

**THE PUBLIC STUDIO FOR EPHEMERAL ARTS:  
AN ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE WINNIPEG  
METROPOLITAN THEATRE**

by

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
The University of Manitoba**

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

**MASTER OF INTERIOR DESIGN**

**Department of Interior Design**

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**Winnipeg**

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# Abstract

As a master's practicum of interior design, this project is concerned with the role of design in shaping mass and individual identity. This indirect relationship is demonstrated in the spatial qualities of spaces that are specifically designed for the display of cultural commodities. These commodities, as components of the Culture Industry, effectively define a communal identity for the individuals. The Winnipeg Metropolitan Theatre, an abandoned movie house belonging to the golden days of the silver screen located in downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba, is chosen as the site of this practicum. This Practicum is interested in defining new spatial relationships and functions; by using a different architectural language, the passive mass is replaced by the active individual, diverse functions are experienced within the same building, and the contrasting separation between the art object and the subject, or the spectator and the spectacle are removed. In order for these goals to be achieved, a new function has been defined. Instead of a cultural supermarket that displays and sells commodities in remote production plants, this new facility provides the opportunity for individuals to experience the creative and contemplative process of art production. The public studio for ephemeral arts is open to the whole society for being involved in the artistic process without having any durable product, which is vulnerable to becoming a commodity. This newly defined function rises from studying the new roles of art as a commodity that even undermines the separation of high art and low art and consequently, neutralizes the rebellious nature of the latter.

By using a qualitative research method, this practicum studies the theoretical aspects of modern mass identity, and the project of modernity as a whole. However being an interior design project, it heavily relies on the ideas of a selected number of theorists, mainly from the Frankfurt school, for building the theoretical foundation of the design. The new design is the result of questioning the existing space's spatial hierarchy, the new function's spatial requirements, and a general approach toward the adaptive reuse of an existing building.

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# 1 Chapter I: Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

Mass culture is a vital instrument for the dissolution and reduction of the individual's identity into mass identity. It is the focal concern of this Master of Interior Design practicum at the University of Manitoba and is studied, challenged and criticized throughout. The new role of art and cultural commodities in the end shape the Culture Industry that can be potentially used for prescribing a mutual identity for individuals. Among the branches of the Culture Industry, cinema has been chosen for a closer study. However, in this practicum there is no general or specific judgment of cinema and the film industry. Rather, in this project the goal is the decentralization of cultural production and the preference of artistic creativity over the consumption of ready made commodities. Since interior design is the subject, the relationship between mass and individual identity and design is explored.

Therefore, this practicum originates from the intersection of a few major concerns. Among them, in order to challenge the commoditization of art, I define a new architectural function that would question the preference of end product over the creative process. Also, a close study of an existing interior space, the Winnipeg Metropolitan Theater in downtown Winnipeg, Manitoba, shapes another part of this project that through its architectural language dictates a collective identity for the individuals. Finally, the project is defined by a

combination of the relationship between spatial experience with mass identity, and the new creative function. A key question in this practicum is the role of design in shaping collective and individual identity and exploring its limits and potentials.

## **1.2 Primary Concerns**

The study of mass identity has been the starting point of the process that led to this project. In fact, the individual's identity and the ways of reaffirming it as opposed to that of the masses, is the primary concern of this practicum. However, the difference between that and individualism which is not necessarily the counterpart to mass identity especially in today's capitalist societies should be emphasized.

As a practicum of interior design, this document is primarily concerned with the relationship between design and identity; how interior design effects and even shapes mass identity and how at the same time it is affected by that. Finally, the goal is to identify a solution through which design challenges mass identity and reaffirms individual identity. In order to examine that, there was a need to find a specific facility that has the characteristics of shaping mass identity. Among them, media are clear examples of the tools that result in the dissolution and reduction of the individual's identity into that of the masses.



### 1.3 A Site for Mass Culture

Based on these concerns, I have chosen a historic theatre in downtown Winnipeg for an adaptive re-use into a public studio for ephemeral arts<sup>1</sup>. This facility has not been chosen merely for its previous function that is ironically a significant example of a site in which mass culture commodities are consumed, but more importantly, because of the architectural qualities of the space. These qualities that have been examined in the site analysis are to be challenged and altered in the proposed design in order to invert one's spatial experience of this former theatre, and simultaneously resolve the design issues that the new facility is concerned with.

However, a general prejudgment about all cinematic products is neither desired for this practicum nor possible due to their diversity. These products consist of a wide range from propaganda to documentaries that raise public awareness about different issues. Because of that and the primary concern of my practicum project that is the role of design in shaping mass identity, the focus of my study is the architectural typology of theatres and movie houses.

The relationship between design and identity in general should be explained further. A number of design aspects are related bilaterally to identity. For instance architectural function is a key aspect to people's experience that either determines or undermines their collective and personal identity. In our

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<sup>1</sup> Ephemeral arts are defined as: art that disappears over time, where the disappearance or the decay of the work is intrinsic to how the work communicates with its audience. Mary O'Neill, "Ephemeral Art: The Art of Being Lost", in *Emotion, Place and Culture*, ed. Mick Smith, Joyce Davidson, Laura Cameron and Liz Bondi, 149-162 (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 149

example, the existing theatre is functionally promoting the display of cultural commodities that play a significant role in defining mass culture. The existing space is not designed for different simultaneous experiences and activities, imposing a restricted act on all the individuals. Also a number of spatial characters encourage one restricted spatial experience: the fixed orientation of all seats toward the screen and the sharp distinction of the spectacle and spectator, being a major aspect of the Culture Industry are among the effects of theatre design on identity. The new design is therefore different in a few ways in order to resolve this: a multifunctional space with high flexibility enhances different spatial and functional experiences of the space by the individual. By proposing a new design that draws attention to the old situation, while defining new spaces that are connected to each other with a non-linear circulation, a new spatial character and experience is created that provides diverse opportunities for individuals.

Since these structures have been designed specifically for the projection and display of movies, their design is a symbol of spaces that promote mass identity, through their strong spatial orientation. The sharp distinction of the spectacle and the spectator as well as some small hints such as the two balconies that are designed for the placement of prestigious spectators suggest a hierarchical society. In a theatre, because of its spatial homogeneity, there is no room for different activities for the mass, let alone the individual. A monotonous dark space with a clear unilateral orientation toward the screen being clearly separated from the audience leads spectators to silently view the spectacle that

is itself produced in a distant location. This is a simultaneous experience of a passive mass, not only of the cultural product but also of the space. An active spatial experience of the individual, as well as the possibility of its active participation in artistic creativity, is the challenge of this practicum.<sup>2</sup>

The evolution of art from a sacred phenomenon into a consumable product in Walter Benjamin's "Age of Mechanical Reproduction"<sup>3</sup>, has made the emergence of "culture supermarkets"<sup>4</sup> possible. This phrase indicates the new definition of art as a commodity and, at the same time suggests the shaping of a monopoly and centralization in its production. Cinema, as an art and industry that was born in the twentieth century, is an example of these media. Since a considerable amount of financial ability is needed for making a film, the centralization of its production in the hands of a few who are capable of providing the financial support seems inevitable. In the end, these products with a significant amount of exchange value are delivered for the consumption of the society. Here, a sharp distinction between production and consumption is made.

One major question this practicum faces is how we could define a new function which has two specific characteristics; firstly, the new function should differ from the current function in three ways:

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<sup>2</sup> This idea originates from Giuliana Bruno's book, *Public Intimacy, Architecture and the Visual Arts*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007)

<sup>3</sup> Based on an essay by Walter Benjamin. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" *Marxists Internet Archive*, <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm> (accessed 31 August 2009)

<sup>4</sup> S. Hall, D. Held & T. McGrew, *Modernity and its Futures*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 303

1. It should promote and encourage the participation of the individual and provide opportunities for different experiences for each person.
2. It should question the separation of consumer and producer by challenging the separation and definition of the subject and object.
3. It should eliminate the possibility of producing a “commodity”. In this way the concept of passive consumption is made meaningless.

Based on these requirements, the answer should be an artistic activity such as ephemeral art that does not necessarily require the cooperation of all, and does not have a clear and obvious subject.

The second characteristic of the new function should be the prevention of any durable and final product being produced, since the main concern is the creative process rather than the end product. These concerns led to the selection of ephemeral arts as the new activity that replaced the cinema.

#### **1.4 A New Function Defined**

Ephemeral art explores all the objectives mentioned above. Since by its very definition it does not have a durable product, it can never become an exchangeable commodity. Also, because of the inevitable effect of time on it, the amount and limits of the initial creator on it are under question, therefore the artwork is no longer an object solely created by a subject. However, since ephemerality is the characteristic of a wide range of arts, there should be a more specific definition of those that are proposed for creation and display in this

space. In this practicum, a number of prominent artists who have been working in this field are examined as case studies, and the spaces of this practicum project are designed to accommodate their creative processes. Some artists, who have been active in the field of ephemeral arts, are also renowned for their installation art. By studying the artworks of artists who are known for their ephemeral artworks, it becomes clear that many of these artists do not recognize a strict border between the two. Also, because ephemeral arts and installation art are common in one point that is most important in this practicum, the interior space will be designed for the accommodation of the latter as well. This common point is the lack of any long lasting product in either art.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, a wide range of ephemeral artists insist on working in outdoor spaces, using natural materials, that are vulnerable to constant change by their nature<sup>6</sup>. Therefore, one of the aspects of this new facility is to provide an outdoor environment in addition to the interior space of the theatre. This issue will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

In addition to providing space for the physical creation and exhibition of ephemeral arts, their virtual display also plays a key role in design for two reasons. Firstly, since ephemeral arts are meaningful in their own contexts due to their close relationship with the environment, and because of the natural materials used in them many artists are interested in working in outdoor spaces.

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<sup>5</sup> This characteristic is based on the definition of ephemeral arts from the following essay: Mary O'Neill, "Ephemeral Art: The Art of Being Lost", in *Emotion, Place and Culture*, ed. Mick Smith, Joyce Davidson, Laura Cameron and Liz Bondi, 149-162 (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 149

<sup>6</sup> A clear example is Andy Goldsworthy, whose work is explained in this documentary: *Rivers and Tides, Andy Goldsworthy Working with Time*, prod. Annedore v. Donop, 2005, DVD

In this way, they have easy access to natural materials and are also inspired by their surroundings. Therefore, displaying those arts in an indoor space would either remove its meaning at the best or could simply be impossible. After all, this theater, like all other architectural objects, is a human-made and artificial space disconnected from the nature. In order to avoid the de-contextualization of some forms of ephemeral arts that would undermine their meaning, their virtual display would be a better solution. By providing projection rooms and collecting an archive of virtual records of ephemeral arts, this goal is accomplished.

Also, as homage to the building's previous function, the virtual or indirect display of ephemeral arts links the new function to the former. By showing films and photographs, some common ways that artists have used to record their works, this objective is achieved. However, it should be noticed that recording ephemeral arts by virtual media, contradicts the primary concern of the founders of this art, because it potentially produces a commodity. In the proposed function, the archived material are only lent to those interested, without generating revenue for the facility. This partially resolves the commoditization of artworks including virtual recordings.

This practicum is not concerned with introducing a new typology of theatre design. Rather, the objective is studying the architectural aspects of a theatre or movie house that symbolically represent the notions of mass culture and alter the space so that the new function acts in the opposite way and enhances the participation of the individual in artistic creativity. The new function, a "public studio for ephemeral arts", has been selected not because of its relationship with

cinema, but on the contrary because of its specific qualities that promote a new definition of art, considering an active participation of the individual. The organization will be run by artists who are acknowledged in this field and the planning and design of areas such as management and administration as well as residential suites for visiting artists is considered.

## **1.5 Research Methods**

The research methods that inform this document include a number of subjects that are explained briefly here: site and building analysis, precedents and case studies review, literary and design investigation.

1. Site and building analysis: The existing building is studied and analyzed to examine the current potentials and inform the design by those potentials, but it is primarily studied in order to explore its spatial qualities that lead to the projection of a collective identity to the individuals. Here the subjective interest and priority of the designer is clear in emphasizing and magnifying specific spatial characters; instead of an all-inclusive study of every aspect of the building, the spatial hierarchies, the orientation, and separation of spectacle and spectator are discussed in more depth. Besides the existing building, the surrounding neighborhood is also studied briefly to ensure the adaptation of the new function.

2. Precedent review: Other subjects studied include similar examples of buildings and facilities that are close to the new design in terms of architectural

aspects, function or even organization. A renowned counter-example, the Pompidou Centre is also considered to compare it with the proposed design.

3. Case studies: Examples of artworks by established artists in the field of ephemeral arts or installation art are studied in order to ensure the new spaces are designed for the accommodation of these artists' creative process.

4. Literary investigation: The ideas that shape the theoretical mindset which leads to this prioritization primarily originate from the Frankfurt School or have close relationship with its members. Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Marshal Berman, and Jean Baudrillard are among the theorists whose ideas about art theory, mass culture and the commoditization of art have informed and shaped this practicum's theoretical basis. These scholars are studied more precisely because of their mutual theoretical concerns with this practicum. By acknowledging the role of the Culture Industry in shaping mass identity, this practicum is offering a new way of resistance to the commoditization of art. The ideas of these theorists are discussed in further detail in the following chapter.

These subjects support this practicum and orient the design. But I should mention the subjectivity of my concerns by using a qualitative research method. This practicum is not interested in optimizing or developing an existing typology of theatres. It also does not accept the founding conceptual principles of the existing interior space. Therefore a quantitative research, which considers a large number of theatres in order to extract objective similarities and seeks to apply them to the new design, is not an appropriate approach. Thus, due to challenging the fundamental spatial characters of the theatre, a qualitative research of similar



and different facilities, whether being theatres or not is more helpful in guiding the design process since the subjective concerns are highlighted.

A subjective approach, however, is not inclusive in studying different aspects of a phenomenon. Rather, it acts as an interpretation by intentionally selecting few areas of study. In this practicum, those areas mentioned earlier have been shaping an interpretation of the existing space, as well as the new function. It is needless to say that other subjective concerns could lead to other literary and design investigations and function.

## 1.6 Site Analysis

The site chosen for this project is the Winnipeg Metropolitan Theatre, located on Donald Street, in downtown Winnipeg. As the eighth largest city of Canada, Winnipeg has a population of approximately 666,000 people, including diverse ethnic groups<sup>7</sup>. The city was originally located at the confluence of Red River and Assiniboine River, a historic site which is today known as the Forks. Winnipeg is positioned almost at the midway of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. This potential was used by earlier settlers to turn the city into “the gateway to the West” by controlling many aspects of transportation, specially the railways<sup>8</sup>. Even though this region was occupied by newcomers from Europe since the seventeenth

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<sup>7</sup> City of Winnipeg, “Population of Winnipeg, *City of Winnipeg*, <http://winnipeg.ca/cao/pdfs/population.pdf> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>8</sup> Alan Artibise, *Winnipeg, a Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914*, (Montreal and London: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1975) 76

century, it did not officially become a city until 1873.<sup>9</sup> Today, Winnipeg is largely known as an urban area with a strategic location for transport across North America.

### **1.6.1 District Land Use**

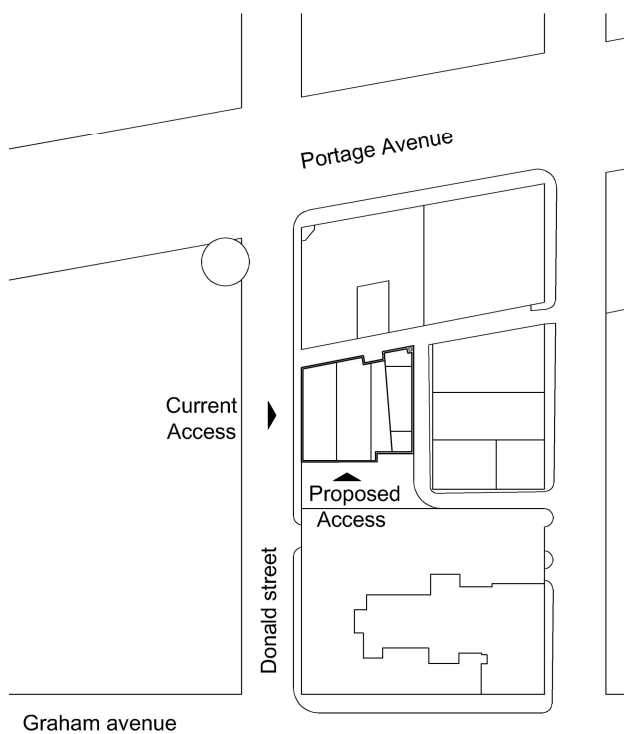
Downtown Winnipeg is close to the Forks historical site. There are several notable character areas as well as historic sites in this area, including Chinatown, the Exchange District, Broadway Street, Central Park, and the Forks itself. Also, a number of significant buildings are located in this area including the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and the Millennium Library, which is close to this practicum's site. The downtown houses over 68000 workers everyday<sup>10</sup>. Public and commercial buildings dominate this district.

The Metropolitan Theatre is located in Donald Street, an active street in downtown. As the following drawings indicate, the current access is from the western façade of the building, opening to Donald Street. However in the proposed design the adjacent southern lot becomes the facility's courtyard and access is provided from there (Fig. 1-1).

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<sup>9</sup> Alan Artibise, *Winnipeg, an Illustrated History*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1977), 20

<sup>10</sup> City of Winnipeg, "Downtown Winnipeg Profile, *City of Winnipeg*  
[http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/planning/pdf\\_folder/dwntwnprofile.pdf](http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/planning/pdf_folder/dwntwnprofile.pdf) (accessed 29 August 2009), 2



**Figure 1-1: Current and proposed access**

The Metropolitan Theatre is located next to several major public spaces that attract a large number of people for different reasons. For example the MTS Centre which is located on the other side of Donald Street, is a multi-functional facility with a capacity of up to 15,000 seats that draws in 800,000 people into the downtown every year.<sup>11</sup> The City Place, the Exchange district, the Forks, Hudson's Bay central store, Winnipeg Square and the Millennium Library are among the facilities and hubs which are all a walking distance away from this theatre. A study of the urban context in which the Metropolitan theatre is located

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<sup>11</sup> MTS Centre, "Project Overview", *MTS Centre*, <http://www.mtscentre.ca/overview/> (accessed 29 August 2009)

demonstrates the potentials and benefits of an adaptive re-use of the building. Since it is located in a busy street, which was the primary reason for its original construction, the new function would benefit from a large number of visitors. Besides the MTS centre, the building is surrounded by a church at the south, and an office building at the north.

### 1.6.2 The Metropolitan Theatre

The theater, also known as Allen Theater after its original owners Jay J. and Jules Allen, was constructed in 1919 and opened to the public in 1920 as a member of the Allen movie house which were spread throughout Canada.<sup>12</sup> The theater's name was changed to the Metropolitan Theatre by its new owners, "Famous Players" who were backed by American investors. During "the golden days of the silver screen", this theatre could accommodate 2500 people.<sup>13</sup> The building was designed by a renowned theatre and movie house architect, Howard Crane, an American who designed several theatres across Canada for Allen Corporation<sup>14</sup>. The major rivals of the theatre including the Capitol, Lyceum and Gaiety have all been demolished or turned into smaller halls in hope of survival. Hence the Metropolitan Theatre is the only one from its genre in

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<sup>12</sup> City of Winnipeg, 281 Donald Street – Former Metropolitan Theatre C.H. Crane, 1919 , *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald%20285-short.pdf>, 1

<sup>13</sup> City of Winnipeg, 281 Donald Street – Former Metropolitan Theatre

<sup>14</sup> Historic buildings Committee, "281-285 Donald street, Metropolitan Theatre", *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 3

Winnipeg that, except for the damages due to negligence, has remained mainly intact.



**Figure 1-2: View of the Metroplitan Theater from Donald Street, Photograph by author.**

Howard Crane, was among the other prominent architects of that time such as Charles Lamb, who followed the principles of Neoclassical design.<sup>15</sup> This style was followed by all theatre architects of that time and the Metropolitan Theatre is a significant example. The Historic Buildings Committee of the City of Winnipeg describes the interior space of the theater according to this style:

Interior spaces were luxurious, even opulent in their faithful reproduction of key Adamesque elements: classical plaster detailing, muted and complimentary colours, a sense of spaciousness and special attention to

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<sup>15</sup> City of Winnipeg, "281 Donald Street – Former Metropolitan Theatre C.H. Crane, 1919", *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald%20285-short.pdf>, 2

ceiling details. Mirrors, brocades, crystal and plaster ornamentation on the walls created the appropriate illusion.<sup>16</sup>



**Figure 1-3: Interior view of the Theatre from Balcony, Courtesy: Number Ten Architectural Group.**

The importance of ornament is obvious in the interior decoration of all spaces, even the mezzanine:

The colors were very Adamesque, ivory, gold and old rose with French trimmings, which corresponds exactly with Lamb's preferred color scheme.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Historic buildings Committee, "281-285 Donald street, Metropolitan Theatre", *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 4

<sup>17</sup> Historic buildings Committee, "281-285 Donald street, Metropolitan Theatre", *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 5

Even though the building has had a major renovation in 1948 by architects Green, Blankstein and Russell, the interior space has remained intact and close to its original status.<sup>18</sup> This renovation included the addition of new washrooms on the mezzanine and mainly the mechanical and ventilation upgrading. Therefore the value of reviving this building through adaptive reuse becomes obvious.

The theatre has performed since the time when the experience of “going to the movies” was significantly different from now. Since the movies were not as long as today’s, movie houses had to offer a wide range of entertainment in order to attract people for a long period of time. This justifies the relatively deep stage, which was not merely used for film projection, but for the accommodation of the orchestra as well as various vaudeville acts which were performed in between the short movies.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Heritage Winnipeg, “Theatres”, *Heritage Winnipeg*, [http://www.heritagewinnipeg.com/historic\\_buildingsTheatres.htm](http://www.heritagewinnipeg.com/historic_buildingsTheatres.htm) (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>19</sup> Historic buildings Committee, “281-285 Donald street, Metropolitan Theatre”, *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 7

### 1.6.3 Future Plans

A few significant events led to the building's current situation. Among them the introduction of the television to the city in 1954<sup>20</sup> was a major reason for a considerable decrease in the number of movie-goers. As a cheap home entertainment the television competed with cinema successfully, a phenomenon which could be seen universally. Also the growth of suburban areas in Winnipeg, each having their own movie houses was another important change. As a result, many downtown theatres had to permanently close or be broken down into several smaller halls<sup>21</sup>. The Metropolitan Theatre was not an exception. Even though it managed to survive for a while with a smaller daily schedule, it was closed in 1987<sup>22</sup>. The building was registered and recognized by the Historic Buildings Committee in 1997, preventing its demolition. Since then a number of new functions including the Rock' n' Roll Museum<sup>23</sup> and a Super Supper Club<sup>24</sup> have been recommended as alternatives for the adaptive reuse of the site. To

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<sup>20</sup> "CBWT-Manitoba's First Television Station goes on the air with RCA Victor". *Winnipeg Tribune*. [May 31, 1954](#)

<sup>21</sup> . Heritage Winnipeg, "Capitol Theatre Now Being Demolished", *Heritage Winnipeg*, <http://www.heritagewinnipeg.com/advocacy/capital.htm> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>22</sup> Bartley Kives, Show over for Metropolitan?, *Winnipeg Free Press* <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/show-over-for-metropolitan-53785892.html>, (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>23</sup> CBC news, Met Theatre to become Canad Inns-run restaurant, CBCnews, Met Theatre to become Canad Inns-run restaurant <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2007/04/17/met-theatre.html> (accessed 29 August 2009)



this date none of these dreams have become true, and the building still remains abandoned and neglected.

#### 1.6.4 Spatial Analysis and Description

The Metropolitan Theater consists of three main levels which are also accompanied by half levels. The spaces include:

- Main floor foyer. This is the space with direct visual and physical access to the Donald Street. The foyer is stretched from the south to the north of the building, and gains light and access from the western side. This area has gone through a major renovation and almost no part of it has remained intact; the walls and ceiling are covered with gypsum board and it is lit with fluorescent lighting. There is no sign of decoration in this space. At the time the building was active, there were two shops at the two ends of the space that were rented out<sup>25</sup>. The area provides access to the main audience hall, washrooms and the mezzanine through two grand staircases (Fig. 1-4 & 1-5).

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<sup>24</sup> Murray McNeil, "Met Makeover about to begin", *Winnipeg Free Press*, <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/met-makeover-about-to-begin-heritage-building-gets-fresh-start-42114407.html?viewAllComments=y> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>25</sup> Historic buildings Committee, "281-285 Donald street, Metropolitan Theatre", *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 4



Figure 1-4: Interior View of Foyer. Courtesy: Number Ten Architectural Group

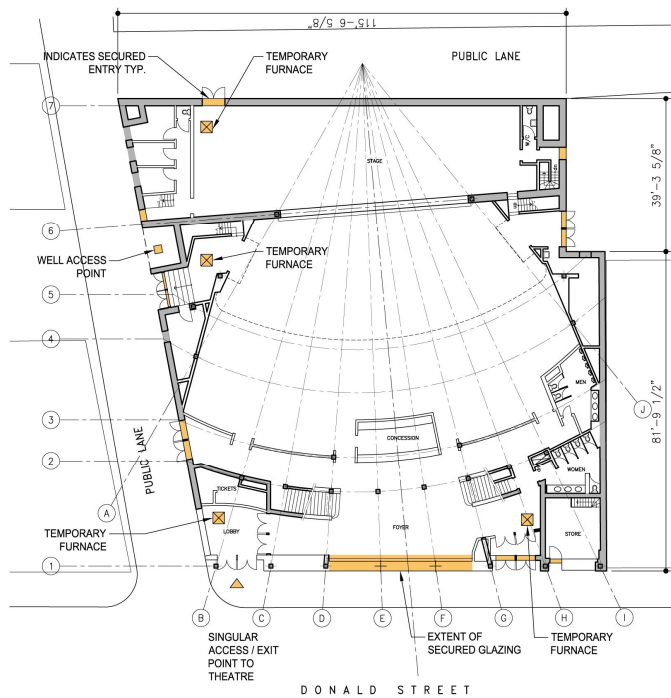


Figure 1-5: Existing Main Floor Plan. Courtesy: Number Ten Architectural group

- Audience hall: This is the largest space in the building. It is also the main focus of this practicum. The hall has remained mainly intact with the exception of a portion of the seats which have been removed. The wall plaster has been slightly damaged on the east wall<sup>26</sup>, adjacent to the stage. The walls are covered with red paint while the high ceiling which has a white ornamented dome in the center is painted in green. Besides the foyer, this area also has access from the alley on the north side of the building and the vacant lot on the south. Generally, this space is intentionally isolated from the urban context and the streets surrounding it (Fig. 1-6).



**Figure 1-6: Interior View of Auditorium from Stage. Courtesy: Number Ten Architectural group**

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<sup>26</sup> Number Ten Architectural Drawings

- Stage: this space has the highest ceiling and is located on the eastern side of the building. The space is accessible from the hall whose richly ornamented walls make a sharp contrast with the stage's exposed brick walls.
- Second floor: this floor mainly consists of seats which are placed on a stepped floor. Each platform is approximately 14 inches higher than the previous one, in order to provide comfortable visual access to the stage. Since the space differs in height and is generally sloped toward the stage, a strong orientation is imposed toward the center space and the stage. This fact has affected the design since one of the architectural objectives of the design was resisting any spatial orientation. The projection room is also located at the far end of this floor, adjacent to the western exterior façade. Two additional staircases provide access to the two balconies on each side, which at the time of this building's construction, seemed to be fixed elements of theatre design. Also, the mezzanine has access to this area through two small stairways.
- Mezzanine: the mezzanine is among the few spaces which have visual access to the city. The heavily ornamented surfaces as well as the light fixtures imply that the space was not functional in terms of displaying movies, it was an end destination in itself:

... [t]he furnishings were elegant and luxurious, contributing to the total effect of a visit to the theatre as far more than simply seeing a

show. Patrons came early and lingered after; the décor was intended to be appreciated more than simply in passing.<sup>27</sup>

During recent renovations, washrooms have been added to both ends of it,<sup>28</sup> removing the “elaborately furnished”<sup>29</sup> ladies restroom and gentlemen’s smoking room (Fig 1-7).



**Figure 1-7: Interior View of Mezzanine. Courtesy: Number Ten Architectural group**

- Western Façade: the only decorated façade of the building opens to Donald Street. While the ground level provided access to the building, the upper level façade provided daylight and visual access for the Mezzanine. The steel structure is covered with bricks and terracotta ornaments. The

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<sup>27</sup> Historic buildings Committee, “281-285 Donald Street, Metropolitan Theatre”, *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 5

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

exterior decoration also follows the Adamesque style, which during those days was common in theatre design:

Basically from about 1912 to 1922, the Adams style was exclusively employed by both Lamb and Crane, and became definitive to theatre design in that era. The facades of the buildings were symmetrical, repeating low-relief classical ornamentation and figuring prominently the Palladian-type windows of Adams design. ...The upper portion of the façade is unchanged from its construction in 1919. Constructed of brick over a steel frame, the exterior ornamentation is terra cotta. The arched windows with fanlights are framed by fluted pilasters. Each window has a wrought-iron faux balcony, the windows topped by swags of terra cotta. The low relief cornice features urns and a series of frieze details, capped by a plain brick carpet.<sup>30</sup>

A sunshade is cantilevered from the modular exterior façade, in order to clarify the entry's definition. Also one of the windows on the north side of the building has been blocked due to the renovation leading to the installation of new washrooms.

## 1.7 Following Chapters; General Overview

### Precedents

A number of precedents have been selected for this practicum, for various reasons. Since there are several interests that have led to this project, each precedent supports the argument in a different way and has some similarities

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<sup>30</sup> Historic buildings Committee, "281-285 Donald street, Metropolitan Theatre", *Municipally Designated Sites in Winnipeg*, <http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Donald281-long.pdf>, 4

with the public studio of ephemeral arts. For example, while one precedent, the *Quartier Éphémère*, is formally similar, another one, the *Cinematheque* has a common function. The major precedents which have been selected and will be studied in further detail throughout the next chapters include:

1. *Quartier Éphémère*- Montreal, Canada
2. Pompidou Centre- Paris, France
3. *Cinematheque*- Winnipeg, Canada
4. *Museo Efemero*- Lisbon, Portugal

1. *Quartier Éphémère*: this facility that is located in the Darling Foundry, an abandoned factory in Montreal, is an example of the adaptive reuse of a space with minimal intervention. The center's mission is:

...to support the creation, production, and dissemination of visual art; it seeks at once to question the role of art and artists in the heart of the city, and to promote that role. By investing in *'in situ'* projects within vacant or abandoned industrial buildings, QE [*Quartier Éphémère*] attempts to explore our urban zones and to reach a diverse public, off of the beaten track of contemporary art.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *Quartier Éphémère*, "Mandate", *Quartier Éphémère*, [http://www.fonderiedarling.org/quartier\\_e/index.html](http://www.fonderiedarling.org/quartier_e/index.html) (accessed 29 August 2009)

Also, a number of ephemeral arts have been installed during previous years, which will also be studied as case studies of similar projects to be presented in the re-used Metropolitan theatre.

2. *Pompidou Centre*: this multi-functional cultural center has raised large controversy over the last decades, over the new definition of art and culture that it offers. As an outstanding “culture supermarket”, it has drawn the attention of many scholars such as Jean Baudrillard, who describes it as a place of “implosion and deterrence” where the masses come to celebrate the invasion of the previously sacred culture as a new consuming product <sup>32</sup>. The architectural aspects of the centre are also considerable, in terms of a specific space for the display of artworks.

3. *Cinematheque*: this facility which is located in the Exchange District of downtown Winnipeg is selected because of its similar conceptual concerns; the centre “dares to be the Canadian vanguard in the creation and promotion of diverse cinematic forms and to ignite a community of artistic exploration”. <sup>33</sup> Its values that include providing a diverse, independent, innovative and artist-run environment resonate with the public studio of ephemeral arts. However this project does not have any architectural similarity with this practicum, instead it is considered in terms of its function and values.

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<sup>32</sup> Francesco Proto, *Mass, Identity, Architecture : Architectural Writings of Jean Baudrillard* (Wiley Academy, 2003), 112

<sup>33</sup> Winnipeg Film Group, “About”, Winnipeg Film Group’s Cinematheque, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/cinematheque/about.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)



4. *Museu Efemero*: This outdoor facility is located in one of the old districts of Lisbon, Portugal. The museum whose function and definition is far from traditional museums, is a temporary collection of street and graffiti arts; the administration is responsible for distinguishing art from vandalism and after registering those with aesthetic and cultural values, will preserve them for a short period of time. The museum declares itself as the first museum of ephemeral arts in the world, with plans to develop in other neighborhoods and cities, and even other countries.<sup>34</sup>

## 1.8 Summary

Mass culture and identity as keywords of this practicum have shaped the major concern and approach to the project of public studio for ephemeral arts. As a specific phenomenon which is instrumental in defining mass identity, mass culture will be studied throughout this document from a critical point of view, in order to challenge the notions of mass vs. individual identity. However, being an interior design project, this practicum does not claim to resolve theoretical issues regarding identity. Rather, I explore the role and effect of design in shaping mass or individual identity, and identify its limits.

An abandoned theater in Winnipeg was chosen as the site for this practicum. The Metropolitan Theater, a registered heritage site, houses my

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.museuefemero.com/>

intervention, the public studio for ephemeral arts. This building has been chosen because of its ironic functional change and the architectural and aesthetic qualities of the interior. The irony in converting the existing space into one with opposite objectives, draws the attention toward the current function of theatres in general and raises awareness about the relationship between design and identity.

In this practicum, I do not study all aspects of mass culture, but only some ideas that are relevant to mass and individual identity. My subjective point of view is interested in challenging the existing definition of mass identity in favor of individual identity. Therefore I have preferred a qualitative research method which heavily relies on a specific school of thought whose members are studied in the following chapter.

The public studio for ephemeral arts is a place for displaying and processing ephemeral arts, whom by their definition are short-lived and therefore do not result in a durable and timeless product. This character leads to the preference of process over product and resists the conversion of art into a commodity. The selected building is also no longer a place for the display of products that have been manufactured elsewhere. Rather, the new facility provides the opportunity for every citizen to practice art and be involved in the contemplative process of creating art. By creating a facility that opens its door to all citizens, not only for observation but also creation of art, this would become a place where everyone can leave a trace, an ephemeral one.

## **2 Chapter II: Literary Investigation and Conceptual Analysis**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter consists of two parts: a literary studies analysis and a case studies review. In the first part, those ideas that have shaped the theoretical framework of this practicum and their theorists are discussed. The objective is to explain the relationship between the theoretical concerns and the subject of this project as well as its architectural forming and development. In the second part, a number of renowned artists are chosen for a close study in order to ensure that their practice is considered in the design and the space is designed to provide their requirements. Lessons learnt from this chapter are reflected in the design process in terms of architectural function and spatial relationships.

### **2.2 A New Role of Art**

This practicum is theoretically concerned with mass culture and individual identity and is informed by the writings of Jean Baudrillard, Marshal Berman, Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno as well as other scholars close to the Frankfurt School. These ideas include the definition of mass culture and the role of the Culture Industry in generating it. Products of Culture Industry include artworks such as movies, photographs and music that depict specific lifestyles or attitudes which become common among the society, primarily shaped by defining

celebrities and stars. This implies a major shift in the definition and role of art from pre-modern times to the age of capitalism. Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), the German philosopher and literary critic, in his well-known essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, questions the concept of aura for the art work, but argues instead for it to be regarded as a consumable product<sup>35</sup>. By accepting this new definition of art as a commodity with no ritual value, one can realize its need to be consumed; therefore society should be convinced that it is consumable. This, as Theodor Adorno (1903-69), the German aesthetic theorist and social critic and a member of a prominent group of theorists known as the Frankfurt School argues, shapes the “culture industry”<sup>36</sup>. However, as Adorno suggests that the boundary between low art and high art is removed or at least faded<sup>37</sup>, one quality of low art is the main interest of this practicum; resistance. Even though ephemeral is not necessarily categorized as either high or low art, it has a common point with low art in resistance: it resists and defies the commoditization of art.

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<sup>35</sup> Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, *Marxists Internet Archive*, <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm> (accessed 31 August 2009)

<sup>36</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered”, in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, 98-107 (London: Routledge, 2001), 98

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 99

## 2.3 Key Theorists and Their Ideas

The Frankfurt School, which is the name given to a number of scholars and theorists associated with the *Institut für Sozialforschung* (Institute for Social Research), includes thinkers such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, German philosopher and social scientist and director of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research from 1930 to 1958 and Walter Benjamin<sup>38</sup>. The institute, which was founded in Frankfurt in 1923, later continued its research in exile after the Weimar Republic was overthrown. The current leader of the school is Jurgen Habermas, an influential German philosopher who is known for connecting the Anglo-American and Continental schools of philosophy. The theorists close to the school are mainly interested in new interpretations of Marxism far from the Positivist and Materialist interpretations which were typical of eastern Marxism and Stalinism.<sup>39</sup> Critical theory, the term coined by this school refers to their concern which is finding a way toward human emancipation<sup>40</sup>. In his controversial 1973 film based on his 1967 book of the same name, *The Society of the Spectacle*, Guy Debord explains critical theory as “the language of contradiction, which must be dialectical in form as it is in content. It is critique of the totality and historical critique. It is not a degree zero of writing, but its

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<sup>38</sup> Darrow Schecter, *The History of the Left, from Marx to the Present*, (New York: Continuum, 2007), 71

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 77

<sup>40</sup> Stanford University. “Critical Theory”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-theory/> (accessed August 31, 2009)

reversal. It is not a negation of style, but the style of negation.”<sup>41</sup> Generally, these theorists had a holistic approach toward the achievements of recent centuries in terms of scientific and industrial progress and the rise of modern urban contexts and questioned the true intentions of modernity and the movement that changed the face of the world, the Enlightenment.

### 2.3.1 Critiques of Enlightenment

Ideas of some key philosophers of the Enlightenment such as Emanuel Kant have been studied and criticized by these theorists. The Kantian epistemology that suggests our understanding of nature is based on *a priori* knowledge and not a direct interpretation of nature is criticized because it defines a secondary role for the senses. Therefore, according to Adorno, this epistemology leads into instrumental reason, while Adorno and his colleagues advocate a plurality of modes of reason.<sup>42</sup>

Some scholars such as Adorno and Horkheimer are in fact skeptical about the whole Enlightenment project. Believing that “Enlightenment, that is the progressive technical domination of nature, becomes mass deception and is turned into a means for fettering consciousness”<sup>43</sup>, they suggest abandoning the whole idea of Enlightenment in hope of human emancipation. This pessimism

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<sup>41</sup> Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle and Other Films*, (London: Rebel Press, 1992), 68

<sup>42</sup> Darrow Schechter, *The History of the Left, from Marx to the Present*, (New York: Continuum, 2007), 75

<sup>43</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered”, in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, 98-107 (London: Routledge, 2001), 106

toward the Enlightenment and the project of modernity, as Habermas names it, originates from the practical historic experiences of the twentieth century. The use of nuclear bombs against civilians in Hiroshima, and the Nazi death camps in Europe are examples of these experiences. The latter was ironically designed by graduates of the prestigious Bauhaus school<sup>44</sup>. These experiences, which became possible because of the stunning progresses in science and technology, were resulting from instrumental reason. What some of these theorists such as Adorno believed is the similarity between the social infrastructure of Fascist Europe and today's capitalist societies. Thus, all these diverse ideologies are considered as a continuing project of the Post-Enlightenment era. In fact, in a chapter of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* called "Enlightenment as Mass Deception", Adorno goes as far as comparing the Fascist propaganda with the Culture Industry of capitalist societies<sup>45</sup>. The Frankfurt School theorists were critical of this instrumental reason which reduces the individuality of human being into a sole member of the mass. However, theorists of the Frankfurt School were not alone in this criticism; neither were they the pioneers of this Anti-Enlightenment idea. These ideas were born as early as late eighteenth century.

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<sup>44</sup> Yisrael Gutman and Michael Berenbaum, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz death camp*, (Washington D.C.: Indiana University Press, 1994), 118

<sup>45</sup> Deborah Cook, "Theodor W. Adorno: an Introduction", in *Theodor Adorno, Key Concepts*, ed. Deborah Cook, 3-21 (Stocksfield: Acumen Publishing, 2008), 5

### **2.3.2 The Left Spectrum**

If Romanticism and Idealism are among the main categories of Continental Philosophy and specifically German Philosophy, the Frankfurt School is mostly perceived as belonging to the former. Ideas of philosophers and thinkers such as Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach, and most importantly Karl Marx are of great interest for these scholars. The emancipation of the proletariat and Marx's ephemeral understanding of modernity are two key concepts that these scholars heavily rely on. Some ideas of Marx, including his renowned notion of alienation are also criticized especially by postmodern thinkers of the Frankfurt School. The reason for this criticism is Marx's hidden presumption about having a clear definition and understanding of human nature. Being in a time in which the sign is preferred to the signified, which reflects a humble approach toward the meaning of signs, accordingly such presumption is subject to serious skepticism. An important point in this practicum's theoretical concern is that there is no insistence on defining the nature of human beings or the individual. Rather, this practicum merely challenges the status quo by providing the possibility of new spatial experiences and engagement with art.

Even though individual identity is the major concern of my project, its definition may not be simple; since a post-structural perception denies the meta-narratives suggested after the industrial revolution, including a non-alienated definition of human nature and identity, this document primarily insists on challenging the status quo, rather than on defining a clear end destination.



Marshal Berman, a teacher of political theory and urbanism at the City University of New York, in his book named after Karl Marx's sentence, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, suggests that:

if bourgeois society is as volatile as Marx thinks it is, how can its people ever settle on any real selves? With all the possibilities and necessities that bombard the self and all the desperate drives that propel it, how can anyone define definitively which ones are essential and which merely incidental? ... [T]hus, along with community and society, individuality itself may be melting into the modern air.<sup>46</sup>

In this practicum, I do not study all aspects of mass culture, but only a selection of those that are relevant to mass and individual identity, as there are several other aspects which could be studied but are not directly related to this project.

### 2.3.3 Culture Becoming an Industry

The sensual passivity deriving from Kant's instrumental reason, as well as the clear distinction between the subject and object are the main points of Kant's and Post-Enlightenment western philosophers in general. These concepts are criticized by the Frankfurt school. As Adorno argues:

but this is precisely what no product of the culture industry would engage in. the concepts of order which it hammers into human beings are always those of the status quo. They remain unquestioned, unanalyzed and undialectically presupposed, even if they no longer have any substance for those who accept them. In contrast to the Kantian, the categorical imperative of the culture industry no longer has anything in common with freedom. It proclaims: you shall conform, without instruction as to what;

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<sup>46</sup> Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into the Air, the Experience of Modernity*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 110

conform to that which exists anyway, and to that which everyone thinks anyway as a reflex of its power and omnipresence.<sup>47</sup>

As a scholar mainly concerned with the emancipation of humankind, Adorno has been studying various aspects of mass culture as an instrument that reaffirms and justifies the status quo. His subjective opinion about mass culture is most clear in the term Culture Industry that he and Horkheimer have coined. He explains the reason for using this phrase:

In our drafts we spoke of “mass culture”. We replaced that expression with “culture industry” in order to exclude from the outset the interpretation agreeable to its advocates: that it is a matter of something like a culture that arises spontaneously from the masses themselves.<sup>48</sup>

The Culture Industry, Adorno believes, tries to picture a perfect image of the world. At the same time, it responds to a stimulated and inauthentic demand. However, while talking about the culture industry he insists that the term “industry” should not be interpreted too literally, because “[I]t refers to the standardization of the thing itself... and to the rationalization of distribution techniques, but not strictly to the production process”.<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, since the products are mainly standardized, there is a need to integrate the consumers from above. High and low art, which were always separated, are united and a uniform taste is imposed on the masses for the

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<sup>47</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered”, in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, 98-107 (London: Routledge, 2001), 104

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 98

<sup>49</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered”, in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, 98-107 (London: Routledge, 2001), 100

consumption of these products. The products “are no longer *also* commodities, they are commodities through and through”<sup>50</sup>. Low art, which was always recognized with its “rebellious resistance”, is now being controlled. This is just one portion of a general social control which is increasing. Jean Baudrillard also comments on this integration imposed by higher levels of hierarchy:

The irrationality of drives increasingly more “free” at the base will go hand in hand with control increasingly more restricted at the top.<sup>51</sup>

In relationship with Walter Benjamin’s critique of art, Adorno is skeptical about the fading aura the culture industry defends:

the culture industry is defined by the fact that it does not strictly counterpose another principle to that of the aura, but rather by the fact that it conserves the decaying aura as foggy mist. By this means the culture industry betrays its own ideological abuses.<sup>52</sup>

In his famous essay, “The work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, Benjamin studies the history before and after the invention of photography. Referring to the ritual origins of art, especially painting, he mentions the preference of exhibition value over ritual value after the Industrial Revolution. Explaining the importance of photography, he states:

Earlier much futile thought had been devoted to the question of whether photography is an art. The primary question – whether the very invention

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, 100.

<sup>51</sup> Jean Baudrillard, “The System of Objects”, in *Jean Baudrillard, Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster, 10-29 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 13

<sup>52</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, “Culture Industry Reconsidered”, in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, 98-107 (London: Routledge, 2001), 101

of photography had not transformed the entire nature of art – was not raised.<sup>53</sup>

The nature of art, which he believes has changed due to the birth of photography, mainly means the elimination of the aura; there is no longer any difference or preference between the original work of art and its copies. Hence the preference of exhibition value over ritual value:

[t]he technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. By making many reproductions it substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique existence. And in permitting the reproduction to meet the beholder or listener in his own particular situation, it reactivates the object reproduced.<sup>54</sup>

The farther the definition of art is distanced from a ritual object, the more it changes into a commodity. As Adorno suggests the cultural product turns into a consumable product and commodity which serves the culture industry, whose psycho-technology pursues one objective: the adaptation of the individual to the economic system.<sup>55</sup>

Once art is converted into a commodity it follows all the rules that control and shape other commodities. As a consumable object, it is emptied of any meaning and, rather, it becomes a signifier without any signified. In his doctoral thesis, *The System of Objects*, Jean Baudrillard discusses the consumption of all

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<sup>53</sup> Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", *Marxists Internet Archive*, <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm> (accessed 31 August 2009)

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Deborah Cook, "Theodor W. Adorno: an Introduction", in *Theodor Adorno, Key Concepts*, ed. Deborah Cook, 3-21 (Stocksfield: Acumen Publishing, 2008), 7

products, whether cultural or non-cultural, in terms of a stimulated definition of the consumer:

We can imagine that each individual feels unique while resembling everyone else: all we need is a schema of collective and mythological projection – a model.<sup>56</sup>

The Culture Industry, by using stars and celebrities, tends to have an individualistic feature and also touch people personally. In fact, these stars are merely acting as the projected models.<sup>57</sup> Here the difference between the individualism advocated by the Culture Industry and the individual identity is demonstrated, since the projection of those individualistic features does not result in the difference between individuals, but rather in their integration.

## **2.4 *The Challenge of Ephemeral Arts***

Even though the new definition of art as a non-ritual and non-sacred object with exhibit value is accepted in this practicum, its potential in questioning the status quo and the culture industry's tendency of standardizing artistic creativity is appreciated. Art is capable of escaping the stereotypes that the industry needs. It is often a field and instrument for individual expression, a key concept of this practicum. Also, the conversion of art into consumable products could be resisted, if the process is preferred to the product. Or if the artistic creativity has

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<sup>56</sup> Jean Baudrillard, "The System of Objects", in *Jean Baudrillard, Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster, 10-29 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 11

<sup>57</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered", in *The Culture Industry*, ed. J.M. Bernstein, 98-107 (London: Routledge, 2001), 106

no tangible product or at least no durable product, the commoditization of art would become meaningless. These are the specifics of ephemeral arts, which have been selected to be exhibited, either physically or virtually in the renovated theatre.

Ephemeral art also has other characteristics that reflect the concerns and questions of this practicum. Among them, the distinction between subject and object, which, as mentioned, is a key concept in Western thought since the Enlightenment, is subtly challenged in these arts. Since the process of artistic creativity is the centre stage in ephemeral art, and because of the lack of any durable product, the object is not clearly defined. During the process of production, and even after the artist has abandoned the process, the process will go on and change the object until it is totally diminished. In fact, the passing of time is strongly emphasized in ephemeral arts. Benjamin's interest in the passing of time and his criticism toward modernity, which tended to turn time into a subjective concept and measured it, is echoed here. After all, "the grey coating of dust on things is its best part"<sup>58</sup>. For Benjamin, accepting ephemerality is equivalent to accepting and even embracing the passage of time.

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<sup>58</sup> Walter Benjamin, "*Dreamkitsch*", in Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings, Volume 2, 1927-1934*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 3

## **2.5 Case Studies**

There are numerous artists who have been involved with creating ephemeral arts. However, not all of their works could be categorized as ephemeral. In this section only those works with no durable end products are considered for study. The intention was to incorporate the requirements these artists need for working in the proposed facility or for displaying their installations and temporal artworks. As demonstrated in the coming pages, some of these artists will only be capable of working in natural environments or outdoors. Their works are displayed virtually in the designed space. The reason for introducing them is to show the diversity of ephemeral arts. Other artists who are involved in both ephemeral arts and installation or combinations of the two, are considered as the hypothetical occupiers of the interior space.

### **2.5.1 Andy Goldsworthy**

Born in Cheshire, England in 1956, Andy Goldsworthy is a prominent figure among ephemeral artists and environmental artists. He has been active since the mid-1970's in various forms of art related to nature. Goldsworthy has traveled consistently during these years and has explored different locations in which he has found desirable places for artistic creativity. Among them are

places such as the northern territories of Canada, Japan, Scotland, England, and the United States of America.<sup>59</sup>

To understand Goldsworthy's concerns and his interest in ephemeral arts, it is important to note the Land Art movement which began originally in the United States during the late 1960's and spread over the world thereafter. This movement originated in protest to the universal commoditization of art in general. Since this art would happen in nature, it would be accessible to individuals and become inclusive and it does not serve just a small number of elite who frequent art galleries, and therefore it would always be beyond the reach of the art market. A major character of Land Art is its relationship with the context. The relationship is so intimate that it makes the separation of the art work and the site impossible<sup>60</sup>. Not accidentally, the Land Art movement appeared at a time when a strong wave of political activism spread throughout the world. One of the main founders of this movement was Robert Smithson who also contributed to Land Art by writing a few prominent theoretical essays such as *The Eliminator*,<sup>61</sup> and *The Crystal Land*.<sup>62</sup>

Even though one of the goals of Land Art was a resistance toward commoditized artworks, this goal was not achieved thoroughly. Since artists were

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<sup>59</sup> National Gallery of Art, "Andy Goldsworthy", *National Gallery of Art, Washington*, <http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pbio?571670> (accessed 31 August 2009)

<sup>60</sup> Martin Hogue, "The Site as Project: Lessons from Land Art and Conceptual Art", *Journal of Architectural Education*, v.57, no.3 (2004), 54-61

<sup>61</sup> , Robert Smithson, "The Eliminator", in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, ed. Nancy Holt, 207-.208 (New York: new York University Press, 1979),207

<sup>62</sup> , Robert Smithson, "The Crystal Land", in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, ed. Nancy Holt, 19-.21 (New York: new York University Press, 1979),19



tempted to keep record of their artwork and document them by either film or photography, these documents were later distributed and sold as artistic products, having the movement end up in the same process as other commoditized arts.

Goldsworthy is not an exception. He has been documenting his numerous works mostly by photography. These images which are mainly taken by the artist himself are collected in books that are now sold. However, the point of interest for this practicum is the first portion of his work that is the process of creativity leading to an ephemeral and mortal object. He uses natural materials such as snow and ice, leaves, stones and twigs. These materials, which are decadent and transient in nature, shape his works of art that only last for a short while. His perception of nature and mortality is described in his own words:

I find some of my new works disturbing," he says, "just as I find nature as a whole disturbing. The landscape is often perceived as pastoral, pretty, beautiful - something to be enjoyed as a backdrop to your weekend before going back to the nitty-gritty of urban life. But anybody who works the land knows it's not like that. Nature can be harsh - difficult and brutal, as well as beautiful. You couldn't walk five minutes from here without coming across something that is dead or decaying.<sup>63</sup>

Some of his recent works are more permanent or semi-permanent, by using more durable materials or structures that are physically more stable. These include the *Arches Project* in Scotland, which is a series of stone arches built in diverse locations throughout the country. In other examples, he has used ice which is naturally vulnerable and passive to build different forms, as time passes

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<sup>63</sup> Alastair Sooke, "He's got the whole world in his hands", *Telegraph*, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/3663966/Hes-got-the-whole-world-in-his-hands.html> (accessed 31 August 2009)

and the ice melts down, these sculptures also decay. His works are examples of manipulating the nature temporarily in order to express an artistic inspiration.

The artworks of Goldsworthy are clear examples demonstrating some qualities of ephemeral arts. His works do not occupy the centre stage; in fact they are at times hidden in their surroundings because of the accessible natural materials used for them, making it difficult to notice them. These qualities have been incorporated through a few ideas. In order to avoid the disconnection of artworks from their environment, transparency became a major factor in selecting the construction materials. Because of this important connection, a neutral and non-effective gallery space that is typically seen in art institutes is avoided. Also, because of no separation between the process and product, the workplaces act as exhibition spaces as well. However, due to the diversity of ephemeral arts and their close association with installation art, this idea is not implied throughout the whole project.

### 2.5.2 Hannah Bertram

If the works of Andy Goldsworthy and others are rooted in Land Art, Hannah Bertram associates herself with Conceptual art and *Arte Povera*, movements which share one point in common, “[a]n attempt to readdress the traditional status of the art object as collectable and saleable”<sup>64</sup>. *Arte Povera* which was a movement born in the 1960’s by a small group of Italian artists including

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<sup>64</sup> Hannah Bertram, *Hannah Bertram*, <http://www.hannahbertram.com/text.html> (accessed 31 August 2009)

Germano Celant, introduced itself as a protest against commoditized art. The artists used common inexpensive objects to create art that was politically charged. This movement had mutual interests with conceptual art, ephemeral art, performance art and installation art. By using non-valuable objects in their artworks, the artists questioned the normal conventions and the art market.<sup>65</sup>

One artist, who has influenced both movements mentioned above, is Marcel Duchamp. In his most famous work, the *Fontaine*, he challenged the conventional definitions of art; since it did not follow any aesthetic regulation, and it was neither a unique object nor was there any sign of the artist's hand skills, but it only emphasized the concept. Those works of Bertram that are created by using common objects, could be related to Duchamp's famous work.

Hannah Bertram, who sees herself close to these movements, has one major interest that is shown in her works. Ornament and its temporal display is a key subject in most of her artworks. By mentioning two opposite interpretations of ornament, one from the traditional world, and the other from the modernist era, she explains her own stand on this subject. The traditional view, which was dominant before the publication of Adolf Loos' influential essay "Ornament and Crime", understands ornament as a means to add value to the object or the space. Modernism however, criticizes the use of ornament in any shape. As Adolf Loos suggests:

... cultural evolution is equivalent to the removal of ornament from articles in daily use.... the greatness of our age lies in its inability to produce a

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<sup>65</sup> Germano Celant, "Arte Povera, Notes for a Guerrilla War", *Flash Art (International Edition)*, v.41 (July/September 2008), 118-121

new form of decoration? We conquered ornament; we have won through to lack of ornament.<sup>66</sup>

Bertram defines her own understanding of ornament in this way:

This play between the boundaries of apparent opposites creates a third and new dialogue about worth, value and preciousness, that identifies ornament not as either valuable or redundant but ambiguously both precious and worthless.<sup>67</sup>

In many of her works, ornamental shapes and patterns, resembling rugs are drawn on the floor by using dust and other fluid materials. These forms are easily erasable and could be wiped off by water, hence the insignificance of the final product. As the importance of art is emphasized in “the ephemera of experience”<sup>68</sup>, the viewer is encouraged to become conscious of the pass of time. Her works suggest a new definition of preciousness. In other works, she offers new interpretations of daily objects by the use of temporal ornament.

Bertram’s works question the barrier between ephemeral arts and installation art. Due to her use of non-durable materials, her works are considered as ephemeral arts. However, her emphasis on displaying the final product instead of the process, even though they are temporal, places her among the artists who are interested in installation arts. Her artworks tend to draw attention as the central and focal point, at least for a short while. This quality brings up the necessity of designing stages that are not necessarily meant to be used for long working hours, but rather for setting up installations, whether

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<sup>66</sup> Adolf Loos, “Ornament and Crime”, in *Adolf Loos: Pioneer of Modern Architecture*, ed. Ludwig Munz and Gustav Kunstler, 226-228 (New York: Prager, 1966)

<sup>67</sup> Hannah Bertram, *Hannah Bertram*, <http://www.hannahbertram.com/text.html> (accessed 31 August 2009)

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

made of durable or non-durable materials. In the design application, a number of stages are designed incorporating conventional lighting options that give flexibility to the artist and provide the opportunity of displaying the artwork as the focal object.

### **2.5.3 Nicole Dextras**

Based in British Columbia, Nicole Dextras has been working as a professional artist since 1986 when she graduated from Emily Carr College of Art. She has been active in various fields including photography, book arts, paper casting, and ephemeral arts. The ephemeral works mainly consist of sculptures made by impermanent materials such as ice and snow, as well as live plant materials (fig. 14). These include twigs, leaves, flowers and branches. One of her main interests is raising awareness toward the environment. She is also concerned with gender-related issues. Some of her works are fashion designing by using vegetables and plants, in order to “question our attitudes toward territorial dominance, societal status and sexual identity”<sup>69</sup>(fig. 2-2).

In her projects working with ice, she is mainly interested in exploring the limits of “order and chaos”. Since ice has a transient nature, this continuous change from the ordered artwork at the beginning to the chaotic leftovers in the end demonstrates these limits. She explains her interest in ice in these words:

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<sup>69</sup> Nicole Dextras, “Ephemeral Arts”, *Nicole Dextras*, <http://www.nicoledextras.com/ephemeralart/weeds/01.html> (accessed 31 August 2009)

Ice works represents a turning point in my art practice where installations of ice works act as a metaphor for the transient nature of the environment and of human existence.<sup>70</sup>

Even though Dextras works with natural and temporal materials, some of her works are displayed in interior spaces. This is due to the fact that she insists less on the connection with the environment. Rather, other issues such as political, gender-related or social concerns are far more significant for her. Natural materials only act as metaphors for conveying a message. Her works are clear examples of ephemeral arts that are displayed and produced indoors, as opposed to many other artists who are inclined to work in outdoor spaces. This examples validate the creation of an enclosed studio for ephemeral arts.



**Figure 2-1: Green Shirt, Courtesy of Photographer, Nicole Dextras**

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<sup>70</sup>Nicole Dextras, "Ephemeral Arts", *Nicole Dextras*, <http://www.nicoledextras.com/ephemeralart/iceworks/01.html> (accessed 31 August 2009)



**Figure 2-2: Hydrangea Tournure, Courtesy of Photographer, Nicole Dextras**

#### **2.5.4 Augustine Lynas**

Augustine Lynas is a sculptor with more than forty years of experience in making different scales of sculpture. The materials he has worked with include resistant and durable materials such as concrete, bronze, plaster, clay and ceramic, as well as impermanent ones like snow and sand. Those sculptures made of sand or snow do not have long lives, lasting only a few days. Therefore, begin categorized as ephemeral arts, the whole emphasis is on the process which is usually recorded by film or photography.<sup>71</sup> His works have the potential to be created and displayed indoors, and with the combination of durable and

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<sup>71</sup> Augustine Lynas, "Ephemeral Sculptures & other Art by Augustine Lynas, *Sandsong*, <http://www.sandsong.com/> (accessed 31 August 2009)

decadent materials, the necessity of providing a space for working with heavy duty tools becomes obvious.

### **2.5.5 Duthain Dealbh**

Duthain Dealbh is a group made of three Irish sculptors who have all graduated from the Dublin Institute of Technology. Duthain Dealbh means Fleeting Sculpture in Irish Gaelic and is pronounced [du-hawn dah-liv]. Daniel Doyle, Niall Magee and Alan Magee are the artists who have been working together for over ten years and have created several sculptures out of snow, ice, sand and even fire. Their projects have been performed in different countries such as Siberia, Canada, China, Singapore. They have also been active in producing documentaries. Their first production is called “Cool Carvings” which was about the ice sculptures.<sup>72</sup>

The works of Duthain Dealbh and Augustine Lynas are only feasible in outdoor spaces, due to the materials applied. Therefore, an external space for producing and displaying similar artworks to those mentioned is implied in the design. However, the option of virtually displaying these arts inside is also provided.

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<sup>72</sup> Duthain Dealbh, “The History of the Team”, *Duthain Dealbh*, <http://www.duthain-dealbh.com/> (accessed 31 August 2009)



## 2.6 Summary

In the first part of this chapter, the major theorists belonging to the Frankfurt School or those closely associated with them were introduced briefly, and their ideas that were relevant to this project were explained. The general concern over mass culture and its role in shaping mass identity, and the commodification of art that in the end serves the Culture Industry, are among the issues discussed. Based on these studies the new facility makes an effort to challenge the role of art as a commodity, and in this defies the Culture Industry.

A number of prominent artists who have been involved in ephemeral arts were studied in the second part. The case studies mentioned in this chapter, share a few common points besides their differences: the materials used are decadent and subject to change. They respond to an existing context, whether it is the land, as Land Art or even architecture. This is characteristic of ephemeral arts that are by definition passive toward their surroundings. Therefore a traditional gallery with a neutral interior space is not appropriate for their display since the artwork itself is not necessarily the focus. Also, the artists use ephemeral arts as a means of sending a message about a political or social concern, by emphasizing on the pass of time. These common points are considered in the adaptive reuse of the Metropolitan Theatre.

Their use of natural or other decadent materials, the interdependent relationship of their work with the environment, whether it is nature or architecture, and the use of art as a medium for expressing their concerns, were considered as issues in the design. Also, since these artists tend to record their

works by visual media, and because the display of all these works inside the former theatre is not possible, the use of virtual and digital display as well as providing an archive space for collecting these recordings, shape different parts of the new design. The new facility is informed by the theoretical studies of mass culture and the case by case review of the ephemeral artworks introduced in this chapter.

## 3 Chapter III: Precedents

### 3.1 Introduction

As a part of the research process, it was necessary to review a number of relevant architectural or interior projects. These projects are relevant in terms of either architectural form or content, or both. In fact, some projects chosen to be studied here are counterexamples; they represent the opposite values and concerns of this practicum. But since they have been successful in generating discussion and drawing global attention, it is necessary to review them to measure this project's success. As mentioned previously, four projects are chosen for study in this chapter:

1. *Pompidou Centre*, Paris, France: as an internationally renowned cultural centre in France, it has been chosen due to both theoretical differences and functional similarities with the current practicum.
2. *Cinematheque*, Winnipeg, Canada: this facility based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, has similar philosophical values with this project. However, its architectural conversion into a cultural environment promoting the art of cinema has little or no relevance to this practicum. My study is focused on its principles and values.
3. *Quartier Éphémère*, Montreal, Canada: this cultural institute consisting of galleries, artist residences and a restaurant is a successful example of the adaptive re-use of an existing interior space into an art-related facility. The architects' approach in renovating some of the spaces, the newly defined

space programming and the administration's values and concerns are among its similarities with this project.

### 3.2 Pompidou Centre:

The *Pompidou* Centre was officially opened in 1977 in Paris and it sparked controversy, excitement, criticism and curiosity around the world. The final project which was a competition entry of Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, two young architects of the 1970s, was the only proposal with a large courtyard in front of the building. The architects had sought to connect the building to the city by using this grand open space as a buffer. Today this area is used as much as the interior spaces for art exhibition.

A major aspect of the building is the application of timeless materials in large scale. Glass and steel that have been widely used in the building are naturally durable. Since they do not show the passing of time in themselves, this quality helps the building to become a monument<sup>73</sup>. As Henri Lefebvre describes, a monument offers “each member of a society an image of that membership, an image of his or her social visage”<sup>74</sup>. A monument should by its very definition demonstrate its timelessness in order to “overwhelm anxiety”<sup>75</sup>. This obsession with time originates from philosophy. There is a long discussion between

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<sup>73</sup> Jeremy Till, Thick Time, in *Intersections, Architectural Histories and Critical Theories*, ed. Iain Borden & Jane Rendell (London ; New York : Routledge, 2000) 288

<sup>74</sup> Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space (Extracts), in *Rethinking Architecture, A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Neil Leach (London, New York: Routledge, 1997), 139

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

philosophers, from earlier ones such as Immanuel Kant to their contemporary counterparts such as Bertrand Russell about this issue.<sup>76</sup> They argue whether time is *a priori* to human's perception or is it *a posteriori*.<sup>77</sup> If the latter is true, then it becomes vulnerable to manipulation by the subject. This modern perception of time is shown in the architects' desire to work with frozen images and documents such as plans and sections as well as the wide spread application of glass and steel in modern architecture.

As a result, one can clearly categorize the *Pompidou* Centre as a modern monument that presents "each member of a society an image of that membership"<sup>78</sup>. This is met by placing the circulation routes on the main facade and projecting the masses inside. The *Pompidou* Centre is recognized as a monument of the twentieth century that re-defined monuments away from "cultural pretension and elitism".<sup>79</sup>

An obvious characteristic of the *Pompidou* centre is its transparency. The building is meant to provide maximum visibility in all areas. This includes the circulation routes and escalators which are located in the front facade and even the mechanical and electrical ducts. The mechanical shafts are presented by using sharp and bright colors, in order to emphasize their visibility.

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<sup>76</sup> Roger Scruton, *Kant, A Very Short Introduction*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 41

<sup>77</sup> Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 146

<sup>78</sup> Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space (Extracts), in *Rethinking Architecture, A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Neil Leach (London, New York: Routledge, 1997), 139

<sup>79</sup> Nathan Silver, *The Making of Beaubourg, A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), Introduction, x

Also, the interior spaces are visible from outside. The result of this transparency which is the self-behaviour of the masses is similar to the Panopticon prison effect. As Michel Foucault has commented on that prison:

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power, he makes them play spontaneously upon himself, he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.<sup>80</sup>

Since “visibility is a trap”<sup>81</sup> the standards of a disciplined society will be intangibly imposed upon the masses.

The placement of mechanical ducts and structural elements on the external shell of the building had another objective as well: to give maximum flexibility to the interior spaces.<sup>82</sup>

The original design of the *Pompidou* Centre had suggested the use of prefabricated members throughout the project. The building was supposed to look incomplete and in an endless process of construction<sup>83</sup>. Even though most of the building is not built by prefabricated panels, the general picture presented to the public presents this idea. Here the notion of use value versus exchange

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<sup>80</sup> Michel Foucault, Panopticism (Extract), in *Rethinking Architecture, A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Neil Leach (London, New York: Routledge, 1997), 362

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* 361

<sup>82</sup> Centre *Pompidou*, “Architecture of the Building”, *Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou*, <http://www.centrePompidou.fr/Pompidou/Communication.nsf/0/B90DF3E7C7F18CAEC1256D970053FA6D?OpenDocument&sessionM=3.1.12&L=2> (accessed 18 November 2009)

<sup>83</sup> Francesco Proto, The *Pompidou* Centre: or the Hidden Kernel of dematerialization, in *The Journal of Architecture*, Vol. 10, No. 5, 573.

value is reminded. Mass production has replaced use value with exchange value. In other words, the relationship between the subject and its environment has changed from a direct relation to an indirect and abstract one. Here, in *Pompidou* Centre, the exchange value of prefabricated, timeless and incomplete building is preferred to its use value<sup>84</sup>.

In the *Pompidou* Centre, four departments including the public library (BPI), the museum of modern art (CNAM), the centre of industrial creation (CCI) and the research institute for musical and acoustical coordination (IRCAM) are managed by a common administrative staff<sup>85</sup>. By reviewing the budgets contributed to each of these departments and the administration, the role of the centre as a centralized facility for cultural production rather than an institute for the enhancement of spontaneous cultural activities is clearly understood. When culture is defined as “a precinct of secrecy, seduction, initiation and symbolic exchange, highly ritualized and restrained”<sup>86</sup>, the irony of “cultural production” becomes apparent. But the very possibility of cultural production demonstrates the difference between today’s culture with the “sacred quality characteristics of cultures with a magic or theo-centric view of the world”<sup>87</sup>. The *Pompidou* centre has become a symbol of this major change in the definition of culture.

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<sup>84</sup> Francesco Proto, *The Pompidou Centre: or the Hidden Kernel of dematerialization*, in *The Journal of Architecture*, Vol. 10, No. 5, 573.

<sup>85</sup> Jean & Marie Eiffel, *Beaubourg: Innovations to a Trojan Horse*, in *Architectural Design*/2/77, 138.

<sup>86</sup> Jean Baudrillard, *The Beaubourg-Effect: Implosion and Deterrence*, in *Rethinking Architecture, A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Neil Leach (London, New York: Routledge, 1997), 212.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

The cultural spaces in the center include: Cinema, children's gallery, educational workshops, bookstore, library, exhibition space, café, museum, restaurant and galleries.<sup>88</sup> The diversity of spaces indicates the centre's will to provide a multifunctional space.

### 3.2.1 Similarities and Differences

The *Pompidou* Centre has been chosen because of both its differences and mutual points with my interests. Among the differences there is the intention of founding a monumental building that insists on defining a timeless perception of space. The Centre's approach toward art products is similar to the Culture Supermarkets that were discussed earlier. This tendency of centralization becomes more apparent by studying the administrative section. However, its similarities include the importance of both exterior and interior spaces. In the proposed design, the new addition as well as the outdoor space plays a major role in the new function. Also, another objective was to provide the most possible free and flexible space, which is relevant to the space planning of this project. Finally, even though transparency is a primary factor in the Centre's design, this aspect is applied in the new design due to different reasons including the prioritization of the existing space, a factor that is not applicable to the *Pompidou* Centre. Because of the *Pompidou* Centre's outstanding success and controversy, its study was appropriate.

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<sup>88</sup> Centre *Pompidou*, "Maps", *Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou*, <http://www.centrePompidou.fr/Pompidou/communication.nsf/pagesweb/info.plan.1n6?opendocument&sessionM=3.1.11&L=2> (accessed 18 November 2009)



### **3.3 Cinematheque**

*Cinematheque* is a cultural centre located in downtown Winnipeg which has been active for the last 26 years. This centre defines itself as “an artist-run education, production, exhibition and distribution centre committed to promoting the art of cinema”<sup>89</sup>. The *Cinematheque* has been acting under the supervision of Winnipeg Film Group that itself has been founded in 1974<sup>90</sup>. This council includes various prestigious local artists such as Guy Maddin<sup>91</sup> and is mainly concerned with promoting and encouraging local artists working in the field of cinema by providing them with rental equipments and facilities. The *Cinematheque* which is mainly the acting arm of the group is responsible for these issues<sup>92</sup>. Rather than its architectural aspects, this centre has been chosen for its functional and typological similarity as a precedent for this practicum.

Located at 100 Arthur Street in Winnipeg’s Exchange District, the *Cinematheque* has been housed in a recently renovated turn of the century building. The building has been adapted to a cinema hall as well as other subordinate functions. The activities covered in this centre include screening films, holding workshops, lectures, and other special events<sup>93</sup>. Renting the

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<sup>89</sup> Winnipeg Film Group, “About”, *Winnipeg Film Group’s Cinematheque*, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/Cinematheque/about.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>90</sup> Winnipeg Film Group, “History”, *Winnipeg Film Group*, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/history.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>91</sup> Winnipeg Film Group, “About”, *Winnipeg Film Group’s Cinematheque*, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/Cinematheque/about.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>92</sup> Winnipeg Film Group, “About”, *Winnipeg Film Group’s Cinematheque*, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/Cinematheque/about.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

cinema theatre and filming equipments to novice and professional local artists, production funding, providing experimentation opportunities as well as affordable training and mentorship are other practices of the centre. Financially, this non-profit artist-run organization relies mainly on the support of the Manitoba Art Council and the City of Winnipeg, through the Winnipeg Art Council.<sup>94</sup>

Declaring itself as the Canadian vanguard in the creation and promotion of diverse cinematic forms<sup>95</sup>, the *Cinematheque* follows a few values and principles in its service to the local community. The promotion of diversity in cinema by reflecting the spirit of the Canadian community, as well as the independence of the organization by defending the artist's freedom in expressing her ideas are some of these values that the centre promotes.<sup>96</sup>

### 3.3.1 Similarities and Differences

The *Cinematheque* has a number of similarities with this project, the Public Studio of Ephemeral Arts. These include theoretical and functional issues. Theoretically, the centre's objective which is "promoting the art of cinema" is similar to this project's goal. Other common points include its ambition to give equal opportunities to all interested citizens by providing them with equipments and workplaces, and the will to educate and familiarize the public by holding

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<sup>94</sup>Winnipeg Film Group, "About us", *Winnipeg Film Group's Cinematheque*, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/Cinematheque/default.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Winnipeg Film Group, "About", *Winnipeg Film Group's Cinematheque*, <http://www.winnipegfilmgroup.com/Cinematheque/about.aspx> (accessed 29 August 2009)

lectures and workshops. From the administrative point of view, this non-profit artist-run organization has been successful in moving toward its objective. Therefore the practicality of such an institute for ephemeral arts, with the same administrative system becomes possible.

### **3.4 *Quartier Éphémère***

*Quartier Éphémère* is the name of an ephemeral arts organization which after several relocations has been housed permanently in a renovated old foundry in Griffintown, an industrial section of Montreal. The Quartier, defines its mission in supporting the creation, production, and dissemination of visual art<sup>97</sup>. The organization is born of an agreement between the *Fondation pour le développement des artistes de la relève* and its French counterpart, the *Usines Éphémères*. The latter organization, similar to the *Quartier*, is an artist-run organization concerned with opening new doors to the experience of contemporary art, by placing them in existing and non-neutralized spaces and encouraging artists to respond to their environment. Throughout its history, the *Quartier Éphémère* has been occupying three other abandoned buildings before choosing the current site. These *in situ* projects which are placed in everyday spaces instead of traditional and conventional galleries and studios, offer new interpretations of these spaces, as well as new experiments in contemporary art. The *Quartier's* interest in this area began with the exhibition they held in 1997

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<sup>97</sup> Darling Foundry, "Mandate", *Quartier Éphémère*, [http://www.fonderiedarling.org/quartier\\_e/index.html](http://www.fonderiedarling.org/quartier_e/index.html), (accessed November 3, 2009)

named *Panique au Faubourg*. This exhibition intended to reveal this district's potentials as a post-industrial area.<sup>98</sup>

The *Atelier In Situ* architectural firm was selected for the renovation project, who had various experiences in older districts of Montreal, such as the Zone Project in 1997.<sup>99</sup> Before, they had been active in the *Faubourg des Récollets* in the recent years and their usually avant-garde, yet respectful intervention of the spaces they worked in, made them the right choice for the renovation of this facility.<sup>100</sup> These architects had won the prestigious Grand Prize of Excellence from the Order of *Québécois* Architects.

The Darling Foundry was the latest home of the Darling brothers' foundries. The brothers, who started their business in 1880, soon realized their shortage of space and in 1888, 1909 and 1918 additions were attached to the existing building<sup>101</sup>. This complex is today used as the house of the *Quartier Ephémère*. The original building was a pioneer in those days in terms of structure; the foundation and columns are all made of concrete and reinforced with steel rod and the exterior facades are all covered with red brick. As an

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<sup>98</sup> La Fondation Daniel Langlois, "Quartier Ephémère (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)", *Daniel Langlois Foundation* <http://www.fondation-langlois.org/html/e/page.php?NumPage=82>, (accessed November 3, 2009)

<sup>99</sup> Nancy Dunton, Helen Malkin, *A Guidebook to Contemporary Architecture in Montreal*, (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008), 68

<sup>100</sup> Ibid

<sup>101</sup> Darling Foundry, "Historical", *Quartier Ephémère*, [http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter\\_e/index.html](http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter_e/index.html), (accessed November 3, 2009)

employer of 800 people at its most glorious days, the foundry was sold to another company in 1971 and eventually, was closed in 1991 due to several reasons including urban changes and the closure of several other foundries and factories in this industrial district of Montreal<sup>102</sup>. The building was abandoned for the next 10 years when it was adapted for the use of the *Quartier Éphémère*. The closure of the Darling foundry was a symptom of Griffintown's characteristic change. The district is today known as the *Faubourg des Récollets*<sup>103</sup>.

Since the renovation of London's former Bankside Power station into a modern art gallery, the Tate Modern, a number of previously industrial sites have been considered for similar appropriations.<sup>104</sup> The Darling Foundry is a prominent example of this kind in Canada. The old foundry which has been turned into an art centre, houses several major and minor functions. These include a large and small gallery, administrative offices located on the second floor, artist studios and residences, reception, washrooms, and a restaurant-bar<sup>105</sup>. The renovation had a limited budget which was effective in the architects'

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<sup>102</sup> Marc Choko, Bernard La Mothe, Georges Adamczyk, *The New Montreal, Major Urban Projects in Old Montreal*, (Montreal: UQAM, 2001), 34

<sup>103</sup> Ibid

<sup>104</sup> Shauna Janssen, *Quartier Éphémère: Indeterminate Territories and Curatorial Practice in the Industrial Space*, [http://art-history.concordia.ca/institute\\_site/conf08\\_palimpsest/papers/Shaugauna\\_Janssen.pdf](http://art-history.concordia.ca/institute_site/conf08_palimpsest/papers/Shaugauna_Janssen.pdf), (accessed November 3, 2009)

<sup>105</sup> Darling Foundry, "Plans", *Quartier Éphémère*, [http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter\\_e/index.html](http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter_e/index.html), (accessed November 3, 2009)

approach and forced them to limit the renovation in many areas to the preservation of the current situation.<sup>106</sup>

The complex also includes suites and residences for artists who do not reside in Montreal. These suite- studios are located on the upper floors and are rented to artists in a highly competitive manner. There are also workshops designed in the second phase of the project.

Also, located on the main floor and at the corner of Ottawa Street, the Cluny art-bar is another public face of the organization. The restaurant-bar with approximately 500 clients per week<sup>107</sup>, provides the clients with art exhibitions and displays along with the conventional services of other restaurants. While not everyone is receptive to the exhibition, others will be encouraged to visit the rest of the facility. Its location on the main street is a key point in attracting passersby to the art centre.

The two galleries have differences with each other; the large one with an area of 500 m<sup>2</sup>, is a two storey space with daylight access, and is mainly restored to its original condition, preparing a unique space for artistic explorations and creativities. The small one however, which occupies 180 m<sup>2</sup> of the building is a more traditional gallery; by painting a single storey space with neutral colors,

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<sup>106</sup> Nancy Dunton, Helen Malkin, *A Guidebook to Contemporary Architecture in Montreal*, (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2008), 68

<sup>107</sup> Darling Foundry, "Plans", *Quartier Éphémère*, [http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter\\_e/index.html](http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter_e/index.html), (accessed November 3, 2009)

rather than the existing space the art work is more central to the experience<sup>108</sup>. This gallery is lit with artificial lighting.

### **3.4.1 Similarities and Differences**

The Darling Foundry's conversion into an art gallery has a number of similarities with this practicum. The revitalization of an old abandoned building, the administration which is an artist run organization and its will to connect the building to the urban context once again are among the mutual points. The artist residence is also an innovative service given to visiting artists. However, different approaches have been taken for the renovation of the interior spaces. While the larger gallery has been minimally renovated to ensure the prevention of further damages, the smaller one has been converted into a more conventional gallery, by using neutral colors and materials. My approach in this practicum is closer to the former, due to the selected building's historic and architectural value.

## **3.5 Summary**

Each of the precedents introduced in this chapter were selected due to different reasons and affected the research as well as the design process in different ways. The *Pompidou* Centre had mutual and opposite concerns with this practicum. The mutual points included the importance of the exterior courtyard,

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<sup>108</sup> Darling Foundry, "Plans", *Quartier Ephémère*, [http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter\\_e/index.html](http://www.fonderiedarling.org/rehabiliter_e/index.html), (accessed November 3, 2009)

the multi-functional spaces and the maximum flexibility desired by the architects. However, due to the preservation concerns and the existing context in this project, flexibility and the free plan are not the first priorities, even though they are required. The emphasis on creating a modern monument, the abundance of prefabricated elements and the expanded administration that supervises all activities are among the differences mentioned. The *Cinematheque* was primarily selected because of its administration system as well as mutual concerns that included promoting a specific art. The *Quartier Éphémère* is the most similar example to this project among the precedents. Since it was a formerly industrial space being adapted to an art institute run by a group of artists, it is similar in terms of functional change, approach in adaptive reuse, and the spaces included in the new design. Generally, except for the smaller studio, the architects have intentionally mainly preserved the existing condition, encouraging potential artists to react to the context. The artist residences are among the spaces that are also included in this design. All these similarities and differences are implied in the proposed design, either in terms of space programming, preservation approach, or administrative policies.



## 4 Chapter IV: Design Application

### 4.1 Introduction (Theoretical framework)

As a practicum of interior design, this project has been informed by a number of issues that were discussed in the previous chapters. The theoretical framework, similar precedents and potential users were studied to shape the design. This chapter explains the design component, from the conceptual starting point to the design process which led to the final result of an interior re-use of the Winnipeg Metropolitan Theater. However, before describing the proposed design, it is necessary to summarize the theoretical base and mention its effects on the project.

Mass culture was discussed in the previous chapters as a powerful instrument which affects and shapes a mass identity for the individuals that shape a community. Therefore a theater, which is a true example of a facility provided for the projection of mass culture, was chosen for conversion into a place that seeks the engagement of all individuals, insists on fading the separation between the spectacle and spectator (as opposed to typical theaters), and finally does not promote the production of a durable object that is prone to becoming a commodity. As a result of these discussions, a public studio for ephemeral arts was proposed as the new function.

The adaptive reuse of the Metropolitan Theater into an ephemeral arts studio is described in this chapter. Various design aspects include circulation,

spatial experience and relationships, the relationship between the new and the old, space programming, mechanical and electrical requirements, building code analysis, structural issues, materials and finishes, and lighting. Each of these issues will be discussed after a concise explanation of the design process and the first options that led to the final result. The final drawings including plans, elevations sections and interior details, cut sheets and specifications as well as 3d images are provided in the appendix.

### **4.2 Design Process**

The subjects that have been studied in this practicum, each affected the design process and final result in different ways. These subjects include the literary investigation, case studies and precedents. Among them the literary investigation has been mainly effective in defining the new facility and its functions, as a place that defies the commoditization of art by preventing the creation of a durable product. This defiance is due to the objection with mass culture as a powerful instrument in shaping mass identity, one of the original concerns of this project. The public studio for ephemeral arts and its functions which are introduced in this chapter are concrete outcomes of the theoretical studies of identity, individual and mass, and the will to define a new form of art that is resistant to becoming a commodity in service of the culture industry.

There were also some strategic outcomes of the theoretical study. Among them was the replacement of the passive gathering of the mass by an active experience of the individual. Hence a dynamic space is preferred to a static one.

Also, in order to provide diversity within the space, different functions were sought instead of having one activity imposed on all the visitors, as it was before. A few spatial qualities were also relevant to the theoretical framework. Among them the blunt separation of the scene from the audience, the symmetrical space and access, the existing Adamesque-style ornaments, the existing furniture (i.e. audience seats) and finally the unilateral orientation toward the scene were more effective in the design because I meant to draw the visitors' attention toward these qualities. As it will be shown later, the latter aspect, the spatial orientation was influential in shaping the design vocabulary.

A number of artists have been studied in chapter two; these include Andy Goldsworthy, Hannah Bertram, and Augustine Lynas. Each artist has been relevant to this project in a different way, as explained in that chapter. However, the overall understanding of the works of these artists, has affected and shaped the general strategies in design. Contextualizing the workspaces and exhibition areas in the existing interior space by means of applying transparent materials is an example of these strategies. Also, the general approach toward the existing space was to preserve, as opposed to restore or renovate the existing condition and emphasize the architectural aspects of the space. Instead of creating a neutralized gallery space the current condition is highlighted. This approach was due to the emphasis on the context and the surrounding environment that has been repeated in the works of many of the studied artists.

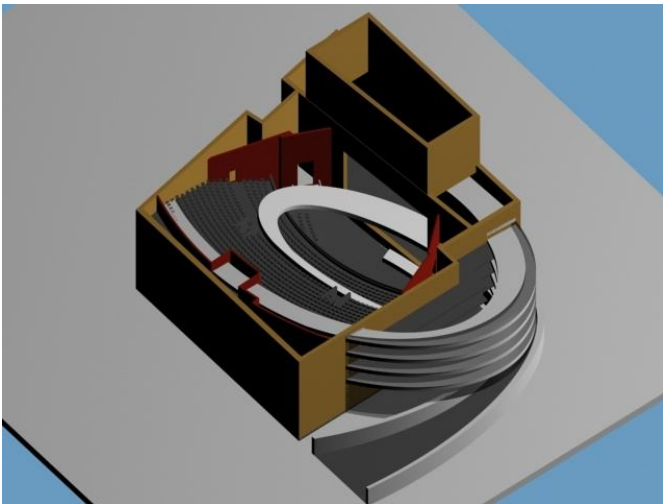
One common character of ephemeral arts that has been shown in the works of those artists, is the lack of any distinction between the creative process

and the final product. In fact, the final product is usually overshadowed by the process. This quality has shaped the layout of the spaces and their relationship with each other. By creating fluid spaces with a gradual transition into each other, there is minimal distinction between work spaces and display areas. This aspect also responded to the sharp distinction between the spectator and the spectacle, as emphasized in the Culture Industry. Yet as another result of studying various artists, the close relationship between ephemeral arts and installation arts is recognized. Therefore providing spaces that are solely meant for the display of installation arts and some probable temporal outcomes of ephemeral arts became a necessity.

Other general strategies resulting from the case studies include the need to provide workspaces that are appropriate for working with heavy duty tools, an outdoor workspace for those artists who prefer exterior spaces, and also the incorporation of equipments and spaces for video/ audio display and archiving. In chapter three a number of existing facilities are studied as precedents. The result of these studies is reflected in this project in different ways. Among them is defining the new facility and specially its organizational hierarchy. The lessons learnt from the Pompidou Centre and the *Quartier Ephemere* resulted in defining an artist run organization with minimal administration which merely supervises the whole facility. Also, by studying examples such as the Cinematheque and the *Quartier Ephemere*, the practicality of such a facility is proved. Another mutual point between the *Quartier Ephemere* in Montreal and this project is the adaptive

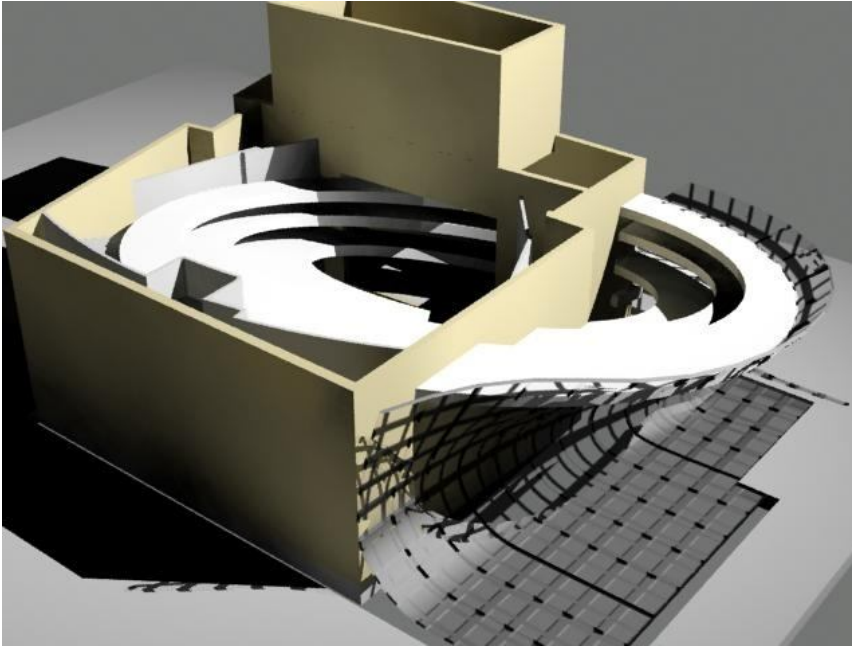
reuse of an aged and abandoned building into a facility that revitalizes the existing space and reconnects it to the urban context.

A number of options were sketched at the beginning of the design process. In these options, some of the issues mentioned above were addressed while others were overlooked. For instance, in fig.1, a number of ramps were inserted into the existing building, shaping the gallery/workshops, which are intentionally inseparable. But the general solid and purist form did not comply with the passive nature of ephemeral arts.



**Figure 4-1: 3d model of initial concept**

Since the southern lot is considered for further expansion of the building, the exterior development would shape the public perception of the building. Therefore the façade was studied further in order to connect with the conversion into an ephemeral arts studio. This resulted in the gradual change of the ground into a pervious mesh that covered the new addition.



**Figure 4-2: 3d model of initial options**

These options did not provide the possibility of diverse activities within the existing spaces, nor did they draw enough attention toward the mentioned aspects of the theater. Also, the geometry applied in the addition imposed a new character to the space, without compromising its own quality in favor of the existing space. However, the southern lot was considered as the open space for those artists who need outdoor spaces for their works. The complex's entry is also located on the southern wall, gaining access from the open space. These two last aspects were preserved in the final design.

### **4.3 Final Design**

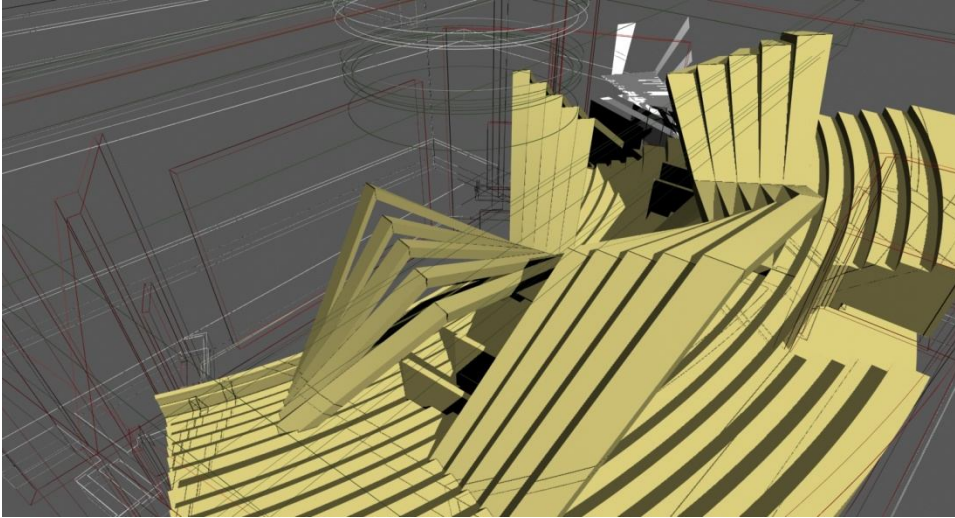
The existing space has a unique spatial quality which defines its character: the unilateral orientation toward the stage, from the seats. As shown in the picture, on the second floor, the seats are located on curbs with increasing height. These identical curbs were selected as the starting point for developing a design vocabulary.



**Figure 4-3: Interior view of the theatre from balcony, Courtesy: Number Ten Architectural Group.**

Since the curbs and seats, represent the passive audience that is oriented toward the stage, deforming these items in different directions, would clearly demonstrate the theoretical concerns of this project, such as lack of individuality in the existing space.

As shown in this preliminary 3d model, the curbs are continued by the new design that follow the existing proportions, but are made of different materials.



**Figure 4-4:3d model of design development at intermediate stage**

These continuing curbs form new and diverse pathways leading to different directions without any specific destination. The pathways in turn shape enclosed and semi-enclosed space between themselves that are used as workshops, studios, display areas or a combination of all.

### **4.3.1 Circulation**

The access to the building was previously maintained from the western façade on Donald Street, providing a symmetrical view of the auditorium for the visitors. In the proposed design the entry is from the southern side, inviting the visitors directly to the second floor, which has become the main gallery area. Therefore the visitors will have an asymmetric experience of the existing space. Also the spatial experience is based on the visitor's motion as opposed to the passive static position of the former audience. A non-linear circulation with various



pathways provides the opportunity for different experiences as well as the possibility of different simultaneous activities (figure 4-5).



**Figure 4-5: Final rendering of interior space**

### **4.3.2 Spatial Programming**

The new spaces that are incorporated in the project occupy the main and second floors as well as the mezzanine. These spaces are located on different floor levels due to their functions and required adjacencies.

The spaces on the main floor are listed below:

Main floor:

Entry- Foyer: 1290 sq. ft.

Reception: 270 sq. ft.

Archive: 1938 sq. ft.

Management: 1568 sq. ft.

Video/ Audio Projection Hall: 512 sq. ft.

Lecture Hall: 590 sq. ft.

Outdoor Exhibit Space: 2000 sq. ft.

The entry and reception are located on this level as they are adjacent to the main access routes from the street. Other spaces, including archive, management, video/ audio projection and lecture halls are selected for this level due to their functional requirements and the existing space's potentials in housing them. The management requires minimal space with relatively flexible functional requirements. Also, the video/audio archive and the projection hall will be operating under the supervision of the artist-run administration. The archive and the projection hall are also functionally inter-dependent as the archived material will be displayed in the projection hall. Also, there was less emphasis on locating these functions in the intact context of the existing space, since none of these spaces were involved in the creative process.

These considerations resulted in planning these facilities adjacent to each other and since the existing main floor foyer is not in a preservable condition, and the management's adjacency to the entry is desired, the foyer was designated to these areas. The final square footage of each space was the outcome of the design process.



**Figure 4-6: the video projection hall on the main floor**

The mezzanine level is considered to be re-used as the cafeteria. The space's relatively short access from the entry and the exhibition spaces and its view toward the street made it a desirable space for serving food and beverages.

On the far northern side of the existing stage, the former management offices are located. These offices were selected for the accommodation of visiting artists. This was due to their similar proportions with residential units, as opposed to other areas within the existing building as well as access to natural daylight.

The main auditorium, specially the balcony which is the focus of this project, is designated to the studios, exhibitions and the relevant pathways. As discussed earlier, there is intentionally no distinction between these spaces and the exact square footages of these spaces were later defined in the design process. I should mention that the new spaces' formal proportion with the existing space was a major factor in shaping the new facilities. The functional requirements were the second priority as I explored a compromise between those and the existing space's integrity.

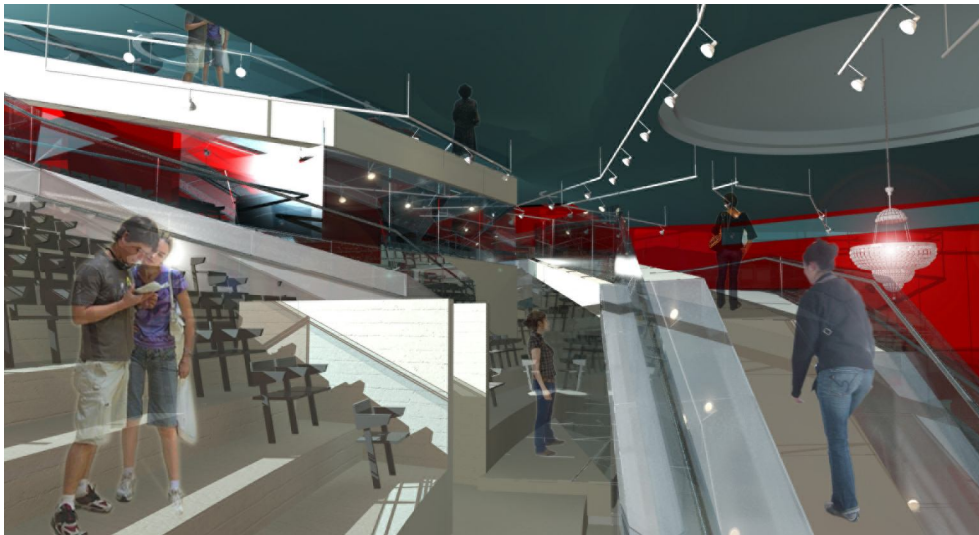
The spaces on the second floor are listed below:

Second floor:

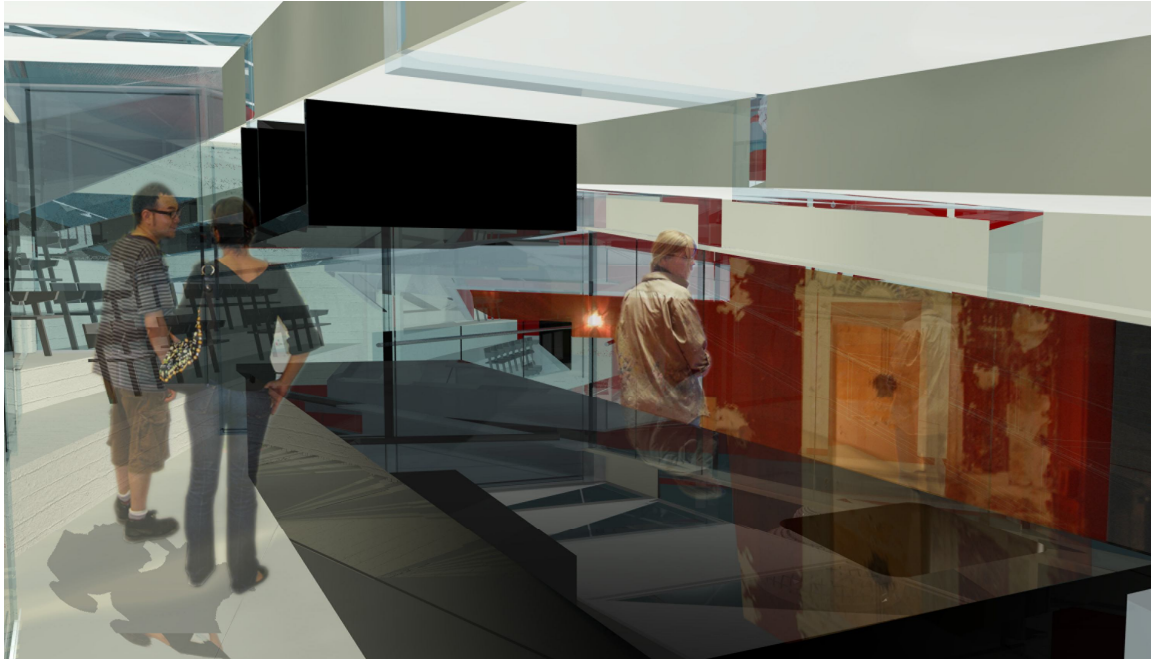
Artists Residence: 377 sq. ft.

Pathways/ Exhibit spaces: 3288 sq. ft.

Workshop/ Studio: 624 sq. ft.



**Figure 4-7: Second floor pathways and exhibition spaces**



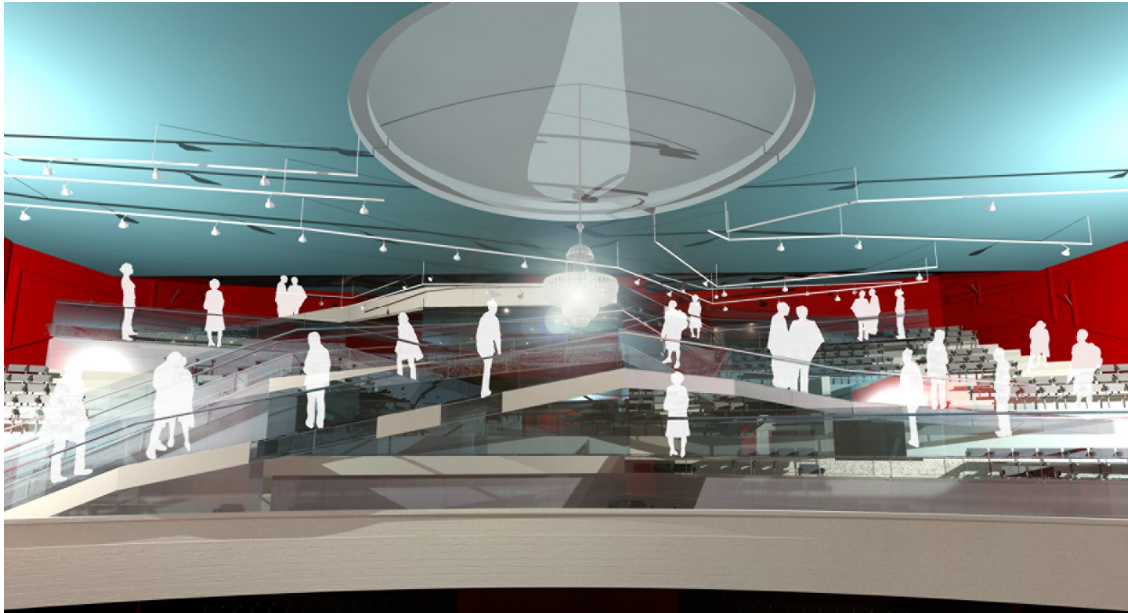
**Figure 4-8: Artist Studio on Second Floor**

### **4.3.3 Scope of design**

Among the existing spaces within the building, the auditorium was the focus of design. Other spaces have been identified in terms of new function, area, access and circulation.

Main floor: On the main floor, the new spaces that occupy the former foyer include administration, two audio/video projection halls and multimedia archive. As mentioned in previous chapters, due to the temporal nature of ephemeral arts and since artists have been willing to record their artworks, an archive should be considered in an ephemeral arts studio. The mezzanine is proposed to accommodate the cafeteria and the administrative offices on the far end of the stage are renovated to be used as artist studios. The second floor has become the main exhibition area, which the new design is focused on.

As an adaptive reuse of the Metropolitan Theater, the design is focused on the new spaces. The existing interior space is preserved in the condition it is today, as opposed to being restored to its original condition. Emphasizing the pass of age by creating and exhibiting ephemeral arts, design consistency resulted in preferring preservation over restoration.

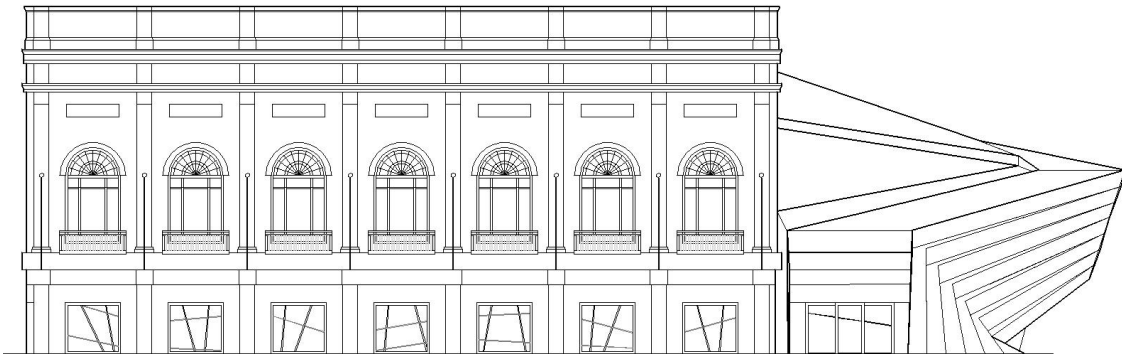


**Figure 4-9:**The second floor balcony is the focus of this project.

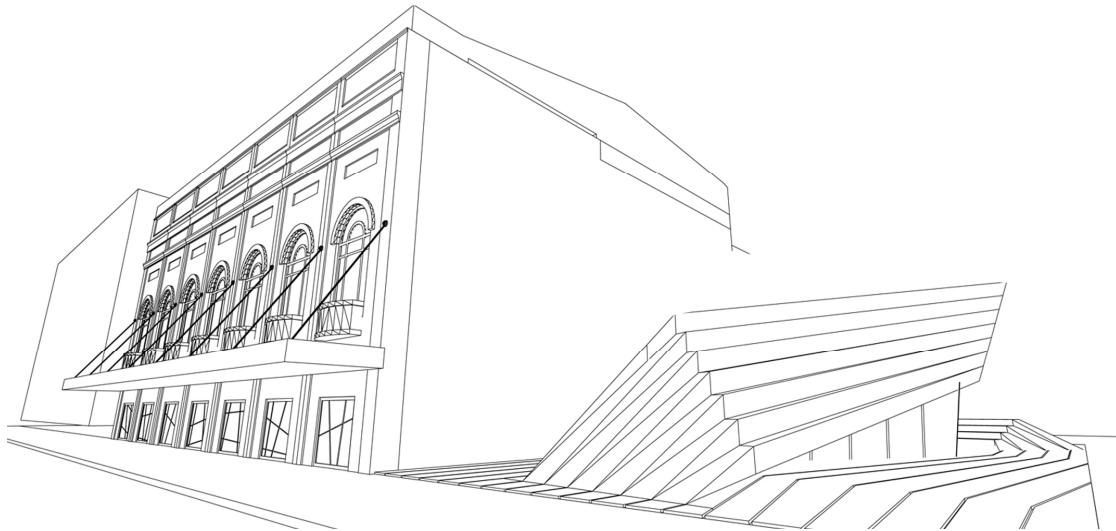
### **4.3.4 Relationship with urban context**

Since the entry is relocated to the southern lot, the western façade is liberated and has the potential of reconnecting the activities inside with the urban environment. As shown in the proposed western façade, the proportions of the Mezzanine windows have been repeated in the main floor façade and have shaped the window frames, providing a more transparent and invisible boundary

between the interior space and the urban context (Figure 4.10 & 4.11).



**Figure 4-10: West Elevation**



**Figure 4-11: Exterior Perspective, showing the additional openings on the main floor.**

### **4.3.5 Mechanical and electrical infrastructure**

The mechanical infrastructure of the building was upgraded in its first renovation in 1948. Since the new facility houses different spaces instead of a single function, the new mechanical facility including heating, ventilation and air conditioning should provide separate and independent ducts for each space. The

two workshops on the second floor which could potentially be enclosed from the rest of the building, as well as the small audience halls on the main floor, have independent mechanical ventilation. Also, the workshops are provided with sinks, which needs plumbing. This is provided from the main floor as shown in the drawings. The two workshops are also equipped with water sprinklers which require water plumbing supported from the main floor.

The two workshops that provide space for heavy duty artistic experiments, are also separated from the rest of the building acoustically, the ceilings are covered by custom made acoustic ceiling tiles due to their irregular forms.

The existing light fixtures are reactivated or replaced with new ones in order to preserve the existing facilities that are reusable. The main chandelier is reactivated and the wall mounted lights are replaced with new items whose cutsheets are provided. However, the workshops and display areas are lit by track lights, in order to provide maximum flexibility for the artists. Another concept in lighting is emphasizing the existing ornaments and colors which by using new light fixtures that lit the existing surfaces, this goal is achieved. Also, since there is intentionally no separation between pathways and display areas, all pathways are lit by tracklights pending from the ceiling, giving the opportunity to artists to adjust the amount of light according to their projects.

The new pathways are also lit by sensitive LED lighting installed underneath handrails. The relevant cutsheets are provided in the appendix.



### **4.3.6 Structure**

The new interior addition is structurally connected to the existing structure. The new steel frame construction relies on the existing steel beams that support the second floor and are located on the gridlines that are oriented toward the stage. The vertical elements that are tied and welded to the existing structure, bear the load of horizontal elements that in turn hold the vertical and horizontal panels. The steel frame construction has been selected because of being non-combustible.

### **4.3.7 Materials and Finishes**

The main concepts in selecting the materials, whether structural, decorative or interior finishes included transparency, similarity with existing structure (i.e. with second floor curbs), and non-combustibility. The materials that have been presented in the material board and in the renderings include steel frame structure, stainless steel hardware and light fixtures, plywood panels for heavy duty flooring, translucent or transparent glass for vertical panels, and tempered glass for flooring panels. The cabinetry and working stations are equipped with stainless steel countertops, due to their durability, and the storage are filled with frosted glass insert.

### **4.3.8 Exterior addition**

The exterior addition that mainly includes the access ramp to the second floor and the new lobby, which provides access to the main floor facilities, is located on the southern lot. The formalist concept is generated from the similar approach of the interior space; the audience curbs shape the exterior addition and gradually tie it to the ground. Also a number of curbs are provided for an outdoor studio for those artists who prefer to work in the exterior context.

## **4.4 Summary**

This project is the result of a number of parameters that have been shaping the design process. These parameters include the theoretical concerns about mass and individual identity, criticism of the Culture Industry and the new role of art in capitalist societies. Also, the architectural aspects of the existing building and the functional requirements for an art studio have been effective in orienting the project. However, I believe the prioritization of these parameters which has been subjective and according to my interests, has been important in the result. The theoretical concerns have been most significant in this practicum, rather than the historic preservation of the existing building, or the functional necessities of a public studio for ephemeral arts. By changing the priorities other results would have been achieved. One of the characteristics of this design is the subjectivity of it. This could be also regarded as a weak point since a comprehensive response has been achieved, but other answers are also possible.

In this chapter the result of the theoretical study and precedent review, which is the designed project, is introduced. The relationship between the theoretical and abstract concerns and the concrete outcome is explained. The 3d renderings, and other documents that are provided in the appendix support the authenticity and sensitivity of the proposed design for the Public studio for Ephemeral Arts at the former Winnipeg Metropolitan Theatre.

## 5 Conclusion

This project raised from a number of theoretical issues, and the interest of studying their effects in design. The question of identity, both of the mass and the individual, was the prominent theoretical concern. However, its relationship with design was studied in more depth due to the subject of this practicum. The instruments and streams that shaped and affected identity were considered and mass culture, as a powerful example that defines a collective identity for the masses was selected for further study. Different shapes of the culture industry include music, television, and cinema among other fields. Since movie theaters were clear examples of architectural objects that were intentionally designed for the projection and consequently, consumption of cultural products by a large number of people, its study examined the various relationships between identity and design. Some of the problems that were sought after in this practicum included how spatial geometry, order, hierarchy and orientation promoted the definition of collective or individual identity, the relationship between spatial experience and active or passive collection of information, the separation of spectacle and spectator in pop culture and its translation into design vocabulary, and the conversion of art into a consumable object and its effect on design. All these issues were discussed through reviewing ideas of prominent scholars and theorists who were concerned with identity, mass culture and art theory. an abandoned theater in downtown Winnipeg, the Metropolitan Theater, was selected and studied for conversion into a place for a specific kind of artistic

creativity that does not result in any durable product, ephemeral arts. The lack of any final product would address one of the key concerns of this practicum, the commoditization of art as a consumable object. This would resist the culture industry and its definite role in shaping mass identity.

In other chapters, several artists whose works and experiences were relevant to this practicum were studied and reviewed and their effects on the design process were also mentioned. Similar cultural facilities around the world were also brought to attention in another chapter. However, since there is no center or facility that is exactly similar to this practicum in terms of function and theoretical concerns, a number of precedents were selected that were each similar to this project in one aspect. Formalist and architectural similarities, functional relevance, and similar theoretical concerns were among the reasons that these projects were selected for review.

The final chapter explains the design process and the effects of the discussed issues on the project, from the beginning concepts to the final detailed design. Plans, elevations, architectural renderings, specifications and cut sheets as well as building code analysis are provided in order to support the designed project in offering a comprehensive answer to some of the questions raised at the beginning.

This practicum has provided an option for resistance against the commoditization of art. A new function, a public studio for ephemeral arts is created by the preservation and adaptive reuse of an abandoned theater that ironically, was originally designed for the consumption of artistic commodities.

## Conclusion

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However, a number of new questions were generated as results of this process. The possibility of any practical resistance toward mass culture in today's capitalist societies, or introducing a new design typology that by its very definition resists collective identity are among these questions. This practicum does not address these questions, since it is involved with the adaptive reuse of a specific existing facility, and the practicality of its resistance is not proved until being examined in the real world. Also, other shapes of art besides ephemeral could be potentially explored and used for the same purpose, resisting mass identity. This practicum does not claim to have provided the only answer to the questions raised before, but only an alternative to the status quo, solidifying mass identity by commoditizing art.

## **6 : Appendix A**

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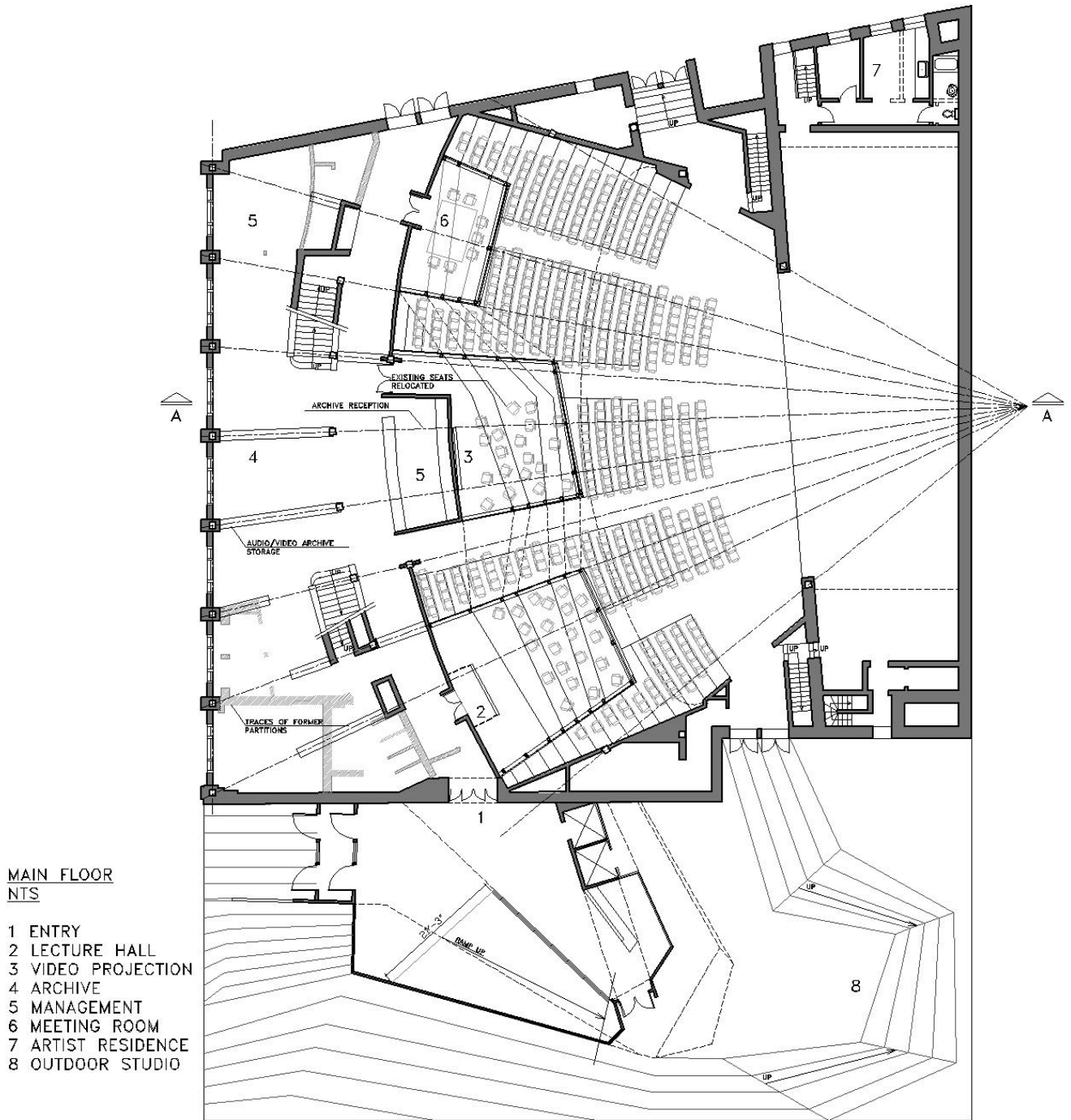


Figure A 1: Main Floor Plan

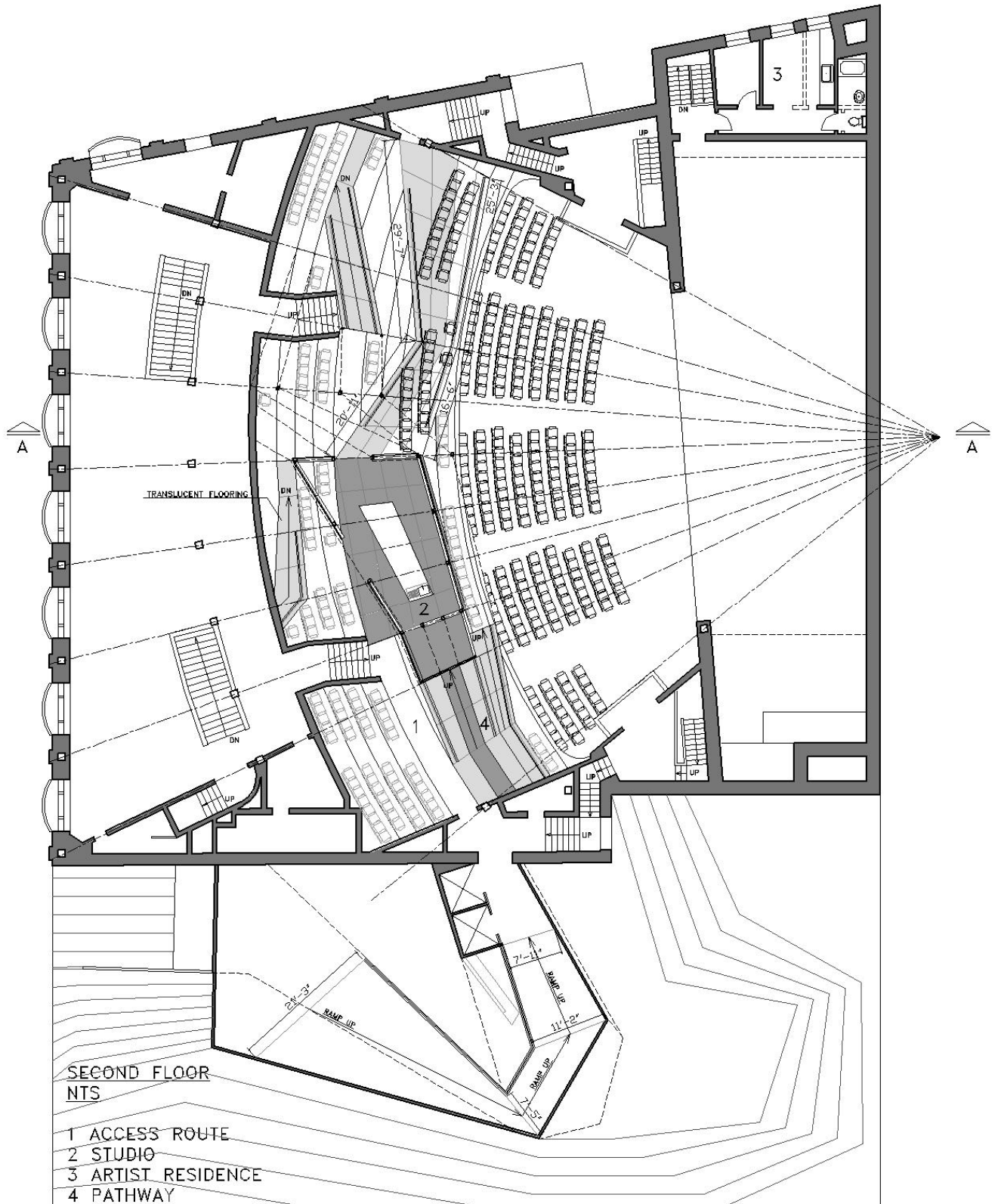
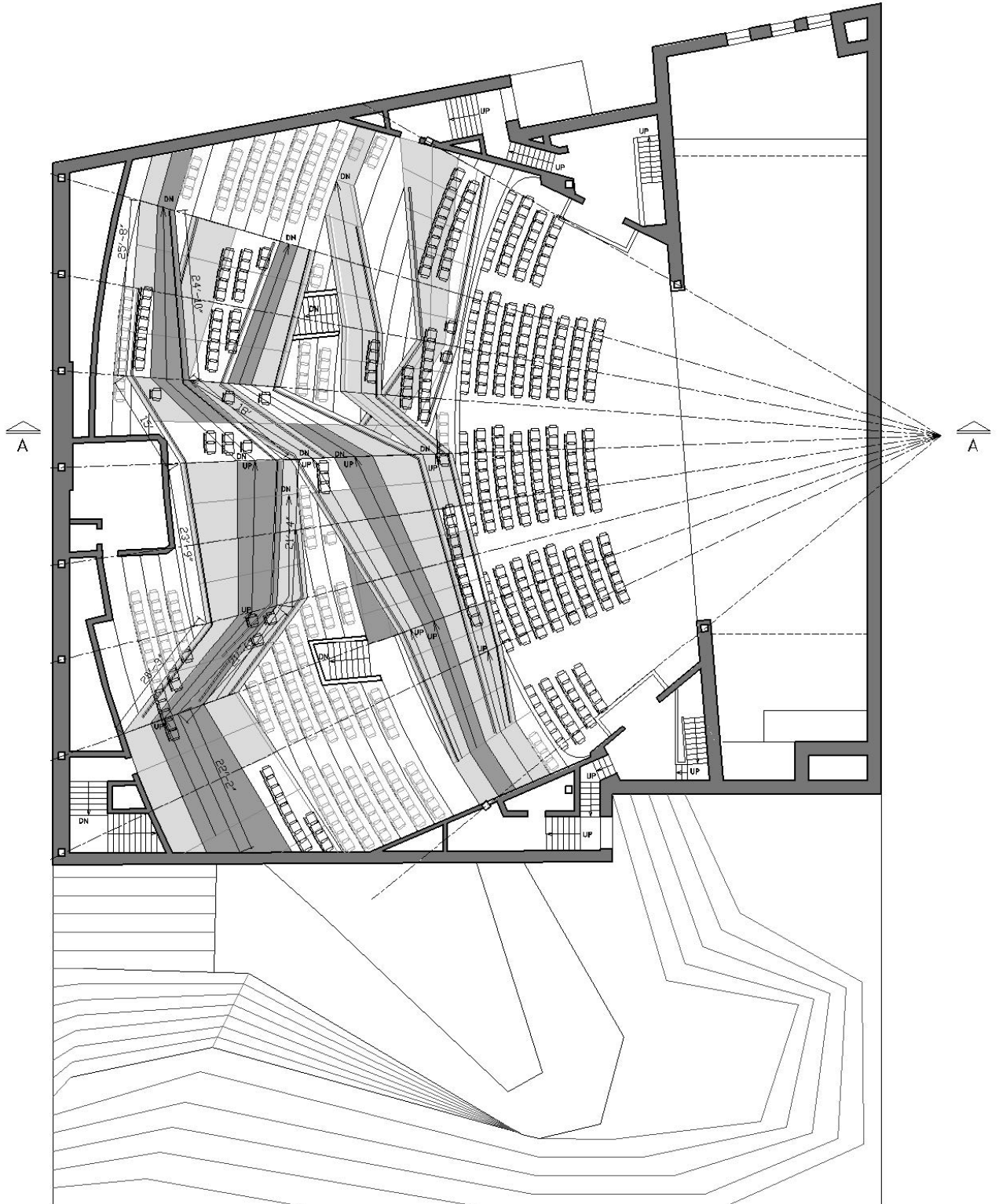


Figure A 2: Second Floor Plan- Lower level



SECOND FLOOR  
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Figure A 3: Second Floor Plan- Middle Level



SECOND FLOOR  
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Figure A 4: Second Floor Plan: Upper Level

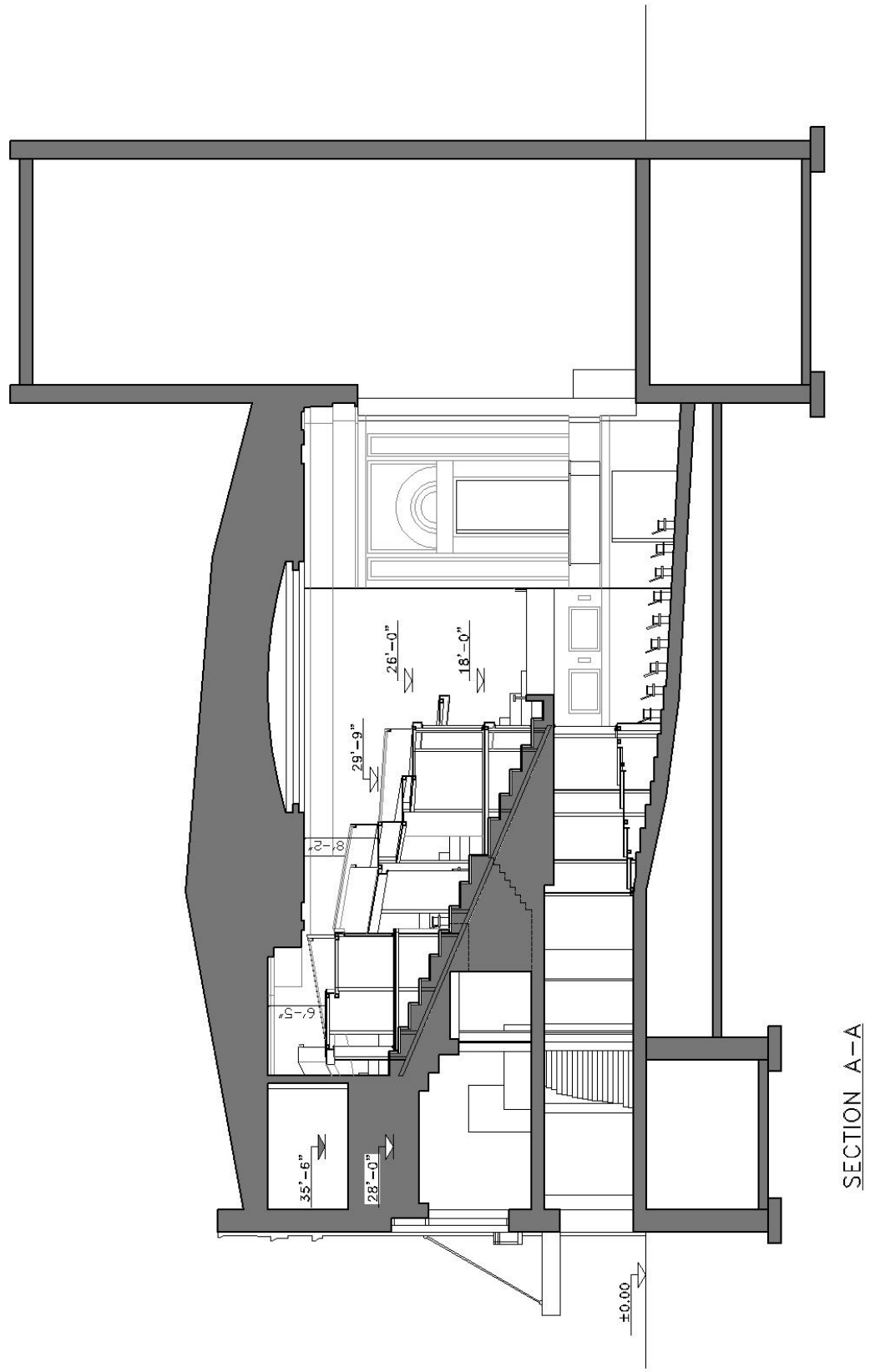
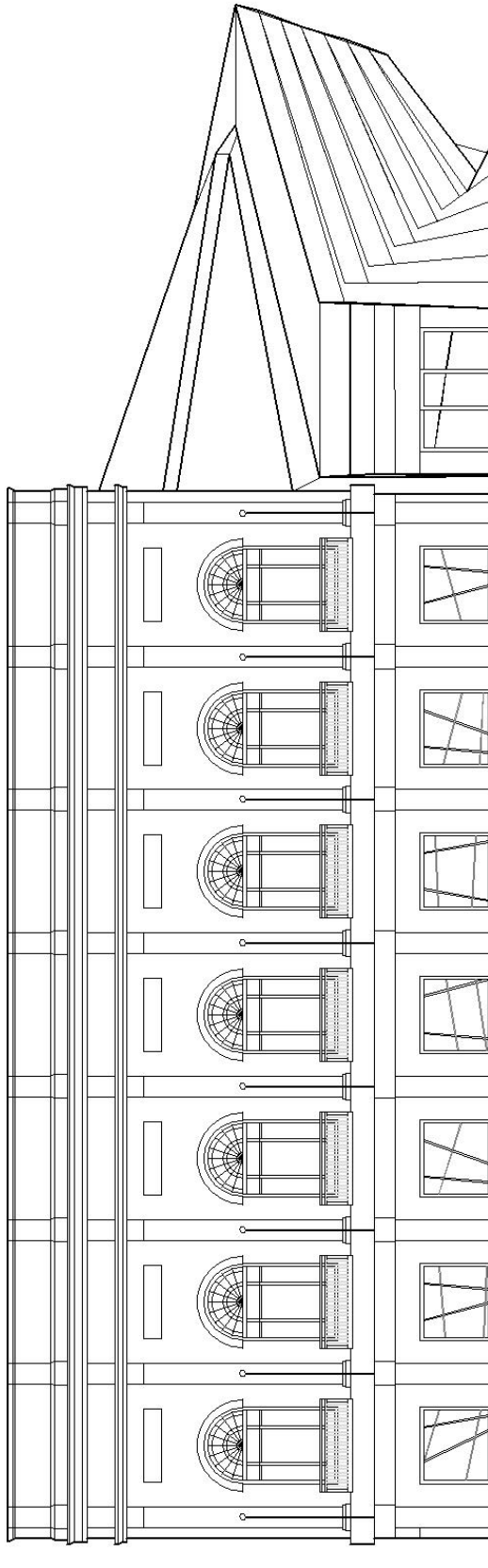
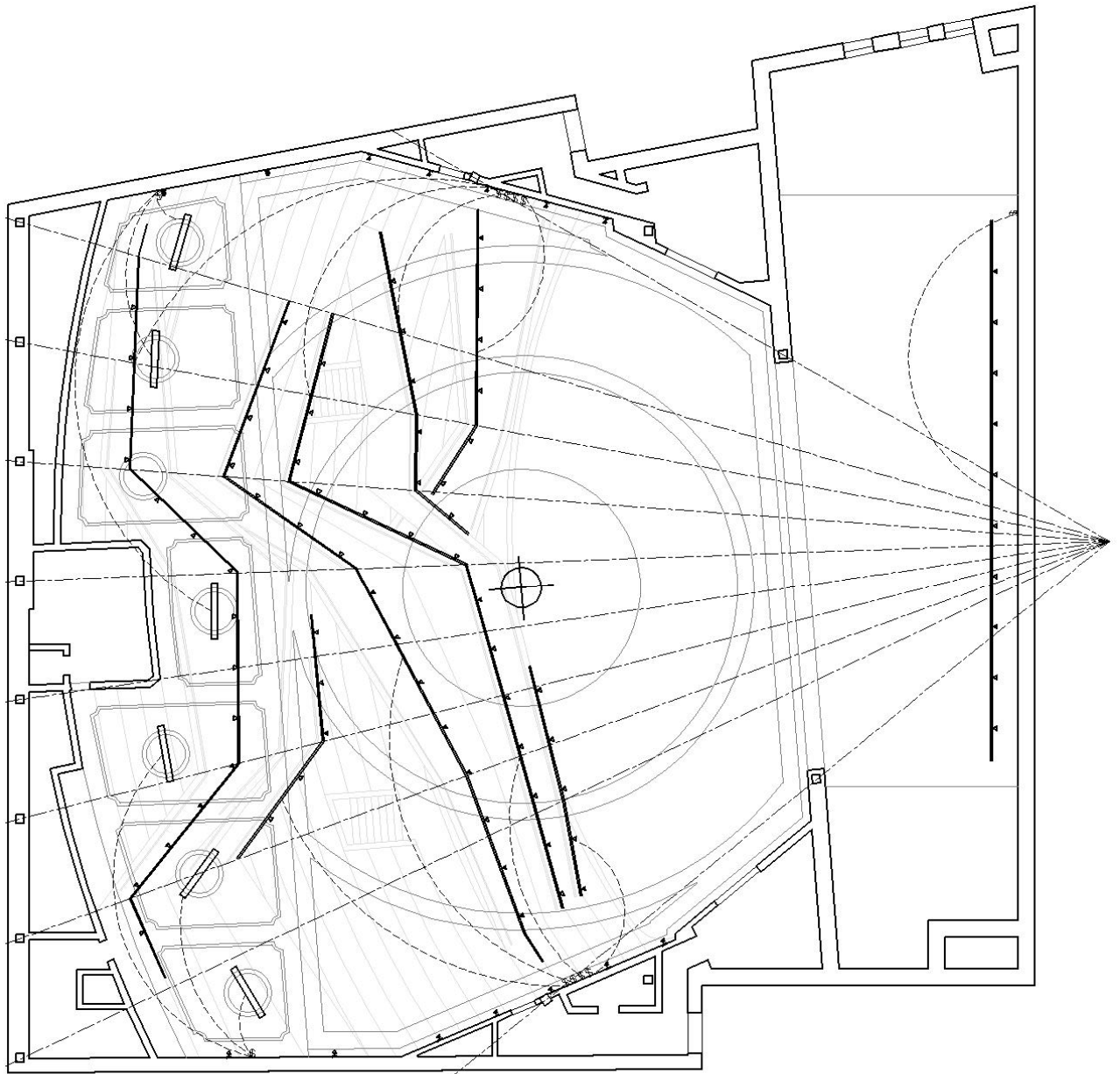


Figure A 5: Building Section



WEST ELEVATION  
NTS

Figure A 6: West Elevation



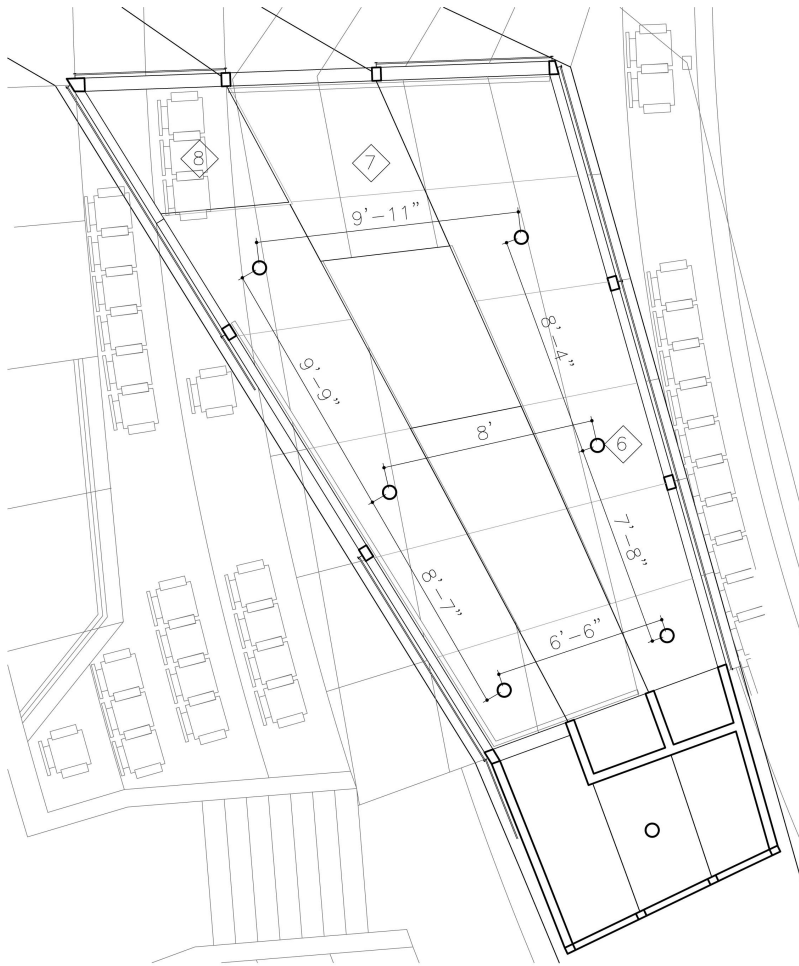
REFLECTED CEILING PLAN  
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**Figure A 7: Second Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan**



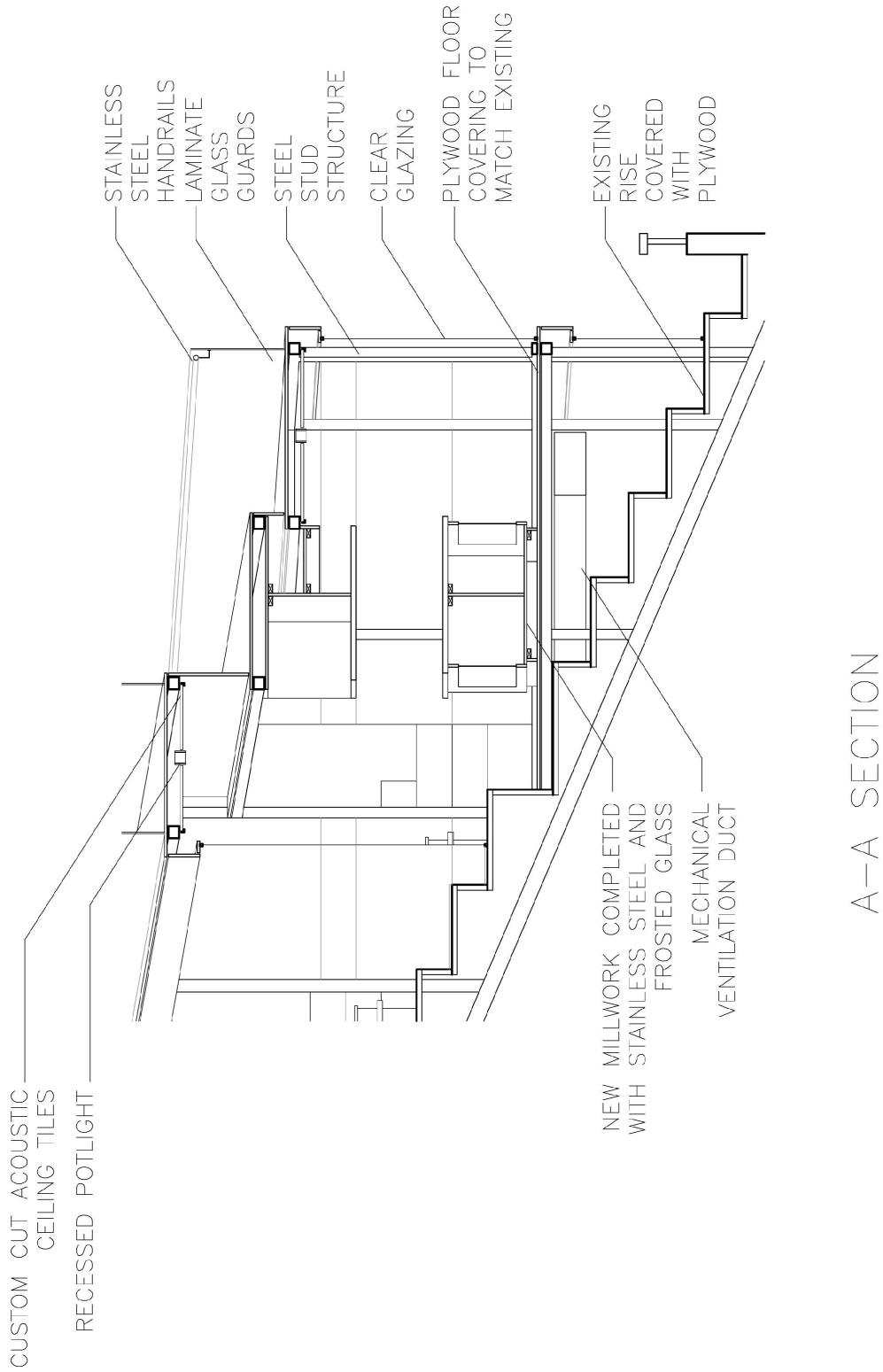
STUDIO FLOOR PLAN  
**Figure A 8: Studio Enlargerd Floor Plan**



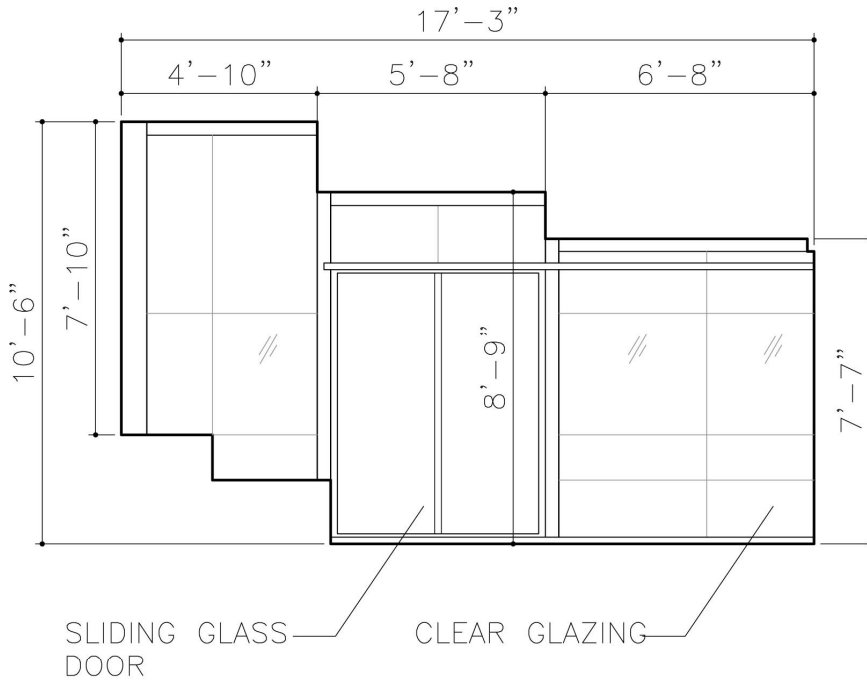


REFLECTED CEILING PLAN

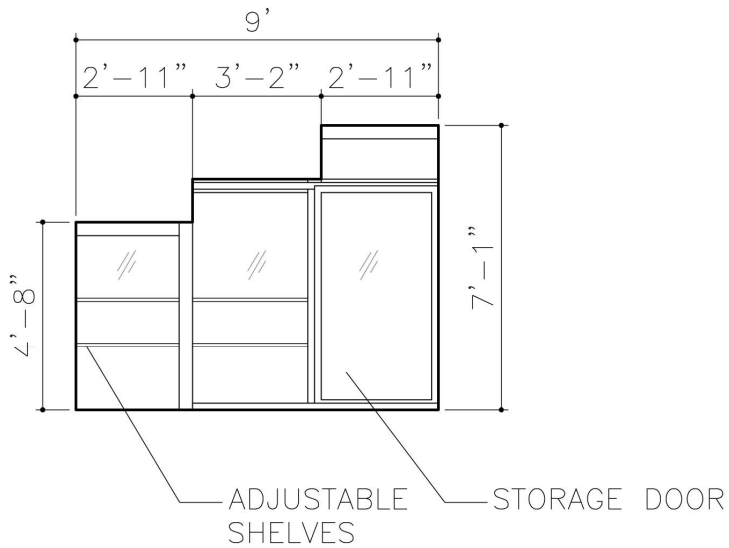
**Figure A 9: Studio Reflected Ceiling Plan**



**Figure A 10: Studio Section**



1 INTERIOR ELEVATION



3 INTERIOR ELEVATION

Figure A 11: Studio Interior Elevations

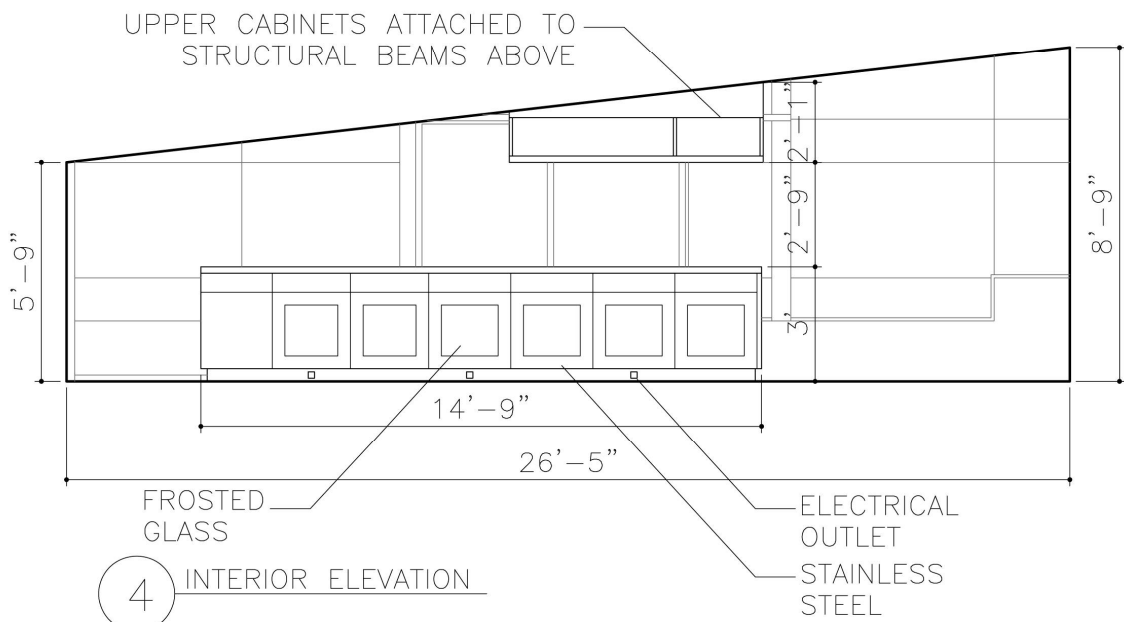
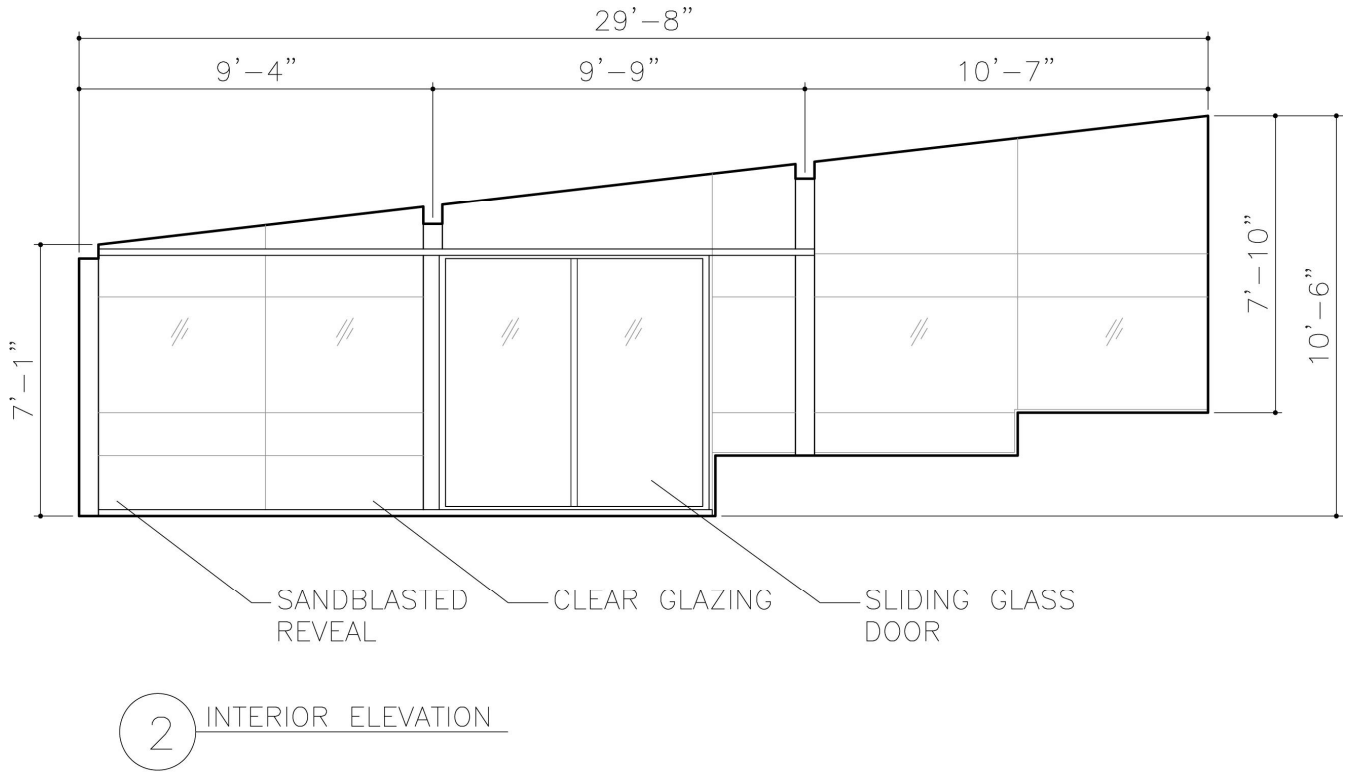
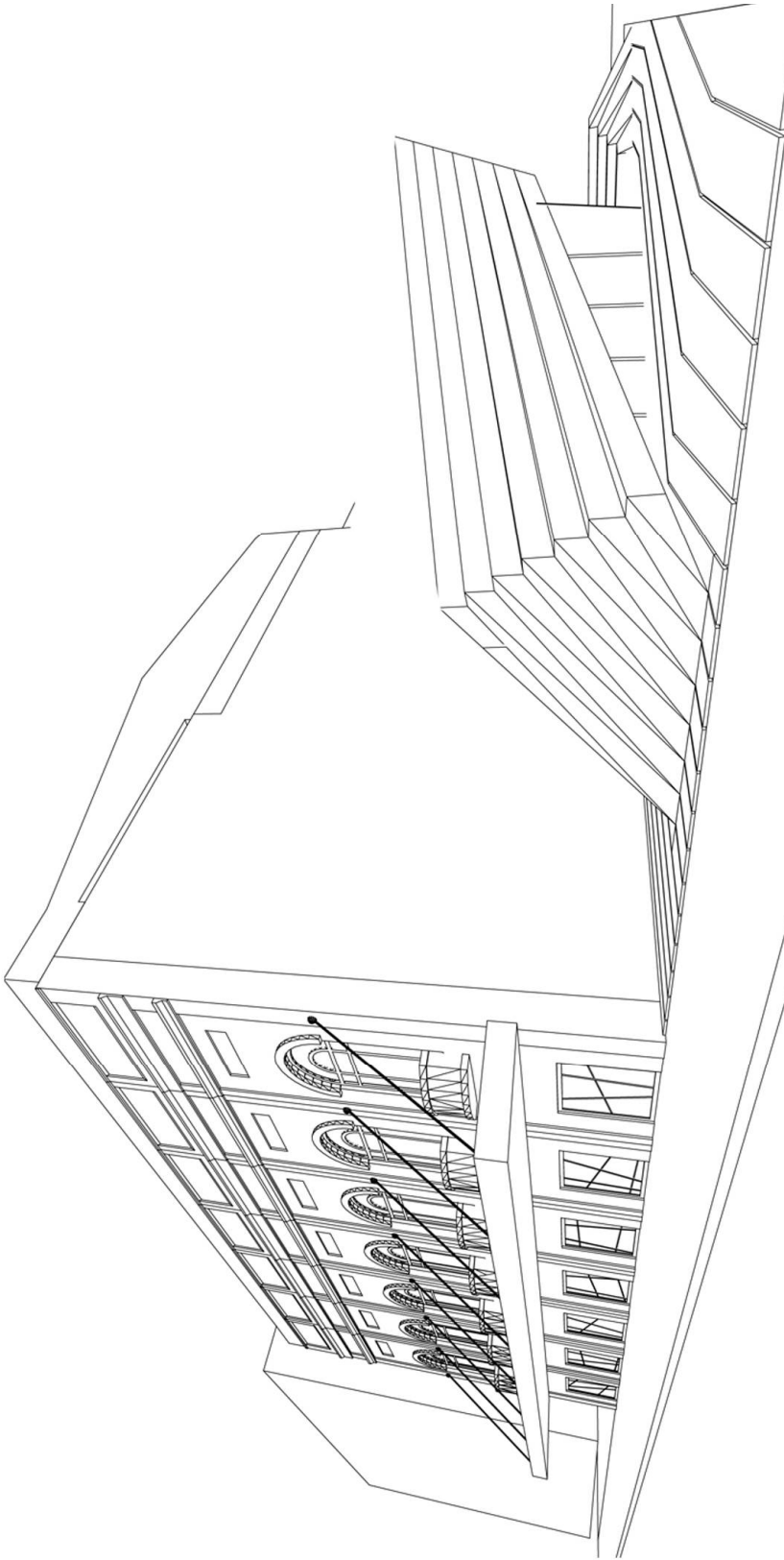
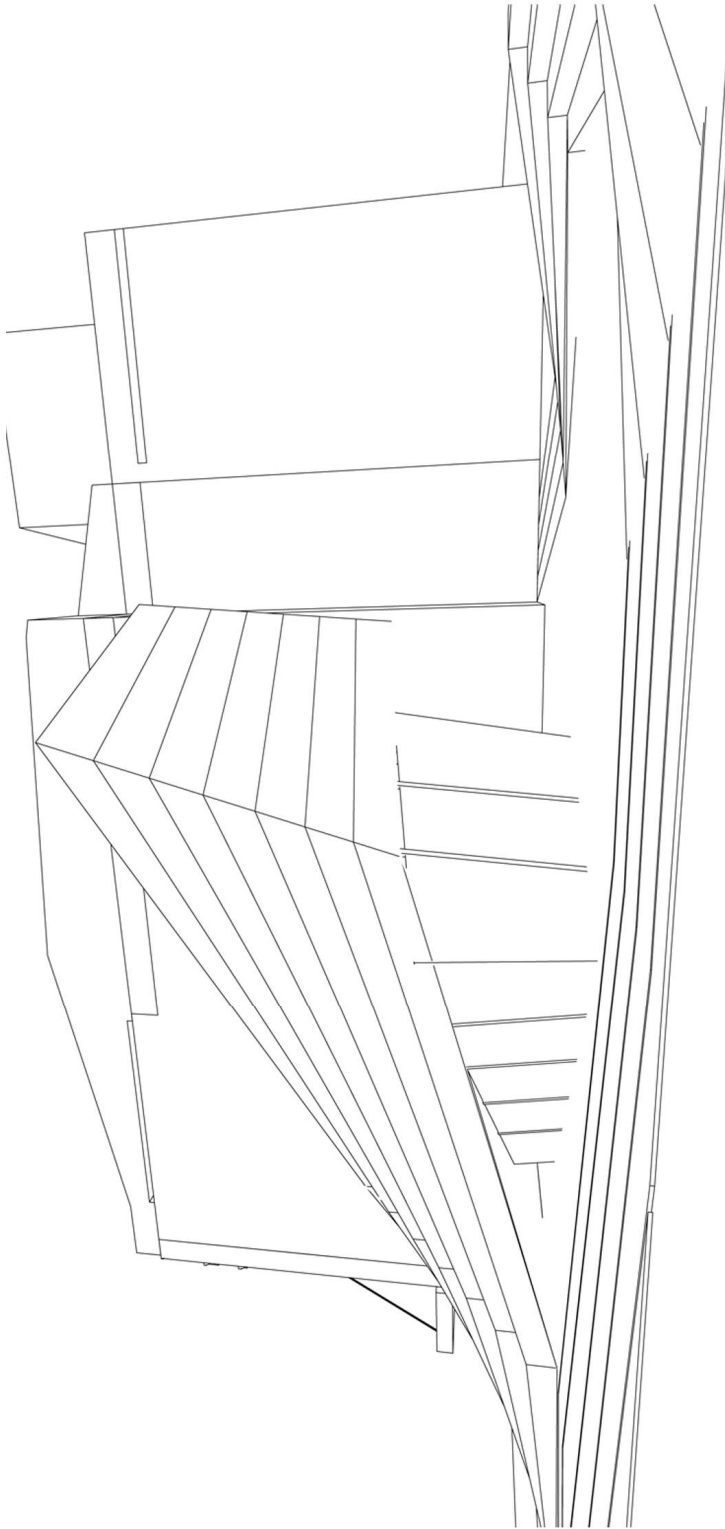


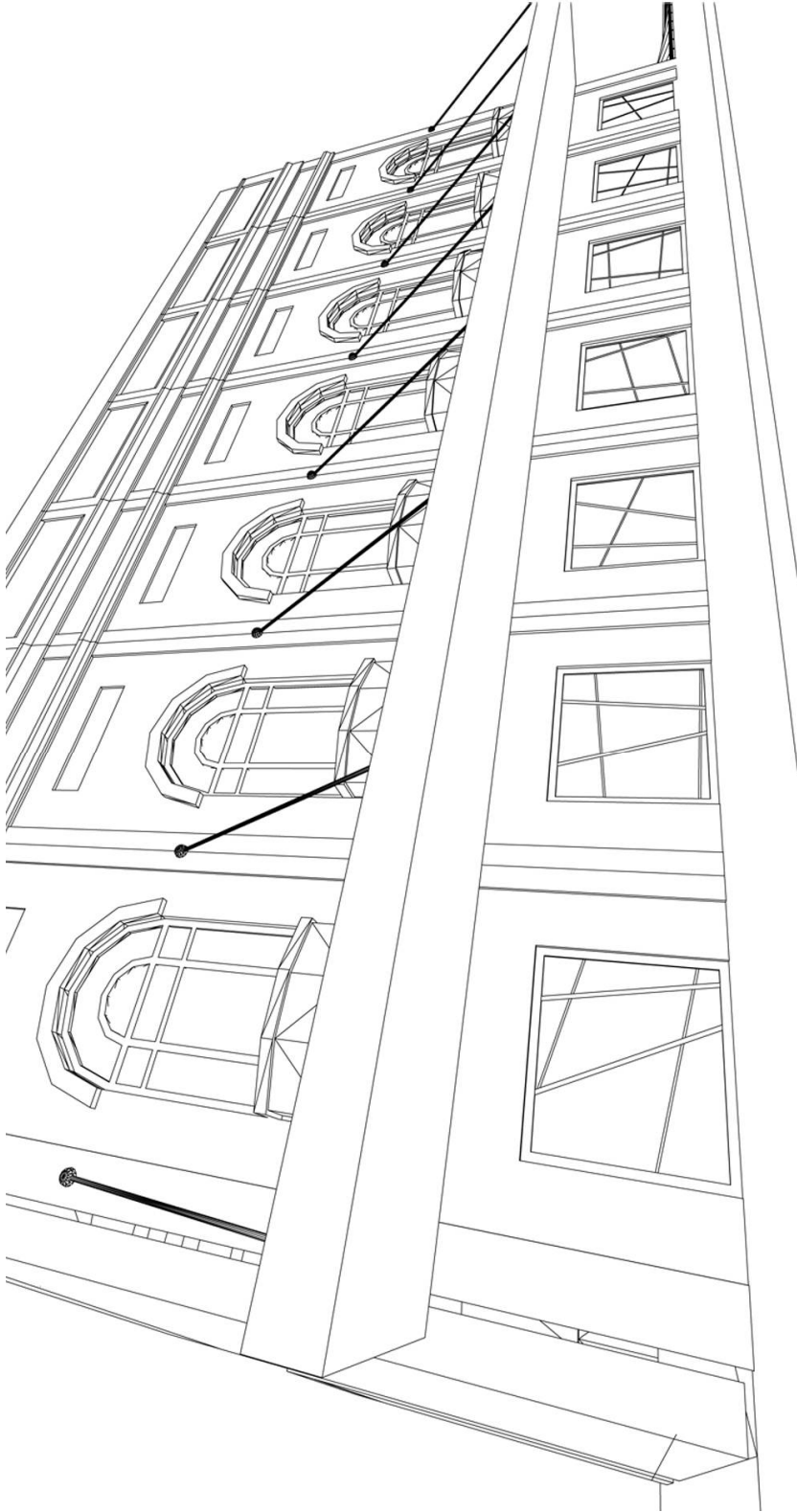
Figure A 12: Studio Interior Elevations



**Figure A 13: Exterior Perspective**



**Figure A 14: Exterior Perspective**

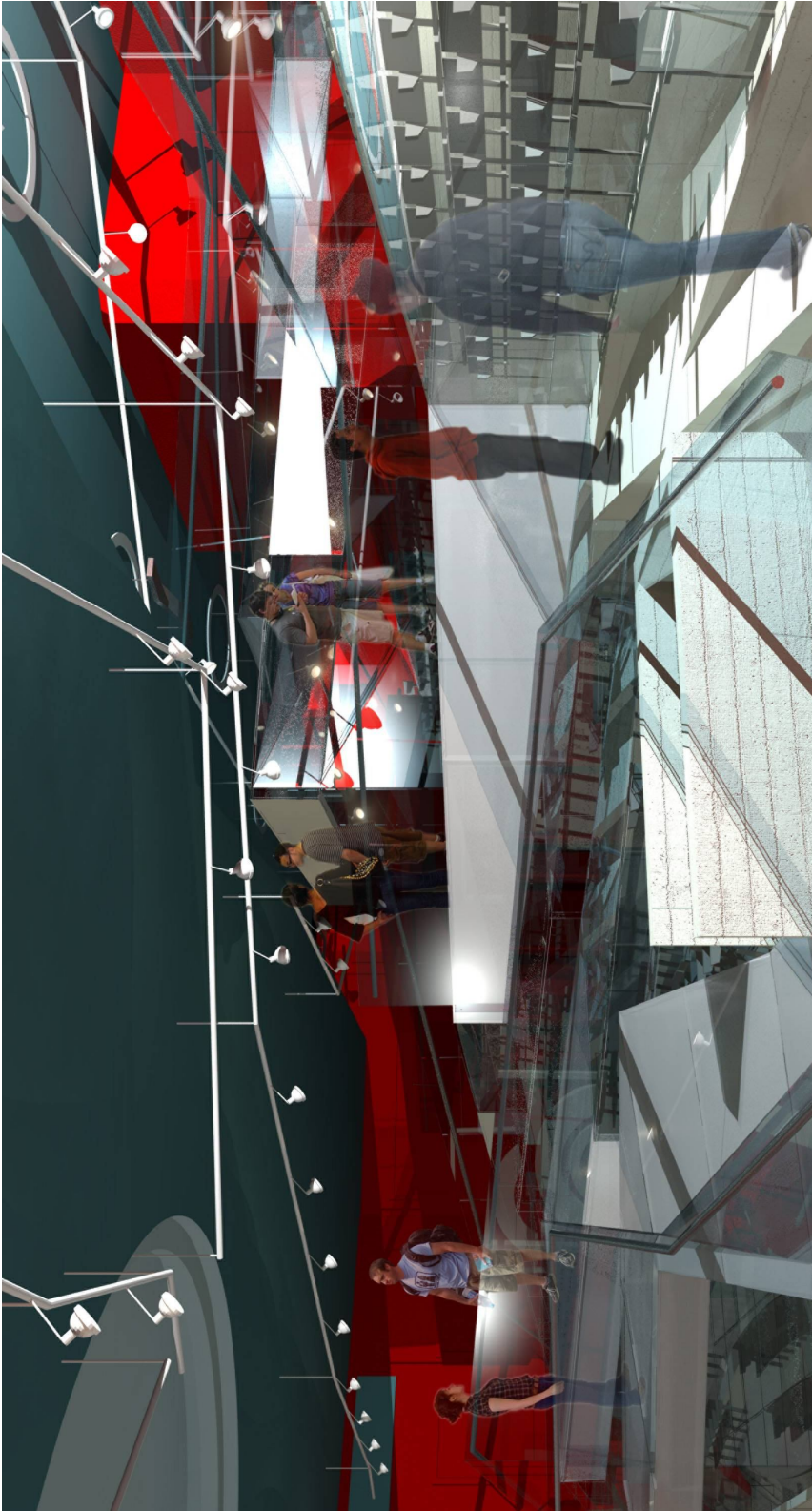


**Figure A 15: Exterior Perspective**



**Figure A 16: Interior Rendering of Second Floor**

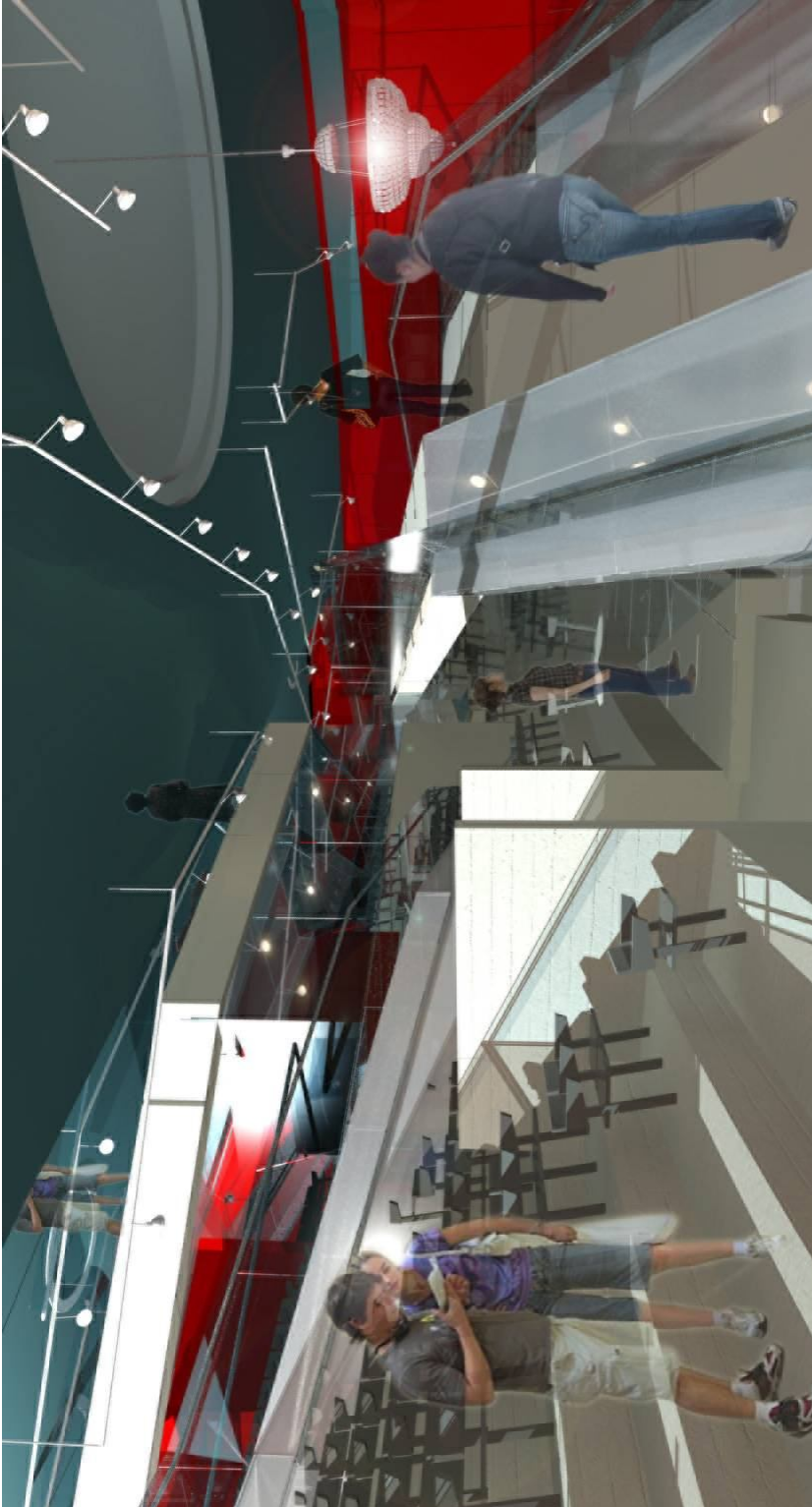




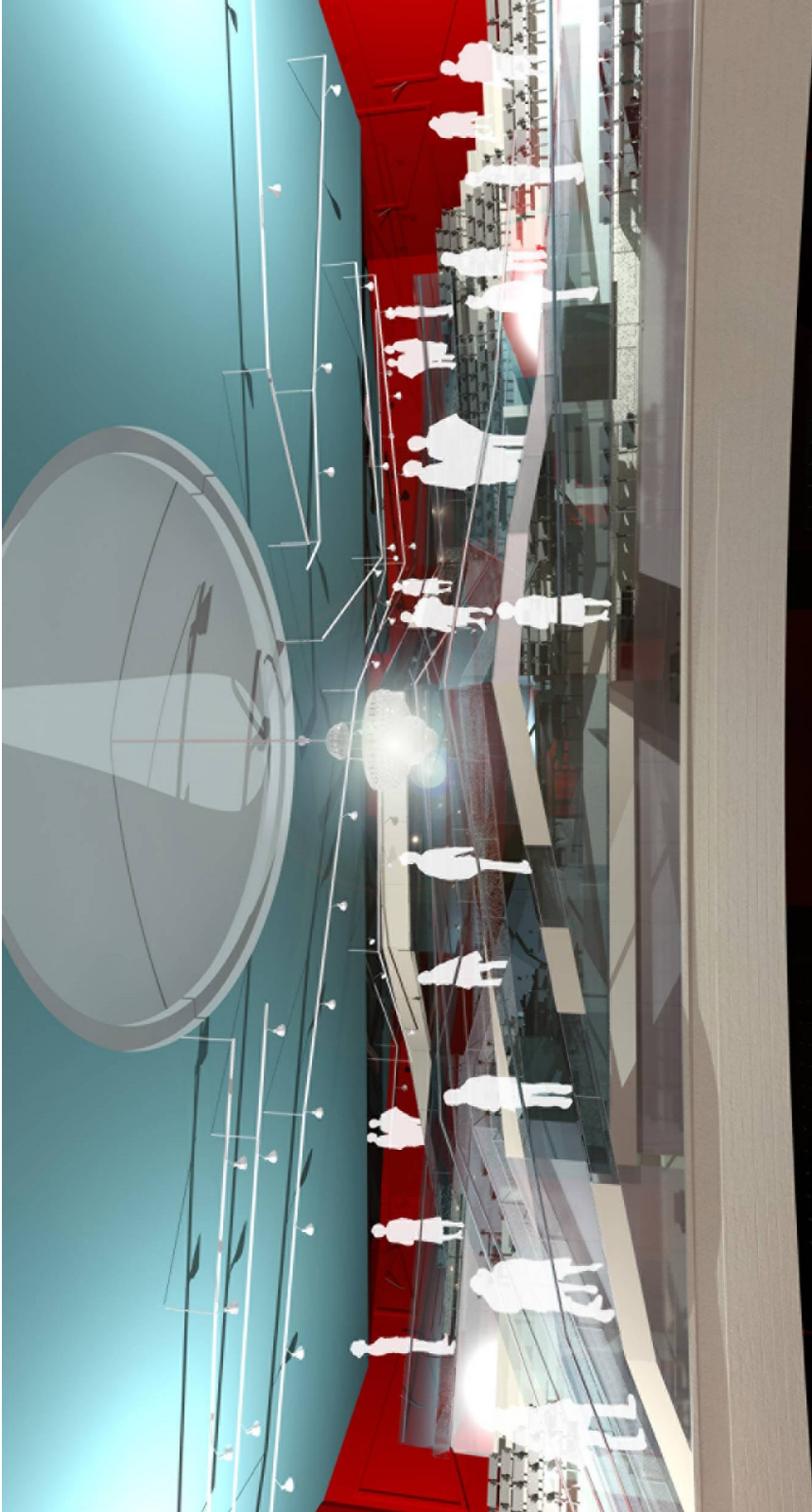
**Figure A 17: Interior Rendering**



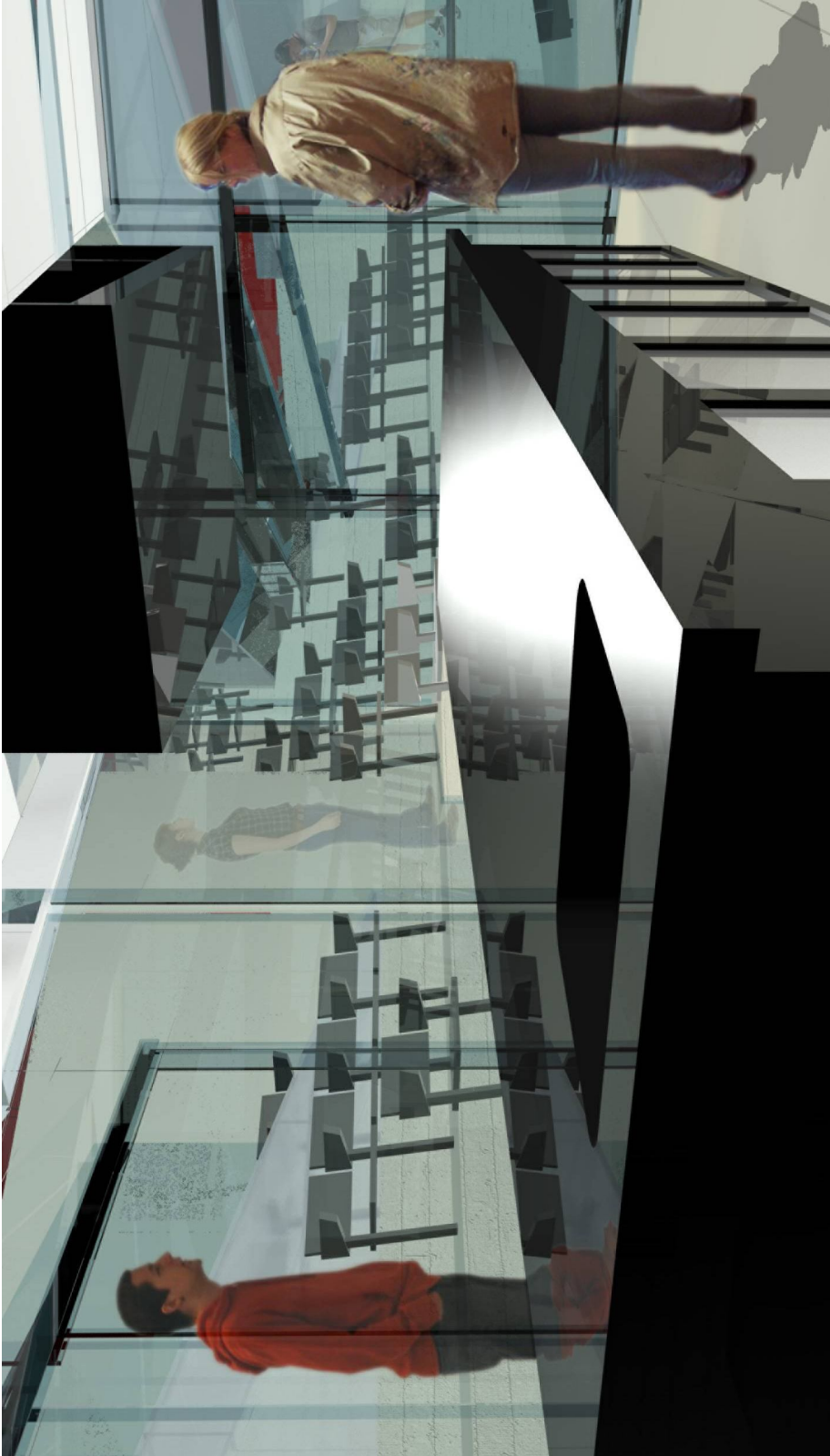
**Figure A 18: Interior Rendering**



**Figure A 19: Interior Rendering**



**Figure A 20: Interior Rendering Showing Extent of Design**



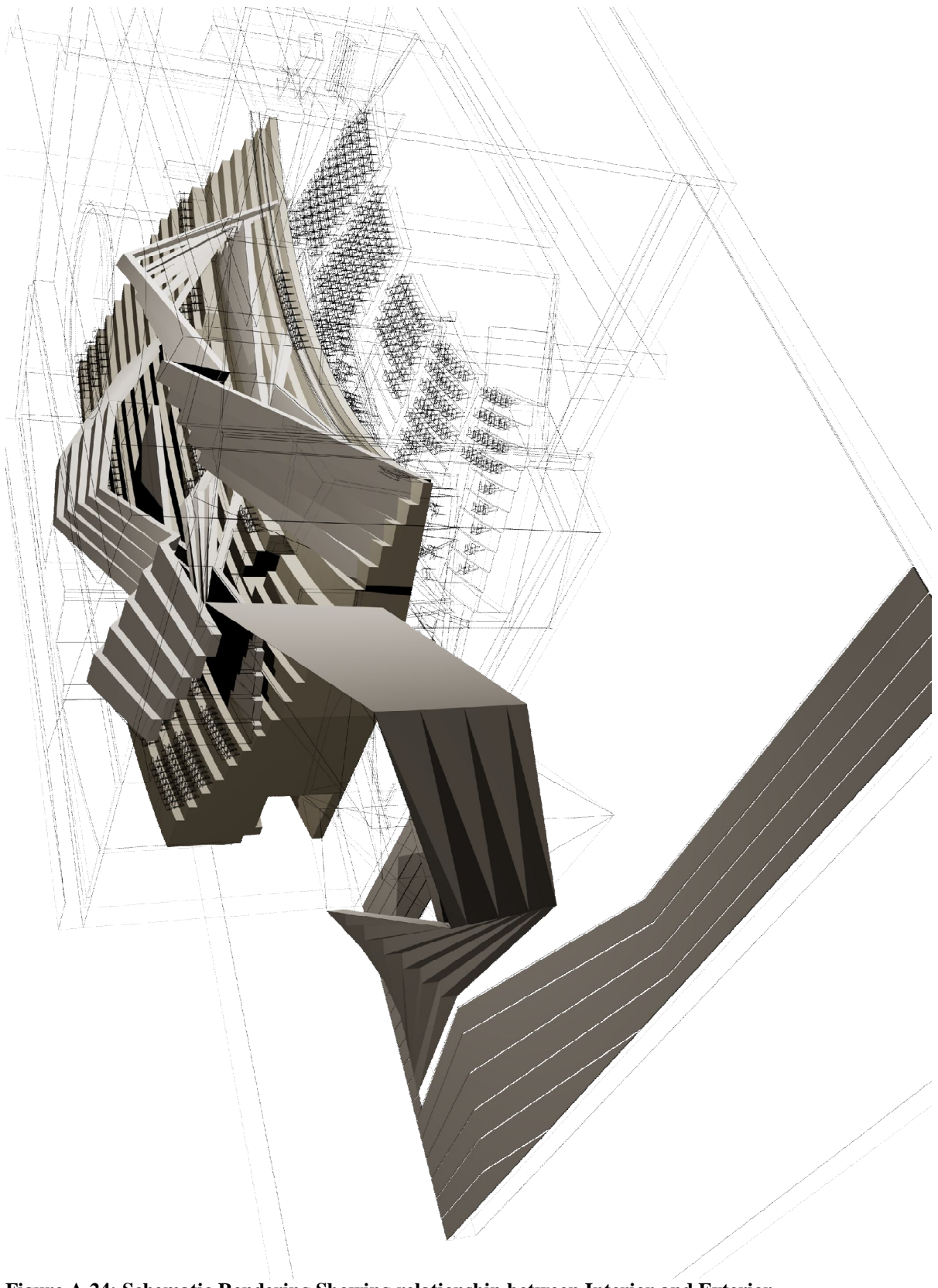
**Figure A 21: Interior Rendering- Studio**



**Figure A 22: Interior Rendering- Studio**

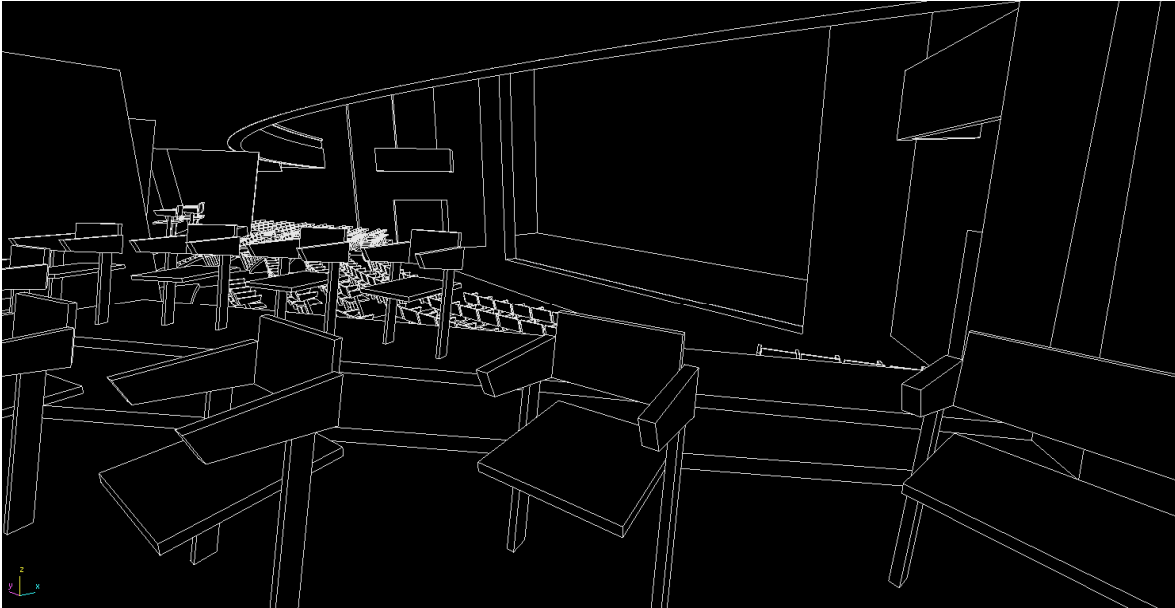


**Figure A 23: Interior Rendering- Studio**

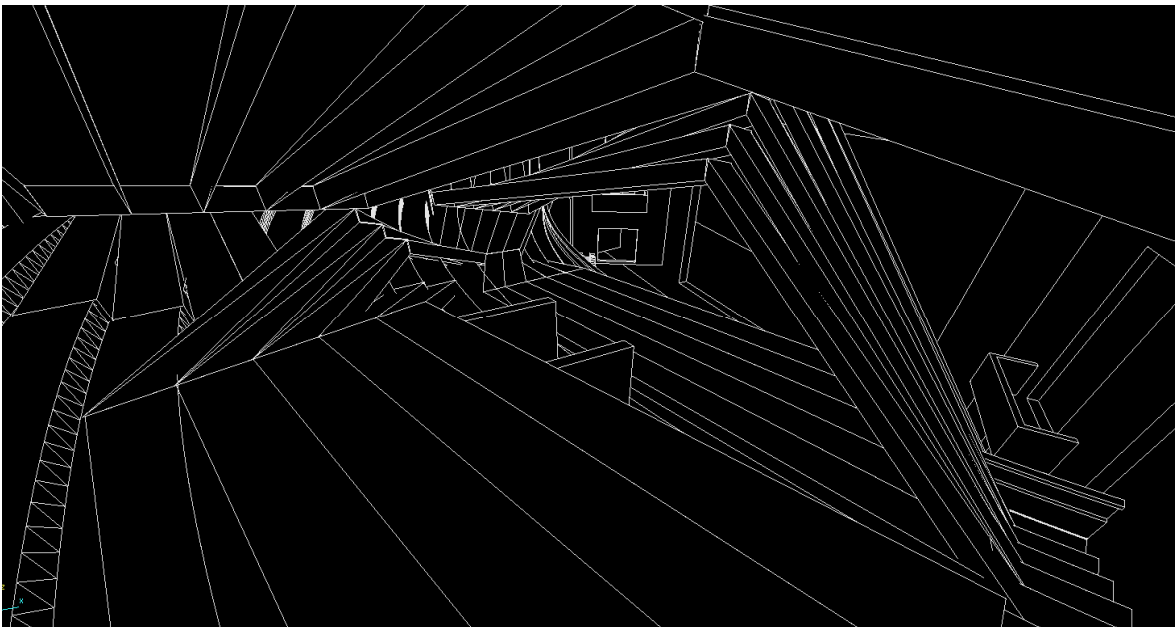


**Figure A 24: Schematic Rendering Showing relationship between Interior and Exterior Developments**

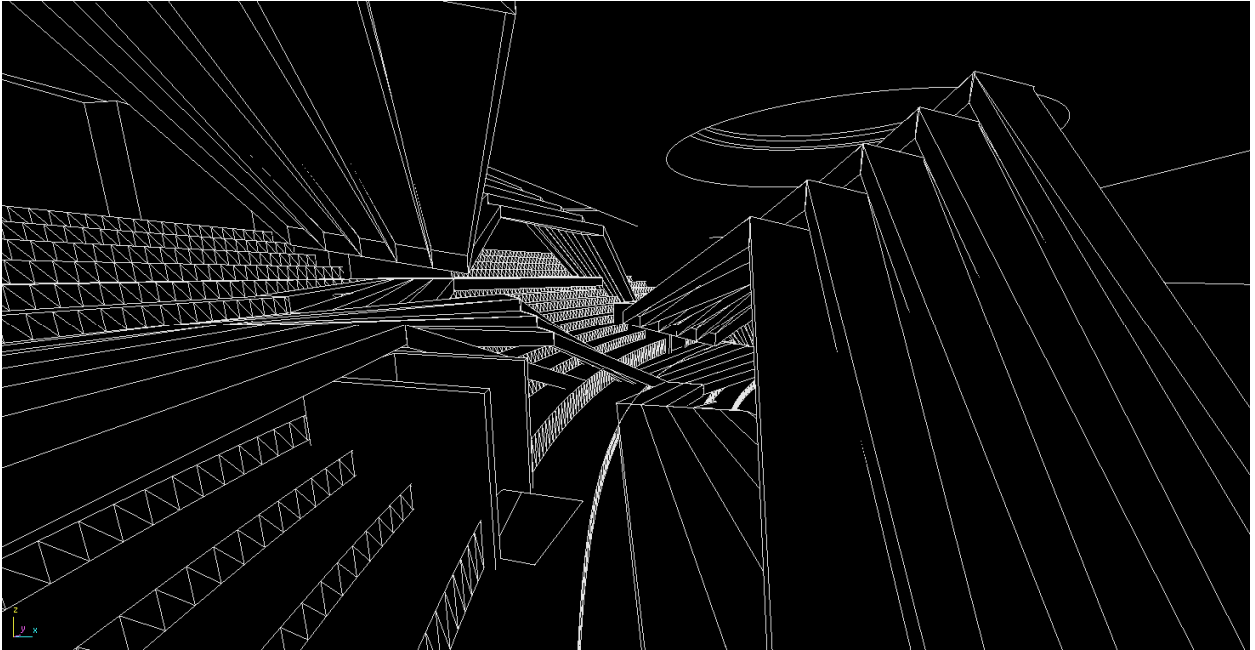




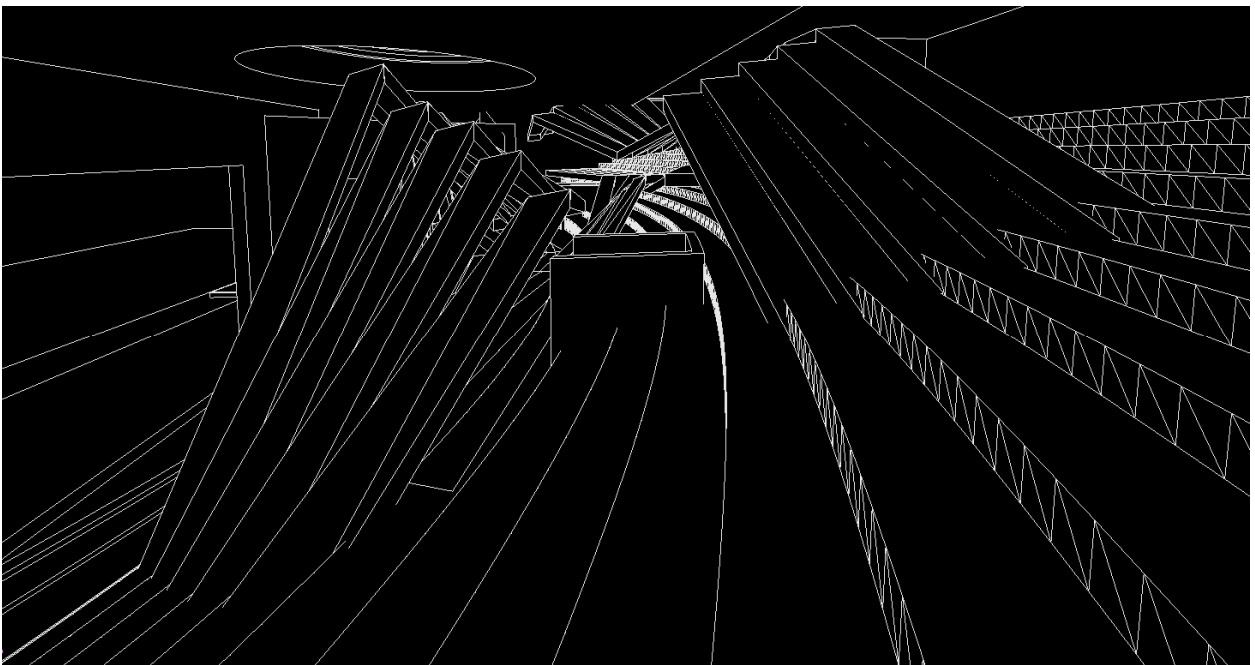
**Figure A 25: Schematic Interior Perspective: Video Projection Hall**



**Figure A 26: Interior Schematic Perspective- Intermediate Stage**



**Figure A 27: : Interior Schematic Perspective- Intermediate Stage**



**Figure A 28: : Interior Schematic Perspective- Intermediate Stage**