on the hill in front of the House of Parliament but there will need to be other civic buildings to bring the desired cultural activity to this area. They will create important focal points throughout the masterplan that break away from the more typical mixed-use program that is needed to densify the area.



## EXHIBITION

### INDIVIDUAL AREA

### TOTAL AREA

#### Flexible

Flexible Gallery & Bar	7800 sqf	x1	7800 sqf
South Flexible Display Space	1400 sqf	x1	1400 sqf
North Flexible Display Space	1400sqf	x1	1400sqf

#### Media Exhibition Spaces

Media Projection Room	4600sqf	x1	4600sqf
South Gallery	4000sqf	x1	4000sqf
South Courtyard	2000sqf	x1	2000sqf
North Gallery	4000sqf	x1	4000sqf
North Gallery Lounge	1500sqf	x1	1500sqf
North Media Exhibition Gallery	3800sqf	x1	3800sqf
South Media Exhibition Gallery	3800sqf	x1	3800sqf

#### Commercial

Museum Shop	1300sqf	x1	1300sqf
Book Store	1500sqf	x1	1500sqf
Coat Counter	100sqf	x1	100sqf
Coat Closet	680sqf	x1	680sqf
Lockers	220sqf	x1	220sqf
Parking Entrance	2100sqf	x1	2100sqf
Parking Office	300sqf	x1	300sqf
Restrooms	920sqf	x1	920sqf
Fashion Corridor	1000sqf	x1	1000sqf
Commercial Space	4000sqf	x1	4000sqf
Media Store	1200sqf	x1	1200sqf
Radio Station	800sqf	x1	800sqf
54'0" Level Bar & Lounge	2500sqf	x1	2500sqf

#### Children's Area

Children's Circulation Desk	400sqf	x1	400sqf
Children's Stacks	1400sqf	x1	1400sqf
Play Room	800sqf	x1	800sqf
Child Care	800sqf	x1	800sqf

## ADMINISTRATION

Press Room	1200sqf	x1	1200sqf
Reception	200sqf	x1	200sqf
Conference Room	400sqf	x2	800sqf
Employee Lounge	800sqf	x1	800sqf
Interns	500sqf	x1	500sqf
Employee Desks	1000sqf	x1	1000sqf
Director's Office	250sqf	x1	250sqf
Head Curator	250sqf	x1	250sqf
Assistant Curator	250sqf	x1	250sqf

**TOTAL EXHIBITION AND ADMINISTRATION AREA: 56,470 SQF**



## MEDIATHEQUE

### Audio

	INDIVIDUAL AREA		TOTAL AREA
Sound Attenuation Room	290sqf	x1	290sqf
Storage & IT Room	260sqf	x1	260sqf
Editing Suite	280sqff	x1	280sqff
Small Audio Booth	290sqf	x1	290sqf
Small Recording Booth	300sqf	x1	300sqf
Small Audio Studio	300sqf	x1	300sqf
Electrical Closet	60sqf	x1	60sqf
Editing Station	180sqf	x2	360sqf
Main Audio Studio	900sqf	x1	900sqf
Audio Booth for Main Studio	300sqf	x1	300sqf
Main Recording Room	2200sqf	x1	2200sqf
Ante Room	290sqf	x1	290sqf
Audio Lounge	920sqf	x1	920sqf
Contemporary Audio Stacks	3400sqf	x1	3400sqf
General Audio Stacks	1800sqf	x1	1800sqf
Local Culture Audio Stacks	1800sqf	x1	1800sqf
Archive	1800sqf	x1	1800sqf
Meeting Room	800sqf	x1	800sqf

### Video

Video Studio	1100sqf	x1	1100sqf
Video Prep	320sqf	x1	320sqf
Video Editing	320sqf	x1	320sqf
Video Work Suite	320sqf	x2	640sqf
Video Archive and Storage	280sqf	x1	280sqf
Video Stacks	1600sqf	x1	1600sqf

### Public/Social

General Media Stacks	4500sqf	x1	4500sqf
Interchangeable Stacks	2300sqf	x1	2300sqf
Periodicals	720sqf	x1	720sqf
Back Issue Periodicals	500sqf	x1	500sqf
Cafe Seating	2500sqf	x1	2500sqf
Cafe Serving Counter	270sqf	x1	270sqf
Cafe Prep	270sqf	x1	270sqf
Sight & Hearing Impaired Desk	65sqf	x1	65sqf
Security Desk	65sqf	x1	65sqf
Tickets Desk	65sqf	x1	65sqf
Information Desk	65sqf	x1	65sqf
Piata Constitutei Entrance Lobby	7500sqf	x1	7500sqf
Coat Counter	100sqf	x1	100sqf
Coat Closet	680sqf	x1	680sqf
Lockers	220sqf	x1	220sqf
Parking Entrance	2100sqf	x1	2100sqf
Parking Office	300sqf	x1	300sqf
Restrooms	920sqf	x1	920sqf
VIP Lounge	2200sqf	x1	2200sqf

**TOTAL MEDIATHEQUE AREA: 45,970 SQF**



## THEATERS

	INDIVIDUAL AREA		TOTAL AREA
<b>Theaters</b>			
Media Theater	11200sqf	x1	11200sqf
Media Theater Storage	1600 sqf	x1	1600 sqf
Backstage	500 sqf	x1	500 sqf
Theater Preparation	700 sqf	x1	700 sqf
Storage	2400sqf	x1	2400sqf
Performer Lounge	150sqf	x1	150sqf
Performer Rehearsal	250sqf	x1	250sqf
Wardrobe	120sqf	x3	360sqf
Restrooms	850sqf	x1	850sqf
Public Film Seating	4000sqf	x1	4000sqf
Lecture Hall	7700sqf	x1	7700sqf
Media Theater Workshop	2500sqf	x1	2500sqf
Jointery/Metal Workshop	440sqf	x1	440sqf
Workshop Operations	100sqf	x1	100sqf
Workshop Office/Ante Room	280sqf	x1	280sqf
Electrical Closet	50sqf	x1	50sqf
Reception of Goods	900sqf	x1	900sqf
Unpacking Room	440sqf	x1	440sqf
Receiving Room	530sqf	x1	530sqf
Box Room	500sqf	x1	500sqf
Waste	260sqf	x1	260sqf
Gallery Drop Off	260sqf	x1	260sqf
Theater Drop Off	260sqf	x1	260sqf
Main Mechanical	3600sqf	x1	3600sqf

**TOTAL THEATERS AND SERVICES AREA: 4,7250 SQF**





# TEMPERATURE DATA

Average Temperature										Years on Record: 21			
	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	52	30	32	42	52	62	68	72	71	64	53	40	33

Average High Temperature													
	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	61	36	39	50	62	72	79	82	82	75	63	47	38

Average Low Temperature													
	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	42	23	25	33	42	51	58	60	59	52	43	33	27

Highest Recorded Temperature													
	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	103	59	68	81	88	93	99	103	102	97	91	75	64

Lowest Recorded Temperature													
	YEAR	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
°F	-11	-7	-11	3	30	33	43	47	44	32	21	---	-1

Bucharest has a temperate continental climate. Due to its position on the Romanian Plain, the city’s winters can get windy, even though some of the winds are mitigated due to urbanization. Winter temperatures are often below 0 °C (32 °F), even though they rarely drop below −10 °C (14 °F). In summer, the average temperature is approximately 23 °C (73 °F) (the average for July and August), despite the fact that temperatures many times reach 35 °C (95 °F) to 40 °C (104 °F) in mid-summer in the city center. Although average precipitation and humidity during summer is low, there are infrequent yet heavy and often violent storms. During spring and autumn, temperatures vary between 18 °C (64 °F) to 22 °C (72 °F), and precipitation during this time tends to be higher than in summer, with more frequent yet milder periods of rain.

Source: wikipedia.org



# CODE ANALYSIS

## **Occupancy Groups:**

Assembly (A)

Business (B)

Educational (E)

Mercantile (M)

## **Assembly:**

Group A: 50 or more occupants.

A-1: Assembly areas with fixed seats intended for viewing performing arts or motion pictures.

A-2: Assembly areas where food and drink are consumed.

A-3: Assembly areas that do not fit in the previous two categories such as space used for worship, recreation, and amusement.

Group B: 50 or less occupants.

## **Business:**

Business Group B = Office buildings are typically classified as Group B occupancies. Storage areas for offices, such as back-office file rooms do not constitute a separate occupancy.

## **Mercantile:**

Mercantile Group M = Most retail facilities, no matter what merchandise they sell, fall into this occupancy.

Incidental storage up to 10% of the total floor area may be considered as an accessory part of the same occupancy group.

Special detailed requirements based on use and occupancy: Covered Mall Buildings, Atriums, Underground Buildings, Motor-Vehicle Related Occupancies, Motion Picture Projection Rooms, Stages & Platforms, Special Amusement Buildings.

## **Mall Typology:**

Covered Mall Buildings:

A mall is a roofed or covered pedestrian area in which two or more tenants have their main entrances. They are limited to three stories and no more than three levels above grade.

Assembly occupancies with an occupant load of 500 or more are to be located in the covered mall building such that their main entrance is immediately adjacent to the principle entrance to the mall. Not less than one half of the assembly area means of egress is to open directly to the exterior of the covered mall building.

Whenever the occupancy load of a tenant space is more than 50 people a second means of egress must be provided.

The minimal width of exit passageways is 66".

The maximum distance from any tenant space to an exit is 200'.

The building area must be separated from other buildings by at least 60' of permanent open space to allow safe egress areas for occupants.

### **Atriums:**

The travel distance through an atrium cannot exceed 200'.

Atriums must be sprinkled throughout.

A building wrapped around an open space creates a court not an atrium.

Balconies in assembly areas or mezzanines do not create an atrium.

Buildings with two or three levels of openings that meet the criteria for a covered mall may be more properly classified as mall buildings. The definitions of mall and atrium are mutually exclusive and are not intended to overlap.

### **Motor-Vehicle related Occupancies:**

1. Private garages or carports.
2. Open parking garages.
3. Enclosed parking garages.
4. Motor-fuel dispensing stations.
5. Repair garages.

#### **2. Open parking garages.**

Open parking garages are multiple-vehicle-facilities used for parking or the storage of vehicles where no repairs take place. These are typically classified as group S-2 occupancies. Because these openings are distributed in a manner that provides cross-ventilation for the parking tiers, no mechanical ventilation is required.

#### **3. Enclosed Parking Garages**

Enclosed parking garages are similar to open parking garages except that the amount of wall enclosure relative to the building area does not allow them to be considered as open garages. Because they do not meet the criteria for open parking garages and are considered enclosed, mechanical ventilation is required to compensate for the lack of cross-ventilation.

Rooftop parking is permitted.

7' minimum clear height at each floor level.

Means to get fresh air in for mechanical ventilation of the parking garage.

Means to get exhaust air out for mechanical ventilation of the parking garage.



**Building Heights and Areas:**

The construction of this project will be Type I and II so any type I construction for restaurants, business, and retail will be unlimited.

For type II restaurants can be 65' above the grade plane, 3 stories, and 15,500 sf.

Business can be 65' above the grade plane, 5 stories, and 37,500 sf.

Retail can be 65' above the grade plane, 4 stories, and 21500 sf.

Fire walls are acceptable thus dividing a single structure into a number of separate buildings.

Multiple buildings on a single site may be considered as separate buildings, or as a single building for determining building areas.

Areas of afore mentioned buildings on site must not exceed the single building area of the more restrictive occupancy.

**Types of Construction:**

Noncombustible: Type I-A, II-A.

**General Egress Requirements:**

Design occupant load shall be based on the number of occupants determined by assigning one occupant per unit of area. For areas with fixed seating, however, the actual number of fixed seats in a theater will determine the occupant load for that space.

Example:

30' x 40' room

Fixed seating for 46 occupants

No standing room, fixed walls

Two wheelchair locations for accessibility

Occupant load = 48



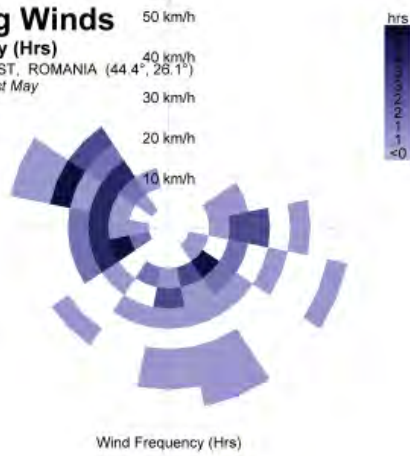
# WIND DATA

## SPRING 4:00 PM

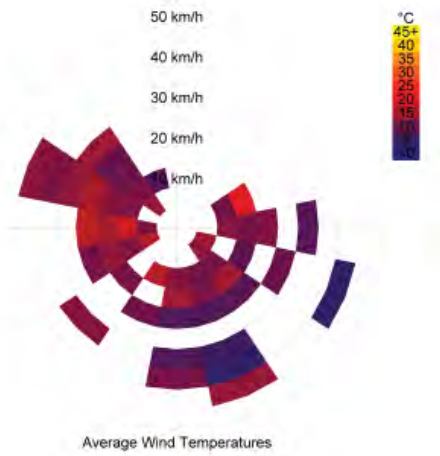
### Prevailing Winds

#### Wind Frequency (Hrs)

Location: BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (44.4°, 26.1°)  
Date: 1st March - 31st May  
Time: 16:00 - 17:00  
© Weather Tool



Wind Frequency (Hrs)



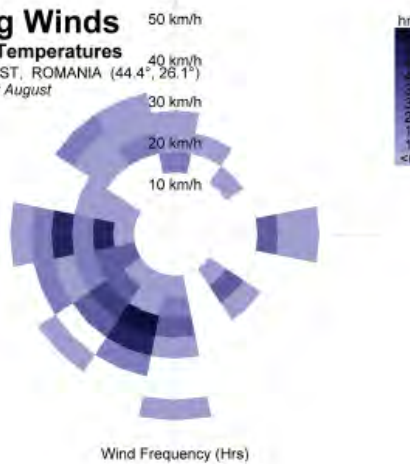
Average Wind Temperatures

## SUMMER 4:00 PM

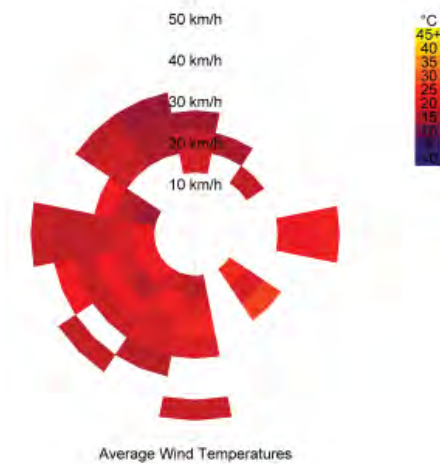
### Prevailing Winds

#### Average Wind Temperatures

Location: BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (44.4°, 26.1°)  
Date: 1st June - 31st August  
Time: 16:00 - 17:00  
© Weather Tool



Wind Frequency (Hrs)



Average Wind Temperatures

Data taken at 4:00 PM during every season seems to suggest that the wind predominantly blows from the South-Southwest.

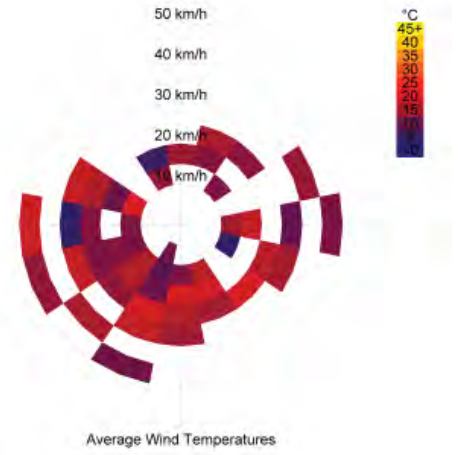
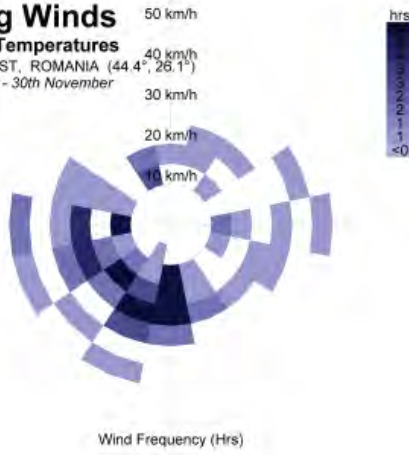


## SPRING 4:00 PM

### Prevailing Winds

#### Average Wind Temperatures

Location: BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (44.4°, 26.1°)  
Date: 1st September - 30th November  
Time: 16:00 - 17:00  
© Weather Tool

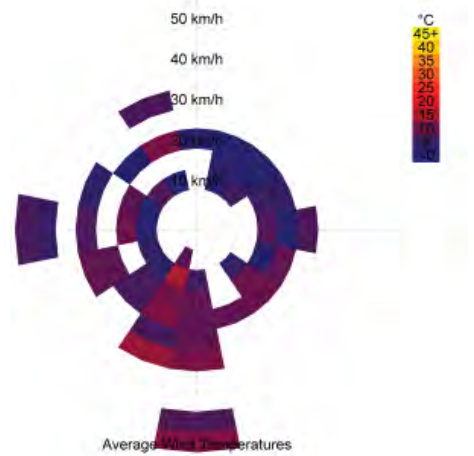
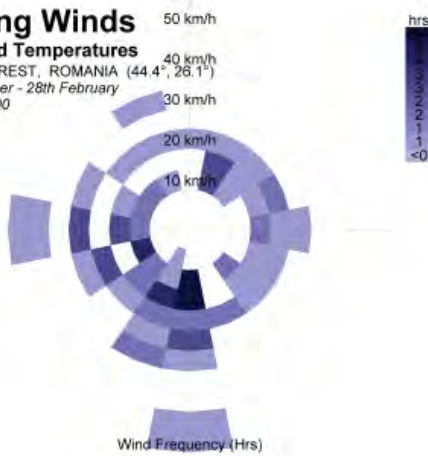


## SUMMER 4:00 PM

### Prevailing Winds

#### Average Wind Temperatures

Location: BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (44.4°, 26.1°)  
Date: 1st December - 28th February  
Time: 16:00 - 17:00  
© Weather Tool



This means that most wind will not be a factor since the majority of the facades will be facing East or West. Yet there might be some issues with the negative air pressure coming from wind that blows around the House of Parliament.

# SEISMIC DATA

Bucharest is located in a active earthquake zone. The most damaging earthquakes in Romania are concentrated in the Vrancea region, located at the sharp bend of the Eastern Carpathians Arch, in a well confined focal volume at intermediate depths between 60 km and 200km. Vrancea earthquakes have been documented for at least a millennium (since 985 a.c.) and represent very peculiar characteristics. They are a permanent threat for large urban areas in Romanian and other nearby areas of Europe. Bucharest is among the large cities most affected by the resulting destructive earthquakes.<sup>16</sup>

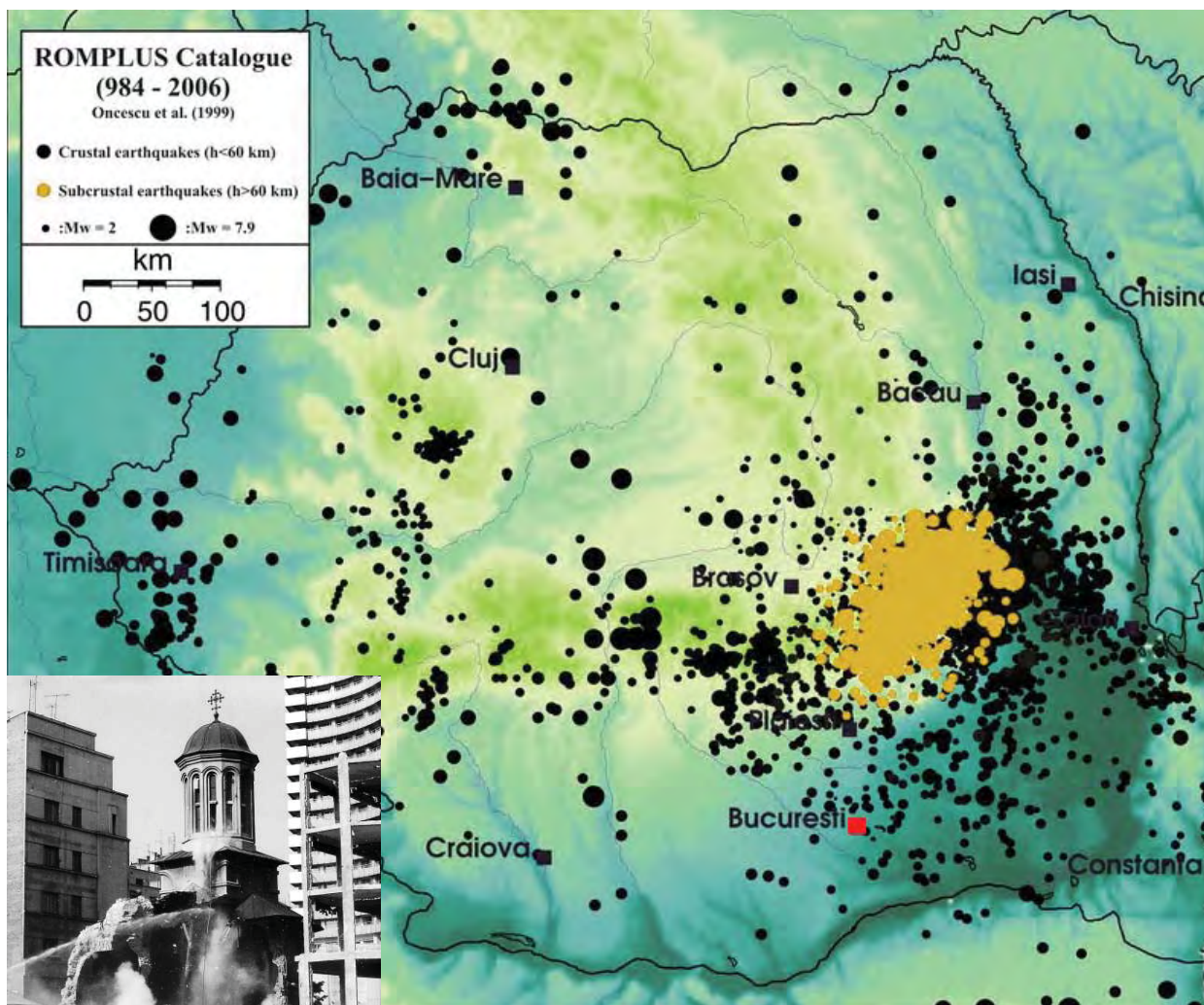


Image from the 1977 Earthquake



The 1977 Vrancea Earthquake occurred on Friday, 4 March 1977 at 21:20 local time. It had a magnitude of 7.4 with an epicenter in Vrancea, in the Eastern Carpathians, at a depth of 94 kilometers. The earthquake killed about 1,570 people and wounded more than 11,000.

About 35,000 buildings were damaged, and the total damage was estimated at more than two billion dollars. Most of the damage was concentrated in Bucharest, where about 33 large buildings collapsed. Many of these buildings were built before World War II, and were not structurally reinforced. Many of the historic buildings that collapsed were not rebuilt; instead Ceausescu used it as an excuse to build the House of the People and the Boulevard to the Victory of Socialism. After the earthquake, the Romanian government imposed tougher construction standards.<sup>17</sup>

Today all new major construction must withstand earthquakes of up to 9.0 on the Richter scale.



Typical examples of diagonal structural reinforcement on new buildings in Bucharest.

# **FINAL WORK:**

# **MASTERPLAN &**

# **DESIGN FOR THE**

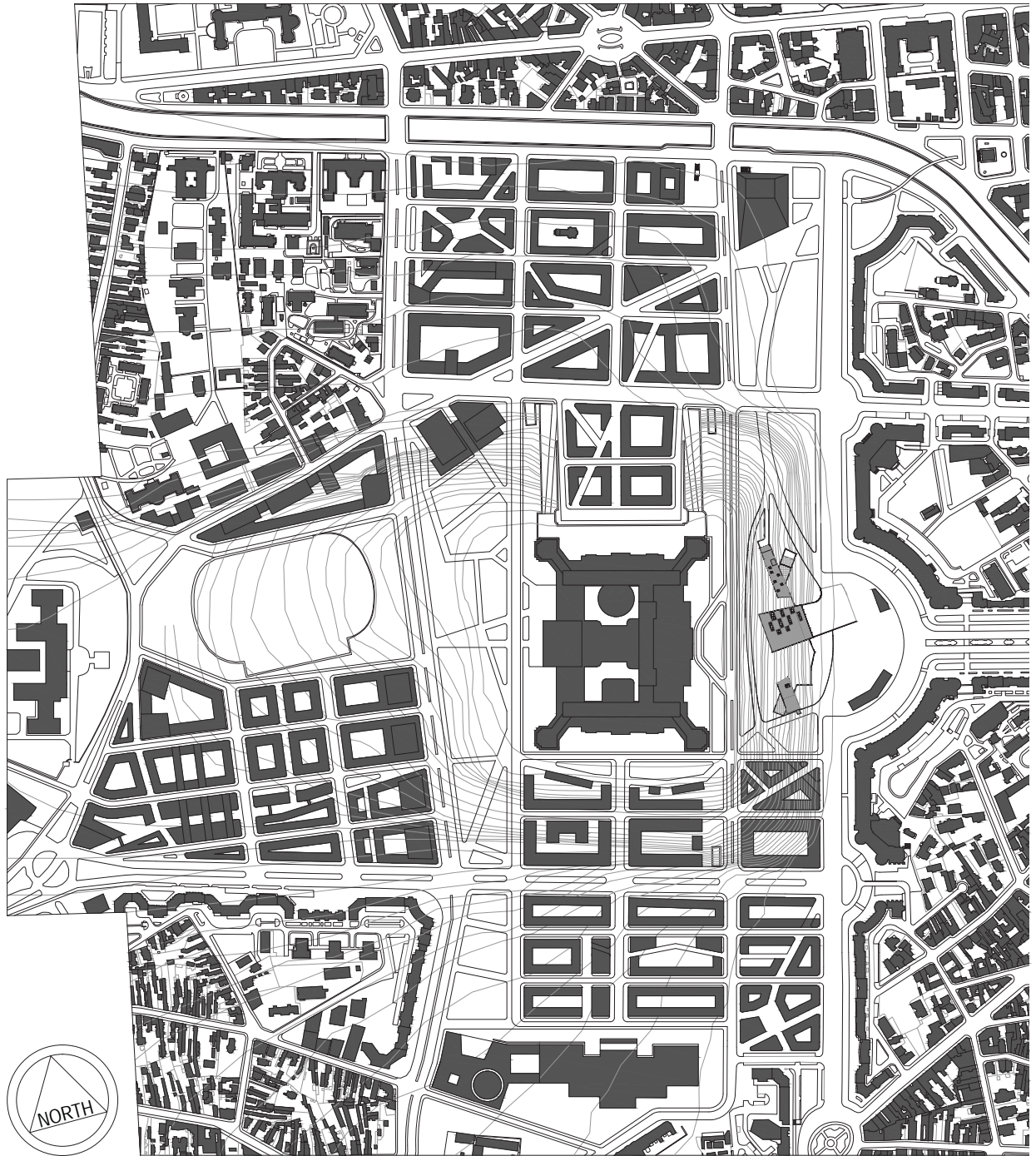
# **HOUSE OF ARTS &**

# **CULTURE**

This is the final proposal for the masterplan. The concept is layers. The eclectic history of the city is reflected here because of the superimposition of various elements on top of each other to create a more unified and interconnected environment. First there are the main boulevards: they provide the main north-south connections needed to traverse the void and not only serve as a utilitarian and logistical connection but also reinforce the symbolic notion of the city's historically important north-south arteries. The boulevard that is further West and runs behind the House is crucial because it connects to an important piazza to the north where the Office of the Prime Minister rests. Both boulevards connect to a up-and-coming former industrial neighborhood just to the South of the immediate site. The next step is a rational grid over the Boulevards; it's job is to create a humane scale and provide the necessary connections to the surrounding urban fabric. The grid was a natural choice for the area because it adheres to the geometry that the Communist intervention provides while allowing for a mix of interior courtyard, townhouse, large scale, and block-like typologies. The rectangular plot that is roughly 200 by 400 feet can be found throughout all three sections of the masterplan and allows for dense development. As one can see: there are three areas that naturally emerge from this intervention: the group to the North, West, and South. This allows for the idea of community to be reinforced by tight groupings of buildings as well as leaving ample room for parks. Parks are the next layer to be added into the plan. There are essentially two linear parks the shear North and South from the center of the area which is the House. They both have civic buildings at their extremes which act as focal points and attractions. On top of the park layer are the inscribed destroyed streets, these not only have symbolic and historical connotations but also serve as new pedestrian and bike routes connecting the new development to the surrounding urban fabric, quite naturally because they literally plug in to what was there before since the area that surrounds the new development does not relate to the Communist intervention at all. Lastly is are the buildings which are not only sustainable because of their density but serve as the main elements for reintegrating the House into the fabric of the city. As one can see they squeeze the House in from the North and South, thus making it a part of the fabric. There are also skyscrapers to the West of the House which diminish its imposing size when one looks down Unirii Boulevard.



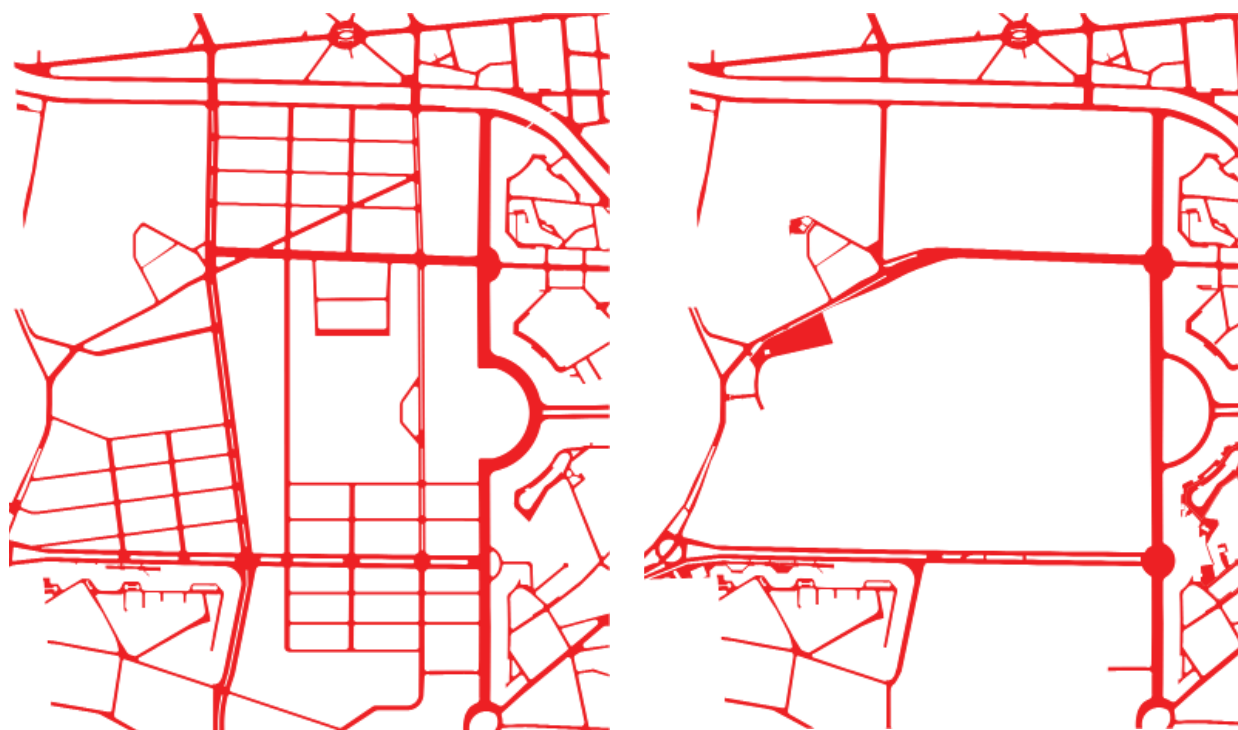
The proposed masterplan is loosely based on the grand prize winning entry by Meinhard von Gerkan for the Bucuresti 2000 competition. The rational grid and inscribed "destroyed roads" are maintained as a major played in the intervention. *Information on the winning project can be obtained in the precedents sections.*



The Masterplan



A comparison between the existing and proposed plans shows the clarity of what redensification would mean. It also shows the clearly defined three neighborhoods that the plan would set up.

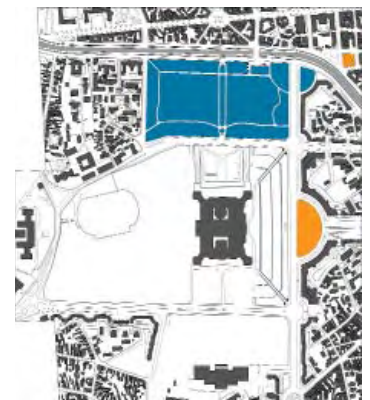


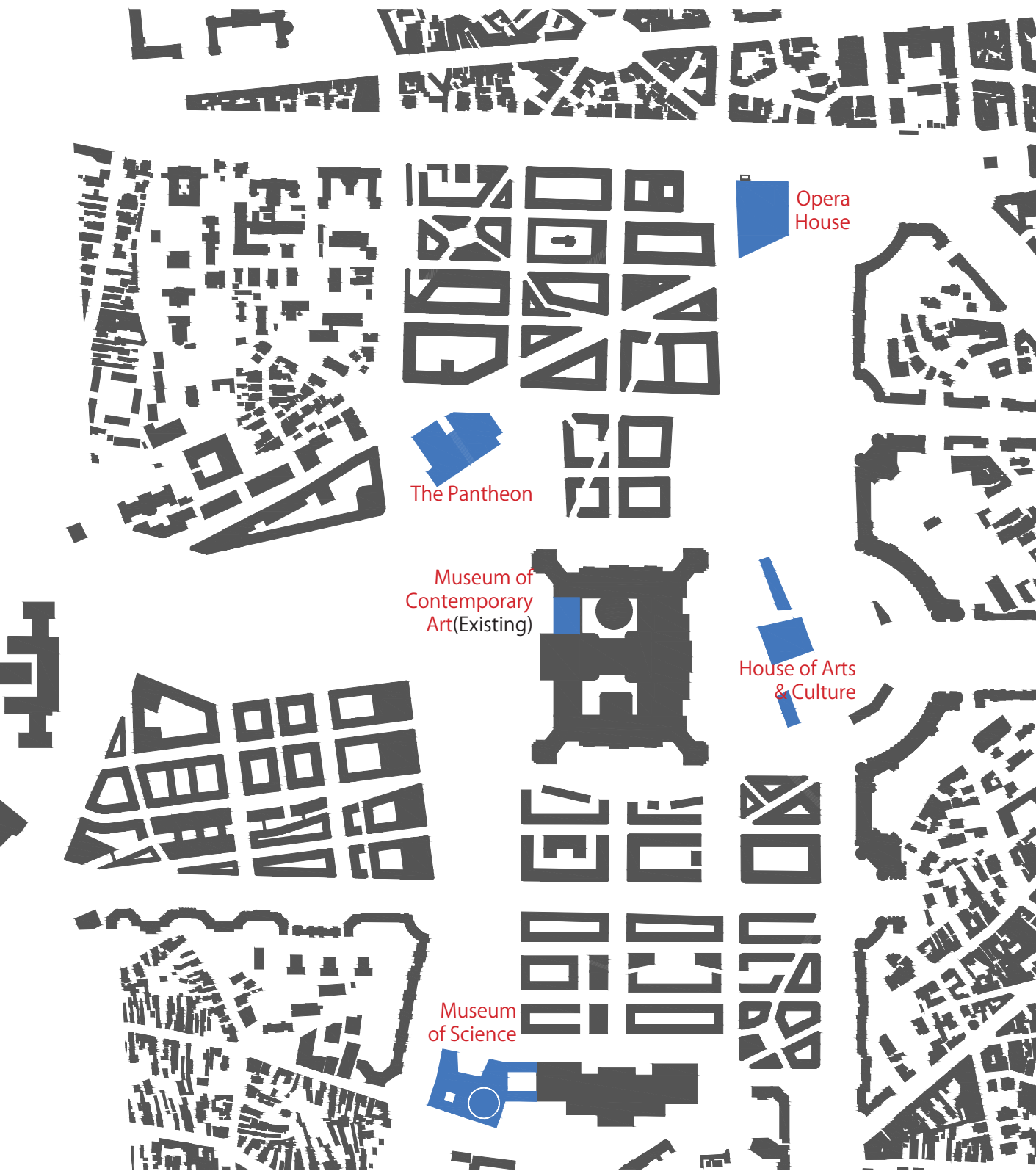
The redensification also can be seen in a comparison of the existing and proposed above ground infrastructure. The streets of the rational grid are clearly expressed here, as are the two boulevards: the two thicker North-South arteries. As one can see: the road running through Piața Constituției has been re-routed so that the entire area in front of the House can be pedestrian only.





The new hardscape and softscape plan shows the destroyed streets in orange and the linear parks in blue. It highlights the connectivity this plan would provide especially in relation to the existing situation. The inscriptions made by the paths also cut through the new buildings thus creating public space and situations that would otherwise not be possible.



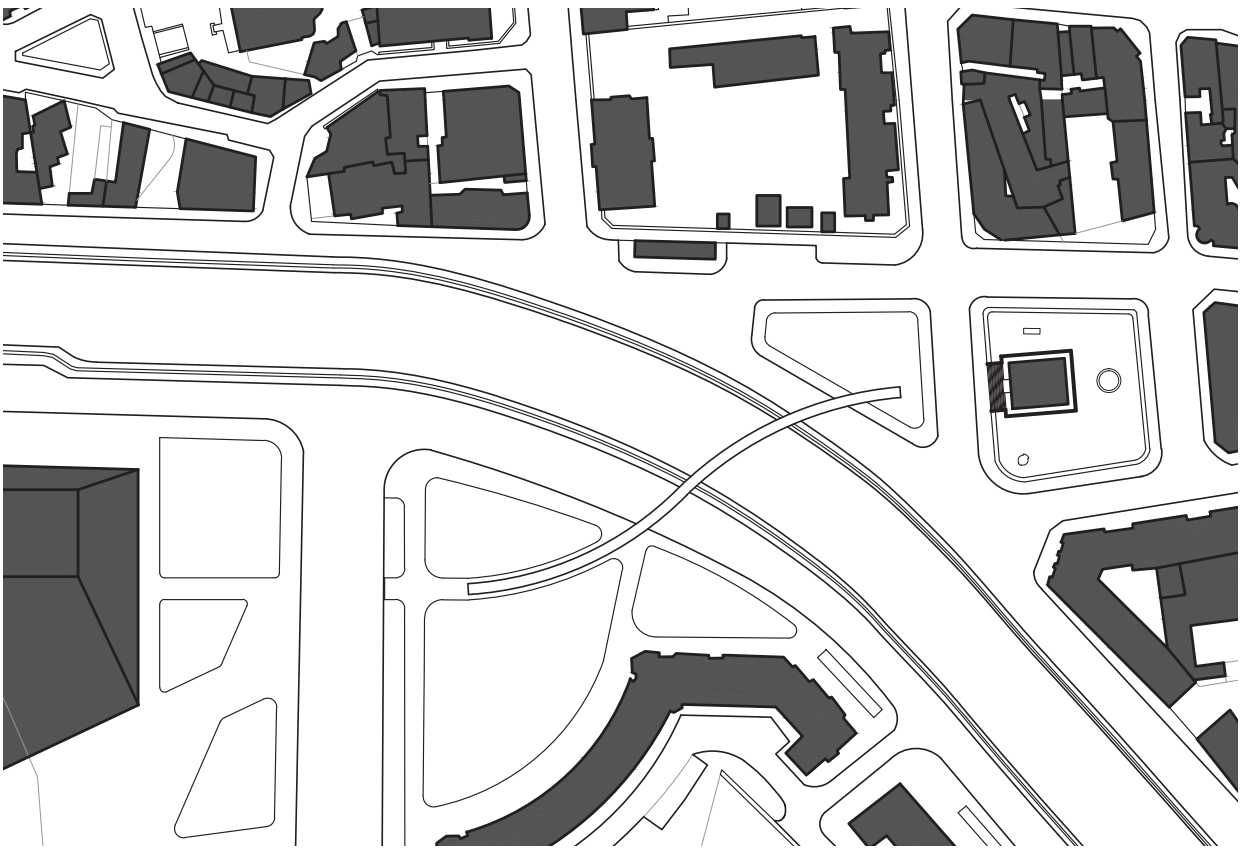


With the exception of the Museum of Contemporary Art, which takes residence in the Northwest corner of the House , there are no civic or cultural buildings in the void. There are many cultural institutions that surround the zone so it is important that they are all strategically connected to the new interventions. The new cultural buildings will be the Opera House, House of Arts & Culture, the Science Museum, and the Pantheon. The Current Opera House is immediately to the Northwest of the site and resides in a historic building that is several hundred years old. There is potential for a new Opera that is larger and gives the Opera an updated, world-class venue near the river Dambovita. It would be right next to the metro stop and have direct access to the pedestrian bridge that makes a strategic connection to the historic Lipscani district with it's cultural venues.





The Museum of Contemporary Art



The Pedestrian bridge would begin on the north side of the river in a triangular parking lot that would be converted into a park. There would be ample space for underground parking as well. The bridge begins right in front of the new Holocaust memorial to the East of the bridge. The holocaust memorial is pictured below.



From inside the memorial one would be able to look straight ahead and see the entrance to the bridge.



The Pantheon is another civic building that the city has expressed need for. It is essentially a place where various intellectual figures can give speeches. It is comprised of two halls that sit upon a plinth that interacts with the ground plane. It will provide the terminus for the Eastern shear-park and have a dialogue with the existing museum.

To the South of the Pantheon creating the other end to the East shear-park is the Museum of Science. A building that will be annexed to the existing Academy of Science: an existing large scale building that was meant to serve as a piece in Ceausescu's Disneyland.

The axonometric highlights the building heights as well as the greenspace. The skyscrapers which take the heat off of the house also serve as a counterpoint to the new skyscrapers that will be further to the East on Unirii Boulevard.

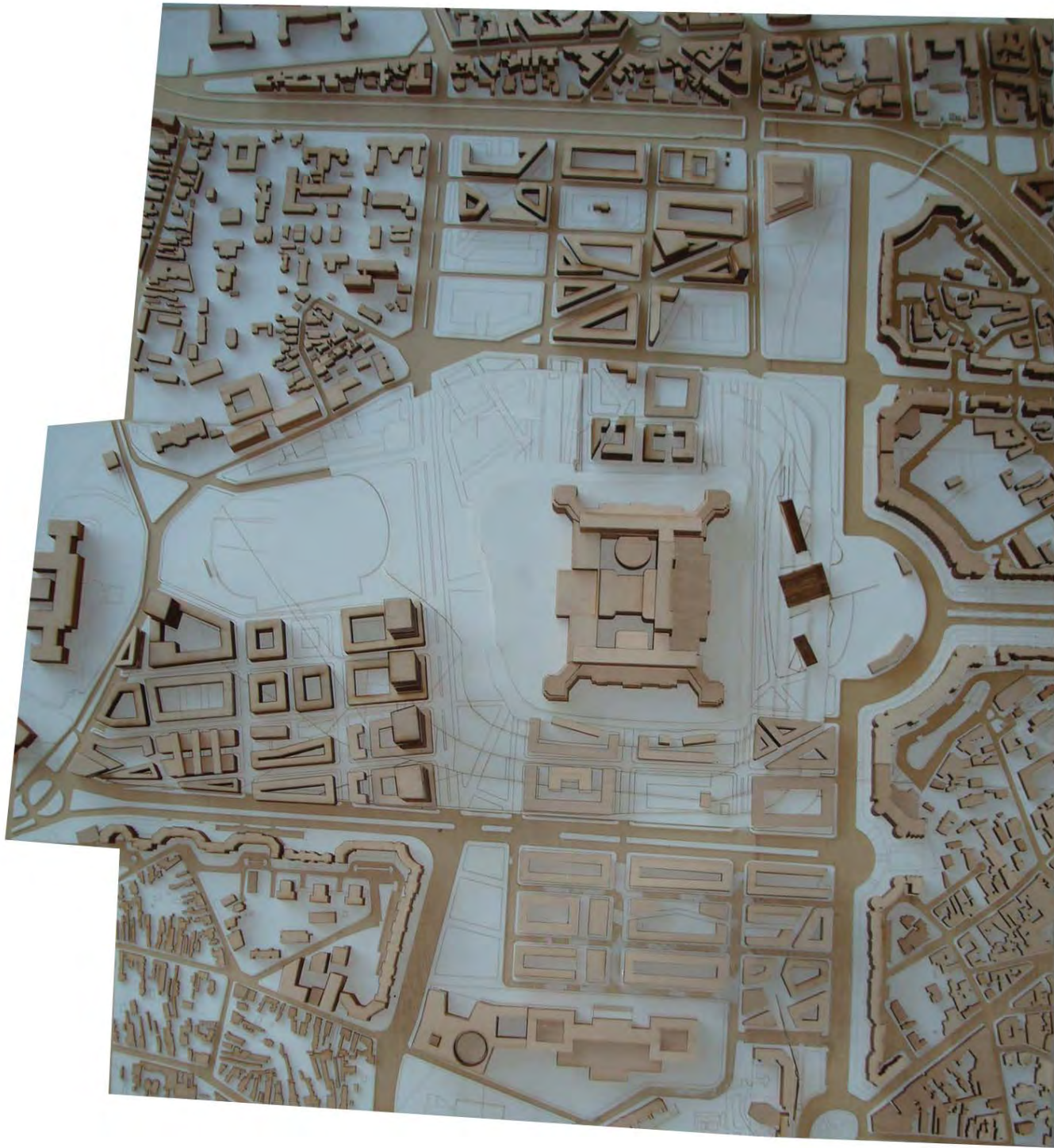


Masterplan Axonometric



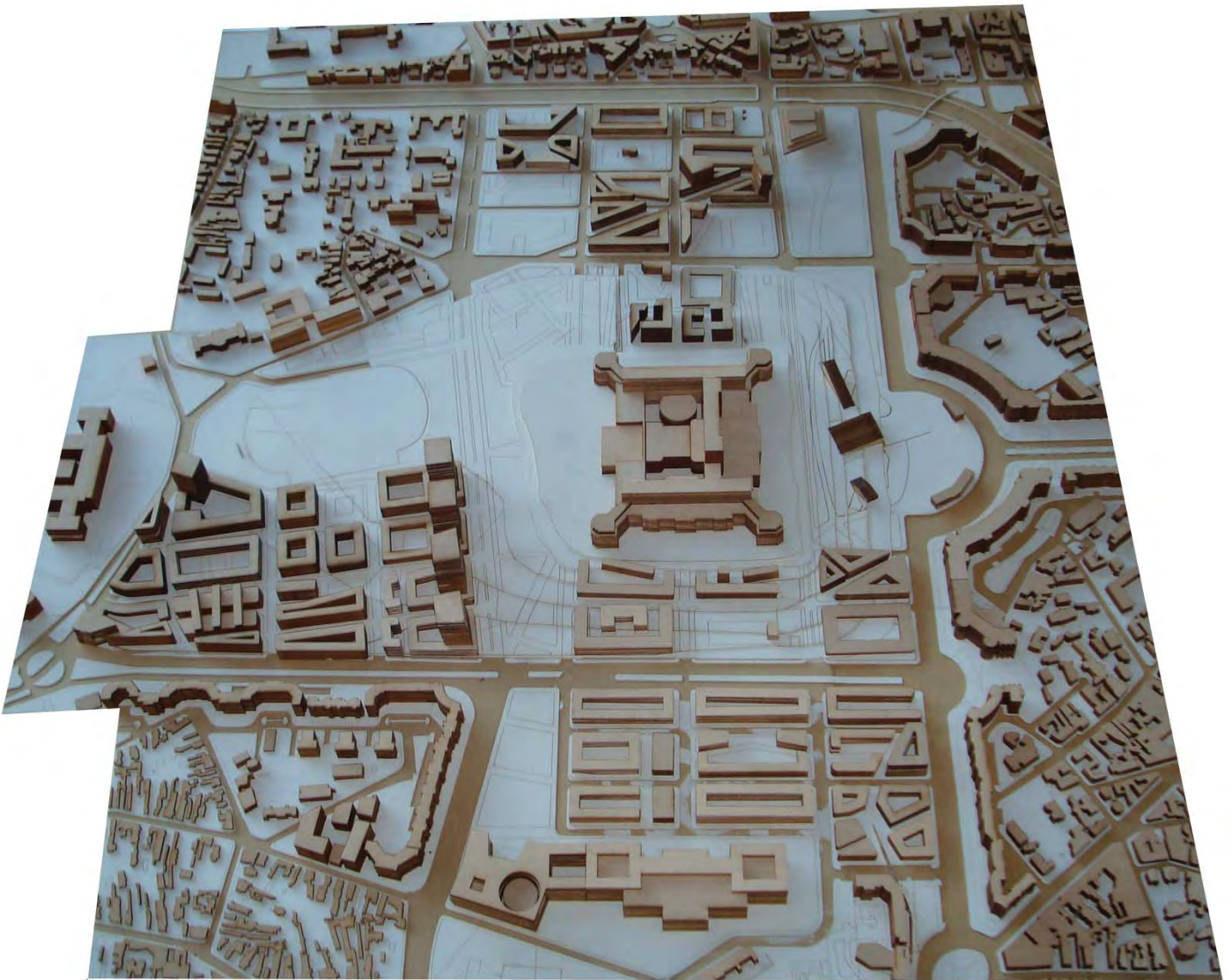
The skyscrapers on Unirii Boulevard by Helmut / Jahn



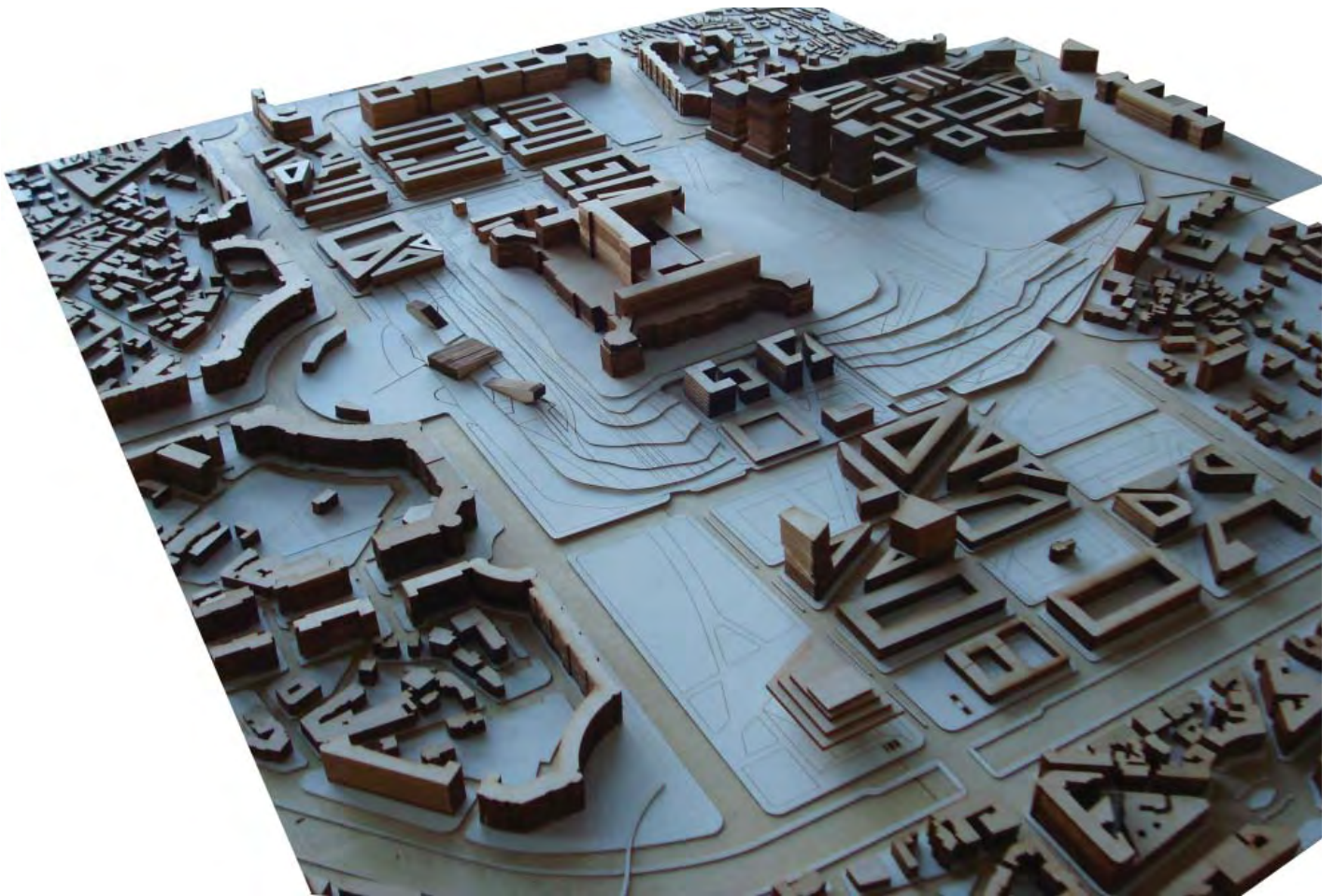


This masterplan could refill and restore the fabric that was once torn asunder thus filling the void that literally and symbolically lays in the heart of the city. The unspecificity of program also fits in with the concept of open-ended architecture because a sense of possibility can be injected in to the intervention. This is something that the mediatheque strives for as well.

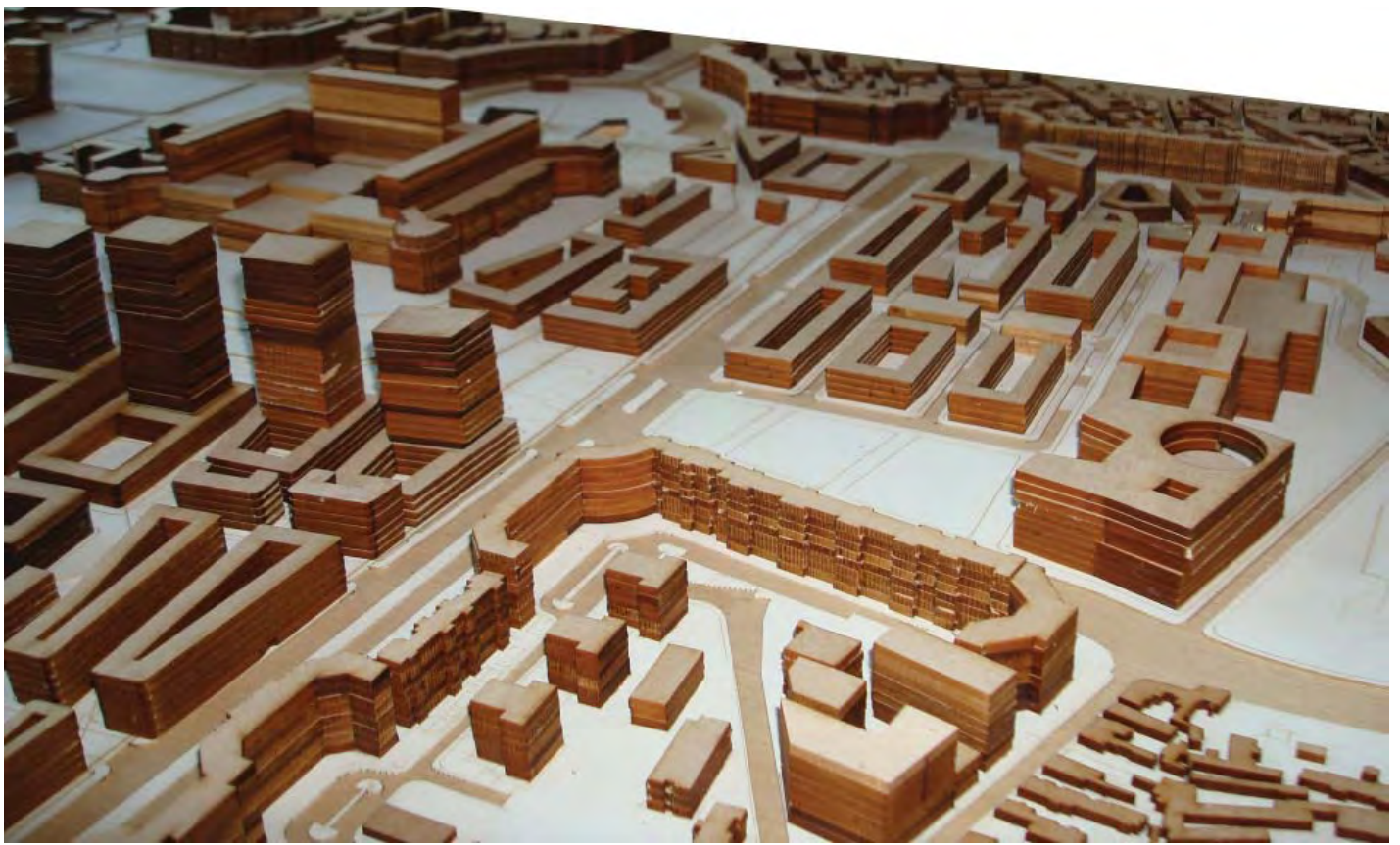




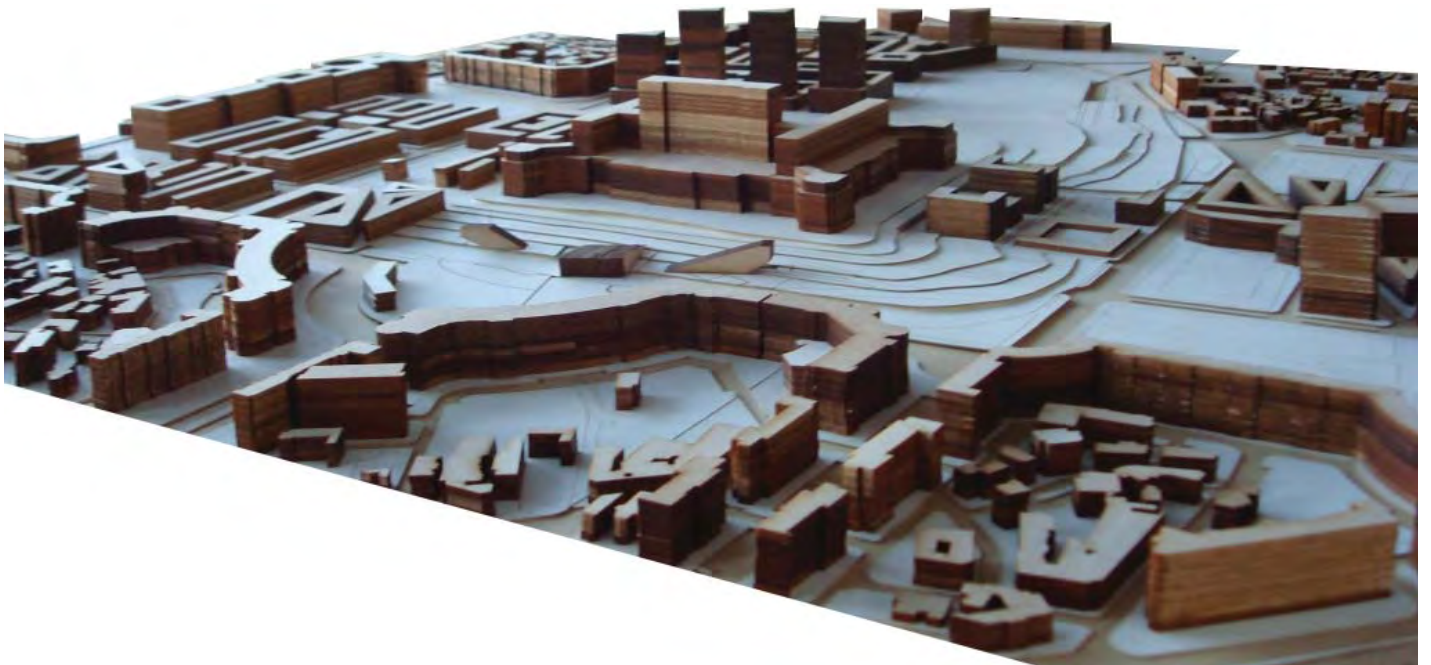
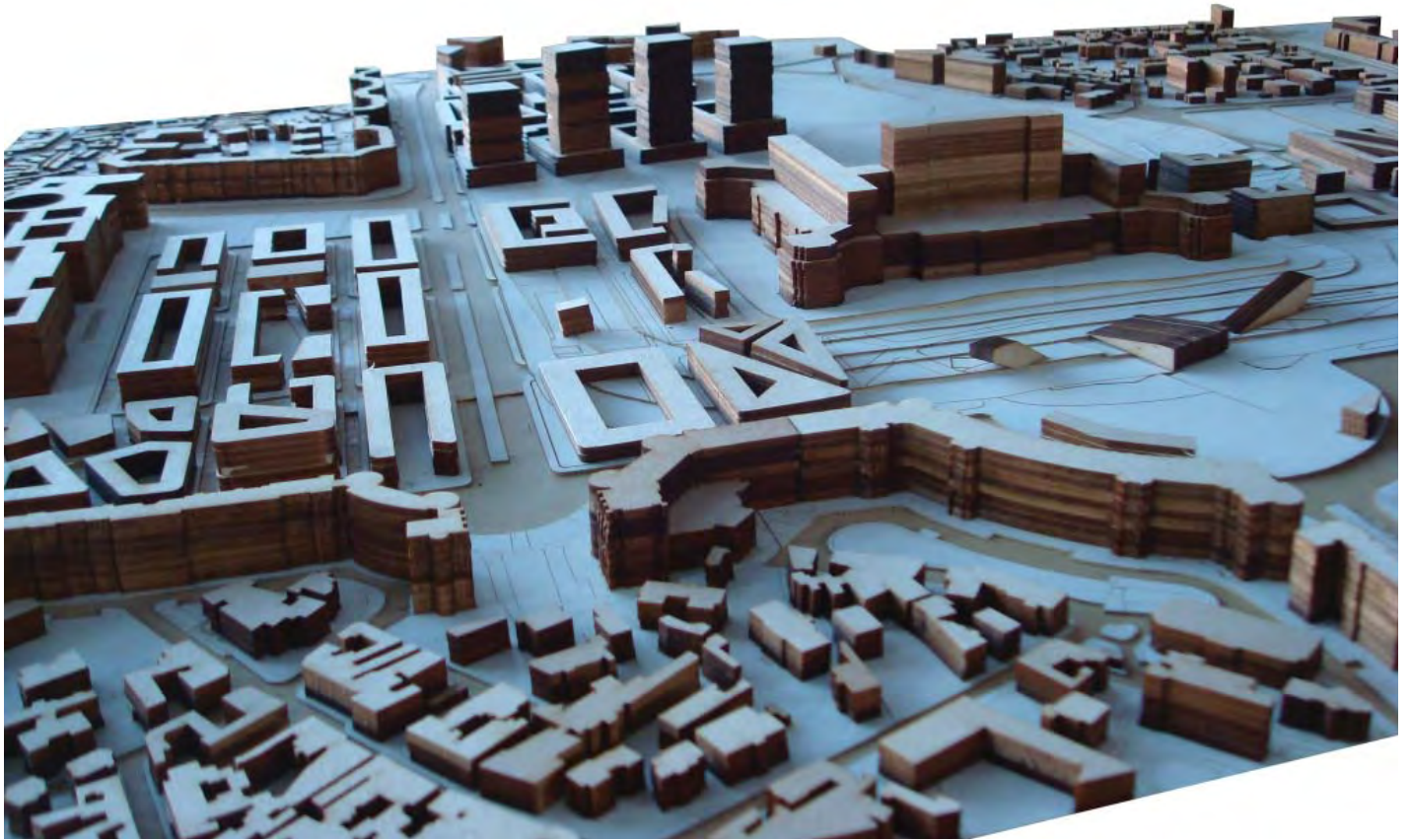












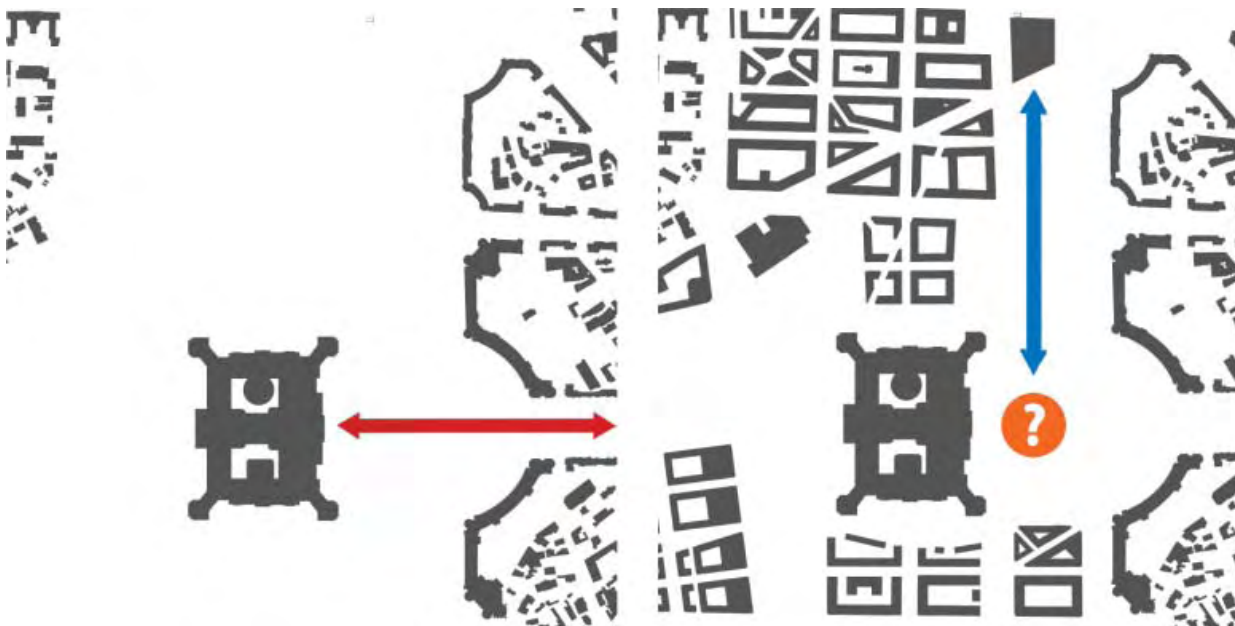


# THE HOUSE OF ARTS & CULTURE



Out of the four new civic buildings proposed in the masterplan the mediatheque that is directly in front of the House of Parliament is the cultural institution that will be developed in depth because it holds the most prominent location for addressing the issues of the House at the architectonic scale. It will achieve what the masterplan alone cannot, while complimenting the virtues of the overall plan as well. The form of the building is a combination of circumstances ranging from a response to the symbolic meaning of the House to blending in to the overall park system that runs throughout the masterplan.

The building itself could be thought of as an iceberg because only portions of it are revealed above ground. This is a direct response to the size and scale of the House of Parliament: it is an imposing figure that cannot be competed with so it is buried for several reasons. First it expresses an attitude of acceptance towards the past and acknowledges that this mammoth building is here to stay and cannot and should not be blocked. Second it allows the hill to become a park that can also be used for watching events in the piazza. And third: it directly contradicts the gesture of showing everything one has to offer; the gesture made by the House of Parliament. By only exposing it's three entrances it creates

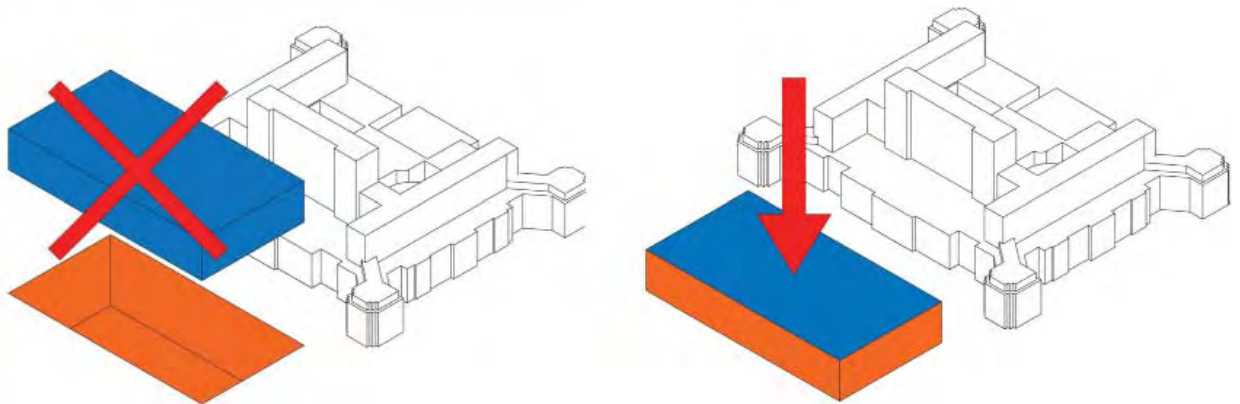




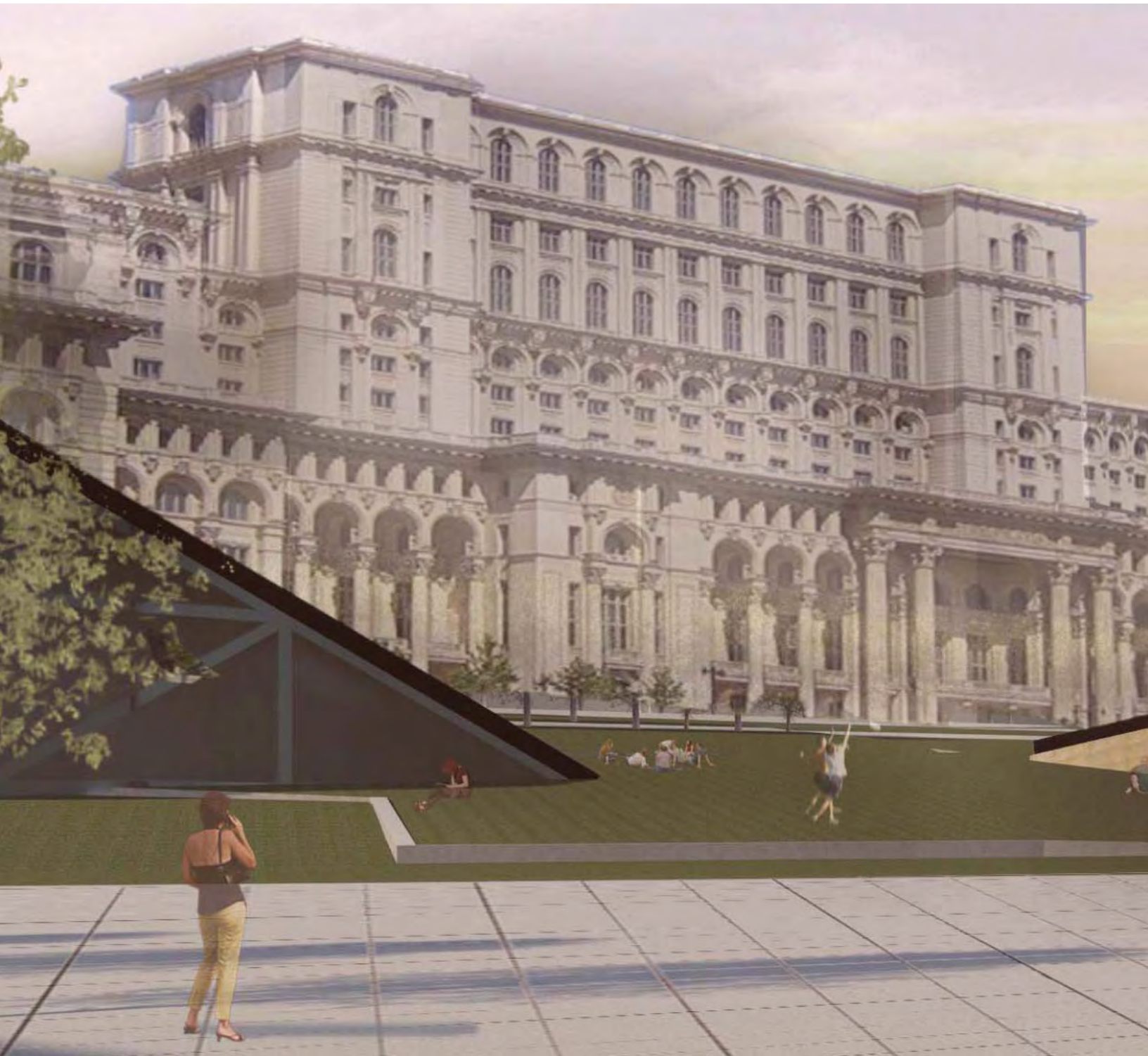
the opportunity of exploration, excitement, mystery, and potential. The pedestrian's curiosity is struck and the process of discovery is set in to motion.

The dynamic gestures of these entrances reinforce the contradiction between the two "houses" as well. While the Parliament is composed of horizontal and vertical lines, classical orders, and traditional motifs; the mediatheque is comprised of two bands that intertwine and flirt with the plane of the hill. Popping up and sinking below, their priority remains with the paths of the park, the connections to the surrounding context, and the symbolic essence they mean to uphold rather than the strict geometrical symmetry imposed by the Parliament. These gestures are meant to be debated and discussed, and criticism of their angles is embraced. The goal is to attract all people interested in culture and art rather than authorize only a few politicians and statesmen entry; as the Parliament does.

The process of this shape and attitude was an additive one in the sense that ideas grew upon each other and the final product was a culmination of several concepts. Some were discarded along the way to make room for others, and others were altered, or merged with others to form mutant offspring. At the start of the building scale the masterplan was in place and served as guiding force in the development of the project. I was faced with the intersection of the existing Communist axis and the new North-South one; one was inherently cruel, of another time, and suppressive, the other one is meant to be liberating, exciting, new, and relaxing. Such strong forces would ultimately cause an interesting situation at their convergence so it was important to take advantage of this situation in every possible way...But how?

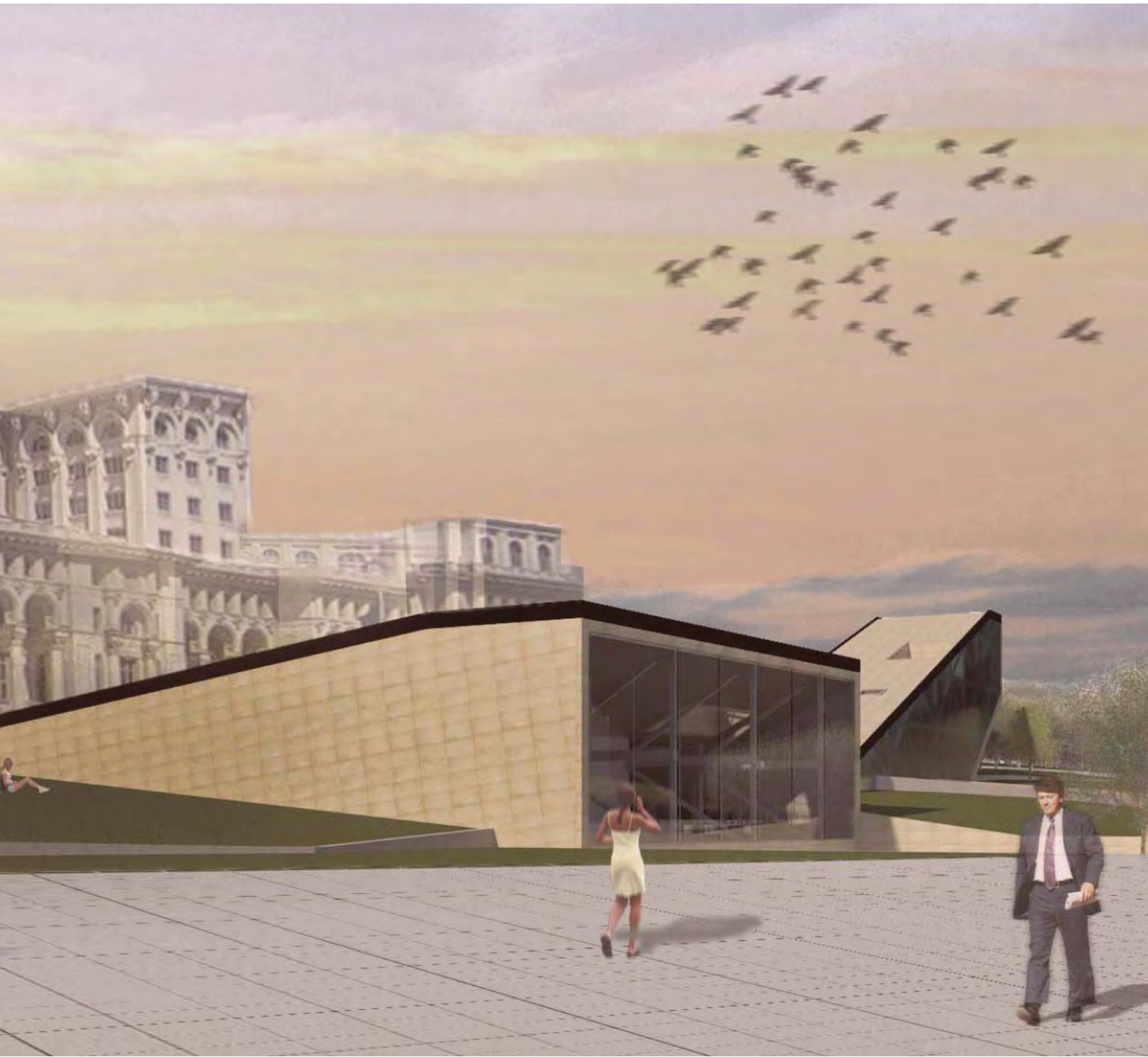


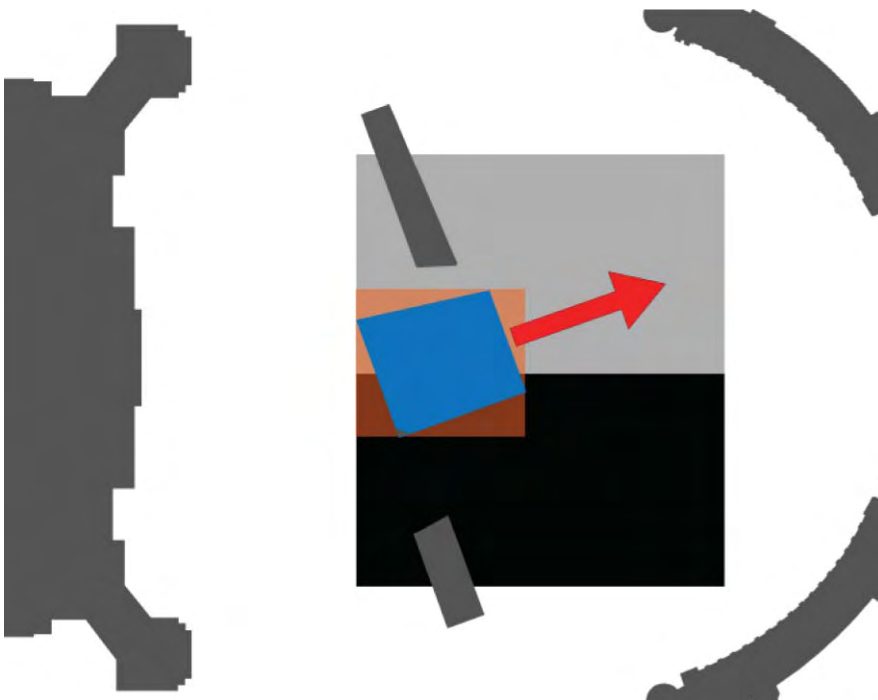
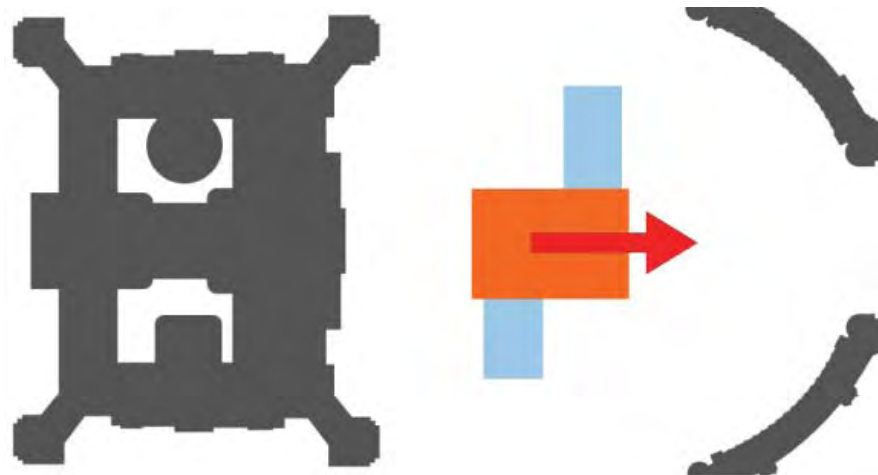
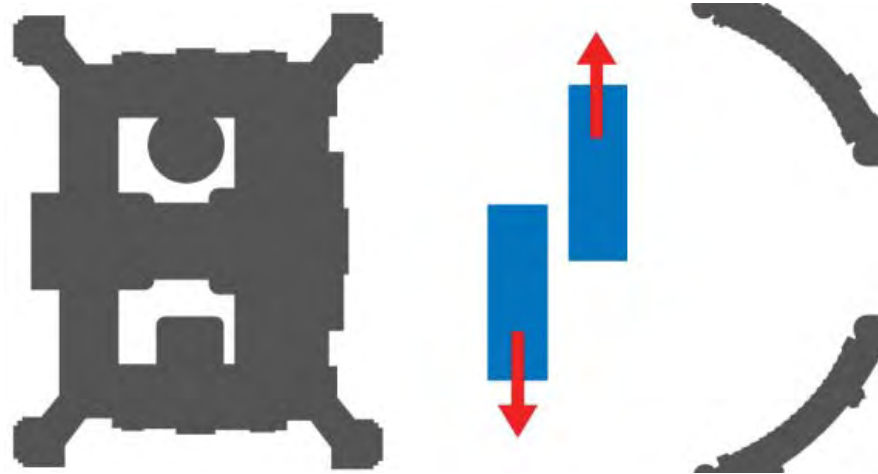
The site gave me two options: either bury the project and be submissive to the Parliament, or block it and denounce its presence. Blocking was out of the question not only because it sends the wrong message but also because it was difficult to block the entire facade. My attempts in getting in front of the facade resulted in the "jumping in front of the photograph" situation and it was like trying to put ones finger up to the sun to block it. It simply did not work. On the other hand I did not want to completely submerge the project because the symbolic statement that would result would not carry the intended weight in my mind. Instead the decision was made to partially bury the project and commit to staying below a certain elevation; this would allow the politicians to get their views out from the balcony at the front of the Parliament while the intended statement could be made. The height of the mediatheque would not extend above the tree line of the trees planted along the new boulevard that ran between the two Houses.



Perspectival view looking East towards the House and the Hill.







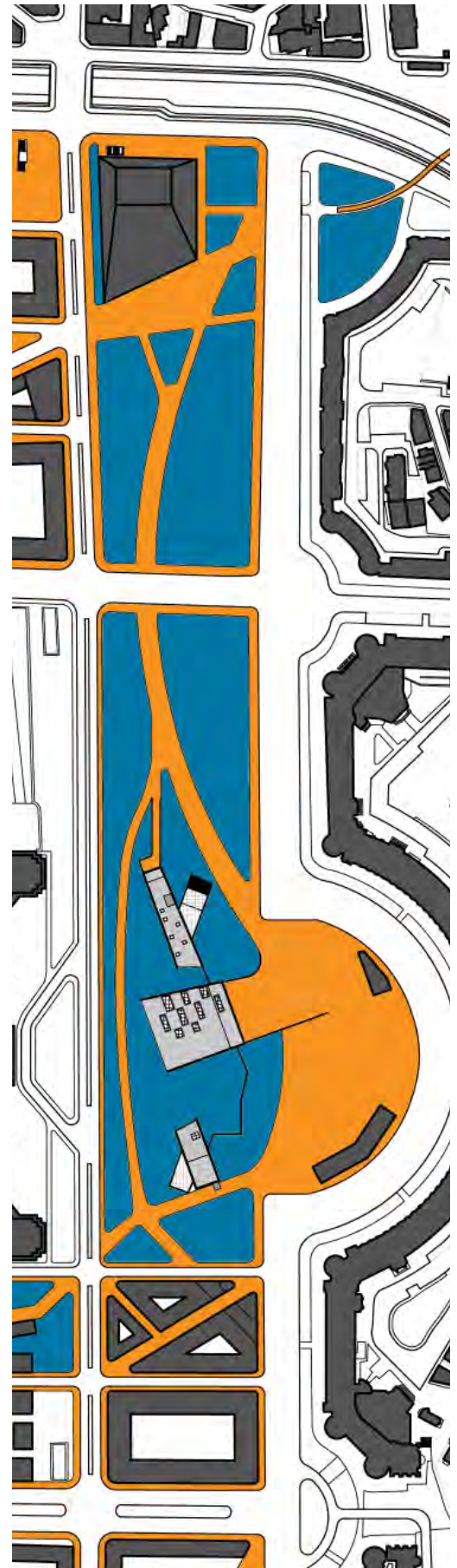


Once the position was set and the heights were regulated the next step became to create the gesture. Since a subtle denouncing of the East-West axis and a celebration of the North-South axis was intended the initial move was a shear. A shearing of two masses in the North-South direction would be the asymmetrical move that could go against the stagnant geometry of the surrounding environment while responding to the park and Opera House to the North and the nearby buildings to the South.

The next insertion was a central piece. The gesture in the middle would be the one that responds to the immense piazza before it; providing and absorbing activity all around. But it still felt subservient to an extent, the strict North-South response did not take into account the slope of the hill or the park paths.

So the next move was a slight rotation, as seen in the diagram above, thus achieved several goals. First the gigantic plaza was divided in to two halves: the grey could serve the main piece of the mediatheque in conjunction with the slope that leads to it's entrance and the black could remain more open to preserve the space for various events. Since the part of the hill that is now usable for viewing onto the piazza rests within this black zone it makes up for the space lost to the grey area. The rotation also solves the issue of the north protrusion and its large overhang. By rotating it to the West it protrudes with the topography rather than neglecting it, it creates a usable space at the entrance which becomes an interior/exterior cafe. If it was directed straight North it would create an awkward condition at the underside of the protrusion. This was only an issue for the North protrusion because of it's height; the Southern one had a different job: to coincide with the various park paths that intersected in this area. The area around the Northern protrusion had no historical roads in that area.

Instead of using the existing paths as references, the Northern part of the building is influenced by a large new sweeping path that connects the Opera House and pedestrian bridge to the piazza. This gesture intentionally bypasses the Northern protrusion in order to direct pedestrians to the main public hardscape of the project. Just before the protrusion the path splits in to several thinner walkways: one to circumnavigate the building on its Western side in order to reach the Southern tip of the park and the other is a direct entrance to the building.



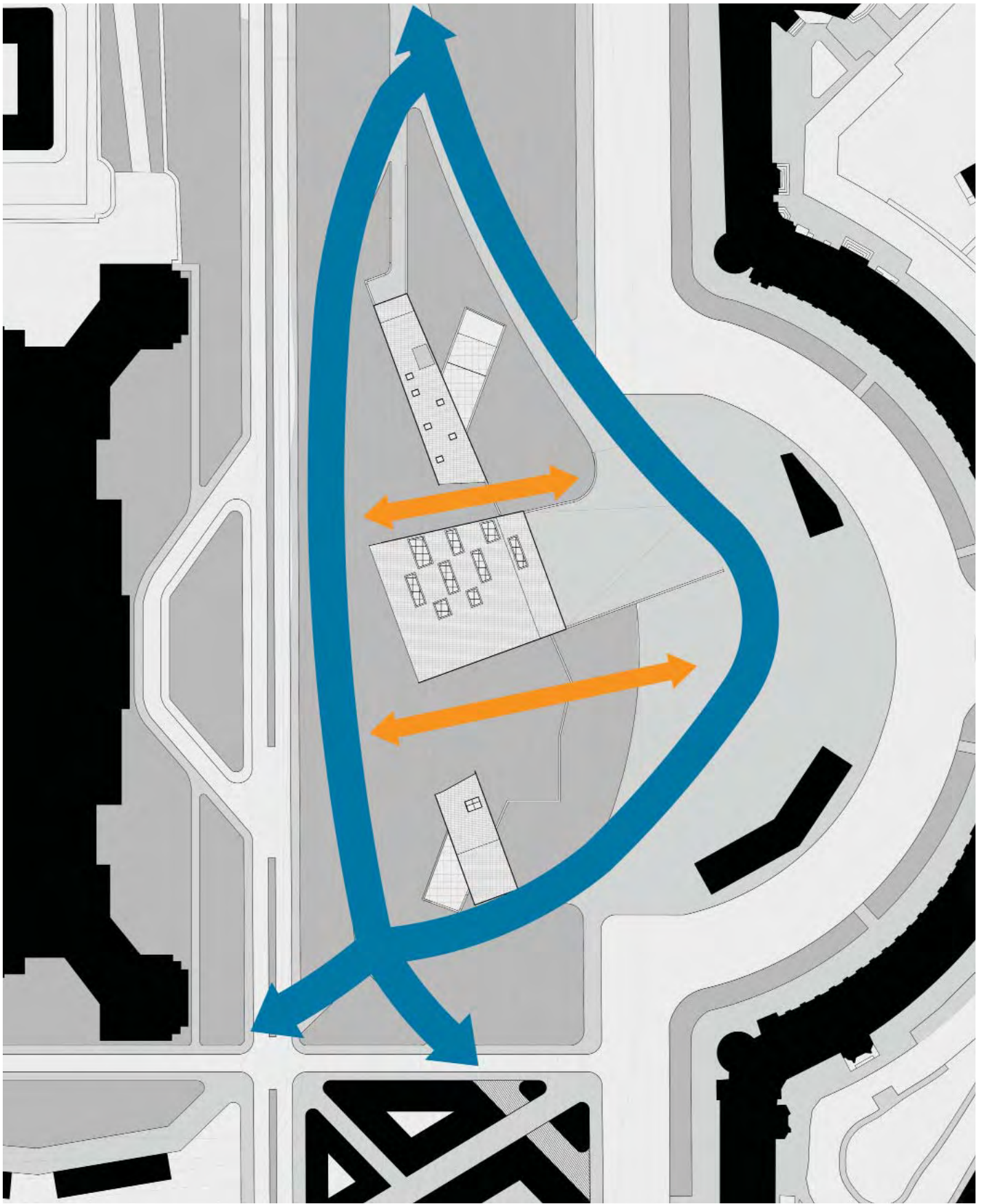
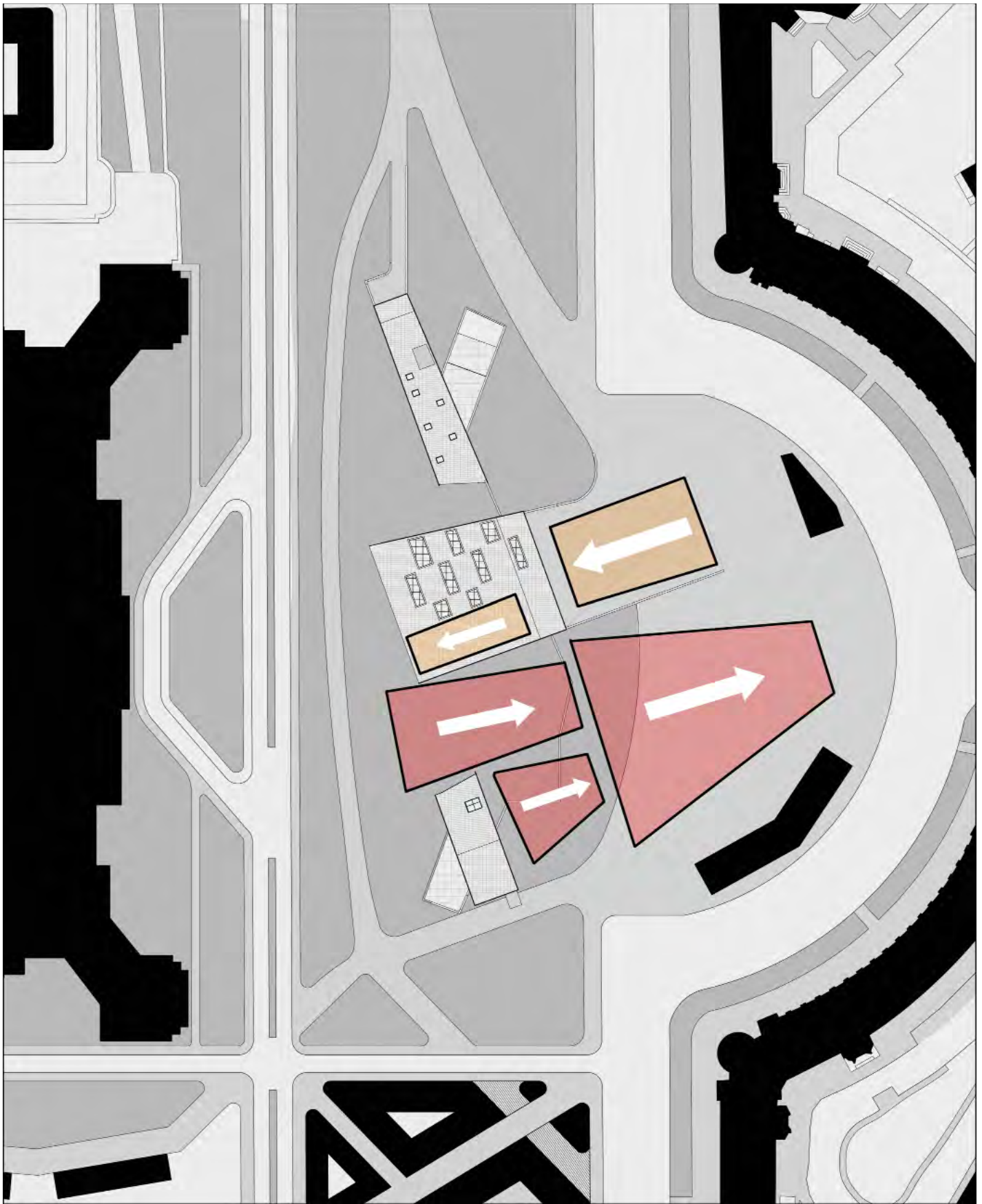
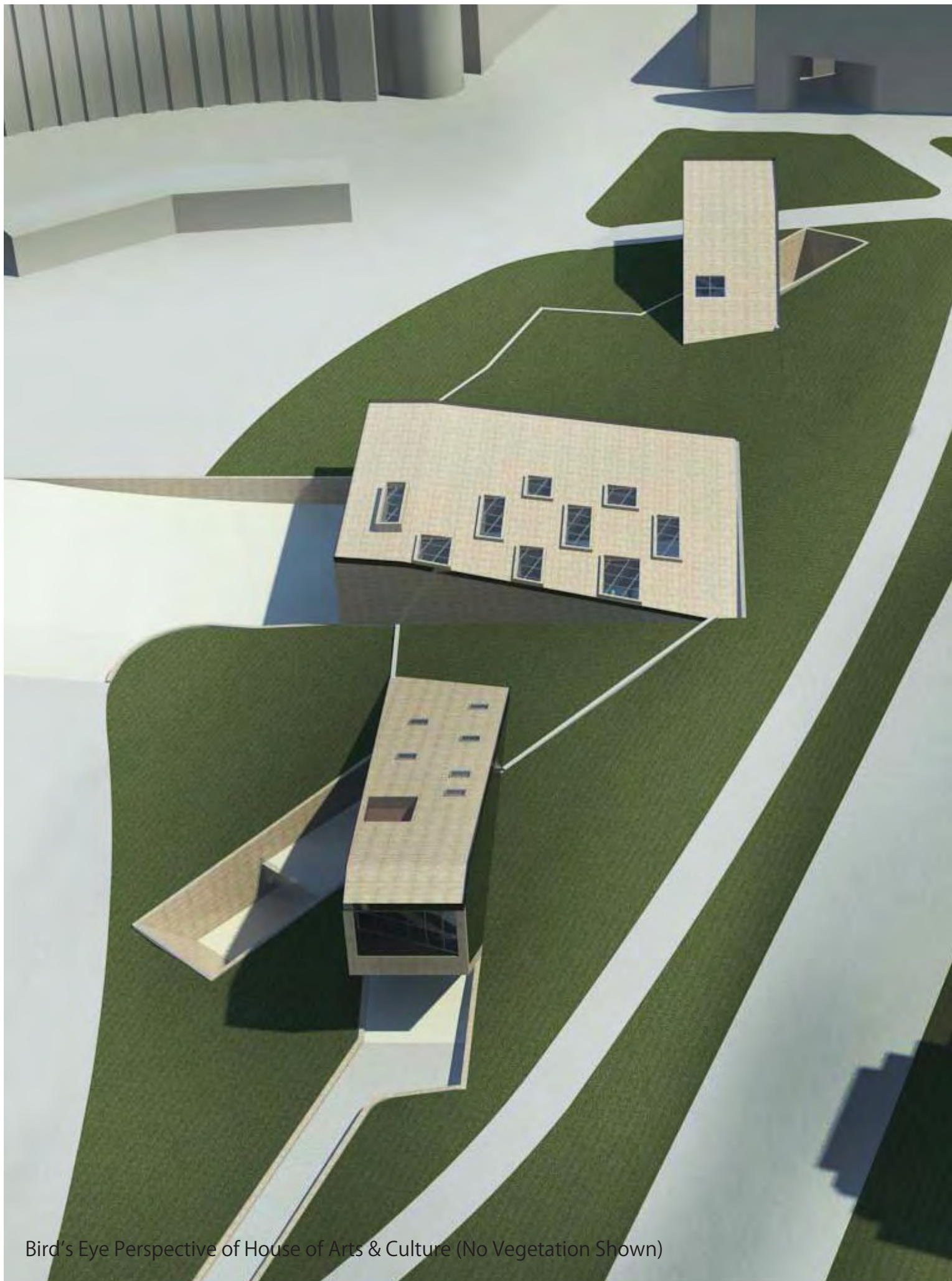


Diagram showing the route one takes to circumnavigate the building (in blue) and the spaces meant for moving East-West on the hill between the Western path and the piazza (in orange).





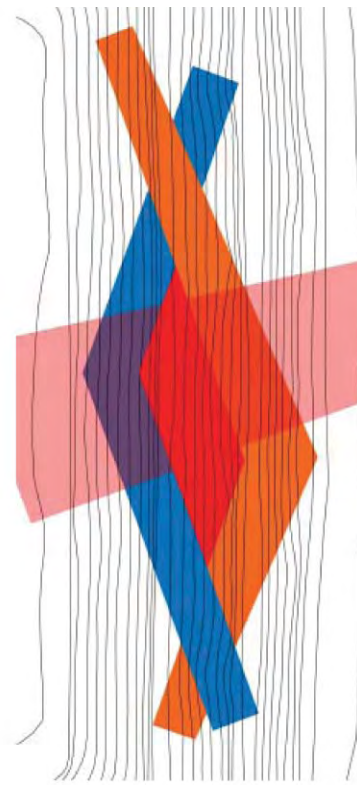
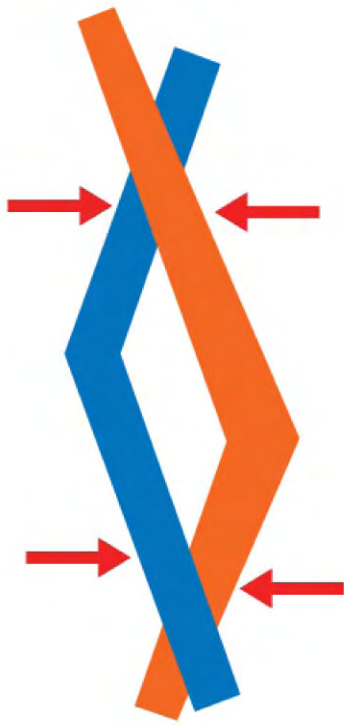
Showing the programmatic distribution of intended activities for the public outdoor space. The orange areas pertain to the mediatheque related program: viewing projections, watching smaller scale performances, and just lounging. The red zones are meant for watching large scale performances like concerts, festivals, etc.



Bird's Eye Perspective of House of Arts & Culture (No Vegetation Shown)



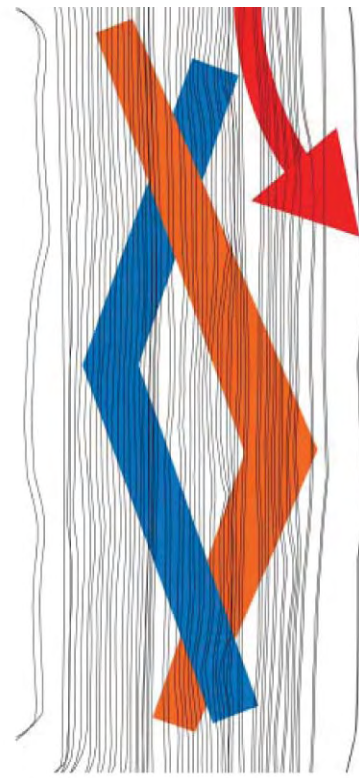




The rotation of the middle protrusion and its constituents is not just an above ground cosmetic gesture. It directly affects the interior layout of the building because the protrusions continue underground. In fact, this pinching or twisting of the two masses resulted from a number of variables: first it was ideal for the North and South entrances to be as far apart as possible in order to receive the incoming pedestrians from their respective destinations so an elongation of the orange and blue pieces took place. Second: longer thinner bands seemed more suitable for housing stacks of media, rows of production studios, or various small galleries. The bending of the two bars strategically took place at two certain locations to make sure that the entrances, program, and surrounding landscape all worked together. In addition, as the diagram with the red space in the middle shows: the angle of these bending bars was largely determined by the direction of the central protrusion and its duty of addressing the Northern half of the piazza. The bending also allowed for the central gathering space to take place between the two bars, the area from which all the program could be accessed.

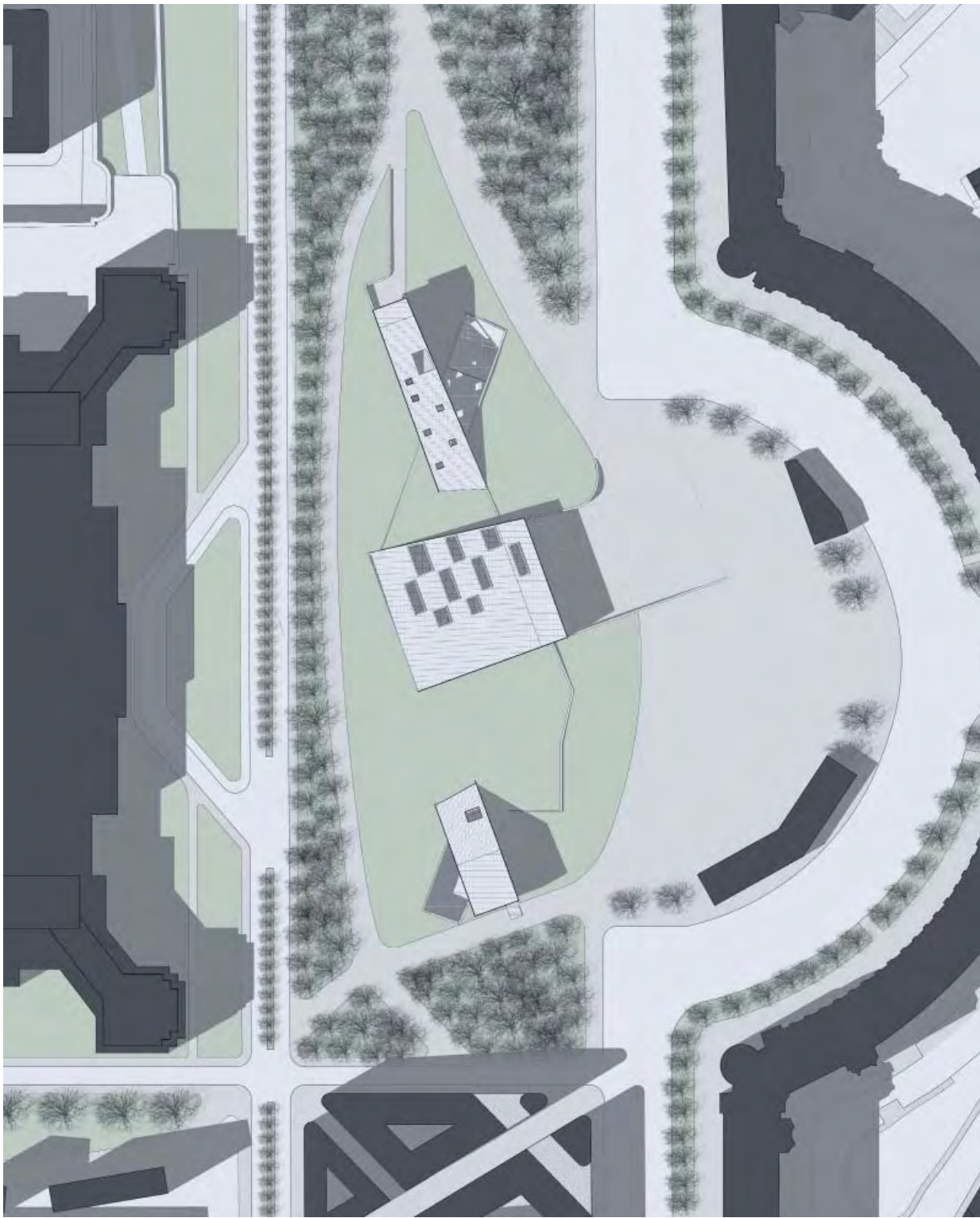






The North and South protrusions have opposite counterparts: tails. The tails are voids or subtractions that complement the protrusions or additions. This allows for a courtyard to be placed right next to a protrusion. The courtyards are only accessible from the interior and serve multiple purposes: while the Southern courtyard is adjacent to a gallery thus usable as a sculpture courtyard or some other display area, the Northern one is next to media stacks so something can be projected on to it's walls at night or a class can be taught outside during the day time. And as shown in the final diagram: the angle of the bending works in conjunction with the long path from the North to direct pedestrians to the piazza as shown in the last diagram. Finally the overall shape that the two bands create produces an important symbolic essence that represents this country's aspirations for the future and remembrance of the past. This intertwining motif represents a traditional Romanian art found on everything from churches, plates, clothes, architecture, to modern sculpture, and even the interior decoration of the House of Parliament itself.





Roof Plan with Vegetation



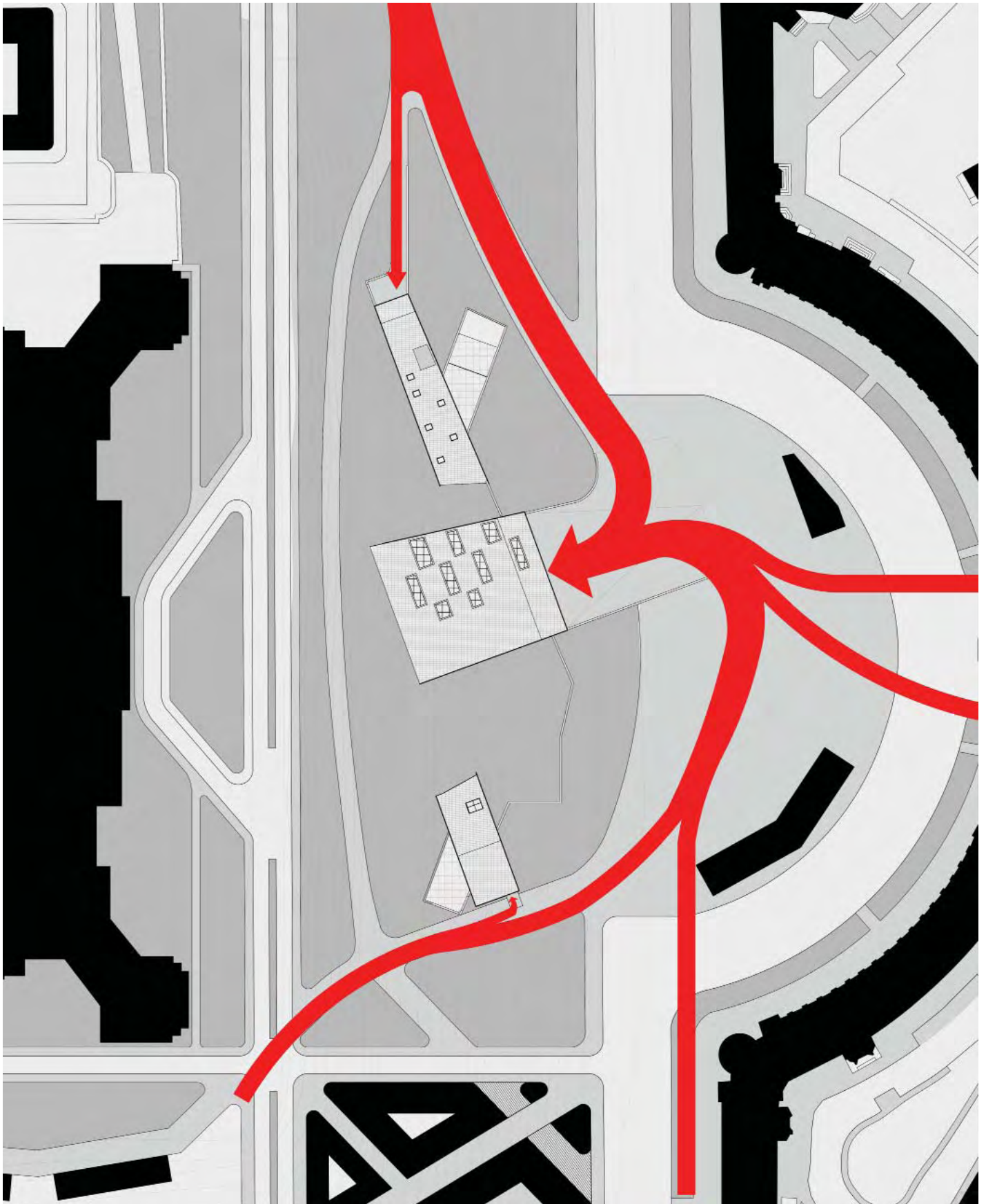
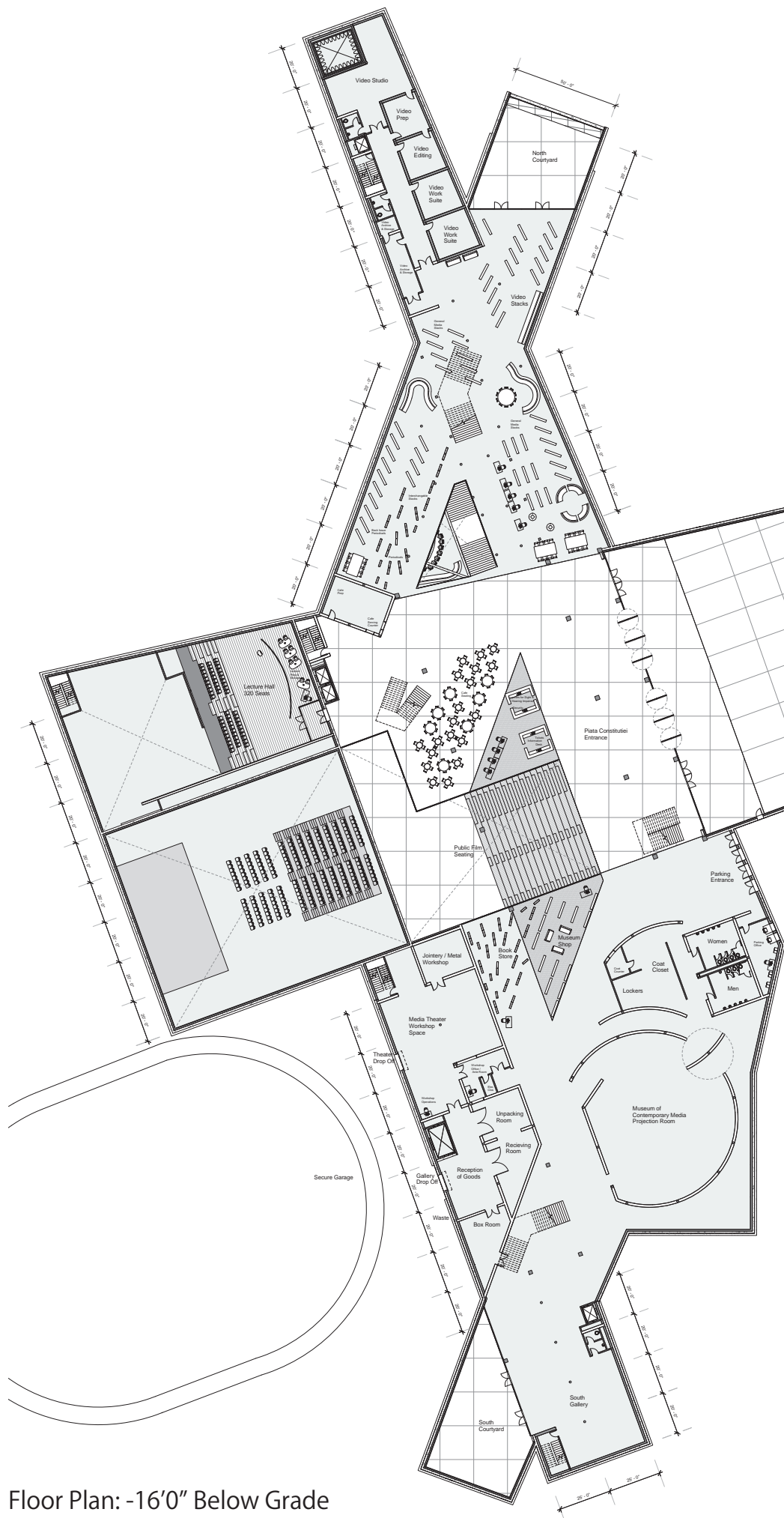


Diagram showing entrances at grade. The red arrows highlight pedestrian routes coming from the South, Unirii Boulevard to the East, and the metro station to the North. While the smaller arrows symbolize the entrances at the North and South protrusions, the thicker ones are meant to show the influx of users going to the main entrance in the middle, where several arrows merge.



Floor Plan: -16'0" Below Grade



The main floor of the building is at -16'0" below grade because a gentle slope leading to the main entrance starts at grade in Piata Constituei. A pedestrian entering this way would either pass through the regular doors during the colder months or simply stroll in through the open pivoting doors that could constantly be open during the warmer months. This would also allow for passive cooling since the wind blows from the East/Southeast. From there one is at the center of the entire building, above: large skylights let in plenty of natural light while a lack of exterior views keep the visitor's attention on the many areas to be explored. I toyed with the idea of having a view towards the parliament from this interior grand space but that got removed because people have seen the Parliament enough and this space is about an introverted agenda rather than dealing with the House of Parliament. Directly in front of the entrance there is a grand staircase that leads down to -32'0" below grade where there is a media theater. This is not simply a staircase but it doubles as a seating area for 100+ people. It can be used for resting and conversing, browsing some media, or watching a film that is projected on a screen in front of the media theater wall. Also in the central space there is: an information/circulation desk, a ticket desk for shows, security, a desk for inquiries for the sight and hearing impaired, and a cafe. The lecture hall with 320 seats is also accessible from this area. To the North there is a stair leading down to -32'0", another leading up to grade, and periodicals like a regular library would have. Stacks of interchangeable literature and media are dispersed throughout and as one moves further North they begin to see video stacks. At this point where the two Northern halves of the bars cross the program becomes more private. The Eastern bar becomes an exterior courtyard while the Western one is comprised of a video studio, video prep, editing, work suites, and archives and storage.

If one chooses to go South from the central area they will be met with a bookstore and museum shop since the Southern half of the building is largely devoted to galleries. This formula is consistent throughout all levels: the Southern portion of the building is mostly galleries while the Northern half is devoted to media with several galleries and other amenities throughout. Also in this area of the -16'0" level there are amenities like a coat check, lockers, restrooms, and a parking office since the entrance from the underground parking is here too. There is a definite potential to develop underground parking beneath Piata Constituei and since all of this new development would require a lot of new parking, this would be an ideal place for it. It was important to have the underground parking entrance right next to the main one so that people coming in from both of these locations could be oriented in the same place. Further below the amenities found here is a circular projection room that would be used for displaying different pieces of motion picture media; it is encased in the remnants of the underground concrete room on it's Southwestern side that remains from the Parliament's construction. To the West of this area is the services area for the galleries: a media theater workshop is adjacent to the media theater with a joinery and metal workshop, a workshop office, as well as a gallery drop off with unpacking, receiving, and boxing. There are two drop off areas: one for the gallery and another for the theater; both are connected to a secure garage that links up to an underground tunnel that passes in front of the Parliament, it is existing. The area furthest South is a gallery as well as the other exterior courtyard, there is also a large staircase that leads to galleries on higher levels.



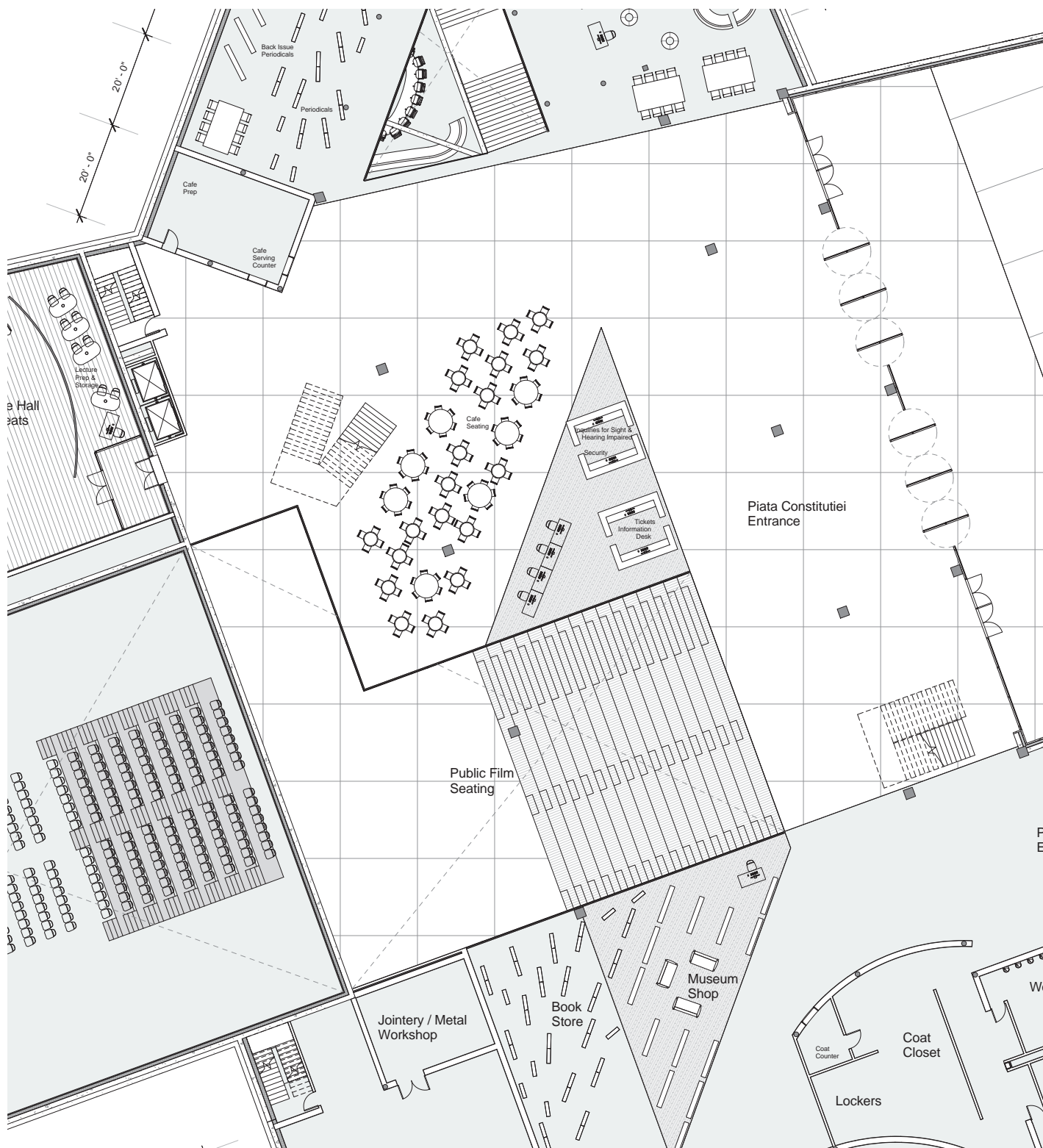
View of Central Space.



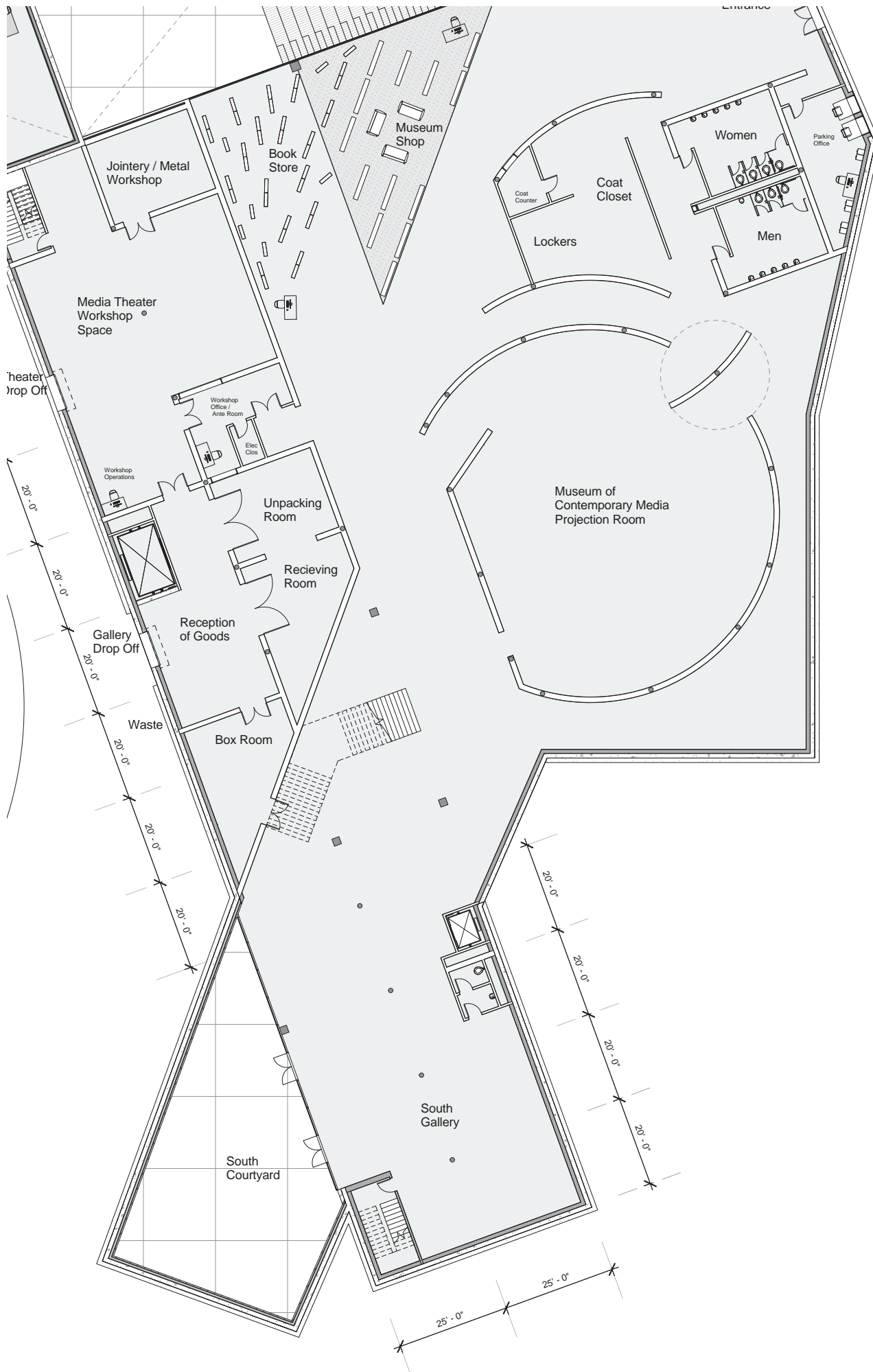








Enhanced views of -16'0" Plan



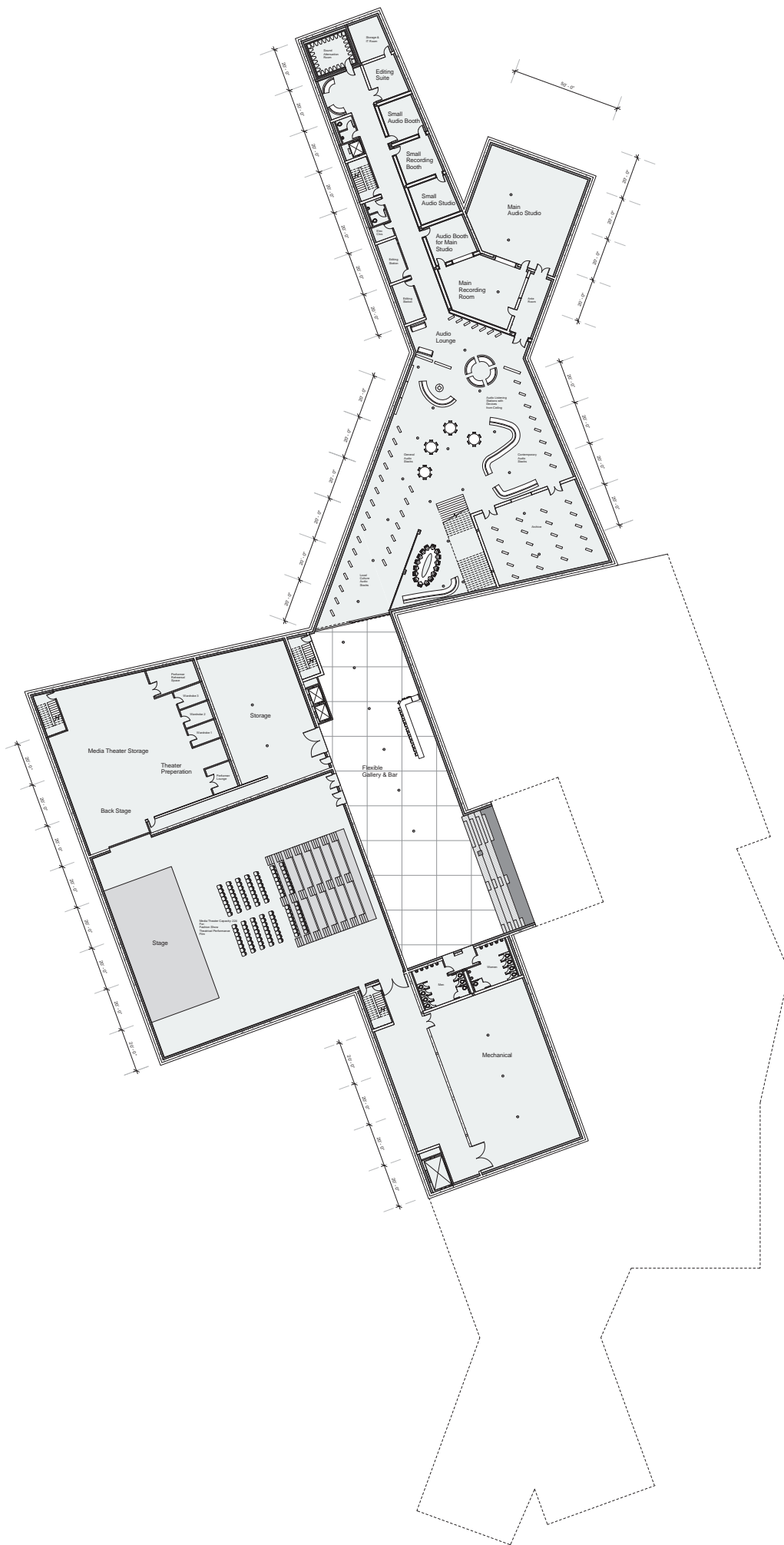




View of Main Entrance.

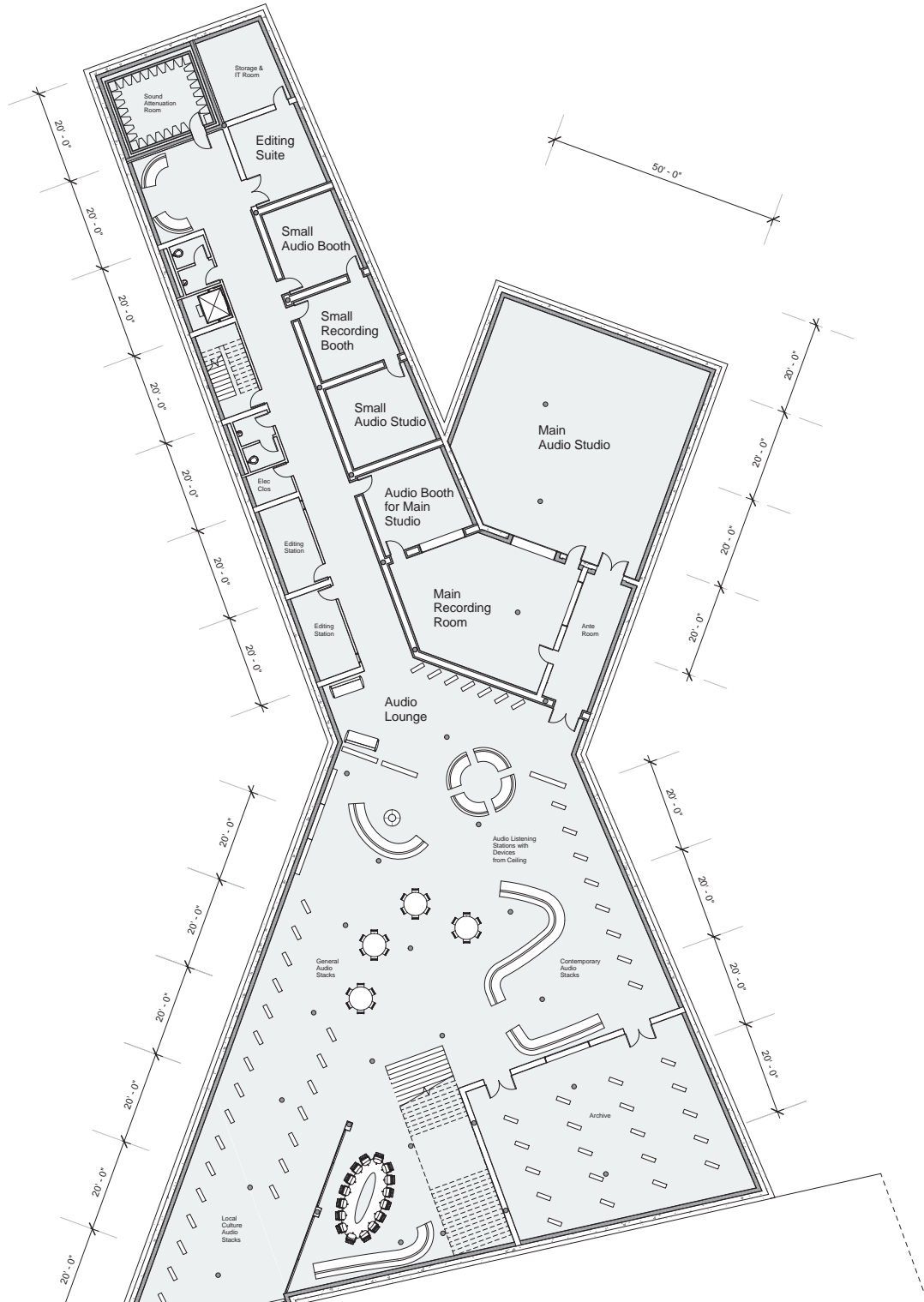


View of stacks on -16'0" Level.





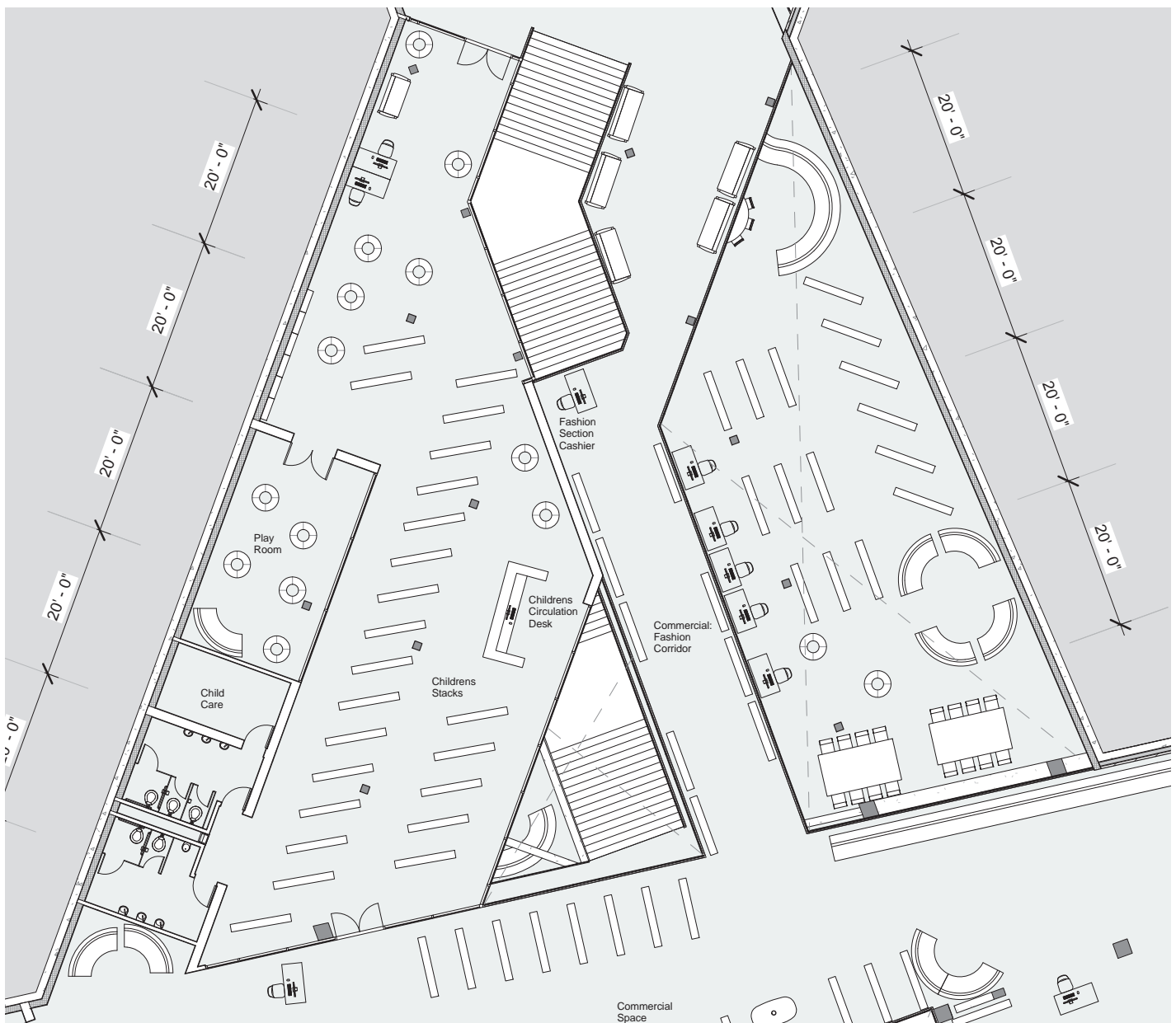
The -32'0" level is mostly comprised of program that does not need natural light. The Northern part of it is devoted to audio production and development, similar to the video production rooms that are one level above. There are audio booths, audio editing suites, a sound attenuation room, and a large recording studio. There are also public audio media stacks that include an audio lounge, listening stations, contemporary audio stacks, general stacks, and local culture media. There is also a large archive. When one moves down the large central staircase from the -16'0" level they are greeted with a long rectangular room that is a flexible space. Usable for banquets, parties, fashion shows, and art openings; it is blocked off from the audio section by a movable partition. This is also the level of the media theater which would be used for displaying film and live performances so there is a backstage with theater preparation, storage, wardrobe and make up, as well as other amenities like bathrooms and a mechanical room. The capacity of the media theater is 224 persons.

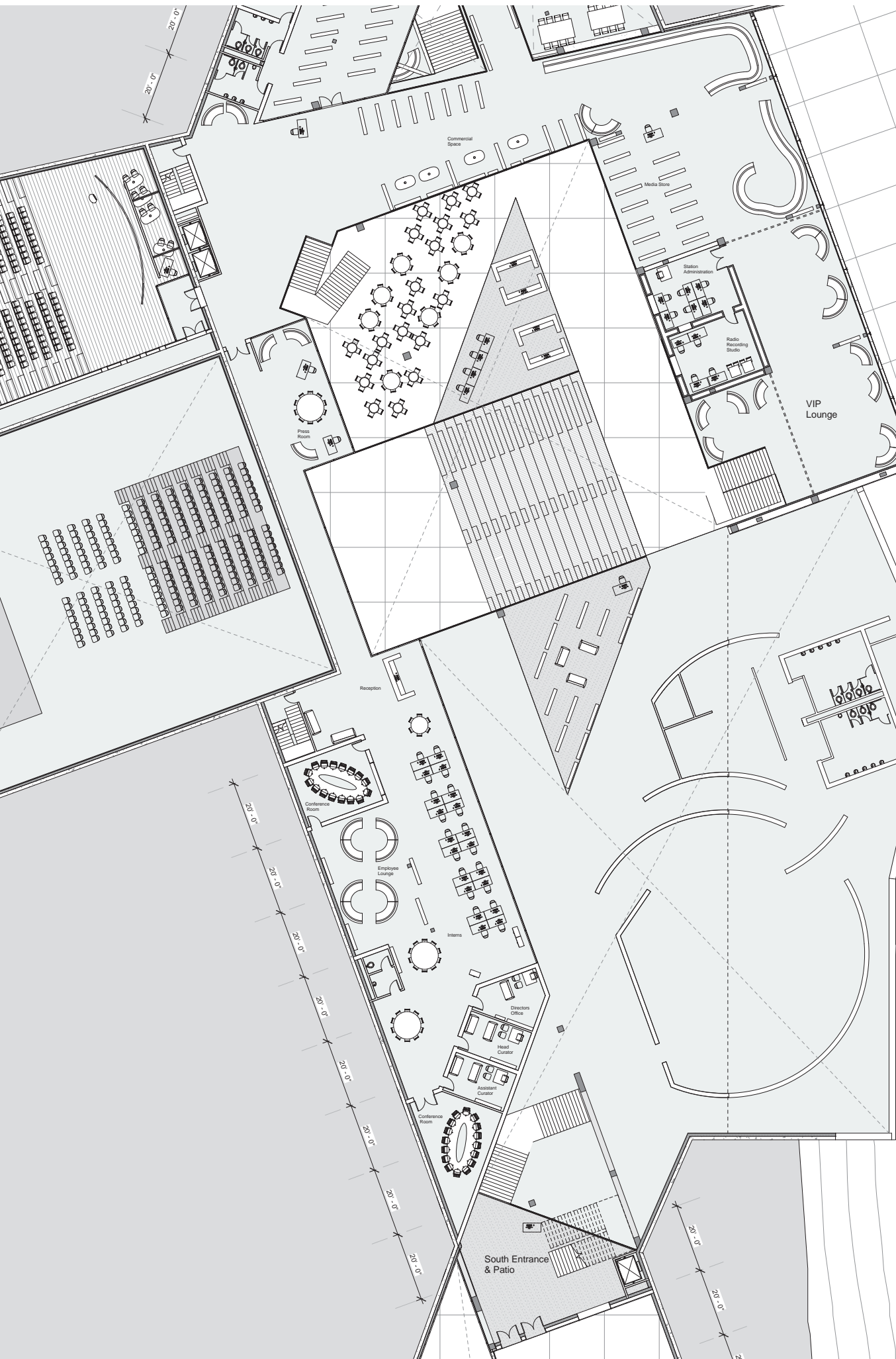




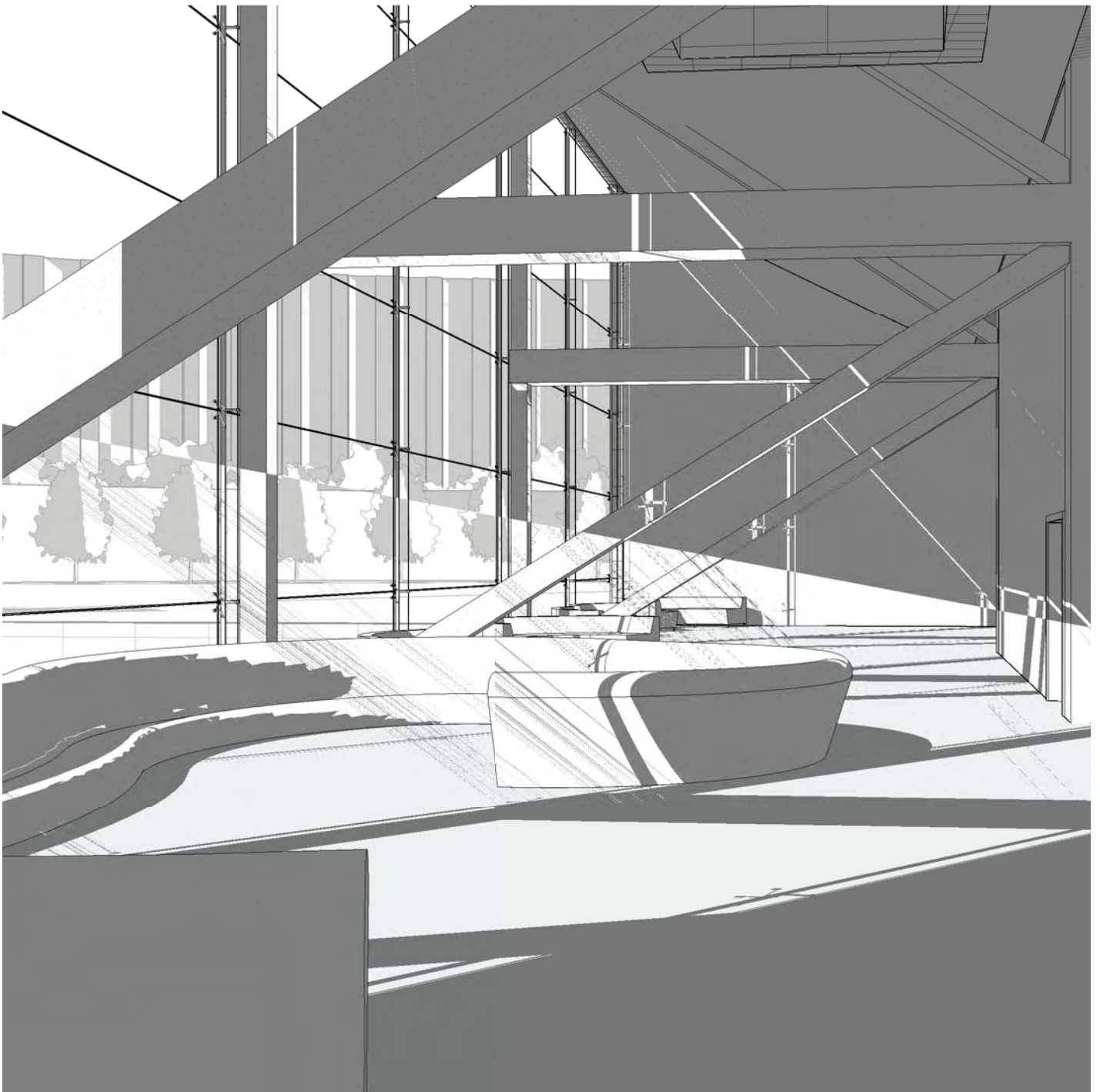


The program at the 0'0" level is a bit more diverse than the rest and encourages a multitude of activity. Starting at the Northern end there is a media gallery that is accompanied by a patio to it's East. Below that there is a lounge for time spent before a gallery opening or other event, this lounge also acts as a intermediate space between the gallery, the patio, circulation leading above and below, a walkway/fashion vending area, and the children's section. The children's area is comprised of a circulation desk, stacks of media, a play room, reading area, and restrooms with child care amenities. Directly below the children's area is a mezzanine level that receives the incoming circulation from the main level below. To the East of this area is space reserved for commercial usage such as a media store; and to the South there is a press room that precedes a walkway that leads to the administration with it's conference rooms, director's offices, intern spaces, and general employee desks. The commercial area shares half of the area above the main entrance with a VIP lounge and a radio station. The VIP lounge is meant to receive artists, musicians, film makers, etc. while the radio station is another component that makes up the lively work environment of the "House". This entire institution is meant to harbor a learning environment as well as just display areas that promote art and culture. The idea is that direct interaction with media is much more suitable for a rich environment than simply coming in, observing, and leaving.

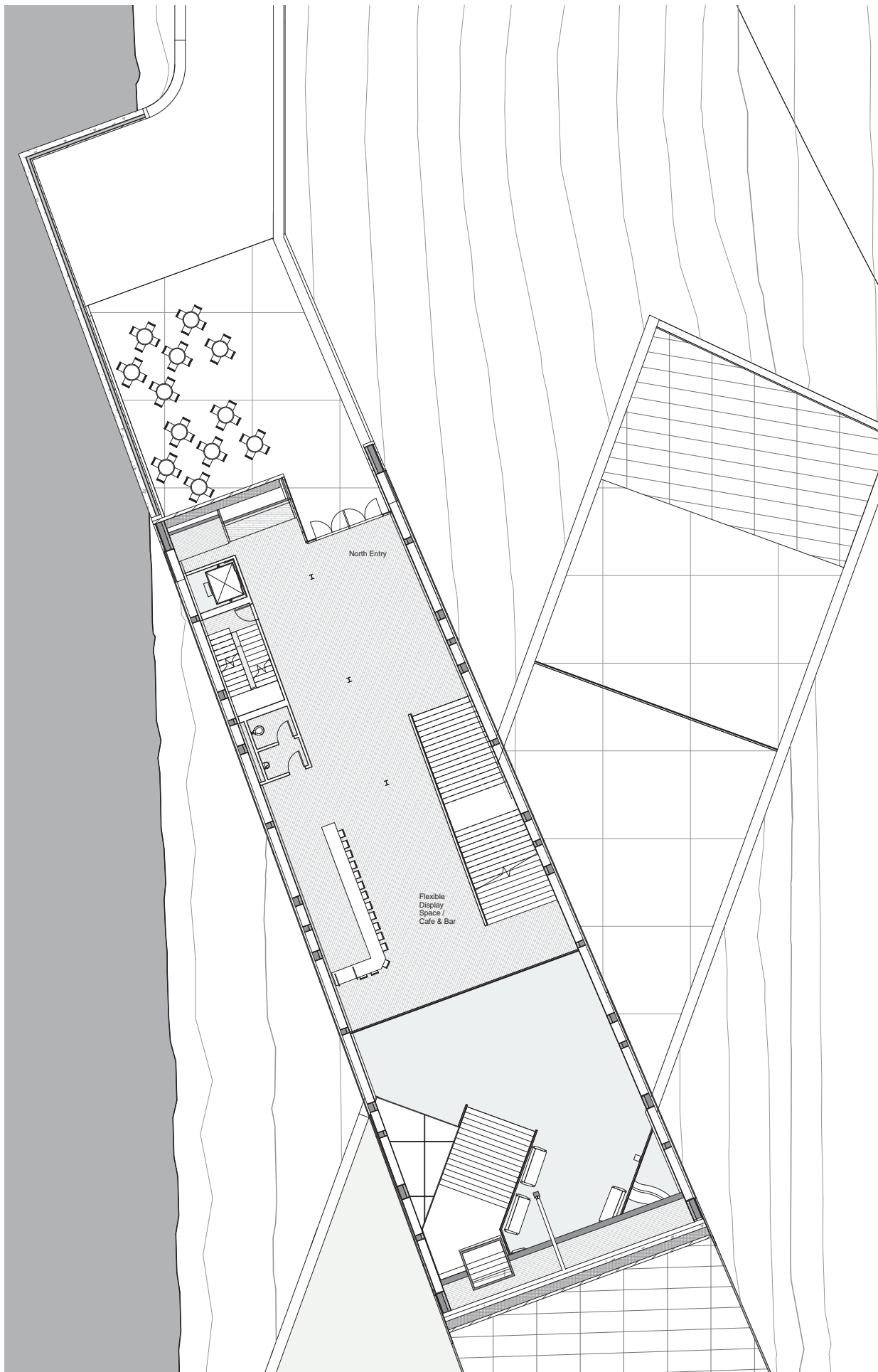






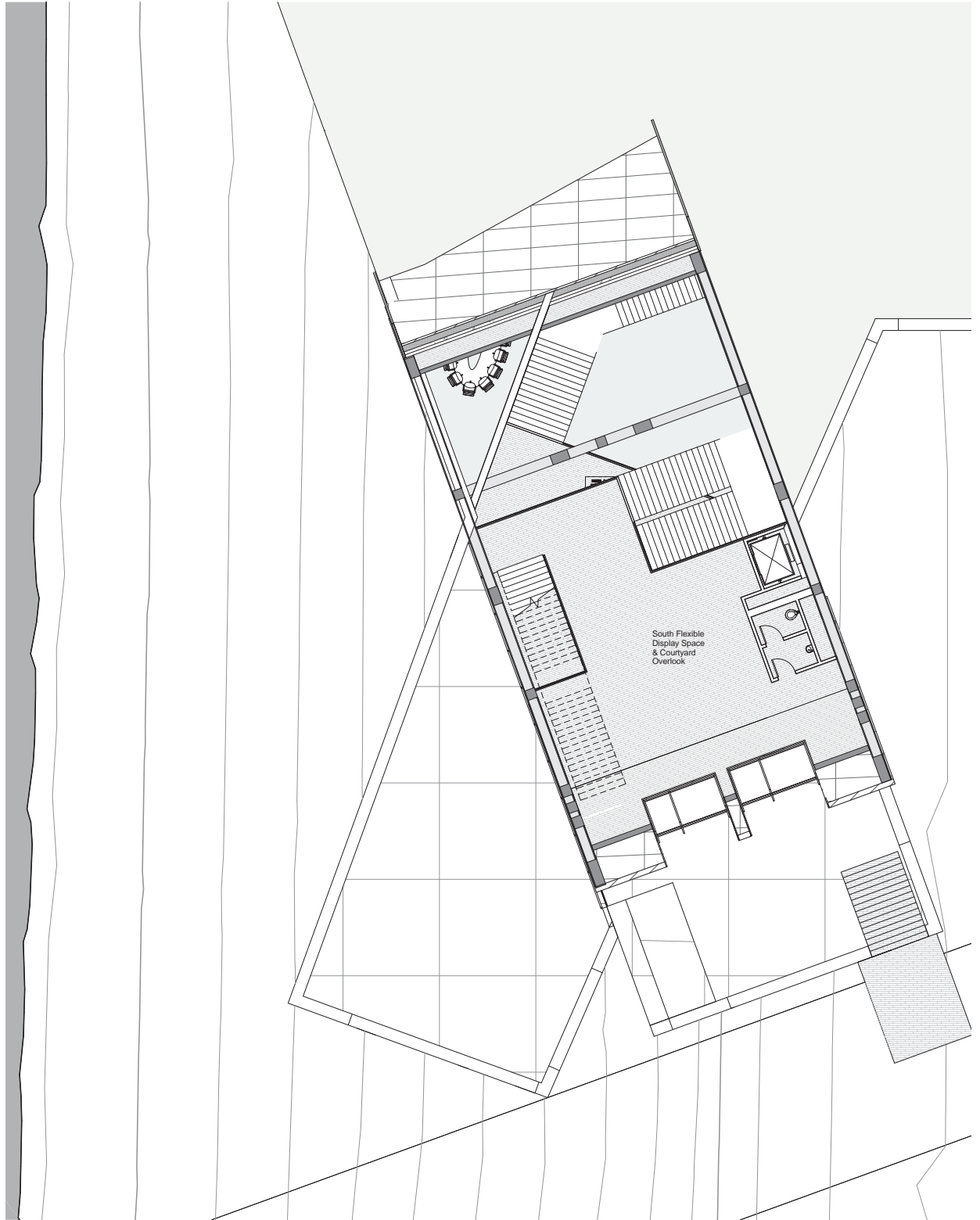


View of Lounge on Level 0'0"

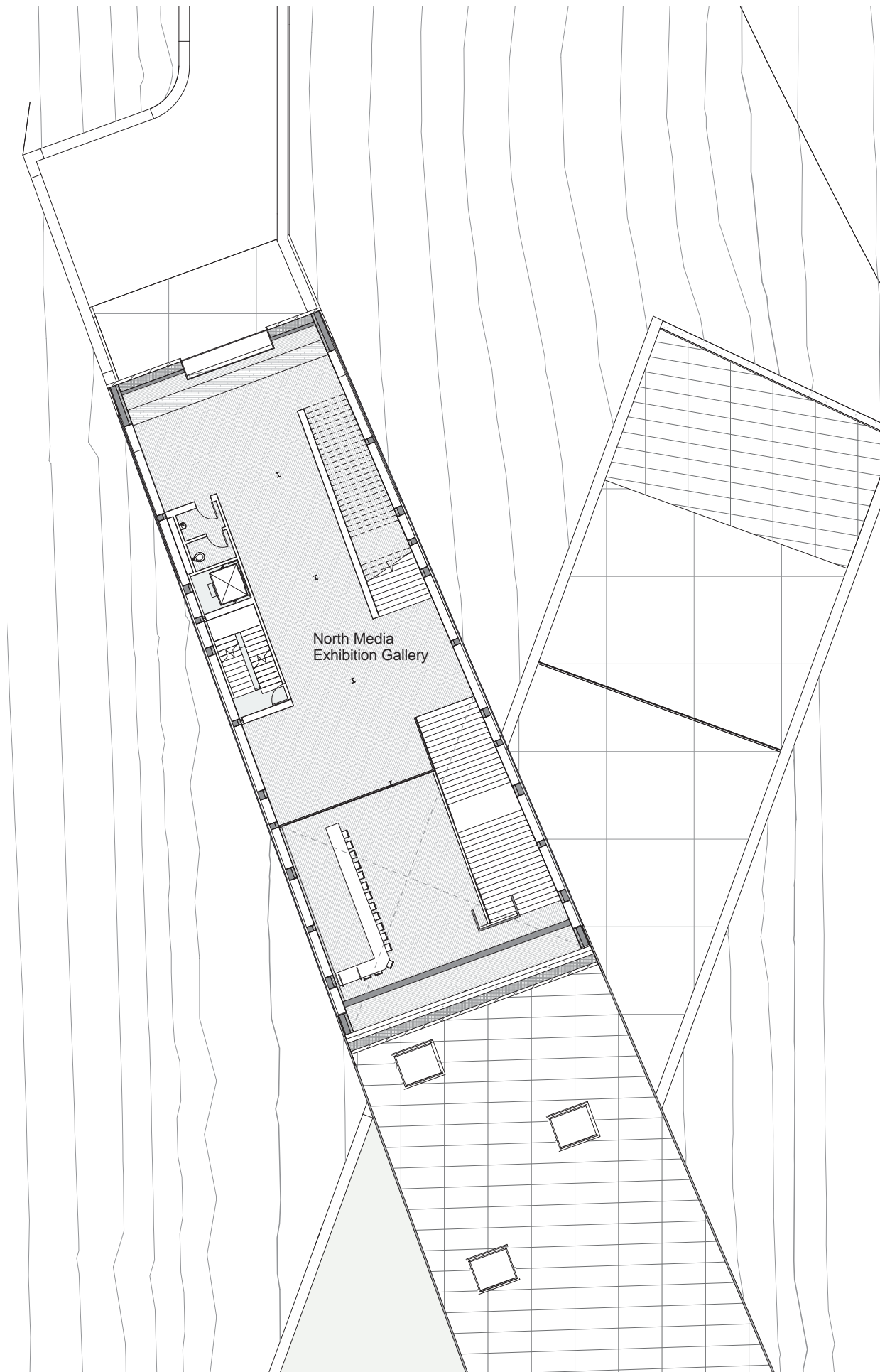


Level +18'0" of the Northern Protrusion with the North Entrance.



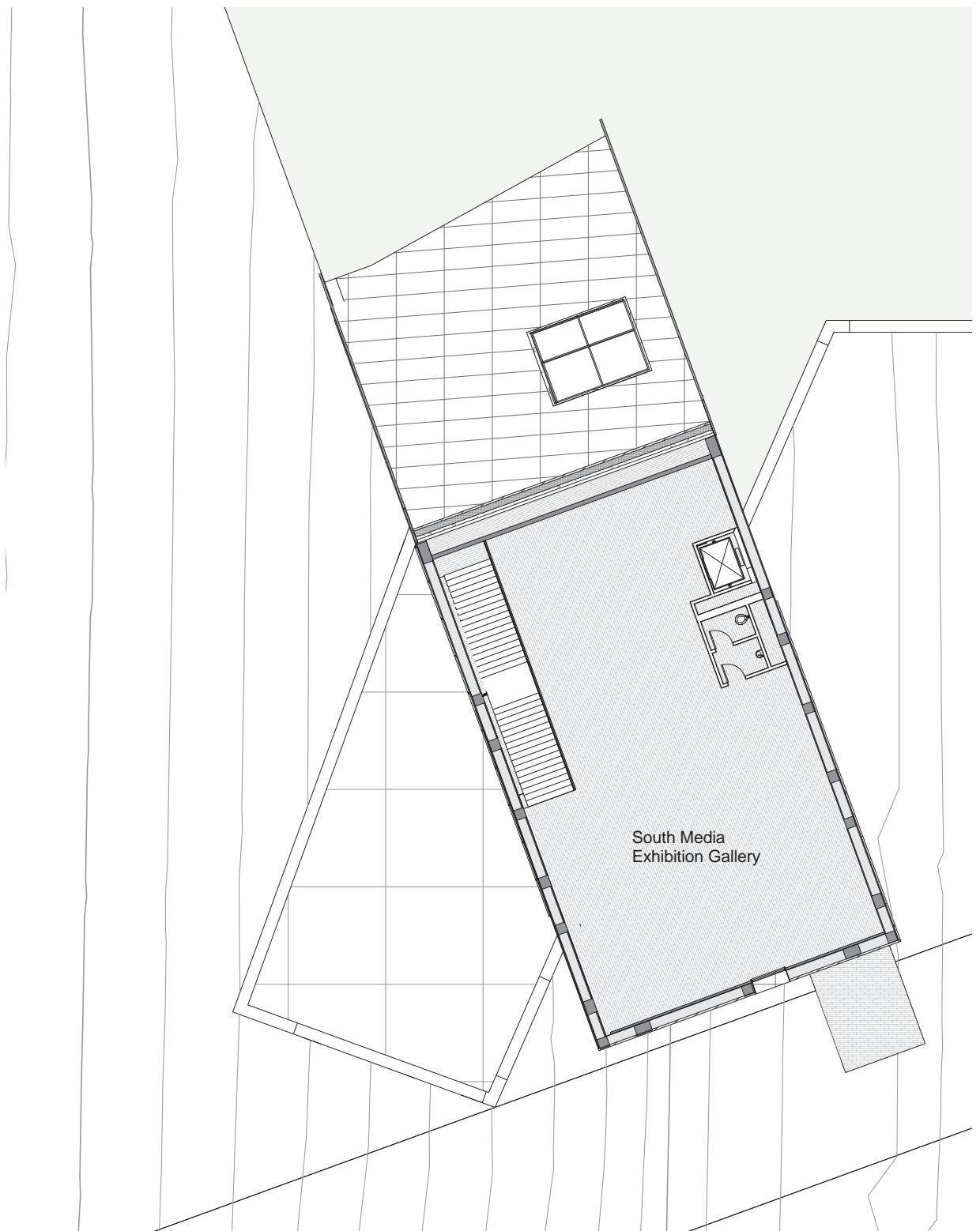


Level +18'0" of the Southern Protrusion.

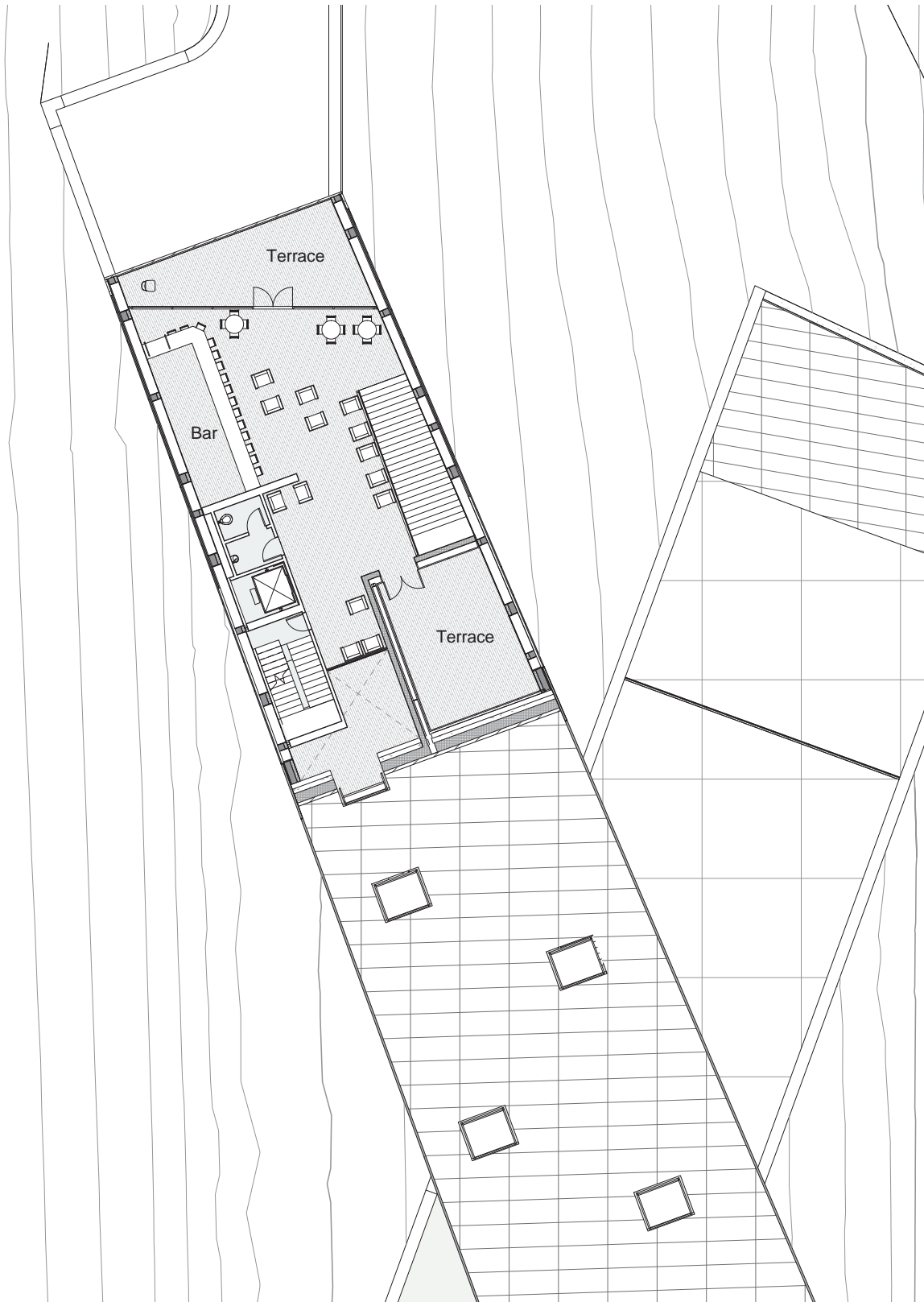


Level +36'0" of the Northern Protrusion.



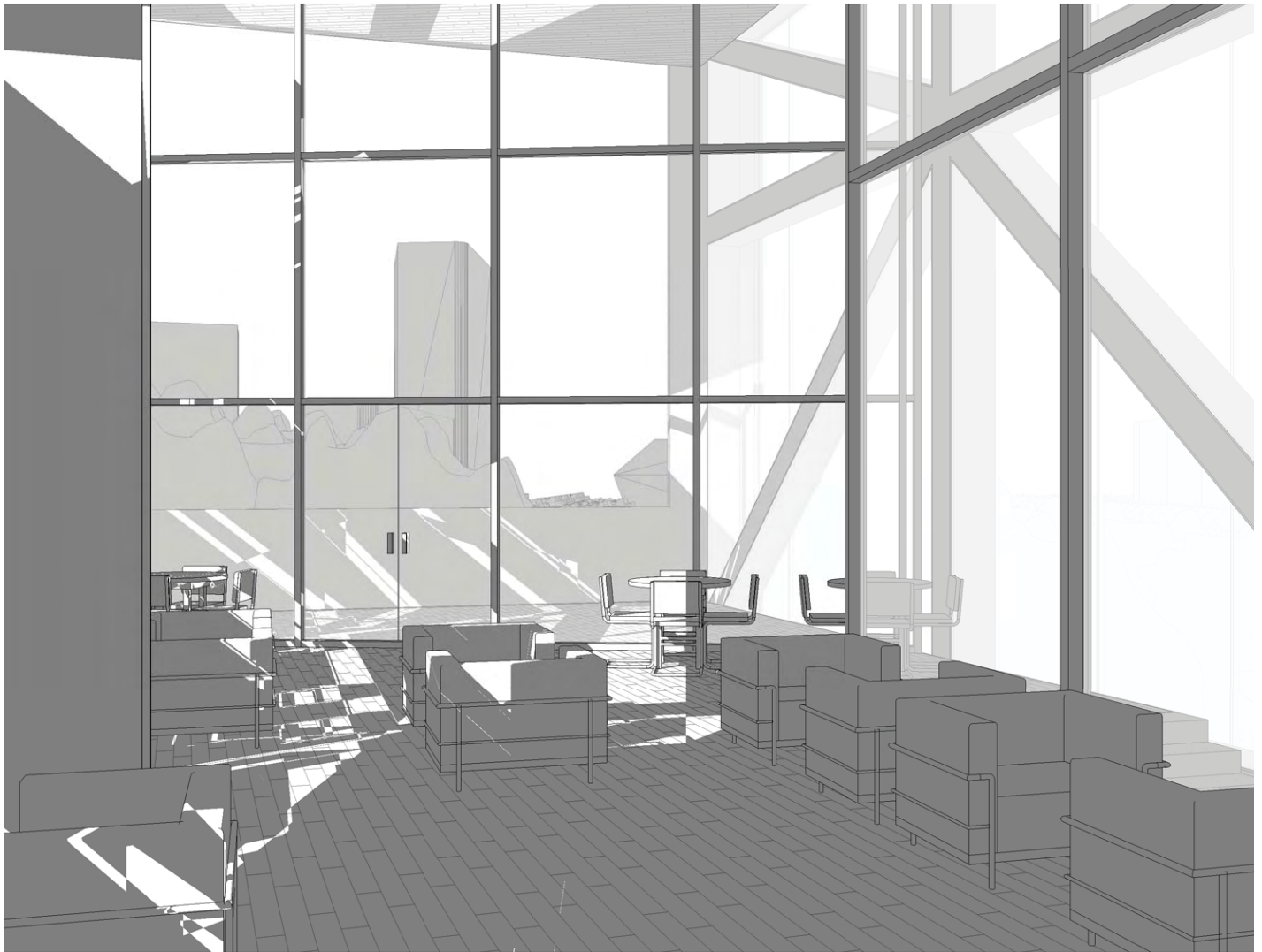


Level +36'0" of the Southern Protrusion.

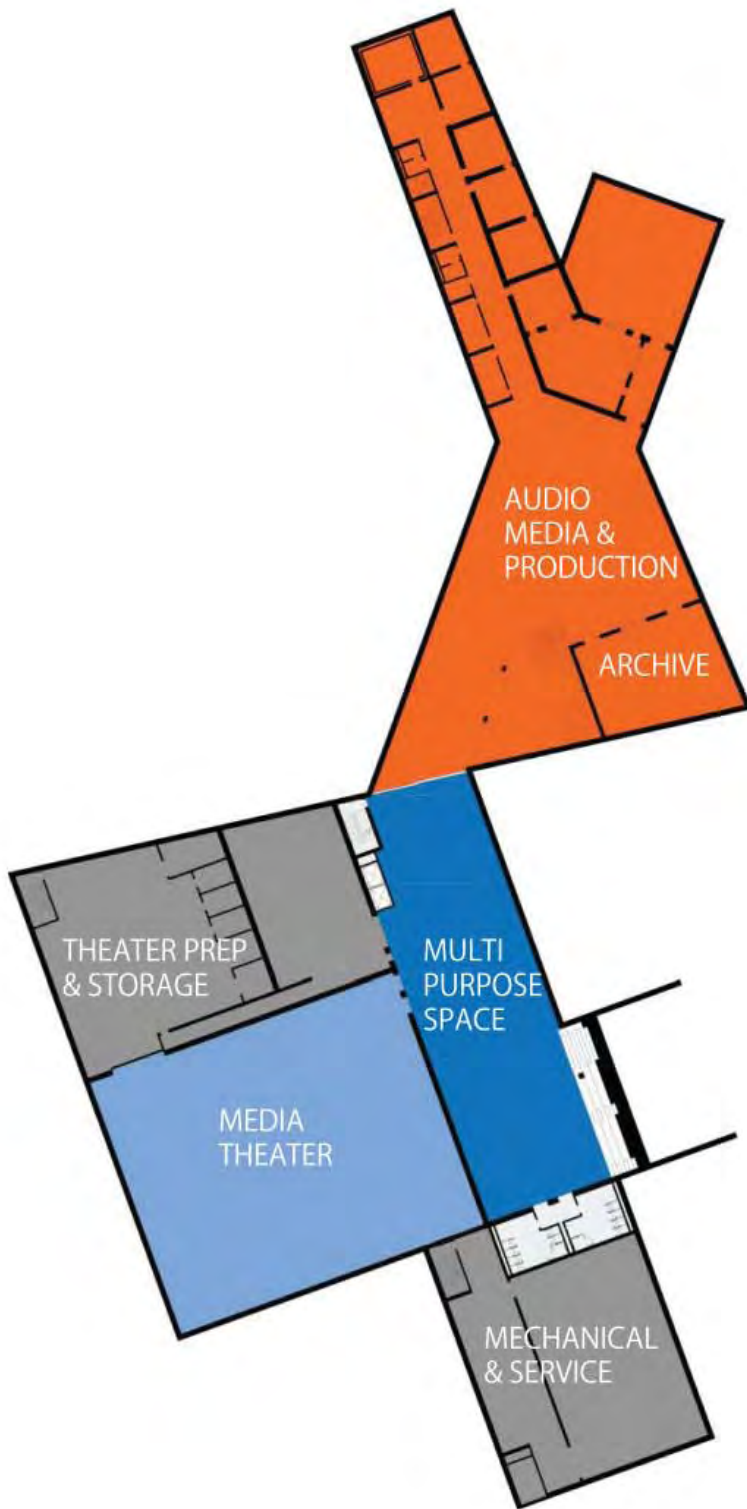


Level +54'0" of the Southern Protrusion.



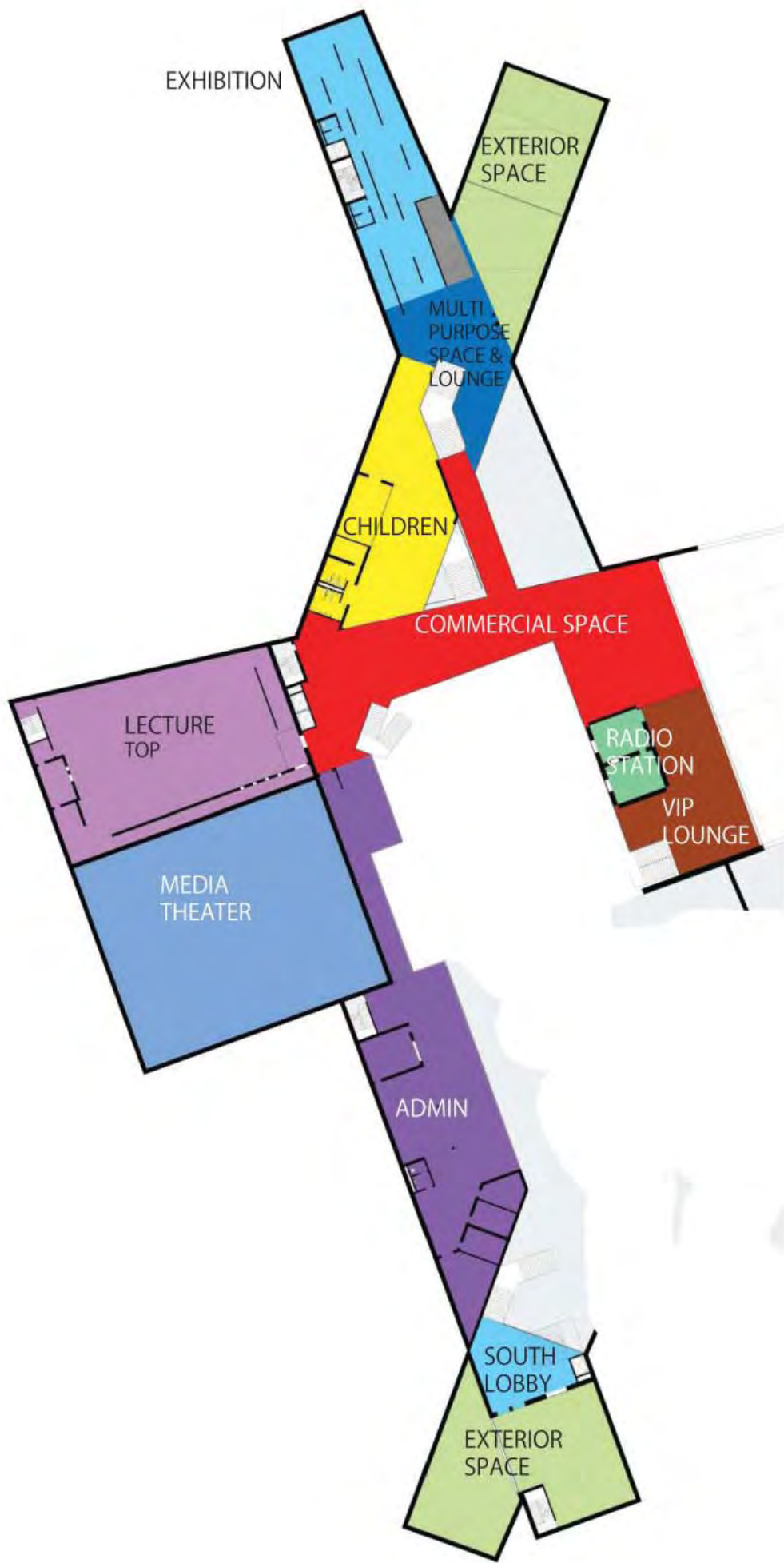


View of Lounge at Level +54'0"

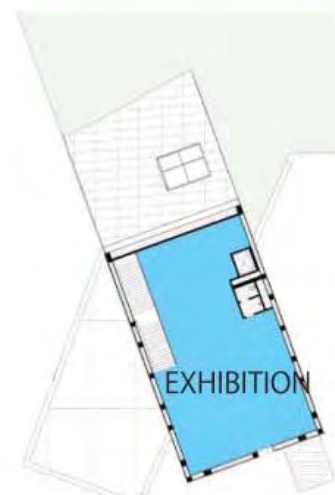
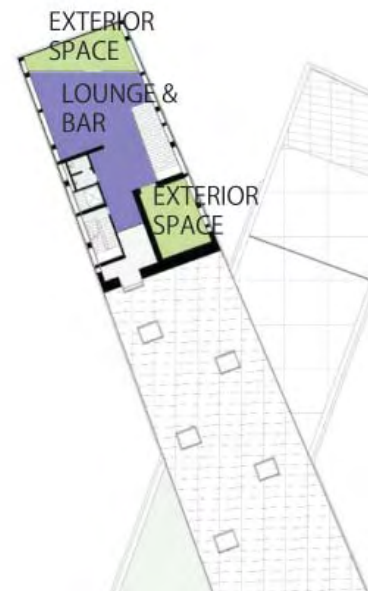
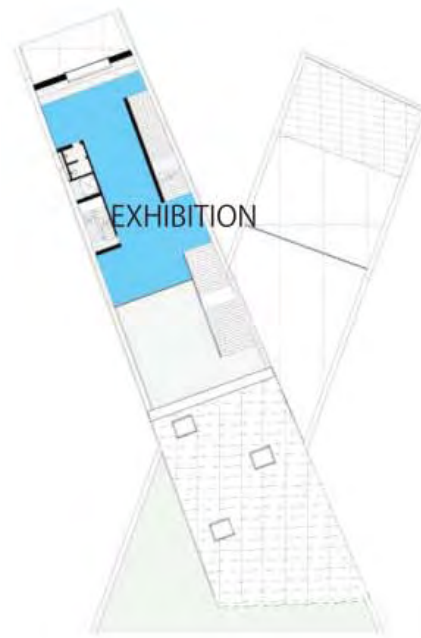
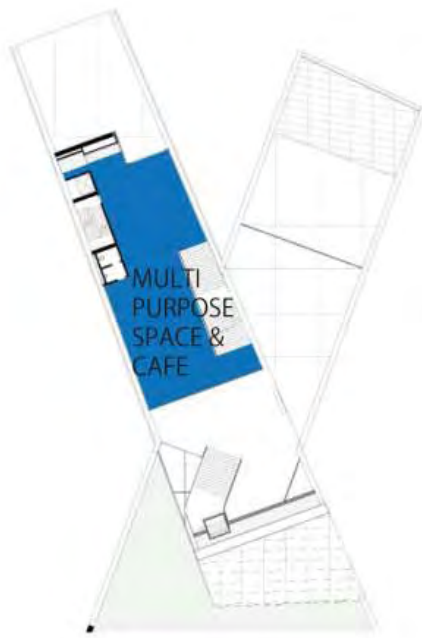








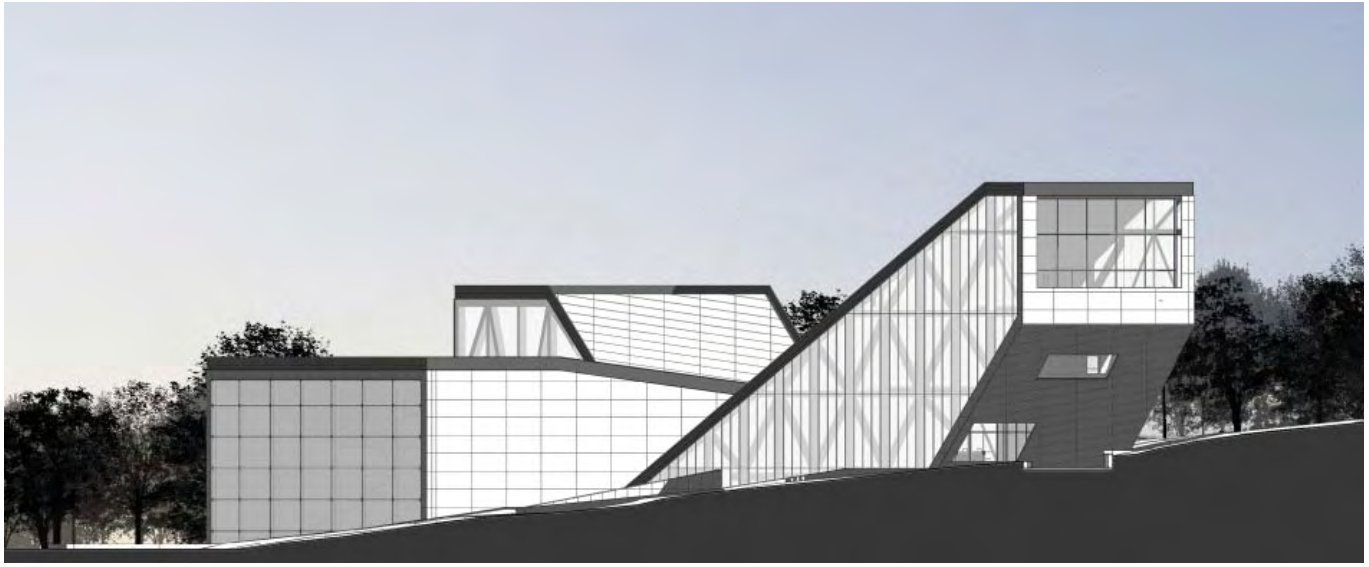




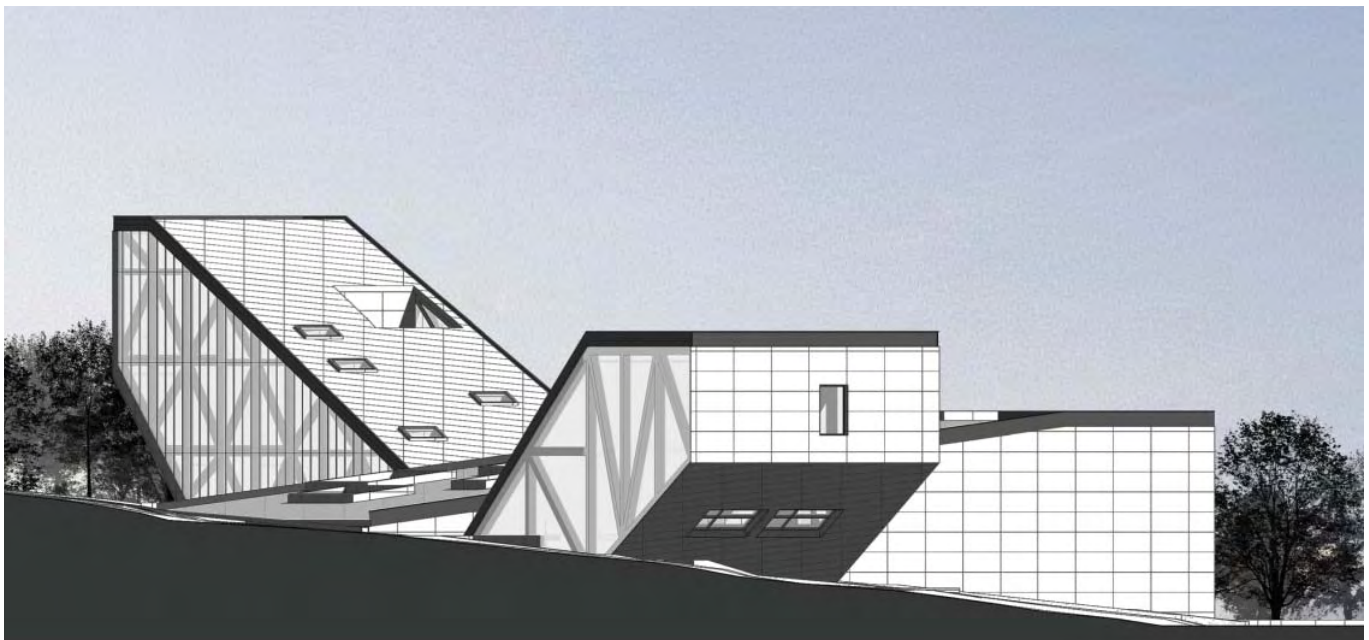
Level +18'0"

Level +36'0"

Level +54'0"

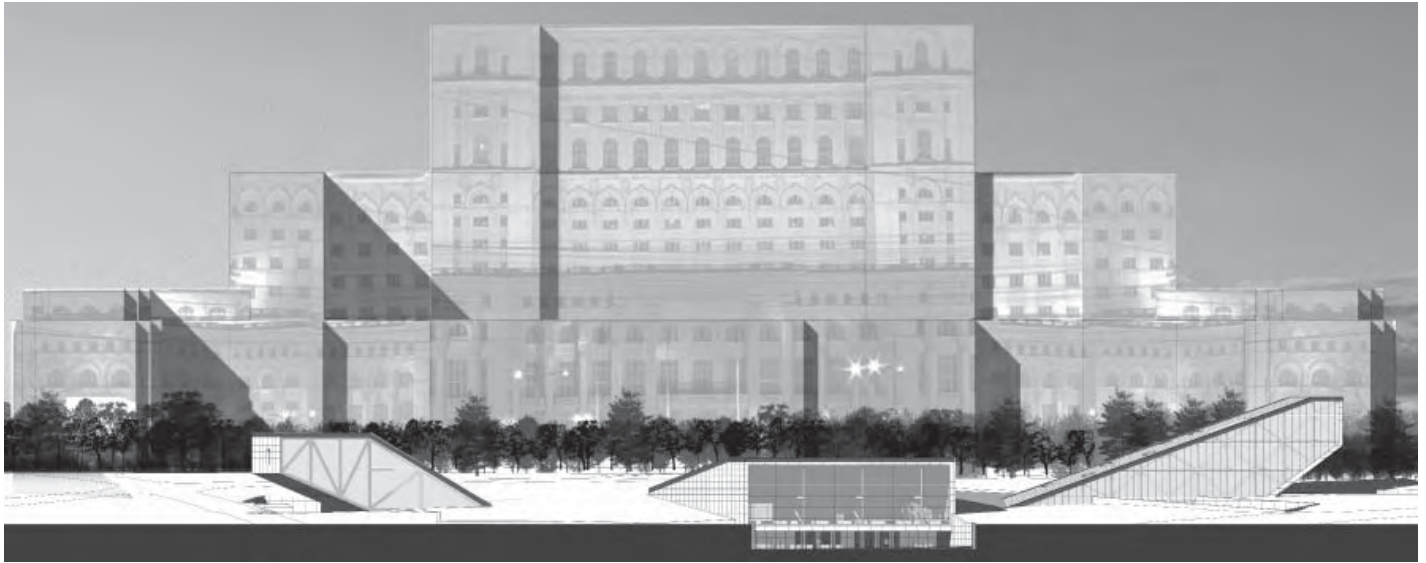


North Elevation



South Elevation

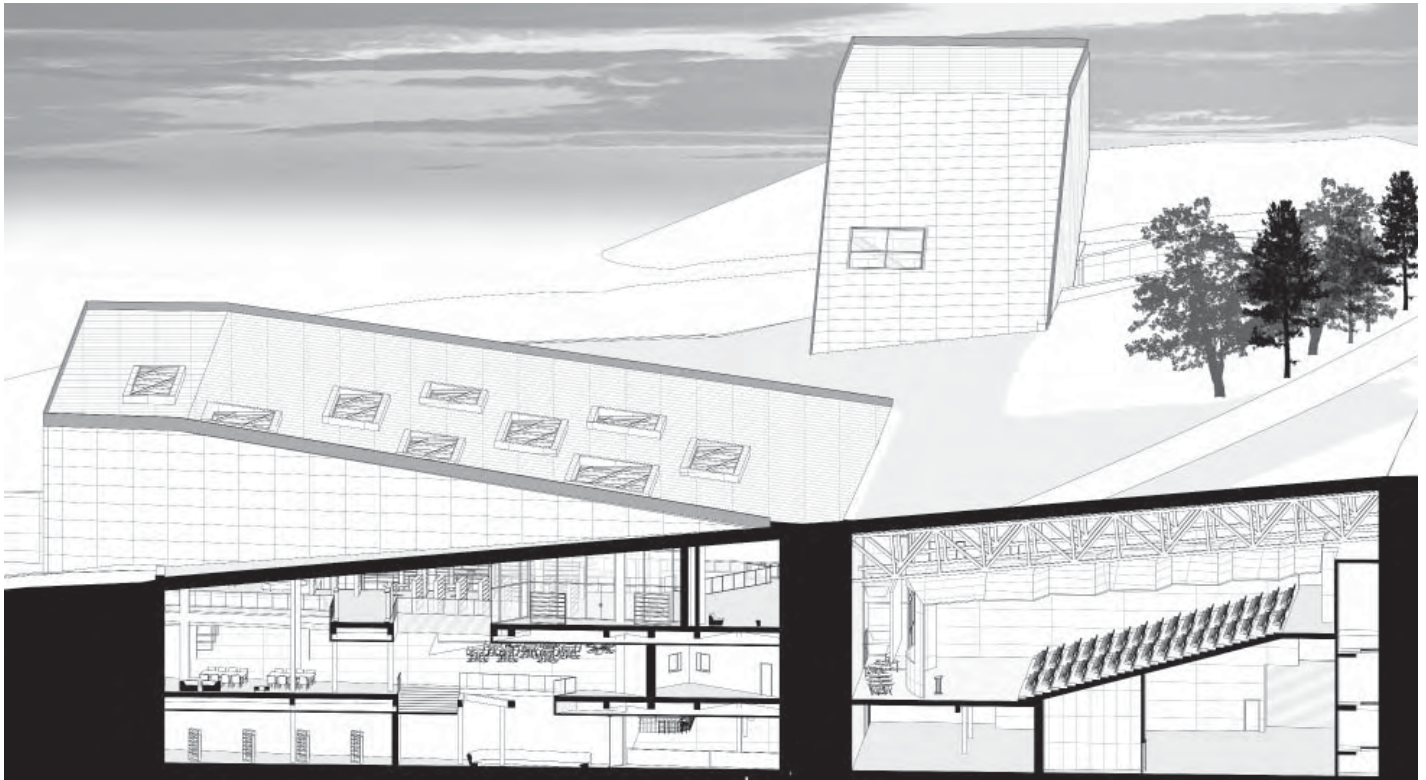




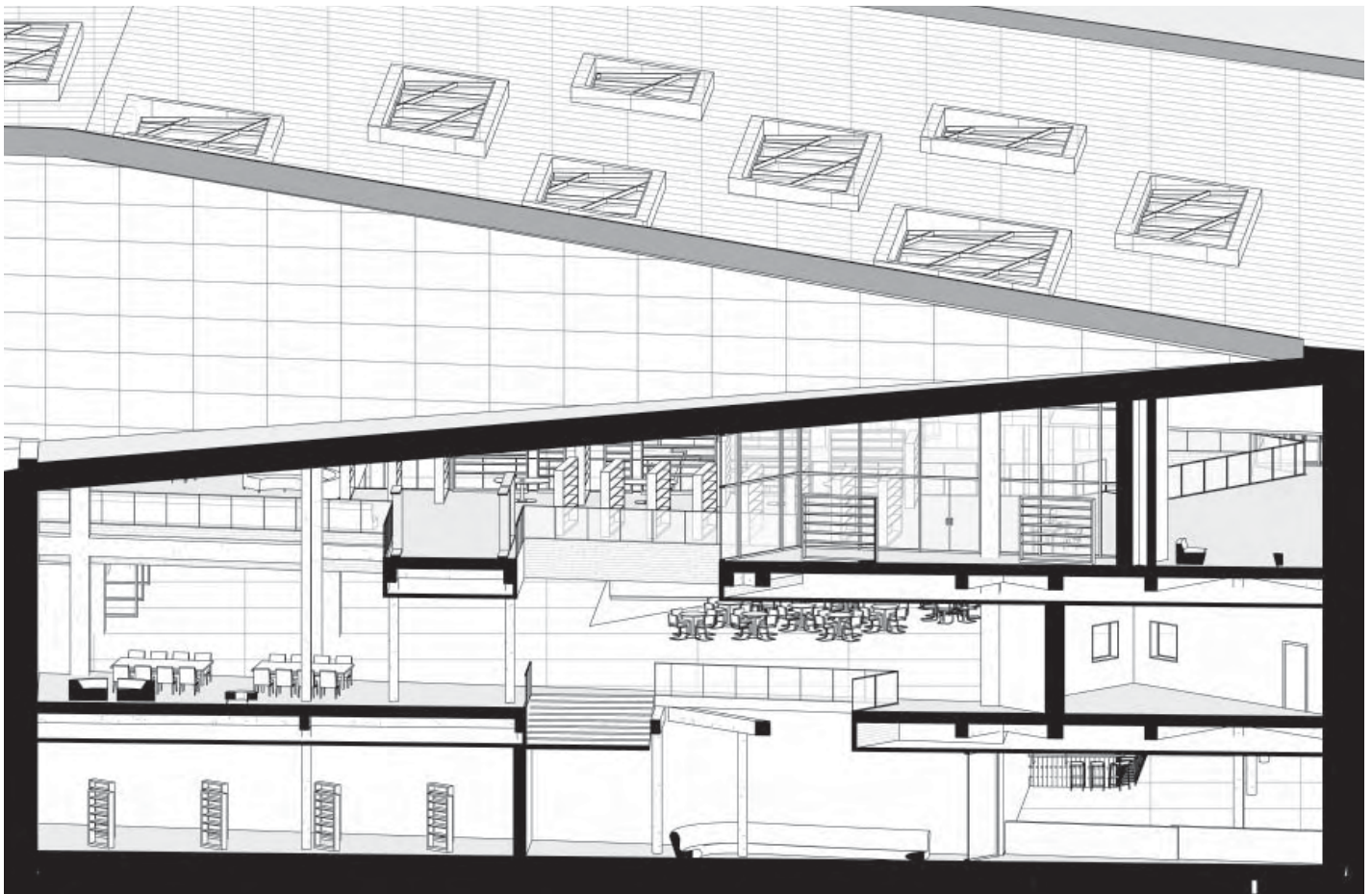
West Elevation



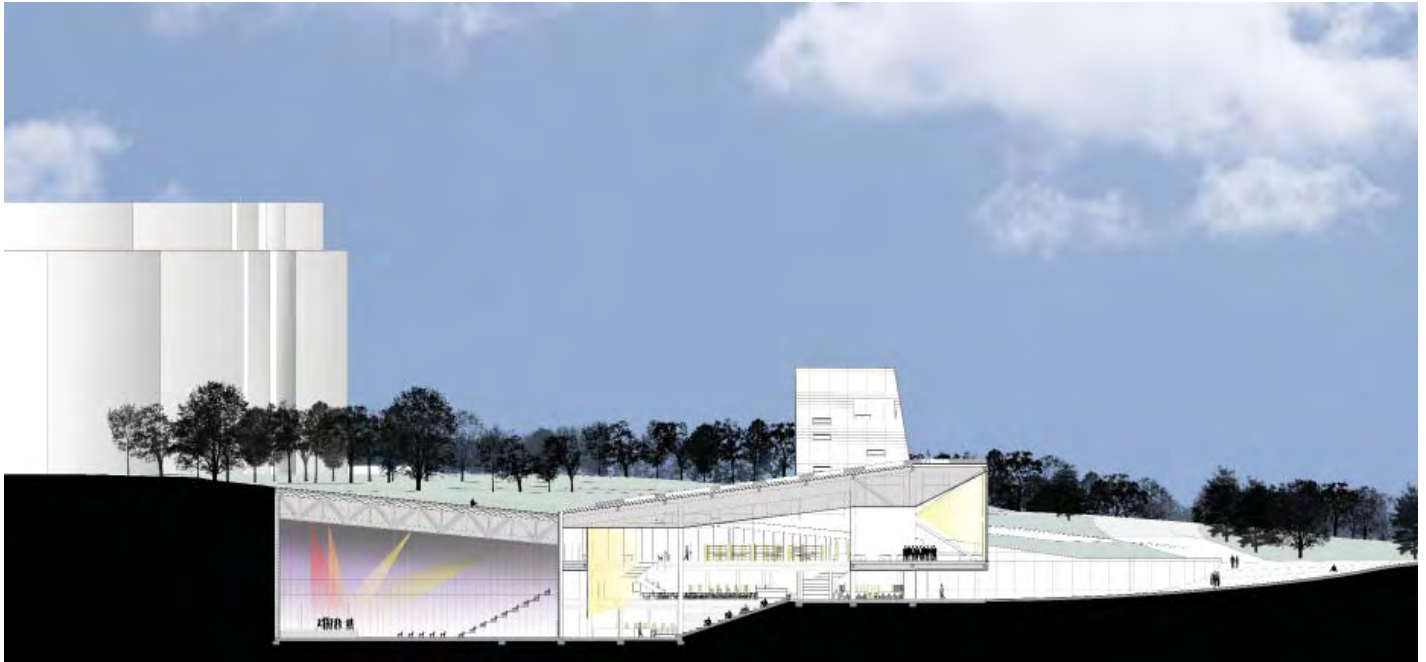
North Entrance



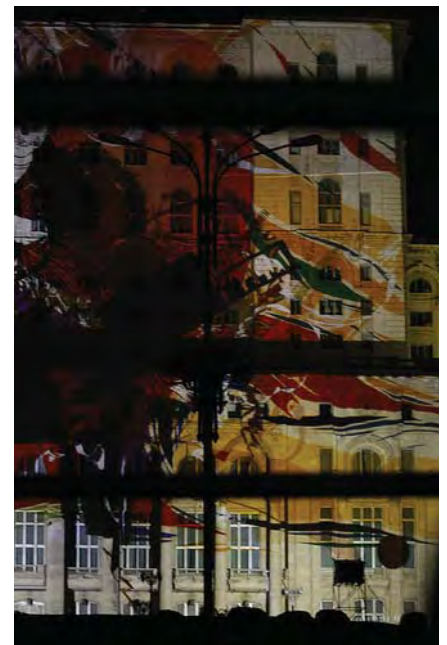
Cross Section Through Central Space & Lecture Hall

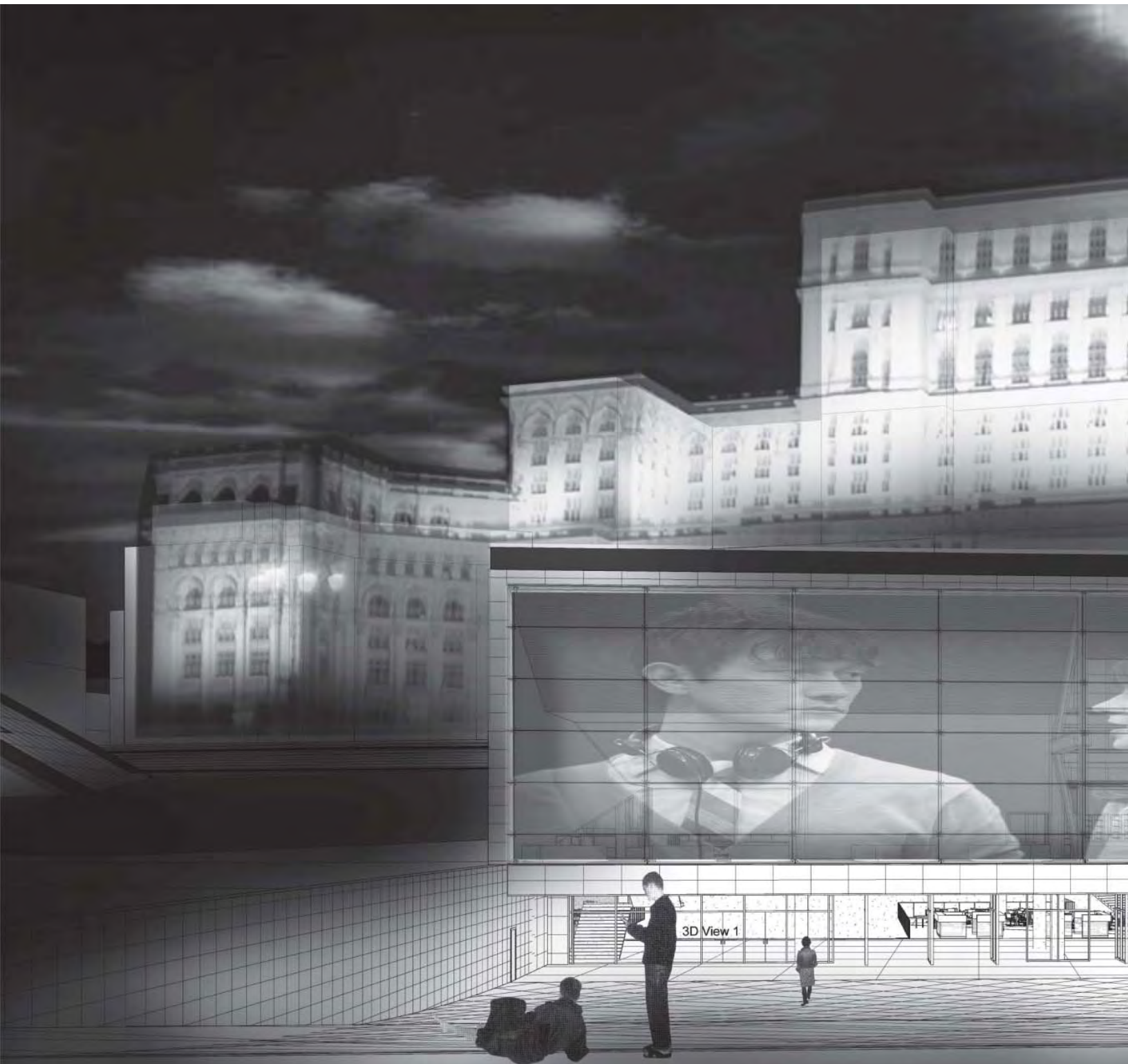






Section through central protrusion highlighting various means of viewing media, including: the media theater, the grand staircase used for viewing film on the media theater wall, the scrim screen that allows projected media to be displayed to anyone sitting on the slope in the piazza, and the slope of the protrusion itself which allows pedestrians to sit and watch live shows or something projected on to the House of Parliament.

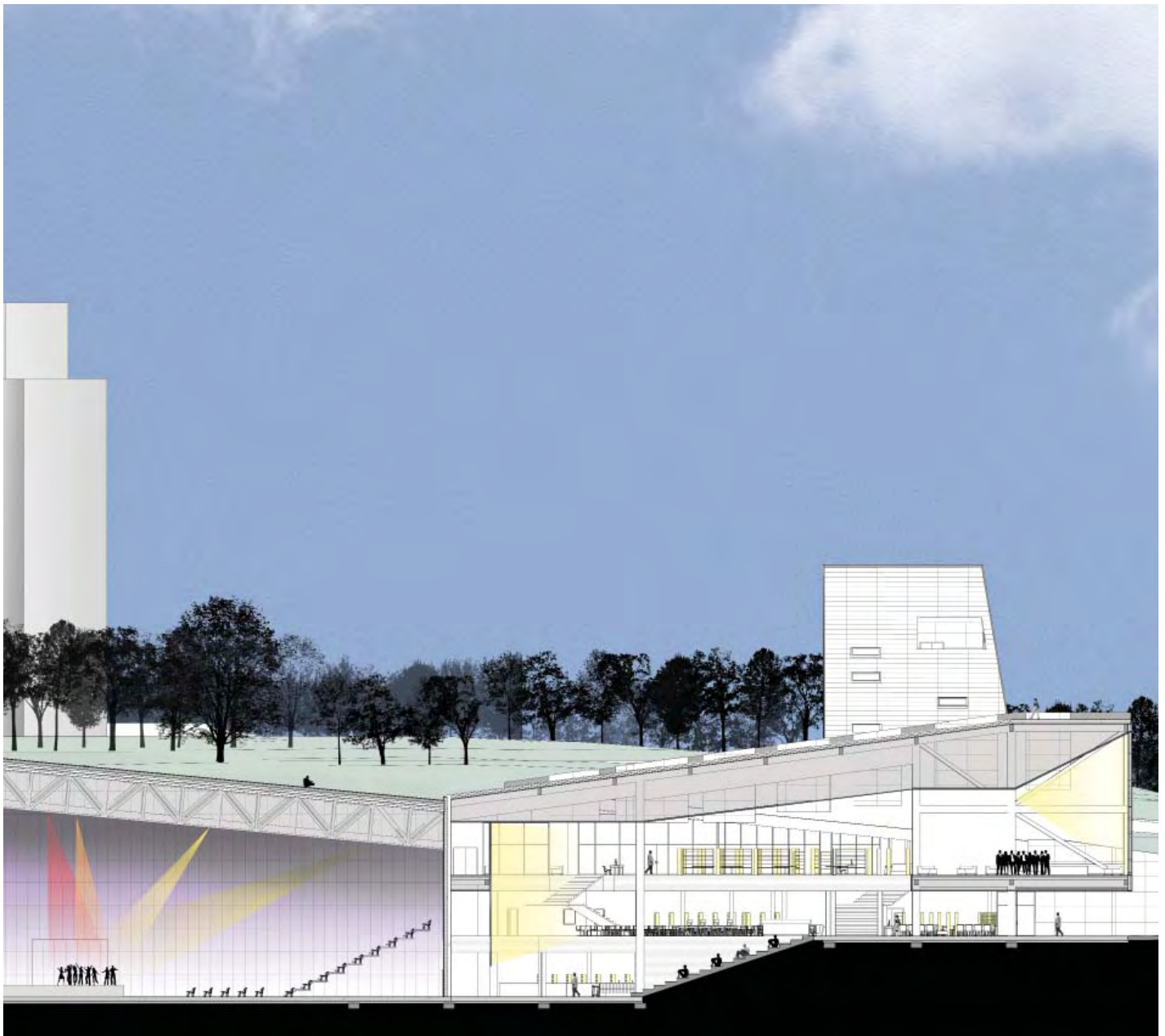




Perspectival view of middle protrusion at night with film playing on scrim screen.





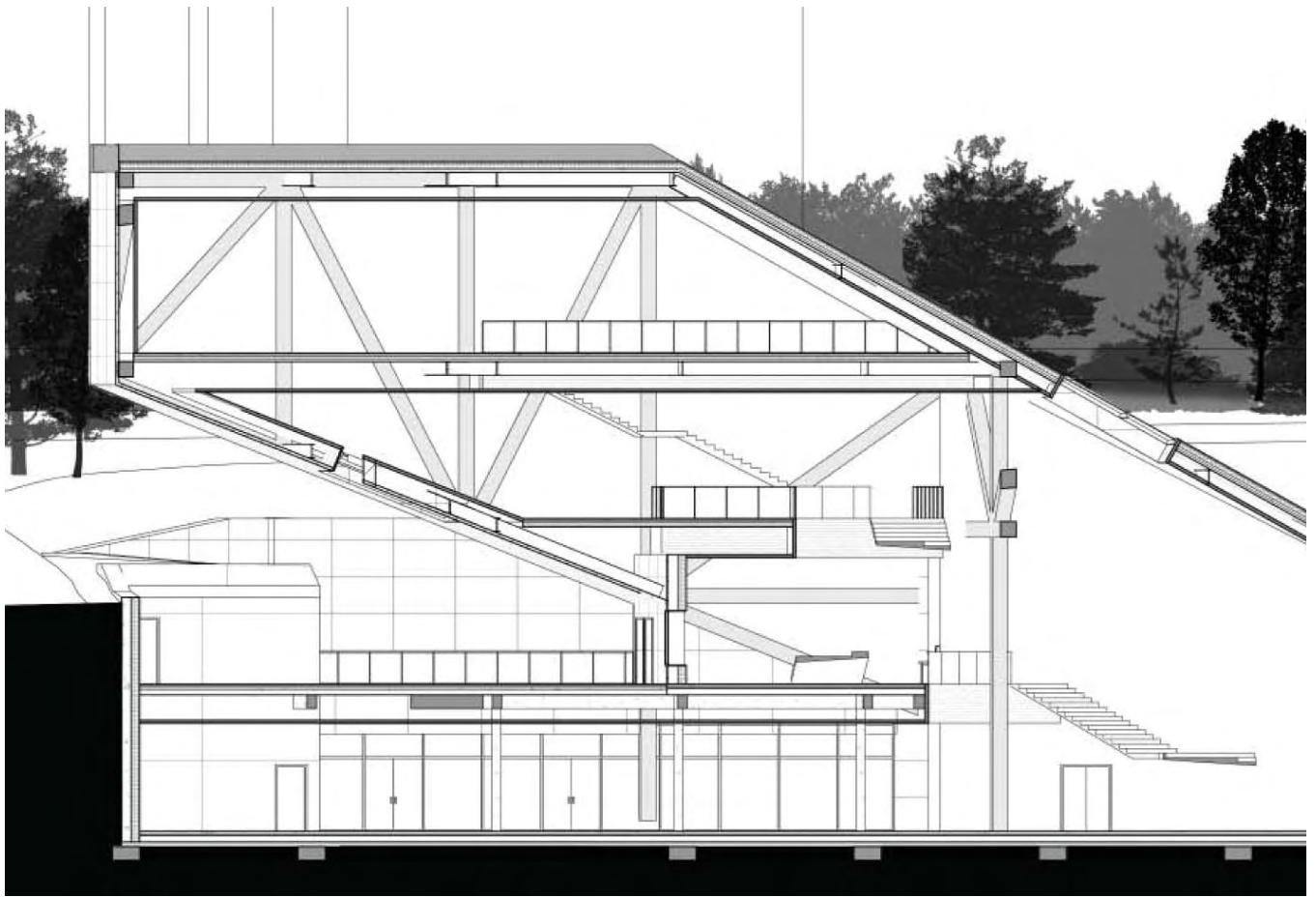


Enhanced Cross Section through Central Space



Longitudinal Section

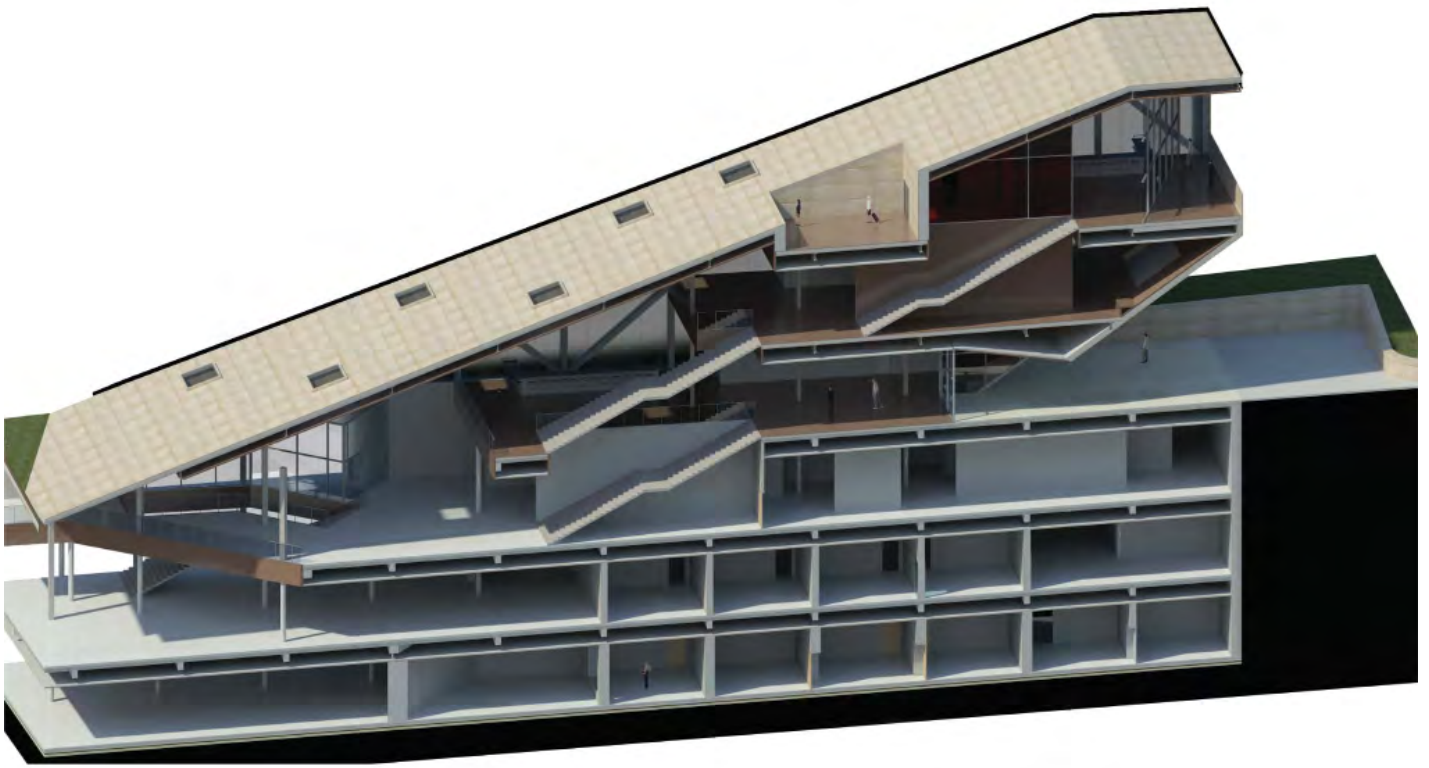




Enhanced Portion of Longitudinal Section



Enhanced Portion of Longitudinal Section

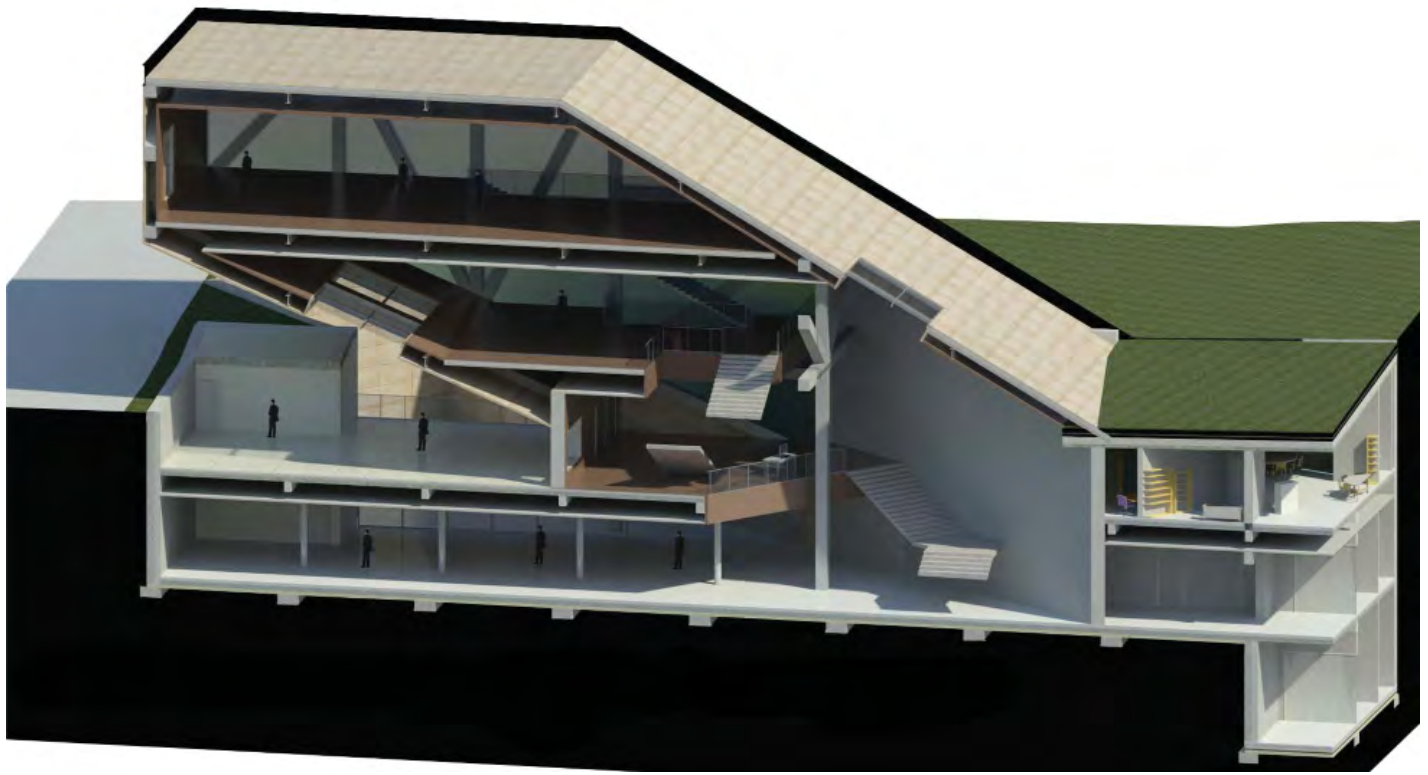


Northern Protrusion Cut Away Axonometric



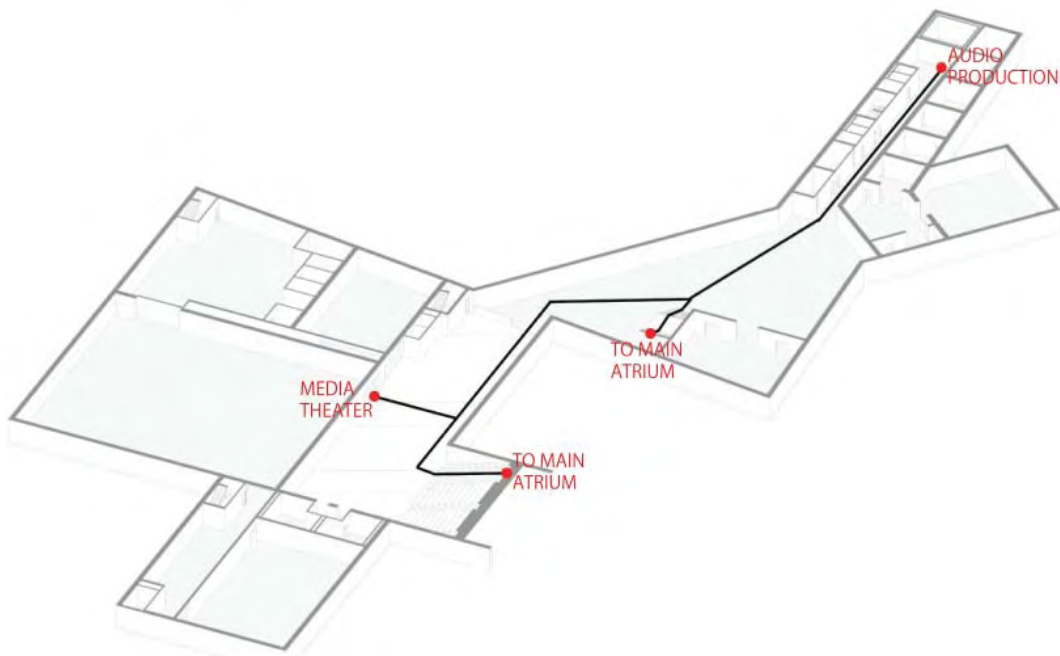
Middle Protrusion Cut Away Axonometric



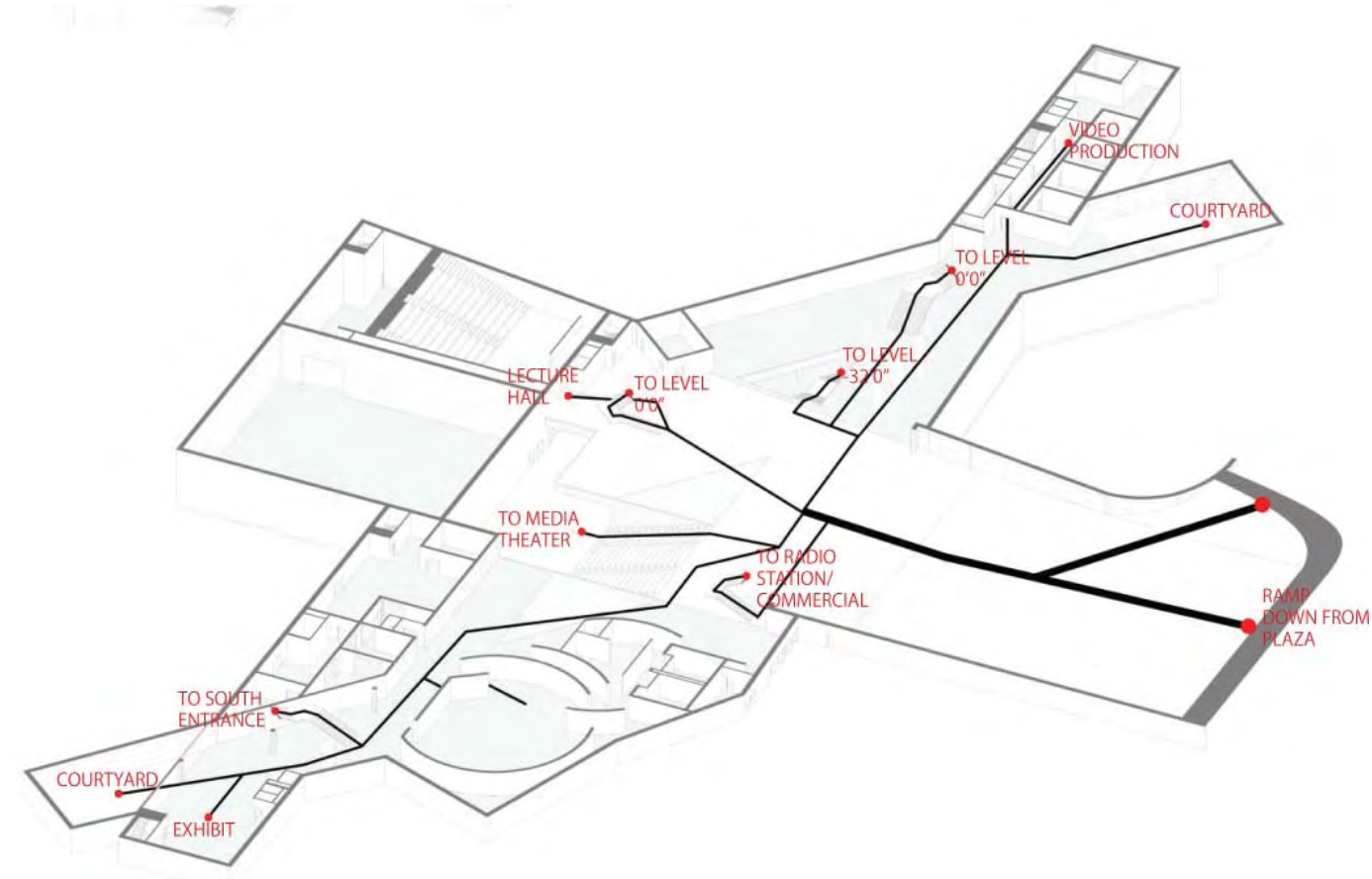


Southern Protrusion Cut Away Axonometric

The axonometric of the Northern Protrusion highlights the staircase that begins at the +18'0" level and continues to the lounge on the +54'0" level. From the base of that staircase one can see all the way to the top of the protrusion and to the sky above. The patio at the top level is also showcased, as is the North entrance, the children's library entrance, and the audio and visual studios at the base of the institution which follow the 20'0" spans laid out by the grid. The middle protrusion is showing the main entrance; the 0'0" level VIP lounge, commercial area, and the radio station is the white mass in the middle of that floor. The cavity which houses the skylights in the central space is also shown, sandwiched between the roof and ceiling. The grand staircase/seating area that takes visitors down to -32'0" is shown as well. The cut through the Southern piece plays an interesting game with the sequential stair that begins at -16'0" and continues three stories above that to +32'0". The Southern entrance is shown here, as well as the gallery which allows indirect light to filter in to it via two large windows on the underside of the protrusion.

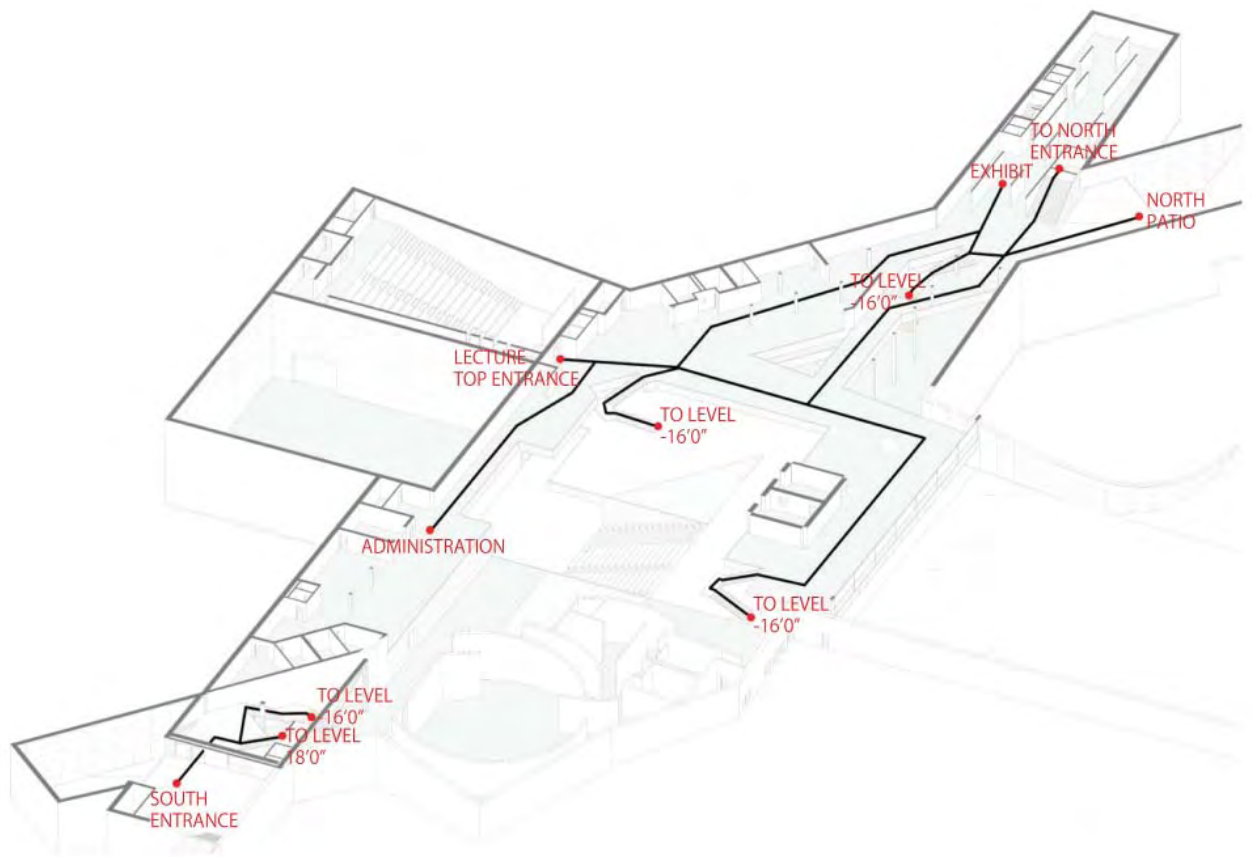


-32'0" Circulation Diagram

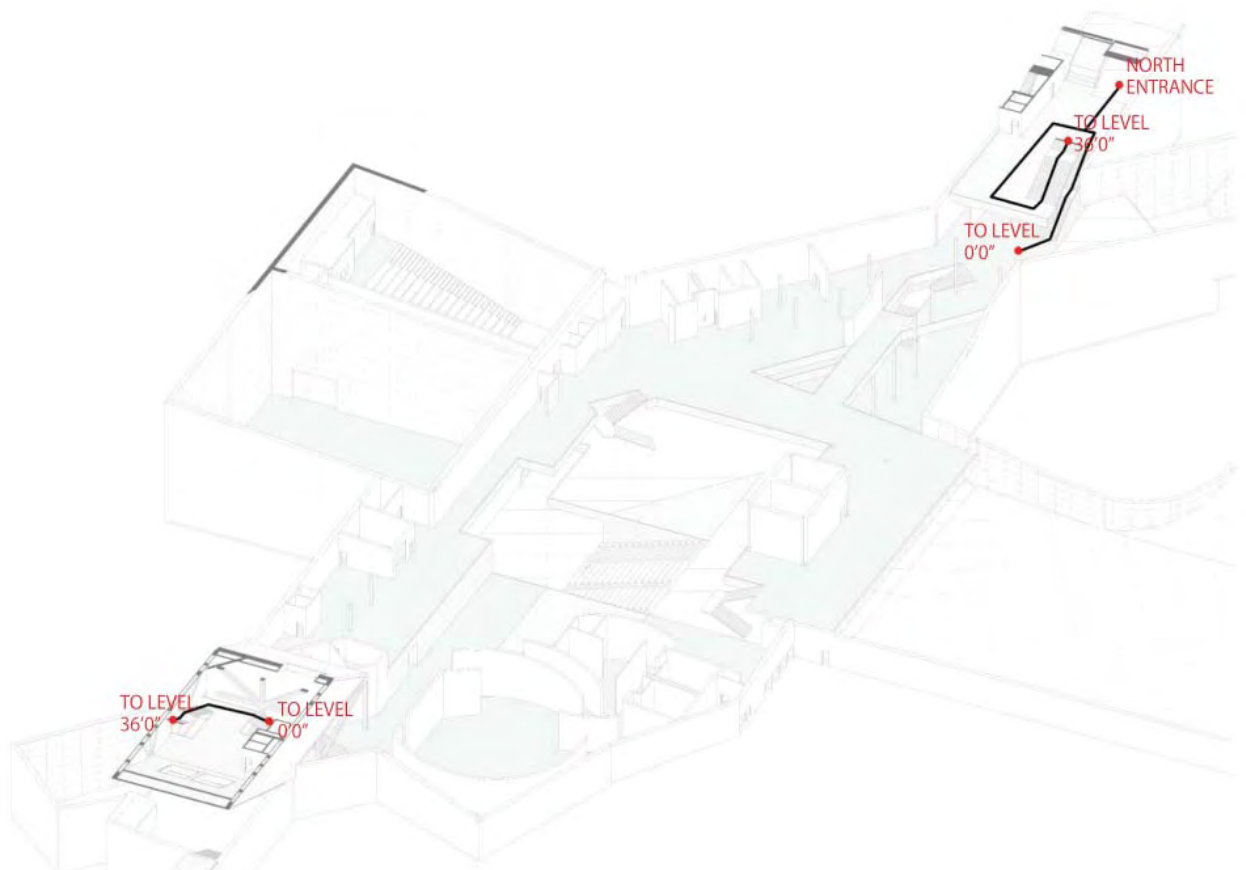


-16'0" Circulation Diagram

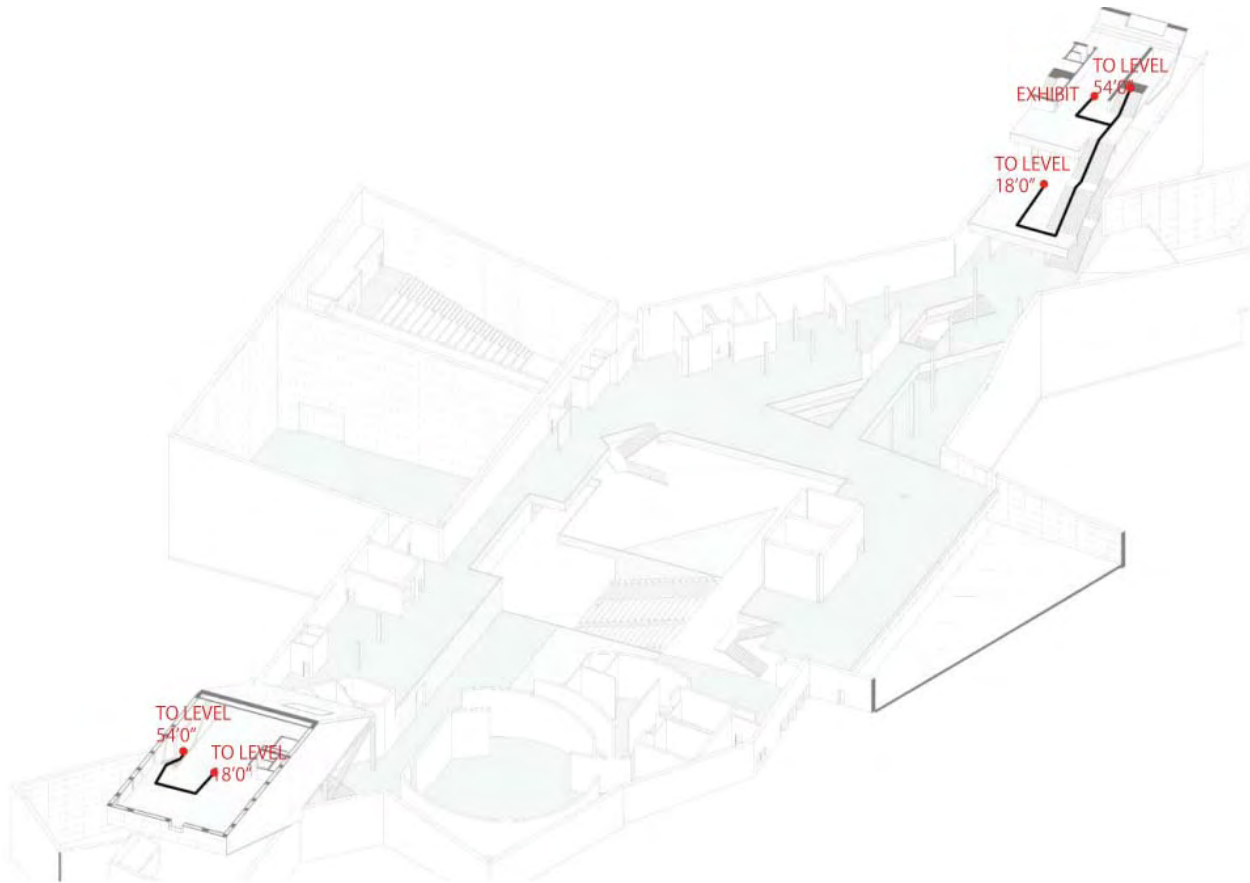




0'0" Circulation Diagram



+18'0" Circulation Diagram



## +36'0" Circulation Diagram

### ROOF CONSTRUCTION

3" STEEL C-CHANNEL  
 2X1 TRAVERTINE PANELS  
 STEEL ANGLES BOLTED TO CONCRETE; 16" O.C.  
 4X3" METAL PERIMETER GUTTER  
 WATERPROOFING MEMBRANE  
 3" RIGID INSULATION TAPERED  
 6" POURED-IN-PLACE CONCRETE SLAB W/1/4" SLOPE DOWN TO PERIMETER  
 3" METAL DECKING  
 1'-6" MECHANICAL SPACE W/ SUPPLY AND RETURN DUCTS  
 SUSPENDED 1" WOOD CEILING PANELS

### SKYLIGHT CONSTRUCTION

7X6' SKYLIGHT  
 SPECIALLY MANUFACTURED DOUBLE PANE METAL  
 WINDOW UNIT  
 4" STEEL C-CHANNEL FRAME W/ FIBERGLASS  
 INSULATION IN BETWEEN; DRAINAGE SYSTEM  
 BUILT-IN 1" WOOD PANELS

### TYPICAL DOUBLE FACADE CONSTRUCTION

TRIPLE PANE FRITTED GLASS CURTAIN WALL ATTACHED TO STRUCTURE W/ METAL  
 SPIDER CONNECTIONS; PANEL HEIGHT VARIES BY FLOOR  
 1/6" AIR CAVITY  
 1'X10" STEEL WIDE FLANGE STRUCTURAL BEAM  
 W/ FIRE RESISTANT COATING; ENCASED IN FIBERGLASS INSULATION AND 1/2" GWB.  
 DOUBLE PANE FRITTED GLASS CURTAIN WALL PANEL HEIGHT VARIES BY STRUCTURE

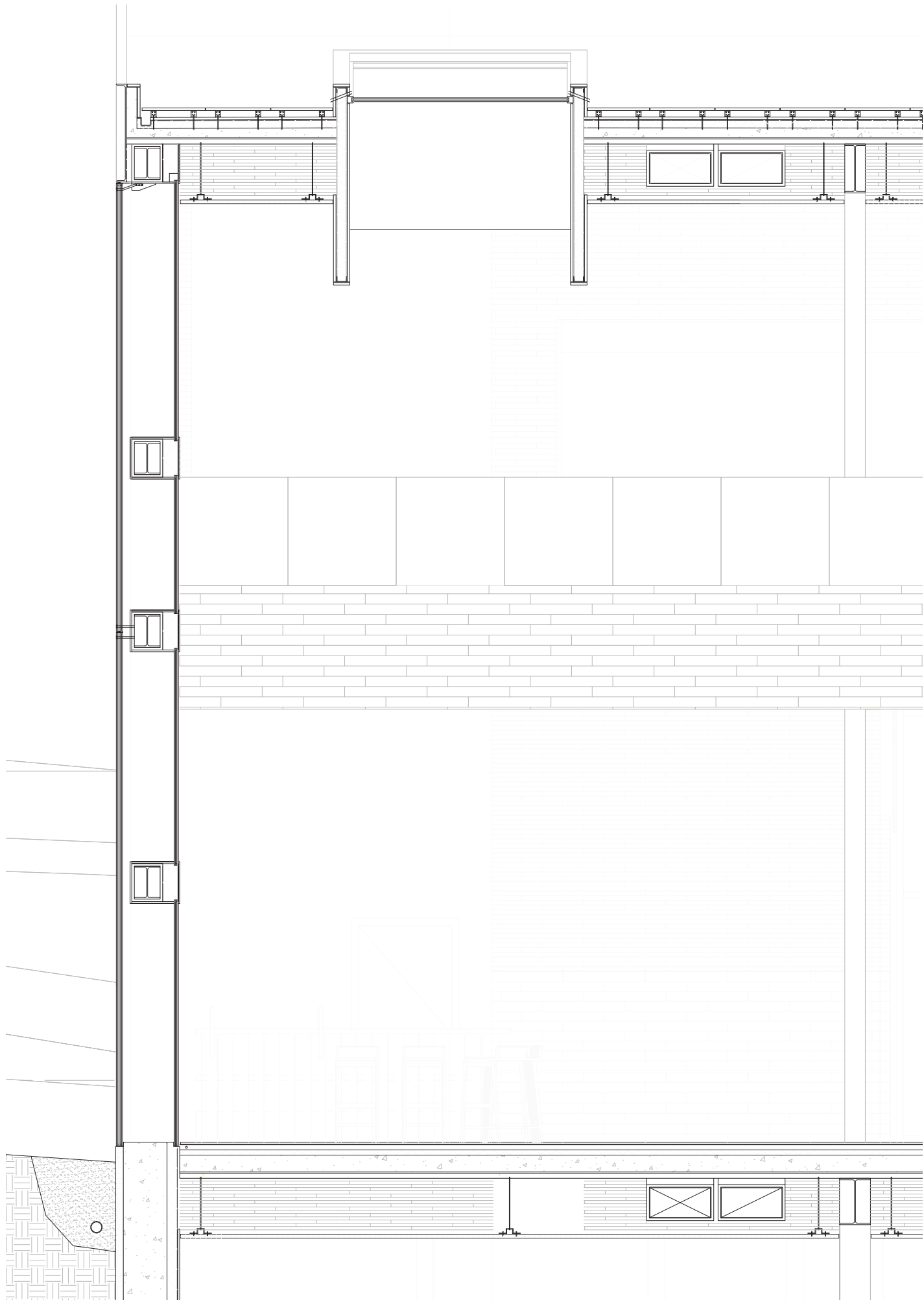
### TYPICAL FLOOR CONSTRUCTION

1" FINISH FLOOR  
 1" DIAMETER RADIANT FLOORING  
 2" RIGID INSULATION  
 4" POURED-ON-PLACE CONCRETE SLAB  
 3" METAL DECKING  
 1'-6" MECHANICAL SPACE W/ SUPPLY AND RETURN DUCTS  
 SUSPENDED 1" WOOD CEILING PANELS

### FOUNDATION CONNECTION

1'-4" FOUNDATION WALL  
 3" DAMPROOFING  
 4" PERIMETER DRAIN W/ FIBER FABRIC  
 SAND  
 BACKFILL



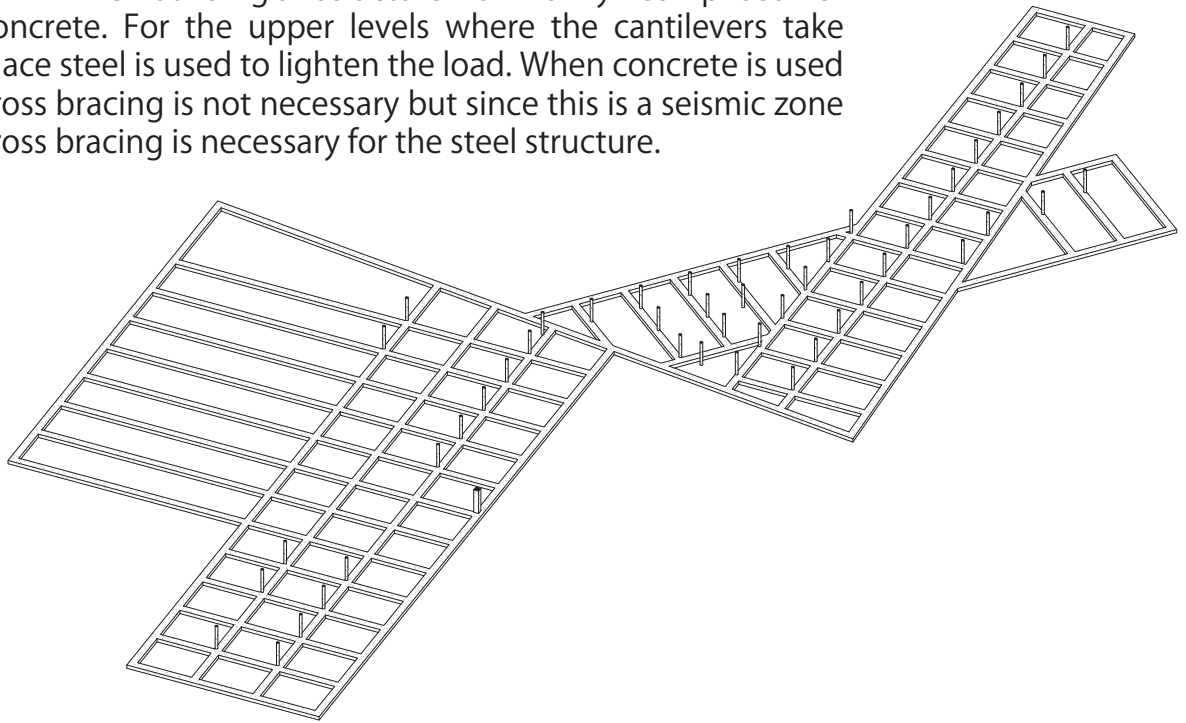




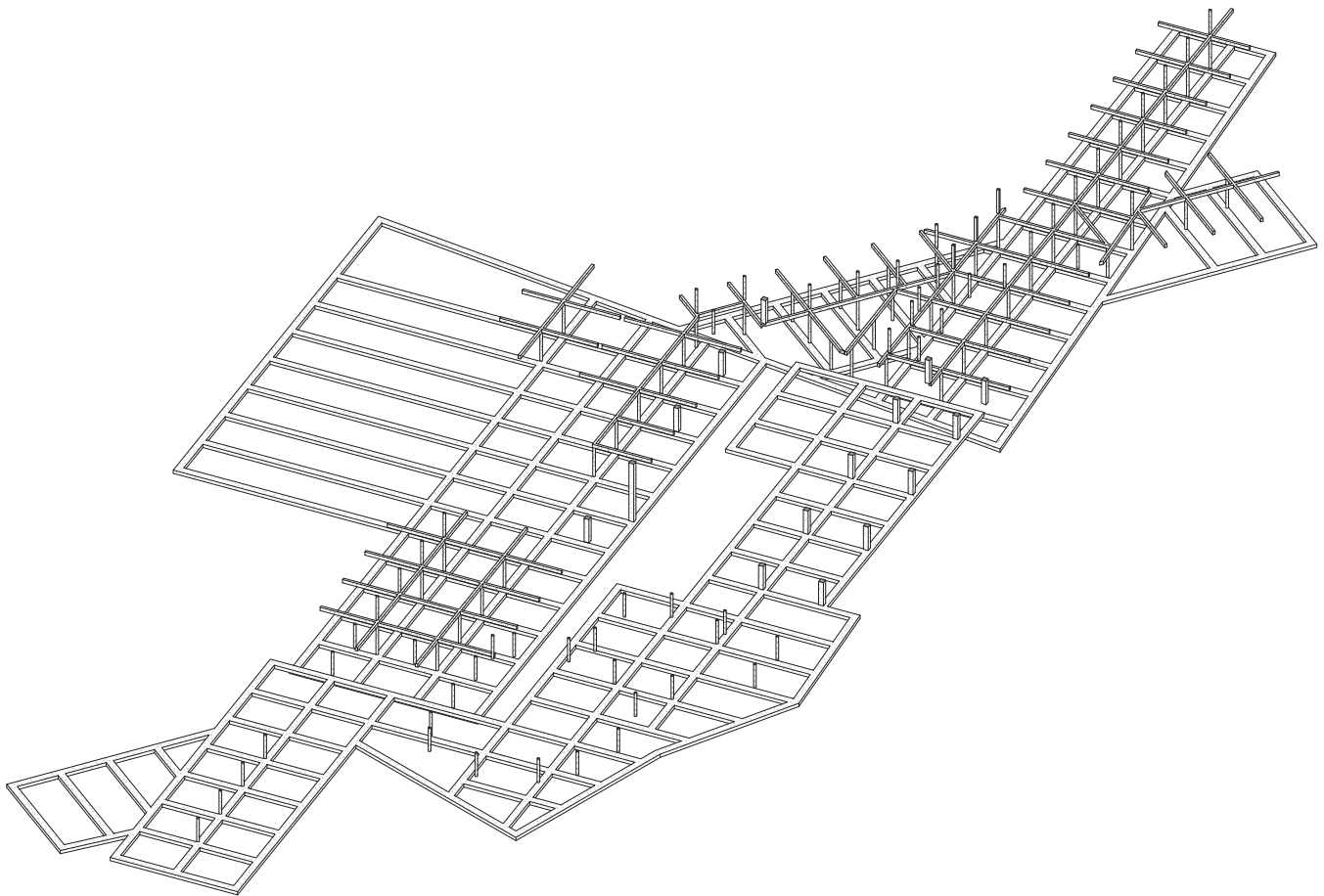
The scrim screen which covers the face of the middle protrusion is a typical glazed wall with spider fittings holding the glass, connected to a taut wire running in the vertical direction. This allows the fittings to be held in tension while a scrim sheet that can be rolled down is behind the glazing.



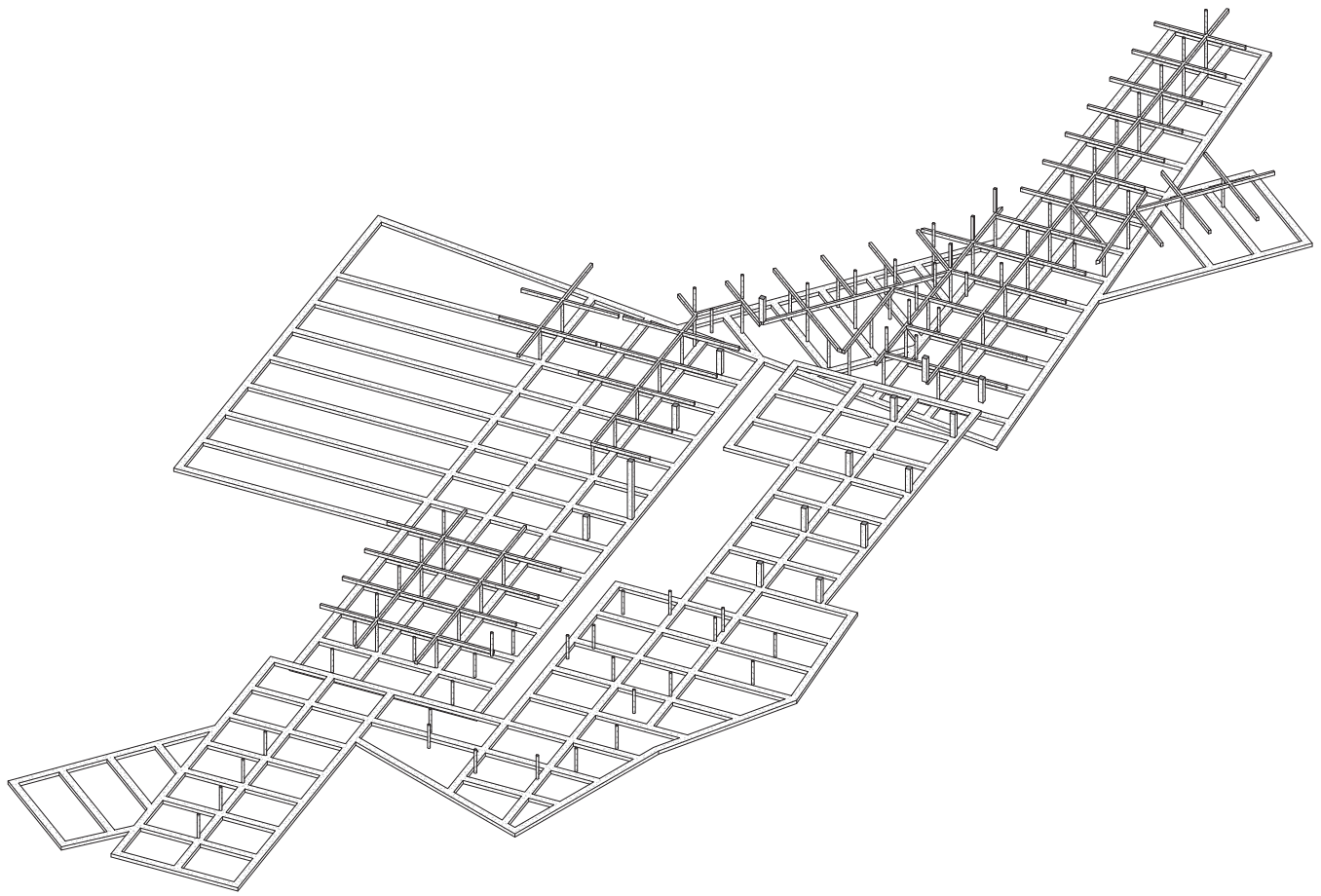
The building's structure is mainly comprised of concrete. For the upper levels where the cantilevers take place steel is used to lighten the load. When concrete is used cross bracing is not necessary but since this is a seismic zone cross bracing is necessary for the steel structure.



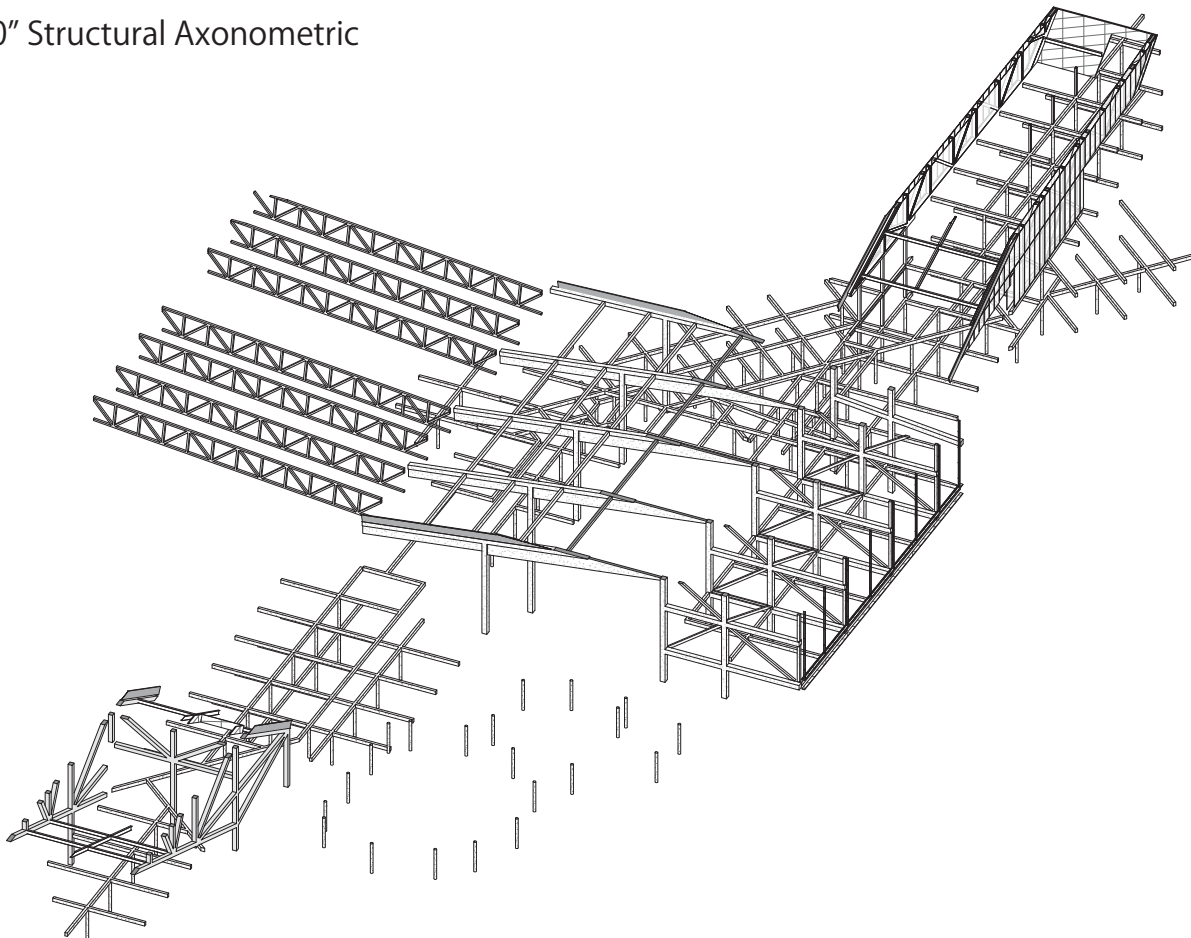
-32'0" Structural Axonometric



-16'0" Structural Axonometric

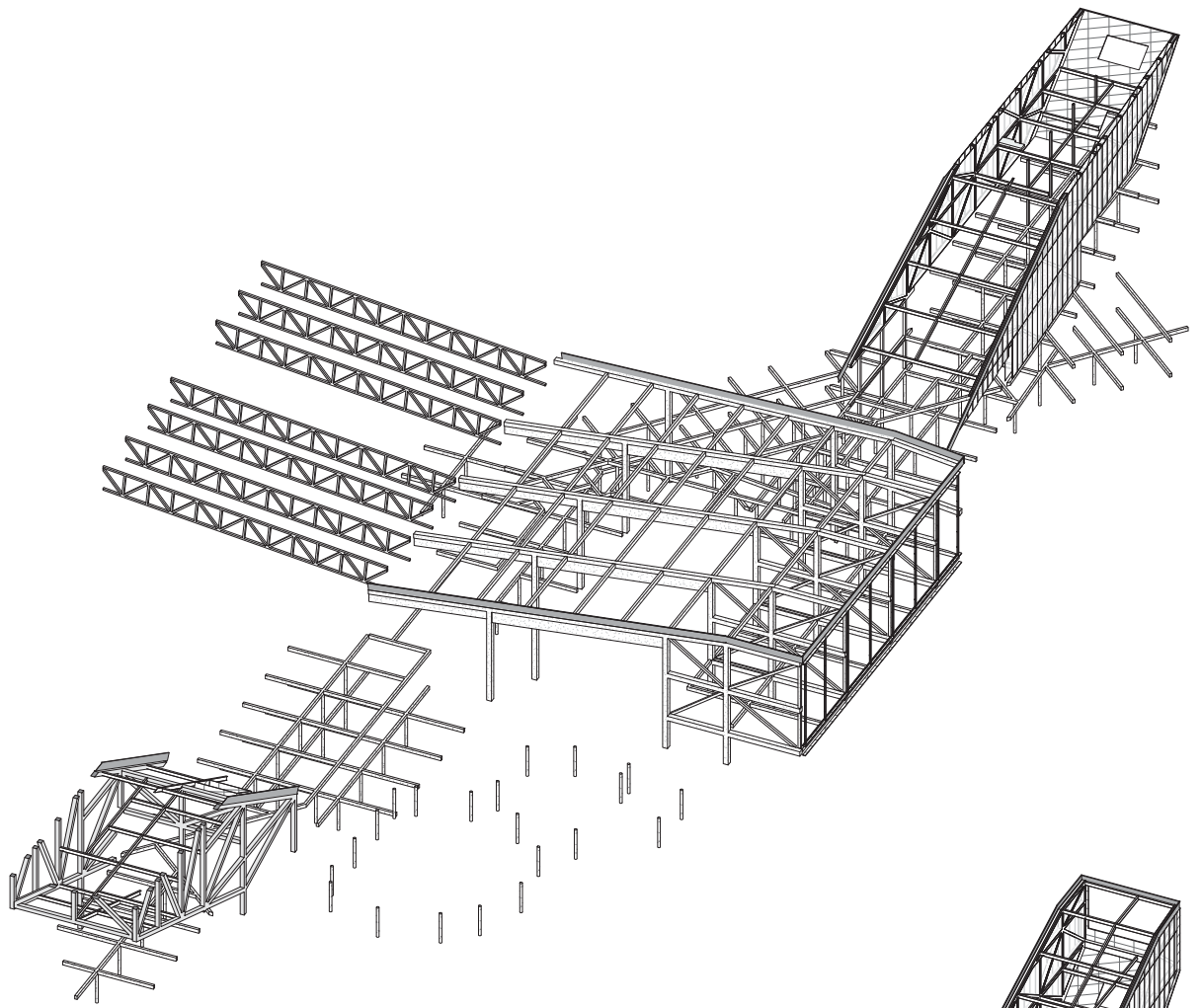


0'0" Structural Axonometric

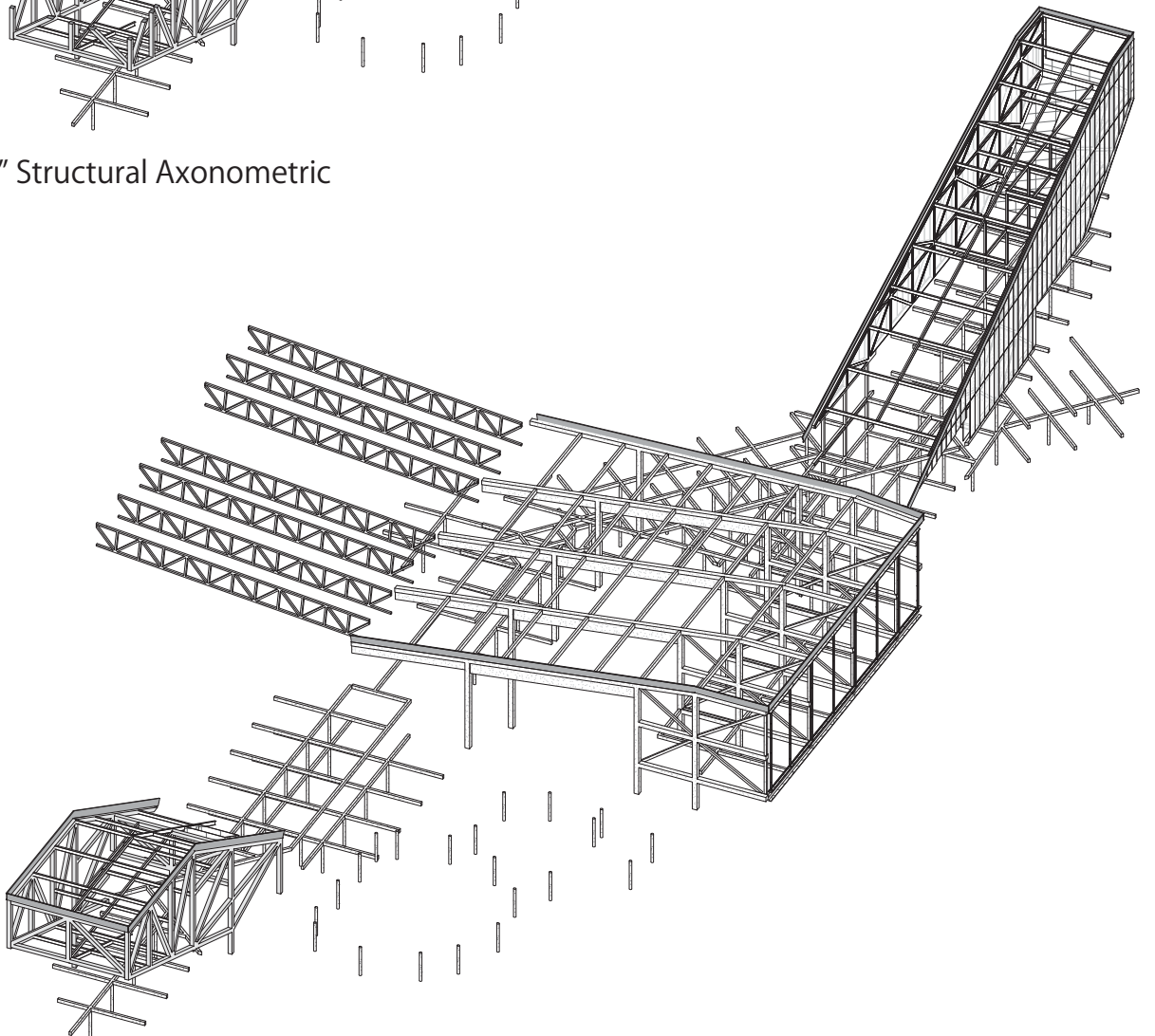


+18'0" Structural Axonometric

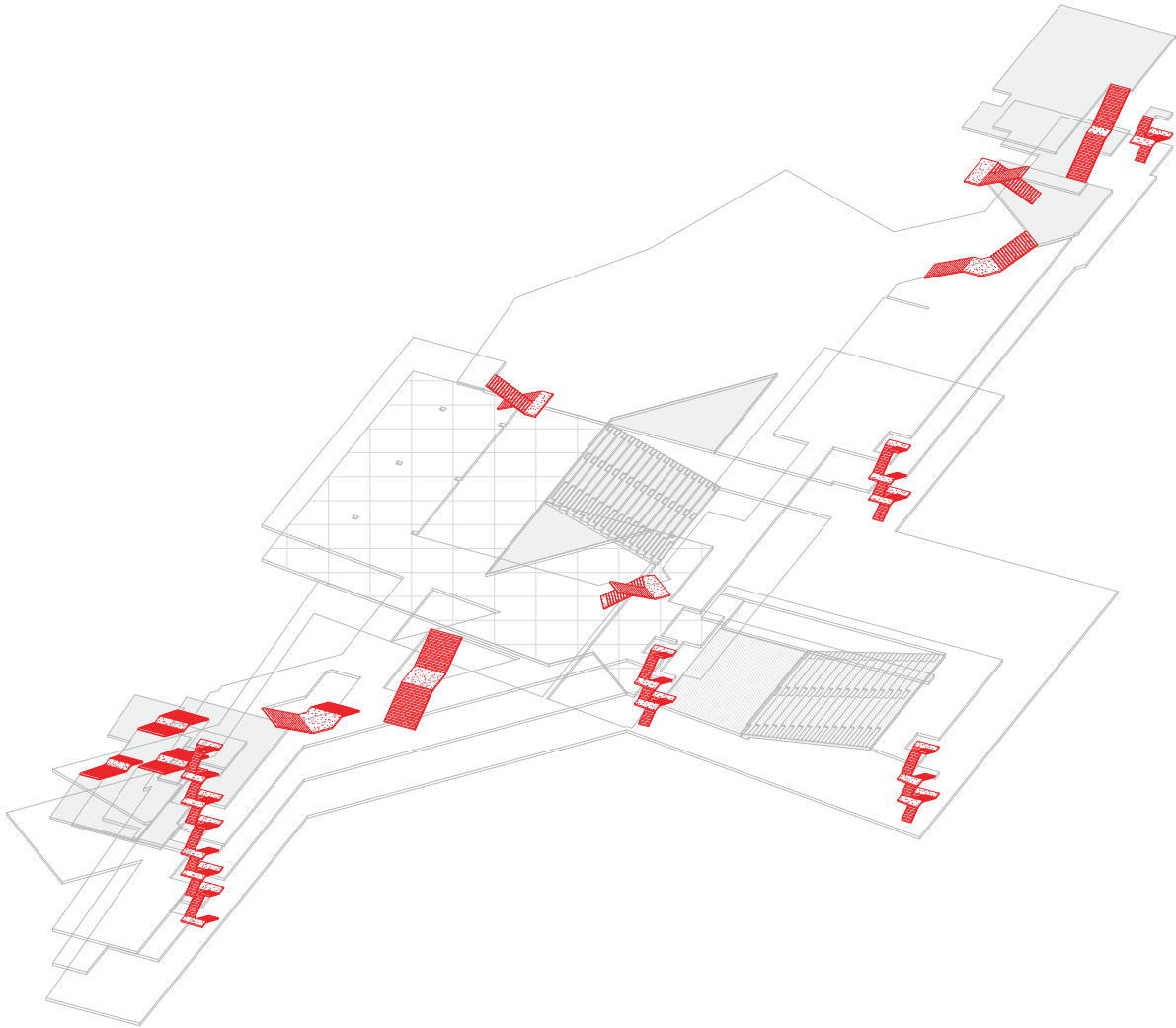




0'0" Structural Axonometric

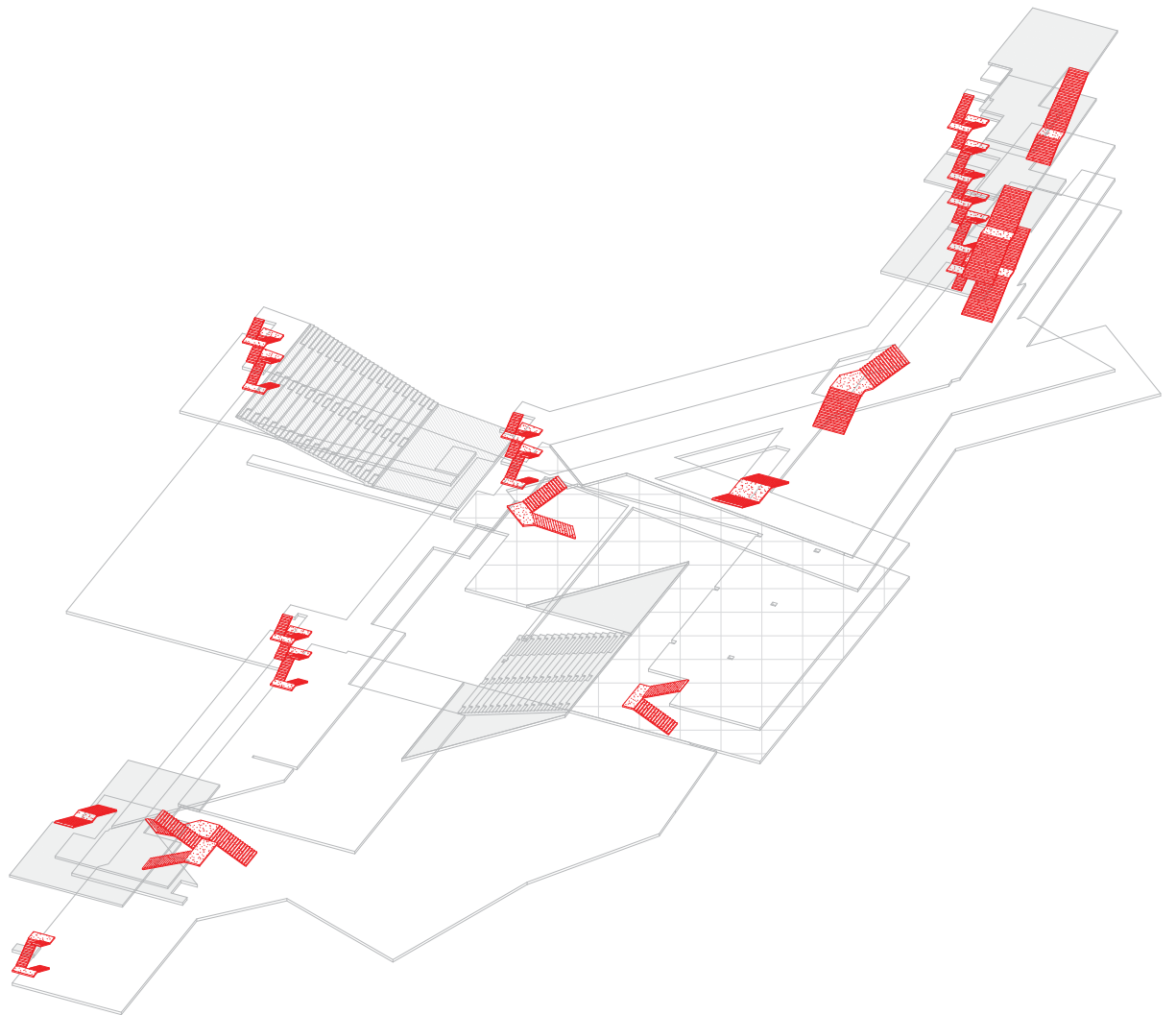


+18'0" Structural Axonometric

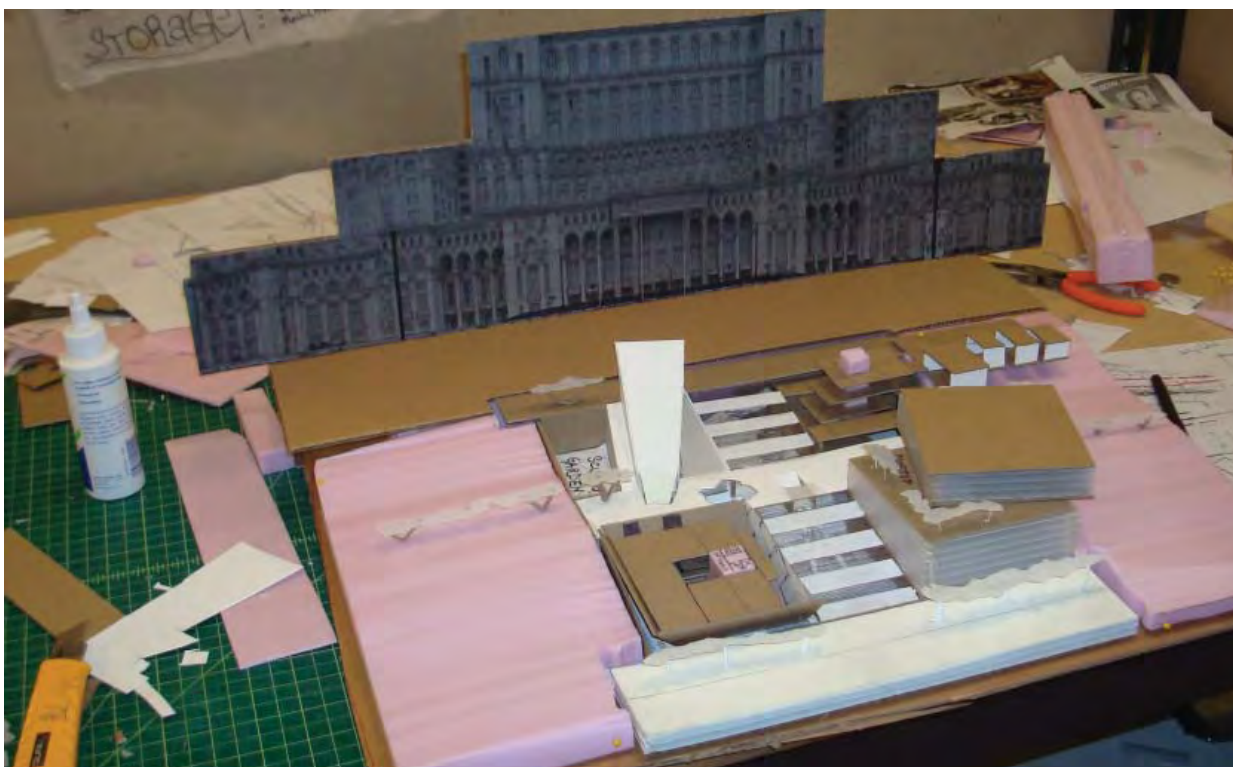
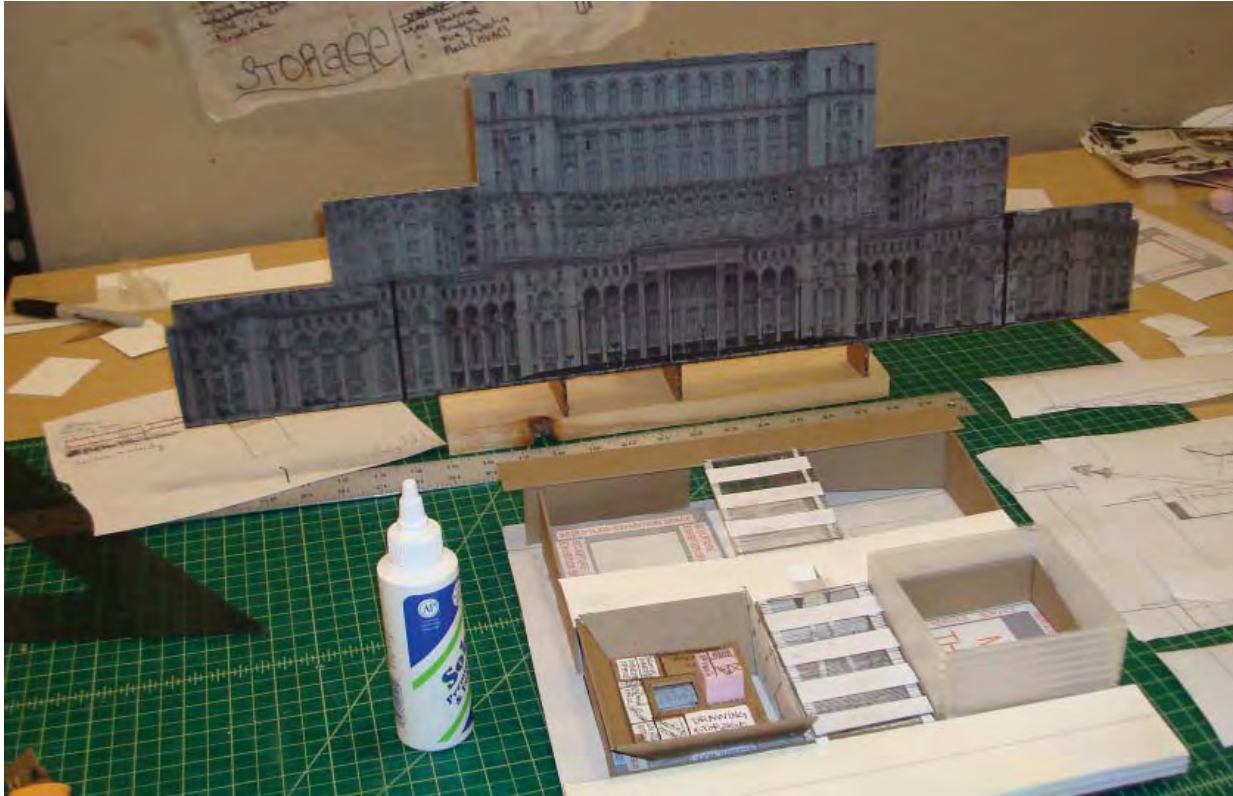


Two views of the egress diagram with staircases highlighted in red.



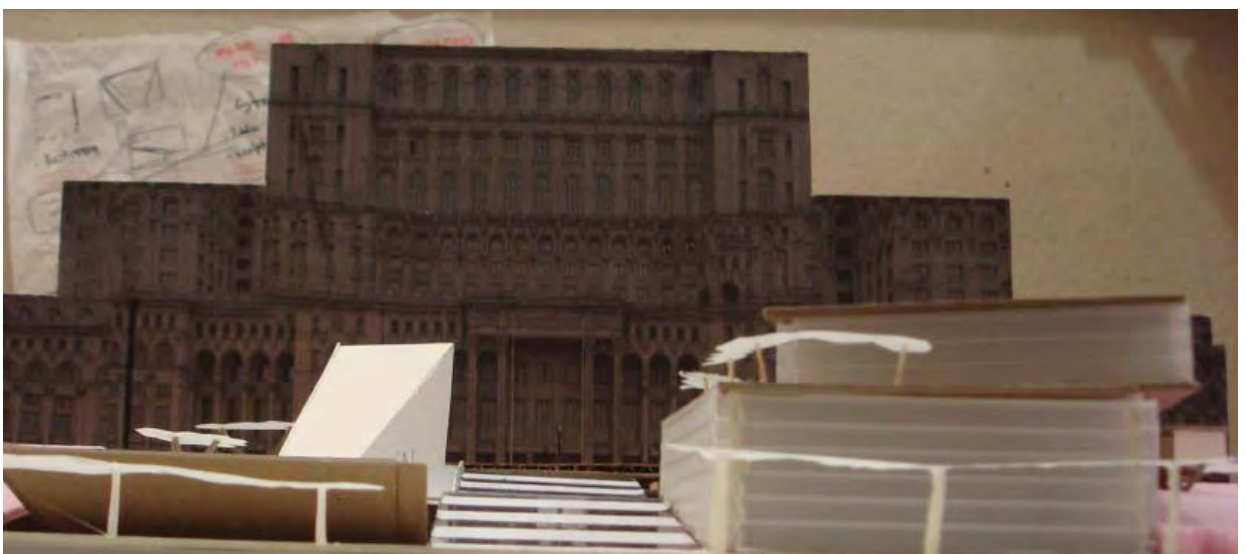


# PROCESS **WORK**



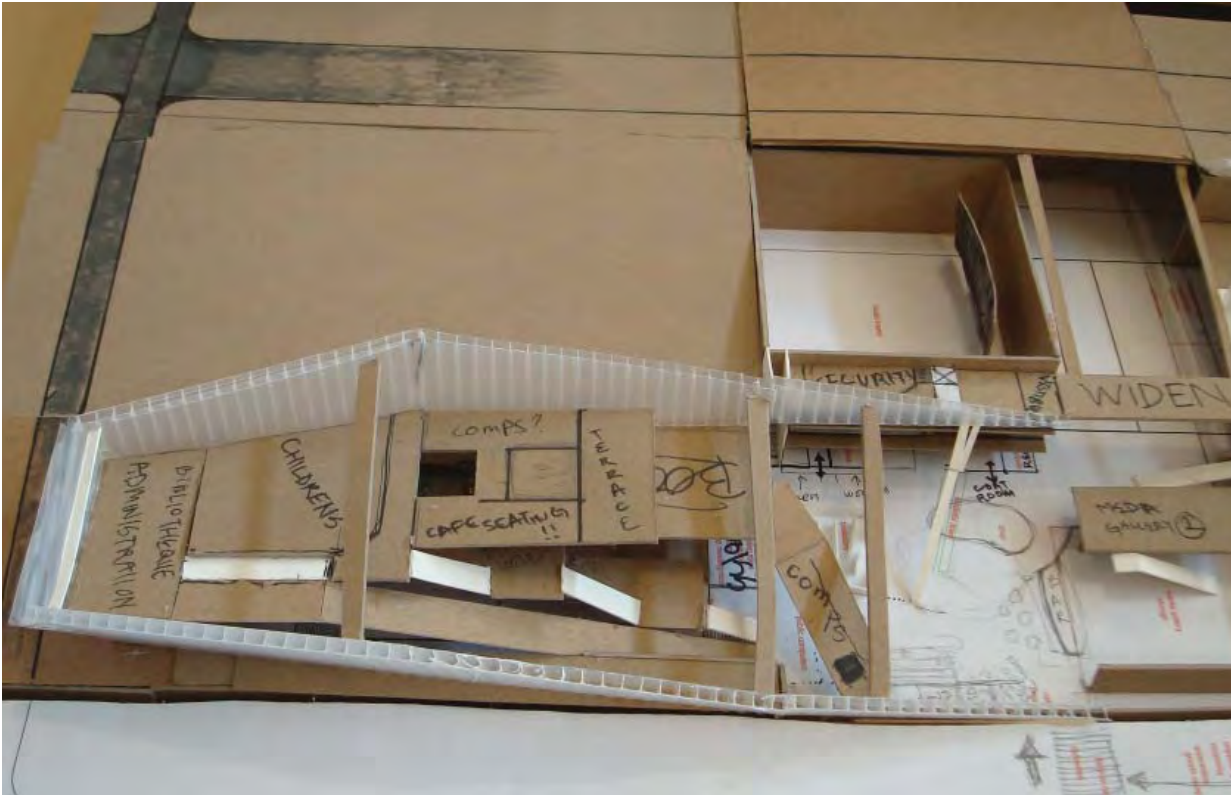


The first iterations of the project developed as four masses that demarcated the intersection between the North-South and East-West axis. This scheme was meant to simultaneously create a grand staircase that lead from the piazza to the House, as well as incorporating a sequence that would connect four galleries in a row on the interior. This model, and point of development, was still early so the physical representation focused more on the goals needing to be achieved rather than the actual aesthetic of the project in terms of materiality. Solid, transparent, and opaque are loosely represented but the ultimate goal was to begin to set up a dialogue of rich experiential moments that occurred on the interior. The site development did not yet live up to their potential in terms of the building engaging it's surroundings.

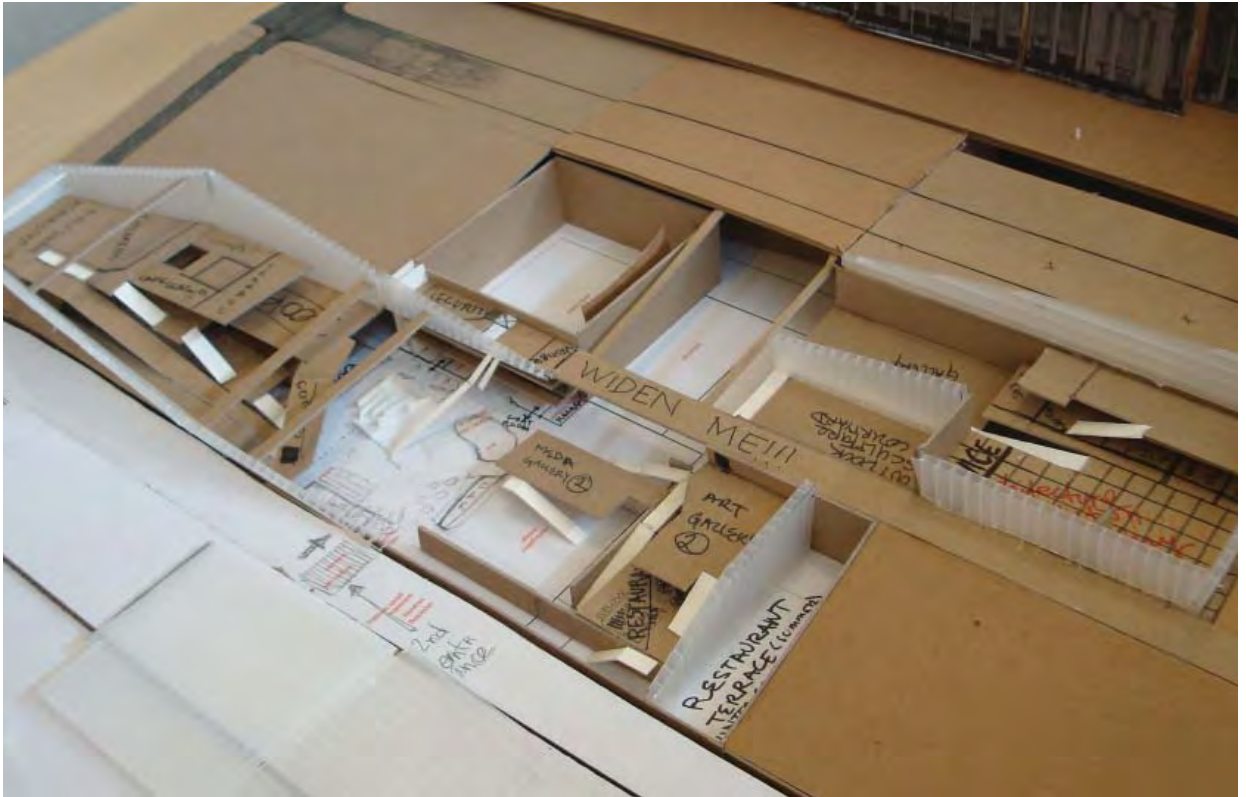
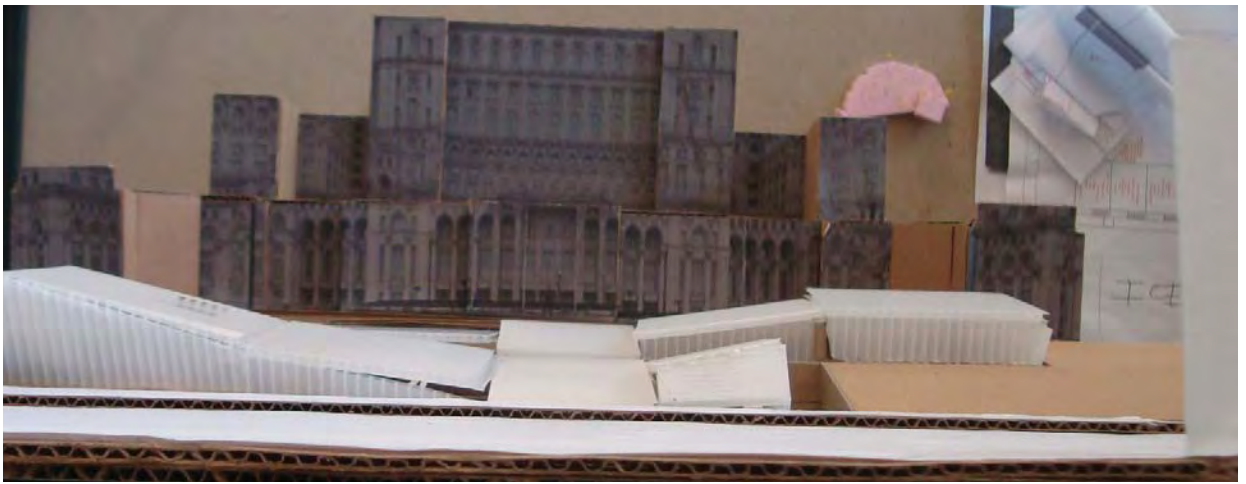


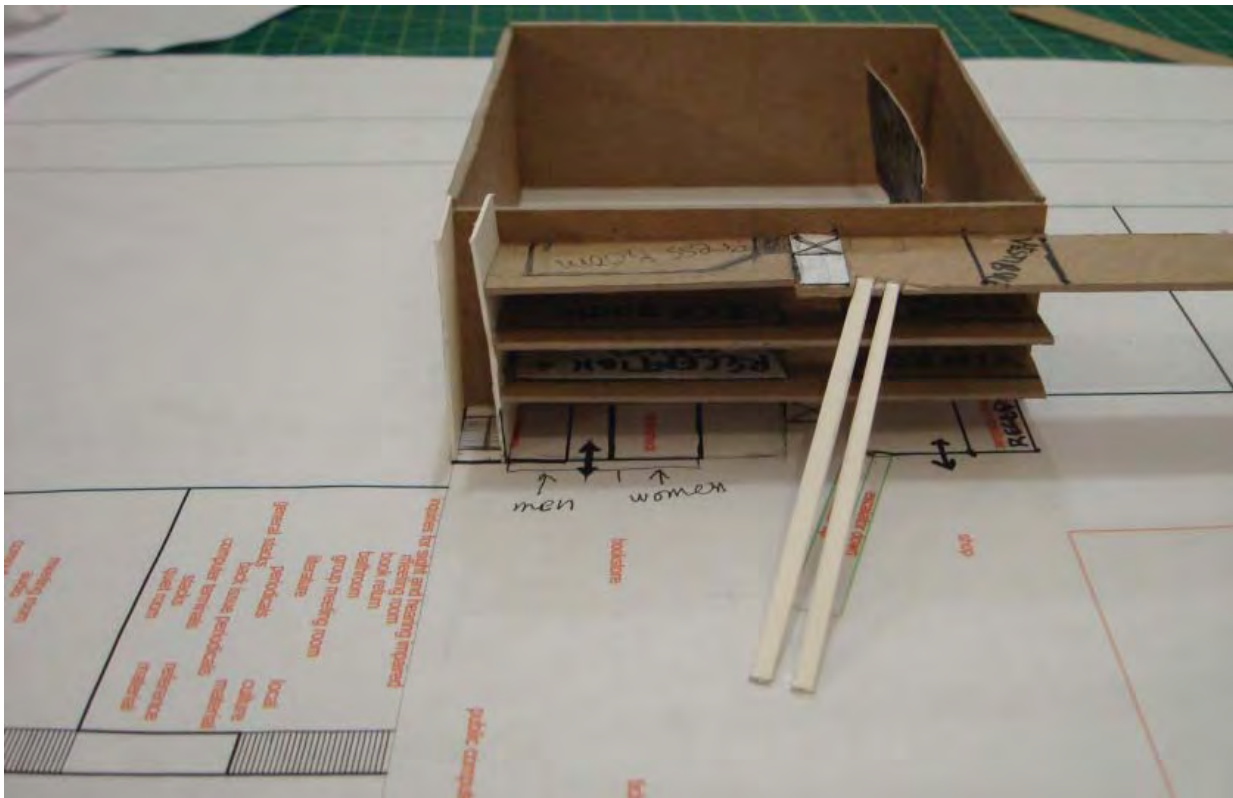
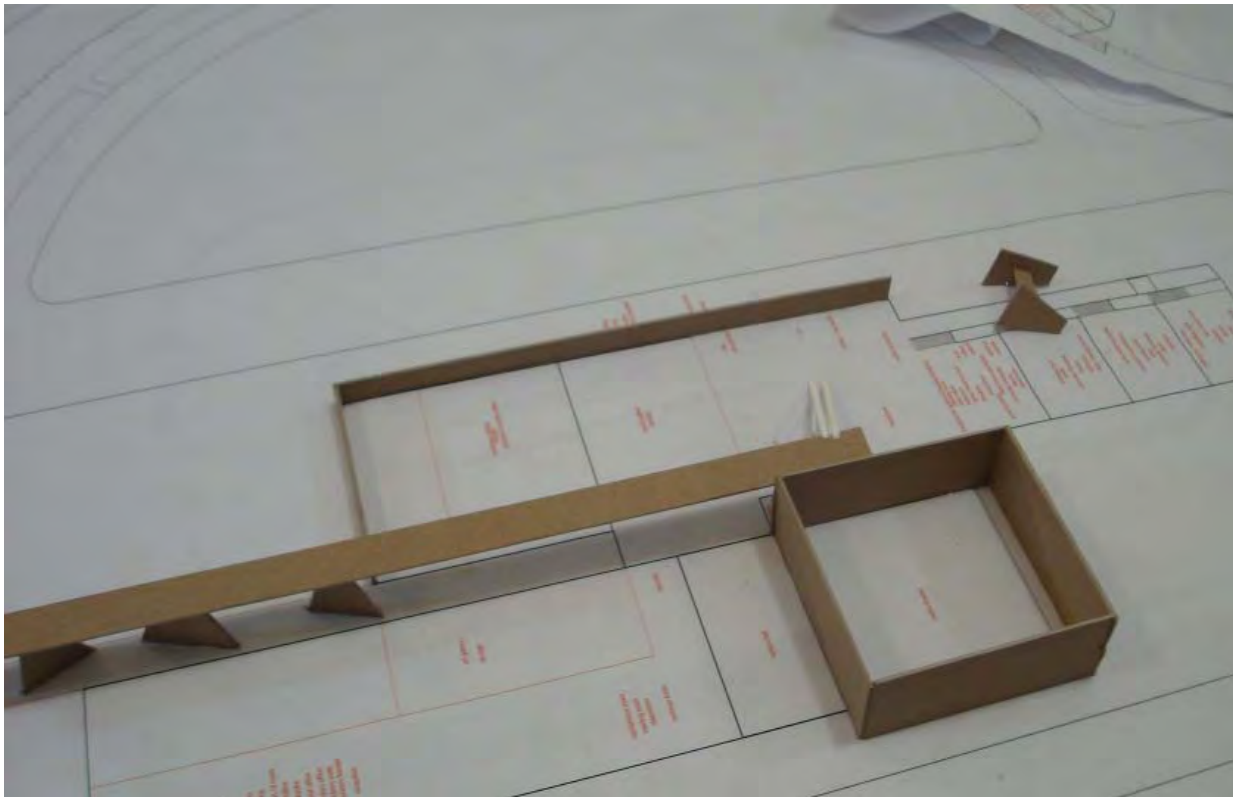


The next iteration saw the four masses being consolidated in to two and then sheared North and South. Now the work again mainly dealt with the organization of program within the interior of the project and staying true to the shearing gesture. The exterior envelope was thought of as some sort of frosted material.



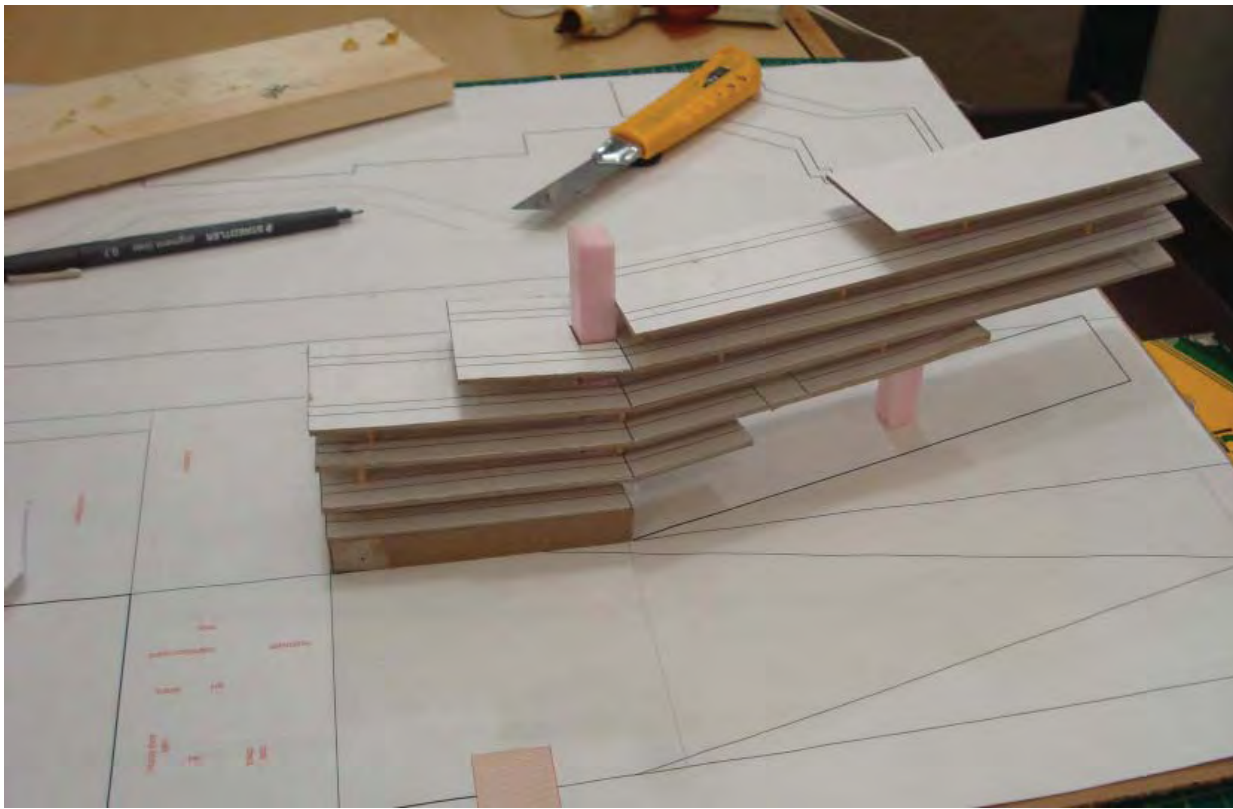




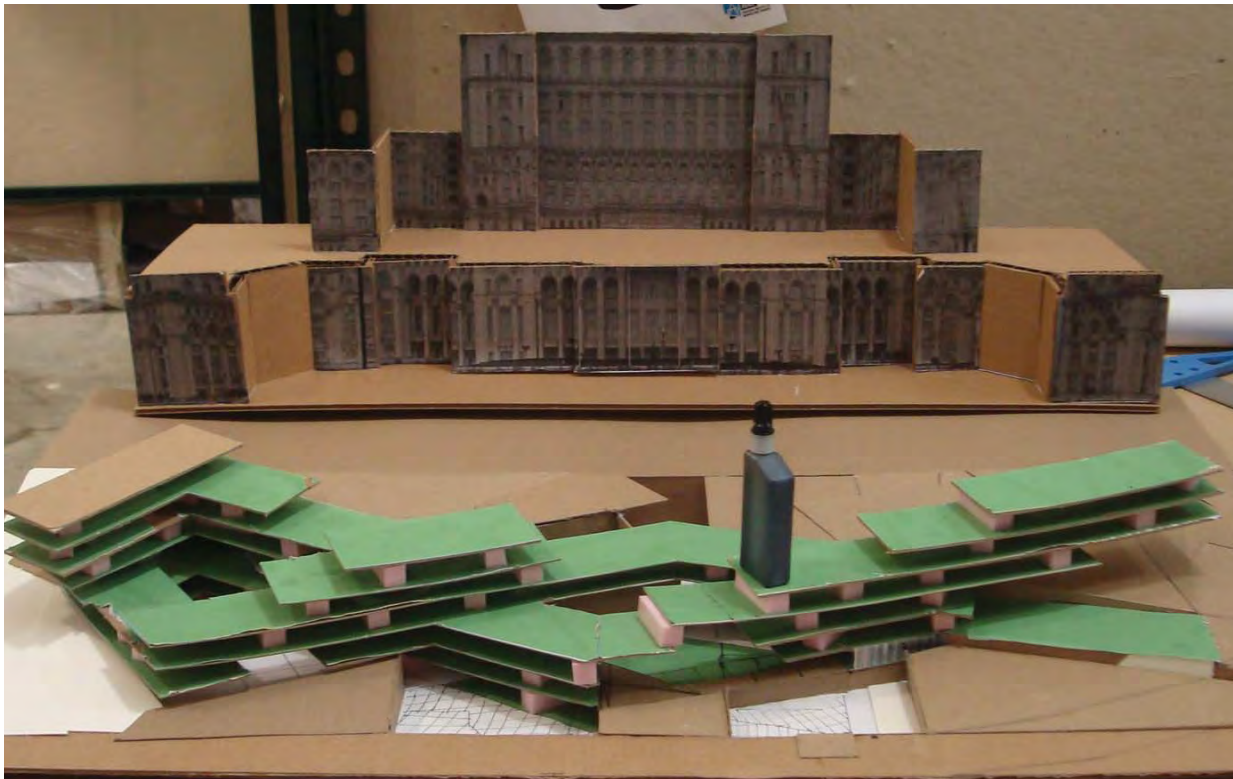






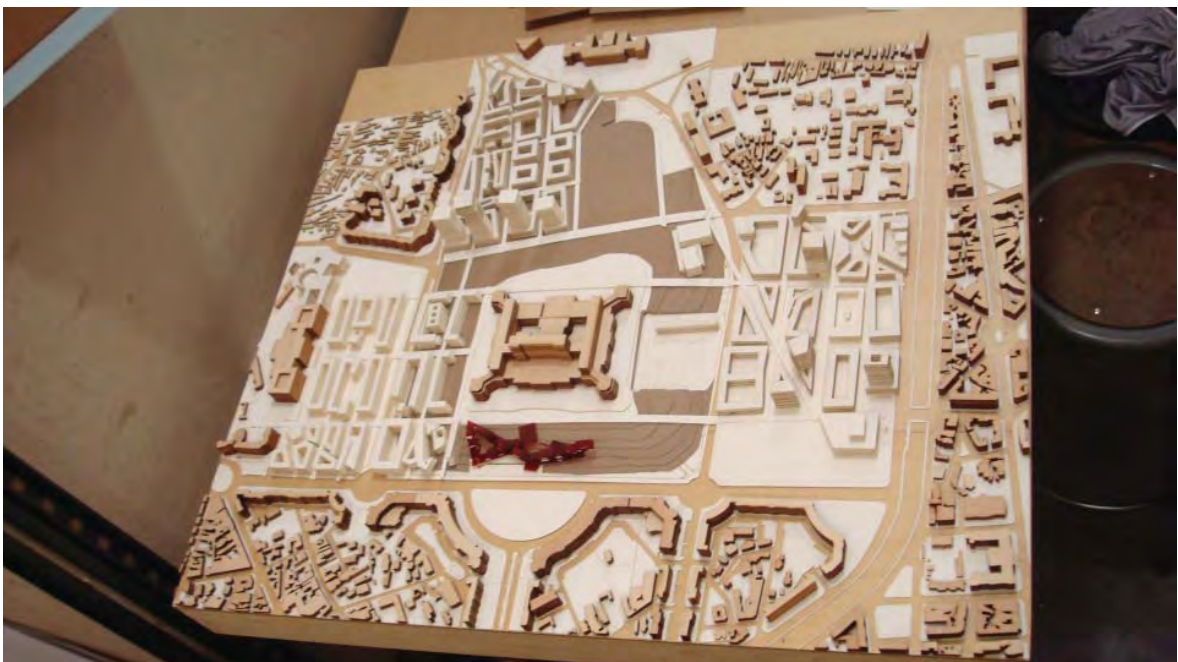


The next step came with the elongation of the bars and the beginning of the bending to relate to the slope of the hill.



That lead to the beginning of the final work. The intertwining bars were established and the program and site strategy had started to fall in line. This was before the project was sunk even lower in to the hill to have a lower elevation. On the opposite page: this site model with the first rendition of the masterplan grid and buildings. Also the scheme of the mediatheque where crossing bars form an entire motif gesture above ground.





# PRECEDENTS

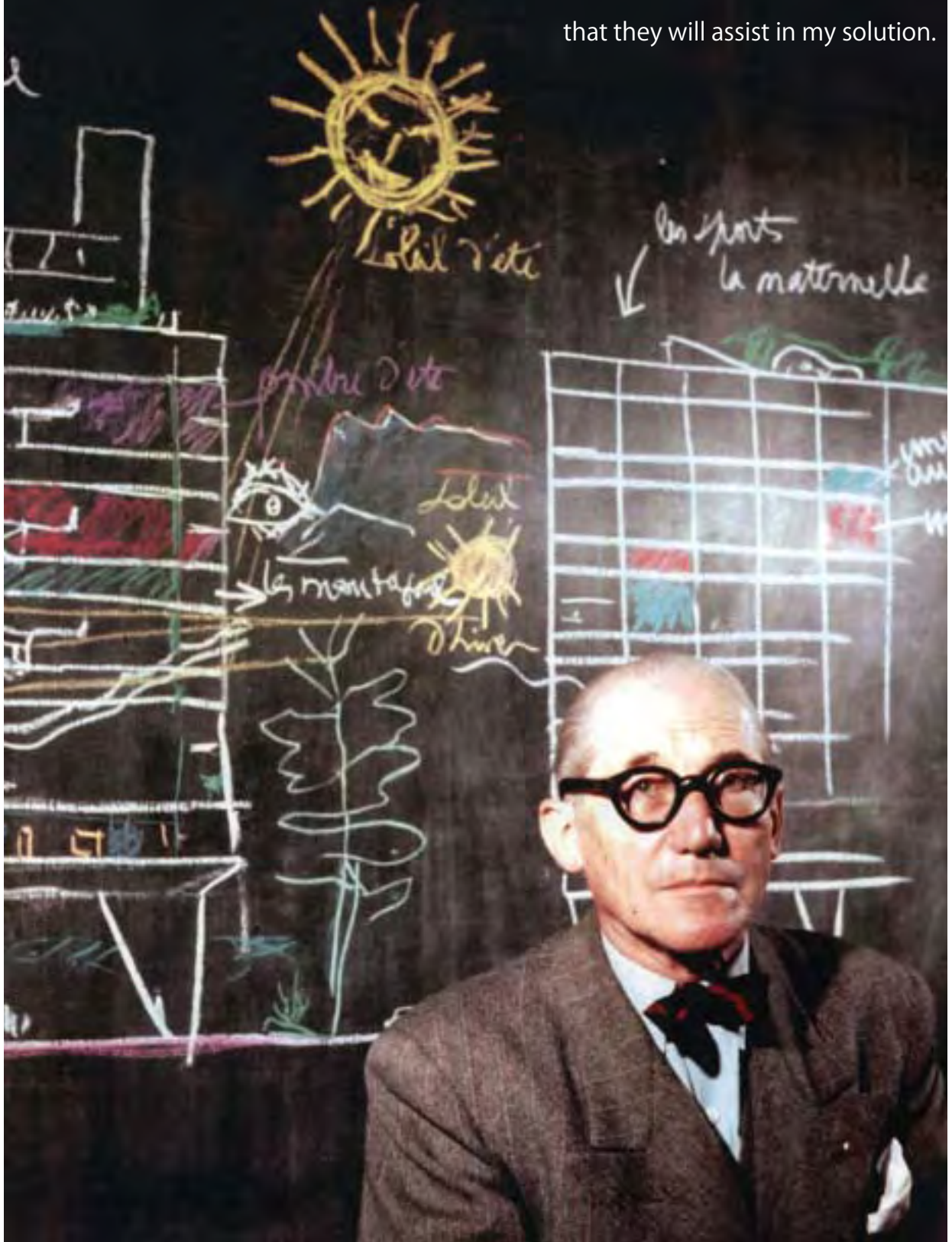


*"Unlink the other temporary pavilions, which looked more like buildings, the German pavilion, which looked light, was too heavy to be moved easily"*

- S,M,L,XL



I will be looking at various precedents for their programmatic and site strategies, structural and social innovation, as well as other characteristics. Their intentions parallel those of my own and I am hopeful that they will assist in my solution.



# House of Arts & Culture

Location: Beirut, Lebanon

Architect: Alberto Catalano of Teknoarch

Status: Recent Competition Winner

Year: 2009

Budget: \$20 million



Located in the Ghalghoul neighbourhood sorely affected by the conflicts, the new dynamic and interactive edifice, will offer a vast range of spaces devoted to creativity, exchange, debate, education and cultural diffusion for all publics and all generations.

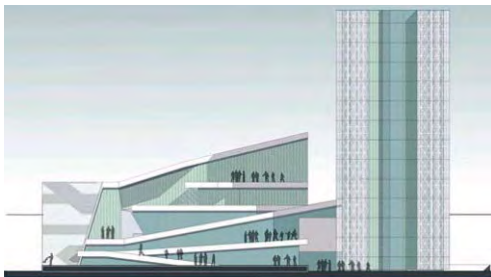
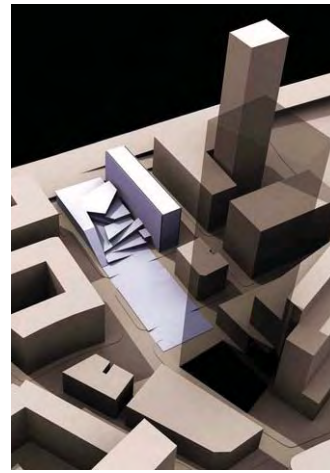
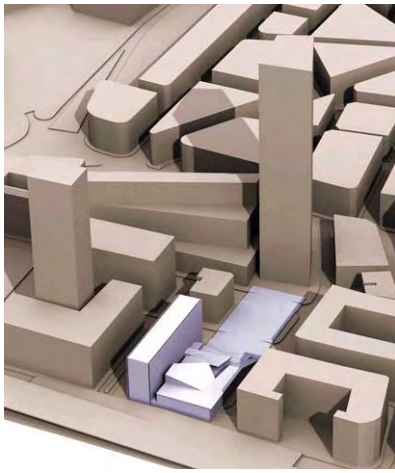
An international jury met in Beirut examining 388 projects and the Italian team led by Alberto Catalano was chosen as the first prize winner. The jury commented that they appreciated the sensitive approach of the Milanese team, the idea of designing the building as a public plaza, as a “non-building”, and its integration in the urban fabric thus achieving one of the important objectives of the programme: the engagement of the public realm.

*Source: worldarchitecturenews.com*

The Arts and Culture House will be the first of its kind in Lebanon and is funded by a \$20 million gift from the Sultanate of Oman. The project should be complete in 2013.

*Source: archdaily.com*

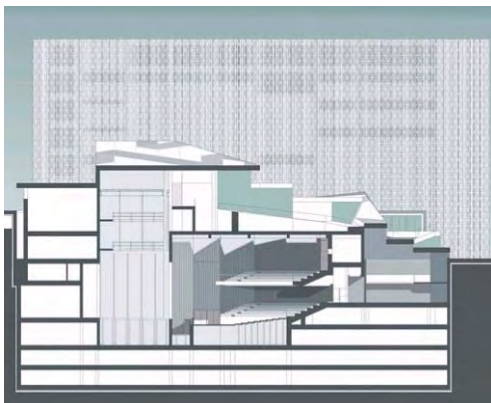




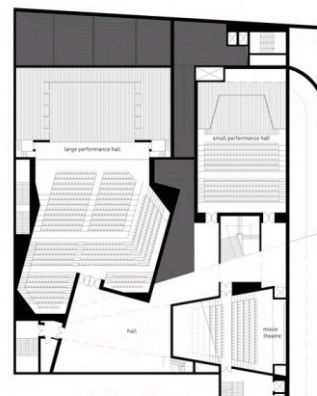
Elevation



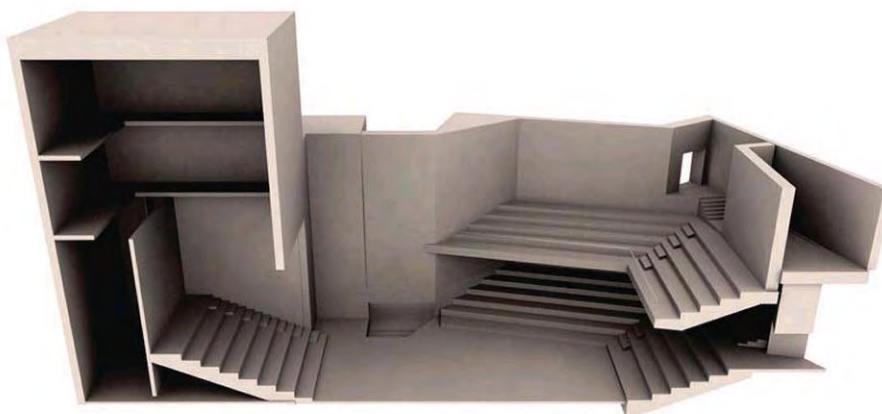
Entry Level Plan



Section



Auditorium Plan



Sectional Perspective of Theater

# Sendai Mediatheque

Location: Sendai, Japan

Architect: Toyo Ito Associates

Status: Built

Year: 2000

Budget: ¥ 13 billion

Site area: 3,948.72m

Building area: 2,933.12m

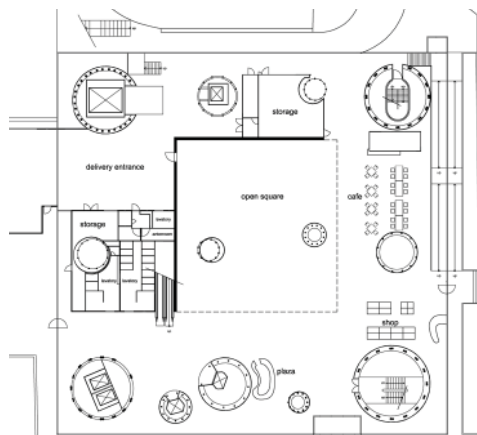
Total floor area: 21,682.15m

Max height: 36.49m

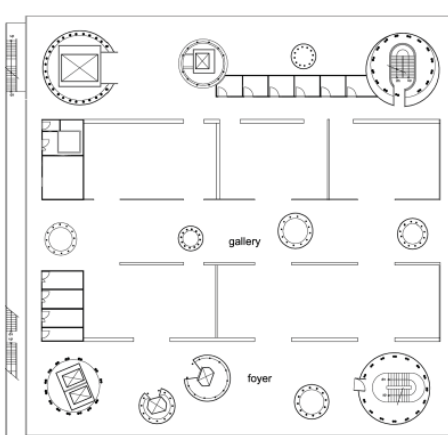


The Sendai Mediatheque provides a base for activities related to art and films, as well as public facilities that help people communicate with each other freely and smoothly through various media. Instead of being a simple mixed-use facility, it was intended to encompass a larger sphere of functions that would allow the facility to operate as a unified mediatheque with common goals to respond to a continuously changing information environment and users diverse needs.

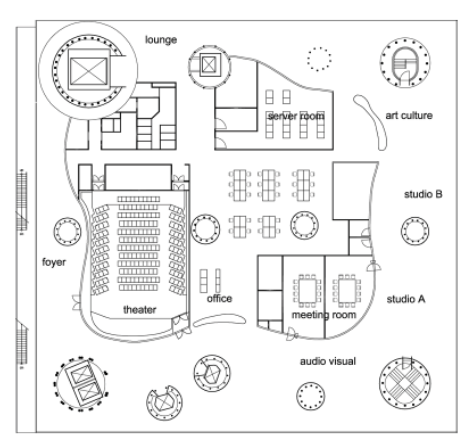
The Sendai Mediatheque will gather, preserve, exhibit, and present various forms of media without being bound to form or type. This public facility for the 21st century will, through its various functions and services, be able to support the cultural and educational activities of its users.



Ground Floor



Fixed Exhibition Floor

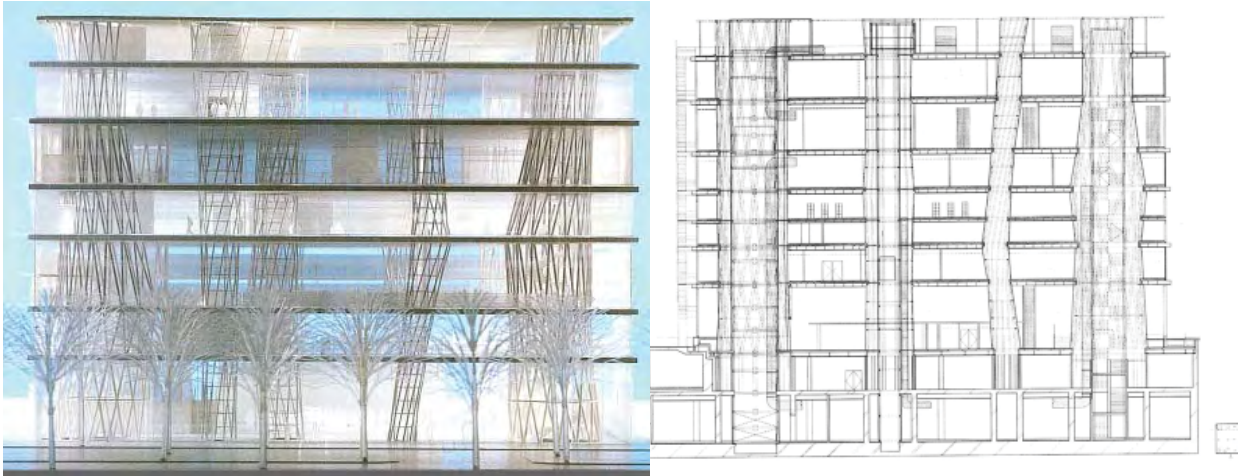


Cinema Floor



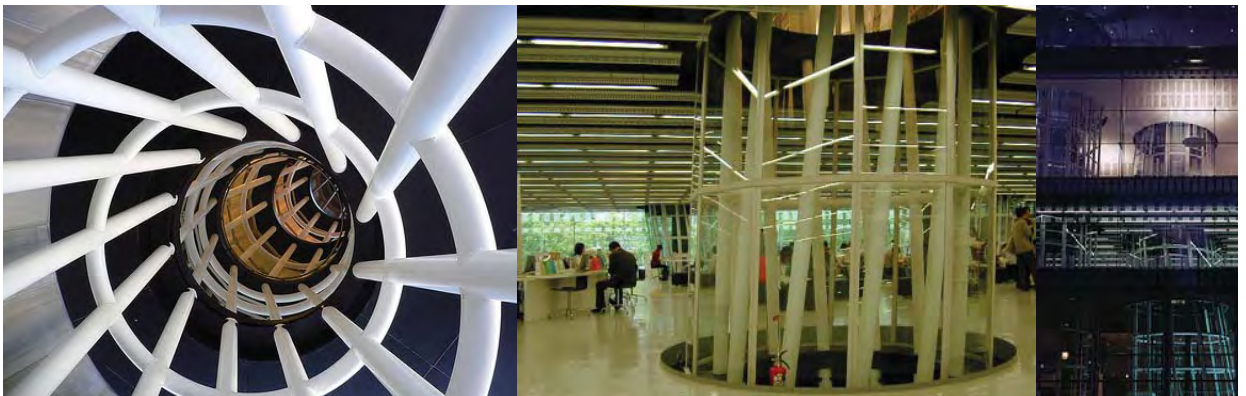
## Structural System

The building is composed of 13 independent steel-ribbed shafts (tubular columns: mainly steel-tube truss construction) and 7 steel-ribbed slabs ("honeycomb" slabs: sandwiched steel-plate construction), giving each floor a different floor plan. Basement structures feature seismic energy-absorbing mechanisms.



## Tubes for Light Wells, Ducts, Vertical Mobility

The tubular column structures serve as light wells, with rooftop devices to reflect sunlight down the tubes into the building. And also as vertical connector "pipelines" for network cables, wiring, elevators and stairways.



## Program

Exhibitions, film screenings and workshops related to art, films, and media are arranged.

- Educational promotion and voluntary activities are supported so that all people including the disabled can use media freely.
- Cooperation with many people to collect information and store digital records in archives is encouraged.
- Collaboration with outside libraries and various organizations is developed.



# Cordoba Congress Center

Location: Cordoba, Spain

Architect: Office for Metropolitan Architecture

Status: Competition Winner

Year: 2002

Budget: 80 million

Program: Congress Center: 21,187m<sup>2</sup>, Hotel: 18,394m<sup>2</sup>, Comercio: 4,925m<sup>2</sup>, Promenade: 6,766m<sup>2</sup>, Parking: 9,766m<sup>2</sup>

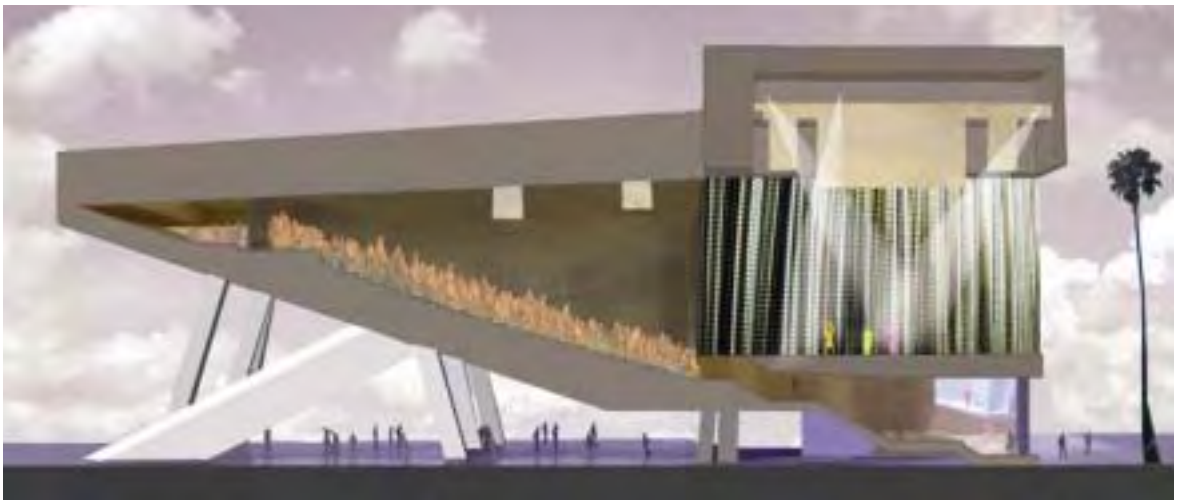
Taking full advantage of the potential site the project transforms the East-West strip across the Miraflores peninsula into a linear volume that acts as promenade, mall, and mixing chamber - a takeoff point for the Cordoba Experience.

First, the site is thickened into a long block that marks the threshold of the Miraflores neighborhood and defines a southern edge for the planned fluvial park. A horizontal slice through the slab allows the necessary activities - congress center, auditorium, retail, hotel - to be contained along a continuous trajectory running the full length of the building. The transparency of this middle zone establishes the building as a linear viewing platform, looking out over the park, the river and the historic center beyond.





Functioning as a programmatic sandwich, the upper lower layers fold or converge to respond to different interior/exterior pressures along its length: separating to accommodate the conference hall and auditorium; converging to define the hotel lobby; lifting to allow Miraflores Park and the street to continue through to the specified site. To the south, the main volumes of conference center and auditorium project from the slab; a ramp between the two marks the formal entrance to the complex.



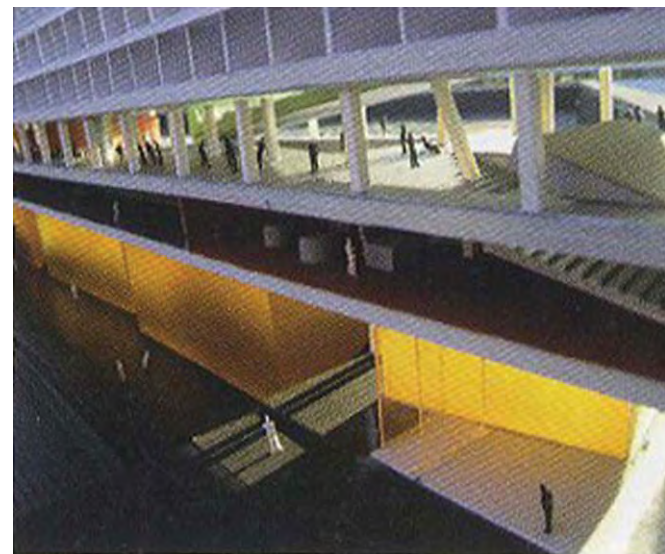
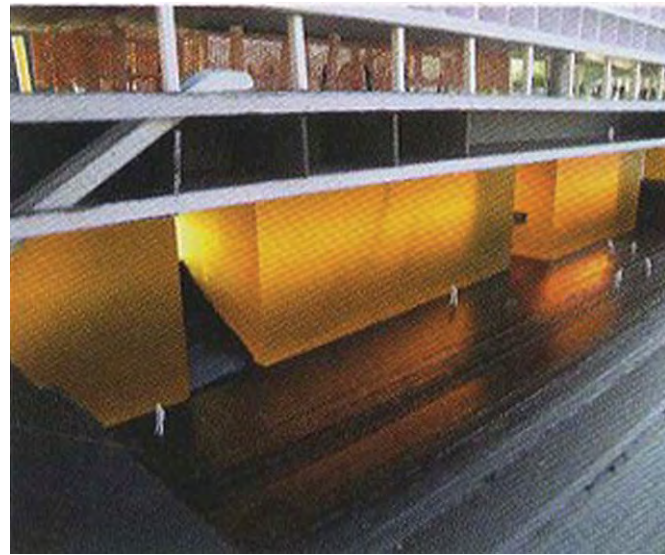
The 360-meter length of the building is conceived as a promenade, a coherent sequence of programs and views. Bridging the east and west banks of the river along its length, the project spans the new site to become a route, the crucial link is the trajectory that moves visitors in and out of the historic center. A series of ramps channel the public seamlessly through the building, absorbing all circulation into a sequence of visitor's center, auditorium, conference hall, retail and hotel. A roof terrace accommodates additional leisure activities: mini golf, outdoor cinema, and lookout.

Taking its place within the urban fabric of the city, the siting of the CCC organizes the now disparate elements of Miraflores, river and historic center into a coherent urban grouping that extends the benefits of Cordoba's tourist industry to the rest of the city.

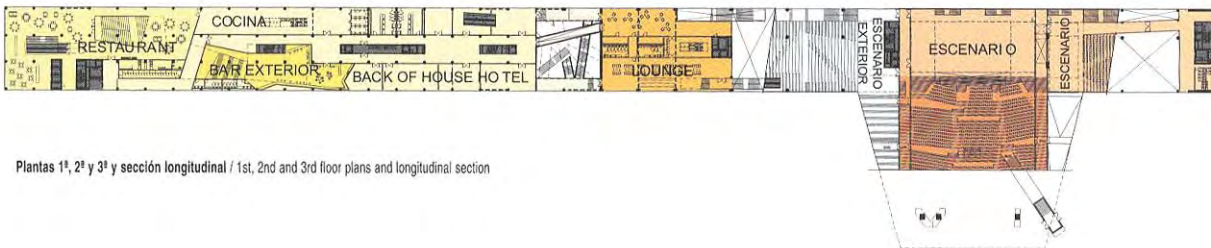
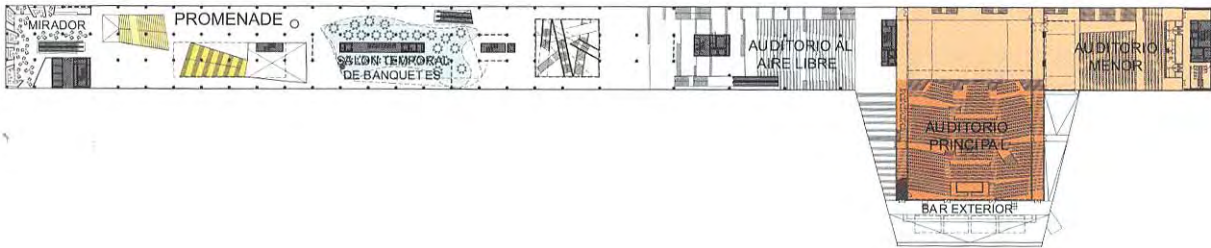
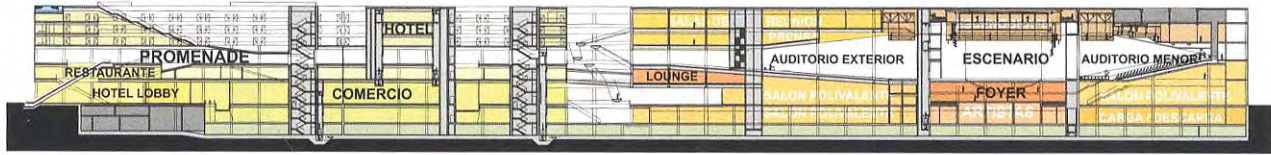
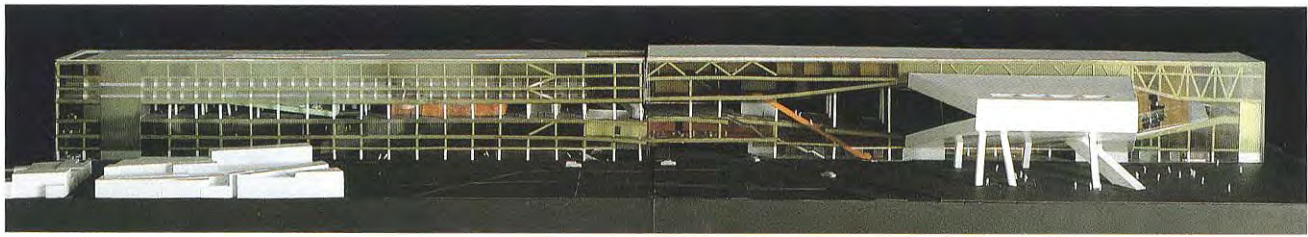


*Source: oma.eu*









Plantas 1ª, 2ª y 3ª y sección longitudinal / 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor plans and longitudinal section





# Charles de Gaulle Square Underground Complex

Location: Bucharest, Romania

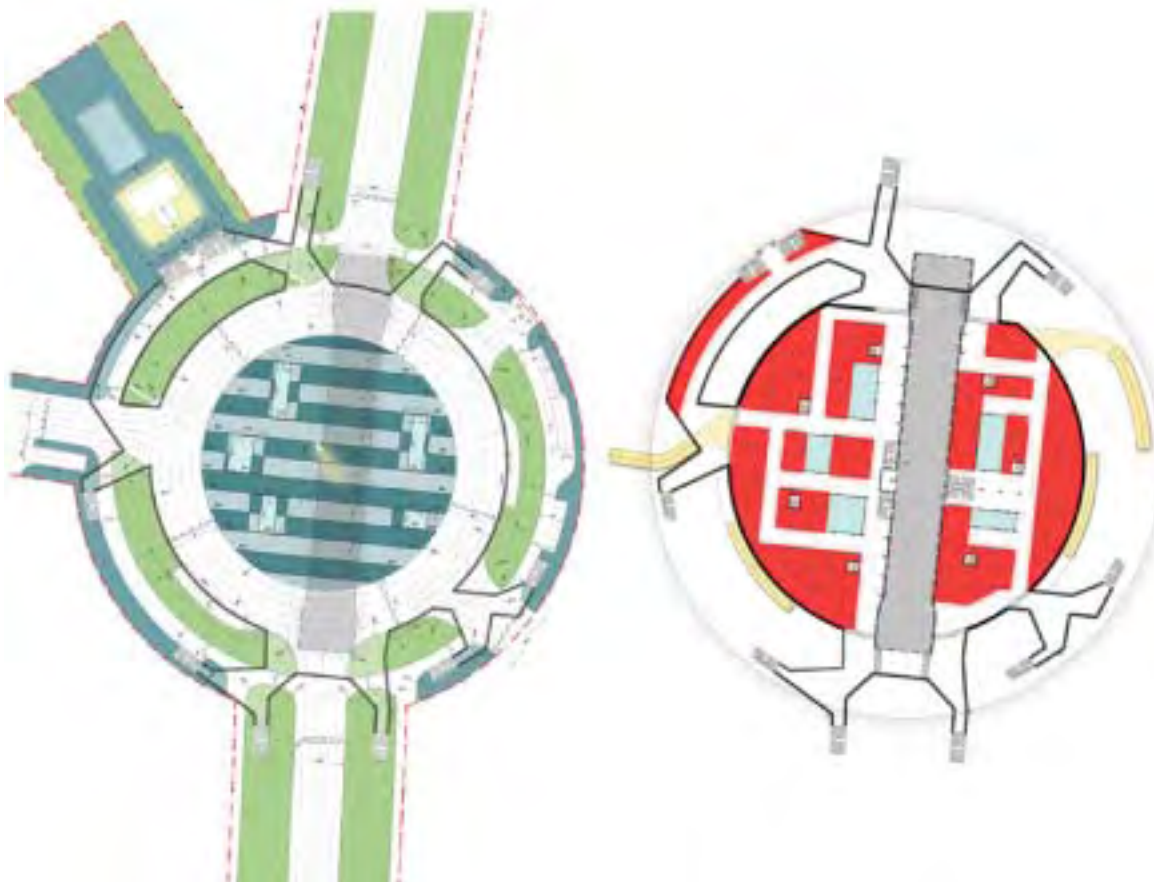
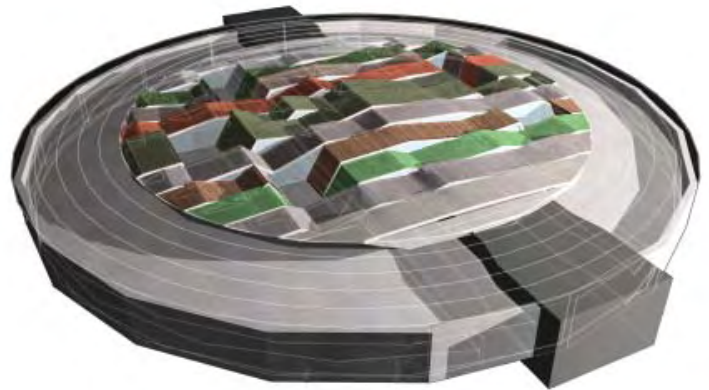
Architect: Dorin Stefan Birou Arhitectura

Status: Concept

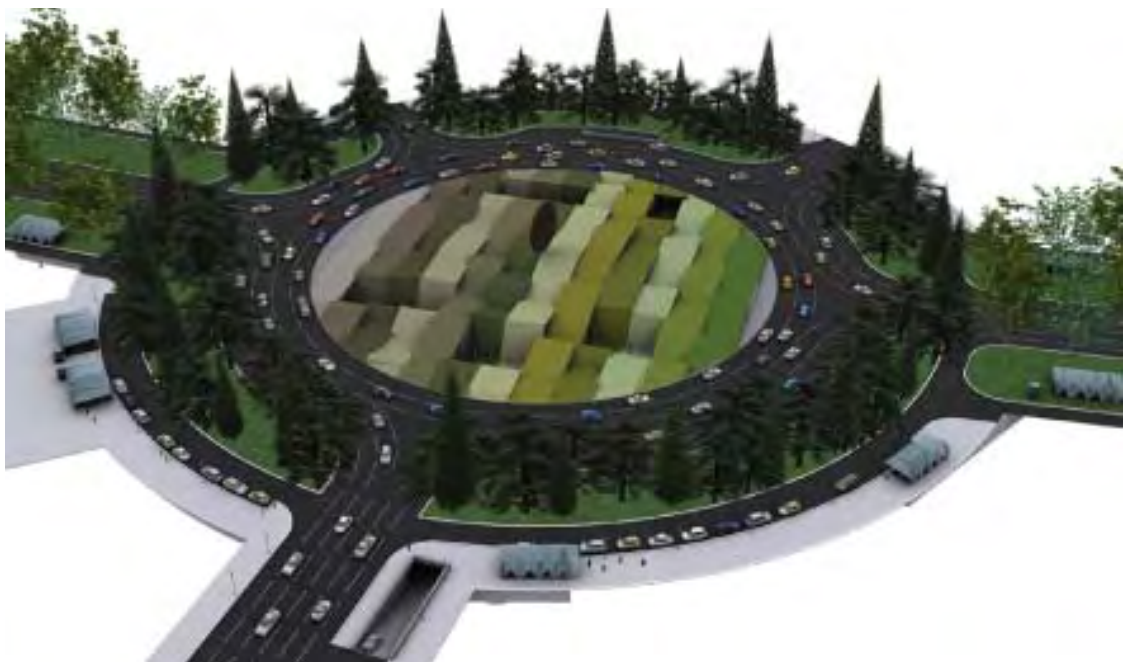
Year: 2007

**Budget:** n/a

Program: Underground parking, drive and walk passage, trainstation, services.







# Georges Pompidou Cultural Center

Location: Paris, France

Architect: Renzo Piano, Richard Rogers

Status: Built

Year: 1971

Budget: 400 million francs.

Program: Exhibition space, theaters, piazza, art stores.

A hundred thousand square meters in the heart of Paris dedicated to the figurative arts, music, industrial design, and literature. The buildings reflects the program laid down in the competition, which indicated that culture should be given a less institutional and traditional setting. With its parody of technology, but above all with its great expanse of public spaces that find their main expression in the plaza, it has become an active urban and cultural entity. Each day Centre Pompidou hosts more than twenty-five thousand people.

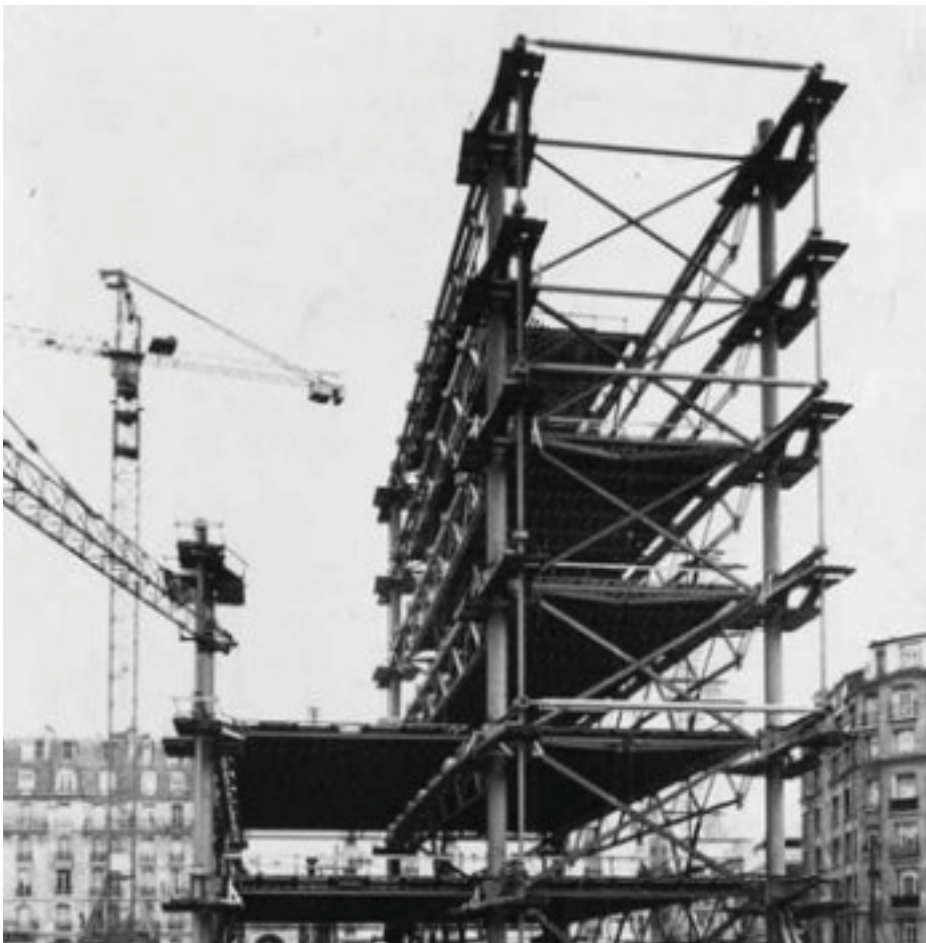
It is a double provocation: a challenge to academicism, but also a parody of the technological imagery of our time. To see it as high-tech is misunderstanding. The Centre Pompidou is a celibate machine, in which the flaunting of brightly colored metal and transparent tubing serves an urban, symbolic, and expressive function, not a technical one.

It is the exact opposite of the technological model of the industrial city. It is a medieval village of twenty-five thousand people, the average population of daily visitors. The difference is that it extends upward: the layout is vertical, rather than horizontal, so the squares are set one on top of the other, and the streets run up and down. Like a medieval village, it is essentially a place for meeting and contact: a place for wandering, for unexpected meetings, for the surprising and the curious, culturally speaking of course.

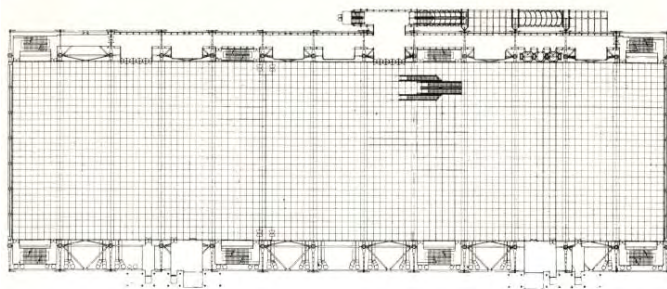
The various means of access (lifts, escalators, horizontal galleries) are hung around the load bearing structure so that the flow of visitors is channeled, totally transparent, placed to dominate the urban panorama and provide a view of the spectacle of the building itself. Each of the five stories is made up of spatial enclosure measuring 50m x 170m with an open plan and which can be equipped for any type of activity, the various structural systems are relatively independent; plant and layouts are separate and can be expanded or diminished as required.



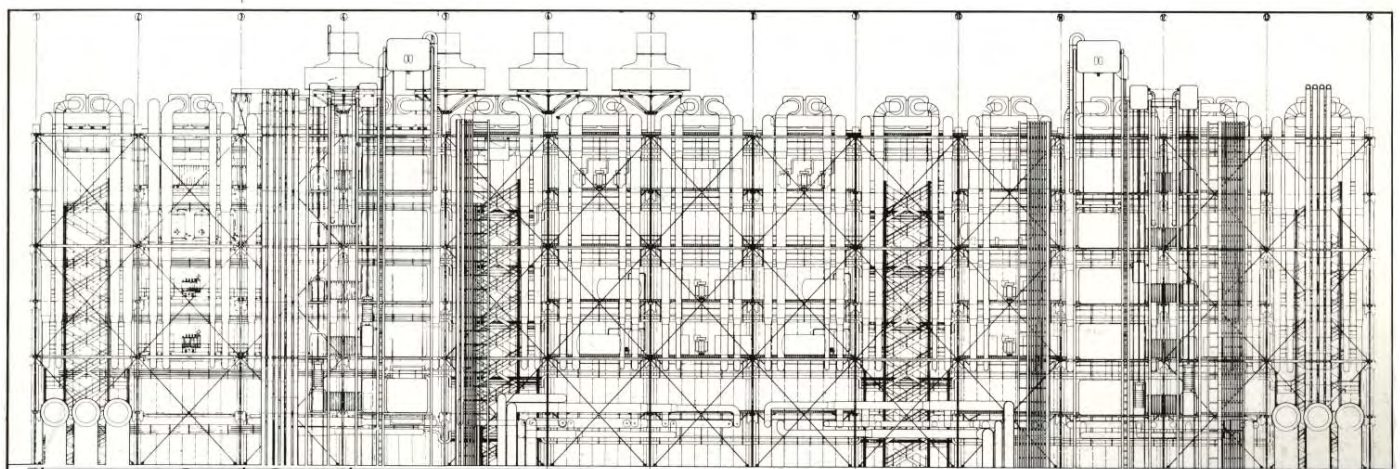






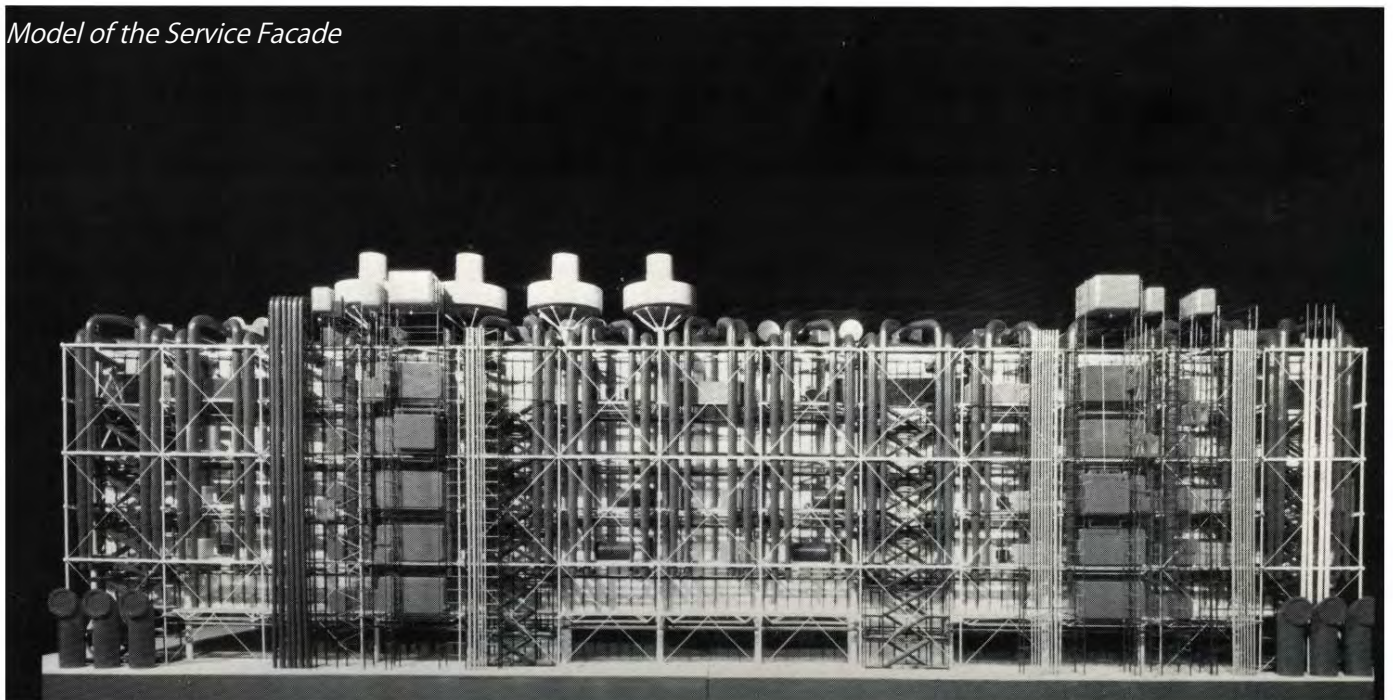


*Typical Floor Plan*

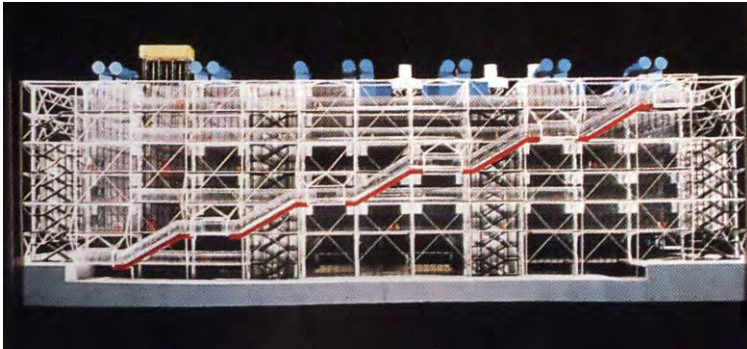


*Elevation on Rue du Renard*

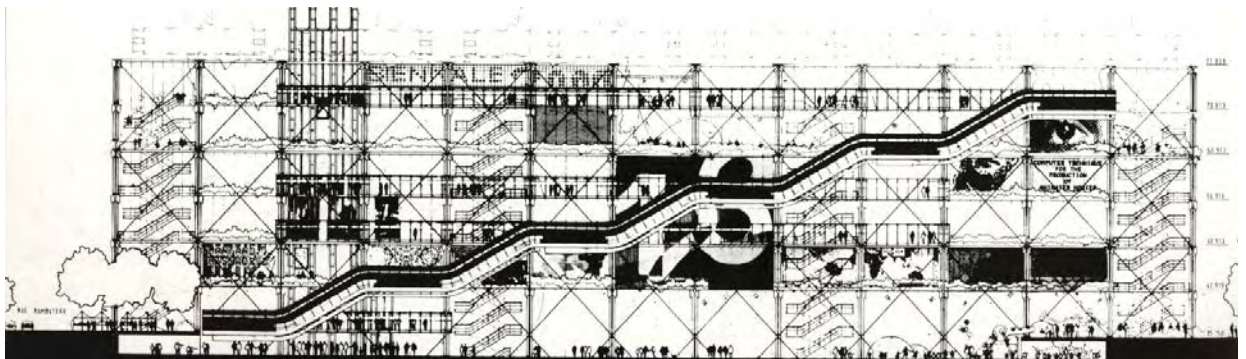
*Model of the Service Facade*





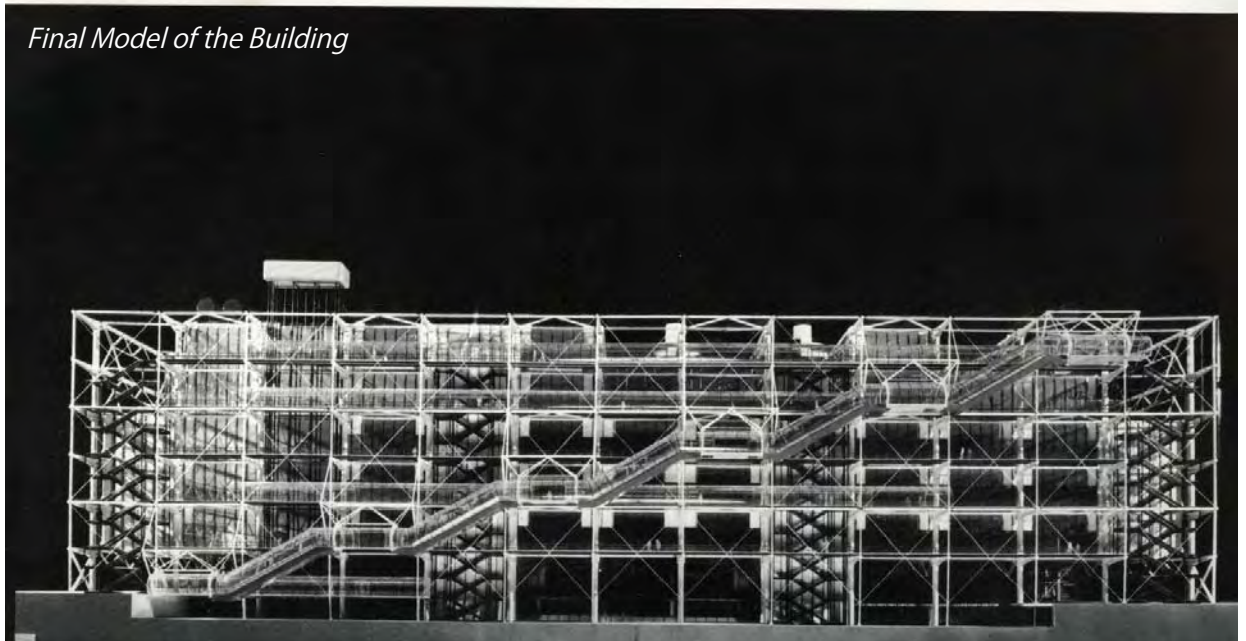


*Final Competition Model*



*Elevation of the Building in its Final Version*

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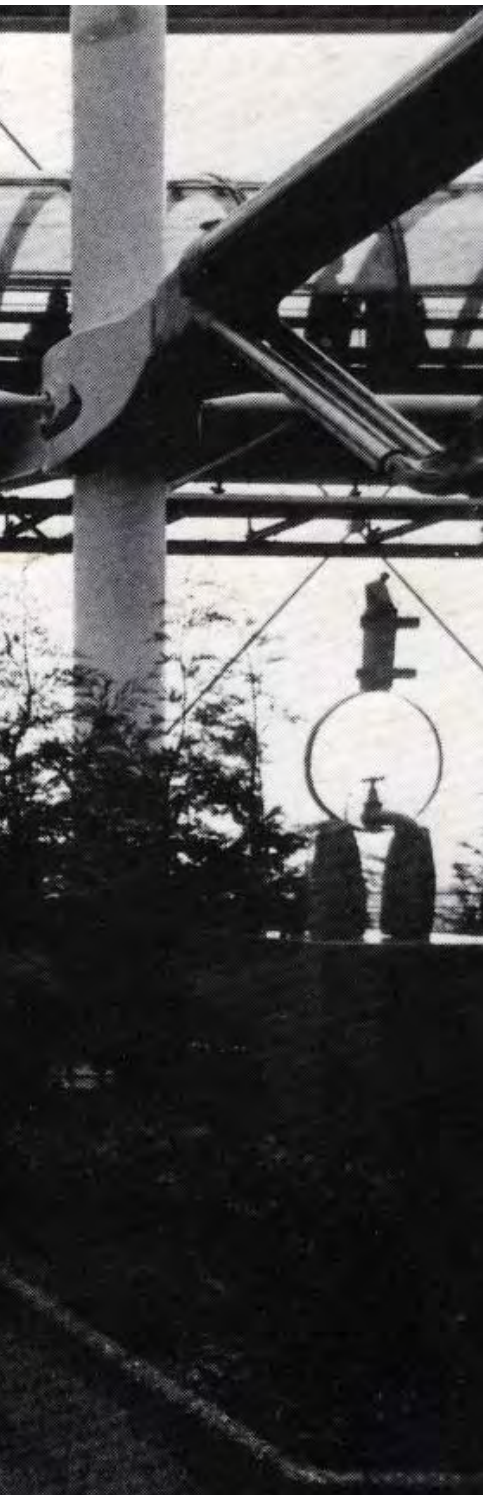
*Final Model of the Building*





*Cross Section of the Building*





*Structural detail of the node between horizontal and vertical booms and diagonal braces.*



*One of the terraces facing west.*

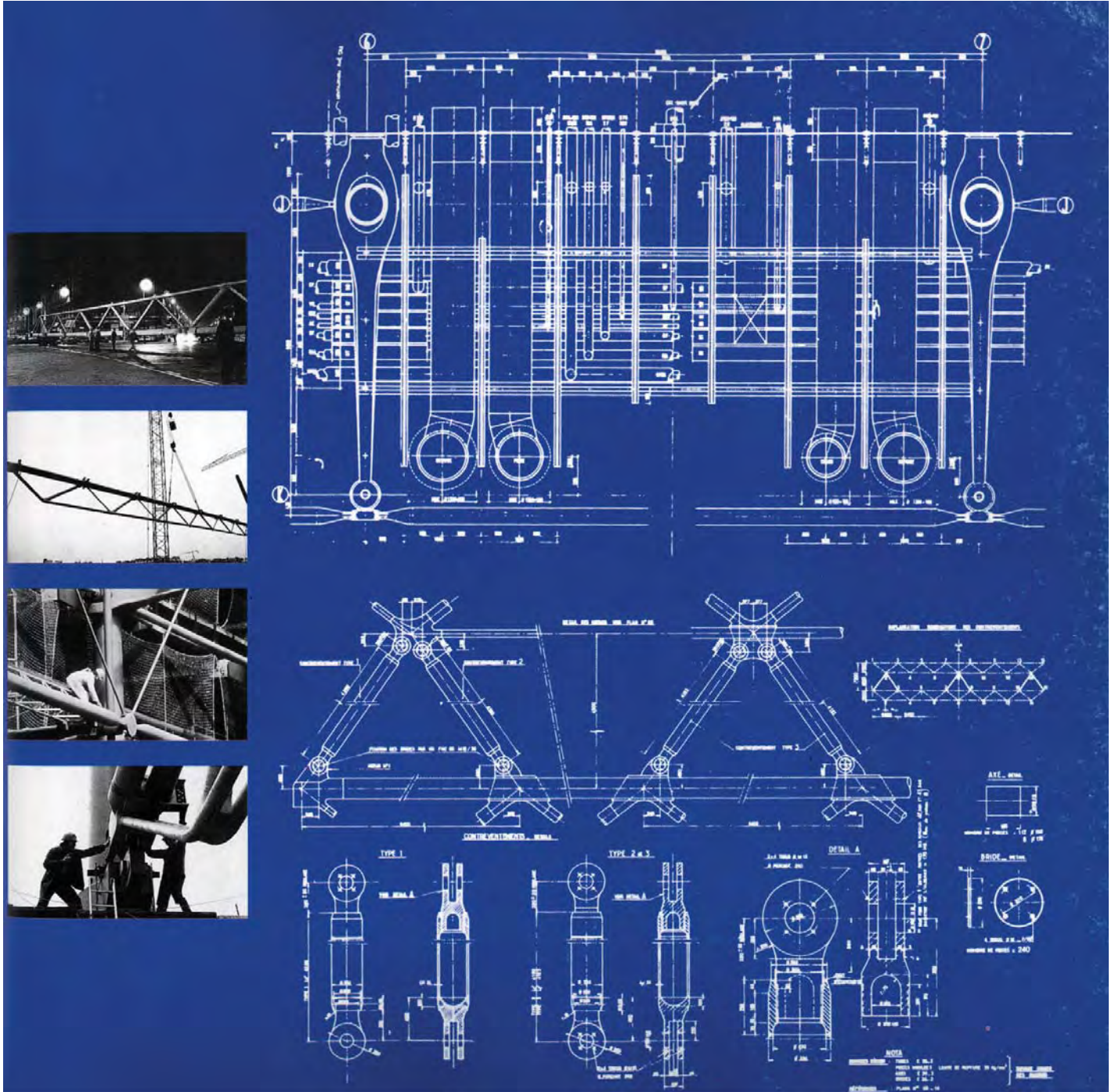




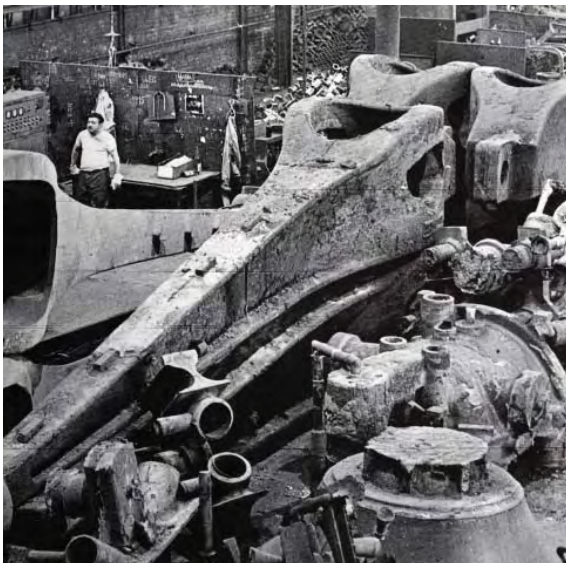
*The escalators on the west facade viewed from the inside and from the outside. The escalators provide access to the various departments. The visitor, rising at a slow pace, is gradually presented with a view of the quarter and, finally, the city.*







*Transport and installation of a prefabricated girder; assembly of the structure, without the use of scaffolding; placing the main girder on the end of the building.*





# Bucuresti 2000 Masterplan

Location: Bucharest, Romania

Architect: Meinhard von Gerkan/Joachim Zeiss: Hamburg, Germany

Status: Competition Winner

Year: 1997

Budget: n/a

Program: Residential, Business, Institutional, Mixed Use, etc. (Master Planning)



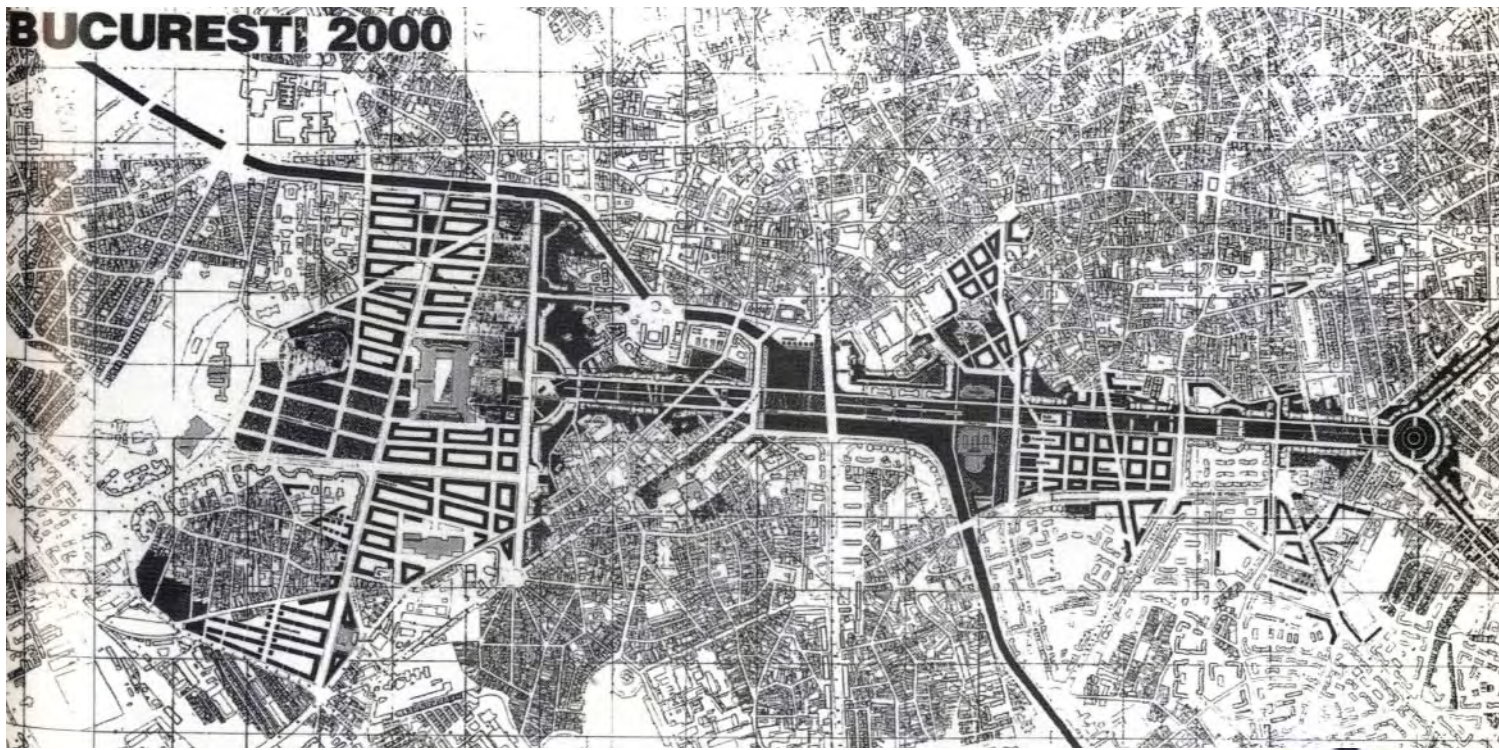
*Plan of the House of Parliament zone.*

Above all else, this was a competition for ideas, not a final solution. Yet this too makes an intriguing parallel to Ceausescu's advisory role to the architect-in-chief of the House. In this case, the winning team becomes the advisor to the city.

The winning project, a design which perhaps more than the others engaged in the architectural act of emulative repossession, or the attachment of new meaning to a form which imitates the old, was that submitted by the team headed by Meinhard von Gerkan.<sup>3</sup>



# BUCURESTI 2000



*City Plan with Intervention.*



*Axonometric of Intervention.*



*Perspectival View of the Model.*



*Plan View of the Model.*





*View to the South with the House and the high rises of the intervention.*



We can see how this becomes an act of emulative repossession in the model by conceptualizing the existing House as a complex of cubic volumes of varying heights, which are then encircled by other slabs indicating the proposed new buildings and creating a stepping stone from the new to the old.

As the new buildings assume the power of emulation, the old building is subsumed by the new and the power of the old is diffused while the power of the new is magnified. The old meaning and the old building have not been obliterated; the meaning has been reattached, reasserted, and reconfigured-it has, in short, been reified in the language of post-socialist modernism.



*Other prize winning entries.*



To describe this in the more metaphorical terms of the cultural mythology, the old building appears to have been simultaneously dismembered and left intact, a design tactic which uncannily replicates Ceausescu's strategy of incorporating suggestive but incomplete allusions to Romanian architecture.

In its own way, this appeared to be a restatement of the issue of origins, in this case acknowledging the need for a synchronic (arising simultaneously in the East and West) view of origins, as opposed to the protochronic (arising first in Romania) view of Ceausescu.



*Above & Below: Other prize winning entries.*



# Urban Fade

Location: Helsinki, Finland

Architect: Visiondivision

Status: Competition Entry

Year: 2009

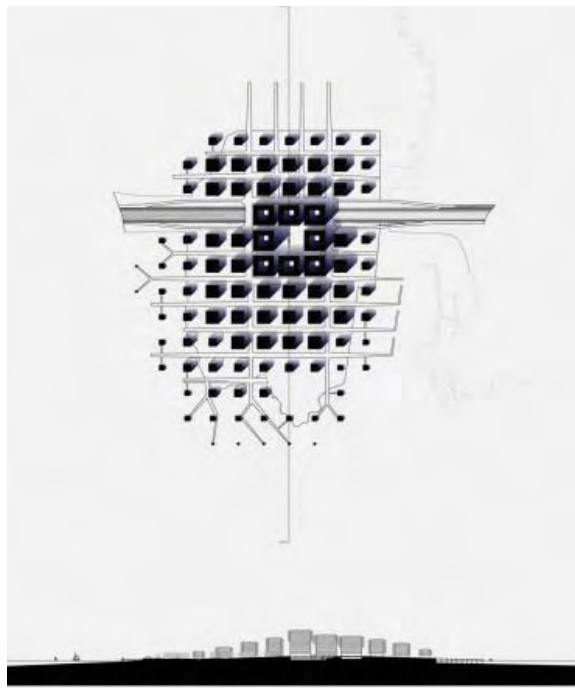
Budget: n/a

Program: Residential, Business, Institutional, Mixed Use, etc. (Master Planning)

Source: *archdaily.com*



The competition asked participants to organize a master plan for the island that would provide the framework for further planning. Visiondivision's proposal, Urban Fade, is comprised of a highly efficient city grid that allows users the option of moving around the district to interact with the different areas.





"In Koivusaari, you will experience a great urban diversity on a relatively small island; a dense city core that gradually fades to smaller premises and that eventually becomes archipelago. The island becomes a distillation of the best qualities that each one of the urban typologies has to offer," explained the architects.



The proposal divides the city into separate areas: a city center, medium sized town, small town and then the archipelago. These areas create a densely programmed layout where "the distances between the new districts is kept short ...to get a lively city area. This is good for both the environment and from an economical point of view."



# Duoc Corporate Building

Location: Santiago, Chile

Architect: Sabbagh Arquitectos Status: Competition Winner

Year: 1997

Budget: n/a

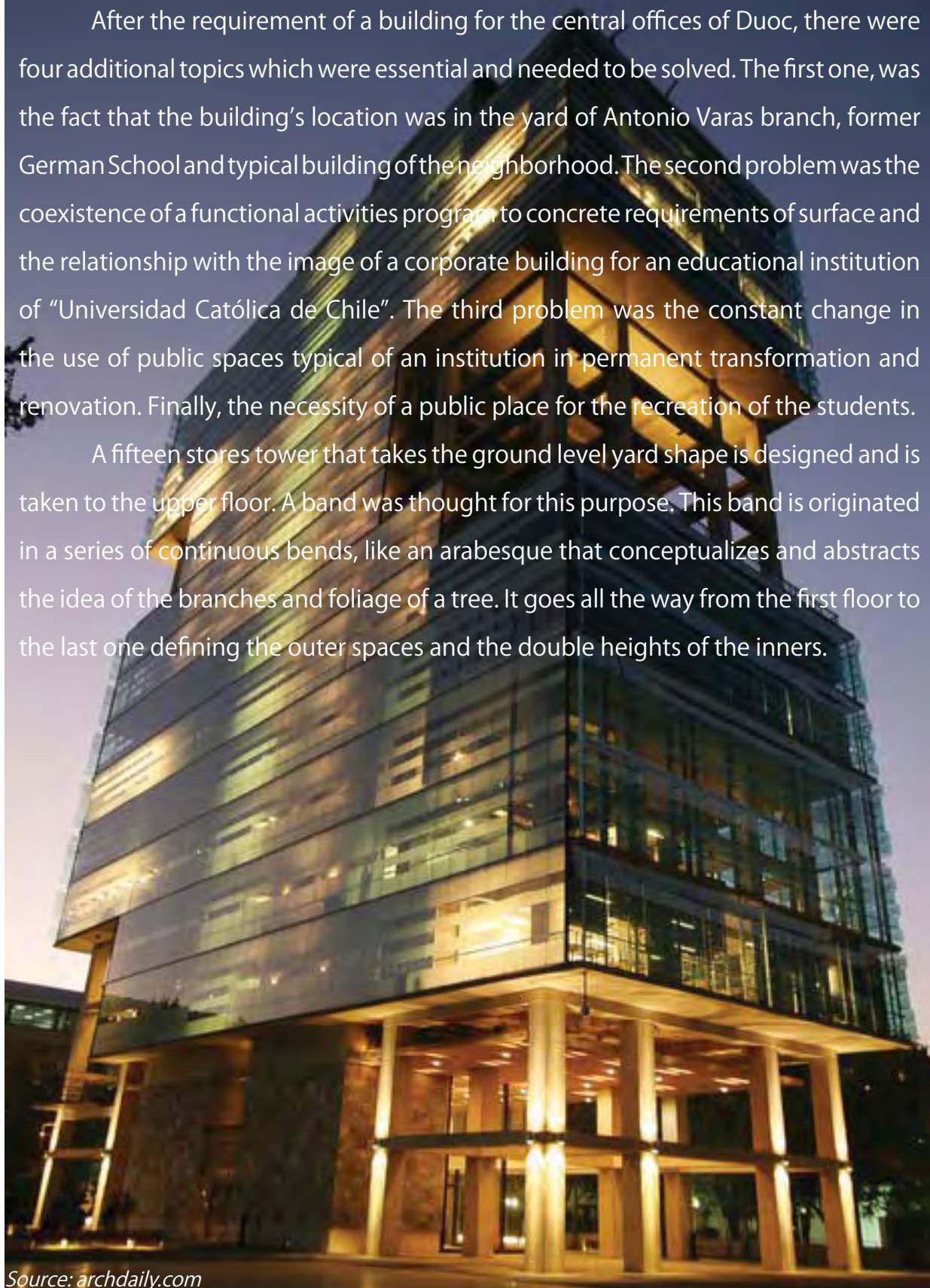
Program: Business, Educational

Site Area: 9,954 sqm

Constructed: 12,000 sqm

After the requirement of a building for the central offices of Duoc, there were four additional topics which were essential and needed to be solved. The first one, was the fact that the building's location was in the yard of Antonio Varas branch, former German School and typical building of the neighborhood. The second problem was the coexistence of a functional activities program to concrete requirements of surface and the relationship with the image of a corporate building for an educational institution of "Universidad Católica de Chile". The third problem was the constant change in the use of public spaces typical of an institution in permanent transformation and renovation. Finally, the necessity of a public place for the recreation of the students.

A fifteen stores tower that takes the ground level yard shape is designed and is taken to the upper floor. A band was thought for this purpose. This band is originated in a series of continuous bends, like an arabesque that conceptualizes and abstracts the idea of the branches and foliage of a tree. It goes all the way from the first floor to the last one defining the outer spaces and the double heights of the inners.





The empty spaces of the building are yards that are used as an extension of the educational and public areas and at the same time as a space to be related with the landscape.

This continued band is intercepted by a grid, an octagonal weft of pillars and girder which are the frame and building's support which is exposed and are part of the expressive definition of the project. Because of the later development of the building's structure, the explicit evidence of the band is lost. Keeping it's trade on the disposition of the fullness and emptiness of the current volumetry.







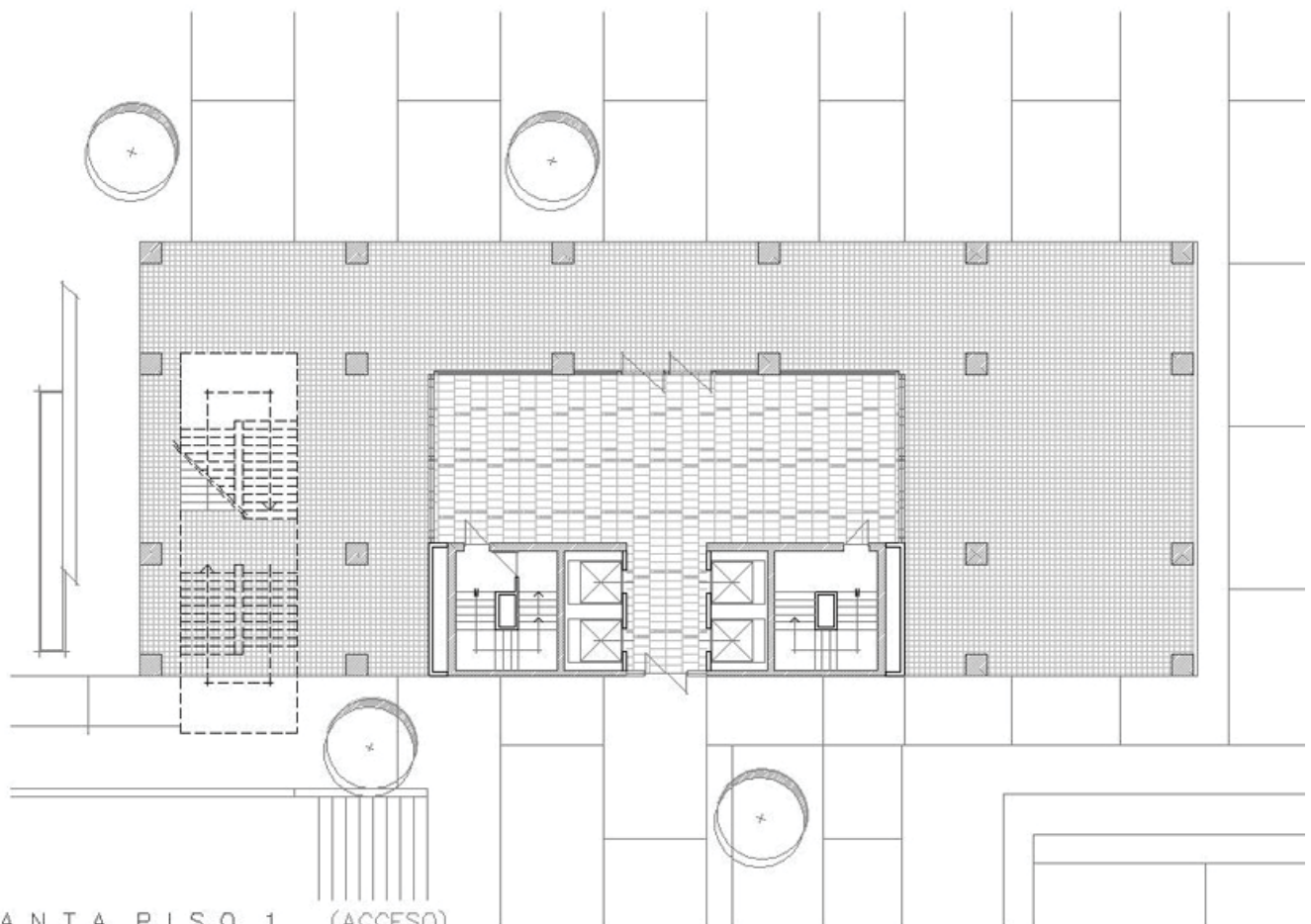
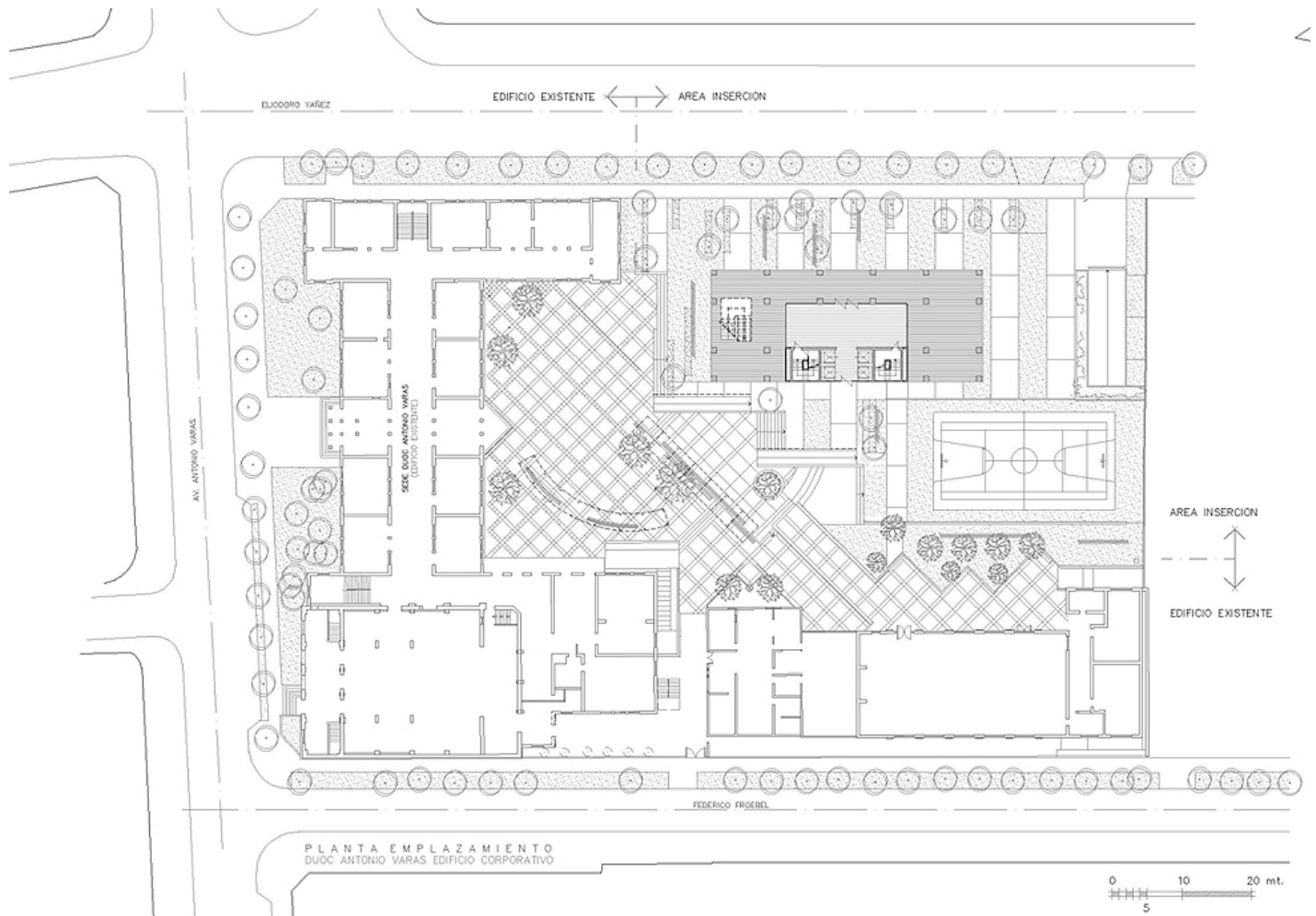


The purpose of the empty spaces of the building is to allow the people to climb the urban weft in order to reach places to have a perfect view of the city. At the same time, this allows the continued sight through the openings.

The building's plants look for their best efficiency organized like a regular structural weft of pillars which disposition facilitates the program's resolution. The vertical core of the elevators, steps and humid zones are displaced from the axle to the south front of the building encompassing the circulations and services areas. This disposition is reflected in the volume and fronts. The first and second floors are clear spaces that allow the continuity of the down yard of the building.

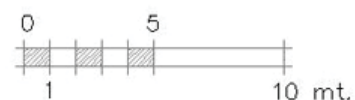
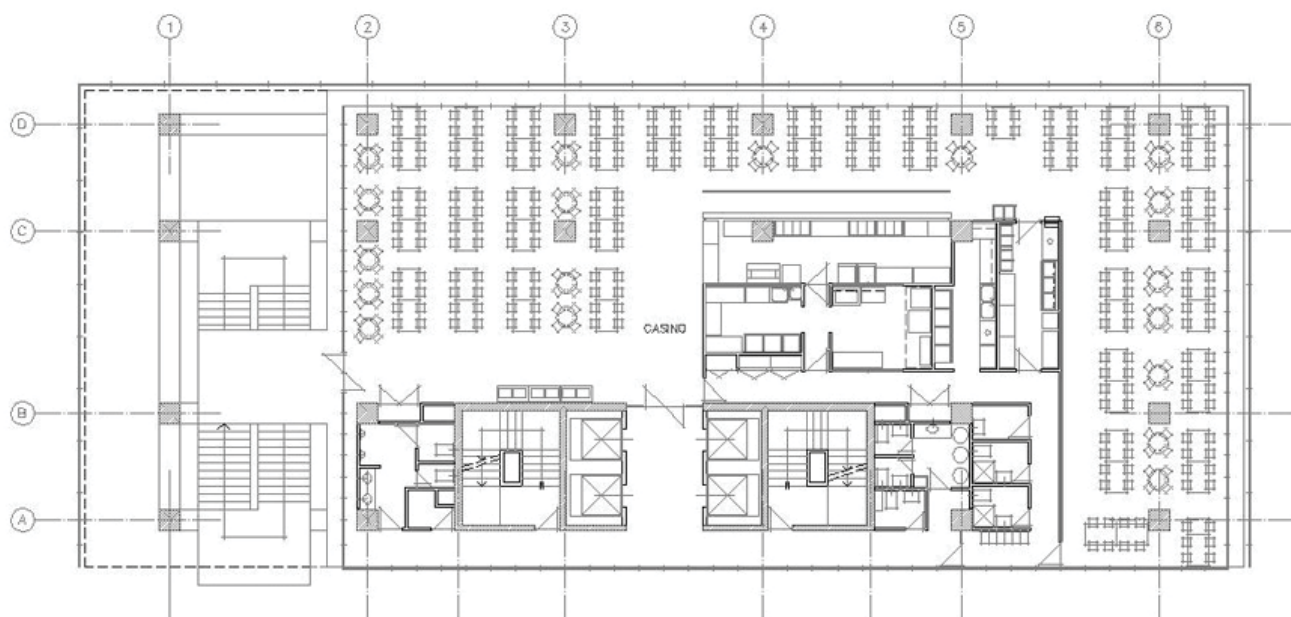
The closing of the front is conformed by a glass coat. A first shutting, has windows in all the establishments to incorporate natural ventilation. And a second shutting, like a screen made of reflective and pigmented glass, to control the radiation and the thermal transmission. These shuttings are joined like a knitting so that its reflection gives a volumetric texture to the vertical plane of the building's front. This texture allows the educational building to look alive and be connected to the city.



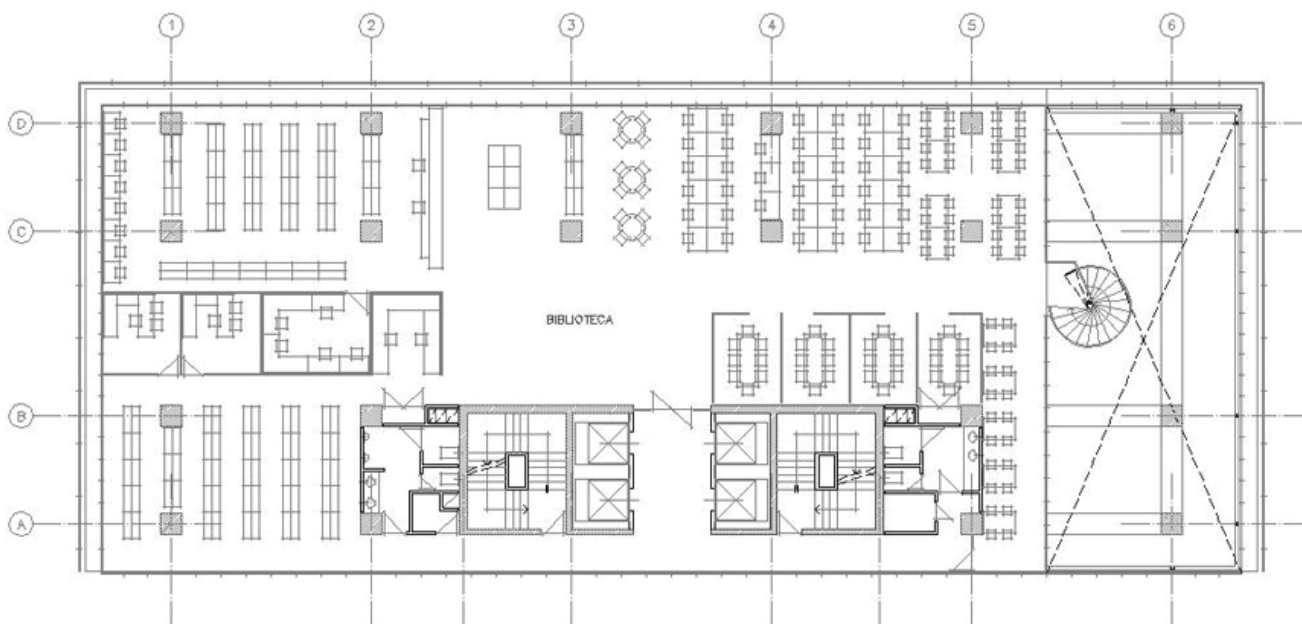


PLANTA PISO 1 (ACCESO)  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS

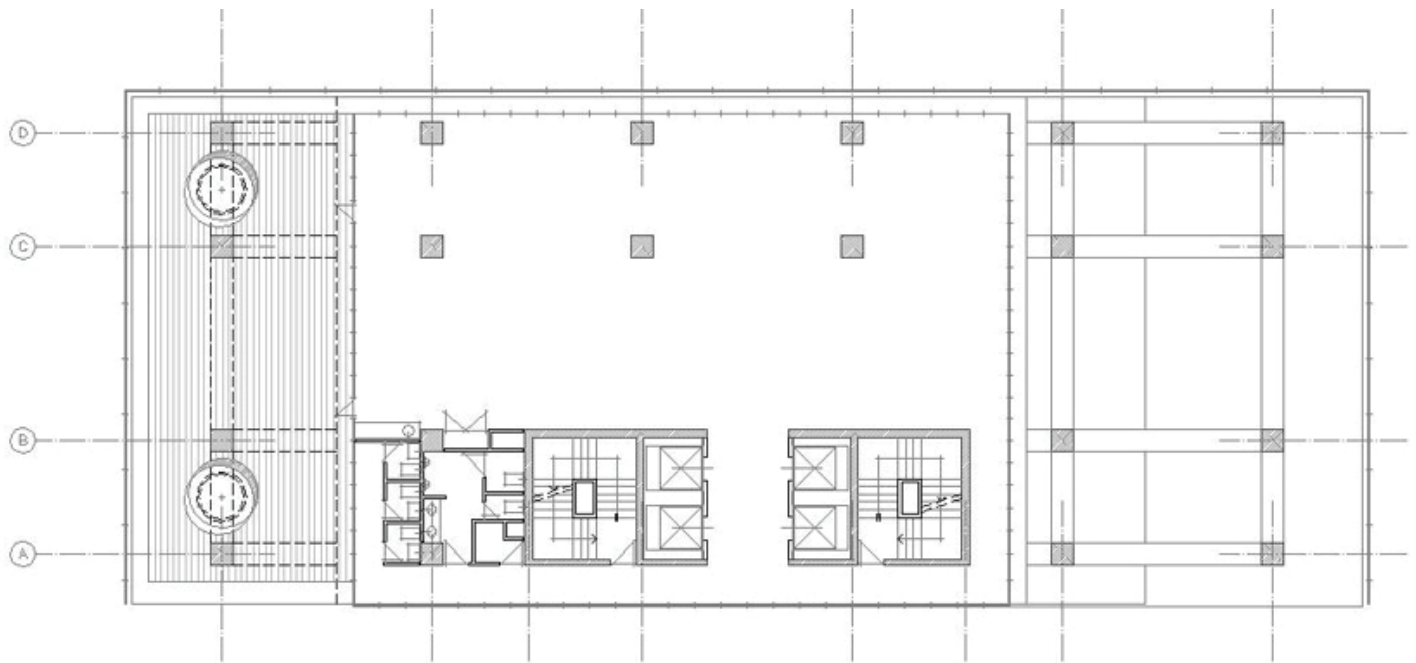




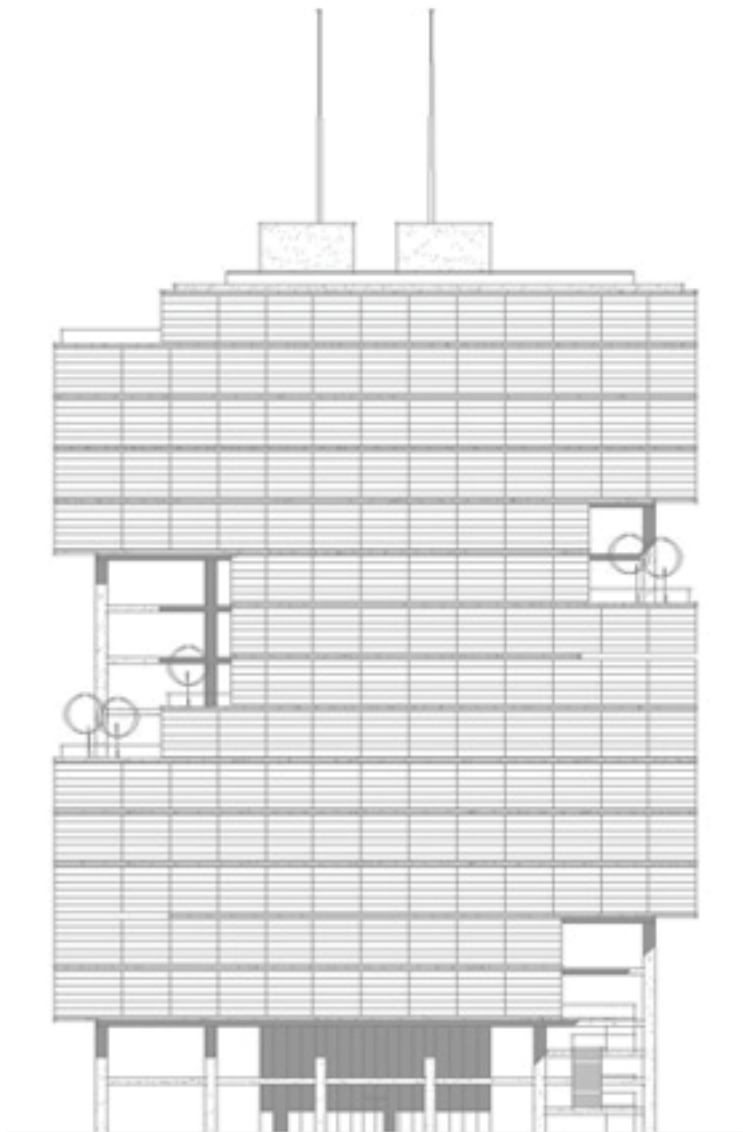
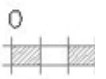
PLANTA PISO 2 (CASINO)  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS



PLANTA PISO 4 (BIBLIOTECA)  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS



PLANTA PISO 10 (TERRAZA PONIENTE/APERTURA ORIENTE)  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS

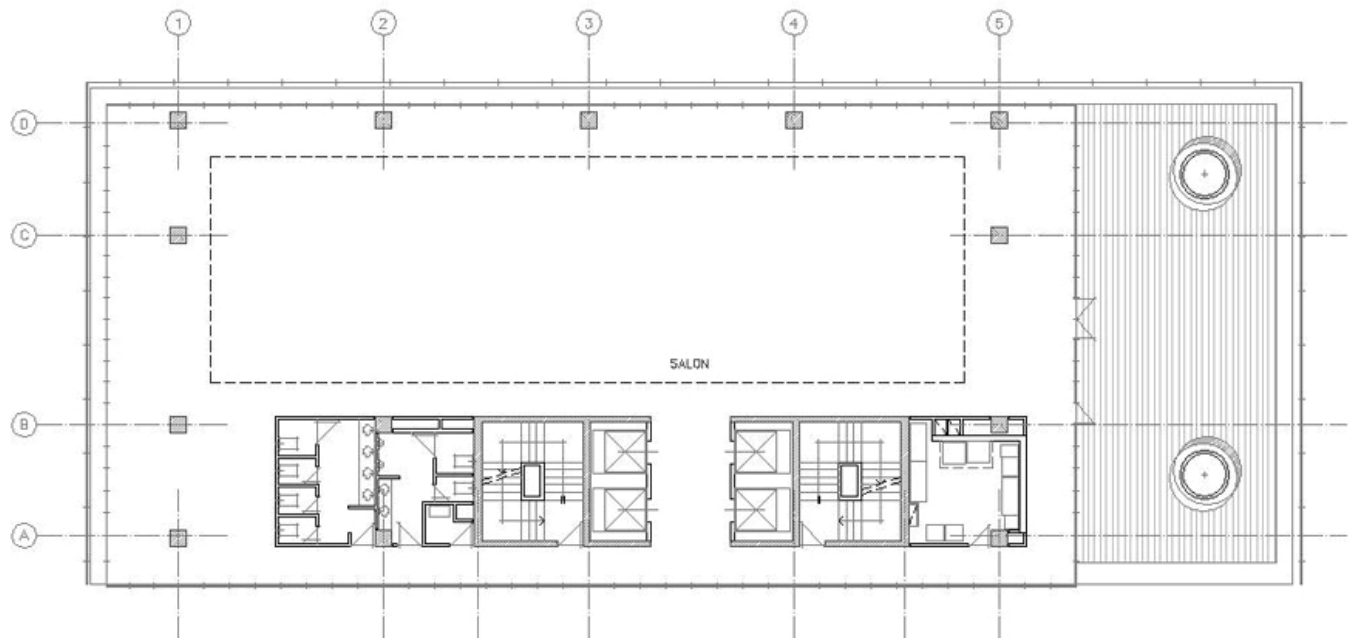


ELEVACION NORTE  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS

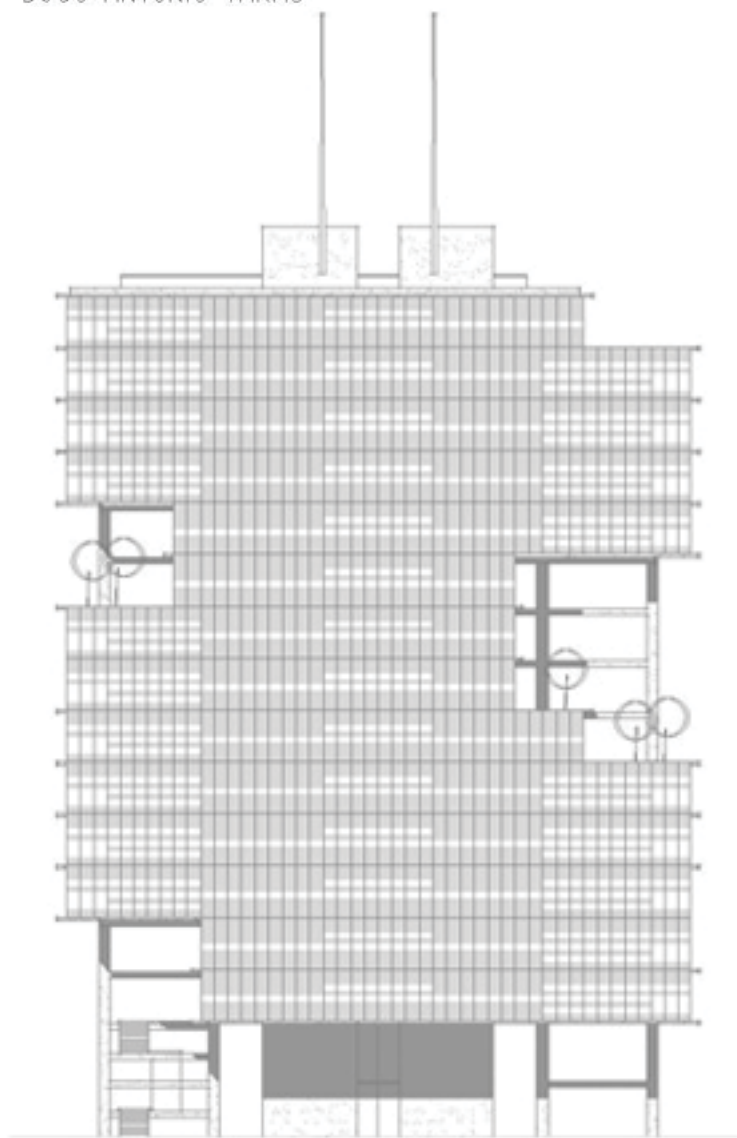
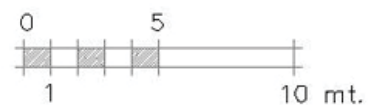


ELEVACION ORIENTE  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS

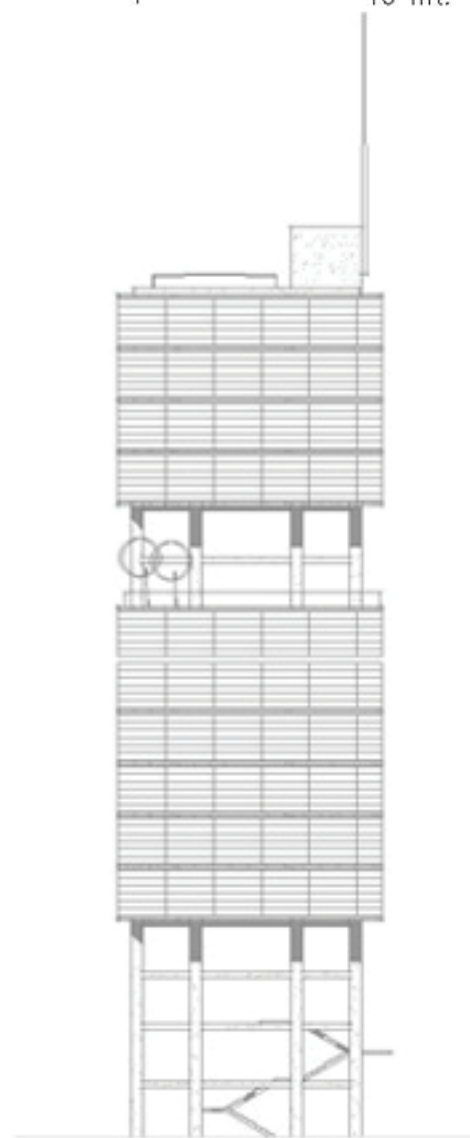




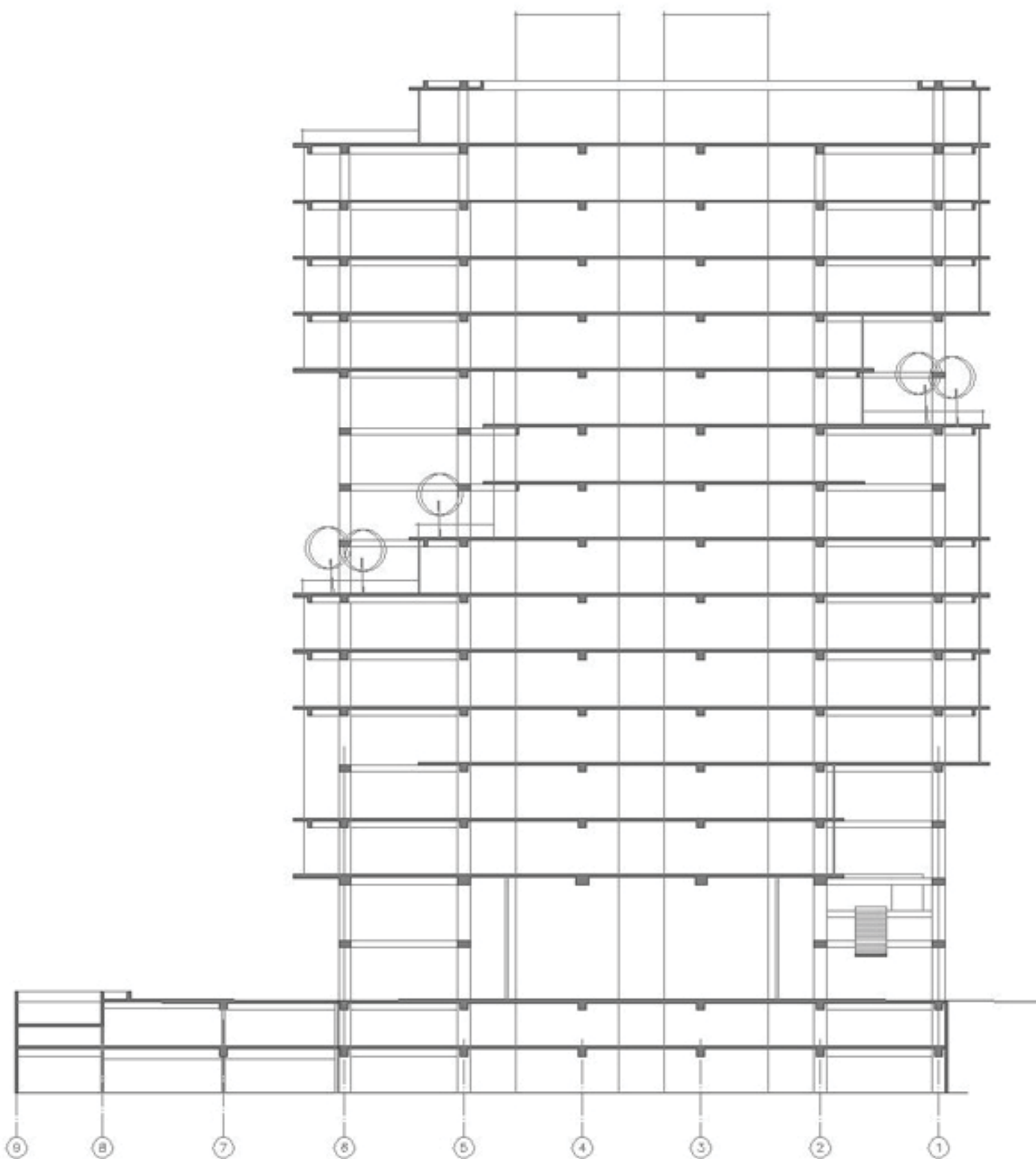
PLANTA PISO 15 (SALON)  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS



ELEVACION SUR  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS



ELEVACION PONIENTE  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS



CORTE A - A  
DUOC ANTONIO VARAS





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# Contradiction & Duality Within The City: The House of Arts & Culture

Andrei Sdrula

Masters of Architecture

Roger Williams University

School of Architecture, Art & Historic Preservation

December 2009



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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters of Architecture degree at Roger Williams University, School of Architecture, Art & Historic Preservation. December 2009.

Andrei Sdrula: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
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