

empty spaces







**SIGNATURE PAGE**

Figure 2

# EMPTY SPACES

A Design Thesis Submitted to the  
Department of Architecture and Landscape Architecture  
of North Dakota State University

By  
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Architecture

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Primary Thesis Advisor

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Thesis Committee Chair

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# ENGINEERING



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# THE CONTINUAL **UNDERREPRESENTATION** OF WOMEN



Figure 5





DISCOVERING HOW **ARCHITECTURE** CAN FACILITATE THE HEALING OF  
VICTIMS OF ABUSE AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION



Figure 6

# Abstract

Just as death is underrepresented in modern society, women who have been exploited in abuse, domestic violence, stalking, rape, and sex trafficking have also become underrepresented. A voice needs to be given to these women who are forgotten and misunderstood. They need a place to heal and find their voice again. This will happen in a women's shelter that focuses on the architectural healing of their psyche in the public setting of a shopping mall. The shelter will also give a voice to those who have not yet escaped their oppression through its mood and experiences in the spaces. Through in person interviews and phenomenological research, I will be able to understand the needs of these women and apply them to my design.

# Narrative

Life. The most valued thing on earth.

Death. The most feared thing on earth.

This promise of an end is what gives value to the life we live. But death has been pushed away and hidden in the shadows of reality. It is there, lurking all around us but no one knows, no one cares. We no longer experience death on a regular basis; and we are no longer reminded of the end that inevitably comes to all. Cemeteries, which once were housed on the grounds of the church everyone would pass when entering Sunday morning service, have now been abandoned to the outskirts of town; out of sight, out of mind. The sick and dying are giving a place to rest and continue their days in seclusion away from the greater society in nursing homes, senior living, and hospice. Just like the women and children who have been forgotten and abandoned in the depths of abuse and sexual exploitation. But who visits these places and these people? Everyone is scared to experience death, to see death and ultimately ... to die. Just as they are scared of their legitimacy in society and the potential of this being their reality.

## Forgotten

Current victims of abuse and sexual exploitation are ignored and forgotten. They are forcibly restrained in the shadows. No one knows because no one sees, therefore, no one cares.

Figure 7





## False Hope

They have been stuck in an environment that has stripped them of any hope of freedom or security. Whether it's the house they are abused in, the brothel they are sold in, the city they are stalked in, or the workplace they were raped in. places and spaces they should feel safe in are items of daily torture.

## Coping

Shame, disappointment, failure, regret. Emotions that linger behind after the abuse, the rape, the exploitation, and the manipulation. They do not go away on their own. They leave marks on the soul and psyche so deep you can see it in their eyes.

## Trials

First, he told me I was special. Better than the other girls.  
Then he wooed me with all the gifts and all the nice things he said. I felt pretty. I felt wanted.  
But then. He got mad. He hit me. Again and again and again.

## Disappointment

They all want an escape from what they are experiencing every day. The only thing is, they don't know how. All they know is the life they have. They can try on their own, but they will fail every time. They will go back to their abusive lifestyles.





Figure 8

# Typology

Women who have been made vulnerable through addiction, abuse, or other traumatic events need a place to find safety, guidance, and rest. This women's transitional community will assist women in their journey of healing back to stability through psychological uncovering. Similar to a shelter, therapy sessions, job search guidance, and education regarding pregnancy, delivery, and personal finance will be offered to its tenants. In addition, the center will expose the current issues of underrepresentation of sexual exploitation through representation of the women who are trapped in abusive, addictive and exploitative relationships and lifestyles.



# THEORETICAL RESEARCH







Figure 9

# Literary Review

## **The Enigma of Health**

Hans-Georg Gadamer

## **Mind in Architecture: *Mood and Meaning in Architecture***

Alberto Perez-Gomez

## **Nesting: Body, Dwelling, Mind**

Sarah Robinson

nothing is safer  
than the sound of you  
reading out loud to me

- *the perfect date*



Figure 10

# The Enigma of Health

## Hans-Georg Gadamer

### Overview

This review will provide insight on the topics of the specialist, the clinical setting and the underrepresentation of death. These topics relate to my thesis as they address the shortfalls of the current system in place for healing in the physical and psychological realms. Hans-Georg Gadamer illustrates how healing, science and architecture can cohabit and benefit the users of the spaces.

### The specialist

In Hans-Georg Gadamer's book *The Enigma of Health*, he explains the growing problem of specialization in multiple fields. Specifically, the research and medical field have become very specialized. Gadamer expresses the problem with this that "Specialized researchers find themselves in need of an orientation which is similar to that of the layperson in general as soon as they look beyond the most limited range of their area of work" (p. 8). Though medical professionals first do a general study of the body and their biology, they are quickly put on a track of specialization that quickly forgets the general knowledge of the biology. When multiple disciplines know only a part of the whole, it makes for difficult decision making for some simple diagnosis. Gadamer continues to explain; "Our progress of knowledge is subject to the law of increasing specialization and, hence, to increasing obstacles to comprehensiveness. The action of human beings – that is, the conscious use of human knowledge and know-how for the preservation of health or social equilibrium, particularly peace – manifestly lacks a unified scientific basis" (p.10). An example of this is when your back hurts. Who do you go to for help? A list of specialists comes to mind; a chiropractor, back surgeon, and physical therapist. When you visit each of these specialist, they all have a different answer and solution to the problem. Though necessary, even the technology they use is very specialized and often intimidating. But if they actually communicated with each other, then maybe the true answer would appear. There needs to be greater communication between the specialists, so their fragmented knowledge becomes one whole understanding. This problem of specialization affects the environment of healing in the medical setting.

### The clinical setting

Health is a hard thing to sell because it is a hard thing to measure. Therefore, the job of the



doctor or medical professional is not always clear, and this is where the difference between science and practice takes place. Gadamer describes the change in the medical environment to today; "For illness is a social state of affairs. It is also a psychological-moral state of affairs, much more than a fact that is determinable from within the natural sciences. All this, which formerly made the family doctor a friend of the family, indicates the elements of medical efficacy of which we today are often painfully deprived" (p.20). Today there is still the need to psychologically treat the patient along with the physical healing. Patients have been more and more deprived of this psychological healing throughout time. The family doctor who would visit the house to heal and treat their patient had more access to their patient's environments and true symptoms. Today, to get a diagnosis and treatment, one must remove themselves from their environment and enter a new and sterile one. This restricts the accuracy of the diagnosis from the specialist. This brings us back to the idea that the specialists should communicate with each other. They provide different settings and environments that may present different symptoms and, possibly, diagnosis.

### **The underrepresentation of death**

As I moved into the next relevant chapter in Gadamer's *The Enigma of Health*, he starts off by addressing his concerns with death in society today; "I am concerned with a much more radical and specifically contemporary occurrence, that is, with the gradual disappearance of the representation of death in modern society" (p.61). He demands our consideration as he connects the demythologizing of death with that of life. He calls this era of demythologizing the second enlightenment. He blames this era and our experience of death to be a result of the industrial revolution. Our experience of death has disappeared in society, specifically in the modern hospital. Gadamer illustrates that; "The dying and their relatives are removed from the domestic environment of the family[...]And yet there is perhaps no other experience in human life which so clearly marks the limits places on that modern control of nature acquired through science and technology" (p.62). Not being able to participate in the experience of death deprives us of the significance of life. Even the daily reminders of death are no longer apparent. Cemeteries are no longer within large cities or on the properties of churches to remind people of the inevitable end. This connection to the realness of death reminds us of the value of life and we begin to appreciate all we have.

### **Conclusion**

The underrepresentation of death is caused by the specialization of healthcare and the current clinical setting. Like death, women who have been abused and sexually exploited have not been represented in modern society. There needs to be a reevaluation of the healing environment and its application to these women.

# **Mind in Architecture: *Mood and Meaning in Architecture***

## **Alberto Perez-Gomez**

### **Overview**

Alberto Perez-Gomez illustrates the importance of mood in architecture and how it connects us with our unconscious and our environment. Mood is an essential participant in the overall essence of the architecture and its spaces. He talks about how we used to perceive the world and our minds and how our understanding of the mind today influences how we should be designing. This review will address these issues.

### **The embodied mind**

During the 17th century Rene Descartes dualistic epistemology/psychology of how architecture communicates lead to the unforeseen presumptions of what architecture should be. The poststructuralist and deconstructivist philosophy believed architecture was a visual sign. They designed for only the eye and nothing more because they believed all the senses were separate and did not work together to place us in our environment. Our connection to the environment was not of significance to these philosophers. Perez-Gomez explains this when he talks about Perrault; "Perrault assumed perception to be passive and cognition to be merely the result of the association of concepts and images in the brain. Like desacartes, Perrault believed that human consciousness was capable of a perspectival visual perception, one that assured the human capacity to grasp the immutable geometric and mathematical truth of the external world" (p.220). We now understand the embodied mind is the connectivity of our mind, body and environment. When we understand our inherent belonging in the environment, we then understand the necessity of appropriate moods.

### **Mood in architecture**

Alberto Perez-Gomez states, "Once we start to understand, through recent cognitive science, that our consciousness does not end with our skulls, it becomes easy to grasp that the emotive character of the built environment matters immensely: what matters, in other words, is its material beauty; its power to seduce us on one hand, and its capacity to open up a space of communication for intersubjective encounters on the other hand"(p.226). This can be applied to architecture by intentionally designing spaces that allow for this communication and seduction. Stimmung is an attunement that evokes interiority, this is a

German word that relates to the word mood. Although human actions can create the mood of spaces like lighting effects and artificial acoustic, “architects are capable of incorporating in their design spaces a more lasting mood, one that we may associate with the room itself: solemn, strange, quiet, cheerful, reverential, oppressive, etc.” (Perez-Gomez, p.227). Perez-Gomez argues that architecture needs to be greater than simply designing efficient buildings. Efficiency is important, but not when the mood and meaning in the architecture does not exist. Designers need to use their imagination to make poetic spaces with character. They need to resonate with the situations that take place in these spaces and to engage all the dimensions of consciousness. “Architecture has to speak back to us without becoming merely invisible, acting like a numbing drug or like the perfect fit dreamt by functionalism, and today by architects who design increasingly more ‘intelligent’ – i.e., comfortable and efficient – buildings” (Perez-Gomez p.226). When there is a greater purpose than efficiency in architecture, then architecture has the unique gift of offering experiences of sense and purpose within the spaces. This is not done in the simple fulfillment of pleasure, but “delay that reveals the space of human existence as a space of desire, actually bittersweet, never ending with a punctual homeostasis” (Perez-Gomez p.225). We should long for people to desire being in the buildings we design.

## **Conclusion**

Alberto Perez-Gomez expressed the need for more meaningful spaces in our architecture. When designing for a provocative topic like a healing center for abused and sexually exploited women, there needs to be a mood, and that mood needs to send the right message. Through the understanding that the mind, body, and environment are not separate, but indeed one, I now understand how to connect with the emotions and situations that will take place in the spaces.

# Nesting: body, dwelling, mind

## Sarah Robinson

### Overview

Sarah Robinson unwraps and describes the nesting of our psyche within our body and world. Robinson talks generally about these topics which allows for interpretation and multiple applications. Understanding these concepts will serve as the foundation of my thesis as I will be dealing with the wounded psyche. This review will address how we experience our world with our different senses.

### Touch

Our body's skin is what separates us from the exterior world, and it is the platform of our sense of touch. Touch goes beyond what happens when we place our hand on a wall to feel the roughness of the brick, it entails the shifting of bones when we walk or the angle of which our feet step at when climbing a mountain. This sense when combined with sight and sound help us to keep our balance. Sarah Robinson explains that the electrodes which travel from our feet to our brain at each step creates a story of that place. Paying attention to the textures and materials of the design can help create the narrative of the building and spaces.

### Sound

Sarah Robinson explains the need to be cautious of artificial sounds in architecture. "Unlike the eyes, we cannot close our ears, which explains why we feel more vulnerable to sound. The first sound that anyone has ever heard is the pulse of the mothers heartbeat" (Robinson p.41). Artificial sound is unlike natural sound. The waves of natural sounds are irregular while artificial sounds do not change. We are surrounded by rhythm all the time and are usually unaware of it. We can use this to our advantage in architecture. Robinson explains; "...we can, as architects, compose symphonies" (p.43). Though, sound is often not designed for because architecture is designed by the eye and for the eye which has caused our ears to become desensitized. The mayan temples in Mexico are thought to have been designed with sound in mind. The steps of the pyramids sound like an echo of rain as people walk on them. We should also design for sound like how the Mayans did in ancient times, with intentionality.

### Taste and smell

Similar to artificial sound, the world is filled with artificial smell and it's causing problems. In Sarah Robinson's book, Nesting: body, dwelling, mind; she quotes E.T. Hall saying; "The extensive use of deodorants and suppression of odor in public places results in a land of olfactory blandness and sameness that would be difficult to duplicate anywhere else in the



world. This blandness makes for undifferentiated spaces and deprives us of richness and variety in life.” (p.51). Wall plug ins and Febreze are attributers to this problem. Spaces should be allowed to smell the way they naturally want to. The aroma of cedar, maple and ash trees are embedded in a wood shop, to change that natural smell would deprive the users of the full experience. Allowing the buildings to breath creates a changing of scents within spaces which gives us that variety of smells and aromas Sarah Talks about.

## **Sight**

The sense of sight is over designed for in architecture. Though, this does not mean all design for sight should be stopped. Instead, design for sight needs to be reimagined. A lot of times architects and developers are light happy in their designs. Sarah Robinson explains the change that must take place to alter to a better design; “We can only see the brilliance of the stars against the darkness of the sky. In our love of light, we must praise the night” (p.84). The use of shadow and contrast within the building assists in the creation of mood and the embodiment of the senses.

## **The nested psyche**

When Sarah Robinson talks about the nesting of the psyche and the unconscious, she says; “Cognitive scientists would most likely agree that when it comes to consciousness, ‘usefulness comes from what is not there.’ For they tell us that the unconscious, which they call the ‘cognitive unconscious’, comprises of 5% of our total cognitive functioning” (p.68). This means what most of what we perceive is not done with the consciousness we experience everyday but rather in the depths of the psyche within the unconscious. The unconscious takes note of all the smells and sounds and what we feel so when we encounter it again in the future, we remember on a much deeper level than we realize. We are shaped by our environment even our thoughts. She confirms this by stating; “Our conscious thought truly emerges from the rich loam of the unconscious. This views of the unconscious portrays our identity as embedded and resumed in the greater whole” (p.74). She then goes on to encourage architects; “Since we know that what is visible and conscious emerges from a vast source, shouldn’t we then design to appeal to the full dignity of a person who not only thinks, but feels and slaps and dreams and imagines?” (p.74). Architecture is the vessel which houses memories. We need to facilitate these memories by designing for all the senses, not only sight.

## **Conclusion**

Architecture needs to use all the senses. Creating a place for all these senses to dwell will enable the imagination to take root and for the healing to take place. This is the creation of mood within architecture.

# Conclusions

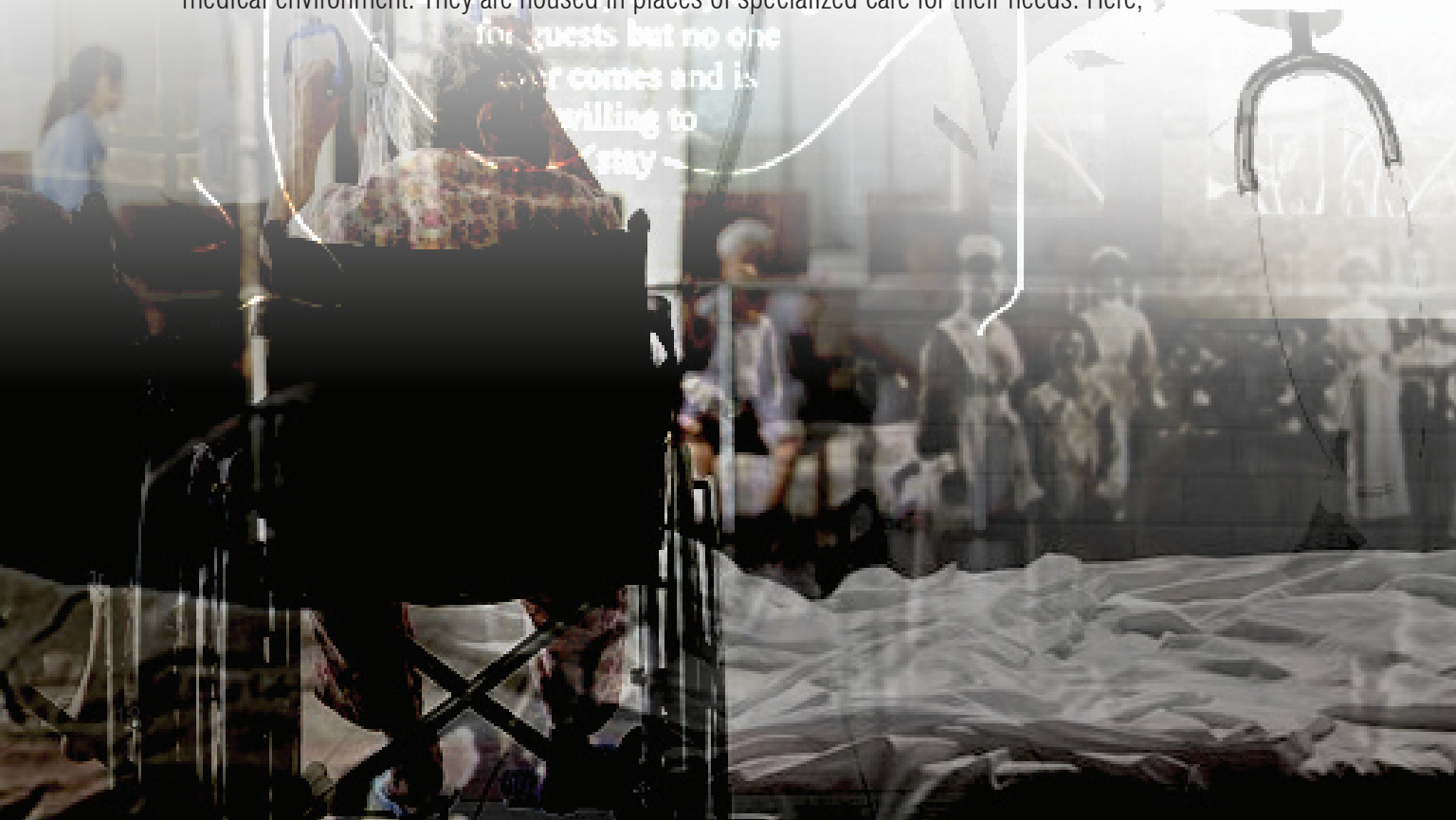
Life. The most valuable thing on earth.

Death. The most feared thing on earth.

Death gives value to life, but it has been pushed away and hidden in the shadows of reality. It is there. It is lurking all around us, but no one knows, and no one cares. Cemeteries have been abandoned to the outskirts of town; out of sight, out of mind. The sick and dying are given a place to rest and continue their days in seclusion away from the greater society in nursing homes, senior living, and hospice. But who visits these places?

Everyone is scared to experience death, to see death and ultimately to die. We are so scared of dying that we have removed the experience of death from society. Those who are dying are cleansed from the sight of society. We no longer care for our family when they are sick or dying, we remove them from our home environment and condemn them to a hospital in the medical environment. They are housed in places of specialized care for their needs. Here,

for guests but no one  
ever comes and is  
willing to  
stay



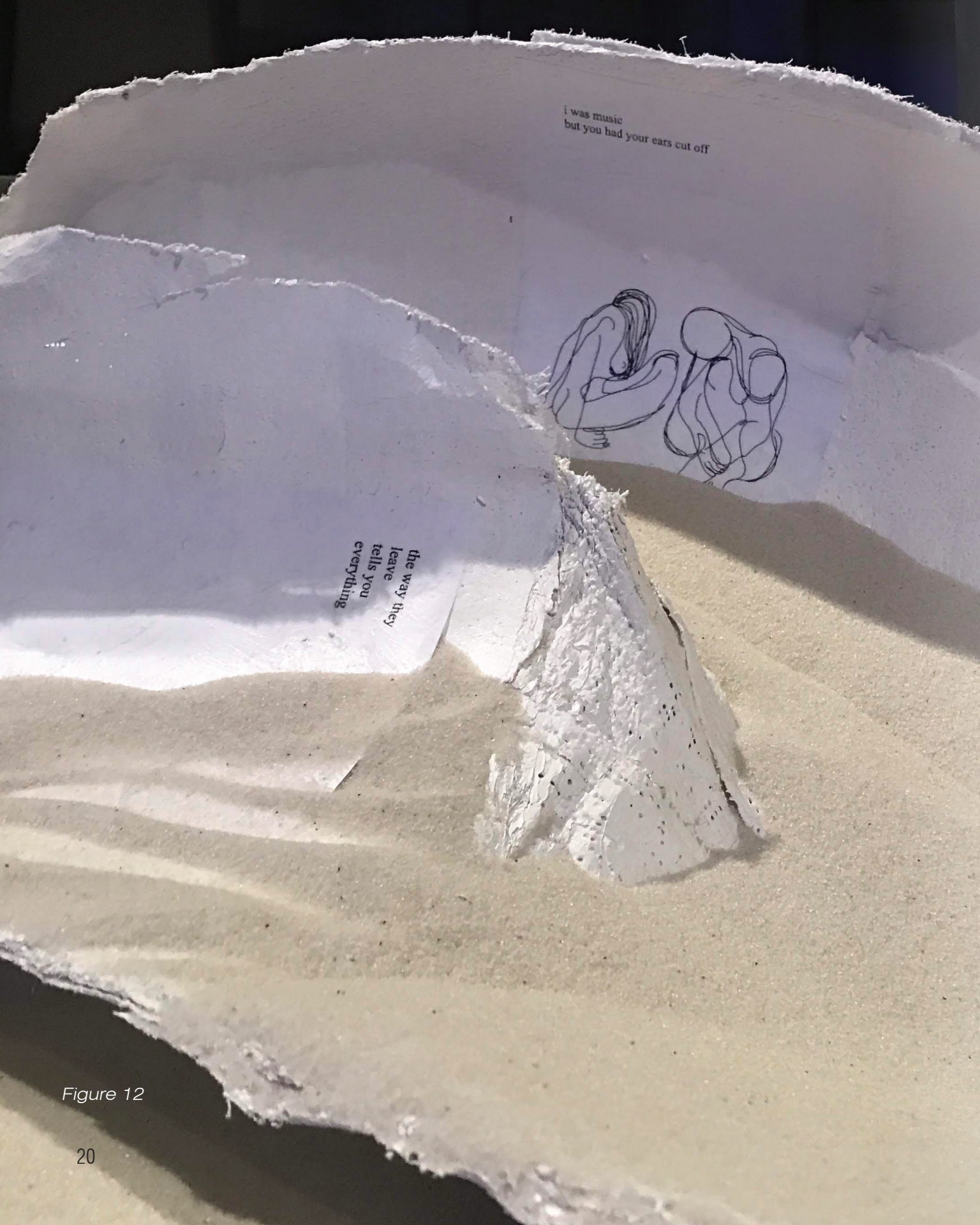
the dead are kept alive for the sake of the living. “The prolongation of life finally becomes a prolongation of death and a fading away of the experience of the self.”

Like how death lurks in the shadows, so do the faces of the women and children who have been forgotten and abandoned in the depths of abuse and sexual exploitation. Just as death is removed from society, cast out and forgotten in the abyss of the clinical setting, so are these women. Here they are secluded with no visitation, out of sight, out of mind, their ‘self-ness’ fading away.

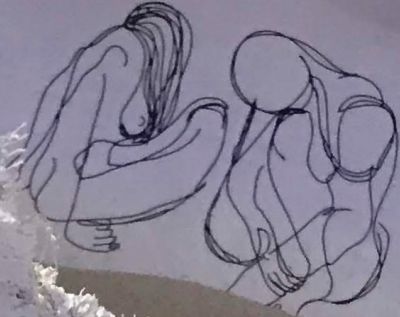


Figure 11





i was music  
but you had your ears cut off



the way they  
leave  
tells you  
everything

Figure 12

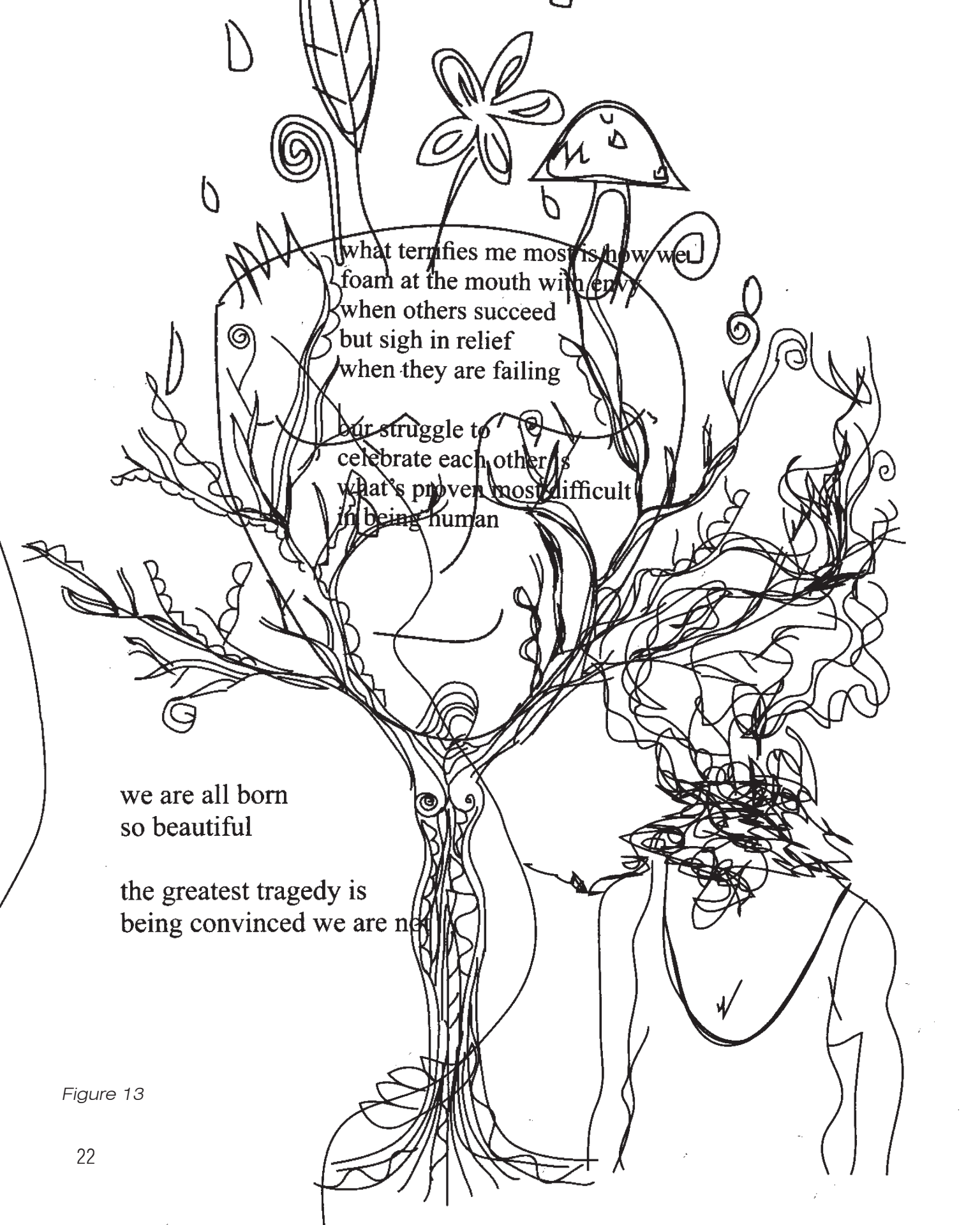


Though these women may very well be physically injured, the real healing needs to happen within their psyche.

We have come to understand that our body, mind, and environment are no longer independent entities but are actually “an embodied dynamic system in the world.” Just as “an animal does not so much live in its environment, as the environment is an extension of the animal. The two coexist in a mutually interdependent, constantly evolving relationship.” The current response to this new understanding is often centered around the visual experiences people have within the built environment. Perez-Gomez expresses the need for architects to shift their way of thinking and focus on the *stimmung* of those spaces. *Stimmung*: a German word meaning mood is further explained as “a search for lost integrity, health, wholeness, and holiness” ... “An attunement that evokes interiority. *Stimmung* is related etymologically to the central questions of harmony and temperance in music, philosophy, and architecture.” To do this, architecture can and should “try to bring about the appropriate moods for human actions that reveal life as purposeful by designing spaces that are open to an appropriate range of moods.”

The emotions and feelings of patients relating to their moods are quickly discarded when in the presence of a clinical setting. The urgency of the physical healing supersedes the need of psychological healing. Psychological healing can be accomplished through mood; the understanding of the emotions and feelings happening within a space.

Giving context to the clinical setting through mood in architecture will facilitate the specialist in the proper healing of the women and children. Designing a better environment for the occupants will also boost the healing process through the psyche and the physical realm.



what terrifies me most is how we  
foam at the mouth with envy  
when others succeed  
but sigh in relief  
when they are failing

our struggle to  
celebrate each other is  
what's proven most difficult  
in being human

we are all born  
so beautiful

the greatest tragedy is  
being convinced we are not

Figure 13

“Remembering and imagining draw on the same neural pathways and are more similar than we realize. Memories, dreams, and our imagination are linked inextricably with the objects of our lives and the rich associations we have with meaningful places.” This was from Sarah Robinson’s book; *Nesting: body, dwelling, mind* where she reveals the connectivity of our subconscious and conscious thoughts and how they influence the perception of our physical surroundings. E.V Walter expressed the vitality of imagination in correspondence to the perception of a place: “Towns may die for all sorts of reasons, but expressive vitality depends on how a place engages the imagination. A place is dead if the physique does not support the work of the imagination [...] To inhabit a place physically but to remain unaware of what it means, or how it feels, is a deprivation more profound than deafness at a concert or blindness in an art gallery. Humans in this condition belong nowhere.” Our imagination invokes our feelings through our experiences. The feeling of hope can be tied to the imagination. When we hope we are imagining a world that ‘could be’ and essentially are making memories of that fictitious reality. This form of imagining can be the ultimate hope for the future, but to do that, there is a need for freedom and limitation. By this I mean, “if freedom is a wide-open door, its strength is contingent upon study hinges whose movement permits the door to close. When sheltered, our essence can unfold. Salvation perhaps, is not freedom from limitations, but through limitations.” Only through this understanding of freedom can one’s essence and imagination deepen and intensify. Once we are sheltered, we can finally dwell.

Within this shelter, there comes the ability to cradle the psyche and all the consciousness. This psyche is nested within the brain, within the body, within the space, within the context of the shelter, within society, and ultimately within the world. Natalia Subotinic explores this nesting; from the psyche to the shelter.

While studying Sigmund Freud's working environment, Subotinic discusses the importance of his objects within his workspace and how they are seen as pictorial systems of writing from the interpretations of his dreams and unconscious. When looking at his objects, the space they are in and the space between them are of vital importance. Sigmund Freud said that "Contiguity, the spatial connection, is an essential principle of the process of association." The spaces he has created with his collection of statues and antiquities is an example of how connected the psyche is with the world we live in.

Through reading his work and inhabiting the environment he worked in, Subotinic was able to understand the structure of the psyche, that it is composed of all the levels of consciousness. Its architecture consists of 3 realms. The external world, the inner world, and the one which exists between the external and inner; the outer world. The external world is what exists outside of our bodies but are perceived and sensed by it. We are never apart from the external world; we are situated within it at all times. The inner world is within the deepest recesses of the body: the unconscious. Finally, the outer world, the one that exists between the external world and inner world, is the space of consciousness. The outer world is where the inner and external world convene in our psyche. Sigmund Freud identified that in the unconscious, concrete concepts exist, waiting for their impressions to become conscious as this is the only way one can verbalize that concept. To get there, the psychologist and philosopher need to become an anthropologist to uncover and unwrap the depths of this nested psyche. They need to bring to consciousness those concrete concepts in order for people to start to heal.

There needs to be a creating of environments that inhibit this confession of dreams. The outer world, that is constructed within this environment, is where the consciousness and dreams cannot part ways but essentially form the unpredictable foundations of their existence. This space needs to facilitate the communications between the realms of the psyche. Where the experiences continually interrupt the consciousness from the deeper recesses of their beings. This interaction of the unconscious with the conscious is interwoven with the perceptions arriving from the external world. They are working together at all times and all spaces should be constructed to reflect what people hold within their psyche.

This is what we are designing for.





Figure 14





Figure 15

The concept of conscious and unconscious is nothing new. They have only recently been given names. Myths and stories have helped us to understand the world we live in since the beginning of human existence. These have illustrated the complicated psyche in terms and ways for all to understand. When the stories are dissected, there is a theme that emerges which leads to the understanding of the conscious. All these tales that we read about, listen to, or watch all follow the same sequence of actions taken by the hero of the story. This is known as the hero's journey which is laid out by Joseph Campbell. He defines a hero as being someone who achieves something that is greater than the normal range of achievement. This can be either a physical achievement – saving a life, giving of life – or a spiritual one – learned a new mode of experiencing the supernatural and returning to share. There is this cycle the hero takes of going and returning.

There are many ways heroes start their expedition.

1. There is the intentional journey, like finding your career and going to college
2. Another journey is when you're pitched the idea, sometimes without a choice, like being drafted for a war. But this can turn into an intentional quest that you ultimately choose to go on for yourself.
3. Sometimes they do not know they are going on a journey; they are lured by something which ends up turning into an adventure.

During all of these types of journeys and on their way to their action of achievement, the hero must go through a transformation of some sort. Through their course of heroism, they will encounter trials and revelations which will change the way they think and who they are, this is the transformation that happens. They need to die to their old self and return a new being. This can be seen in many movies like *The Lord of the Rings*, *Star Wars*, *Divergent*, *Harry Potter* and the *Hunger Games*. Basically, their consciousness is transformed from the old, to the new.

The story of *Jonah and the Whale* represents this idea of the conscious and the unconscious meeting at the threshold when one's consciousness is beginning to be transformed. According to Joseph Campbell, the water is the unconscious and the whale is the dynamic of the unconscious. The hero must leave the realm of the known, of light, and travel to the unknown of the unconscious, the water, and this is where the whale meets them. Every time we encounter the threshold of the conscious and unconscious, we are transformed into a new person with new understanding.

Sometimes the beast isn't a whale, sometimes it's a dragon. The dragon in European mythology is the representation of greed and the ego. They are our own binding to our ego in our very own dragon cage. This dragon can be identified as our fears or other emotions or experiences that keep us from being our true selves. The job of the psychiatrist is to crack open our dragons, so we are free to experience. They are our helpers when we are in the depths of our unconscious. Architecture can assist this surfacing of unconscious concepts to help those make sense of what they are feeling.

Victims are on this journey; these women are the heroes in their own lives. They just happen to be stuck in life's trials and tribulations. This center will assist them on their journey to revelation and transformation.

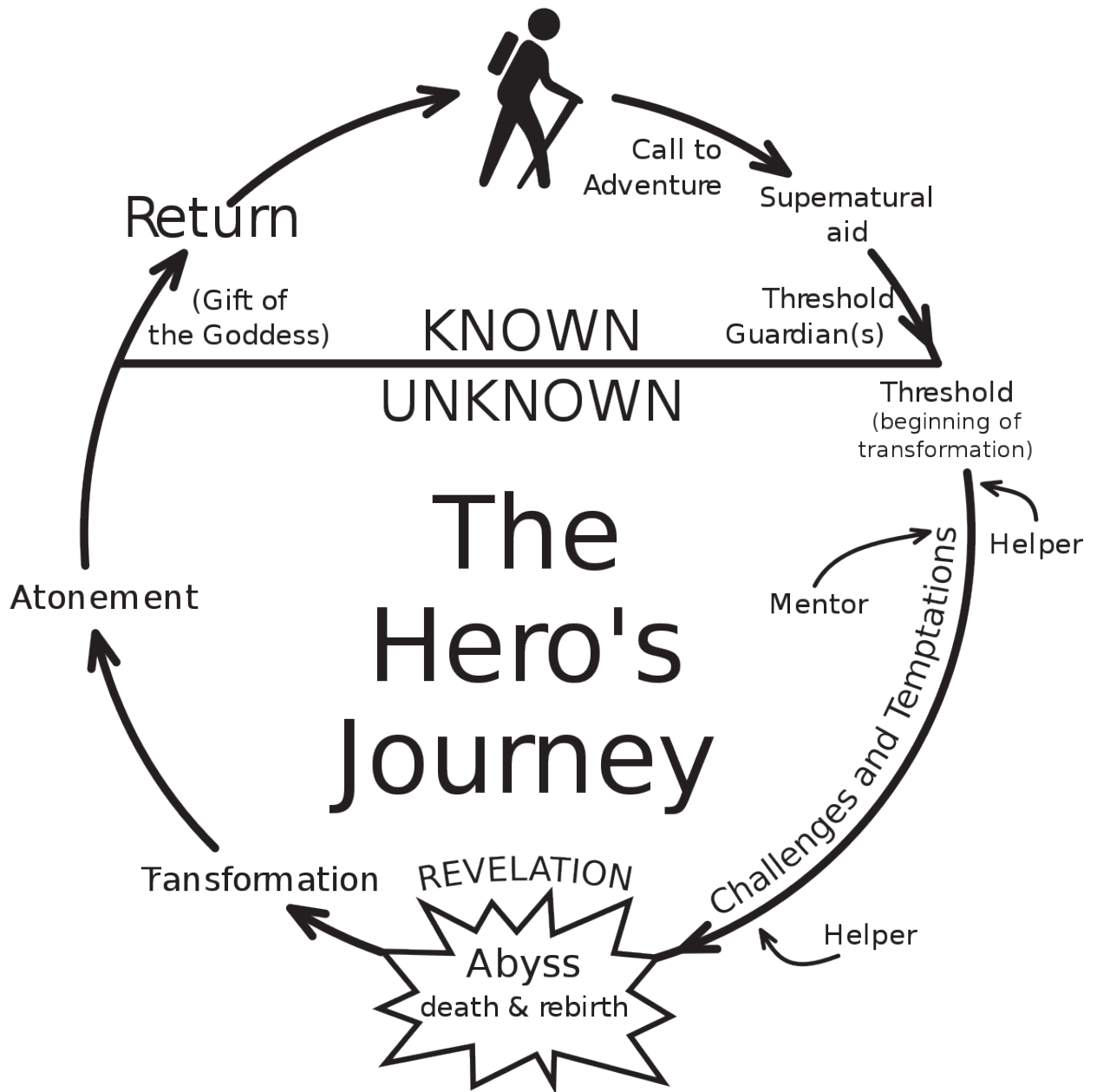


Figure 16





Figure 17

An example of this hero's journey can be seen in the story of Orpheus. He is a half human, half god being who was born of the god Apollo and Calliope, a muse. He was the most skilled in music and singing. So much so that he could move trees and rocks to dance to his song. He fell in love with a nymph, Eurydice, and they got married...but only for a few short years until a shepherd was beguiled by Eurydice's beauty and chased after her to seduce her. She ran from him in the woods and was bitten by a poisonous snake and died. When Orpheus found her body, he became overwhelmed with grief and played a song to mourn her death. All things living and non-living were succumbed to sorrow when they heard his music. The gods advised for him to go to the underworld and see and convince Hades to let Eurydice leave with him out of the underworld. Orpheus went and seduced all things with his music which allowed him to pass to get to Hades. When he reached Hades, he played a song to convince him to let her go. Hades' heart of stone softened, and he was brought to tears, he then allowed Orpheus to bring his wife back to the living under one condition, he could not look back at her until they reached the world of the living. Orpheus agreed and was bringing Eurydice back to the living when at the last second, he looked back to make sure he was not deceived, and he watched her disappear back to the underworld where she was to stay for eternity. Orpheus was overwhelmed with grief more than the first time and played a mournful song that ended with wild animals tearing him apart leading to his death, he was reunited with Eurydice in the underworld.

This is the story behind the religion and philosophy of orphism. Le Corbusier based his architecture on this philosophy. Orphism in architecture deals with numbers, geometry and proportion and how these can be used to achieve harmony with nature. Similar to how Orpheus could enchant anyone or anything with his music, architecture could achieve this same outcome, according to orphism. Le Corbusier used opposites like dark and light to bring this sense of wholeness to the viewer. As Orpheus' journey into the darkness and emergence out and into the light as a metaphor, it can also be interpreted as light representing the realm of the living, the known and the conscious and darkness representing the dead, the unknown and the unconscious. He tried this in a design proposal for the Basilica at la Sainte Baume. Architecture today can still bring wholeness to its occupants and visitors through the understanding of the nested psyche by challenging the user to transform themselves through their uncomfortable experiences within the spaces.



# PRECEDENT STUDIES



Figure 19



Figure 20

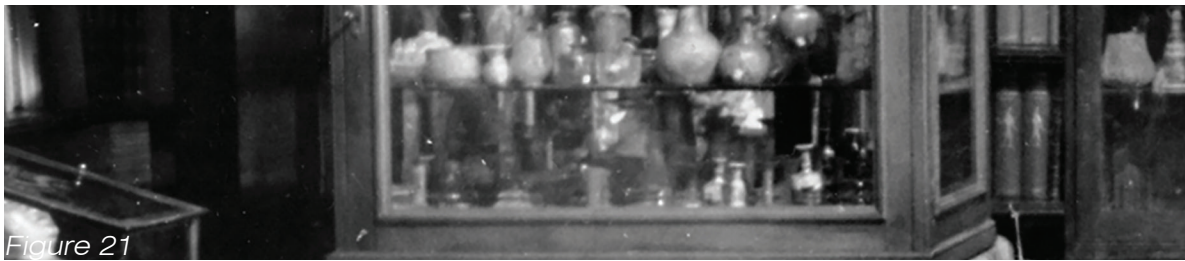


Figure 21

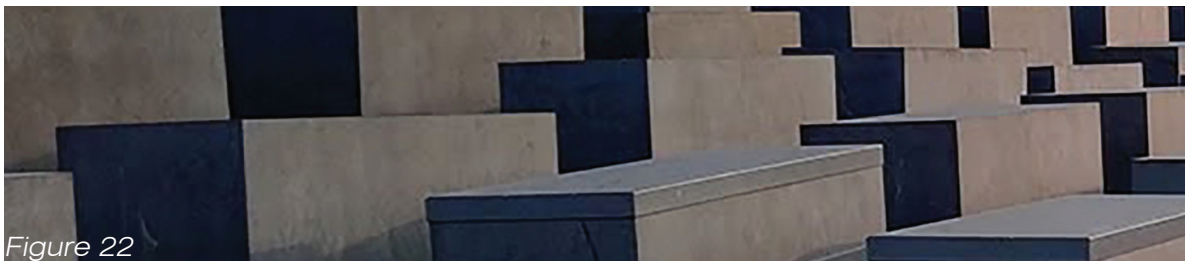


Figure 22

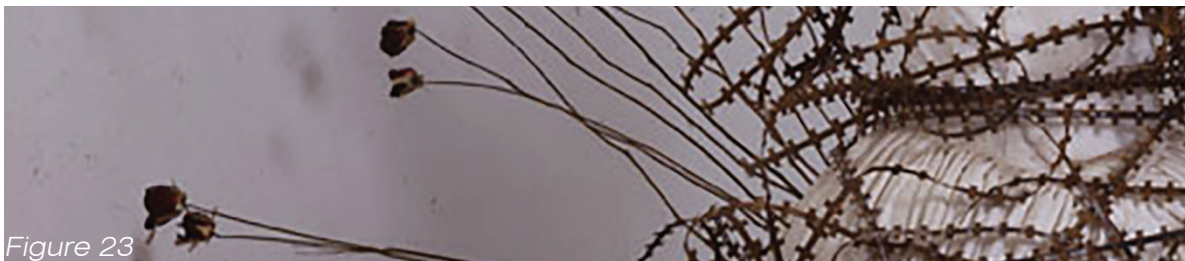


Figure 23

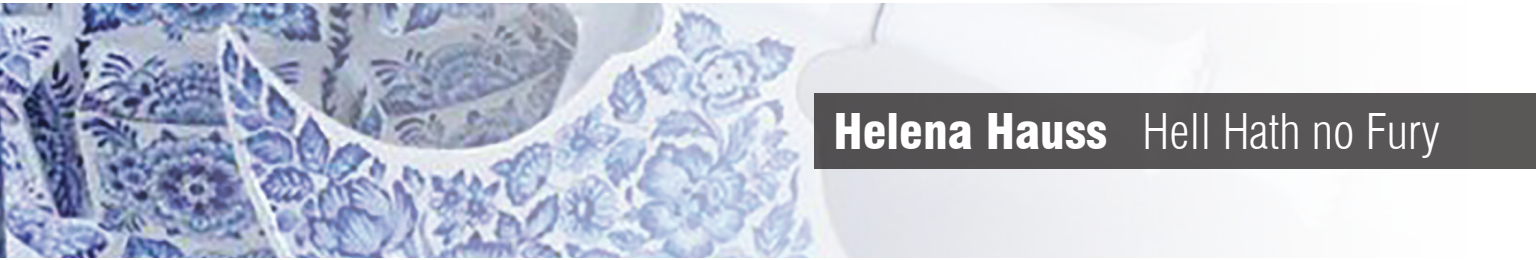


Figure 24





**Daniel Libeskind** Berlin Jewish Museum



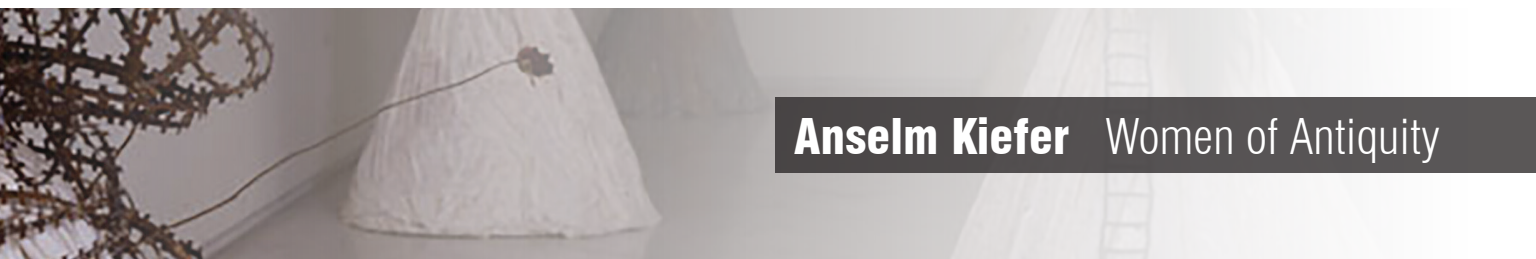
**Helena Hauss** Hell Hath no Fury



**Natalia Subotnic** Constructing Sigmund Freud's Cabinet



**Peter Eisenman** Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe



**Anselm Kiefer** Women of Antiquity



**Le Corbusier** Basilica at la Sainte Baume

# Daniel Libeskind

## Berlin Jewish Museum

This Museum designed by one of the greatest architects of our time is a labyrinth of meaning and interpretation. Daniel Libeskind didn't want to simply design a museum, but he wanted to recount the German-Jewish History of Berlin.

The main attraction of this permanent exhibit are the voids. These voids cut through all levels of the building when the axes intersect. With no air conditioning, heating or artificial lighting, the voids invoke a feeling of emptiness and loss from the expulsion, destruction and annihilation of the Jews. This feeling will never be and could never be refilled. The installation Shalekhet (Fallen Leaves) by Israeli artist Menashe Kadishman at the base of one of the voids is especially moving. Faces cast out of thick iron are laid out on the floor of the vertically reaching void. When one walks on them, they feel self-conscious about who they are walking on and a feeling of disrespect emerges from trampling on these peoples lives. The faces shift as you walk on them making them seem alive and personable. The sound of them clinging against each other makes you think of the chains that would have bound them together.

A sense of vulnerability in the holocaust tower is made through the architecture. Like the other voids, there is no air conditioning, heat, artificial light or even the influence of sound from outside the tower. A small sliver opening from the top corner of the space is the only source of light and allows all of the elements to penetrate the space. These sense limiting elements invoke the feelings of oppression, anxiety, and vulnerability.

Being completely vulnerable to the elements, the Garden of Exile leads the user through its grid of concrete pillars which are laid upon the slightly sloped ground. This slant disorients the user and makes them dizzy when trying to navigate this seemingly elegant garden. Atop the pillars are Russian olive bushes which resemble hope. They are planted in soil gathered from Berlin with one pillar containing soil from Jerusalem. With hope visible but out of reach and the disorientation of the ground is a representation of the feeling felt by the emigrants forced out of Germany.

While experiencing these series of spaces, the user is constantly in a state of discomfort making them aware of what they are experiencing.





Figure 25

# Helena Hauss

## Hell Hath no Fury

Often times, women are represented in art by men and how they think women want to be represented. Helena Hauss is a French female artist who typically works in ball point pen, but briefly changed her medium to sculpting. She focuses on the theme of Irreverence and defying the boundaries and limits that society has put on us, specifically women. The lens women are often perceived through leave them being seen as fragile and delicate. Helena Hauss defies this stereotype by creating something that seems delicate like porcelain, but which is actually constructed of a strong polymer. This serves as a metaphor for the perceived weakness and vulnerability women contain when in reality, they are strong and courageous. What is sculpted out of this medium shows the ferocity and empowerment that women and femininity truly have which topples the perceptions forced upon them. All of Helena Hauss' works strive to show the need to be oneself in a world and society with restrictions of the self. They all encourage their viewers to accept themselves for all of who they are, the good and bad, the acceptable and unacceptable, what is praiseworthy and what is shameful. In her work Hell Hath no Fury, a women can identify with it immediately feeling understood buy the deep layers of metaphor she provides in this work.





Figure 26

# Natalia Subotinic

## Constructing Sigmund Freud's Cabinet

The psyche is nested within many layers of society and the physical world; it's nested within the brain, within the body, within the space, within the context, within society, and ultimately within the world. In Natalia Subotinic's speech on the Construction of Sigmund Freud's Cabinet, she studies and evaluates his living and working spaces to learn how the psyche and the physical world are intertwined.

While studying Sigmund Freud's working environment, Subotinic discusses the importance of his objects within his workspace and how they are seen as pictorial systems of writing from the interpretations of his dreams and unconscious. She inspects all the statues, pictures and prized possessions. She finds he has a connection to death as there is a wall dedicated to it with masks and pictures of those who have passed. Everything he has placed was intentional. When looking at his objects, the space they are in and the space between them are of vital importance. Sigmund Freud said that "Contiguity, the spatial connection, is an essential principle of the process of association." The spaces he has created with his collection of statues and antiquities is an example of how connected the psyche is with the world we live in.

Within Freud's work, which is also evident in his built environment, is the understanding of the 3 realms of consciousness; the external world, the inner world and the outer world. These realms make up the entirety of the psyche. To reach all these worlds and layers of the psyche, the psychologist must become an anthropologist. The external world this takes place in is a room for the confessional of dreams. Here, in Sigmund Freud's office, is where the confessions took place.





Figure 27



Figure 28

# Peter Eisenman

## Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

2,711 concrete stelae stand at attention in remembrance of the Jews who lost their lives due to the Nazi regime. They vary in height but leave the same footprint. As you navigate through the large overbearing pillars, the ground brings you lower into the earth. As you become shorter the pillars become taller and the feeling of claustrophobia sets in and you become self-conscious of where you are and who is watching you. At every approach to a new intersection, you become anxious to see what or who is around the corner. These forced feeling of claustrophobia, anxiety and self-consciousness are intentional as they bring the user into a self-awareness and discovery. In a world of instant gratification and knowledge, this monument requires the user to slow down to question and interpret the meaning of all the aspects of the space.

The Memorial is in great contrast to other monuments of today. The Vietnam Memorial designed by Maya Lin and the 911 Memorial Pools designed by Michael Arad both show the loss of our loved ones through a void. This represents the emptiness we feel, as the ones left behind, from those who are no longer here. This is a form of subtraction, in contrast, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe is instead is a form of addition. This difference intrigued me; Eisenman put back into society what was once taken away from it. I was reminded of the Women of Antiquity brilliantly done by Anselm Kiefer and how these are also a form of addition.





*Figure 29*

# Anselm Kiefer

## Women of Antiquity

Kiefer has studied the history of different societies and religions and has identified women who have been mistreated, specifically strong women who have tried to defy society. The intention of this series of sculptures by Anselm Kiefer is to restore the dignity and position in history these women have been stripped of and even for all womankind. He uses these women and their stories as the foundation for his series. They are represented by the objects that have replaced their heads. A Greek poet, by the name of Myrtis, was blamed for competing with Pinder; a lead book upon her shoulders restores her dignity. Phryne was an ancient courtesan who is overlooked for her accomplishment of rebuilding the wall of Thebes which was torn down by Alexander the Great. A stack of bricks replace her head as a testament to her less know, heroic story. I was first inspired by these statues when I learned how these women were identified as something greater than their face or their body. They were recognized for their accomplishments in an interpretive way.



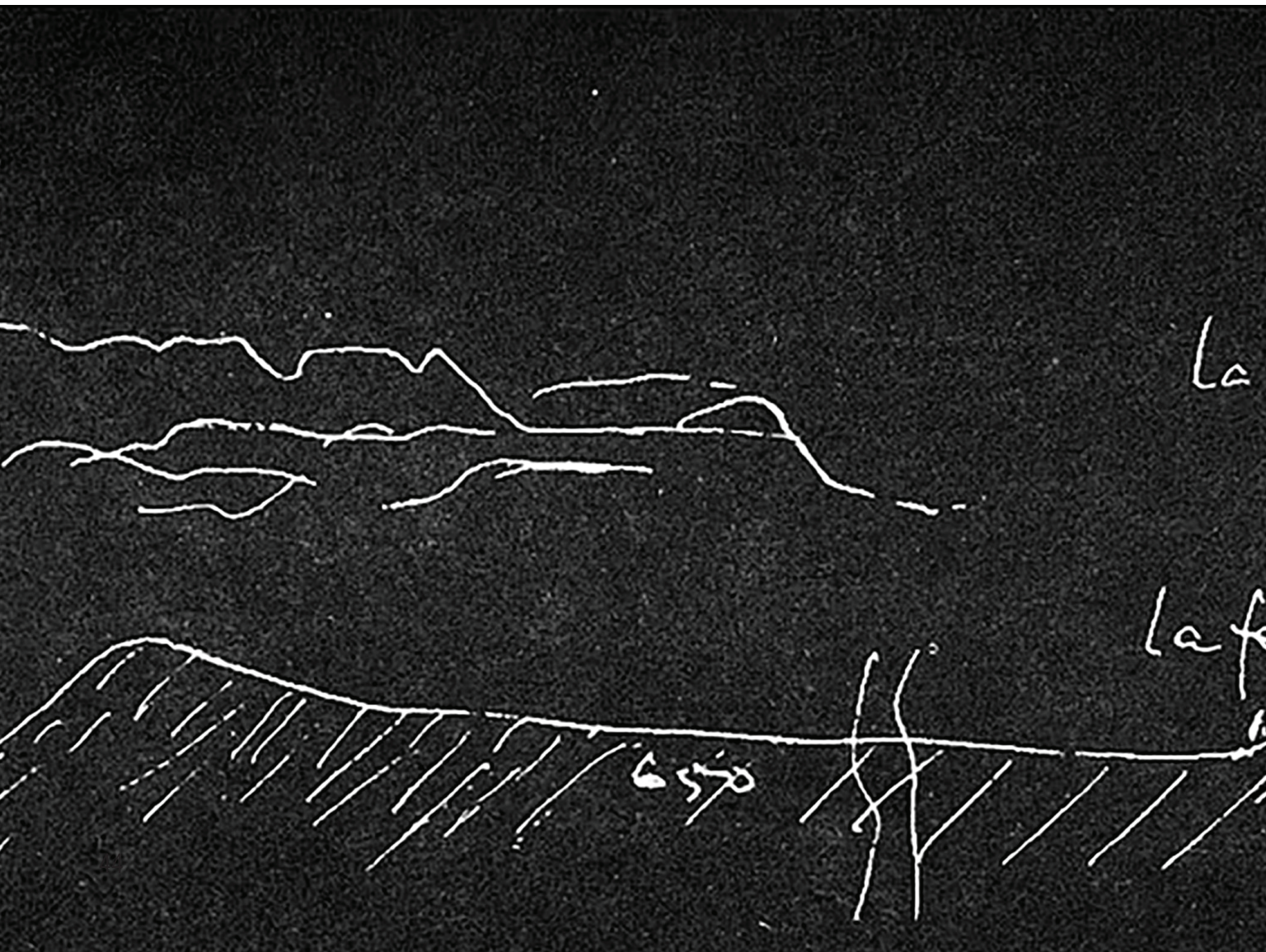
Figure 30



# Le Corbusier

## Basilica at la Sainte Baume

This was Corbusier's most influential post-mechanistic work. He bases his work in the belief of orphism. The story of Orpheus descending to the underworld to retrieve his love and ascend back to the living is the basis of this belief. Le Corbusier uses this story as a metaphor in many of his designs. The most prominent is in his Basilica at la Sainte Baume. Darkness and light can be metaphors for many things; life and death, good and evil, the other world and this world, but here the metaphor is similar to that when Orpheus descends to the underworld, darkness, then ascends back to the living, light. Either heaven and hell or heaven and earth. His intention was to illuminate the connection between worlds by creating





a union. He used specific daylighting tunnels to allure the user into the spaces and influence self-discovery.

Le Corbusier was fascinated with the saint Mary Magdalene, and this was his inspiration for his design. He wanted to summon the spirit of the saint through his design and connect her with the deities. The intricate tunnels that connected to a subterranean chambers that were the dwelling place for the saint. As the interior of the caves was to symbolize Mary Magdalene's body, the landscape was to sculpt her extended self. Integrating the body and building was intended to engage users in the spiritual communion with the saint. Through the careful design for light, color, sound, and rhythm, Le Corbusier would provoke the journey of initiation. Though his design was never built, the design process was the true work of art.

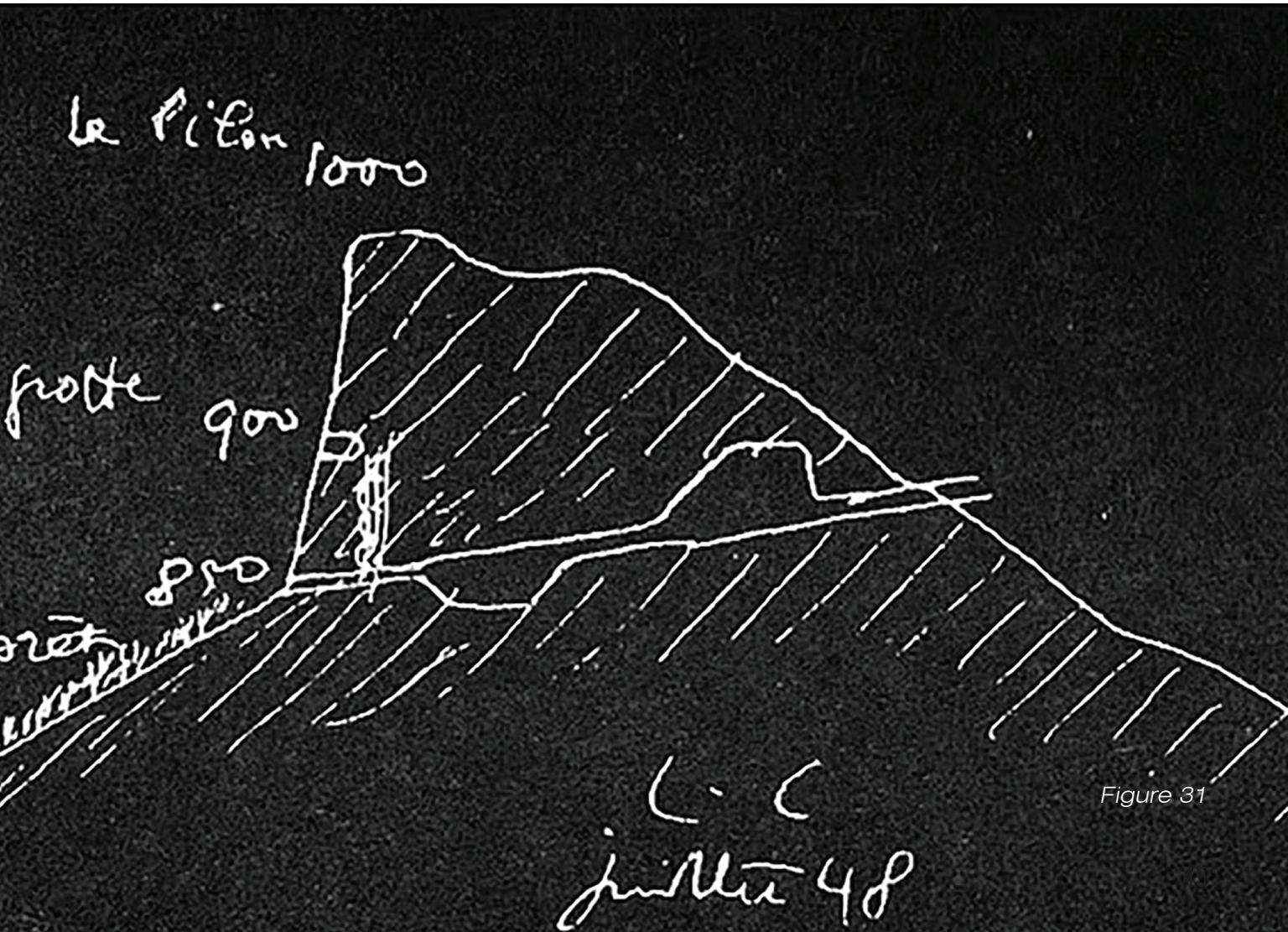


Figure 31



# TYPOLOGICAL RESEARCH



Figure 32





## **Re-Habit** (Unbuilt/Experimental)

Architect KTG Architecture + Planning

Typology Transitional Housing

## **Promise at Dawn**

Architect AIR + Moon Architecture

Location Paris, France

Typology Emergency homeless housing

Project Year 2016

## **Women's Dormitory and Meditation Building**

Architect Wallasia

Location Thailand

Typology Residential

Project Year 2018

## **Swiss Concept Clinic**

Architect Francesc Rifé Studio

Location Valencia Spain

Typology Dental Clinic

Project Year 2019

# KTGY Architecture

## Re-Habit

Typology Transitional Housing

“While shelter and emergency care are the most immediate forms of relief for the homeless, housing programs with counseling, support, and training can ease the suffering of homeless individuals while also empowering them to break a cycle of poverty. Additionally, the entire community benefits through a more stable workforce, decreased need for public assistance, and increased health and safety for all.”

– KTGY Architecture







Figure 33





Figure 34



In response to the homeless predicament in Los Angeles KTG Y's research and develop studio designed a solution for the homeless population and the problem with vacancy in malls. This design takes a big box anchor store in a mall and re-organize the spaces and program to create a space for people to transition out of homelessness as 35% of the U.S homeless population is unsheltered. The services provided in the program involve multiple support services like counseling and job training. There is transitional housing with multiple options to accommodate the independence of the user. A roof garden teaches residents how to grow food and then how they can be used in the kitchen. Job opportunities are on site which empower them to continue on their path of security. The goal of this project is to be self-supporting through the employment of the residents.



Some negatives to this design proposal are the excessive use of expensive materials, designs, and energy efficient systems. Most passive energy efficient systems are not expensive, but they must be considered in the design right away.

The design of the sleeping pods is interesting but does not provide the security I would be looking for when designing for these vulnerable women.

Using this program as a guide in my design will be very helpful in knowing what I should include and what is important to people who are in these situations. This proposal is very similar to my thesis proposal so keeping this close and referencing in the future will be helpful.



Figure 35



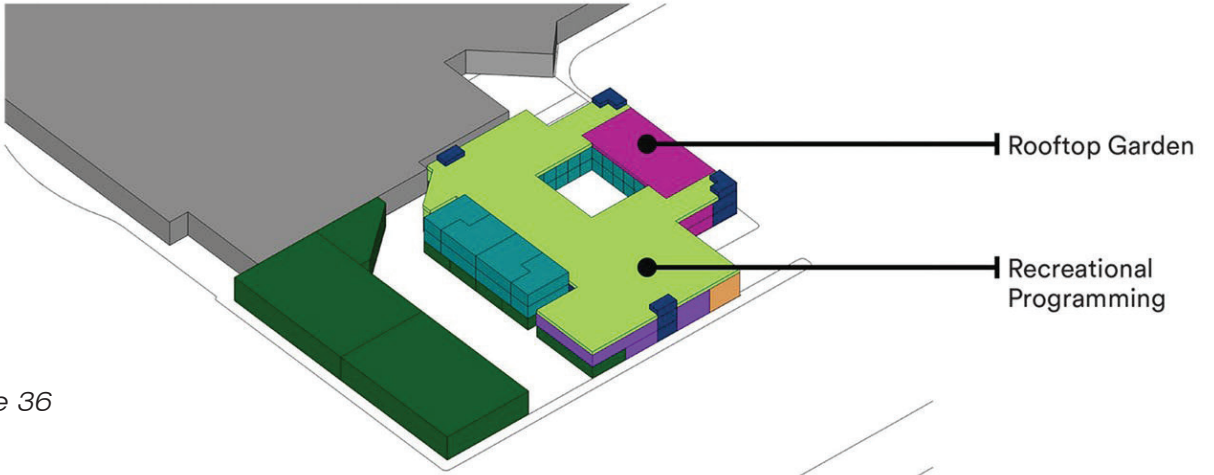


Figure 36

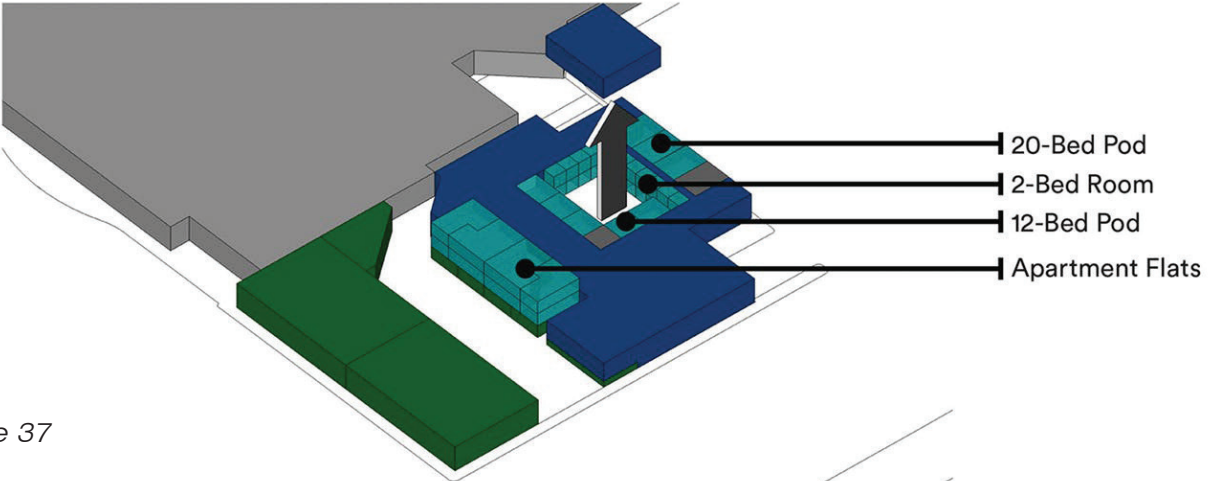


Figure 37

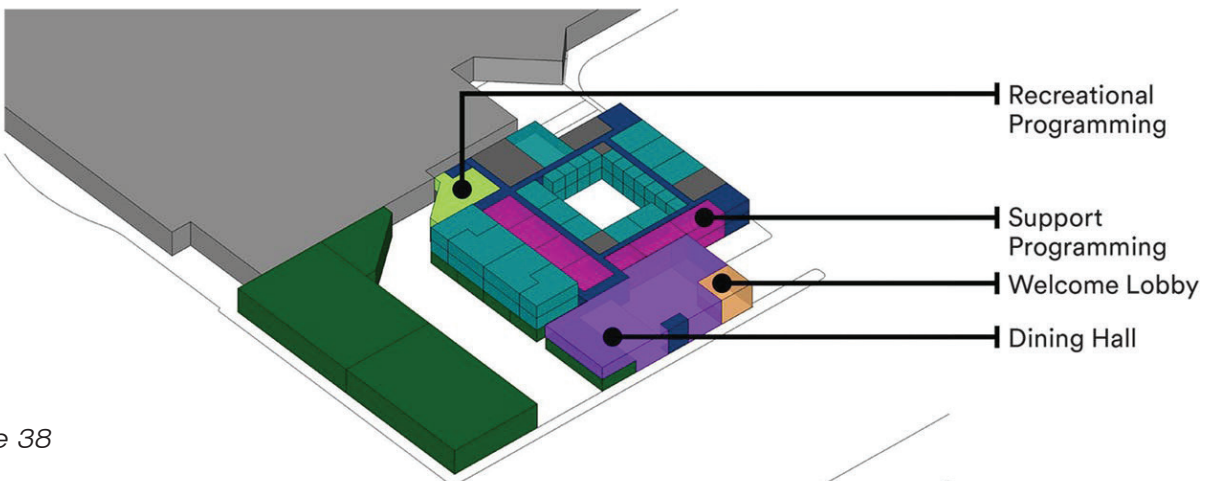


Figure 38

# AIR Architecture

## Promise at Dawn

**Location** Paris, France

**Typology** Homeless housing

**Project Year** 2016

The Promise of Dawn project is a transitional homeless housing facility in a high-class neighborhood in Paris, France. It is a temporary site of 3 years that can be taken apart and moved to a new site when needed. All the walls and floors and roofs were prefabricated panels that were quickly put together on the site. This allows for quick construction and an easy assembly. There are many layouts for the units depending on who was needing space like a family unit or a single unit.

Though it is temporary, the architect didn't want it to seem that way, they wanted a sense of permanency within the high-class neighborhood. This integration of rich and poor empowers the inhabitants of the home to be better homeowners and to get jobs. The use of materials and large open windows connect the user to nature and the community.





Figure 39



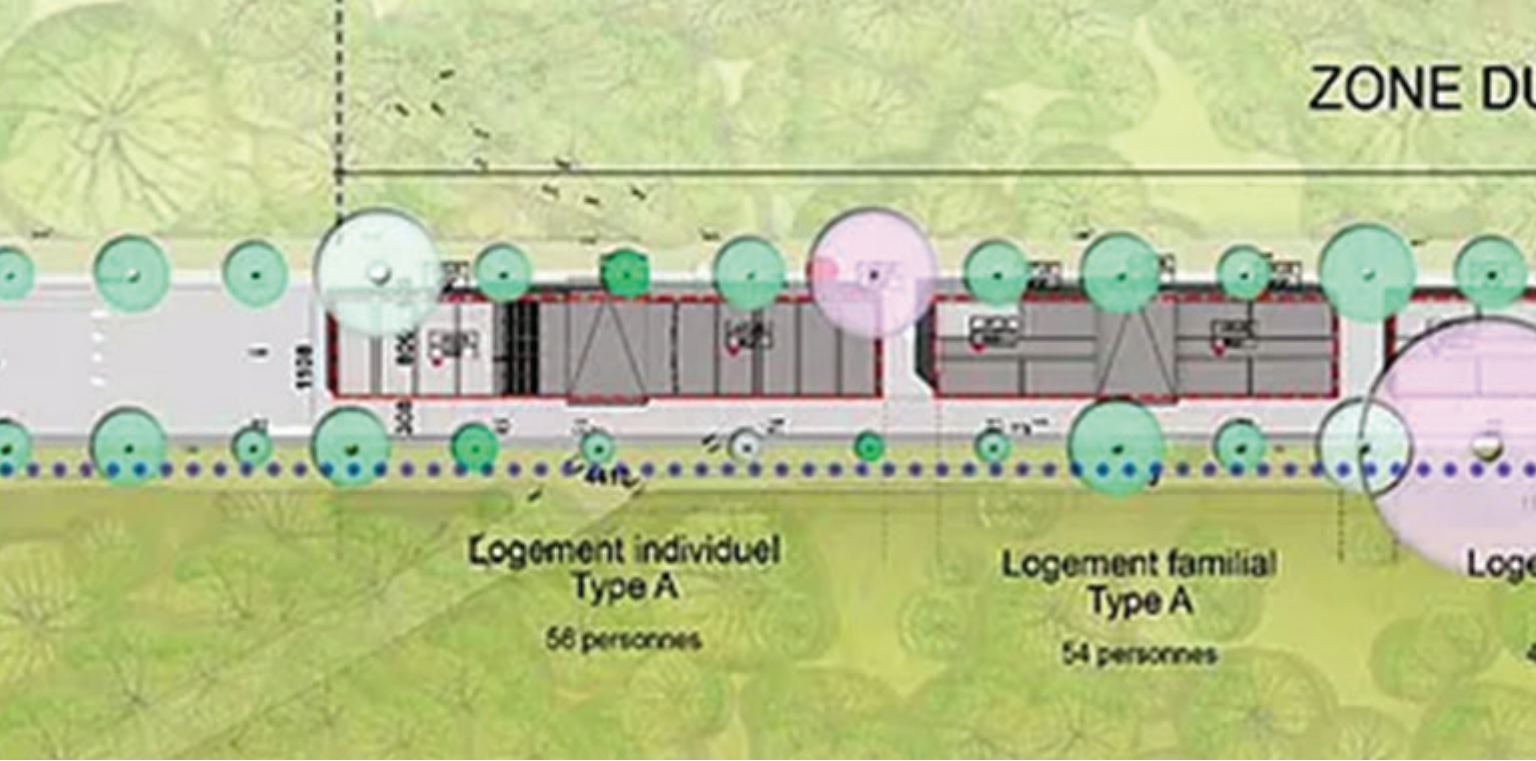


Figure 41



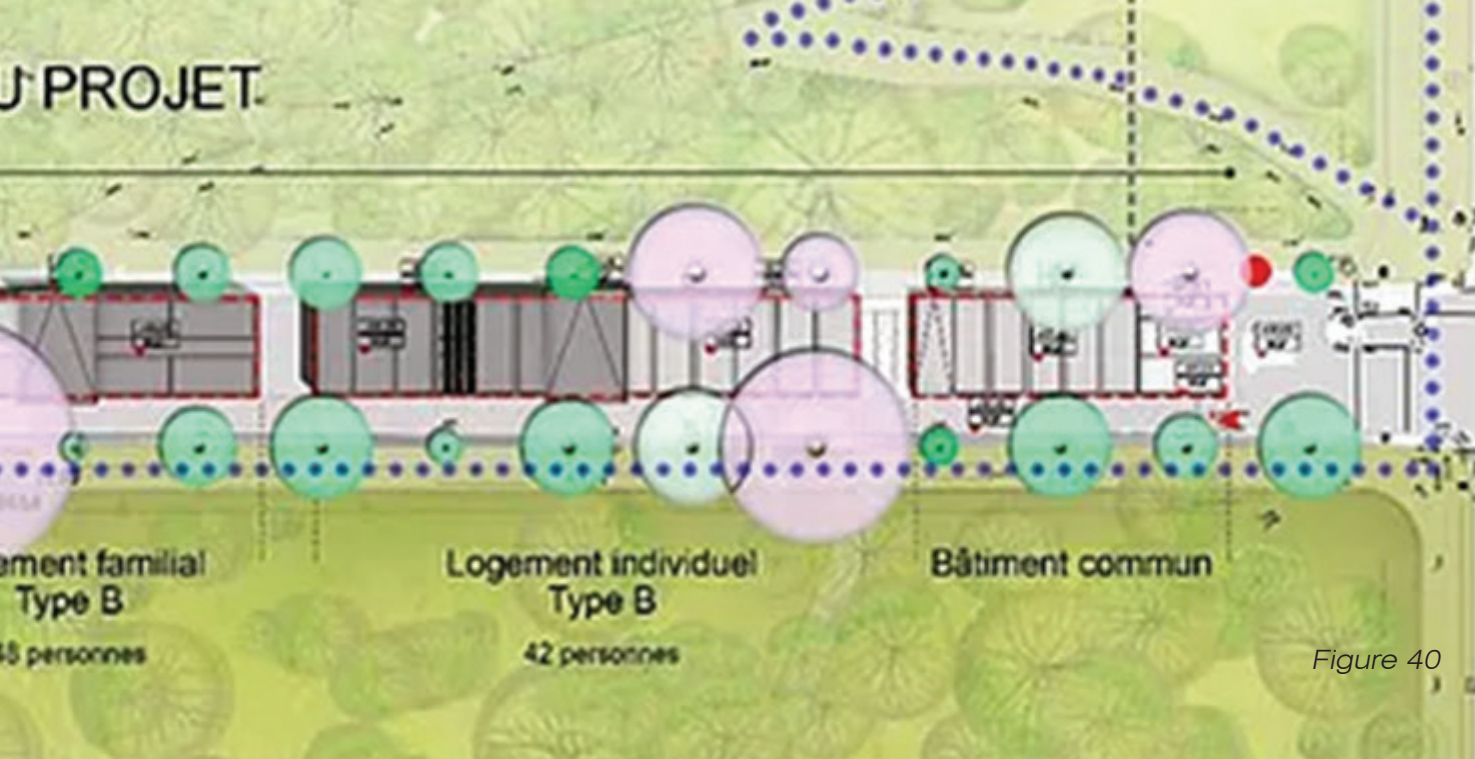


Figure 40



Figure 42

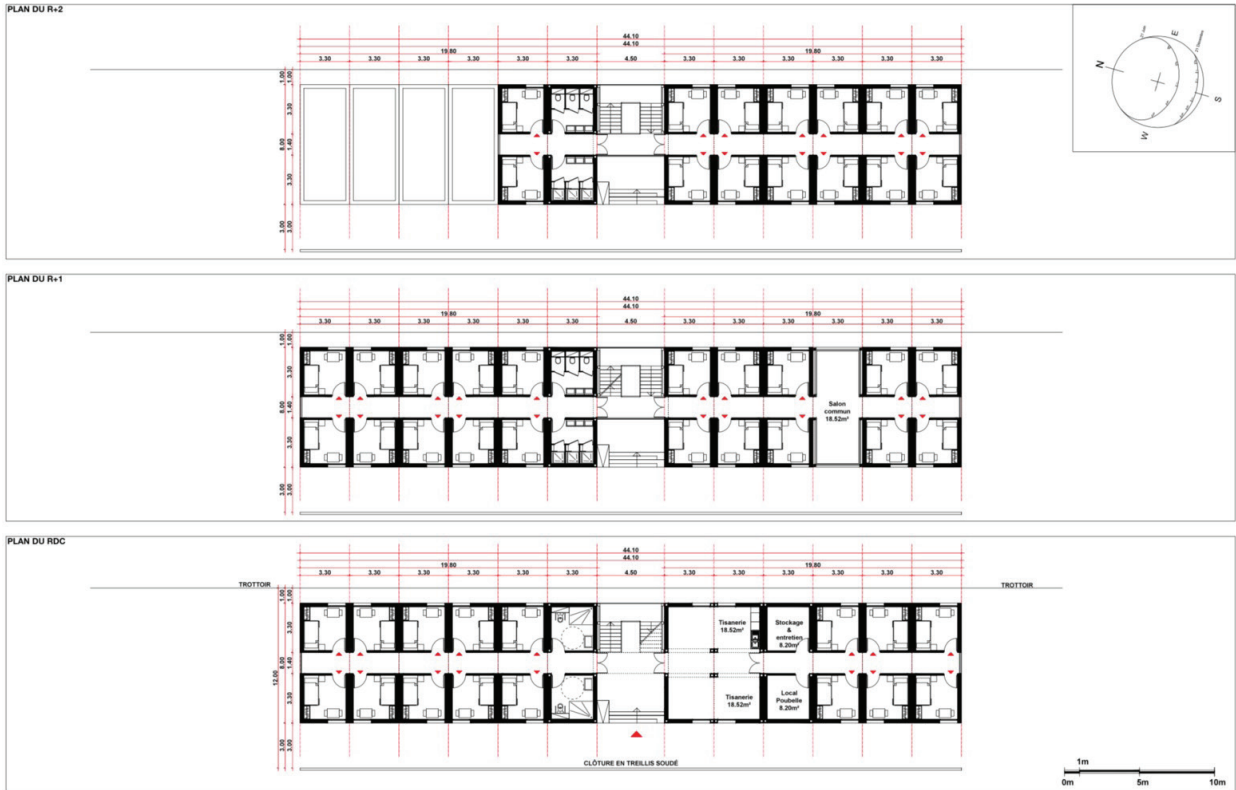


Figure 43

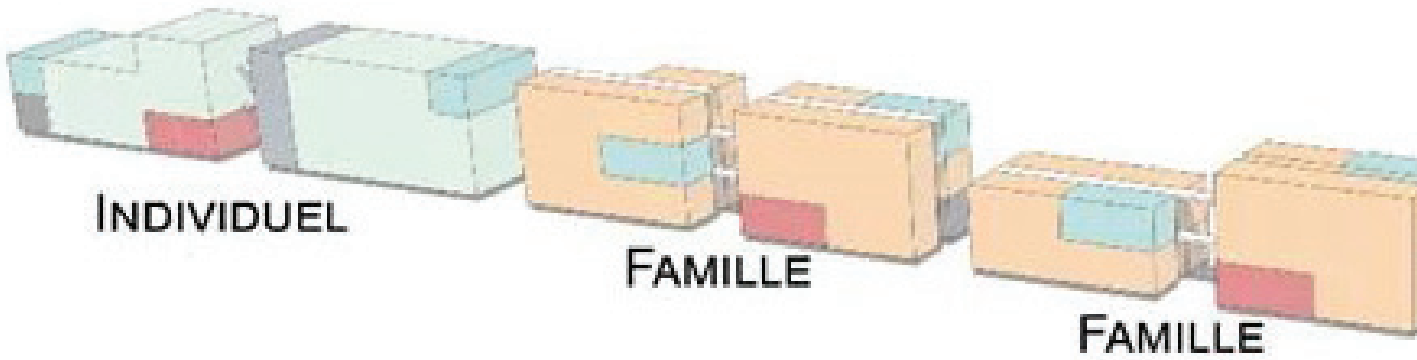
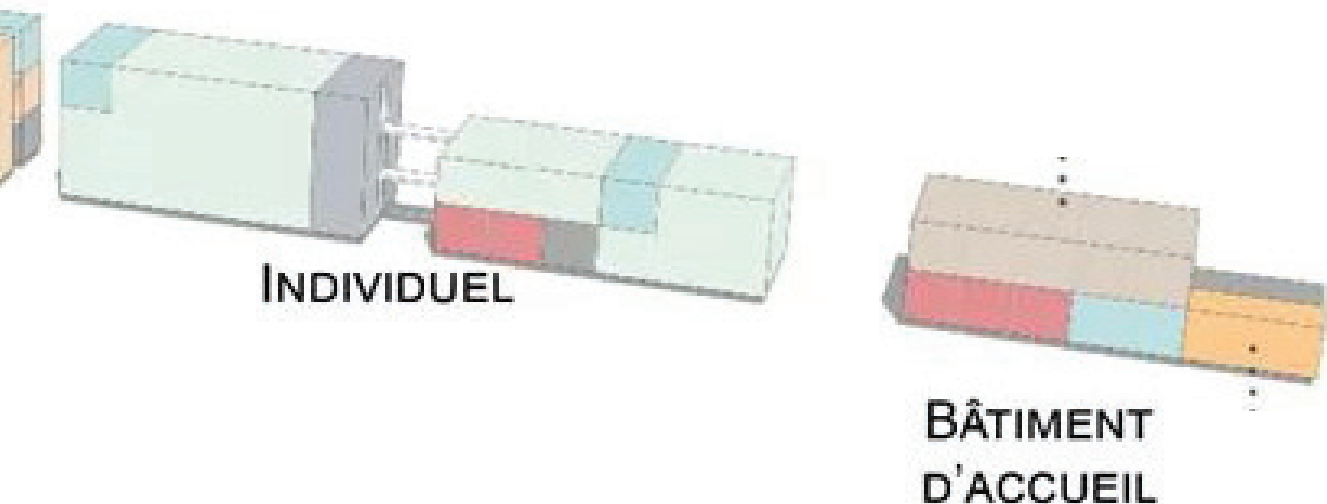


Figure 44



Designing and building in modular sections help to reduce costs for the owners of the facility. Implementing modularity in my design will be tricky since there is already a shell, but it will help to keep costs down, nonetheless.

Like this higher-class neighborhood, Edina is known to be a wealthier town within the suburbs of Minneapolis. Establishing a women's crisis center in the middle of their social lives and economic lives will hopefully raise awareness of their situations and how the community can help them.



# Wallasia

## Women's Dormitory and Meditation Building

Location Thailand

Typology Residential

Project Year 2018

This simple palette design is nested in and surrounded by natural surroundings. Though concrete is used as a main material, it is soft and elegant and seems to be a part of nature. With breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains, all 100 of the rooms provide a sense of place and connection to nature. The interior is open and airy with many views out. A connection is made between the levels through the openings in the floor, this also allows light to travel down the building allowing for the best use of natural lighting.







Figure 45



Water is a huge aspect of this design. There is a large man-made pond in front of the building. Subsequent ponds are placed throughout the building for meditation. These areas frame the view of the surrounding habitat excellently. From the outside, it seems as though one could simply walk off the edge of these open spaces, but the ponds act as a barrier. The magnificence of this is, one cannot see this view from the outside, but only from within.

“From a distance, the building is like a white box inserted into the mountain. It was in fact designed so that the rocks stayed in their original places surrounded by the pond – in the middle of the structure – to keep the temperature inside mild and enhances the rocks’ stoic presence where they can be viewed from every level through the skylight box.” - Wallasia



Figure 46



Figure 47



Figure 48



Figure 49



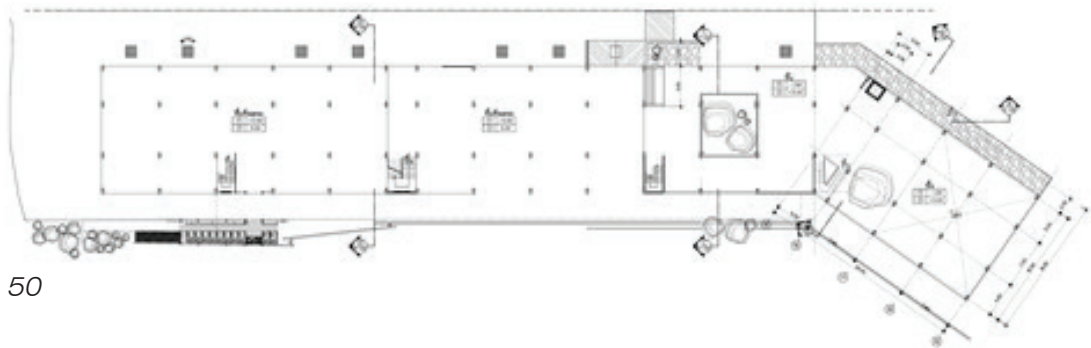
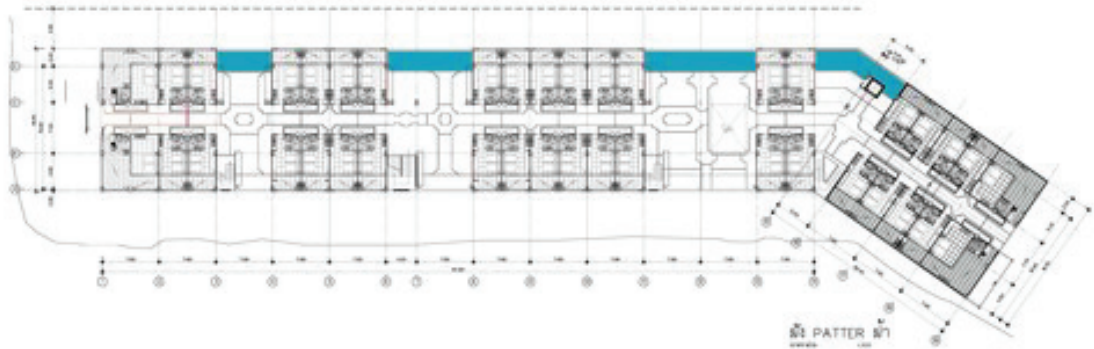
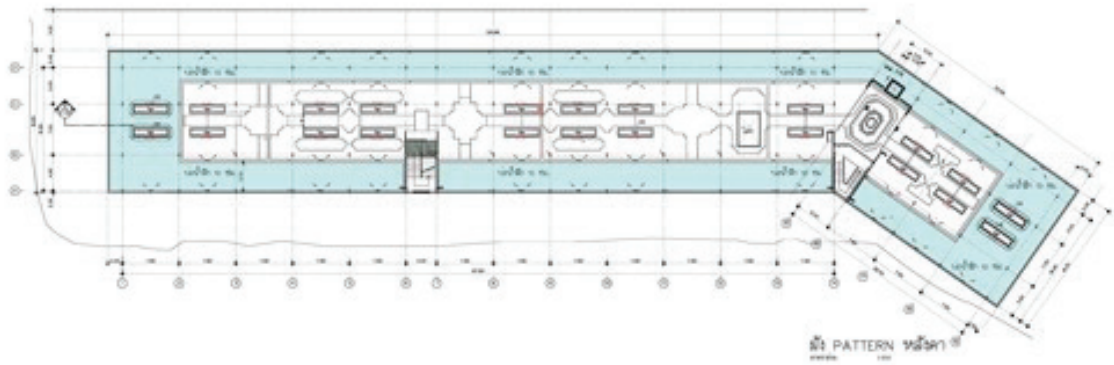


Figure 50

# Francesc Rifé Studio

## Swiss Concept Clinic

Location Valencia Spain

Typology Dental Clinic

Project Year 2019

“Mainly inspired by Eastern aesthetic and meditation, this facial surgery and dental clinic was conceived following notions of lightness and calm.”

– Francesc Rifé Studio







Figure 51





Figure 52



Lightness and calm are achieved through the material palette. Light ash wood invokes calmness and the translucent glass allows light to softly enter the spaces. The use of these two materials creates a clean and soft look that is warm and welcoming. Green is used behind the reception desk to tie into nature and welcome the patient with calmness and peace.

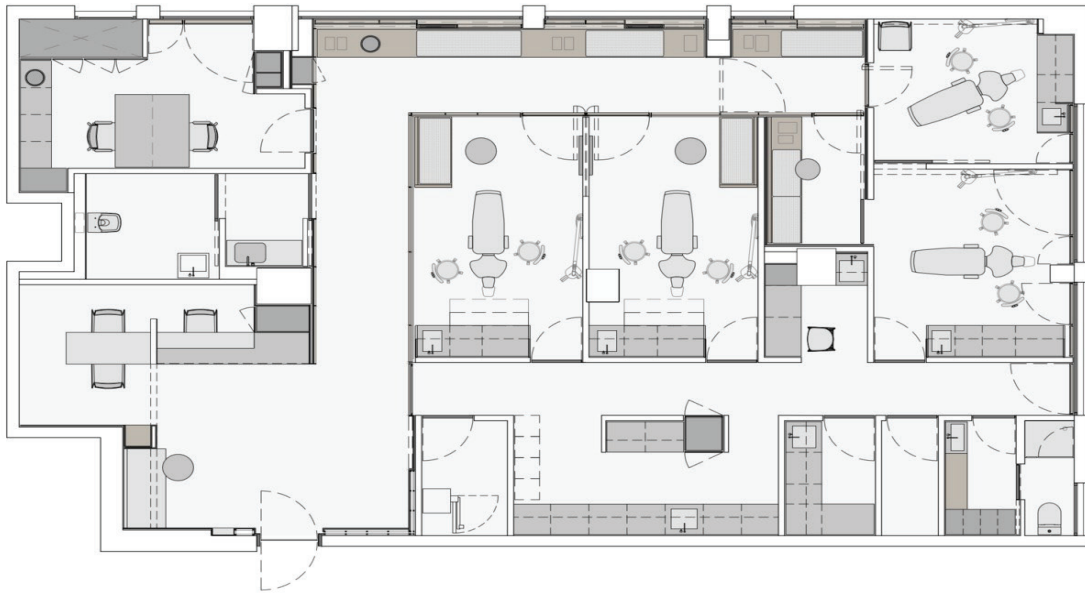


Figure 53

The layout of the office is not typical. The waiting room is unusual as the patient faces the treatment rooms along the wall with their backs to frosted windows. With the light coming in from behind them, it hits the frosted glazing of the treatment rooms providing more privacy to them. Within each treatment room there is housed a secondary waiting bench for the patient when waiting for the dentist. In addition to the use of natural light, the glass is also backlit to increase the wonder and peace within the spaces. The circulation of the rooms is very efficient. With two entrances to each treatment room, the patients and doctors can flow continuously. The materials in the back of house operations signify its independence and quietness with whit surfaces.





Figure 54

# PROJECT JUSTIFICATION





Figure 55





Through this thesis, I strive to bring attention to the neglect and misunderstanding society has given to women who are being physically and sexually exploited. They have been existing in the shadows because no one has allowed them to take the light. Currently, there are no proper healing spaces for the abandoned victims of abuse, domestic violence, rape, and sex slavery. Directors and managers do their best to maintain the facilities they were given, but they do not have the funds or ability to transform their spaces to most efficiently heal them and guide them through the trauma they went through. Giving survivors a place where the environment aids in their healing and facilitates their growing to become empowered again will bring them out of the shadows and into the light of reality. It will give them hope for a future they can believe in.

Malls are similar to clinical settings in the fact that they are designed for instant gratification and quick turnover. A clinic heals the body of illness and cures disease with medication, and a mall offers pleasures of the body that lures us into the desire to show the outside world our economic standing through the things we cover our bodies with. The setting of the mall will serve as the prime location to house a healing center for women who have nothing. The opposites and clashing lifestyles of the mall and healing center will balance each other. These two will be in tension of each other and will create situations and encounters of discomfort. This will be intentional as then the users and viewers will be challenged to transform who they are.



Figure 56



# The User and Client

## User:

The project is designed for women who are victims of rape, domestic violence, sex trafficking, addiction, and homelessness. Women who are pregnant and looking for a place to go are welcome here as well as homeless single mothers with children.

## Client:

The client for the project is not specific to any one company or organization. This will be an example for people to adapt into their specific site conditions. Presumably, the client will be a not-for-profit organization supported by the Church or other religious sects. Though, this could also be adopted by the government and implemented in shopping centers across the nation.

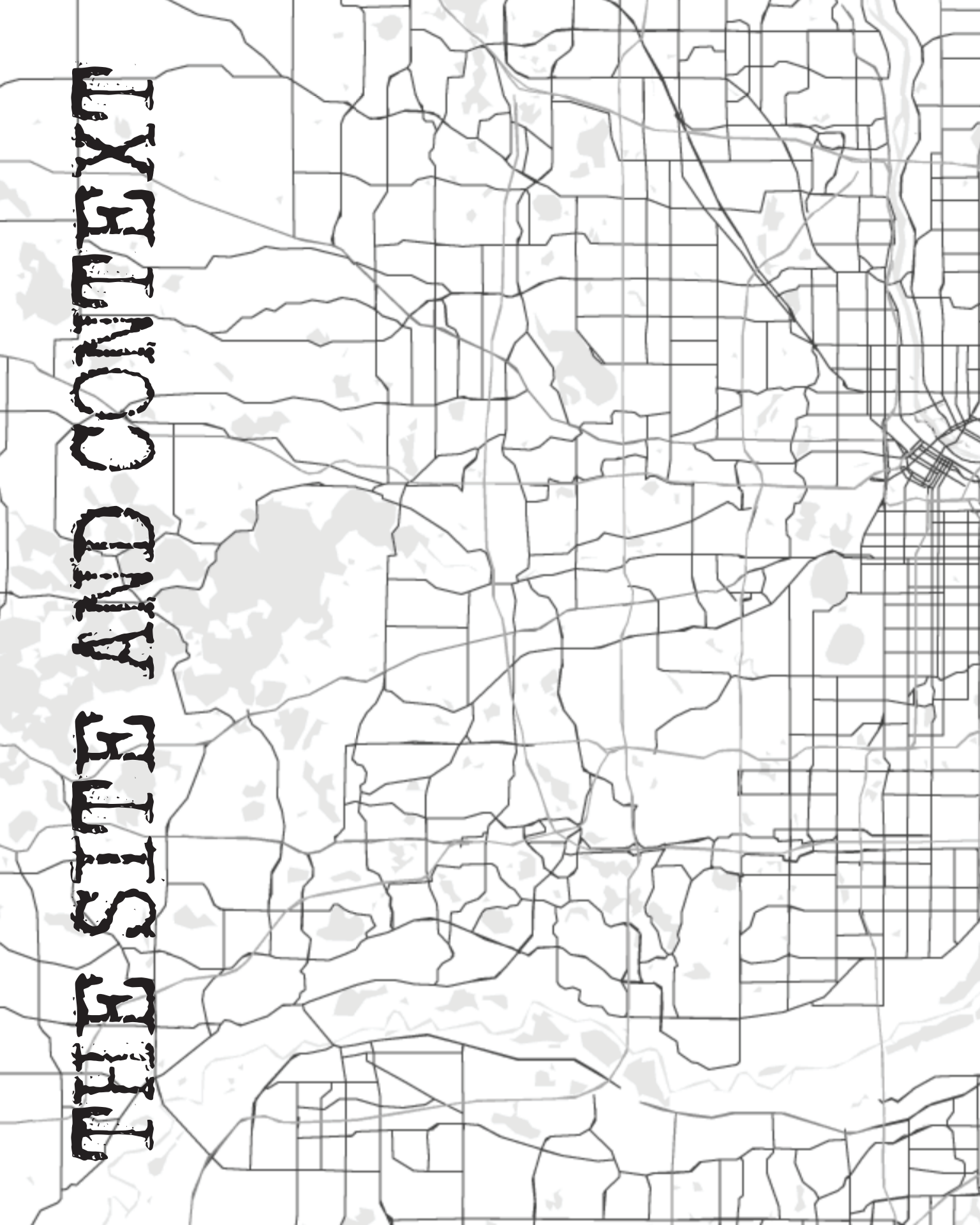




Figure 57



# THE SITE AND CONTEXT



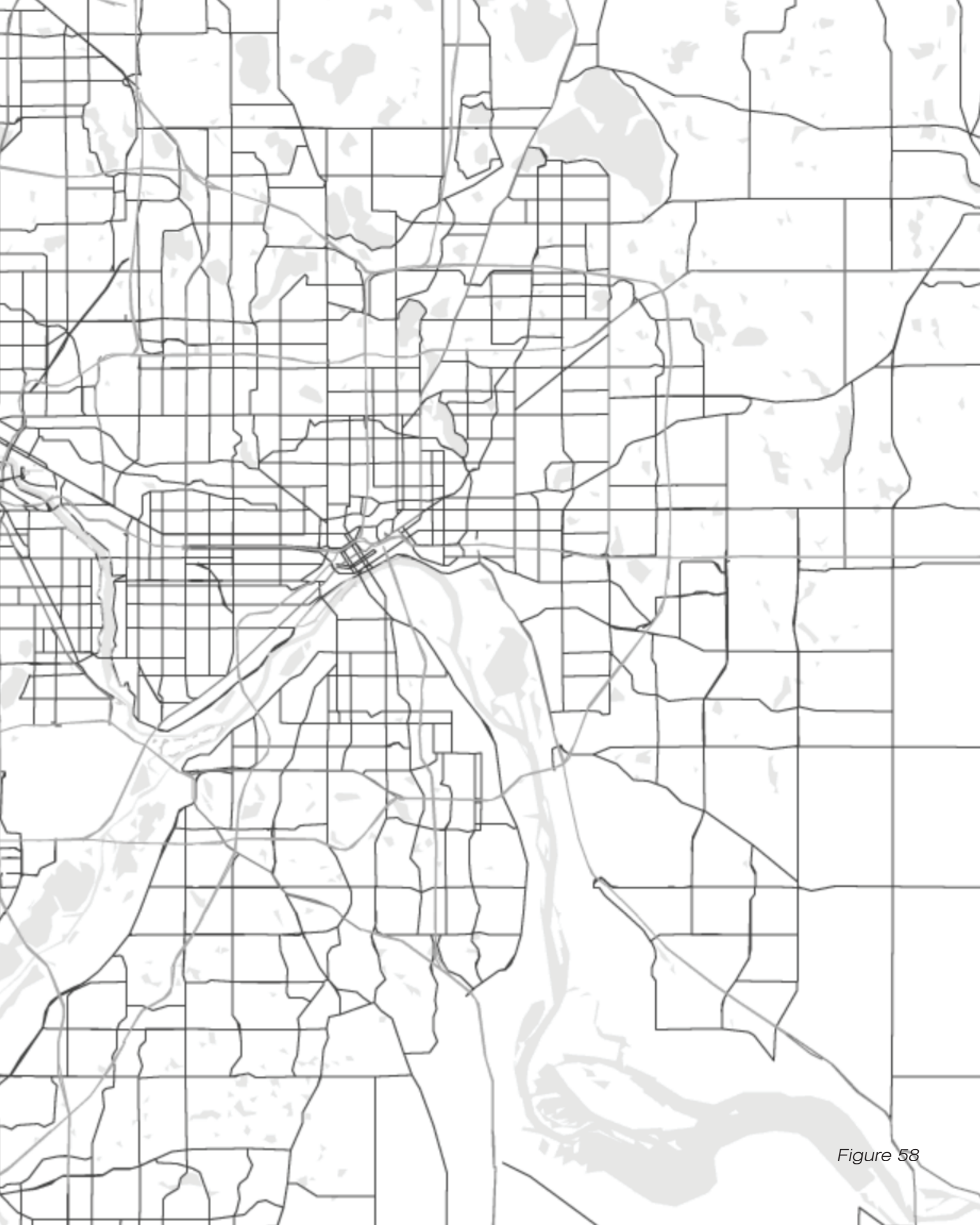


Figure 58



# About the Site

The location of this thesis is a Midwest icon: [slide] The Mall of America.

A destination of quick pleasure and lasting entertainment. People from all over the world come to see the Mall of America and all of its high-end shops and trendy styles. All while the children enjoy their day in the year-round land of thrills and excitement.

In this world of quick thrills and instant satisfaction, the buying and selling of women and children also occur here, creating a trafficking hub. This is because of its central location within the suburbs of the Twin Cities and the Minneapolis Saint Paul international airport. The connection to these highly dense locations provides the means and opportunity for a functioning sex trafficking hub.

It is the role of this design to call out and identify the trafficking that happens here. The healing center and the mall will be in tension of each other and will create situations and encounters of discomfort. This will be intentional as then the users and viewers will be challenged to transform who they are. Joining these two together will highlight the struggle in the trials these women encounter by bringing these issues out of the shadows and making them a priority in society, especially more than that of material things you can buy here at the mall.



Figure 59



Figure 60



# Average Temperatures and Precipitation

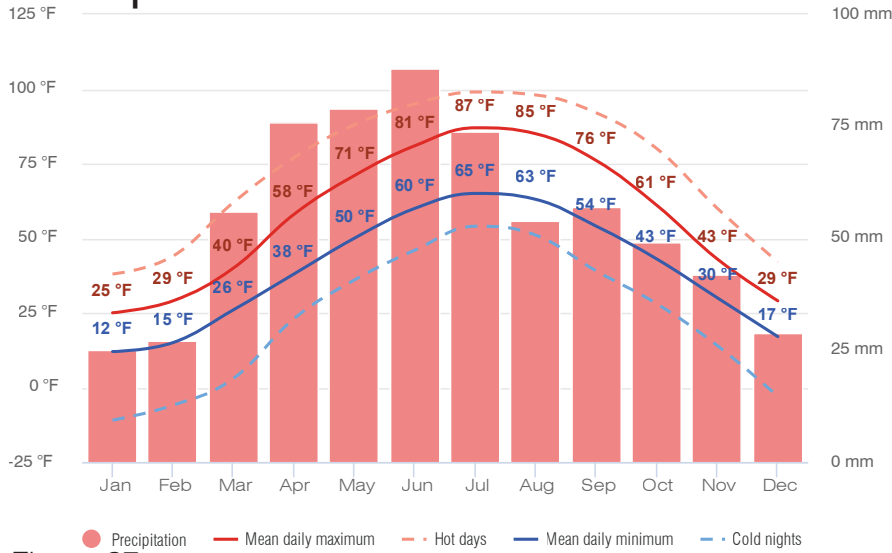


Figure 67

# Precipitation Amounts

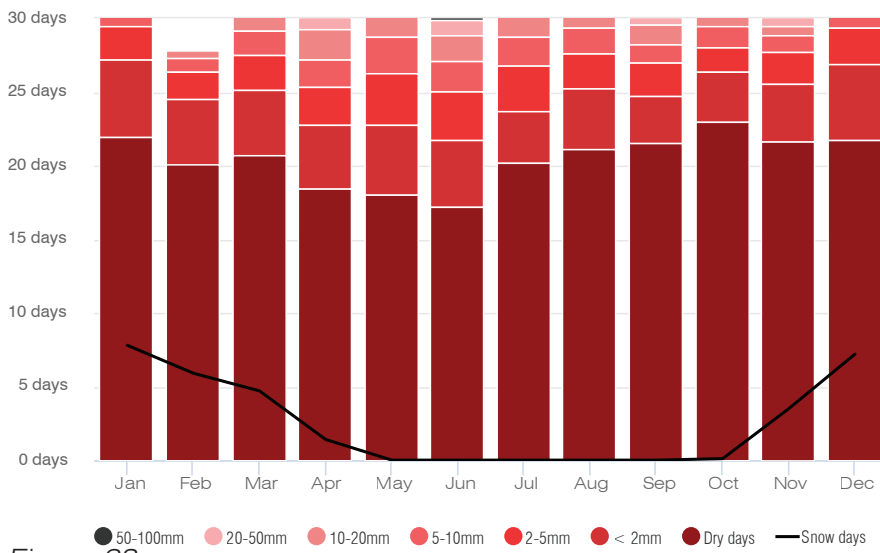


Figure 68





# Climate Information



Figure 69

# Wind Rose

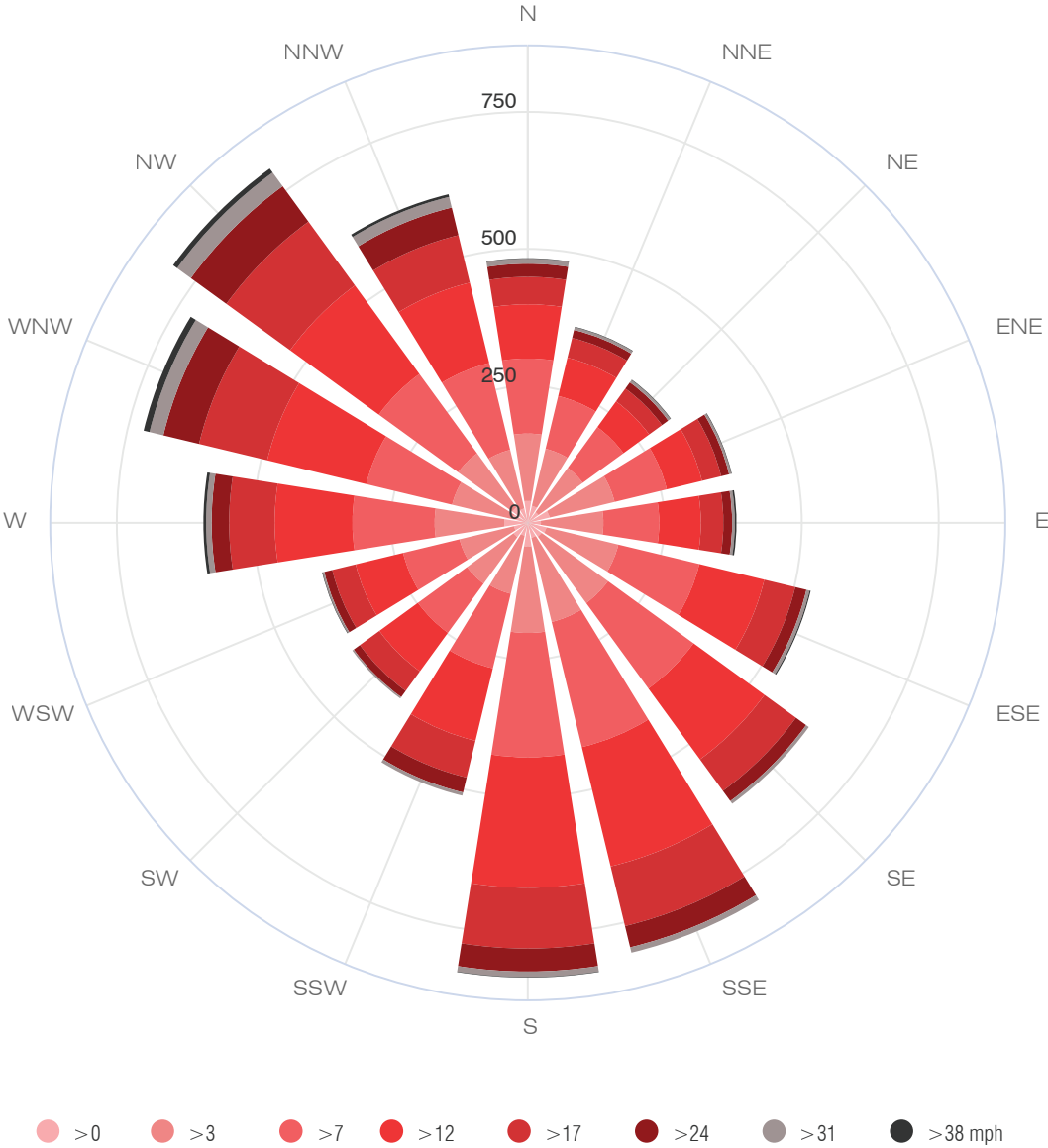


Figure 70





Figure 71



# Site Context

I have decided that the Mall of America in Bloomington is a great location for my proposed project. The Mall of America is closely located to the Airport and downtown Minneapolis which allows people to easily travel here through public transportation. Most victims in need of healing are trafficked through the airport or kept in places downtown to work, whether voluntary or not. One of the benefits of this location is being close to the people in need of care and healing and will provide quick assistance to them.

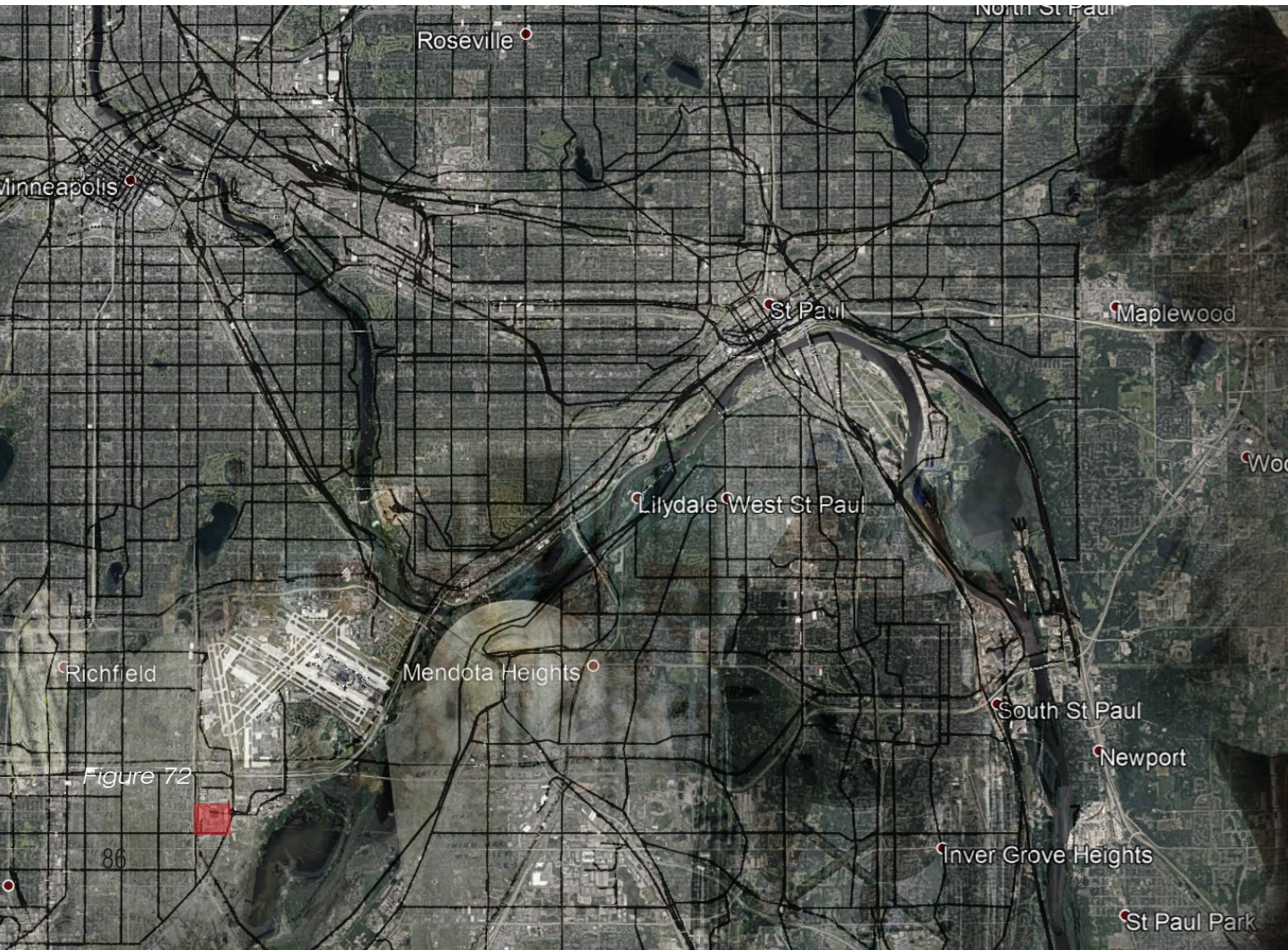






Figure 73



Figure 74









Figure 75



# Performance Analysis

## Major Project Elements

### Healing Spaces

Psychologist Office

### Social Spaces

Atrium

Dining Center

Community Spaces

### Self-Improvement Spaces

Classrooms for Life Skills

Teaching Kitchen

### Personal Spaces

Living Quarters

Personal Bathrooms

### Logistic Spaces

Restrooms

Circulation

Mechanical Room

Lobbies

Kitchen

Offices

Storage

Security

## Space Allocation Table

Space	Count	Square Footage	Total SF	Percentage
lobby	4	200	800	10.32%
atrium	1	500	500	6.45%
living quarters (20-25)	20	150	3000	38.71%
Offices	3	100	300	3.87%
class rooms	3	200	600	7.74%
kitchen	1	300	300	3.87%
learning kitchen	1	300	300	3.87%
community restrooms	2	200	400	5.16%
community areas	2	300	600	7.74%
storage	6	50	300	3.87%
dining room	1	500	500	6.45%
Security room	1	150	150	1.94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2950</b>	<b>7750</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Figure 76

# Space Interaction Matrix



Figure 77



# Space Interaction Net

Level 1

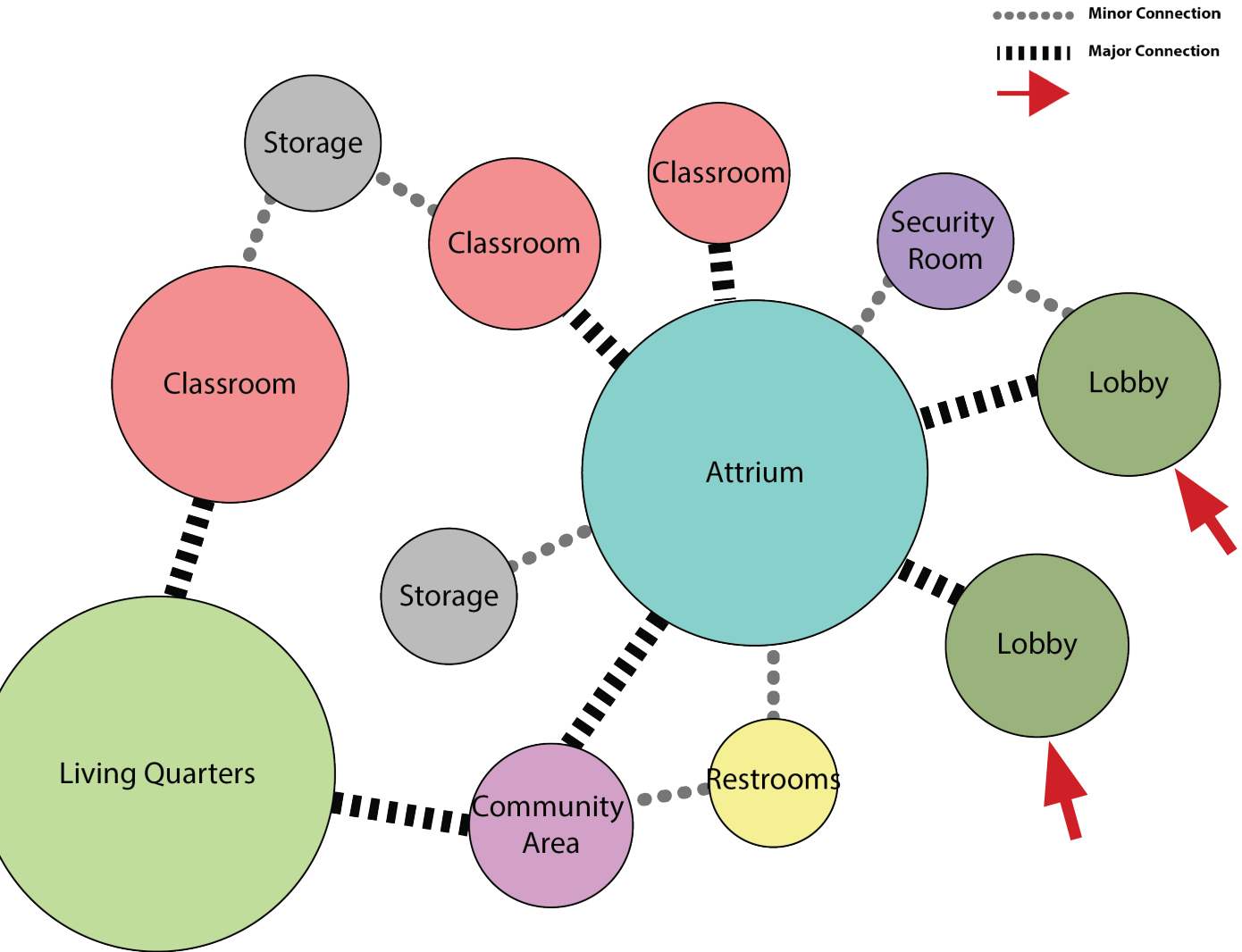


Figure 78

# Space Interaction Net

## Level 2

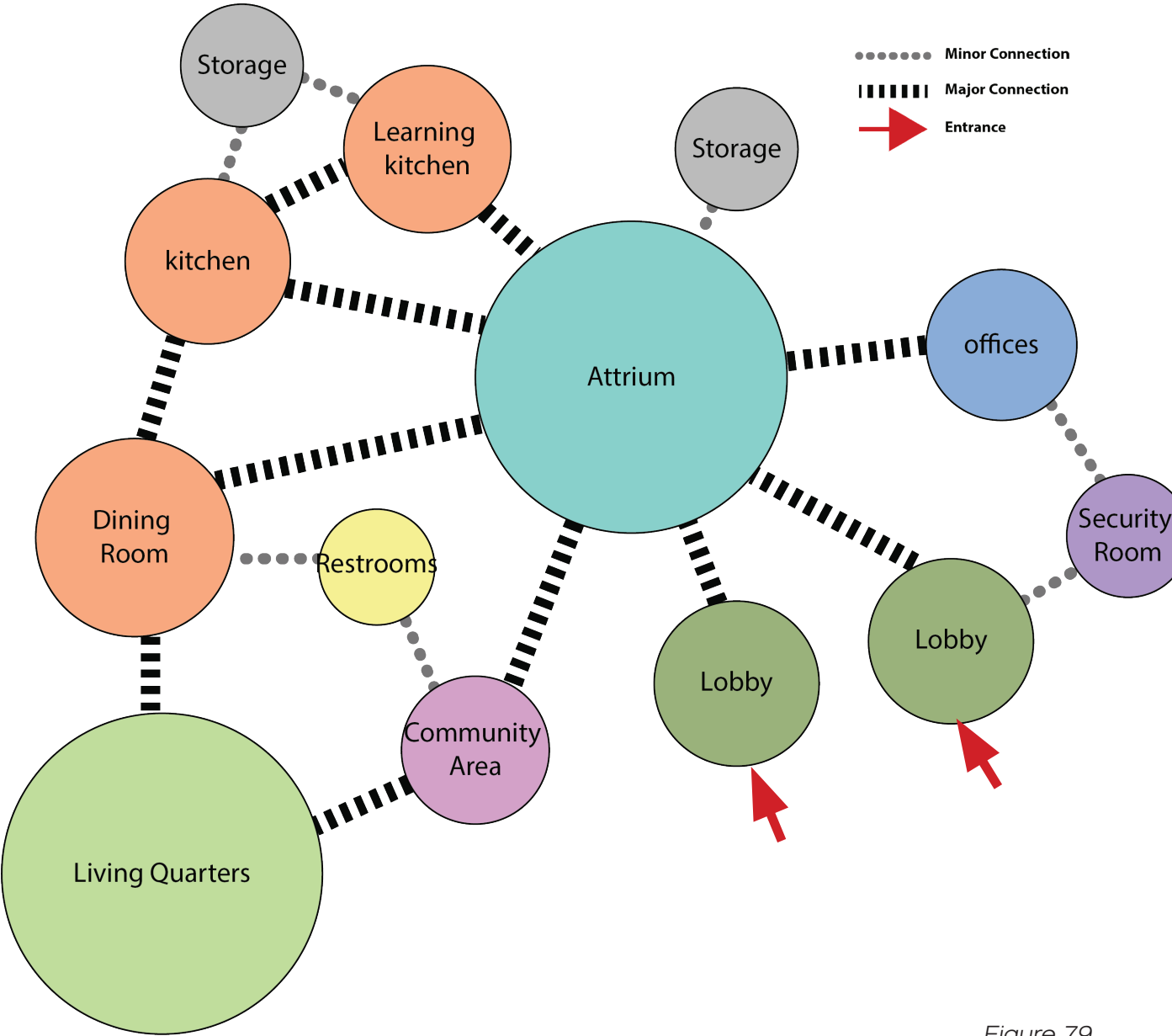


Figure 79



# Performance Criteria

## Space Allocation

Choosing the right spaces and the right square footage is important when designing for efficiency and cost effectiveness. The spaces chosen will benefit the survivors who will be in transformation in this building. To measure the performance of the spaces, a test to see the usage of spaces will help establish which spaces are truly important and which are not. The layout of these spaces is also important. Sketches will help to work through the best layout plans.

## Psychological Impact

A main aspect of my design is the psychological affects of the users of the building. The mood of the spaces within the building is what will ultimately influence the state of the users. Some of the features that create the mood are lighting, natural ventilation, color and shadow, plant life, and material choice. It is difficult to measure the psychological state of people without directly asking them. Therefore, conducting interviews of current existing facilities will help to paint a picture of what I should be shooting for. Viewing my design in a 3D model will definitely bring insight to the state of the mood. To test the performance, conducting simulations of lighting, temperature and air ventilation will assess the benefits of each category.

## Code Compliance

Being welcoming to all is of the most important, therefore, it is important for them to have access to all the amenities this facility will provide. Going beyond the restrictions of the ADA is the only option, it is time to update the code and make all things accessible. Along with the ADA code, following and going beyond energy codes in the area is not only good for the environment, but also for the health and wellbeing of the users. Using the LEED checklist as a guide and looking at WELL certifications will help me to start designing for an efficient building. To check performance, conducting more simulations for daylighting, temperature, and HVAC and drawing layouts of the HVAC systems will guide my design

towards sustainability. To judge the performance, I will use the LEED certifications and WELL standards to compare with.

### **Cost**

Cost is important for this project because the possible owners of this facility will most likely be nonprofit organizations or the government who both have tight budgets. Using local and low-cost materials will aid in maintaining a low budget. To keep this on track, I will set up a hypothetical budget which will assist in keeping material cost low. I plan to keep most of the structure that is existing in place, though changes will inevitably happen. One thing going for me is the adaptive reuse of the mall so there should be very little deconstruction costs. To check the performance of the cost, I will compare my estimated cost with the budget I had set beforehand.



# Project Emphasis

## **Atmosphere of Healing**

Space in architecture is more than its physicality. The built environment can offer so much more than a room with walls and a roof. How the space is intentionally designed can lead to the healing of deep psychological trauma in victims of abusive situations.

## **Representation of Women**

Death is often underrepresented in society; cemeteries are pushed to the outskirts of town and the elderly are stowed away in nursing homes and assisted living communities away from the rest of society. Like death, women who have become victims are neglected, abandoned and left to deal with their own problems. The proper representation of women will bring the attention that is needed to no longer allow these issues to continue happening in the dark.

## **Economic Feasibility**

Users of the facility are not paying to use the space, so the maintenance and daily operational costs fall on the owner of the facility. Most owners would be from not-for-profit organizations or from organizations that do not have a large budget for the design or construction. Picking materials and a modular system will help to keep these costs down so more people can adopt this system.

# Project Goals

1. Learn through philosophy, phenomenology, psychology, and sociology how spaces can influence the psyche of the users and promote healing.
2. Learn the individual stories of domestic violence, human trafficking, abuse, rape and other forms of oppression.
3. Change the way I think; from logistical and systemic to theoretical and philosophic
4. Graduate with a master's degree



# ARTIST ACT

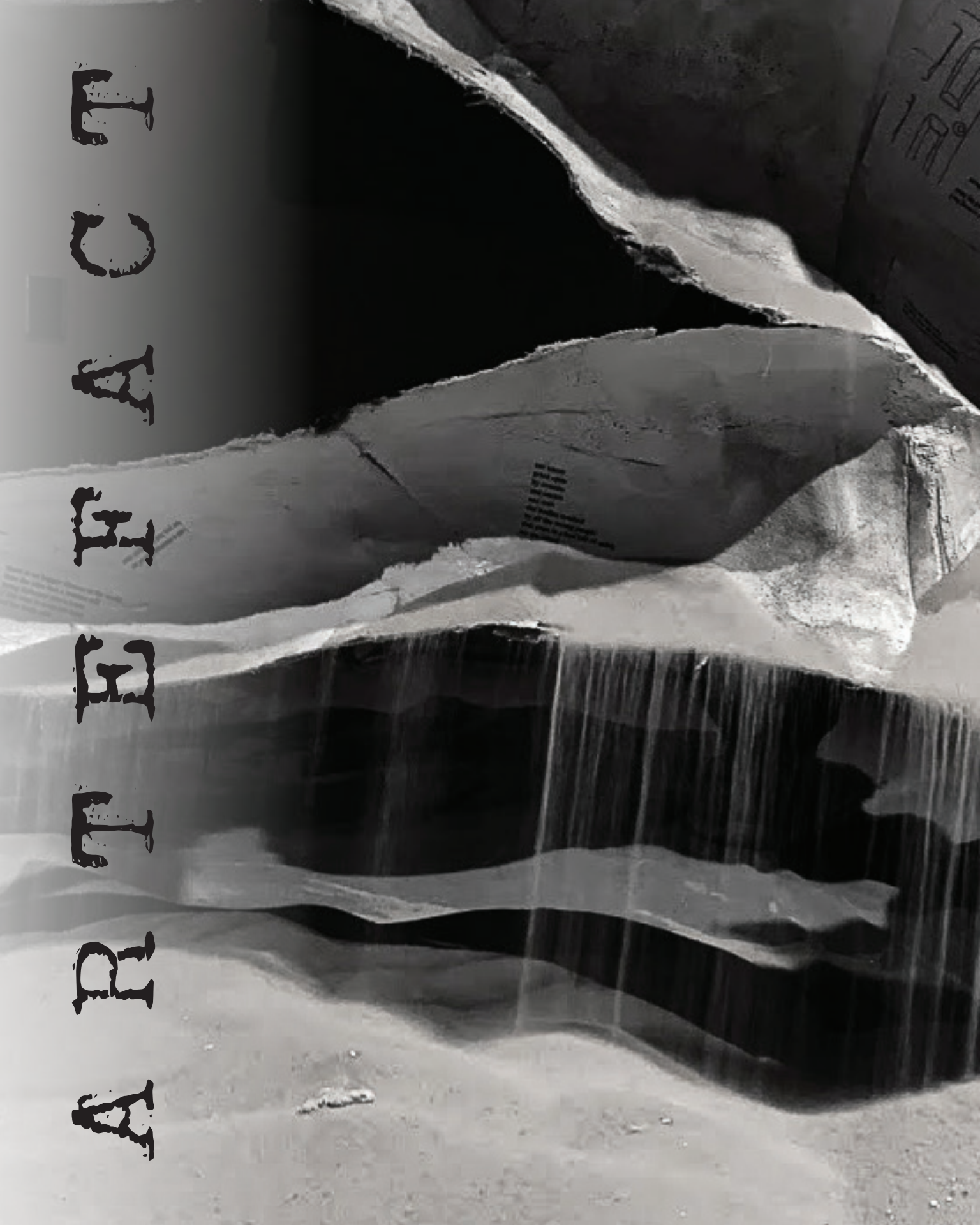




Figure 80



# empty bodies

Metaphors and realities made new are an essential topic within “The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality” by Paul Ricoeur. These allow people to activate their imagination when they encounter a work that uses metaphors and creates room for a reinterpretation of reality. To discover how architecture can facilitate the healing of victims of abuse and sexual exploitation, I first need to empathize with the emotions and encounters these women have. Through the creation of my artefact, metaphors became a fundamental instrument to represent my topic of Continual Underrepresentation of Women. To produce productive aspects of imagination in my artefact, I linked productive language through the metaphors of death, the nesting of the psyche, and the journey of transformation.







Figure 81



# Death

Through Hans-Georg Gadamer's "The Enigma of Health", I am able to imagine death, as related to oppressed women, through metaphor and remake it into a productive work. Paul Ricoeur states it nicely: "This will be our first task: to show how the emergence of new meanings in the sphere of language generate an emergence of new images" (127). There are a few key meanings that present themselves within the texts of Gadamer. His critique of medical specialization within the realm of healing and the removal of death in society lays the foundation for the creation of images through metaphor within my artefact entitled: "Empty Bodies".

The work of the artefact speaks to its viewers by identifying the issues these women encounter through the mood and tone it sets. As sand is poured into the empty bodies, the image of filling the body up with toxic medications and coping mechanisms to help bury their experiences manifests itself. The action of uncovering the sand-filled empty shells of bodies is in itself a cathartic experience for the viewer. This encounter the participant has with the artefact reflects the need of therapeutic, cathartic environments and processes for these women to help instigate the process of healing. The pouring of the sand into the empty bodies not only represents the filling of toxic medications but also what we do to them as a society. Just as the dead are buried in the ground away from the efficient process of our everyday lives, these women and their experiences are also buried in society. This is remade through a metaphor that arises in the action of pouring sand which submerges the empty bodies and the words of Rupi Kaur . Once they are successfully submerged in the depths of unreality and abandonment, they are forgotten.





Figure 82



# Nesting

Works by Sarah Robinson and Natalia Subotinic explore the psyche and how it interacts with the world we live in through, each of which are inspired by the writings and workspaces of Sigmund Freud respectively. Examining the nested psyche and the role of the psychiatrist in the client's lives can also be re-imagined through metaphors in "Empty Bodies".

Sarah Robinson identifies the matrix of the psyche, as something nested within the brain, within the body, within the space, within the context of the shelter, within society, and ultimately within the world. This poetic interconnection is transformed and made new through a participation with my artefact (and my coming architecture) in the form of metaphor. When someone encounters the artefact, they are met with shells of bodies within a setting which are filled with a substance. Just as the psyche is within the body, which is within the world, so is the sand within the shell which inhabits the environment of the room. The bodies, which are made of thin layers of plaster, are a representation of the outer world which exists between the world we physically occupy and the one we mentally occupy, which are brought together in this experience of pouring and filling, which incites and interchange between internal and external worlds. Sand that leaks out and pours into the exterior world shows how this outer world is not impermeable. The pain and suffering these women experience cannot be contained within the bounds and confines of such a weak barrier.





Figure 83



# Nesting

There needs to be a discovery of the unconscious within the realm of the inner and outer worlds of these women and their experiences and my project questions how architecture can effect this interchange in the same way an anthropologist or archaeologist uncovers artefacts buried in the depths of this nested psyche.

As the artefact is presented to the viewer, they are greeted with glimpses of poetry peeking out of piles of sand in and around the body cavities. The viewer then bends down to encounter these hidden texts through the removal of the sand. Just as a psychologist needs to uncover and dig through the depths of experience and coping, so does the participant when they remove the sand to view and read the provocative poetry of Rupi Kaur. Here the viewer becomes the anthropologist of the psyche. Rupi Kaur's poetry activates emotions of empathy and sympathy for the experiences of those who are trapped in true oppression and within their own experiences. They symbolize the true nature of abuse and exploitation. This discovery and unwrapping of the psyche is a large section of the journey these women need to take.





Figure 84



# Transformation

held my shoulders down  
like the handlebars of  
the first bicycle  
he ever rode  
i was five

i flinch when you touch me  
i fear it is him

he had the smell of  
starvation on his lips  
which he picked up from  
his father feasting on his mother at 4 a.m.

he was the first boy  
to teach me my body was  
for giving to those that wanted  
that i should feel anything  
less than whole

and my god  
did i feel as empty  
as his mother at 4:25 a.m.

our knees  
prried open  
by cousins  
and uncles  
and men

our bodies touched  
by all the wrong people  
that even in a bed full of  
we are afraid

hav  
taught  
are a pit  
that need  
a vacant bod  
for guest  
ever co  
wil

*i've had se*  
but i don't  
what makin  
feels like





Myths and stories have helped us to understand the world we live in since the beginning of human existence and the same is true of my artefact and the architecture I intend to design to aid in the healing of traumatized women. This transformation has been central to stories and myths throughout history, perhaps best summarized by Joseph Campbell's concept of the Heroes Journey and the story of Orpheus's journey from darkness to light, which are the foundations of "Empty Bodies".

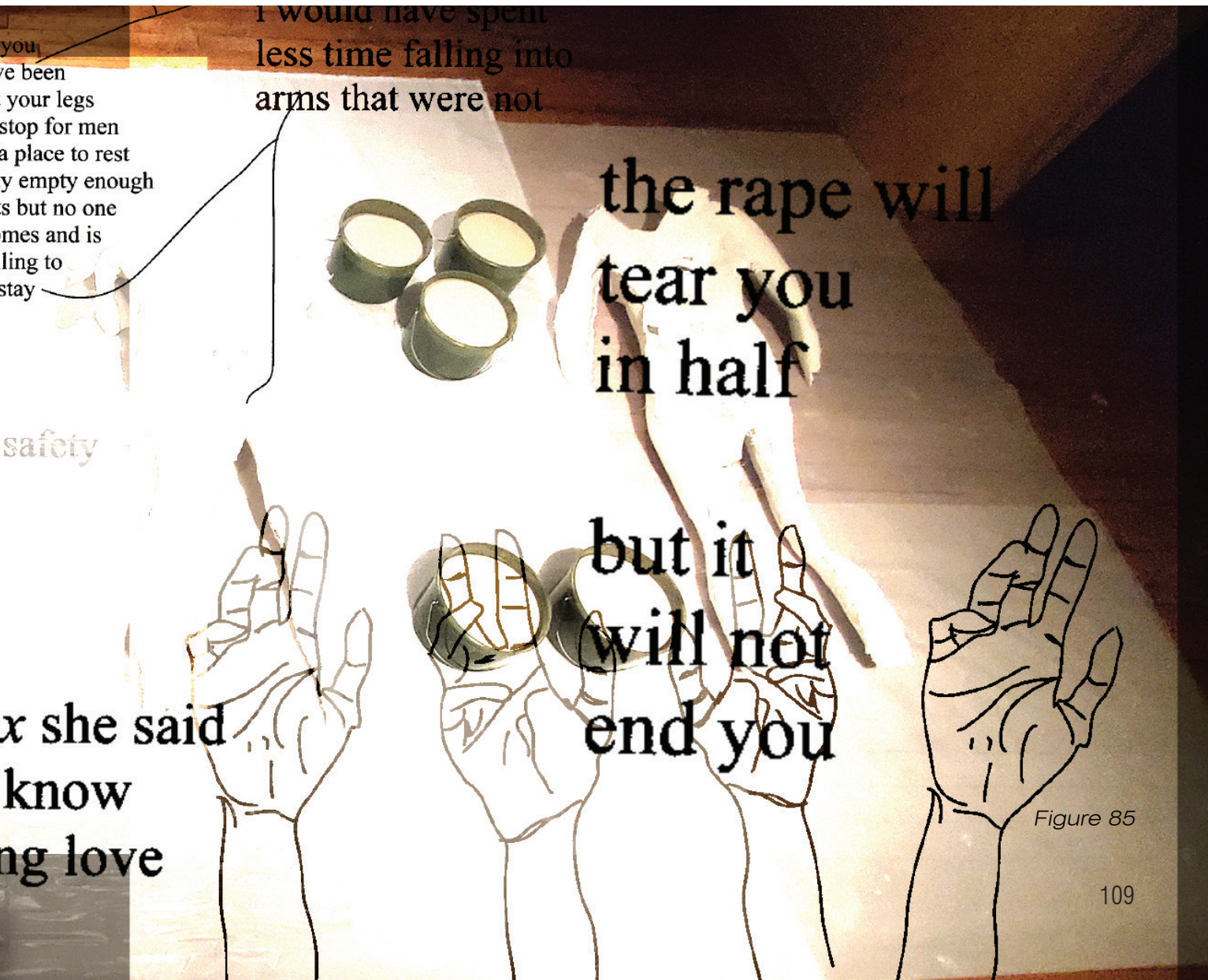


Figure 85

The Myth of Orpheus paints a picture of emotions and situations that relates to the many experiences of transformation and healing even today. Similar to Orpheus' journey, the women I seek to help heal with my architecture need to descend into the darkness of themselves in order to start healing just like the artefact depicts traumatized bodies filled with sand. These women need to find who they are and bring them back to the light of their new reality. Finding yourself deep within your psyche is similar to being buried with emotions and experiences, like the sand overflowing the decaying body cavities. Once buried within the center of the subconscious and finding who they are, the ascension to a new life can begin. This ascension is accompanied by the therapist who plays the role of the anthropologist. Since the participant with the artefact is like the therapist, the removal of the sand also represents their aid in the ascension of the survivor from within the depths of their psyche. They become less entrapped the more the viewer therapeutically removes the constraining sand from the fragile corpse.





Figure 86



## A New Meaning

“Reminiscences from the past must be found at all cost in all new ideas and images. The components are old, only the combination is new” (Ricoeur 125). Through the language of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Natalia Subotinic, and Joseph Campbell, new combinations form from old ideas that have been re-created through metaphor in my artefact, “Empty Bodies”. To produce productive aspects of imagination in my artefact, I linked productive language through the metaphors of death, the nesting of the psyche, and the journey of transformation. “Empty Bodies” creates an atmosphere of empathy and sympathy for those who have been and currently are oppressed through abuse, domestic violence, rape, stalking, and sex trafficking. Through the experience of the artefact, the viewer will not only see these issues as something unchanging or immutable, but like metaphor or the stories and myths mentioned above, help them to transform and heal in the way they perceive their reality anew.

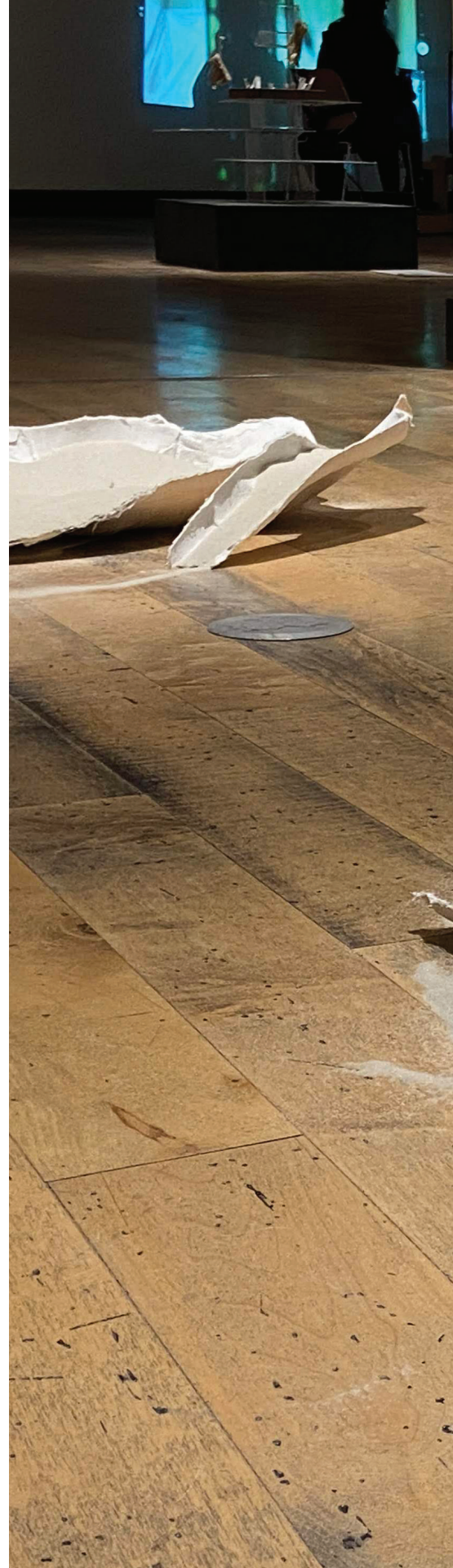






Figure 87



ARCHITECTURE







Figure 88



# empty spaces

Poetry and metaphor speak best through architecture when thoughtfully executed with intention and desire. Literature has influenced the production of my artefact, titled Empty Bodies, through metaphors and imagination. These same influences carry over to the design and creation of my architecture titled Empty Spaces. The interpretations of the words from Hans-Georg Gadamer, Sarah Robinson, Alberto Perez-Gomez, Natalia Subotinic and Joseph Campbell, has led to an architectural design which represents the underrepresented by exploring the metaphors envisioned through Empty Bodies. The burying of the self, the emptiness of coping, and the ascension of darkness to light are the foundational metaphors which bring the architecture to life.





Auditorium  
class

class class class class

Figure 89



Through the discovery of the artefact, I was able to transform the text from Alberto Perez-Gomez in “Mood and Meaning in Architecture” into architecture by including metaphors reimagined from my artefact which speak to the experiences of those kept in the realm of abuse and exploitation. Just as the bodies in the artifact are buried under the sand, the architecture is also buried beneath itself and the ground to meet the user where they are at. Perez-Gomez talks about how our body, mind, and environment are no longer independent





entities but are actually “an embodied dynamic system in the world”. I implement this ideology in the design by starting them on the ground floor buried beneath the weight of the building which is accentuated through the use of concrete. The building becomes larger when ascending through to the top level, this amplifies the feeling of being buried to accept these women at the stage they are at.

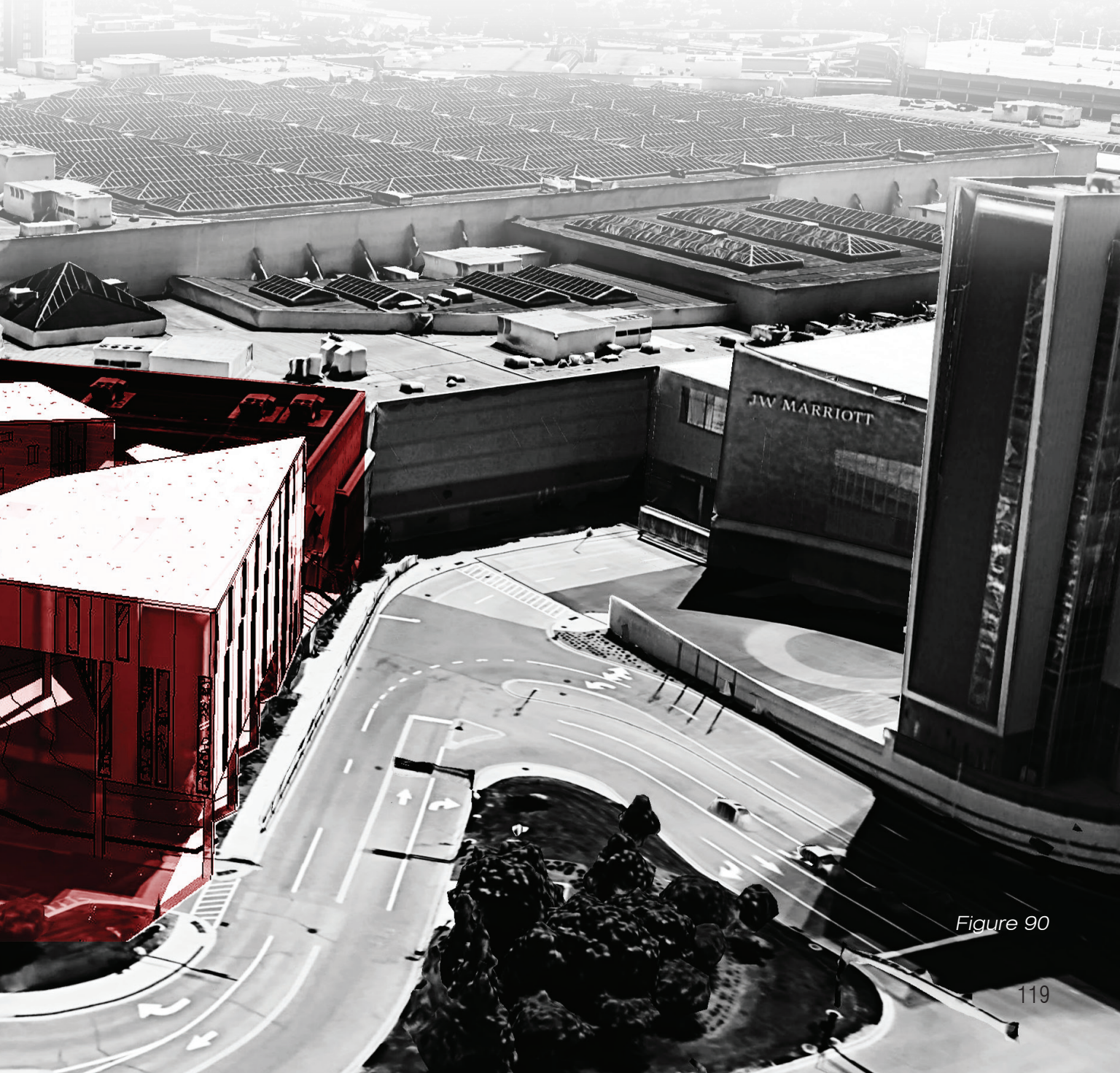


Figure 90



The architecture is designed to embody the same metaphor and experience of the artefact through voids created throughout the building. As the women enter the ground floor buried beneath the weight of the building, they are met with a vertical shaft which allows them to see above to the heavens and below into the depths. They are faced with their own emptiness and are reminded of the depths within themselves they must travel to in order to heal. Though, they are also given hope as they glance up to the upper floors which house people further along in their journey, with light gleaming down softly resting on the smooth concrete. While facing the emptiness head on, there needs to be guidance on what to fill the emptiness with through therapy and self-discovery.







*Figure 91*



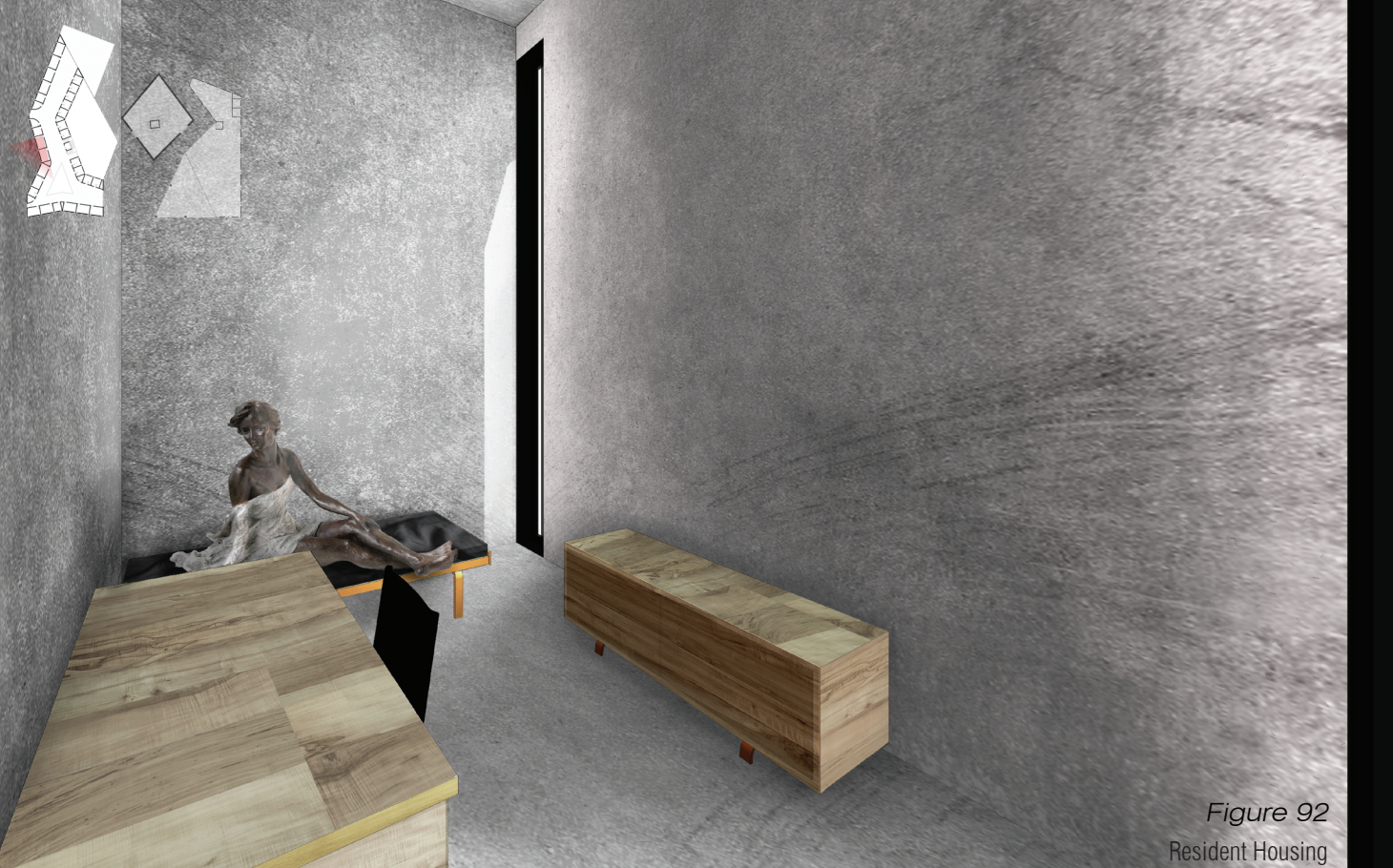


Figure 92  
Resident Housing



Figure 93  
Emergency Housing

They becomes a resident once they chooses to exit her current situation and starts her journey of transformation. They is first given a room in emergency housing on the first level, this gets her out of the abusive situation immediately in order to start her journey of healing. To begin her journey in the Building of Life, they starts at the bottom where the darkness surrounds her and the walls are near, but as they ascends through the levels, the spaces continue to open up and become more saturated with light. Once they chooses to continue with the program, they is moved from the emergency housing to the residential dwelling units on the upper floors. This movement reflects the ascension from the shadows of abuse to the light of redemption back into society.



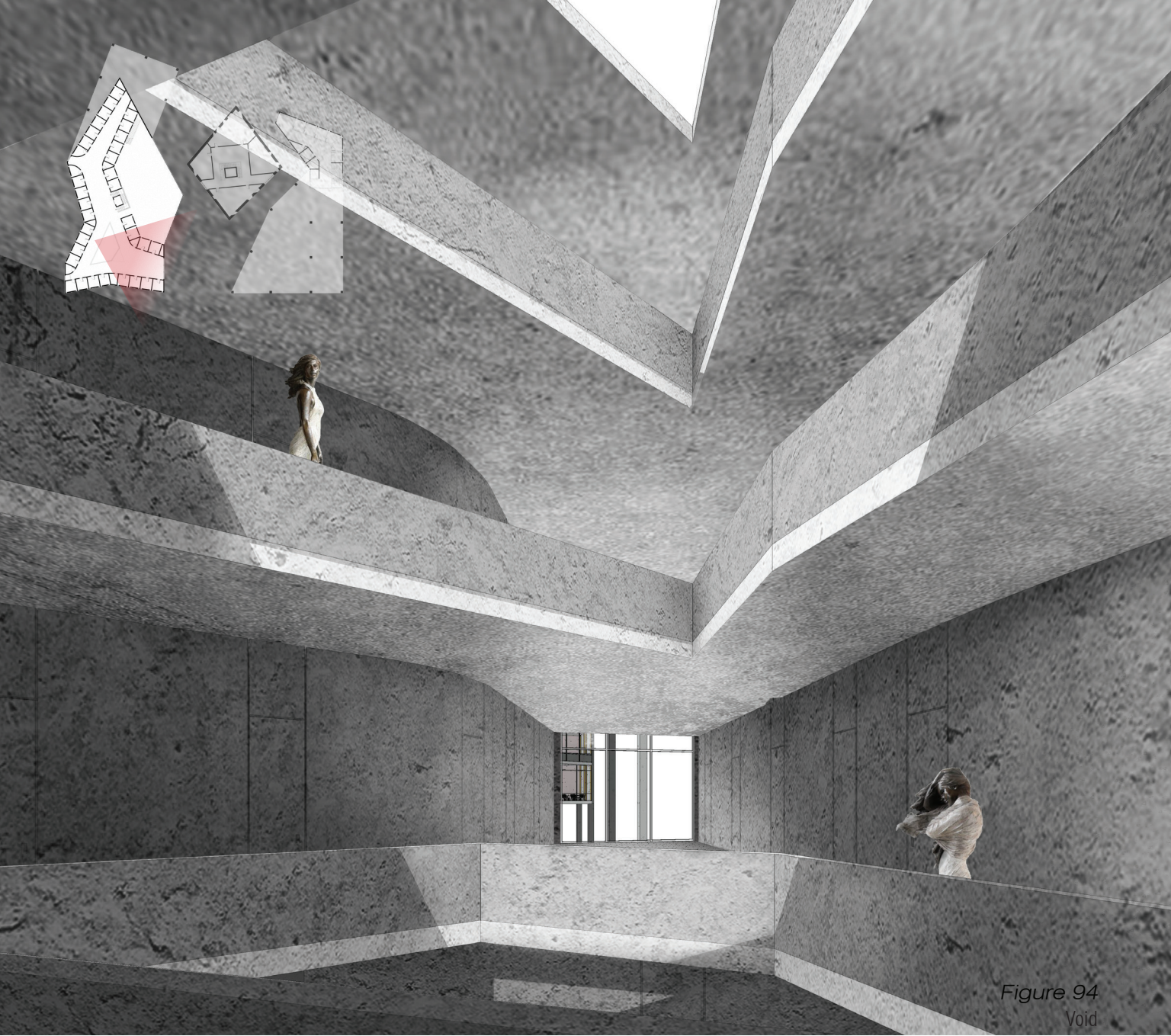


Figure 94  
Void

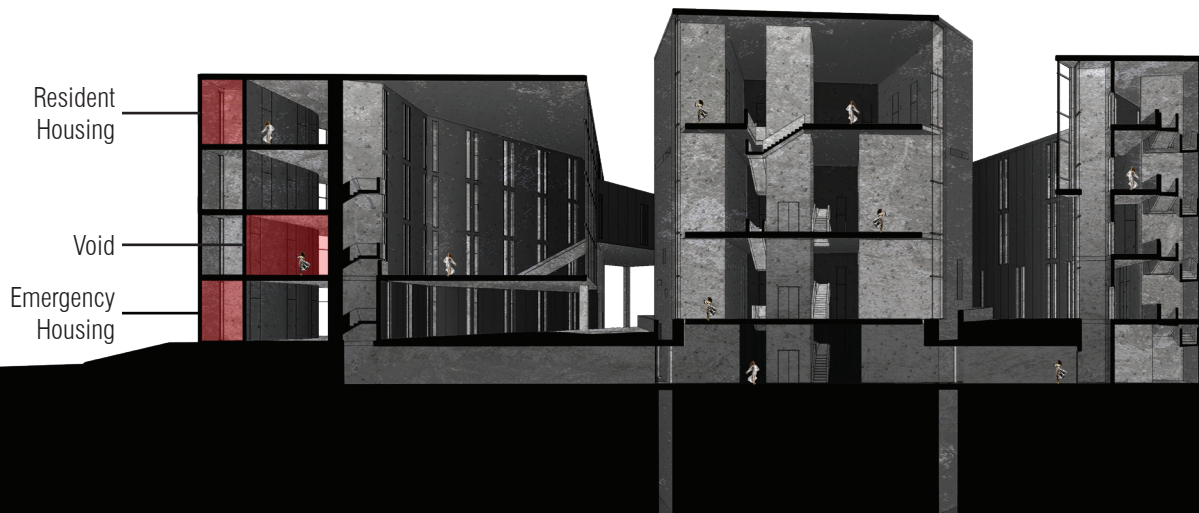
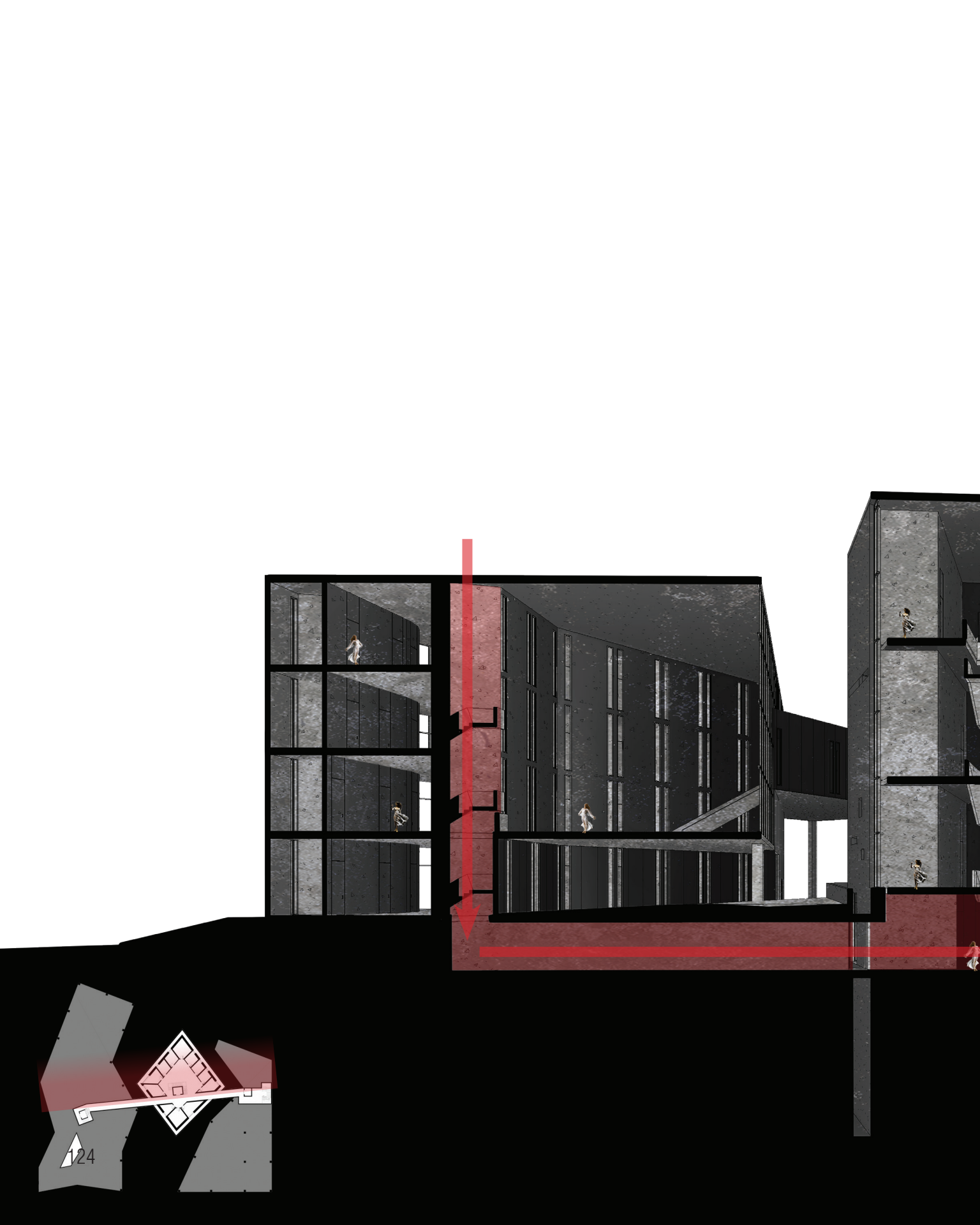


Figure 95







While they explore the architecture, they will discover themselves and confront their emptiness in a therapeutic way by receding into the depths of the structure until submerged underground like Orpheus' journey to the underworld to claim his bride. The Axial tunnel underground leads then along a journey which mimics that of their own struggles of oppression.

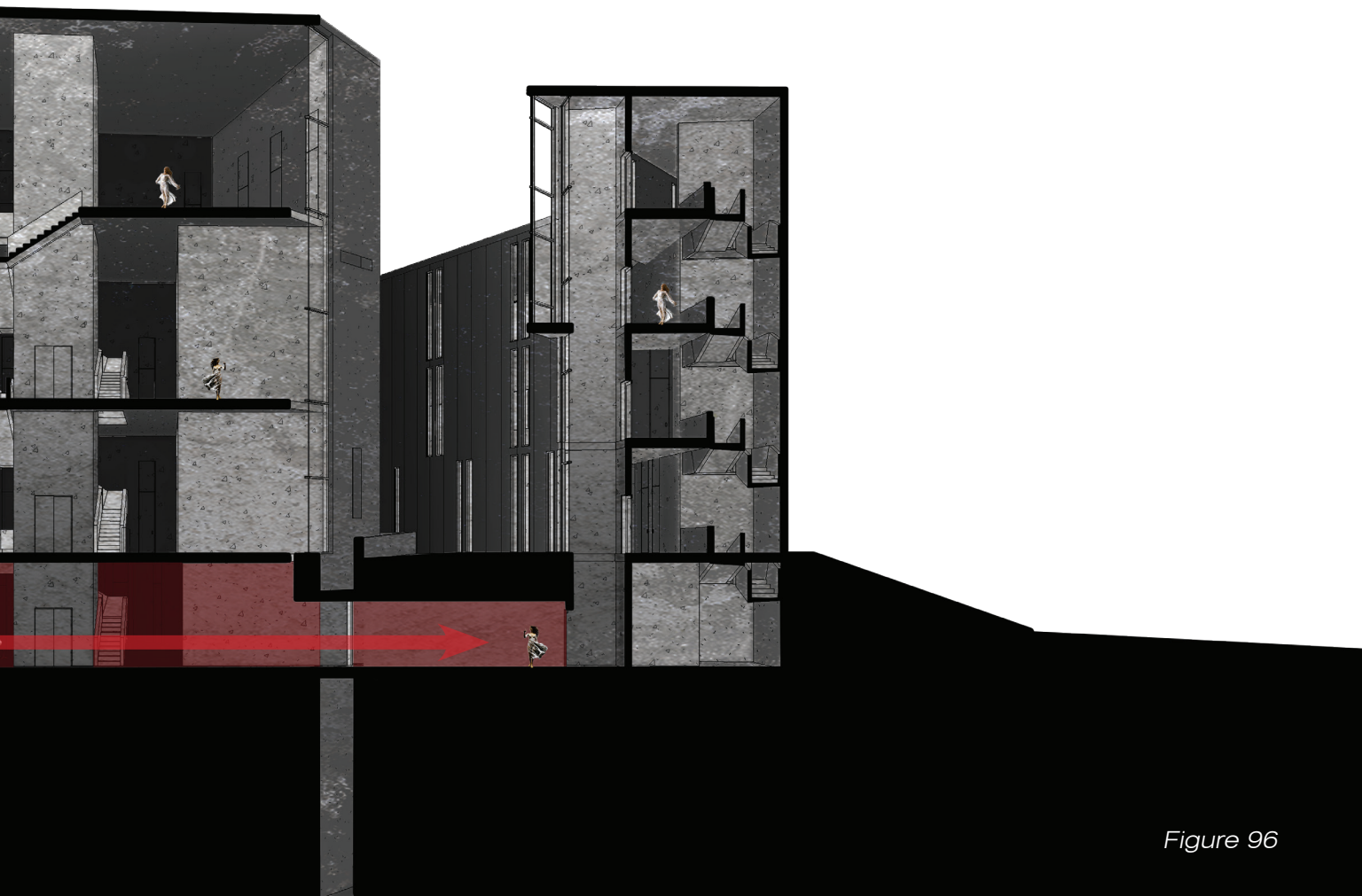


Figure 96



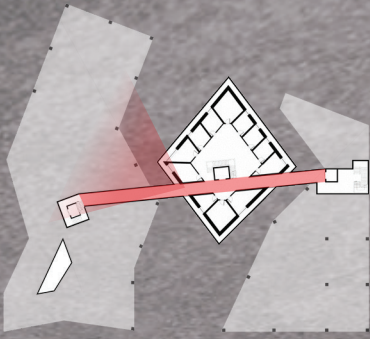


Figure 97





Through the architecture, on their way to receive healing, they are introduced to the depths of their emptiness as they pass the canyon separating the tower of healing from the earth. They are able to reflect in this moment by observing the architecture which creates a transition of light to darkness within the cavity. This resembles the depths of the psyche which are hidden beneath the surface like an iceberg, and the transition that must be taken out of that depth of unconscious into the light of reality.

The tower which sits between the two masses is designated for healing through therapy. This space mimics that of the open void within the living center but acts as the filling of the empty space through cathartic activities like music and art. As one would ascend through the tower, the interactions become more public and social as a representation of the unburying of the psyche. The first interactions with the psychologist happen deep underground but as they progress in their healing, the architecture also reflects their movement in their journey by allowing them to rise out of the ground into the other forms of therapy. This ascension is the transformation the architecture strives to accomplish through the mood of the spaces.





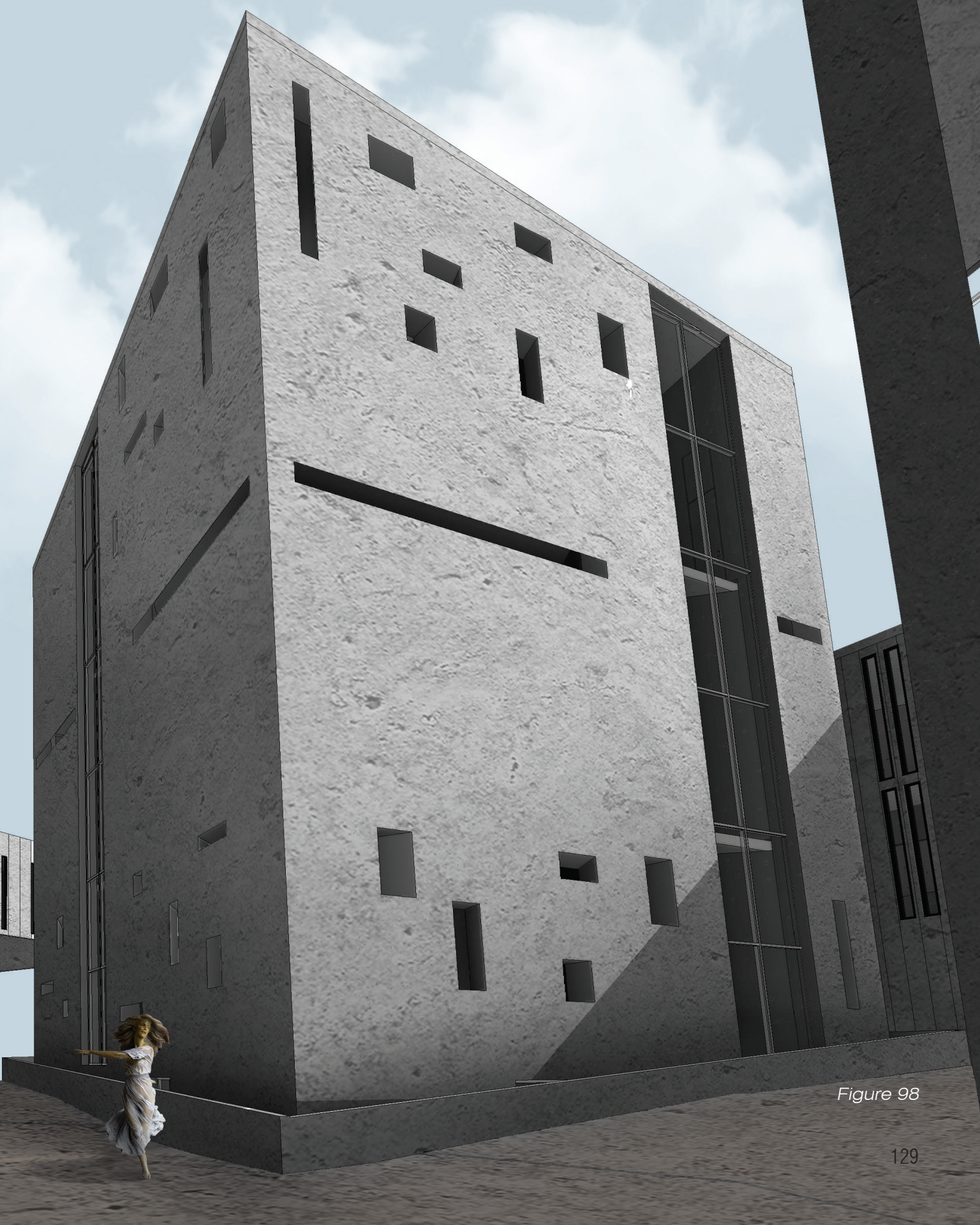


Figure 98



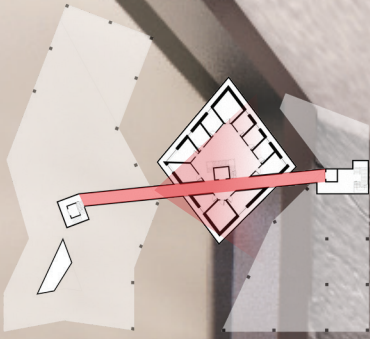


Figure 99





Underground, the ceilings are low creating a sense of claustrophobia which emphasizes the feeling of being buried beneath a large, heavy mass. The concrete is distressed from the elements of nature which ties into the distress they have also experienced from the elements of society. Little light penetrates the center of the tower when in the depths, setting the mood for the transformation into the environment of healing which allows for the confessional of dreams. Each time they take this course, they have to confront the emptiness that is deep within themselves as they travel into the earth before they can receive healing.





Figure 100





Perez-Gomez established that architecture should “try to bring about the appropriate moods for human actions that reveal life as purposeful by designing spaces that are open to an appropriate range of moods”. The mood dramatically changes when they enter the therapeutic space of healing which will provoke them to open up and start their journey of healing.

The first encounter with the psychologist happens in a small room with only a view of a concrete wall. As one would approach the window, they realize there is no floor, the concrete wall they face continues down into the depths of the earth for what seems like eternity. One might move their focus up along the wall that holds the earth back, and might feel the light, saturated with hope, flow into the space from above. This architectural expression of the space between the world and the tower reflects to the emptiness within these women but also gives them hope of ascension into the light of redemption.





Music  
Figure 101



Art  
Figure 102



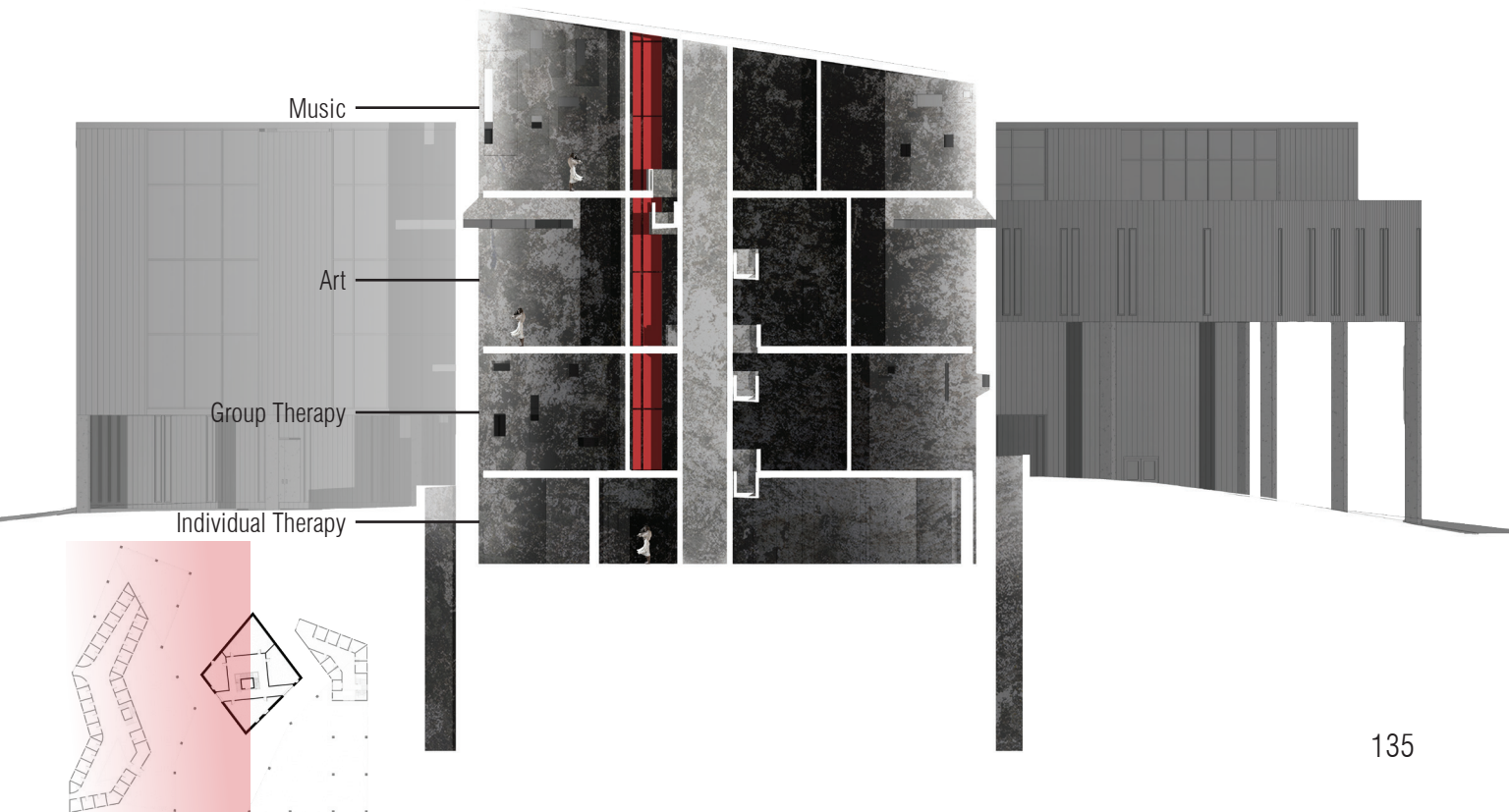
Group Therapy  
Figure 103



As they progress in their healing, the architecture reflects their movement in the journey by allowing them to rise out of the ground into other forms of therapy. When they become more comfortable with being amongst others, they ascend through the tower by progressing to group therapy which is still intimate but allows others to hear their stories. Here light penetrates the central corridor of the tower through windows that pierce the walls continuing the axis, which is horizontal, vertically through the building.

Then they can rise to the next level which opens up their creativity through art therapy. Light continues to penetrate the core of the building as the windows continue to follow the axis vertically. Within the art studios, light is gracefully let in through chamfered windows that allow even diffused light to enter the space. This non direct lighting allows for the creation of art in many different mediums.

As each of these therapies continue to become more open and inclusive, they reach the top floor of music therapy. The axis is completed in its verticality through the windows stretching to each building, allowing those in its path to see within and beyond the tower. As they enter one of the ensemble rooms, their attention might be brought to the large chamfered windows that light up the space. A sense of divinity and peace might fill their souls as the light punctures the walls like the sun through the clouds of a storm.



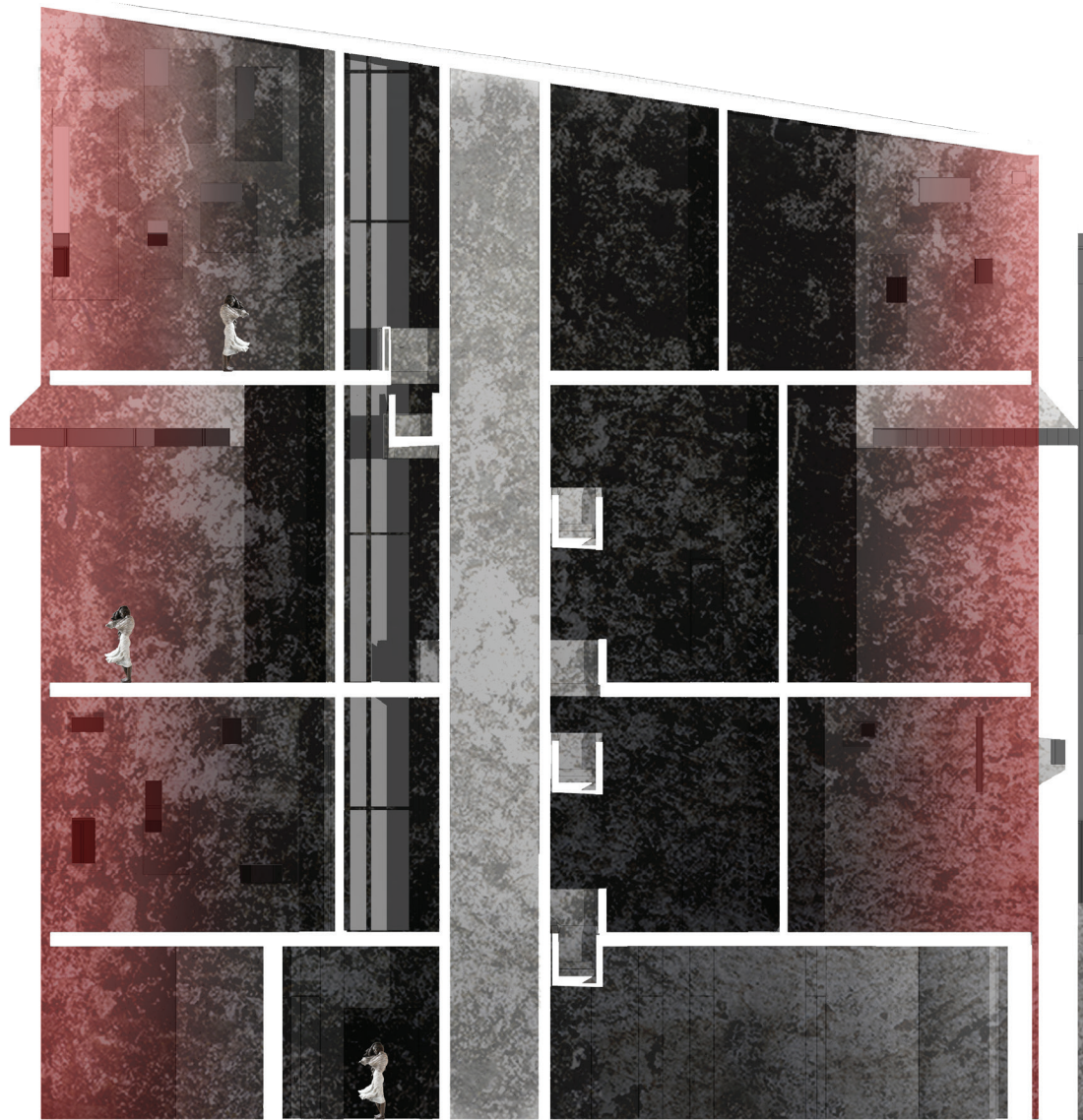
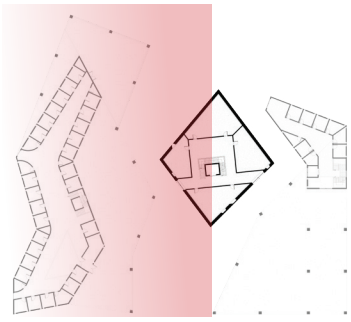


Figure 105





As music is played, the sound floats down through the reveals between the floor and the walls, even reaching those depths within the earth, resonating throughout the building penetrating every space of healing.





Figure 106



Figure 107



In order to continue onto the building of growth, they must descend back into the depths of the tower and travel along the axis to remerge within the building of growth. The action of descending and emerging mimics that of the heroes' journey illustrated by Joseph Campbell. It acts as a reminder that in order to continue the process of healing, they must repeatedly examine the health of her psyche. Within the building of growth, there is a dining center which provides the physical nourishment of the body in order to properly continue the healing of the mind. Here they are able to create relationships with others in the program. There is glazing facing the plaza allowing them to observe others from a safe distance in security. They are now the observer and no longer being observed. The second level of the dining room overlooks the floor below and the floor above, creating a sense of community and togetherness. The top level of the building of growth is dedicated to teaching, learning and growing. Classrooms are available for teaching how to budget, how to clean, how to get a job, and also allowing them to finish their GED. Simple things many take for granted.

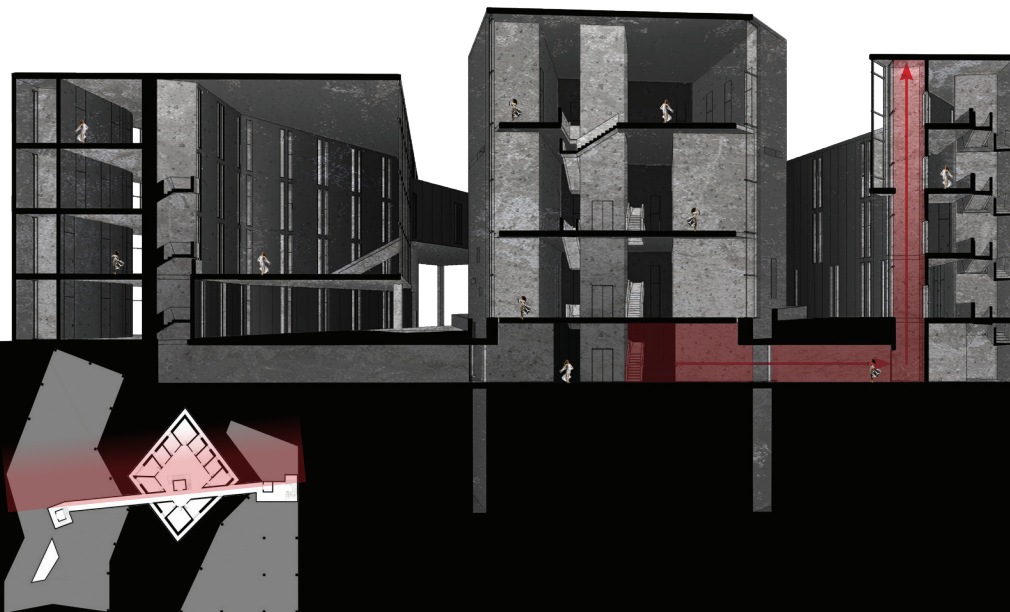



Figure 108





The image is a complex digital composition. In the background, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a light pink, flowing, ruffled dress, is shown from the waist up, looking upwards and to the right. In the foreground on the left, the back of a child's head and shoulders is visible; the child is wearing a black long-sleeved shirt. The entire scene is overlaid with large, semi-transparent, abstract shapes in shades of yellow, orange, and pink, which appear to be layered on top of the other elements. The overall aesthetic is ethereal and artistic.

Through the anthropologic discovery of self through the architecture, the journey of the hero has come full circle. Creating spaces within the architecture which provide the right moods for the actions within, allows for the confessional of dreams. Dreams that one day will be achievable to all. It is the only hope that the architecture can assist along this journey of dream achievement within these women and their futures.

*Figure 109*



X

H

D

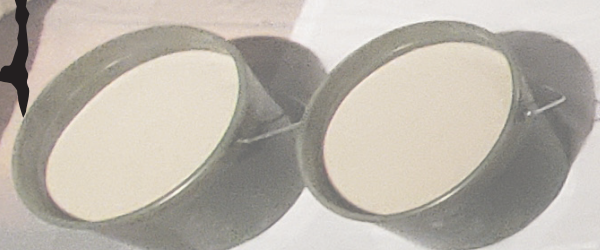
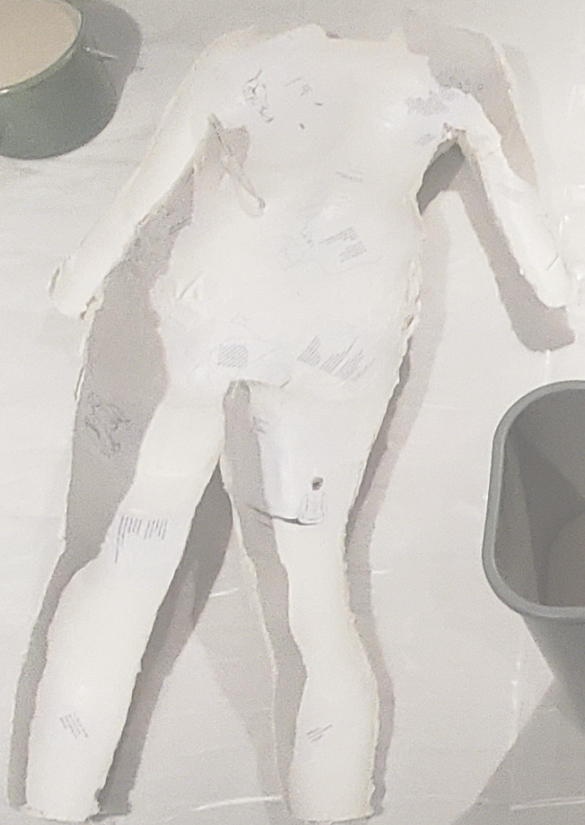
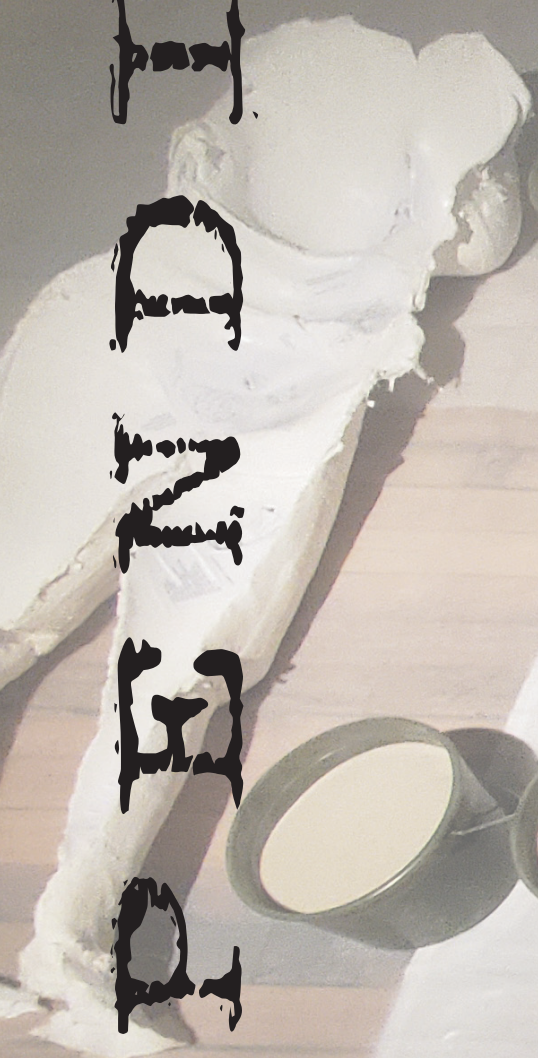
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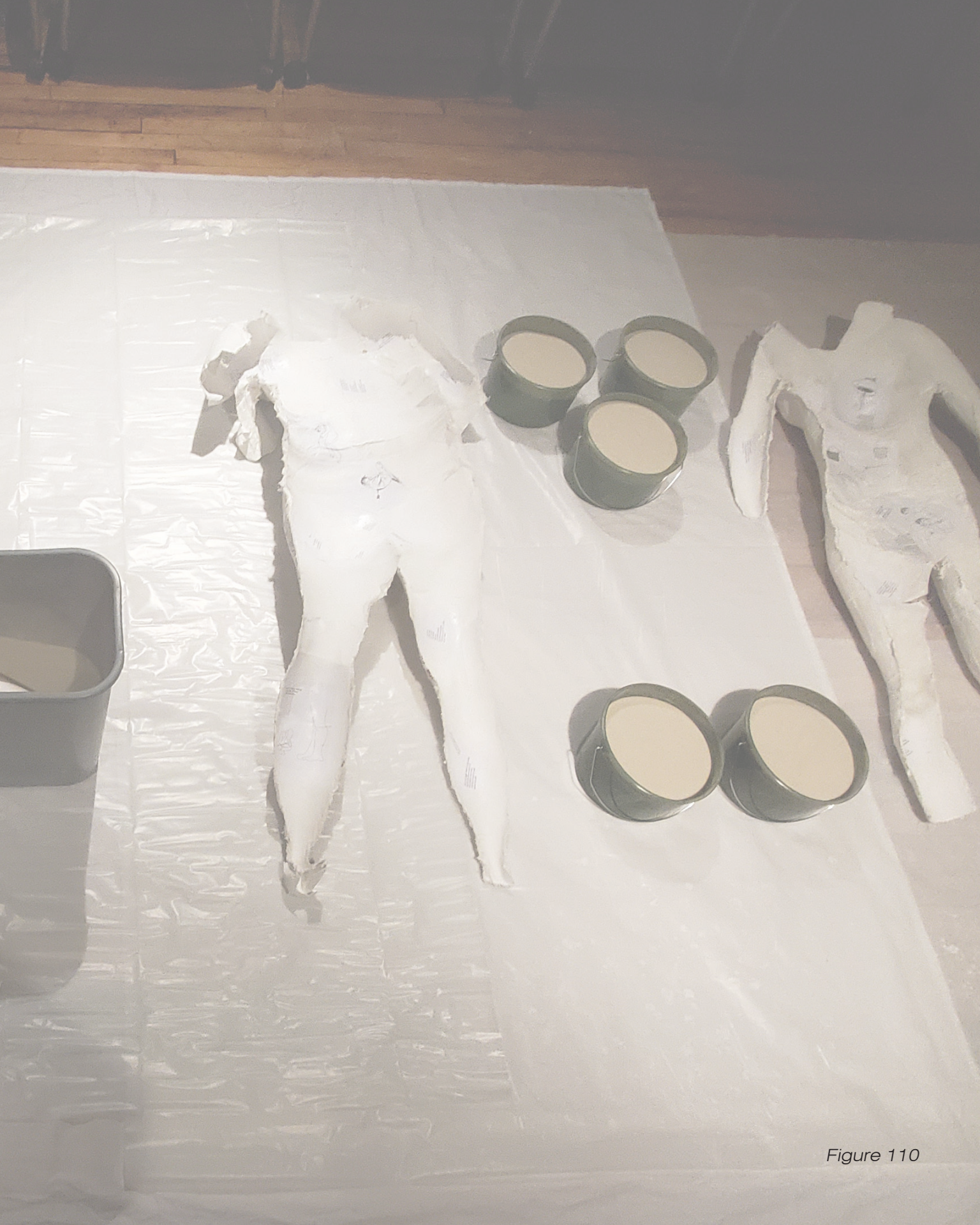


Figure 110

# Schedule

## Full Semester 2019

	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.
<b>Thesis Proposal</b>	█		█	
<b>Thesis Research</b>		█		
<b>Design</b>				█
<b>Thesis Hook</b>				
<b>Thesis Exhibit</b>				
<b>Thesis Reviews</b>				

September 12 Thesis Narrative  
 October 10 Thesis Proposal  
 December 12 Thesis Research

March 13 Final Thesis Research  
 March 9-13 Thesis Mid-Term Review  
 April 24 Digital Thesis Exhibit



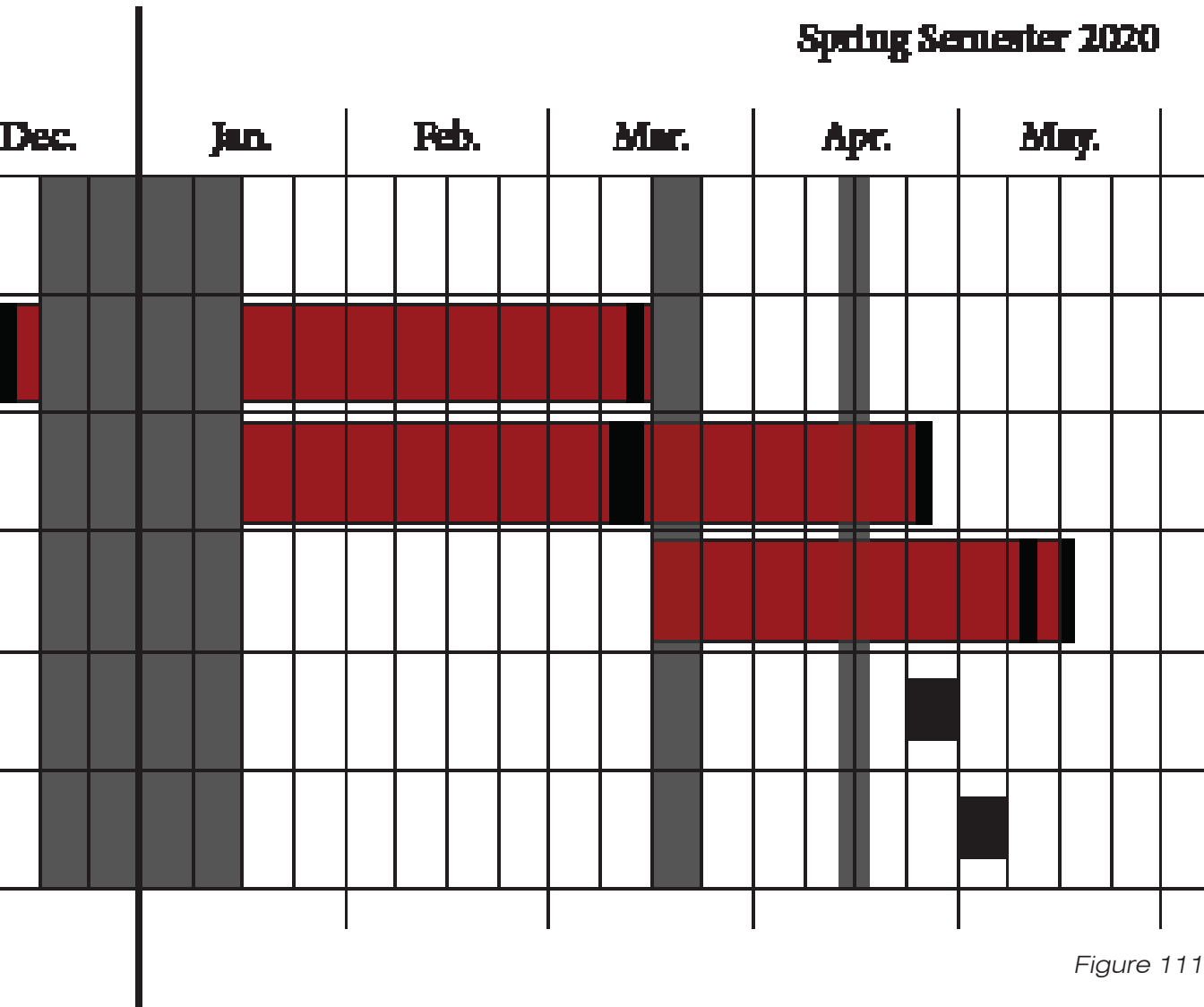


Figure 111

April 27 Physical Exhibit  
 April 28-30 Thesis Exhibit  
 May 4-7 Thesis Review

May 11 Digital Thesis Book  
 May 15 Thesis Book

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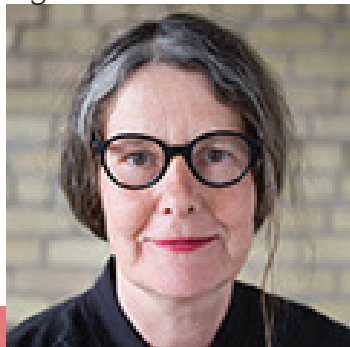
*Sculptures of Women* - Lou Li Rong





# Previous Studio Experience

Figure 112



## 2nd Year

Fall 2016:  
Charlotte Greub

Meditation Tea House | Fargo, ND  
Montessori School | Fargo, ND

Figure 113



Spring 2017:  
Milt Yergens

Performing Arts Center | Fargo, ND  
Dwelling Unit | Marfa, TX

Figure 114

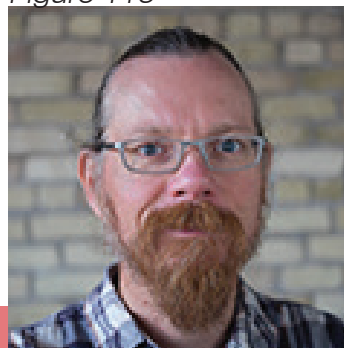


## 3rd Year

Fall 2017:  
Mike Christainson

Adaptive Reuse Art Gallery | Chicago, IL  
Boarder Station | AZ

Figure 115

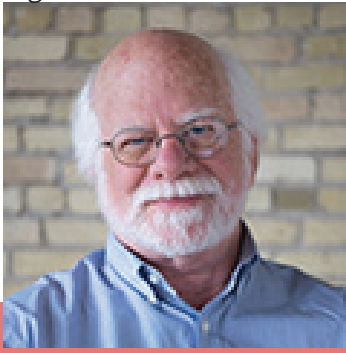


Spring 2018:  
Regin Schwaen

Visitors Center | Fargo, ND  
Steel Affordable Housing | Fargo, ND



Figure 116



## 4th Year

Fall 2018:  
Don Faulkner

High Rise Capstone | Miami, FL  
Vision Project

Figure 117



Spring 2019:  
Paul Gleye

Community Focused Urban Plan |  
Brussels, Belgium

Figure 118



## Thesis Year

Fall 2019 | Spring 2020  
Steven Wischer

Thesis Theoretical Research | Edina, MN  
Thesis Project Development | Edina, MN

## Professional Experience:

Cunningham Architectural Group  
Minneapolis, MN

Summer 2018 | Summer 2019



# empty spaces

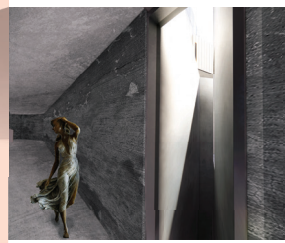
architecture healing the emptiness within victims of abuse and sexual exploitation



Abuse, domestic violence, stalking, rape, and sex trafficking are situations we all know exist, but how often do we talk about it? How often do we do something about it? Hans-Georg Gadamer criticizes the specialization of medicine and the effects this has on the healing environments which depend on the immediate effects of medication of the body instead of healing through therapy of the mind, which involves the broader interrelationship of mind/body and world. Healing these women, needs more than what is typically offered by the clinical setting. My thesis suggests that the difficult journey to healing might benefit from the creation of external, resonant atmospheres that affect the internal world of thoughts and emotions.



Based on archetypal stories of transformation, my architecture guides the users through a journey of healing by provoking self-discovery within spaces that explore emptiness and transition from darkness to light, which leads to exploring the emptiness they are trying to mask within themselves. Confronting these depths, the architecture acts as a therapist, guiding them towards healing. This journey takes place at the Mall of America which is not only an icon in the Midwest for pleasures of shopping and quick thrills but, unknowingly, is also a location for sex trafficking and the sex-trade of children.



The tensions of two environments, one of healing and one of consumerism, creates a new environment of learning and acceptance through the calling out of horrendous conditions in such an iconic location



The story of Orpheus is vital as the metaphor and meaning of the architecture. His descension into the darkness of the underworld and ascension back to the light of the living relates to the journey these women need to take within themselves and within the architecture to complete their healing

The therapist must become the anthropologist of the psyche in order to unwrap and discover the trauma they have endured for the revealing of their true selves.



Figure 119





# The End



Figure 120



# Thank you!

To my **family** that supported me during my college career and the craziness of being an architecture student.

To my **fiance** for being my emotional support during times of doubt and anxiety.

To my **friends** Zoe and Noah for enduring thesis with me through mutual support and encouragement.

To my **professor** Stephen Wischer for showing me what I am truly capable of and what Architecture is capable of.

During these difficult times of the COVID-19 Pandemic I am looking forward to start my role as an Architectural Designer at Cuningham Group in Minneapolis Minnesota at the beginning of June. I am also excited to start the new chapter of my life as a wife to my wonderful Fiance Logan Wenisch. Hopefully our wedding will continue as planned in October within these unsure times of the Pandemic. Watch out world, I'm fearless and I survived my architecture thesis project.





Figure 121