



**New New York City  
Domus Populi Competition  
Official Documentation**  
*April 28 2045*

**CLASSIFIED**

# *Domus Populi*

Authors	<b>Safa Mehrjui, Daniel Infante</b>
Critics	<b>Abigail Coover Hume Michael Szivos Ashley Simone</b>
Course	<i>Architecture Degree Project</i>
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This project would not have been possible without the admiration, guidance and engagement of our dear friends Liam, Sam, Arya, Alicia, Nabil, Elif, Tyler, Josh, Lara, Richard and the insightful mentorship of Ezio Blasetti and Danielle Willems.



# PREFACE

This book has 3 fonts, because there are 3 points of view, at least.



# Editor's Preface

Additions and Edits in this font (maxular) are the most important part of this book.

This book is a brochure for the opening of Domus Populi, the revised and rebuild civic center of NNYC.

As its designers, we've created this expanded version of the brochure as a bootleg guide to architectural espionage.

What we did was create a cover-up concept based on ideals such as public utility and ease of access, and presented them to the city with confident reassurance.

The core concept however, remains secret to us:

Utilizing cloaking schemes and turning our architectural knowledge against our clients in order to create a civic center capable of fostering public action.

These added parts also offer a small insight into what the government of NNY is actually trying to say and how to decode key elements from their jargon.

We recommend you follow this up with the *pop up manual* for more information on how to actually **take action**.



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## Architecture

**Civic space:** Places built by government entities that primarily include programs that hold political functions. These can range from municipal to education and everything in between. Some civic spaces also include secondary programs that aren’t necessarily political, such as gyms, recreational programs and open outdoor plazas.

**Facade:** [From Merriam Webster] The front of a building, Any face of a building given special Architectural treatment; a false, superficial, or artificial appearance or effect

[They] tried to preserve the facade of a happy marriage

**Monumentality:** Meaning of historical and cultural significance. Monumentality can demonstrate but not disseminate as the place. Buildings that can be described as Monumental deploy visual demonstrations of status quo power through architecture and ornaments (i.e.. Motifs) that convey their ideology. Nazi’s liked eagles because they were fierce and soared, so they used eagles in many ways ranging from ornamental sculpture to urban plans.

## Politics

**Egalitarian** [From Merriam Webster]: a social philosophy advocating the removal of inequalities among people. [From Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy]: People should be treated as equals, should treat one another as equals, should relate as equals, or enjoy an equality of social status of some sort.

Egalitarian doctrines tend to rest on a background idea that all human persons are equal in fundamental worth or moral status.

**Direct Democracy** [From Dictionary of modern politics] : According to the theory of direct democracy, all concerned citizens must directly participate in the making of decisions and the passing of laws, and this function can neither be delegated to others, nor can it be carried out by others chosen to represent the interests of the many.

**Scenario** [From Dictionary of modern politics]: A scenario is any imaginary description of a possible future problem, which can be used by the potential actors to plan policy and strategy. As such it is closely related to game theory. Scenarios have been extensively used in defense, with a large number of models of potential conflicts being set up to enable conventional and nuclear force requirements to be calculated, and to study the political, diplomatic and military consequences of a variety of postures that might be adopted. At its most technical, a scenario can be the basis for extremely complicated and even computerized simulations. An example of a purely domestic British political scenario might be the result of an election in which no party held a majority in parliament, and where the previous prime minister, though now the leader of a minority party, refused to resign. The scenario, especially if built with sufficient realistic detail, would allow examination of the adequacy of our understanding of, for example, the constitutional position of the monarch, and perhaps help in the development of theories about the need for a written constitution.

**Means/ Ends:** Means are methods used by an agent to achieve a goal. Ends are what the agent expects from the achieving of the goal, or what he/she hopes to change in society.

**Organizing:** [from Britannica] method of engaging and empowering people with the purpose of increasing the influence of groups historically underrepresented in policies and decision making. organizing is both a tactic to address specific problems and issues and a longer-term engagement and empowerment strategy.

**Passives:** a group of individuals who are inactive in politics due to their lack of capacity in free time. These individuals are those who work constantly rather than take time off and engage in the politics of society.

**Subversion:** is a process by which the meaning or function of an object in an attempt to transform its meaning and function.

Protest

**Demonstrate:** Demonstration in simple terms means to make clear. In this project demonstration is the manner in which architecture is represented. Architecture has the ability to use demonstration to flaunt, hide, and express.

**Dissimilate:** Dissimulation is the method of making unfamiliar. This is tied to the functions and representations of an object in its relationship towards other objects. The act of dissimulation could inform the way an object is perceived within its context. For example, an animal in nature can use camouflage to disseminate itself within its context. Therefore the chameleon is unfamiliar towards its surroundings.

**Dissonance:** Simply meaning lacking harmony. Dissonance is a connection between two contrasting elements that do not normally go together.

Organizing

**Action:** When agents and/or members commit acts (means) that are meant to yield certain results (ends)

**Actives:** a group of individuals who are active in politics due to their high capacity in free time. These individuals embrace time off and utilize it to engage in political activity.

**Activism:** A doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue.

**Agents:** A person or group that follow a certain political ideology and act within the political field to pursue their goals.

**Estrangement:** is a process in which an object that is well known is transformed into an object that’s attributes are no longer clear.

**Identity:** Each agent or member will naturally subscribe to the specifics of their ideology. But they will each also identify with its qualities on a personal level and add their own layer of interpretation to the ideology.

**Members:** individuals in the public that follow or support certain agents but do not participate in the political field as rigorously as the agents.

# Introduction

**British** journalist and filmmaker Adam Curtis begins his documentary Hyper-normalization with the following statement:

*‘We live in a strange time. Extraordinary events keep happening that undermine the stability of our world. Suicide bombs, waves of refugees, Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, even Brexit. Yet those in control seem unable to deal with them, and no-one has any vision of a different or a better kind of future...’<sup>1</sup>*

Beyond its assertions this opening reflects several ideas: First, that our world is becoming increasingly volatile, violent and uncontrollable.<sup>2</sup> Second, it implies that politicians and rulers have failed to maintain their power to control society. With the loss of agency of this group of people, it becomes increasingly difficult to pinpoint where agency and political capacity have relocated to. Later in the film Curtis explains how two entities, corporations and technologists, became critical in reshaping power dynamics towards the end of the twentieth century. When discussing power in this context Curtis is referring to political and social power, which is the capacity for an entity to influence the actions of a mass of people. According to him how this reshaping took place was through a slow process of internalization of vital information via computer systems and servers. What Curtis observes is the fact that since the 1980s many banks and financial institutions became increasingly

**1.** *Hypernormalisation*, directed by Adam Curtis (2015; London, BBC)  
**2.** An understatement at best but a paradoxical one because violence and uncontrollability have been a consistent aspect of human history up to the last few decades. Only recently thanks to widespread information and connectivity do we get to actually see and reflect on these aspects of ourselves.

together via servers which were for the most part kept secret from not just the public but from governments as well. This allowed the two entities, who were now working in unison, to gain massive advantages against their political peers. At first these advances were merely economical, but Curtis illustrates that gradually through lobbying and influencing of legislature this economic might translated into political power. Today we are all too familiar with the role of financial institutions in our political systems, not just in the US but increasingly in other democracies as well.<sup>3</sup>

This shift of political power away from politicians has been a major characteristic of our contemporary political history. But while it is true today, tomorrow the dynamics of power might shift again and perhaps fall into the hands of greenhouse manufacturers, or solar panel collectors. Predicting which groups will politically overcome others in the future is an incredibly difficult task, and the results more often than not surprise even the most seasoned analysts. The most recent US elections are a clear example of this fact, as only one newspaper -the LA times- managed to accurately predict the results.<sup>4</sup>

One key aspect that is common in most regimes of power, however, is their treatment of images. Governments want to look powerful in the eyes of their subjects, so they create numerous forms of propaganda and promotional art that subversively feeds the public with positive notions of their policies. These images serve many purposes, ranging from the creation of likable authority figures, or as Fredric Jameson calls them, fetishes,<sup>6</sup> to the spread of ethnic agenda, such as Nazi propaganda in Germany in the thirties.

At their core, all of these methods of propaganda stem from the idea that in order to maintain order in society, governments have to create an illusion in the collective mind of the public: that the rulers are indeed very powerful, cannot be overthrown or questioned, and that serving them wholeheartedly and being a nationalist is in itself most rewarding. Governments want their citizens to not merely think that their nation is great, but believe it too.

Up and coming regimes rely heavily on propaganda to propel themselves forward and gain a more rooted place in political power dynamics. In its early days the Soviet Union created intensive programs for art creation and even schools of aesthetics that were meant to instill a sense of pride in the citizens of the new communist regimes. The revolutionary images and films that came out of this era were also challenging the public to reevaluate a lot of old cultural and economic systems of living, warranting even more reliance on the new Soviet regime. Constructivists for example cared not just about new theories of materiality and the relation between industry and art, but also how their new art forms could transform how ordinary people think of the arts, and how it could unify them around a single political ideology. In cinema Sergei Eisenstein developed new cinematography techniques that retold

So with all the difficulties in the way of assessing the dynamics of power, which requires rigorous data analysis, historical contextualization

and much much more, how can one be critical of the trajectories of politics? For many the answer lies in **fiction**. And Nation States revel in creating fictions.

3. Lee Drutman, "How corporate lobbyists conquered American politics", *The Atlantic*, April 20th 2015, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/04/how-corporate-lobbyists-conquered-american-democracy/390822/>

4. David Lauter, "The man behind the USC/L.A. Times poll that predicted Trump winning: To be honest, I was surprised", *LA times*, November 9th 2016, <https://www.latimes.com/politics/la-na-pol-trump-polls-20161109-story.html>

5. "The cultural significance of Cyberpunk", Cuck philosophy, published May 3rd 2019, Youtube video, 20:37, <https://youtu.be/Nvor7hhDKTs>

6. Fredric Jameson, "An American Utopia: in conversation with Stanley Aronowitz" (lecture, The Graduate Center at CUNY, New York, NY, March 20th 2014)



This fake facade of power has been instrumental for established and powerful regimes as well, who would use it beyond the purposes already stated. In Achaemenid Persia, for example, the large palace complex of Parse, known today as Takhte Jamshid, was used not just as space for the royal family and its functions but also as a gathering space for certain members of the public, representatives of different states of the empire and other lower ranked state-persons. While the spatial arrangement intensely separated the public spaces from the private ones, the fact that so much public program was included into a royal fortress shows how the empire cared not just about its images of power, wealth and vastness but also its images of justice, forgiveness and allowance. This can be read as an extremely subversive use of the image of power, because the regime in question not only shows that it can lower its guard and permit a certain level of freedom and individual action but that it knows what the public demand from it as well. To show that you understand your subjects' demands and desires is stating that you can read their minds, the ultimate illusion that can be crafted.

Whether or not values like justice were upheld in actuality is a different matter altogether. Studying how true a certain government's ideals were is an arduous task and historians have spent lifetimes researching these issues. What can be studied however is the manner in which regimes have used their image with different intents and the varying levels of success they've achieved in their pursuit. Success here can be determined by how popular a regime was deemed by the public, or how long their grip on political power lasted. Architecture, as an instrument of monumentality and a tool for showing off pure power -in construction, in gathering materials, in wealth of materials, etc. is one of the main categories of such images.

While there has been a lot of debate on the use of material, ornamentation and size to convey monumentality, a parallel debate on the use of program to similar ends has been largely absent. Sigfried Gideon illustrates this lack of emphasis on programmatic uses of monumentality in point four of his nine points on monumentality. While he doesn't use the exact word program, his description of monumental buildings that have no use value and only serve as "empty shells" shows his discontent not with the material state of this type of architecture, but its programmatic state:

*'The last hundred years have witnessed the devaluation of monumentality. This does not mean that there is any lack of formal monuments or architectural examples pretending to serve this purpose; but the so-called monuments of recent date have, with rare exceptions, become empty shells. They in no way represent the spirit or collective feeling of modern times.'*<sup>7</sup>

More recently Bernard Tschumi has become one of the main arguers for a closer look at program and how it works, not necessarily through its purely architectural features but rather through ways people end up using spaces. To summarize Tschumi debates the meaning of program for the public and each of its individual members. Program, in Tschumi's mind can never be fully realized by the architect because the eventual use by the inhabitants will always be different than what the architect expected.<sup>IV</sup>

**7.** Sigfried Gideon, J.L. Sert, Fernand Leger, "Nine points on Monumentality" in *Architecture, you and me*, written by Sigfried Gideon (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 48-52

**IV.** Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and disjunction*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 128-135



A kitchen has no way of preventing a user from sleeping in it, and neither does a toilet or any other program. In other words there is usually no architectural coercion involved in programs that punish users for misuse or reinterpretation.

Systems of power, however, adamantly strive to create such spatial coercions, and they have proven to be successful. Barriers such as subway turnstiles, boom gates, the myriad of hostile architecture objects and even security cameras and other surveillance devices have been crucial for governments in maintaining civil order and preventing people from disobeying the law spatially.

Within this position of program and its potential use as a tool for instilling freedom *and also* propaganda, a key question that arises is whether an egalitarian government with just intents and policies could use similar programmatic tools of implementation for ends that don't tie to control and the maintenance of order. In the barrier example, the end is always keeping order in society, and this is achieved by disallowing the public from accessing certain areas or taking certain actions.

Punishments for subverting and breaking these tools are definitive and unavoidable, by passing a turnstile without swiping your metro card, a trespassing fine is assigned. By changing the ends, new programmatic systems that empower people and give them a heightened role in governance can be possible." Another factor is demand and supply. One of the main reasons the subway turnstile is a functional tool of programmatic coercion is because the public demand a government service, in this case transportation, and by following the guidelines and avoiding transgression they get what they pay for. Once the empowering programmatic systems offer a set of services, people will comply with those systems in order to attain the things they want.

Our aim with Domus Populi is to offer various tools of expression and governance to every citizen of New New York, from any creed and of any gender. Rather than restrict access, we intend to fully publicize official and administrative spaces and allow citizens to gain access.\*

**Considering these matters of potential programmatic systems and the desires of the public, together with the speculative methods of Cyberpunk, a fictionalized context containing political, social, cultural and economical frameworks of a future New York society will be created. This will act as a vessel for the designing of a set of structures that allow citizens of this society to actively partake in politics and governance. This fabricated context will resemble those of our current society, but its system of governance will differ in its level of idealistic egalitarianism, and the desire of the government to achieve total equality and true democracy will be pushed to its furthest extent. This would be to test if a political utopia could really exist without imploding on itself. The goal isn't to prove or disprove that utopias or dystopias can or cannot exist, but to achieve a deeper understanding of the facade of power and to see what programmatic interventions can change the fragility of this facade through ways the public transgresses them.**

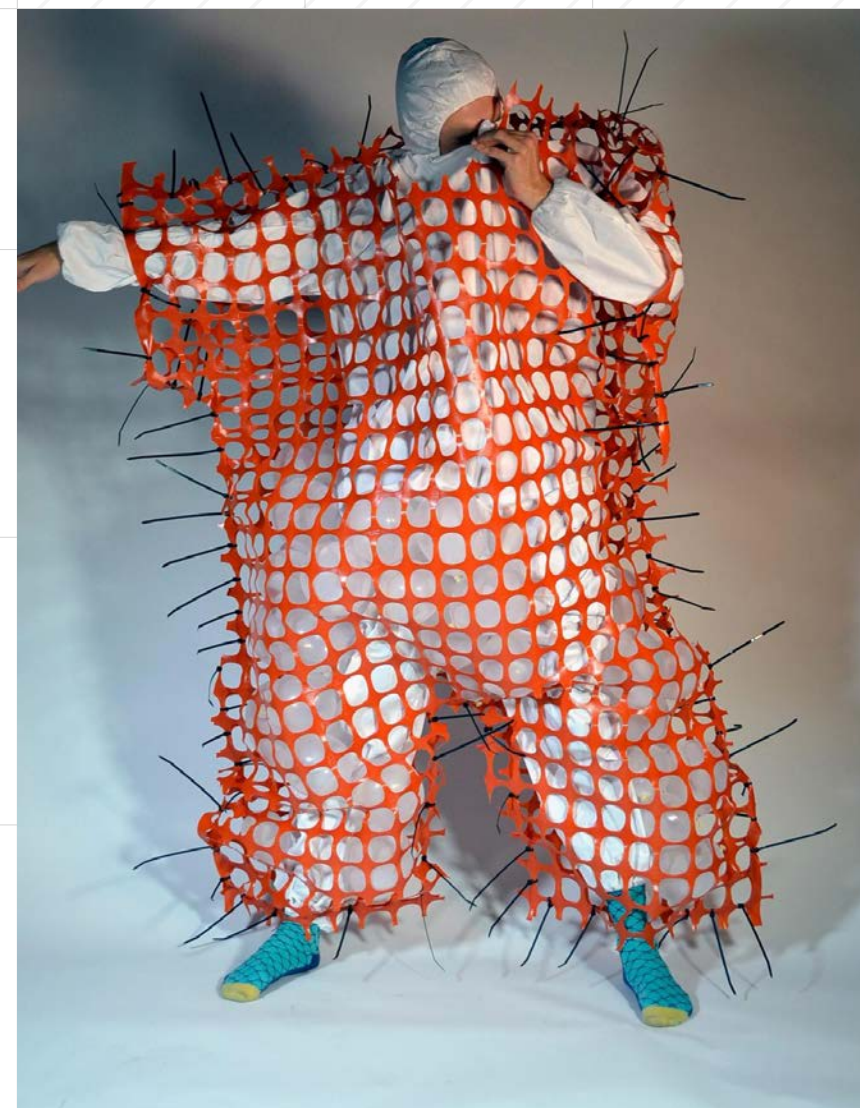
\*Access has to be granted through application to the department of public supervision of affairs. For more information visit [nyc.gov/psa](http://nyc.gov/psa) or print form 2130-F and 2130-T from a post office or state center.

## Why Protest?

Architecture must operate as a medium for Activism. In the context of this project Activism acts as a doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue. Society's activities within politics is directly tied to people's capacity of free time. Jacques Ranciere, devises a way people engage with politics, due to aesthetic judgment and free time. For Ranciere, aesthetic judgment came before art and therefore can be used to not only as a way to read art but as a way to read program and space. According to Ranciere Aesthetics is not a judgment of art but a

distance from the work being done by a person in order to experience their surroundings. To Ranciere, Aesthetic judgment is tied to those who have a capacity to engage in free time and those who don't. These individuals are deemed the actives and passives. Ranciere states,"In the past, property owners who lived off their private income were referred to as active citizens, capable of electing and being elected, while those who worked for a living were passive citizens, unworthy of these duties."<sup>1</sup> Actives therefore have a larger capacity to have free time which makes them more able engage within politics. Passives being a working group, have no free time and therefore are not able to engage with politics. This project seeks to investigate a system in which passives become actives through program.

<sup>1</sup>Jacques Ranciere, *The Emancipated Spectator*, (London: Verso, 2009), 12.



Matthew Bohne and Clair Haugh, *Protest Protection Suit*, Mark Foster Gage, "Theory through Objects" (Yale, Fall 2016)



Statement

Our Story goes back all the way to the 2020s and the mass uprisings that eventually lead to the secession of New York state and the creation of New New York. The following pages are scans of archived NNYT newspapers from key historic dates. As part of our agenda to reform news coverage, access and distribution, NNYC has put forth groundbreaking systems to bridge gaps between journalists and readers, communicate more clearly, honestly and justly, and offer as many sides of the story as possible.





Saturday, January 11th, 2040

"All the News  
that's fit to  
print"

# The New New York

Late Day Edition  
Weather today  
is a hailstorm.  
Watch out for  
those big ones,  
they can crack  
your head open  
like a coconut!

## Government Announces plans to rebuild Civic

### Domus Populi

was introduced by Mayor of New New York Joe Pesci Jr. on Thursday. Its spaces are currently being laid down by architects across the city, as the city intends to choose from local designers. The project seeks to outline architectural manifestations of a more direct democratic society. New York has had a long history of fighting for its rights, for its immigrants and for its For decades state contracted architects have adamantly strove to create spaces that could grant the public new means of political and expressive freedoms. In reality, however, forms of politicized architecture rarely became utilized in ways they were intended, and often were never built in the first place. Many years ago in a lecture titled "aesthetic activism" at Yale French Philosopher Jacques Ranciere mentioned how he saw the architectural solutions only going so far as trying to reveal the hidden. In other words he believes politically motivated

D.P. will be a concentrated cluster of buildings -a complex. Its first purpose is housing the three branches of government: judicial, legislative and executive department. This includes their headquarters, as well as headquarters of other political parties and organizations, offices of officials and administrators, and senate halls and courts. The second purpose is offering the public free and accessible means of artistic expression, as well as means to observe the expressions of



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Domus Populi would act as places where people can partake in the city's politics and raise their voices on issues they want resolved or are discontented with. If they choose so they can also enroll in a public debate system that through voting elects citizen-senators that can represent their community or party in congress, where matters such as internal policy, finance and foreign policy are further discussed.

Many governments have tools in their websites that allow citizens to file forms to petition different sectors, criticize authority members, start polls. While these are all political activities, they happen in isolation and do not inform the individuals filing them on what their others think about the issue. This project offers unified enclosed spaces that allow for multiple people to gather and discuss their ideas, thoughts and feelings about their government, and organize around common issues.

## MASS SHOOTING INSURANCE

America's signature coverage



In 2018, there were 340 mass shootings in the US. Although the violence is real, this insurance is not. It's a wake-up call to take action. Together, we can be Louder Than Guns and end gun violence.

Act Now  
LouderThanGuns.org  
LAWGUNSHOT

Advertisement

### New New Deal 'well underway'

Social reform is back on track like never before! Many of the trusted old programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Public Works Administration have started work on updated mechanisms of hiring unemployed citizens. New programs pertaining to data sales and privacy, as well as other Internet and technology related services have also been devised, working off the examples set by such organizations as the data protection guild or Apple. The FCC has also been reconstituted as the State Media and Arts authority, and only serves to issue patents and copy rights in its authority, otherwise they are designed to offer funds to aspiring artists and designers and sponsor various programs across New York State.



# Actual Concept Statement

This is a proposal for a government issued architecture, decreed by a socialist democratic government in pursuit of concrete forms of achieving direct democracy. **To begin this inquiry, a fictionalized New York City is established, one that has seceded from the union and reformed as an independent state.** This state isn't without egalitarian values, in fact they are upheld rigorously because of both public belief and policy enforcement. This society's socio-political context has been laid out such that its members have become accustomed to the higher standards of political engagement and are beginning to demand more. Their political

standards are higher directly as a result of a new architectural complex that offers citizens active roles in running society. Their understanding of this hub of politics has the potential to become critical for the ruling class' grip on power.

We suspect resistance groups with access to this brochure can learn to devise simple architectural assemblages that can disrupt the civic architecture in ways that take advantage of the new political system. Aware of this inevitable outcome, the architect is asked by the state to design with combating escalated situations in mind, so the structure can protect itself, and consequently the state. These architectural methods of protection, which are appropriately called disabling design elements, remain hidden from public view thanks to advanced camouflage techniques.

**Can architecture be designed and/or appropriated to support and participate in activism?**

**How can architects take on the role of a double agent by engaging architecture as a form of activism?**

**The project explores a near-future scenario where architects operate as double agents, placating their client the State while designing architecture that serves the needs and desires of the citizens of New York City. In the realm of architecture and design, activism implies the disobedient use of space. The double-agent architect designs spaces that simultaneously suit the needs of the state and provide opportunities for the constituents of Domus Populi to pursue behaviors subversive to the State.**

**In near-future Domus Populi, an extension to Civic center, located at present-day Foley Square in New York City, commences. Under the guise of serving the State's interest in renovating the government complex, the double-agent architects leading the project exploit the opportunity to pursue their vision of a more inclusive and equitable democracy. The architecture the double agents develop complies with public building safety codes and security measures; it is a divergent strategy. Ultimately, the architects embed mechanisms and opportunities that have the potential to support and amplify the political agency of the Domus Populi constituents. The architects first identify how civic buildings in democratic states engage with the public and then reconfigure various architectural features, modifying programmatic adjacencies and relationships. For example, spaces such as assembly halls are positioned next to public viewing areas or made accessible from exterior, public sidewalks.**

**The project comprises both plaza and building. It operates as a thickened surface with program embedded in a hill-scape that rises to engage with existing buildings, creating critical moments of programmatic adjacency. The development of the design is integral to an understanding of the peaks and valleys that can create confrontations between the private (offices, city council assembly, higher courts) and public (plaza) space. Specific characteristics, which meet the design criteria for intensely confrontational spatial adjacencies, include visual and auditory connection**

**Between disparate user groups, those serving the State and the constituents of Domus Populi. However, the double-agent architects avoid designing these moments in a manner that is singular or attention-seeking. By sporadically infusing the site with critical adjacencies, the architects test the ways in which confrontation can become an unavoidable and pervasive condition, causing continuous disruption. This gives activists and demonstrators gaps of freedom for placing critical stages for political action.**

# Enablers/ Disablers

## Disabler

Anything that prevents action from happening is defined as a disabler. Action can be something as simple and general as going from one point to another, or as strategic and specific as texting a friend during a protest to warn him about a police convoy.

## Enabler

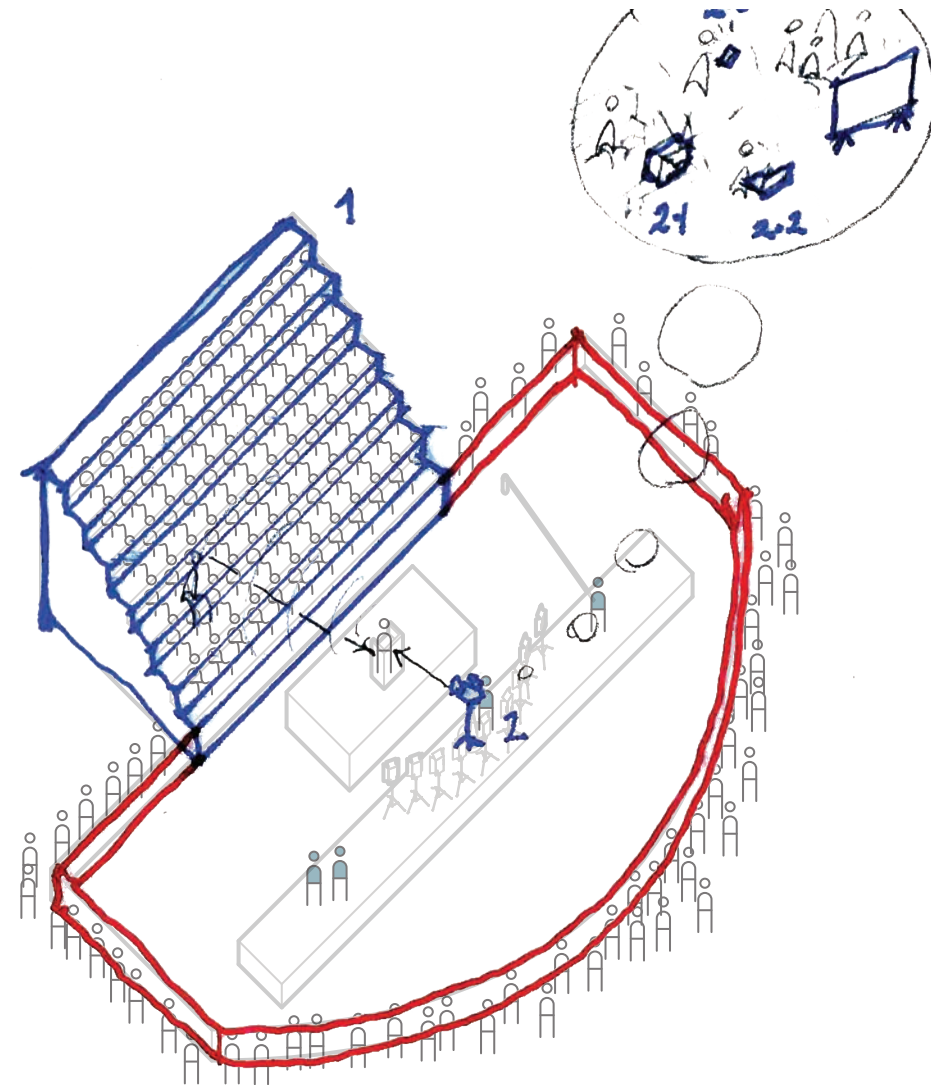
Anything that allows action to happen, or assists it. A window can be used by someone to throw something out, or let air in. A stand can be climbed and used to get the attention of surrounding crowds.

A few examples of enablers and disablers can be seen in the following political scenarios. These scenarios have been selected to be as common and neutral as possible, and contain as many broad ranged *things* as possible.

These things these devices can be described as **tools** in the urban space that serve specific functions. As tools, they have the capacity to be used for functions it wasn't intended for but capable of executing.

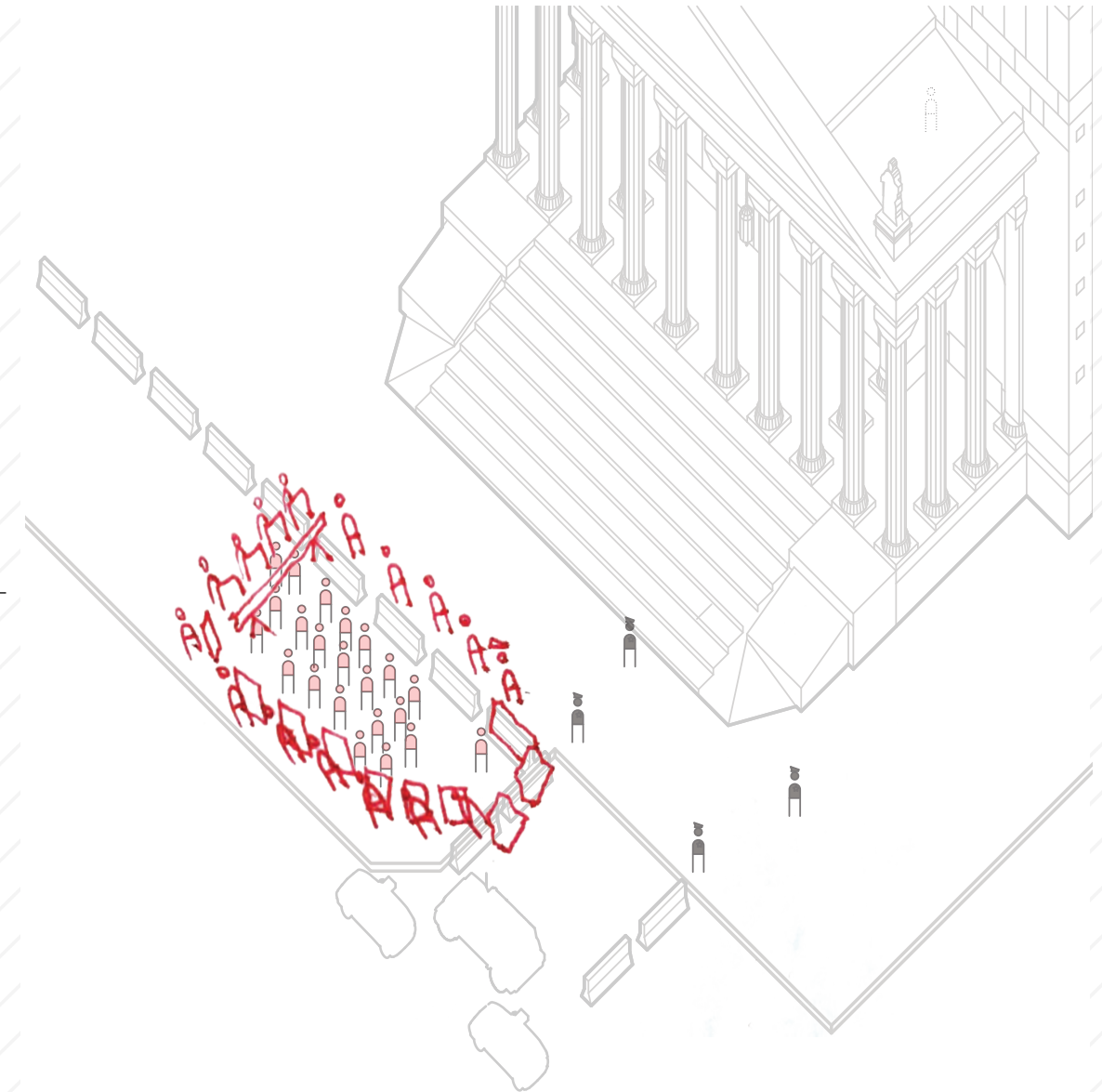
## Political Rallies/ Campaign Speeches

Can be set up **Anywhere** with enough **open space**



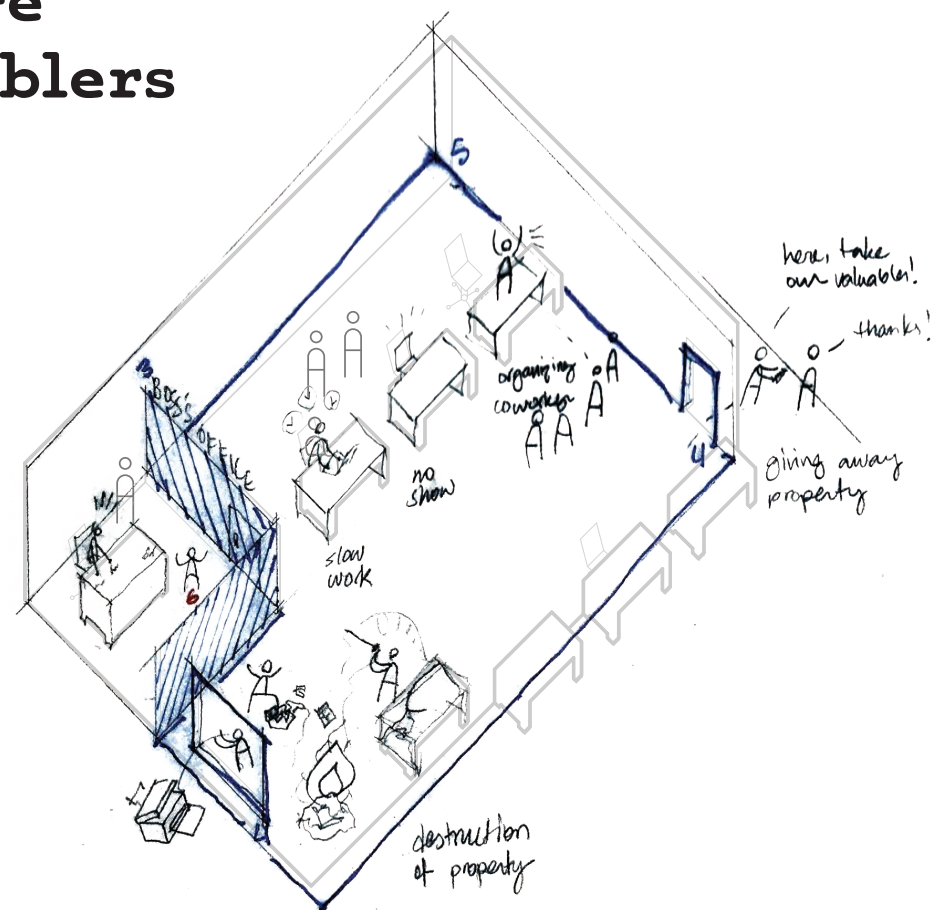
## Protesting Legal Cases

Commonly outside **Courthouses**  
Sometimes outside Legal offices, Town Halls etc.





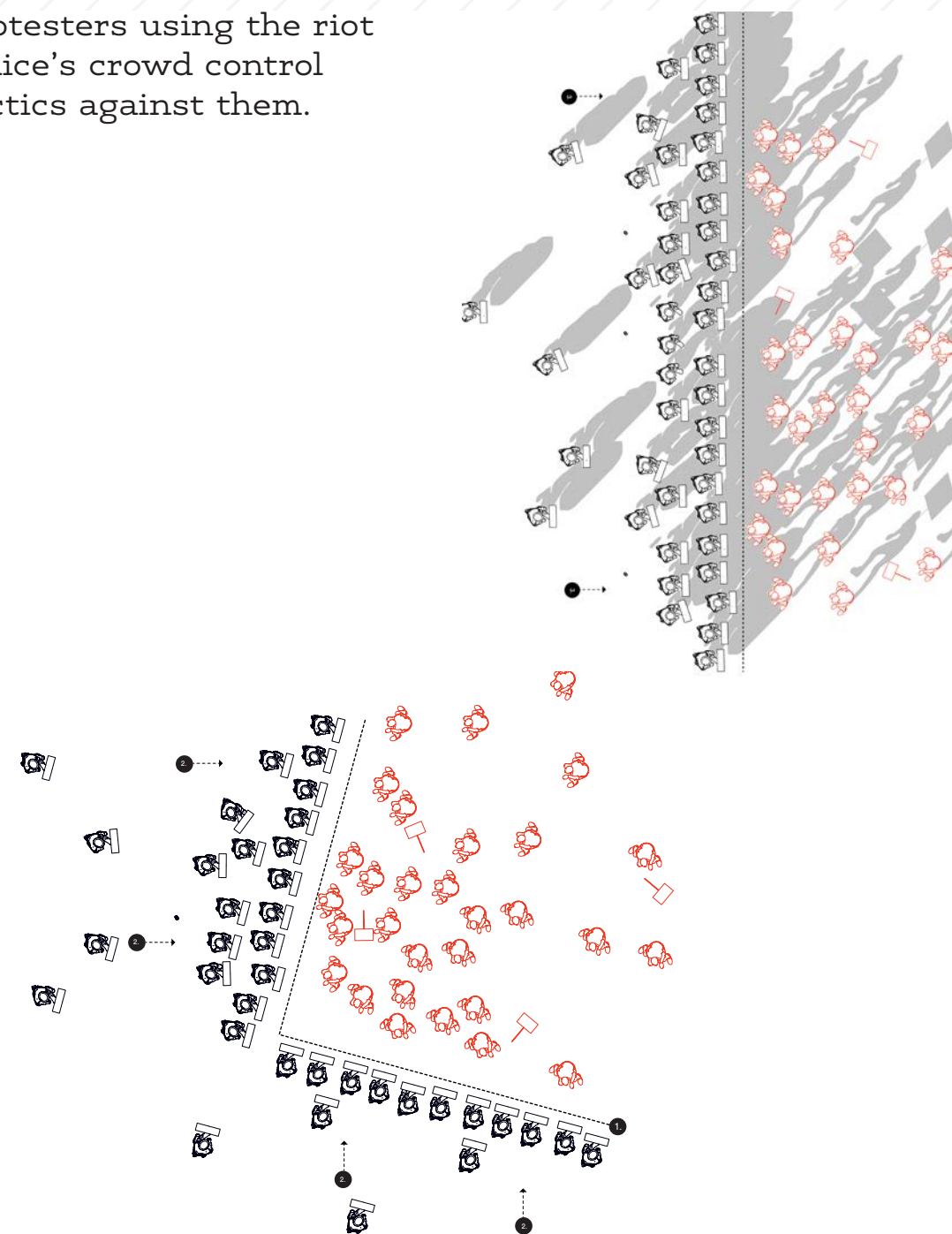
## More Enablers



This is a typical office scenario. We aim to draw workers trying various means of gaining control over their leader, the manager or boss in the enclosed room on the left.

His room is meant to show private zones within greater public space. This office is otherwise accessible to anyone who works there.

Protesters using the riot police's crowd control tactics against them.



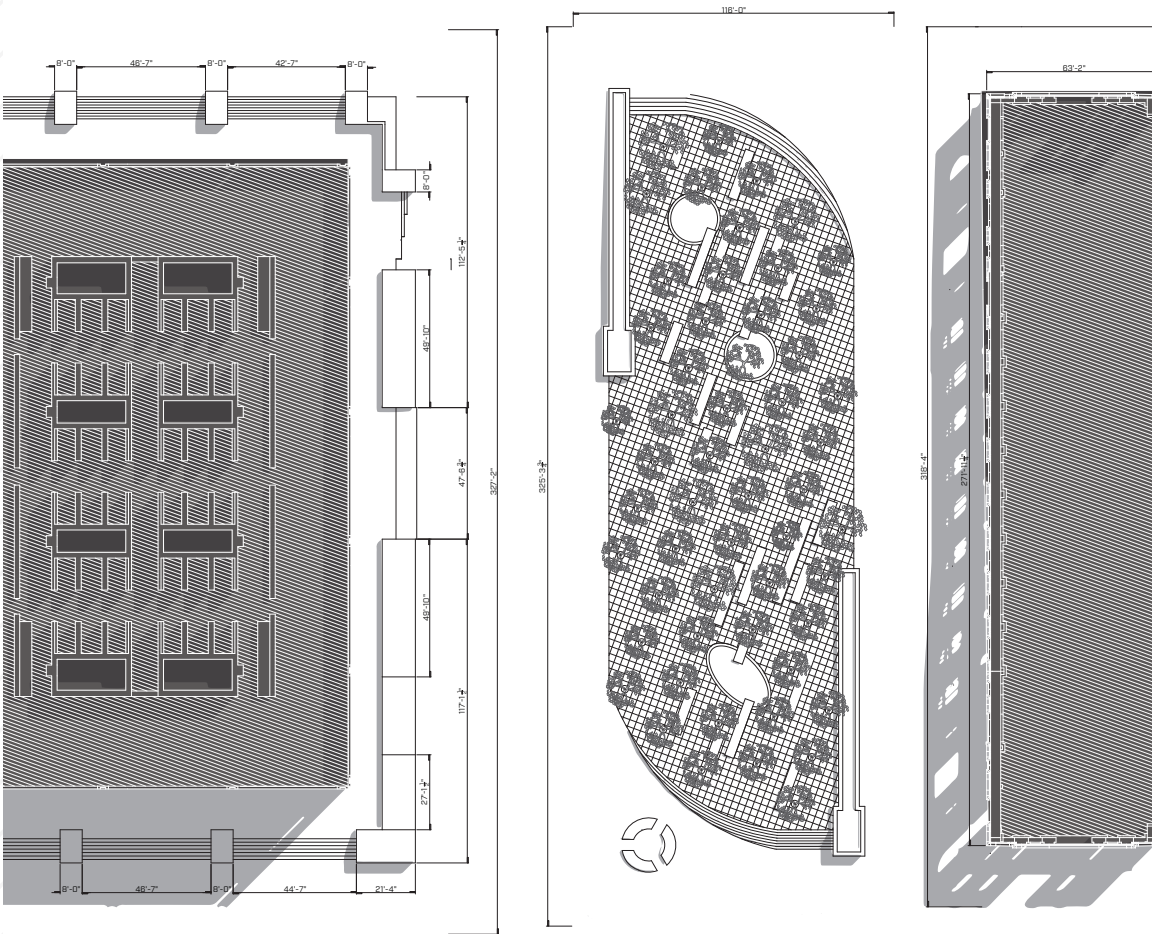
**SENSITIVE PAGE**

**SENSITIVE PAGE**

# Case Study: OWS

The territory for activism needs the right conditions in order for it to be successful. Conditionally, public spaces and thresholds between public and private are desired. To test this Zuccotti Park was analyzed for it's current conditions. The goal was to see how the current conditions assist protest and the architecture that it

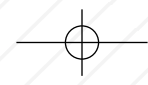
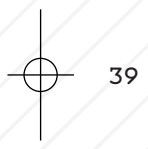
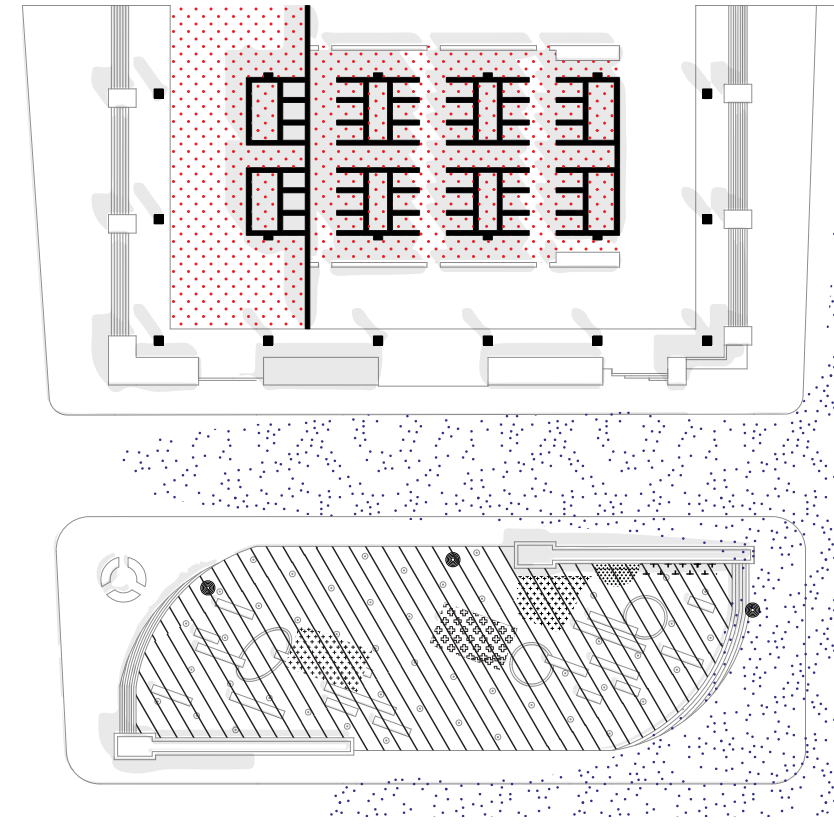
generates. These findings will be applied towards a site for this project, Foley Square. Contextually the project will be set in the near future. Manhattan at this point in time will be a city state where it's government center gets a retreated to allow for a direct relationship between activism and politics.





OWS were eventually kicked out of Zuccatti Park on November 15. This NYT article from later the same day breaks down the events as they unfolded from 1 AM.<sup>9</sup>

**1:45 a.m.**  
Officers move through the park, clearing protesters. Sanitation workers follow, picking up any belongings left behind. Police set up a perimeter to keep out supporters who begin streaming into the area. They arrest 28 people on the northern perimeter.



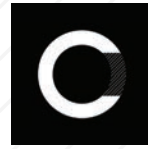
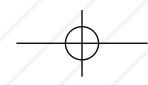
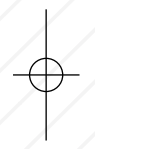
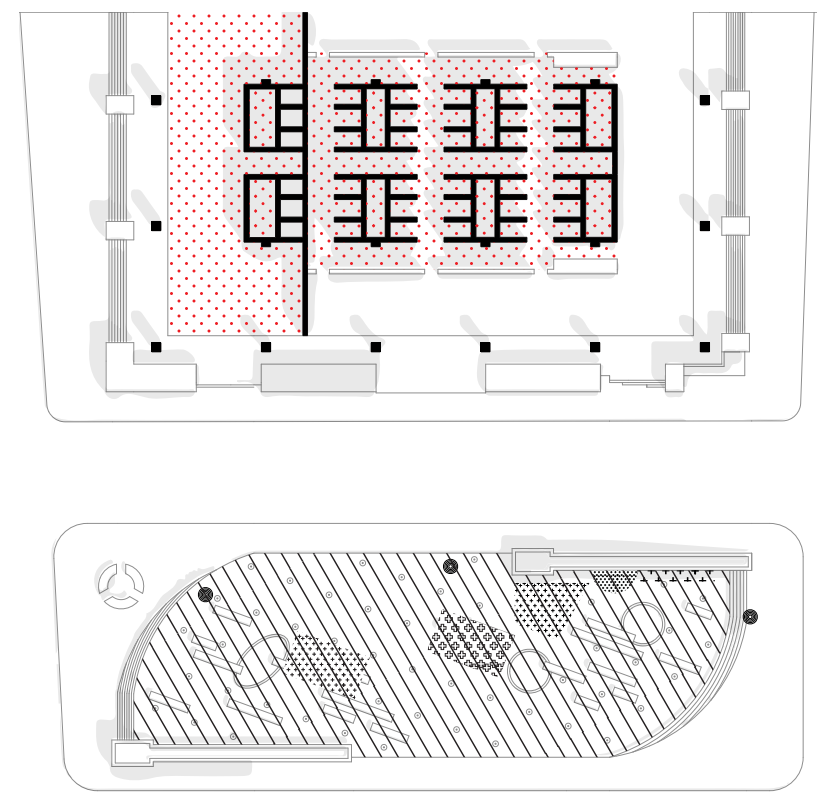
[HOME PAGE](#) [TODAY'S PAPER](#) [VIDEO](#) [MOST POPULAR](#) [TIMES TOPICS](#)

**The New York Times** **N.Y. / Region**

[WORLD](#) [U.S.](#) [N.Y. / REGION](#) [BUSINESS](#) [TECHNOLOGY](#) [SCIENCE](#) [HEALTH](#) [SPORTS](#) [OPINION](#) [ARTS](#)

Published: November 15, 2011  
**A Surprise Nighttime Raid, Then a Tense Day of Maneuvering in the Streets**  
Almost two months after Occupy Wall Street protesters took over Zuccotti Park, police cleared out the encampment in the early hours of Nov. 15. Shortly after midnight, police trucks moved in and took up positions along the park's perimeter.

**1 a.m.**  
Police turn on klieg lights, announcements boom over loudspeakers, and officers spread leaflets ordering protesters to leave.

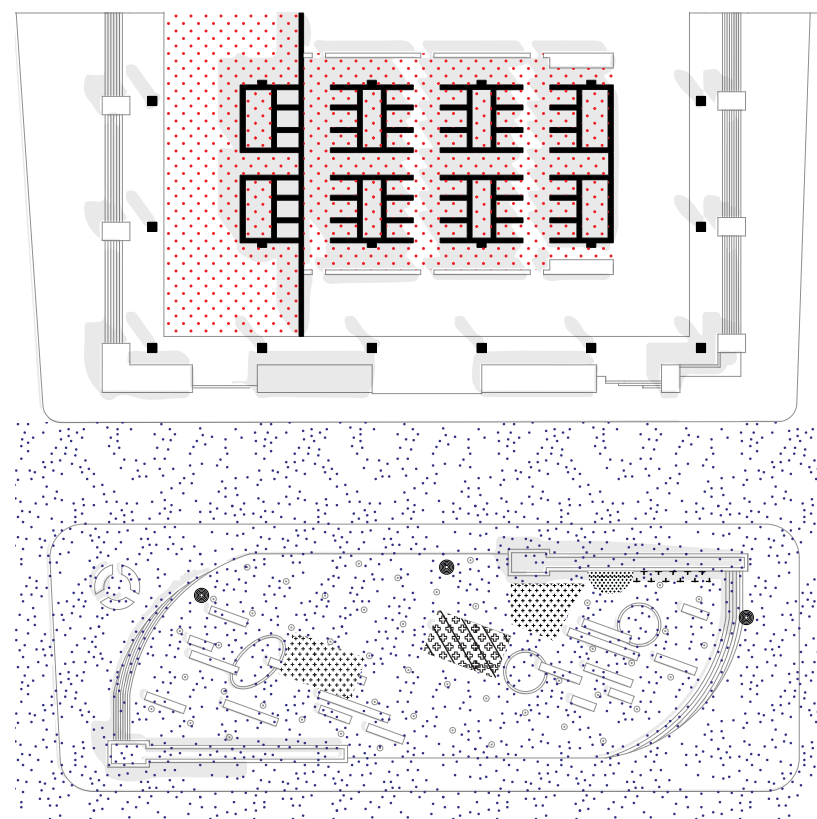






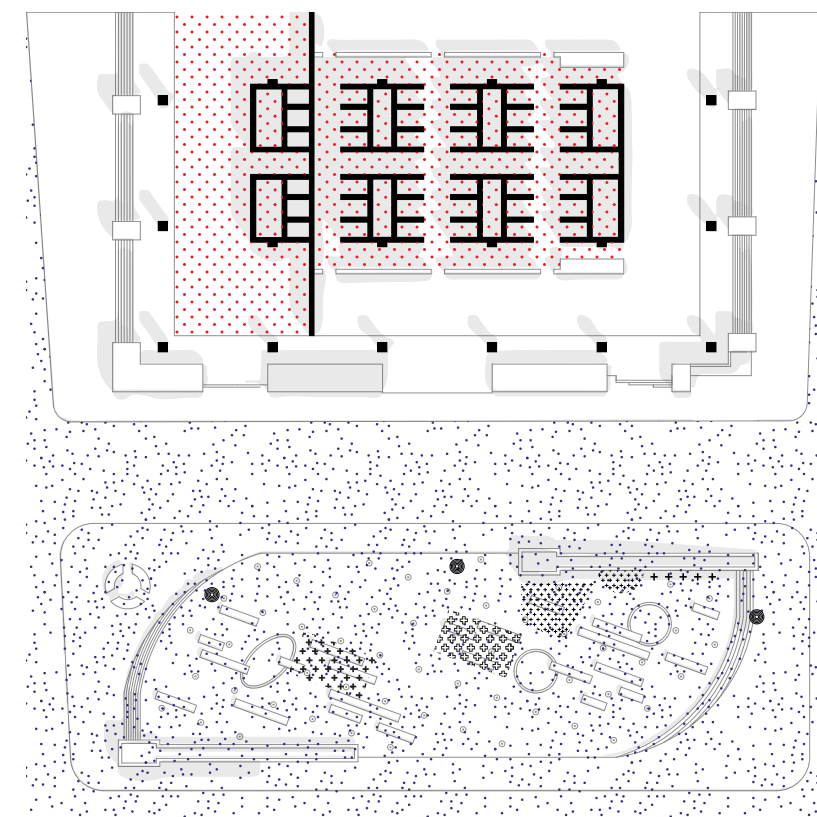
**3:30 a.m.**

A core group of protesters locks arms in the camp's kitchen area in the center of the park, refusing to leave. Police begin methodically removing and arresting them.



**4:15 a.m.**

Park is cleared.



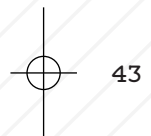
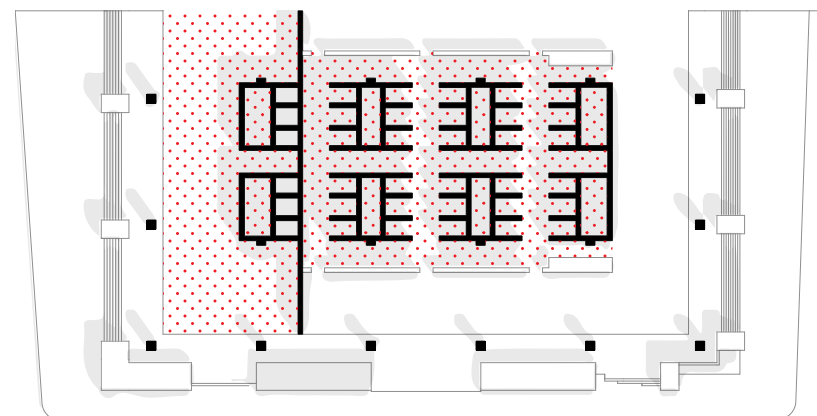
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**1 p.m.**

Police clear Duarte Square, arresting protesters and several journalists. Protesters march south, shutting down Broadway. They ring Zuccotti Park, which is occupied by police.



43

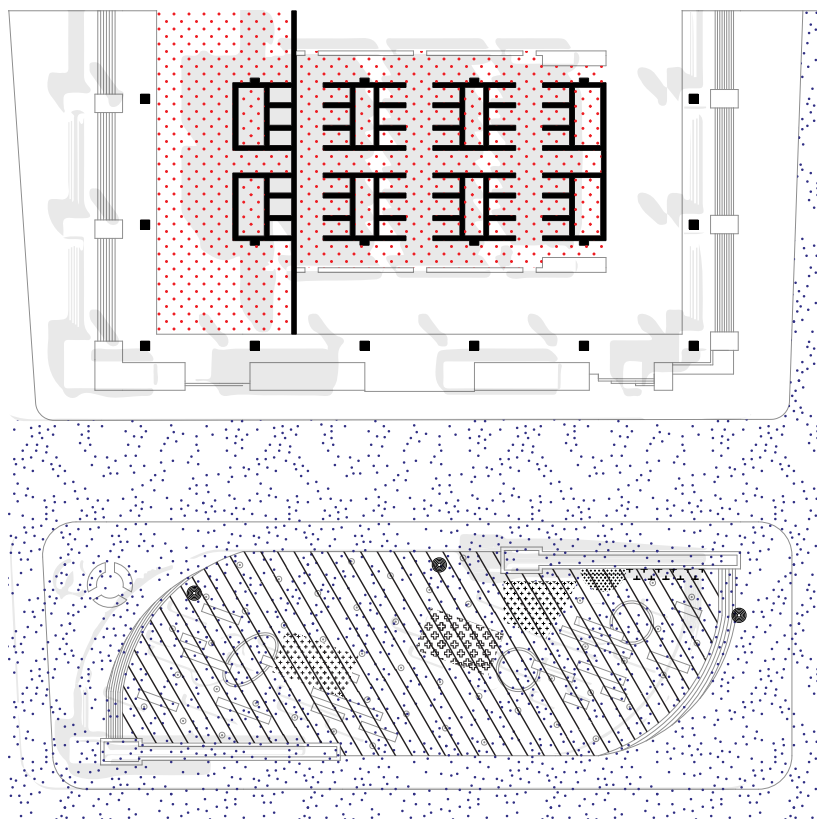


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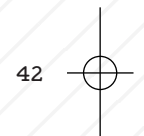


**5 a.m.**

Clashes break out south of the park, as protestors hurl objects and jump on a police car.



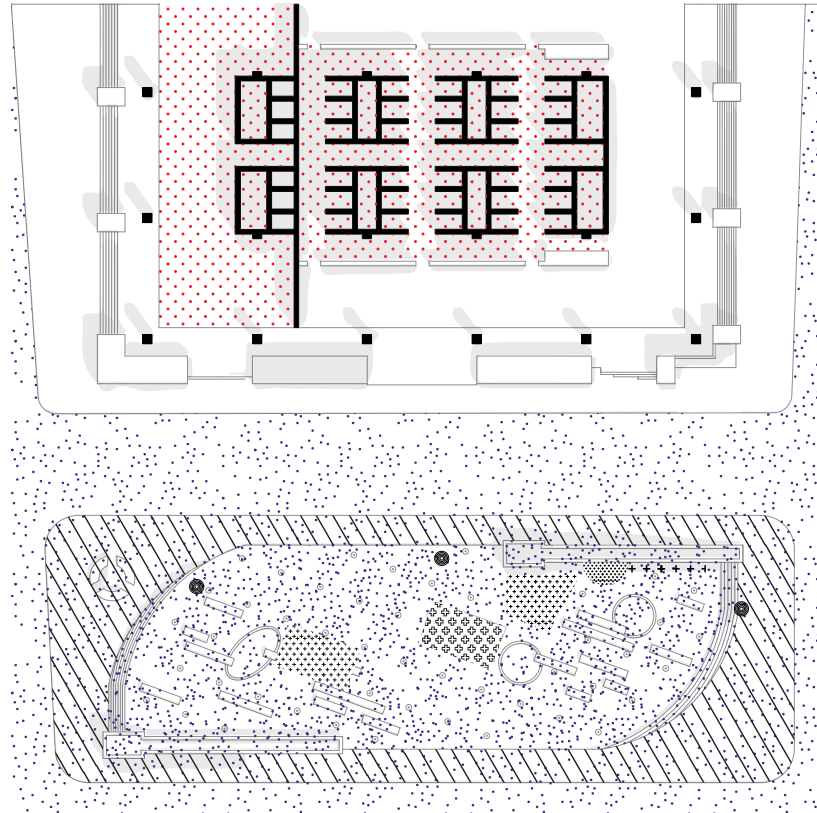
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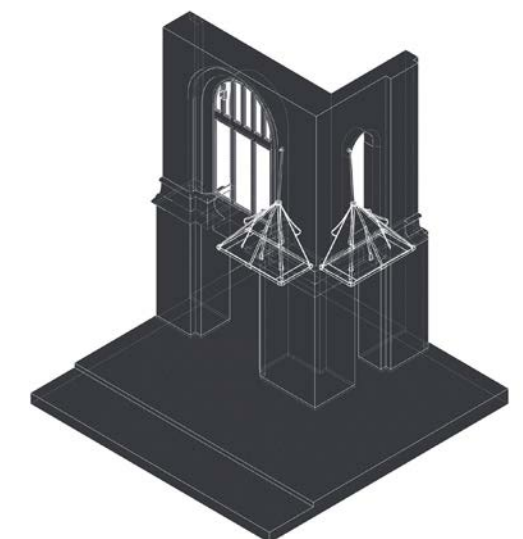
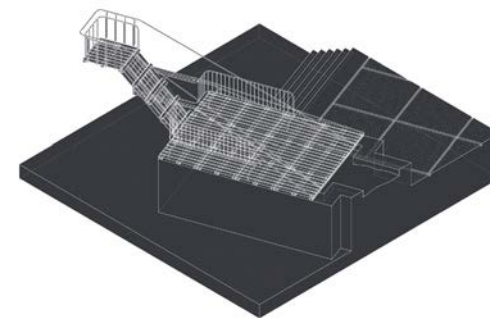
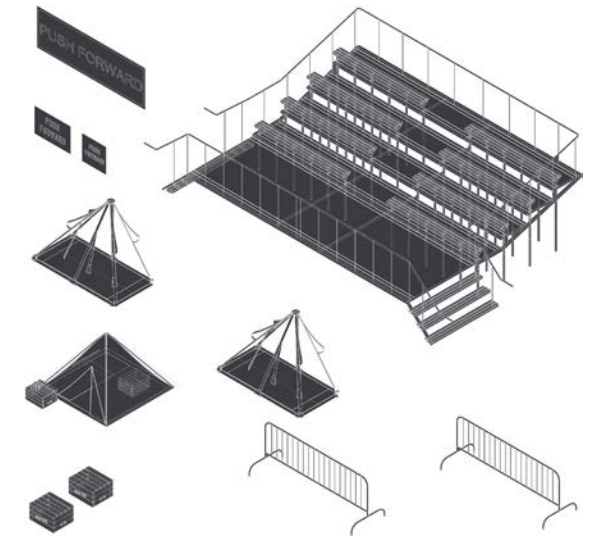
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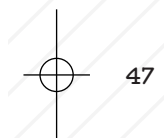
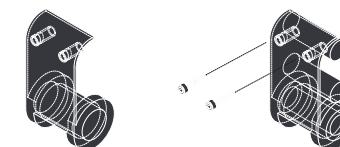
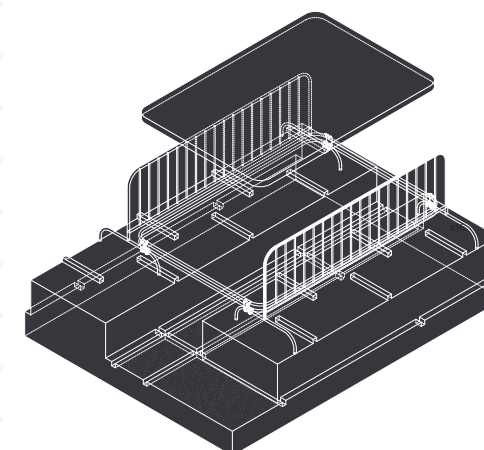
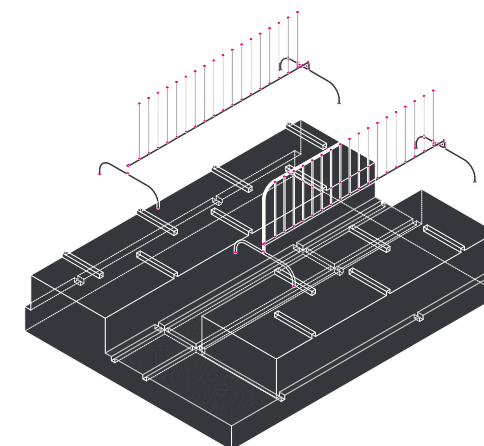
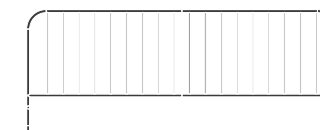
5:33 p.m.

Police allow hundreds of protesters to return to Zuccotti Park after a judge says they can stay, but without camping gear.



The following objects are simple, easy to put together mechanisms that can create formidable stages in an urban public context. We placed these objects on Zuccotti park to analyze prospective uses of the architectural conditions.

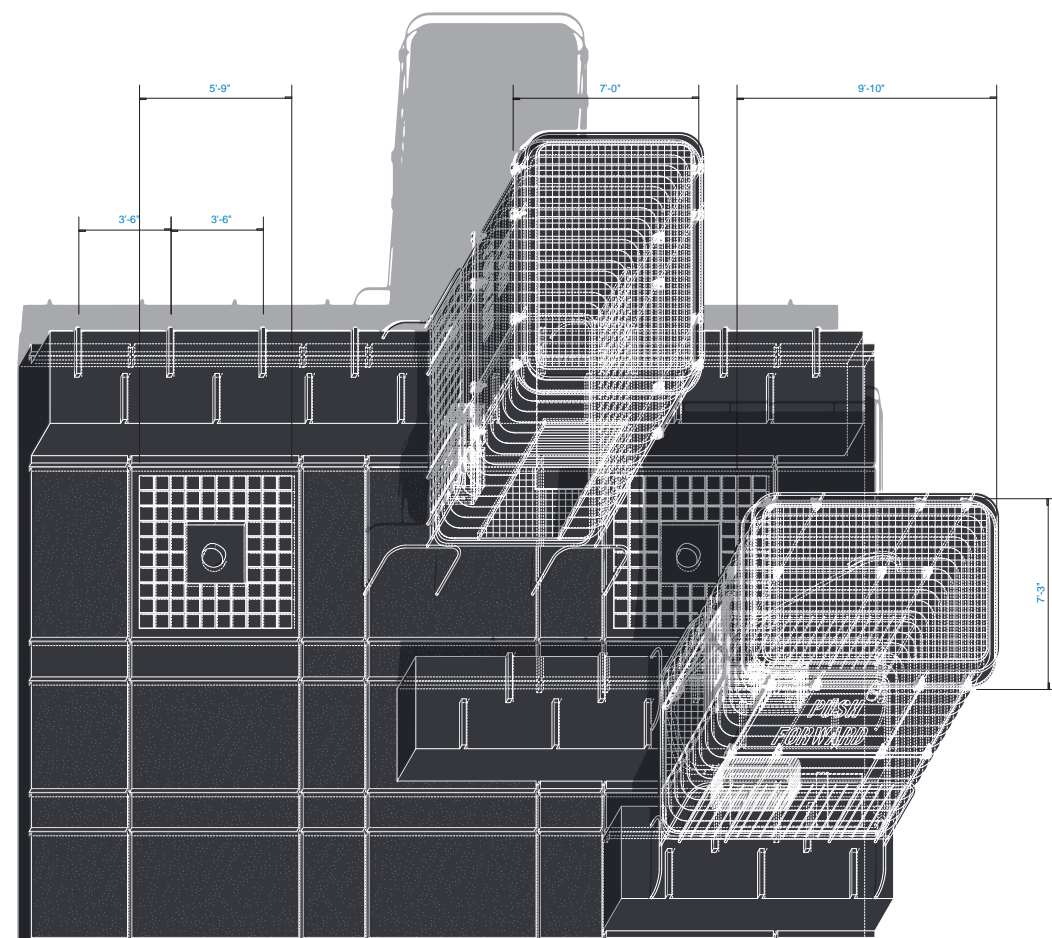




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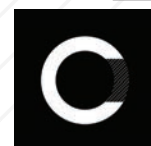
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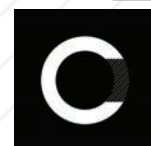
Metal tents attached to  
ground's stone pattern.



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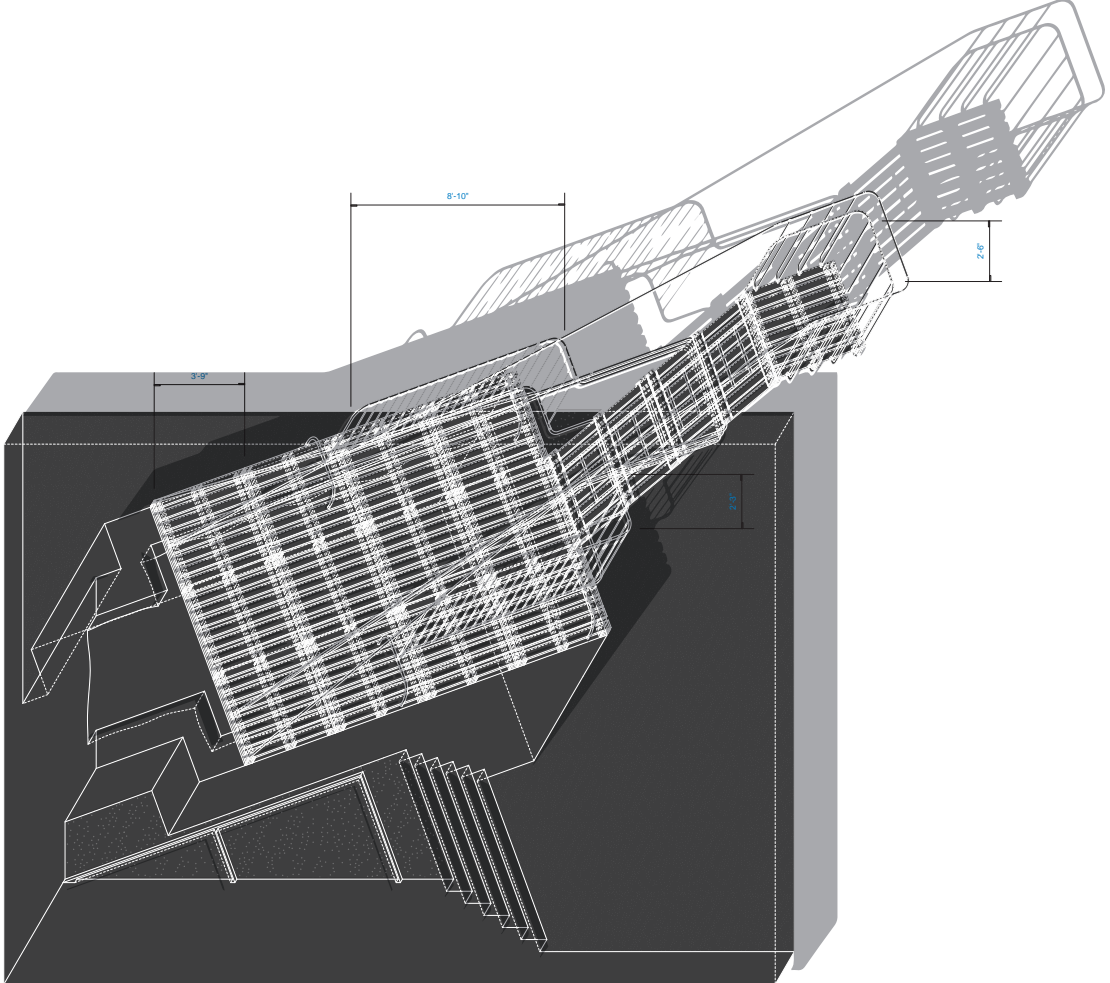


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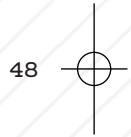
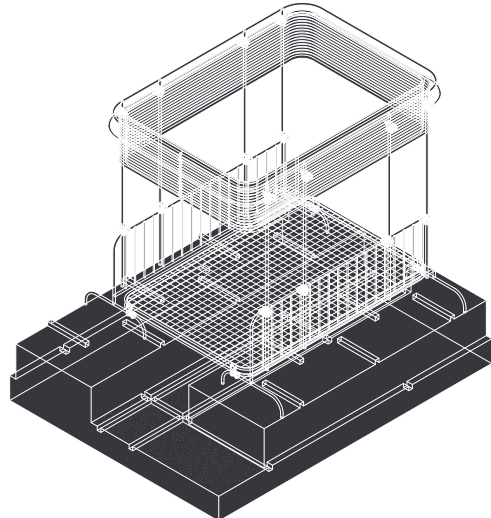
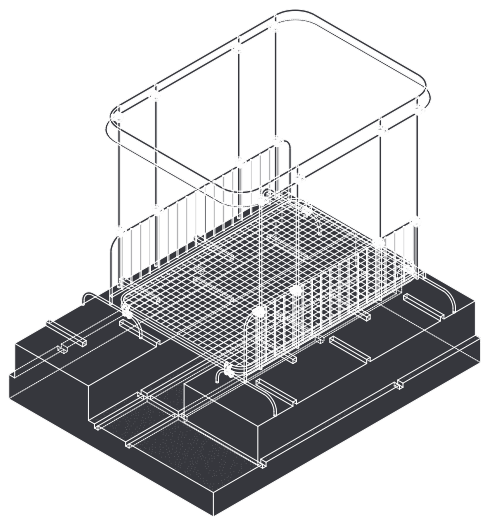
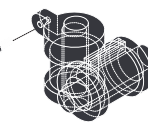
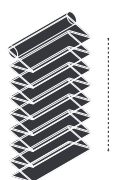


46





8' tall podium





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Gavin Grindon, Catherine Flood, eds.,  
Disobedient Objects (London, V&A, 2015)

Everyday objects can be utilized as tools for dissent, but what is considered everyday to begin with? Could larger, potentially structural elements become architectural objects of dissent, while remaining commercially accessible and easily transportable?



fig4 Marwan Kaabour, Lock on device

lock-on device

The lock on device is symbolic as it prevents a person from being removed from an area.

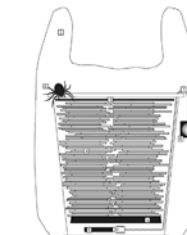


fig5 Marwan Kaabour, Bucket pamphlet bomb

bucket pamphlet bomb

The bucket pamphlet bomb is meant to spread leaflets to a crowd. Does not do any harm as it consists of paper and a bucket.



fig6 Marwan Kaabour, Makeshift tear gas mask

make shift tear gas mask

The make shift tear gas mask is easily produced using a oxygen mask and a water bottle.

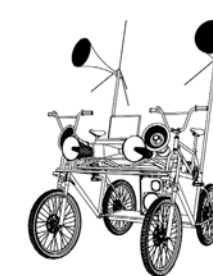


fig1 Marwan Kaabour, Bike bloc

bike-bloc

The bike bloc is an object that is a mobile loudspeaker. It is drivable by two persons who intend to get their message across.

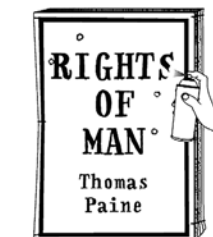


fig2 Marwan Kaabour, Book bloc shield

book-bloc shield

The book-bloc shield is an object that protects individuals from riots. It is more symbolic as it is meant to resemble a large book.

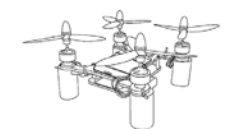


fig3 Marwan Kaabour, Fione

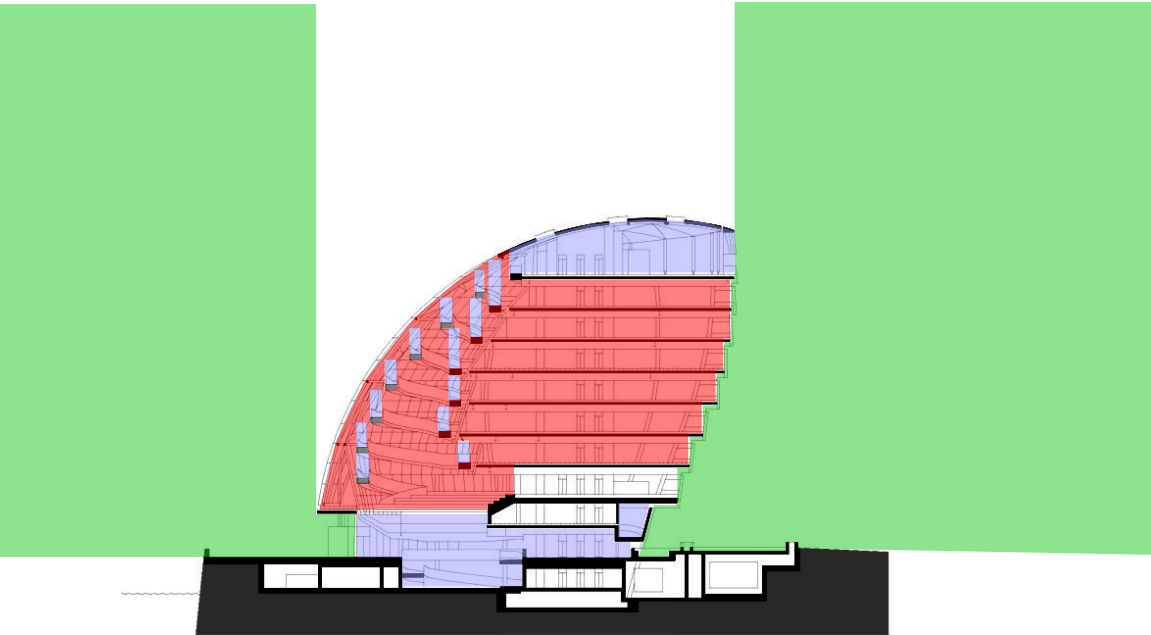
fione

The Fione is a makeshift drone utilized to film and document events.

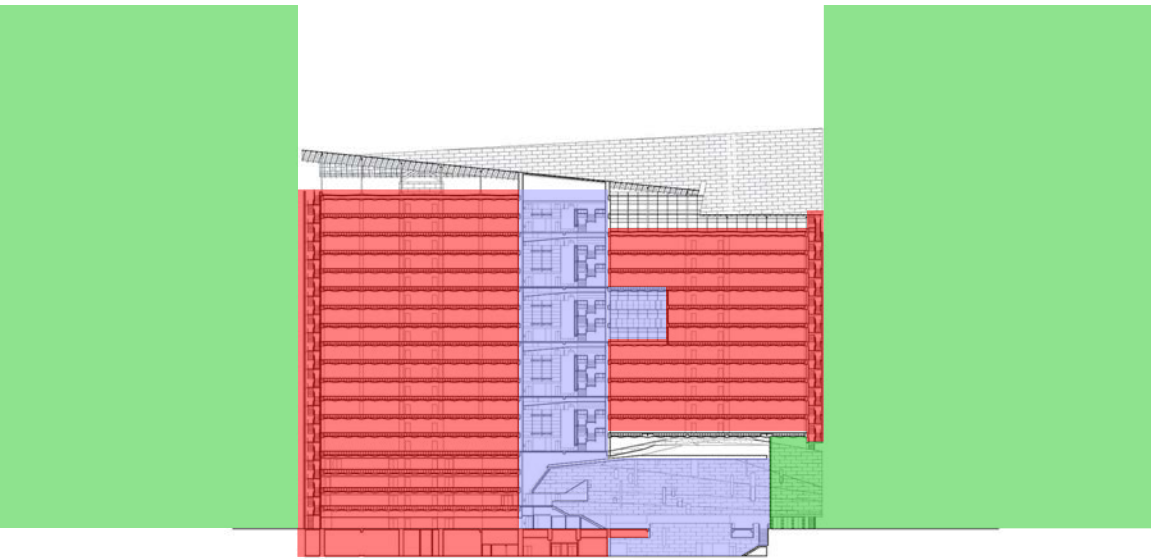
# Modern Civic Architecture

Looking at examples of modern civic architecture we noticed a trend of dedicating public space as a means of creating equity between officials and citizens.

- Fully public  
24 hour accessibility
- Semi-public  
9am-5pm limited accessibility
- Private  
Only accessible to officials and staff



SECTION A-A SECTION



SECTION 03  
SAN FRANCISCO FEDERAL BUILDING

50ft | 101



# The Reality of Modern Civic Architecture

However, these public spaces are often not nearly as public as they claim. Security checks, limited hours and constant surveillance prevent people from using these spaces as freely as other urban public areas. Can accessibility of space be manipulated to allow fully public areas to coexist within private spaces? How far can architects push an idea or concept knowing the risks for the client? What if semi-public spaces were extensions of the urban public space rather than an enclosure within a building?



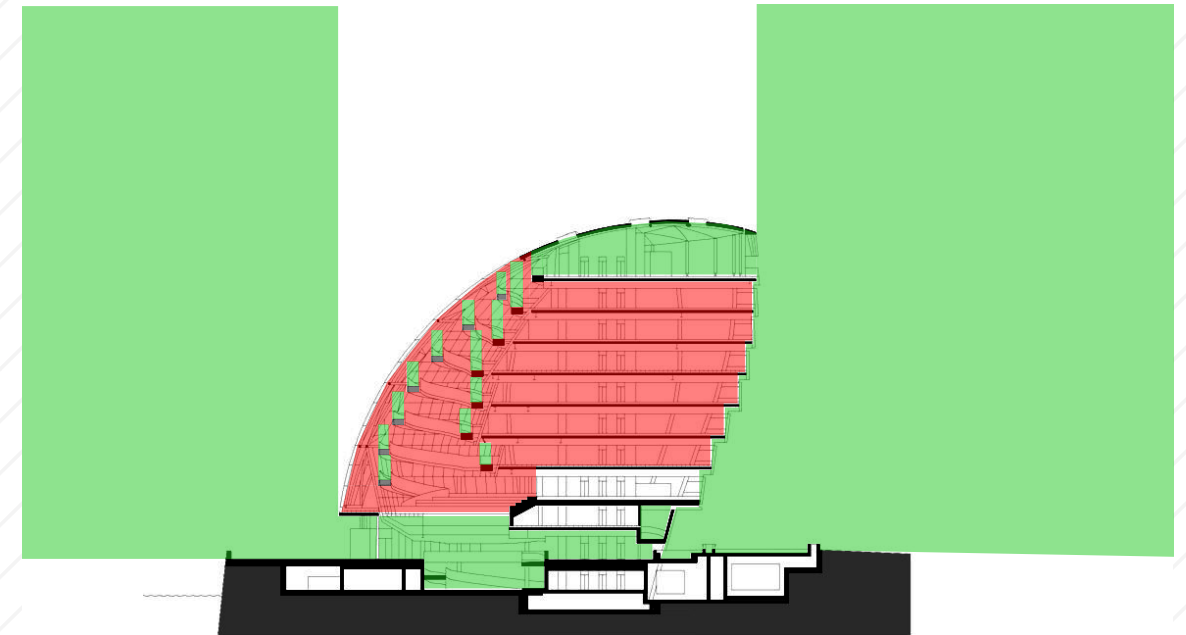
**Fully public**  
24 hour accessibility



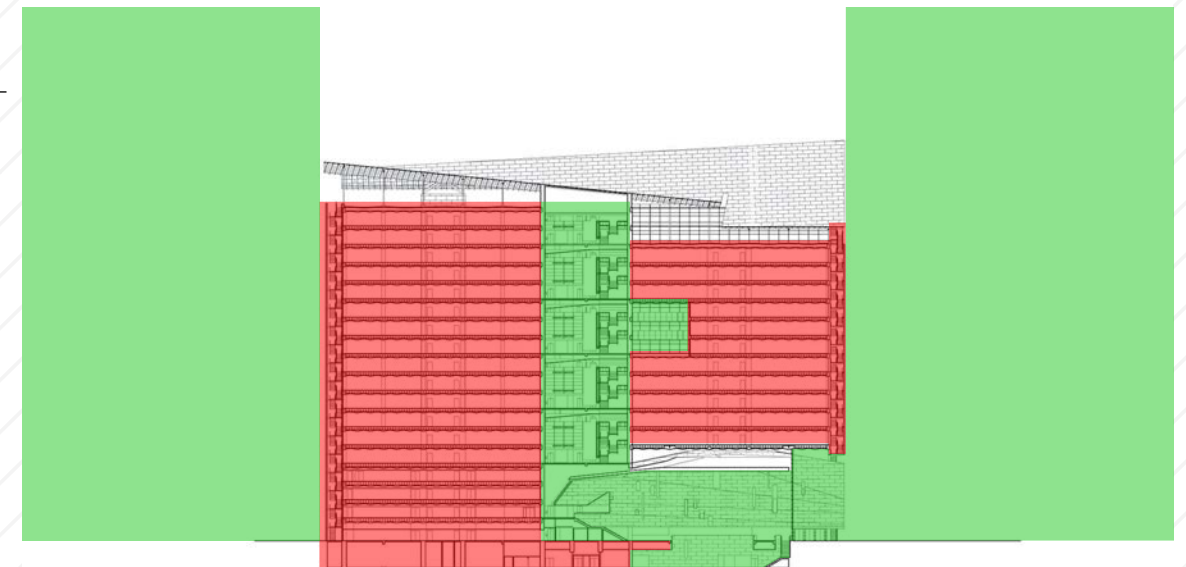
**Semi-public**  
9am-5pm limited accessibility



**Private**  
Only accessible to officials and staff



SECTION A-A SECTION



**SECTION 03**  
SAN FRANCISCO FEDERAL BUILDING

50ft | 101



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## Chapter 3

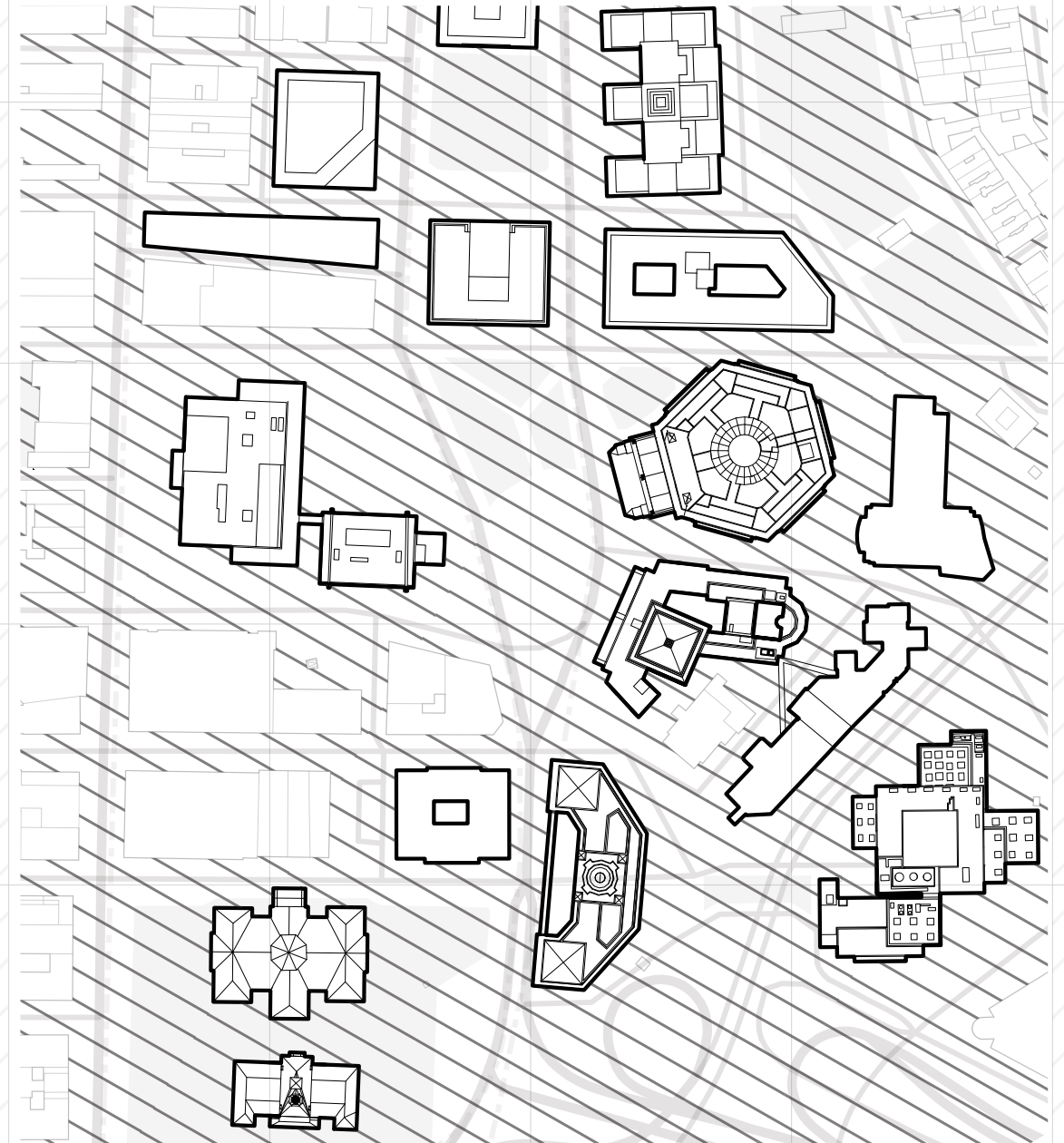
# Site

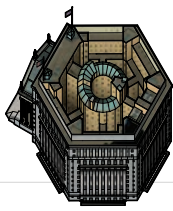
Since as early as the post civil war era, New York City has been developing the area of downtown sitting on top of what used to be Collect Pond, a former Native American water reserve, into a massive civic complex. This area, now appropriately known as Civic Center, houses many key headquarters for the city, including Municipal, Judicial, Federal and Treasural centers of operation within New York City, County and State.

### New York Civic Center, Lower Manhattan

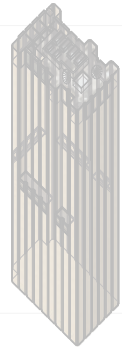
**Black Hatch:** Public space

Outlined buildings are either federal buildings or house governmental programs

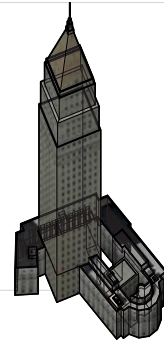




**NY County Supreme Court**  
Houses the Civil and Appellate terms of the New York State Supreme Court, as well as the office of the New



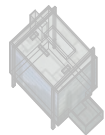
**AT&T Long Lines**  
Long disputed occupancies, notably the NSA's mass surveillance hub TITANPOINT, and the SKIDROWE satellite intelligence



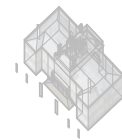
**Thurgood Marshall Federal Court**  
The US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and the US district Court for the Southern



**David A. Dinkins Municipal Building**  
HQ of citywide administrative services, Dept. of Finance, the Tax Commission,



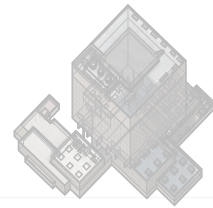
**US Court of International Trade**  
An Article III court, which renders it inferior to federal courts, but financially



**New York City Hall**  
Seat of the New York City government. The ceremonial office of the mayor is also in city hall.



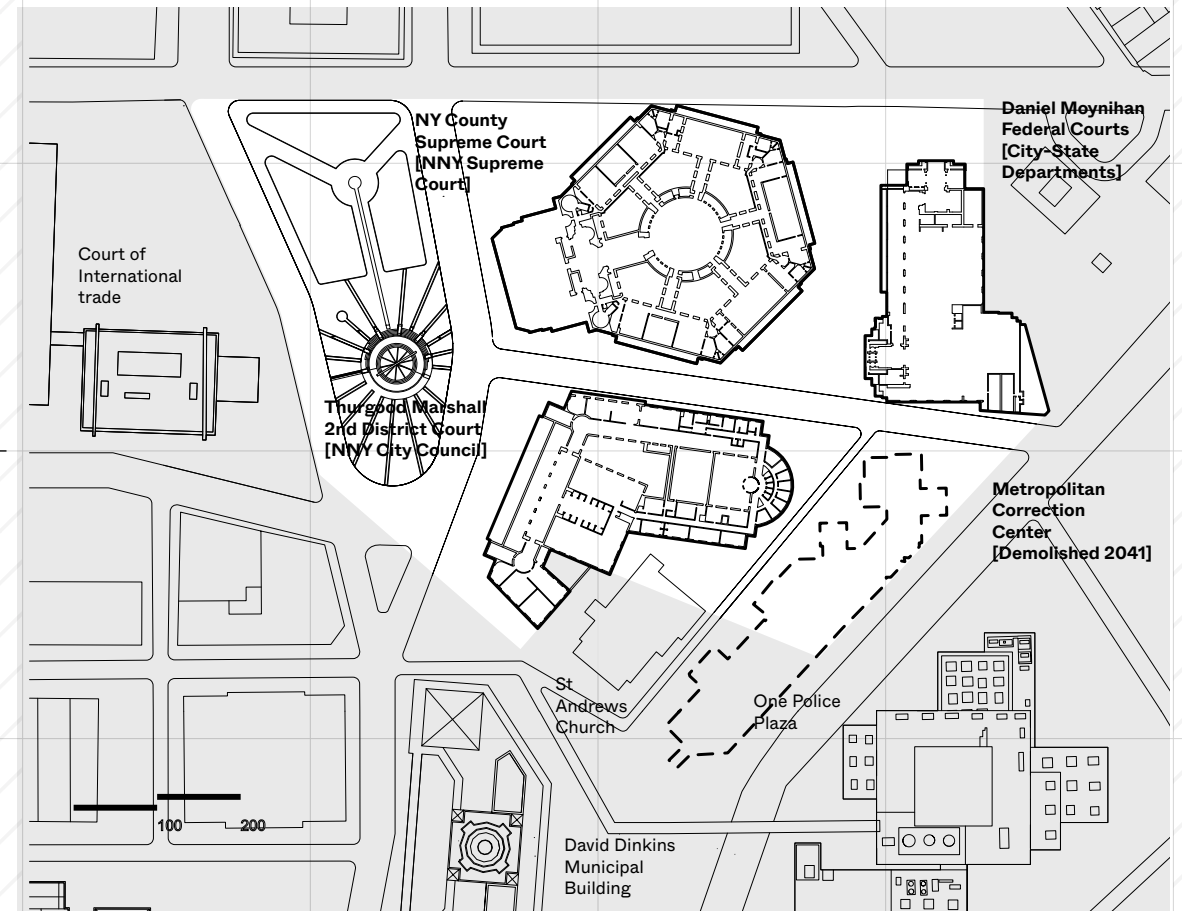
**Tweed Court**  
Former New York City County Courthouse. Built by mythically corrupt Boss Tweed, prominent 19th century New York



**One Police Plaza**  
Headquarters of the New York City Police Dept. A bridge over Park row connects One Police Plaza to the Municipal building

## Boundary of Domus Populi

The three buildings within the site that remain are: Thurgood Marshall court, NY County Supreme court and Daniel Moynihan former federal courts. MCC was demolished in 2041 as citizen watched in great rejoice.





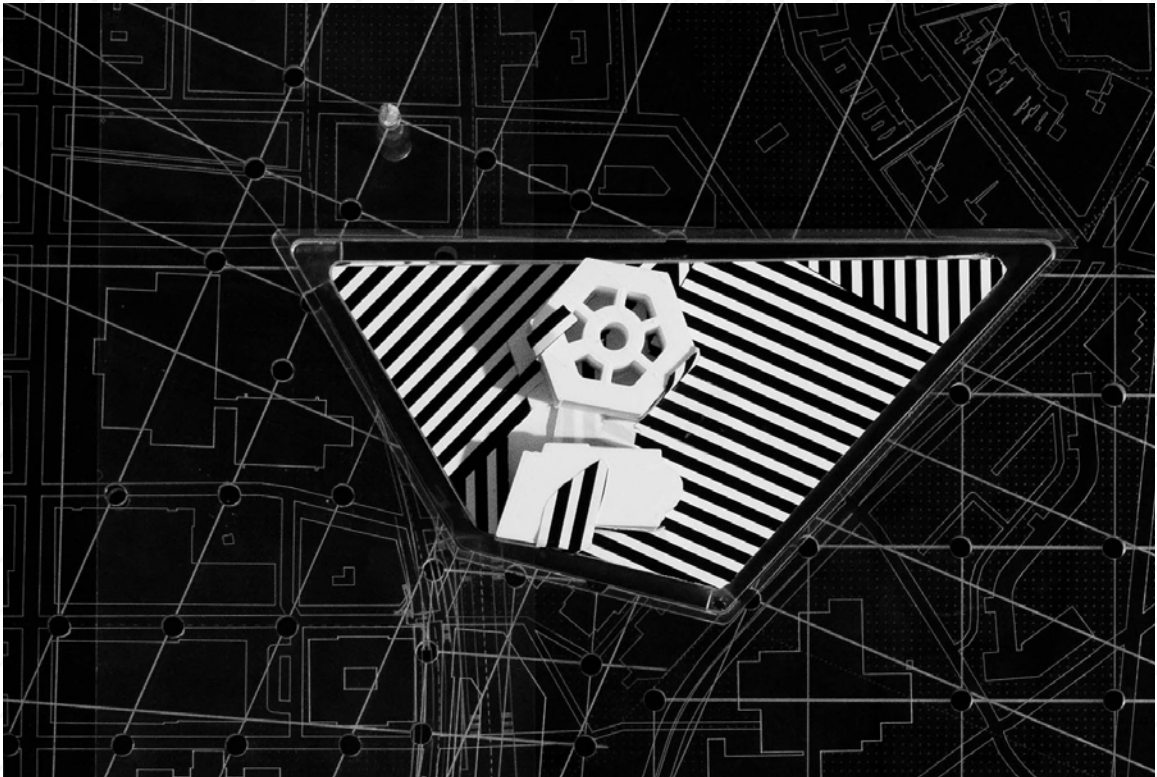






Site render, showing connections to  
Lafayette ave, Park Row and Worth st.









In their approach to designing Domus Populi, Counter Office first took the policy and regulation changes, and found architectural means to materialize them. Then, to fulfill its role as a public plaza and a huge swath of ground surface in Downtown, the visual and aesthetic aspects of the ground-scape were considered.

Chapter 4

**Systems  
and  
Methods**



# Political freedoms granted to every citizen of NEW YORK CITY:

## FREEDOM TO ASSEMBLY:

Every NNYC citizen has the right to organize with fellow citizens and demand changes from the government. Whether this takes place within online or direct frames of communication between citizens and officials is completely up to each citizen. Frameworks for both methods of action have been placed to ease access to these services and offer a wide range of variety

## RIGHT TO PETITION:

You can complain! This has been attempted before, but most governments never guaranteed they'd listen to the complaints. We are building systems that ensure your complaint will be heard by letting you keep track of it in complete transparency.

## FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT:

freedom to go anywhere (as long as you have the right passes!)

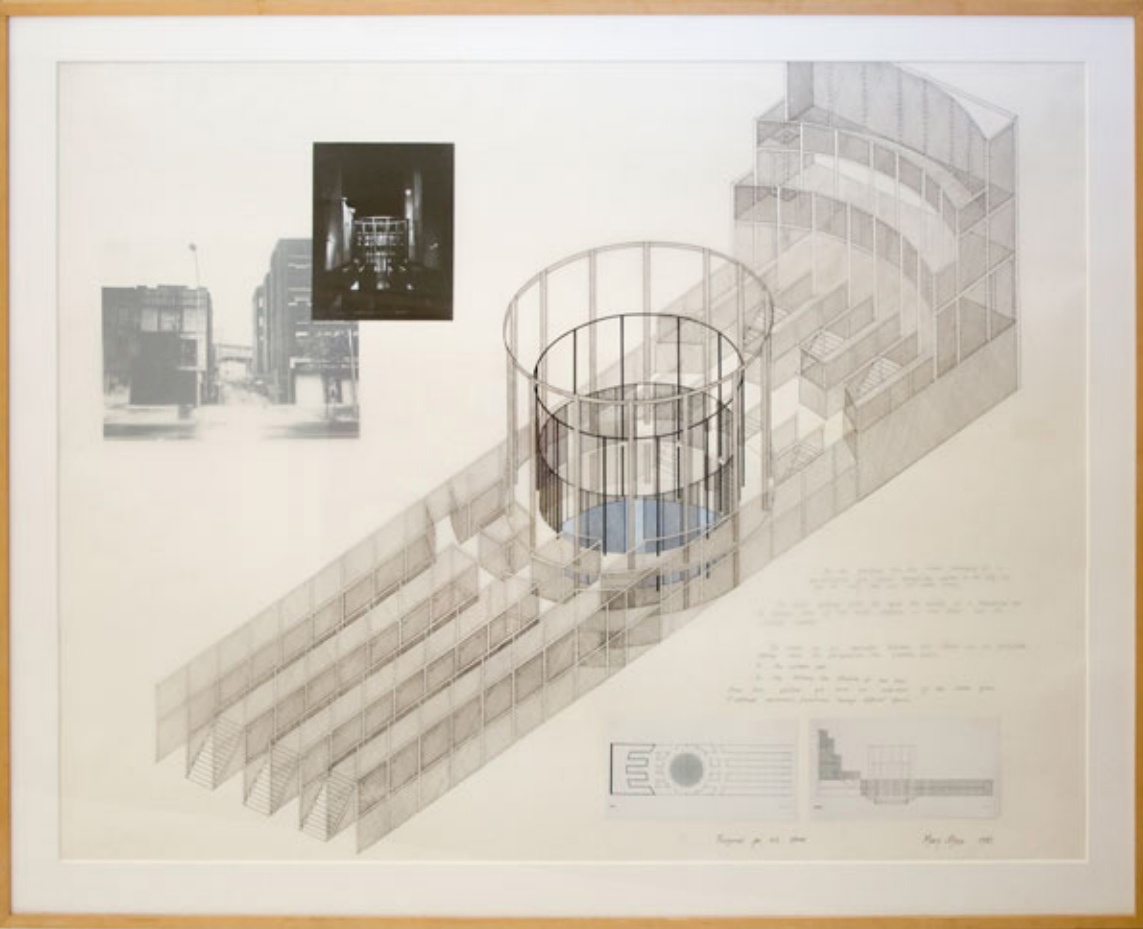
To test the results of a daring experiment, only a portion of civic center was sanctioned, while plans for the rest of the site remained in development. A competition was held to choose the designers of the upgraded civic center. The **primary criteria for the competition** were:

- 1. Increasing **ACCESSIBILITY** to officials and public/state services
- 2. Creating **EQUITY** between public space and government program
- 3. **TRANSPARENCY** of policymaking and official conduct

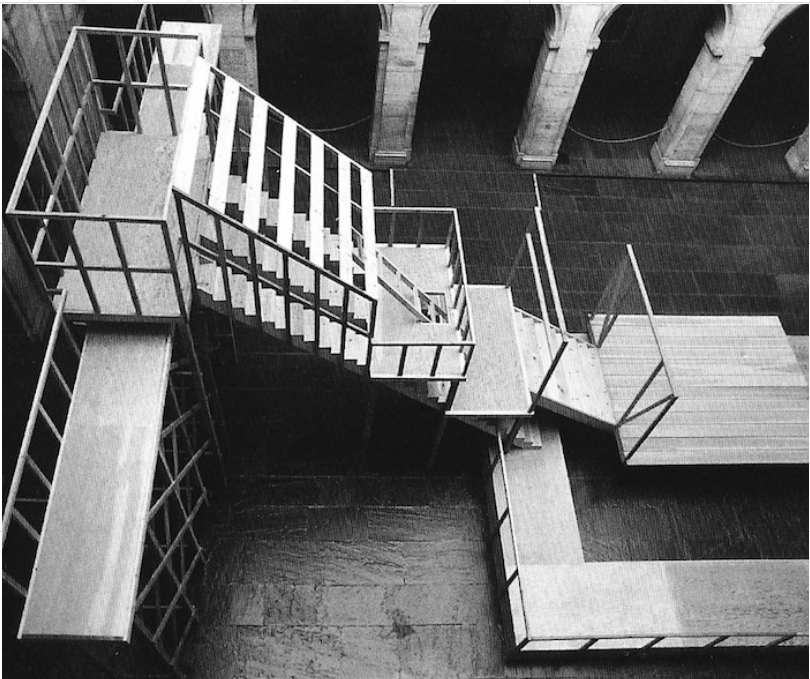
**NNYC**  
Government

# Planar system: OBLIQUE PATTERNS

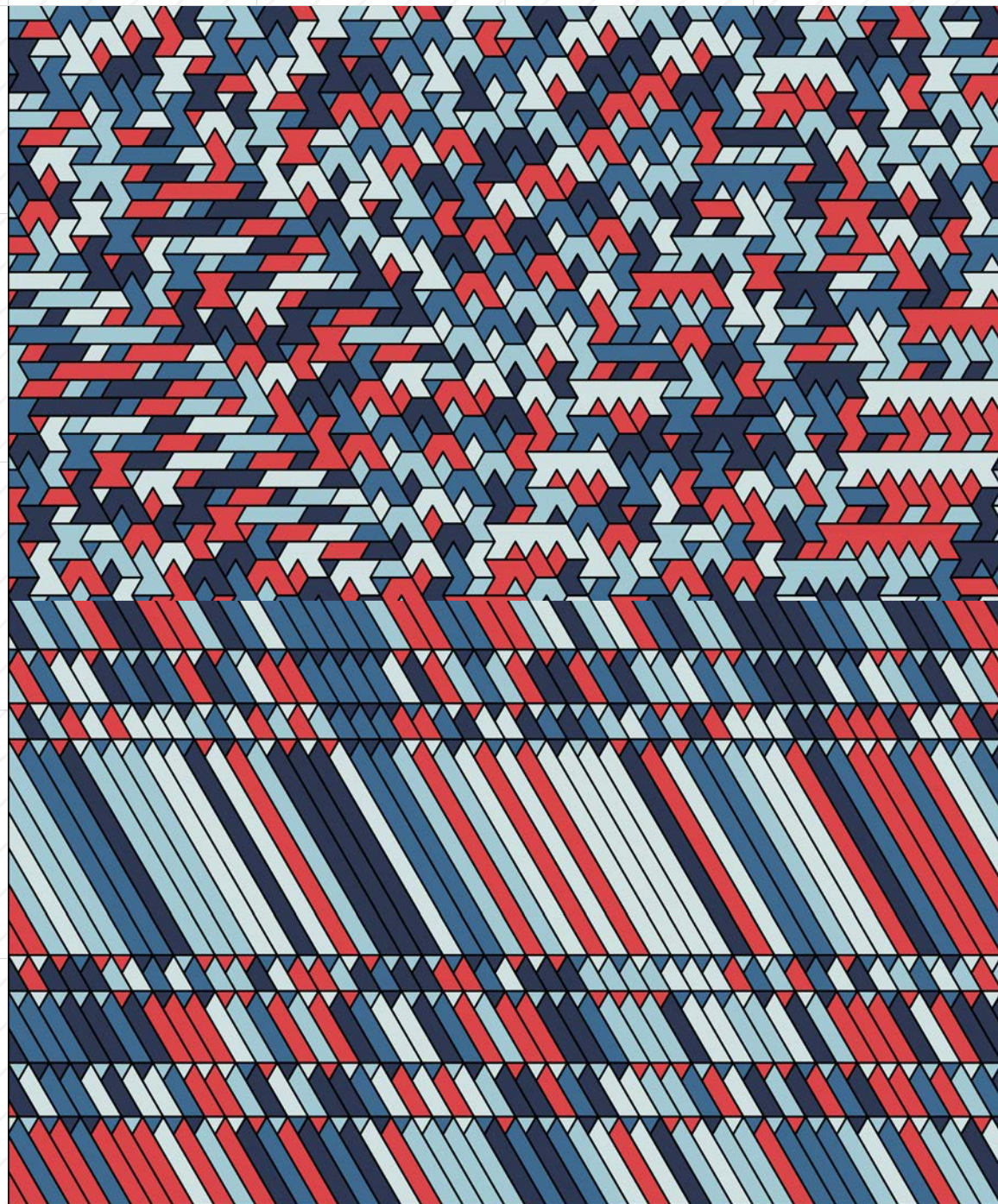
**Mary Miss**  
Mary Miss became an essential artist for our design exploration. Her work revolves around simple geometric planar configurations (2D patterns) that she spatializes via oblique drawing. Her installations are additions to their usually ground surface context that carefully consider surroundings while adding much more spatiality



This technique of lifting flat patterns into space via the oblique became the main mode of designing for the project, to accommodate its majority planar condition while allowing the designers to change spatial connections easily and at will.







Two examples of cellular automata patterns with hexagons as base geometry.  
From <https://generated.space/sketch/hatch-automata/>

### Michael Heizer

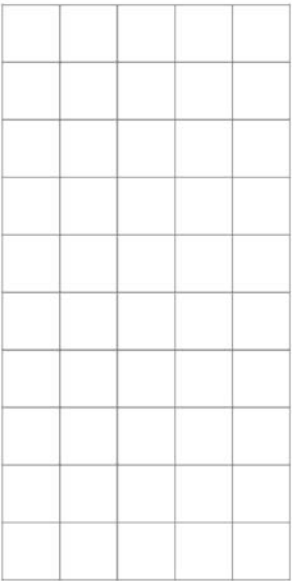
Another Earth Artist, Heizer takes ground patterns and also spatializes them, but not via obliques like Miss, but through looking at the ground itself and infusing it with mystic rituals and programmatic specificity that turns



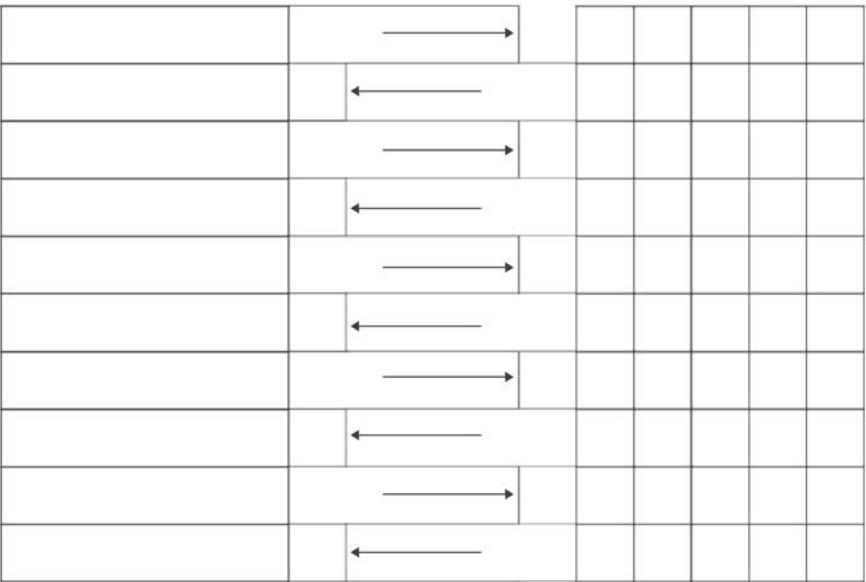




Zone A

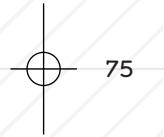
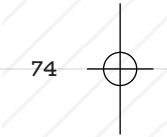
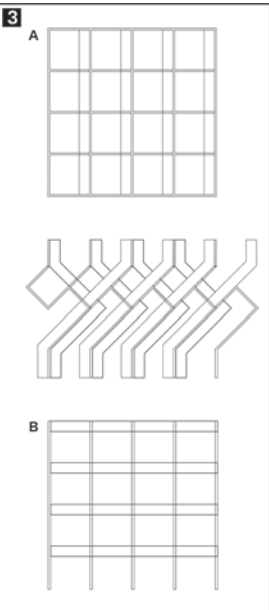
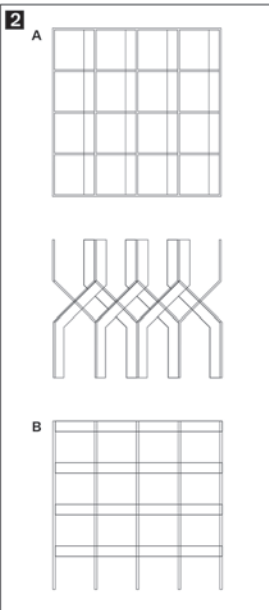
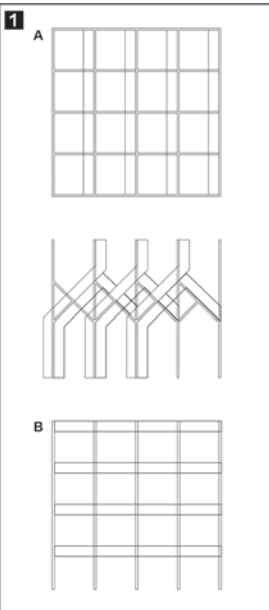
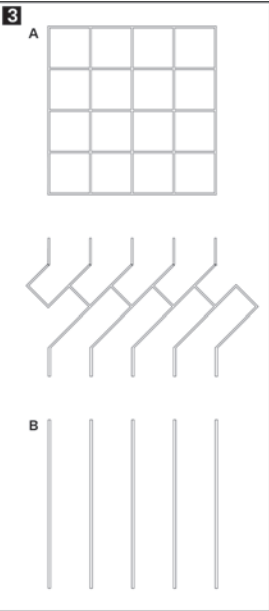
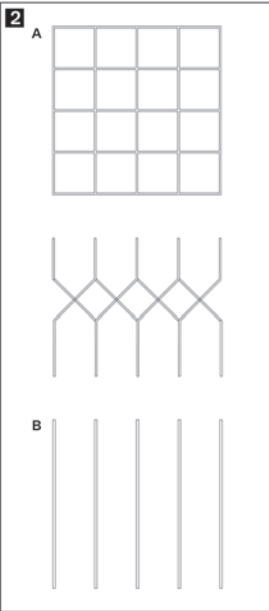
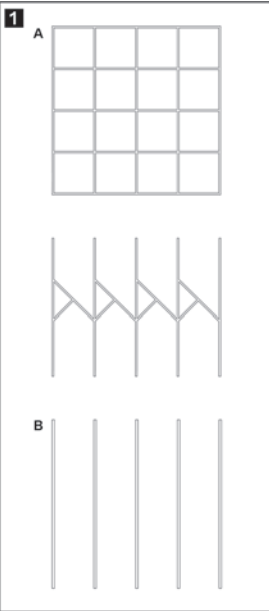


Zone B



Zone A

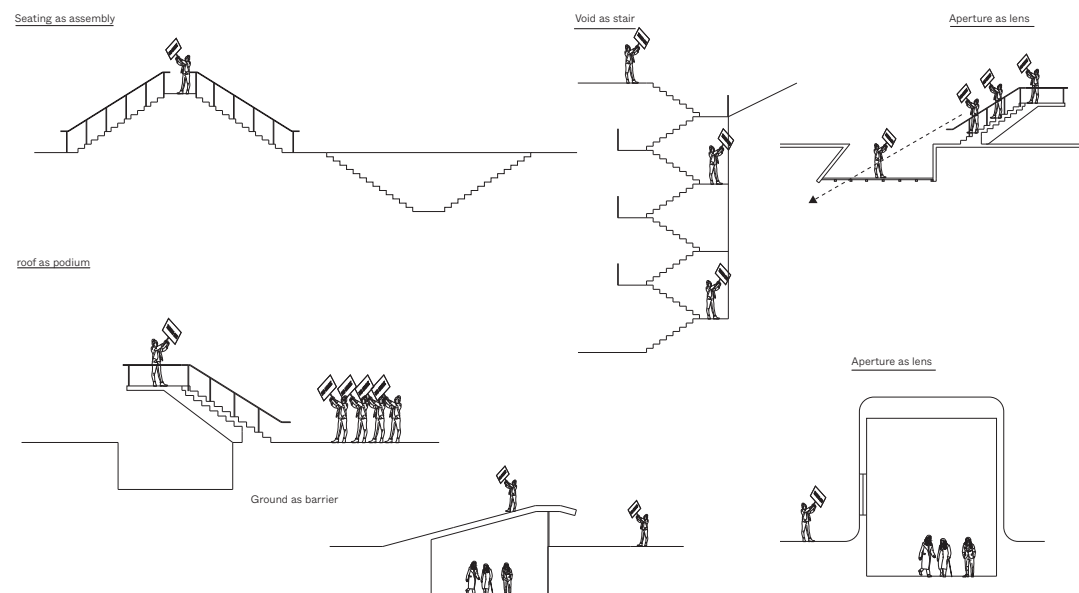
Zone B



Quilting strategies used to stitch adjacent patterns

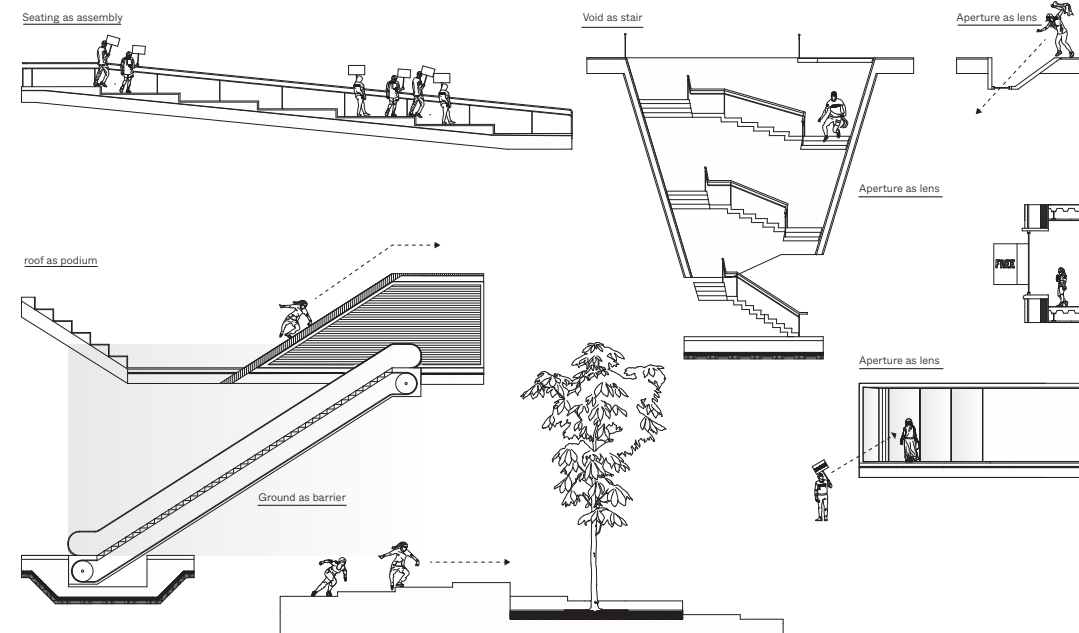


# Sectional system: Plaza/Building



## Ideal Sections

We began drawing sections of the ground that reveal its connection to the underbelly. How the ground opens (explicit or hidden) became a crucial driver, as it dictates what is seen on the plaza surface.



## Actual Sections

The ideal conditions were kept intact throughout the final design development stages. These are their eventual forms and programmatic effects.

Chapter 5

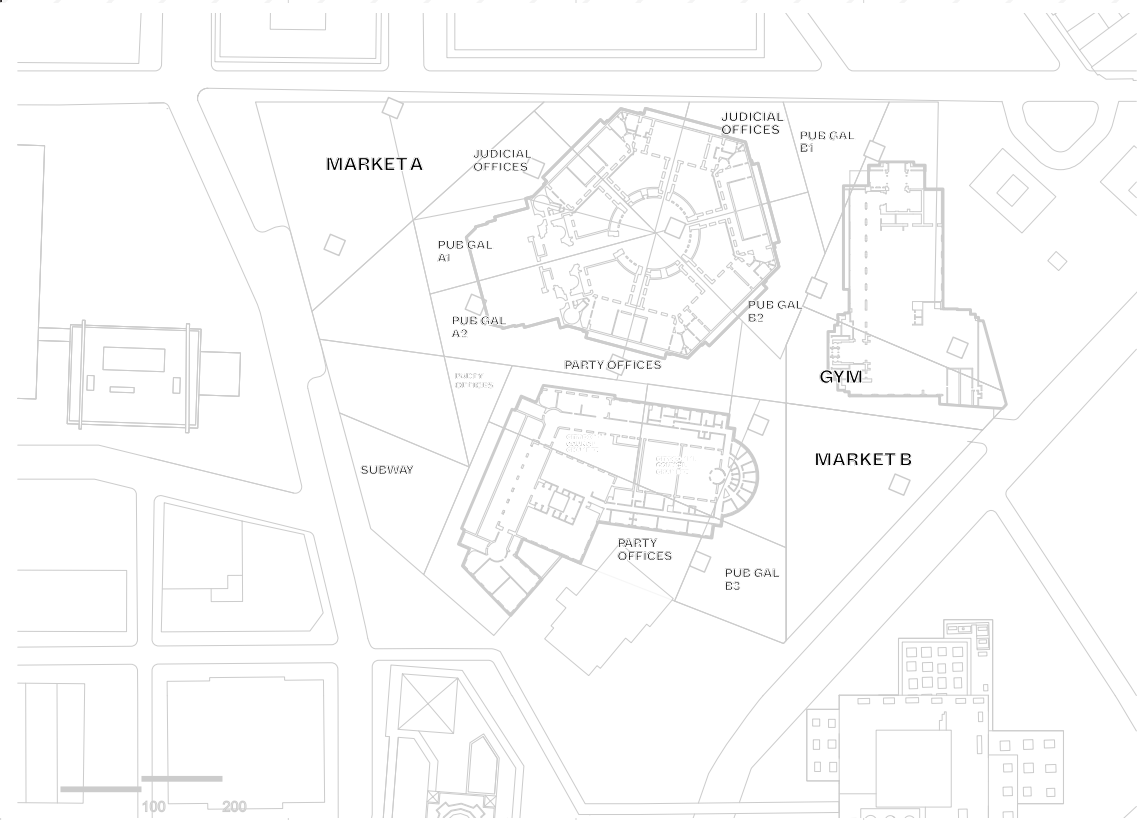
**Program**

**The** first purpose is housing the three branches of government: judicial, legislative and executive department. This includes their headquarters, as well as headquarters of other political parties and organizations, offices of officials and administrators, and senate halls and courts. The second purpose is offering the public free and accessible means of artistic expression, as well as means to observe the expressions of others. A set of public studios, galleries and museums comprises the other, non-governmental programs of the project.

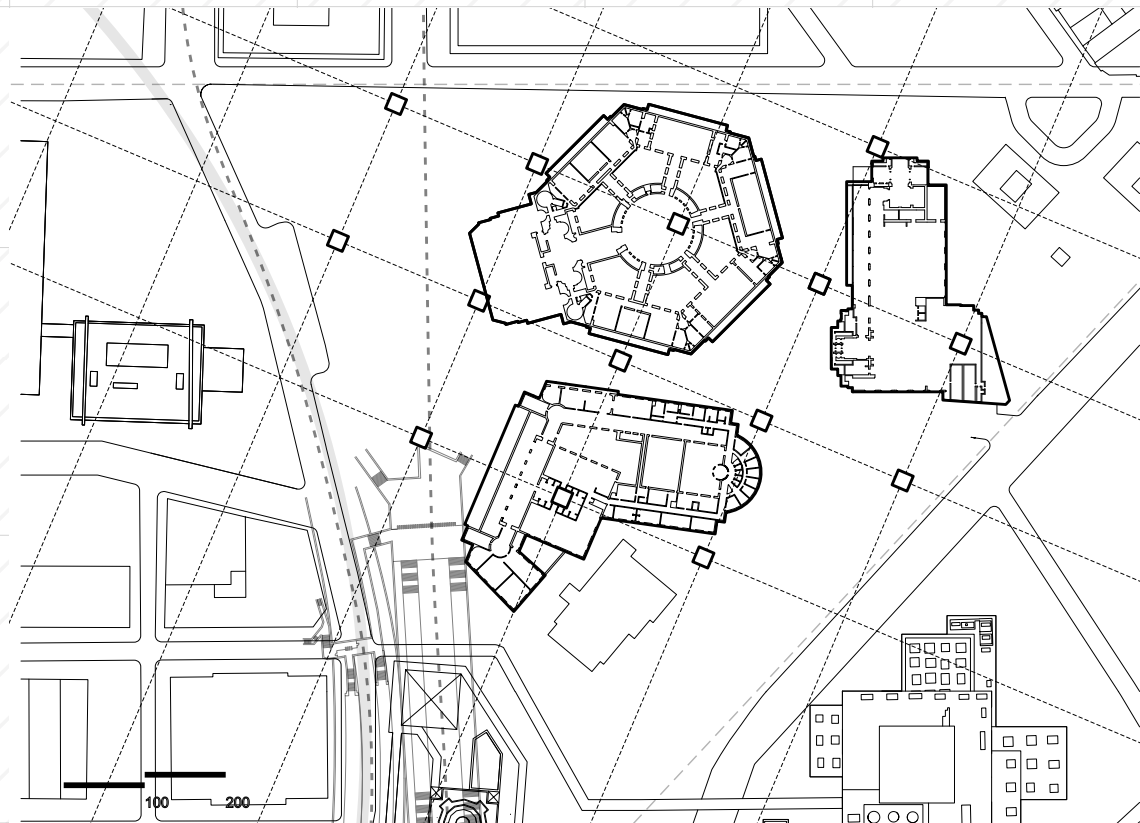
*Domus Populi* would act as places where people can partake in the city's politics and raise their voices on issues they want resolved or are discontented with. If they choose so they can also enroll in a public debate system that through voting elects citizen-senators that can represent their community or party in congress, where matters such as internal policy, finance and foreign policy are further discussed.



The NNY Public Gallery  
Domus Populi Market-hall  
Andre M. Cuomo Food Court  
Domus Populi Gymnasium  
Various Constituent and party headquarters  
Various offices for public engagement and political involvement, including:  
City Attorney,  
City judicial clerks,  
Council members,  
Community boards and  
New York social programs:  
SNAP Benefits and Food Program  
Homelessness Prevention  
Rental Assistance  
Cash Assistance  
Disability Access  
Adult Protective Services  
Child Support Services  
Employment  
Healthcare  
Temporary Emergency Shelter  
Etc.

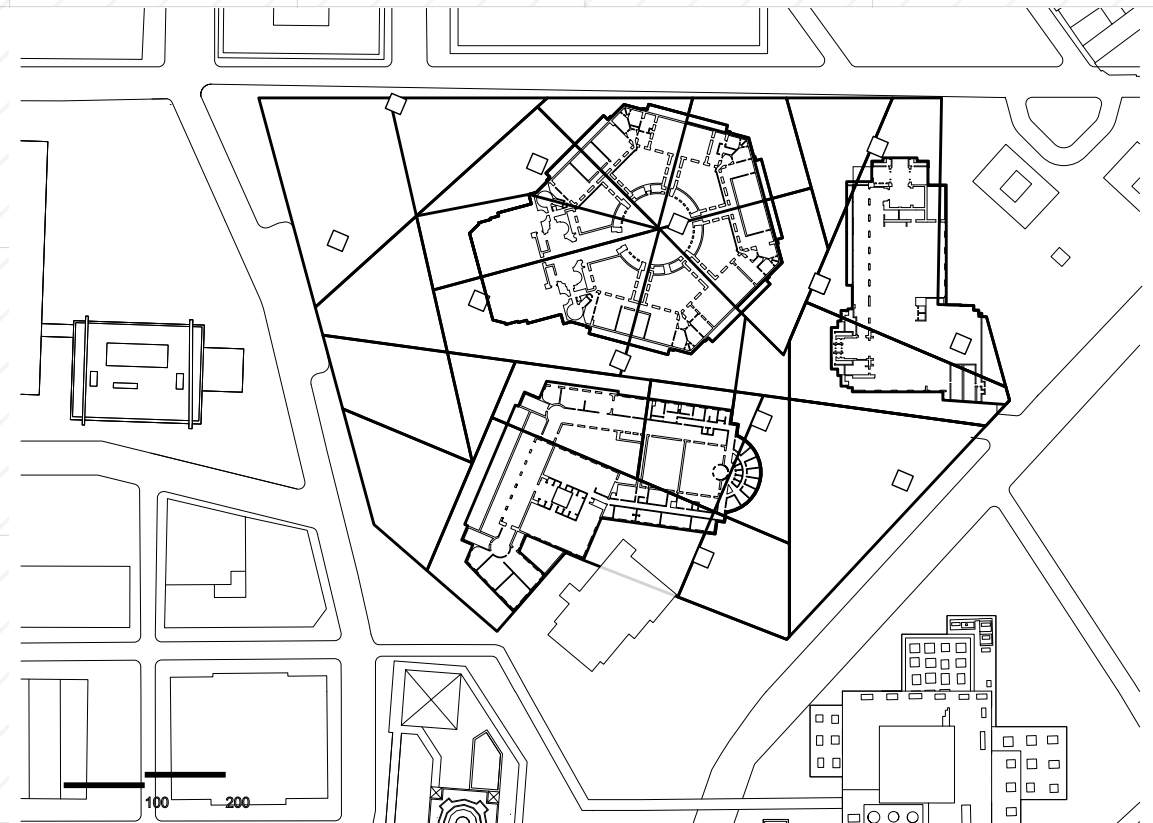


Program across Domus Populi



### Equal access to egress

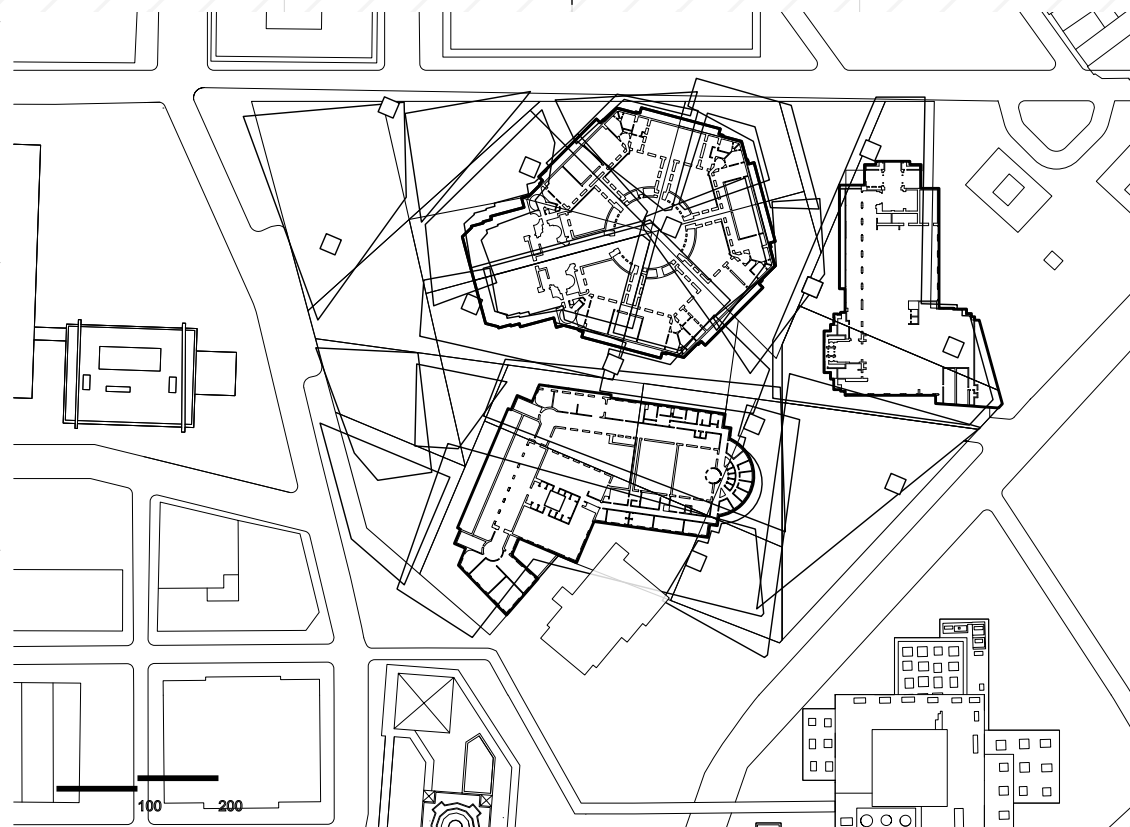
A 140 foot wide square grid aligned with Marshall Thurgood court's tower determines equally spaces nodes for circulation shafts that can carry the public to the farthest depths of the building.



### Paths across site

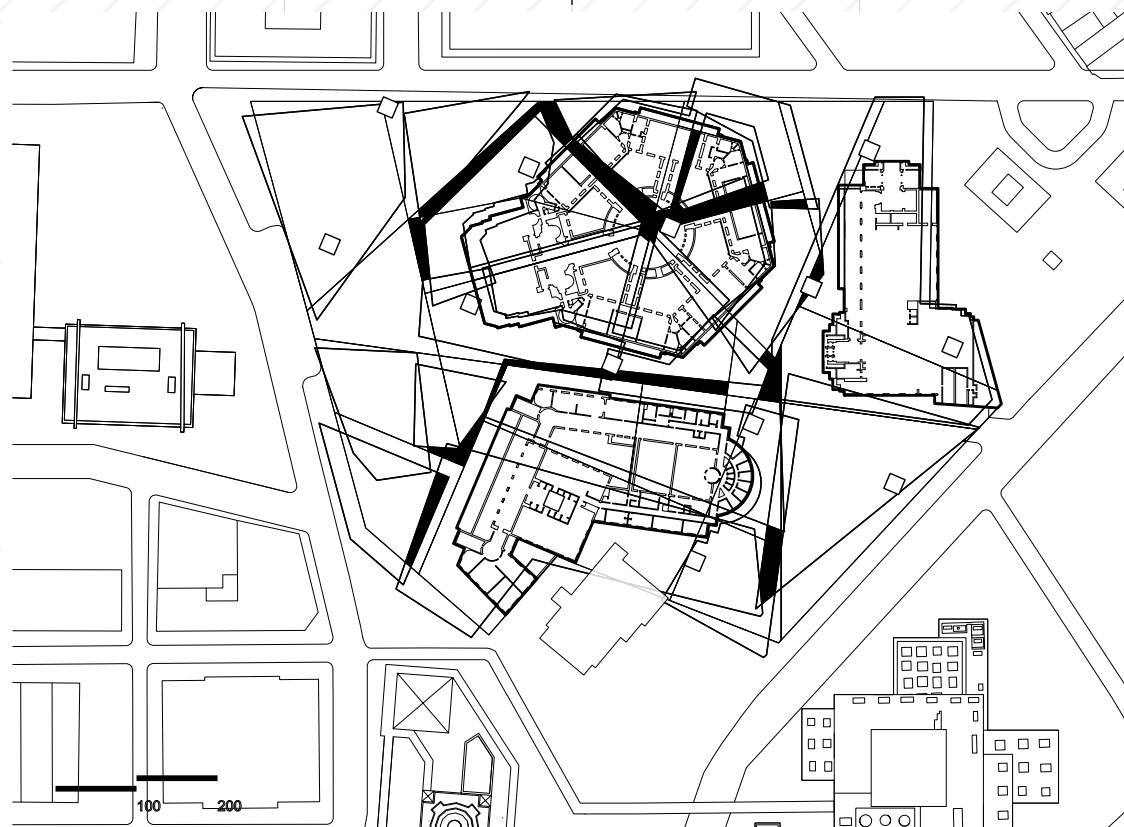
With the previous layout, walking from one corner to another was difficult as giant building blocked a straight route. As we open the ground underneath civic center we wanted to open avenues that can expatiate cross byers and hurried new yorkers. These avenues then cutout the main structural plates of the plaza.





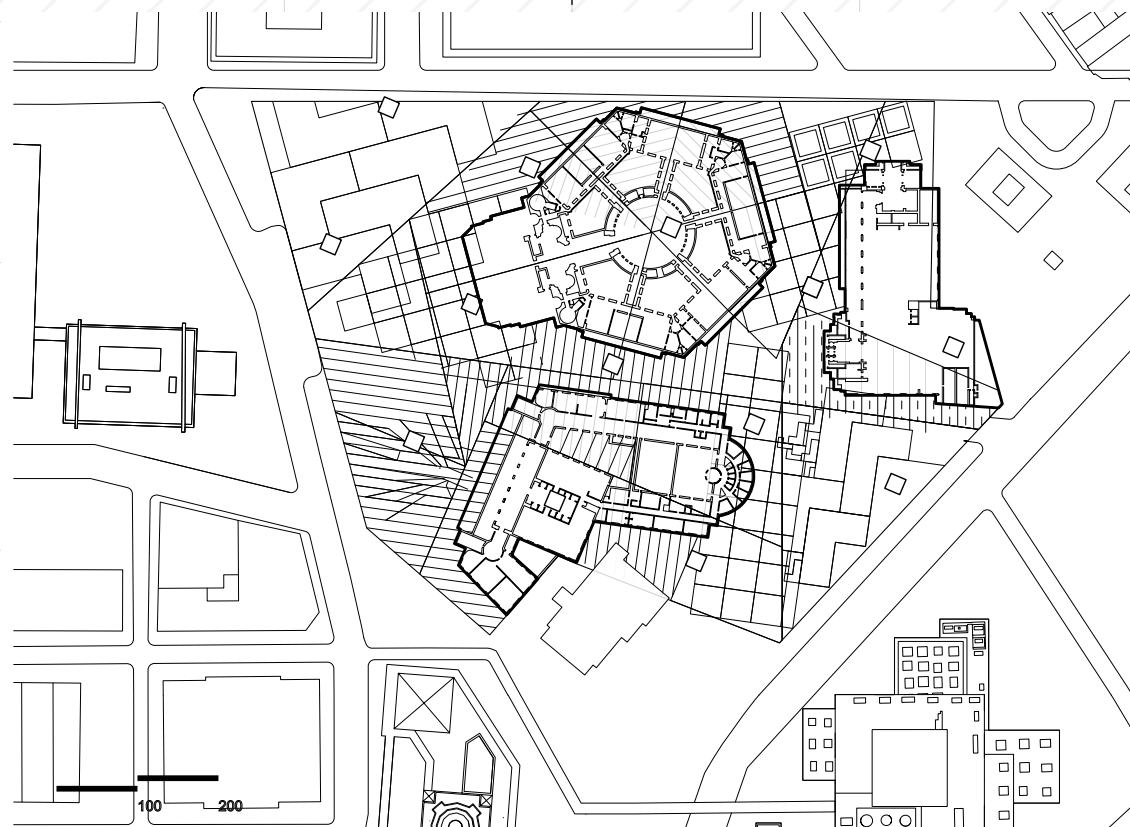
### Shifting the Plaza

The path determined plates are shaken and shifted to create tapering, angled offsets within the avenues.



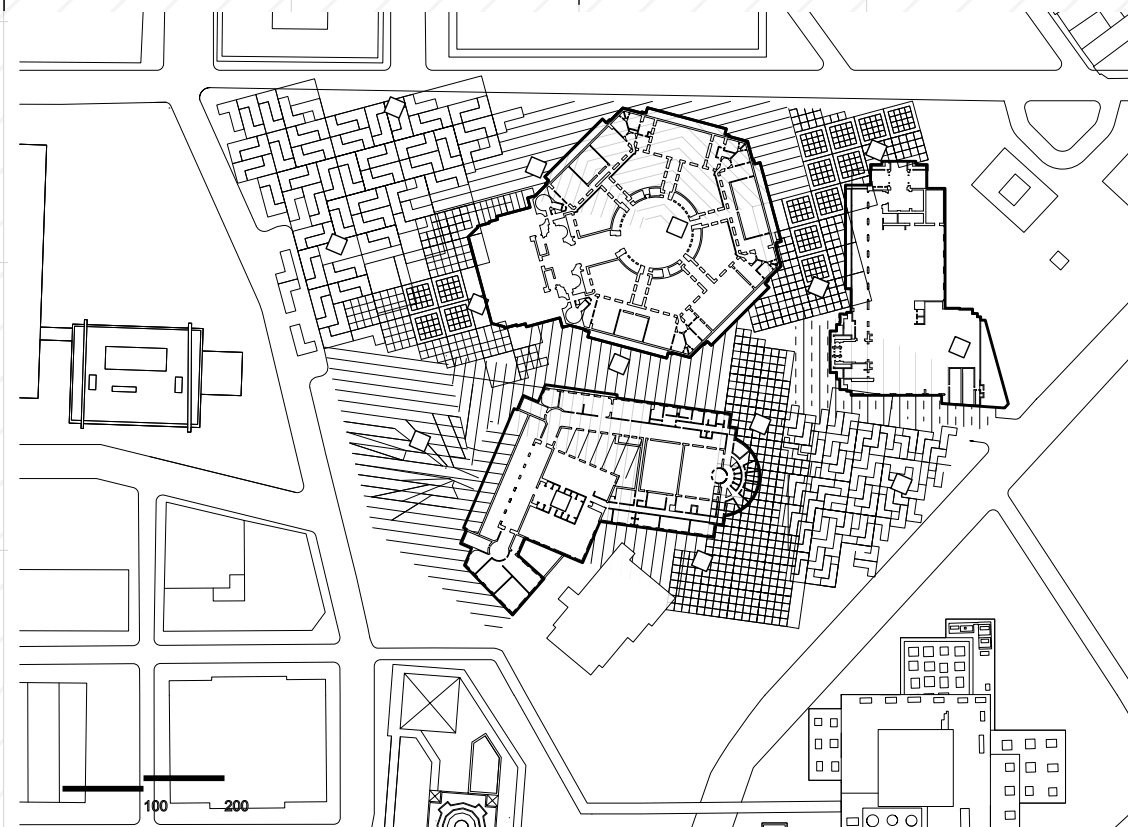
### Opening the Cracks

These offsets come together and become potential openings or cracks along the plates that could allow sunlight and circulation into the below-ground programs.



### Patterning the Plates

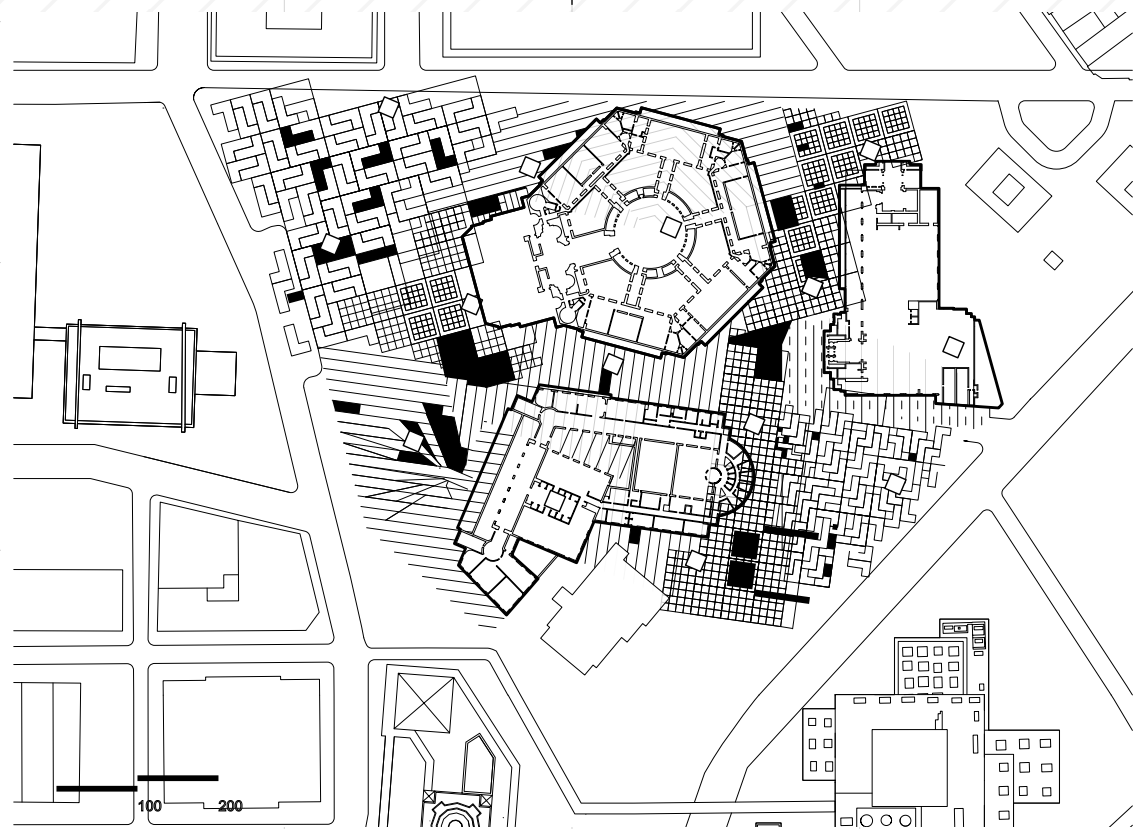
Each plate covers up to 3 different program types (office, gym, market, public galleries) so distinct shapes are molded on top of them to denote a specific program underneath.



### Finer Patterns

The shapes molded onto the plates are further subdivided into smaller parts. Many of these human scale pieces, which we call 'tiles' become programs of their own: seating, stair entrance, ramp, skylight, etc.





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### Openings

A combination of selectively removed tiles and gaps from offset avenues create the openings on the ground of Domus Populi. Some of these openings are walkable access-ways while some are railed-off skylights and ceiling openings.



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## Hidden

**openings:** The black spots represent openings to the underbelly that are not visible from plan or oblique. These informal entries create a sponge condition, allowing

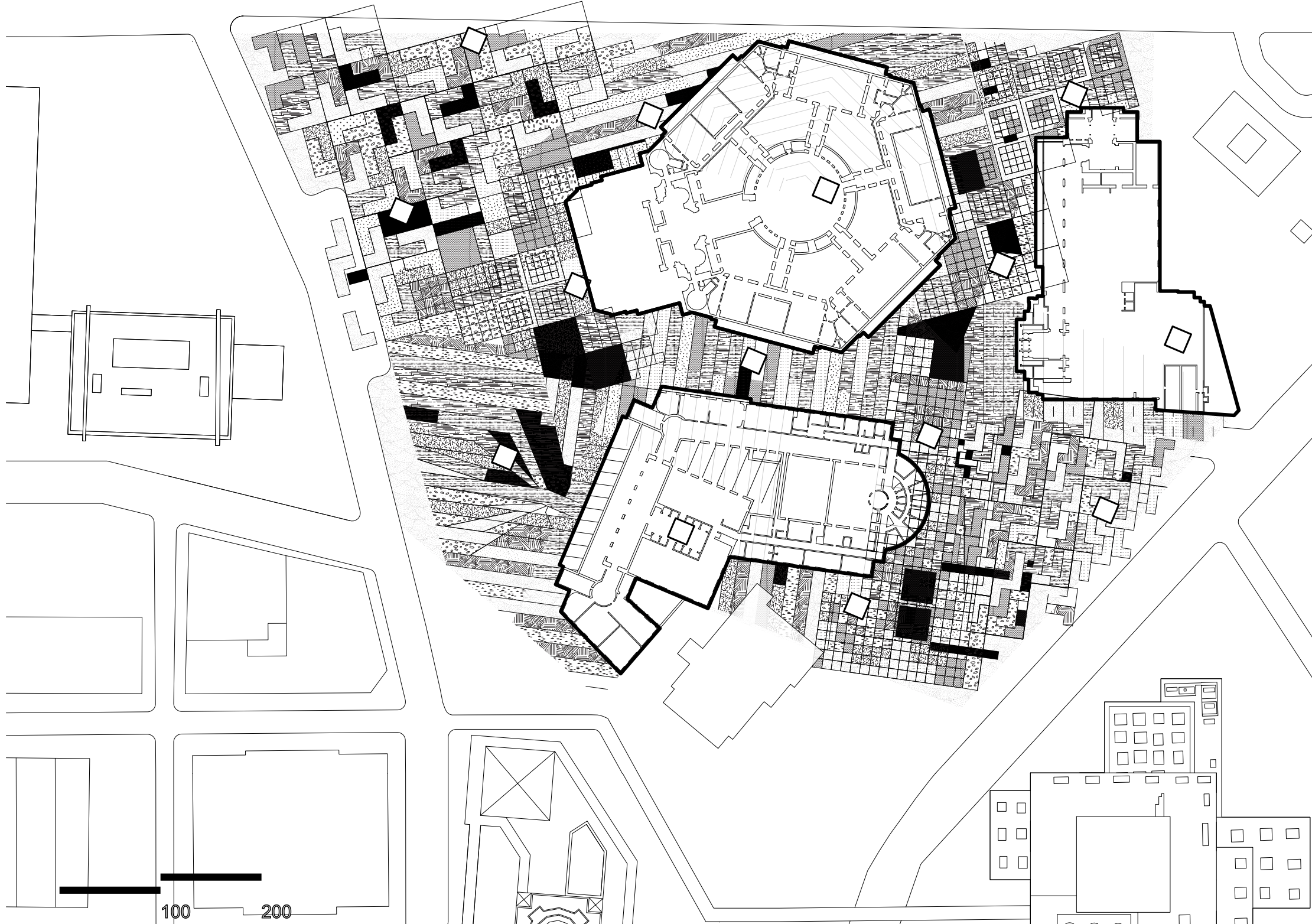
allowing the public to enter the subterranean programs through a plethora of circulatory means.



**SENSITIVE PAGE**

# Final Plan

Here we see the entire site embedded with its patterns.



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Chapter 6

DOMUS  
POPULI

To stay true to the design methodologies employed, the project will be shown in **oblique sections**, to maintain the plan of the plaza while articulating the underbelly’s spaces and thresholds.

The purpose of Domus Populi is a publicly accessible plaza-building capable of housing the three branches of government: judicial, legislative and executive department. This includes their headquarters, as well as headquarters of other political parties and organizations, offices of officials and administrators, and senate halls and courts.

The second purpose is offering the public free and accessible means of artistic expression, as well as means to observe the expressions of others. A set of public studios, galleries and museums comprises the other, non-governmental programs of the project.

*Domus Populi* would act as places where people can partake in the city’s politics and raise their voices on issues they want resolved or are discontented with. If they choose so they can also enroll in a public debate system that through voting elects citizen-senators that can represent their community or party in congress, where matters such as internal policy, finance and foreign policy are further discussed.

Intentions  
Behind the  
Oblique

Drawing in oblique sections was strategically chosen as the design method to conceal certain conditions underground. **By drawing the perspectives behind these sections, we design conditions in perspective that cannot be revealed in the oblique.**





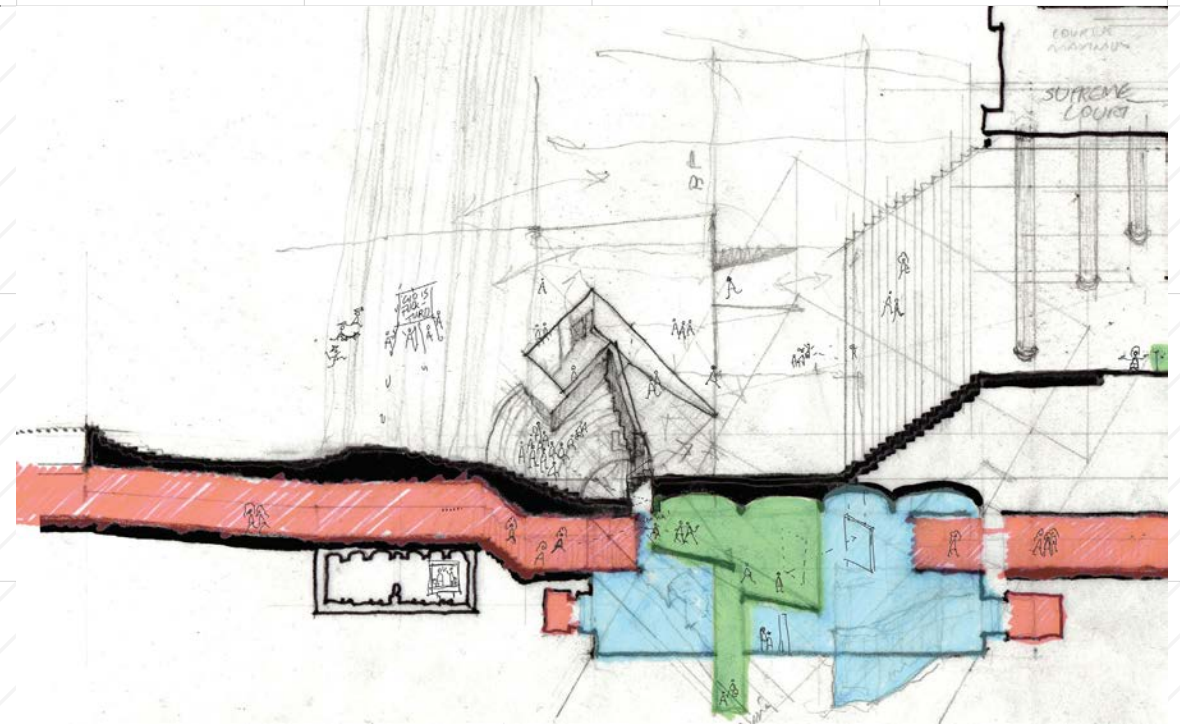
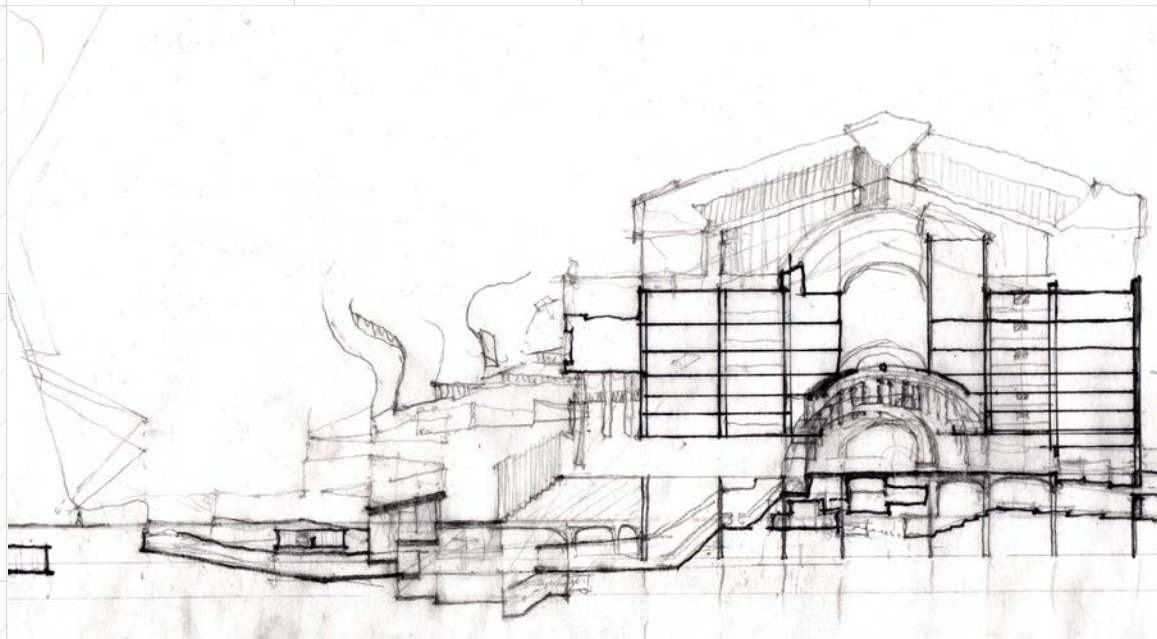
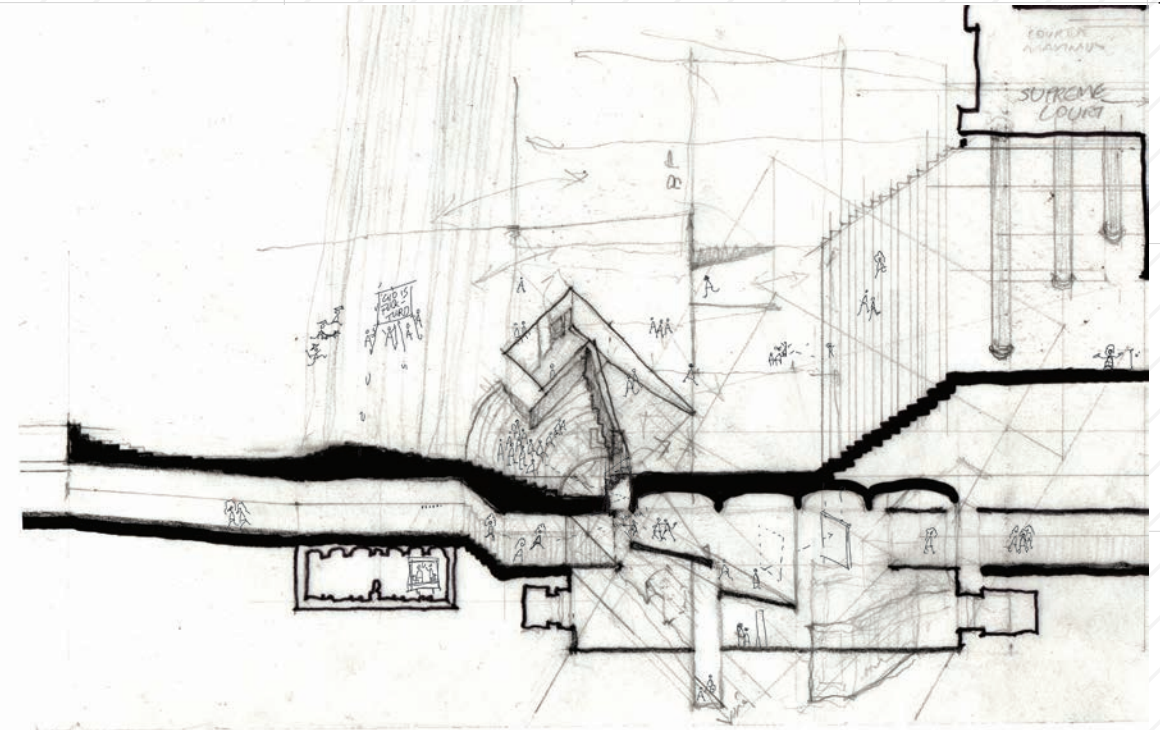
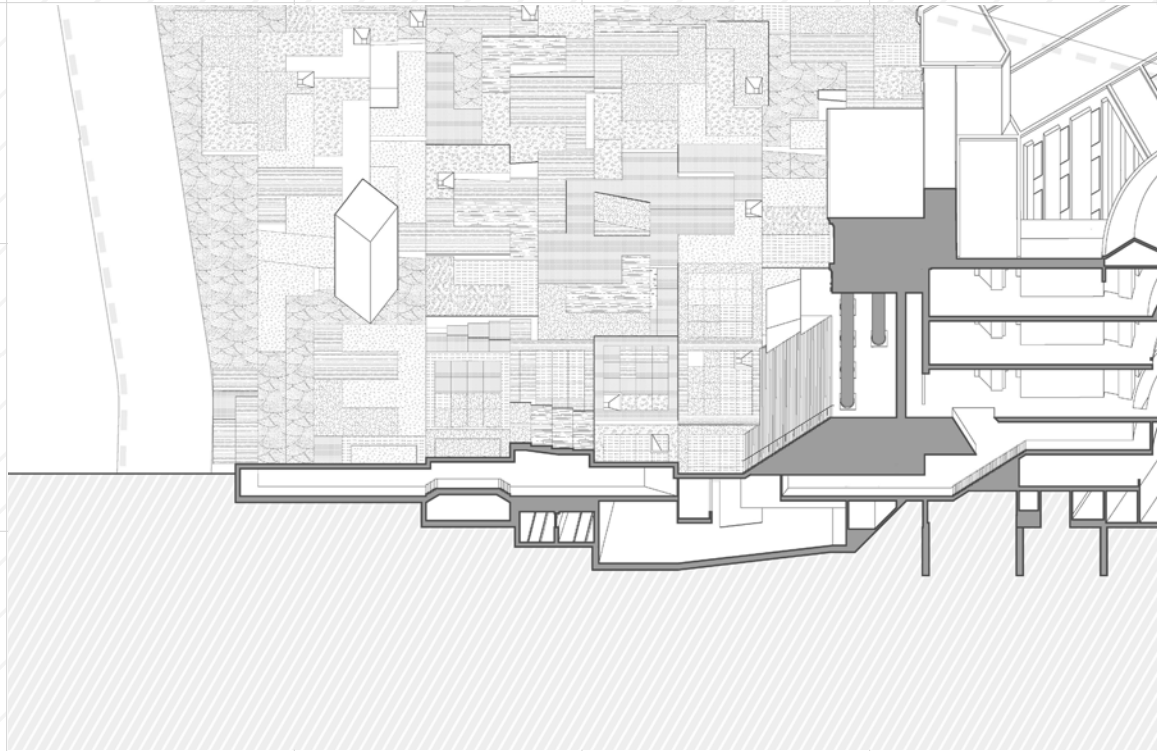


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## Section 1 Progress

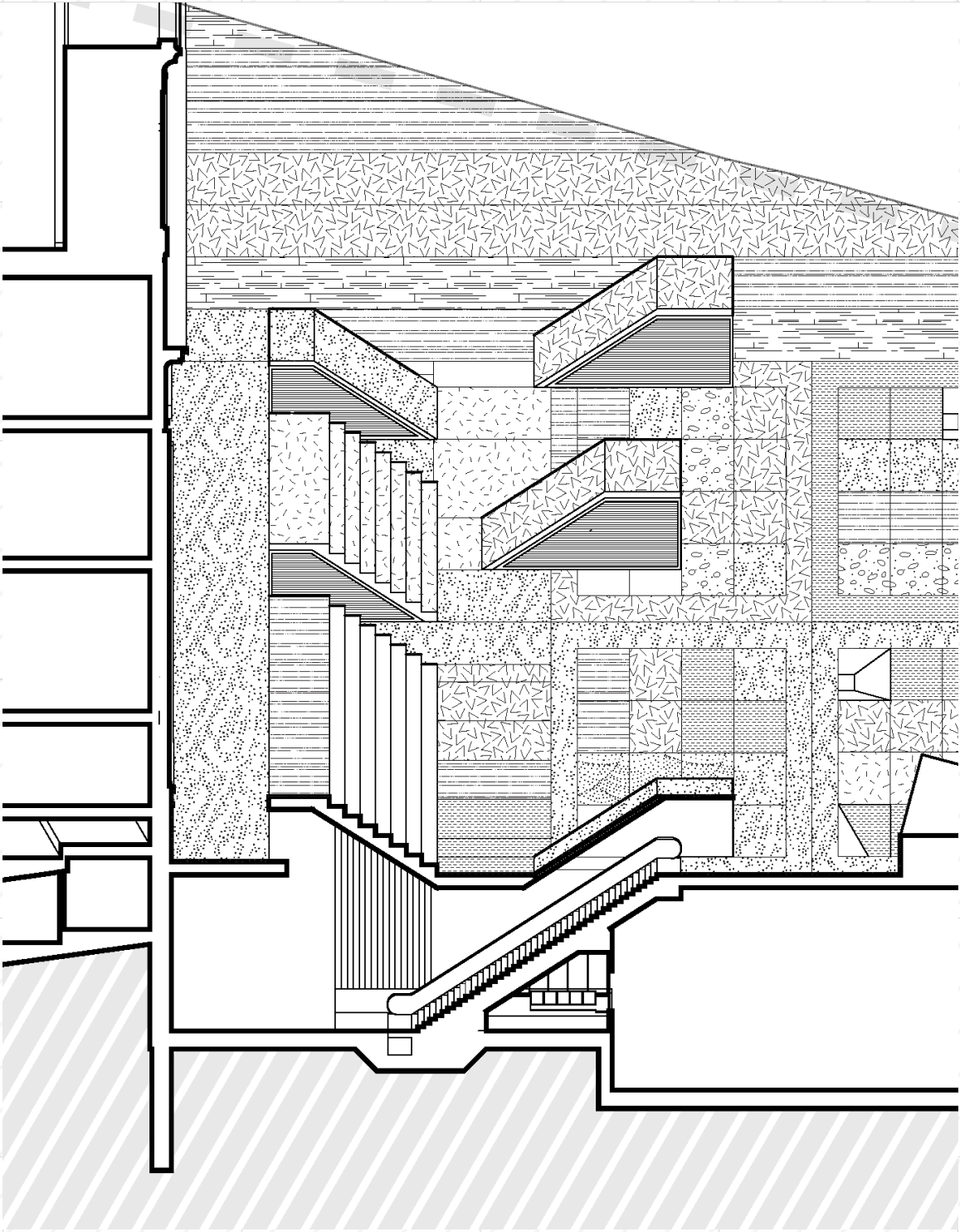
Investigating how people inhabit the plaza above and below. Accessibility diagram on the right shows different adjacencies of private and public space.



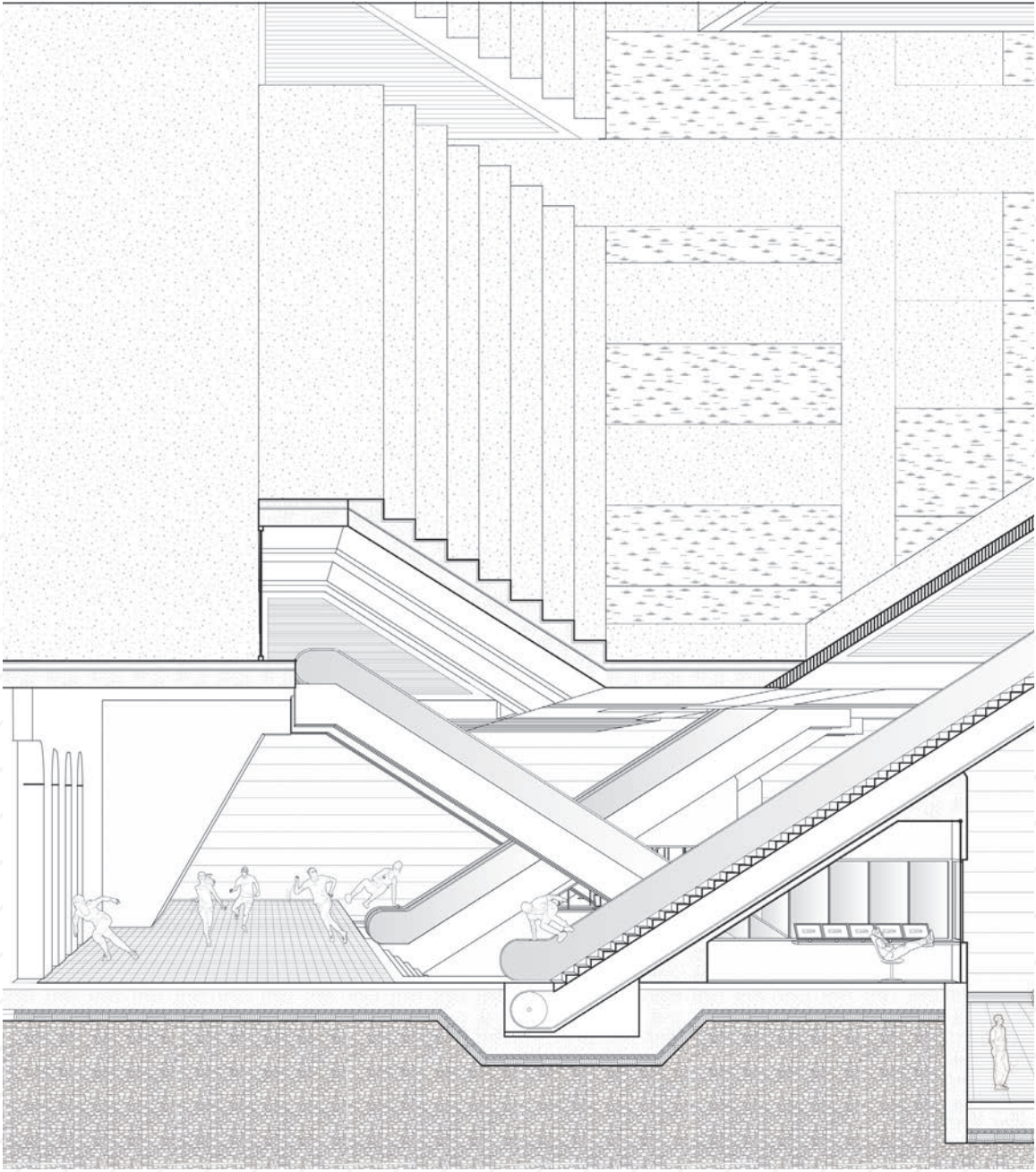
The boundary between a private  
circulation path for justices and a public  
gallery is translucent and tight



Back side of Oblique Section 1



Perspective overlay 1.2



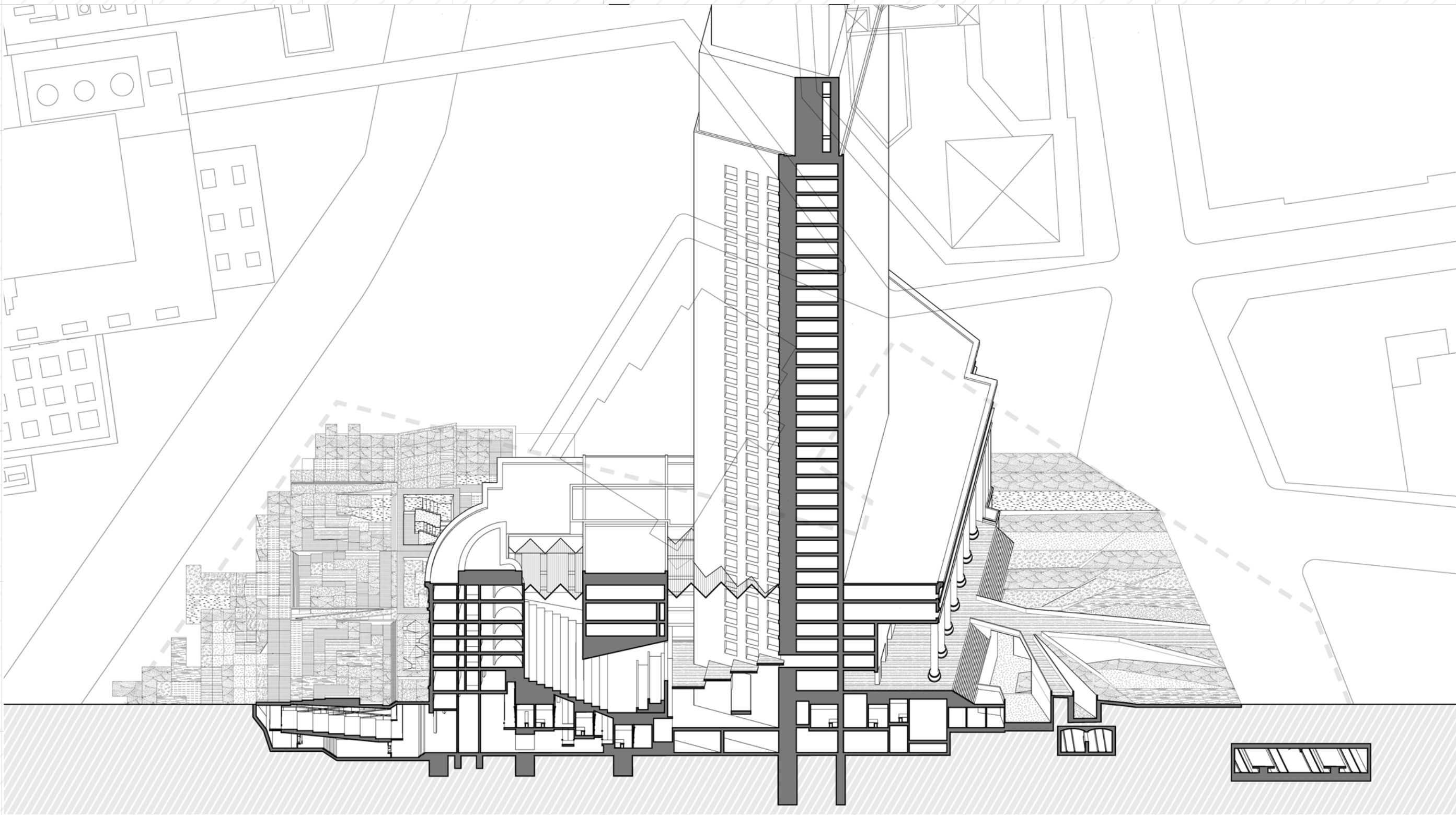


Oblique Section 2, through Marshall  
Thurgood court and city council halls

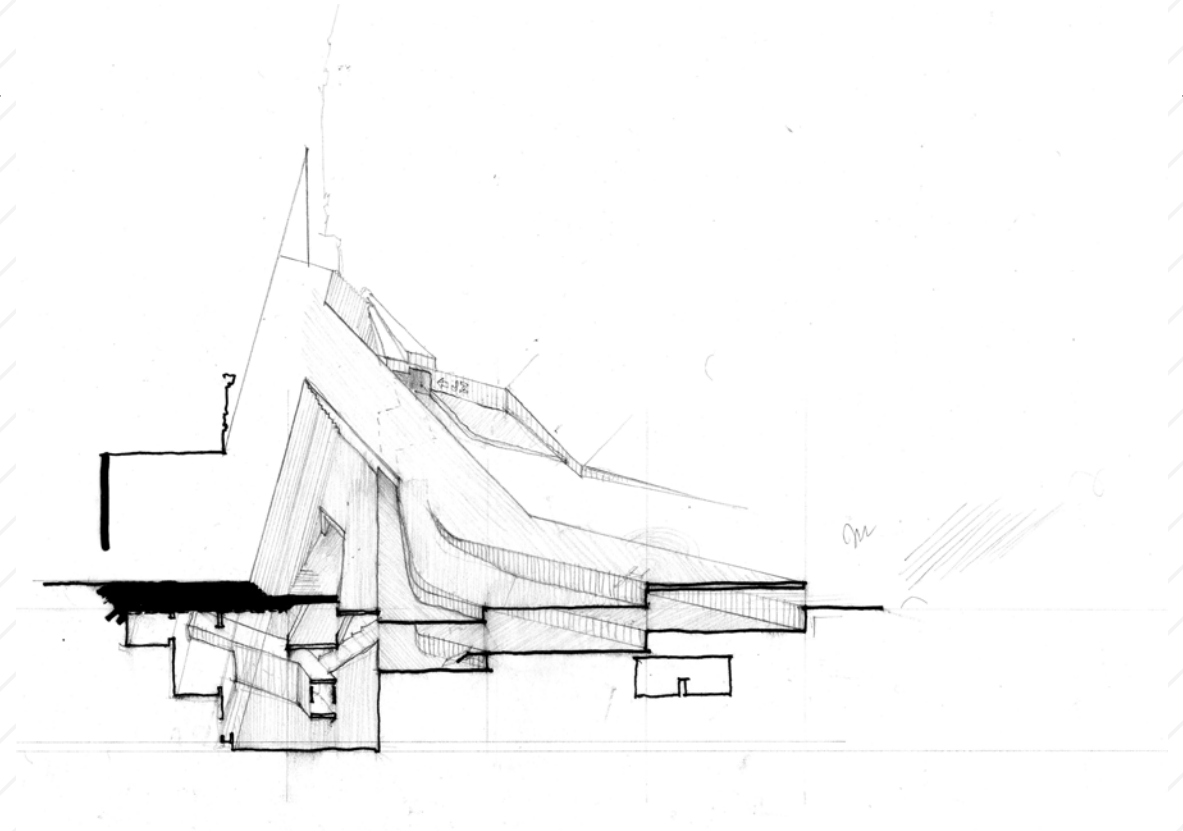
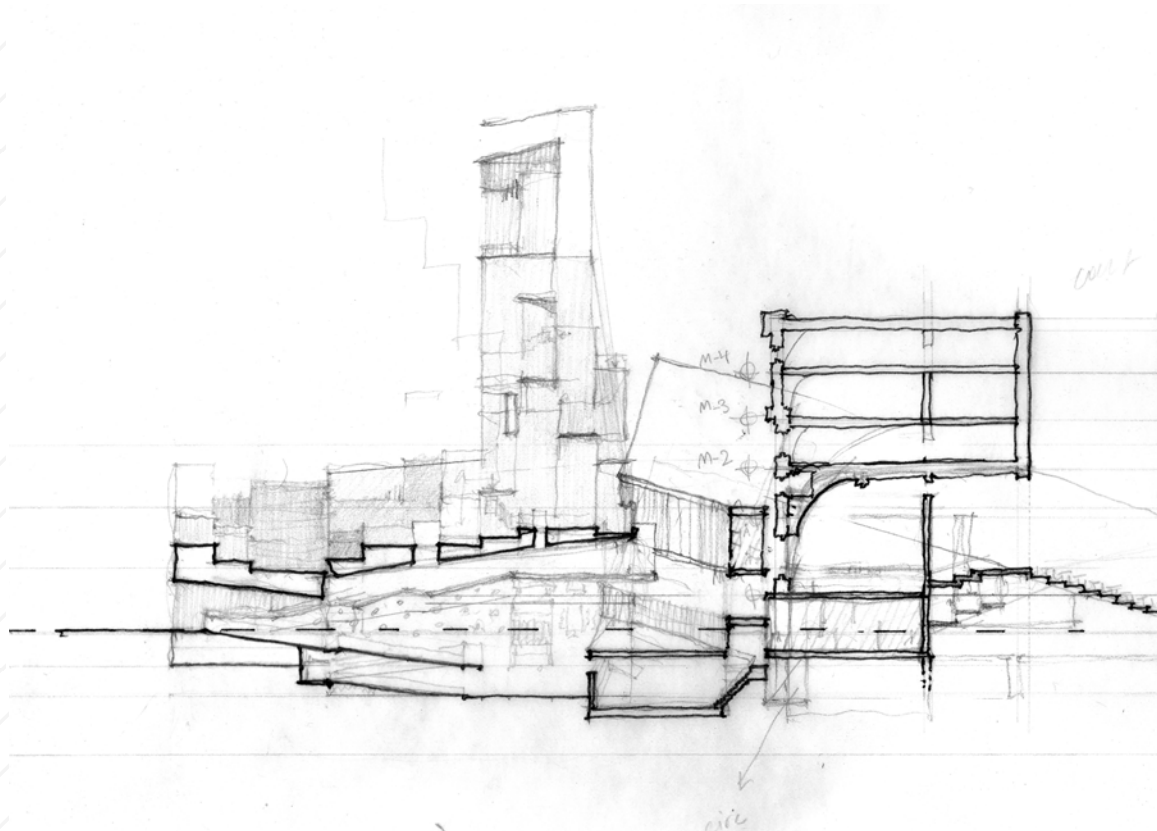
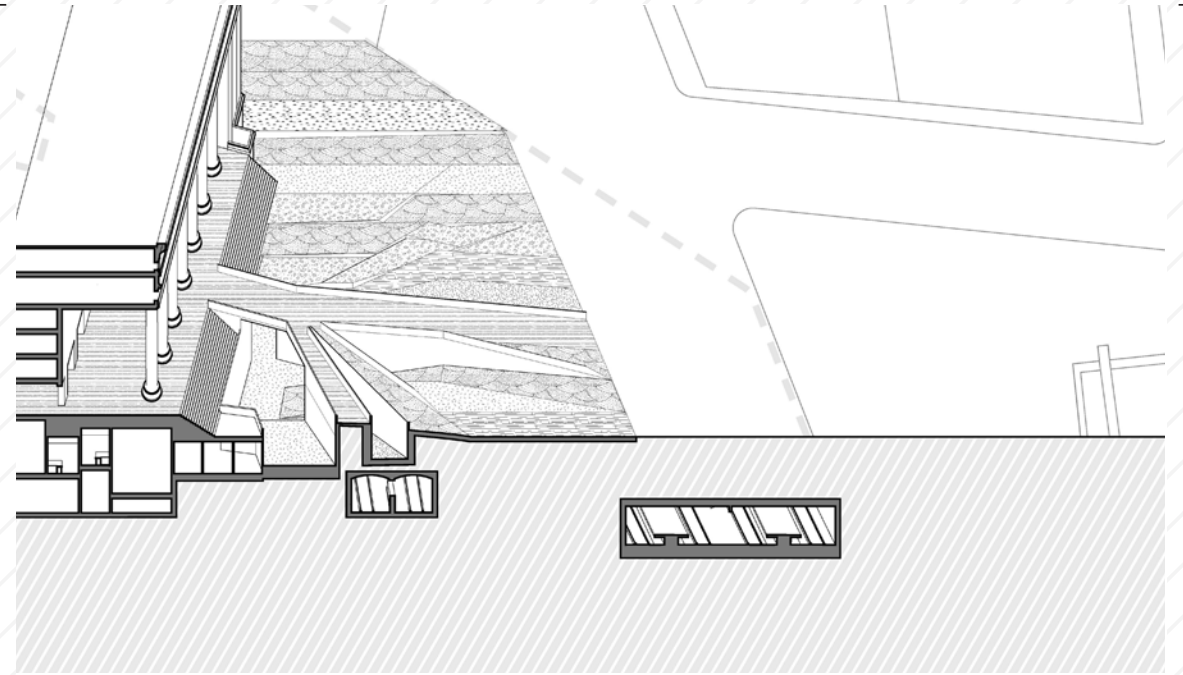
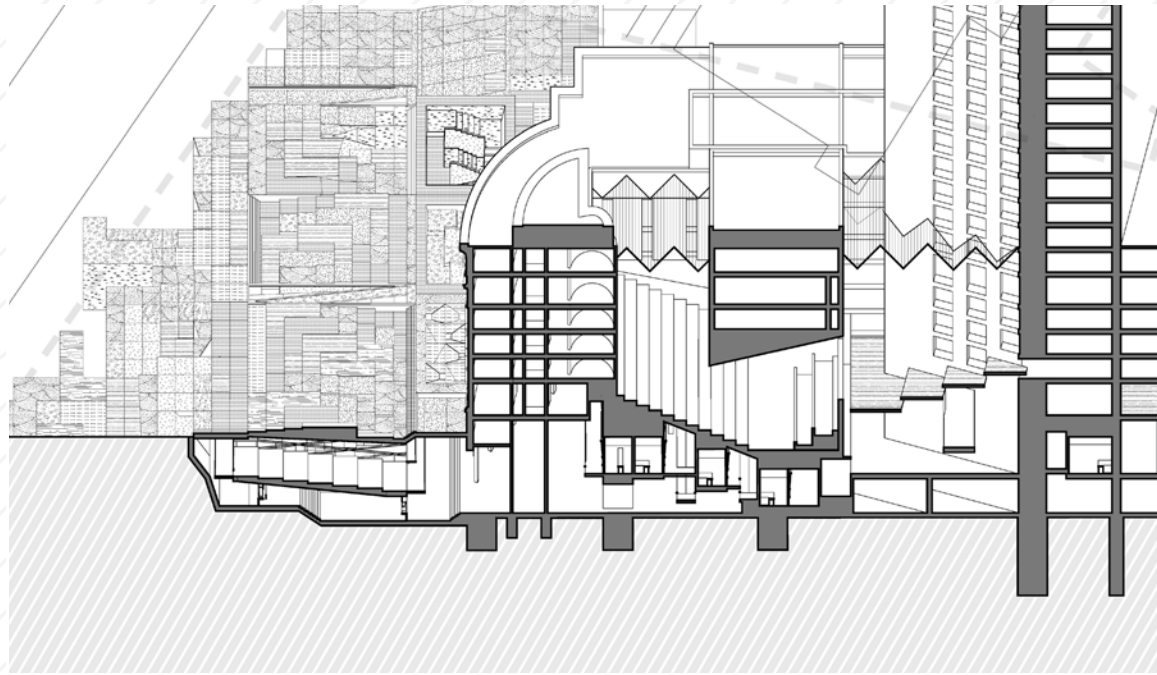
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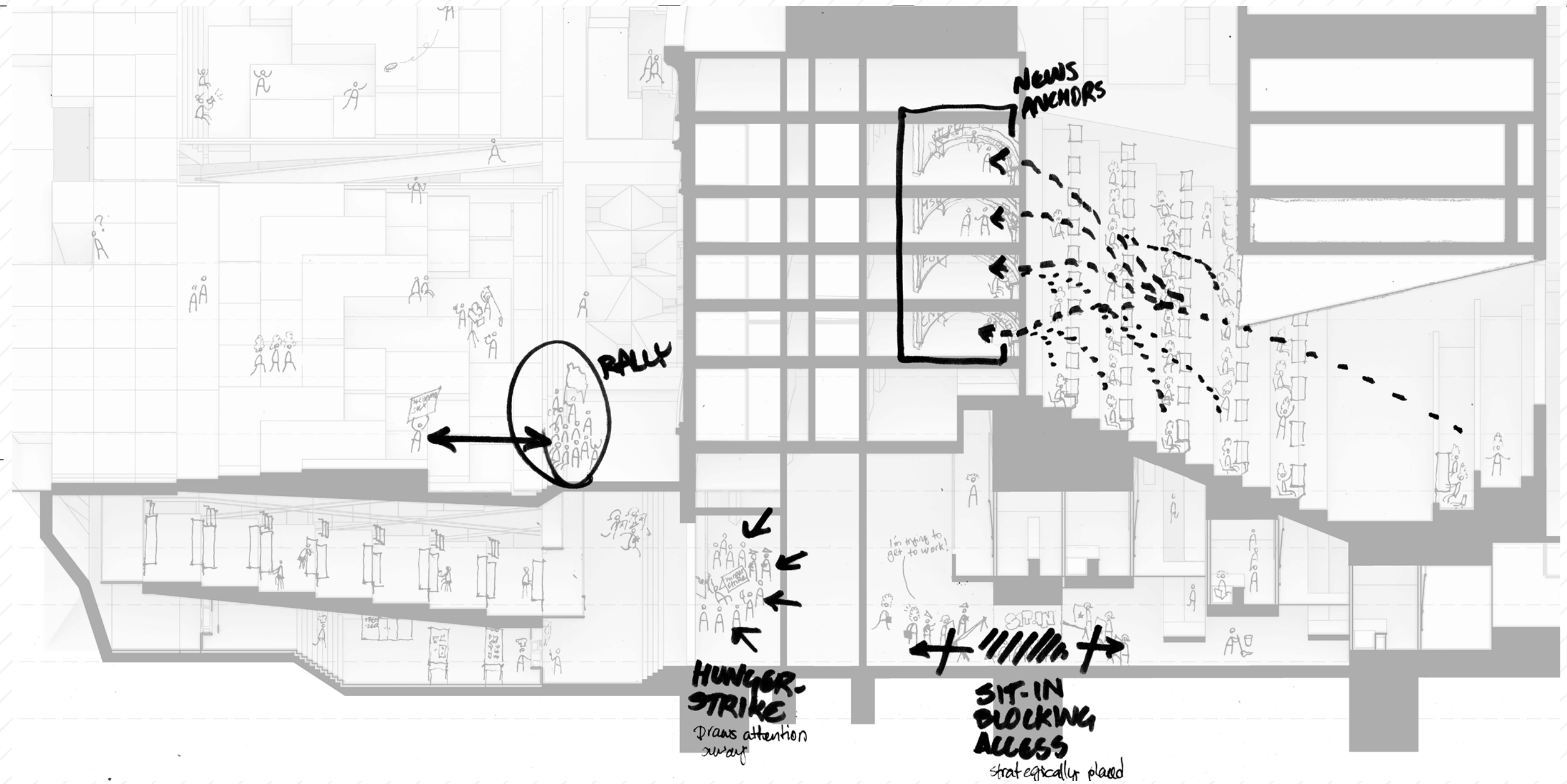


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## Section 2 Progress

Configuring connections to the subway stop as well as Park row via the foodcourts were the main challenges for this section, as well as treating the boundary of the existing building and how it quilts to the new plaza building.



Example of how oblique sections were annotated in preparation for perspective design





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Oblique Section 3, through both the  
Marshall Thurgood court and The Supreme  
court



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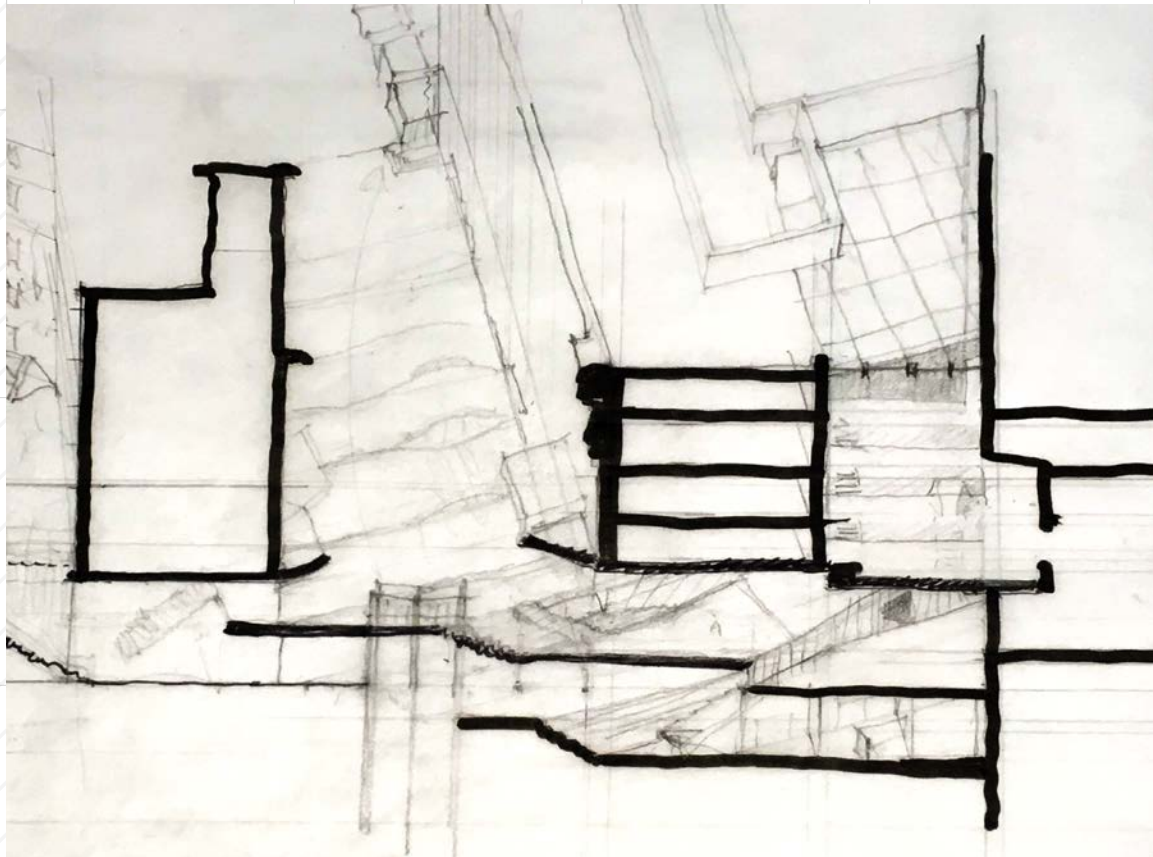
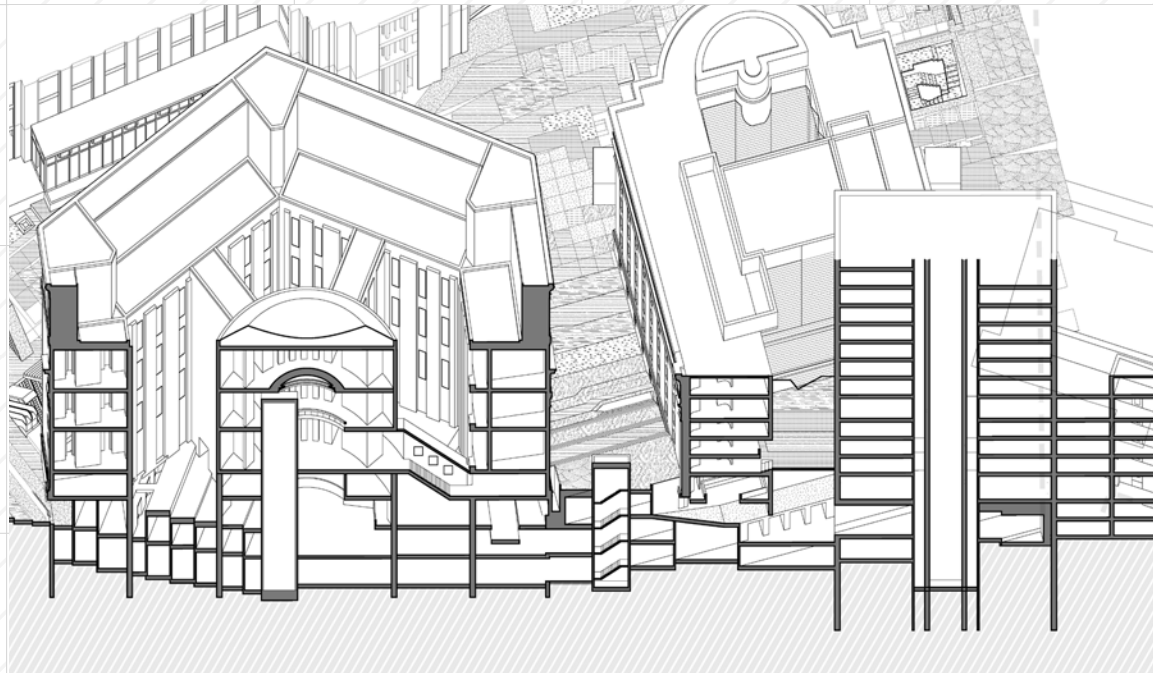
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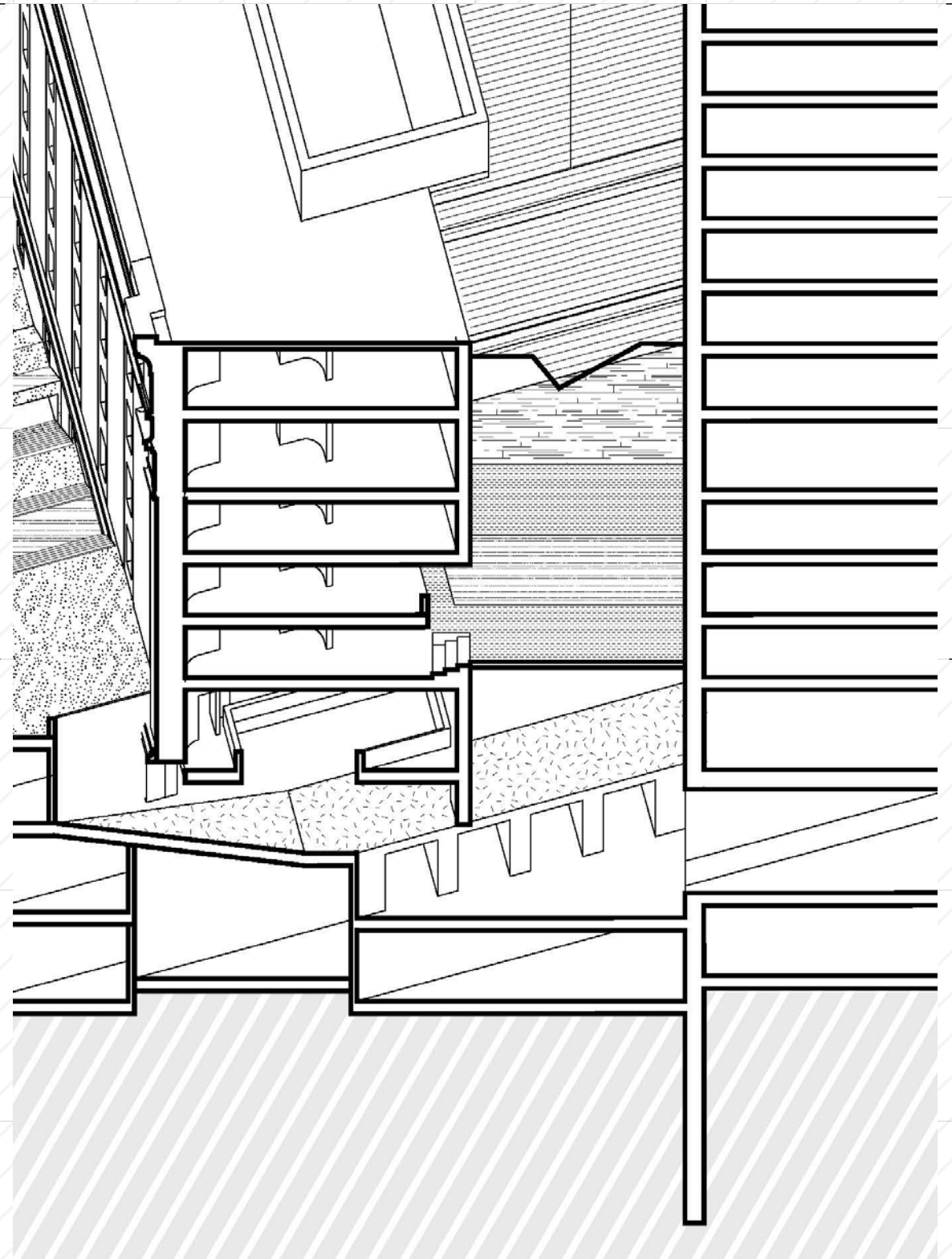






### Section 3 Progress

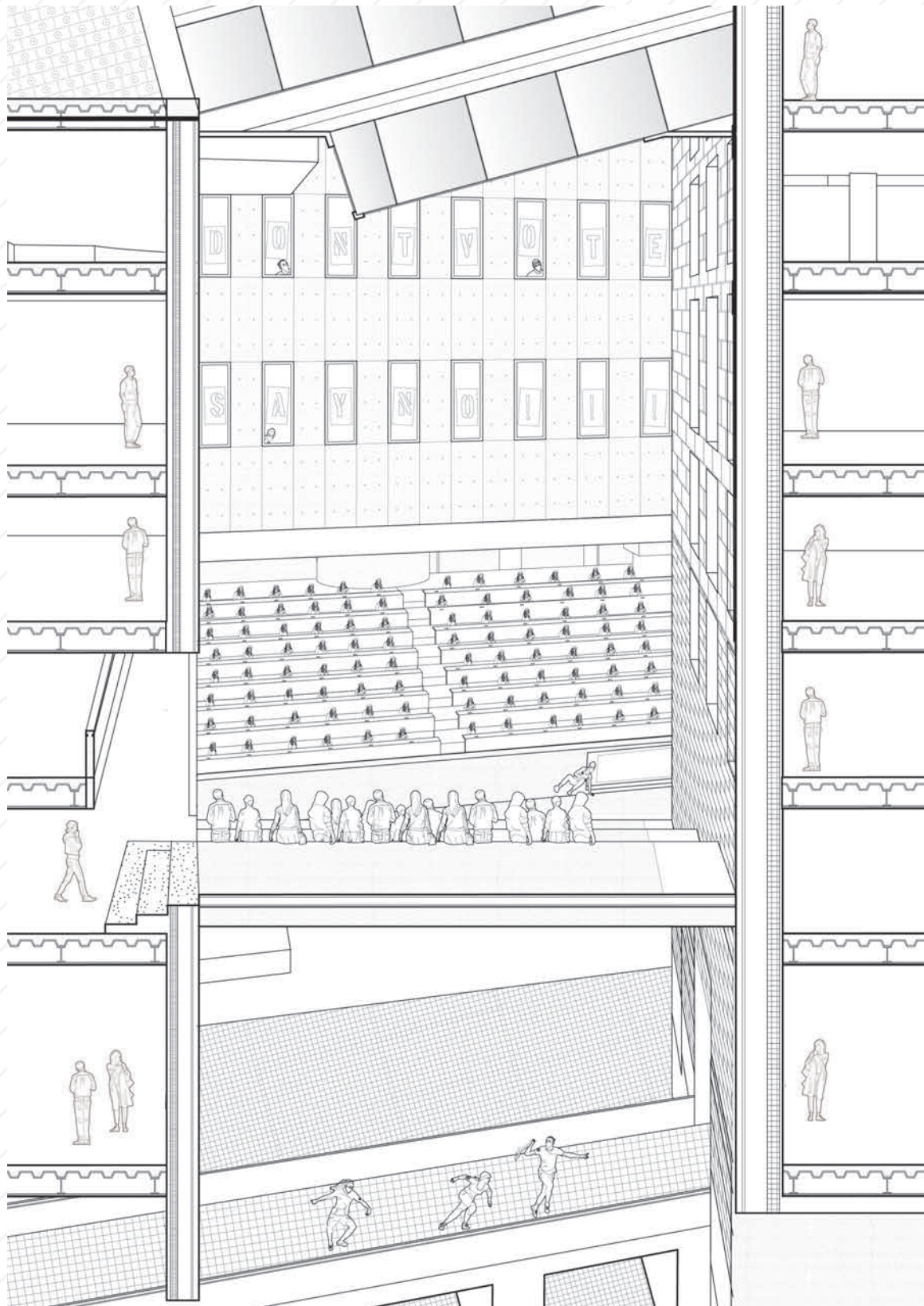
The narrow space between the two buildings had to be resolved to ensure openness and easy access, both into the underbelly programs and across the ground





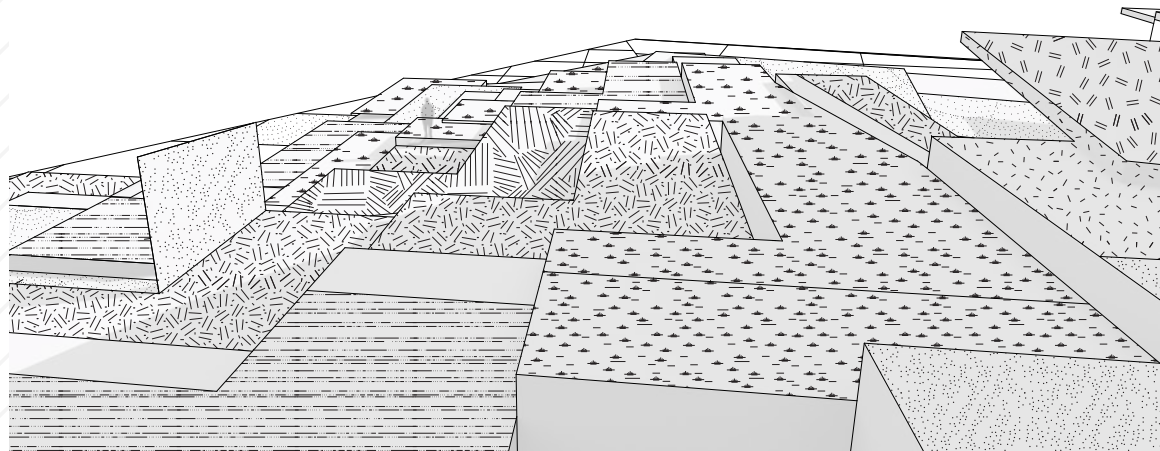


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I Curtis, Adam, dir. *Hypernormalisation*, 2016; London: BBC

For the past two decades documentary film-maker Adam Curtis has been on the forefront of exposing the ugly truths of the world. Curtis consistently raises acute questions that most filmmakers and journalists alike would be afraid to ask. Often he goes beyond thought provoking considerations and makes claims that feel factual but are so far-fetched and without solid proof that even some conspiracy theorists might question him. Because of this, many consider him a skillful propagandist due to his film-making abilities. This aspect of Curtis even spawned a few videos parodying his eerie music choice and graphic, occasionally gory news footage.

II Diller, Liz; Scofidio, Riccardo, *Flesh*. Princeton Architectural Press, 1991

In flesh, D+S (prior to Renfro) review some of their installation artwork from the 1980s and 1990s, many of which address political issues, particularly Loophole (1992) and Tourisms (1991). Loophole, as well as being a narrative driven project, looks at how surveillance attacks the body and switches the roles of the viewer and viewed to give observers a sense of peeking into their fellow museum goers’ private space. Tourisms looks at the artificial nature of tourist spots, and how desperate attempts to authenticate sites such as the beds of old presidents are conditioned to simultaneously be brand new and also centuries old. The book itself tells the stories of these installations as scenario sequences, revealing parts such as the exhibit space and overviewing shots, then wholes within the parts, such as bodies of texts that accompanied the art pieces.

III Tschumi, Bernard, *Architecture and Disjunction*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996

This book is more than a collection of essays and lectures. The chronological order and the seamlessness of the chapters paint an incredibly vivid picture of both Tschumi as an architect and his obsession with program. While Tschumi believes that no matter what, architects are hopeless in trying to convince the public to act this or that way, because eventually people will make their own independent decisions in their use of space. Yet in spite of this realization, we clearly see him attempt to do the opposite. In fact, Tschumi goes so far into his processes of space creation that he essentially does create new ways of being in a space and interacting with it. But alas, if only architects could actually build on their own accord as well! For Tschumi, Parc de la Villette might be a step in realizing his dreams, but it was never realized as he intended. Like Fun Palace by Cedric Price, it’s not just the architecture that needs to change for a vision to realize, the world around it has to change to.

IV Schumacher, Thomas L. *Terragni’s Danteum: Architecture, Poetics And Politics under Italian Fascism*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004

Giuseppe Terragni is perhaps the most fascinating enigmatic figure in modern architecture history. Not much is known about him, as a lot of his office was damaged during the war. Stitching the surviving clues, Schumacher manages to uncover a great deal of Terragni’s architectural process, and not just Danteum’s design but projects throughout the mid 1930s. What’s most fascinating about Terragni was his ability to seamlessly blend programmatic elements from ancient palaces and temples with tectonic and architectural elements from his contemporary peers. For Terragni, LeCorbusier was equally a source of inspiration as Vitruvius and Imhotep.



V     **Baudrillard, Jean, *Simulacra and Simulation: The Body, in Theory*. University of Michigan Press, 1994**

Baudrillard is considered a cult legend by Cyperpunk enthusiasts. His breakdown of the reality served to us by our governments, in particular Watergate and the Persian Gulf war is critical to postmodern political philosophy. Baudrillard points out how realities have always been toyed with by rulers and oppressors, and recently thanks to technology their capacity in creating different realities has exponentiated. Now that a few decades have passed since he wrote *Simulacra* and *Simulation* and deep-fakes exist, it seems that the malleability of reality will continue to grow, and new ways of using or misusing are emerging.

VI     **Forensic Architecture, *The murder of Halit Yozgat*, (Goldsmith, University of London, 2017). <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-murder-of-halit-yozgat>**

Forensic Architecture use traditional forensics techniques combined with architectural investigation and deduction to create what they call reenactments of specific incidents. In this particular example they also had access to several witness testimonies, and a lot of time-logged computer activity data, since the event took place at an internet cafe. Once they combined all their resources, which further included a life size set, a time-log of each testimony references against the computer data, and multiple animated tests for smoke spread, airflow and ergonomic movement, they could confidently assess the incident with proof.

VII     **Alinsky, Saul, *Rules for Radicals*, New York: Random House, 1972**

Alinsky critically breaks down the necessities of creating, sustaining and leading a movement within the political sphere of the 20th century. While things have changed quite a bit since then, this “handbook” is still a fundamental text on how to organize people, spread ideologies and create an effective resistance against the status quo or the government.

VIII     **Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of infrastructure space*. New York and London: Verso, 2014**

Easterling describes buried structures of power in our built environment and how forces shape them with an eye opening effect. In a way similar to how *The Prince* by Machiavelli illustrates the underlying structure of power of his place and time, *Extrastatecraft* takes the mask off of the formalities of a few strange new creations of hyper-globalization such as free-trade zones or our massive data and power infrastructures. While a lot of these systems are crucial for the daily livelihood of billions, they aren’t run or maintained with public service primarily in mind. In fact, in many cases such as the free-trade zone the main underlying purpose is to circumvent global legal frameworks and regulations placed for social benefit. Throughout the book and especially in the last chapter, she presents the idea of advancing dissent through understanding these infrastructures, an idea that might be necessary for a long awaited evolution of political activism.

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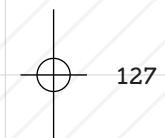
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