

# *bottega - desire and distance:*

A JOURNEY THROUGH STORIED  
ARCHITECTURE, ART, AND FASHION  
IN VENICE, CALIFORNIA

A Design Thesis Submitted to the Department of Architecture

North Dakota State University

By

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Degree of Master of Architecture

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# Thesis Abstract

While we are constantly immersed in a world driven by efficiency and immediacy, the result is a collapsed distance of seduction and desire and a diluted connection to making and the arts.

Venice, California was intended to emulate the character and stories of Venice, Italy, to create an emphasis on the arts and fashion in the United States. In the dawn of our consumer culture, this intention was lost along the way. Journeys through architecture, whether they are in dreams or waking reality, can inspire meaningful and memorable cadence and creation that restores empathy and connects to stories by maintaining an interpretive, participatory distance for those who encounter them. Based on paradigmatic influences from Octavio Paz's interpretation of Marcel Duchamp's, *The Large Glass*, the quest for love in *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, the Janus Head, and inspirations from evocative writings in Joseph Brodsky's *Watermark*, this thesis proposes a campus of maker spaces and galleries for fashion and art that connects users to stories, culture, and each other while on a journey through the buildings and site.

Like Duchamp's *The Large Glass*, the buildings on the campus act as a hinge to bring stories together and open layered spaces of wonder and desire. Constructed by meaningful tectonics and materials, the architectural frame houses a path that intrigues a cognizant involvement with spatial encounter, aiming to inspire and awaken others to make and create art, fashion, and architecture.



FIGURE 1 - DREAMING IN ARCHITECTURE

# Thesis Narrative

Through my time in architecture school, I have learned two things for certain: People matter, and the spaces we are subjected to affect us, good and bad.

Environment matters and is so important to our well being. Environment is much more than aesthetics, which is subjective, or science and math with daylight calculations and statistics on fire code and ceiling height. And ultimately, as architects we cannot create situations. We can only create spaces where people come together for a common purpose. This is where the design can become rooted in culture.

I am interested in pursuing the relationships between human experience and textures, tectonics, and textiles in architecture. The questions I want to ask are:

Is there a synthesis between fashion, art, buildings, and our well-being?

Assuming that we do not want to keep up with modern architecture or culture, how can we provide a space or building that is an antidote to modernity?

How do we promote surface and beauty without the need to consume that in turn, does this inspire creating?

***How can we create a journey through an architectural space that imbues an atmosphere and space of desire which inspires makers to create meaningful fashion, art, and architecture?***

One of the most pivotal points where humans can be affected by architecture on a physical, mental, and emotional level is by touch. Touch has the capacity to connect us with time, tradition, and culture.

In *The Eyes of the Skin*, Juhani Pallasmaa makes the point that we've lost the anthropocentric tradition in modern times. We aren't measured by our own capacity in human form anymore, and we forget that our physical bodies are how we can even experience anything. Modern culture determines our reality and what common sense is. There are things in modern culture that I don't want to keep up with. We live in the age of misinformation, and this has resulted in a lack of wonder. Grounding and true connection has been lost. Detachment from our emotions and experiences brings forth a chaotic mind and life in this world. In *Attunement*, it's said that "There is a malaise and disenchantment clearly linked with our "advanced" consumer societies." Alberto Perez-Gomez says, "He has forgotten his fragility and his capacity for wonder."

Architecture has the capacity to reveal that life is purposeful. The premise of the word capacity is that we actually cannot expand our capacity while taking part in something. We can only expand this capacity through returning again and again through repetition and iteration. We must conceal and reveal to expand this capacity. We need to rediscover the world through the spaces we are in and in doing so rediscover ourselves.

When architecture has this poetic quality rooted deep in context, it's no longer merely a building. It is part of the physical fabric, a physical phenomenon. Because of this, I know a space can create wonder and inspiration through textures, textiles, and tectonics by binding art and fashion with architecture. A building without intention and meaning lacks a transformational quality. And this is where we decide what is meaningful.

Juhani Pallasmaa presents that for anything to be invigorating and healing, it requires a constant interaction between all senses. What we see, touch already knows. The task at hand, in order to provide this antidote for modern culture, is to create this backdrop for human beings that is life-enhancing and show how the world touches us.

***“Buildings need to be a meaningful backdrop and framework for man’s finite existence.”***

Tadao Ando said it best, which shows the connection between architecture and fashion. “There is tension or opposition between functionality and uselessness.” The significance of architecture is found in this tension.

Through the exploration of texture and tectonics, the feeling and effect of an atmosphere we want to create is achievable.

All in all, touch, along with material and form and the overall atmosphere that this creates, is where the mind can create a moment that shapes us as we shape the fabric of the built environment.



FIGURE 2 - ATMOSPHERIC SPACE

# Project Precedents

## CASE STUDY - WERKRAUM HOUSE / PETER ZUMTHOR

Location: Andelsbuch, Austria

Year: 2012

Werkraum Bregenzwald, located in a small village in Austria, was created to serve as an exhibition hall and meeting place for craftsmen who employ analog methods, such as stonemasons, bricklayers, and carpenters. The building's wooden frame and glass facade provide a stunning backdrop for showcasing the intricate details of these specialized skills. The building provides a versatile space for meetings and public events. The result is a stunning tribute to craftsmanship, a testament to the enduring power of analog methods, and a beacon for the local community and visitors alike.

Architecturally, the simplicity of the design and use of material allows the craftsmanship to become the focal point. The transparency of the glass and the setting within the village allow for the buildings, users, and onlookers to look to each other for inspiration which creates a continual loop of inspiration and understanding. The architecture does not impede on the craft and sets an atmosphere for meaningful creation.



FIGURE 3 - WERKRAUM INTERIOR



FIGURE 4 - EXTERIOR APPROACH



## CASE STUDY – BARCELONA PAVILION / MIES VAN DER ROHE

The Barcelona Pavilion, once called the German Pavilion, presents a metaphor of classic historical roots that bridge into the modern architectural movement.

A unique feature offered by the pavilion is that it was built as a sculpture intended to be deconstructed, which it was, but it was reconstructed on a different site, hence the two names. Thus, the pavilion is rooted in two cultures. When it was the German Pavilion, it wasn't meant to house anything; it was meant more so to be a sculptural element in itself. When it became the Barcelona Pavilion, it was intended to hold the 'Barcelona Chair' by Philip Johnson. The unique materiality presents a stunning backdrop for various product showcasing, such as clothing, like the Louis Vuitton fashion show.

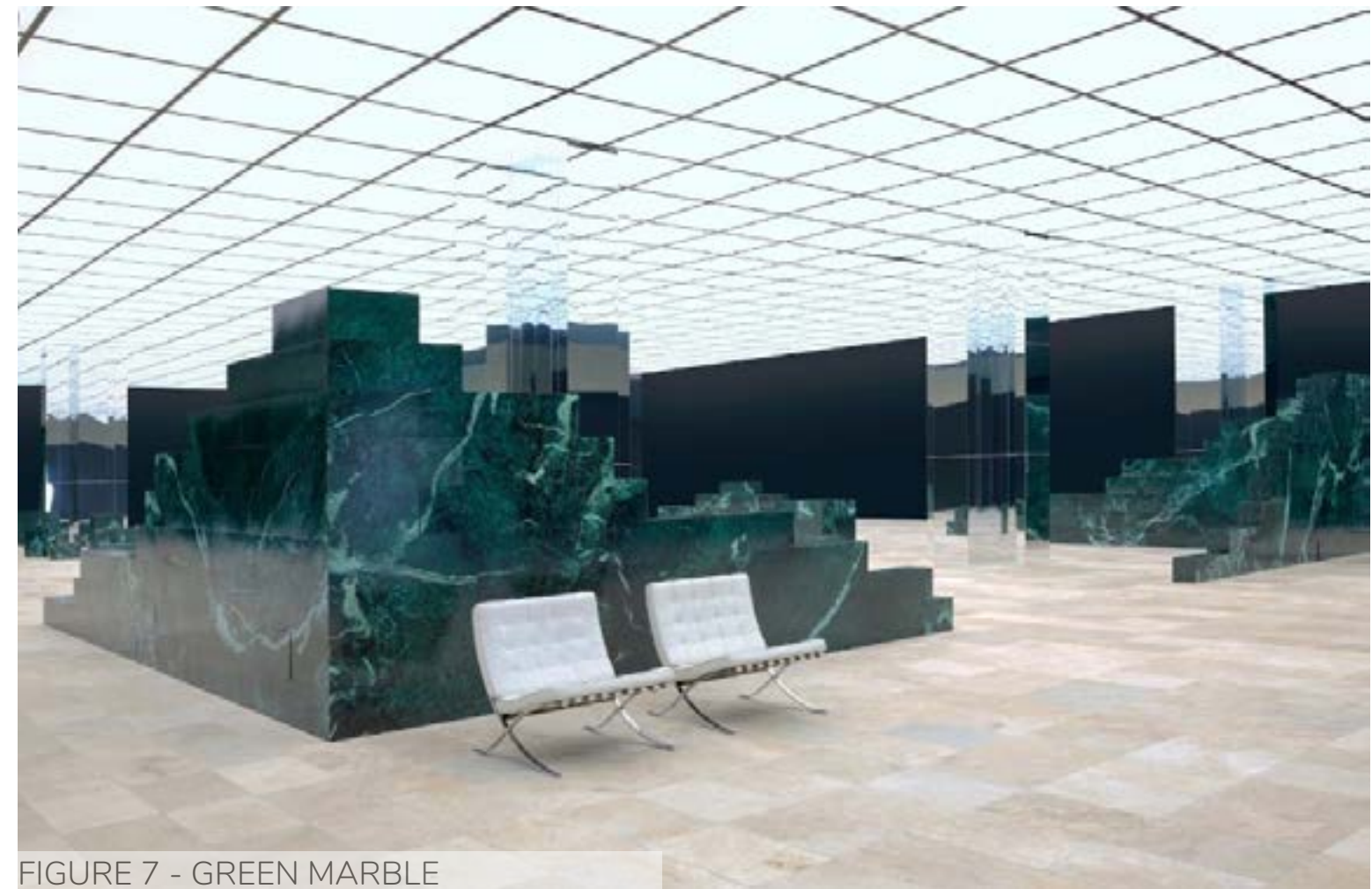


FIGURE 7 - GREEN MARBLE



FIGURE 5 - LOUIS VUITTON



FIGURE 6 - LOUIS VUITTON



FIGURE 8 - BARCELONA CHAIR

## CASE STUDY – PUNTA DELLA DOGANA / TADAO ANDO

Location: Venice, Italy

Year: 2009

Another inspiration that is culturally rooted and brings people together to view art within a beautiful architectural frame is Punta Della Dogana. This iconic contemporary art museum showcases Tadao Ando's blend of minimalist aesthetics and innovative use of light and space. Situated on a triangular site, the building seems to slice through the Grand Canal and the Giudecca Canal with its striking presence. The building was originally a customs house, but the transformation of the structure has preserved its heritage, breathed new life into the site, and blends the old and the new. The exterior of Punta Della Dogana features a captivating combination of restored historical elements and sleek, modern materials. Inside, the museum's spacious galleries and soaring ceilings provide a serene and immersive environment for visitors to engage with each other within diverse range of contemporary artworks.

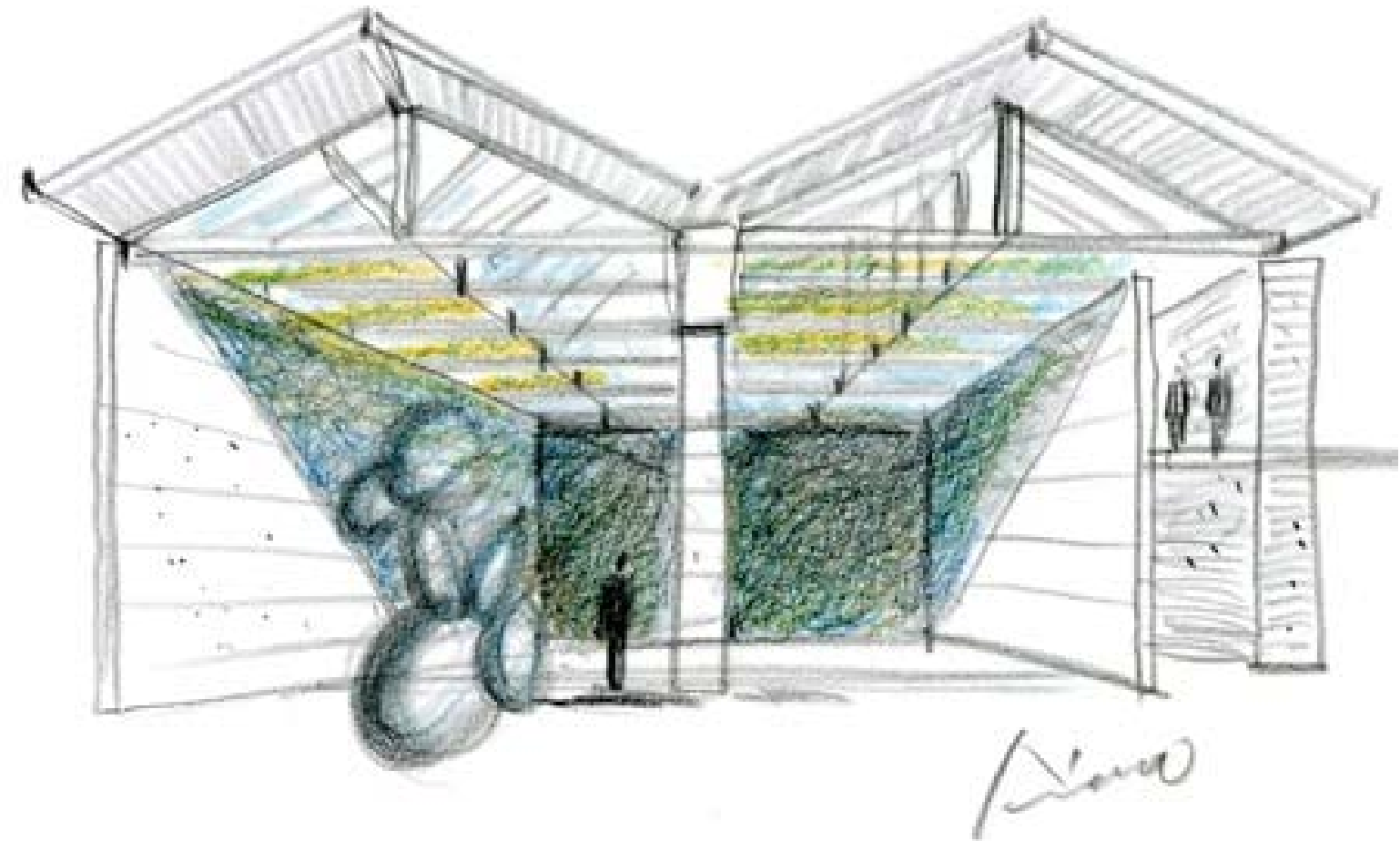


FIGURE 10 - PRELIMINARY SKETCH



FIGURE 9 - AERIAL VIEW



FIGURE 11 - INTERIOR FINISHES

# Project Justification

A seductive space to create art and fashion is needed in modern society to restore wonder, transformational experiences, and the desire to create. In our current culture, grounding, connection, and wonder is lost or lacking. Architecture has the capacity to reveal that life is purposeful. Through this design, users of the space will be able to connect with time, tradition, and culture through the use of touch in materiality, form, and texture.

Through readings from Alberto Perez-Gomez, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Dalibor Vesely, further exploration into the culture and history of these questions and topics will assisted me during my research. I am interested in pursuing the relationships between human experience and textures, tectonics, and textiles in architecture. During readings, discussion, and research, I created a collage-type moodboard of architecture I felt mirrored the topics I am interested in connecting with.

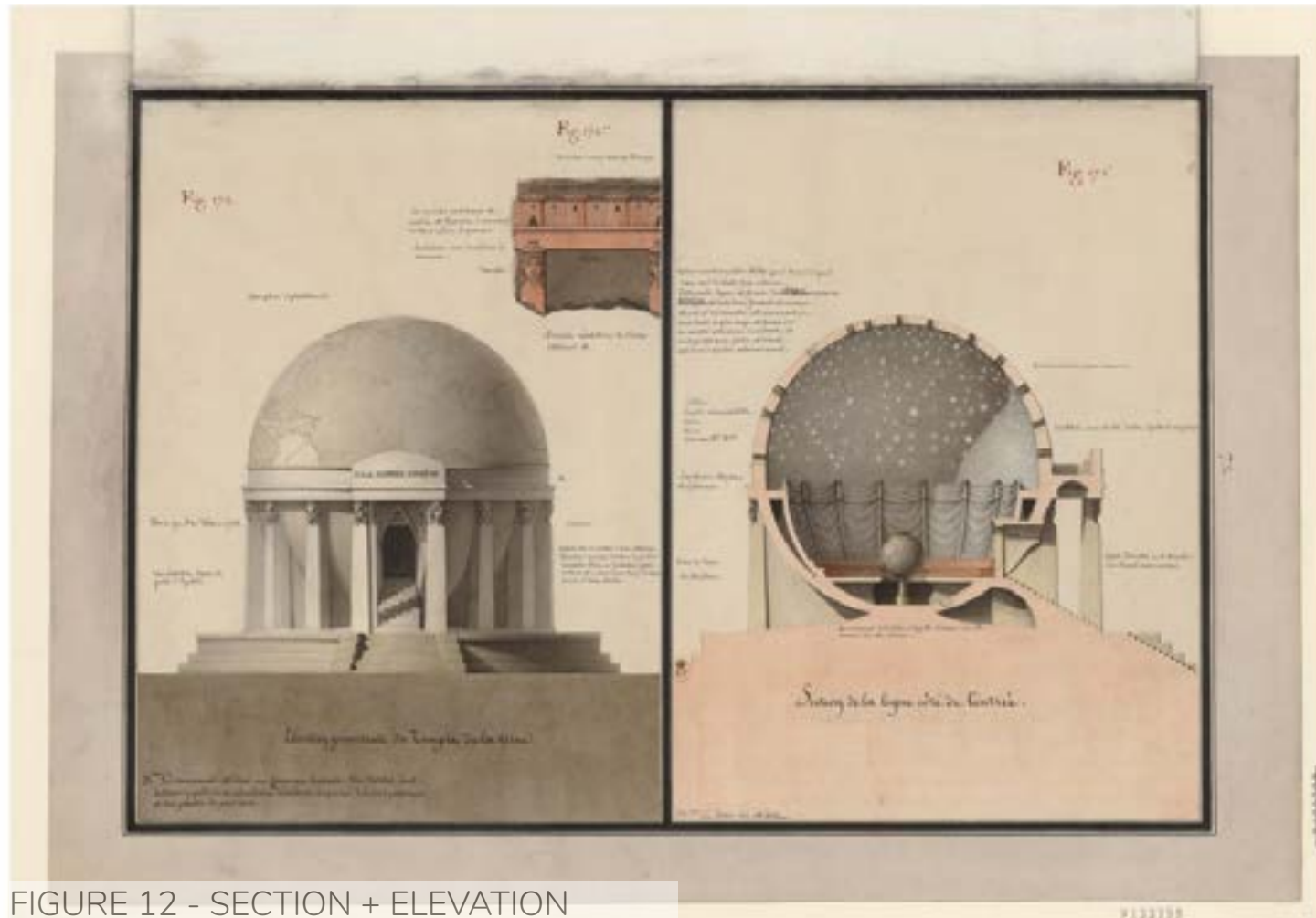


FIGURE 12 - SECTION + ELEVATION

## CASE STUDY – JEAN JACQUES LE QUEUE

Architectural drawings that I looked to for inspiration were from Jean Jacques Le Queue since his designs push the boundaries of imagination and captivate viewers with their artistic and seductive forms. Through his innovative use of materials, shapes, and spatial arrangements, he creates immersive environments that transport occupants to a realm of wonder and awe. By constantly blurring the lines between art and architecture, lasting impressions and the transformative power of design are revealed. His work ignites inspiration and imagination in creative design fields.

# Moodboard

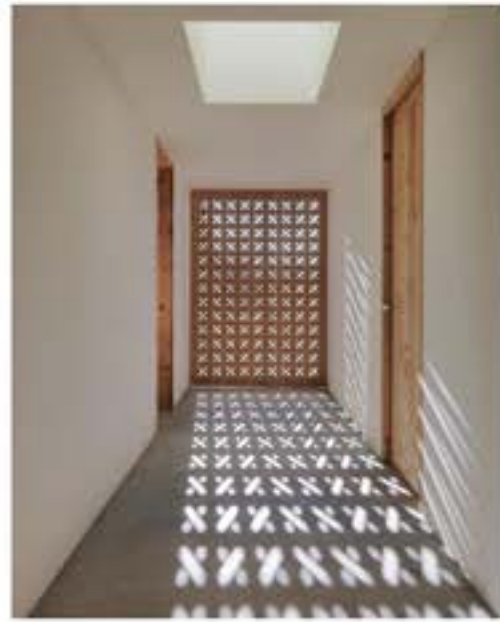
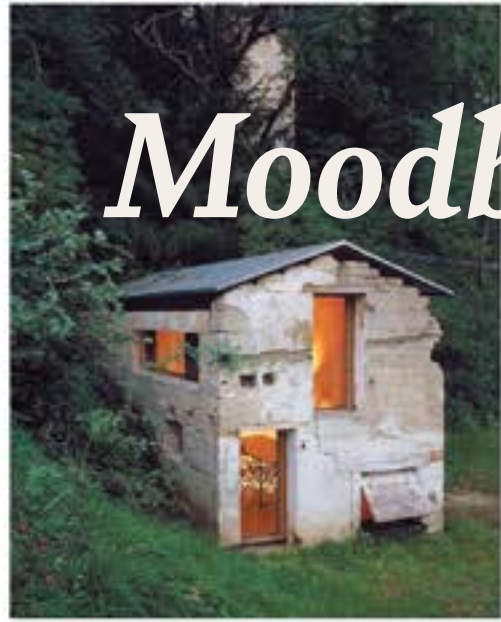
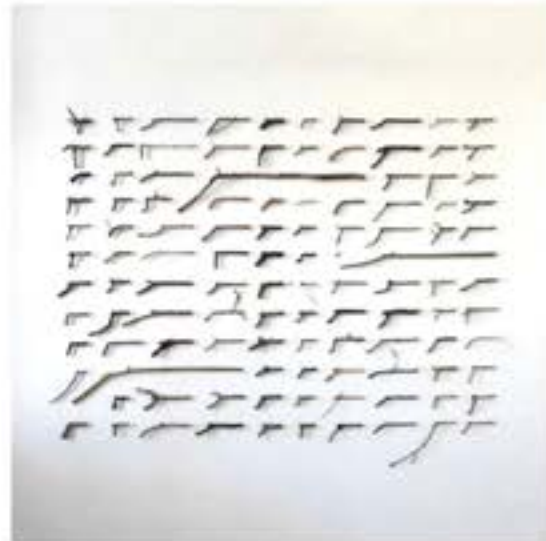
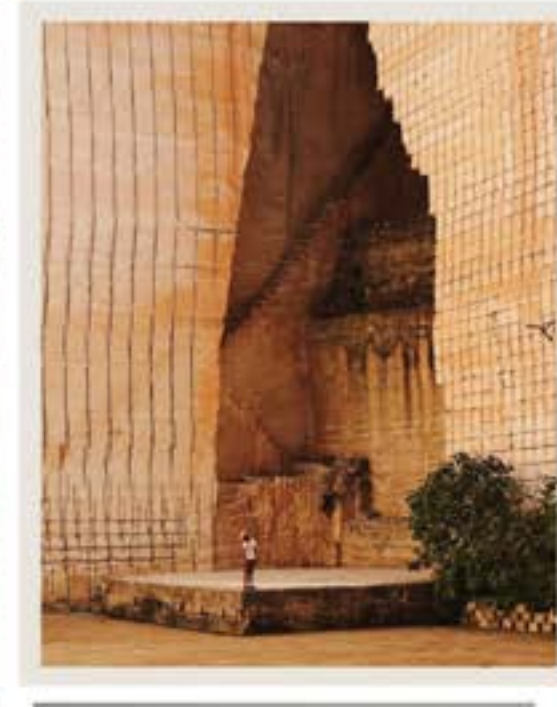
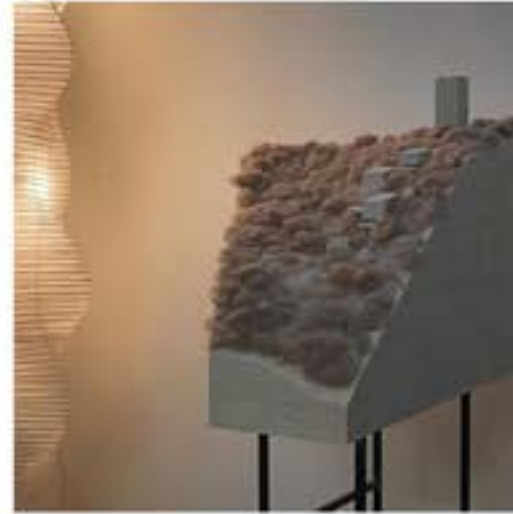
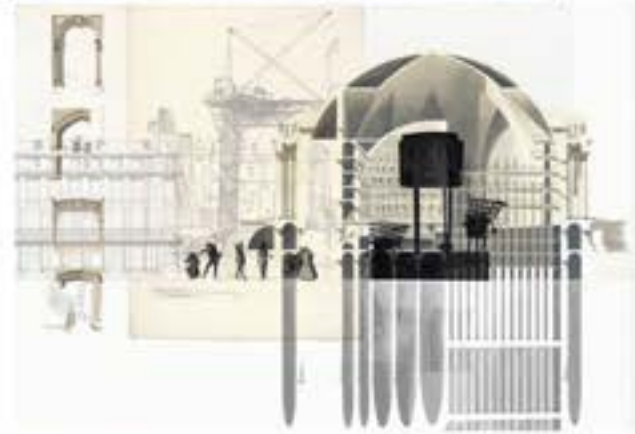


FIGURE 13 - MOODBOARD COLLECTION











# *Goals of the Thesis Project*

## **PHYSICAL GOALS**

Design a space where people can come together for a common purpose which is creating meaningful fashion and art.

Impress the structure upon the landscape and use local materials and context in order to make a culturally and ecologically sustainable design.

## **THEORETICAL GOALS**

Demonstrate how bridging between history, culture, and modern design is important.

Reinforce that for design to be transformative, it needs to employ all senses and have deep intentionality behind it.

Create knowledge and inspiration that reawakens architecture as an art form.

## **SOCIAL GOALS**

Identify how to connect users of the design with time, tradition, and culture.

Identify how architecture, with texture and material, can inspire creation rather than consuming.

## **PERSONAL GOALS**

Further my passion for fashion, art, and architecture and find how this can correlate to my career as an architect.

Enjoy my last year in Fargo with my teachers, colleagues, and friends.

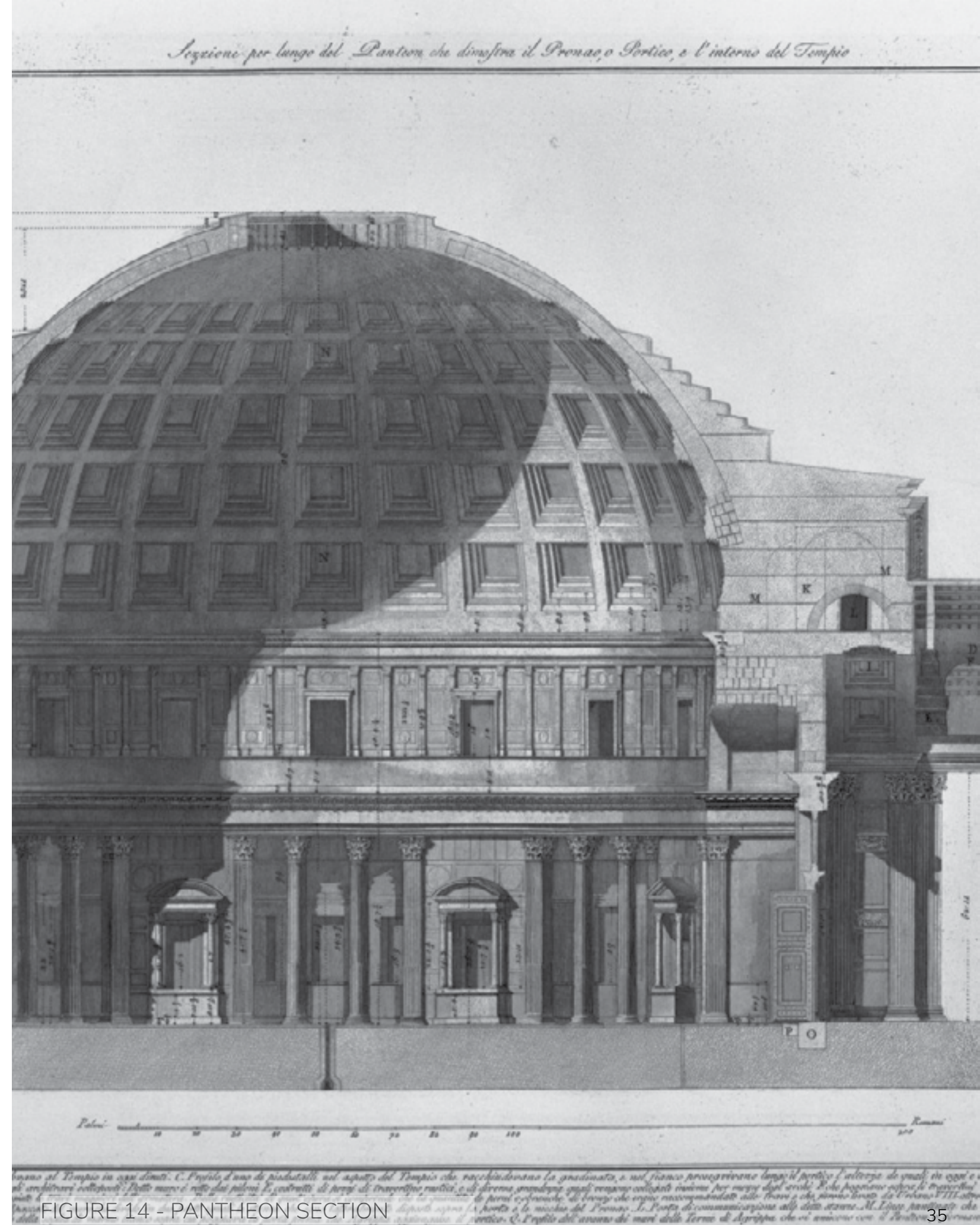
# Rhetoric Analysis

## THE RELEVANCE OF THE BEAUTIFUL - HANS-GEORG GADAMER

In order to get a sense of the relationship of the arts and the role of architecture, I explored the history of this and why “the beautiful” was important then to determine why it is important now. Aesthetics and “the beautiful” encounter issues within architecture regarding the fact that it “serves” no purpose. A fundamental purpose that beautiful nature, as well as, art, fashion and architecture serve is truth.

***“In the beautiful presented in nature and art, we experience this convincing illumination of truth and harmony, which compels the admission: ‘This is true.’”***

Other problems we face today concerning art are the questions of, “is this art?” and, “does this want to be considered art?” We all can agree and recognize that some things are made to be seen, but what remains a question, tied to subjectivity, is whether it is worth seeing. Although these questions and problems exist within and throughout modern art, architecture, and fashion, modern art has still been stimulated and nourished by traditional art even through opposition to one another. There are aspects of traditional art that are fundamental for truly moving and experiential art that should be incorporated into modern art.



Aspects of art, then and now, consist of Play, Symbol, and Festival. Play is defined as:

***“Self-movement that does not pursue any particular end or purpose, the basic character of excess striving to express itself in the living being.”***

It's hard to imagine a world without children or animals playing, and the role of play in art and architecture is equally as important as the childlike view that “play” is typically given. Play is meant to include everyone of all ages, and the older we get our intellect clouds this idea by telling ourselves we need a function. The actual idea of a “play” in the theater was introduced to show that everyone in a play, audience and actors, is a participant.

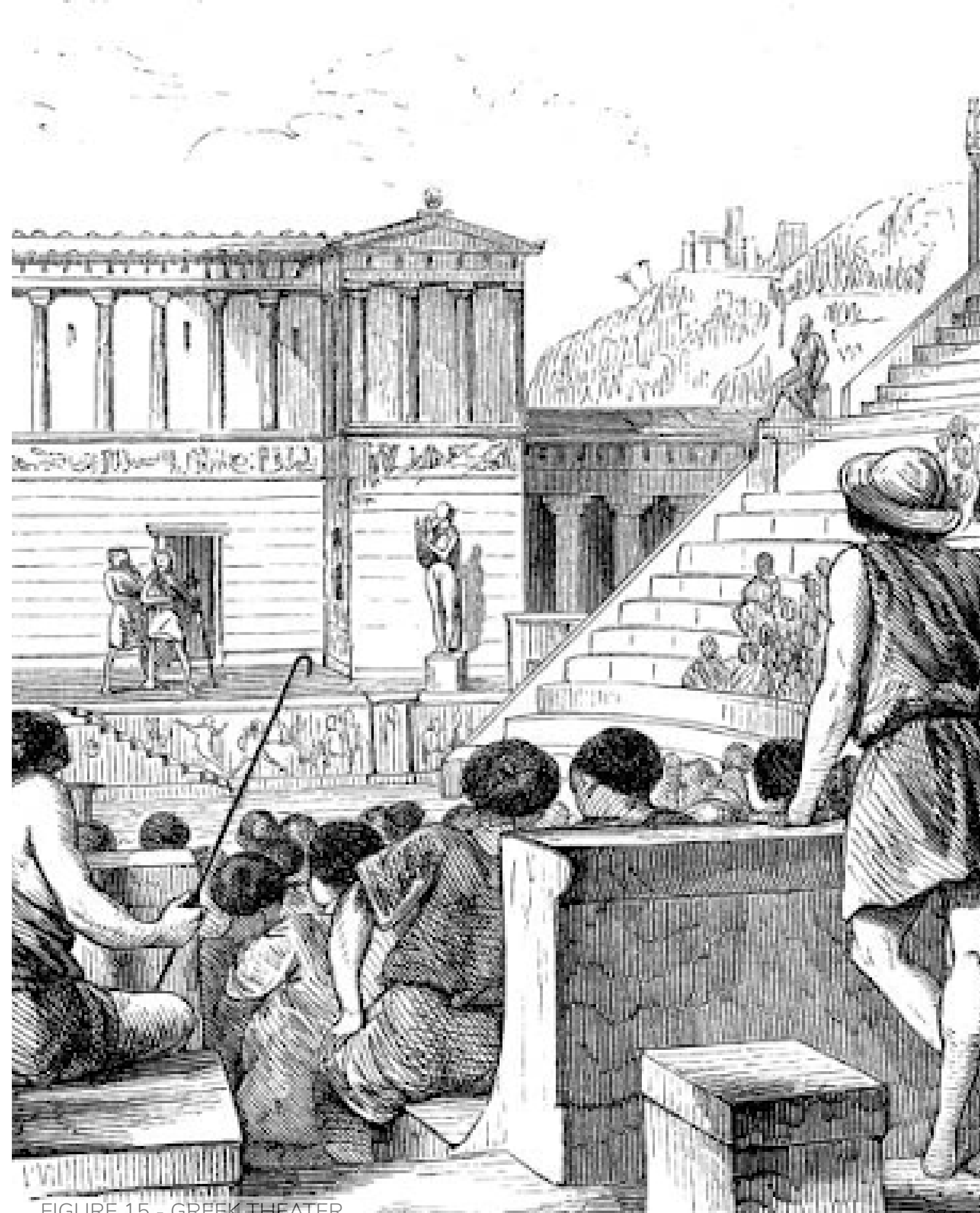


FIGURE 15 - GREEK THEATER

Symbol is defined as a “token of remembrance” in Greek culture. In this culture, a symbol called the “tessera hospitalis” was presented and broken in two from a host to a guest so that at any point of returning and remembrance in the future, this moment and relationship would be recognized. In this case of a symbol, it becomes fragmented, seeks to be made complete, and makes whole our fragmentary life. Every individual is a fragment that seeks to be whole again. This token of remembrance can also be seen as something that helps us recognize what we already know, which can also be what art and architecture means to us.



FIGURE 16 - TESSERA HOSPITALIS

Festival is “an experience of community and represents community in its most perfect form. A festival is meant for everyone.” Art and architecture are meant to create a community meant for everyone. The idea of the festival actually bolsters an impulse of modernity. One of the goals and desires for modern art and architecture is to lessen the distance from the audience, or the “consumers” from the “product.” Interacting and creating within culture create a genuine experience of art and architecture whether it is traditional or modern forms.

***“If we really have had a genuine experience of art, then the world has become both brighter and less burdensome.”***

This idea directly addresses some of the thesis questions from earlier concerning modernity, which can be proven to be dark and burdensome at times. Art and architecture have encountered a shift from being in culture to becoming a specialized venture or science. This, along with other reasons, has to do with the change from the traditional world being more centered around religion and the modern world focusing on science. Truly meaningful experiences within art, fashion, and architecture must be in culture, and this can be supported by the fundamental aspects of Play, Symbol, and Festival.

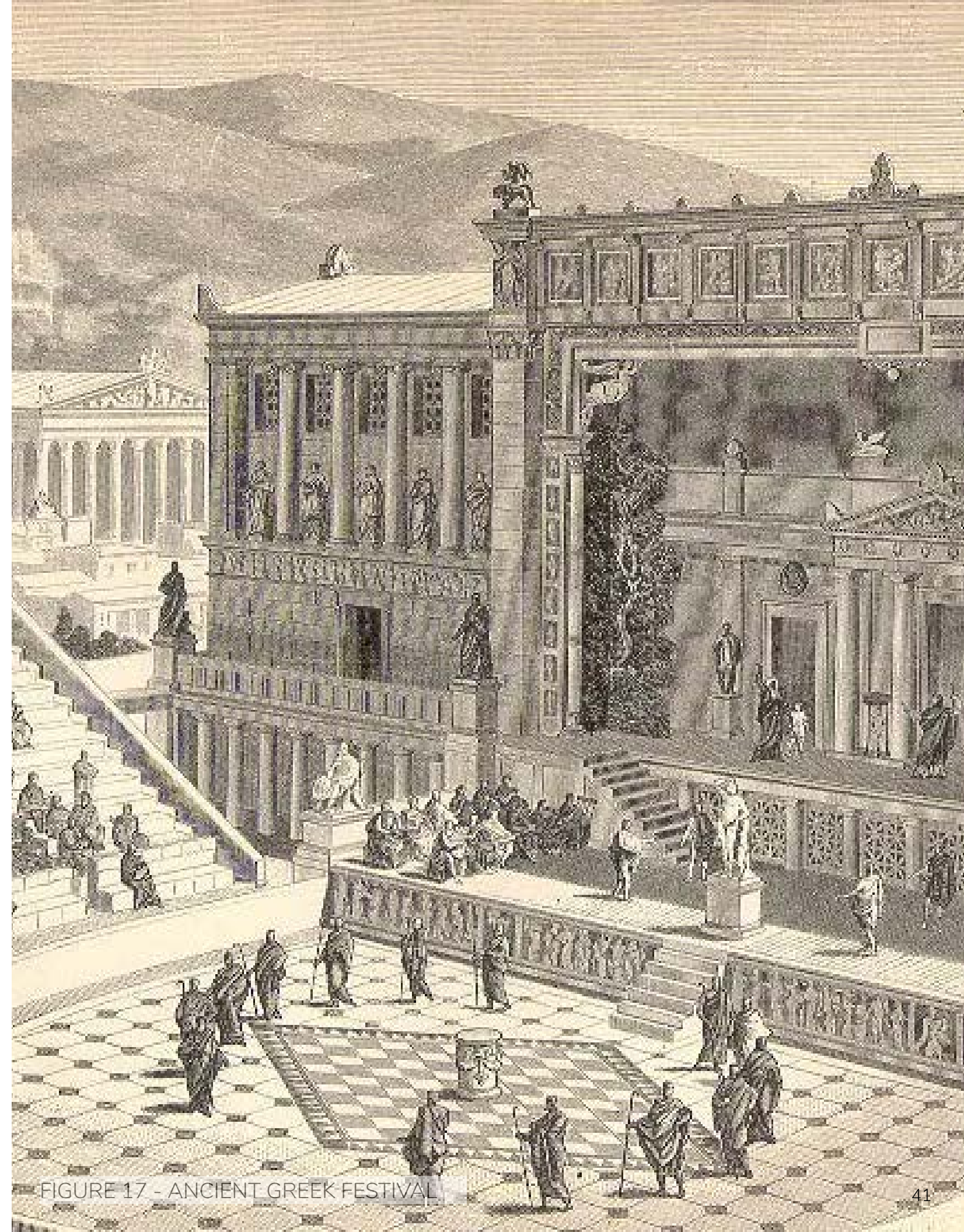


FIGURE 17 - ANCIENT GREEK FESTIVAL

## THE REHABILITATION OF FRAGMENT - ALBERTO PEREZ-GOMEZ

I briefly touched on the role of fragment within symbol in art, but the importance of fragment within art, fashion, and architecture is paramount in authentic art because it requires and often demands participation from viewers. Within the reading “The Rehabilitation of Fragment”, many examples within art and architecture are given to show the importance of the unfinished nature.

***“The fragment of a building, the torso of a sculpture, an object taken out of its context, and an artificial ruin often initiate symbolic meaning and reference more powerfully than does the piece intact in its original setting.”***

The works of rocaille, impressionist painting, cubism, and collage all appear to be unfinished, much like a fragment or ruin. This unfinished nature is intentional and encourages viewer participation because it expresses the want or need to possibly complete the unfinished. Architecture can employ this tactic by using unfinished geometries or materials for participants to “complete.” Vesely shares thought to show the meaningfulness of fragmentation:

***“The gap between our ability to form concepts of totality, wholeness, and infinity and our incapacity to experience them on the level of the finite and sensible...a space where it might be possible to come to terms with the infinite through the experience of the sublime.”***

The use of collage even creates a link between the fragmentation of language and the world. It fills the space inbetween the differing objects shown at hand while combining and recombining fragments. Through architecture, we can create an intellectual storytelling and fragmentation to make a more meaningful experience for those participating within the space.



FIGURE 18 - FRAGMENTED SCULPTURE

## ARCHITECTURE: THE SPACE OF PARTICIPATION - ALBERTO PEREZ-GOMEZ

The ideas of play, festival, and fragmentation show the importance of participation within the arts and architecture. Architecture frames meaningful experiences and connection within community, and the idea of this should be further explored to show the importance of architectural spaces. I touched on it earlier in the presentation that many of the suffering effects of modernity are caused by the transformation of architecture into a science rather than a symbol. Architecture in traditional times was designed to be a backdrop for rituals and stories, and architecture in modern times is designed around circulation and functionality. The secret of architecture is illustrated right here. The reality is that architecture is still a backdrop for public rituals and stories, but it wasn't intended for that. This is where the lack of meaning originates. It becomes lackluster and unremarkable and is likely the cause for feelings of isolation, consumerism, and overstimulation. Over the last two centuries, architects have struggled to create meaningful contributions to modern culture. Alberto Perez-Gomez outlines many arguments for traditional architectural ideas to incorporate today to create meaningful, resonant public spaces. This includes providing spaces that by revealing the limits of certain human actions, enable human freedom. We experience this freedom by interacting with other human beings rather than machines. When we continually interact only with machines, we become isolated, alienated, and lose the sense of purpose for our actions. This is a direct result of modernity that I am striving to provide an architectural antidote for.



FIGURE 19 - PIAZZA DEL CAMPO

A public participatory space created by architecture is “the space of appearance.”

***“It is the site where I find myself and recognize my place through the presence of the Other. Public space is a space of full embodiment, a space of dialogue, gesture, and erotic exchange.”***

In the space while in the presence of others, we are then bound to a shared temporary experience which can create a particular resonance or atmosphere. The resonance can even become cathartic for those experiencing:

***“through their participation in the space and plot of the drama - which is also the space of architecture - their place in the universe and in the civic world.”***

Regarding the earlier proposition of intention behind architecture, these public spaces should be intended to be reclaimed as poetic events. Instead of circulating the site in a car, it is vital to walk and linger in culture that takes place in a clearing made possible by architecture. Through this lingering, we can become open to desire, beauty, and change from the experience. Spaces to linger in do require flexibility and openness in order to invite participation, but the intention for the design must still exist. An example I have included where participants were intended to linger is the Barcelona Pavilion by Mies Van der Rohe. It was intended as a beautiful place to rest, but its openness allowed for more than that. It has housed furniture and fashion shows that show our place in the world through these rituals with the architecture as a backdrop: designers, viewers, models.



FIGURE 20 - CULTURAL FASHION EXCHANGE



**CHORA: THE SPACE OF ARCHITECTURAL REPRESENTATION -  
ALBERTO PEREZ-GOMEZ**

Beyond public spaces, architecture represents participatory human spaces to help humans remember their presence within an architectural space. Architecture reveals the possibility of making or creating something, or poiesis. Intention, thought, and imagination at the roots of architecture are important but can easily become convoluted into theory rather than practice and craftsmanship. What is significant about this is that the architect becomes the narrator of the space that frames the meaningful experience I have mentioned so many times already in this presentation. Architectural representation should include everything that has been talked about already: play, symbol, festival, fragmentation, and participation.

***poiesis -  
the activity in which a person  
brings something into being that  
did not exist before***

***techne -  
making or doing (skill or craft)***

FIGURE 21 - FABRIC FORM CONCRETE



# *Project Emphasis*

While we are constantly immersed in a world driven by efficiency and immediacy, we have collapsed the distance of seduction and desire which has diluted connection to making and the arts. The question arises:

*How can we create a journey through an architectural space that imbues an atmosphere and space of desire which inspires makers to create meaningful fashion, art, and architecture?*

Over time, our society has lost connection to each other and to making: our cellphones that we carry in our back pockets contain precious metals mined in Africa, the clothing we wear daily contains complex tectonics and fabrics constructed overseas in a factory by people we will never meet, and even the furniture we use each day is often made in a mold or by a machine.

What has this resulted in?

*A loss of empathy.*

For everyday objects, art pieces, and for others.

Everything we ever need is available at our fingertips, but making and creating has the capacity to restore our empathy for craft and for the other. But just creating and making for the sake of it is not enough.

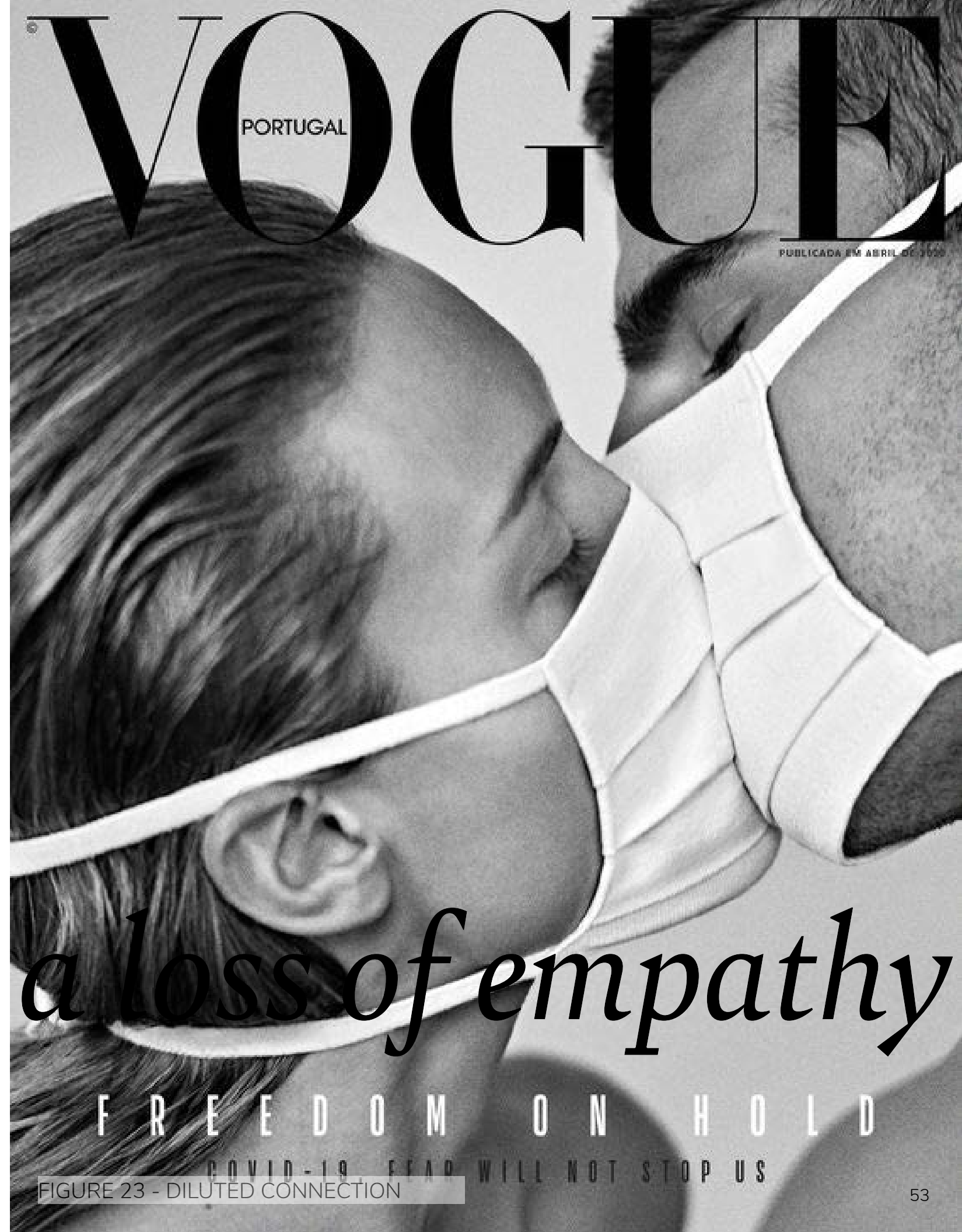


FIGURE 23 - DILUTED CONNECTION

# Myth of Daedalus

Value now is automating and outsourcing your creativity and maker-ship, and in the past, it used to be that value was **in** the creation of making the art, clothing, and architecture. Making has become productive instead of analogical. Through different stories that take place in history like the Myth of Daedalus, we can see the impact of making creating by needs.

*This creates wonder. This creates awe.*

While reading “The Myth of Daedalus: One the Architect’s Metier,” which tells the story of how discovery and making are the basis of architectural ideas, I was presented with the idea of the Labyrinth, which is an extremely helpful example of fragmentation. Through the use of veiling, continual delay, disorientation and reorientation, the labyrinth creates an experiential path that makes you part of the plot. The labyrinth in yogic tradition is seen as where you go to be changed and grow. You never know who you will meet on the way, but you will never come out of the labyrinth the same.

***“So you never know as you move through these labyrinths whether you are pursuing a goal or running from yourself, whether you are the hunter or his prey.”***

Through the use of the aspects of a labyrinth, an architectural design can become meaningful and authentic even in the scope of our modern culture today.



FIGURE 24 - MINOTAUR'S LABYRINTH



FIGURE 25 - ICARUS FLIES TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN

# *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*

HYPNEROTOMACHIA POLIPHILI, VBI HV  
MANA OMNIA NON NISISOMNIUM  
ESSE DOCET .ATQVE OBITER  
PLVRIMA SCITV SANE  
QVAM DIGNA COM  
MEMORAT.

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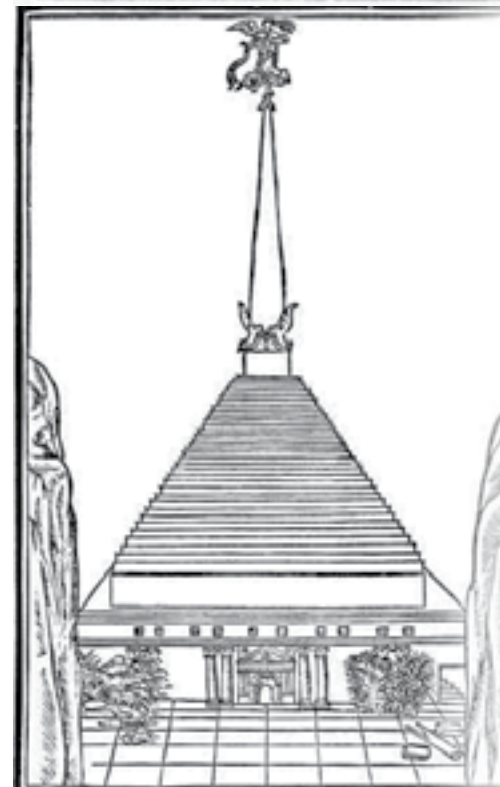
CAVTVM EST, NE QVIS IN DOMINIO  
ILL. S. V. IMPVNE HVNCLI  
BRVM QVEAT  
IMPRIME  
RE.

FIGURE 26 - TITLE PAGE

A story that happens to take place in Italy that was a direct inspiration to me is Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, which translates to Poliphilo's "Strife of Love in a Dream." Although often overlooked, it is an influential architectural text in which the reader can encounter the experience of ancient architecture along with the space of human desire.



FIGURE 27 - DARK FOREST



*"A pyramid and obelisks; the great ruins of classical buildings; the precise measurement and characteristics of columns, their capitals, bases, entablatures with their diverse architraves, friezes and cornices, and their respective moldings and ornaments; a great horse representing the impetuous force of destiny; a magnificent elephant that contains the tombs of a solar king and a lunar queen, representing sulfur and mercury, the masculine and feminine principles of alchemical work; a hollow, half-buried colossus where we find the cures of different ailments associated with bodily organs; and a triumphal gateway with its harmonic measurements and rich ornamentation, alluding to the temperance of good and bad fortune."*

FIGURE 28 - PROPITIOUS DESTINY

The main character, Poliphilo, embarks upon a journey in his dreams to pursue an unrequited love for Polia. In the beginning of Poliphilo's dream, he awakens to the realization that he is lost in a dark forest. In this forest, he runs from dragons, maidens, and wolves in the midst of architectural forms. He awakens again; a dream within a dream where he continues on his journey, directed by nymphs this time.

*“A pyramid and obelisks; the great ruins of classical buildings; the precise measurement and characteristics of columns, their capitals, bases, entablatures with their diverse architraves, friezes and cornices, and their respective moldings and ornaments; a great horse representing the impetuous force of destiny; a magnificent elephant that contains the tombs of a solar king and a lunar queen, representing sulfur and mercury, the masculine and feminine principles of alchemical work; a hollow, half-buried colossus where we find the cures of different ailments associated with bodily organs; and a triumphal gateway with its harmonic measurements and rich ornamentation, alluding to the temperance of good and bad fortune.”*

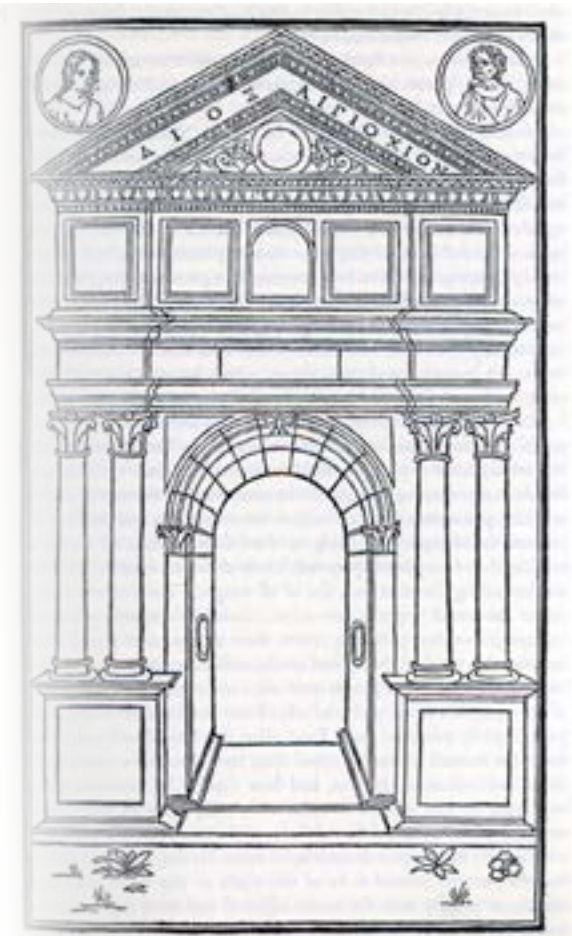


FIGURE 29 - CLASSICAL BUILDING FORM

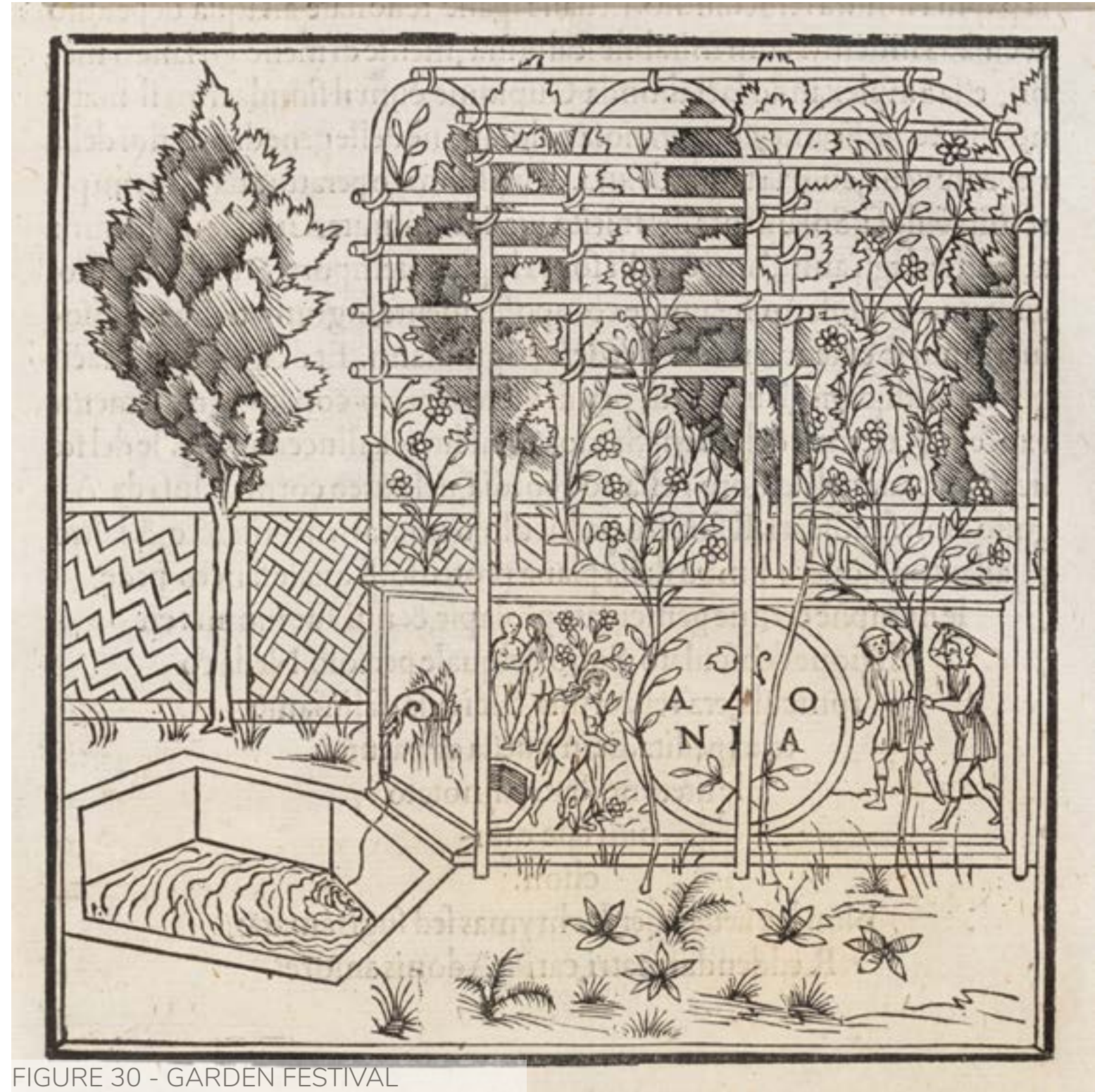


FIGURE 30 - GARDEN FESTIVAL

Ultimately, he discovers his love, Polia, and as he is about to take her in his arms, she vanishes, and Poliphilo wakes up.

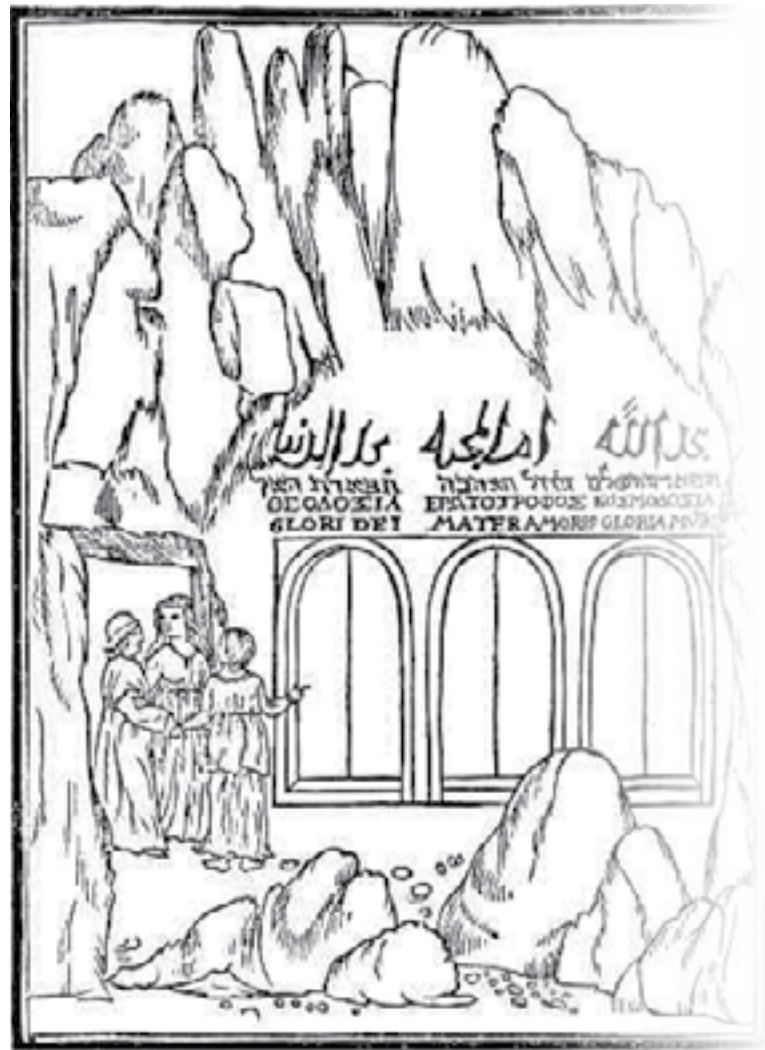


FIGURE 31 - THE LIFE OF LOVE

“A pyramid and obelisks; the great ruins of classical buildings; the precise measurement and characteristics of columns, their capitals, bases, entablatures with their diverse architraves, friezes and cornices, and their respective moldings and ornaments; a great horse representing the impetuous force of destiny; a magnificent elephant that contains the tombs of a solar king and a lunar queen, representing sulfur and mercury, the masculine and feminine principles of alchemical work; a hollow, half-buried colossus where we find the cures of different ailments associated with bodily organs; and a triumphal gateway with its harmonic measurements and rich ornamentation, alluding to the temperance of good and bad fortune.”

# space of desire

Although, he does not have his love. He has something perhaps better. A journey through space, time, ornate detail, participation in rituals, and longing for his love that drove his quest ever on. A memory. An experience.

## ***The space of desire is opened.***

Whatever we are pursuing takes place in an ever changing backdrop of texture, textiles, and tectonics that we call architecture. Journeys through this backdrop, whether they are in dreams or waking reality, can inspire meaningful and memorable cadence and creation that restores empathy and connects to stories by maintaining an interpretive, participatory distance for those who encounter them.



FIGURE 32 - A DREAM IN A DREAM



# The Large Glass

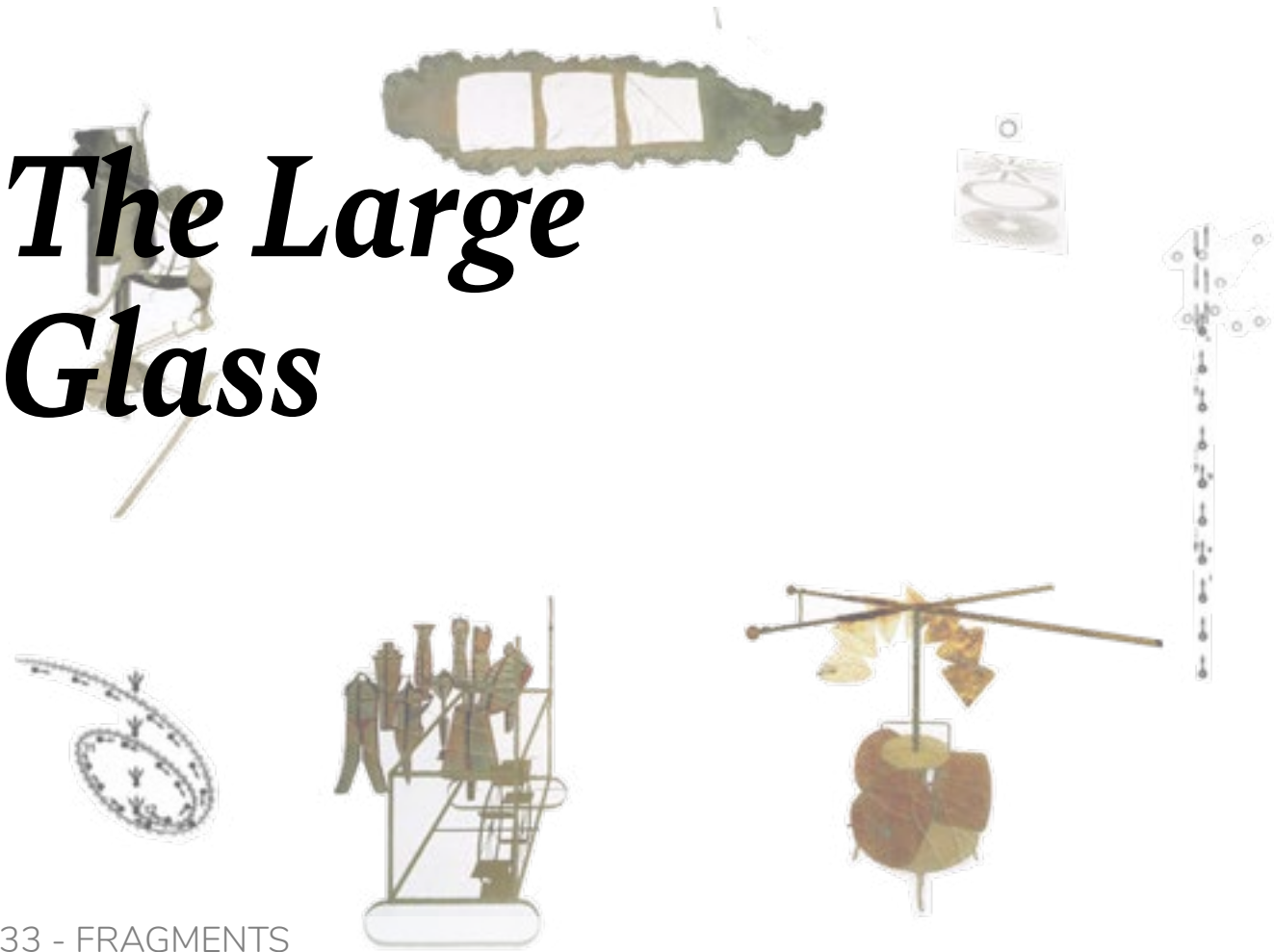


FIGURE 33 - FRAGMENTS

The Large Glass by Marcel Duchamp is a challenging work of 20th century art that ties together architectural fragments, desire, poetic distance, and the art of making which directly inspires my proposed design. The art depicts the erotic encounter between the “bride” on the top half and her bachelors on the bottom half. The entire image was created by chance procedures, arduous craftsmanship, and perspectival studies. The art piece proves to be architectural with the fragments becoming the plans and sections for desire.

***“Duchamp was not as much interested in ‘built’ architecture as he was in the architecture of desire, re-constructing the imagination through drawing and testing the boundaries between reality and its aesthetic and philosophical possibilities”***

This work challenges the retinal - it is not about what it looks like - it becomes about the meaning behind it. The cubistic space shaped by philosophical speculation and cultural diversity inspires the entire design as a reconciliation between historic and modern realities.

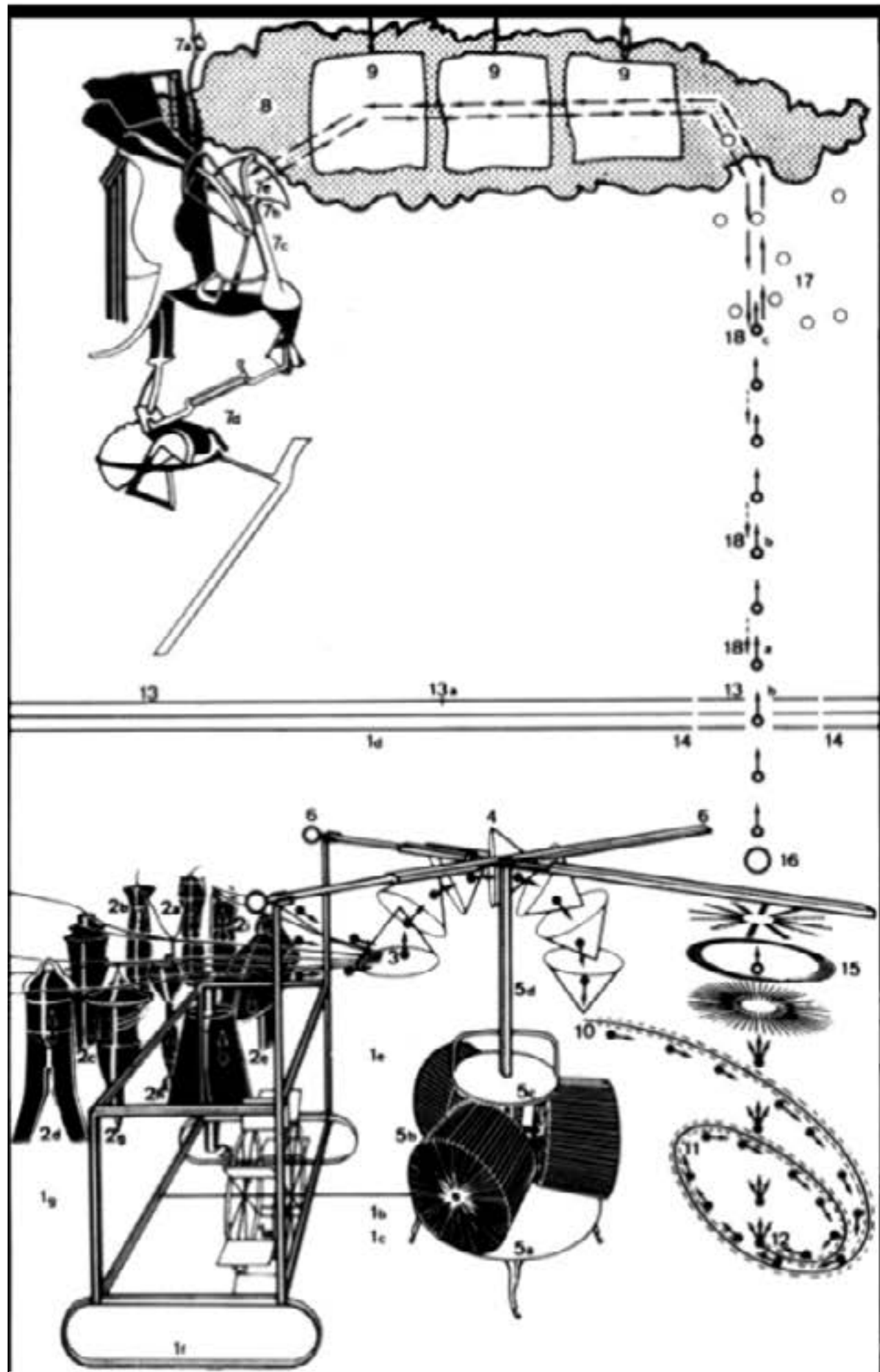
In Octavio Paz’s book, Marcel Duchamp’s Appearances Stripped Bare, he gives a comprehensive and poetic study of The Large Glass. He says

***“...visual representation is subordinated to a story...except that anecdote and representation have undergone a radical transposition, instead of things and the sensorial consequences of our perception of them, the painting presents us with measurements of things, the relationships between them, and the symbols of these relationships. A world a l’infinif.”***

The relationships and reciprocal nature give rise to infinite interpretations and experiences based on individual perception and encounter.



FIGURE 34 - ARCHITECTURE OF DESIRE



- Key to the *Large Glass*  
(including elements not executed):
- 1 Chariot or Sleigh
    - (a) Water-mill wheel
    - (b) Pinion
    - (c) Trap-door to basement
    - (d) Pulley
    - (e) Revolution of the bottle of Bénédictine
    - (f) Runners
    - (g) Sandow
  - 2 Nine Malic Moulds/Cemetery of Uniforms and Liveries
    - (a) Priest
    - (b) Delivery boy
    - (c) Gendarme
    - (d) Cavalryman
    - (e) Policeman
    - (f) Undertaker
    - (g) Servant/Flunky
    - (h) Busboy/Waiter's assistant
    - (i) Station-master
  - 3 Capillary Tubes
  - 4 Sieves or Parasols
  - 5 Chocolate Grinder
    - (a) Louis XV chassis
    - (b) Rollers
    - (c) Necktie
    - (d) Bayonet
  - 6 Scissors
  - 7 The Bride/*Pendu femelle*
    - (a) Suspension ring
    - (b) Mortice joint
    - (c) Stem
    - (d) Wasp
  - 8 Milky Way
  - 9 Draught Pistons
  - 10 Region of Butterfly Pump
  - 11 Toboggan or Planes/Slopes of flow
  - 12 Crashes or Splashes
  - 13 Horizon/Bride's garment
    - (a) Vanishing point of perspective
    - (b) Region of 'Wilson-Lincoln' effect
  - 14 Boxing Match
  - 15 Oculist Witnesses
  - 16 Magnifying glass
  - 17 Nine Shots
  - 18 Handler of Gravity
    - (a) Trivet
    - (b) Rod
    - (c) Weight
- path of Illuminating Gas  
 → Bride's instructions

After Jean Suquet, *Miroir de la Mariée* (Flammarion).



66 FIGURE 35 - BRIDE + BACHELORS

# Diana's Bath

A story that Paz brings in is the myth of Diana and Actaeon at Diana's bath. Actaeon spots Diana during her bath and while she is embarrassed, she enjoys being watched, and Actaeon enjoys watching. Although Diana punishes Actaeon, her multifarious tendencies match the bride from The Large Glass.

*"...the ambiguous nature of the Bride's modesty, a veil that uncovers her as it hides her, prohibition tinged with provocation. Warm, not cold modesty, and with a 'touch of malice.'"*

The exchange, like the bride and the bachelors, makes the other aware of their own presence by seeing and being seen.



seeing

being seen

FIGURE 36 - ACTAEON PUNISHED

# Janus Head

In another ancient Roman myth, the Janus Head represented the god of doorways, transitions, and duality. The two faces watch you come and watch you leave and represent seeing and being seen. The duality of the bride and bachelors is present within this myth, as well.



FIGURE 37 - JANUS LOOKS TO VENICE

# Watermark

Another source of inspiration came from *Watermark*, a meditation by Joseph Brodsky on the city of Venice, Italy which he considers one of the most beautiful and haunting cities. This book is about the power of place and how a particular location can shape our perceptions and experiences. His writings are often deeply evocative, capturing the vivid detail of Venice. For example:

***“The gondola’s gliding too was absolutely noiseless. In fact, there was something distinctly erotic in the noiseless and traceless passage of its lithe body upon the water - much like sliding your palm down the smooth skin of your beloved. Erotic, because there were no consequences, because the skin was infinite and almost immobile, because the caress was abstract. With us inside, the gondola was perhaps slightly heavy, and the water momentarily yielded underneath, only to close the gap the very next second. Also, powered by a man and a woman, the gondola wasn’t even masculine. In fact, it was eroticism not of genders but of elements, a perfect match of their equally lacquered surfaces.”***

The language throughout the book captures the unique and powerful character of Venice, drawing readers into his own seduction by the city’s beauty and history.

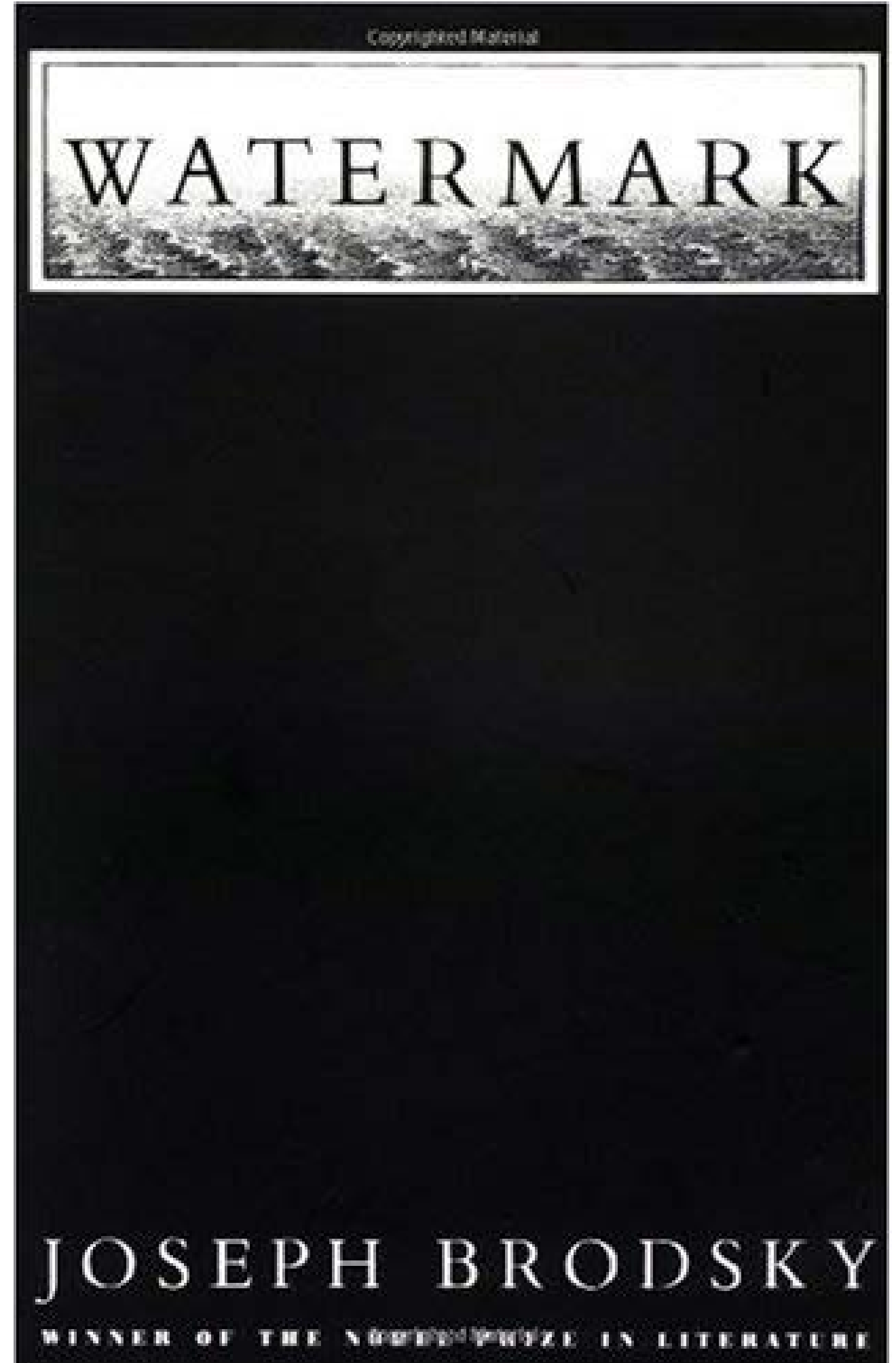


FIGURE 38 - A JOURNEY THROUGH VENICE

# Artefact

During my research, I created an artefact that explored materiality, journey, dreams, and the human body layered with etchings from Giovanni Battista Piranesi's atmospheric work titled "Carceri d'invenzione." These etchings distort the vision of an epic, labyrinthine architectural space that takes the viewer on a surreal journey through light and shadow. I achieved this by constructing an architectural frame using wood fastened with castle joints and dowels that framed a mannequin. Then, I styled a dress on the mannequin and draped organza fabric that refracted light and texture on the mannequin, frame, and surroundings. The end result was ethereal and mesmerizing and was a successful combination of art, fashion, and architectural journeys. The caress and tension between the dreamlike material and architectural movement combined my inspirations and moved me to create architecture that does the same.



FIGURE 39 - THESIS ARTEFACT

In stories from the past surrounding making, we see that value used to be in the creation of making art, clothing, and architecture because what was made was created by needs and deeply rooted in culture. I cannot restore what once was, but as a designer, I can open up an atmospheric space of interest and desire to journey throughout.

Venice, Italy has a rich history of stories around making art, architecture, and fashion. The projection on the dress of my artefact is a walkthrough of engravings of a journey through architecture (by Gregoire Dupond). The engravings are from the point of view of Giovanni Piranesi, an architect and artist who was enraptured and inspired by his journey through architecture. Poliphilo's "Strife of Love in a Dream" is another story that takes place in Venice. The main character seeks his love through a series of architectural spaces which is the backdrop for these meaningful, dreamlike, ethereal experiences.

*artefact video*

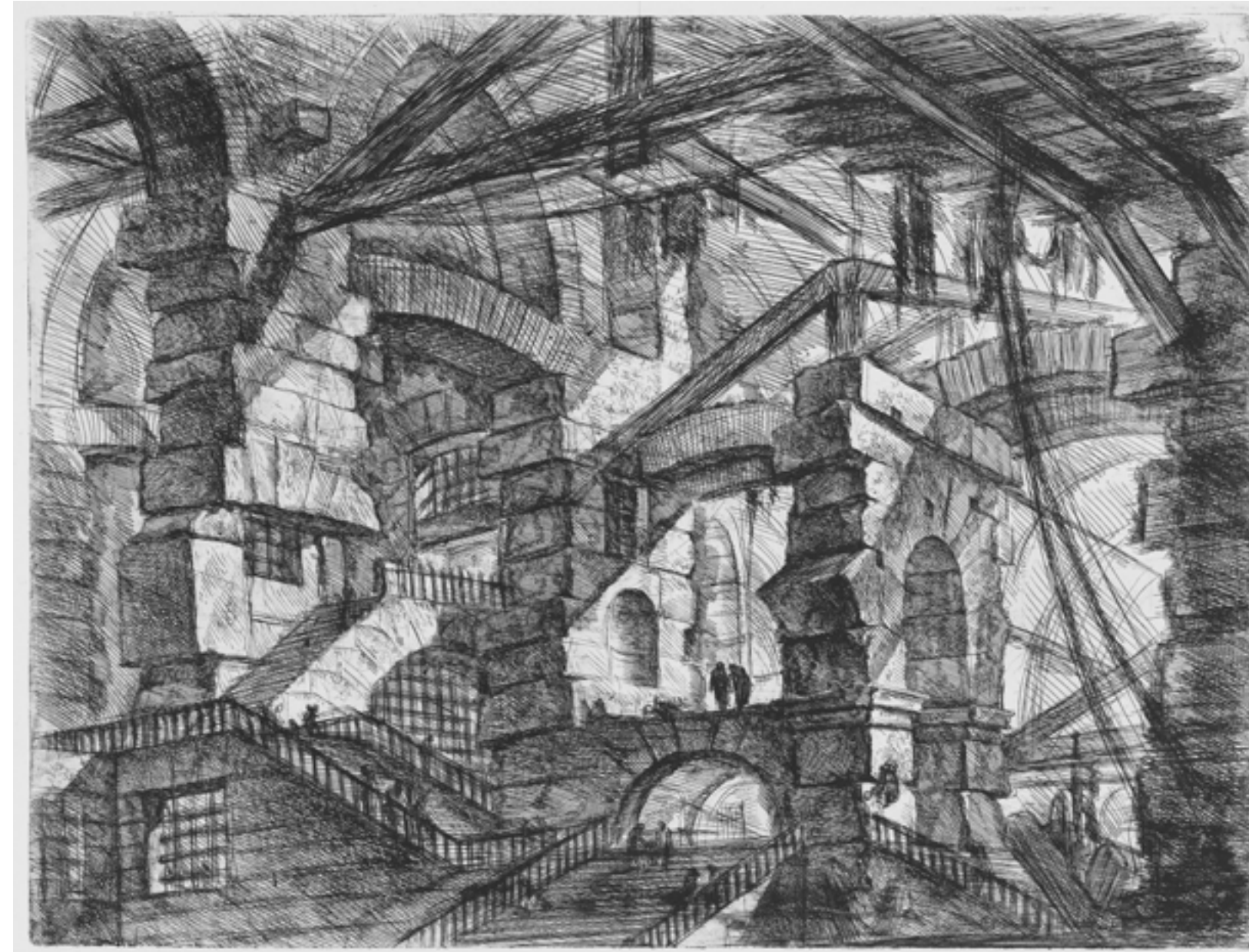


FIGURE 40 - PIRANESI ETCHINGS

# Site Context

## **Considerations:**

In the United States where people are suffering the effects of modern culture.

Where art, fashion, and architecture are celebrated.

Urban environment so public interaction is encouraged.

## **Site Location:**

1010 Abbott Kinney Boulevard  
Venice, California 90291

## **Site Information:**

Current Use - Elementary School  
Size - 400,000 sq. ft.

FIGURE 41 - VENICE, CALIFORNIA



FIGURE 42 - SITE CONDITIONS



Venice, California was originally designed to replicate the charm and allure of Venice, Italy. Its aim was to create a vibrant arts and fashion scene in the United States, but this vision was unfortunately lost amidst the rise of consumerism. Abbot Kinney Boulevard, a mile-long stretch of road in southern Venice, Los Angeles, is now lined with numerous shops, restaurants, and galleries. However, I believe that this location has the potential to serve as a hub for creativity, rather than solely for commercialism, in contrast to its current state.

Abbot Kinney, the town's founder, initially called it the "Venice of America" and envisioned it as a cultural hotspot reminiscent of Venice, Italy. This included canals, gondolas, and Venetian Renaissance-style architecture.

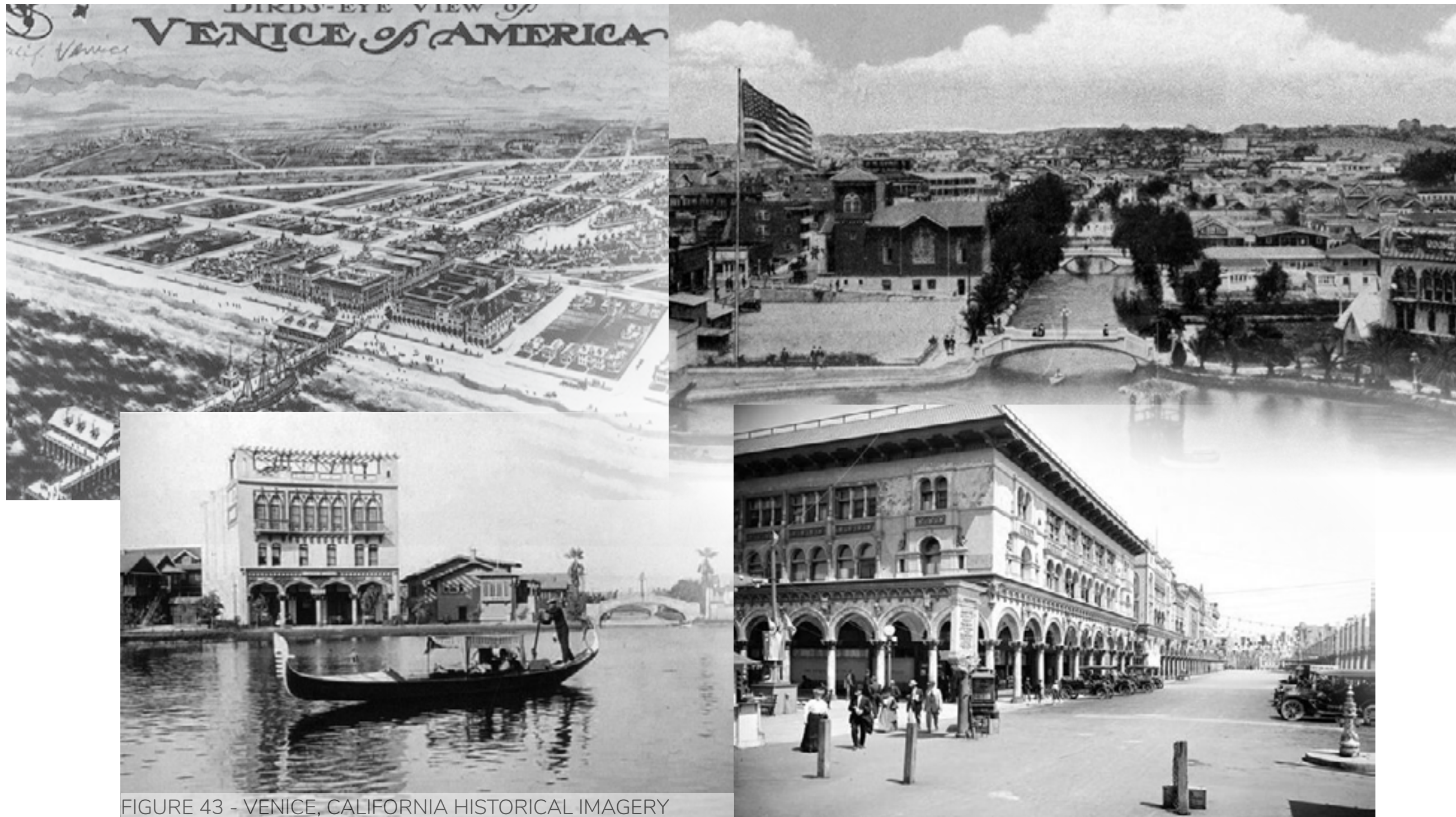


FIGURE 43 - VENICE, CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL IMAGERY

The site currently houses an elementary school, and the entire perimeter is surrounded by a chain link fence which hardly encourages a public participatory space. Iconic Venice, California has the opportunity to be met with a transformative place at the end of a mile-long stretch of shops just two blocks from Venice Beach. To restore the intended focus on art and culture, I aim to draw inspiration from Venice, Italy and revitalize this area as a center for creativity.



FIGURE 45 - VIEW OF SITE



FIGURE 44 - VIEW FROM SITE



FIGURE 46 - VIEW OF SITE

# Project Typology

From the paradigmatic influences mentioned, this thesis proposes a campus of maker spaces and galleries for fashion and art, or bottega, that connects users to stories, culture, and each other while on a journey through the buildings and site.

Accessible to participate from within and without the building structure.

A studio where artisans of differing levels of skill learn and work together to make and bring forth art.

A backdrop to present what has been made that encourages participation and discussion.

botegga (noun): Italian, artist's studio, shop, from Latin apotheca warehouse

# *Major Project Elements*

## ***Public Viewing Spaces***

Exterior Public Viewing Space: Storefronts  
Primary Exhibition Space  
Secondary Exhibition Space  
Tertiary Exhibition Space  
Outdoor Pavilion Extension Space

## ***Facilities for Campus Use***

Library  
Studio Spaces  
Workshop Spaces  
Lounge Space  
Classrooms  
Storage  
Parking  
Restrooms

# *Audience Description*

The space is created for makers of any kind: architects, fashion designers, visualizers, photographers, artists, or anyone on the hunt for inspiration. This inspiration would be driven by infinite interactions within and throughout the architecture.

Artisans looking to teach their craft.

Artisans looking to learn and expand upon their craft.

Artisans looking to collaborate with other disciplines to refine their craft.

Artisans looking to exhibit their craft.

Viewers of the craft.

# Design

Situated at the end of Abbot Kinney Boulevard, the triangular block becomes the ideal site to highlight the dichotomy between consumerism and the concept of the bottega, as it marks the intersection between conventional retail spaces and the new purpose of the site of creative experiences in art and fashion. This new purpose for the site couples with the original intent and character of Venice, Italy.



FIGURE 48 - SITE AXONOMETRIC

An art and fashion hub takes shape within a traditional building form, carefully designed to align with the surrounding street lines.

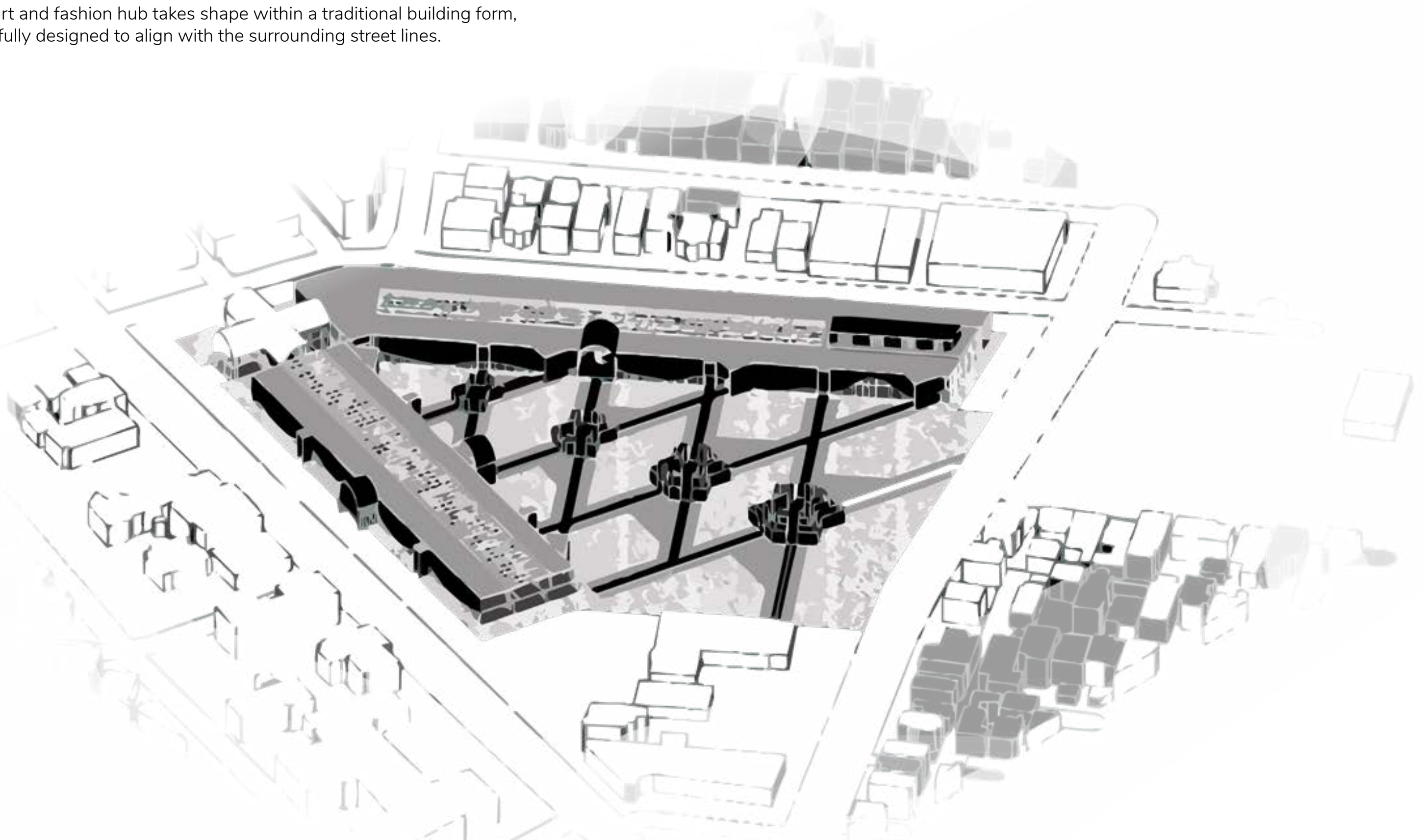


FIGURE 49 - NEXUS OF ART + FASHION

The art studios and galleries are located along Abbot Kinney Boulevard as space of desire is opened from the outside through storefronts. Seeing others participate in the rituals of making and being seen participating creates the duality once again.

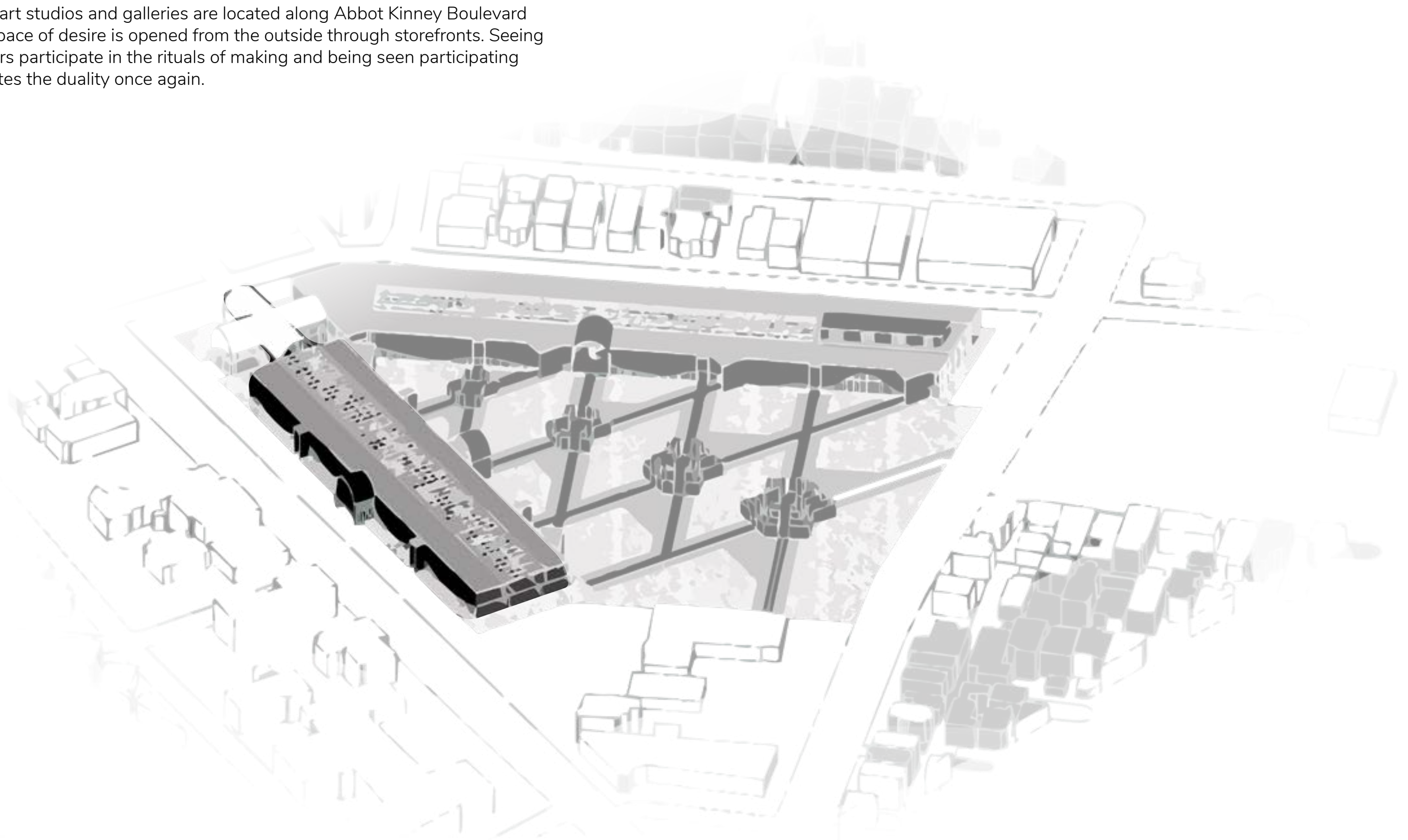


FIGURE 50 - ART SIDE

The fashion maker spaces and gallery reside in the second building.

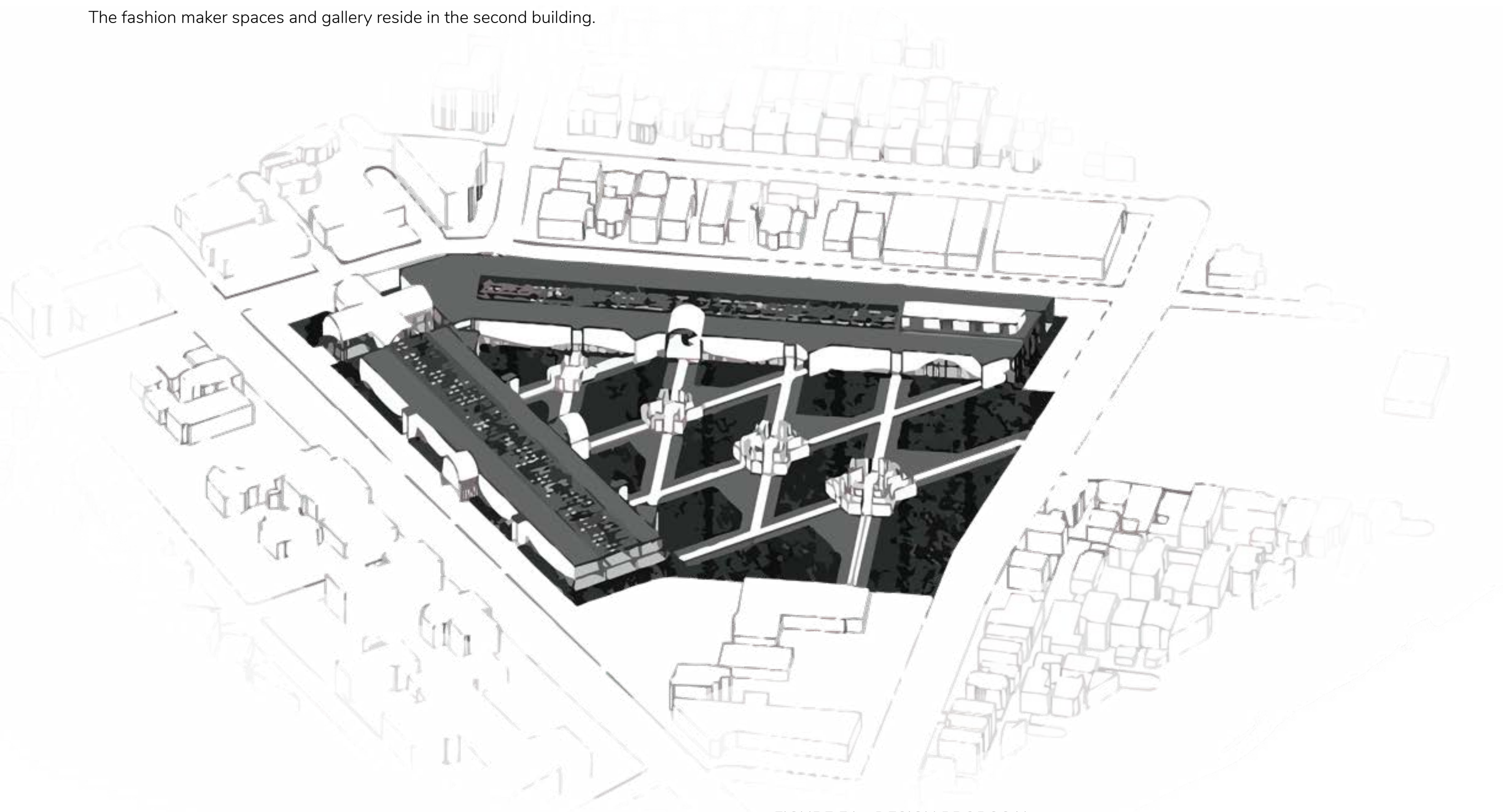


FIGURE 51 - DESIGN PROPOSAL



The fashion side is contained on a more accessible yet private side of the site, encouraging the public to become part of the exchange. Dwelling units exist on the upper levels and encourage those who stay to watch everything on the site from a unique vantage point.

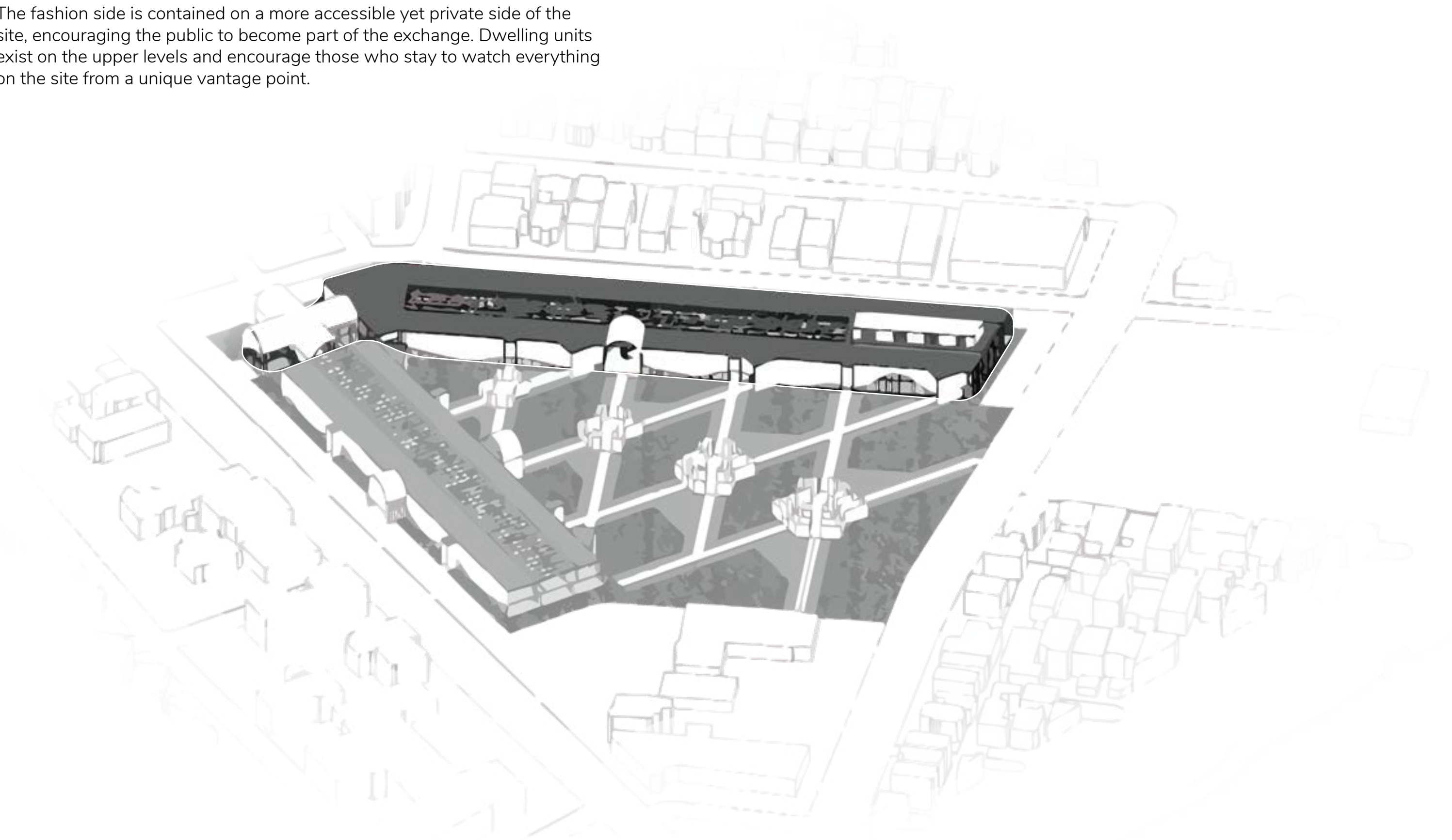


FIGURE 52 - FASHION SIDE

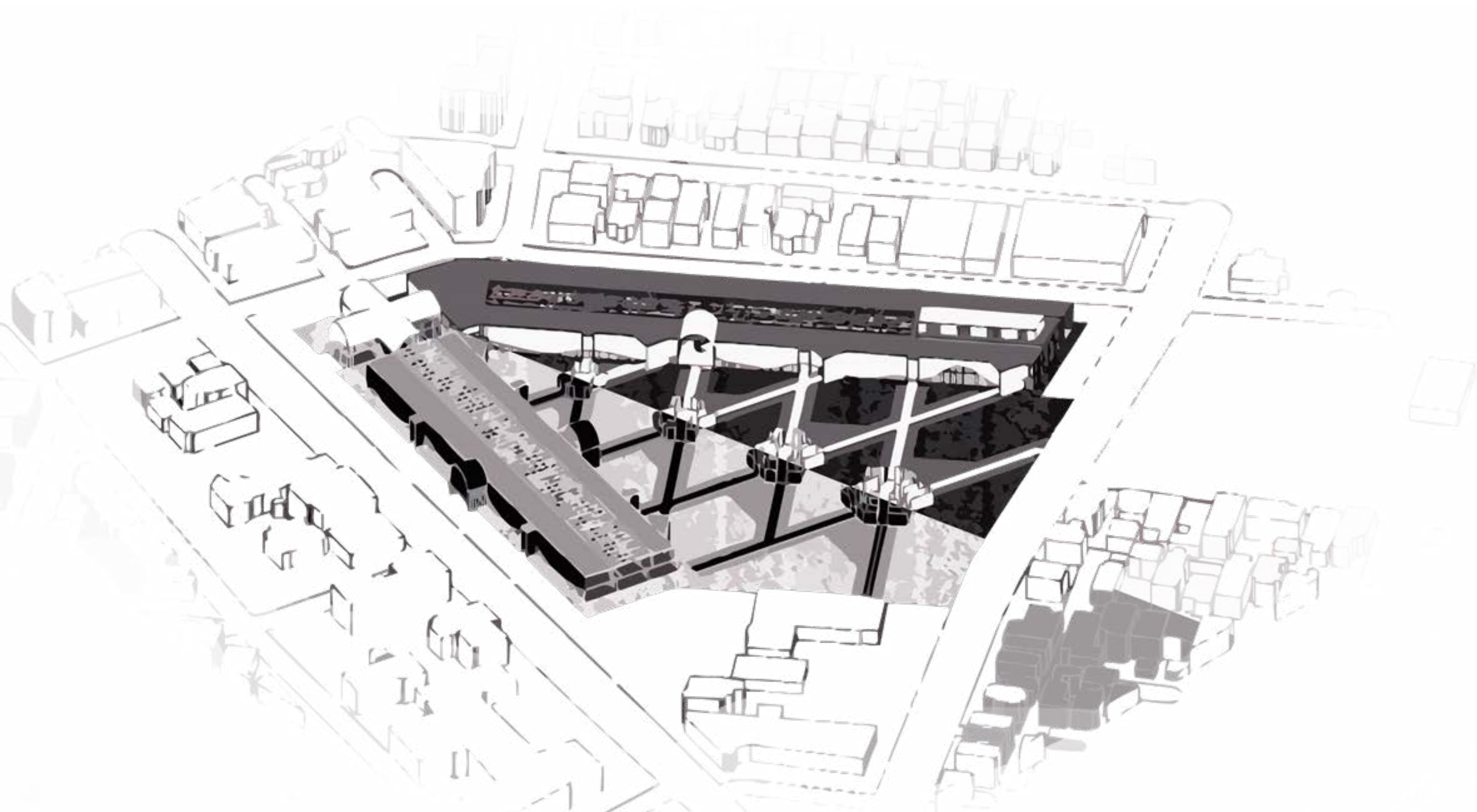
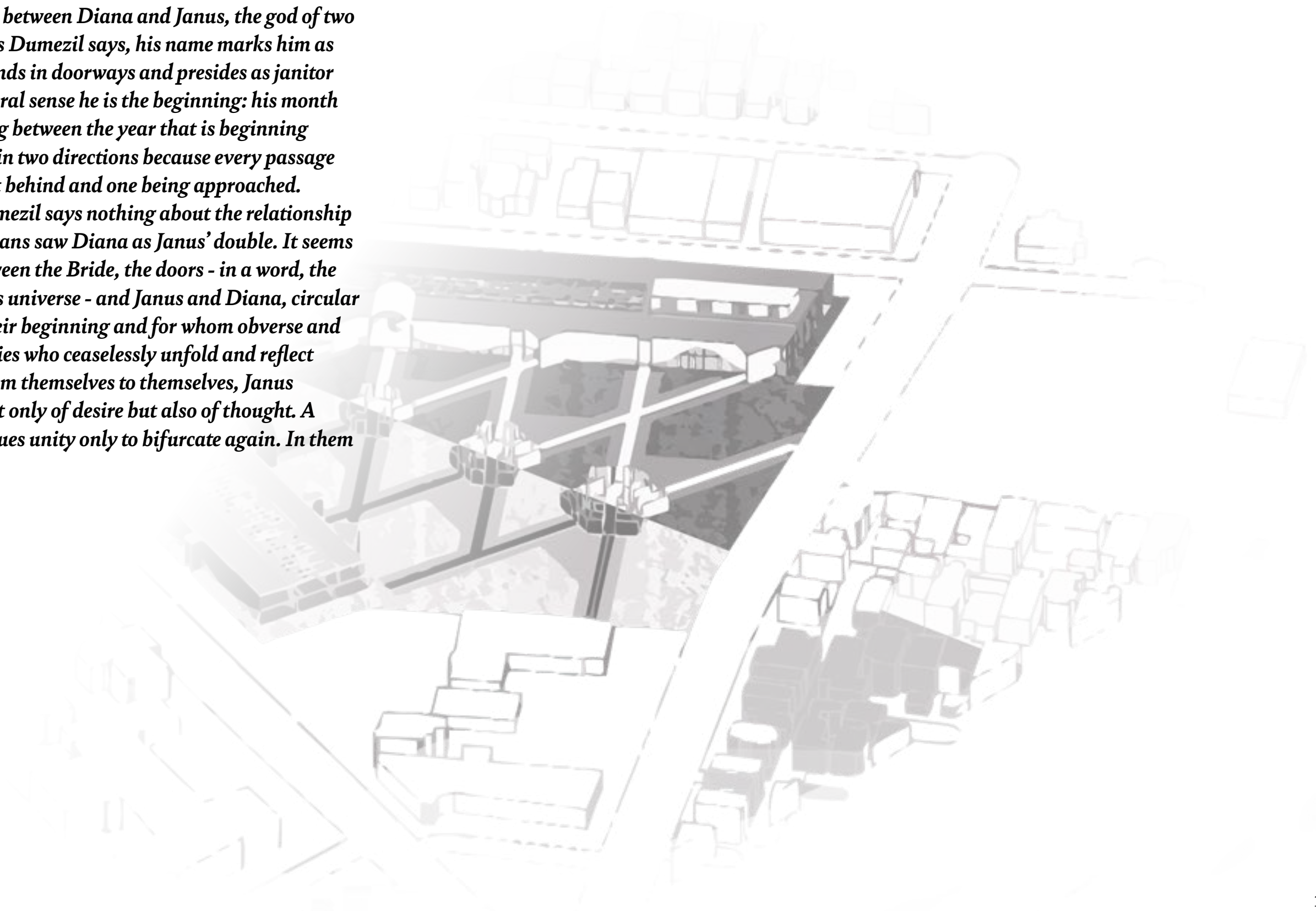


FIGURE 53 - A HINGE

All of the research and inspirations culminate at this nexus of art and fashion and is best reiterated by Paz,

***“I must still mention the relationship between Diana and Janus, the god of two faces, divinity of doors and hinges. As Dumézil says, his name marks him as a passage. Spatially speaking, he stands in doorways and presides as janitor over entrances and exits; in the temporal sense he is the beginning: his month is Januarius, the first month, standing between the year that is beginning and the one that has ended. He faces in two directions because every passage implies two places, two states, one left behind and one being approached. Janus is a hinge, a pivot. Though Dumézil says nothing about the relationship between them, we know that the Romans saw Diana as Janus’ double. It seems unnecessary to stress the affinity between the Bride, the doors - in a word, the system of pivots that rules Duchamp’s universe - and Janus and Diana, circular and double divinities whose end is their beginning and for whom obverse and reverse are one and the same. Divinities who ceaselessly unfold and reflect themselves, reflexive gods turning from themselves to themselves, Janus and Diana embody the circularity not only of desire but also of thought. A bifurcating unity, a duality that pursues unity only to bifurcate again. In them Eros becomes speculative.”***



Although the buildings are separated starkly, they continually look to each other through pavilions, windows, doorways, and paths always looking towards and reaching to the other. Seeing and being seen. The buildings interlock at the entrances, but interaction beyond looking is delayed and reserved for the shared pavilions that exist within the canals created on the site.

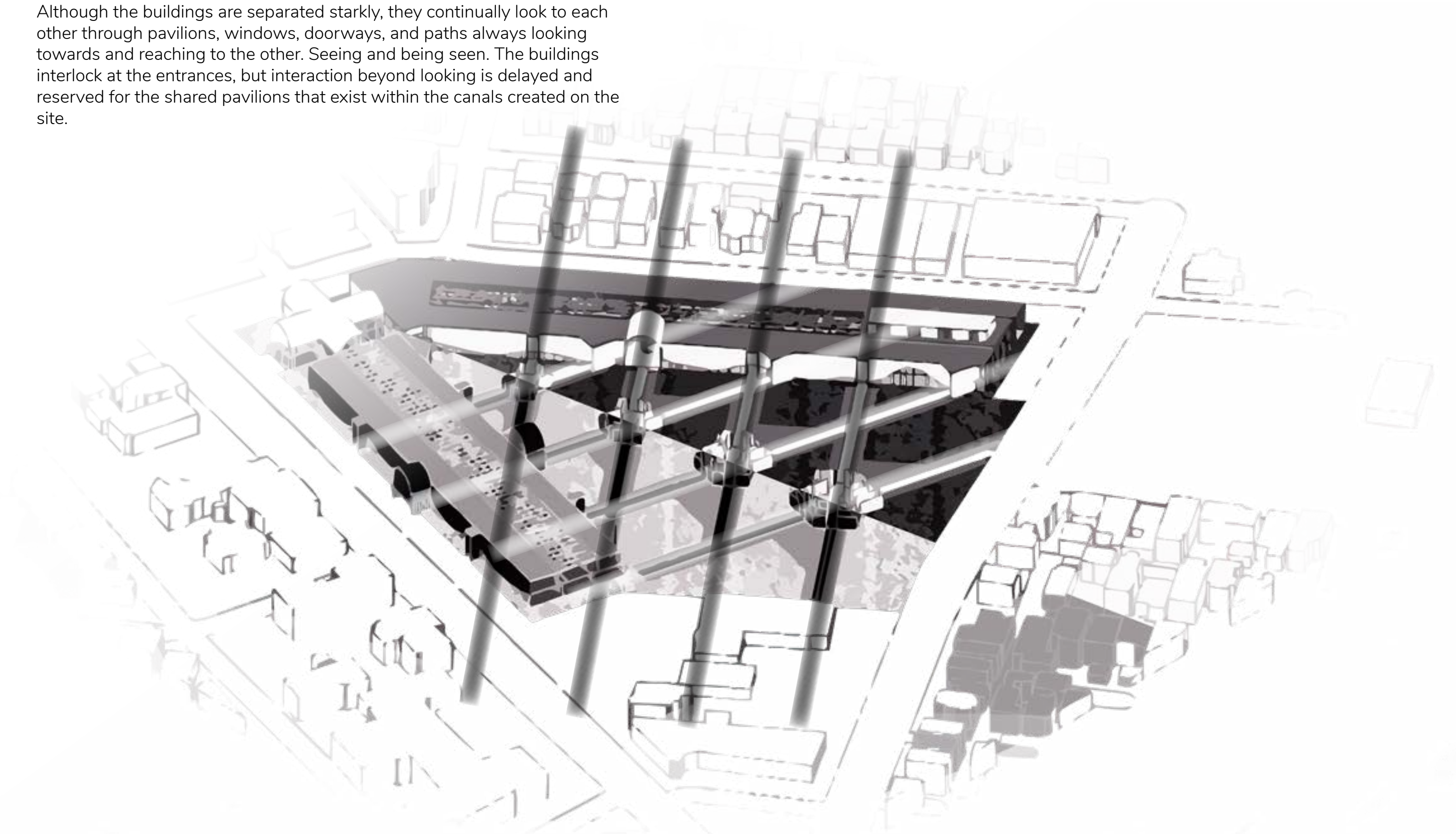


FIGURE 54 - SEEING AND BEING SEEN

Like Duchamp's The Large Glass, the buildings on the campus act as a hinge to bring stories together and open layered spaces of wonder and desire. Constructed by meaningful tectonics and materials, the architectural frame houses a path that intrigues a cognizant involvement with spatial encounter, aiming to inspire and awaken others to make and create art, fashion, and architecture.

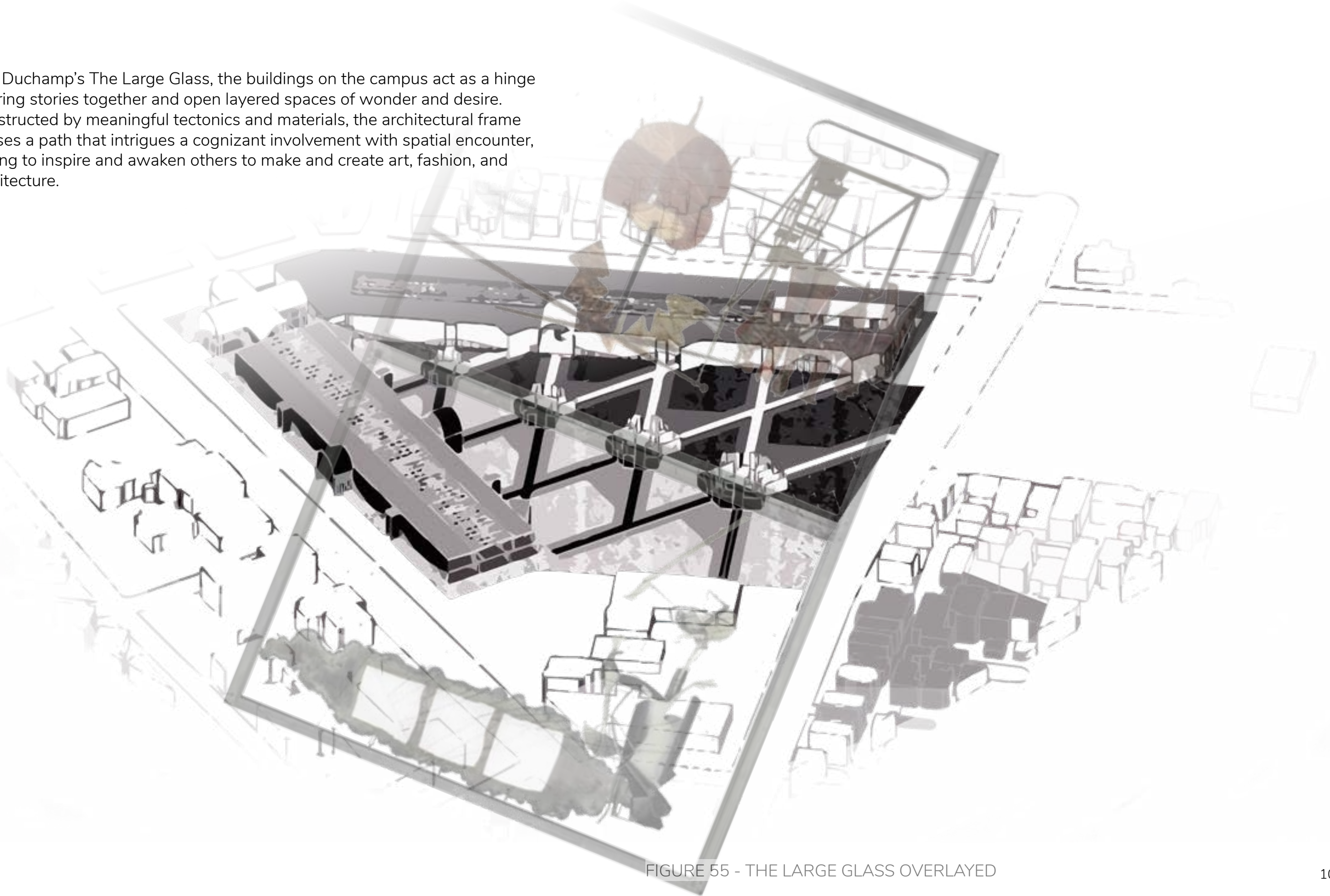


FIGURE 55 - THE LARGE GLASS OVERLAYED

# *Process Techniques*

During the design process, I conducted tectonic and material studies. One experiment was the use of a castle joint as a representation of the symbolon. This joinery technique later informed vertical circulation in the final design. Another technique used was fabric form concrete. The concrete picked up the texture of the fabric including the seam and shape.



FIGURE 56 - CASTLE JOINT TECTONIC



FIGURE 57 - FABRIC FORM CONCRETE

Along with in-depth tectonic and material studies, I created drawings by layering the two Venices and The Large Glass. My ultimate goal was to create moments of convergence that act as a metaphor for longing; where previously nameless distant things become physically tangible. By grafting two loves, two cities, and two passions together, I aimed to create a space that evokes a sense of connection and shared experience.

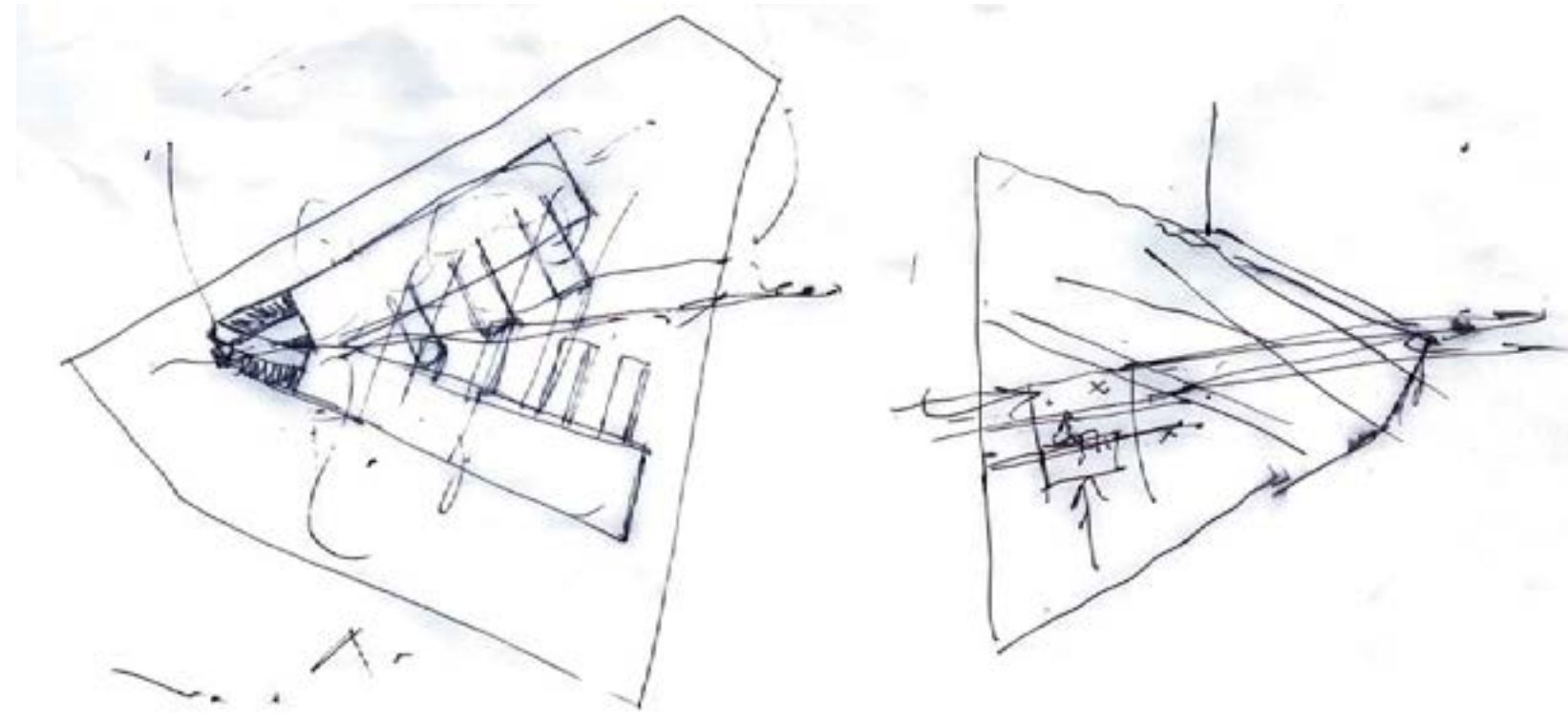
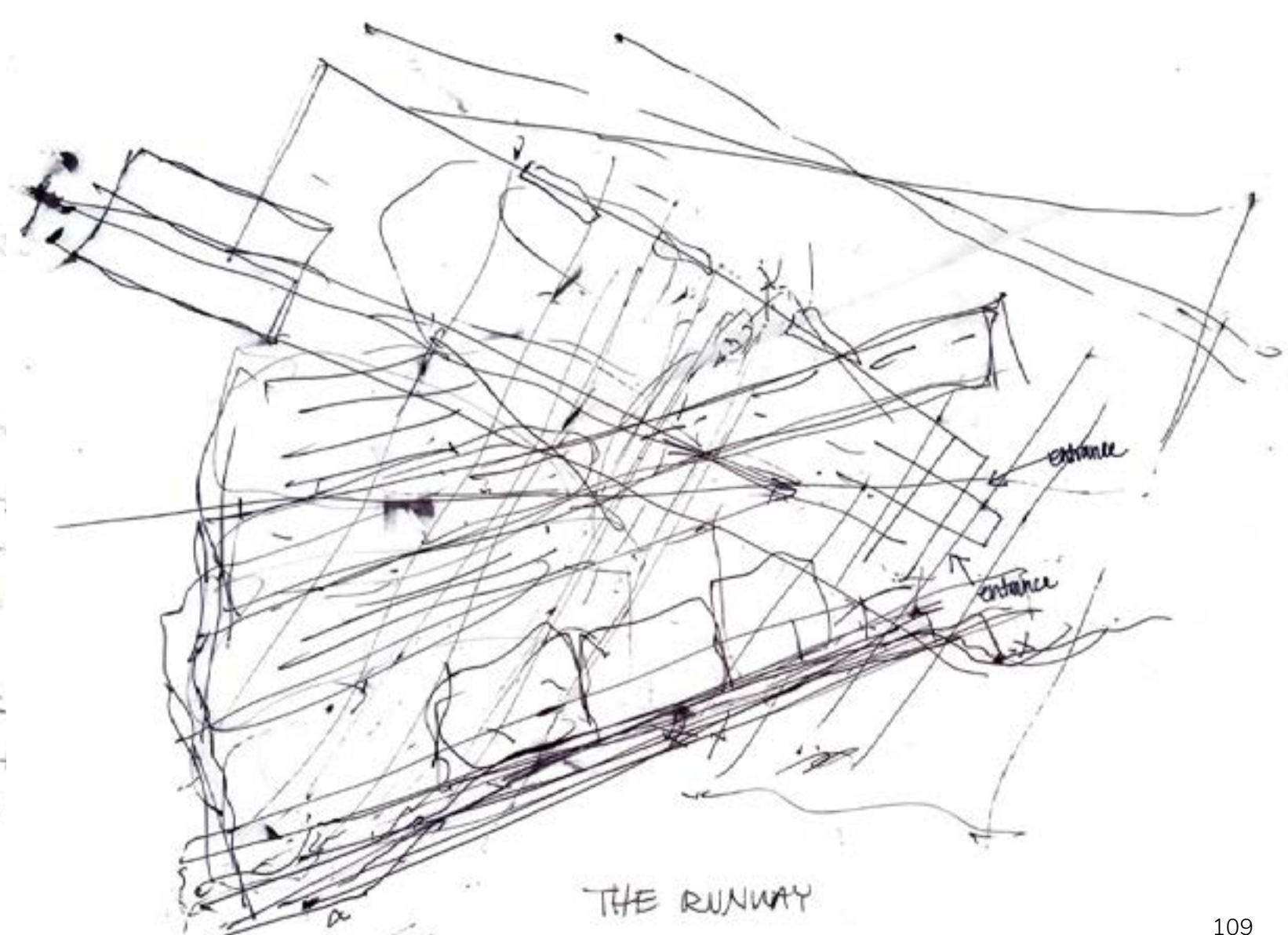
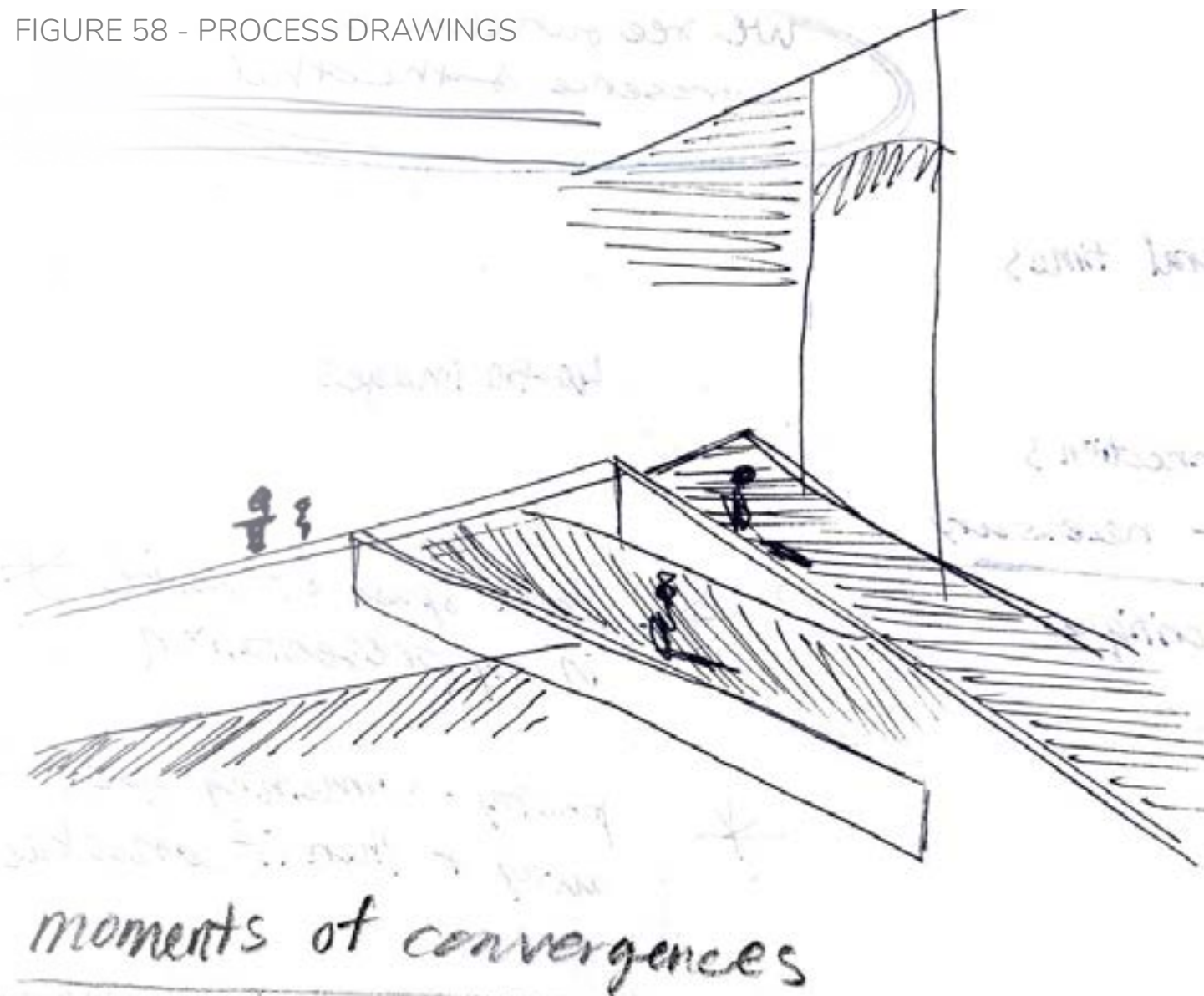


FIGURE 58 - PROCESS DRAWINGS



# ***Floor Plan***

The program takes you on a captivating journey through a series of studios, galleries, and pathways that intertwine and converge, eventually leading to shared pavilions that increase in size as you progress. At the culmination of the final pavilion, the journey comes to an end, and you must begin again, left with a sense of anticipation for what lies ahead.

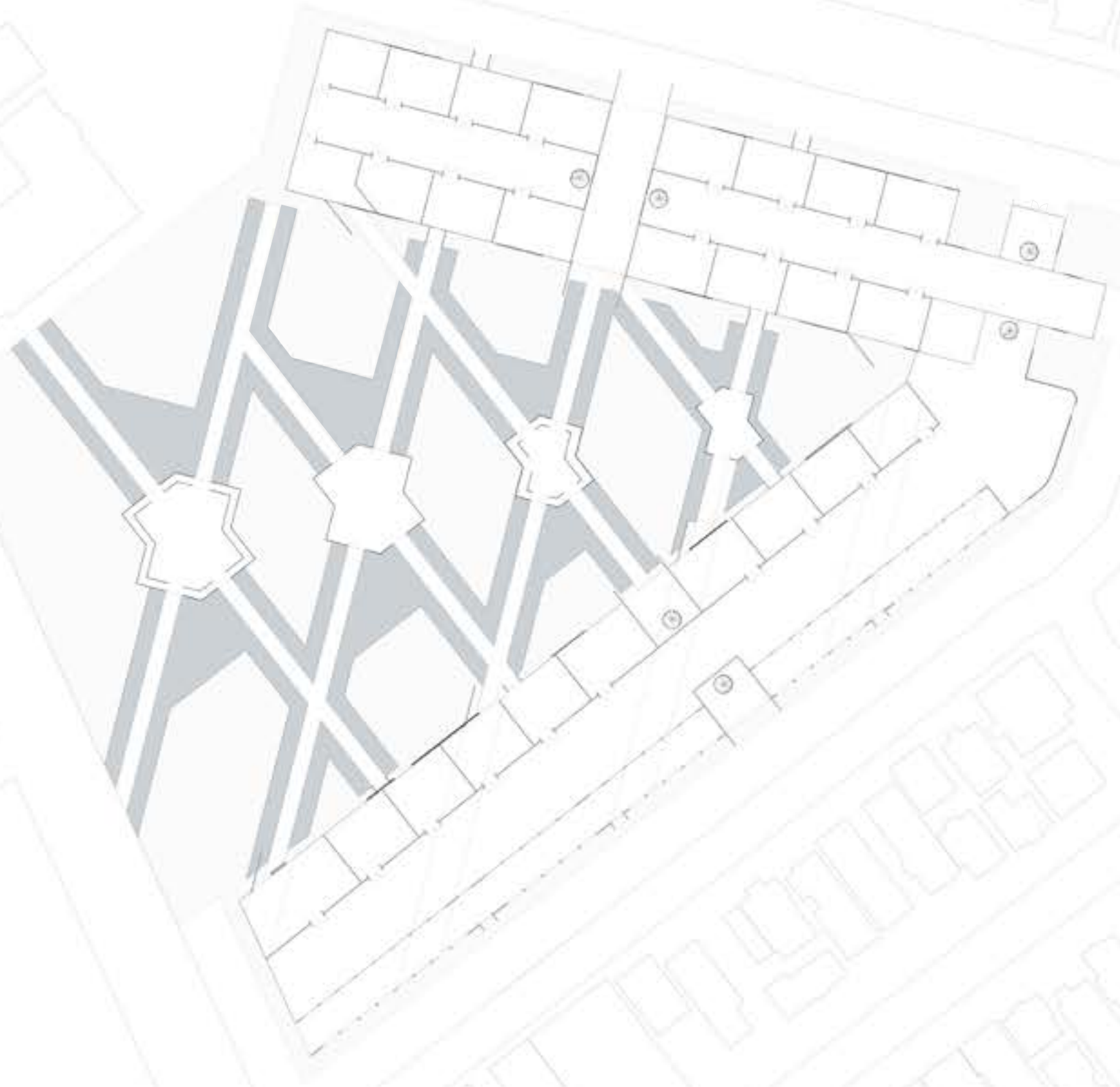


FIGURE 59 - PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



# *Inventory of Spaces*

- 1 Canals
- 2 Shared Pavilions
- 3 Paths
- 4 Art Studios
- 5 Fashion Studios
- 6 Promenade
- 7 Galleries

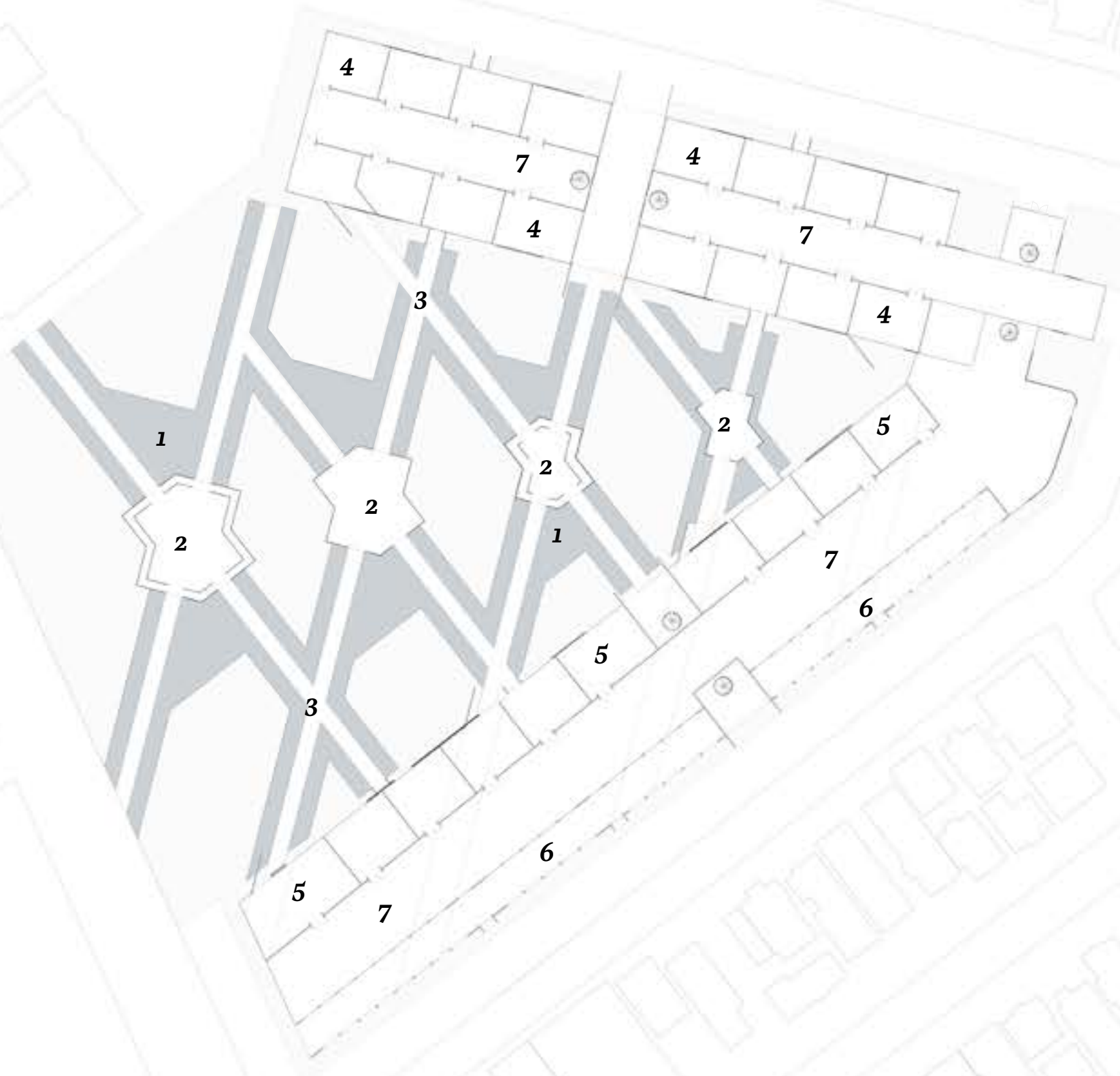


FIGURE 60 - INVENTORY OF SPACES

# *Final Design*

The journey starts before a grand entrance, its arches and domes soaring above you. The facade is shrouded in a delicate, textured fabric that at times seems to move in the breeze. Lush greenery surrounds the entrance, palm trees and plants framing the space like a verdant frame. As you step forward, you notice an artist focused intently on their work through the haze of the facade. Your gaze lingers, and eventually their eyes meet yours. A spark of recognition flares between you from your shared love of beauty and creativity.

You wonder if you will see them again as you begin your ascent on the green marble steps of the spiral staircase, its graceful curves and elegant lines a testament to the beauty of the space. As you cross the mezzanine, you can see the artists at work, the makerspaces filling as the morning continues. Watching from afar, you can catch glimpses of vibrant fabrics, bold brushstrokes, and intricate designs taking shape, but cannot interact because you must go on your way to create your own work by drawing inspiration from the space and the inhabitants. The air is filled with the hum of voices, the sound of music, and the fragrance of freshly brewed espresso from the cafe inside.

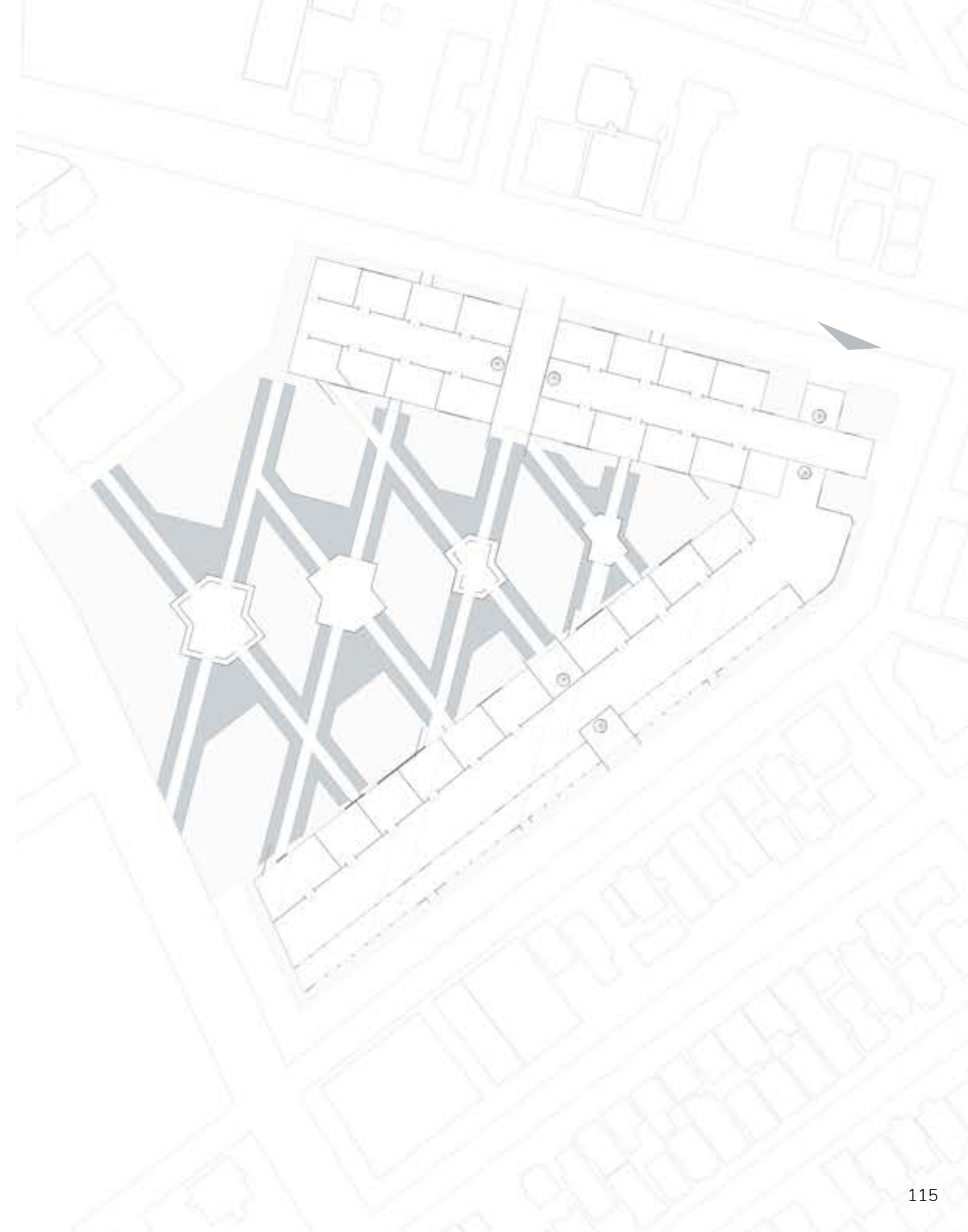


FIGURE 61 - TEXTURED ENTRANCE



You step into a grand art gallery with marble walls and an imposing ceiling. The space is filled with natural light that streams in through a series of wooden framed skylights. As you walk through the gallery, you catch glimpses of artists at work in their studios, their figures obscured by flowing fabric. Before the staircase far in the distance, marble walls reflect the natural light, creating a soft glow throughout the space. The artworks on display are diverse in medium and style, ranging from large-scale sculptures to delicate watercolor paintings. Each piece is a testament to the talent and creativity of the artists who created them. You stop in front of a stunning sculpture made from twisted metal and found objects, marveling at its intricate details and raw beauty. As you make your way through, the spaces invite you to become enamored with the beauty of the architecture. The grandeur of the marble walls, the intricate details of the staircase, and the interplay of light and shadow all combine to create a sense of awe and wonder.

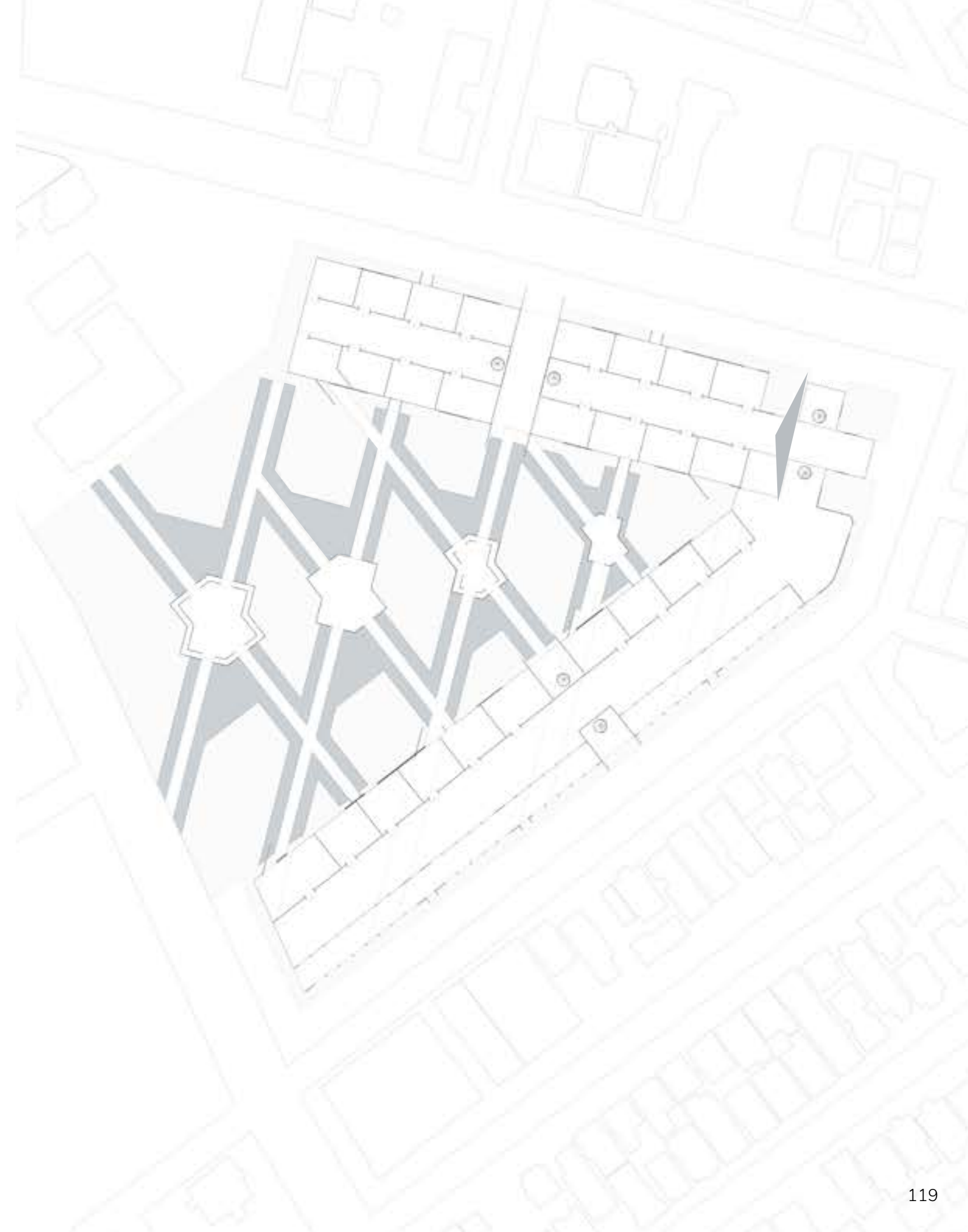


FIGURE 62 - ART GALLERY



As you obliquely approach the grand fashion design building that seems to stretch endlessly in either direction, the double walls of arches create a stunning visual effect, their repeated patterns casting intricate shadows across the courtyard. As you walk through the arches, you notice cutouts that reveal glimpses of the interior, adding to the building's sense of mystery and intrigue. The space is alive with activity, with students and teachers going about their day. The building is bathed in natural light, casting a warm glow on the space and inviting visitors to stay awhile. As the day progresses, the light begins to shift, casting long shadows across the arches. As night falls, the building takes on a new life, with the courtyard becoming a hauntingly beautiful space illuminated by the glow of the interior lights. At any time of day, the playful exchange between the fashion designer and fashion model carries on.

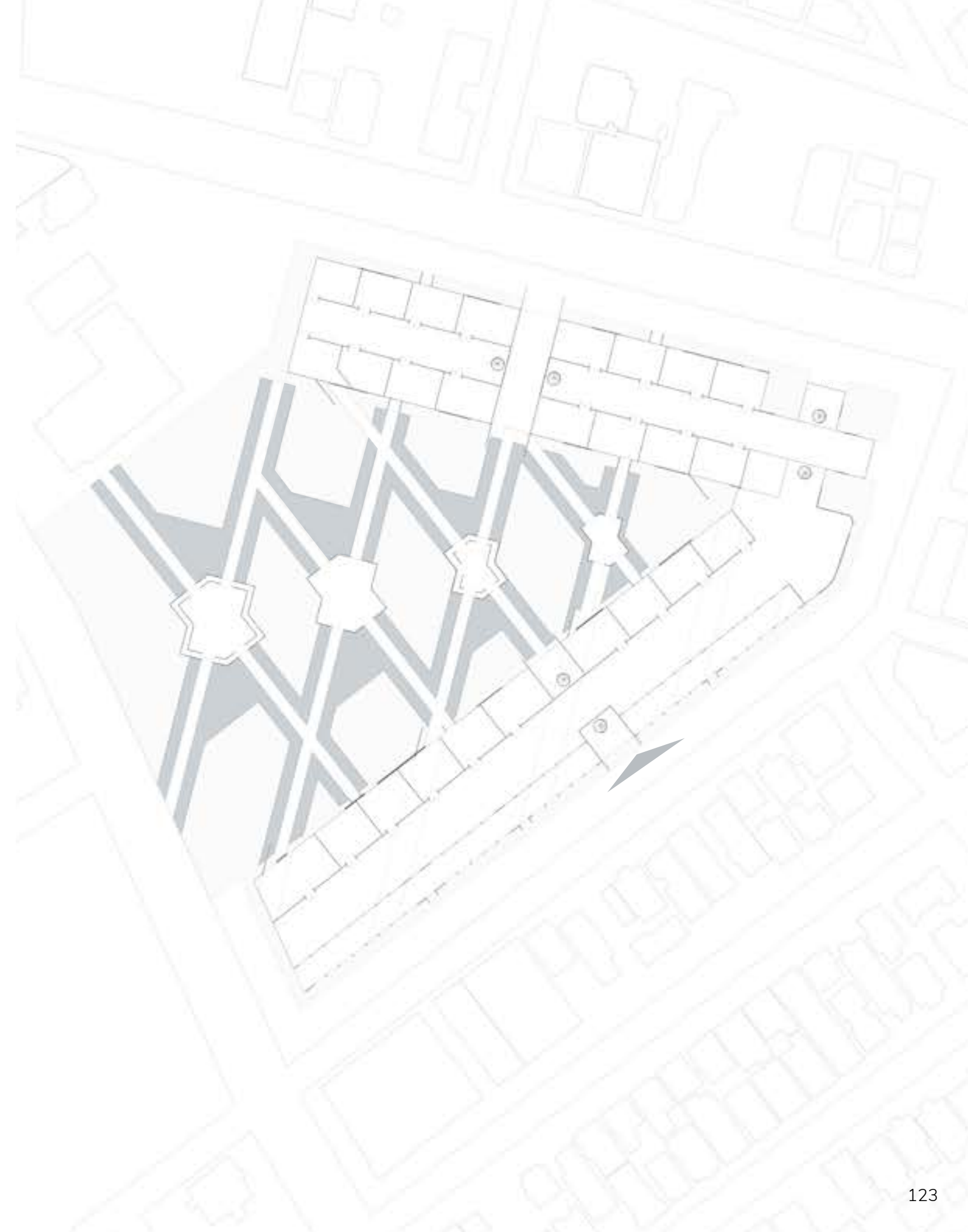


FIGURE 63 - AFTERNOON LIGHT



FIGURE 64 - DUSK





FIGURE 65 - INNER GLOW





Night has fallen, and you find yourself standing in a serene outdoor gallery, the sound of the nearby ocean mixing with the soft hum of distant conversation. The slick, polished stone beneath your feet is reminiscent of the canals in Venice, a place where many creatives have gathered over the years. On either side, a canal flows serenely, its quiet waters reflecting the surrounding architecture. You can hear the gentle lapping of the water against the stone walls, a sound that's both soothing and enchanting. Within the convergence of each path lies a pavilion with its gauzy fabric illuminated by the moonlight. The pavilion is adorned with embroidery and beading that glints in the soft light. Text and imagery is intricately sewn into the fabric, a hidden message waiting to be deciphered. The artist and designer, captivated by the place and the moment, stand close together and take in the moment that will remain etched in their memories.

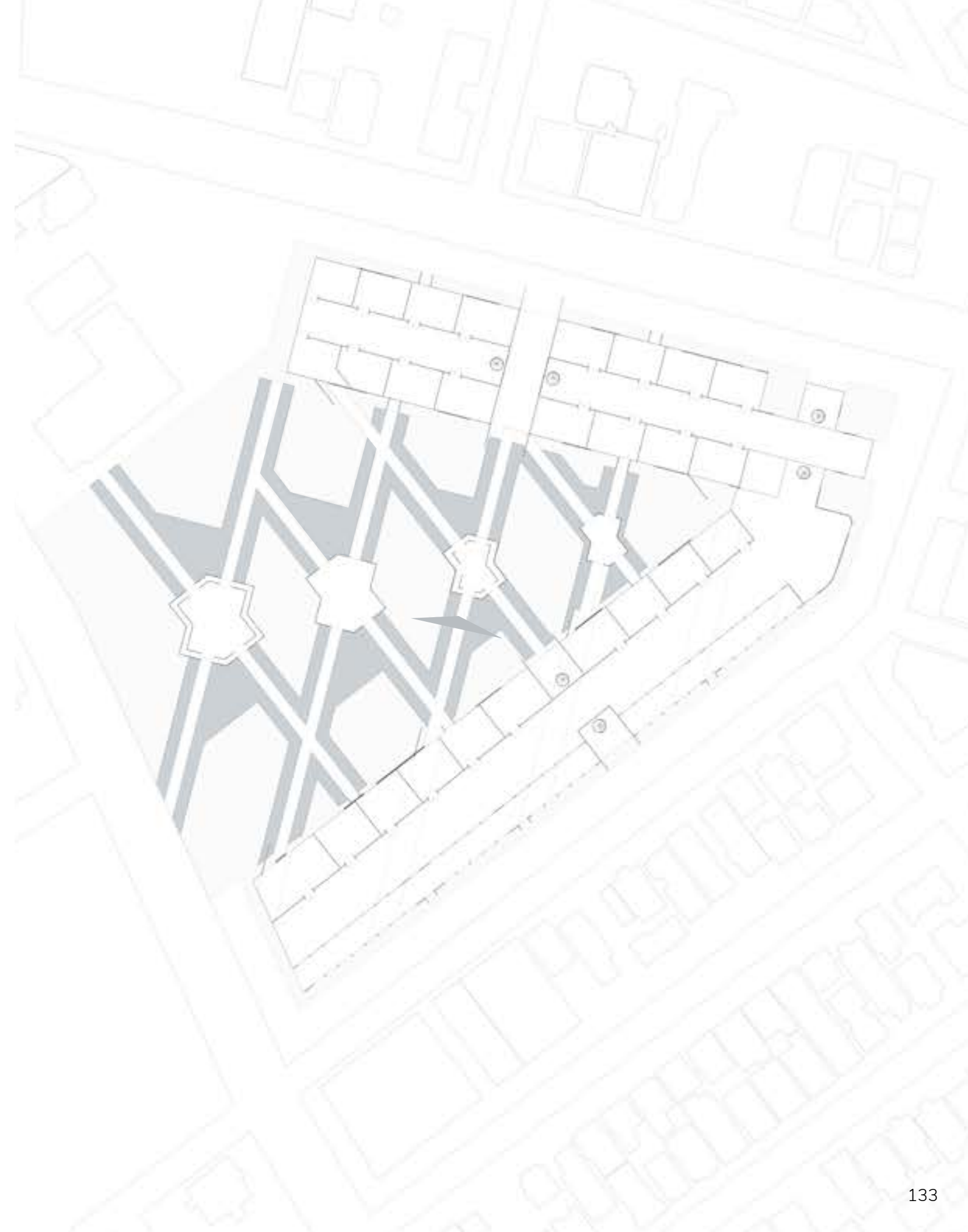


FIGURE 67 - JOURNEY TO PAVILIONS



To quote Alberto Perez-Gomez,

***“It expounds a poetic vision that sets a temporal boundary to the experience of architecture, emphasizing that architecture is not only about form and space but about time, about the presence of man on earth. Architecture had always disclosed a symbolic order at the intersection between a ‘situation’, a ritual or liturgy, and its material, constructed frame. Both aspects were perceived as indispensable and intimately related.”***

Much like Duchamp’s art, the buildings I have designed are not about how they look, but the journeys they evoke and the infinite hinging from looking back to itself time and time again through others, layered stories, and meaningful art, fashion, and architecture.



# Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the many individuals who have supported me throughout the journey of completing this thesis. Firstly, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my friends and colleagues who have been there for me, offering invaluable insights, encouragement, and a listening ear whenever I needed it. Your unwavering support and camaraderie have been instrumental in keeping me motivated and inspired.

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*Rachel Monsebroten*



# Thesis

# Appendix

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# *Thesis Appendix*

## *Previous Design Studio Experience*

### **2ND YEAR 2018-2019**

Fall Studio: Darryl Booker | Meditation Space Design | Boat House Design

Spring Studio: Cindy Urness | Sustainable Dwelling Design | Mixed-Use Apartment Design

### **3RD YEAR 2019-2020**

Fall Studio: Regin Schwaen | Timber Visitor Center Design | Brick Art Museum Design

Spring Studio: Emily Guo | Concrete Cultural Center Design | Steel Office Complex Design

### **4TH YEAR 2021-2022**

Fall Studio: David Crutchfield | High Rise Building Design – Capstone Project

Spring Studio: Kristi Hanson | Medora Urban Planning Design