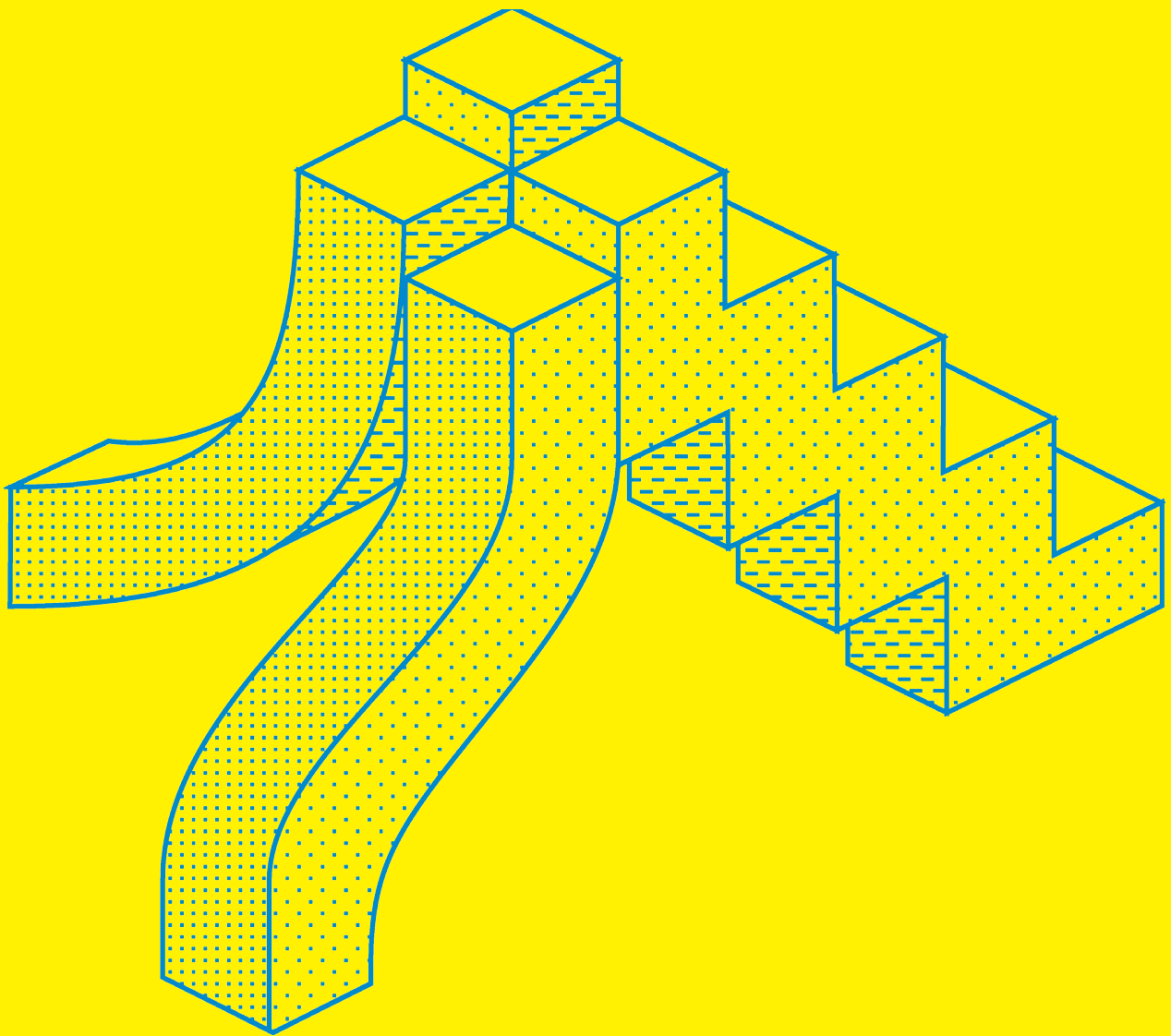


Building Civic Pride



BA (Hons) Architecture, Studio 3 — 2013-2014
Tutors: Torange Khonsari, Sandra Denicke Polcher
The Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design
In collaboration with CASSprojects, Jen Ng

Constructing the Civic

The strongest context from which we can start the conversation about Civic Pride is Sienna during the 13th century. At the scale of the 'contrade' (neighbourhood), there was great rivalry and competitive alliances were born within and across the contrades which expanded to the city. The contrades had their own political entities, their own museums and their own fundraising events, which supported the welfare of the contrade. The central point in a contrade was a fountain where all new born children were baptised and fires were burnt.

The commune, which is similar to a county in the UK, was ruled by the Oligarch or the 'monti'. He formulated all the policies for the commune. The contrades were part of the commune but also very much independent. Their political process was truly participative. Inside the contrade nine men plus a captain were elected to serve bi monthly in the office. Around 1 in 6 citizens were in government at any given time and then this rotated. This means all men from a contrade had been in the political arena at one point. This enabled the government to live in harmony with, what we call today 'civil society'. The citizens were all involved in creation and involvement of civic values and aspirations which had physical implications on the symbolism of the architecture and the city. Values such as justice, freedom and honour were engrained in all citizens but this wasn't political propaganda but what the citizens believed in, practiced and were involved in implementing. As governance and administration became more complicated, more skill and knowledge was needed. Frequent travelling and knowledge transfer also meant that ideas about new governance models developed.

The Piazza del Campo which hosted civic and cultural activities was the first place to rival the nobility and the church's public events in splendour and grandeur. This manifested its symbolic tales in decoration, ornamentation, art and sculpture which defined architecture that was consequently created. In Sienna the institutional orientation was 'bonum commune' (common ground) opposed to individual grandeur practiced at the same time in other Italian cities. The Piazza was a sight for competitive fights between the contrade which ended with dance festivals as a sign of comradeship. At these large events people put their differences aside and got together in the same activity. This sign of togetherness reconfirmed the civic tradition of the city. The buildings that supported the symbolism and Civic Pride were designed and built collaboratively between the civil society, their beliefs and the government. Great civic failures happened when the state or the architect designed and built exclusively from one image or for the architects' own convenience.

Consequently, the current perceived crisis in public space making is often less a matter of inadequate design techniques as it is a muddled uncertainty about appropriate relationship between the state and civil society.

The Piazza del Campo provided a place for collective practices, rituals and encouraged everyday individual activities and experiences. The localities of the civic sites should be varied and not state orientated. The Piazza del Campo's success also lies on the fact that it served a very local population.

Can we instigate such civic pride today?

It was also the common property of the 17 contrades, which helped with a common sense of ownership. Large metropolitan public spaces, specially those with corporate funding, fail to attract a localised use, collective and comprehensive use or symbolism and thus they often fail as civic spaces.

Architecture needs to address current immediate social and cultural concerns. It is important, how it is conceived, what its material and construction techniques are, which are embedded within the social infrastructure of the everyday. This everyday is specific to a locality and local group of people and individuals or to groups that share an interest or a territory. A successful project must be common place at least in the sense of being accessible to the locals and encourage and build on shared experiences.

The Barcelona open space program of the 1980s was a success due to collective intellectual ideas of place making. The city perceived Barcelona as distinct quarters and districts with unique qualities.

The architects and public officials were keenly aware of the plurality of interests confronting them as various groups in civil society and began to assert themselves.

It needs to be considered that sometimes social diversity can be denied through an overly monolithic insistence on a particular style or approach. Spaces should allow re-appropriation for unforeseen uses whilst not being vague and bereft of ideas about use. This vagueness and unclarity would become alienating to the citizen.

The fundamental part of a new image for the city is that those in government and civil society need to find the right level of involvement and method of involvement.

Unfortunately, such decisions often vary between the abstractions of plan making and broad social programs that attempt to satisfy everyone and yet often end up enfranchising very few, and the construction of favoured local projects of powerful interest groups.

There are questions about who is the public when we talk about the public. There is no singular concept of the public due to this shifting all the time, with movements in the city and diversity of ethnicity, social groups and interests which can't create the cohesion of a Sienese society.

Hannah Arendt talks about the modern public condition as one with lack of sufficient common ground or way of relating to each other. According to Richard Sennett, the values formed in specific families cannot extend into the public realm in a context where there is diversity, cultural difference and those are conflicting value systems. Jurgen Habermas talks about the private world embracing the intimate sphere of the household – personal, moral, religious values-making personal economic choices and personal economic decisions. Public authority by contrast is bound up in a state of policy, courts and its supporting institutions:

Civil society is an organisational construct within this public sphere, depicting the banding together of people with common interests and as a corollary of a depersonalised state authority.

Civil society and civic space according to Habermas is the public part of private realm necessitated by alienation of the state which exists at odds with organised authority and is critical of it. Cohen describes Civil society being composed of intimate relations between family and the sphere of volunteering associations and social movements.

Hannah Arendt says that public space also signifies publicity or a sphere where everyone is heard. It is about a sphere where things are held in common. The common world gathers us together but it "prevents us from falling over each other".

This commonality can also be about national or local myths and narratives or histories that bring people together and create a common interest. This values can even diminish the power of a state, shifting to the collective unified inhabitants that have a common interest and common cause. In addition to hosting commonality it is important to entertain simultaneous awareness of social and cultural diversity.

“A dining room where dissidents meet, for instance could be just as much a public place as a town hall.”

Peter Rowe

Individual rights and liberty are extremely important and sometimes this takes precedent over common engagement. Here, civil society facilitates a debate on matters of public good and benefit.

“ Being civic lies somewhere between the private realm of ones existence and the public domain of officialdom”

G.W.F. Hegel
(*Philosophy of Rights*)

Something purely created or owned by the state can not be civic. You need to be aware of what is public and what is private and through the shifting boundaries the civic can be placed.

The civic dimensions integrated into everyday life are necessary to hold public institutions accountable and ensuring individual rights to be practiced.

“Buildings should not make private citizens realise how unimportant they are, but create a public architecture of intimacy, one that brings people together in an experience of confidence and trust.”

US Senator Daniel Moynihan

Transformation of Space Into Place

Henry Lefebvre talks about how all the spaces we occupy are produced by social processes. Each culture brings a different notion of use of spaces. This can be applied to public or private space. This appropriation of space, which is very specific and can bring out commonality between cultures and denote differences, is usually unconsidered when developing housing or public realm.

The city shifts, changes, gets altered and is re-invented with the movement of society and its needs and development. How permanent should buildings be? And what should be the monuments of tomorrow?

Can temporary civic architecture be a way to establish common values required for civic pride as suggested in Sienna model? The permanent structures need to create a common sense of identity, whilst the temporary enables establishment of partnerships, collaborations and experimentation with action and built form.

In Soho, New York, the claiming of industrial buildings by artists in the 1960s and a collective action in negotiating with government to change the use of Soho and gaining services and property rights lead to a history of civic action and Civic Pride. The weekly newspaper – Soho Weekly - that started to voice community issues, became part of the voice of the citizens that Hannah Arendt talks about.

The pre-existence of space does condition a person's actions, perceptions and exchanges with others. Neighbourhoods are now also involved in a transition from organised street husking to coordinated alternative forms of street government.

This establishes community as solidarity. Lefebvre talks about space as place where social practices can be played out and documented.

The efforts of individuals publicly motivated, or not, but publicly played out produce localised environments that offer more to the meaning of a city than otherwise would have been the case.

Resistance and Manifestation

Our maps refer to an abstract and independent description of many specific trajectories and spatial experiences of an area. They are about geographical space but also an anthropological tour that describes how people enact, feel and learn about space. De Certeau explains that the act of 'serving' belongs both to maps and places, referring to the performed, influencing specific actions that take and place within it. 'Walking' is to urban systems as 'speech' is to language. Through observation we understand the places within the city. We find spaces that conform to a general order and those which oppose it. De Certeau calls for individuals and personalities to lead in asserting their will and right onto the city. Generalised descriptions, accounts and understanding of cities which are developed to ease solutions and proposals for the city, deprive cities of their essential humanity and true reality. Dangerously, once accepted as reality and used to fashion other places, they start to strip them from their genuine anthropological spaces. A generous place is one that can accommodate many practical spaces.

Meguro City Hall Tokyo

Susan Kudo

Opened in 1966, Meguro City Hall started life as head offices for the Chiyoda Life Insurance Company. At the time it was built, Japan was experiencing strong economic growth but by the year 2000, amid recession, the company went bankrupt and the building was purchased by Meguro City who were desperately in need of a new city hall.

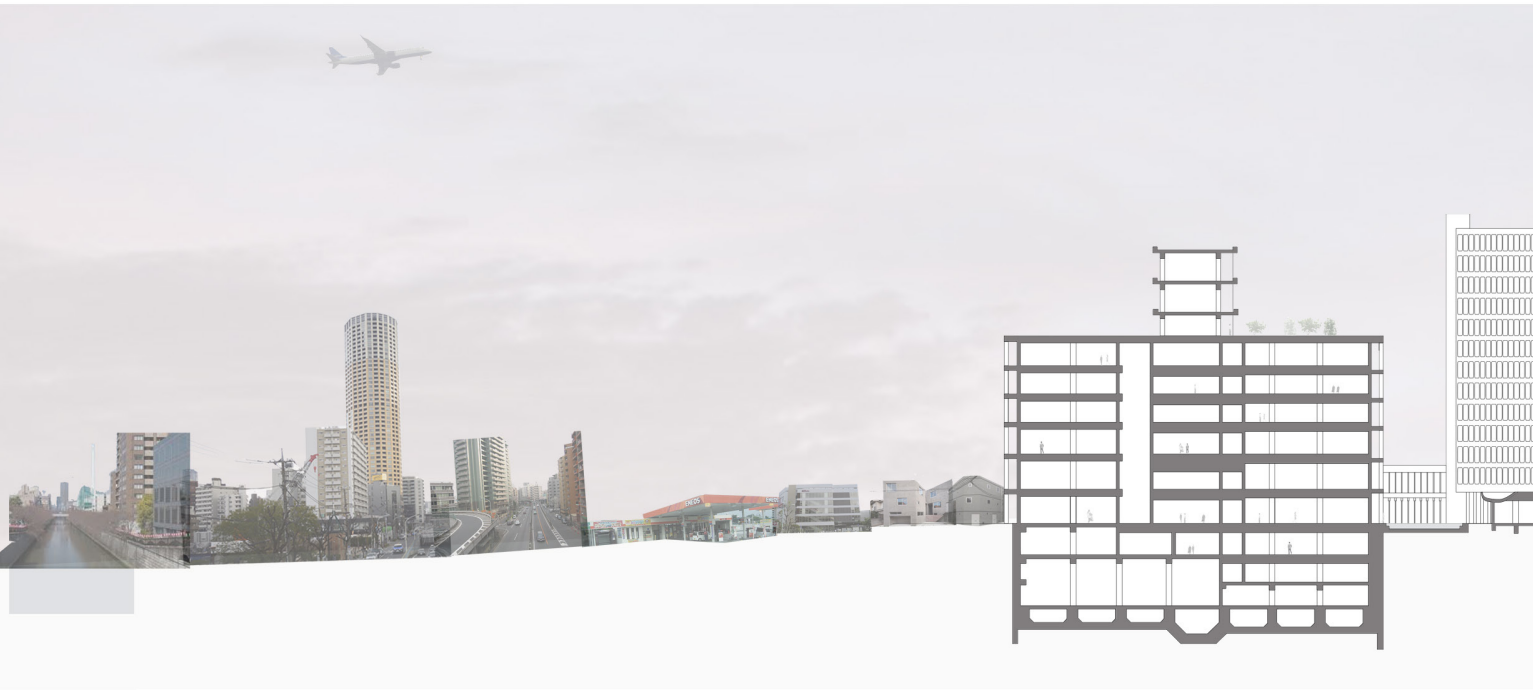
Designed by renowned Japanese architect Toga Murano, the building was considered a masterpiece for its elegant use of concrete as a material which, at the time, was relatively new to Japan. The decision was taken by Meguro City to preserve and convert the building instead of demolishing it which is usually the case in Japan. Tokyo based Yasui Architects were appointed to convert the office space and in 2003 the new city hall was opened.

Meguro City Hall serves 250,000 residents and is home to various municipal offices. Japan is a paper based society and residents services are all under one roof making the City Hall a place where citizens visit regularly. Inside the city hall there is also a small clinic, library, meeting rooms, club spaces and rooms for consultations on daily life. Staff at the city hall are often long serving and are familiar faces to many residents.

What drew my interest to Meguro City Hall is the multi functional aspect of the space which includes a timetable of leisure activities. People not only visit to complete municipal paperwork but also to socialize through attending clubs and activities. It is a shared space in the heart of Meguro which is well used by residents.

How do we design a public space that people will use?







Traditional Japanese rooms used for clubs are located alongside the underground car park. The space is flexible and can accommodate many different activities.



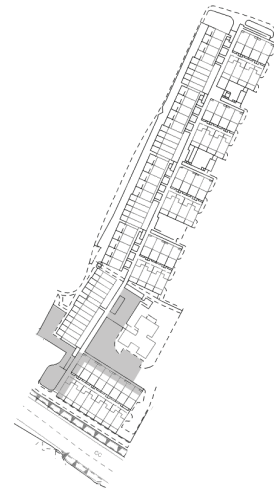
Rooms for Residency

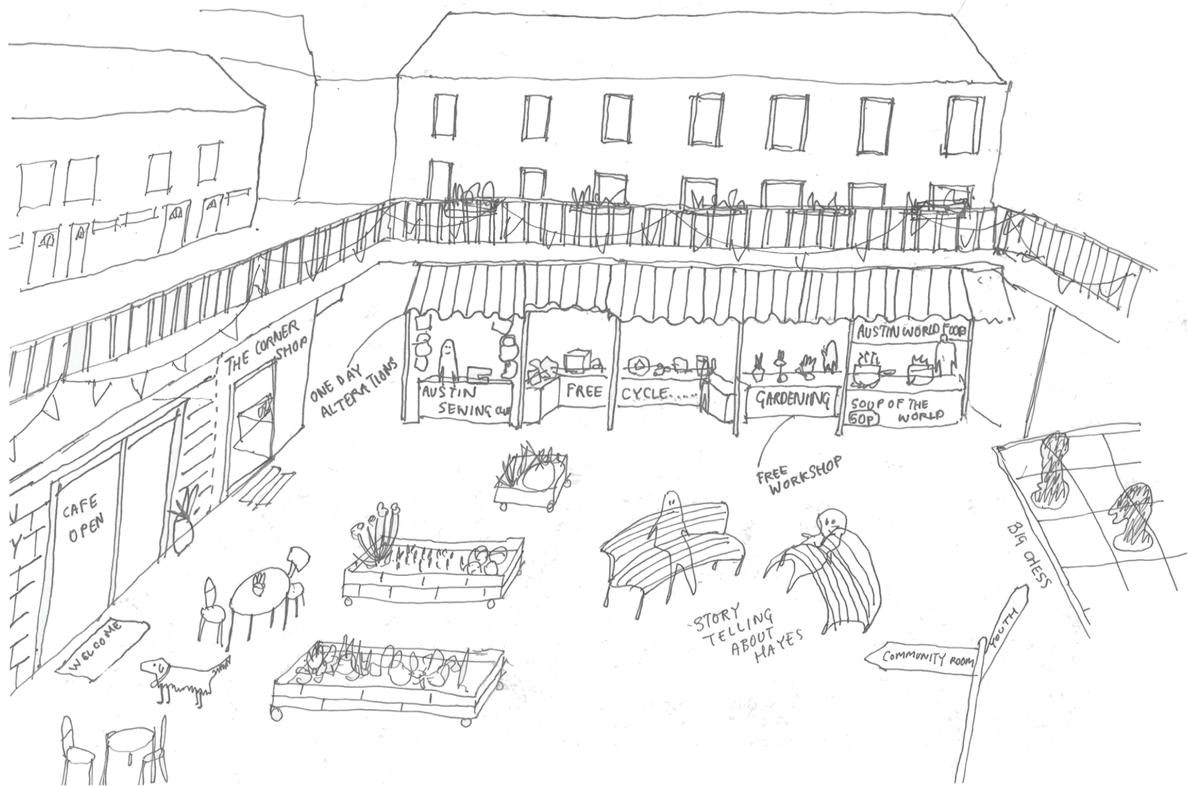
'Rooms for Residency' are a collection of spaces that home the 'pop up' live events held on the estate over months. These events, organized each member of Studio 3, were intended to test the need for new civic spaces through residents participation. After the events, students collectively developed building programme based on the successes and failures of the live events.

The Austin Sewing Studio was the courtyard for 2 hours during which time, 15 residents visited to have a go on the sewing machine. Interest was mainly from Asian ladies who, after the event, requested to have a regular sewing club on the estate to make and repair clothes.

In the months after the Sewing Studio further testing was conducted by holding two one-off clubs in the residents room. The ladies were left to agree a day and time to hold the club, and discussions took place about funding for machines. The regular club started in January 2014 and is now held twice a week for hours each time. There are twenty members using machines purchased with money donated by the Heathrow Community Fund. The residents are independently running the club.

Although the sewing club is now a permanent event, to define the exact typology of Rooms for Residency is tricky as it could change according to the residents' needs. As with the traditional rooms Meguro City Hall, the spaces are intentionally multifunctional, allowing flexibility in the layout which is intended to eliminate future redundancy and give the residents the choice of how they wish to use their space.





New Town Square: Sketch proposal showing the inclusion of successful events.



1. Existing car park
2. Corner shop
3. Estate office and caretakers rest room
4. Community canteen and grand dining table
5. Sit and chat/sit and rest
6. Austin Sewing Club
7. Carrom club (Ludovica Cirillo)
8. Pop up events space (Live Archive by Michael Cielewicz)
9. Hillingdon play school (Hillingdon Play Association)
10. Playground with Big Fox (Fox by Eeva Sarlin)
11. Market place (Freecycle by Jessica Dale)
12. Youth centre
13. Performance space (dance club by Ania Folejewska, band by Reham Elwakil)
14. Radio station (Deena Gohil)
15. Study rooms
16. Heathrow Greening Project planters (Heathrow Greening Project/Michael Cielewicz)
17. Chess and outdoor seating (Chess by Ludovica Cirillo)
18. Big Rocking Chair (Caveh Toosii)
19. Town square clock
20. Stage with big Mirror
21. Pipe organ (Isabela Alexandru)

Ráðhús Reykjavíkur,

Reykjavik, Iceland

Elisabeth Fargues

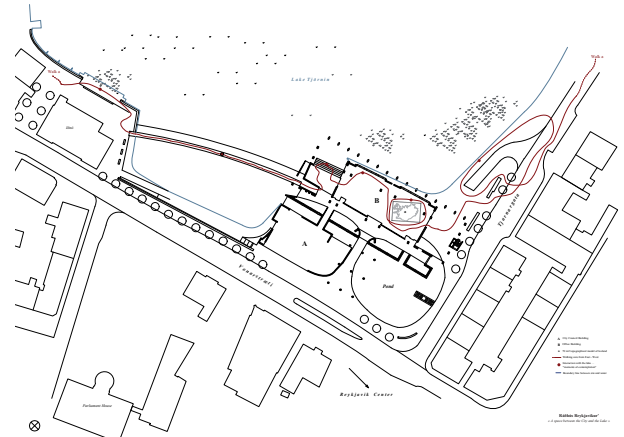
Ráðhús Reykjavíkur is situated by the lake Tjörninn in Reykjavík. It houses the offices of the mayor of Reykjavík, a café and a large 3D map of Iceland.

The building was constructed in 1992 following an international competition won by architects Studio Granda.

The City Hall is designed as a building without a front door. Access to the public spaces on the ground floor is from the West North and across a bridge from the East, each an extension of a walking route within the city. The intention is that it is used as a short cut for citizens and that they become engaged with the activities in the public halls.

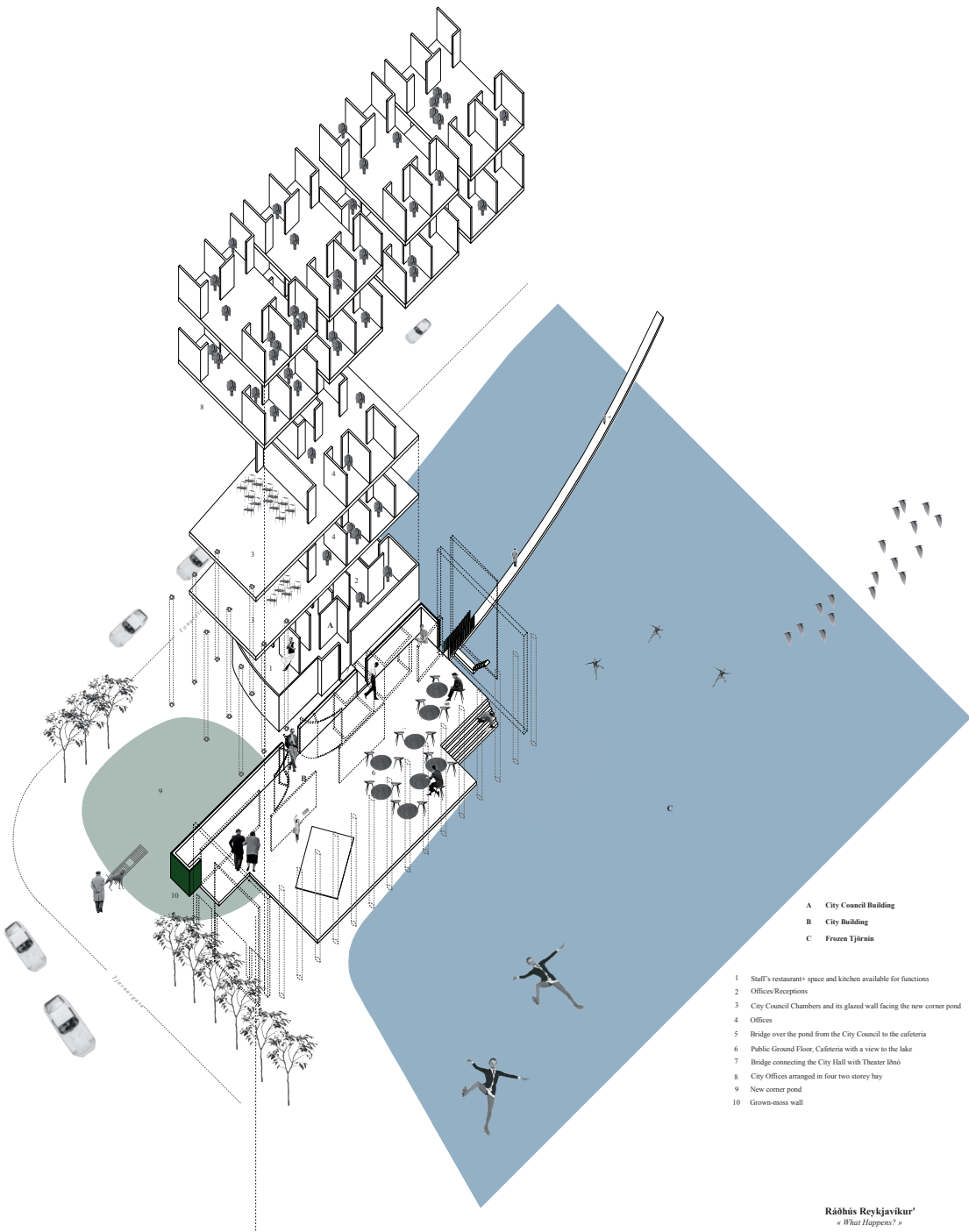
The building creates a connection between the Lake and the visitors. It offers the opportunity to encounter others, while creating individual moments of contemplation. The City Hall creates the possibility of approaching an unreachable yet public space, that during a few weeks, freezes and becomes a surface of freedom for ice skaters.

I am interested in thinking about the publicness of a space as being under the influence of the sky. Under certain meteorological circumstances, an unreachable public surface, though an ephemeral metamorphosis, suddenly becomes a usable extension of the urban landscape.



Can the collective
desire for blueness
bring people
together towards a
civic goal?





- A City Council Building
- B City Building
- C Frozen Tjörnin

- 1 Staff's restaurant+ space and kitchen available for functions
- 2 Offices/Receptions
- 3 City Council Chambers and its glazed wall facing the new corner pond
- 4 Offices
- 5 Bridge over the pond from the City Council to the cafeteria
- 6 Public Ground Floor, Cafeteria with a view to the lake
- 7 Bridge connecting the City Hall with Theater Íbúð
- 8 City Offices arranged in four two storey bays
- 9 New corner pond
- 10 Grown-moss wall

Ráðhús Reykjavíkur'
 « What Happens? »

Asymmetric 1:200
 Elizabeth Fargues

The Blue Path

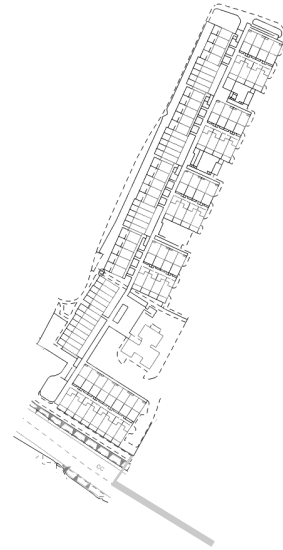
The project's aim is proposing an extension of the public landscape, spaces which offer the possibility of disconnecting from a routine and of contemplating life from a different perspective.

A new route connects the Austin Estate to the canal and transforms it into an inhabitable space, to be experienced collectively as well as individually.

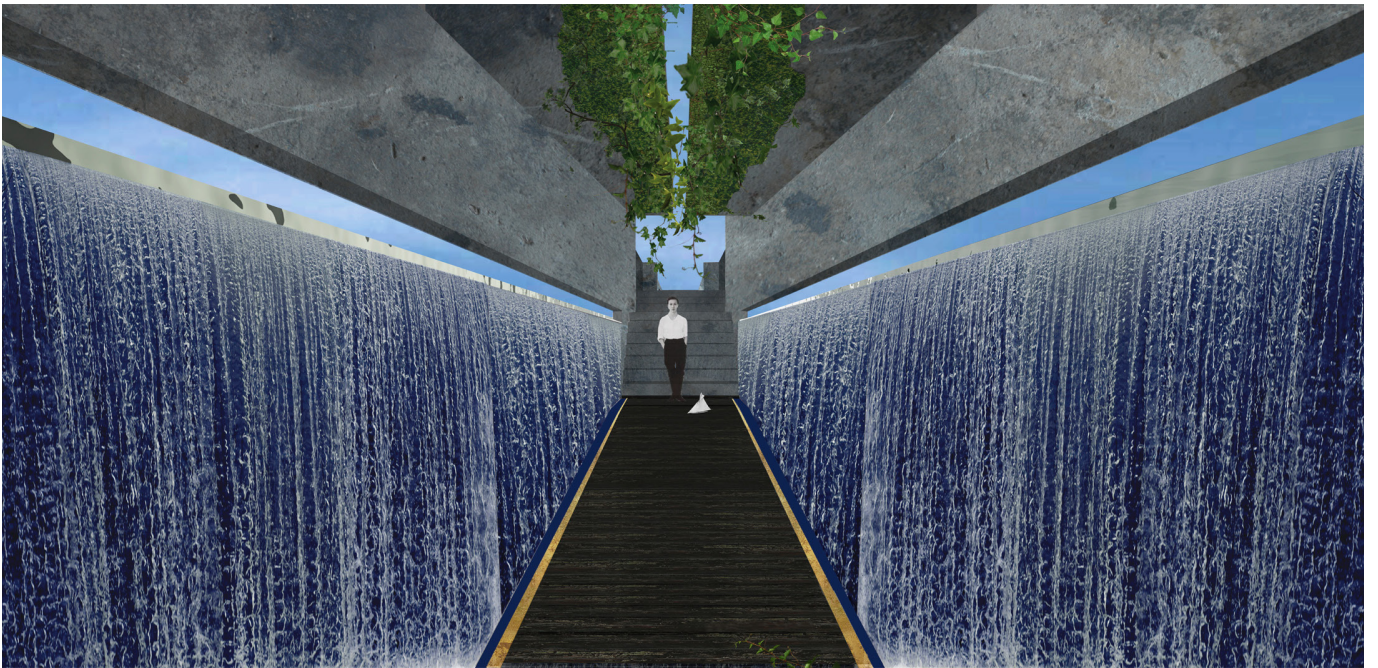
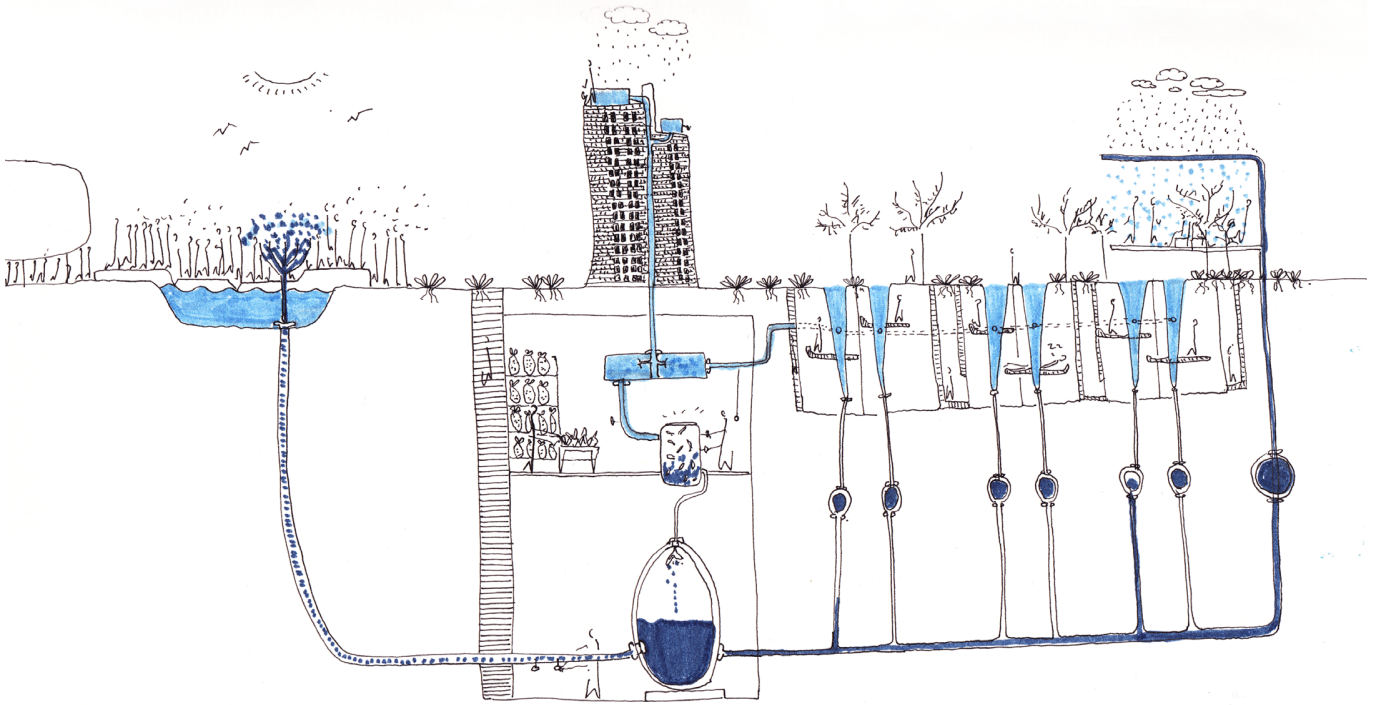
My encounter with the residents of the Austin Estate was based on spatial conversations with children. As a methodological path, I chose to build a narrative based on one of the children's ideas and to think about a spatial metamorphosis that would metaphorically illustrate and bring to life a naive and poetic thought.

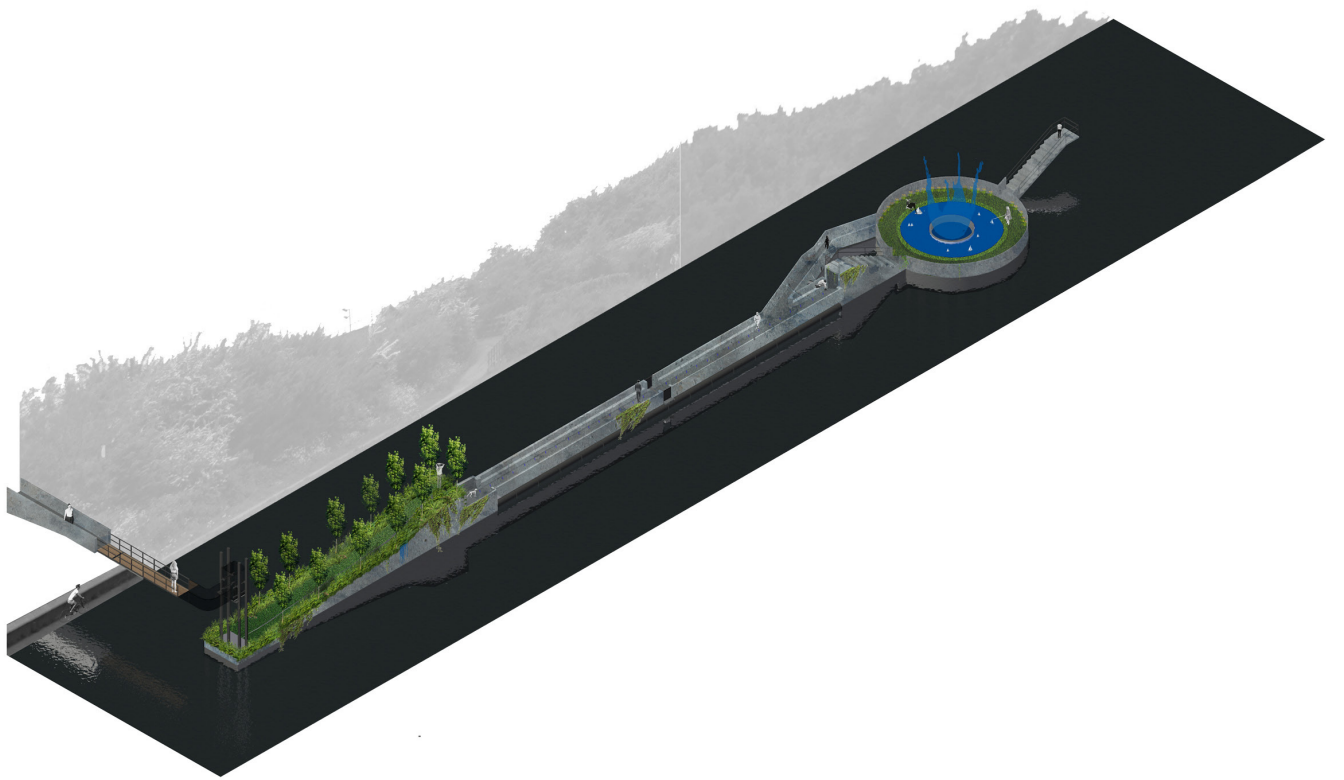
The Blue Path project refers to spaces such as corridors, routes, spaces of passages and random encounters leading to spaces which are like cells, enclosed or open, to be inhabited individually or collectively.

The reimagined Town Hall works as an invitation to take a route, to follow a path, to leave. On this route and on the way to 'somewhere else', the context for encounters is somehow of a new kind. Different spaces give the possibility to the users to either be on their own or connect with others.









York Town Hall

Western Australia

Nuria Garcia Vazquez

First opened in 1911 and later subject of slight modifications, the York Town Hall is one of the largest town halls ever built in the country.

The design by James Wright is a fine example of Edwardian opulence and makes it one of the buildings responsible for the 'Historic Town' status York holds. Its elaborate corner entry, feature clock and extensive use of columns make it a clear spotlight in the Australian town hall architecture.

Civic about it is, that being in a town mainly sustained by tourism nowadays, the location of the visitor's centre and the tourist bureau offices in the ground floor of the building make it the usual starting spot and first thing any visitor will get to discover about York.

Ifocused on the theater as a feature to study and take forward in my projects. The town hall has a theater which takes most of the first floor. This space is the only one of which information is available, being this a few pictures from which the activities and uses have to be discovered.

Can performance be a relevant part of a town hall?

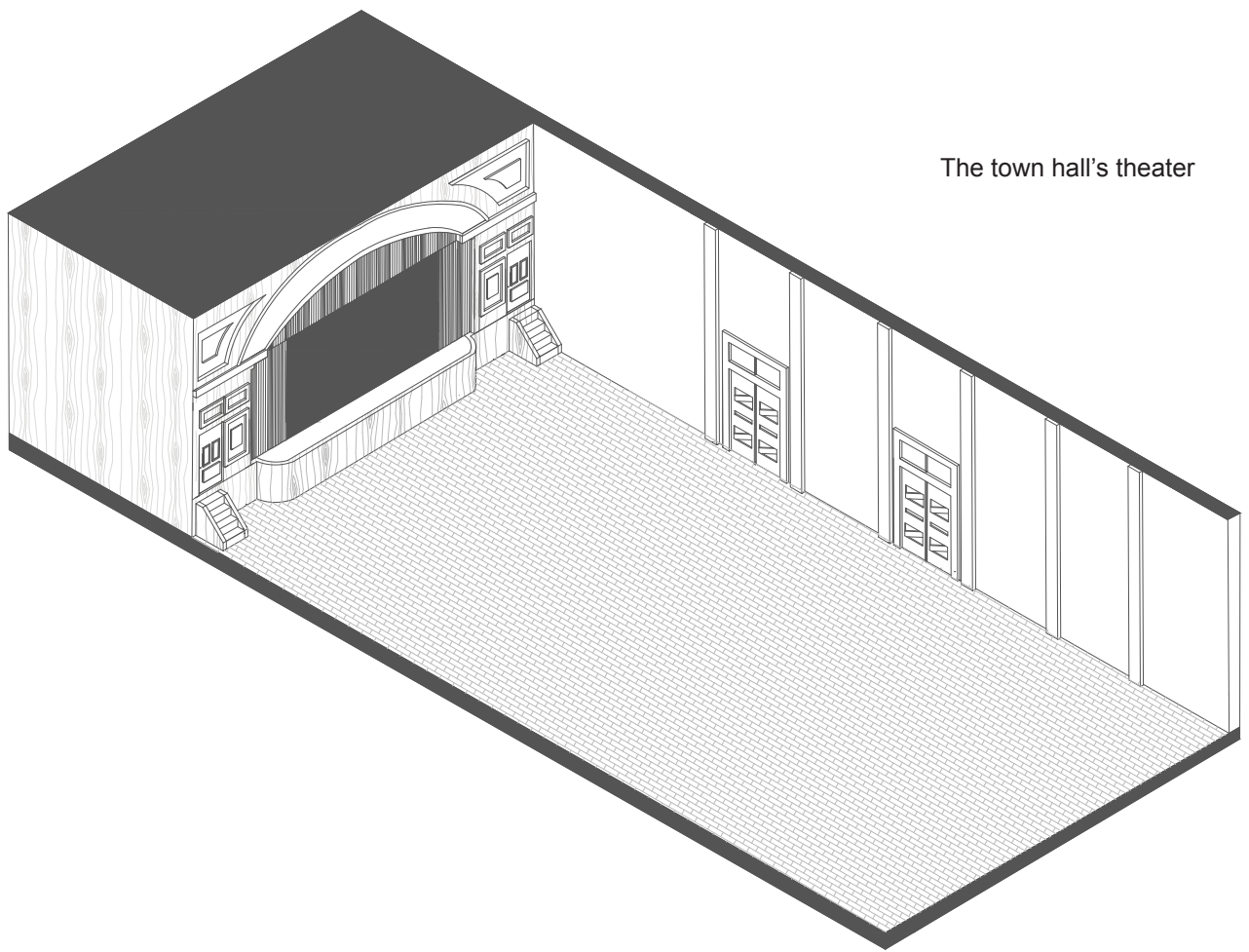
The definition of a Town Hall should not finish the provision of basic social services. Being the public expression of a citizen's rights and opinions, a critical point in the function of the town itself, an activity such as performance could take this citizen's means of expression to a further level making it at the same time a way of social interaction and public gathering.



York, Western Australia







The town hall's theater

Make and Perform Civic Rooms

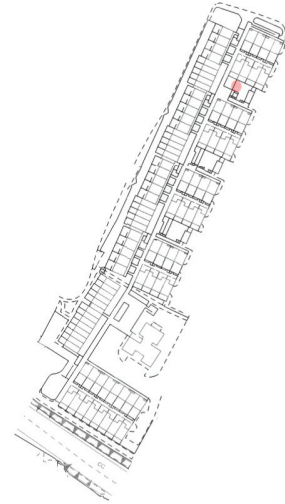
The 'make and perform civic rooms' take the idea behind the mask decorating event held on the Austin Estate in February 2014. These rooms accommodate workshops for the making of different crafts. Within the space of this building, the residents of the Austin Estate learn to make play scenarios, costumes, etc., composing all of these activities in a final piece of theater work. These will be shown as small performances.

A first glimpse of the residents' responses was initiated and tested through a masks decorating workshop. This was good feedback for a craft oriented activity.

The building's changeable spaces create a strong interaction between different activities and its own shape, influenced by the uses it has been given to.

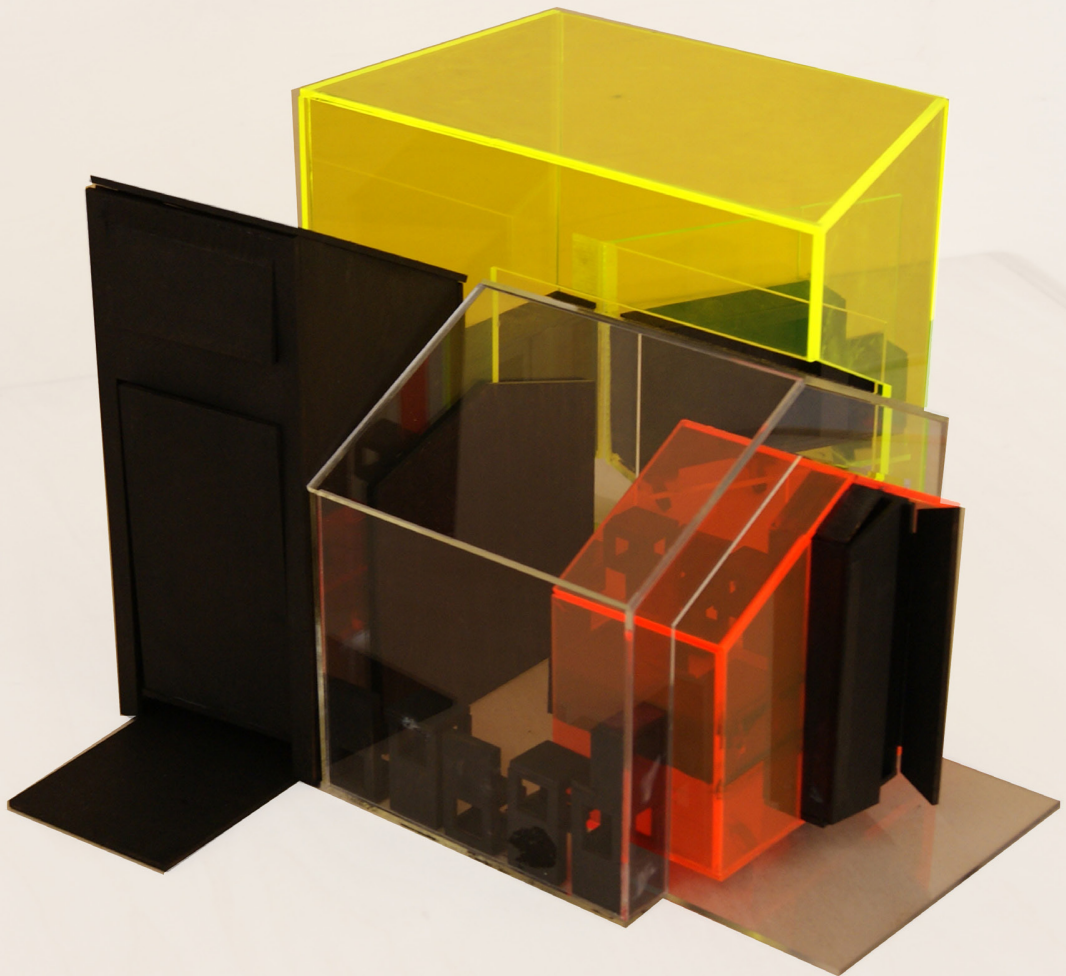
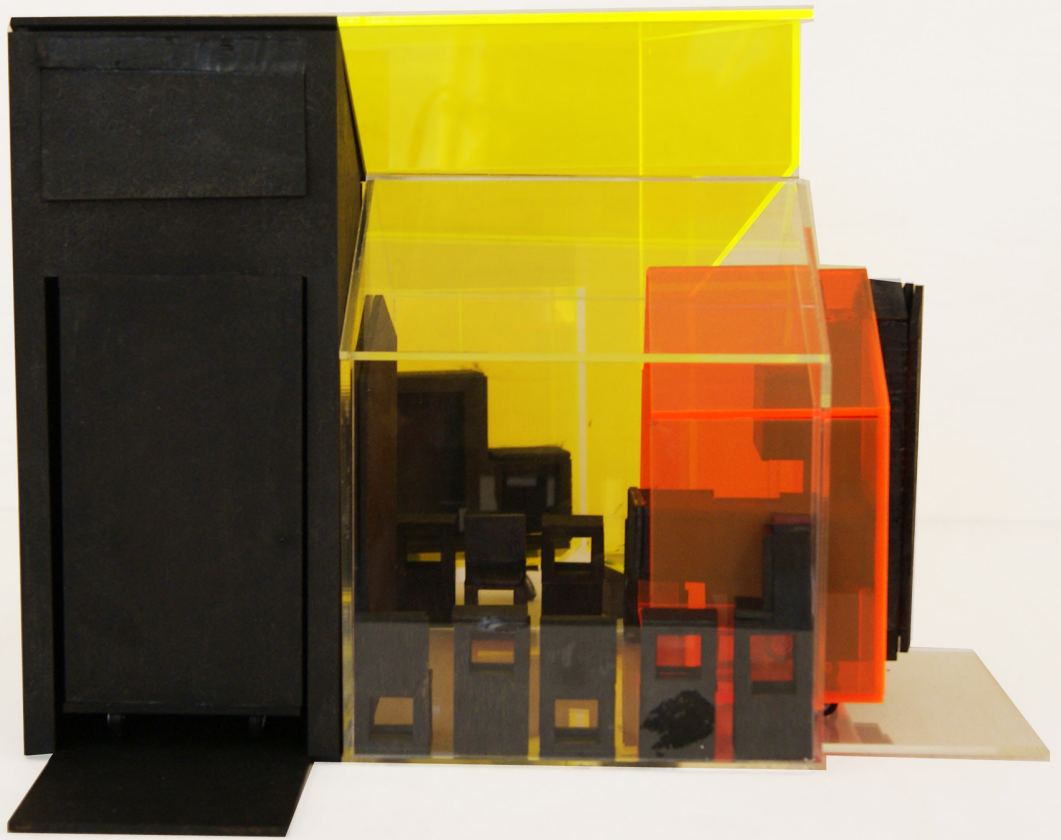
This joins the temporary nature, being it only functioning at certain times, and working as a series of closed blocks when not in use.

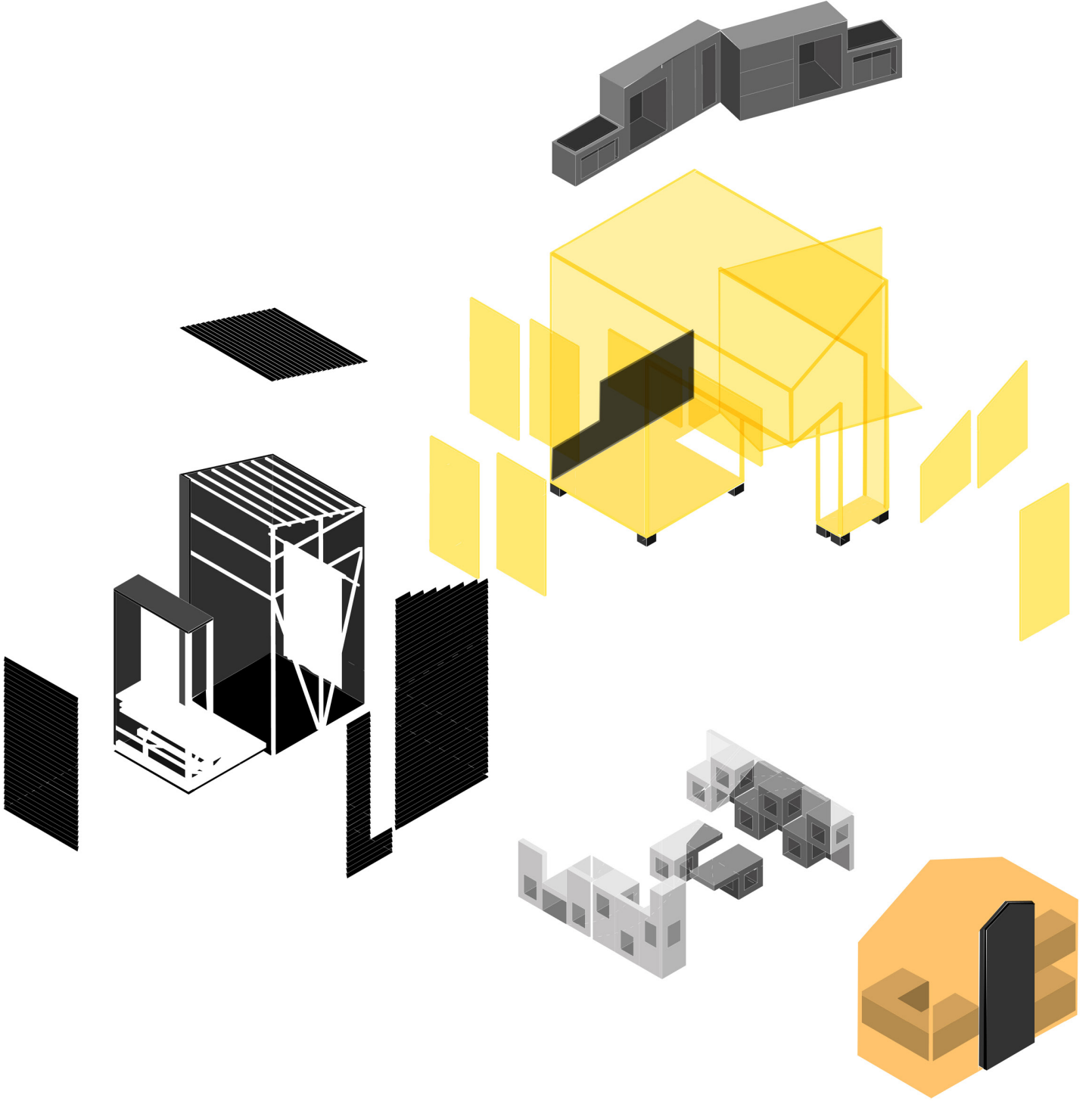
Its relation to the performing arts implies the expression of the citizens in a different way, starting with their artistic expression through the physical making of pieces, and going all the way to its full verbalization through different performances, being this the most civic characteristic of the proposed space.



Event location: Last courtyard at the Austin Estate







Ramses Wissa Wassef Art Centre

Reham Elwakil

This art/cultural center is located in Cairo. The aim of the center is to provide spaces for arts and crafts skills of the villagers living in Harraniya village. Wassef provided them with workshop spaces for weaving, pottery making, sculpting and other creative crafts.

The art centre evolved over a period of 20 years, and now comprises of several workshop spaces. It reflects Wissa Wassef's rejection of the conventional modern Egyptian Architecture and his search for ways of developing traditional mud brick architecture to serve a wider range of needs. It is also a reflection of his belief in the innate creativity of man which he applied as much to the making of buildings as of the artifacts for which the center is well known.

The Arts Centre was cited not only for its architectural excellence but also as an institution emerging from a successful experiment to preserve and develop the role of traditional crafts in contemporary life. In 1983 it was awarded by the Aga Khan Architecture which is given every three years to projects that set new standards of excellence in architecture that aim to address the needs of Islamic societies.

By adapting an ancient craft to a modern day environment, the tapestries exhibited represent a link between past and present. By virtue of the Wassef Art Center's location in a village on the periphery of Cairo, the work of art provides a living connection between rural life and the bustling city. The vibrant art produced provides a meeting point for locals to express and share their creative outlets as well as giving them a sense of civic identity and ownership of crafts and skills.

What really attracted me to explore this culture and art center was Wassef's approach to encourage creative skills within the community, as well as the authentic construction techniques used to build the adobe buildings. I visited the center during last summer and met the villagers who showed me their unique collection of tapestry art work which they sell on a daily basis in an exhibiting hall on site. I would like to take forward such approaches to the community in Hayes and encourage their local creative



- Art centre
- Cairo city inhabited areas
- Harraniya village
- City/village road divide
- Nile river



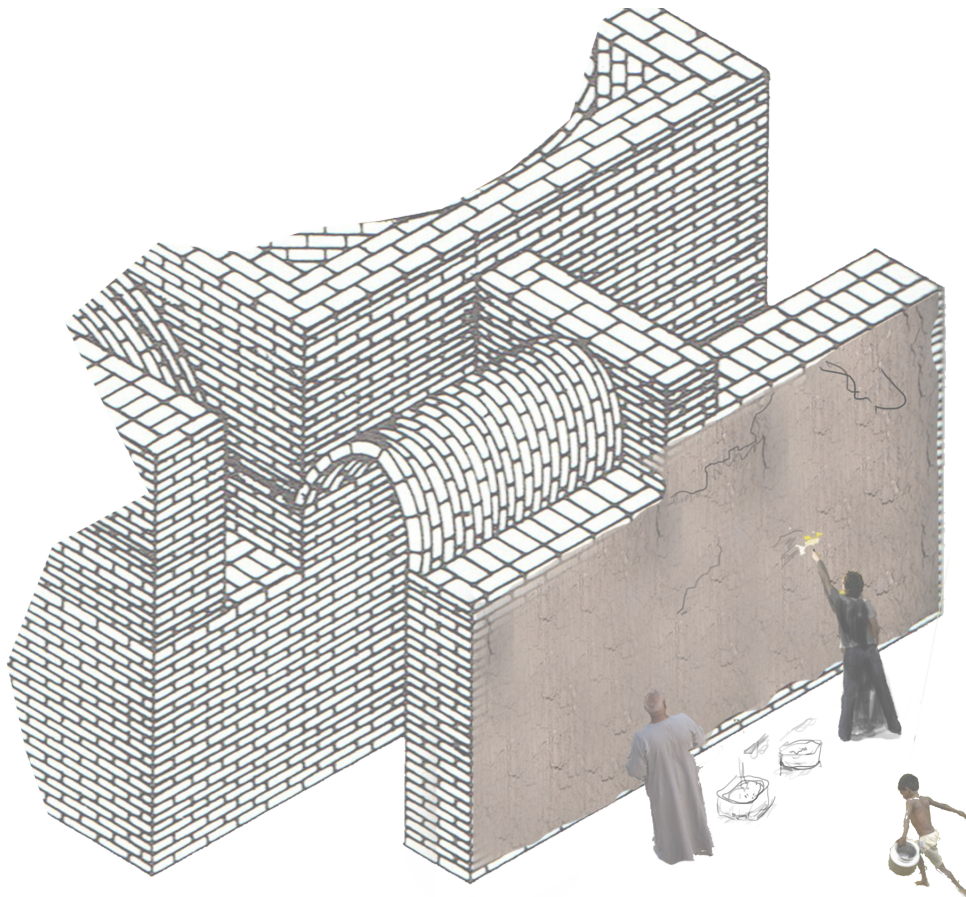
Can we adopt an approach to empower diverse cultures towards a common civic pride?



View of the The art centre



Weaving inside the art centre- photo taken in September 2013



Axo showing community gathering for the re plastering of external facade using mud.

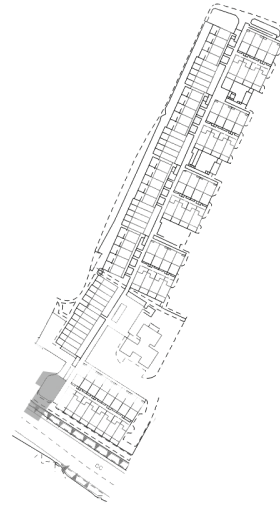
Hayes Music Academy

This Town Hall will be introducing a temporary music academy serving the residents of the Austin Estate as well as the locals in Hayes and Harlington. It is an opportunity to bring the community together in suitable public and communal spaces, as well as forming a ground base for nurturing the creative talents of the local children and artists. In addition, the music academy serves a bigger purpose by celebrating the music history of Hayes, home to the EMI record company, which dates back to 1897. This will be an informal academy, which opens its doors for volunteering teachers and musicians and promoting the exchange of creative skills. The spaces provided consist of a mini theatre, a music instrument making workshop, a cafe, a dining table and a radio station.

The idea for a music academy was shaped after we formed a mini music band on site with some of the residents, some of which were professional musicians who received the opportunity to share their knowledge and music through the many events we held in Hayes. We made musical instruments together, using recycled materials, and used them to gradually compose music and constitute a group named 'Austin Musical Band'. The community was highly engaged throughout the events which led to us recording some of our rehearsed music. This was sent to be played on Hayes FM radio station on a regular basis.

The typology of the academy is defined through its temporary existence, aimed to activate the community's sense of civic pride and identity within a city rich with multiple ethnicities and cultures. The building design is planned in a way to pull together the various fragments of the re-imagined Town Hall and place it in a very visible zone in the estate which would enable its recognition by outside visitors. This recognition would also be expressed through the unique facades of the building made by using recycled Vinyl records, enveloping the theatre and open work-shops, thereby celebrating the music history of Hayes.

Something civic is educational and worthy of being seen and heard in public, and furthermore something to be passed on to further generations with pride. The academy offers an informal educational purpose while reaching out to the public and celebrating its presence as well as bringing the community of the Austin Estate together by responding to their unique collective needs.





Adna playing the horn - Austin Estate music rehearsal event on 7/12/2013



Design thought process of the Music Academy- allocating the various activities on site



Section through the academy 1-200

Scharnhauser Park Germany

Raoul Adam Aspinall

Scharnhauser Park in which the town hall is located, was historically an American military site. Large parts of the park are constructed using the materials, recycled from the military site after its closure. The town hall was designed by J. Mayer H. Architects, and construction was completed in 2001.



It is a concrete, modernist style building, consisting of mostly clean, simple, elegant lines. The building is principally one large, open public space with inlays of certain core elements. The enclosed boxes structure the interior layout of the building and the uses within.

The building is almost entirely public space and acts as a focal point for the whole complex. Large areas are exclusively designed for the public to be used as communal meeting points. The building contains a public library, art gallery, spaces for music lessons, sports facilities and an evening school.

I want to take forward the creation of educational spaces and learning facilities for the use by the public. I also want to incorporate the feel of an open-access space, which people will feel that they have ownership over and civic pride.

How can collective
memory of the past
create civic pride of
today ?



Ostfildern Town Hall
1st floor axonometric

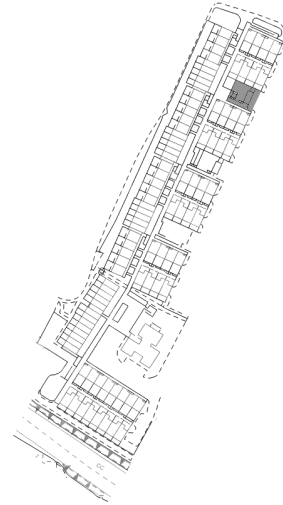
Austin's City Farm

The town hall is a city farm, which is a space for people to learn more about where their food is sourced from, promoting local sourcing and for children to learn about animals and food. The building is constructed around a farm ruin, which references the history of the local area.

I engaged with the estate through the means of taking portraits of people on the estate in the style of the Victorian photographer's studio. These portraits were then collected into a book which documents the people on the estate during this period in time.

My building's typology is based upon that same layout to that of an old, small farm house. The building consists of mainly open spaces, with minimal interior walls similar to that of many farm buildings.

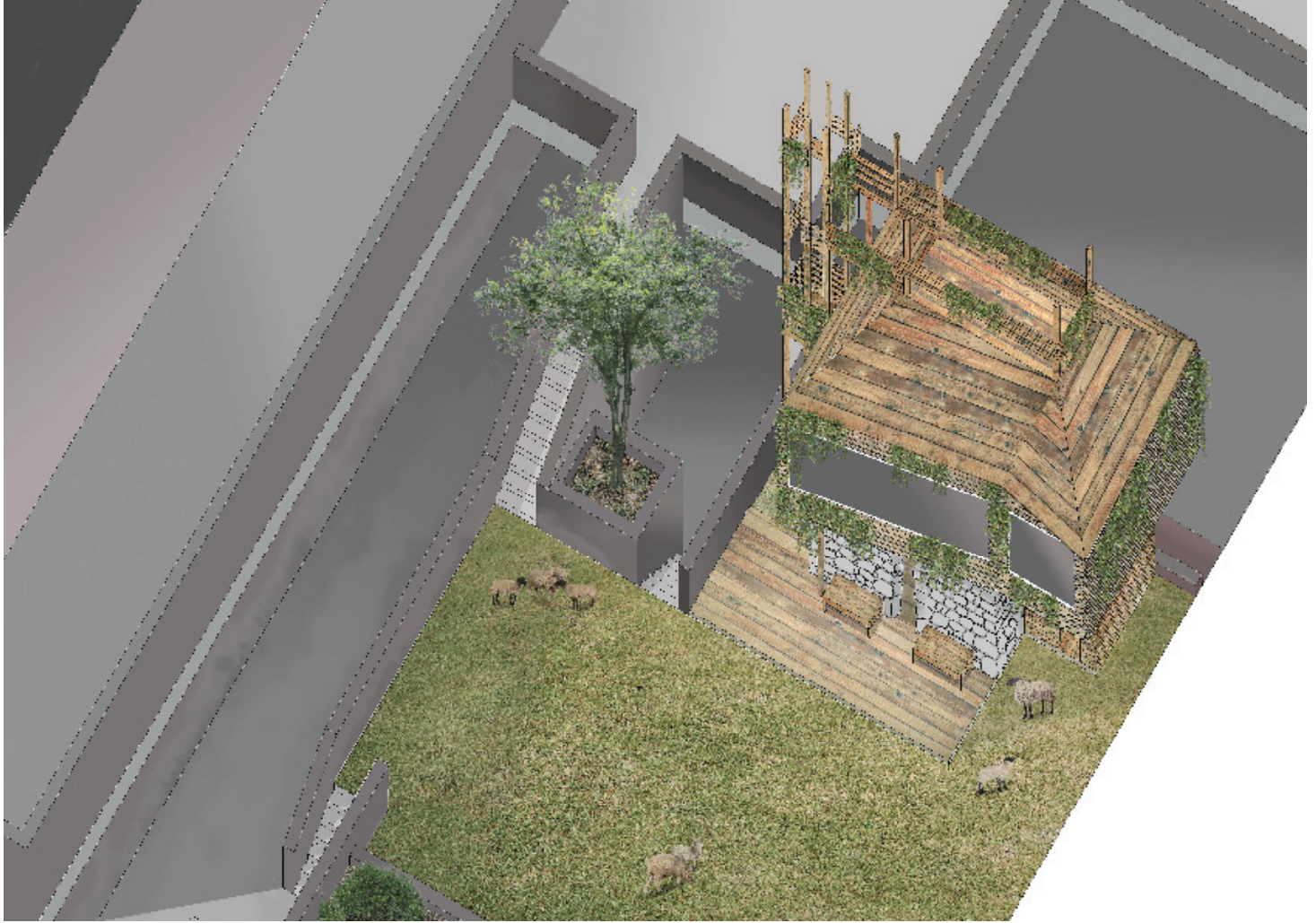
A space will be created which will be communal in spirit and facilitate the communication and birth of relationships between the residents of the estate. It will become a space of education in which children can learn about farm animals and how food is sourced, while promoting the concept of local sourcing.







Austin City Farm



Austin City Farm

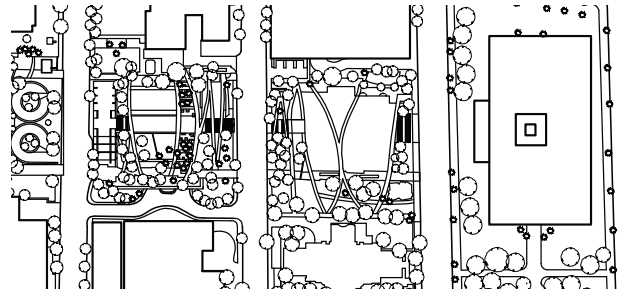
Los Angeles City Hall

Caveh Toossi

Los Angeles City Hall is a 138 metre tall building and is the world tallest base-isolated structure. It is an Art Deco building with a steel frame structure and applied masonry.

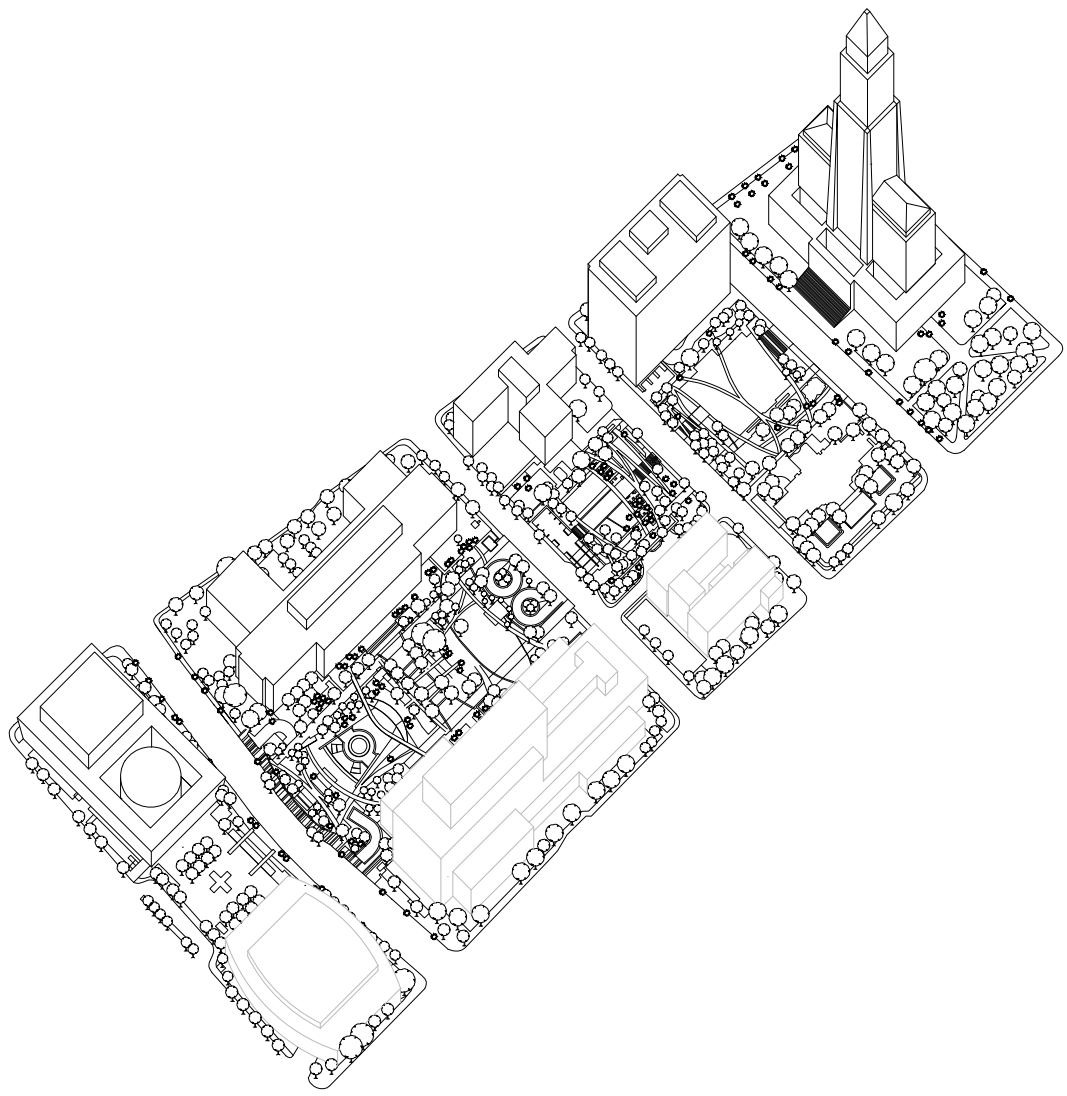
Construction of the building was started in 1926 and finished 2 years later, designed by J. Parkinson, J. C. Austin, and A. C. Martin, Sr., remaining the tallest building until 1964 in Los Angeles, California.

In 2012 the creation of the L.A. Grand Park in front of the L.A. City Hall had great impact on the area. The integration of the coloured movable furniture and the giant dining table added great civic value and social engagement of the public in the very front of the City Hall and added a certain 'softening' of the monumentality of the building.



Shouldn't all the city halls have the facilities to host a dining event ?!





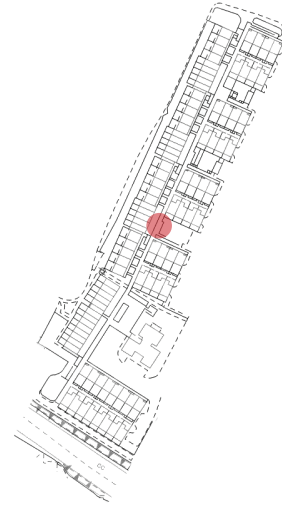
Public Dining Hall

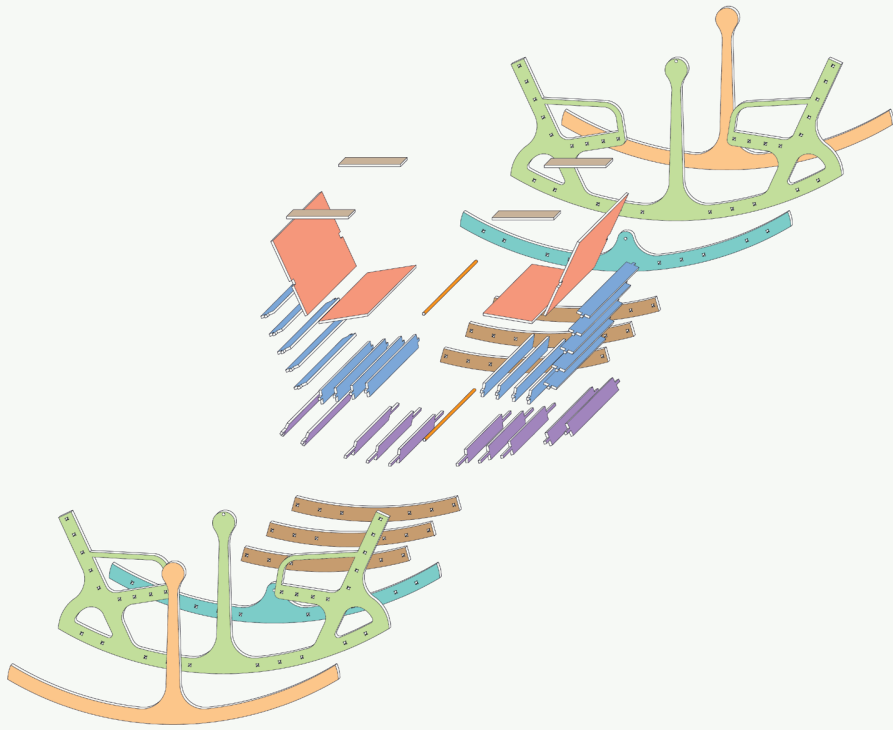
A place you know, a place to deal with your problems, a place with people who care, and a place which welcomes you to share and shine!

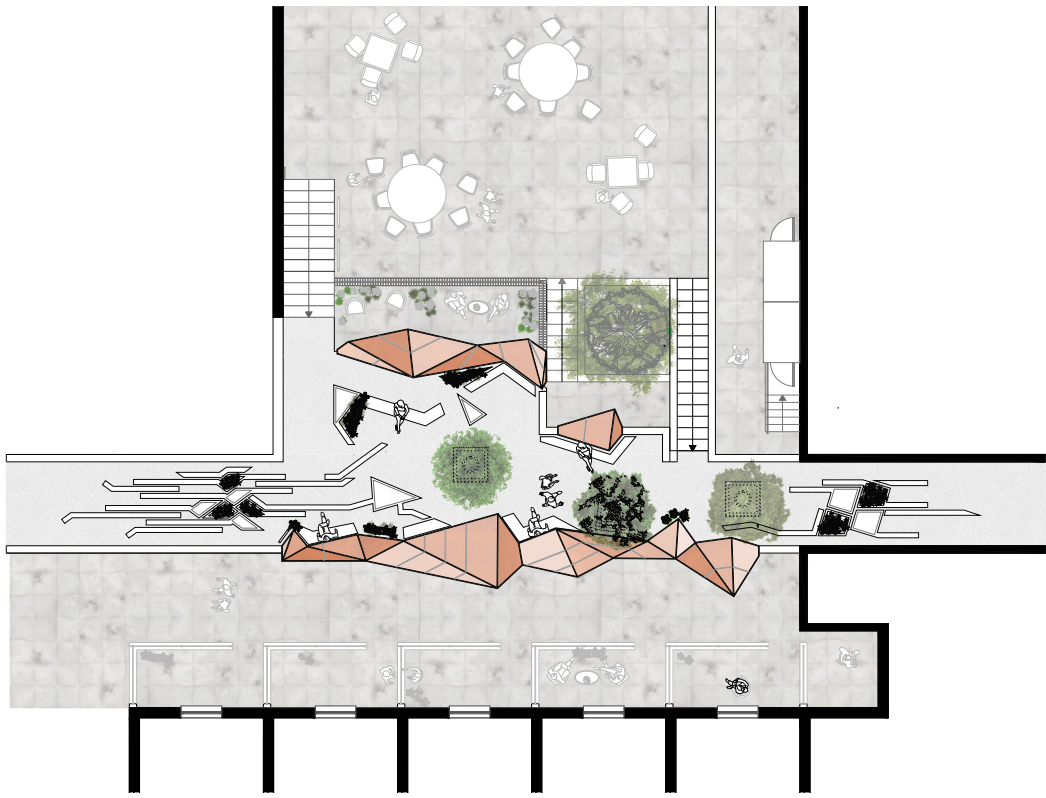
As part of the conversation kit the 'Rock and Dine' chair was brought to the Austin Estate allowing people to share what they had while enjoying the ride on the chair.

The common features within a town hall are waiting, anxiety, gathering and discussion, which all could be improved by providing suitable facilities such as a dining area. This fragment can act as a connecting, or focal point between the other functions.

One common characteristic between all humans is the desire or need to consume food, and since early times a method to communicate, trade, or even accept or reject relationships has been based upon dining. Through dining, people gather together, offer to, or share with each other and receive the opportunity to meet. And what is more civic than this!







Shoreditch Town Hall

Ania Folejewska

Shoreditch Town Hall is an Edwardian building designed by Caesar Augustus Long and built in 1866. In the 19th century it used to be the popular spot of public life of the surrounding Shoreditch area. The Importance of the building's role was reflected through the use of materials and ornament typical for Edwardian architecture: the front facade made from stonework, carved walls, Doric columns and the Town Hall's tower visible from further streets of Shoreditch.


The main civic spaces are situated on the upper floor:

- 1 - Assembly Hall - place where people gathered for dancing evenings and listening to the life orchestra.
- 2 - Buffet space - here people could have a cup of afternoon tea, eat some cake and talk.

Main social meetings organized in the Town Hall in the 19th century were focused on conversation about important issues for the town. Moreover, people could share entertainment, food and drink.

A very popular event that frequently took place in the town halls of the 19th century was the tea dance: a summer or autumn afternoon or early-evening dance from four to seven. The local community had the chance to meet for a cup of afternoon tea, dance together and socialize.



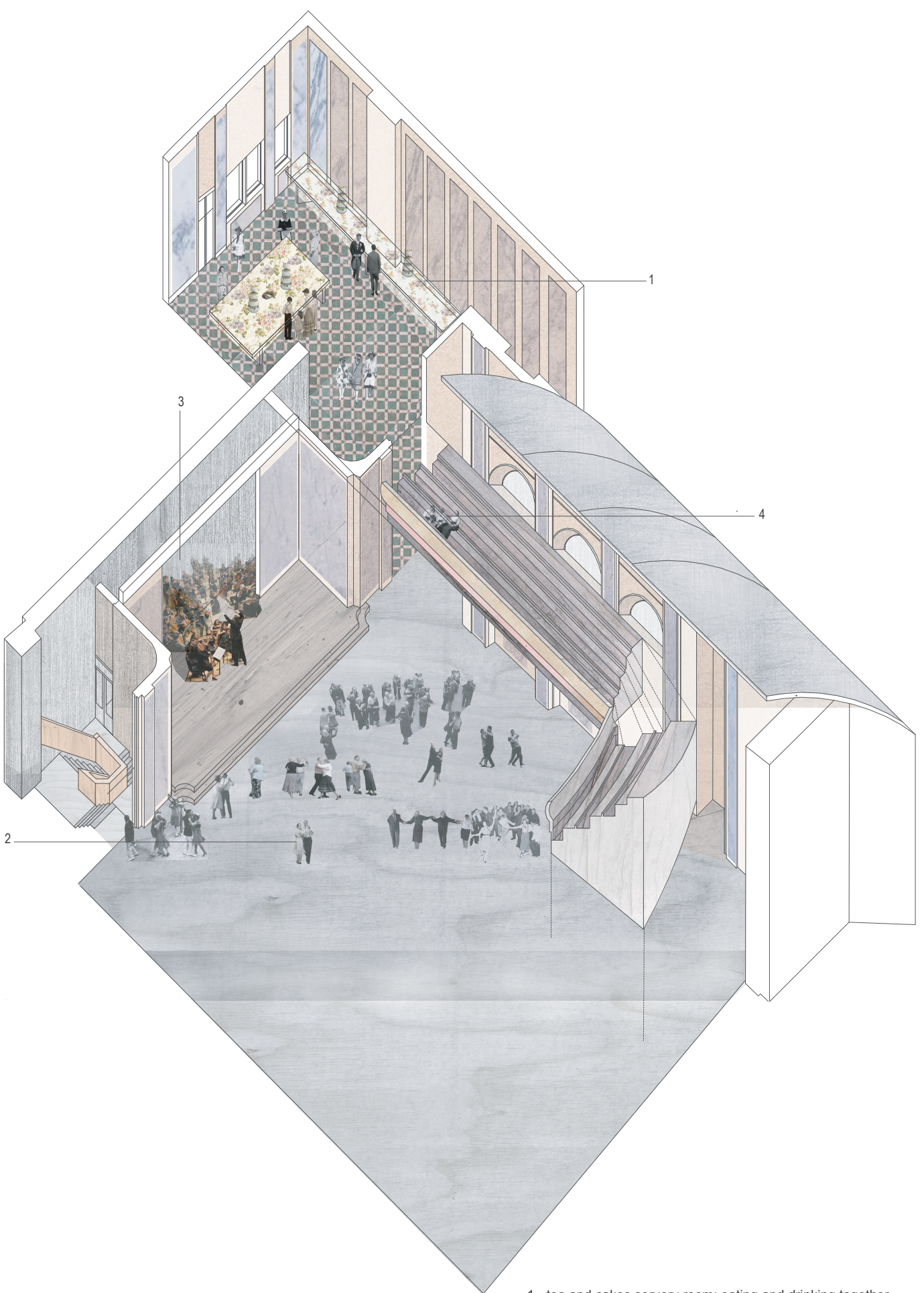
 - Shoreditch Town Hall

What type of spaces would attract the Estate's community?

Should tea dance events be part of today's town halls?







- 1 - tea and cakes servery room: eating and drinking together
- 2 - Assembly Hall: dancing together
- 3 - orchestra: live music
- 4 - galleries available for audience

Tea Dance: mapping of social activities

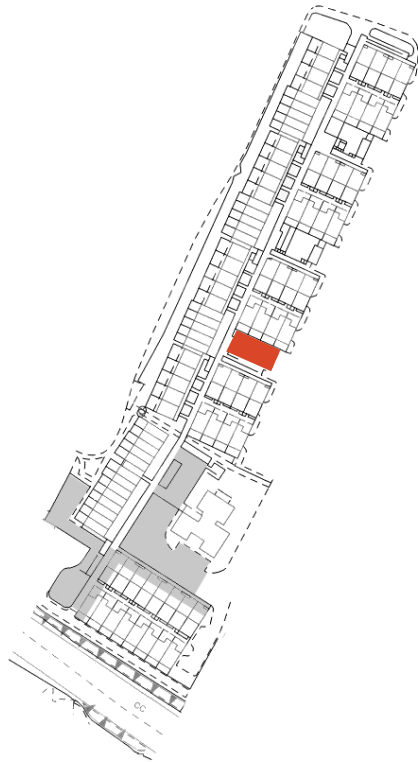
Community Theatre Dance and Music Centre

My town hall building's design was inspired by the Shoreditch precedent: main area of the building is a miniature of the previously analysed Assembly Hall of the Shoreditch Town Hall. I decided to connect a tea dance event with performance in general, which is why the whole building becomes a performative arts centre, where collaboration between residents in separate workshops and studios support staged shows, concerts or dancing events.

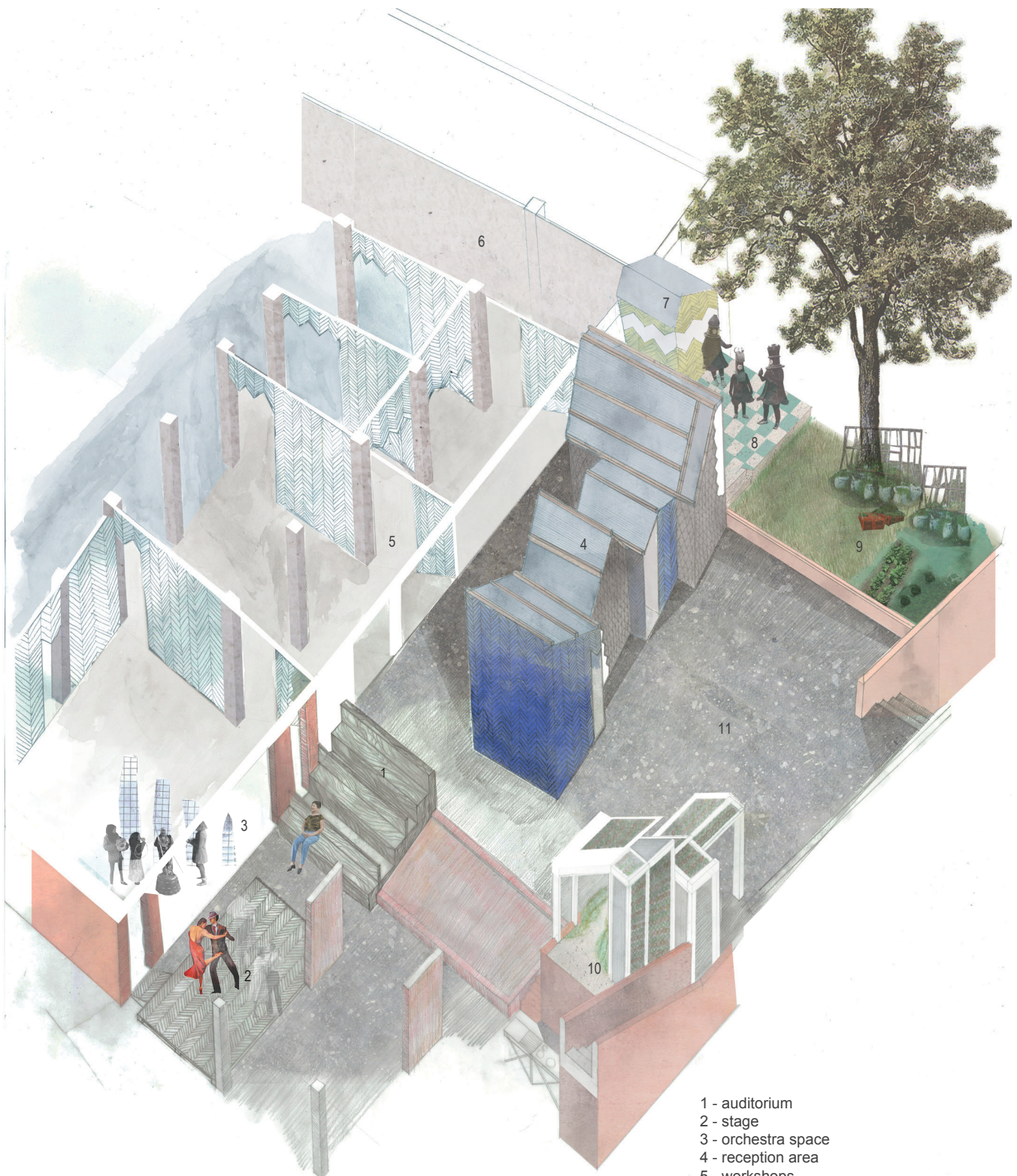
Life engagement on the site during two events helped me to identify the residents' interests and requirements. Organized by myself, two dance classes (salsa and ballet) revealed that dance is a great way to bring people together and encourage conversations between them.

I believe, that the space I created is a patchwork of areas which really answers the residents' needs - each group would have its own room dedicated for a hobby - dancing, playing instruments, mask-making, sewing, wall-paper-making and gardening. Although each of the activities is different, the residents would have the awareness of participating in a collective process as each club's work would have the same aim: a successful show performed on the town hall's stage. Each resident could have real influence on what and how this would be staged. Each resident could participate in all steps of the performance's preparation, starting with designing it (costumes-sewing, mask-making, instrument-making) participating in rehearsals (dancing, acting, musical workshops) and performing in the final show (acting, playing in the orchestra or watching the show as an audience while eating the food grown in the community garden).

Civicsness of the town hall building is therefore based on resident's interests shared in proposed space and the feeling of responsibility they gain when participating the the performances' preparations.

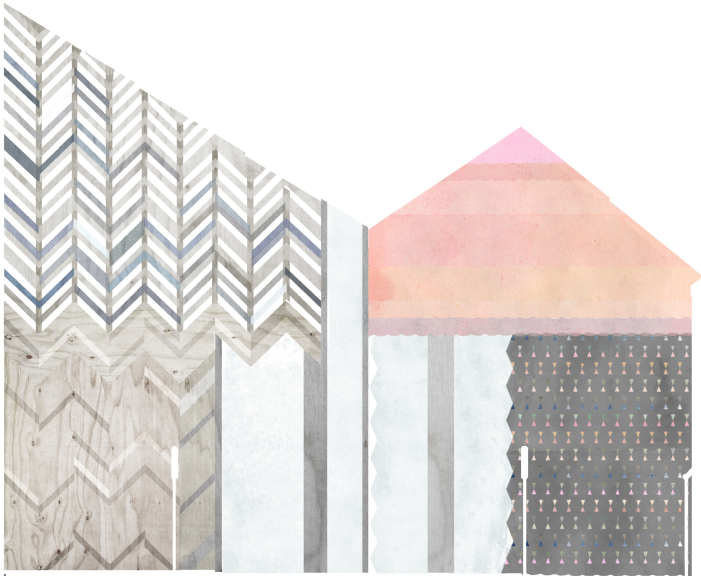




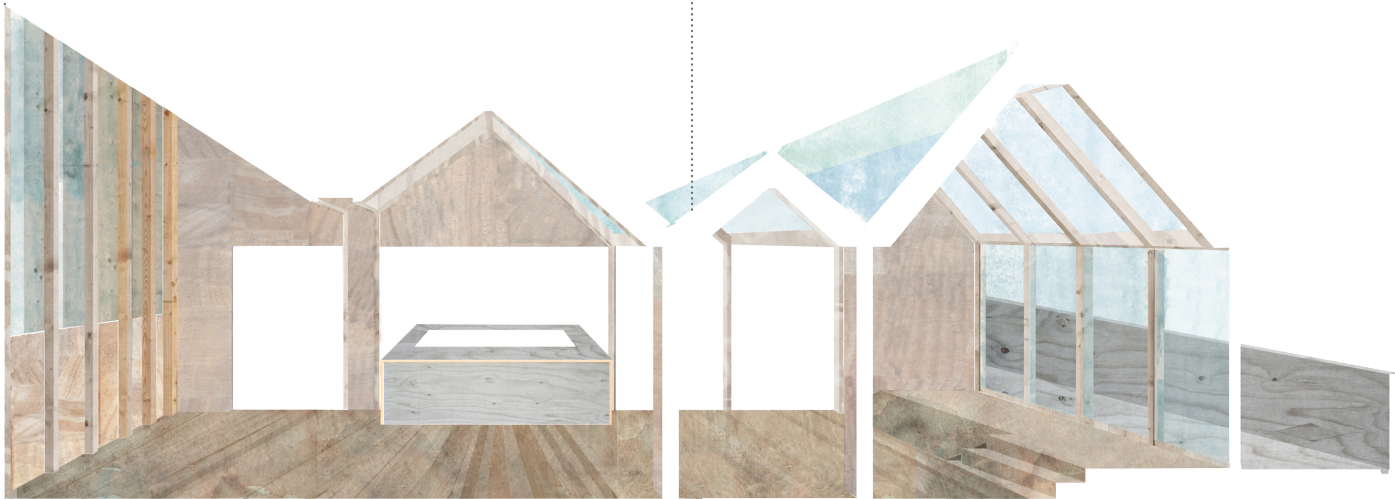


- 1 - auditorium
- 2 - stage
- 3 - orchestra space
- 4 - reception area
- 5 - workshops
- 6 - corridor joining two courtyards
- 7 - ice-cream bar
- 8 - life chess game
- 9 - community garden
- 10 - wintergarden
- 11 - piazza

Axonometric Concept Drawing



facade



interior view

Piazza del Campidoglio - Rome

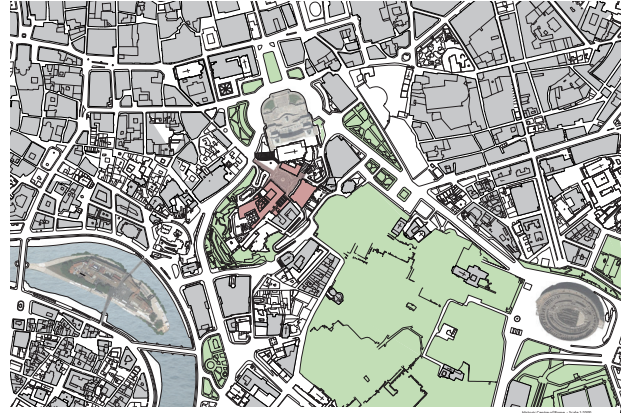
Ludovica Cirillo

The Campidoglio Hill is one of the seven hills where Rome was founded. Here, Romans established the first example of a Republic, which has become the model of the modern form of Republic.

The understanding of the origin of the 'Res Publica' or 'Public Affairs' is essential to define the key features of an active public space.

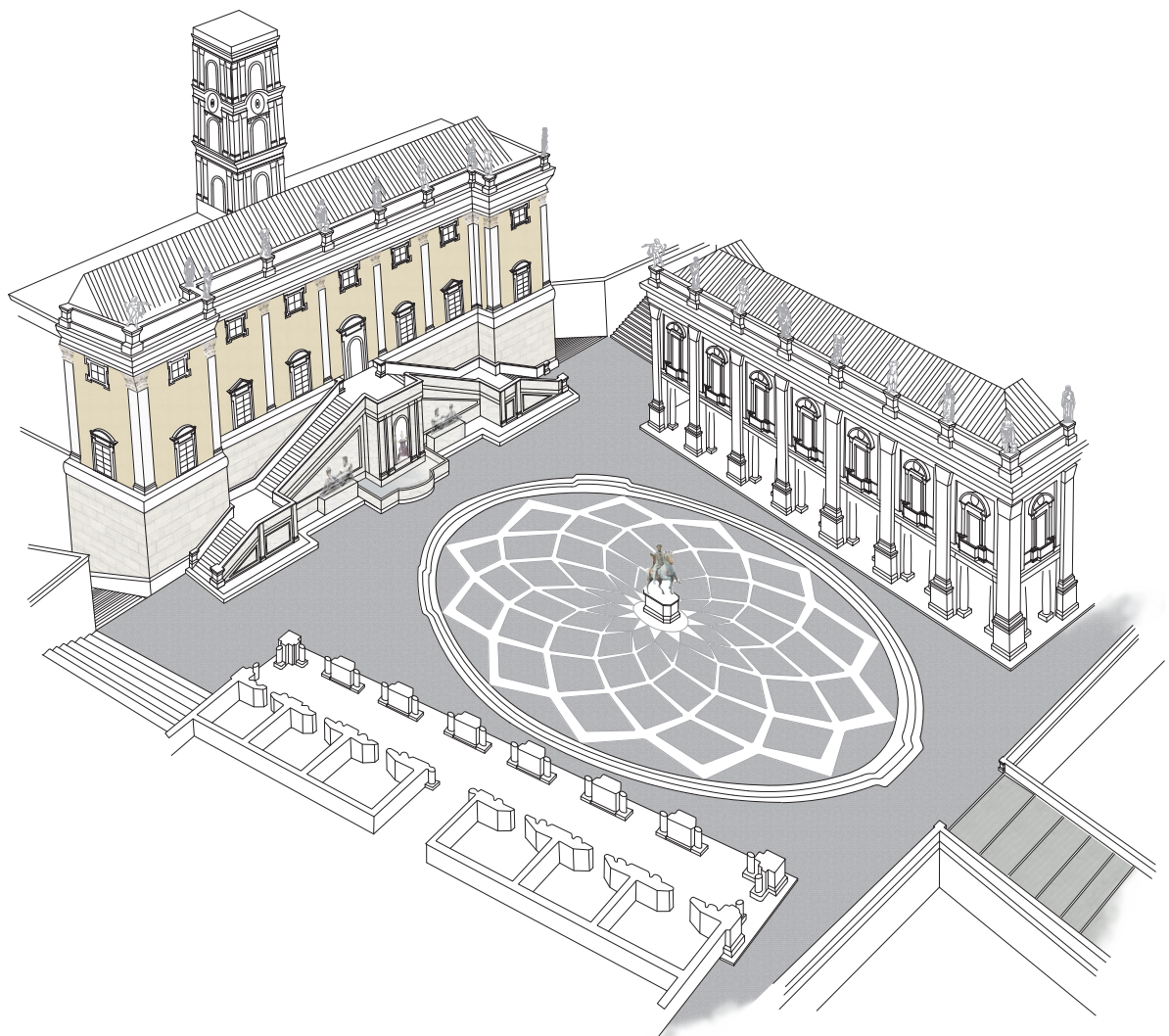
Apart from being sited on such an important location for the story of Roman culture, the Piazza del Campidoglio is one of the most impressive examples of a monumental civic square for a major city. The Campidoglio square, since its early ages, has been the location of the most important civic events, and still plays such a role.

I want to propose for the community of the Austin Estate a public piazza, which will be the location of assembly and community events.



How can we activate public space today?





Piazza del Campidoglio Axonometric 1:200

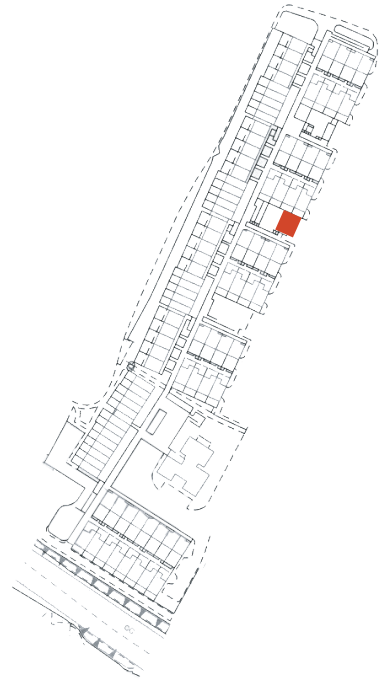
Civic Plastic

A town hall is a public building which should serve the needs of a community, but often people change their demands, causing public buildings to fall into disuse. A modern town hall should therefore constantly adapt to the development of the community. This is why I propose demountable building with a 5 year life span. This means that after that period the community could evaluate the efficiency of such a public building and adapt it to their changed and new requirements.

My re-imagined town hall is based on the use of the public space and the middle courtyard, and the new townhall itself.

The piazza plays the role of the assembly space for public events, such as live chess games, dining events and performances. The town hall hosts public rooms to accommodate community clubs and artistic workshops as well as a dedicated area to promote recycling on the Estate. Apart from being a useful activity to improve cleanliness and rise awareness of environmental issues on the estate, it would also strengthen the relationships of the community group.

Reuse and recycling instill an altruistic behaviour, since the efforts to promote it are focused on non-monetary motives, and encourage residents' cooperation and civic engagement.







Elevation view from Austin Road 1:100



Public engagement on civic piazza 1:100

Viborg Town Hall, Denmark

Halil Yorel

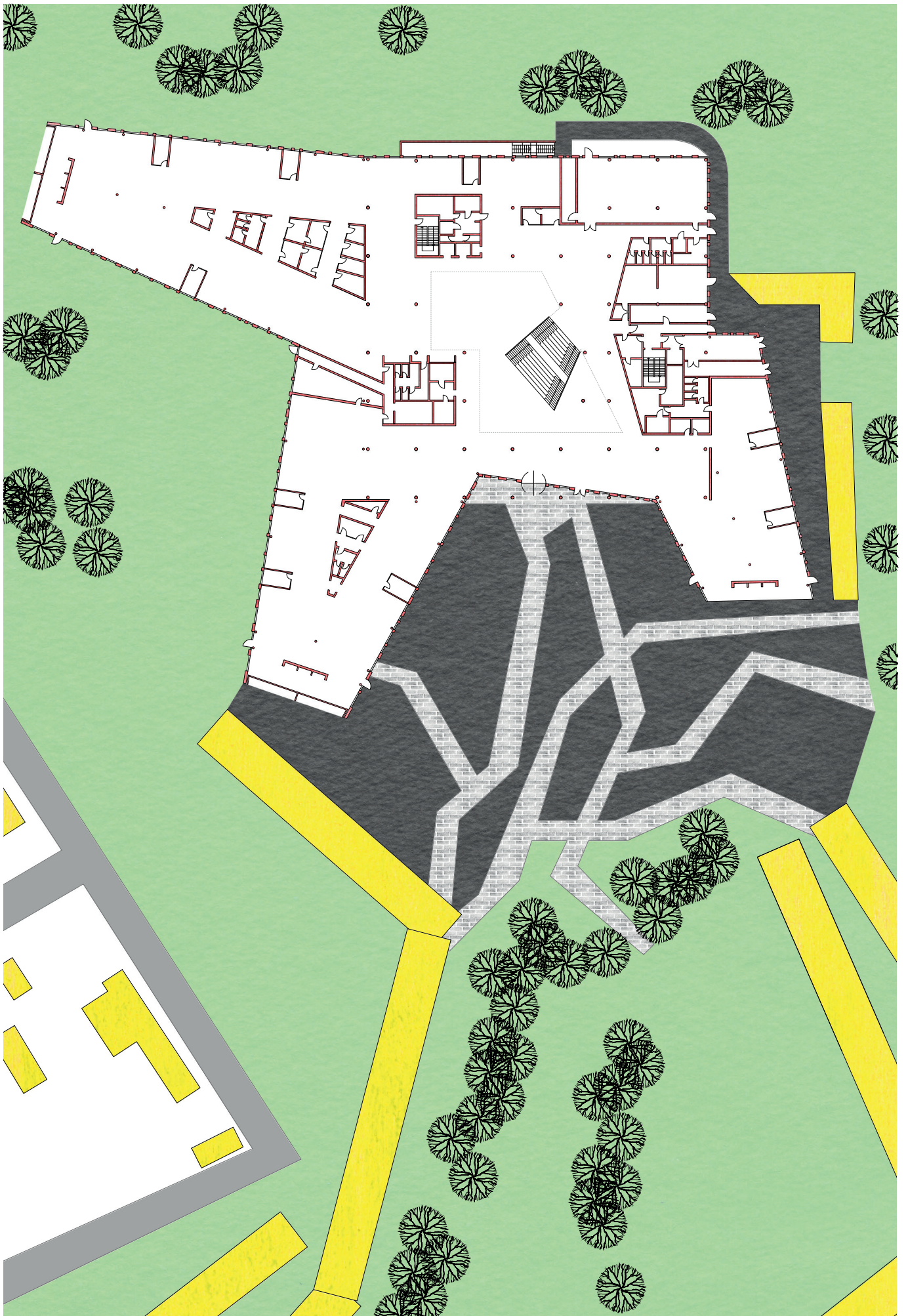
Constructed in 2011 by Henning Larsen Architects, the Viborg Town Hall was built in order to serve its home city, celebrating the then recent merger of local municipalities, making the city even larger. The expansion of the city meant that the municipality therefore required a larger space to operate the local authority's offices from, as well as having a space that could be effectively used by the denizens of Viborg.

Located on the outskirts of the city centre, the town hall is surrounded by a large amount of greenery, echoing the environmentally conscious design of the building. Features such as the triple glazed windows, placed behind the sculptural facade surrounding the upper levels of the building, and a lawn covered roof, reducing solar gain within the building, work both in terms of their architectural efficiency, as well as symbols demonstrating the local authority's commitment to the support of sustainable design.

The ground floor, and some of the first floor of the building, acts as the publicly accessible space, with the higher levels housing the non-publicly accessible council offices. One of the of the most important spaces within the entire town hall is the central ground to first floor staircase, which also doubles as the central seating area. Seating cushions that fit on to the bleacher-style seats are available for the visitors of the building to use. Inversely, the stairs are sometimes used as a stage for public speeches, with a podium set up on the landing mid-way up the stairs.

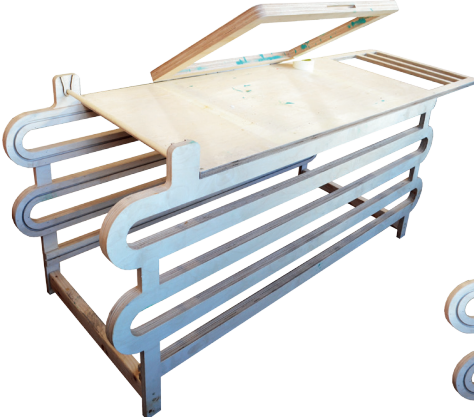


How public are our town halls?





The Wallpaper Printing Table

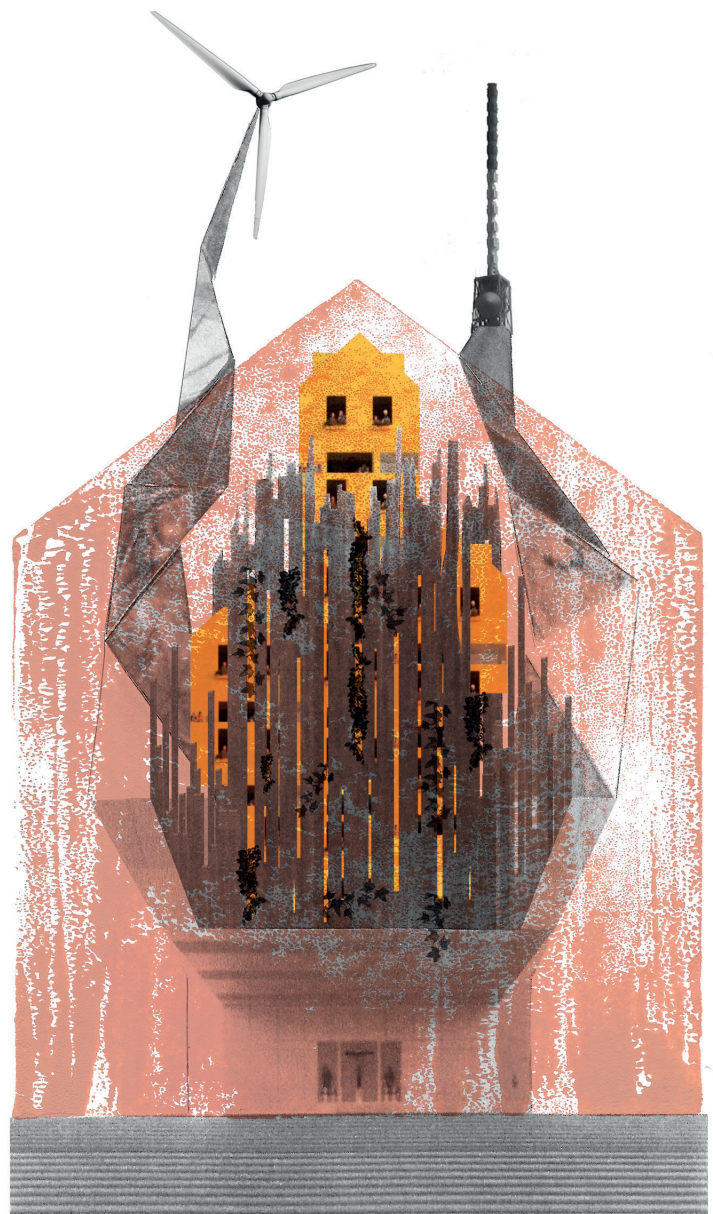
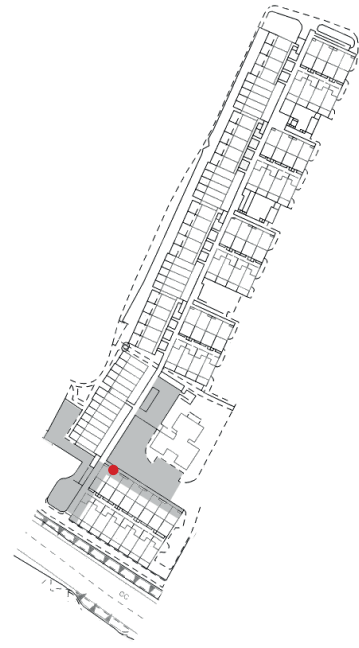


The Yellow Towers

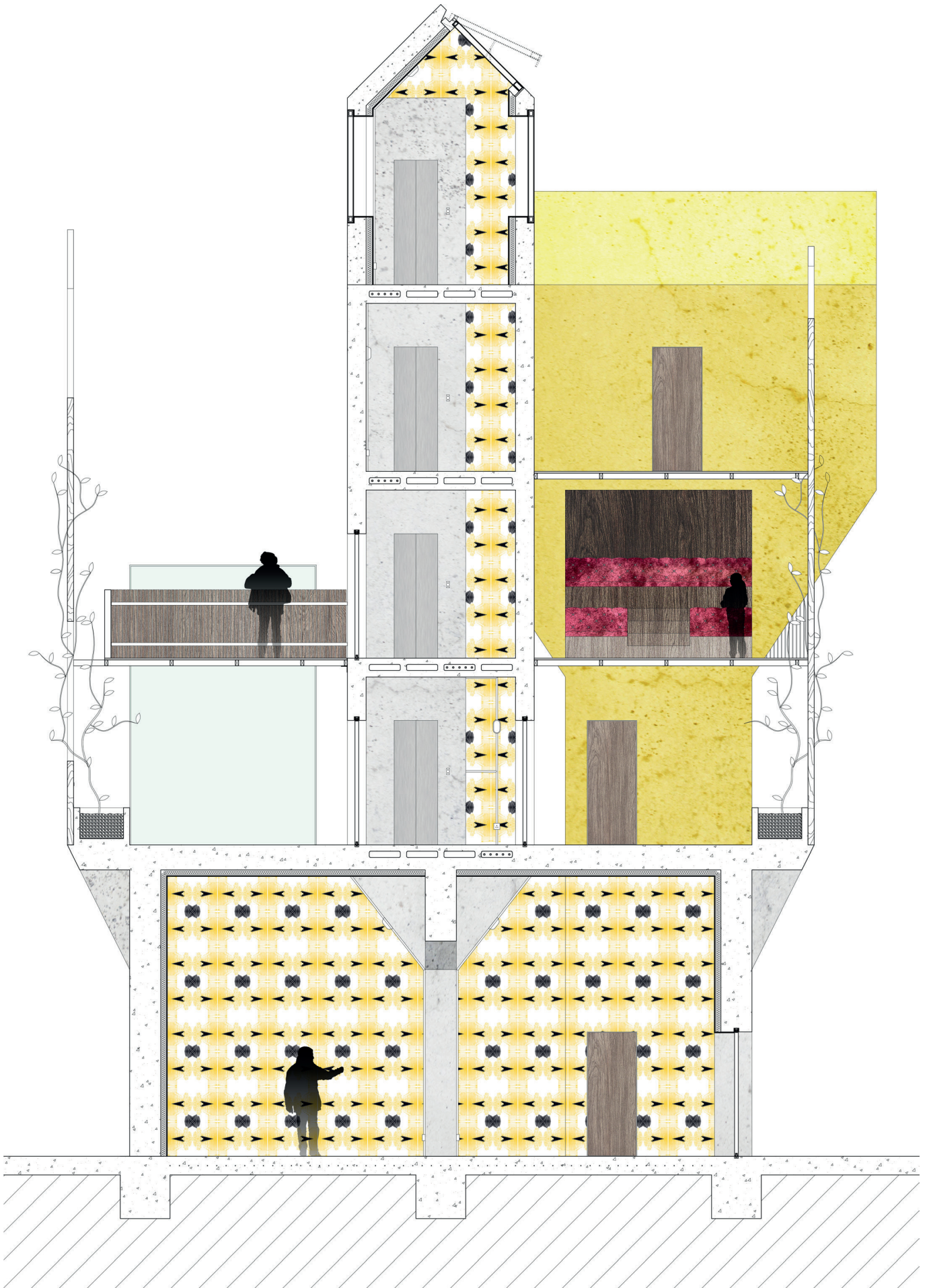
Austin Wallpaper was the first part of the project. Working with the estate's residents, mainly the children, we designed and printed wallpaper together. Wallpaper holds such important significance in the place of the home, as it allows an immediate transformation to take place in such an inexpensive, personal way.

Expanding on this concept, the Yellow Towers work on the principle of image projection, transforming the surrounding estate with images and patterns, creating temporary, immediate, non-physical spaces. In the same way that wallpaper can change a space from a sterile, impersonal, undesirable and therefore unusable place, projecting onto the empty walls bring life and habitation to the Austin Estate.

Offering multiple levels of different rooms and exterior garden terrace levels, as well as a small performance space on one of the garden terrace levels, the proposed town hall reaches into the airspace of the estate, acting as a widely visible beacon, symbolizing the community within.









Cultural Center and City Hall Archidona

Petruta Isabela Maria Alexandru



Designed by Ramon Fernandez-Alonso, the City Hall is located in the heart of the city Archidona, in the Plaza Ochavada, Spain. It combines two distinct types of intervention, consisting of on one hand the heritage building that faces the square consisting primarily of a conceptual redefinition of its function and enhancement of its structural features, and, at the same time, the approach towards the new building.

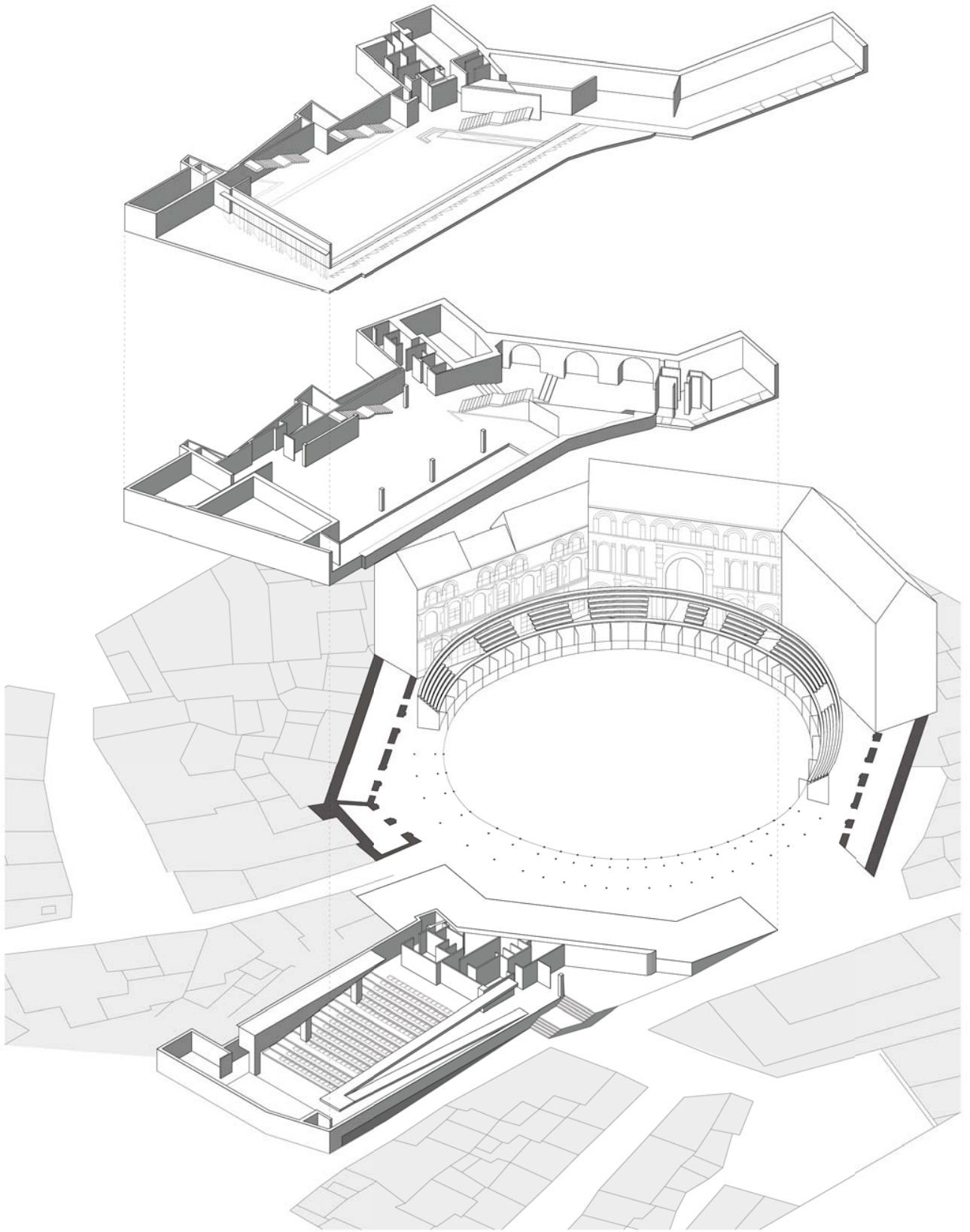
He proposes two interventions, on one side, to recover the existing building of the 18th century as much as possible, to locate the areas dedicated to the representative room and the city hall, and on the other hand, the part to accommodate the cultural program: hall, exhibition hall, cinema, restaurant on the ground floor and offices on upper floors.

Plaza Ochavada is an unusual designed octagonal plaza built in the 18th century and in the French style. Inside this 'Andalucian Patio', at the beginning of February, Carnival time is celebrated with parties, bull fighting and people dressing up in fancy dress. During movie festivals, the town hall opens its auditorium as a cinema and everyday for a week there is cinema from around the world, but with a focus on great Spanish films.

What has drawn my interest to this town hall is the way the architect has made the transition between the old and new with the insertion of a 'glass curtain' that obscures the line of intersection of their perspective planes of the facade. Another interesting aspect is the functionality of the space and how the Plaza Ochavada transforms into a Carnival.

What is the role
of animated event
in producing civic
pride?





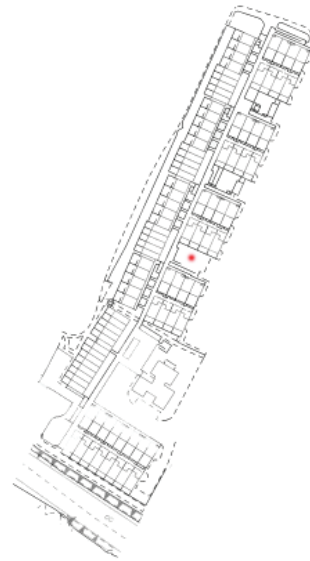
Dismantled theatre

A Wind Chime Installation was designed for the events organised in Hayes, which tried to explore the potential of the area and create a focal point for community activity. The events were lively, especially for the kids.

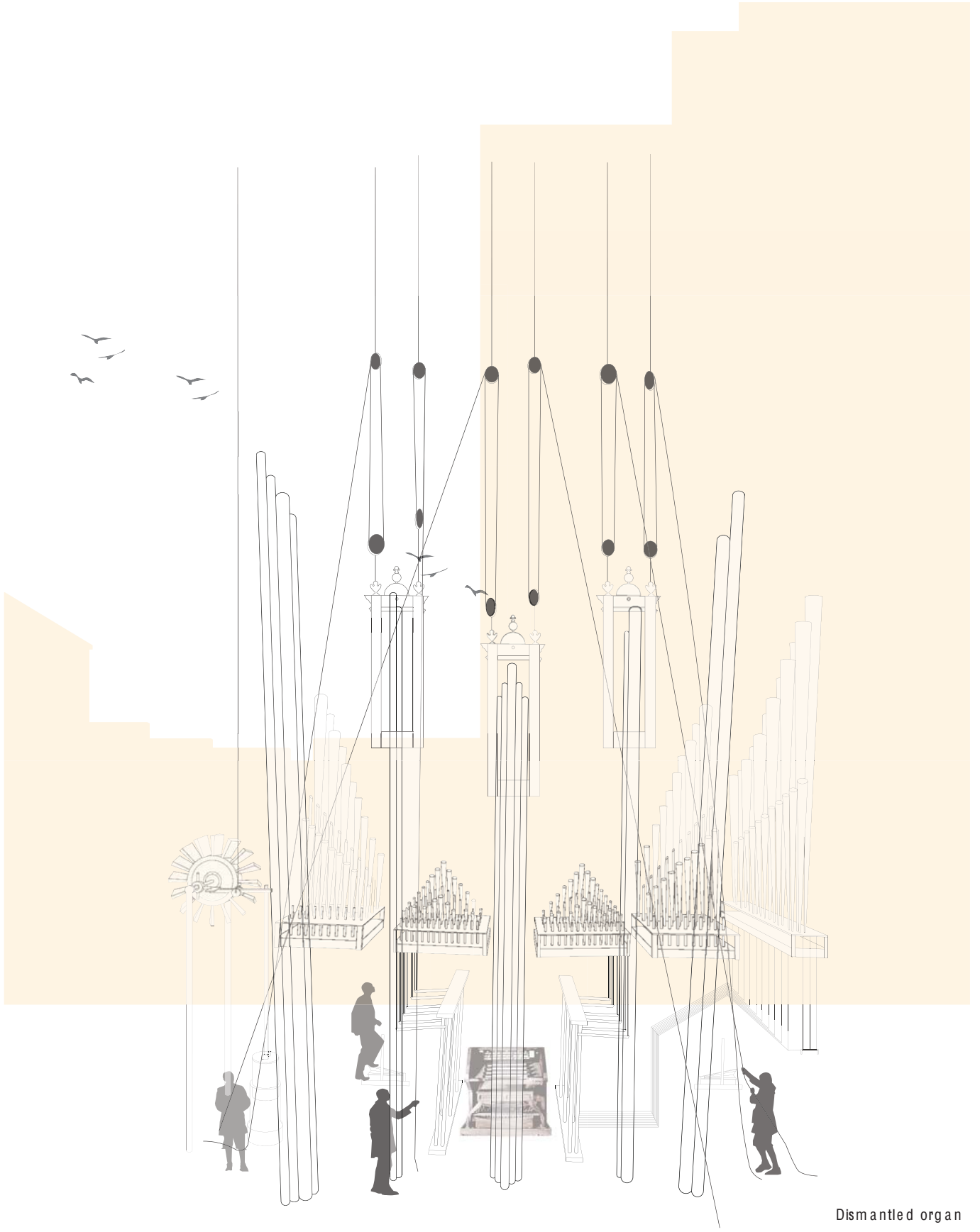
The installation can be activated by human movement or the wind which will cause it to sing, dance and play with the senses. The visitors were encouraged to interact with it, using each pipe to create their own music. By using the fusion of music and interaction, a way was created for humans to interact with one another and play.

After the success of this event, I was encouraged to take a further step and to dismantle the installation and hang windchimes all around the estate, thus creating a more magical space at the estate made by the sound of the chimes.

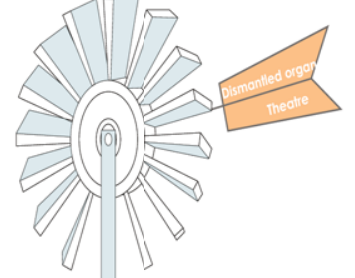
The new project will provide the residence with an educational facility in the hopes of changing the children and making them better people. It will improve the residents' lifestyles and will give them a more secure feeling. Job opportunities will be created and it is likely that the local community will be willing to work for the theatre and thus make use of the building and connect with each other. Therefore a sense of ownership will be created, residents will be able to call it their own, care for it and further develop it.



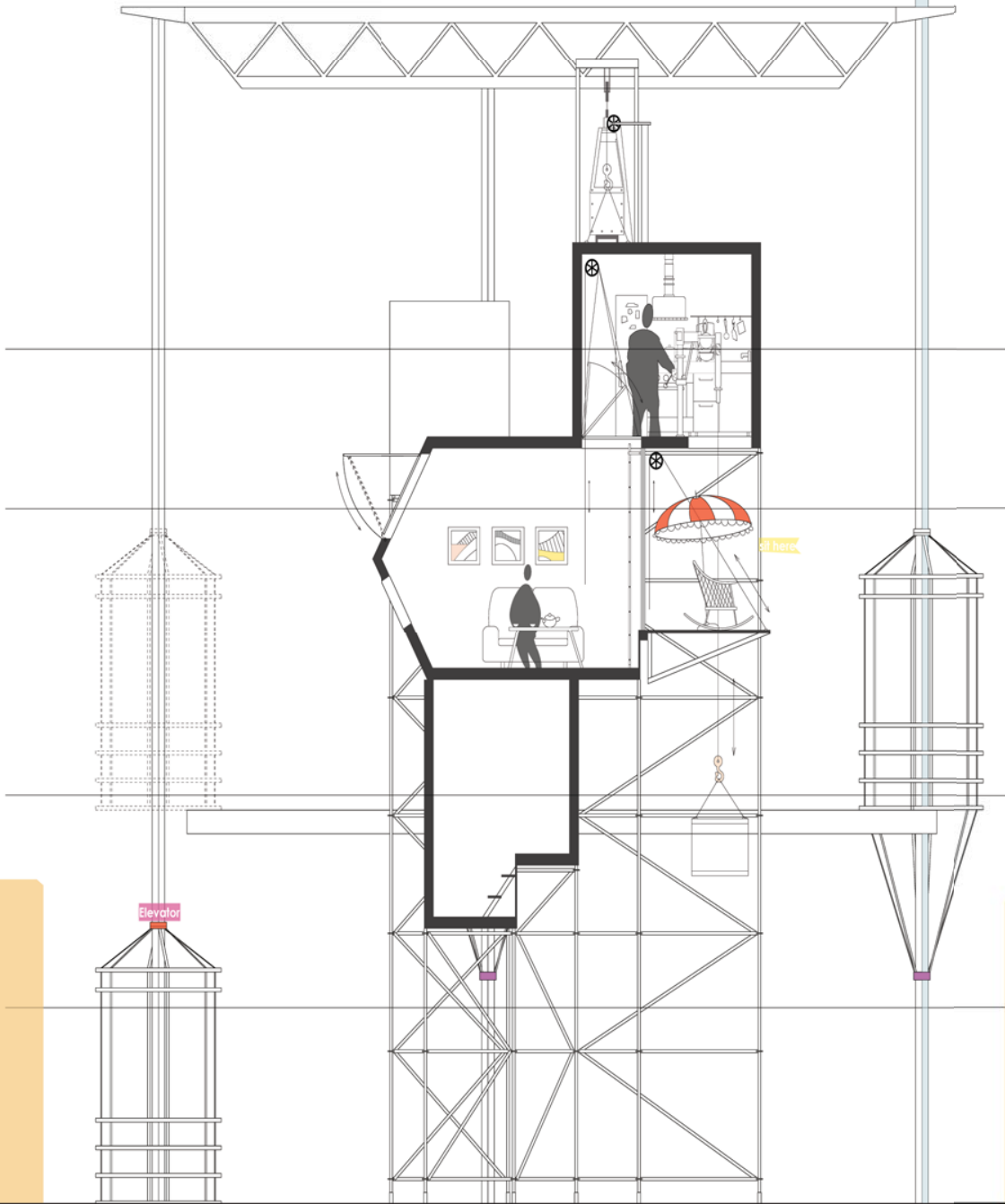




Dismantled organ



Dismantled organ
Theatre



Students:

Adam Aspinall
Alasdair Martyn Harrison
Ania Folejewska
Austin Joseph
Caveh Toossi
Deena Gohil
Elisabeth Fargues
Emily Wheeler
Eeva Sarlin
Guy Pomnongsan
Halil Yorel
Isabela Alexandru
Ivy Coles
Jessica Dale
Ludovica Cirillo
Michael Cielewicz
Nuria García Vázquez
Reham Elwakil
Samson Eniola
Soraya Osei-bonsu
Susan Kudo
Tayba Al
Zsofia Tompa

BA(Hons) Architecture, Studio 3 — 2013-2014
Tutors: Torange Khonsari, Sandra Denicke Polcher
The Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design
In collaboration with CASSprojects, Jen Ng