

**RE-IMAGINING THE RMS TITANIC
THROUGH THE USE OF
ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTATION**



Figure 001



RE-IMAGINING THE RMS TITANIC
THROUGH THE USE OF
ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTATION

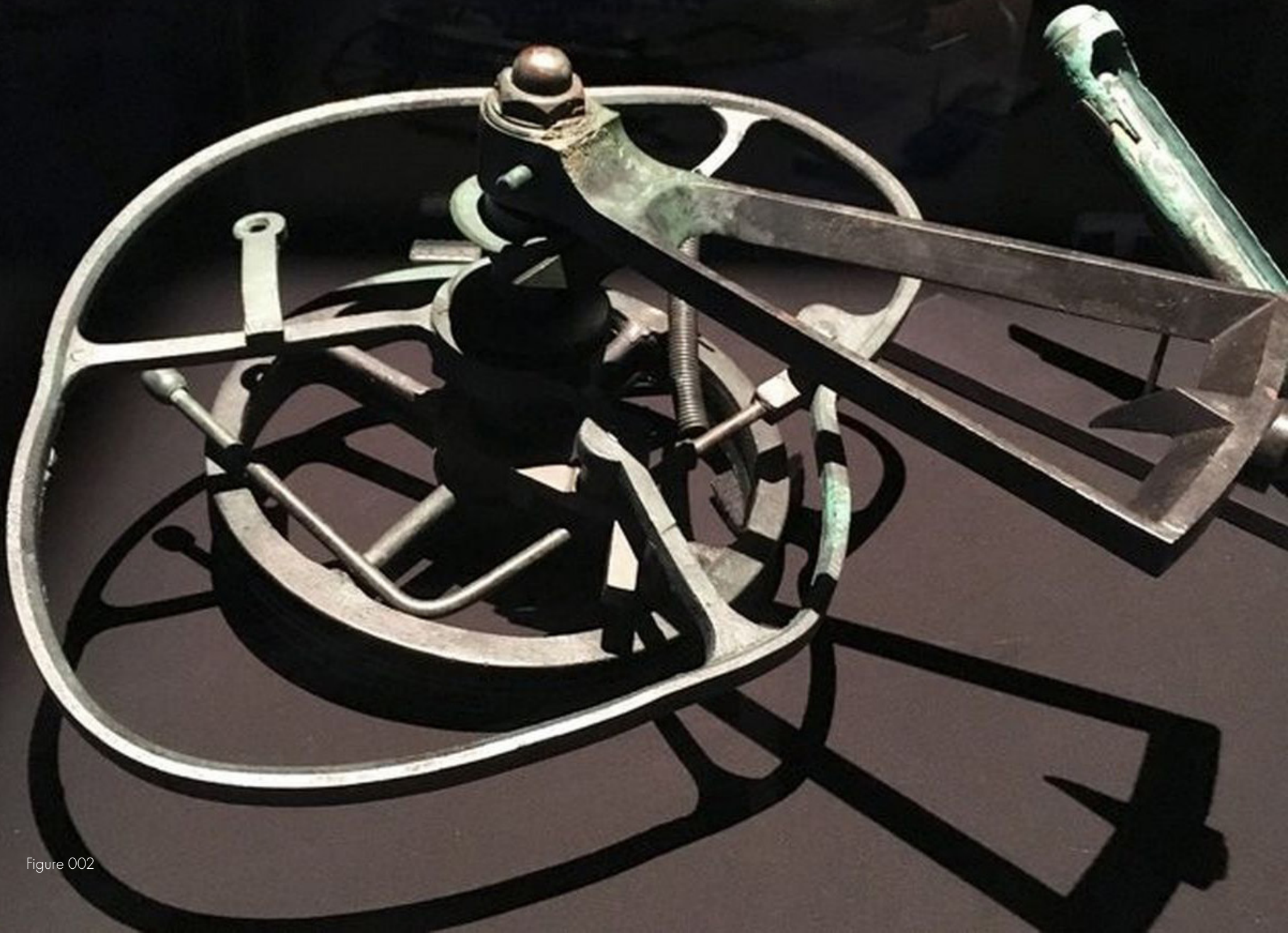


Figure 002

RE-IMAGINING THE RMS TITANIC THROUGH THE USE OF ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTATION

A Design Thesis Submitted to
the Department of Architecture
and Landscape Architecture of
North Dakota State University
by Mason Von Gaskins In
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Architecture.

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Figure 003

CONTENTS

TABLES AND FIGURES	8
ABSTRACT	13
NARRATIVE	15
PROJECT TYPOLOGY	17
HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL CONTEXT	31
THEORETICAL CONTEXT	33
PROJECT JUSTIFICATION	43
TYPOLOGICAL RESEARCH	45
MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS	83
USER/CLIENT	84
PROJECT EMPHASIS	85
A PLAN FOR PROCEEDING	87
THE SITE	89
THE ARTEFACT	101
THE DESIGN	113
FINAL PRESENTATION	153
APPENDIX	154
IMAGE REFERENCES	155
STUDIO EXPERIENCE	158
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	159

LIST OF TABLES | FIGURES

Figure 001	Shadowed Artefact	2-3
Figure 002	Telegraph Artifact	4
Figure 003	Smoking Room Electrolier Artifact	6
Figure 004	Untergang der Titanic	12
Figure 005	The Sinking of the Titanic	14
Figure 006	The Big-Piece Exhibit	16
Figure 007	Titanic Launch in Belfast, Ireland	18-19
Figure 008	Titanic Departs Southampton, England	20-21
Figure 009	Titanic Sailing in Cherbourg, France	22-23
Figure 010	Titanic Sailing Away From Queenstown, Ireland	24-25
Figure 011	London Newsboy With News of the Disaster	26-27
Figure 012	The New York American Bulletin Board	28
Figure 013	Titanic's Lifeboats a rest in Pier 59	30
Figure 014	Canto XXXIII	32
Figure 015	Canto XXXI	34
Figure 016	Dishes Transition From Past to Present	36
Figure 017	Architecture of Spoils	38
Figure 018	Phantom Limb	40
Figure 019	Titanic Museum in Branson, Missouri	42
Figure 020	Chengdu History Museum	46
Figure 021	Chengdu History Museum	48
Figure 022	Chengdu History Museum	48
Figure 023	Chengdu History Museum	49
Figure 024	Chengdu History Museum	49
Figure 025	Chengdu History Museum: Section Cut	50
Figure 026	Chengdu History Museum: Section Cut	50
Figure 027	Chengdu History Museum: Section Cut	50
Figure 028	Chengdu History Museum: Section Cut	50
Figure 029	Chengdu History Museum: Floor Plan	52

Figure 030	Chengdu History Museum: Floorplan	53
Figure 031	Chengdu History Museum	54-55
Figure 032	September 11 Museum	56
Figure 033	September 11 Museum	58
Figure 034	September 11 Museum	59
Figure 035	September 11 Museum	60
Figure 036	September 11 Museum	60
Figure 037	September 11 Museum	61
Figure 038	September 11 Museum	61
Figure 039	September 11 Museum: Reference Model	62
Figure 040	September 11 Museum: Section Cut	62
Figure 041	September 11 Museum: Floor Plan	64
Figure 042	September 11 Museum: Floor Plan	65
Figure 043	September 11 Museum: Floor Plan	65
Figure 044	September 11 Museum	66-67
Figure 045	September 11 Museum	68-69
Figure 046	Belfast Titanic Museum	70
Figure 047	Belfast Titanic Museum	72
Figure 048	Belfast Titanic Museum	73
Figure 049	Belfast Titanic Museum: Elevations	74
Figure 050	Belfast Titanic Museum: Section Cut	74
Figure 051	Belfast Titanic Museum: Section Cut	74
Figure 052	Belfast Titanic Museum: Site Plan	76
Figure 053	Belfast Titanic Museum: Floor Plan	77
Figure 054	Belfast Titanic Museum	78-79
Figure 055	Site Plan	88-89
Figure 056	Historic View of the Chelsea Piers	90-91
Figure 057	Historic View of the Chelsea Piers	92
Figure 058	Current View of the Chelsea Piers	94

Figure 059	Historic View of Pier 59	96-97
Figure 060	Current View of Pier 59	98-99
Figure 061	Frist Look at the Artefact	100
Figure 062	Artefact	102-103
Figure 063	Artefact: Titanic's Launch	104-105
Figure 064	Artefact: Titanic's Journey	106-107
Figure 065	Artefact: Titanic's Full Time Line	108-109
Figure 066	Artefact: Displayed Orientation	110-111
Figure 067	Inspiration From Titanic's Design	114-115
Figure 068	Space One: Entrance and Memorial	116-117
Figure 069	Section Perspective	118-119
Figure 070	Space Two: Journey Into the Museum	120-121
Figure 071	Section Perspective	122-123
Figure 072	Space Three: Gangway Door Exhibit	124-125
Figure 073	Section Perspective	126-127
Figure 074	Big-Piece Artifact Representation	128
Figure 075	Space Four: The Big-Piece Exhibit	130-131
Figure 076	Section Perspective	132-133
Figure 077	Space Five: Dish Display	134-135
Figure 078	Section Perspective	136-137
Figure 079	Space Six: Bridge Exhibit	138-139
Figure 080	Section Perspective	140-141
Figure 081	Space Seven: Lifeboat Davit Display	142-143
Figure 082	Section Cut	144-145
Figure 083	Circulation Floor Plans	146-147
Figure 084	Exterior Perspective	148-149
Figure 085	Exterior Perspective	150-151
Figure 086	Final Presentation Boards	153



Figure 004

ABSTRACT

Architecture often presents itself as a gateway to how we understand the past, whether through monuments, museums, or installations. There are many instances where architecture impacts how we perceive major historic events with the idea to immortalize the past. However, some instances are not as successful as others. My question is: How does architecture influence how we understand history? More specifically, how can architecture aid in thoughtfully articulating a historic tragedy such as the sinking of the RMS Titanic?

Designing a museum to house the physical and linguistic fragments of the sinking of the RMS Titanic means transforming many personal stories into a collective cultural milieu as well as understanding the connection between the structure and its site. Located at the Titanic's original destination known as Pier 59 in New York, the site of the museum displays the thousands of artifacts that have surfaced over the past century. This project aims to create an environment that not only transforms how the sinking is perceived, but to bring back a sense of empathetic storytelling that is currently lacking at the other Titanic museums around the world.



Figure 005

THE NARRATIVE

Stories of the past often help us understand what is to be remembered; but what prevents the narrative within them from being forgotten. If stories that come from a tragedy such as the sinking of the RMS Titanic are forgotten, would those that were lost the night of the sinking cease to exist? The stories that come from such a tragic event are how we remember the sinking as a tragedy and are crucial to the renewal of its narrative that has been radically altered.

Today's exhibitions dedicated to the RMS Titanic are conducive to the theory of the public forgetting the sinking being a tragedy. Current perspectives of the stories are changing how we remember the sinking of the RMS Titanic. Many of these exhibits are located in cities unfavorable to the context of the Titanic's story. They callously portray the sinking of the RMS through a glorified facade that creates an attraction rather than enacting a sense of loss. Of the thousands of artifacts that have been surfaced from the wreck, many have been simplified in the way they are displayed to where the original story does not speak.

There are numerous perspectives on the past and not everyone will agree with how we view history, but to give it the best representation—using architecture as a vessel, will create a better understanding of it.

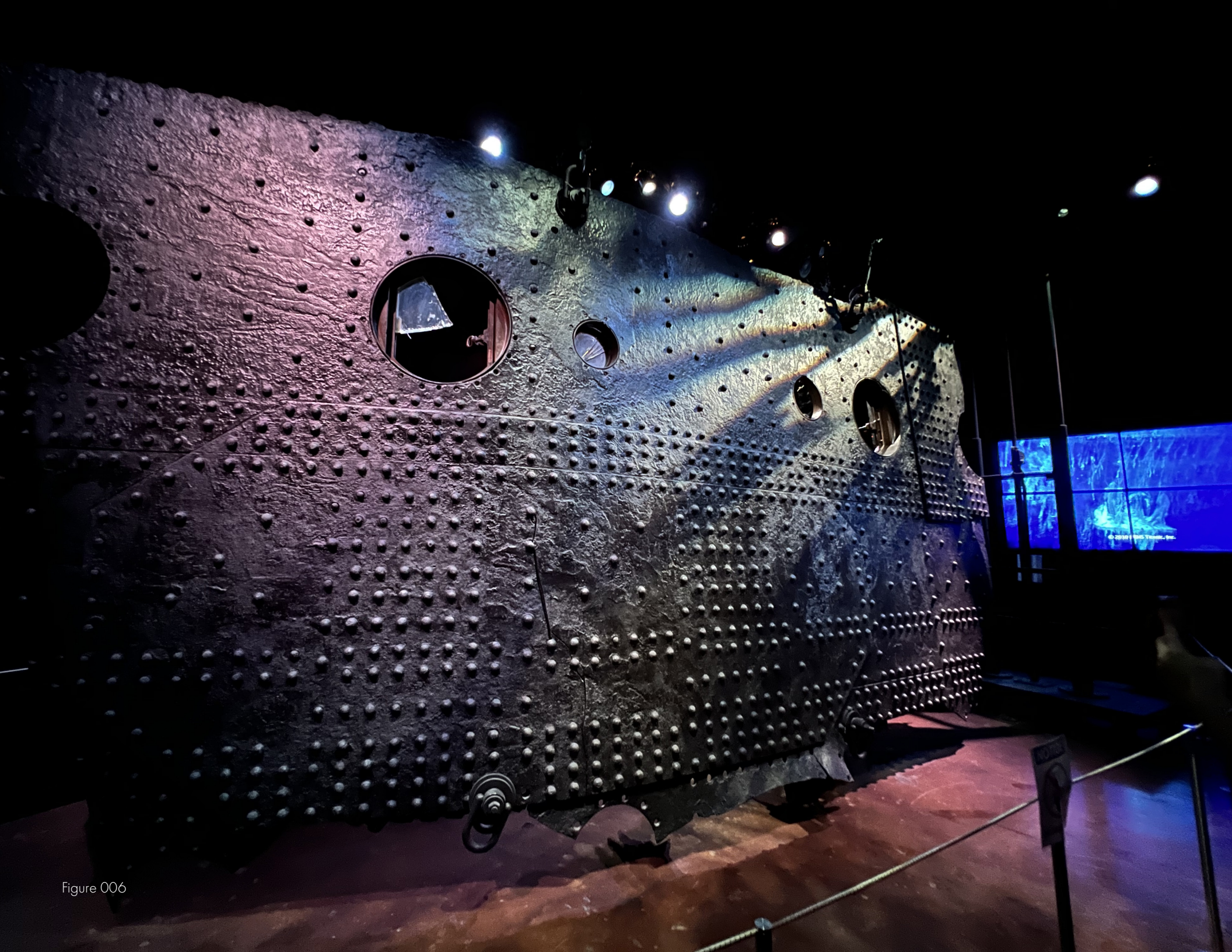


Figure 006

PROJECT TYPOLOGY

The building typology of this project is a museum. The theory is to create a structure that helps preserve the historic narrative of the sinking of the RMS Titanic. This means curating numerous exhibition spaces to house the thousands of physical and linguistic fragments of the Titanic and its passengers and crew so that they may tell the story in a re-imagined interpretation.



Figure 007 The RMS Titanic's Launch in Belfast, Ireland



1000
1000
1000



Figure 008 The RMS Titanic Departs Southampton, England



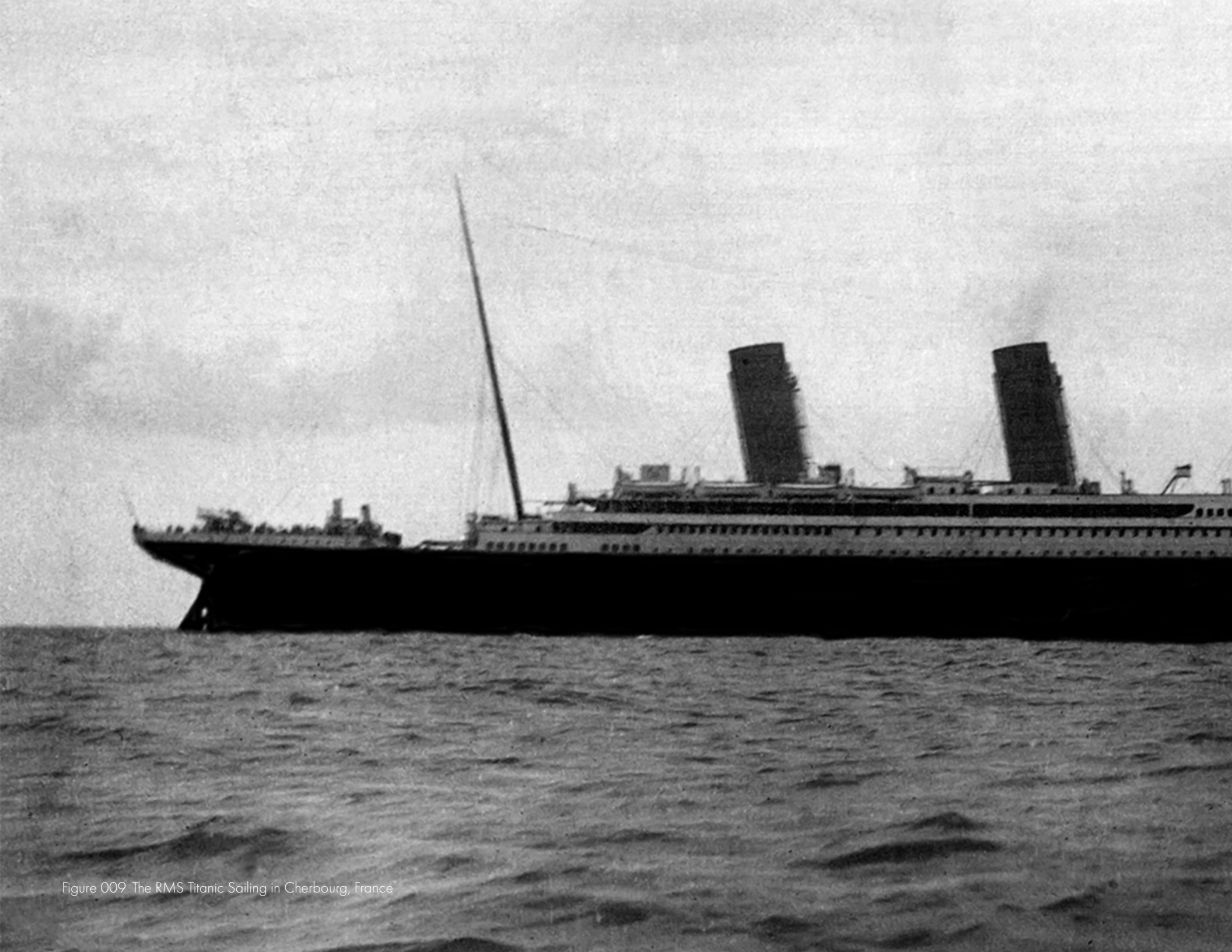


Figure 009 The RMS Titanic Sailing in Cherbourg, France

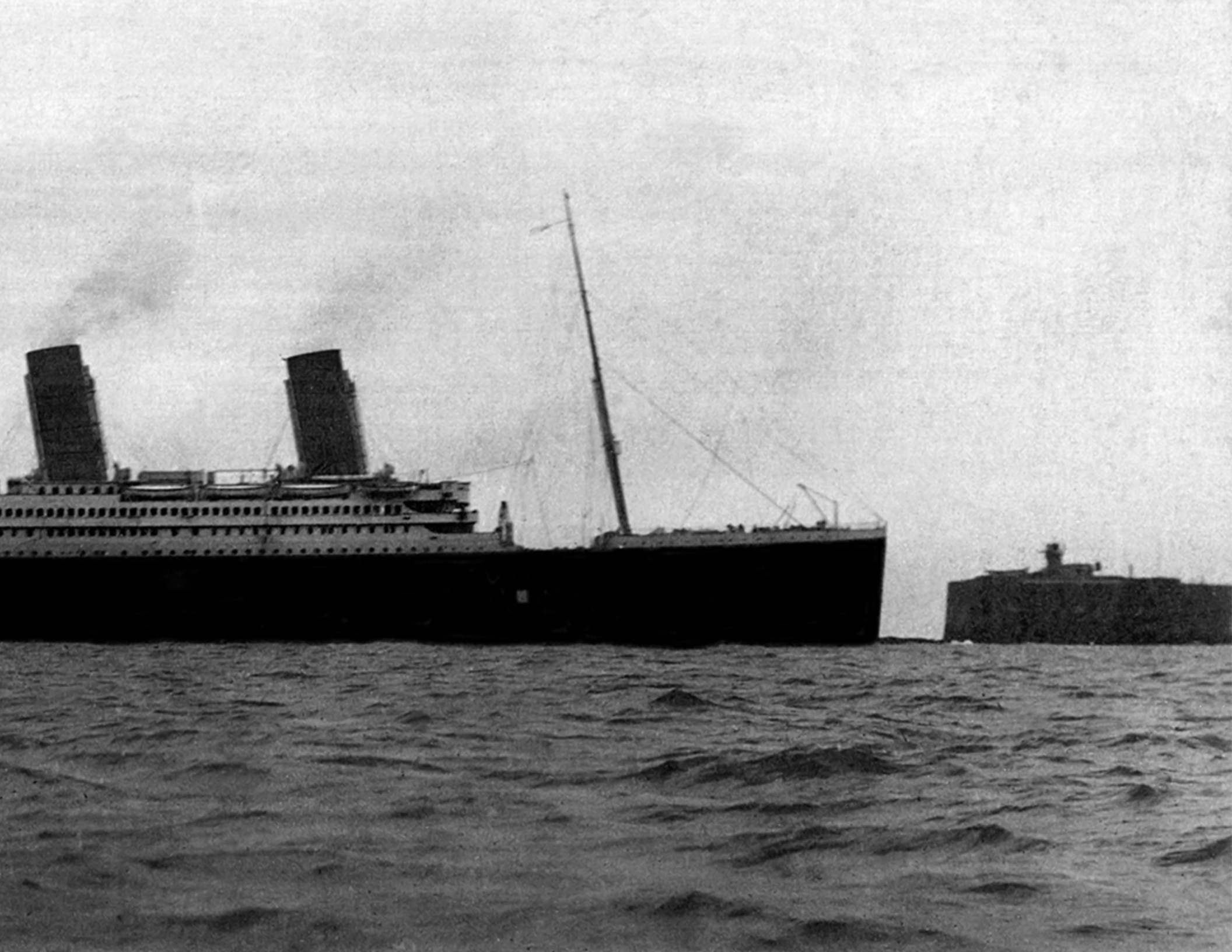




Figure 010 The RMS Titanic Sailing Away From Queenstown, Ireland





Figure 011 A London Newsboy With News of the Disaster

MINIC
STER
TLOSS
LIFE
G NEWS



Figure 012

LATEST NEWS - WHITE STAR TITANIC

Special Edition of Montreal Standard People Magazine All
Montreal People Bought - Among Personal Portraits
Mrs. J. J. Astor, Countess of Rothes, Queen of the Sea,

MURRIS & FRANK

210

STARS UNITED LINE





Figure 013

HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL CONTEXT 31

The sinking of the RMS Titanic struck the world when the largest ship afloat hit an iceberg and plunged to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean taking over fifteen-hundred lives. Of those lost, some of the richest and poorest were claimed by the tragedy. In the RMS Titanic's short lifespan, the ship was designed and constructed by the shipyard Harland and Wolff; a revolutionary ship builder located in Belfast, Ireland. After completion, the largest ship of the world made its way to Southampton, England to where it would depart on its maiden voyage. Following its course across the British channel, the RMS Titanic docked in Cherbourg, France. Before steaming across the North Atlantic, the Titanic docked in Queenstown, Ireland to take on its final round of passengers. No one would see the famed liner again as it set off en route to New York. The RMS Titanic was anticipated to cross the North Atlantic and bring touring Americans and hundreds of immigrants in search of a new life to America. The world stood still when word broke out that the largest ship in the world had sank leaving only seven-hundred and six passengers and crew to survive. No one truly knew who had lived and who was lost in the disaster until the rescue ship RMS Carpathia docked in New York days after the sinking. Rather than the largest ship in the world carrying over two-thousand passengers and crew; only thirteen of the Titanic's empty lifeboats would lay within the white star line pier, number 59 in New York.



Figure 014

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

To expand on the philosophy behind my proposed design involved research through series of texts that pertained to the altered narrative of today's perspective on the sinking of the RMS Titanic. Starting with "Public Forgetting: The Rhetoric and Politics of Beginning Again" by Bradford Vivian. It pertained to the premise behind my thesis because of how the public image of the Titanic has been forgotten as a significance. Reading a section from the book "Reading Architecture: Literary Imagination and Architectural Experience" written by Rumiko Handa provided the theory of bridging the lost past and the present so that it may support the development of my design philosophy. Other influential readings that impacted the re-imagining of the RMS Titanic in a current perspective were "Monsters of Architecture: Anthropomorphism in Architectural Theory" by Marco Fascari. His theory of "architecture of spoils" builds the framework behind my proposed design. It provides an understanding of how fragmentation is an element curated of various fragments. The last text within my research is the elaboration of the "Phantom Limb Phenomenon" discussed in the book "Time Matter(s): Invention and Re-imagination in Built Conservation: The Unfinished Drawing and Building of St. Peter's, the Vatican" by Federica Goffi. The phantom limb phenomenon supports the site choice made of my proposed design. All together, each text supports the aspects behind my thesis.



Figure 015

“Public forgetting promotes or enacts a dramatically new communal perspective on the past in which the former works, words, and deeds undergo radical alteration. Losing their previous authority”

- Bradford Vivian

PUBLIC FORGETTING

35

Stories are posed upon a fine line between life and death when in relation to our memory and as stated by Bradford Vivian: a Pennsylvania State University professor: “The symbolism of life and death, of cultivation and destruction, operates at the heart of major intellectual, religious, and artistic movements without which both our historical and contemporary attitudes toward memory and forgetting would not exist” (Vivian 2010). He follows up with a correlation of life and death to memory and forgetting. He draws comparison to the mythological rivers of Lethe and Mnemosyne by explaining that: “Memory, in this figuration, is impressively fertile--biologically, culturally, and artistically. Souls in Hades could likewise drink from a river named Mnemosyne, but its waters, unlike those of Lethe, enhanced their recollections” (Vivian 2010). In relation to the word mnemonic, Mnemosyne is referred to as the Greek goddess of memory. The waters of the river: Mnemosyne brings remembrance to the souls that drink from it. Whereas, Lethe is demonstrated as the spirit of forgetfulness and oblivion in Greek mythology. Its waters cause those who drink it to forget their past after death. Comparing a tragedy such as the sinking of the RMS Titanic to the idea of life and death poses the understanding of how we construct the memories of the past. The stories that come from such a tragic event are what form the “currents of memory” and “ensure continuity between body and soul, mortal and immortal life.”



Figure 016

BRIDGING THE LOST PAST AND THE PRESENT

37

Articulating the fragments of the RMS Titanic in such a way that evokes the connections of the past means understanding what role architecture plays in our lives. Architecture Professor - Rumiko Handa touched on this in her theory stating that: 'Beyond being useful, solid, or pleasing to the eye, the everyday architecture has a potential of being a memento, and such, it is "a bit of the past that has not disappeared" and "keeps the past present for us."' (Handa 2018). She also remarks on how architecture participates in experiences of the past and how it affects everyday life claiming that: 'When we contemplate in a building on the past that took place there, we experience both the sense of identity, as "the past is what makes the person,' and that of solidarity, with our contemporaries as well as predecessors, no matter if they are our blood relation or only connected to us by being human' (Handa 2018). To prevent the past from disappearing, changes within the current portrayal of the RMS Titanic must be manipulated to bridge the lost narrative to current perspectives of how we view history.



Figure 017

FRAGMENTATION

To re-imagine the RMS Titanic in a tactful sense involves using the theory of fragmentation. Macro Frascari: an architect and architectural theorist claimed that fragmentation is considered architecture of spoils or otherwise known as spoila. 'A concrete case of fragmentary architecture is the architettura di spoglio (or known as the architecture of spoils). This is not an architecture of prefabricated romantic ruins, or of post-modern "instant history," but it is a way of producing architecture as the assimilation of prior architectural artifacts. Buildings are cultural texts that are generated by assembling fragments, excerpts, citations, passages, and quotations' (Frascari 1991). He then compares the method of spoils to the art of Guiseppe Arcimboldo. His paintings embody the muse as he substitutes the human body with individual fragments. The Librarian: a portrait that depicts the muse is curated from various books used to form a human figure "Architecture of spoils" is stated as "buildings partially or totally composed of elements and fragments taken, either actually or conceptually, from preexisting buildings produced in other times or cultures" (Frascari 1991). From an ideological standpoint, to bring together the physical and linguistic elements of the RMS Titanic would mean orienting spaces around them to form the ship's story as a whole.



Figure 018

PHANTOM LIMB PHENOMENON

In the midst of its first and only voyage the RMS Titanic hit the iceberg and sank prior to docking at pier 59. This occurrence falls in conjunction with Dr. Federica Goffi's "Phantom Limb effect" In her words, Goffi explains that: "A collective body image can be so powerfully persuasive that if a mnemonic building is lost through a traumatic and sudden event it could provoke a phantom limb effect, where an amputee feels pain in a lost limb" (Goffi 2016). In addition, "Contemporary neurologist Vilayanur Ramachandran argues that it is this body image that generates the pain and movement of the phantom" (Goffi 2016). She further explains that the neurologist restores the body image of an absent limb using a mirror, "which is made visible in a specular reflection of the other limb" (Goffi 2016). In a more metaphorical sense, the mirror is the vessel of the memory that supplies the mind with ease as it recognizes what it once knew. There is a parallel drawn between RMS Titanic and pier 59 with the neurologist's theory of reflecting what was lost with a mirror. Pier 59 embodies the amputee; therefore, exists a need for a metaphorical mirror to reflect what was supposed to be there had the Titanic not foundered.



Figure 019

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

Current representations of the sinking of the RMS Titanic are quite tactless in the sense of being understood as a loss. Museums today host remnants of the RMS Titanic within tourist driven attractions. Growing up I always looked forward to visiting these museums for I have been fascinated by the RMS Titanic for almost to decades. Upon my visit to three exhibitions of the course of years, I was dissapointed to say the least in the way the Titanic is being represented.

The RMS Titanic is currently represented by numerous museums around the world, but four in specific are guilty of the alteration of the Titanic's story. Located in Las Vegas, Nevada; Orlando, Florida; Branson, Missouri and Pigeo Forge, Tennessee; artifacts that have been extracted from the wreck on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean are being displayed with poor representation.

My thesis aims to re-imagine the RMS Titanic so that the stories that come from such a tragedy can be heard and tell the full story. It gives me the oppurtunity to exert my passion for the Titanic and my knowledge of architecture to create the best possible solution to the problem that currently persists. I believe that there are numerous perspectives on the story and not everyone will agree with how we view it, but to give it the best representation- using architecture as a vessel, will create a better understanding of the sinking of the RMS Titanic.

TYPOLOGICAL RESEARCH

45

Chengdu Natural History Museum

Chengdu, China

National September 11 Memorial Museum

New York City, New York

Titanic Belfast

Belfast, Northern Ireland



Figure 020

CHENGDU NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Pelli Clarke & Partners | 2022

47

TPOLOGY: Museum

LOCATION: Chengdu, China

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 540,000 sq. ft.

The museum is intended to be an “institute for science and culture, welcoming visitors from around the world with expansive exhibits, public spaces, shops, a café, a cinema, state of the art educational facilities” (Walsh 2018). Its exterior design is to resemble the staggering mountains of the regions landscape. The design is inspired by the shifting of tectonic plates – hinting at the history the museum intends to withhold.

With the intention of being welcoming, the design of the main entrance includes a large canopy to greet people at the main entrance. The comparisons to this case study and my own project is that the architects used their context in relation to the design of the museum. The connection between them brings a greater bond to what they are displaying to their audience.



Figure 021



Figure 022



Figure 023

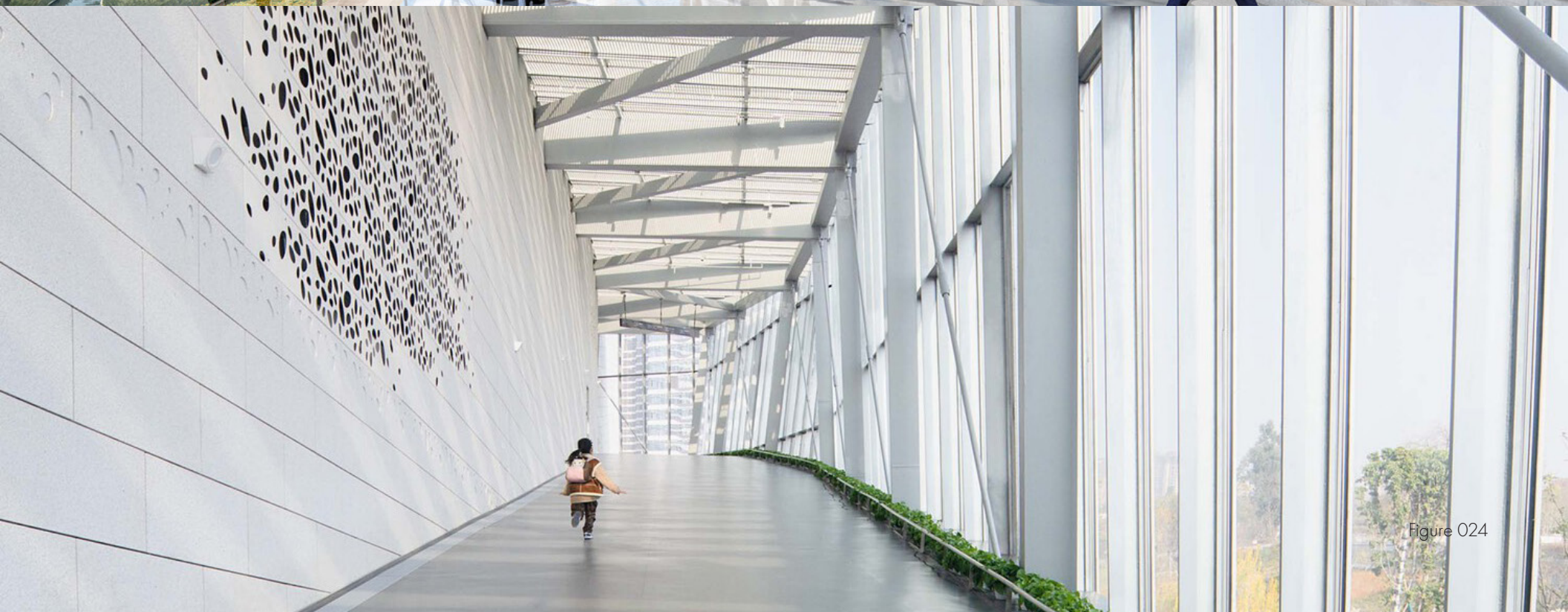


Figure 024

Figure 025



Figure 026



Figure 027



Figure 028



PROJECT ELEMENTS

51

Exhibition Spaces
Observation Areas
Circulation
Restrooms
Atrium
Education Center

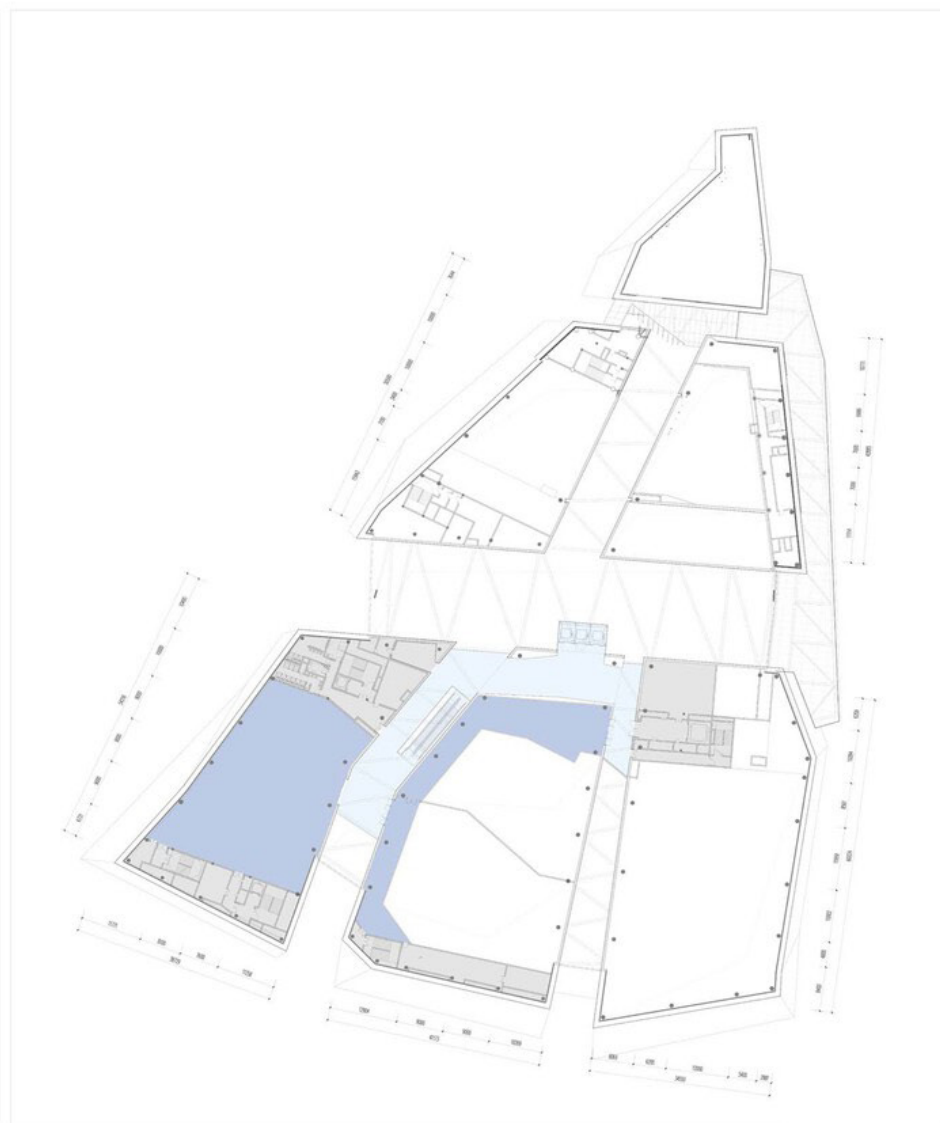
Designed with the environmental context of the site in mind, the Chengdu Natural History Museum embodies the cultural aspect of Chengdu. Its angular facade resembles that of the surrounding mountain scape. Its large footprint withholds ample space for the intended design elements.

典型平面

展厅
中庭

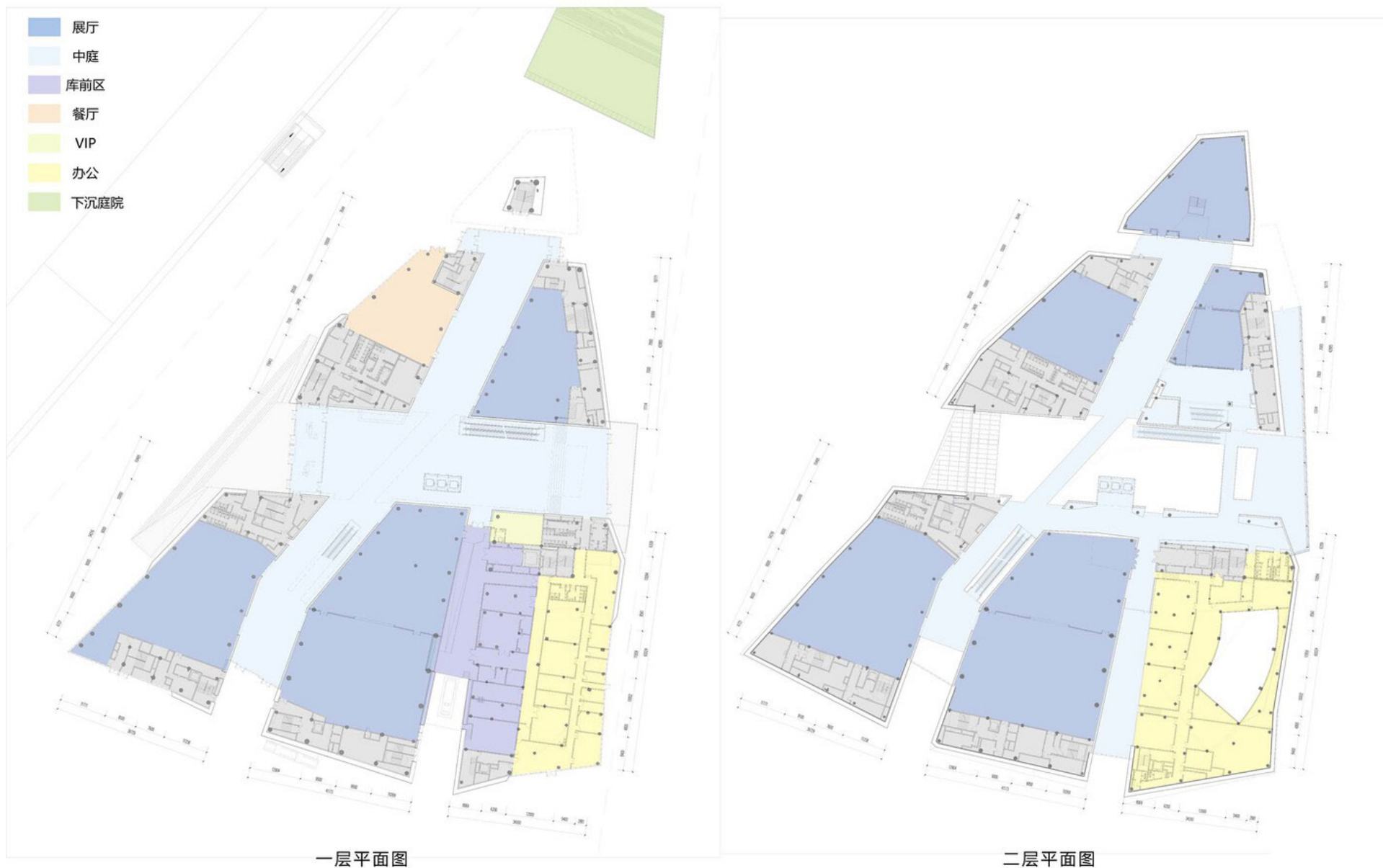


三层平面图



四层平面图

典型平面



一层平面图

二层平面图



Figure 031





Figure 032

NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MUSEUM

Davis Brody Bond, Peter Walker and Michael Arad

57

TYPOLOGY: Museum

LOCATION: New York, NY

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 110,000 sq.ft.

An intention of site preservation was crucial to this project when in the planning stage. When dealing with the case of a traumatic event, using the site to impact the emotions required authenticity of place.

Similar to this project being designed in the very location that the tragic events unfolded, it provides a contextual backdrop to the story in a way that better articulates it. That is why location is important to my own project because I intend to use the same impact.

This museum lies within the foundation of the original World Trade Center towers and lets visitors view the site in full scale. To be able to see the site in comparison with the various debris that is displayed, the emotional value of the story is strong.



Figure 033



Figure 034



Figure 035



Figure 036



Figure 037



Figure 038

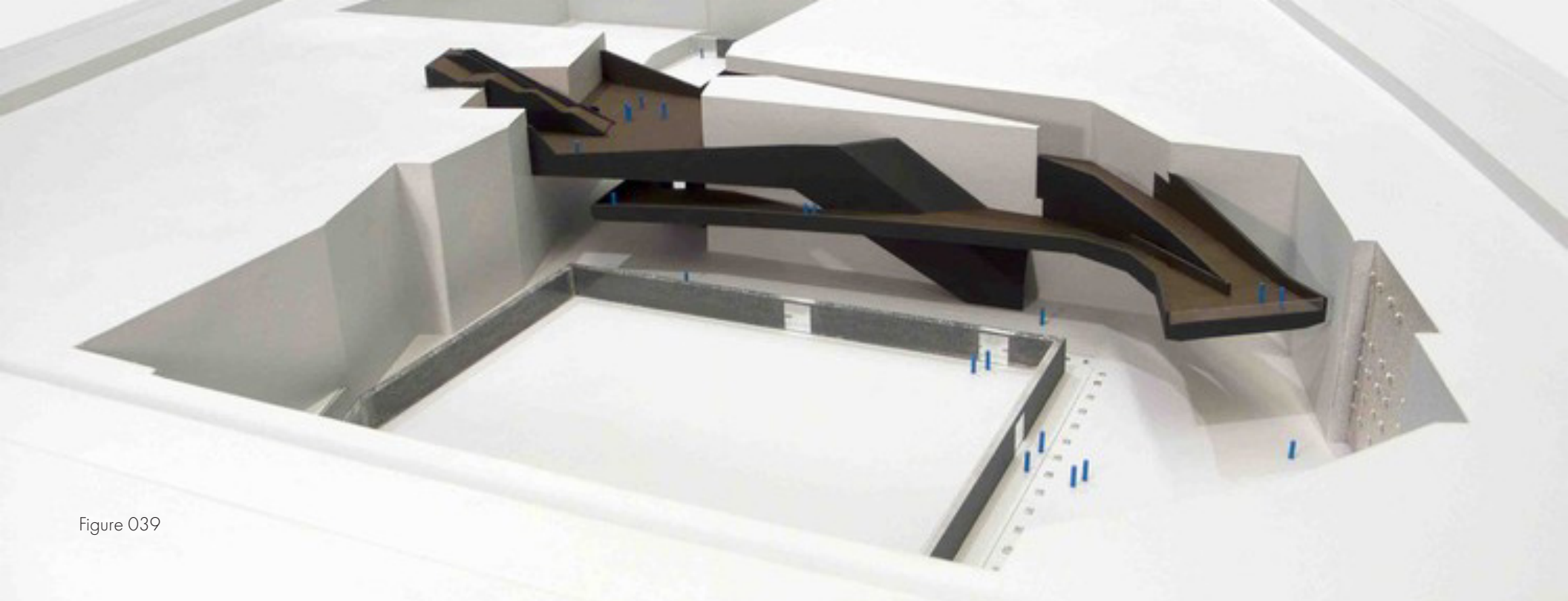


Figure 039

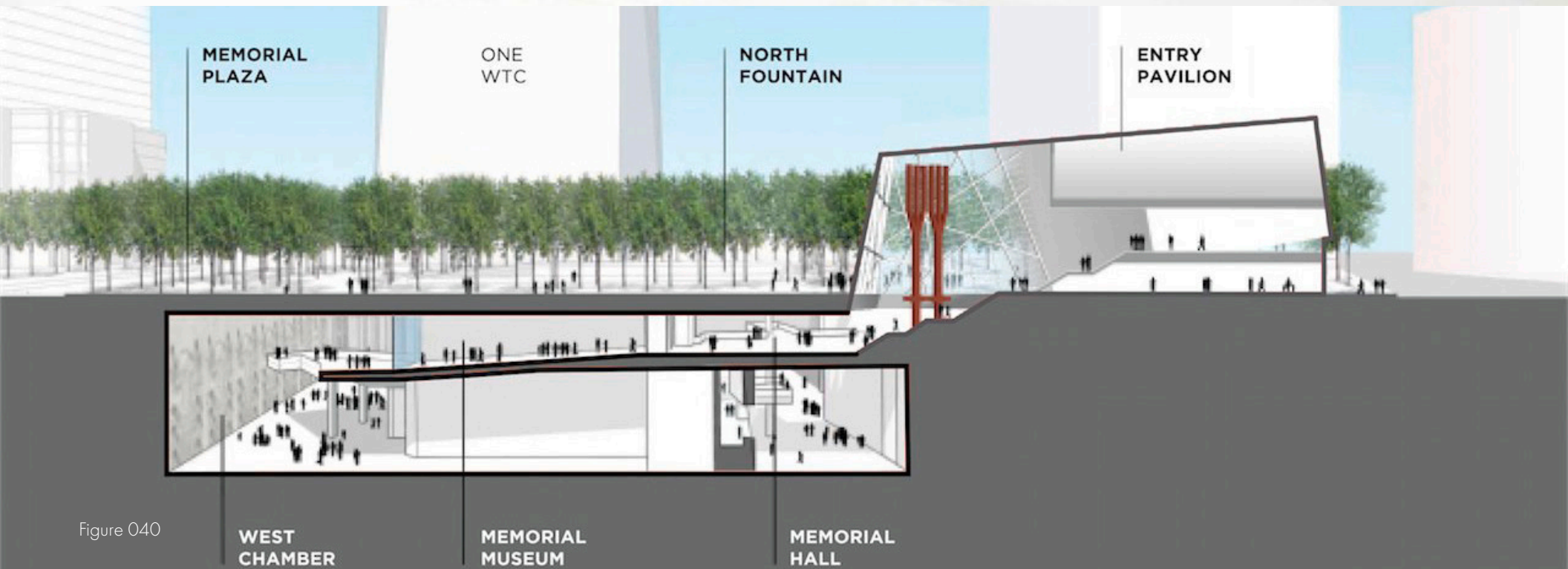


Figure 040

PROJECT ELEMENTS

63

Exhibition Spaces

Variety of Galleries

Circulation

Restrooms

Screening Room

Education Center

Being designed within the site of where the event happened, the story that is told within the spaces articulates it in a way that not many museums can do. The plan retains the context of the site while also providing the necessary resources to simulate a museum.

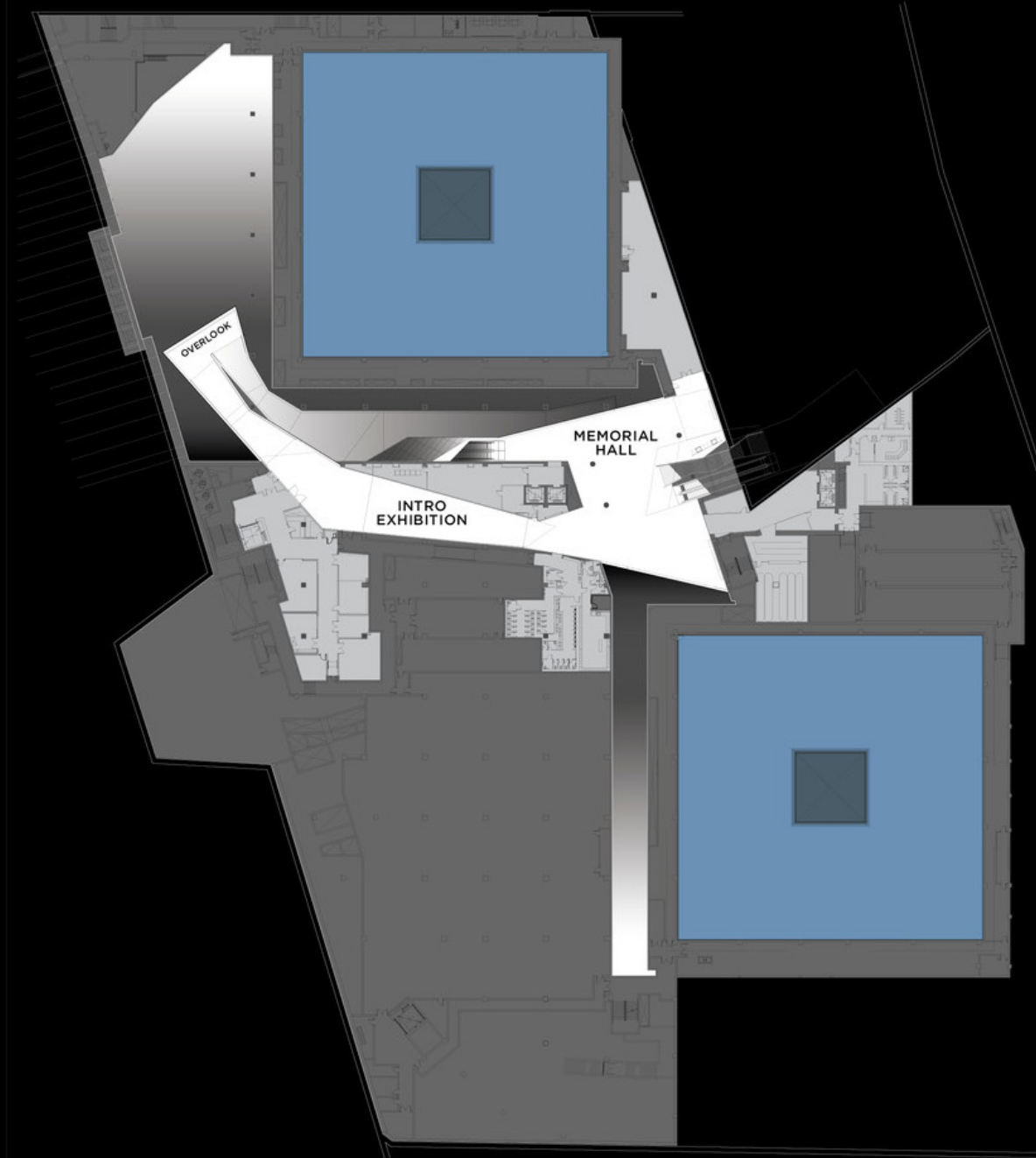


Figure 041

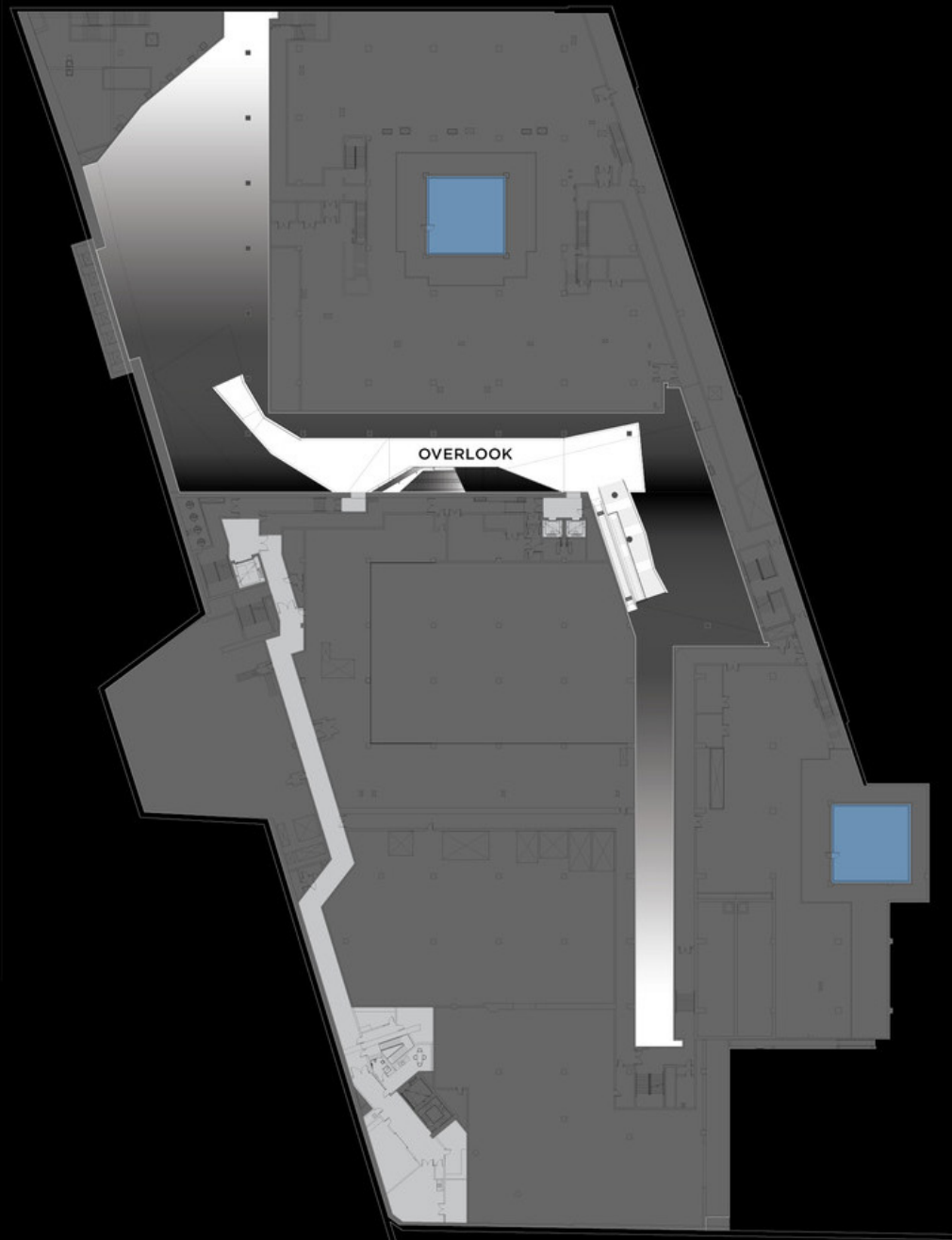


Figure 042

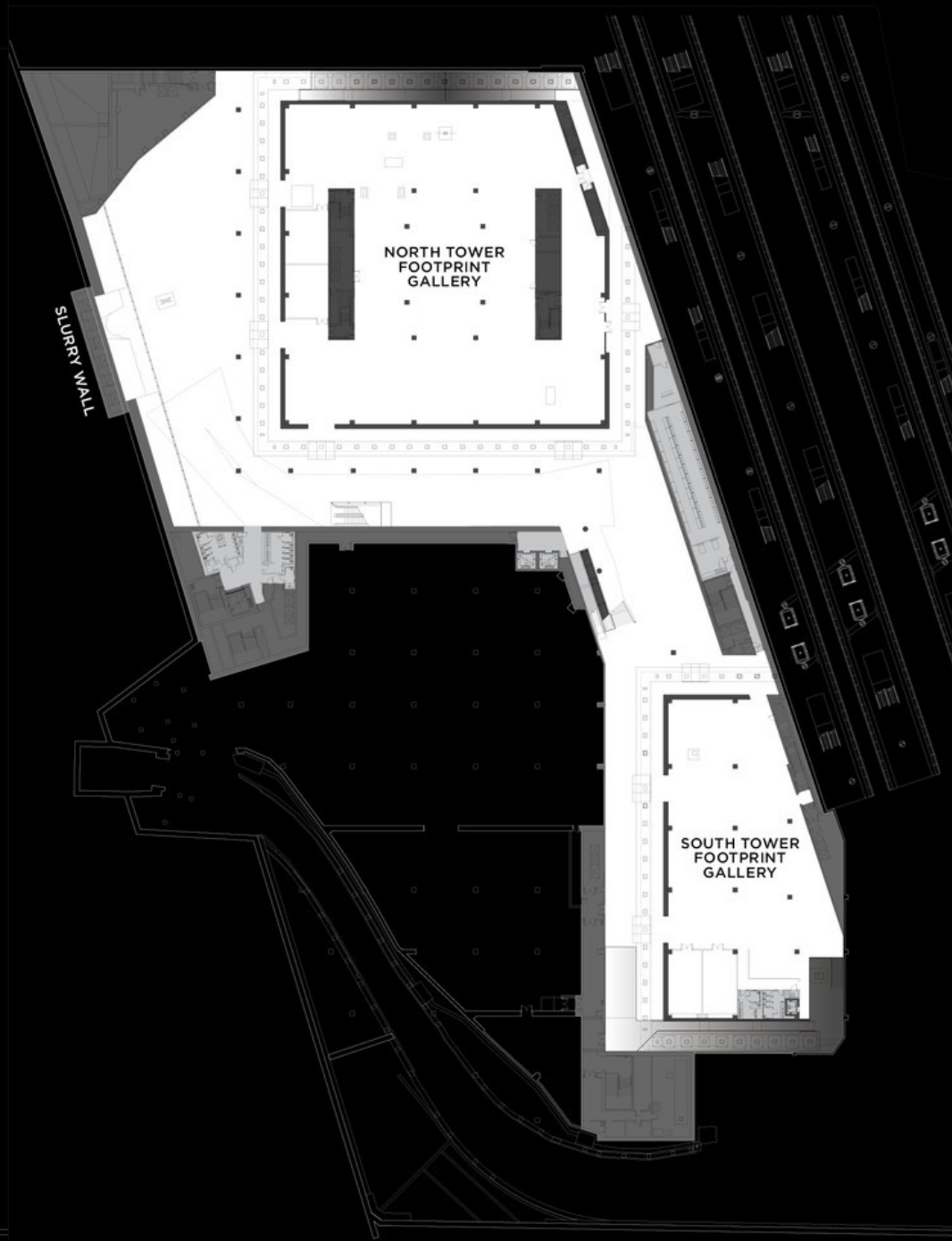
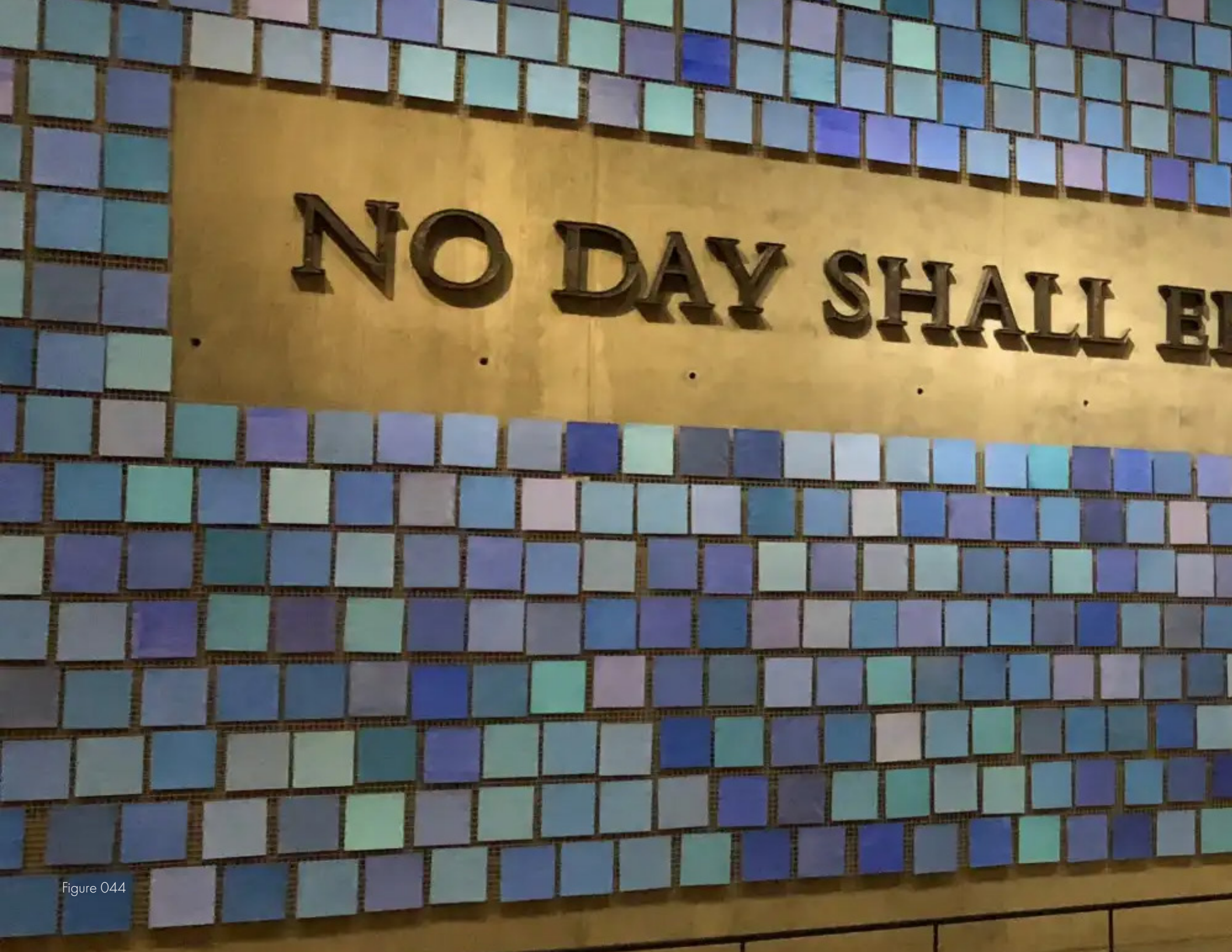


Figure 043

A wall featuring a mosaic of small, square tiles in various shades of blue, teal, and green. The tiles are arranged in a grid pattern. In the center of the wall, there is a rectangular panel of a solid gold or yellowish-brown color. On this panel, the words "NO DAY SHALL EL" are inscribed in large, bold, black, three-dimensional block letters. The letters are slightly raised from the surface of the panel. The overall appearance is that of a decorative or commemorative wall.

NO DAY SHALL EL

Figure 044

ERASE YOU FROM THE MEMORY OF TIME

Vigil



Figure 045





Figure 046

TITANIC BELFAST

CivicArts and Todd Architecture

TYPOLOGY: Museum

LOCATION: Belfast, Ireland

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 150,700 sq.ft.

Contextual perspective is crucial to understanding how a space impacts the stories that are told within a structure. Direct relation to an event provides exceptional insight to how others successfully convey a story.

Designed to tell the story of the Titanic, the Belfast museum was constructed to re-imagine the Titanic's short lifespan as a marvel of history. As a museum, it constructs the story as Belfast's greatest achievement and celebrates the ship.

As a whole, the building provides good context to understanding spaces may be laid out in accordance to the event; however, it contrasts to my project because they claim to not house any artifacts brought up from the wreck. They would rather celebrate the Titanic than mourn it.



Figure 047



SURVIVORS ARRIVE
IN NEW YORK

Figure 048

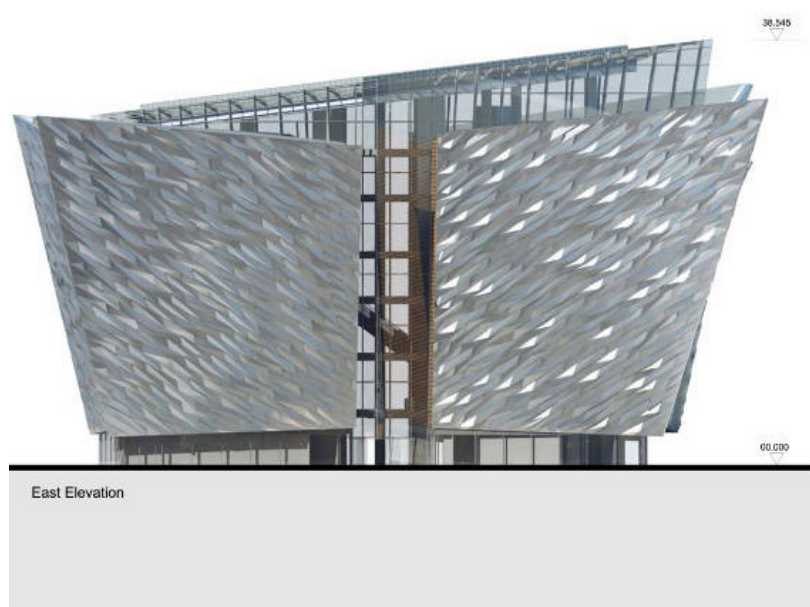


Figure 049

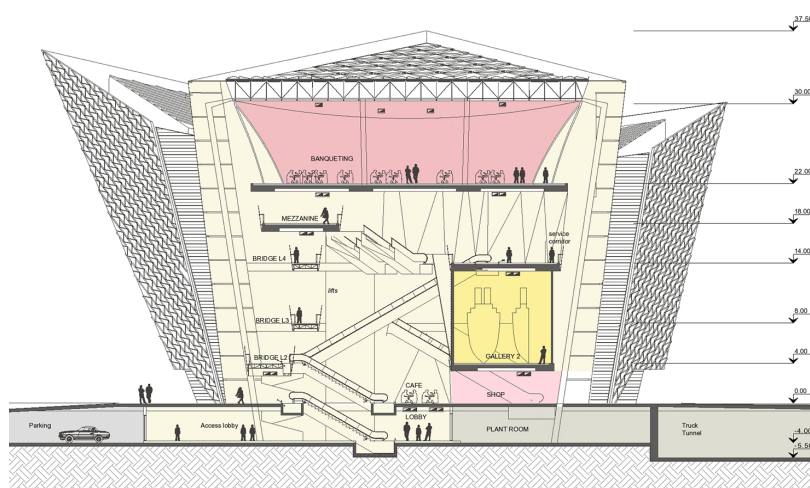
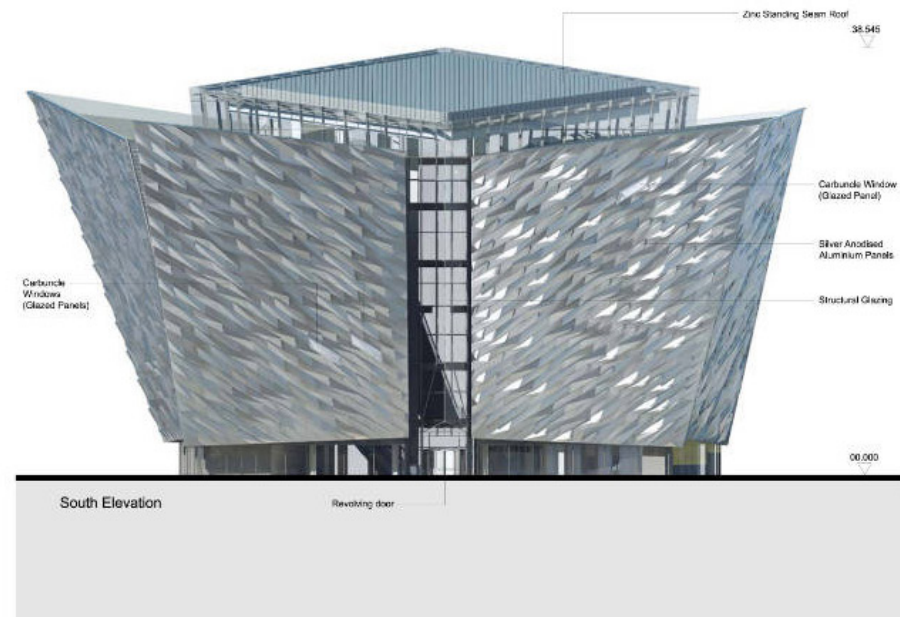


Figure 050

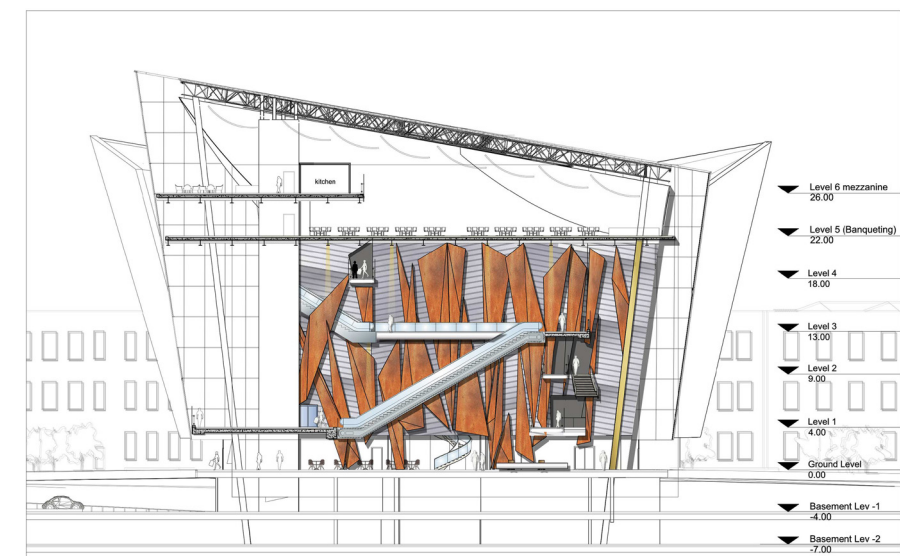
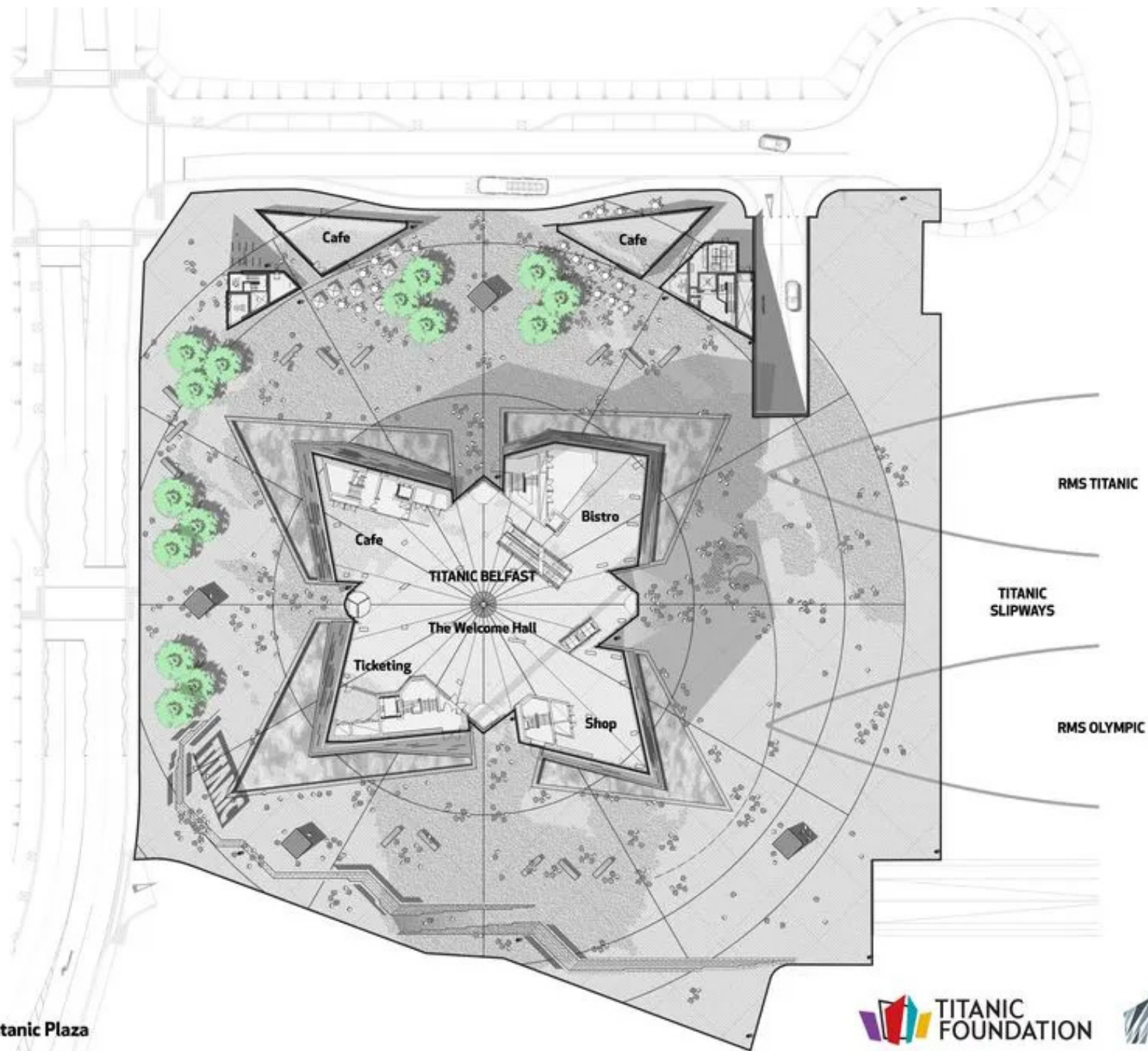


Figure 051

PROJECT ELEMENTS

Exhibition Spaces
Variety of Galleries
Circulation
Restrooms
Screening Room
Education Center

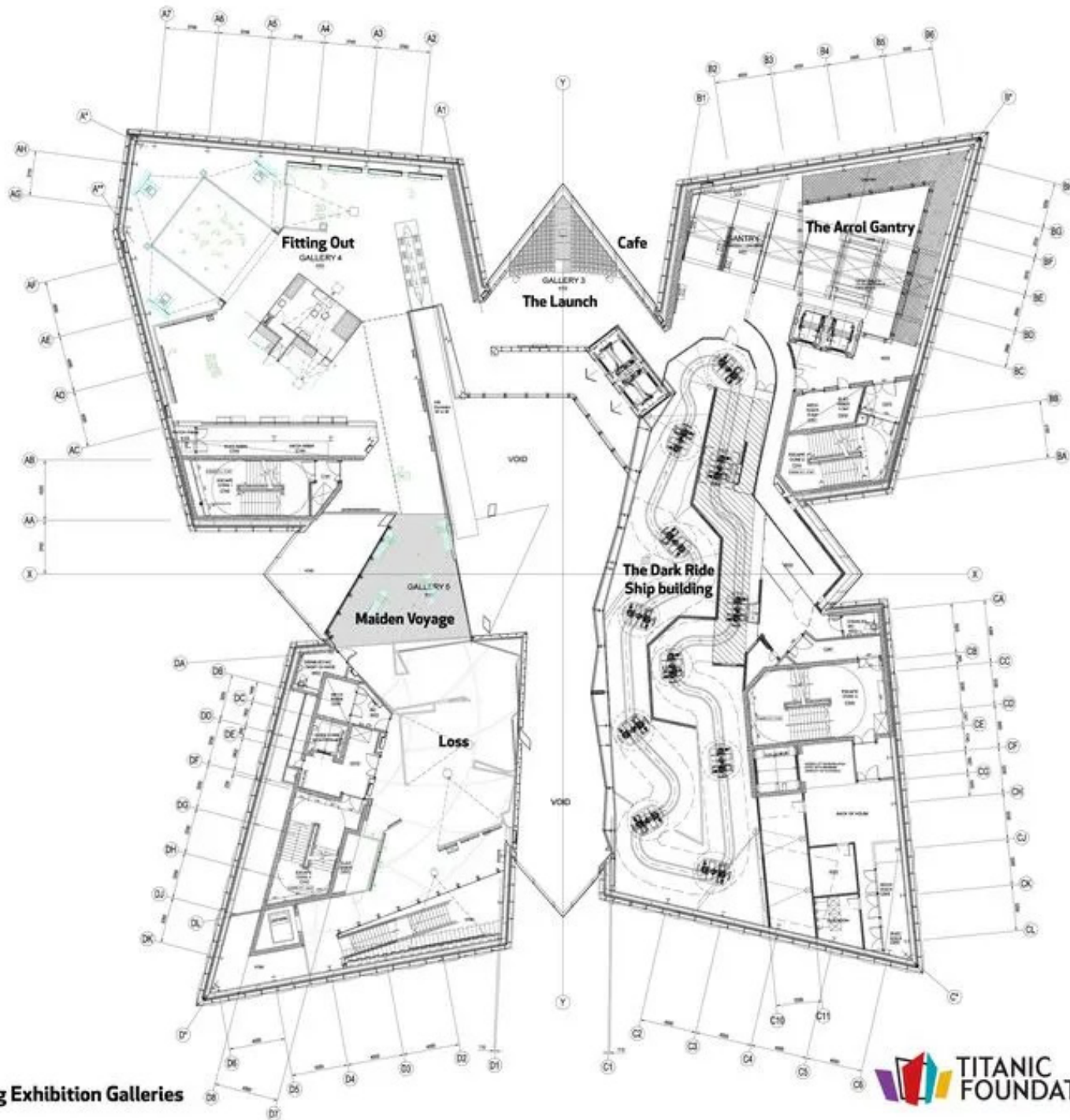
Being designed within the site of where the event happened, the story that is told within the spaces articulates it in a way that not many museums can do. The plan retains the context of the site while also providing the necessary resources to simulate a museum.



Landscape Plan of Titanic Plaza

Figure 052





Fourth Floor Plan Showing Exhibition Galleries

Figure 053



Figure 054



TYPOLOGICAL RESEARCH SUMMARY

By examining the methods of existing architectural designs allows for a deeper connection to the program of a museum. Each of the provided typological research studies has context to the design strategy intended to re-imagine the RMS Titanic. The Chengdu Natural History Museum provides insight on how to tie a structure to its site using the surrounding context. Similar to the Chengdu museum is the National September 11 Museum that uses its site to narrate the story within the structure; However, it is also successful in articulating sensitive remnants from the tragedy that took place there. In the same manner as the first two museums, the Belfast Titanic Museum is positioned on a context-connected site. While the Belfast museum is successful in conveying the RMS Titanic's past, it does not house any physical elements from the tragedy. Belfast is prideful of the Titanic and does not want to portray it as a loss; Therefore, the design is successful, but not in the favor of telling the Titanic's entire story from its launch to the current discoveries being made from its wreck. Researching these designs helped way this thesis can prove to be successful in creating a museum that is grounded by its site and can thoughtfully articulate the physical and linguistic remnants of the RMS Titanic to convey the ships entire story.

MAJOR PROJECT ELEMENTS

AUDITORIUM

A space to allow visitors the chance to view screenings of the famous films and recordings related to the RMS Titanic. Even today, new footage is brought up from the wreck and this space allows for it to be experienced upon the big screen.

EXHIBITION SPACES

Spaces dedicated to orienting displays of the physical and linguist elements of the RMS Titanic; this includes interactive exhibits that create an immersive environment.

ARTIFACT GALLERIES

Specially designed spaces to provide ample context to the story behind the artifact that is displayed to put the visitor in an experience that places them within the story of the event.

MUSEUM SHOP

Although considered a shop, it is to sell items that will inspire visitors to take the story home with them. It will sell items such as books related to the RMS Titanic or other educational merchandise rather than tasteless trinkets.

OFFICES

Private offices allow staff amongst the museum to work on duties required of them.

USER/CLIENT DESCRIPTION

GENERAL PUBLIC

The local population of New York City
Tourists visiting New York City

EDUCATIONAL

Elementary School
Middle School
High School
College Students

RELATED PARTIES

Descendants of Past Victims
Historians
Hobbyists

Clients such as the legal salvager company: RMS Titanic Incorporated would be involved as they are a provider of the artifacts. The company withholds the current exhibits and is in charge of preservation of the Titanic's wreck.

PROJECT EMPHASIS

By expanding on the existing perspectives of the RMS Titanic story provides a greater context to an already famous tragedy. There are many aspects to the RMS Titanic's story that lacks connection to the social and cultural realm of this generation. With research curated around the architectural method of choice combined with the knowledge of the story, a sense of connection is intended to be built so that the sinking of the RMS Titanic may not be forgotten as a tragic event that took the lives of over fifteen-hundred people. This thesis is intended to shape the way we view architecture and utilize it as a vessel to tell the stories of the past rather than using historically-rich sites as destinations for tactless complexes.

A PLAN FOR PROCEEDING

PROPOSAL

With an established proposal that states the background on the project. The next step is to move into the program phase.

PROGRAM

Coming up with a method that has derived from the research presented. Doing so involves understanding the context and how the research influences the design. Using three-dimensional software such as Sketchup, will allow for a better understanding of the existing site and how it can be modified. This will lead into the creation of mass-modeling to form concepts.

DESIGN

Understanding the research while working with conceptual model means creating a structure that articulates the historical context that has been gathered. Using methods represented in case studies will influence the design process.

PROJECT BOOK

A written document that compiles the proposal, program and research that has been done. This will display the crucial takeaways of the thesis project.

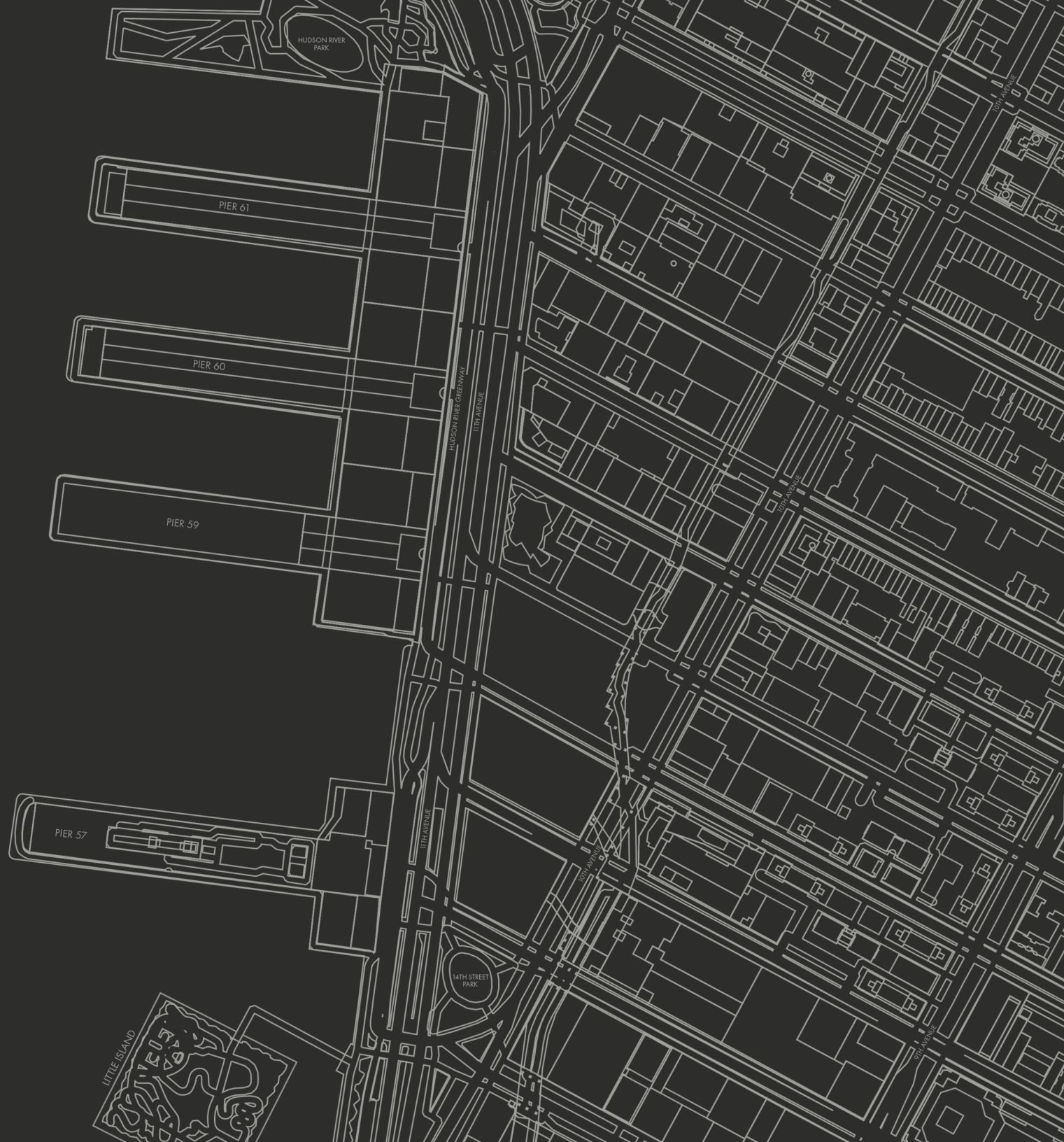


Figure 055



THE SITE

The RMS Titanic was due to dock in New York, NY on Wednesday April 17th, 1912 in the White Star Line owned pier number 59. When the ship was lost, the surviving passengers and crew brought aboard the rescue ship RMS Carpathia were off-loaded at pier 54; the pier owned by the Carpathia's shipping line known as Cunard. These piers are located within the neighborhood of Chelsea and are along the east shore of Manhattan and lining the Hudson River for ease of access to the Atlantic Ocean. Built in 1910, the historic piers were to be part of the ocean liner terminals required to berth ships larger in scale as the older piers were not large enough. Chelsea quickly became one of the busiest shipping ports in the world as most major shipping lines had ownership over the piers there. Pier 59 was specifically reserved for any of the ships owned by the White Star Line and the RMS Titanic was the ship destined for it. Had the ship not foundered, the Titanic would have pulled into the reserved berth between pier 59 and pier 60.



Figure 056



61

62

AMERICAN LINE

INTERNATIONAL MERCANTILE MARINE CO

RED STAR LINE

AMERICAN LINE

WHITE STAR LINE

QUEEN ANNE'S BAY

NEW YORK

LIVERPOOL

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

NEW YORK

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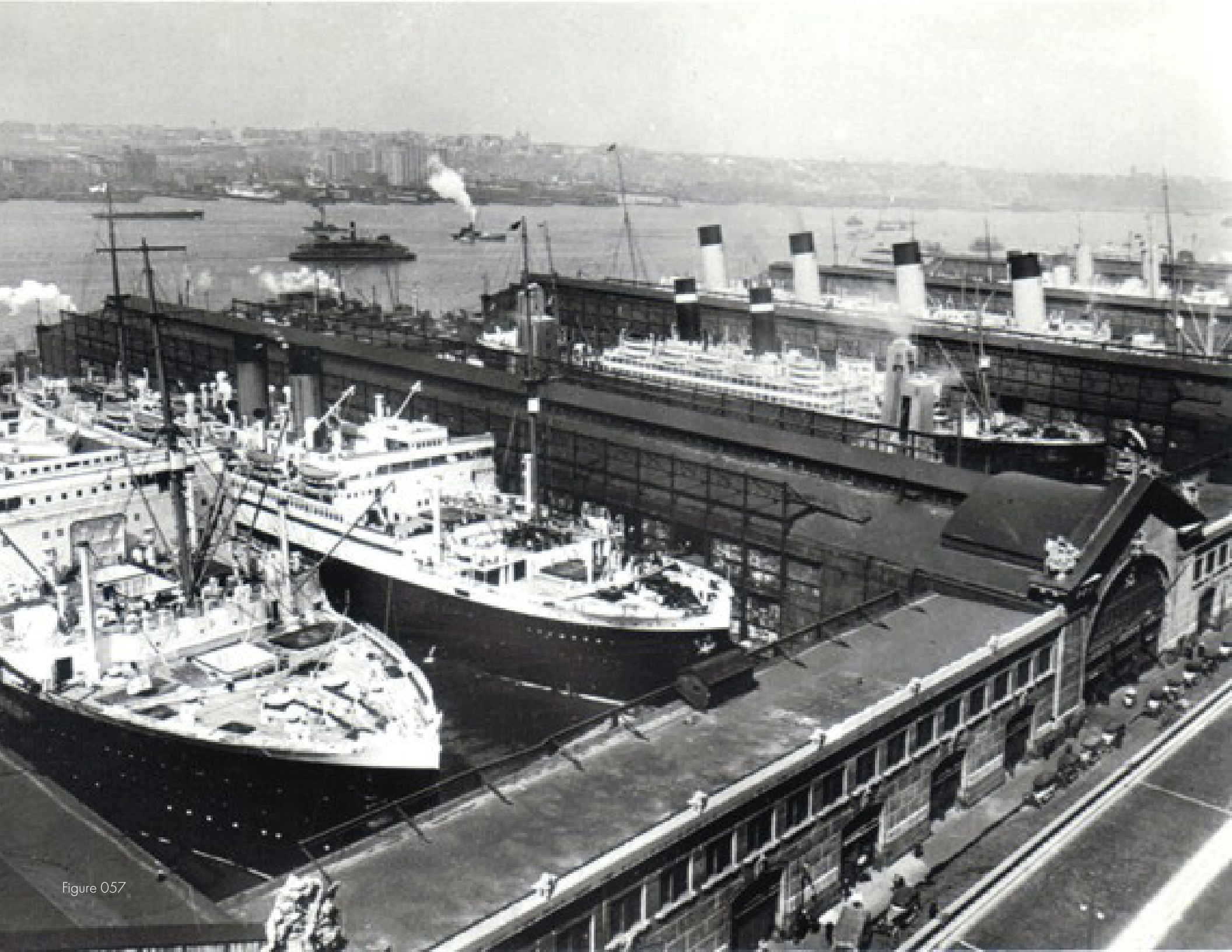


Figure 057

THE HISTORY OF CHELSEA

The Manhattan neighborhood of Chelsea has existed for centuries as it has transitioned through various time periods. According to the High Line; It first served as the site of a Native American trading post that was inhabited by the Lenape before being uprooted by British colonists. A century later, the land would turn industrial as migrants from Europe were brought in by numerous Manhattan companies. Immigration spiked within the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries causing the need for more transportation along with the growing popularity of American tourism in Europe. As the Urban Archive put it, "Steamship companies wanted to expand to allow for greater capacity. However, there was a problem, the Army, with full control over the size of piers, refused to permit the pier line (length of the piers into the Hudson) to be extended" (Urban Archive). The solution to the problem deemed the "Chelsea Improvement Section" and consisted of newly built piers in place of land that had been removed for the project. "Designed by Warren and Wetmore, the architecture firm famous for Grand Central Station, the piers were grand buildings with pink granite facades" (Urban Archive). The newly built piers brought a new life to Chelsea as some of the most opulent vessels carrying cargo and prominent passengers docked there for years to come.



Figure 058

CHELSEA PIERS TODAY

As the golden age of the trans-Atlantic voyage came to an end due to the rise of air travel, the piers that once lined the west Manhattan waterfront were stripped of their elaborate history and either torn down completely or converted into entertainment complexes. The pier's downfall began in the 1950's when the opulent granite facades were removed due to safety concerns. Proceeding into the 1980's, usage of the piers degenerated and they had become utilized as storage at the city's disposal. In the eyes of a developer, the piers were rotting remains of the past hindering the appearance of the great city. The piers that were torn down had no chance of retaining the history of a crucial time period in America. Of the few piers that remain in Chelsea, piers fifty-nine, sixty, and sixty-one remain as sporting complexes built in 1995 and provide amenities such as bowling, a driving range for golfing leisure and yachting clubs. Serving as a center for public recreation, no one would ever know that some of the worlds most famous ships have connections to the site.

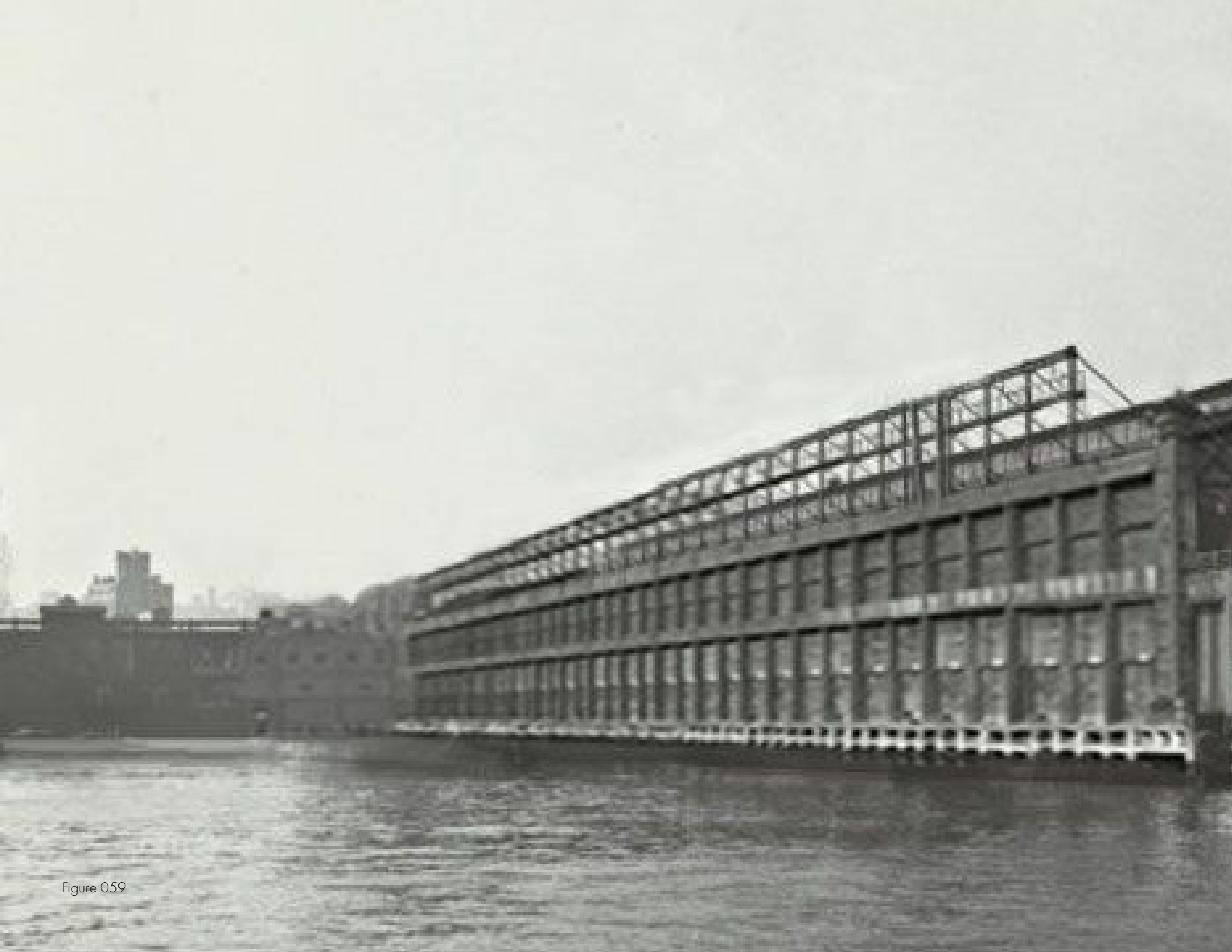


Figure 059



Pier fifty-nine while under the ownership of the White Star Line.



Figure 060



Pier fifty-nine as
it stands today
as a golf club.



Figure 061

THE ARTEFACT

Exploring the research gathered for this project involved creating an artefact that represented the architecture in a metaphorical sense. Like a book it displays the physical and linguistic remnants in a sense that tells the story. In theory chronology remains as a traditional concept for interpreting a story; three crucial moments include: Titanic's launch in Belfast, the journey across the Atlantic and concludes with the loss of the ship. As one interacts with the stories directed by the architecture, they should not be restricted to following a single plot line. Each story develops at a different pace and the architecture should promote this. The sinking of the Titanic was much more than just the simplified plot line most know of today. Even over a hundred years later the fragments of disaster; both physical and linguistic have a larger story to be told. In the artefact, the pages develop various paths that draw the viewer down different points of the Titanic's timeline. Each path is overlaid with the layers of the fragments found and they are mere bits and pieces to the stories of those who survived and those that were lost.

I am sorry that
 I neglected to send you
 the first of the
 I got all about it
 Monday you see, I
 have had a little
 very busy all day
 - If I forget all about
 however I hope that you
 will find my good wishes
 and that they have a bit
 so you next year

On the RMS TITANIC
 Sunday afternoon
 Dear Mrs. All,
 I have seen the
 all the while, but today I have
 got over it. This morning I
 + I went to church & she has
 blessed the ship. She has
 help in eyesight. She has
 the ship out look, she is
 very young. She has had a
 Mrs. Ball & a box of



father got on with his club
 down glad to get over from
 breakfast as usual
 intend to go off for a night
 of two. I should say two
 unlocked & 6000 dollars other
 out of my pocket book. Hope
 I my steps. She has
 stolen. Did she say my
 mother has the dinner
 I will not

Dear
 on had
 around
 fully
 will
 sitting
 is less
 pen
 the ship
 much

Figure 062



And my way from one kind of that ship to another



Figure 063



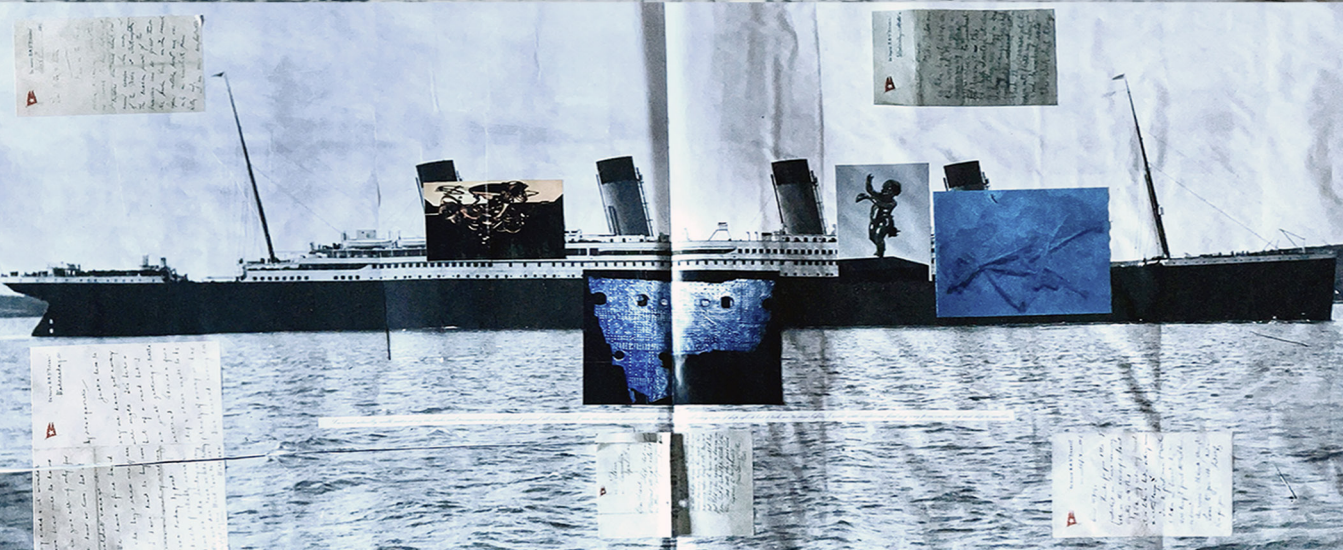
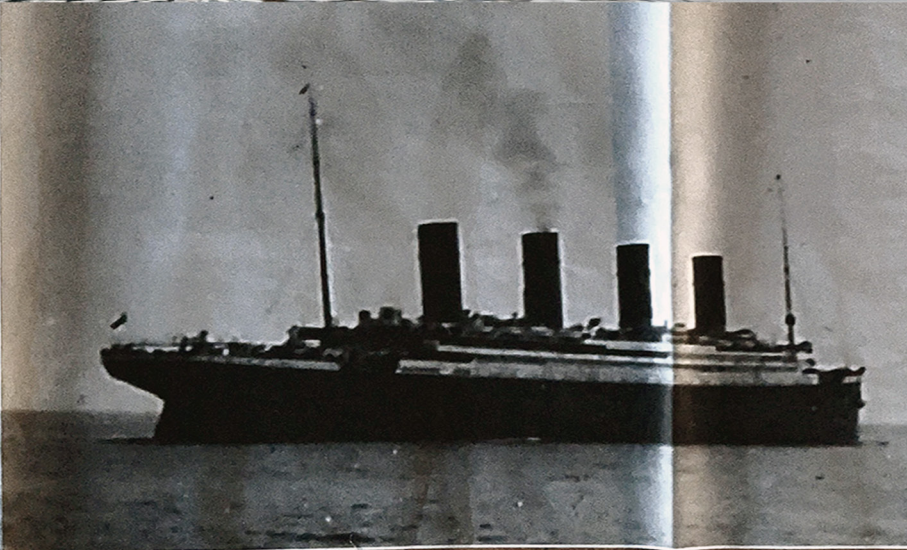
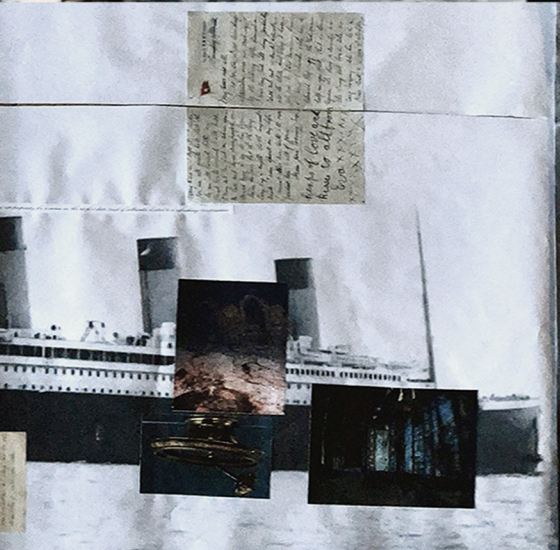


Figure 064



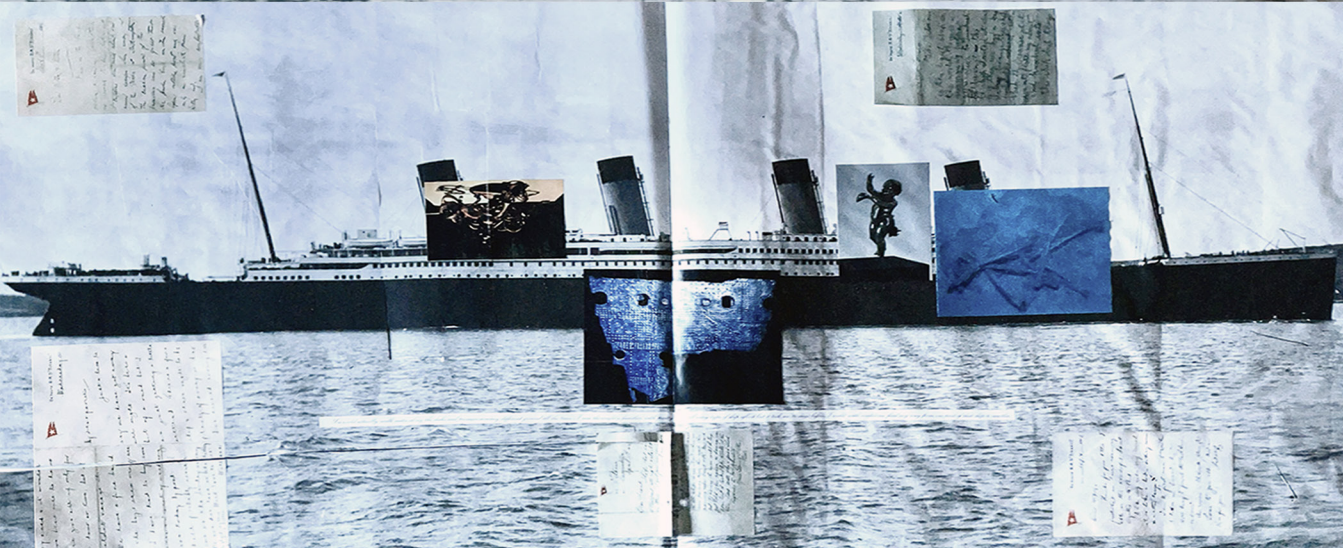


Figure 065

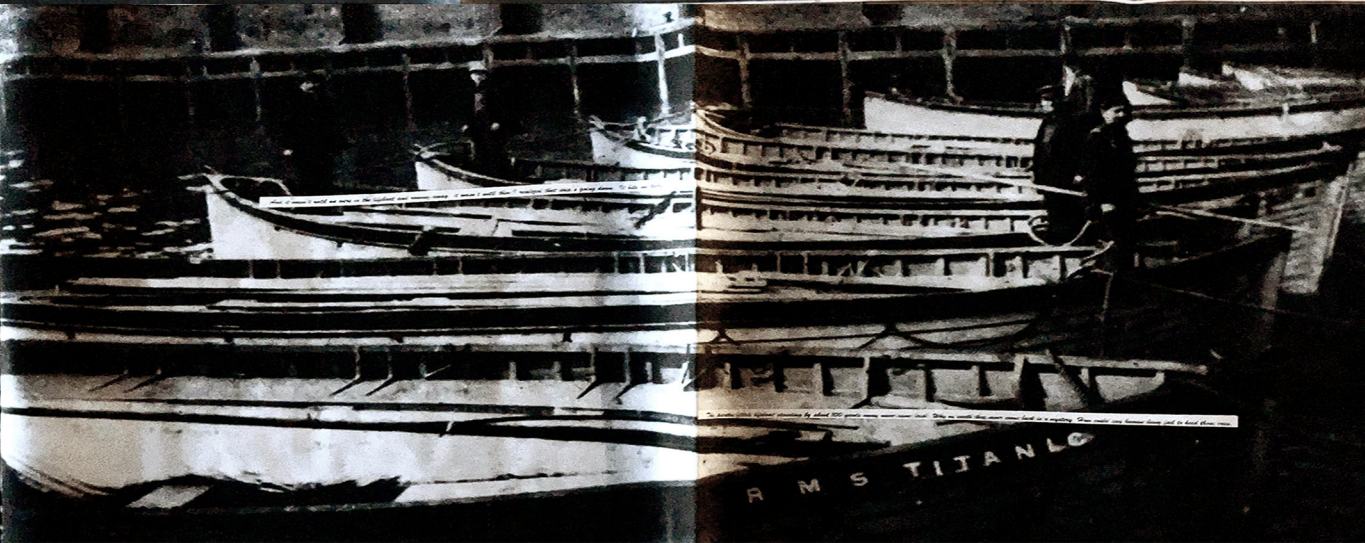
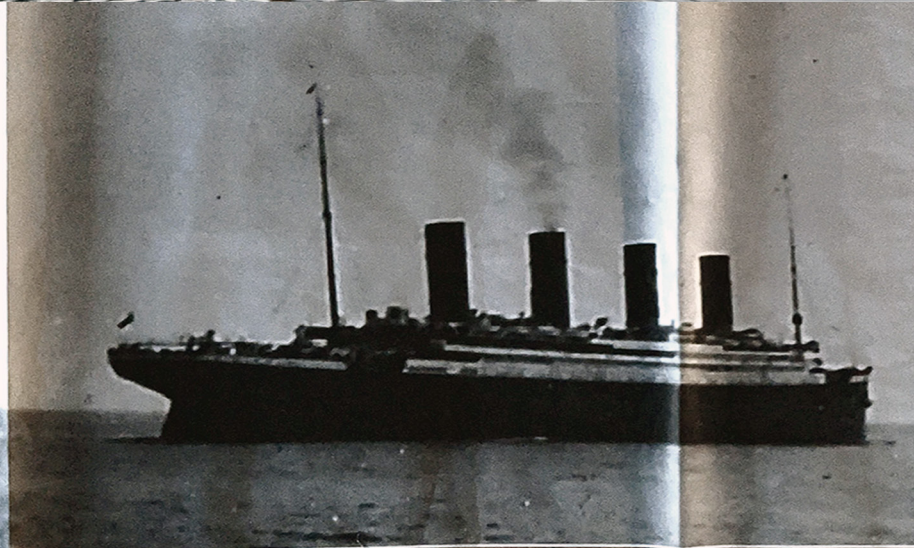
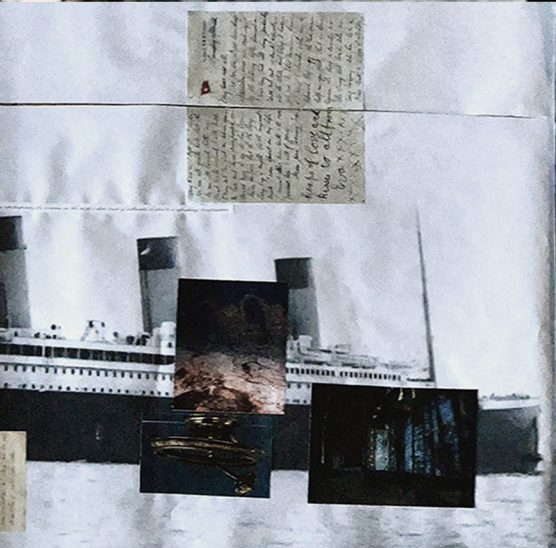




Figure 066



THE DESIGN

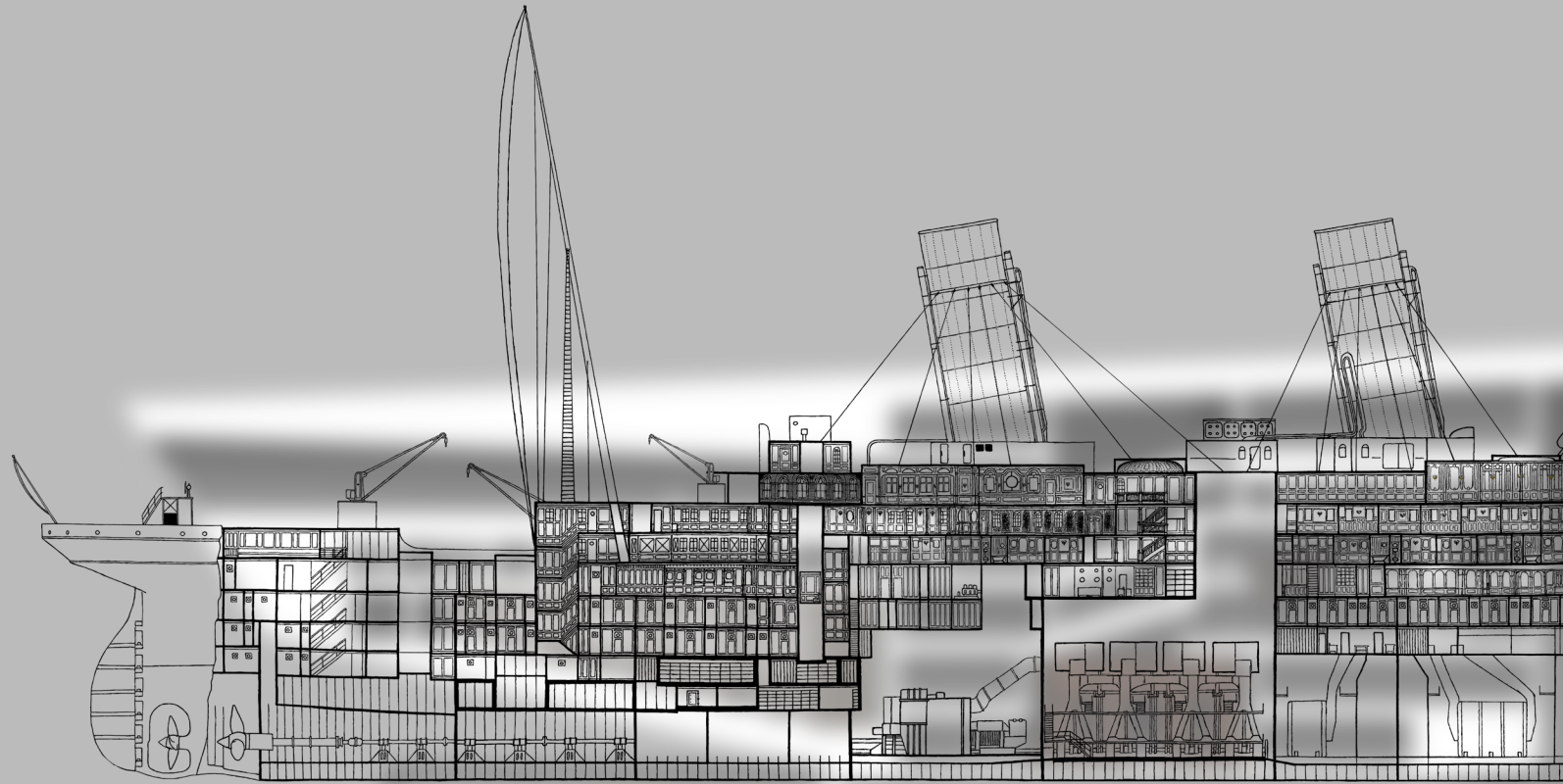
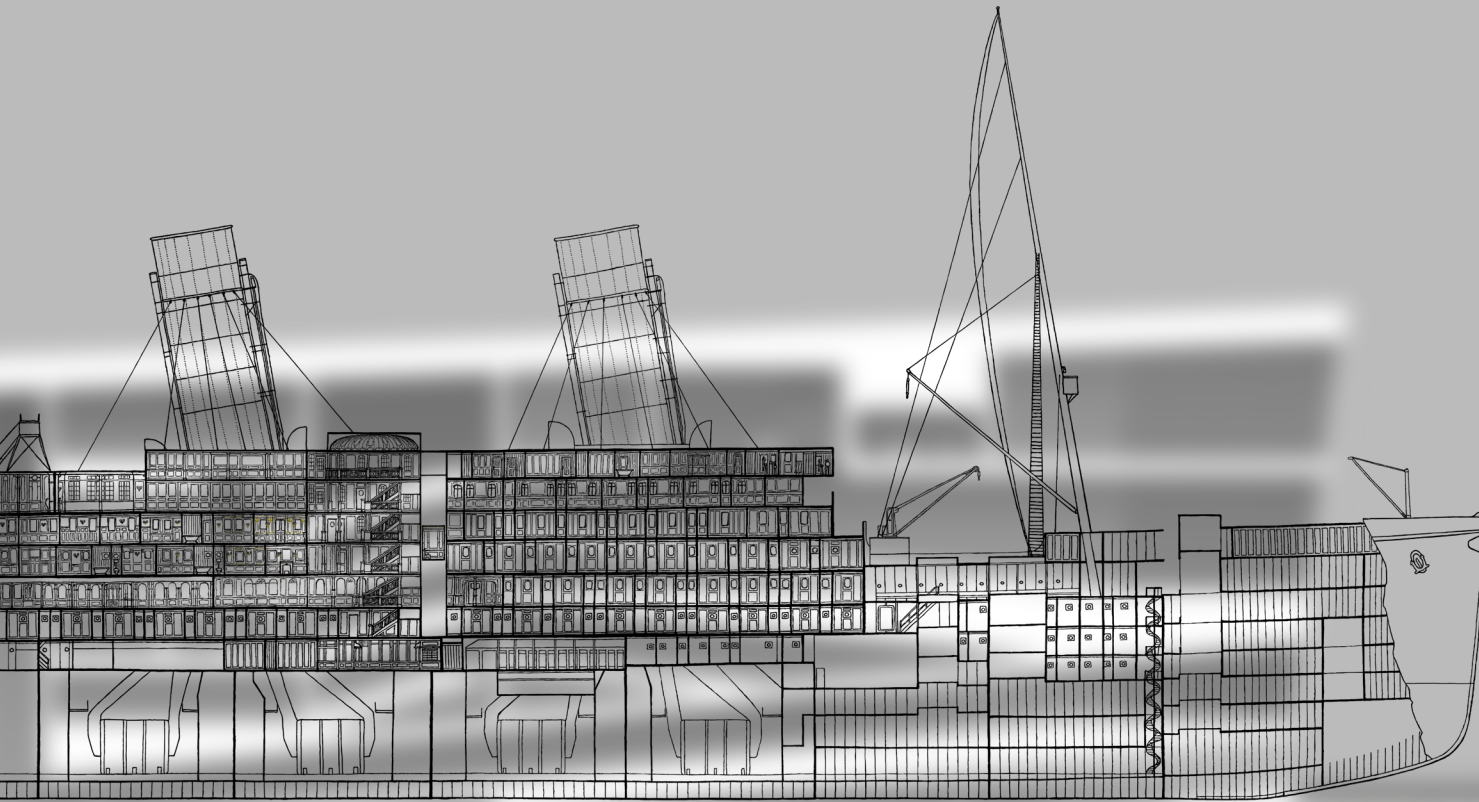


Figure 067



Inspired by the Titanic's striking hull shape, this museum echoes the silhouette that would have been present had the Titanic not hit the iceberg before making it to New York. Its interior orientation echoes the plans of the ship. Rather than simply telling the story in a chronological order, the museum places fragments of the past in respect where they would have been on the ship.

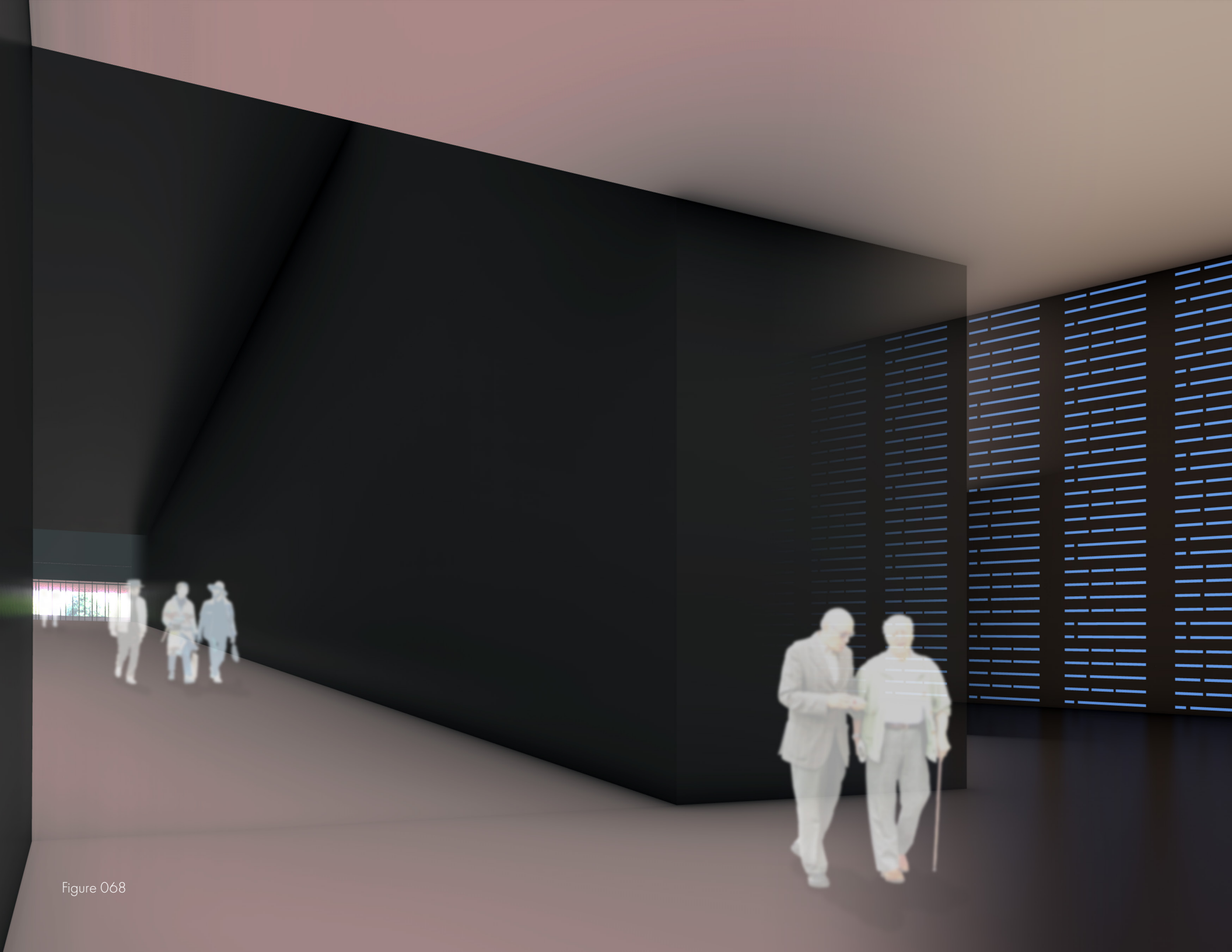


Figure 068



As the journey begins into the museum, the feeling of sinking is evoked by the entrance that leads down to the lowest level. On that level, visitors are exposed to the feeling of lostness as the wreck of the ship was undiscovered for 73 years. Names of the one-thousand five-hundred and fourteen passengers and crew that were lost line the memorial wall.

After the wreck was discovered, artifacts and stories from the tragedy surfaced as the Titanic gained public attention. This museum explores the idea of the stories rising from the deep by drawing the visitors upwards through the structure.



Figure 069

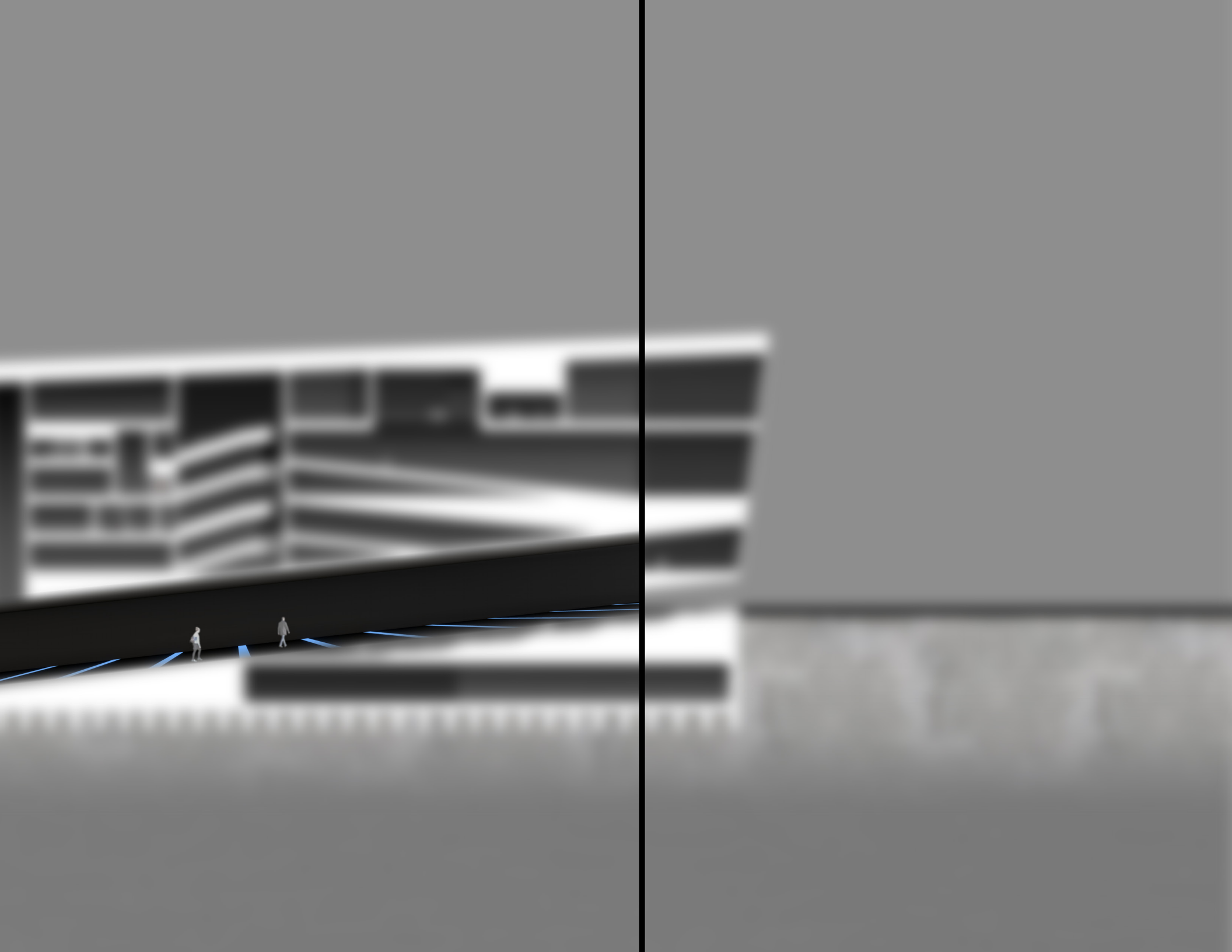




Figure 070



A path that brings visitors up into the structure is in conjunction with the course of the iceberg impact with the ship's hull. It leads into the main spaces that orient the physical and linguistic fragments in a way that tells the story of the sinking of the Titanic without showing it all at once.

Moving through the exhibits, the spaces within correspond to the design of the ship placing the fragments with them in the area they would have been at the time before sinking. Graphics of the ship as it sailed and how it remains on the sea floor sweep the walls allowing physical remnants such as artifacts center themselves within each space.



Figure 071

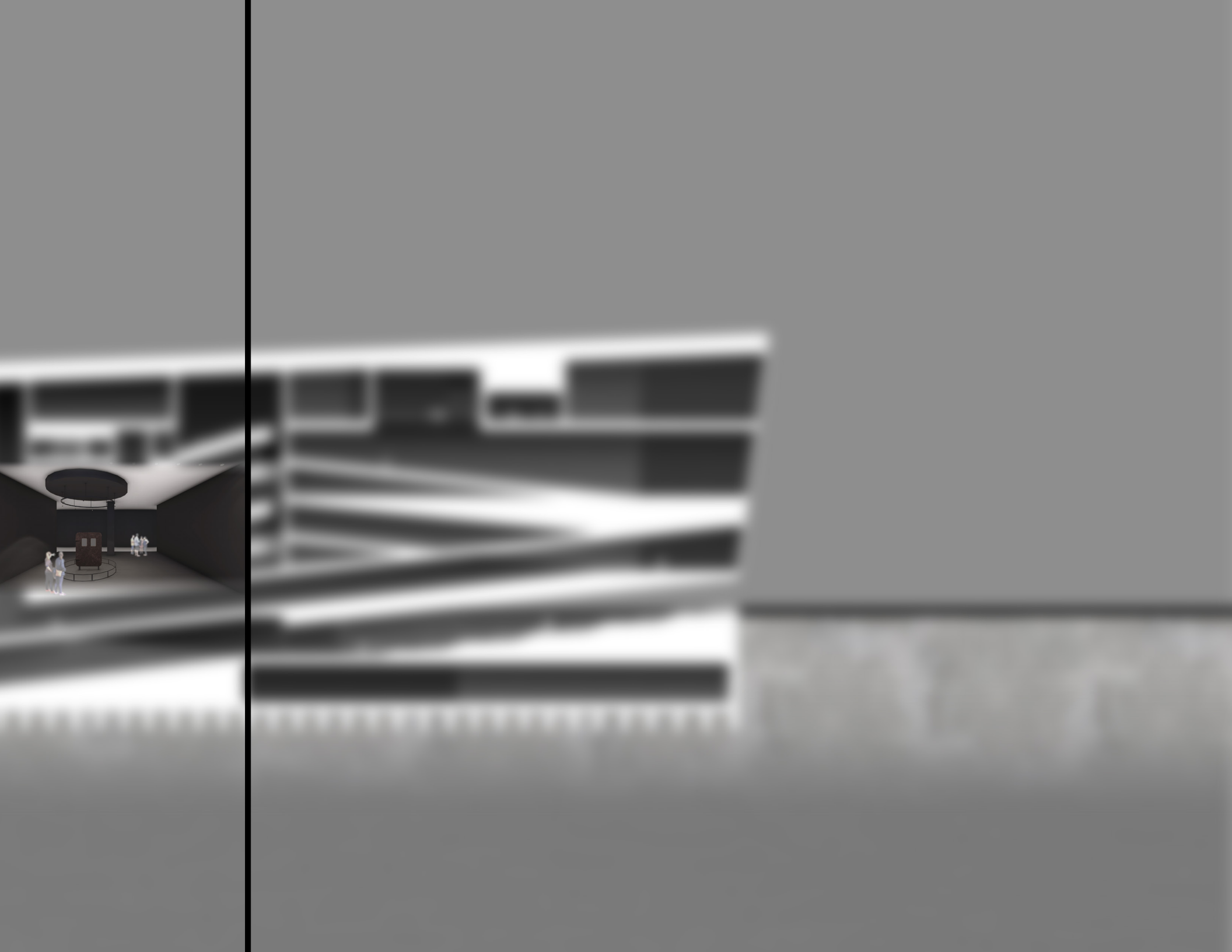




Figure 072

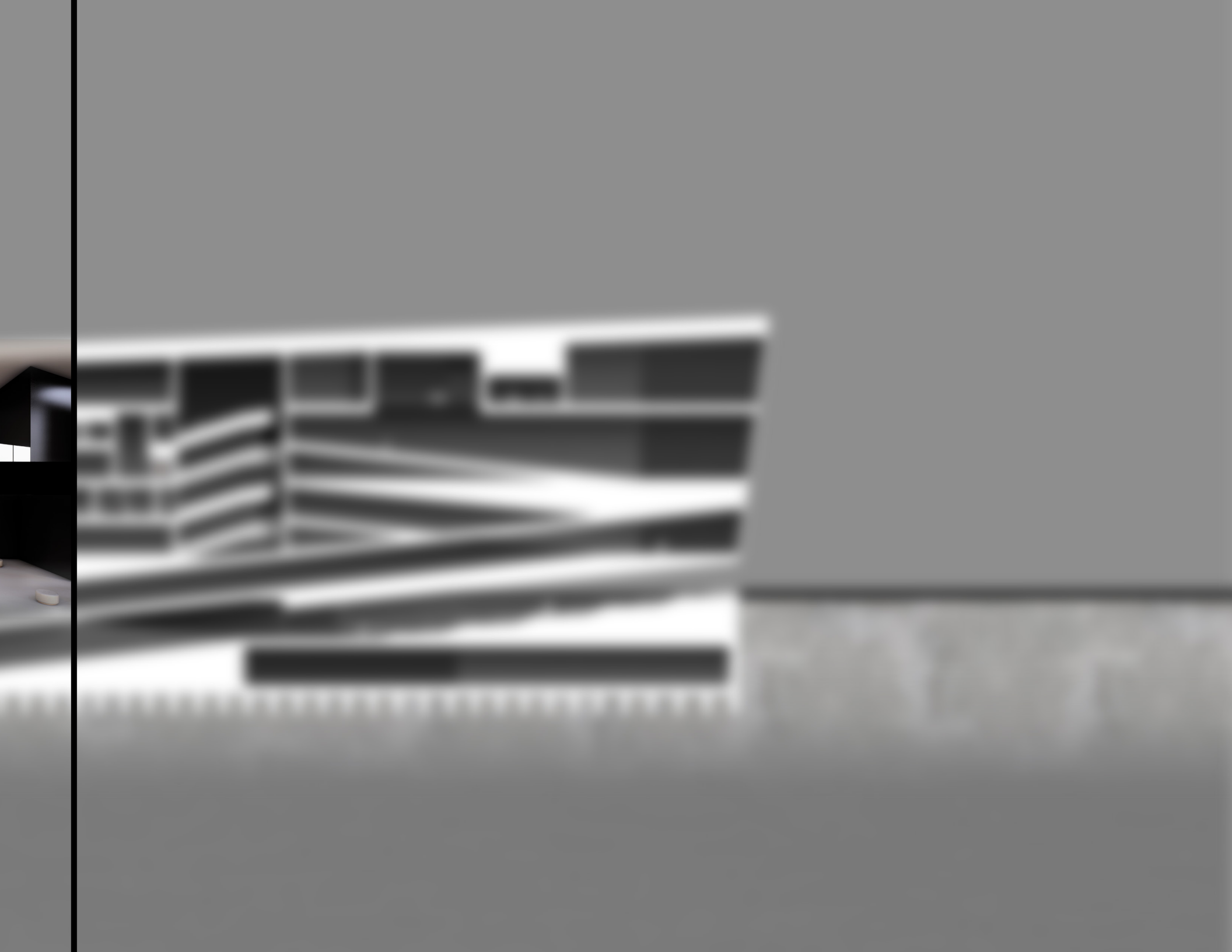


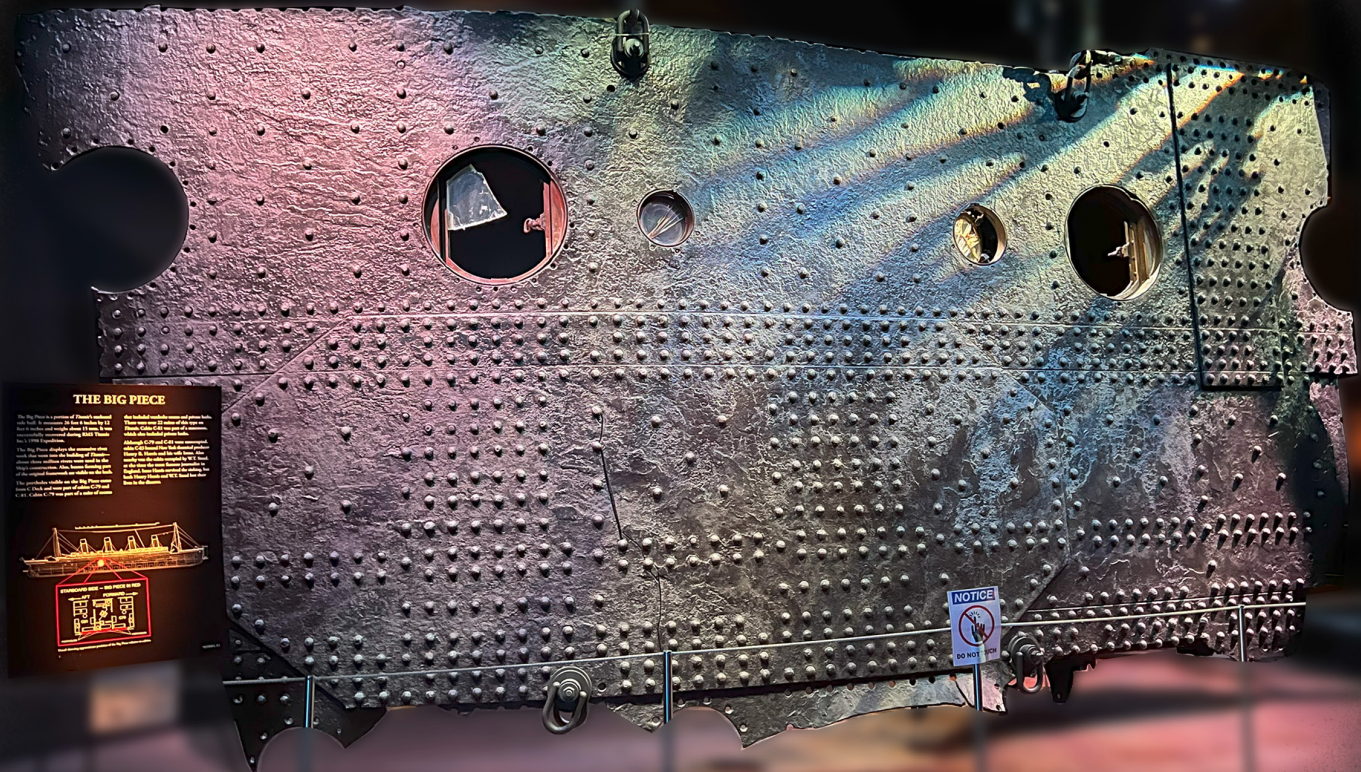
The Titanic's first class gangway door was the only thing separating the internal labyrinth of the ship from the outside world. It once welcomed those coming aboard for the journey; no one would ever leave through those doors again. Behind stands a graphic of the rust-covered ornate doors that cover each gangway entrance. Until the visit to the wreck, no one had known that they existed.

Of the thousands of physical artifacts that would be housed within this museum, the largest is a section of the ship's steel hull that was torn off during the sinking.




Figure 073





THE BIG PIECE

The Big Piece is a portion of the Titanic's hull that was recovered from the wreck site in 1985. It is the largest piece of the ship's hull ever recovered and is a testament to the ship's construction. The piece was found in a state of severe corrosion and was in need of extensive restoration. The restoration process was a complex one, involving the use of advanced techniques to repair the metal and restore its original appearance. The piece is now on display in the Titanic Museum, where it serves as a powerful reminder of the ship's history and the challenges of deep-sea exploration.



NOTICE
DO NOT TOUCH

Figure 074

The space brings together two pieces that were once joined, but were split between the Las Vegas and Orlando exhibits.



Figure 075



The combined piece of the hull spanned two decks of the ship and in conjunction, the space it's posed in consists of a two floor viewing gallery. This is so that the hull fragments may be revealed in perspectives in respect to its coordinating floor.

To develop a thoughtful connection between the event and those who visit the museum, I explored creating a space to orient the stacked dishes as they were when they came to rest on the seabed.

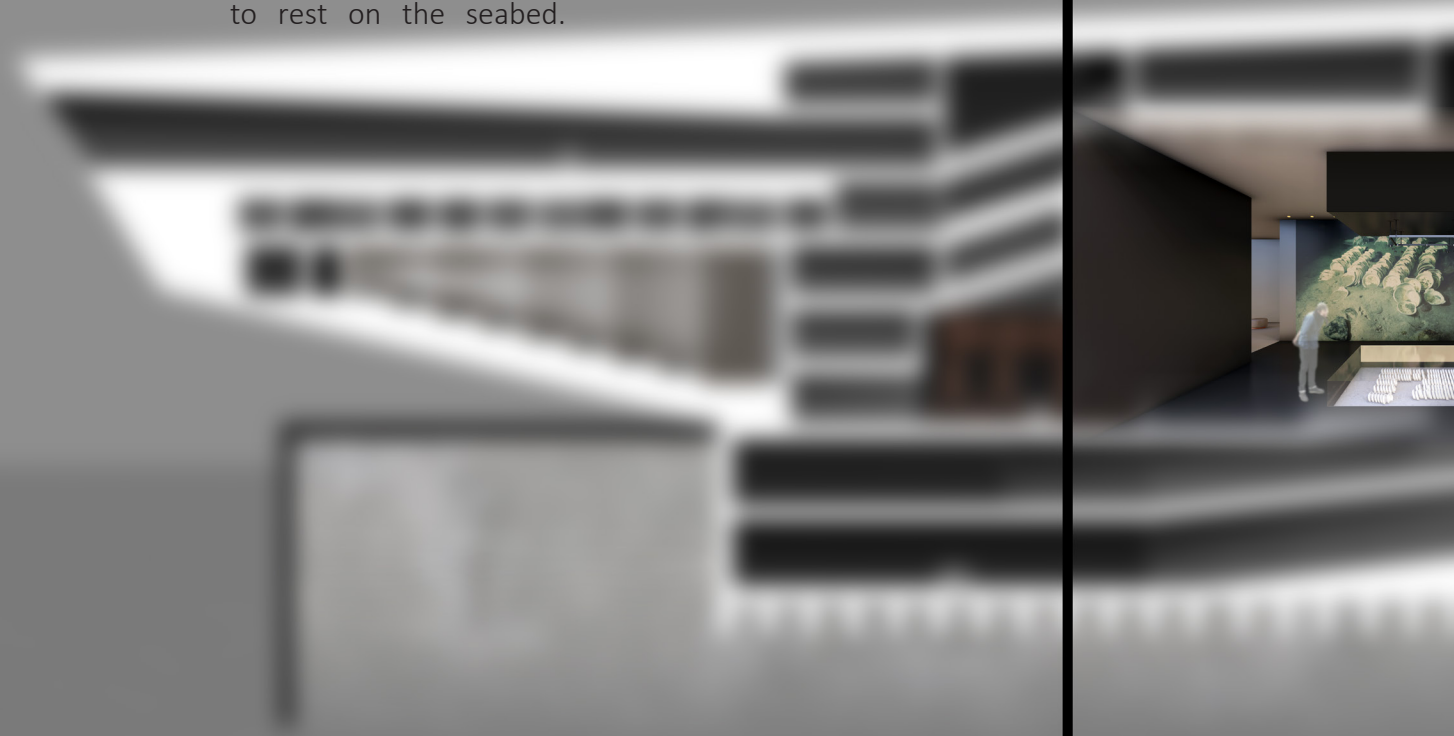


Figure 076

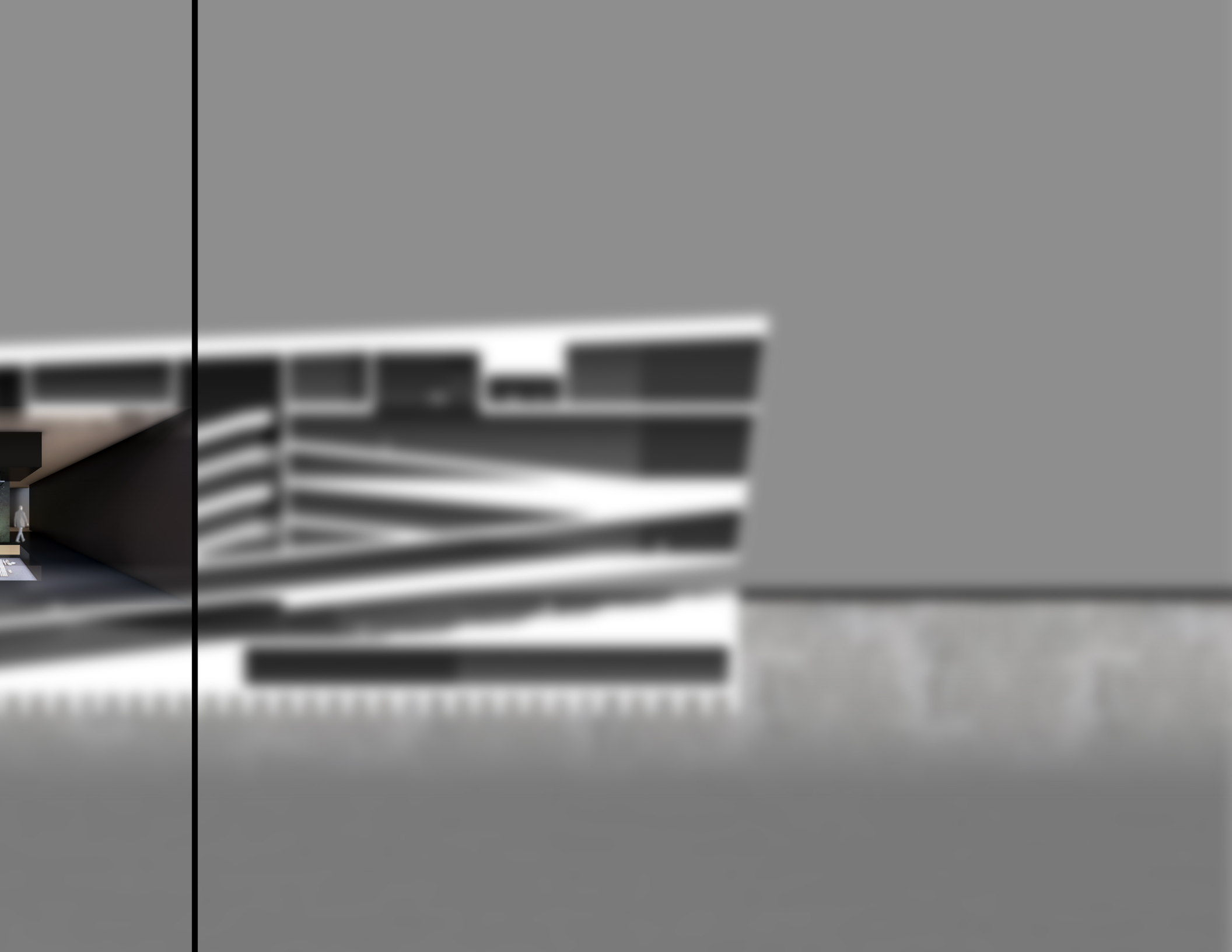




Figure 077



The dishes lie in a display of sand that lets them remain in the position they were at the time when the last person aboard the Titanic stacked them. It creates a sense of walking on the wreck site rather than within a museum.

Many of the physical fragments from the wreck are unrecognizable; positioning this space where the ship's wheel house and bridge would have been, the space articulates the artifacts in the positions they would have been before the sinking.

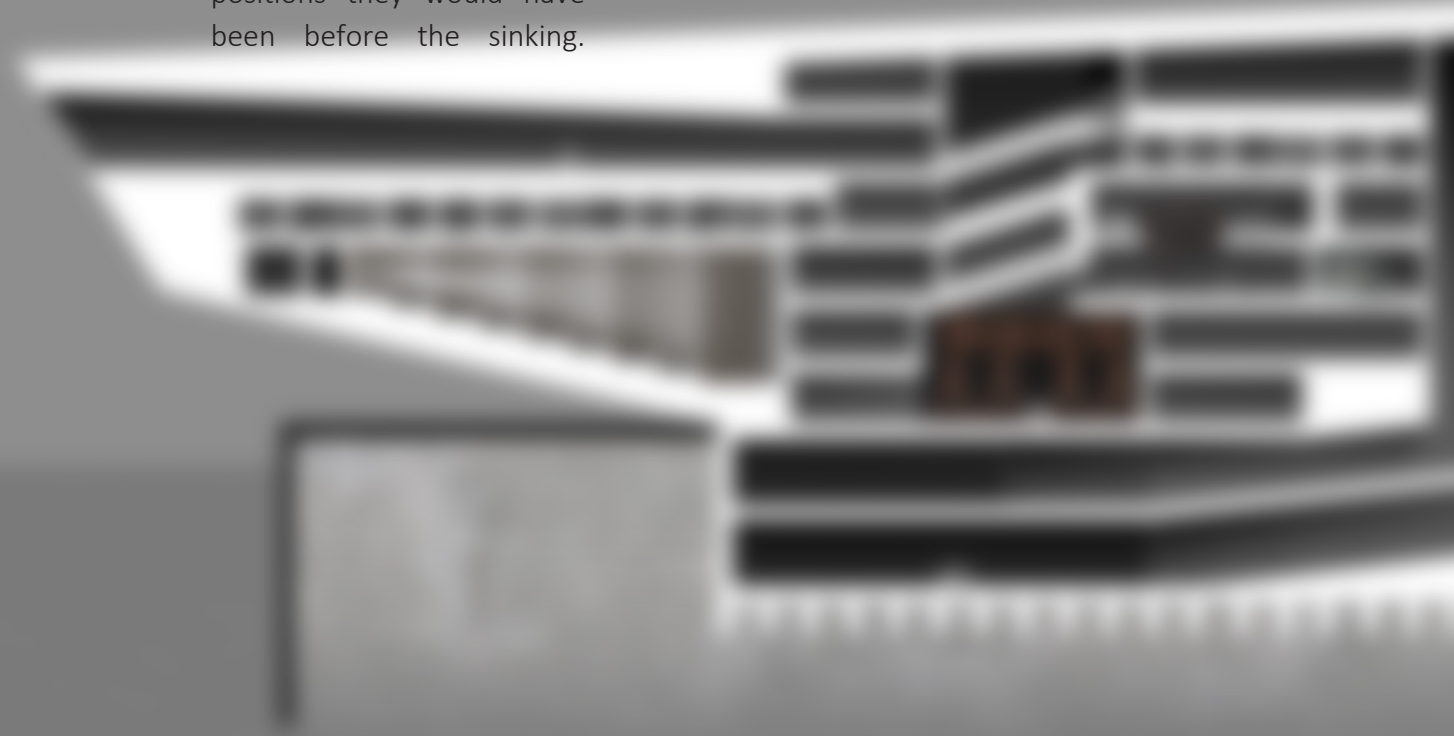


Figure 078

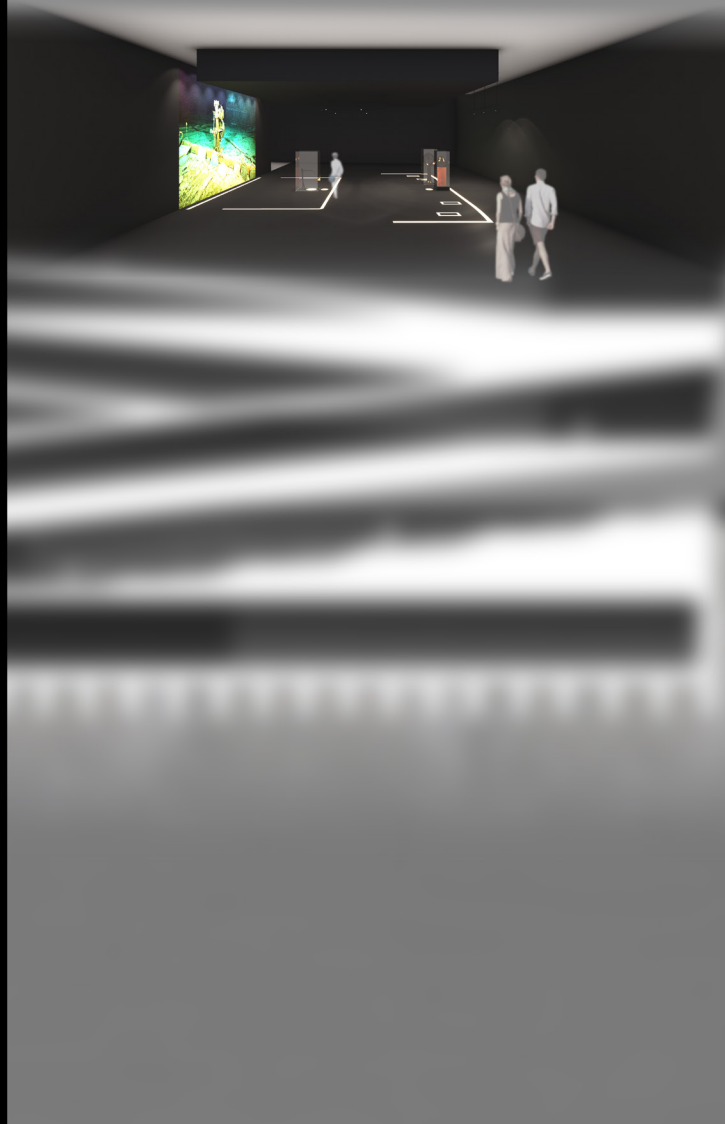




Figure 079



Crucial pieces of the Titanic bridge include the stand that once held the ship's wheel. Their positioning within the space portrays the environment of where events unfolded as the Titanic's crew made their best efforts to steer away from the iceberg. To provide context in spatial orientation, the plans used to build the ship are projected on the floor.

The boat deck: where all twenty of the Titanic's lifeboats were stored, was positioned on the highest deck of the ship. The lifeboats aboard the Titanic were the fine line between life or death to the passengers and crew. The davits holding the boats were cranes that hoisted them as they filled up with survivors over the side of the sinking ship and lowered them down to the icy Atlantic waters.



Figure 080





Figure 081



Only one of the Titanic's many davits have been surfaced from the wreck and this exhibit positions it within a projected outline of where the lifeboat would have been in respect to the original plans. Its position allows visitors to step inside the projection lines and see themselves within the lifeboat to connect them to the survivors.

When viewed in unison, the spaces designed within the museum are not only created to house the remnants of the tragedy; they provide context to them so that they may tell the story of the RMS Titanic.

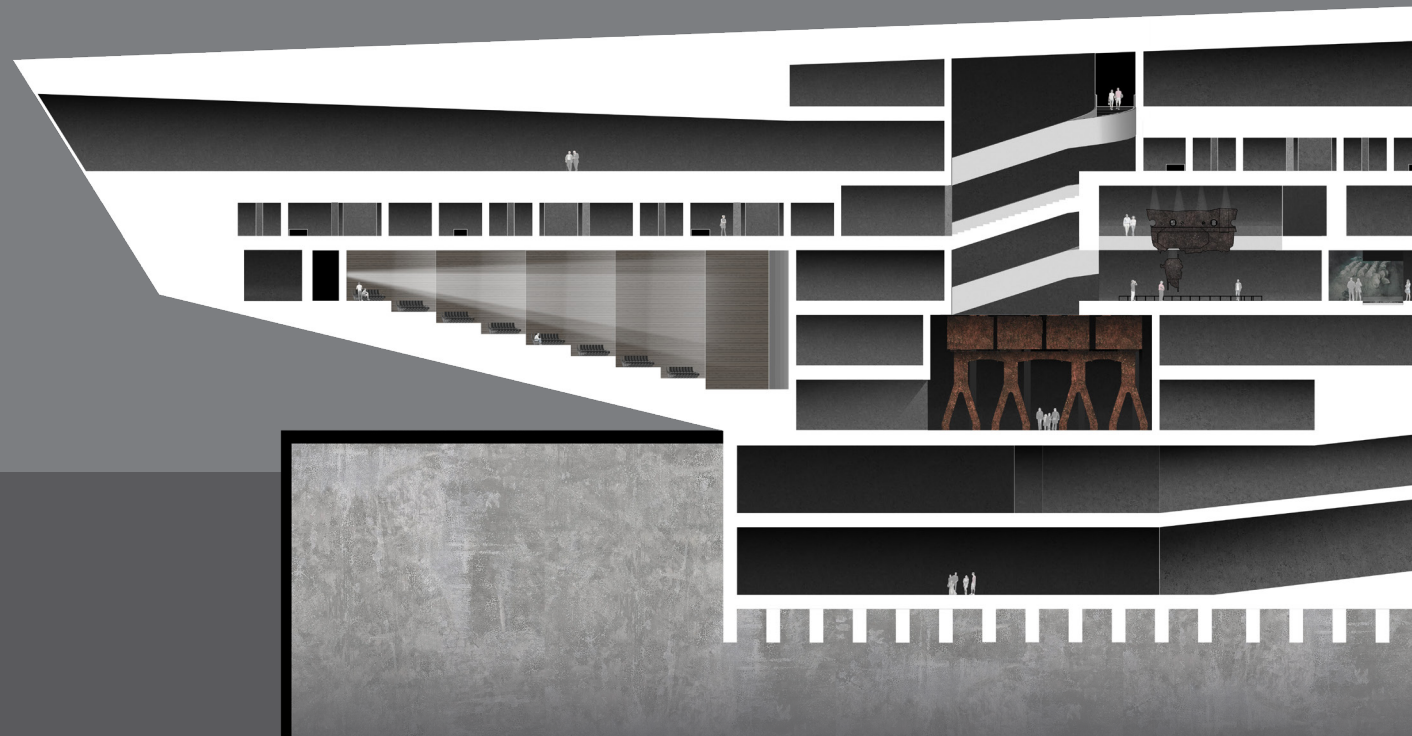
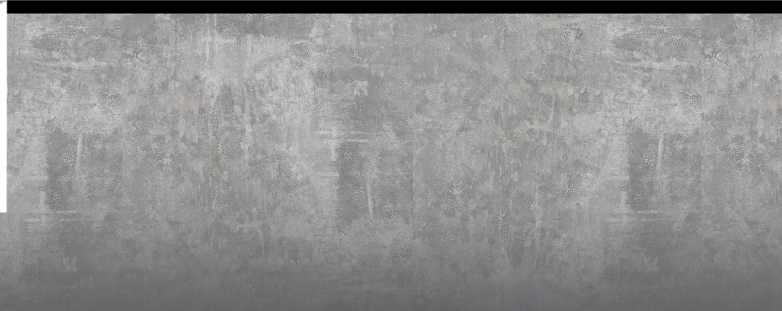
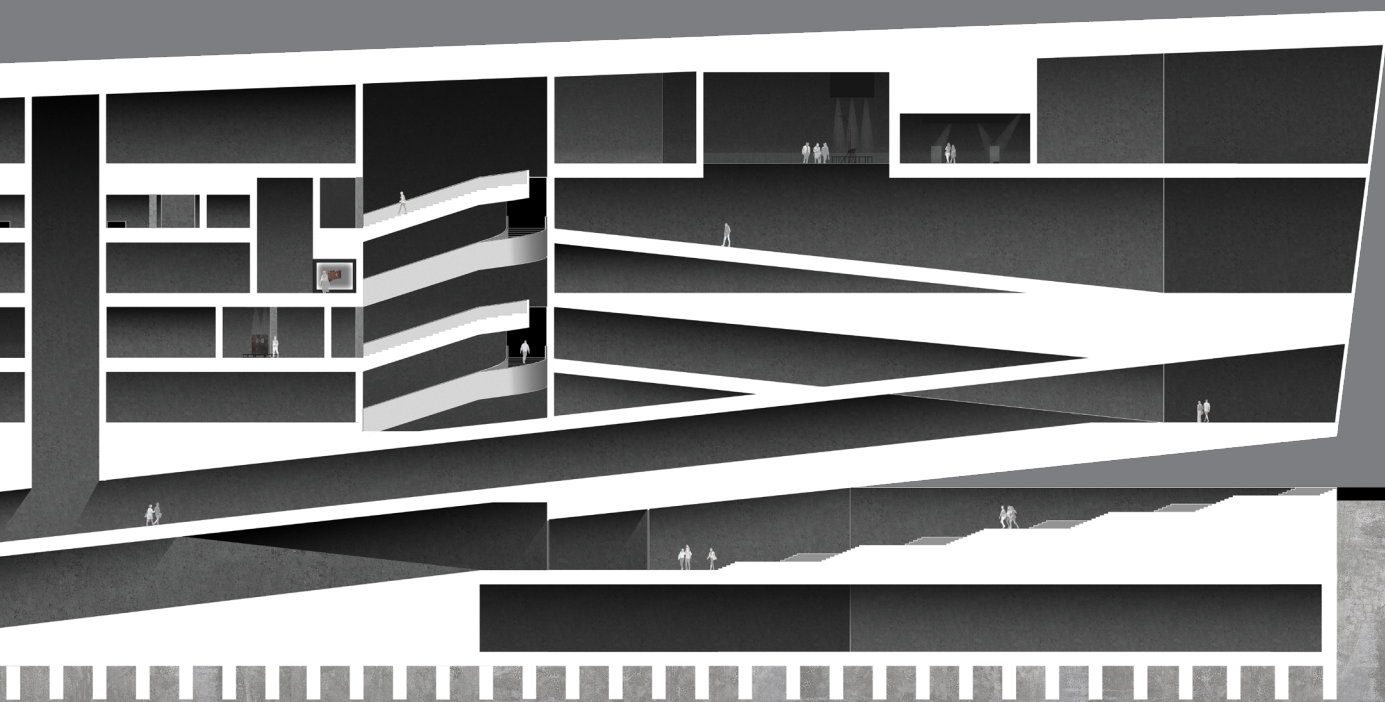
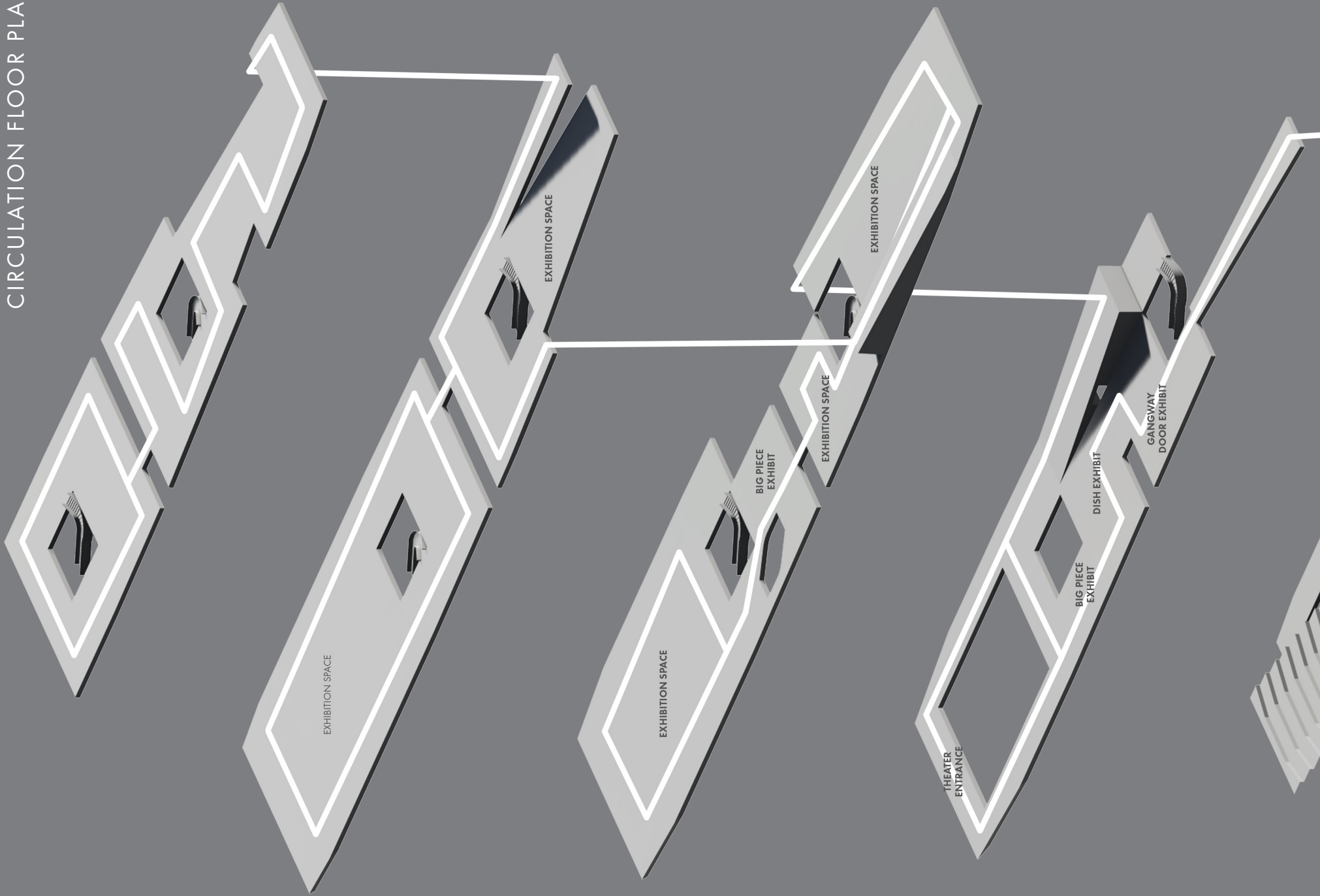


Figure 082



CIRCULATION FLOOR PLAN



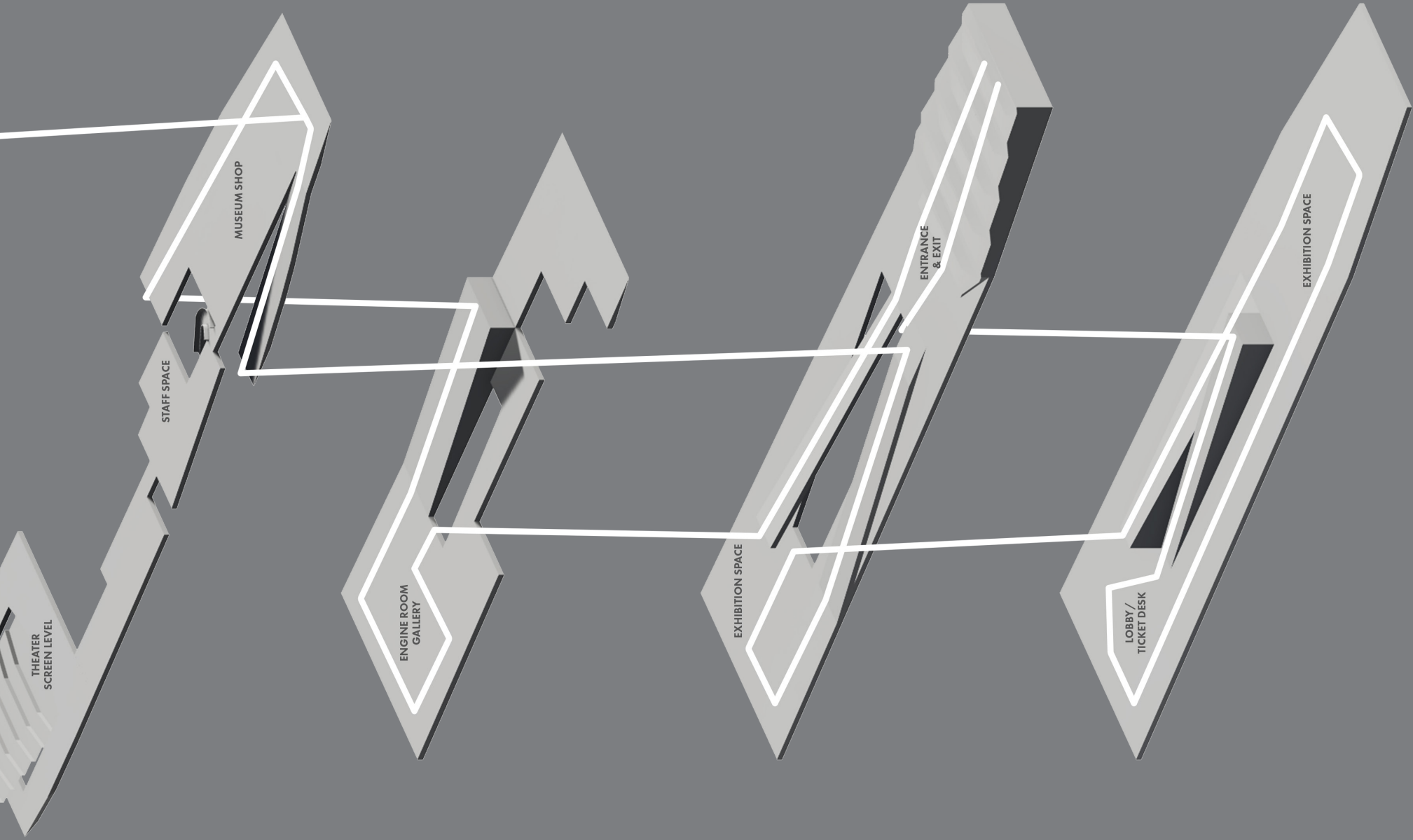


Figure 083

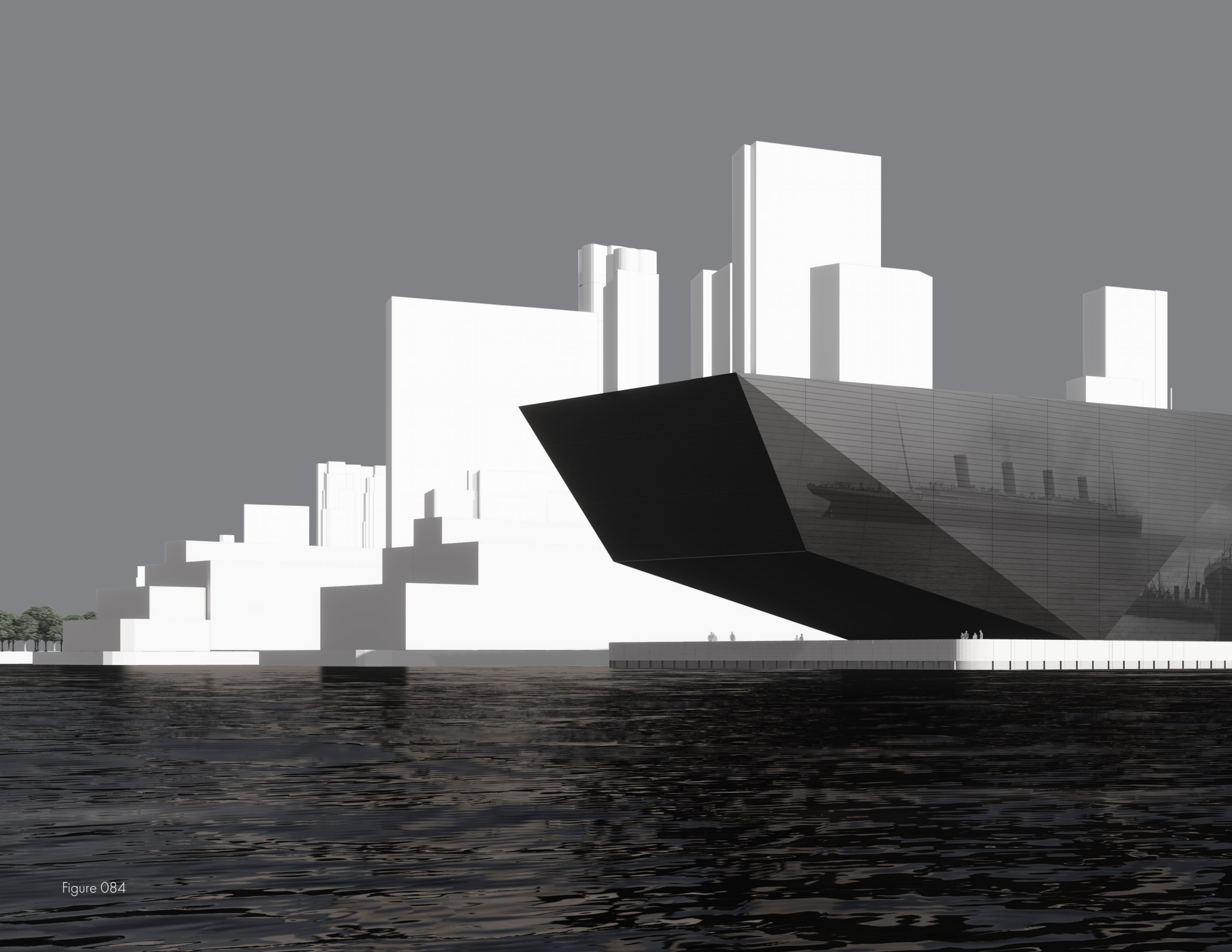
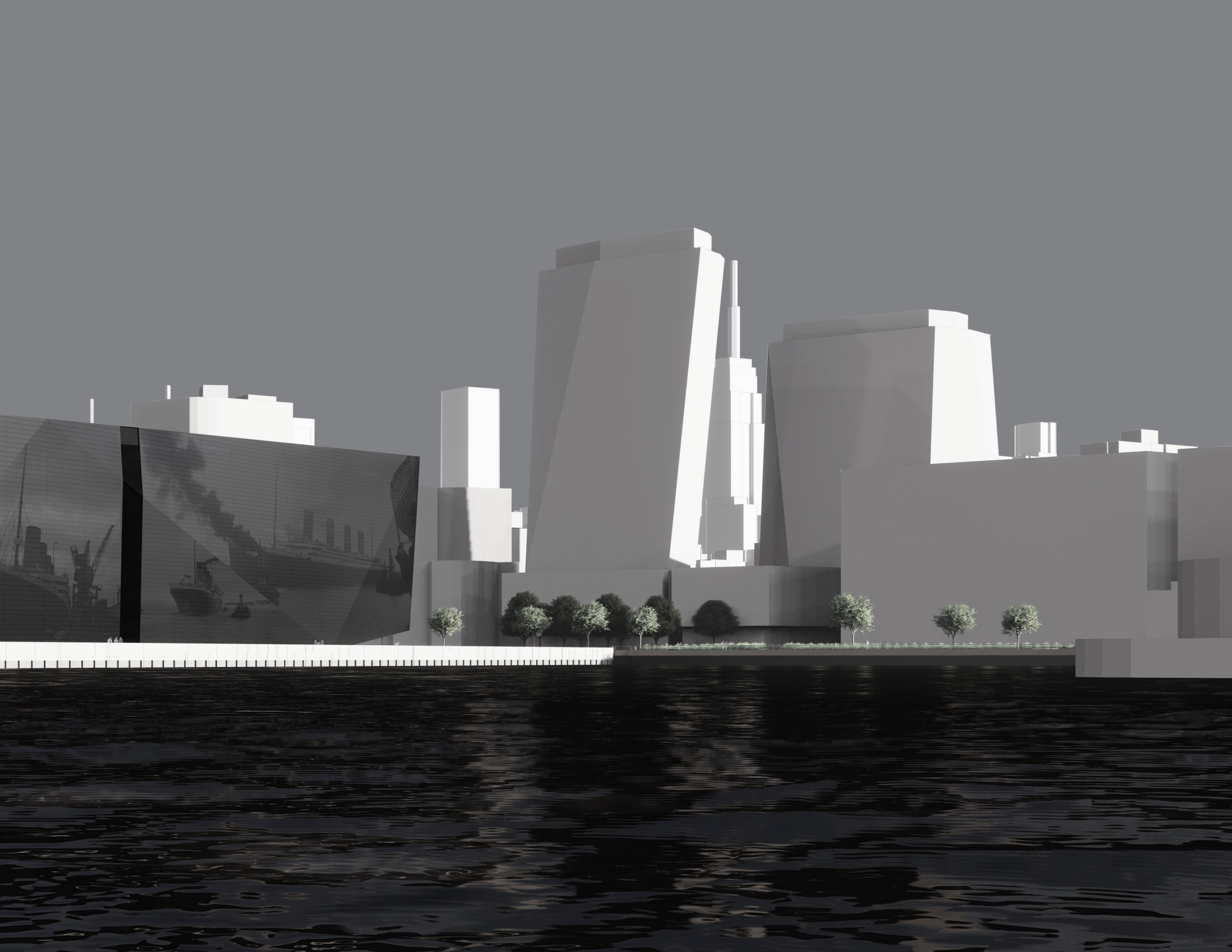


Figure 084



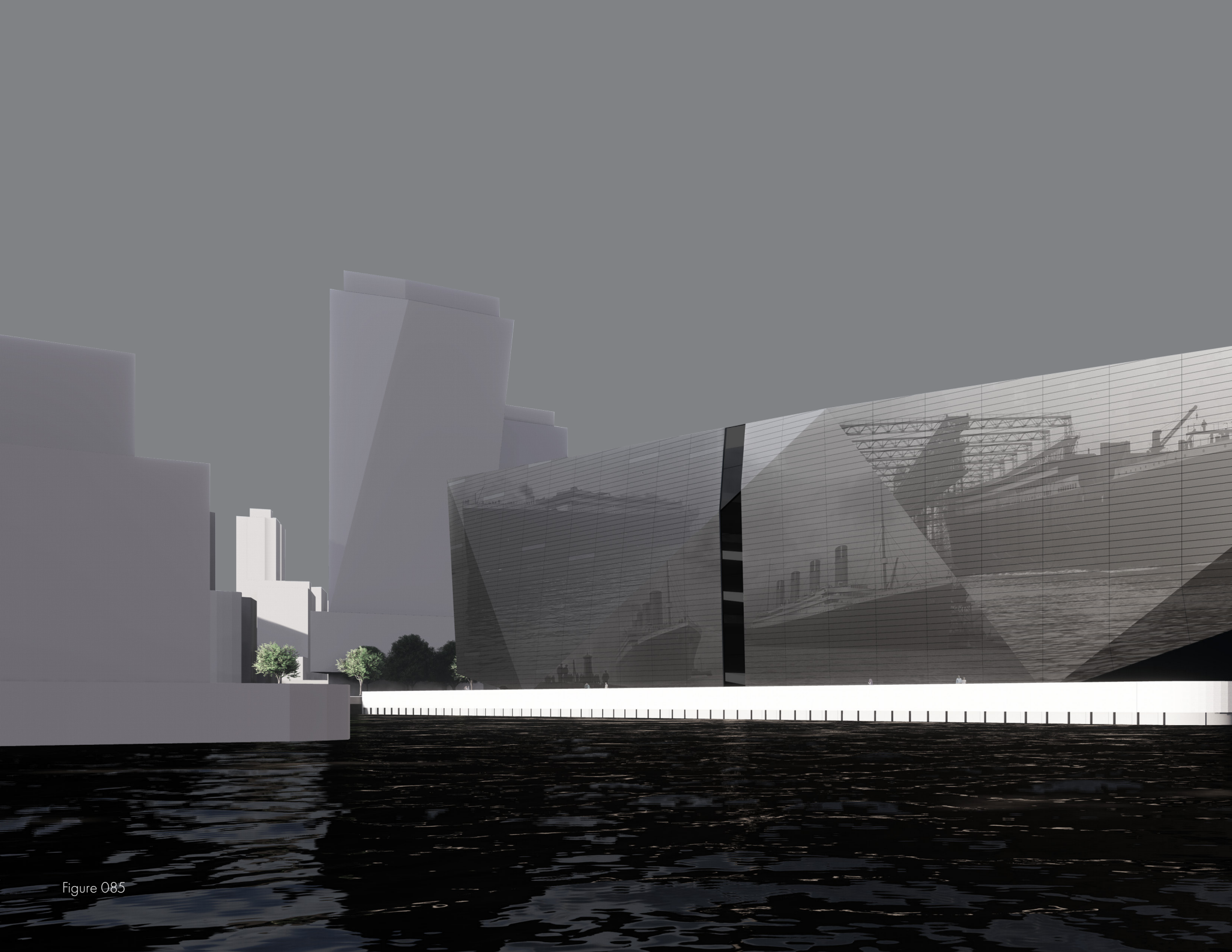
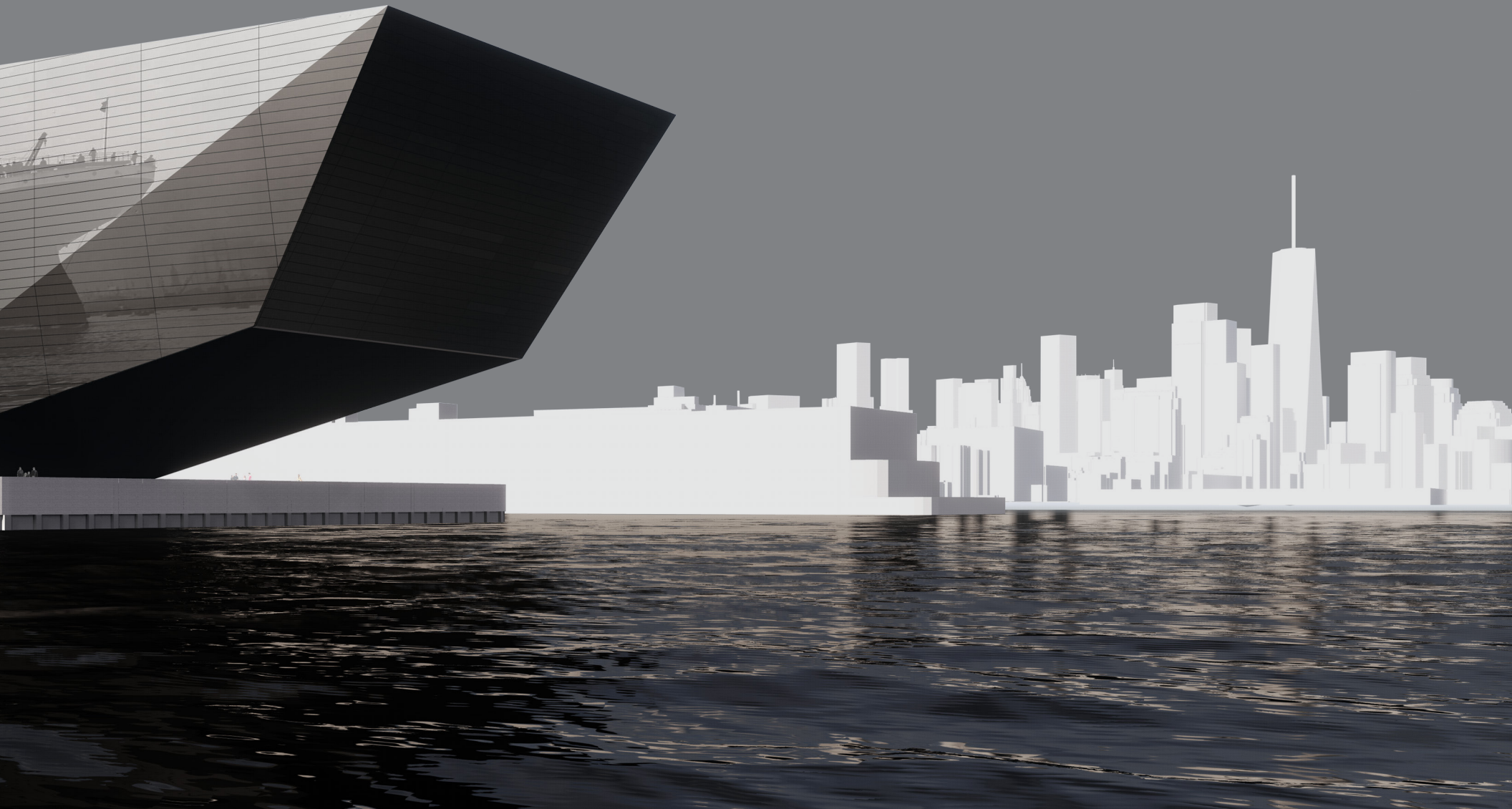
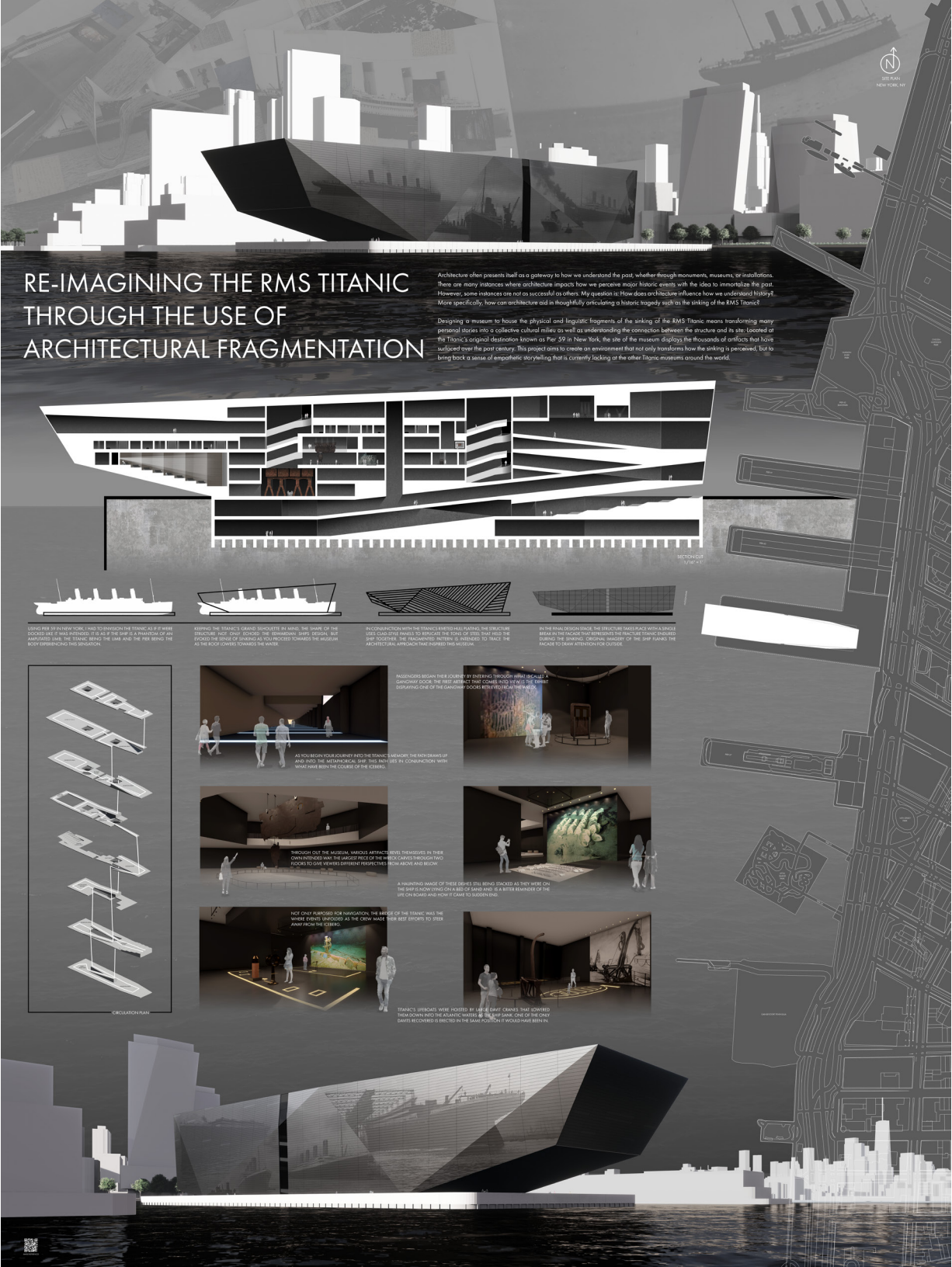


Figure 085

The dark silhouette of the building mimics the ship as if it were docked like it was intended to. Pier 59 becomes the final resting place for the artifacts surfaced from the wreck as the museum built upon it is designed to house them and any future discoveries.



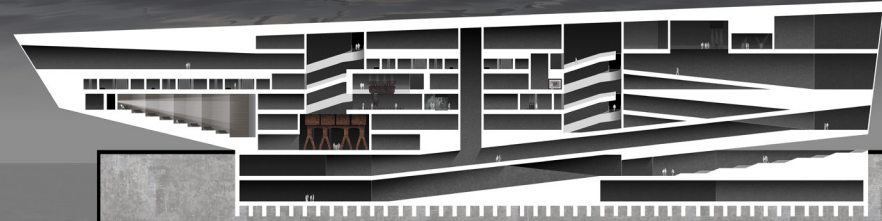
FINAL PRESENTATION



RE-IMAGINING THE RMS TITANIC THROUGH THE USE OF ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTATION

Architecture often presents itself as a gateway to how we understand the past, whether through monuments, museums, or installations. There are many instances where architecture impacts how we perceive major historic events with the goal to immortalize the past. However, some instances are not as successful as others. My question is: How does architecture influence how we understand history? More specifically, how can architecture aid in thoughtfully articulating a historic tragedy such as the sinking of the RMS Titanic?

Designing a museum to house the physical and linguistic fragments of the sinking of the RMS Titanic means transforming many personal stories into a collective cultural milieu as well as understanding the connection between the structure and its site. Located at the Titanic's original destination known as Pier 59 in New York, the site of the museum displays the thousands of artifacts that have surfaced over the past century. This project aims to create an environment that not only transforms how the sinking is perceived, but to bring back a sense of empathetic storytelling that is currently lacking at the other Titanic museums around the world.

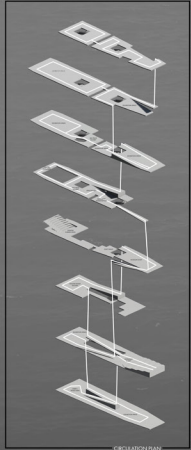


USING PIER 59 IN NEW YORK, I HAD TO DIVISCH THE TITANIC AS IF IT WERE BROKEN UP IN THREE PORTIONS: 1) AS IF THE SHIP IS A REMINDER OF AN UNFINISHED IDEA, THE TITANIC BEND THE LINE AND THE PIER BEHIND THE BODY REPRESENTS THE EDUCATION.

KEEPING THE TITANIC'S GRAND SHIPWRECK IN MIND, THE SHAPE OF THE STRUCTURE NOT ONLY RESEMBLES THE SHIP'S DESIGN, BUT ALSO THE SHIP'S DESTINY. THE SHIP TOGETHER, THE TRAGEDY OF SINKING AS YOU PROCEED TOWARDS THE MUSEUM AS THE SHIP SINKS TOWARDS THE WATER.

INCORPORATING WITH THE TITANIC'S INTERESTING DATA, THE STRUCTURE USES QUANTIFIERS TO EXPRESS THE SENSE OF SCALE THAT HELD THE SHIP TOGETHER. THE TRAGEDY OF SINKING IS REFINED TO TRACE THE ARCHITECTURAL LINKAGES THAT JOINED THE MUSEUM.

IN THE FINAL DESIGN PHASE, THE STRUCTURE TAKES PLACE WITH A SPACE BETWEEN THE FLOOR THAT REPRESENTS THE TITANIC'S TRAGEDY DURING THE SINKING. ORIGINAL IMAGERY OF THE SHIP PLANKS THE FLOOR TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE TRAGEDY.



AS YOU BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY FROM THE TITANIC'S MEMORY, THE WALKER'S UP AND INTO THE METAPHORICAL SHIP, THIS INCLUDES IN CONNECTION WITH WIND (AIR) BEHIND THE COURSE OF THE COURSE.



PASSENGERS BEGAN THEIR JOURNEY BY ENTERING THROUGH WHITE DOOR, A GARDEN DOOR, THE BIG OBJECT (THE CORAL) WITH THE SHIP'S DESIGN, DISPLAYING ONE OF THE GARDEN DOORS (THE TITANIC'S TRAGEDY).



THROUGHOUT THE MUSEUM, VARIOUS ATTRACTIVES REPRESENTED IN THEIR DIMENSIONS (THE LARGEST PART OF THE SHIP) THROUGHOUT THE MUSEUM TO GIVE VISITORS DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES FROM ABOVE AND BELOW.



A FANTASY OF THESE OBJECTS WILL BRING VISITORS TO THE SHIP ON THE SHIP'S HISTORY (ON A BED OF SAND AND IS A BITTER REMINDER OF THE LIFE ON BOARD AND HOW IT CAME TO SINKING).



NOT ONLY PURPOSED FOR NAVIGATION, THE BRIDGE OF THE TITANIC WAS THE BRIDGE BEING INTRODUCED AS THE CROWD WALKS HER BEST EFFORTS TO STAY AWAY FROM THE CREEPER.



TITANIC'S LIFEBOATS WERE HOSTED BY LIFEBOAT CHAIRS THAT SINKING INTO DOWN AND THE ALUMINUM CHAIRS & THE LIFEBOAT ONE OF THE CHAIRS RECOVERED IS DIRECTED IN THE SAME POSITION IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN.

APPENDIX

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STUDIO EXPERIENCE

SECOND YEAR

FALL 2019 | Charlott Greub

Land Artist Studio - Moorhead, MN

Boat House - Minneapolis, MN

SPRING 2020 | Cindy Urness

Small Dwelling - Cripple Creek, CO

Mixed-use Project - Fargo, ND

THIRD YEAR

FALL 2020 | Regin Schwaen

Puzzle City - China

Artist Museum - Nekoma, ND

SPRING 2021 | Niloufar Alenjery

Wellness Retreat - St. Mortiz, Switzerland

Pavilion Project - Fargo, ND

FOURTH YEAR

FALL 2021 | Cindy Urness

High Rise - Miami, FL

SPRING 2022 | David Crutchfield

Urban Housing Project - Fargo, ND

FIFTH YEAR

FALL 2022 | Stephen Wischer

Thesis Development

SPRING 2023 | Stephen Wischer

Design Thesis

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Mason Gaskins
Coon Rapids, MN

She was such a beautiful ship;
She looked so lovely, and that's
how we ought to remember her.

- Eva Hart, Titanic Survivor