REDEFINING RETAIL:

Designing an Alternative Experience-Based Retail Model

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of e-commerce and technology in the twenty-first century has caused a significant shift in shopping behaviours and consumer needs. This practicum project responds to these shifts by investigating how the practice of interior design can revitalize traditional retail environments to enhance the user experience. By responding to the demands of contemporary retail spaces and the experience economy, the design of this project was developed based on a theoretical framework rooted in concepts of brand experience, interior atmospheres, and strategies of adaptive reuse. The Zenshi Zone, a temporary, location adaptive, and experience-based retail model, is an alternative retail space aimed for introduction of the Zenshi brand. Ultimately, this project highlights the ongoing significance of physical retail environments, and demonstrates how retail space can be redefined to sell through unique brand and consumer experience.

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"To save retail, let it die. The physical store will become the most powerful and measurable media channel available to a brand, and the customer experiences that take place there will be the most profitable product a retailer can sell."

- Doug Stephens[1]

[1] Stephens, Doug. "To Save Retail, Let It Die." The Business of Fashion. September 05, 2017. https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/opinion/to-save-retail-let-it-die.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND

In contemporary society, advancements in technology and the growth of e-commerce have caused immense shifts in our daily lives and the environments in which we live, work, and play. The trends arising from these advancements have caused the retail sector to evolve considerably in the twenty-first century, and retailers are now responsible for catering to an audience that is more social, interactive, and technologically advanced.[2] This is what inspired the design of this Master of Interior Design practicum project completed at the University of Manitoba. Considering the significant developments in retail and e-commerce, the aim of this project was to design a retail model rooted in brand and product experience. This was done to address the increasing desire consumers have for extraordinary experiences in the retail setting – experiences that are both exciting and entertaining.[3] Unlike online shopping, physical retail environments afford a brand the ability to emotionally engage and stimulate the senses of consumers.

This practicum project is centered around the Zenshi brand, with the initial project location being The Power Plant in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.[4] The intent of this project was to study how, as designers, we can improve traditional retail environments and the shopping experiences they provide. In addition, the design of this project focused on how to successfully incorporate a brand within the experience of a retail environment, while remaining relevant to the local context and culture. Simply stated, the intent of this project was to design a retail environment that is better suited to the needs and desires of today's brands and consumers.

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[2] Squire Patton Boggs. *The Retail Experience Economy: The Behavioural Revolution*. Research Report. Retail Economics and Squire Patton Boggs. United Kingdom: Retail Economics.
[3] Garvin, Alana Nicole. (2009). *Experiential retailing: extraordinary store environments and purchase behavior*. (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from http://commons.emich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1225&context=theses.
[4] For the purposes of this project, this client is hypothetical in nature. Detailed client information can be found in Chapter 5.

A theoretical framework was developed to inform the design strategy and process. With a strong foundation in concepts and design strategies related to brand experience, interior atmosphere, and adaptive reuse, the theoretical framework laid a groundwork for design programming and decision making. Authors such as Adam Arvidsson, Sarah Banet-Weiser, Liz Moor, and Martin Lindstrom, informed the study on branding, brand identity, and brand experience. Joseph Pine and James Gilmore's literature on the experience economy further contributed to an understanding of the significance of experience in retail design. The works of authors Gernot Böhme, Peter Zumthor, Juhani Pallasmaa, Jean Baudrillard, and Jean Whitehead informed the analysis of interior atmosphere. To further investigate its significance to retail design, research on retail atmospherics by Philip Kotler was consulted. The writings of Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone were examined to inform the design strategy of adaptive reuse. These concepts and design strategies are discussed and analyzed in Chapter 3: Literary Analysis.

The retail environment in this practicum project was designed for the client Zenshi, an influential Chinese company specializing in the telecommunication business. Though Zenshi is an international brand, the Zenshi name is unrecognized outside of the Asian market, and marketing strategies to expand brand presence in North America and Europe have proven unsuccessful thus far. Therefore, the aim of this project was to enhance Zenshi's brand and product awareness, with a specific goal to introduce the brand's smartphones, tablets, and other related accessories to the North American market through consumer experience. A more detailed client profile can be found in Chapter 5: Design Programme.

Ultimately, what differentiates this retail environment from traditional brick and mortar retail is the focus on selling through experience rather than product. Considering the significance of e-commerce, the idea behind this alternative retail model is that consumers will make a

purchase online after they experience the product in the physical retail environment. The online marketplace has enabled retailers to no longer focus solely on physical purchase, thus providing an opportunity to concentrate on consumer experience. Furthermore, the foundation in adaptive reuse allows for this project to be inserted within various significant landmark buildings globally. This permits the retail environment to be temporary – not only increasing the exclusivity of the brand experience, but also affording the environment to reach a greater number of consumers across more cities. By utilizing impressive landmark buildings, the design can create influential, culturally-relevant branded experiences that generate lasting impressions.

This space was designed to be functionally adaptable by use of modular and flexible design elements. The modularity of the design allows for maximum impact through location adaptability and mixed-use function flexibility. As will be discussed in Chapter 2: Site Analysis, the initial design model was inserted into The Power Plant in Toronto, Ontario. In the future, this model is intended to be transported and reconfigured to suit international sites that meet the site selection criteria, which is further discussed in this chapter and Chapter 2.[5] Due to the modular and reconfigurable nature of the project, site analysis is a critical component of this practicum project.

The practicum's retail model is called the "Zenshi Zone". With the Zenshi Zone, a unique shopping experience was designed using interactive entertainment, innovative technologies, spectacular atmospheres, and flexible spaces. As discussed, this is an alternative experience to the traditional retail method – an opportunity to provide Zenshi a space for brand introduction and experience. Rather than focusing on physical purchases, the design of this experience-based

[5] See figure 81 in Appendix A for a future reconfiguration plan for The Yard, Shoreditch located in London, United Kingdom.

retail model aimed to differentiate the Zenshi brand from competitors and position the brand name globally.

TYPOLOGY AND PURPOSE

This practicum project is focused on designing a retail environment that is experiential in nature, thus removing the act of physical purchase behaviour. Experiential retailing is defined as a retail strategy that not only transforms the consumption experience, but also satisfies the hedonic desires and utilitarian needs of the consumer.[6] This project, and the design of the Zenshi Zone, was concerned with the experience of consumers and considered how various consumers will experience retail space in diverse ways. For this reason, the programming of the Zenshi Zone was based upon different user profiles and customer journeys as defined in Chapter 5: Design Programme. Since brand experience was one of the key considerations of this project, it was essential to program the space based on how different types of users will experience it, and how it can be organized to achieve maximum effect. Through this, the project explored how to create a successful and captivating retail environment centered on various human experiences, while exploring the emergence and impact of technology and e-commerce.

As is critical when designing retail spaces, in order to remain purposeful and meaningful, the design of the project considered how to adapt the interior in such a way to ensure its relevance to the local context and culture, while remaining consistent with the Zenshi brand identity – this played a large role in both the programming and design decisions that were made. The design proposal can be found in Chapter 6: Design Proposal. Ultimately, the purpose of this project was to design an environment that is responsive and adaptable to the rapidly evolving

[6] Kim, Youn-Kyung, Judith Anne Cardona Forney, and Pauline Sullivan. *Experiential retailing: concepts and strategies that sell*. New York: Fairchild, 2007.

needs and desires of today's consumer, while incorporating the Zenshi identity into the interior design of the retail insertion.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

The design of the Zenshi Zone was intended to not only become a retail space, but rather a destination that would reinvigorate the site and city fabric in which it is situated. As will be discussed in Chapter 3: Literary Analysis, consumers are co-producers in the brand experience, and the acknowledgment of this notion became a critical consideration in the project. For these reasons, the interior of the Zenshi Zone was designed in such a way to include both fixed and adaptive brand elements. Fixed brand elements are intended to remain consistent regardless of which city or site the model is situated in. These features are intended to be direct reflections of the Zenshi identity, immersing consumers into the narrative of the brand and its character. On the other hand, adaptive brand elements are features that respond to both the local culture and the varying host buildings, such as the café and bar area, installations, and local gallery. These adaptive features were designed to be flexible and responsive, thus allowing the local context to guide their offerings and functionality. The combination of fixed and adaptive brand elements is what allowed the Zenshi Zone to act as an insertion that is suited for application internationally. Furthermore, this allowed Zenshi to introduce the brand in such a way that connects on a personal level to the local audience, thus forming more pertinent and meaningful consumer relationships.

SITE PROFILE AND SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

The host building selected for this project is The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, located in Toronto, Ontario in the Harbourfront Centre. The Power Plant was built in 1926 and

operated as a powerhouse until 1980, at which time the building was renovated to function as an art gallery.[7] A more detailed analysis can be found in the following chapter, Chapter 2: Site Analysis, however it is critical to establish the main site characteristics and selection criteria.

Firstly, it is situated in the downtown core in Toronto, and witnesses heavy pedestrian traffic in the summer months.[8] Aside from being adjacent to the city's entertainment district, it is located near major transportation hubs, thus ensuring ease of access to the site. Secondly, the site features the characteristics of a simplistic single-storey layout with an existing lighting grid system, therefore allowing ease of insertion of the proposed design model. This is an essential consideration for any future sites that will be considered – the floor plan must be designed in a rectangular nature with minimal obstructions, and an existing lighting grid must be available to allow the programming of the design to be adapted accordingly. Thirdly, it is situated in a significant city – Toronto is the largest country in Canada, as well as the economic and cultural capital. Toronto's history dates to the 1700's, and therefore there was an abundance of sites suitable for adaptive reuse. Finally, the Harbourfront Centre site is known to be "a bold and innovative force in Canada's cultural scene" – a year-round destination for arts, culture, and cuisine.[9] Considering the nature of this project, it was critical to select a site that would align with the intent and goals of this project – to be more than merely a retail environment, but a compelling destination to experience.

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[7] "The Power Plant." *The Power Plant - History*. http://www.thepowerplant.org/AboutUs/History.aspx.
[8] The Zenshi Zone will be inserted into The Power Plant for four months during the summer peak season. These months include May, June, July, and August.
[9] "Harbourfront Centre: Festivals and Activities." *Harbourfront Centre*. http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/festivals/

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The design of the Zenshi Zone was aimed at exploring how the interior design of a retail environment can redefine the retail experience of today. More specifically, it was aimed at developing a theoretical framework to inform the design of a retail model rooted in brand and product experience. This project examined how to engage the consumers in the physical store environment, as consumers play a vital role in the co-creation of a brand identity. Furthermore, this project considered the role of e-commerce in twenty-first century shopping behaviour, and how brands must adapt to cater to an audience that is more social, interactive, and technologically advanced. By removing physical purchase behaviour, the design of the Zenshi Zone considered how the advancement of technology and role of e-commerce can benefit physical retail spaces, rather than cause their decline. Through this, the project examined how to design the interior of a retail environment to consider these trends and the progression of consumer needs and desires. The designed outcome of this project aimed to propose a retail model that was not only experiential in nature but improved the quality of a brand experience through interior design. To inform these objectives, the following questions were used in the process of research and design:

1) How can a traditional brick and mortar retail environment be reinterpreted and designed to inform and sell users through immersive brand experiences rather than solely products and services?

2) How can interdisciplinary theory, particularly in the fields of brand experience, interior atmospheres, and adaptive reuse in retail design, inform the design of an alternative retail environment?

3) How can theory and research of these concepts inform the techniques used to design an experience-based retail model, centered around branded elements that are effective, responsive, and adaptable?

RESEARCH METHODS

To address the above questions, as well as to guide and inform the design process and decisions, this practicum project used the following research methods:

1) *Literary Analysis:* The literary analysis was intended to identify and analyze the concepts that informed the design of the Zenshi Zone. The concepts studied informed both the programming and design decision process of the project, as well as the subsequent analysis of precedents.

2) *Visual Essays:* The visual essays, compiled by the author of the project, were intended to enrich reader understanding of the project site and building architecture. For this project, two distinct visual essays were created to allow comparison between the past and present nature of the site. These visual essays can be found in Chapter 2: Site Analysis.

3) *Precedent Analysis:* The precedents analyzed demonstrate three retail projects that are characteristic of the concepts studied in the literary analysis. The qualities and nature of these projects were used to contextualize the nature of the typology, as well as to reflect on the process of designing user experiences. The precedent analysis is intended to inform the reader on existing applications relevant to this project, as well as to highlight specific qualities that informed the design of the Zenshi Zone.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Throughout the course of this project, the analyses and research conducted have highlighted the need for interior design to step in and play an essential role in retail environments to make them more meaningful to the current consumer landscape. The benefit in this project comes from the ability to demonstrate the vital role physical retail spaces have, especially when considering the online marketplace and trends related to e-commerce. Though this project is hypothetical, it considered and addressed the need to design a retail model that allows a retailer and consumer to co-produce the brand identity through human experience.

As an alternative to traditional retail, this project considered different types of consumer journeys in retail space and demonstrated the importance for interior design professionals to understand the experiences that are required for distinct user groups. Since these user groups vary in character, the physical store environment can be designed accordingly to ensure maximum efficacy in establishing brand awareness. Ultimately, the Zenshi Zone aimed to define the ongoing importance for physical retail environments, and the importance of strengthening consumer relationships and brand loyalty through atmosphere and the senses – something that e-commerce simply cannot do.

BIASES AND LIMITATIONS

A potential limitation arises when considering the temporary, adaptive reuse nature of the Zenshi Zone design. The design proposal was done in a manner to demonstrate the design model's insertion into the first initial site – The Power Plant in Toronto, Ontario. Since this project is intended to be situated internationally, to maintain this project under a manageable

scope the design proposal depicts only the initial insertion in depth. However, to supplement this, the design proposal highlights elements of the design that would be adapted for future locations.

A bias that exists in the project is the nature of the client. The goal of this project was to design a brand experience, however the client in this project, Zenshi, is hypothetical. The reason for this was to ensure that the project could move forward, thus avoiding a potentially lengthy process of gaining rights and permissions from existing brands.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

- *Chapter 1 – Introduction:* This chapter outlines the goals and objectives of this practicum project. It is intended to introduce the theoretical concepts that informed the research and design of the project, as well as the information that will be analyzed in the following chapters. A brief introduction of the site and building are provided, as well as the client and the nature of the typology. Site and cultural considerations are discussed to give context to the intent of the design. Research questions addressed by this project are presented in this chapter, and research methods, biases, and limitations are outlined.
- *Chapter 2 – Site Analysis:* This chapter is intended to inform the reader about the site and building selected for the purposes of this project. The chapter begins with an overview of the Harbourfront site in Downtown Toronto, and its suitability for the initial project location. The building analysis provides a history of The Power Plant, as well as a study of the architecture. Within this chapter, two visual essays depict the past and present conditions of the building and site through by use of photography
- *Chapter 3 – Literary Analysis:* This portion of the project is divided to study three concepts that have influenced the design of the project – brand experience, interior atmospheres, and adaptive reuse in retail design. These concepts are intended to be

understood distinctly, however also understood holistically as they informed the groundwork for the programming, process, and aesthetical decisions of the final design.

- *Chapter 4 – Precedent Analysis:* This chapter is concerned with providing existing applications of retail design that were informed by the concepts discussed in the preceding chapter. These precedents were selected for their ability to provide insight into experiential retail environments and to add legitimacy to the design decisions made in this project. Three precedents were chosen based on their relationship to the retail typology and literary analysis. Through this study, the final design outcome was influenced by characteristics and qualities of these environments that have been proven effective.
- *Chapter 5 – Design Programme:* This chapter outlines the client and user profiles, as well as an in-depth description of the primary consumer types. This section also displays varying consumer journeys based on the established profiles, and provides a detailed description of the functional, programmatic, and spatial needs of the proposed design.
- *Chapter 6 – Design Proposal:* In this chapter, the information and findings from the preceding chapters inform the design of the Zenshi Zone. This chapter features the completed design, which includes drawings and renderings. The final design outcome demonstrates solutions to the issues raised in the analyses of the project, and how they have influenced the design process and decisions.
- *Conclusion:* This section aims to reflect on the research findings and how they influenced the final design outcome. A personal reflection on the result of the design has been included to summarize the investigation and to provide insight into the project's potential future opportunities.

CHAPTER 2: SITE ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Much of the design for this project was informed by the theoretical concepts raised in the literary analysis, however the selection of the site was primarily driven to meet the criteria of the topic and typology. To maximize impact and global presence, this project was planned to be situated within large, influential metropolitan centers globally. The proposed space was intended to have a small, yet effective, footprint for insertion into various existing structures. Due to the project's temporary nature, a standard design model was created as part of the initial phase of the project. Once this model has been completed, the project will be expanded internationally and installed on sites that meet the venture's site selection criteria. Through this, the original design is adaptable to each distinct site, thus serving as an individual adaptation of the specific site. Aside from an emphasis on adaptive reuse, selection is based on sites located in central city cores with high pedestrian traffic, significant architectural histories, and the ability to create unique impressions on consumers. The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery in Toronto, Canada was selected as the site for the initial project introduction phase. Located centrally in Downtown Toronto in the culturally-rich Harbourfront Centre, the site sees heavy pedestrian traffic and is in proximity to major entertainment hubs within the city. Furthermore, the historical designation and industrial nature of the building presents ideal conditions for adaptive reuse.

Adaptive reuse is a prominent topic in the field of interior design, as working with existing buildings for contemporary uses is becoming an increasingly important practice. Reusing a building for new functions and activities has proven to be a valuable strategy towards preservation – Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, French architect and theorist well-known for his interpretive restorations of medieval buildings, argued that "the best of all ways of preserving

a building is to find a use for it".[10] The process of repurposing historic buildings for retail will not only result in an advancement of urban regeneration, but will allow for a progression in the activity and growth of historic centres.[11] When existing buildings are repurposed, an opportunity arises for a retailer to reveal and intensify the heritage of the site and its surroundings, which further enriches the relationships formed within the existing space.[12] This becomes a significant opportunity for retailers to tap into new markets, as well as a chance to revitalize the branding and cores of the cities in which they are established.

This chapter begins with an overview of the aforementioned subjects and their influence on the selection of the site. Through this, a proposed program and design for this project can be made to reflect an alternative retail design strategy founded in adaptive reuse, with a primary focus on the method of insertion. Following this, an in-depth analysis of the Harbourfront in Downtown Toronto and The Power Plant will be conducted. This will provide an overview of more detailed information about the site's setting, demographics, history, and architecture. A series of figures and maps to supplement the analysis will be presented throughout the chapter. To build on this, an analysis of The Power Plant's architecture and history will be presented through visual photographic essays, depicting both the past and present. The chapter will conclude with a summary of site suitability for the initial design model.

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[10] Eugene Viollet-le-Duc, "Restoration*",* in *Historical and philosophical issues in the conservation of cultural heritage,* Price, Nicholas Stanley, Mansfield Kirby Talley, and Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro. (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2010.)
[11] Kirby, Audrey, and Tony Kent. 2010. "The Local Icon: Reuse of Buildings in Place Marketing." *80 Journal of Town & City Management* 1 (1) pg. 80-91.
[12] Kirby, A.E., and A.M. Kent. 2010. "Architecture as Brand: Store Design and Brand Identity." *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 19 (6) pg. 432-439.

SITE ANALYSIS

Downtown Toronto: Suitability for Initial Project Location

The situation of the site is a critical consideration for this project, as it will determine the effectiveness of outreach from the retailer to the consumer. The location plays a vital role in establishing the appropriate connection between the brand and its surroundings, thus resulting in a cultural destination for the public rather than solely a sales-driven environment.

When designing for influential retail experiences, the city and site in which the environment will be designed is of vital importance – not only for maximum outreach to consumers, but also to ensure feasibility of the project. For this reason, the cities selected for the purposes of this project must be deemed influential through expert analysis. Several studies were consulted and examined – namely, a Research Report titled "Size is Not the Answer: The Changing Face of the Global City". The research was led by fellow in urban studies Joel Kotkin, with contributions by a research team consisting of urban geographer Ali Modarres, management consultant analyst Aaron Renn, and demographer Wendell Cox. To quantify a city's global influence, the researchers looked at eight factors: the amount of foreign direct investment the city has attracted; the concentration of corporate headquarters; how many particular business niches the city dominates; air connectivity and east of travel to other global cities; strength of producer services; financial services; technology and media power; and racial diversity.[13] Of a total of 47 evaluated cities, the prototype city, Toronto, Canada, was ranked in the tenth position.[14] The cities ranked above Toronto included: London, United Kingdom; New York, USA; Paris, France; Singapore; Hong Kong, China; Dubai, UAE; Beijing, China and Sydney, Australia.[15]

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[13] Kotkin, Joel, Wendell Cox, Ali Modarres, and Aaron M. Renn. *Size is not the answer: The Changing Face of the Global City*. Research Report. Demographics and Policy, Chapman University and Civil Services College Singapore. 2014.
[14] Toronto, Canada tied for the tenth rank with Los Angeles, USA and San Francisco, USA.
[15] Kotkin, Joel, Wendell Cox, Ali Modarres, and Aaron M. Renn. *Size is not the answer: The Changing Face of the Global City*. Research Report. Demographics and Policy, Chapman University and Civil Services College Singapore. 2014.

Therefore, these cities will be the ones considered for future site locations once the standard design model has been established.

Toronto, Ontario is the financial and economic capital of Canada, with a lively downtown core which is home to many cultural and entertainment destinations.[16] As per the 2016 census conducted by Statistics Canada, the current population of Toronto is 2.8 million, making it the largest city in Canada.[17] With a history dating back to the 1700's, it becomes an appropriate city with an abundance of sites suitable for adaptive reuse. The city core is predicted to continue to see steady development, with the most growth predicted to be in the Downtown and Central Waterfront Areas.[18]

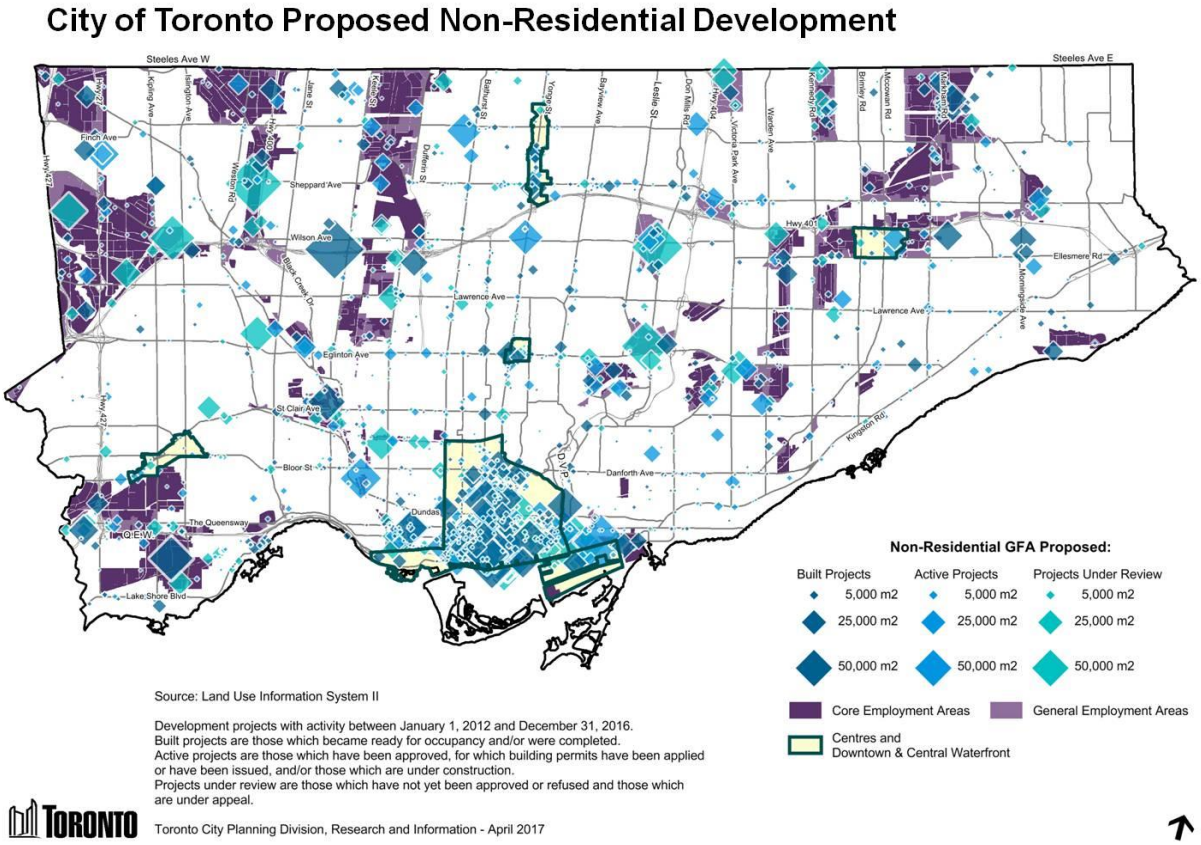

Figure 1: City of Toronto Proposed Non-Residential Development Map, April 2017. Not to scale.

[16] Kotkin, Joel, Wendell Cox, Ali Modarres, and Aaron M. Renn. *Size is not the answer: The Changing Face of the Global City*. Research Report. Demographics and Policy, Chapman University and Civil Services College Singapore. 2014.
[17] Government of Canada Statistics. "*Census Profile, 2016 Census Toronto, City [Census subdivision], Ontario and Toronto, Census division [Census division], Ontario*." Census Profile, 2016 Census. November 03, 2017.
[18] City of Toronto. *"How Does the City Grow?"* City of Toronto. September 06, 2017. https://web.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/trends-analysis/how-does-the-city-grow/.

Toronto is an especially exciting location for retail, as predicted by JC Williams Group, a global retail advisory and consulting firm. When analyzing retail trends in Downtown Toronto, the firm concluded that due to declining shopping trips and store visits, Toronto retailers are experiencing pressure to deliver an "authentic, seamless, branded shopping experience – creativity and experimental qualities are becoming a differentiator for existing bricks-and-mortar retailers in the city".[19] Aside from retail, the core areas of Downtown Toronto have seen a simultaneous development of businesses, restaurants, and other entertainment venues that contribute to the cultural qualities of the city. These qualities coexist in conjunction with the vibrancy, functionality, and uniqueness of Toronto's metropolitan fabric. Considering these factors, the Downtown and Central Waterfront areas hold great potential for the situation of this project.

The Harbourfront: Toronto's Cultural Destination

The Toronto Harbourfront is located on the northern shore of Lake Ontario within the downtown core of Toronto, Ontario. Since the founding of the city, the Harbourfront has been used for shipping and industrial purposes. Under Pierre Trudeau's federal government in 1972, a Crown corporation was formed with a mandate to revitalize 100 central acres of waterfront land stretching west from York Street to Stadium Road.[20] The Harbourfront Development Framework caught the essence of the late 1970's in Toronto and received one of the first City of Toronto Urban Design Awards, reflecting the best of new planning practices: medium-rise, high density urban fabric, mixed uses, preservation of historic buildings, mixed income non-profit housing, and public programming to animate urban spaces.[21] Culture, education, and recreation were

[19] Barron, Stuart. *"Toronto Retail Snapshot Q4 2015."* Cushman & Wakefield. 2016. http://www.cushmanwakefield.com/en/research-and-insight/canada/toronto-retail-snapshot/.
[20] "Harbourfront Centre: History." *Harbourfront Centre*. http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/history/index.cfm.
[21] Spafford, Greg. *"Toronto Harbourfront Case Study."* Centre for Environmental Design Research and Outreach. 2001. http://www.ucalgary.ca/ev/designresearch/projects/2001/CEDRO/cedro/cip_acupp_css/harbour.html.

intended to be tools that would bring Toronto residents back to the lake and attract international visitors. These cultural activities would strengthen the city core and redefine the nature of public space in the city. Architect Harley Sherlock reinforces this notion by referring to noted urbanist Jane Jacob's book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, in which she states: "nothing enhances a city's reputation more than friendly streets where there is plenty happening."[22] Jacobs argues the importance of offering a diversity of activities in the central cores of cities, as well as ensuring there is a consistent excitement offered to the public. By implementing a project with a temporary nature through a unique application, an alternative retail typology will further strengthen the themes of diversity and public excitement for the Harbourfront.

In 1976, the Harbourfront Corporation was formed to fulfill the intended mandate and initiate change.[23] Since then, the site has been at the forefront for leading the way in urbanization in Toronto. The Harbourfront Centre, a non-profit cultural organization established in 1991, plays a key role in the sites initiatives and oversees the programming of events and activities. With a vision to be "a vibrant home for the culture of our time, inspiring people through the magic of the creative spirit", the Harbourfront Centre has become a model of urban revitalization, inspiring and setting a new standard for cities such as London, Tokyo, San Francisco, and Chicago.[24] Moreover, the Toronto Harbourfront has established itself as a valuable public space for the city and its inhabitants. Architectural curator Zoe Ryan argues:

> One indication of quality public spaces, used by many kinds of people and at different times of day and night, is that they are flexible spaces that can accommodate different activities, whether programmed or spontaneous, and have the capacity to transform over time to encourage new uses, energizing the site at all times.[25]

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[22] Sherlock, Harley. *Cities are good for us*. London: Paladin, 1991. Ebook edition.
[23] "Harbourfront Centre: History." *Harbourfront Centre*. http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/history/index.cfm.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ryan, Zoë. *The good life: new public spaces for recreation*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007. Ebook edition.

The Power Plant is a strong example of what Ryan describes above – the space is used both day and night, throughout all seasons, and by all ages. It presents the public with both programmed and spontaneous events in venues that are flexible and easily transformed. Examples of this include the Natrel Pond and Skating Rink, the Harbourfront Concert Stage, the Harbourfront Theatre, and the gallery itself. The activities that take place within these spaces range from physical activity and outdoor relaxation, to entertainment and performance art. Hosting over 4,000 events and programs annually, the Harbourfront is not only a significant cultural destination but also acts a quality public space; both of which were key considerations for site selection.

When considering the site, it is important to note that the Harbourfront is home to the ports of Toronto. This has determined the development and growth of the area and is an important consideration for the narrative for the project. The Harbourfront not only provides Toronto with a leisure waterfront zone and outdoor public space, but it results in a distinct personality and qualities that will be critical for successful integration of the project.

The unique quality of the Harbourfront site is the character it has consistently retained and restored over the decades. By amalgamating two strategies – historic preservation and public access – the redevelopment agency continuously sought to revitalize the site's functions and image.[26] Not only has the Harbourfront preserved its original industrial buildings, but these architectural symbols of Toronto's history have come together to form a vibrant center of originality and creativity. To date, the Harbourfront Centre site has been regarded as a "bold and innovative cultural force in Toronto"[27], as well as a popular destination for both residents and

[26] Spafford, Greg. *"Toronto Harbourfront Case Study."* Centre for Environmental Design Research and Outreach. 2001. http://www.ucalgary.ca/ev/designresearch/projects/2001/CEDRO/cedro/cip_acupp_css/harbour.html.
[27] "Harbourfront Centre." *Toronto Community Knowledge Centre*. http://ckc.torontofoundation.ca/org/harbourfront-centre-0.

tourists. It is especially popular throughout the summer season, witnessing heavy pedestrian traffic during the months of May through September. This may be a result of the high density of parks, open spaces, and walkways in the public – features which the city has often been criticized in lacking.

The Harbourfront is easily accessible by foot and streetcar from the downtown core, as well as by ferry from the Toronto Islands. Apart from being centrally located for transportation, the Harbourfront is in walking distance to major entertainment hubs and amenities within the downtown core. Ease of access was a critical consideration in site selection to ensure feasibility of the project. Within the Harbourfront area, other notable buildings and facilities include: Jack Layton Ferry Terminal, Queens Quay Terminal, Canada Malting Silos, and the Redpath Sugar Refinery. An analysis of the site is depicted in the following site maps.

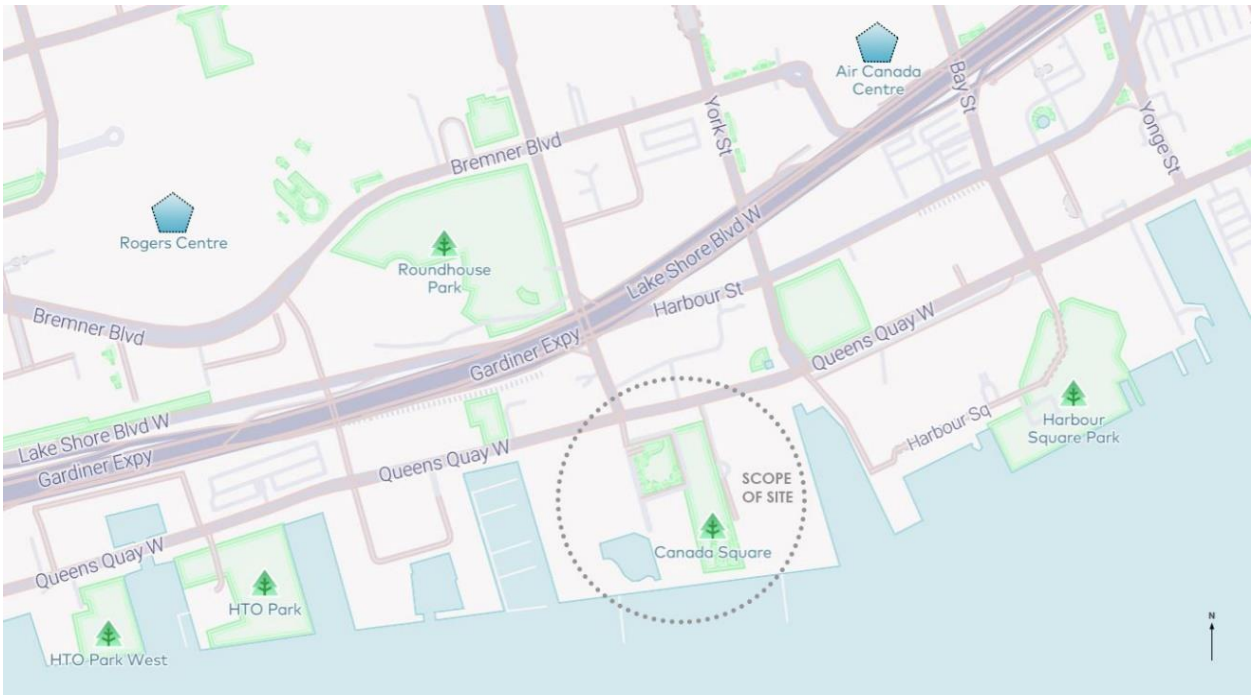

Figure 2: Map representing parks and entertainment venues surrounding site. Adapted from Mapbox. Not to scale.

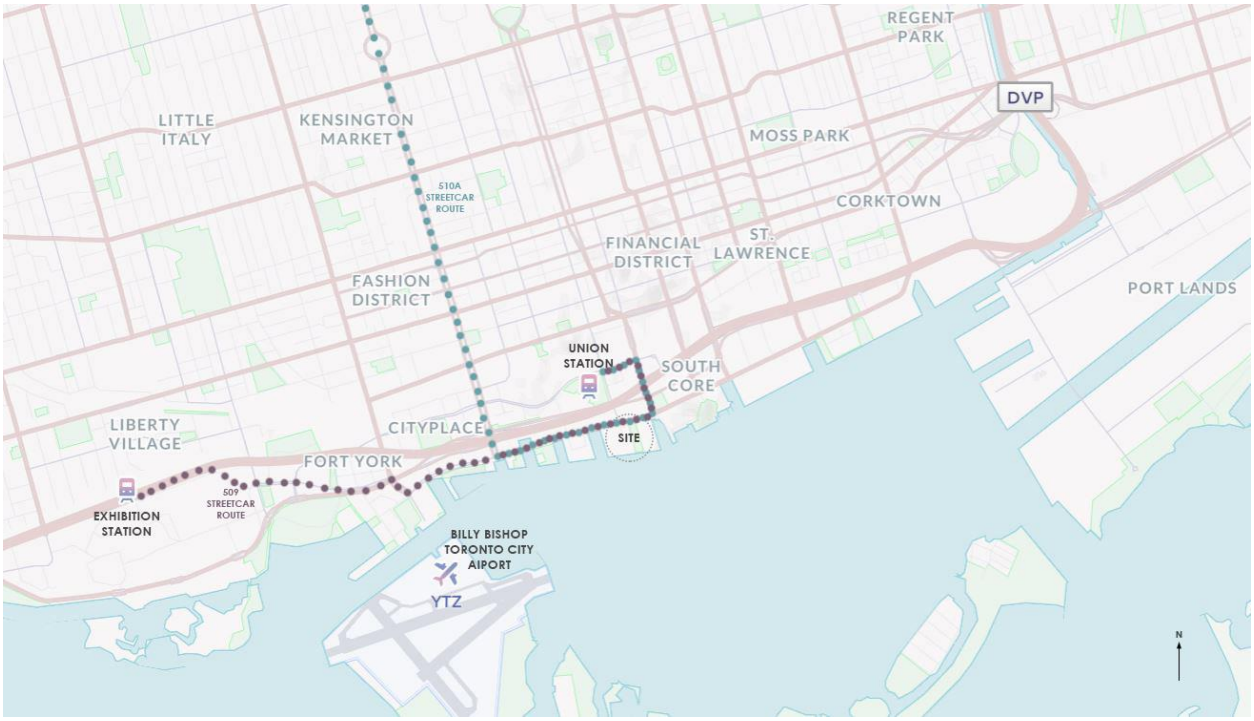

Figure 3: Map representing transportation routes to The Power Plant, as well as major transit hubs surrounding site. Adapted from Mapbox. Not to scale.

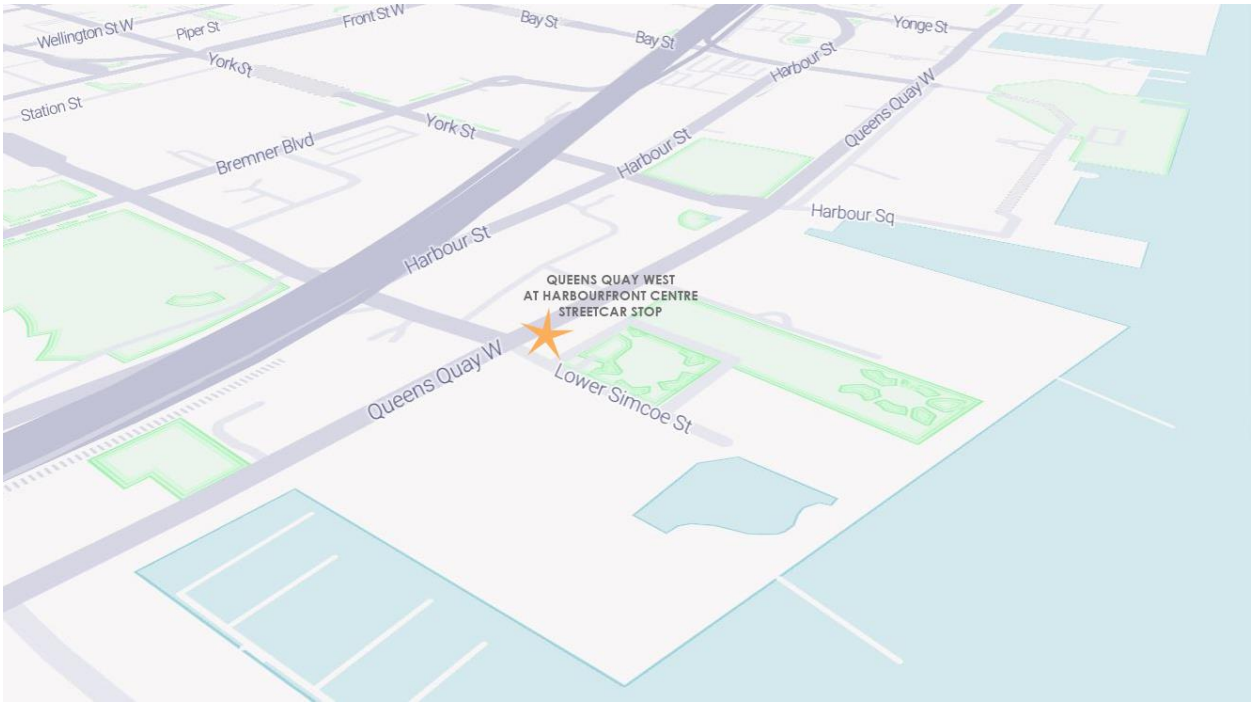

Figure 4: Aerial map facing northeast. This map represents the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) designated streetcar stop at the Harbourfront Centre. Adapted from Mapbox. Not to scale.

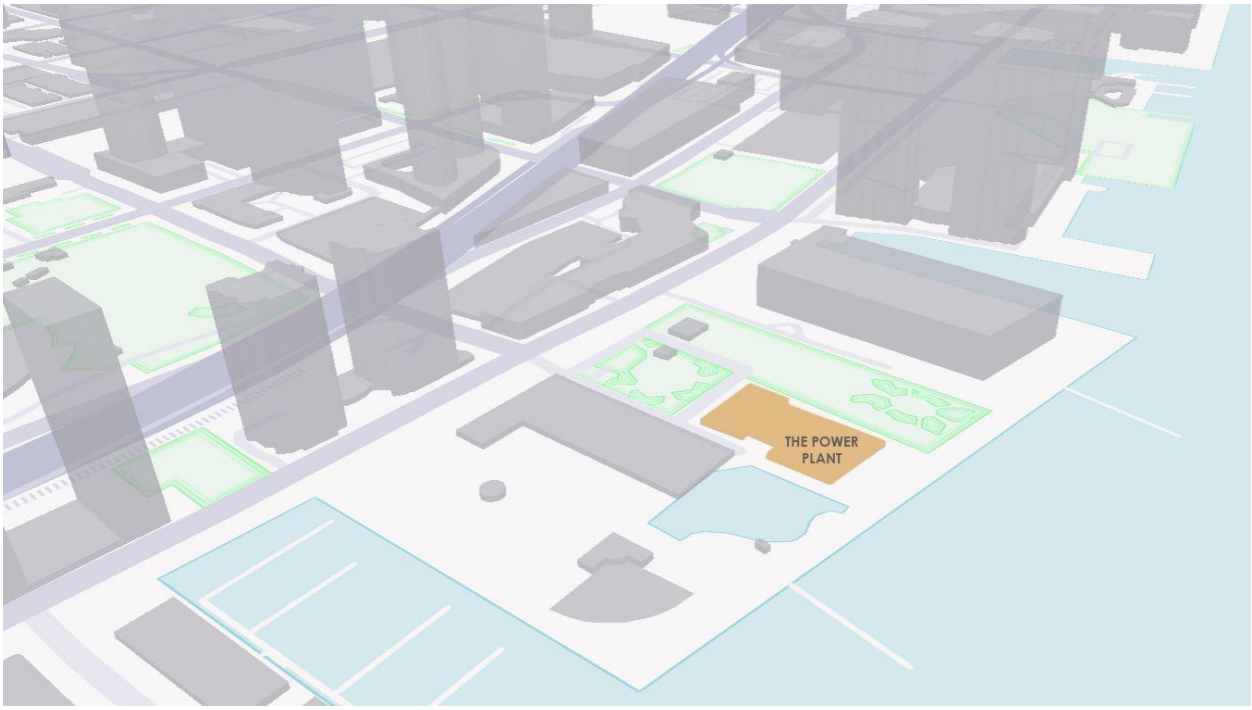

Figure 5: Map representing northeast facing aerial view of site, as well as density of surrounding structures. Adapted from Mapbox. Not to scale.

BUILDING ANALYSIS

The Power Plant: Building History

The Power Plant was constructed in 1926, and was the original powerhouse that contained the heating and refrigeration equipment for the Toronto Terminal Warehouse[28] and The Ice House[29], its companion building.[30] The plant operated as a powerhouse until 1980, at which time the Harbourfront Corporation provided the Art Gallery at Harbourfront with the opportunity to renovate and move into the existing structure.[31] On May 1st, 1987, the building was established as The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery and opened to the public. During this time, post-industrialism presented the city with a large shift in the cultural scene, bringing new museums back to the city fabric and into previously existing buildings. This shift has been

[28] Presently, Toronto Terminal Warehouse is known as Queen's Quay Terminal.
[29] Presently, the Ice House is known as the Harbourfront Centre Theatre.
[30] "Harbourfront Centre: History." *Harbourfront Centre*. http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/history/index.cfm.
[31] "The Power Plant." *The Power Plant - History*. http://www.thepowerplant.org/AboutUs/History.aspx.

understood as the musealisation of historic city landmarks, known as a contemporary architectural heritage defined as 'industrial archaeology'[32]."[33]

Since its inception, The Power Plant has operated as a registered Canadian charitable organization, supported by members, sponsors, donors, and funding from all levels of the government. Throughout this, the gallery was consistently devoted to presenting the public with culturally enriched experiences through the exhibition of Canadian and international contemporary art. In celebration of their 25th anniversary[34], the gallery introduced "ALL YEAR, ALL FREE". This initiative offers the public free admission and open access to all exhibitions, thus furthering the gallery's outreach. Reflected in the vision statement, the institution's commitment to providing the public with a dynamic cultural destination has resulted in an establishment that is essential to the cultural infrastructure in Toronto and Canada.[35]

[32] Industrial archaeology is the systematic study of material evidence associated with the industrial past, collectively referred to as industrial heritage. (Palmer, Marilyn, and Peter Neaverson. *Industrial archaeology: principles and practice*. London: Routledge, 2005. Ebook edition.)
[33] Alfrey, Judith and Tim Putnam. *Industrial Hertiage: managing resources and uses*. London: Routledge, 2016. Ebook edition.
[34] The Power Plant's 25th anniversary was celebrated in 2012.
[35] "The Power Plant." *The Power Plant – Mandate and Vision*. http://www.thepowerplant.org/AboutUs/Mandate---Vision.aspx

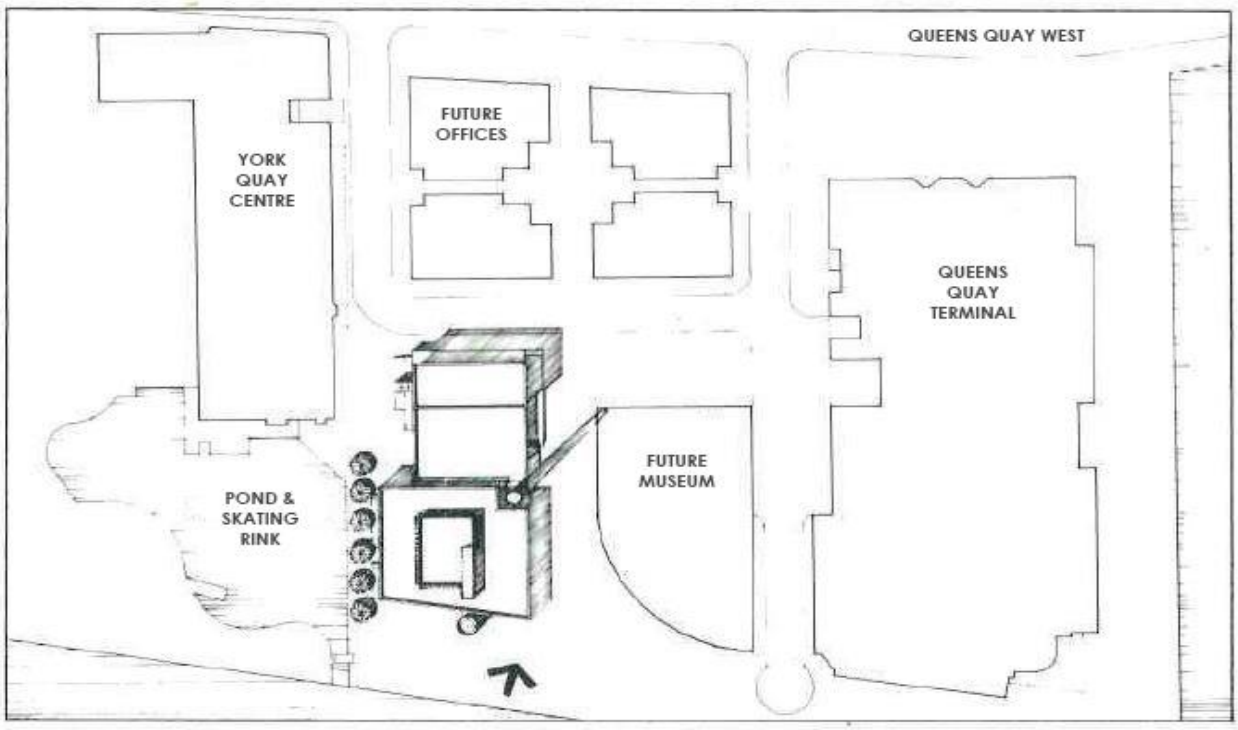

Figure 6: Historical site re-development plan. Not to scale.

In support of its activities, the fiscally sound Power Plant has been awarded The Lieutenant Governors' Award three times for building innovative private-sector partnerships.[36] This institution has established itself as a key player in the Toronto art and design community, which has been proven through consistent recognition throughout its years of operation. Spanning the last twenty-five years, the gallery has produced over forty significant and award-winning publications – it was a recipient of the 2011 OAAG[37] Curatorial Writing Award (Adaptation: Between Species, 2010) and 2011 OAAG Design Awards (Pae White: Material Mutters, 2010; The Power Plant – Refresh, 2011).[38] As demonstrated through its history, as well as present and future initiatives within the city, The Power Plant has inevitably positioned itself as an influential figure and sets the standard as a top cultural destination in the country.

[36] "Harbourfront Centre." *Toronto Community Knowledge Centre*. http://ckc.torontofoundation.ca/org/harbourfront-centre-0.
[37] OAAG is the acronym for Ontario Association of Art Galleries.
[38] "Harbourfront Centre." *Toronto Community Knowledge Centre*. http://ckc.torontofoundation.ca/org/harbourfront-centre-0.

VISUAL ESSAY: PAST

The following series of photographs (figures 7-14) portray the historical qualities and architectural heritage of The Power Plant and surrounding site. It is intended to convey the character of the site and institution upon its establishment in the 1980's. Images represent the relationship between the building exterior and interior and are supplemented with historical building plans.

Figure 7: Looking south, a view of the Ice House. In 1981, Artec Consultants conducted a feasibility study of the space. They determined that it presented the ideal criteria for a music hall due to its lack of windows, brick construction, interior dimensions, and 40-foot ceilings. For these reasons, it became host to a performance space due to the building size, shape, and acoustical characteristics.

Figure 8: Looking west to the gallery on the south and theatre on the north. The historical characteristics of the building, as well as the signature smokestack, have been preserved through the site renovations. These comparisons can be made in the subsequent visual essay, “Visual Essay: Present”, which presents present-day photographs of these views.

Figure 9: Looking north, a view of the gallery entrance and clerestory. Once again, the historical characteristics of the building remain greatly unchanged when contrasting the past and present images. The glass entrance, clerestory, and windows have been preserved and continue to allude to the building's heritage and architectural past.

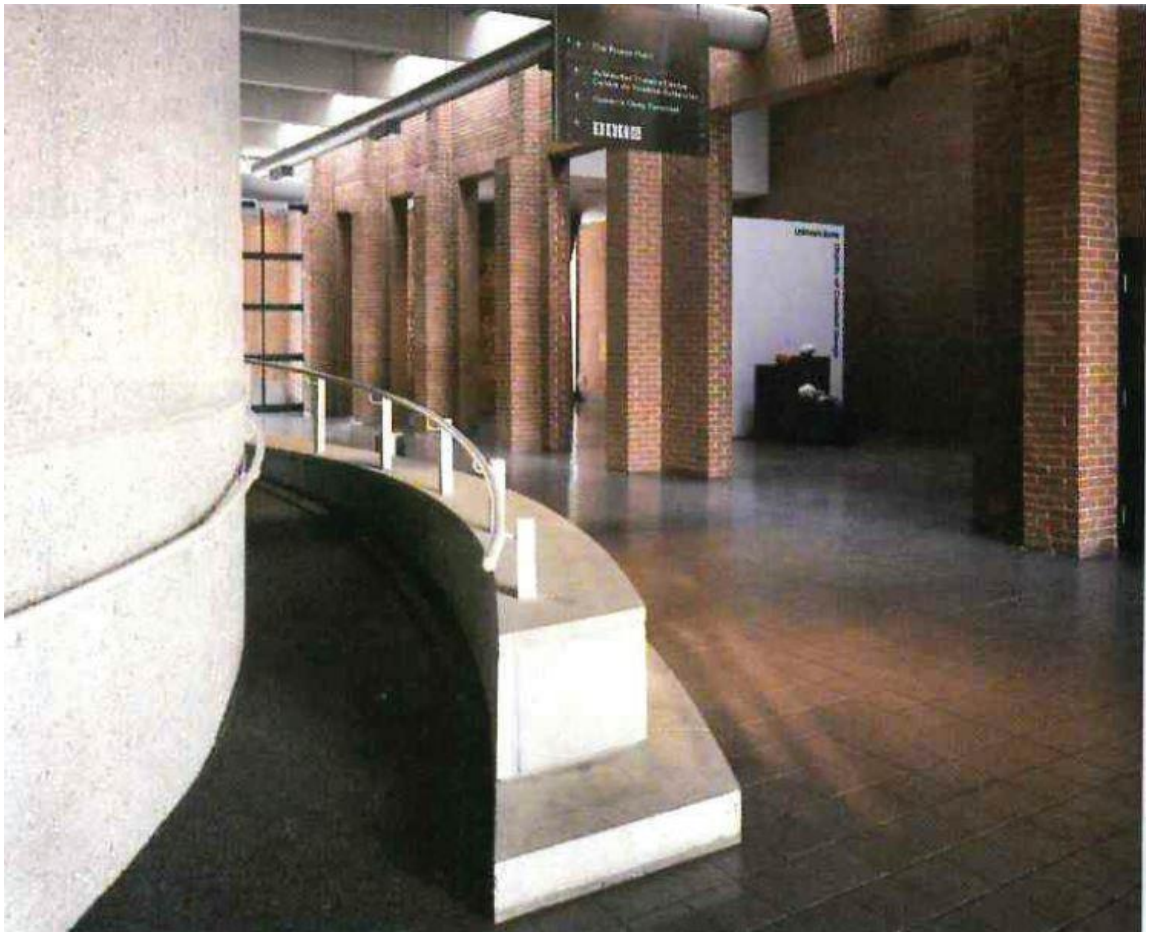

Figure 10: View of foyer in ground floor lobby, which links gallery and theatre spaces. The lobby has evolved over the years – not in terms of materiality, but rather in program and layout. The cement feature – the cylinder at the left of the image – houses the facilities washrooms and utility spaces. These areas are common and shared amongst both the theatre and the gallery.

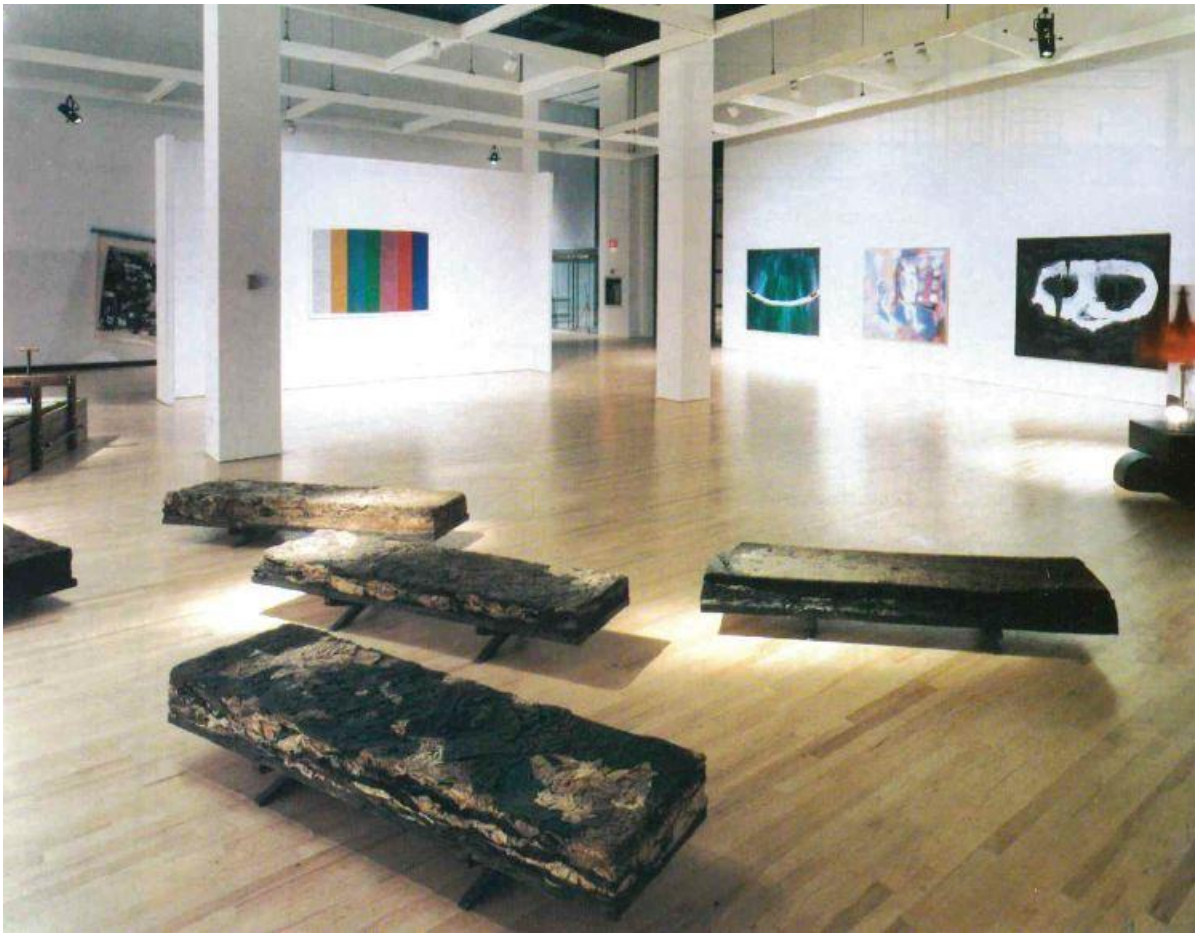

Figure 11: View of gallery areas, with electrically-adjustable lighting grids. This photograph depicts how past installations were presented. Maple flooring was installed throughout the galleries, and walls were painted with a warm white to present a clean, white aesthetic.

Figure 12: View of gallery areas, with former maple flooring. An image of a different gallery space than the previous image, both photographs depict a harmonious theme across the galleries. Continuous flooring, materiality, and use of color promote a cohesive aesthetic within the interior and allow for the art installations to stand out.

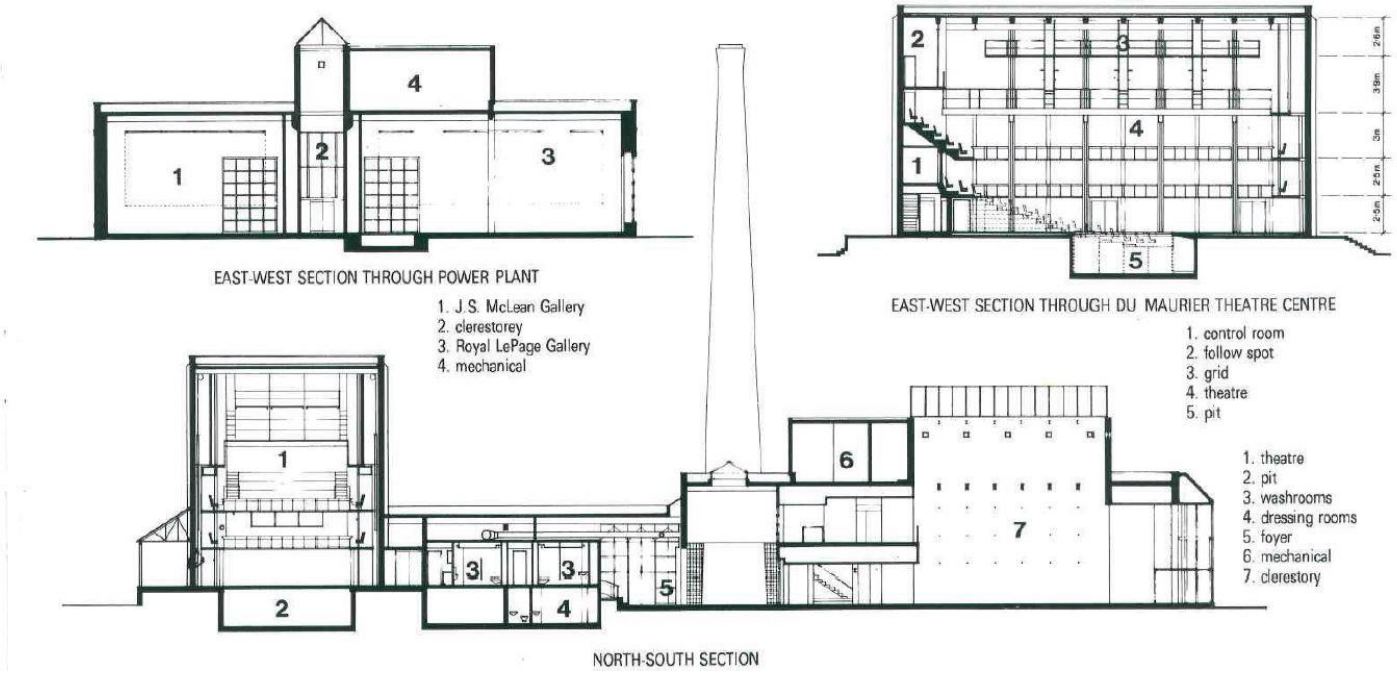

Figure 13: Historical section drawings. Not to scale.

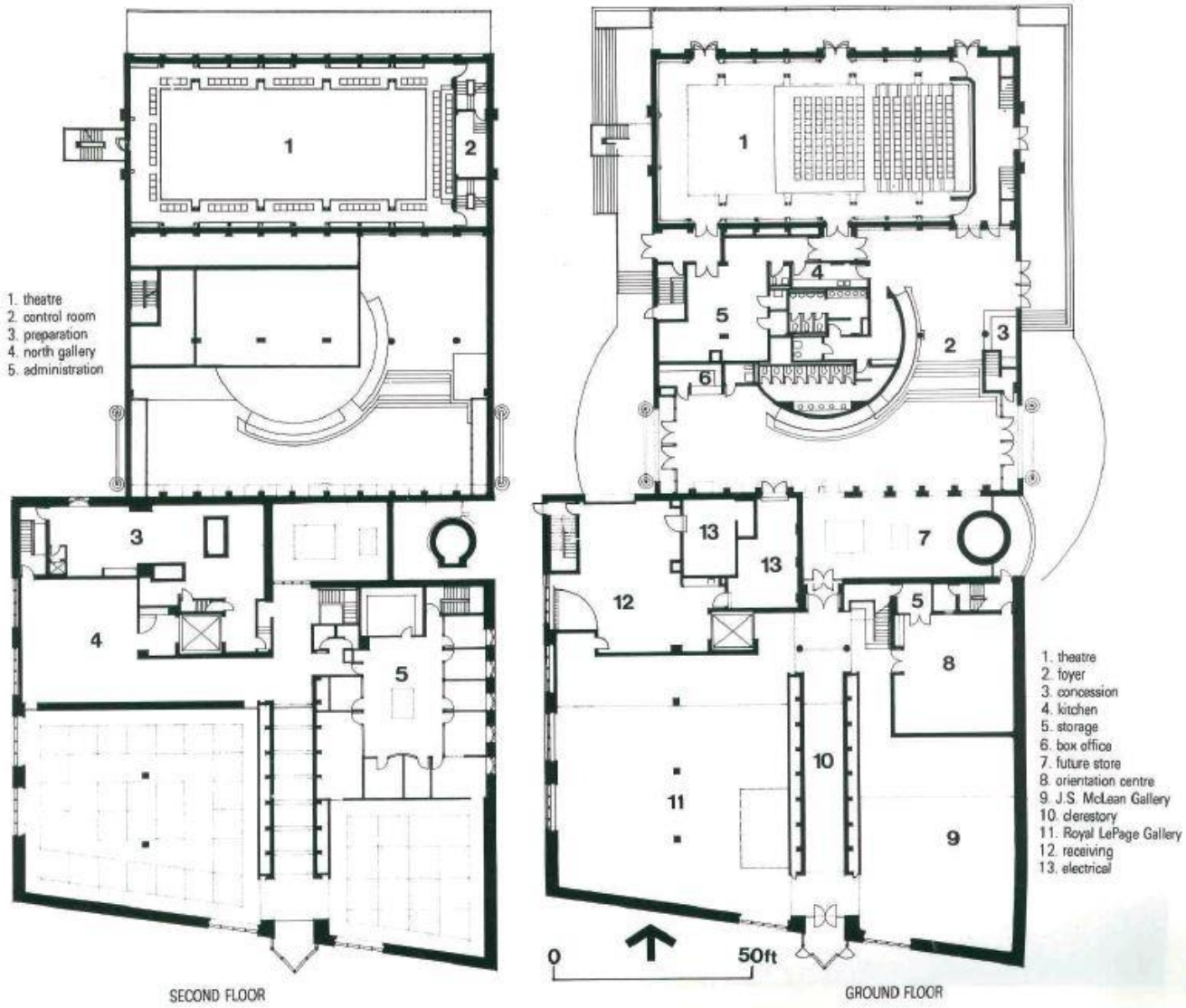

Figure 14: Historical plan drawings. Not to scale.

Building Architecture

The Power Plant is an exceptional example of preserved architecture in Downtown Toronto. Judging from historical photographs, as seen in "Visual Essay: Past", the structure has retained a large majority of its architectural and structural qualities since it was constructed as a powerhouse in 1926. In the 1980's, when the building was renovated into an art gallery, Peter Smith of Lett/Smith Architects was selected to head the project.[39] As the renovations were undertaken, the design was "intended to take into consideration both the history of the building and the demands of contemporary art".[40] From the exterior, the dominant 20s-period architecture is distinctly identifiable by the structure's signature 35-metre smokestack and industrial qualities. These contribute to the persona and charm of the building, both of which add character and appeal to the Harbourfront community.

Furthering its mission to operate as a welcoming public space, The Power Plant implemented an initiative devoted to increasing public access to the gallery in 2009. In 2011, to improve physical and visual access, the "Access Project" was launched. As a result of this, both the lobby and reception area were renovated.[41] This design not only improved the visitor experience, but also positively impacted the amount of pedestrian traffic to the gallery.

Though the renovation preserved many of the existing qualities of the exterior façade, the interior underwent a larger scale of transformation. The shifting typology of the space primarily motivated this; predominantly the adjustment from operating as a powerhouse towards functioning as a public art gallery. The space currently consists of four indoor gallery spaces over two levels with ceiling heights ranging from 10 to 20-feet .[42] A naturally-lit central

[39] This partnership ended in 2004; since then Peter Smith Architect Inc. and William Lett Architect Inc. operate independently.
[40] "The Power Plant." *The Power Plant - History*. http://www.thepowerplant.org/AboutUs/History.aspx.
[41] "Harbourfront Centre." *Toronto Community Knowledge Centre*. http://ckc.torontofoundation.ca/org/harbourfront-centre-0.
[42] The Royal LePage Gallery was the original boiler room; the J.S. McLean Gallery was formerly a coal silo.

clerestory, a double volume space complete with skylights, becomes the central focal point and foreshadows the design language carried throughout the interior. This defining feature provides the visitor with immediate intrigue and fascination upon entrance into the gallery. The design of the interior is approached in a simplistic manner, defined by a sleek, white aesthetic. Certain industrial elements contrast this, such as the original brick smokestack in the front entry. These symbols allude to the preservation effort of the space, and act as a symbol of the architecture's history. There is great flexibility for custom projects and installations – for example, when it comes to lighting, the lighting grids throughout the galleries are electrically height-adjustable. Large windows flood the gallery with natural light, however are also fitted with motorized shading and blackout blinds to accommodate certain exhibitions. At any given time, the gallery holds a maximum capacity of 2,000 people. A site visit confirmed the building's interior to be in excellent condition.

The design of the project gives prominence to the site and architecture, with the intent to reinvigorate the interior with a new purpose. Taking into consideration existing conditions and qualities, the initial project model has been designed for insertion into The Power Plant through means of various strategies. This will be further discussed in Chapter 6: Design Proposal.

VISUAL ESSAY: PRESENT

The following series of photographs (figures 15-30) document The Power Plant and site as it exists today. It is intended to portray the current architectural state of the establishment, in contrast to the historical photographs presented in the previous visual essay. These images are intended to not only depict the relationship between the site and building, but to also consider the diverse activities the complex offers to the public.

Figure 15: Queens Quay West at Harbourfront Centre streetcar station. The station is centrally located at Queens Quay West at Lower Simcoe Street, allowing ease of transportation to the site. The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) runs two streetcar routes to this station: Harbourfront 509 and Spadina 510A. These routes, and this streetcar stop location, are presented in the maps found in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 16: View of The Power Plant complex and surrounding area. Though this photograph is taken in the winter months, it depicts the large amount of space surrounding the complex. The Harbourfront Theatre, formerly the Ice House, is shown at the right of the complex. To the left, The Power Plant's signature smokestack rises above the contemporary art gallery, formerly known as the Toronto Terminal Warehouse.

Figure 17: Looking south at The Power Plant complex. This view gives a closer view of the Harbourfront Theatre, as well as advertising for programming in the area. Natrel is the sponsor for the skating rink on site, which acts as an activity pond in the summer months. As the advertisement states, “Making Winter Fun Delightful” is exactly what the site intends to do. Whether it be skating in the winter months or paddle boating in the summer, the site is host to a variety of activities catering to all ages.

Figure 18: View of CN Tower from site. This photograph depicts the site's relationship to the surrounding cityscape. The CN Tower is known as a prominent Toronto landmark, one which is in proximity to The Power Plant. "More than enough", graphically represented on the south side of the smokestack, adds an edgy quality to the site.

Figure 19: Looking north at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery. This view also presents a glimpse of the surrounding Toronto skyline, situating the site within the city context. In comparison to the historical photograph of this view, as seen in Figure 8, it can be concluded that much of the exterior architectural qualities have been preserved.

Figure 20: West façade of building and pathways to waterfront. This photograph also depicts a series of bike racks, alluding to the encouragement of activity on the site. With these bike racks in place, visitors are offered yet another option for transportation. The large windows, which are located on the west side on the building, allow for great daylighting and views within the interior.

Figure 21: Looking north with a view of Natrel skating rink, which acts as an activity pond in the summer months. The rink is located to the west of The Power Plant, with an adjacent restaurant called The Boxcar Social located at the left of the photograph. This area is a central part of the Harbourfront site, where many events and programs are hosted.

Figure 22: Exterior view of east entrance to The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery. This photograph displays the sign "ALL YEAR, ALL FREE", advertising the free admission to the gallery. As discussed in the site analysis, this is part of the gallery's outreach program to encourage the public to become engaged with the arts and culture of the community.

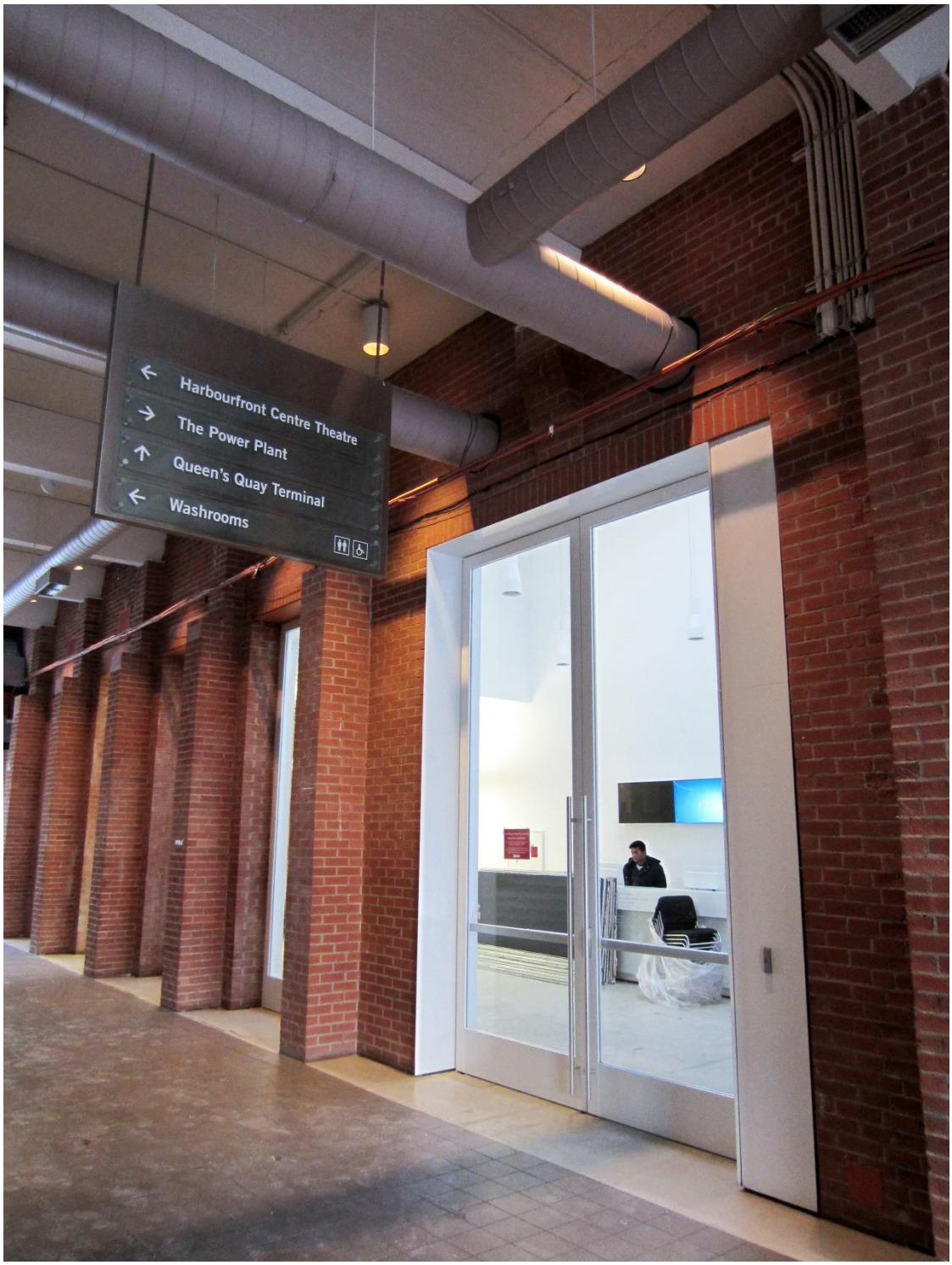

Figure 23: View of gallery entrance from lobby. The grand entrance doors provide visitors with a heightened entrance experience to the contemporary reception area. As shown on the sign, the washrooms are located outside the gallery, as is the Harbourfront Theatre. This lobby area serves as a common area between the complex's facilities.

Figure 24: View of theatre entrance from lobby. The spacious lobby acts as a welcoming space for all visitors, with main entrances on both the east and west sides of the building. Though the theatre and gallery spaces coexist within the building, each are located on opposite sides of the building and act as separate entities.

Figure 25: View of Harbourfront Centre Stage and outdoor summertime patios. Much of the Harbourfront's programming occurs in these areas, with a variety of concerts, shows, and performances occurring during peak season (spring, summer, and fall months). With a steady mix of food and drink establishments, event stages, and activity areas, the Harbourfront ensures there is something for everyone to enjoy.

Figure 26: Looking north at Harbourfront Centre Stage, which showcases seasonal concerts and live shows. This stage plays host to many of the Harbourfront's programs and offers free performances for everyone to enjoy. The stage brings qualities of liveliness and energy to the public, while engaging the audience with an outdoor atmosphere and views of the Toronto skyline.

Figure 27: The Kajama Tall Ship, known as one of Toronto's greatest attractions in the summer months. The ship is docked right outside of The Power Plant, which increases both tourist and resident traffic during its operational months. However, it is not the only of its kind at the Harbourfront – several other cruises, such as the Mariposa Boat Tours, depart from the site as well.

Figure 28: View of Amsterdam Bridge, which joins the Harbourfront Centre site with adjacent Amsterdam Brewhouse complex. In the summer months, when the Blue Jays baseball team is playing in town, this complex is extremely popular – wait lines extend past the restaurant, and visitors can expect over an hour wait to be seated. This establishment is an award-winning Toronto craft brewery which enriches the Harbourfront with the city's pride and spirit.

Figure 29: View of Amsterdam Brewhouse, an award-winning Toronto craft brewery. In the summer months, the large patio spaces offer stunning views over Lake Ontario. With three patios seating over 300 people, the atmosphere is intended to represent Muskoka's cottage country.

Figure 30: View of Lake Ontario. Across the lake, the photograph provides a slight glimpse of the Toronto Islands. These islands are accessible by ferry in the summer months, with the terminal being located right on the Harbourfront. Though this image is taken in the winter months, in the summertime the lake is strewn with sailboats, kayaks, boat cruises, and various other water activities.

CONCLUSION

A retailer can use historic buildings as a tool for differentiating themselves in an oversaturated retail market and offer charismatic experiences in a time where e-commerce has begun to dominate purchasing behaviour. Additionally, the relationship established with the architecture will further contribute to emotional brand connection with consumers. As stated by branding expert Martin Lindstrom, "brands that create an emotional connection to consumers are much stronger than those that don't – it's as simple as that."[43] With this in mind, the project demonstrates how interior design can play an integral role in creating authentic and influential consumer experiences through the adaptive reuse of significant architecture. It outlines that, as interior design professionals, we hold the opportunity to uncover and inspire sustainable strategies that will influence the future of retail design.

The Harbourfront, a site located in the core of Downtown Toronto, has been identified as one that encourages cultural expression while providing a dynamic, accessible environment for the public to experience the culture of the city. Through an in-depth site analysis, it has been concluded that the introduction of a creative, experiential retail environment holds positive outcomes for both the retailer and surrounding community. The application of this project within The Power Plant, an existing building in the Harbourfront Centre, will provide the neighbourhood with an innovative and imaginative new typology. This increases future pedestrian interest and traffic and presents the community with a new venture to sustain urban revitalization of the area.

[43] Lindstrom, Martin. *Brand sense: how to build powerful brands through touch, taste, smell, sight & sound.* London: Kogan Page, 2005. Ebook edition.

Based on analysis of the site and time spent in the area, the summer season – May through September – offers a prime opportunity for the project to be installed in the building. The site is situated near major transportation hubs within the city, and located in proximity to major attractions, amenities, and entertainment districts. Appropriately sized and centrally located in the Harbourfront, The Power Plant site is an ideal location to serve the needs and goals of this project. Through an analysis of the interior, its suitability for adaptive reuse, and its reputation as a well-established destination, The Power Plant meets the criteria required for insertion of the proposed alternative retail design model.

CHAPTER 3: LITERARY ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Traditional brick and mortar retailing has drastically evolved over the past decade – retailers have shifted towards experience-based environments that are exciting, dynamic, and interactive.[44] In the twenty-first century, retail environments, shopping behaviours, and consumer needs have drastically evolved with the rise of e-commerce and technology. Consumers crave more than the typical brick and mortar store experience – they desire extraordinary shopping experiences that are entertaining and engaging.[45] Furthermore, consumer demographics have largely shifted, and a large proportion of retail audiences in now represented by Millennials.[46] As this generation becomes more significant in the retail sector, brands must adapt their experiences to an audience which is more interactive, social, and technologically advanced.[47] However, not only Millennials crave unique retail experiences, and therefore a strong need arises for brands to address emerging trends and the constantly evolving retail landscape.

The creation of the Zenshi Zone addresses this need through the design of an experience-based retail model, inspired by the characteristics of a concept shop. Simply stated, the idea behind a concept shop is to offer unique, curated experiences that evoke a brand identity and lifestyle.[48] With a strong foundation in the concepts of brand experience and atmosphere, and differentiation through adaptive reuse strategies, the Zenshi Zone redefines the retail experience of today by surprising consumers with the extraordinary and unexpected.

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[44] Moore, Melissa, and Robert S. Moore. *New meanings for marketing in a new millennium*, proceedings of the 2001 Academy of Marketing Science (AMS) Annual Conference; San Diego, California, May 30 - June 2, 2001. Cham: Springer, 2015.

[45] Garvin, Alana Nicole. (2009). *Experiential retailing: extraordinary store environments and purchase behavior*. (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from http://commons.emich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1225&context=theses.

[46] Though variously defined by different institutions, for the purposes of this paper Millennials are known as North Americans born between 1981-1996. (Source: Pew Research Center, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/01/defining-generations-where-millennials-end-and-post-millennials-begin/)

[47] Squire Patton Boggs. *The Retail Experience Economy: The Behavioural Revolution*. Research Report. Retail Economics and Squire Patton Boggs. United Kingdom: Retail Economics.

[48] Trotter, Cate. "What is a concept store?" What is a concept store? July 07, 2017. Accessed February 15, 2018. https://www.insider-trends.com/what-is-a-concept-store/.

In this project, the literary analysis provides a theoretical framework for the design process. It has also been used as a foundation for precedent selection and analysis, which can be found in Chapter 4. As established, the main goal of this project was to design an experience-based retail design model that is rooted in brand and product experience – individuals do not make a physical purchase in person but online after experiencing the product in the space. In essence, the goal of the Zenshi Zone was to create a temporary interior environment that informs the user through experience rather than goods alone.

This project was intended to immerse consumers in a captivating sensory experience, which was made possible through the responsive design elements of the interior environment. For these reasons, this chapter has been divided to analyze three concepts and design strategies that have informed the design: brand experience, interior atmospheres, and adaptive reuse in retail design. This analysis informed the design programming, aesthetics, and decision decisions made in this project. The brand experience section outlines key branding theories that apply to the designed space, their relationship to the experience economy, and the resulting experiential retail environment that has been designed. The second part of the chapter defines atmosphere, studies retail atmospherics, and considers the tangible, intangible, and sensory qualities that have informed the designed space. Finally, this chapter analyzes the link between adaptive reuse and the project, studies the relationship and significance of the strategy to retail design, and defines the approaches that have been used in the design.

BRAND EXPERIENCE

Brands have a history that pre-exist the creation and development of modern marketing.[49] When considering the history of brands themselves, it is critical to highlight where they began. Historians will often identify Wedgwood & Bentley, a brand of luxury china in industrializing eighteenth-century Britain, as the first instance of a successful brand.[50] Created by Josiah Wedgwood, Wedgwood & Bentley understood the importance of branding through experience – they designed their showrooms and catalogues to convey a particular "shopping experience" and invested in a high-status image around their product.[51] Wedgwood understood the importance of targeting a specific audience and producing a certain identity to attach to the brand. As Adam Arvidsson, author on critical branding theory, states: "Wedgwood was conscious of the fact that the socially constructed 'aura' might be as valuable as the material qualities of the product".[52] With the successful creation of a brand identity and experience, Wedgwood & Bentley sold their products at a premium – and became one of the most lucrative brands of their time. In present-day consumer society, considering the emergence of e-commerce and online shopping trends, the significance of brand experience is more apparent then ever. Brand experience is the core component that has informed the design of the Zenshi Zone.

Though the Zenshi Zone is focused on designing the interior environment, the space and resulting brand experience of the project is largely dependent on the host architecture.[53] Branding in architecture, largely equated with commodification, plays a critical role as a catalyst to generate an authentic identity for people and places.[54] For this project, the interior environment

[49] Arvidsson, Adam. *Brands: meaning and value in media culture*. London: Routledge, 2006. Ebook edition.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] This will be discussed further in the adaptive reuse section of this chapter.
[54] Klingmann, Anna. *Brandscapes: architecture in the experience economy*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010, pg. 3.

was designed to construct an authentic identity of the Zenshi brand, while considering the importance of the existing architecture to the identity of people and place of the site. This was done based on the significance branding has in the way we perceive and design spaces; the spatialization of brands permeates urban centers, cities, and communities.[55] In addition, the notion of authentic identity is especially significant in both brand strategy and the retail setting. As stated by brand theorist David Aaker, an authentic brand strategy consists of brand "must haves" – personality, values, interests, benefits – backed with substance that consumers desire.[56] Such brands will find compelling ways to narrate the stories for these "must haves", thus generating authentic brand experiences.[57] Aaker furthers the importance of this notion by expressing the significance of brand relevance and credibility, stating:

> To win in brand relevance competition, an organization will have to be able to support more ambitious and risky innovations. They will need to have the capability to sense changes in the marketplace and its consumers, an ability to commit to a new concept and bring it to the market, and a willingness to take risks by going outside the comfort zone.[58]

The statement above summarizes exactly what the Zenshi Zone intends to do – narrate the brand story by being ambitious, committing to a new concept, and taking risks which will bring both the brand and its audience out of the traditional retail comfort zone. In doing so, the Zenshi Zone demonstrates the significance of interior design to the retail environment – when taking the quote above into context, it is clear that design becomes an integral part of brand strategy.

Considering the above, Arvidsson discusses the concept of brands in relation to informational capitalism, which he defines through two central principles: the indication of a

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[55] Ibid., pg. 81.
[56] Aaker, David A. "Win the Brand Relevance Battle and Then Build Competitor Barriers." *California Management Review* 54, no. 2 (2012): 43-57.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

blurring of the distinction between production and consumption, and the putting to work of communication.[59] The first describes a blurring of business and leisure, in which the socialization aspect is emphasized in traditionally understood work environments. In the case of this project, the retail environment is no longer solely to produce value. Blurring the lines of business and leisure was central to the design of the Zenshi Zone – especially through the focus of informing consumers through experience rather than selling physical products. Arvidsson notes that, for retailers, wealth is now dependent on a series of consumer activities, such as playing, observing, or dining.[60] The Zenshi Zone was designed to engage consumers in all the above – whether it be in the digital play spaces, the performance and entertainment areas, or the café and bar areas.

The latter principle is a notion central to what Maurizio Lazzarato, sociologist and philosopher, has called "immaterial labour".[61] Lazzarato defines this as "the kinds of labour that are employed to produce the increasingly important immaterial – aesthetic, emotional, and social – qualities of goods, or to produce and reproduce the flexible social conditions that allow for their production."[62] It can be noted that the function of immaterial labour lies in its ability to promote the socialization of the retail experience. In relation to this project, to produce meaningful and memorable experiences, Zenshi must integrate the social dimension into the design of the interior. The physical environment of the Zenshi Zone will act as the primary component to drive socialization – the aesthetic, emotional, and social qualities of the designed space are what will drive brand experience and influence consumer behaviour. To optimize the

[59] Arvidsson, Adam. *Brands: meaning and value in media culture*. London: Routledge, 2006. Ebook edition.
[60] Lee, Benjamin and Edward LiPuma. "Cultures of Circulation: The Imaginations of Modernity." *Public Culture* 14, no. 1 (2002): 191-213.
[61] Arvidsson, Adam. *Brands: meaning and value in media culture*. London: Routledge, 2006. Ebook edition.
[62] Ibid.

socialization of the space, the Zenshi Zone was programmed to consider and address different consumer profiles, characteristics, and journeys of experience.

Experience is considered an important element towards appreciation of a brand, with the brand experience being one of the most memorable characteristics that a consumer will purchase.[63] A brand experience can be defined in a multitude of ways, though its intensity and influence will vary amongst each unique individual. It can be understood as an emotional connection, a physical experience, or simply a consumer memory. Formally, a brand experience is conceptualized as "sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments".[64]

Brand experience can be measured through a variety of factors, however key consumer experiences include the product experience, shopping and service experience, and consumption experience. Product experiences occur when customers interact with physical goods – for example, the search, evaluation, and examination of a retailer's product.[65] In this project, this is when the interior environment of the Zenshi Zone sets a stage for the product, allowing for it to be presented in a captivating and engaging manner. This was done through the design of interactive displays and attractive installations to feature the Zenshi products. Shopping and service experiences occur when a consumer interacts with the store's physical environment, including its sales staff, business practices, and store policies.[66] In the Zenshi Zone, this is the area which considers atmosphere theory and retail atmospherics – both of which combine to play

[63] Healey, Matthew. *What is branding?* Mies: RotoVision, 2010. Ebook edition.
[64] Brakus, J. Joško, Bernd H. Schmitt and Lia Zarantonello (2009) Brand Experience: What Is It? How Is It Measured? Does It Affect Loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 73, (3), 52-68.
[65] Hoch, Stephen J. (2002), "Product Experience Is Seductive," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29 (December), 448–54.
[66] Kerin, Roger A., Ambuj Jain, and Daniel J. Howard (1992), "Store Shopping Experience and Consumer Price-Quality-Value Perceptions," *Journal of Retailing*, 68 (4), 376–97.

a significant role in shaping the design of the interior. In this project, it can be seen in the selection of live entertainment and performance experiences, as well as in the presentation of the food and beverages served. Consumption experiences are multidimensional and dependent on feelings an individual.[67] This is the result of the consumers interaction with a store environment, as well as the success of the brand to connect and form a relationship with its audience. In the Zenshi Zone, this is the cumulation of the experiences within the interior environment – from the tangible to the intangible, as well as the resulting relationship formed with the consumer. All the above experiences directly reflect the Zenshi brand and define the qualities and characteristics the brand aims to communicate to its target audience. Ultimately, these experiences were significant considerations in the design of the Zenshi retail environment and formed the groundwork for design decisions and solutions.

With this project being focused on brand introduction, the concept of branding became a critical notion for the design.[68] Prior to designing any brand experience, the first major consideration must be establishing and understanding the brand identity.[69] Brand identity is one of the most significant factors in retail design because it serves as the inspiration behind a retail concept and establishes a groundwork for how the store design is developed.[70] The Zenshi brand identity, including vision and mission statements, is defined in Chapter 5: Design Programme. The above-mentioned experiences aim to successfully communicate the Zenshi brand identity, further determining the success of the relationship formed between the brand, retail environment,

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[67] Holbrook, Morris B. and Elizabeth C. Hirschman (1982), "The Experiential Aspects of Consumption: Consumer Fantasies, Feelings, and Fun," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9 (September), 132–40.

[68] In 2001, Molly Hislop defined branding as "the process of creating a relationship or a connection between a company's product and emotional perception of the customer for the purpose of generating segregation among competition and building loyalty among customers."

[69] Brand identity: How the business wants to be perceived by customers. Based on the brand's core values, fundamental substance, and essential character – the unique combination of attributes that define the brand's aspiration and promise.
Robins, Anthony, web, s.v. "brand identity", accessed March 4, 2017, *"Retail Design: Much More than Meets the Eye." The Robin Report.* January 21, 2016. http://www.therobinreport.com/retail-design-much-more-than-meets-the-eye/.

[70] Robins, Anthony. "Retail Design: Much More than Meets the Eye." The Robin Report. January 21, 2016. http://www.therobinreport.com/retail-design-much-more-than-meets-the-eye/.

and audience. Architect and brand consultant Anthony Robins argues that a critical step in designing a successful retail environment is a thorough understanding and clear sense of the brand identity.[71] The built environment became a medium for the brand representation of Zenshi, and every element and detail of the space was designed to reflect the brand identity.

Brand experience is derived not only from the brand identity – it is driven by the needs and desires of consumers who seek memorable retail experiences. As will be discussed later in this section, consumers are co-producers in the creation of brand identity and the resulting brand experience. The influence of the experience economy, a term first coined by business authors Joseph Pine and James Gilmore, has greatly influenced the retail industry. Consumers have shifted from valuing products and material possessions to desiring experiences and memories that can be shared with friends, family, and social media.[72] This shift, along with the emerging presence of e-commerce and the online marketplace, has drastically changed the landscape for traditional brick and mortar retailers. Today, with the emergence of the experience economy, retailers must focus on providing memories rather than products, thus becoming stages for experiences rather than merely goods and service providers.[73] This notion illustrates that consumers remain in need of a physical store environment – however, the need for an approach towards an alternative retail method arises when the desire for dynamic and memorable shopping experiences is considered. This was the one of the founding ideas upon which the Zenshi Zone was designed. This theme is further addressed by German architect Anna Klingmann, who states that "for architecture in the experience economy, the relative success of a design lies in the sensation a consumer derives from it – in the enjoyment it offers and the resulting pleasure it

[71] Ibid.
[72] Squire Patton Boggs. *The Retail Experience Economy: The Behavioural Revolution*. Research Report. Retail Economics and Squire Patton Boggs. United Kingdom: Retail Economics.
[73] Joseph B. Pine and James H. Gilmore. *Welcome to the Experience Economy*. Harvard Business Review. July 31, 2014. https://hbr.org/1998/07/welcome-to-the-experience-economy.

evokes".[74] Simply stated, the Zenshi Zone aims to provide experiences that e-commerce cannot offer.

According to Pine and Gilmore, customers buy to reflect and conform to a self-image – what they own is a depiction of how they perceive the world, who they are, and who they aspire to be.[75] In this project, it can be said that consumers seek shopping experiences that strengthen their connection to a brand. The interior of the Zenshi Zone was designed to heighten the identity of Zenshi in new and exciting ways, further enriching this connection. The principle behind this stems from the notion that brands have become communities and cultural resources that people relate to as significant components of their own identities, as well as their perceptions of the world.[76] Considering this, the Zenshi Zone narrated the brand by use of a variety of tools – ranging from space planning based on the intended consumer journey, to visual devices built to evoke certain emotions, to material selections that arouse a specific bodily experience. Through this process, an alternative, experiential retail opportunity was formed.[77] The design of this environment allows Zenshi to tap into a new market, therefore differentiating the brand through a distinguished brand experience.

However, brands and the experiences they provide are not the only vehicle to purchase behaviour. What the consumer buys is the ability to create experiences and be involved in constructing the brand identity. Consumers want to be co-producers in this process, resulting in a desire to establish authentic ideas about a brand through experience. Arvidsson considers this the ability to produce a common social world, one which is empowered and programmed to unfold

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[74] Klingmann, Anna. *Brandscapes: architecture in the experience economy*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010, pg. 19.
[75] Joseph B. Pine and James H. Gilmore. *Authenticity: contending with the new consumer sensibility*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2007.
[76] Arvidsson, Adam. *Brands: meaning and value in media culture*. London: Routledge, 2006. Ebook edition.
[77] Experiential retail can be understood as a retail strategy that, through the transformation of products and services into a total consumption experience, satisfies both hedonic desires and utilitarian needs of a consumer. (Source: Kim, Youn-Kyung, Judith Anne Cardona Forney, and Pauline Sullivan. *Experiential retailing: concepts and strategies that sell*. New York: Fairchild, 2007).

through communication and interaction.[78] Brands are now spun into the social fabric of our society, and act as an universal medium towards building our notions of identity, social relations, and shared experiences.[79] The value in brands comes from their ability to connect and form relationships with their audience – consumers are critical for this process, as without them, brand experiences would not exist. In the Zenshi Zone, experience is reliant on consumer interaction. The interior environment was designed to come alive through its audience, which serves as the medium through which the Zenshi identity is formed. Sarah Banet-Weiser, author and academic in the field of branding culture, emphasizes the importance of brand relationships in the cultural context. She argues that, in contemporary society, brands are about culture rather than solely business – the experiences they evoke define our everyday living, individual identities, and affective relationships.[80] To summarize the concept of brand perception, Banet-Weiser addresses that "brands become the setting around which individuals weave their own stories, where individuals position themselves as the central character in the narrative of the brand."[81] The goal of the Zenshi Zone was to design the setting for this to transpire – an environment where each individual is afforded the freedom to construct their own experience.

The commonalities that arise between brands and consumers are what define a brand as valuable – it is through the ability to manage and program human interaction effectively that will allow this value to be realized.[82] Therefore, brand experience is not a one-way street – it becomes clear that a brand's value is not only in the tangible product, but in the intangible experiences the brand co-creates with its audience. This is the reason the Zenshi Zone was designed to inform

[78] Arvidsson, Adam. *Brands: meaning and value in media culture*. London: Routledge, 2006. Ebook edition.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Banet-Weiser, Sarah. *Authentic TM: the politics of ambivalence in a brand culture*. New York, NY: New York University Press, 2012. Ebook edition.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

through experience rather than sell through products – this allows a greater emphasis to be placed on consumers co-producing the brand identity. With the project being aimed at brand introduction, it is critical that at this stage Zenshi concentrates on staging the right experiences to allow the audience to be a part of the identity construction process. With this, the process of branding becomes more than simply a marketing strategy or commodification – it is understood as a dynamic, cultural phenomenon that aims to shape the ways society perceives the world.[83]

Compelling consumer experiences within the retail setting could not exist without the spatial environment. Branding researcher Liz Moor emphasizes the importance of utilizing the spatial and experiential dimensions of a brand to reach consumers.[84] Moor states that the "socialization" of experience and memory can be considered a "spatialization" – a feeling of "I wish I was *there*".[85] To further this concept, she discusses both Prada and Nike as examples of "experientialization" – Nike and the Run Club community, and Prada's hosting of art events and club nights.[86] Moor describes careful spatial planning and a live, event-based nature as a strategy to make brands more memorable and create a shift in what constitutes a marketing space – the more effectively the environment can engage the senses, the more memorable it will be.[87] This was one of the core principles in the design of the Zenshi Zone.

As human beings, much of our knowledge of the world and our environment is experienced through our senses. When considering brand experience, it is important to address the sensory qualities of the retail environment. Many retailers differentiate themselves based on their ability to form sensory relationships with a consumer, targeting the senses of sight, smell,

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Liz Moor (2003), "Branded Spaces: The scope of new marketing," *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 3 (March), 39-60.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Both Prada and Nike spaces are discussed and analyzed in Chapter 4: Precedent Analysis.
[87] Liz Moor (2003), "Branded Spaces: The scope of new marketing," *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 3 (March), 39-60.

touch, taste, and sound. Brand expert Martin Lindstrom defined branding in space through the senses. He introduced the concept of sensory branding – creating a brand experience focusing on the emotional connections between the retailer and audience, with the purpose to stimulate consumers' imagination and perception.[88] For example, brands such as Starbucks, Abercrombie & Fitch, and Subway have a distinct smell that is immediately recognizable to the public audience. However, it is crucial that the sensory qualities emitted in the retail environment are consistent with the brand identity, otherwise a disconnection will result. For example, Starbucks experienced a problem when they began to serve breakfast – the warming of the egg sandwiches conflicted with the renowned coffee scent, which is central to its brand identity. Therefore, to make the right sensory connections with consumers, Zenshi must remain consistent yet be adaptable to the environment in which it is situated. Lindstrom notes that brands which appeal to multiple senses and form resulting connections with their audience become stronger, and gain more loyalty, than those who do not.[89] This is a key reason for the significance of physical store environments – an online marketplace cannot be conducive to the five senses, as it is does not physically interact with a consumer. The role of the Zenshi Zone is to provide a medium for generating experiences that will be integral to the formation of consumer relationships and loyalty. From lighting, to materials, to furnishing, this is the opportunity for interior design to step in and play an integral role in Zenshi's brand management.[90] From the careful curation of interactive installations, such as the digital galleries, to the integration of local cuisine in the café

[88] Lindstrom, Martin. *Brand sense: how to build powerful brands through touch, taste, smell, sight & sound.* London: Kogan Page, 2005. Ebook edition.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Brand management: The process of identifying the core values of a particular brand and reflecting the core values among the targeted customers. It is important to be consistent in the ideas portrayed by the company, whether it is through internal or external branding. *Investopedia,* online ed., s.v. "brand management", accessed March 4, 2017, http://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/brand-management.asp

and bar, to the characteristic materiality in the themed environments – each design decision in the Zenshi Zone was made to accurately represent the brand identity.

The ways in which a retailer stages brand experiences are highly dependent on the built environment, a process referred to as brandscaping. Otto Riewoldt, author of *Brandscaping: Worlds of Experience in Retail Design*, defines brandscaping as "transforming the brand into an attraction location– a three-dimensional microcosm representing a brand image and identity and provides an experience to be perceived by the senses".[91] In brandscaping, architecture and the interior provide the stage setting for a retailer, affording the opportunity for a flexible, constantly changing scene. This notion is strongly related to the concept of *mise-en-scène*, which will be further discussed in the subsequent section of this chapter. Riewoldt states:

> The primary objective is not to sell the product but to generate a fascination with the brand; to get the customer to identify with the world of the brand, creating a brand awareness and providing it with a deep-set emotional anchor. The act of purchasing becomes the potential climax. This dramatization of the brand experience calls for 'experience architecture'. Architecture and design assume a new significance in the retail sector, because as an expression of the image and brand, they are a vital part of any convincing presentation.[92]

Through this excerpt, it can be understood that architecture and interior design play a significant role in all brand experiences. With the previously discussed experience economy, physical purchase behaviour is no longer what the retail environment is intended to achieve. Instead, as discussed by Riewoldt above, it is the ability to have a customer identify and connect with the brand, thus resulting in an emotional attachment to its identity. Brandscaping can further support the notion that in the current retail landscape, products are sold through brand experiences – retailers should not focus solely on product sales, but rather the opportunities presented by

[91] Riewoldt, Otto. *Brandscaping: worlds of experience in retail design. Basel: Birkhäuser*, 2002.
[92] Ibid.

selling through experience. As discussed by Klingmann, brandscapes allow for brands to develop their own physical contexts by forming distinguishing cultural contexts.[93] Klingmann furthers this notion by stating, "today, more than ever, brandscapes as physical sites have become the key elements linking identity, culture, and place."[94] The ability for the Zenshi Zone to connect with the local identity and culture was a key determinant in the adaptable, temporary nature of the design. The Zenshi Zone is not intended to exist in a vacuum – it is intended to revitalize not only the retail experience, but also the site and social fabric in which it is situated.

INTERIOR ATMOSPHERES

A widely-used, yet broadly defined term, atmosphere is a phenomenon that reconsiders the meaning of space. In a spatial context, atmosphere causes the blurring of boundaries between humans, environments, and experiences, and can therefore be understood as the connection between environmental qualities and human states.[95] Gernot Böhme, philosopher and author of *Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics*, wrote about the expression of atmospheres in terms of "new aesthetics", which he defined as "a theory of aesthetic work, understood as the production of atmospheres."[96] He defined atmospheres as an alternative expression for mood, feeling, ambience, or tone, with a "spatial atmosphere being the common reality of the perceiver and the perceived."[97]

In Böhme's *The Art of the Stage Set as a Paradigm for an Aesthetics of Atmospheres*, he discussed how atmospheres are entities that change over time yet can be consistently recognized

[93] Klingmann, Anna. *Brandscapes: architecture in the experience economy*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010, pg. 83.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Böhme, Gernot. "Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics." *Thesis Eleven* 36, no. 1 (1993): 113-26.
[96] Böhme, Gernot, and Jean-Paul Thibaud. *The aesthetics of atmospheres.* London, 2016. Ebook edition.
[97] Böhme, Gernot. "Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics." *Thesis Eleven* 36, no. 1 (1993): 113-26.

through their steady character.[98] This notion can be directly related to branding and brand identity – though brands are constantly evolving, the experiences they stage for consumers must remain consistent to accurately represent brand identity. As the market, products, and consumer demographics change, the stage that is set by the retail environment must be temporal and flexible to provide the appropriate brand perceptions, however the experiences evoked must remain consistent with the brand image. As discussed in the previous section, this is critical as consumers are co-producers of brand identity, and therefore experiences within the retail environment must be meaningful and representative of the brand. This was a central theme in the design of the Zenshi Zone, as the project is intended to be modular and temporary in nature, yet still consistent with the Zenshi brand. For example, one way this was done was through design was the selection of specific materials. Materials are one aspect of the Zenshi Zone that afforded the ability to stimulate multiple senses – a language was created not only by the selection of certain materials, but also through the design of their placement. Thus, the materials begin to form the scenes of the interior setting, narrating the Zenshi brand identity and the resulting brand experiences. Böhme considers this through his discussion of creating an atmosphere through materiality – it can be understood through a process, which involves specifying materials, arranging them appropriately within a space, and providing the environment with symbols that will further heighten the atmospheric identity.[99]

The notion described above can be strongly supported by the concept of *mise-en-scène*. In fact, not only does *mise-en-scène* heavily relate to interior atmosphere, it also has a strong relationship to the typology of retail environments. Though definitions vary, interior designer

[98] Böhme, Gernot. "The art of the stage set as a paradigm for an aesthetics of atmospheres" *Ambiances. Environnement sensible, architecture et espace urbain*. February 10, 2013. http://journals.openedition.org/ambiances/315.
[99] Böhme, Gernot. *Architektur und Atmosphäre.* München: Wilhelm Fink, 2006. Ebook edition.

Jean Whitehead notes that the simplest way to define *mise-en-sc*ène is "the art of framing, choreographing, and displaying – an essential part of this, in many films, happens in what is staged (actors in an environment) for a camera".[100] In the design of the Zenshi Zone, the art of framing, choreographing, and displaying was apparent in all elements of the design. The consumers are the actors in the Zenshi Zone environment, and the Zenshi brand used this art to evoke its brand identity. The interior setting of The Power Plant provided the stage for the design and allowed Zenshi to decorate the space in such a way that contributed to a captivating atmosphere. To further support these ideas, Whitehead considers interior environments through a *mise-en-scène* lens, addressing that the decoration of an interior setting can contribute to intense interior atmospheres.[101]

The concept of *mise-en-scène* suggests that, similar to a cinema, the interior setting is designed to evoke expression, set a scene to enhance character identity, and use narratives and storytelling to create a "staged space".[102] In the Zenshi Zone, the use of narrative was used to design based on the Zenshi identity – with this project being aimed at brand introduction, one of the core notions of the space was to narrate the Zenshi brand to the audience. "Staged spaces" were used throughout the design – in the themed environments, interactive installations, digital galleries, and performance areas. As previously addressed, the concept of *mise-en-scène* and the use of narrative has a strong relationship to retail design – Whitehead notes that within the commercial sector, narrative is often used to convey the essence of a brand, and the resulting "retail brandscapes" create memorable experiences that "communicate the brand ethos through a carefully considered arrangement of graphics, lighting and setting that aims to appeal to the core

[100] Martin, Adrian. *Mise en scène and film style: from classical Hollywood to new media art.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
[101] Whitehead, Jean. *Creating interior atmosphere: mise en scène and interior design*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017. Ebook edition.
[102] Ibid.

customer".[103] In the Zenshi Zone, the coordination of graphics and lighting to stage the interior was central to the design of the various installations within the space. These installations were intended to do just as Whitehead describes – create a brandscape to communicate brand identity and stage memorable experiences.

Since the Zenshi Zone is intended to be a temporary insertion, the interior atmosphere heavily relies on the use of design props. Whitehead defines props as four main categories – accessories, furniture, fixtures, and equipment. Props work with the interior setting to communicate a specific ambience, define the emotion of the space, and suggest its use – they are intended to have no permanent connection to the structure of the building or its utilities.[104] The notion of props is central to the design of the Zenshi Zone – as with any insertion, the project is not intended to have any permanent impact on the structures within which it is inserted. The following paragraphs illustrate how each category was used in the design of the space to create a captivating interior atmosphere.

Whitehead defines accessories as "anything that embellishes the interior which says something about the brand they belong to".[105] In the Zenshi Zone, some of the accessories included art installations, soft furnishings, and lighting and mirror details. Accessories were used to highlight the brand identity and provide a strong visual identity to the interior setting. Ranging in scale, accessories were intended to be personalized to fit with the local culture in which the Zenshi Zone is situated.

[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

Furniture, as defined by Whitehead, are "loose items that can be easily removed – freestanding, moveable items that have no permanent connection to the building."[106] In the Zenshi Zone, furniture was used to create distinct spaces within the interior, suggesting specific activities that were intended to take place. For example, the café area has a distinguishing furniture setup which alludes to its spatial function. Bespoke, modular elements were used to represent the Zenshi brand, such as the Virtual Reality Zone.

Fixtures are "a distinct category as they are fitted or attached to the building framework, reasonably permanent but can be removed if necessary".[107] Fixtures also have no permanent connection to the host building unless they are permanently attached. The fixtures in the Zenshi Zone were constructed to be adaptive to fit different locations – such as the performance stage and café bar. Though these fixtures are more fitted than other props, they are intended to be temporary and easily transported. Other forms of fixtures in the Zenshi Zone are the various installations within the space. Whether they are suspended from the ceiling of the host building or used to create a distinct space, the installations in the Zenshi Zone allowed the interior to be infused with a characteristic ambience, thus contributing strongly to the overall atmosphere.

Equipment was described by Whitehead as "the electronic equipment and technologies we all encounter as we go about our lives, items that enable us to complete tasks."[108] Equipment afforded the opportunity to bring the digital nature of this project to fruition – the technological elements allowing the spatial functions to take place. For example, the acoustical and lighting equipment for the performance stage, the digital panels for the galleries, and the equipment for the food and beverage areas. Though equipment could be regarded as cumbersome, this project

[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.

considered both its function and aesthetics. In this project, equipment not only supported activities such as performances, but it also contributed to the personality of the interior atmosphere. For installations and other fixtures, equipment was designed to be seamlessly integrated into the feature.

With the Zenshi Zone being a retail project, the concept of props can also be understood as products themselves. Props not only enhance atmosphere – as described by philosopher Jean Baudrillard, the concept of products as props can be used to reinforce a consumer lifestyle.[109] Since the Zenshi Zone is centered on informing through human experience rather than selling products, the ability for Zenshi products to act as props to reinforce the lifestyle consumers can live through the Zenshi brand is central to the project. With his seminal work on Semiotics, Baudrillard considered these products as "sign-objects" which contributed to both their narrative and their value.[110] In the Zenshi Zone, all props used were intended to symbolize elements of the Zenshi identity to communicate the unique Zenshi personality to the audience. Certain props used in the Zenshi Zone were coupled with various special effects, which were especially apparent in the use of installations and digital features throughout the space. Baudrillard compared the use of special effects to the art and techniques of the theatre, highlighting the notions of architectural illusions and dramaturgy.[111] Furthering the narrative of the brand, the combination of props and special effects are central to the sensory design elements of this project – the drama created within the interior stage setting is what resulted in the immersive interior atmosphere.

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[109] Ibid.
[110] Baudrillard, Jean. Translated by James Benedict. *The system of objects: Jean Baudrillard*. Verso, 2006. Ebook edition.
[111] Baudrillard, Jean, "Truth or Radicality? The Future of Architecture", in *The Jean Baudrillard Reader.*, ed. Redhead, Steve. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 171-85.

When considering interior atmosphere in the retail setting, there are various terms that are critical to understanding how to design these environments. Architect Peter Zumthor identified atmosphere as a core theme of architecture and design. Zumthor – who uses atmosphere as a guiding principle in his practice – specified a series of themes that play a role in establishing atmosphere, including: the body of architecture, material compatibility, levels of intimacy, and the sound and temperature of a space.[112] In the design of the Zenshi Zone, these themes were considered specifically in the creation of distinct spaces without the use of permanent partitions. For Zumthor, atmosphere lies in the aesthetical qualities of space, which are perceived through an individual's emotional sensibility.[113] The emotions that are intended to be evoked in each unique zone within the project contributes to not only that zone's atmosphere, but the overarching atmosphere of the entire interior environment.

As discussed previously, brand experiences are formed through the emotional and sensory relationships formed between the retail environment and the body of the consumer. The need for a physical retail setting becomes paramount in achieving these connections. In his book *Atmospheres*, Zumthor describes the aesthetical qualities of environments through the senses – the touch of materials, the sound of a space, and the sights of surrounding objects. This is critical for any retail space – the way a brand is perceived through the retail setting sets the stage as a representation and reflection of their identity, product, and experience. Zumthor reflects on the notion of the architecture as a stage, stating:

> Architecture, like music, is a temporal art. This means thinking about the way people move in a building; rather akin to designing a stage setting, directing a play.[114]

[112] Pallasmaa, Juhani. *Space, Place, and Atmosphere Lecture*. Royal Academy of Art/STROOM, The Hague. 24 Apr. 2014.
[113] Zumthor, Peter. *Atmospheres: Architectural Environments - Surrounding Objects.* Basel: Birkhäuser, 2006. Ebook edition.
[114] Ibid.

Zumthor believed a great place for learning the relationship between movement and architecture was the cinema. This notion is relatable to both the concept of *mise-en-scène* and the design of the Zenshi Zone, as it is intended to be a temporary environment designed to set a stage for Zenshi to play out uniquely designed brand experiences. To further this connection, consider the components of a cinema: a stage, a director, a narrative, characters, and an audience. In this project, these variables can be redefined as, in the same order: The Power Plant's interior environment, the Zenshi brand, the Zenshi identity, the interior props and features, and the consumer.

Architect Juhani Pallasmaa, another noted author in the fields of atmosphere and the senses, argued that the experience of atmosphere can be related to the concept of spatial quality and phenomenology. Pallasmaa defined atmosphere as "the sixth sense", stating that contemporary architectural practice and education revolves around the expressive qualities of form and space.[115] He addressed that the quality of space does not solely rely on visual perception, but rather relies on a multi-sensory fusion of multiple environmental factors which contribute to the overall atmosphere and ambiance.[116] In his book, *Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, Pallasmaa describes how the five senses were understood to form a hierarchal system. In this system, he defines sensory experience as being subject to a multitude of factors, with vision representing the highest level of human sense, and touch representing the lowest.[117] In the design of the Zenshi Zone, the consumer's senses and the sensory qualities of space were key factors in all design decisions.

[115] Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2016. "The Sixth Sense: The Meaning of Atmosphere and Mood." *Architectural Design* 86 (6):126–33.
[116] Böhme, Gernot. *Architecture and Atmosphere*: Gernot Böhme. München: Fink (Wilhelm), 2006. Ebook edition.
[117] Juhani, Pallasmaa. The eyes of the skin: architecture and the senses. Chichester: Wiley, 2014. Ebook edition.

When considering the concept of atmosphere, though an individual can understand each sense distinctly from another, Pallasmaa argues that the various facets of sensory experience influence and interact with each other.[118] The way an individual perceives and experiences an interior environment is heavily founded upon the sensory qualities the environment emits. For example, the sense of sight, and how it goes beyond solely vision or the act of seeing. To further illustrate this, Pallasmaa describes the eye as touching, vision becoming taste, and certain colors as well as delicate details evoking oral sensations.[119] Therefore, the design of any interior atmosphere must consider the sensory effects it is presenting, and brands must ensure these experiences are forming the appropriate physical and emotional connections with their audiences.

It is important to understand the typology being designed when considering the role of atmosphere in an environment. For this project, atmosphere must be understood specifically for the retail environment. In a marketplace where e-commerce and technology increasingly dominate the industry, retailers must make a serious commitment to delivering unique, captivating atmospheres to their audiences. In the case of the Zenshi Zone, where the retail environment is centered on human experience, the atmosphere relied significantly on sensorial and emotional qualities created by design. In retail practice, this is known as atmospherics, defined by marketing expert Philip Kotler as "the conscious designing of space to create specific effects in buyers; the effort to design buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer that enhance purchase probability"[120]. Kotler describes the physical retail environment, and more specifically the interior atmosphere it provides, as being more influential

[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Kotler, Philip. "*Atmospherics as a Marketing Tool*" Journal of Retailing 49, Winter (1973): 48-64.

in a purchase decision than the products the brand is offering.[121] Created by use of retail design features, atmospherics is comprised of both tangible and intangible elements. Unlike atmosphere, which is a concept that can be applied in any design typology, atmospherics is directly focused on the spatial qualities of retail environments.

When it comes to the interior design of a retail environment, atmospherics is one of the most important considerations when it comes to conveying brand identity and designing a brand experience. However, there are different conditions related to atmospherics – Kotler describes these as "desired atmosphere" and "perceived environment".[122] Desired atmosphere relates to the role a retailer plays in establishing a distinct ambiance through sensory qualities – this is also a strategy Zenshi can use to differentiate itself from competitors. These qualities are not dependent on external factors, such as unique individual responses, but rather act as a desired, ideal atmosphere the brand intends to present to its audience. On the other hand, the retailer cannot control the perceived atmosphere. This is mainly due to the inability to regulate consumer reactions – for example, sensory-related reactions such as hearing sounds and music, seeing colours and materials, or feeling temperatures and textures. Such personal preferences cannot be determined by a retailer, however can be better predicted if a brand has a deeper understanding of its target or desired audience. Furthermore, due to selective attention and retention, an individual will perceive and absorb certain atmospheric qualities differently than another.[123] Thus, consumer behaviour is heavily reliant on store atmosphere, which influences brand loyalty and purchasing.

[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.

Several elements of a retail interior are critical to study when designing for brand experiences. For example, in branding and marketing, colours and symbols act as a primary method of communication between a brand and its audience. The same goes for a store atmosphere – after analyzing various studies and texts, it can be concluded that meaning is communicated through a subconscious understanding of colour. It is imperative to note that colours have varying meaning across different cultures, which must be a central consideration prior to designing any retail environment. When studying the effects of colour on purchase behaviour, marketing experts Joseph Bellizzi and Robert Hite experimented with the colours red and blue in a shopping environment.[124] These colours were selected based on their contrasting color properties and popularity in retail settings. Two experiments were conducted, with both experiments carried out through predominantly red or blue retail environments. The results showed that blue resulted in more positive customer reactions, resulting in a calmer, relaxed consumer; red was perceived as negative and distracting, resulting in a tenser, more physically aroused consumer.[125] Another interesting finding in this study was that colours that are warm in tone seem to have greater potential in attracting a customer to a store window or display.[126] Therefore, when designing the Zenshi Zone, it was essential to understand the reactions a device such as colour can cause prior to making any design decisions.

Earlier on in this chapter, brand identity in relation to interior design was discussed. It has been established that interior atmosphere in the retail setting is a primary method through which a retailer can control brand experience. A retailer holds the ability to regulate elements of the

[124] Bellizzi, Joseph A., and Robert E. Hite. "Environmental color, consumer feelings, and purchase likelihood." *Psychology and Marketing* 9, no. 5 (1992): 347-63
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.

interior that are related to the senses, such as lighting, music, colours, and refreshments.[127] However, though these are controllable, brand experiences are not exclusively managed in the interior setting. Outside the interior environment, certain factors exist that influence both atmosphere and consumer behaviour. For example, situational factors such as store location, ease of transportation, time of year, economic climate, and convenience of access can influence the atmosphere a retailer intends to create.[128] Therefore, when selecting a space for a retail environment, the site becomes a critical consideration as it will strongly influence and impact the resulting experiences. For these reasons, a thorough site analysis must be conducted prior to the establishment of any retail space. It is crucial that both the site and host building are in synergy with the intended atmosphere of the brand. For the purposes of this project, the initial project location site, The Power Plant in Toronto, was examined in Chapter 2, titled Site Analysis. Since this project is intended to be a temporary environment, site selection and analysis will be an important step in the future when the Zenshi Zone is transported and recreated in a new location.

ADAPTIVE REUSE IN RETAIL DESIGN

Repurposing existing buildings for new functions through adaptive reuse has proven to be a successful strategy in contemporary architectural practice.[129] In any city, residents and tourists alike engage with historical structures with a different demeanour than with contemporary buildings. Whether it be due to nostalgia or inquisitiveness, the novelty of experiencing a historical structure in present-day heightens its sense of fascination with the public. The history

[127] Bellizzi, Joseph A., and Robert E. Hite. "Environmental color, consumer feelings, and purchase likelihood." *Psychology and Marketing* 9, no. 5 (1992): 347-63.
[128] Kaltcheva, Velitchka D., and Barton A. Weitz. "When Should a Retailer Create an Exciting Store Environment?" Journal of Marketing 70, no. 1 (2006): 107-18.
[129] Adaptive Reuse: Adaptive reuse is conventionally defined as the process of adapting old structures for new purposes. *Merriam-Webster*, online ed., s.v. “adaptive reuse”, accessed February 26, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/adaptive%20reuse

of heritage architecture provides a glimpse into the past, while forming new narratives with the city in the present. Nowadays, when studying architectural construction work, renovations, and conversions of existing structures account for 50 to 70 percent of global projects.[130] Offering an innovative strategy for designing alternative retail experiences, creating a store environment through strategies of adaptive reuse allows Zenshi to differentiate from traditional retail models. One reason for this would be the opportunity to be situated in an influential, captivating space – the historical structure sets a unique stage for the consumer experience, thus contributing to a strong differentiation strategy for the brand.[131] In the case of Zenshi, a telecommunication giant expanding into the North American market, creating a branded environment in an existing structure would allow for a deeper emotional connection to its audience. By hosting the brand experience in a historical building, Zenshi would be able to reach consumers in a creative way that is fascinating and unanticipated. For example, each visitor will feel a strong sense of privilege when entering a space with historical status that has been reimagined into a cutting-edge retail experience. Not only does this heighten the brand experience, but it also elevates the brand's identity in the eyes of a consumer. In recent years, similar strategies have proven effective by iconic brands such as Apple and Prada, who have chosen to situate their retail environments in historical centers.[132] By employing strategies of adaptive reuse, Zenshi uncovers an opportunity to tap into a new market – something which will become increasingly important in the experience economy. In addition, this would allow the brand to break through the clutter of both the retail and communications industries. Unlike most other organizations, who have built

[130] Cramer, Johannes, and Stefan Breitling. *Architecture in existing fabric: planning, design and building*. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2007. Ebook edition.
[131] Kent, Tony. "Creative space: design and the retail environment." *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management* 35, no. 9 (2007): 734-45.
[132] Apple has a retail location inside New York City's Grand Central Station, and Prada in the Guggenheim Museum (also located in New York City, NY). Both retail spaces will be further discussed in the Chapter 4: Precedent Analysis.

permanent stores and kiosks in malls, Zenshi will introduce their brand in an alternative way – using temporary environments designed to be inserted and installed within significant landmark buildings.

Considering the nature and characteristics of the retail industry, such as high investor and stakeholder interest, retail becomes an ideal sector to benefit from strategies related to adaptive reuse. As a powerful brand that leads the industry, Zenshi has significant influence and resources to make a project of this nature feasible. For Zenshi, the design of this environment will be their first impression to a new audience – the introduction of not only its products, but of the brand's identity. The design of the interior serves as the fundamental component to support experiences and establish new relationships between the brand and the consumer. As previously discussed, the store environment is one of the largest investments for a retailer as it is the direct link between a brand, its product, and the intended target audience. For example, an important characteristic to consider is that retail interiors – including traditional brick and mortar retailers – are in a constant state of change. The lifespan of most retail environments is noted to be five years or less, which means that these spaces require renovation, upgrades, and modifications at a much higher rate than other types of interiors.[133] The temporary nature of retail environments reinforces the importance of designing interiors that are both flexible and responsive. The design of the Zenshi Zone was founded upon these notions, as it is only intended to be in a certain location for a maximum of four months at a time. During this time, it must constantly evolve to provide its audience with varying experiences – this can be seen in modular theme environments, live performances, flexible play spaces, and alternating collaborations with other brands within the space. Sensory features, such as digital galleries and themed rooms, will reinforce the notion

[133] James Douglas. *Building adaptation*. London: Routledge, 2015. Ebook edition.

of responsive design within the environment. This idea can be supported by considering the reuse of existing buildings to create spaces for the display and consumption of products as "extravagant temporal micro-environments".[134] The aim of the Zenshi Zone is to employ strategies of adaptive reuse to stimulate the desires and senses of consumers, further strengthening the brand experience and interior atmosphere.

Since this project is situated in historic city centres, adaptive reuse is appropriate as it allows for existing buildings to adopt new programmes and functions. It is also an ideal strategy for this project for two key reasons: due to its temporary nature, entirely new architectural construction would not be feasible, and being situated in nondescript spaces would be mundane. Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone, both authors in the field of adaptive reuse, state that the original building becomes the most significant element in the design, serving as the foundation upon which all resulting design decisions are based upon.[135] To further complete the definition, both authors agree that "it is the establishment of a relationship between the old and the new that is the most influential device in the design; an approach to providing new life and meaning to an existing structure".[136] The age of the host building guided the narrative for the new design, allowing Zenshi to design unique experiences centered around the contrast between the historic and the contemporary. Naturally, relationships are formed between the visitor and the existing architecture. However, the customized experiences within the interior are what allows Zenshi to stand out. For example, modular sensory panels were designed to respond to existing interior features. The live performances, partner brand collaborations, and cuisine served will be curated

[134] Brooker, Graeme. *Key Interiors Since 1900*. Laurence King Publishing, 2013. pg. 92.
[135] Brooker, Graeme and Sally Stone. *Rereadings: interior architecture and the design principles of remodelling existing buildings*. London: RIBA Enterprises, 2014. Ebook edition.
[136] Ibid.

based on local culture – the components that create these environments are designed to support evolving consumer needs and values.

When any space is adaptively reused, the host building must be able to physically adapt to serve a new set of functions and requirements. It is important to note that, when considering retail design, both the brand identity and the experience a brand desires to present must be thoroughly understood prior to determining which adaptive reuse strategy will be employed. As discussed in the previous sections, achieving synergy between the interior atmosphere and intended brand experience primarily informs this decision. Furthermore, prior to implementing any project in a historic structure, the design team must carefully evaluate the existing site's condition and qualities to determine which strategy is most appropriate. As defined by Brooker and Stone, there are three strategies of adaptive reuse: intervention, insertion, and installation.[137] Though the adaptive reuse strategies are described as distinct methods, there are many ways in which they inspire and influence one another. The following section will examine these strategies, their relationships, and how these strategies were considered and applied in the Zenshi Zone.

The first method, intervention, is a process that attempts to stimulate the potential or supressed meaning of a specific place – the building is a narrative for a story that is to be discovered and restated.[138] With activation of a place serving as a guiding principle for the design, a main consideration is representing the symbolic qualities, as well as the previously generated energy, of the past building.[139] For these reasons, the building is remodelled in such a way that the old and the new cannot exist independently from each other. Though the Zenshi

[137] Brooker, Graeme and Sally Stone. *Rereadings: interior architecture and the design principles of remodelling existing buildings*. London: RIBA Enterprises, 2014. Ebook edition.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.

Zone did not use intervention as a core strategy, it drew inspiration from the ways in which the host building's narrative is considered in design. This was addressed in the design of adaptable brand features unique to a specific site, such as the digital gallery and café area. These features cannot be replicated in another city or site in the same manner – alluding to the notion of the old and new being unable to exist independently. Since the narrative of a building is also a narrative of the historical past in which it lived, the design elements within the space are intended to evoke a unique energy characteristic of the host building. In addition, Zenshi was able to build upon the existing symbolic qualities of The Power Plant – such as the central clerestory – thus heightening the brand experience and strengthening the connections formed with its audience.

The second method, insertion, is the core strategy upon which the design of the Zenshi Zone was based. It is a strategy that allows the character of the host building and the new design to exist in a strong, independent manner while establishing an intense connection.[140] This means that new elements are introduced into, alongside, or between an existing structure. With the goal of the project being to temporarily occupy historical landmark buildings, insertion allows Zenshi to create extravagant interior environments without altering the host architecture. This allowed an opportunity for the existing building and designed space to form a dynamic relationship, and the juxtapositions formed further heighten and intensify the consumer experience of both the brand and environment. Ultimately, the aim of insertion is for the existing building to maintain its integrity by remaining physically unaltered, thus creating a sharp contrast between the inserted design and the antiquity of the existing.[141] This contrast is what contributes to an elevated experience for the visitor, as the excitement of the new design unified with the emotion of the past architecture forms an exclusive, mesmerising impression. A prominent example of

[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid.

insertion in retail is the Selexyz Dominicanen Bookshop, located in Maastricht, The Netherlands. This project, analyzed further in Chapter 4: Precedent Analysis, required introducing a bookshop into a thirteenth-century Gothic church interior, while maintaining the identity, character, and qualities of the host structure. The success of this project has inspired the design of the Zenshi Zone – the reason insertion has been chosen as the key strategy for this project is because it allowed for a higher level of design freedom within the bounds of existing architecture.

Since the Zenshi Zone is intended to be temporary, insertion offered a strategy that allowed for the creation of an interior environment understood as the brand's own, while being customized through the narration of the existing architecture. With the future phases of the project intended to be located internationally, insertion allowed the design of this retail space to create a relevant dialogue between the brand and the changing user demographics. Through this, the brand can adapt the brand experience through the narrative of an already existing structure that the public is familiarized with. The initial phase of this project designed a standard design model that is comprised of both fixed and adaptable brand elements, thus allowing it to be both modular and flexible in the future. The space within the host building is temporarily transformed – however, when the project moves to a new location, the host building can return to its regular state and functionality. In this project, The Power Plant's reception and ground floor galleries will be host to the Zenshi Zone for approximately four months, after which they will resume standard operations.

The third method, installation, involves the placement of a series or group of elements related to one another in an existing environment.[142] In the Zenshi Zone, installation was a key

[142] Brooker, Graeme and Sally Stone. *Rereadings: interior architecture and the design principles of remodelling existing buildings*. London: RIBA Enterprises, 2014. Ebook edition.

component in the creation of brand experiences and atmosphere. Since the architecture was to remain unaltered, installation allowed for the creation of distinct interior environments, such as themed rooms and settings intended to evoke a place or theme – all of which were designed to be dynamic. Instead of building physical walls, installations provided an alternate means to dividing spaces. The beauty of installation is that it can have a similar or strongly distinct character from the host building – the relationships formed do not compromise or interfere with the existing as minimal modifications are required.[143] Installations can be done on both large and small scales, with varying levels of detail and diversity of materials. For these reasons, installations can be designed to accommodate and be fitted to almost any interior environment. Furthermore, they are intended to be temporary, allowing them to be flexible and responsive – the use of innovative installations themselves represent the brand identity of Zenshi. An example of a successful installation in a retail setting was completed by Kuramata Design Studio for the Issey Miyake Store in Tokyo, Japan. As many installations often do, this project considered the consumer experience and made careful design decisions based on materiality.[144] For this clothing display feature, mesh was selected to resonate light and shadow. The "skin" of the installation used black mesh, while the interior details used a chrome-plated mesh – resulting in a shimmering effect for the observer as they walked past. In this case, the brand experience was elevated through the creation of this captivating display feature. The installation not only represented Miyake's sharply designed fashion, but also differentiated the brand and its garments by creating a strong impression through customer interaction. In the case of Zenshi, the use of installation within the interior environment set the stage for the experience of the consumer, communicate the brand identity, and serve as the first impression of the brand to a new audience.

[143] Ibid.
[144] Brooker, Graeme. *Key Interiors Since 1900*. Laurence King Publishing, 2013. Ebook edition.

Brooker and Stone note that, though reuse is heavily prevalent in architectural and design practices, very little theoretical support exists in the field.[145] A group of architectural historians known as Crimson, who write on the notion of Re-Arch[146] and the use and abuse of old buildings, discuss architectural historian Ignasi de Solà-Morales' concept "from contrast to analogy".[147] Contrast emphasizes individuality and modernity in the design – the design establishes its own identity, disregarding the former state of the existing.[148] On the contrary, analogy does not confront history. Rather, it focuses on connecting the past and present, with the oscillation between the two creating the new design.[149] In this project, both contrast and analogy were considered when it came to the use of insertion and installation. Insertion can be understood as analogy – in the Zenshi Zone, the overarching design had to consider the host building, with the design features intended to form relationships with the existing architectural narrative. Modular design elements that form the insertion, such as custom wall panels, must be reconfigured when the project moves to a new site. On the other hand, installation acted as a form of contrast, establishing the brand's distinct identity. The installations within the environment, such as the Digital Playspace, did not need to form direct links to the existing architecture, thus emphasizing the notion of modernity in their design. In the Zenshi Zone, installations focused on forming relationships between the brand identity, local culture, and audience.

To summarize Re-Arch, Crimson notes that many times the new design does not begin with a predominant concept, but rather with the smallest detail – therefore Re-Arch is heavily

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[145] Brooker, Graeme, and Sally Stone, "The Process of Remodelling: Introduction" in *From Organisation to Decoration: An Interiors Reader,* ed. Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone. (London, Routledge, 2013) pg. 219.
[146] Defined by Crimson as "tasks related to architectural design when it is converted, extended, facelifted, or revamped." Source: Crimson, "Re-Arch" in *From Organisation to Decoration: An Interiors Reader,* ed. Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone. (London, Routledge, 2013) pg. 228.
[147] Crimson, "Re-Arch" in *From Organisation to Decoration: An Interiors Reader,* ed. Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone. (London, Routledge, 2013) pg. 228.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.

based upon technique and material.[150] With this project being centered around the methods of insertion and installation, it is critical the design addresses these considerations. Furthermore, acknowledging the temporal nature of the project, it became important to consider the role of reversibility in the interior environment. Crimson confirms that insertion is an appropriate strategy for a temporary environment as it does not alter the host building. They add that the ultimate aim of Re-Arch is to create something "new at all costs, something that rises above what it was that was there first".[151] In the Zenshi Zone, the retail environment that will be inserted into The Power Plant will not only create something new at all costs, but it will also serve to redefine the site and its previous functions – no such typology has previously existed in the building or the surrounding site. This novelty will result in increased public engagement, enhanced human interaction, and improved connectedness between the site, the brand, and the audience.

Since the design of the Zenshi Zone is centered on creating interior environments within a host structure, studying the work of Eileen Gray was inspirational. An Irish architect and furniture designer based in France, Gray was a pioneer in the Modern Movement in architecture. In her early project, the rue de Lota apartment of Madame Mathieu Lévy, Gray was tasked with designing custom furniture, lighting fixtures, and finishes – including entire walls of lacquer.[152] The lacquered walls were designed to cover the "disgraceful mouldings", as Gray described, with a system of panels decorated in abstract designs which were butted together.[153] This demonstrates a creative solution towards recreating the interior environment without altering the existing structure, a key consideration for this project. In addition, the level of customization

[150] Crimson, "Re-Arch" in *From Organisation to Decoration: An Interiors Reader*, ed. Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone. (London, Routledge, 2013) pg. 232.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Gray had been heavily trained in working with lacquer in her early years, while she was a student in London's Slade School for drawing. Long interested in the art, she had stumbled upon the shop of D. Charles in Soho, London while on a lunch break at school, and began working the following Monday. (Source: Johnson, J. Stewart. *Eileen Gray: Designer*. London: Debretts Peerage, 1984. Ebook edition.)
[153] Johnson, J. Stewart. *Eileen Gray: Designer*. London: Debretts Peerage, 1984. Ebook edition.

within the environment Gray designed speaks to the identity of its owner – Lévy was a renowned modiste, a profession in which each piece is individually tailored and customized for the wearer.[154] This notion is strongly related to this project, which aimed to create a customized environment within an existing structure – one that is representative of not only the brand, but also characteristic of the local culture.

In later years, when Gray turned her interests towards architecture, the notion of modularity in the interior environment became even more apparent. Her own home, *Tempe à Pailla*, served as a great inspiration for the design of the Zenshi Zone. This home, which Gray designed and built for herself, became an icon of Modernist architecture. Gray designed the space with multi-purpose furniture – modular pieces that could be altered to suit her needs, such as an expanding metal wardrobe on tracks and adjustable window louvres for light control. The home itself is an example of working with existing architecture – Gray built the structure on three cisterns which existed on the site.[155] She turned one into a garage, the second into a storage cellar, and used the third to hold water collected on the flat roof of the house.[156] Gray embraced the given site and made use of it, rather than rejecting it – with the Zenshi Zone intended for insertion within existing landmark buildings, this becomes an important reflection. Moreover, she was inspired by the site and made use of an interior language that emphasized the beauty of the exterior. It has been noted that Gray fell in love with the site's views and countryside, and therefore made this a key consideration in her design decisions.[157] To do this, she designed the interior to be reminiscent of a ship – long, narrow forms with many levels for storage and decks for viewing. Once again, this alludes to the adaptive reuse notion of designing the interior

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[154] A modiste is defined as one who makes and sells fashionable dresses and hats for women. *Merriam-Webster,* online ed., s.v. "modiste", https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/modiste.
[155] With this project, Gray demonstrated adaptive reuse of a site rather than a building.
[156] Johnson, J. Stewart. *Eileen Gray: Designer*. London: Debretts Peerage, 1984. Ebook edition.
[157] Goff, Jennifer. *Eileen Gray: Her Work and Her World*. Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Ireland: Irish Academic Press, 2016.

environment to be evocative of the existing site and architecture. Gray's work demonstrates the ability to create and design compact interior environments that are centered upon customization, modularity, and maximal functionality – all of which are core concepts that guided the design of the Zenshi Zone.

CONCLUSION

This literary analysis examined three influential concepts that collectively informed the design of the Zenshi Zone. This analysis was intended to provide a theoretical groundwork for the design decisions made in this project. Through the discussion of brand experience, interior atmosphere, and adaptive reuse in retail design, this chapter analyzed varying notions that are significant to a retail environment. The investigation of these interrelated concepts allowed for a more meaningful design process and resulting design solution.

By drawing on the theories and research of these fields, the design of the Zenshi Zone can provide the Zenshi brand with an innovative, cutting-edge environment that is grounded in research and knowledge – this not only becomes a primary opportunity for brand differentiation, but it also seeks to redefine what retailing will mean in the future. Though each dimension of this analysis is separate, the concepts are intended to be intertwined with one another, thus contributing to the overarching design of the Zenshi Zone. The diverse topics discussed in this chapter allow for an elevated understanding of each distinct field – consciousness of the concepts as a collective whole rather than as separate entities contributes to a deeper understanding of the perspectives that have informed the design. The relationships formed between these concepts were crucial in this project, as understanding these areas holistically allowed for a cohesive and unified design, which is found in Chapter 6: Design Proposal.

CHAPTER 4: PRECEDENT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The following chapter provides an analysis into design precedents that have influenced the design of the Zenshi Zone. These examples were selected to provide insight into the guiding strategies and principles employed by designers globally, as well as an enriched understanding of the design features, aesthetics, and qualities that relate to the typology of this project. These precedent studies are noted examples of international brands that have employed innovative design solutions centered upon consumer experience. In addition, these precedents consider elements of the theories and concepts discussed in the literary analysis, further informing the design of an alternative, experiential retail environment. Considering the emerging trends of e-commerce and technology, these environments have been selected on the basis that they deliver inimitable, captivating retail experiences that are unique to the brand they represent.

The subsequent precedents have been chosen to demonstrate varying scales of retail spaces – from the large, permanent Prada Epicenter in New York City to the smaller, temporary Nike Fuel Station in London. The locations of these projects are relevant to the Zenshi Zone, as each is situated either in a historical building or a contemporary, futuristic retail setting. The first precedent, the Prada Epicenter in New York City, is an example of a powerhouse retail environment. Employing strategies of adaptive reuse, it is situated within the former Guggenheim Museum building. Apart from its mixed-use functionality, this precedent is significant for its research into experimental technology, innovative display methods, and unconventional materiality. The second precedent, the Selexyz Dominicanen Bookstore in the Netherlands, is an excellent example of an award-winning adaptive reuse retail insertion. This precedent significantly informs the study of how the host building narrates the organization of a space, as well as how designers managed the conditions and constraints of a challenging existing

structure. The third precedent, Nike Fuel Station at Boxpark London, was selected because Nike is known for designing experiential, futuristic retail environments that strongly convey brand identity. It is an alternative retail concept located in an inventive setting – Boxpark London is the world's first pop-up mall. Known as a retail revolution, the site itself is constructed from refitted shipping containers designed to host temporary retail spaces. The Fuel Station is intended to connect and play with consumers, while capturing the essence of the Nike brand through experiential design.

PRECEDENT 1: PRADA EPICENTER NEW YORK

- Location: New York City, New York
- Completion Year: 2001
- Designers: Buro Ole Sheeren Architecture and OMA

The Prada Epicenter in New York City is a 23,000 square-foot retail project that also serves as a public space, gallery, performance space, and experimental laboratory. This multi-functionality allows the flagship store to become more than merely a retail environment – it transforms into a cultural hub for the public and fashion community. Throughout the interior, the brand installed several exhibits to showcase its products using alternative methods and technologies. For example, the brands iconic Prada Wallpaper is displayed as a colossal mural that runs along the northern entrance of the store. The way this wallpaper is presented begins to express the programmatic intentions of the interior – it defines a theme for the exhibitions throughout the store. The wallpaper also evolves on a regular basis, allowing the interior to constantly change. The store is filled with interactive technologies and cutting-edge displays in an attempt to revitalize the shopping-related experiences. For example, when considering the fitting rooms, the liquid crystal glass doors turn opaque at the touch of a button, and users can

view their silhouettes on video projections from varying angles. Through such elements, it is clear the design decisions of the space all intend to change the attitudes towards how an individual experiences retail.

Located on the ground floor and basement of the former Broadway Guggenheim building, the Prada Epicenter was designed with a strong concept and architectural gesture that establishes a foundation for the design of the space. This is known as "The Wave" – a curving element that radiates throughout a majority of the interior. This element is what influences the user experience and enables the space to serve the functions as previously described. Being the largest element within the space, The Wave also sets the tone for the form, textures, patters, and materiality used in the store environment. The scale of this feature allows for both transformation and experimentation – one side of The Wave caters to fashion and exhibitions but is also a seating area facing the other side of the gesture. Once again, at the push of a button, an event stage rotates out of the component to create a platform for performances, projections, lectures, and other events. This rapid change between functions allows the space to be in a constant state of change, allowing the space to be both experimental and temporary in nature. This temporary nature is apparent in other design features as well, such as custom shelving systems and moveable partitions that can be readily altered.

The aesthetics of the space allude to the nature of the brand. They are carried throughout the space which ultimately results in the brand experience. The flooring within the space is black and white marble – materiality that references the brand's first store in Milan.[158] The language of the space – bold, sleek, and refined – not only reflects the brand identity, but communicates character to the public audience. The materials also reinforce the high-fashion, luxurious nature

[158] Welch, Adrian. "Prada New York Epicenter: Architecture." E-Architect. https://www.e-architect.co.uk/new-york/prada-new-york.

of the brand – The Wave is constructed from zebrawood, an exotic and expensive hardwood that is known for its bold and unique striping. To represent the dynamic personality of the brand, this feature is contrasted with unfinished, exposed gypsum wall boards and translucent polycarbonate walls. The latter provides intrigue for visitors within the space, as it reveals the raw brick element of the existing structure.

The relationship between the old and the new was an important consideration when designing the space, forming a narrative that related to the historical landmark. As noted above, wall treatments allow for users to see the contrast between the antiquity of the host building, while still experiencing a contemporary, futuristic retail environment. Situated on the ground floor and basement of a space formerly belonging to the Guggenheim Museum, this project was an interior conversion of the existing SoHo structure. The overlap of typologies within the space, from performance art to social events, was inspired by the nature of the host building. Through examination of these typologies, one of which includes ongoing research into shopping behaviours and brand perceptions, this precedent proves to be beneficial towards this practicum project.

ANALYSIS

There are many qualities of the Prada Epicenter that influenced the design of this practicum project. The environment was built to be multi-functional, with the intent to create a cultural destination rather than solely a retail space – a major component in the programming and design of the Zenshi Zone. Prada's use of performance spaces, galleries, and technologies to connect with their audience was highly relevant to the study of alternative retail. Furthermore, the overlapping typologies within a single space is characteristic of the Zenshi Zone. The scale of The Wave, as well as its narrative and symbolic quality, provided an example of how to tie these

typologies together. It also demonstrates how to integrate a monumental architectural gesture within the design of a retail environment.

Another element of Prada's design applicable to this project was the interior's ability to constantly change – from the large-scale mural to the modular functionality of The Wave. The design of the Zenshi Zone required a temporary environment that was both flexible and transformative, thus such elements are inspirational in the way they can alter the atmosphere of the interior. The experimental characteristics of the Prada Epicenter, such as the unconventional design of the fitting rooms, blur the lines between physical environments and technology – precisely what the installations within the Zenshi Zone were designed to do.

When considering materiality, Prada made design decisions based on how to best represent the brand identity. In the design of this project, materiality became a major consideration for representing the Zenshi identity appropriately. Learning from the ways in which Prada embodied the brand through materials – from the representative marble to the exclusive zebrawood – presented this project with a successful case of materiality decision-making. The use of industrial materials, such as steel and wire mesh, for the product display cages inspired ideas related to installation, while demonstrating the importance of material selection that allude to the host building character.

Finally, the project is situated in a historical landmark building. Though the project is not necessarily a temporary insertion, the ways in which Prada's design was integrated into the host building are relevant to this project. For example, to convey the antiquity of the structure, Prada insisted on using translucent walls, and exposing the raw brick of the existing building. This serves as an example of how to celebrate the qualities of the old, while integrating them with the new – a unique way of presenting the audience with an inimitable experience.

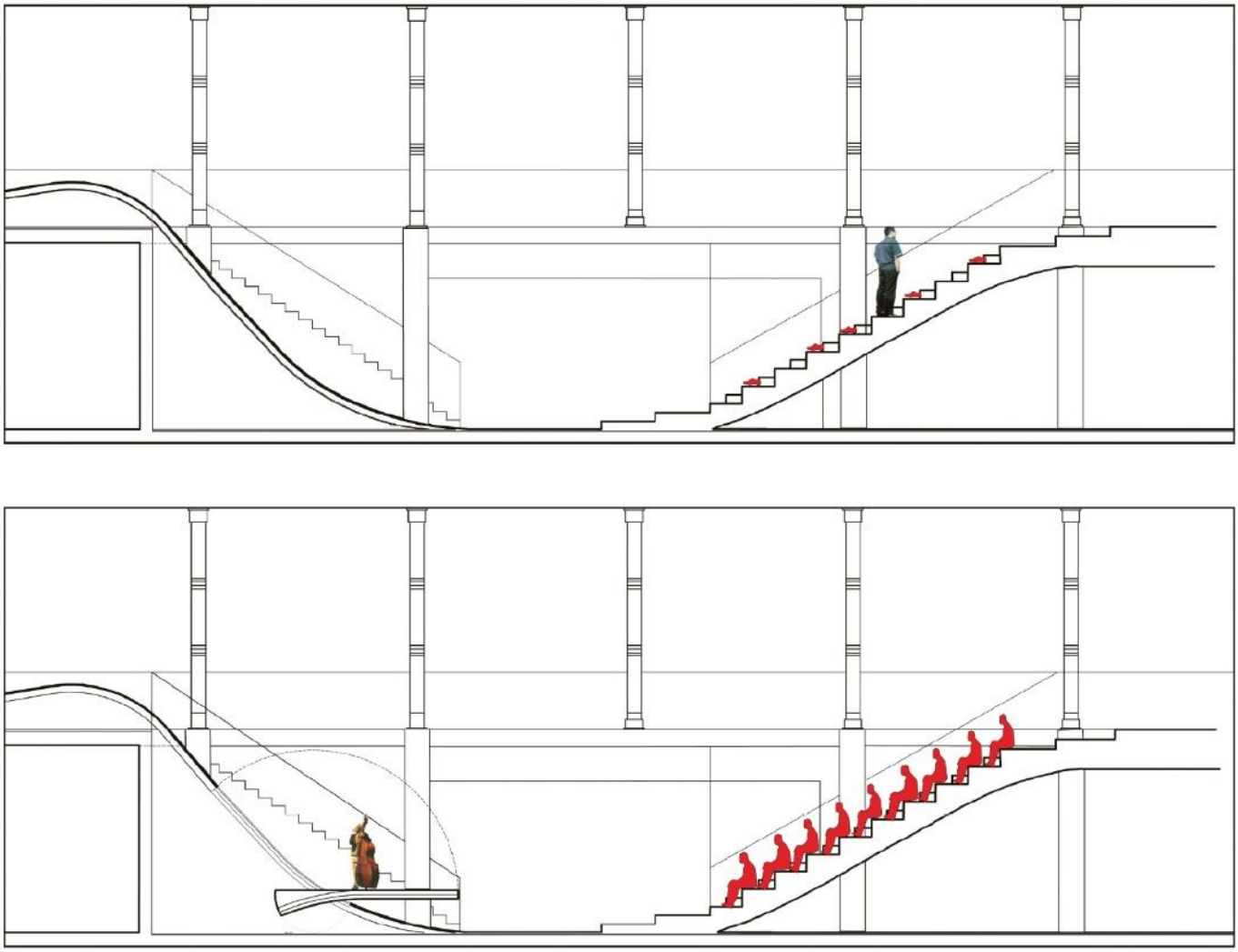

Figure 31: Section view of The Wave demonstrating the functionality of the feature. Above shows The Wave as a product display space, with the stage intact. Below presents an alternate option, with the stage unfolding to accommodate performances and events. This gesture highlights the modular quality of The Wave, as well as its ability to respond with ease to the changing needs of the environment.

Figure 32: View of The Wave and large-scale graphic wall mural. This mural extends from Broadway to Mercer Street, providing a street-length graphic display across the northern wall of the space. Another flexible interior feature, the graphic changes regularly to define the theme of the space and the exhibitions and interactive elements within the store.

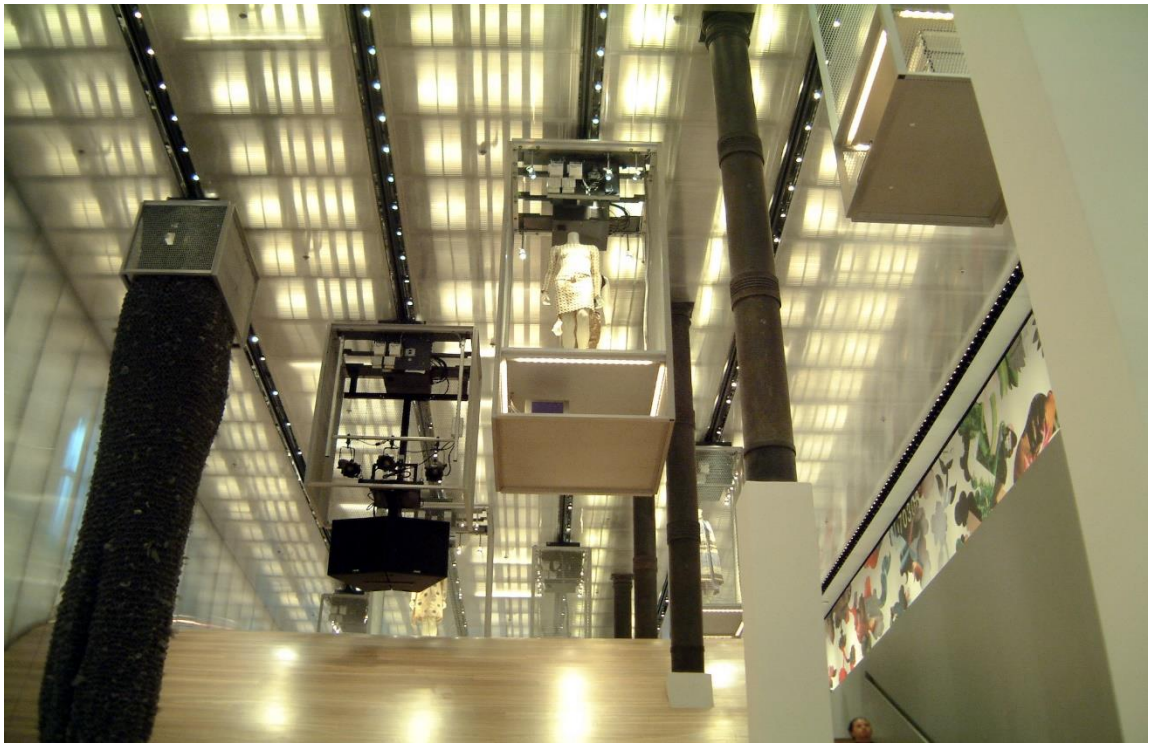

Figure 33: View of the metal cage display features. These cages, considered a "hanging city" by Prada, act as a flexible display for merchandise and mannequins. They also accommodate audiovisual equipment, and the modules can be reconfigured to provide technical support for performances and other events.

PRECEDENT 2: SELEXYZ DOMINICANEN BOOKSTORE

- Location: Maastricht, The Netherlands
- Completion Year: 2007
- Designers: Merkx + Girod

This precedent is an award-winning project displaying the adaptive reuse strategy of insertion.[159] This project required over 12,900 square feet of floor space, which was double the amount of space available in the thirteenth-century Gothic church interior. Historically, the church had secular functions since the French Revolution, however many of these functions did not respect the historic and architectural qualities of the space – from a warehouse to a bicycle storage.[160] The repurposing of the structure meant that the designers needed to study and uncover layers of historical meaning and create a design that narrated the identity of the host space as well as the vision for the commercial application. Preserving the character of the interior was critical in retaining the existing identity, detail, and scale of the church. In addition, the preservation of these elements would allow the atmosphere to enlighten and restore the historical charisma in a contemporary manner.

In order to preserve the unique landmark and spatial qualities, the designers had to create a unique solution to for the bookstore's program. After a rejection of the idea of installing a second floor, the designers created a colossal walk-in bookcase which spanned several storeys. Constructed of black steel, this feature was inserted asymmetrically within the interior of the church and allowed a visitor to climb throughout the display. Affording the opportunity to view the expansive artwork and views within the church, this becomes an inimitable experience that is unique to this project and cannot be replicated elsewhere.

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[159] This project was awarded the Lensvelt de Architect Interior Prize in 2007.
[160] Moran, Tom. "Selexyz Dominicanen: The 700-Year-Old Former Church Turned Modern Bookstore." The Huffington Post. March 25, 2013. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-moran/selexyz-dominicanen-the-700-year-old-church_b_2949961.html.

In this project, the contrast between the old and the new is powerful. The dialogue created between the history of the existing and the modernity of the insertion establishes the narrative of the design. The two-storey bookcase, situated between the central and lateral naves of the church, is inserted to embrace the stone columns of the space. In order to meet both the needs of the space and client, the designers decided to work vertically rather than horizontally. The innovation of the ensuing design allowed for minimal modification to the church, which was crucial due to the landmark status of the site. The opposing aesthetics of the church and inserted design has resulted in it being considered one of the most beautiful bookstores in the world by a multitude of sources. The space exemplifies a principle characteristic of adaptive reuse strategy – maintaining an existing structure's identity while reprogramming the interior to serve new uses and functions.

Several symbolic qualities of the past were considered in the design of the bookstore. For example, to preserve the religious identity of the space, a crucifix-shaped table was centrally situated in the café area within the apse of the church. Both the café and bookshop were designed in such a way that would deem them comparable to the colossal scale of the grand church hall. The art on the ceilings, paintings done by Jan Vessens in 1619, are illuminated by ambient light which was installed along the tops of the bookcases. Therefore, as visitors climb throughout these features, they can witness the art located in the nave in more detail. Placement of furniture was also addressed symbolically, with low tables organized parallel to the central nave, leading to the impression of approaching a hypothetical altar. This results in a consumer experience that is both historically relevant yet emotionally engaging.

The materiality of the inserted design elements informed the aesthetics of the project. The black steel frame of the construction exemplifies the distinction between the antique and modern

within the space. The opposing material qualities of the host building and the insertion forms a juxtaposition between the details of the church and the new features. For example, the perforated steel cladding of the bookcases contrasts the weighty sandstone of the church interior, allowing maximum views to the upper levels of the stack. The industrial nature of the bookcases is subtle yet distinct, contributing greatly to the grand scheme of the church's overall atmosphere without dominating the experience. The horizontal display plinths, a feature common to all Selexyz bookshops, was reconfigured to function within the constraints of the space. This is relevant to this practicum project, as one of the aims of the project is to design flexible brand elements to adapt and respond to the spatial requirements of diverse host buildings.

ANALYSIS

The significance of the Selexyz Dominicanen Bookstore to this project lies heavily in its demonstration of insertion. The design goal was focused on meeting the commercial imperative of the project, yet not physically altering the structure – the same goal of the Zenshi Zone. The inserted bookstore design resulted in a multi-storey space without the construction of a level, demonstrating alternative methods of creating new spaces without structural additions. The design of this project took inspiration from this, as the galleries within The Power Plant have several double-volume spaces.

The way in which this precedent defined the consumer experience through the interior environment was exceptional. Rather than refusing to acknowledge the architectural contraints, the designers decided to capitalize on the architecture and relate it to visitor movement. For example, designing the bookcases in such a manner that would enable the visitor to experience the illuminated historical ceiling paintings. The design process reflected the experience the visitor was intended to have – Merkx + Girod designed vertically rather than horizontally, thus

demonstrating the importance of understanding the architectural composition prior to inserting any new elements. This resulted in a strengthened design process characteristic to both the brand and site, serving as an influential example for the design of the Zenshi Zone.

A significant takeaway from this precedent was the sharp contrast between the old and the new – from the typology to the materiality. However, the historical symbolism was preserved, and the existing structure was embraced with the inserted design. If the bookstore was to be removed, the church would remain physically unaltered. Moreover, the design of the bookstore was done in such a way to convey the brand identity through fixed elements, such as the display plinths, which were adapted to suit the needs of the host building. All the abovementioned considerations strongly influenced the design of the Zenshi Zone.

Figure 34: View of inserted bookcase design in nave of church interior. Cafe can be seen in the distance, located in apse of church. Horizontal display plinths characteristic of retailer guide visitors throughout the space.

Figure 35: View of cafe, located in apse of church interior. A crucifix-shaped table was placed centrally to allude to symbolic qualities of the building. To heighten the experience of the atmosphere, fascinating lighting details were designed.

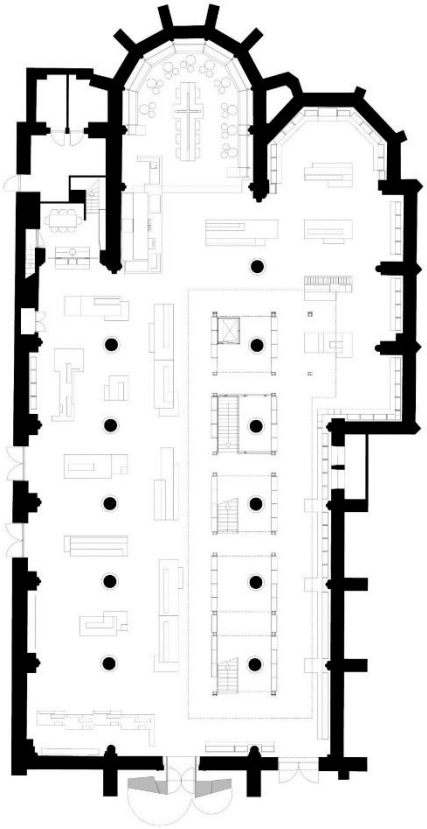


Figure 36: Floor plan of Selexyz Dominicanen Bookstore. Not to scale.

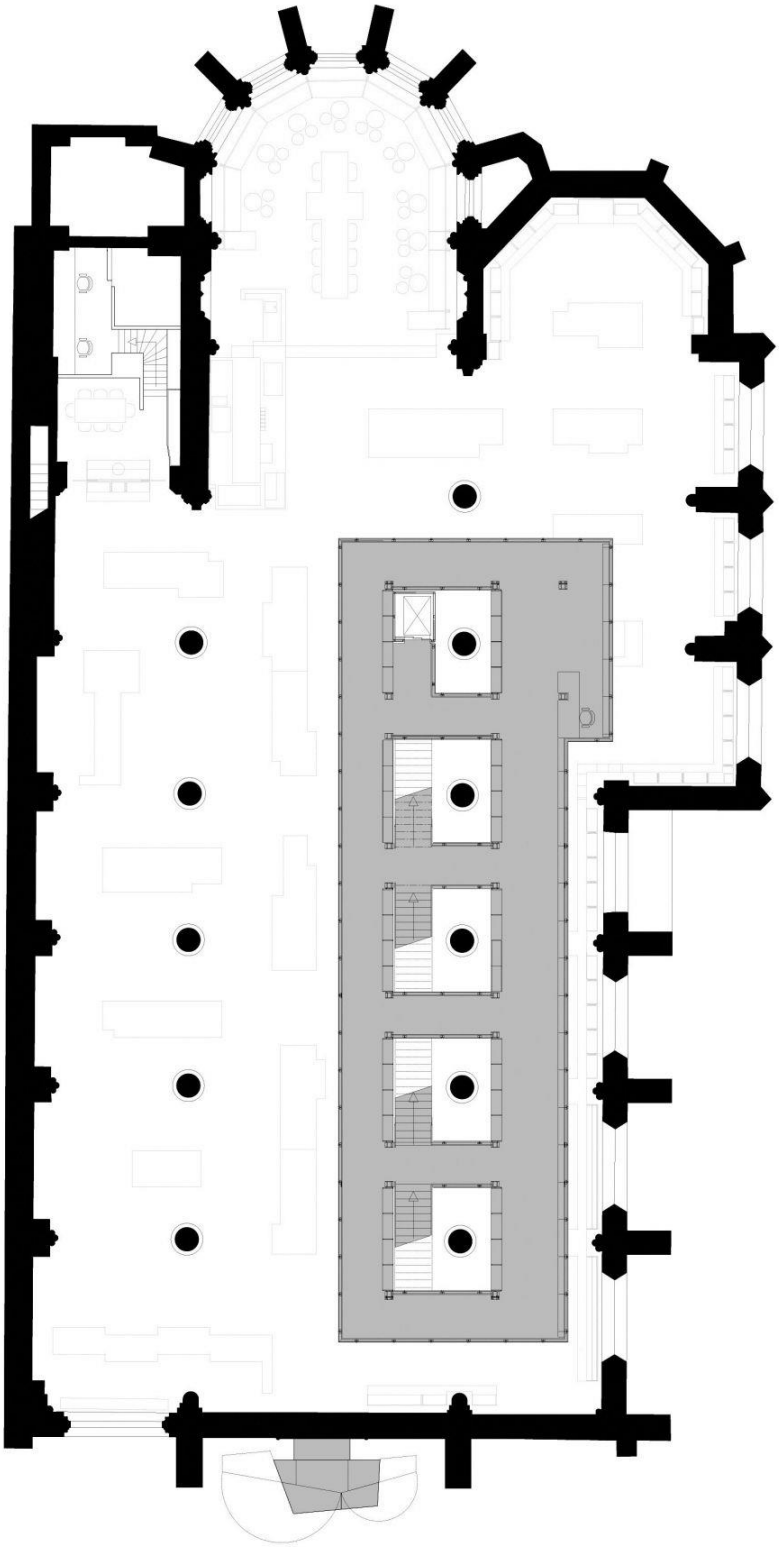


Figure 37: Inserted bookcase design highlighted in context of floor plan. Not to scale.

PRECEDENT 3: NIKE FUEL STATION POP-UP STORE

- Location: London, United Kingdom
- Completion Year: 2012
- Designers: Millington Associates

Nike is a pioneering brand when it comes to designing engaging, interactive retail environments. From flagship NikeTown locations to temporary pop-ups, Nike sets the standard for experiential retail design. Located in the cutting-edge, temporary retail mall known as Boxpark, Nike set up the 4,000 square foot Fuel Station across four shipping containers. From the moment a visitor enters, the experience is guided by interactive technologies that are programmed to react and play with audience movement. For example, the entry corridor is tracked by a camera that turns an interactive wall from red to green as a customer passes by. This is an exceptional example of brand experience – Nike's brand identity is centered around active living and movement, which is depicted and experienced from the initial impression of the store. The movement-based technologies are connected to social media, so that users can upload and share their experiences with family and friends. Engagement on this level allows the brand to not only exist in a physical sense, but also to create a powerful online presence. The key differentiator with this retail environment is that it becomes a destination – one of the most significant elements of this practicum project.

As a visitor moves throughout the space, they experience various features such as digitized treadmills, and interactive product information tablets. The entire experience is focused on consumer interaction, allowing users become familiar with the brand and Nike community. Product technologies are brought to life through augmented reality tools, creating excitement for product information through animation and human contact. For example, the space makes use of "digital mannequins", which are motion-sensitive intelligent mirrors that display local runners

wearing the brands product. This is yet another example of adapting a retail environment to remain relevant to the local context. Various services are offered on-site, free of change – Nike+ Run Club members have full access to physiotherapists and nutritionists, alluding to the healthy lifestyle element of the brand. Aside from encouraging visitors to join this community, these services also encourages a stronger connection with the brand and culture. Furthermore, rather than focusing solely on product, the store focuses on consumer experience through design. For example, the store only stocks a limited selection of physical product – the full product library is available on interactive devices throughout the store or online. As previously discussed, this is where the physical retail environment is of paramount importance to a brand – e-commerce and the online marketplace simply cannot replicate this highly sensory, experiential atmosphere.

Materiality and aesthetics were an important consideration in this design, with design decisions focused on communicating the brand identity and history. The flooring is made of a raw material comprised of recycled athletic shoes, known as “Nike Grind”. This unique material, created by Nike, is used worldwide for premium sports surfaces such as tracks, gyms, and courts – the use of this material in the store demonstrates brand values of authenticity and innovation. The visuals of local runners, as described above, are cut into solid steel elements to create a dynamic, spectacular feature. LED lighting throughout the space contrasts the dark aesthetic, allowing for the products and interactive technologies to take the stage. This allows for a heightened sensory experience and a distinguished, striking atmosphere. Finally, the iconic chevron-shaped bleacher wallcovering portrays the brand’s past, alluding to the first ever store which opened in 1973 in Portland, Oregon. By creating such relationships between the old and the new in the retail environment, Nike ensures their brand identity and experience remains consistent and steady, while at the same time continuing to be flexible and responsive.

ANALYSIS

As previously discussed, Nike is a leader when it comes to the design of retail environments centered on human experience. A key takeaway from this precedent is the Fuel Station's interactive application of sensory technology. The ways in which the Nike brand is represented is evident in the design of each feature within the space – a core component of the design of the Zenshi Zone. Furthermore, Nike went beyond presenting its audience with a retail space and focused on creating a community. With the Zenshi Zone being aimed at brand introduction, and focused on selling through experience rather than products, the Nike Fuel Station provides an excellent example of how to reach an audience in engaging, memorable ways.

The Nike Fuel Station is temporary in nature, as is the Zenshi Zone. The host structure is comprised of a series of shipping containers, therefore the project exhibits qualities of insertion and installation. For these reasons, the use of modular furniture components is emphasized throughout the space. The Zenshi Zone is heavily founded upon tapping into the senses of the consumer by designing the interior atmosphere to evoke emotional responses to the brand experience, and the Fuel Station is no exception to this. The flexibility and responsiveness of the environment, demonstrated through the immersive sensory installations and digitized shopping experience, offers a glimpse into futuristic retail practices – an important field of study for this project.

This precedent demonstrates the importance of engaging consumers in alternative ways, as well as the necessity of a physical store setting. Considering the emerging trends of e-commerce, the design of retail environments is more critical than ever before – in a digital era, it is the only way for a brand to truly connect with a consumer's emotions and senses. Nike, a

brand with a significant online presence, recognized the need to continuously innovate the physical retail experiences they provide to their audiences. This precedent is inspirational for this project as it proves the significance of interior design within physical store environments. It also validates the importance of challenging the status quo when it comes to designing retail environments of the future.

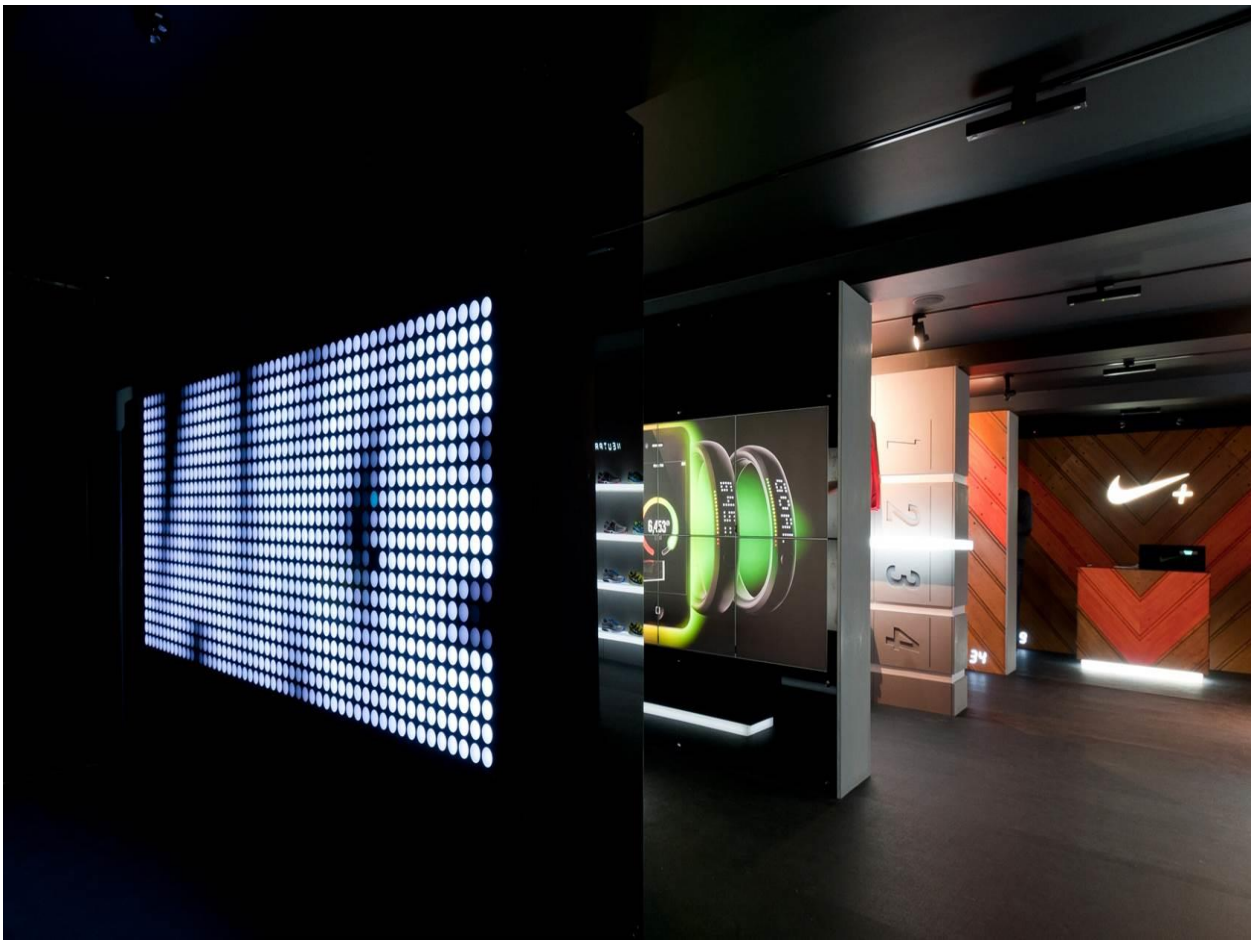


Figure 38: Entrance to Nike Fuel Station. Interactive technologies line the corridors, with the characteristic Nike logo and chevron pattern to welcome visitors.

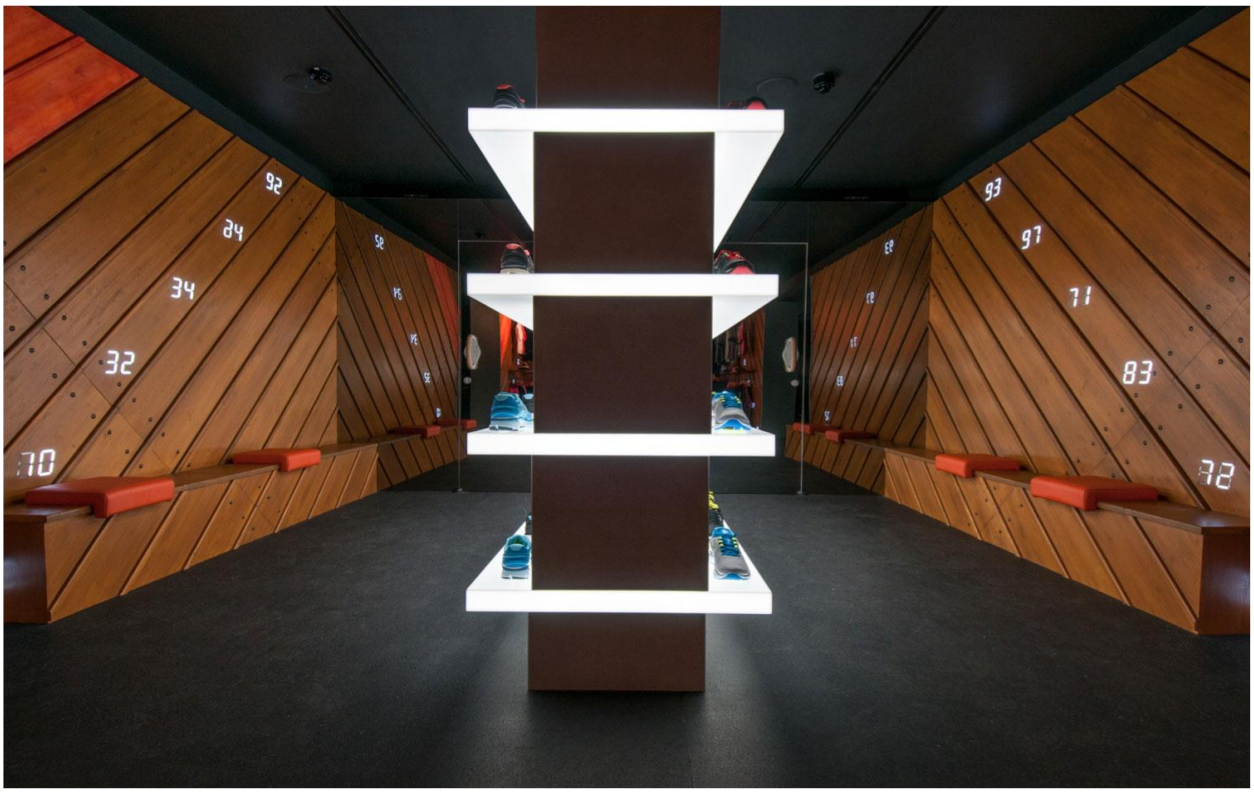


Figure 39: View of Nike product displays and built-in benching for product testing. Digital technologies integrated into wall panels illuminate the space. The reflection due to mirrors at the rear end of the space creates an illusion of an expanded, infinite interior. Lighting details elevate visual interest of interior, encouraging visitor engagement by highlighting product displays.

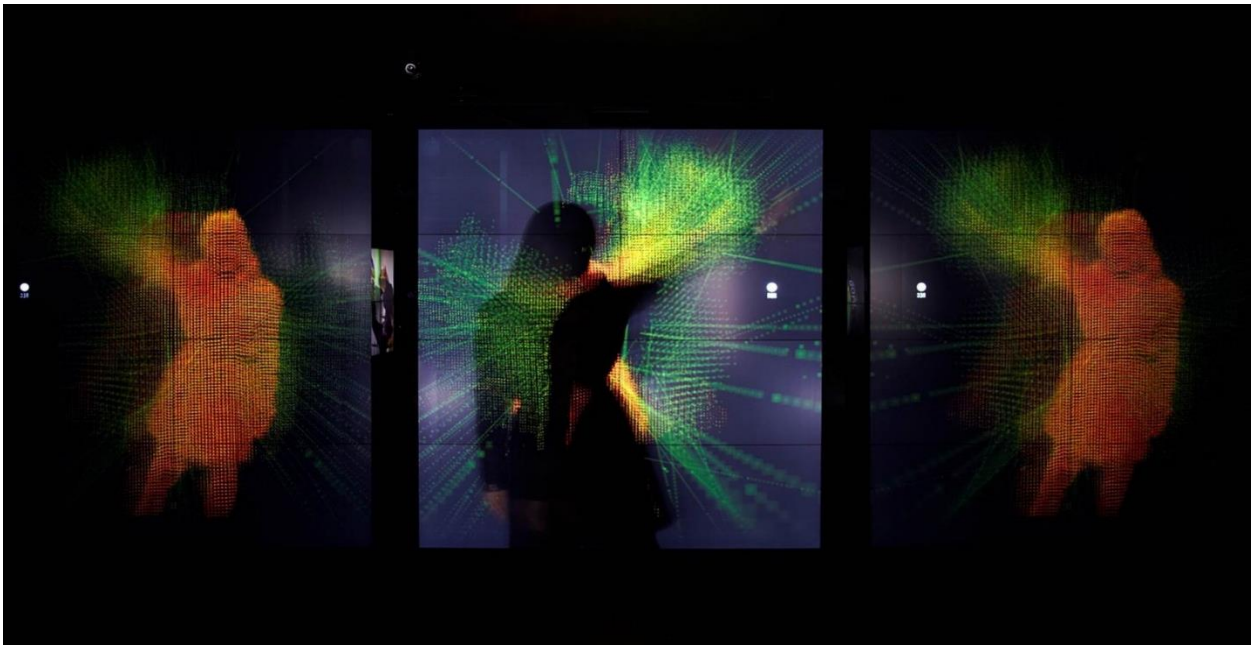


Figure 40: Digital technologies within space are motion-sensored and respond to human interaction. To further the brand identity, Nike designed these sensory installations to encourage visitors to move, dance, and engage with the brand in new ways. These experiences can be shared with friends and family on social media, furthering brand outreach past the physical store environment.

CONCLUSION

The precedents examined in this chapter provide understanding and insight into the design processes and strategies of experience-based retail environments. Each precedent exemplifies specific qualities and characteristics that will inform the design proposal for this project, which is found in Chapter 6.

Selected based on the themes discussed in the literary analysis, these precedents allow for a deeper, more enriched understanding of the typology by presenting realistic applications. Each precedent addressed a retail environment centered around the concepts of brand experience, interior atmosphere, and adaptive reuse at varying scales through diverse methods. Therefore, each of the design projects discussed in this chapter served to influence and inspire the design approach, process, and proposed insertion that will be implemented within The Power Plant.

CHAPTER 5: DESIGN PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION

This section describes the key considerations that informed the design programming of the Zenshi Zone. The first subsection, Client Profile, highlights the background of the Zenshi brand, defines the brand identity, and provides vision and mission statements. The second subsection, User Profiles, outlines primary, secondary, and tertiary users. This section provides an in-depth explanation of four user types that have been considered in the design of the project. Finally, the third section presents the Design Programme. This portion of the document explains how the theory discussed in previous chapters was used to organize the space through a series of charts and graphics.

CLIENT PROFILE

The design of the Zenshi Zone was based upon the client, Zenshi Technologies Inc., which is referred to in this project as Zenshi. For the purposes of this project, Zenshi is a hypothetical client that has been created by the author.

Zenshi is one of the largest technology companies in the world, specializing in electronics. Known as a leader in the industry, the Chinese Fortune 500 company is a powerful international business that is looking to gain a stronger international presence. The name "Zenshi" is derived from the Mandarin word "Zhenshi", which means "real, authentic, and true". This name was chosen to reflect the experiential quality of the brand, as one of the core values of the brand is to deliver authentic experiences in the retail environment. The Zenshi product portfolio consists of various consumer electronics, including smartphones, tablets, audio devices, and wearable technologies.

The Zenshi brand's tagline is "Experience the Unexpected"; a statement that describes not only the innovative technologies the company delivers, but also the retail environments they provide. The Zenshi brand identity is bold and edgy, yet sleek and refined. The following statements serve to further define the brand and brand identity:

> *Mission:* To consistently provide our consumers with exceptional products, service, and experience, and to remain at the forefront of innovation, creativity, and ingenuity in the electronics industry.
>
> *Vision:* To continue to inspire, enrich, and excite the world with our passion and commitment for authentic innovation, technologies, products, and experiences.

Zenshi prides itself on producing cutting-edge, sophisticated product designs, and therefore the retail spaces that showcase these products must reflect the same qualities. What differentiates the Zenshi brand is their commitment to providing exciting and engaging experiences for their consumers – whether that be through consistent product and software updates, or through a unique international consumer community. This is similar to what brands such as Nike have done with their Run Club – allowing their audience to experience more than simply purchasing products. From hosting special events to offering exclusive benefits and benefits, the Zenshi community is intended to engage consumers long after the purchase experience ends.

One of the main purposes of the Zenshi Zone is to allow Zenshi to expand into new markets and target new audiences. Although Zenshi is well-established in the Asian market, the name is unrecognizable to North American and European audiences. Though the brand has recently attempted to improve this presence, marketing strategies have proven unsuccessful thus far. With a goal to establish the Zenshi identity and improve brand awareness, the main purpose

of this retail environment is for brand introduction. Therefore, an experience-based retail model is the ideal strategy for Zenshi – the brand can immerse its target audience into an environment that evokes the spirit and values of the brand, thus selling consumers through evocative experience. The target audience, as well as detailed consumer profiles, will be defined in the next subsection of this chapter.

USER PROFILES

The users and the ways in which they experience space was the primary consideration in the programming and design decisions of the Zenshi Zone. The following sections analyze the primary, secondary, and tertiary users.

Primary Users – Consumer Profiles

Consumers are the primary users of the Zenshi Zone, as the space was designed for brand introduction to a new audience. Since Zenshi is expanding into new markets, it is important to keep the target audience broad, thus considering various types of consumers and the ways they will interact with the space. Four consumer profiles have been created for programming and design purposes. They are as follows:

i. Devoted – The Loyal Consumer

The loyal consumer is the smallest segment of the audience, however very valuable as they are generators of sales. They can be considered brand ambassadors – they are loyal to the Zenshi brand and promote it to their friends, family, and social circles. This consumer type strongly believes in the brand, valuing customization, individualized attention, and frequent interaction in the retail setting.

ii. Spontaneous – The Impulsive Consumer

The impulsive consumer has an unpredictable, whimsical nature. They are emotionally driven, which means they follow emotion over logic. This consumer type acts on instinct and desire, hence can be converted to a purchasing consumer if they are engaged in the right manner. Therefore, they key into selling to this category is to tap into their emotions in the retail environment through excitement and entertainment.

iii. Particular – The Needs-Based Consumer

To be satisfied, the needs-based consumer has specific requirements and needs to be met. They are habitual in nature and are more difficult to please than the other consumer types. The key is to catch these consumers at the beginning of the experience and engage them in a planned manner to fulfill their precise needs. This requires positive interaction and personalized customer service within the retail environment.

iv. Free-Spirited – The Wandering Consumer

This consumer type can also be considered a browser and window shopper. They may be brought into the store with a friend or family member, with no real intention of entering the space. On the other hand, they may be simply shopping for the entertainment and experience. They are the least committal of the consumer types, however are seeking to confirm needs in the retail setting. Therefore, this consumer type needs to be engaged with personal experience and unique interaction to convert them to the brand.

Secondary Users

Though the consumer categories described above form the majority of users, the secondary users are very important to the function of the space. These users include the Zenshi employees, who will be hired locally by Zenshi. These employees are direct representations of

the Zenshi brand, and therefore must be trained accordingly to accurately represent the brand identity. Temporary employees, which includes hired special events staff, performers, and artists, will be users of the space for specific events and functions. Secondary users also include the employees of any brand collaborations that occur – they are not employees of Zenshi, but rather employees of the brand with which Zenshi is collaborating. Brand collaborations in the Zenshi Studio are intended to alter bi-weekly to monthly, and therefore these external employees will only be using the space during the time they are scheduled for.

Tertiary Users

Since this project is a temporary insertion, tertiary users will include the presently existing on-site facilities management, building management, and maintenance and operations staff. Although these users are tertiary, they are critical because they are the most knowledgeable on building functions and operations, and will be an important resource prior, during, and post insertion as they will aid in project coordination.

DESIGN PROGRAMME

The design programme was made to organize and allocate the spaces and activities of the Zenshi Zone. Moreover, the programme references the influence of theory that has been discussed throughout the document. In the following sections, the ideas addressed are further explored in a series of graphics and charts that highlight various components that influenced the design.

3 E'S OF EXPERIENCE

For the purposes of this project, "3 E's of Experience" were determined by the author – engagement, entertainment, and education. These terms informed the spatial zoning and consumer journeys that were created for the four consumer types. They are as simple as they are stated – engagement refers to engaging consumers, entertainment refers to entertaining consumers, and education refers to educating consumers.

In the Zenshi Zone, engagement occurs in spaces that allow a consumer to interact with the Zenshi product, either individually, as a group, or in the presence of a Zenshi employee. The activities that occur in these spaces tend to be informal and casual, allowing a user to engage with a product in their own way. Engagement spaces are important to consumer experience as they offer a hands-on opportunity with the brand and product. For example, this would include product display modules and the café area. Spaces dedicated to engagement are distributed evenly throughout the space, as it is critical to retaining the attention of consumers.

Entertainment occurs in spaces that are intended to excite and delight the consumer. They are the most stimulating to the senses and can be understood as the fun and exciting areas of the Zenshi Zone. Whether it be through interactive technologies or performance events,

entertainment provides users with memorable experiences that are curated based on the Zenshi identity. They may or may not involve direct contact with a Zenshi product – the activities that happen within these spaces are intended to evoke the essence of the brand identity: bold, edgy, and dynamic. Therefore, this would include spaces such as the Digital Playspace, interactive local gallery, and the virtual reality experience. Spaces intended for entertainment are located mainly in the middle to rear areas of the design, as this ensures consumers explore the entire space with excitement.

Education is an important element of the Zenshi Zone as it involves direct interaction with both the product and sales staff. However, education can occur during essentially any activity that involves the consumer learning about the Zenshi brand and product. In most instances, education refers to the consumer walking away with their questions answered and any doubts cleared. Therefore, it can take place formally in areas such as the Smart Space, or informally in the Digital Playspace where consumers learn about the product through interaction. Education areas are located mainly at the front, near the entrance of the Zenshi Zone. This was done to ensure all types of consumers are educated prior to entering the space, as well as before exiting. Furthermore, consumers who come in to be solely educated do not need to explore the entire space if they do not intend to.

In the subsequent sections, the 3 E's will be directly referred to in the zoning plans of the Zenshi Zone. Furthermore, each consumer profile will highlight the order of importance of the 3 E's, and illustrate how this influences the primary, secondary, and tertiary consumer journey paths and resulting experiences.

Journey	**Consumer Type**			
	Devoted	Spontaneous	Particular	Free-Spirited
Order of 3 E's	• Engagement • Education • Entertainment	• Entertainment • Engagement • Education	• Education • Engagement • Entertainment	• Engagement • Entertainment • Education
Purpose of space	• Gain continued consumer support • Demonstrate why consumer should remain loyal; why brand is unique	• Start the conversation and captivate consumer • Attempt to convert consumer to brand	• Get consumers excited about brand while fulfilling needs • Prove what products can do through customer service experiences	• Welcome consumer to brand • Open a dialogue between consumer and brand • Spark intrigue
Goals of experience	• Ensure continued brand advocacy • Let consumer leave proud of the brand they believe in • Evoke feelings of community with brand and fellow users	• Entertain consumer through unique brand experiences • Differentiate the brand from others • Establish brand in consumer memory	• Prove how brand can meet and exceed expectations • Respond to consumer questions and provide experience that aligns with brand identity	• Ensure consumer does not feel pressured, but rather free to experience space • Get them interested in brand prior to leaving
Consumer emotions within space	• Excitement • Pride • Happiness	• Enthusiasm • Curiosity • Exhilaration	• Inquisitiveness • Gratification • Determination	• Enjoyment • Delight • Surprise
Potential weaknesses	• Losing valued customer due to wrong experience • Not aligning experience with brand identity that consumer believes in	• Not providing meaningful experience that is memorable • Consumer will not connect with brand due to personal preferences	• Not connecting with consumer at the right time during journey • Brand may not be the right fit if consumer not educated appropriately	• Consumer does not see value in brand, or does not understand brand identity and offerings • Bad experience could result in negative word-of-mouth

Space	Functional, Aesthetic, and Spatial Requirements					
	Function	Accessories	Furniture	Fixtures	Equipment	Approx. Size
Display Exhibit	Education; Welcome visitors to space; Education-based display modules to allow users to be introduced to product and brand	Lighting details in display modules; Custom mural application for walls	N/A	Product display cases; Wall-mounted LED strip lighting	Zenshi products; Any additional tech needed	250 sq. ft.
Interactive Product Modules (x2)	Engagement and Education; Introduce Zenshi products to users; Allow hands-on interaction with smartphones and accessories; Employees available if needed, otherwise user free to explore devices without individualized attention	Lighting details; Product display mounts and tethers; Soft flooring material for employees to stand on	N/A	Product display millwork; Suspended ceiling and lighting fixtures	Zenshi products; Any additional tech needed	200-300 sq. ft (display module only); 400-500 sq. ft (display module and surrounding circulation)
Digital Playspace and Lounge	All 3 E's are touched on; Themed rooms allow users to play with smartphone devices; Each room will have different scene to depict a photography setting (macro, action, daylight, lowlight etc.)	Accessories for each theme (i.e. boxing bag and gloves for boxing room); Themed flooring, ceiling and wall materials	Soft seating attached to panels in Lounge; Seated-height tables (x4)	Modular room wall and floor components assembled on-site; Integrated ceiling details; LED strips on panels in Lounge	Zenshi products available in custom case attached outside each room; Any additional tech required for function	1400 sq. ft.
Virtual Reality Zone (x2)	Entertainment; Open-concept space for virtual reality; Users can experience travel destinations, concerts, etc.	Soft carpet flooring	Swivel-base lounge chairs (quantity dependent on site)	Custom boxes attached to seating to hold VR equipment	Virtual reality equipment; Ceiling-height projector	500 sq. ft. (Total between 2 zones)

Zenshi Studio + Brand Collaboration Area	Engagement; Space to use Zenshi products to customize and create takeaway items; Creative area to allow for product personalization; Can double as brand collaboration space – local brands will set up and customize space and use Zenshi technologies to create custom items (either for purchase online later, or complimentary items created in person)	Lighting details (i.e. accent light above bar); Product display mounts	Bar-height stools (x10)	Studio bar millwork; Product display shelving; Touch screens on panels	Zenshi products; projector for wall graphics; Any additional tech needed	500 sq. ft.
Zenshi City	Entertainment; "Your City, Your Zenshi"; Digitized local gallery intended to display regional content from users; Can be from shared content from Digital Playspace, or "#getinthezone", "#zenshicity" etc. hashtags on social media by local users; Intended to make content more accessible and personal to local context by displaying users within city using products in own way	Mirrored floor and ceiling	N/A	LED strip lighting on ceiling	Video wall panels mounted as required to display content; Any additional tech needed	400 sq. ft.
Smart Space	Education; Area intended for customer service and individualized attention	Lighting details (i.e. pendant lights above bar)	Bar-height stools (x10)	Service bar millwork; Accent green wall with LEDs	Zenshi products; projector; Any additional tech needed	400 sq. ft.

Zenshi Home	Engagement and Entertainment; Residential-themed setting to allow users to experience products in home-like environment; Lounge space to let users relax	Lighting details (i.e. accent lights above seating); Comfortable, soft flooring material; Wallpapers intended to simulate brick and shelving features (best option for insertion)	Soft lounge seating; Coffee tables; Any additional home furniture as required	Product display module	Zenshi products; Any additional tech needed	400 sq. ft.
Zenshi Live	Entertainment; Multi-functional performance space to accommodate live performances, silent disco, demos, workshops etc.	Interactive kinetic-sensor flooring; Themed accessories for certain activities as required	N/A	Modules for headphone display mounted to panels	Headphones; Curved video panels (mounted to wall panels as required); Projector; Any additional tech needed	600 sq. ft.
Zenshi Café and Bar	Engagement; Branded café and bar area to serve locally sourced food and drink; Allow users a space to interact with products and order through devices; Licensed bar for special events	Lighting details; Comfortable, soft flooring material for employees	Bar-height stools (quantity dependent on site)	Café bar millwork; Suspended ceiling details and lighting system	Zenshi products; Any additional tech needed	600 sq. ft.
Immersive Installation Tunnels (multiple)	Entertainment and Engagement; Dispersed throughout interior (depending on site location and set-up) to create immersive experience through interactive installation; May be curated by local artists	Sensory technology accessories for kinetic tunnel (kinetic-sensors); Reflective materials for mirror tunnel	N/A	Modular curved wall panels (2 of which comprise the mirror tunnel, 2 of which comprise kinetic sensory tunnel)	A/V equipment; Sensory equipment for kinetic tunnel; Any additional tech needed	Site-specific

Immersive Light Installation	Entertainment; Similar to above – intended to entertain consumers by use of sensory technologies and lighting	Any additional lighting features and materiality as required	Soft, padded cushion module for users to lie down	Suspended lighting installation feature	A/V equipment; Any additional tech needed	Site-specific
Main Entrance Installation	Engagement; First point of contact with space and brand; Intended to create memorable impression and be consistent in each site	Mirrored flooring and ceiling	N/A	LED light strips installed on padded fabric partitions	Sound system available; Any additional tech needed	Site-specific
Circulation	Circulation will account for about 30% of total floor area.					
Washrooms	Note: For the initial site, The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery, the washrooms are presently existing in the ground floor lobby of the complex (as shown in figure 14). Therefore, they are not included in the programming as they are site-specific.					
Storage and Maintenance Facilities	Note: As discussed above, storage and maintenance facilities are situated in the ground floor lobby of the complex, and therefore outside the scope of the project. Storage and maintenance facilities are also site-specific, and their use must be coordinated with building operations and facilities management.					

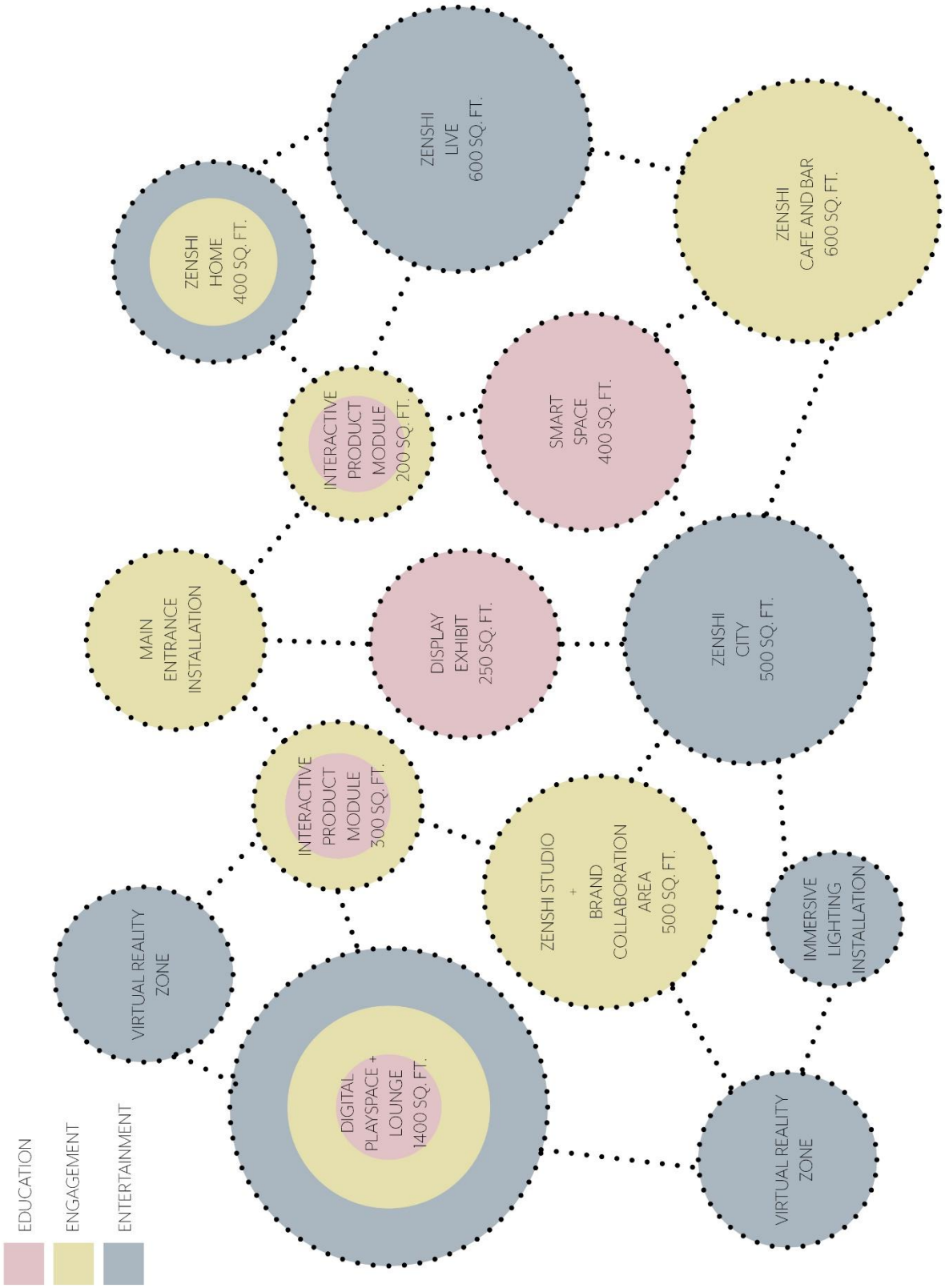


Figure 41: Spatial relationship zoning diagram. Bubbles depict distribution of 3 E's and spatial sizes.

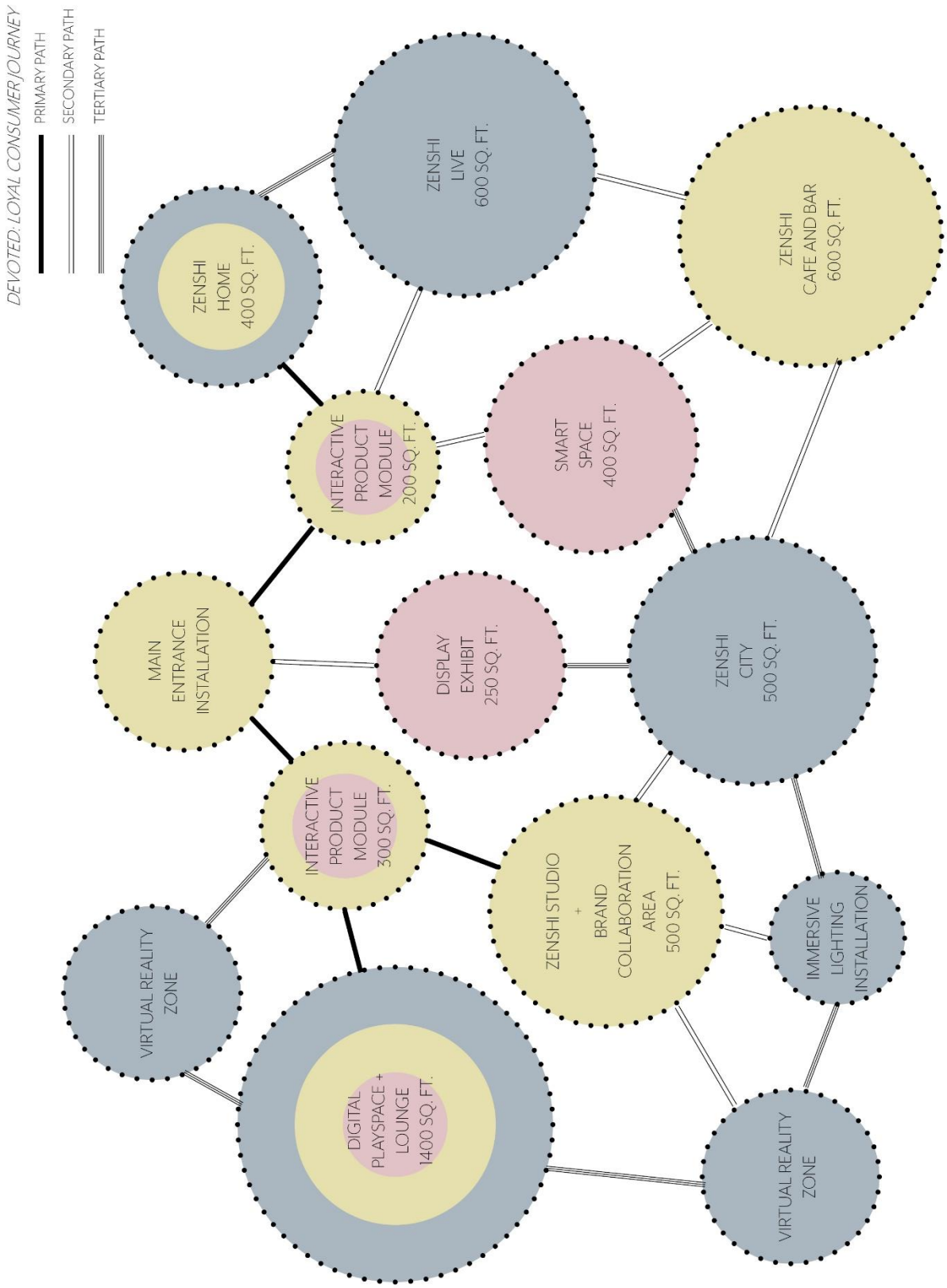


Figure 42: Devoted consumer journey map. Diagram depicts primary, secondary, and tertiary paths for this consumer type.

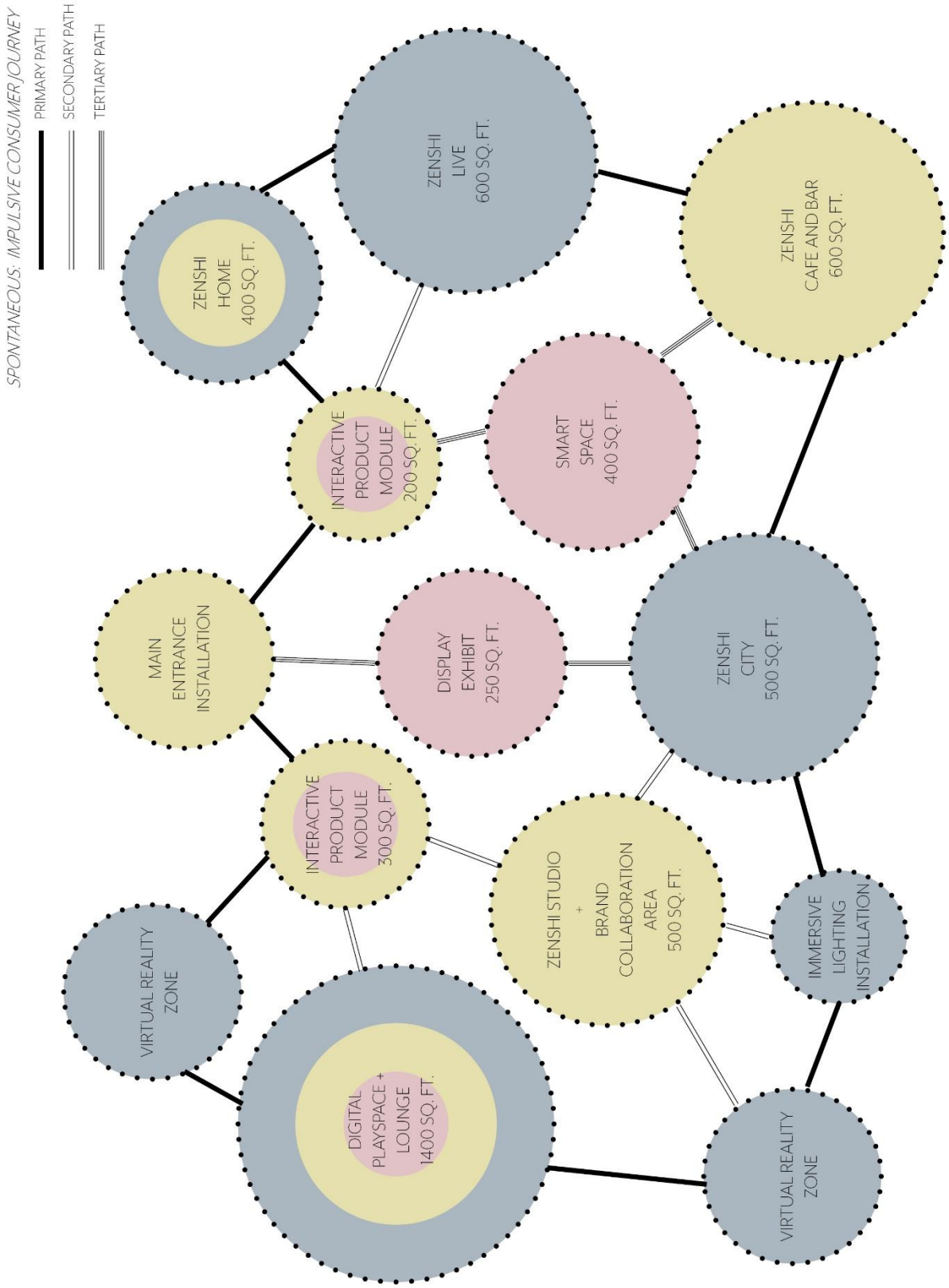


Figure 43: Spontaneous consumer journey map. Diagram depicts primary, secondary, and tertiary paths for this consumer type.

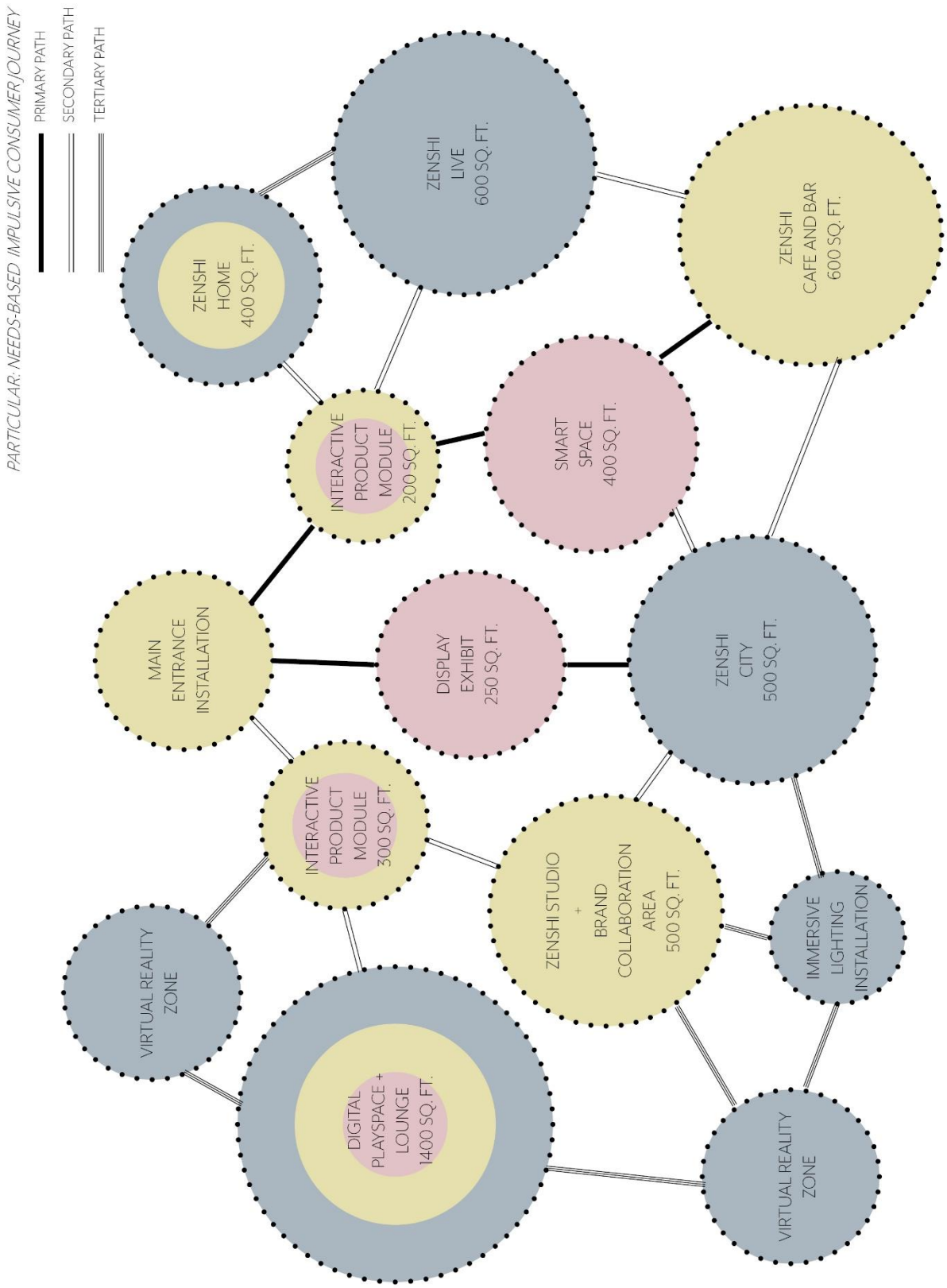


Figure 44: Particular consumer journey map. Diagram depicts primary, secondary, and tertiary paths for this consumer type.

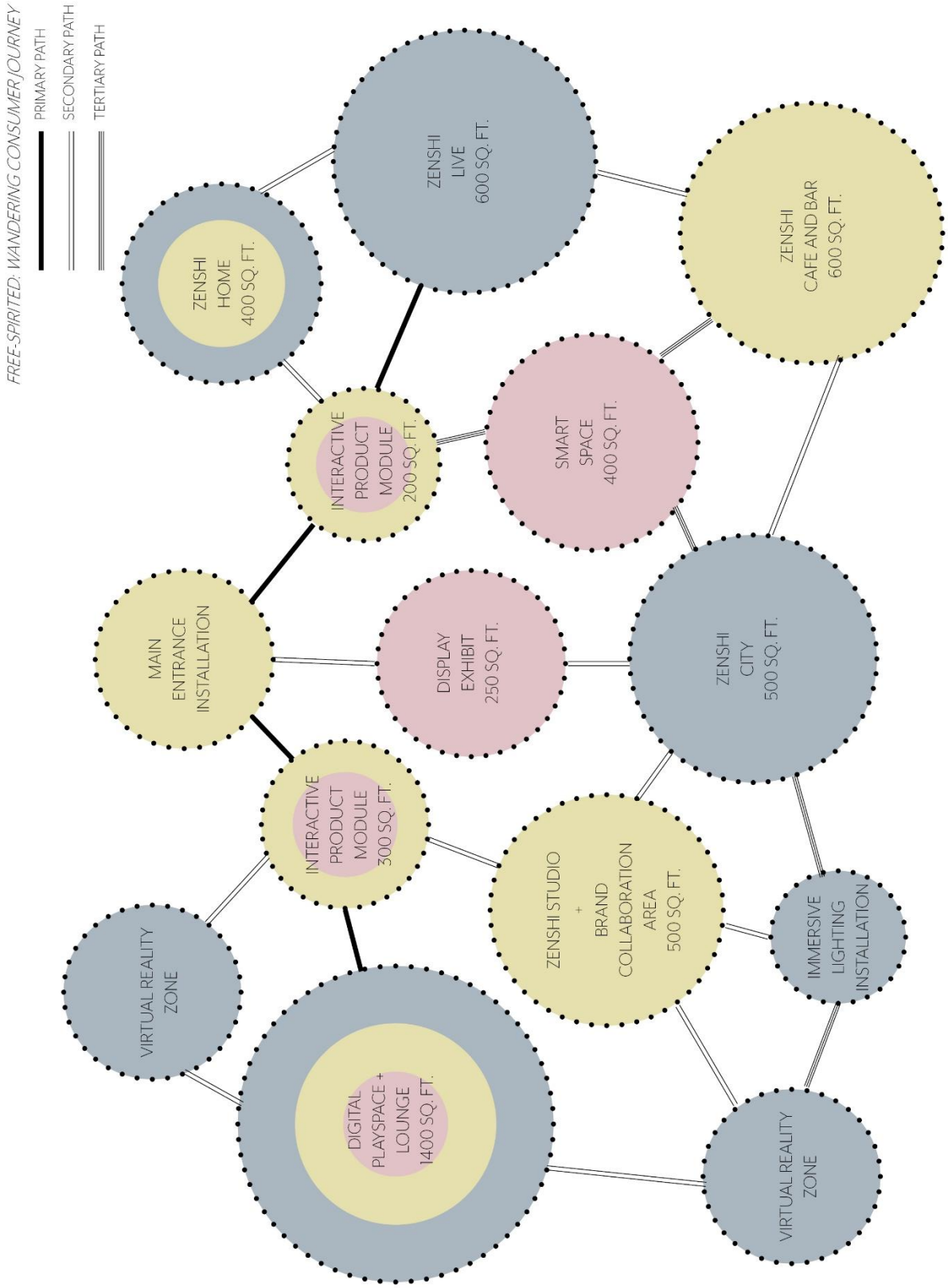


Figure 45: Free-spirited consumer journey map. Diagram depicts primary, secondary, and tertiary paths for this consumer type.

CHAPTER 6: DESIGN PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to redefining what successful retail means, it is ultimately the experience of the consumer that must be addressed. In this project, the proposed design considers the emerging trends of e-commerce and technology to create a retail model that is rooted in brand and product experience. Unlike traditional retail environments, the design of the Zenshi Zone took into consideration the experience economy and shifted away from a sales-driven retail typology. Based on the needs of consumers and brands alike, this chapter presents the design of the Zenshi Zone – a unique, temporary retail space that is intended to excite and engage consumers on various levels. By transforming the retail interior into a theatrical brand narrative, the essence of the Zenshi brand has been captured and conveyed to multiple consumer types. To reinforce this notion, Whitehead states:

> As designers we can create spaces that are more than the sum of their built parts – retail brand-scapes are deliberately aspirational, often memorable, aiming to communicate the brand ethos through a carefully considered arrangement of graphics, lighting and setting that aims to appeal to the core consumer.[161]

With the above objectives in mind, the proposed design is informed by the Literary Analysis, found in Chapter 3. By examining the concepts of branding, interior atmospheres, and adaptive reuse strategies, the literary analysis served as the primary framework for the design decisions made for the Zenshi Zone. Through the study of how brands are co-created through consumer experience, the Zenshi Zone was designed and programmed based on "3 E's of Experience" – entertainment, engagement, and education. In each space, the appropriate atmosphere was created to ensure that the correct senses were targeted – this was undertaken primarily through careful curation of lighting, sound, colour, and materiality. Furthermore,

[161] Whitehead, Jean. *Creating interior atmosphere: mise en scène and interior design*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017. Ebook edition.

through the investigation and understanding of adaptive reuse strategies – specifically insertion and installation – the temporary qualities of the Zenshi Zone were informed. Additionally, this guided the techniques required to successfully insert the project into prominent, historical landmark buildings globally.

Building on the aforementioned concepts and strategies from the literary analysis, a design precedent study further informed the design of the Zenshi Zone. This investigation is found in Chapter 4: Precedent Analysis. Three retail projects were analyzed – Prada Epicenter New York City, Selexyz Dominicanen Bookstore, and the Boxpark Nike Fuel Station. This study identified key design concepts, elements, and strategies that were successful in the creation of captivating, experiential retail spaces. All three projects are excellent examples of cutting-edge retail spaces that thoroughly considered the experience of the consumer. For example, with the Prada Epicenter and the Nike Fuel Station, a wide range of sensory and experimental technologies were used to enhance the user experience of the brand. In the case of the Selexyz Dominicanen Bookstore, the adaptive reuse strategy of insertion was utilized to uniquely curate not only the interior experience, but also to solve complicated design and programming issues related to the host building. These precedents allowed a deeper investigation into what drives successful contemporary retail environments, and provided inspiration for the design decisions for the Zenshi Zone.

As has been established in this document, the Zenshi Zone is an alternative, experience-based retail environment that is temporary in nature. As will be discussed in this chapter, the concept was to design the Zenshi Zone to be comprised of a kit-of-parts that can be transported to various appropriate international sites. With the premise of the Zenshi Zone being to introduce the brand to multiple cities, several components are designed to be adaptable to local cultures.

However, in order to maintain a consistent brand identity, a large majority of the components will remain unaltered when the project is relocated. These elements will be discussed in more detail in the sections to follow.

The layout and zoning of the design was done in accordance with the programming (outlined in Chapter 5), as well as the character of the host building, The Power Plant. The design is intended to occupy one storey, and therefore all of the spaces are located on the main level of the building. As shown in figure 46, the proposed floor plan accommodates all of the spaces outlined in the programme.

As shown in figures 47 and 48, the sections exhibit the existing lighting grid and varying ceiling heights of The Power Plant. These sections also represent the vertical development and relationships between distinct spaces. For example, both sections highlight the clerestory and show the existing building's construction and materiality. These sections also depict the intention of laying out the Zenshi Zone to work with the significant design features of the building, such as the monumental walls that define the clerestory. Elements such as these, in conjunction with the programming requirements, informed the spatial organization of the design. Finally, these sections provide a collective visual of the materiality of the Zenshi Zone, which contributes to the overall ambience and atmosphere of the space. A more detailed analysis of each section can be found in the extended captions of the following figures.

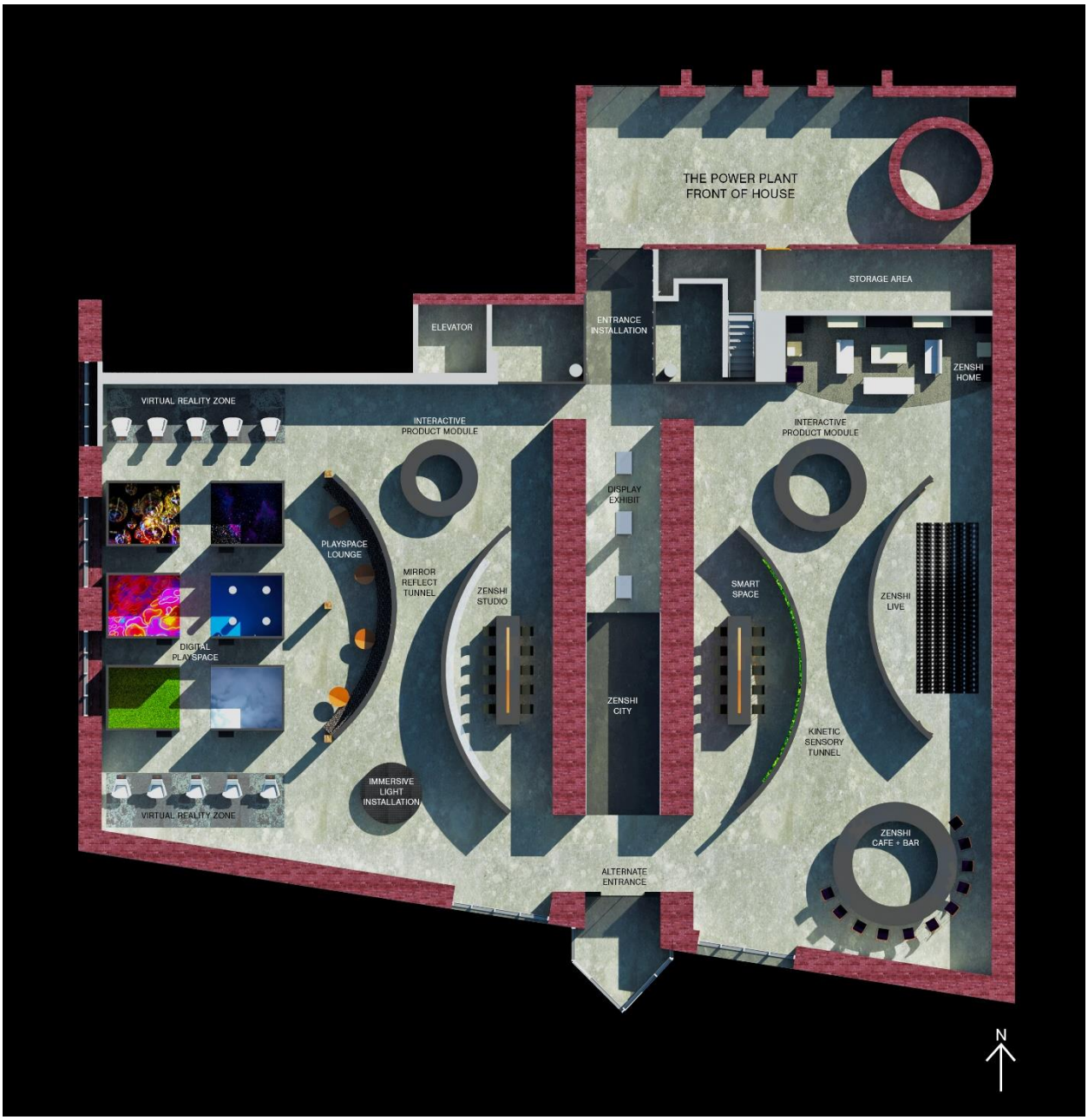


Figure 46: The Power Plant Main Level – proposed Zenshi Zone design layout. The design components will be inserted without physically altering the building, and will occupy The Power Plant site for four months. By dispersing the 3 E's of Experience throughout the host building, visitors will be able to spontaneously engage with the brand and product. Not to scale.

Figure 47: Longitudinal section. This section displays several of the spaces within the Zenshi Zone. The Virtual Reality Zone seating is shown at the far left, directly in front of the Digital Playspace rooms. The Mirror Reflect Tunnel is shown with the Immersive Lighting Installation located beside the Virtual Reality Zone. The central clerestory shows a glimpse into the Zenshi City and Display area, as well a distant view of the main entrance installation. The Zenshi Studio is shown at the left of the clerestory, with the Smart Space mirroring it on the right. Looking further to the right, the Kinetic Sensory Tunnel is shown with the Zenshi Bar and Café area in the front, as well as the Interactive Product Module located in the distance. In this section, the electrically adjustable lighting grids are shown suspended from the ceiling at a height of 18 feet, from which all additional fixtures are suspended and powered from. Not to scale.

Figure 48: Latitudinal section. This section shows the main entrance installation at the left which leads into the Display Exhibit and Zenshi City, both of which are located in the central clerestory. The Display Exhibit features a site-specific mural, which is commissioned by a local artist. At the far right, the Zenshi Café and Bar is shown, as well as the alternate rear entrance. For the purposes of this project, the second level will not be occupied. Not to scale.

DESIGN CONCEPT

When designing the Zenshi Zone, there were several critical factors to consider. Firstly, with the project being temporary, the site in which it is inserted to must meet all the criteria required for proper functionality. For example, as previously mentioned in this document, criteria such as a single storey layout with minimal obstructions and existing lighting grid inform the site selection. The following sections examine three key considerations that informed the design of the Zenshi Zone – the kit-of-parts concept, 3 E's of Experience, and Zenshi branding.

KIT-OF-PARTS

This project was designed for The Power Plant site, however since it is intended to be relocated in the future, a kit-of-parts strategy was deemed the most suitable. This concept allows for ease of transportation, and ensures that the elements are modular and can be reconfigured as necessary. By allowing convenience during the transportation process, the Zenshi Zone kit-of-parts can be easily transported and reassembled to various building footprints. The theory behind the kit-of-parts concept is that each component is pre-designed, pre-engineered, and pre-fabricated for the Zenshi brand. In the engineering and design industry, the term kit-of-parts can be defined by the acronym MESR, which stands for modular, extensible, scalable, and reconfigurable.[162]

In this project, all of the major components are designed in this manner to ensure flexibility and efficiency in assembly, function, and future relocation. For example, there are four curved panels in the project, as shown in the floor plan in figure 49. There are two large panels that house the Zenshi Studio and Smart Space, and two smaller panels that house the Digital

[162] Bilgin, Mehmet Huseyin. *Empirical Studies on Economics of Innovation, Public Economics and Management: Proceedings of the 18th Eurasia Business and Economics Society Conference.* Cham: Springer, 2017. Ebook edition.

Playspace and Zenshi Live. All four curved panels have been designed to be composed of eight separate panels, which are joined together during assembly at the site to form the whole panel component. If required, the panels can be downsized by removing the central panels when necessary. Although the panels can be scaled down, they remain visually consistent, which is critical to ensure accuracy in both branding and atmosphere. All other components, including the product display modules, Digital Playspace rooms, furniture, fixtures, equipment, and accessories, have been selected and designed based on their ability to satisfy the kit-of-parts MESR requirements.

3 E'S OF EXPERIENCE

As previously stated, staging the ultimate consumer experience was at the forefront of the design intention for this project. As discussed in the literary analysis, the design of the interior was inspired by the concept of *mise-en-scène* – this means it holds the power to evoke emotion, stimulate the senses, and create an immersive environment that stages particular experiences.[163] For the purposes of this project, 3 E's of Experience – engagement, entertainment, and education – were determined to program and organize the layout of the Zenshi Zone. This concept is unique to this project, as it was developed upon establishment of the Zenshi brand's target audience. Four consumer profiles were compiled and can be found in Chapter 5. Since each consumer has unique needs and desires in the retail experience, the 3 E's help to map out the consumer journey and program various touchpoints in the user experience.

In the following floor plan, figure 49, the 3 E's are highlighted as they correspond to each specific area in the design. Yellow represents the engagement experience, pink represents the

[163] Whitehead, Jean. *Creating interior atmosphere: mise en scène and interior design*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017. Ebook edition.

education experience, and blue represents the entertainment experience. Education experiences are targeted near the main entrance in an effort to ensure that visitors who seek customer service and support are met upon entry. Engagement experiences are scattered throughout the plan, however organized along the main paths of travel upon entrance to the Zenshi Zone. Finally, entertainment experiences – the most frequently occurring in the design – are placed on the outskirts of main travel paths. This was included to add to the spontaneity and surprise of the space, and to continually excite users throughout the consumer journey. Chapter 5 provides more in-depth definitions of what each experience entails, as well as the order of experience priority for each consumer type.

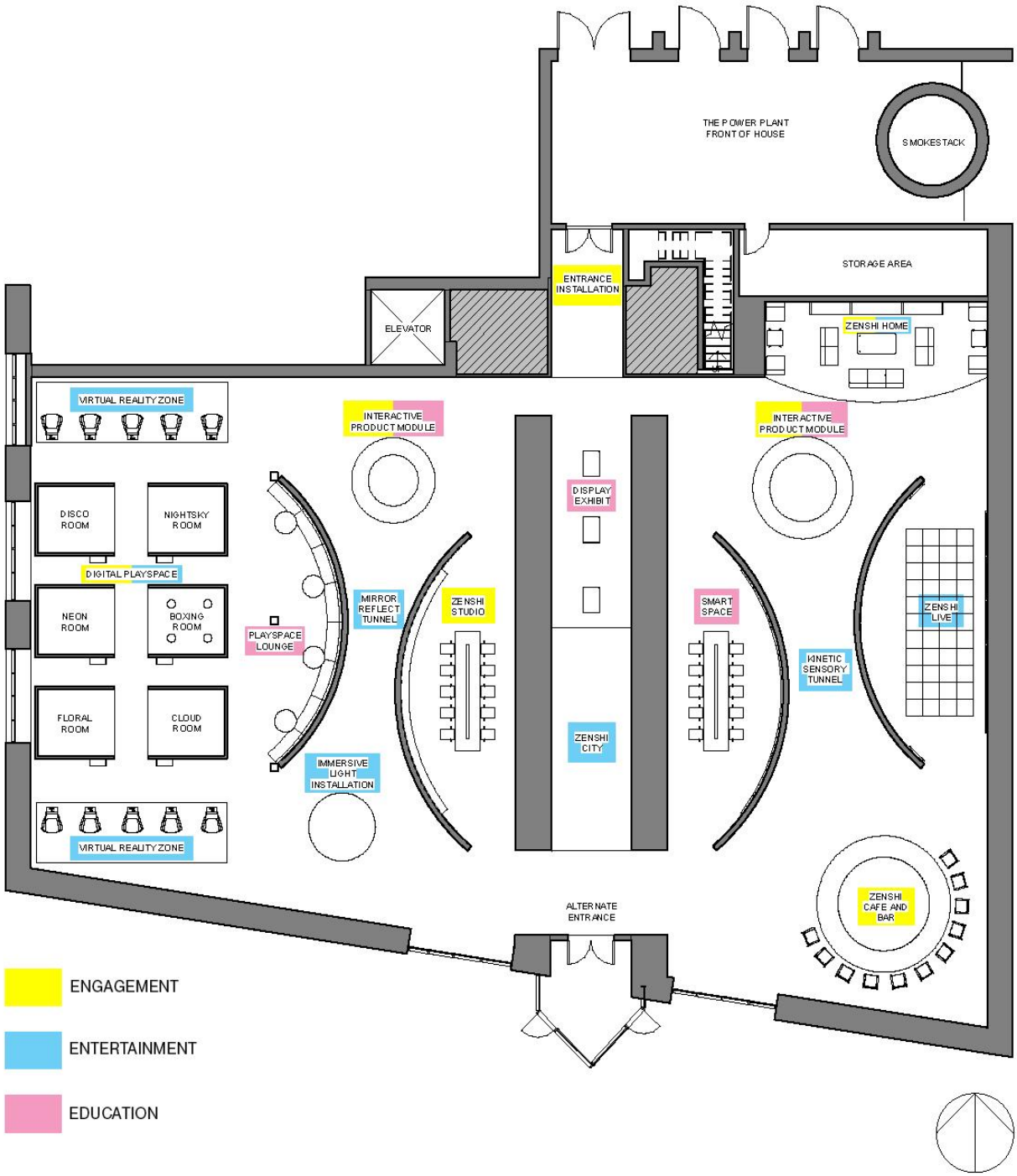


Figure 49: Zenshi Zone floor plan displaying 3 E's of Experience. Not to scale.

ZENSHI BRANDING

The Zenshi brand is defined by a sharp, sleek, and sophisticated persona. This persona served as a groundwork for the design decisions of the Zenshi Zone, along with the brand vision and mission which can be found in the Client Profile in Chapter 5. Since the project is intended to be temporarily inserted into various buildings, simplicity in the design was crucial to both maximize flexibility and emphasize the dynamism of the brand. The logo, displayed on a tablet in figure 50, speaks to the design of the branding, as well as to the design language of the space.

Figure 50: Zenshi logo displayed on tablet.

The design of the Zenshi Zone is heavily founded in materiality that is representative of the Zenshi brand. Zenshi is primarily characterized by a distinctive matte black material, along with refined copper accents and cool white linear lighting. Secondary brand materials include white oak, reflective surfaces such as chrome, and cool grey finishes. These material selections have been made not only to visually speak to the brand, but also to engage the senses of consumers who interact with the brand and the Zenshi Zone. The branding design of the Zenshi

Zone is intended to represent the brand both directly and indirectly – rather than simply having logos on all the components, the materiality in conjunction with the minimal use of strategically placed logos is what expresses the brand. Not only does this heighten the connection between the user and the space, but it also enriches the connection between the consumer and the brand – ultimately resulting in a more purposeful brand experience. Additional analysis on materiality is found later in this chapter, and a detailed material outline can be found in Appendix A.

DESIGN PROPOSAL

With the Zenshi Zone being a design project intended for insertion, it is important to recognize that the design proposal must not physically alter the building in any way. Since The Power Plant is a historical building, no changes have been proposed to the existing exterior or interior spaces. Therefore, the design of the Zenshi Zone carefully made use of the existing host building's layout, existing floor, wall and ceiling finishes, as well as the lighting, ceiling, and power systems. In this design, most of the fixtures, equipment, and accessories are battery-operated, therefore not requiring power provided by the building. All ceiling and lighting fixtures are suspended from the existing ceiling lighting tracks and grids. The Power Plant site and host building characteristics, as well as photographs of the interior and exterior, are discussed in detail in Chapter 2: Site Analysis.

As previously established, the design of the Zenshi Zone is essentially a theatrical stage set for the brand in which the consumer becomes the star of his or her own show. In order to achieve this, each space has been designed with a distinctly unique atmosphere – whether it is through temperature of lighting, materiality selections, ceiling elements, or the shapes and placement of certain components. The following sections will describe several key spaces of the Zenshi Zone in detail, providing an in-depth explanation of the design elements in each space.

MAIN ENTRANCE

The main entrance is the first impression for all visitors to the space. Therefore, it was designed in such a way to be memorable and captivating, allowing users to immediately immerse themselves into the space. In this area, the design intention was to create a fascinating sensory illusion. For this installation, LED strip lights were installed on black acoustic fabric covered walls, with a mirrored floor and ceiling. This enables the visitor to see infinitely above and below, which alludes to the Zenshi brand's mission to provide infinite possibilities to users. It also allows the user to visualize them experiencing the space, which is important as the goal of the design is for the consumer to have the experience that they are the star of the show. Furthermore, a speaker system is installed behind the walls to play sounds and music to engage the visitor. Figure 51 below displays an elevation of the main entrance wall.

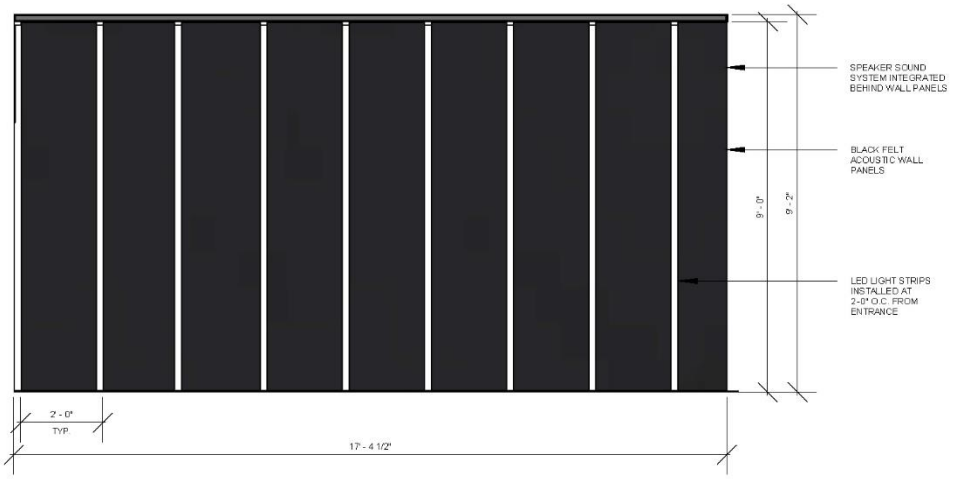


Figure 51: Main entrance wall elevation. Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0".

The intention of the main entrance installation is to focus on the E of engagement. This is because if the consumer is engaged immediately upon entry, the resulting experiences within the Zenshi Zone will be increasingly enriched. If the visitor is engaged in the appropriate way upon initial entry, then the Zenshi brand has already connected with the consumer on a subconscious

level. As has been previously discussed, this is one of the main goals of the design – to engage consumers with brands in ways that the online marketplace cannot. The perspective in figure 52 further illustrates the experience of walking through the space.

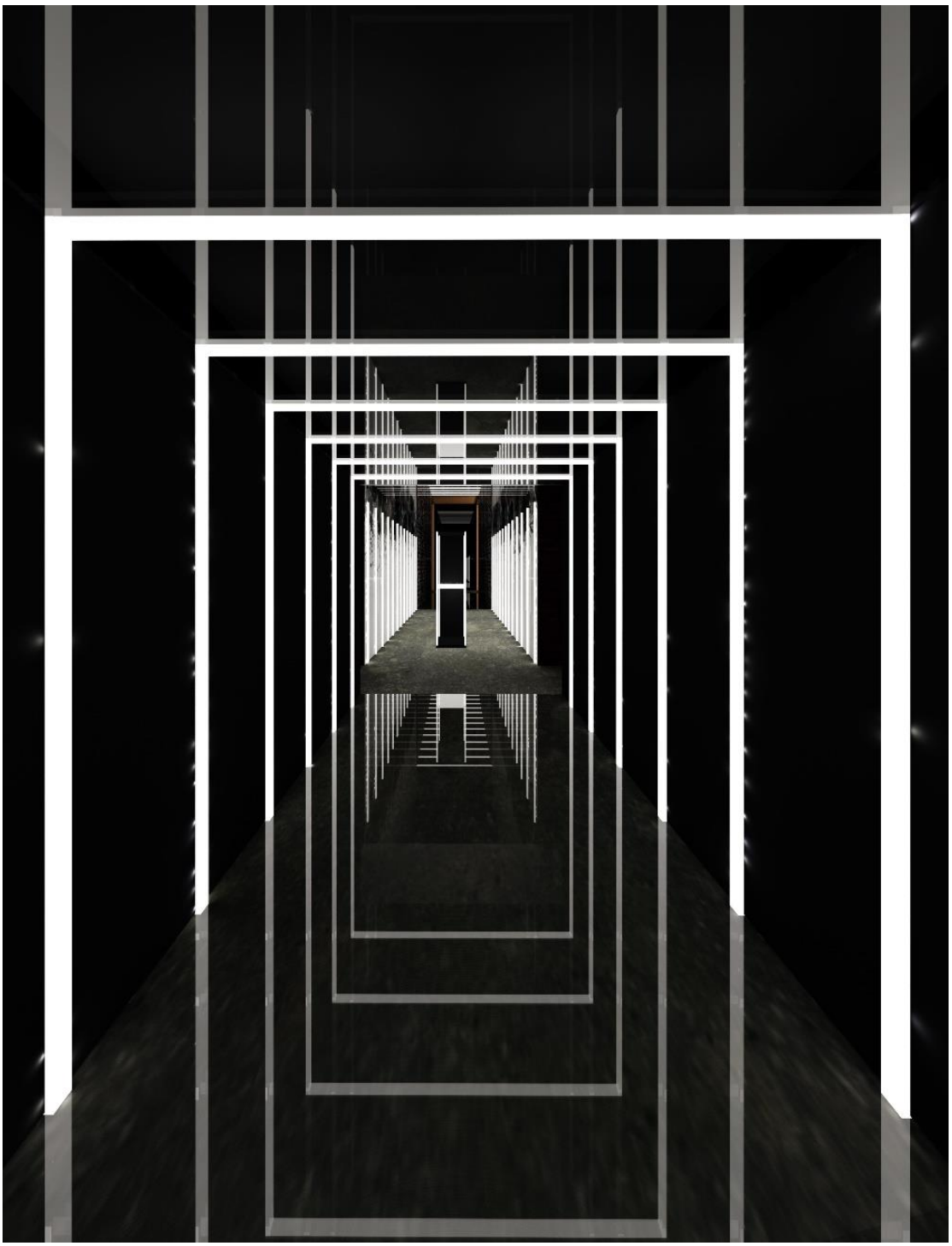


Figure 52: Main entrance featuring LED strip lighting, as well as a mirrored floor and ceiling.

PRODUCT DISPLAY EXHIBIT

As the visitor moves further into the Zenshi Zone, they are met with the product display exhibit. In The Power Plant, this exhibit is housed in the central clerestory space, which allows for a dynamic impression due to its double-height volume and clerestory windows above. The intention for the display exhibit is to echo the main entrance, and therefore the LED strip lights are continued to create a sense of harmony and repetition. In this space, a custom-designed mural by a local artist is featured on the walls, alluding to the local culture in which the Zenshi Zone is situated. In the case of The Power Plant, the mural is a graphic skyline visual of Toronto. An elevation of the clerestory space can be seen in figure 53 below.

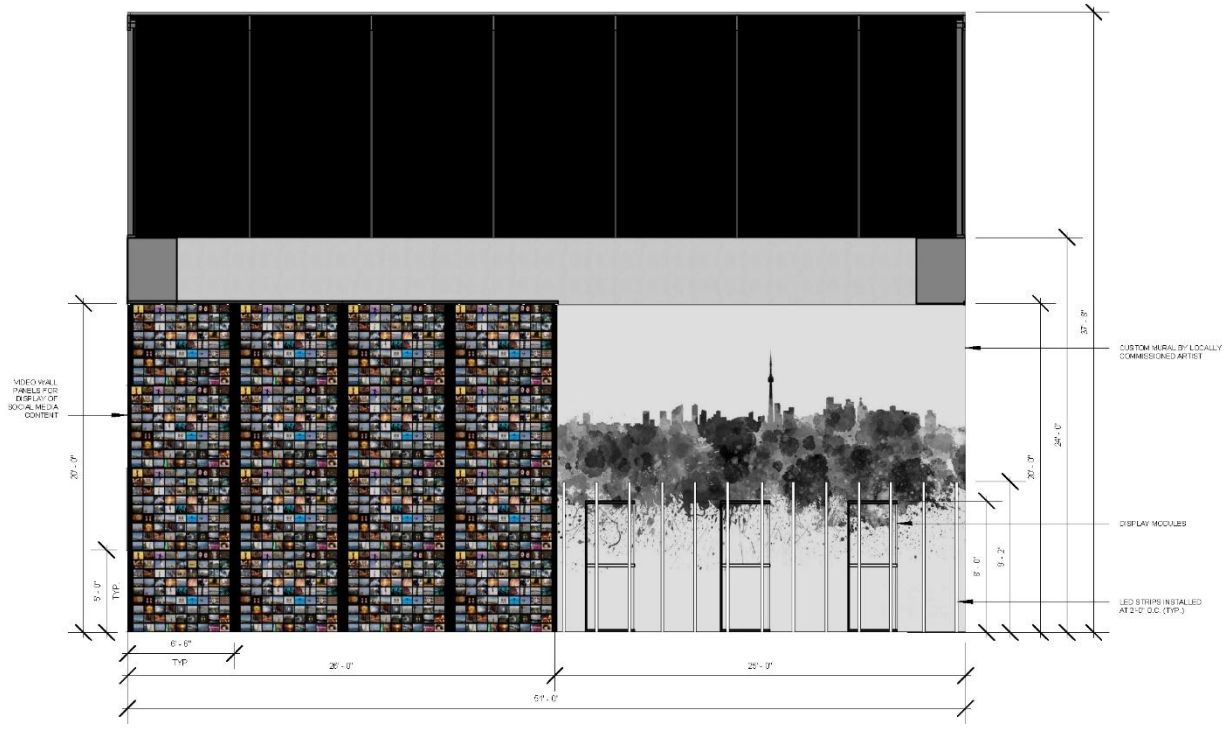


Figure 53: The Power Plant clerestory elevation, featuring the display exhibit at right and Zenshi City at left. Scale: 1/8” = 1’-0”.

The product display exhibit is proposed to be an education experience, therefore custom product modules were designed to feature one specific Zenshi product, as shown in figure 54. This not only creates a sense of drama around the device, but the display of a sole product enhances the sense of exclusivity and importance.

Figure 54: Product display modules and custom wall murals, accented by LED strip lights.

ZENSHI CITY

As users move past the display exhibit, they are greeted with the Zenshi City. As shown in figure 53, the Zenshi City is comprised of video wall panels that span the double-height of The Power Plant's clerestory. Zenshi City is an entertainment experience – it is intended to inspire consumers to upload social media content that will be displayed in this space. Functioning as a local gallery concept, Zenshi City was designed to entertain all types of consumers by allowing them to co-create their own interactive display. Serving as a multimedia gallery, the goal of the space is to feature images and content that are uploaded by users of the city in which the Zenshi Zone is located. For example, users who visit the Digital Playspace can upload content to the Zenshi City gallery, thus experiencing their content in real-time.

As discussed in the literary analysis, this is one of the key spaces that allows consumers to be co-producers of the brand experience. This space is also intended to resonate with the entrance experience by utilizing a mirrored floor and ceiling. Not only does this create a sense of infinity, it also speaks to the Zenshi brand identity and mission – the user is at the forefront of what the brand believes in, and therefore the possibilities are endless. LED light strips are installed on the mirrored ceiling to create resonance with the main entrance installation, as well as to instill a sense of fascination for the viewer.

This dynamic, interactive feature is constantly changing, thus alluding to the dynamic, evolutionary nature of the Zenshi brand and its users. Additionally, this space also functions to connect Zenshi users to one another – a key part in creating a brand community. Brand communities are one of the many factors which can play a role in differentiating brands from one another, along with improving consumer loyalty. The Zenshi City is displayed in figure 55.

Figure 55: Zenshi City featuring multimedia video walls, mirrored floor and ceiling, and LED light strips to create repetition with the main entrance installation and display exhibit.

DIGITAL PLAYSPACE

In the Zenshi Zone, the Digital Playspace is one of the most prominent entertainment experiences. It is designed to enable users to explore the Zenshi devices in several different themed rooms. Each room is designed to mimic a certain photography setting, thus allowing consumers to test and actually experience the Zenshi smartphone camera. The importance of this space is that it immerses the consumer not only with the Zenshi product, but also the brand – rather than being shown what the camera can do in a product display, the user can actually experience it firsthand. Figures 56-61 display the six various rooms that the Digital Playspace will offer. A further investigation into each unique room can be found in the Design Outcome Analysis section at the end of this chapter.

Figure 56: Floral Room. This room is designed to allow users to test the macro camera setting.

Figure 57: Cloud Room. This room is designed to imitate a daylight photography setting.

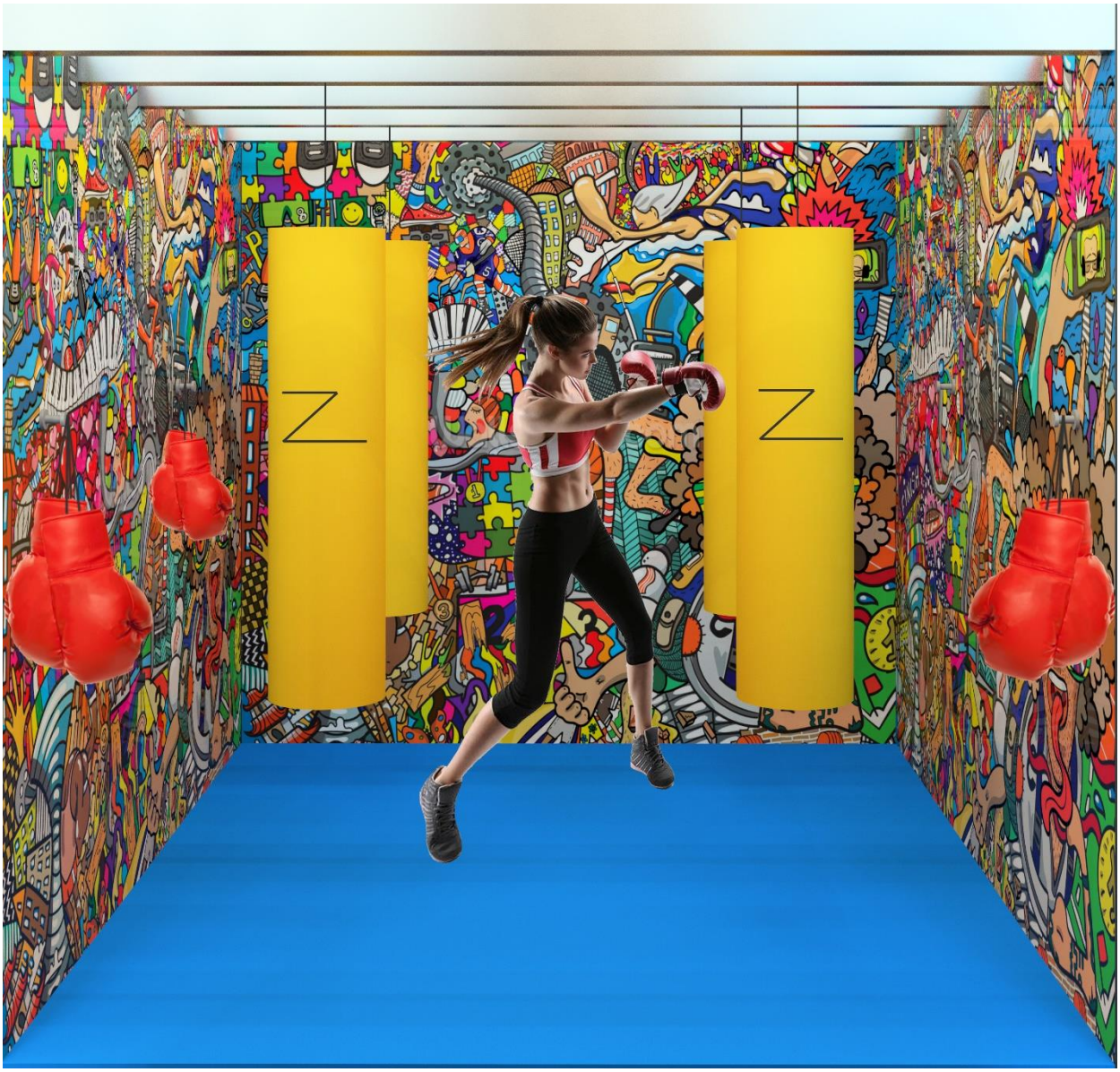


Figure 58: Boxing Room. This room allows users to test the active sport camera setting.

Figure 59: Neon Room. This room is designed to allow users to test photographing artificial neon lights.

Figure 60: Disco Room. This room is intended to allow users to move and dance, thus testing out both movement and dark light settings on the camera.

Figure 61: Night Sky Room. This room is designed to mimic a starry night sky, allowing users to photograph in a night setting.

Since the Digital Playspace rooms are highly stimulating, it is necessary to allow users a space to relax and soak in the excitement. Consequently, the Playspace Lounge (shown in figure 62) was designed to provide users with a space to unwind from the entertainment experience, connect with each other, and upload any of their favourite moments to social media. Additionally, users have the option to upload to the Zenshi City gallery so that they can share their Playspace experiences with others.

Figure 62: Playspace Lounge featuring comfortable seating and tables to allow users to relax and soak in the atmosphere and experiences of the Digital Playspace.

VIRTUAL REALITY ZONES

In the Zenshi Zone, virtual reality experiences are imperative to providing users with an immersive, enchanting atmosphere. In The Power Plant, two virtual reality zones have been designed. As this is an entertainment experience, simplicity was important in the design to ensure that nothing is taken away from the entertainment itself. As a result, as shown in figure 65, custom virtual reality headset boxes were designed to be mounted on the headrests of the lounge chairs. Additionally, figures 63 and 64 below show elevations of the two virtual reality zones.

Figure 63: Elevation of the Virtual Reality Zone located on the north wall of The Power Plant. Scale: 3/16" = 1'-0".

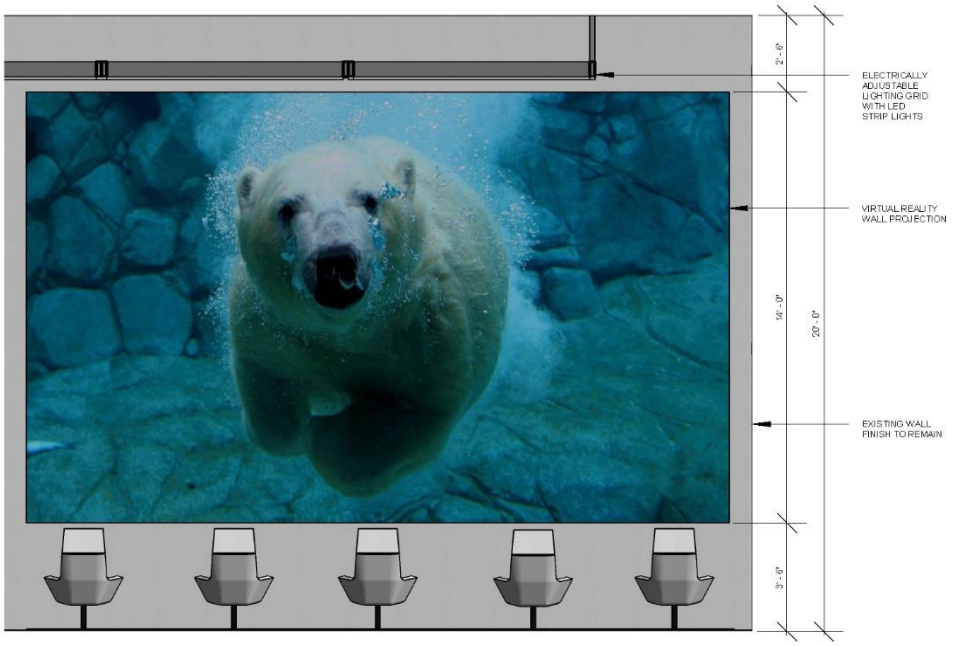


Figure 64: Elevation of the Virtual Reality Zone located on the south wall of The Power Plant. Scale: 3/16" = 1'-0".

Figure 65: Virtual Reality Zone on south wall, featuring custom virtual reality headset boxes. In the distance at left, the immersive lighting installation is shown.

INTERACTIVE PRODUCT MODULES

In the Zenshi Zone, the interactive product modules are designed to be an opportunity for consumers to interact with the product and Zenshi product expert. They serve as both engagement and education experiences, both of which are dependant on what the user is looking for. Figure 66 depicts the west interactive product module, which displays portable Zenshi sound speakers. Figure 67 shows the east interactive product module, which features various smartphones and tablet devices. Each product module is designed with FENIX NTM Nero Ingo, a matte black nanotech material, completed with accent copper edges. The ceiling fixtures are also constructed with FENIX NTM and accented with recessed LED strip lighting. These three materials are the primary materials of the Zenshi brand, and therefore were critical in the design of these modules. A further analysis on the material selections is found later in this chapter.

Figure 66: Perspective of the west interactive product module, with the north Virtual Reality Zone at right and the immersive lighting installation at left. Behind this product module is the mirror reflect tunnel, behind which the Digital Playspace and Zenshi Studio is located.

Figure 67: Perspective of the east interactive product module, with Zenshi Home at the back left and a glimpse of the kinetic sensory tunnel at the right.

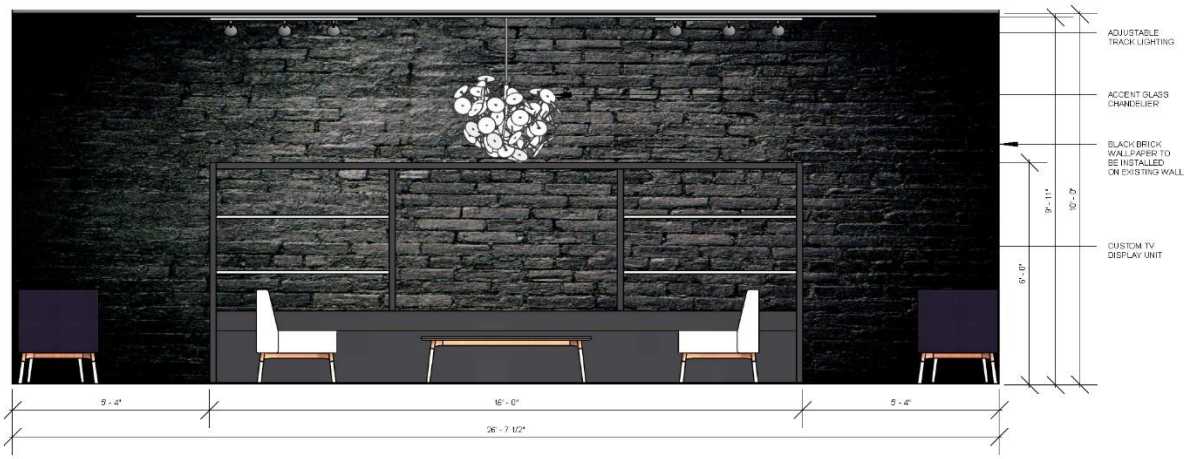


Figure 68: Zenshi Home elevation. Zenshi home was designed to simulate a home environment, thus features comfortable furnishings to allow users to relax and soak in the atmosphere. It is intended to be both an engagement and entertainment experience, depending on the consumer type and needs. Scale: 1/4” = 1’-0”.

SMART SPACE

In the Zenshi Zone, the Smart Space is dedicated to customer service. In this space, consumers are free to approach Zenshi employees with any questions or concerns they have, seek product advice and technical support, or simply converse and learn about the brand. The atmosphere in the Smart Space is intended to be more ambient in nature, thus providing a more serene environment that can calm users in contrast to the other Zenshi Zone experiences. Moreover, it is designed to be an education experience, hence why it was designed to be a comforting, relaxing environment. Figure 69 below shows the Smart Space, and highlights the feature accent green wall with integrated LED light strips characteristic of the brand.

Figure 69: Zenshi Smart Space, complete with a bar-height table module constructed with white oak panels, FENIX NTM Nero Ingo, and a copper strip for integrated power supply.

ZENSHI CAFÉ AND BAR

When designing the Zenshi Zone, it was important to consider a wide range of sensory experiences that would result in notable impressions. For these reasons, a space that would stimulate the sense of taste was required. Considering the significance of integrating local culture in the Zenshi Zone, the café and bar are designed to host a local vendor that will serve their offerings in a collaboration with Zenshi. Figure 70 highlights the Zenshi Café and Bar area, located at the end of the kinetic sensory tunnel. As this is an engagement experience, it was located at the end of the tunnel to reward users with something that everyone can enjoy – food and beverage.

Figure 70: Zenshi Café and Bar, with the kinetic sensory tunnel at right.

ZENSHI LIVE

The performance space in the Zenshi Zone is known as Zenshi Live. It is an immersive entertainment experience that brings performances of all kinds to life – ranging from music, to sports, and interviews and live demos. Curved video wall panels span the space, as shown in figure 71. Since live performances will not always be on, the space makes use of Zenshi headphones for all other entertainment – for example, a silent disco. Headphone display modules were designed on either side of the curved panels for ease of access, and to allow for a display method when they are not in use. Acoustic panels adhered to the wall will help to absorb and minimize excess sound, as shown in figure 72. Comprehensive detail drawings of these panels can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 71: Zenshi Live performance space, with kinetic-sensor light up flooring and headphone display racks. Curved video wall panels allow for an immersive entertainment experience, allowing users to become one with the show.

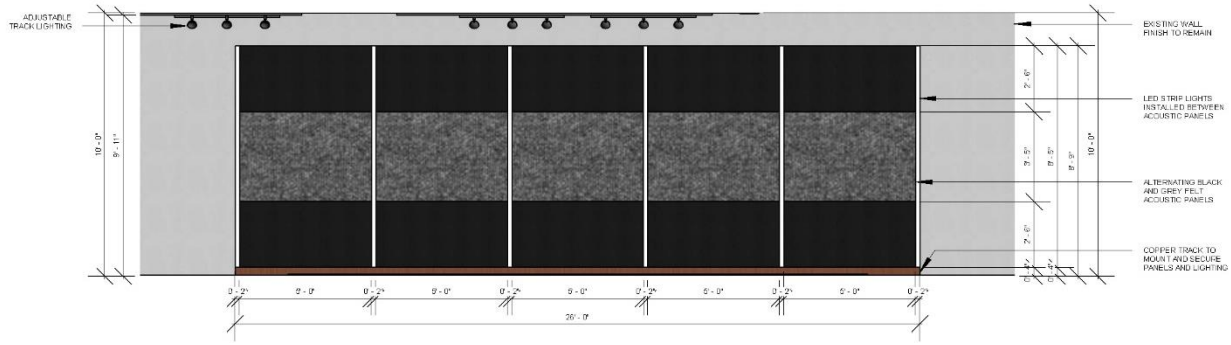


Figure 72: Zenshi Live acoustic performance panel elevation. Scale: 3/16” = 1’-0”.

DESIGN OUTCOME ANALYSIS

Considering the concepts and strategies raised in the Literary and Precedent Analyses, it is necessary to analyze a few key features and their relationships to the design outcome of the Zenshi Zone. Several spaces within the design are intended to assemble a certain type of environment for users – for example, in the Digital Playspace rooms shown in figures 56-61. Each of these rooms is essentially a stage set that is inspired by the concepts of *mise-en-scène* and staged space. In this case, the room serves as the framed setting, with users being the actors that become part of the narrative within each distinct atmosphere. Each space is intended to tell a story, and the rooms function as devices that convey meaning through interior characterization – as detailed by Whitehead, "characterization is integral to the narrative, supporting and underlining the story".[164] Each room has a spatial narrative with the intention of communicating a story, and by evoking certain qualities the interior moves into a realm of decorative story telling – one which Whitehead ultimately defines at the interior *mise-en-scène.*[165]

There are six rooms in the Digital Playspace, each offering a unique stage set to test the Zenshi smartphone camera. With all of the spaces being distinct from one another, the atmosphere of the rooms encourages a certain kind of user activity and emotion – similar to the way a stage set inspires the actors performance. As Zumthor addresses, this design is about "capturing a certain mood – a magical, almost intangible quality explored through the poetics of architecture as a space of sensory richness."[166] With that said, the Digital Playspace can be considered a poetic, sensory attempt to capture specific user moods and emotions. The Floral Room (see figure 56), intended to symbolize a garden and enable users to test the macro features

[164] Whitehead, Jean. *Creating interior atmosphere: mise en scène and interior design*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017. Ebook edition.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.

of the camera, was designed to be lively, fresh, and vibrant. The detailed floral walls, grass-like flooring, and trellis-like ceiling set the ambience for the bloomy space. The Cloud Room (see figure 57), evocative of a daylight setting, was created to be light, airy, and whimsical. The narrative of the space was intended to bring users to a "head-above-the-clouds" feeling, thus the atmosphere was designed with a cloud-form installation to be peaceful and daydream-like. The Boxing Room (see figure 58) was planned to allow users to test the active sport camera setting in daylight. This space is meant to be dynamic and playful, so therefore the atmosphere was designed to host bright graffiti walls and padded ring flooring to simulate an urban underground boxing ring. The Neon Room (see figure 59), a space designed to offer users a chance to test cameras on artificial neon lights, was intended to be energetic, upbeat, and stimulating. The multitude of neon lights, as well as a reflective mirrored floor and ceiling, provides a captivating atmosphere that was envisioned to arouse the visitor through spirited, colorful visuals. The Disco Room (see figure 60) was envisioned to let users to test active movement in a nighttime setting. By featuring crystal ball walls coupled with a reflective floor and ceiling, visitors are immersed into a nightclub setting that encourages them to move and dance. Finally, the Night Sky Room (see figure 61) was designed to simulate the night sky, where users can test the nighttime camera setting. This room is ambient yet vivacious, and captures the essence of experiencing a clear, starry night.

As discussed in the literary analysis, as well as to relate this to the concept of brand perception in the retail setting, Banet-Weiser addressed that "brands become the setting around which individuals weave their own stories, where individuals position themselves as the central character in the narrative of the brand."[167] A unique consumer experience is formed by enabling

[167] Ibid.

users to weave their own stories in the Digital Playspace while interacting with Zenshi products. A second space that allows for this type of consumer experience is the Virtual Reality Zone. As shown in figures 63-65, there are two dedicated areas in The Power Plant for virtual reality – one on the north wall, and one on the south. They were placed adjacent to the Digital Playspace on opposite sides in an effort to enhance and expand on the entertainment experience. The idea behind the use of virtual reality in the Zenshi Zone was to capitalize on the ability to transport consumers to a new dimension – one that is made possible by Zenshi. Wireless Zenshi headsets are provided for users, while projectors display a destination or theme that the virtual reality experience will offer. Each zone is designed for a capacity of five people, which brings an atmosphere of exclusiveness and prestige to the experience.

As discussed earlier in this document, the abovementioned spaces can be attributed to Moor's emphasis on the importance of importance of utilizing the spatial and experiential dimensions of a brand to reach consumers.[168] With the Digital Playspace and the Virtual Reality Zones being heavily rooted in entertainment, these spaces can be attributed to what Moor describes as the "socialization" of experience and memory – one which can be considered a "spatialization" – a feeling of "I wish I was *there*".[169] Within the Zenshi Zone, these spaces in particular add to the excitement and heightening of the retail experience.

As Pallasmaa notes, space is a combination of remembering and imagining places – it is the intertwining of these that enlightens our understanding of space.[170] The overarching goal of the Zenshi Zone was to design a captivating, immersive retail experience that is better suited towards the needs and desires of twenty-first century consumers. The final design outcome not

[168] Liz Moor (2003), "Branded Spaces: The scope of new marketing," *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 3 (March), 39-60.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Whitehead, Jean. *Creating interior atmosphere: mise en scène and interior design*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2017. Ebook edition.

only addresses the several concepts previously discussed, but also aims to reinterpret how consumers relate to brands and retail space. By designing such experiences that incite unique memories and imagination, Zenshi is one step closer to differentiating the brand, establishing consumer relationships, and redefining what the retail experience entails.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

The Zenshi Zone, as presented in the preceding pages, is designed to be characteristic of the Zenshi brand. The design language was established as a representation of Zenshi, whether it is through the understated minimalism of the design components or the refined nature of the materiality. As this is a project intended for temporary insertion, simplicity was at the heart of the design intention. This simplicity also allows for the dynamic experiences within the Zenshi Zone to shine, and allows distinct users to form their own unique experience within space. Therefore, each design decision – lighting, materials, sound, and furnishing – was done to ensure consistency and harmony between the brand experience and the interior atmosphere, as discussed in the literary analysis.

The lighting of the Zenshi Zone is characterized primarily by linear LED strip lighting. The sleek, sophisticated nature of this cool white lighting is a consistent element not only in the ceiling lighting, but also in many of the key spaces as a wall or panel element. Overhead track lighting was installed in existing lighting tracks, and varies n color temperature depending on the space. For example, when Zenshi Live takes on a live performance act, the track lighting colours can be adjusted accordingly. However, for the most part, cool white lighting is characteristic of all lighting elements within the Zenshi Zone. It embodies the cutting-edge personality of the brand, while remaining clean and elegant.

Material selections, displayed in detail in Appendix A, are critical to successfully conveying the Zenshi brand to consumers. Primary brand materials include FENIX NTM Nero Ingo, a smart nanotechnological material that is both bold and durable. It employs innovative technology to be an extremely matte, anti-fingerprint surface that can be easily repaired through the use of heat. Its resistance to scratches, abrasion, dry heat, and solvents makes it an excellent choice for modules that will be constantly transported and relocated. Moreover, it is silky smooth to the touch – a significant factor when considering the senses in design. In many of the product modules, copper metal accents, white oak panels, and additional LED strip lighting come together to characterize the Zenshi brand materials. Certain materials, such as the reflective mirror surfaces, were used to further the brand identity by placing the user at the forefront of a particular experience. Ultimately, the intention was to select a set of materials that would be unique to Zenshi and the Zenshi Zone experience, thus distinguishing it from other technology and electronics brands globally.

With each material selection, careful consideration was placed upon signifying the brand and creating relationships with the brand identity and persona. For example, the sleekness of the main brand material, FENIX NTM, is representative of the cutting-edge and refined nature of the brand. It is also an exceptional material in terms of innovation and technology, which is characteristic of the Zenshi brand mission. Copper was chosen as an accent to contrast the black nature of the brand, but also to give Zenshi an edge. Copper is not commonly used by brands in the technology industry, so it serves to differentiate and surprise consumers – once again, qualities that are illustrative of the Zenshi brand. Other material selections, such as the reflective and kinetic sensory surfaces, express the brand's vision to put the consumer at the forefront of the product and experience. By allowing users to see themselves interacting with the space, and

providing finishes that react to users movement, Zenshi is showing consumers what they are all about – that being, that the brand is responsive and its products are centered around innovation and evolving consumer needs. By providing the latest and greatest in materiality, Zenshi ensures to establish themselves as a leader in the industry, thus setting the bar high in the fields of design, quality, and experience.

In summary, the most important consideration of the design elements of the Zenshi Zone was to ensure the aesthetics allowed for diverse, positive experiences within the space. Hence, it was critical to design each space and component to ensure it was a balanced combination of minimalism and dynamism. Since the Zenshi Zone is intended to exemplify qualities of a theatrical stage set by use of *mise-en-scène*, it was important to not design with only a single consumer type or specific experience in mind. The importance of the consumer co-creation of brand identity and narrative meant each space had to make careful use of materiality and forms to enhance the experience of all users that it comes into contact with. In addition, since the space is intended for brand introduction, a second significant consideration was to design each spatial experience to stimulate certain senses for lasting impressions. Through the creation of certain interior atmospheres and use of sensory technologies, such as the Kinetic Sensory Tunnel, the Virtual Reality Zones, and the Zenshi Live sensory flooring, consumers could deepen their connection to both their spatial experience and the Zenshi brand. Consequently, simplicity in design was key in avoiding overstimulation of the senses, which could result in disorientation, confusion, irritability, and a lack of constructive brand connection.

CONCLUSION

The design of the Zenshi Zone synthesized the site conditions discussed in the site analysis, the theories and concepts presented in the literary analysis, and the lessons and inspirations from the precedent analysis that were examined in the preceding chapters. Aside from presenting the design, this chapter considered the design from several perspectives, including: different consumer profiles, the 3 E's of Experience, the kit-of-parts concept, and ultimately the Zenshi brand and identity. Each design decision was informed by the previous notions and themes explored in the document, as well as the programming and spatial requirements that were required to successfully insert the Zenshi Zone into The Power Plant site.

With the design of the Zenshi Zone, the ultimate goal was to redefine what retail meant to the consumers of today. The intention was to not only create an alternative, temporary retail space, but to design something that would truly engage and excite people in a novel manner. The design process began with an investigation into the kinds of experiences that consumers crave, which led into instilling these desires into interior spatial experiences. The spontaneous nature of the Zenshi Zone is critical, as this is what differentiates it from traditional retail environments.

In summary, the Zenshi Zone was designed to be dynamic, bold, and different – an experience-based retail environment that would create immersive, memorable impressions on consumers. Furthermore, aside from strengthening the connection between the brand and consumer, it becomes a destination for consumers to connect with one another to establish the Zenshi community. In a generation where experiences and memories are what sells, the Zenshi Zone was designed to invite consumers of all genders, ages, and needs to reignite the spark of attraction, anticipation, and fascination that retail spaces may have lost in the twenty-first century.

CONCLUSION

The inspiration for this practicum project derived from my own experiences and studies, as well as the current state of the retail industry. When considering built environments, physical retail spaces in particular has undergone a massive shift in recent years with the rise of e-commerce, technology, and the ease and accessibility of online shopping.[171] The reality is that traditional, physical retail environments have begun to diminish, while online retailing has risen exponentially. I reflected on my own shopping needs and behaviours, and realized that the only factor that compelled me to visit a physical retail store would be to connect with a brand and to experience something remarkable. However, I could not recollect the last time that had occurred.

By addressing my own experiences and the research conducted throughout this project, I found that consumers currently seek the extraordinary, craving to be surprised and thrilled – and retail environments are no exception. Therefore, I came to understand that physical retail spaces face a serious problem unless they are revitalized to provide consumers with unique experiences that cannot be replicated in the online marketplace. I considered how this could be solved, and realized that the practice of interior design could stand as an influential tool to revive and redefine contemporary retail environments. I decided to concentrate this project on the design proposal of a temporary, alternative retail environment that would reignite the desire of physical shopping by focusing profoundly on the consumer experience.

The proposed design of the Zenshi Zone is the result of an interdisciplinary approach to the practice of interior design. At this time, it is worth revisiting the research questions that were established at the start of this project. They are as follows:

[171] Moore, Melissa, and Robert S. Moore. *New meanings for marketing in a new millennium*, proceedings of the 2001 Academy of Marketing Science (AMS) Annual Conference; San Diego, California, May 30 - June 2, 2001. Cham: Springer, 2015.

1. *How can a traditional brick and mortar retail environment be reinterpreted and designed to inform and sell users through immersive brand experiences rather than solely products and services?*

The notion of reimagining physical retail spaces was at the forefront of this practicum project. This project investigated how shopping behaviours and consumer needs have shifted as a result of the experience economy and online shopping, and what is required to keep retail spaces thriving. By examining various consumer types and establishing the 3 E's of Experience, the design proposal of the Zenshi Zone was deep-rooted in brand and consumer experience.

The reinterpretation and design of this alternative brick and mortar environment came from various ideas. Firstly, it removed the act of physical purchase behaviour so that the brand and its consumers could concentrate solely on establishing a relationship, connecting them emotionally. In doing so, the Zenshi Zone ensures to deliver what the online retail environment cannot. Secondly, the intention of this project was to synergize the online and offline retail environments. The Zenshi Zone was designed as an experience-based retail model envisioned to generate memorable, lasting impressions that will transpire to an online purchase after the visit. In this way, any misguided overlap is avoided between online and offline channels, and the brand can focus the appropriate efforts in each environment. Finally, the experience-based nature of the Zenshi Zone was the foundation of the reinterpretation of physical retail space – by designing this temporary, *mise-en-scène* environment, the Zenshi Zone aims to meet consumer desires for spontaneity, surprise, and excitement.

2. *How can interdisciplinary theory, particularly in the fields of brand experience, interior atmospheres, and adaptive reuse in retail design, inform the design of an alternative retail environment?*

The theories, concepts, and strategies related to brand experience, interior atmospheres, and adaptive reuse has been studied in the Literary Analysis, found in Chapter 3. These explorations highlighted various potential ways of enhancing and enriching both brand and user experiences in the physical retail environment. In addition, this investigation emphasized the importance of designing interior atmospheres that accurately correlate to brand identity, thus producing the intended consumer connections and outcomes. Ultimately, a retail environment must be conducive to establishing positive relationships, and therefore the atmosphere of each space was designed to stimulate the desired emotions, senses, and reactions of the user.

Study into the strategies of adaptive reuse, namely insertion and installation, heavily informed the design application. Since the design proposal is intended to be temporarily inserted into historical landmark buildings, a thorough understanding of the theory and methods of how this is done correctly was paramount to this project.

3. *How can theory and research of these concepts inform the techniques used to design an experience-based retail model, centered around branded elements that are effective, responsive, and adaptable?*

With the Zenshi Zone intended as a temporary insertion by means of adaptive reuse, a kit-of-parts technique was used when designing the elements and components that comprise the design. The primary furnishing, fixtures, accessories, and equipment (as discussed in Chapter 5) were designed to be easily transportable and adaptable to different sites globally. Moreover, certain elements – such as the Zenshi City – are responsive, location adaptive features designed to be customized based on the city in which the Zenshi Zone is situated. This notion came from the research on brand experience, found in Chapter 3, which provided critical insight into how brands are co-created with consumers. Consequently, the experience-based nature of this retail

model held a strong focus in brand and consumer interaction – each space made use of effective elements that would facilitate unique narratives and communication. The success of the Zenshi Zone elements are essentially reliant on the design's ability to effectively adapt to distinct location contexts, while still remaining consistent with the Zenshi brand.

In this project, research into brand experience and interior atmosphere illustrated that brand identity is more than simply a logo in a retail environment. Rather, it is a combination of environmental attributes that contribute to a consistent design language, evoke certain emotions, and stimulate specific senses. For example, in the Zenshi Zone, this was executed through materiality and lighting selections in each distinct space, rather than the literal use of the Zenshi name and logo. Each design decision made was not only suggestive of the brand, but functioned to enrich the user experience to provide a lasting, distinguished impression.

Since the field of experience-based retail is a more recent typology, there are many possibilities for future research. For example, further investigation into types of consumer experiences and emotions would be beneficial in understanding how to design successful sensory environments. However, research such as this would be beneficial to all design fields, as the notion of experience within space is imperative to any interior design project.

Through completion of the site, literary, and precedent analysis studies, this practicum project concludes with the Zenshi Zone design proposal – a temporary, location adaptive, and experience-based retail model. Aside from being an alternative retail space to introduce the Zenshi brand, this design proposal was intended to demonstrate the importance of reinterpreting the physical retail environment. Above all, this practicum project was conducted with the vision of reimagining what retail can be in the future, and to make known the influence that interior design practice can have in redefining retail.

APPENDIX A: DESIGN

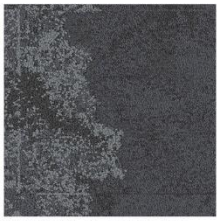
MATERIAL SELECTION

OCTOLUX METAL
BRUSHED COPPER

FENIX NTM
NERO INGO

WHITE OAK PANELS

INTERFACE CARPET
HUMAN NATURE - NICKEL



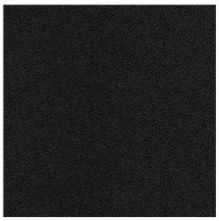
INTERFACE CARPET
BLACK SEA

CHARCOAL GREY MIRROR

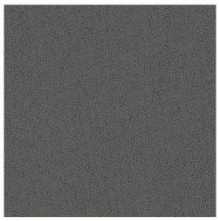
MAHARAM UPHOLSTERY
SMALL DOT BY CHARLES AND RAY EAMES - 006

MAHARAM LEATHER
STARK - BLACKOUT

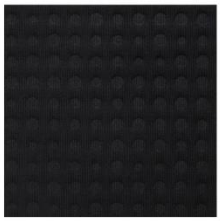
MAHARAM LEATHER
STARK - FROST



GUILFORD OF MAINE ACOUSTIC
OPEN HOUSE - ONYX



GUILFORD OF MAINE ACOUSTIC
OPEN HOUSE - ASTEROID



KVADRAT UPHOLSTERY
HIGHFIELD - 191

FINISHED CONCRETE
EXISTING FLOORING

STUDIO WHITE PAINTED GWB
EXISTING FIELD WALL FINISH

ACCENT GREENWALL

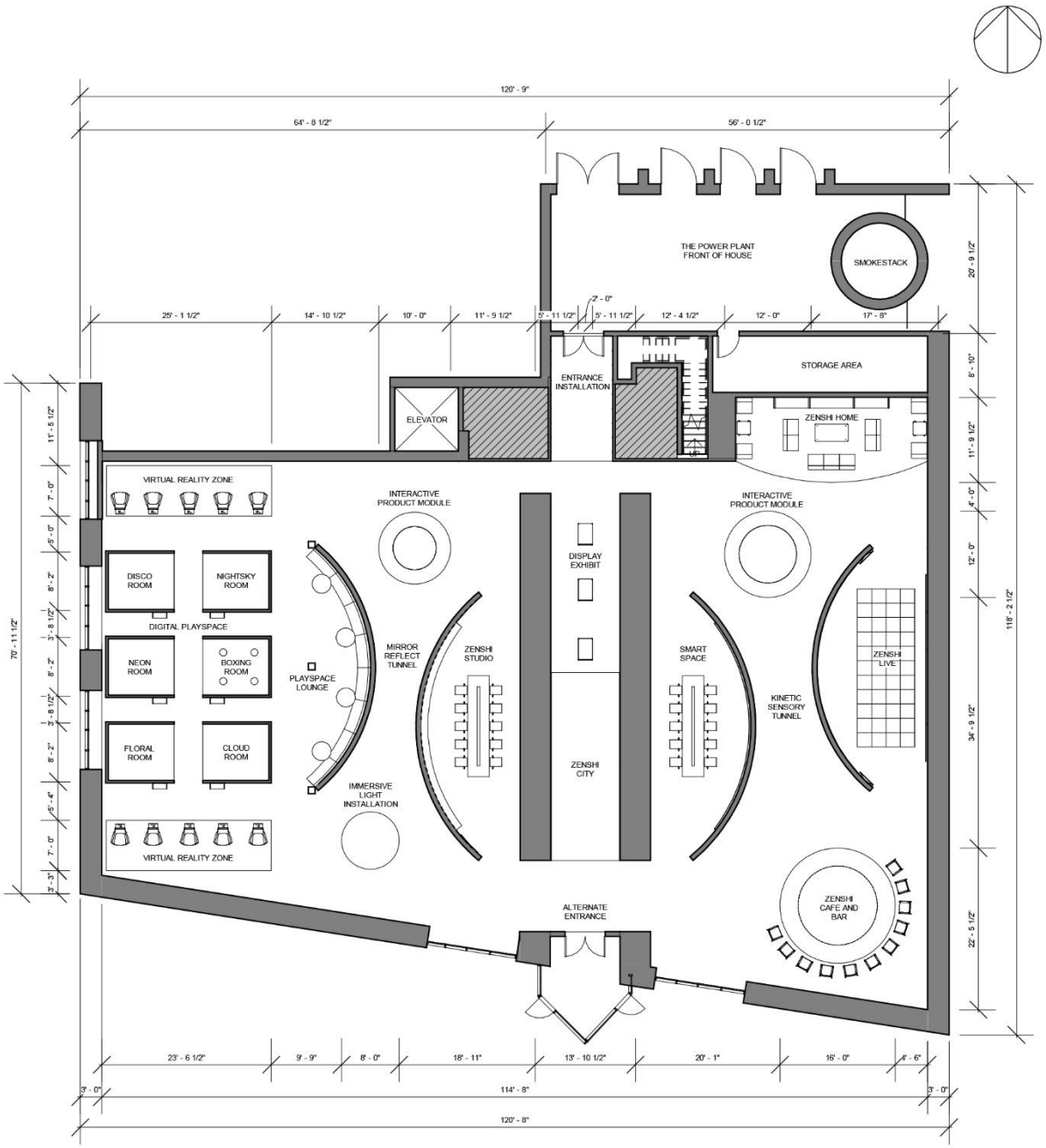
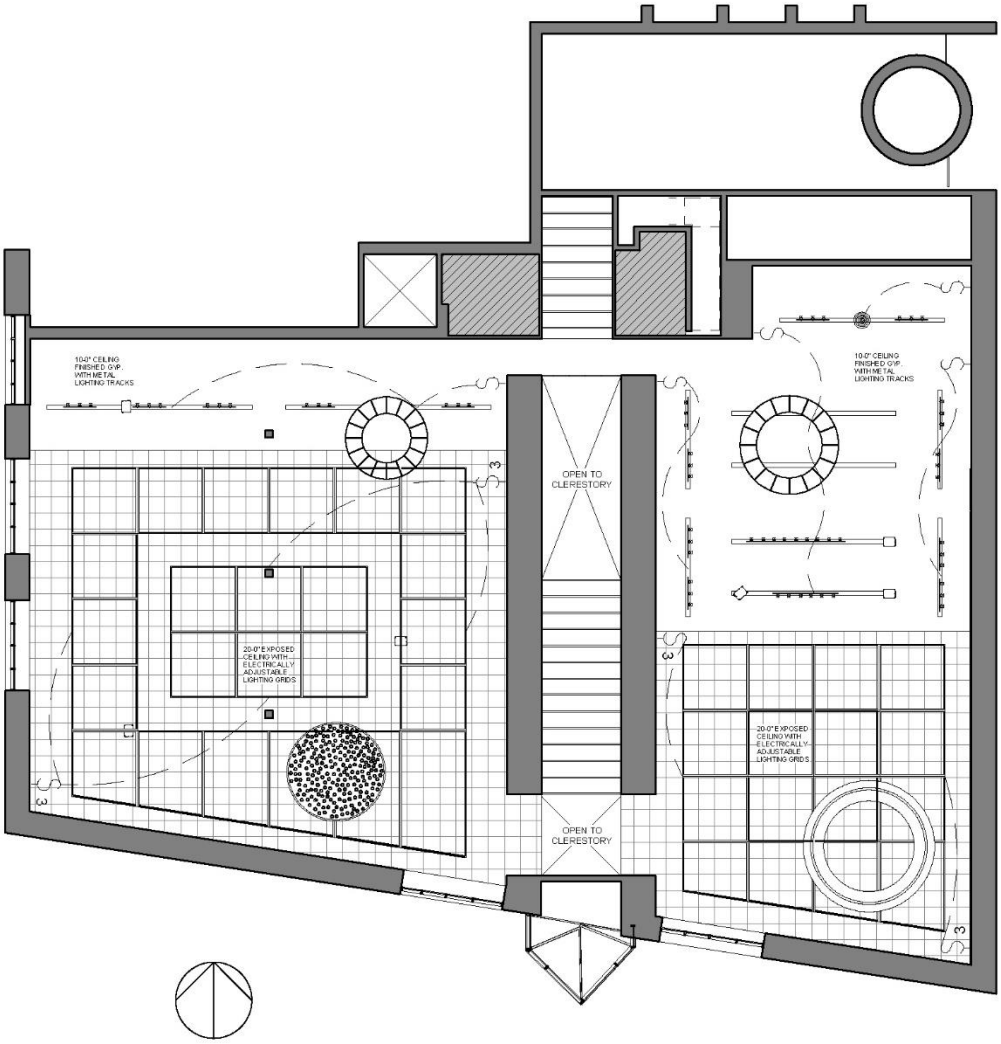


Figure 73: The Power Plant Main Floor Plan. Scale 1” = 20’-0”.



LIGHT FIXTURE LEGEND	
	TRACK LIGHTING INSTALLED IN EXISTING CEILING TRACKS
	LED STRIP LIGHTING INSTALLED IN EXISTING ELECTRICALLY ADJUSTABLE LIGHTING GRID
	CAFE LIGHT FIXTURE SUSPENDED FROM EXISTING ELECTRICALLY ADJUSTABLE LIGHTING GRID
	INTERACTIVE PRODUCT MODULE LIGHT FIXTURE SUSPENDED FROM EXISTING ELECTRICALLY ADJUSTABLE LIGHTING GRID
	ZENSHI HOME ACCENT CHANDELIER LIGHT SUSPENDED FROM EXISTING ELECTRICALLY ADJUSTABLE LIGHTING GRID
	IMMERSIVE LIGHT INSTALLATION SUSPENDED FROM EXISTING ELECTRICALLY ADJUSTABLE LIGHTING GRID
	PROJECTOR SUSPENDED FROM EXISTING ELECTRICALLY ADJUSTABLE LIGHTING GRID
	LED STRIP LIGHTS MOUNTED ON MIRROR SUSPENDED FROM EXISTING CEILING

Figure 74: The Power Plant Main Level Lighting Plan. Shows existing ceiling, lighting grid and tracks. Scale: 1” = 20’-0”.

Figure 75: North-South Building Section. Scale: 1/16” = 1’-0”.

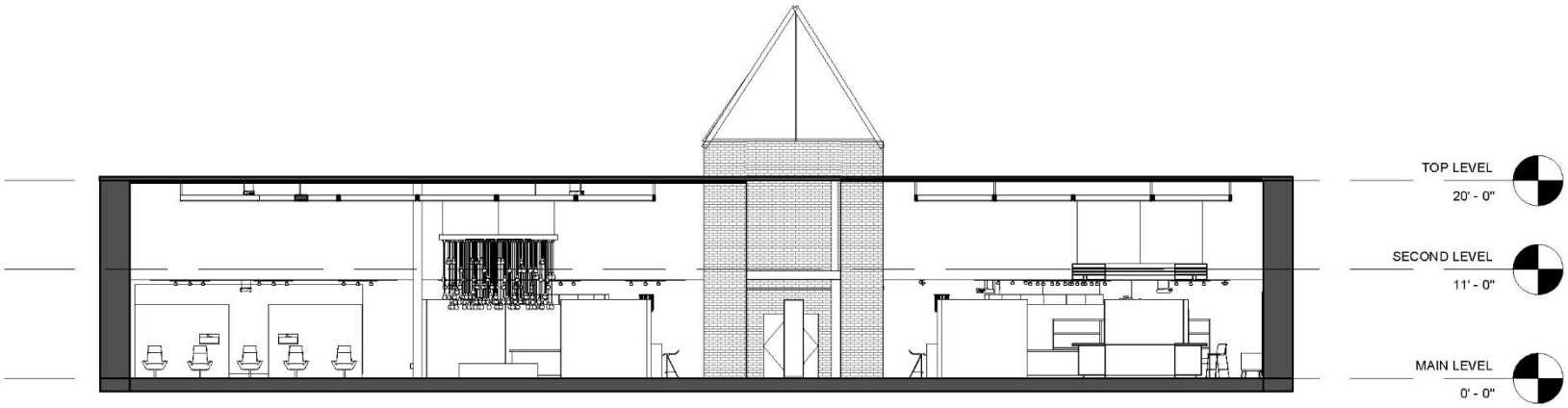


Figure 76: West-East Building Section. Scale: 1/16” = 1’-0”.

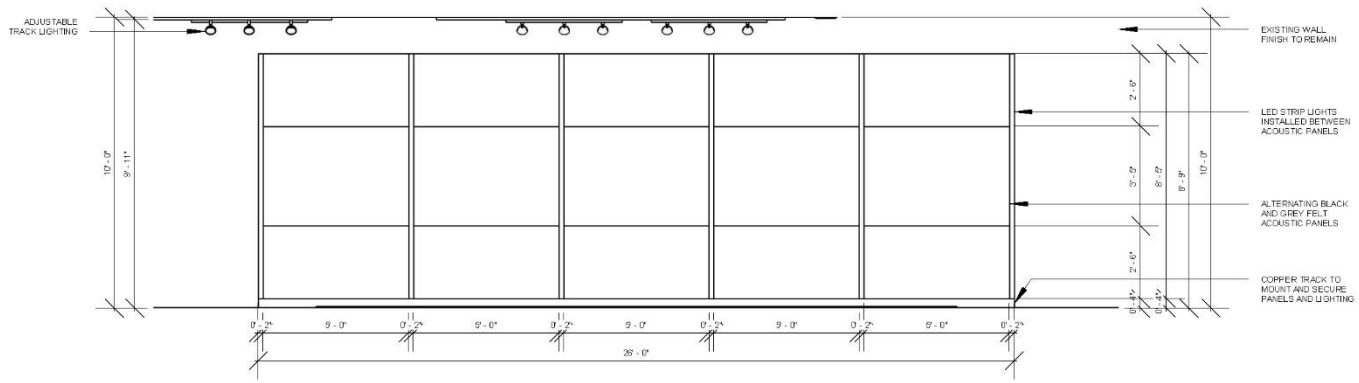


Figure 77: Zenshi Live Acoustic Performance Panel Elevation. Scale: 3/16” = 1’-0”.

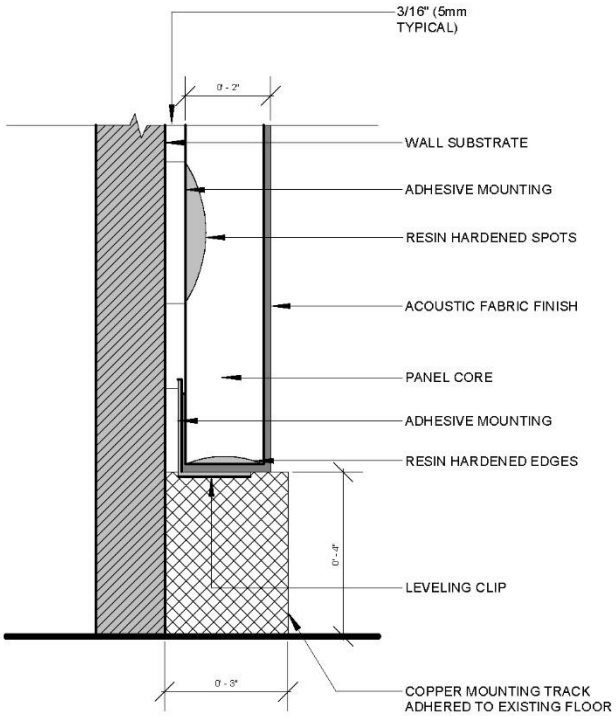


Figure 78: Acoustic panel mount detail. Scale: 1 ½” = 1’-0”.

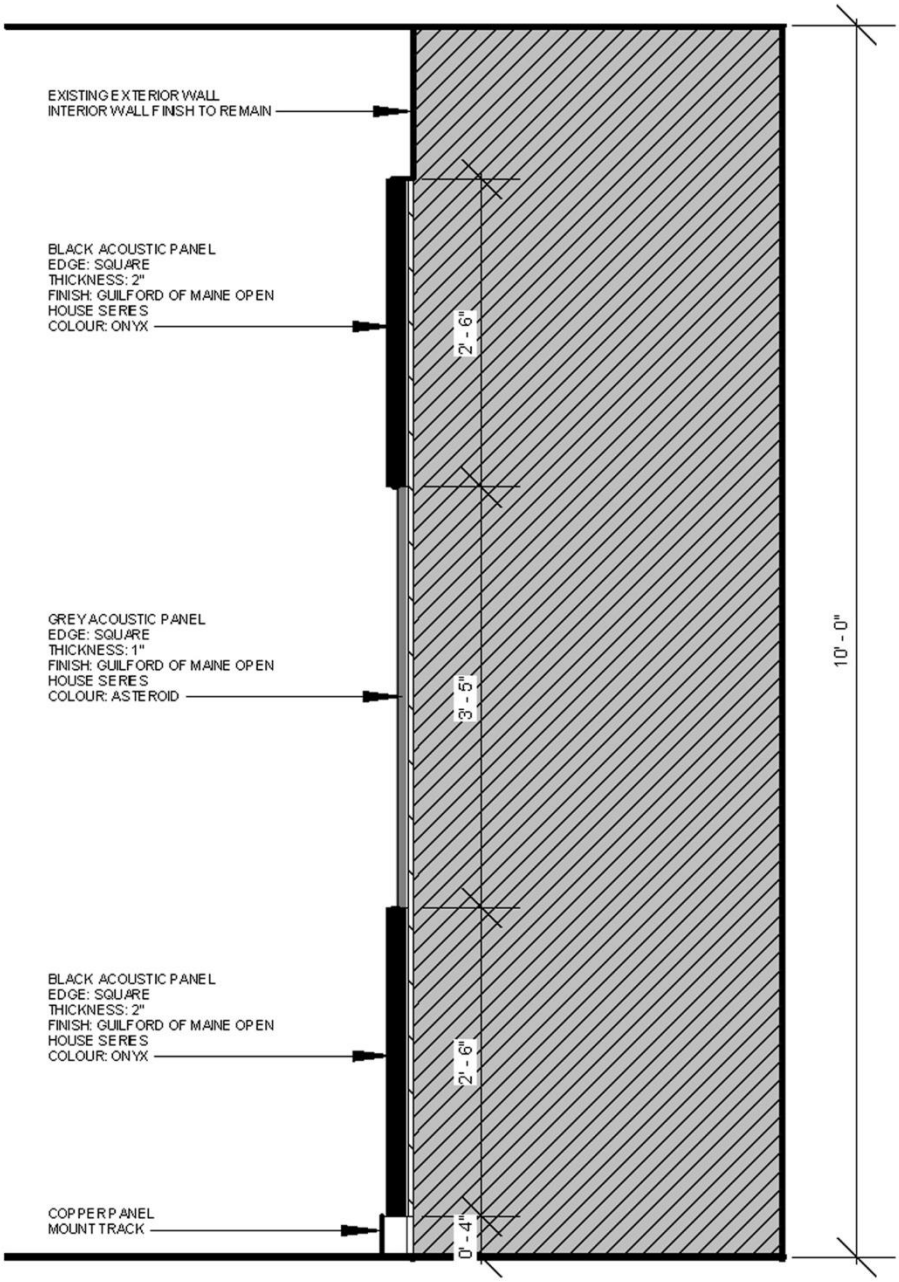


Figure 79: Acoustic panel section. Scale: 3/4 = 1'-0".

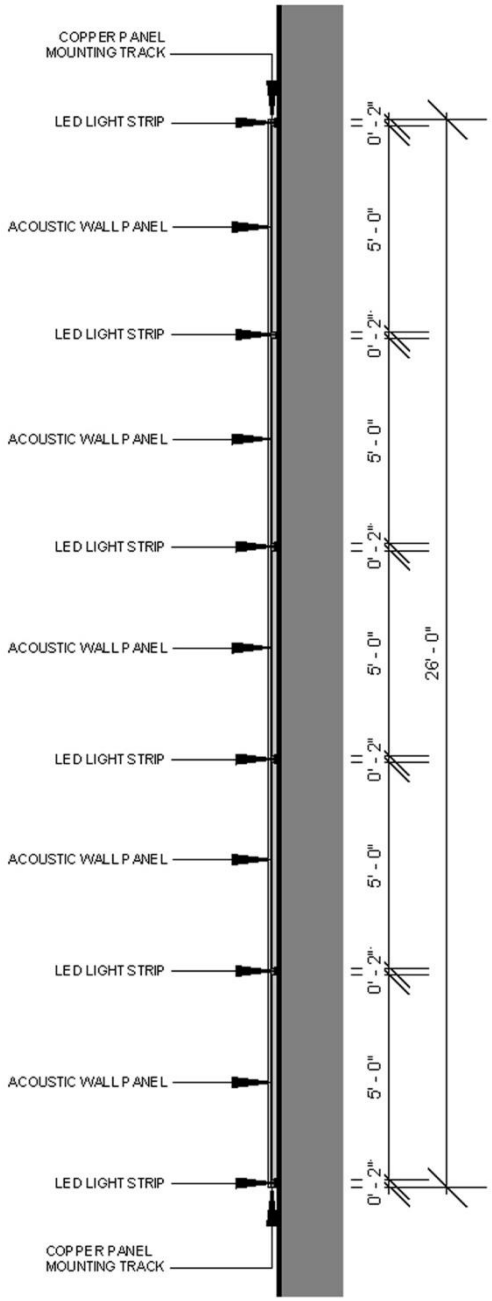


Figure 80: Plan view of acoustic panel. Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0".

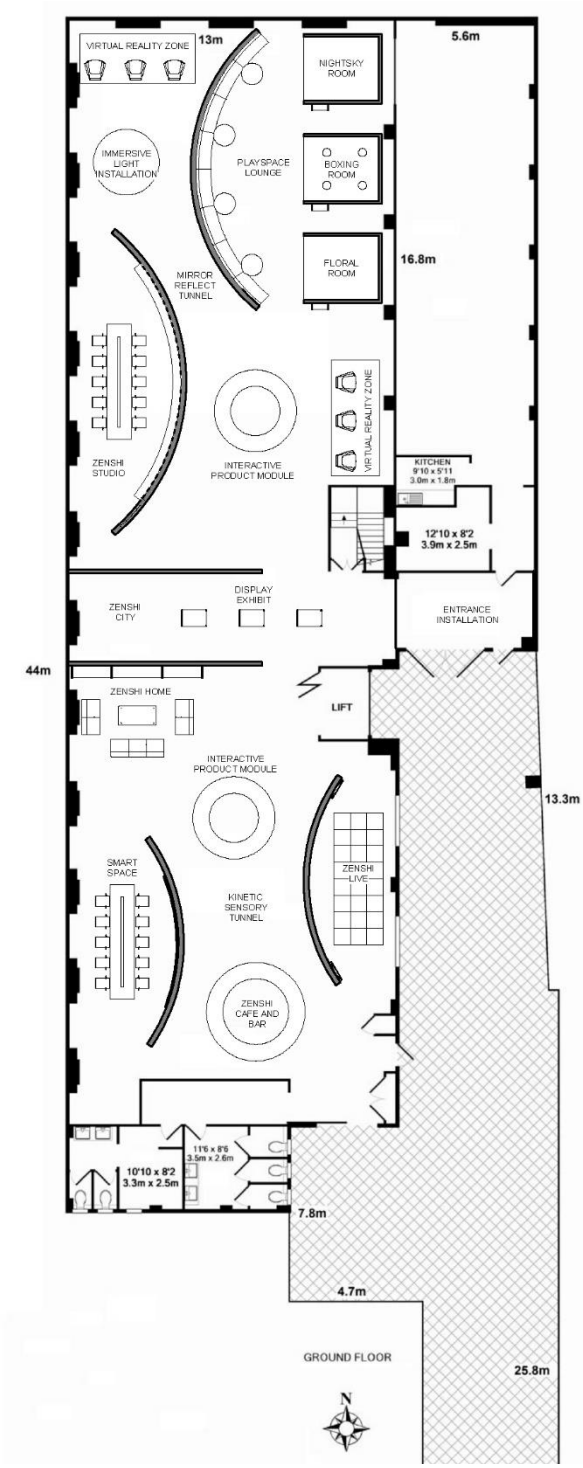


Figure 81: This figure depicts a possible future reconfiguration at The Yard Shoreditch, located in London, United Kingdom. This site meets the criteria for insertion, such as characteristics of site location, plan layout, and existing lighting grid. This space was also chosen to illustrate the adaptability of the Zenshi Zone design model, as this building has a footprint of approx. 6000 sq. ft. (The Power Plant main level is approx. 8500 sq. ft.). Certain elements, such as the panels which host the Smart Space and Zenshi Live have been scaled down, and café seating was removed to allow for more standing space. The Digital Playspace was downsized to host 3 rooms rather than 6 (rooms selected on the basis of the 3 that are most diverse from one another), and the Virtual Reality Zones decreased to 3 seats from 5. This proposed plan demonstrates the model's ability to be reconfigured at a different site while remaining consistent with design programming and language. In addition, it illustrates the flexibility and modularity of the components that are intended to be transported to various sites internationally. Scale: 1" = 20'-0".

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“Design is a tool that allows us to reach out and inspire,

to touch others and help make lives magic and wonderful.”

- Marcel Wanders