Vol.1 PRE

[-1]

Playground

Creative Companionship in a Living Landscape

AY24/25 Design Options MArch 1 | Studio Lilian Chee | **Tan Wan Theng**

Working + Living Archive

Design, Research & Thoughts

Volume 1. PRE [-1], aims to document through a layered research methodology combining my personal experiences, site-visit fieldwork with research. Taking one through a curated series of key case studies, I aim to foreground my inspirations through a dynamic record of my Design, Research and Thoughts.

Any Design Process is non-linear and incredibly volatile. This record serves to capture these thoughts that form the foundations of the Design Project for present and future reference beyond the timespan of a singular project - as a Working+Living Archive.

OPEN FIELD ARCHITECTURE TRANSCRIPTS

Depoliticization of power through embodied social realities of Architecture

Context - Domestic Capital Studio Discourse

The Studio "Domestic Capital: Typological Experiments" predictates a study into the evolving Work/Home phenomenon where historical boundaries distinguishing productive (paid) and reproductive (domestic care) labour are increasingly blurred. Delving into Singapore's Housing Development Block (HDB) model, specifically exploring expiring housing stock models that form a significant public housing mode where 77% of Singapore's resident population reside, the Studio structures an intensive typological exercise to revitalise expiring models into work-homes alongside shifting static housing policies.

Capital & Housing Archetypes - A Historical Perspective

My interest derives itself from the historical connotations of modes of labour and reproduction, where architectural models often embody power structures, defined and controlled by a singular author. Architecture's origins emerged as a technique for living together evident in the formations of hunter-gatherer campsites [1]. Weber's The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism notably distinguishes the ascretic motivation to work as one fuelled by intrinsic religious values that over time evolved into a Capitalist spirit where work is no longer a means to live but becomes an end in itself [2]. The domestic sphere is a microcosm of the larger mechanics of Marxist productive realities in the Industrial age, where architecture of homes and factories become instruments that naturalise social relationships, reinforcing the family as the primary unit of "labour" in the larger body politic of the societal machine. A house has therefore been historically a politicised spatialised site of the capitalist spirit, controlled by the state and economic institutions, which in contemporary times is exemplified in the work/home phenomenon where production and capital accumulation are interwoven in lived spaces. Labouring activities is manifested in the storing of production of surplus including domestication of animals and plants.

Historically, one of the most important archetypes of domesticity includes that of a typical family unit. The institution of the family was a primary link between capitalistic production and domestic reproduction as seen in traditional shophouse models. This carries assumptions of a hegemonic hetrosexual parental makeup that is increasingly challenged by the present diversity of non-binary identities and familial models. Single-flat home ownership are increasingly integrated in housing policies to reflect broader social trends of unmarried singles.

The individual living cell has further broadened the range of archetypes in modern domesticity. While historically reflected in models such as the religious monastry, collegial institution predicated on shared intellectual labour as sites of cultural reproduction of intrinsic values opposed to the hectic ethos of urban life, emergent is the artist loft studio as a direct progenitor of the contemporary live/work type and increased commodity fetishization of the housing type. The contemporary phenmenon of freelance work and small-scale businesses presents a disjuncture between contemporary work/live needs and traditional workspaces such as the factory or office. The conception of the artist as a bohemian bachelor, reinforces a radically individualised form of living separated by any familial relationship, but whose social relations are forged through cooperative premises where domestic equipmentand facilities such as bathrooms, kitchen, storage and exhibition/ performance spaces are shared. An artist's appropriation of the iconic open-plan "loft" allowed for a synchronous development of experimental art forms and multi-dimensional realities reflected in the traversal of traditional painting, sculpture and performance. The cooperation of the individual dwelling archetype presents a constant negotiative process in the dialectic between individual and collective, live and work, freedom and discipline.

Open Field Architecture - Depoliticization of Labour and Power

I hope to challenge these historical assumptions of the home as a site of domesticated labour by imagining a new architectural model that depoliticises labour through an open-field of co-authorship. An open-field in plan, section or elevation offers an unscripted space where a person's appropriation transforms the space into one of unbound experimentation while allowing the elements of life and work, production and reproduction to blend. Be reconfiguring and redistributing architecture's power in reproducing social structures, a deconstruction of the conception of a traditional "work" and "home" typology may become a means of inhabitants to negotiate in a dynamic process of architecture as a social process.

By positioning the individual dwelling archetype in the collective archetype, I aim to uncover a potential of sharing and collectivising the right to living and working through a structure that paradoxically de-structures existing power dimensions, while restructuring a democratic space of living and working.

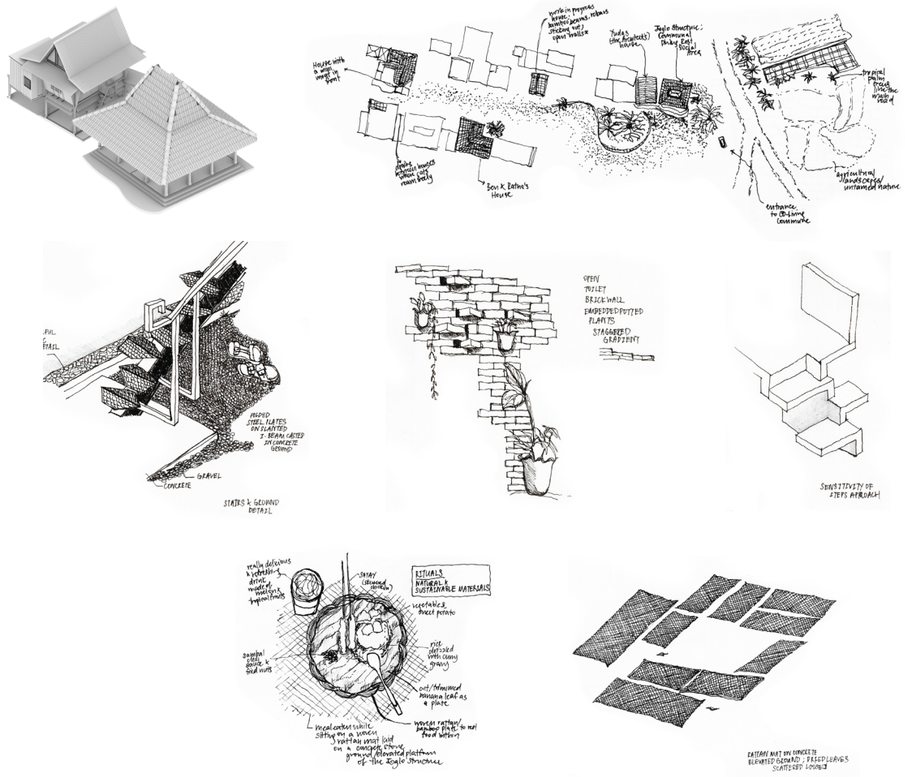
The concept of the Open Lattice provides an insight to how such a paradoxical structure may be designed.
In Open Score Architecture, Manopoulou expands on her research in chance-aided design, where the visibility of structure as a score to establish a common rhythm and visble notation orchestrates a multitude of uses without determining a rigid and predefined organisation through a social process of negotiation through spatial and temporal invention and adaptations by the inhabitants.[3] A matrix and field of possibilities, the architect is recast as an invisible author who redistributes agency to individual authors that engage collaboratively to practice architecture as a "social activity" and a "social artefact". [4] Non-hierarchical action and empathy is fostered through the spontaneous and unpredictable characteristics of a conversation faciliated by the physical language of architecture.

A spatial and time continuum where music and dance were created independently in a shared space structured by defined time units is faciliated by architecture to advance an autonomous and interdependent way of working. Further, the subversions and appropriations of spatial materiality through objects and adaptations of structures become a means for individual authors to negotiate. A reflection of architecture and affect through emotive realities are manifested in material artefacts and social fiction that deterritorialize space.[6] The tapestry of materials and collaboration intermingle to shape an embodied social reality. This model prompts an introspective understanding of the self through the language of the body as a fundamental relation of feeling, knowing amd embodied experience.

In the case studies to be explored, I argue for a possibility of communal consciousness in rethinking of contemporary architecture. With the theoretical contextualisations as a prelude, the case studies will be analysed independently to elucidate typological possibilities and insights. The new methodological approach to design as an "open-score architectural lattice" may be summarised to possess the following key principles:
(i) co-authorship
(ii) open lattice
(iii) language of time, bodies and space

[0] Studio booklet
[1] Dogma
[2] Weber
[3] Manopoulou
[*] HDB stats
[4] ibid p.214
[6] Architecture and Affect

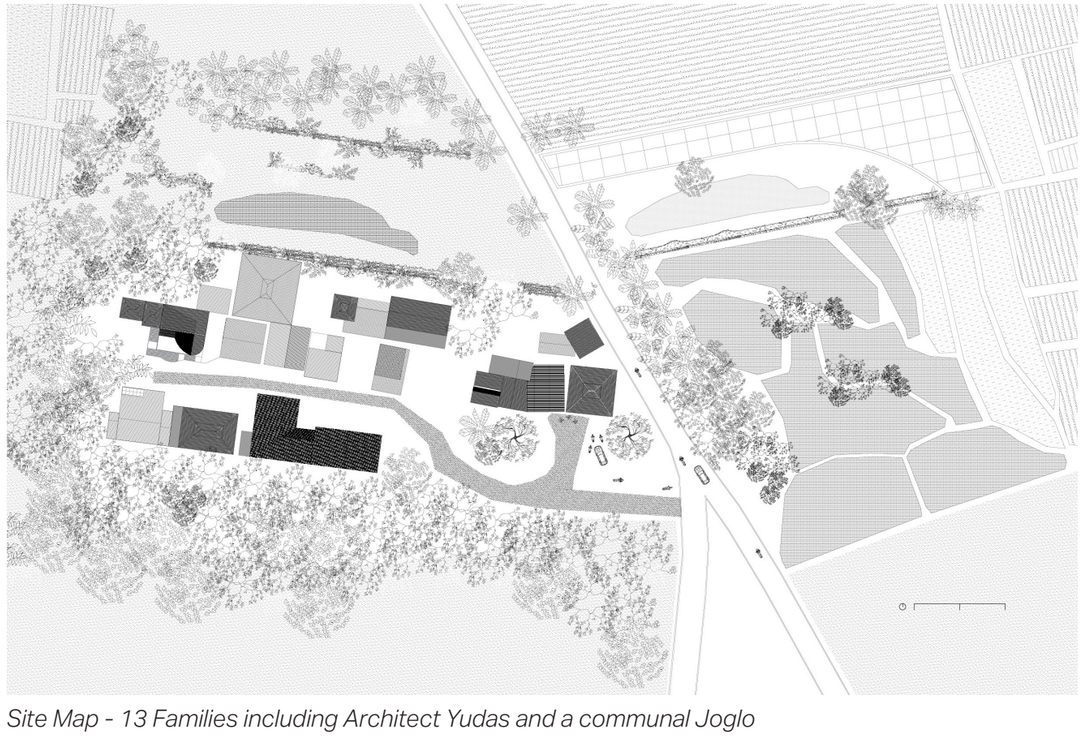
Case Study #1 | Co-Living, Yogyakarta by Studio Tanah



Retrospective mapping - record of textures, materials and everyday rituals
28 July 2024

HOW DO WE LIVE?

This existential question summarises my intrigue and instinctive curiosity of the place and its projective ideals after visiting. The afternoon began with a heartwarming meal of homecooked food prepared by the locals, followed by an enriching conversation with its visionaries - one a philosopher and another an architect, Yudas, student of the late Eko Prawato. Following that, our small group was guided to walk through the houses and neighbourhood, entering some of the homes of the residents although photos were not allowed for their privacy. I present my insights through an assemblage of textual notes and records from my experience, alongside sketches and photographs to stitch a retrospective memory that one new to this space can experience.



Site Map - 13 Families including Architect Yudas and a communal Joglo

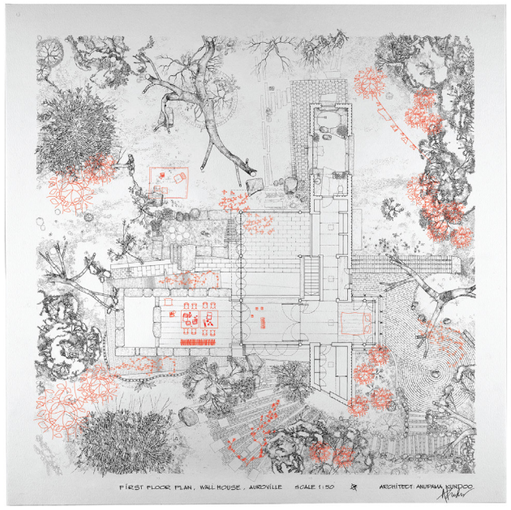
Community | 13 Families
Economical & environmental model, shared resources; open architectural language- no fences, building of trust

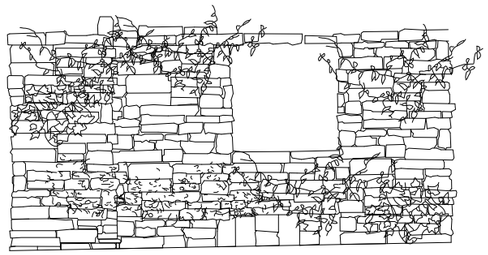
Language of the Body | Rituals - Cooking, Eating, Talking, Silent dinners
A space for bodies to gather. the body thinks & communicates, Social healing

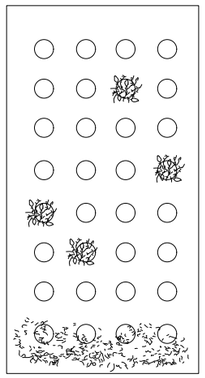
Education, Art, Activism
Social Responsibility, Collaborative Space, School & Exhibiton Space

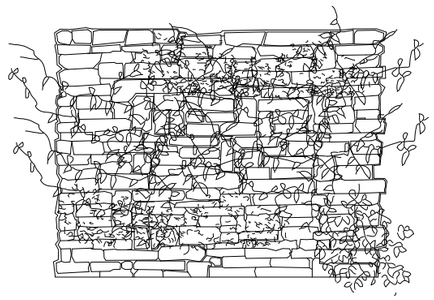
Layers of Privacy | Work & Rest Spaces
An Architecture of fluidity, An Architecture of agency, An Architecture of "Coming into being"

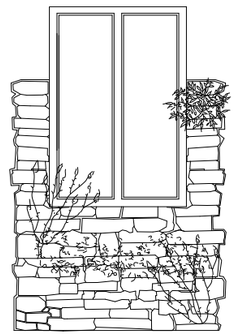
Case Study #2 | Wall House, Auroville by Anupama Kundoo

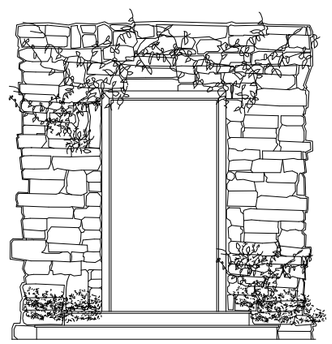


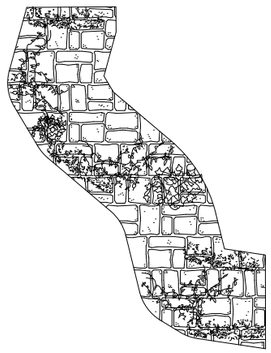












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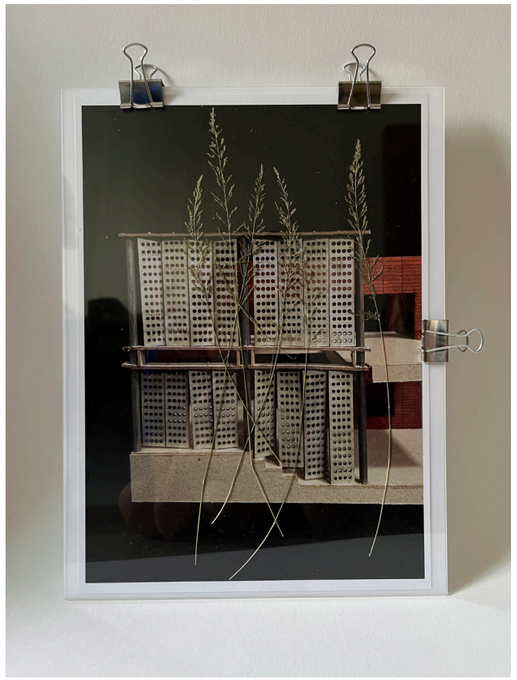

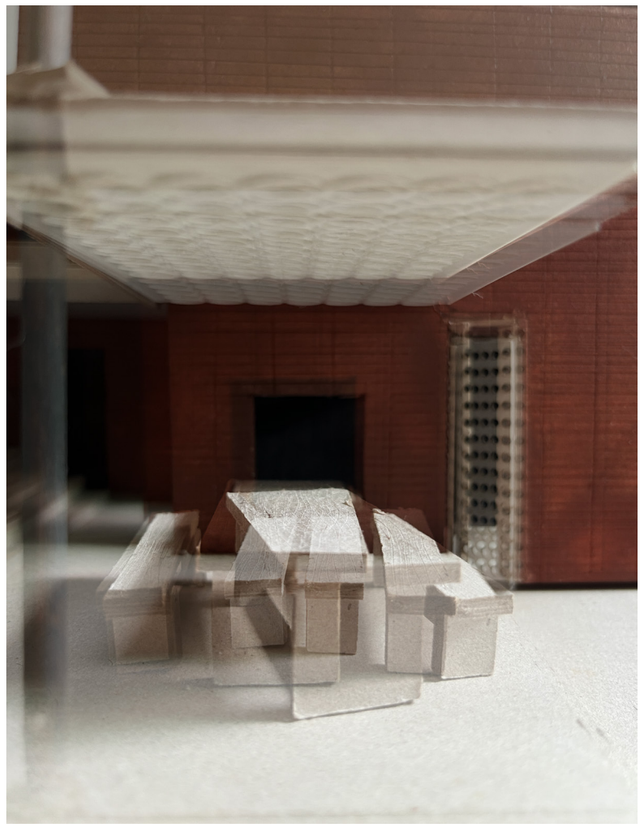

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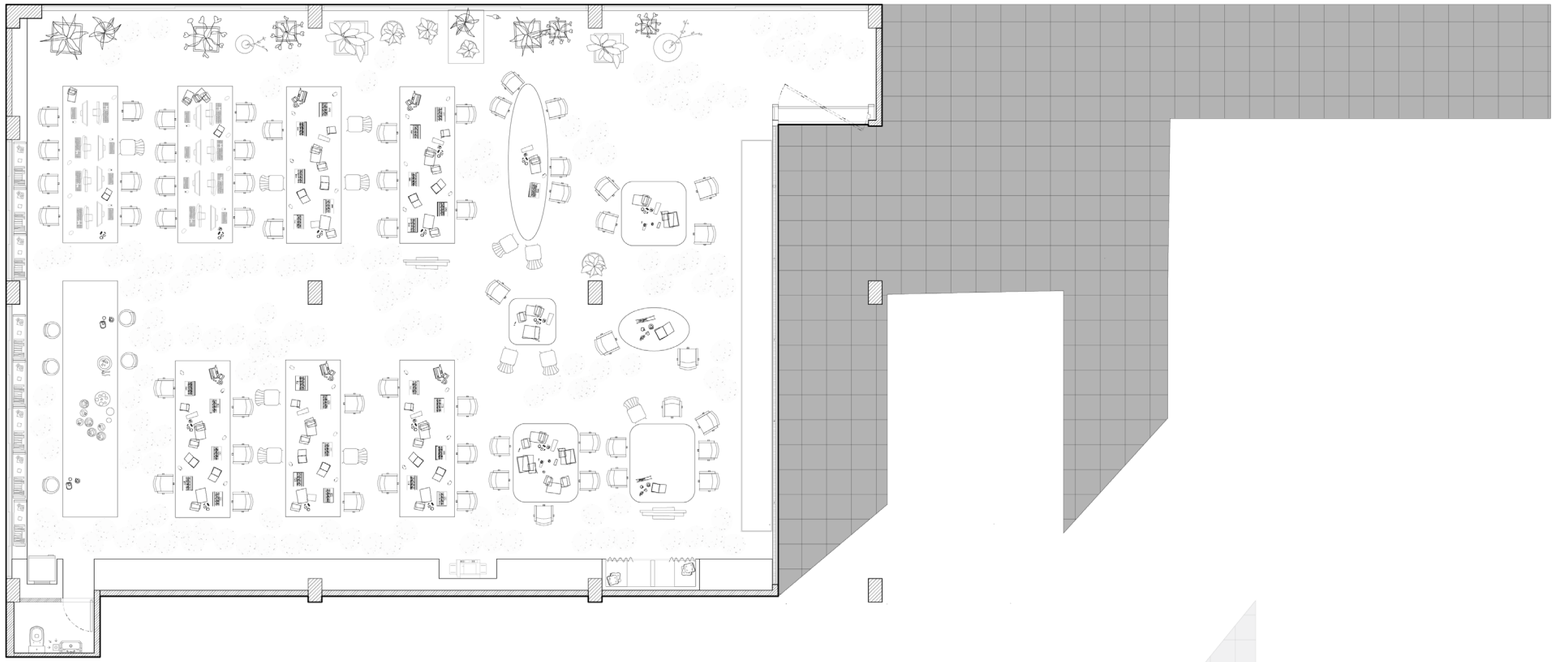
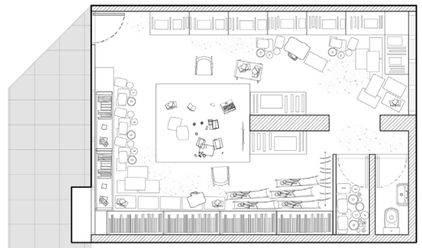
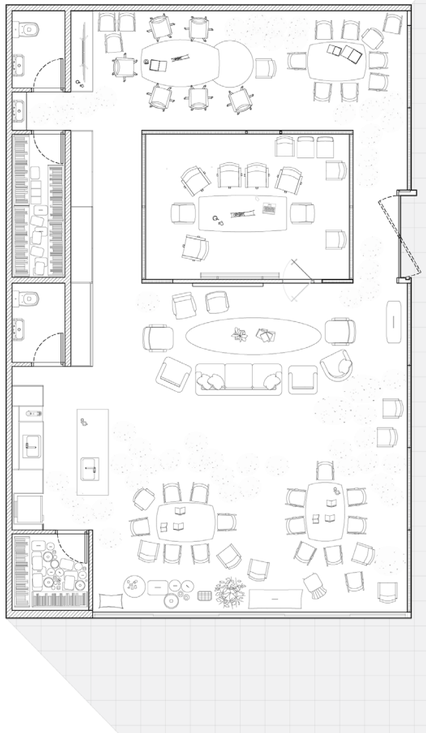






Black FARM

Holds up to around 50-60 people when in full capacity. Private office area exclusively for staff.
(first space)

Users:
Staff

Spatial Planning:
- 1 Large open hot-desking area
- 1 Printer Corner
- 2 Confession rooms
- 1 Pantry (big table, fridge, food)
- 1 Washroom
- Locker built-in shelves
- Large storage shelves built into walls

Work Type:
- Team discussions
- Screen projections for Presentations
- Work desk + desktop for more software intensive work

Needs:
- Flexibility
- Privacy in an open space
- Gradient of discussion to quiet zones

Notes:
People tend to cluster with their friends, space allows flexibility for people to gather on a project basis

Grey FARM

Densely populated by material and finishing samples for Interior Design & Architecture projects. Storage room for project files and live model making area.
(newest space)

Users:
Interns, Staff

Spatial Planning:
- Material library
- Dedicated model-making area
- Resource reference for past projects
- Storage areaa

Work Type:
- Model making
- Material samples reference
- Referencing Project files.

Needs:
- Working space
- organised storage systems

White FARM

Only area where guests are allowed to enter. Typically used for internal team meetings, and meetings with clients, suppliers, contractors, engineers etc.
(second space)

Users:
Guests, Staff

Spatial Requirements:
- A room in the middle equipped with a projector that can be expanded to the space's full extents to house varying volumes of people.
- 1 Countertop with basic appliances such as a cooler, coffee machine and sink.
- 2 Washrooms.
- 1 meeting room enclosed by shutters.
- Many tables and seating areas
- Storage areas

Work Type:
- Internal/ Client Meetings
- FARM sharing takes place once every month where all staff gather for a sharing session.
- Free-flow beer in pantry for staff to unwind/ socialise

Needs:
- Flexibility
- Scalability

Notes:
See-through shutters allow a lot of natural light into the space, and allows public to peer into the activities of the room, aligning to the openness of its conception.

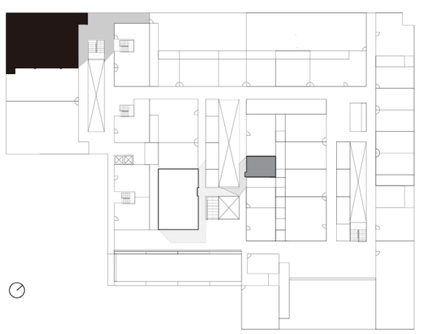
[WORK TYPE CASE NOTES]

Any specific time/ routine of an architect's usage of a space?
- No. It really depends on the project the architect is working on. [Flexibility]
- Typical working hours are from 930am - 5/6pm. Workers can continue WFH if necessary. 1 day of WFH per week on Monday/ Friday.

Relationship to rest of building
- Venture out of the office for food/ lunch breaks to the Kopitiam downstairs, but otherwise one resides mostly in the office.
- Observations of rest of building: population of residents are mostly elderly, often see funeral processions carrying the casket down the stairs. Space allocated for funerals at podium block. Community centre, exercise corner and elderly nursing home at base of tower block. Other tenants such as Zumba fitness centres cause the whole building to vibrate with its music beats

Demographics
Mostly young architects, most senior architect has 15 years of experience.
Archi department: ~15 | Interior Design: ~30 | Exhibitions: ~5 ++

User experience
(+) Open plan offers flexibility (-) can get noisy (+/-) boss can see everybody (+)flexibility of using laptop to move around (+/-) Trial of hot-desking, no space ownership, required to store



scale 1:100

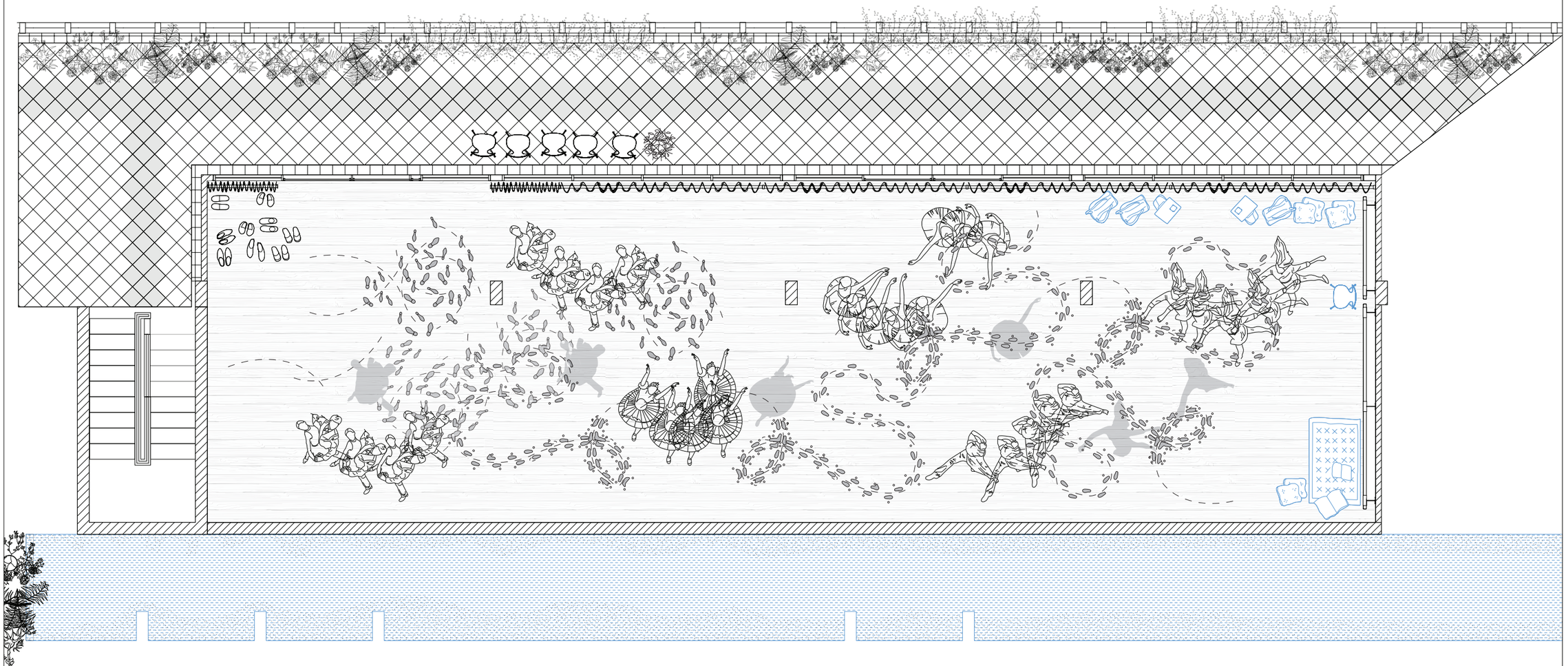
0 1 3 5 10M

scale 1:50

0 1 3 5 10M

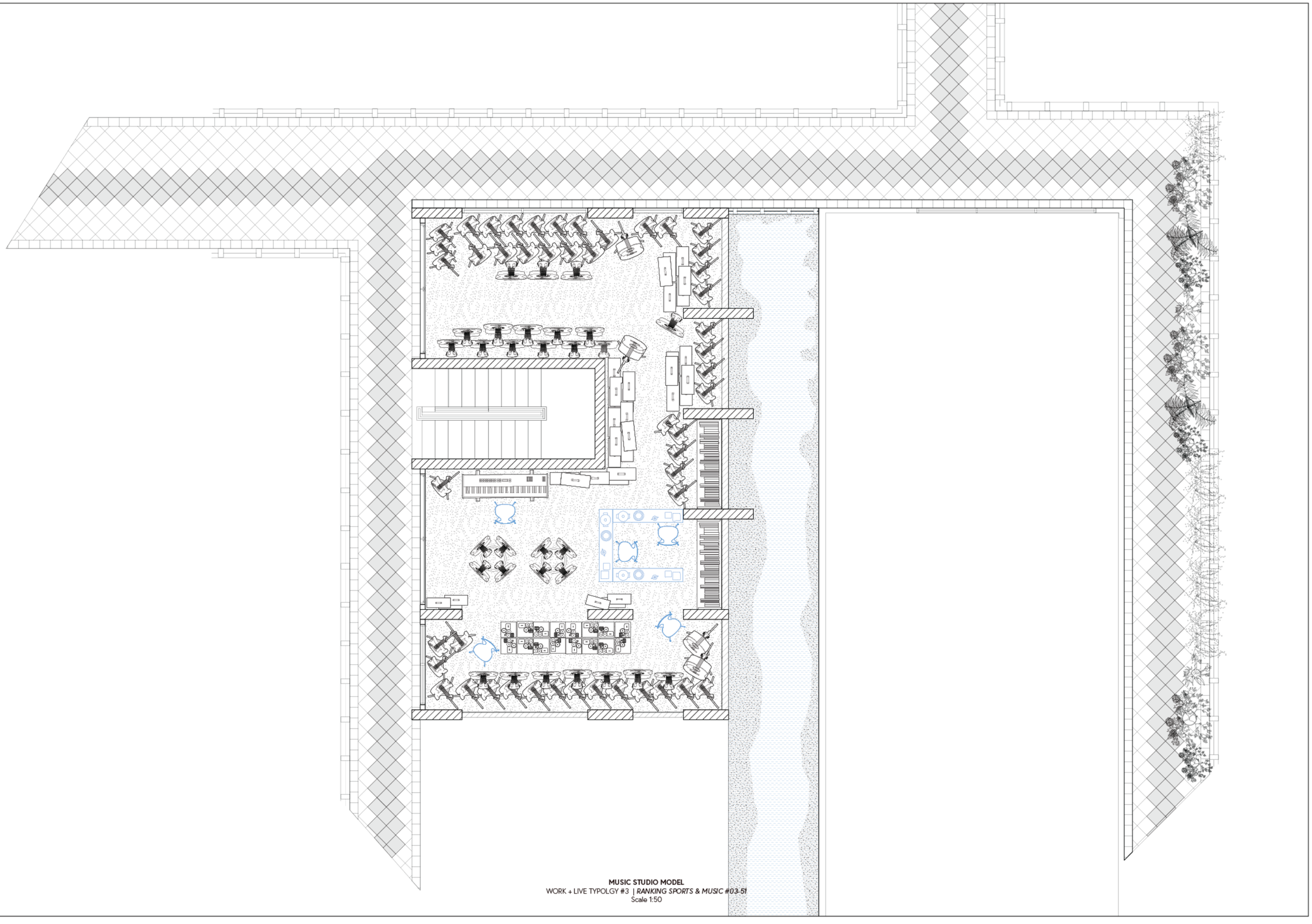
Podium-Block Typological Study

The Architecture Firm Work(Type) Analysis | FARM @ Waterloo Centre



PERFORMING DANCE/ THEATRE STUDIO MODEL
WORK + LIVE TYPOLGY #1 | *JOHN & JOSEPHINE DANCE CREATIVE #04-03/05*
Scale 1:50

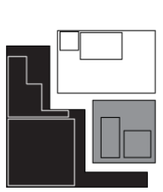
VISUAL ARTS STUDIO GALLERY MODEL
WORK + LIVE TYPOLGY #2 | *CAPE OF GOOD HOPE ART GALLERY #03-17*
Scale 1:50



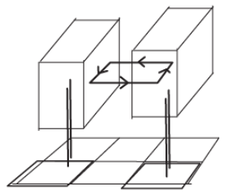
MUSIC STUDIO MODEL
WORK + LIVE TYPOLGY #3 | *RANKING SPORTS & MUSIC #03-51*
Scale 1:50

Podium as a Rule-based Structural Expression

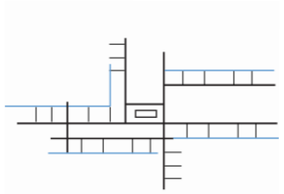
Rule Logic Development - Principles of Spatial Occupancy



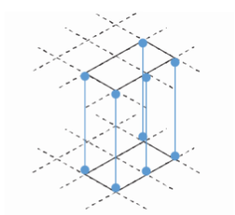
Conslidating “Discrete” objects/ programmes into “Union” of shared open spaces



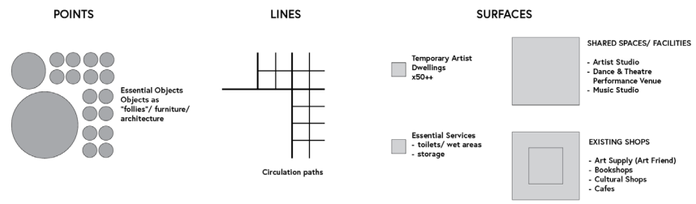
Exploding & Activating the Podium Floor into the Block



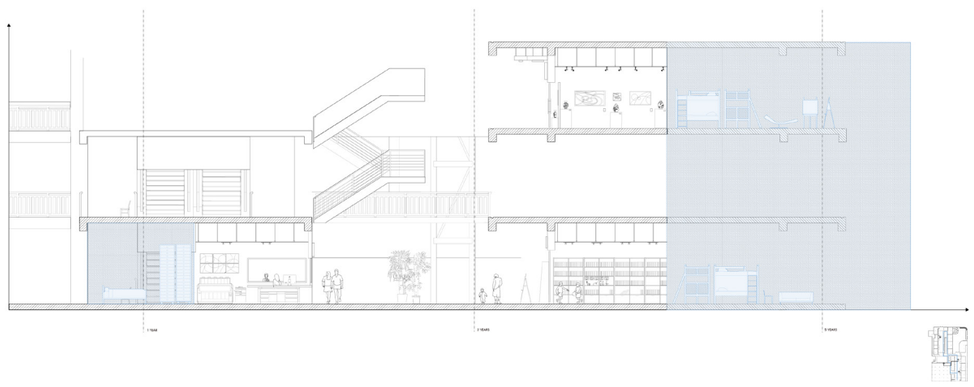
New Circulation network of front & back/ Private & Public



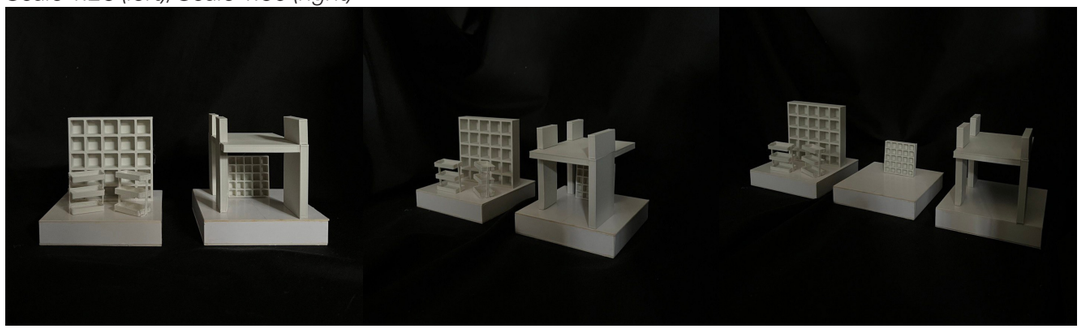
Spatial Grid Lattice Structure
Demarcation of plots on S,M,L,XL scale



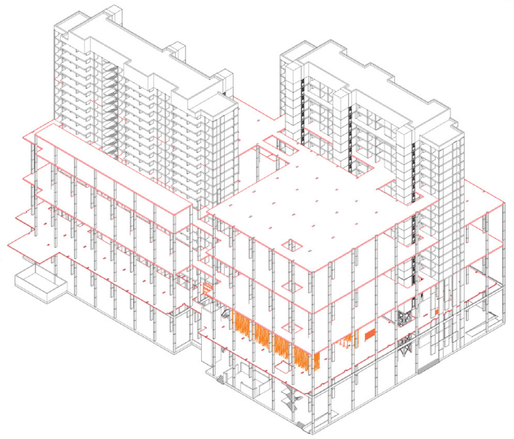
Time Machine - Work + Live Attachments Concept Study
‘Shophouse’ Front & Back | Infrastructure of Fluidity



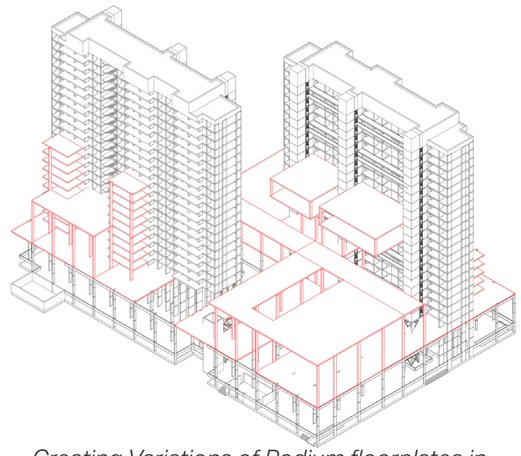
S, M, L Objects in Space on Grid | Parti Conceptual Experimental Model
Scale 1:25 (left), Scale 1:50 (right)



Structural Grid & Exploded Podium Floor Design



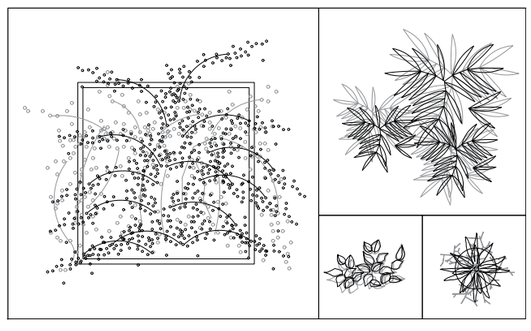
Exploding Podium Floors into the shared corridor floors of the Block

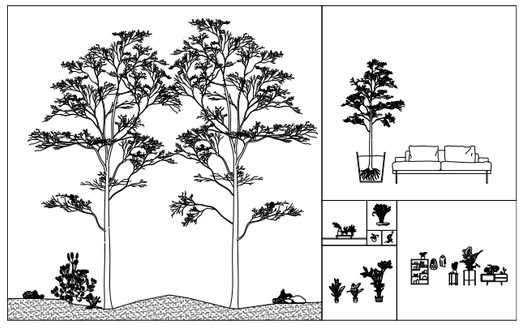


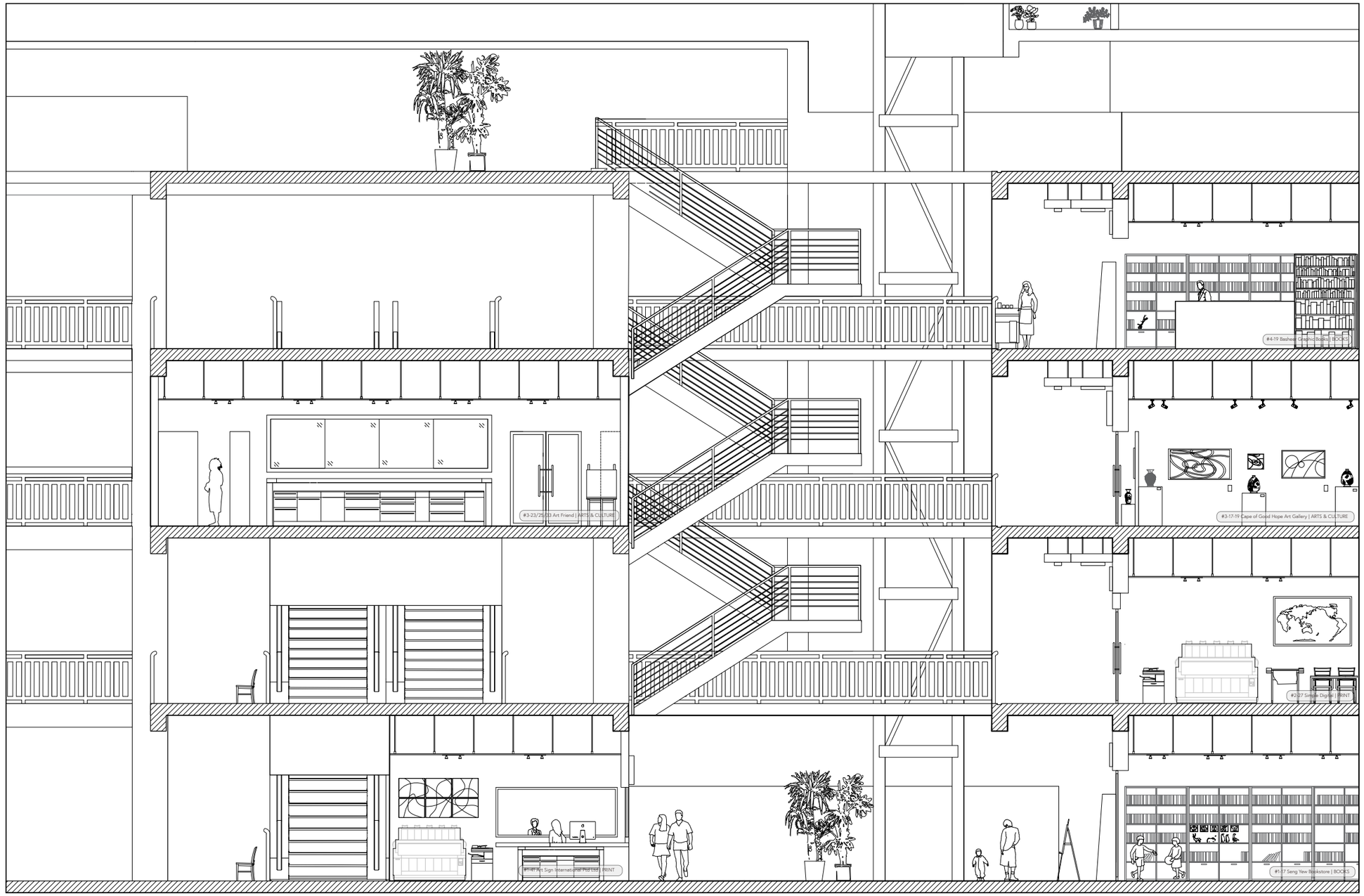
Creating Variations of Podium floorplates in the block

Structural Expression Experiments with Open Nature Programmes

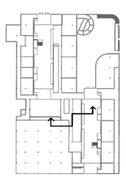
S,M,L,XL Object Morphologies in Plan & Section | Experimental concept drawings







BRAS BASAH COMPLEX
PODIUM NETWORK | MICRO-SITE ANALYSIS
Scale 1:35



Vol.3 POST

[1]

Playground

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Vision of PLAYGROUND

Architecture practiced as a social reality and “living” organism where the architect is recast as a facilitator of space. Time and bodies as a new language for the social production of architecture. Architecture as a conversation. A space to be and to become where friends give and share rather than to claim, terrorize and stake properties. A space to be comfortable with sharing vulnerability. Democratic architecture and a mode of becoming.

A Landscape of Creative Companionship

My intervention eventually seeks to argue for an alternative paradigm of Creative Companionship by uncovering the tensions between the conflicting commercial typologies with the fluidity and accessibility of knowledge exchange, where knowledge encompassing the work/live agents such as architects, budding creatives and designers, tenants and residents, can potentially form parts of a self generating system of creative capital.

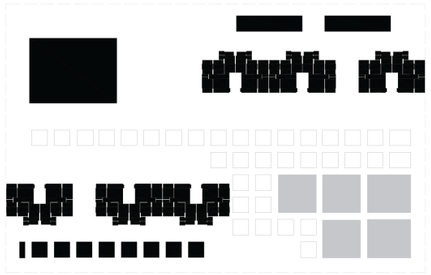
Where occupancies take centre-stage, the role of the architect is quietly alluded to as the mastermind of the PLAYGROUND. On a more existential level, the project recasts the architect as a facilitator of architecture as a social process - where spaces unravel, linger and embody subjectivities.

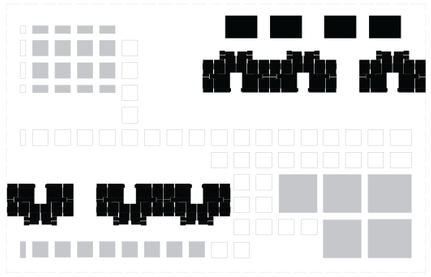
SCALAR RULE SYSTEM

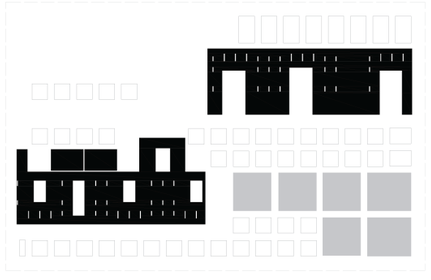
Conceptualising the new open field as a playground, the objects within are organised by a scaled rule system, which may be multiplied and aggregated through volumetric variation in section and plan, encompassing “opening” and “disappearing” nodes in space.

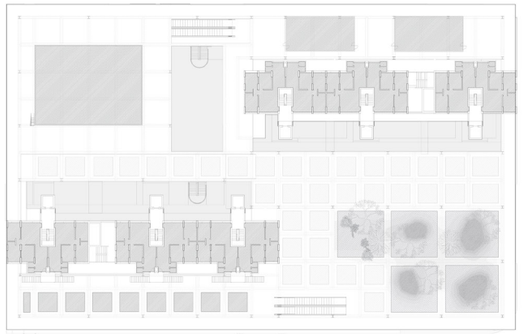
S – Furniture, Objects
M – Rooms
L – Infrastructure
XL – Urban Streetscape Language

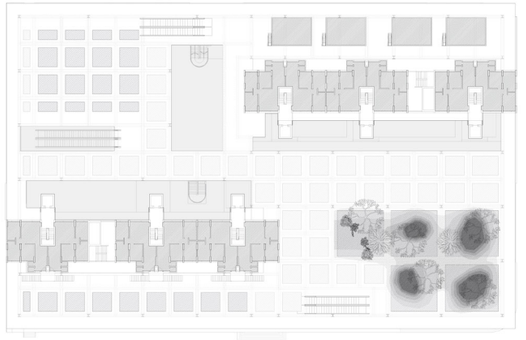
These components may exist in the three programmatic states:
Black - Fixed programmes
Grey - Semi-porous spaces
White- Open spaces



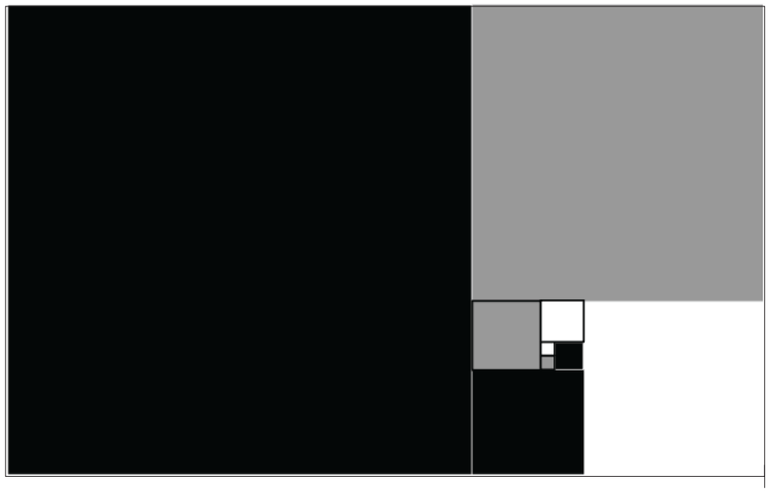


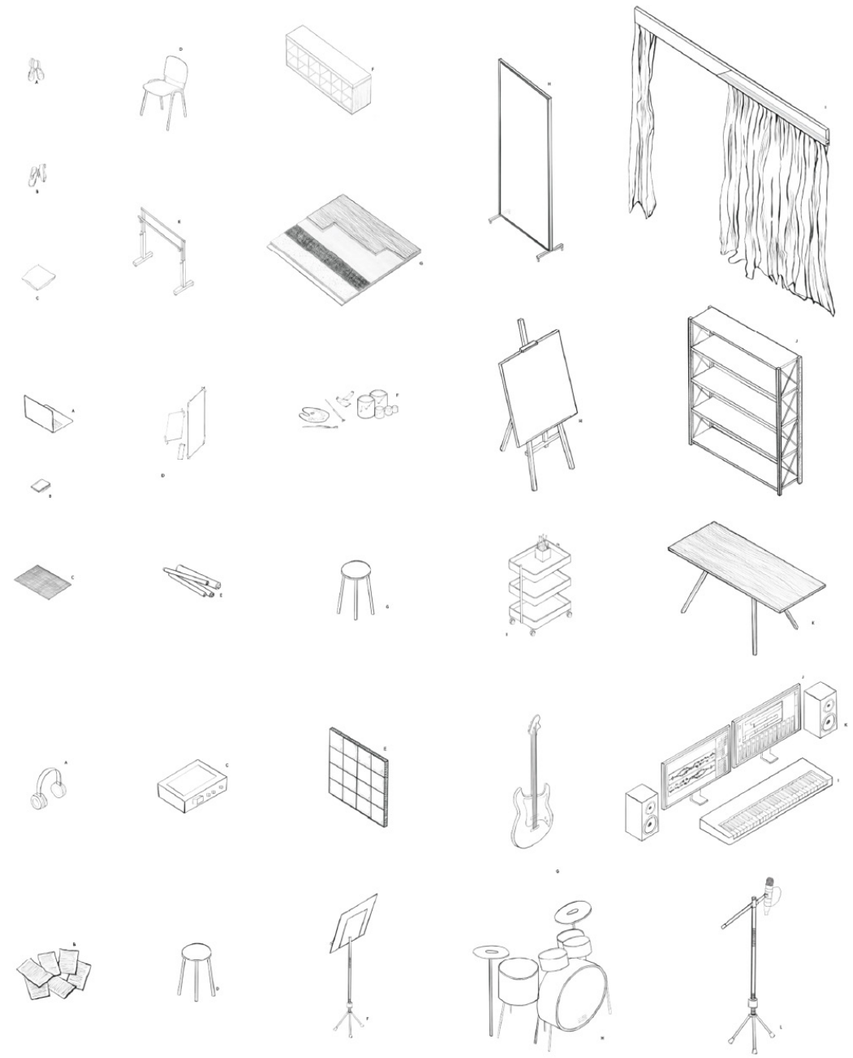


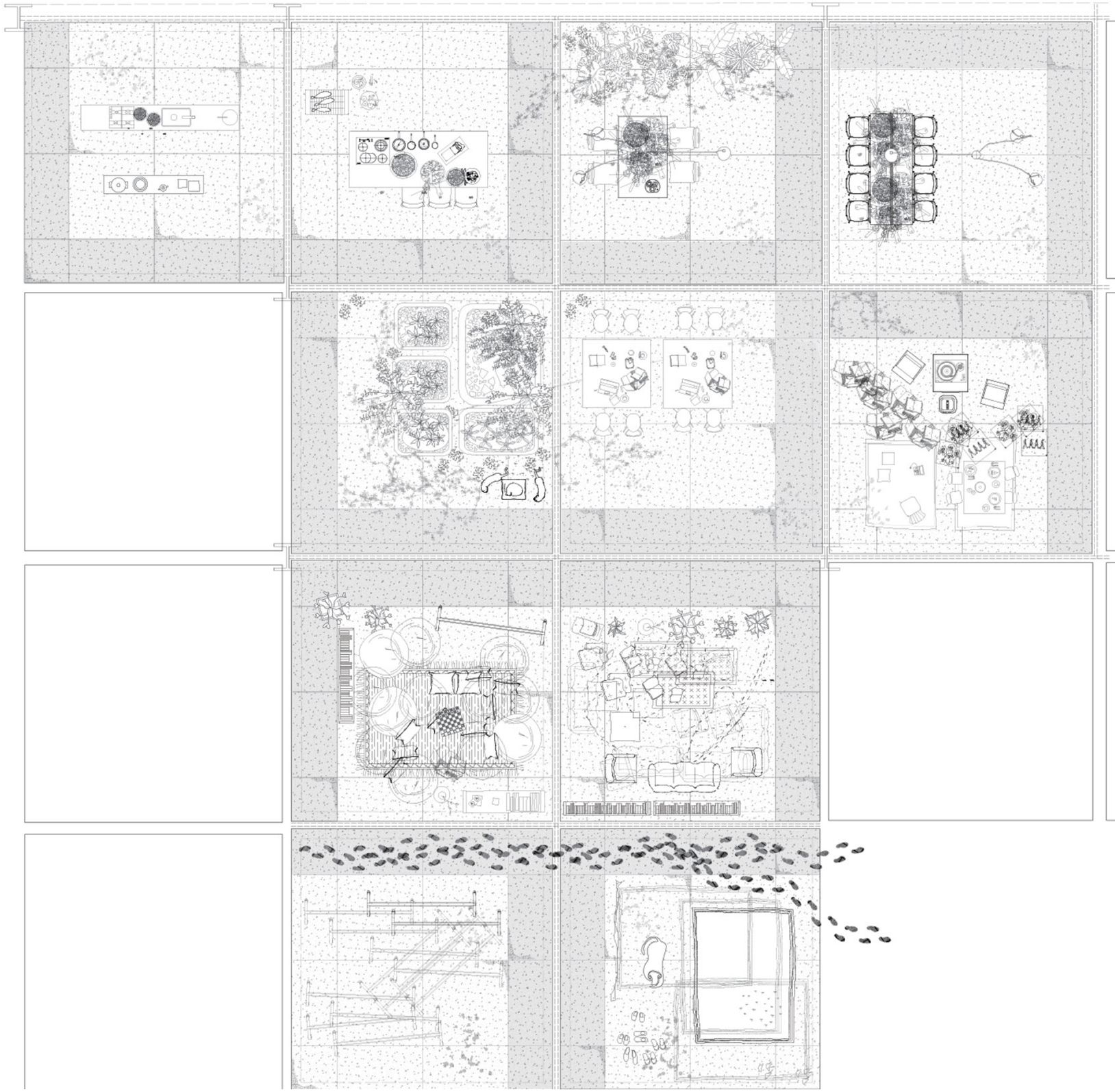




(left) Spatial abstraction of programmatic zones
(right) Podium level Plan detail drawings







Companionship of White Spaces

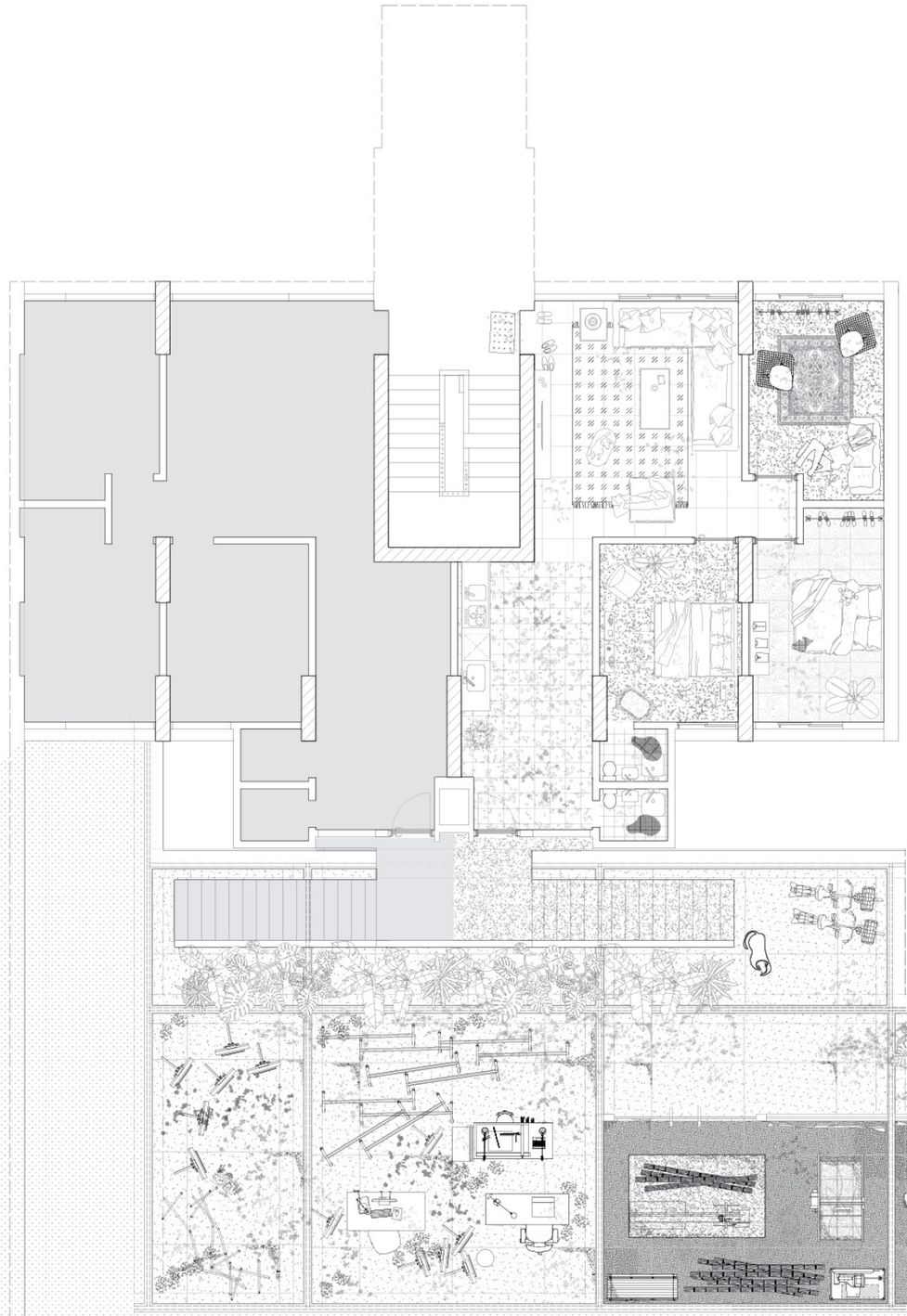
An extension of the structural grid, each square plot has a carefully dimensioned concrete tile plates with a 600mm border on the edges. The spatial design of rules facilitates an user guide of (i) only occupying a maximum of two edges, leaving a minimum of 600mm walking transitional space (marked in grey), and (ii) for each occupied space to not be more than 50% filled.

A space for play, an open sharing kitchen, small gardening plots, extended living rooms, and undemarcated spaces for gathering.

Where objects, cats, dogs, weather, nature & people interact in relational networks constantly in flux.

Companionship of Grey Spaces

A 1800mm platform bridge rests on top of the structural grid on the second podium floor, creating porous interfacing with nature, the trees and the ground from the first floor. Where stray animals may wander, where a bohemian may perform, paint, or simply chill with the melody of birdsong, whistle of leaves and the breeze of rain.



Companionship of Black Spaces

Where the crossover of the private residential artist home overflows into workshop, exhibition, studio and open classroom spaces, the expansion beyond the home as an artmaking space extends the possibilities of interdisciplinary making across different scales. Marked by traces of usage, dirt, paint, stains, and the growth of nature. Sunlight flows in to naturally ventilate and illuminate the space, exposing users to the vulnerabilities of extremities.

X-ray Sectional Scenography
Layering of Life & Activities | Multitudes of *scenes in a Landscape*
Scale 1:50

A Tale of Two Cities
Village Organic Configuration in the City Multi Storey Block | *Bras Basah Complex as a Living Arts Centre*
Scale 1:50