



MINGXUN ZOU

GSAPP, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

MSAAD PROGRAM

CLASS OF 2022

PERSONAL STATEMENT

I think I'm a person with a lot of creativity and curiosity. Besides from architecture, I'm into singing and composing pop music in my spare time. I also like humanistic knowledge such as geography, art, history, and social relations and accumulate it whenever I want to know more. For me, architecture is a way to accumulate knowledge and realize my imagination, and lastly the main way for me to make a living.

HOW COULD DESIGN MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF CONTEMPORARY URBANITES?

In China, the rapid gentrification process brings about homogenizing and stifling high-rise buildings in replacement of low-density communities. Communal living scenarios are erased, and neighborhoods lose a sense of belonging. Accordingly, I have been thinking intensely about how urban design and architecture can meet the material and spiritual needs of contemporary urbanites. To find the answer, I intend to investigate the humanity-oriented design that is focusing on the collective memory and spiritual life of urbanites, instead of an unsustainable, real-estate-driven approach.

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How To Be Alone

House For Hiding

2021 Summer, Advanced Design Studio

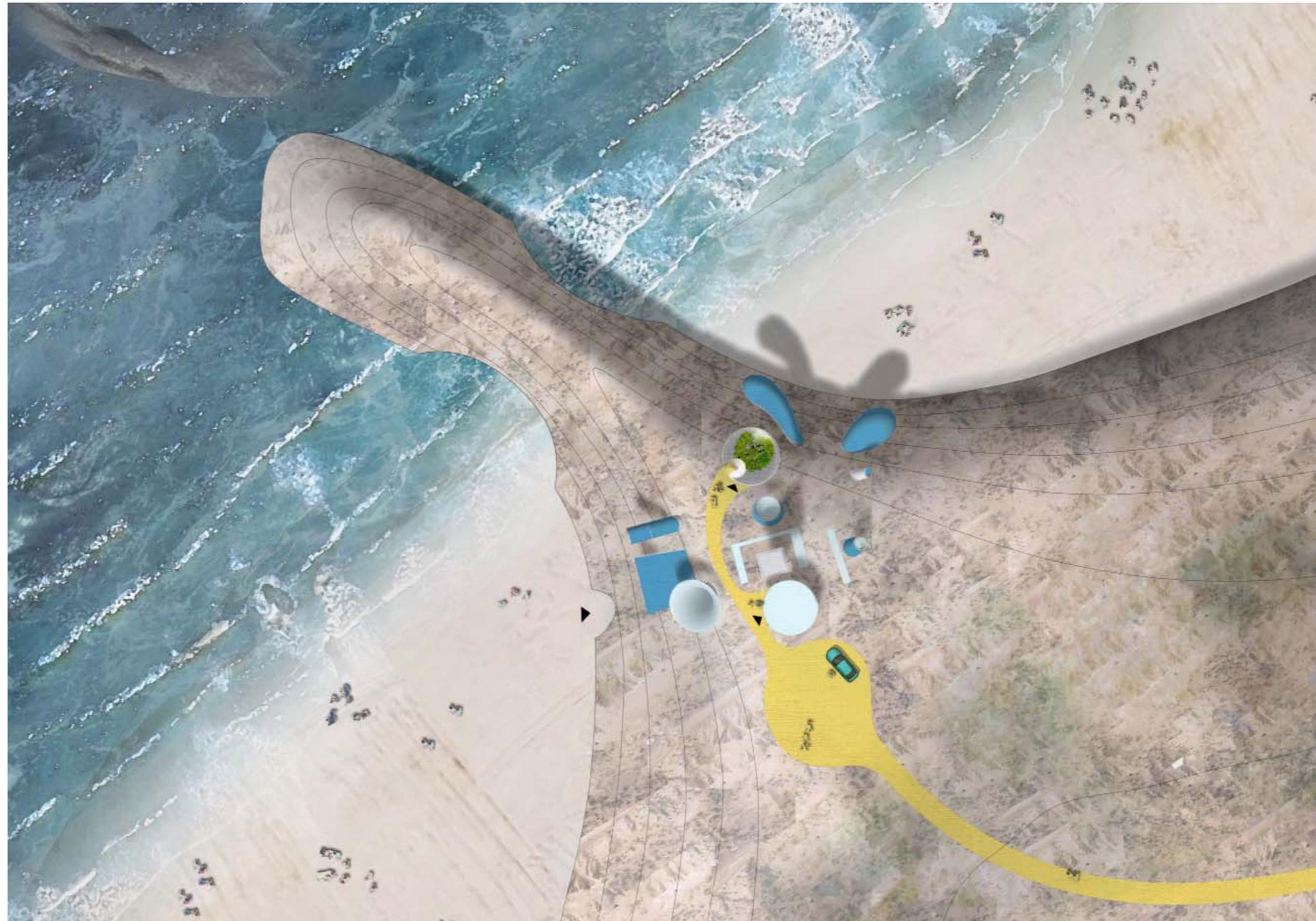
Site: Morocco, Africa

Instructor: Dan Wood

Individual Work

Manifesto

Being alone helps recognize myself better
To confront with the anxiety and depression from the past
To feel fragmented
To hide inside corners and free myself
To Figure out what happened inside my mind
To recover from the bad mood
To reintegrate into the society
It is a house for me to hide from social regulation.
It is my phantasy of being alone.



Imagination Of Being Alone



Bumpy Corner 1



Bumpy Corner 2



Emotion Of Being Alone

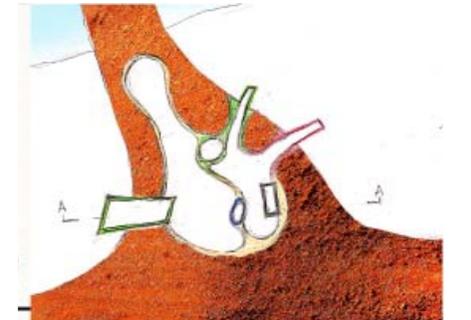
- Fragmented & Reintegrated

There is the idea of bumpy corners because corners give me more privacy. Through making assembly, I create a "cave" with bumpy facade and natural sporadic light. Additionally, hot pot, spicy food originate my hometown Chongqing, so maybe it's my unconscious choice to play with red and green pepper.

Imagination Of Inhabiting In Stone Arch



Assembly - Caved & Inserted



Emotion To Site

- Falling

I choose the Legzira beach at Morocco as my Site. There is a big stone arch. My proposal is to inhabit inside it. I went to Morocco once. After I walked along Atlantic ocean, I got sheltered inside, feel peaceful. There is good memory for me and my friends, such as camp fire in the desert and game party. I'm a nostalgia person. I enjoy recalling the past when I am alone. I want to be immersed in the natural environment. The stone arch is 1 km away from the town nearby, from which the water and electricity could be transferred.

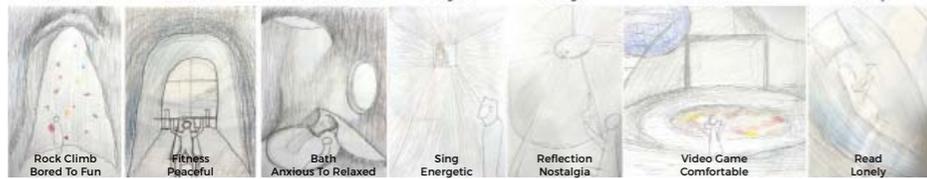
Positive & Negative Space For Hiding



Cave For Hiding



Vignettes In Cave

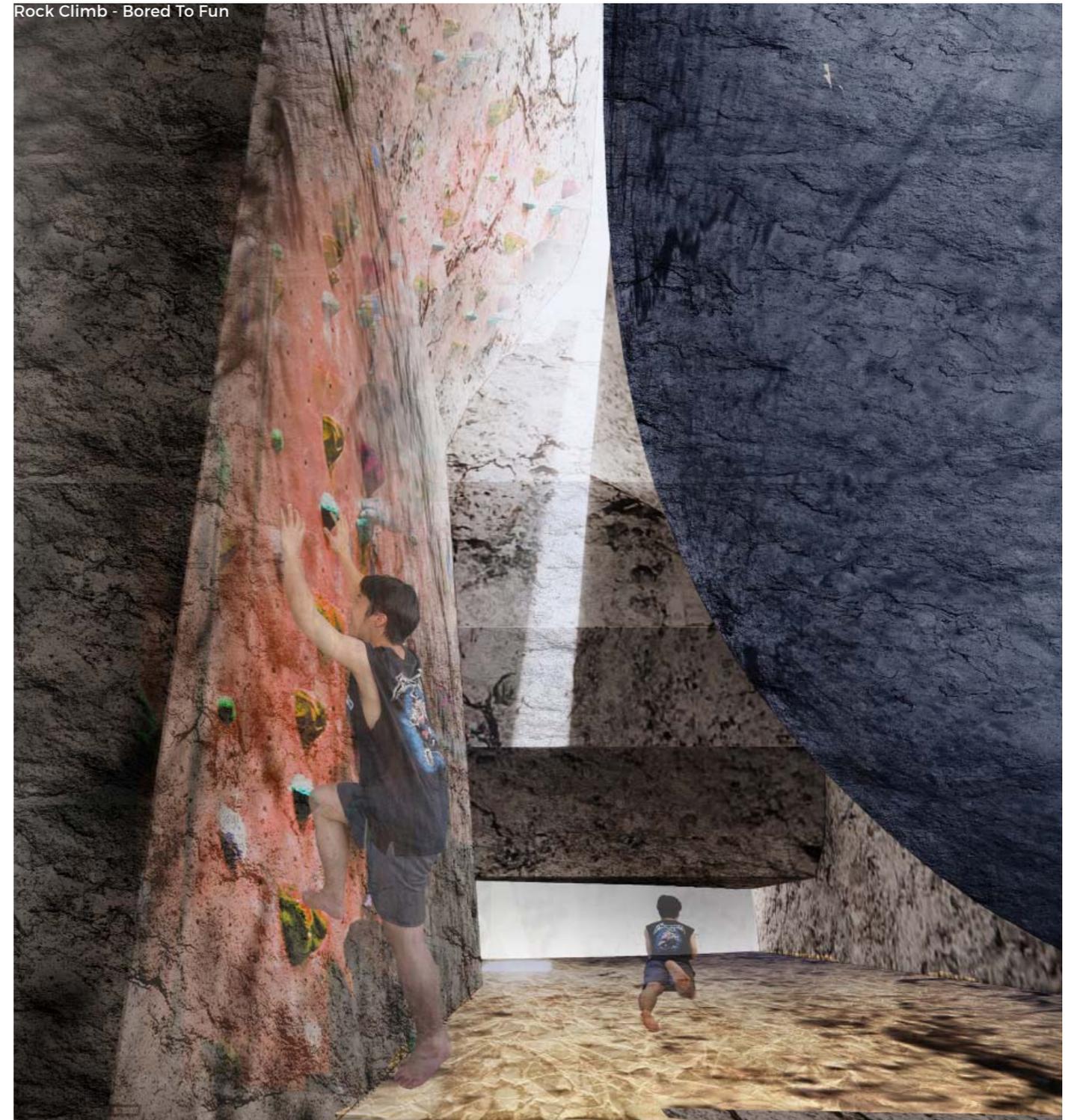


Hiding In Cave

- Bean shaped space & Program

Through combining the idea of hiding with previous work, I have the concept of hiding and use Bean-shaped space as a prototype. Also, the negative space is utilized.

Rock Climb - Bored To Fun



A-A Section

- 1. GYM
- 2. PARTY SPACE
- 3. SING
- 4. VIDEO GAME
- 5. CLIMB
- 6. BEDROOM



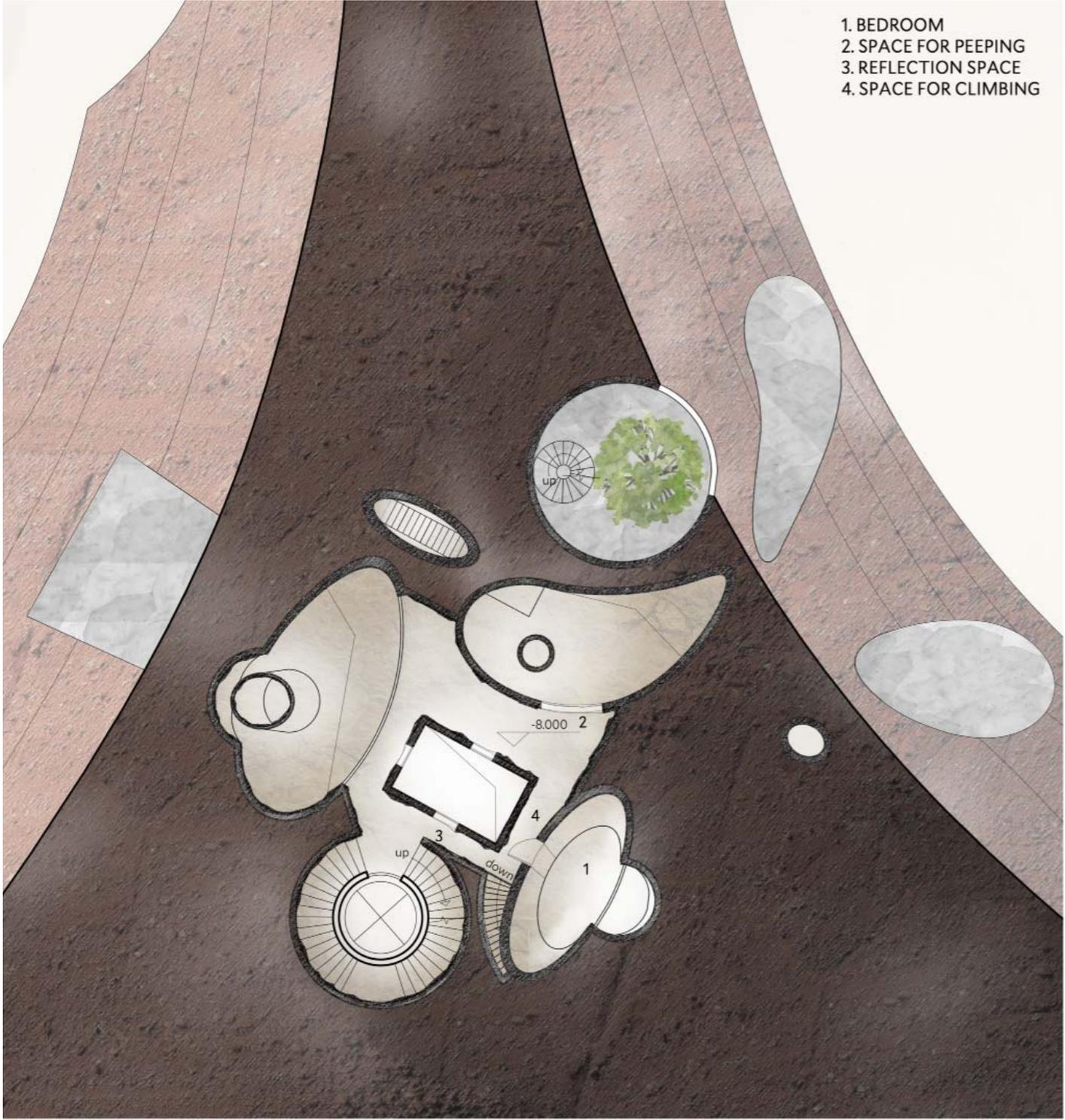
Cave Corners To Release Emotion

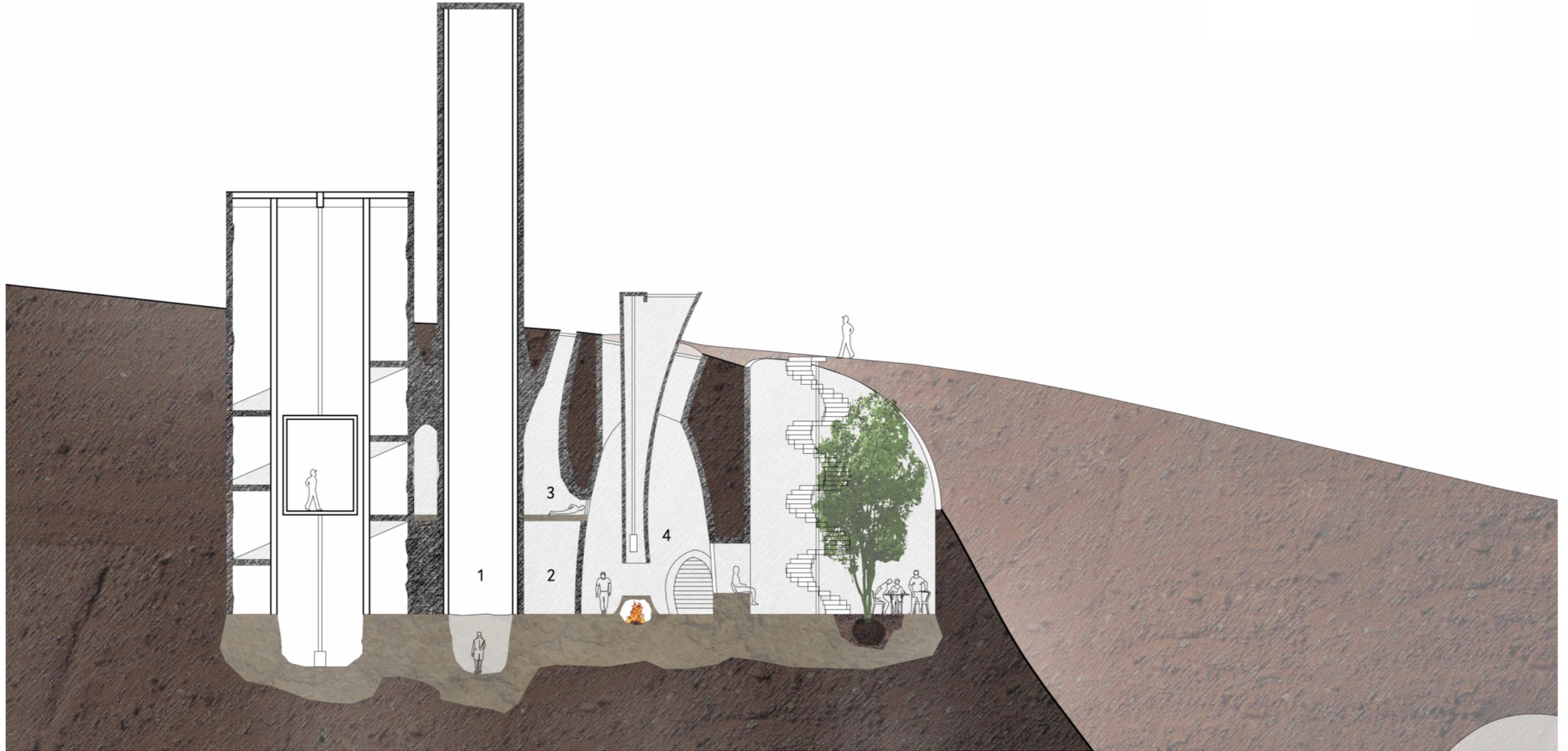
I feel peaceful when I do the fitness in the gloomy environment and see the ocean through untypical French window.

There is a vertical space for singing and it could produce nice reverberation. The interior material is mirror and works like a periscope to reflect in the scenery from the outside.



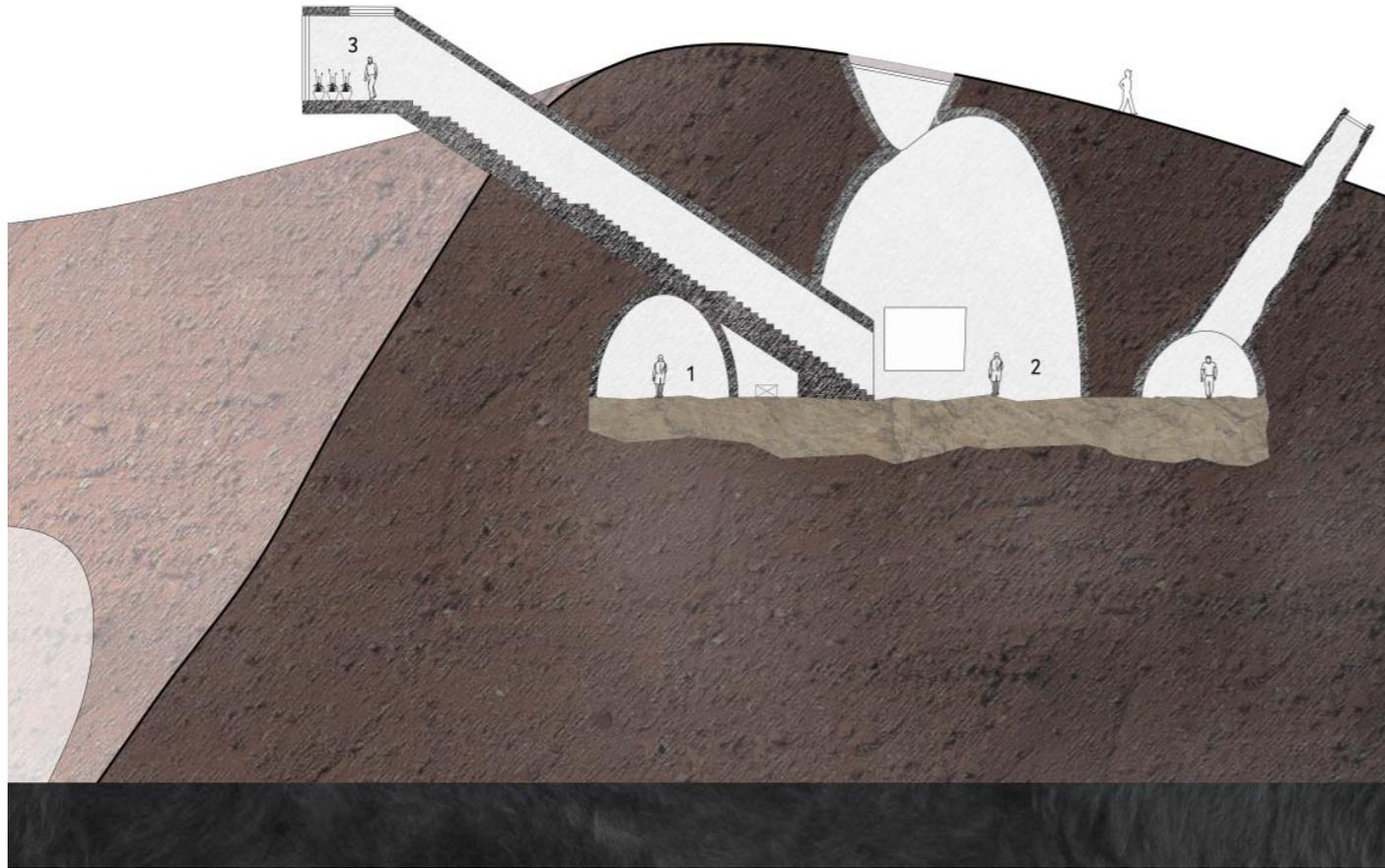






B-B Section

- 1. PARTY SPACE
- 2. BARBEQUE
- 3. RAISING PLANTS



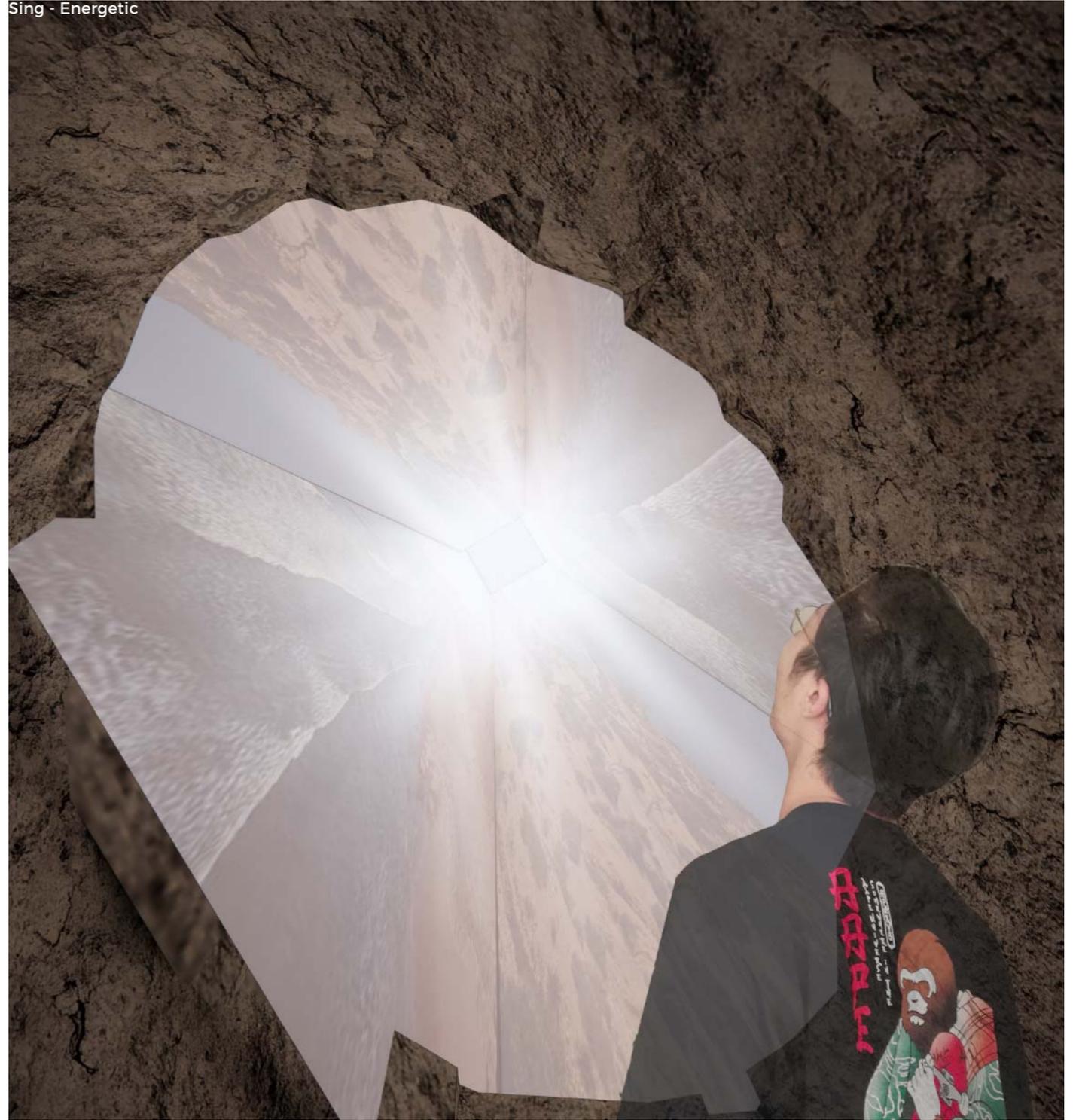
Barbeque



Party & Recall The Past



Sing - Energetic



ANTI-COMMODITIZING MACHINE

A STREET FOR PROTEST

2021 Fall, Advanced Design Studio

Site: Canal Street, Soho, New York

Instructor: Mario Gooden

Individual Work

HOW TO RESIST COMMODITIZATION

The uniqueness of a place is associated with its multilayered history and events instead of its real estate value, which might result in characteristic architecture and streetscape. The uniqueness is a reflection of bottom-up activities in life through the history. This project aims to transmute public spaces in canal street of Soho into an anti-commoditizing machine. It proposes to reclaim the collective memory of protests towards events such as rezoning, black lives matter, Manhattan expressway proposal. There are layers of protests history on Soho streets, but there is hardly any streetscape to remind people of these events. However, street art on plywood and mirror emerges as a way to document protests movement during the lockdown period in Soho. The street art encourages public engagement of folk artists and nonprofit organization offers permission for their productive work.



KNOCK-OFFS ON PROTEST STREET

Memory Of Protests
 - Protest Events Through Soho History

Protest A - Manhattan Expressway 1962



Protest B - Black Lives Matter Movement 2014



Protest history C - Black Lives Matter Movement 2020

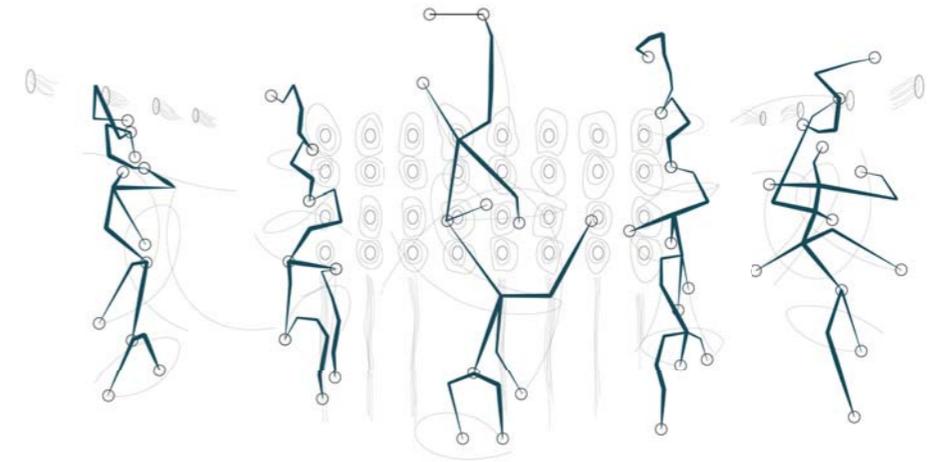


Protest D - Save Soho Movement 2021



This project extracts a spatial language from the cheography, Holding Space and form new typologies to cater different body gesture and generate bottom-up activities. The cheography suggests an idea of collective caring and operation in public realm. Each dancer occupies one floor tile. Five group of dancers correspond with each other to show an effort of collective caring.

Exploring "Body Gesture Of Protestors"
 - Spatially Reinterpret Body Movements in Cheography

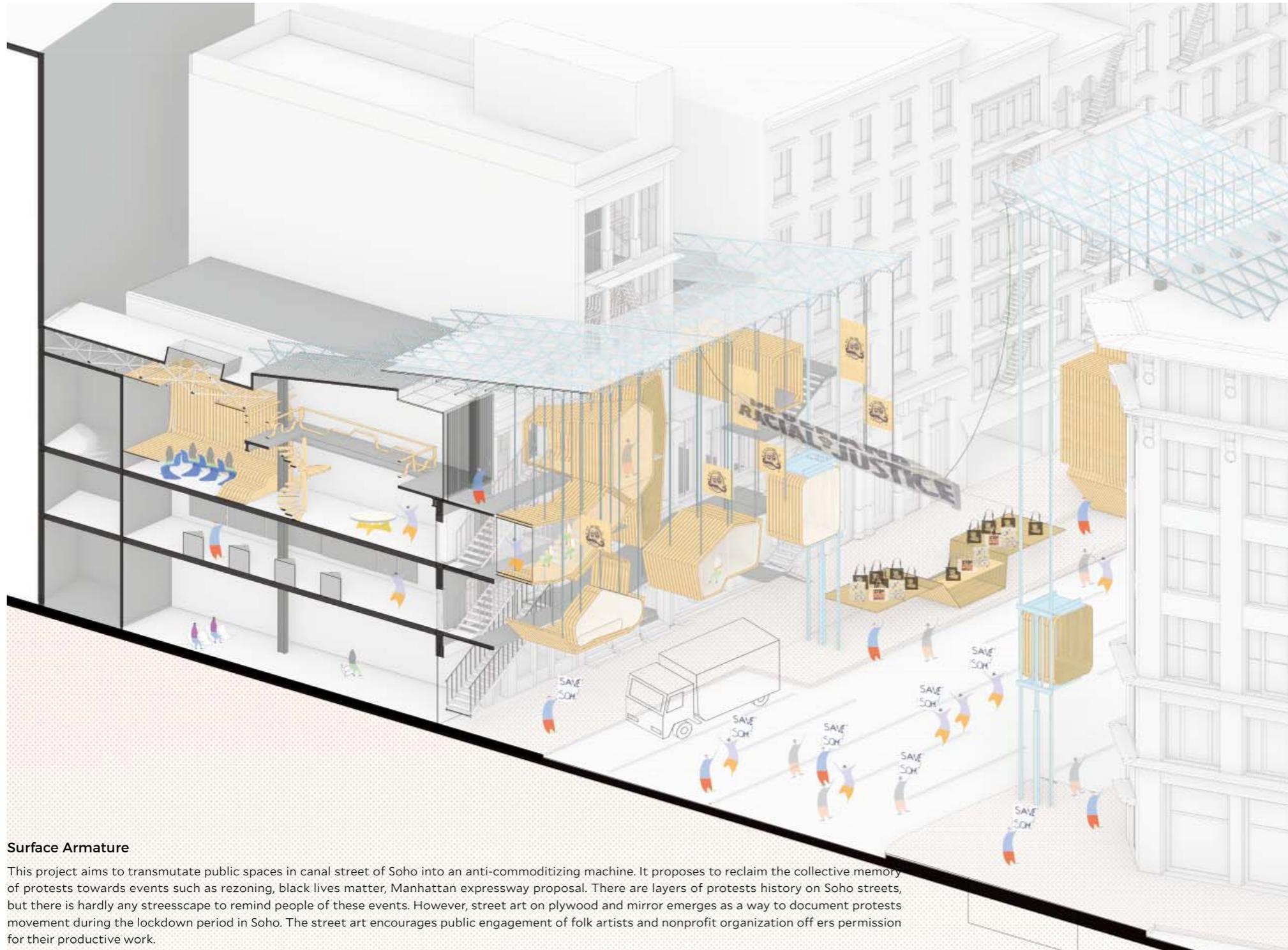




Wood Panel With Protests Art
- Archiving Protest Events

Referring to the protests events and protests art in Soho and learning from Julie Mehretu's artwork, a partial view of the shopping window in Soho is created. It layers together different perspective views and graffiti of protest events such as saving soho and chinatown through reflection on window, mirror and plywood.





Surface Armature

This project aims to transmutate public spaces in canal street of Soho into an anti-commoditizing machine. It proposes to reclaim the collective memory of protests towards events such as rezoning, black lives matter, Manhattan expressway proposal. There are layers of protests history on Soho streets, but there is hardly any streetscape to remind people of these events. However, street art on plywood and mirror emerges as a way to document protests movement during the lockdown period in Soho. The street art encourages public engagement of folk artists and nonprofit organization offers permission for their productive work.

WHY CANAL STREET

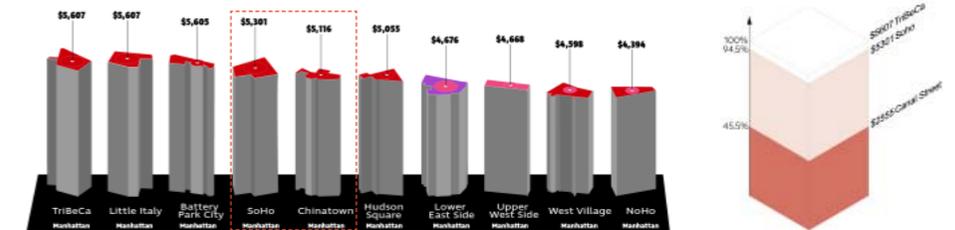
Street For Protestors Gathering



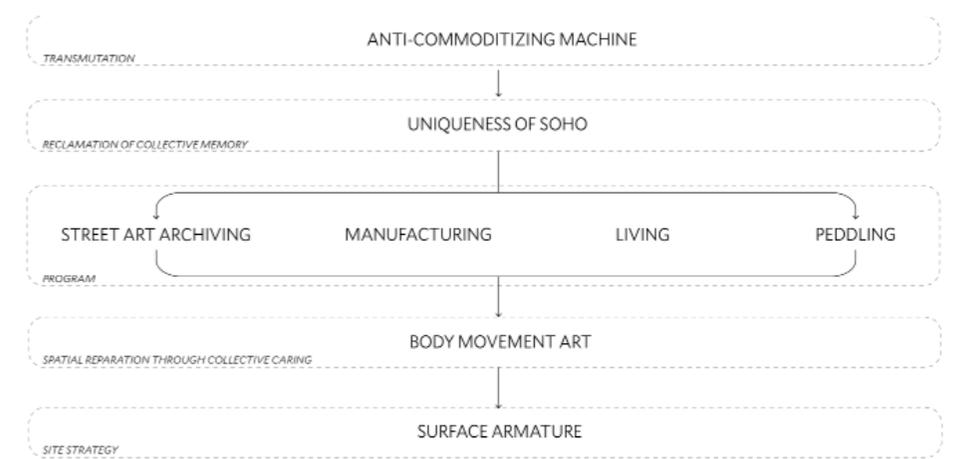
Resisting Gentrification: Fleas in 1970 For Knock-offs

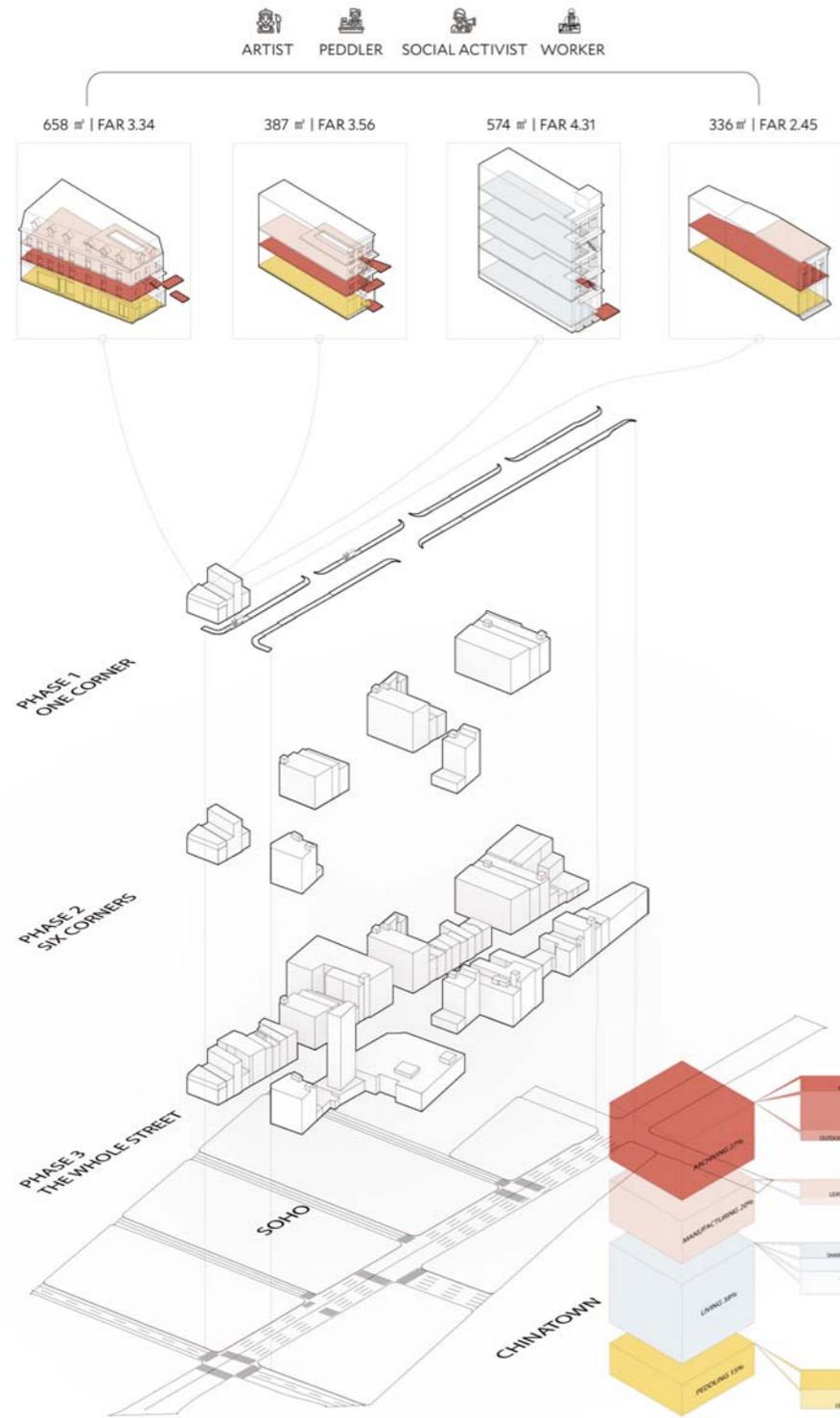


Lowest Rent in Soho



PROGRAMS

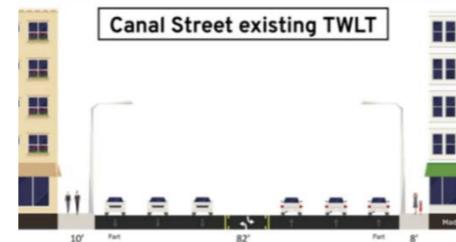




Surface Armature Typologies - Reutilizing Wooden Art Panels

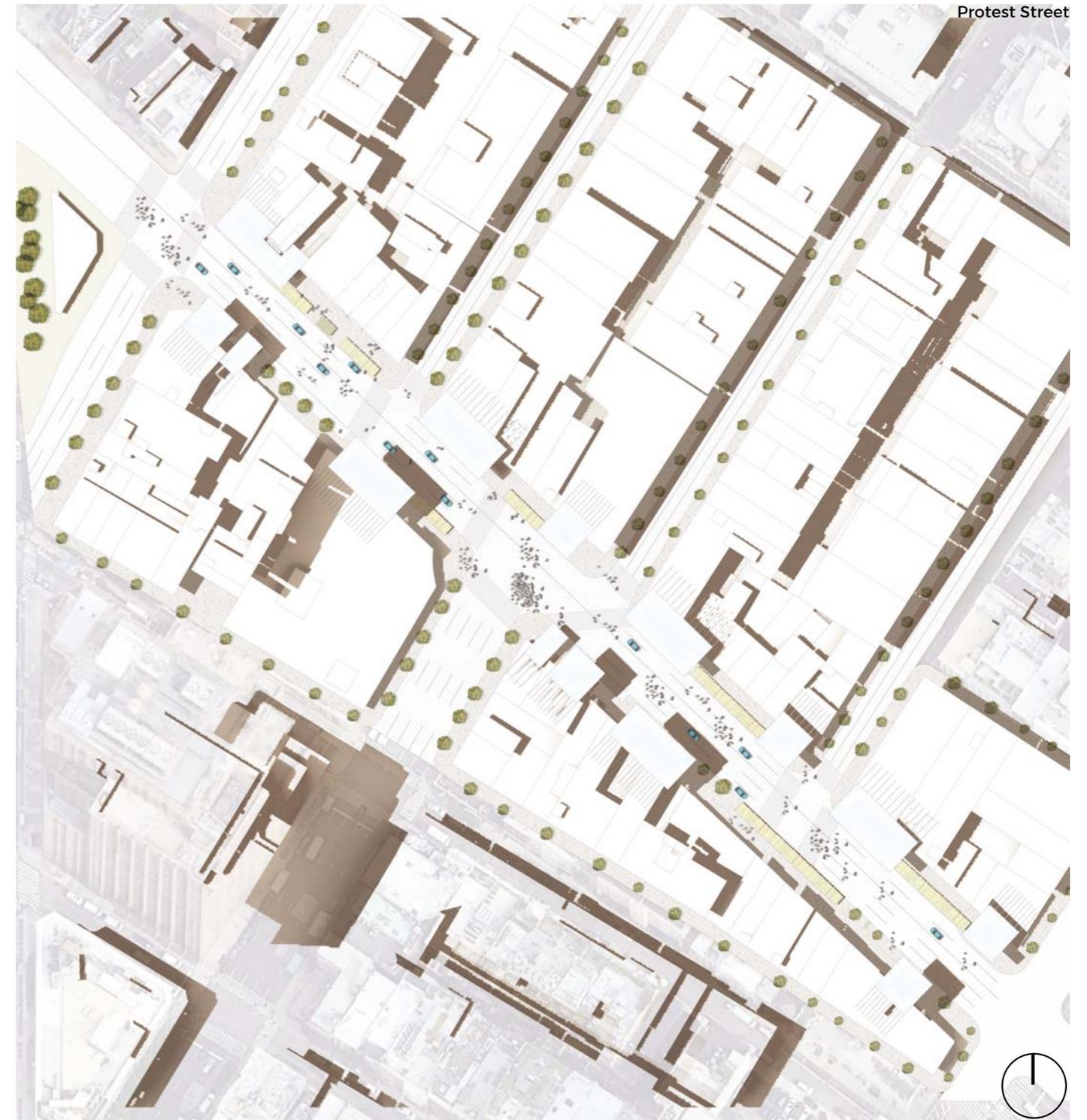


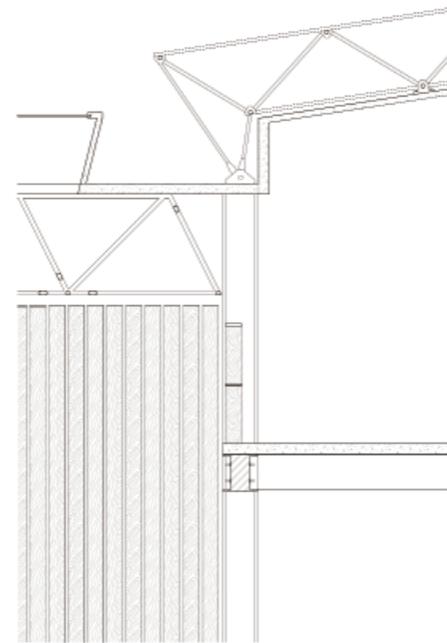
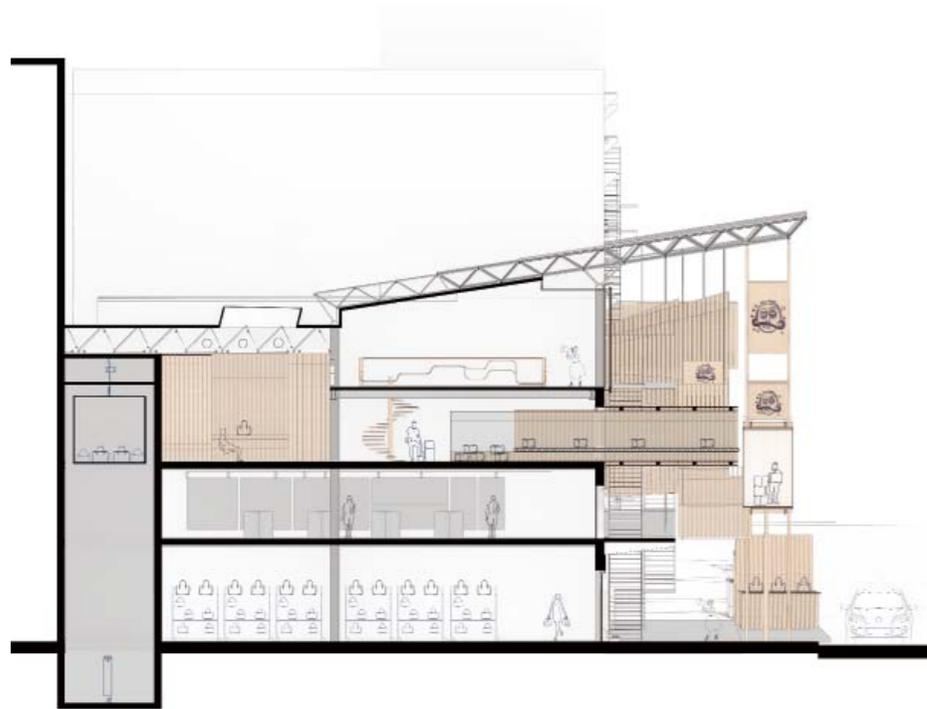
Traffic Problems



Collective Property Ownership

Workers, social activists, artists and peddlers collectively rent buildings in canal street and collectively operate it. The development of canal street would undergo three phased development. This project demonstrate the first phase development. It start from one corner of canal street and transform the original 7-lanes road into 5 lanes in order to extend sidewalk and give room for vendors and truck parking. The second phase would make interventions to six corners of the blocks on canal street and the third phase would affect the whole canal street.





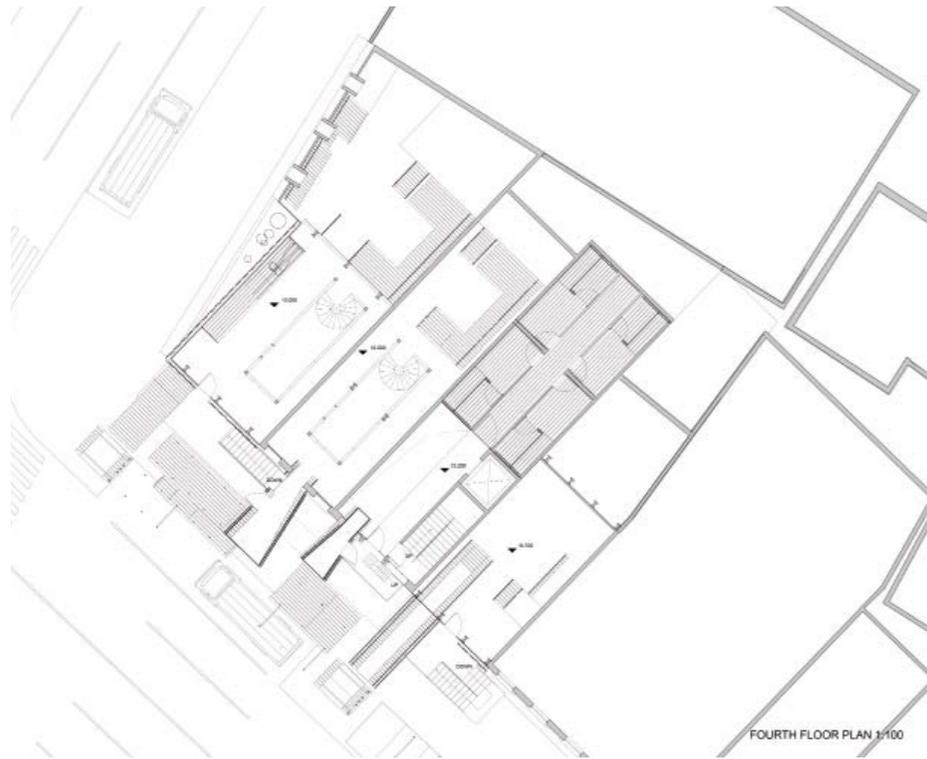
Structural Strategy

There are ideas of cantilivering and suspension. The new interventions are suspended from the new truss structure. New steel column is attached on the top of existing load-bearing facade. New I beam extends outside loadbearing walls to support the extended floor.



Leather Factory

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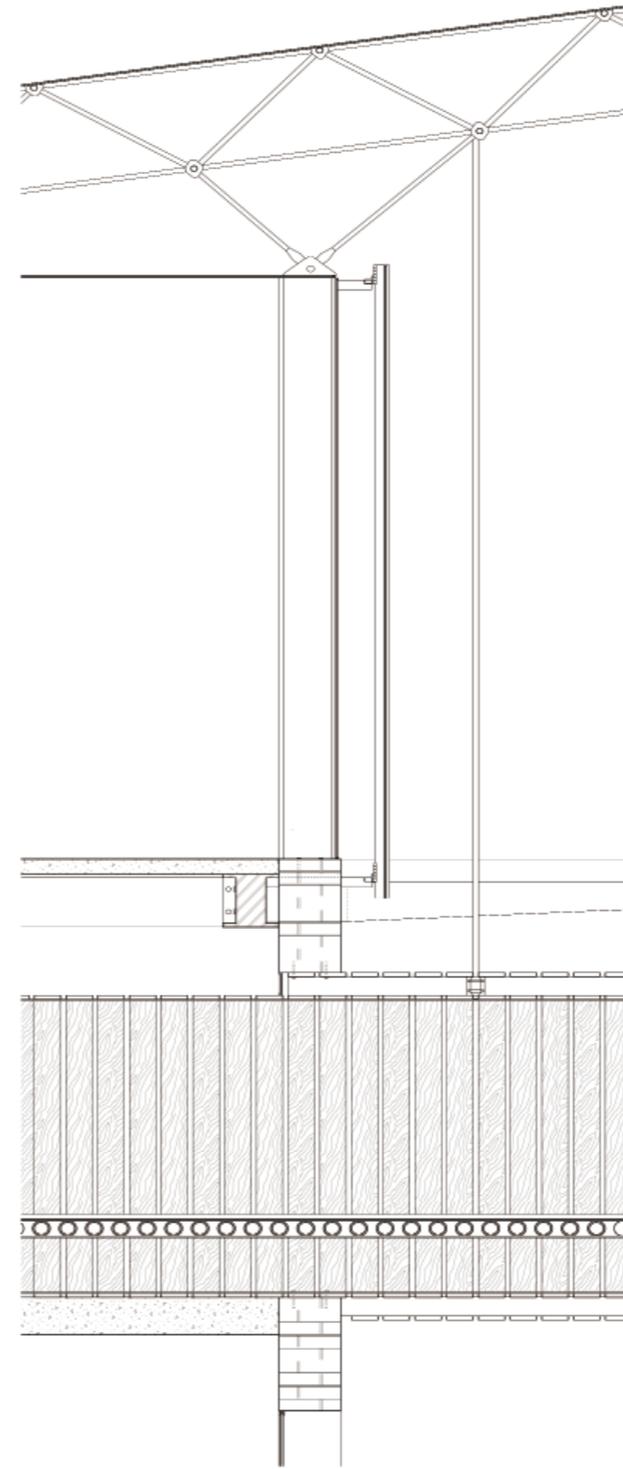
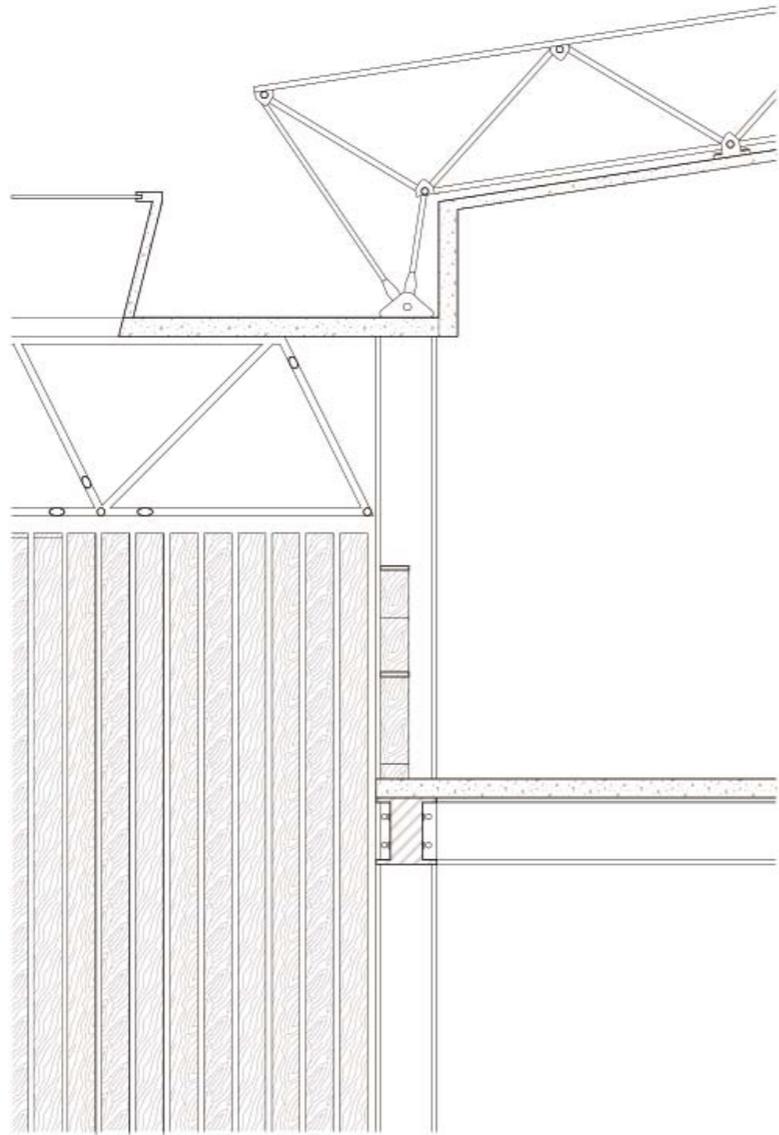
Sharing Apartment Units

There are ideas of cantilivering and suspension. The new interventions are suspended from the new truss structure. New steel column is attached on the top of existing load-bearing facade. New I beam extends outside loadbearing walls to support the extended floor.



Surface Armature For Protestors

There are ideas of cantilivering and suspension. The new interventions are suspended from the new truss structure. New steel column is attached on the top of existing load-bearing facade. New I beam extends outside loadbearing walls to support the extended floor.





METROPOLITAN RECOLLECTION ADAPTIVE REUSE MANNUAL

2022 Spring, Advanced Design Studio

Site: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Instructor: Juan Herreros

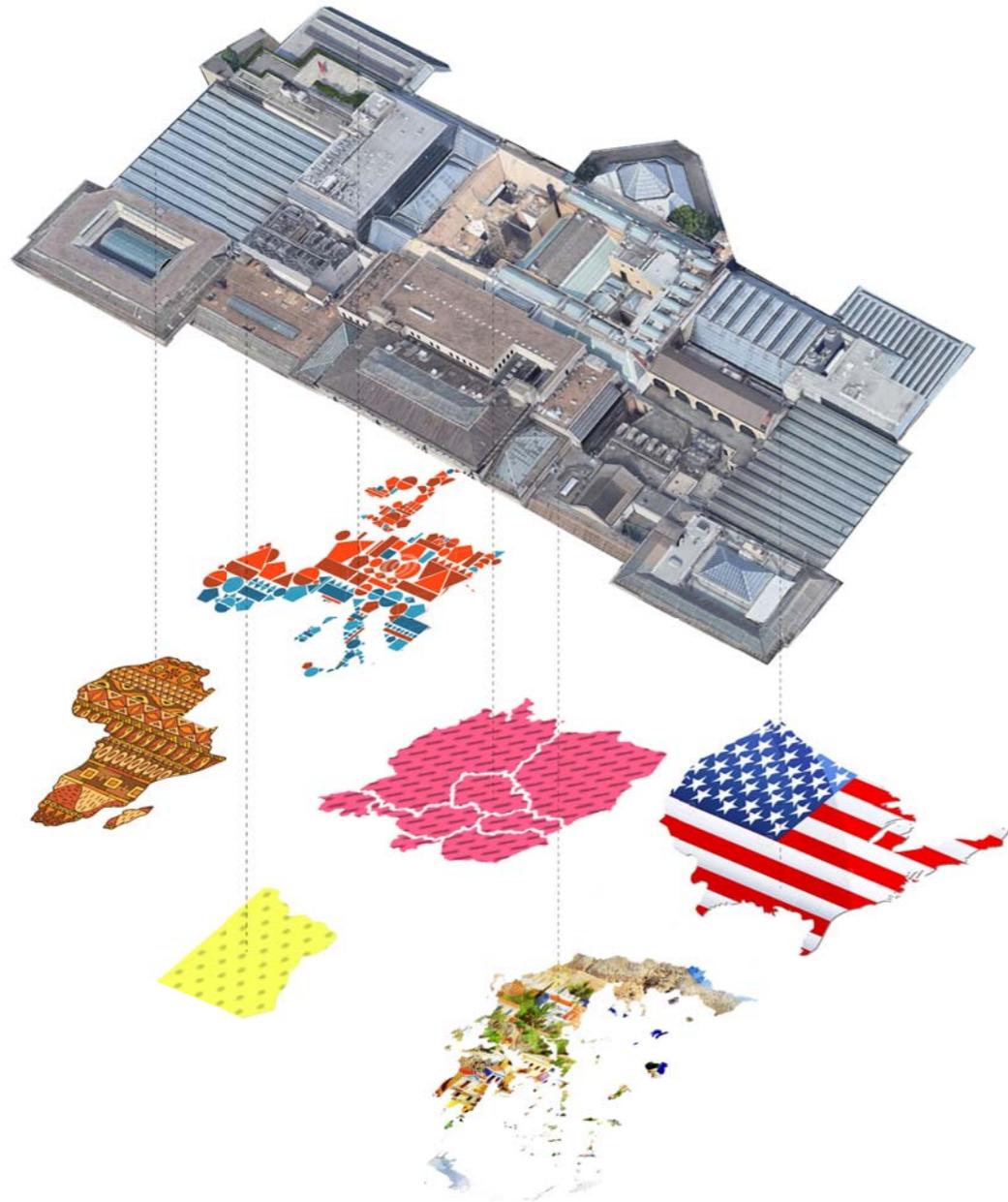
Individual Work

DISRUPT THE COLONIAL SYNTAX OF THE ENCYCLOPEDIA

The mission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, colloquially "the Met", is an encyclopedic collection from around the world. It is a global fantasy of total knowledge and the illusion of unity is produced by the uneven geography and the appropriation of colonial artifacts from other places. It collects exhibitions from cultures outside America but fails to recollect the trajectory of these artifacts. It celebrates artifacts from other geography but ignores the indigenous American Art.

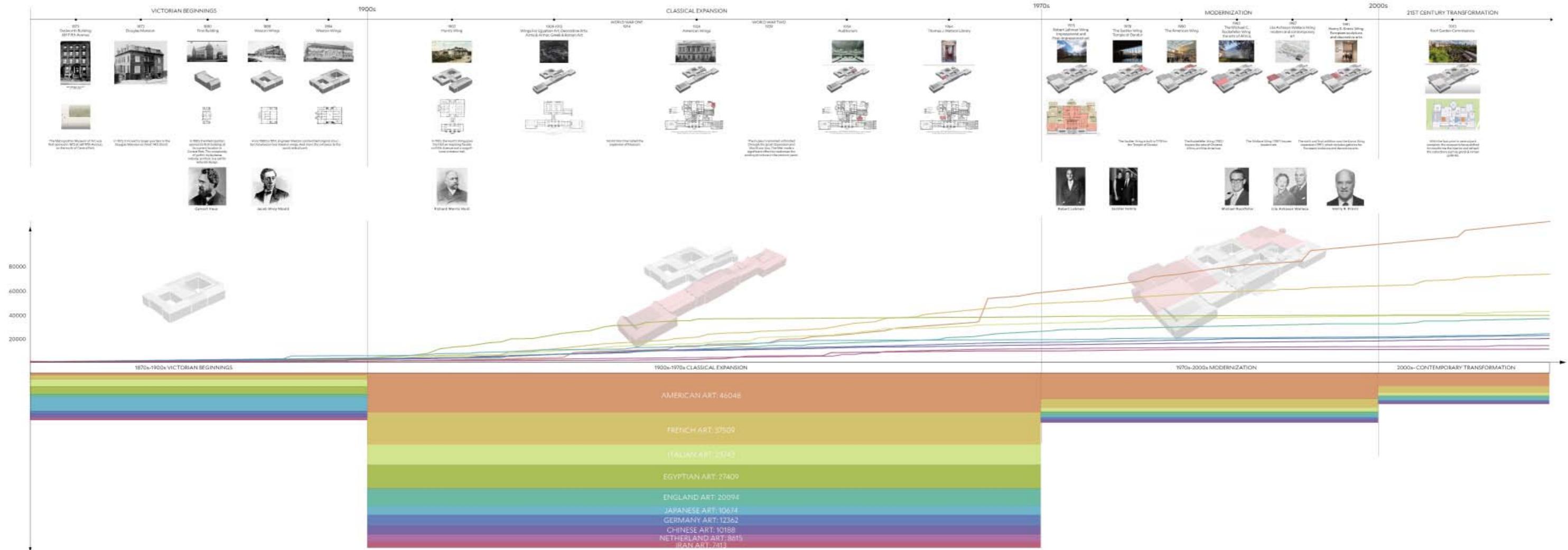
Three families of architectural interventions are introduced to disrupt the colonial syntax of the Encyclopedia. The new families - nests, valleys, and yards with distorted shapes punctuates the antiquated floors and facades and soften the orthogonal wall systems of the Met.





Colonial Syntax Of The Encyclopedia

The mission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, colloquially "the Met", is an encyclopedic collection from around the world. It is a global fantasy of total knowledge and the illusion of unity is produced by the uneven geography and the appropriation of colonial artifacts from other places. It collects exhibitions from cultures outside America but fails to recollect the trajectory of these artifacts. It celebrates artifacts from other geography but ignores the indigenous American Art.



Imprudent Expansion

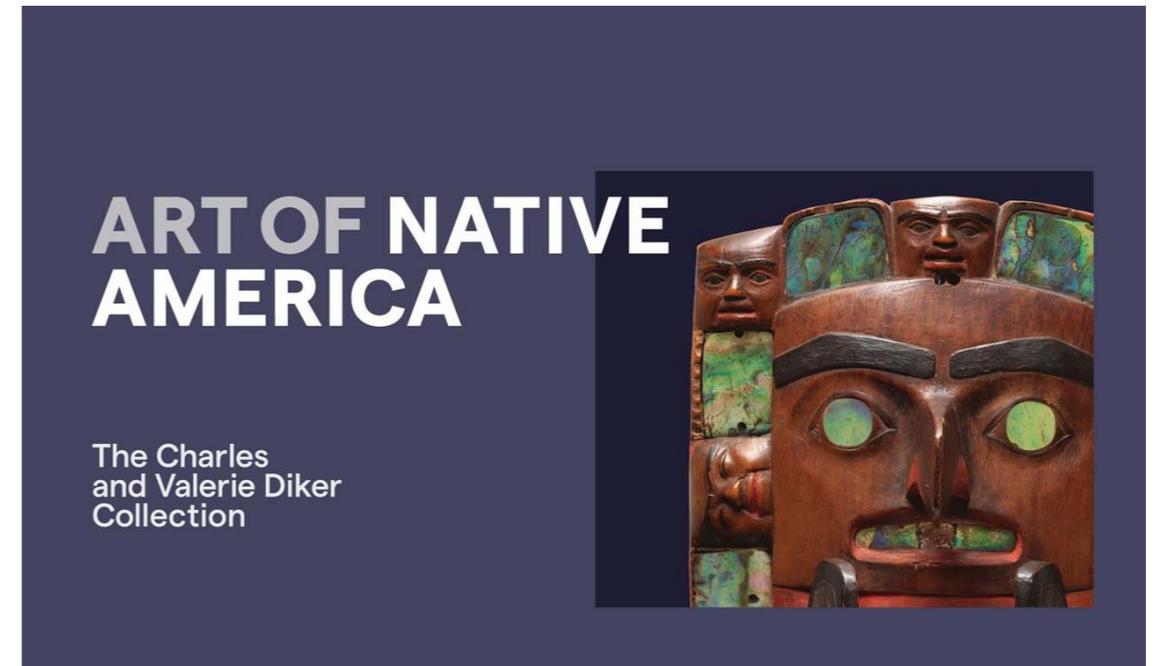
The development of Met is colonial history. It takes over part of Central parkland with its imprudent expansion which could be divided into three periods. In 1880, the Met located itself on the east side of central park and began with the Victorian Gothic Styles. The first group of Victorian buildings is designed by Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould. And then, Richard Morris Hunt's proposal further expanded the Met with Renaissance and Palladian-style wings. When it Comes to the modernization period, different people donate money to further expand the Met and named these new wings after themselves.



Protest Against Met's Colonialism Ideology

The New York-based protest group, Decolonize This Place, launched a large demonstration at the front steps of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Representatives for Decolonize This Place described the Met as bastions of harmful ideologies, in particular colonialism. Many protestors chanted, "They want the art, but not the people!" There are also traces of colonialism outside the Met in the metropolitan area. The campaigners regarded Cleopatra's Needle, an Egyptian obelisk as a colonial art craft which is appropriated by the US in the 19th century, and launched protests there.

Correspondingly, the Met should also recollect the colonial memory besides from collecting the arts from otherness, which is a response to the existing advocacy for decolonization from activists and artists. The Met as an encyclopedic educational institute has the responsibility to get people informed about the colonial history of various arts.



Indigenous American Culture

An exhibition of Indigenous American artifacts took place in the American wing of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2018. The marginalized culture entered the public's vision for the first time. There is a call for recontextualizing what we define as American culture and transforming the indigenous American tribal art into American art.



Current Director

Max Hollein is an Austrian art historian and the current Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

He added in an interview with the New York Times:

The reason for bringing in Egyptian art is to answer questions like “What was happening in the 1950s in Egypt?”. More contexts need to be demonstrated here.

Therefore, the Met needs to demonstrate more stories about the trajectory of arts. It would recollect the colonial history of each art craft that has been erased.

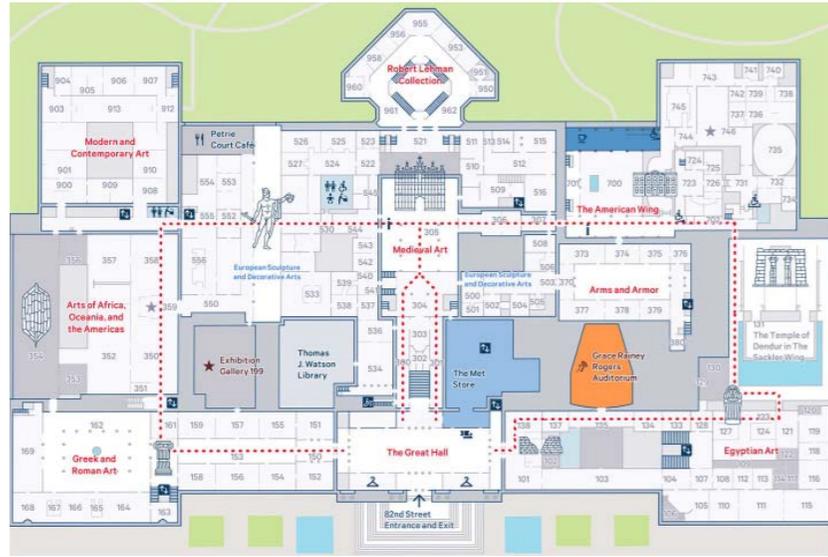


Iceberg

The colonial memory of artifacts is archived underneath the Met as an invisible iceberg. Besides that, the iceberg also includes conservation departments, the topics of which include objects, Paintings, Paper, photographs, Textile, Costume and Scientific Research, and Time-based media art.

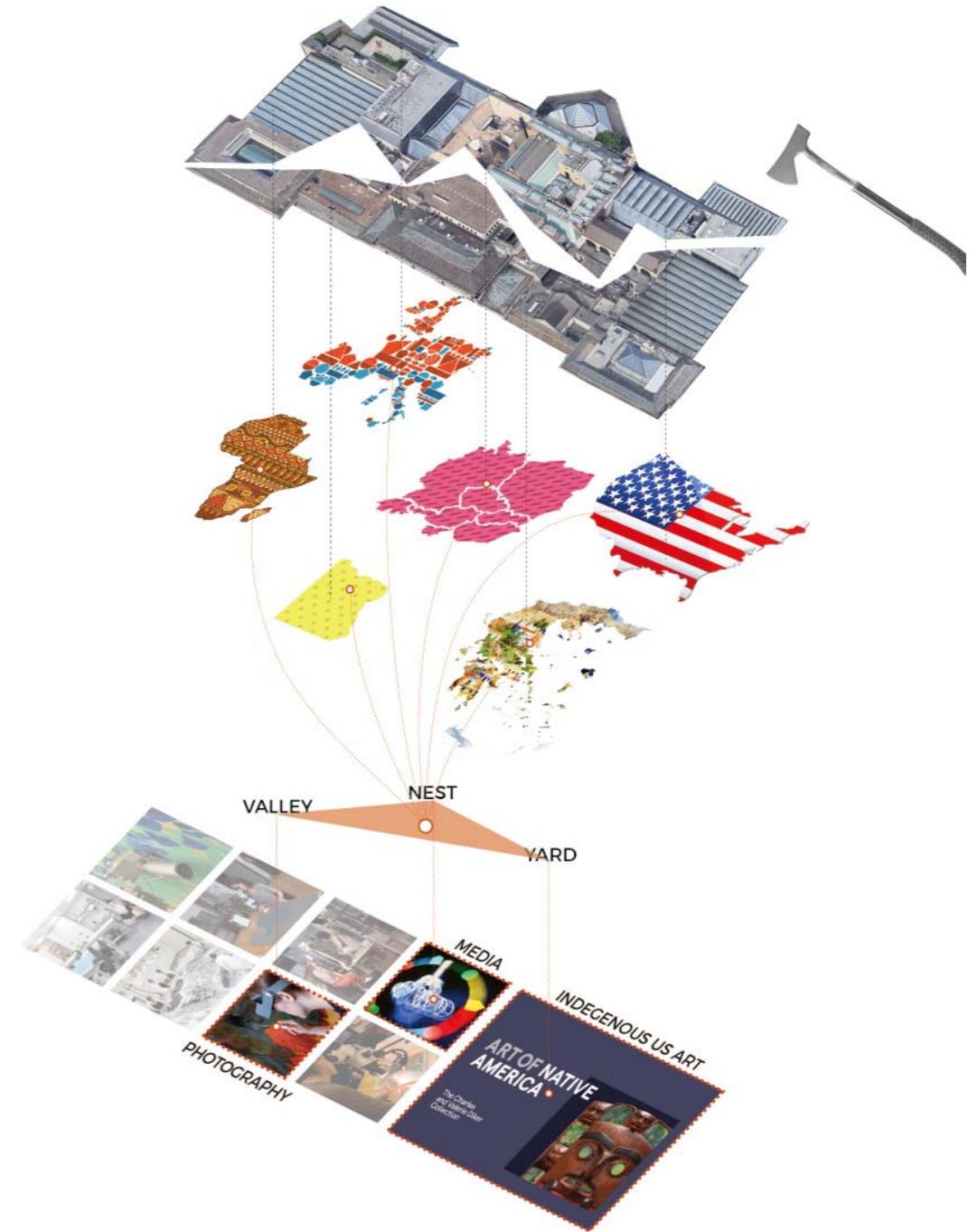
The archive should be recollected and pumped above the ground.





Circulation

The spatial organization of Met is a result of colonial expansion. Now there is only one entrance from the east side of the central park near the fifth avenue. Inside Met, It is an orthogonal maze and people have to at least go in a rigid rectangular loop, which is an exhausting journey. There is no gathering place to have a rest and no clear boundary between different exhibition areas.



Softening Met

-Disrupt the colonial syntax of the Encyclopedia



NEST

VALLEY

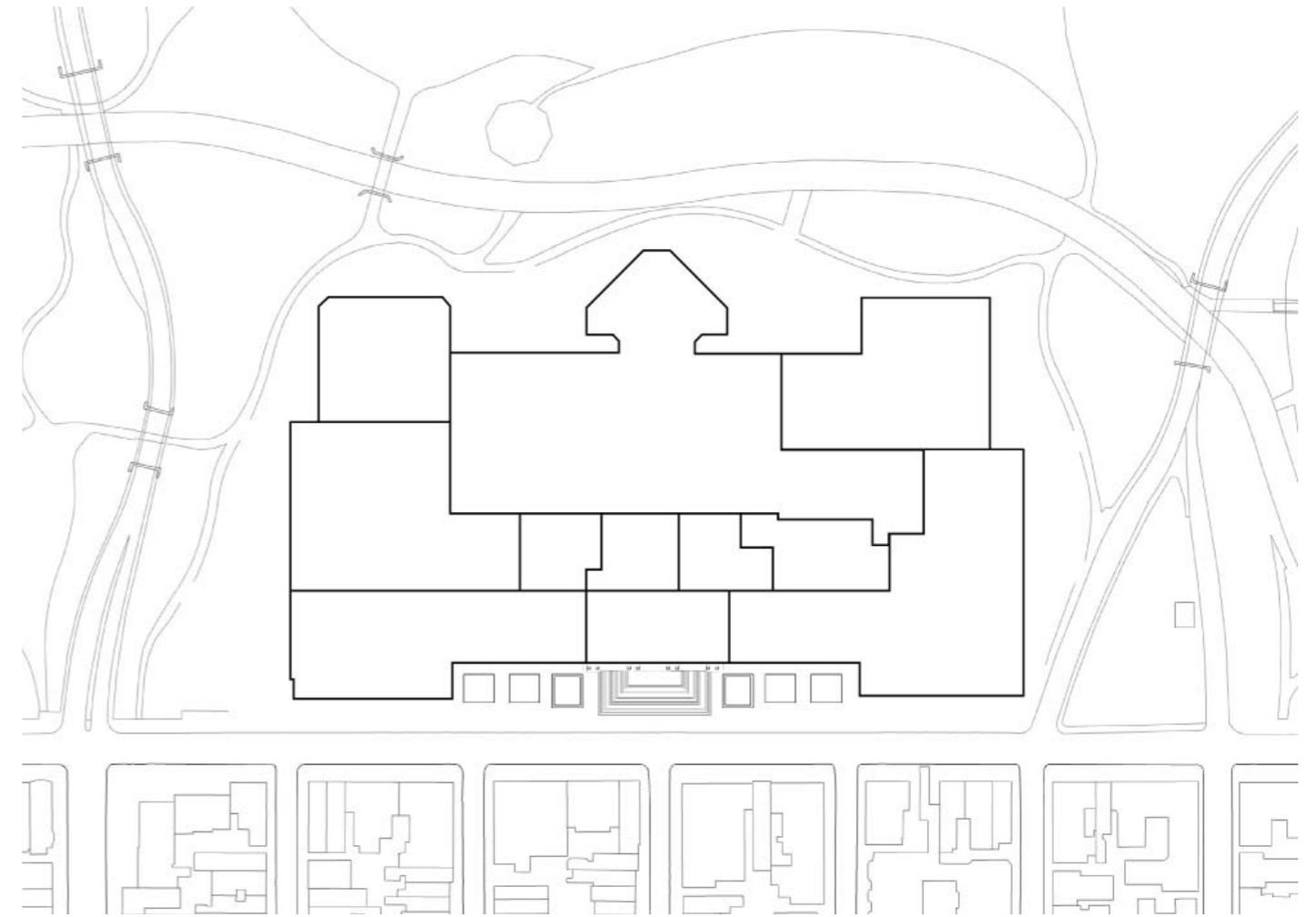
YARD

Softening Met

-Disrupt the colonial syntax of the Encyclopedia

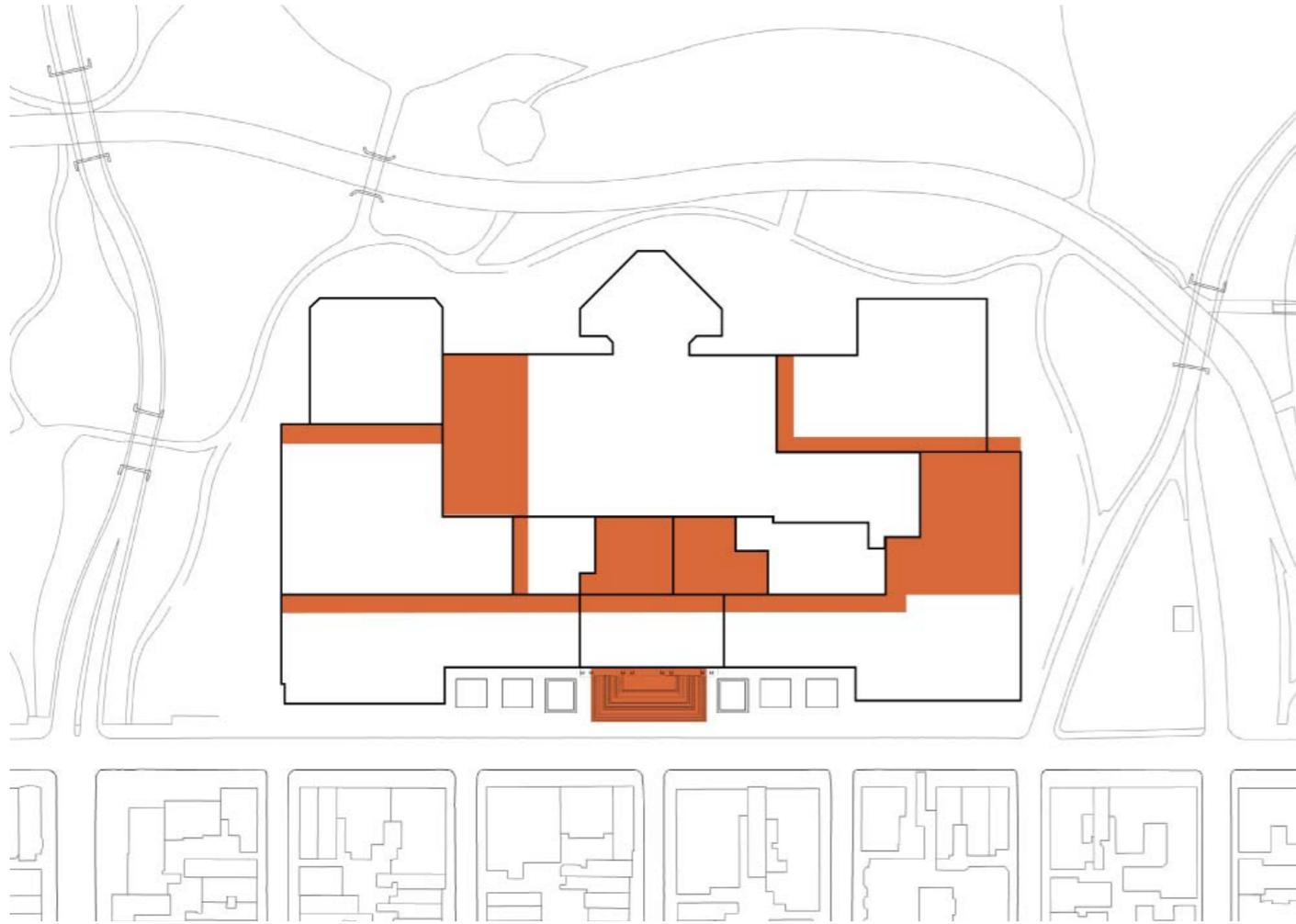
Correspondingly, three families of architectural interventions are introduced to disrupt the colonial syntax of the Encyclopedia. The new families - nests, valleys, and yards with distorted shapes punctuates the antiquated floors and facades and soften the orthogonal wall systems of the Met.

Valleys and nests absorb archives of colonial memory. The valleys recollect and demonstrate the trajectory of artifacts from another geography inside the Met through photography. The nests of media tower recollect colonial history in the central park and a wider range in metropolitan New York through multimedia. The yards exhibit indigenous American art to reemphasize its importance. To achieve this, staff from the Time-based media art working group and photography conservation department would work closely with each other.



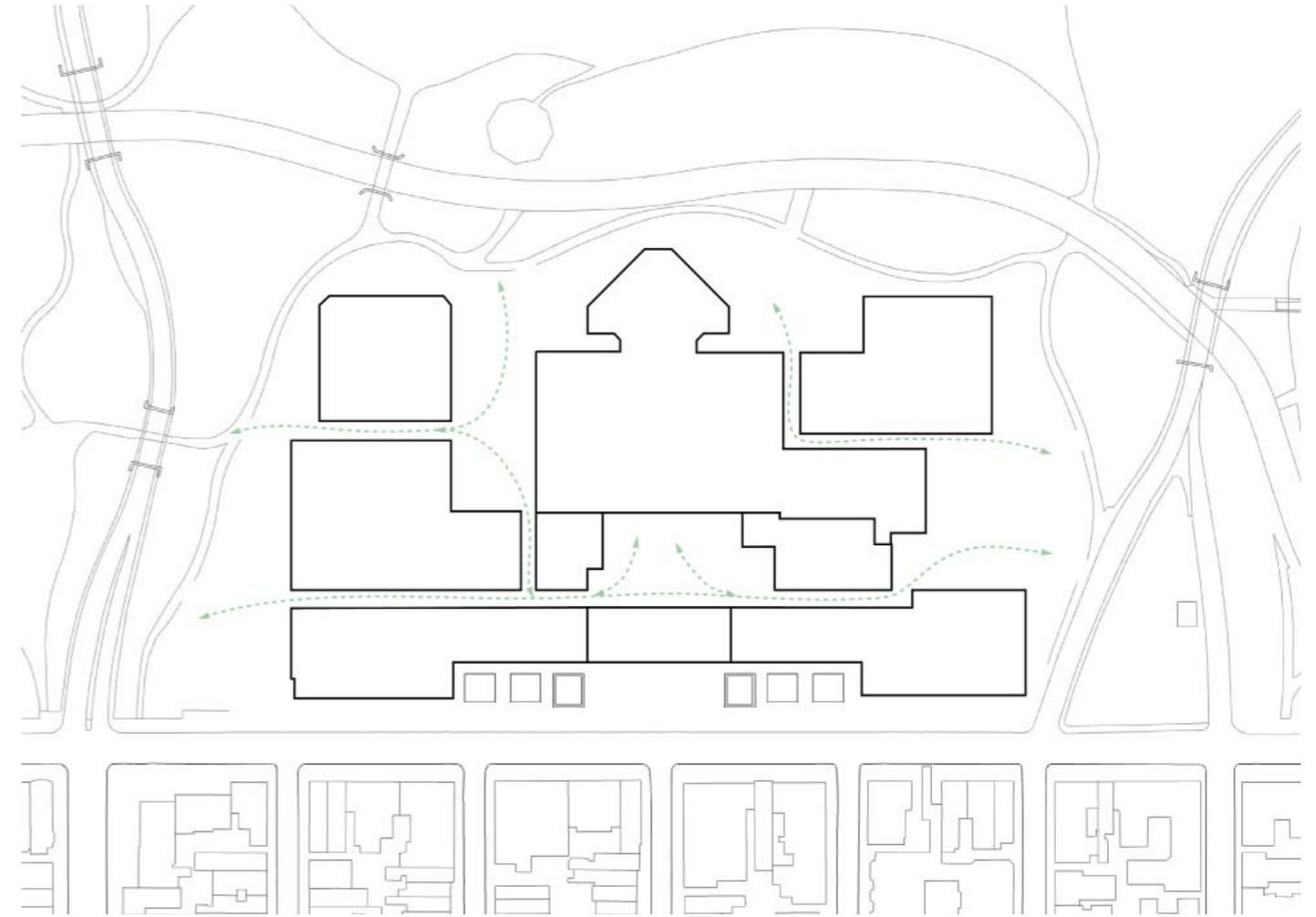
Current Situation

Currently, Met is organized into 6 exhibition areas by geography with a library, store, and auditorium in the middle. There is no rigid boundary between them and the only entrance from the grand hall is on the fifth avenue.



KEY MOVE 1 - Demolition

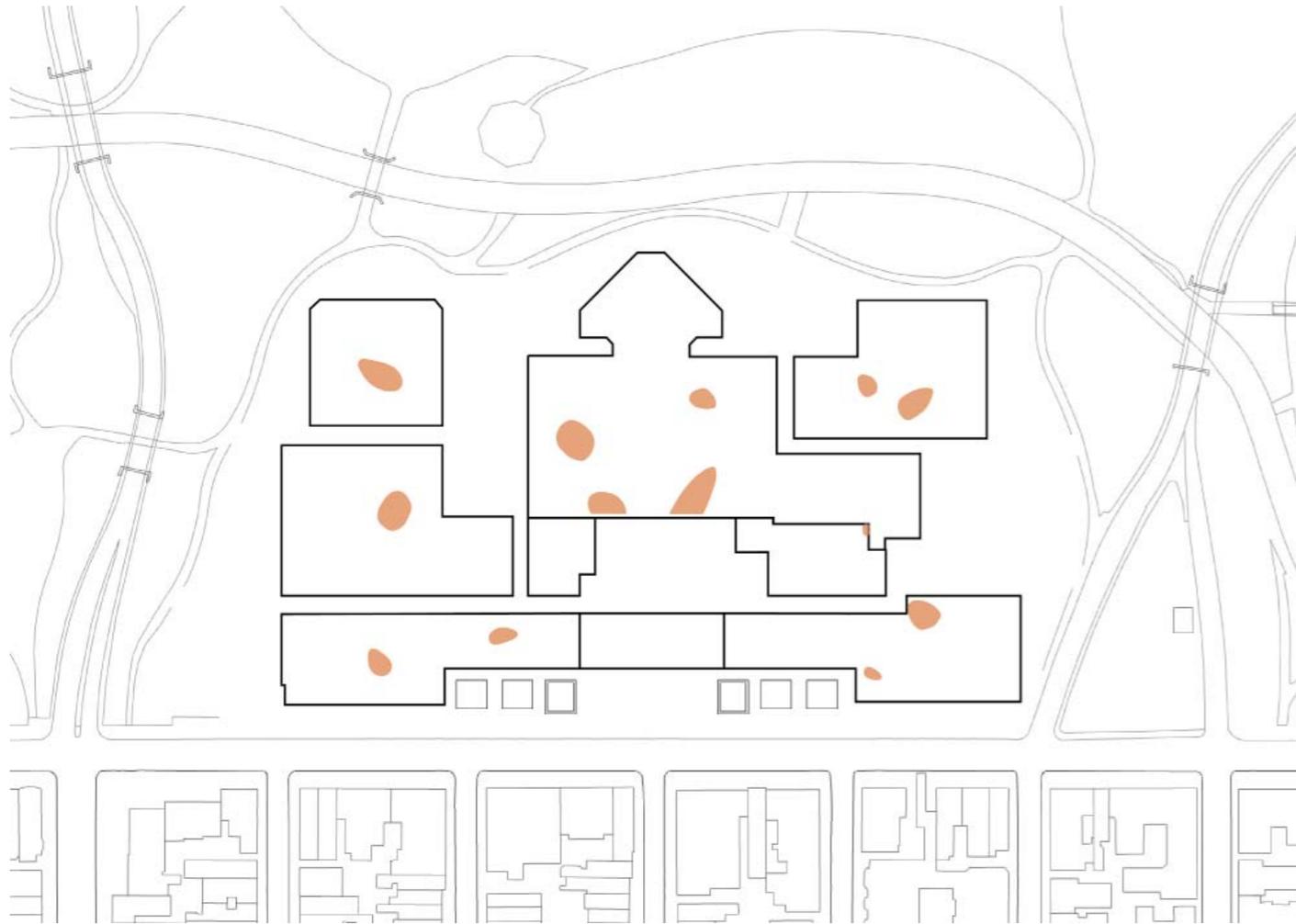
According to the expansion of the Met, the vague boundary between buildings is going to be eliminated, thus disrupting the syntax of one whole encyclopedia, demonstrating the footprint of colonialism and liberating the arts from different cultures. Additionally, the big stairs which are out of human scales are dismantled, as they used to celebrate the fantasy of total knowledge.



KEY MOVE 2 - Create Yards For Indigenous American Art

With antiquated walls torn down, The new Met museum is divided into 6 micro museums according to its expansion history to disrupt the illusion of unity under one roof. New Yards are generated for indigenous American Art.





KEY MOVE 3 - Create Valleys For photography archival show

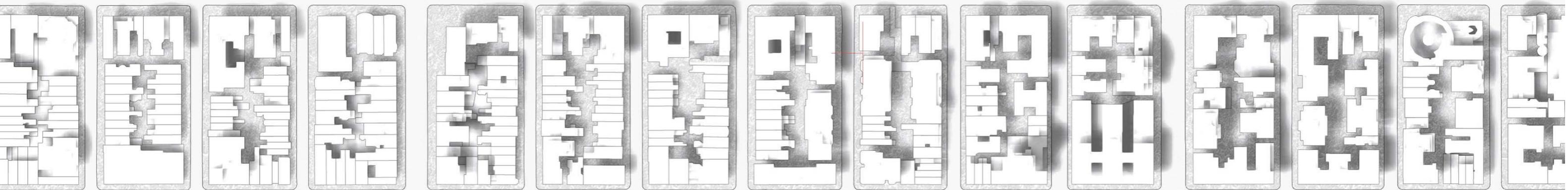
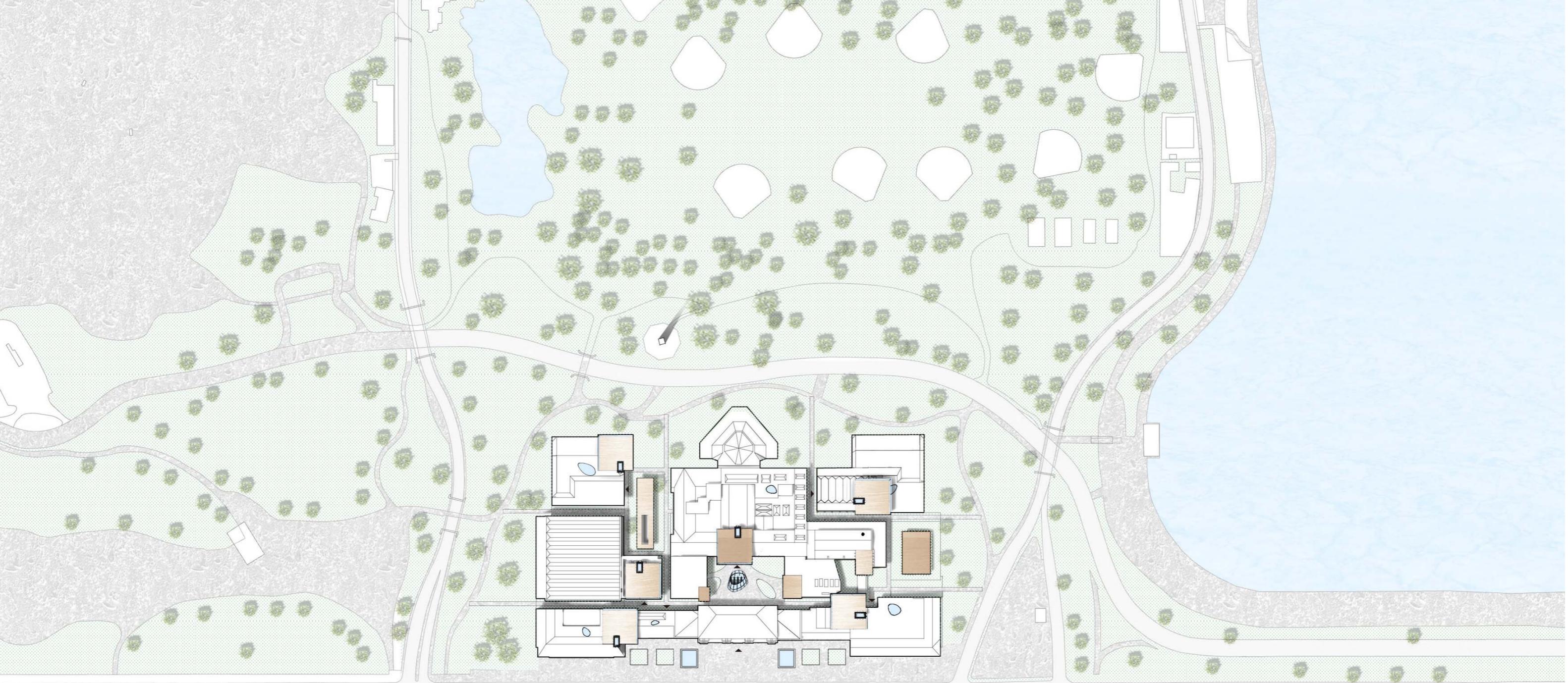
The valleys with distorted shapes for the photography archival show punctuate the existing floors to show the trajectory of artifacts from different geography. It could also serve as a gathering place to have a rest and create walkways and exhibition rooms with constantly changing scales.

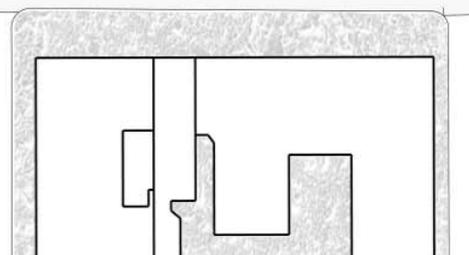
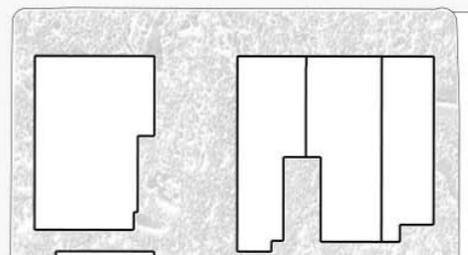
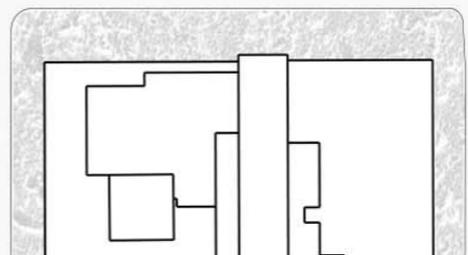
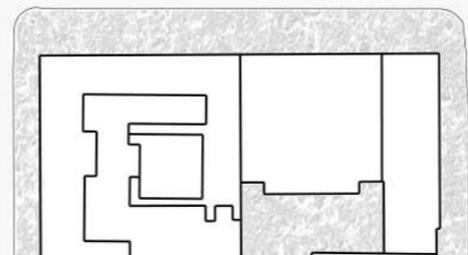
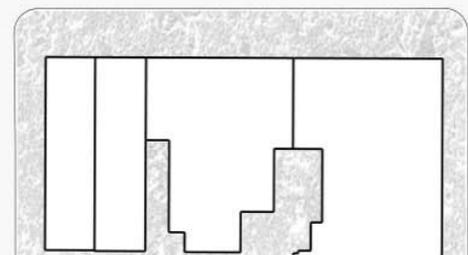


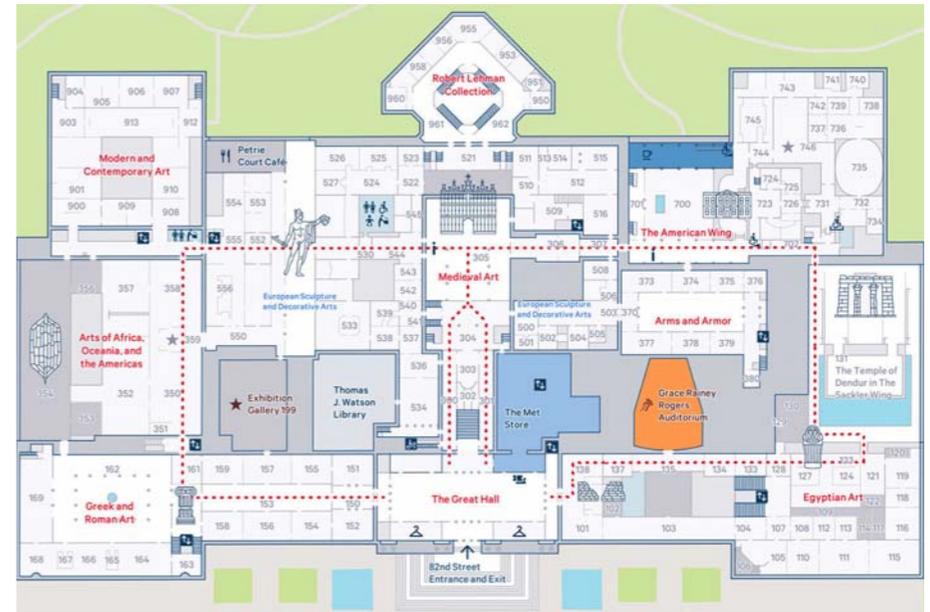
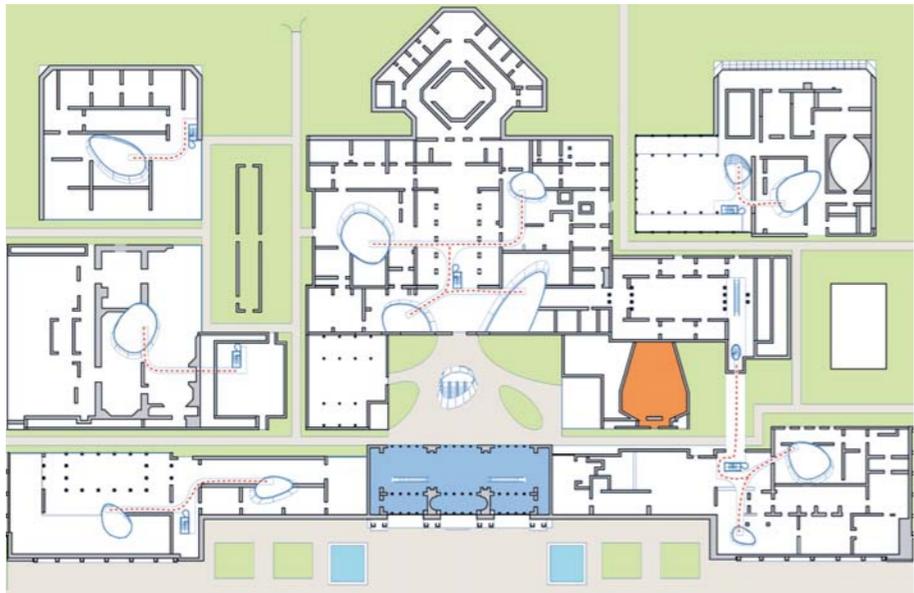
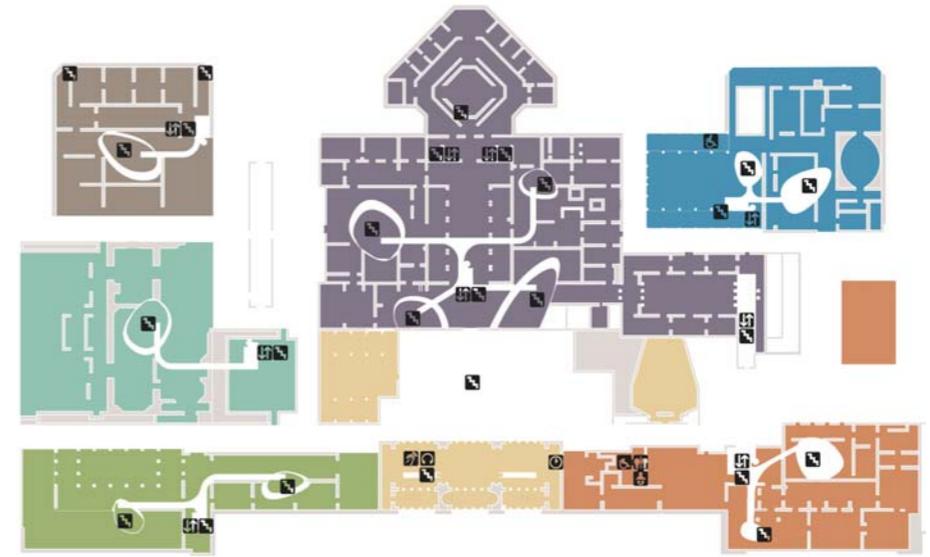
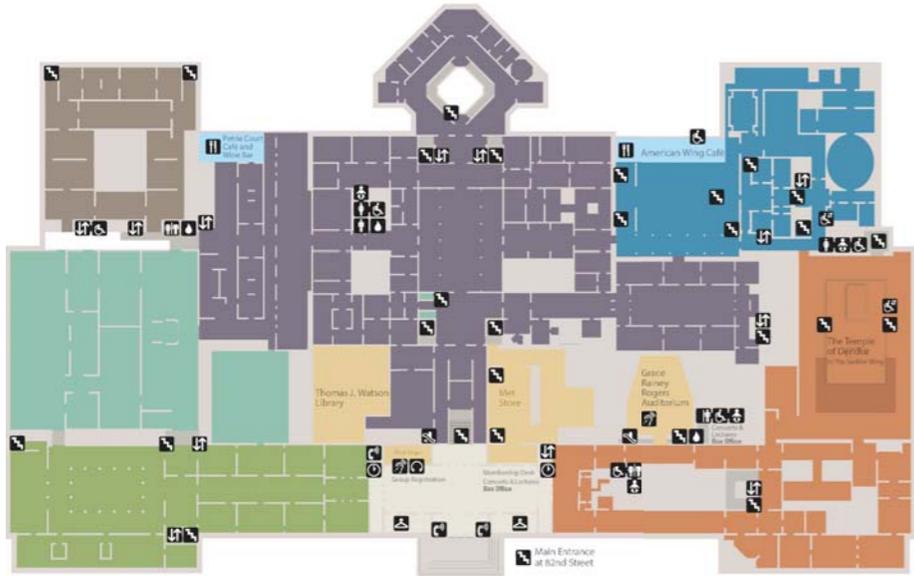
KEY MOVE 4 - Create Nests For Archival Media Show

Media trees punctuate the floors and roofs and stick into the iceberg to absorb the archive collection. These collections are reexhibited with high-tech in the nests above, to demonstrate the history of artifacts from other geographies. The media tower receives signals from wires at the top and is controlled by staff from the media art working group at ground level.



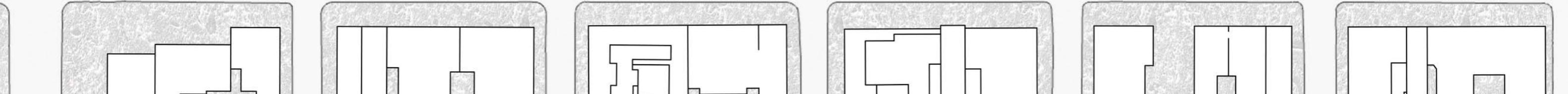
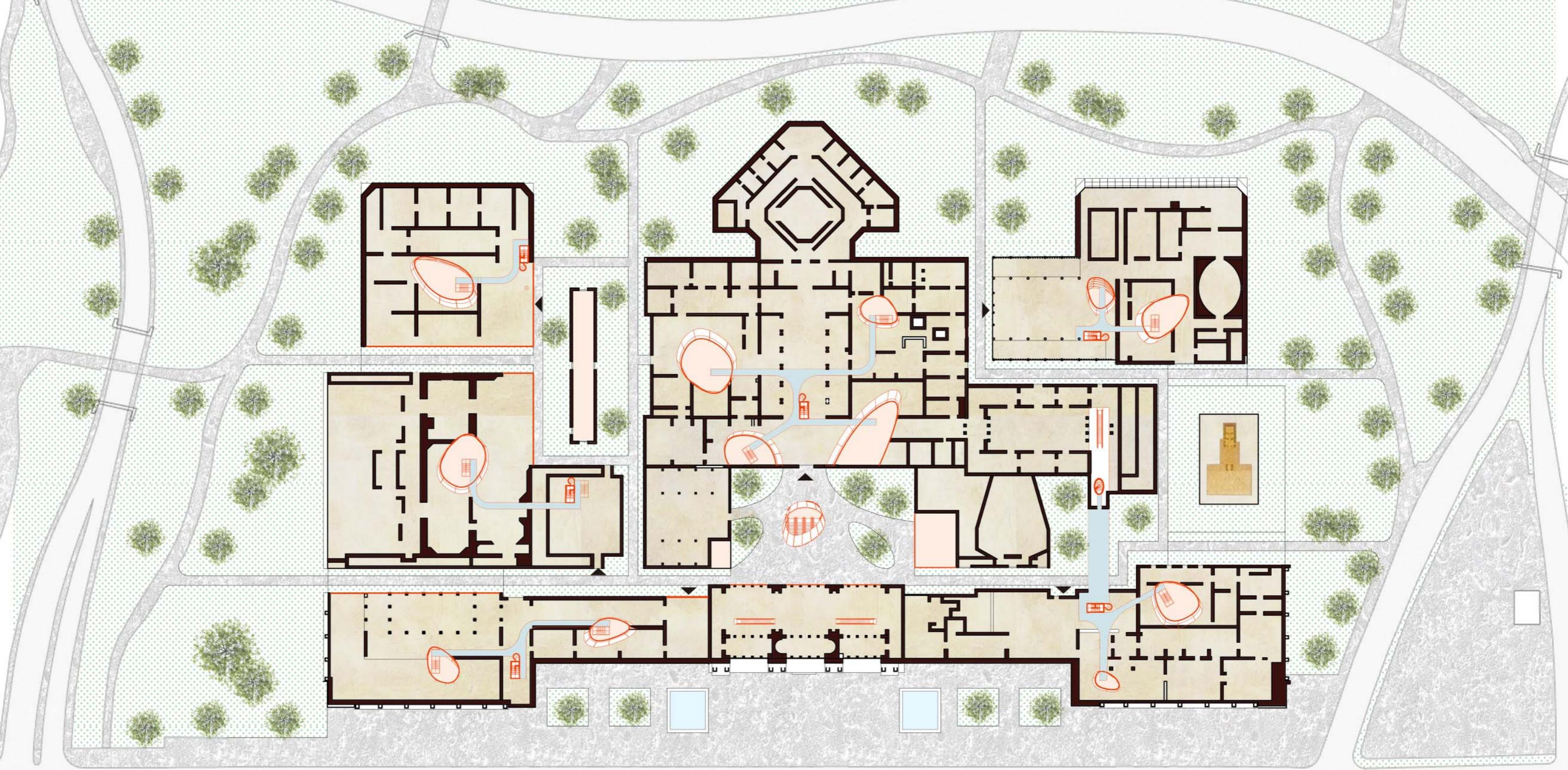




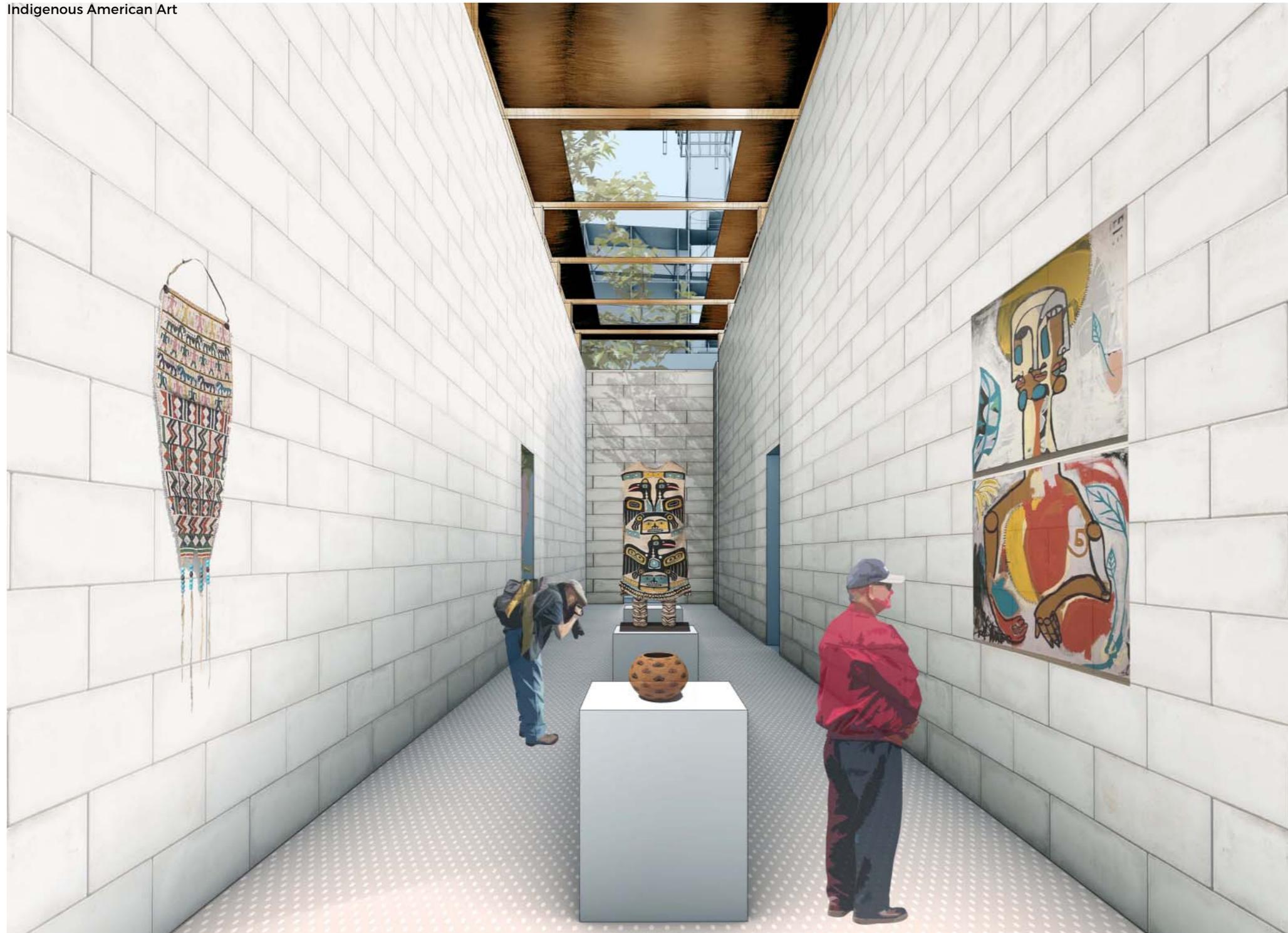


Circulation/Program

Now each Museum has its own circulation which is less complex. The new circulation is centralized around the media tower. New Platform stretches its legs around the media tower towards organic valleys.



Indigenous American Art



Tunic and leggings
ca. 1890

Tlingit, Native American



Headdress frontlet
ca. 1820-40

Tsimshian, Native American



Beaded Bag
ca. 1860

Wasco, Native American



Mask
ca. 1900

Yup'ik, Native American



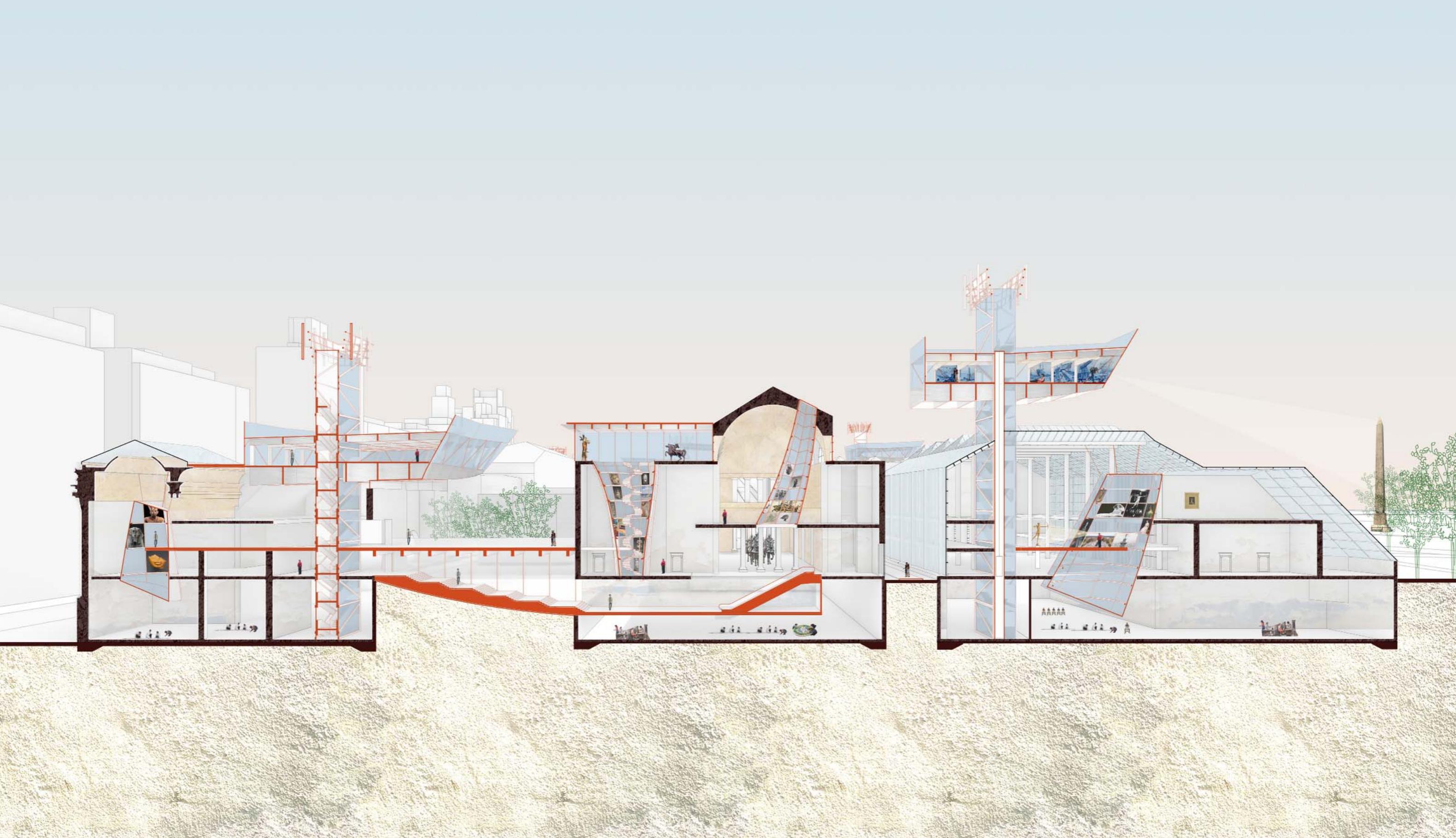
Portrait figure
ca. 1840

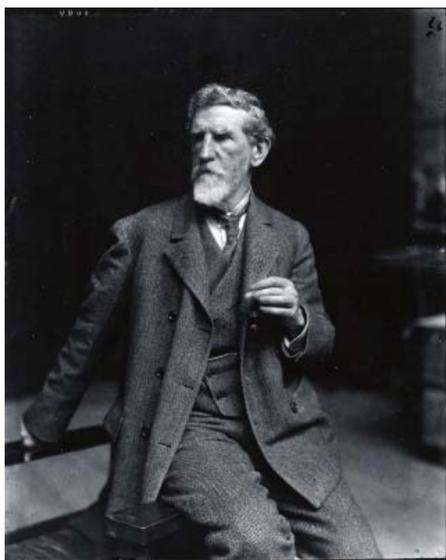
Haida, Native American



Bowl
ca. 1840

Wasco or Wishram, Native American





Recollect Trajectory Of Sculpture Diana In The Valley

The Valley in the American Wing museum demonstrates the origination of Diana Sculpture.

The artist Saint-Gaudens creates two versions of Diana.

Model Julia "Dudie" Baird posed for the body of the statue. Its face is that of Davida Johnson Clark, Saint-Gaudens's long-time model and mistress.

The first version used to stand atop the tower of Madison Square Garden from 1893 to 1925. In 1932, it entered the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art

And then Saint-Gaudens was asked to create a half-sized copy in cement.

Finally, White's cement statue was used to produce two bronze casts in 1928

Recollect Trajectory Of Obelisk In The NEST

Moving the monument from Alexandria to New York City was an incredible engineering accomplishment.

The Nest digitally demonstrates the journey of the obelisk monument from Alexandria to New York City.

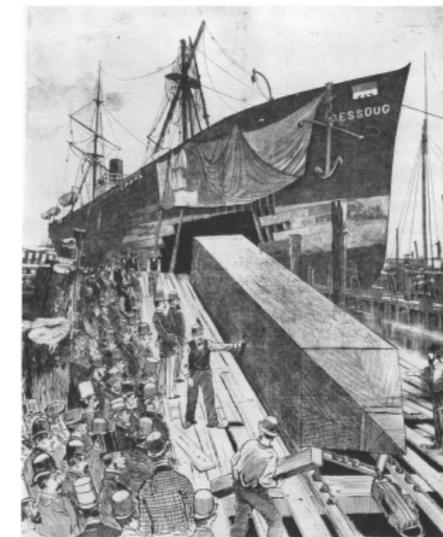
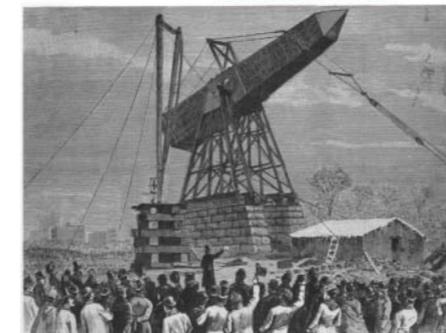
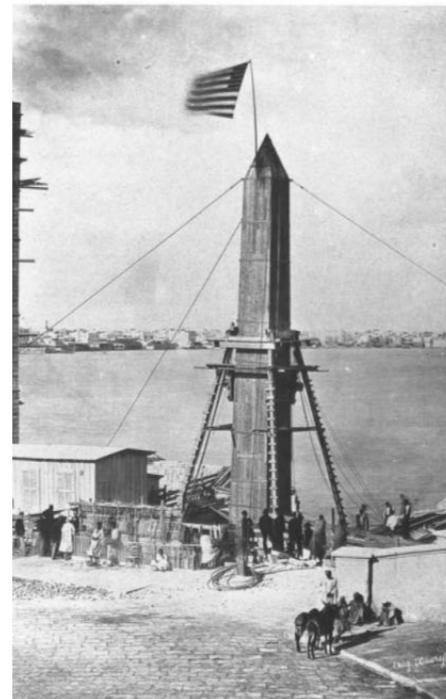
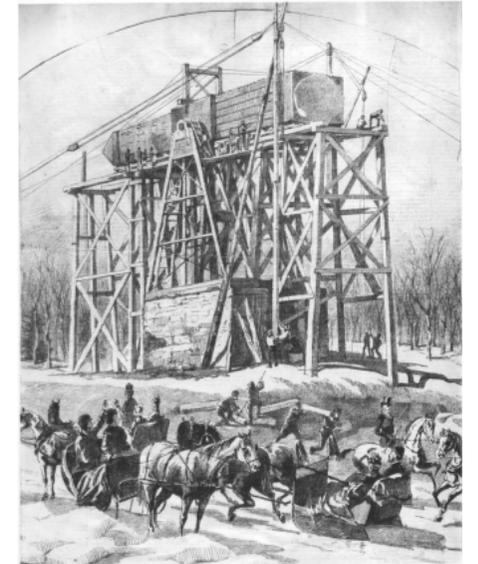
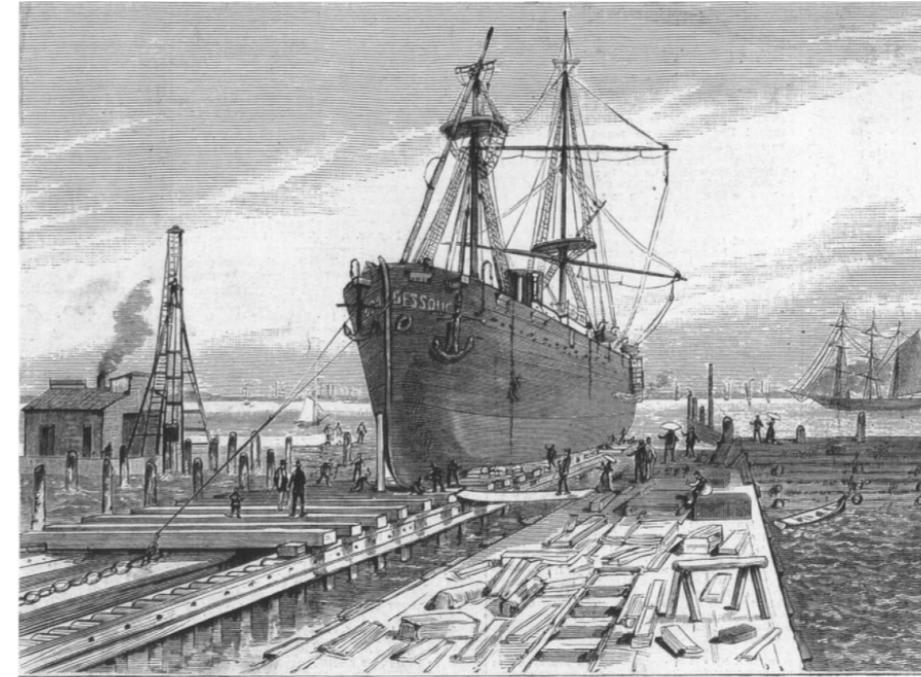
Egypt announces the obelisk as a gift to New York.

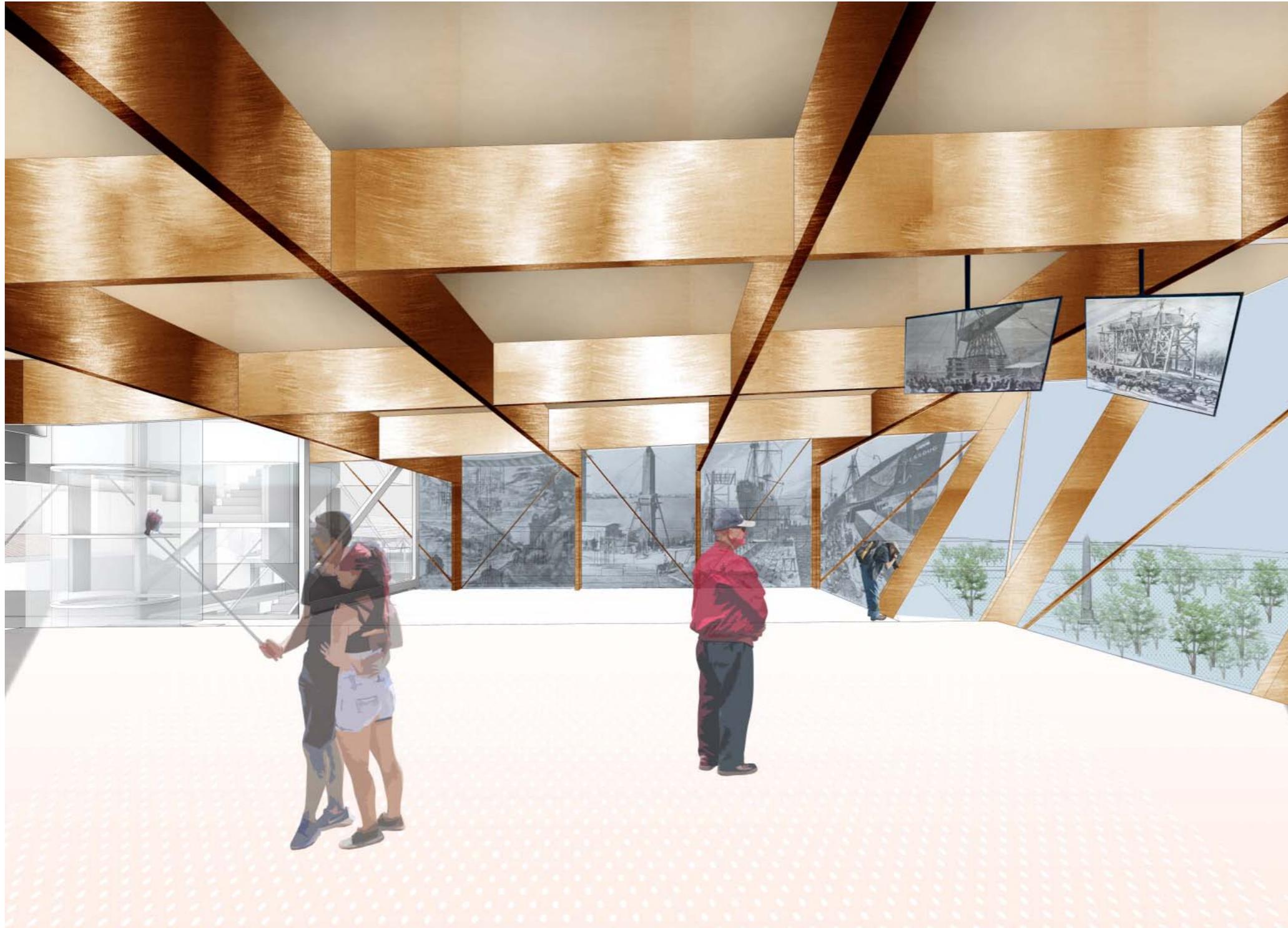
The scaffolding is used to put the obelisk in place

The enormous barge used to transport obelisks

Men turn capstans to drag the obelisk forward,

The installation process is like putting the obelisk horizontally and rotating it in a vertical direction.





Recollect Trajectory Of Obelisk In The NEST

Moving the monument from Alexandria to New York City was an incredible engineering accomplishment.

The Nest digitally demonstrates the journey of the obelisk monument from Alexandria to New York City.

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