



ARCHITECTURE & EXILE:

LOSS AND DISCOVERY IN THE DESIGN OF A
REFUGEE FACILITY

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**ARCHITECTURE & EXILE: LOSS AND DISCOVERY IN
THE DESIGN OF A REFUGEE FACILITY**

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THESIS ABSTRACT

My thesis examines the relationship between exile and creativity through the design of a refugee facility for learning and temporary living in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Prominent philosopher Edward Said describes exile as “the unhealable rift forced between a human being and its true home.” A more positive view proposed by writer Vilém Flusser suggests that exile in fact liberates one “to see things they would not have previously known.” For creativity to take place one must give up the familiar in order to see things anew. In this sense, loss itself acts as a threshold: the beginning of something new - a process of discovery.

Through the design of a refugee facility that includes places of reflection in solitude, spaces for sharing stories, as well as communal areas for learning about culture, my architecture seeks to create an environment that helps refugees transition from the loss of their home to dwelling in a different culture, providing spaces for memory and imagination.

THESIS KEY WORDS

Key Words:

Loss and Discovery

Threshold and Transition

Creativity

New and Old

Boundaries and Borders

THESIS QUESTION

My design proceeds from the question: How can architecture function as a threshold between loss and discovery, between transition and belonging?

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Project Typology

Claim

Premises

Project Justification

STATEMENT OF INTENT

PROJECT TYPOLOGY

Refugee facility for transition

CLAIM

Architecture can directly influence the transition of refugees through the built environment.

Project Justification

When we look back at the history of America along with many other countries, we see the consequences of wars and how many people are displaced and uprooted from everything they knew. Wars are not the only way people are displaced and uprooted. Natural disasters have been the cause for many people to be without a home and need to relocate. There are people that choose to relocate because of jobs and needing to start over. Nevertheless, all of these people share something in common with each other: they have been displaced from their homes and treated poorly.

This project will demonstrate how architecture has the ability to help improve refugees' quality of life; not only through providing a safe and healthy place protected from the environment, but also on an individual, social, political and symbolic level as well. Looking back at the history of refugee camps, we see how these camps are poorly placed and lack even the basic necessities needed for living a healthy life. It is through the interactive learning that will help refugees' transition and improvement of the social quality and standard of life for refugees. Architecture is more than just a shelter.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This project is a good vehicle for demonstrating my understanding of how the creation of space can impact humanity in complex ways; such as culturally and socially, for example social will be demonstrated through the educational interactive spaces. The culture will be directly influenced by the site location. The location of site is important in two ways. One is by the surrounding neighborhoods, the neighborhood is important because of the culture differences and the acceptance of a new culture. It is just as important for the refugees to be placed directly into a neighborhood for them to learn more about this new culture.

Premise

The project premise is to give life and freedom to refugees at a point of transition between the loss of their home and discovery of their new homeland.

The essential goal of this thesis problem is to examine the way architecture influences social interaction between groups that is culturally and geographically different. This thesis problem seeks to show how architecture affects the social environment within its geographical location. In addition, it will study the implications of how architecture can be interpreted differently between cultural groups, and how those differences can be reconciled through architecture.

THESIS PROPOSAL

Narrative
Artefact
User/Client Description
Major Project Elements
Site Information
Project Emphasis
Plan for Proceeding

THESIS NARRATIVE

Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela and Mary Pipher inspire me to ask the question how architecture can function as a threshold between loss and discovery, between transition and belonging. As the number of refugees coming to America continues to rise, it is important to answer this question so that we do not repeat past mistakes. Mary Pipher puts it best:

“When Europeans arrived on this continent, they blew it with the Native Americans. They plowed over them, taking as much as they could of their land and valuables, and respecting almost nothing about the native cultures. They lost the wisdom of the indigenous peoples-wisdom about the land and connectedness to the great web of life...We have another chance with all these refugees. People come here penniless but not cultureless. They bring us gifts. We can synthesize the best of our traditions with the best of theirs. We can teach and learn from each other to produce a better America.” (Mary Pipher, 2002).

THESIS NARRATIVE

It is with Mother Teresa's perspective that I seek to answer my questions about loss, discovery and transition; and from Darwin that I start to see the connection of all humanity through the expression of emotion, the grounds for asking questions about what sparks humanity's emotions.

Darwin says expression showed the basic humanity and it showed the basic unity of all human beings, that we all share the same emotions and the same expressions. That's what links us together. That was very important to him, to counter the racists of his times who were claiming in the 19th century that Caucasians had descended from a more advanced progenitor than Africans. (Paul Ekman, 2014)

THESIS NARRATIVE

In order to answer my questions about the transition, loss and discovery, I will interpret the different spatial needs for a refugee facility, recognizing the importance of the defined spaces within the architecture to facilitate transitioning from one culture to another, an old home to a new home.

Through the pursuit of my education in architecture, I have asked myself what value I have as a future architect internationally.

I've learned through discussion with practicing architects that sometimes things which Americans find very comforting, people from other countries see as insecure. It is through the threshold of the architecture I hope to help bridge this gap between cultural perceptions of space.

THESIS NARRATIVE

In one of my classes, my teacher asked if we would continue pursuing the career path we were on if the money did not come along with it. I raised my hand in response, saying yes I would continue in the pursuit of architecture. Architecture is not about money for me, it is a way for me to influence the world in a large scale and a way for me to tell a story to the world. Therefore, this study of transition space will directly impact my long term goals and desire to influence the world. I have chosen a refugee facility for my typology because I believe it will help my investigation of the understanding of universal design at a large scale. The location of the site needs to be in an area of need for new refugees.

THESIS NARRATIVE

It is because of Mary Pipher's wisdom that I desire to bring about harmony between all users of the refugee facility in order to learn from each other. From Darwin's insight I believe it is possible to design a space of transition that is unique to each user, but which draws out the expressions and emotion of all users. Finally, I cannot forget Mother Teresa's warning, "Sweetest Lord, make me appreciative of the dignity of my high vocation, and its' many responsibilities. Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness or impatience." I seek to uphold the responsibility of my education as an architect to protect the health, safety and welfare of humanity.

THESIS ARTEFACT

During this design process I created an artefact to help guide the design. The artefact is an interpretation of the ideas of exile. Through explorations of the making of an artefact, I learned some of the qualities the architecture should embody: for example, the ability to be a permanent place yet still temporary. The architecture should allow for the sharing of stories and the ability to be contemplative. It should embody the ideas of the past while discovering the future. I have done so in the artefact through the making of these panels that allow for transporting them to many different locations. They can be set up to create a space within a space, allowing for solitude and the ability to share all at the same time. These panels allow for a distance in the way shadows dance across the screen. It is the displacement of the shadows that reflect memories of the past.

USER/CLIENT DESCRIPTION

My project will be built for a hypothetical nonprofit organization which serves the world and their local community by helping new Americans and refugees relocate. While things seem to be changing and getting better across the world, there are still many countries fighting for a better life and freedom. When these countries are not able to provide for their citizens, those citizens seek a land and country with these hopes and dreams in mind.

The organization strives to bridge this gap, helping the new Americans and refugees relocate to find freedom and a better life. Through the many different programs they offer for learning about the American way of life, the organization will help new Americans to realize the importance of self-identity from the country they grew up in without forgetting who they are and their hopes and dreams.

USER/CLIENT DESCRIPTION

The organization's headquarters offers many opportunities for Americans, new Americans and refugees to interact with each other, giving opportunities to learn from each other through activities like sports, gardening, cooking, and interactive classrooms. There are many other opportunities through Bridging the Gap for counseling and services, like help to find jobs and become familiar with American ways of life. Bridging the Gap gives opportunities to the new Americans and refugees to teach and share with the local community about their cultures. These programs help the local community to learn more about the world and the different beauty the world offers, connecting new friends with the people who are the backbone to this great community and country in a more personal way.

USER/CLIENT DESCRIPTION

The building will facilitate a range of users, from supportive staff and fulltime staff overseeing the operation and running programs to the counseling and education staff. Other users will be made up of many different nationalities and groups of people whose ages range from very young to very old. The facility will host an average of 80 to 120 people daily, Monday through Friday.

User Categories:

Staff:

Staff for all areas of operation, office administrative (5), programming (3), educators (4), facilities management (5), counselors (4), specialized staff (3), food preparation (3), total (27).

The staff is made up of many different people with different roles who are always looking for ways they can serve the new Americans and the local community through their programming.

USER/CLIENT DESCRIPTION

The programs consist of life skills, for instance how to find and apply for a job, how to find the right housing, and ways to communicate with the local community. In addition, the staff will teach sports that are native to the community and give opportunities to new Americans to teach the local community some of their sports from back home. Finally, the organization will offer temporary housing to new Americans as they transition to find more permanent housing.

New Americans:

The different groups will average from 12 to 35 years old; but will not be limited to this age. They will be seeking to learn more about American culture and life skills for adapting to a new culture while not losing sight of their history and identity. The average number of users will be approximately 60 per day, five days a week.

The new Americans will be looking for ways they can become a part of the community and contribute to the community while learning a new language and some of the skills needed for local jobs. In addition, they will be building relationships with the local community members while sharing about their culture in order to create a holistic perspective of the world.

USER/CLIENT DESCRIPTION

Local Community Members:

Longtime residents of the community who volunteer will range from 12 to 70 years old; but will not be limited to this age. They will share in the opportunities to learn about life skills and new cultures from the people groups that are represented at the refugee facility. They will do this while welcoming new nationality groups to their community and making friends from all around the world. The average number of users will be approximately 20 per day five days a week.

These local community members will be high school students and retired teachers looking for ways to share in the lives of new arrivals by helping them learn more about the local community.

The volunteers will teach, but they will also learn from the new Americans in order to gain a more global perspective. Another group of community members will be local business people who stop by for their lunch break to visit and build relationships with the new community members.

THE PROJECT EMPHASIS

The nonprofit organization will facilitate an interactive learning environment through architecture focused on threshold designed for many different cultures with the goal of promoting individual identity while hosting many different cultures at the same time, finding harmony between these many cultures through the application of universal design applied to the transitional spaces.

MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS

Gathering Space

Gathering space is for hosting many different types of events. For example times of sharing stories, meals and different types of cultural activities. It is here I believe the social and political will take part.

Voids

Voids are spaces that are not programmable and are located in-between the three main areas. It is within these voids that I believe the symbolic is revealed through transition. This space allows for the reflection of the past and the discovery of the future by remaining open to the living, learning and gatherings spaces. One may dwell in the void to both reflect through stories of their past and make a visible connection with their new place

Learning Space

The learning space is designed to help embrace a new culture on a personal and political level. One may transition back and forth between different programs as well as between a memory of their past and a view back to the city.

Private Living Area

Private living areas allow one to remember the past and engage in more intimate social dialogues.

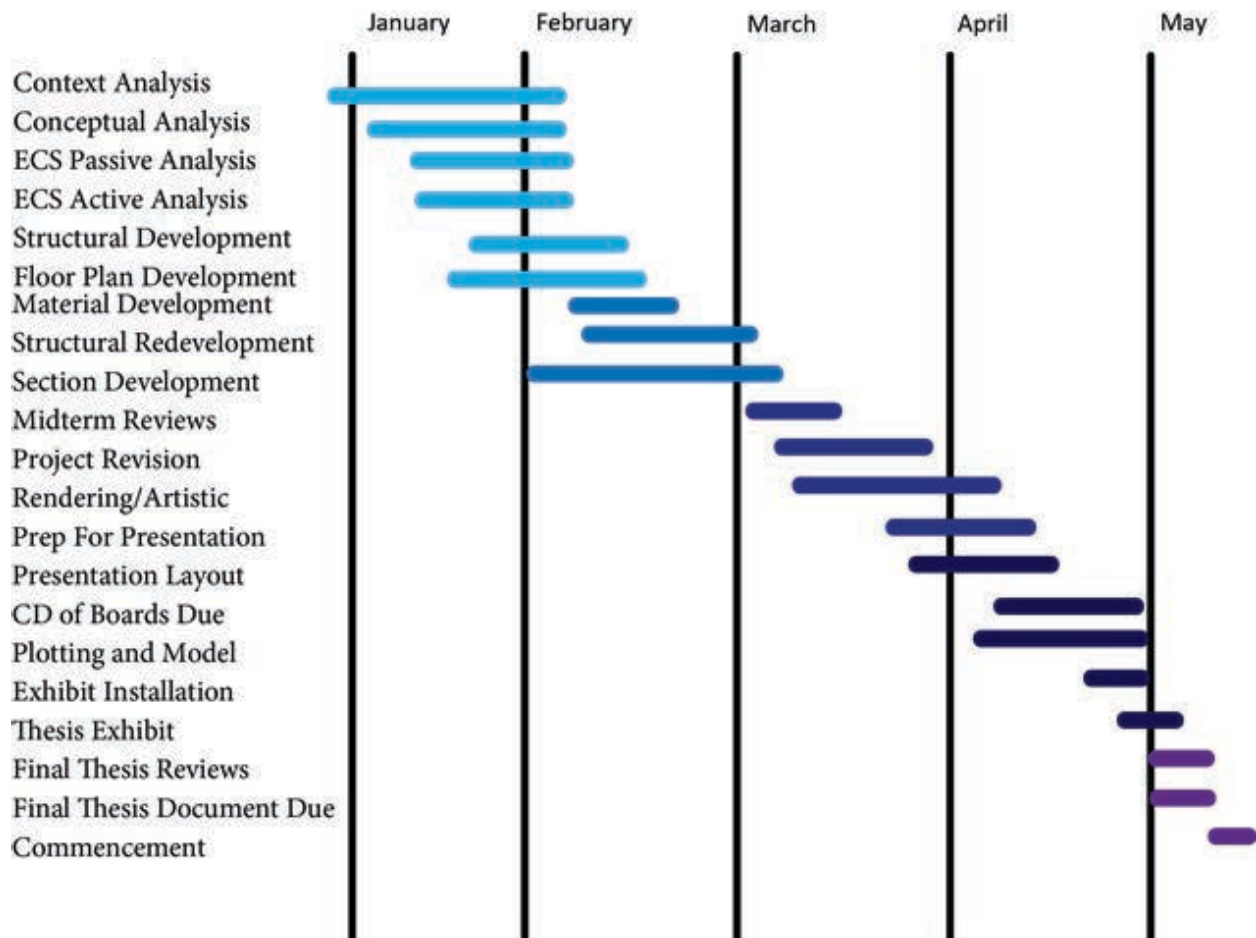
SITE INFORMATION

The site is located in Minneapolis, Minnesota at the intersection of Cedar and Fourth Street, the site was chosen since the surrounding neighborhood is one of the most diverse, multi-cultural areas within the Midwest.

It's the multi-cultural population that strengthens the site location by the opportunity to transition from one culture to another. In some way forcing one to abandon their own culture to discover the other positioning one in a state of exile for the pursuit of discovery.

The site itself is a space of transition; situated in-between private homes of residential neighborhoods and public spaces of downtown. The state of transition points to the past while discovering the future and being in-between the private and public, past and future. It is in this state that one is able to see the beauty of the past and allows for the discovery of the future and the beauty of exile to be revealed.

PLAN FOR PROCEEDING



Figures 2.1 [proceeding chart]

PREVIOUS STUDIO EXPERIENCE

2nd Year Fall – 2011

Joan Vorderbruggen

Tea house

Boat House

2nd Year Spring – 2012

Darryl Booker

School of Dance

Dwelling

3rd Year Fall – 2012

Steve Martens

Camp Lodge

Funeral Home

3rd Year Spring – 2013

Milt Yergens

Urban Infill

Oil Fields

PREVIOUS STUDIO EXPERIENCE

4th Year Fall – 2013

Don Faulkner

San Francisco High Rise

4th Year Spring – 2014

Joan Vorderbruggen

Field Study Internship

5th Year Fall – 2014

Ganapathy Mahalingam

Researcher Light Design

5th Year Spring – 2015

Stephen Wischer

Thesis Project Refugee Facility

THE PROGRAM DOCUMENT

Research Results and Goals
Case Study Research
Historical Context
Project Goals
Site Analysis
Programmatic Requirements

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

The essential goal of this thesis problem is to examine the way architecture influences social interaction between groups that are culturally and geographically different. This thesis problem seeks to show how architecture affects the social environment within its geographical location. In addition, it will study the implications of how architecture can be interpreted differently between cultural groups, and how those differences can be reconciled. The design will target specific sensory perceptions in order to create a building which uses common sensory perceptions to foster social interaction.

From the three case studies I have examined, I have learned there needs to be a focus point either on space and/or object that is relatable to all the users. What does this object want to be? Should it be more about the space or the object? Through my research I have come to learn the idea of universal design is broad in its understanding and is like trying to nail jello to the wall. For this reason I will be looking into the different culture groups such as the homeless and the refugees and more directly how they interact with the social world around them. This still does not change the need for a focus point for the architecture. It just shows that the space will need to be dynamic and act as though it is a work of art, allow users to interpret the space and/or objects with their own meaning and purpose.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

“Home is not an eternal value, but rather the function of a certain technique; yet, whoever loses his home, suffers.”(Taking up residence... page 92)

These words ring ever loudly with me in my personal experience of moving many times throughout life already. While these moves were mostly by my choosing, it does not change the sense of loss and suffering. But that is not the point that is the most valuable here. It is the understanding that the home is not an eternal value. It is from truth that which frees us to explore true value of dwelling, a place of refuge. For this reason the site and location will be important. What are the values that are needed to provide this logic of safety? What could it's surroundings provide? The homesickness relates well to most people. It is through this absence of home that reveals the comforts of home, to look for something that reminds us of things that no one else knows, because we did not even know until it was absent from our lives. I'm not a smoker and in my mind thought it to be distasteful to me, until one day I was in the presence of smokers again which drew upon memories of my brother and sister who would smoke around me. It is from this absence I learned the truth was not as though I had thought it to be.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

Through the research along the lines of man without a home, it tends to analyze himself freely, for what does he have to lose? It is within this, the secrets of the subconscious of the psychic activity lies awake waiting to reveal the secret that lies so deep within oneself. It is from this which reveals the blinders to be as such the home. It is not to say the home is bad or even wrong within itself, but for the user to separate from it, to see its true value and purpose. It is through the separation that the true value is seen from which one is encouraged to see and understand its own value from which gives the opportunity to understand the value of the two together.

Nevertheless the homeowner will not and does not see it this way, therefore it proposes a problem. The homeowner revels in the subconscious level unaware of the certainties of the enjoyment from which they come from and long with worries that are tied to the subconscious. It is through these subliminal habits, laws are evoked that habits and patterns are performed. It's from this difference these two cultures of the homeowner and homeless collide. It shows how the senses of perceptions are different for the homeowner and the homeless. It is from here the question is asked, what are ways to draw upon these perceptions of the subconscious and conscious to bring about a harmony between these two groups.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

“When one is without a home and unprotected from the usual and what one is used to, everything that comes to us is noise and nothing is information. In a world without information, a world of chaos, one can neither feel, nor think, nor act.”(Taking up residence... page 100)

Don't miss the jump here, the home is no longer the square box people live within. It is now referred to as the state of being for an individual that which one is familiar with, used to and able to learn from. We see in this how the homeless and homeowner are two cultures at odds with one another. It is true that when the homeless are transplanted within the homeowners, it draws upon the consciousness of the unconscious homeowners leaving them unaware, unprotected and confused. In this regard it is more the responsibility of the homeless to teach and adapt to the homeowners unconsciousness because of their subconscious awareness. And in this regard I would ask how is the architecture able to help facilitate this perspective to help the homeless to adapt and reveal a new point of view?

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

As would be common for most to assume refugees are ripped from their homes and ways of life, evidence would support this fact. We can see similarity with the transplanting of plants, being able to uproot the plant and still be successful in this process to replant it in a new location. When talking about the transplanting of a plant, the location is vital. I believe there is commonality here as well with perception of senses talking about the relocation of a people group.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

In summary, I have determined there are three parts I have found to be important to this design and unifying idea. The case studies provide the understanding of how different spaces are layout, organization and the comprehension of the unifying idea. The study of different culture such as the homeless and refugees has given me a better perspective of the problems of the transplanting of new culture into other cultures and the remedies for these problems. Senses are a key factor in the process of the transplanting of a culture into a new location.

It is through the examination of the case studies that were selected for this project, I was able to recognize what I believe to be the most important part of each case study. The most important part is the focus point, having just one focus point seems to be the strength of these case studies. While the focus point was different for each case study, it still carried the focus all the way through the project. The focus of case study one is about the memories of the history of the site and the location, tying the community together through ideas of memories. It is through the memories of each individual that allows this project to become personable to a larger group of people.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND GOALS

In case study two it draws upon the showcasing of history in a literal main of the archeological finding. It is through this literal presentation of history that allows the viewers to reinterpret the fictional truths that are awakened in the viewers' subconscious mind. In doing so, it allows each viewer the freedom to understand this archeological finding in a personal manner if one so desires. Case study three is unique because it is not a permanent piece of architecture. The purpose is to remain as though it is invisible, just like it was before and after as though the before and after were never there to begin with. For in so doing it remains invisible for the purpose it was intended for all along. The need for the invisibility is not in and of itself, but for the viewers to observe the work of art/architecture that is taking place. Herein lies the freedom for each viewer to interact with the work of art/architecture, undistracted, free to draw in their minds the stories only they can tell.

CASE STUDY 1



Figures 3.1 [case study 1-picture]

<http://www.archdaily.com/264340/karakida-community-center-chiaki-arai-urban-and-architecture-design/>

Chiaki Arai Urban and Architecture Design

Architects: Chiaki Arai Urban and Architecture Design

Project Year: 2011

Project Area: 2,601.84 sqm

Project Location: Tama City, Tokyo, Japan

CASE STUDY 1

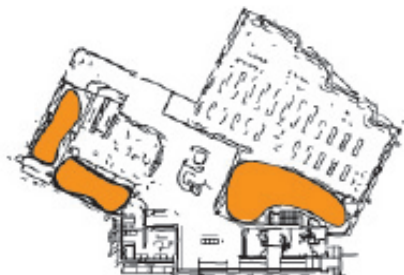
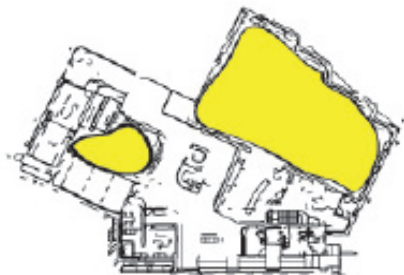
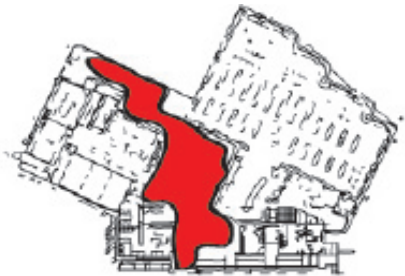
Elevations: North, South, East and West



<http://www.archdaily.com/264340/karakida-community-center-chiaki-arai-urban-and-architecture-design/>

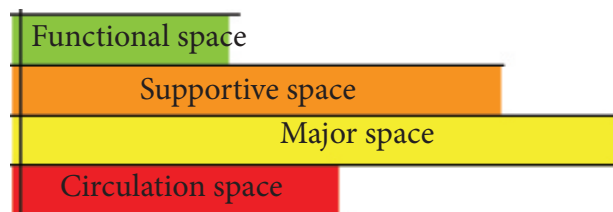
Figures 3.2 [case study 1- elevations]

CASE STUDY 1



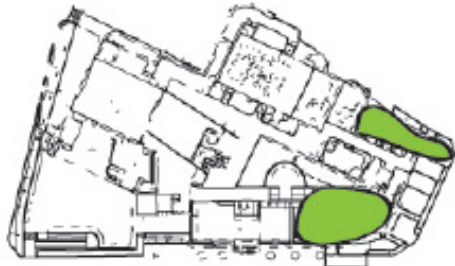
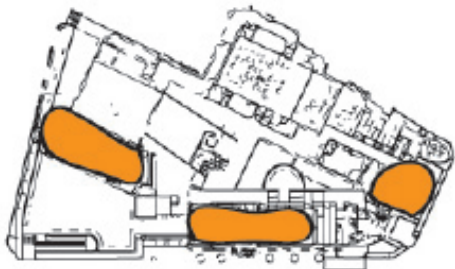
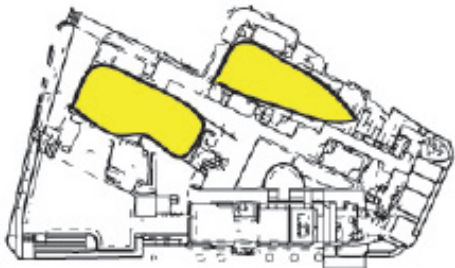
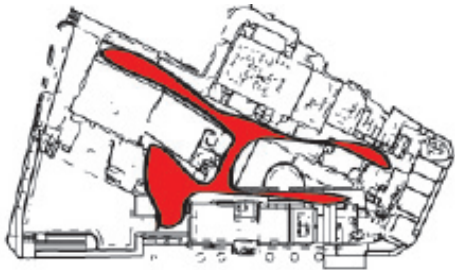
Figures 3.3 [case study 1- 1fl plan diagram]

These spaces were reduced to four different categories, Circulation, Major, Supportive and Functional. The circulation helps in dividing these spaces up and to bring about connect through shared space. For this project the major spaces are made up of classrooms. Some of the classrooms are interactive allowing for more flexible space. There are also two major spaces on each level of the design. The supportive spaces include breakout rooms for the classrooms and lounges. The functional space hosts restrooms and offices. All of these spaces seem to intermix with each other. There are three other parts to help define the special arrangement Structure diagram, Elevation grid and Section massing. The Elevation grid and Structure diagram work hand in hand. In these two diagrams we see a pattern of 4x7 in the grid relating this back to the structure. We see this theme showing through in the pattern of the structure. The Section massing shows profile that would appear to be integrated within the site giving the design a lower profile.

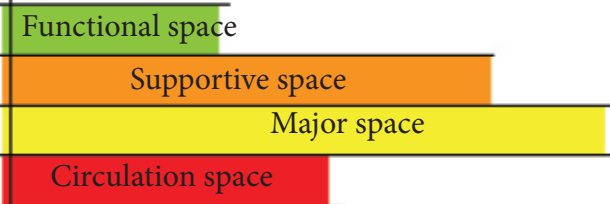


Figures 3.4 [case study 1- 1fl spatial diagram]

CASE STUDY 1



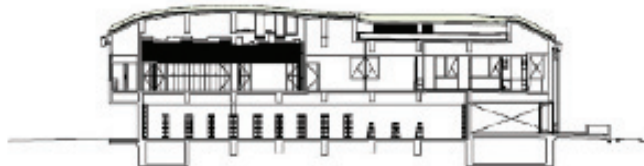
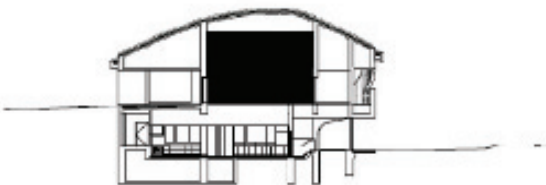
Figures 3.5 [case study 1-2fl plan diagram]



Figures 3.6 [case study 1- 2fl spatial diagram]

CASE STUDY 1

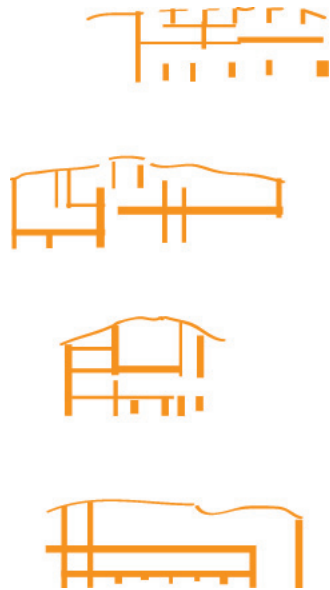
Section cut



There are three other parts to help define the special arrangement Structure diagram, Elevation grid and Section massing. The Elevation grid and Structure diagram work hand in hand. In these two diagrams we see a pattern of 4x7 in the grid relating this back to the structure. We see this theme showing through in the pattern of the structure. The Section massing shows profile that would appear to be integrated within the site giving the design a lower profile.

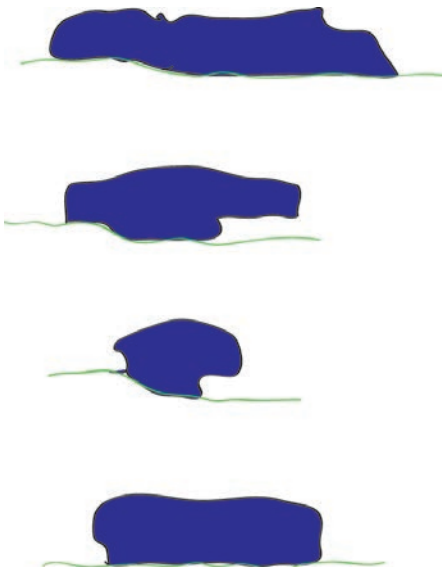
CASE STUDY 1

Structure



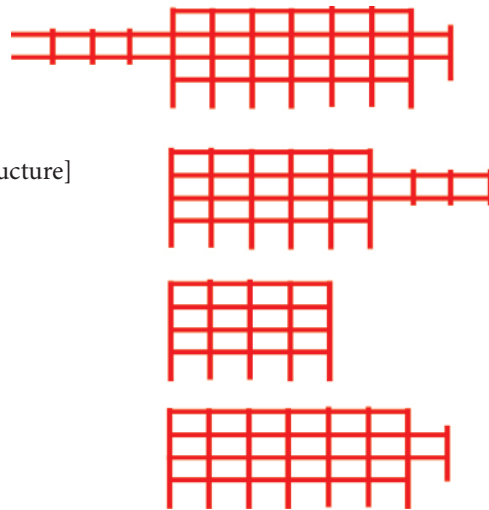
Figures 3.8 [case study 1- section cut structure]

Section Massing



Figures 3.10 [case study 1- section cut massing]

Elevation Grid



Figures 3.9 [case study 1- section cut elevation grid]

CASE STUDY 2



<http://www.archdaily.com/313950/archaeological-space-in-daroca-sergio-sebastian-franco/>

Figures 3.11 [case study 2 -picture]

Archaeological Space in Daroca / Sergio Sebastián Franco

Architects: Sergio Sebastián Franco

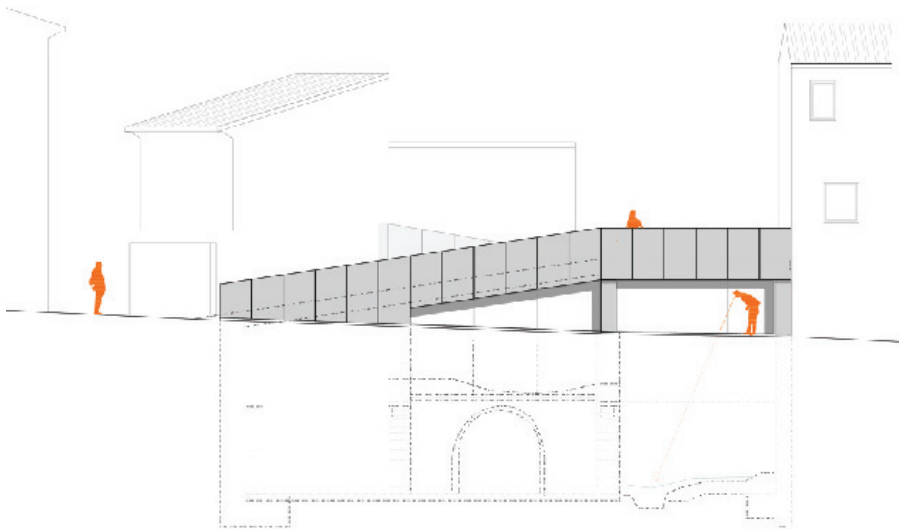
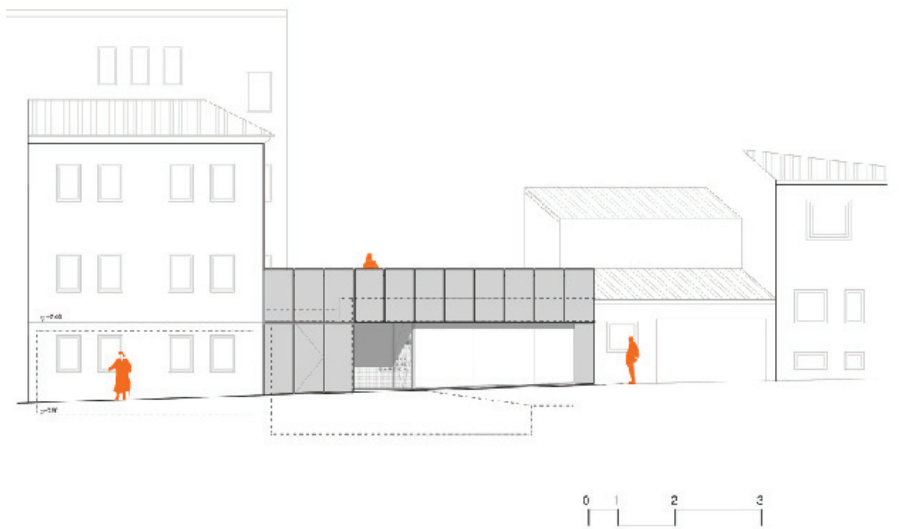
Project Year: 2007

Project Area: 350 sqm

Project Location: Daroca, Zaragoza, Spain

CASE STUDY 2

Elevations



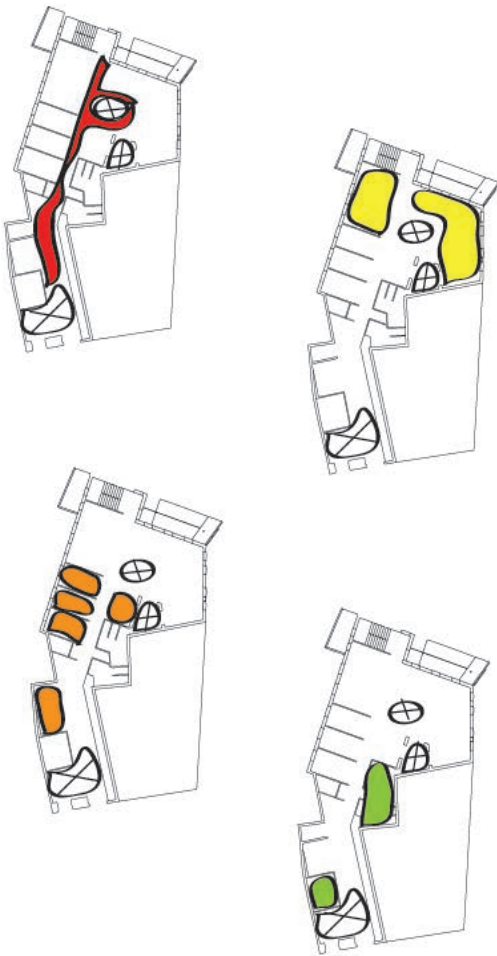
<http://www.archdaily.com/313950/archaeological-space-in-daroca-sergio-sebastian-franco/>

Figures 3.12 [case study 2- elevations]

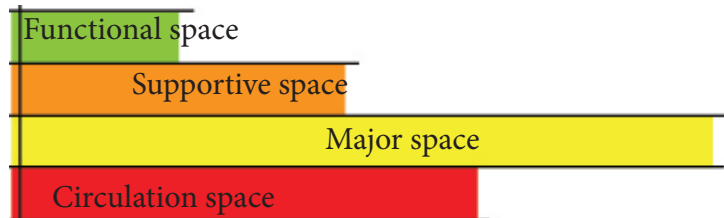
CASE STUDY 2

As in Case Study 1, these spaces were reduced to four different categories, Circulation, Major, Supportive and Functional. In this project the spaces are broken up by three different levels. There are some pretty big differences from level to level. This project is based on an archeological site. The major Spaces are framed around the archeological findings. The first two levels are largely supportive and functional. But the third level is mostly the major space. This project is unique because it is mainly focused on the archeology. I believe there will be some really good things to be learned from this as there is only one thing within the space to bring people to, which helps to create harmony between the users.

CASE STUDY 2

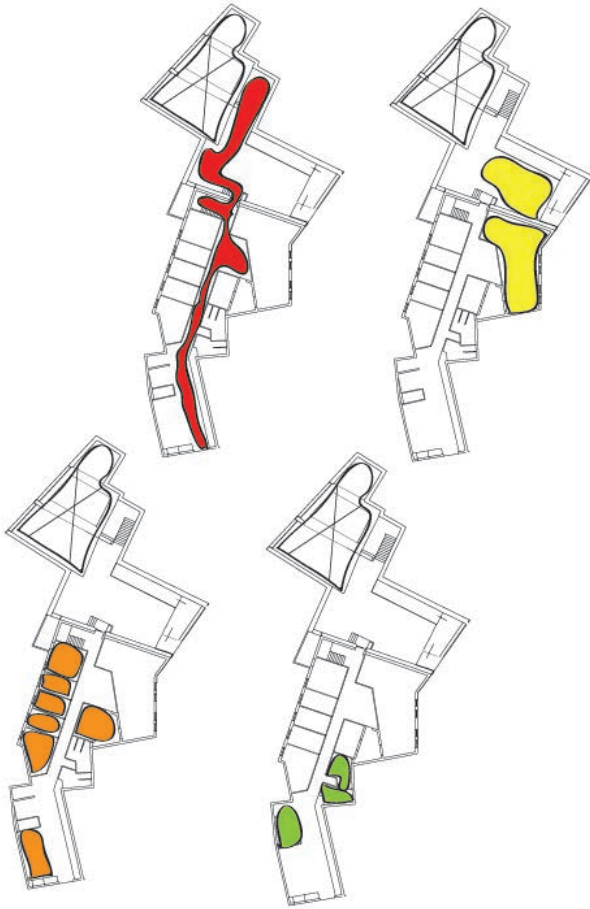


Figures 3.13 [case study 2- 1fl plan diagram]

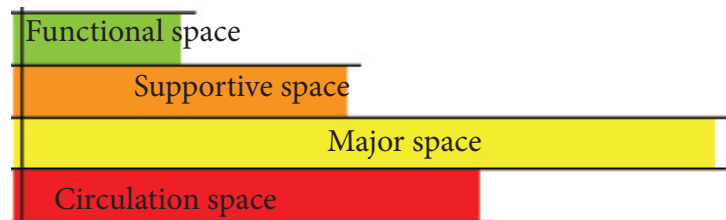


Figures 3.14 [case study 2-1fl spatial diagram]

CASE STUDY 2

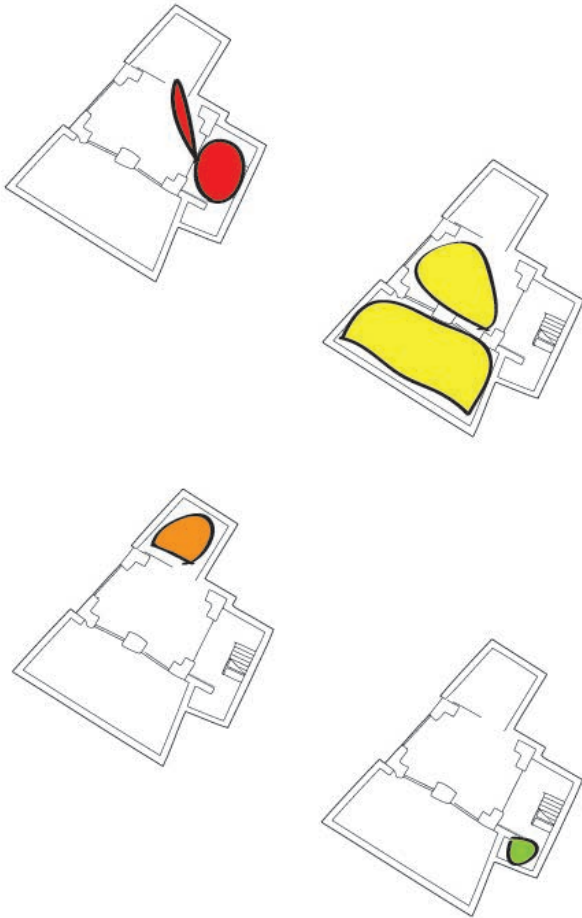


Figures 3.15 [case study 2- 2fl plan diagram]

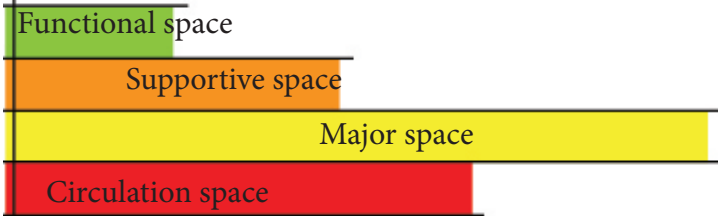


Figures 3.16 [case study 2-2 fl spatial diagram]

CASE STUDY 2



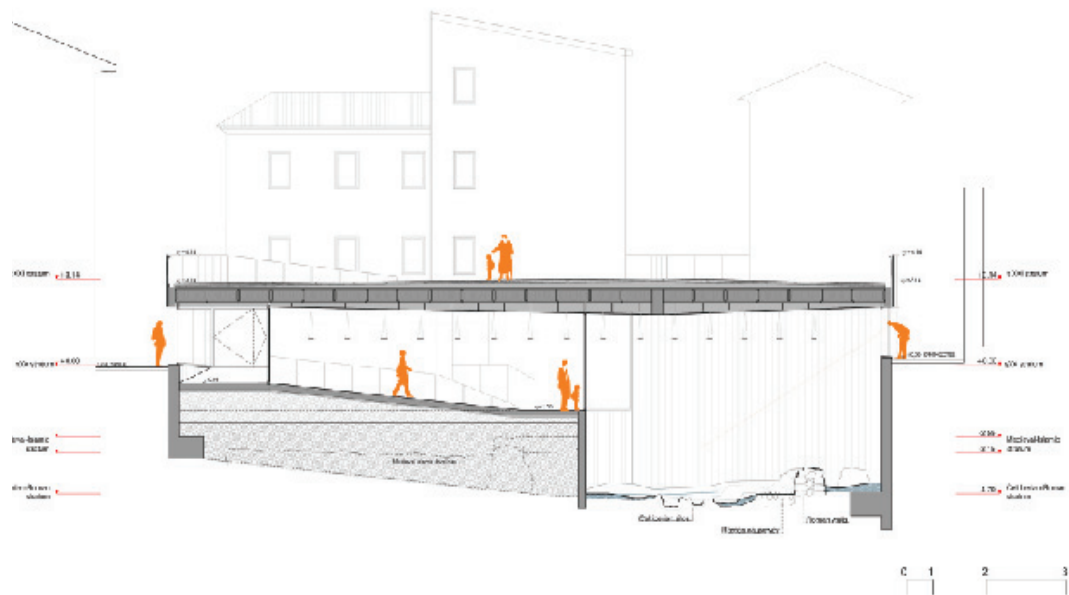
Figures 3.17 [case study 2- 3fl plan diagram]



Figures 3.18 [case study 2-2 fl spatial diagram]

CASE STUDY 2

Section cut

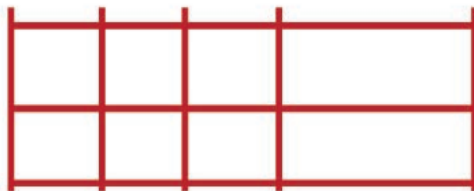


CASE STUDY 2

Structure



Elevation Grid



Section Massing



Figures 3.20 [case study 2- section cut structure grid massing]

The Elevation grid is very simple; it is mainly a 3x5 pattern. The structure is very minimal and follows the idea of the grid. Section massing shows a very integrated form and low profile...similar to the Case Study 1. It will be important to understand why they have used this within the design.

CASE STUDY 3



<http://www.archdaily.com/557166/visitors-center-of-the-stavros-niarchos-foundation-cultural-center-betaplan/> Figures 3.21 [case study 3-picture]

Visitors Center of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center

Architects: Agis Mourelatos, Spiros Yiotakis

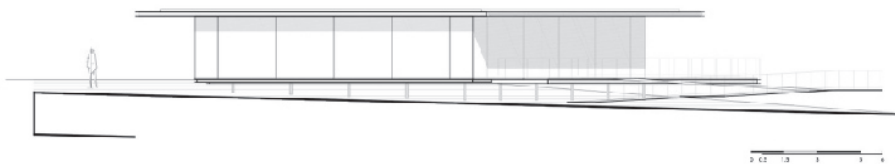
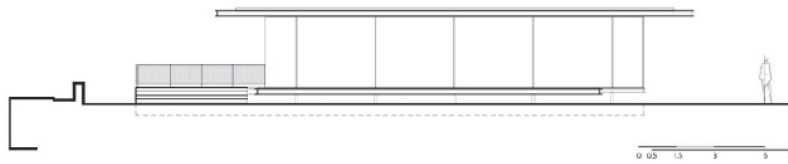
Project Year: 2013

Project Area: unknown

Project Location: Athens, Greece

CASE STUDY 3

Elevations

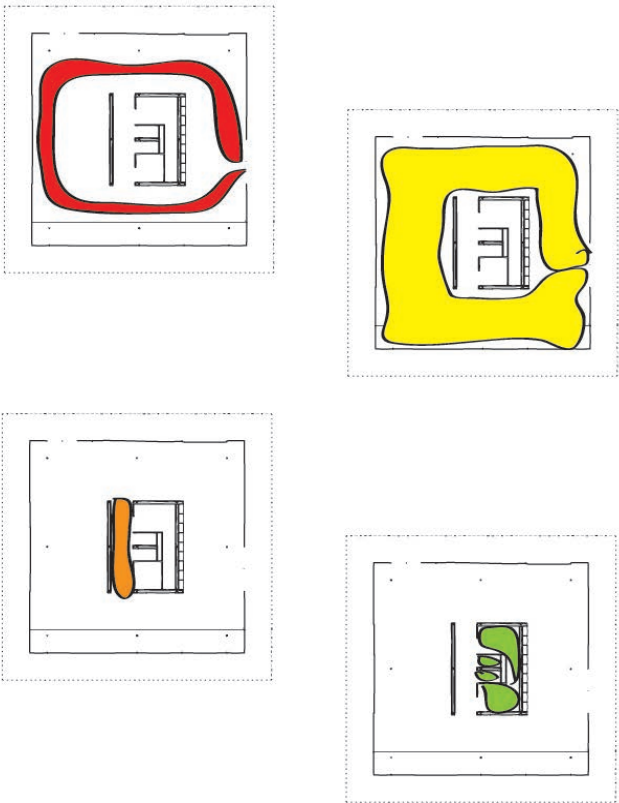


<http://www.archdaily.com/557166/visitors-center-of-the-stavros-niarchos-foundation-cultural-center-betaplan/> Figures 3.22 [case study 3- elevations]

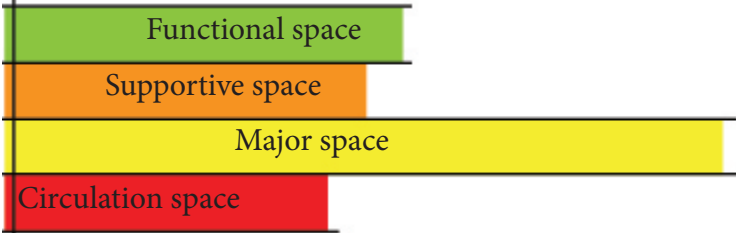
CASE STUDY 3

This case study is very unique because it is temporary and will be used for informational visitors' center. This piece of architecture is not designed for itself. The design is to inform the surroundings, to take away from itself, to give to its surroundings. The minimalist design is well done in its ability to frame the design outcomes while creating great in and of itself. The major space is pretty much the whole building. The three other spaces functional, circulation and supportive are pretty equal in the space allotted to them.

CASE STUDY 3



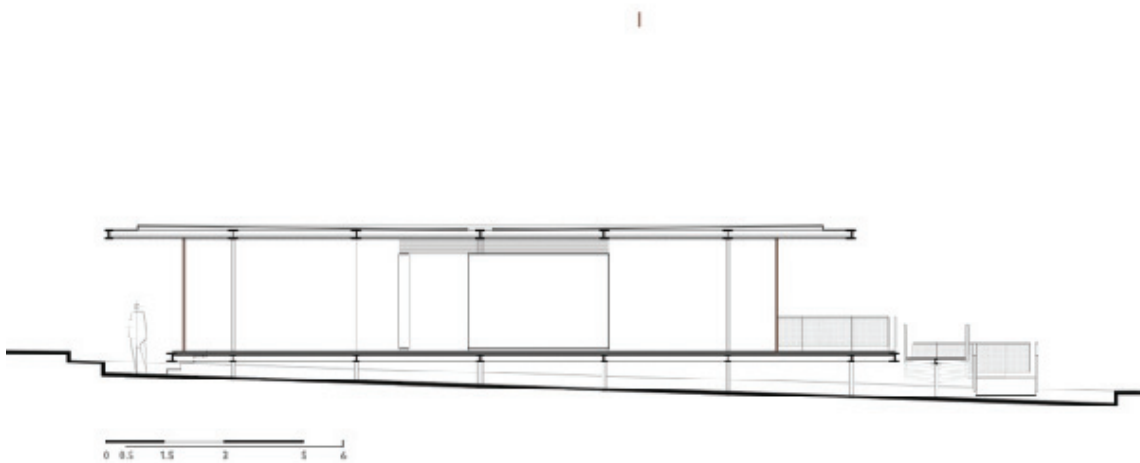
Figures 3.23 [case study 3- 1fl plan diagram]



Figures 3.24 [case study 3 -1fl spatial diagram]

CASE STUDY 3

Section cut



<http://www.archdaily.com/557166/visitors-center-of-the-stavros-niarchos-foundation-cultural-center-betaplan/> Figures 3.25 [case study 3- section cut pictures]

CASE STUDY 3

Structure



Elevation Grid



Section Massing



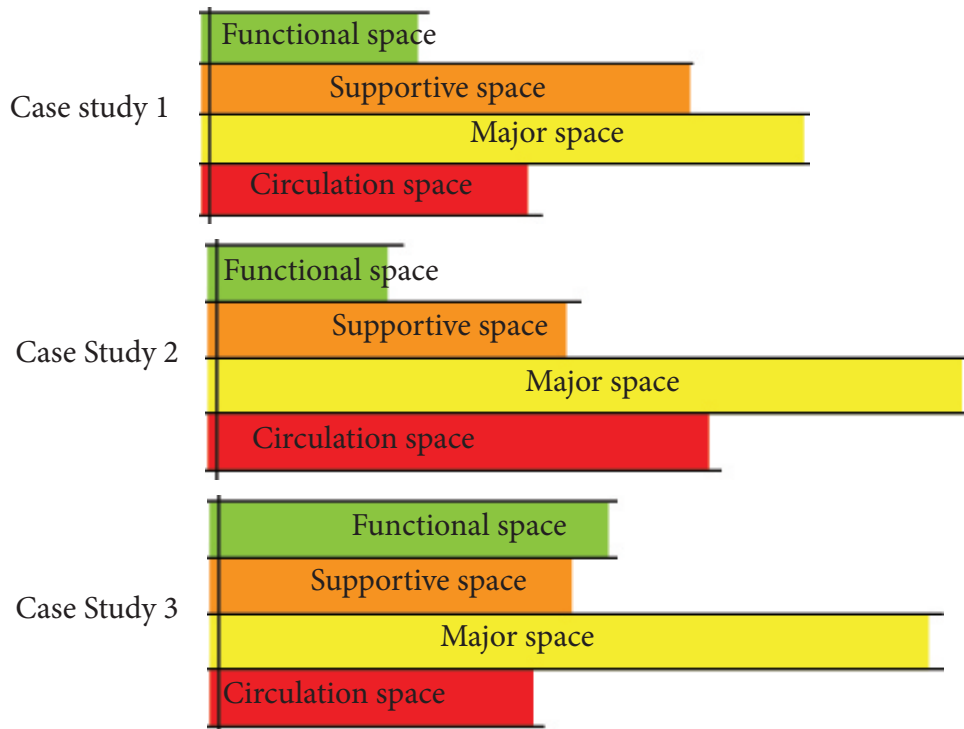
Figures 3.26 [case study 3- section cut structure, grid massing]

The Elevation grid is 2x7 keeping this design very simple allowing the structure to follow suit very easily. Section massing reveals something a little different than before in the other two case studies. It would appear to be hovering over the ground and not interrupting the plane of the ground.

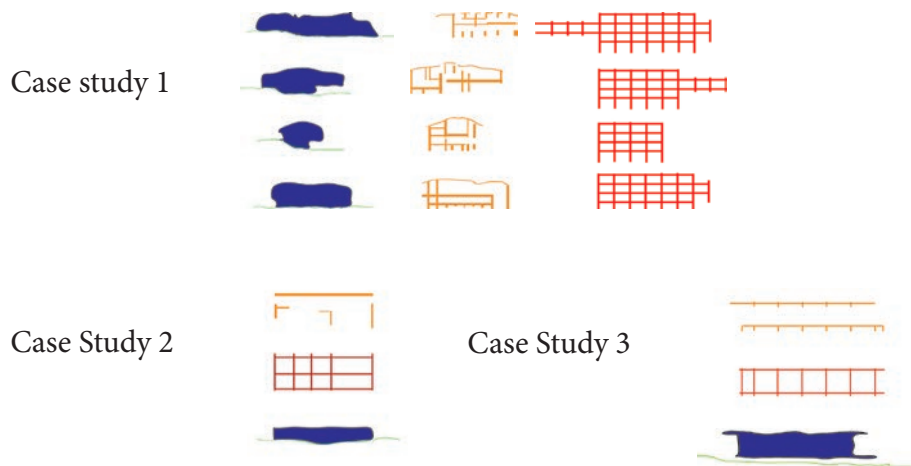
CASE STUDY SUMMARY

From these case studies I have been able to see how the integration of projects and site will be very important to my project. While each case study was different in the way it interacted with the site, it was strong. Therefore it will be important for this design to understand the important parts of interacting with the site context knowing what is important to the site. The space allegations revealed how the major space was considerably more than any other space. For this project it will also be important to describe what these major spaces are to be. The circulation was used not only for the means to get from place to place; but also a way to divide the space up and to control the way these different spaces interacted with each other. From this knowledge I will be looking at a way the circulation can be used for more than one purpose at a time. The functional space was most of the time adjacent to the supporting spaces. It would appear that these spaces are typically smaller than the others by nature. The supportive spaces really do act as though they are supportive, finding many different uses. Not only for its main purpose, but for the way it holds the function and order of the other spaces around it. Keeping order through the overall design. While understanding these are simple by nature, it will be important to follow these throughout the designing of this architecture space.

CASE STUDY SUMMARY



Figures 3.27 [case study summary spatial diagram]



Figures 3.28 [case study summary structure grid massing]

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Looking back in history we see many philosophical concepts related to the ideas of dwelling, exile and creativity. For example: In the story of Cain and Abel we see God sending Cain into exile from his homeland. He could be the first nomad. But not even Cain could wander forever; he needed a place of dwelling.

Exile is not limited to just this understanding; there are people who choose to leave their homes and the things they know behind. Here we look at both those who welcome exile and those who have no choice. Today, refugees are exiled due to political problems, war, and natural disasters.

Refugee camps are intended to be short term, but some refugees can remain in the camps for many years. For instance, there are examples of people living for over sixty-five years in the refugee camps in Palestine.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Alessandro Petti and Sandi Hilal are two architects working with the Palestinians that are stuck waiting to return to their homes. The two architects learned that tents are used as a symbol of transition and of being ready to leave at a moment's notice. After the architects proposed a design for schools and a plaza, the refugees made it clear that there should be no roofs for the plaza or the schools. They see the act of building a roof as setting roots and as the first act of dwelling.

Edward Said describes the tragic side of exile in these words

“Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and its true home: it's [sic] essential sadness can never be surmounted.

And while it is true that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in the exile's life, these are no more than efforts meant to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement.” (Said, 2002)

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although exile is in some ways a very tragic state to live in, certain personal truths may only be realized from within a state of exile. Vilém Flusser welcomed the life of exile. Flusser was a philosopher who lived a life of exile due to his flight from the concentration camps where his family was murdered, but also because of his own relocation for jobs and other adventures. This life of exile was far from crippling. It did not leave him estranged from his true home, his place of dwelling. On the contrary, it liberated him to see things he never would have known. Flusser does not ignore the pain of exile but rather explains this pain as setting him free.

“Only when we are separated from something can we truly discover the thing we are separated from in its entirety.”

-Vilém Flusser (Flusser, 2002)

Flusser deliberately uses the term “expelled” and not “refugees” or “immigrants” since he does not want to confine himself to one specific form of forced migration. Instead, Flusser points to the entire scope of expulsion, regardless of whether the migration is personally, politically or even artistically driven. He does this to emphasize the similarities between many forms of exile and displacement experienced by many different types of people.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is only through exile that one finds an understanding of creativity, for the idea of exile is of loss and discovery, a constant balance facilitated through transitional spaces that allows for creativity. For creativity to take place one must give up what he knows to see things anew. The expelled are given the choice to live in a world forever lost and leading to death, or to discover the new and beautiful in things that are everchanging.

Dwellings were once places that held great value but were not always permanent in the sense of today's age. Tent structures of early nomadic societies, just like the tabernacle, symbolize not just the individual but also provided a threshold that connected the individual to the social, political and religious beliefs of the people. Likewise, permanent and temporary Triumphal Arches are symbols of thresholds and the making of boundaries and crossings that provided places that connect to the larger culture. In the same way, I see my design for a refugee facility being able to provide an in-between space between loss and discovery, between transition and belonging, on an individual, social, political and symbolic level.

THESIS PROJECT GOALS

The goal of this project is to determine how universal design can be applied to a multi-culture space design for learning and facilitating many different cultures. I hope to not limit the design to one culture, but to highlight all cultures in specific ways that will be relatable to all users at the same time.

Academically, this project looks at the study of universal design with the intent to add to the existing body of knowledge. I will focus on a multi-cultural space that allows for all users to feel as if they are a part of the space, and which facilitates the interaction between the many different cultures that are using the space.

THESIS PROJECT GOALS

Professionally, my goal for this project is to build upon my critical thinking skills in a specific way. For this I will be looking at thresholds and the way transition spaces are used between homes. This will require specific research and analysis of thresholds and commonalities within diverse cultures and backgrounds. This process will show my ability to analyze and apply the critical thinking skills needed for this specific design as well as my personal design style and the things I find to be important within the design field, from the frame work and process to the final presentation.

Personally, I plan to grow in my understanding of the holistic design approach, from the poetics of how a space feels, to the practical side of things such as the site and environmental aspects of the design, and structure and building systems. Finally I hope to learn more about communicating the project to the clients and the audience.

SITE ANALYSIS

The site is located at the intersection of Cedar and Fourth Street in Minneapolis, Minnesota



Figures 3.29 [site analysis plan]

SITE ANALYSIS



Figures 3.30 [site analysis plan]

Pictures are looking south from site



Figures 3.31 [site pictures south]

SITE ANALYSIS



Figures 3.32 [site analysis plan]

Picture is looking west from site



Figures 3.33 [site picture west]

SITE ANALYSIS



Figures 3.34 [site analysis plan]

Picture is looking north from site



Figures 3.35 [site picture north]

SITE ANALYSIS



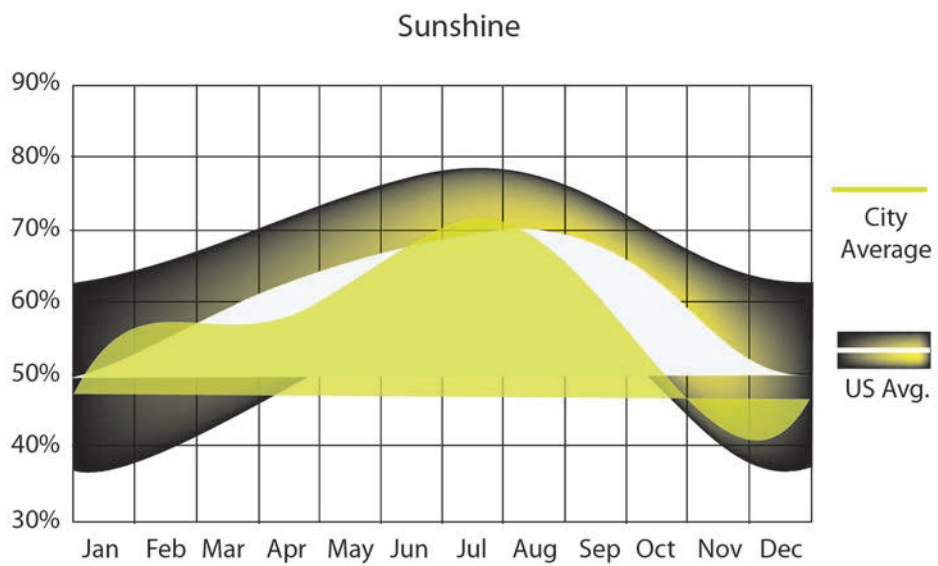
Figures 3.36 [site analysis plan]

Picture is looking east from site

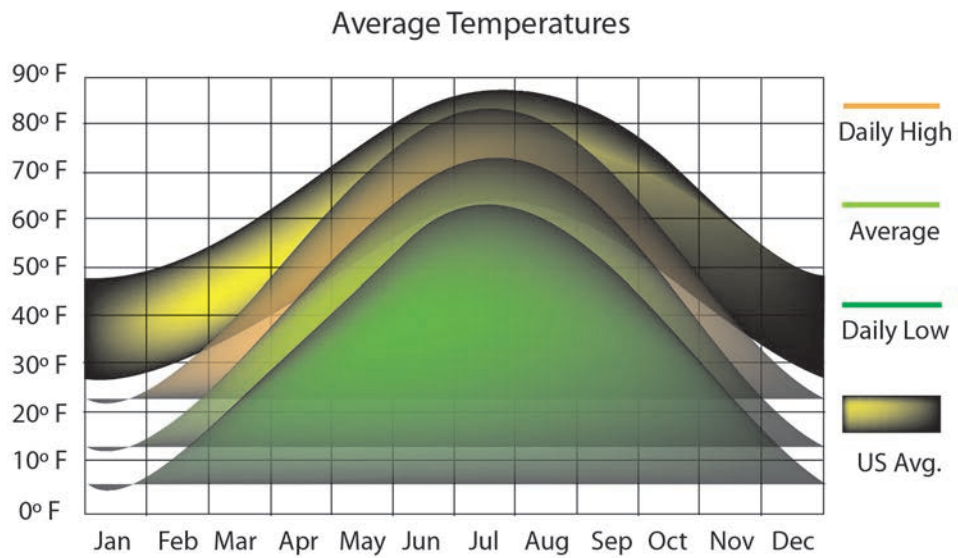


Figures 3.37 [site picture east]

SITE ANALYSIS

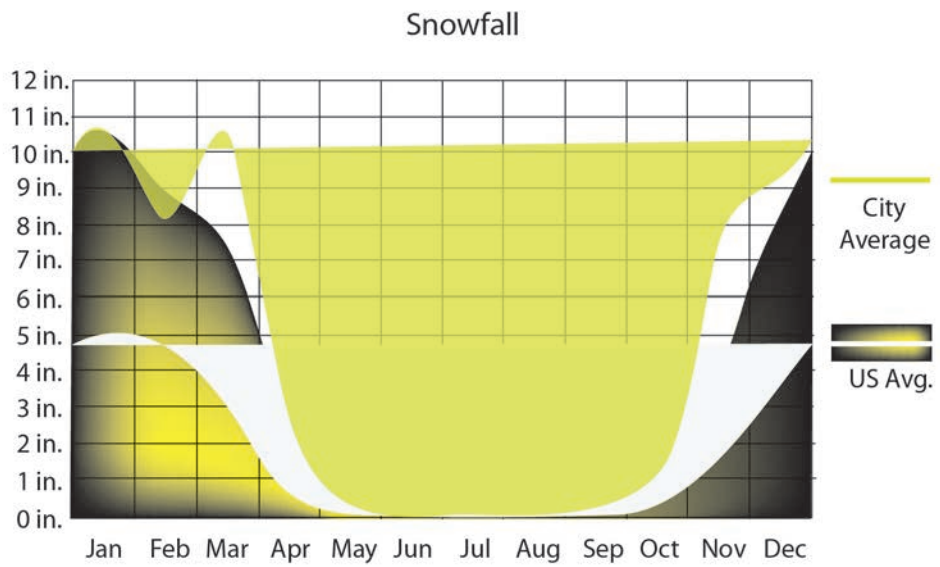


Figures 3.38 [sunshine diagram]

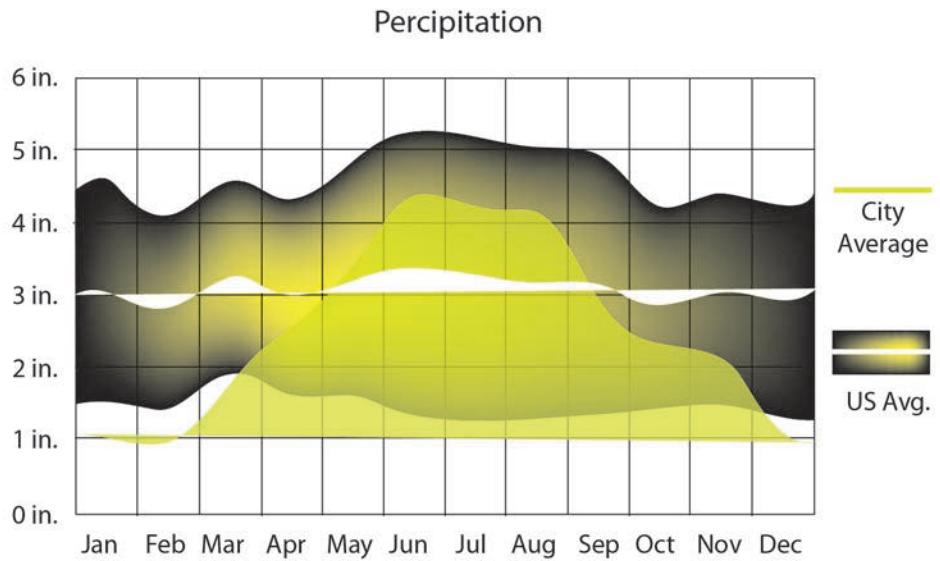


Figures 3.39 [temperature diagram]

SITE ANALYSIS

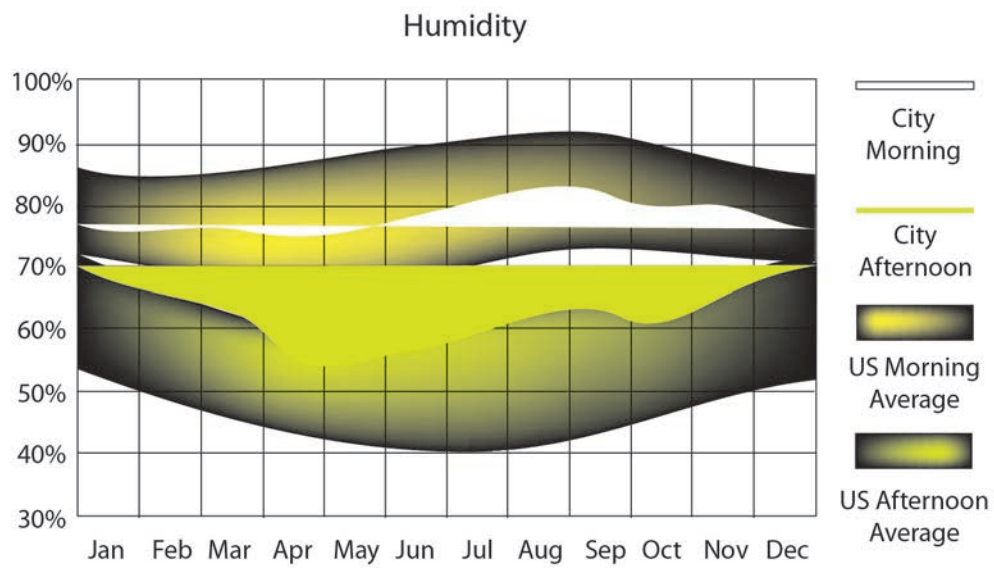


Figures 3.40 [snowfall diagram]

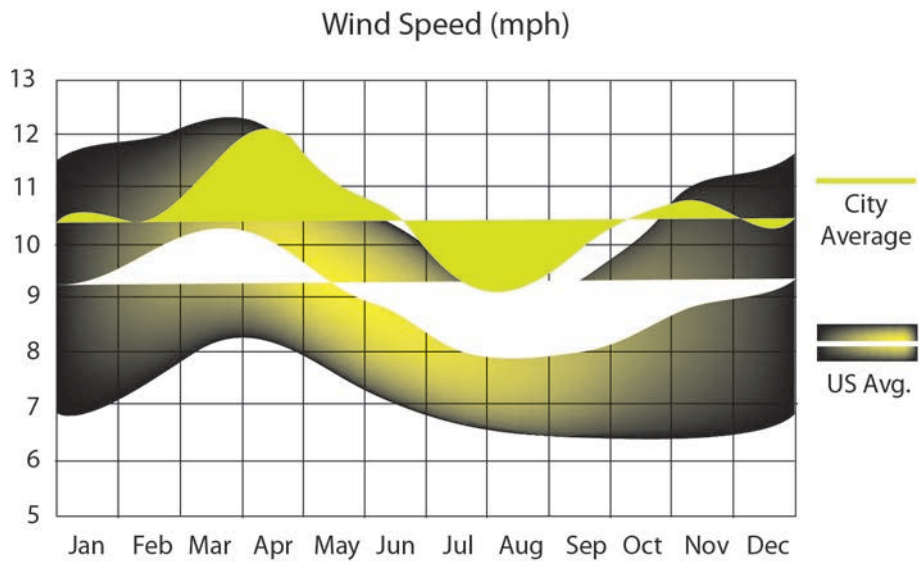


Figures 3.41 [precipitation diagram]

SITE ANALYSIS

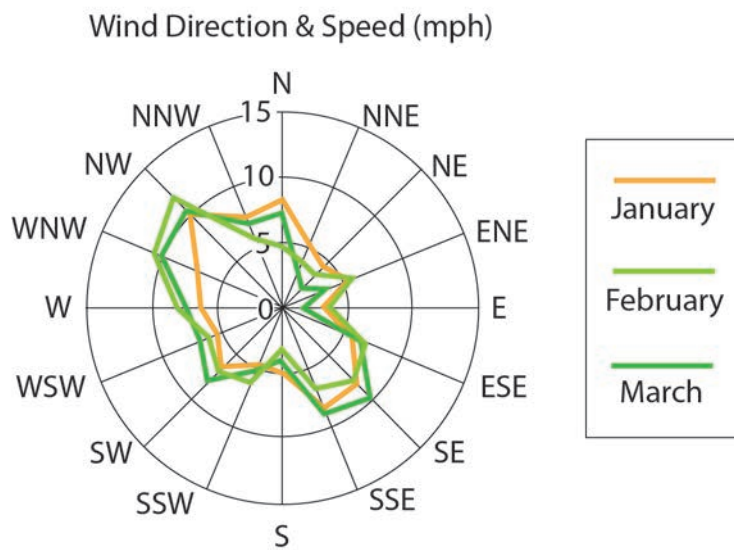


Figures 3.42 [humidity diagram]



Figures 3.43 [wind speed diagram]

SITE ANALYSIS

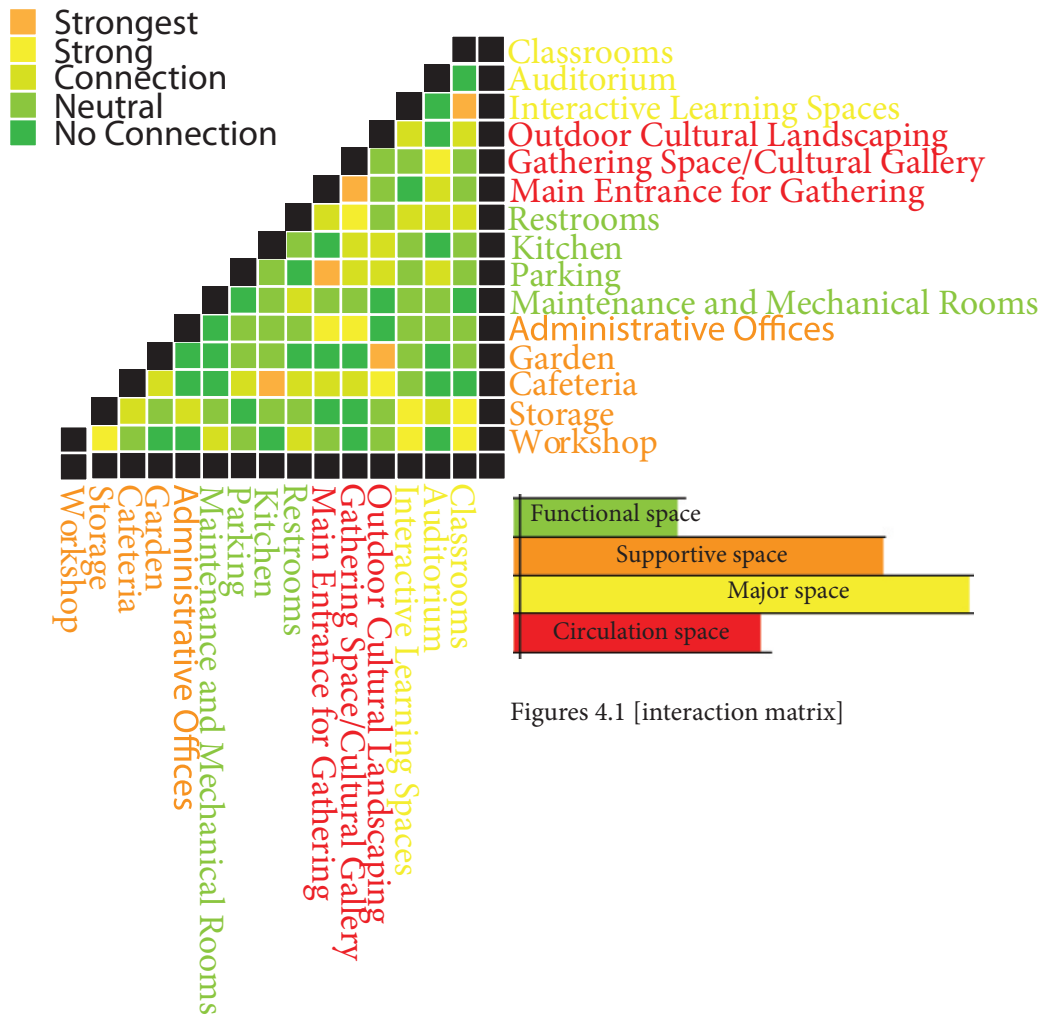


Figures 3.44 [wind direction diagram]

PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS

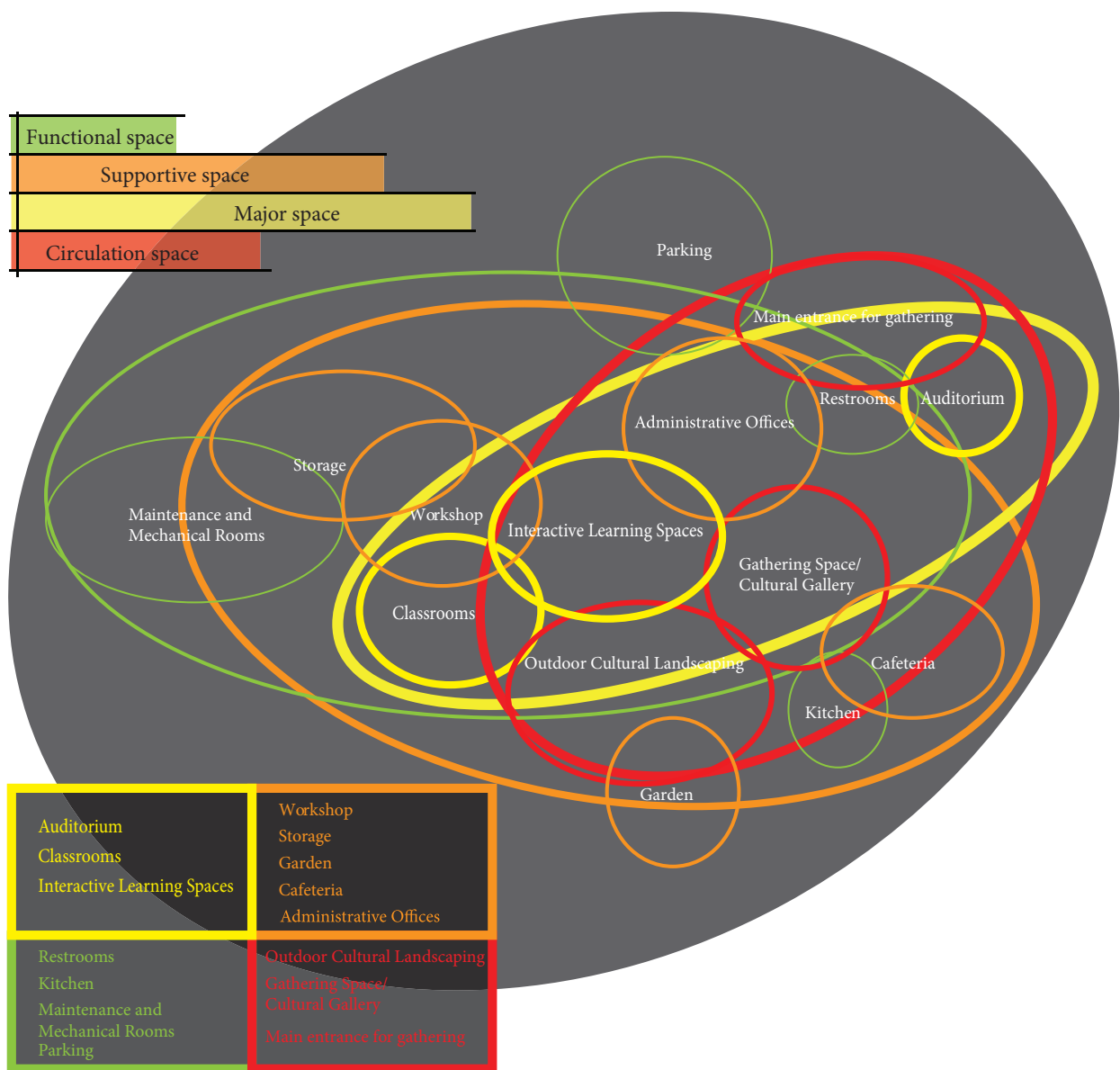
Interaction Matrix
Interaction Network

INTERACTION MATRIX



Figures 4.1 [interaction matrix]

INTERACTION NETWORK



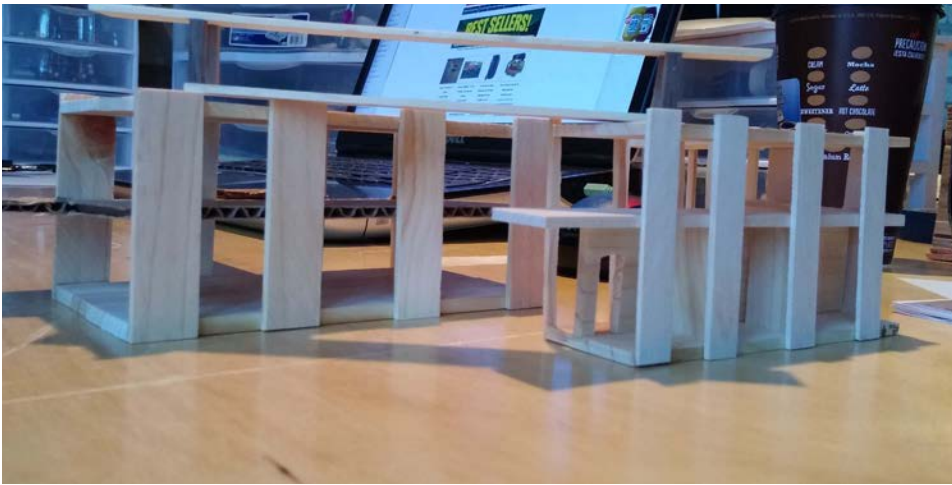
Figures 4.2 [interaction network]



THE DESIGN

Process Work
Final Design
Final Model

PROCESS WORK

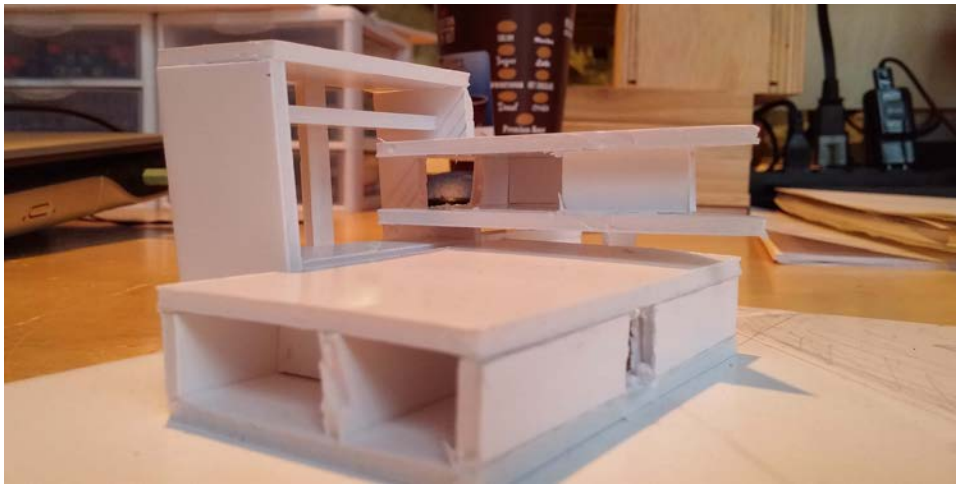


Figures 5.1 [process model]



Figures 5.2 [process model]

PROCESS WORK



Figures 5.3 [process model]

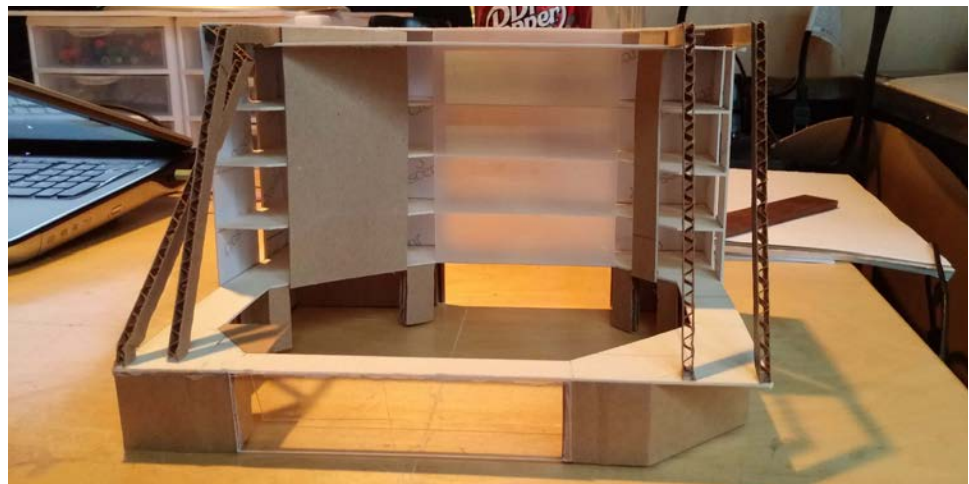


Figures 5.4 [process model]

PROCESS WORK



Figures 5.5 [process model]

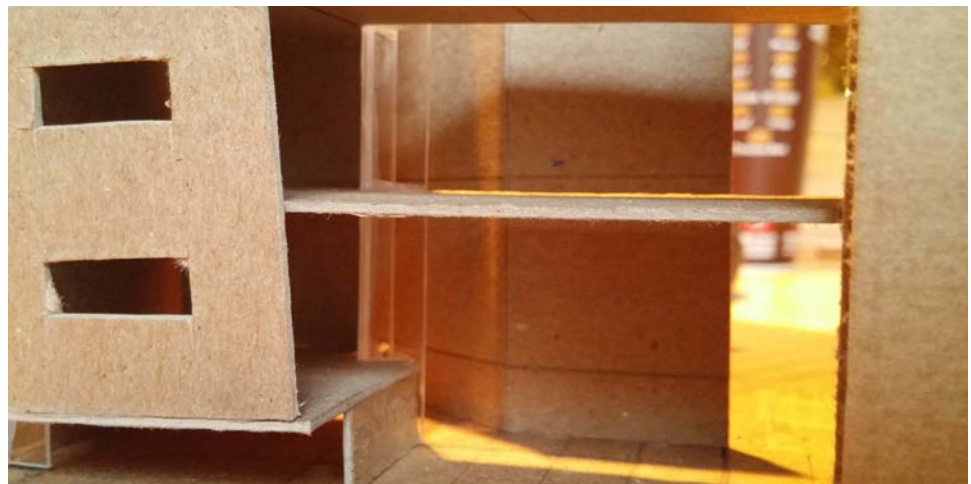


Figures 5.6 [process model]

PROCESS WORK



Figures 5.7 [process model]



Figures 5.8 [process model]

PROCESS WORK



Figures 5.9 [process model]



Figures 5.10 [process model]

FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.11 [site maps]

It is from this exploration of the artefact that led me to the site location. The site is located in Minneapolis, Minnesota at the intersection of Cedar and Fourth Street, the site was chosen since the surrounding neighborhood is one of the most diverse, multi-cultural areas within the Midwest.

FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.12 [site pictures]

It's the multi-cultural population that strengthens the site location by the opportunity to transition from one culture to another. In some way forcing one to abandon their own culture to discover the other, positioning one in a state of exile for the pursuit of discovery.

FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.13 [site context]

The site itself is a space of transition; situated in-between private homes of residential neighborhoods and public spaces of downtown. The state of transition points to the past while discovering the future and being in-between the private and public, past and future. It is in this state that one is able to see the beauty of the past and allows for the discovery of the future and the beauty of exile to be revealed.

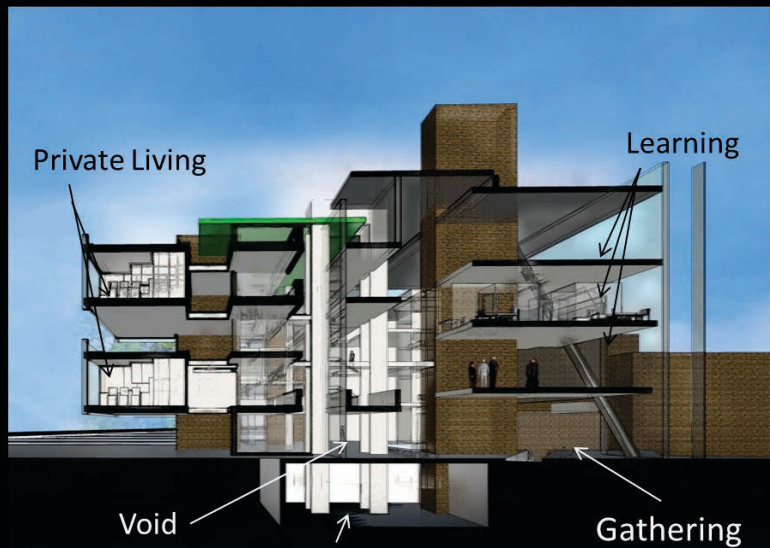
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.14 [final design outside]

The entire building is designed as a threshold – containing spaces of transition between past and future, loss and discovery.

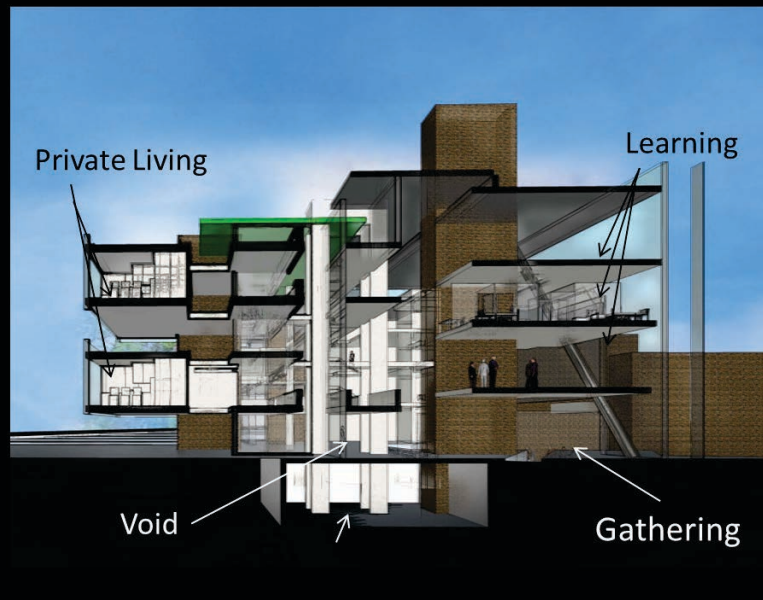
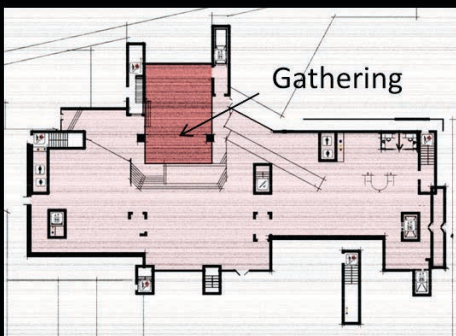
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.15 [section cut]

There are four main areas within the building program. Earlier I stated that my architecture would address the individual, social, political and symbolic through the architecture. These four main areas are how I will address the individual, social, political and symbolic.

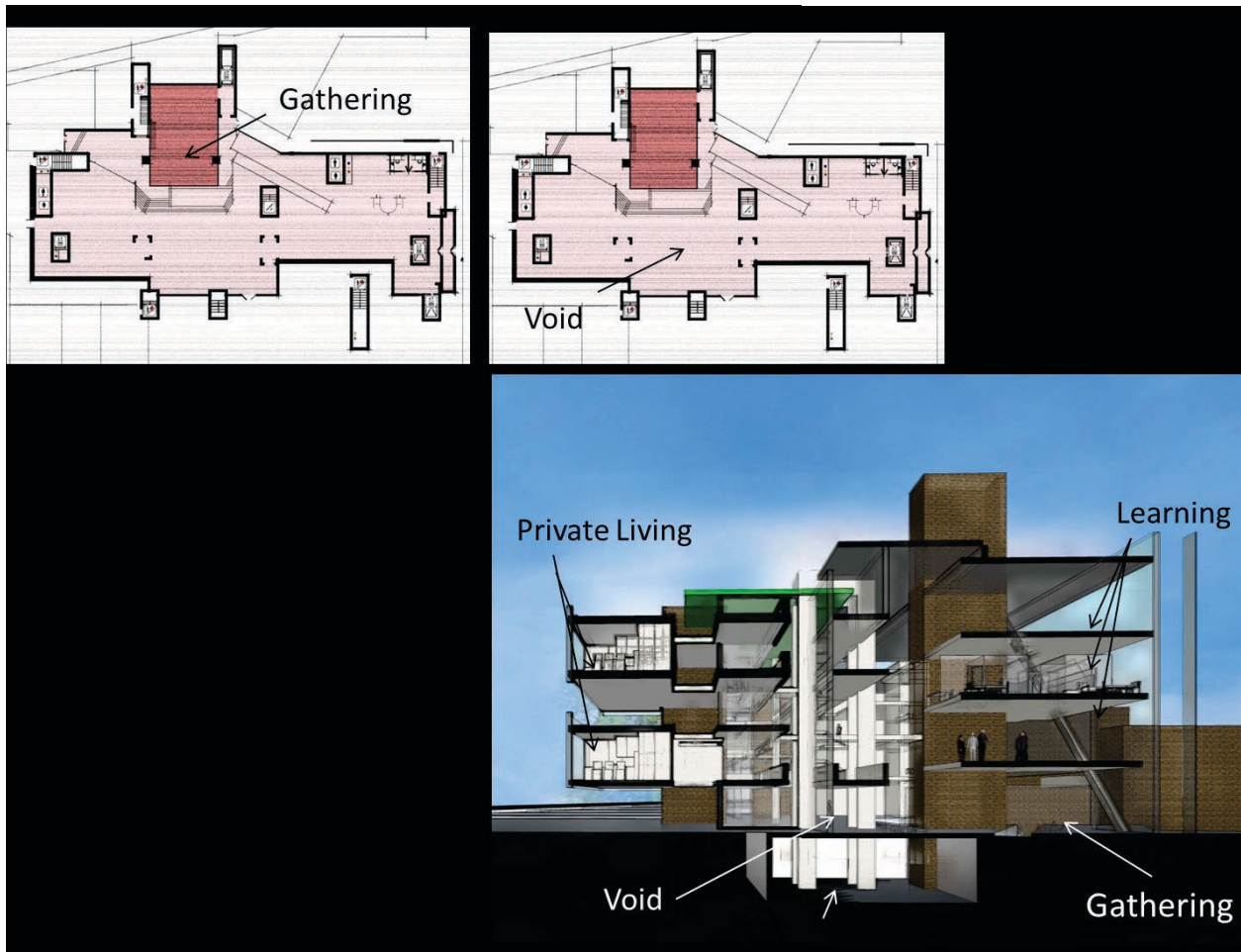
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.16 [plan gathering]

Gathering space is for hosting many different types of events. For example times of sharing stories, meals and different types of cultural events. It is here that I believe the social and political will take part.

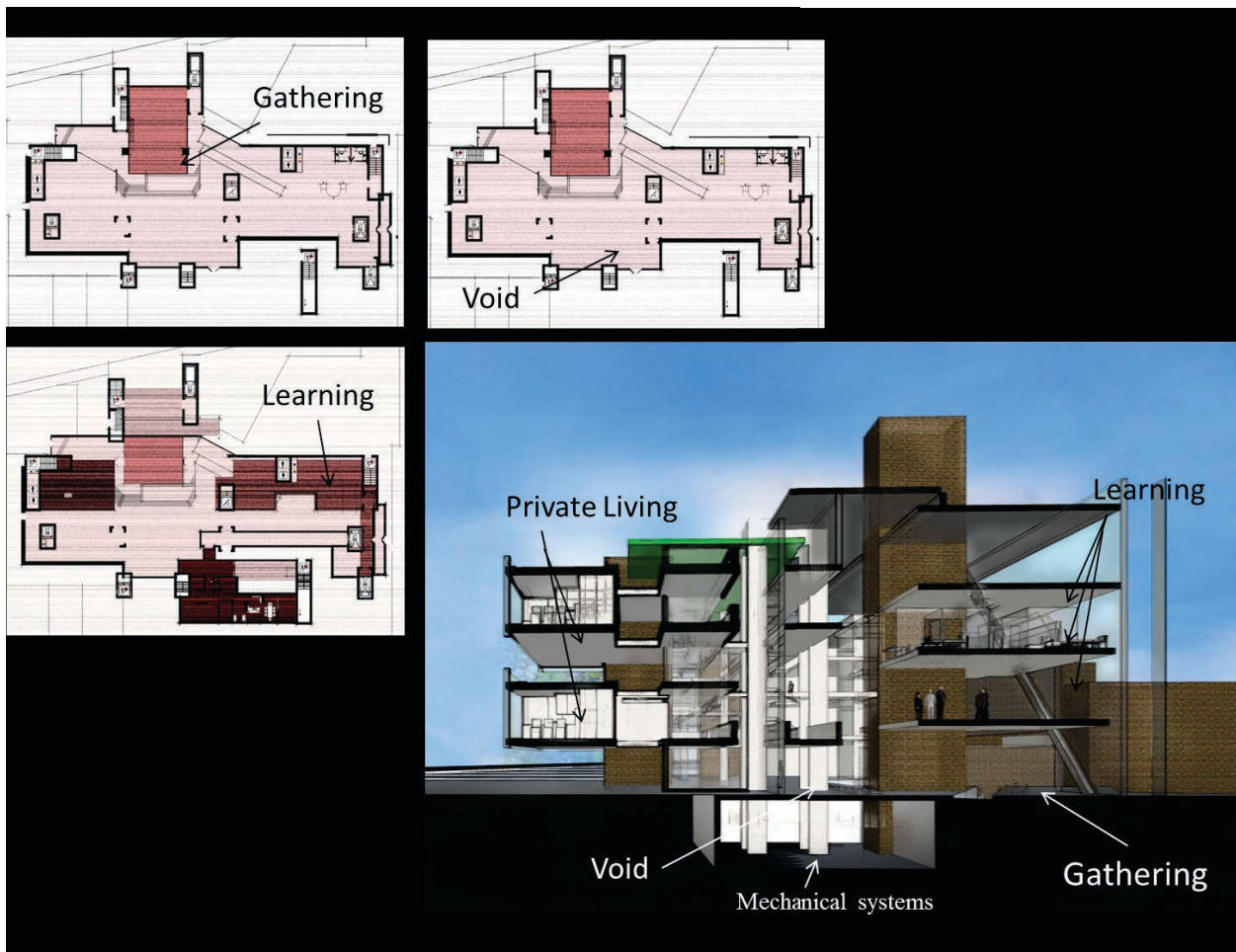
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.17 [plan void]

Voids are spaces that are not programmable found in-between the four main areas in a similar way that refugees are in the transition from one home to another. It is at this point that I believe the symbolic is revealed. In this place of void it allows for the reflection of the past while the discovery of the future.

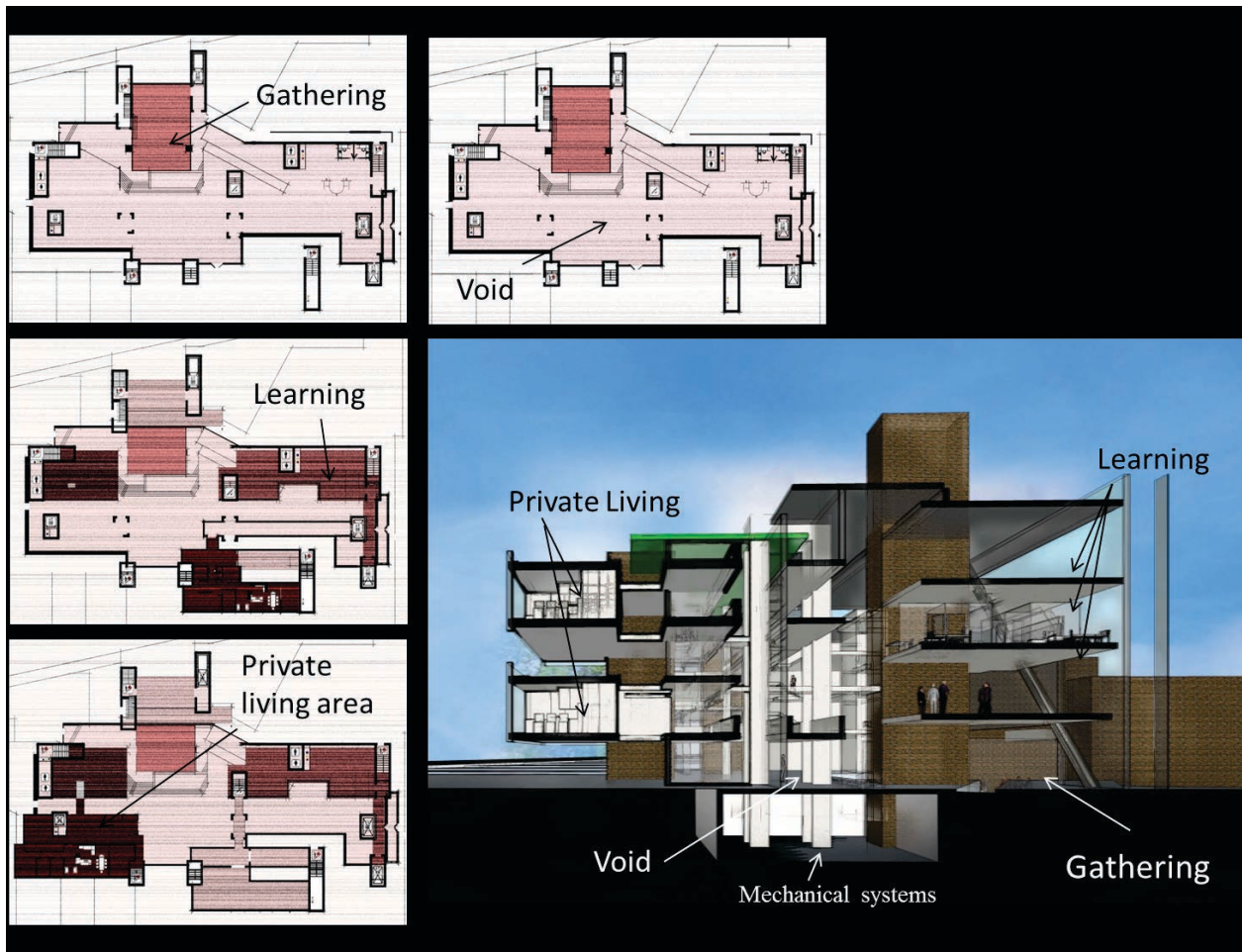
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.18 [plan learning]

The learning space is designed to help discover the new culture on a personal and political level from the way one can transition back and forth between different programs and the direction of the view back to the city.

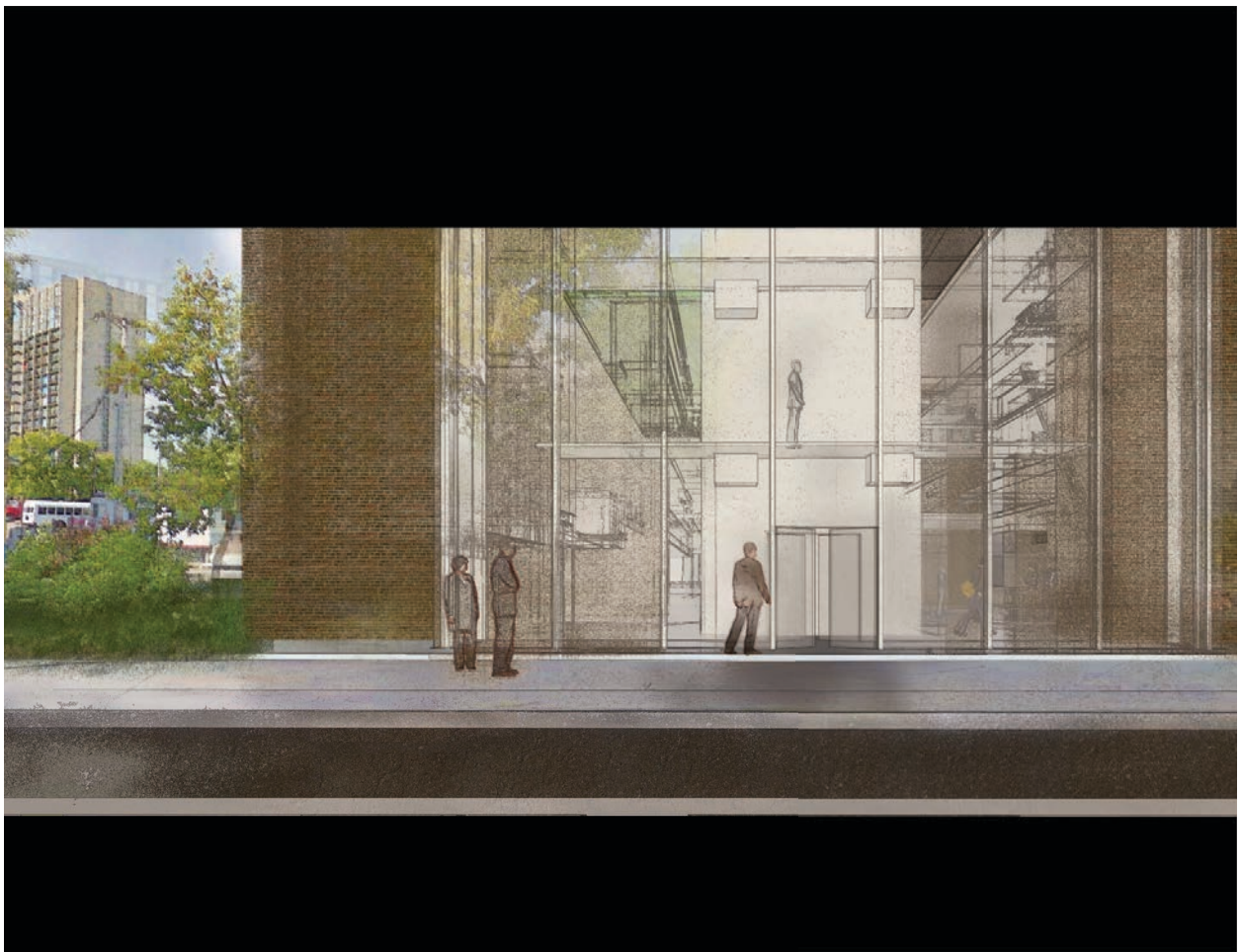
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.19 [plan private living]

Private living areas point to the individual and social through the positioning of views that are revealed and concealed by the towers looking over the private dwellings of the surrounding neighborhoods.

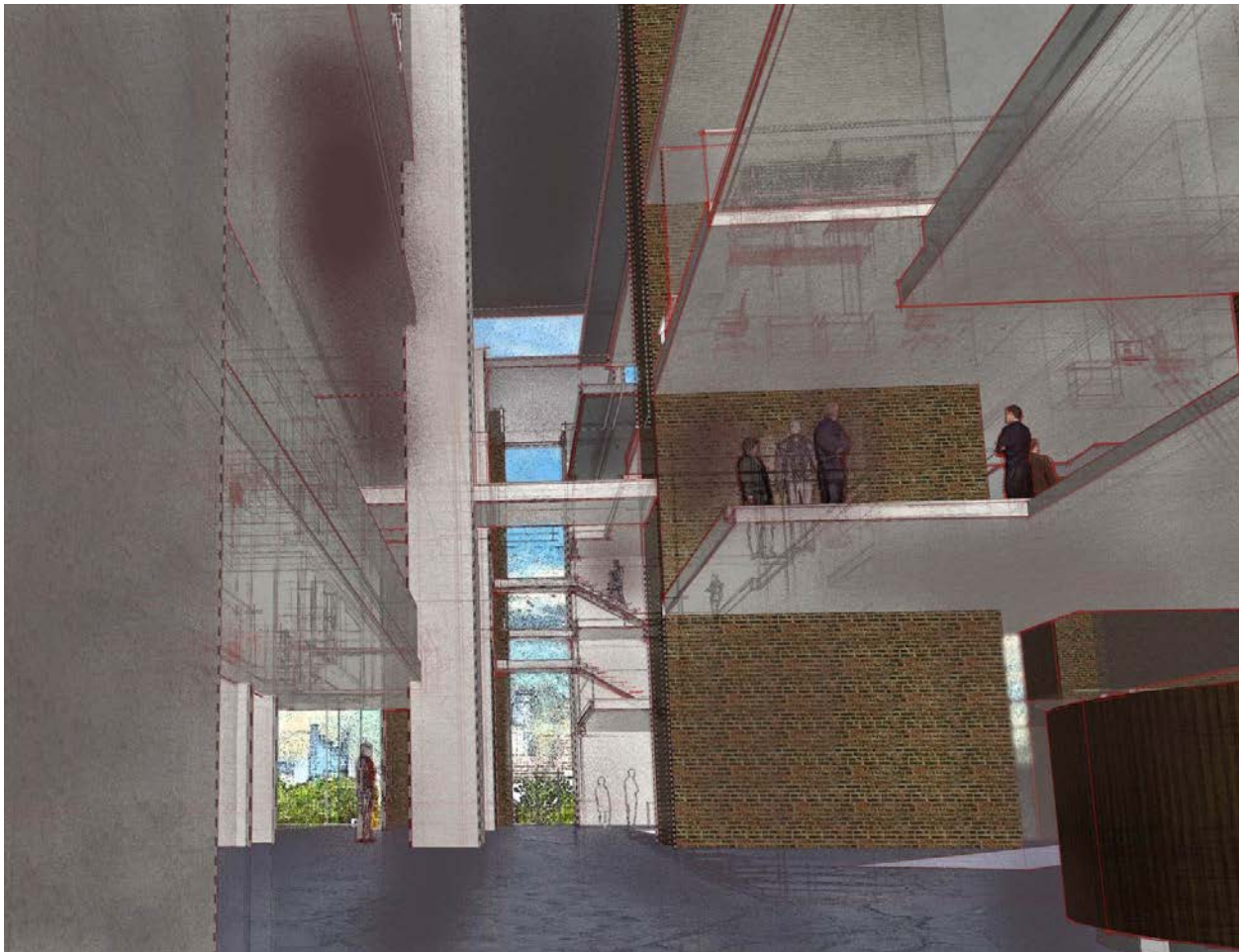
FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.20 [entry]

The first and primary building threshold is the entrance, which is composed of a large curtain wall followed by layers of towers which allow visitors a glimpse of four primary building programs. Private living areas, Learning, Gathering, and Voids.

FINAL DESIGN

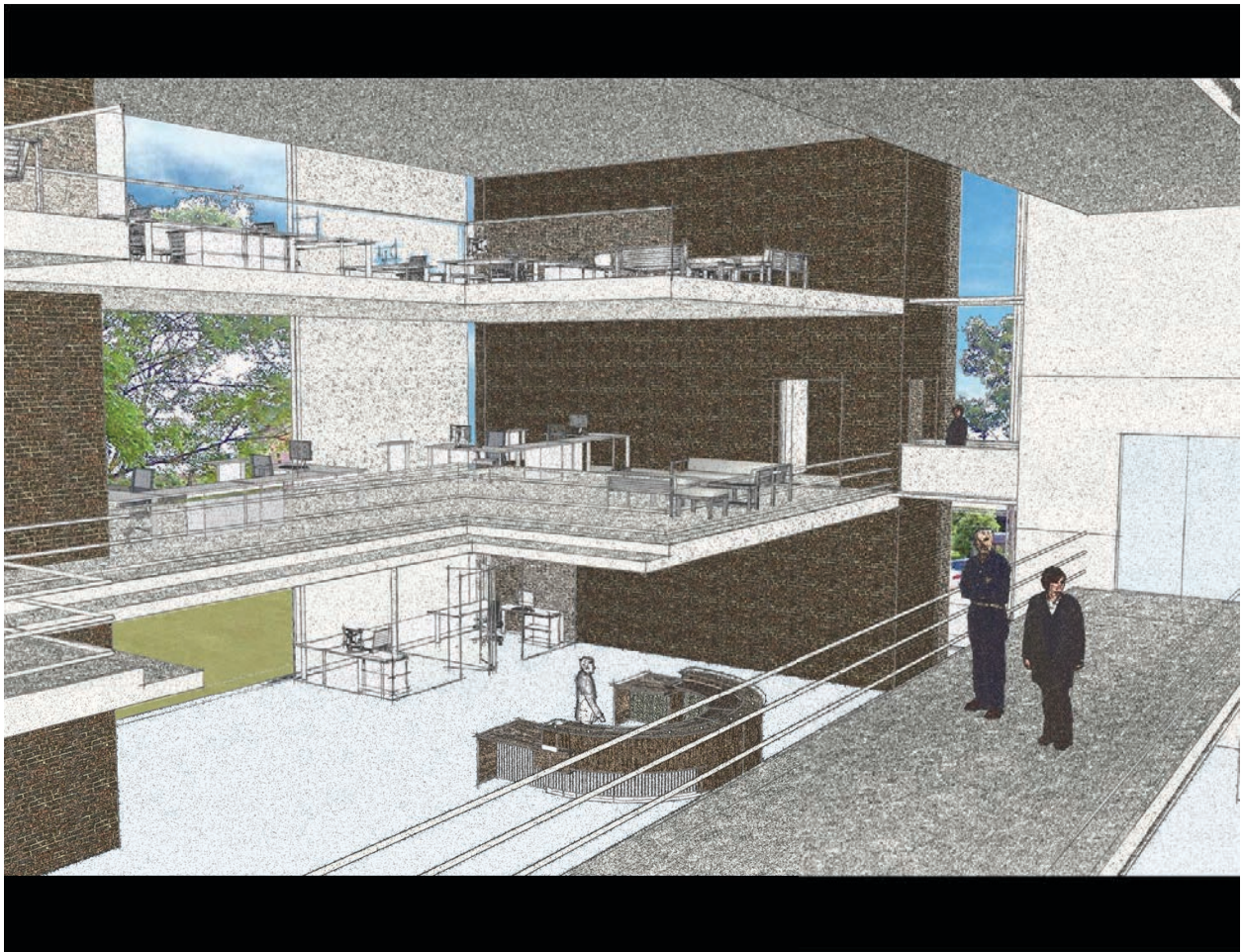


Figures 5.21 [atrium]

Moving through and in between, the building towers are intended to heighten the sense of transition between past and future, since they are constantly revealing and concealing a variety of views throughout the building.

On the ground, level one is constantly caught in a contrast between stability of the towers and the views that allow one to see completely through the building speaking to this idea of something that is permanent but temporary in the same way the artefact works.

FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.22 [path/crossing]

Travelling the length of the bridge into the dwelling area passing along the learning center, crossing over a void, arriving at the entry of the dwelling; is one example of the many transitional spaces allowing for the duality to take place between the loss and discovery of the past and future.

FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.23 [private living view]

In the private living area, the residents will have a place where their past and present situations are brought together. It is through the views to the surrounding city that look toward the residential area where the towers simultaneously draw about the sense of security through the concealing of views and residents are called into a state of reflection.

FINAL DESIGN



Figures 5.24 [private living space]

Moving into the learning area, towers are intended to heighten the sense of transition between past and future. The materiality of the towers are in contrast to each other, the concrete gives one a sense of strength and protection while the layering of bricks are a reflection of the layering of memories from the past. The views that are revealed are of public works and schools encouraging the discovery of a new culture.

FINAL DESIGN

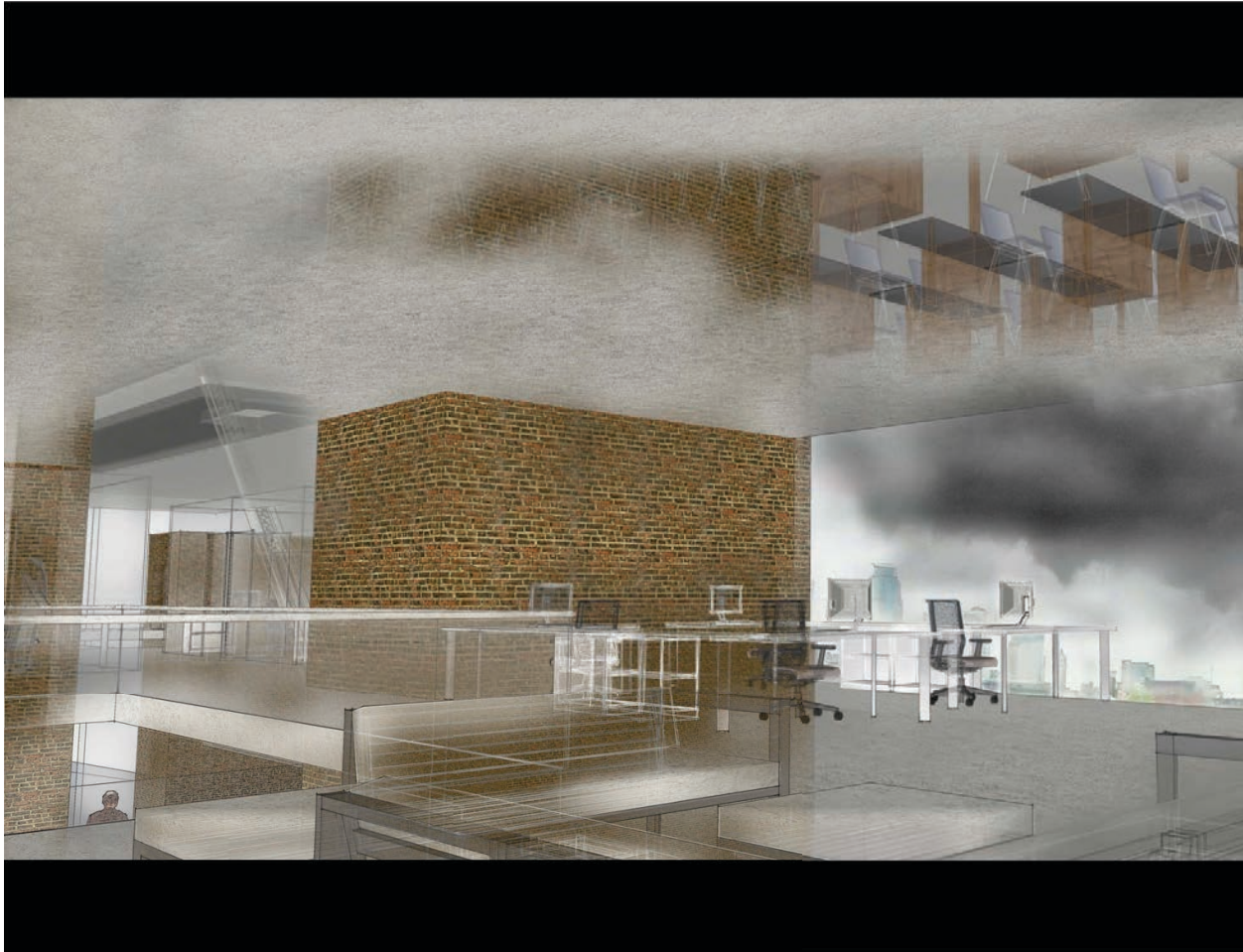


Figures 5.25 [crossing learning area]

Private spaces allow for remembering while public spaces encourage discovery. The learning area is where the past and present situations are brought together; with this interplay between public and private, revealing and concealing, the design is intended to allow for reflection and the discovery of a new culture and home.

FINAL DESIGN

The learning area will provide opportunities to discover the new culture through language class, driver's education, along with counseling and other important basic skills for new Americans.



Figures 5.26 [learning area]

The architecture will facilitate these basic skills through areas that allow for computers, classrooms and counseling. The counseling areas are adjacent to towers which give a sense of protection. The computer clusters are positioned next to the curtain wall allowing for views to the downtown area. The classroom views are concealed by a secondary façade for the purpose of protection from north winds and concealing of views.

FINAL DESIGN

Moving through the building toward the gathering space, the architecture is intended to guide your vision from the ground to the sky and back to the ground transitioning into the gathering area.

It is through the transition into the gathering area one becomes aware of the ground and sky in position to the body. As the body is positioned just below the ground in the gathering area, it is intended to evoke a sense of memory, while allowing for the sharing of ideas in a new location.

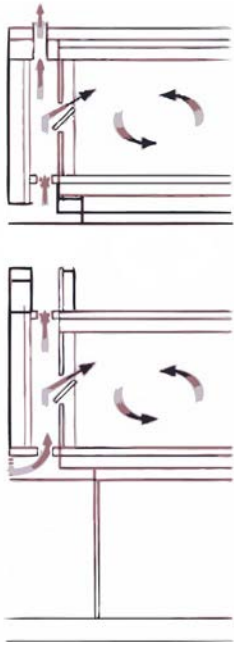
The gathering space will be used for sharing of stories and memories of the past. Different cultural meals will be shared for the transition between many different cultures and the discovery of something new.

FINAL DESIGN



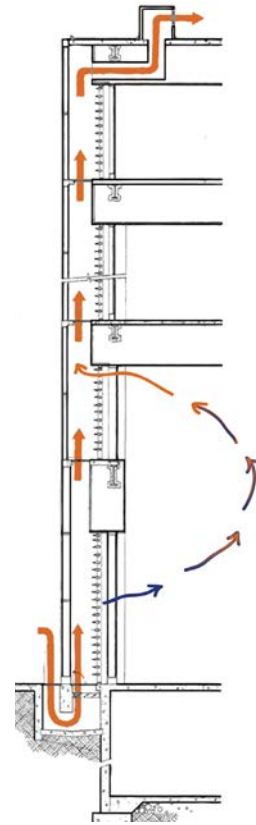
Figures 5.27 [gathering area]

FINAL DESIGN

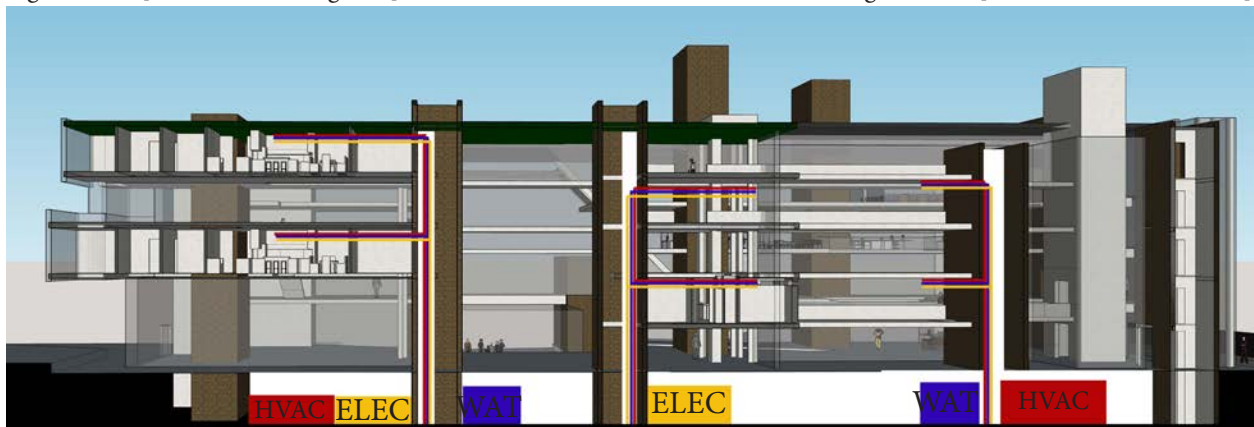


Figures 5.28 [double skin living area]

The double skin is a passive system being used for natural air ventilation. The hvac is a multi zone system located in the basement. The electrical, water and hvac systems are delivered through the towers.



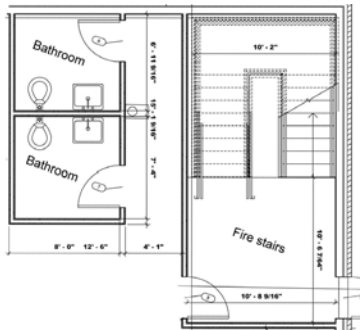
Figures 5.29 [double skin wall section]



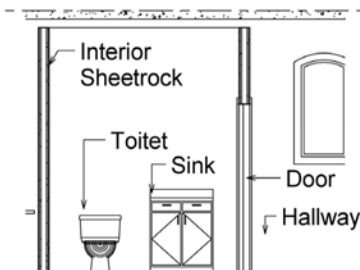
Figures 5.30 [section cut systems]

FINAL DESIGN

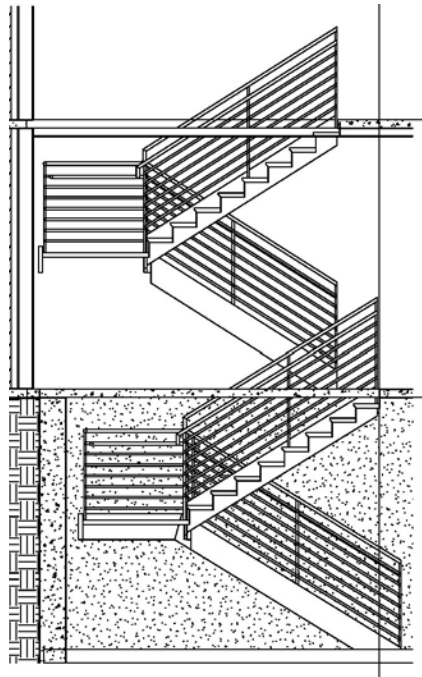
Few details of the fire stairs, bathroom, wall section, roof detail, basement and foundation.



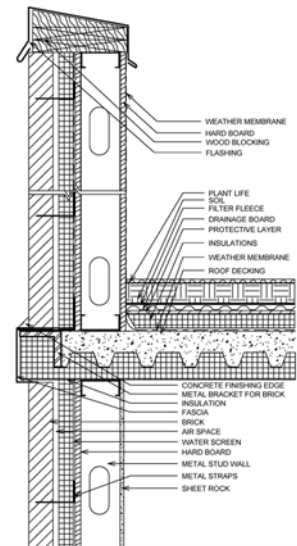
Figures 5.31 [plan bathroom & fire stair]



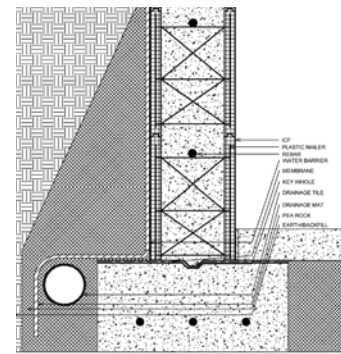
Figures 5.32 [elevation bathroom]



Figures 5.33 [fire stair section]

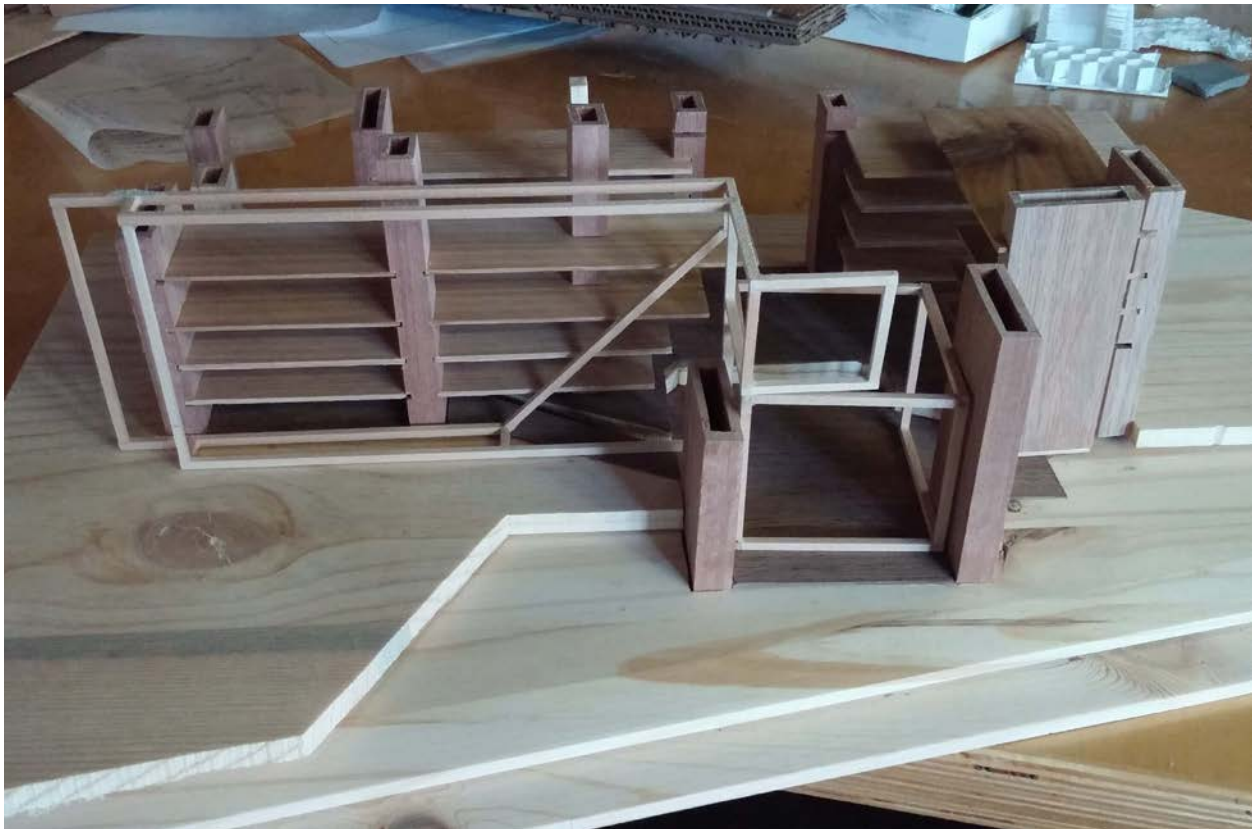


Figures 5.34 [roof section]



Figures 5.35 [foundation section]

FINAL MODEL



Figures 5.36 [final model]

FINAL BOARDS



Figures 5.37 [final boards]

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Exile and Creativity

-Celebrates the idea of exile because it causes people to remove themselves from what they know and do as though it is a habit the things that provide comfort something that is pretty not to be confused with beautiful. Pushing them to discover the truth, in doing so they must be creative to reveal the truth.

Taking Up Residence in Homelessness

-shows the way the exile is not just one type of person but could be many different types of people. For example it could be refugee along with many different types of people and people groups and is part of something large. It allows the home owners to see the reflection of things that are blinding them. Calling them out from these things that bind and blind them from seeing what is true.

Heidegger, M. (1993). Basic writings. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Building Dwelling Thinking

-challenges the idea of dwelling in what it is and how one dwells. This is good question to ask in the project because it will impact the program for the architecture in the way refugees use the space.

Said, E. (2002). Reflections on exile and other essays. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

-This shows the opposed side of the exile's life in the way that there is nothing that can fill the void no matter who is the exiled. No matter how much they overcome or heroic they are.

Stoler, A. (2014). Spatial ordering of exile: The architecture of Palestinian refugee camps. [Online Video]. Retrieved from <http://www.publicseminar.org/2014/12/spatial-ordering-of-exile-the-architecture-of-palestinian-refugee-camps/#.VMez8C5QQb5>

-This video talks directly about the experience of people living in exile and the desire to return. How the built environment directly impacts them through spatial ordering and the form of the space through symbolism. From the things that are described in this video, it exposed the desires of the client and needs to assist in the architecture.

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PERSONAL INFORMATION



Figures 6.1 [personal picture]

PERSONAL INFORMATION

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