



Grand reading room view





Preservation enclosures



The hyper-new juxtaposed into the ruin

Heidegger, M. (1977). The question concerning technology, and other essays. New York: Harper & Row Nietzsche, F. (1980). On the advantage and disadvantage of history for life. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Bazon Brock (editor): Lustmarsch durchs Theoriegelände. Verlag Dumont Literatur und Kunst, Köln 2007

South Entry point frames the old facade of the brewery

## Ruin **The Library Reimagained**

In his essay, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life" Friedrich Nietzsche discusses how a "critical approach to history" allows the past to be used as a vital force for future life and action. Such assumptions have led me to consider how the ruins of the old Hamm's brewery complex in St. Paul, Minnesota is a compelling site for the design of a new rare books library, inspired by Bazon Brock's notion that "one can only understand the known from the new; one can only experience the new with a new view of the old."

The design of the new library will support the experience of the past by giving precedence to the sharing of knowledge and ideas. This will occur within spaces that explore paradoxical relationships between past and present: where the ruin of the old brewery is supported by new architectural renovations, and where the foundations of the old

Up until the Renaissance, the library was viewed as a living immortal collection of the past within the present. This changed due to the shifting of culture in the western world, from the understanding of experiential existence, to scientific explanation. In the early 20th century the library was prominent figure in the American landscape. Many libraries built at this time were magnificent and beautiful examples of works of architecture, but this was just a façade.

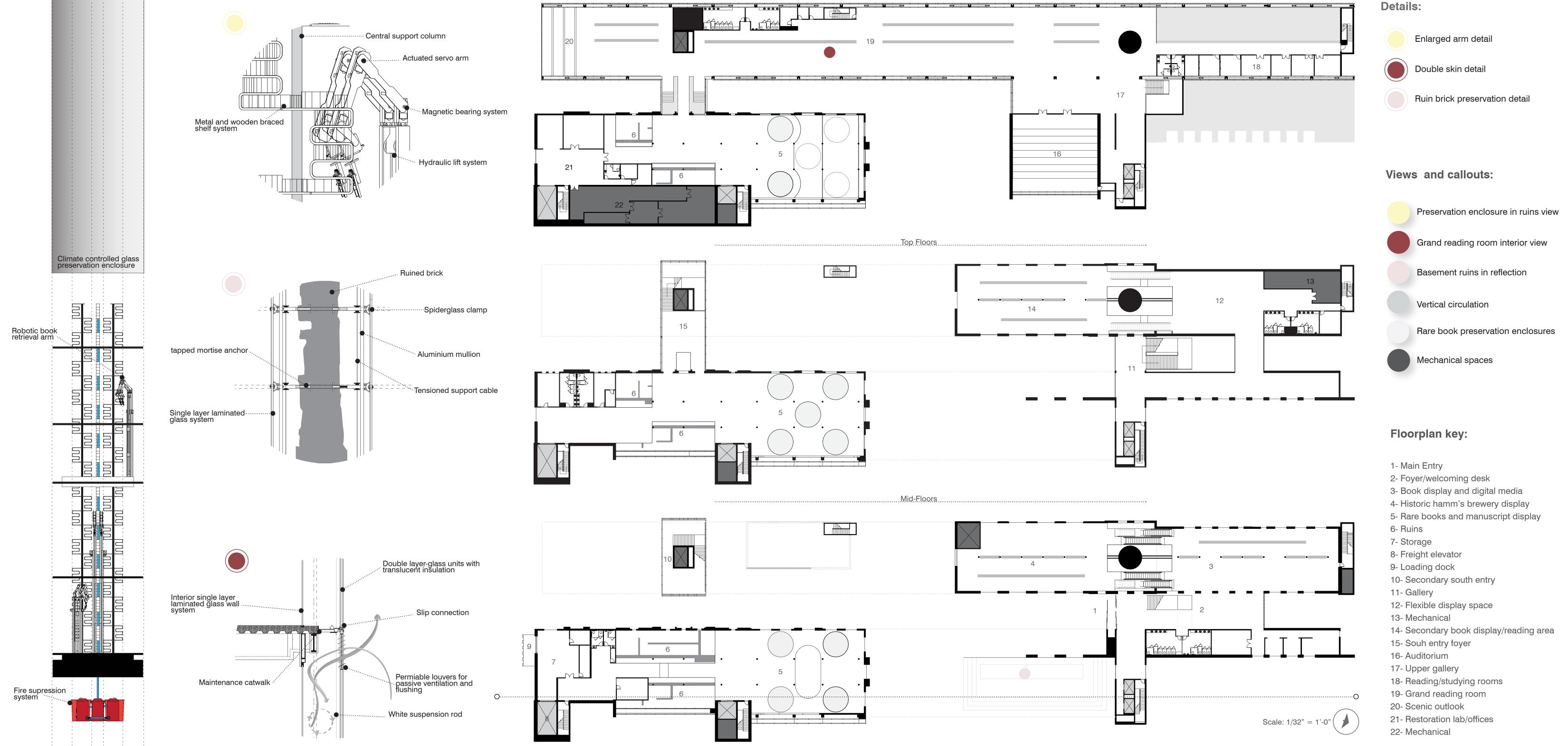
Martin Heidegger, A 20th century German philosopher, critiqued the modern era. Heidegger suggested that the modern library lost its way, losing itself within the technology. In his essay "The age of the world picture," he suggests that "The scholar Disappears. He is succeeded by the research man who is engaged in research projects. The research man no longer needs a library. Moreover, he is constantly on the move. He negotiates at meetings and collects information as he congresses. He contracts for commissions with book publishers. The latter now determine along with him which books must be written." Heidegger is criticizing the modern age's obsession with the new, the fresh, the incisive, at the potential loss of the possibility of "creative questioning and shaping out of the power of genuine reflection. The modern library as Heidegger suggests has failed to give life to the texts that are preserved, instead they seem to be treated as a "Standing Reserve." A Resource that is stored, until it is consumed later. The 20th century library very much so could be considered a standing reserve. Fluorescent lights replaced open windows, closed white rooms is where people read. The library became institutionalized, giving no imaginative qualities to the building itself, leaving behind the ruins of what were once the centers for learning, knowledge, and imagination



design support the new program.

Likewise, the sophisticated systems of technology needed to house many of the very rare books and old manuscripts may create tensions between the traditional understanding of a library and its inevitable future. This poses a challenge to modern assumptions regarding time as something progressive and linear.

Basement ruins support the new revealing the history of what once was





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RUIN: The Library Reimagined
3ds Max Autocad InDesign Illustrator Photoshop Revit Sketchup

