

SPATIAL EXPERIENCE IN ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH DANCE,
TIME, AND URBAN CHOREOGRAPHY

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Abstract

Space and time are two inseparable parts of architecture. The human body experiences space through movement in different ways than dancing. A dancer carves the space through dancing. Sensorial experiences have an impact on architectural design. If sequencing and relating experiences with the human body and senses can be related through architecture, how can art and architecture be experienced through space with dancing and time? Time is the tool and opportunity to measure and experience every moment we have, as our body moves through space. Capturing every sequence that we experience in a space is the exact and the honesty of the space, the honesty of human nature. How all the experiences, choreography, and time can help in designing a larger scale of a city but not just a single building? Buildings, streets, sidewalks, spaces between them, and every single element in a city and our everyday life creates new experiences for us, as designers how can we design according to choreography to provide these experiences? Through a series of observations of dance rehearsal, interviews with architects and dancers, and readings of philosophers, such as Juhani Pallasmaa, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, John Berger, Sigfried Giedion, and Susan Sontag concerned with the relationship of time to our experiences through space, and specific dance theoreticians, a discussion unfolds to consider the essential relationship between architecture, time, and dance.

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Introduction

Imagine you are sitting on a sofa in a small hut in a cold snowy night, some woods are burning in the fireplace, you can see the flames that are making a lovely contrast with the cold harsh winter, the smell of the coffee which is in the cup on the table, and your loved one is dancing with a piece of pleasant music that is playing from the gramophone besides the wall, isn't it beautiful and memorable? Architect Steven Holl states "The way spaces feel the sound and smell of these places has equal weight to the way things look."¹ We feel a space not just by our eyes but with all our senses. All memories and all feelings are part of what architecture should be. All our movements, spatial interpretations define architectural space.

Imagine that you were dancing, the feeling that you get from the space, and the environment is unique. A dancer does not simply move in the space but she or he carves the space to express the feeling and the act of movement. What are the role of memory and the remembrance of space in architecture and the architectural design process?

Time plays an important role here. Every memory, every movement, every emotion that we feel is related to time. Philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes in *Phenomenology of perception* "Our body is in space, or in time. Our body inhabits space and time."² A dancer carves the space through time, a photographer captures a moment of time, and how does architecture engage the space and time?

Spatial Experience

Spaces that we inhabit have a direct influence on our understanding of space and the ways we see and explore. Space is the cause of our memories, not time³ says Gaston Bachelard. Every single room has its own unique feeling and we can experience it differently than other places or it might have similarities with experiences we had before this is where memory comes into play. Memories have an undeniable role in our comprehension of quintessential space. Bachelard introduces the word "topophilia" in his writings to explain the importance of body and physical experience in our interpretation of space. He explains "topophilia" as the love of space and describes that our mind cannot understand the space as much as our body does. What about a dancer? How does a dancer think about space? Joanna Kotze a famous dancer and choreographer states that space and movement in space gives her the feeling of being alive.⁴

Spatial Experiences and Consciousness

Architectural spaces and their relationship to the human body and consciousness in spaces that we inhabit have a direct influence on our understanding of space and the ways we see and explore. "Phenomenology thus means examining a phenomenon of consciousness in its dimension of consciousness."⁵ The phenomenological architecture is defined as "Looking at" architecture from within the consciousness experiencing it. Experiencing in architectural spaces is highly related to inhabitants' consciousness in a way that the definition of feelings and experiences of the atmosphere is dependent on it. As Pallasmaa explains "The phenomenology of architecture seeks the inner language of the building."⁶ What is the definition of the inner language of a building? The inner language of a building is what it is offering to its audience, the materiality, texture, light, shadow,

senses, experiences derived from the space, and by experiencing all these components a new dimension is included into our feelings. All these experiences and interactions made with space, the private dialogue made between the human and the sequences in space is what architecture could offer. What about imagination? According to the Cambridge dictionary, the definition of reality is the state of things as they are, rather than as they imagined to be, but Pallasmaa adds another layer to this definition, he includes imagination into the architecture realm. He states "The quality of architecture does not lie in the sense of reality that it expresses, but quite reverse, in its capacity for awakening our imagination."⁷ Architecture could take its audience to another realm, and that world would be a world of imagination and poetry.

Architecture is poetry that shapes that imagination. It involves the spirit and creates a memorable experience worth exploring. Architecture and poetry are flowing in the same realm. Poetry is the solidity of human infinite sensation, in a glimpse of a moment, in the shape of words, while architecture is the art of creating spaces and expressing it poetically. This relationship exists between the building and its site. "Architecture and site should have an experiential connection, a metaphysical link, a poetic link."⁸

Dance

Philosopher professor and independent researcher Maxine Sheets-Johnstone writes "If body movement is the object of the image, then body movement will appear imaginatively as a form having no actual existence."⁹ What would a dancer's movement look like? Does the dancer feel and imagines her/his movement the same way as the audience? The movements might seem the same for both but the feeling will not be the same for sure. All we see is an image of a dancer's body and that body in movement. A dancer's movement has a direct connection to her/his consciousness that is the reason for the correct movement which gets interpreted exactly the same way that the dancer intends. According to Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, movements of a dancer is an imaginary form which has a linear form, a trajectory or appears as a flight. What if movement in the space is not a linear form, not a flight form? What if it has a different shape? I believe it depends on the viewer's personal thoughts, and perceptions. Joana answer to this question was "I don't think it would be one shape. It would be all of the shapes the body can make, which is different for each person. I also don't think of movement as shapes, form maybe, but not shapes."¹⁰

When an audience sees a specific shape in

dancers' movement this means that it is the interpretation of the dancers' movement as that specific shape. When a dancer moves in the space her/his movement occurs in audience imagination and represents a shape in their mind. This is where our consciousness comes into play. With the help of conscious human beings are able to interpret what they see or feel of the movement, and this is a unique gift. These interpretations are individually based, everyone has their own perception of the space and movement. Maxine Sheets-Johnstone describes how the audience interprets a dancers movement, she explains when a dancer moves in a circular shape that does not mean that there is a circle in the space but that circle is an interpretation of circle in our minds as she states in her book "We form an imaginative *Gestalt* of the movement by apprehending each moment of the circle as a spatial-temporal present in relation to a spatial-temporal past and future: the present is a flight out of the past toward a future."¹¹ How a dancer does interprets and feels her/his movement in the space? How do they know that they have fulfilled the action or the movement they were intending? More importantly, how do they feel when they are at the reaching point? This is again where consciousness plays the role. The dancer's consciousness helps them to be aware of what the intention was. There is an inheritance matter by the time a dancer moves in the space. The dancer inherits the space by moving in it and carving the space. Joana explains that she feels her movements in the space are interpretations of drawings in the space in the moment. The feeling of being alive is what Joanna feels when she is moving in the space as a dancer.¹²

The question that remains is the relationship between the body and the objects in the space? How much can objects affect our feelings and sensations in space? According to Maxine Sheets-Johnstone "an object has many relationships to other things,"¹³ but how is this connection made? How are we influenced by the relationship between the body and objects in space? What about architecture? As architect Antoine Predock states "The body moves through space every day, and in architecture in cities that can be orchestrated,"¹⁴ architectural spaces are designed for people to inhabit and experience every day.

The only female writer of Futurist Manifesto, Valentine de Saint-Point explains the communication between a dancer and space when moving, and mostly these communications are sensual. According to Futurists, dancing and life have a direct relationship together. They believed that dance has a structure which is a conceptual notion of life. When a dancer creates a movement and motion covered and involved

with a specific rhythm evokes the feeling of living. Futurists were not chasing the notion of movement only by investigating the sequence of movement but also with the quintessence of the sensorial experiences and dynamic of the space.

Merce Cunningham

Merce Cunningham is known as the most influential twentieth century choreographer and dancer believed that dance movements do not need to relate the rhythm of the music or the stage set and they can be performed individually and separately but in harmony. This enlightens the reason why he did not practice dancing with music nor did his dancers. Rehearsing without a music companion or any information about the set made Cunningham's works unique and exquisite. The dance, music, and set would be encountered at the time of the final performance which unfolded in front of the audience's eyes. The fundamental nature of dance, motion, music, and sight could meet at the specific moment which he calls it "common time". He believed that "It is hard for many people to accept that dancing has nothing in common with music other than time and the division of time."¹⁵

As for myself, I cannot interpret what intention is behind dancers' movement in Cunningham's works. When I see a video of Cunningham's works I need to research the work to understand it, which I think is not good. At least some honest interpretations should be seen from a dance performance for people who are not professional dancers or just watching a dance performance for pleasure. Sometimes it's not just the matter of enjoying the piece but it's the matter of understanding what the dancer is trying to explain, and I find it hard to interpret Cunningham's pieces. Dividing music and dance provides the opportunity for the audience to see and feel the innocent and honest movements of the dancer, but also music helps us to interpret it easily.

Merce Cunningham was able to separate music from dance and combine rhythm to the dancers' inner rhythm. His philosophy of choreography provides the audience with comprehension of space and its limitations. The separation between body and space planes. Kenneth King in his article writes about Merce Cunningham's structure of dancing and he states "Dipping actually plays with scooping out space on different planes and axes using the curvilinear gradients of gravity to accent the fall, swoop, or drop of the body."¹⁶

Different dances have different techniques that following them helps the audience to feel the intention and essence of the dance. Certain

stepping and movements in ballet provide a perception opportunity to the viewer to acknowledge the dance and its meaning, on the other hand, modern dance has to work harder to reach this goal, because it is free of the rules that ballet dancing has. As Cunningham notes another factor that provides the opportunity to measure movement in the space is body weight.¹⁷

Rudolph Laban's Kinesphere

Perhaps to understand more about dance and body movement we should take a look at Rudolf Laban's theory and system named 'Kinesphere'. A system that captures the movement of the body in space. The body is surrounded by a sphere that is indiscernible and has 27 major routes. It is connected to human body movement and changes with every change in body movement.

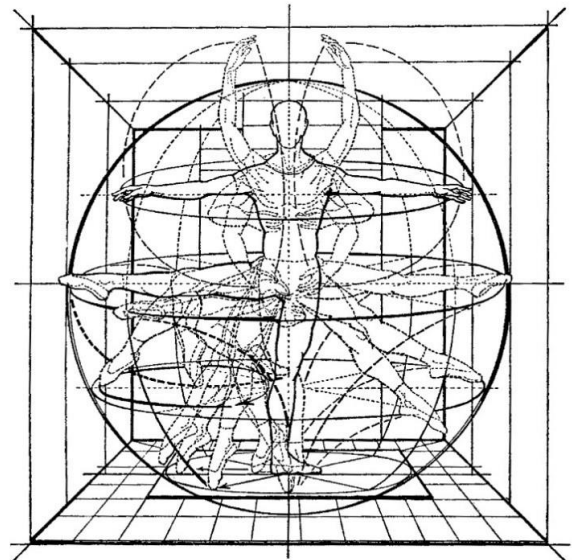


Figure 1. Laban's Kinesphere

Furthermore, he introduces another system named 'Space Harmony' which is involved with the movement on 112 inclinations in a total of 24 directions. This is to help examine space and movement harmony. "Laban describes this harmony in space with three laws: (a) law of equilibrium: how directions within the Kinesphere link to stability (3D in dimensional scale) and lability (diagonal directions, linked to harmony as allowing a flow of movement); (b) law of flowing-from-the-center: each movement initiated by any part of the body starts from the center or affects it (responsible for sequentially and connectivity in the body); (c) law of countermovement: each movement happening in one or more directions contains its stabilizing counterpart."¹⁸

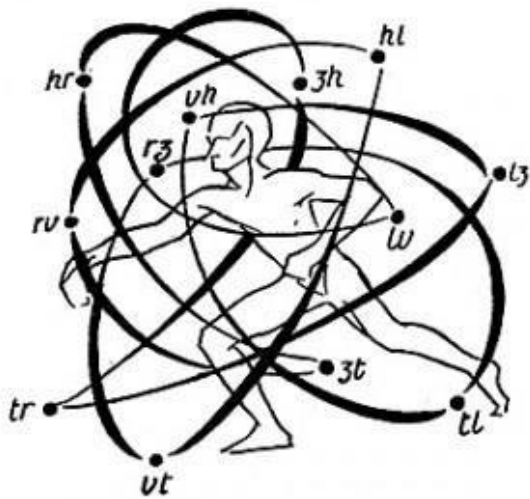


Figure 2. Laban's Kinesphere

Time

Time is a tool that allows us to measure and understand space. All senses and emotions can be felt when they are given time. This means that time plays a fundamental role in the perception of space. If we are not given enough time to feel and analyze the space then there would be no perception nor any spatial experience. Elvan Dervisoglu in her article describes how the body reacts in a space with time considerations, she states "The relations that appear in space are recorded through time and cognitive association materialized space."¹⁹ The importance of the time in dancing is obvious. When a dancer moves through space based on a specific timely rhythm then the sequencing and succession are achieved.

Time allows the dancer to comprehend the rhythm, perceive the feeling, and then she/he can flow and liberate her/his body in the space. As Cunningham states "The fortunate thing in dancing is that space and time cannot be disconnected, and everyone can see and understand that. A body still is taking up just as much space and time as a body moving. The result is that neither one nor the other--moving or being still--is more or less important, except it's nice to see a dancer moving. But the moving becomes clearer if the space and time around the moving are one of its opposite stillness."²⁰

What will happen if we liberate the relation between time and space? When there is no tool to measure the movement there would be no movements, all the movements would be meaningless. But what if space and time are

limiting the movement? Imagine how many movement sequences can occur when there is no limitation?

Methodology

This study includes the study of different approaches to physical and emotional feelings and movements through space. Space is not an easy topic nor out of importance. It is important to take space into consideration of its impact on human life. What is the role of time here? How time influences space and the spatial environment? How can we interpret architectural spatial experience through time, and dance?

Several different methodologies are used in this research to fully gain the essential value of the research such as observational studies, interviews with architects and dancers, case studies relevant to space and time and movement projects, and related literature reviews. These methods will help to understand how different factors and elements are important in feeling the space and interpreting spatial impacts on the human body and how spatial experiences get influenced by architecture and time.

Case Studies

Oskar Schlemmer

Oskar Schlemmer was a German Choreographer and artist. He was a teacher and sculptor in the years of Bauhaus. The idea of abstraction in dancing was owned by him. Triadisches Ballett is a dance which evolved by Oskar Schlemmer.

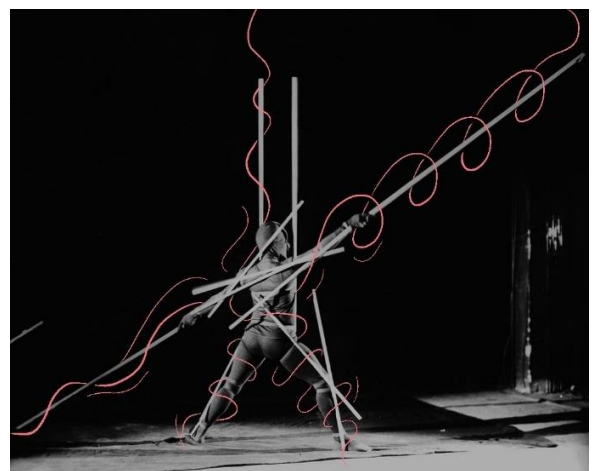


Figure 3. Oskar Schlemmer, *Stick dance*, 1928

These dance performances done by Bauhaus dances are representing body movement and motion in space. We can see a representation of movement, form, order, and mechanics. The way that he tries to illustrate the motion of the human body in space while dancing is interesting including the laws of motion of the human body in space. What is clear from his work is that the human body gets influenced directly by the space as well as the space that gets influenced by the human body effectively. (Figure 4)

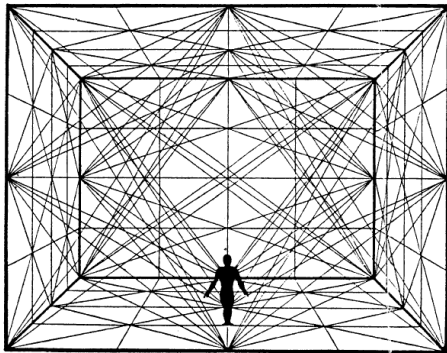


Figure 3. *The laws of cubical space*, drawing by Schlemmer, 1924.

Figure 4. *The laws of cubical space*, drawing by Schlemmer, 1924.

Oskar Schlemmer in his performances tried to invent a new way of creating movements and motions that could unchain the dance and movement from its connection to the specific space like stage and bind it with new tools to achieve new spatial sequences and experiences.

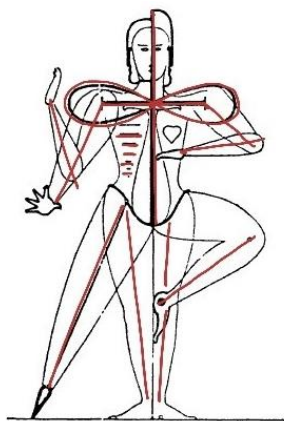


Figure 5. *The laws of motion of the human body in space*, drawing by Schlemmer, 1924.

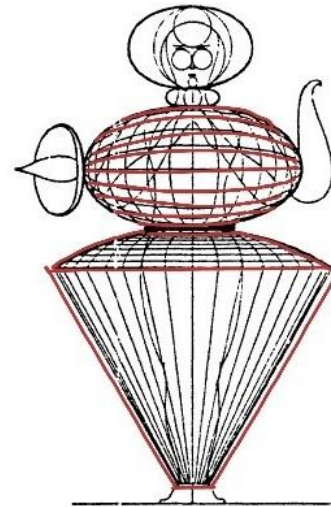


Figure 6. *The metaphysical forms of expression*, drawing by Schlemmer, 1927

Tesseract of Time

This performance is a collaboration of ideas between Steven Holl and Jessica Lang. In this project we can find the relationship between architecture and other arts and their combination together. Also one of the main ideas in this project is time and its relation to all pieces of art. The design for the stage and choreography was based on four main ideas, "Under, In, On, and Over."



Figure 7. *Tesseract of Time*, Photo Credit: Todd Rosenberg



Figure 8. Tesseract of Time, Photo Credit: Todd Rosenberg



Figure 9. Tesseract of Time, Photo Credit: Todd Rosenberg



Figure 10. Tesseract of Time, Photo credit: Todd Rosenberg

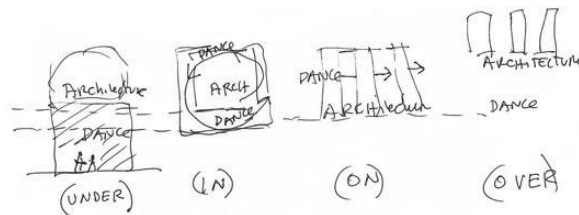


Figure 11. Spatial concepts, Drawings by Steven Holl

The Event of a Thread by Ann Hamilton

The event was displayed in December 2012 in New York City. In the beginning, the first thing that catches the eye is the huge white sheet that is hanging and is dancing in the middle of the hall. The movement of the sheet is a planned choreography made by the swings hung around the room and have a steady pendulum motion. The feeling that the artist is trying to express is very beautiful and mostly about floating in the space, which is repeating over and over. Calmness and

Nostalgia and ecstasy are the feeling that space is illustrating, the pure sensation can be felt through space along with the significant design.



Figure 12. The event of a Thread, Paul Octavious



Figure 13. The event of a Thread, Paul Octavious

Color Tunnel by Olafur Eliasson

Color Tunnel is a one-way arched walkway that is made of triangular panels of acrylic colored glass and mirrors, it represents movement in the form of walk-way. The colors and mirrors seem like they are reflecting dream and happiness.

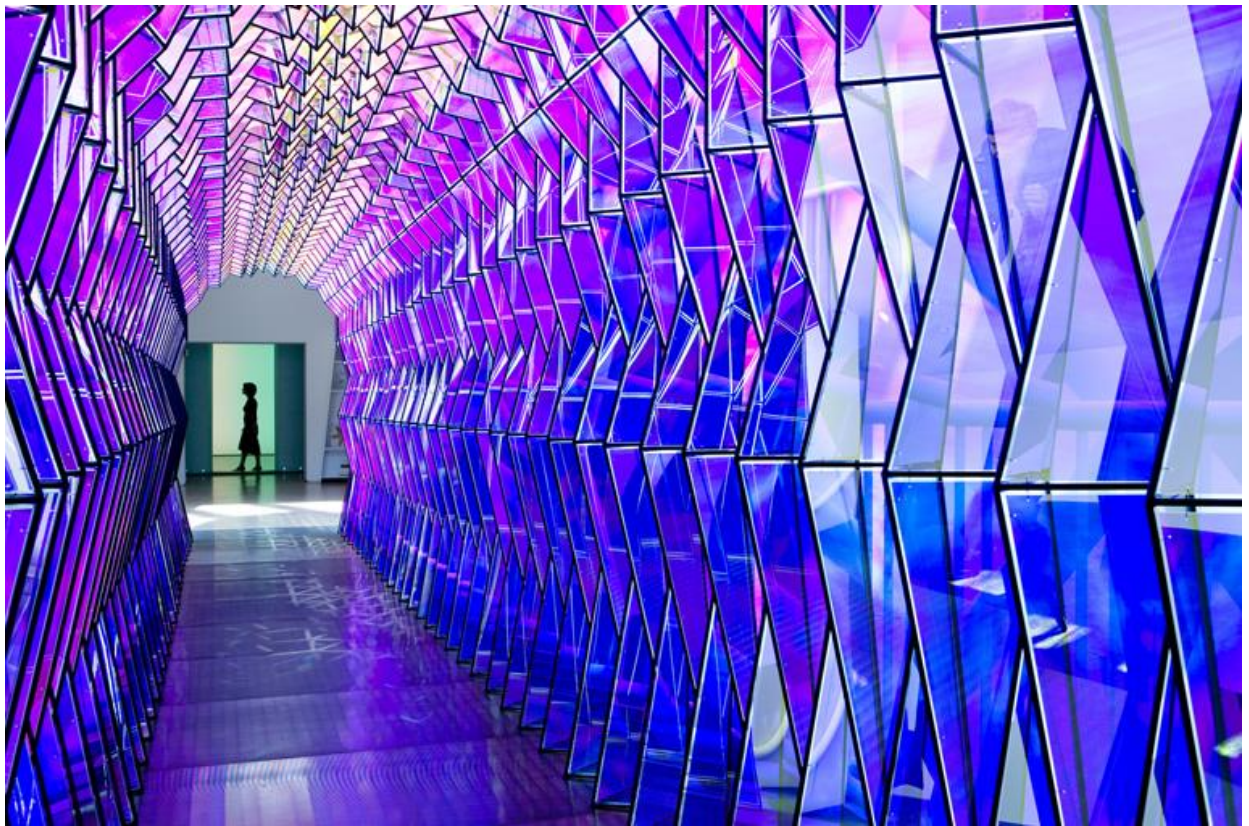


Figure 14. Color Tunnel, photo by Olafur Eliasson

Eliasson in his artworks tries to connect the audience with his pieces physically, and mostly these pieces are related to experiences of the space. Exploring the space, walking through it, and explore it in various ways is his aim. This provides the audience to create a physical and emotional connection with the artwork. In all his works there are some interesting abstract feelings and ideas that evoke a variety of memories and feelings.



Figure 15. Olafur Eliasson, "Rainbow assembly," 2016



Figure 16. Olafur Eliasson, "The Weather Project," 2003

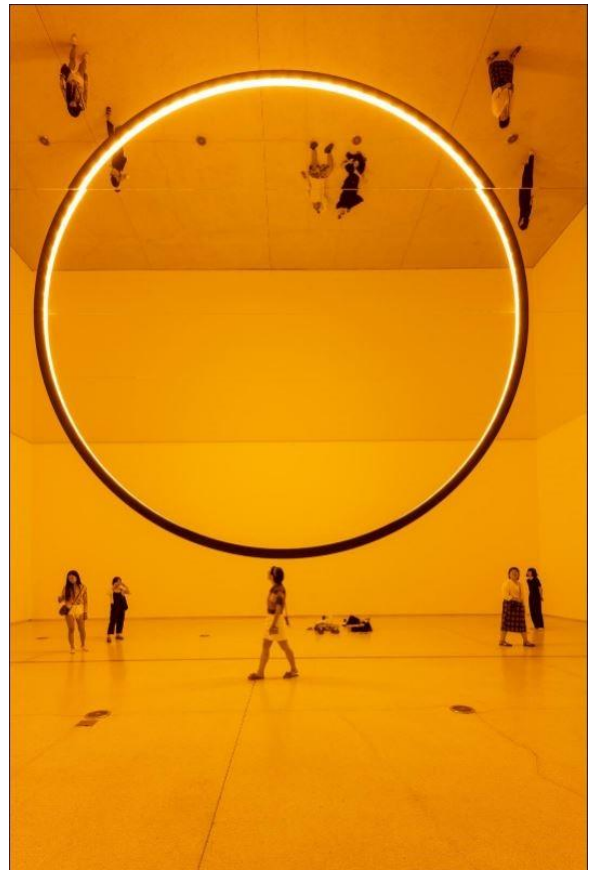


Figure 18. Olafur Eliasson, "The unspeakable openness of things," 2018



Figure 17. Olafur Eliasson, "Rainbow assembly," 2016

Discussion

One of the methodologies to better understand sensorial experience in space is observation. I analyzed dance rehearsal in a dance studio located in Phillips Hall, Miami University. "Being in the moment," this is a statement that can be felt and seen in every piece of art, as for dancing. It was really interesting for me that dancers and choreographers care about this statement deeply. The meaning behind all movements and forms that their body shapes all are related to being in the moment and illustrating it to the audience. In one dance performance, the truth about the dancers' movement is hidden, they try to not just tell a story but also to share their life and experiences.

The observation I conducted helped me to understand the emotions behind a dancer's movement, and how these feelings are transformed into space through those movements. Being able to move freely and breaking the space and time rules through deep emotional movements seems dreamy.

It is interesting to consider how the dancers used the dance studio and created a good atmosphere to move, and bring their ideas to life.

Combination of movements with music was fascinating and the rhythm played a practical rule in it. I was deeply involved in the rehearsal and all movements that without noticing I was moving in the space as they were moving to capture all those breath taking movements. I believe one of the important factors was lighting. The way that the space was lit with natural and artificial light was capturing the audience's focus on the center and only on the dancers and their movement. It is noteworthy to mention that reflection also played a significant role in capturing my attention. Mirrors are one of the main characters in any dance studio, they are useful for dancers to examine their movements by seeing them in the mirror, but also in reflecting light, reflecting the atmosphere, or even emotions. Mirrors were not the only elements of reflection, also the floor was a perfect reflector as it was brighter and compelling in my eyes. The reflection on the floor seemed more alive than the one in the mirror, it was moving with the dancer, it was closer to them.



Figure 19. Perception of dancers' movements - drawing by the Leila Naghdian

I could feel and understand their feeling by their movements, body language, and posture. The way that the dancers moved their hand through space, or spin in the air seemed like they are breaking the space and trying to inject their feeling into space. Flexibility and moving like a feather flying in the space, oh it felt like a dream. The way that space gave the opportunity to them to be able to do and move as they want; the ability to trust each other seemed appealing. Body strength was one of the important ability as how they were prepared and were able to do all the movements and carry their partners, and trust their partners were all factors that space

presents to its audience. Space is kind of a trustworthy element that is represented. I think it is one of the basic factors of space that portrays the idea of trust.



Figure 20. Photo by Leila Naghdian

Keeping other performances pictures and dance history on the wall obviously was an interpretation of how much history and learning from their experiences, their honor, and failures is important.

Apart from all the architectural aspects and also dance aspects, it was very interesting for me that I enjoyed being in that place for one and half hours and did not think about anything but their dancing and movement.



Figure 21. Photo by Leila Naghdian



Figure 22. Photo by Leila Naghdian

Conclusion

Through the developing process of research, I understand that spatial experience has an undeniable impact on the human body, and there are lots of factors involved in it, such as time and movement. There is harmony between architectural spaces and all pieces of art. All architectural spaces have a direct impact on feelings, moods, and also understanding of space. As architects, we should design buildings with considerations of sensorial and physical impacts on the human body. All architectural spaces need to have their specific poetry, a poetry that evokes good memories and feelings for humanity. Architecture serves human beings and is responsible for their well beings. There are lots of factors and elements involved in achieving this important matter but if we as architects just recall all our own feeling in the space it would be easy to understand what's the intention of creating environment and spaces that unfolds emotion and spirit.

Notes

¹ Juhani, Pallasmaa, "The Eyes Of The Skin," introduction by Steven Holl, Wiley-Academy, 2005

² Maurice, Merleau-Ponty, "Phenomenology of Perception," Editions Gallimard, Routledge, 1945, 139

³ Gaston Bachelard, "Poetics of Space," Presses Universitaires de France, 1957

⁴ Joanna Kotze, online interview by Leila Naghdian, July 20, 2020

⁵ Juhani Pallasmaa. *The Geometry of Feeling: A Look at the Phenomenology of Architecture*, Kate Nesbitt, 450, Princeton Architectural Press, 1996

⁶ Juhani Pallasmaa. *The Geometry of Feeling: A Look at the Phenomenology of Architecture*, Kate Nesbitt, 450, Princeton Architectural Press, 1996

⁷ Juhani Pallasmaa. *The Geometry of Feeling: A Look at the Phenomenology of Architecture*, Kate Nesbitt, 452, Princeton Architectural Press, 1996

⁸ Steven, Holl. *Anchoring*. 9, Princeton Architecture Press. 1996.

⁹ Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, "the phenomenology of dance," chapter title "The Imaginative Space of Dance," (Temple University Press, 2015), 92

¹⁰ Joanna Kotze, online interview by Leila Naghdian, July 20, 2020

¹¹ Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, "the phenomenology of dance," chapter title "The Imaginative Space of Dance," (Temple University Press, 2015), 92

¹² Joanna Kotze, online interview by Leila Naghdian, July 20, 2020

¹³ Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, "the phenomenology of dance," chapter title "The Imaginative Space of Dance," (Temple University Press, 2015), 92

¹⁴ Antoine Predock, "Antoine Predock Quotes," https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/antoine_predock_556334

¹⁵ Merce, Cunningham, "The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader," Edited by Teresa Brayshaw, Noel Witts, 1996

¹⁶ Kenneth, King, "Space Dance and the Galactic Matrix: An Appreciation of Merce Cunningham's "Sounddance"," Chicago Review, Vol. 37, No. 4 (1992), pp. 64

¹⁷ Merce, Cunningham, "Space, Time, and Dance" *Trans/Formations* 1, Wittenborn & Co, 1952, pp. 150-151 <https://www.mercecunningham.org/the-work/writings/space-time-and-dance/>

¹⁸ Anne-Gaelle, Thiriout, "*Space and relationship: An exploration of and a reflection on Laban's spatial concepts in current dance practices*," <https://thespaceintherelationship.wordpress.com/harmony/>

¹⁹ Elvan, Dervisoglu, "Mekan ve Beden Iliskrisi: Mekan Bedenle Kavrayis Uzerinden Degerlendirilmesi," Msc. Thesis Istanbul Technical University, Graduate School of Science Engineering and Technology, 2008

²⁰ Merce, Cunningham, "Space, Time, and Dance" *Trans/Formations* 1, Wittenborn & Co, 1952, pp. 150-151 <https://www.mercecunningham.org/the-work/writings/space-time-and-dance/>

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Addendum

After finishing the writing portion of this thesis in September 2020, the topic and focus of the thesis shifted slightly and evolved in larger-scale design, and became more of an urban scale design.

The start of this change took place after selecting 3 different sites to find a suitable site for this project. The sites were selected based on different criteria such as culture, ethnicity, population, and also it was important to find a site that would accept and adapt to the narrative. At first, I chose 3 different abandoned theaters in Philadelphia, Detroit, and Chicago, and the aim was to help in reviving the theaters and offering the community and the city new experiences and possibilities. For a better understanding of culture and how people would react and adjust to the offered program, I started exploring my hometown Zanzan in Iran. Exploration in my hometown helped me to understand the culture and the relationships that people would make with the built environment especially in downtown and most crowded parts of the city. I chose four different locations in my hometown and the idea of connecting four different locations in a city and defining a dialogue between them provoked the idea of "Urban Choreography."

This idea raised several different questions, how does architecture engage space and time through dance? How can we design a city based on choreography? How can architecture, dance, and time work as a solution to bring communities together? And how urban scaled designs could engage and bring communities together with the help of choreography? The main challenge for me was when I chose Detroit as my site, I needed to find answers to these questions and many more from a city that I did not have any information about. So I started exploring and investigating the city of Detroit in-depth.

Detroit was founded in 1701 by French colonists and was named from the Detroit River. The growth of the city was influenced by several different reasons such as the variation in population at different times. Immigrations from Europe, the white flag, and crime were some of the main rationales behind the way the city has expanded. Another notable and important point about Detroit is the variety of ethnicity it has in its context, which was a positive challenge in the process of design.

Another research I did in order to be able to understand the culture of Detroit was the studies

I conducted about the history of Music and Dance and how different musical movements had started from Detroit and influenced the music world, such as Motown.

The first iterations of the design were to connect neighborhoods and buildings together and create different and new experiences and sequences in time, connection, and sequences in different levels and layers. Outdoor and indoor connections that would offer gathering moments to its occupants. The concepts evolved to urban choreography and the goals are to create pauses and sequences in time in urban scale design to invite the community of Detroit in and provide new spatial and experiential moments. These moments are invented through possibilities of choreography and embodiment. Any place that can offer the opportunity for people to congregate is a place in which performance can happen. Performance can be timed according to the choreography of how that place is inhabited by people. Therefore this project is offering a place with different interventions with the help of choreography. It celebrates different ethnicities, cultures, and generations. In this project I am assuming the community and people as passengers that I traveling through this site and exploring every moment and sequence in it, I am inviting them to interact, explore, experience, dance, and watch Dance.

In this design, I have defined 4 main languages that shape the concept and narrative. **Ribbon (or Shawl), Grids, Sequences and Profiles, and Existing Buildings.**

The main characters in this design are the grids that are following choreography and creating pathways. These pathways are offering new narratives throughout the site by becoming larger or narrower. As the grids and pathways intersect they create a main central boulevard that is the main gathering space in which events and moments of pauses occur. As choreography has specific and planned steps and follows a certain rule this design is also following some rules in some sections but also has the freedom and offers freedom within itself. The pathways for connecting destinations together but they are events, elements that could rise up and create landscape elements, create frames and different sequences in time, they could become a part of a building or even shape a new building, and lastly they enter the existing buildings and create new sequences inside the existing buildings.

Different programs are proposed in this design which are open and closed gathering spaces, a

performing art center, dance studios, an amphitheater, and a community center.

The feedback on the final review I think was very good and helpful, the comments of the jurors were encouraging. Martin Moeller one of the jurors explained that the project has lots of potentials but it is diagrammatic and abstract. The expression of the shawl is literal but on the other hand, some forms are different. He offered me to concentrate more on the performing art center and make it more real to help in the understanding of spaces and how people move inside the building. He thought that the sense of the overall scheme is very good but needs more investigation on a smaller scale. Some of the other comments were about the choreographic notations that I have in my design and to explore that idea in a level of specificity in building scale. James Michael Tate another juror one of the things in my design that need more specificity is the figurative and fuzziness of the landscape objects and how the forms are shaped could be aspirational. The idea of approaching the site translating fluidity of human movement into forms could be a beautiful space. The changing perception of objects could be choreography. Martin Moeller mentioned that the idea of choreography and my dance identity is completely offered in my design. Benjamin Smith another juror thought that the project is interesting and compelling and its metaphoric relationship to dance. He emphasized the idea of ambiguity and how to evolve it in a design and help in reimagining. Felicia Francine one of the other jurors explained how deeply dance is connected to identity and how we move. She thought that this project needs more explanation in the urban landscape.

The conversation and comments shifted significantly when I answered the question that the jurors asked me why I chose dance, and why the ideas of choreography are used in this design. When I explained that it is illegal to dance in Iran and people can not dance in public. Not having the freedom to dance in public spaces and move freely and we should not put a limitation on how people move and experience space. Another reason for me was to break the rules of having predefined grids in a city that are following specific predefined patterns, and my question while designing was that what if we break these rules, what if we offer something different than what is expected? The jurors thought that goals and reasons are incredibly powerful and these ideas need to be presented in the first of the presentation. The physical and personal freedom and how it is translated in urban scale for all. The ability to bring cultures would be strong. The idea of dancing being illegal impacts the spaces and our experiences, and create diverse experiences based on cultural and social needs. Benjamin

offered that the thesis question could be re-written "how does analysis of dance engages thinking about architecture and its relation to space and time" and he said that it is a powerful thesis Especially with the given narrative of freedom and lack of it.

Generally, the comments were on having more specificity and details on smaller scales and inside the buildings.

So I worked on the design of the performing art center and evolved it into a smaller scale and detailed design to offer the opportunity of walking through inside the buildings and exploring and experiencing the sequences inside of this project. In conclusion, I think this project helped me understand human perception and experiences in the architectural and urban environment. With the help of dance and choreography, I was able to measure these movements and create spaces that would offer the community a new way of telling a story, experiencing spaces and their surroundings, and have interactions.

Process Work

SITE SELECTION



Zanjan

Work & Study?

This section provides a detailed site selection analysis for Zanjan. It includes a site plan, a 3D model of the theater building, and various site diagrams. The diagrams show the building's orientation, site boundaries, and surrounding context. A red dashed line highlights the building's location on a site plan.



Michigan Theater

222 Michigan St., Ann Arbor, Michigan

- Designed: George A. Stone
- Built: 1927
- Expanded: 1970
- 1,070 seats
- Box: Schickel and Schickel (Ann Arbor Office), Rick Kay Group

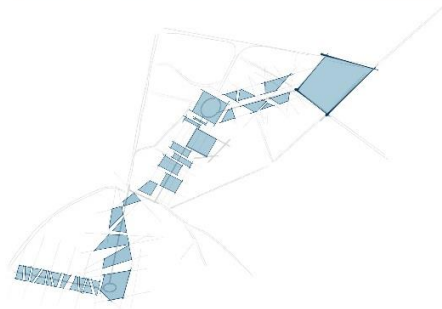
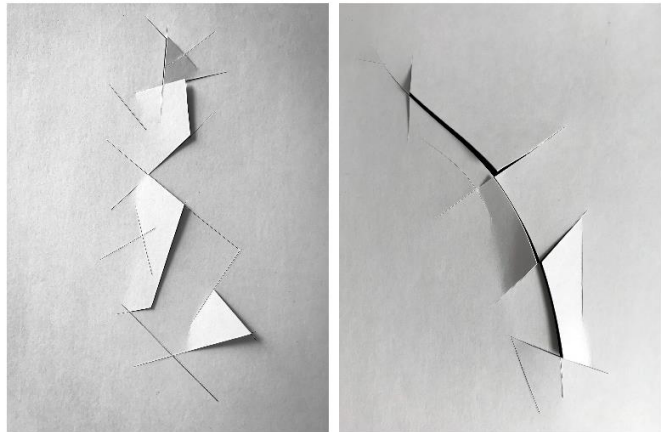
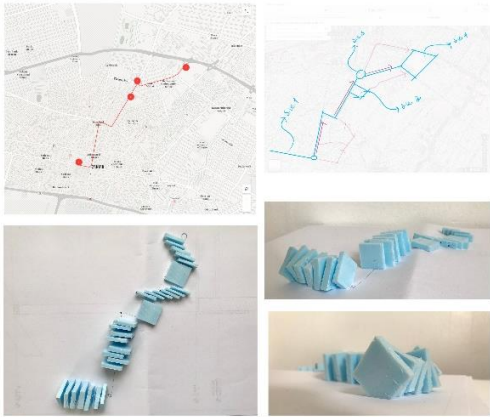
This section provides a detailed site selection analysis for the Michigan Theater. It includes a site plan, architectural details, and a 3D model of the theater building. The diagrams show the building's orientation, site boundaries, and surrounding context. A red dashed line highlights the building's location on a site plan.

Uptown Theater

- 2241 N. Grand St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Designed: Wisconsin State Board of Design
- Built: 1927
- 1,000 seats

This section provides a detailed site selection analysis for the Uptown Theater. It includes a site plan, architectural details, and a 3D model of the theater building. The diagrams show the building's orientation, site boundaries, and surrounding context. A red dashed line highlights the building's location on a site plan.

This section provides a detailed site selection analysis for the Zanjan theater. It includes a site plan, a 3D model of the theater building, and various site diagrams. The diagrams show the building's orientation, site boundaries, and surrounding context. A red dashed line highlights the building's location on a site plan.



- Key Ideas:**
- Series of events
 - sequences
 - surprises in the way
 - Movement

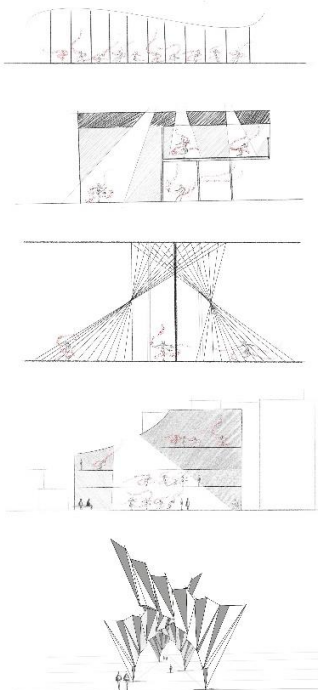


Detroit

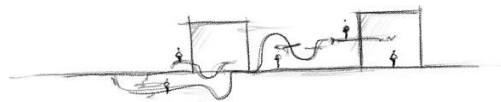


Philadelphia

Creating Sequences by relating Inside, Outside, On, and Under Spaces



- Rhythm
- Light and Shadow
- Harmony
- Connectivity



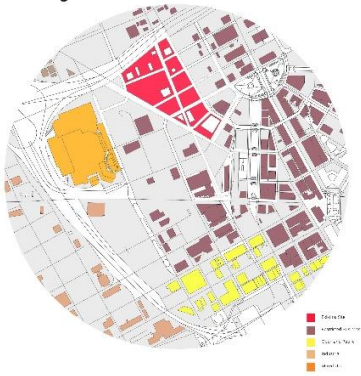
Site Analysis

LOCATION OF SITE IN CITY

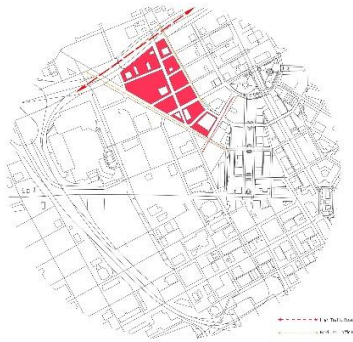


SITE ANALYSIS

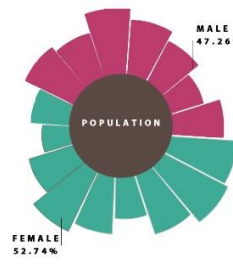
Land-Use Diagram



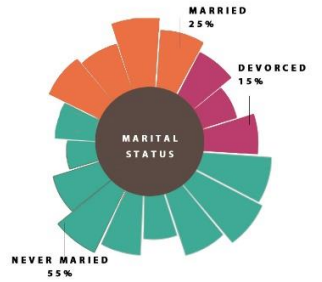
Road Accessibility Diagram



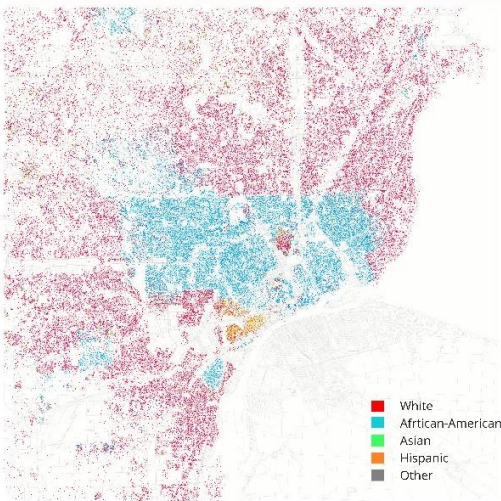
Population Diagram



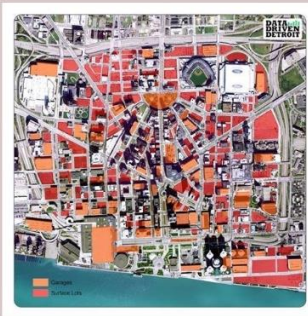
Marital Status



ETNICITY



Why so much Parking?



Source: <https://use.streetsblog.org/2013/05/14/garaging-secrecy/limp-obs-sna-acta-lmp-gp-of-downtown-secrecy/>

- Because the city had flourished in the heyday of the auto industry, local politicians made periodic attempts to stimulate a revival of the auto industry in the city. For example, in the 1980s the cities of Detroit and [Hamtramck](#) used the power of [eminent domain](#) to level part of what had been [Poletown](#) to make a parking lot for a new automobile factory.
- Broken promises, misallocated public subsidies and relentless demolitions have rendered a large swath of downtown Detroit a sea of empty parking lots. Employing an "acquire, neglect and demolish" strategy for over two decades, the Ilitch family is the primary culprit in this scheme.

Music THEN and Now



About Motown

Motown Records is an American [record label](#) owned by the [Universal Music Group](#). It was founded by [Berry Gordy Jr.](#) as Tamla Records on January 12, 1959,^{[2][3]} and incorporated as Motown Record Corporation on April 14, 1960.^[4] Its name, a [blend](#) of motor and town, has become a nickname for [Detroit](#), where the label was originally headquartered. Motown played an important role in the [racial integration](#) of [popular music](#) as an [African American](#)-owned label that achieved [crossover](#) success. In the 1960s, Motown and its subsidiary labels (including Tamla Motown, the brand used outside the US) were the most successful proponents of the [Motown sound](#), a style of [soul music](#) with a mainstream [pop](#) appeal. Motown was the most successful soul music label, with a net worth of \$61 million. During the 1960s, Motown achieved 79 records in the top-ten of the [Billboard Hot 100](#) between 1960 and 1969.



- Marvin Gaye - I Heard It Through The Grapevine [Official Music Video]
- Released **October 30, 1968**
- In addition to being released several times by Motown artists, the song has been recorded by a range of musicians including [Creedence Clearwater Revival](#), who made an eleven-minute interpretation for their 1970 album, [Cosmo's Factory](#).



Martha & The Vandellas "Dancing in the Streets"

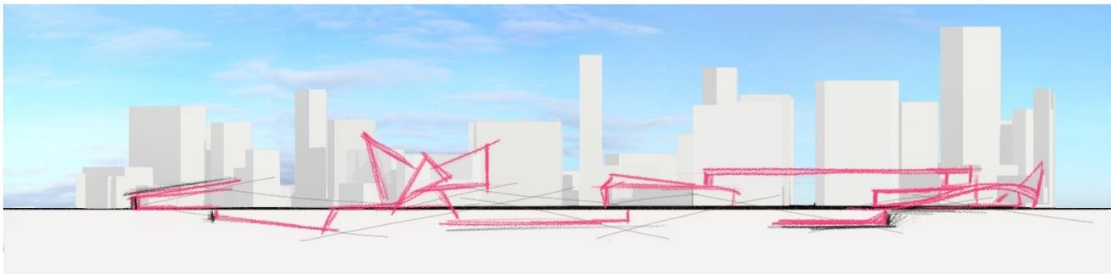
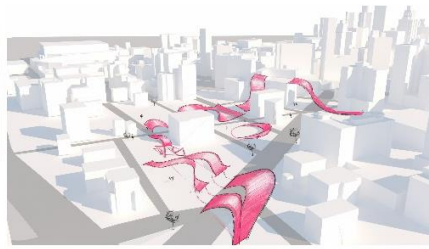
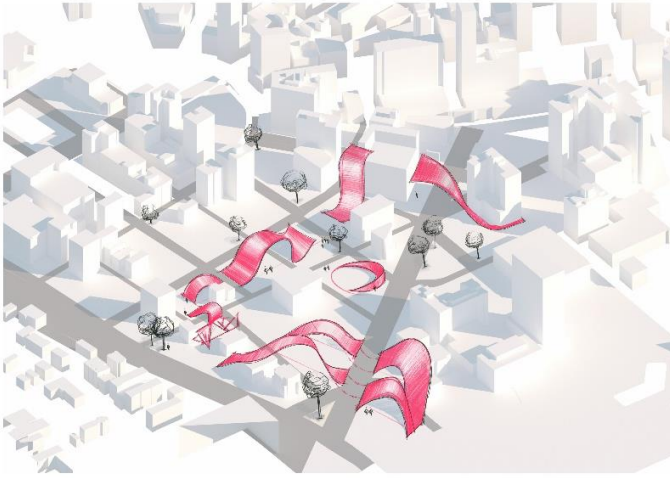


David Bowie & Mick Jagger - Dancing in The Streets (Official Video)

Design Iterations

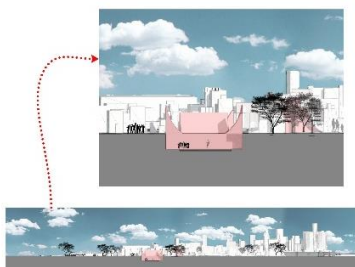
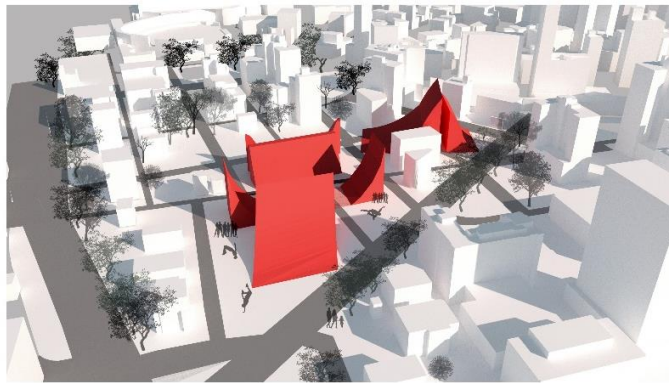
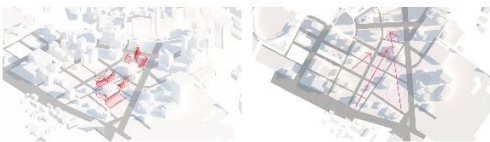
DESIGN
ITERATION

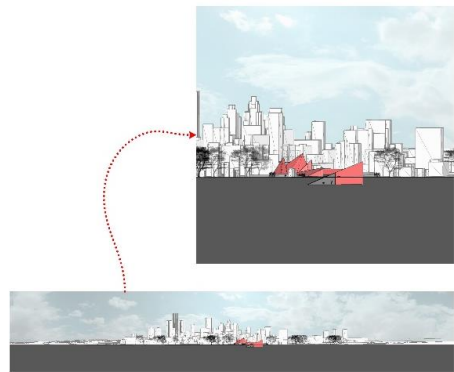
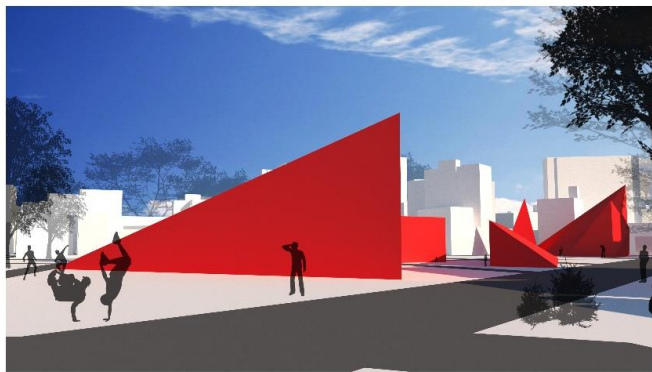
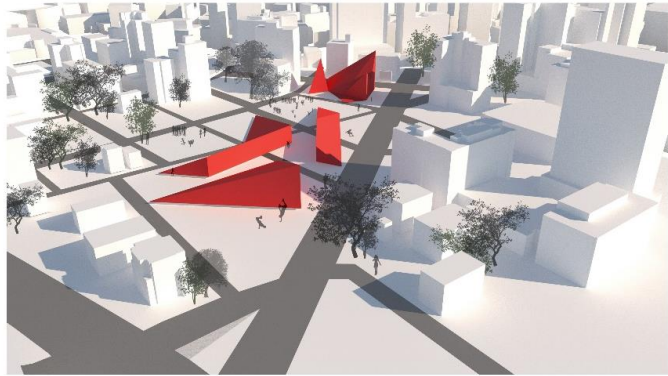
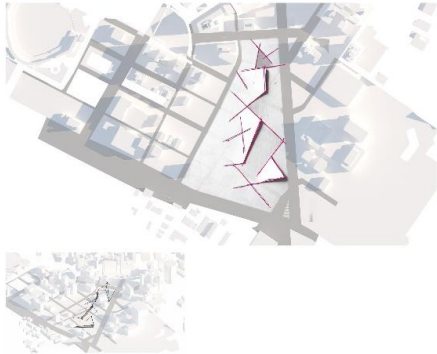
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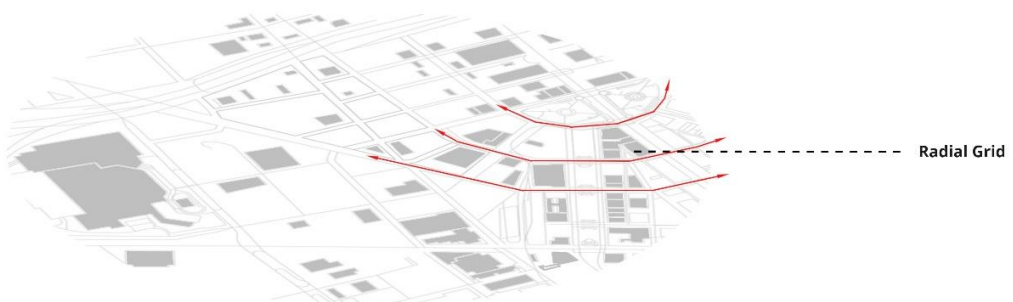
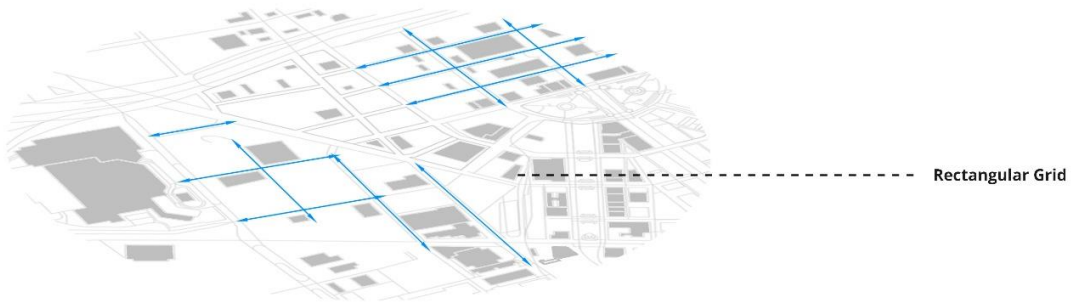
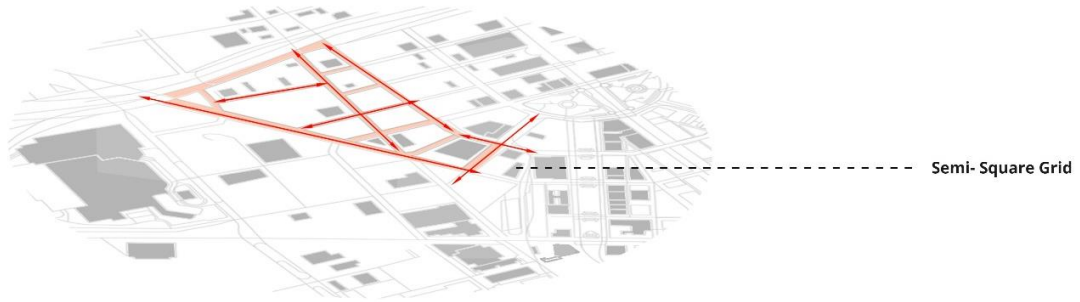
DESIGN
ITERATION

2

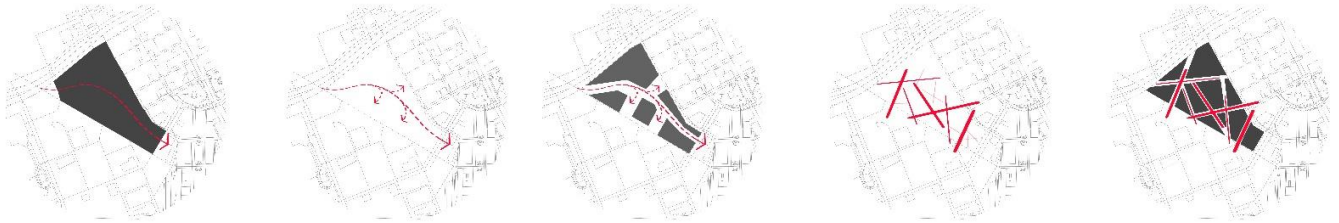




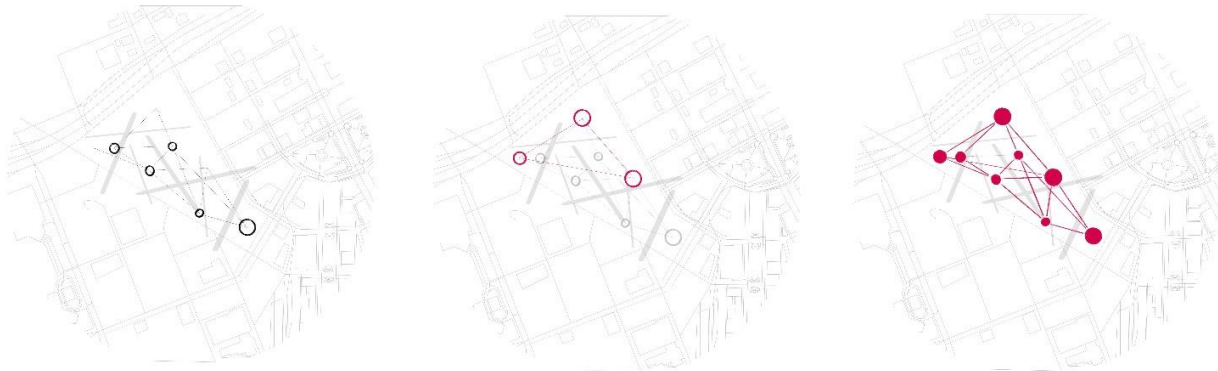
GRID STUDY



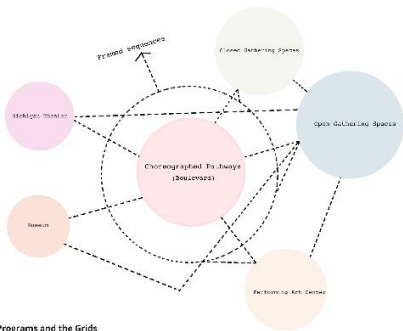
EXPERIENCE DIAGRAMS



CIRCULATION DIAGRAM AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROGRAMS

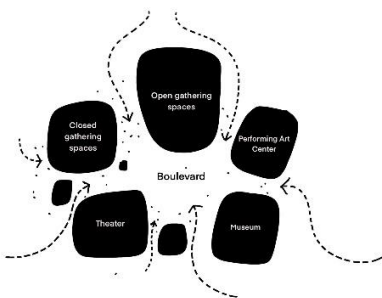
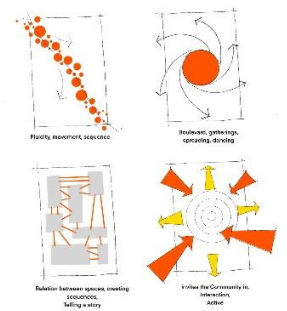
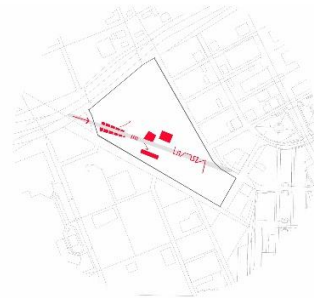


SPATIAL RELATIONSHIP



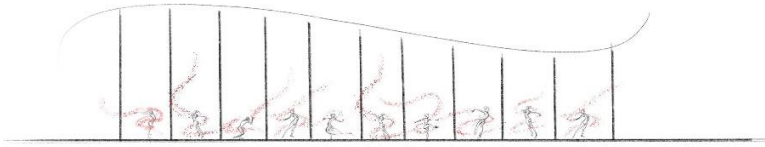
Relationship Between Programs and the Grids

BOULEVARD SEQUENCES AND ACTIVITIES

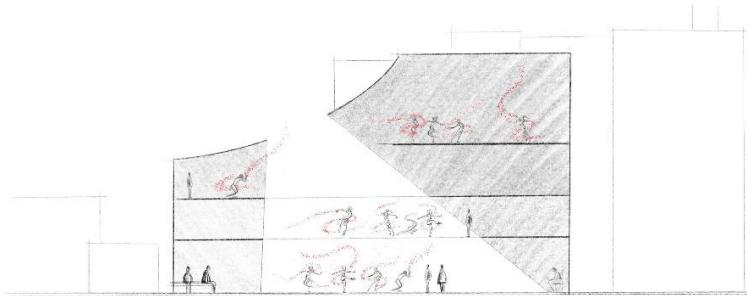


Circulation of Pathways Between Programs

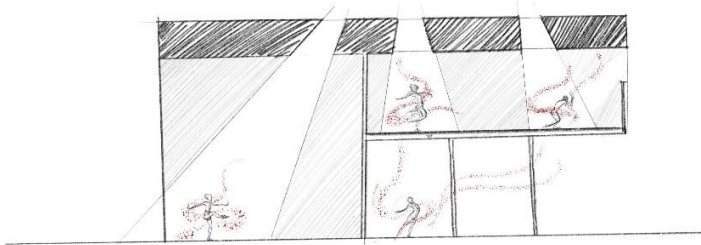
Earlier Sketches



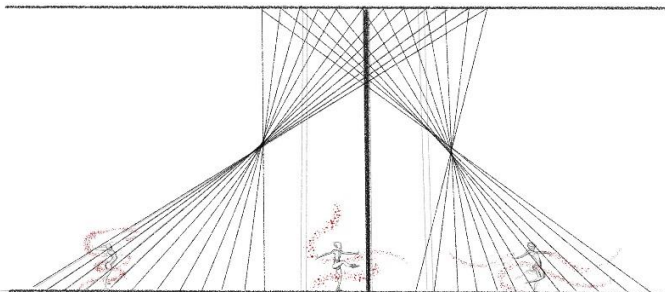
Rhythm



Light and Shadow

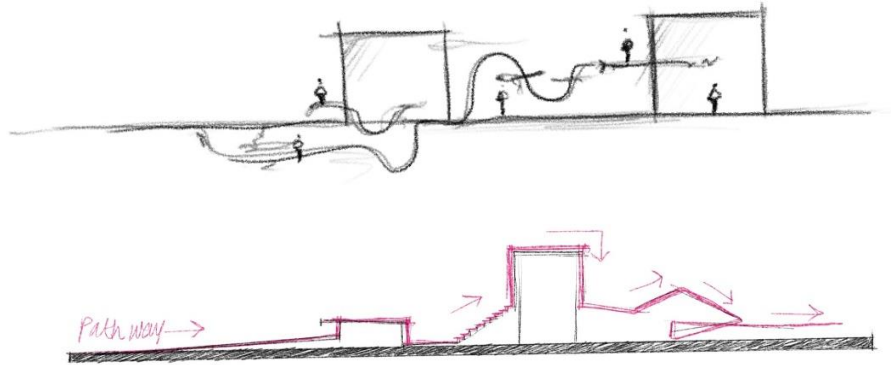


Sequencing

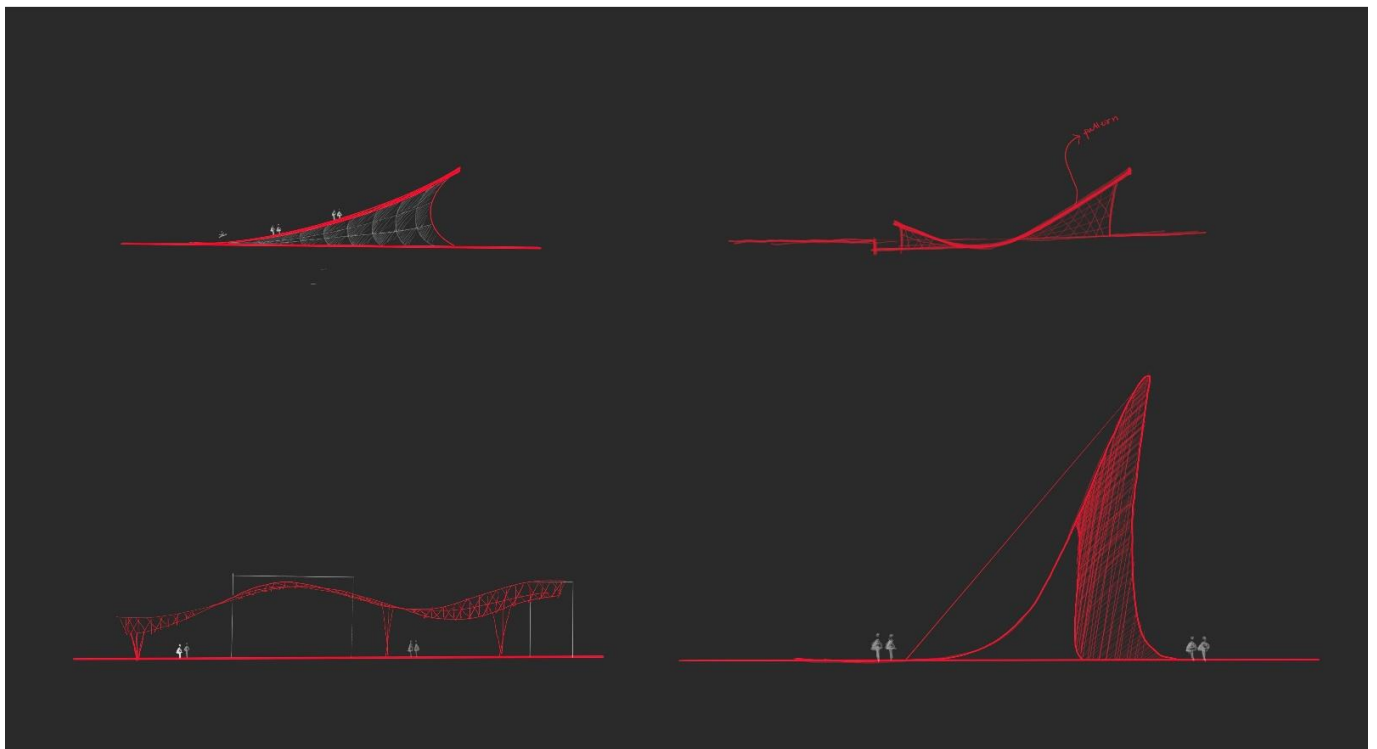


Harmony

Creating sequence by relating inside, outside, on, and under spaces

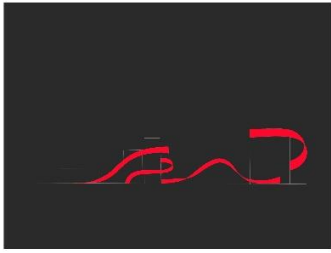


Building form sketches

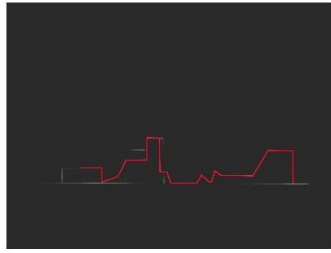


CONCEPT DIAGRAMS

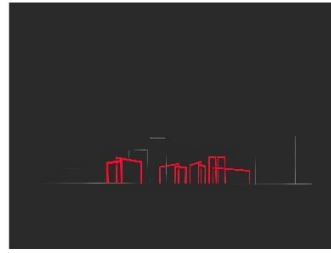
4 Main Languages



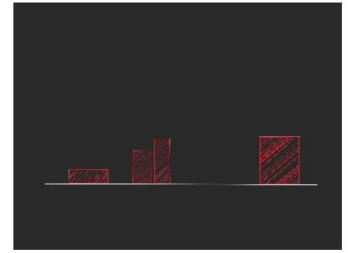
Ribbon, Fluid Forms



Grid + Lines



Profiles, Sequences

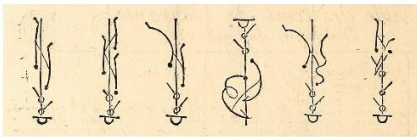


Existing Buildings

Key Ideas:

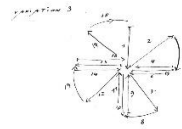
- Series of events
- Sequences
- Surprises in the way
- Movement

DANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY



Collection of Dances in Choreography Notation (1700)

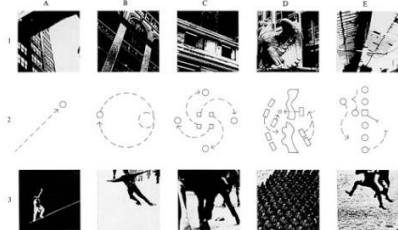
Choreography Movements & Dance Stepping



DANCE VISUALIZATION



The Manhattan Transcripts, by Bernard Tschumi

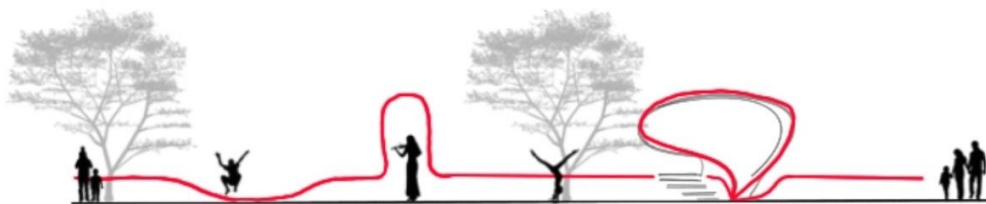
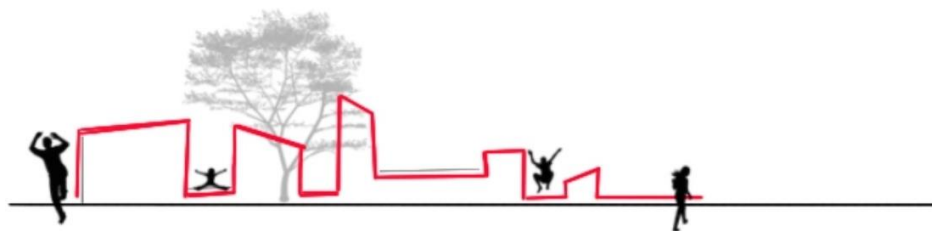
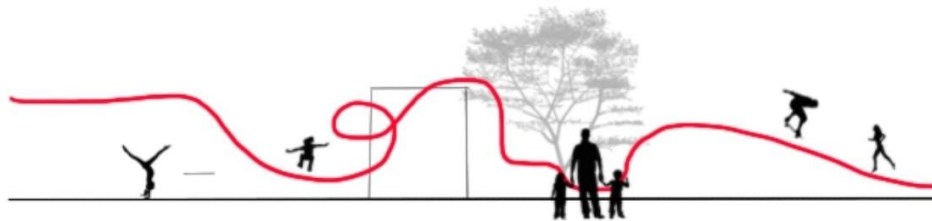
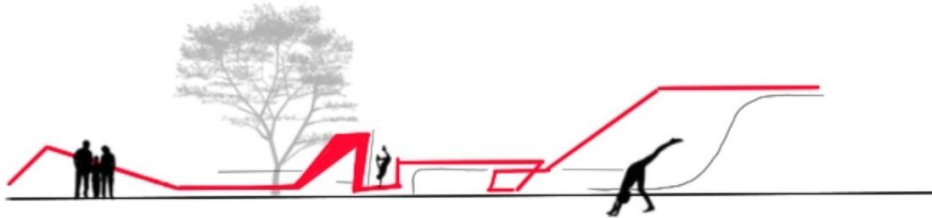
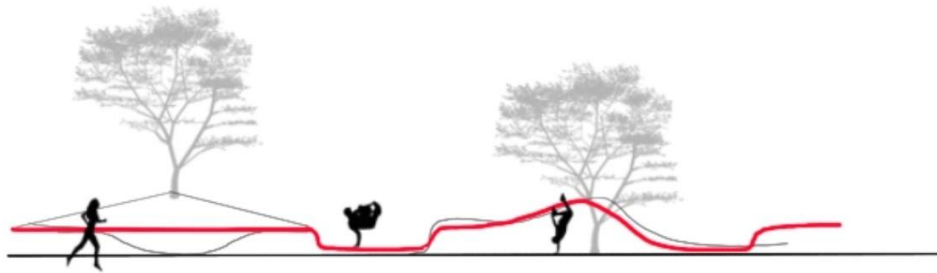


objects/buildings

movements

events

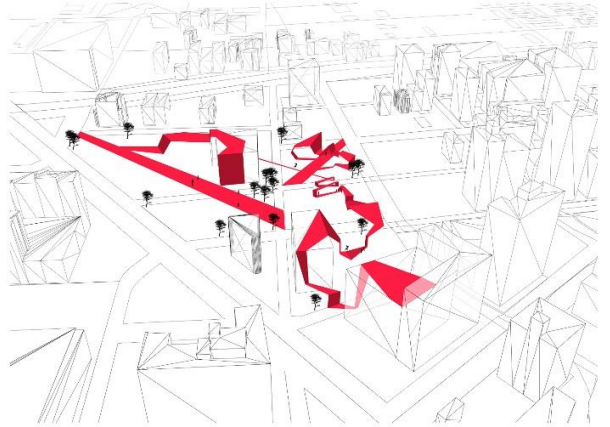
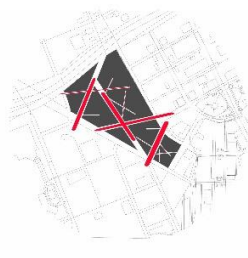
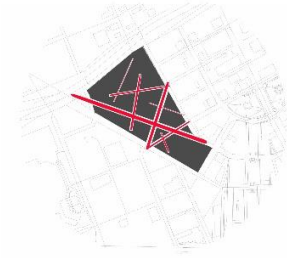
EXPERIENCES THROUGH THE SITE



Final Design

PATHWAY

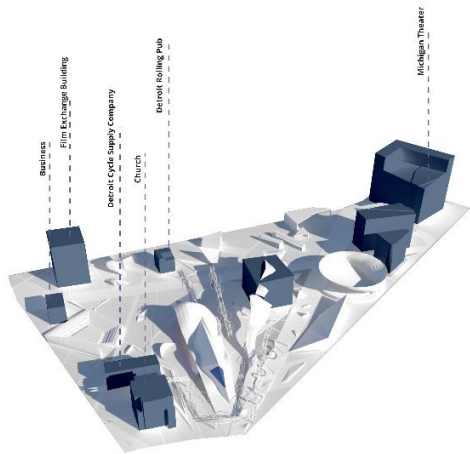
Pathway and Grid design



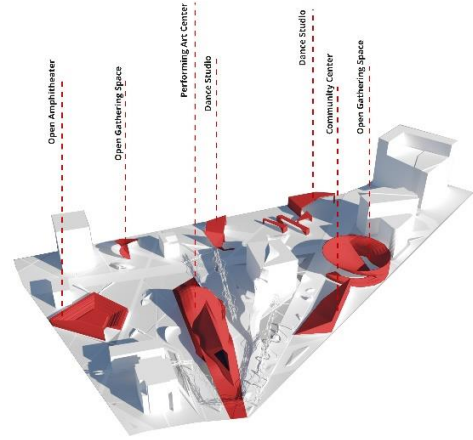
SITE PLAN



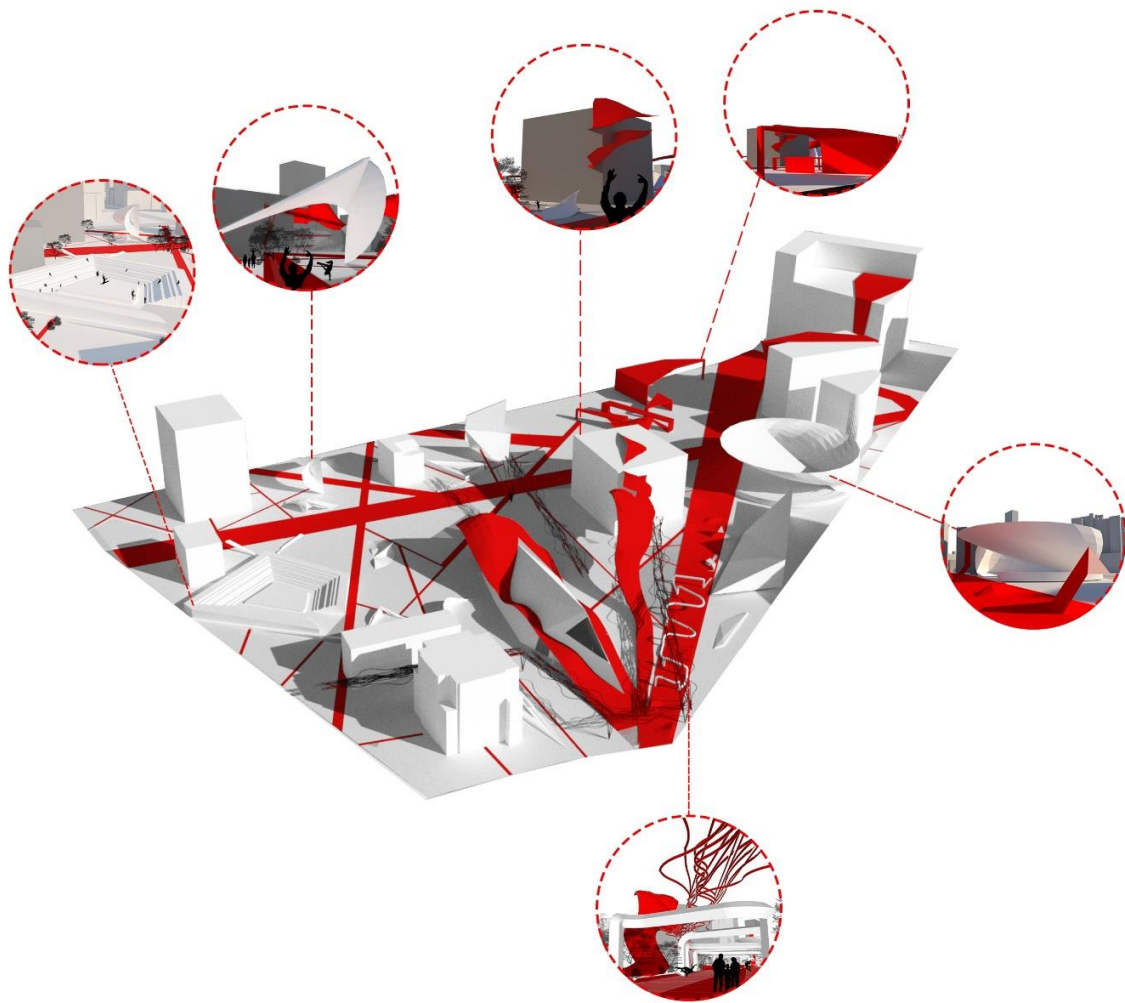
EXISTING BUILDINGS



PROPOSED PROGRAM

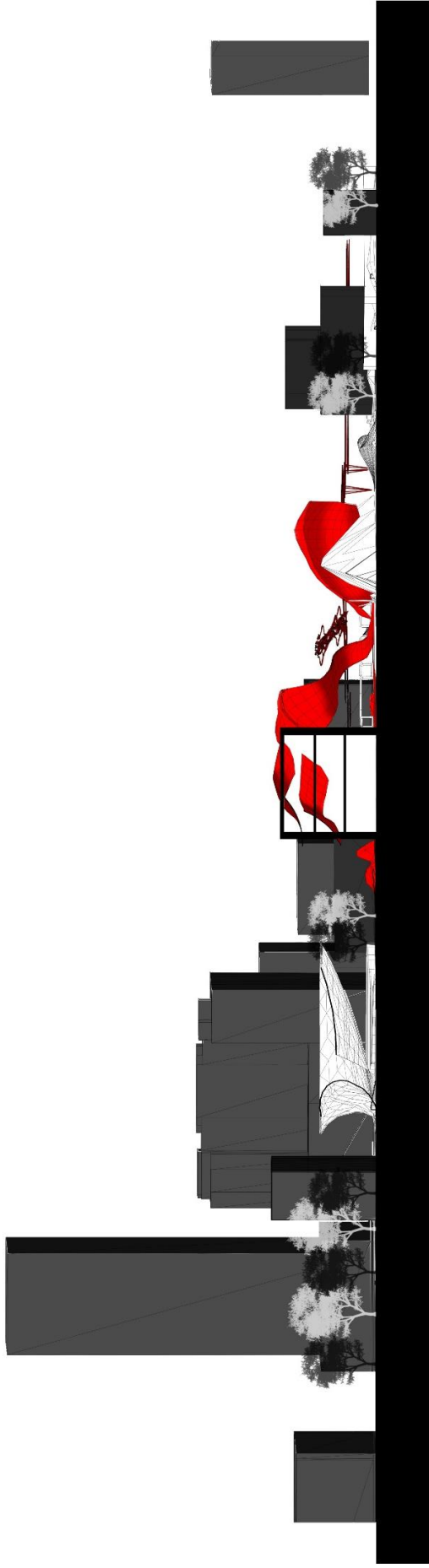


EXPLODED VIGNETTES OF THE PROGRAMS

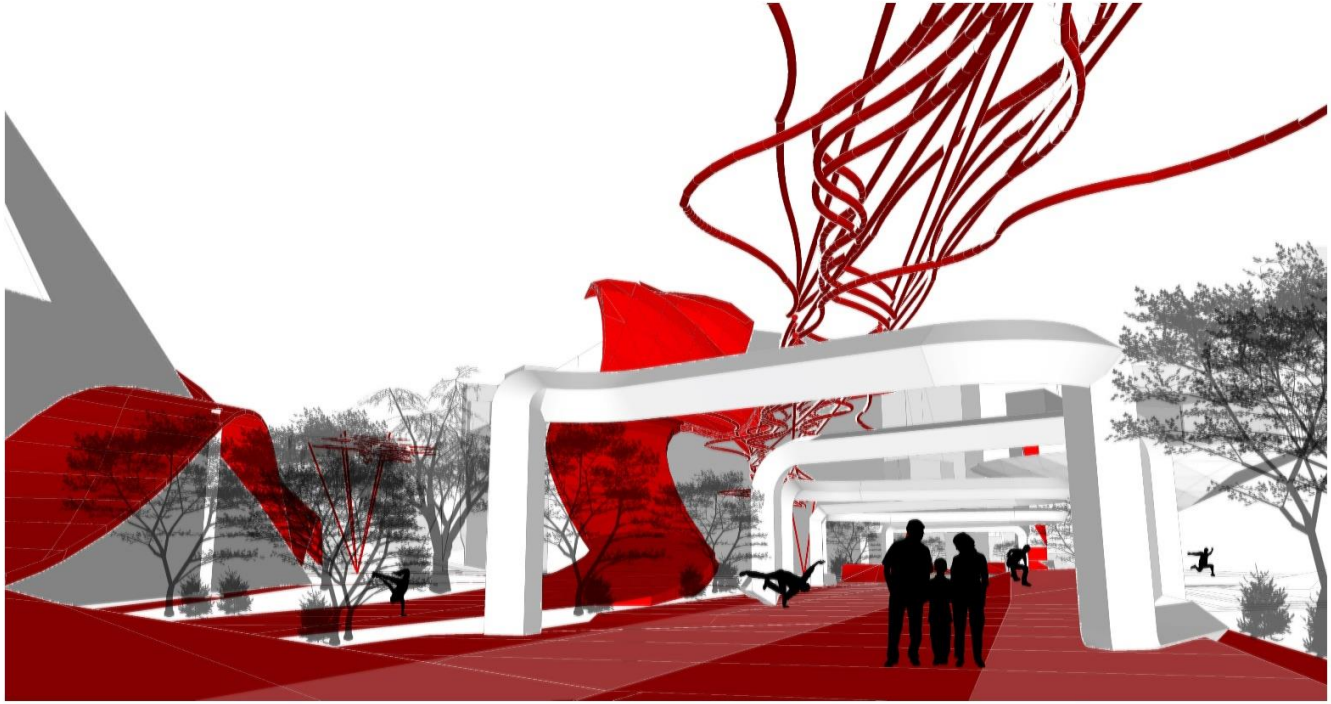




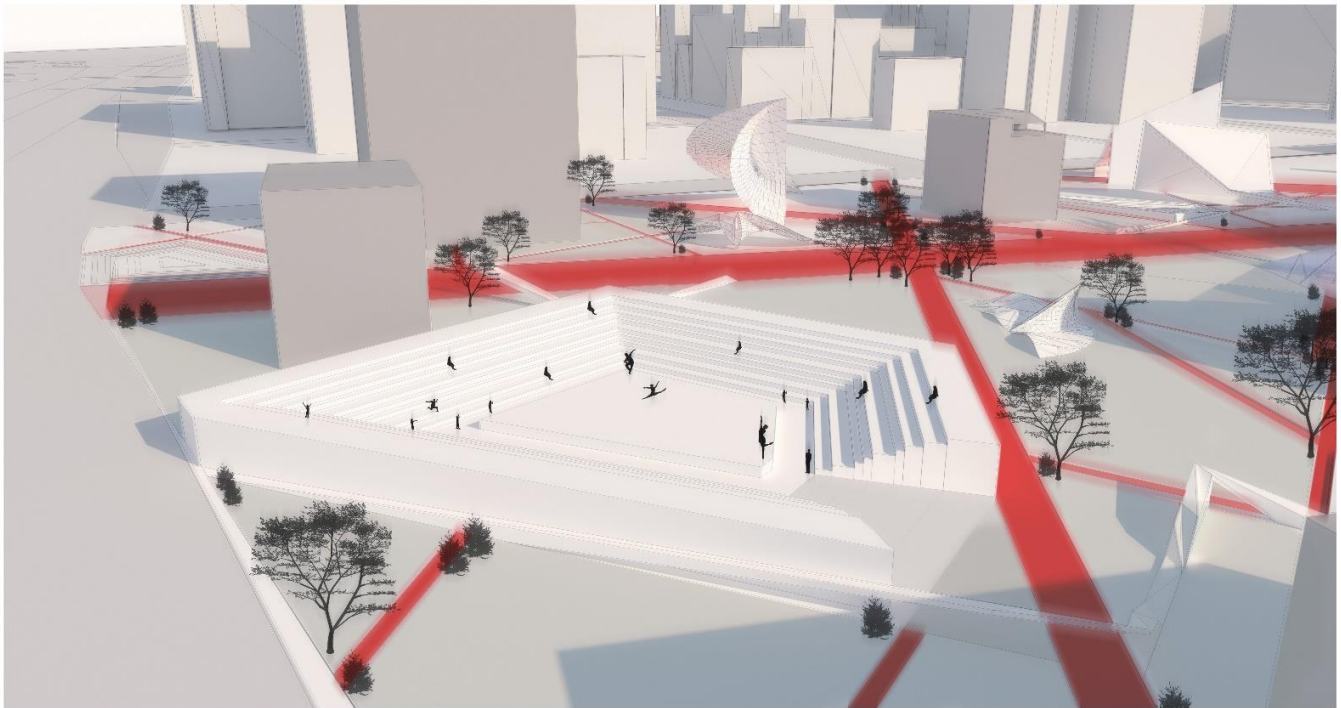
SECTION THROUGH SITE



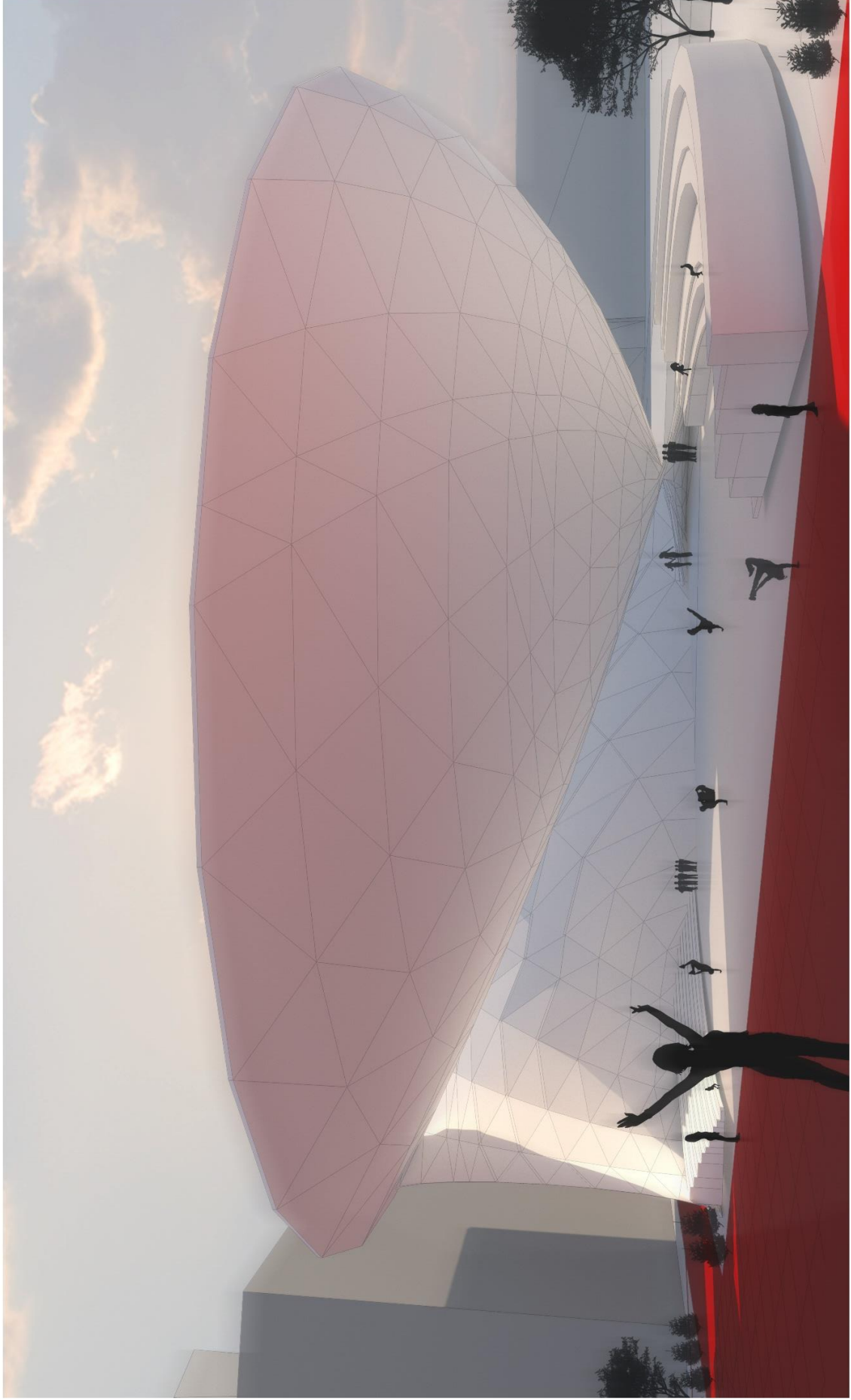
SECTION THROUGH SITE



VIEW OF THE PATHWAY

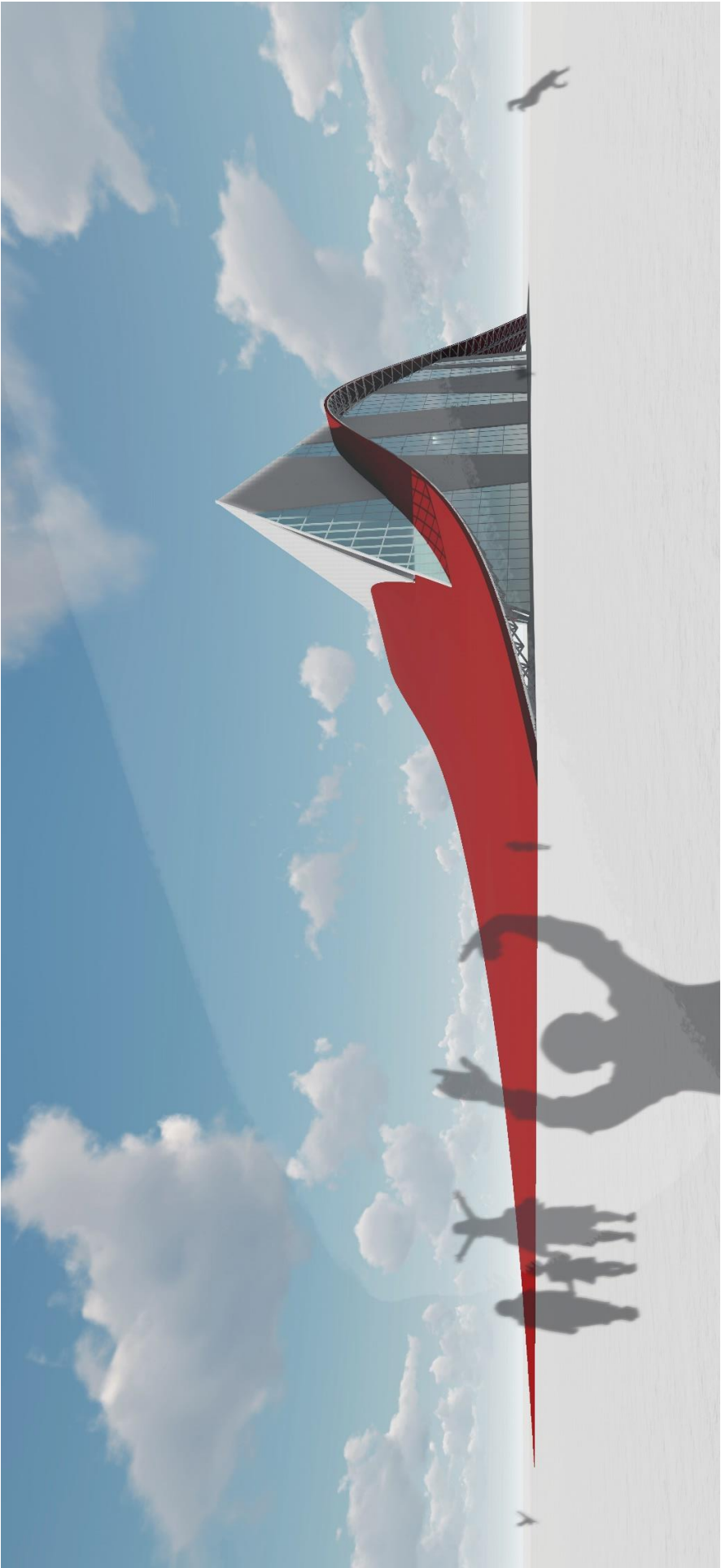


VIEW OF THE AMPHITHEATER

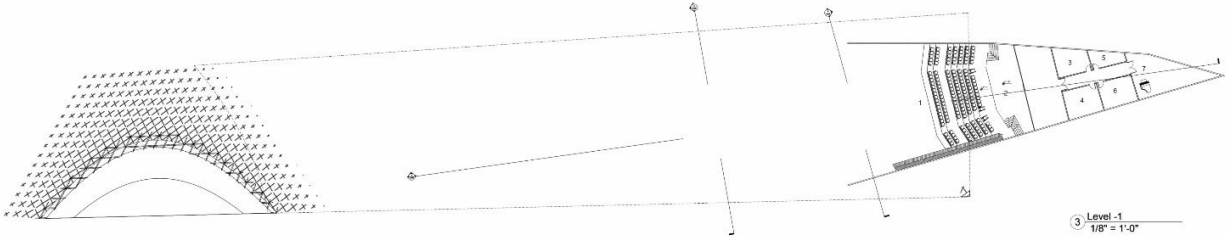


MAIN GATHERING SPACE

Performing Art Center



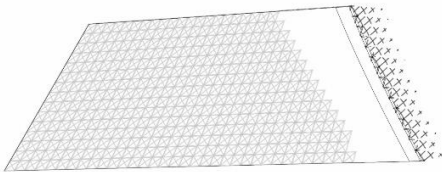
FLOOR PLANS



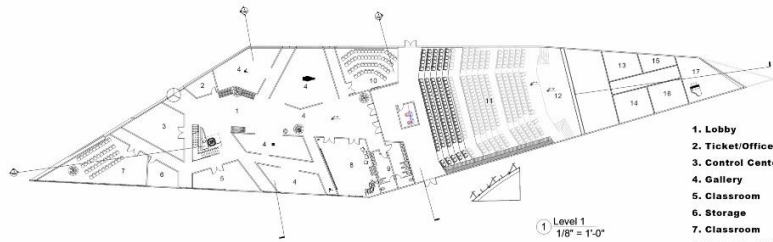
Level -1
 SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"

3 Level -1
 1/8" = 1'-0"

- 1. Auditorium
- 2. Stage
- 3. Dressing Room
- 4. Event/Rehearsal
- 5. Storage
- 6. Private Restrooms
- 7. Storage

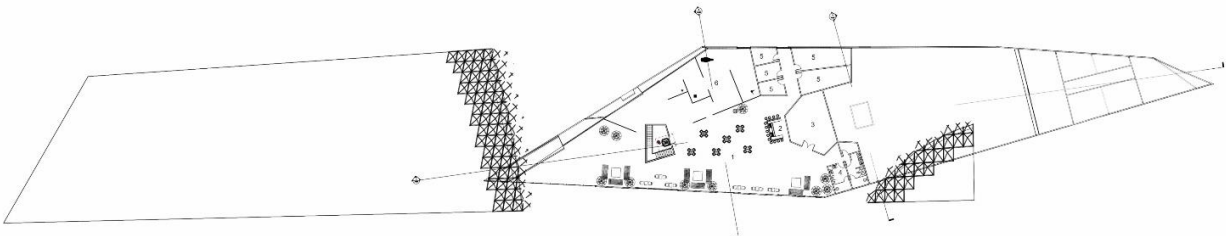


Level 1
 SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"



4 Level 1
 1/8" = 1'-0"

- 1. Lobby
- 2. Ticket/Office
- 3. Control Center
- 4. Gallery
- 5. Classroom
- 6. Storage
- 7. Classroom
- 8. Dance/Music Studio
- 9. Public Restrooms
- 10. Film/Video Lab
- 11. Auditorium
- 12. Stage
- 13. Dressing Room
- 14. Event/Rehearsal
- 15. Storage
- 16. Private Restrooms
- 17. Storage

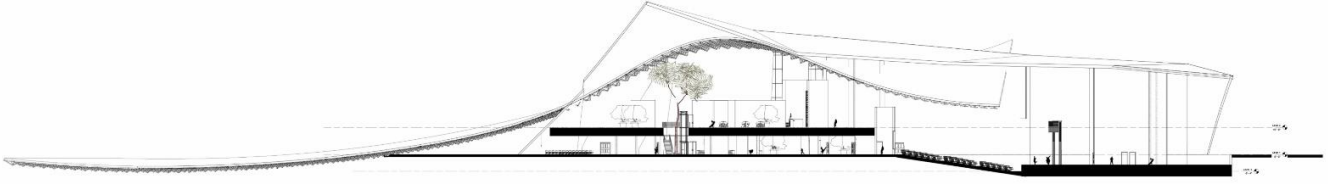


Level 2
 SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"

1 Level 2
 1/8" = 1'-0"

- 1. Cafe
- 2. Bar
- 3. Kitchen
- 4. Restrooms
- 5. Offices
- 6. Gallery

SECTIONS



1 Section 1
1/8" = 1'-0"



Section 1
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"

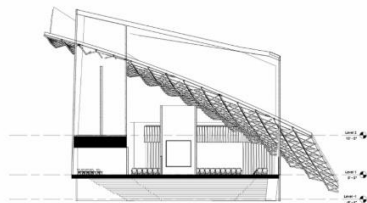


1 Section 2
1/8" = 1'-0"



2 Section 2 Copy 1
1/8" = 1'-0"

Section 2
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"



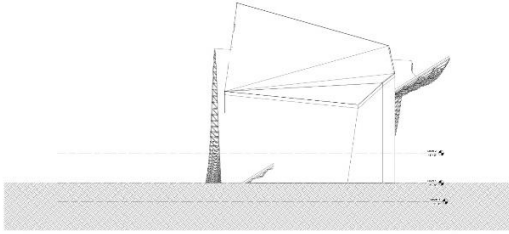
3 Section 3
1/8" = 1'-0"



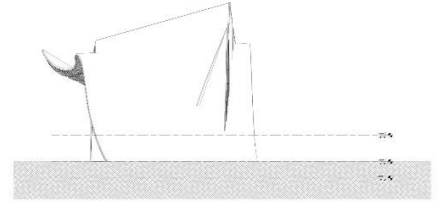
4 Section 3 Copy 1
1/8" = 1'-0"

Section 3
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"

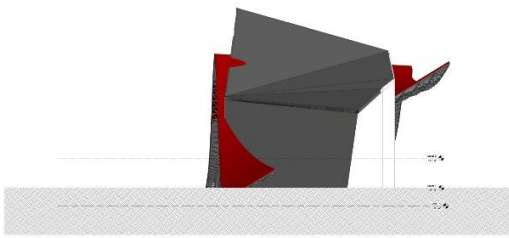
ELEVATIONS



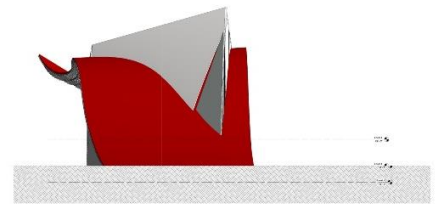
1 East Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 West Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"



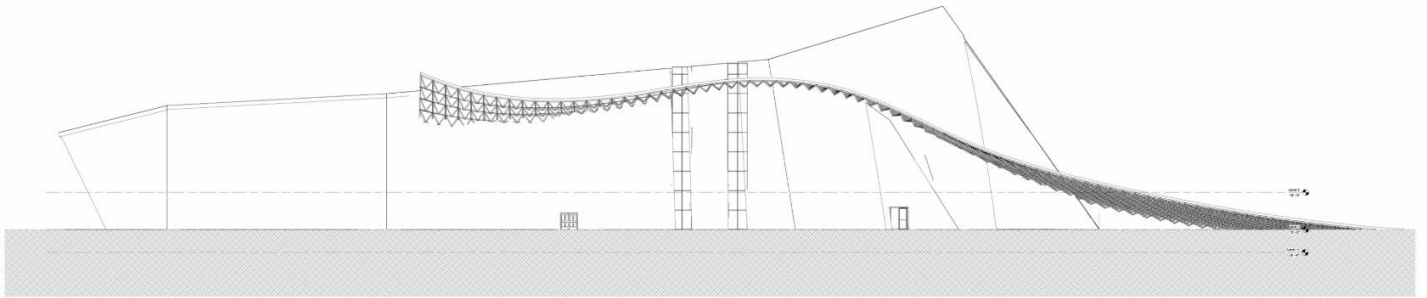
1 East Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"



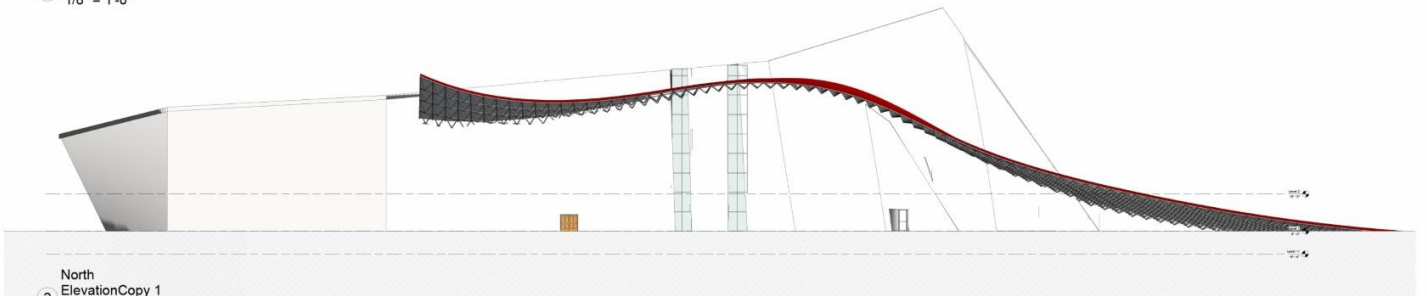
1 West Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"

East Elevation
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"

West Elevation
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"



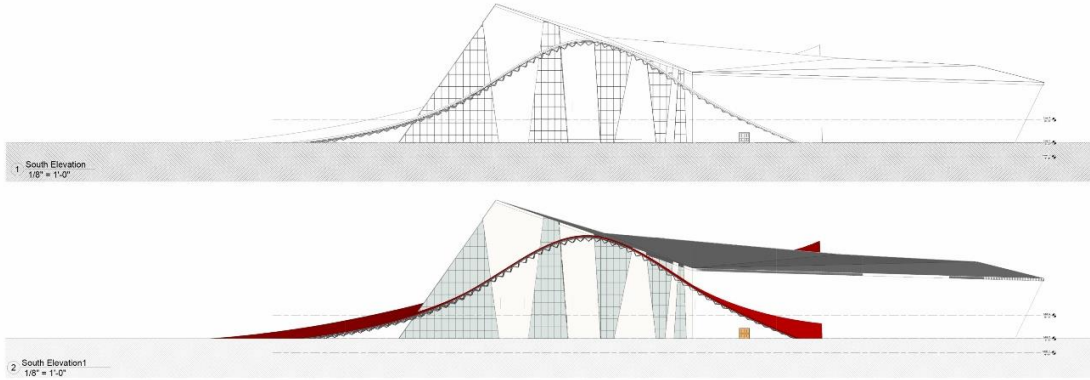
1 North Elevation
1/8" = 1'-0"



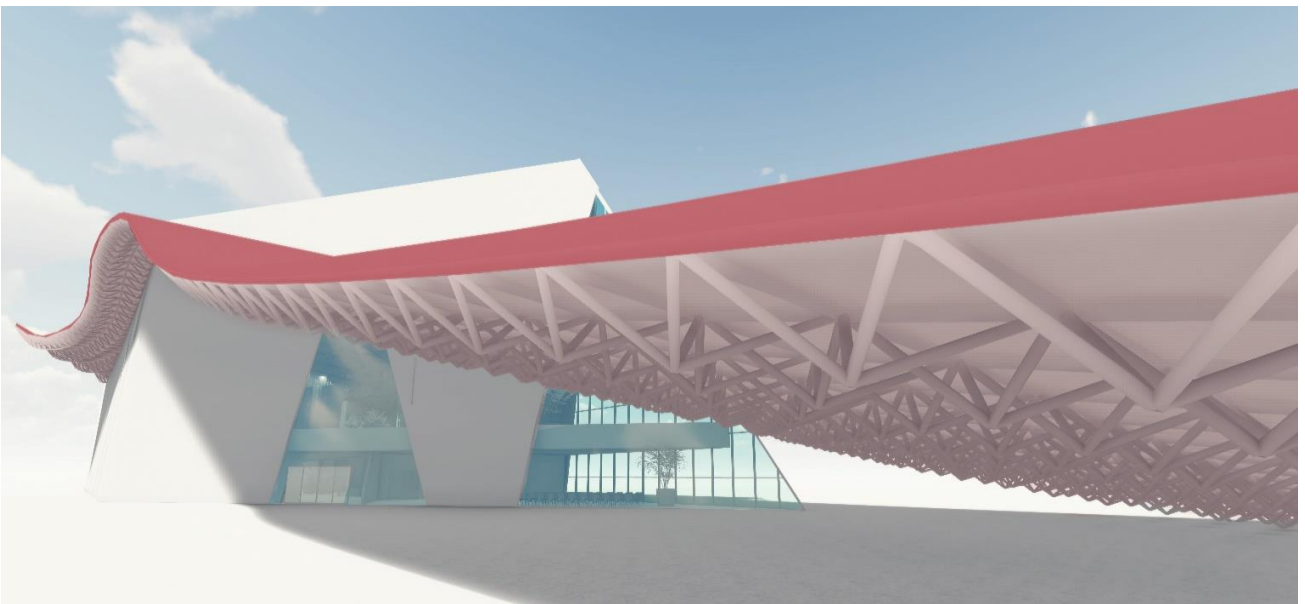
2 North Elevation Copy 1
1/8" = 1'-0"

North Elevation
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"

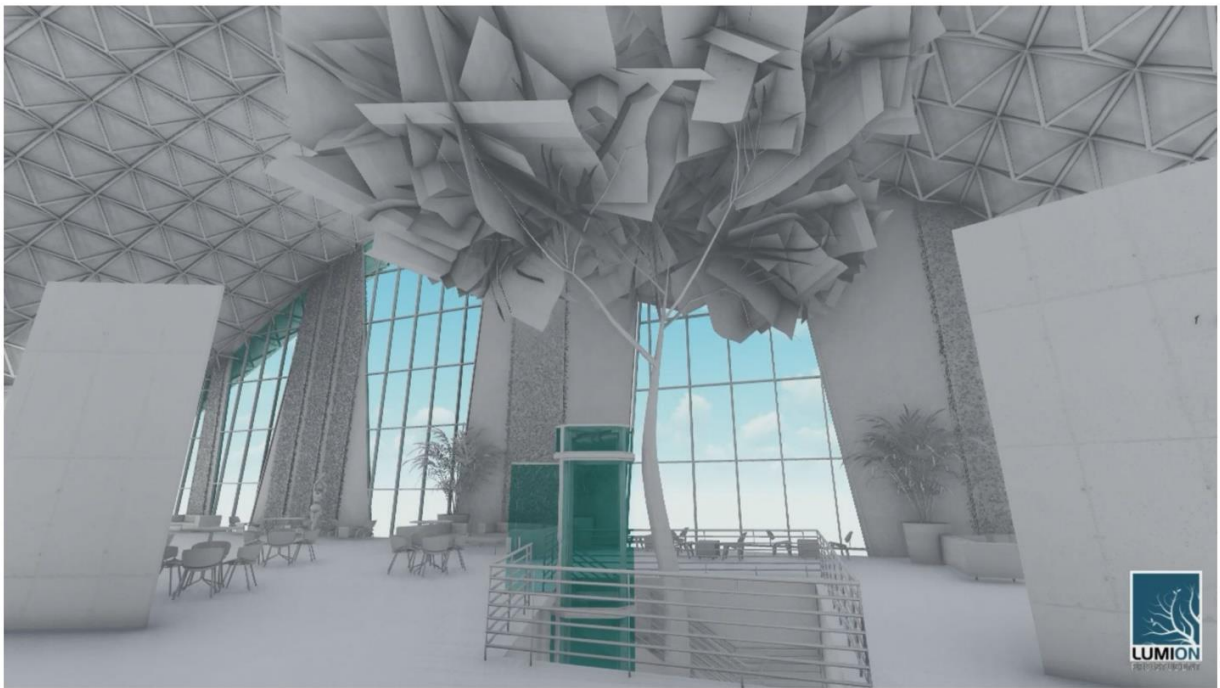
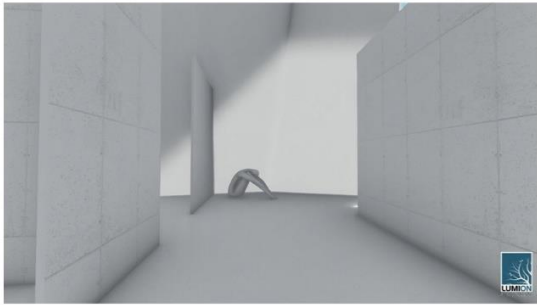
ELEVATIONS



South Elevation
SC: 1/8" = 1'-0"









Videos created for this project:

“Spatial Experience in Architectural Environment Through Dance and Time”



Link: <https://youtu.be/UQKaSB5RjJ0>

“Urban Choreography”



Link: https://youtu.be/2T_W5JTkc6s

“Intersections of Dance and Time (walkthrough performing art center)”



Link: https://youtu.be/2T_W5JTkc6s