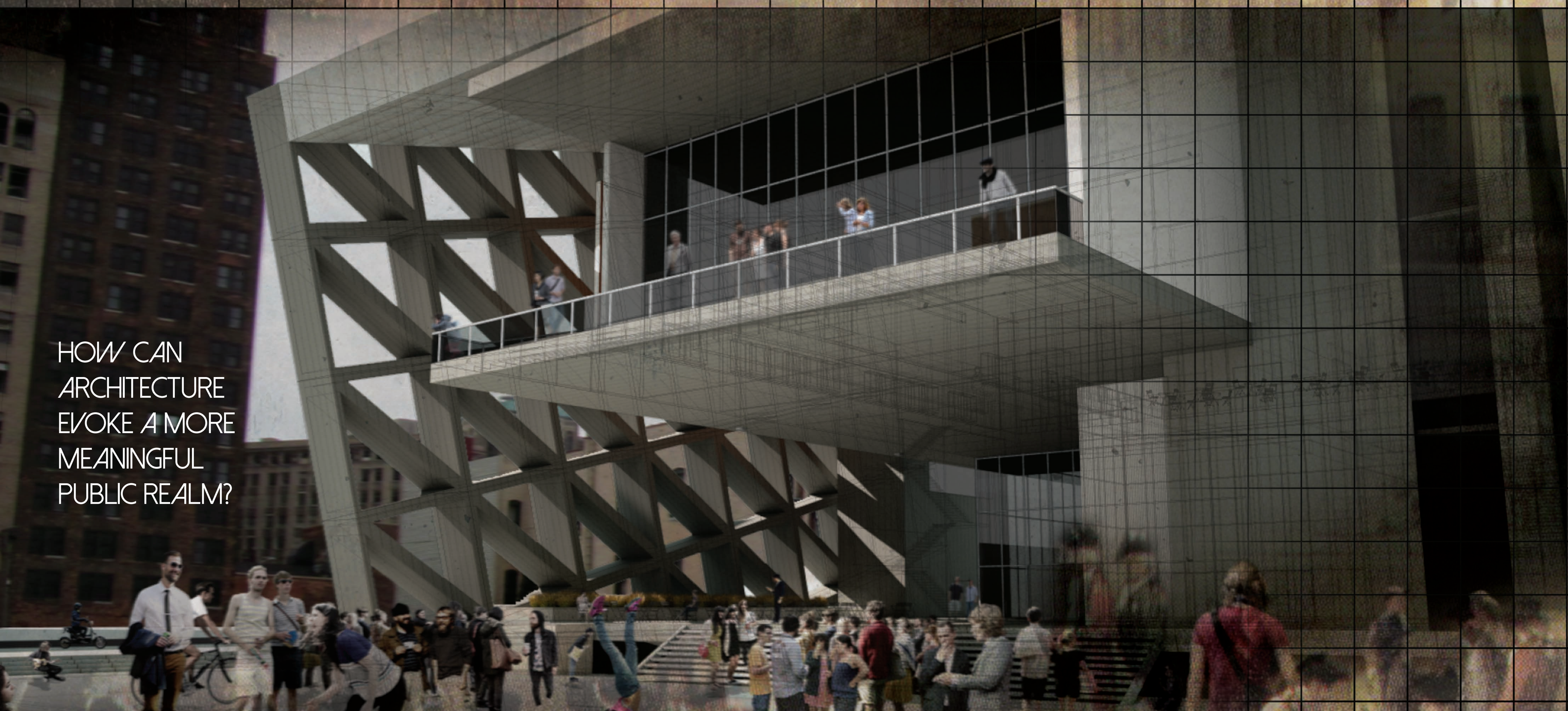
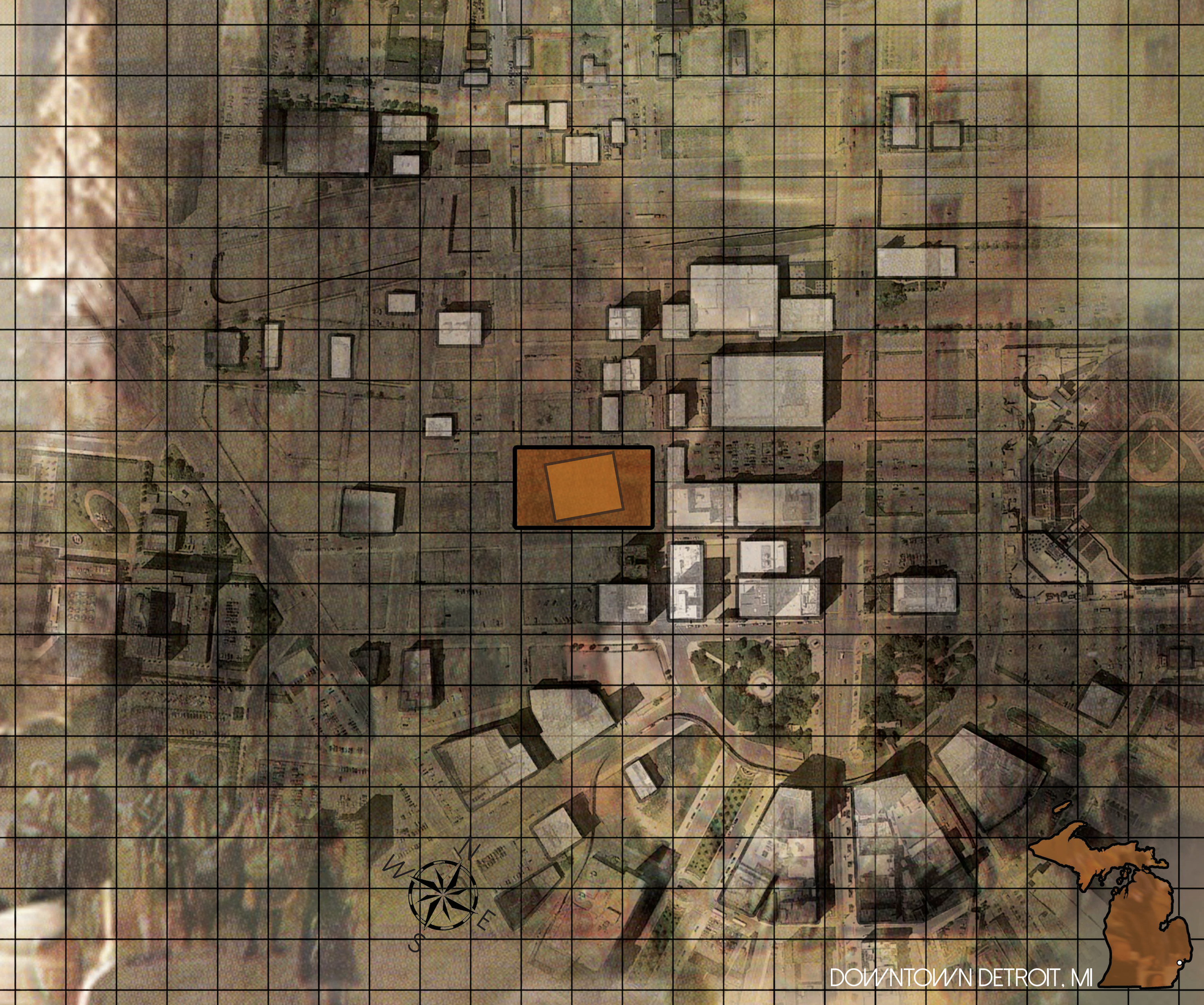
THEATRIC DEPTH:
THE THEATRE AND THE PUBLIC



HOW CAN ARCHITECTURE EVOKE A MORE MEANINGFUL PUBLIC REALM?

As the city expands it becomes harder for the public to interact with one another. Sprawl particularly within Detroit divides the community. My site is located in the downtown of Detroit on the crossing of West Elizabeth and Park Avenue. Large plots of empty land only serve to accommodate parking for the nearby Tigers stadium. My architecture will offset the city grid by allowing a center for the community to engage theatre and public space. This architecture will serve as a place to see and be seen, a way of understanding ourselves within the larger context of society.

SITE MAP



DOWNTOWN DETROIT, MI

THEATRE FRAMING THE PUBLIC

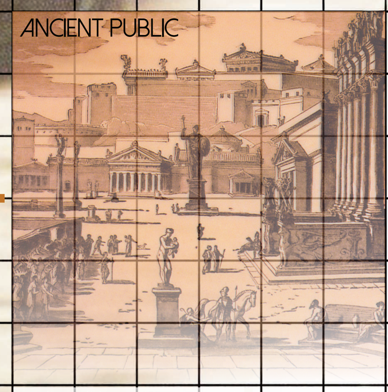
The outdoor raised theatre puts the public on display. The public becomes the actor among the outdoor space.

THEATRIC PERFORMANCE - THESIS ARTEFACT

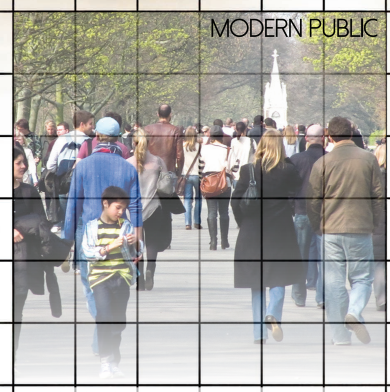
My artefact is a critique on our current public life. Two performers place boxes onto their heads, isolating themselves from the audience while standing in front of the projector. The projector casts faces onto the masks, reflecting a distorted personality separate from their own. The images surrounding the performers illustrate an illusion of public space set onto a minimalist grid, not unlike the grid of the city. Finally the performers sit among the audience, calling attention to the depth that they cross and the cathartic event of the theatre.

GREEK MASKS

ANCIENT THEATRE



ANCIENT PUBLIC



MODERN PUBLIC

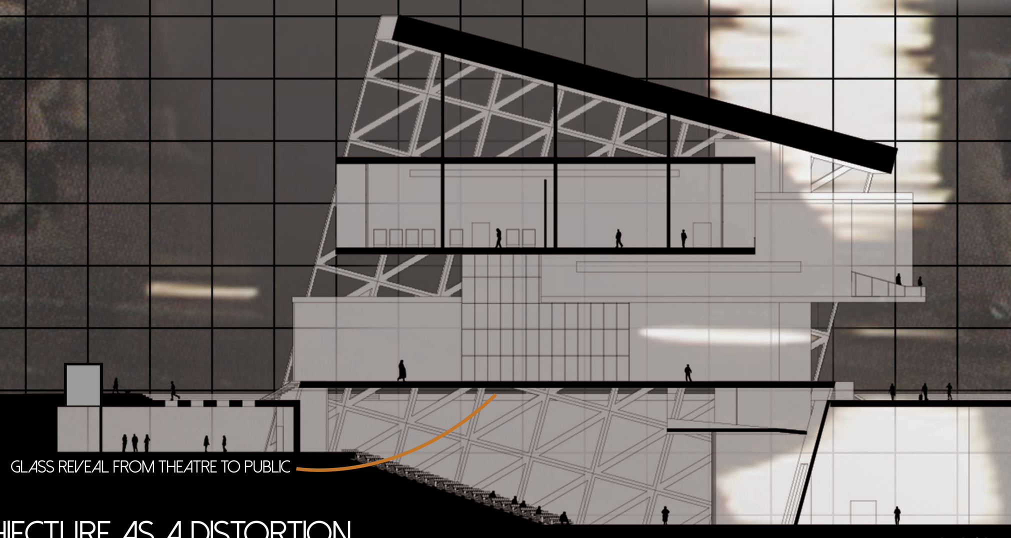
Richard Sennett describes "Theater Mundi" as the idea of the world or public as a stage. Plato viewed this as humans being staged by the gods. By understanding the relationships between the theatre and public we can begin to question ourselves in terms of the "Other." Public space like the theatre opens up a space of interpretation between the actor and the spectator. The act of theater creates a space that allows us to reconnect through a symbolic distance. It's similarities to public space allow us to partake in the moment, to linger in its festive qualities and allow our senses to be molded by the performance. The experiential qualities of theater can transform our understanding of ourselves in relation to society.

Traditionally architecture has always been for the public, it was a space in which we could acknowledge and engage one another. Alberto Pérez-Gómez states that more recently cities have turned into mere circulation deviating from its historic root as ritualistic space. As Modern society has advanced, a new form of public space has emerged via social networking. But isn't it valuable to interact within a physical depth too? Through the theatre and public space can we find the missing city center that we lack? This architecture will provide a center for the community to engage the public and theatre.

The Theater will be primarily used to serve as a performing arts center for the public. The program consists of a Theater, public space and a museum of theatre. The architecture will serve as an event to bring citizens to the downtown area of Detroit.

VIEW FROM THEATER LOBBY

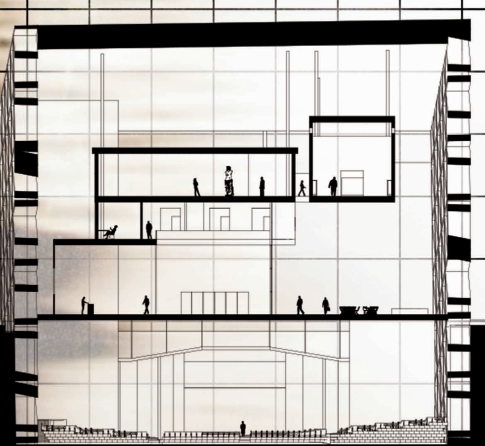
Grid-like openings from the upper public space cast light and shadow into the theatre lobby as people move through the outdoor public space. Small glass reveals on the doors allow waiting guests to peer into the theater. Doors pivot open to reveal the theater, similarly to a mask being removed.



GLASS REVEAL FROM THEATRE TO PUBLIC

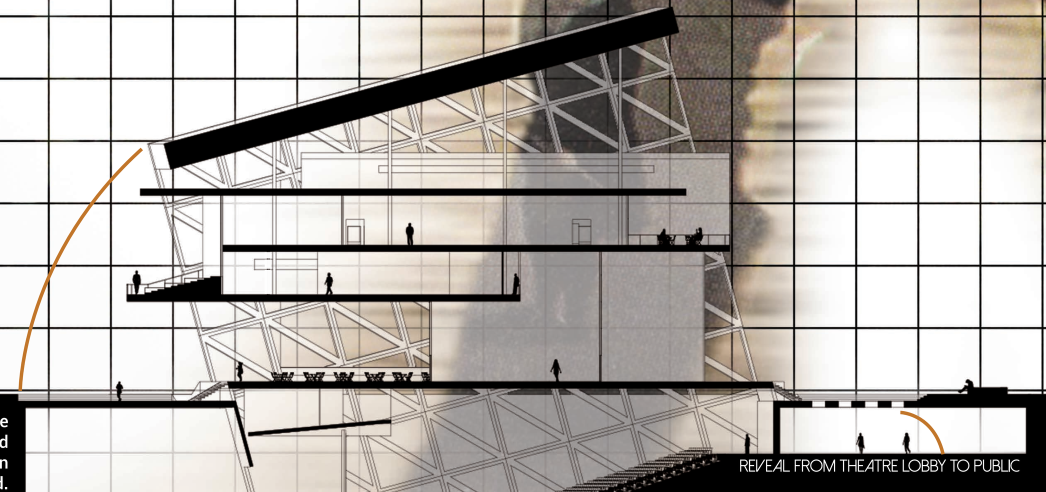
SECTION A

Glass reveals from the theatre and the outdoor raised theatre make evident our relationship to the public, private and theatre.



SECTION B

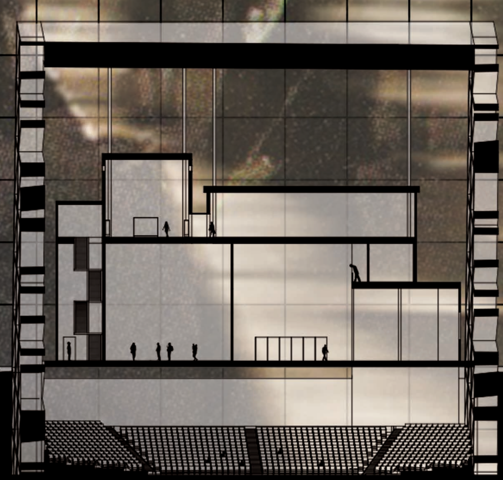
Making a connection between the recessed ground and the tilted structure we recognize our position within the grid.



REVEAL FROM THEATRE LOBBY TO PUBLIC

SECTION C

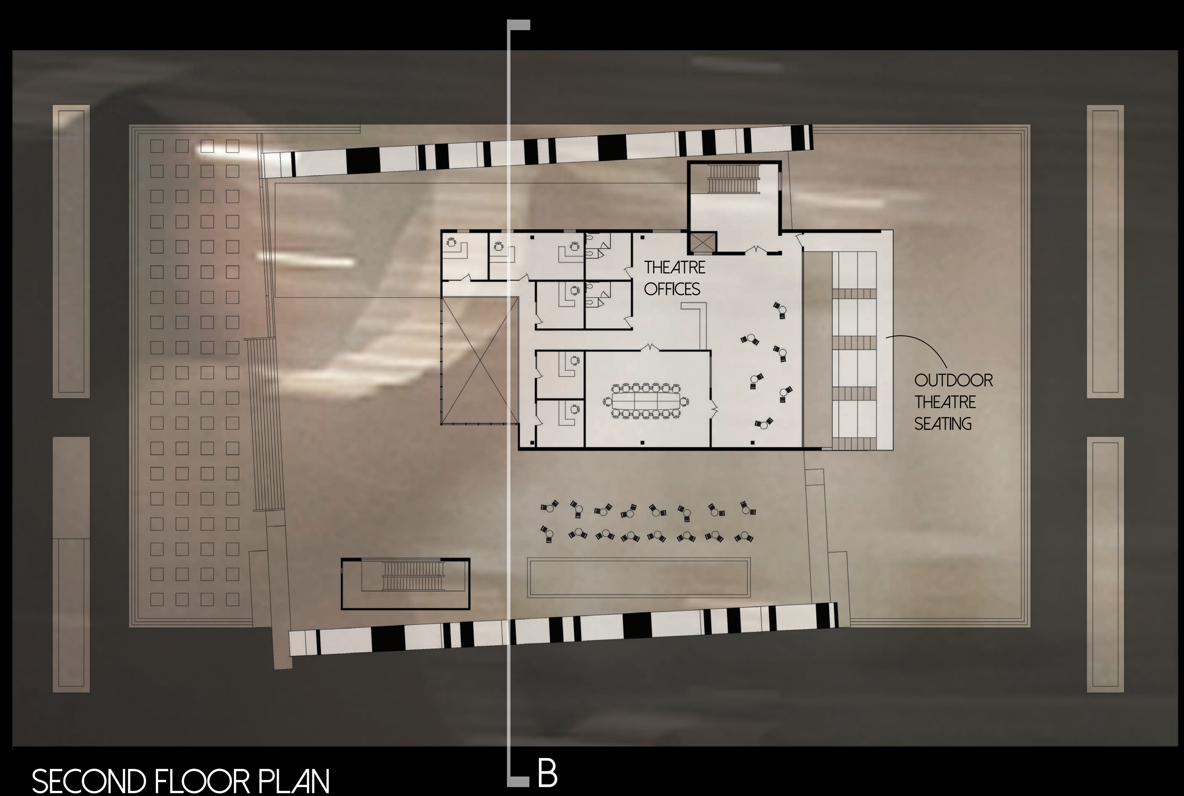
Tilted structure aims to show a distortion within the city grid. Interior structure works with the grid; this contrast calls our attention to the distortion. Within theatre and public space distortion also occurs. As Hans-Georg Gadamer describes Festive time is a distortion of time and space as we lose track of ourselves and linger in the moment.



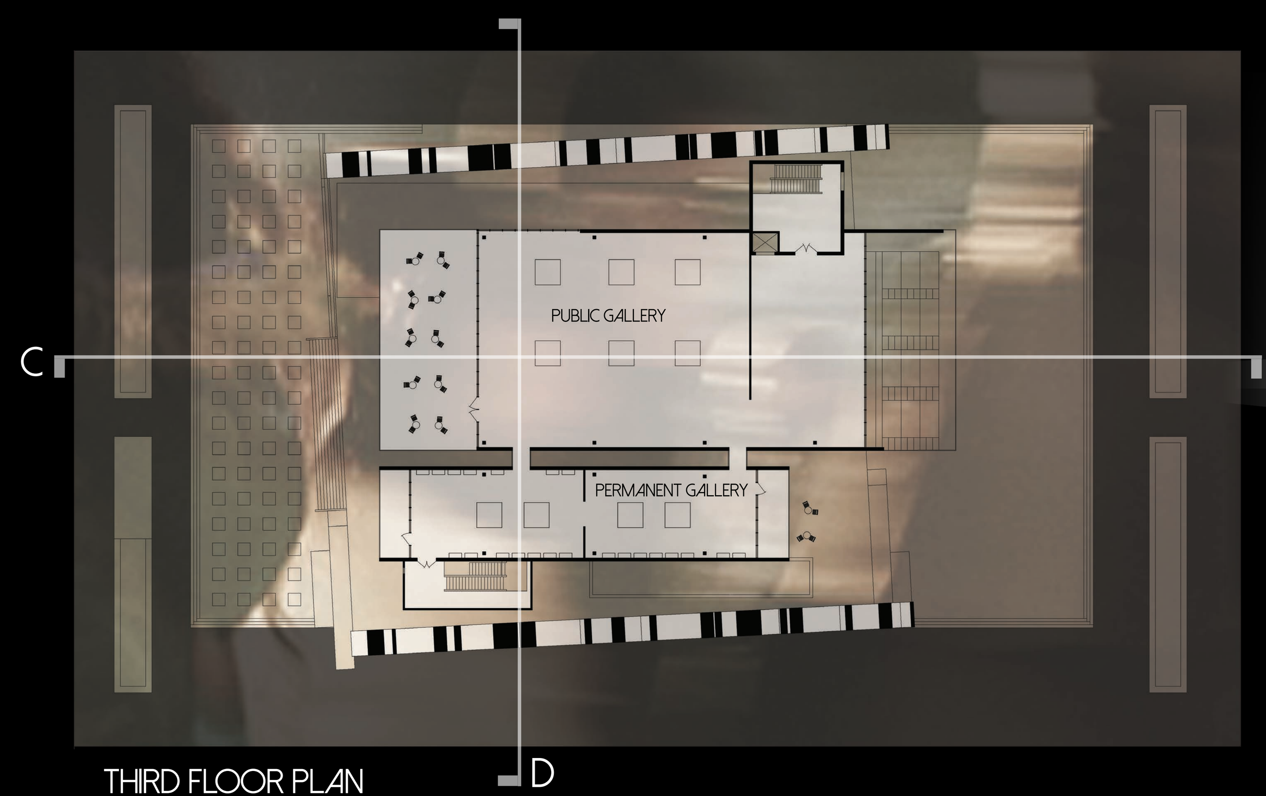
SECTION D

ARCHIECTURE AS A DISTORTION WITHIN THE CITY GRID

FIRST FLOOR PLAN

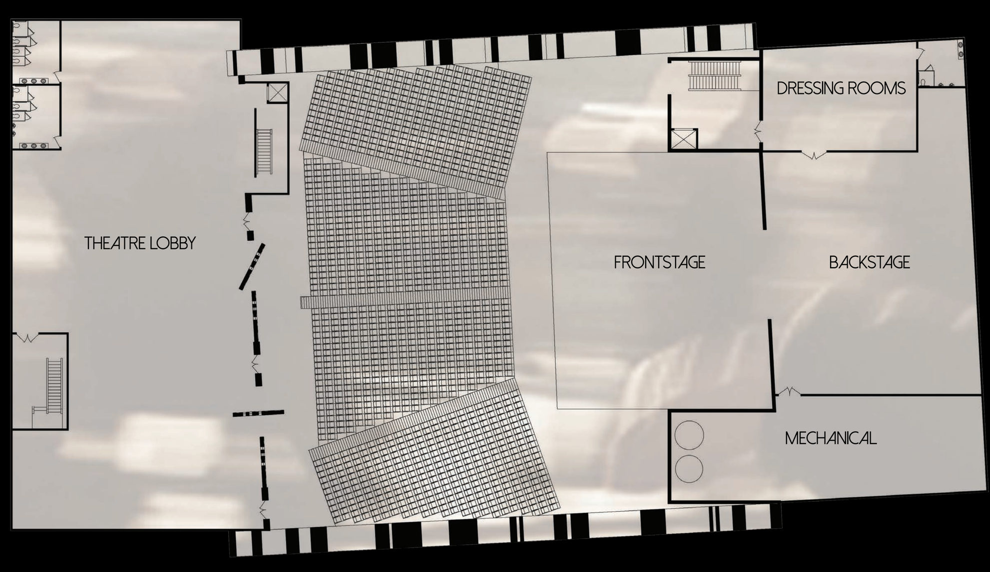


SECOND FLOOR PLAN

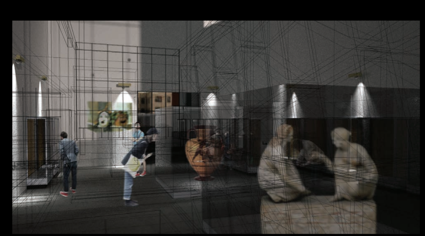


THIRD FLOOR PLAN

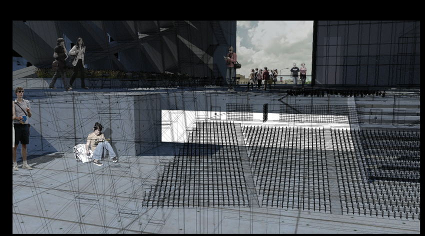
SECTION B



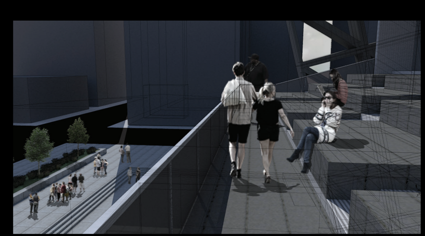
LOWER LEVEL PLAN



PERMANENT GALLERY



REVEAL TO INDOOR THEATRE



OUTDOOR THEATRE VIEW TO PUBLIC

VIEW FROM THEATRE

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