

# Nathaniel Gillette

Condensed Portfolio

Summary: The design projects herein were carried out with the express purpose of granting **agency** to those who might inhabit them. Agency to choose, agency to live their lives, and agency to engage with space in whatever way suits them.

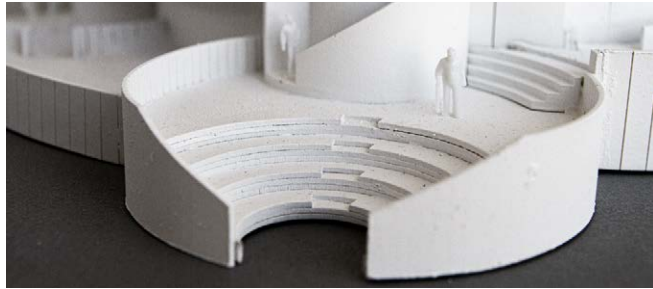
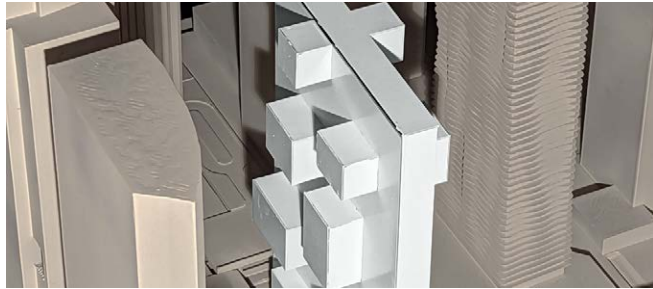
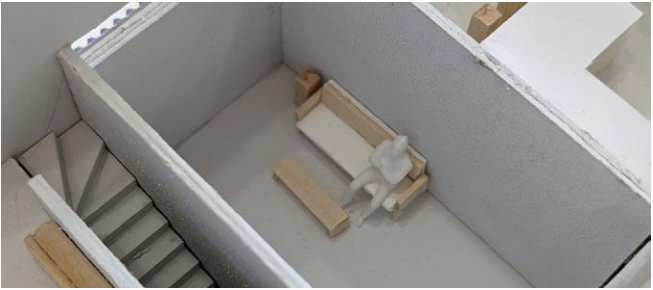
## Table of Contents

**Log Chapel** ..... 1                      2 ..... **Home Alone, Together**

**Protrusion / Interruption** ... 3                      4 ..... **Last Record**

**Laminar Flow** ..... 5                      6 ..... **Fold Pavilion**

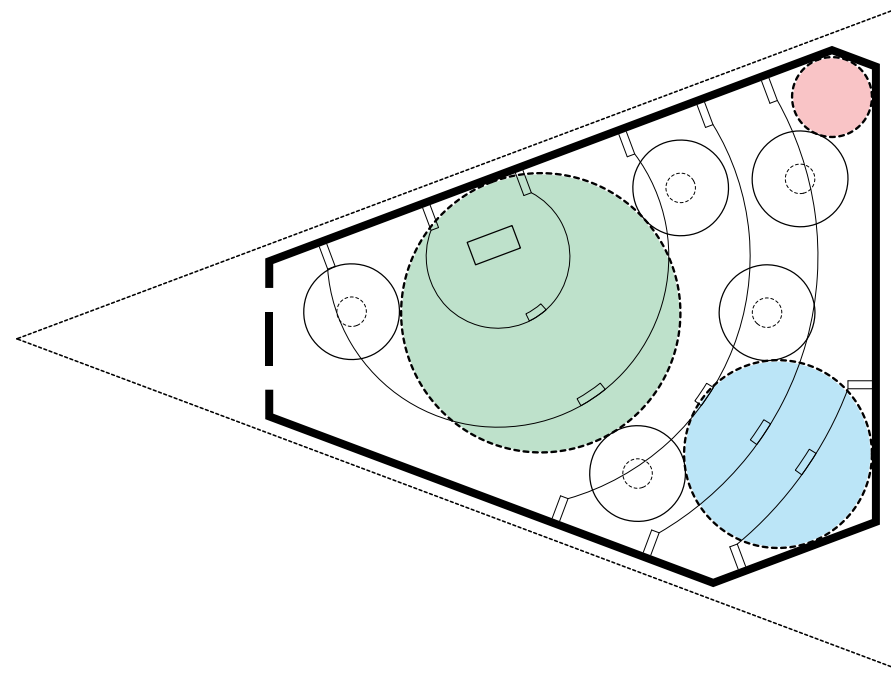
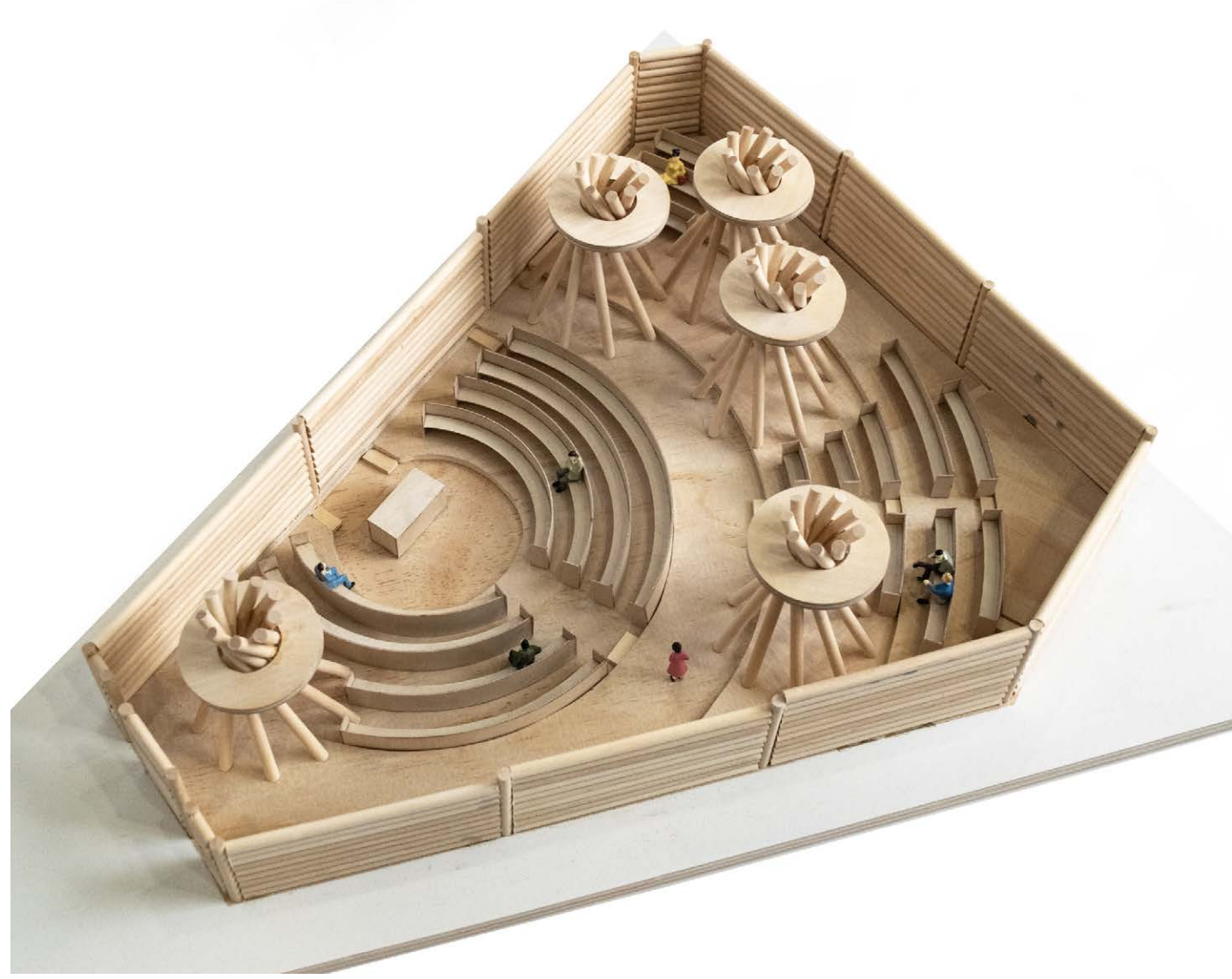
**Parasocial Architecture** .... 7                      8 ..... **To The Lighthouse**



Resume included on final page.  
Additional work and project elaboration can be found at [www.nathanielgillette.com](http://www.nathanielgillette.com)

# Log Chapel

For ARCH 565: A Log Building - Paul Andersen



## Collectivity

Low - distant from the altar, highly visually obfuscated ●

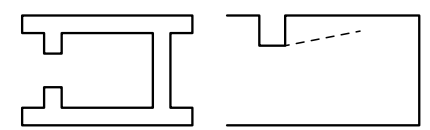
High - dense congregation surrounding the altar ●

Medium - direct lines of sight to the altar, slightly obfuscated ●

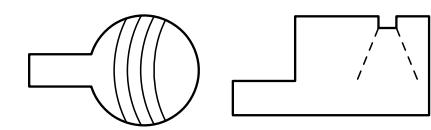
**Log Chapel** is a worship space designed to give visitors agency over their desired degree of collectivity while worshipping by creating **three distinct communal zones** in the single-room interior.

To achieve this, the project employs log constructed hyperboloid forms in the interior to support the roof, allow in natural light, and break up the visibility and audibility of the interior space.

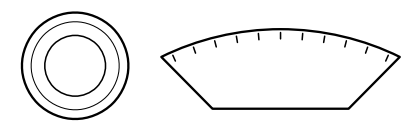
## Precedent Studies



*Temple of Diana Propylaea*  
Thick, isolating poche



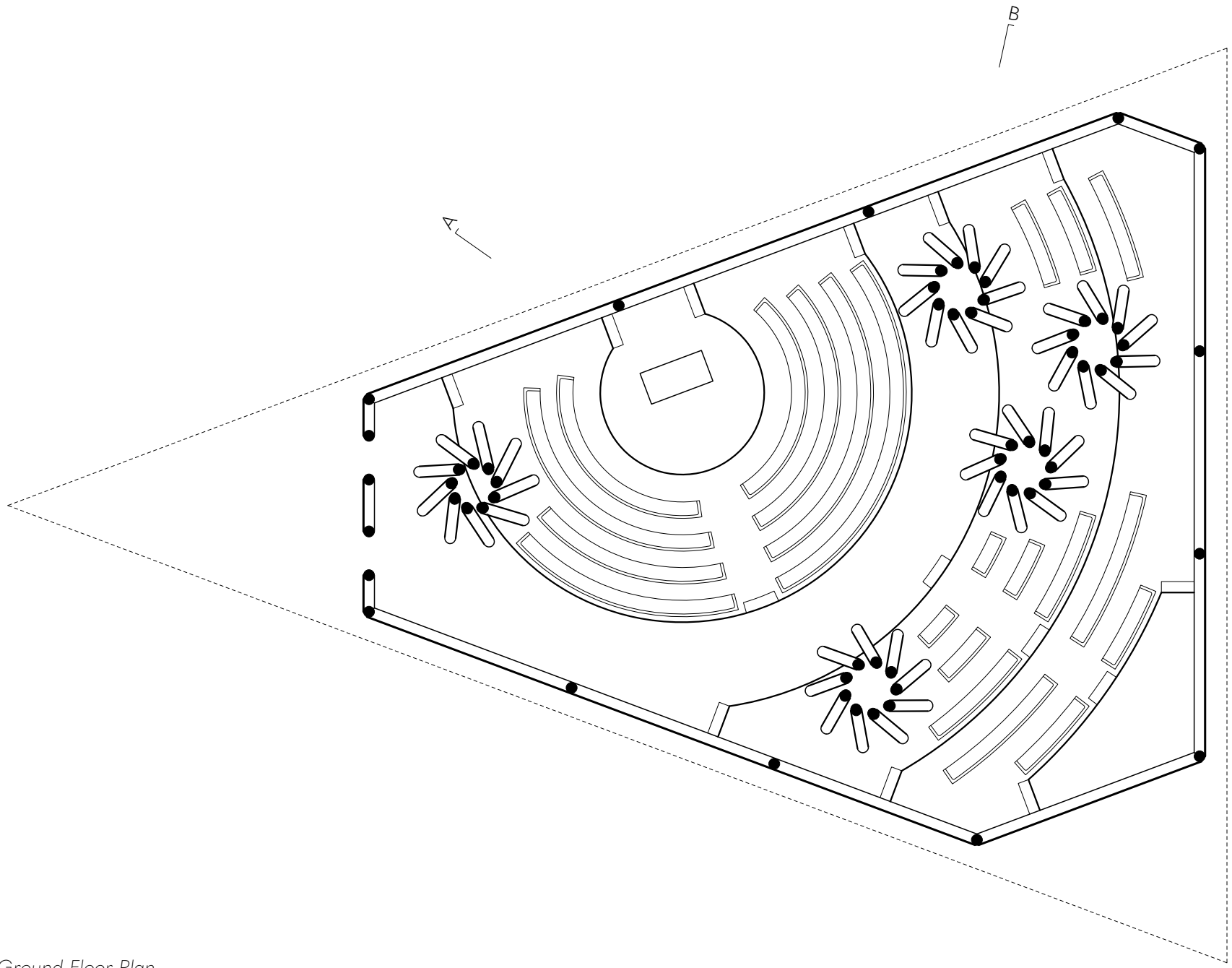
*MIT Chapel*  
Vertical focus of lighting



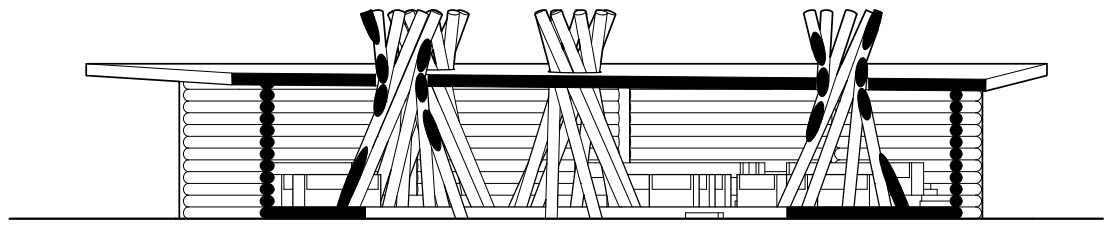
*Houston Astrodome*  
Concentric organization

Drawing from three windowless precedent studies, this project finds its strength in synthesizing a new design strategy from **disparate aspects of canonical precedents**.

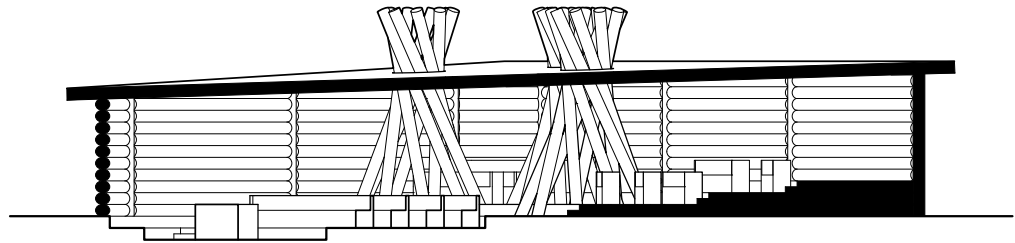
Program: Worship  
Size: 112' x 84' x 18'  
Floor Area: 3,300 ft<sup>2</sup>



Ground Floor Plan



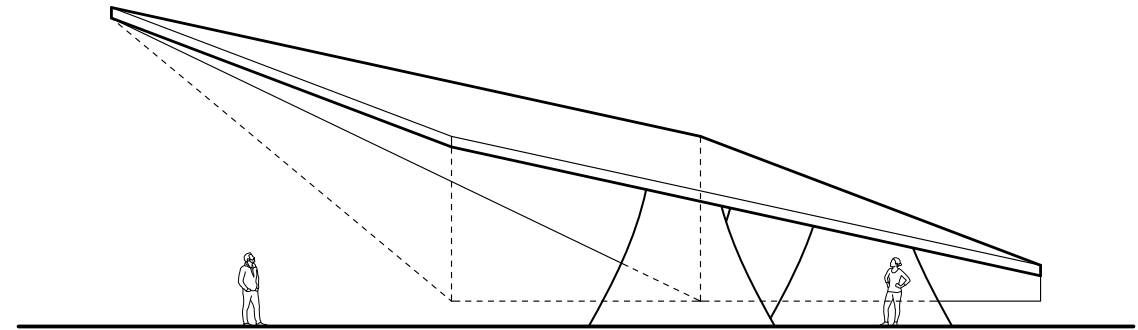
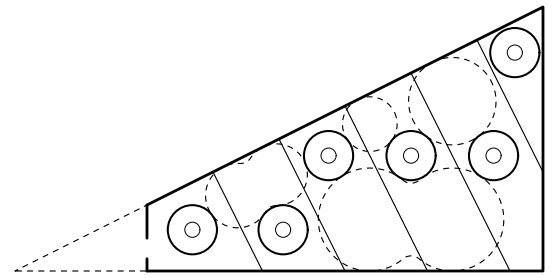
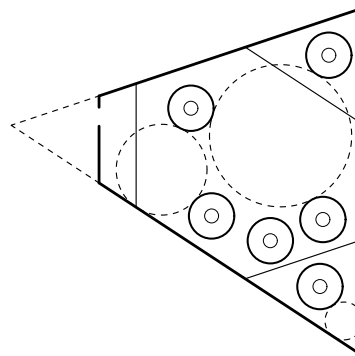
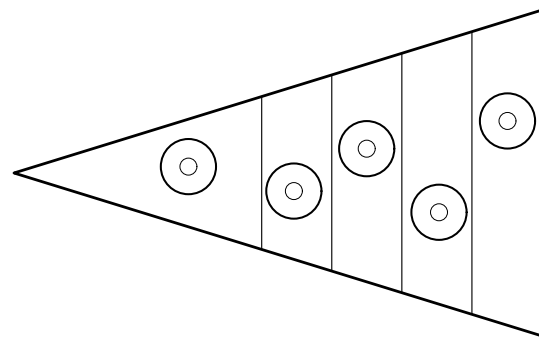
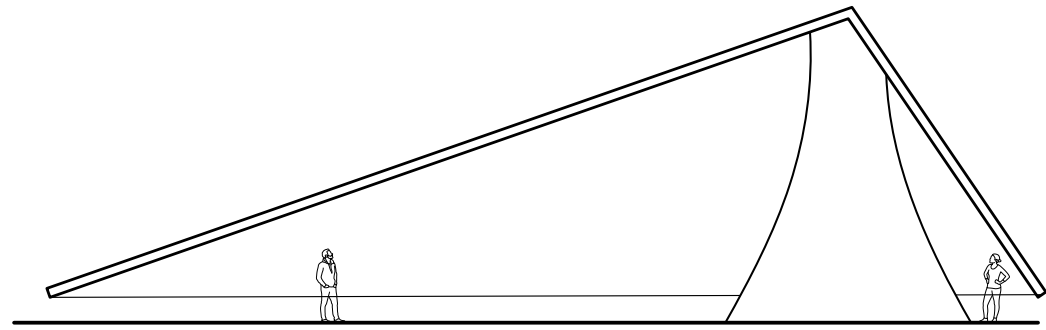
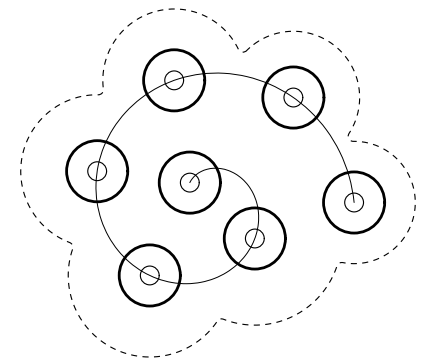
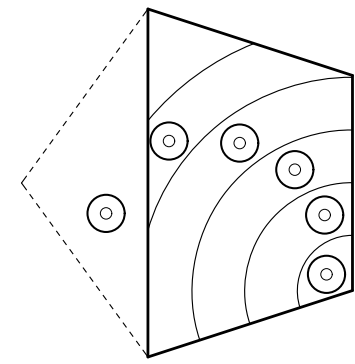
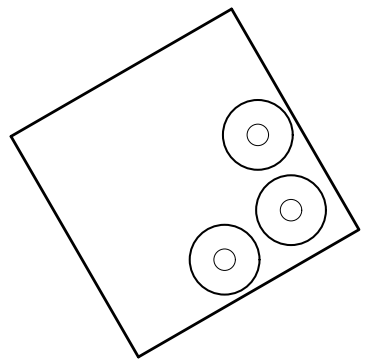
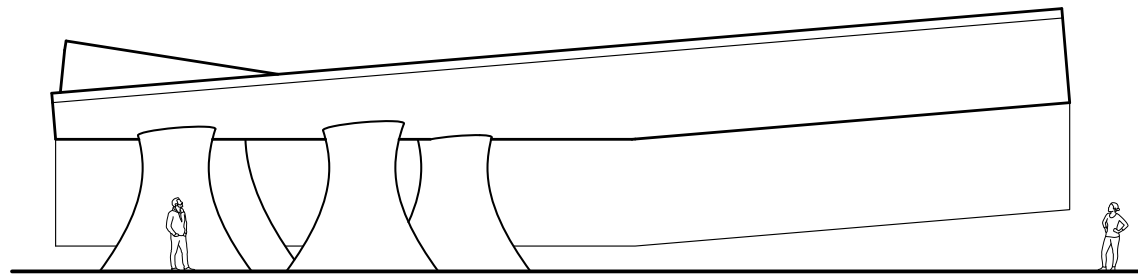
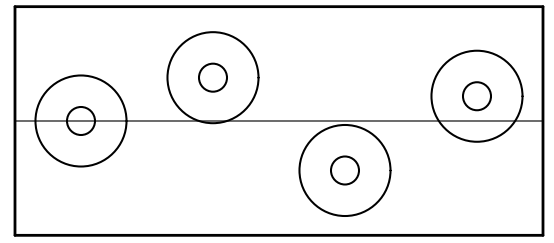
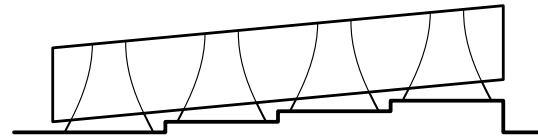
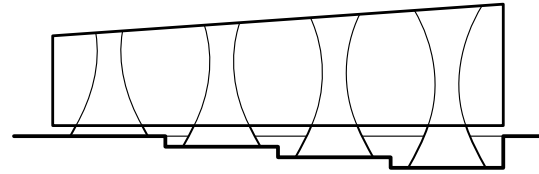
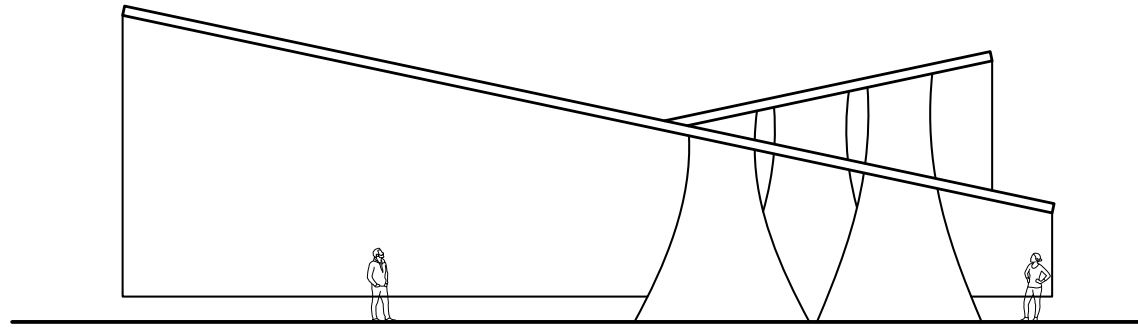
Section A



Section B



Exterior

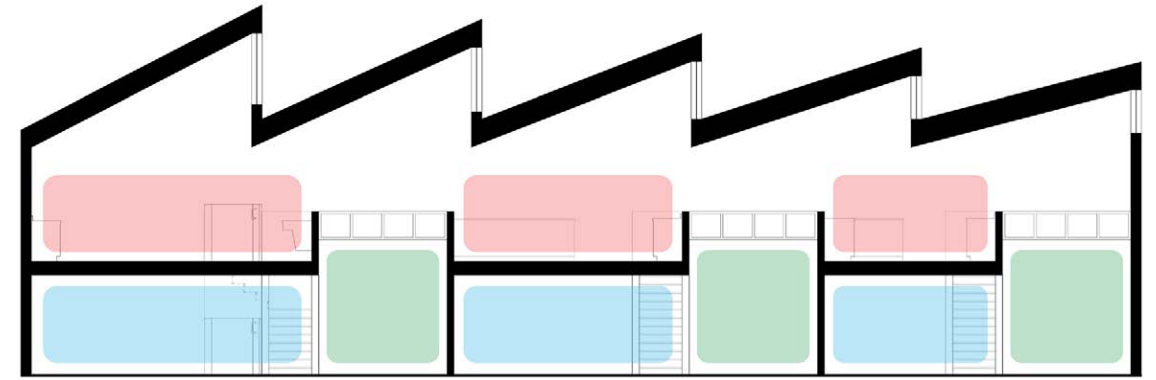
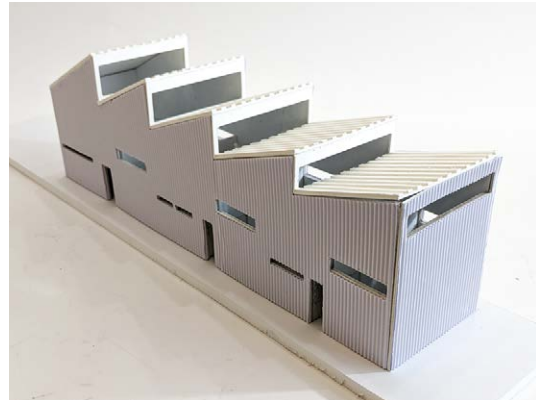


Early process work focused on designing at a human scale while exploring the notion of **interiority separate from traditional enclosure**.

Later iterations examined the productivity of orderly layouts versus seemingly random organizations in creating different zones of collectivity. The final outcome would attempt to use the log hyperboloids to break up the space while not approximating walls.

# Home Alone, Together

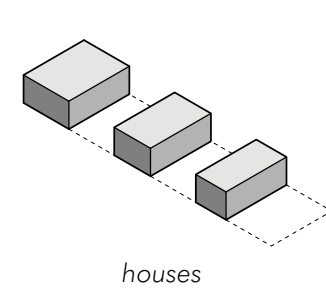
For ARCH 553: Three-in-one and One-for-all - Grant Gibson & Penelope Dean



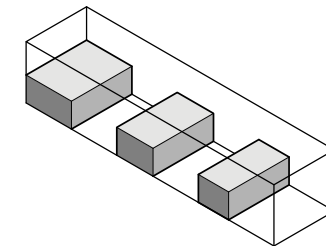
(red) collective space, (green) semi-public space, (blue) private space

**Home Alone, Together** is a multi-unit residential co-living project that gives agency to its co-residents to control their presence with one another and interact on their own terms.

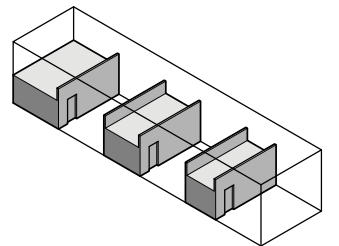
Each of three units is separated into three zones of privacy determined by how directly residents can see and hear one another from separate units. Bedrooms and bathrooms are **fully private spaces** in which residents cannot see or hear one another between units. Living rooms are **semi-public spaces** wherein residents can be seen and heard from an adjacent unit with effort. The kitchens and dining areas are the most **collective zones**, being directly visible and audible.



houses

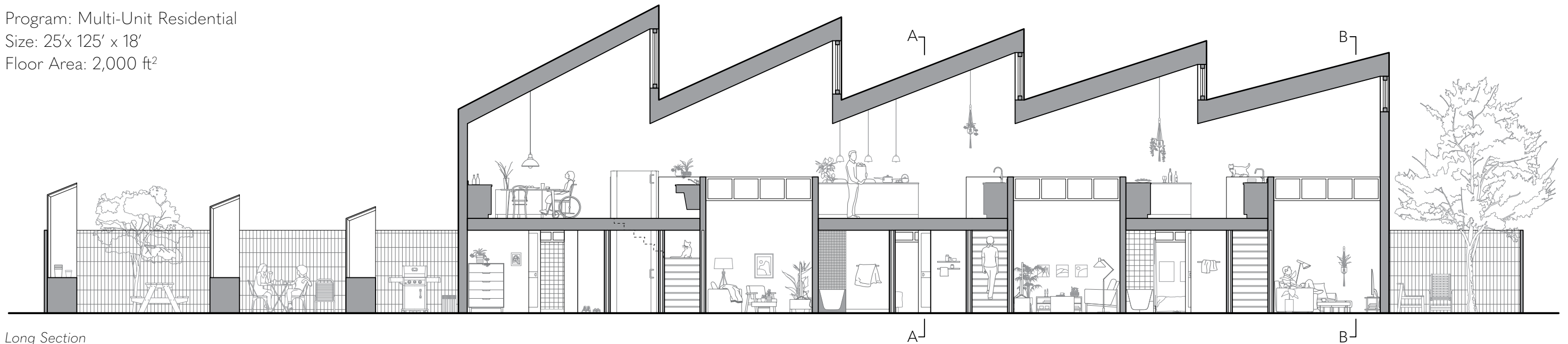


houses in a house

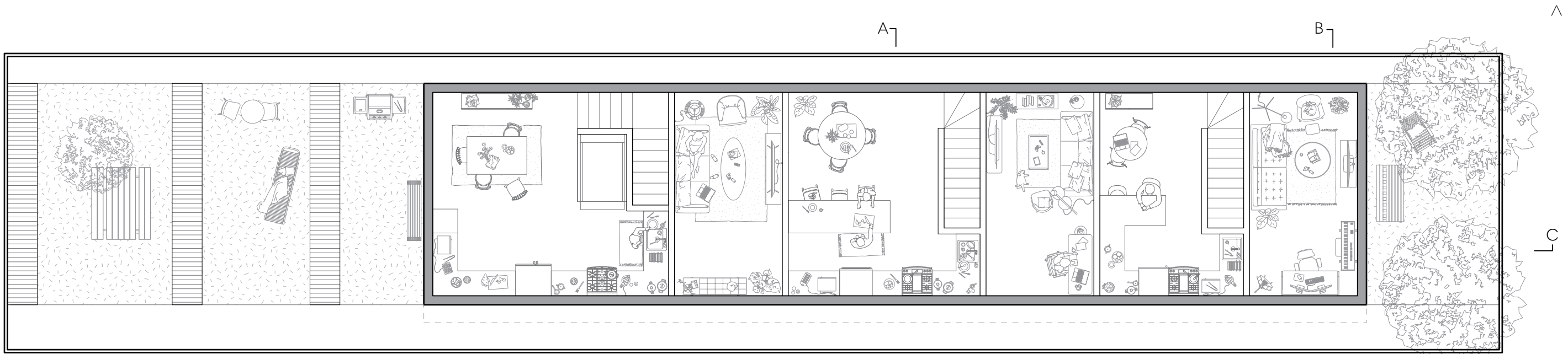


collective living

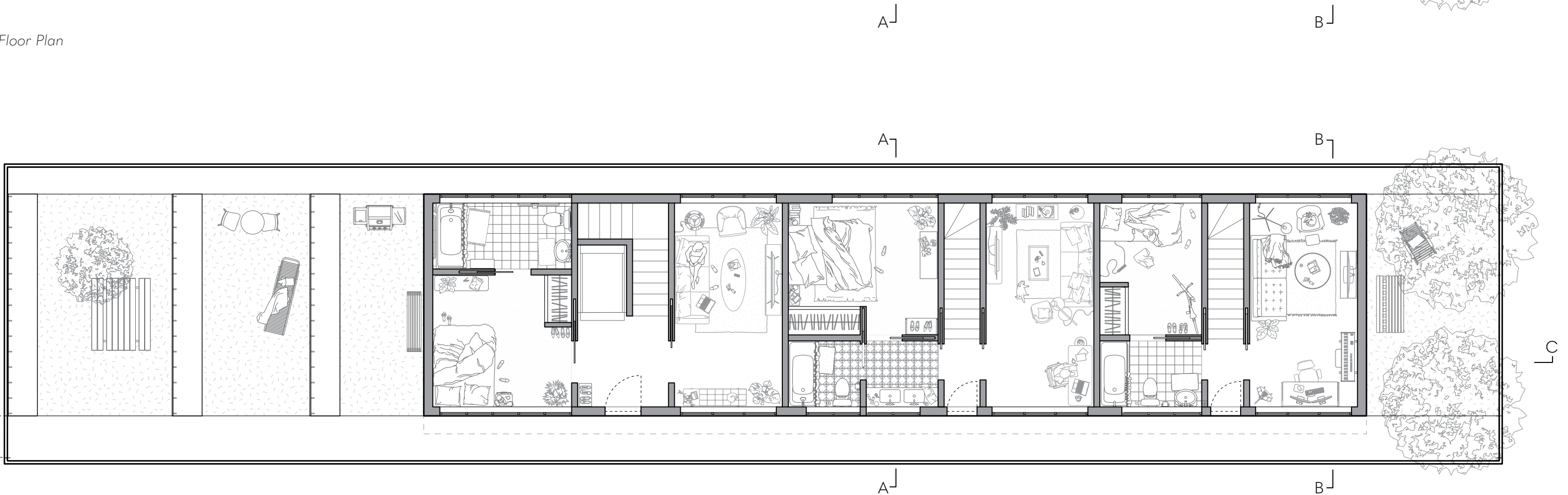
Program: Multi-Unit Residential  
Size: 25'x 125' x 18'  
Floor Area: 2,000 ft<sup>2</sup>



Long Section



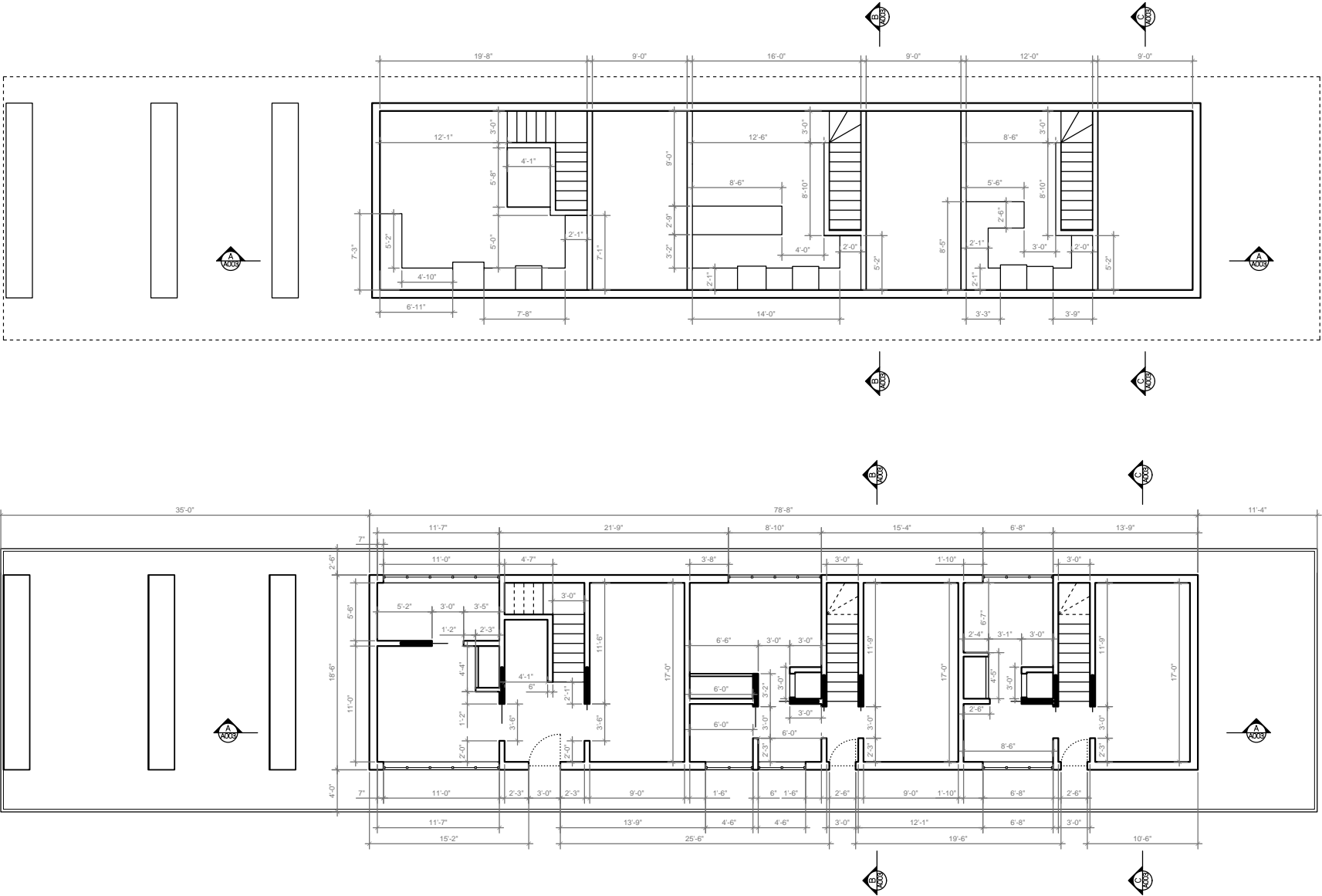
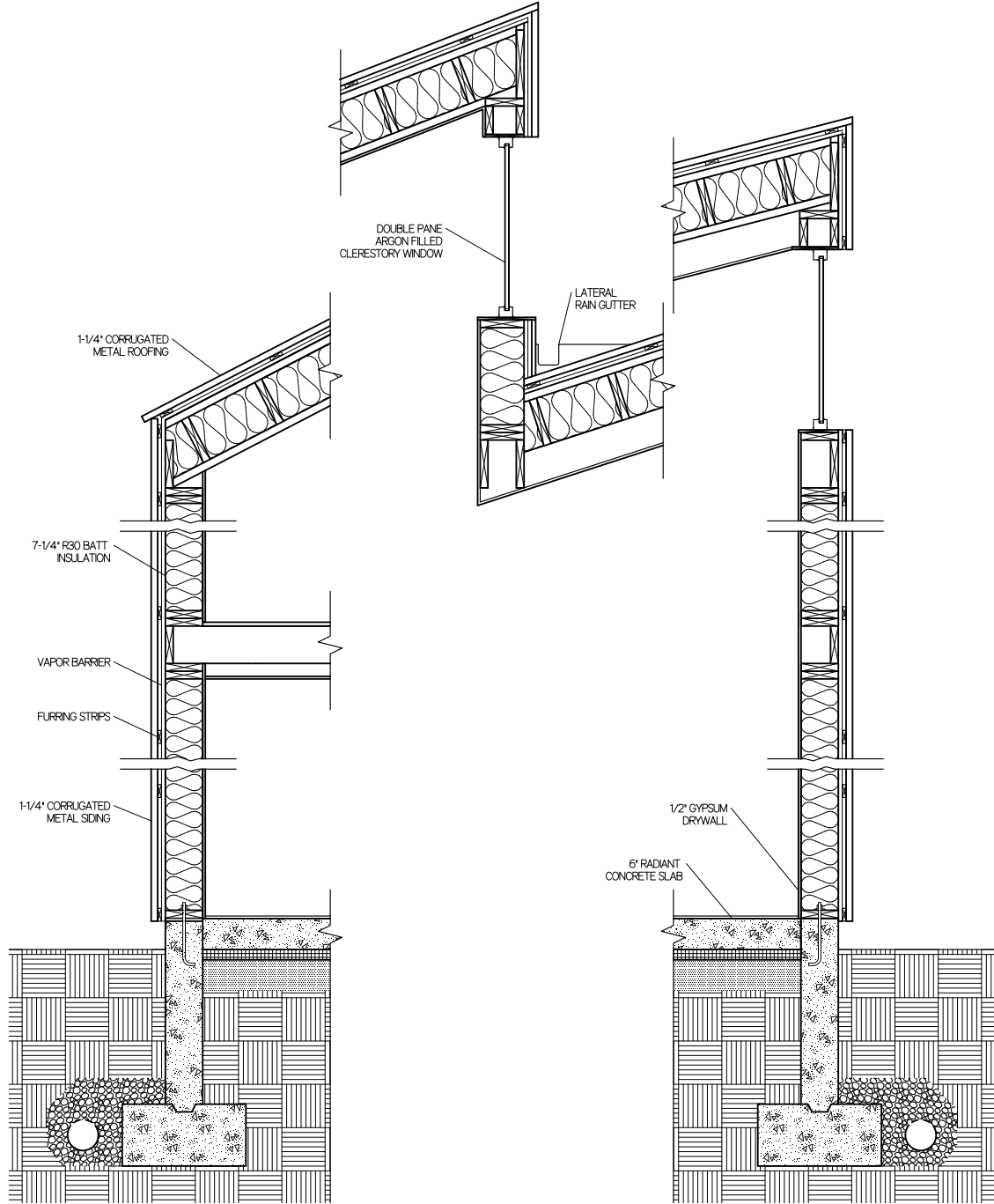
Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

# Design Development - Home Alone, Together

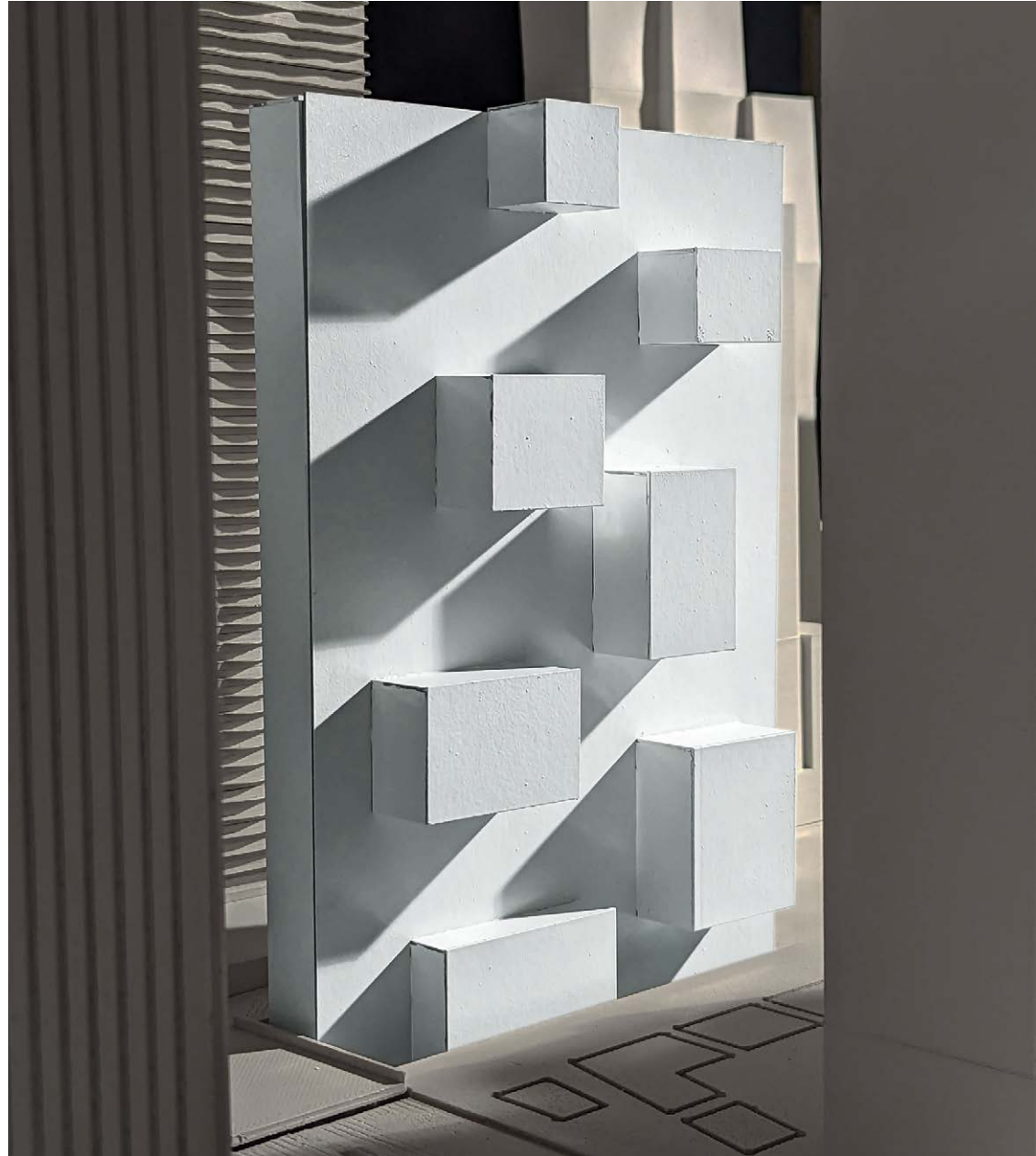
For ARCH 555 - Design Development - Grant Gibson & Aura Venckunaite



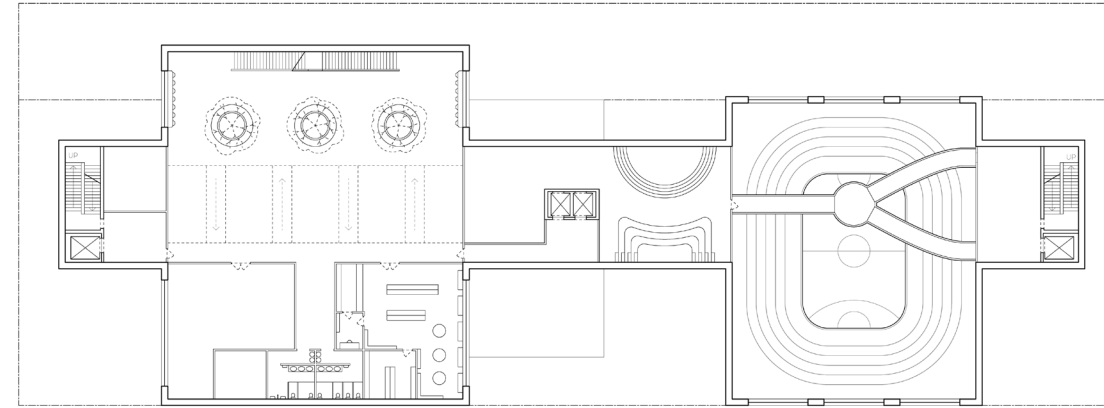
(top) Dimensioned Second Floor Plan  
 (bottom) Dimensioned First Floor Plan  
 (left) East-West Wall Section Details

# Protrusion / Interruption

For ARCH 554: Open House - Barbara Materia & Spencer McNeil

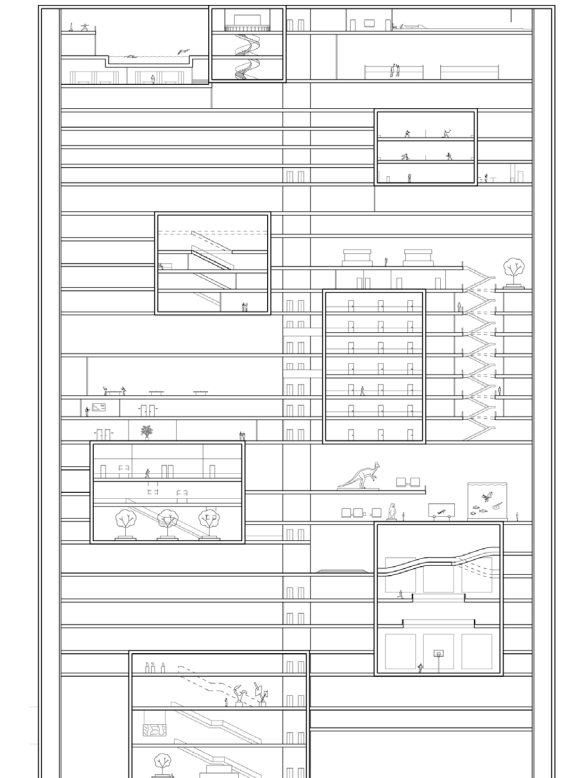
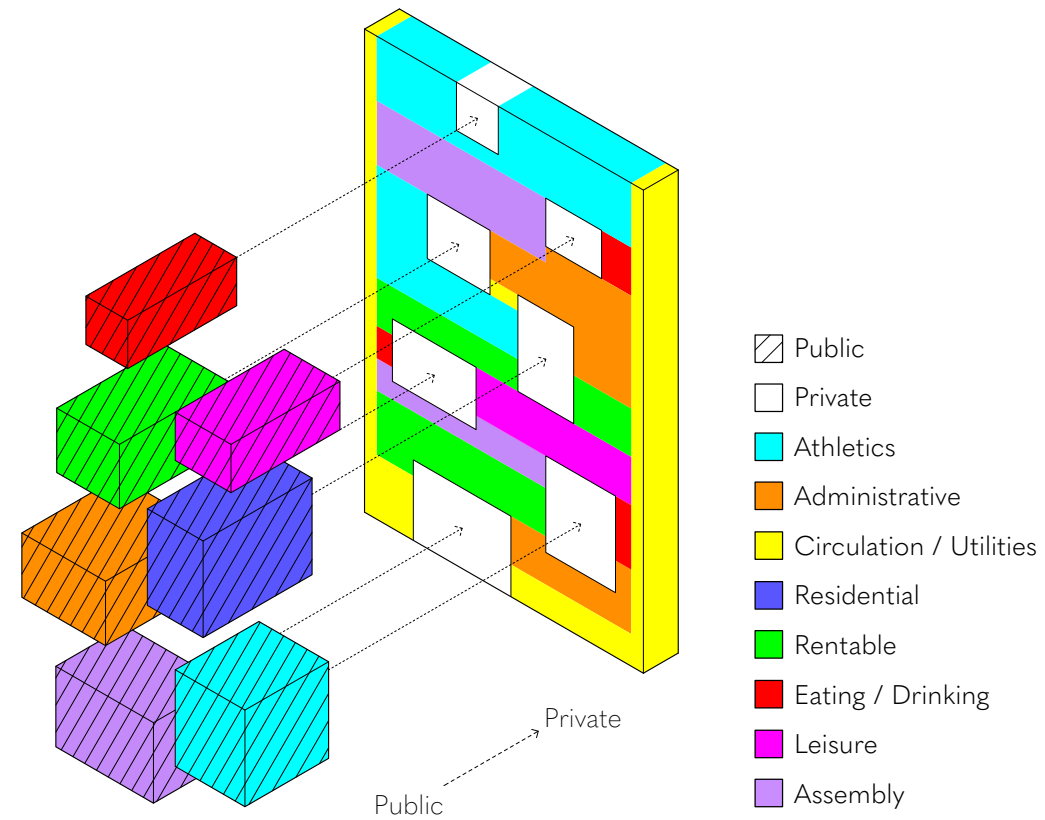
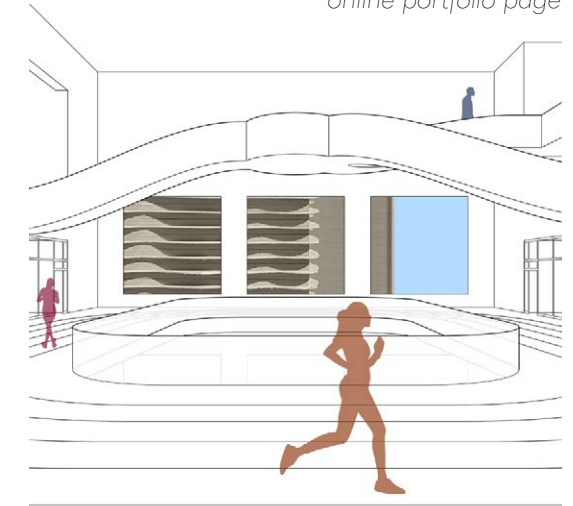


Program: Athletic Club  
Size: 320' x 125' x 480'  
Floor Area: 372,000 ft<sup>2</sup>



10th floor plan and rendering, showing adjacent retail, performance, and athletic spaces

online portfolio page



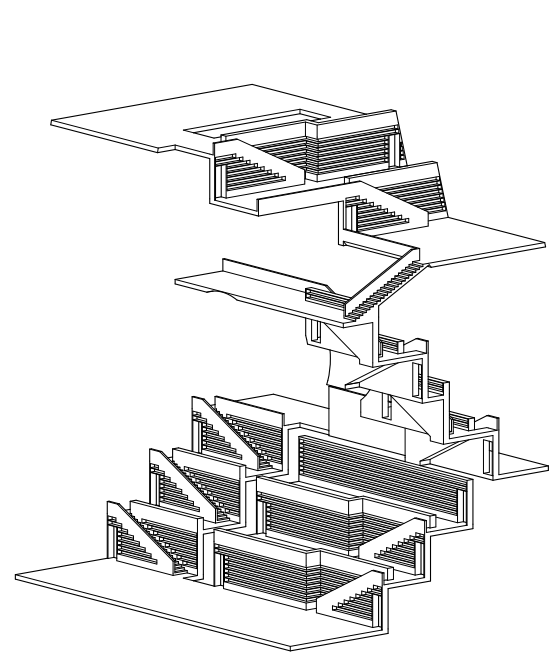
**Protrusion / Interruption** is an athletic club for downtown Chicago that argues for greater enrichment of participants' lives through spontaneous interaction with fellow visitors.

To achieve this, the building has been organized into distinct programmatic zones, some accessible to the general public and others accessible only to members of the club. These zones have been arranged to attempt to maximize the number of unique programmatic adjacencies.

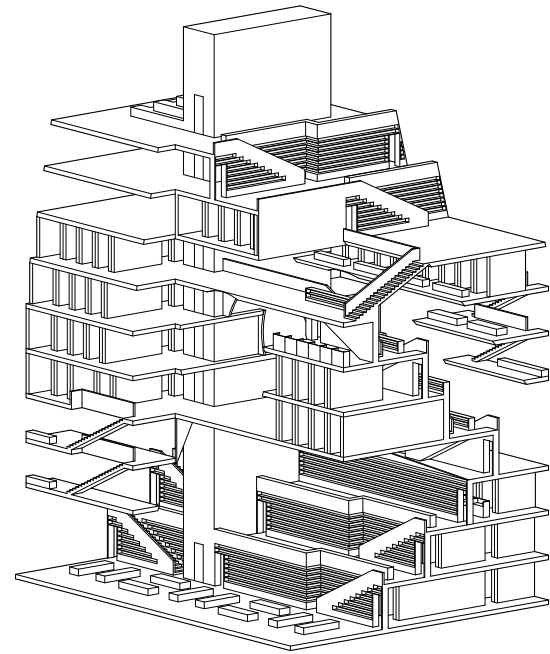


# Last Record

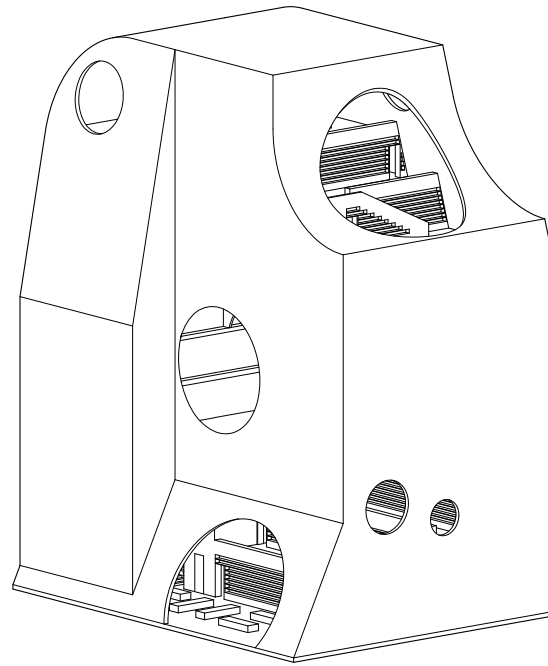
For ARCH 552: Architecture is Everywhere - Sarah Dunn



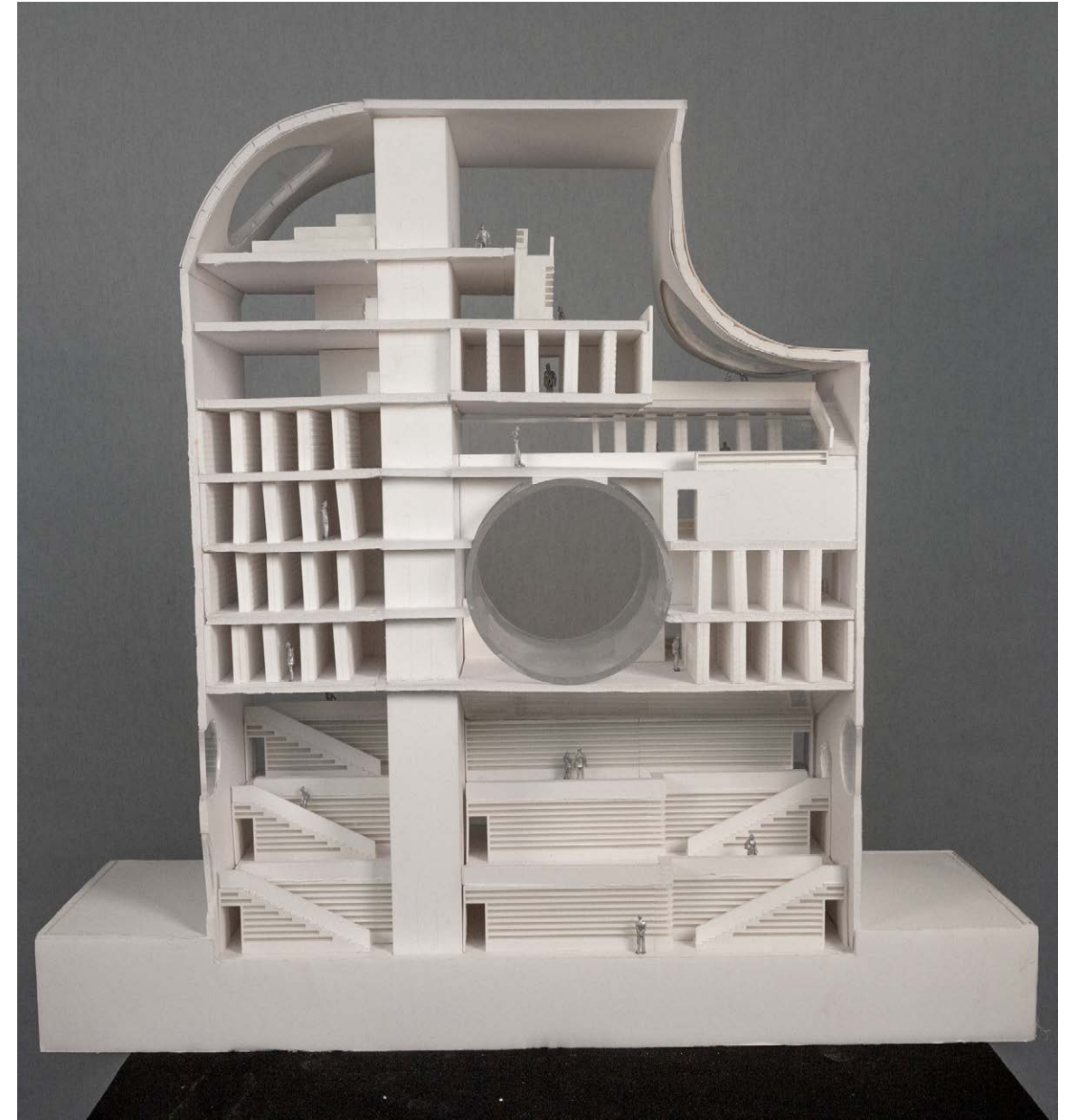
Public Spaces



Public Spaces + Stacks



Exterior Shell

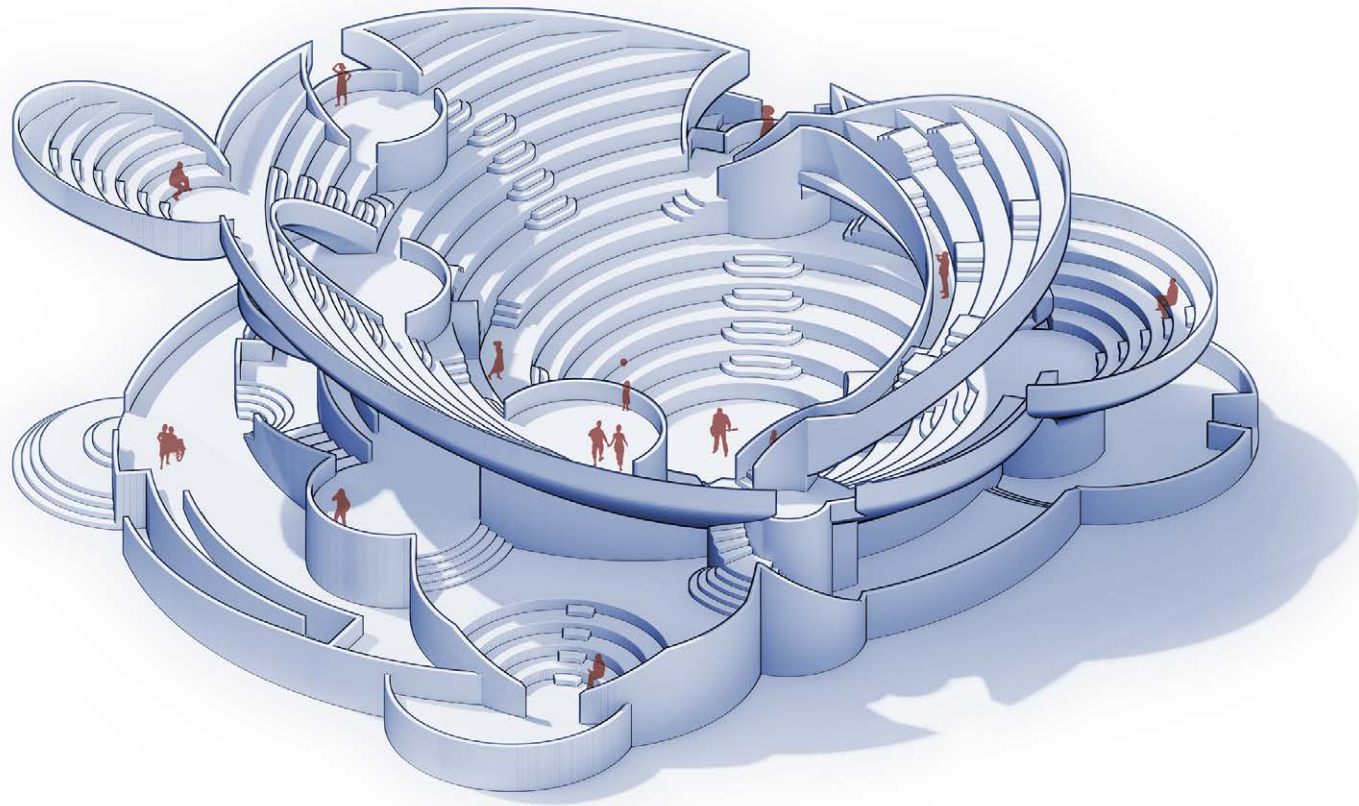


Program: Library  
Size: 96' x 74' x 124'  
Floor Area: 40,000 ft<sup>2</sup>

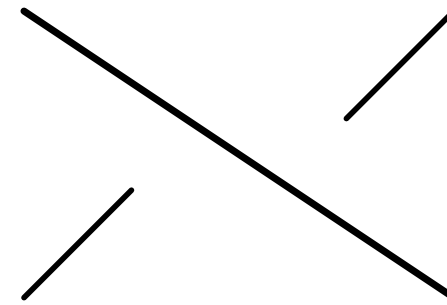
**Last Record** is a library of anthropological literature and research materials concerning multi-cultural death practices. Designed to take visitors on a vertical journey upwards through a series of differing spaces, this project finds balance between **large, open public spaces** and **dense private stacks**.

# Laminar Flow

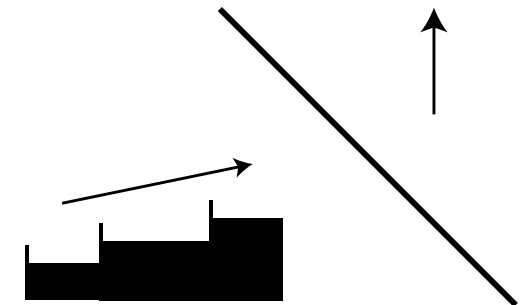
For ARCH 551: Stairs, Stands, and Ziggurats - Sarah Blankenbaker



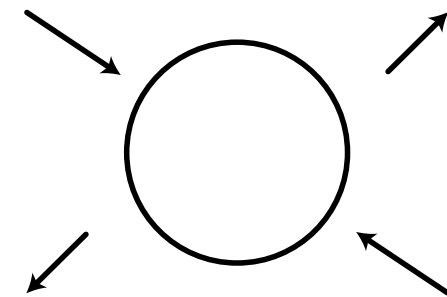
## Design Strategy



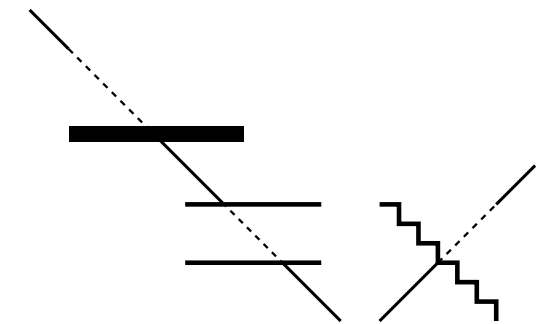
Interdependent Halves



Dichotomy



Circulation



Access

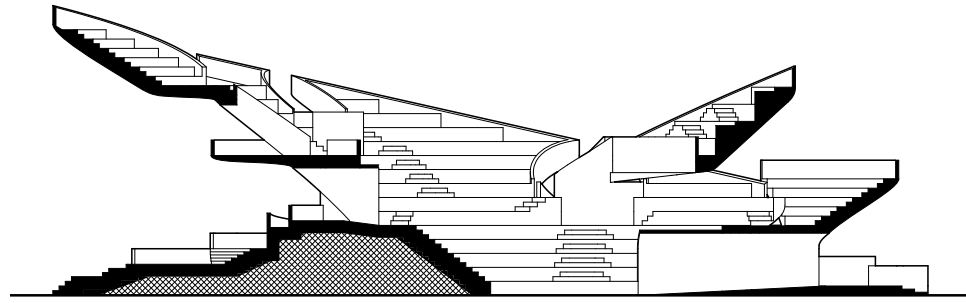
Drawing from Archizoom's No-Stop City, this project attempts to oppose the 'open, but interior' design scheme by instead arguing for a '**closed, but exterior**' plan.

To this end, Laminar Flow is separated into **two interdependent halves**: the outer areas are low, supporting structures offering circumferential circulation and access to the inner areas, which have a vertical design and house the main performance spaces and viewing areas.

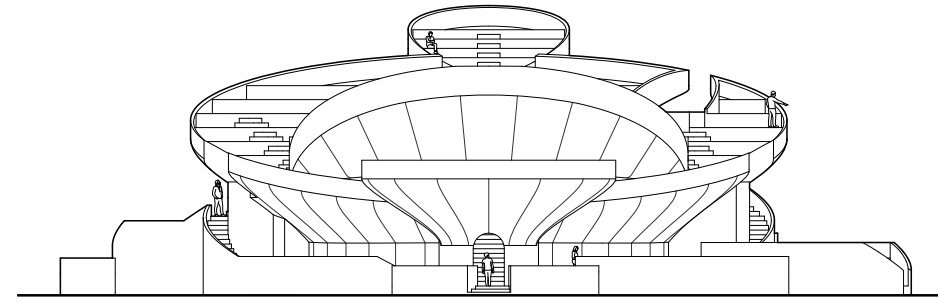
Program: Performance Venue

Size: 125' x 96' x 42'

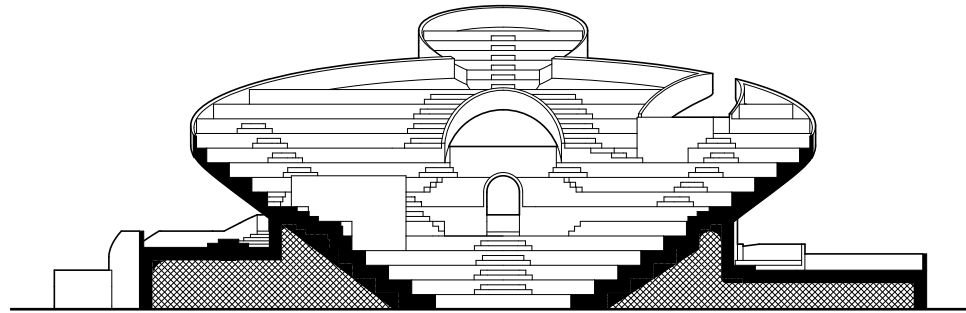
Floor Area: 15,000 ft<sup>2</sup>



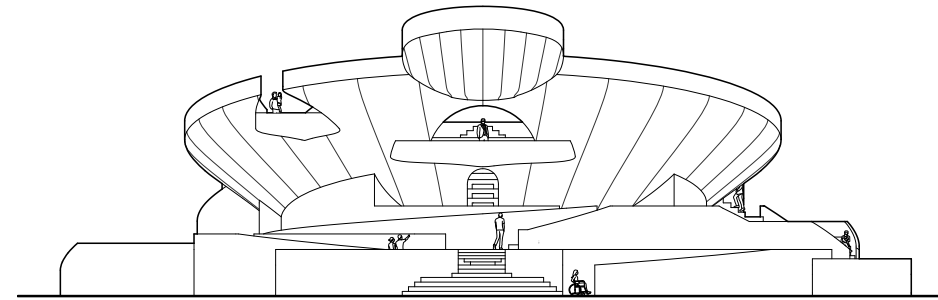
Section A



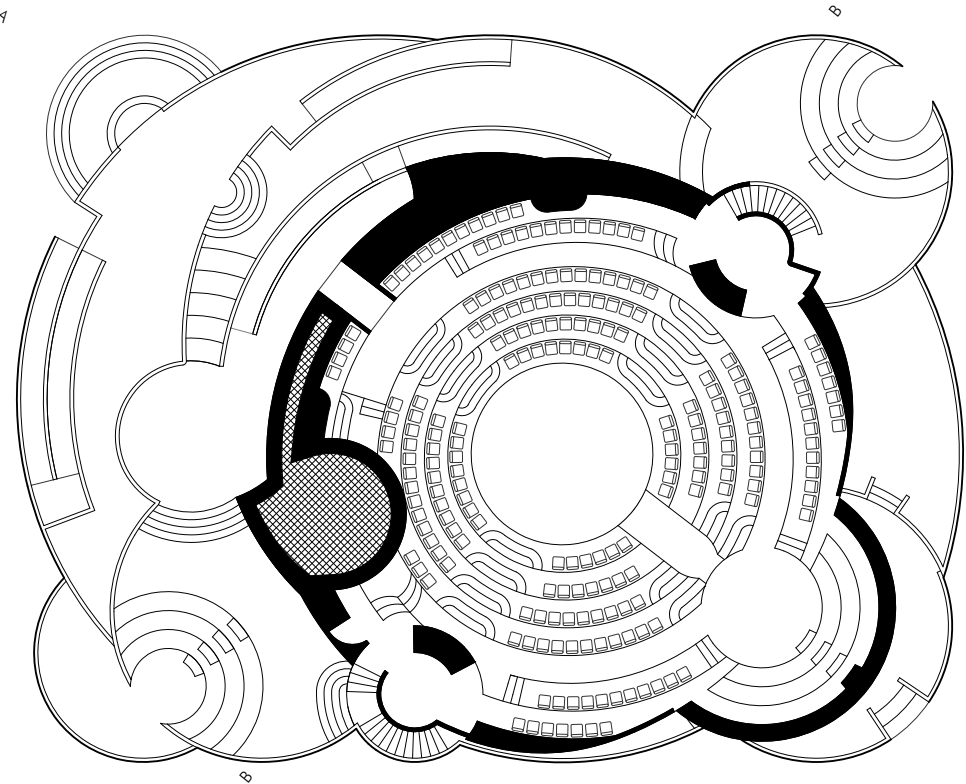
Elevation C



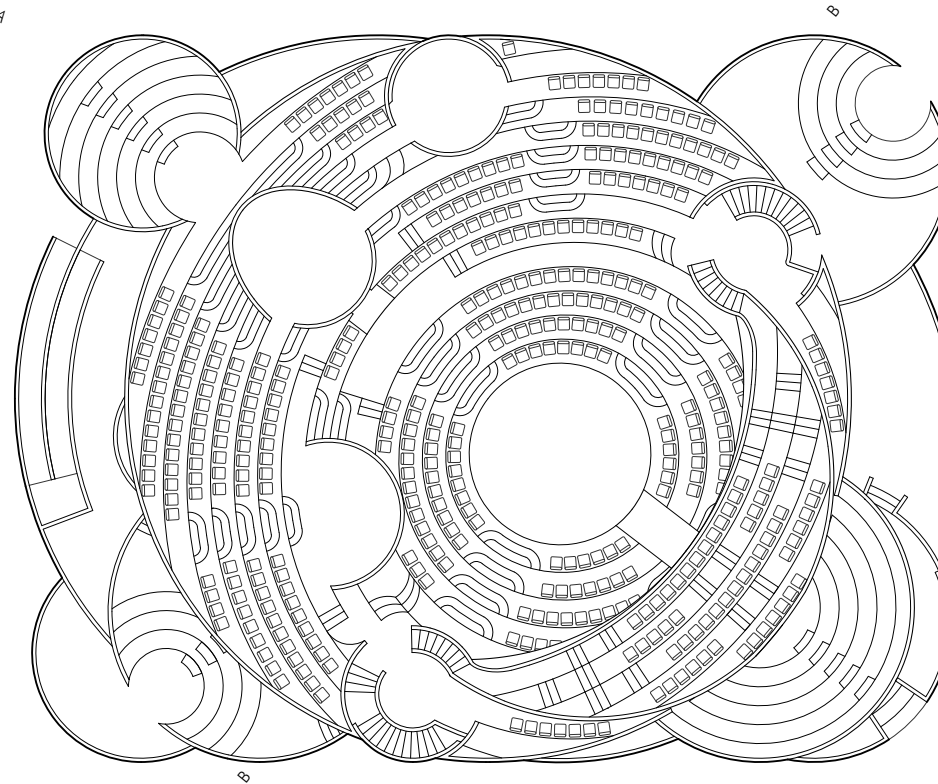
Section B



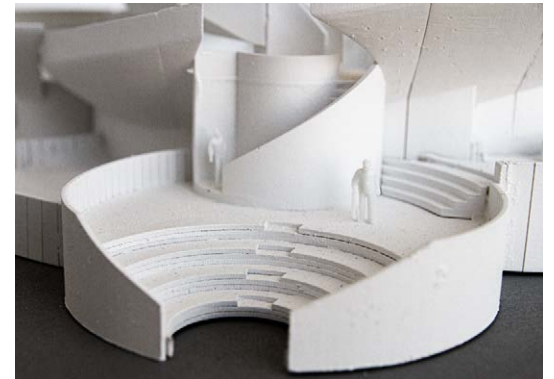
Elevation D



Plan at 16' above grade



Roof plan



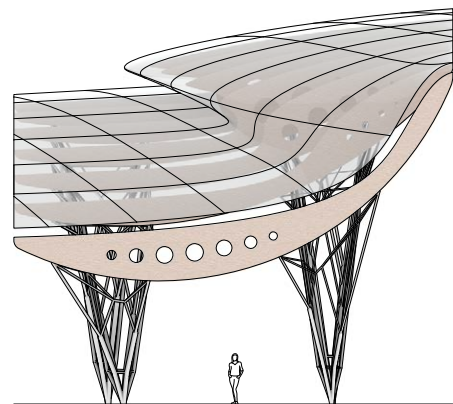
# Fold Pavilion

For ARCH 564: Performance of Form - Geoffrey Goldberg

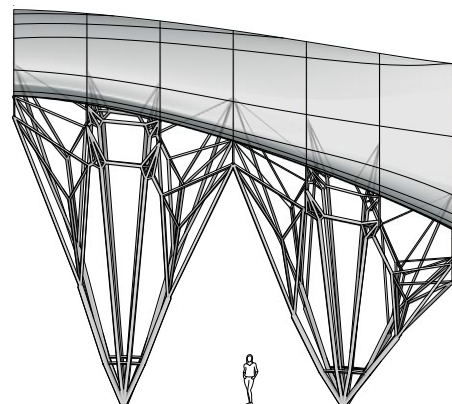


Fold Pavilion is an experiment in form and structure centered around an academic examination of the question: **what makes a surface provocative?**

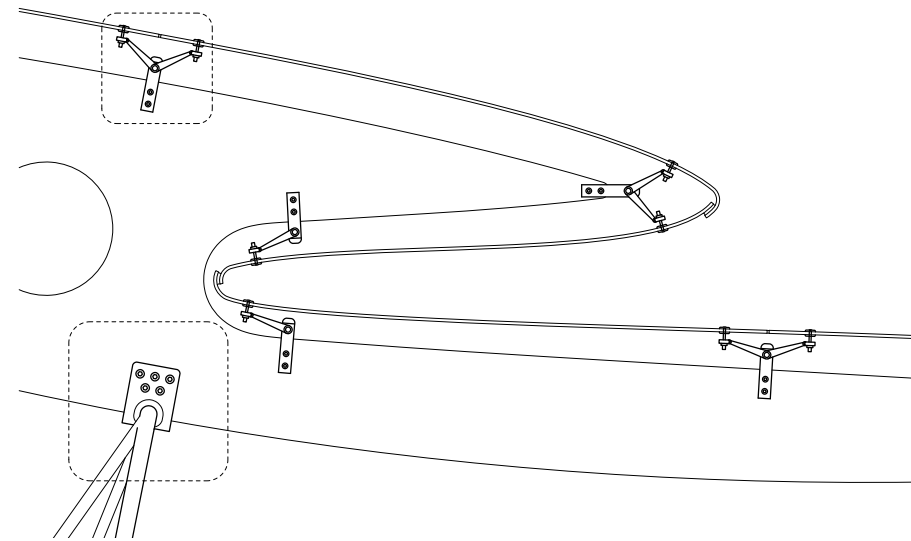
From a basic folding gesture came a top-down system of carefully curved custom glass panes, spider connectors, support ribs, and procedurally generated compression-only structural trees.



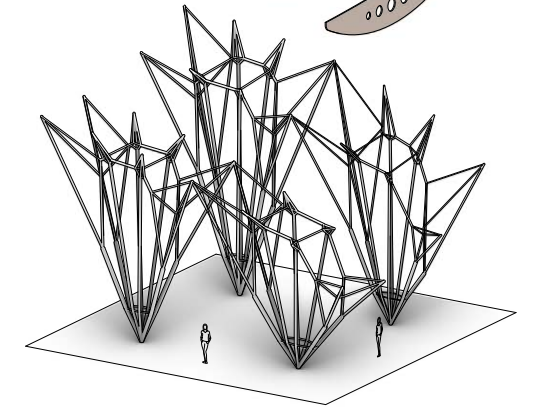
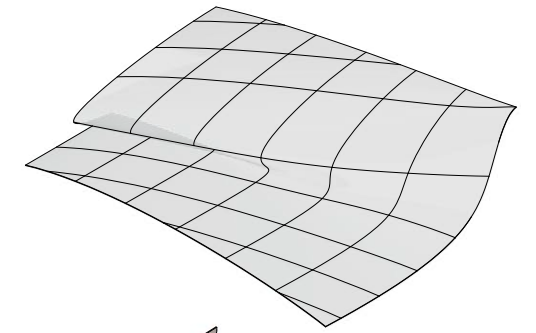
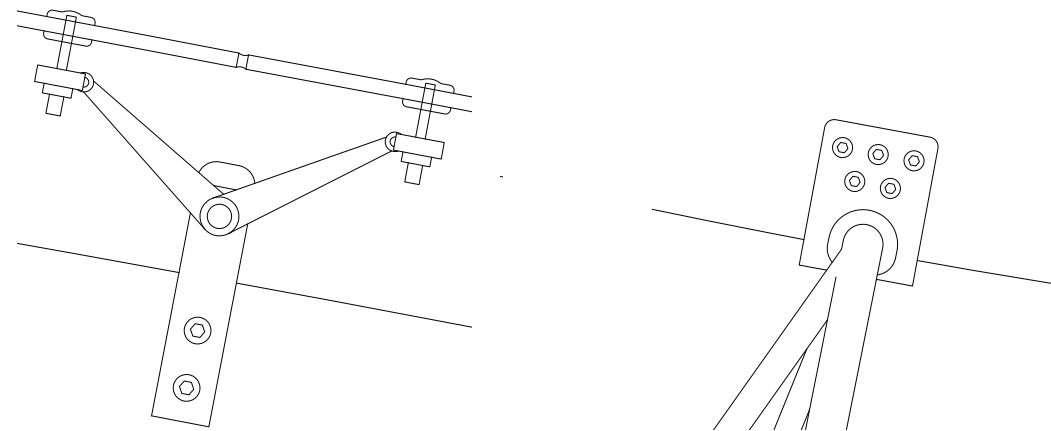
Side Elevation



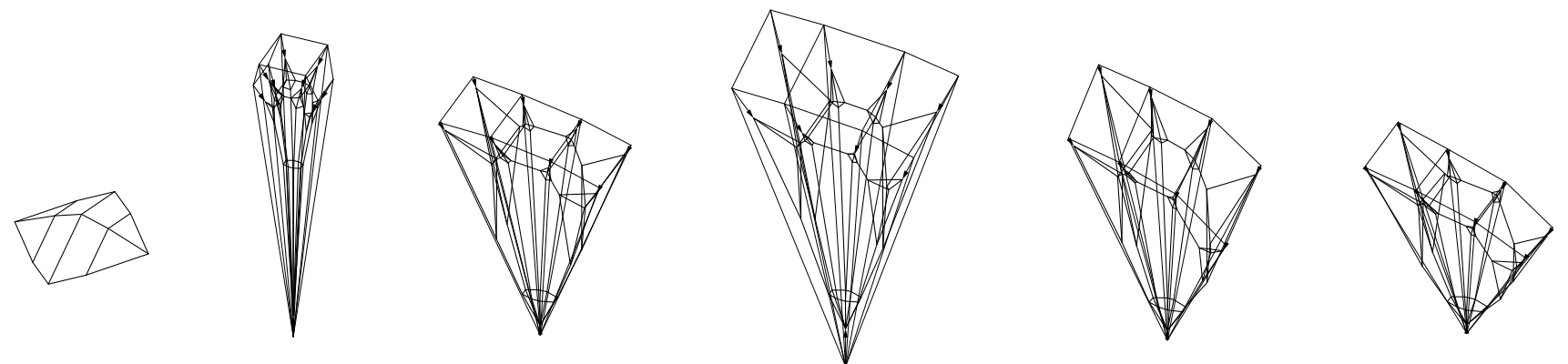
Front Elevation



Structural details showing tree to rib to glass connection system



Exploded axon



Visualization of force diagram to structural tree frameworks

# Parasocial Architecture (All of It)

Written for ARCH 520: The Shape of Things - Sam Jacob

The term **parasocial** has blossomed into a very zeitgeisty word in the last few years. It refers to the a sort of one-sided relationship one forms towards another through intermediary media of some sort, such as social media, television, music streaming, and so on. This is an intentionally vague term, as media is a broad category. What matters here is that there is a distance and a filter between the viewer and the performer.

Parasocial relationships are one sided as a result of the performer-audience dynamic inherent to them: only the audience feels that they know the performer in an intimate, connected way. While *parasocial* as a term is mostly used to describe relationships between a human perceiver and another person (or at least a representation of another person) it can be easily applied to the relationships we have with other places and things, or even with mere ideas.

This is where the internet of media becomes a double edged sword. On the one hand, people without means to travel, see live shows, go to museums, etc. can still have a mediated version of those experiences and be enriched by them the way a real world tourist or live audience member might. On the other hand, parasocial audiences are inherently subjected to the curatorial filters placed

upon the media they consume as a result of both the authorial decisionmaking exercised in the creation and refinement of said mediated experience and the inherent differences between the tangible and the represented.

This should not necessarily be damaging to one's sense of reality as long as the consumption of media is tempered by a conscientious understanding that one is *experiencing* through these filters. However, the rise of psychologically toxic parasocial relationships demonstrated by users of social media and consumers of highly targeted content would suggest that this understanding is largely absent.

When applied to architecture, parasocial becomes a revelatory term. Audiences of architecture include everyone from film audiences in a cinema to video gamers and social media doomscrollers. The question is: how does architecture in the media perform for its audience? The natural answer is: **how does it not?**

The performance of architecture can be experienced through its use as the backdrop of most if not all narrative media. Take for instance the Lars Von Trier film *Dogville*, in which the narrative occurs in a small mountain town. The town has a quaint collection of buildings,



A shot from *Dogville* (2005), showing the floor plan / set of the film.

footpaths, and shrubbery. Or rather, it has these things exclusively in the imagination of the viewers. On film, the town is expressed as a flat stage with a floor plan drawn onto it, and the actors play their roles by pantomiming the activities of daily life.

As an example of **parasocial architectural expression**, the film leverages audiences' imagination to compel viewers to conjure an understanding of the environment unique to each viewer. As a result of seeing both what's shown in the movie and what's fabricated in one's imagination, the film possesses a unique panoptical quality. Perhaps this effect was meant to function as a commentary on the pseudo-omniscience of film audiences observing narratives from a detached position behind the camera. Perhaps it's the director experimenting with the overlap of theater and cinema.

The architecture in this film is the **performance of architecture itself**. But is this not the case with all architecture, in some sense? Are architects designing concrete and glass structures, or conditions that inhabitants inherently understand, within which they might perform their humanity day after day and year after year?

The assertion at play here is as follows: architecture is a greater practice than designing buildings that stand up. It is the design of spaces that, if done well, empowers people to both write and live out the stories of their lives in preferred, enriching, or fulfilling ways as both performer of their instantaneous identity and audience member to its gradual changes.

In pursuit of these lofty goals, architecture must tap into the culture, technology, and sentiments of its

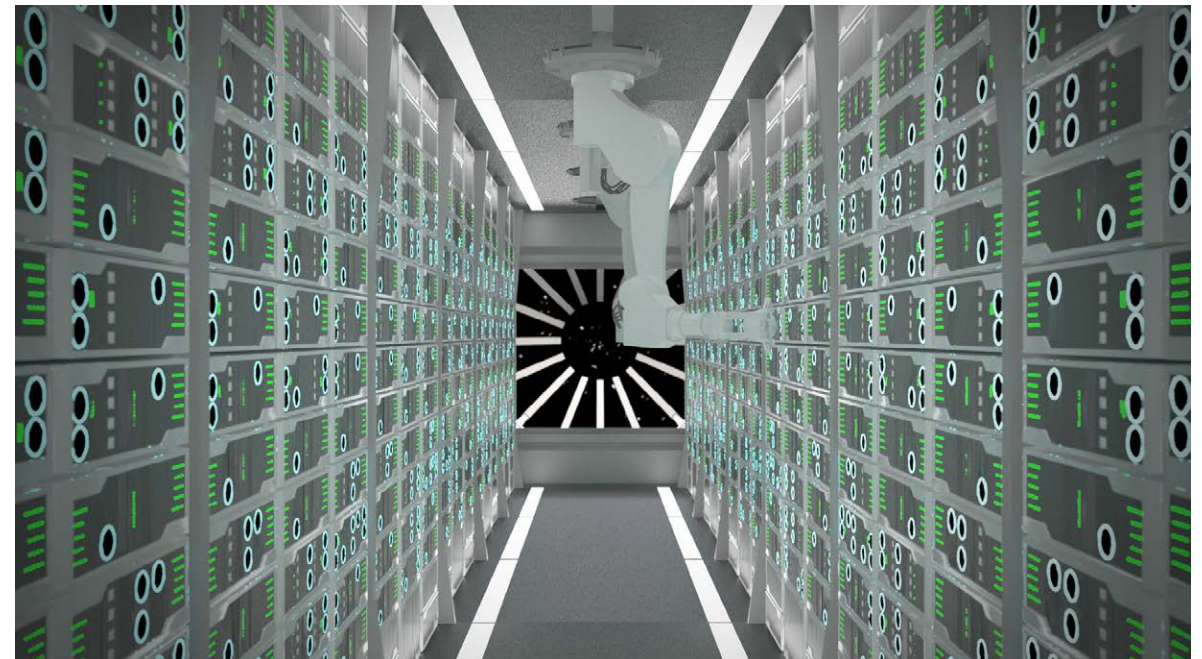
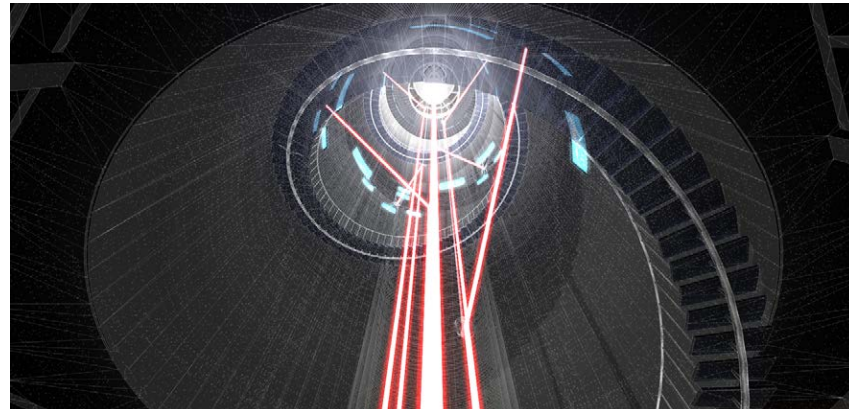
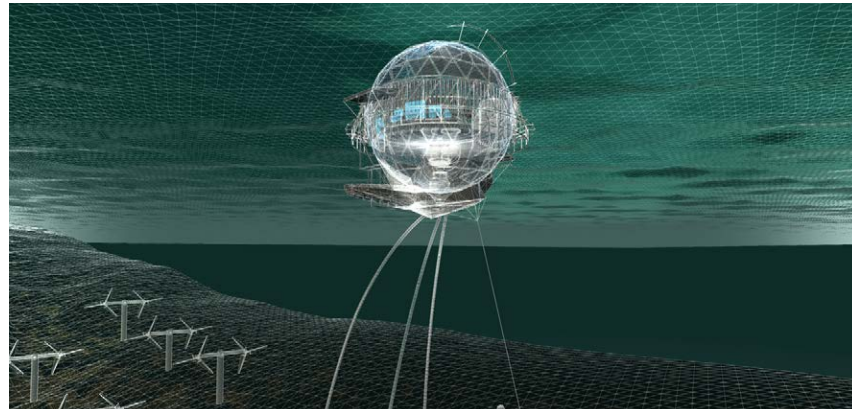
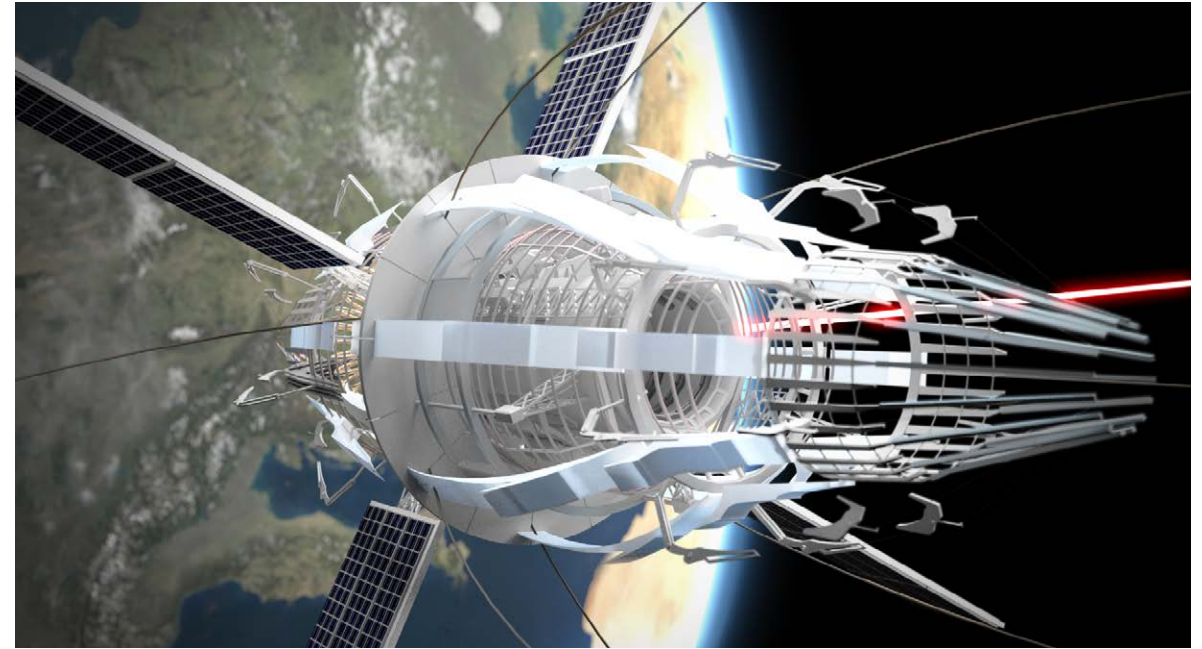
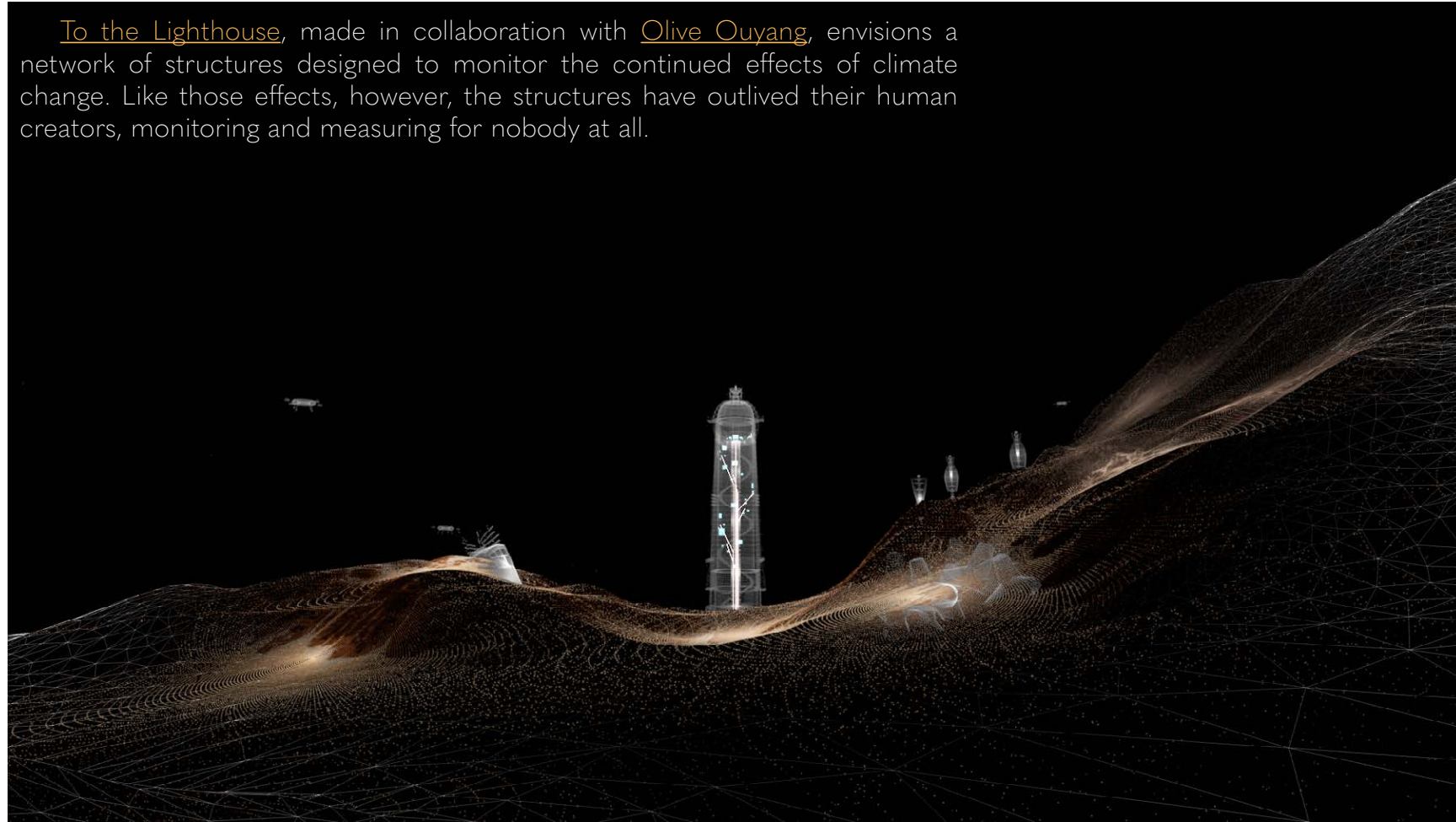
intended inhabitants, synthesize some sort of ideal space that considers these factors, and offer a final design to be constructed within a reasonable time and budget. No matter how this process is carried out, architecture is fundamentally performative in the ways that it appeals to inhabitants and observers to express the goals and ideals of its creators.

**Good architecture**, then, does well to lean into the parasocial relationship between inhabitants and their continuing performance of self. **Good architecture** is both a backdrop and a collaborator to this performance. **Good architecture** is the cinematic floor plan upon which people enact their narratives, unobtrusively giving them space to imagine who they might become by offering new distillations of the place and time they inhabit and letting them fill in the blanks with their evolving self.

# To The Lighthouse

In collaboration with Olive Ouyang.

To the Lighthouse, made in collaboration with Olive Ouyang, envisions a network of structures designed to monitor the continued effects of climate change. Like those effects, however, the structures have outlived their human creators, monitoring and measuring for nobody at all.



In the collaborative effort of this project, I was responsible for the design of lighthouse interiors, camera animation, rendering, and post-production.

## Education

### Master of Architecture, University of Illinois at Chicago

Graduated May 2024

Awarded Merit Scholarship, Elected to Student Advisory Board

### Bachelor of Fine Arts, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Graduated May 2018

Awarded Merit Scholarship, Elected to Student Advisory Board

## Work Experience

### Architecture Intern, Chipman Design Architecture

Summer 2023

As an intern with CDA, I spent 1 to 3 weeks with each of their design teams carrying out code compliance research, client and municipality communications, drafting for CD sets, proposal composition, and surveying as-built conditions.

### Architecture Instructor, Midtown-Metro Achievement Center

Summer 2022

This position involved leading a 6 week high school architecture apprenticeship covering topics ranging from design basics to occupancy code to cultural factors.

### Teaching Assistant, University of Illinois at Chicago

Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

Responsibilities included grading work, tutoring students one on one, and holding independent class sessions.

### Visiting Instructor, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Summer 2019

Co-instructed Continuing Studies course *Digital Fabrication*, covering the basics of designing 3D printable and laser cuttable sculptures.

## Skills / Software

### Architectural Design and Revision

Design and revision experience working from schematic design through construction documentation. In order of skill, software proficiencies include: **Rhino, AutoCAD, SketchUp, Bluebeam, Revit.**

### Project Coordination and Communication

Experience coordinating pipeline processes of design, revision, code compliance, and detailing. Written and verbal skills suited to teamwork, presentation, pitching, marketing, and publication.

### Rendering and Visualization

Video and still production workflows covering asset creation through rendering and post-production. In order of skill, software proficiencies include: **Adobe Suite, Maya, Cinema4D, Lumion, V-Ray, TwinMotion.**

## Exhibitions

Work shown by **Peter Burr** in **The Dream Buckets**

*Kinomural, Wroclaw, Poland, 2023*

Work projected on the **Merchandise Mart**

*Art on the Mart, Chicago, 2022*

Work shown in **The Space Dust Show**

*Futurelab 2020, Shanghai, 2020*

Work shown at **Supernova Festival**

*Denver Digerati, Colorado, 2020*

3D Artist for **Future Firm** piece **Storm Speed City**

*Shenzhen & Hong Kong Biennale, 2019*

Post-Producer for **localstyle** piece **Choral**

*150 Mediastream, Chicago, 2019*

Work selected for **The Night Gallery**

*Future Firm Bridgeport, Chicago, 2019*

Work shown at **Mykonos Multimedia Festival**

*Mykonos, Greece, 2018*