

MORE THAN BUILDINGS

Architecture, networks and power

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COLUMBIA GSAPP

MORE THAN BUILDINGS

More than buildings is a reflection on the agency of architecture to create networks, and consequently, shape and distribute power.

Since my arrival at GSAPP my whole conception of architecture has been transformed and expanded. *More than buildings* speaks about this personal and very profound expansion. By being here I have learnt that there are no right answers - this is one of the first things you learn at GSAPP - and that even the questions change. All these concerns are crucial because architecture is not an isolated or autonomous discipline; it is part of networks that define our world and the distribution of power in it. Architecture needs to transform and get transformed, and to do so it has to be understood as something that is “*more than buildings*”.

Architecture is indeed defined by each of the relationships and entanglements that emerge from its existence. The acknowledgement of this places me in a state of political responsibility through my practice. Now, I am concerned not only with providing physical responses, but also to consciously engage with the relevant socio-political and environmental matters of today.

Every design decision is a political one; and in every design decision there is always an opportunity. In this sense, each project is a chance to engage in the creation of a more critical and decent world. This is why More than buildings is fundamentally a statement of hope. It reaffirms the agency of architecture in transforming contemporary life. It pushes me to take position, to be critical, and to be conscious of what architecture is capable of doing. To design from this state of consciousness is something I embrace and I am committed to.

I also became aware that architecture moves beyond architects. When a building is understood as part of a network, multiple actors become involved, and hence architecture becomes trans-disciplinary, experimental, unstable and performative. Architecture does not only affect humans; it can also trace new relationships with other species and shape new ways of relating with the living environment. The complexities of today demands us to address topics of climate crisis, geo-politics, toxicity, social justice and gender. How does architecture operate in this complex world? Mainly by acknowledging that it is part of a broader system and that it has the power to transform it.

The projects I present here operate in this dimension, by being conscious of their agency to transform the social, the environmental and the political. They propose radical ways of life and unexpected interaction between species. They propose networks that move *beyond* the building, and at the same time they emerge *from* the design of architecture. The conversations and essays on this portfolio also unfold these topics; they are a projection of the thoughts and concerns I became aware of during this extraordinary year at GSAPP. Here, I have learnt that text and sound are also mediums from where the architectural practice can be confronted.

The Declaration of Independence of “the Toxic” is a project centered on the interspecies relationship between pokeweed - a species of “invasive” plant - and humans living with HIV and Covid viruses. This intervention reflects on the transfusions of body fluids as a subtle network that connects different species and allows new distributions of power, transforming the built and natural environment of Central Park. It confronts the notion of “toxic”, unfolding transcalar relations between humans and plants, from the intimacy of the body to the extension of the city through a critical process of inter-species acclimatization. This project has been crucial in my understanding that architecture is about more than humans.

Architecture should be sensitive to the social fabric that lives within the space where it is operating. **Networks of Resistance** is a housing response to the spontaneous, fragmented and powerful social network of East Harlem. The intervention understands that people in Harlem are resisting gentrification and capitalist expansion through its small-scale fragmented idiosyncrasy. Harlem’s social cohesion operates as a decentralized army of small pieces; it operates as a network. The project provides a collection of collective rooms for the

Wagner Social Housing Project which are occupied by the inhabitants for multiple purposes. The apartments are radically transformed; they are fragmented into smaller pieces that can be combined in multiple ways, both in plan and section, through furniture devices. By doing this, the concept of “family” can be redefined as many times as needed, as apartments can grow or shrink according to people’s needs. The whole intervention also transforms the flooding crisis of East Harlem in a topographical operation of ponds and piers for social encounters.

Everydayland is an intervention that re-arranges the chemical concentration of fireworks in Disney World. It proposes an alternative and radical way of living at the center of Magic Kingdom. It is a tower that allows people to live everyday at Disney, fully engaging with the chemical spectacle of fireworks. Everydayland Tower becomes part of the chemical networks of entertainment in Disney, physically shaping how fireworks engage with humans’ everyday life. The tower also distorts the conception of Disney’s Castle. Disney makes chemical entertainment a fantasy, like Tinkerbell’s magic dust. Everydayland Tower both allows Disney fans to live this fantasy by literally making the castle a home. But at the same time it also shifts the chemical dimension of the fireworks from the world of fantasy into the real world - so it provides a fantasy and “de-fantasizes” at the same time.

Unorthodox Architectures presents a graphic essay on Lina Bo Bardi’s work. This visual-research project allowed me to understand the intangible relationships in Lina’s life and work: what are the networks in which her work operates? In relation to what other practices is her work read today? Which social, political and environmental networks were created through her practice? Lina developed an extraordinary and heterodoxical architecture, linked with issues of politics, social justice, material cyclability and nature. To study her life and work through diagrammatic relationships has been a revealing experience to me.

Confronting Architecture’s Authority is a research project on Rossi that takes the form of a trial. It confronts Rossi’s theories, specifically the condition of timeless, abstract and autonomous architecture.

The essay **Domesticity, Feminism and Power** is an inquiry on Conventillos, a collective domestic architecture that has been crucial in the fight for feminist rights in Argentina by the beginning of the 20th century. The conventillos played a crucial social and political role for immigrant women, who found in the collective patios a space to organize politically. It is an exemplary architecture where the domestic space allows women to gain political agency and disrupt the established social order and conservative family mandates.

Real Talk is a conversation with Argentinian architect Gerardo Caballero on how architecture engages with the real; in this case on how architecture is rendered as a critical practice directly linked to the reality of its context. This text is part of my contribution as editor of PATIO, the magazine of Latin GSAPP.

Dissecting Architectural Practice assembles the reflections and discussions that gave form to the season 2 of RAADio. Our concerns were centered on how the practice of architecture is performed, and how this shapes the architecture we ultimately produce.

My relationship with architecture has changed through my experience in GSAPP. Now, I understand architecture through the complex networks and entanglements that are related to it; and I am critical on the fact that architecture has the agency to transform these networks and re-shape power. Design decisions are to me political decisions now. They are intrinsically embedded with values and ideologies. Architecture is, in simple words, much more than buildings.

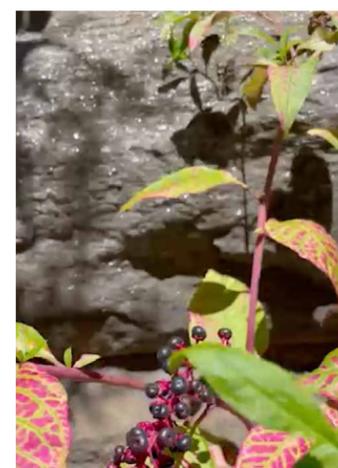
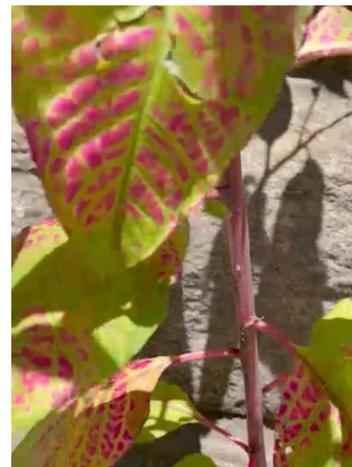
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THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF “THE TOXIC”

Transfusions for an interspecies alliance
between pokeweed and people living
with HIV and covid viruses

Adv Studio IV
Professor Nerea Calvillo





*What is not toxic today?
In an era in which air, soil, food, water is polluted,
aren't we all toxic?
Isn't toxicity encompassed within each of us?
Among the environments in which we live and within
our own bodies?*

The Declaration of Independence of "The Toxic" - Transfusions for an interspecies alliance between pokeweed and people living with HIV and Covid-19 viruses is a pokeweed acclimatizer, which brings together two species - Pokeweeds and Humans - to collaborate and help each other through transfusions of their chemical body fluids. Pokeweeds help humans to fight HIV and Covid viruses; and humans help the weed to write its own Declaration of Interdependence in Central Park.

To do so, two pokeweed fluids are mobilized: the PAP - Pokeweed Antiviral Protein - contained in the leaves of the plant which will be collected to produce antivirals for HIV and Covid; and the pokeweed's magenta liquid contained in the berries which will be squeezed to write the plant's Declaration of Interdependence.

"Toxicity" and the injustice of its displacement will be collectively acknowledged and celebrated in its multiple forms.



This one here is **Poke**. She is an American Pokeweed or commonly named as Pokeberry. The American Pokeweed, widely extended in the southern and eastern territory of the US, was originally known as Poke, which in the Algonquin Indian language means blood. Later, in the 20th century, it was cataloged as a weed, by the US Department of Agriculture, defining the plant as an unwanted species.

Pokeweed is considered invasive because it reproduces “too” fast and spreads “too” easily. It is also disliked because it can be poisonous for some animals since livestock, pets and humans have been intoxicated because of eating the berries. However, despite this negative portrayal, Poke tends to be surrounded by an abundant ecosystem of species that rely on her for both food and pollination, as pokeweed is indeed not harmful or toxic to these birds, insects and small mammals.

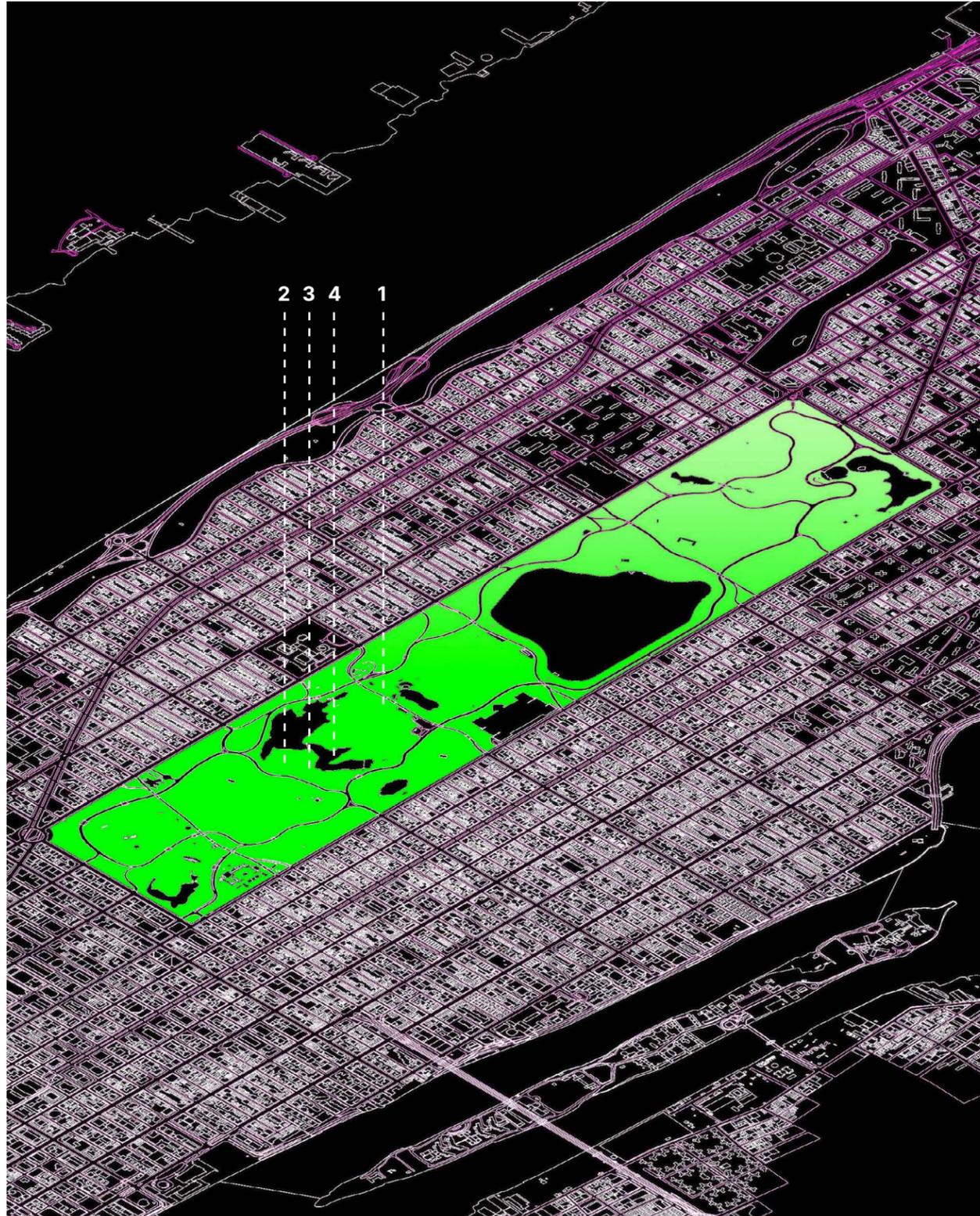
Poke has made some major appearances in history, especially thanks to her amazing fluids: the chemicals running through her leaves and the colorful liquid contained in her berries.

The magenta fluid was used by Native Americans to dye textiles, and the leaves for medicinal purposes: as a cardiac stimulant, and to treat epilepsy, anxiety and neurological disorders. Paradoxically, Poke also had a prominent role in the American Revolution. It is claimed that poke berries’ ink was used to write the Declaration of Independence of the US in 1776. Later, during the Civil War, soldiers at the war fields used to squeeze poke berries to extract its ink and write letters to their beloved ones. Today, Pokeweed has been discovered to be a potential breakthrough in medical applications. Pokeweed’s leaves contain a protein called PAP (Pokeweed Antiviral Protein) that has shown effectiveness to treat HIV virus. Recently, it has also been tested to treat Covid-19 virus.

Despite all the key-playing roles of Pokeweed throughout history and in the present, it continues to be cataloged as an unwanted species.

**Then, why do we catalog this plant as unwanted?
Who says it is unwanted?
And, unwanted for who?**

We found Poke at Central Park through Citizen Science apps. We noticed that many Pokeweeds that were recently mapped in Central Park were no longer there, thus we believe that the plants were removed from the park when reported. Actually, this explains the site where we found Poke, on 86th Central Park Traverse, in the dirty sidewalk of this underground road, where Poke was able to emerge from the cracks. She has managed to live in the borders, apart from humans, together with litter.



Map of Central Park. Location of the project: Bethesda Fountain. Phases of the intervention: 1/ Toxic Gardens, 2/ Soaking Leaves, 3/ Biohacking Center & 4/ Once in a Year Celebration.

Both Pokeweed, as a weed, and people living with HIV have been forced to live in liminal and relegated spaces. Viruses and weeds propagate by themselves and out of human control, and as a consequence they have been pulled apart and rejected.

In addition, both Pokeweed and people living with HIV have been stigmatized because of the poisonous or infected fluids circulating in their bodies, turning them into poisonous or “toxic” bodies.

But actually, we question:

What is not toxic today?

In an era in which air, soil, food, water is polluted, then, aren't we all toxic?

Isn't toxicity encompassed within each of us?

Among the environments in which we live and within our own bodies?

The Declaration of Independence of “The Toxic” - Transfusions for an interspecies alliance between pokeweed and people living with HIV and Covid-19 viruses is a pokeweed acclimatizer, which brings together two species - Pokeweeds and Humans - to collaborate and help each other through transfusions of their chemical body fluids. Pokeweeds help humans to fight HIV and Covid viruses; and humans help the weed to write its own Declaration of Interdependence in Central Park.

To do so, two pokeweed fluids are mobilized: the Pokeweed Antiviral Protein and the juice of the poke's berries. The PAP, Pokeweed Antiviral Protein, contained in the leaves will be collected to produce antivirals for HIV and Covid. The Poke's magenta liquid contained in the berries will be squeezed to write the Poke's Declaration of Interdependence.

These interspecies interactions happen at the acclimatizers which are: the Toxic Gardens, the Soaking Fountain and the Biohacking House.

These spaces take over existing empty infrastructures and open areas in Central Park where people living with HIV and LGBTQ communities have protested and secretly gathered throughout the years.

1/ "TOXIC" GARDENS

The "Toxic" Gardens are dispersed throughout Central Park in open available areas such as the Sheep's Meadow, The Rambles and The Strawberry Field. Here is where Poke will grow freely and humans will collect mature leaves during the summer and spring seasons. To acclimatize these areas, flexible and mesh-like canopies are hung from nearby trees. The canopies capture the trees' falling leaves creating the necessary shade for Pokeweeds to flourish. As the canopies collect more and more leaves, these drop down into the canopy's sacs, eventually decaying and enriching the soil around the Pokeweeds' gardens.

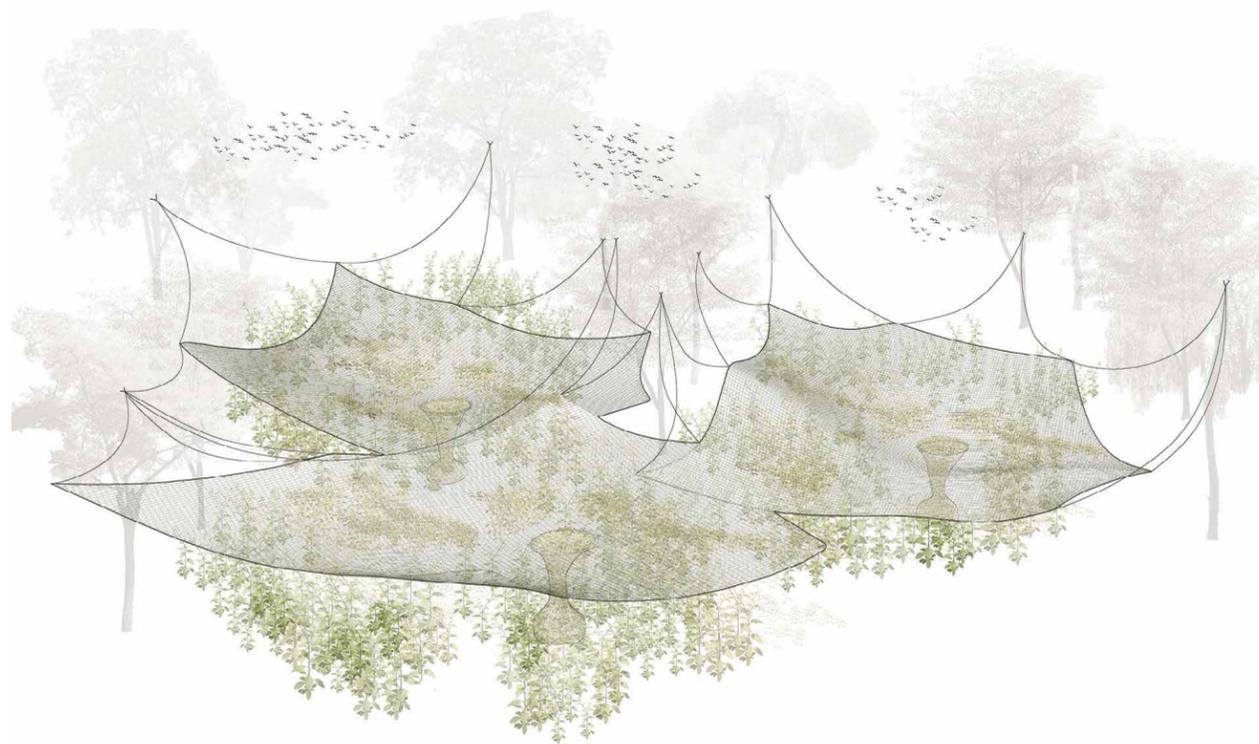
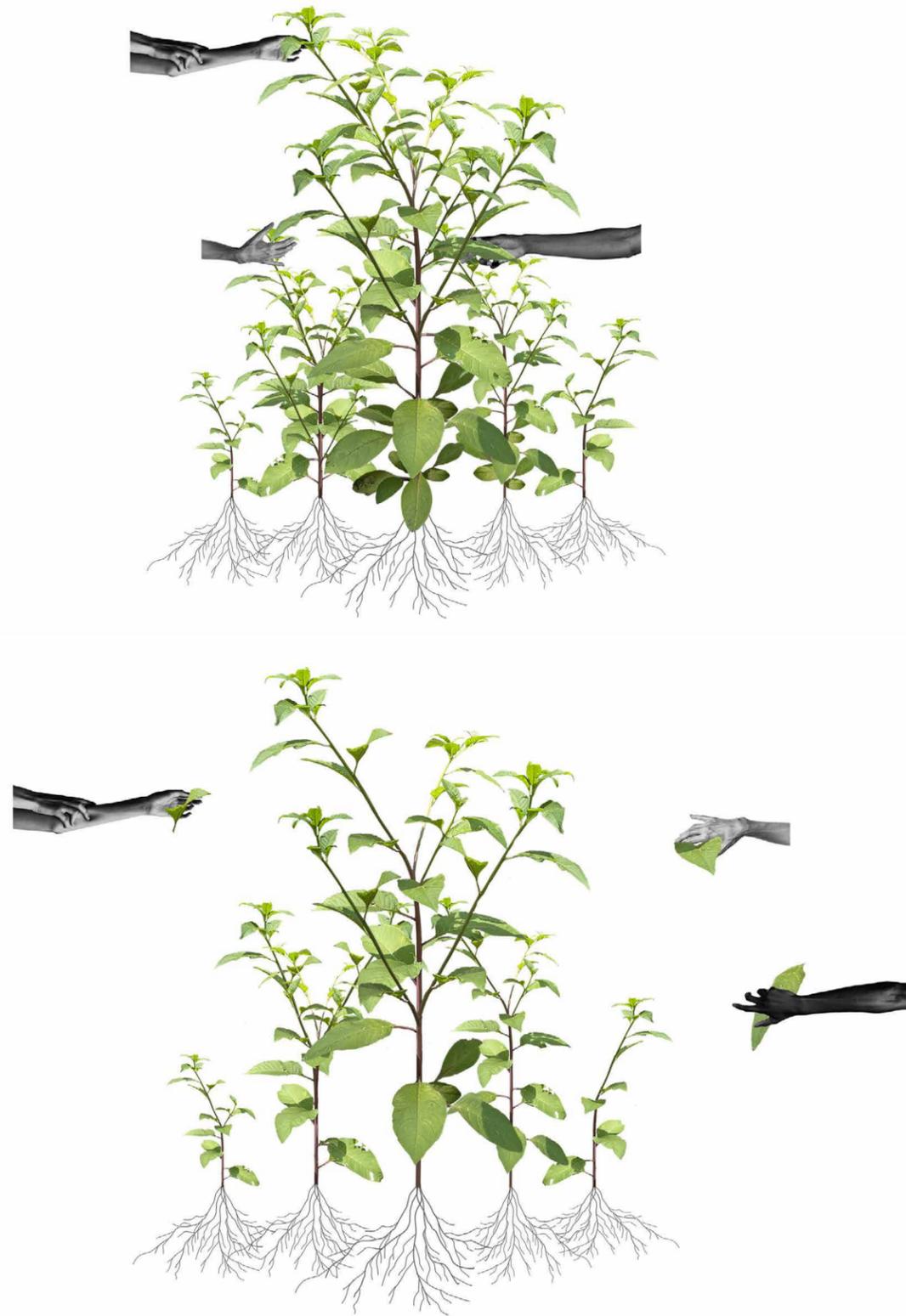


Diagram of the DIY meshes located in Central Park that host the Toxic Gardens. They facilitate an acclimatized space for Pokeweeds to grow.



Aerial Views of the Toxic Gardens and Bethesda Fountain, Central Park.



Images from the video on how the project engages with Poke. They show how the intervention sets in relation humans and pokeweeds.



They show the process of collecting the leaves from the plant at the Toxic Gardens to later extract the PAP protein at the Biohacking House.

2/ SOAKING FOUNTAIN

The collected leaves are taken to the existing Bethesda Fountain, below the Angel of the Waters, the sculpture designed by Emma Stebbins in 1873. Emma was an active feminist and lesbian, and the first woman to be commissioned a public artwork by the City of New York. This sculpture represents water as a main source for healing the body, and a crucial element in the transfusion of body fluids. At the Soaking Fountain the leaves will be washed collectively during summer and fall, and then transported on the boats to the Biohacking house.



Screenshots from the video "Soaking the Leaves" which shows the process of washing the poke's leaves before taking them to the biohacking house.



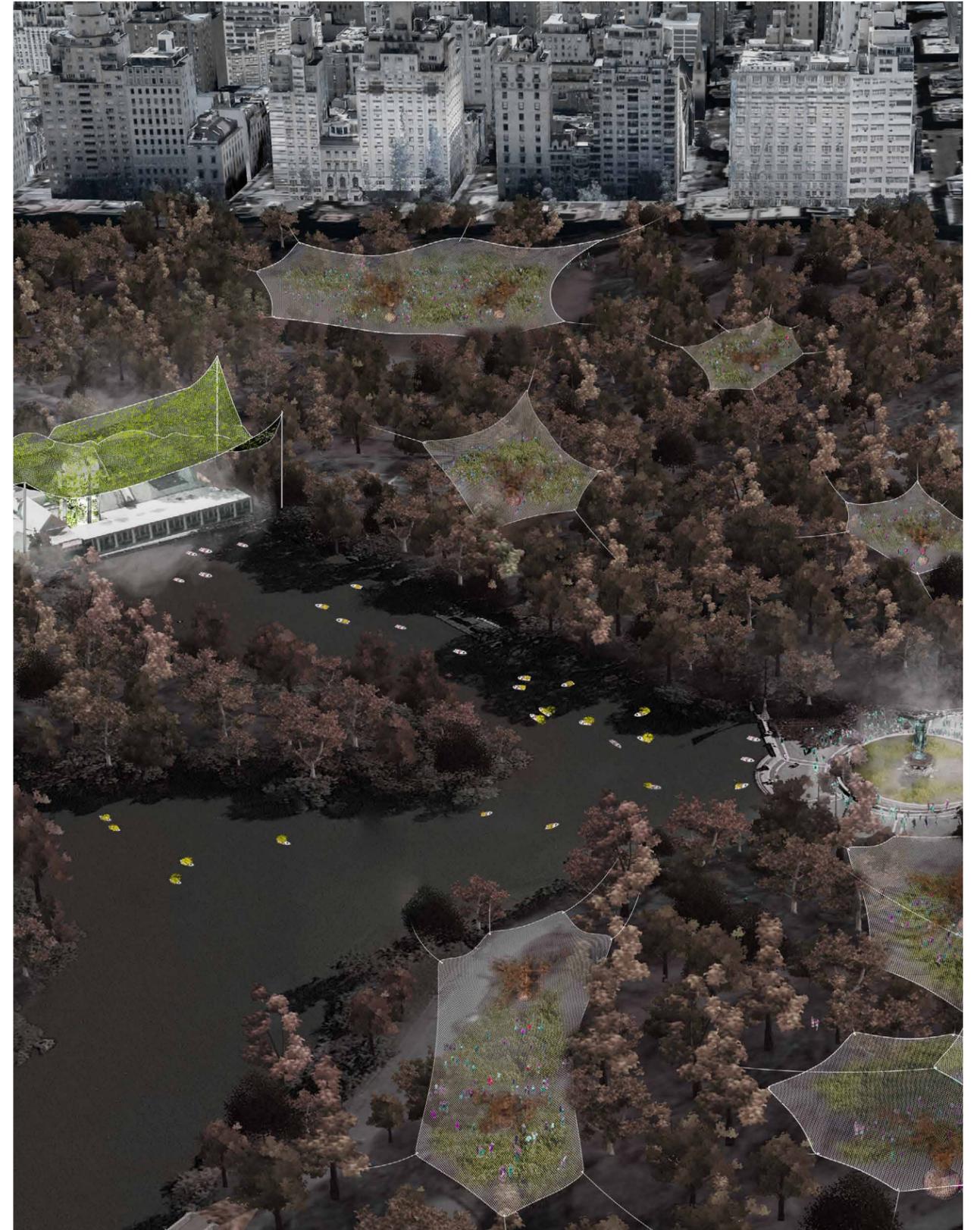
3/ BIOHACKING HOUSE

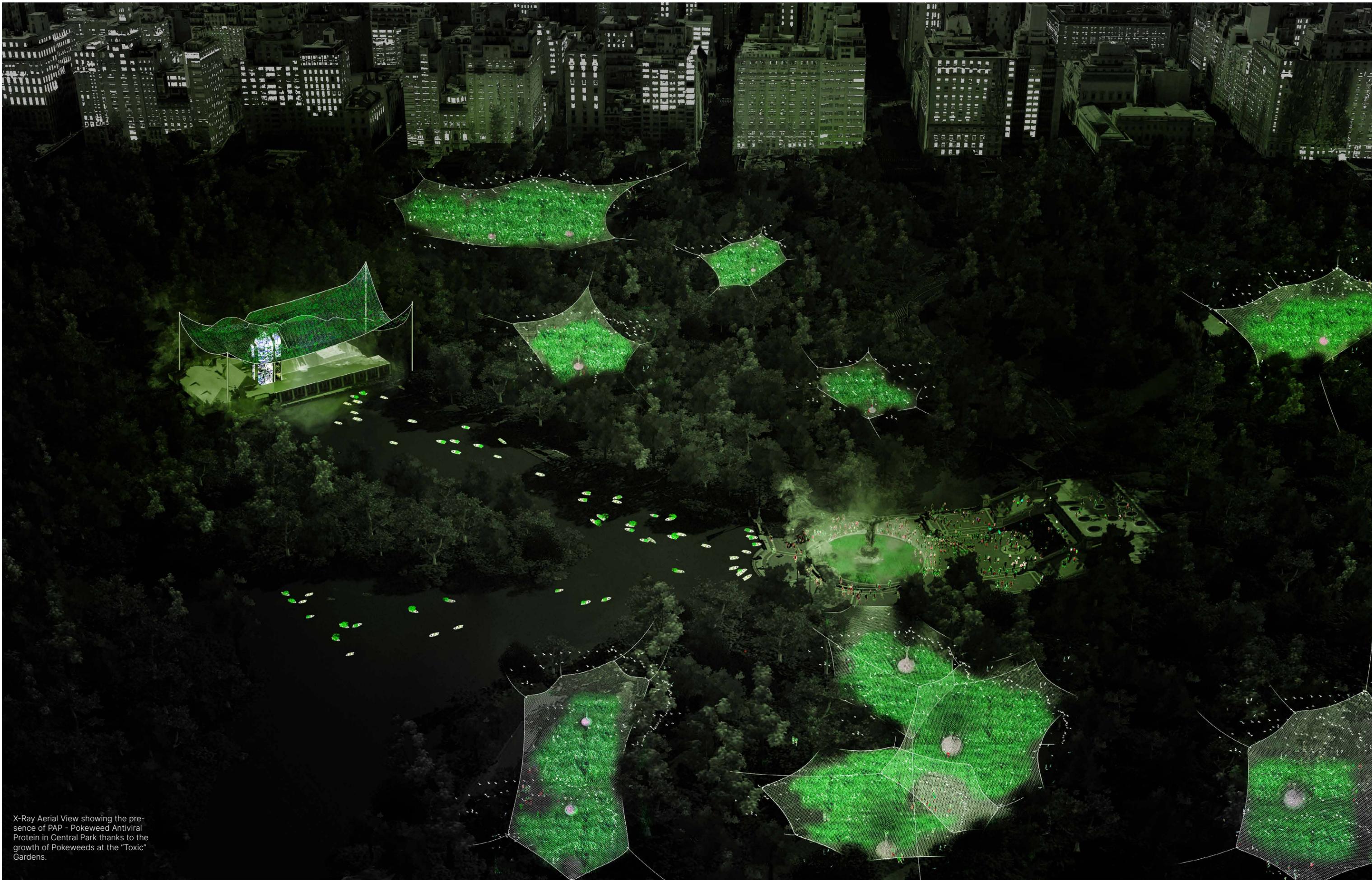
The Biohacking house will take over the unused rooftop of the existing Loeb Boathouse and its boats. Here, the leaves are dried and processed to extract the PAP Antiviral Protein. A double mesh is installed over the terrace and big tubes pour air to dry the leaves and prepare them for the antiviral extraction. If we could X-Ray our intervention, we could see the PAP antiviral protein circulating from the leaves of the plant to the human body.

Participants of this (do it yourself) biohacking process, as well as others who might not be able to participate, will get, in addition to the PAP Antiviral Protein, the GFP, a Green Fluorescent Protein, which is a bio-marker for HIV and Covid. This protein, which has been already tested as a marker for cats and other animals' immunodeficiency viruses, will glow on Covid or HIV bodies. The use of GFP is an action for visibility, intended to dilute the stigma placed on people living with viruses, and to blend with fireflies at night.



Intervention at the Boat House, which is transformed into a Biohacking House. The boats are used as devices to transport the leaves.





X-Ray Aerial View showing the presence of PAP - Pokeweed Antiviral Protein in Central Park thanks to the growth of Pokeweeds at the "Toxic" Gardens.

4/ ONCE IN A YEAR EVENT

Once a year, a toxic-interspecies-celebration takes place. With the help of humans, Poke will “write” its own Declaration of Interdependence in Central Park. This event will unfold as a procession. Humans will stop at each of the Toxic Gardens and squeeze the round and juicy Poke’s berries, allowing the fluid to tint the soil and mark the plant’s territory. Instead of using citizen science apps to mark Poke’s location, Poke will use her own magenta fluid, contained in her berries, to speak for herself. This is Poke, writing her own Declaration of Interdependence - as she can now move freely - in Central Park.

The procession is conceived as a performative and bodily engaged event that will end at the Bethesda Fountain. The berries collected throughout the summer will be poured into the fountain where humans will crush the berries, as a sort of grape harvesting event, releasing the magenta liquid into the water-bodies of Central Park.

In this collective celebration, “toxicity” and the injustice of its displacement will be collectively acknowledged and celebrated in its multiple forms.



Screenshots from the video “Ink and Soil” which shows the process of squeezing the Poke’s berries.



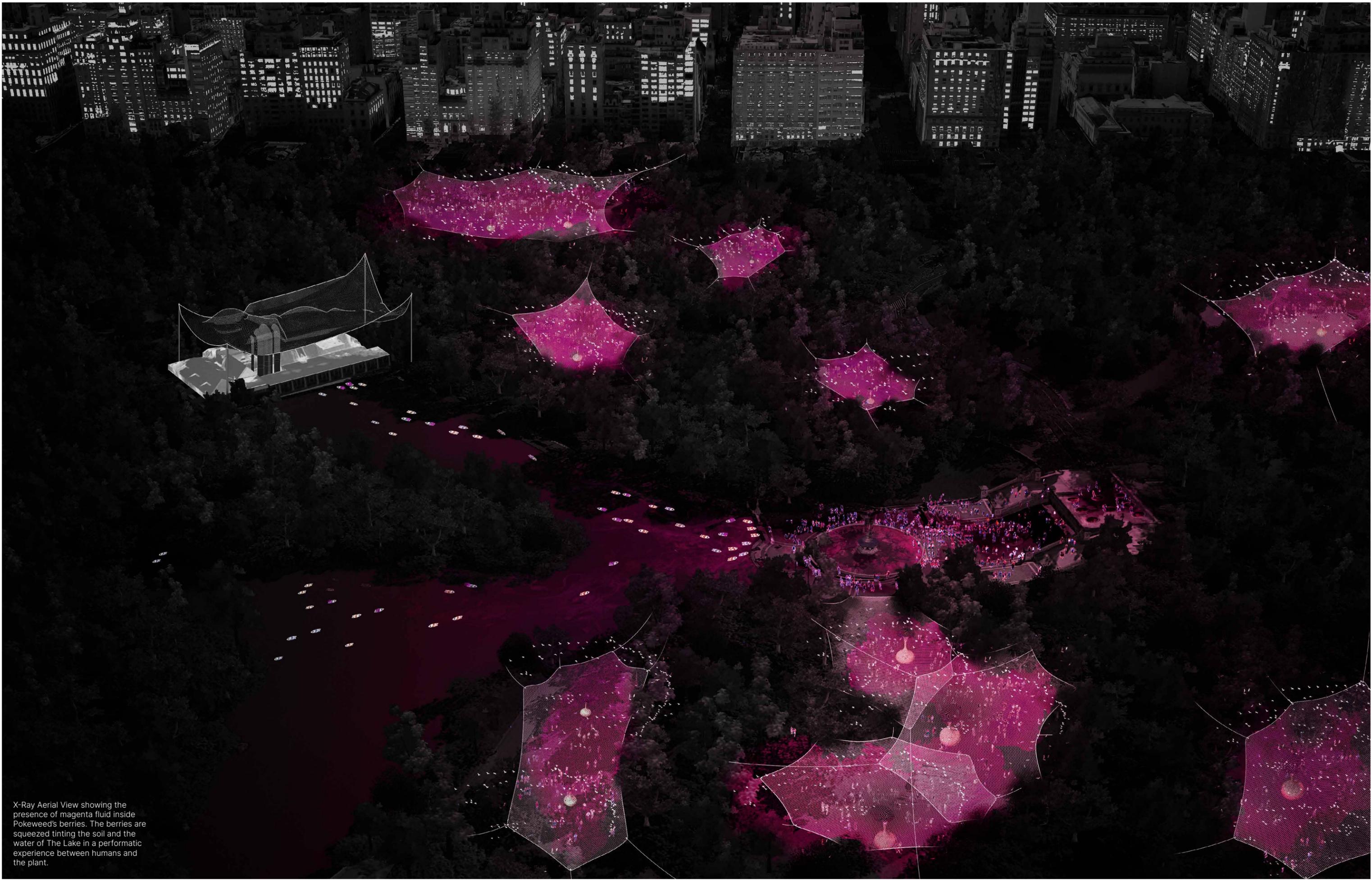


Images from the video on how the project engages with Poke. They show how the intervention sets in relation humans and pokeweeds.

These images show the moment in which humans swueeze the berries in an inter-species celebration of "the Toxic".



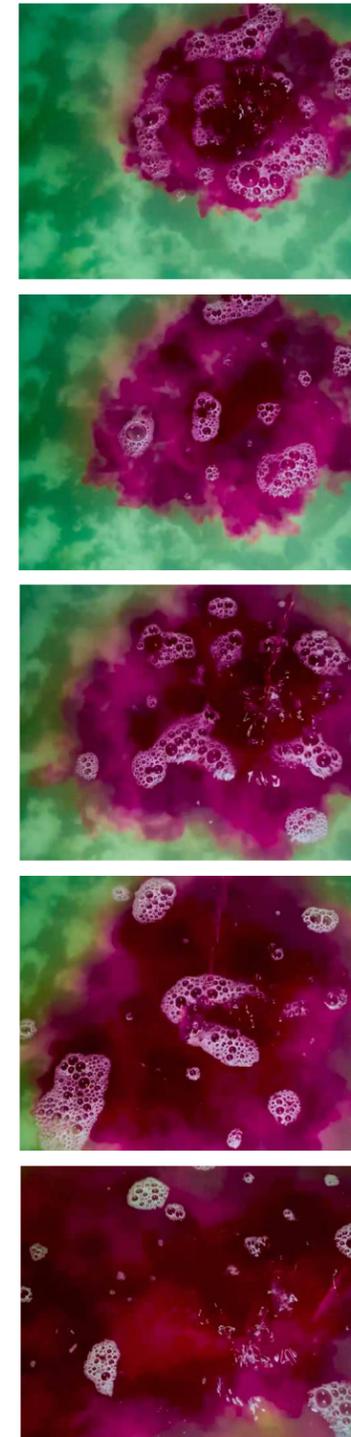
Screenshots from the video "Encountering Poke" that show how I squeezed the berries and got tinted by its magenta fluid.



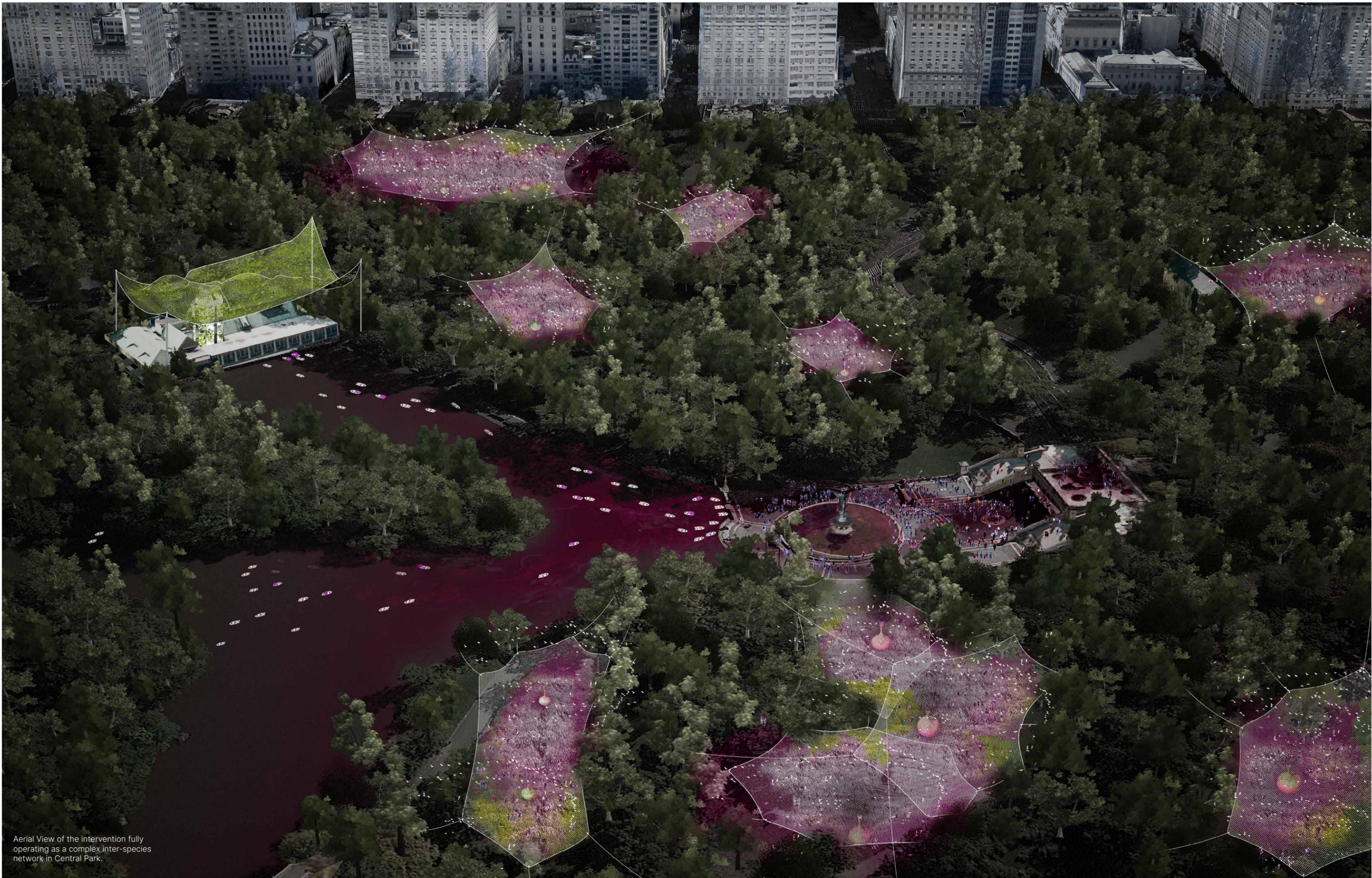
X-Ray Aerial View showing the presence of magenta fluid inside Pokeweed's berries. The berries are squeezed tinting the soil and the water of The Lake in a performatic experience between humans and the plant.



Aerial Image of the "Procession" that takes place once in a year in Central Park. In this event, the berries are squeezed, releasing the magenta liquid that is inside.



Screenshots of the video "Ink and Water", which shows the process of tinting The Lake's water

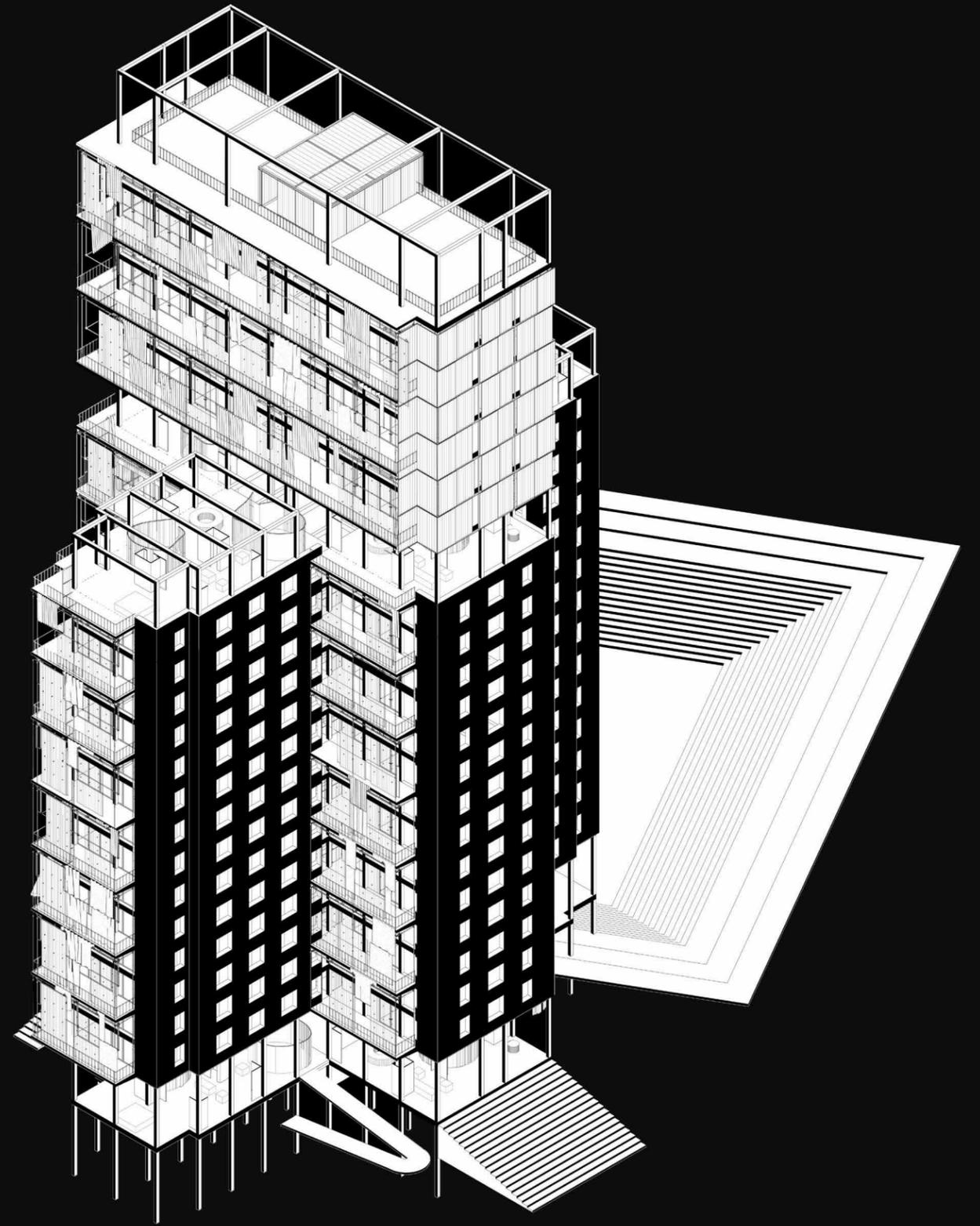


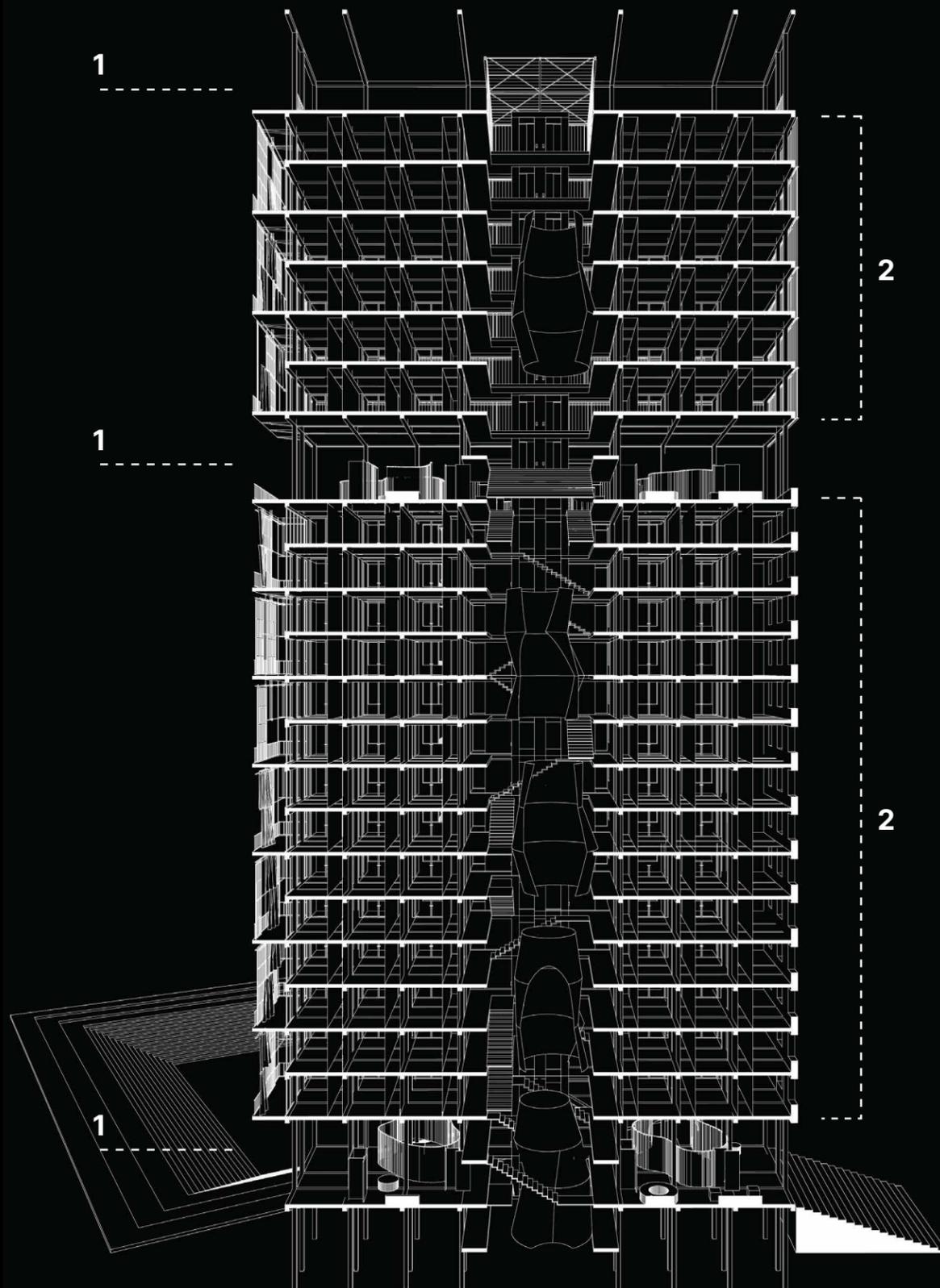
Aerial View of the intervention fully operating as a complex inter-species network in Central Park.

NETWORKS OF RESISTANCE

Typological corrections in
NYCHA housing, East Harlem

Adv Studio V
Professor Juan Herreos





Section of the intervention in one of Wagner Social Housing buildings.
 1 / Collective spaces: Ground floor, Intermediate floor, Upper floor. 2 / Private - Intimate spaces: Existing housing units + new housing units on the upper floors

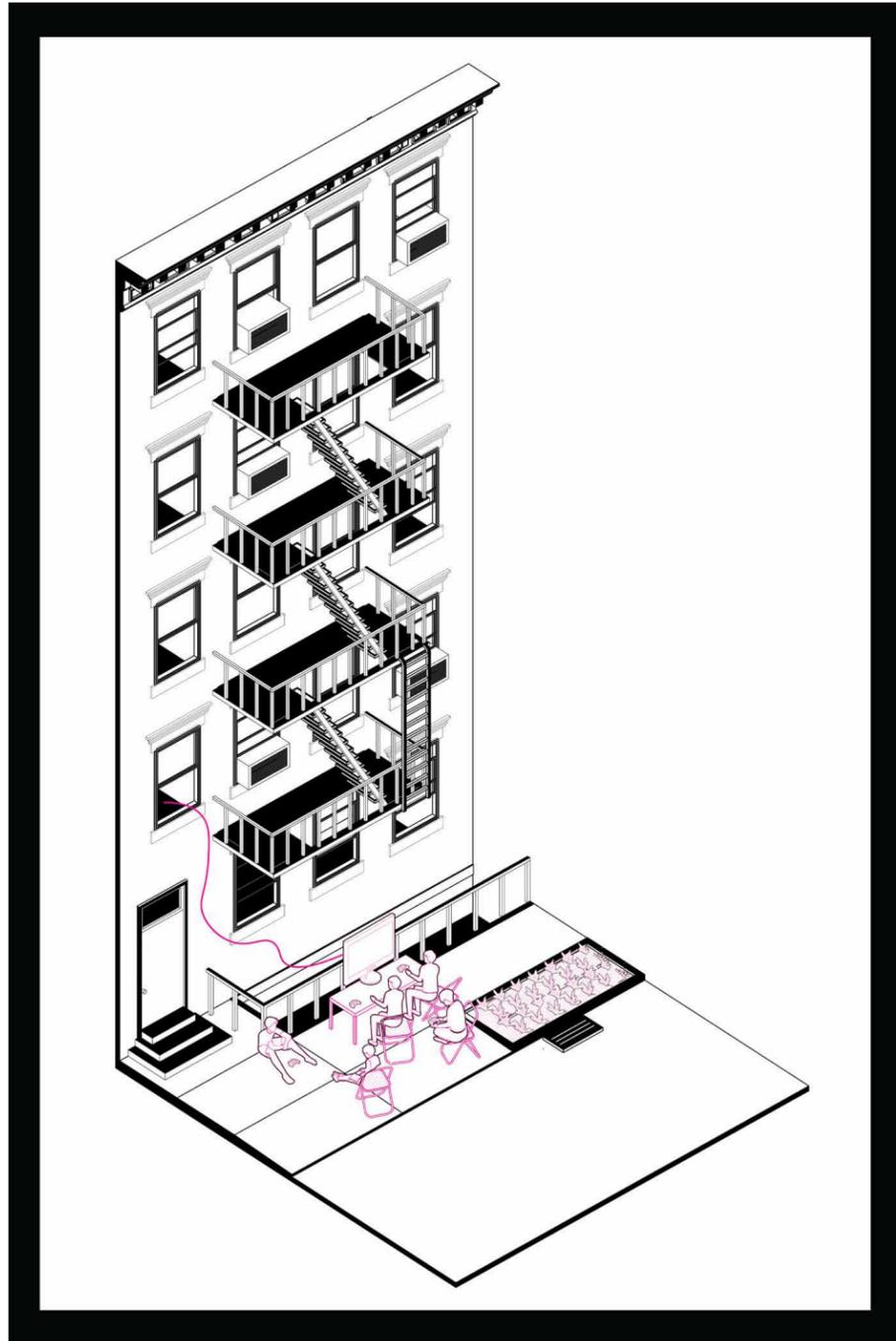
Networks of Resistance is a housing response to the spontaneous, fragmented and powerful social network of East Harlem. It is a project that inquires on the social power of East Harlem and how it is constructed through an intense network of small-scale activities: from spontaneous ones that happen on the streets to more formal ones such as the collection of restaurants, delis, hair salons and stores owned by local people from Harlem. They are the actual network of resistance of Harlem; a decentralized army that faces gentrification and corporate expansion every day.

The project intervenes transforming the Wagner Social Housing buildings with that same logic: through small scale interventions that can be re-arranges, modified, and transformed by its occupants. The aim is to give room for things to happen, and for things to change.

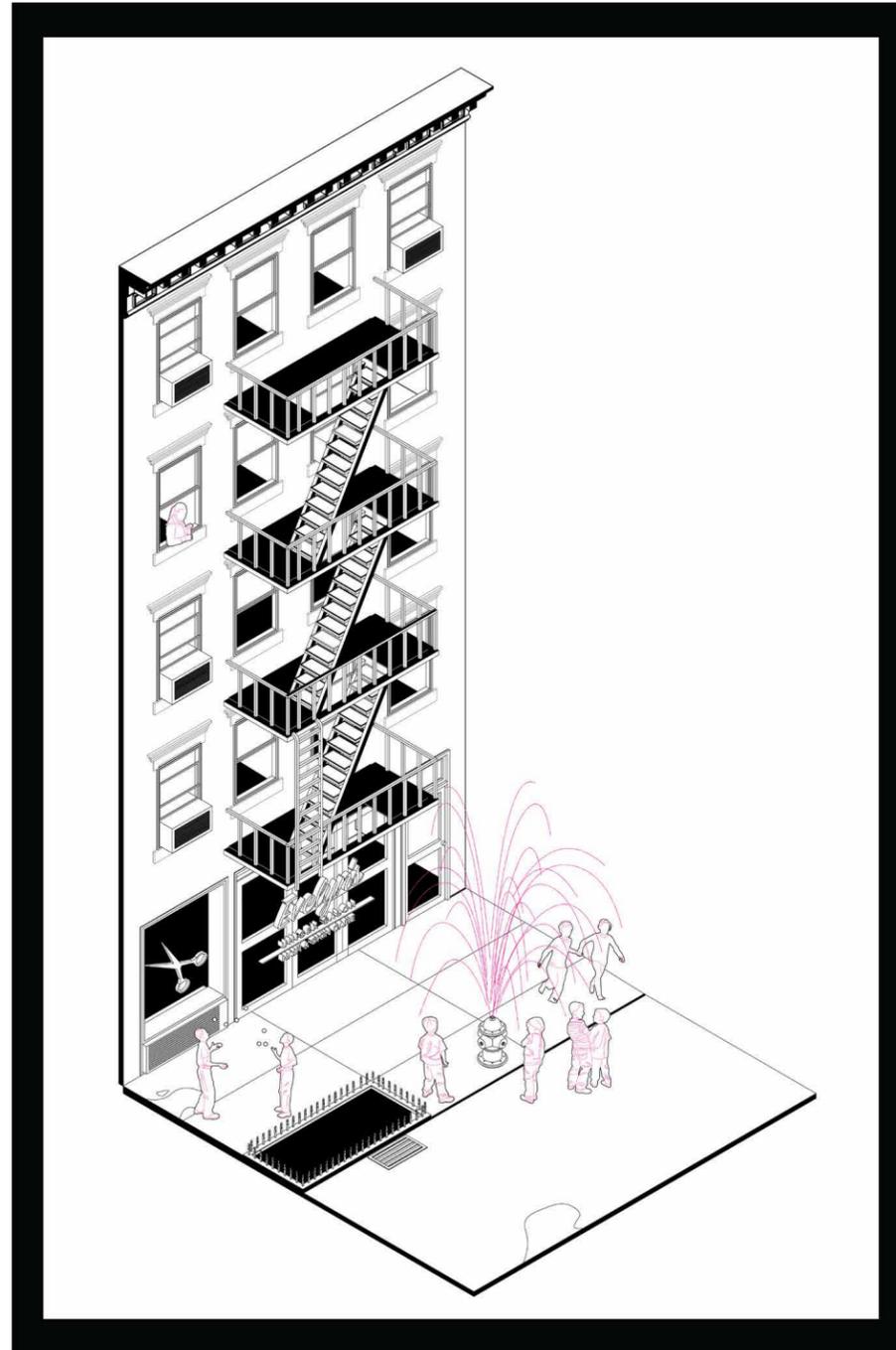
The intervention is focused in two types of spaces: collective and intimate ones. The first are a series of soft rooms that occupy the common areas of the building. The second are the apartments, which are radically transformed in a collection of smaller pieces that can be re-assembled. They can be combined in multiple ways, both in plan and section, through "furniture devices". By doing this, the concept of "family" can be redefined as many times as needed, as apartments can grow or shrink according to people's needs. The whole intervention also transforms the flooding crisis of East Harlem in a topographical operation of ponds and piers for social encounters.

Networks of Resistance emerges from the understanding of how the people live and work in Harlem and seeks to provide domestic spaces that will empower them socially, economically, environmentally and politically. The project reflects on housing as a transformative space that can change and adapt as a result of people's needs, expanding and shrinking in time.

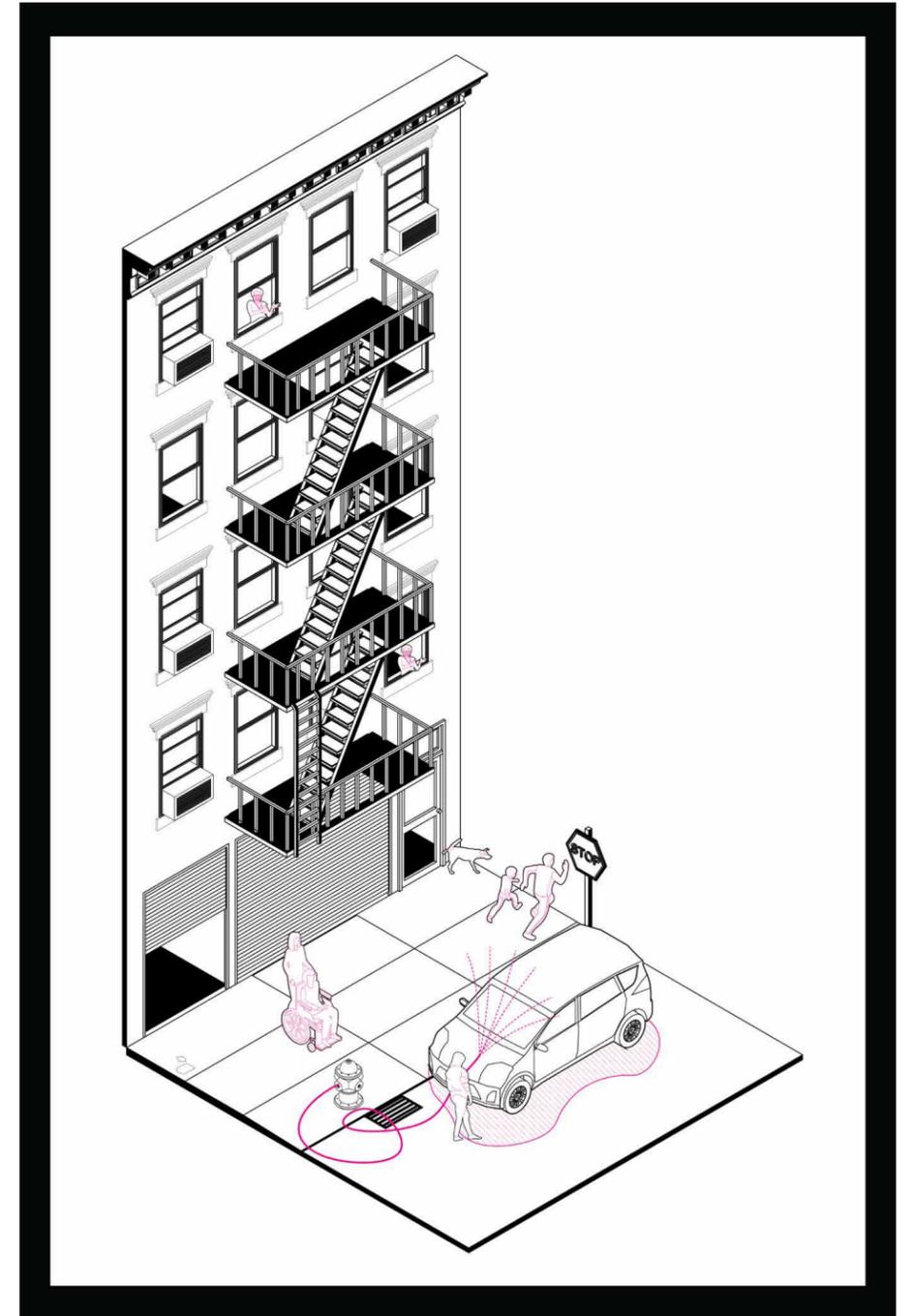
GETTING TO KNOW EAST HARLEM: THE GRID



Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Playing PlayStation on the sidewalk, Saturday 5 pm

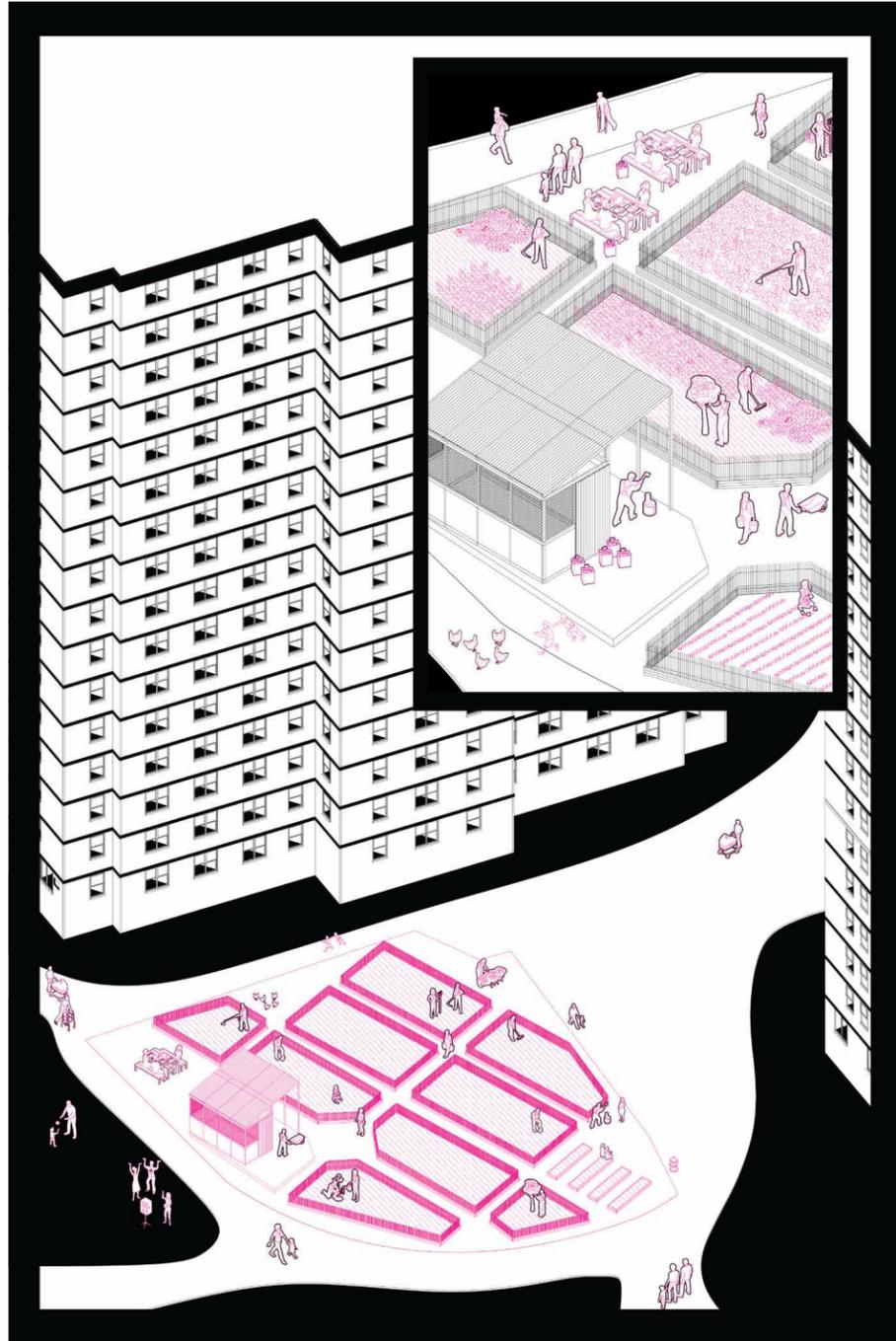


Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Playing with water, Sunday 2 pm

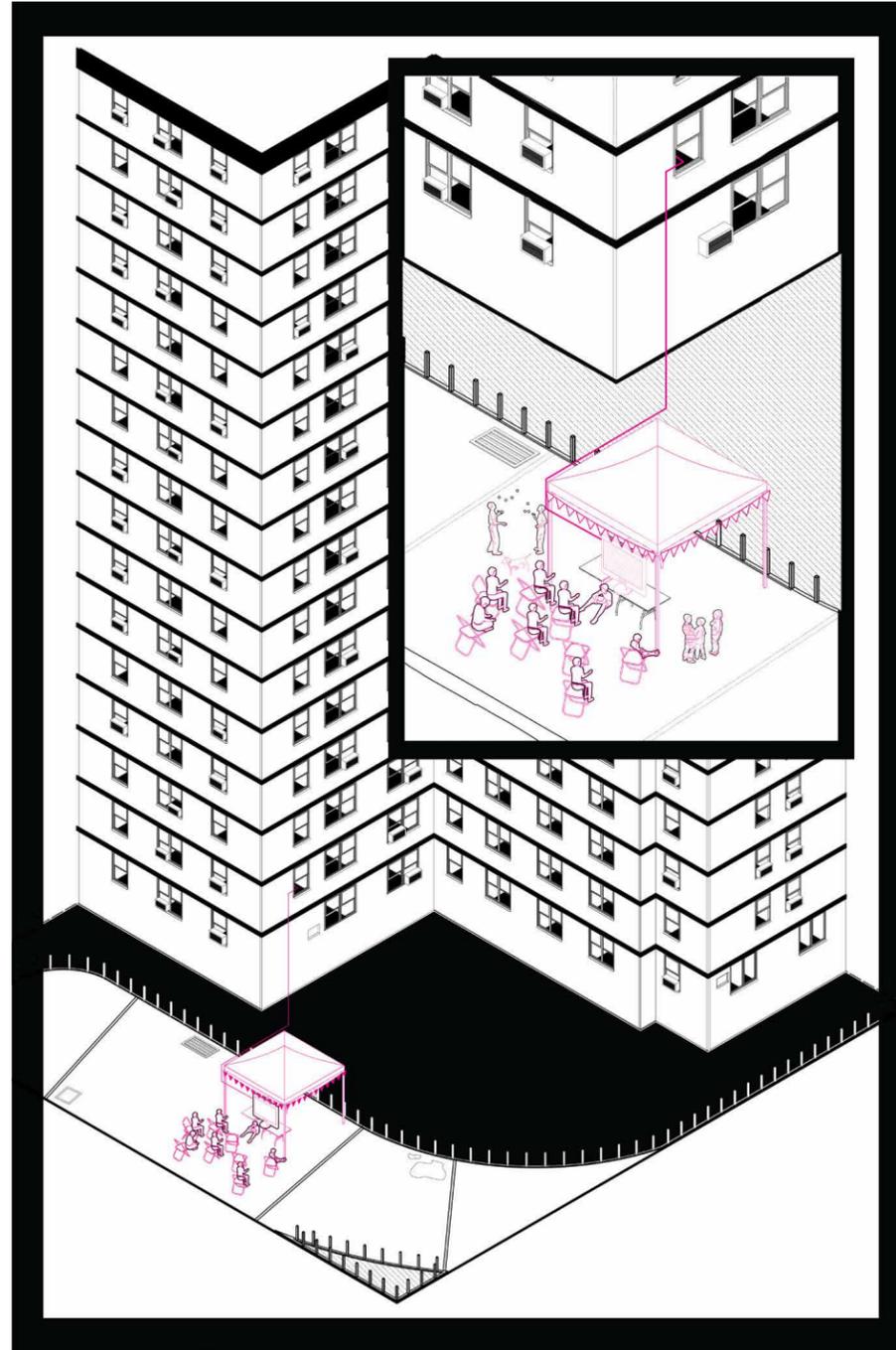


Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Washing the car, Sunday 1 pm

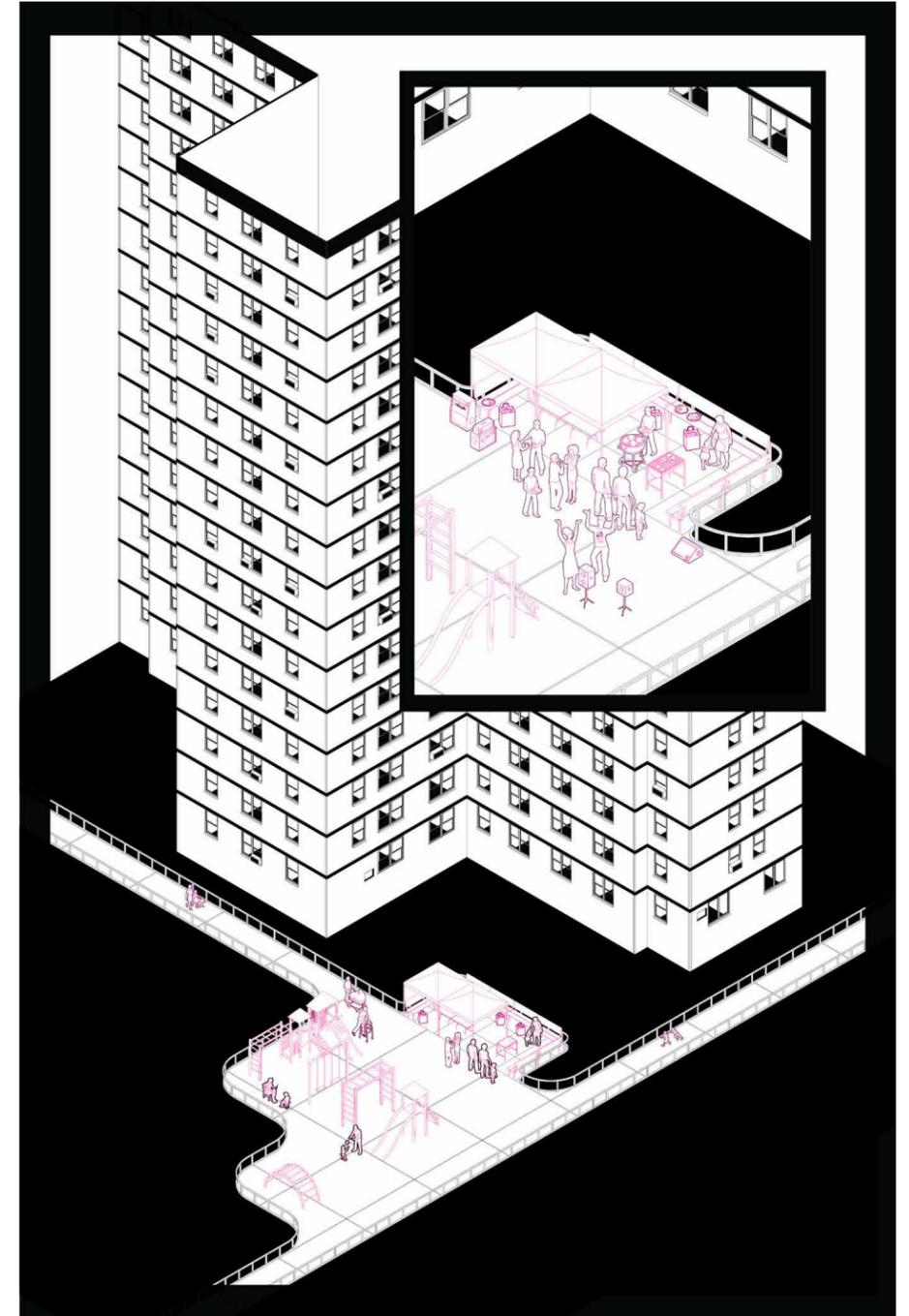
GETTING TO KNOW EAST HARLEM: THE PROJECTS



Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Working on the community garden of Wagner Houses, Sunday 11 am

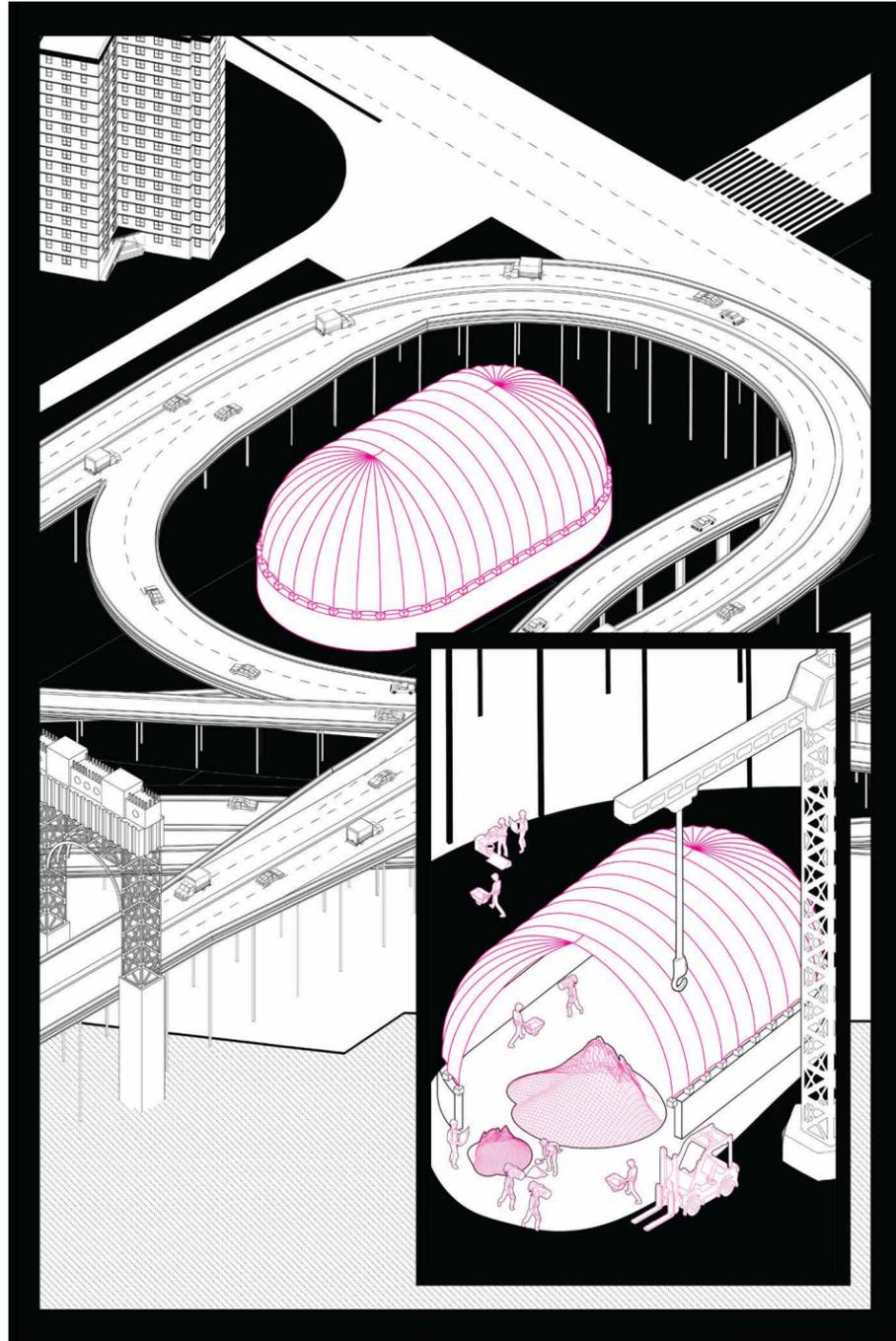


Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Watching a soccer match, Sunday 6 pm

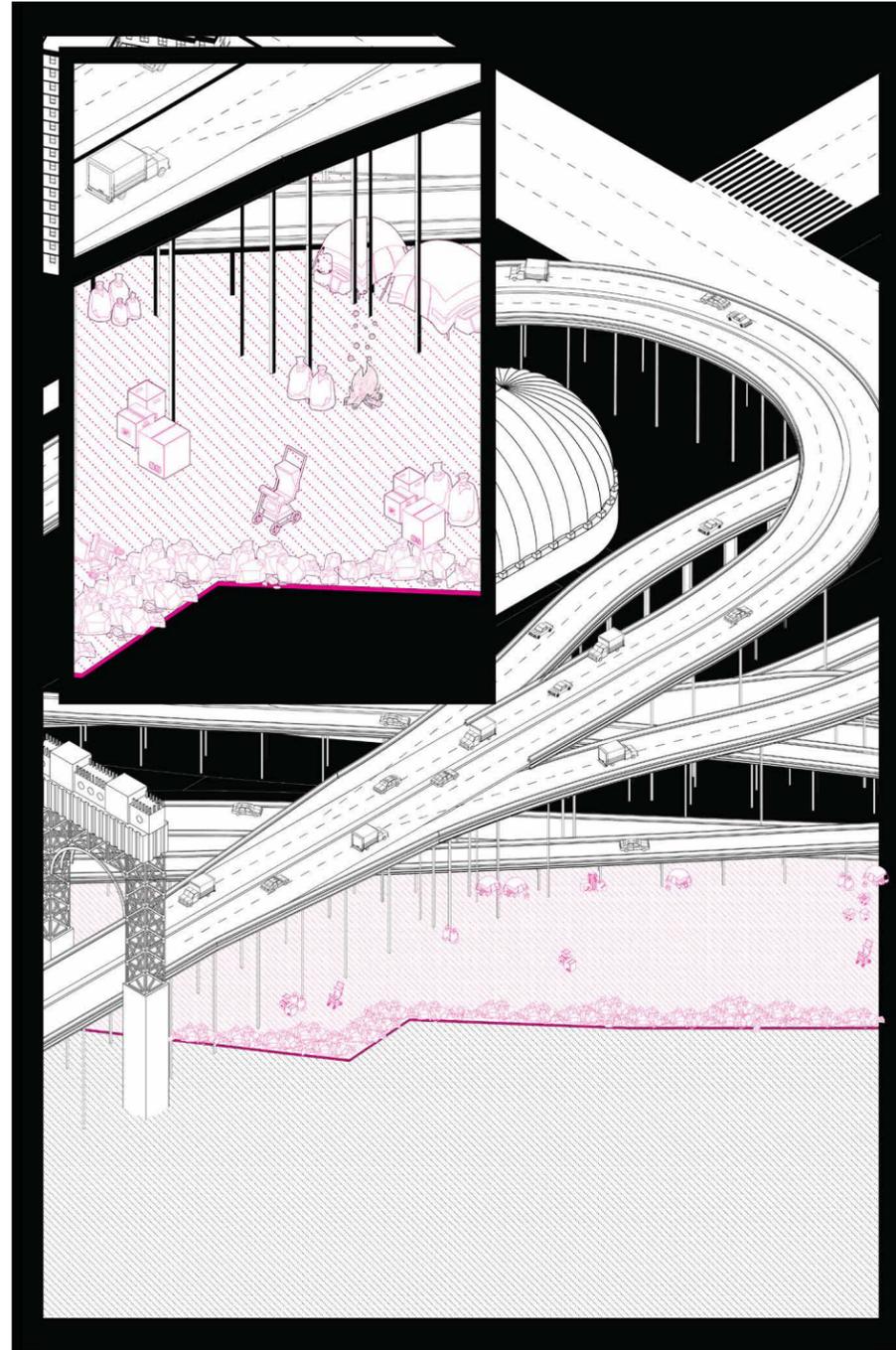


Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Having a barbecue party, Sunday 12 pm

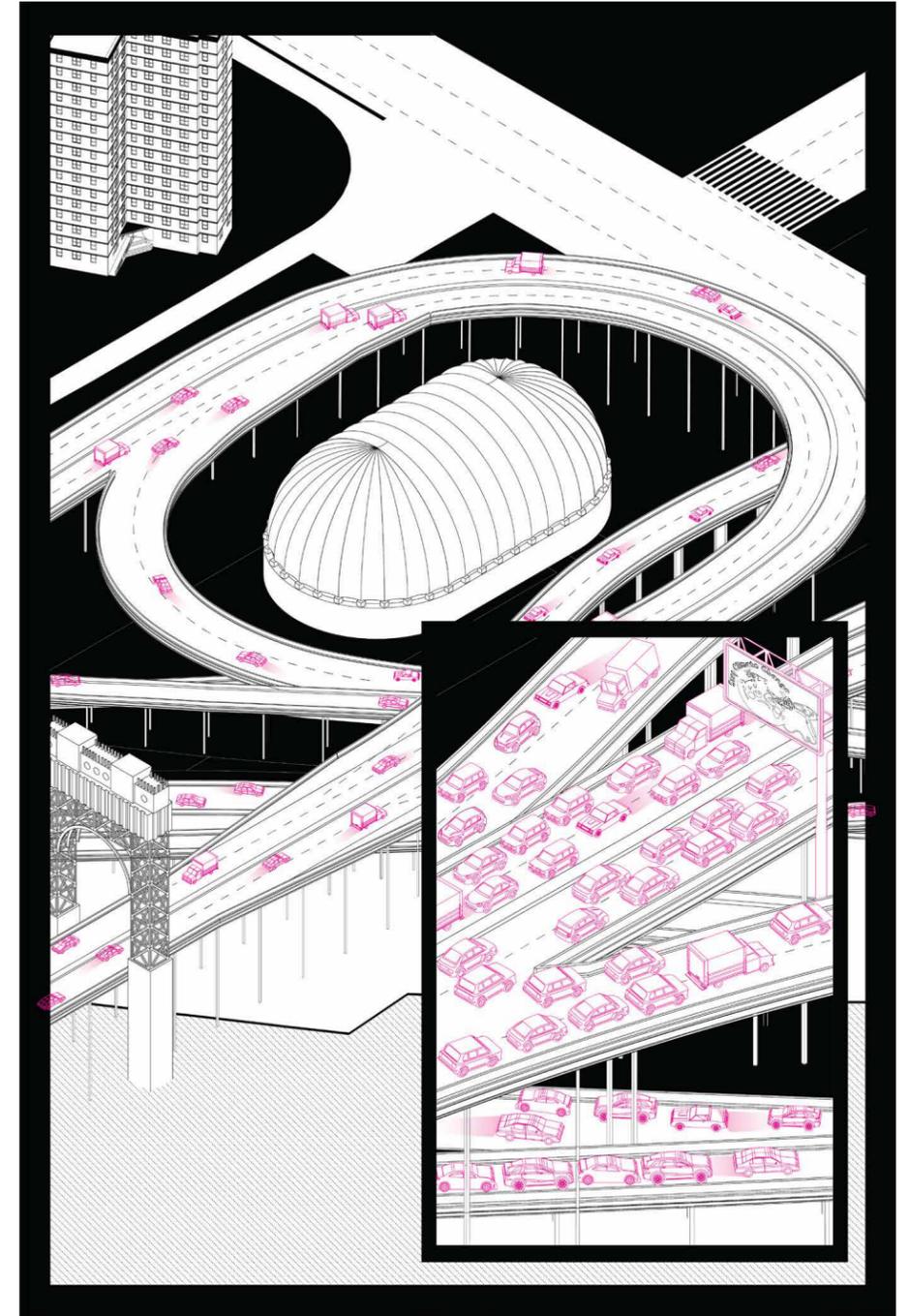
GETTING TO KNOW EAST HARLEM: THE INFRASTRUCTURES AND THE VOIDS



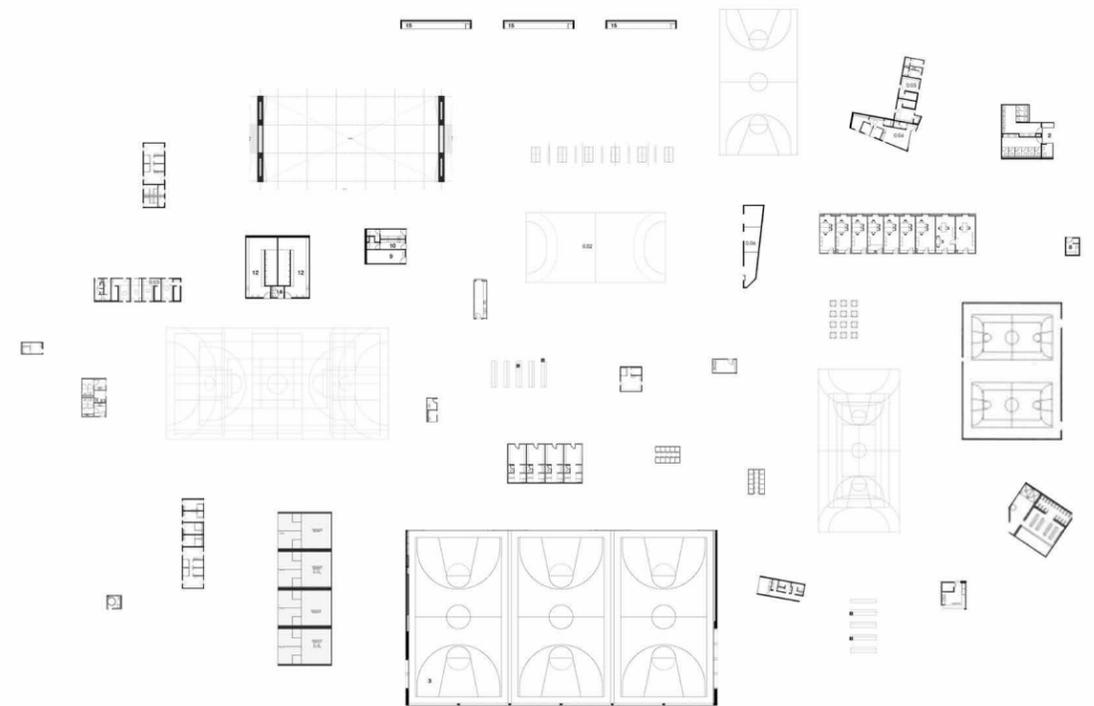
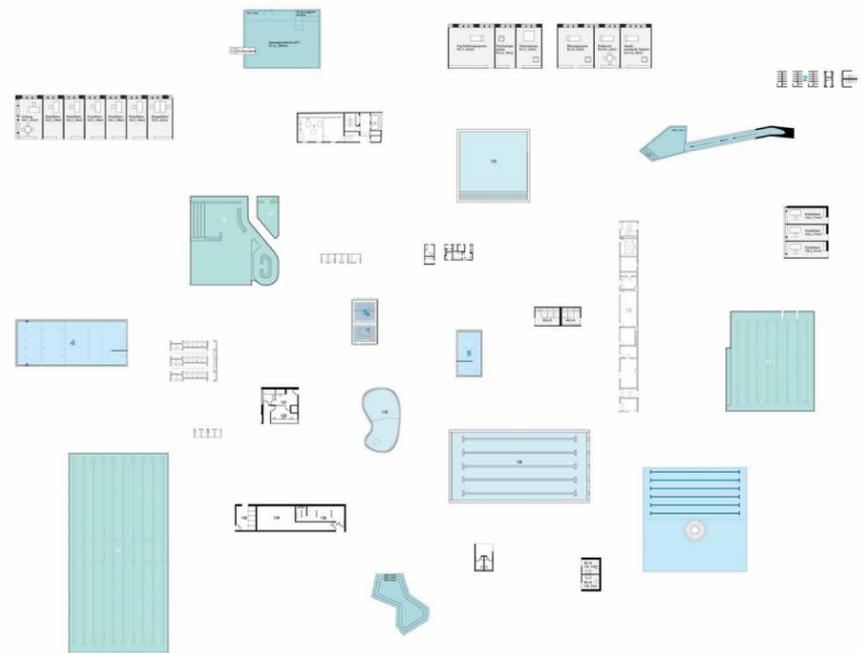
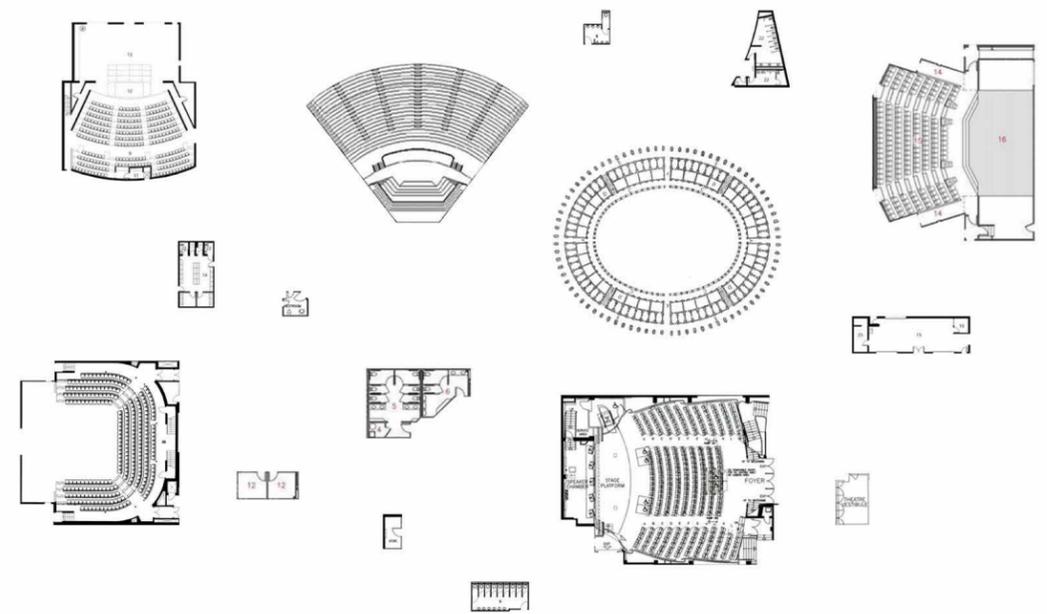
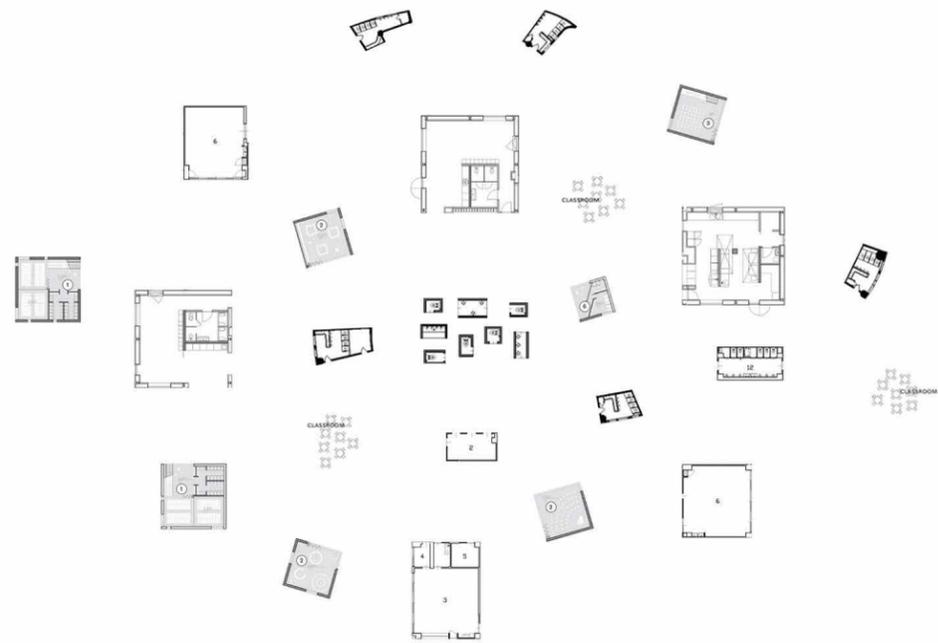
Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Construction workers in huge tent, Thursday 10 am



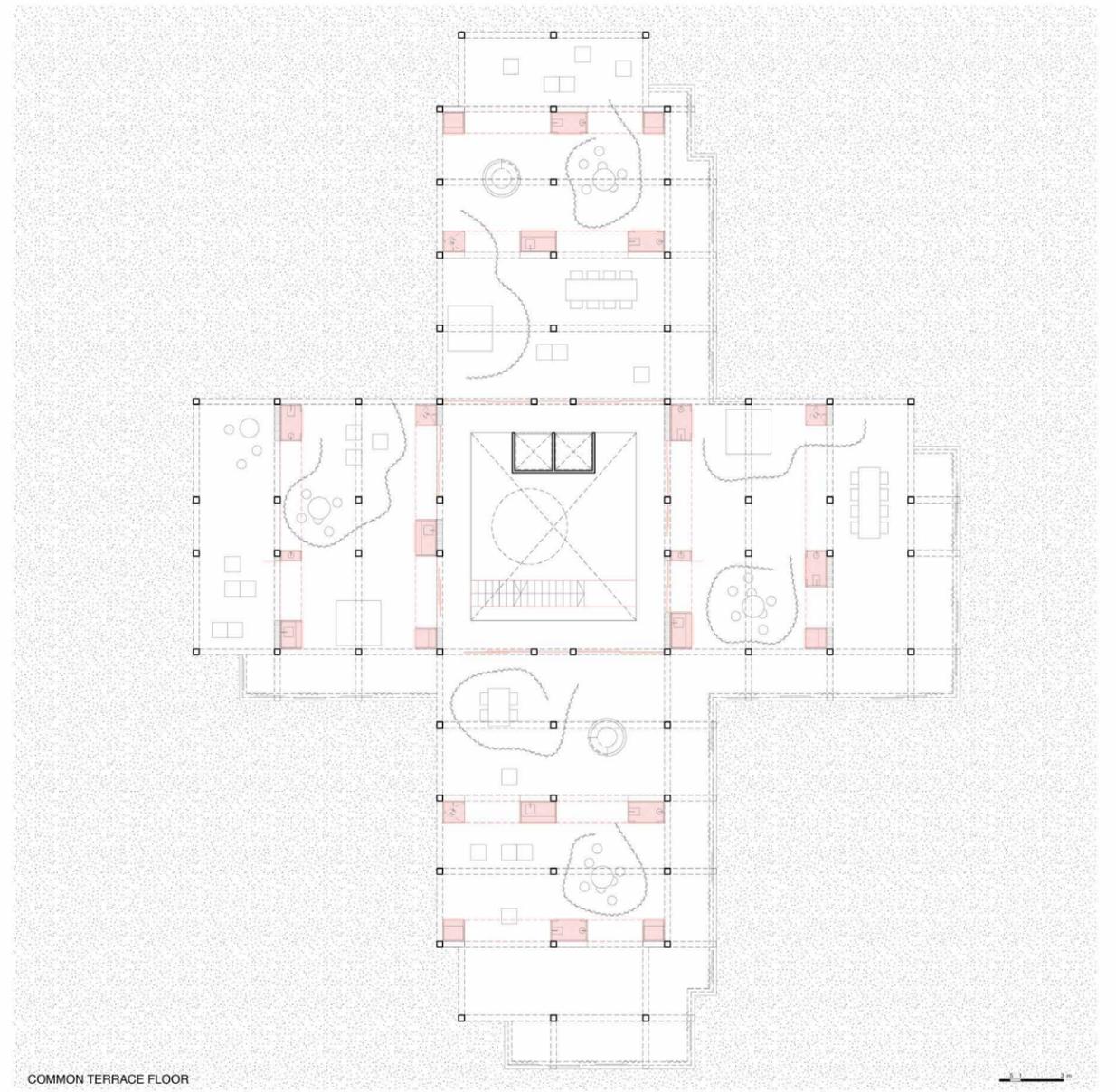
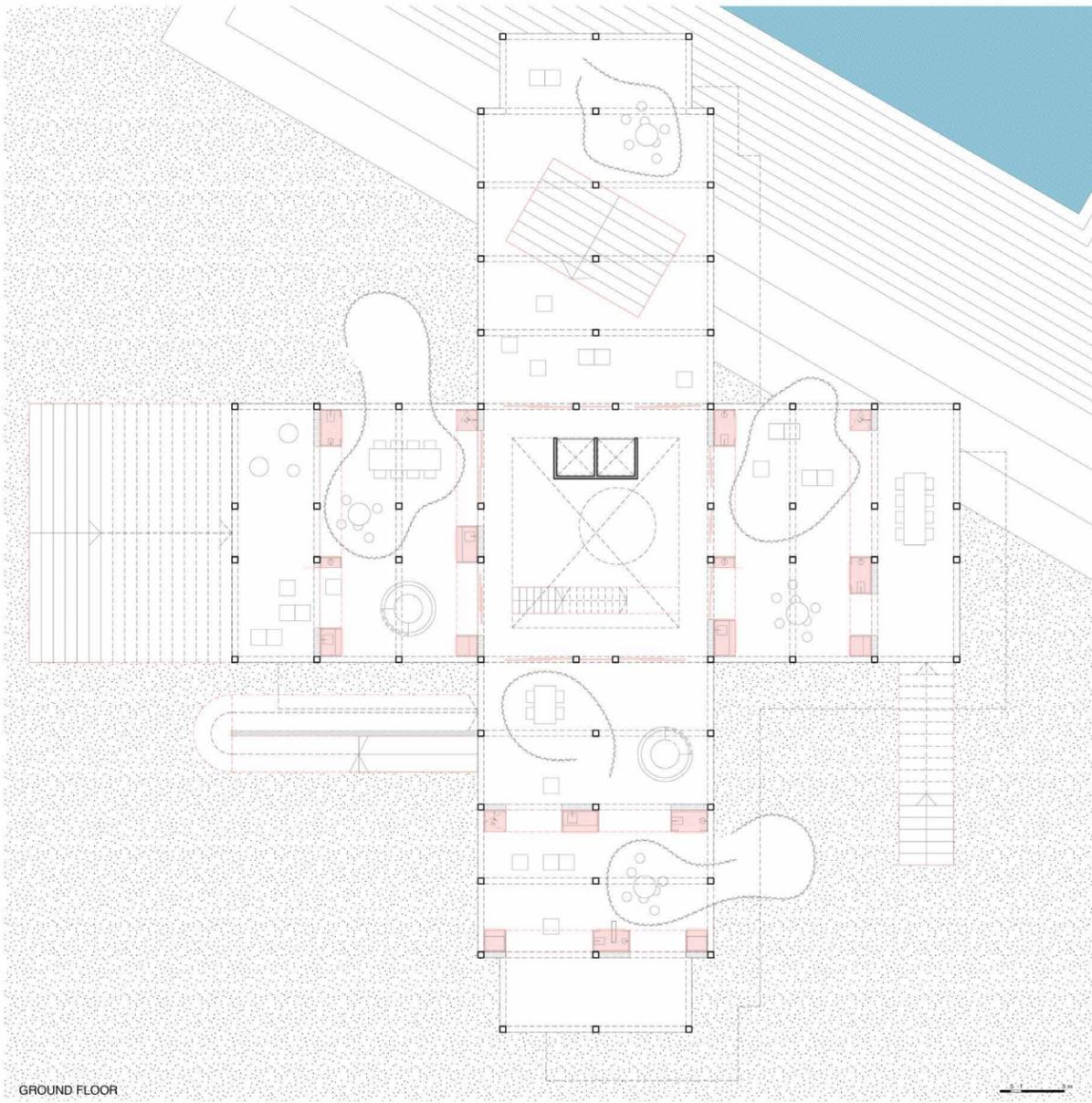
Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Homeless people and its belongings, Saturday 3 pm

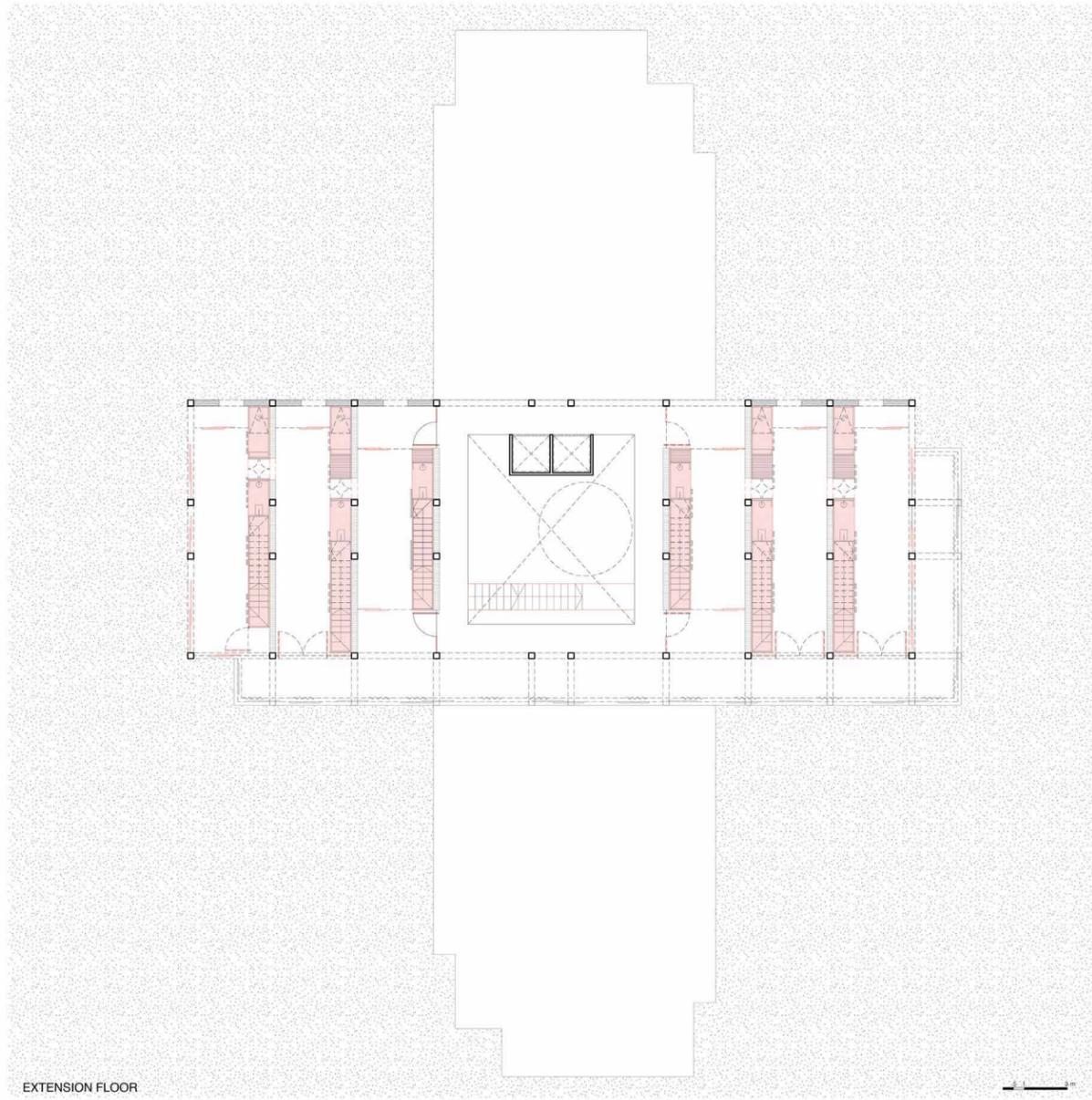


Mapping the social as a network of small-scale situations in East Harlem:
Crazy crowds on highway, Thursday 5 pm

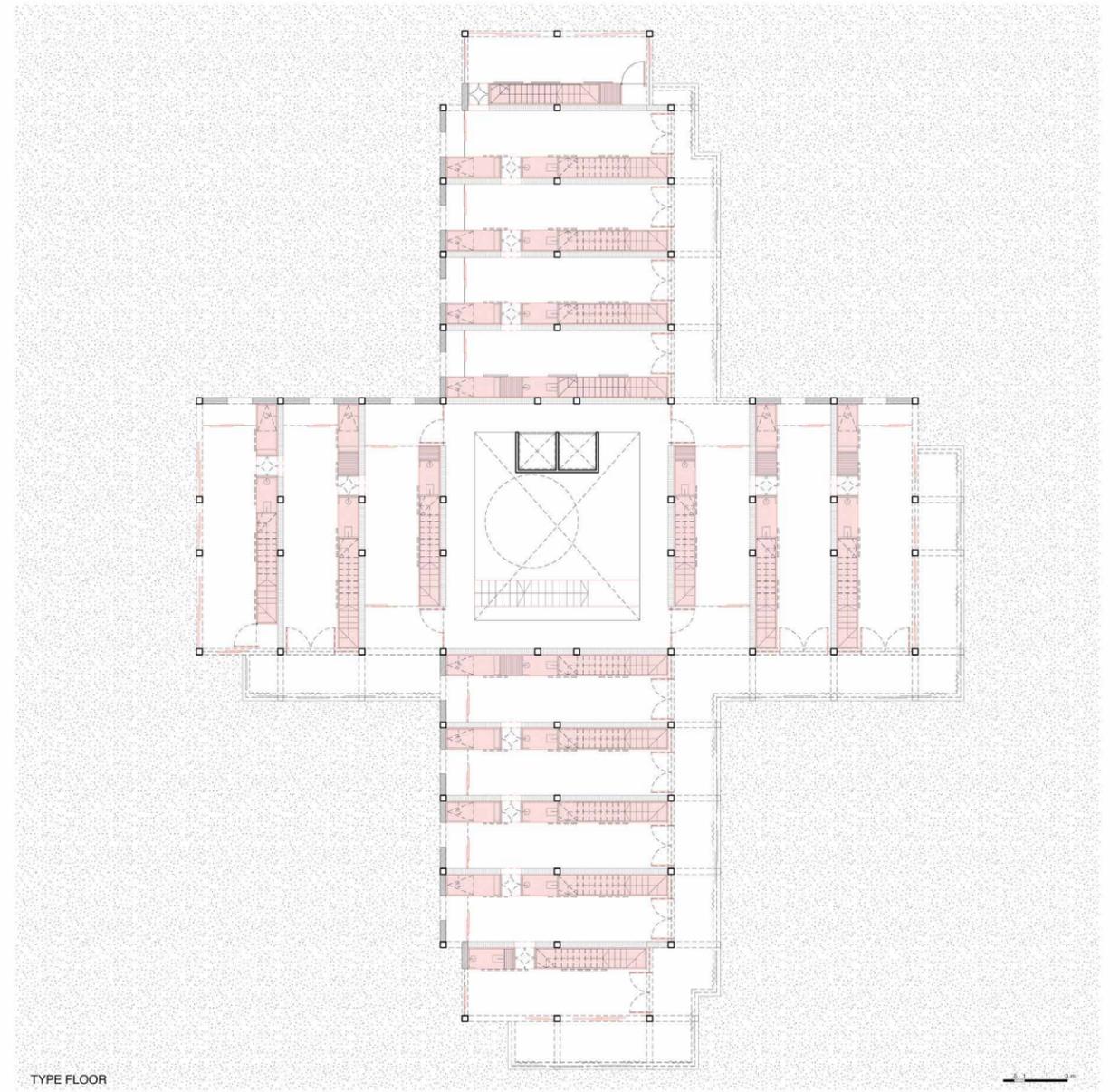


Analytic Collages. They represent the idea of fragmentation and miniaturization of the spaces. By "destroying" the original plan of an sports center, a clinic, a theatre or a child care center we are able to re-arrange the structuring elements of the type and produce a collective type for the NYCHA building.





EXTENSION FLOOR



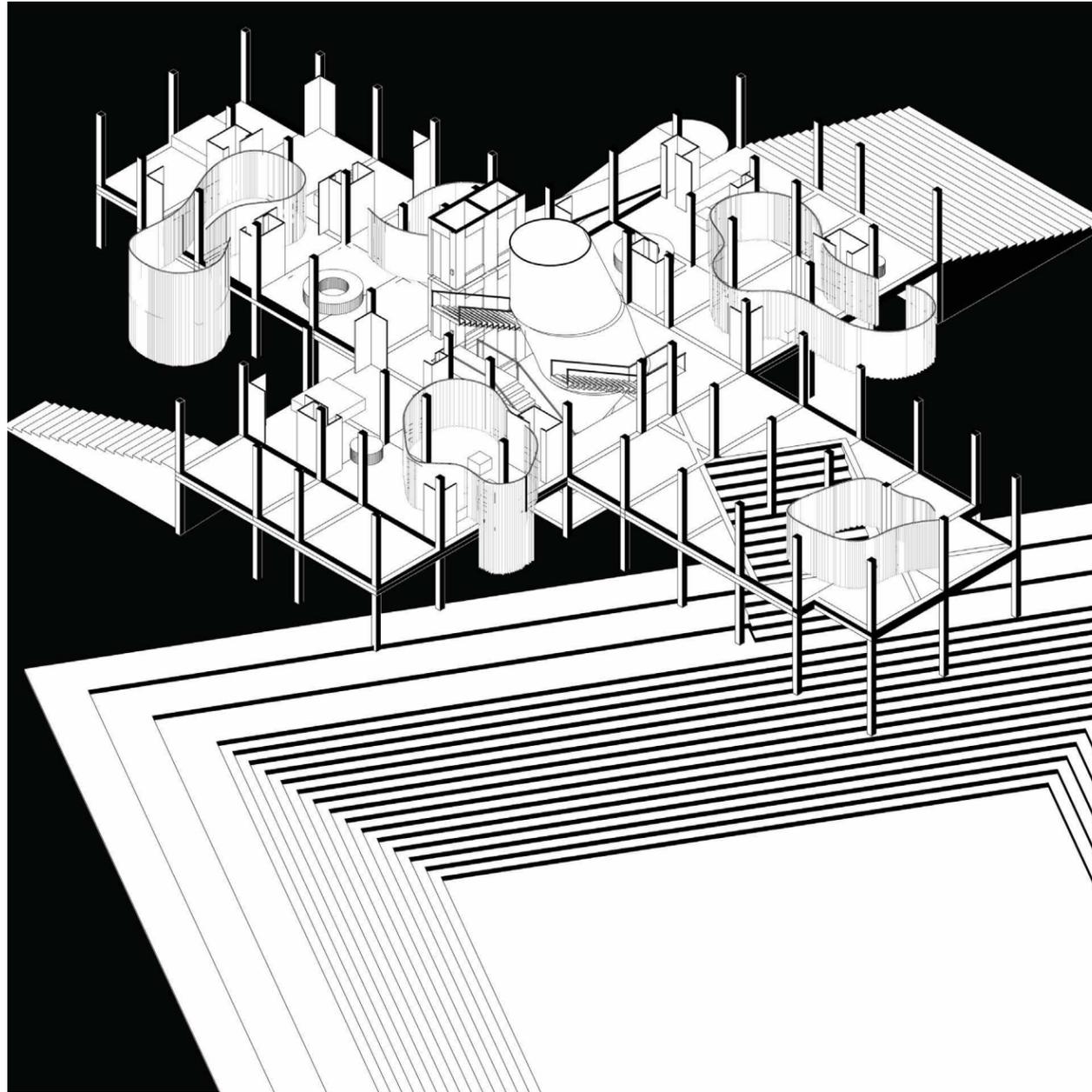
TYPE FLOOR



Speculating through images on the possibilities of East Harlem and the Wagner Houses.
Testing Infrastructures for the incoming Subway line on 2nd Ave.

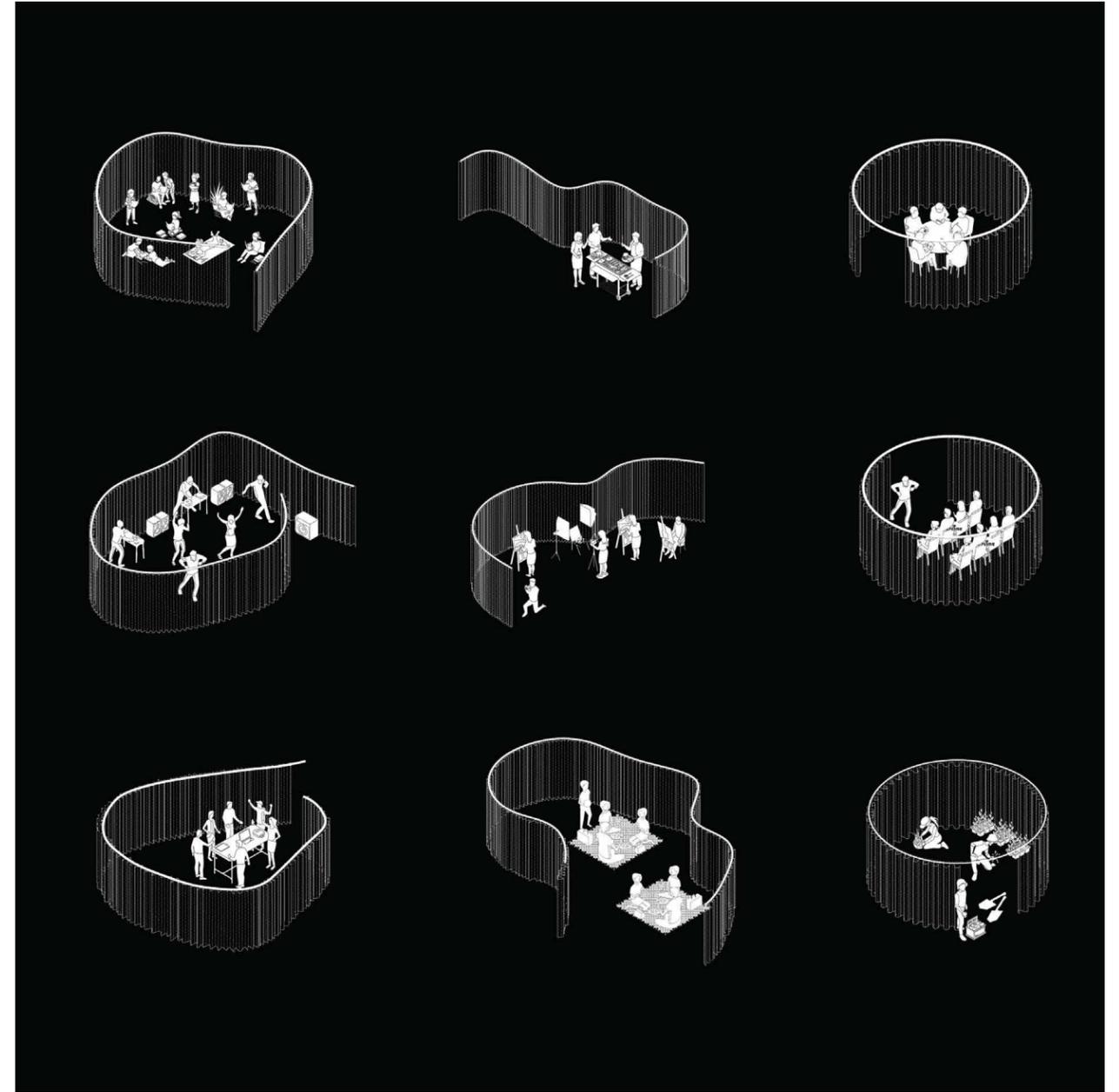


Social Encounters on Wagner Houses Terraces.



1/ OPEN GROUND FLOOR

At the ground level the building relates topographically with a series of ponds that allow the project to manage the flooding hazards in the area. The ground floor hosts a series of collective and flexible rooms that are occupied by the inhabitants to do work, give classes, host celebrations, etc. The rooms are supported by an infrastructure of “furniture devices” that provide them with restrooms, collective kitchens, small deposits, etc. The whole floor is understood as an open space for exchange, where social networks are shaped. Architecture here is spontaneous and mutates.



2/ COLECTIVE ROOMS

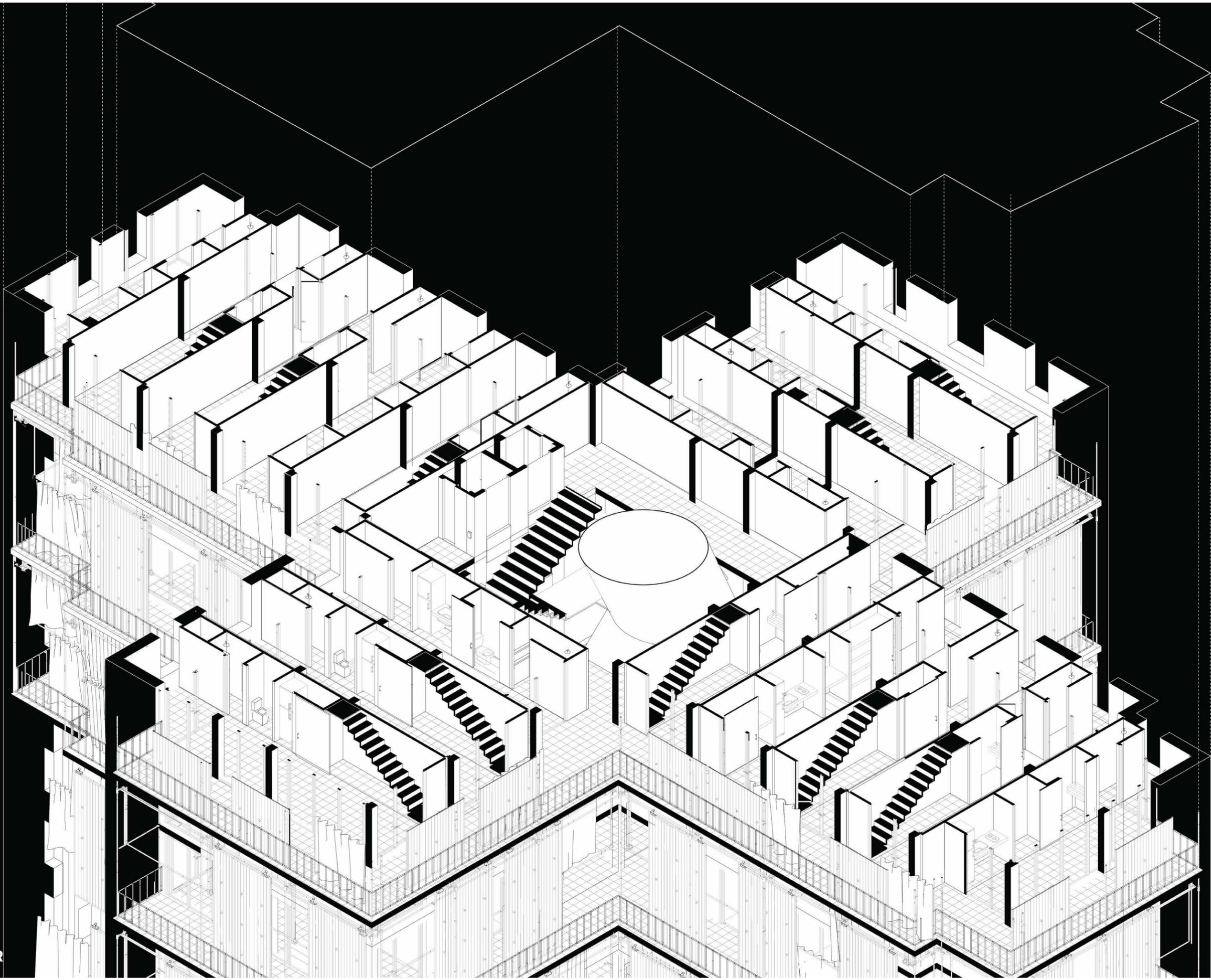
The collective rooms occupy the ground floor, the intermediate collective floor and the upper terrace. They are conceived as “soft rooms” made of different materials allowing different gradients of intimacy. They are spaces to be colonized by its inhabitants. They are spaces for negotiation, production, sociabilization and encounter.



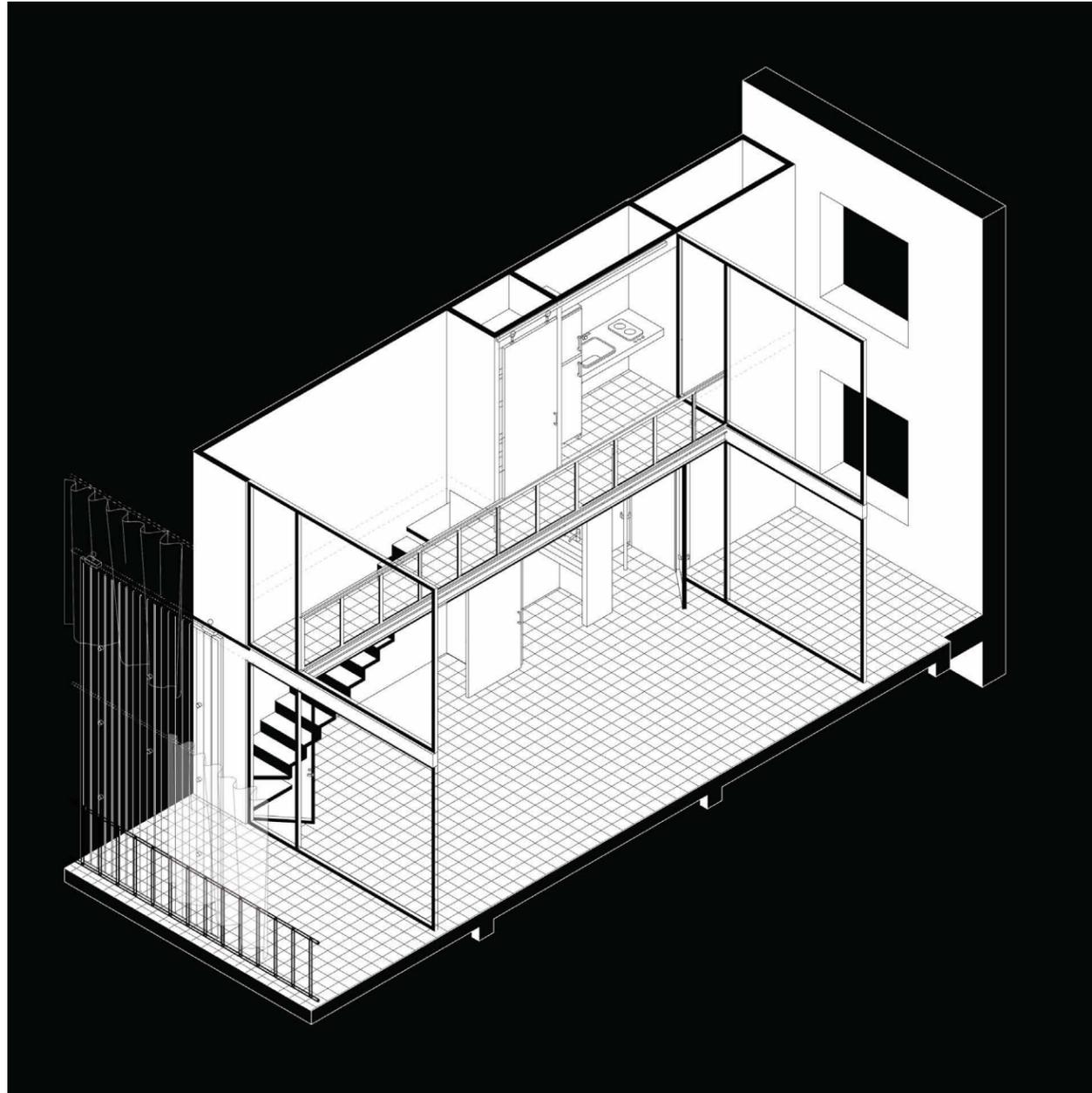
The pond and the building. The interventions on the facade are the new corridors that give access to the apartments. They are conceived as collective balconies.



One of the piers reaching East River, crossing over the FDR highway that blocks the connection between Wagner Houses and the water.

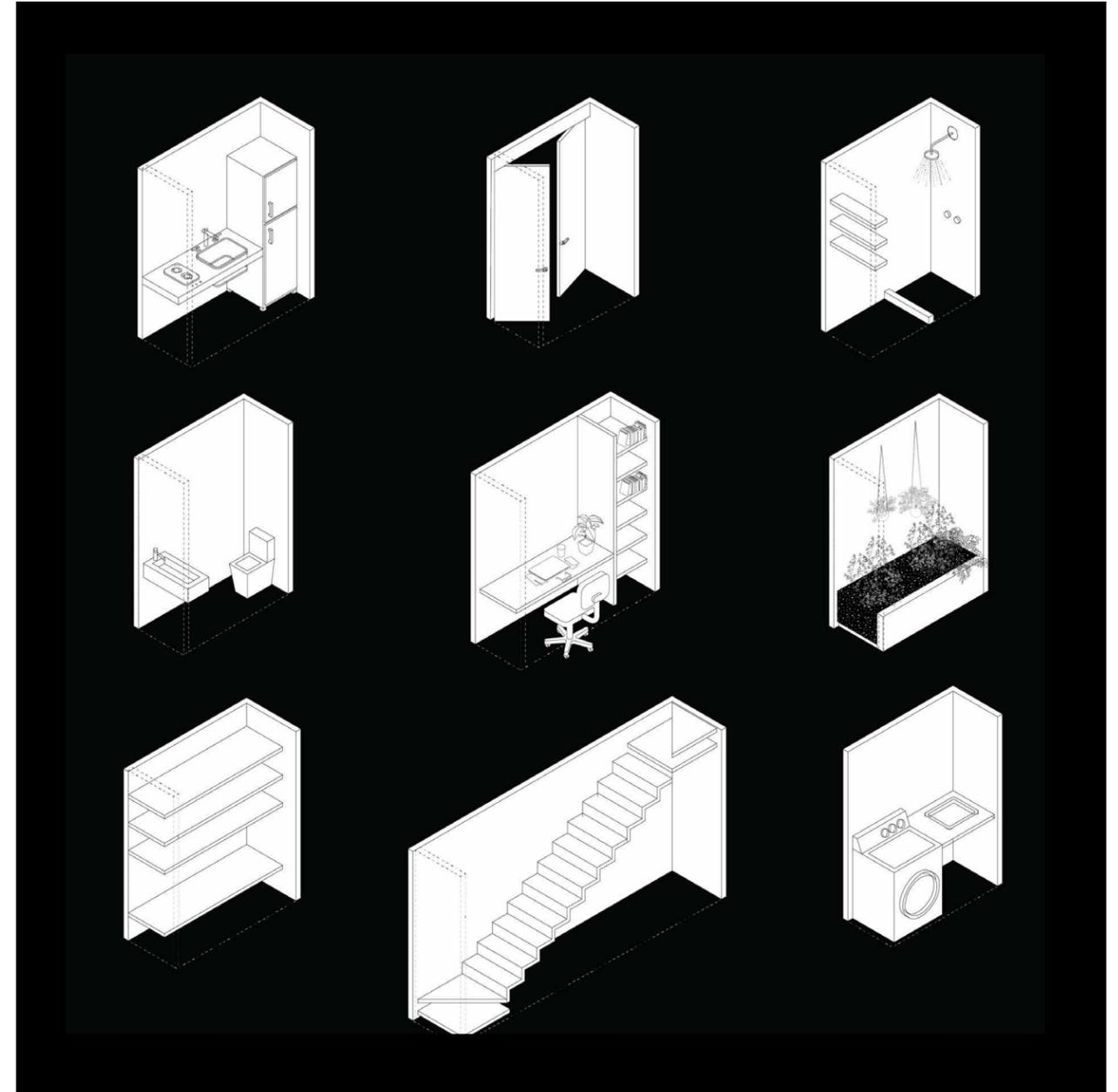


3/ TYPICAL FLOOR



4/ HOUSING UNIT

The typical floor changes radically. Instead of 2 or 3 bedroom apartments arranged along large dark corridors, the floor plan is partitioned in a series of small rooms. The access to this rooms / housing units of double height occurs from the enlargement of the facade. A new balcony is added to it, which is an intermediate-space, both to access to the units as well as to sociabilize there. The housing units can connect one with the other through its "furniture infrastructure" both in plan an section. The house gets bigger or smaller depending on people's needs.



5/ FURNITURE SYSTEM

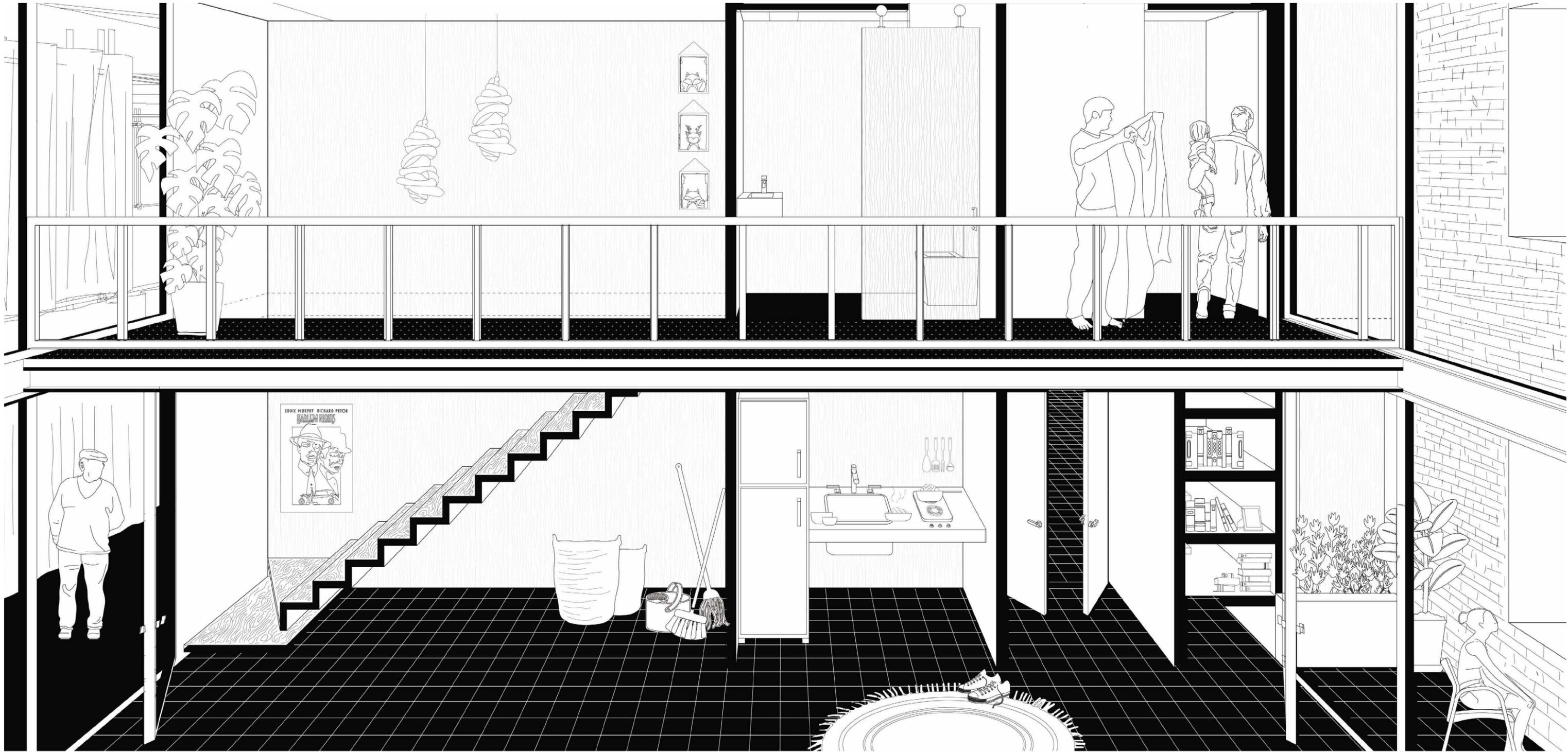
The furniture system is conceived as a system of small pieces: bathroom, stairs, gardens, kitchens, storage and connecting doors configure this catalogue of possibilities.



Interior of the Housing Units, Wagner Houses



Interior of the Housing Units, Wagner Houses



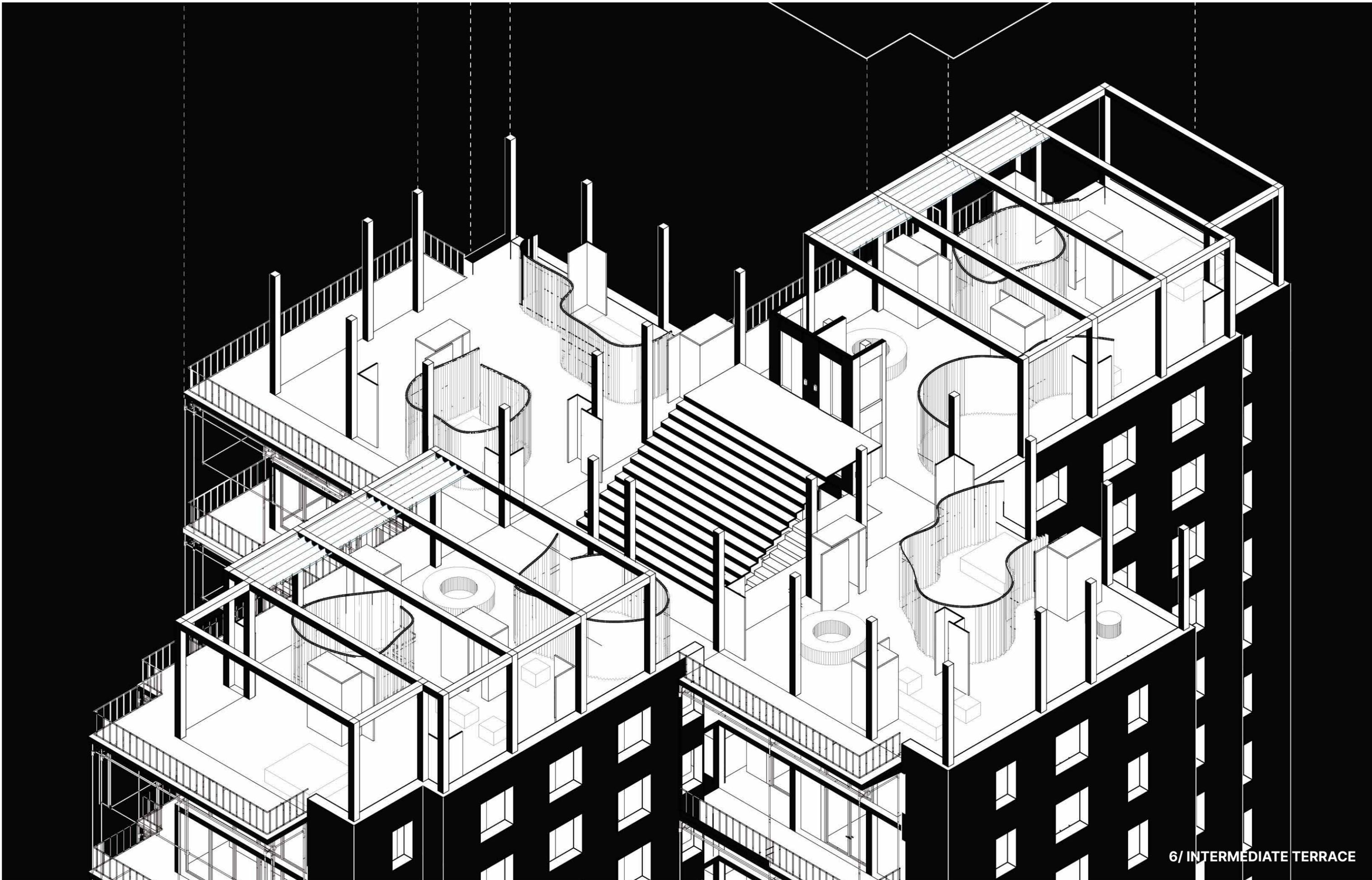
Section of the Housing Unit, facing the "Furniture Devices"



Collective Rooms on Wagner Houses Intermediate Terrace.
This terrace is the floor in between the existing building and the new expansion on top of it.



Balcony that provides a new access to the houses. Its space can host social encounters and exchanges.





Wagner Houses Terraces, initial speculations



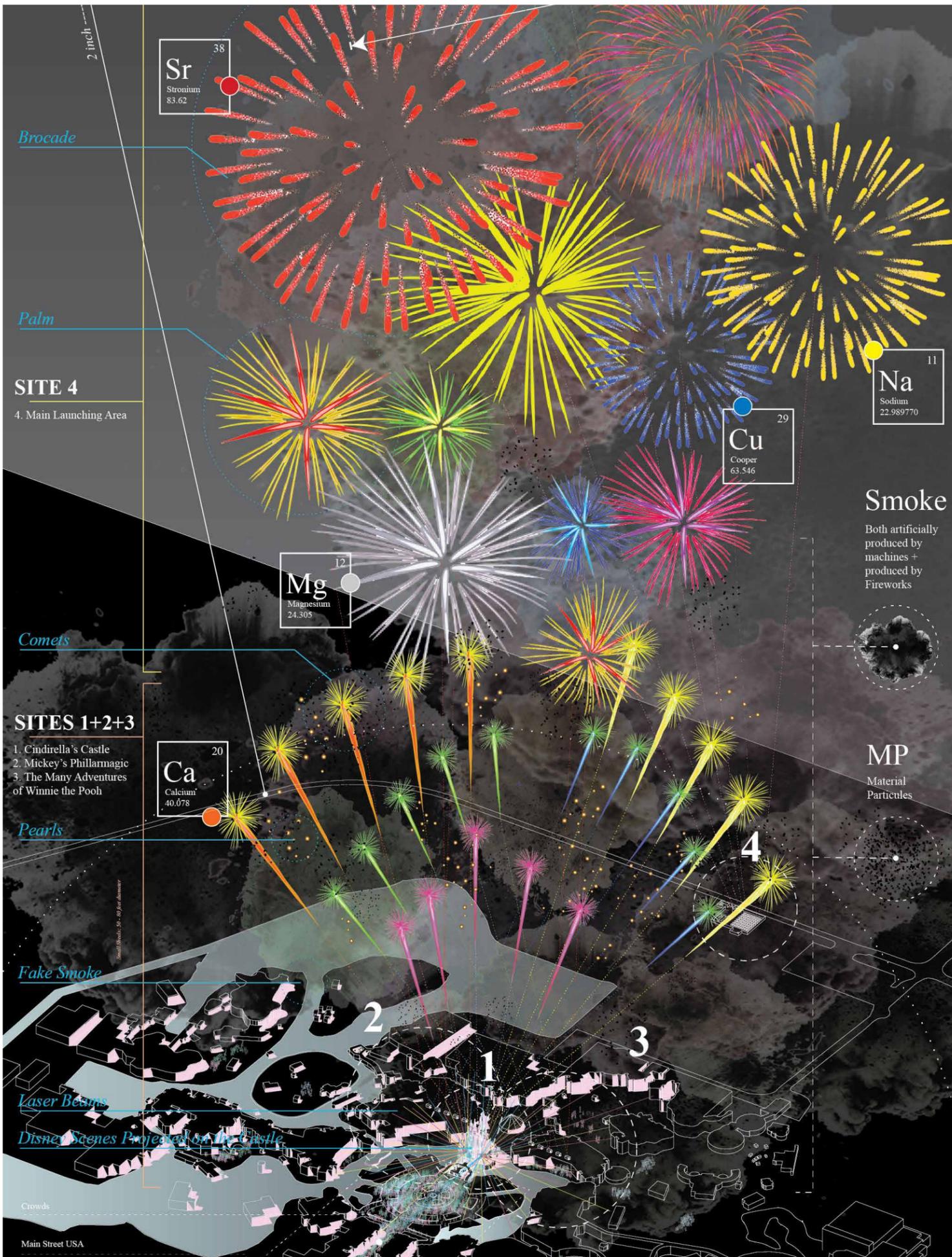
Wagner Houses Balconies, initial speculations

“EVERYDAYLAND”

Living within Disney's Chemical Spectacle

Adv Studio VI
Professor Mark Wasiuta





Chemicals and spectacle are indivisible elements in Disney World. Despite the persistent image of “purity” and “cleanliness” that Disney projects, it depends on and adds to the chemical components that shape contemporary life. Disney is part of our chemical modernity.

So, what if instead of hiding its chemicality, we render it visible? Then, what would it be like to actually live within Disney's fireworks? To be consciously part of that chemical experience?

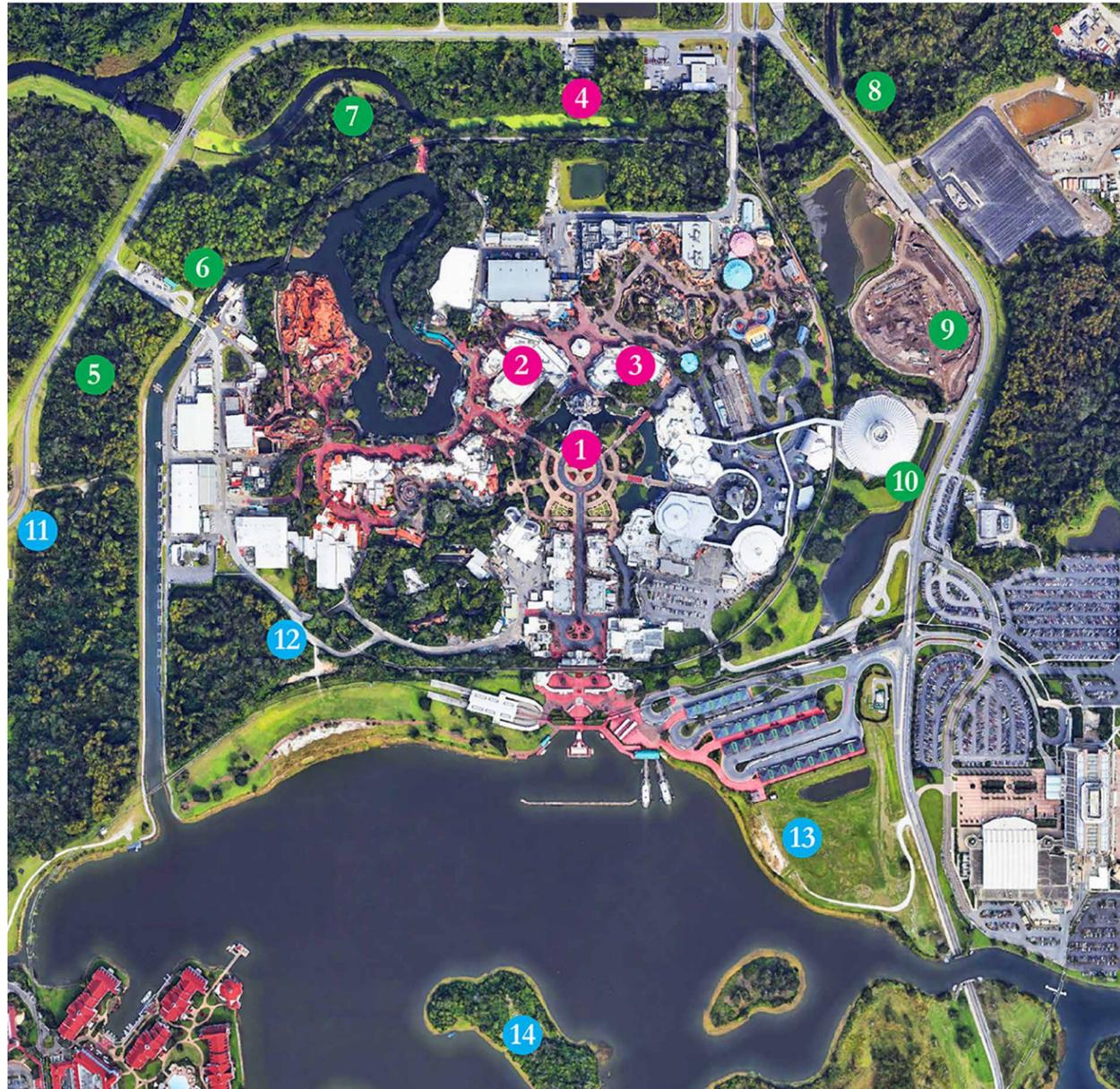
Everydayland is a housing project at the center of Magic Kingdom, at Disney World Florida. It is a tower for long-term life at the center of Disney's entertainment.

Everydayland rearranges Disney's fireworks, so that they become a crucial component of everyday life, and through this it exposes their chemical condition and its presence in our culture.

By associating the fireworks with the castle, Disney makes chemical entertainment a fantasy, like Tinkerbell's magic dust. Everydayland Tower both allows Disney fans to live this fantasy by literally making the castle a home. But at the same time it also shifts the chemical dimension of the fireworks from the world of fantasy into the real world - so it provides a fantasy and “de-fantasizes” at the same time.

Everydayland is formed by 5 main elements: the Castle, the Rollercoaster, the Atrium, the Facade and the Domestic space of the apartments.

Everydayland presents an alternative life at the center of the chemical spectacle of Disney World. The dream to live in “the happiest place on earth” is now possible and it is both a spectacular and a chemical experience.



Everydayland is a project that looks into how fireworks shape the chemical spectacle of Magic Kingdom. It exposes and expands the relationship between people, culture, chemicals and entertainment through the possibility of living everyday at Disney World.

Disney's vast entertainment complex is a fundamental part of global contemporary culture, and its most iconic image shows how Disney engages with chemicals to perform its entertainment.

The project specifically looks at Disney's Fireworks as chemical concentration. Disney uses the fireworks as its most representative image, however they have always been shown as pure and clean, without acknowledging the smoke, metals and particle matter that is released into the air after each explosion. Paradoxically, Disney both celebrates and hides its chemical condition.

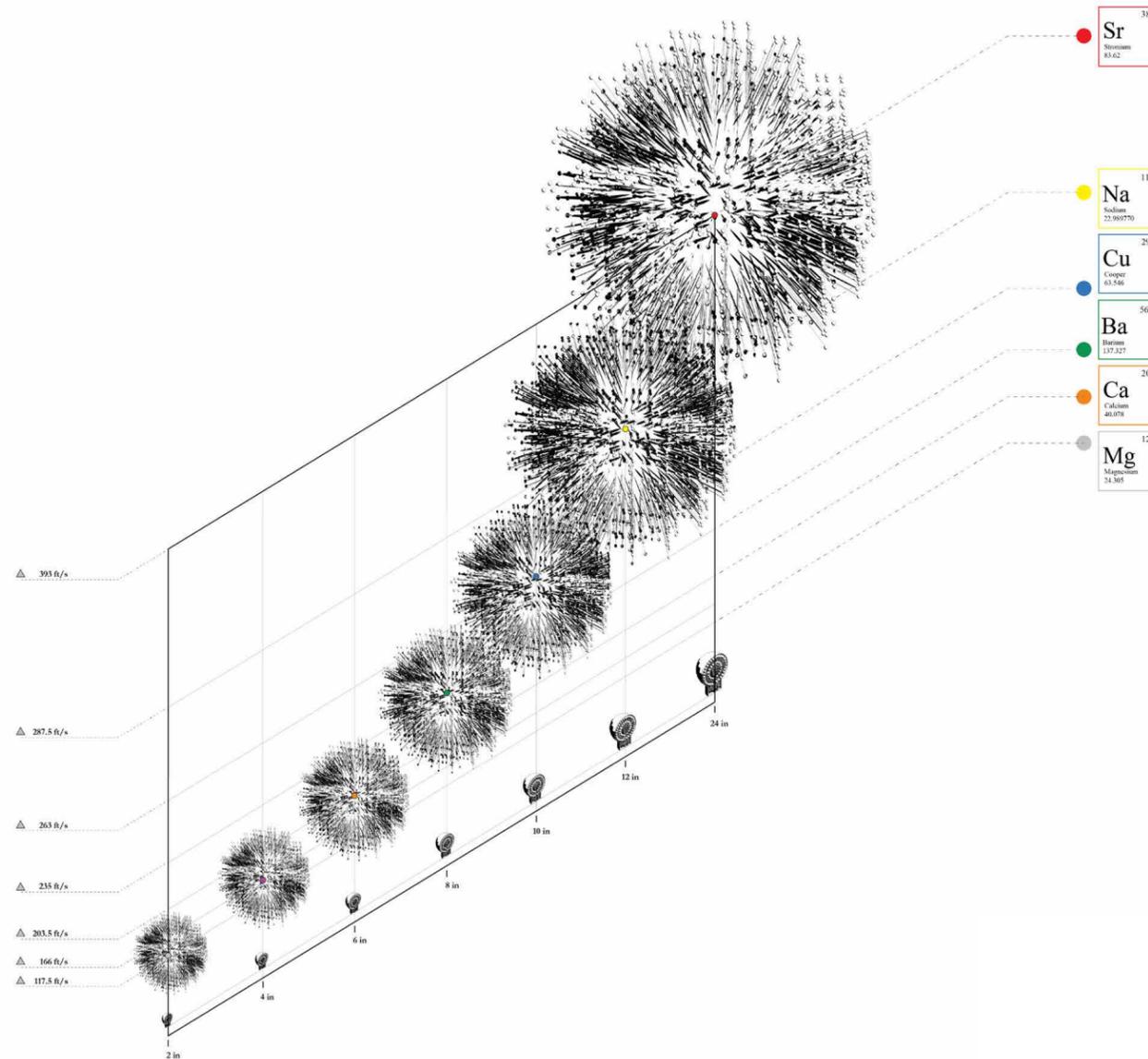
In addition to this, Disney is the second largest buyer of explosives in the world after the US Department of Defense. The amount of fireworks they buy every year is valued at 50 million dollars. 50 million dollars that are being exploded in the air.

Disney World, Florida occupies an area of 27 thousand acres and it is formed by 4 theme parks. I am specifically looking at Magic Kingdom.

There is a whole territorial strategy that organizes the chemical concentration of fireworks in Magic Kingdom. There are 3 types of fireworks shows: the pink dots show the sites that operate daily, and the green and blue dots are additional sites activated on special occasions throughout the year.

Small and medium fireworks are launched from the Castle, while large shells are launched from a site located 420 meters, or 1,300 feet from the castle.

The castle is in itself a fireworks launching platform. It has 3 terraces with more than a hundred mortars each. The second and third launching sites are right behind the castle. But the main launching spot is located far from the castle, which is number 4. From here the really big fireworks are thrown. It has 63 pneumatic devices, launching more than 3,000 fireworks' mortars every night. It is the main site where Disney's explosives are located. Its distant location is not chosen randomly. It creates a scenographic effect, so that the fireworks are seen as if they were exploding right above the castle.



SIZE / HEIGHT / CHEMICALS

On Halloween and Magic Kingdom Party Nights, other 6 launching sites are added, which are the green dots; forming a 180 degrees configuration. These sites are located on the border of the park. Other 4 sites are activated on 4th of July and New Years, reaching a total of 14 launching sites. This creates a 360 degree configuration around Magic Kingdom.

But how do fireworks work? Have you ever looked inside a firework? A shell is a big ball full of gunpowder and “stars”. In Disney, each shell is connected with a wire to a remote system that sets the ignition. This lights a bit of gunpowder at the bottom of the shell - also known as the lift charge - that shoots it into the air. While the shell flies through the air, a time fuse starts burning. This burns slowly up into the upper chamber of the shell where it reaches the second supply of gunpowder, called the burst charge - right in the center. Here the gunpowder explodes, igniting the surrounding stars, which create the colorful arrangements that we see in the sky.

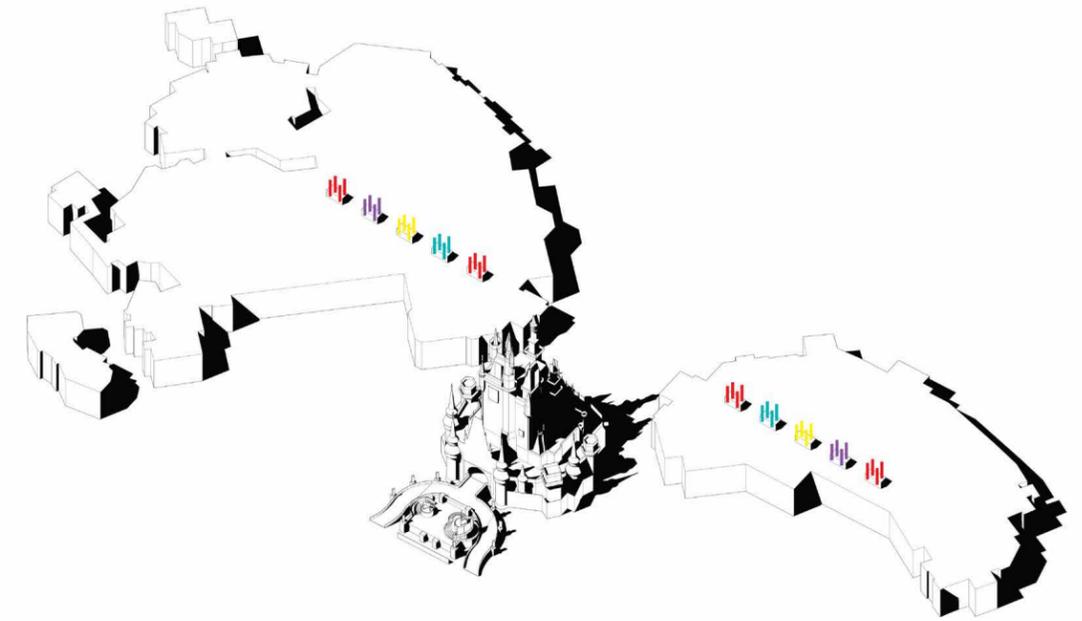
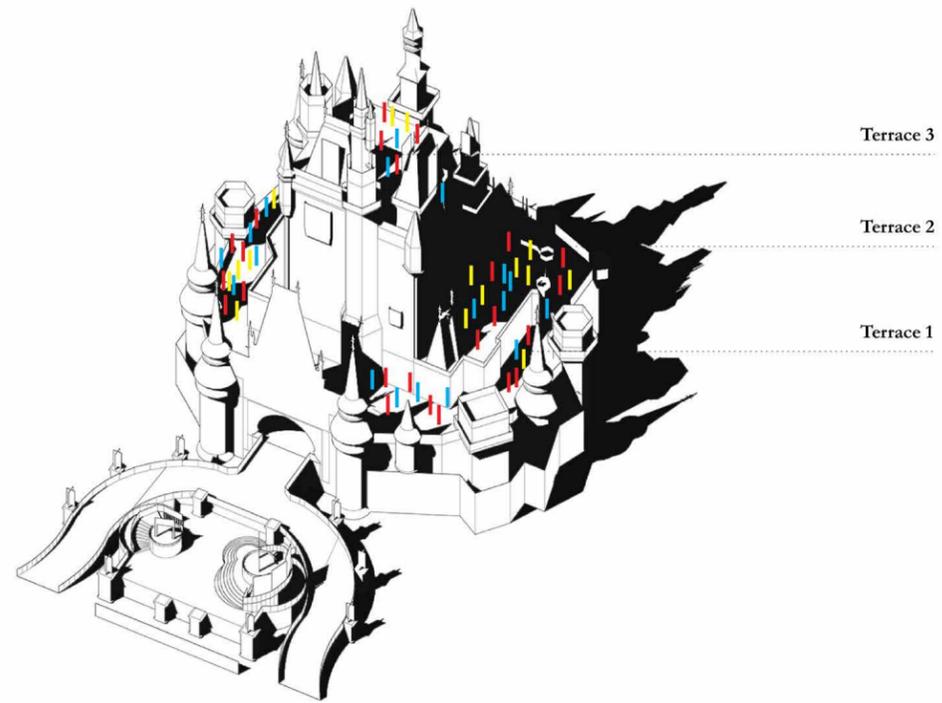
Each shell is placed in a mortar tube. The mortars are held together in a mortar compound, which is connected to a computer and managed through a digital controller.

The way the stars get arranged inside the shell determines the shape fireworks will create in the sky.

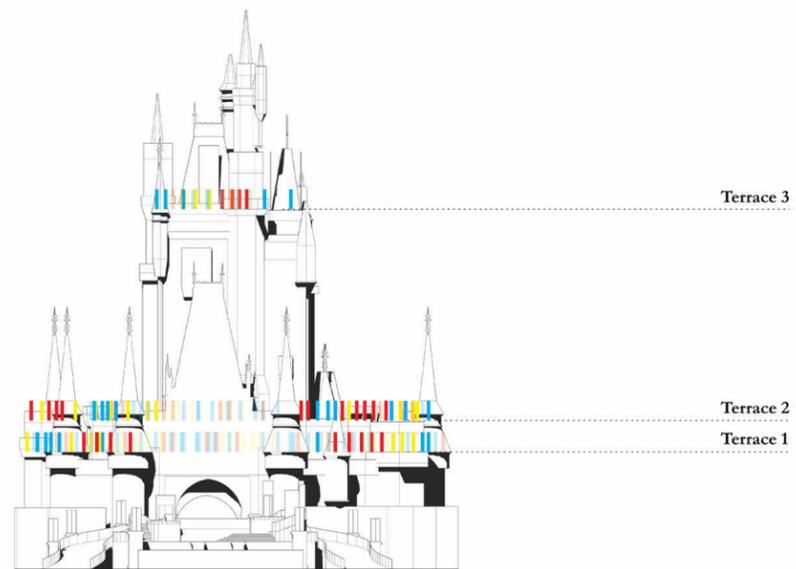
The size of the shell also determines the height of the explosion. The larger the shell, the larger the delay fuse, and the higher it explodes in the air. A 24 inch shell reaches a height of almost 1200 feet or 365 meters.

And the last component is the color of the firework. Depending on the type of metal the stars are made of is the type of colors displayed in the explosion. Strontium for red, Sodium for yellow, Barium for green or Cooper for blue.

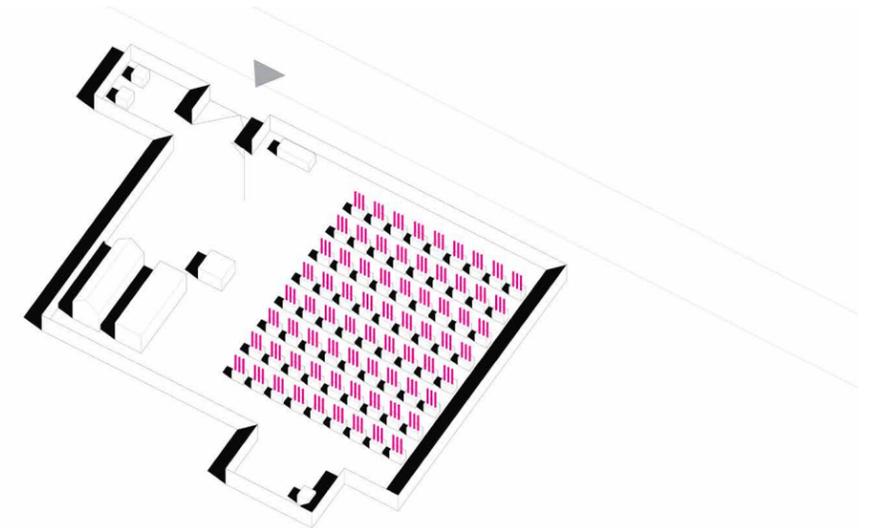
When fireworks explode they release particulate matter, metals, perchlorate and gasses which remain 24-hours in the air. As Disney is throwing fireworks every night, this amount of pollution becomes a constant in Disney World.



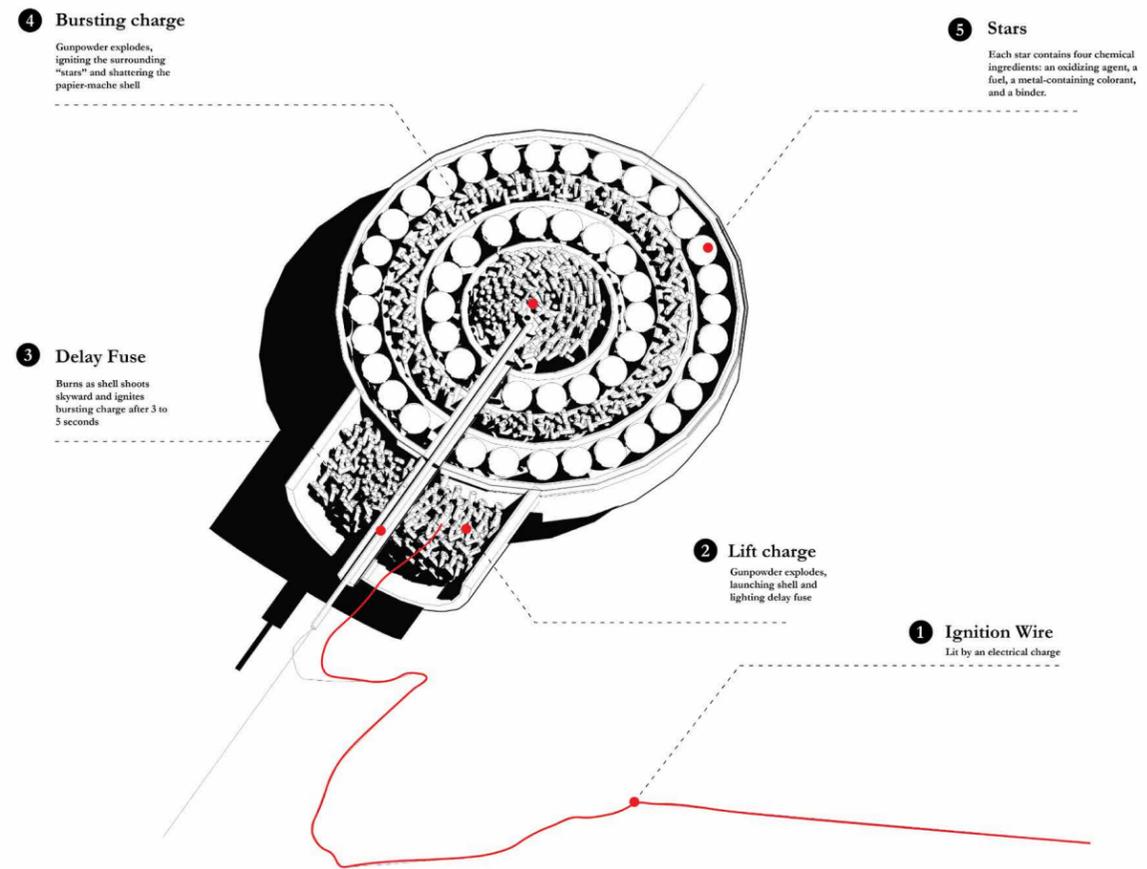
SITE 2 & 3



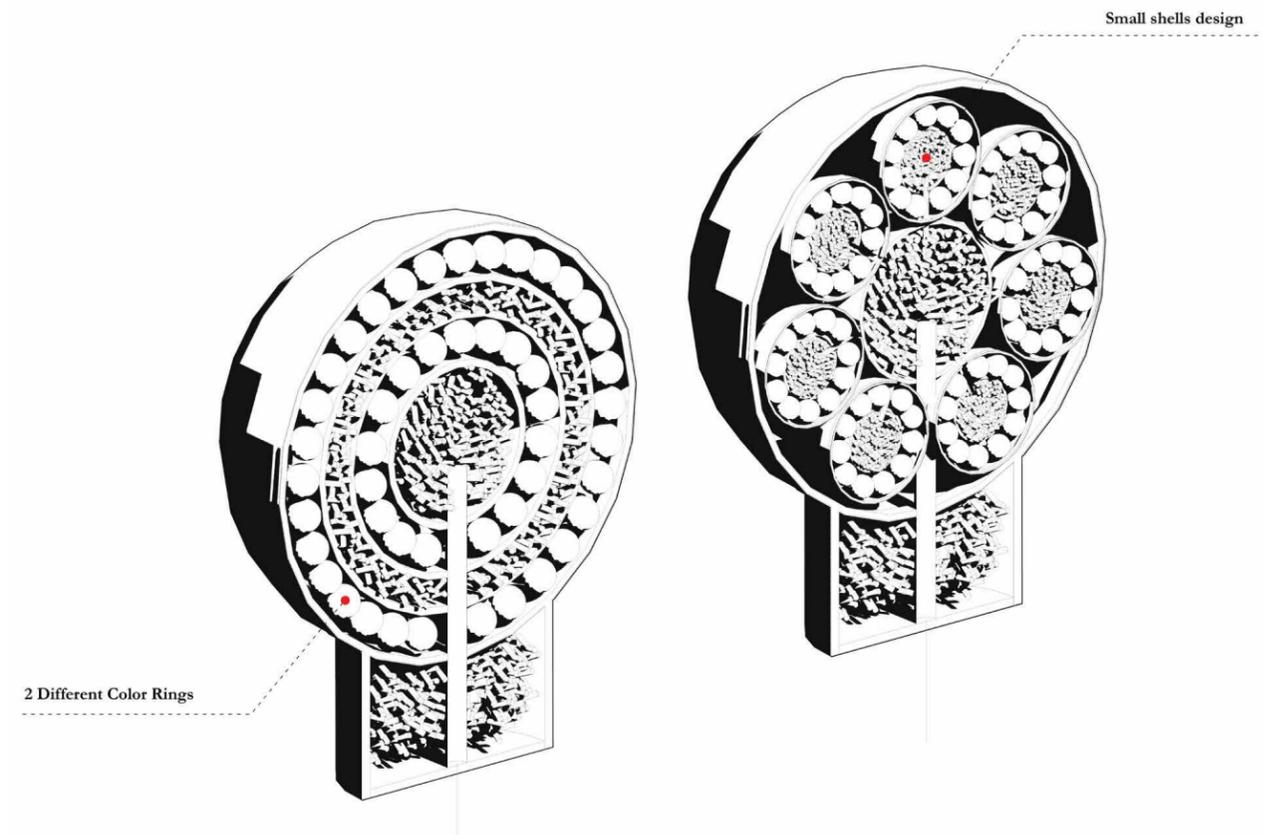
SITE 1



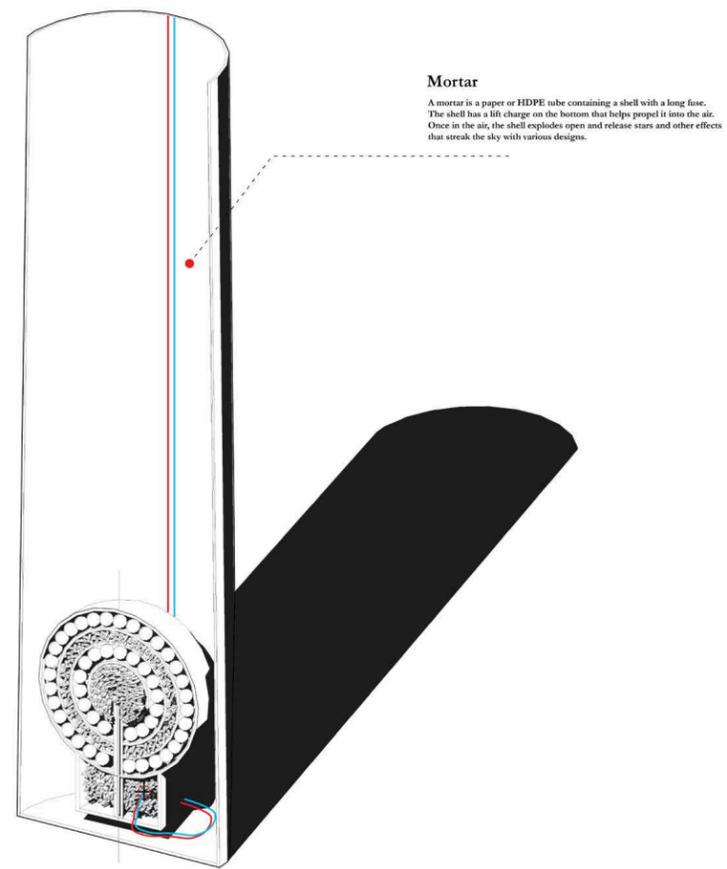
SITE 4



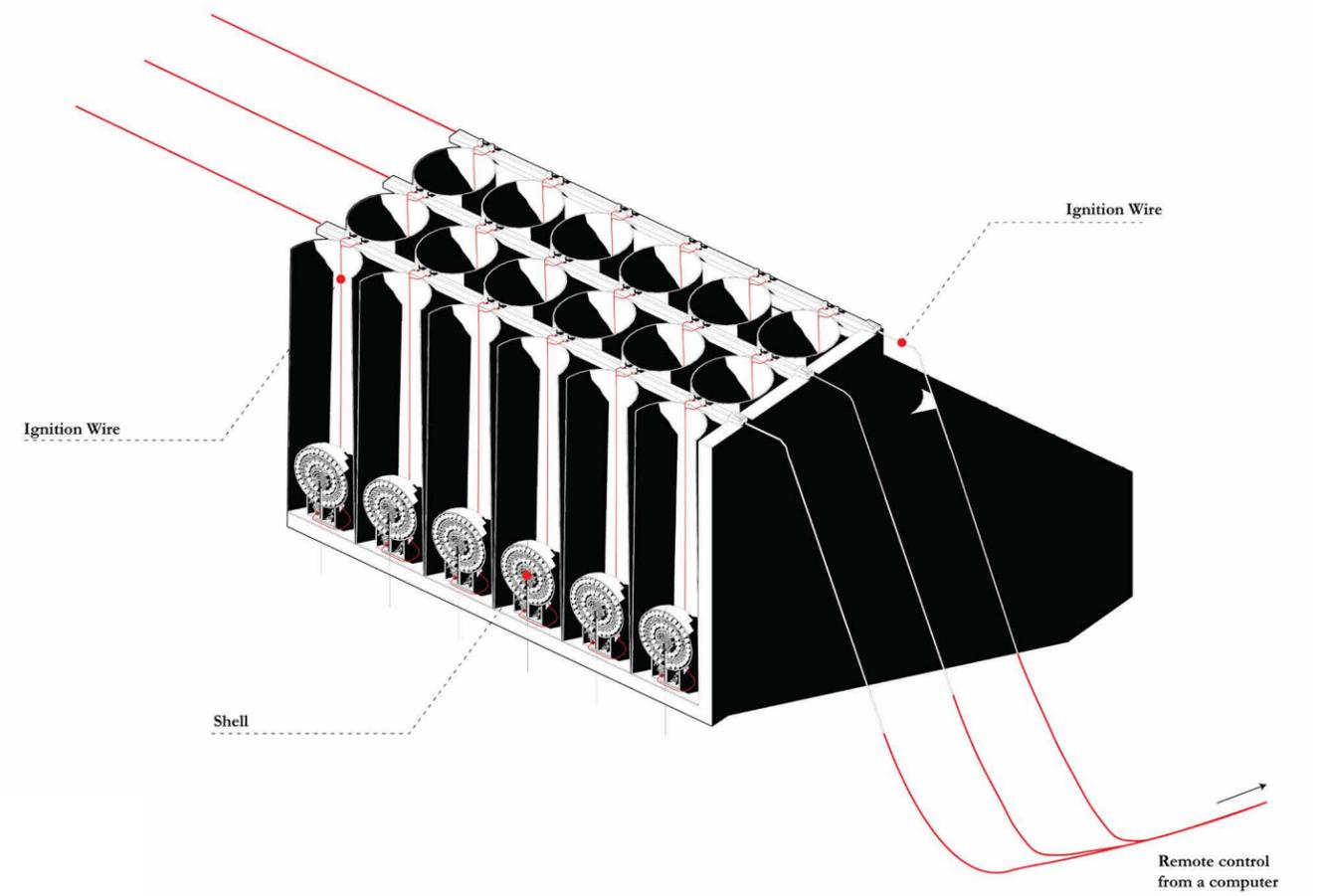
SHELL / COMPONENTS



SHELL / DESIGN



MORTAR



LAUNCHING SYSTEM

Everydayland is formed by 5 main elements:

1/ The Castle is Everydayland's Lobby

Cinderella's Castle is everything to Magic Kingdom and to the Disney company in general. That is why the tower is placed exactly on top of it. The image of Disney is its castle, and the project intervenes precisely there. The castle becomes the lobby that gives access to Everydayland Tower and to Everydayland Roller Coaster. It is glorious, it is magnificent, it is magical... It is a lobby.

2/ The Roller Coaster is its Real Estate best-selling machine

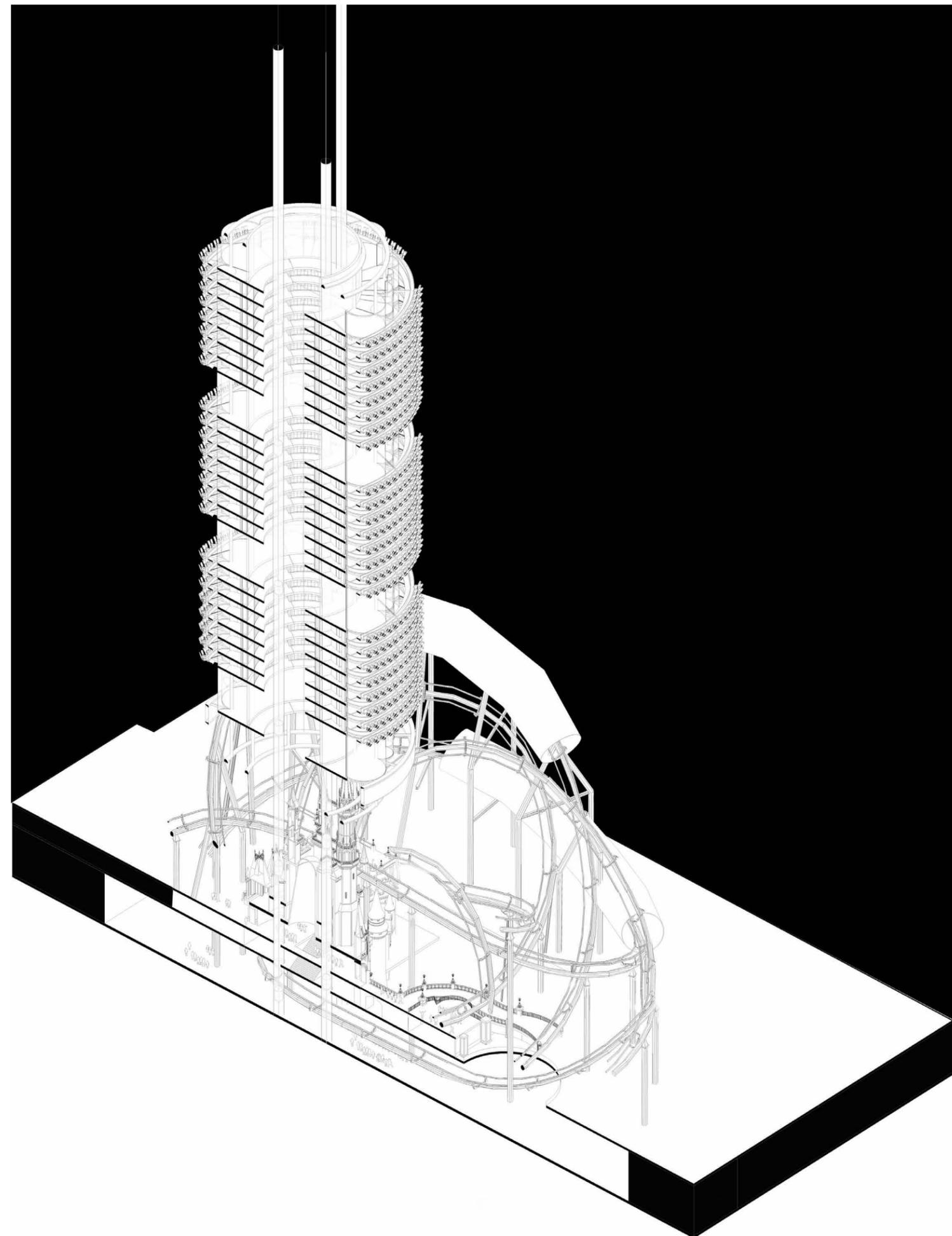
Every attraction in Disney tells a magical story. Everydayland Roller Coaster tells a story as well. The roller coaster is used as a promotional tool to sell the apartments of the tower. On the ride, the roller coaster goes through "media sales tubes" where images from the lifestyle at Everydayland are shown. On this attraction you can see how people live in Everydayland; a life surrounded by the magnificence of fireworks just a few meters from their window.

3/ The Atrium is a high-rise attraction

The open atrium allows people to access through the core of the tower and look at how people live in Everydayland. When this happens, the life of the tower and the domestic patterns of Everydayland become attractions themselves.

4/ The facade is the new Fireworks launching site

The fireworks are no longer arranged horizontally around the territory of the Magic Kingdom. The tower re-shapes this territorial scheme, placing now the fireworks launching devices as part of the facade detail of the tower. Much as in the previous Castle fireworks, there are different hierarchies according to the size of the shells. Smaller fireworks are thrown with a different angle than bigger shells, as their trajectory is shorter and they explode earlier. The corridors operate as a "social media device" that renders intimacy visible.



5/ The domestic life is completely immersed in the fireworks' spectacle

To live at Everydayland tower means to live within the chemical entertainment of fireworks.

This housing project engages with the chemical condition of fireworks, because they are part of Disney's entertainment, hence if you want to fully live in Disney, there is no way to escape from the fireworks. Entertainment is a chemical experience.

While living in this tower you encounter everyday the Disney's employees that operate on the facade, recharging the launching mortars to set them ready for the night show. The devices can rotate, to be recharged with new shells every day; and then rotate again to the exact angle required for the show. It is probably the facade with the highest maintenance ever invented, as it needs to get recharged every morning.

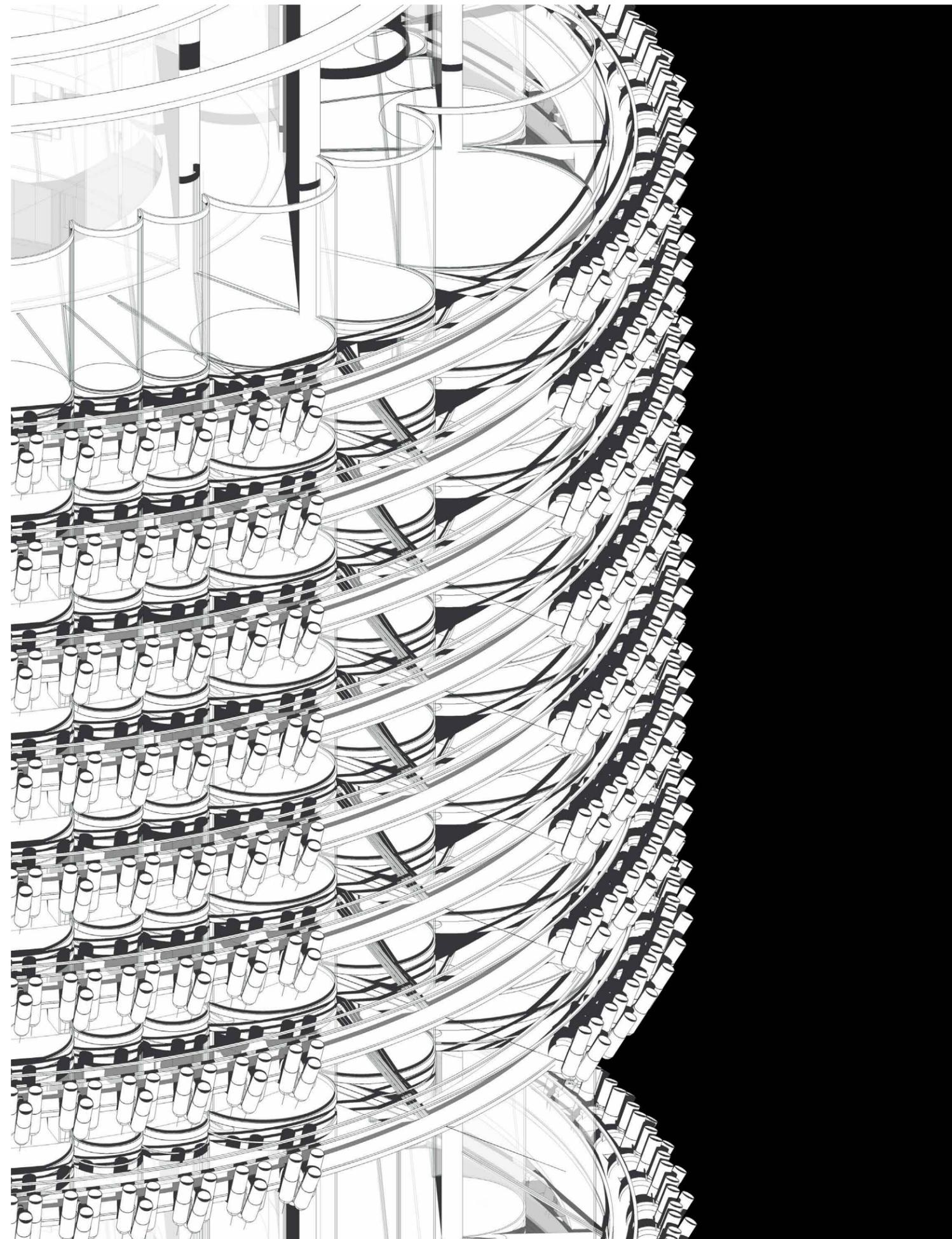
People living at Everydayland not only consume the spectacle but are also part and witnesses of its chemical production. The circular plan of the tower, as well as the curved windows allow a 360 degree view of the fireworks.

The design of the plan is conceived through a series of elements that intensify the experience of fireworks in the domestic space:

The "double border" between the apartments and the atrium is reflective on the inside and a transparent glass on the outside. The curtains regulate intimacy. Rounded windows provide a 180 degree view. The circular terrace opens a magnificent space into the sky. And the room dividers are huge tv screens.

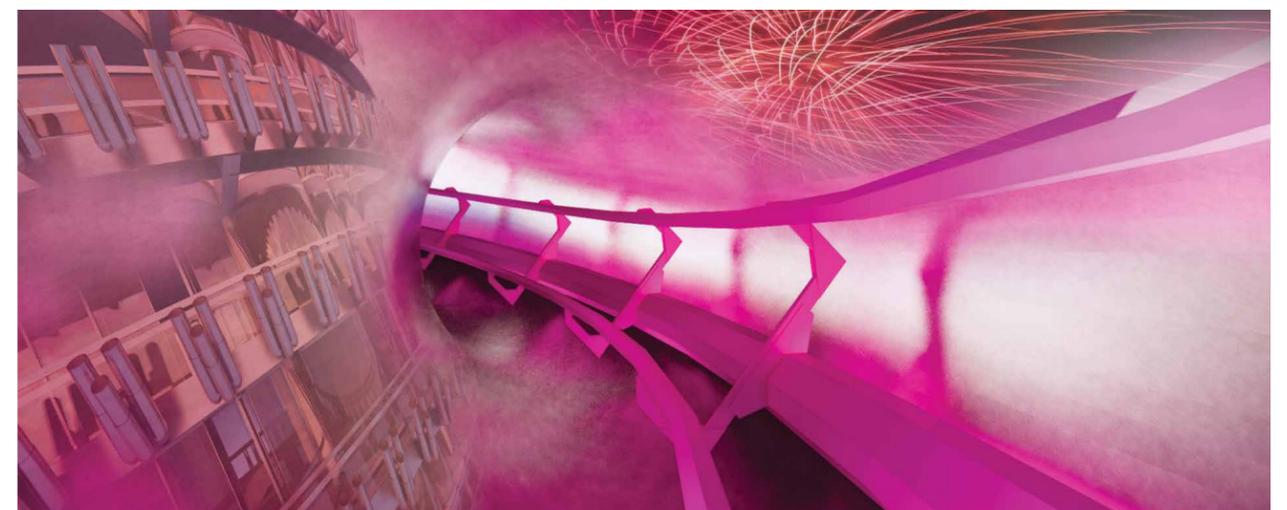
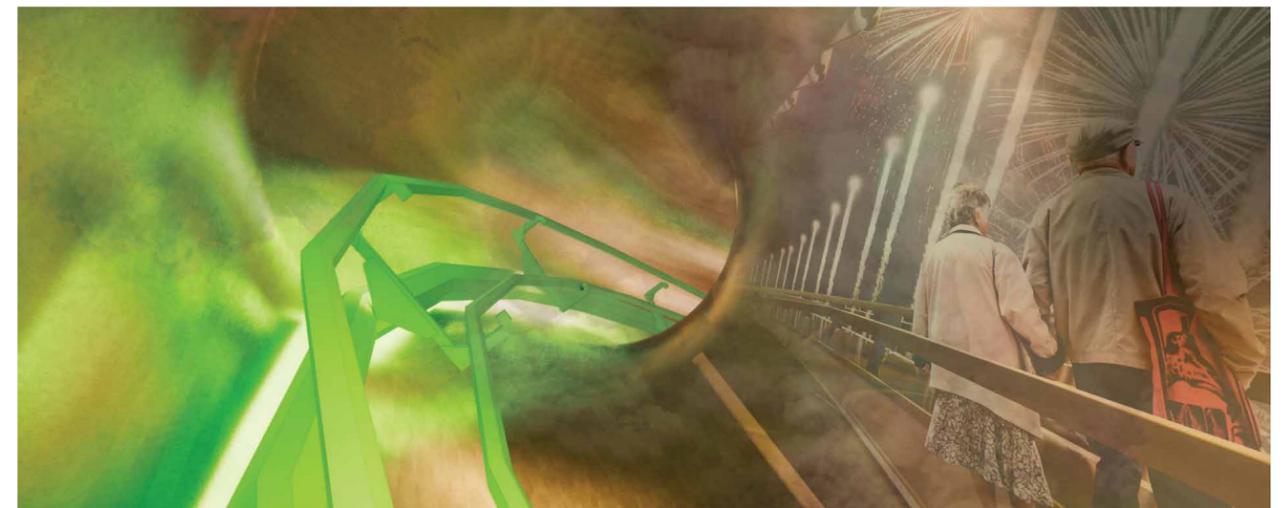
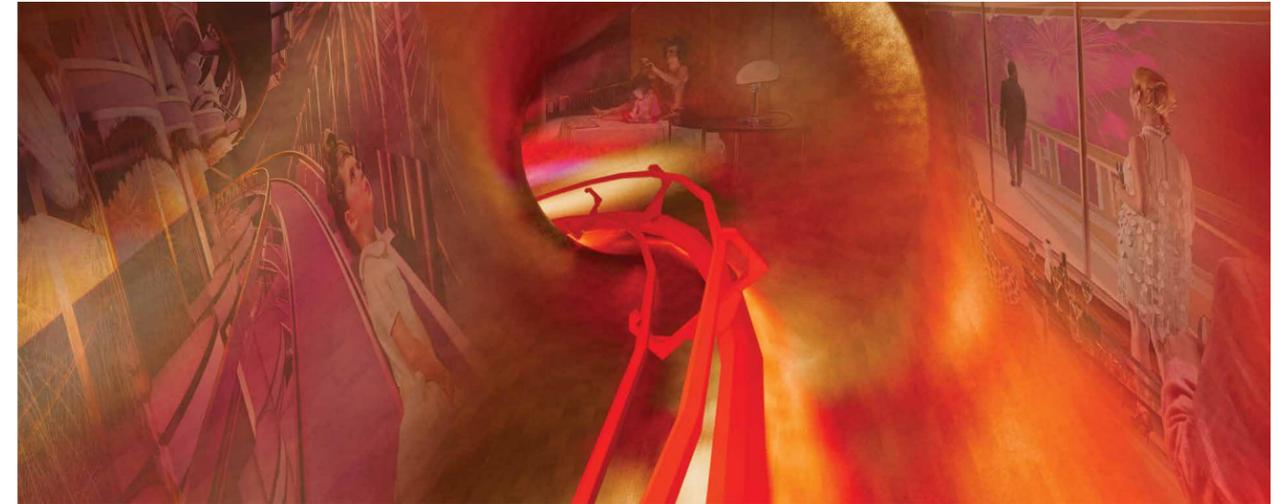
Fireworks enter into the intimate space of the apartment and become part of the everyday life of new Disney inhabitants. Every room has a fireworks view; you can look at the explosions while taking a bath or while cooking dinner. A big rounded terrace operates as a platform to go out into the toxic air and engage even more with this magical and chemical show.

Everydayland presents an alternative life at the center of the chemical spectacle of Disney World. The dream to live in "the happiest place on earth" is now possible and it is both a spectacular and a chemical experience.

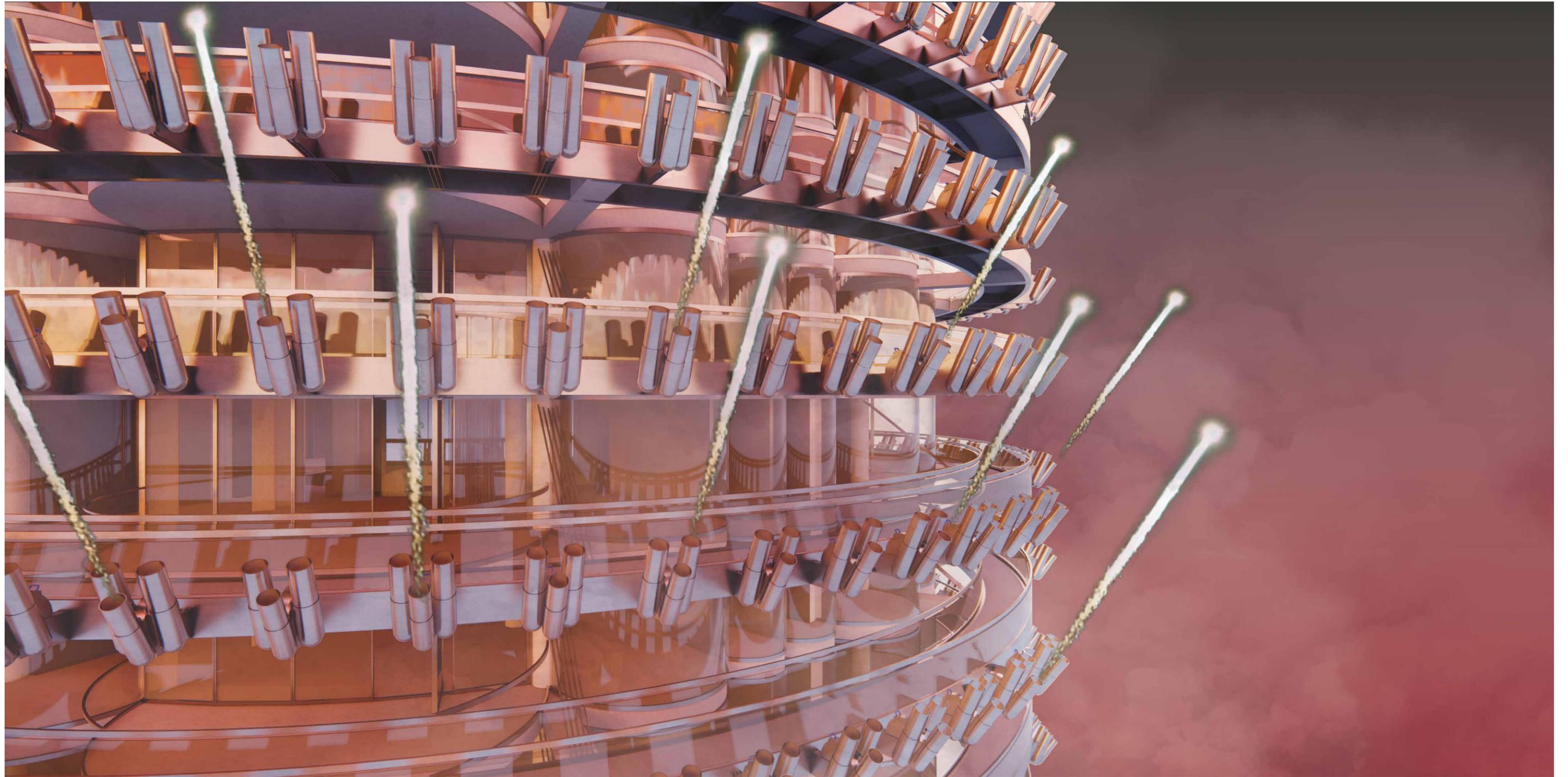




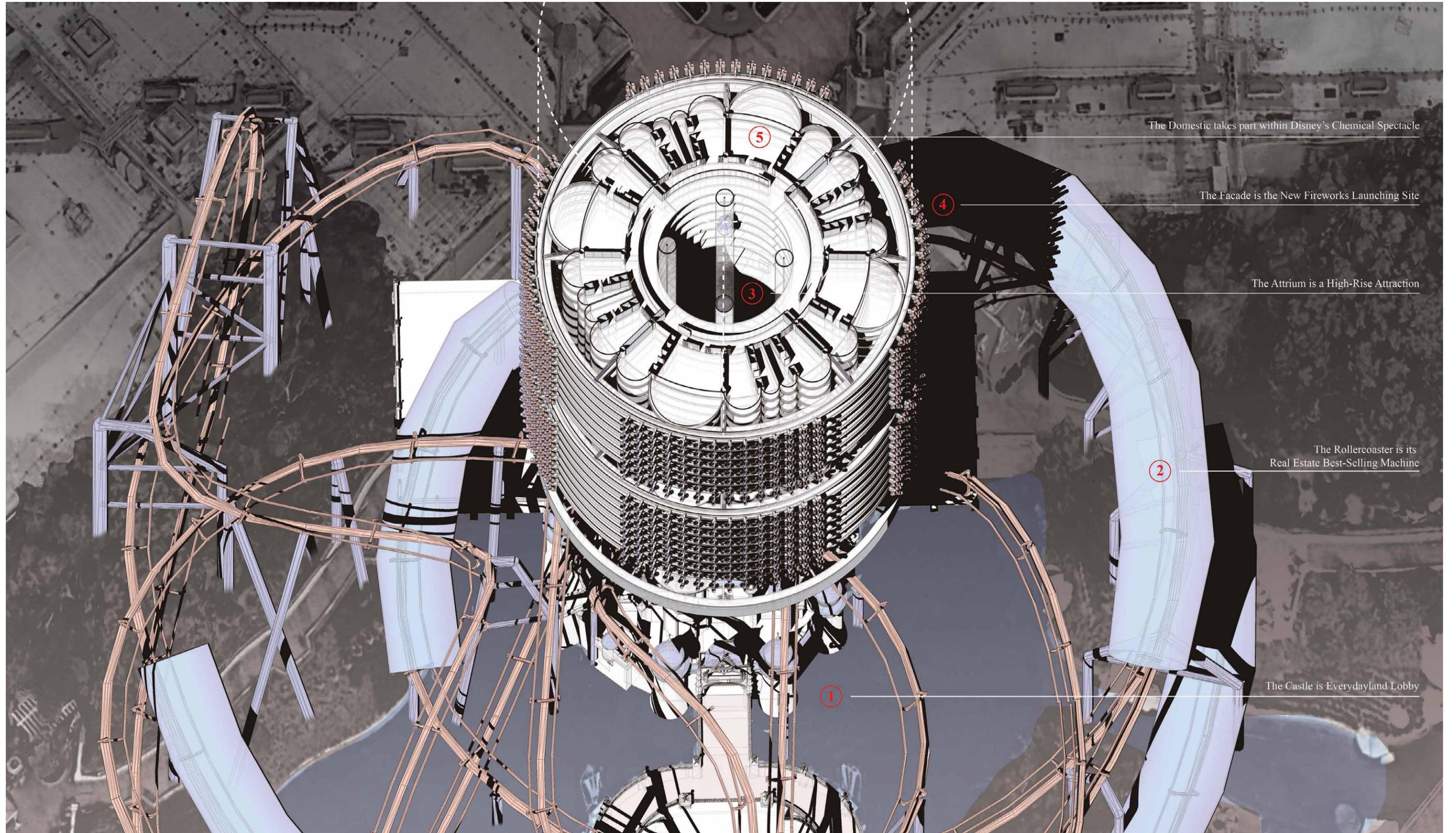
Section of the Castle as the Lobby of Everydayland Tower and the access to Everydayland Rollercoaster.



Interior of the Everydayland Rollercoaster.



Fireworks launching devices on the facade of Everydayland Tower



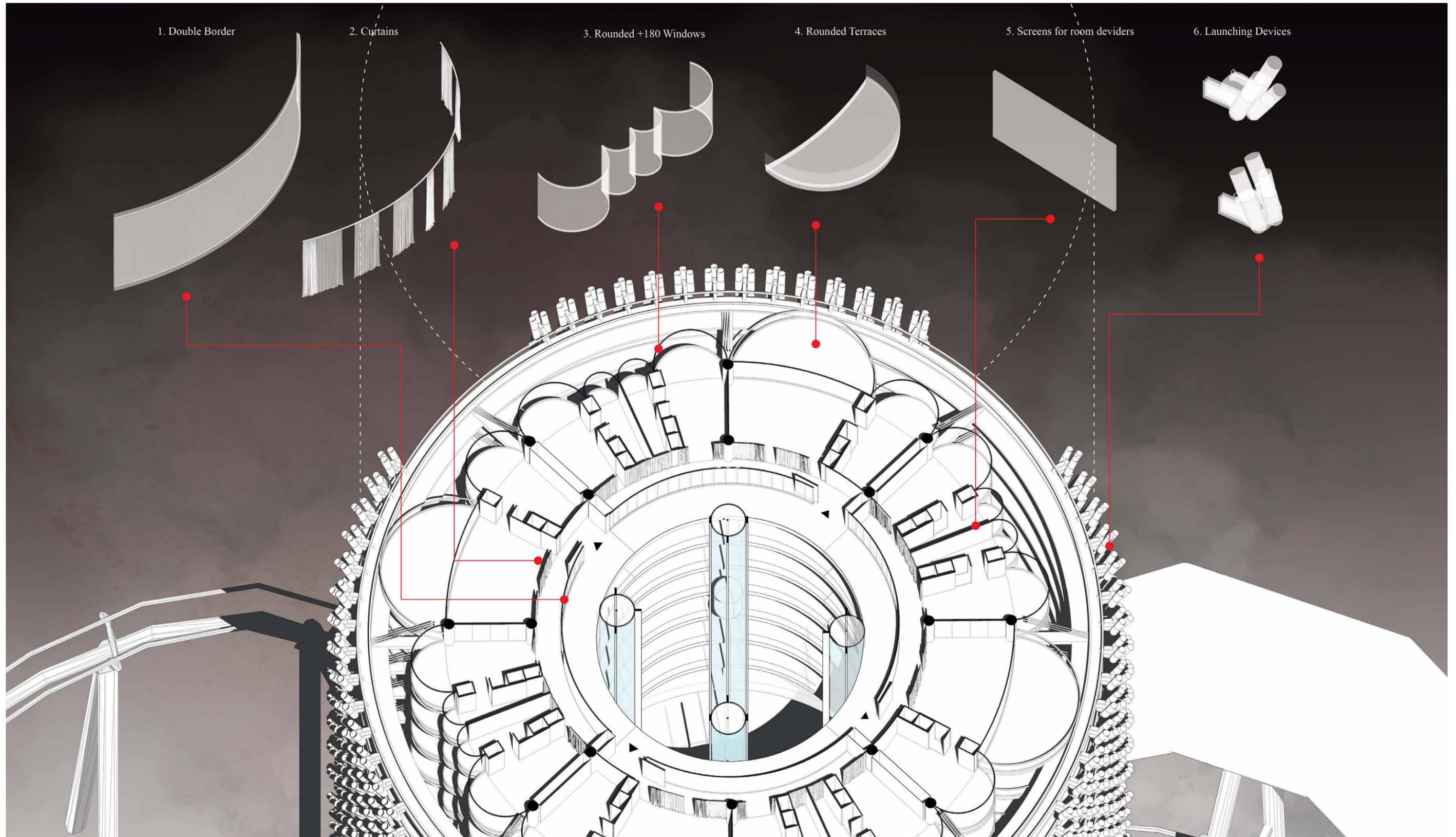
The Domestic takes part within Disney's Chemical Spectacle

The Facade is the New Fireworks Launching Site

The Atrium is a High-Rise Attraction

The Rollercoaster is its
Real Estate Best-Selling Machine

The Castle is Everydayland Lobby

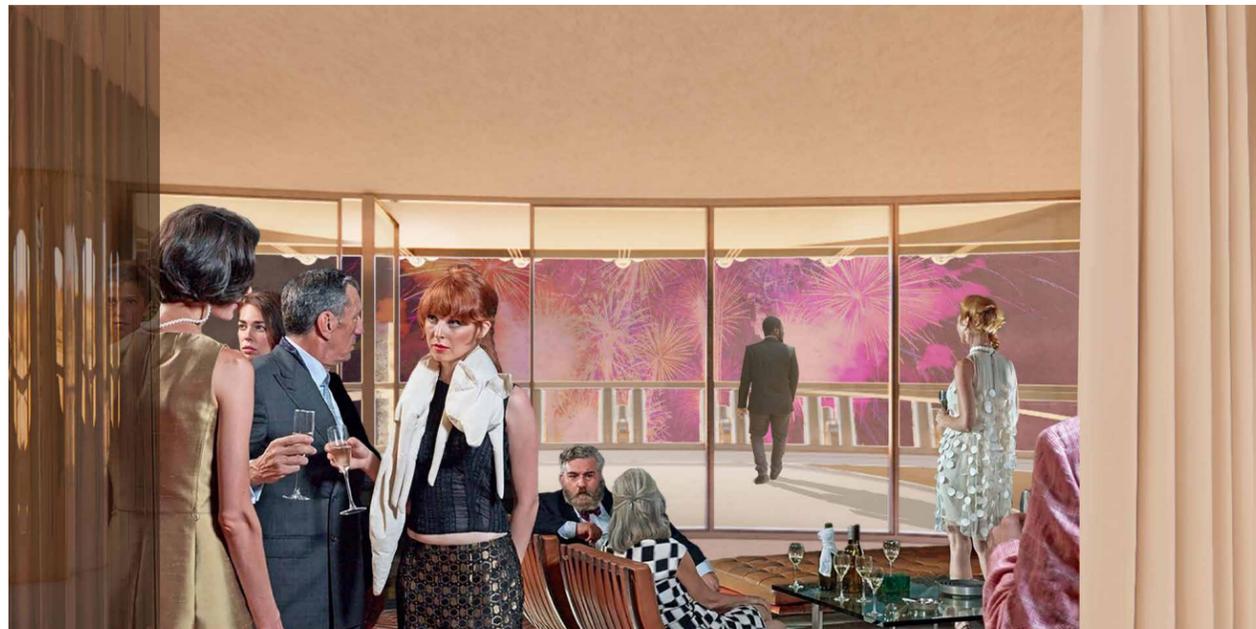




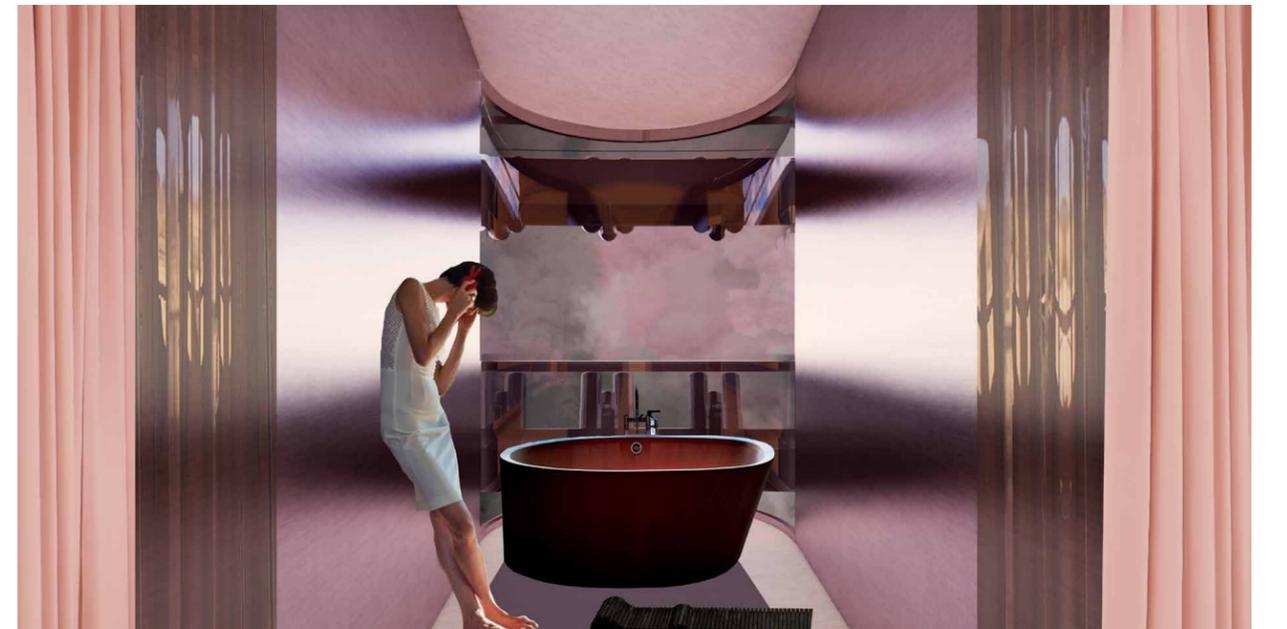
The division between the apartment and the atrium is constructed by a "Double Border". In the interior the glass reflects the fireworks operating as a mirror. On the outside it is a translucent glass, that operates as a window, allowing visitors to look into Everydayland's residents intimate life.



The show of the fireworks has come to an end. Outside there is still the smoke released from the explosions.



Fireworks are a daily event at Everydayland tower. They are the backstage of every night. They are part of the celebration of chemical entertainment.



At Everydayland Tower you can enjoy a warm bath while engaging with the fireworks right next to your window. You can not dream of a more intimate relation with colored explosives.



The circular 180 degree terraces allow residents to engage their bodies with the chemical experience of fireworks. They can also access to the perimetral platform, and make a 360 degree walking tour around the tower.



Fireworks, chemical entertainment, toxicity, fantasy, utopias, dystopias, bodies and materials configure a complex network in which Everydayland emerges as a radical way of living that acknowledges that chemicals and toxicity are part of our life. And they keep us entertained.

UNORTHODOX ARCHITECTURES

A graphic essay on Lina Bo Bardi's
heterodoxical practice

Visual Studies
Professor Juan Herreros

'La dea stanca'
The Tired Goddess

"The centenary of Lina Bo Bardi has rekindled the fervor for her figure. The critic Rowan Moore considers the Italian-Brazilian "the most underrated architect of the twentieth century"; however, she who Martin Filler describes as "the Anna Magnani of architecture" is now enjoying an extraordinary wave of acclaim through publications and exhibitions. Her death in 1992 gave rise to a monograph and exhibition, organized the following year by the Institute dedicated to her memory; but until the PhD thesis of Olivia de Oliveira in 2006 there is a parenthesis of silence that has been broken by the approach of her centenary, with the show in the Venice Biennale of 2010 curated by Kazuyo Sejima, the publication of her writings by the AA in 2012, the monograph by Zeuler R. Lima in 2013, and the Munich exhibition organized by Andres Lepik in 2014-2015, with a catalog featuring essays by prominent experts – all these initiatives throw light on the rich personality of a mythical figure".

Luis Fernandez-Galiano, AV Monographs 150, 2015.

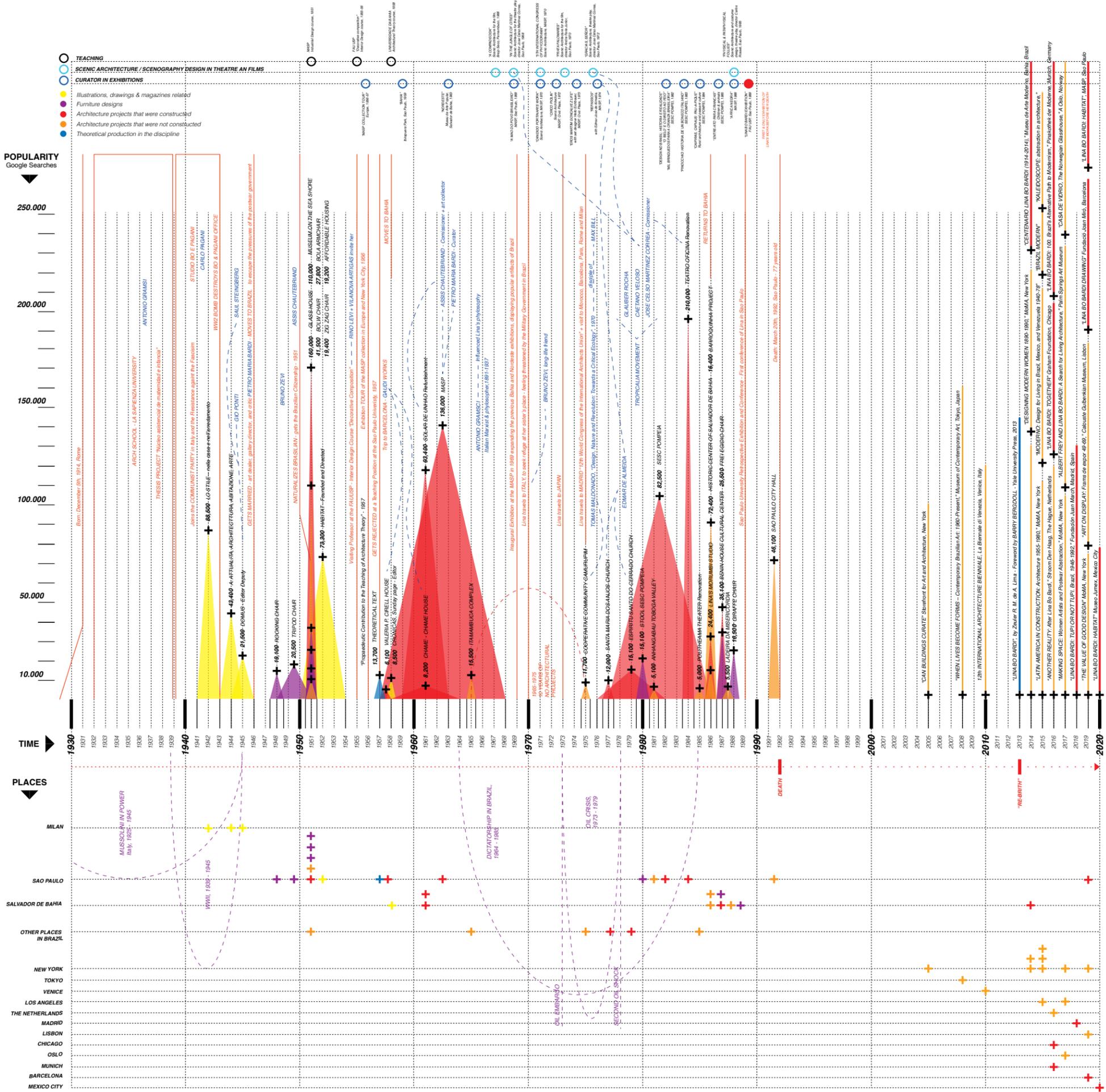
Why has Lina suddenly become worldwide acclaimed? Why now? Why not before, when she was alive? Why, after a life in which she was rejected as professor in several schools are there now decenes of PhD thesis about her work? What is it about? What topics does it discuss? Which other practitioners are related to her work? Why is it relevant today? Why is "the northern academia" looking at her? How was her life? How relevant was Brazil in her work? How did vernacular architecture from Salvador de Bahia influenced this Italian immigrant borned and raised between Roma and Milan? How it was to be a female architect in Brazil 50 years ago?

This are some of the questions that came to my mind when constructing Lina Bo Bardi's diagrams. A diagram allows us to set relations and extract conclusions. Intead of writing about Lina, I draw about her.

2/ LINA'S LIFE & WORK

This diagram shows the biographical information of Lina Bo Bardi.

The triangles represent her work, placed chronologically, and classified according to the place where they were produced. The color of the triangle shows the type of practice: un-built projects, built projects, illustrations and publications, furniture and theoretical texts. The size of the triangles indicates its "popularity" measured through the amount of Google Searches on the project. Important personal and professional events are also mapped on the diagram.

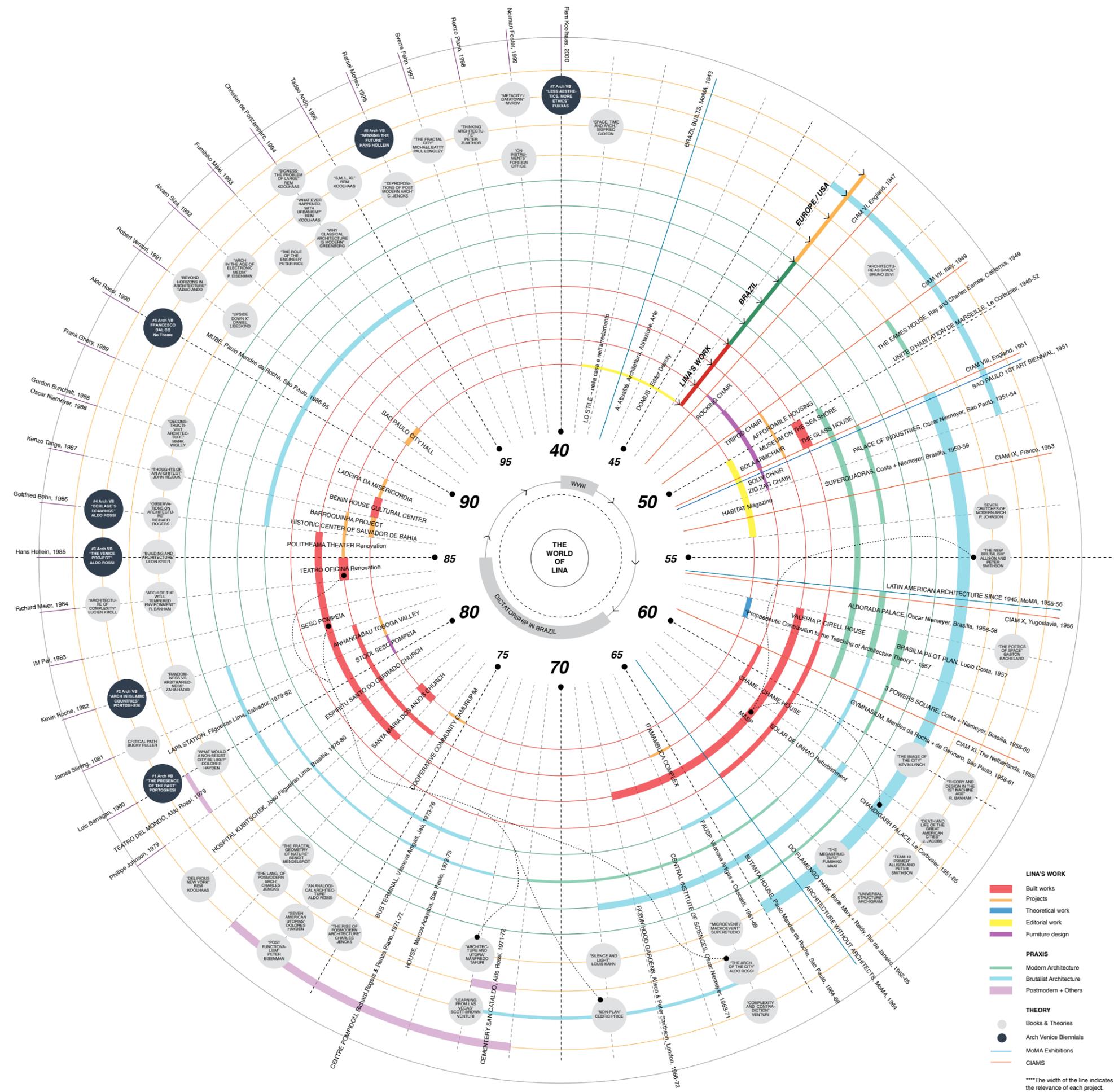


3/ THE WORLD AROUND LINA

This diagram operates as a photo of Lina Bo Bardi's context.

What was happening while she was building the SESC Pompeia? Or while she was designing the Teatro Oficina? Which texts were being published? What exhibition was opening in MoMA? Who was the curator of the Venice Biennial? Who won the Pritzker? What were other contemporary architects doing in Brazil? And in Europe?

All these questions find their answers in this diagram. It is an attempt to relate Lina with her contemporary time.



- LINA'S WORK**
- █ Built works
 - █ Projects
 - █ Theoretical work
 - █ Editorial work
 - █ Furniture design
- PRAXIS**
- █ Modern Architecture
 - █ Brutalist Architecture
 - █ Postmodern + Others
- THEORY**
- Books & Theories
 - Arch Venice Biennials
 - MoMA Exhibitions
 - CIAMs
- ***The width of the line indicates the relevance of each project.

CONFRONTING ARCHITECTURE'S AUTHONOMY

The day Rossi walked into trial

Research
Professor Bernard Tschumi

The following text brings into trial the Scuola Elementare at Fagnano Olona, a project designed by Rossi in 1972. The conversation is centered on four crimes the building is accused of committing, and which are linked with the way Rossi conceives architecture: as a timeless and autonomous discipline that rather than engaging with the context is more preoccupied in unfolding abstract ideal concepts of type and form in buildings.

The crimes can be understood on the topic of how Rossi's buildings do not engage with trans-scalar networks, or any other concepts "outside" architecture.

Overall, the trial is a provocative conversation that makes us reflect on how architecture relates with broader topics.

Let's the trial begin.

PROSECUTOR: The Scuola Elementare at Fagnano Olona, a building designed by Aldo Rossi in 1972, is called to TRIAL.

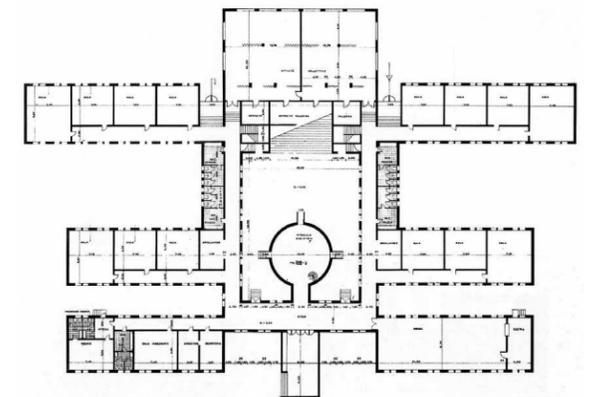
This building has been accused of a series of terrible crimes that we will proceed to announce to you, dear members of the jury.

But before starting this session. Let the building present itself.



BUILDING: Hello everyone. As you already know, I'm the Scuola Elementare at Fagnano Olona. Honestly, I have been feeling very comfortable with myself lately. Very confident. I believe it is probably because of this sort of ongoing Rossi's neo-revival we are experiencing these days. I feel I am back in fashion. But well, all great until I got accused of some crimes. So here I am.

Let me tell you my story: I am one of Rossi's first buildings. When he designed me, he had already written The Architecture of the City. However, it didn't have an English translation until much later so you probably wouldn't know it yet.



So...I was designed in 1972 and I am located in a small town 40 km north of Milan. Rossi wanted me to be like a small city. You can definitely see that if you look closely enough. The city, you may know, is built collectively by the continuous superposition of layers across history. We all share a collective memory of the city so that we recognize it, in spite of it having different forms across the world.

I will explain myself in more detail. I am the square in the center of my plan, and the monument that is inside of it: a round volume which is the library of the school.

I am the theater formed by the monumental

stairs and the empty space of the courtyard.

I am also the classrooms, which are like houses of a city, distributed in wings according to a central axis of symmetry.

And of course, as this place used to be occupied by a factory before my construction, I also am some elements that refer to the past of this place. Like a chimney aligned to the entrance.

Essentially, I am like the city because I am all these things juxtaposed. I am past and present perceived all at once. A whole, not the sum of my parts.

PROSECUTOR: That's enough building, they get it...don't try to buy the jury before we even start. You will have more time later to speak for yourself.

I will proceed to read the crimes you are suspected of committing. You are accused of:

1. Representing an obsolete past that we are leaving behind.
2. Your timeless abstract form is incapable of representing its particular time and place.
3. Prioritizing the form of the building rather than its function.
4. Not aiming for the maximum efficiency and flexibility.

Let's begin the trial.

1 / "LOOKING BACKWARDS instead of looking ahead"

PROSECUTOR: You are accused of representing an obsolete past that we are leaving behind. We want our buildings to be about tomorrow, or at least, a snapshot of the best version of today. The value of architecture is

its capacity to renew our hopes for the future. On the contrary, you represent an image of the past, even at the time you were built. We have proof.

We bring Mario Bellini to testify. He was the curator of the 1972 exhibition "Italy: The new domestic landscape" at MOMA.



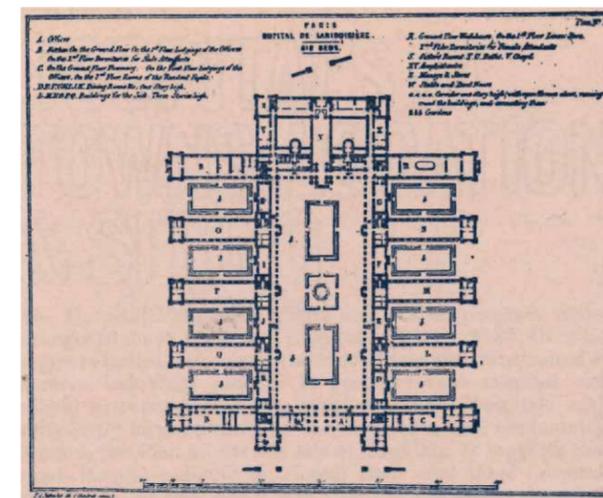
MARIO BELLINI: Thanks for having me. This is a picture of the exhibition I curated at MOMA the same year you were designed. New technologies were being used to solve the problems of everyday life. Moreover, the presence of designed artifacts in every aspect of life was so successful that "good design" became just "design". You, on the other hand, completely negate these technological advancements. The only artifact you display is a clock on the wall at the end of the staircase. And it's not even a digital one, a technology that was around since the 50's.

This second image is a collage called Happy Island by Superstudio. Around the same time you were designed, the forward-thinking group Superstudio was representing futuristic ideas about the built environment. This image rep-

resents the world as a continuous landscape made of hidden technological infrastructures that would support a nomadic lifestyle for people. Great stuff. Instead, this drawing of Aldo Rossi references only architecture elements and composition. Nothing that would give us a sense or vision of the future.



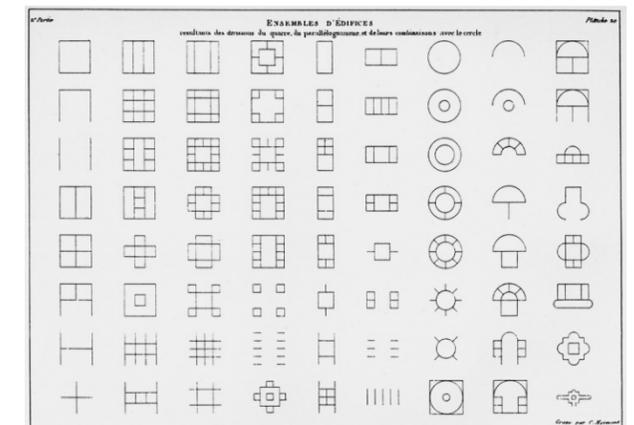
PROSECUTOR: Well said. Lastly, your plan resembles more of an 18th century hospital than an elementary school in Fagnano Olona. You don't carry any novelty, nor experimental inquiry, which ultimately leaves no chance for people to do things differently, to evolve, to become their future selves...



BUILDING: You have it all wrong. I will ask the architect himself, Aldo Rossi, to respond to these claims.

ROSSI: Architecture has nothing to do with technological artifacts, or images of the future. I don't care for the over-optimist illusion of the future that is just creating images of an Eden of labor. I want to reveal the power hidden in the architecture, which lies in its essence, or what I like to call its type.

The type is what is permanent, constant. It is the essential collective memory from which architecture takes meaning. It is a logical principle that is prior to form and that constitutes it.



Fagnano Olona's type is the city itself, therefore it cannot be, as you say, an image of the past. The history of the city is what constitutes its present, what gives meaning to its present form. It doesn't make sense to say that a city is "an image of the past" as long as it has the possibility of being repurposed. This collective construction over time IS the city.

By referencing history and repurposing it in the Fagnano Olona school I am not "supporting an image of the past", but being true to the principles that form the city. This makes my architecture prevail. Or, in your terms, be part of the future.

BUILDING: So, what Rossi is saying here is that I'm innocent of being an image of the past because I'm actually timeless. If that doesn't renew your hopes for the future honestly I don't know what would.

2 / "TIMELESS: Incapable of representing its particular time and place."

PROSECUTOR: Being timeless requires a certain degree of abstraction, which brings us to your second crime. You are accused of being "too abstract". In other words, of not being specific of a particular time and place. We expect buildings to represent the spirit of the time since they are, after all, a catalog of human progress.

We are bringing our expert, MANFREDO TAFURI to present the case for this one.

MANFREDO TAFURI: Hello everybody. Hello building.

I will amplify the prosecutor's claims. So, what is the crime in being "too abstract"?

The problem of placing your value in the abstract concept of a type is that it is only true if everyone can relate to the same original concepts. And that is a very naive belief.

How can you expect people from Olona to have the same mental references to someone in, for instance, Rome?. Or, even, how can we expect people from this very jury to have the same mental references with each other? Architecture should relate to real places with real people having real experiences.

Lets see some picture evidence. You don't look like either Fagnano Olona city or Rome. You

look like a diluted image of a city that does not exist. You resemble more of a Chirricco painting of an idealized Italian city square than the overlapped layers of history that you claim to be.



PROSECUTOR: Thanks Manfredo. Seems like you, Building, are intentionally detaching yourself from the context. Your materials don't speak of the site. In the same way your plan, as we saw before, is more reminiscent of an 18th century hospital than what we might find at a mid-sized town in the north of Italy. In that sense, you appear without context in all these representations, in which it is also evident that scale acts in favor of abstraction rather than to appeal to the human experience. Symptomatically, your sections don't have any human

figures.

BUILDING: So you are accusing me of being too abstract to the point of being unrelated to a time and a place, and disconnected from the real city. I would say, that is not a crime.

I am like a monument. I carry the collective memory of a place throughout time.

The concept of locus is important to understand this. This is the relationship between a certain specific location and the buildings that are in it. It is at once singular and universal, a never-ending relationship that generates the city.

I might be abstract in form and essence, but I am permanently making the city around me inasmuch as the city it is making me.



Being abstract does not limit me from engaging with the city. I can be repurposed to respond to the city's current needs, whatever they are in any period of time.

3 / "ANTI-FUNCTIONALISM: Form does not follows func- tion"

PROSECUTOR: I'm not convinced, but this takes us to your third crime. Rossi has al-

ways favored form rather than function. You do not look like a school. You are not constructing the image of what a school should be like. In other words, form is not following function. This is a serious crime. You could be anything. People expect things to look like what they are. You are getting people confused!

BUILDING: But which is the form of a school? Is there one? Should every function have a particular form? Is that a LAW? I can speak for Rossi in this matter, we have discussed this a lot. Rossi completely rejects the idea that form follows function, which was Sullivan's popular claim. Rossi is interested in permanence, and function is not a permanent matter. It changes over time. I want to bring back to the judgment stand the Palazzo della Ragione in Padua. It first hosted the law courts of the city and now houses an active retail market in the ground level. And it looks like neither.



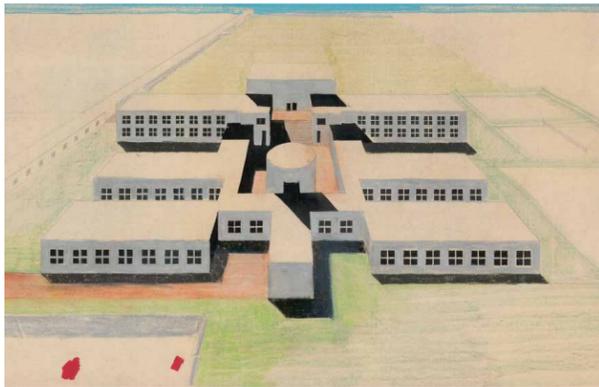
Architecture is much more complex than temporal functions. Rossi is interested in the type, which represents the essence of architecture. As I mentioned before, he says: The concept of the type is permanent and complex. It is a logical principle that is prior to form and that constitutes it. Function changes over time. On the contrary, the form remains.

Please, I would like to invite Pier Vittorio Auerelli to comment on this matter. He will better relate Rossi's architecture with the idea of an autonomous theory and the political implications it has. Pier...

PIER VITTORIO: Yeah, thanks Building. I was about to jump in.

In my work *The project of Autonomy*, I claim that Rossi's work is to establish a new socialist theory of the city opposing to the city of bourgeoisie. Rossi believes that the hybrid and technological heteronomous city is caused by neo-capitalism. Due to the rapid development of technology, in order to integrate social resources and workforce, a new urbanism arised, which was characterized by integration of urban and rural area, megastructures, and the establishment of the overall framework of the new city.

Rossi was against integration, technology and overall planning. He decided to learn from history, from the discipline of architecture itself, so called architectural autonomy.



He also admired the individuality of urban artifacts, or as he called it the singularity of Locus. The typology and the Locus concept, as well as Rossi's rejection of functionalism, is his way of rejecting capitalism.

4 / "IT IS NOT FLEXIBLE, IT IS NOT EFFICIENT"

PROSECUTOR: Well, but our present time demands us to be efficient, to be pro-

ductive, to be flexible, to be specific; to be all those things right now. For buildings society demands exactly the same. The Scuola is accused of the fourth and last crime: Its lack of efficiency and flexibility.

Rossi rejects completely the Modern Movement triumph in the liberation of the 18th and 19th century Beaux Arts plan corset. How could he design a school with a miniature palazzo-like plan? After Mies' Crown Hall??. Rossi rejects the free-plan, which has been probably the most radical conquest of the Modern Movement. The free-plan allows experimentation, evolution, and change to happen. In contrast, Rossi's architecture is a grammar of rigid geometric volumes that lacks flexibility. His architecture is not efficient in responding to today's needs.

BUILDING: Wait, wait, wait. Are you really accusing me of not being flexible and efficient? I can easily adapt to other functions. Everything that has prevailed in history did so because it was capable of absorbing new functions. For instance, my simple forms: a central void, a cylindrical room, and a series of small and medium clusters can host many functions. This architecture is highly flexible in terms of having a variety of spaces. And I don't need the latest technology to do that. I didn't need luxurious construction materials, hightech products, complex geometries or specialized workers to be built. Tell me if that is not efficient. Less is Enough, as Pier Vittorio would say.

I am austere by choice. By political choice actually. Just think about it one second: the customization of things actually makes them much more rigid. Specificity is inherently linked with rigidity. If something changes, your product becomes obsolete. Part of Rossi's idea of autonomous architecture was detaching form from function so that nothing is so specific that it couldn't be anything else. Therefore, when things change, there is no real need for building anew, you can repurpose the old buildings.

In this sense Rossi's architecture opposes the consumerism culture of neoliberalism. My austere look just reinforces his political stances.



FINAL STATEMENT

As a conclusion of this trial we believe that the crimes that the Scuola is accused of can be understood in very different ways. Some people may claim the building is guilty; others may say it is not. *Are you on Rossi's side or not?*

We believe that the architectural concepts that each of us defend represents what we think and what we are. Architecture, to a certain extent, is an image of the architect, and the ideas that we embrace.

We might also find ourselves agreeing to contradictory statements and realizing some of the complexities of architecture itself.

What do you think?

DOMESTICITY, FEMINISM AND POWER

Conventillos,
A Platform for Feminist Fight

Research
Professor Anna Puigjaner

(Abstract)

The extreme purge of conventillos that occurred in Buenos Aires after 1930 can only mean one thing: they were a threat. By 1907 there were more than 2,500 conventillos in the capital city, which hosted 150,000 migrant workers, most of them women. The shocking disappearance of this collective housing typology and its dramatic replacement by suburban single-family housing plans had the intention to control the population by controlling the family and the women. The eradication of the conventillos was executed in the name of health, through evictions masked under a rigorous hygienist discourse. Public attacks on conventillos will shift from the sanitary conditions to the moral sphere targeting the collective living as a promiscuous and indecent one. This domestic architecture was crucial for workers, migrants and especially women, who found in their collective patio the space to organize politically and fight for their rights. Conventillos allowed unorthodox, insurgent and nonconforming ways of living together that empowered political manifestations and strongly supported the feminist suffragist movement. As architecture they represent a space for feminist political power within the spaces of collective domesticity.

(Excerpt)

A name and a type

Conventillo became the popular way to refer to the Houses for Rent – Casas de Inquilinato in Spanish – that abruptly emerged in Buenos Aires between 1880 and 1920. The name directly arose from its physical architectural condition. The word conventillo comes from the idea of a small convent, due to the disposition of small cells one next to the other, similar to the typological arrangement of a religious convent.

It is popularly stated that Argentina is a country of immigrants. This expression was definitely a political and ideological construction that was planned in detail during the last decades of the XIX century through the promulgation of both laws and military campaigns. On the one hand, in the year 1876 the Immigration and Colonization Law N° 817 was passed. This act is popularly known as the Avellaneda Law, on behalf of the name of the president that promoted it. The political strategy behind the decree was to attract European immigrants and to impulse them to move into the inner rural areas of the country, with the clear intention to colonize wider extensions of the Argentine territory.

On the other hand, the Law was accompanied by the military campaign known as The Conquest of the Desert, which started in 1878, with Julio A. Roca as Minister of War and Nicolas Avellaneda as president of the Argentine Republic. This military campaign had the objective to extend the limits of the territory over the indigenous lands of the Pampa and Patagonia in the south and the Chaco in the north. It is today conceived as a major humanitarian crime of the Argentinian National Army, in which more than 14.000 Native citizens were murdered. This military campaign had the objective to control a large extension of land, to

expand Argentina as an agriculture producer and introduce the country as a main exporter of commodities, as a geo-political strategy perfectly timed with the entrance of Europe in World War I and II.

[...]

Immigrant women: anarchists, feminists and suffragists

The fight for women’s right to vote in Argentina was led by women immigrants, socialist and anarchists. Conventillos have been always conceived as unhealthy, overcrowded, precarious collective dwellings, but they were indeed crucial in the fight for women’s rights at the turn of the XIX century. What is incredibly interesting about this architectural type is the duality of the collective patio, which hosted both domestic and political activities.

This space was a sort of interior street; a prolongation of the public sphere inside the private domain. The patio was a crucial place to host anarchist and socialist assemblies. This political force, rather than the precarious sanitary conditions, will be for the conservative parties the most dangerous threat of the conventillos. As Diego Lecuona mentions, it is worth affirming that from a political point of view the courtyards of the conventillos configured the ideal space for true assemblies of anarchists and socialists, as had been seen in the rent strike of 1907.³ In another cite, Ana Cravino mentions a recurrent comment at the beginning of the XX century, the police authorities can perhaps persecute and dissolve the assemblies of the enemies of the social order, but who will avoid the meetings of the inhabitants of a tenement house.⁴

The political debates were mixed with a messy

collectivization of domestic labor as the patio was the area where most household work was performed. It was for sure not a collectivization freely chosen by the inhabitants. It was rather the only option they had due to the lack of space inside their small rented rooms. However, it became crucial for women and for their political engagement. At this time almost all women worked outside the home, but political assemblies at factories were conceived as spaces for men. The anarchists and socialist assemblies were neither welcoming women into the debates, nor even supporting the suffragist feminist movement. The political sphere was a male zone at every political color. This is why conventillos were crucial. They operated as a mechanism to trigger the political debates into the domestic space where women had a strong voice.

A turning point in the political life of conventillos was the strike of 1907; the largest protest of tenants till that time. The strikers’ claimed a 30% reduction on the rent, the elimination of the three-month deposit, flexibility in the due date of payments and an improvement in the sanitary conditions of homes. The active engagement of women on the strike was crucial, being The Broom’s March the most successful and media-covered event of the three-months strike. As Ines Yujnovski mentions, the success of the suspension of the payment of rents during the months that the strike lasted is due to the women, who managed, through multiple strategies, to arrest the landlords. The women not only managed to prevent the performance of the collectors but also they gave visibility to the conflict. The opinion of the press was not against the strikers. On the contrary, it was justified by the poor conditions to which women and children were exposed.¹

[...]

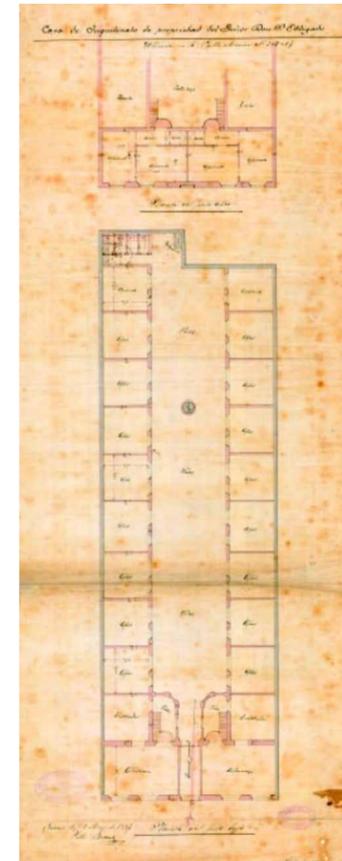


Fig.1 Plans for the construction of a conventillo, located in 585/7 Mexico St., Buenos Aires. Archivo General de la Nación,1887.

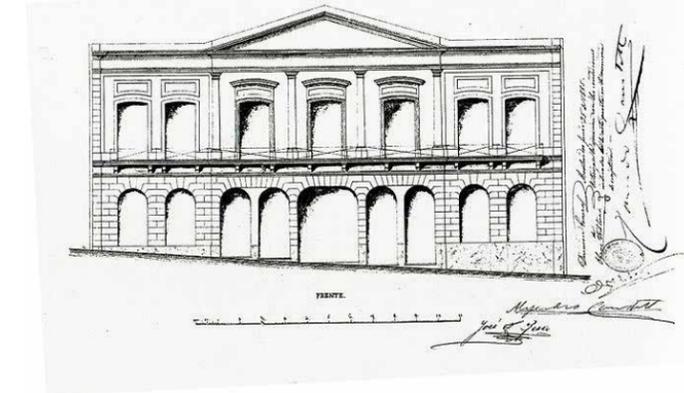


Fig.2 Facade of the Medio Mundo conventillo, Montevideo. Wikipedia.

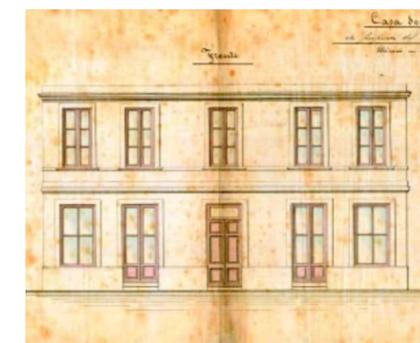


Fig.3 Facade for the construction of a conventillo, located in 585/7 Mexico St., Buenos Aires. Archivo General de la Nación,1887.



Fig.4 Plans for the construction of a conventillo, located in 777/79 and 823/27 Ituzaingo St., Buenos Aires. Bencich Hnos. Contractors,1889.

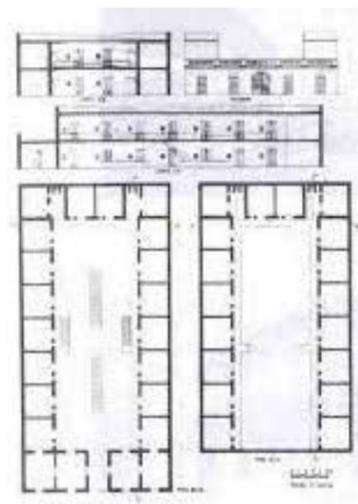


Fig.5 Facade of the Medio Mundo conventillo, Montevideo. Wikipedia.

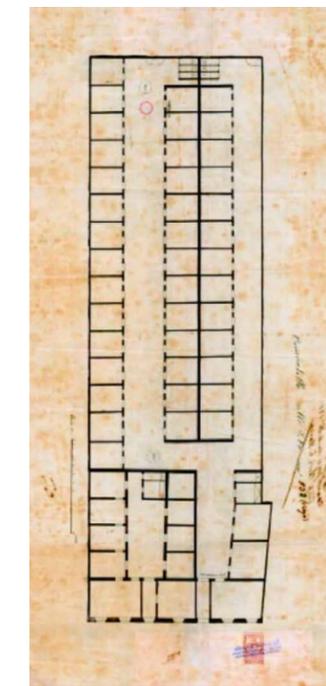


Fig.6 Plans for the construction of a conventillo, located in 538 Santa Fe St., Buenos Aires. Archivo General de la Nación,1889.

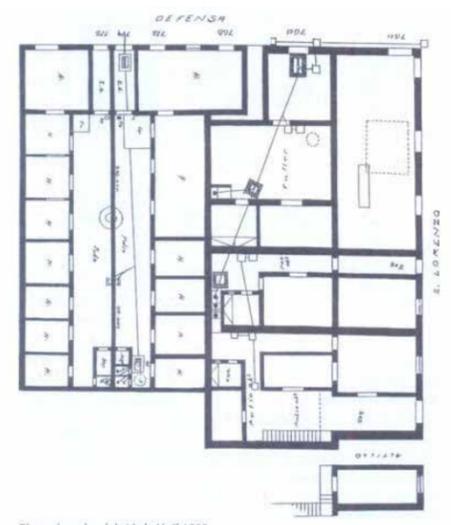


Fig.7 Sanitary Infrastructures plan for an existing conventillo, located in Defensa and San Lorenzo St., Buenos Aires, 1895. Los Conventillos de Buenos Aires. La Casa Mínima, un estudio arqueológico. Buenos Aires, 2005.

Hygienist regime: purity versus promiscuity

In the name of health and sanity, the conventillos were largely attacked and stigmatized. They were conceived as the focus of epidemics, a discourse that was used to target both the bodies and the spaces inhabited by poor migrant workers. These claims were framed by the dominant hygienist ideologies at the time, which took the form of acts, laws and commissions that imposed a sanitary dictatorship⁴ of rigorous controls over the tenants. The pressure exercised over the conventillos was led by a wide range of the population, from the conservative and catholic groups, to the Socialist Party, who through different means will promote the development of single-family houses for workers.

The insistent attack to the conventillos will always focus on the poverty and the constructed idea of insanity of the migrants' bodies, instead of targeting the actual responsible actors who were the private owners of the conventillos, members of the rich sphere of the society. However, and as expected, the attack to the sanitary conditions of the conventillos was a giant cover; a masked operation that will indeed allow the landlords to achieve their actual desires. On the one hand, the rise in the value of the land occupied by the conventillos, due to the process of modernization of the city center and the new technologies of construction, will be a key motivation for the demolition of the conventillos and the displacement of workers south into suburban houses. This operation was a radically precise one. Every housing development plan, either private or public, was located in the south of Buenos Aires, on lowlands where flooding is still today a critical problem.

[...]

Conventillos have been crucial as a platform that supported social and political encounters. Its architectural configuration allowed an hybridization of the domestic space, fostering its politicization. In this spirit, conventillos became spaces of protection – a protection that was conquered collectively. The patio was a safe space specifically because of its capacity to operate in between the public street and the intimate private room. It kept the outsiders outside, and allowed the insiders to find support and build a community structure. In the conventillo each person was able to recognize in the other their own struggles, which became crucial in the fight for civil rights. The continuous attacks to the morality and health conditions in the conventillos together with the speculations on the land sentenced them to death. With the establishment of the hetero-patriarchal suburban single family house, promoted both through private and state housing developments, all the spaces for collective care and protection vanished. In this equation women were the ones that lost the most.

Conventillos are a radical evidence of the political agency of domestic architecture. Feminist Carol Hanisch said it in 1961: the personal is political. I may add, the domestic space too.

Fig.8
Conventillo, view of the patio. The residents, just arrived European immigrants. Archivo General de la Nación, 1890.



Fig.15
National Feminist Party poster. Lanteri national deputy candidate, 1930. Documentary Sufragistas, Pioneras de las Luchas Feministas. Canal Encuentro. 2018.



Fig.14
Julieta Lanteri, first women to vote in Argentina and Latin America. Departamento Documentos Fotográficos. Caras y Caretas. Inventory115553.

Fig.13
The Brooms March - Huelga de las Escobas, in Spanish. Women were the leaders of this march that constitutes the peak of the Tenants Strike of 1907. Departamento Documentos Fotográficos. Caras y Caretas. Archivo General de la Nación, 1907.



REAL TALK

A conversation on how architecture engages with
“the real”

Patio 2
Latin GSAPP

(Intro)

In the context of this conversation Real Talk is understood in the terms of how the architecture that we produce is capable of relating with the real conditions around ourselves. The work of Gerardo Caballero becomes relevant in this approach because of its particular sensibility with La Pampa, Argentina. His engagement with the real is produced through his sharp and consistent focus on what happens around him, with enough sensibility to transfer that reality to powerful architectures, photographs or drawings.

In this interview, he discusses with Patio how his work is “cutting the crap” of cleanness and sophistication to relate with a world of sheds, mills and silos in the very core of the Argentinian rural landscape.

(Conversation)

Rocio Crosetto Brizzio: There is a particular sensibility in the way you understand and address the built environment and the extended landscape of La Pampa, Argentina. This sensibility, I feel, is so valuable because it unfolds both as a poetical and pragmatic response to the existing landscape. I know you have worked and studied in Spain and the US before settling your office in Rosario. Has this distance been influential in how you approach the realness of your context?

Gerardo Caballero: Definitely, and I think I was very lucky in that sense. When I graduated from the Architecture School in Rosario, I first went to Barcelona to work, and later I traveled to the US where I studied a Master in Architecture. That distance from Argentina was crucial to me. It allowed me to gain perspective; to really see in a different way the place where I was born and raised. Especially the huge blue sky and the infinite horizon of the rural areas around Rosario. There are some things that we tend to take for granted when we are so close; then when you take distance you have the chance to look again, to see more in there.

There is a popular saying that goes “the foreigner sees more than the local”. Routine can make us blind. My time away from Argentina also made me conscious of the way of producing architecture in Rosario. I never thought of coming back to my country to do what I learned in the US. On the contrary, I came back committed to do architecture by looking and learning at how things are done in Argentina. I wasn’t looking at other architects’ work in particular; I rather looked at common and ordinary buildings, typical of the rural landscape and the very small villages around Rosario.

RC: That is something really consistent in your work. There is a constant and very par-

ticular dialog with the place from where you produce architecture.

GC: I believe that if you avoid the real conditions of the place where your work is being produced, you are kind of lost, or out of tone, and your work as well. It could be a parallel of speaking a foreign language that no one can relate to and finally not being able to establish any communication with others. I sometimes say that hopefully things are not as we want them to be, but as they actually are. Things just are as they are, and you have to deal with that as a part of your project. That dimension of reality is a primary source for my work.

RC: This relates also with your constant activity of recording, both through photographs and drawings, the reality around yourself. I know you recently got *Libretas de Viaje* [Traveling Notebooks] published, a book that collects some of your sublime drawings. I say some because I believe you have more than 190 notebooks full of drawings, right? I see both your drawings and photos as a crucial part of your work, as I believe they make you stop to look at what is around you. How does this relate with your work?

GC: I started drawing on these notebooks in 1983, so it is a continuous process that started almost 40 years ago. Leo Tolstoy, the Russian writer used to say: "Paint your village and you will paint the world". I believe in that, and the drawings constitute a tool through which I relate to the place where I belong.

RC: As well as the photos, right? I believe they capture very ordinary elements in such a way that allows others to see a particular and alternative beauty in them, beyond our common understanding of these architectures. It feels to me that your photographs give us a second chance; another opportunity to understand the architecture of Rosario and La

Pampa. A chance to look again, maybe.

GC: The photos and the drawings are the same thing to me. They allow me to relate with the built environment around myself. Some of them are taken from the car, while driving on the road; others are taken in rural areas and in the small villages close to Rosario. I am currently working on a book that will be called *Las Cosas Próximas* [Closer Things].

RC: That sounds great, and it will be amazing to see that collection. I wonder how your work got connected with this, I may say, "alternative vernacular" lecture of La Pampa. Was it that clear from the beginning?

GC: I have an anecdote that can frame this better. When I first came back to Rosario after being abroad for a while, the first commission we received was a *Quincho*. This is a typical domestic construction in Argentina; basically a large room, separated from the house, most times in the backyard, which is used to host large meals— especially barbecues—with family and friends.

At first we thought of doing a "Mies-like" pavilion, with a flat concrete roof and large mirrors. But pretty soon we realized that it was going to be so bizarre to have that strange abstract pavilion in a very small, almost rural town. Then we asked ourselves, so what should we do here? And we thought: un galpón [a shed]. So this is how we probably started building our relationship with the agrarian rural context. For us it was much more coherent to build in that way. We believe we could make interesting reflections by looking at the "ordinary" constructions around.

Also, a commission itself already has lots of restrictions and possibilities. I believe that you do not need to create "additional problems"

for yourself through a complicated design. You rather have to address all the restrictions and apparent contradictions and take the rich and unexpected possibilities out of them, in order to construct a project that could "say something relevant or interesting".

RC: And how does your design operation work? Because I have this feeling that you start from the real built environment around yourself, as a place of intellectual departure. You take photographs and you address with a delightful sensibility your context. How is this processed into architectural ideas, strategies, and finally an architecture project?

GC: A long time ago, while I was living in Barcelona I had a conversation with Catalan architect Albert Viaplana, and he said something that I always recall while working. He said that "for the project to be born, you have to kill the idea". The ideas operate in a very abstract world. In order to arrive at the project you need to deal with "real stuff". In other words, you need to move from the abstract world to the concrete world.

I believe that projects have to discuss contemporary issues. I like to think that if I look into a project and ask about its materiality, its ethics, its politics or its construction techniques, I will get a coherent and interesting answer. If I interrogate the project on all of these matters and the project is able to get back, then it is not a vulnerable project, but rather it is offering something. At least a reflection.

RC: I believe that in all of this there is a constant and careful exercise of looking.

GC: The things that you see, the things that you look at are crucial. I was recently in Venice and while I was visiting the work of Carlo Scarpa I thought "yes, Scarpa is from here, Scarpa belongs to Venice". If you visit the work of Al-

varo Siza, you may say the same, "Siza is Portuguese and so is his architecture". If you look at Miralles and Gaudí, it makes total sense that both of them were from Barcelona where the Catalan Modernism was so powerful. Each of these people are connected with their places and they have made their architecture part of that reality. Being real is also not being fake.

Also, I always think of my work as a single one, instead of a series of individual projects. My work may have different chapters. It is made of drawings, photographs, projects, thoughts, conversations and so on. In my case, there was a moment in which I realized that what I was doing was what I indeed had the intention to do.

In Argentina, and I believe this is a Latin American condition as well, we work mostly with private clients, which produces a very different scenario for the profession to unfold. While I was working in Spain with Mario Corea, we would mostly develop public projects: hospitals, schools, parks, cultural centers, public pools, etc. Most times, with private commissions the project has to be conceived as a profitable business, for example when you are working on collective housing, which is mostly promoted by private owners. But of course, that is part of the "dealing with reality" we are talking about.

RC: As you mention collective housing, this reminds me of your project in last year's Venice Biennial, in which the topic of collective housing is—literally—put on the table.¹ The theme of the Biennial was How will we live together? Which were the main ideas behind the pavilion?

GC: Everyone thinks that they live in their own house, but the reality is that we all live in the same house: the world. This is the idea of the Infinite House, the name of the pavilion; a

house in which we already live together and from which we cannot enter or go out.

Then in order to turn this idea into a Pavilion for Argentina, we started thinking about how this part of living together unfolds in our latitudes. For this, we looked into the Casa Chorizo, a traditional domestic typology for Argentinian houses, which is formed by a series of rooms that align alongside a patio, creating a row of rooms. This house type can also recall the idea of the infinite house, as you can keep adding rooms in this linear sequence. These 4x4x4-meter rooms are generic rooms. They do not have programs. The same space could be used as a bedroom or as a dining room. Either to sleep, to eat or whatever.

And later the pink color came into play. Pink was a really common color for painting the facades of buildings after the country's revolution. Besides being a symbol of union between the colors of two political parties, the pink came from the mixture of animals' blood and limestone. This mixture suited well to both give color and also protect brick walls, as the blood protected the limestone from getting washed by the rain. Actually, our own governmental house is called La Casa Rosada [The Pink House].

So the pavilion is structured around these pink rooms in which we display more than 40 collective housing projects from Argentina, traversing all the national territory. These projects are proof of the vast differences and particularities of each territory, and show how they engage with topographic, climatic and social conditions in every region.

These projects are also divided into three categories. First, projects that have not been built but that we found of particular interest as references of collective housing in Argentina, such as the Housing Towers in la Boca by

Katzenstein, Peani, Santos and Solsona from 1958, other housing projects by Amancio Williams, etc. Second, projects from the 60's and 70's that we have called emblematic projects. Finally, a third part that displays what architects are doing today in terms of collective living across the territory of Argentina.

So finally, when we built the pavilion in Venice we thought, Ok then now we need to "furnish" this infinite house. And we thought that the Collective Housing exhibition could be shown as part of this house; in big and large prints that recall bed sheets and tablecloth.

RC: Can you mention some referents that you find or have found relevant through your career and work?

GC: Robert Venturi and Denis Scott Brown have always been heroes to me. Learning from Las Vegas proposed revolutionary things that most people at the time thought were trivial, irrelevant, or too ordinary to be part of the architectural debate. Their ideas were even underestimated by many, whereas for me, Learning from Las Vegas was an incredibly revealing book. The ideas around ordinary objects, popular culture, and the so-called "ugliness" were of extreme value for my work. Most times the most valuable things are just right here; and we just need to change the lens with which we look.

Notes:

1. This refers to the printed sheets that showed the Collective Housing Exhibition at The Infinite House Argentinean Pavilion, and which were displayed recalling tablecloth, covering wooden tables across the pink rooms of the pavilion.



DISSECTING ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

Sleeplessness, Resistance and Dissidence
in Architectural Practice

rAADio
2022

rAADio

The second season of rAADio brings the discussion to the center of architectural practice. We are dissecting our work and the ways in which it is produced, placing on the table the controversies and challenges of being an architect today.

These episodes are thought of as a journey; they are somehow moving forward, pushing our practice towards more critical and sensitive horizons.

The first chapter presents the controversies of our practice today, through a sleepless reality. The second episode inquiries on how our reality can be confronted, and how we can resist the incongruences and fight towards better working conditions. The third episode broadens our perspective of the discipline. It speaks about dissident practices and architects that do not do building.

Coming back to the start, this may be because architecture is MORE THAN BUILDINGS.

Ep 1 /

Sleeplessness in practice

Do we need to be sleep deprived to produce good architecture?

Sleeplessness in practice confronts the assumption that architecture students and architects have to push the limits of their bodies while practicing architecture. This episode discusses the 24/7 reality and the demands of a digitally and remote world. Sleeplessness is about sleep deprivation and the exhaustion of the body. It looks back into history to understand where this behavior comes from, and to inquire on the relationship between creativity, productivity and sleep. Artists have experimented with alternative sleeping cycles, the military has invested millions on sleep related research to achieve the utopia of the sleepless soldier, philosophers have written about the relationship between sleep, the unconscious and gods. Till now architects still push themselves to stay awake.

Ep 2 /**Resistance in practice**

Do we need to pick passion over profit to be a good architect?

Resistance is a main issue in architectural practice. We are always resisting. This episode unfolds issues related with the collective force architects can create when organizing in unions, both in academia and in the work sphere. The debate includes historical strikes organized by Columbia students workers as well as very recent events such as unions created in architecture offices and the controversial incidents occurred in SCI Arc in Los Angeles. This episode also has a “bonus track”: an interview with Dank Lloyd Wright, a memes Instagram profile that had gone viral and which claims to be a new media for the speculation on architecture and theory. This episode has the intention to understand the networks that configure our practice and our rights as workers, to be capable of manipulating them gaining agency and power.

Ep 3 /**Dissidence in practice**

Do we need to build at all to be an architect?

Dissidence in practice brings new alternatives onto the table. This episode is the one that moves forward; the moment in which we claim that despite the controversies of architectural practice, architects have the agency to operate through a wide range of media: through texts, drawings, objects, performances, and so on. Architecture is not only about buildings. On this last recording we invite the audience to engage with other forms and media to produce architecture.

And from here we go back to the very beginning of this portfolio: Architecture is MORE THAN BUILDINGS.

rAADio, an investigation by Advanced Architectural design students in the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at Columbia University. As a cohort from a plurality of diverse backgrounds, we aim to observe the many polycentric entanglements of architecture. We explore the questions of how we expand the traditional role and associations of architecture between assemblages, interrelationships, bodies, and technologies; beyond simple scalar translations.

Credits by projects

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF "THE TOXIC"

Transfusions for an interspecies alliance between pokeweed and people living with HIV and covid viruses

Design Project - Research

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio, Ana Paola Hernandez

Professor: Nerea Calvillo

Year: 2021

NETWORKS OF RESISTANCE

Typological corrections in NYCHA housing, East Harlem

Design Project - Research

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio, Ruben Gomez Ganan, Leon Duval

Professor: Juan Herreros

Year: 2021

"EVERYDAYLAND"

Living within Disney's Chemical Spectacle

Design Project - research

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio

Professor: Mark Wasiuta

Year: 2022

UNORTHODOX ARCHITECTURES

A graphic essay on Lina Bo Bardi's heterodoxical practice

Visual Studies

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio

Professor: Juan Herreros

Year: 2021

CONFRONTING AUTHONOMY

Contextualizing Rossi

Research

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio, Daniela Beraun, Shulong Ren, Yifei Yuan

Professor: Bernard Tschumi

Year: 2022

CONVENTILLOS

A platform for Feminist Fight

Research

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio

Professor: Anna Puigjaner

Year: 2021

REAL TALK

Conversations on how architecture engages with "the real"

PATIO, Latin GSAPP

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio

Year: 2022

DISSECTING ARCHITECTURAL

PRACTICE

Sleeplessness, Resistance and Dissidence in Architectural Practice

RAADIO

Authors: Rocio Crosetto Brizzio, Daniela Beraun, Dhruva Viswaraj Lakshminarayanan, Leon Duval, Aahana Banker, Hein Song and Malavika Madhuraj

Coordination: Andres Jaque

Year: 2022

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