RKO RUINS & THE SURREAL FRAGMENT: dreams, film & architecture

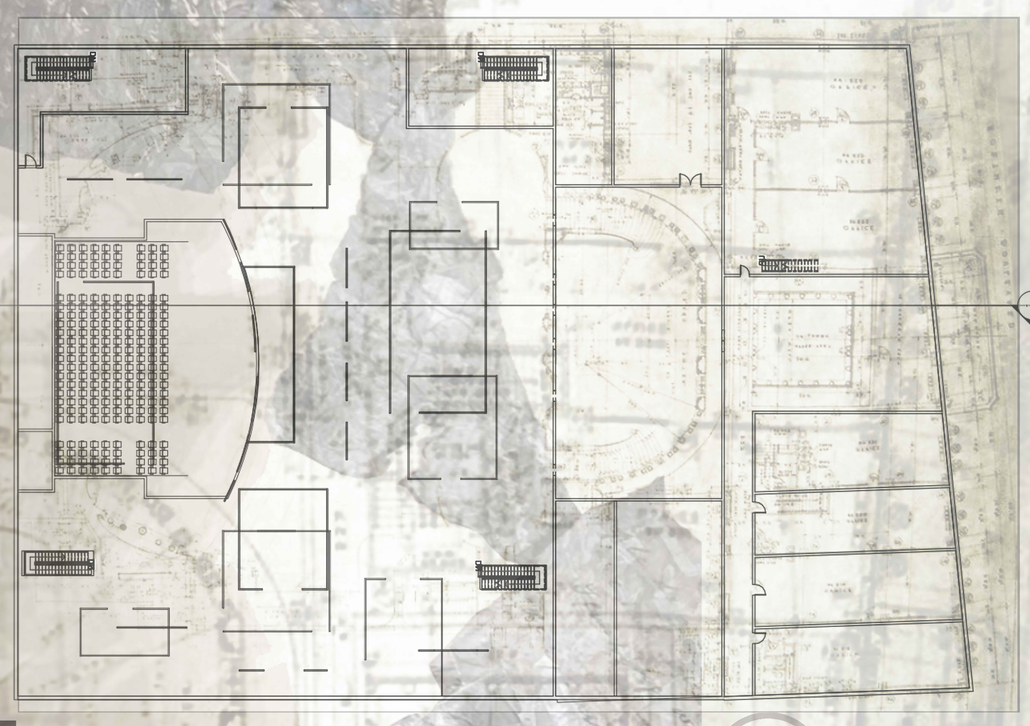
This thesis explores the primacy of dreams on our experience through the space of literature, film, and architecture. In contrast to the modern definition of "reality," much of our waking experience is structured in the same way as dreams, as we stitch together fragments of memories we have to make meaning in the world and navigate our daily rituals. This is never reducible to a direct picture or a purely rational organization of time and space. In fact, as many philosophers suggest, looking at creations such as poetry, literature and film may show us how we actually see.

Tarkovsky Film Clips

"Architecture exists, like cinema, in the dimension of time and movement. One thinks, conceives and reads a building in terms of sequence"

-Jean Nouvel

Inspired by the capacity of dreams and film to disrupt spatial temporal relations that are typically considered normal, this project brings to light the significance of dreams and imagination to waking experience. By restoring the abandon RKO Keith's Theater in Queens, New York, into a contemporary space for surrealist art and film, I hope to answer the question: Can architecture, like film and dream, engage our memory and imagination to augment and enhance our notion of reality?



Floor Plan

Section Perspective Video

Freud very rightly brought his critical faculties to bear upon the dream. It is, in fact, inadmissible that this considerable portion of psychic activity (since, at least from man's birth until his death, thought offers no solution of continuity, the sum of the moments of the dream, from the point of view of time, and taking into consideration only the time of pure dreaming, that is the dreams of sleep, is not inferior to the sum of the moments of reality, or, to be more precisely limiting, the moments of waking) has still today been so grossly neglected.

-Andre Breton, Surrealist Manifesto

As you move through the gallery spaces, the movement and rhythm of the body are framed. Where the **rhythm articulates a form of animation**, constructing the space through the **figment of imagination.**

Visual projections of the old theatre are placed throughout, simulating a **living architecture**, where the body is induced to follow the rhythm of the montage images. It is home of a moving picture, a house of film, where the eye moves back and forth causing the body space to be controlled and **manipulated through imaginary endless space.**