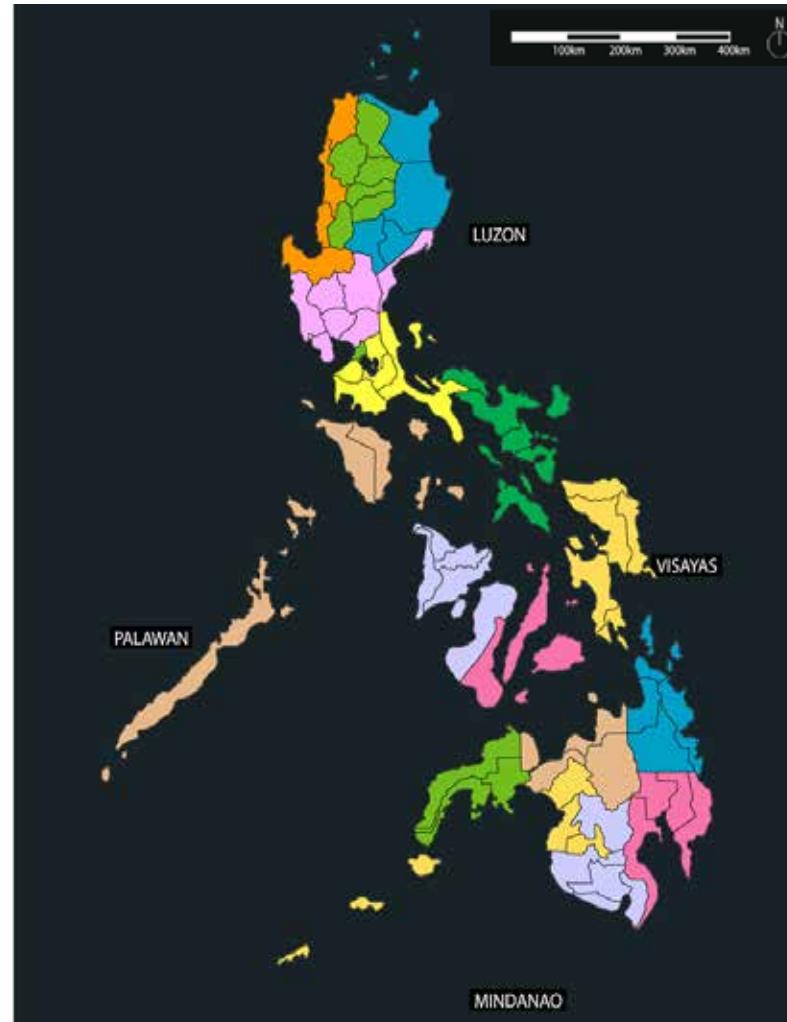


# THE LIVING MUSEUM

MONIKA LIGOT + ANTHEA VILORIA



The Living Museum achieves social justice by establishing an **INCREMENTAL URBAN FRAMEWORK** for learning, sharing, and preserving **CULTURAL PRACTICES**



## Filipinos, Colonial Mentality, and Mental Health

A psychological exploration of the effects of colonialism among Filipinos.

Posted Nov 02, 2017 E. J. R. David Ph.D.

GLOBAL

### A Damaged Culture

Our Asia correspondent offers a dark view of a nation not only without nationalism but also without much national pride

JAMES FALLOWS NOVEMBER 1987 ISSUE

### What 'relief' for the poor should really look like

*Aid handouts for poor communities allow them to just barely survive. This has to change.*

by Maria Khristine Alvarez & Joshua Miguel Makalintal

3 May 2020

**The Philippines is an archipelago of about 7,641 islands, 91 provinces, 17 regions, and 182 native languages. In the last 50 years, over 50 million people have moved to the city to find work. They not only leave their families, but also their culture behind. This urban migration has also caused an increase in informal settlers from 4.1% to 5.4% in 2012, with 1.3 million in Metro-Manila alone.**

# The Living Museum

The Living Museum is a **new museum typology** that serves as an innovative space for **representing** every community in the Philippines, especially those of marginal, usually invisible, impoverished informal communities.

The Living Museum achieves social justice by establishing an **incremental urban framework** for learning, sharing, and preserving **cultural practices**.



*Right: Intangible cultural heritage practices, such as maranao weaving and wood carving, have been forgotten. The Living Museum will provide an urban framework for the learning, sharing, and preserving of these practices.*

# Call to Action

Rather than having a monumental structure that is detached from society, what if a museum could **be integrated into the community?**

The Living Museum will reinvent the museum typology as a **dynamic and immersive space** that **branches** into the **East Triangle Informal Community**.



**Right:** Due to the social and economic inequality caused by industrialization and globalization, the informal communities, like those of the Smoky Mountains, Payatas, and Tondo regions, have been overlooked. The Living Museum will act as the interface between these communities and others.

# City-Scale Site Plan

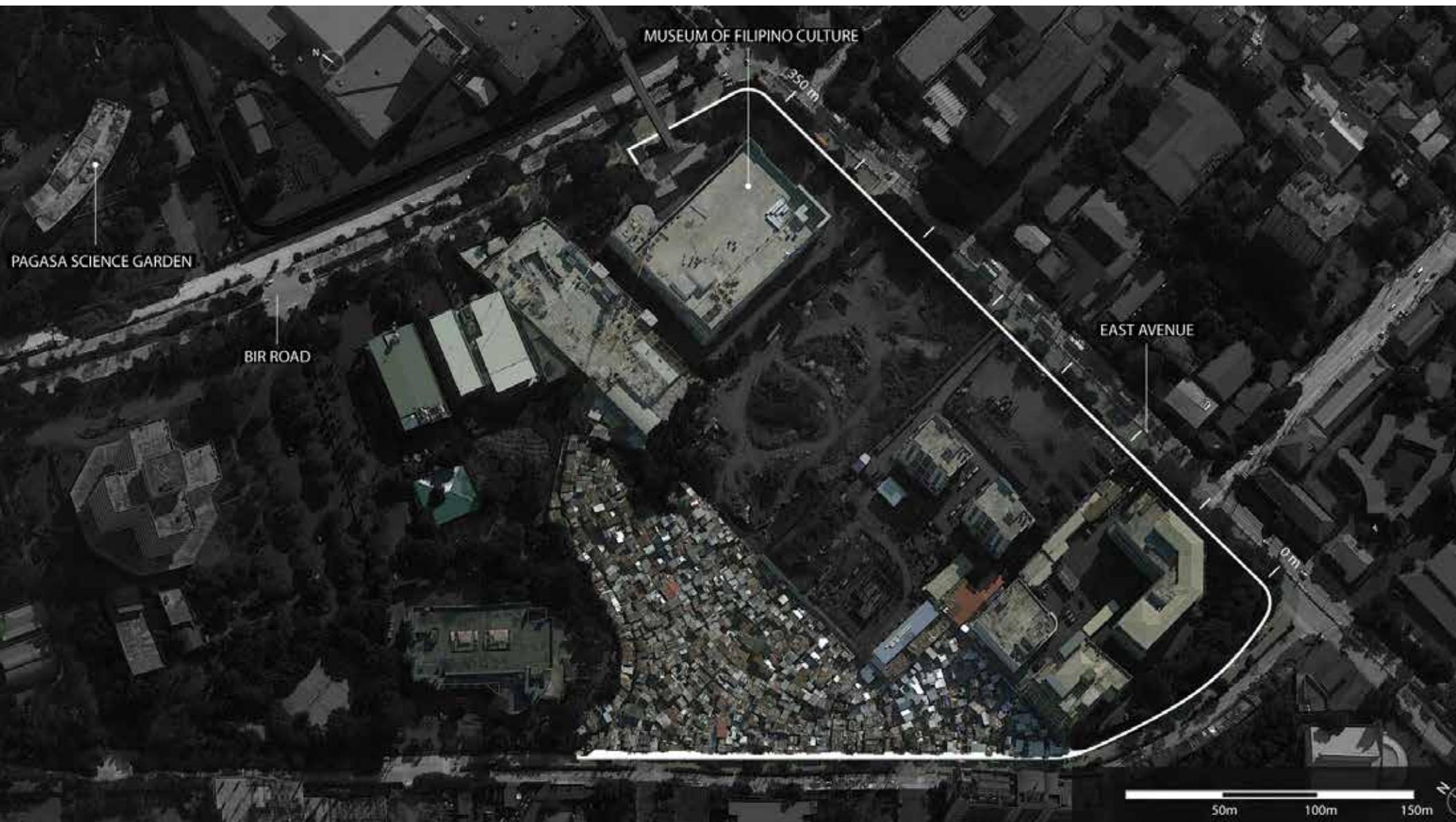
Barangay Pinyahan, Metro-Manila, is our site, located between the Quezon Ave. Station and East Ave. Station.



# Barangay-Scale Site Plan



# Site Conditions



Barangay Pinyahan is the ideal place for this museum because it addresses 3 existing conditions; an existing cultural museum that is inaccessible to the public, mid-rise government buildings that are enclosed by an 8-10 foot high walls and an informal settlement adjacent to the existing museum.

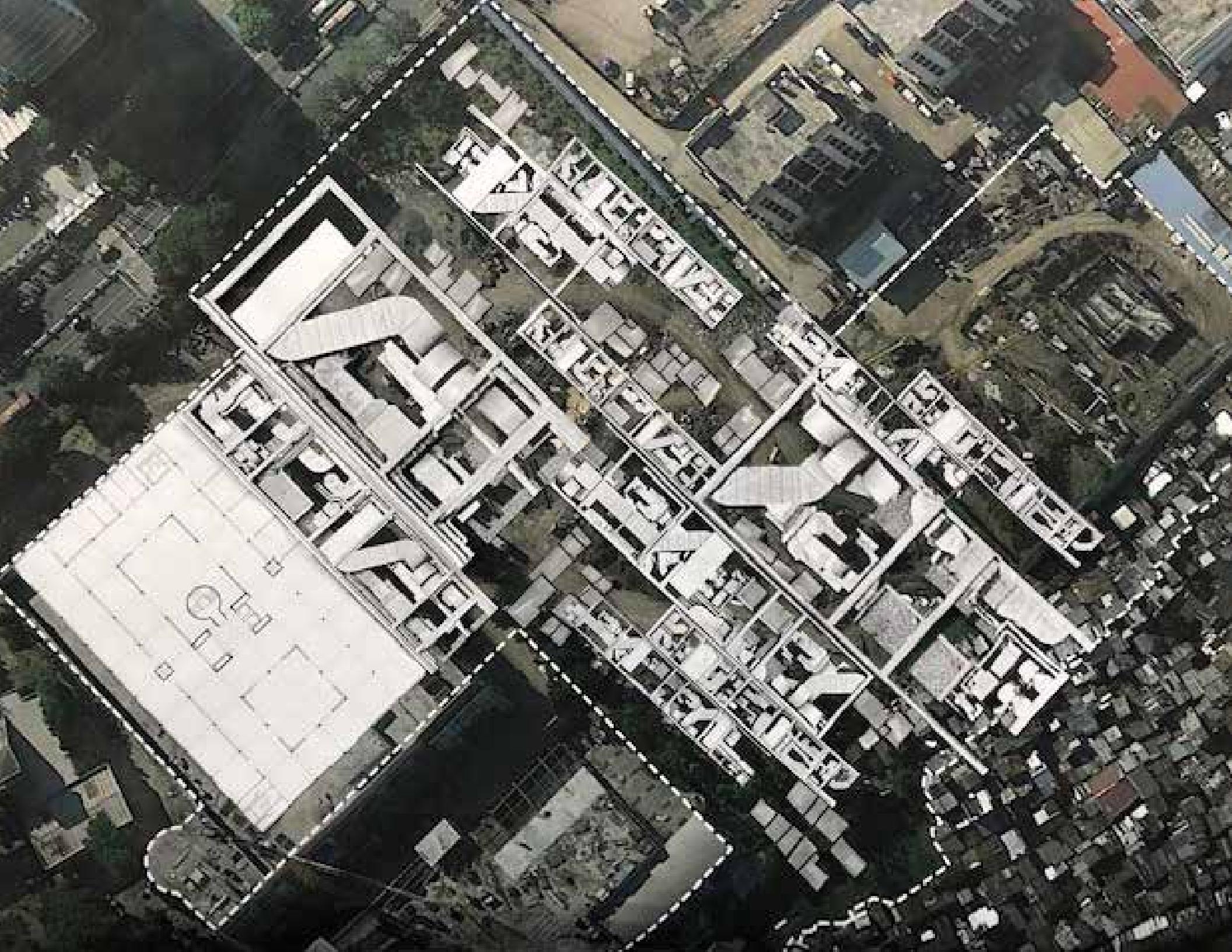
The adjacent informal settlement is tucked away behind the surrounding government buildings and is only accessible by NIA Road, a street which branches from the major artery of East Avenue. By opening up the empty lot and the existing museum to the informal community, the Living Museum will create an accessible connection to East Avenue.

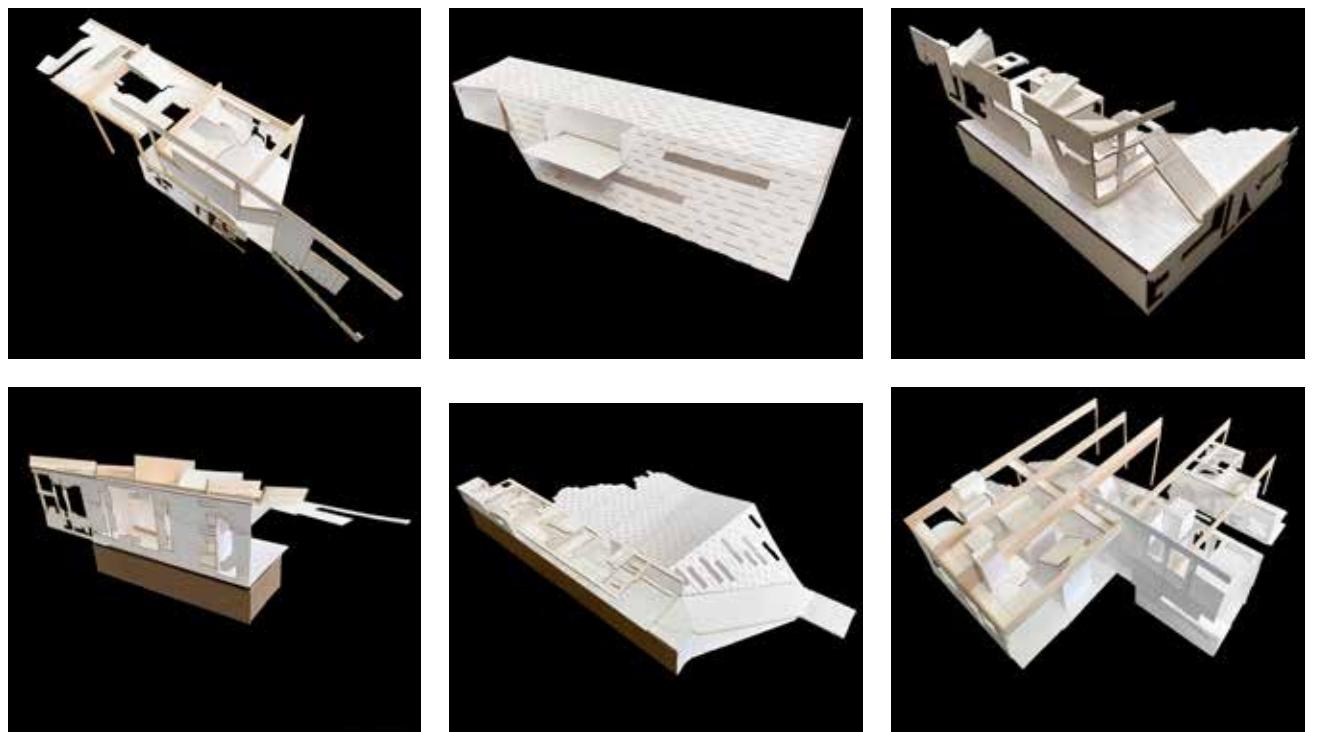
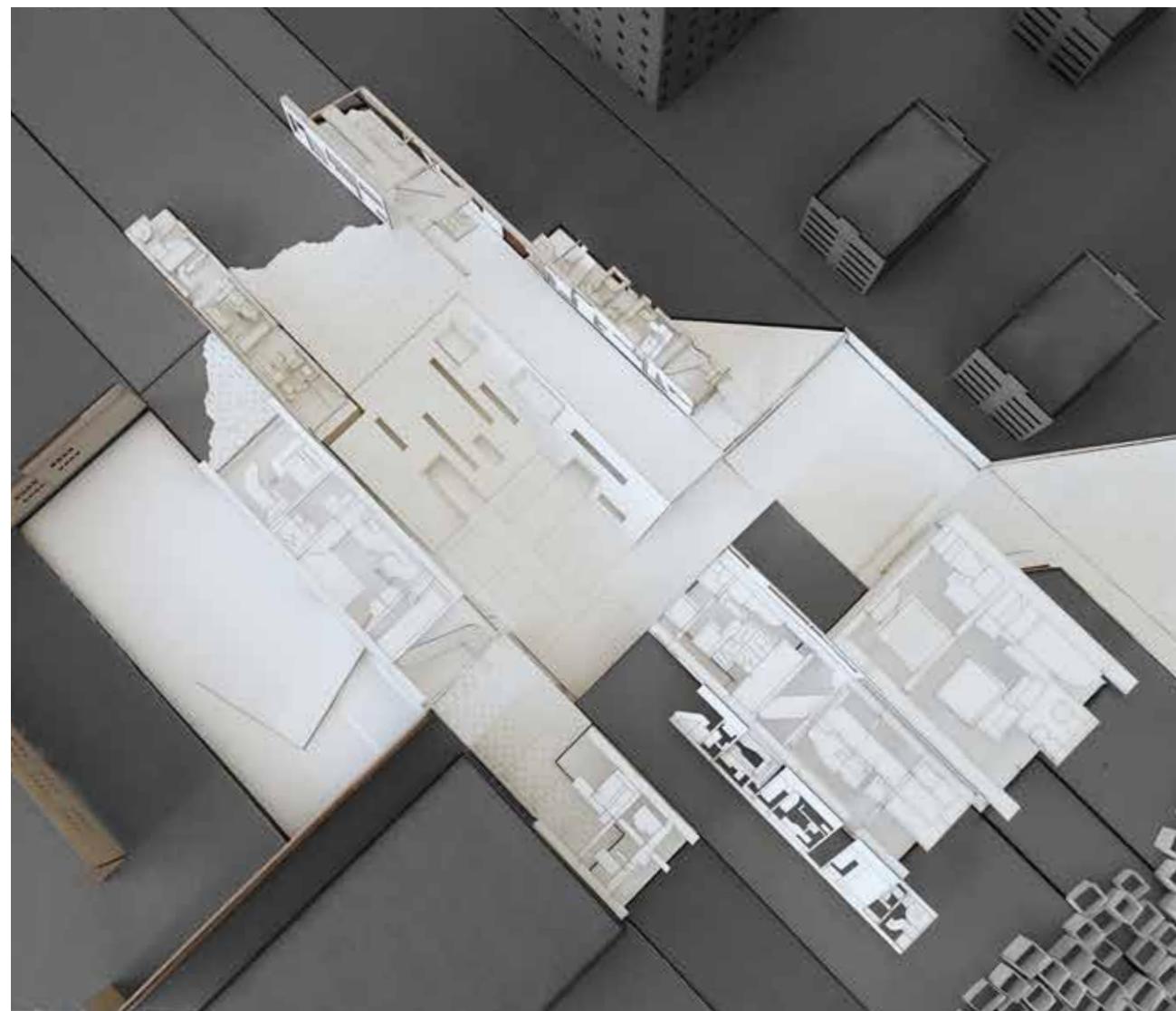
# Urban Framework

Mechanical systems serve as the connective tissue within a building that allows it to function. As the lungs of the building, mechanical systems manage the flow of energy and air. The Living Museum integrates this systematic connectivity and breathability by collaging patterns of mechanical systems at different scales to create a flow across the site through the practice of intangible cultural heritage. The existing grid of the site determines how the parts are oriented and shifted along parallel bands. This creates a continuous flow between the East Triangle Community, the existing Museum of Filipino Culture, and East Avenue.

The Living Museum uses dynamic shifting to link the once isolated informal East Triangle community to the rest of Metro-Manila by overriding the inadequate existing museums and reviving the practice of intangible cultural heritage.

*Left:* This drawing collages mechanical systems at three different scales according to the existing grid of the site to create a flow from the East Triangle Informal Community to East Avenue.

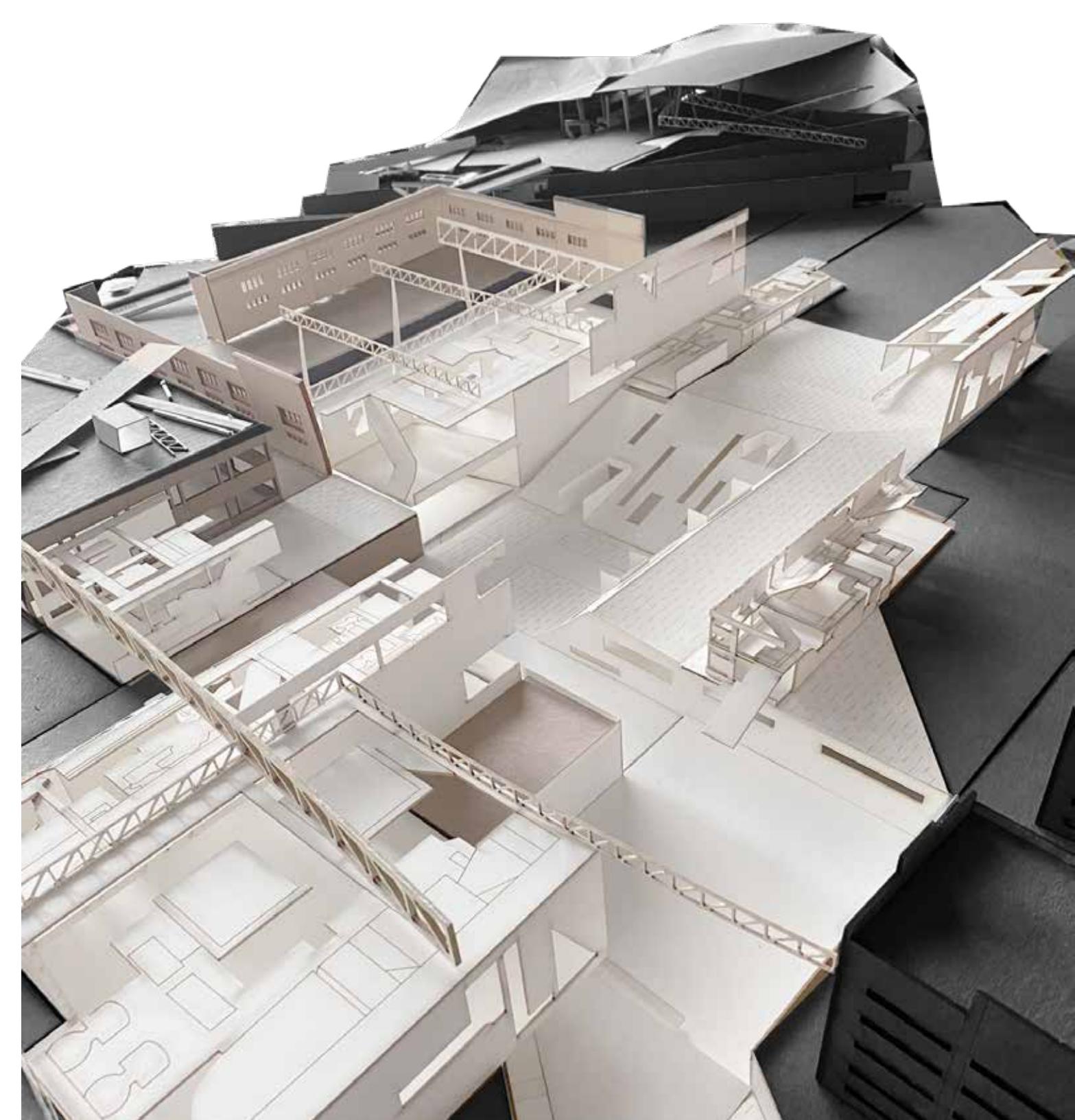
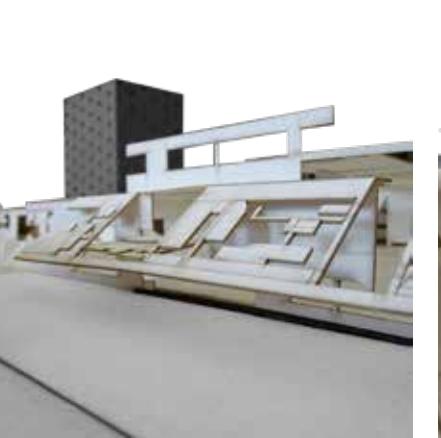
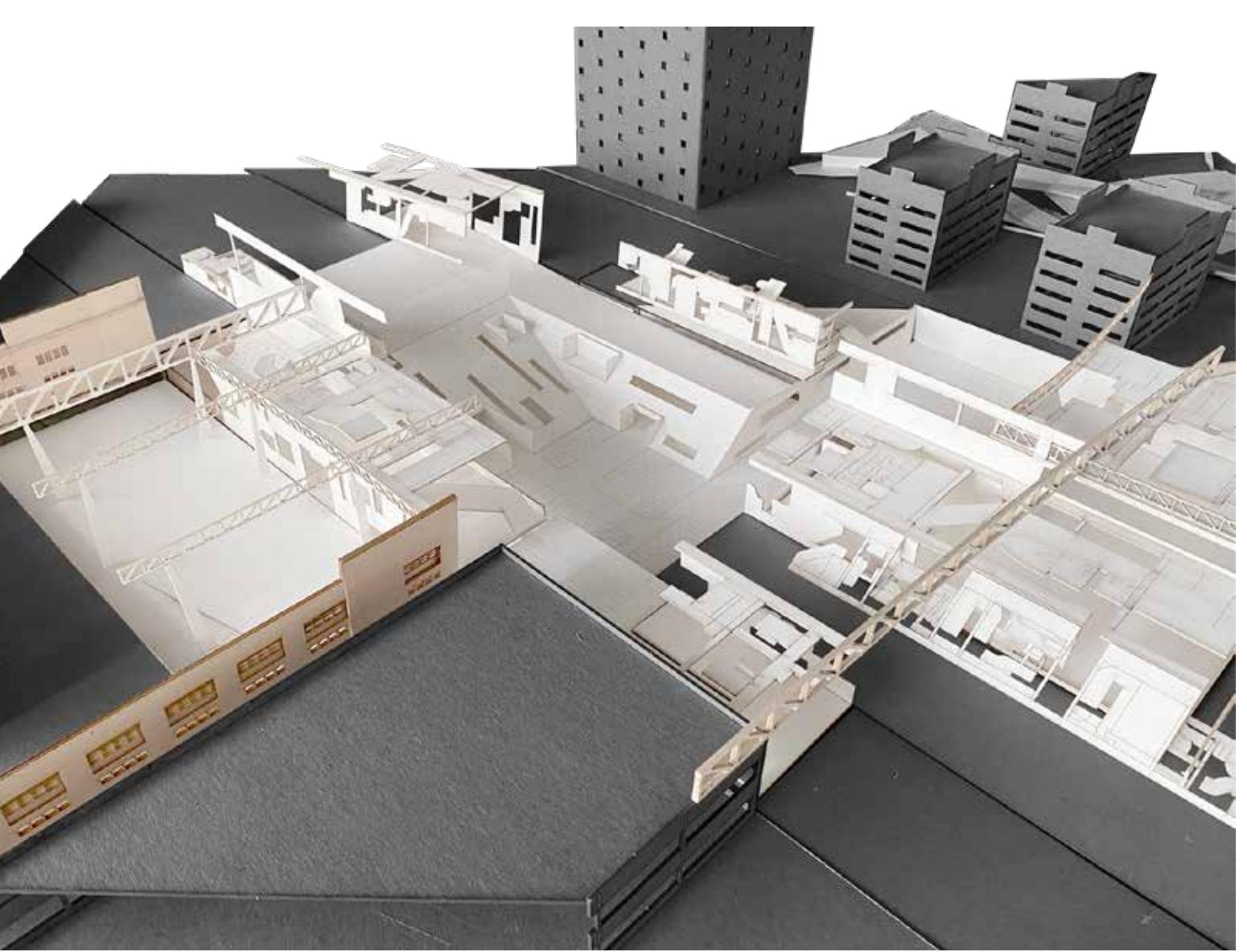




**Left:** This is an aerial view of the overall model on the site.

**Right Above:** From left to right are the models of the work component, the gallery component, and the craftsmanship component.

**Right Below:** From left to right are the models of the market component, the agriculture component, and the performance component.

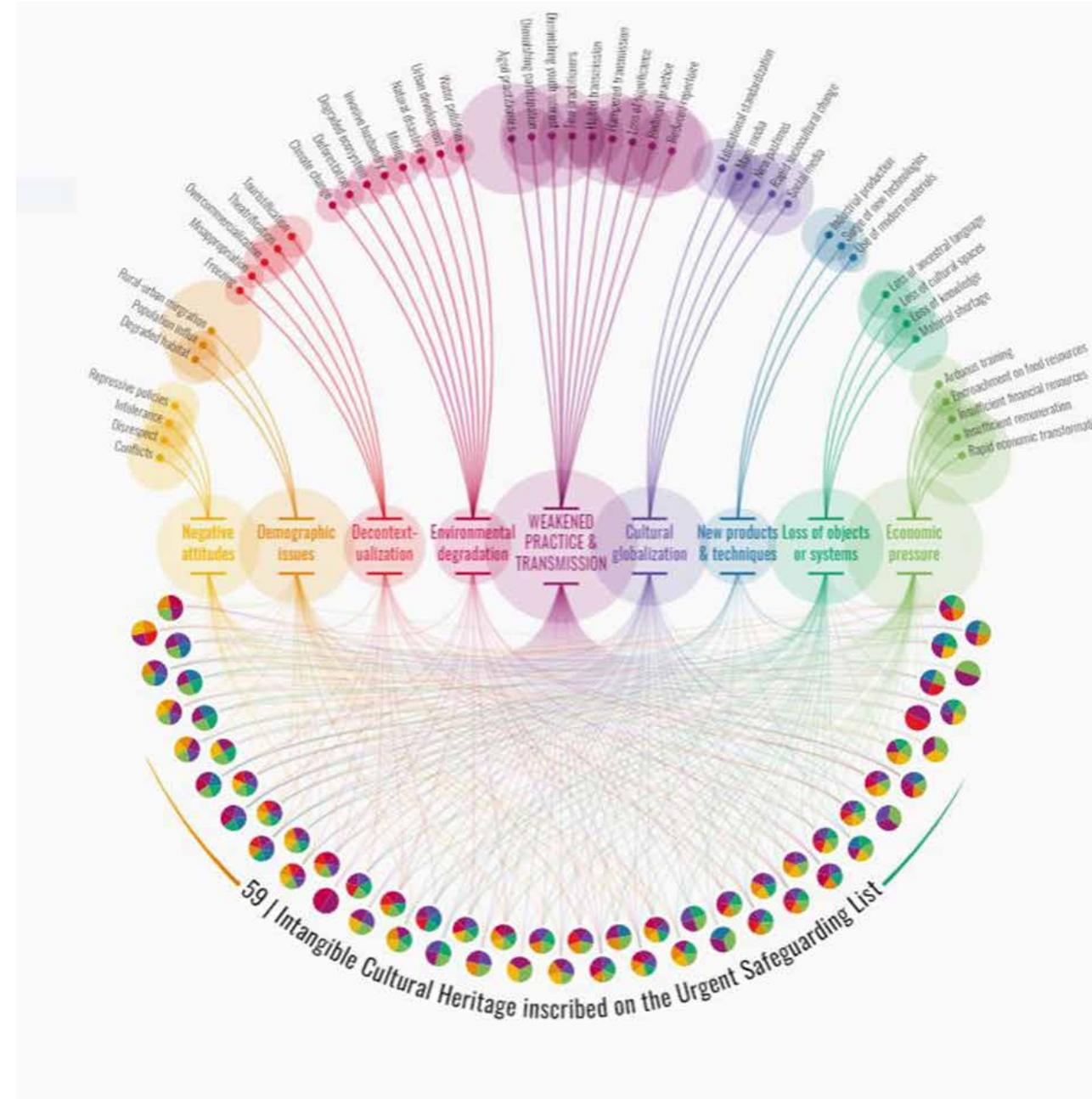


## Program

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines Intangible Cultural Heritage as, “traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts” (UNESCO). These practices are important to protect because they embody a historical transmission of knowledge and skills between generations. UNESCO also states that “intangible heritage culture is traditional, contemporary, and living at the same time. Culture is “living” because it does not only involve lives in the past, it exists in those in the present who continue these practices and use them in their daily lives” (UNESCO). This new living museum will advocate for the Philippines’s intangible cultural heritage to be continually practiced in the present and in the future through collaborative and experiential programs.



**Right:** The potential exhibitions described above are shown in the images to the right.



One of the major threat groups to intangible heritage culture is weakened practice and transmission, caused by aged practitioners, diminishing participation, diminishing youth interest, few practitioners, halted transmission, hampered transmission, loss of significance, reduced practice and reduced repertoire.(UNESCO) The creation of a new living museum can counter the lack of cultural space present in the city, becoming a place to restore significance of cultural practices. It will provide a place for aged practitioners to share their knowledge in an environment that is accessible to all. From stories to art forms, traditions will be able to be passed from generation to generation. Emphasis on increasing youth interest and participation will reverse a cultural identity that has been replaced by globalized practices. Recognition from the community is key in the safeguarding and continuation of intangible heritage culture. The Living Museum will be a socially cohesive space, connecting generations together to restore the community's Filipino identity.

**Left:** This UNESCO diagram indicates the different threats to intangible cultural heritage.

Five zones of program flow from the informal settlement in the east to the existing museum in the west. There is the performance zone, craftsmanship zone, agricultural zone, market and food zone, and residential zone. All of these zones are united through an underground system of interconnected landscape and public spaces. The forms and relationships between these zones are influenced by the interrelated forms of mechanical ductwork and pipes in order to create a continuous and holistic experience of intangible cultural heritage.

**Left:** The program diagram shows how the five zones of program are interwoven with each other within the Living Museum's buildings and landscape.

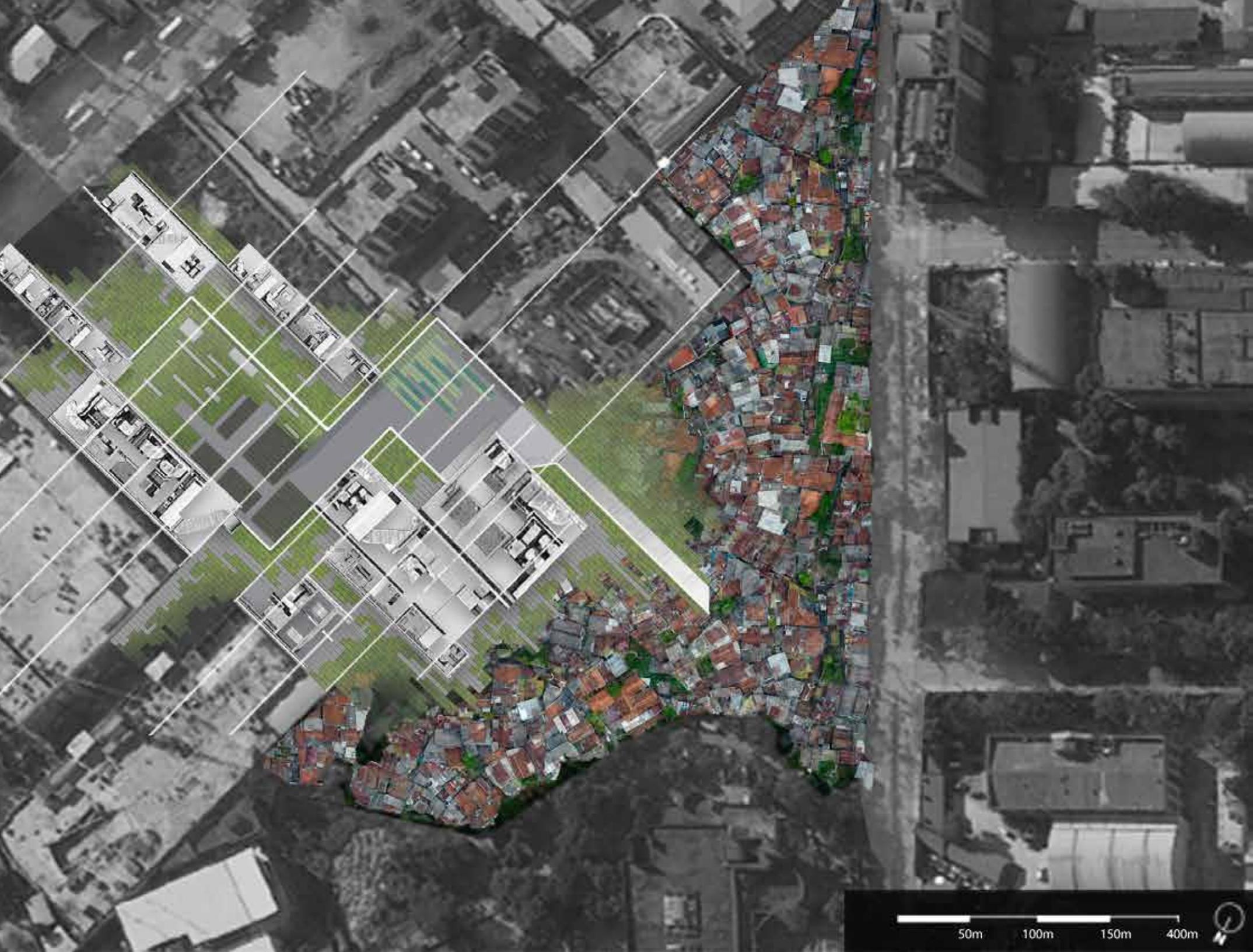


# Roof Plan

## Sharing Culture:

The components of the Living Museum are porous to create a connection between the East Triangle Informal Community and the main East Avenue.

The agricultural fields, outdoor areas, and market places are where the East Triangle Informal Community can come together with other neighboring communities to share traditional food, recipes, crafts and skills .



# Ground Plan

## Learning Culture:

The studios, workshops, theaters, and classrooms within the urban framework promote the learning of Filipino intangible cultural heritage practices.



# Lower Level Plan

Preserving Culture:

The archive, food museum, and gallery are where Filipino intangible cultural heritage practices are preserved.



# Connecting the East Triangle Informal Community to the Museum of Filipino Culture



EXPLORE

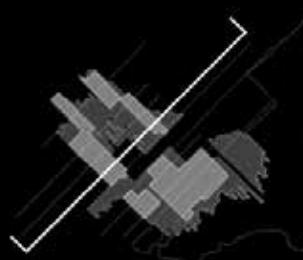
LIVE

WORK

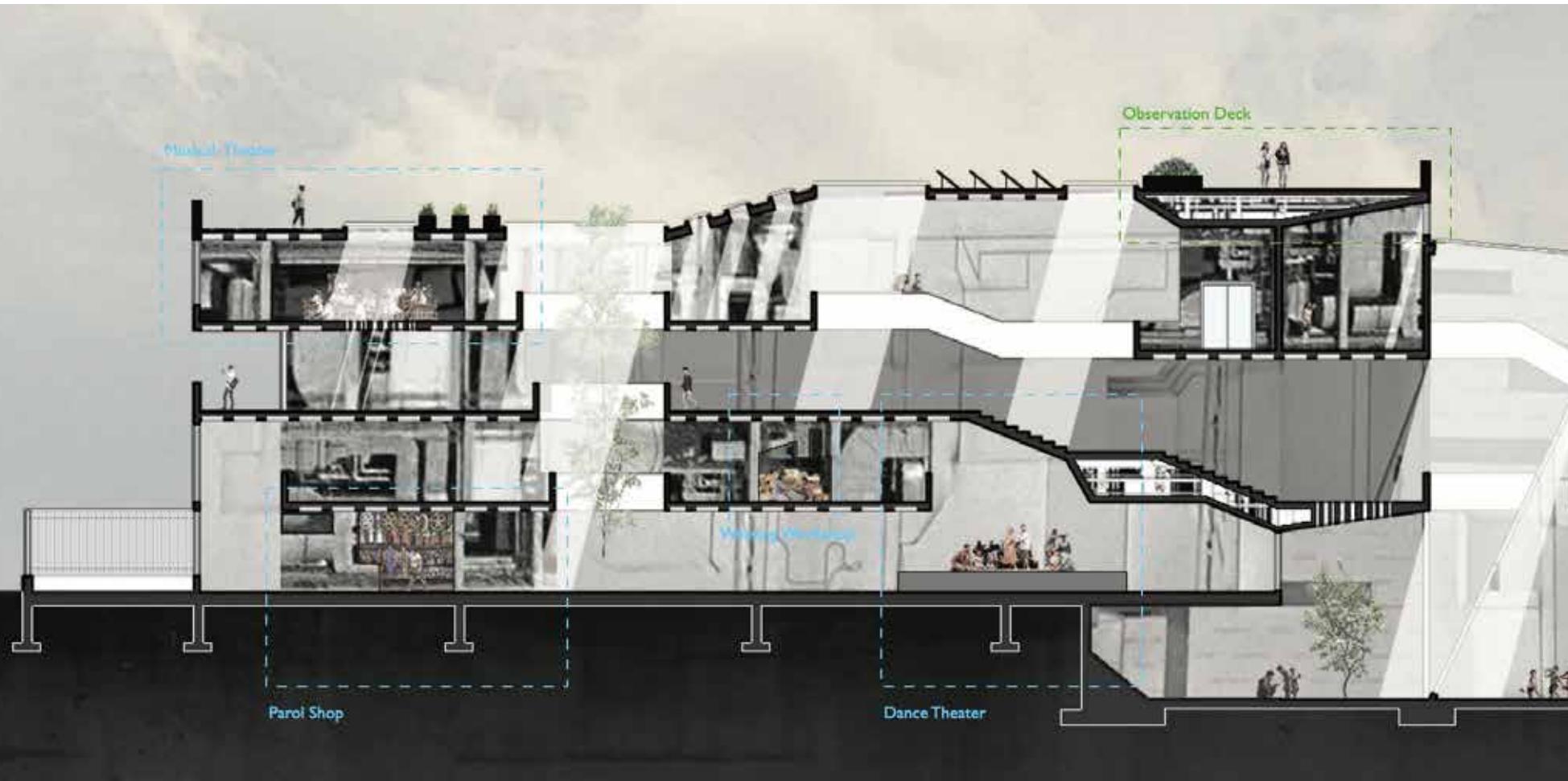
GROW

SELL

CREATE



# Preserving Culture by Transforming the Museum of Filipino Culture



The existing Museum of Filipino Culture is physically transformed with more public spaces and skylights that let in more natural light. The original floor slabs are transformed to create more continuous spaces.

Rather than having a detached experience of culture where the viewer and object are separate, the Museum of Filipino Culture is revitalized with active participation of Filipino intangible cultural heritage practices.

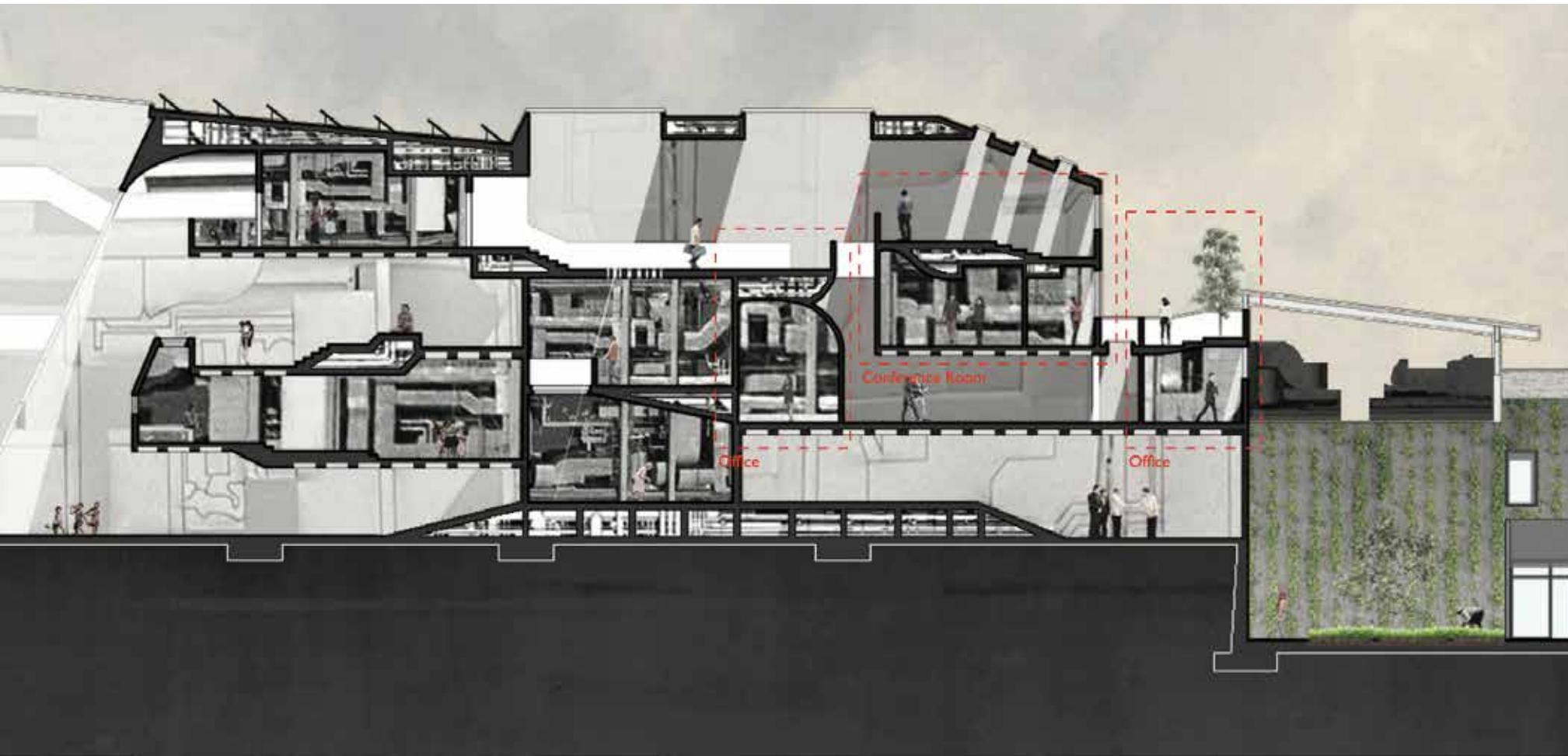
# Preserving Culture by Housing the East Triangle Informal Community

A portion of the existing Museum of Filipino Culture is taken over to provide improved houses for the residents of the informal East Triangle Community. Open indoor areas, roof decks, and community gardens are provided for gathering and socializing. Skylights provide the residents with light and air while the solar panels provide the residents with electricity.

While improving the living conditions of the informal inhabitants, the housing preserves the close-knit social dynamic of the original East Triangle Community.



# Sharing Culture by Upholding the Livelihood of the East Triangle Informal Community

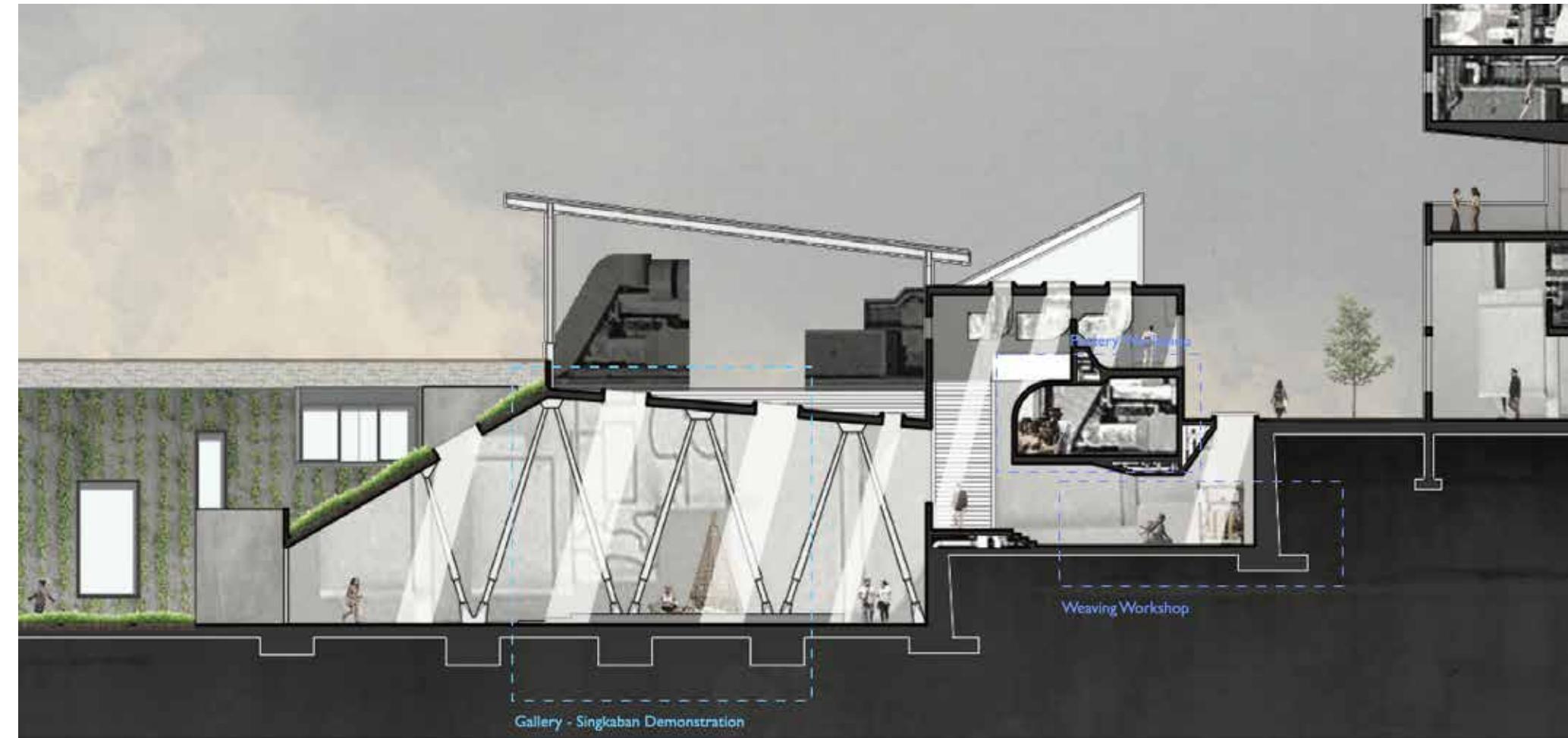


Adjacent to the housing are the offices where the inhabitants of the East Triangle Community can work. This allows the inhabitants to balance their personal and professional responsibilities by providing them with a source of stable income within close proximity of their homes

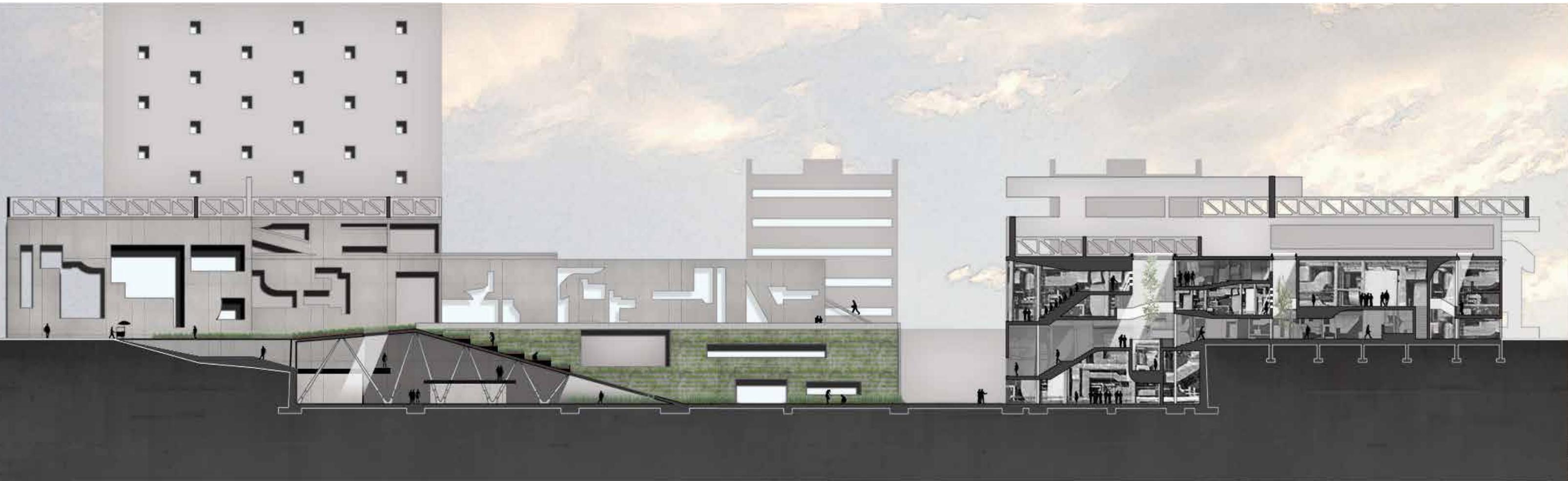
As the running administrators of the Living Museum, the informal inhabitants share their embedded cultural practices with other communities, justifying how they are valuable as themselves, not just their labor.

# Learning Culture through Traditional Craftmanship

Across from the offices and administration building is an occupiable berm that can be accessed in the subterranean level. This contains the gallery that exhibits traditional arts and crafts. Adjacent to the art gallery are the crafts workshops, where people can learn to create traditional arts and crafts. The lower craft workshops overlook the gallery, where their creations can be displayed.



# Connecting the East Triangle Informal Community with East Avenue



SELL

EAT

CREATE

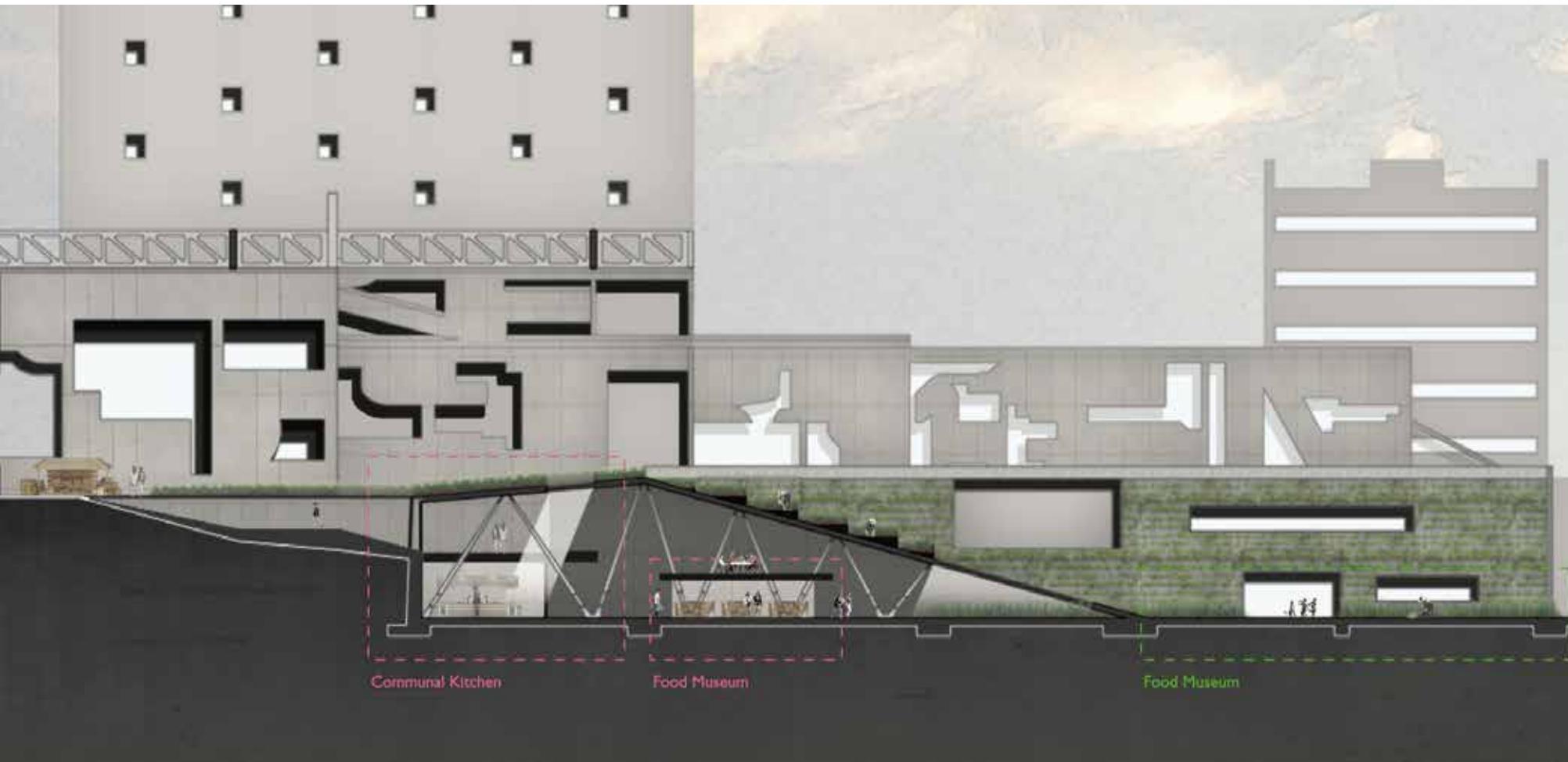
GROW

TEACH

PERFORM



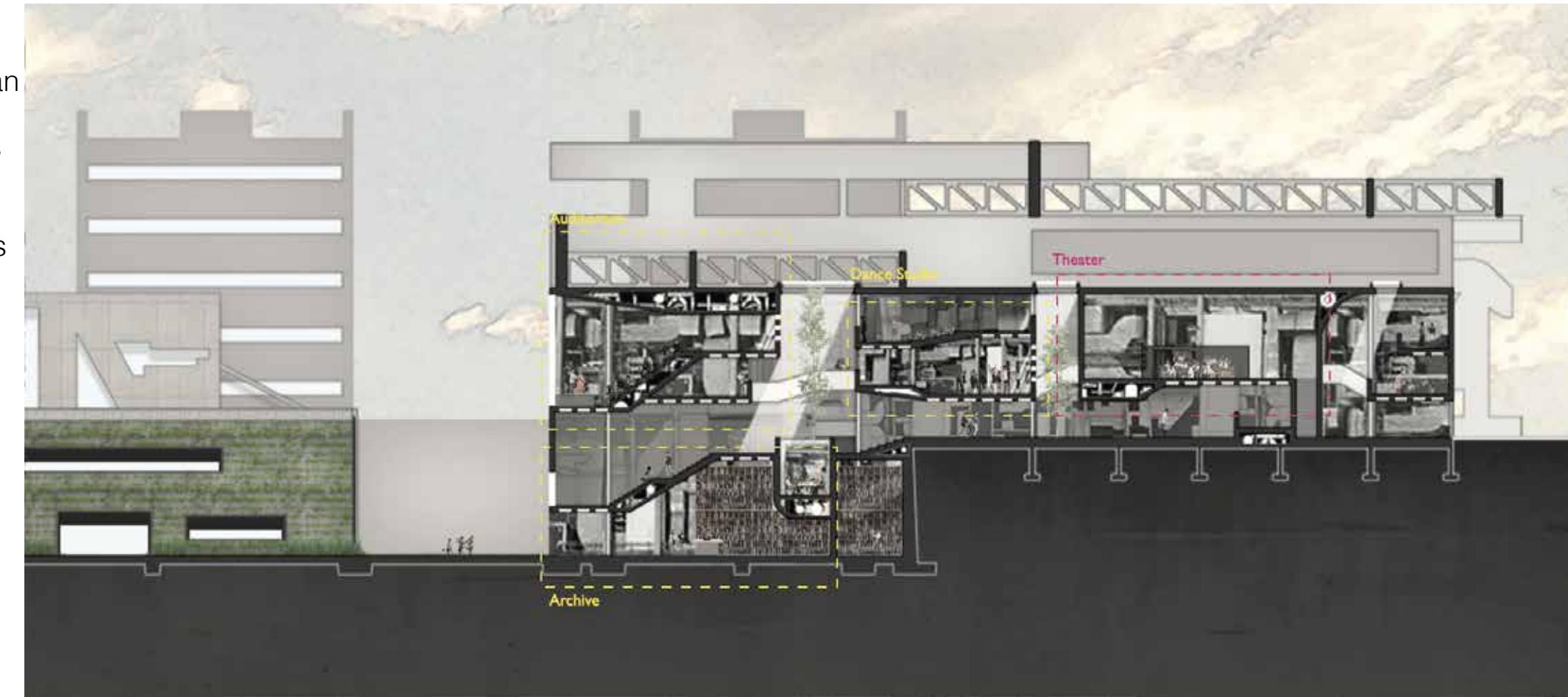
# Sharing Culture through Traditional Craftmanship



The Craft Market structure functions as an exterior shell, in which smaller stalls can share the traditional arts and crafts created from the adjacent workshops. Underneath is another occupiable berm, in which a food museum and communal kitchen uses the traditional crops grown from the fields in order to exchange traditional recipes and dishes. The berm is terraced in order to cool the exterior surfaces and control water runoff.

# Learning Culture Through Traditional Performances and Storytelling

Across from the berm is the performance zone. The west part of the performance zone has classrooms and studios where people can learn traditional dances and theater. There is also an archive where people's oral traditions can be permanently recorded. The east part of the performance zone has theaters and storytelling rooms, in which traditional dances and theatrical productions can be performed and where personal stories can be shared.



# Historical Background

The history of the Philippines is saturated with years of interaction, occupation, and domination by foreign nations. The country has been infected by external influences that have penetrated both its society and urban landscape, creating neoliberalist architecture that interrupts circulation. In the city of Manila, flows are interrupted by hard borders that impose density through impermeable isolation. Removal of borders can create transitions and unrestricted space that reconnect the fabric of the city. Reinterpretation of borders can create new edges and new interface where interactions between different members of society can take place. If a boundary were porous could the growth of this infection be reversed to reveal porosity in the densest areas of the city?

Despite the Philippines's long history of occupation, it had an identity prior to its adaptation into a colonial society. The country had functioned as an individual culture that interacted with other civilizations before the introduction of foreign occupancy in the 1500s. In Manila, settlements were based mainly by the sea or between rivers and creeks. (Ocampo, 306) The coastal nature of these villages meant that the population was reliant of fishing, trading and agriculture. "Dwellings were typically dispersed, their concentration depending on ecological and economic conditions, including the prevailing mode of cultivation." (Ocampo, 306) Trade was done with Chinese, Arab, Siamese, and Indian merchants, showing that the Philippines already had a presence among other cultures within its vicinity. (Magno, 2) These village settlements were given the name barangay, originating from the Austronesian-Malayan word balanghai, the sailboat used by migrants who came to live on the islands. (Magno, 2) Today the word barangay is used to refer to districts in Philippine cities. The fact that the term 'barangay' is still used in society shows the importance of the village culture that had existed since the beginning inhabitants of the region. These village-like qualities would be tested and adapted during the occupation by the Spanish.

Family owned shops such as the sari-sari store (convenience store) are often located at the periphery of an informal settlement. They offer a range of necessities, from snacks to cleaning products, and are a place routinely visited by locals. The sari-sari stores operates as communal space, providing a place for one-on-one interactions between members of society because of their small size and their outward facing nature on the edge of settlements.

The existence of stores like this define the edges of informal settlements as inclusive space. If a museum of culture could operate architecturally as an edge, it could promote an inclusive environment. Each "exhibit" would operate as its own shop, housing programs such as traditional food making, recounting oral traditions and stories, folk dancing, education on informal communities, and even housing small performances. By breaking up the museum into smaller, shop-like structures along an edge, the museum itself becomes the interface for people to meet; it becomes communal space.

Using repetitive smaller scale structures to house the program of museum allows for more personal interaction with traditions and culture. The museum becomes a place of communal learning rather than a sterile field of artifacts in a confusing extensive circulation. The idea of a barangay, or village, becomes incorporated into the museum experience. Exhibiting in various sized segments along an edge allows visitors to choreograph their own narrative. While the series of structures become accessible points of intermingling, the exterior edges function as circulation to unify the dispersed spaces into an immersive cultural experience.

While the city was taken by force, the rules of planning developed by the Spanish did maintain a minor amount of respect towards the local culture and practices. When planning the colony of Manila, the Spanish had 150 homes built with local materials in the native building style. (Ocampo, 307) Small portions of Filipino identity like this were able to survive through the cultural alterations caused by colonization. The implementation of Spanish planning was also meant to improve living conditions by focusing on health, safety, and beauty. According to the guidelines, Spanish colonizers were also asked to retain a peaceful relationship with native inhabitants. (Ocampo, 309) While this rule seemed to be an attempt at building friendship with the natives, the underlying purpose for this action was to establish a permanent Spanish presence within the Filipino community. (Ocampo, 309) This act of friendship would be betrayed as Filipinos were taken as laborers for the Spanish economy. After 32 years under imperialism, many of the natives forgot many of their trades such as farming and weaving. (Magno, 29) The 400 years of colonization by the Spanish would only be the beginning of the story of foreign presence in the Philippines.

After winning the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States of America gained “ownership” of the Philippines with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. (Magno, 38) This occupation would become more focused on ideologies. The Americans tried to establish the Philippines as an additional state, but many would find this action against the democratic beliefs of the United States. Instead of complete colonization, the Americans put forward their occupation as preparing the Philippines for independence or “education for self-rule” as U.S. President William McKinley had called it. (Magno, 38) In reforming the Philippines, the Americans also attempted to remove forms of Spanish culture, from changing the language of instruction in schools to English to removing the midday breaks of siesta. (Magno, 38) A government system matching the U.S. was also put into place. Throughout these changes and the transition to “Independence” the ideologies with heavy influence from external parties, such as Neoliberalism, began to rise.

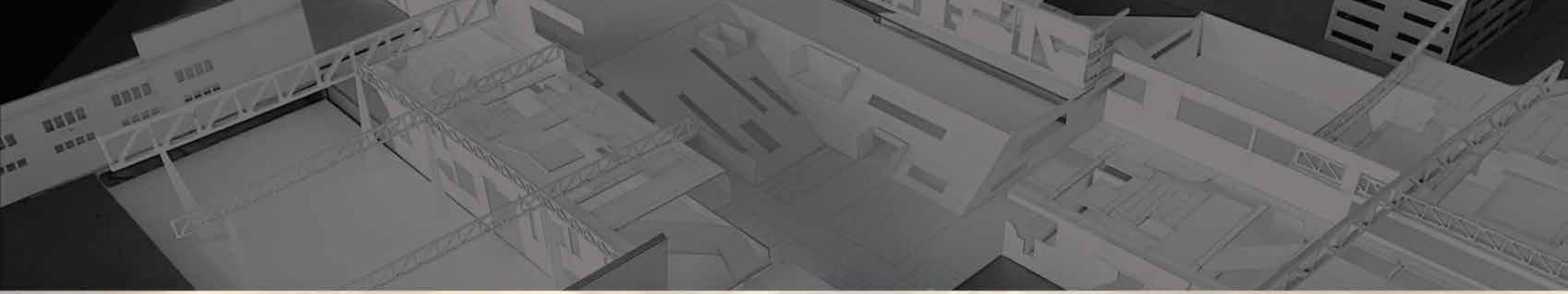
The American attitude towards Capitalism gave birth to Neoliberalism in the countries it began to occupy. Although it gave the Philippines its independence, the United States took on a hegemonic position in its role as educator for an underdeveloped nation. Such a position allowed for the introduction of Neoliberalism to the Philippines and the promotion of separating market from government. This separation has only invited more foreign influence from countries that may not understand the conditions of the Philippines and its people. This ideology's particular quality of privatization of urban space planning has been widely used in Manila, but it has created areas of segregation in a city that already bears a dense grid. This promotion of privatization has only promoted inequality, leading to gentrification and the expansion of gated, exclusive urban landscapes. (Michel, 385) Inequality is a very visible quality in the Manila urban landscape.

Poverty in Manila is visible through the city's many informal settlements that are inserted into the city fabric on pockets of private and public land. These locations are often confrontational, as they are sometimes right outside the gated communities. 21.6% of the population is below the poverty line, and many of those living in poverty are living in these informal settlements. (Asian Development Bank, Poverty in the Philippines) Only half of the people living in these settlements are employed. (Ragragio, 4) Scarcity of land and the expense of property in a society that prioritizes private housing and commercial projects have left citizens in poverty with no choice but to live informally. Lack of public space forces vendors from these communities to take to the streets, the seemingly only public space available. People who live in informal settlements are living in some of the densest areas of the city, with little space to work to earn a living.

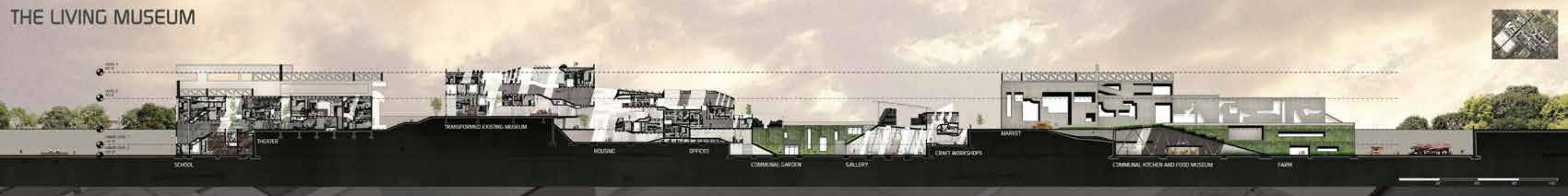
It is the influence of these external forces that, overtime, have created a dense urban fabric that prioritizes some citizens over others. From the Spanish colonial grid to the new city plans drawn by Daniel Burnham, foreign influences have tried to imagine the planning of Manila with a forced western perspective. Today, these influences have let the city become filled with large investment projects, such as luxury condominium complexes or oversized climate controlled malls, that section off space for an elite group of people. These neoliberalist buildings are the architecture that comes with the hard borders of gates and security.

Amidst the hard edges of the city, there still exists a more permeable edge that promotes inclusivity. On the periphery of the informal settlements are shops known as sari-sari stores. The term "sari-sari" is Tagalog word for variety. (Matejowsky, 248) These family-owned convenience stores offer a range of necessities, from snacks to cleaning products, and are a place routinely visited by locals. The sari-sari store operates as communal space, providing a place for one-on-one interactions between members of society because of their small size and their outward facing nature on the edge of settlements. The existence of these shops define the edges of informal settlements as inclusive space, fostering interactions and serving as a mediation between those of the settlements and outsiders. Along the informal, pedestrian walkways permeate through the edge around the sari-sari stores and into the settlement. In informal settlements, edge already exists as a place of interaction.

While informal settlements are tightly packed, they retain the sense of community, the barangay village-like atmosphere where families work together to cover every day needs. (Ragragio, 9) What would the settlements be like if they achieved the openness that once existed in the original barangays of Manila? Their boundaries can be redesigned as an interface for intersecting communities, where permeable edges create an inclusive environment. If there was a way to create porosity in the city as a result of reversing the effects of occupation and globalization, then perhaps a new urban identity of Manila could be formed.



## THE LIVING MUSEUM



**The Living Museum achieves social justice by creating an urban framework where learning, sharing, and preserving culture provides the means for the issues of informal communities to be seen and heard.**

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