



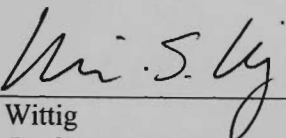
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GRADUATE SCHOOL  
MASTER'S PROJECT

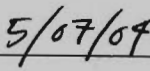
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

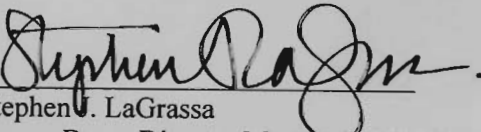
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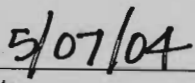
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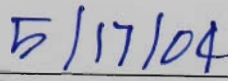
  
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***PRESENCE OF ABSENCE***

**CRITICAL POSITIONS DOCUMENT**



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**23 April 2004**

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## ABSTRACT.

Originally, the thesis question was based on a combination of the statement that architecture, like so many of the arts, *communicates to people* and the question; *how does architecture communicate.*

Dance is an art form that is between the making of spaces and the making of poetry; moulding of space within, around and between bodies as well as between those bodies and the surrounding architectural surfaces and objects. A dancer perhaps understands the space of the body more deeply than an architect, whose profession is to create the shell for the space of the movement of the body, or perhaps the interface between the body and other types of space. Dance is the chosen circumstance because it is an art form about the space of the body as well as the spaces surrounding the body and because it is reactive to and expressive of sensory perception.

Redefining the meaning of the act of dance through challenging the roles of the performer and the audience as well as their relation to one another became the motivation for space making throughout the design process in this thesis investigation.

Life is a dance and an art form, in that the things we do all day long everyday are indicative and explicative of who we are. On the chosen site, the particular conditions are that the site is spatially set up as a focal point, as if it is in the center of rivers of vehicular traffic that is layered with pedestrian traffic as well. Challenging both the placement and definitions of audience/performer in relation to one another, by happenstance as well as by orchestration, is the way that this project attempts to redefine the act of dance.

## PROJECT SUMMARY.

Dialogue. A discussion, a dialogue, a back and forth about language and communication. The meaning that is perceived by the reader relies heavily on the grammatical method in which those words were orchestrated. The experience offered by the piece depends on the point of view from which it was written.

The way words are composed to form poetry, for example, can cause a more emotive response in the reader than literature can because it combines fewer words to create meaning, most of which is left to interpretation. The reader's interpretation is what ultimately makes a poem a more personal experience than other forms of written language. The power of poetry lies in what the reader interprets and adds between the lines.

Without the definitive parts of language, the meanings of words, and the possibility of manipulation by a poet, her work would not be as significant. A discussion about space making for a particular circumstance in the realm of the language of architecture, or the architecture of language, would not be complete without recognition of all the parts of both language and architecture.

Similar to poetry and its ability to purely express emotion or revelation, dance and music also have history, precedent, techniques and methods one may study, and from which the author may draw. Through the combination of such historical precedents, techniques, and methods with the idea of using them as tools to communicate certain ideas or feelings, the choreographer or the composer speaks to her audience. Music has notes, it has different styles and genres, there are different instruments and different combinations of all of those respective parts. Dancers begin by studying the classical elements in ballet, jazz, tap, etc. in order to eventually develop a meaningful way of combining those elements; thus creating a new medium altogether.

The same kind of statement can be made of artists, poets, and writers of all kinds. What is more relative to the manner in which architecture communicates is the question of what is done with all the preceding elements, and how they are built upon through time to challenge precedent and to create new meaning. What is interesting about modern dance versus classical ballet is that much of the movement technique requires knowledge of the movement techniques classical ballet, but the intention is less about memorizing previously performed and perfected pieces and more about expressing one's own ideas through movement, lighting, sound, and costume.

### *circumstance.*

A place will be created that invokes expression that is communicative. One that does not rely on the written language or the verbally spoken language. A place that is not about being dormant, about sitting and reading and writing, but that is about expressing, or feeling the need [space] to do so. A space that expresses epiphany, experiential and emotive and even spiritual attachment to a place or to something entirely other that occurs in this place. A place where expression occurs, where a person or a people is encouraged and challenged to experience and to share, to understand, and to feel without knowing or telling or asking; where one explores within

the space of the mind but also has the desire to somehow report back to the rest; to take in and to give back.

### ***relationship between thesis and circumstance.***

Should the architecture be used as art, as expressive or cultural commentary solely above programmatic requirements?

Should the architecture communicate in spite of or in conflict with the functions/spaces that it is to provide to its inhabitants?

If the architecture is to communicate or to express something, is it enough to say that such communication is the program?

The designer of a place for dance may then gain a higher level of understanding by drawing upon the dancer's way of describing space.

Architecture is an art form, but is also responsible for fulfilling specific functions. For example, a person needs a surface for sleeping, a place to keep warm and dry from weather. A person needs to eat and to use the restroom; a person needs to get exercise and also to understand the environment around her.

Dance is an art form that is somehow between the making of spaces and the making of poetry because it is about poetically expressing thoughts, emotions, or just abilities through the moulding of space within, around and between bodies as well as between those bodies and the surrounding architectural surfaces and objects. A dancer perhaps understands the space of the body more deeply than an architect, whose profession is to create the shell for the space of the movement of the body, or perhaps the interface between the body and other types of space. Because a dancer entertains many different ways of moving the body, she has a grasp of the amount of space that is required to express various gestures from walking to jumping to lying on the ground.

Awareness of surroundings. Perhaps this is the most profound manner in which architecture is an art form. If the architecture draws attention to itself, it causes an awareness of surroundings, but if it draws attention to the things and people within a space, it achieves a similar condition on another level. If the architecture can even draw the attention of the inhabitants to the realm outside the envelope of the building and past the extent of the property line, its power to communicate increases. Visual connection between several sites as well as through both performance and audience spaces could create a dynamic that on its own is a dance or performance even if actual events have not been scheduled.

Redefining the meaning of the act of dance through challenging the roles of the performer and the audience as well as their relation to one another is the motivation for space making in this thesis investigation. Creating a performance space meant for dance is suggestive of a performance hall typology, however, challenging the notions of the opaque envelope of the performance hall as well as the necessity for planning performance important as well. Life is a dance and an art form, in that the things we do all day long everyday are indicative and

explicative of who we are.

On the chosen site, the particular geometric conditions create a focal point, as if rivers of vehicular traffic flow past on all sides. The flow of traffic occurs in layers that include cars, trucks and buses, the people mover, and last but certainly not least pedestrians. When unoccupied or in the state of calm, the dynamic changes in height of buildings that surround the site project long shadows to create high contrast in light quality. Because of the materiality of the site one experiences reflections that occur from layering translucent and transparent materials, as well as reflection of color. From the eyes of a dancer looking to choreograph for this particular site, the desire to choreograph a 'ballet of cars' arises. The collection of sites surrounding the original focal point became the site for the project due to the relationships between them and the space that exists upon them.

It breathes, but at rest it's a beautiful sculpture.

## THESIS PAPER.

Exploration of issues regarding what architecture can communicate and how it is able to do so, or rather the way architecture is experienced and the way that experience is stored in the human mind (which gives architecture its meaning) is the purpose for this investigation. In much the same way that people are able to read language composed of groups of words with certain meanings, they also experience architectural elements and 'phrases.' In the realm of text, expression can be more meaningful although less accurate using poetic forms. Moving into a spatial realm, the expressiveness of the body as employed in modern dance is in some ways analogous to the structure of poetic language. Perhaps combining these two forms of communication, poetry and modern dance, one can begin to establish a way of understanding how space or place-making can be understood as a kind of language. Of course architecture must also exist in the background as a functional environment, but is it possible that architecture can communicate not in spite of, but in concert with its need to function? Can architecture simultaneously serve and speak?

### *Language and architecture.*

What can be spoken with language is very specific to and somewhat limited by its components, how they are arranged in relation to one another as well as in relation to their meanings. In some ways, architecture is also able to communicate through the combination of certain components (signifiers) with certain meanings (signified). Language, in the form of written or spoken prose, is often meant to share something literal and clear to those who read or listen to its delivery. The combination of the meanings of the words as they are put in order have a particular message that is meant to be understood as a whole more than it is meant to be interpreted through analysis and dissection.

There are as many reasons for the use of both language and architecture as there are methods for their execution. When comparing written language and architecture as finished pieces, one can also derive conclusions about the similarities and differences in the process of creation in both cases. Robert Venturi offers an example of how the processes are similar in his comment from Complexity and Contradiction, that the "labor of sifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing: the frightful toil is as much critical as creative." (Venturi 21) I would argue that while processes of editing, omitting, creating, and refining of architectural design is analogous in some ways to the writing of literary fiction, the purpose of executing either process is dramatically different from the other. Michel Benedikt's book entitled For an Architecture of Reality explores this issue. "Can, or should, a buildings' meaning be fabricated with building parts by the architect (or client or publicist) by any process analogous to the way writers construct words and meanings with words in literary fiction? Better, is architecture properly a medium of communication at all, regardless of the factuality of 'what it says'?" (Benedikt 14) As is sometimes a problem with understanding the written language, architectural elements do not always clearly denote any meaning on their own without some form of conjunction with one another. Even if someone wanted to argue that the elements of architecture do in fact have specific meanings, there would likely be many meanings to each element. Grouping elements of architecture can give those elements meaning, much like grouping certain words to



create phrases gives all of the words a meaning collectively. When Benedikt refers to the idea of whether or not architecture is *properly a medium of communication*, he brings up the idea that there is more than one way to communicate with architecture, or that architecture is not solely a means of communication.

While the presence that architecture has in the life and the experience of a person empowers the potential for communication, architecture is responsible for providing functional space to people. Similarly, prose has a purpose, an obligation to the reader to be decipherable, to express an idea in a clear way, and to guide the reader to use the meanings she understands from a list of signified meanings she has learned and understood in her life. Prose is meant sometimes solely to explain information, to collect and describe numerical or scientific data, or other functions that are purely technical in nature. Architecture must be very technical in its artful and expressive execution in order to fully address the issue of functionality. The power architecture has to express ideas, forms, and space through the language of materiality, structure, and lighting is a language unique to the medium. The way the elements of design are woven together has the ability to express in phrases that no other medium can simulate; architectural design creates its own poetic language of expression that the architect constructs so that the experience of a space feels a certain way or reminds the person of something.

While expressive media have the ability to make a person feel something distinct, that feeling is not typically defined by a word. Although words contain, or are linked to definitions, meaning cannot always be contained in a word, or in a string of words that form a sentence. Strings of words and clusters of ideas can sometimes carry deeper meaning when they are arranged in a poetic way; one that leaves gaps in formed thoughts, but gaps that also form thoughts. The connection expressive work makes with the reader becomes a poetry of her own in the way that she fills in the gaps that she senses and understands, leaving others to uncertainty. Somehow it is this ambiguity that exists through the expressive influence of poetry, dance, or music that draws people in, as if the mystery of what they cannot actually define about the experience of something makes it more compelling. It is as if they are assigning to themselves the position of the sleuth who will never be able to define the answer to the mystery, but cannot help but come up with as many possible solutions as the mind can fathom.

The poet constructs particular feelings, imagery, and even allusions to memory as well in an entirely different medium than an architect. For instance, in his poetry, Pablo Neruda uses words and phrases that are not directly about architectural description, but that are very good descriptions of the materiality of space, light, shadow, and sound, even though they are physically intangible. What he describes in his poem entitled "Ars Poetica," Neruda mentions an "absence of flowers," an "absent thirst," and a "cold fever." The whole poem embodies the idea of the presence of absence and while that idea is rich and suggestive of a framework for imaginative thought, what that imagery may be in another individual's mind will remain a mystery to me. For instance, by describing an *absence of flowers*, he alludes to the fact that flowers do have a presence that is somehow different or maybe even opposite of the condition that does exist. By using dichotomies of words Neruda creates imagery based on prior knowledge of certain circumstances in order to describe something without saying exactly what it is. In essence, his words dance around what he is talking about and by the process of elimination, the reader is able to create her own imagery from

those words. The phrases are carefully constructed including just the right amount of words and just the right amount of space between them in order to communicate an entirely perceptive experience on the part of the reader.

*Response to sensory perception.*

Aside from what architecture communicates, it is in the first place a response to the human condition. The extreme nature of the sensuality with which people experience space, light, sound, smell, and touch creates a necessity to respond to that particular condition. Architecture formulates that response into a physical reality.

Sifting tiny granules between the toes under the hot sun and in the midst of a fresh breeze, water approaches, retreats, and the senses are enveloped. Enveloped by nothing except the residue that radiates off the skin of bodies under the sun, the material composed of endless tiny granules upon which one stands, an endless horizon, and panorama for miles in front of the eyes. The beach can be a place that is described as nothing, but also as a convergence of many things at once. What makes an experience like going to the beach interesting is that there may be no built environment but all the intangible materials of architecture are there to be seen, smelled, touched, heard, tasted, and altogether perceived through the mind's combination of all the sensual experiences simultaneously and the effects of that perception on the body.

Although architecture is physically enveloping to the body with elements that create arrangements of space, those elements do so because of the sensual human experience of such elements. In fact, the architect is much more interested in the space that exists between, under, over, and around all of the objects that people normally associate with "architecture." Rather than using the walls as the object of manipulation, the architect learns to play with the space between them, squeezing, pushing, stretching, and pulling that space until the result is inhabitable. In much the same way, a dancer choreographs space, not simply by thinking of the body and how it moves through a space, but how that space is temporally changed with every movement she orchestrates. A dancer/choreographer is a "molder of ever changing space in, of, and around [her] body," in which "Nothing is ever in stone, it has to be malleable." (Brunke) Sometimes the type of expression that is necessary comes out only in forms that cannot be explained precisely, rather in ways that can be seen or read and simply understood, even if the reason for such understanding is unclear. People *connect* with dance in a way that is analogous to how they *feel* architectural space.

Architecture communicates to people and is stored in their memories as a whole experience. Much like a poem that is read in its entirety or a dance that is watched as it is performed live, these particular media are of an expressive nature that is not about the clarity between what signifies and what is signified. Art forms express directly to people without the translation through literary prose, the ideas are not filtered or extracted into strings of words and thus are not easily explained or reproduced the way prose is. Without preexisting rules of language and rules of movement, however, neither dance nor poetry can communicate what it is about human nature that requires breaking the rules for the purpose of its translation. The audience brings meaning to the space because of interpretation. The interpretation of the space of the architecture also relies on this totality of perception and memory.

Because of the reception of space by the senses of a person in all their simultaneity, it is impossible to describe in texts that are written in the style of prose

because to do so only fragments the collective memory of sensory experience by asking one to remember parts of an experience in a segregated manner when the parts are so integrated during the actual experience that it may be impossible to separate them. Movement, the possibility of movement, mass, void, transparency, opacity, sound, texture, and flow of energy are some of the parts of that experience. While remembering the warmth of the sun on one's skin is a pleasant sensory experience to remember, it is not quite comparable to remembering what its like to be at the beach, lying on the sand, listening to the flowing or rushing water, watching kids playing and teenage boys throwing their girlfriends in the water. Remembering each piece of any experience is comparable but not equivalent to the reality of the experience in its present state.

Because of the way people experience and remember spaces, the architect may be compelled to imagine that the experience she must design for is like a dream. When thinking of all the ingredients of others' minds, we may have to dream ourselves and identify with things of the human experience that are universal, for instance, the fact that we do dream and that our minds are made up of multiple consciousnesses that interact with one another on levels that we are unaware of but that we are directly affected by. Essentially, the architect attempts to respond to the minds of people by speculation of what they may have experienced throughout their lives by exposure to spaces, people, and cultural factors of all kinds. "Writing in his diary, Ralph Waldo Emerson reflected that 'Dreams and beasts are two keys by which we are to find out the secrets of our nature, they are our test objects.'" (Turkle 22) In essence, the images and details that we sometimes remember can be compared to what we store in our memories of the experience of space and time combined together. By stating that "[dreams] are our tests subjects," Emerson acknowledges how much people tend to connect with and trust their dreams, which could be argued to be largely constructed by experiences and memory.

Because of the way a person experiences and perceives space, it has the ability to communicate with people like the movement of dance or the manipulated language of poetry. People bring many past experiences to architectural form, and because of this, the space becomes a collector of the active present as well as the past as it is stored in each person's mind; the architecture comes to life with the active presence of humans and it then becomes instantaneously folded into their memories. The exchange is like that of fitting two puzzle pieces together. The reader brings memory and imagery from experience to everything that she reads, and what the carefully crafted and often sparse language of a poem leaves out, she adds for herself. "Derrida emphasized that writing is constructed by the audience as well as by the author and that what is absent from the text is as significant as what is present." (Turkle 17) In much the same way, spaces are catalogued in each and every person's mind in a completely individual way that is meaningful to the individual, and when experiencing the particular space that exists between her body and that surface that is most immediately adjacent, she will compare that to other experiences in which such an intimacy or lack thereof has occurred.

### *Everyday performance.*

Through the experiences people have with the spaces they visit repeatedly, they begin to understand and develop sequences and routines. The way the architecture

influences those patterns is then reciprocated through the act of the patterns due to the residue or trace that is left within the surfaces of the architecture. An architecture that anticipates routine or that creates new patterns of movement from those that were pre-existing on a particular site certainly must be communicating something to the importance of those patterns and routines.

Each time a person has an experience with a space, she potentially adds another layer of experience to its memory, a temporal trace of where she is going and from where she came. Perhaps she will walk the same path through that space upon every visit, perhaps she will live there, start a family, and die there, leaving behind artifacts of many kinds; perhaps she will simply leave a trace of her scent and the next passerby will notice the trace of someone whose presence recently filled the space. Because of the traces we leave of ourselves in every space that we encounter, architecture can be considered as much a living and breathing thing as those persons who occupy it on a regular basis.

Our comings and our goings are repetitive; we have routines, and the beauty about this pulsating nature of activity, much like the blood that courses through our veins with every breath of oxygen that we inhale, is its record in our surroundings. Footpaths become worn in grassy areas, roads become wavy like frozen ripples in puddles after each raindrop, stairs made of stone begin to dip in the center to the constant padding of feet in the same place, graffiti collects on otherwise unadorned surfaces, keyholes in doors collect dirt and become difficult to open, and trails of water follow the path of foot traffic inside a building on a rainy day. When a building becomes abandoned by its original owners and is left dormant for decades, as has been the case for most of the industrial and residential structures in the city of Detroit, the building may lose some of its record of activity, however it takes on a new presence and life of its own. Even if a person or group of people does not occupy a building on a regular basis, it still witnesses the passing of every day and the changes in weather, light, and passersby. Although essentially *nothing* may exist in the space as it was intended originally, many things exist "between shadow and space..." (Neruda 47)

Attempting to interpret poetry makes us aware of the variables that exist in the minds of the readers. For instance, memory is one thing that affects the reader's ability to bring meaning to something she reads, another is gender, socioeconomic characteristics, emotional makeup, and the list goes on. Because no one can ever actually be sure how another mind will interpret something she creates, it seems an impossible task to express something specific to someone else, or to another group of people, especially if it is something that is not easily defined or described by words. In considering how this affects the designer of architecture, one might proceed with extreme caution in attempting to express anything specific through the orchestration of space. One method might prescribe the simple design of spaces that create the possibility of complexity once the layers of light, shadow, sound, collective memory and instantaneous experience of the observer are present simultaneously. In other words, creating space for interpretation could be one method with which the architect tries to identify with and speak to people who will experience a space.

Because of the ubiquitous presence of architecture in the lives of people and because of the myriad of purposes it has, the subject matter that it can address is extensive. A project could be largely about the surrounding context and fitting into a strong existing building type, material use, façade composition, or creating a good mix of different building functions in a particular area. If one is designing a space that will

have to accommodate both vehicular traffic and pedestrian traffic for example, an additional part of the program is coordinating the two in order that they do not collide unintentionally, and a possible part of the program may be to cause a person to reflect upon the difference between the two. , architecture has the potential to be about anything or nothing at all. Although architecture can be made without any intention to communicate, it is influential nevertheless because of its presence as the backdrop for everything that we do.

What architecture that is designed without specific intentions to communicate actually expresses is the lack of attention to those who will use the space. Because our culture is centered around visual advertising, we look at everything critically, even the small rectangular block buildings that are located just behind or underneath those large expensive neon signs. For a person to feel as though everyday experience does not deserve design is in some way to belittle her feeling of importance. How can a people take pride in the environment they live in when it is so obvious that very little care was taken into its conception and creation? Architecture can and does communicate things, even the absence of things, the absence of care in the design for the individual or for the specific group. The effect of architecture in this case can be negative.

Our spaces should not reject us, they should embrace and react to our presence, after all, what is architecture but a design that caters to human activities and vulnerabilities to the outdoor environment? When Benedikt makes the statement that "...architecture [can] simply 'be itself' without being about anything," I disagree because I believe the architect's role has to be more aggressive and decisive about what the project should try to communicate, even if that message is not interpreted exactly in the way that she had intended.

### *To serve or to speak?*

While the ability architecture has to communicate should not be overlooked, for that condition will communicate a rather negative outcome, something is lost in the conception or in the building of an architecture that is only meant to communicate a message in a poetic way. Even if the architecture is crafted or conceptualized in a way that it is able to communicate something upon its actual completion, in twenty years, to a different culture it will say something else, maybe even simply that its ability to communicate has become antiquated. The service architecture is to perform and the way it hopes to communicate can work in conjunction with one another to make the experience of each stronger to the inhabitants it is to service as well as to the imaginations it is to fuel.

Architecture can be considered just as much a collection of images and happenings as the human mind can, so it is an interactive backdrop or stage for the everyday performances of life. The critical question posed by designing architecture as an interactive backdrop for life is that such a term is dichotomous in nature. How to determine the extent to which architecture shall remain in the background or in the foreground is difficult and may yield a myriad of solutions. In terms of designing a performance hall, one must question just how active a backdrop it can be without extinguishing the strength in composition created with highly limited and controlled lighting for the purpose of performance. Function and meaning cannot simply be juxtaposed or forced to collide in architecture, rather they should be fused, married, woven, integrated; thus making the experience stronger. When one walks through a

corridor for the purpose of going from the seating space for a performance to the restroom and then back, what does she experience? If she experiences the architecture's ability to frame something from the other parts of the building in her vision or from the exterior contextual urban fabric in her vision, the meaning of the experience has been combined with the event of going to the restroom, a service of the architecture. When she remembers the experience, she will likely remember that view as she took a leisurely walk to the restroom and take it back with her to the remainder of the performance. She may even take the chance to explore the remainder of the building with the intent to discover more moments like the one previously described. She may remember it vividly for only a moment and leave or not remember the moment consciously at all, but the possibility of such experiences should certainly exist in all architecture, specifically one that seeks to study the relationship between the meaning of a building and its function.

Architecture is inherently *about* something simply because we assign a program, or specific list of functions to each of the spaces to be designed. Quantitatively, a list is made of each space needed for the intended purpose of the building to match what the client needs. Qualitatively, a sense of what is really necessary and desired by the client, the type of project, and its immediate context must be defined by the architect because it is she who will orchestrate form and intention. Like the poet, or the dancer, the architect can use her designs to speak to other people, if only in her personal definitions of how to create space for specific functions, or in her suggestion of the perspective one should have on the world through the spaces she experiences.

For example, when designing a school for elementary age students, a quantitative list of the program elements might include things like classrooms, multi purpose rooms, teacher offices, bathrooms, etc. A qualitative list might include things like providing visually stimulating experiences for the eye level of the students who are significantly shorter than the teachers while still creating a comfortable and efficient working environment for the teachers and staff. Asking questions about what happens in the mind of a child might be a way to decide how to create space that can react to the child's physical characteristics and mindset. This would be one example of how an architect can communicate through the architecture; that she understands the somewhat unfamiliar physical and mental limitations of her clients. The architect might imagine that while sitting in a classroom, a child needs to pay attention to her teacher, but also needs the space to let her mind wander and look out a window to wonder what else there is in the world around her. Because of the curiosity inherent in a child's way of life, maybe the opportunity to explore spaces that the teachers are too big to fit into is the architect's way of helping the kids understand that they are special and that they are not less important than the adults because they are smaller in size. While the quantitative listing of elements to be included in any particular project does not seem to bear so greatly on the imagination of the architect, the way that space is defined and meant to respond to the needs of the program is also a careful process that does not have to rely on predetermined definitions of space and how much is necessary for any particular space.

Discovery of the poetry that exists in architecture inspires the architect to search the realm of possibility to redefine for each new project the meaning of the function. An architecture can simply be about what is to happen within and around it, however defining what the architecture is really about may never be simple.

People need space to do all of the things that they do in life. Life occurs whether the environment was designed for it or not. Communication isolated from and devoid of function is not enough to create architecture.

While I do not believe that the architect has an obligation to take advantage of architecture's ability to communicate, and I also do not believe that expression of any kind should actually take priority over the functions and spaces the architecture is to provide to people. An architect can definitely be too aggressive in her intention to communicate, exploiting the ability to be poetic in the design of space and ignoring the function of space or even the aesthetics of the experience. Attempting to make people feel a kind of disorientation, or feel as if they are on display in a storefront are ways to communicate ideas; perhaps to criticize culture as it exists today. Making cultural criticism or diagnosis is certainly something architects feel compelled to do because the environment is such a significant part of any culture, however, making a disorienting building should not be the sole purpose for making buildings. Architecture can be art, but art alone cannot be architecture. The implication in the definition of architecture is that even if part of its intention is to be artfully created, which is hopefully the case, it cannot be architecture without catering to the functions of space that it is intended for. The architect differs from the artist in the responsibility to not only identify problems, but to react to them in hopes of a solution through expression of form. While architecture can express ideas, emotions, and simple reactions to problems, it must also be responsive to such problems rather than simply identifying their existence and perhaps redefining a way to communicate them.

#### *Language and dance.*

Dance is a form of applied art that uses the body as its communicative medium. What is interesting about the difference between modern dance in comparison to more concentrated types of dance like ballet or jazz is that it encompasses many learned types of dance in an attempt to express a particular idea or feeling. Part of the body language used by modern dancers to choreograph is the actions that people perform on a daily basis. For instance, one performance by two students at Wayne State that was choreographed by members of the dance company included a portion in which the dancers were looking at the audience as if they were a mirror. The dancers were pretending to brush their teeth and get prepared for the day as a response to the business of the music and as a part of the collective piece of choreography as well. Dance is specifically about the sensory perception, expression of, and understanding of the body and its immediately surrounding space, and the shell for that space, or perhaps the interface between that space and what lies just beyond.

As implied above, one of the important factors in the interpretation of architecture is the body. The body is the vessel through which we know space. By focusing the program of the project on the body as expressor-through the vehicle of modern dance-the concept of a link between the subject and the function of the building may be achieved. Architecture is capable of communicating a myriad of subjects each in a completely individual manner. The creation of space for every intended purpose of a building can be achieved through the formal implementation of the movement of the body. The people in a space are as much a part of its experience as it is a part of theirs.

By implementation of metaphor in the intended expression of architecture, a building could be a dance, or it could be about the subject of a dance, however, a dance cannot be a building because it may manipulate space in the movement of the human body, but does not create a space for such movement that remains static and inhabitable in material form. A dance can suggest physical form, and react to it as well, but since the space of dance is always changing and remains *malleable*, it can never be a model for architecture without servicing the functions of living within an interior space.

### *A place to dance.*

Exploration of designing architectural space through the exploration of site specific dance choreography will be the experiment to begin understanding movement of the body through space. Site specific choreography is a type of creating dance that has given parameters, like site, sound, light, materials, and perhaps the intention to react to the changing parameters of the environment. Much like the conception of an architecture, the choreographer is given some set parameters that must be catered to, and some parameters are implied but left to her to define. The choreographer then creates strings of movement that react to or explain the environment based on what parts of the environment she is to give special attention. This translation of the phenomena of space into movement can then inspire a reactive form of space that begins with a site as well, but adds the string of movement as a parameter for the creation of architectural space. Although the resulting space will definitely change the given parameters for the choreographer should she so desire to continue the process of choreography, the change in her reaction to space would be a manifestation of how architectural form is expressive in itself and that it does affect the way we move within its existence.

The way a space is experienced will also largely depend upon the current cultural conditions that surround and permeate everyday life for its inhabitants. We live in a society that is highly visual and that centers marketing tactics and entertainment on visual communication. Because we see such an overload of imagery on television, movies, and other digital culture, our collective memories are full of different things entirely than are the minds of those who lived with different types of technology. "Arguments about the education/communication/entertainment value of Gothic Cathedrals or ancient Greek friezes do not apply: neither the Goths nor the Greeks had television." (Benedikt 14)

With eyes focused so intensely upon screens during the daytime in an office setting and also in the evening for entertainment as well as personal reasons for spending time in front of a computer, pda, or cel phone which also have screens, it seems that architecture has drifted further into the background than is necessary. In a society that relies on fast food, fast paced information, fast traffic, fast technology, and the desire to make everything faster, the possibility of slowing down to take another look at the spaces one is within is highly unlikely, unless the spaces are somehow unique and provide and unexpected visual experience.

Architecture has the potential to communicate to its inhabitants that they are important, that they are the subject for the design of entire projects and environments created from the minds of architects. Everyday activities people perform should be the central subject of the spaces they are within so that they do not spend time and effort in everything they do trying to force themselves into situations that have no breathing



room. Something that can speak negatively to people about architecture is neglect of such a possibility. When a space simply does not fit the scale of a human being because all of the seating areas are too high to be reached easily from the ground, or when the space contains no connection to the outside world that might cause interest in the eyes of the human, what is missing speaks volumes. The designer is responsible for being sensitive to the person for whom a project is meant. For the necessity of a framework for discussing how and what architecture communicates, the average pedestrian passerby as well as any person circulating through the project have become important elements of how the design intends to breathe, or to pulsate with life throughout the architectural iterations and interventions. Providing a heightened level of visibility in a strategic manner as well as providing a heightened level of circulation throughout the entire project suggests the importance of the happenstance of dance.

To walk past a large portion of a building that is completely opaque and to see that surface quickly open up and then retreat into hiding once again may have the effect of enframing the passerby from either within or without the envelope of the architecture. Visually, it is possible to experience the same connection with a person who is inside the building or outside the building. Pieces of the performance that previously maintained a high level of obscurity can be exposed. People can watch from the street and the sidewalks. People can watch the street and the sidewalks from the balconies and circulation spaces intermittently placed throughout the architecture.

### *Who is performing? Who is watching?*

To serve and to speak is perhaps a feat that can be accomplished by an architecture that serves a medium for communication such as modern dance. An architecture that is designed for the purpose of dance constructs the possibility for a discussion of the role of performer and audience, of formality of relationships, and of challenging the formality of the relationship between performer and audience. In order to question such a relationship, one might first ask who is watching as well as who is performing. Because of the voyeuristic interest people tend to have generally, it can be argued that everyone is watching and everyone is also performing. A space can be interesting simply because a person moves through it and another person watches that movement, whether she is intentionally performing some other sort of task or not.

In regard to the tradition of a static audience and a dynamic performance, the possibility arises for the desire of the audience to become more dynamic, to move, to change position, to perhaps become a part of the performance. Perhaps the audience is curious about what adrenaline rushing through the body can do for the state of mind. Perhaps the curiosity is limited to having visual access to that which is kept concealed from the audience, the passerby on the exterior of the building, and the cars driving past the site during performances.

Ultimately the goal of the project is to stitch into an existing fabric of forms and activities; to weave functionality into the expression of the architecture that reaches people by reaction to the collections of memories of those who inhabit the space currently as well as those who once inhabited the space before. Ultimately, to collage the expressive movement of the body through the language of dance onto the existing contextual story that the dance is to tell is what the project hopes to achieve. To create the architecture of the moving body through providing the backdrop in front of which the body will move, the 'curtain' behind which the body will temporarily disappear, and



## SKETCH PROBLEMS.

### re[LOOKING]

The smooth shiny metallic surface appears to stare at me, showing my reflection with a gold hue, and with a mystifying cloudiness from the detail of wear in its most uniform plane. Folding in and out, under and through strategic cuts, grooves, the depth of which is slightly different with each rise and fall, the material is uniformly solid and uneasily altered by the human touch. Striking another hard surface clangs, vibrating the eardrums and almost alarming the ears.

The feel is cold, and the smell of metal, the folds are strategic, but are also like the constant undulation of a mountain range that differs at each apex and at each valley. These valleys have a rigid quality, as if each was designed, planned to be precisely what it is. Standing in a narrow valley cut so sharp that feels so cold would evoke the motivation to escape, and the motivation to reach the top, and also the wonder of why the edges are so definitive.

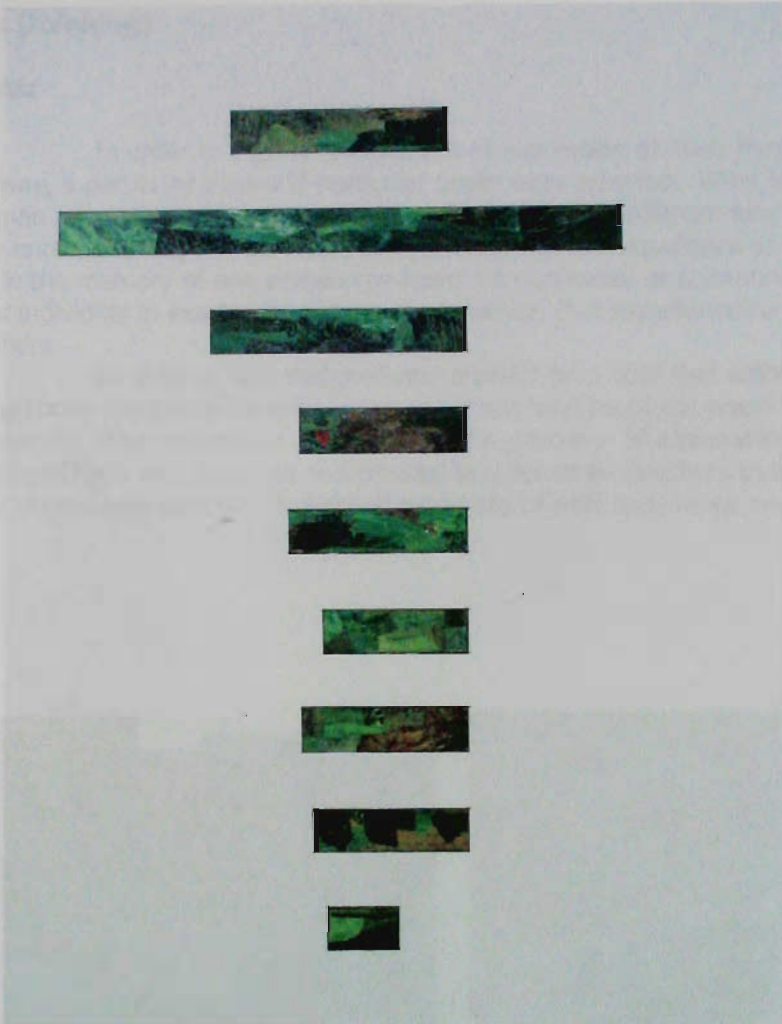
Walking within one of the widest valleys makes apparent the ripples that allow the rainbow of color to shine with reflection of light upon close inspection as many different shades and values, but at a distance as one shade of gold. It is like walking along a river of color that from afar has the appearance of a uniform texture, but whose detail shows many small ripples and changes in texture that simply catch the eye.

The space between this clearly and definitely articulated metal undulating surface and its surroundings is limited by what carvings and cuts have been made. That space is meant to match a particular other half, it is tailored in a particular way to enter into a place that no part of the human body can, and to mate a particular set of notches in a way that only this one individual set of teeth can.

Similarly, the object can be a permissive device for travel. What is revolutionary to the human about the possibility to travel through space in a physical sense is the travel that the mind is suddenly comfortable doing. Realms of the mind that may otherwise be left dormant to collect dust, now become visited in order to imagine or to dream of possibility.

Clearing of the mind, like traveling through a small dark place that is unknown and unadorned with clues and suddenly discovering that in your possession you hold one half of the ability to gain passage through to somewhere unknown. To go through this dark enclosed space and enter into one that is open, clear, and free of obstacles. One can enter from a space of confusion suddenly into a space in which nothing exists, nothing is known, but the beauty of which lies in the fact that nothing is predetermined and all is to be discovered.

People will always be searching for the means to achieve a state in which they feel compelled, or feel the license to dream. It is human nature to be curious and to wonder what lies beyond those things that are directly tangible to our senses, and so we hold on with a tight grasp to those things that remind us of such a possibility, in hopes to reawaken our minds when the need to do so appears in the daily rigor of life.



The way the collage was used as a technique in the visual representation of the object that was an extension of the body was the embodiment of the idea it was to express. In other words, since the idea was about an unknown, uncertain opening of something else, the medium was unknown but expressive of that idea itself. A collaged green was produced by the combination of many different shades of green and scales of the surfacing that was used to show an open feeling green texture.

For the purpose of expression, architecture can be conceived in a similar way, to embody the idea in order to share that idea with others. Although this idea may not be interpreted as exactly what it was meant to communicate, it still has been shared with others once it has been translated into form that the body, the senses, and the mind can perceive all at once. Through the embodiment of ideas, architecture speaks volumes.

## design [thinking]

### Outpost:

In order to explore the process of expression of ideas through form in a poetic way, a particular poet and particular poem were selected. What is connective to the human experience about poetry is its ability to say in a different way that which we already know, but may not be aware of. Extraction of the experience of the poem once stored in the memory of one person can never be duplicated or communicated to another individual in exactly the same way, however, that experience can be shared with others.

An outpost was designed and created for a poet that embodied the ideas extracted from one particular experience and interpretation of the poem "Ars Poetica" by Pablo Neruda. The abstraction of the idea of the *presence of absence* into a small architectural form was designed and created in order to allow others to experience the idea for themselves with their individual memories of past experience and imagery.





Through the creation of a small space in which a person could stand, but that was restricting enough that virtually no other movement could occur, the planes that created the outpost were permeated with holes in order to let natural light through the planes and into the space. Color was used to create a factor of curiosity for a person to wander into the space, around the folded planes. However, the effect of the color was solely dependent upon the amount of natural light pouring into the space between the planes, and on which angle it permeated the perforated planes.

Without explanation of all the elements used in the design of the outpost, one could simply experience its space for oneself, adding another layer to the collection of imagery and spatial experiences in her life, from which she will likely gauge experiences of other spaces in the future. While space was not manipulated to particularly mould to the body, it was created to point to an awareness of the space that exists between the body and something of a more rigid uniform surface. The space between the body and that surface creates another way of understanding the body itself.

When inside the outpost within the daylight that pokes through the holes, a person within the space is adorned with spots of light, again making her aware of the way light affects the surroundings, and possibly of the way the body changes that effect.

The space between in this case is a space that was orchestrated to a specific end that was inspired by a poem whose meaning is actually left up to the individual. The resulting space within the architectural expression is considered a space for interpretation.

**PRECEDENT ANALYSES.**

**PRECEDENT ANALYSIS 1.**

*comparison and contrast*

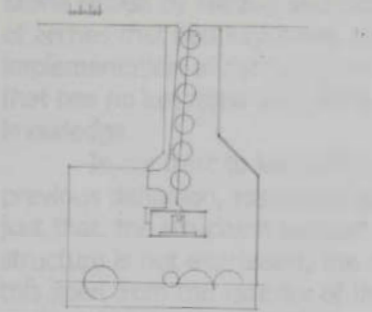
**Vanna Venturi House**

[Robert Venturi]  
Chestnut Hill, PA  
1964

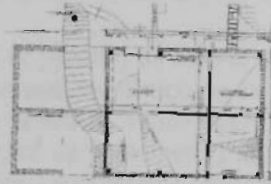
vs.

**Stone House**

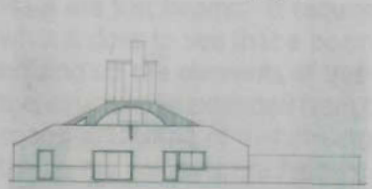
[Herzog & DeMeuron]  
Tavole, Italy  
1988



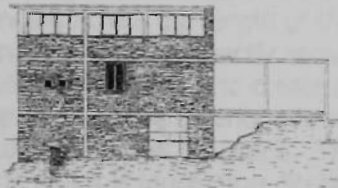
site plan



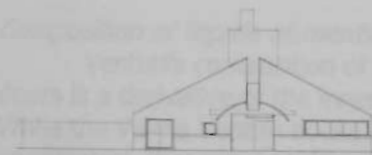
first floor plan



elevation



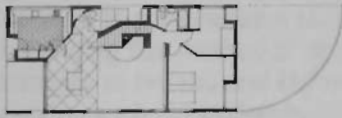
elevation



elevation



stone detail



floor plan



section

### *Structural element use.*

Venturi uses the idea of structure to make a commentary with the elements of the façade of the house for his mother. The arch, for instance, is missing its center, or what would have been its keystone if it had been for actual structural purposes. However, even though the actual purpose of the arch is not the same as what it would have been in the structural sense, it still has a purpose, it still has meaning, it still can be used as an icon to simulate the idea of something structural that usually signifies entry. Venturi's use of elements such as the arch require a more intellectual reading of the building than does the Stone House by Herzog and DeMeuron because one must have prior knowledge of arches that had keystones and that carried structural loads through the implementation of that element in order to make the comparison with the arch that has no keystone and, in fact, is not what it may appear to be based on prior knowledge.

In contrast to Venturi's method of utilizing structural elements as icons of previous definition, Herzog & DeMeuron use the structure as an expression of just that, the structural support for the building. While every piece of the structure is not expressed, the meaning of each element that is expressed (and this seen from the exterior of the building) requires no interpretation to understand that the beams that extend past the rubble stone of the exterior walls are just beams. It requires no previous knowledge of what a beam is or what it does to see that a beam extending across the length of the building is holding up the elements of the construction that are directly above it. Some of the structure is extended from the building on one end to create an outdoor space, and some of that structure is evident on the exterior of the building, while the corner columns are hidden, masked by the infill dry stone. This project used structure as an icon as well, but I think that it is much more literal in its expression of just what the concrete beams and columns exist for; to hold the building up against gravity and wind as well as to hold it together.

### *Composition of façade elements.*

Venturi's composition of elements on the façade such as windows and doors is a derivative of the inner functioning of the spaces within the house. While the Vanna Venturi house is very much about what it looks like as one approaches, that was not the approach that the exterior of the facades were designed from. Rather than looking at façade design on its own accord, as a process of composition of elements that should be balanced and in harmony,



Venturi provided light to spaces that had previously been placed in the house in ways that also questioned previous methodologies of placing windows. Once again, it takes a prior knowledge of the fact that facades are sometimes designed as compositions of their own to notice that Venturi is consciously challenging this method of design. Rather than compose facades as balanced elements as Herzog and DeMeuron did in the Stone House, Venturi prefers to question such methodology and to make one think as she approaches the house.

The Stone House is one that has been looked at and composed in all planes of plan, section, and elevation as compositions of their own, but with a different methodology than that of Robert Venturi. As one approaches the Stone House, she may likely experience that the facades are designed to balance all objects and to flow into the existing landscape, and even to emphasize what the landscape has to offer by the use of ribbon windows around an open plan that allow one to gaze off into the landscape of Tavole. One does not, however, have to think of how this experience happens, or how it questions other methods of design. One simply has to take this experience for what it offers without thinking of how its method of design was meant to be sensed in the experience of the building itself. One does not need to think of how the design of this particular project questions the method of design and perception in its design.

#### *Overall building focus.*

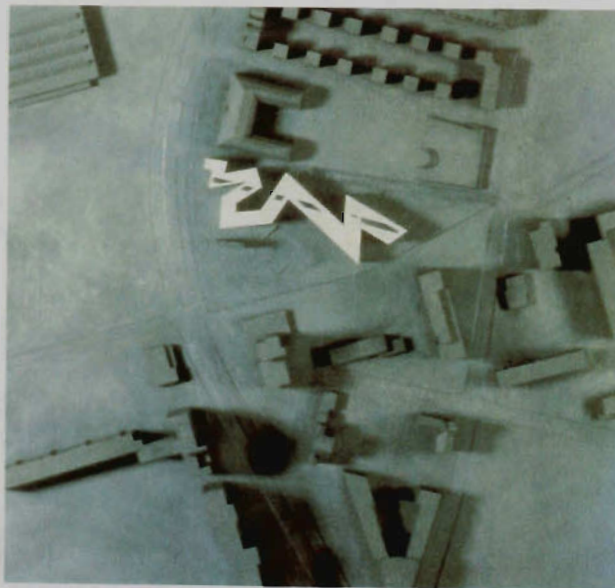
Overall, by Venturi's manipulation of space through the hierarchy used to place certain elements and to shape certain spaces, the focus is drawn inward to the interior spaces as they exist and have been manipulated and as they have the potential to be used. The focus is not on the experience of being inside and looking out as it is in the Stone House. Because of the symbolic emphasis placed on each and every element the meaning of typical elements of interior residential architecture is questioned, and even transformed into something other than has previously been used. Because of all these questions and changes in the meaning of elements, the experience of the Vanna Venturi House is much more about being on the interior of the building and sensing the critical eye he uses toward typically definite elements.

On the contrary, the Stone House is simply a space to approach, enter, and then to look outside from once inside. An emphasis is placed on this idea by the arrangement of the windows on the third floor because the plan is mostly free of obstacles or elements that delineate space and rather than focus on the interior of the space, one is encouraged to view the vast landscape beyond the site. While much of the first and second floors are more private and focused more inwardly than the third floor, the intricacy and symbolic placement of elements that occurs in Venturi's design is simply absent from Herzog & DeMeuron's design for this house. The interior spaces are simply delineated and divided by the cruciform plan and section of the structure.

**PRECEDENT ANALYSIS 2.**

**"Extension of the Berlin Museum with  
the Jewish Museum Department"**

[Daniel Libeskind]  
Berlin, Germany  
1988-1999



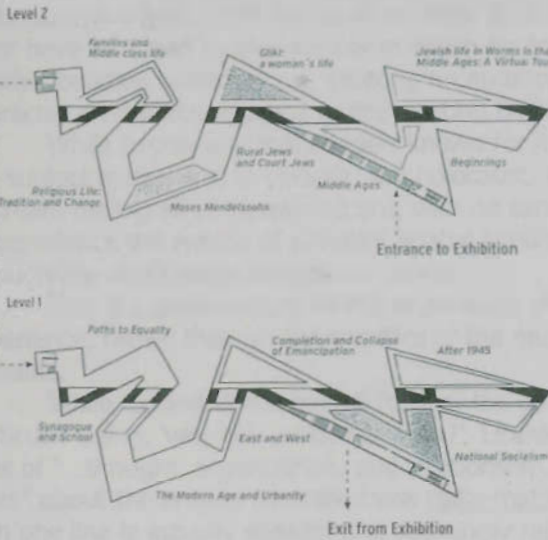
site model



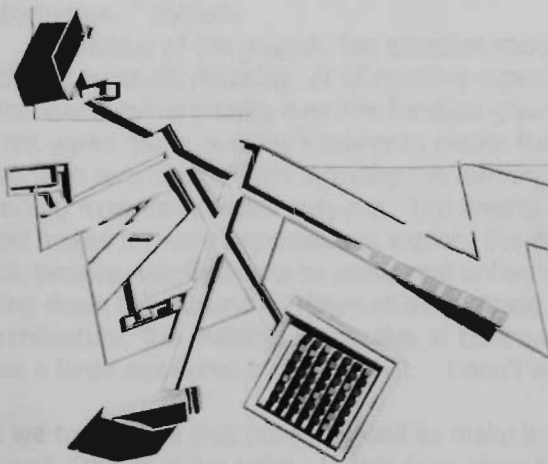
garden of concrete trees



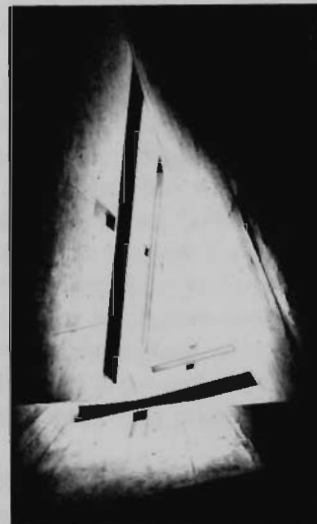
view of disorientation



floor plans



site plan



view up light well

*between the lines.*

Shiny dark grey zinc sheathing that glints in the sun, reflects light, and masks reflection and at the same time towers over head, pierced by sharp angles punched through the skin so that the light pierces the space contained in this metal monster. The garden is formed by trees growing from within the confines of hollow concrete columns, placed upon a ground plane that is skewed in two directions. Confusing proportions are obviously made to make a person feel small, planes are shifted from those angles that are most familiar in building, 90 degrees or 0 degrees. Degree of shift need not be measured, only that it differs from typical methods of navigating through a garden or a building. Black, white, grey, dark, light, bright, walk, climb, look...

Daniel Libeskind has renamed the project to attach to the Berlin Museum that contains the Jewish Museum Department "Between the Lines." The project was conceptualized from 1988 and built in 1989. It takes on a character of its own, as he must have intended by the manner in which he actually connected the project to the existing building underground, creating an autonomous object completely of its own character on the site adjacent to the existing Berlin Museum.

While largely and most widely known for its conception and symbolism due to the subject matter it is to contain; the holocaust, this project is one that has the power to create feeling all of its own accord, with no exhibits, with nothing inside but a person to experience the wealth of different spatial conditions and the light that streams through the skin's many articulated slices.

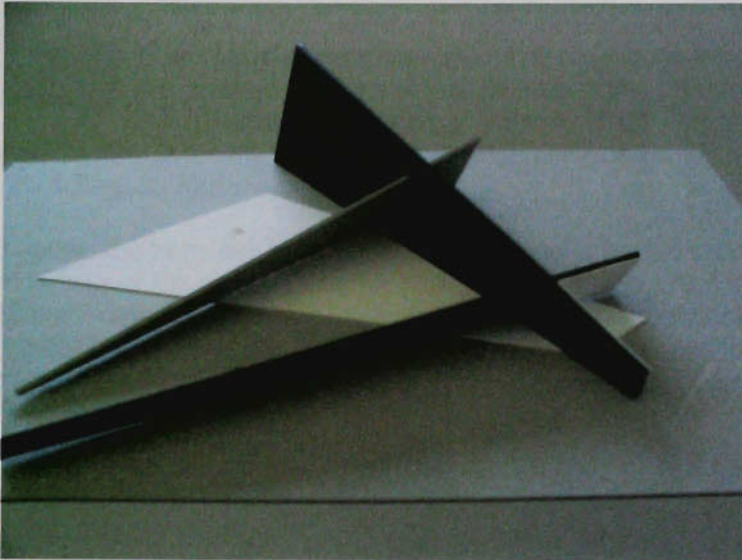
This is a commentary on the experience of the spatial and material and lighted experience, rather than on the specifics of the museum function that this space contains.

While looking at the overall form of the building, many questions arise, one in particular being, 'why this particular form?' Libeskind describes the jagged plan as two lines of "...thought, organization, and relationship," in his piece entitled "Between the Lines" about the project from the book *radix-matrix. Architecture and Writings*. While in plan one line is actually straight and seemingly rational because of this quality, its other quality of being broken into fragments removes the apparent rationality of its character. The other line is completely continuous, as if it was drawn with a pencil in one stroke, in a "...torturous..." pattern.

In critique of the project, the question should be asked whether or not the function of symbolic meaning, or of creating experience, feeling, or emotive response in its inhabitants takes priority over the function given to a particular architectural project. I do not agree that a building's power to create feeling, to invoke emotion, or to cause someone to reminisce should overtake the function in a building in a way that is so distracting from its intended purpose. The feeling of disorientation created due to this project makes it nearly impossible to explore the entire building and thus the entire exhibit because wayfinding is so accidental unless one asks every employee while walking down the skewed corridors of the building. While more like a piece of art than an architecture, this building is effective at conveying an idea that is powerful and that carries a large emotional burden with it. I don't want to strip away that power, but

can't we try to have that power as well as make it work with the overall function of the building? Or is that the point. In this case, does it make sense to make the function seem somehow disjointed from the space within which it takes place? Is that mimicry of

the event in too literal a form? The purpose for raising the question is that even though the mimicry I mention is a manifestation of an idea, architecture's being that idea is a condition that is particularly useful when the idea is left up to interpretation. One experiences this building much like art, poetry, music, or dance. However, the actual function of the building is somehow overtaken by the function of the building itself as art.



analysis object:  
disorientation/contrasting color  
shifting planes/lack of origin

## PROGRAM PRECEDENT.

### London Contemporary Dance School at The Place

[Allies and Morrison]

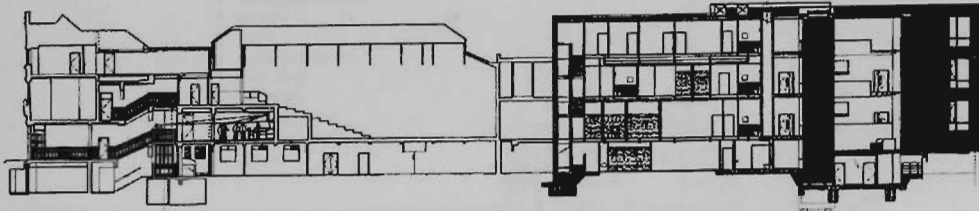


Located at King's Cross in London, England, the London Contemporary School of Dance was located in a building that needed addition and renovation in order to expand and update the dance school in 1995. Architects Allies and Morrison were in charge of the much needed transformation. The school also contains a performance space that was created within the old Drill Hall of the Artist's Rifles that was constructed in 1889. The Dance school was established there in 1969 and now since its growth houses 80 staff. (Architectural Review 2001 June, p. 82)

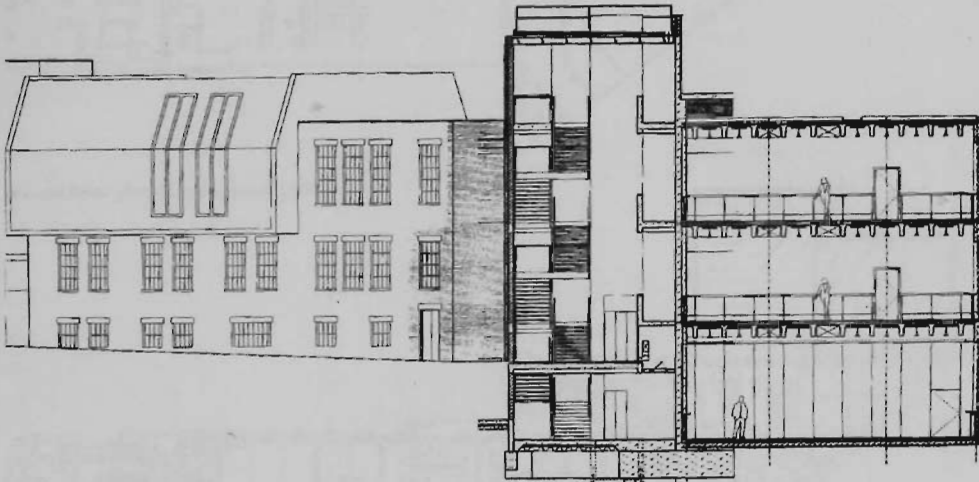
Pictured above, the entry has become a marquee of sorts for the dance school due to the transparency of the building and stairwell at night. The building is open from 8:30 am till 10 pm 7 days a week and stretching areas have been placed strategically in this space in order to create an opportunity for their silhouettes to be emphasized as they prepare for classes or to perform.



As is pictured above, the studios have natural light pouring in a diffuse fashion through glass block which allows the dancers to concentrate and still have natural lighting in the open spaces with floating flooring construction composed of durable materials as well as dividing walls that fold away when they are not in use in order for the classroom sizes to vary. Special barres for dancing were even chosen in order to allow for optimal ease in gripping for the dancers.



west-east long section

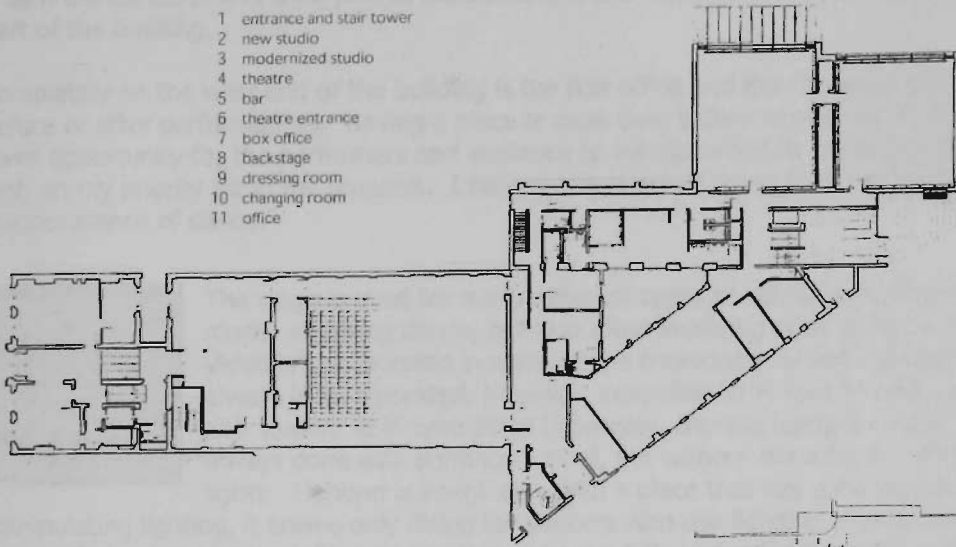


south-north cross section

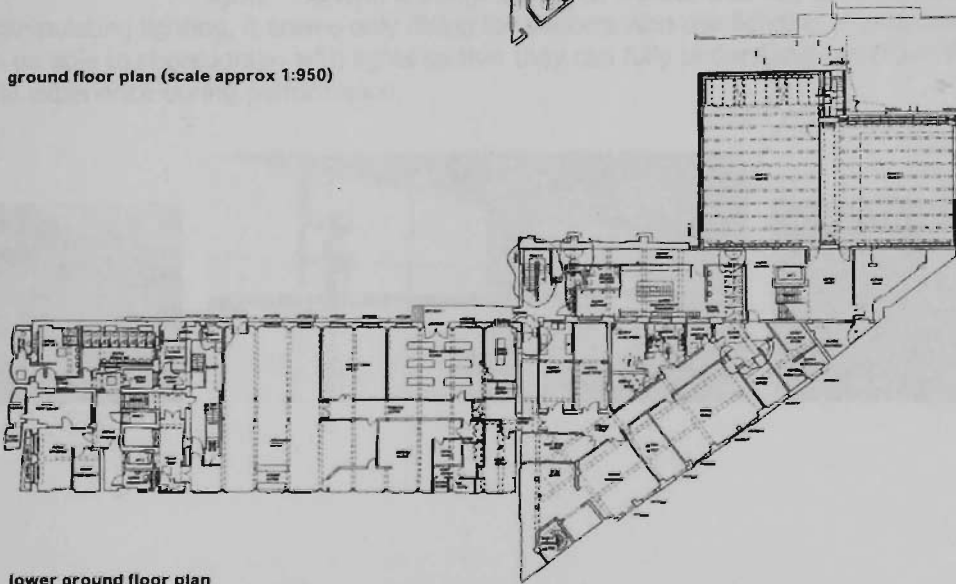
In the east-west cross section above, the performance space can be seen as well as the ancillary spaces below and behind the seating for larger venues.

The south-north cross section above shows the entry space that is illuminated at night as well as the integration of the mechanical systems into the new studios. Not only is the entry like a signage for the building because it becomes illuminated at night, but it is also a large expression on the façade.

- 1 entrance and stair tower
- 2 new studio
- 3 modernized studio
- 4 theatre
- 5 bar
- 6 theatre entrance
- 7 box office
- 8 backstage
- 9 dressing room
- 10 changing room
- 11 office



ground floor plan (scale approx 1:950)



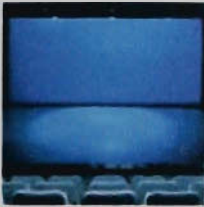
lower ground floor plan

In the floor plans, the relationship can be seen between the triangular part of the building, the new studios on the northeast end of the building, and the old performance space. What is so important about those relationships is that the theater/performance space and the instructional studio spaces are separated spatially but they are connected through the parts of the program that link the two functions. The dancers and faculty have access to the changing rooms, dressing rooms, and backstage that cannot be gained by anyone who is coming to see a performance because there is no need for a spectator to see the dressing rooms, unless he or she just really needs to congratulate a performer, in which case the performers usually reappear after the performances are over and they have had a chance to breath in the dressing rooms in private. While I do not believe that it is necessary to separate these functions in different parts of the building entirely, it is a simple way to blend the two functions and to avoid confusion. It



is as if the dancers have their part of the building and the spectators have their separate part of the building.

Completely on the west end of the building is the Box office and Bar for social gathering before or after performances. Having a place to pass time before or after performances gives opportunity for the performers and audience to mingle, which is something that is high on my priority list in my program. I believe this is one method for creating the 'happenance of dance.'



The stage is used for many different types of media performance, mostly involving dance, but also often involving other types of media. Video is incorporated in some of the choreography and lighting is always incorporated, however, according to Megan Brunke, dancer and student at Wayne State University, choreography is almost always done with lighting in mind, but without the actuality of the lights. Lighting is imagined. With a place that has such capability for

manipulating lighting, it seems only fitting for dancers who use lighting so dramatically to be able to choreograph with lights so that they can fully understand the effect they will experience during performance.



## SITE ANALYSIS.

[Location]

Downtown Detroit at the point that Grand River, Bagley, and Cass intersect with one another to form a triangle of pavement that is a sort of leftover space, of which there are many in Detroit.



Adjacent to the Grand River side of the site is the Michigan Theater Building that is now occupied by offices and the old theater space is occupied by a parking garage.

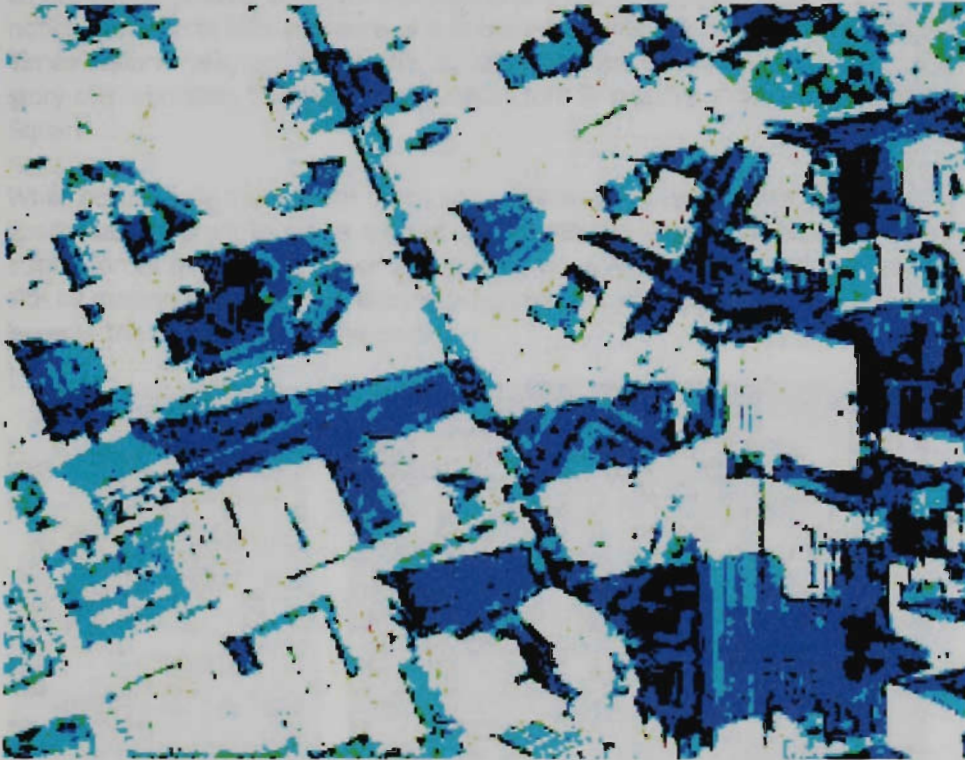
Adjacent to the Bagley side of the site is the Gaslight Restaurant that is in full use and even uses some of its surrounding surface parking as extended party areas for temporary tents and music on holidays or big events like Halloween.

Adjacent to the Cass side of the site is the Ramada Hotel that has at its base a restaurant called 'City Bites', a late night club called 'Labyrinth,' and a party/liquor store as well.

The character of the space surrounding all the described buildings is surface parking that only fills up when there is an event in Foxtown and that is partially occupied during the daytime week hours.

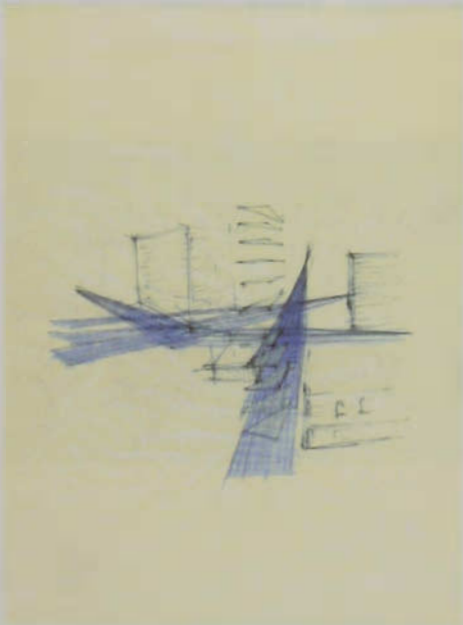
Because there is so much parking of this nature in Detroit, I see the opportunity to occupy these spaces with an outdoor theater, a restaurant and parking garage, a pedestrian greenscape and a dance instruction, choreography, and performance center rather than maintaining the amount of parking that exists there today in the sprawled out fashion of so much of the surface area of this city.

***Why this site?***



Above: In reaction to the extremely tall buildings with large empty voids between them, one can sense a contrast in lighting as well as the intense spatial quality of the site between the Book Tower, the Ramada Hotel, the Michigan and United Artists Theaters, and the Stadler Hotel.

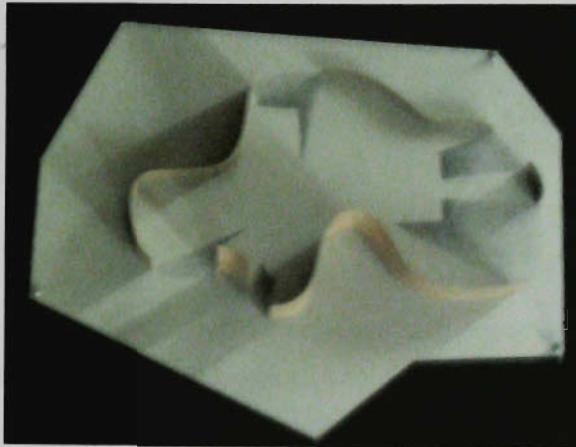
The image is an enhanced rendering of the contrast in the aerial photograph to emphasize the layering of shadows on the patterns of the site created by the streets.



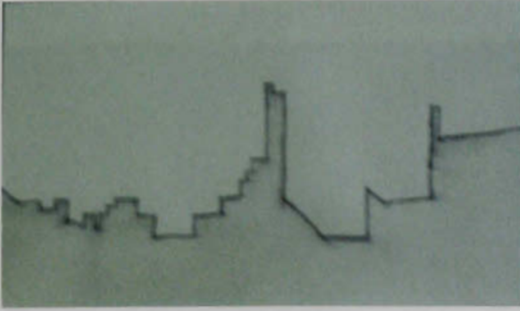
Left: The triangular site was appealing in the sense that it seems to be either floating or sinking in the middle of three strong rivers of traffic that don't seem to stop flowing. One can actually drive in a circular motion around the site repeatedly due to the direction of traffic flow.

The ballet of cars flies by; in fact that is how I discovered this site. It's intensity is strong and dynamic because of the lack of building density. The masses that do exist create strong striking shadows and surround a realm, a space within which one can notice the objects that are more of a human scale like the people mover, the trees at Times Square Park, and the smaller buildings like the Gaslight Restaurant and the two story office building that houses an architecture firm and a night club called Times Square.

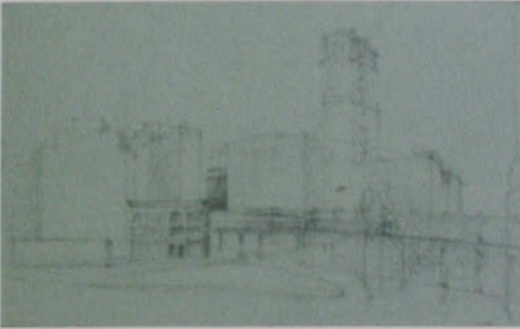
While horizontally there is not much space within this dynamic triangle, the vertical space was apparent to me as a great opportunity because of the tensions that would be strong forces through the process of design, however maintaining the dynamic of the site by making it a stage and placing programmatic elements around it and focused on it became the overall goal of the project.



Left: from a hand pencil sketch done on site, the silhouette was traced and shading added above was meant to show the sky for the purpose of sensing only simple layers of the context. Also, the trees are added at an unrealistic proportion and perspective to show that the things at a smaller scale tend to pop out once you are 'in' the site.



Left: The opposite of the above silhouette was used to again change the perspective of the site and imagine what it would feel like if the skyline actually appeared in such a way rather than how it appeared in the last drawing.



Left: Simple perspective sketch of the site from the Southwest corner looking toward the Book Tower.

Intensity of traffic flow and building density was something poetic about the site that Megan Brunke, dancer at Wayne State University reacted to in a site specific choreography session on the site. She reacted to the cars that were present and also reacted in an opposite motion to the energy felt from the combination of the vehicular traffic, the occasional pedestrian meandering through the area from a venue to her car, or from Grand Circus back to the highway.





site energy flow + night activity



view of site from people mover station



view of Michigan Theater Parking Garage across Cass and Grand River



view of people mover and Times Square Park looking South



view of office building looking west from Gaslight Restaurant toward Lodge Freeway

## PROJECT PROGRAM.

### INTRODUCTION.

[Identification]

The overall program for the project is a Center for Dance Performance and Instruction. Both indoor and outdoor performance and viewing spaces will constitute a large portion of the program as well as different types of classroom spaces. Dance of various types will be taught, as well as choreography with an emphasis on students of dance choreographing and performing within a creative context. Distinctly different spatial conditions will be developed for the purpose of choreography that is informed by the site on which it is created and presented. The nature of the performance will be left open ended rather than limited to one particular type of dance by company or by individual. The routine actions of the everyday passersby are as integral to the dance as the choreographers and performers as well as the vehicles flowing by and through the project. The performance spaces will be both enclosed and of a theatrical character as well as outdoors and of a temporal character.

Specifically, there will be four different interventions, two of which will be enclosed with mostly indoor space, one of which will be primarily an outdoor performance space, and the last which will be a pedestrian space that links people from the Michigan Theater parking garage and the outdoor performance space in the center. The project will include a physical intervention to connect these spaces to one another through the creation of some form of pedestrian access between sites that are primarily ruled by vehicular traffic.



The project will emphasize the dynamic character of the site by allowing the center space to remain with very little building mass, but utilize its presence within a context of larger buildings through lighting and use of that space for performance. Both the enclosed buildings as well as the pedestrian connection from the Michigan Theater are focused visually and physically on the centrally located site as well.

[Intent]

A collection of spaces that are focused on a centrally located outdoor performance space for dance that facilitates and precipitates the performance of, spectation of, teaching of, choreography of, and the happenstance of dance.



Because dance communicates to people without language, or with a language of movement and emotion rather than of words and phrases, creating a space for dance is meant to facilitate a medium of poetic expression. The manner in which the architecture responds to and forms movement of dance will be intended to create the opportunity for a poetic collection of movement of the pedestrians, vehicles, sunlight, shadow, and streetlights; and to stage performance with the layering of activity on the site as a backdrop.

The project hopes to become a place that is meant to be soaked in, as if the person is a sponge meant to absorb the grit of a city that has been created for the automobile at the expense of the pedestrian experience. A dance that moves against the backdrop of ghostly tall buildings that once had a purpose but now only a spatial presence; and one that is frozen to encapsulate the swirling hum of the part of the city that whurs by...an intervention that both recognizes the spatial tensions of the site and brings them together through the choreography of their *dance*.

The project should recognize and fit within the rhythms of existing noise, mass, traffic, and activity while showing that movement of the body, movement of light, movement of shadow, movement of noise, and movement of vehicles are beautiful elements. The site is a living, breathing pulsating set of streams surrounding a supposedly uninhabited island of concrete. There is a sense of place that the intervention will occur within, as well as react to from its edges or boundaries

In order to create the thickness of the envelope that creates the condition needed for separation of the performance space from other functions within the building, layering of thin spaces for circulation, stretching, warming up, meeting can be wrapped around the performance space. Layering above, around, below, as if to isolate that space with thickness of space rather than opacity of material.

[Enumeration of Actions]

#### Teaching/Choreographing:

- Teaching through exemplification
- Expressing emotive connection
- Mixing music
- Playing music
- Reacting to sound intensity
- Creating moving sound through dance
- Isolating sound
- Reverberating sound
- Choreographing music, lighting, dance collaboratively, each in reaction to the other.
- Mirroring the act of dance for the purpose of display to the city
- Moving light
- Capturing sunlight and shadow

Creating shadow  
Masking light  
Controlling light  
Making light dance

Performance:

Exposing and challenging traditional process of performance  
Performing to the street (redefining 'street performer' 'storefront dance')  
Dancing in/on/around/under the building  
Dancing in/on/around/under the audience

Spectation:

*To occur within many spaces of the building in moments at which spaces overlap physically as well as visually. Also to occur in programmed performance spaces, but as a part of the experience of moving within, around, adjacent to, above, or around the building and the dance.*

Buying tickets  
Listing venues  
Attending venues/performances  
Arriving in a vehicle  
Entering in anticipation  
Leaving having experienced the space; having become part of the dance  
Watching, while possibly being watched through another layer  
Watching performers in preparation

Happenstance:

*This cannot exactly be enumerated or programmed, but rather designed within the fabric of the architectural character and articulation of space in relation to the human body, as well as through the juxtapositions of different parts of the program.*

Spectating secretly...

from behind, above, or around a dark space and into any space, so that people are...

Viewing from inside...through transparencies that occur due to lack of daylight, and presence of artificial night light...

Wondering from outside

Reading about venues/scheduled events

Performing unexpectedly

Passing through as pedestrian, sharing space with performers

Sensing change from inside to outside (from within to without) a permeable boundary of spaces between large tall masses

Occupying wall sections

squeezed between masses.

## **SITE DATA.**

Topography. The topography of the site is mainly in the slight dips and cracks of pavement that change as one crosses the street, as well as a slight slope from north to south. The main topography to react to is the skyline above when one is on the center site and within the shadow of the taller buildings.

Access. Access to the collection of sites is limited because the traffic actually goes through and swirls around the center site. The access that exists for vehicles currently is access through the site rather than to it, so some attention will be given to that condition throughout the schematic design process. The spatial arrangement of the interventions that focus on the center site suggest entry from the furthest points from that center, as if one enters from behind and once inside each building comes forward to see what is being performed or just to use the function of the space she enters. The pedestrian has access across all streets by way of crosswalk and pedestrian lights, however it is quite dangerous to cross the streets because of their width and the speed and carelessness with which drivers come through the area.

Views. There are views through this site on many angles. One in particular that is a nice connection to Foxtown is the view down Bagley as it goes toward Grand Circus Park, where one can see the buildings along Adams that continue through to Woodward. Looking north on the site, the point at which Grand River and Cass intersect is a dynamic view, as is the view down Grand River itself as it seemingly extends forever to the other side of Michigan.

Utilities. A closer inspection of the sewer lines running through the site needs to occur, however there are lines running down the streets that will need to be considered when designing connection between each of the interventions and the center stage.

Site functions. The existing site functions are surface parking, garage parking, offices, two night clubs, commercial, people mover station, residential, and restaurants.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW.**



1. Center Outdoor Stage. 2 outdoor performance spaces, below grade and one approximately 4 feet above. Pedestrians can circulate through the level that is below grade and performers might practice there or use the difference in lighting to their advantage to create a show based more on lighting effects than the other stage. Ramps leading into that space fill its periphery, and are extensions of connections from the other buildings. The lower level acts as an ancillary space for pedestrians to cross in the event of performance on the upper stage as well. The character of set design will act as signage for the performance space in general, for the entire project. Visually all pieces will be connected and focused on this piece. Lighting may stem from the buildings and create the space of the stage.



## 2. Dance School/Performance Space adjacent to Gaslight Restaurant.

Layering of skin to surround performance space and to create opportunities for those circulating through the building to catch glimpses of practices, choreography sessions, and rehearsals without interrupting the processes of those activities. Creating an awareness among those who drive by that there is a performance center is also a goal. Blending of interior and exterior space, the sidewalk enters the building, the path through the building extends outside with seating elements in both directions from the building along the sidewalk on the north side and toward the people mover on the south side. From the second floor a bridge extends over Bagley to the outdoor theater space, which is expressed on the exterior of the building due to the large area of glass from ground to roof at the point along the elevation that the bridge extends from. A traditional proscenium style theater seating is used in conjunction with a stage, backstage, and flyspace, however there are balconies that can be seen into through the exterior, and the flyspace and backstage and be seen through the entire building as well. The studio spaces are both 'behind' the flyspace and above the theater, and there is a harscape garden on the roof with informal theater seating and the extension of the flyspace above the roof plane allows for a sculptural backdrop for performing and the roof access from both firestairs provides another form of egress as well.



## 3. Michigan Theater Outdoor Space.

This space is meant to be outdoor viewing space as well or is a physical connection between the parking garage pedestrians and the outdoor center stage. Layering of viewing platforms and paths to them as well as through the space form a void in the center to maintain the windows on the façade of the Theater Building and seem to be a reversal of the traditional stage-audience relationship. At grade, there is seating and greenscape within the spatial 'wings' of the ramps and thick sculptural concrete walls that support them and buffer the space from the streets on two sides of the site.



## 4. Building adjacent to Ramada Hotel.

The first 2 floors will contain a restaurant with a view of the outdoor stage and the remaining floors will contain parking that is exposed to the same elevation; facing the Michigan Theater that is now a parking garage, but whose function as a garage is hidden until night and unless one is at the right angle to see inside. Pedestrian space at first floor is an extension of watching the performance of center stage. Standing room is the suggestion of space by the objects created, like bars to lean on rather than actual seating. Once through this space, a threshold for the building, one may enter and go up to the second, third, or fourth floors for seating and eating to watch venues presented on the outdoor stage.



## 5. Park and Parking Behind Gaslight.

This space is meant to be a green space that includes paths, seating, lighting, all for pedestrians due to the geometrical connection to the people mover station. Also to be located on this site is a small amount of parking in order that the site is occupied with

a function analogous to the building and that a mass does not get built adjacent to the dance school building. This site is designed only conceptually in order to strengthen the axes of the project and will not be designed in detail for the purpose of this project.

## PROGRAM QUANTITATIVE SUMMARY.

### 1. Center Outdoor Stage.

#### Outdoor Performance Space:

stage	7200 sf	total: 7200 sf
changing	2300 sf	total: 2300 sf
practice	1400 sf	total: 1400 sf
storage	650 sf	total: 650 sf
spectators (approx. 300)	4500 sf.	total: 4500 sf
gathering/circ. (seating: 650)	4150 sf	total: 4150 sf
Mecahnical equip.	250 sf	total: 250 sf

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**total: 20,450 sf**

### 2. Dance School/Performance Space adjacent to Gaslight Restaurant.

#### Indoor Performance Space:

##### performers

Warmup/stretching space (1-5 people)	12 @ 50 sf	total: 600 sf
Dressing space (30 people)	2 @ 400 sf	total: 800 sf
Changing space (40 people)	2 @ 1000 sf	total: 2000 sf
Concentration space	180 sf	total: 180 sf
Fly space	4000 sf	total: 4000 sf
Backstage space	1400 sf	total: 1400 sf
Set Construction	1200 sf	total: 1200 sf
Lighting space	300 sf	total: 300 sf
Projection/Lighting	350 sf	total: 350 sf
Storage	1000 sf	total: 1000 sf
Stage	1400 sf	total: 1400 sf
Pit	800 sf	total: 800 sf
Orchestra Practice	960 sf	total: 960 sf
Storage(instruments/coats)	200 sf	total: 200 sf

##### spectators

Seating space	300 people	total: 2700 sf
Public Gathering Space	1@2000 sf	total: 2000 sf
Café	1@ 900 sf	total: 900 sf
Box Office	1 @ 700 sf	total: 700 sf
Restrooms	8@300 sf	total: 2400 sf

Outdoor Performance Space:

performers/spectators(roof) 1 @ 2000 sf total: 2000 sf

Instructional Studio Space:

Offices: 6 @ 100 sf total: 600 sf

Music studio 1 @ 1500 sf total: 1500 sf

Light studio 1 @ 1500 sf total: 1500 sf

dance studios: 3 @ 1300 sf

1 @ 2300 sf

1 @ 1600 sf

1 @ 1800 sf

1 @ 250 sf total: 9850 sf

Warmup/stretch space: 6 @ 100 sf total: 600 sf

Storage: (studios) 3 @ 250 sf total: 750 sf

Support Spaces:

Mechanical equip. 1@ 1200 sf total: 1200 sf

Rooftop units 2@ 500 sf total: 1000 sf

Supply/Return ducts 50 sf total: 50 sf

Circulation 10,000 sf total: 10,000 sf

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**total: 75,340 sf**

3. Michigan Theater Outdoor Space.

Physical connection from Michigan Theater Garage to Center outdoor stage space

Outdoor seating/watching: 900 sf total: 900 sf

Pedestrian Circulation: 900 sf total: 900 sf

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**total: 1,800 sf**

4. Building adjacent to Ramada Hotel.

Parking: (125 cars) @300 sf ea total: 37500 sf

Restaurant: (200 people) 5000 sf total: 5000 sf

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**total: 42,500 sf**

5. Park/Parking.

Parking: (25 cars) @300 sf ea total: 7500 sf

Park: 13,000 sf total: 13,000 sf

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**total: 20,500 sf**

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**OVERALL TOTAL**

**160,990 sf**

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## SPACE DETAILS SHEET.

### 1. Center Outdoor Stage.

Stage: 7200 sf

Concrete with floating wood construction atop, triangular shape oriented toward Ramada Hotel building, but visible from all parts of project and physically connected by bridge to dance building and to Michigan Theater Parking Garage. Stepping concrete seating wraps stage coming down from bridge, there are two stairs to below stage spaces that are separated due to performers' privacy and access through tunnel from dance building. Stage is above its support spaces that include changing/dressing rooms, storage, and warmup space.

Practice: 1400 sf

Can be seen only from sidewalk above below the plane of the stage that is 4' above. Simple space that is private from spectators who are waiting to watch a performance. Only access is through changing rooms, stairs from stage, or tunnel from dance building. Adjacencies include the outdoor stage above and the social gathering space and changing/dressing/storage spaces for the performers as they prepare to perform.

Spectators (approx. 300) 4150 sf.

Informal arrangement of watching space, with or without seating, but with spaces to go to, to stop at, to watch from, to gather in, that are not delineated by an architectural envelope but by the people who occupy them.

Changing space: 1@ 2300 sf.

Informal space with walls, shared seating, mirrors, storage for costumes and props, as well as open space for stretching and warming up. One space is shared for men and women due to the level of informality of this particular type of space. There is a playful visual connection with those who are seated before performances to watch also, but the view is screened from the interior space where people would actually be changing, they can just venture out toward the seating but it is still enclosed, so they can see people but the people cannot get into the dressing rooms.

Storage: 650 sf

Integrated with changing space for costuming and props.

### 2. Dance school/performance space.

Warmup/stretching space 12 @ 50 sf total: 600 sf

Small simple spaces with floating wood construction flooring, dance bars that can be moved, and looking out of glass out of the building. Some of that glass is frosted, some is clear but all stretching spaces on the first floor are 4' above the ground so that the relationship between the pedestrian and the dancer is skewed by height, but visible for both. These spaces are located between the fire stair and the exterior of the building and are accessible only through dance studios or the stair core itself. They are separated from most functions of the building, however they are very public in a visual way.

Dressing space        2 @ 400 sf    total: 800 sf

Separate spaces for men and women meant for changing meant for 30 people each. Seating, clothing racks and lockers, also the spaces are 4' above the sidewalk and at some points those passing on the sidewalk get glimpses of what is going on inside. The spaces are adjacent to the backstage area for ease of use during, prior to, and after performances. The transition between these spaces can be seen by passersby on the sidewalk.

Changing space        2 @ 1000 sf    total: 2000 sf

Separate spaces for men and women meant for changing and using the restroom, meant for 40 people each. Seating, clothing racks and lockers, also the spaces are 4' above the sidewalk and at some points those passing on the sidewalk get glimpses of what is going on inside. The opposite side of a plane that is meant to hang things on or sit at may be close enough to the exterior plane of the building that one might pass through that space and be seen by a passerby.

Concentration space        180 sf

Adjacent to performance space but very secluded from it for the purpose of mentally preparing for a performance...getting into character as actors might call it; a quiet space that gives only a slight audio clue into the performance is allowed by the adjacency to the backstage, but as the stretching spaces, the concentration space is located between the fire stair core and the exterior envelope of the building. Various translucent panels and seating along them provide planes that one can rest on, slip past, and separate themselves from activity with in order to concentrate and get into character.

Fly space                4000 sf

Located above the backstage and inclusive of the structure and mechanical equipment necessary for providing various backdrop effects for the stage, the fly space is the tallest portion of the building and is expressed on the roof, where catwalks exist for the purpose of operation and maintenance. The presence of this space above the roof provides a physical backdrop for informal performances.

Backstage space        1400 sf

Located directly behind the stage for its intended purpose and divided spatially by walls that form baffles to visually separate the backstage from the audience that is seated in the traditional seating on the first floor and second floor, however there are balconies that exist at the second floor level that only have views of the backstage, as they are between those baffles. The space is visible from the exterior of the building on the north side only.

Set Construction        1200 sf

Because set construction is located directly adjacent to the backstage for the ease of moving things onto and off of the stage. At some points along the façade, the construction space can be seen from the exterior passersby, but not from the interior. The space is a shop with tools for woodworking, metal working, and basic construction as well as the proper ventilation which makes the proximity to the building envelope critical.

Lighting space        300 sf

Located interstitially between the structure of the theater space, the lighting includes all theatrical lighting and is hung within the depth of the structure.



Projection/Lighting 350 sf

Functions mostly as storage space from which projection equipment can be moved to the front row of seating on the second floor where there is no seating and over which those seated behind can see the stage without obstruction.

Storage 1000 sf

Storage is located between stage and stage support spaces. Some of the vertical mechanical circulation for the building is located in the storage space in order that it does not have to be located where it may obstruct more open spaces like studios or the stage itself.

Stage 1400 sf

Adjacent to the backstage, the stage is built at 4' above grade to allow for the relationship that occurs between those seated and watching a performance, those who will practice and play instruments in the pit, and those who will be able to view from the exterior of the building. The actual surface is constructed of a floating wood construction. Because the fly space is actually behind the stage, the style of stage is more like a thrust stage with operable backdrops because the exits for performers are not adjacent to the actual stage space that is free from obstruction, however the intention is that the baffles that create the backstage spaces are used for exit and that such activity is concealed from one portion of the audience, but exclusively viewed by another.

Pit 800 sf

Located directly in front of and below the stage and before the seating begins to tier up in the auditorium space, the pit is located 8' below grade in section in order that the performers have access to the space below the stage for practice and storage as well as to the tunnel that leads under Bagley to the outdoor performance space, for which there are two sets of stairs and an elevator for moving instruments or props up to the stage for performances.

Orchestra Practice 960 sf

Located directly under the stage for ease of access to the pit for performances, the practice space includes seating that is all portable and stored in the storage area that is actually located directly under the first rows of seating and can be directly accessed through the pit itself and less directly accessed through the practice space.

Storage(instruments/coats) 200 sf

Located directly under the first rows of seating with racks and shelving for instruments, chairs, and coats, those who will be using the space will have easy access to this space prior to and during their performance in order that audio connection to the performance for the purpose of queues and remaining outside the realm of the visual performance.

Seating space 300 people total: 2700 sf

The seating space consists of fixed seating that inclines over the entry of the building on the interior as well as a partial second level of seating beginning at the second floor and sloping downward at the same angle of the main level of seating. There are ramps connecting one on the interior of the seating space from the lowest to the highest level, at which one can exit the

space. Egress is provided through entries at the first floor, second floor, and a walkway that one can take from the second floor that acts as a central aisleway between the seating.

**Public Gathering Space** 1@2000 sf

Including various seating areas as well as access to all floors via a large main stair and access through the entire building as well as the box office, coat storage, restrooms, and a small bar/snack counter. Very open space that exists below the sloped seating of the performance space in which all seating is fixed, but clustered in various locations so that people can mingle in clusters as they tend to do normally. Also, this acts as an informational space for the events, and a small café for students when performances are not occurring during normal school hours.

**Café** 1@ 900 sf

Located on the second floor and partially interior and partially exterior. A service bar that is also accessed from both interior and exterior allows seasonal access to this space for both those coming to watch performances and students of the dance school when performances do not occur.

**Box Office** 1 @ 700 sf

Located on the first floor adjacent to the entry on the south side of the building, the box office includes shelving and storage for tickets, money collection, and advertisements that will be displayed on the interior and the exterior of the building. The person working the box office also serves from the interior as well as the exterior, requiring more than one person to service from the office at once. Separate storage is also provided adjacent to the exterior surface of the seating area.

**Restrooms** 8@300 sf total: 2400 sf

Located on the northeast corner of the building, access is easy for either dancers participating in classes in studios or for spectators coming to watch a performance. Men's and women's restrooms are located adjacent to one another each with three stalls and one accessible stall and appropriate clearances. Both men's and women's bathrooms include four sinks also, and the women's restrooms include a window seat on the north façade of the building and an extra full length mirror for quick glances of oneself as leaving the restroom.

**Outdoor Performance Space: 1 @ 2000 sf**

Located on the roof, the seating consists of large concrete steps and the flooring is constructed atop the actual roofing materials in sections in order that it can be removed for maintenance of either the roof or the flooring, as well as the fact that walking on the waterproofing surface of the roof would damage its ability to keep the building water tight.

**Offices:** 6 @ 100 sf

Meant for studio instructors or choreographers who are visiting to instruct the dancers. Secluded from most functions of the building because they are located adjacent only to one another, the fire stair core, and stretching spaces which cannot be accessed or seen through the offices. The only spaces that have access to the offices are circulation spaces between studios, storage, and the fly space so the only persons to access these offices would likely be those to use them due to their location.

Dance studios: 3 @ 1300 sf  
1 @ 2300 sf  
1 @ 1600 sf  
1 @ 1800 sf  
1 @ 250 sf total: 9850 sf

Located on the Second, third, and mainly fourth floors of the building, the studios are of various shapes and sizes, all with some sort of moveable walls to adjust the amount of light, noise, and circulation coming into the space. The fourth floor is all studios with the exception of restrooms and offices and three of the studios are interactive with one another due to the moveable walls. Floating wood construction makes up the floors and the structure, mechanical, and lighting will not be concealed in the ceiling, however it will be baffled or screened by various panels in a wacky shaped arrangement.

Warmup/stretch space: 6 @ 100 sf total: 600 sf

Intermittently spaced on the exterior of the building, these spaces include either carpeted or wood flooring and barres to stretch on. In most cases, there is some spatial separation between these spaces and main paths of circulation, however they can be accessed from the circulation without passage through any threshold. These spaces are on all floors, however are most prominently located on the fourth floor with the majority of studios and are expressed on the exterior of the building either formally or materially (most of them are largely faced in glass so that the dancer can see out and people can see in from close by or from far away especially at night).

Storage: (studios) 3 @ 250 sf total: 750 sf

Storage for the studios includes storage for music and lighting equipment, but is mostly allocated for barre storage because they are moveable and can be unsafe obstructions in dance studios when the practicing is extremely intense. Moveable barres are necessary, however, for people whose work is so much about manipulating the environment within which they spend much of their time.

### 3. Michigan Theater Outdoor Space.

Physical connection from Michigan Theater Garage to Center outdoor stage space: consists mostly of ramps and flat spaces to stop and watch

Outdoor seating/watching: 900 sf total: 900 sf

Existing along the ramped areas as well as small balconies that the ramps result in. Located in winding or skewing patterns that follow the bends in the large concrete walls that support them. Also exists at grade where there are permanent seating designed into a simple greenscape in front of the screen that is spaced 8' from the existing Michigan theater building in order that people can walk behind the screen, but cars will no longer have access to the space.

Pedestrian Circulation: 900 sf total: 900 sf

Concrete ramps and paths that connect to the outdoor stage space and to the interior parking of the existing structure inside the former Michigan theater.

### 4. Building adjacent to Ramada Hotel.

Parking: (125 cars) @300 sf ea total: 37500 sf

Concrete structure that has sloping floors of parking with glass facades on both the west and north facades of the building so that the parking is meant to be visible from across the sites of the project and so that formally the building is focused on the central outdoor stage space.

Restaurant: (200 people) 5000 sf total: 5000 sf

Specifics of this space are not part of the parameters of this project other than the fact that it is located on the first and second floors of the building and is also focused through materiality and placement of function on the central outdoor stage space as well so that while seated in the restaurant one may watch the performance, even if that is not the central intention one may have for coming to the particular restaurant.

#### 5. Park/Parking.

Parking: (25 cars) @300 sf ea total: 7500 sf

Surface parking directed so that one would enter from the alley on the south side of the dance building from the west side (Cass) and so that there is ample space to drop people off and pick them up.

Park: 13,000 sf

Green space with seating that forms the axis for pedestrians to the people mover and lights those seating areas so that nighttime is not extremely unsafe as well as a more interesting time to sit, one can even see portions of performance, perhaps. Also there is a low wall to screen this space from the mechanical and dumpster access to the building for large trucks. This access occurs on the east side of the site, or from Grand River.

### **TECHNICAL SYSTEMS ANALYSIS.**

Lighting. Control of the street lighting will aid largely in creation of different kinds of performance. Also lighting could be its own performance, if lighting is directed from all adjacent buildings onto center stage.

Sound. The space between buildings and center stage is going to be an obstacle, but also an advantage. Technical exploration regarding methods of simultaneously linking sound from one enclosed space to another is necessary because of the fact that light and sound do not travel at the same speed and both are essential factors to setting the stage for performance.

Construction. Focusing buildings on a central location suggests a transparent/translucent quality to facades which may mean that they appear as 'glass cubes' or simply that they have a large percentage of glass within another material. Because of the character of the existing buildings, brick and stone are attractive materials, however, they may be used more to anchor the buildings visually and just as one can see directly into the people mover station to the mural inside on the site, one may see into the enclosed buildings in the project. Steel may be a material choice for the sinuous quality it can possess and the way it can be manipulated for the purposes of attaching glass, but concrete or brick might also be suitable.

Structure. Due to use and occupancy, the type of construction used will be IIA one hour construction. The structure will be composed of steel columns, beams, and joists, cast in

place concrete walls, and concrete masonry unit walls for the fire stair and elevator cores of which there are two in the building. There are two parts to the structure of the building; one that is a grid of steel columns and beams (W12 12"x12" columns and 36" deep beams) in a grid with a clear span of 60' and typical spacing of 24,' which also becomes smaller to accommodate the change in shape from a rectangular grid to a more hexagonal end condition where the seating for the theater space occurs. The exterior walls of the building are 12" thick cast in place concrete, upon which steel joists that span between the rectangular grid and the walls or the fire stair cores and the walls bear to support flooring between the theater space and the exterior of the building. Flooring for most of the building is a 4" slab cast into metal formwork, and the studio spaces and the stage are also floored with a floating wood construction atop the slab. The structure and mechanical systems as they circulate through the building will be largely exposed, but all painted one dark color and screened from view by sound absorbing panels hung from the structure in wacky patterns.

Mechanical. Due to use, occupancy, and square footage, the mechanical system requires a mechanical room of 1200 square feet for 2 boilers and appropriate chillers. The room is located in the southeast corner of the building with access appropriate for removing and maintaining the boilers and chillers as well as having the appropriate amount of intake air square footage. The system is forced air and there are two rooftop units of 500 square feet each with screen walls around them and they are adjacent to the fire stair provides access to the roof for the purpose of maintenance.

## GENERAL AREA RELATIONSHIP DIAGRAMS.

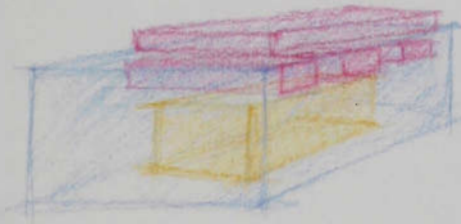
### 1. Center Outdoor Stage.



*Blue area represents outdoor viewing/stage*

*Red area represents pedestrian connection between stage and other sites*

### 2. Dance School/Performance Space adjacent to Gaslight Restaurant.

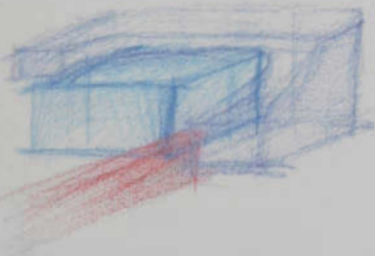


*Purple area represents circulation/ interactive performance*

*Yellow area represents formal indoor performance*

*Magenta area represents studios/outdoor performance*

### 3. Michigan Theater Outdoor Space.



*Purple area represents circulation/ interactive performance*

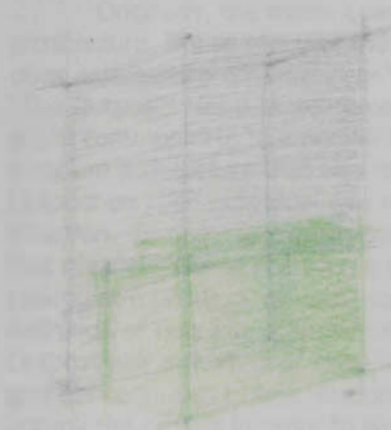
*Blue area represents outdoor viewing/ stage*

*Red area represents pedestrian connection between stage and other sites*

#### 4. Restaurant/Parking adjacent to Ramada Hotel.

*Grey area represents parking*

*Green area represents restaurant*



The site plan shows a rectangular area divided into sections. A large grey-shaded area is at the top, and a smaller green-shaded area is at the bottom. The drawing is a pencil sketch on a grid background. The text below the drawing is very faint and mostly illegible, but it appears to be a descriptive paragraph about the site plan and the proposed restaurant and parking areas.

Essentially the plan is a large school and performance center, a made up of a different structure, we want together by the use of space. In other words, the problem is a collection of ideas and ideas again for the development of, the development and the structure of the structure of, and the development of ideas.

## DESIGN PROCESS.

Originally, the thesis question was based on a combination of the statement that architecture, like so many of the arts, *communicates to people*, and the question; *how does architecture communicate?* In reference to the way poetry reaches its readers, "The Outpost" was a sketch problem meant to define in other terms how architecture might communicate to a person by leaving some room for interpretation, but by creating a certain architecture that was relative to the human body. A specific impact of The Outpost on each individual was not the intention, the possibility of impact was the intention. In order to explain the process of how one goes about creating an experience that parallels that of watching a performance of dance, listening to a piece of music, looking at a painting, or really connecting with a poem, one must first establish a definition of how any of those things are experienced, how they communicate. The Outpost was a product of speculation of how architecture communicates. The design process continues to test relationships between different types of people who will occupy the project in order to discover how they are part of the communication; how they bring to the architecture a presence that resonates and that in turn, reinforces the architecture.

Dance is the chosen circumstance because it is an art form about the space of the body as well as the spaces surrounding the body, and because it is reactive to and expressive of sensory perception. The act of dance is between the making of spaces and the making of poetry; molding of space within, around and between bodies as well as between those bodies and the surrounding architectural surfaces and objects. A dancer perhaps understands the space of the body more deeply than an architect, whose profession is to create the shell for the space of the movement of the body, or perhaps the interface between the body and other types of space. Redefining the meaning of the act of dance through challenging the roles of the performer and the audience as well as their relation to one another is the motivation for space making in this thesis investigation. Life is a dance and an art form, in that the things we do all day long everyday are indicative and explicative of who we are. On the chosen site, the particular conditions are that the site is spatially set up as a focal point, as if it is in the center of rivers of vehicular traffic that are layered with pedestrian traffic as well. Rewriting the placement of audience/performer in relation to one another, by happenstance as well as by orchestration is the way that this project attempts to reshape dance.



Essentially the program is a dance school and performance center that is made up of 4 different sites that are linked together by the act of spectation. In other words, the program is a collection of interior and exterior spaces for the performance of, the choreography and instruction of, the spectation of, and the happenstance of dance.





My response to the folding of sensory perceptions one can experience on the site into one drawing motion is what I expressed in the Energy Flow drawing (seen at left), which is a sketch that is continually used to explain the experiential qualities of the site including pedestrian and vehicular circulation as well as the presence of few tall masses with vast areas of flat pavement between, allowing high contrast. It feels like everything on the site moves in that direction and it has the space to do so from the ground plane as well as through the open space that exists in the absence of buildings. The intent of making the site video was the act of making the architecture as imagined through architectural description as well as imagined space and actual space reacted to by the dancer/choreographer.

Through conclusions reached during the design process and in reaction to the intense nature of the site, the project now seeks to re-examine *who communicates? To whom? What parts of the narrative are revealed? Concealed? How does the architecture embrace or frame the activity, but how does it leave room for interpretation by remaining in the role of the backdrop for activity?*

*Is the city itself another layer that communicates as well and is treated just as the elements of the project which will be added to the site?*



*She moves through space.  
She moulds the space around her,  
Creating shadow,  
Dancing with the space that follows her,  
That is a reflection of her proximity to herself.*

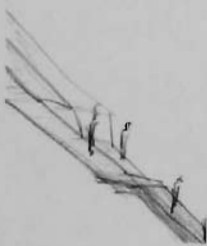
*They come from events.  
They become elements of building facades;  
Dancing with the spaces that follow them.  
They walk, they pass through,  
Leaving only a temporal trace of where  
They are going and from where they came.*

*One second,  
Two stoplights,  
Thirty steps,  
Twenty running strides.  
Zooming past, then stopping to take a glance,  
Watching the layering of circulating performers;  
All who are dancing with the spaces of themselves.*

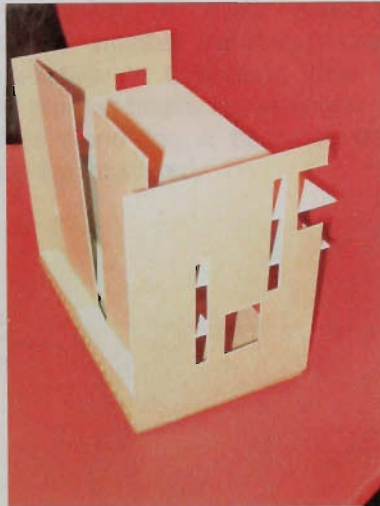
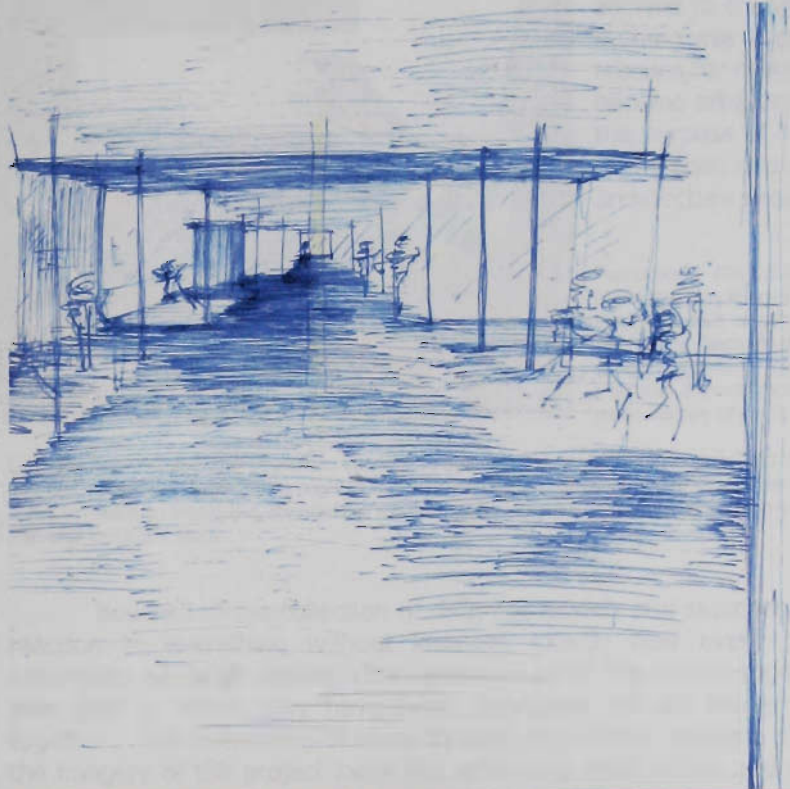
As a reaction to the video footage taken with dancer/choreographer Megan Brunke, the poem was a step in describing the intent of the architectural intervention. The video was a simulation of the act of making the architecture as imagined through architectural description and the combined experience of imagined space and actual space through the eyes and the movement of the dancer/choreographer. Also trying to capture what was communicated through the energy flow drawing and the depth that it showed when looked at from a perspective different than that which it was drawn has been a goal since the site analysis and schematic design critiques.

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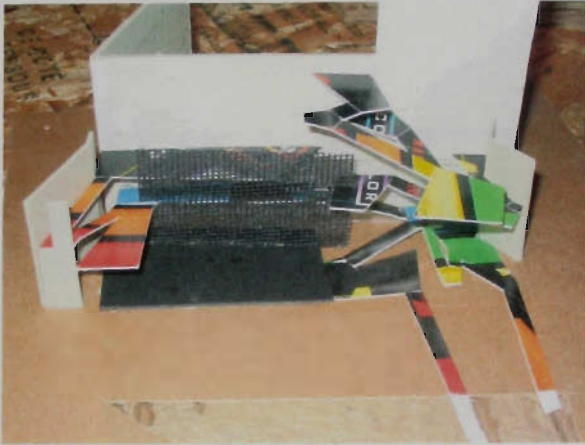
Through the continued extraction of the possibility of formal relationships from pieces created through the process of site analysis as well as pieces created continually to describe the design as it exists at any particular moment, overall schemes are created as well as very specific moments in the overall schemes of the architecture. Looking back at the various different media used to capture the feeling of a site whose description was dynamic and full of movement sets the imagery in motion in one's mind. Rather than attempt to capture the motion with the intention of the architecture, the imagined action on the site becomes a living, breathing thing to wrap, squeeze, mirror, shelter, and ultimately intervene with through the architecture.



To create a collection of spaces that offers a new way of seeing the relationship between performer, audience, casual passerby, architect, and city is the intent of the design. Whether considering a new circumstance that has been created by challenging the traditional relationship between and makeup of performer and audience or seeing the city is the effect, the intent is to make people become aware of what they might be missing, or to see it in a new light. The passersby are really performers, the cars are really creating the noise of a network of rivers flowing past and between vacant and occupied spaces that create the site for this project.



The decision to utilize a traditional stage/performer relationship in the school building was to create a certain framework against which to question the rest of the building function, which is relative to that particular piece of the circumstance, as well as to have something within the framework of the overall design that does not change

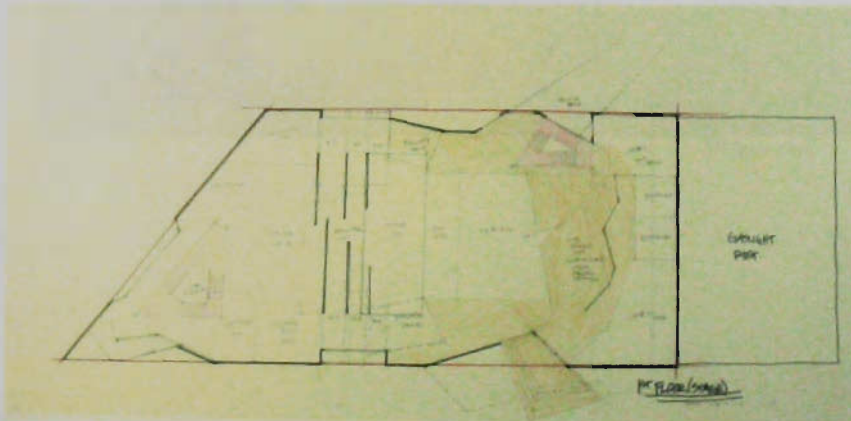


constantly. If the entire design were allowed to change constantly and nothing was ever decided upon, the reasons for making decisions would become arbitrary and made only for the purpose of timing for critiques rather than relative to how the architecture should feel and function.

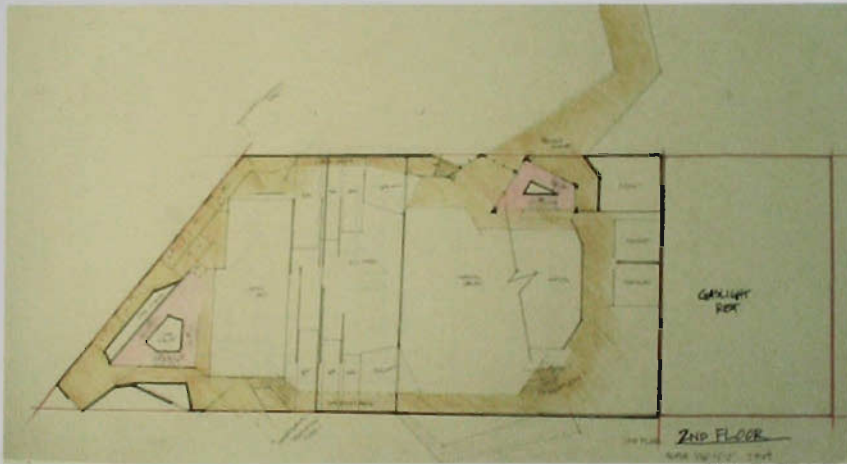
Top photos: The model in the photos are of a model about the simple spatial idea of framing persons as they walk past or behind a plane that largely hides the façade. Because there are few elements and few spaces between, so the spaces between the elements become more special than just a building made entirely of glass.

Left: The first model of the pedestrian connection between the center outdoor stage and the Michigan theater building is one that remained meaningful throughout the duration of the project. The paths meander down from the interior parking levels to create an interesting approach to the ground and to place one in a space that could act as an informal stage but that also looks at a stage.

Because of the collection of different models and sketches, continuing to work in reaction to everything without knowing exactly how every piece fits together is important, although making clear attempts to fit the pieces together on a larger scale than that at which they have been developed will aid the entire design in coming together. The translation of ideas through the hands creates a simulated copy of what the imagery of the project looks like within the mind of the designer, and is a tool that eventually enables the imagery to become a reality. To create models based on what the mass should be, or how the pieces should fit together and then to draw sections and plans of such models is a dichotomous strategy in translating ideas into form and eventually into architecture. As long as this process begins repeatedly in order to refine, question, and redefine what all the pieces stand for, it becomes cyclical and can continue to ask questions as more questions are answered.

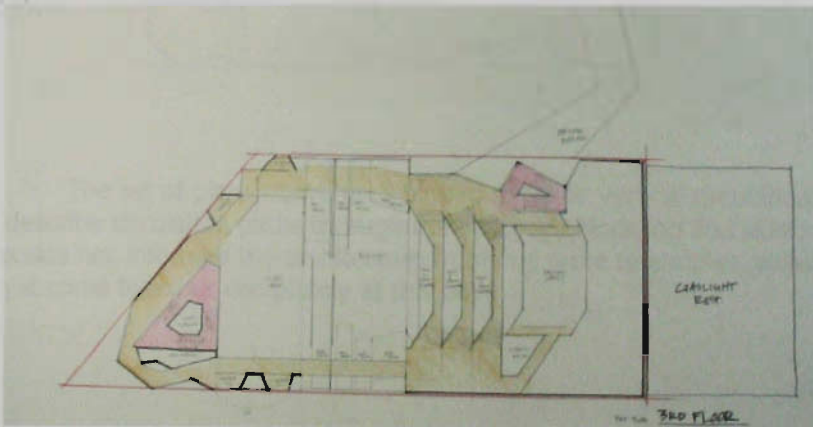


1<sup>st</sup> floor plan

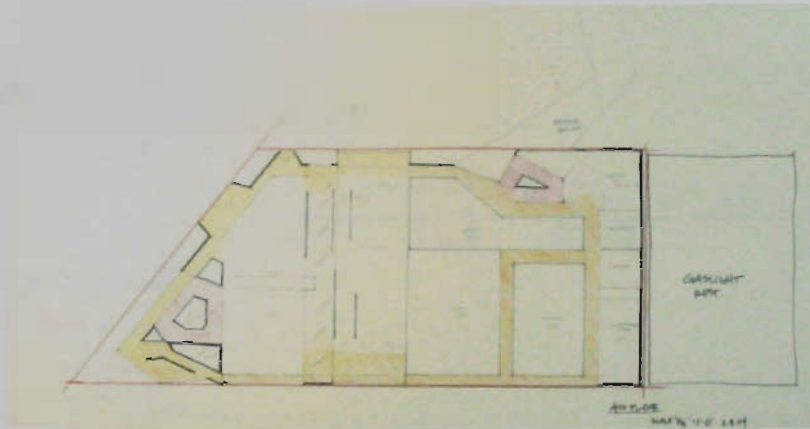


2<sup>nd</sup> floor plan

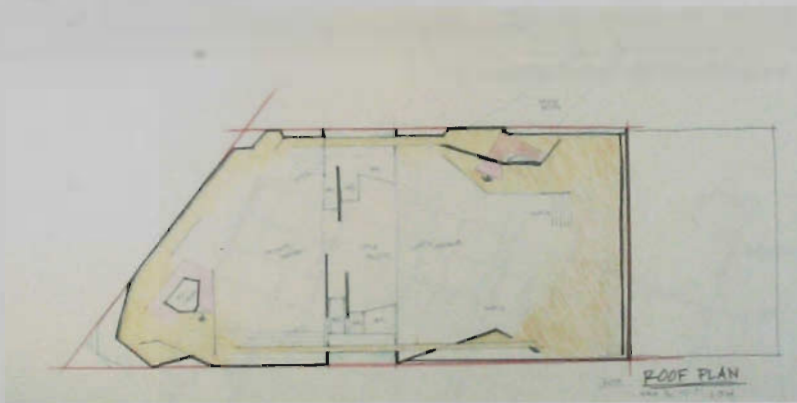
Defining the importance of that connection through pedestrian and performer access between the sites as an articulation of the dance school/performance building is an element to define a portion of the architecture of that building, or at least as an element to bring the 'front' and 'back' of the site together. Because of the size and proportion of the site, looking at its overall composition is one that must be carefully constructed from many scales, so determining the scale of those moves that articulate the appearance of each of the facades has been an important task in designing the architecture.



3<sup>rd</sup> floor plan

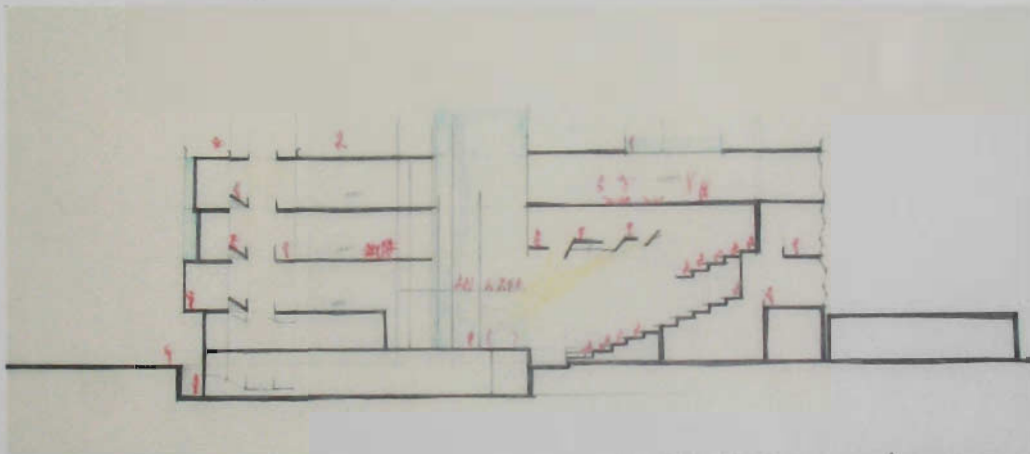


4<sup>th</sup> floor plan

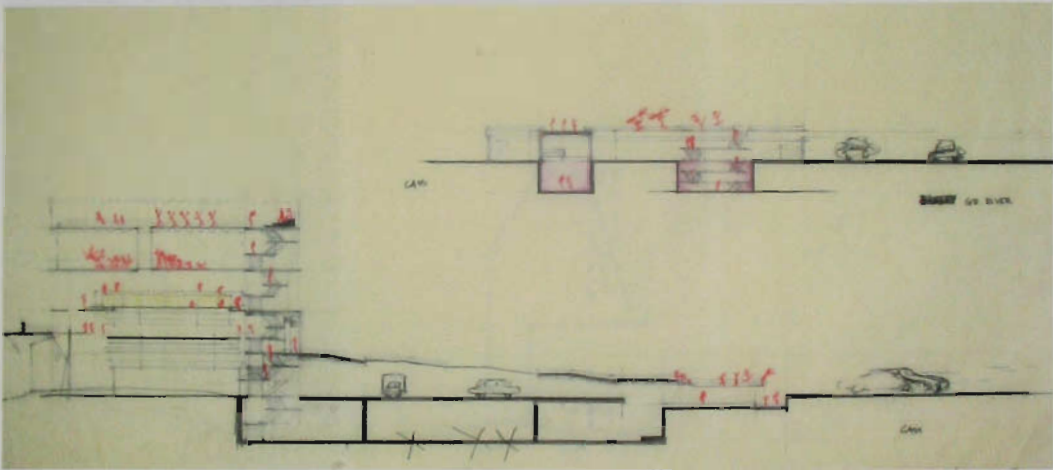


Roof plan

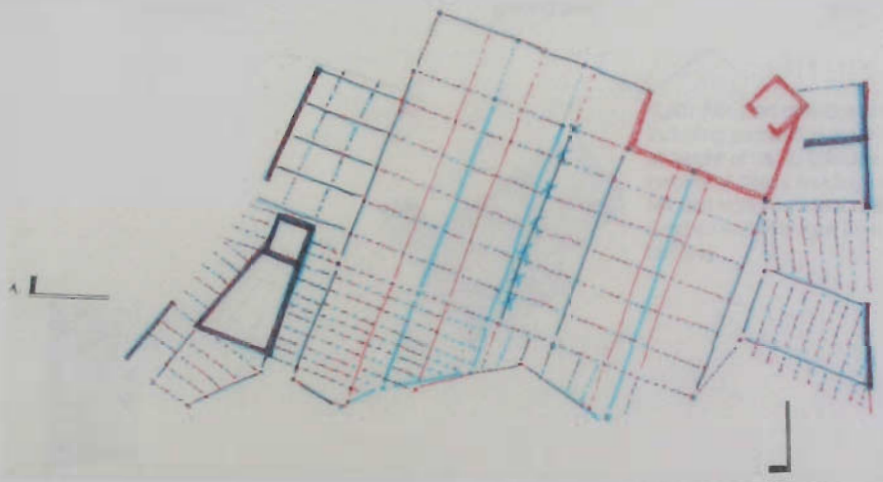
The set of plans above uses pink to describe vertical circulation and yellow to describe circulation paths through the building. Modeling and sketching at different scales has informed the architecture from one scale to another, although they have not yet come together completely at this point.



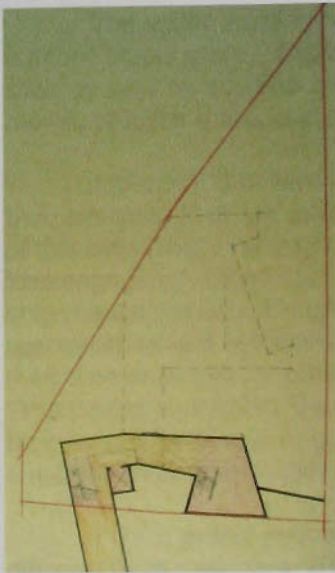
longitudinal section through dance building



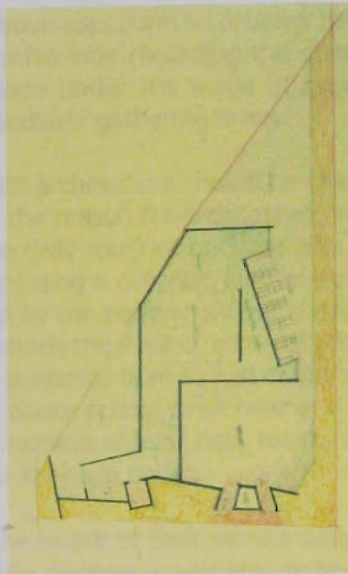
sections through dance building and stage



structural grid in progress



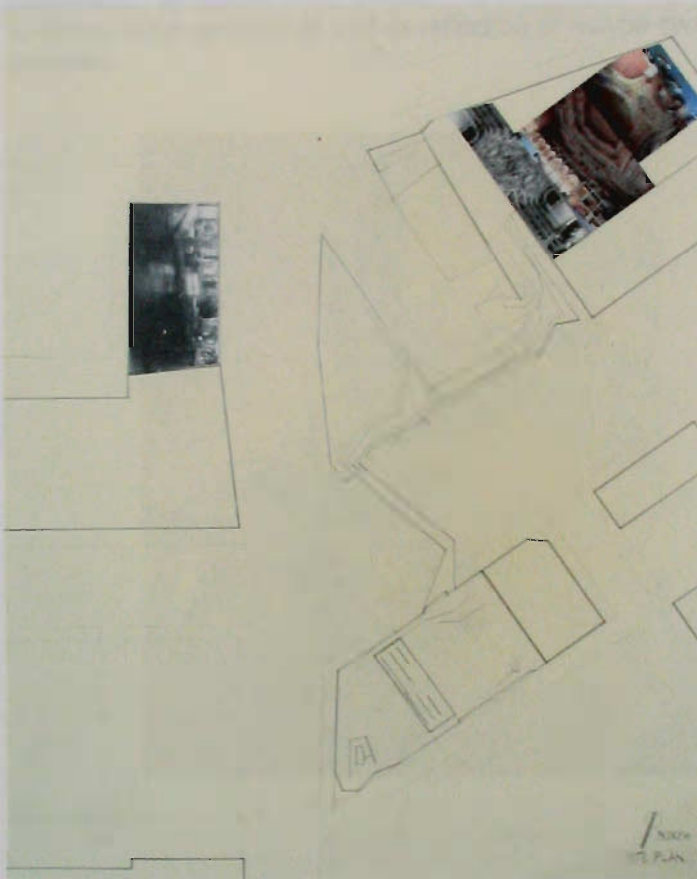
tunnel plan



ground plan



stage plan



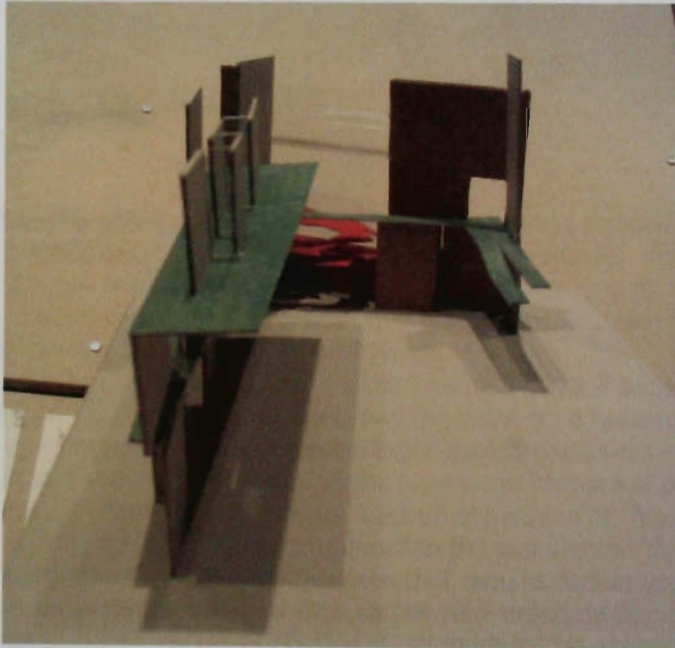
Left: Site plan of entire project including connection made by bridge at height of 16' to coincide with floor heights of dance building. Images on left and right represent restaurant function and Michigan theater building



The set of drawings above was done to develop the different levels of the center outdoor stage space. Exploration was regarding the connection between the different sites as well as what to include under the stage in regards to support like changing rooms, practice space, and spectator gathering areas.

Attitudes: I believe that architecture should be challenged to show people that their everyday lives are really the reason for architecture in the first place. It is because of this belief that I refer to the daily routines of those who use the site as a 'dance' or a 'choreography.' I think that creating a different kind of performance space that will not only change the way it is used by the performers but change the way it is used by the spectators as well can really enrich the lives of some of the people who choose to spend their time in Detroit for other purposes than to just come to work and then flee home. Even having something like a dance school to sit near and watch on lunch break might be a reason for people to get outside of their daily realm, or to stay within in but to have a mental break from whatever they are doing.

I think people should be aware of their surroundings, even if it is on a level much different from designers, artists, dancers, musicians, or poets. I think people need encouragement to seek out ways to enrich their lives and their everyday experiences and placing that opportunity between a few office buildings, near a few night spots and restaurants, as well as in the middle of a collection of surface parking lots is an attempt to create some curiosity as well as reflection or maybe awareness of the routines of the everyday.



Challenging the way performance occurs but also the way it is displayed to the context within which it exists is a vein running through my design process. I want to challenge the fact that in most traditional theaters, the processes that surround the actual stage performance are masked to the audience as well as to the passersby. Rather than creating another theater that looks like a large air and light-tight box, I want to allow some light to leak into the building and to create opportunities for the pedestrians and the passing cars to appear as though they are on stage as well. The fly space, the stage, the backstage, and the seating will all be designed with this premise in mind. Allowing the performance within the building to affect the practicing and the choreography that occurs simultaneously is another way of challenging the tradition of sealing performance into a container that cannot be penetrated by other functions and spaces of the building within which it occurs.

Challenging tradition must also not become an obstruction of the processes of performance, practice, and choreography of dance, rather it should enrich the experience, give the dancers different channels to react to rather than make the experience of these spaces simply a distraction, and detract from their process of making.

Keeping a constant dialogue with my close friend and research dance subject from Wayne State's dance company is a reminder of such experiences that are

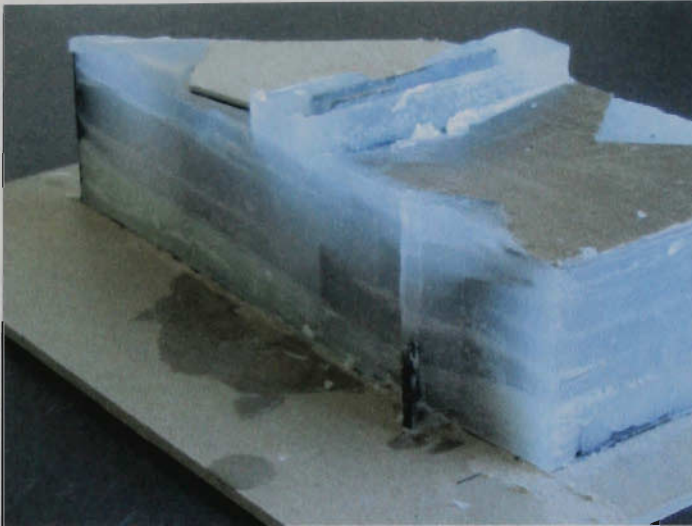


potentially too distracting, for instance, one studio might be located below the main performance space and thus incur a lot of vibration from above. While that is an interesting thought and something that might be worth reacting to, she and the other dancers were really afraid that the ceiling was going to come down on them, as if there was thunder shaking the ceiling over their heads.

Keeping an eye out for simple architectural detail in full scale in the world around me is also informing the process of designing the detail on a human scale because the experience of architecture as one tangible experience is what I am interested in creating, just as a reader experiences all the layers and phrases of poetry in one tangible feeling. I think the only way to research something of that nature is to experience myself, and to ask others to question the experiences they have, and to then to create a set of architectural circumstances that require certain usages, but that allow enough room for interpretation that they can be reinvented by the users of the spaces.

As mentioned in my thesis document, so much of the experience of poetry is what is left out by the poet, and what is added in the leftover spaces by the reader that connects the reader and makes her feel something. By creating gaps in the traditional framework for the type of building I have decided to create, I hope to leave space for

interpretation, and by choosing a function that is meant for people to perform within its skin, its thickness, its materiality, I am asking people to bring something to this building, and asking others to watch and see what they may take from it.

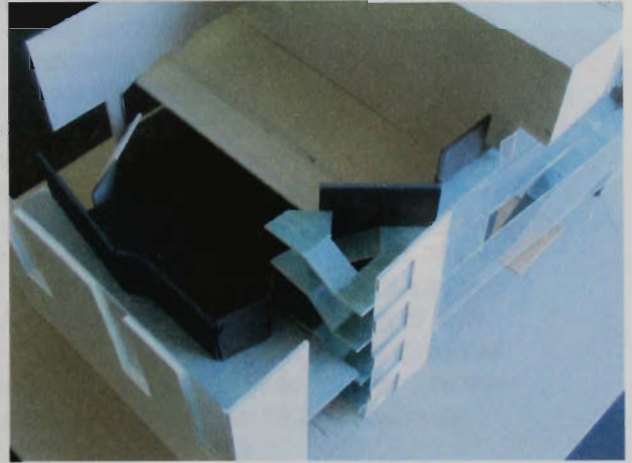
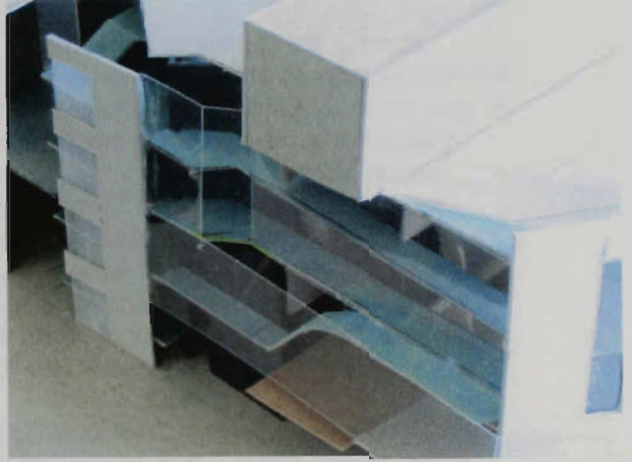
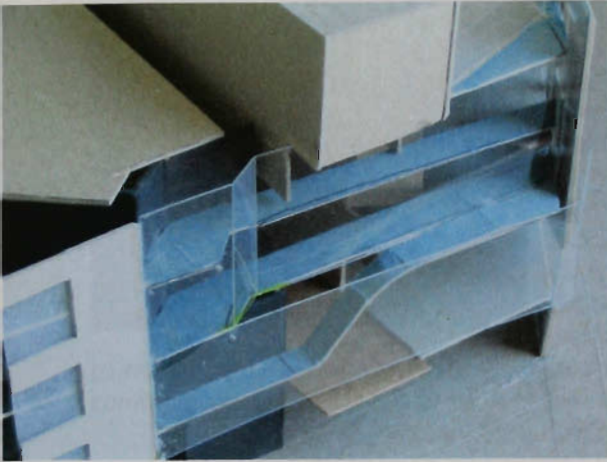


**Missing:** After two critiques in reference to schematic design product and methodology, it has become apparent that a couple of points of analysis that are key to the thesis are missing from this process. One point of analysis is on an urban scale; one that takes in more of the context and proposes an overall scheme that includes more than just one building or even three buildings that happen to be located on sites that are near one another. Another point of analysis that is related to the aforementioned is that priority needs to be established within the pieces of the project. With the time remaining, all four pieces of the project will be limited to a level of mediocrity unless a more defined focus is determined, or many specific moments of the project are designed



and the connections between them are conceptualized. In either case, the scope of development of the project needs to be determined in order to focus the remainder of the design work. A third points of analysis that has been a main vein through the process to this point and that must continue is to step into the shoes of all who might engage the project. Watching everything all the time helps with the understanding of the mentality of a spectator helps in this respect, speaking to those who perform on a regular basis and

study the theory of performance of different kinds are questioned, and studying theory of different kinds of performance as they are published in texts is a continued strain of research to add to the project itself as well as to the thesis argument.



Because of the interest in keeping the existing intensity and tension of the character of the center site chosen, the relationship all three other sites of intervention have are crucial. It has been acknowledged that analysis and development on an urban

scale in the form perhaps of infrastructure or urban landscape that brings the pieces of the project together are necessary to making connections between these elements. The main emphasis thus far has been on creating the possibility for a playful narrative that reveals parts of the processes of performance and spectating that have previously been concealed within one building. As a result of this focus, the connection between this building and the other elements of the project have remained conceptual and desire development in order to maintain their presence to the conceptual framework of the project. In order for the streets that have been referred to as 'rivers of vehicular motion' not to maintain a presence that divides the project but that brings it together, crossing those streets or occupying the space of the streets as a pedestrian need to be conceptualized to the degree that the interior spaces of the building have been conceptualized.



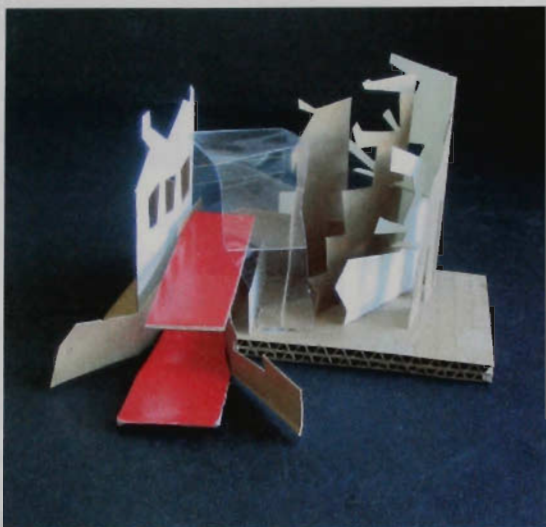
One method of making the exterior spaces integrated more comprehensively with the interior spaces of the project will be to develop in greater detail the actualities of the necessary elements of any interior architectural project, such as means of egress, support spaces for building technology, and development of structure. Rather than focusing on the interior details of the architecture solely, however, the process needs to look at different scales in order

to remain engaged with the discussion of the thesis about how architecture communicates.

Of course as a method, adding detail doesn't seem ambiguous, but the process of adding detail must be balanced by also looking at the entire project on the scale that it becomes an object of its own, a defined 'district' of sorts within the holey fabric of its context within the city of Detroit, as well as at the scale of what the passersby, performers, spectators, and drivers encounter as they move through the project. Thus the reflection on the overall appearance and function of the project remains an entirely cyclical process which requires the designer to assume many different roles through imagining oneself in many different sets of shoes.

In order to stay in touch with what the performer may be used to or interested in, research has been continued throughout the design process through short interviews periodically with dancer Megan Brunke, my mother, and theater student Chris Williams. Questioning the type of spaces one might be used to in performance and in spectating is a process that is of great interest in order to challenge the notion of how performance is learned, constructed, and how it can be altered but not simply disturbed or hindered by the changes implemented through this suggestion of an architecture that attempts to re-examine the relationship such performers may have to their audiences, as well as to the exterior context of the stage on which they perform.

One way that architecture communicates has much to do with scale, and the scale at which one experiences an architecture is so different than the scale on which the designer experiences the same architecture that comparisons are made on a daily basis between what a model at 1/16<sup>th</sup> scale might do to inform the architecture and what walking down a corridor, past a window, or through the threshold of a building might do to inform any architecture.



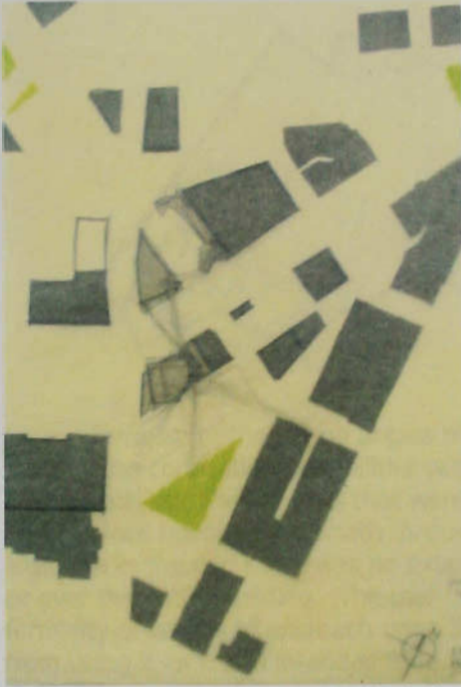
In addition to the models shown a second set of drawings at 1/16<sup>th</sup> scale was done as well as some perspective sketches. First, a step back was taken to look at the entire project to see the urban scale that had been neglected at that point. Below are the diagrams developed from that analysis. This analysis was a bit different than just a site analysis, it was more like a site analysis that assumes that the project I designed was built and had affected the patterns of traffic and movement. In reaction to that analysis, another iteration of the entire project was developed.



figure ground study



diagonal lines signify spaces whose function is surface parking



path study



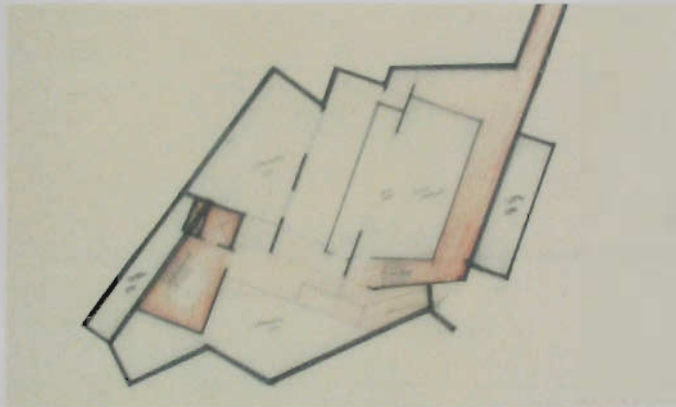
pedestrian traffic study



intended path to draw people



entire project as a result of the analysis



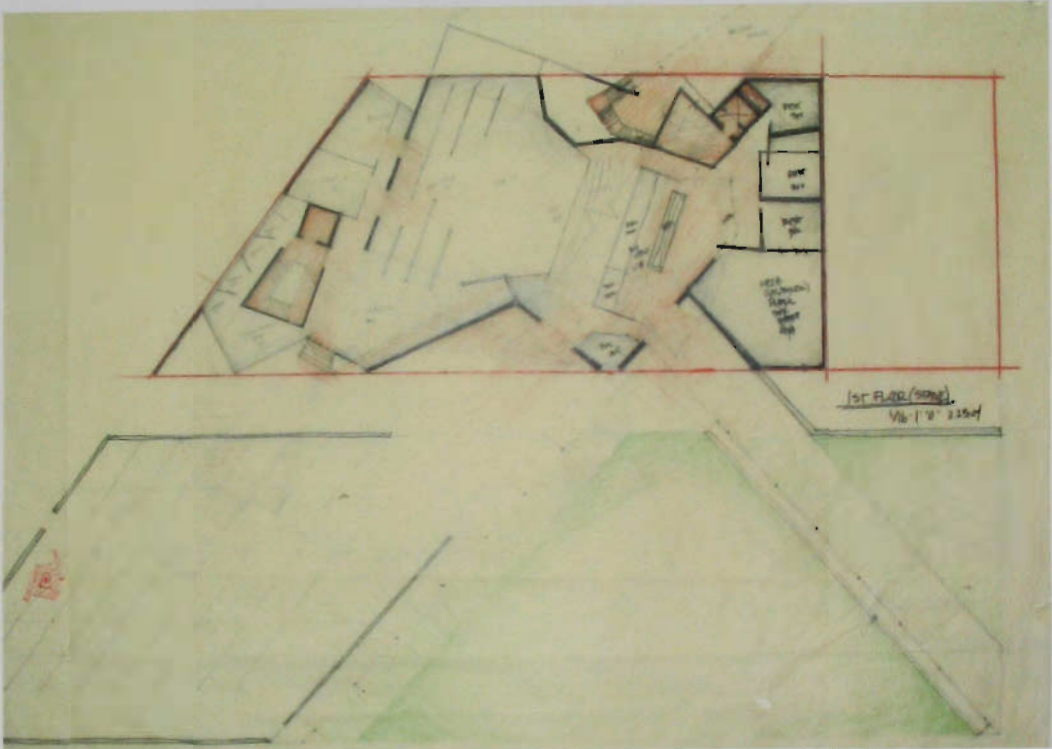
sub floor plan

Because of the strong angles of the site itself along with the angles suggested as path by the connection possibilities with the people mover station to the southwest of the project, the angular lines that were determined to be paths were used to skew the entire dance building. The path through the building was meant to be maintained although in the end there was no exterior iteration of that path that actually went under or over the entire building. The plan was meant to allow for a path even though the formality of having to encroach upon the building envelope may have deterred people from using it as it was intended for a path. The angular geometry became a method of delineating small interstitial spaces for things like stretching areas, parts of the structure and the building interacting with the sidewalk in order to further blend the conditions of exterior and interior, and the small seating areas to view from within the building as well as the expanding of the sidewalk.

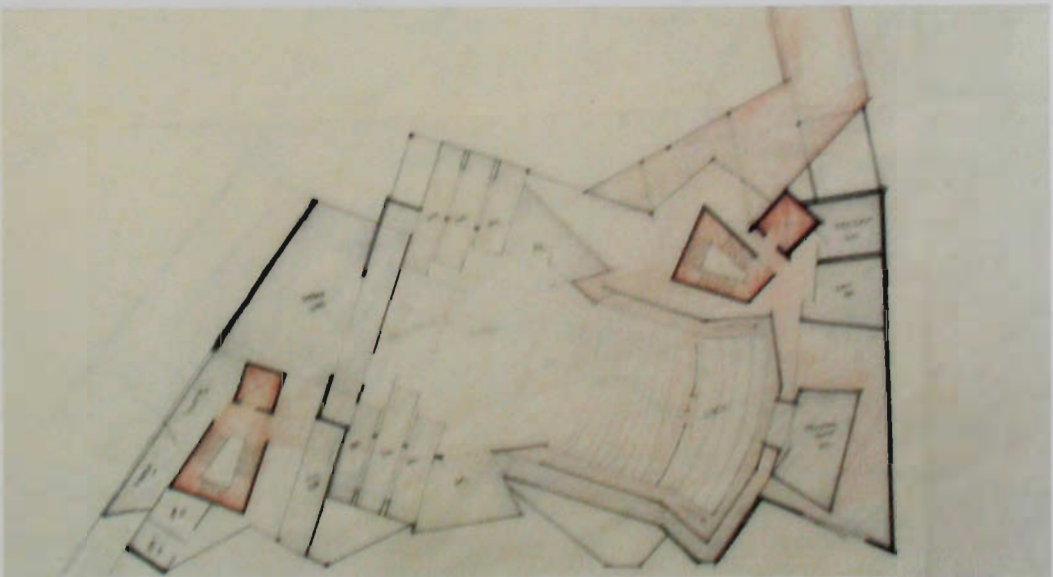


Model to show first iteration of exterior of building

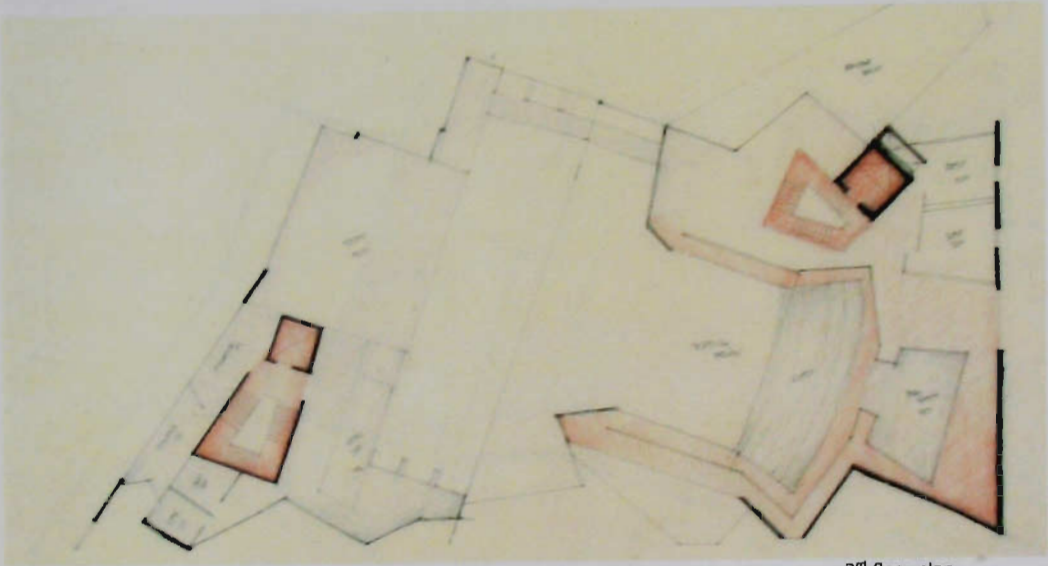




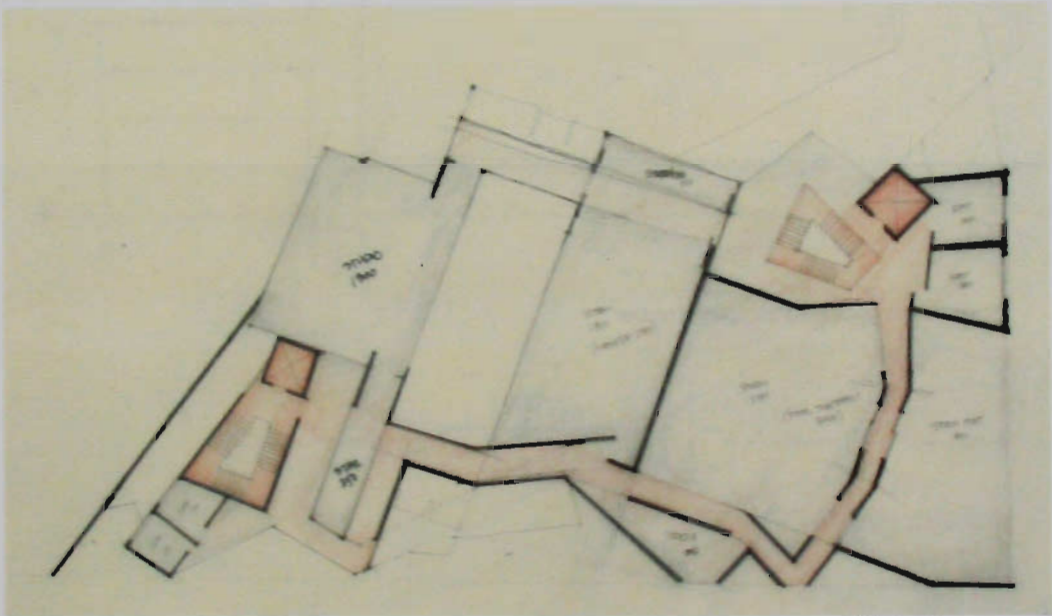
first floor plan and green space/parking to the south



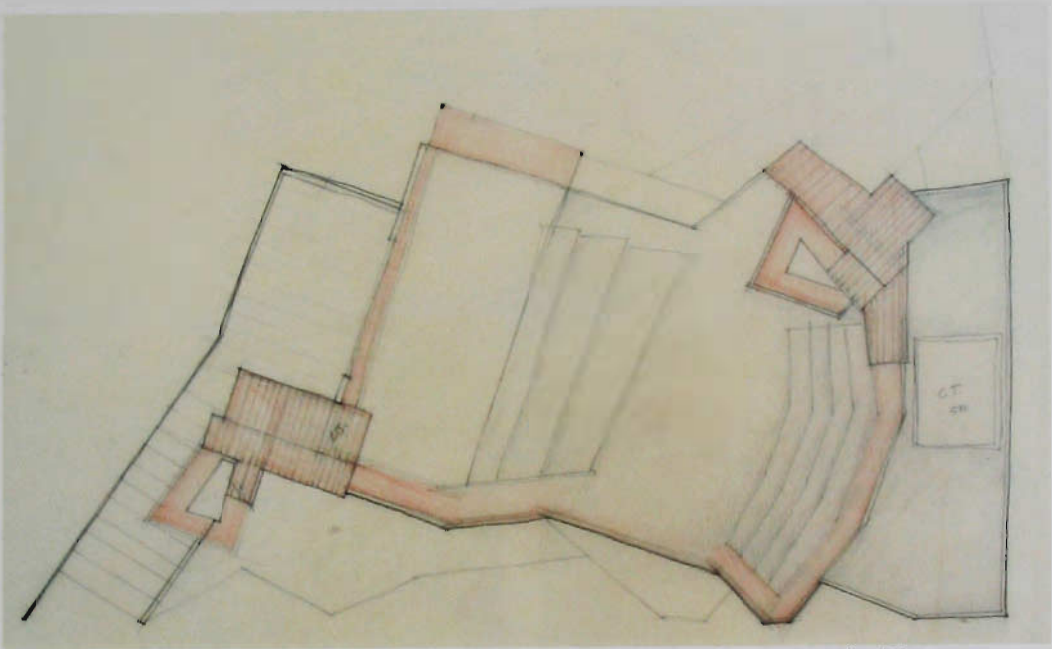
2<sup>nd</sup> floor plan



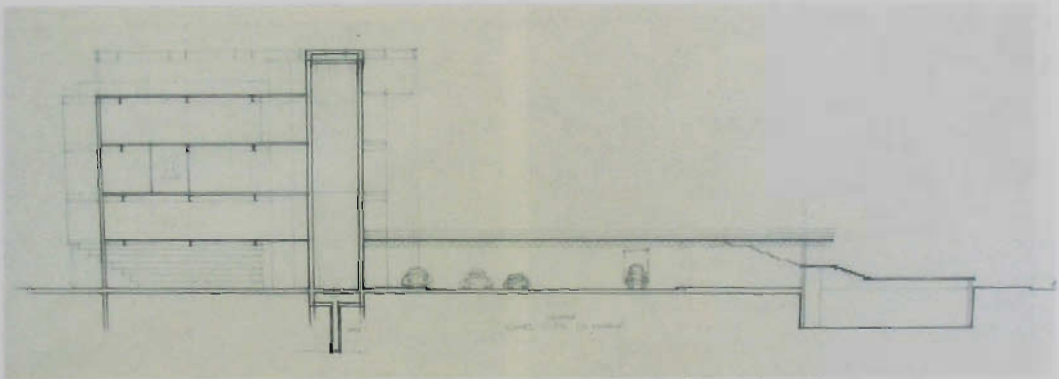
3<sup>rd</sup> floor plan



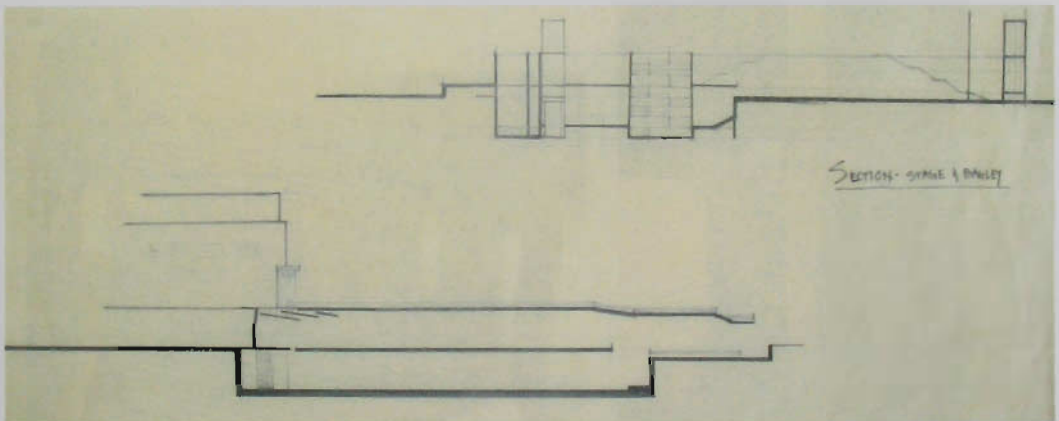
4<sup>th</sup> floor plan



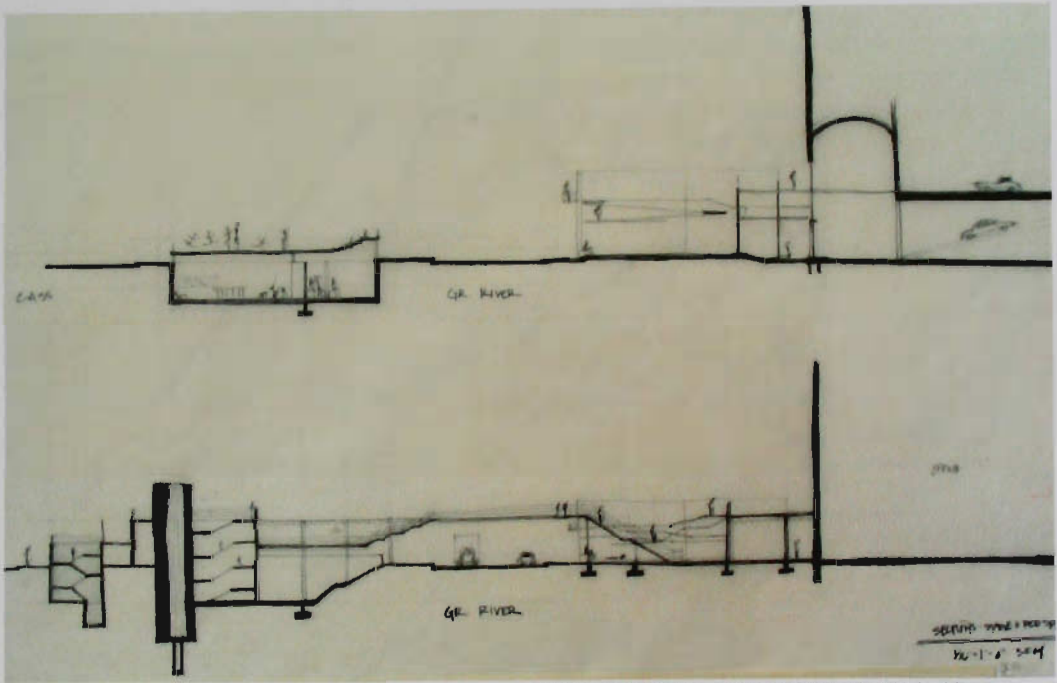
Roof Plan



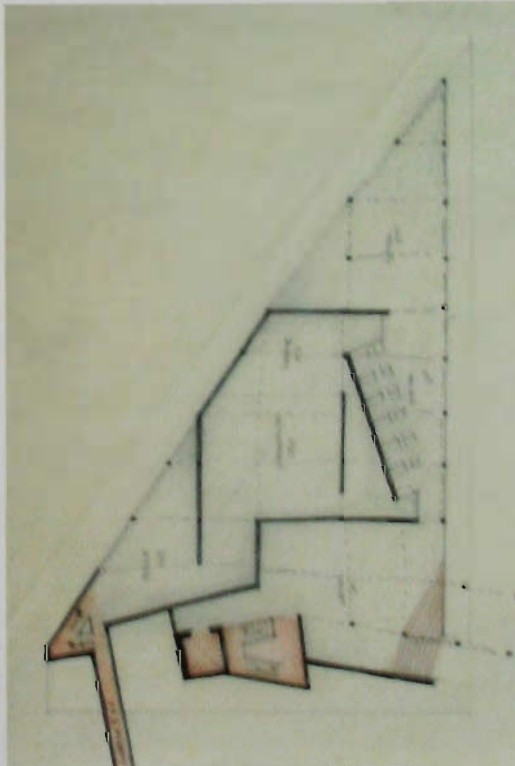
section through dance building and stage



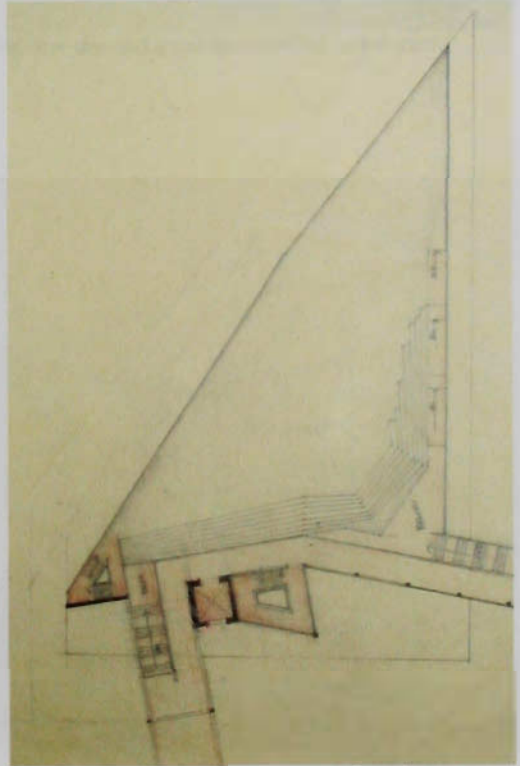
sections through stage and Michigan Theater Building and dance building



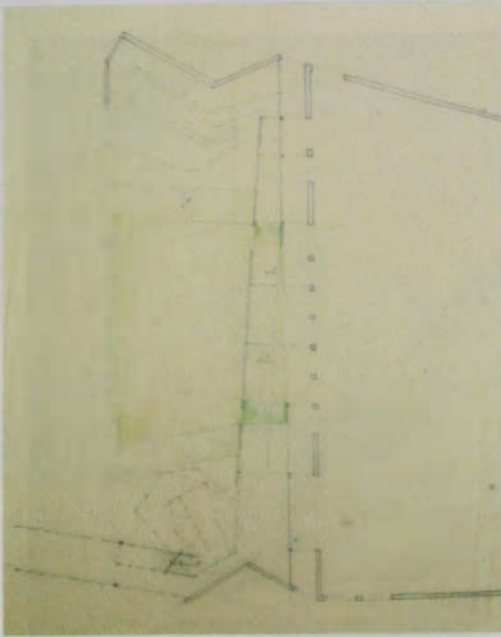
sections through stage and michigan theater building



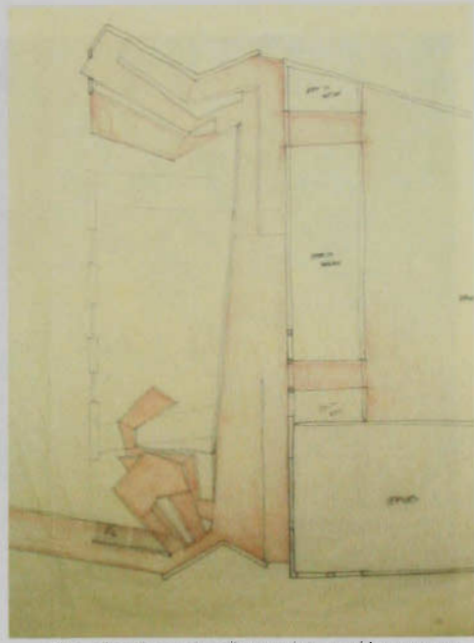
ground plan under stage



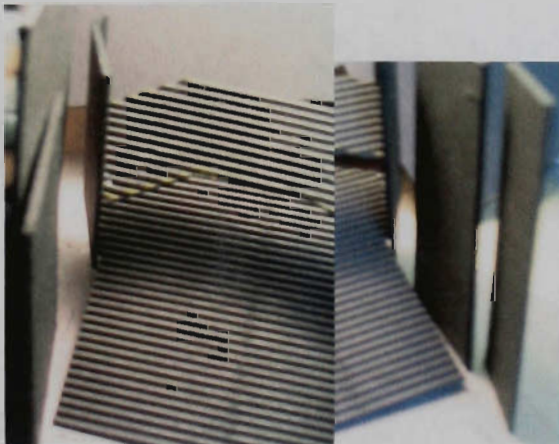
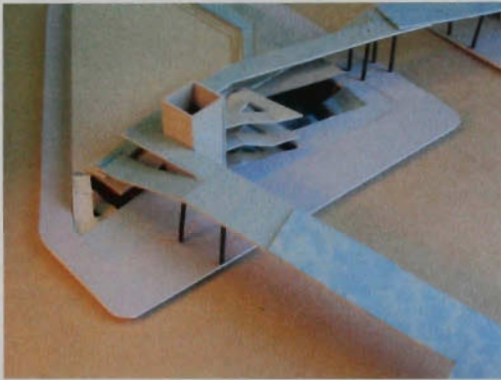
stage plan

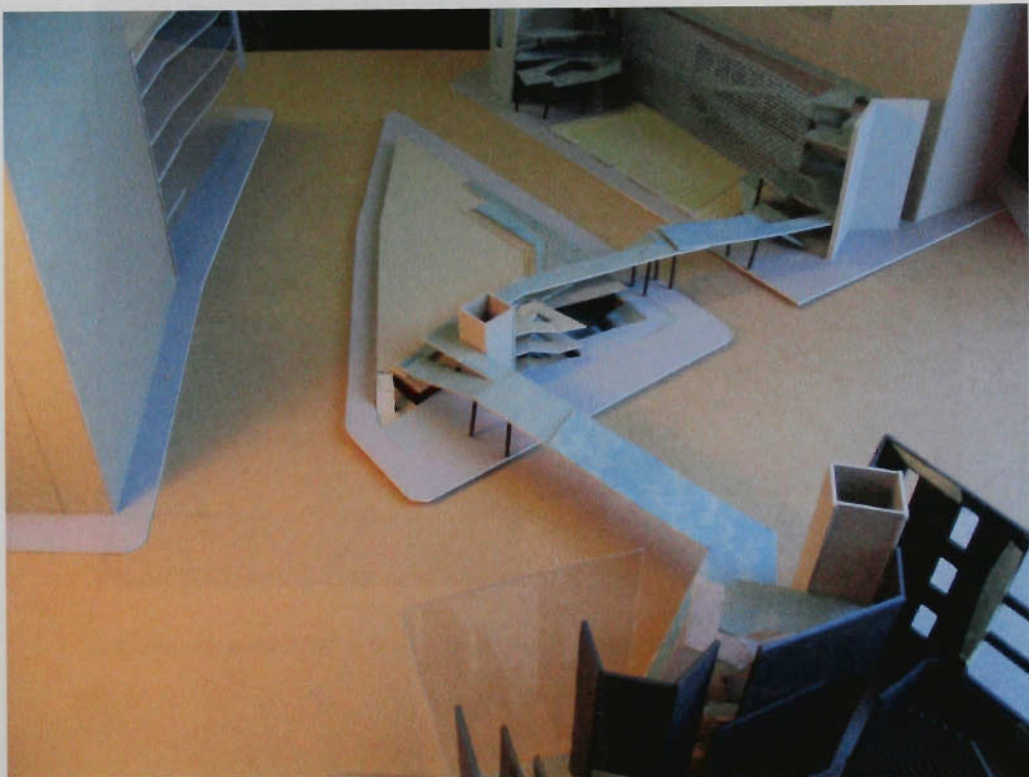


Michigan Theater building connection plan



Plan of paths and walkways into parking garage





**FINAL PROJECT.**



Detail model scale:  $3/16'' = 1' - 0''$  Depicting stretching areas during day and night.



Stretching area viewed from interior in evening.



Interior view: stretching bars.  
Exterior view: mullion pattern at night.



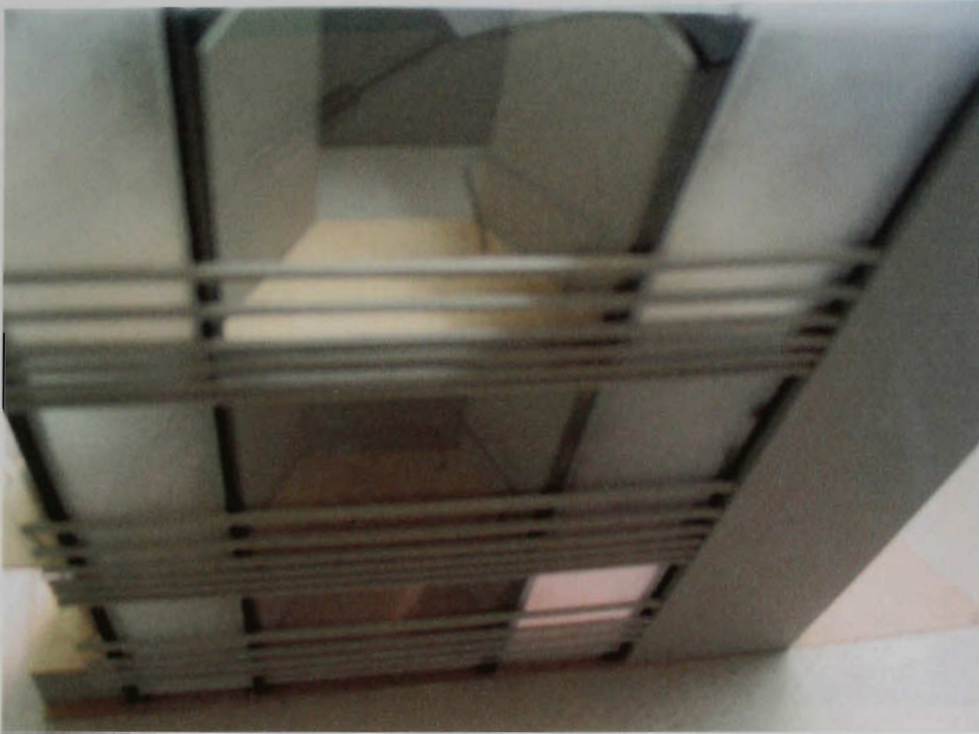




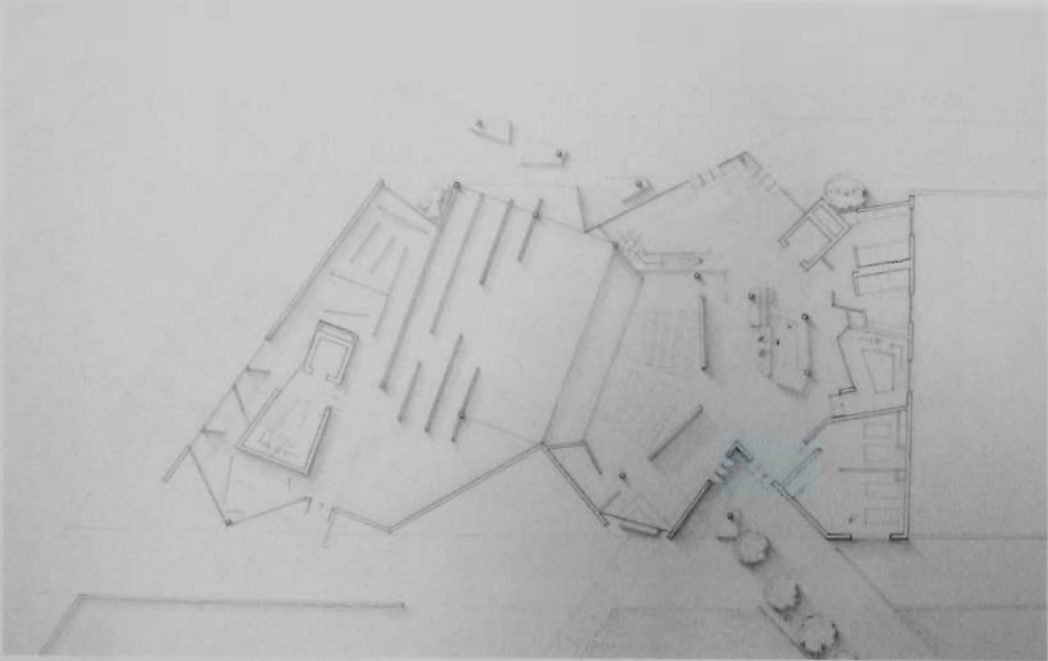
Pedestrian view from sidewalk of stretching spaces lit from interior.



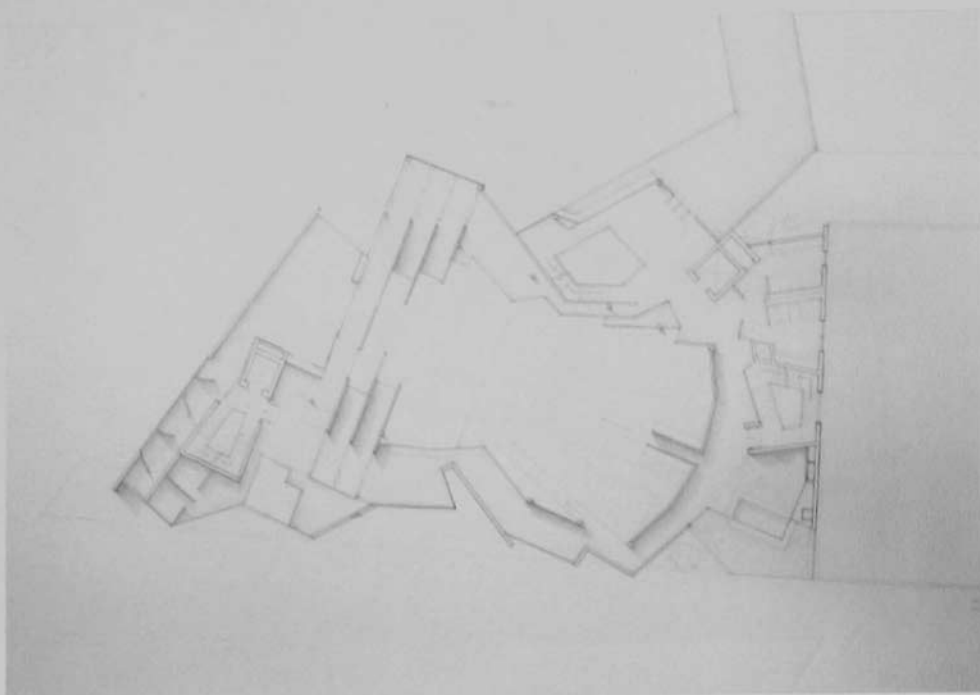
Left: repetition of pattern vertically on façade.



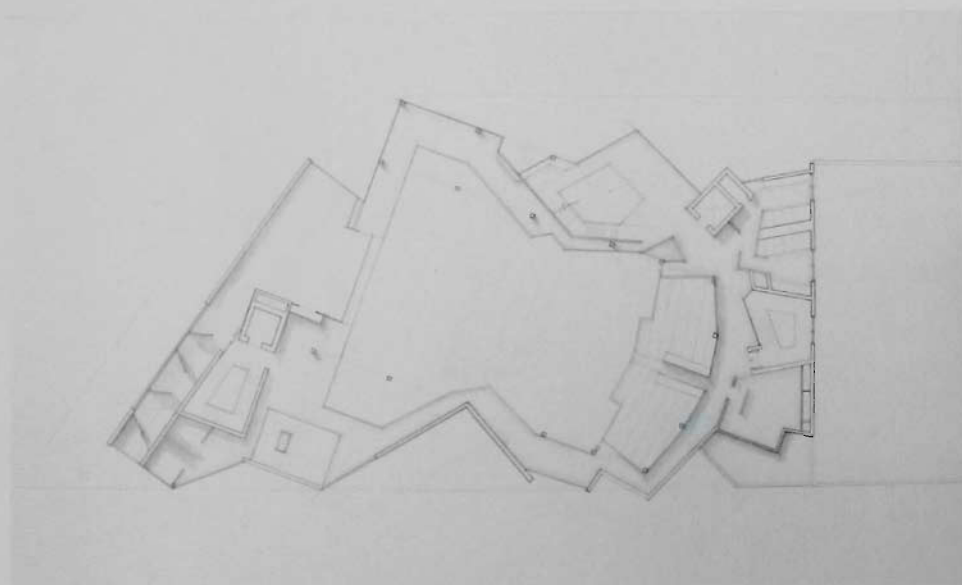
Perspective view: looking down from third floor into stretching spaces.



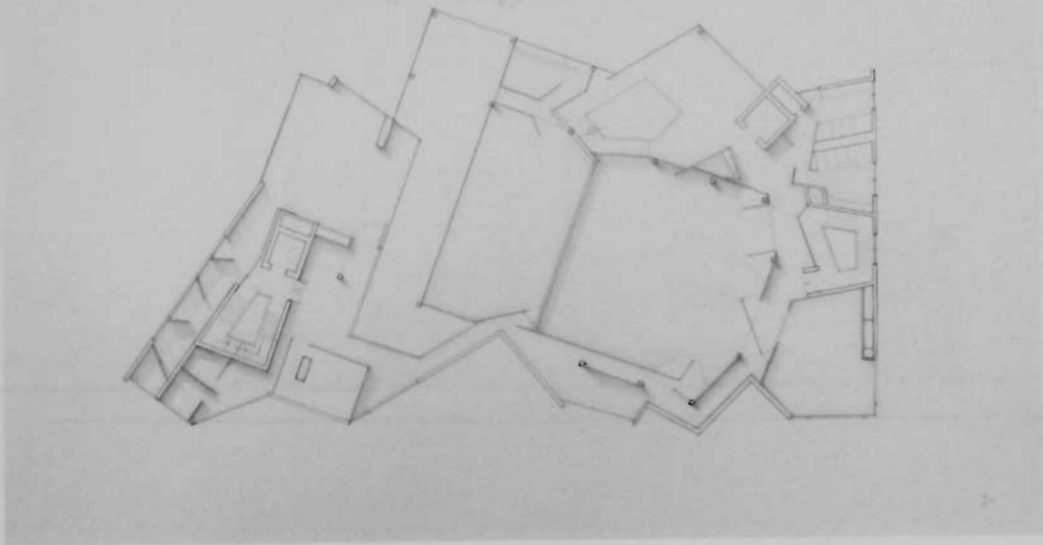
First Floor Plan



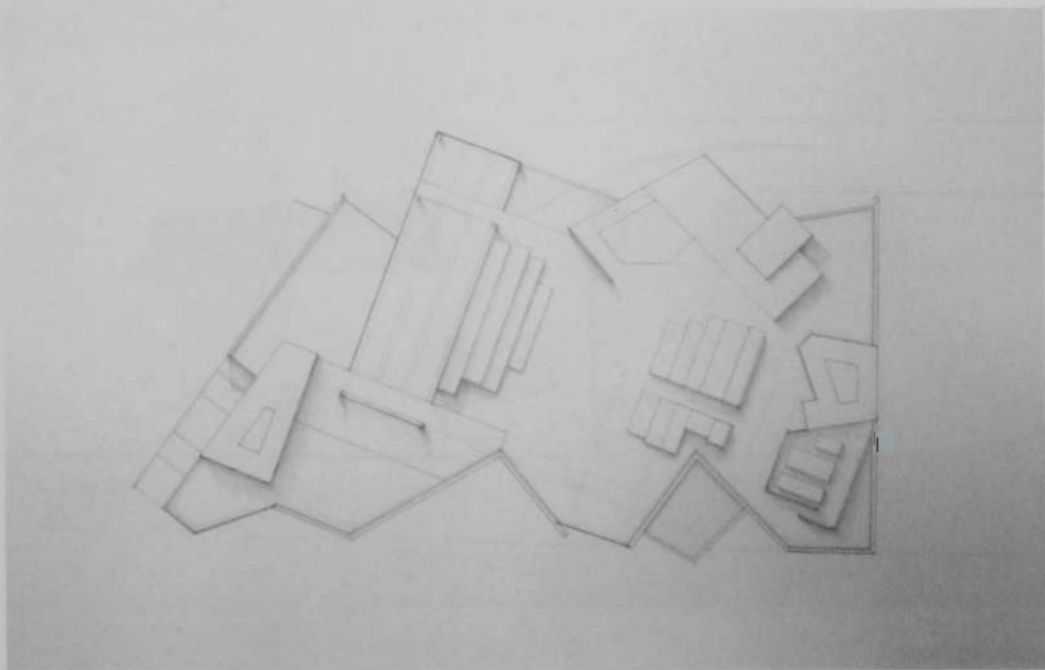
Second Floor Plan



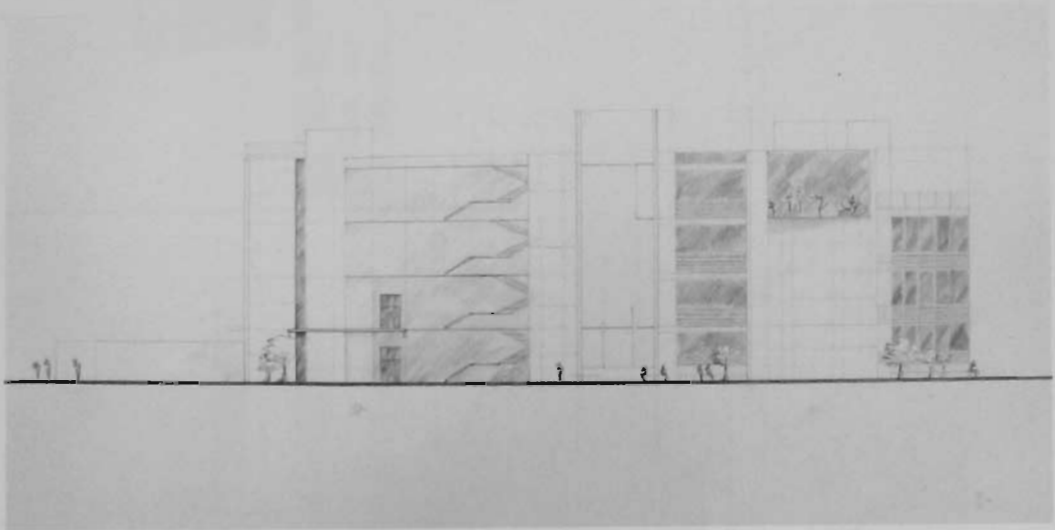
Third Floor Plan



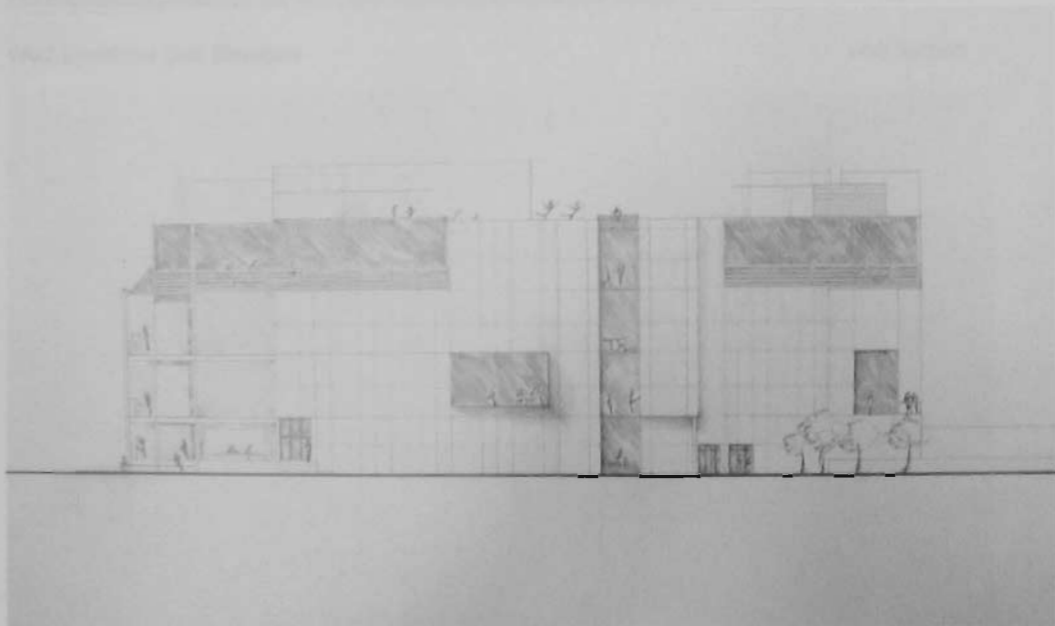
Fourth Floor Plan



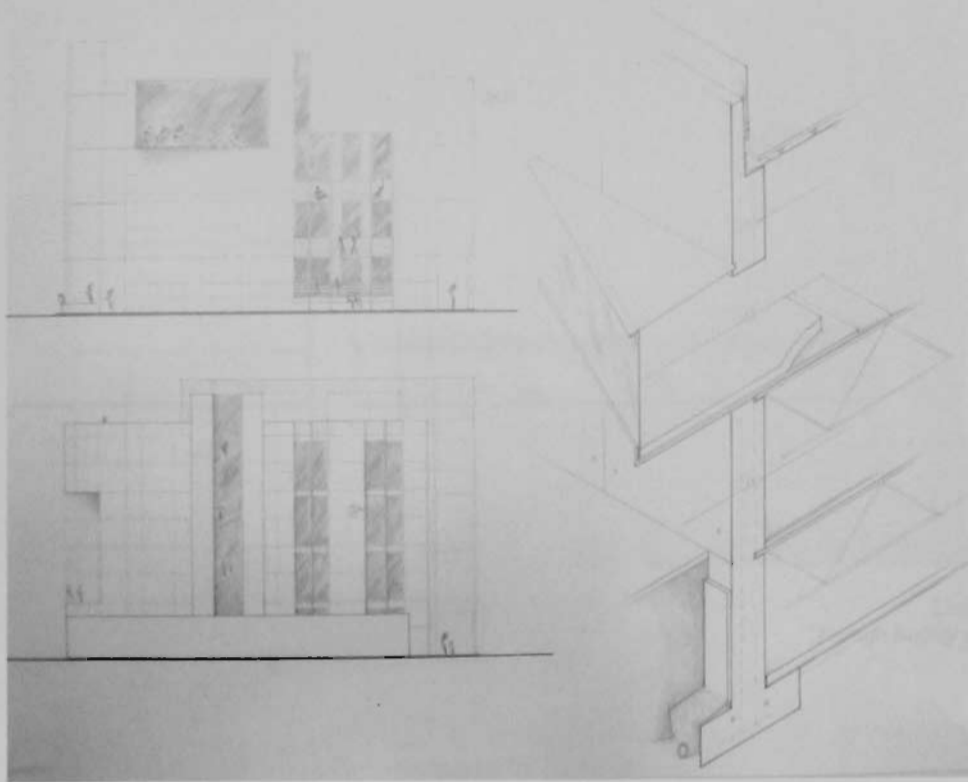
Roof Plan



North Elevation

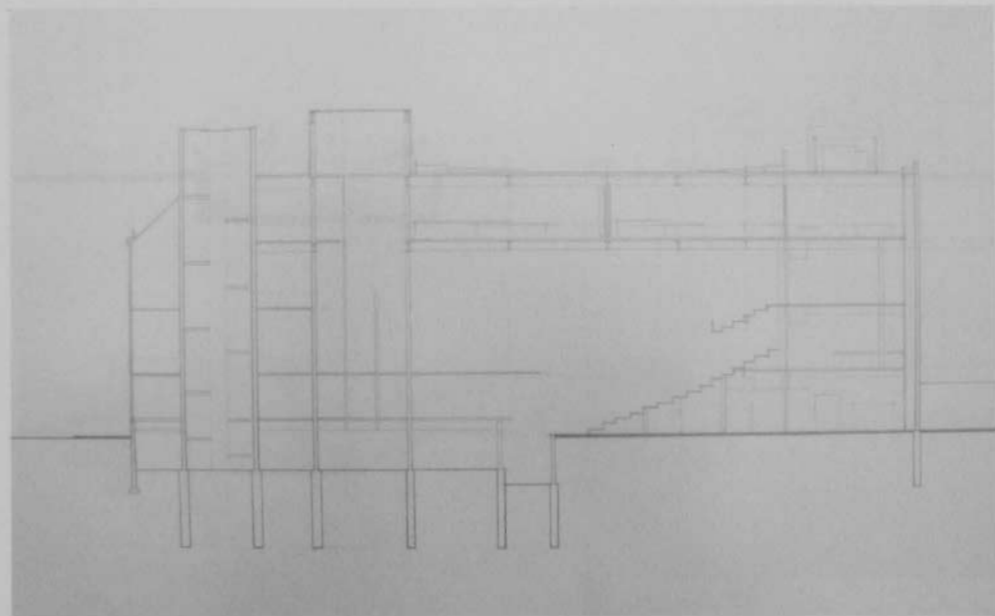


South Elevation

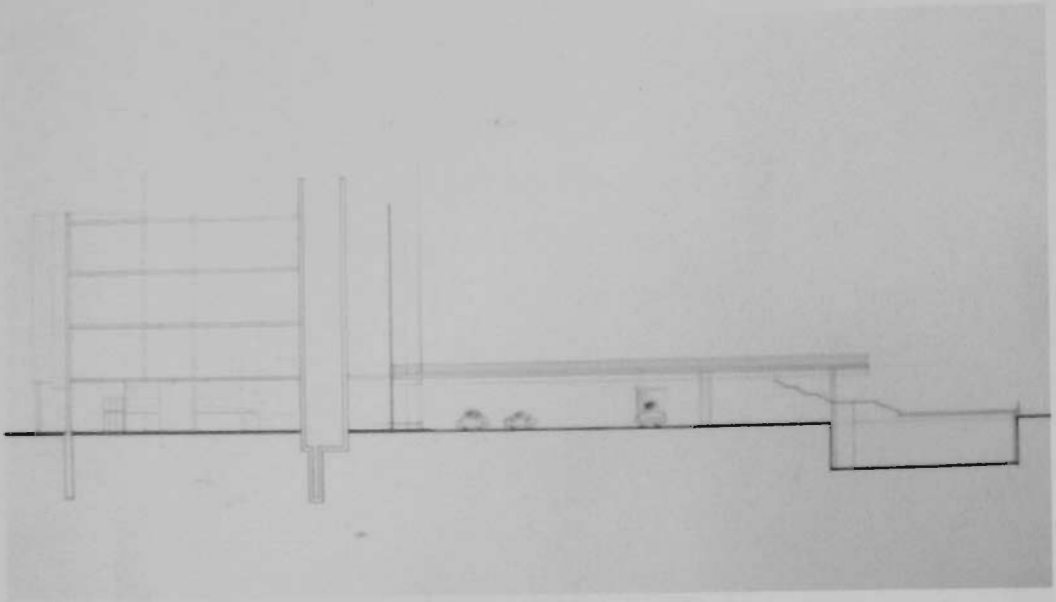


West Elevation/ East Elevation

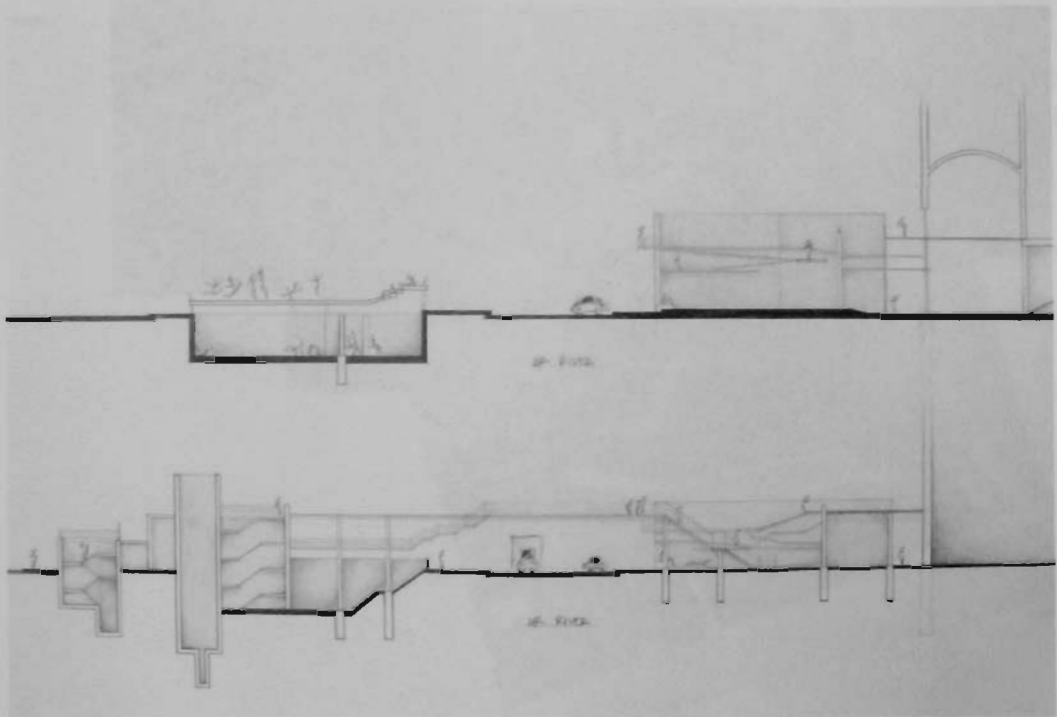
Wall Section



Longitudinal Section



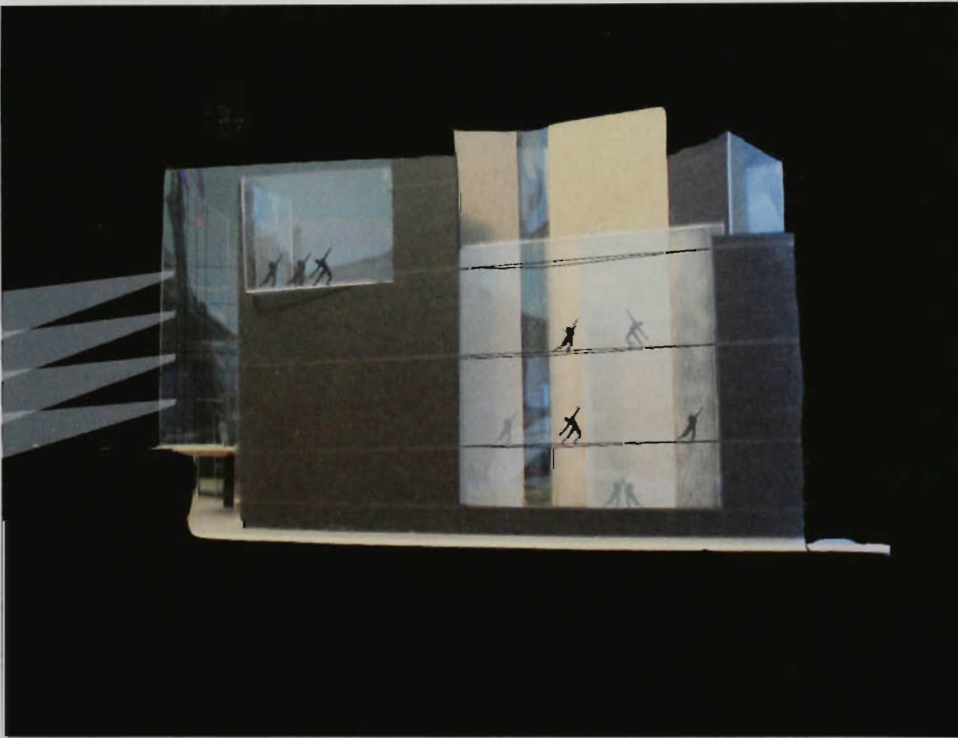
Cross Section  
Through Bagley and Stage

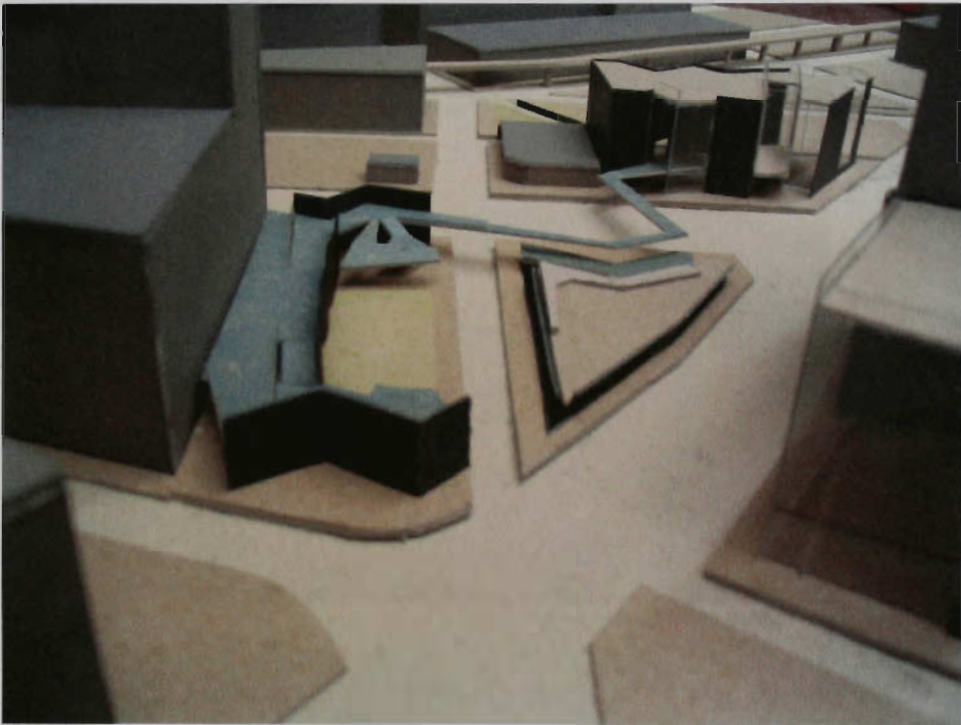


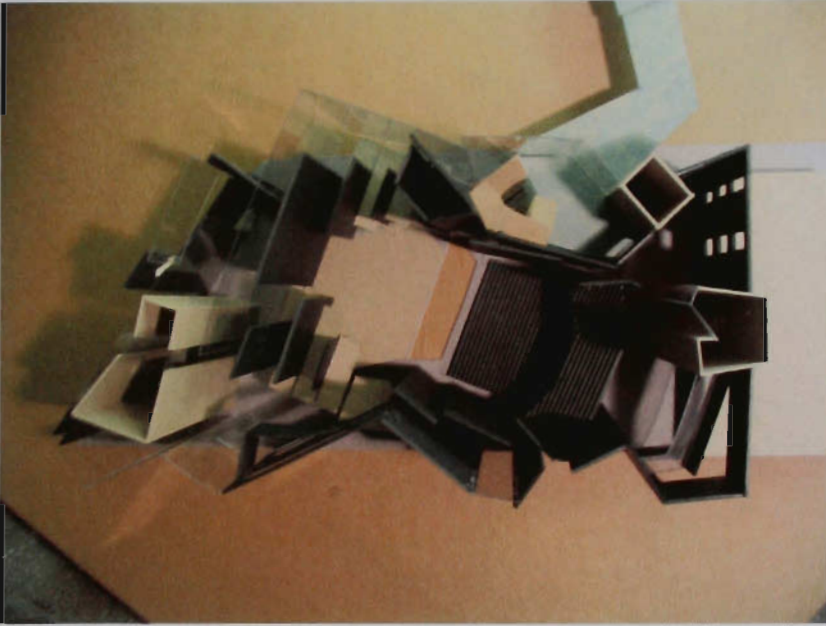
Sections  
Stage and Michigan Theater











dance building model



restaurant and parking garage



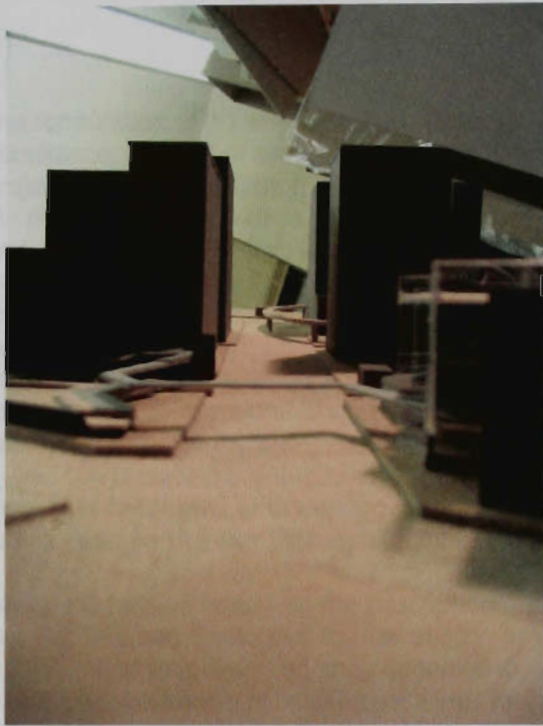
Connection between center stage and pedestrian space adjacent to Michigan Theater building



View of entire site model

FORMAL SPACE

...the space is not a container for objects, but a field of forces. The architecture is a series of gestures, a sequence of movements that define a path through the space. The space is a stage, a place where the architecture performs its role. The space is a story, a narrative that unfolds as one moves through it. The space is a presence, a presence that is felt even when it is absent.



## CONCLUSION:

Beginning with the formulation of a thesis question, there was no formulation of a building typology, circumstance, interest of program, or anything remotely similar to a subject for the design project. Upon investigating what it meant to ask a question that would yield the possibility of an answer as well as the breadth necessary for an entire investigation leading to a building design project, *overwhelming* is the descriptive word that comes to mind. Many different building types or programs may have been suitable to facilitate the discussion regarding the question 'does architecture communicate?' or rather 'how does architecture communicate?'

Upon the decision of the formulation of the above question, a hypothesis was inherent in the choice of words of that question. The assumption was that architecture does, in fact, communicate to its inhabitants, but the description of how it does so was something to be sensed, and never something that could be described well in verbal or written formats. Even now after two terms of discussing, writing, and designing there are not the words needed to describe the way that architecture communicates to people.

A second hypothesis was formed regarding the description of how architecture might communicate to people; in a way analogous to how poetry, among other forms of art, communicates to people. What was observed and supported throughout the text of this paper was the way that a person connects to different forms of art, which is perhaps most clearly defined by a description of particularly the connection one can make to poetry. Because the words of poetry are more selective than prose and are phrased in a different way, with less connection between them, the reader must bring to such language certain understandings and other words to complete the thoughts however she sees fit. Because poetry often describes imagery or emotion, the person brings to the experience the layers of memory and sensory perception as well.

Due to a sketch problem assignment, the issue of the difficulty of explaining how it was proposed that a person could connect with something that will only ever exist with something imaginary was brought to light. When trying to discover just exactly what was meant by the outpost, no answer came to mind, none was offered, and none was ever extracted. The point of the assignment was to simply design in reaction to poetry, to create a space for the poet; the title 'outpost' suggested a sort of solitude, a slight exclusion from some of the layers of the world to be perceived by the senses. Simply, a space to be screened from sound, sight, and contact with other people and other objects that somehow still allowed hints of all that one was to be separated from through the design. It was more deliberate than the remainder of the design project because of time constraints and because of meaning. At this time, the question comes to mind, 'how did I get so far away from that simplicity?'

Because of personal connectedness with and the thesis' connectedness with expression, dance was explored as another form of expression analogous to poetry. Because of its dependence upon the body in such a physical way, the potential relationship dancing has to designing spaces for the body became an essential tool to the design process and a space-place for dance became the circumstance and eventually the program.

Choosing a site was then another challenge, however a site that was dynamic on its own was chosen for the purpose of having some spatial interest and connectedness

overwhelming, it can be bland and go unnoticed. To come to the realization of a building out of an idea making process, however, is still a breathtaking phenomenon, as are some of the spaces that can be designed out of that same process.

## Annotated Bibliography

Benedikt, Michael. For an Architecture of Reality. New York: Lumen Books, 1987.

Discussion of the possibility of reading architecture, and of justifying vernacular types of architecture. Relevance because of specific but vague nature in which language is used to describe architectural form, and because it is done so well.  
(thesis idea clarification)

Brunke, Megan. Personal Interview. Detroit, MI. 10.27.03.

Site observations were noted on three possible sites for the proposed project regarding quality of space, materiality of ground and of other surfaces. A dancer, choreographer, and student of dance at Wayne State University, Megan's observations and her dancing were recorded and used for description of and inspiration for this project.

Feiress, Kristen. Ed. Extension to the Berlin Museum with Jewish Museum Department. Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1992.

Images and drawings of the Libeskind Museum addition in Berlin. Used in order to facilitate discussion on the battle between idea, expression, and function of buildings.  
(precedent study 2)

Furness, Frank. Frank Furness: The Complete Works.

Introduction written by Robert Venturi. A short critique on Frank Furness' architecture.

Libeskind, Daniel. radix-matrix. Architecture and Writings. New York: Prestel, 1997.

Images and descriptions of Libeskind's work. Specifically regarding the Jewish Museum addition, his piece entitled "Between the Lines" explains best his intentions involved in the design process.

Levene, Richard C. and Marquez Cecilia, Fernando. Ed. Herzog & DeMeuron. Amsterdam: El Croquis, 1994.

Images and short description of design and its intentions for Stone House (precedent study 1.2).

Neruda, Pablo. Residence on Earth. Translated by Donald D. Walsh. New York, New Directions Corp. 1973.

The poetry of Pablo Neruda was interpreted for the purpose of the sketch problem in the investigation regarding meaning of space in combination with simplicity of design. In order to create the Outpost for a poet, a poet had to be chosen, one with which I connected in order that I could design in reaction to such a connection; and create a space for interpretation rather than one that tightly hugged the skin of the human body, it instead created a skin for the body to exist between with enough space to examine that skin and its perforation, texture, color, and materiality as well.



Price, William L. Arts and Crafts to Modern Design. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000.

Scheider, Bernard. Daniel Libeskind Jewish Museum Berlin Between the Lines. New York: Prestel, 1999.

Images and drawings of the Libeskind Jewish addition to the Berlin Museum (precedent study 2).

Schwartz, Frederic. Mother's House: The Evolution of Vanna Venturi's House in Chestnut Hill. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1992.

Essays by Vincent Scully and Robert Venturi along with images and drawings of the Vanna Venturi house. Images of all schemes throughout design process as well as excerpt from Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture regarding Vanna Venturi House (precedent study 1.1). Also reflection from 25 years after the project and the particular essay about the project; reflection of the meaning architecture has relative to its setting in time, and how that can change.

"Stone House. Tavole, Italy." *Architecture and Urbanism* 300 (September 1995): 30-47.

Description of design intentions as well as general information about Stone House by architects Herzog & DeMeuron in Tavole, Italy (precedent study 1.2). Also sections, plans, and color photos included in article.

Turkle, Sherry. "Introduction: Identity in the Age of the Internet." Life on the Screen. Touchstone, 1995.

Turkle's ideas and descriptions based upon theorists such as Derrida are mentioned in support of the point that a reader connects with language by what she brings to the text as she reads.

Venturi, Robert. Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1966.

Interesting theory about architecture and the language it can have. Speaking of issues similar to those that I am exploring in my thesis, such as the significance that knowledge of language has on the way people perceive architecture and the significance of architecture through experience.