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AFTER THE ARRIVAL CITY #1

Housing, Social Infrastructure and People in
Displacement in Athens, Greece



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Displacement in Athens, Greece

March 2024

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Acknowledgements

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Athens, Greece

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Wisdom Kitchen
We Need Books
Khora House
Community of Squatted Prosfygika

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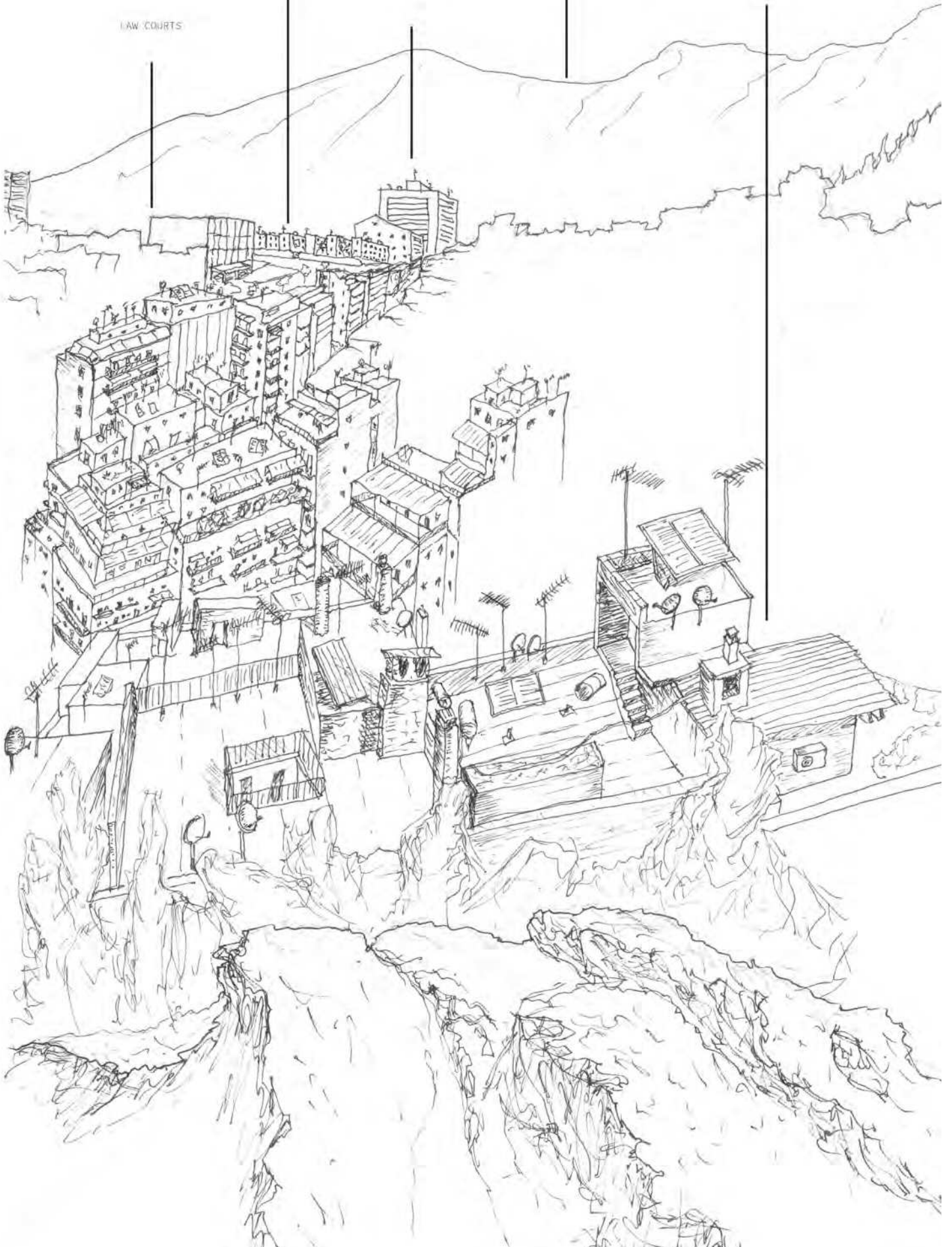
PROSYGIKA

HILLS DEFEINE VALLEY

EXARCHIA ROOF INHABITED

LAW COURTS

POLICE HQ



The Architecture of Rapid Change and Scarce Resources (ARCSR) is a studio-based, teaching and research area within the practice and academic discipline of architecture. It examines and extends knowledge of the physical and cultural influences on the built environment, focusing on situations where resources are scarce and where both culture and technology are in a state of rapid change.

Suspicious of the tendency of strategic and large-scale policy planning to distil out rich but fragile local interactions, the studio encourages students to work outwards from the observed fragment of lived experience. ARCSR aims to explore how the urban landscape is inhabited, made and remade through personal and collective acts, events, memories and experiences; attempting to cut through the surface to expose the undercurrent of silent issues that constitute the everyday.

Since 2006 the School of Art, Architecture and Design at London Metropolitan University has been offering studio modules for its 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th year architecture students in this research area which have involved direct, on the ground, cultural and physical surveys of marginal urban settlements in India, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Athens and London. Latterly MA by Project and PhD by Project courses have also been run in this research area. Study is by project and has included live projects involving the construction of a number of schools and water and sanitation projects.

This year, Unit 06 explored housing, social infrastructure and people in displacement in Athens, Greece.

The city of Athens has played a significant role during the so-called 'European Migrant Crisis', as a major 'Arrival City' for refugees since 2015, where over 1 million people came to Greece in the first year. Seven years on, the close of the European refugee housing support programme (ESTIA), has brought about great uncertainty for an estimated 13,000 people in Athens, who have sought to make the city their home over recent years.

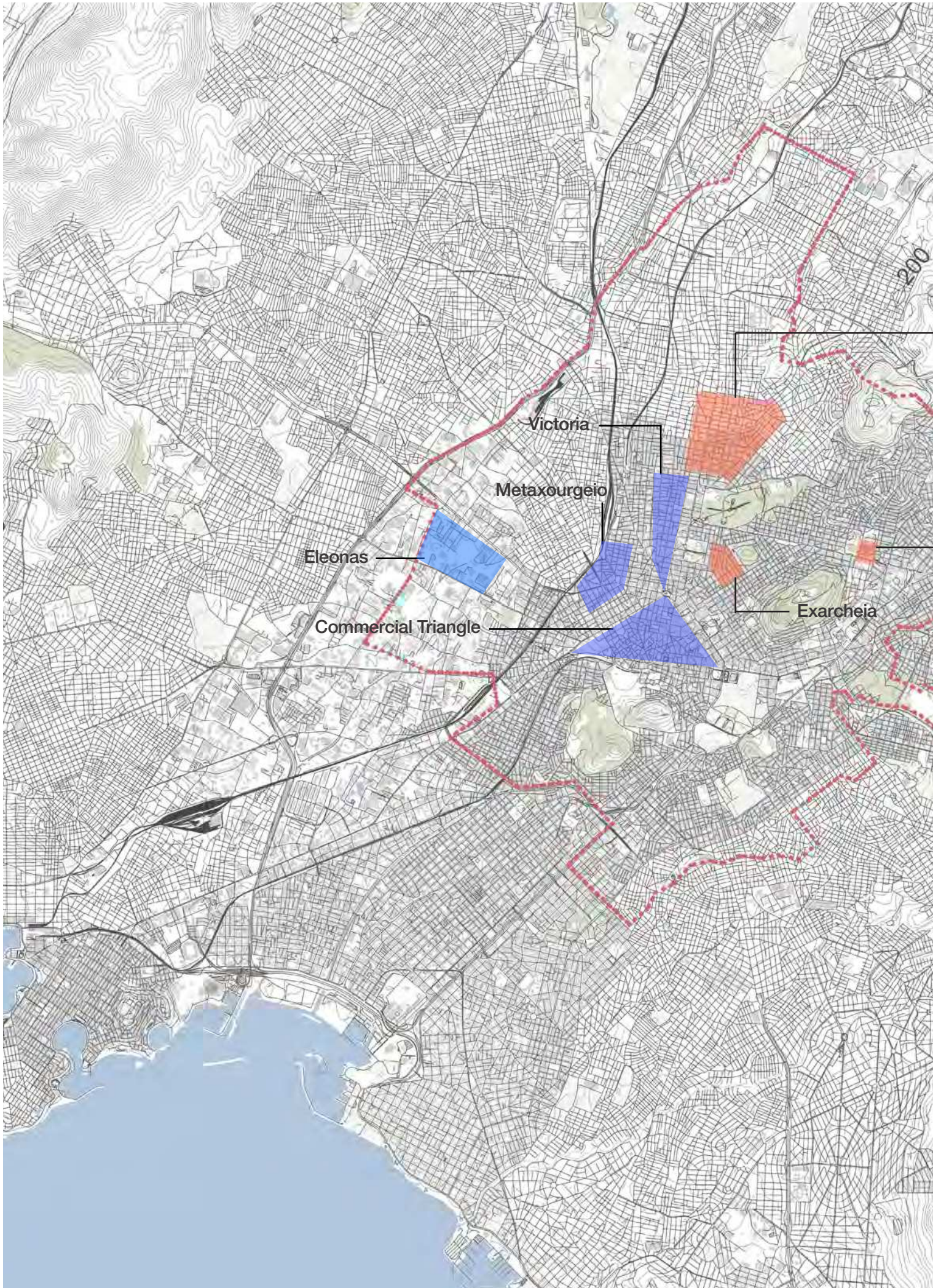
Unit 06 addressed the problem of building new, particularly within the urban context of Athens where 30% of the existing housing stock remains abandoned. We began the year with a field trip to Athens, a transformative city with a rich history, at the eastern edge of Europe.

By locating the unit within the current, critical exchange about the future of refugees in Athens, we interrogated an area of investigation in and around the centre of the city – in three neighbourhoods: Exarcheia, Kypseli and the Prosfygika. Through an exploration of activist squats, polykatoikia (multi-family) residences and neo-classical buildings, and engagement with local residents, students assembled pieces of social infrastructure and imagined future opportunities for refugee homemakers within their own chosen sites, maintained with local capabilities and pre-existing form and materials.

Working closely with ARCSR partners in Athens, students sought to find new ways of looking, imagining and representing their ideas, developing their own briefs and manifestos to imagine the introduction of new housing and shared spaces. A narrative assembled from their physical and sociocultural investigations, was used as a mechanism to address, through their own responses, issues relating to climate change and the built environment, such as global warming, water security, low-cost and low-carbon construction techniques, thermal performance and material science. This culminated in a 2-day workshop symposium in London with invited guests from Athens.

Studies were carried out with optimism, in the expectation that the creative interplay between the energy of students and residents' ongoing act of dwelling would generate a valuable and meaningful discourse around engagement with the architectural opportunities and responsibilities available within civic topography.

Bo Tang & Robert Barnes
December 2023



Athens, Greece

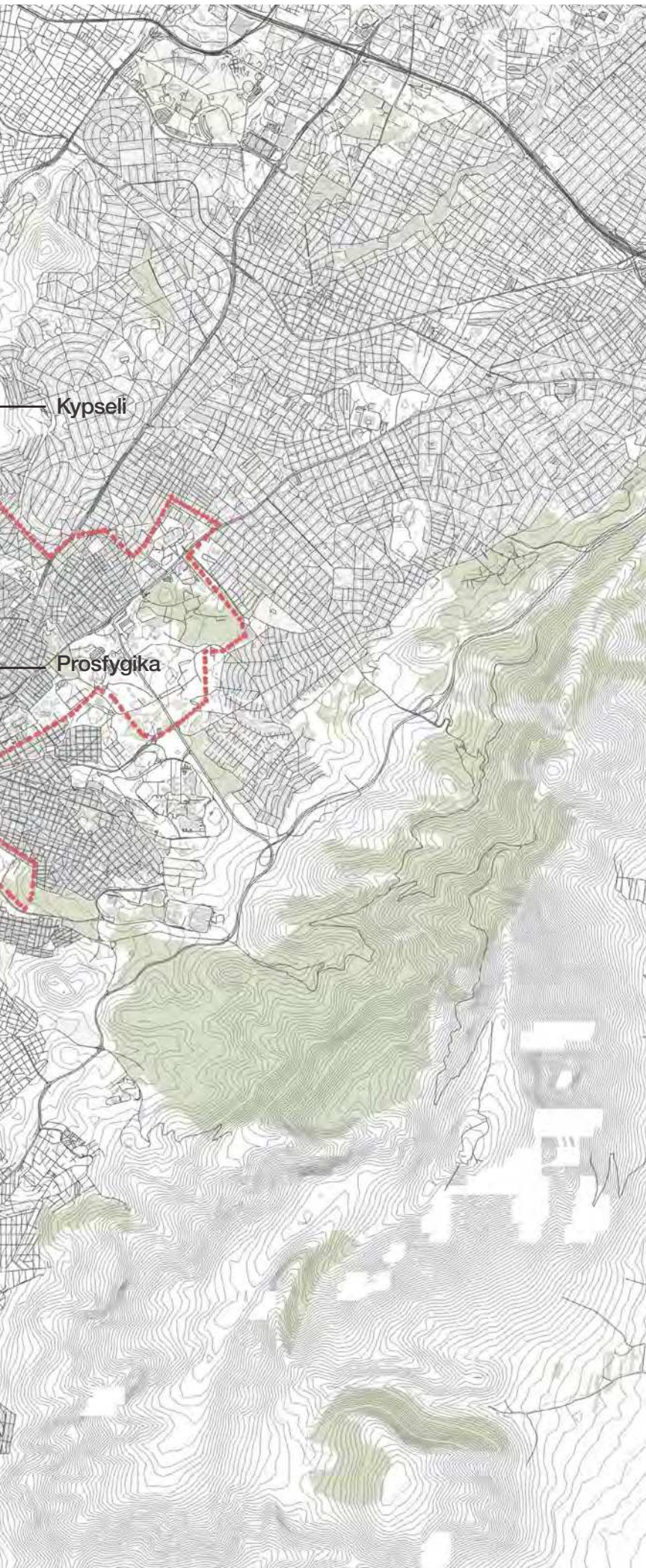
Introduction

Since 2016, ARCSR has focused on migration and refugees, place-based architecture, and homemaking in Athens, with the aim of enhancing the capacity of 'arrival' residents and their support networks to imagine and transform the context in which they live. Building on previous fieldwork by ARCSR students in Eleonas, Metaxourgeio, Victoria and the Commercial Triangle, Unit 6 students this year investigated themes of migration, urban development, housing and social infrastructure in Athens.

Fieldwork began with a transect walk across the city, covering the commercial triangle, Exarcheia and the main boulevard in Kypseli. The walk was followed by a group visit to the squatted development of Prosfygika, where anarchists, activists and refugees come together to resist eviction and create community. Based on those initial experiences of each place, students chose their areas of investigation: Exarcheia, Kypseli and Prosfygika.

■ 2016 - 2019 Investigation Areas

■ Current Investigation Areas





Exarcheia

Introduction

Carlos Bargao, Kleopatra Tuni, Martha Eustace, Indigo Leveson-Bower

Exarcheia is the centre of civilian resistance and protest in contemporary Athens, ever since the first Athenian resistance group was formed there in WWII to overcome the Nazi invasion. The neighbourhood plan is centred on Exarcheia Square, formed by a gap in clashing city grid lines. Presently, Exarcheia is under threat from the tide of gentrification sweeping across the city. A strong police presence around the central Square in Exarcheia, recently closed off for the construction of a new Metro, is a symbol of the resistance to this government led programme. The privatisation of public space is one of the biggest issues facing local residents. Locally significant spaces including Exarcheia Square, Strefi Hill, and Navarinou Park are all under threat of closure.

Historically, Exarcheia was the intellectual centre of the city. The construction of the university in the 1800s has, over the centuries, attracted students, professors and academics to the area. The streets are lined with posters, there are book and art supply shops on every street, and the area has an overwhelmingly young population. The concentration of schools in the area is also testament to this.

Whilst in Athens, we attended a protest calling for the reclamation of Exarcheia Square from government control. We met with many local residents, who told us the history of the area, and talked us through their struggle with rising rents, the closure of local businesses and the rapidly changing identity of Exarcheia as a result of privatisation. One local woman, Anita, said "There is a strong net of people [here], I will never fall, everyone would catch me... [But] we want our lives back. We can't even have our morning coffee without gun presence." This protest was the embodiment of a community reclaiming space in a city increasingly turning against them

Exarcheia is a bustling place, full of friendly chatter, debate and clatter of coffee cups, echoing from the abundance of cafes in the shade of the stoa. The area, though threatened by the government, is nevertheless a thriving area, full of people who have its best interests at heart.



Left
Exarcheia Square protest (Jameson Goring)



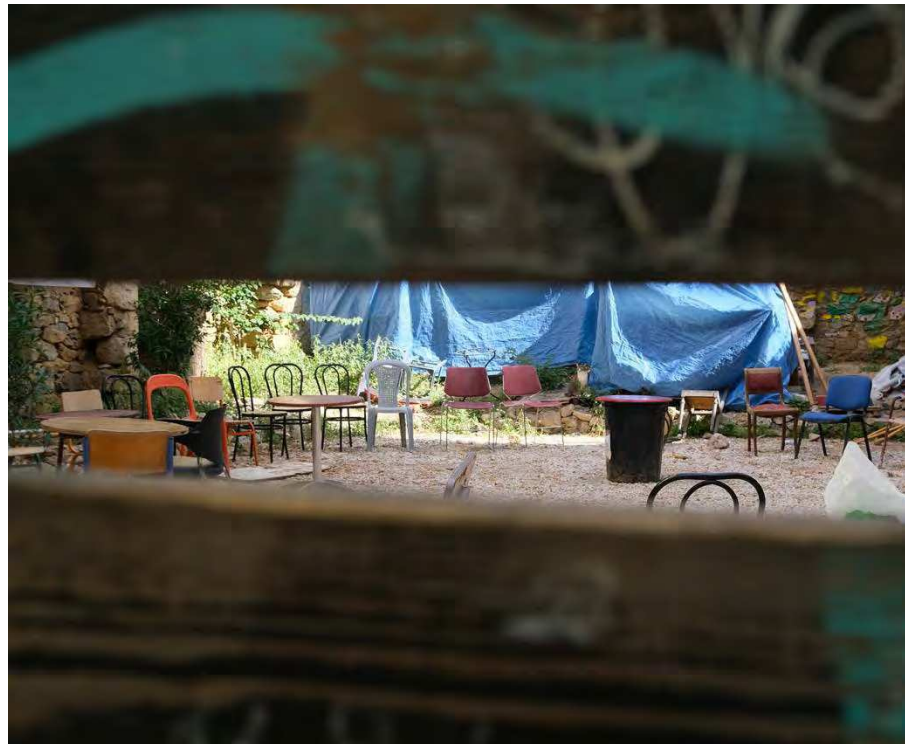
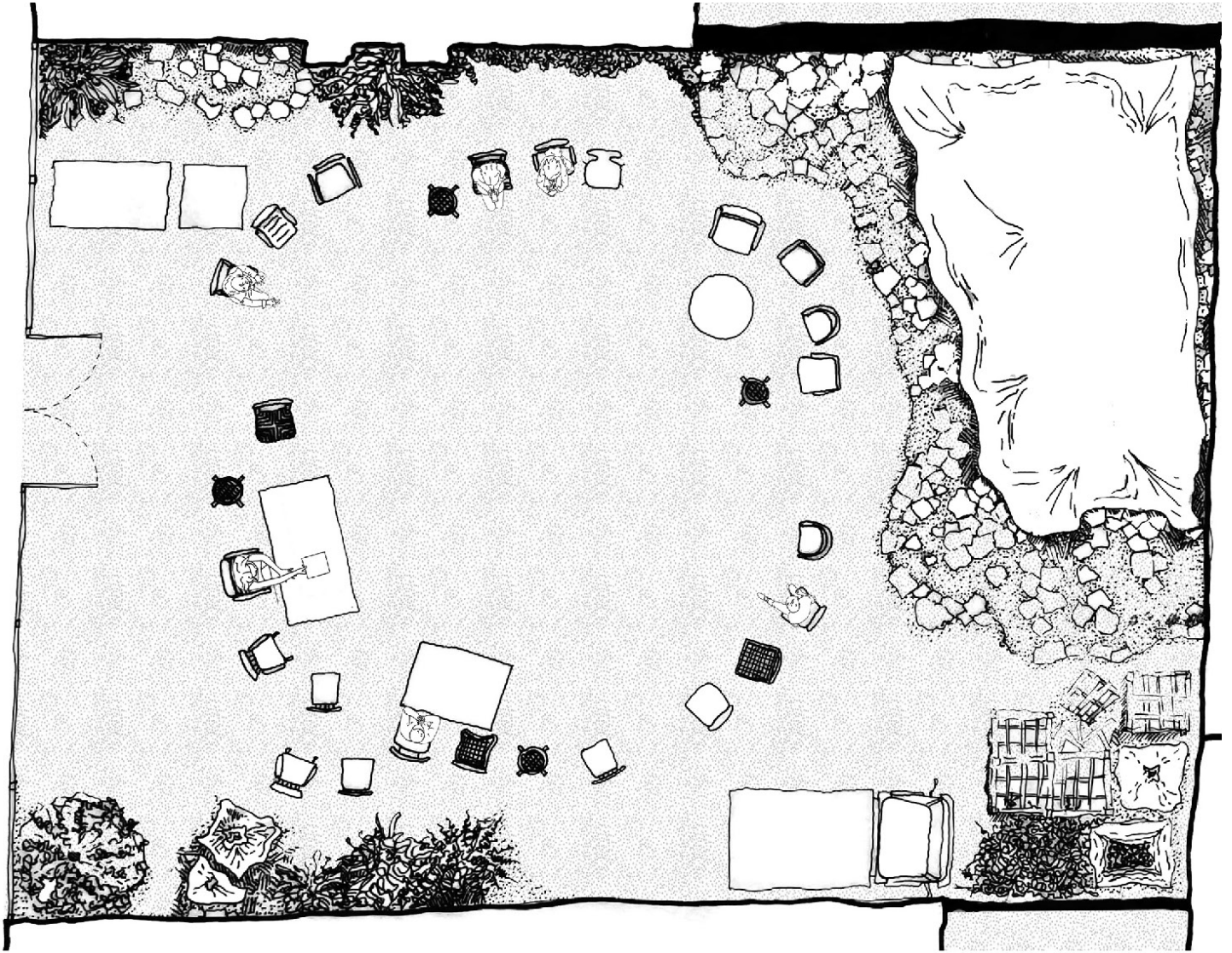


After mapping common observations in Exarcheia and attending the protest, our research group collated a list of institutions, architectural motifs and spaces to explore in further detail. We linked certain elements with overarching themes: the local economy of book making and printing; the tensions between old and new Greek identity; protest as a mode of performance; and the focus on education in Exarcheia, but with a lack of spaces for children and families.

KEY:

-  Abandoned Buildings
-  Schools
-  Pedestrian Streets
-  Populated Areas
-  Common Space
-  Sites
-  Stoa
-  Book + Print Shops
-  Police Presence
-  Banners

Left
Mapping themes in Exarcheia (Exarcheia Group)

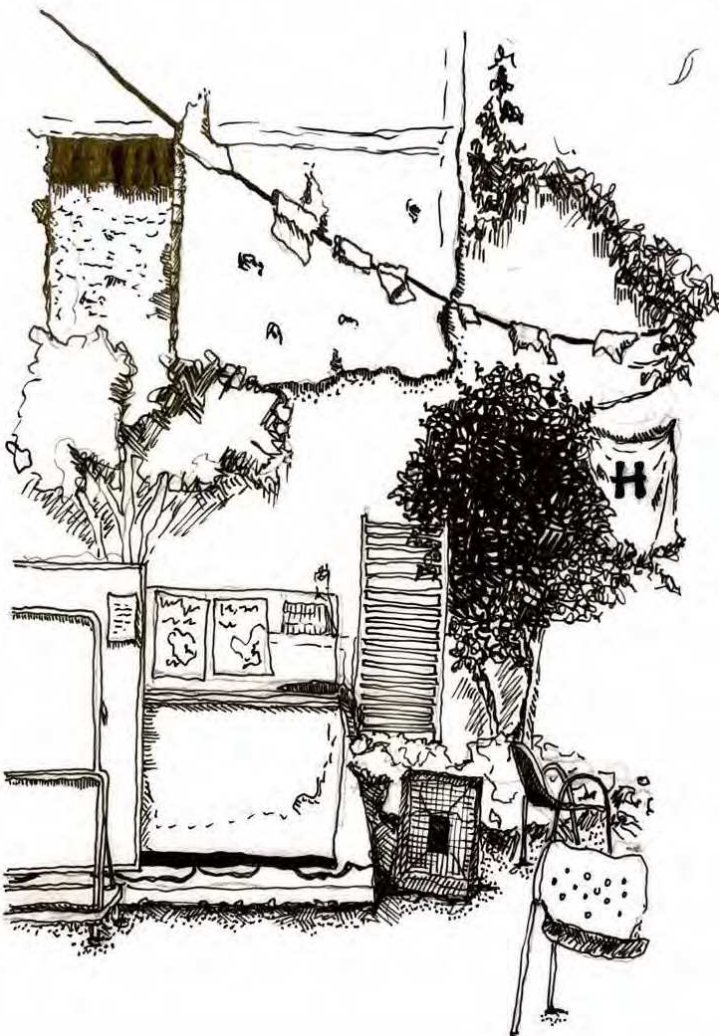


During the research trip, we made connections with members of the local community group. We met a freelance writer and actor and a photojournalist and activist based in Athens at the Exarcheia square protest. We were then invited to attend the general assembly later in the week. This was held in the Exarcheia community garden, and attended by about 30 local residents, as well as some American journalists, and ourselves.

The meeting was to discuss the outcome of the protest, and next steps for the group. Their main goal was to work out how to petition for the metro station to be constructed somewhere else in Exarcheia. Their view, as residents, was that the government was trying to erase the memory of Exarcheia as a hub for local resistance by gentrifying the area, thus driving locals out, and bringing tourists in. Members of the group pitched ideas, based on their own expertise, and debated the best way to go about making change in their neighbourhood.

During the meeting they shared a verbal history of Exarcheia and how the area came into being, as well as their views on the changing landscape. As locals, they felt pushed out. Gentrification has led to many homes being sold by landlords to make way for Airbnbs and bring in tourists to the area. The activism and alternative way of organising, they felt, had been turned into a commodity to sell the area.

The meeting showed us an example of modern Athenian democracy, and revealed the importance of strong community relations in the modern metropolis.



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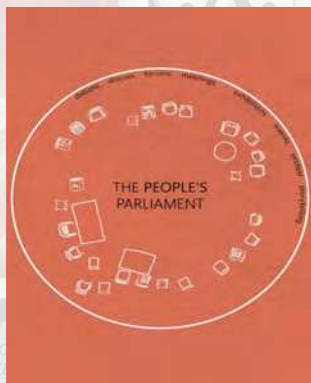
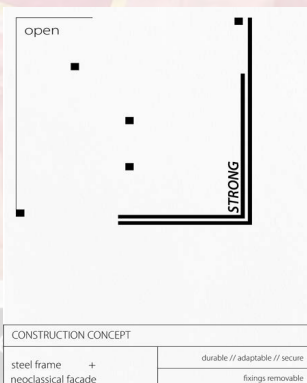
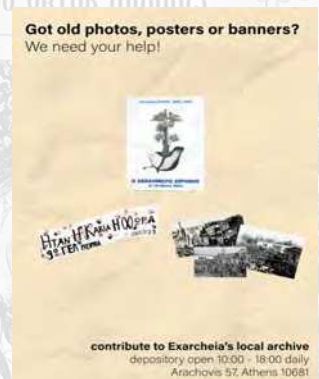
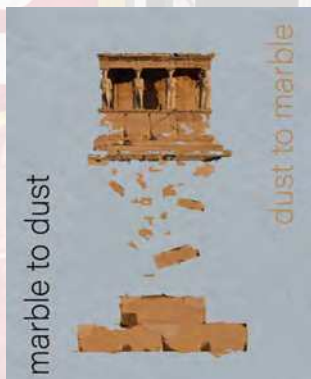
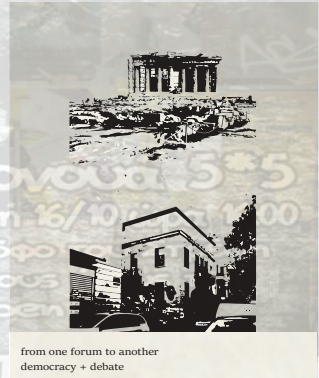
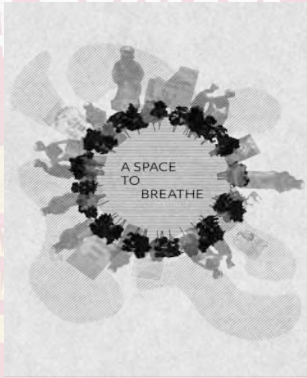
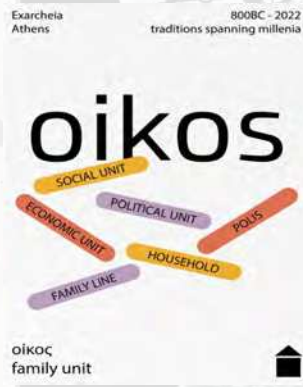
Meeting space plan and photographs (Martha Eustace)

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A collection of found items, in found space (Martha Eustace)



EXARCHEIA



CONSTRUCTION CONCEPT
steel frame + neoclassical facade

durable // adaptable // secure
 fixings removable

Posters: The language of an activist city



Posters, graffiti, art. Exarcheia was covered in layers and layers of it, a sort of living archive showcasing the activist nature of Exarcheia. These posters, visible on most every surface in Exarcheia, were in themselves a sort of vernacular building material. Abandoned buildings became monuments to protests past, and crumbling walls became informal galleries in the city.

The posters, plastered to almost every available surface, were calling for everything from the release of Exarcheia Square from government control to anti-vaccination marches. The sheer amount of these posters was testament to the willingness of the local community to speak out for what they believe to be right. The variety of causes advertised on these posters speaks to the range of issues evident in contemporary Athens. In Athens' most activist neighbourhood, posters were an important part in the fabric of this vibrant neighbourhood.

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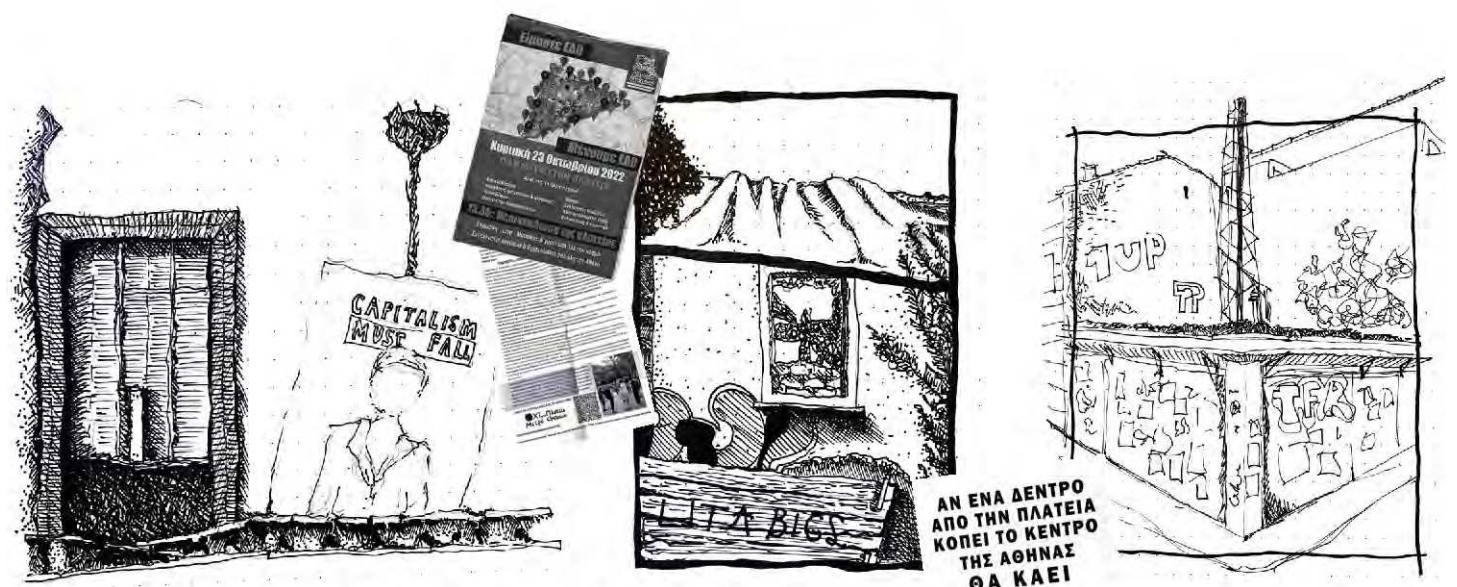
Posters found in and around Exarcheia (Martha Eustace)

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Sketches representing Exarcheia identity (Martha Eustace)

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Representing Exarcheia through interpretive posters (Martha Eustace)

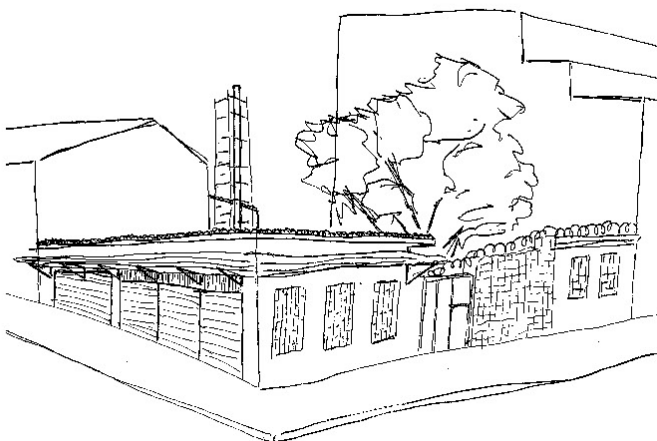
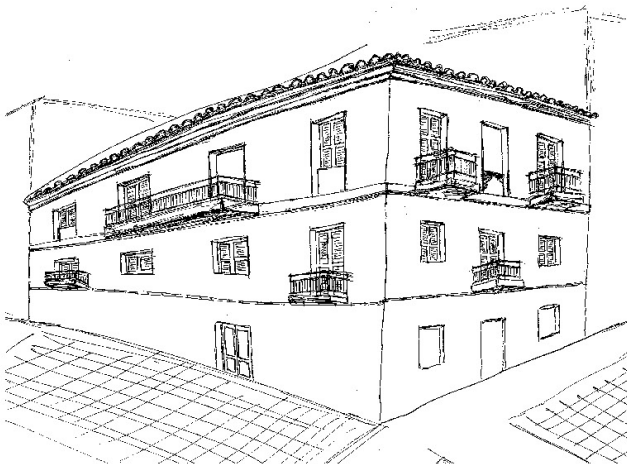
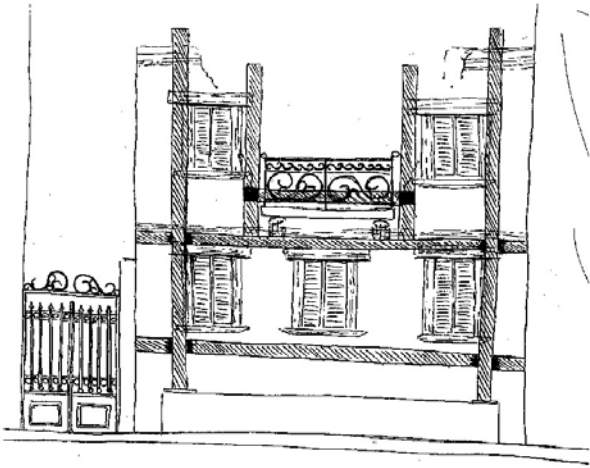




Walking around Exarcheia, one of the most notable aspects is the fact that abandoned buildings sit untouched with their inhabited counterparts. But besides their obvious existence there is also an unspoken arrangement in their midst.

The highest in numbers are the neoclassical ones. The facades of which are usually reinforced by these staple Athenian scaffolding structures. Next in line are buildings which were previously used as squats that were eventually evicted and are now just empty vessels. And the most recent typology noted are recent constructions such as polykatoikies. The reason behind this is gentrification. People that have been living in the area for decades are forced to evacuate their homes so the buildings can be used mostly as airbnbs or bought by foreigners as part of their golden visa endeavours.

Although this is a phenomenon that is widespread across the whole of Athens there is a particular flux of it in Exarcheia giving this neighbourhood another layer of complexity.



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Abandoned building in Exarcheia (Exarcheia Group)

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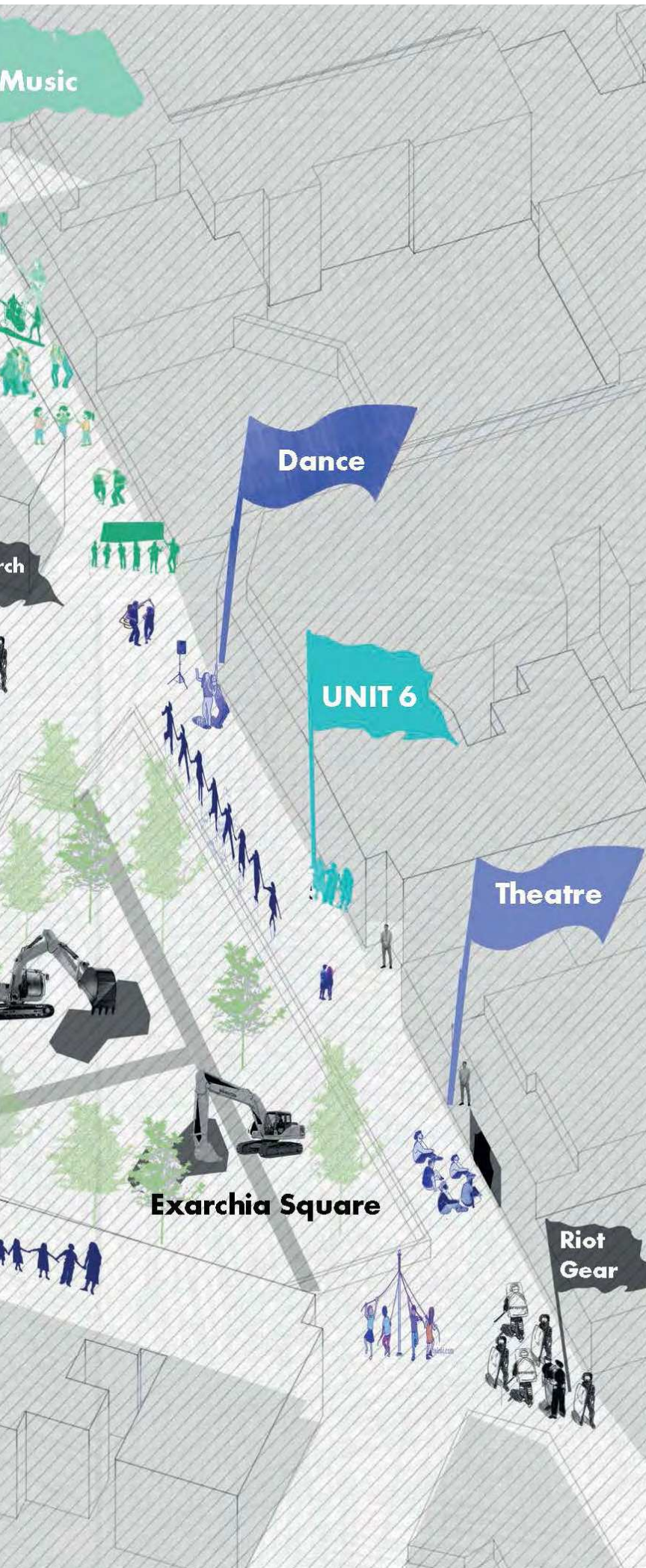
Abandoned building in Exarcheia (Indigo Leveson-Gower)

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Abandoned buildings in Exarcheia Sketches (Exarcheia Group)



- Police Presence
- Unit 6: Cultural Investigators
- Protest we visited
- Organisation
- Previous Protests



Protest and Performance

Exarcheia has links to anti-far right groups dating back to at least the 1890s and is sometimes referred to as the “birthplace of Antifa”. In 1973, a student uprising at the Athens Polytechnic helped overturn the ruling military dictatorship. During Greece’s decade of economic convulsions after 2008, the square became a frequent site of protest. And following the influx of nearly a million migrants to the country in 2015, tens of thousands of refugees made homes in squats around the area.

For decades, the neighbourhood was known as a place police rarely went. But recently, and especially this summer, that has changed. Following the construction of a metro station in Exarcheia Square and the restoration of nearby Strefi Hill the district has been flooded with police. Protests have raged in the face of what many locals feel to be an attack, gentrification as a political weapon.

We attended a demonstration on October 23 where the residents of Exarcheia gathered to protest the Metro on the Square, which would mean the alteration of the area. There’s an atmosphere of cautious calm and protest enthusiasm. It’s just after 9am, coffee shops are occupied by a few patrons, Greek voices mixing with American, German and British accents. The metal fence still stands in the centre of the square, part sheet metal and part barbed wire, some of it painted with murals, at least 30 policemen within a 40-metre radius. The protestors, wanting to protest the presence of police officers in the area, put the figures in front of them and sang lyrics from the song “Heretic” by Yiannis Angelakas.

After 5pm things escalate. Banners are pinned along the metal fence gates of the square that read “Burn the rich, not the witch” and “No to the metro”. Tear gas canisters and flash bangs are set off by police.

Left
Joyful acts of resistance (Indigo Leveson-Gower)



Thesis Proposals

Exarcheia



Above
Exarcheia Sites:
1 Carlos Bargao
2 Kleopatra Tuni
3 Martha Eustace
4 Indigo Leveson-Bower

Left
Community group meeting space (Jameson Goring)

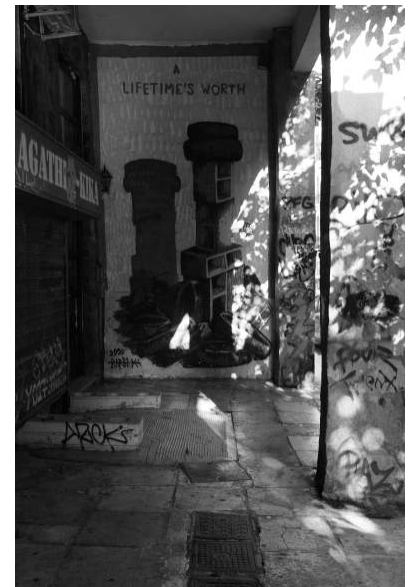
What Happens When Nothing Happens

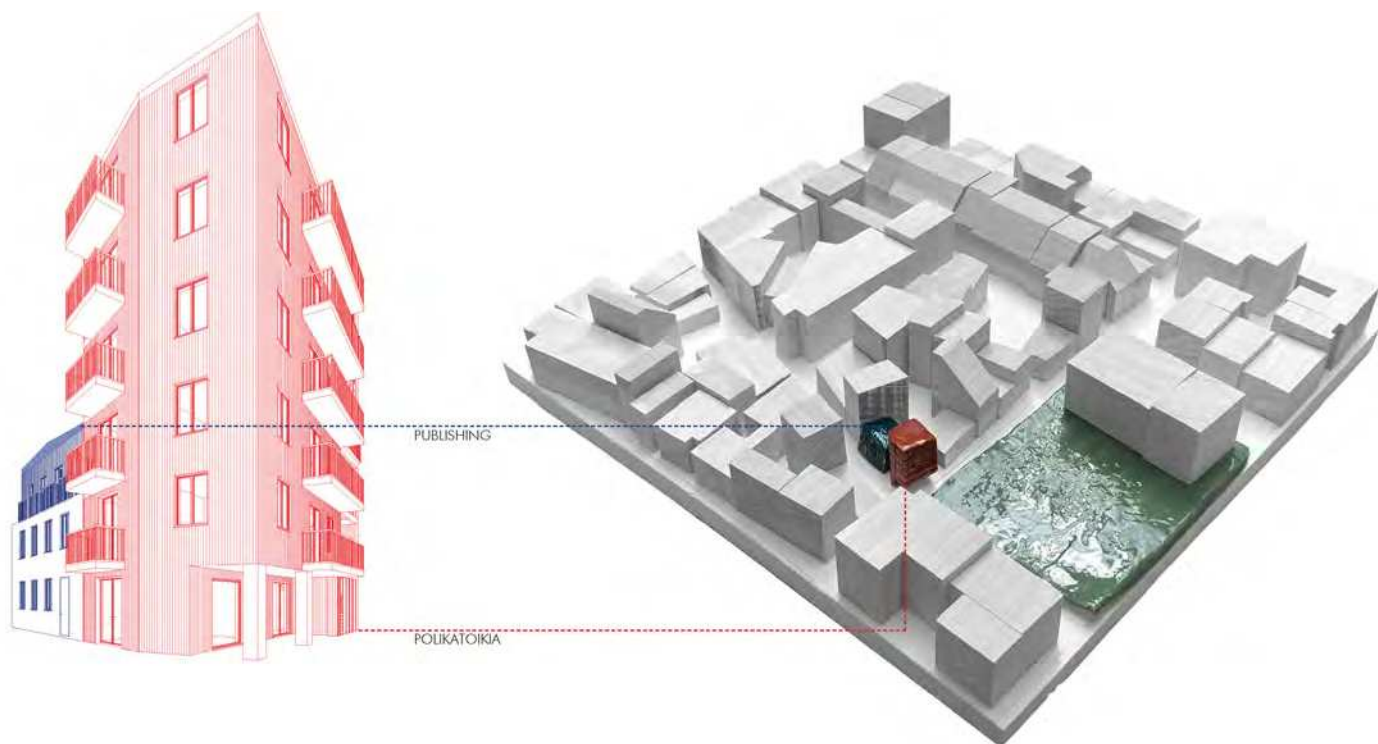
Carlos Bargao



A man loading ink into printing units plates, the sounds of the printing machine bouncing back and forth on the balconies of the yellow polykatoikia. A young woman on the phone in her bookstore. The bookshop door is open showing a little boy and girl of roughly the same age sitting on the floor, leaning their backs on each other, reading a book. Their voices join the other noises, creating a composition of echoes within the pedestrian courtyard formations. Banners are pinned along the walls of Tzavella street Alexandros Grigoropoulos Memorial. They read “Flats for locals not for Airbnb”.

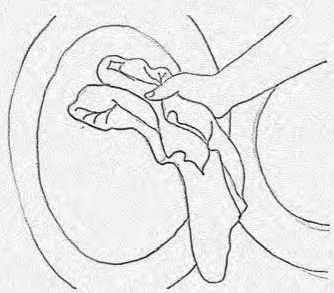
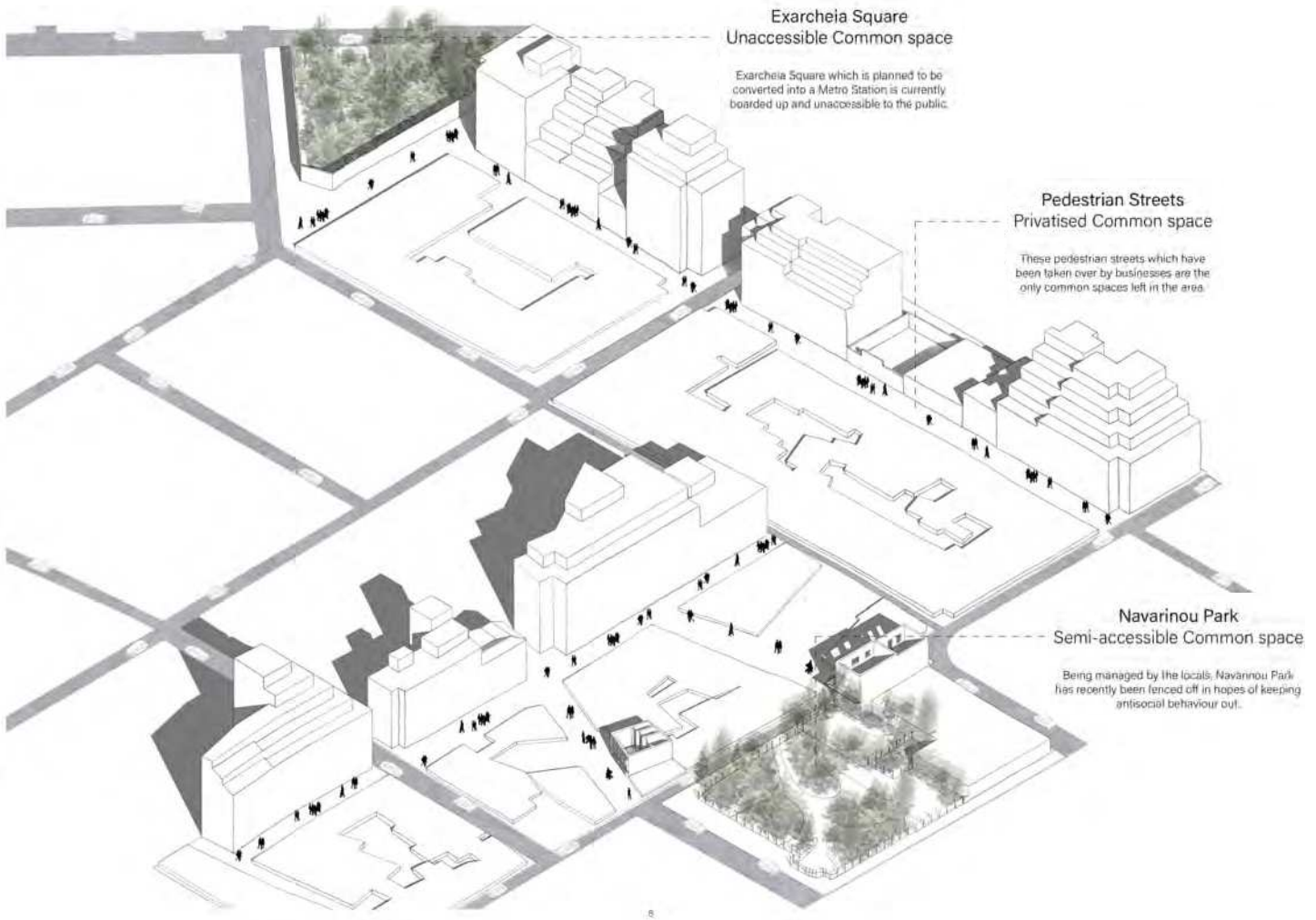
A retrofit-conservation proposal project based in Exarcheia Tzavella street that will retain the overall indoor and facade conditions of the ruined Athenian neoclassical building to accommodate a printing workshop, bookstore, and exhibition spaces. Also introducing a new residential unit flats in an adjacent site split in six floors, a shared facilities area on ground floor, outdoor spaces with amenities and indoor spaces access to scheme workshops. The proposed schemes will be constructed from a lightweight timber frame and CLT panels making savings on embodied carbon and re-using as many materials as possible, to set a precedent for re-using other nondescript buildings that would otherwise be demolished.



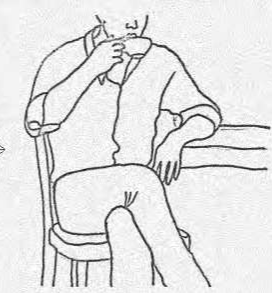








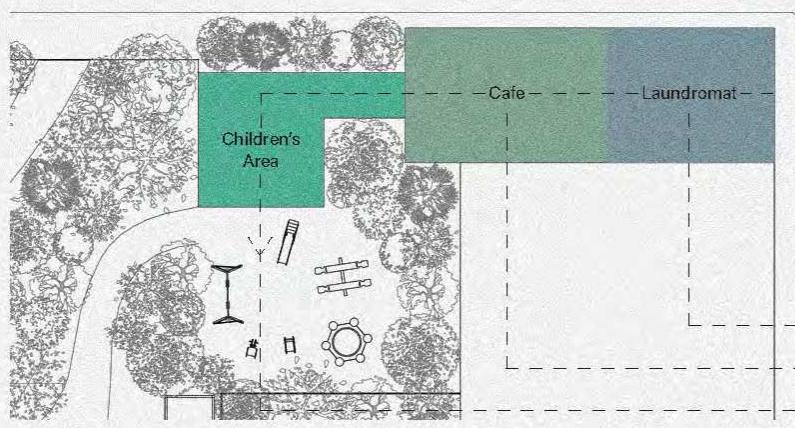
Stage 1
Laundromat



Stage 2
Cafe



Stage 3
Children's Area

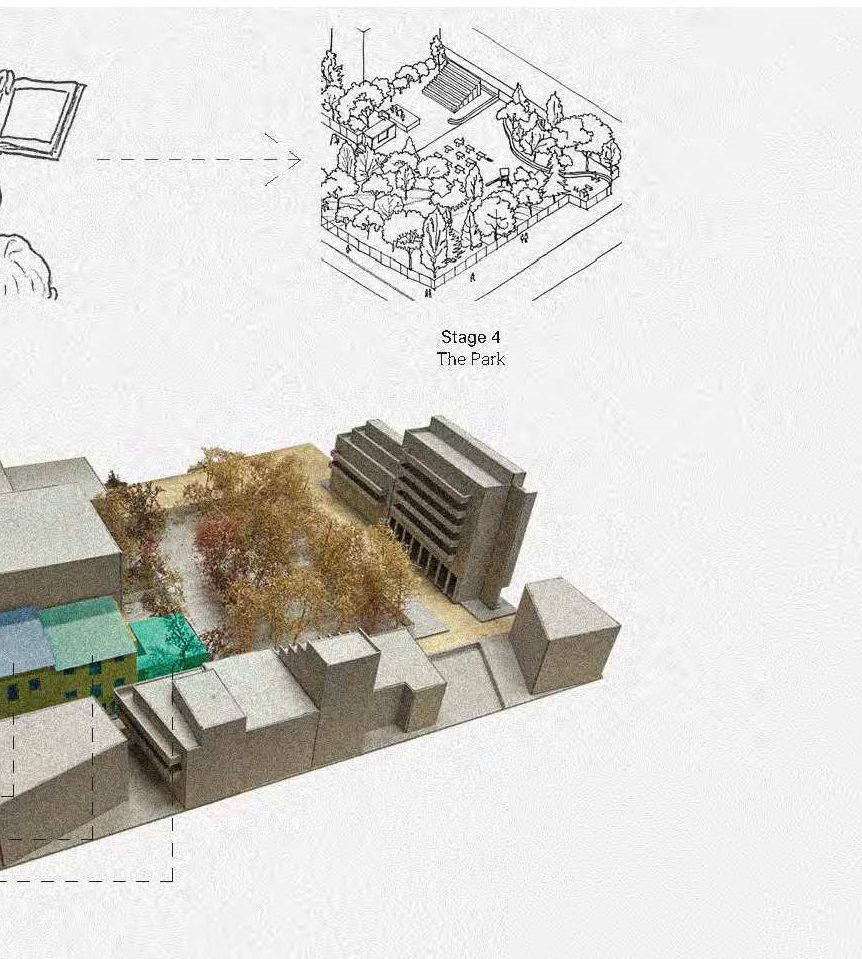


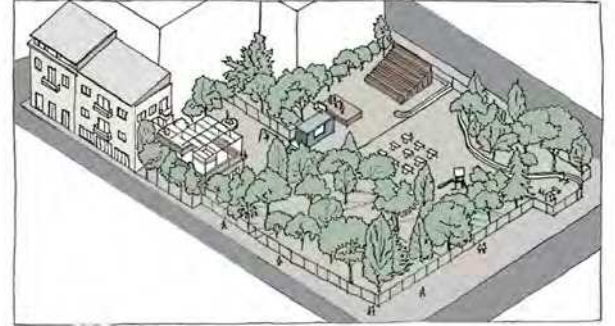
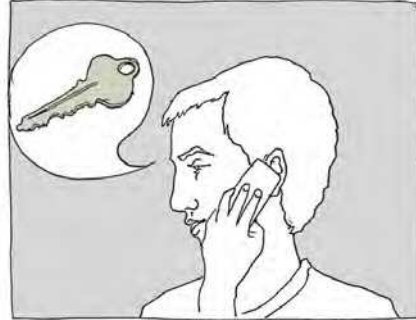
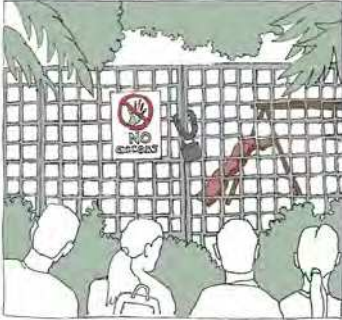
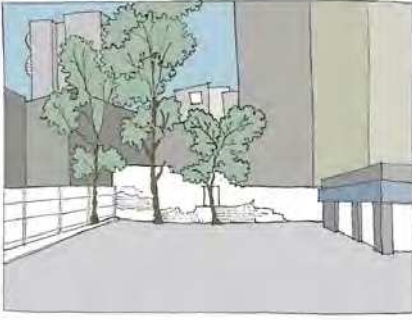


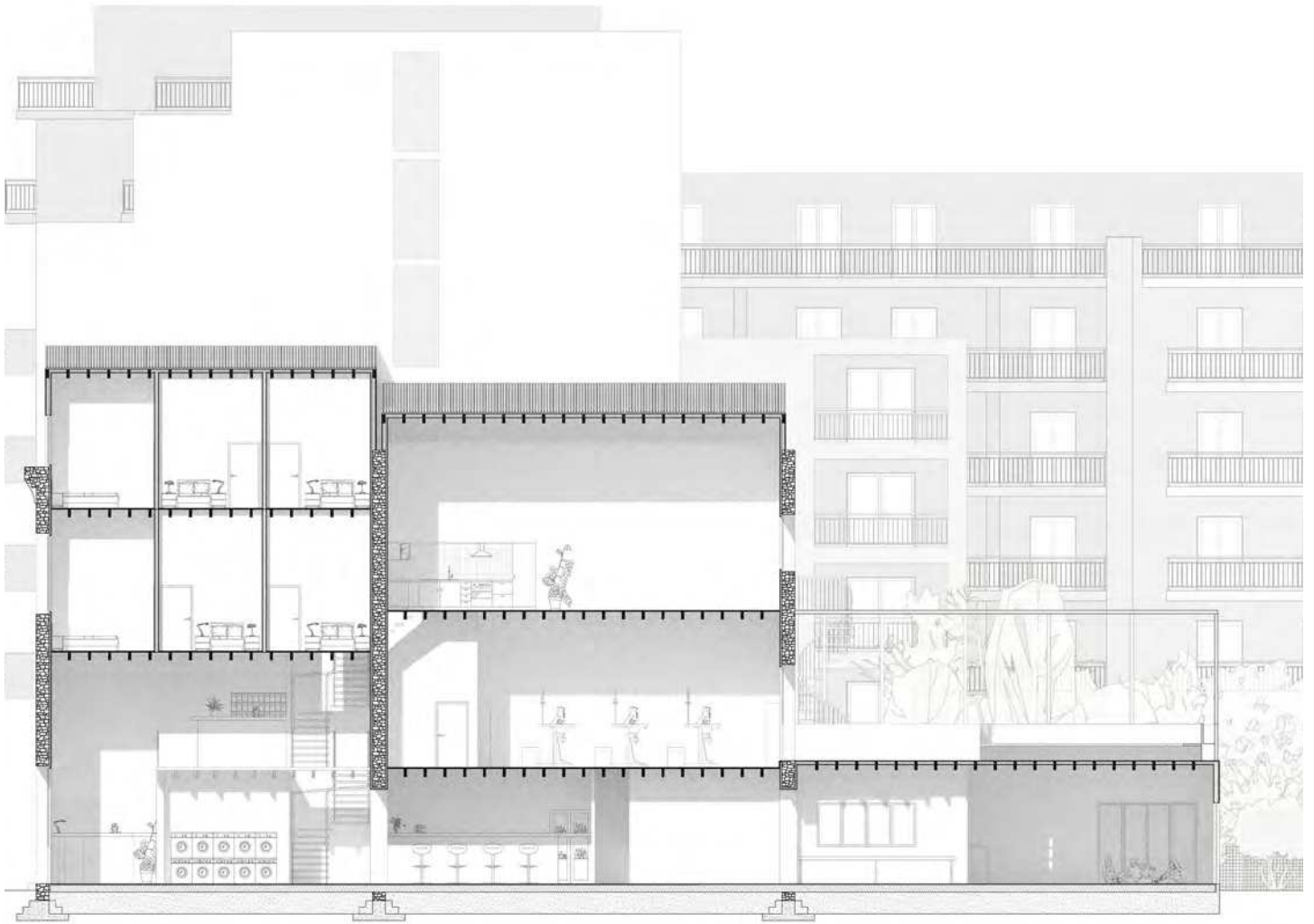
Amidst a dispute for its distinctive square, Exarcheia is fighting back to keep its identity against gentrification. But in this turbulent period for the neighbourhood, filled with conflict and protests seeing the residents on one side and the government on the other, common space continues to be stripped away.

"It is a dangerous thing because young people will wake up, walk around their neighbourhood, see patrolling police with guns taking up space, and eventually think this is the norm. There is nowhere to escape it." Said Marta, one of the members of the local residents' group who gave us a glimpse into the challenges locals are facing trying to keep their space. The last remaining is Navarinou Park, a self-maintained space that is currently fenced off to keep anti-social behaviour out, making this beautiful park really hard to access in a neighbourhood in dire need of it.

This project will be about making space, not taking it. By utilising two abandoned buildings adjacent to one another at the corner of Navarinou Park, the aim of this project is to bring life back into this "wasted space" through a screening process, making the proposal a "gateway" to the park.







A Space to Breathe. A Void to Fill

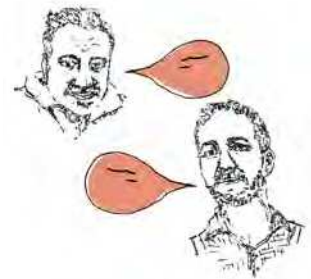
Martha Eustace



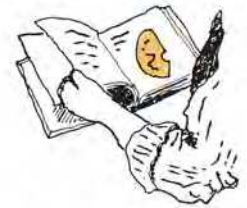
The history of storytelling in Greece originates in ancient times. From the epic poems of Homer to the lyrical poems sung by choruses, the Greeks had a rich tradition of expressing their personal and political narratives through the spoken word. From the lyrical poems telling Aeschylus' dramas emerged the chant Demos-Kratia, meaning "people power." These stories are powerful, surviving for over 2000 years, passed down through theatres, forums, and text. But what of the stories of the contemporary Greeks? And those who now call Athens their home? What mechanism will allow their personal and political experience to be preserved and passed on to the next generation?

Whilst in Athens, we made connections with members of the local residents' group in Exarcheia, who spoke to us about prominent issues including gentrification, decreasing common space, and the lack interest in the stories of those who have arrived in Greece as migrants or refugees. Above all, local residents wanted: a space to breathe; a void to fill and make their own; and a place for exchange of ideas to learn from the experience of those around them.

The role of political discourse and discussion provides the backdrop to this project: a new living library and archive space, coupled with an open public forum, to facilitate the rich tradition of preserving and telling stories, discussing the future of Exarcheia, and wider Athens.



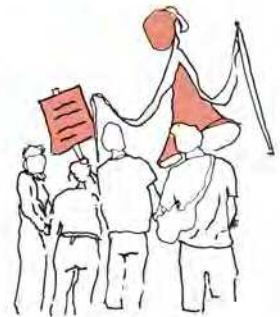
safe spaces for conversation



methods to tell and share stories



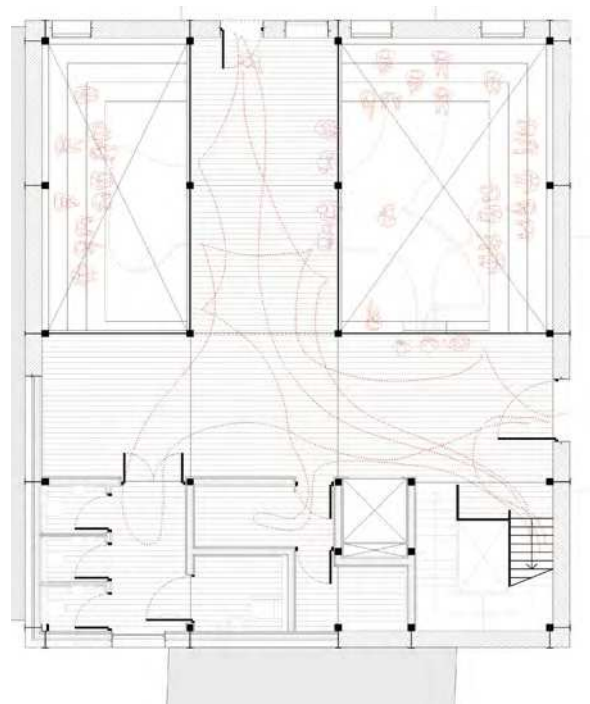
new repository for artefacts of Exarcheia's history



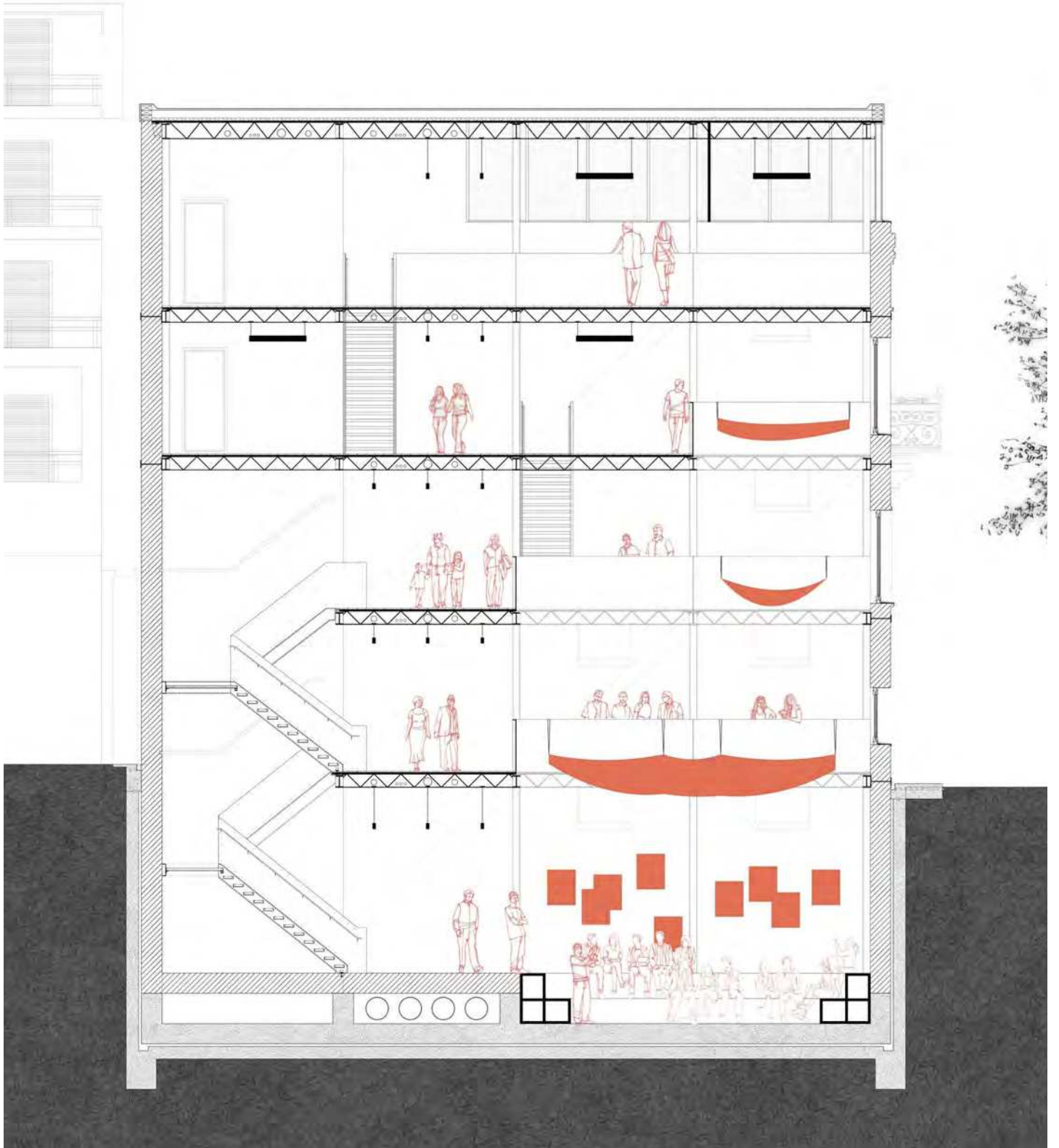
spaces to organise, discuss and learn about protest



creation of new commons in Exarcheia







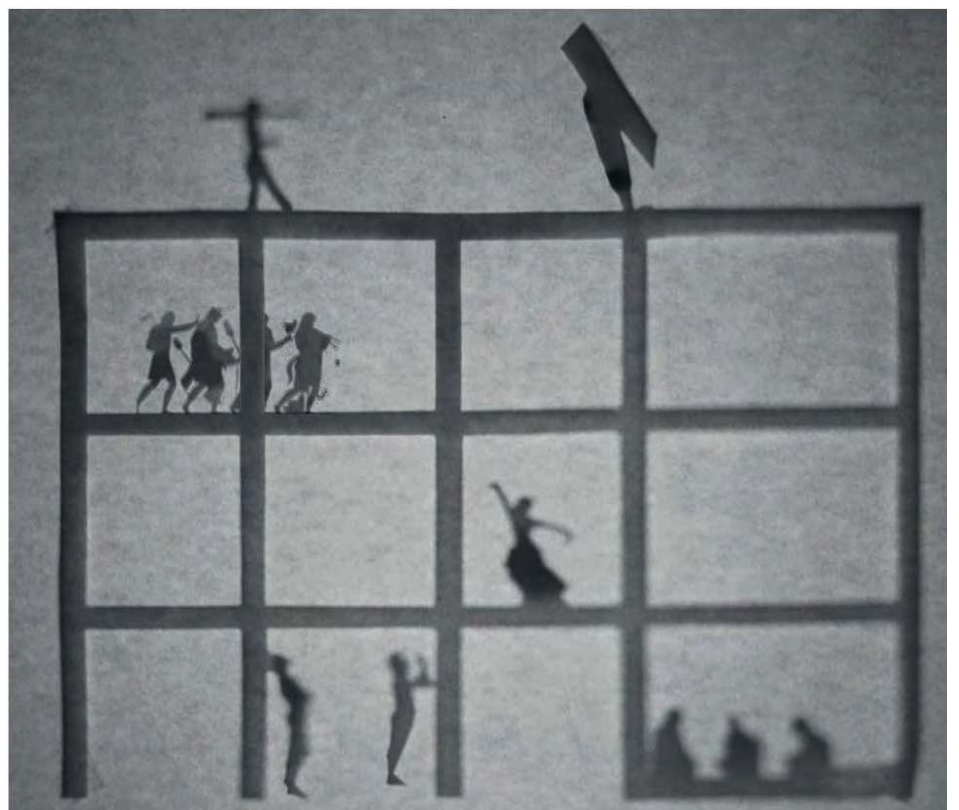


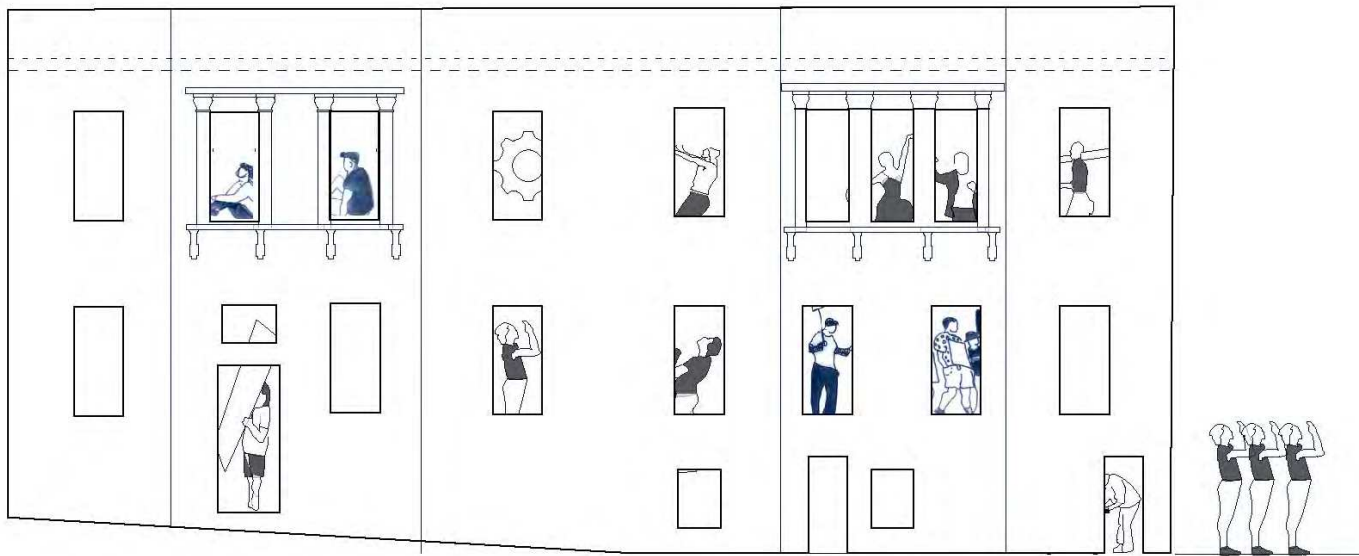
Making Space: Exarcheia's Stage

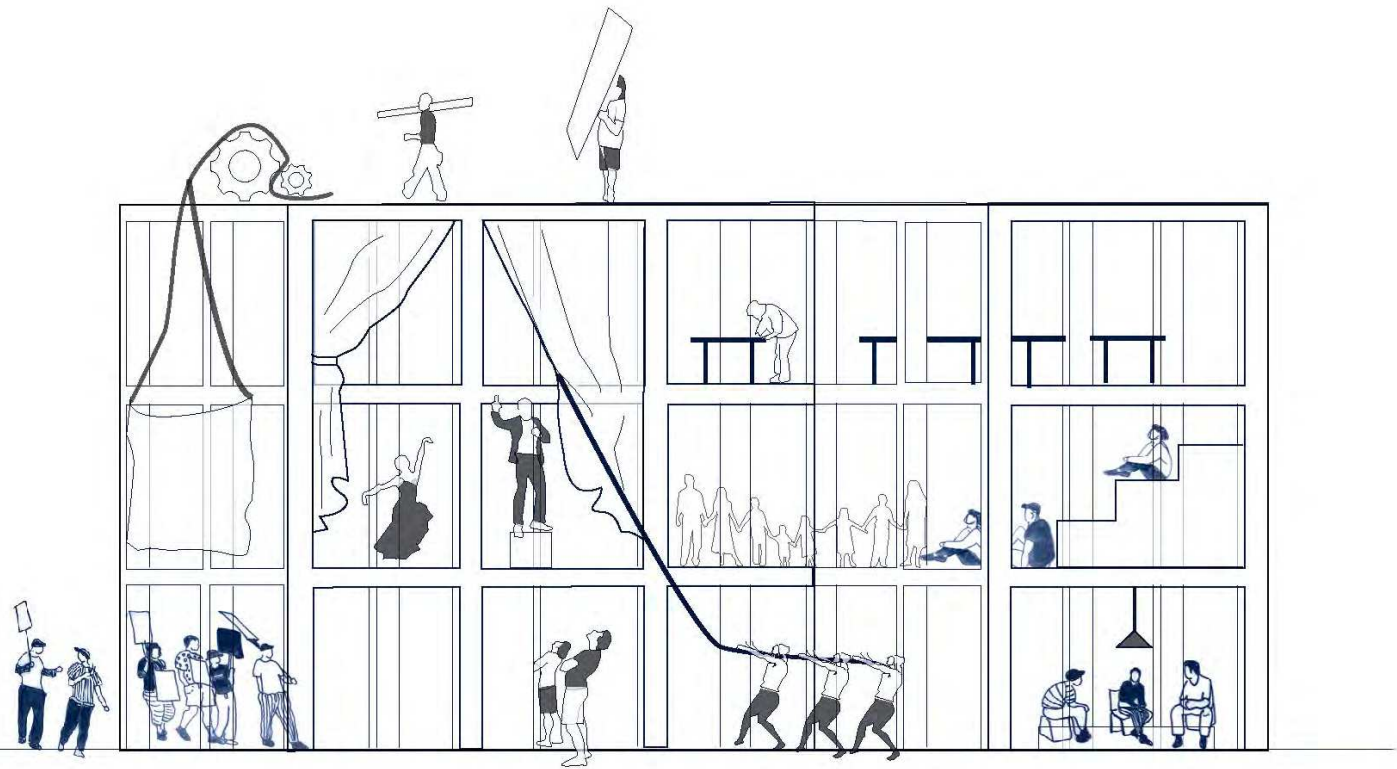
Indigo Leveson-Bower

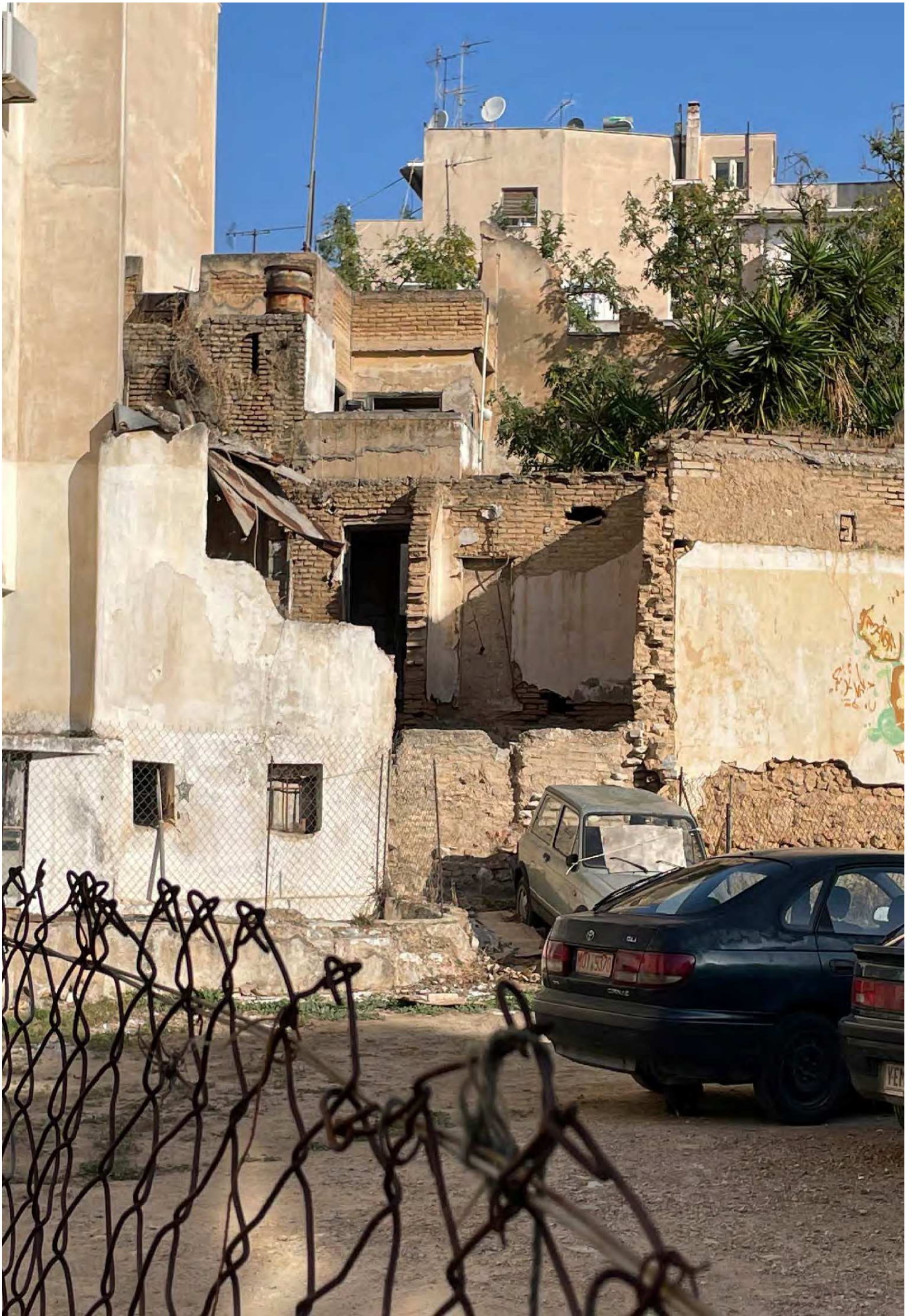


Exarcheia is on the edge of radical political thought, creative performance, and is the traditional site of protest of many issues pertaining to Athens. The project encapsulates the cross section between joyful performance and the act of rebelling against the erosion of communal space, since the 2019 government raids of radical and squatted space. The project proposes a new common space and creative centre for alternative and underrepresented activist communities in Exarcheia. This new 'Stage' for Exarcheia provides a physical place for the production of protest infrastructure, political art and a social space for the organisation of events and to engage the public with the radical culture. This will build upon the rich history of the area, finding and reusing collapsing sites within the city. The project will feed and enrich the established, but threatened, culture of Exarcheia.









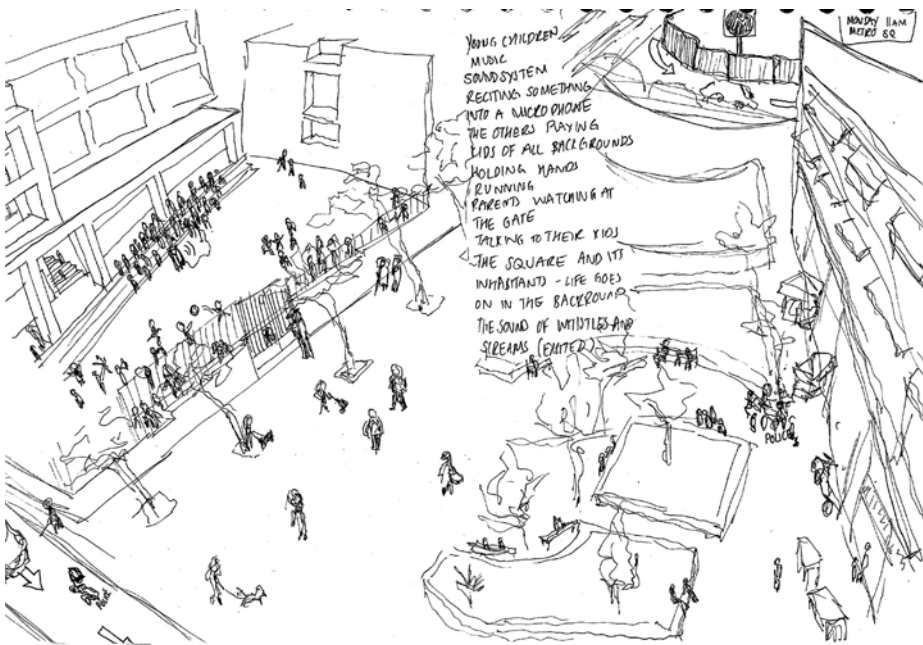
*Maria Markova, Kseniia Shipush, Camille Trinidad,
Holly Wise, Emma Carpenter*

Kypseli lies roughly 30-minutes north-east of Omonia square. An expansive neighbourhood, it is primarily characterised by its constant evolution. While Athenians know Kypseli as a centre for arts and culture, our experiences and conversations with locals revealed more about its shifting history. Today, Kypseli is one of the most ‘multicultural’ neighbourhoods in the city. It was built, like much of Athens, following the second world war by Greek migrants coming to Athens for the opportunity of a better life. Following an intense boom in building and the resulting ‘densification’ of the neighbourhood, there was an exodus of wealthier families to the suburbs in the late 1970s. Following a period of decline, Kypseli became home to migrants from across Europe, Minor Asia and Africa around the 1990s. Public perception and local media often blame the migrants for the decline of Kypseli, which has created an interesting social condition in Kypseli.

Notable observations we made include a generational divide, ‘pockets of POC visibility’ and the use of space by different groups. We quickly noticed through our mapping and conversations with locals that immigrants were more visible in certain areas than others, almost intentionally. The adaptation of old polykatoikia shop units for migrant-owned businesses is prevalent on streets like Kyprou and parts of Kypseli. There exists an interesting tension between the younger migrant community and the older Greek community. The former has taken ownership and agency of their spaces and have built networks, thriving in their new communities. The latter keep to themselves, almost as ‘cliques’. Yet, we couldn’t see the two interacting with each other, almost as if they lived in alternate Kypseli. We also studied Fokionos Negri - the ‘Boulevard’ as we call it.

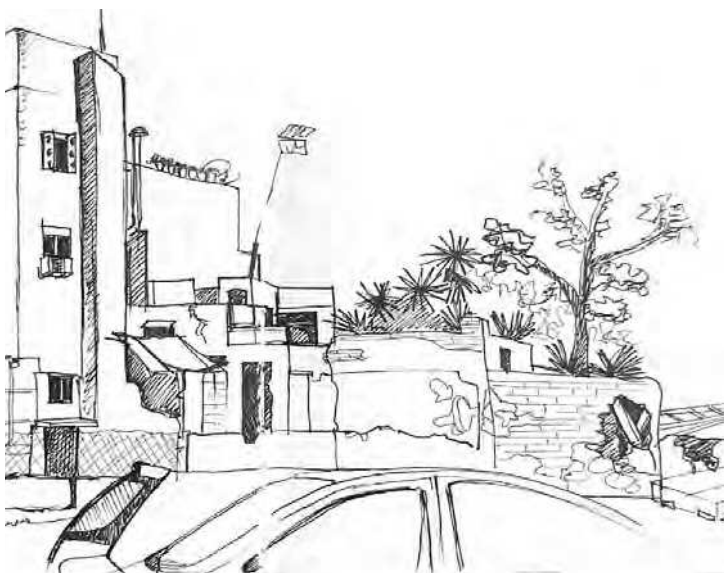
The group took part in various activities during our time in Kypseli. We volunteered at Khora to help them deep clean the kitchen and cafe on a closed day, visited an elderly home and spoke with residents about their experiences of Kypseli and had a meal at Wisdom Kitchen. On the last day, we visited We Need Books, the only multilingual library and learning centre in Athens. They ran an event with local school children teaching Greek, a social practice embedded in Kypseli’s social history.

The rising rent and ‘imminent’ gentrification of Kypseli point to another shift in its population in the future. Our briefs must respond to the constantly changing social condition of the neighbourhood, and the impact this will have on the migrant community in Kypseli.

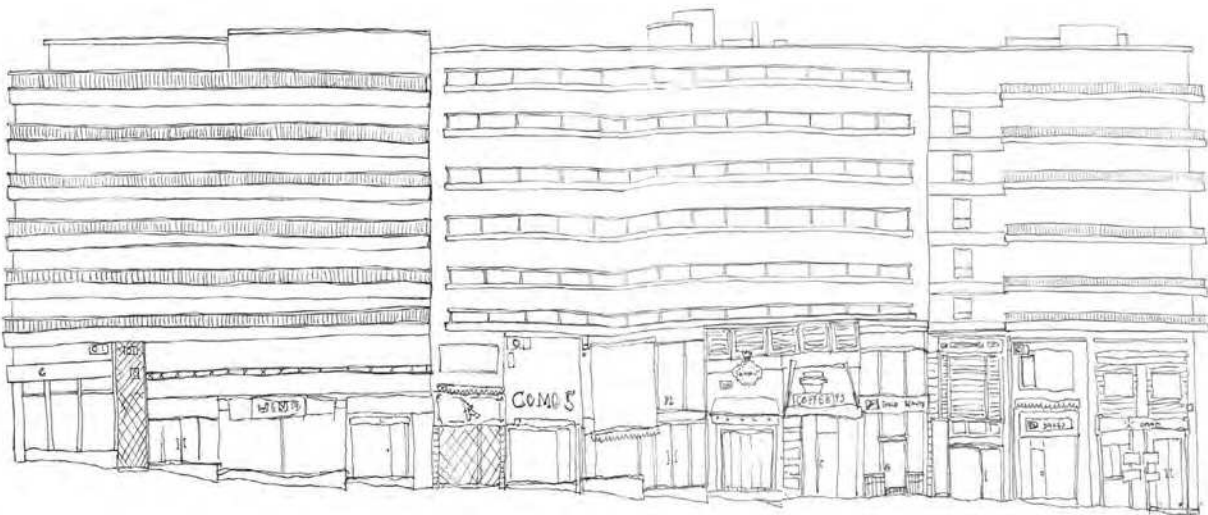




- Elderly and Young People (Maria Markova)
- Young People (Kseniia Shipush)
- Migrant Businesses (Camille Trinidad)
- Stray Cat Infrastructure (Holly Wise)
- Graffiti and Migrant Communities (Emma Carpenter)



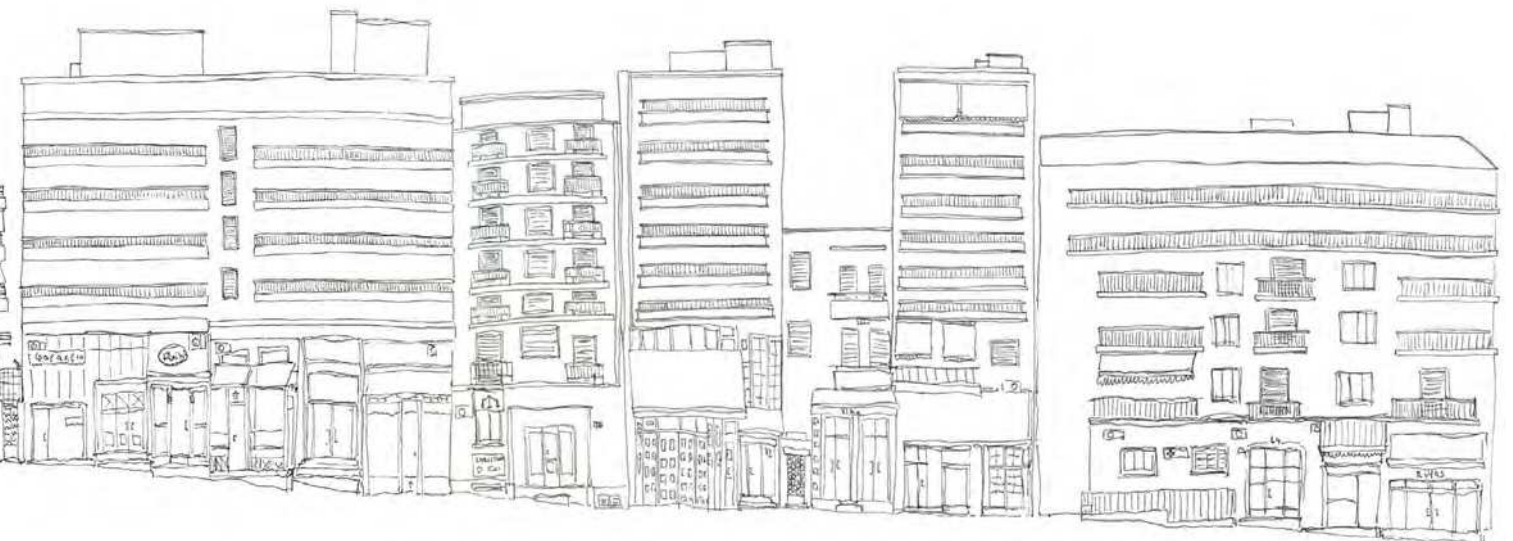
Above
Mapping Kypseli (Kypseli Group)
Left to Right
Sketches in Kypseli (Emma Carpenter, Holly Wise, Kseniia Shipush)



The 'Boulevard' is a fully-pedestrianised, tree-lined park that breaks the grid of the neighbourhood. It follows the route of an ancient buried river going West to East. According to a local, the Boulevard was "the first pedestrianised street in Athens". Its central position in Kypseli makes it a hive of activity - some say Kypseli means 'beehive'. We spent most of our days walking through the Boulevard as it connects the majority of our sites. This gives us an opportunity to explore how our projects will link together through the Boulevard and connect to Kypseli more broadly.



Left
Boulevard plan (Kypseli Group)
Bottom
Boulevard elevation (Kypseli Group)





Khora House

*"We make a lot of food for everyone.
Anything leftover we try and distribute
to the local community.
Nobody should go without food or shelter."
Marianthi, Khora Social Kitchen*

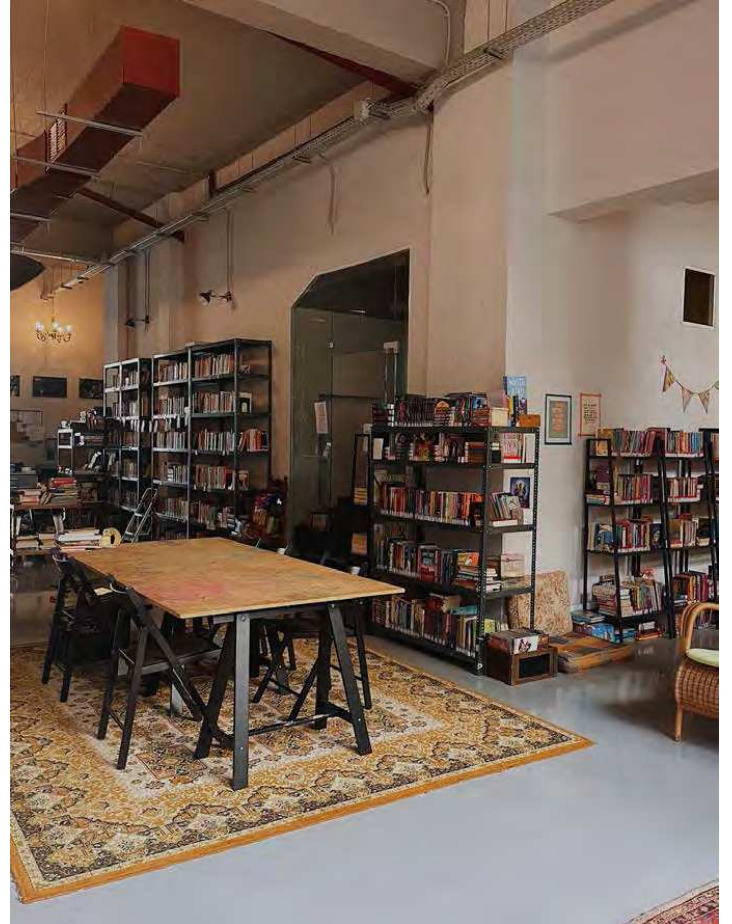


Khora is a collective foundation providing community spaces supporting people in Athens. Started in December 2019, as a community kitchen and cafe that offers free food for everyone but as well as a safe and friendly space to sit with friends for tea and wifi, as well as a space for cultural events. It closed during the pandemic. However, people can pick up hot meals three times a week. They also have showers and toilets and it's free to use if anybody needs them.

Due to the low number of volunteers, they have to close on Fridays. They do however distribute hot food around the areas where rough sleepers and homeless people gather/stay i.e.. Victoria Square, Cyprus & Patission Park, etc. They don't only cater to the local and elderly people, victims of domestic abuse, immigrants and refugees but as well as the LGBTQIA+ community, basically, everyone who needs them.

Right
Khora Social Kitchen (Maria Markova)
Bottom
Kypseli group volunteering at Khora (Holly Wise)





We Need Books

We need books opened Athens' first multilingual library in the vibrant and diverse area of Kypseli in November 2019 . Since 2017, the organisation has collected over 14,000 books, created small libraries, participated in conferences, capacity building workshops and educational trips. They are currently accepting books in very good condition in languages other than Greek, English and French.

'We are a reading and lending library. We are working towards creating a society free of discriminations by ensuring free access to knowledge through a space that encourages communication, imagination and joy. We develop and implement innovative projects that empower the most vulnerable to overcome the obstacles that keep them on the fringes of society. We raise awareness on equality, solidarity and the protection of human rights. We promote interculturalism and empathy in the daily lives of the people of Athens. We are here to stay.'



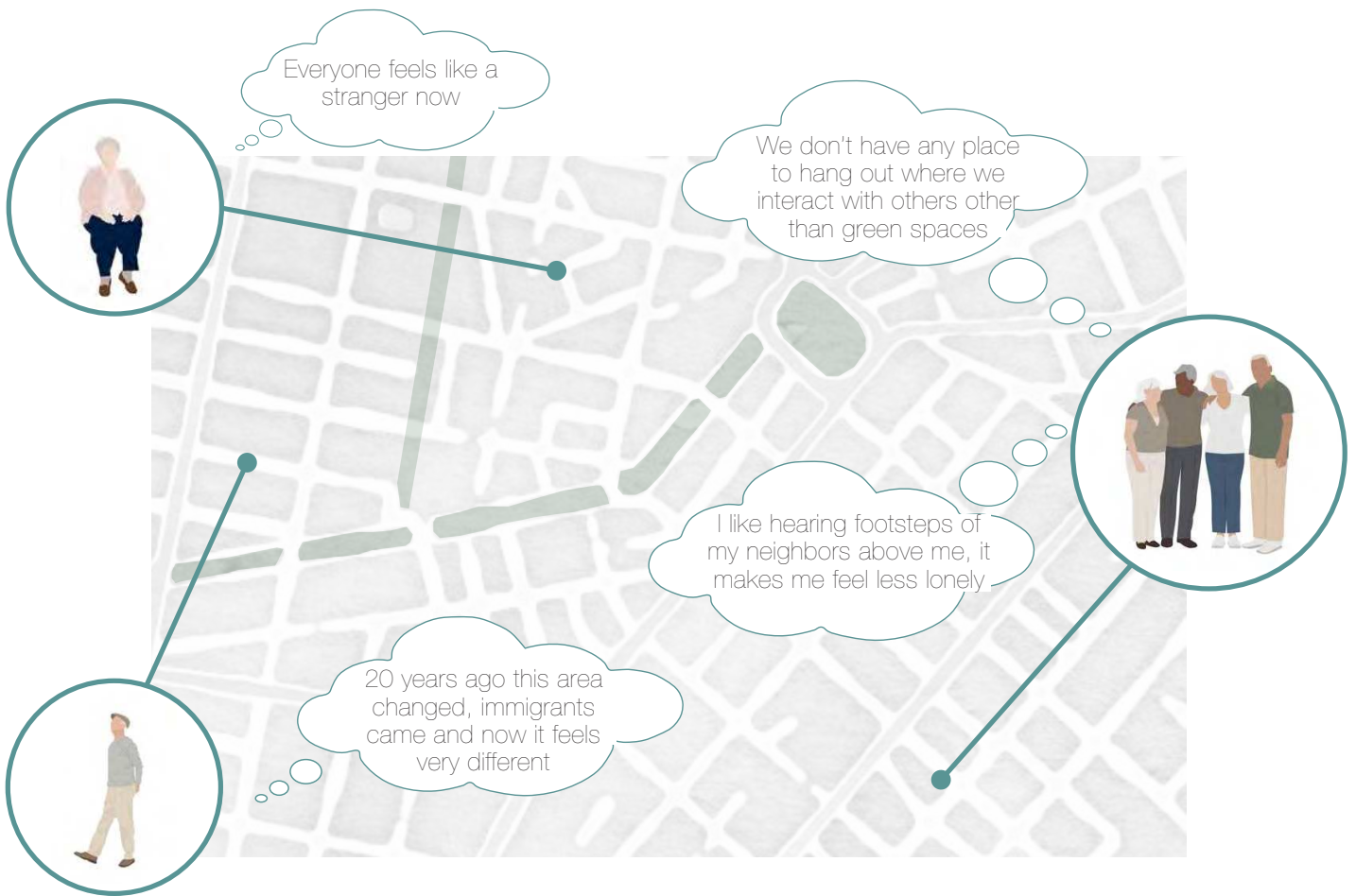
- Workshop
- Garden
- Reading Zone
- Kids Zone

Left

We Need Books - plan (Maria Markova)

Top

We Need Books - images of reading zone and garden (Maria Markova)

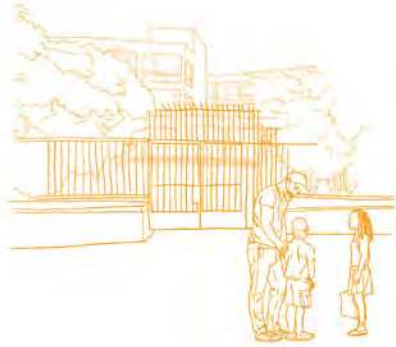


This Page: Top
 Conversations with elderly people (Maria Markova)
This Page: Bottom
 Khora Social Kitchen (Maria Markova)
Facing Page:
 Conversations in Kypseli (Emma Carpenter)

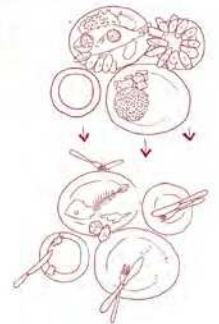




*"I have been in Athens 20 years.
My children are happy here.
But in two years I want to come to London.
I could have a better life there."
Prince, Western Union*



WISDOM KITCHEN



*"When I first came 15 years ago it was
very hard.
But I am successful now, and we have a
community. I will leave if my children
have the opportunity to do better."
Edith, Wisdom Kitchen*



LOCALS

*"The Greeks had one bench, the Albanians
had another, and then the blacks had
their bench, too."
Elderly locals*



Thesis Proposals

Kypseli



Facing Page

Kypseli Boulevard (Maria Markova)

Left

Kypseli Municipal Market (Maria Markova)

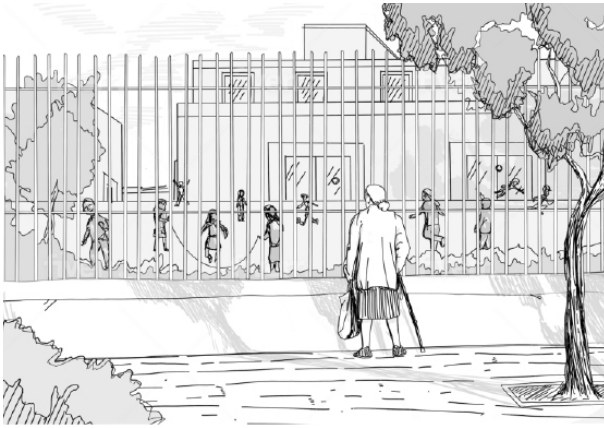
Above

Kypseli sites:

- 1 Maria Markova
- 2 Kseniia Shipush
- 3 Camille Trinidad
- 4 Holly Wise
- 5 Emma Carpenter

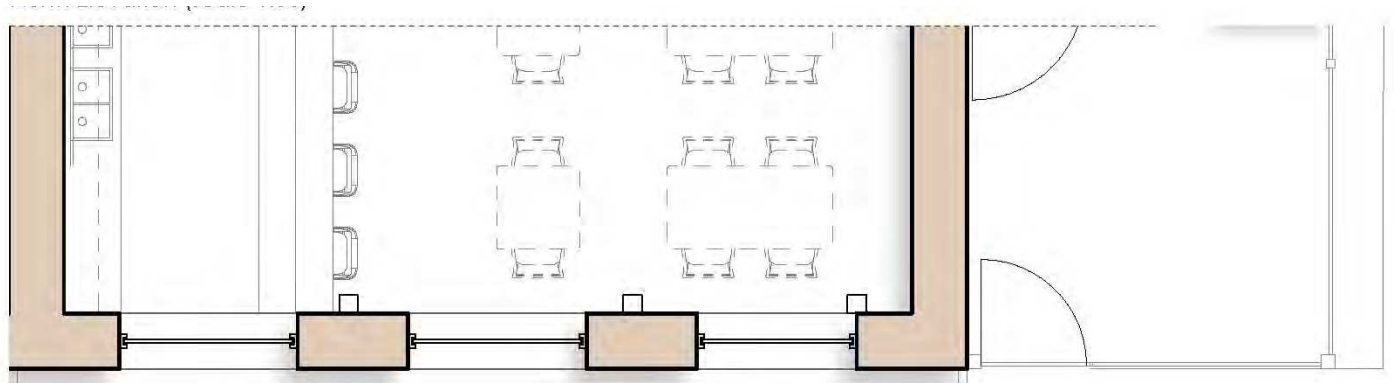
Inter-Generational Collaboration

Maria Markova



While exploring Kypseli it became evident that many elderly people live in the neighbourhood, but there are very few places for them to go and interact with others. While talking to them in the municipal centre for the elderly every one of them confirmed feeling lonely, isolated, and wanting to have a place to gather and do different activities. According to the European Quality of life Survey of 2016 every tenth older adult experiences loneliness, which impacts their well-being and health overall. The proposal aim's to address this issue, by creating a space that would become a place where elderly and refugee kids and Greek kids come together. The site that has been chosen for the proposal is located close to Fokinos Negri Street where many elderly people gather as well as an elementary school is located close by making the site easily accessible. It has an unfinished polykatoikia and a generous open space right next to it. The proposal seeks to finish the construction of the polykatoikia, making the construction more sustainable, and create housing for elderly and young adults to live there. In the current open space, a garden and a library with different workshops and other activity spaces will be built where the elderly and kids will get to interact with each other.



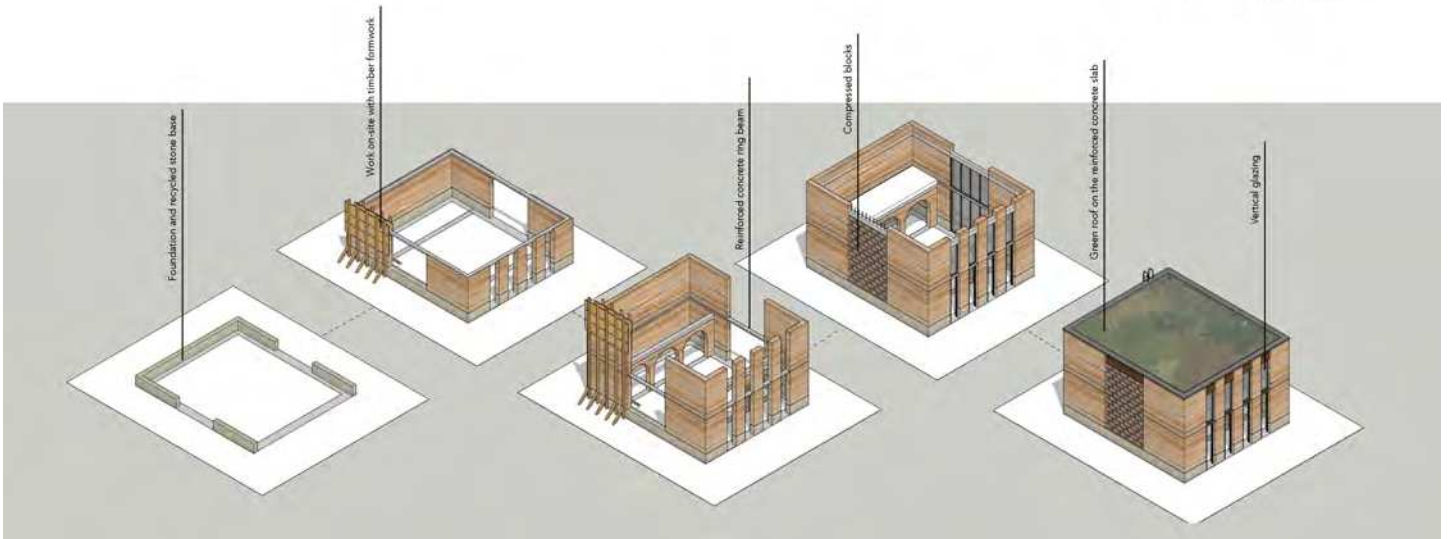


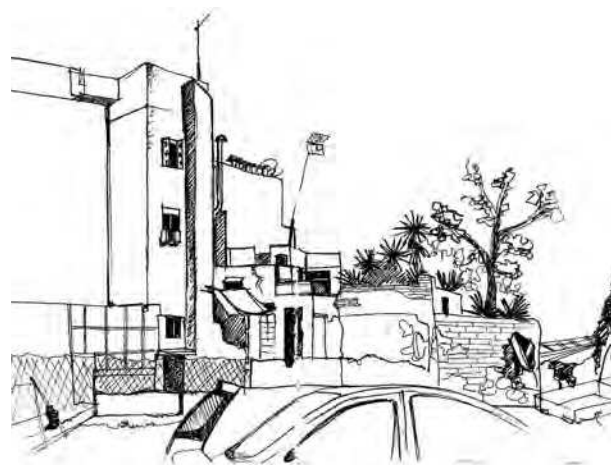
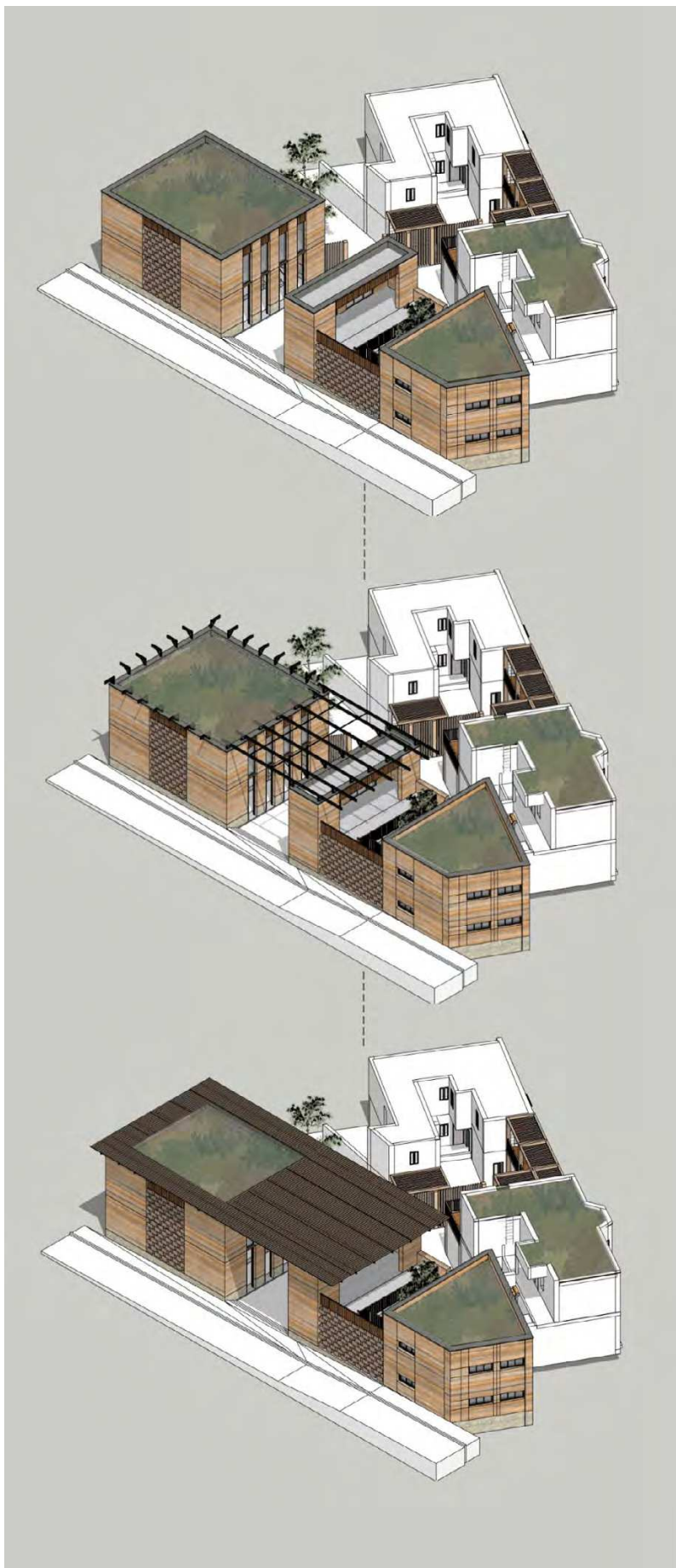






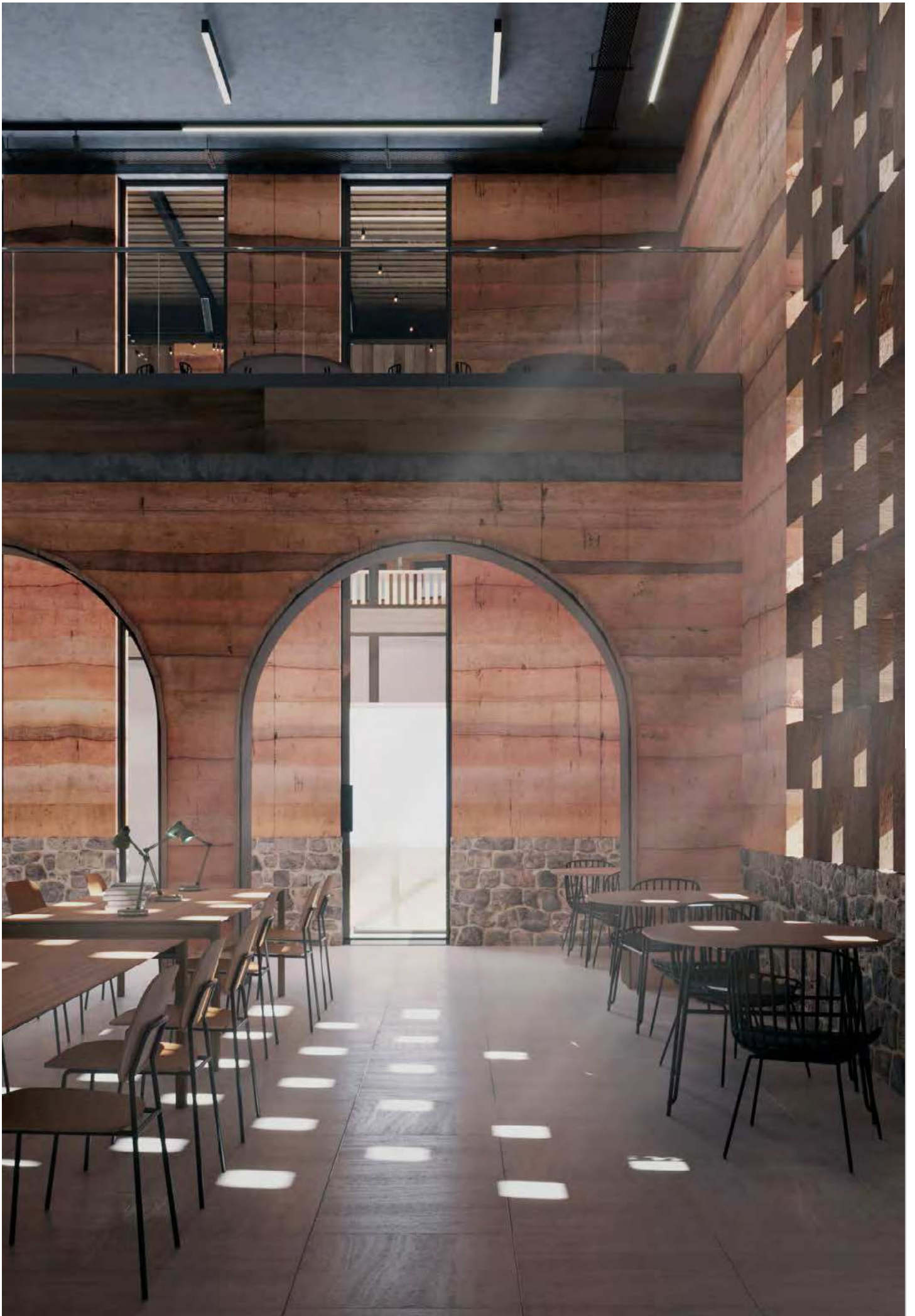
Journal of the working process online

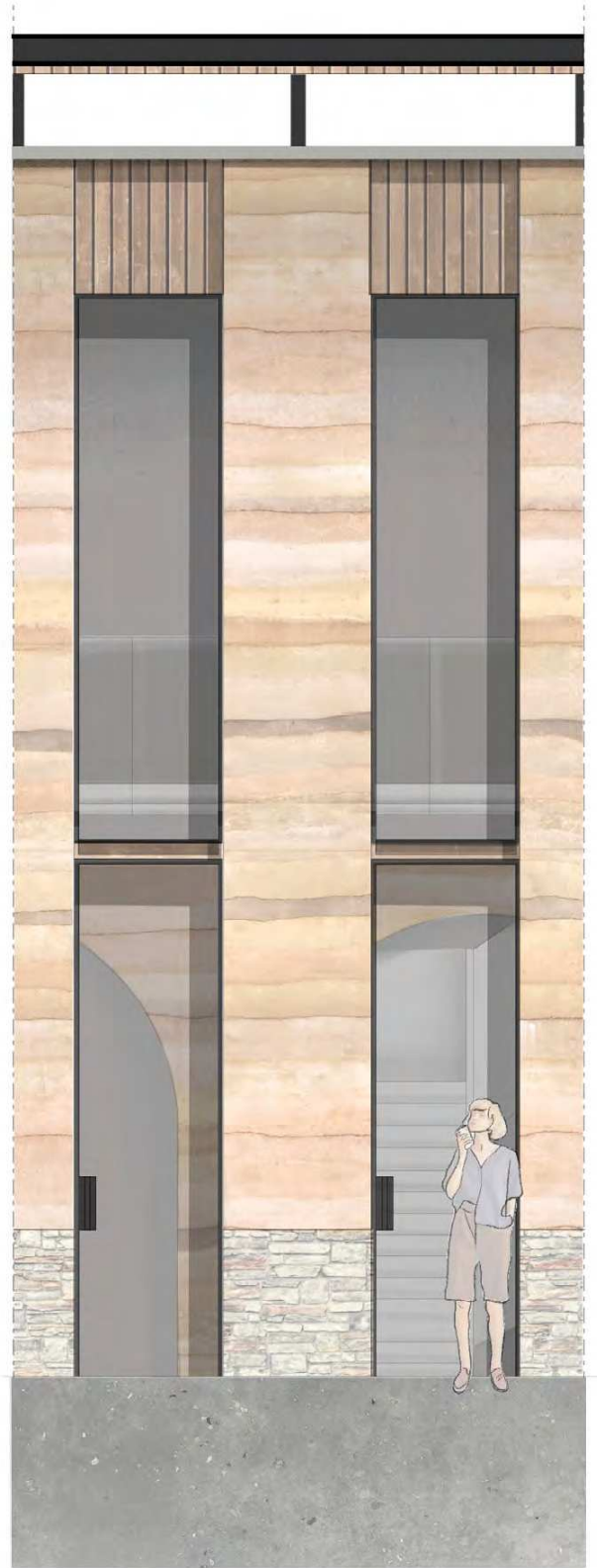
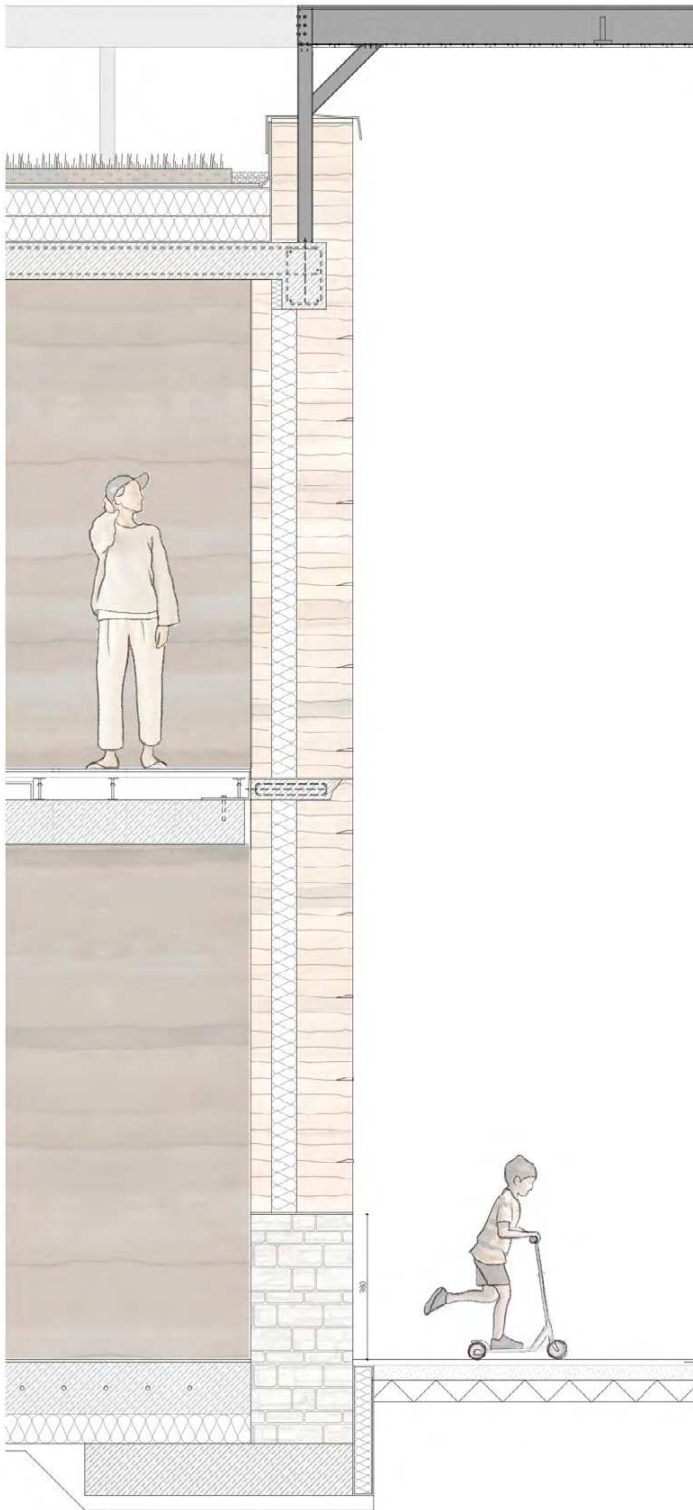




Analysing the Kypseli area, it becomes clear that nowadays it can hardly be called a place of attraction. Young people tend to leave this place in favour of more interesting and developed areas, while the old ones remain only because of their age and attachment to the place. More positive comments about the Kypseli were from young people in the southern part of Kypseli and this is not surprising - the main activities (creative workshops, sports events, cafes, shops) are located there. After analysing the map of activities, it becomes clear that the northern part of Kypseli cannot offer as much as the southern does. Refugees and migrants settling in this part of the area are more likely to be involved in illegal activities, and a large number of abandoned houses could transfer it into the drug addiction areas.

In my project, I want to create a place where young people can find themselves. It will be a place where you can come for free, spend time, attend creative workshops, read, and learn the language. This place can also be filled with exhibitions, film screenings, festivals and parties. A place could be opened for proposals and cooperation, where, in addition to the main activities, it will be possible to rent classrooms and have paid events in purpose to maintain the existence of the centre. When you are a migrant, it is especially difficult to go out, make friends, or find your interests in a new city. And in some cultures, communities are not common at all. Therefore, I believe that this place could be a great way to bring people together, or at least a place for a useful and pleasant pastime.





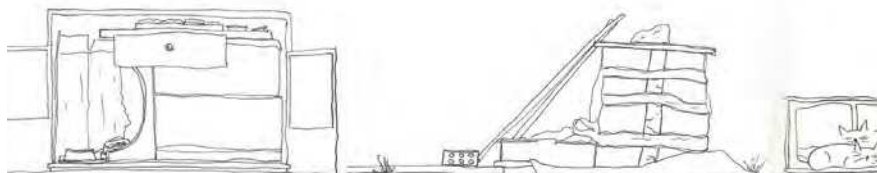
Poly-cat-oikeia

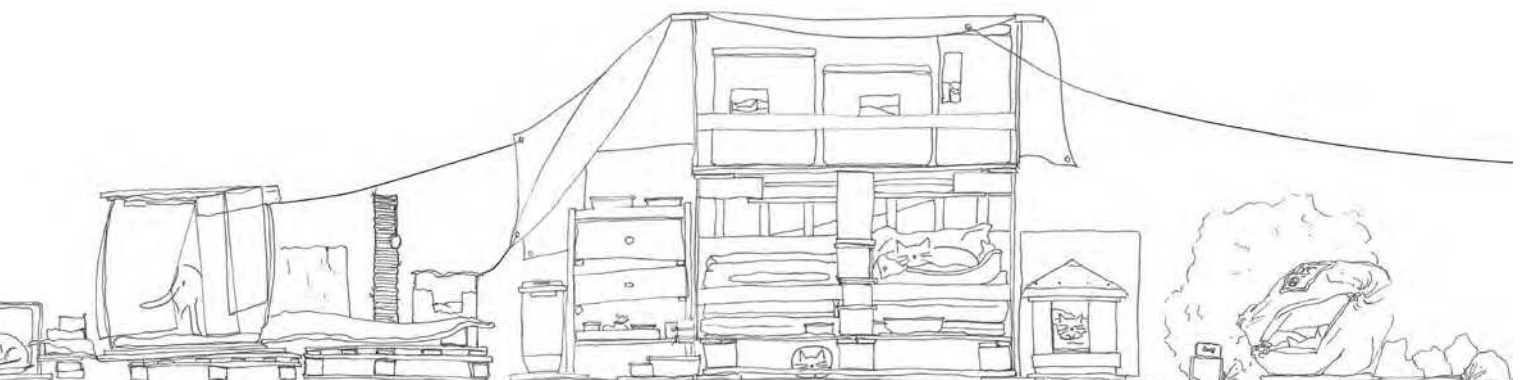
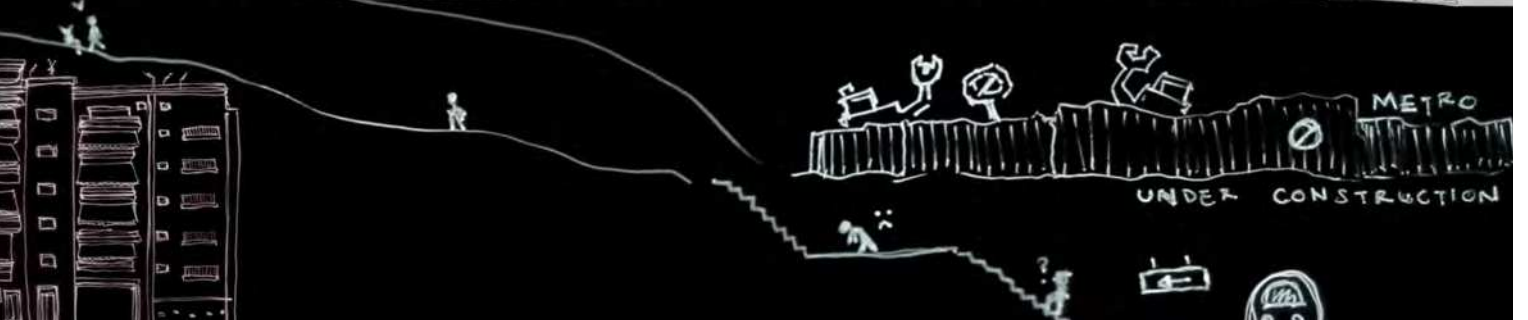
Holly Wise

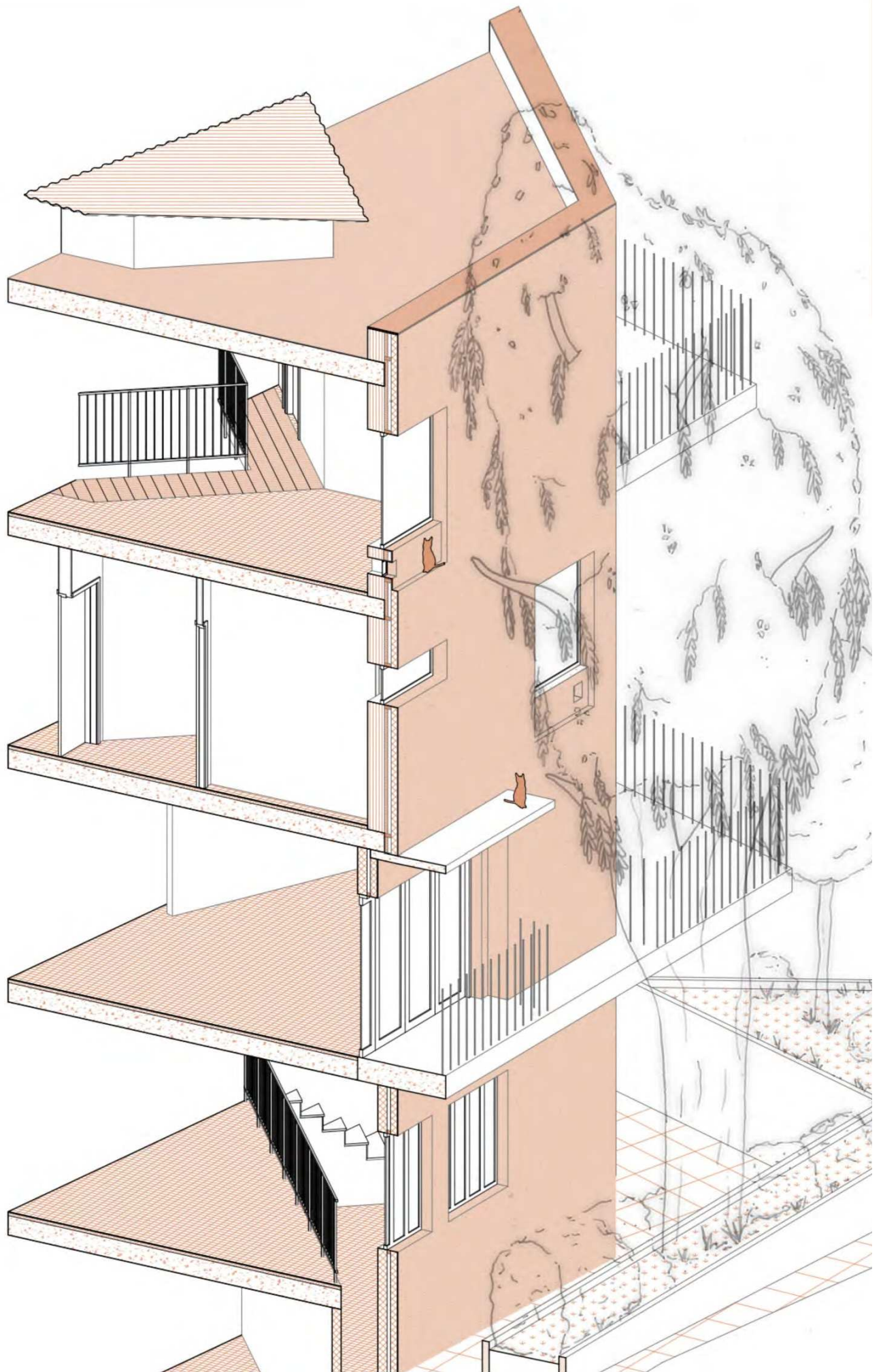


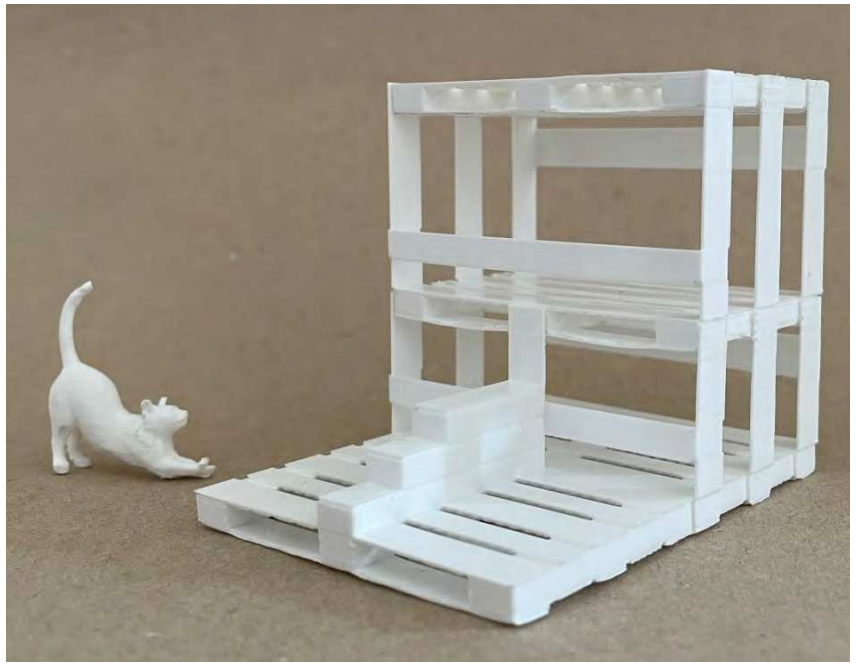
The cats of Kypseli roam the streets finding nooks and shelter wherever they can. They come and go as they please as guests of this urban setting. I spent time in Athens observing the cats and their habits - mainly because I missed my own. In my observations I noticed how many migrants and volunteers came to the same spots around Kypseli to feed and fuss them. I noticed more and more shelters had been made for them, out of whatever these helpers could get hold of; cardboard, wooden palletes, and soft furnishings. Studying these prefabricated feline guest houses made me question, where do these volunteers go once they've taken care of them? They too must be feeling very similar. In a daunting urban landscape, unsure of who will treat them kindly, who will offer them hospitality, or who turn them away with abuse.

I spoke to a handful of people who were looking after the cats and I asked them why they bother. They responded with: love, an innocent type of love you don't get from others. Studies through the pandemic have shown the positive effect pets have on loneliness. Having also witnessed the sense of 'otherness' and lack of groups mixing in Kypseli, I would like to propose a scheme encouraging migrants, settled and newly arriving, to connect and build a community through interactions with the cats of Kypseli. A base for online animal welfare groups to offer advice and support, encouraging the community to partake in volunteering activities that would bring them together.

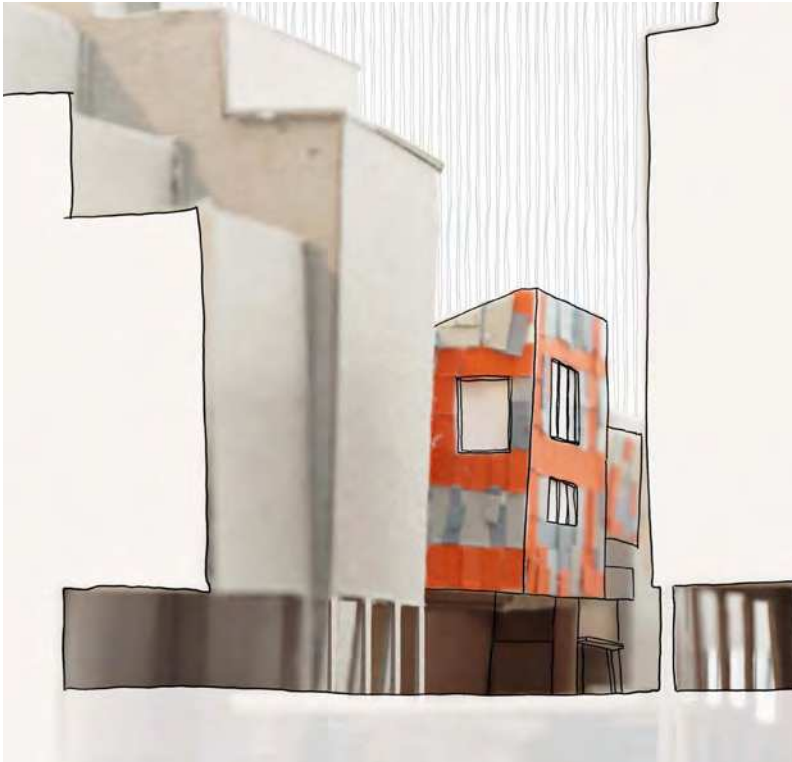








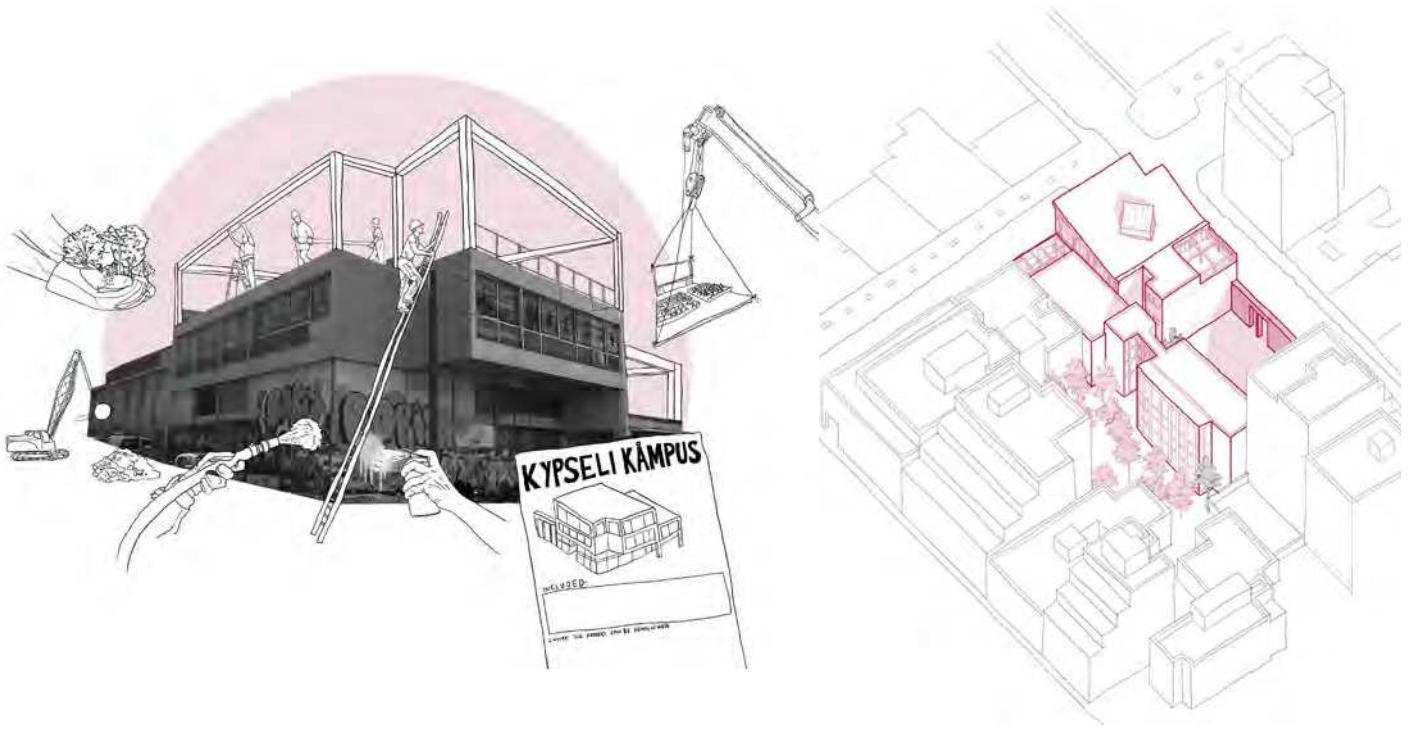




'Palimpsest' refers to the layering and rewriting of history over time, where traces of the past are still visible behind the present. Athens is a place of deep cultural and physical history - visible in its urban grain, architecture, graffiti, and people. Kypseli is a neighbourhood in constant transience, both in the use of its buildings and the people inhabiting them. The project brief was developed as a direct result of conversations with settled migrants and volunteers who live and work in Kypseli. Themes of ownership, embeddedness and generational growth emerged as key drivers for social change in a layered neighbourhood. The area is home to a diverse population of many ethnicities yet the sense of otherness and separation remains strong.

As the migrant crisis in Greece continues with the ending of government support and increasingly far-right politics, migrants will remain the most vulnerable in society. Therefore, Kypseli Campus aims to provide a safe space for young migrants who arrive in Athens on their own. The rehabilitation of an abandoned building on a prominent street will aid and nurture the rehabilitation of these migrants. The intention is for the scheme to act as a pathway to cultural embedding within the vibrant community.







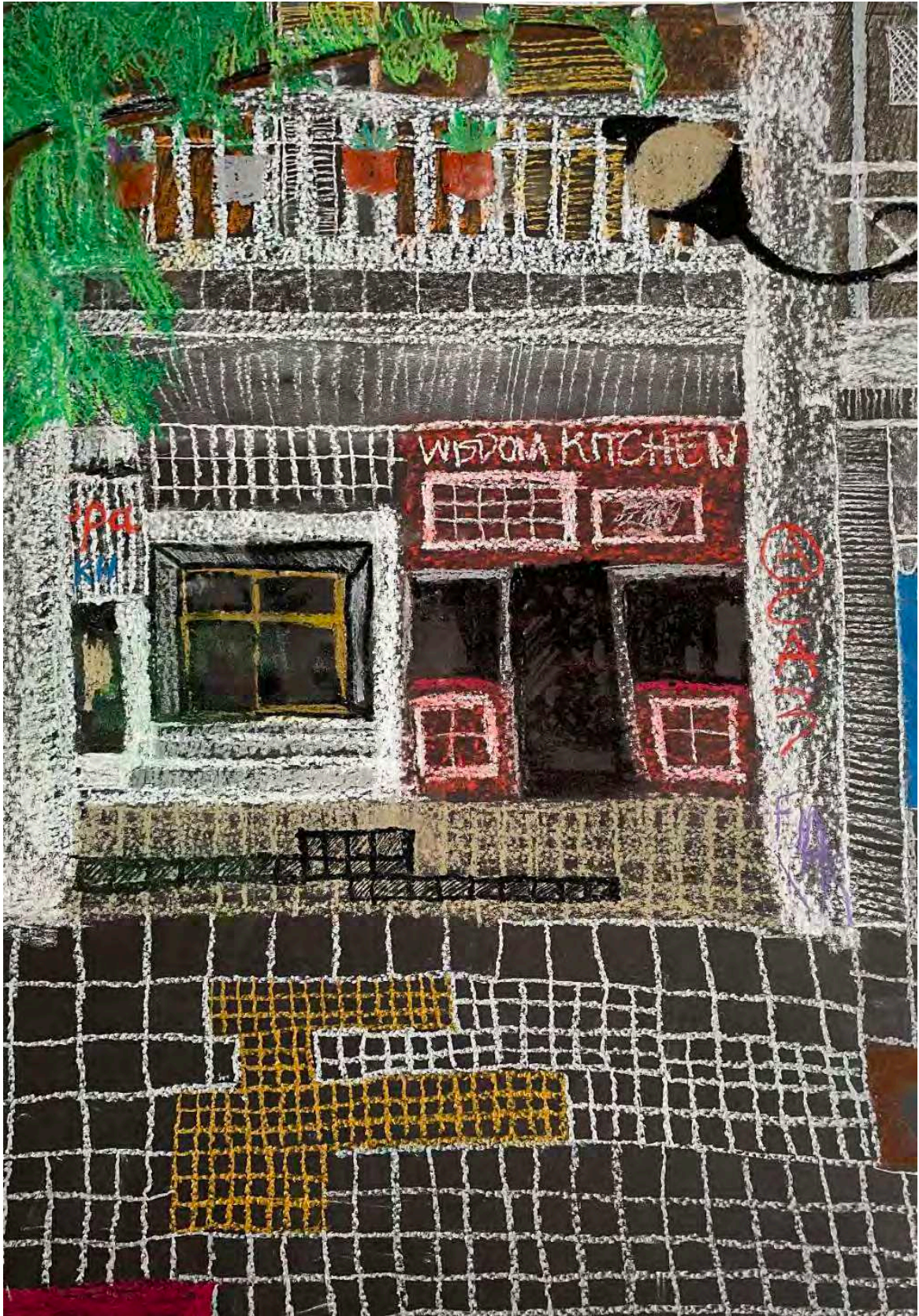
Against the Permanently Temporary

Camille Trinidad



On a Sunday mid-morning, after attending a mass service, as you turn right off the pedestrian route, coming from the boulevard, a crescendo of sound and people will meet you. You'll come across a small courtyard entrance between two busy narrow streets where road access is temporarily removed. As you slowly enter this courtyard, you will feel the hustle and bustle of immigrant traders and customers like a stage set with the strip of colonnade as their background and their goods as props. It is where local businesses come together to sell in an organised yet informal way. From baked goods, street food, antiques, furniture, collectibles, clothing, fresh produce, books, artworks and unique gifts, all arranged within temporary stalls in a large open space which created series of smaller streets, an invisible micro-city in a backfilled site that used to be a car park.

Inspired by the thought of openness yet secluded circle of a migrant's economy, where a Nigerian lady named Edith who built her restaurant in Kypseli said, "we employ our own people" but welcome everyone to try and enjoy her homeland's food, births the aim of the brief - to inject a foreign and unknown network into a forgotten, disappearing space; to help claim abandoned (oftentimes unavailable) buildings or closed off public land in order to make new connections by initiating equal opportunities and introducing unfamiliar ways of coexisting; to revive the spirit of markets in a traditional form of Greek common space; and explore human transactions in a socio-spatial perspective.





I. Parking to Market



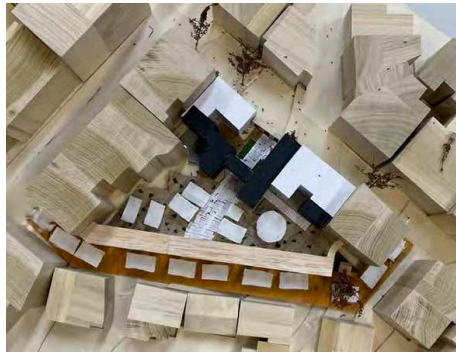
II. Connection of Roads - Courtyard and single story structure rehabilitation



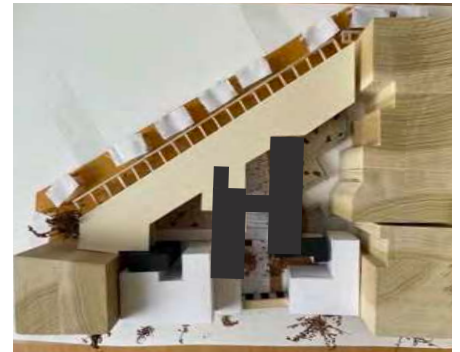
III. Retrofit of abandoned structures and addition of covered walkway



IV. Connecting single story building to commercial structure

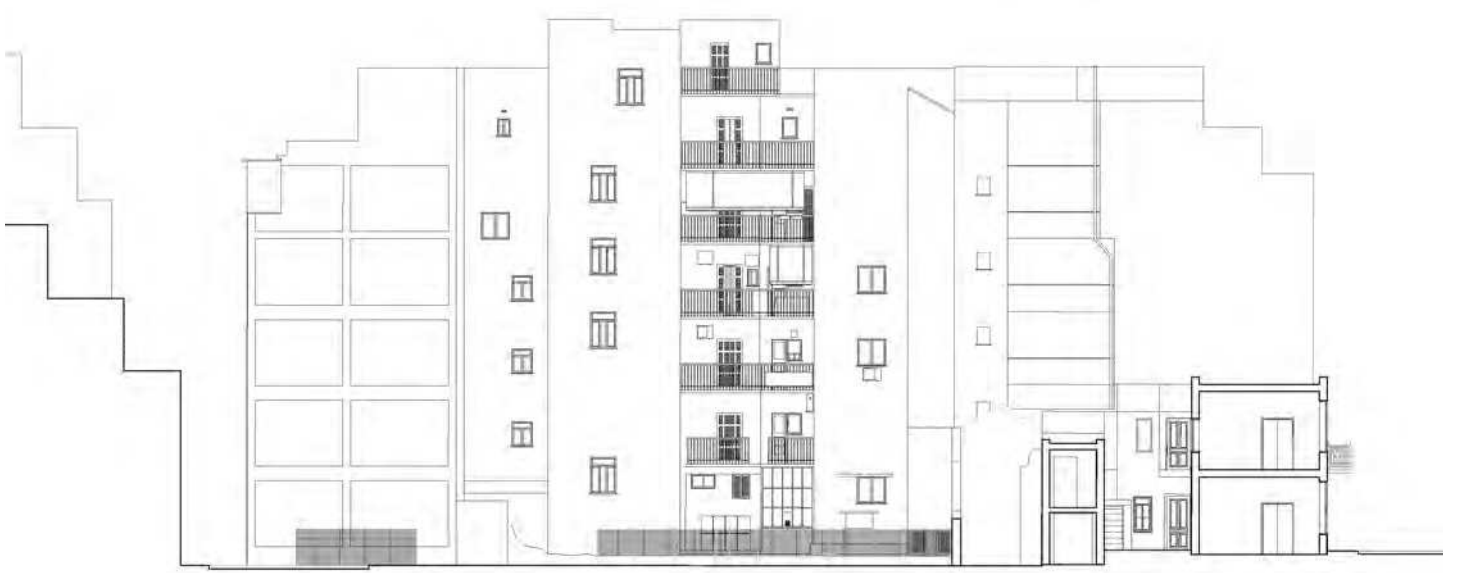
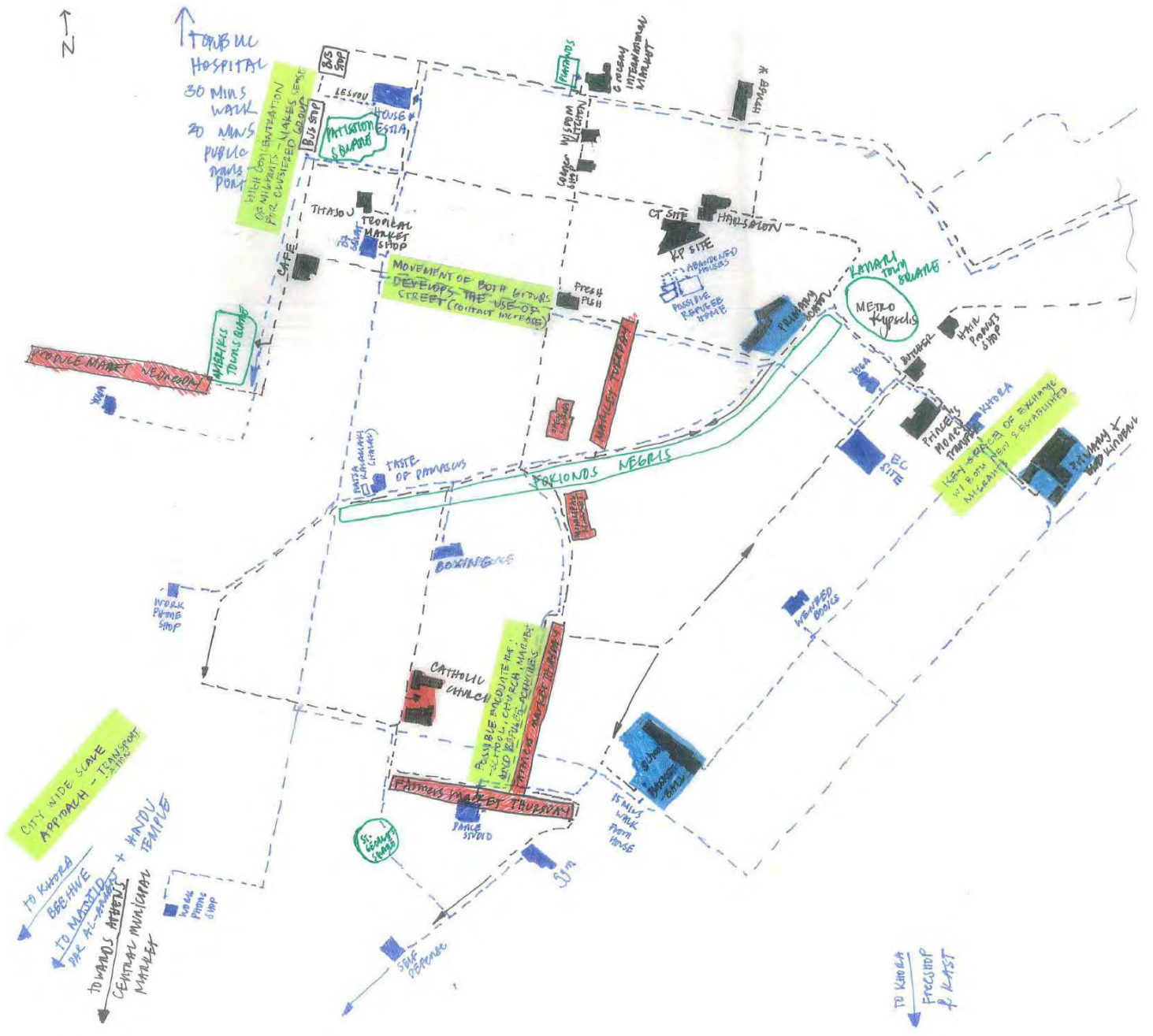


V. Connection of structures and addition of collonade



VI. Arcade and First floor accommodation







Prosfygika

Introduction

Jameson Goring, Sara Golnabi, Oscar Osmond

Prosfygika is a complex of eight modernist buildings surrounded by large institutional buildings in the Northeast of Athens, away from the cramped and busy streets. Between the buildings, six cool, shaded courtyards provide an oasis away from noise and heat. The buildings originally accommodated refugees in 1935 coming from Asia Minor.

Over time the complex became a symbol of otherness in Athens – especially due to the residents' communication with the neighbouring prison. In the 1950s the Greek government tried to buy the apartments back, and in 1960 the prison was demolished. Now, most of the flats are occupied by one of the largest squatting communities in Europe – the Community of Squatted Prosfygika – with 200-400 activist and refugee occupants. There have been number of development plans for the buildings and the residents remain at imminent risk of eviction

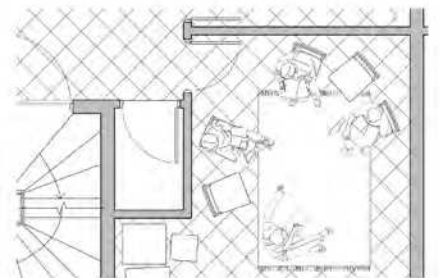
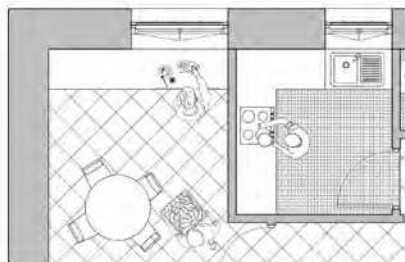
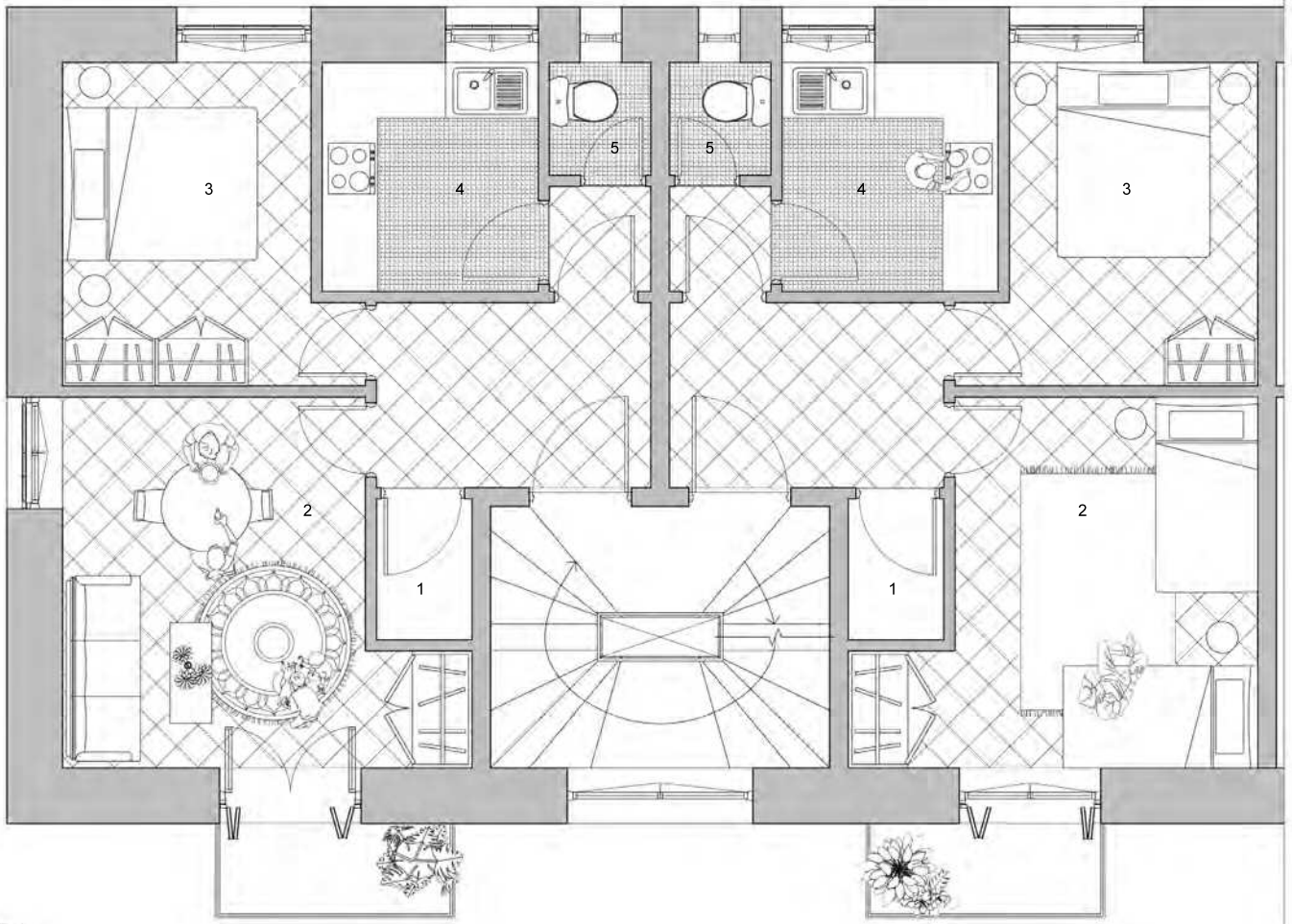
Prosfygika functions as a squatted community thanks to its 'structures': groups that make up a general assembly, can vote on decisions and organise activities and spaces which help them be self-sufficient, without (and in resistance of) government intervention.

The main demographics we observed were young volunteers and activists from Europe who live here to support the 'struggle' and refugee families from the Middle East, Africa and South America who have run out of government help and have been politically oppressed. It is not only 'foreigners' who live here, many Greek people also seek refuge in Prosfygika, usually vulnerable and forgotten by the government.

During the week we spent in Prosfygika, we got to know some of the residents, by volunteering at their community bakery, and running a window repair workshop.



Left
Rooftop in Prosfygika (Jameson Goring)



Existenzminimum - Precedent Study



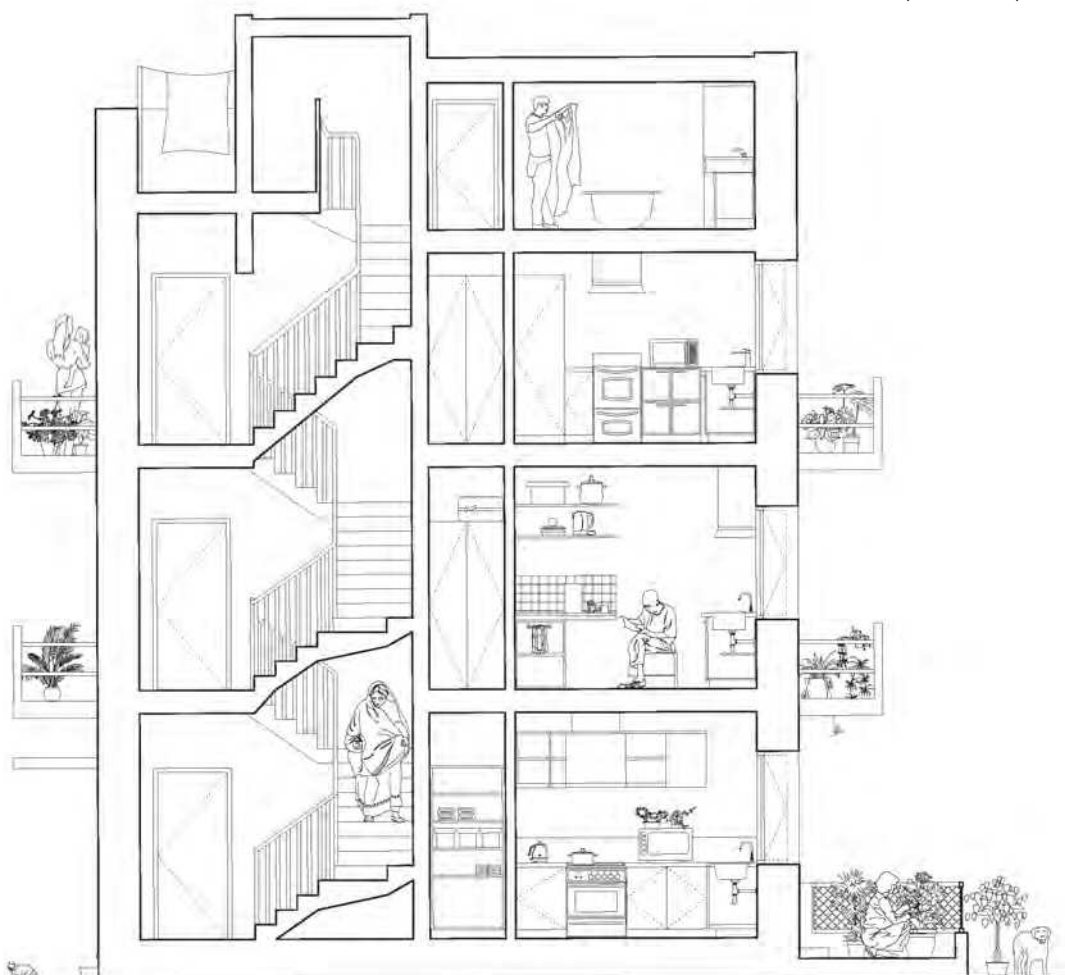
In the first weeks of the academic year, before the Athens trip, the Unit investigated 'Ways of Living', looking at the concept of Existenzminimum - minimal 'subsistence dwelling' developed in the early twentieth century in Germany.

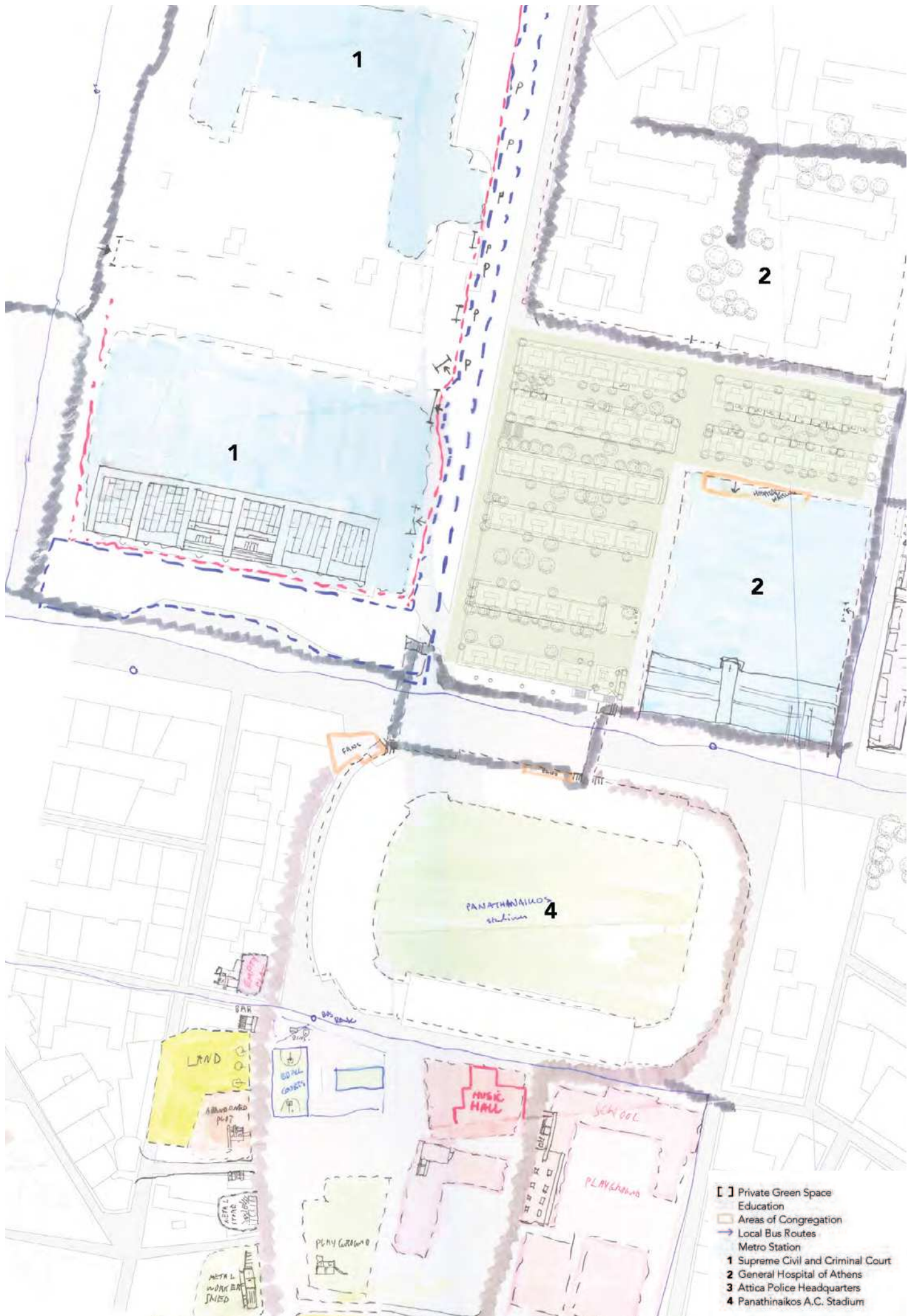
One of the precedents was Athens Refugee Housing (or Prosfygika), a complex of 8 apartment blocks built in the 1930s, directly influenced by the Existenzminimum modernist movement.

Prosfygika was built to accommodate refugees coming from Asia Minor in 2 phases: the Northern blocks in phase 1 (shown blue) and the Southern blocks in phase 2 (shown red).

From our research we found that the buildings were good quality and used modernist and Bauhaus design principles. They had good ventilation and natural light, with south facing balconies. However, now they look run down, as they are owned but not maintained by the Greek government. There is a squatted community that lives there now, that organise events and gatherings such as a community bakery and weekly assembly meetings.

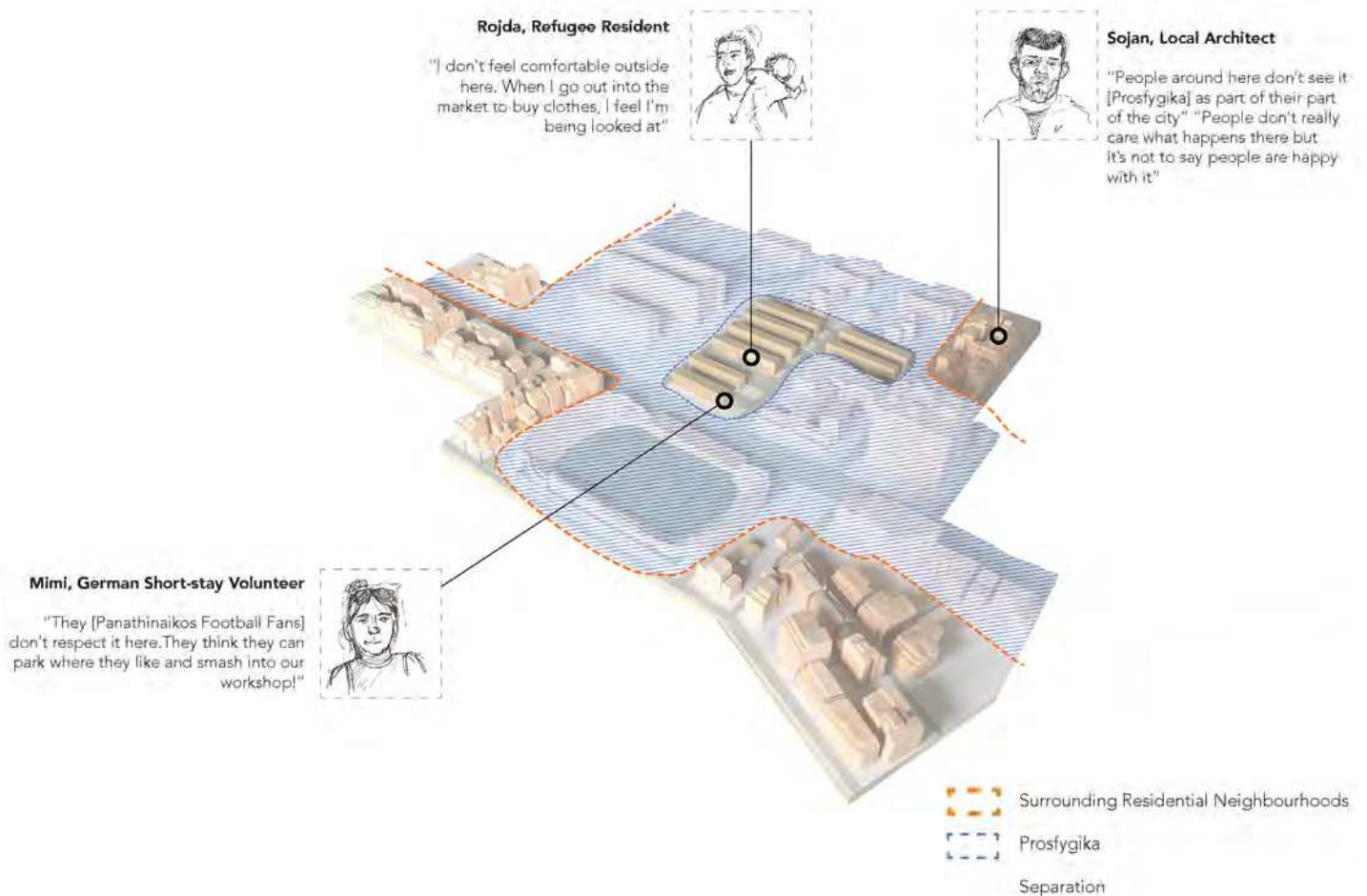
We used our research to draw plans and sections of the apartments and imagine how they might be used in the past and present.





- [] Private Green Space
- Education
- Areas of Congregation
- Local Bus Routes
- Metro Station
- 1 Supreme Civil and Criminal Court
- 2 General Hospital of Athens
- 3 Attica Police Headquarters
- 4 Panathinaikos A.C. Stadium

We took our first day in Prosfygika to understand its context and relationships with the 'outside world'. It seemed this site was deemed a 'no-go' zone by surrounding residents and workers, who only use the site as parking space during their work day. Equally, it seems the residents of Prosfygika are somewhat bound by the borders of the site.



1



2



3



4

Those of us who chose Prosfygika as an investigation site had different personal interests going in, but it was the wide, shaded, welcoming courtyards that drew us all in to begin with.

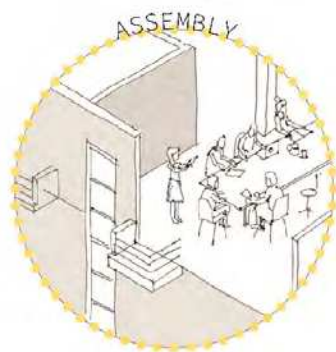
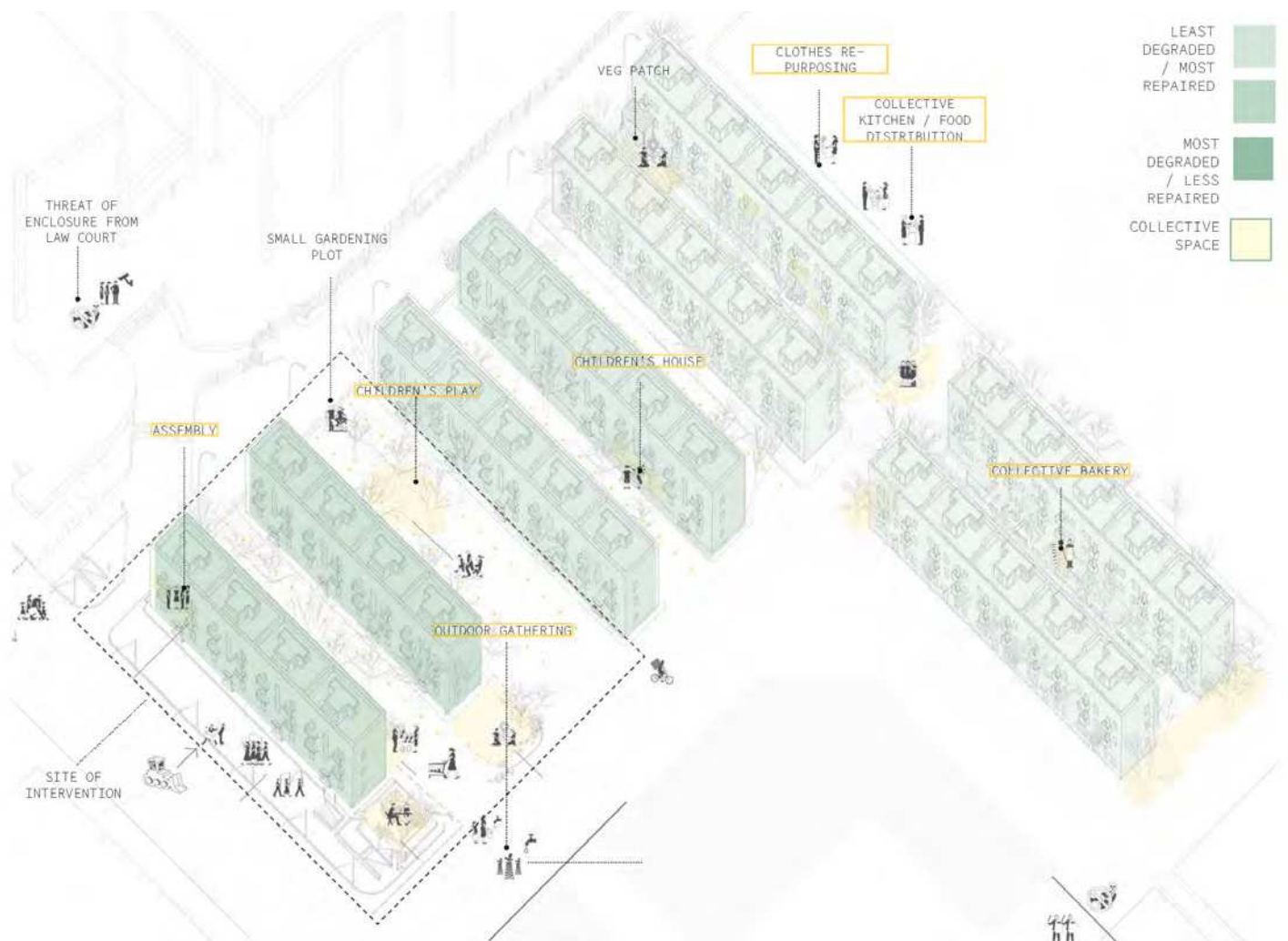
During our first few days there we feel like outsiders, hoping to be accepted, or at least not be pushed away. We first speak to a Turkish refugee, in a mix of broken English, Turkish and Farsi. We notice DIY outdoor spaces, like a small meeting space with benches, chairs and tables. At the back of the site, small gardens and DIY home extensions make up most of the courtyards.



5



Facing Page: Top
1 Courtyard collage (Jameson Goring)
Facing Page: Bottom
2 Playing with Danny, 3 Outdoor meeting space (Sara Golnabi)
This Page: Top & Left
4 & 5 DIY gardens (Sara Golnabi)
This Page: Above
Key plan (Sara Golnabi)



HARNESSING SOCIAL RESOURCES



Prosfygika functions as a squatted community thanks to its 'structures': groups that make up a general assembly, can vote on decisions and organise activities and spaces which help them be self sufficient, without (and in resistance of) government intervention.

After a few days in Prosfygika, we are invited to attend an Assembly meeting. After we introduce ourselves, we notice the community warms up to us and begins to trust us. People become more comfortable talking to us and start to invite us into their homes.



[Facing Page: Top](#)

Mapping resources, scarcity and community responses (Jameson Goring)

[Facing Page: Bottom](#)

Existing community responses to scarcity (Jameson Goring)

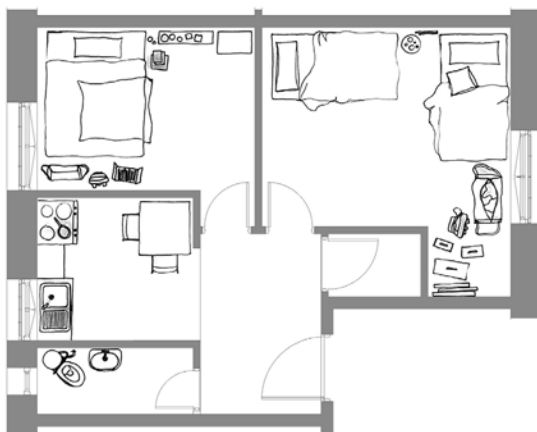
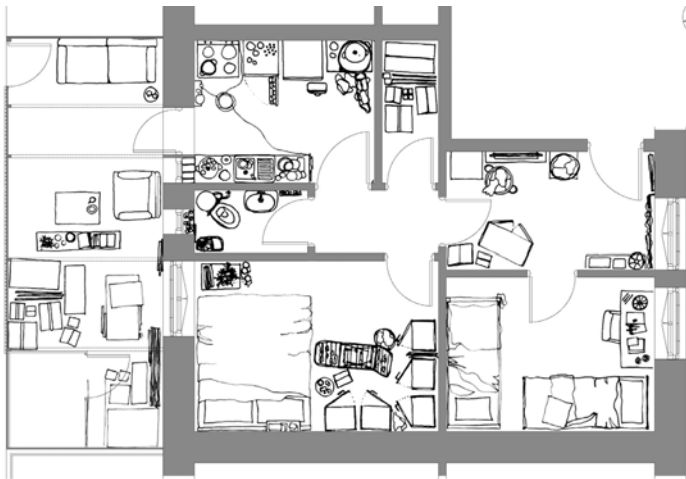
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Assembly meeting room (Jameson Goring)

Home-Making & Self-Build

The buildings at the front of the site are occupied mainly by volunteers and short-term guests, while longer-time residents live at the back. We saw a noticeable difference in flat maintenance between the front and back buildings.

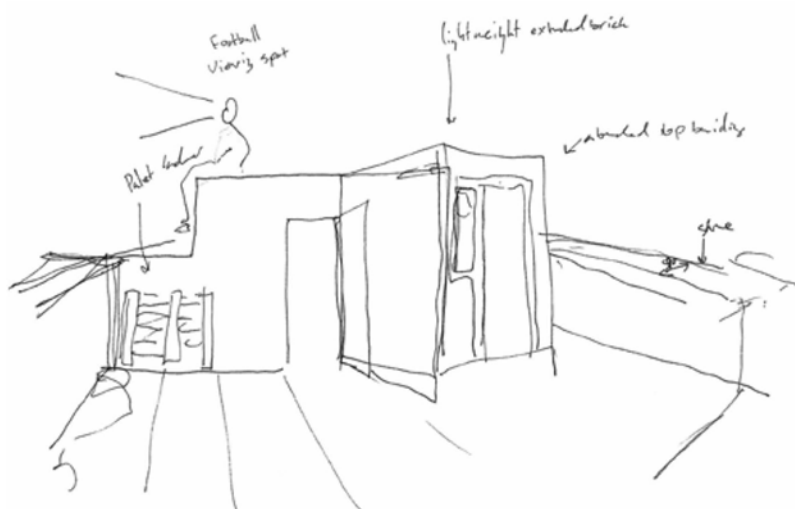
The below drawings show the difference between the home of a refugee family of six and the volunteer guest house. The family has lived in Prosfygika for over 4 years and has built a DIY extension on ground floor (seen through the door in the image to the right). When asked if the flat is too small for them, they say they are happy to all be under one roof.



We are invited on the roofs of Prosfygika on a few different occasions. The roof of the front building, which is occupied by short-term by volunteers, looks onto the football stadium to the South. Here some of the activists and volunteers get together to watch the game.

To the back of the site, it is more families and refugees that inhabit the buildings. A Turkish refugee who has lived in Prosfygika for 7 years invites us into his home and then up to the roof. He tells us when tensions are high with the police, residents take turns sitting on the roof, on the lookout.

We begin to realise the roofs are seen as safe spaces where residents can look out for police and there is no judgement from the outside world.

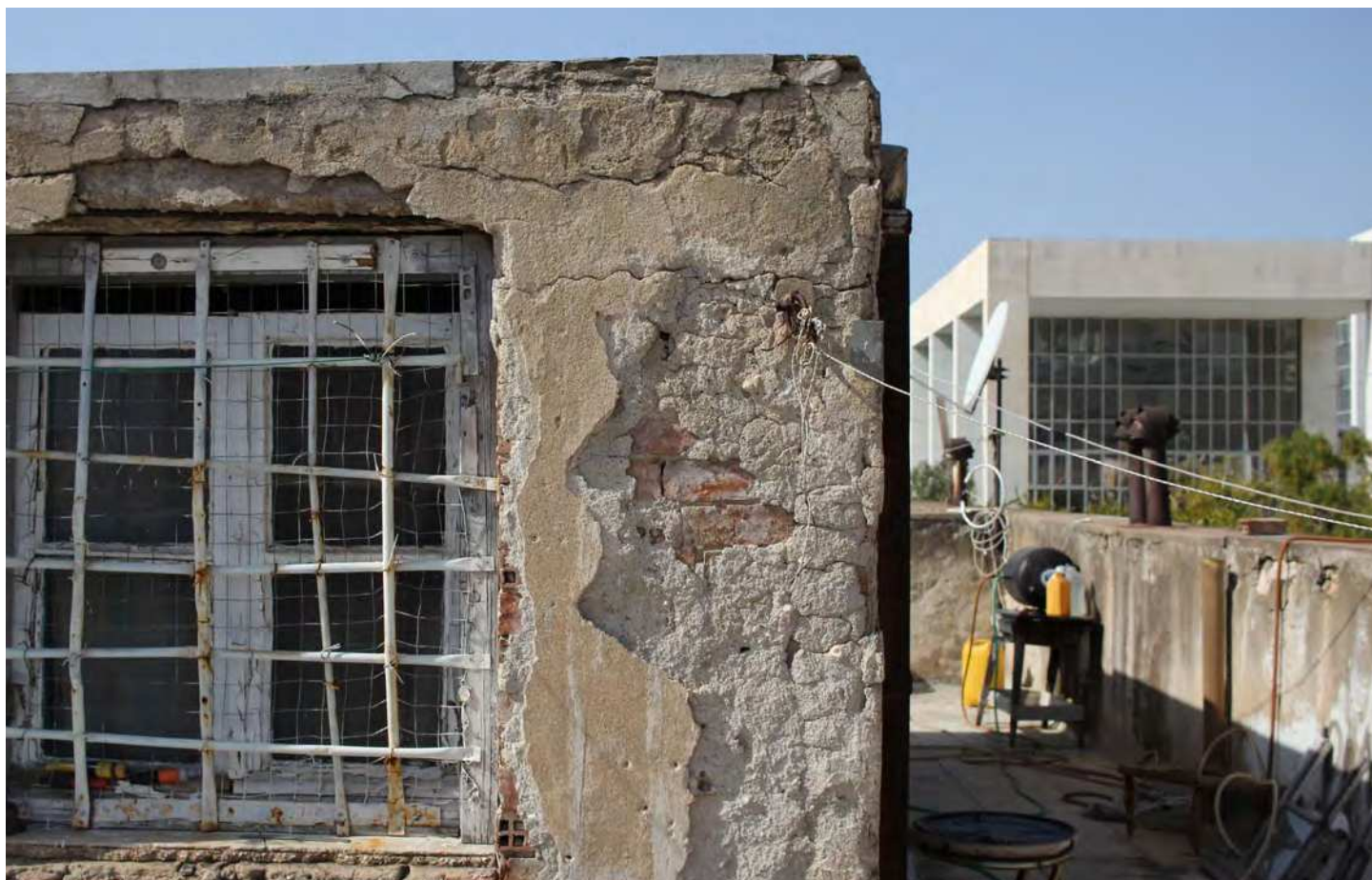


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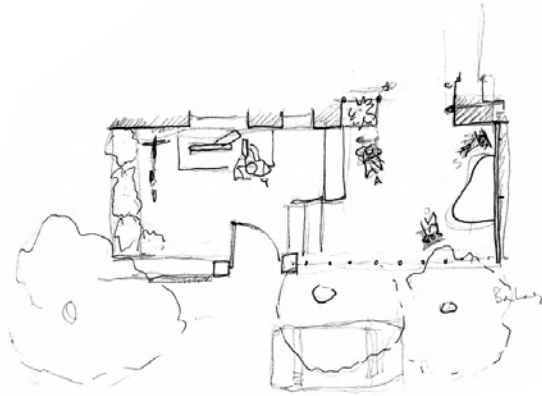
Rooftop sketch (Oscar Osmond)

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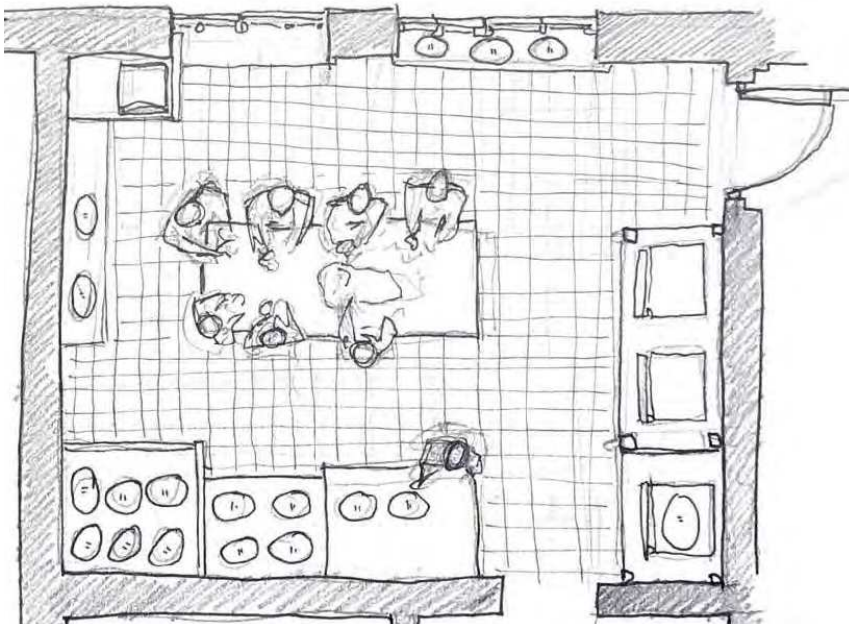
Rooftop image (Jameson Goring)



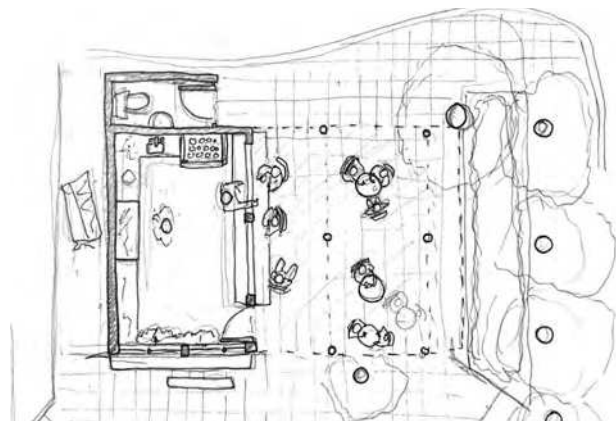
Community Bakery/ Social Porch



Community Bakery which is sold externally, supporting the internal economy of the village. A social space is held outside to converse whilst the bread is proved.



Kiosk



Bar and Dining Space at the south of the village. Current Front to Athens



The Collective Bakery structure produces bread and lahmajun on a weekly basis for the community but also for external people, self-organised open markets and cooperative shops, in order to receive a small income. The Collective are in the process of upgrading the bakery structure, by refurbishing the infrastructure (doors and windows) and its equipment in order to increase the production and improve its functionality.

We arrived at the bakery and were invited in by one of the residents we had met earlier in the week. Some people had already started mixing the first batch of dough. In the main kitchen there was one big long central table, with about fifteen small electric ovens and counter tops around the room. Kneading together, we bonded with a couple of the volunteers from Germany and a Greek lady. This lady had been one of the people who angrily came after us when we were taking photos outside the buildings, but now she was being friendly with us, showing us how to knead, and laughing about the situation because she didn't know who we were.



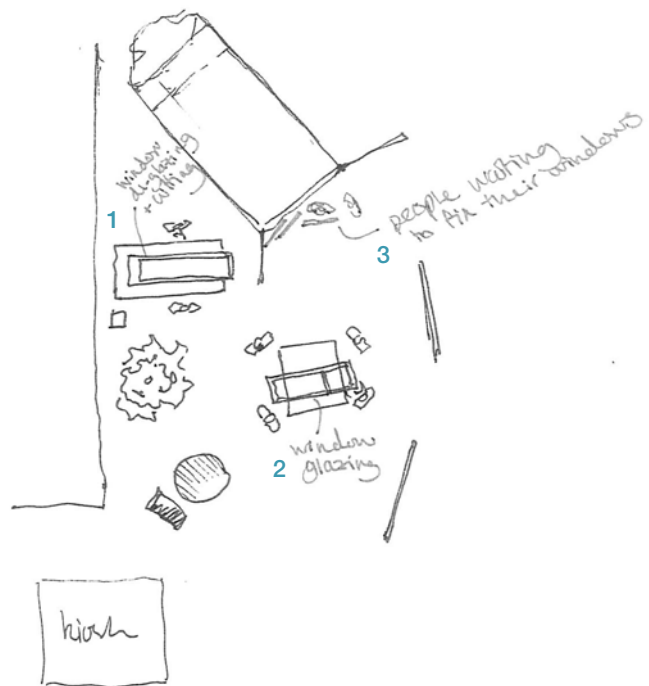
After kneading the dough together on the central table, we cut the dough and weighed it to 110g per piece, and individually kneaded our loaf of bread. We then put it in a clay pot, put oil on top and made a cut in the dough, and left it covered for two hours to prove. We repeated the process to make a second batch. Whilst the bread was baking in the oven, we all sat on the porch and talked about our backgrounds and our stories. One of the refugees who had lived there for 7 years took us up to his flat and to the roof.

By one o'clock the bread, made to order to avoid waste, was ready for residents to pick up.



[This Page](#)
Images of the Collective Bakery (Sara Golnabi)

[Facing Page](#)
Plans of the Collective Bakery, Social Porch, and Kiosk
(Oscar Osmond)



Toward the end of our trip we held a workshop in one of the courtyards, where residents could bring their broken windows and learn how to fix them with cheap materials. We started with two windows that needed the glass replaced, one from the bakery and one from one of the flats that was being renovated. The total cost of the materials was about 1 Euro per window: putty, paint, spirit and glass. We worked simultaneously on the two windows on two different worktops. First we showed how to take off the existing glass (1) and then how to reglaze the window (2). As we were doing the windows, people came past who wanted to get involved. A few people went to get their windows from their flats and formed a small queue to use the workstations (3).



Facing Page: Top

Window repair workshop (Oscar Osmond)

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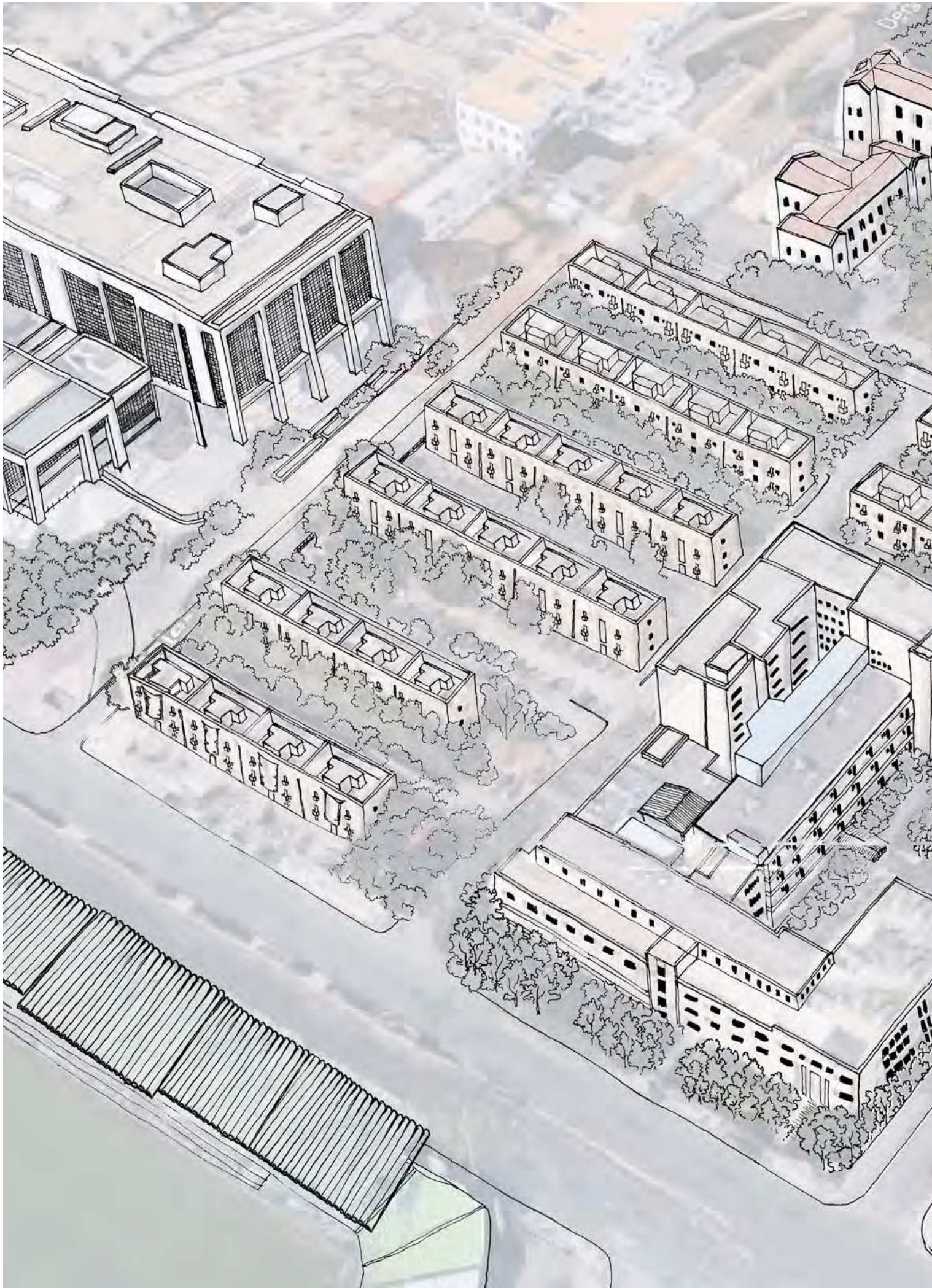
Repaired window (Oscar Osmond)

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Workshop in plan (Sara Golnabi)

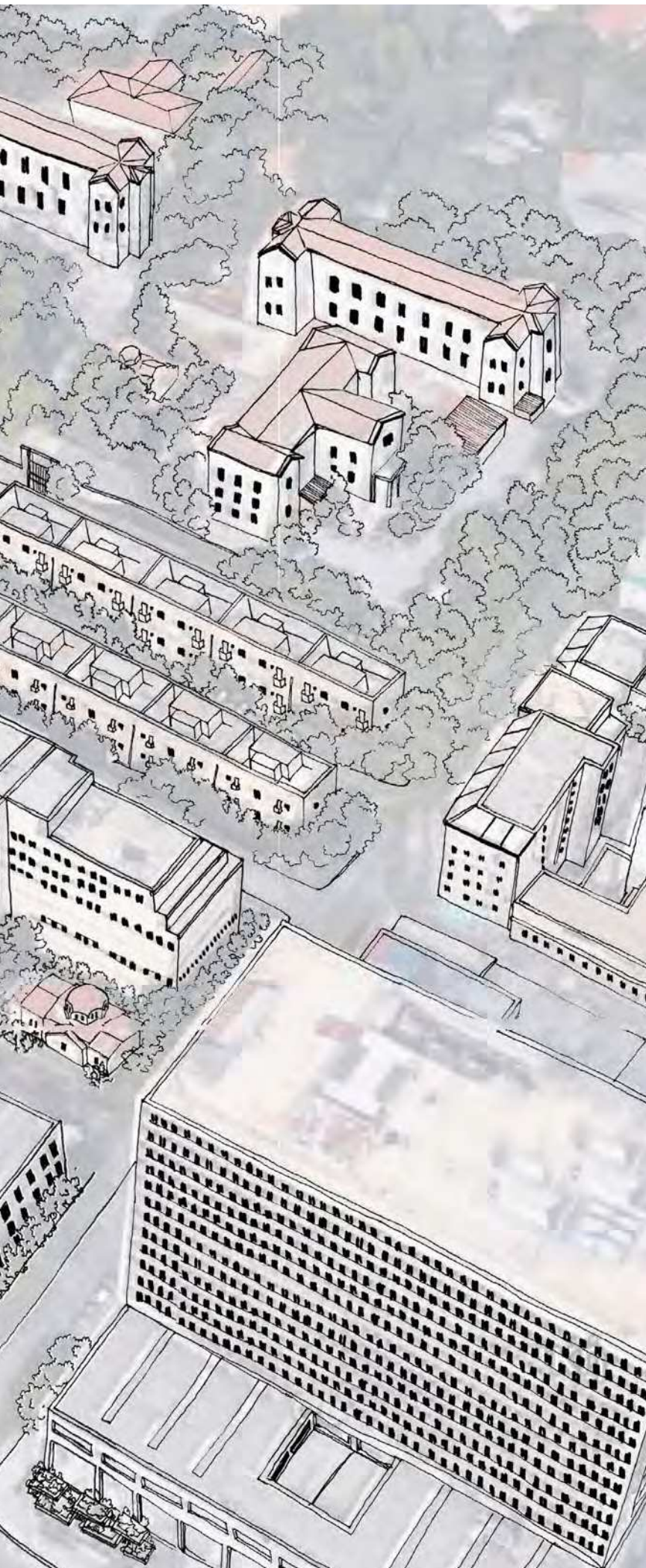
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Images from the window repair workshop (Top: Sara Golnabi; Bottom: Jameson Goring)



Thesis Proposals

Prosfygika



Facing Page

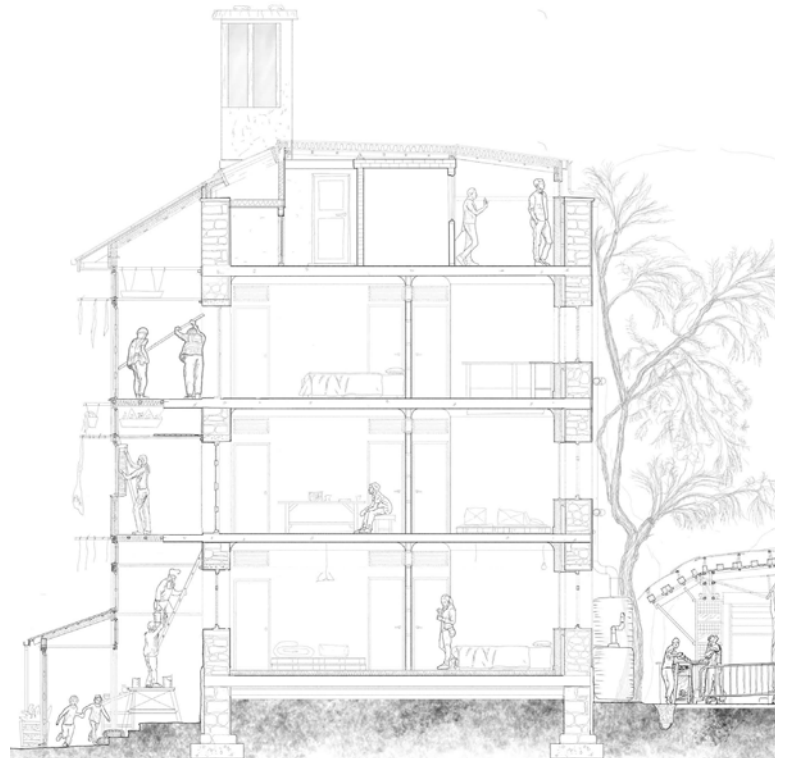
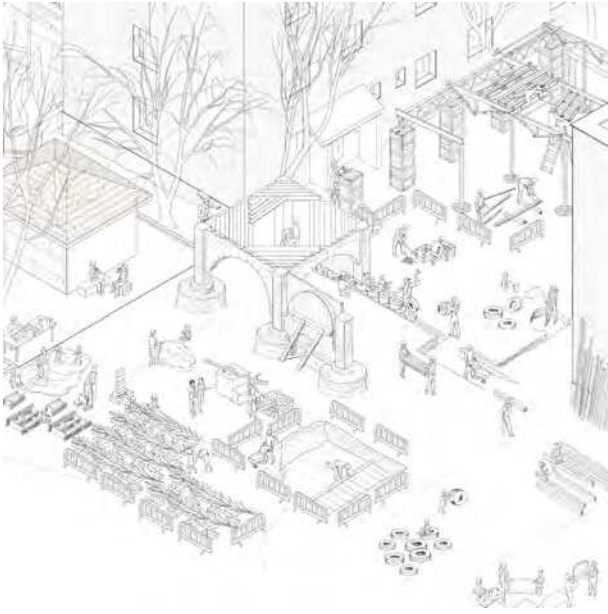
View of Prosfygika (Sara Golnabi)

Above

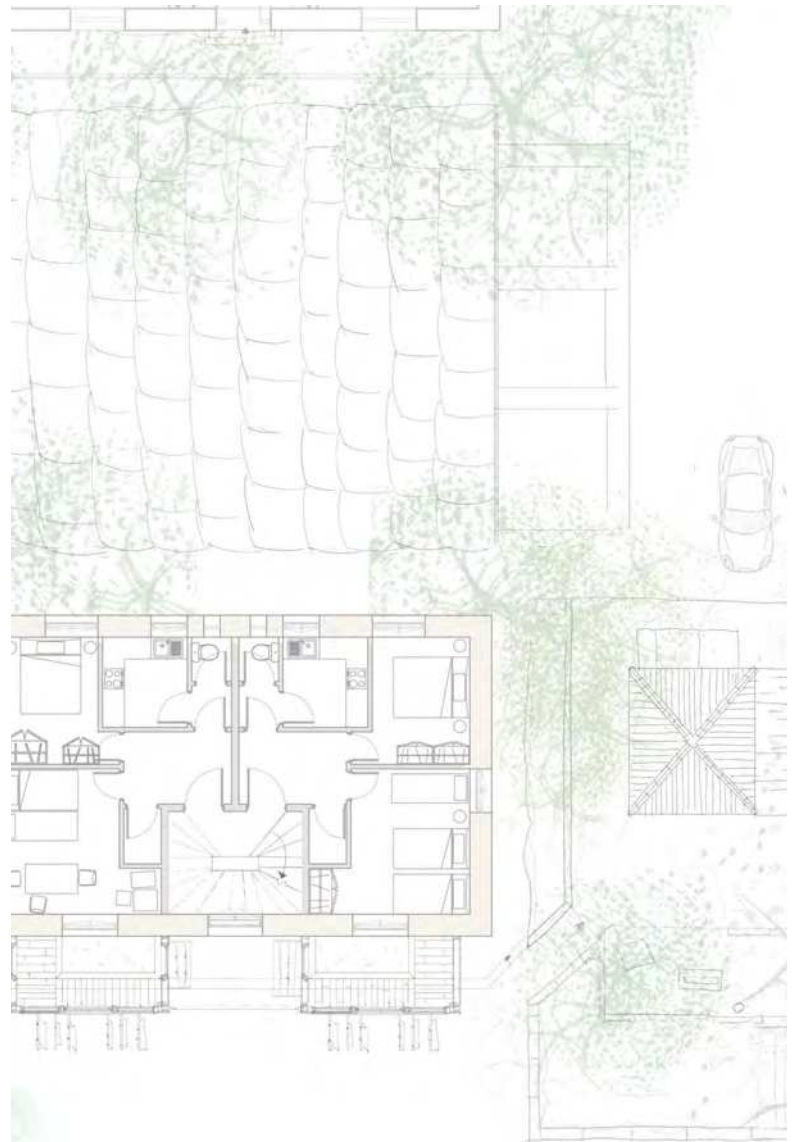
- Prosfygika sites:
- 1 Oscar Osmond
 - 2 Sara Golnabi
 - 3 Jameson Goring

Prosfygika Radical Self-Build Forum

Jameson Goring



Prosfygika Radical Self-Build Forum facilitates the self-education of young Athenian radicals in participatory, emancipatory building methods, helping the wider network to squat, occupy and reappropriate disused buildings and collectivise common resources under non-hierarchical ownership. The Forum is a central organ of an emerging knowledge network which platforms and teaches participatory, simple low-tech methods of construction, renovation and off-grid city living using readily available tools and salvaged materials. Adaptable low-carbon and low-cost construction processes are demonstrated at Prosfygika through two building typologies; SYMBIOTEs (existing building extensions that improve climatic conditions of space) and SEEDs (adaptable and demountable functional sheds) that both define and create new CommonLands (sites of ecological education) and CommonSpaces (sites of social occupation). The interventions both improve the buildings at Prosfygika and emancipate the refugee / anarchist community itself from dependance on the state, whilst demonstrating radically simple ways of making.



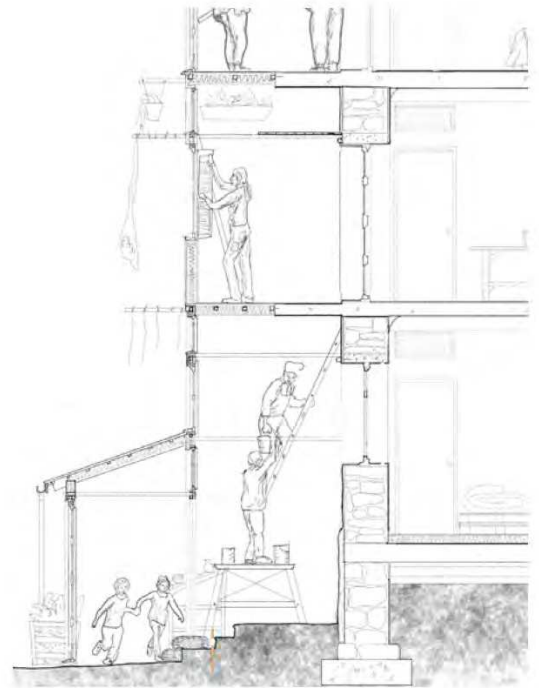




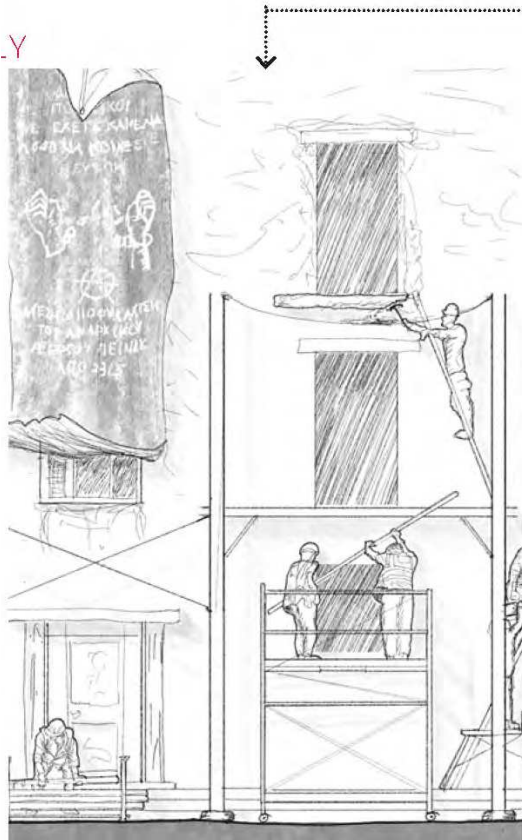
ARCHITECT
TEAM ARRIVE



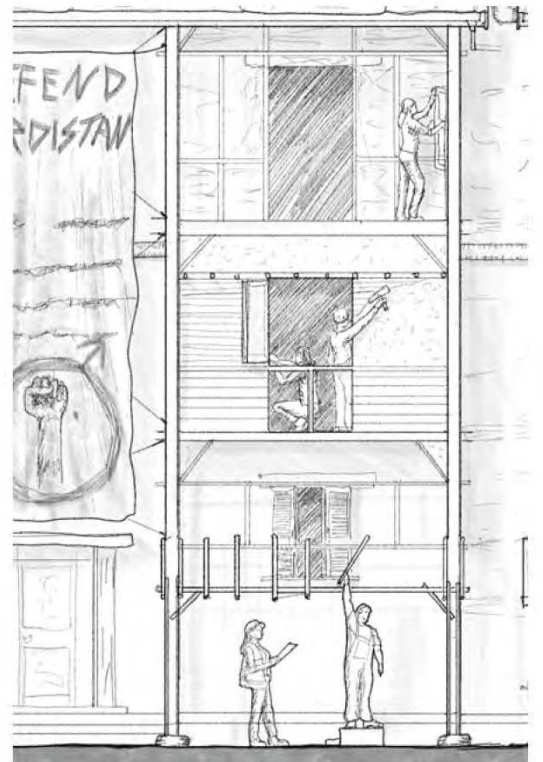
WE BUILD WORKSHOP:
TEACH TO BUILD TRUSSES, EARTH
CONSTRUCTION ETC



WE TEACH RESIDENTS TO BUILD STRUCTURAL
FRAME
WE SHOW TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP
SPECIALIST STRUCTURAL SKILLS
WE BUILD FRAME AND ROOF TOGETHER



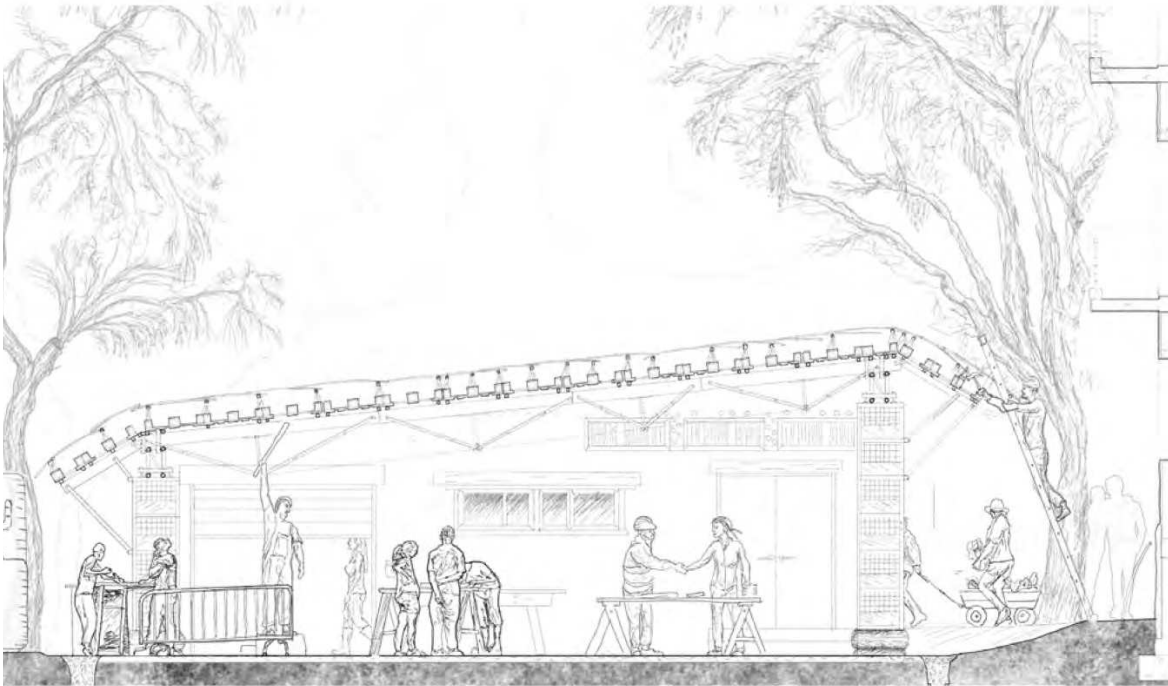
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP:
SELF-BUILD NEW FRAMES



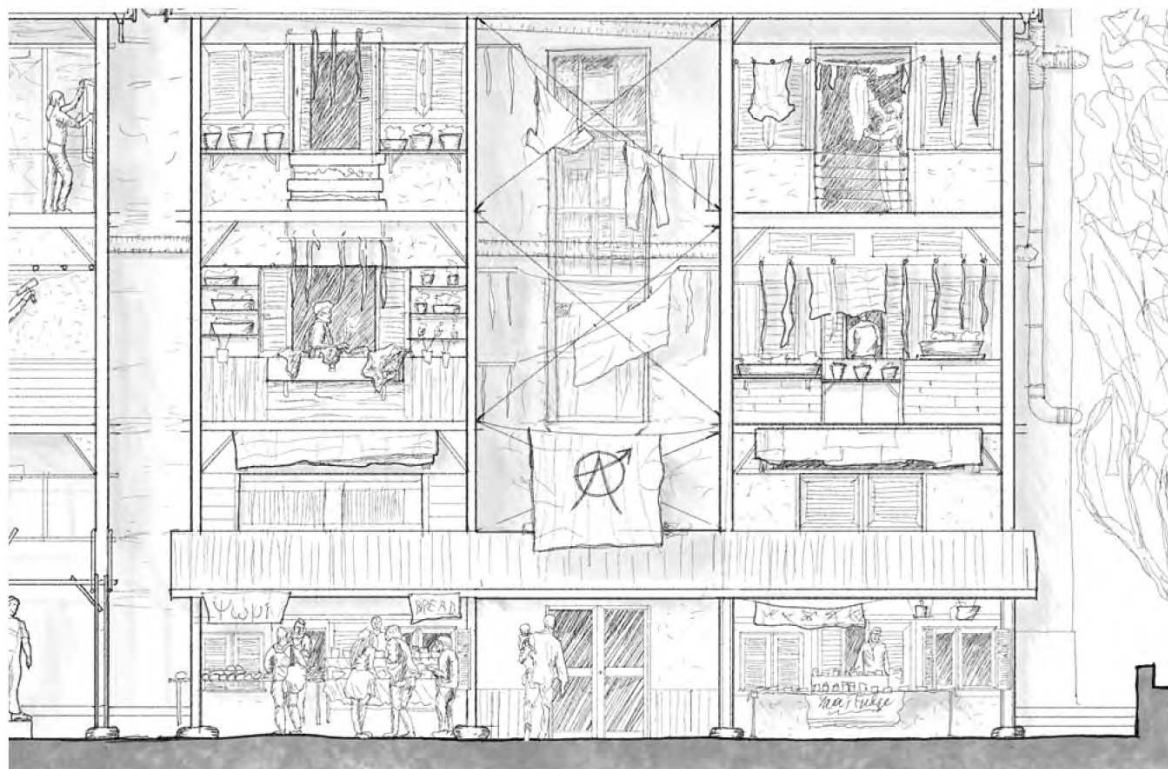
RESIDENTS INFILL FRAMES;
FACILITATED BY TECHNICAL WORKING
GROUP



ALI;
RUNS 'SKIPPING'
MATERIAL COLLECTION



WE TEACH RESIDENTS HOW TO INFILL STRUCTURAL FRAMES
TEACH PEOPLE HOW TO INFILL STRUCTURAL FRAME, HOW TO INSULATE AND ABOUT VAPOUR CONTROL

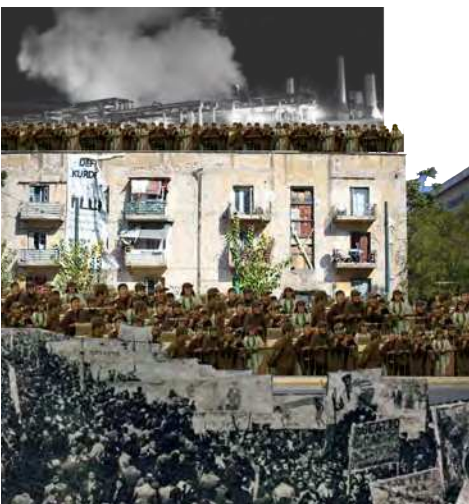


RESIDENTS INHABIT FRAMES:
BUILDINGS CLIMATE IMPROVED, NEW SPACE CREATED



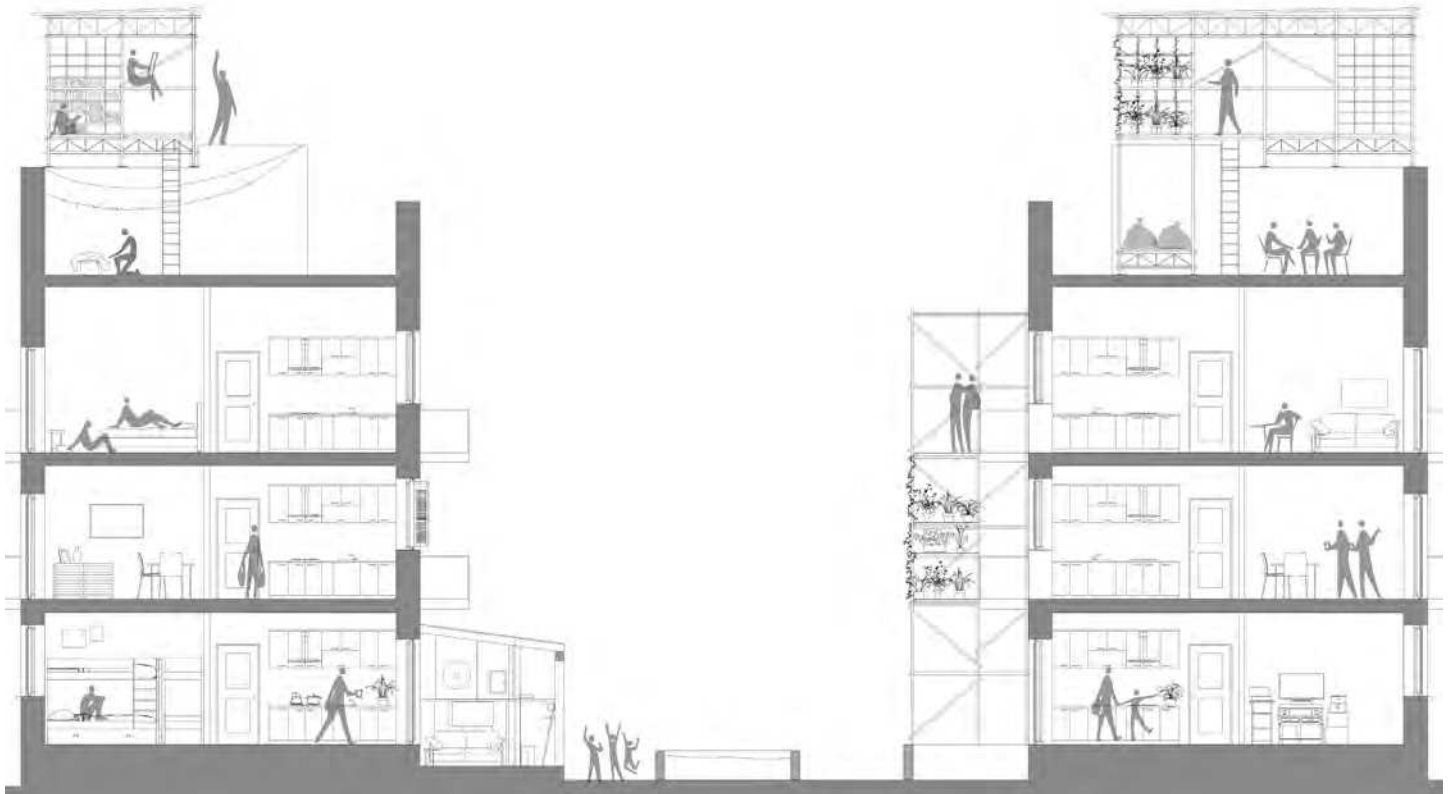
Memory in a Lightbox

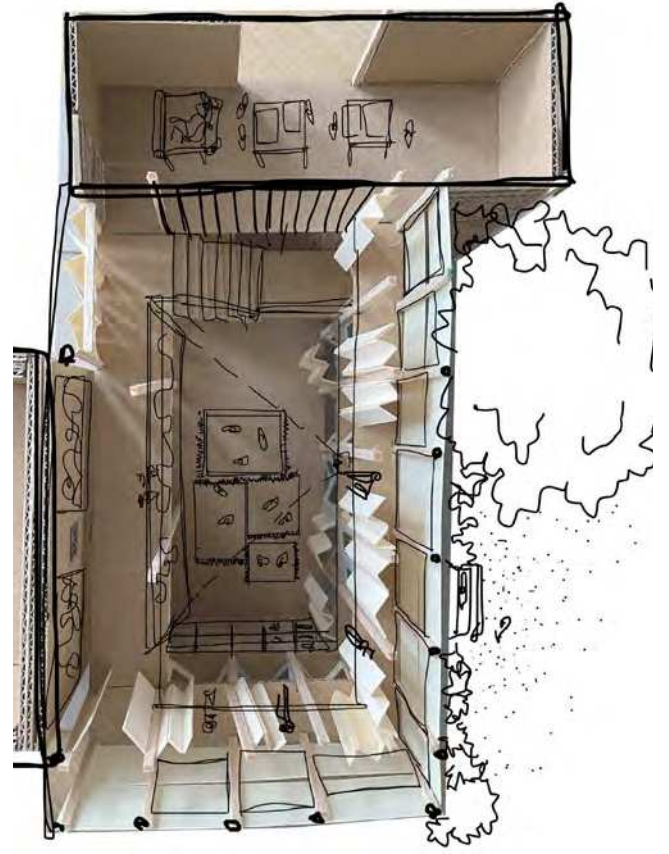
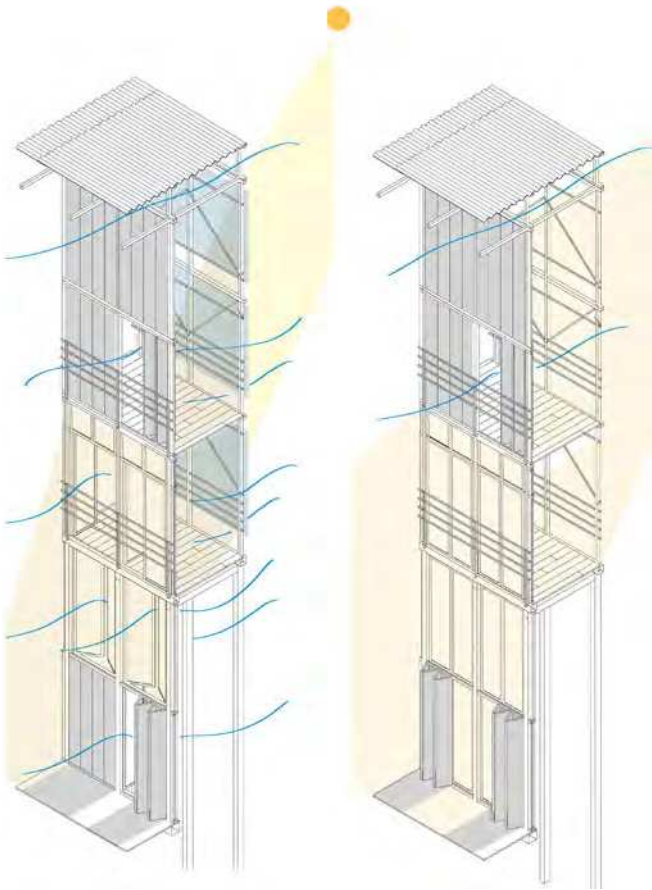
Sara Golnabi



The community that inhabits Prosfygika is bound together by individual and collective histories of resistance. Prosfygika is something more than a political squat: uprooted migrants ('we owned an antique shop. Our life was good'), a site for collective memory (Persian film screenings tell stories of revolution), a sharing culture ('come to my table, there is a bottle waiting for you'). Strangers, now friends, tell us their stories in their living rooms, at the collective kitchen, whilst showing us the view from the roof.

My proposal provides a framework for storytelling at the city, community and family scales. The 'lightbox' provides a hall and smaller more intimate spaces to formalise and expand existing public and community storytelling events which take place in Prosfygika, such as talks, film nights and book readings. The main hall façades open and close to provide flexibility in different weather and times of day, as well as different privacy needs. Surrounding the lightbox, modular mobile structures made from scaffolding move around the site, starting as a workshop, turning into an outdoor theatre, moving and expanding around the blocks and to other sites in Athens. Prosfygika becomes a site for safeguarding refugee stories through generations of diaspora and spreading those stories through Athens and beyond.





A Connected Yet Protected Community

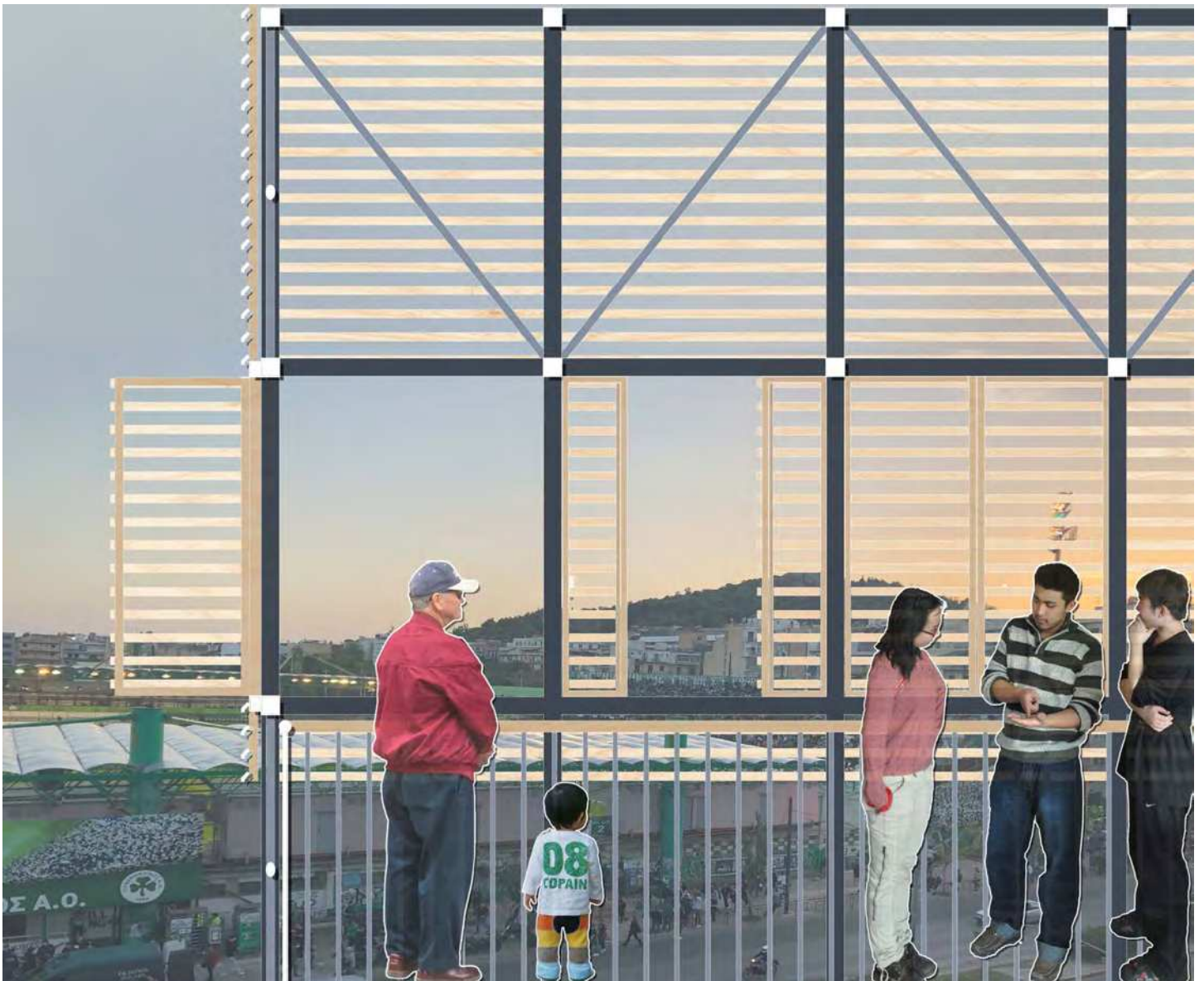
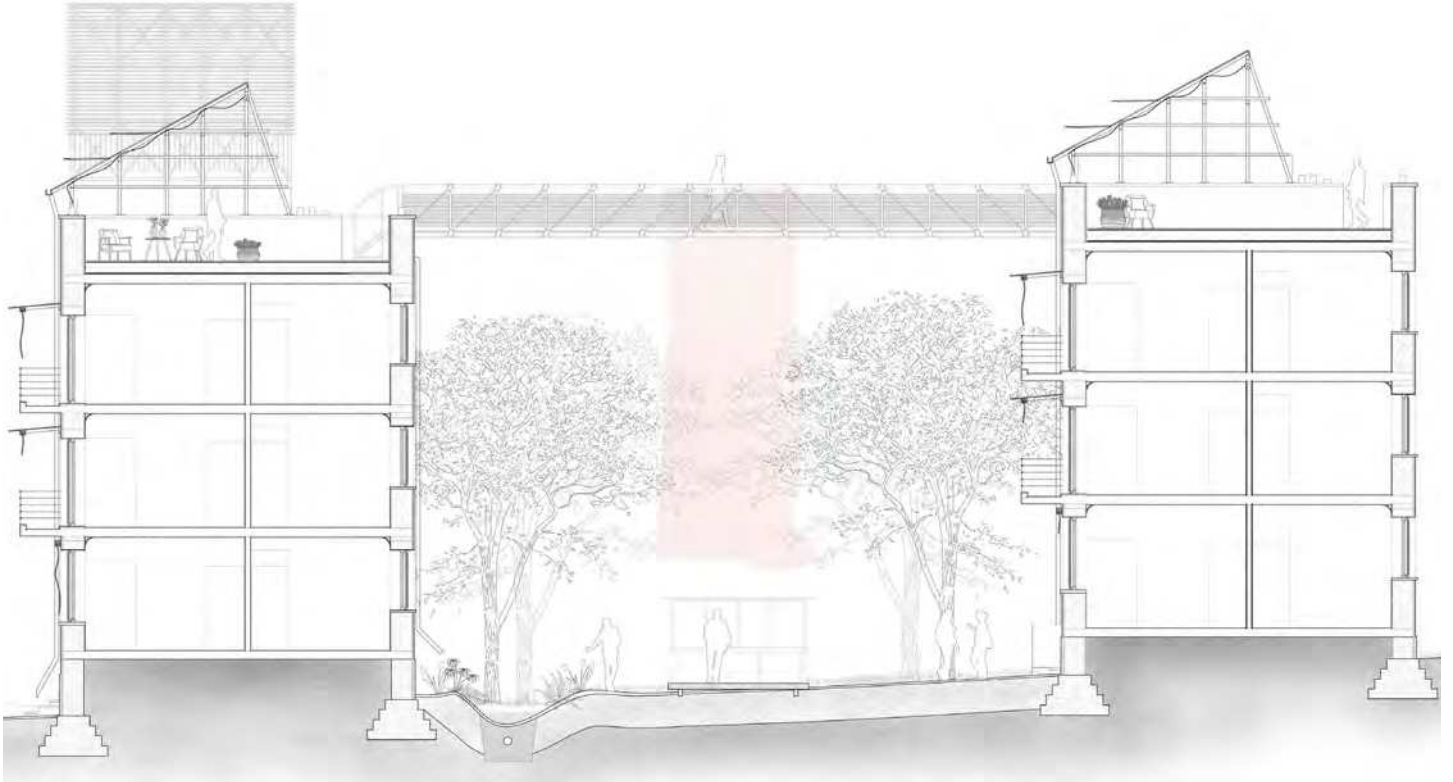
Oscar Osmond



Today, Prosfygika battles with the role of the carpark that its courtyards have become. Struggling to discover meaningful social space between the parked cars. There is a demand from the common spaces by the residents which is currently under-realized within Prosfygika. Using the stability and structure of the important apartment blocks, the project proposes ground floor extensions and rooftop bridges to reactivate and support community activity in between and above. Inspired by the behaviours that are currently unsupported within repurposed flats, the project aims to utilise the previously external 'East Avenue' as a new central 'High Street'. A place for exchange, including workshops, stalls and gathering spaces. Improving the connections to external resources that Prosfygika need to be connected to and additionally improving Prosfygika's place in Athens. Minimal ground floor additions, that initially will be tested through temporary interventions, aim to provide a new face for the village along this High Street and will provide protection to the, now car free, courtyards behind. Re-greened as new private community spaces. Rooftop interventions aim to connect and facilitate more comfortable socialisation for residents as an escape from the city. The rooftops are divided into three key zones, inspired by rooftop activity witnessed on our visit. For Resistance, Self-sufficiency & Maintenance.















ARCSR SYMPOSIUM

London Metropolitan University, London



In April 2023, towards the end of the academic year, ARCSR organised a two-day symposium, bringing together existing and new partners to establish a collaborative, interdisciplinary and international research group focused on questions of housing, social infrastructure and people in displacement in Athens, laying the groundwork for a larger project proposal in Athens in 2023-24.

This initiative was made possible thanks to a small rescaling grant from London Metropolitan University, and the ongoing support of The Water Trust (ARCSR). The symposium was organised and hosted by Dr Bo Tang and Sara Golnabi.

Context

Since 2016, the focus of ARCSR's work in Athens has been on migration and refugees, place-based architecture, and home-making, as a means to enhance the capacity of 'arrival' residents and their support networks to imagine and transform the context in which they live.

After the Arrival City (2022-25) addresses the close of the European refugee housing support programme (ESTIA), bringing about great uncertainty for an estimated 13,000 people in Athens, who have sought to make the city their home in recent years. The project seeks to understand how a city without an existing model for rented social housing can adapt to find new ways to support and accommodate people in displacement. Taking a place-based architectural approach, the project aims to support the development of robust and equitable research partnerships with local and international institutions working in Athens on questions of migration and urban development, housing and social infrastructure.

Programme

Day 1:

- An introduction to ARCSR by Dr Bo Tang
- Student Pecha Kucha presentations - Unit 06
- Guest presentations by Rania Dimitriou & Haris Biskos
- Seminar discussion workshop led by Annika Grafweg & Martha Giannakopoulou

Day 2:

- Roundtable discussion - ARCSR and invited guests

Left
Workshop with students (Bo Tang)

Invited Guest Collaborators:

Martha Giannakopoulou is an architect and graduate of the Architectural Association, (London, UK). She has more than 15 years experience in design, construction, and innovative urban planning strategies in many cities around the world such as Athens, London, New York, Beirut and more. She was awarded the Fulbright scholarship and worked at Cooper Union Institute of Sustainable Design in New York. The past years as a validated Urban expert & UIA (Urban Innovative Action -European Commission) expert on housing she has been consulting many European municipalities on housing and development issues and in the Humanitarian sector INGOs including, IOM UNDP, CRS, IOM, UNOP.

Annika Grafweg is a qualified Architect and graduated from the Architectural Association (London, UK), holding a Post Graduate degree in Emergency and Development Practice (Oxford Brookes University, UK). She is the co-founder of if-untitled architects and has more than 20 years' experience in design, housing, community-led planning, and construction within a wide spectrum of countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. Annika has lecturing experience including Architectural Association and London Metropolitan University (London, UK), as well as King Mongkut's University of Technology (Bangkok, Thailand). She has taken various roles at policy level as well as program level, working with UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, CRS and the World Bank. Recently, she has concluded her position with IOM (International Organization of Migration) Global Camp Management and Camp Coordination Cluster (CCCM) team on the topics of urban displacement and area-based approaches. Currently, she works with Habitat for Humanity International as the Regional Housing Ecosystem & Partnership Advisor for the Ukraine Regional Response.

Rania Dimitriou is a Project Manager in INGO Catholic Relief Services. She has been working in programmes that support refugees and asylum seekers in Greece since 2016. Her focus has been the integration of refugees to the social and economic life of Greece, mainly through employability and affordable housing provision. Rania has studied Political Science and History and holds a Master's Degree in Sociology.

Haris Biskos is an architect and urbanist based in Athens. His work explores contemporary aspirations and contingencies of urbanism through design, research, and action. He is an international city expert working with the Urban Innovative Actions initiative of the EU and an external consultant to the City of Athens Development Agency on urban development and EU projects. In the past, Haris had been leading the public platform for civic engagement in the City of Athens where he worked for over 5 years with the Vice Mayor for Civil Society and Innovation to develop a systematic mechanism for the City to engage with grassroots initiatives and community actors and helped shape a more inclusive urban agenda. He has taught urban design as an adjunct professor at the University of Patras, School of Architecture. He holds a Master in Architecture from Harvard University, Graduate School of Design (M.Arch II), and a Diploma of Architecture from the University of Patras in Greece.



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Images from the ARCSR symposium (Bo Tang)



Student Pecha Kucha Presentations

The first day involved presentations, discussions and workshops with Unit 6 students based around their work in Athens. Students presented their architectural proposal schemes in Pecha Kucha format and invited feedback from the panel of guests.

The student projects this year explored the following themes:

1 Generational Prosperity

In Kypseli and Prosygika, students noted an older generation of Athenians and settled migrants who are at risk of becoming forgotten. Proposals addressed the need for generational prosperity through inter-generational connection, and interaction between younger and older generations.

2 Connection

Some projects explored the creation of connections or networks, within the neighbourhood or the entire city, through support for increased civic activities, local businesses, and through participatory making.

3 Making Places

Other projects focused on placemaking, and reclaiming of unused spaces for new accommodation and community gathering.

4 Storytelling

Themes of performance and protest infrastructure; making connections through memory and storytelling; and safeguarding stories of home passed through generations.



Seminar Discussion Workshop

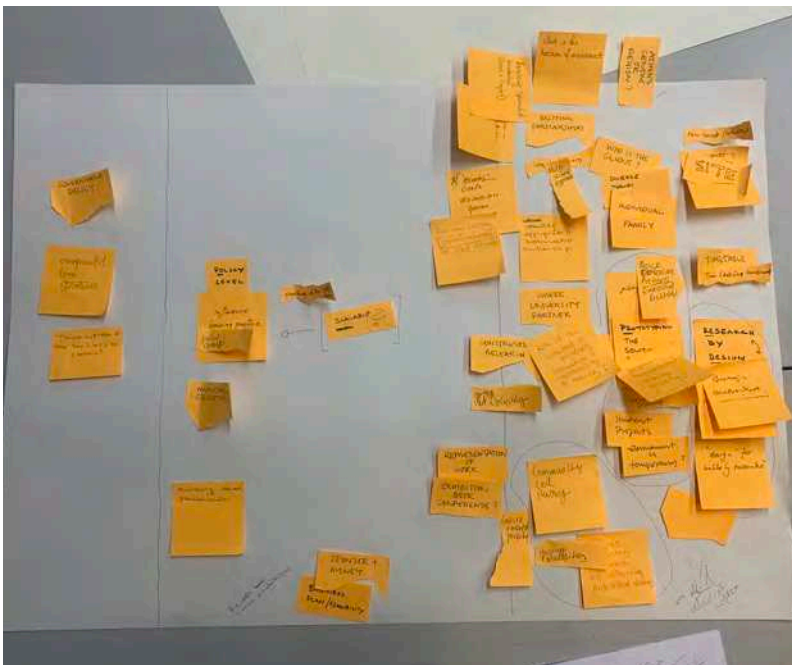
This session, led by invited guests, Annika Grafweg & Martha Giannakopoulou, provided the opportunity for invited guests to offer feedback on the student presentations. This was followed by a seminar discussion workshop focused on 'who, what, when, how?'

Guest Presentations

Invited guests, Rania Dimitriou & Haris Biskos, gave presentations on Athens-based projects focused on support for refugees and civic engagement. Invited guests, followed by a discussion on housing and integration challenges for refugees in Athens.

Roundtable Discussion

On the second day, a roundtable event with ARCSR members and invited guests focused on questions of migration, housing and social infrastructure for people in displacement through an urban lens. The aim was to formulate a research question around the topics of housing, integration, social cohesion and community engagement for people in displacement within the Athenian/Greek context. A collective brainstorm mapping exercise resulted in ideas for next steps at different scales from bottom-up to top-down initiatives.





Changing Places

MArch RIBA II Module

Module Leader/Tutor: Beatrice De Carli

Changing Places offers a critical overview of community-based approaches to urbanism, architecture, and construction, particularly in contexts of rapid change and resource scarcity.

Sessions are divided into four thematic clusters. The first cluster explores critical forms of spatial practice in socially engaged architecture and international development. The following clusters discuss how these practices relate to specific material cultures and technologies, social relationships and organisation, and urban imaginaries.

Each thematic cluster begins with a lecture providing a historical and theoretical overview of the topic, followed by a practical workshop that explores real-life situations through role-play and simulation exercises. The next session involves a student-led seminar where the same theme is discussed using set texts in critical spatial theory and practice. Writing workshops are also included to help students develop critical and reflective writing skills, drawing from their own experiences, locations, and investigations of “changing places.”

Coursework consists of an illustrated essay that analyses a case of community-based architecture and urbanism using one of the module’s themes.



Left
View from Strefi Hill (Jameson Goring)

Exploring Kypseli: Migrants' challenges of integrating into the community and how Kypseli Municipal Market builds a multicultural united community

Maria Markova

This essay examines the challenges of migration and integration in Greece, with a specific focus on the Kypseli neighbourhood in Athens. Through an examination of the support provided to migrants in the neighbourhood and the role of public spaces in fostering a sense of unity between locals and migrants, the study illustrates the complexities of migration and integration in Greece. It highlights the importance of open public spaces in bringing together locals and migrants of different backgrounds and improving the overall well-being of the community. The Kypseli Municipal Market, located on the vibrant Fokionos Negri Street, serves as a case study, providing insight into the impact of public spaces on promoting understanding and community among residents of various ethnicities. The research delves into the historical and cultural diversity of the Kypseli neighbourhood, and how it has evolved over time to become one of the most multicultural areas in Athens. The research is intended for readers interested in understanding the challenges of migration and integration, particularly in the context of Greece. The findings of this research underscore the importance of open public spaces in creating inclusive communities, promoting social cohesion, and fostering economic growth. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of providing support to migrants in order to facilitate their integration into the community.

Key references

- Pike, A., A. Rodriguez-Pose, and J. Tomaney. *Handbook of Local and Regional Development*, ed. by Andy Pike, Andres Rodriguez-Pose, and John Tomaney (London: Routledge, 2010).

- "Kypseli." [n.d.]. *Athens Social Atlas* <<https://www.athenssocialatlas.gr/en/article/kypseli/>> [accessed 1 January 2023]

- Daniilidis, A., 'Spaces of social representation in the new urban landscape: the case of Kypseli Municipal Market, Athens, Greece.' *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network*, 11:2 (2018), pp.60-78.

The Long Goodbye to Athens: The Image of the City Through the Eyes of Cinema

Carlos Bargao

The city of Athens, Greece is both the setting and protagonist of this essay. The essay explores forms of representation of the urban experience in films under two different perspectives. One articulates a theoretical position (Chapters), and the other one offers an anthology of stories (Chronicles), using film characters to explore a deeper understanding of everyday urban life in Athens. Filmic spaces are open to be inhabited and reinterpreted by anyone – each spectator extracting differentiated impressions, emotions and understandings of the city. The city's filmography is thus a representation of lived space. Is the experience of these representations capable of conforming to a set of sensations that modify our perception of the reality of cities? Do films influence our urban stories and experience?

The essay addresses these questions by highlighting the cycle of films produced from the mid-1970s and during the 1990s, by two Greek directors Theo Angelopoulos (1935–2012) and Constantine Giannaris, whose main theme was experience and social and political conflicts, economic and migratory flows generated in the urban space of the largest Greek metropolises: Athens and Thessaloniki. Films such as *A Landscape in the Mist* (1975), *Athens Return to the Acropolis* (1983), *Eternity and a Day* (1998) by Theo Angelopoulos, or *From the Edge of the City* (1998) by Constantine Giannaris, and the documentary *Builders, Housewives and the Construction of Modern Athens* (2021) by Tasos Langis and Giannis Gaitanidis among others, are part of this Athenian urban cinema: are a good example, how cinema can represent new themes and chronicles in the imagination of the viewer.

Key references

- Theocharopoulou, Ioanna and Frampton Kenneth. *Builders Housewives and the Construction of Modern Athens* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2017).

- Kracauer, Siegfried. *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

- Boyer, M. Christine. *The City of Collective Memory* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1994).

Otherness In Common Space: Exploring Spatial Intersectionality in the Squatted Community of Prosfygika

Sara Golnabi

As communities of resistance emerge through housing squats, alternative forms of housing also make their way into mainstream architectural practice, such as self-built housing and illegal occupation of land – practices which are historically linked to displaced people in Europe. As spatial practitioners, what can we make of these bottom-up practices, which act against the bodies that architects are traditionally expected to protect? Common space plays an important role in resistance and creating new socialities. In communities of resistance, common space emerges from the margins, and intersectionality provides a frame to look at the diverse spatial needs of communities who lie at the intersection of those margins.

Mapping the spatial practices of squatted communities may help us learn about their intersectional needs, and to bring forward their spatial agency. This is especially important to displaced and diasporic communities, who are often reduced to a single identity and expected to ‘integrate’ into spaces that do not account for intersectional needs. In this essay I explore the Community of Squatted Prosfygika in Athens and their spatial practices through maps, diagrams, and other forms of representation. Using various references for mapping, I aim to represent the existing demographics and structures of the community, their ways of inhabiting and ‘reterritorialising’ space, and imaginaries or possibilities for the future. I propose ways of mapping on-the-ground experience, which could involve the affected community, that tell the story of Prosfygika from the ‘other’ perspective, centring and giving agency to those at the margins.

Key references

- Stavrides, Stavros, *Common Space* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).
- Awan, Nishat, *Diasporic Agencies: Mapping the City Otherwise* (London: Ashgate, 2016).
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé, *The Urgency of Intersectionality*, online video recording, TED (2016) <https://www.ted.com/talks/kimberle_crenshaw_the_urgency_of_intersectionality?language=en> [accessed 11 January 2023].

The Child’s Experience of Freedom at The Community of Squatted Prosfygika, Athens

Jameson Goring

In this essay we aim to learn about the child’s experience of freedom at The Community of Squatted Prosfygika, Athens, Greece, with a focus on socially reproduced spaces – to understand if these spaces produce a freedom of experience for children and positively contribute to their development. We begin by understanding the occupation in relation to the wider resistance movement, its opposition to the state, and the wider refugee mobility in Athens. We learn from a photographic walk I had with a refugee child who lives in the occupation, Danny, to understand his relationship with Prosfygika and the wider urban environment. We aim to reveal how a greater sense of freedom is facilitated in community-occupied space, and reflect on the child’s experience of the world and how past limitations to their freedom may affect their experiential potential for freedom. We then understand the relationship between society, freedom and the production of space at Prosfygika. We aim to learn from Prosfygika’s reappropriated spaces, and how adaptable space is key to the child’s experience of Freedom. We see child-led occupations in Prosfygika as child-led prefiguration, and come to understand the degree of environmental freedoms that these socially reproduced spaces allow. We see the relationships between Anarchist Spatial Practice and Children’s play as both prefigurative political action, both an assertion of Freedom, an assertion of their right to the city, to participate in the making and remaking of their worlds through adaptively reappropriating space in their own terms. Finally, we reflect on how this may influence our own spatial practice at this intersection.

Key references

- Tuan, Yi-Fu. 1977. *Space and Place* (University of Minnesota Press).
- Ward, Colin. 1978. *The Child in the City* (London: The Architectural Press Ltd).
- Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).



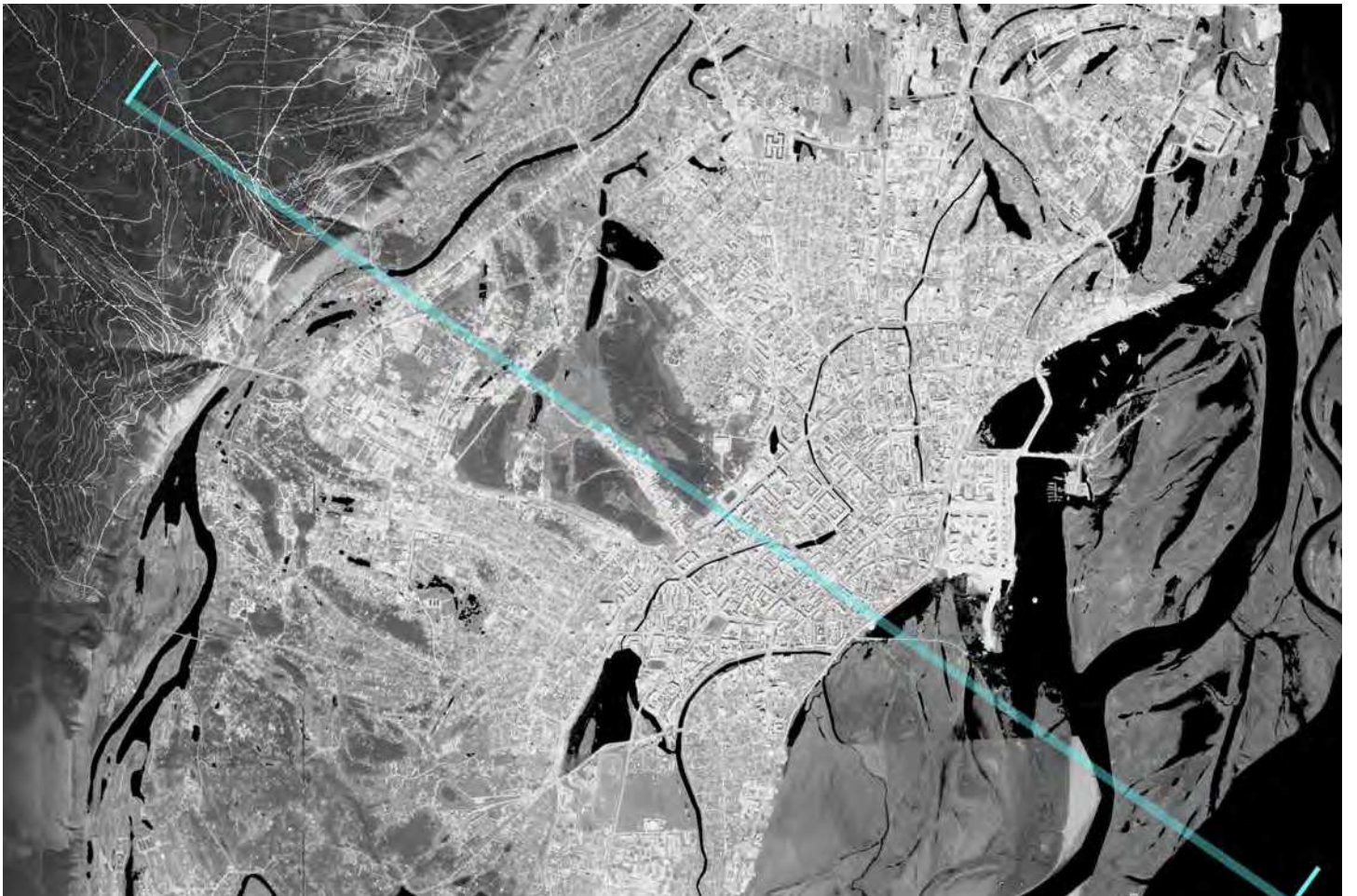
1 - Subarctic extreme climate: below -50C in the winter; above +30C in the summer. Short daytime in the winter, white nights in the summer.



2 - Heavy fog in the winter when temperatures drop below -40C; dust and smoke in the summer (wildfires). Summer wildfires are increasing every year.



3 - Feral animals in the city, stray dogs issue: forming packs and attacking citizens. Heating pipes works as a winter shelter.



Maiia Sivtseva

Supervisors: Bo Tang, Maurice Mitchell
2019-2023

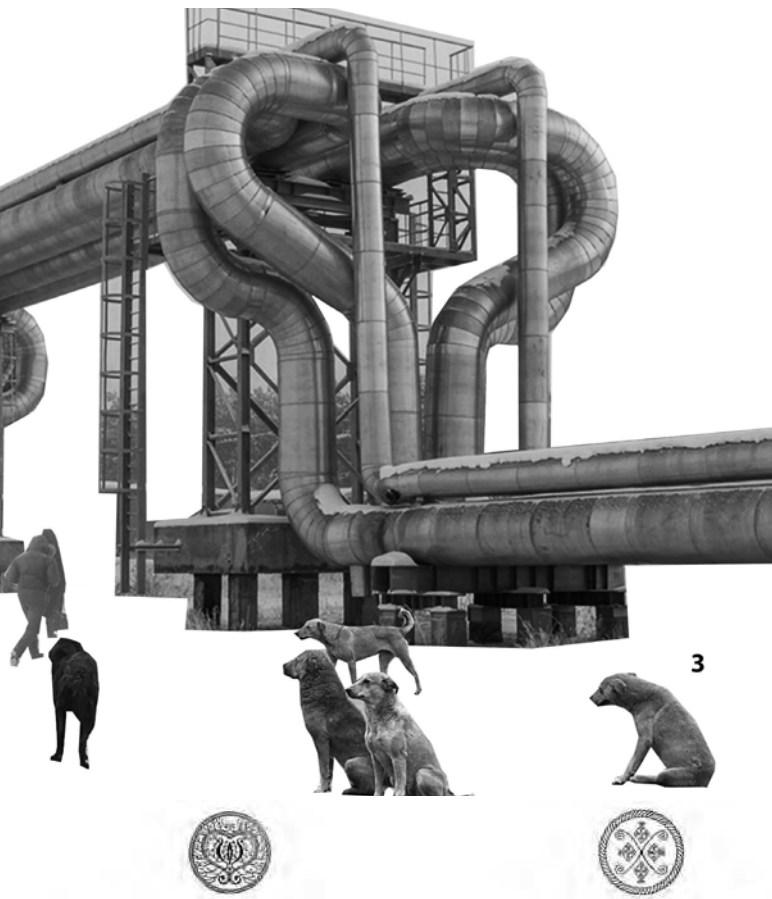
Evaluating participatory placemaking as a tool for civic development of shared spaces in the postcolonial contexts of Yakutsk and Lensk, North-Eastern Siberia.

Maiia's PhD by practice examines the potential of participatory placemaking as a tool for the civic development of shared urban spaces in the postcolonial contexts of Yakutsk and Lensk located in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), North-Eastern Siberia. Inhibited by its colonial history and forced urbanisation during the period of Soviet rule and the rigidity of the current Russian-based planning process, the citizens of Yakutia have little involvement in the imagining and making of the fabric of the city. The research asks: how can participatory placemaking contribute to the civic development of Yakutsk and Lensk by embodying the aspirations of residents and employing other local contextual affordances at city, neighbourhood and building scales?

The case studies of Oyuur Park in Lensk and Dog City in Yakutsk test the top-down and bottom-up approaches of participatory design. The third case study of the Amphitheatre Project in London was added to compare Yakutian learning-by-making practices with western ones. The final survey of Siberian Imaginaries built on found local affordances tests further the theory of urban imaginaries through online participatory design workshops.

The research contributes to knowledge by helping to fill the gap in the application of participatory placemaking in the postcolonial Far North. The recommendations evaluate the most effective design approach, timing, process structure, and scale for PP in the research context. The recommendations can be tested further to scale up the local initiatives in Yakutia and in regions with similar contextual characteristics and/or used as guidance to facilitate speculative participatory placemaking projects.

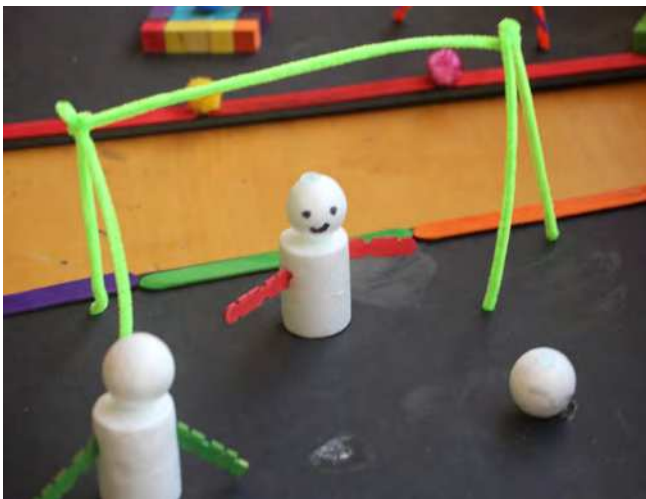
Maiia submitted her thesis in October 2022, and undertook her viva in December, passing with minor changes. She submitted her final thesis in February, successfully achieving her doctorate in April 2023.



4 - Remoteness and scarce resources: transportation links are closed in the mid seasons. Building materials such as concrete, metal and Siberian larch are transported from the western Siberia.

5 - Topography and building regulations: large-scale buildings are raised above the ground due to permafrost landscape. Relatively flat landscape of the valley where Yakutsk is situated, prone to floodings. Lack of green in the city.





Hosn Houssami

Vice-Chancellor's Post-Graduate Research Scholar

**Supervisors: Bo Tang, Beatrice de Carli
2021-**

Exploring participatory mapping techniques and the consideration of children's spaces in city neighbourhoods, as components of shared urban imaginaries and development planning in Beirut, Lebanon.

When assessing architectural co-production methods and practices, especially in the scope city planning and grander development models, we can often assume the key demographics which are often omitted from the participatory process. While architecture as a practice is veering towards more inclusive processes, increasingly younger demographics are overlooked. This thesis looks towards Beirut, Lebanon as the location of interest for a study focusing on the local populations - focusing on children - perception's of their home towns and following from this the use of mapping and participatory workshops to draw out their collective aspirations for said towns.

The lack of children's spaces can be noted within most cities, but especially in Beirut, Lebanon. Beirut, Lebanon, is a city that has borne significant physical and institutional changes due to its unique topographical landscape and ever-changing socio-economic climate. It is therefore not shocking that in a city that has gone through so many fundamental changes that large parts of the population are overlooked in the little development that is occurring, especially development focusing on children,

The two focus sites chosen for this project were Sabra and Karantina. The two sites offer an interesting basis of comparison as while both neighbourhoods are home to a large refugee population and are fast developing neighbourhoods, only Karantina has had any forms of architectural interventions produced specifically with children in mind.

Following a qualitative data collection approach, this thesis looks to examine how participatory practices, specialist and collaborative mapping and representations of spatial and temporal narratives can be used to express alternative potential urban imaginaries and shared aspirations, in order to address the following aims:

- a) Exploration and representation of the local topographic and ethnographic context.
- b) Exploration and representation of different spatial and temporal narratives.
- c) Representation of alternative potential urban imaginaries and shared aspirations at both the local and city scale through an often underrepresented demographic; with a focus on children.



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Photograph from Workshop 2, Karantina

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Photograph of output from Workshop 3, Karantina

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Photograph from Workshop 3, Karantina

d) Identification of hidden needs that may not be a part of the existing collective narrative but will allow the skills, imagination and agency of the urban architect to make a contribution to inclusive city making, starting with small-scale realised structural proposals of children spaces to a larger theoretical framework for city development.

When planning the techniques that were used to collect data, it became increasingly evident that I would be approaching data collection through a dual strategy. The intentions behind this distinction was meant to clarify which parts of the aims for the thesis would be pursued through the production of architectural maps and surveys the lens of a specialist (here referring to myself); and which part of the aims will involve data being collected from participatory workshops and interviews, produced with participants, specifically children. This developed two categories 'Individual Data Collection' and 'Collaborative Data Collection'.

The 'Collaborative Data Collection' mainly comprised of outputs from 3 key workshops ran parallel across both sites. The workshops looked to introduce children to fundamental principles of architecture, help them relate that within the context they already know, and then further from this use their critical thinking and design skills to assess their cities and allow for conversations on aspirations for their city and a potential live build of their design.

- **Workshop 1, Our Town**, was a group drawing activity where children were given the opportunity to develop their mapping skills by mapping their towns in a collaborative process.

- **Workshop 2, Our Street**, was design activity where children are asked to 'build' different social structures and through collaborative discussions, co-design a street from the individual structures.

- **Workshop 3, Our Space**, was design activity where children were asked to design a social space.

Further from this the 'Individual Data Collection' focused more on my role as a researcher and a 'specialist'. I produced sets of maps across both sites, highlighting different contexts, and social, architectural, and topographical features. These would be used in the analysis phase as comparative tools used to assess the outputs from the workshops, aligning the perceptions of the participants with the architectural data collected. The reason for this is to contextualise myself, as the researcher, in the world of the participants as they see it, and following on from this, to use this understanding to form observations which may lead to well-informed proposals for interventions in both sites.



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Lines map of Lebanon

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Lines map of Beirut, with sites

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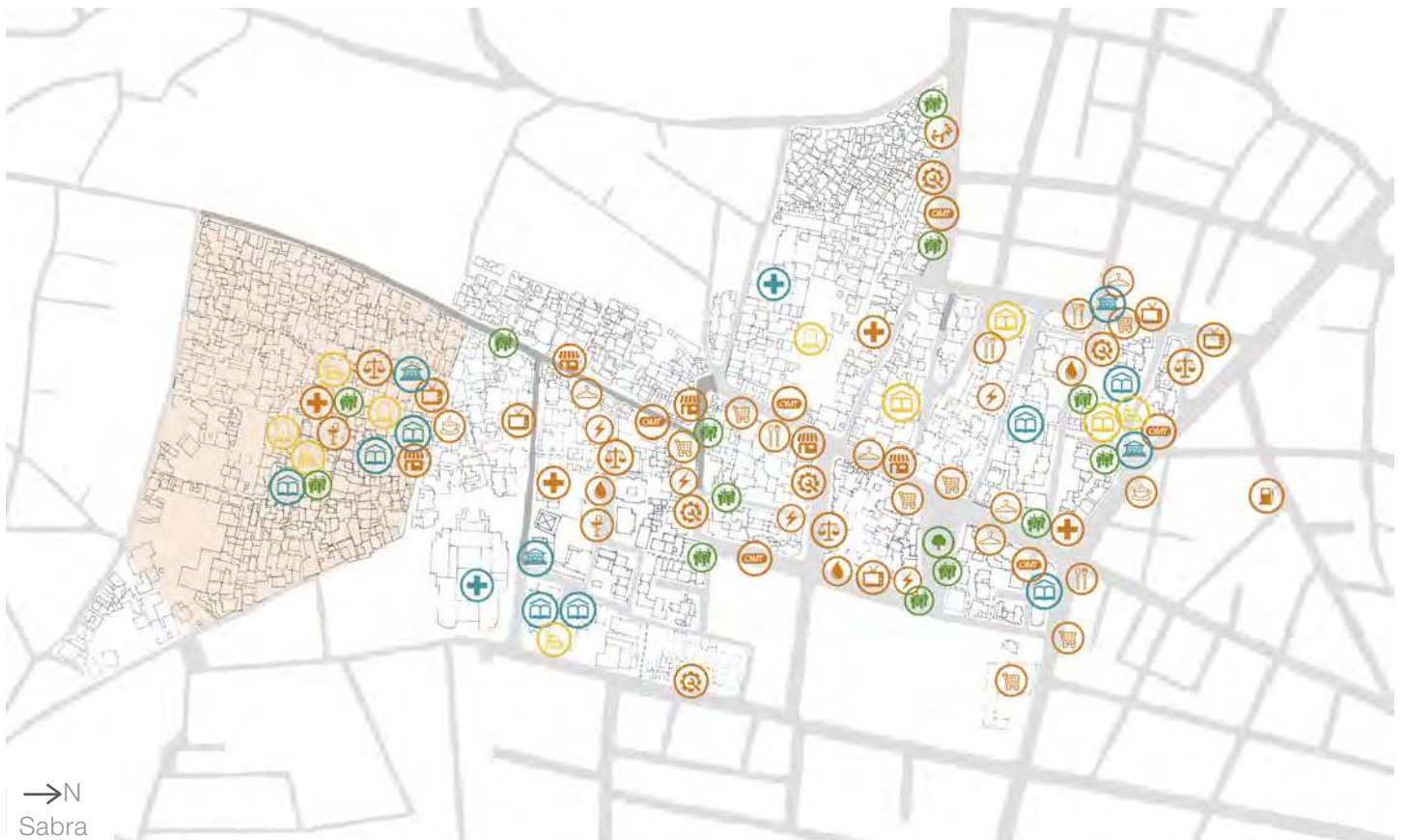
Photograph from Workshop 1, Sabra

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Context map of Karantina

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Context map of Sabra



Private

- Health Care Facilities
- Clothing Stores
- Clothing Stores
- Electronic Stores
- Cafes
- Playgrounds
- Money Exchange
- Generic Shops
- Electricity Distributors
- Mechanics
- Water Distributors
- Groceries
- Legal Advice
- Petrol Stations
- Pharmacies

Semi-Public

- Places of Worship
- Cemeteries
- Schools
- Sports Pitches

Public

- Government Buildings
- Community Centres
- Schools
- Sports Pitches
- Playgrounds

Informal

- Health Care Facilities
- Informal Green Spaces
- Public/Informal Social Spaces

Existenzminimum (German)

The term existenzminimum refers to the concept of minimal 'subsistence dwelling' developed in the early twentieth century in Germany.

Pecha Kucha (Japanese)

Pecha Kucha, literally 'chit chat' is a presentation style in which 20 slides are shown for 20 seconds each (6 minutes and 40 seconds in total). The format keeps presentations concise and fast-paced, facilitating multiple-speaker events.

Polykatoikia (Greek)

Polykatoikia, literally "multi-residence" is used to denote apartment buildings in Athens.

The polykatoikia parallels the development of Corbusier's Dom-ino structure which he designed in 1914. It consists of a reinforced concrete framework with solid reinforced concrete floors but open throughout to non-loadbearing walls and windows. The polykatoikia was originally conceived in the 1930s as a multi-storey apartment building. As with the Dom-ino model, the polykatoikia involved on site construction by relatively unskilled manual labour using what was then a new structural material: reinforced concrete.

Prosfygika (Greek)

'Prosfygika' means 'refugee settlement' in Greek and refers to the social housing blocks developed in the 1920s-50s to accommodate large influxes of refugees from Asia Minor. The largest one in Athens is on Alexandras Avenue.

Stoa (Greek)

Stoa originated from Ancient Greek architecture. It is popularly seen across Greek cities and is identified as a covered walkway on the ground floor level, lining the side of the building with columns.

Additional Credits

[Representation of resistance \(p.104\)](#)

Sara Golnabi

[Views in and around Prosfygika \(p.105\)](#)

Jameson Goring

This publication includes extracts of work from the working document - *Unit 06 Athens Field Trip - October 2022*, edited by Jameson Goring, Kseniia Shipush and Maria Markova.

