

DISCOVERING A TEMPORAL STREET IN BRICKFIELDS

Strength The Resonant Layers of Time

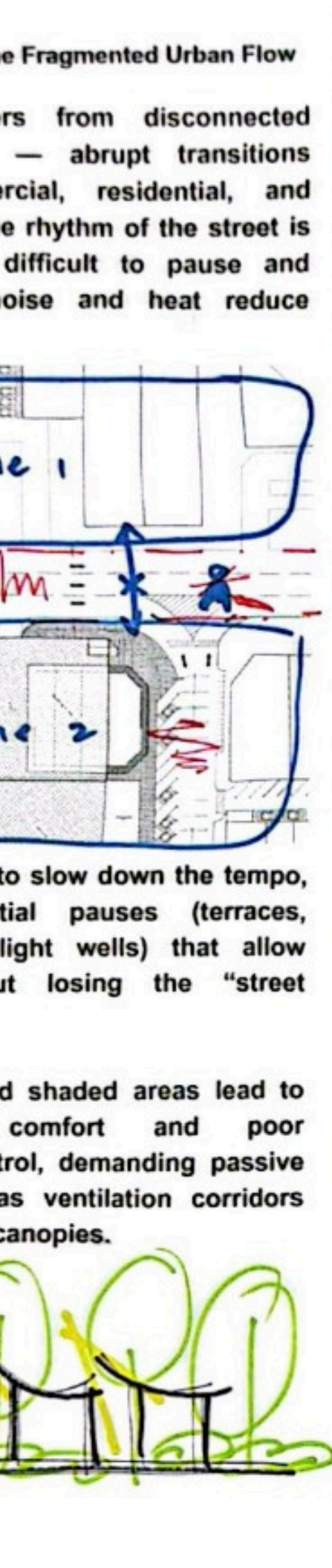
There is a powerful temporal and social layering at the site — old railway traces, cultural remnants, and daily life rhythm coexist. This creates a palimpsest condition that encourages adaptive reuse and reinterpretation. The surrounding shophouses, train lines, and informal activities generate micro-movements and soundscapes, shaping the building as a living timeline.

Weaknesses The Fragmented Urban Flow

Brickfields suffers from disconnected pedestrian flow — abrupt transitions between commercial, residential, and railway zones. The rhythm of the street is fast, making it difficult to pause and reflect. Visual noise and heat reduce human comfort.

The building can celebrate time as architecture — revealing past scars, present use, and future possibilities through materials, light, and sequence.

The multisensory atmosphere — smell of food, sound of trains, and texture of old surfaces — offers an authentic spatial experience that can be translated architecturally into tactile and auditory layers.



Opportunity A Vertical Street of Learning and Memory

By transforming vertical circulation into a continuous street-like experience, the building can become a living archive and learning centre.

Opportunity lies in using temporal design tools — aging materials, memory fragments, and transitional light — to narrate the evolution of Brickfields.

It can act as an urban observatory, offering spaces to walk, learn, pause, and remember.

Integration of courtyards, water channels — reintroduces calmness into the dense city fabric.

Potential collaboration with the community — local artists, historians, and craftsmen — can activate the building as a participatory memory platform, ensuring inclusivity and local engagement.

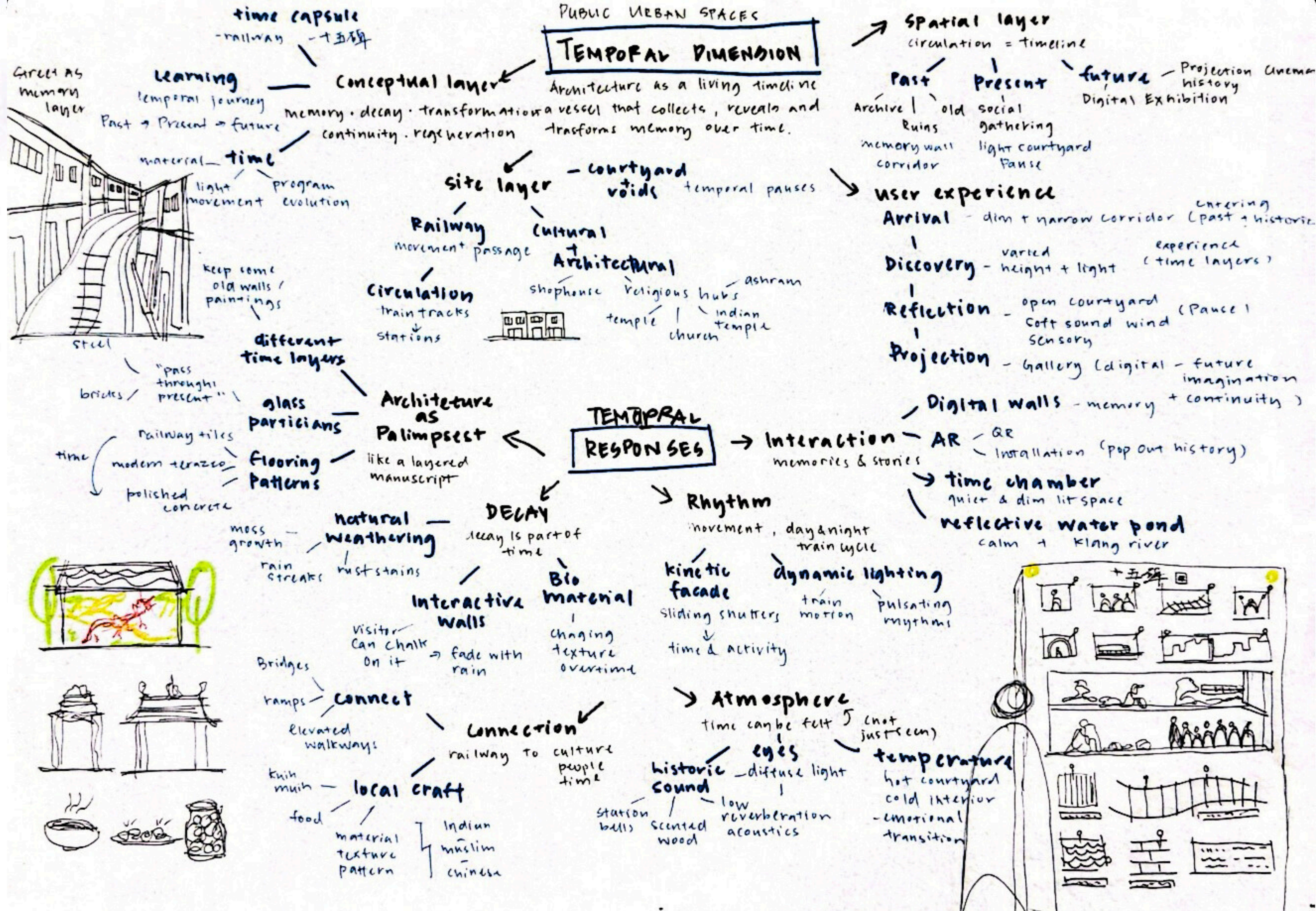
Threats Loss of Authenticity & Rapid Change

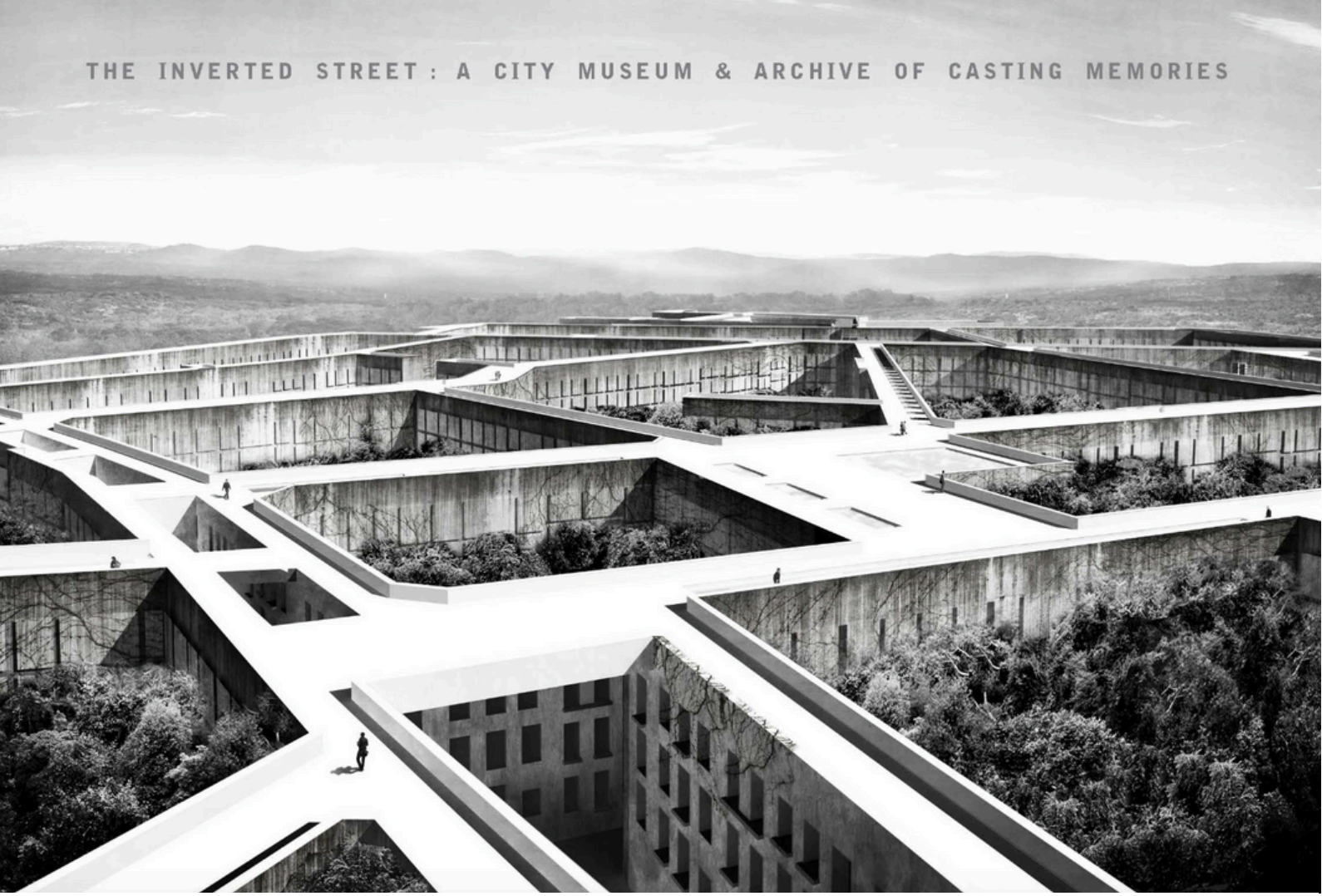
Ongoing redevelopment in Brickfields risks erasing the authentic street character — informal trades, railway identity, and cultural hybridity.

There's a danger that modernization may sterilize memory spaces, turning them into generic glass boxes.

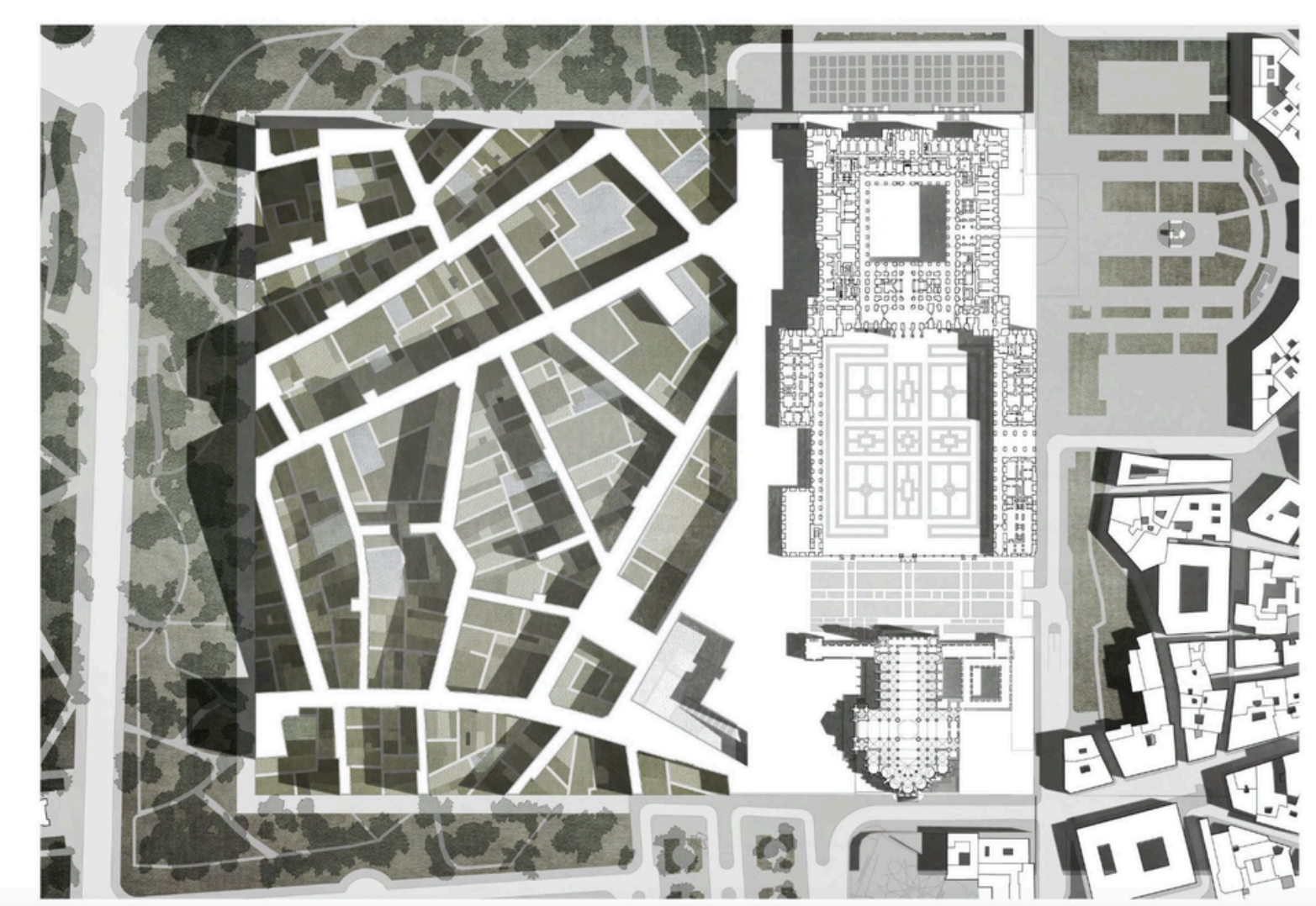
Rapid modernization and commercialization threaten to erase the intangible cultural layers that give Brickfields its soul — informal trades, oral histories, and daily rituals are being replaced by uniform urban patterns.

The design should mediate between preservation and innovation, keeping the spirit of place alive while adapting to new urban demands.

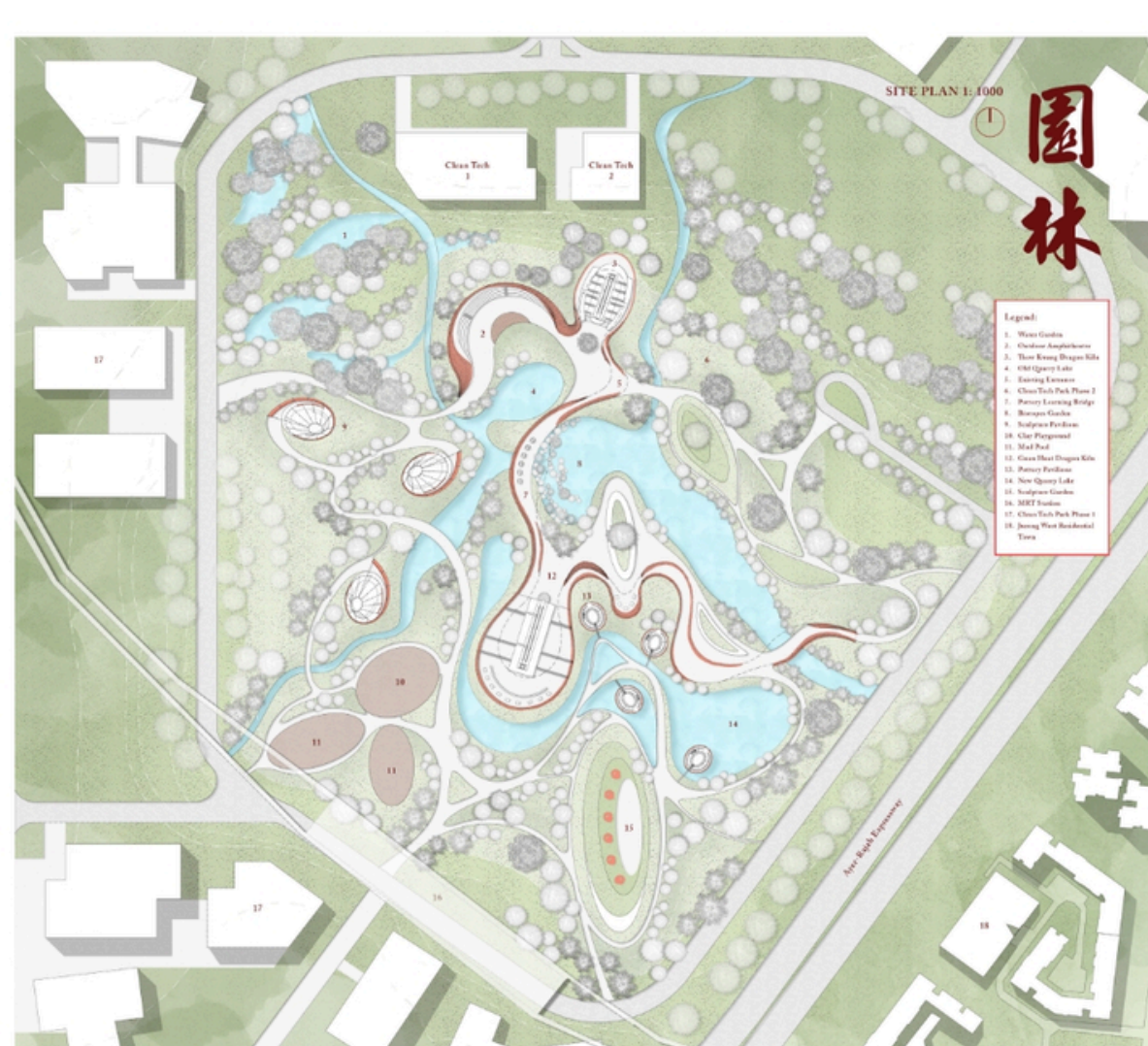




THE INVERTED STREET: A CITY MUSEUM & ARCHIVE OF CASTING MEMORIES



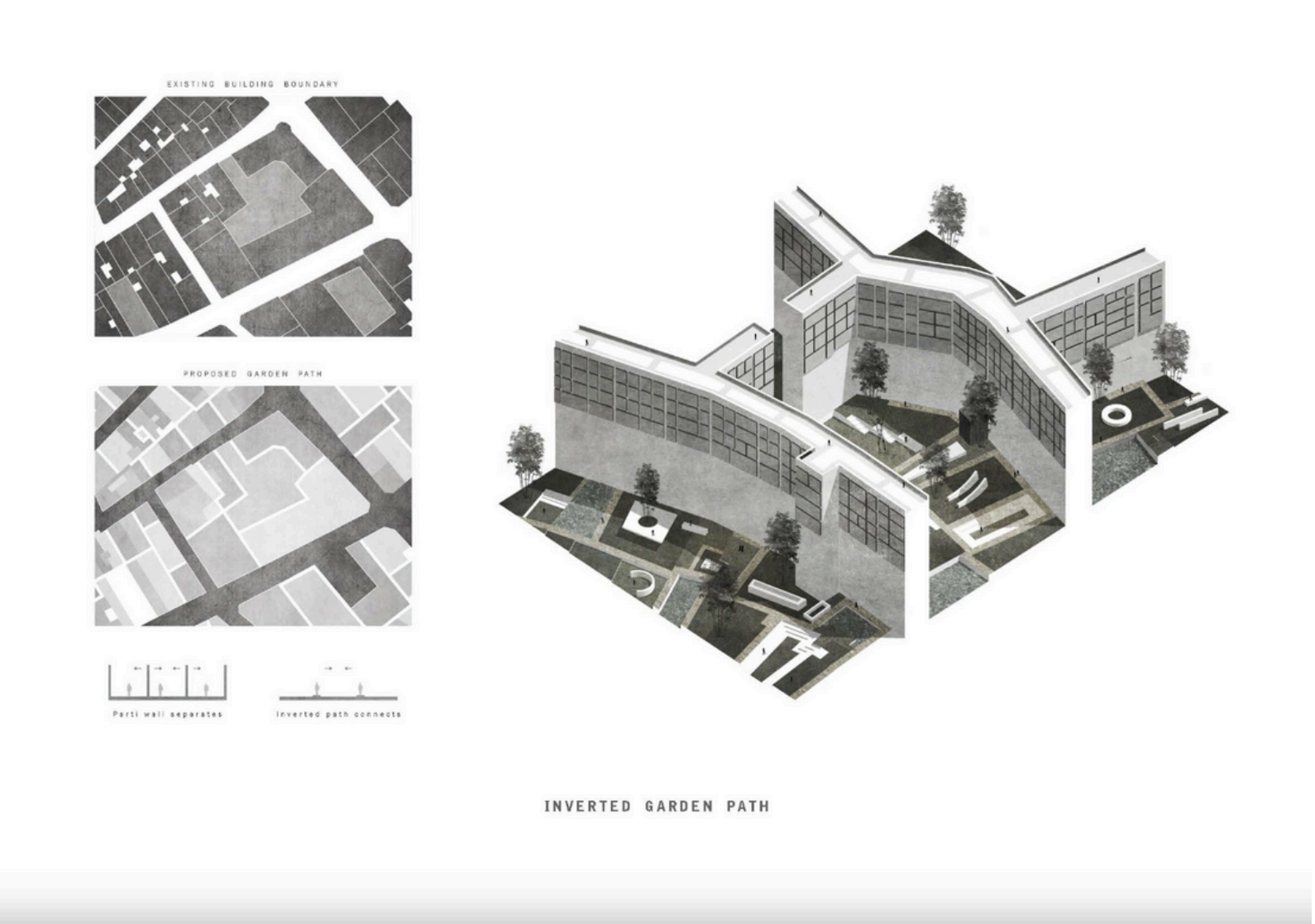
Clay Settlement 世外·陶源



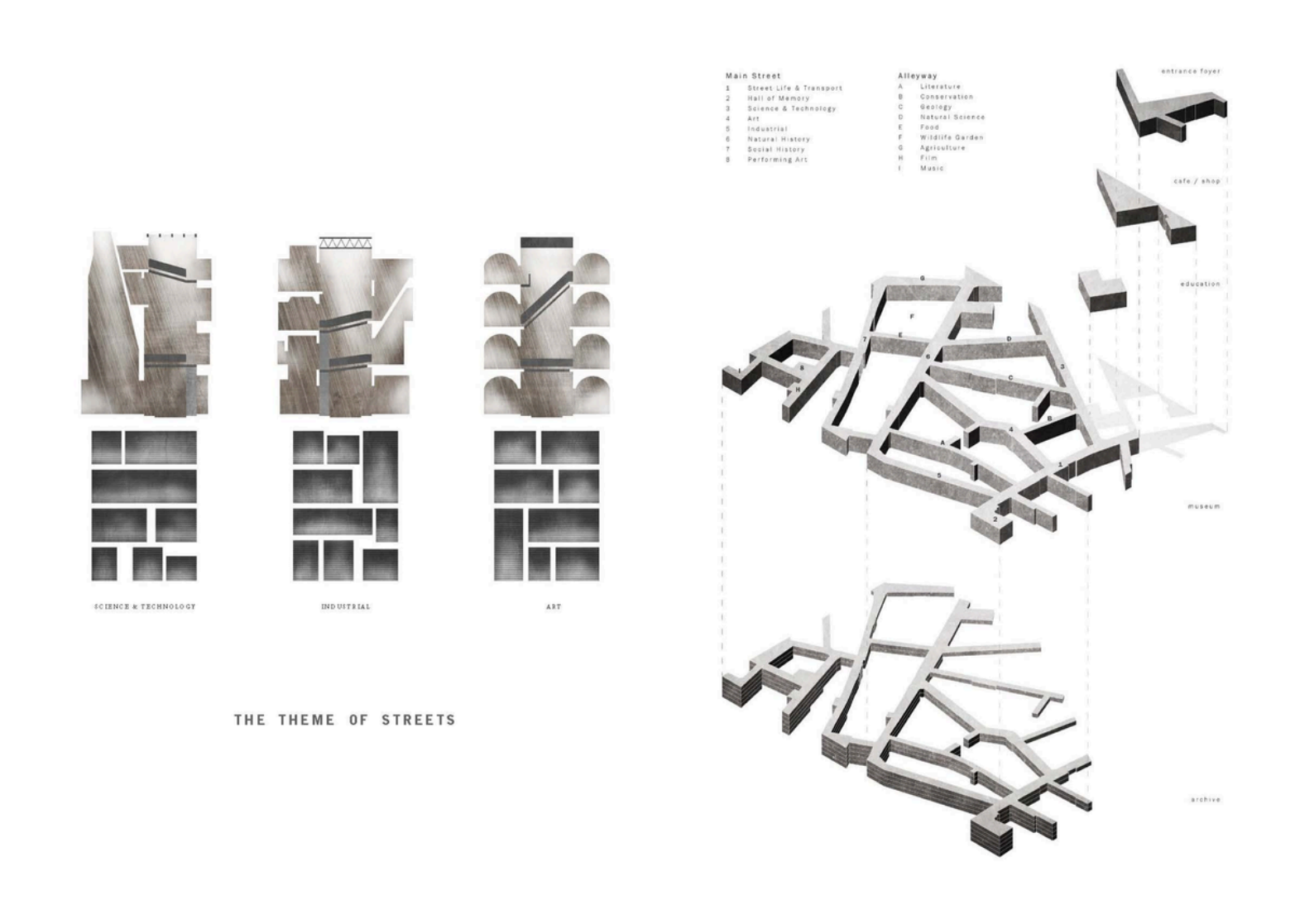
The Masterplan:
Clay Settlement

A Place to Learn and Play
The masterplan is given by public space and experience primary as in a public setting. A public housing unit is considered as the spine of the masterplan. The unit is defined by Design Facade - a continuous structure made by making of Dragon Scale Cell.

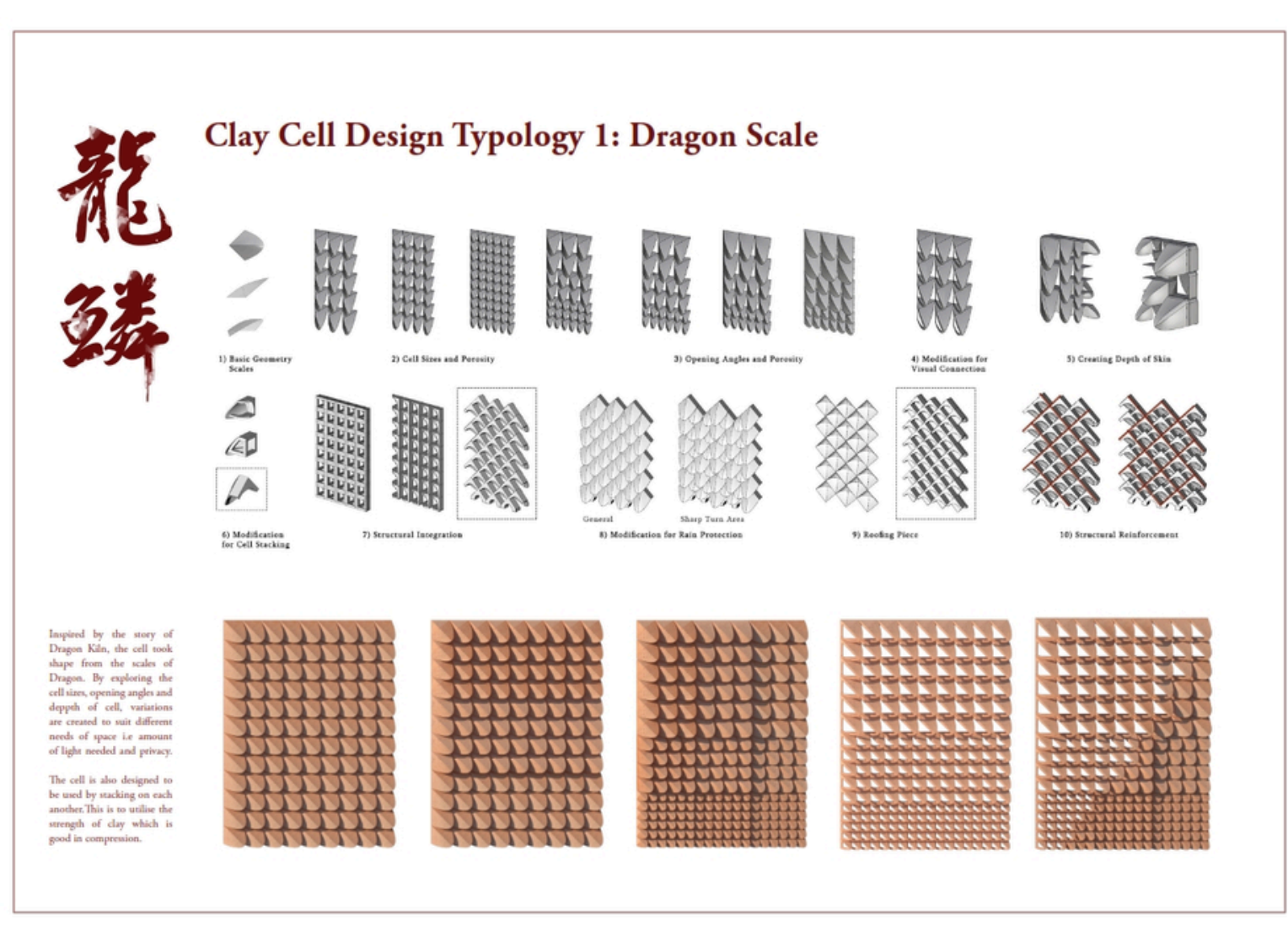
Conserving Historical Clay Production Site within the new Jiaxing Innovation District (JID)
The new historical Dragon Kiln and existing Three Kings Pottery Jiaxing are preserved in the proposed masterplan. Combining history, art and nature, the masterplan is a value adding future to JID.



INVERTED GARDEN PATH

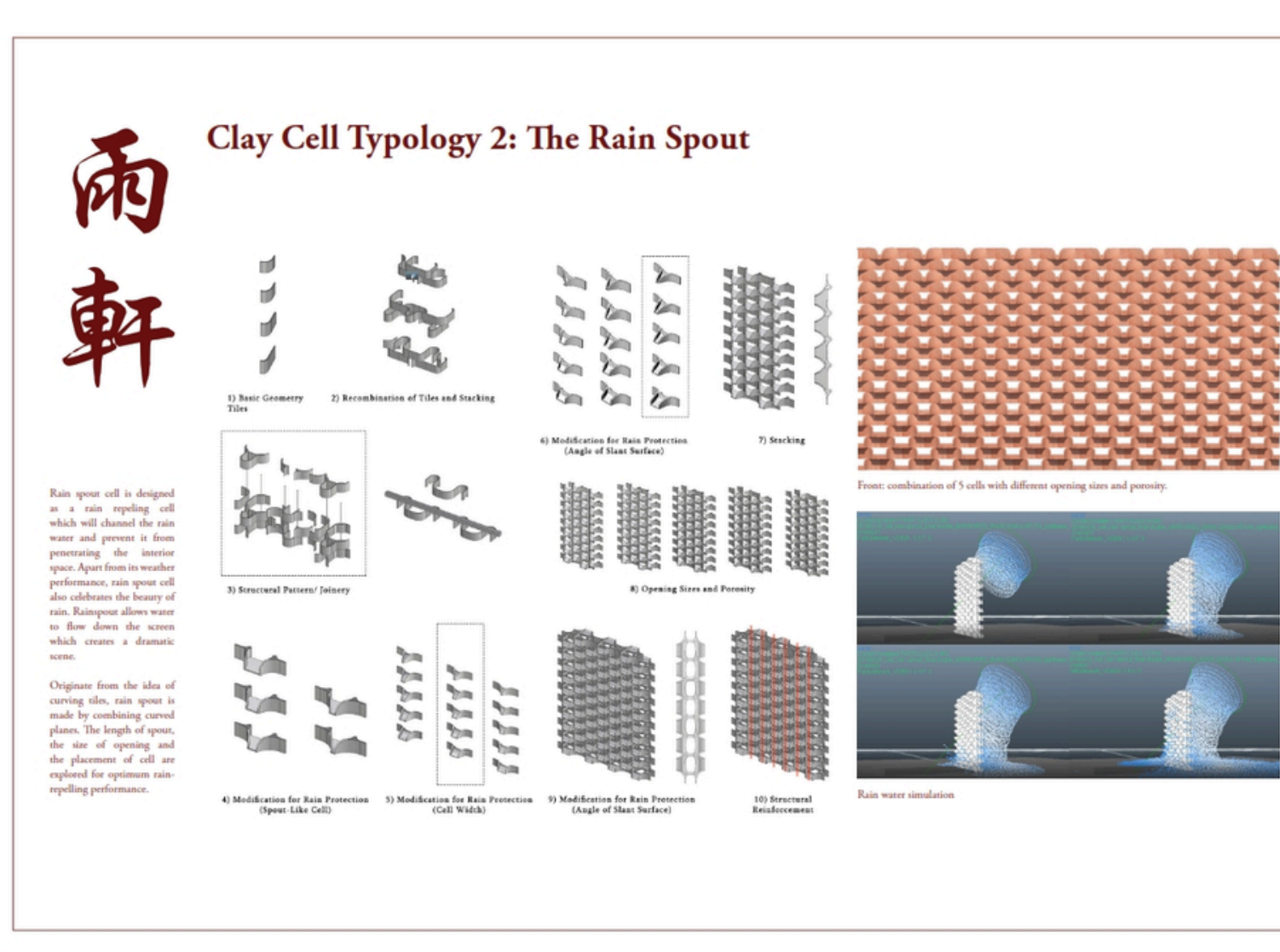
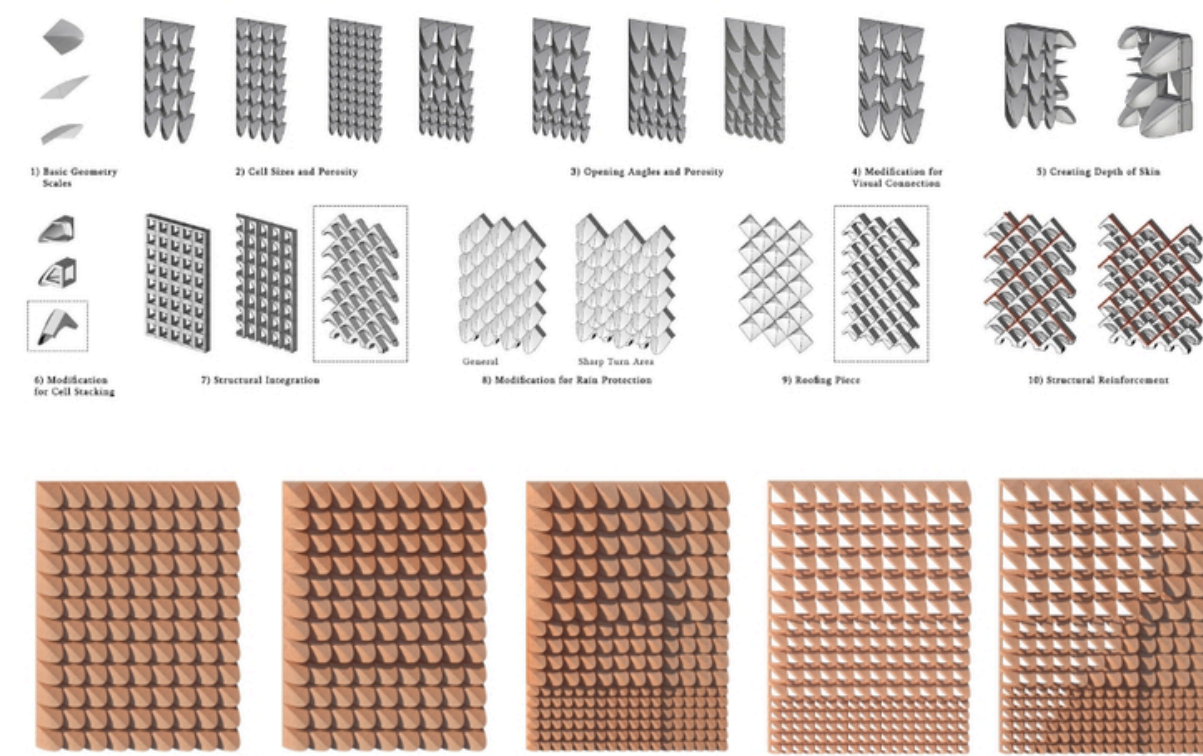


THE THEME OF STREETS



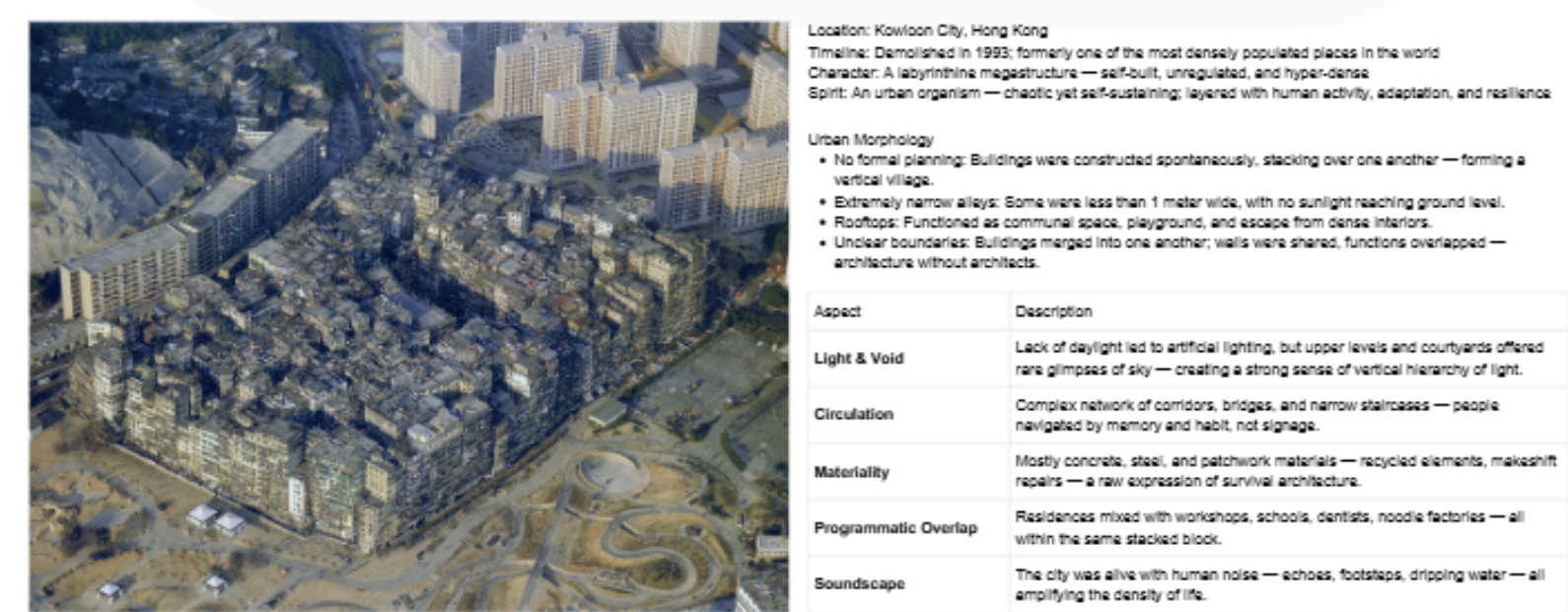
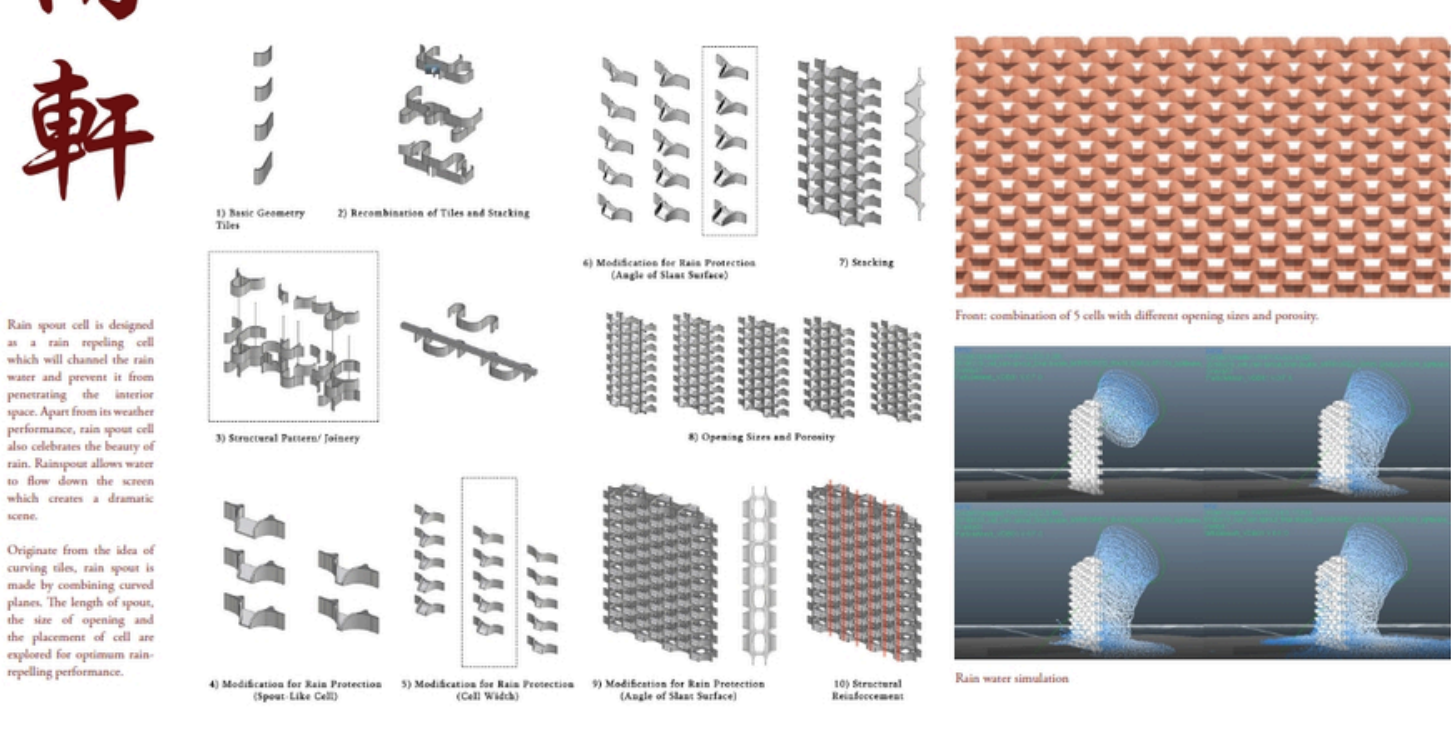
Clay Cell Design Typology 1: Dragon Scale

龍
鱗



Clay Cell Typology 2: The Rain Spout

雨
軒



Location: Kowloon City, Hong Kong
Timeline: Demolished in 1993, formerly one of the most densely populated places in the world
Character: A labyrinthine megastucture — self-built, unregulated, and hyper-dense
Spirit: An urban organism — chaotic yet self-sustaining, layered with human activity, adaptation, and resilience

Urban Morphology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No formal planning: Buildings were constructed spontaneously, stacking one another — forming a vertical village.Extremely narrow alleys: Some were less than 1 meter wide, with no sunlight reaching ground level.Roof-tops: Functioned as communal space, playground, and escape from dense interiors.Unclear boundaries: Buildings merged into one another; walls were shared; functions overlapped — architecture without architects.
Aspect	Description
Light & Void	Lack of daylight led to artificial lighting, but upper levels and courtyards offered rare glimpses of sky — creating a strong sense of vertical hierarchy of light.
Circulation	Complex network of corridors, bridges, and narrow staircases — people navigated by memory and habit, not signage.
Materiality	Mostly concrete, steel, and patchwork materials — recycled elements, makeshift repairs — a raw expression of survival architecture.
Programmatic Overlap	Residences mixed with workshops, schools, dentists, noodle factories — all within the same stacked block.
Soundscape	The city was alive with human noise — echoes, footsteps, dripping water — all amplifying the density of life.

- It teaches architects about spatial negotiation, vertical layering, and informal adaptability.
- Demonstrates human-centred urbanism born from need, not rules.
- Its organic growth pattern challenges modern zoning and planning logic — offering inspiration for bottom-up community design.
- Symbolically, it represents how space, memory, and survival coexist within compressed boundaries.



When the government demolished the walled city and created the Kowloon Walled City Park (opened in 1993), the designers intentionally:

- Preserved the site's geometry — the park follows the footprint of the original city wall.
- Placed a large open courtyard at the heart of the park, symbolically representing those lost communal spaces.
- Acts as a spatial void of memory, echoing where life once condensed.
- Is surrounded by reconstructed Chinese garden elements — pavilions, ponds, and pathways.
- Retains the South Gate and Japan Government Office structure — the original Qing dynasty courtyard compound that existed even before the dense growth.

Then (Before Demolition)	Now (As Park)
Spontaneous micro-courtyards	Planned central courtyard
Functioned for ventilation, light, and gathering	Serves memory, heritage, and public gathering
Surrounded by stacked housing blocks	Surrounded by landscaped pavilions and gardens
Symbol of resilience within chaos	Symbol of calm within remembrance

Urban & Architectural Qualities Today

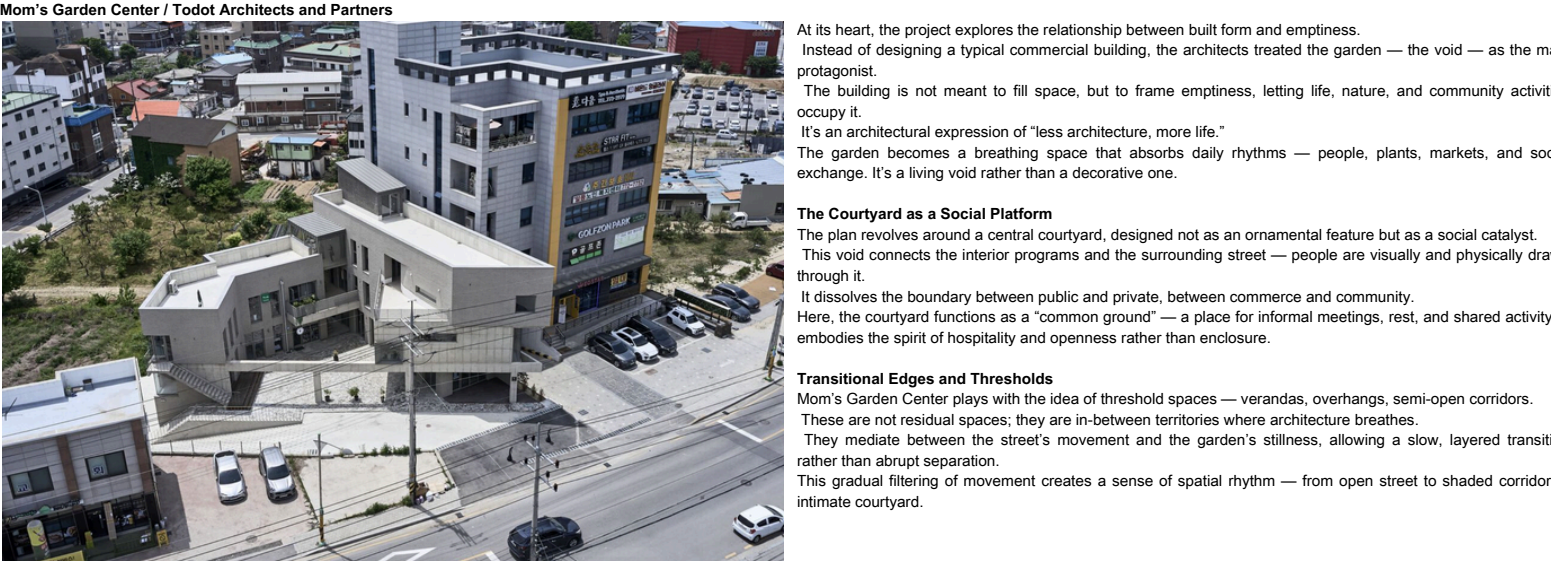
- Scale & Openness: Instead of the cramped, multi-story maze of the past, the park opens up the footprint of the former enclave, introduces landscaped voids and breathing space.
- Material & Memory: While much of the original housing fabric is gone, the preserved stone pavilions, gate remains, and archival displays maintain a tether to the past.
- Circulation & Memory: The narratives of narrow alleys, overlapping levels, and human density are now represented through exhibitions and signage rather than lived architecture.
- Programmatic Shift: From informal mixed uses (residential, commercial, industrial) inside the walled city to planned public space — garden, exhibition, cultural heritage zone.



- Current Condition & Transformation
- Demolition & Redevelopment
 - The original walled city was demolished in 1993-94.
 - On its footprint now stands the Kowloon Walled City Park (KWCP), completed around August 1995.
 - The park design is modelled on a classical Chinese garden (Jiangnan style) with landscaping, water features, reconstructed historic elements.
 - What remains of the original built fabric
 - The South Gate Foundation and some stone plaques/inscriptions from the original walled city have been preserved and declared monuments.
 - Some exhibitions in the park now refer back to the former enclave's physical context.
 - Current Use & Public Experience
 - The park is a green space in a dense urban district — places for leisure, strolls, quiet reflection amidst high-rise Hong Kong.
 - In 2025, an immersive open-air exhibition "Kowloon Walled City: A Cinematic Journey" was launched on the site, recreating scenes, alleyways, storefronts of the former walled city for visitors.
 - Neighborhood around the park remains active; the historic memory is part of the culture, but the built character has shifted away from the original dense city within a city.



- What Was Lost
- Spatial Authenticity
- The raw, dense, and chaotic morphology — those overlapping corridors, random staircases, and hidden backstreets — embodied human adaptation and survival.
 - By flattening everything into a manicured garden, the spatial memory was erased — it no longer conveys the claustrophobic yet communal experience that defined Kowloon.
 - The city within a city character, where residents made order from chaos, has been reduced to a clean void — more memorial park than living urban fabric.
- Human Stories
- Kowloon was a symbol of human resilience and autonomy under extreme conditions.
 - Its demolition erased not just the buildings but the organic social system — the interdependence, informal networks, and shared rituals of everyday life.
 - The new park, while peaceful, cannot replicate the emotional density of thousands of people coexisting within compressed space.
- The redevelopment of Kowloon Walled City was an urban cleansing of memory. It preserved the history through text and landscape, but not through lived spatial experience. Architecture's role is not only to beautify the past — but to let people feel it. In that sense, Kowloon's transformation feels like a lost opportunity to preserve the poetic power of chaos.

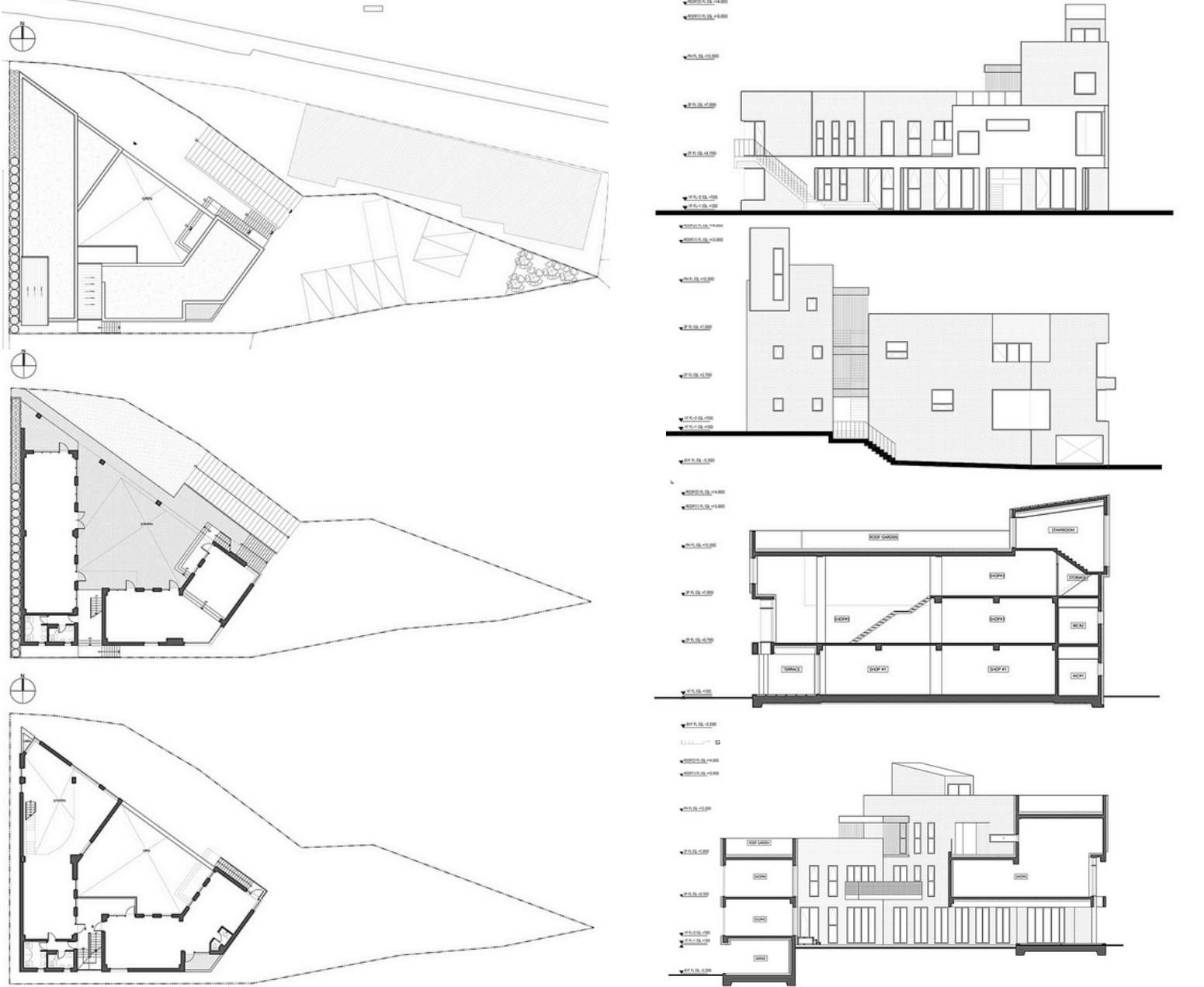
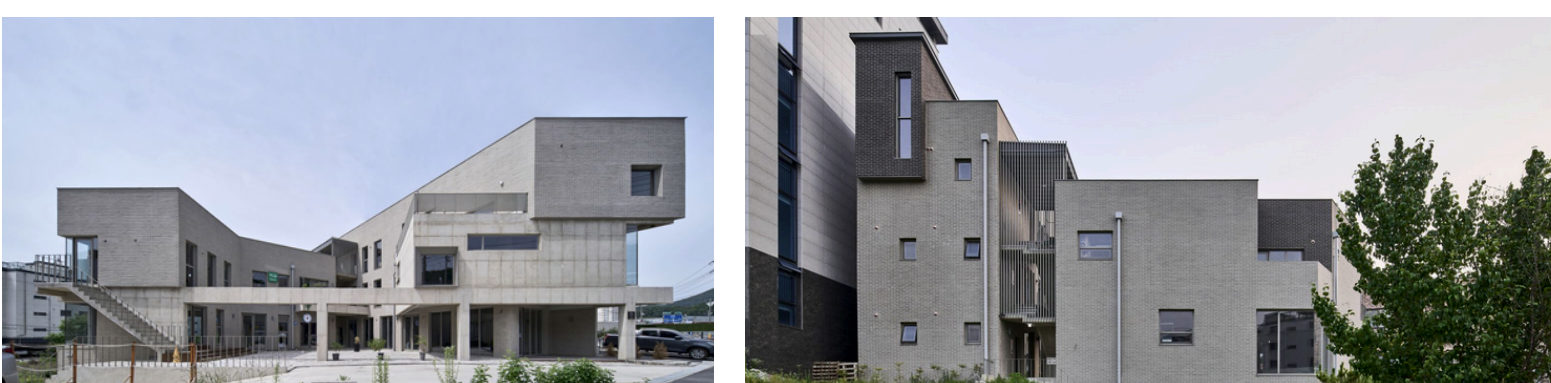


Mori's Garden Center / Todori Architects and Partners

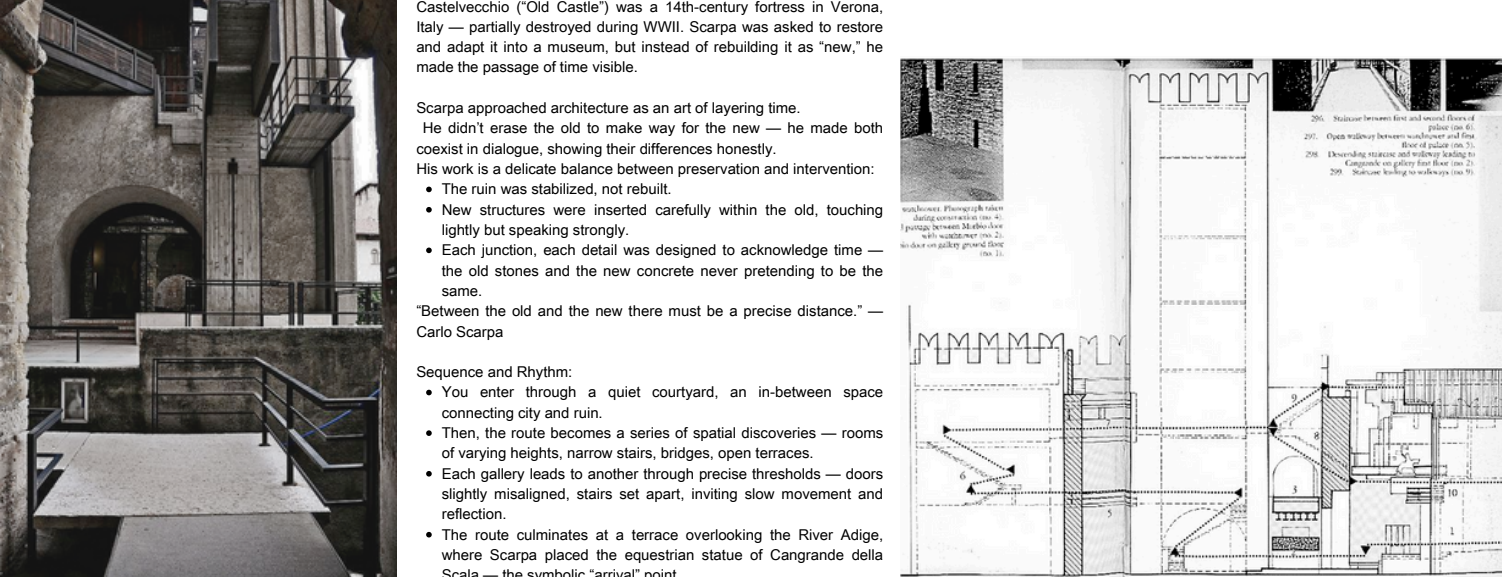
At its heart, the project explores the relationship between built form and emptiness. Instead of designing a typical commercial building, the architects treated the garden — the void — as the main protagonist. The building is not meant to fill space, but to frame emptiness, letting life, nature, and community activities occupy it. It's an architectural expression of "less architecture, more life." The garden becomes a breathing space that absorbs daily rhythms — people, plants, markets, and social exchange. It's a living void rather than a decorative one.

The Courtyard as a Social Platform
The plan revolves around a central courtyard, designed not as an ornamental feature but as a social catalyst. This void connects the interior programs and the surrounding street — people are visually and physically drawn through it. It dissolves the boundary between public and private, between commerce and community. Here, the courtyard functions as a "common ground" — a place for informal meetings, rest, and shared activity. It embodies the spirit of hospitality and openness rather than enclosure.

Transitional Edges and Thresholds
Mori's Garden Center plays with the idea of threshold spaces — verandas, overhangs, semi-open corridors. These are not residual spaces; they are in-between territories where architecture breathes. They mediate between the street's movement and the garden's stillness, allowing a slow, layered transition rather than abrupt separation. This gradual filtering of movement creates a sense of spatial rhythm — from open street to shaded corridor to intimate courtyard.



Carlo Scarpa — Castelvecchio Museum, Verona (1956-64)



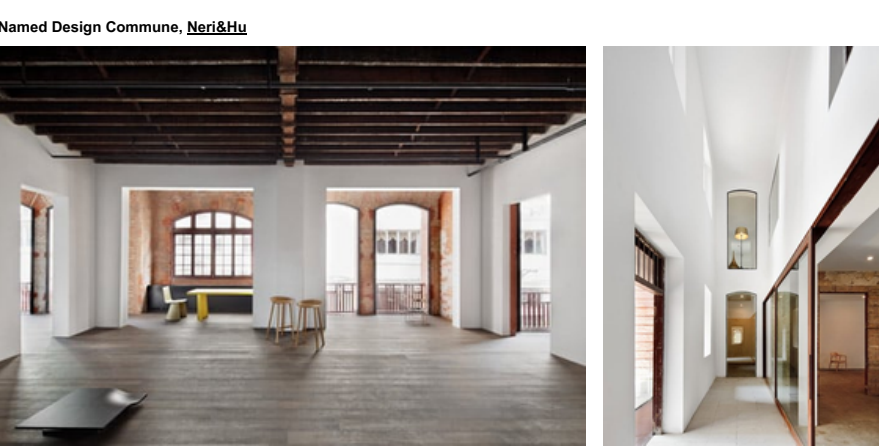
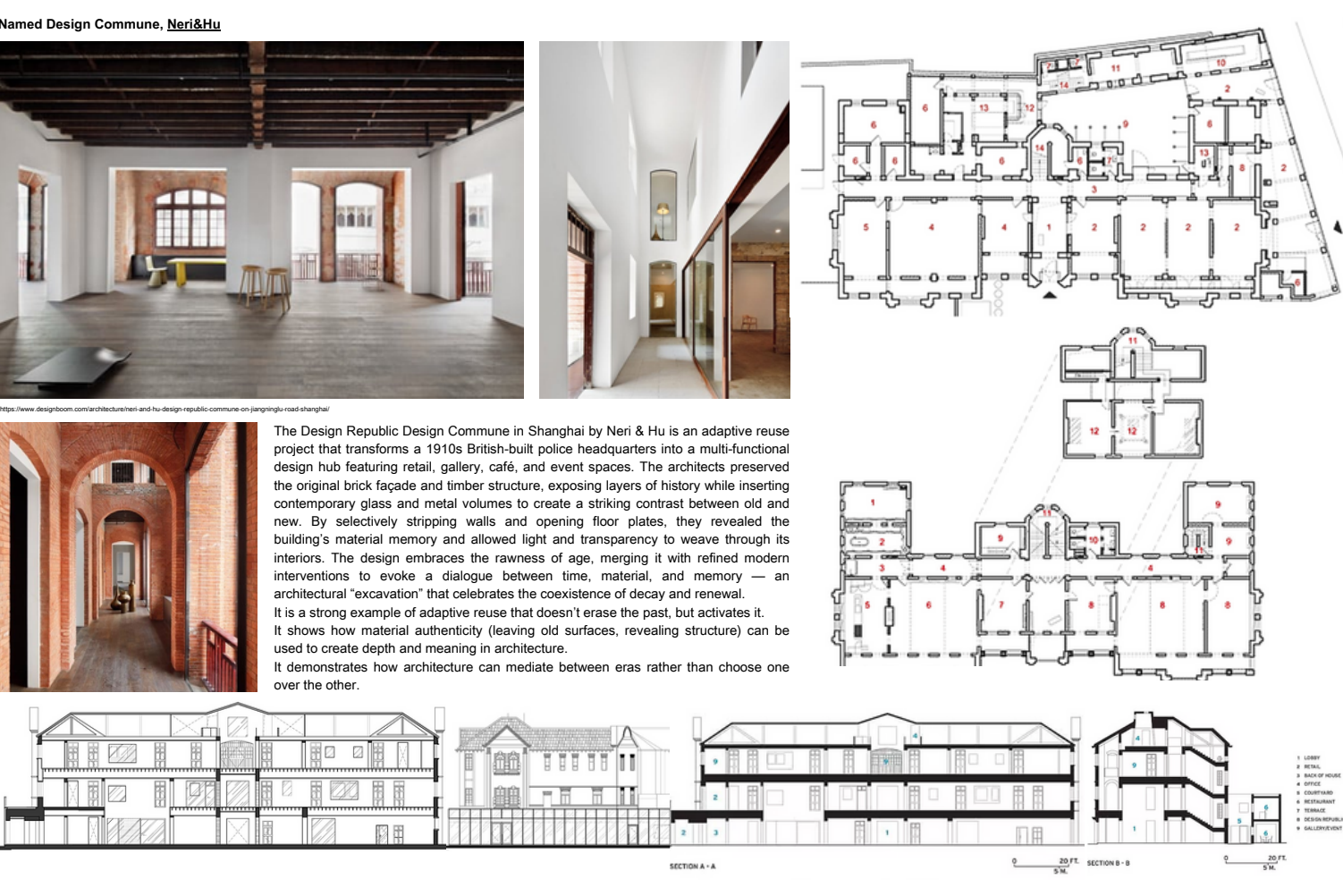
Castelvecchio ("Old Castle") was a 14th-century fortress in Verona, Italy — partially destroyed during WWII. Scarpa was asked to restore and adapt it into a museum, but instead of rebuilding it as "new," he made the passage of time visible.

Scarpa approached architecture as an act of layering time. He didn't erase the old to make way for the new — he made both coexist in dialogue, showing their differences honestly. His work is a delicate balance between preservation and intervention:

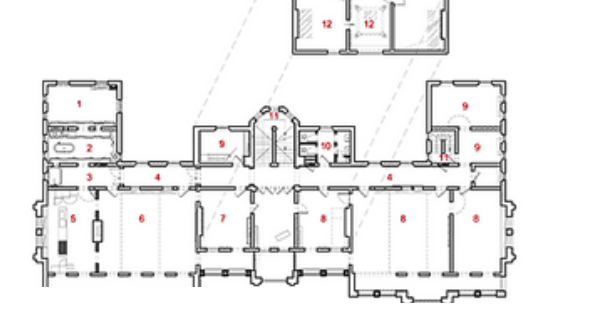
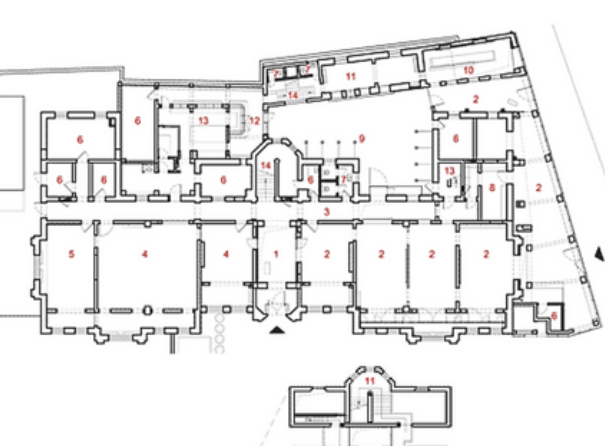
- The ruin was stabilized, not rebuilt.
- New structures were inserted carefully within the old, touching lightly but speaking strongly.
- Each junction, each detail was designed to acknowledge time — the old stones and the new concrete never pretending to be the same.
- Between the old and the new there must be a precise distance. — Carlo Scarpa

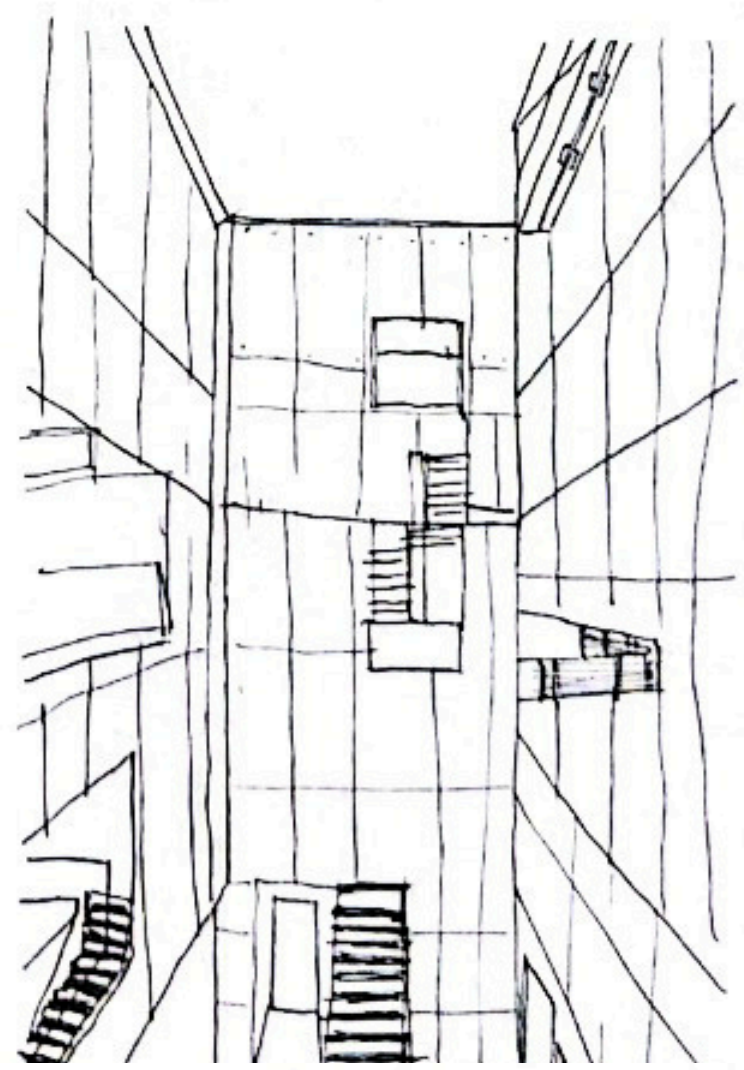
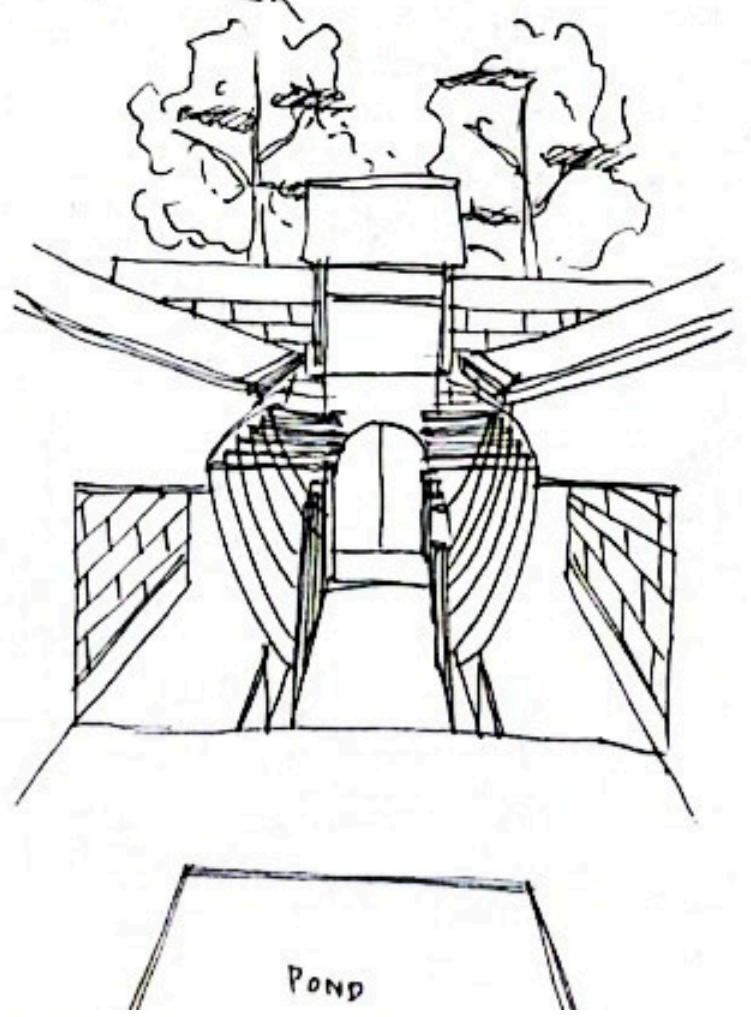
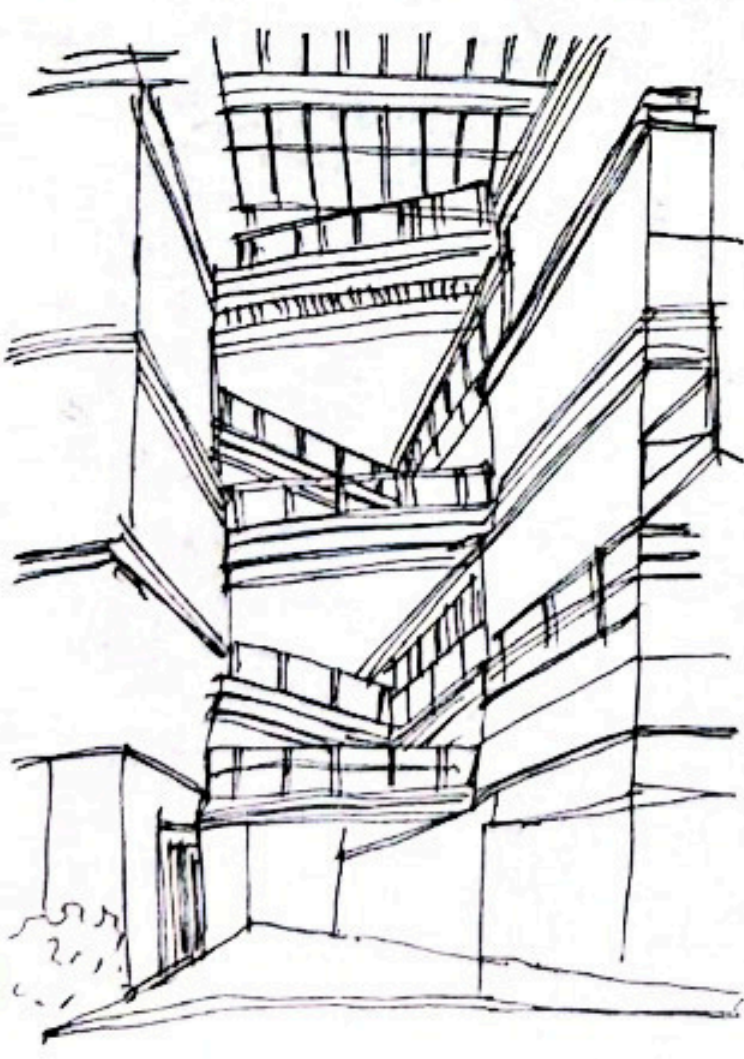
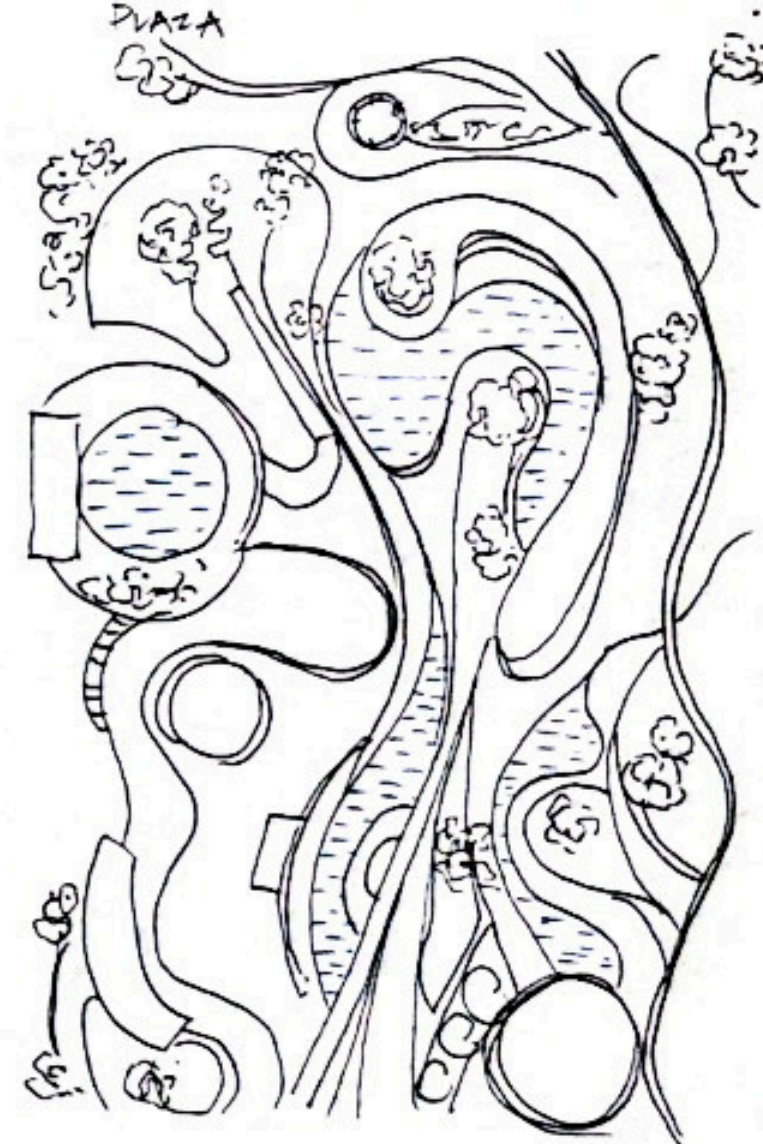
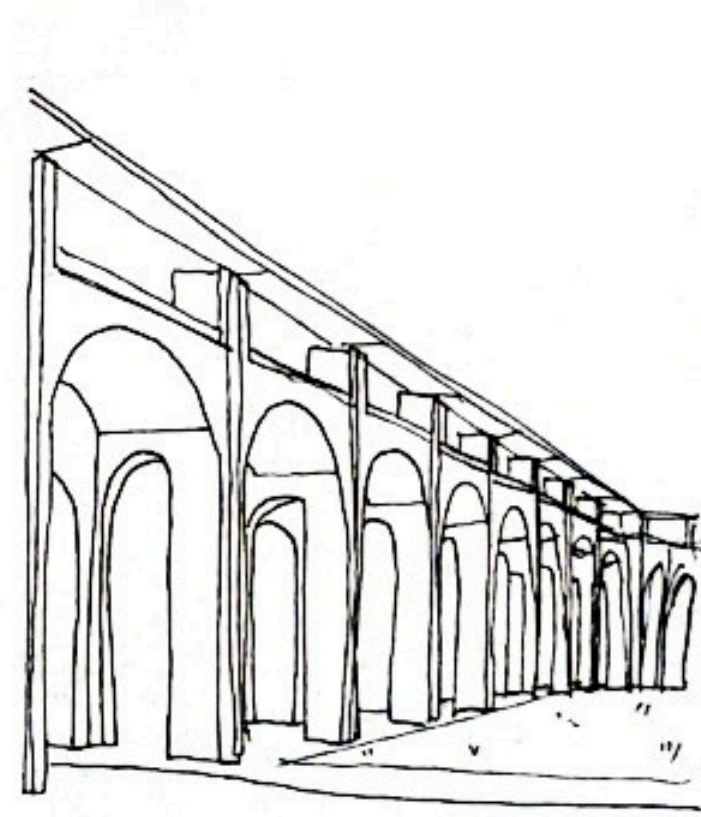
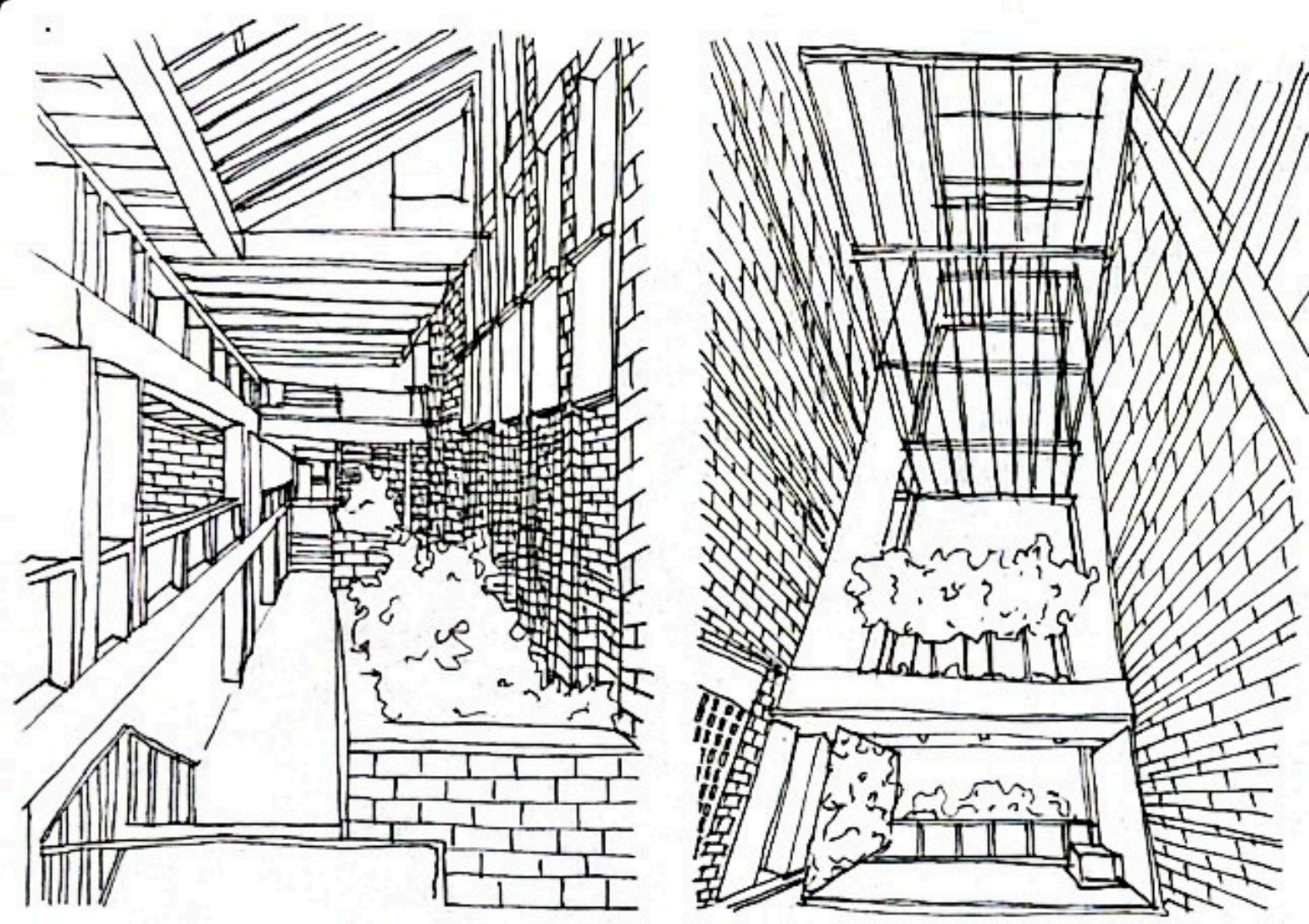
Sequence and Rhythm:

- You enter through a quiet courtyard, an in-between space connecting city and ruin.
- Then, the route becomes a series of spatial discoveries — rooms of varying heights, narrow stairs, bridges, open terraces.
- Each gallery leads to another through precise thresholds — doors slightly misaligned, stairs set apart, inviting slow movement and reflection.
- The route culminates at a terrace overlooking the River Adige, where Scarpa placed the equestrian statue of Cangrande della Scala — the symbolic "arrival" point.

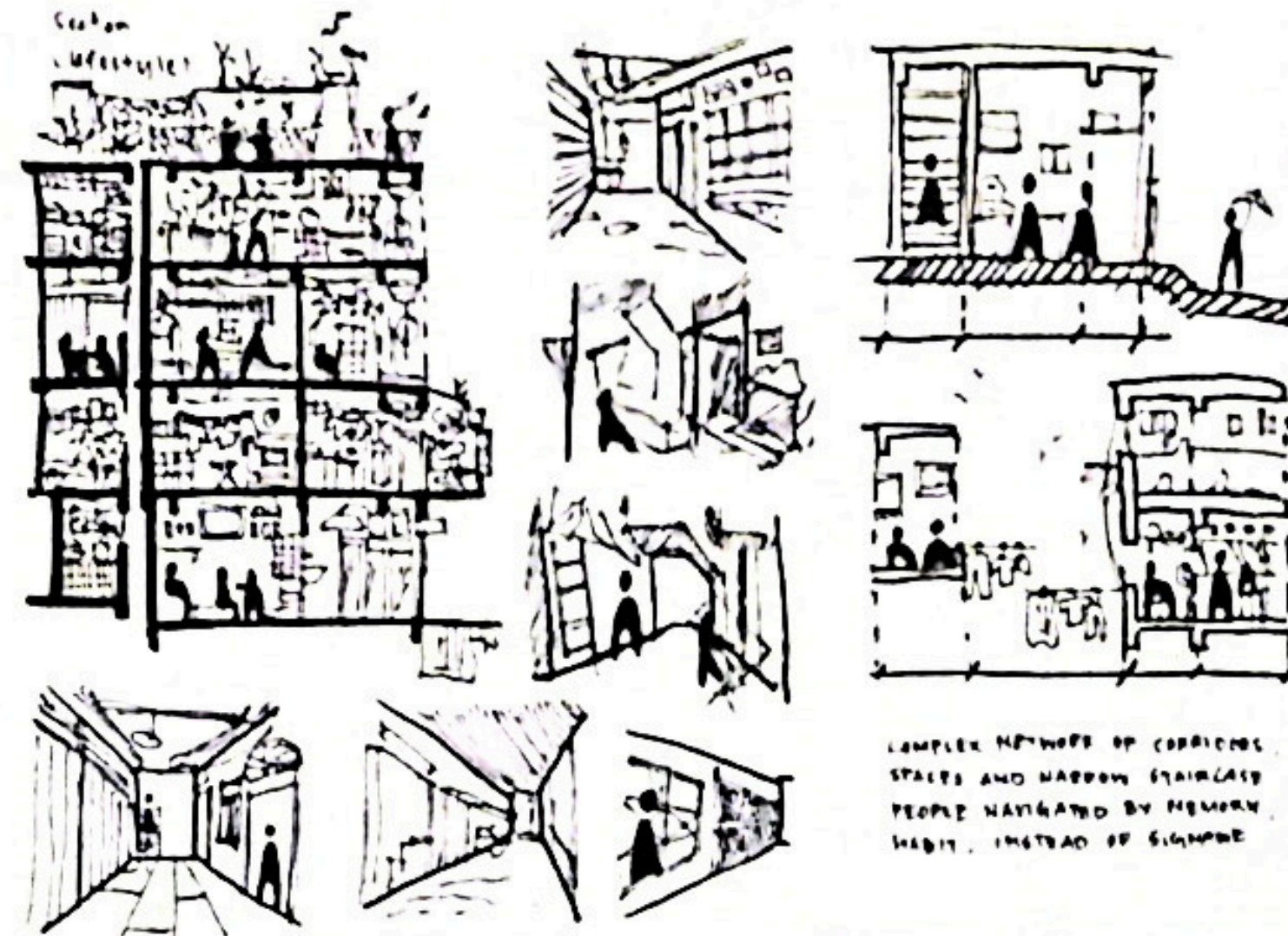


The Design Republic Design Commune in Shanghai by Nei + Hu is an adaptive reuse project that transforms a 1910s British-built police headquarters into a multi-functional design hub featuring retail, gallery, cafe, and event spaces. The architects preserved the original brick facade and timber structure, exposing layers of history while inserting contemporary glass and metal volumes to create a striking contrast between old and new. By selectively stripping walls and opening floor plates, they revealed the building's material memory and allowed light and transparency to weave through its interiors. The design embraces the richness of age, merging it with refined modern interventions to evoke a dialogue between time, material, and memory — an architectural "narration" that celebrates the coexistence of decay and renewal. It is a strong example of adaptive reuse that doesn't erase the past, but activates it, showing how material authenticity (leaving old surfaces, revealing structure) can be used to create depth and meaning in architecture. It demonstrates how architecture can mediate between eras rather than choose one over the other.



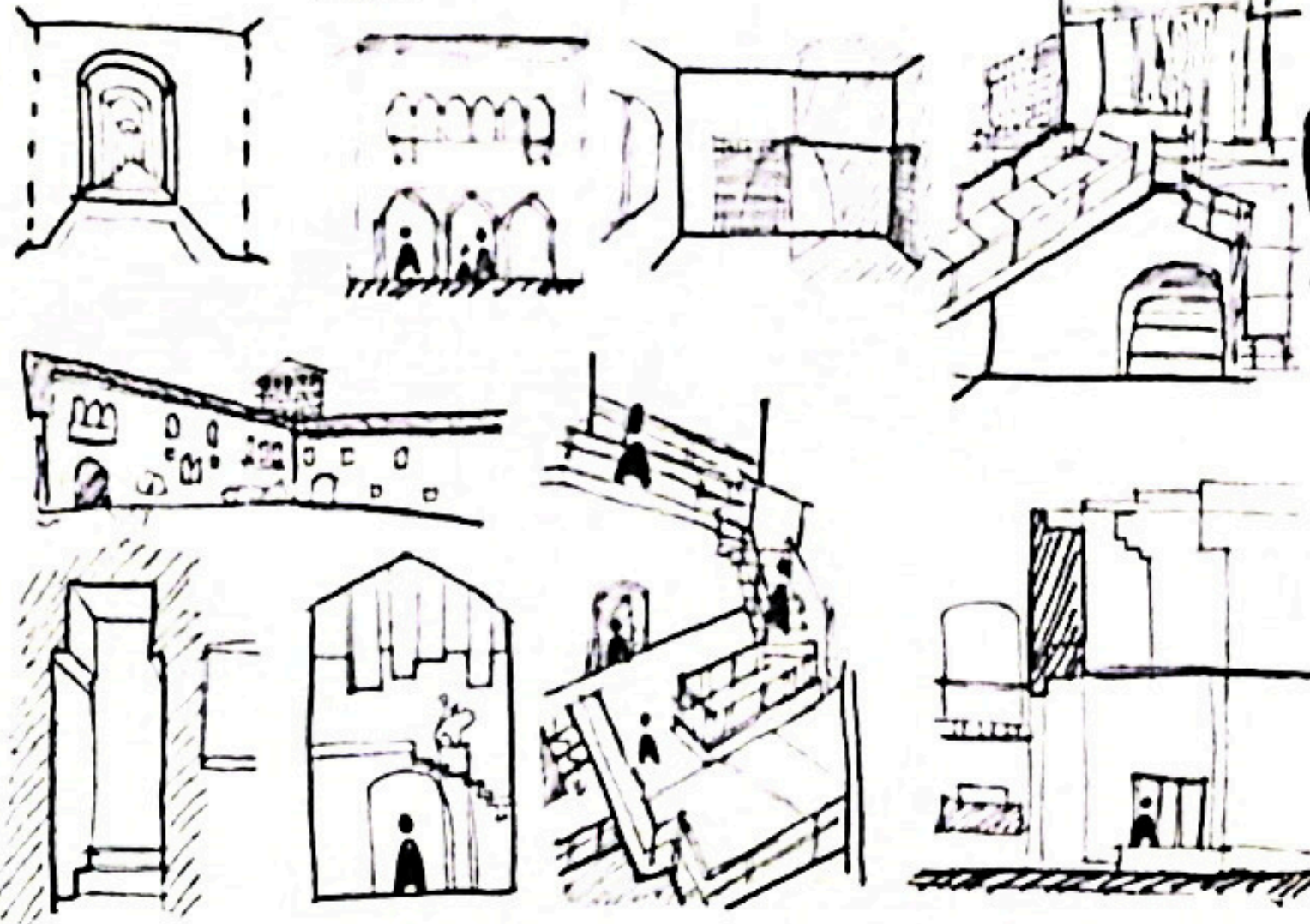


Kowloon Walled City



Complex network of corridors
stairs and narrow staircases
people navigated by memory
habit, instead of signage

Castelvecchio Museum

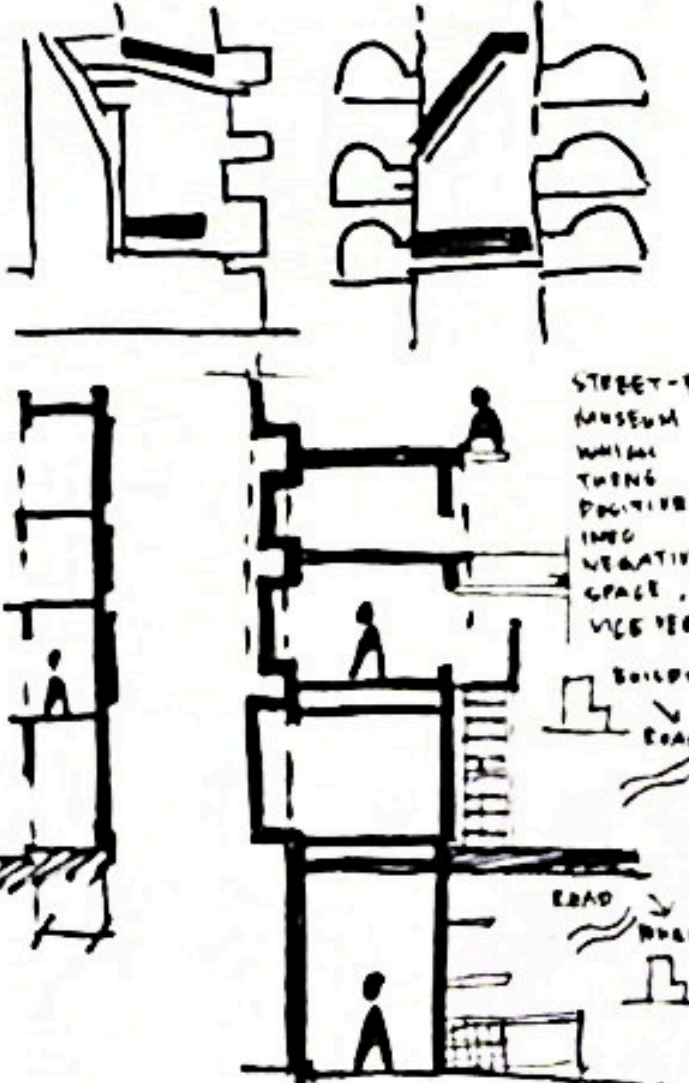


Mom's Garden Center

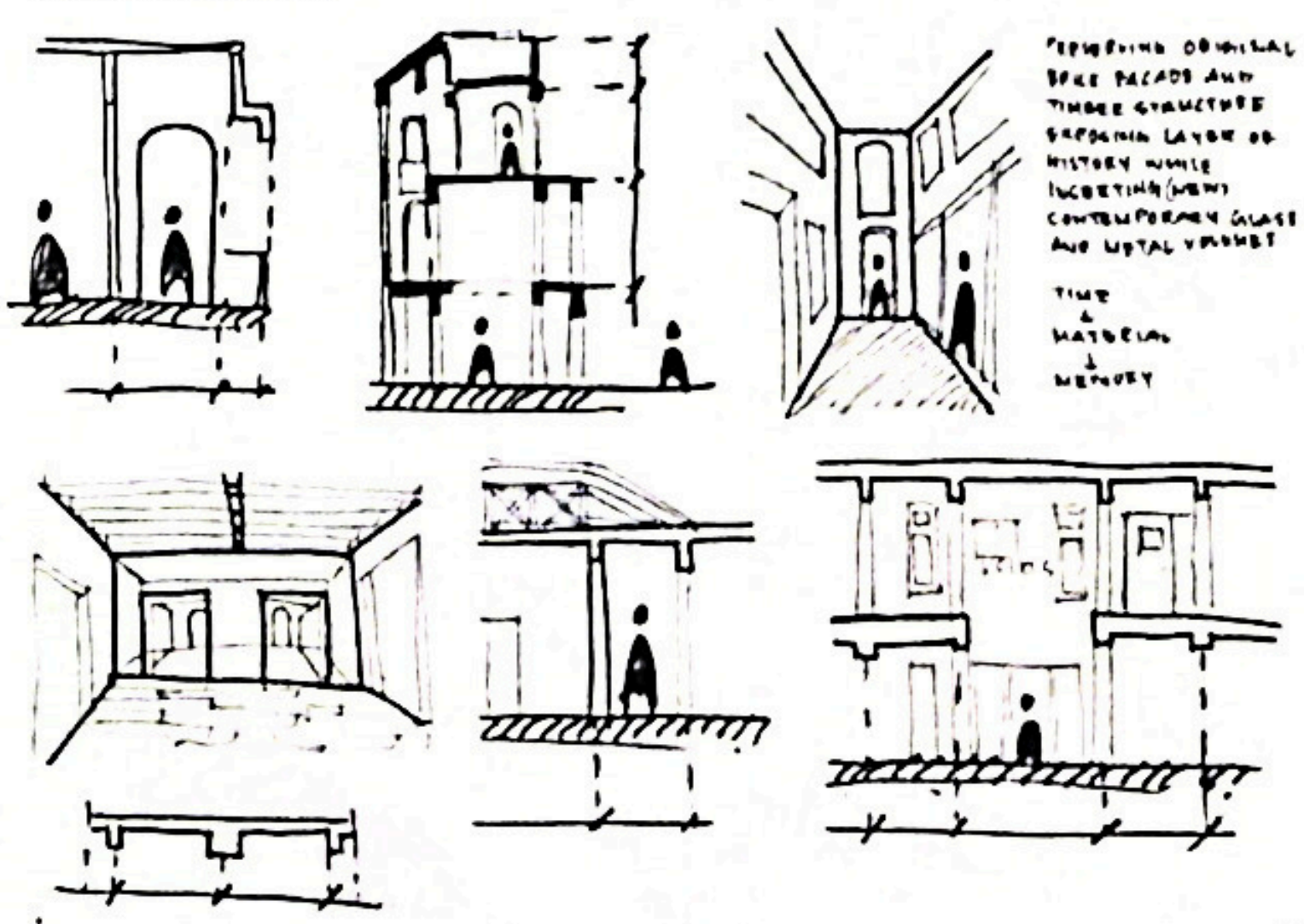


The building
form is interesting
because it
overlapping
forming a
different form
from different
view

The Inverted Street

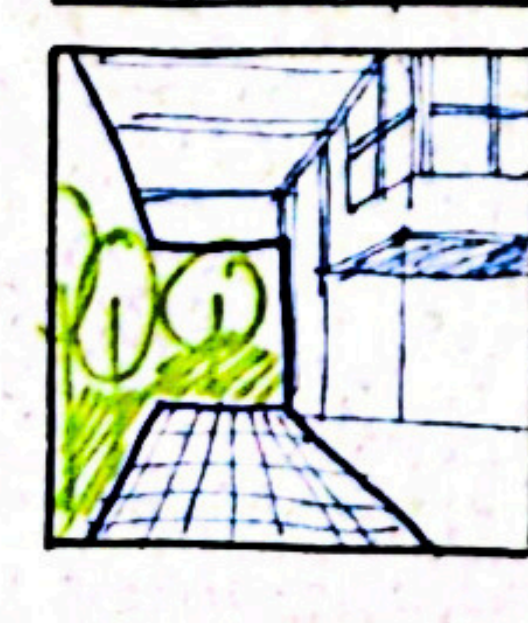
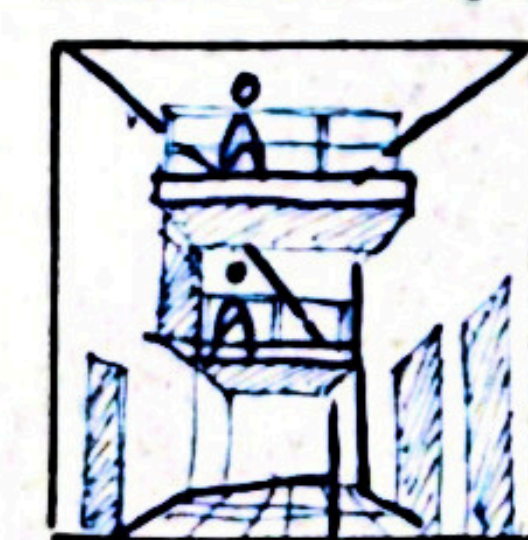
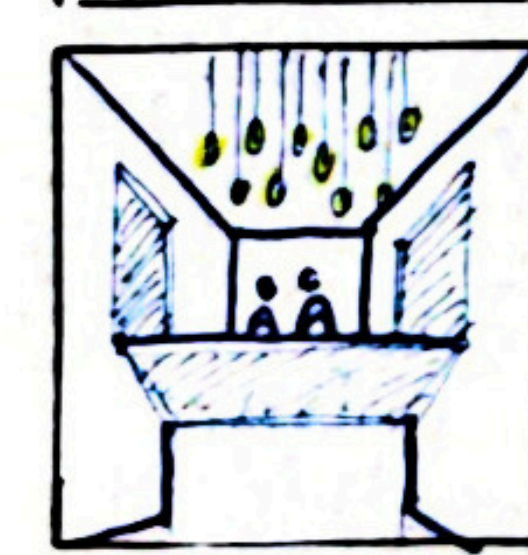
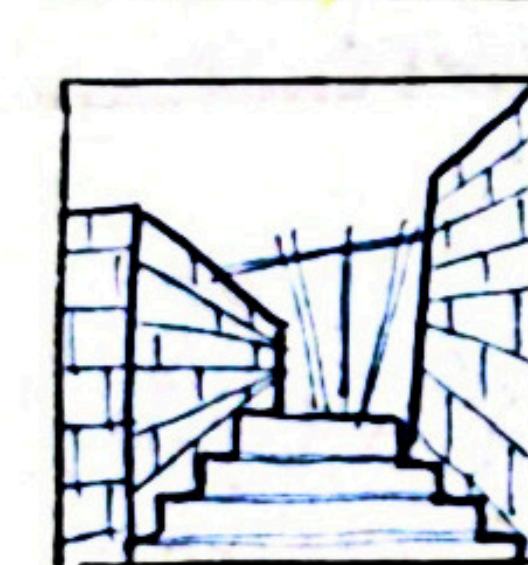
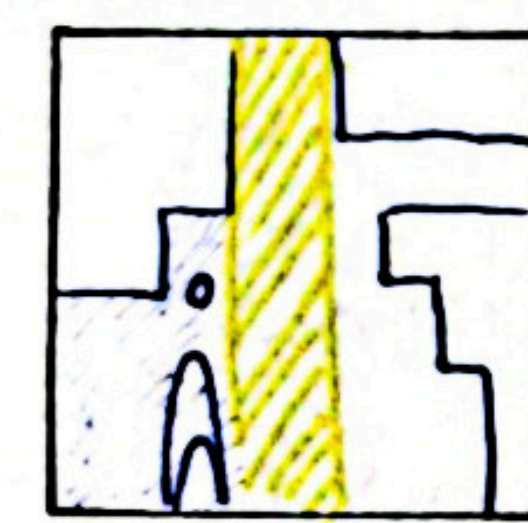
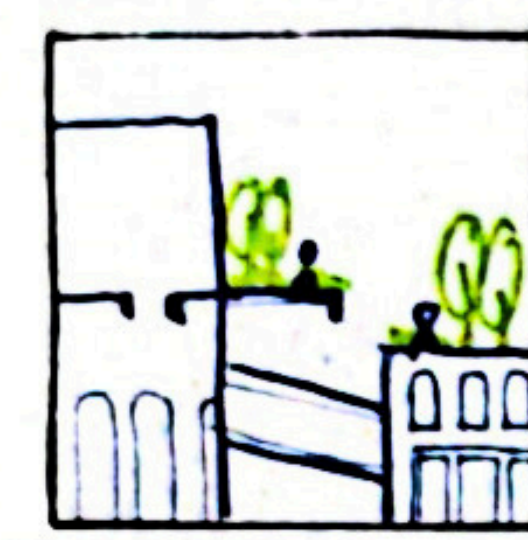
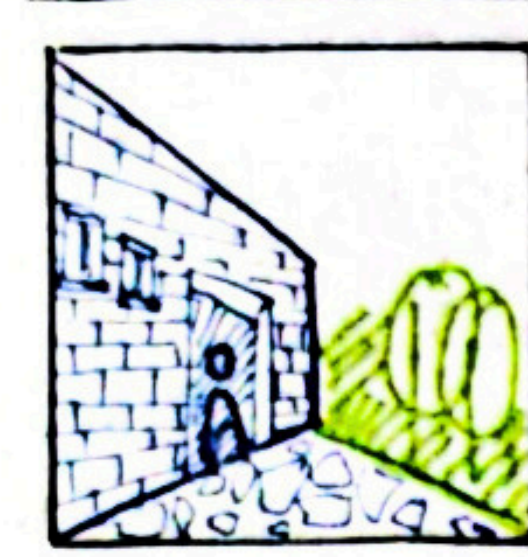
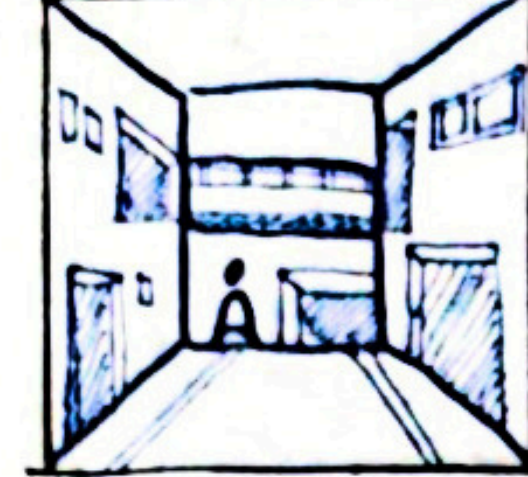


Design Commune

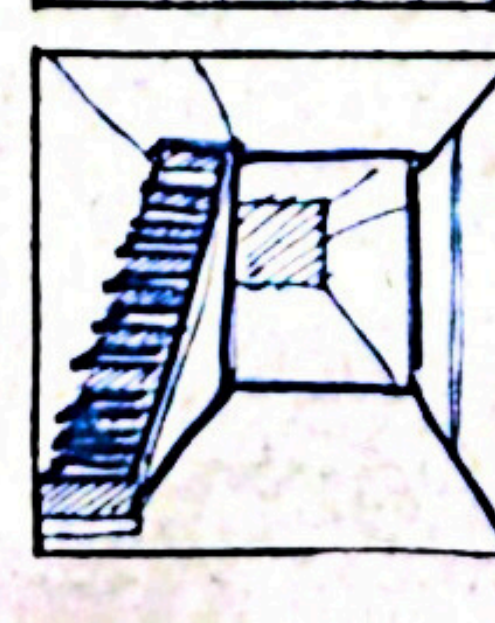
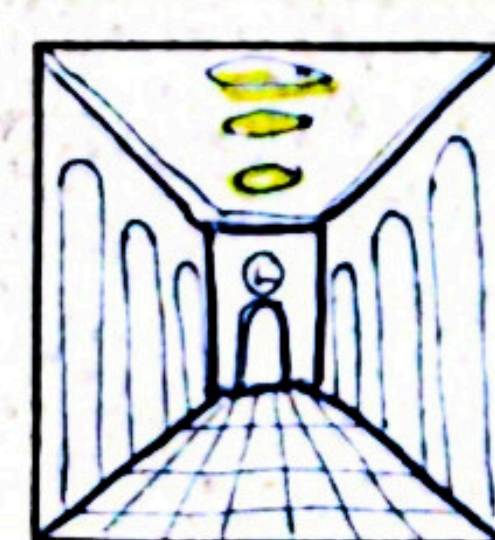
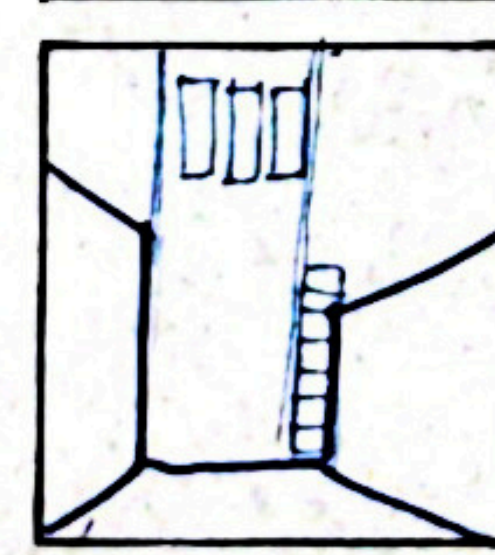
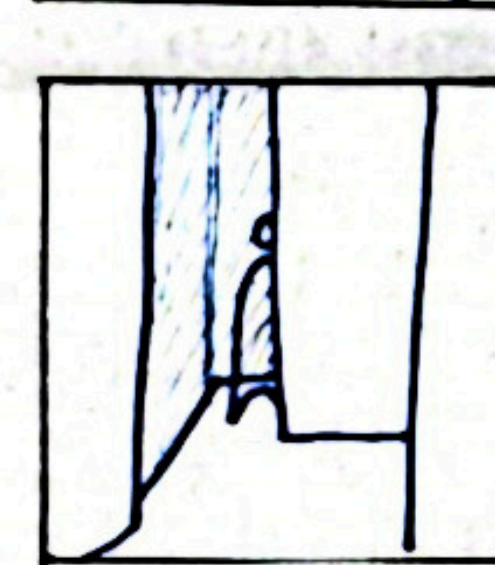
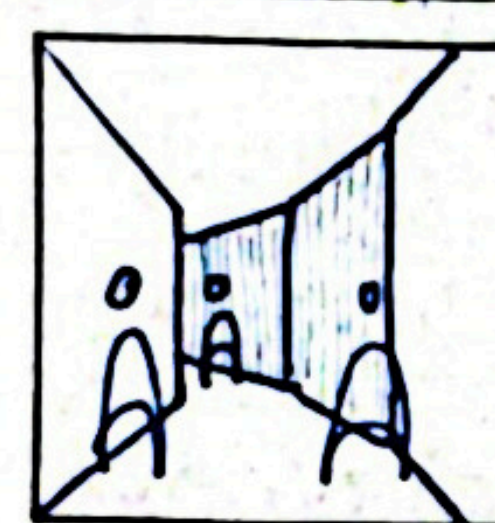
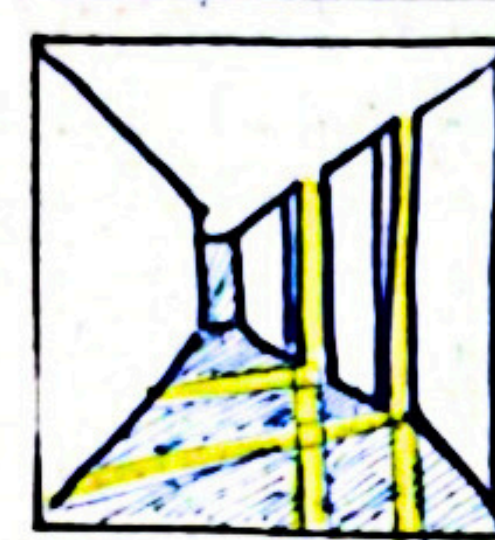
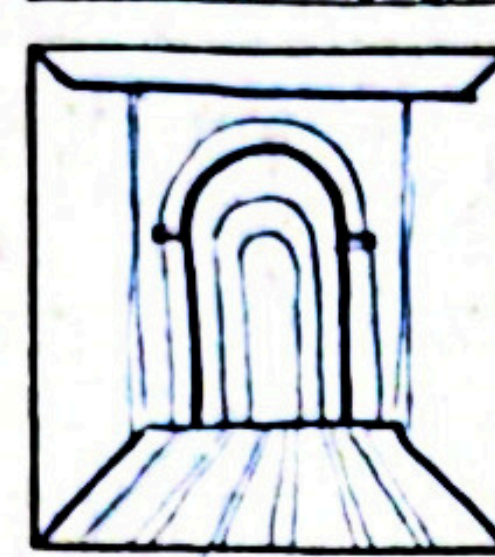


Repeating original
space facade and
three connected
sloping layer of
history while
incorporating
contemporary glass
and metal volume
Time
Material
Memory

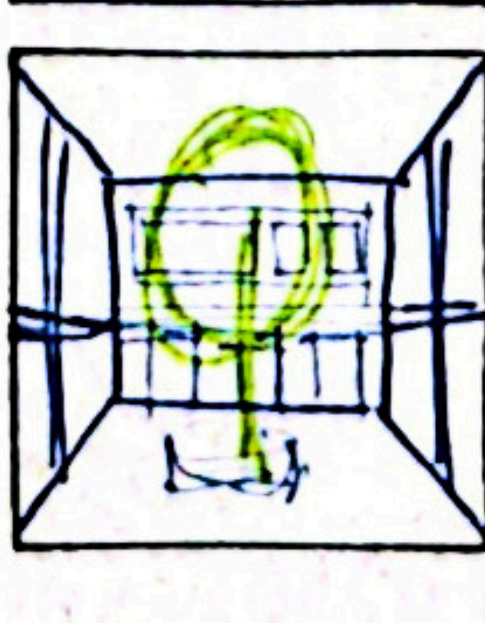
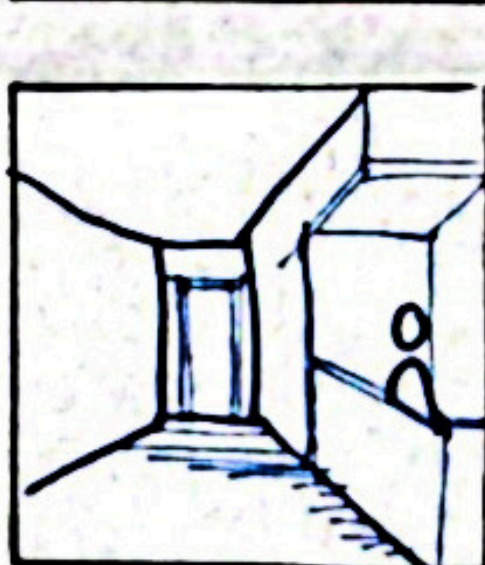
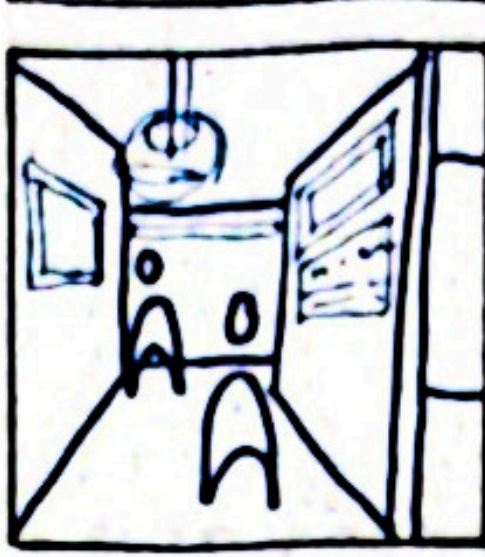
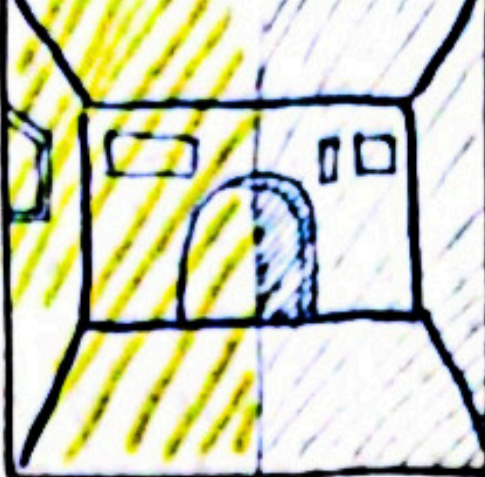
Between Building



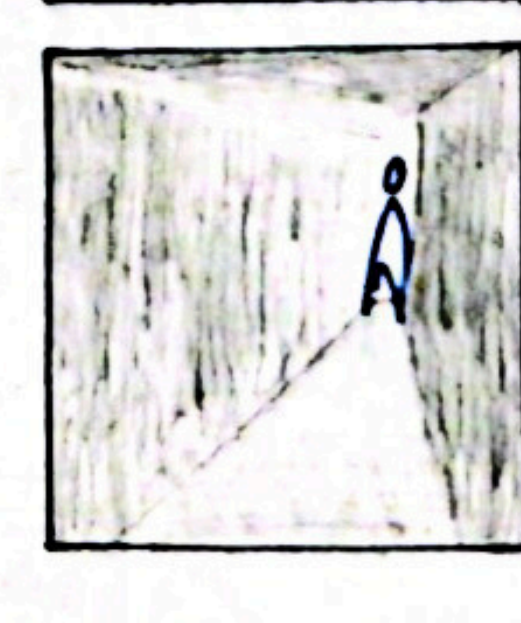
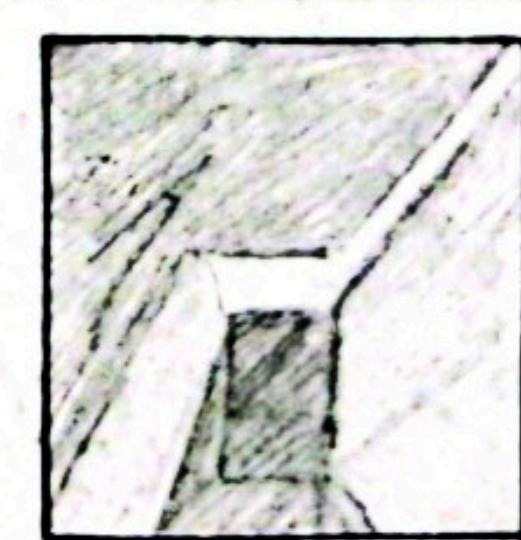
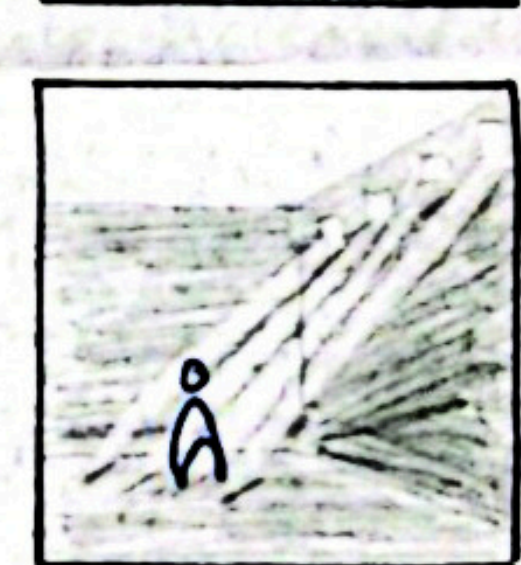
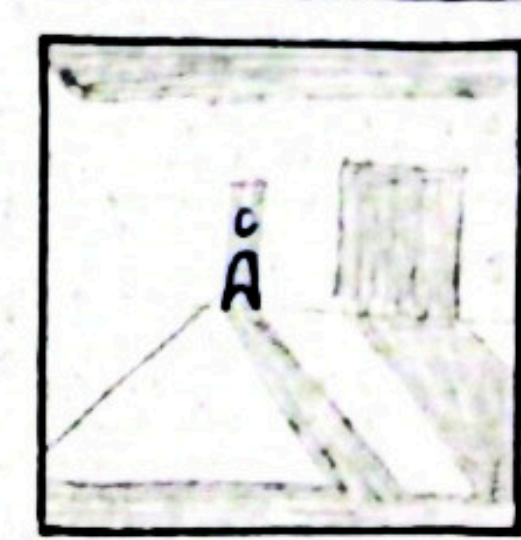
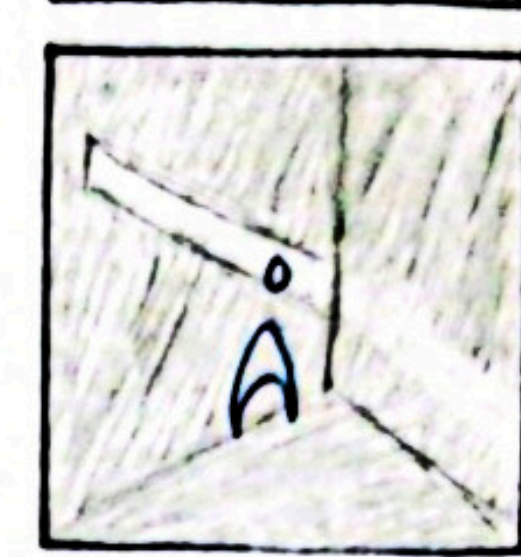
Corridor



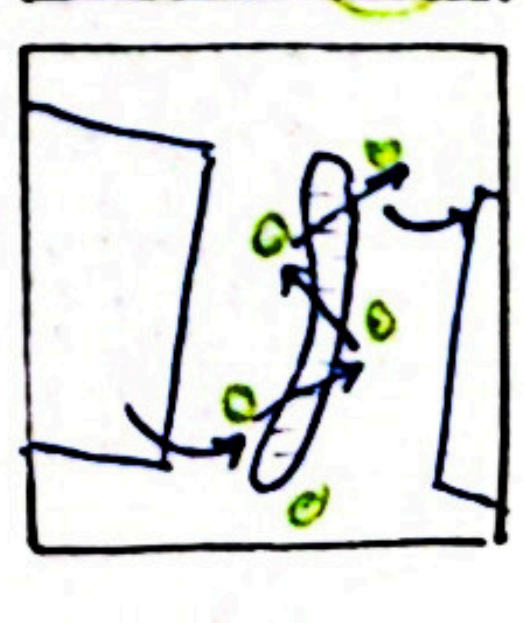
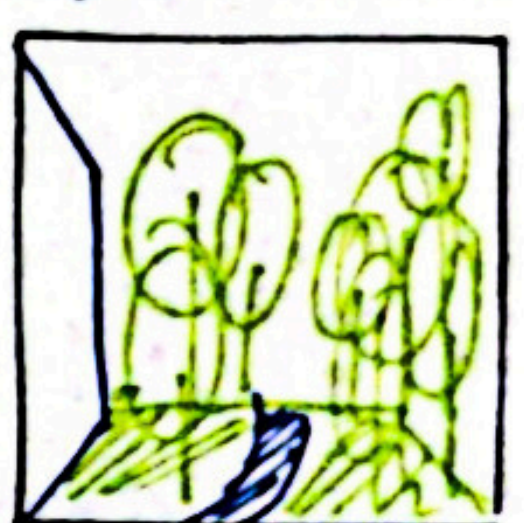
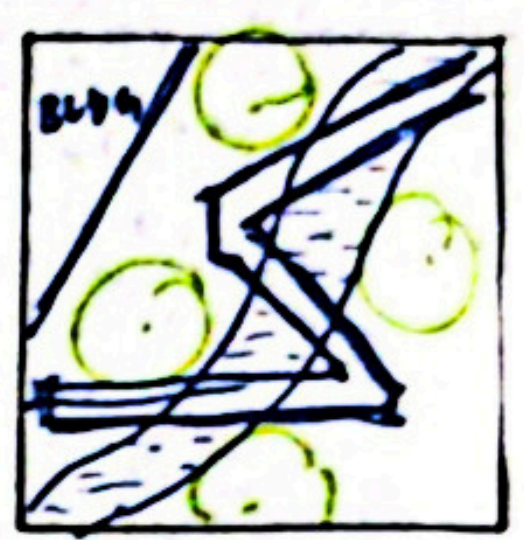
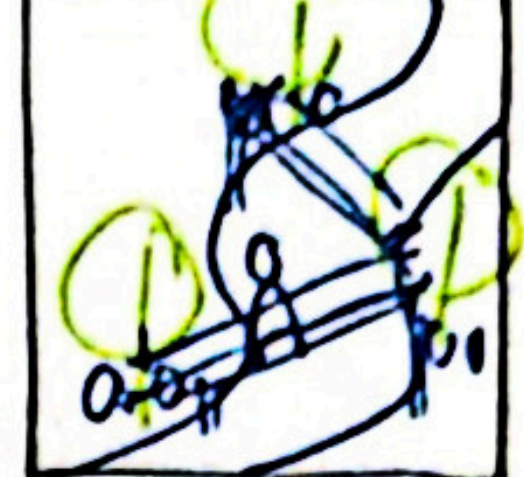
Spaces



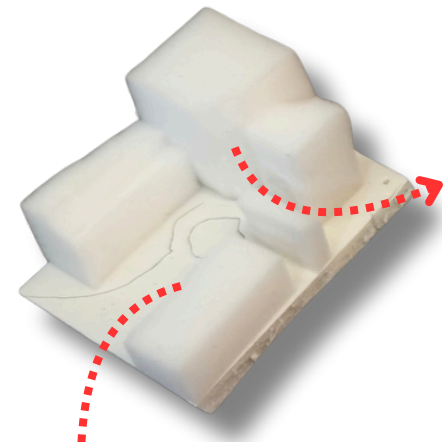
Light & Shadow



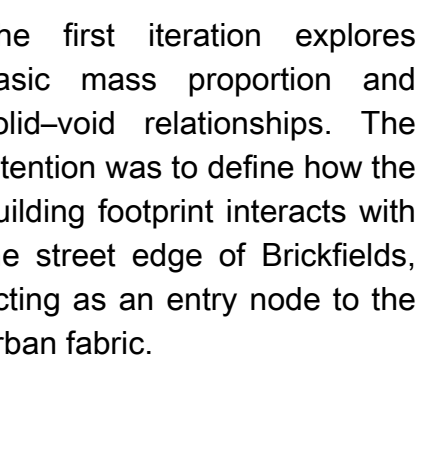
Courtyard



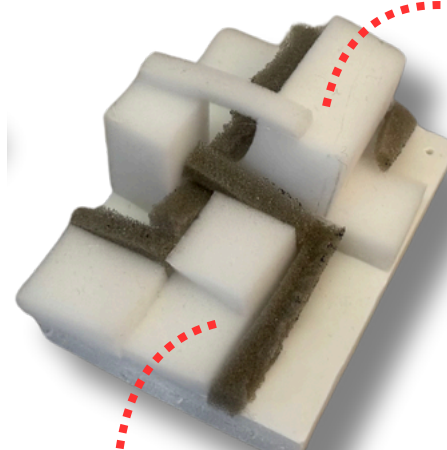
MASSING MODELS
STAGE 1 : Initial Spatial Composition




Simple volumetric blocks were arranged to test hierarchy of spaces — public vs private, heavy vs light.



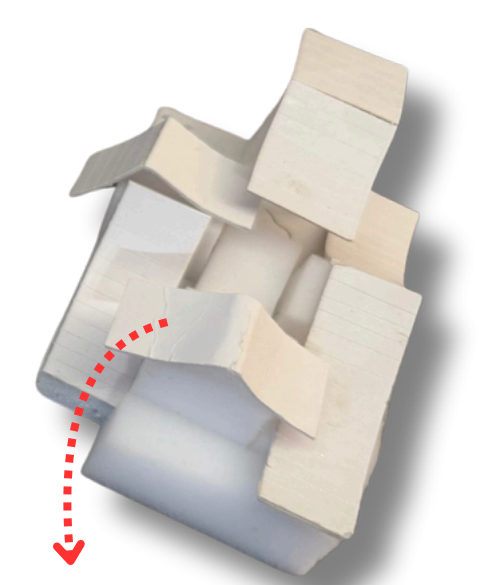
The first iteration explores basic mass proportion and solid-void relationships. The intention was to define how the building footprint interacts with the street edge of Brickfields, acting as an entry node to the urban fabric.



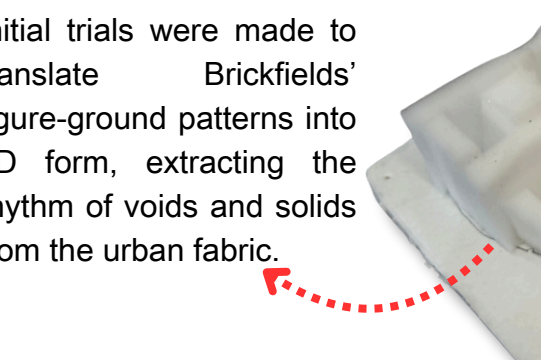
The mass remains compact and grounded, symbolizing stability and context attachment.



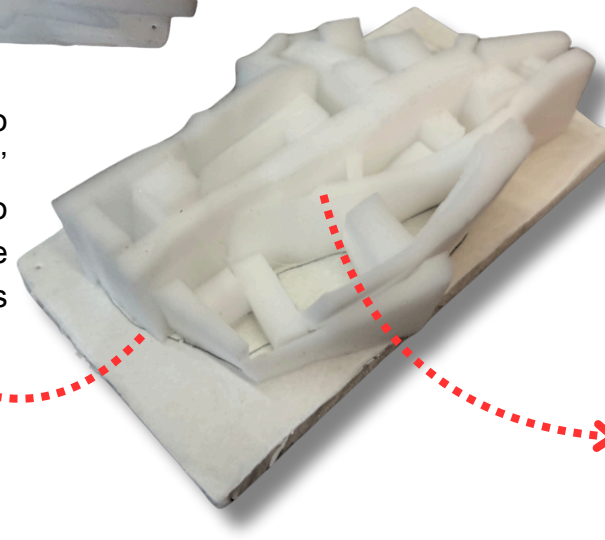
Early focus was placed on how movement begins at ground level, representing the "Street Edge."



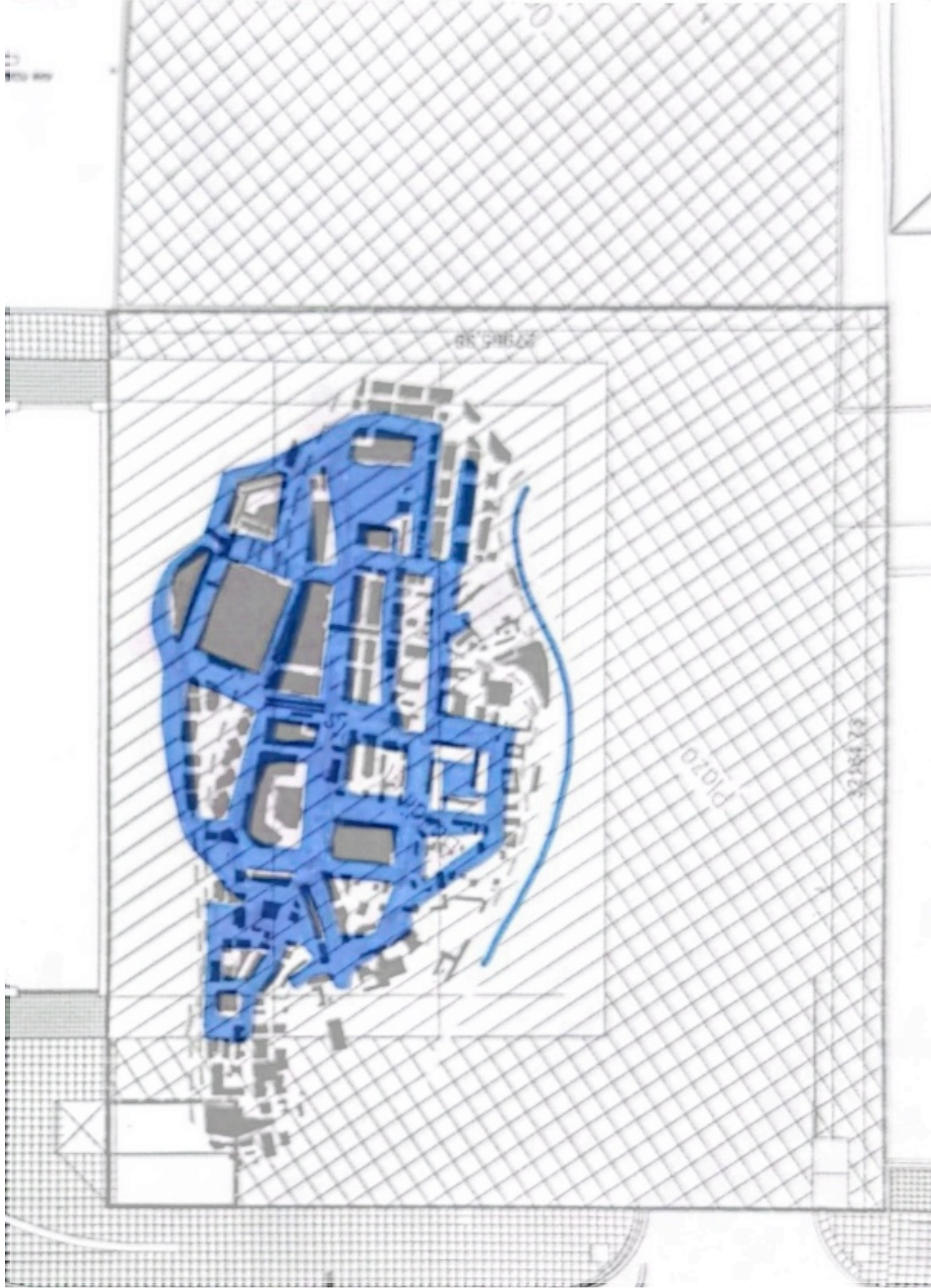
Different roof slopes and orientations were tested to study how natural light, ventilation, and rhythm could animate the interior spaces.



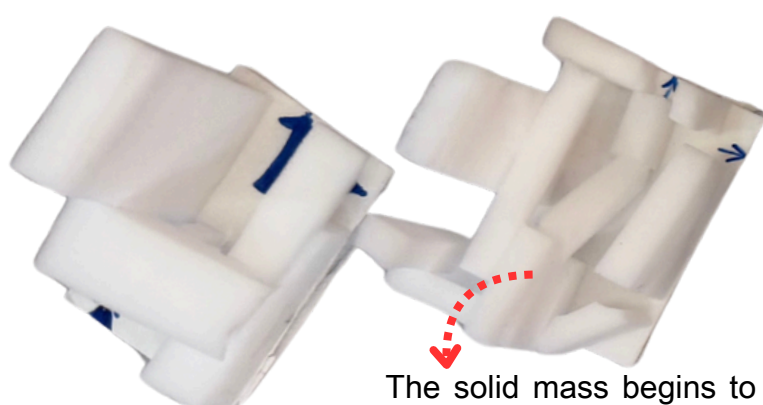
Initial trials were made to translate Brickfields' figure-ground patterns into 3D form, extracting the rhythm of voids and solids from the urban fabric.



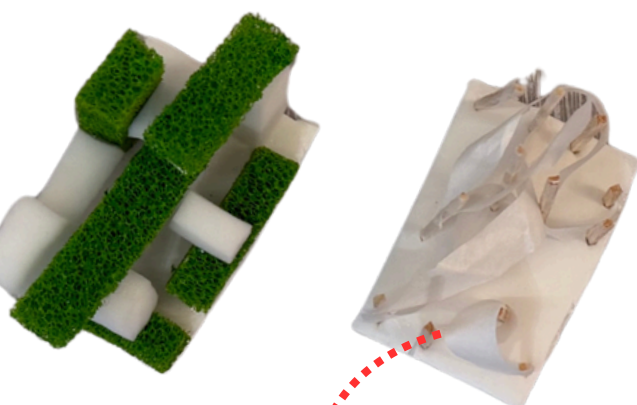
Explored how solid (building) and void (street) relationships shape human experience. Included inverting the figure-ground — turning positive space (building) into negative (street) and vice versa — to understand how the "street" itself can become a building.



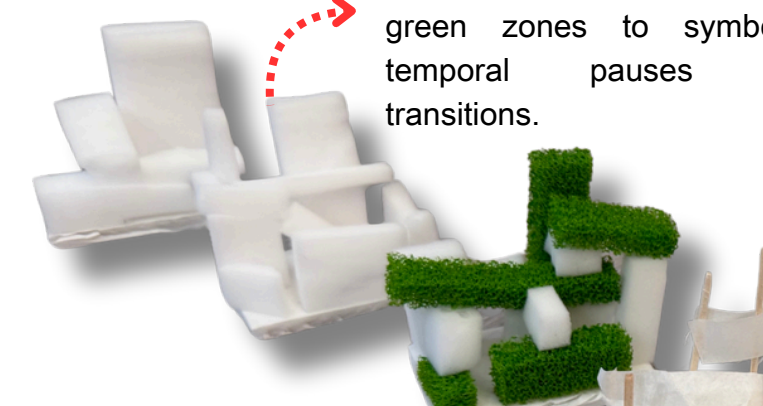
MASSING MODELS
STAGE 2 – Fragmentation & Vertical Flow



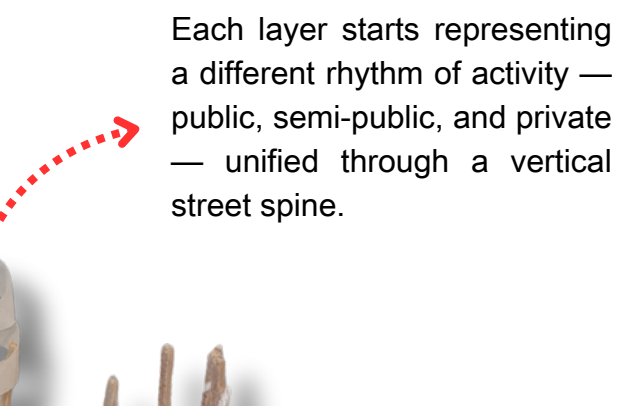
The solid mass begins to split and open, introducing terraces, voids, and interstitial green zones to symbolize temporal pauses and transitions.



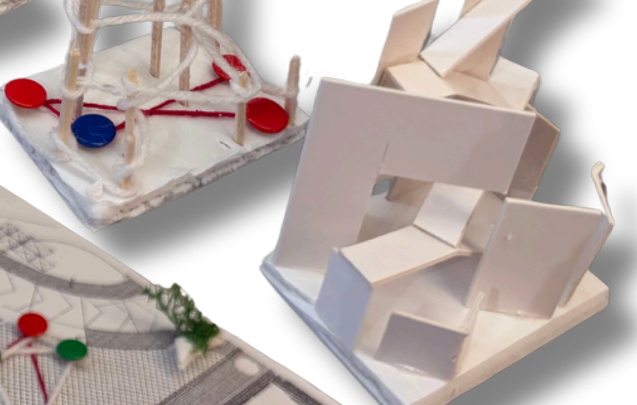
Each layer starts representing a different rhythm of activity — public, semi-public, and private — unified through a vertical street spine.



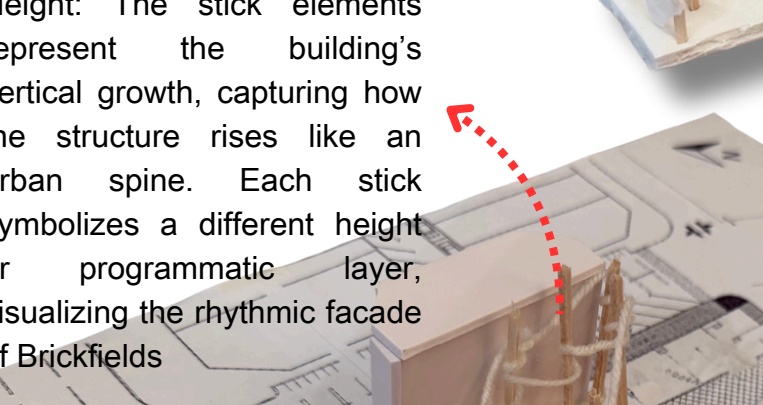
Vertical Stick — Building Height: The stick elements represent the building's vertical growth, capturing how the structure rises like an urban spine. Each stick symbolizes a different height or programmatic layer, visualizing the rhythmic facade of Brickfields



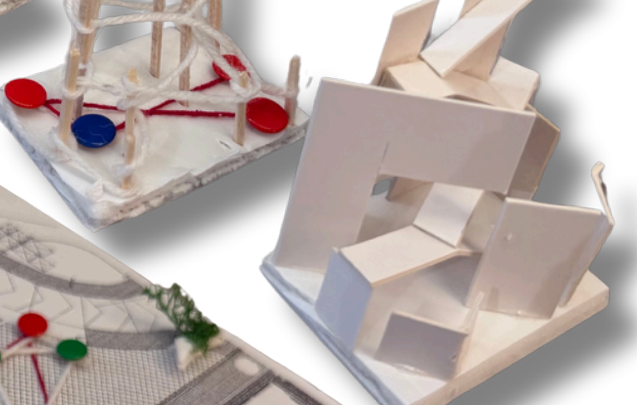
Red Dots — Entrance & Exit: The red dots signify key thresholds — entrances and exits — where interaction begins or ends.



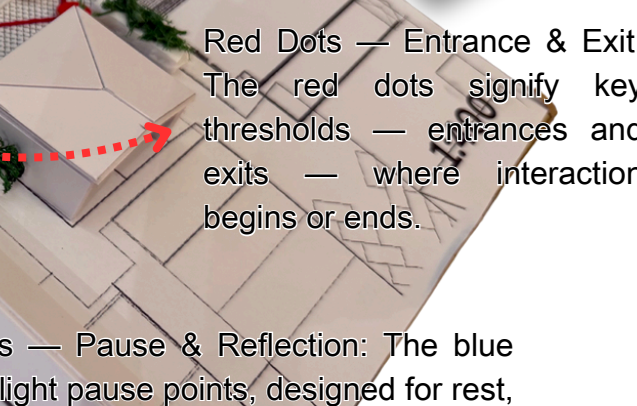
Blue Dots — Pause & Reflection: The blue dots highlight pause points, designed for rest, observation, or reflection. These nodes slow down the tempo of the journey, balancing Brickfields' fast urban rhythm with calm spatial moments.



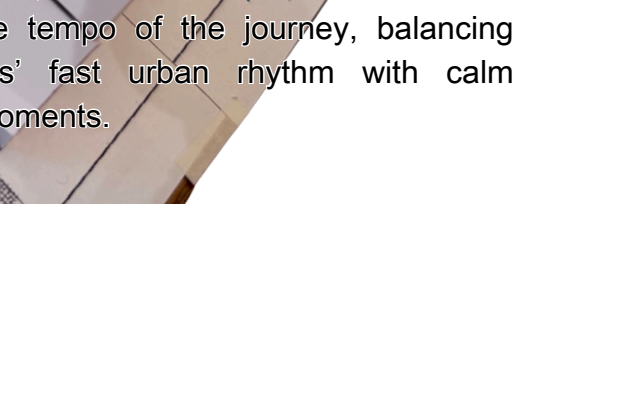
String — Movement of People: The strings trace the movement paths of people, flowing between levels like living arteries. They embody the continuous circulation — how visitors move, pause, and transition through the vertical street.



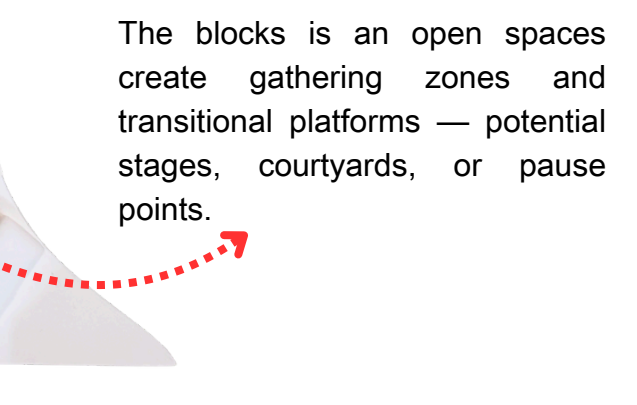
Planes are introduced to study spaciousness and proportion, testing how open and enclosed each zone feels. These planes define horizontal and vertical boundaries, exploring how light, shadow, and height affect user experience.




Planes are adjusted around the stair to shape openness and compression, creating moments of expansion (gathering) and contraction (transition).



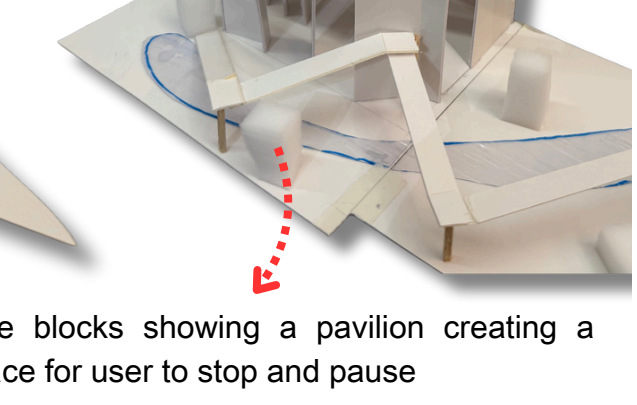
The courtyard becomes a pause within movement, breaking the dense vertical circulation and offering light, air, and visual relief between programs.



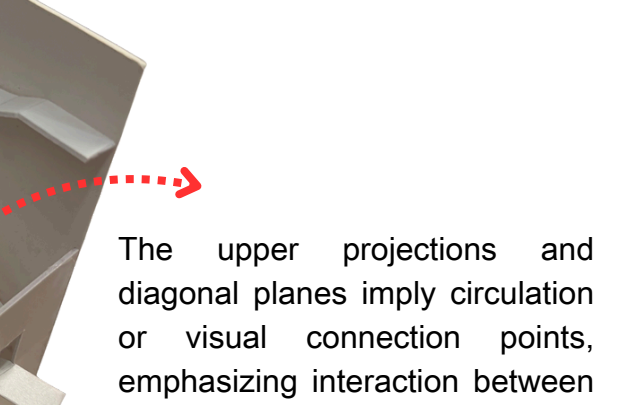
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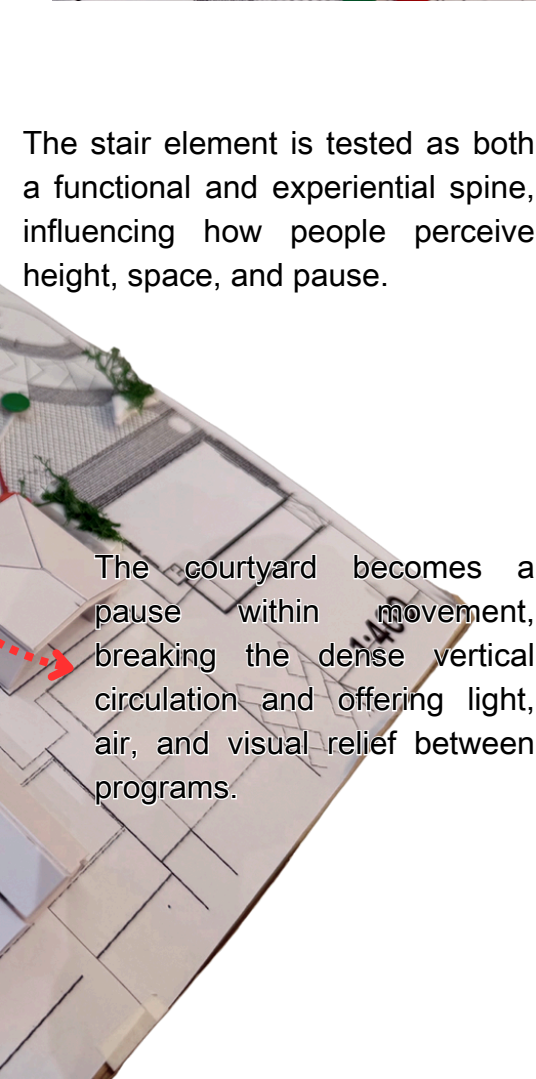
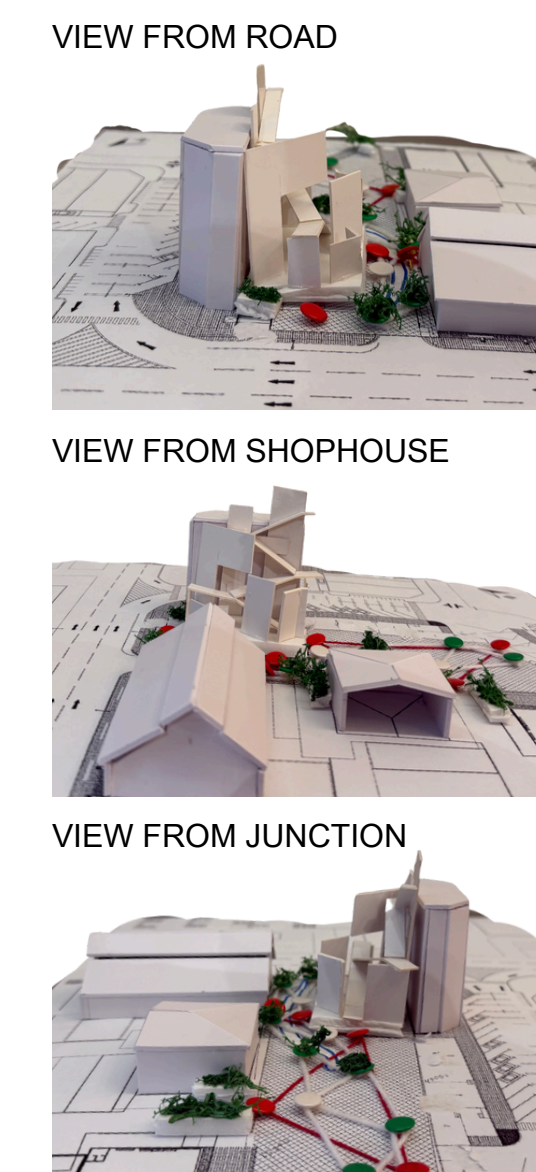
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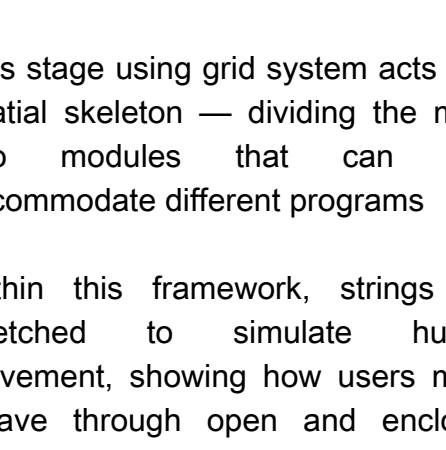
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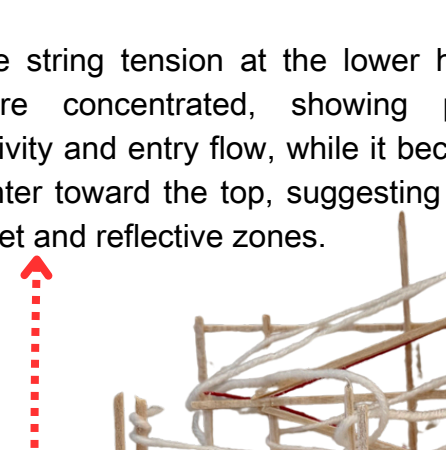
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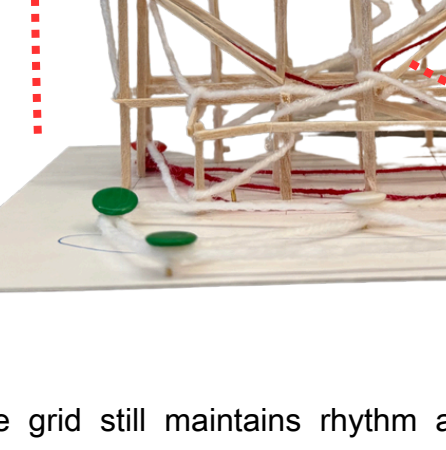
MASSING MODELS
STAGE 1 : Framework & Structural Rhythm



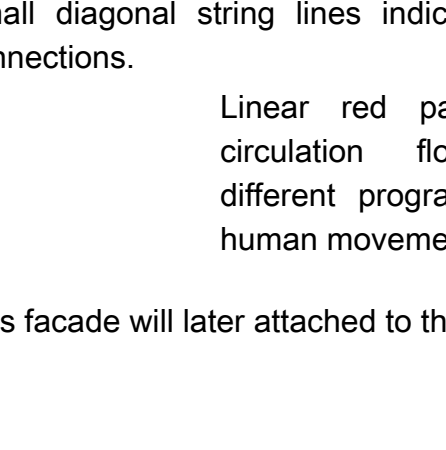
This stage using grid system acts as a spatial skeleton — dividing the mass into modules that can later accommodate different programs



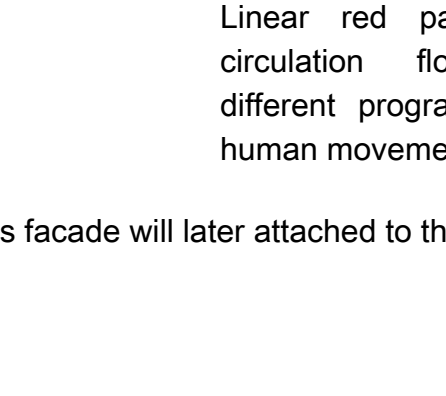
Within this framework, strings are stretched to simulate human movement, showing how users might weave through open and enclosed areas.



The string tension at the lower half is more concentrated, showing public activity and entry flow, while it becomes lighter toward the top, suggesting more quiet and reflective zones.



The view from shophouses reads as a vertical weave — the rigid grid defining floor heights and column alignments, while strings rise diagonally, symbolizing stairs or ramps cutting through volumes.



This facade begins to imply transparency and layering, where movement lines create rhythm and dynamism instead of static composition.

The grid still maintains rhythm and proportion, suggesting structural continuity.

Small diagonal string lines indicate secondary connections.

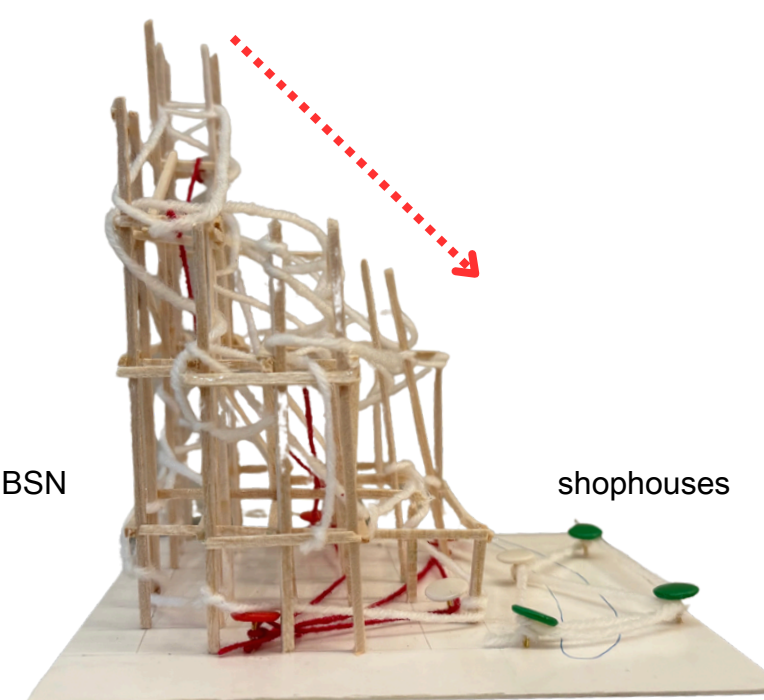
Linear red pathways highlight circulation flows, connecting different programs as if tracing human movement through time.

This facade will later be attached to the BSN Bank

From the top view, the grid forms a rational matrix that reflects order and proportion.

The strings overlay this base, crossing through nodes that represent activity points and interaction zones.

This reveals possible circulation loops, pauses, and connecting routes between different functional layers — forming a spatial map of movement intensity.

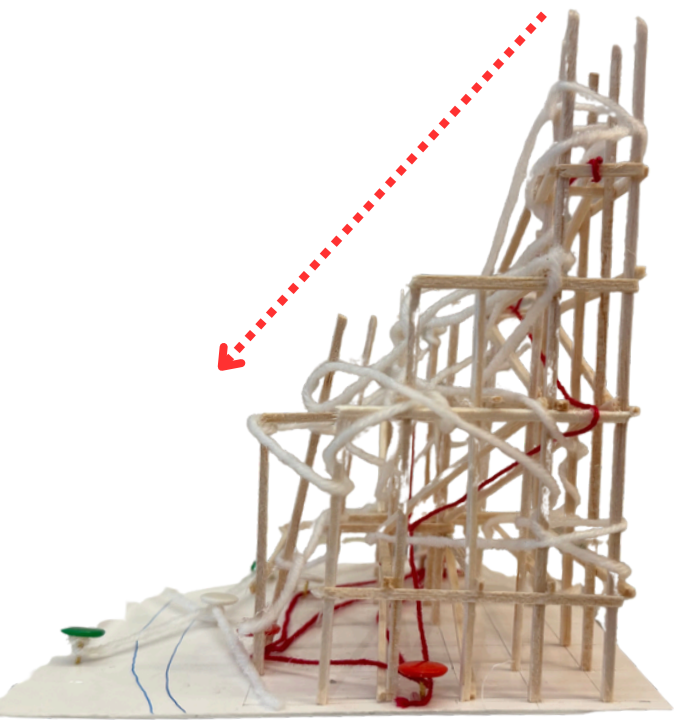


The massing shape is contextually responsive, designed to blend rhythmically with the surrounding urban fabric of Brickfields.

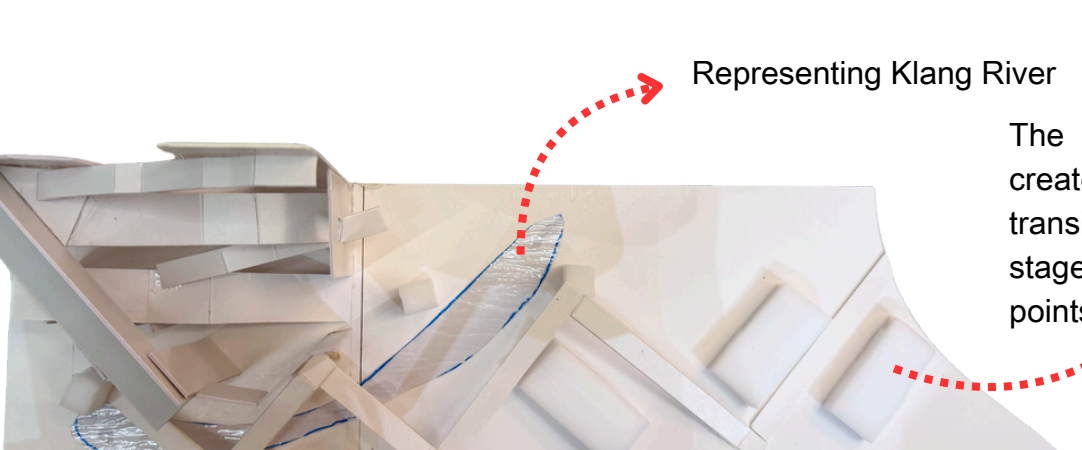
It takes cues from the adjacent building heights, forming a gradual height transition — rising towards the BSN Bank side, where the buildings are taller, and descending towards the shophouse area, where the structures are lower and more intimate in scale.

The side views emphasizes depth and sectional movement. Strings appear as crossing trajectories, linking the front and back edges of the grid, implying connections between interior spaces and terraces.

The layering of grids in depth suggests double-volume areas or spaces that transition between public and semi-private functions.

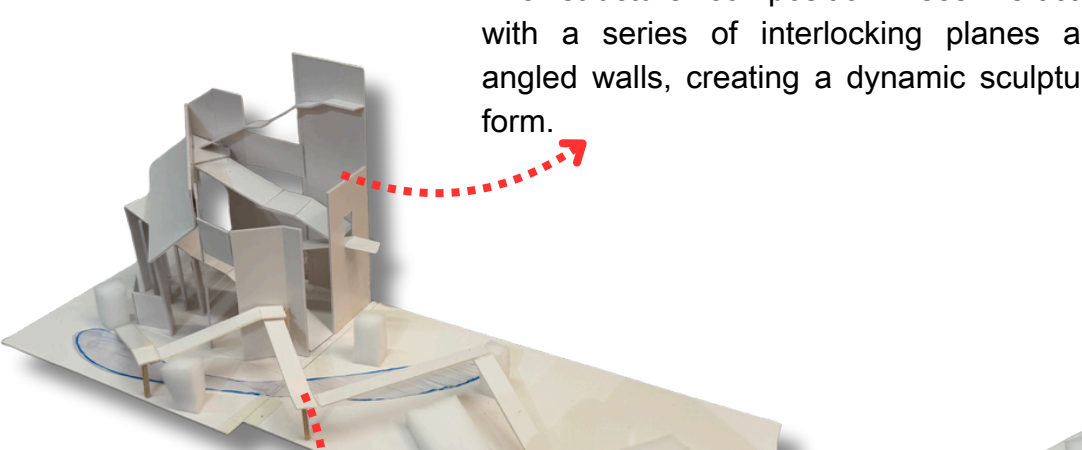


MASSING MODELS
STAGE 4 : LINE-PLANES-FORM

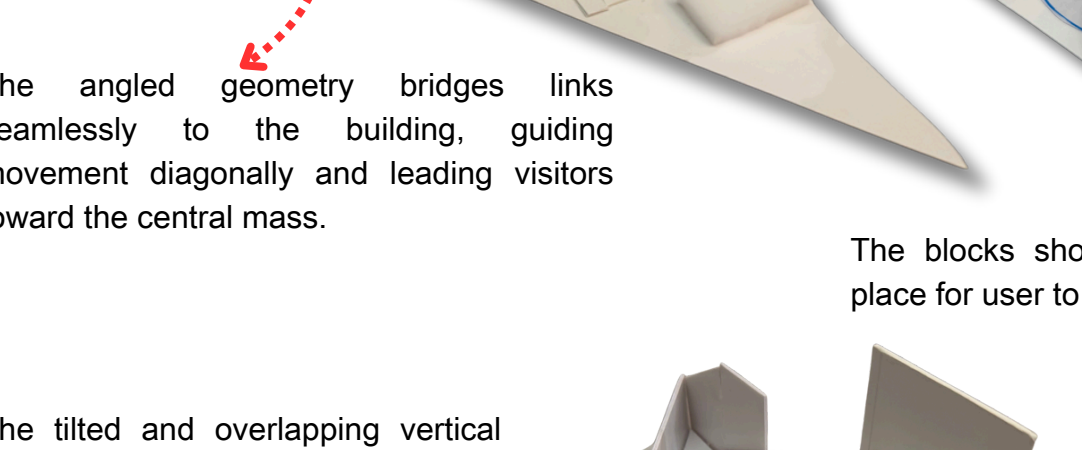


Representing Klang River

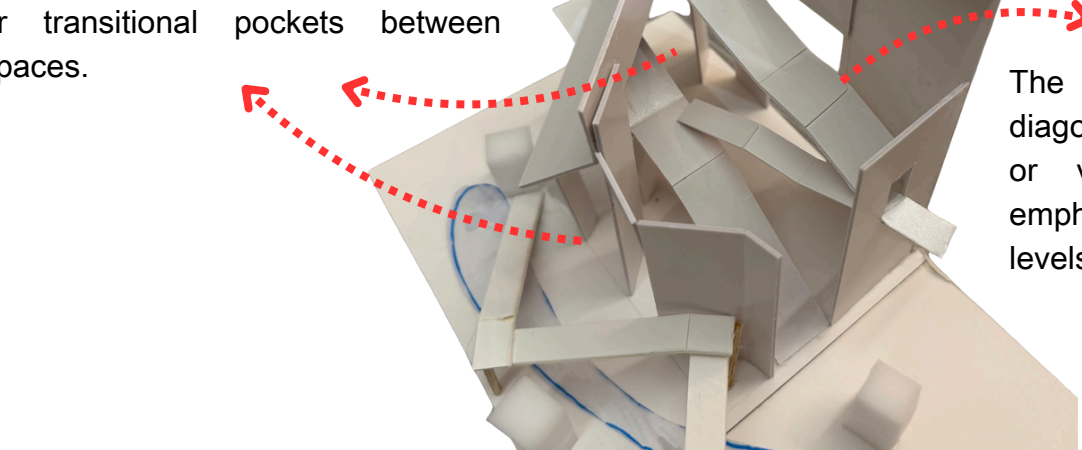
The blocks is an open spaces create gathering zones and transitional platforms — potential stages, courtyards, or pause points.




The structure composition rises vertically with a series of interlocking planes and angled walls, creating a dynamic sculptural form.



The angled geometry bridges links seamlessly to the building, guiding movement diagonally and leading visitors toward the central mass.



The blocks showing a pavilion creating a place for user to stop and pause



The tilted and overlapping vertical planes generate voids between them, which could act as light wells or transitional pockets between spaces.

The upper projections and diagonal planes imply circulation or visual connection points, emphasizing interaction between levels.