



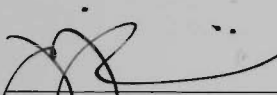
UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY
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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

TITLE: BodyMindSpirit: Mediating the Meta-Physical Transition

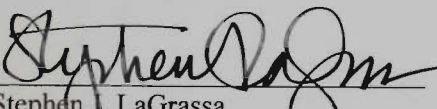
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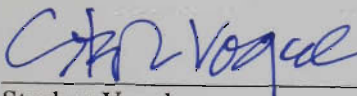
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BODY · MIND · SPIRIT | mediating the [meta]physical transition

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critical positions: Ar 520 | 01
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April 26

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This is an investigation that will look at how a particular mediator mediates the body. First, it will explore the mediation between the building and its site and how the program requires are mediated to each other. It will explore the connection that are built with the built environment - understanding it at a physical level and a meta-physical level. This investigation will analyze and critically evaluate a design process and the variables that affect and make visible such measurements.

ABSTRACT | mediating the [meta]physical transition

Is an entrance or exit to a space a threshold? Is the transition from another or into a space as a space of becoming? Can the previous or previous forms they enter the new space? Is an entrance more than a simple path with the passage through, or is there a threshold that layers the act of passing from one space to another and how in that space can they shift?

This investigation will attempt to realize the intent that the design question proposed. How does architecture mediate the body to address thresholds, spatiality and the spaces within it?

This is an investigation that will look at how architecture mediates the body. Also, it will explore the mediation between the building and its site and how the program spaces are mediated to each other. It will explore the connection that one has with his built environment, whether that be at a physical level or a meta-physical level, this investigation will analyze and critically situate a circumstance to test the variables that affect and make up the built environment.

Is an entrance as simple as a door, an object that separates one space from another or can an entrance be a space of becoming; one that prepares the person before they enter the new space? Is an entrance more than a simple plane that one passes through, or is there a threshold that begins the act of passing from one space to another and how is that space occupy able?

This investigation will attempt to resolve the issues that the thesis question proposes. How does architecture mediate the body to edges, thresholds, inside/outside, and the spaces within itself?

The human body is a dynamic carrier of our physical traits and is made up of a complex network of layers that work together to form a functioning, mobile unit. Multiple systems depend on each other to operate. It is a powerful yet delicate system that, similar to a complex machine, needs maintenance and provisions to prevent one system from failing. Exercise is one of the most effective methods to preserving and preventing any failures in our complex 'machines'. By working our bodies to exhaustion, we open the door in which new life can be restored to our systems and thus prevent our delicate mesh of layers from becoming frayed.

This breaking down and re-building affects us deeper than just physical rejuvenation. A person is able to reach a euphoric state even though they are physically exhausted. This feeling is much more powerful than any physical sensations. It is the rejuvenation of the spirit. The human spirit is the final layer; it makes us human and not just life forms. Without our spirit the body would respond to physical sensations only, yet with the spirit, we can respond to the intangible qualities that surround us. The sensations that make us pause and stare at the setting sun as it illuminates the sky with a fiery palette is an example of an intangible quality that our spirit gives us the fortune of enjoying. Art is the physical representation of this notion that we as humans can enjoy so much more than what is physically stimulating. This is why it is so important to 'rejuvenate' the human spirit. The idea behind exercise and fitness is the rejuvenation of the body as a whole. A re-birth of our qualities that make us human. A renewal of the life force.

Architecture should have a reciprocal relationship with the user. The space should give to the user as much as the user gives to the space. However, it seems, more and more, as though there is a gap between the building and the user, at the micro scale, and the building and its physical surrounding context, in the macro scale. I would like to explore the reciprocity of building and user, as well as, the phenomenological qualities

of a space that link the building, physical body, and metaphysical body. How do you connect spaces that promote the physical aspects of rejuvenating the body with those spaces that inspire spiritual rejuvenation? People will often use a fitness center to escape from the routines of life, yet find themselves engaged in the rituals of exercise and isolation of their headphones. How do you then connect those spaces, so as to create a seamless transfer of energy that encompasses the rituals of those who use their bodies as machines, and those who use relaxation and separation to power their mind and spirit? My investigations will take a critical look at how a space reaches for the intangible qualities of a person and how to establish reciprocity between the building, person, and spirit.

BODY · MIND · SPIRIT | mediating the [meta]physical transition

Architecture is comprised of many elements, some are tangible, but many more are intangible. Bricks, steel, concrete, and glass may make up a typical building, but that is not architecture. Architecture is a composition of light and dark, solid and void, movement and rest, and many other intangible qualities. Architecture caters to the sensations that we, as humans, can detect, as well, as those that we may not necessarily think of while experiencing architecture. Architecture is the mediator through which we discover and experience our places, relate our bodies to edges and thresholds, and it is the mediator through which we connect to our surroundings and transition from the physical constraints of our world to the metaphysical experience of a space.

Architecture as Mediator

Architecture is the mediator through which we experience and discover our environment, ourselves, and our places. To mediate can be described as to have a relation to two differing persons or, in our case, things, meaning, that there are two things that are constantly trying to co-exist: humans and our built environment. A mediator is one who interposes between parties at variance for the purpose of reconciling them. The way I interpret this is that people are conflicting with buildings that are not properly designed, that is, designed to accommodate the needs of humans, both on a physical level and on a metaphysical level. Architecture, I believe, has the power to mediate the human and the built environment, that is, when designed to accommodate and support people, the built environment becomes architecture.

Architecture can be described as mediator between inhabitant and outside as well. When a person enters a building, the building becomes the medium through which one person will gauge his connection to the outside. Is it when a person is disconnected from the outside, in that there is no visual connection to the

outside that defines when a person is inside? Or do audible clues of an outdoor environment change the perception of being inside? Natural light is another way through which architecture mediates the connection of inhabitant to the outdoors. Artificial light is static and does not change throughout the day like sunlight does, therefore creating a barrier between the inhabitant and the outside. That is why many office buildings will place the majority of their workers in the core where there are less distractions and no way of gauging the time of day. Schools also tried this technique. Windows were seldom used because it was thought that students would be distracted by the scenery and the changing daylight. This had an adverse reaction because of the lack of connection the students felt resulted in the students being more reluctant to learn and therefore rebellion increased.

The Cranbrook Natatorium is an example of architecture being a mediator between inhabitant and outside. The pool area is a box that links the inhabitants to the natural surrounding and starts to redefine what is inside and what is outside. The box is punctured by several tall narrow slits that instead of being glass and



creating a solely visual connection, the slits have no glass so when they are open everything comes through, light, wind, and sound. The ceiling of the pool area is punctured by two oculi that, again, open completely to expose the inside to the elements that the building is embedded in.

Architecture also acts as a mediator between spaces within a building. Most often we view one space through means of looking through another space. For example, in the Cranbrook Natatorium, the space of the lobby mediates the view between the pool space and the entrance of the complex. Large windows act as lenses through which certain views of the pool are viewed. This creates an anticipation of processing from one space to another. The tones outside the pool area are earthy, mellow tones that build up the feeling of the space and the excitement of the pool area that is viewed but silenced by the windows of the lobby. This space mediates the two spaces by means of visual connection and audible disconnection. The sounds of cheering and splashing resonate throughout the rest of the building every time the door is opened. This creates a rhythm of sound that adds another layer of experiences to this lobby as it mediates the connection of one space to another, inside to outside, the space of anticipation to the space of participation.

As a body moves through a space it is through architecture that we can gauge its relative position to the



edges that form that space. Therefore, architecture is also a mediator between bodies and edges. In the example set forth by Alvaro Siza in his project the Faculty of Architecture Building, an edge may be a solid continuous boundary or it

may be a series of voids between solid forms that denote a boundary. A building has several edges and even edges within edges, however, without the architectural forms set in place to mediate our relation to those edges, the edges end up losing their significance. Edges are what we as humans use to guide us and place us, such as in maps or property lines. In order to achieve the notion of place we must first set up and

designate physical or implied boundaries to contain our spaces in. If we do not set up those boundaries our places will drift away, as they have in the form of sprawl. The suburbs have continued to expand outward because the edges that are necessary to contain a space, in order to make it a place, were not implemented. Since there are no edges or sense of place in the suburbs, our bodies do not have the necessary frame of reference to gauge our position and therefore we feel lost and out of place when we try to interact with the spaces in the suburbs.

Architecture can be seen as a mediator between building and context, spaces within, body and edges, and inhabitant and the outside. One more, less tangible way that a building can be a mediator is by mediating the link or transition from the physical to the metaphysical. In the martial art Tai Chi, the body goes through a series of movements that are slow, soft, graceful, and smooth, with even transitions between them. These series of movements can also be described as meditation in motion. By performing this art form, the user will elevate his body, in a spiritual matter of speaking, to a different plane, the metaphysical. The body becomes the mediator through which a different state of mind is reached.



The Unresponsive Building Type

We, as a society, dwell within a built environment that is constantly and rapidly evolving. Buildings are constructed and destructed in a whirling blur. Our cities are taking on the characteristics of temporality and impermanence. With this, the notion of place is disappearing with our evolving cities. "For me, what is missing in modern landscapes is genius loci, the spirit that imbues places with meaning and appropriateness." (Seamon p. 38). Edward Relph sees our landscapes as placeless and meaningful less voids in our society. This can be attested to the rapid growth of business and commerce and a growing gap between the built environment and the inhabitant. Office buildings have become oversized file cabinets that keep the workers in tightly configured and uninspiring cubicles neatly organized and efficiently dull. This is done because the important commodity in our current society is money and the production of the product that brings in more money.

Apparently, this drive for profit, results in the deterioration of the building and most importantly the inhabitant. As David Seamon states, "places are an integral part of psychological and social well-being." (Seamon p. 2). People are capable of adapting to certain conditions; in fact, the more a person feels connected to something, the better they feel. A pedestrian walking down the street wants to have a relation to the building next to him. The good examples of a building and pedestrian reacting positively to each other are those buildings that break down the scale of the building with elements that are designed for people scale, such as shops that invite the person into the building, or canopies that shelter the pedestrian from the elements. The cities that have really good examples are the cities that are overflowing with people, because people are extremely affected by the environment that surrounds them. This is one of the many examples that caused urban exodus in several cities. The urban centers had become so alienating that people no longer felt an intimate connection to their surroundings and, in turn, they took flight to the outskirts and tried to begin again. However, their desire to create environments that they could feel more

apart of turned out to be just as alienating. For example, the strip mall alienates the person because the person must rely on their car, the epitome of isolation, to get to and from the strip mall.

This idealism of place has become so lost in our daily lives that it seems to be a daunting task to revive it. The world has become more accessible to the average person with the implementation of the internet and has now begun to change the definition of place. Places now primarily exist as homepages and hyperlinks. Edward Relph claims that "in a world dominated by international economic processes and global telecommunications, there can be no return to an environment of integrated and distinctive places." This sounds a little bit pessimistic and I believe that there still can be an environment created that instills meaning and attachment to a particular place. Even though they are few and far between, our cities have a sense of place; we just have to find them and maybe polish a few of them off. Specifically, looking at Detroit, many of these 'places' have the urban qualities and characteristics that make up a sense of place, but are segmented into fragments by the vacancies and abandoned buildings in the downtown district. This creates an inconsistency where people tend to be drawn to consistency and the rhythm of an urban fabric. The explorations of my thesis will begin at the macro scale and how a building fits into an existing context that is littered with vacant lots and a general fragmented streetscape.

The building is a vital aspect to our daily lives. The building offers us one of our basic needs, shelter. They are our homes, our schools, our offices, our churches, and our hospitals. They are everything that we need and, likewise, we are everything that they need. However, somewhere along the way something got twisted and today we are witnesses of the consequences; buildings without a relationship to its user. Buildings that are being built today seem to have forgotten about the connection that they are supposed to have with their occupants. Whether it is a building that oppresses the person as they enter, therefore intimidate the

user, or lock the person in and clamp down on that person's mental state-of-being, rendering the person numb, and by numb, I mean a person who mindlessly goes through the motions day in and day out without stimulation. People, I believe, have become so accustomed to this monotony of rituals that the problem keeps progressing and nothing is being done about it.

On the same hand, many of the buildings being constructed today have lost their connection to the context in which they reside. For example, The Renaissance Center in Detroit completely separated itself from the urban context in which it was created. It stands like a fortress overlooking the townspeople and barricaded itself from the people that use it with huge concrete berms and by being situated on the opposite side of Jefferson Ave. It is a landmark of disassociation from the inhabitants and the city that it was supposed to be a part of, but only to end up being the division that it was trying to mend. The Renaissance Center is an extreme case of a building isolating itself from its context but this situation is happening in other buildings at different levels. Another example is the new Compuware Headquarters in Detroit. Designed to spark a revitalization of the downtown business district, the Compuware building hoped to invest its employees into the surrounding area's retail and restaurants. However, the building is designed so that the commuting worker can drive into the parking garage and then take the convenient pedestrian bridge over the alley and into the building, therefore eliminating any interaction with the surrounding environment. Also included in the design are restaurants, a cafeteria, a gym, several lounges, and pretty much everything one would need in a self-sustaining environment. Basically, no one ever really has to interact with the surrounding areas if they do not want to. I feel that since the building is in a centralized urban core, it should react accordingly, but instead, it has taken the suburban mentality of isolation from the suburbs and reconstructed it downtown.

Architecture is the mediator through which we feel the connections of ourselves to our surroundings.

However, more importantly, architecture mediates our transition from one state of the mind to another. It houses us as mobile units just like our bodies house our fluid spirit. By understanding how our bodies act as carriers for our spirit and also vehicles for our spirit to use in its transformation, one can gain a clearer perspective of how to make architecture so that it is also a dynamic carrier of its inhabitants. The reciprocity between architecture and user will be explored and tested.

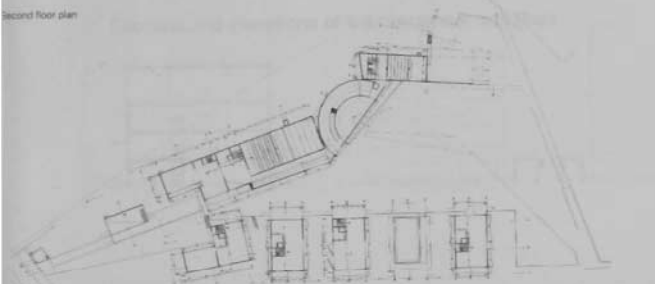
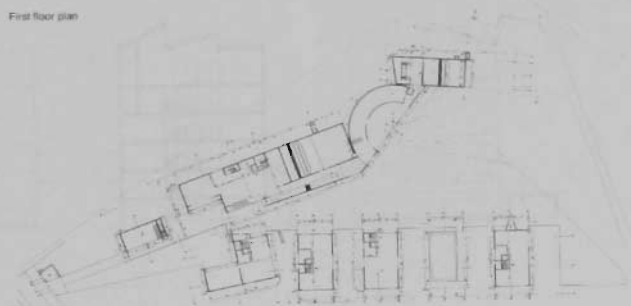
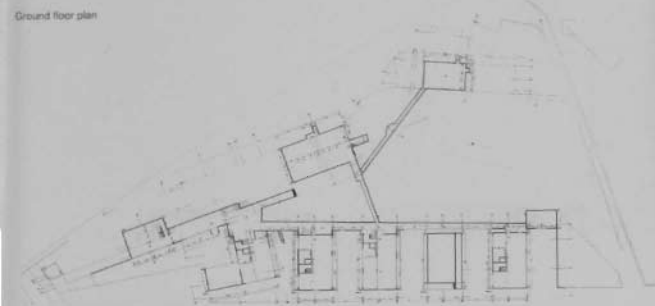
SREA: 87,000 square meters
Project Assistants: Adalberto Diaz,
Peter Tosta, José Montiel Nevón,
Eduardo-Maria da Cruz, Awilene
Silva, Luis Hippo Mendes

PRECEDENT STUDIES | mediating the [meta]physical transition

Located in a residential area with a long history of high-quality
buildings and a view of the ocean, the building is designed to house 100 studios
plus administrative spaces, workshops, and a community center
quality and a library. These spaces include up to 100,000 square
of building. The building will be made up of four interconnected
podiums that comprise a cluster of buildings that will be
quite of form. The complex is a series of interconnected
and the most important building emphasizes the verticality and
spatial quality of the building. The main program is a library
because the buildings were designed to provide space for the
studios and offices that come from the top view.

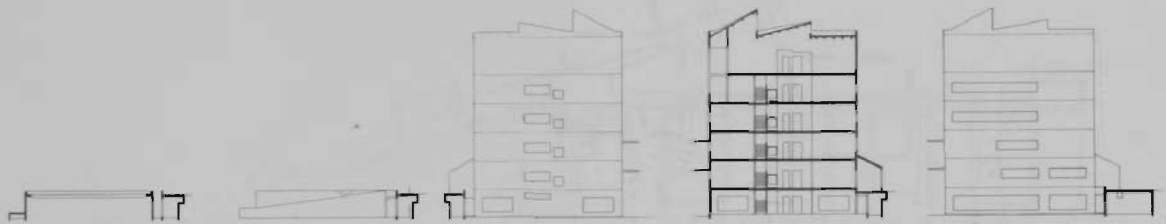
PLANS

AREA: 87.000 square meters
 Project Assistants: Adalberto Dias,
 Peter Testa, Jose Manuel Neves,
 Eduardo Marta da Cruz, Avelino
 Silva, Luis Filipe Mendes

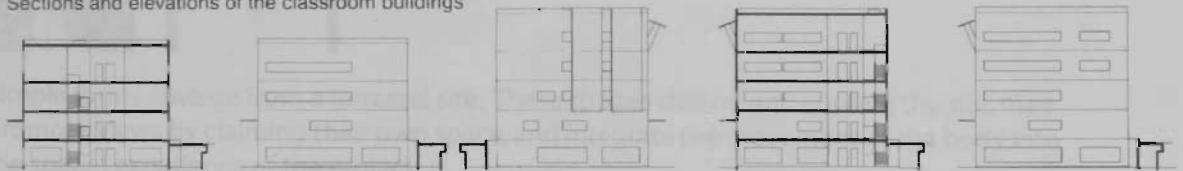


Located on a terraced site with a highway creating the northern border and a view of the Douro River making up the southern side. The Faculty of Architecture is designed to house 500 students plus administration spaces, auditoriums, semi-circular exhibition gallery and a library. These spaces make up the northern clump of buildings. The southern side is made up of four free standing pavilions that contains studios and professor's offices on the ground floor. The campus as a whole is triangular and the entrance is at the west end and therefore emphasizes the courtyard and spacial qualities of the buildings. This was important to Siza, because the buildings were arranged to promote views of the river and shield the campus from the highway.

SECTIONS



Sections and elevations of the classroom buildings



The triangular configuration of the site begins to determine how the project responds to the conditions of the site. The north side of the site is a linear cluster of buildings that follow the contour of the land, but more importantly, shields the campus from the busy highway. This



How would you make something important without telling the person that it is important?

Ground floor plan

COMPRESSION STUDIES



Simple forms emerge from a terraced site. These shapes defend and contain the site, they promote views by claiming their own space, and integrate the movement of the body into the spatial experience of the project.

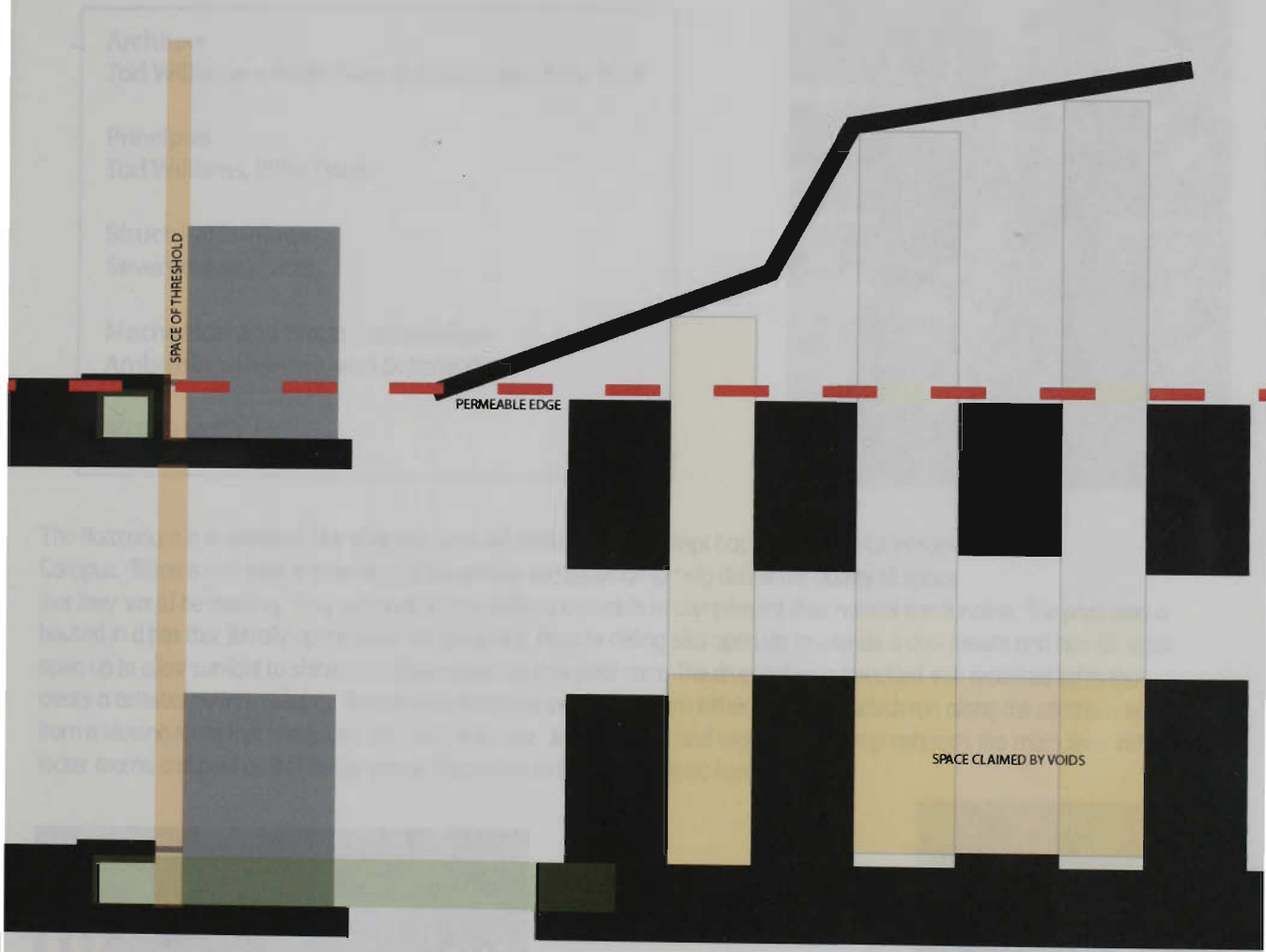
The triangular configuration of the site begins to demonstrate how the project responds to the conditions of the site. The north side of the site is a linear clump of buildings that follow the contour of the land, but more importantly, shields the campus from the busy highway. This gesture helps the courtyard maintain serenity and also gives the courtyard its edge and scale.

The four pavillions on the southern edge of the site creates a permeable threshold that claims space in both plan and section as well as frame views of the river valley. They rise out of the ground as simple forms yet their complexity resides in the voids where light and shadow create a dynamic display on an otherwise stagnant canvas.

The project responds to the movement of the body by creating moments of compression followed by moments of release. The entrance into the campus begins with a compressed feeling as the building converge towards a point but as the person moves through the space, the space opens up and provides relief. The buildings are also connected via an underground tunnel system. The body is firmly held and contained within these tunnels until the area by the studio buildings. At this point the tunnel opens up to the valley and the person emerges into sunlight and fresh air.

I see that this project is an example of allowing architecture to be heard without screaming at the user. The voids that Siza creates to frame views are just as powerful and present as the actual structures are. How would you make something important without telling the person that it is important?

EDGE & THRESHOLD STUDIES



OVERVIEW

Architect
Tod Williams + Billie Tsien & Associates, New York

Principals
Tod Williams, Billie Tsien

Structural Engineer
Severud Associates

Mechanical and Electrical Engineer
Ambrosino, DePinto, and Schmeider

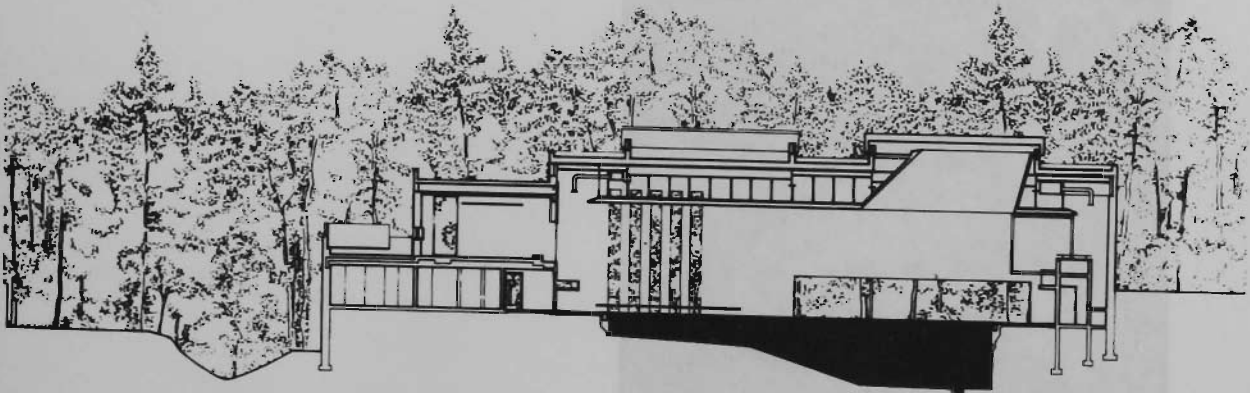
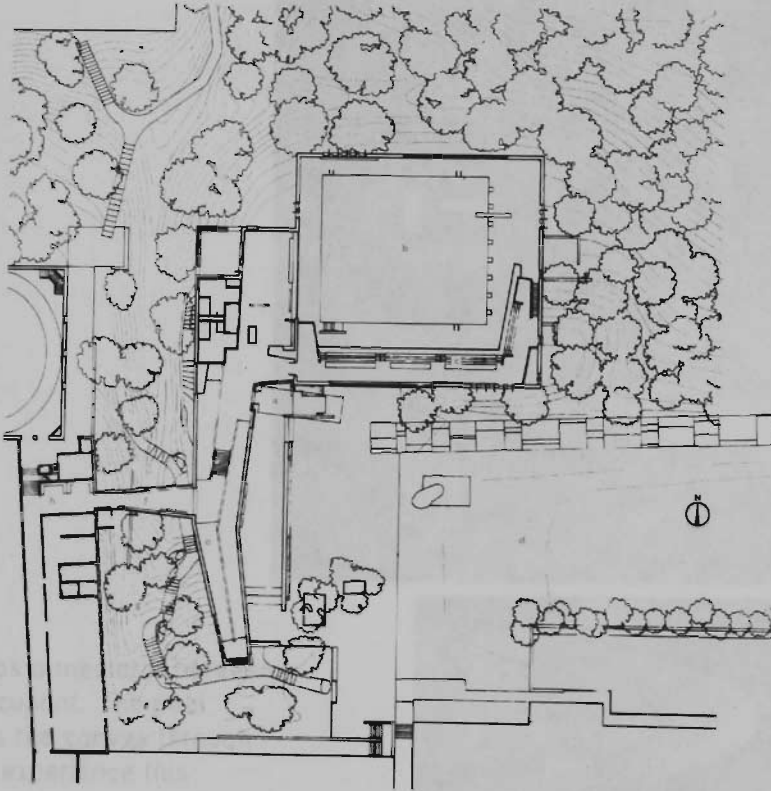
40,000 sq ft



The Natatorium is embedded into what was once referred to as the 'unkept backyard' of the Cranbrook Campus. Williams and Tsien wanted to use the natural surroundings to help define the quality of space that they would be creating. They use dark, earthy colored materials to compliment their natural surrounding. The pool area is housed in a box that literally opens up to the outdoors. Floor to ceiling slits open up to provide a cool breeze and two 30' oculi open up to allow sunlight to shine in and illuminate the dark pool area. The drop ceiling is speckled with recessed lights that create a celestial pattern of lights. Viewers can watch the swimmers from either the stands which run along the southern wall or from a viewing room that is adjacent the main entrance. An articulated and exaggerated ramp connects the main level with the locker rooms and pool as well as the connecting bridge to the other athletic facilities.



PLAN & SECTIONS



MEDIATOR STUDY

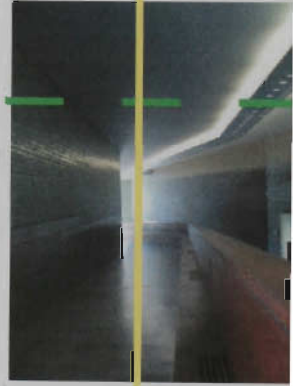
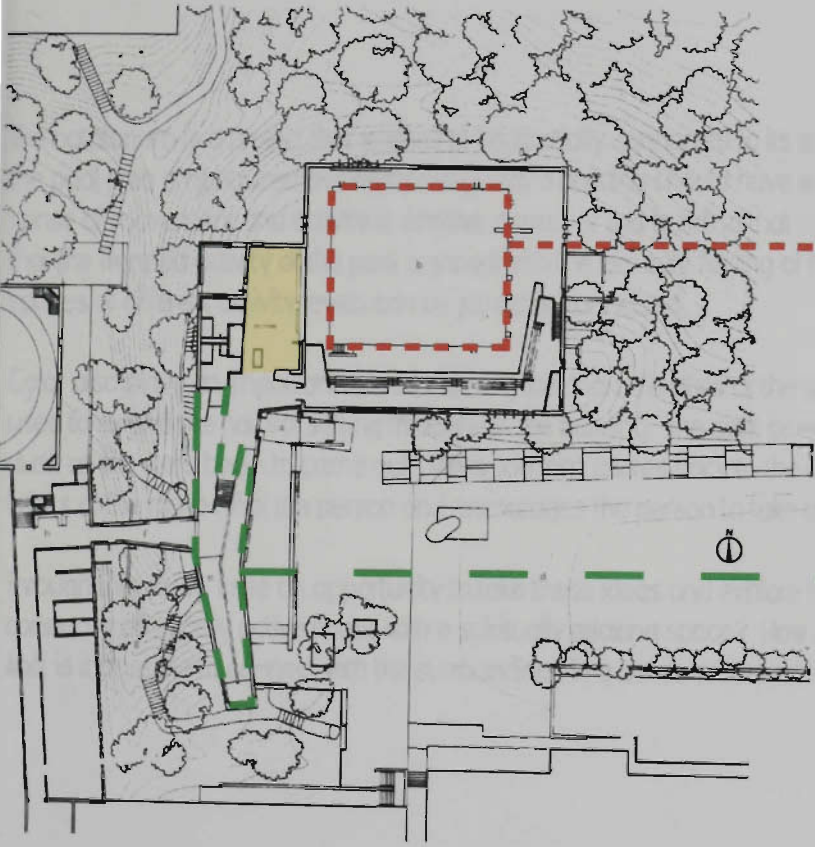


The building acts as a mediator between nature and the occupant. The pool therefore becomes the canvas through which we see and experience this connection



The exaggerated ramp emphasizes a gradual movement and approach and begins to introduce the energy of rapid movement that takes place in the pool. The spectator lobby is the link that connects the two spaces. Providing a vantage point to witness both of movement and connecting a large park with a vigorous pool.

MEDIATOR STUDIES



The exaggerated ramp emphasizes a gradual movement and approach and begins to introduce the activity and rapid movement that takes place in the pool the spectator lobby is the link that connects the two spaces. Providing a vantage point to witness both types of movement and connecting a leisure pace with a vigorous pace.

ANALYSIS

The natatorium is a project that wanted to be spatially connected to its surrounding. Bringing light and fresh air into the pool area emphasized this relationship that a building should have with its surroundings and occupants. The sense of movement and activity is another aspect of this building that is examined for my current thesis. The way that the frenzied activity of the pool is joined with the leisurely feeling of the exaggerated ramp, offer clues as to, how spaces of different activity levels can be joined or connected.

Color also plays an important role as defining the characteristics of the space. In this case, natural earthy tones were used to extend the natural setting throughout the building. The dark blue ceiling in the pool area resembles the sky at dusk as the stars begin to come out. The wood trim relates back to the trees that surround the structure. The green bricks of the ramp relax the person and encourages the person to take their time.

Through this study, I see an opportunity to take these ideas and explore them deeper. What other ways are there to connect a physically active space with a spiritually relaxing space? How can color help define the mood of a space? And, is it possible to connect with the surroundings in a dense urban setting?

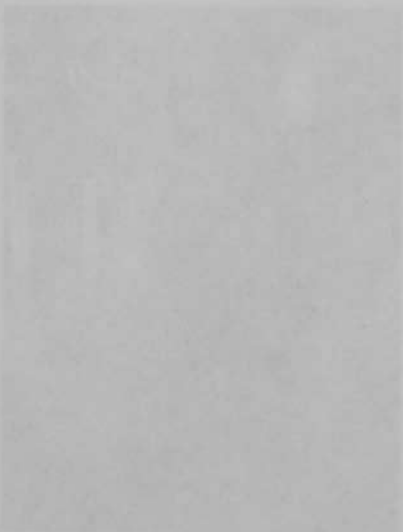
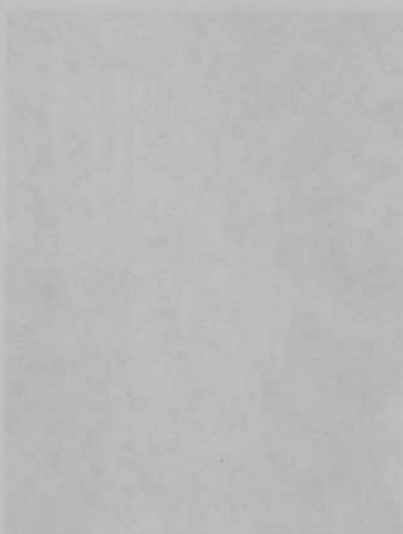
By sketching problems, I sketch the development of the transition from a
single state of being to developing multiple states. I used the
model of the [meta]physical transition to help me understand the link
between these two states of being.

It is also often helpful to sketch the transition from a
series of [meta]physical states to a single state of being. This is
often done by sketching the development of the transition from a
single state of being to developing multiple states. For many of
the steps, the transition is often done in a sketch of the main body
because this is usually faster than the development of the [meta]physical
state. It is often helpful to sketch the transition from a single state of being
to developing multiple states.

SKETCH PROBLEM | mediating the [meta]physical transition

For the [meta]physical transition to promote a shift and development, the learning
process for these movements requires that the mind be prepared
to accept the [meta]physical transition. The [meta]physical transition helps the mind to be
prepared for the [meta]physical transition. The [meta]physical transition helps the mind to be
prepared for the [meta]physical transition.

The solution to the [meta]physical transition is often done by the sketching
process of the [meta]physical transition. The [meta]physical transition helps the mind to be
prepared for the [meta]physical transition. The [meta]physical transition helps the mind to be
prepared for the [meta]physical transition.



My sketch problem is a study and interpretation of the transition from a physical state of being to a metaphysical state of being. Using the martial artist as inspiration and a vehicle I tried to emphasize the link between those two states of being.

Tai Chi is often thought of as meditation in motion. It consists of a series of forms which are a sequence of movements that are executed slowly, gracefully and with even transitions between them. For many of the artists, the movement to achieve these positions is the main focus because Tai Chi aims to foster the circulation of the Chi within the body. This is believed to provide benefits for the body in terms of health and vitality.

Tai Chi also aspires to promote a calm and tranquil mind. The learning process for these movements requires that the mind be free and focused. This freeing of the mind begins the transition to the metaphysical state of being that one strives for by doing Tai Chi.

The solution to the sketch problem came about by the underlying principles of Tai Chi and was translated into a physical representation of the transitional period of the art. I took five photos of a martial artist performing different Tai Chi moves and placed them in front of each



other so that they stood in a linear fashion. The pictures were placed in exaggerated frames and the frames were connected by particle board to help define the space as well as hold the pictures to their given placements. Wire was strung through the photos at various parts of the performer.



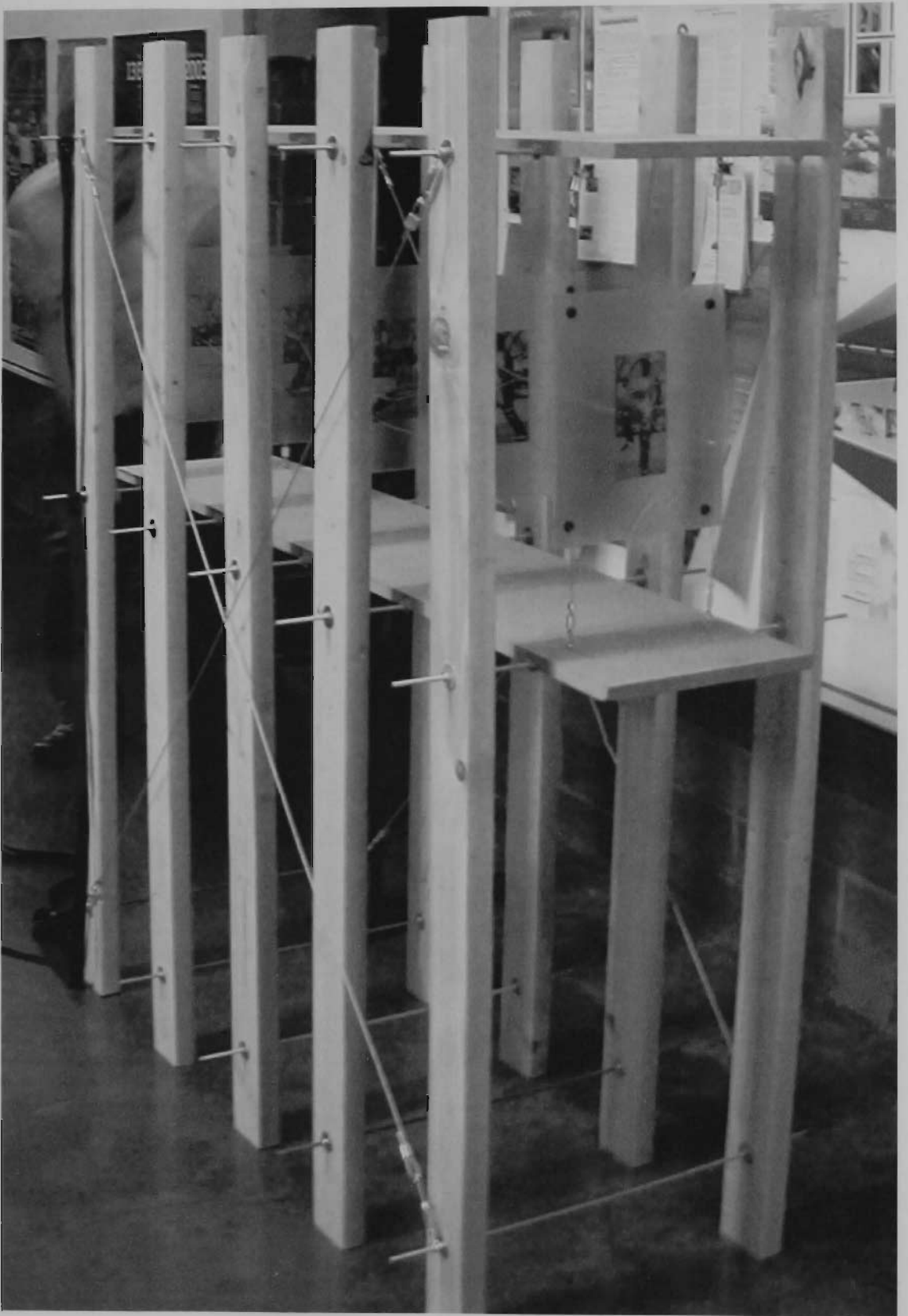
These wires not only linked the pictures together but also created the space of becoming and the space of a past residue. This was done for the purpose of accentuating the link between the physical and metaphysical, in that the body acts as the mediator through which our mind and spirit transform. The wire also represents our Chi which runs through our bodies and doesn't physically take form yet we can feel and sense its presence.

At the end of the sequence, elastic straps are attached to the structure and attaches to the person viewing it. This is done so that the viewer now becomes part of the space of becoming. The elastic was chosen so that



the person is forced to make slow deliberate movements because the principles behind Tai Chi are about bodily control and clearing the mind. Using this allows one to become the next phase in the metaphysical transition. They will understand that the focus is not on reaching these pictures, which I think of as checkpoints, but rather on the journey of realizing the space of becoming that is imbedded within these checkpoints.





HARMONIE PARK

BRUNNEN & PARTNER

SITE ANALYSIS | mediating the [meta]physical transition

Transition Process

Local Dimensions

Conceptual, Social, Spatial, Technical, Cultural, Organizational, Quality

Dimensions for the site design process and realization from strategic

level to detail

HARMONIE PARK

Randolph & Gratiot

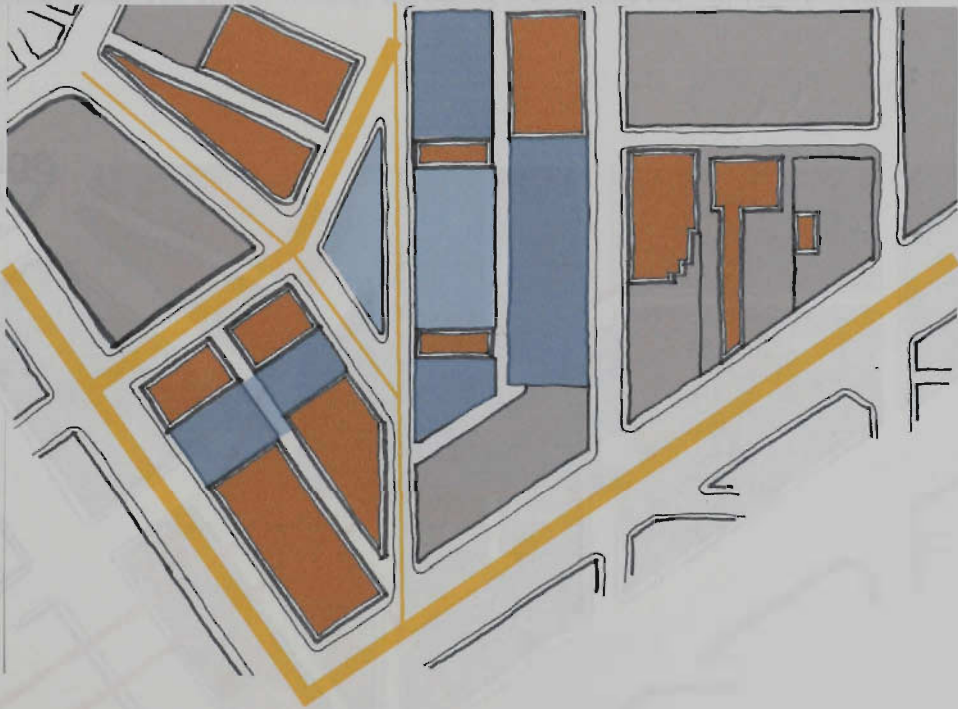


Local Attractions

Comerica Park, Ford Field, Greektown, Greektown Casino, Compuware Headquarters Woodward Ave., Fox Theater, Detroit Opera House, and numerous bars, restaurants, night clubs, and shops.

The site for the 'Alternative Fitness' Fitness Center is in the Harmonie Park district. It is a rectangular site of approximately 180'x100', or 18,000 sq ft. The site is currently used as a parking lot and sits between two, 3 story brick buildings. The two buildings stand alone and the site gives off the impression that a link is needed to complete the urban fabric that is implied but missing. The desire to complete the urban fabric comes from the spatial qualities of this node. The space of Harmonie Park is defined by hard edges and

pause & movement



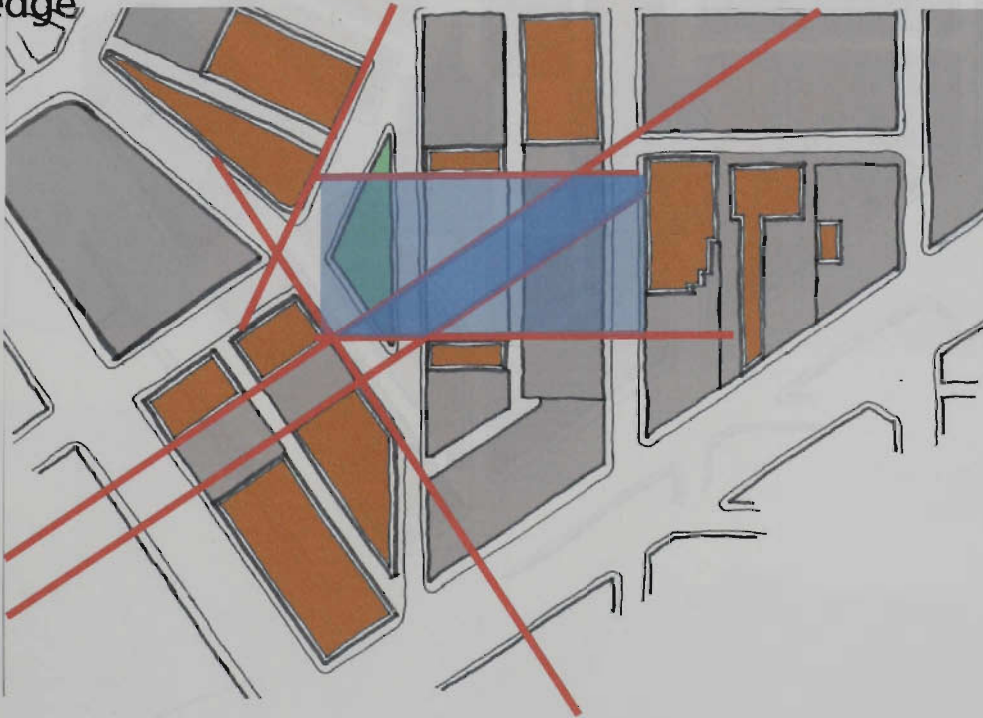
dense street facades. This gap diminishes the qualities of the urban surrounding. Across from the site, historic buildings line the street and really define Harmonie Park, thereby making this vacancy even more noticeable.

The urbanity of the site is important to the city life in Harmonie Park. The area is, for the most part, dense and bustling with activity. There are several small businesses thriving in the adjacent sites such as bars,

restaurants, and retail. Activities range from bar-hopping to opera galas and this area provides places for both ends of the nightlife spectrum to gather. Then on certain days, the larger regional attractions, such as Comerica Park and Ford Field, bring much more life to the area.

Harmonie Park plays a crucial role in the space of the site. The threshold of the site becomes blurred because of the openness and pedestrian friendly nature of the park. This goes back to the concept behind the building which is the transfer of energy and blurring of boundaries that may inhibit that fluidity.

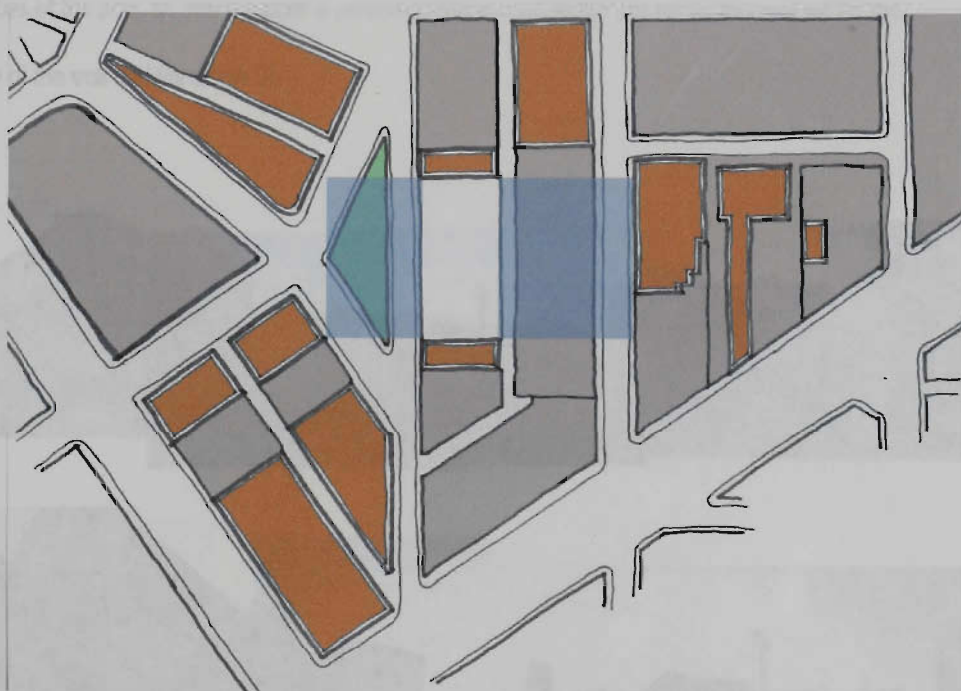
edge



The building may also borrow the ideas of pace from the site which possess both rapid and leisurely paces. The streets support the flow of vehicles, which, although they are not traveling fast, they do represent a rapid means of transport. The sidewalks and park suggest a slower more relaxed pace. Where do these two

paces overlap? One place on the site where an overlap occurs is in the parking lots. This is where the body, as machine, transfers its energy to the car, and then, the body is in motion but, at the same time, is not moving. Bustling pace also overlaps at Harmonie Park where people can be seen relaxing, eating lunch, or passing through the park. This activity adds to the dynamic exchange of energy that happens on the site. The question now becomes, how do I capture the energy of the site in my building and how does my building project the energy it contains out to the surrounding spaces?

threshold



This dynamic movement through out the site is amplified by the hard edges that define and contain the space. The confinement of the site poses the biggest challenge of the project. How do you create an environment that is designed to allow the uninterrupted transfer of energy when the space suggests restraint? Finding areas that allow for a break out is imperative to the success of the project. The surrounding vacancies allow for the possibilities of providing relief from the hard urban edge of the site. For example, Harmonie Park has a wall directly across Randolph from the site. This creates an opportunity to develop a push and pull relationship with the park. The investigation also wants to actively be engaged with the activities of the park, so that the park is perceived more open to the site rather than cut off by the boundary of the wall and Randolph St.



For many years through the South Oakland BICL and other Oakland Centers. All depending to a great level of success among professionals, a decision was made to build a new center to support other Oakland County BICL facilities and build a new community center. This new design and approach will provide youth and adults with an aquatic center, community activity and meeting space and wellness center.

Features

- 1000 sq

- Aquatic Center

- Community

- Activity Space

- Meeting Room

- Wellness Center

PROGRAM PRECEDENT | mediating the [meta]physical transition

The new building was designed by local architects. The primary of the project focuses on learning and community growth and development. A second aim is to provide services as well as structure designed to help the surrounding community. These include creating distinct art spaces and baby-sitting. The building aims to be a local community focus center.

The integration of several of the program spaces makes this project an interesting example of how to blend culture. These spaces will allow and create an energy building that feels united and solid. The building is designed along a central corridor that is connected on both sides to the fitness and community elements. Upon entering the space, one feels the energy that is generated by the structure. The layout allows for efficient energy transfer between the program and equipment but it has some time covered them. The transition is added on the second floor where the layout from being designed the floor is the wellness center and wellness both the gym and pool.

Another wonderful element is the track, which wraps the edge of the second floor. The track is contained for the most part but it is not the same as the surrounding areas and is not there by. The track space provides the ability to create an energy transfer between the energy of the runner to the people watching the track space. The track also provides through the indoor structure and things on the location of the building, giving of the pedestrian within a moment of the energy of the center.

I find the provision of several of these elements to be important to support the relationship of my program. However, I find that I have the opportunity to use these elements as moments of blending together and space and push them even further. To create a solid flow and transfer of energy that is not bound by physical boundaries but rather bound only by the desires of the occupants.

Located in the old program location located with previous and the quality of the South Oakland BICL.

For more than a century, the North Oakland YMCA has served Oakland County, MI. Responding to a high level of interest among area residents, a decision was made to build a new center to augment other Oakland County YMCA facilities and better serve community needs. The new state-of-the-art branch will provide youth, teens and adults with an aquatics center, gymnasium, activity and meeting spaces and wellness center.

Features

- 47,000 sf
 - Aquatics Center
 - Gymnasium
 - Activity Spaces
 - Meeting Rooms
 - Wellness Center
- Rossetti*

The North Oakland YMCA is the newest addition to the Metropolitan YMCA family. It is located in Auburn Hills, Michigan and was designed by Rossetti Associates. The program of the project focuses on families and community growth and development. It houses several fitness elements as well as elements designed to help the surrounding community. These include, cooking classes, art classes, and baby-sitting. The building tries to be a total community fitness center.

The integration of some of the program spaces makes this project an interesting example of how to blend certain fitness spaces with others and create an entire building that feels unified and fluid. The building is designed along a central corridor that is connected on both sides to the fitness and community elements. Upon entering the space, one feels the energy that is generated by the activities. The locker rooms and offices create a barrier in-between the gymnasium and natatorium but at the same time connect them. This connection is evident on the second floor where the locker room ceiling becomes the floor to the wellness center and overlooks both the gym and pool.

Another wonderful moment is the track, which circles the gym at the second floor. The track is contained for the most part but it slips out of the gym/wellness space and into the lobby. The track space invades the lobby space for a short bit, but just enough to transfer the energy of the runner to the people entering the fitness space. The track then punches through the lobby entrance and hangs on to the exterior of the building, giving all the pedestrians outside a glimpse of the activity of the center.

I find the articulation of some of these program elements to be inspiring as I pursue the relationships of my program. However, I feel that I have the opportunity to take these ideas and moments of blending activities and spaces and push them even farther. To create a total flow and transfer of energy that is not bound by physical boundaries but rather, bound only by the desires of the occupants.

Attached is the full program list from Rossetti (used with permission) and the analysis of the North Oakland YMCA.

North Oakland YMCA

Summary

Description

| | | Total Area |
|----------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Natorium | | |
| Natorium | | 8924 sf |
| Aquatics Director | | 95 sf |
| Lifeguard Office | | 81 sf |
| Family Toilet Room | | 56 sf |
| Showers | | 1125 sf |
| Natorium subtotal | | 10281 sf |
| Lockers | | |
| Men's | | 1503 sf |
| Women's | | 1520 sf |
| Family Changing | | 829 sf |
| Storage | | 60 sf |
| Lockers subtotal | | 3912 sf |
| Gymnasium | | |
| Gymnasium | | 6766 sf |
| Gymnasium Storage | | 843 sf |
| Gymnasium subtotal | | 7609 sf |
| Social | | |
| Teaching Kitchen | | 198 sf |
| Family Center | | 465 sf |
| Storage | | 71 sf |
| Social subtotal | | 734 sf |
| ChildWatch | | |
| ChildWatch West | | 1255 sf |
| ChildWatch Toilet Room | | 112 sf |
| ChildWatch Pantry | | 65 sf |
| ChildWatch Check-in | | 71 sf |
| ChildWatch East | | 913 sf |
| ChildWatch subtotal | | 2416 sf |
| Exercise | | |
| Wellness Center | | 5335 sf |
| Aerobics | | 1595 sf |
| Spinning | | 712 sf |
| Storage | | 197 sf |
| Free Weight | | 804 sf |
| Check-in | | 172 sf |
| Screening Room | | 202 sf |
| Running Track | | 3392 sf |
| Laundry | | 193 sf |
| Exercise subtotal | | 12602 sf |

12' x 18" Lockers :
 88 Single Tier; 70 Double Tier
 88 Single Tier; 70 Double Tier
 15' x 18", 22 Single Tier
 Bay Size: 5'-2" typ; 6'-1" ADA

Support

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Lobby | 3784 sf |
| Reception/Check-in | 357 sf |
| Administrative Offices | 1474 sf |
| Staff Lounge | 0 sf |
| Membership Services | 135 sf |
| Multi-Purpose Room | 3221 sf |
| Restrooms | 800 sf |
| Storage | 0 sf |
| Receiving/Building Engineer | 243 sf |
| Exterior Pool Mechanical | 1438 sf |
| Misc. Mechanical | 3973 sf |
| Expansion | 0 sf |
| Support subtotal | 15425 sf |
| sub total net square feet | 52979 sf |
| Grossing Factor | 1.17 |
| TOTAL AREA | 61985.43 sf |

North Oakland YMCA

ROSSETTI ASSOCIATES






GRAM PRECEDENT

— BODY MIND SPIRIT | mediating the [meta]physical transition

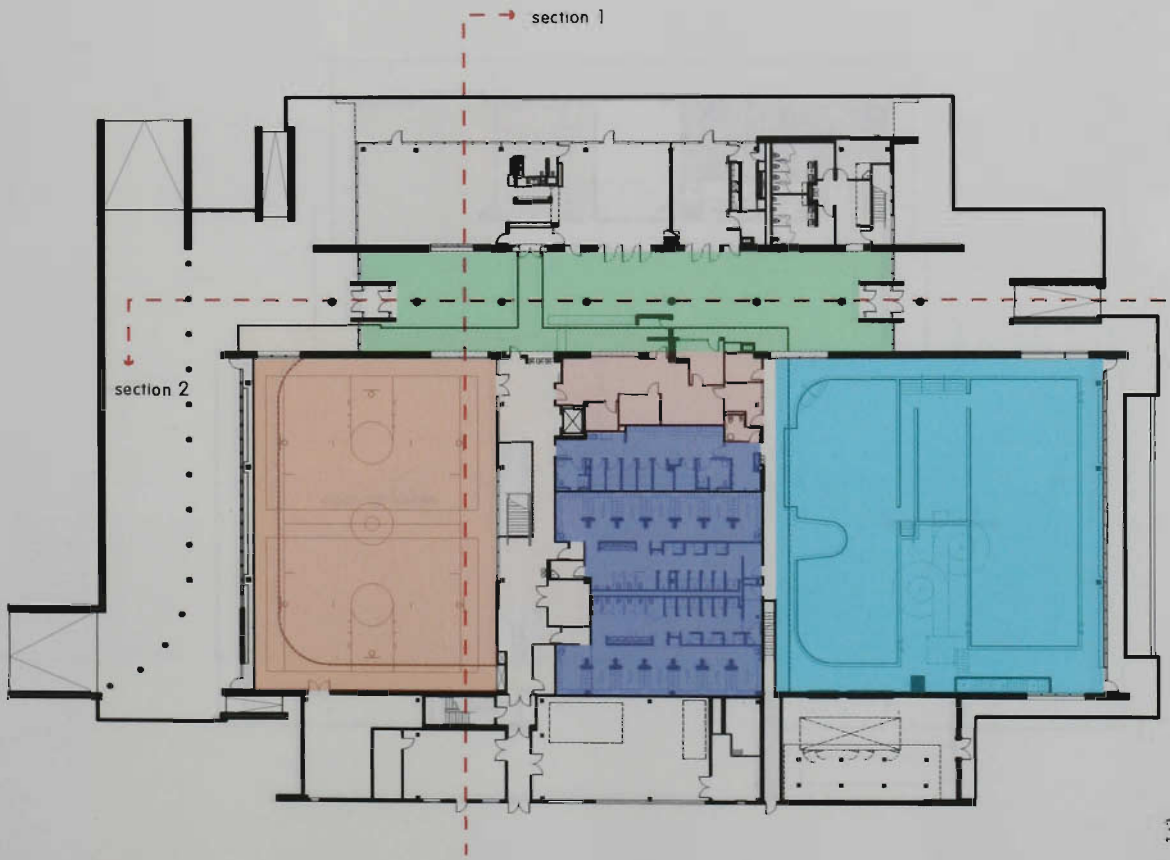


1st FLOOR

KEY ELEMENTS


| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------|
|  | NATATORIUM | 8924 sf |
|  | LOBBY | 3784 sf |
|  | LOCKERS | 3912 sf |
|  | ADMINISTRATIVE | 1474 sf |
|  | GYMNASIUM | 7609 sf |

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PUBLIC - - - - - | PRIVATE |
| lobby natatorium gymnasium | lockers administrative |
| SERVANT - - - - - | SERVED |
| lockers administrative | lobby natatorium gymnasium |
| INDIVIDUAL - - - - - | COLLECTIVE |
| lockers administrative | lobby natatorium gymnasium |

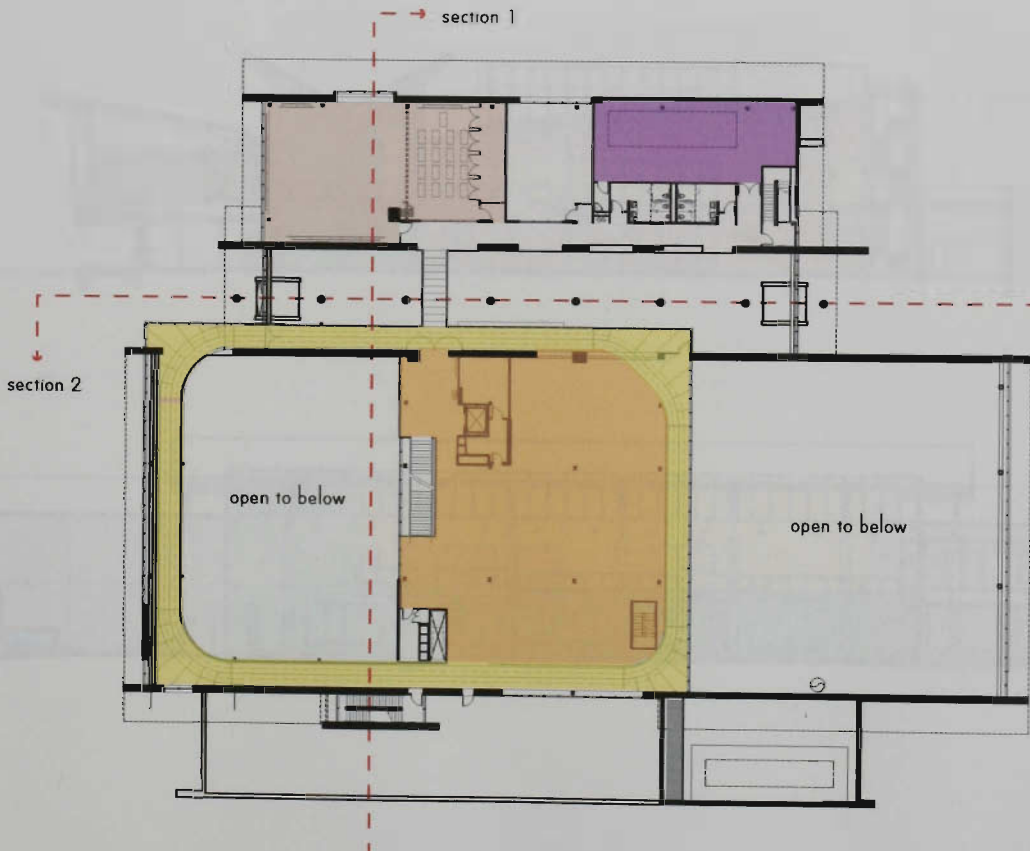


2nd FLOOR

KEY ELEMENTS









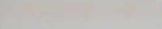

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|
|  | SPINNING | 712 sf |
|  | AEROBICS | 1595 sf |
|  | WELLNESS CENTER | 5335 sf |
|  | TRACK | 3392 sf |

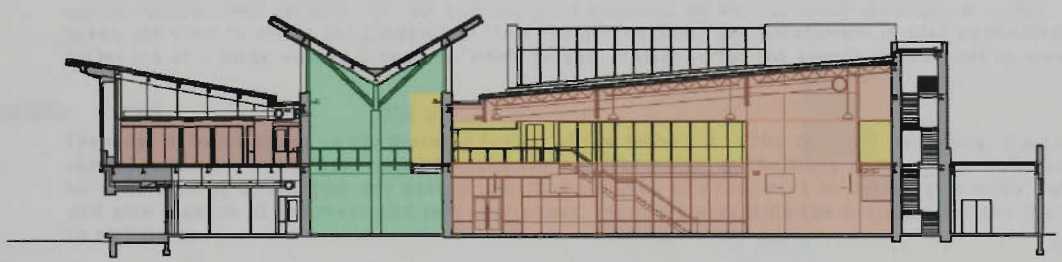
| | | |
|------------|-----|-----------------|
| PUBLIC | --- | PRIVATE |
| track | | wellness center |
| aerobics | | spinning |
| SERVANT | --- | SERVED |
| | | track |
| | | wellness center |
| | | aerobics |
| | | spinning |
| INDIVIDUAL | --- | COLLECTIVE |
| aerobics | | track |
| spinning | | wellness center |



The SECTIONS

KEY ELEMENTS

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------|
|  | SPINNING | 712 sf |  | NATATORIUM | 8924 sf |
|  | AEROBICS | 1595 sf |  | LOBBY | 3784 sf |
|  | WELLNESS CENTER | 5335 sf |  | LOCKERS | 3912 sf |
|  | TRACK | 3392 sf |  | ADMINISTRATIVE | 1474 sf |
|  | | |  | GYMNASIUM | 7609 sf |



section 1



section 2

The SPACES

PURPOSES

TRACK 3392 sf

the track circles the gymnasium and the wellness center. it is designed so that the runner is on display for the people in the gym, wellness center, natatorium, and the lobby. it creates a visual tie between the person running and the rest of the activities. at one point, it violates the implied boundaries of the building and punches outside, allowing the program to define the edges.

AEROBICS 1595 sf

the aerobics room is separated from the gym, natatorium, and wellness center by the lobby. this gives the space a special quality but also a segregated feel.

WELLNESS CENTER 5335 sf

the wellness center is the hub of the program. this is where most of the activities take place, such as weight lifting. its centralized location places it at a vantage point to view into the natatorium, gymnasium, and lobby. the track circles around it which creates a constant interaction between the people in motion and the people who are moving in place.

NATORIUM 8924 sf

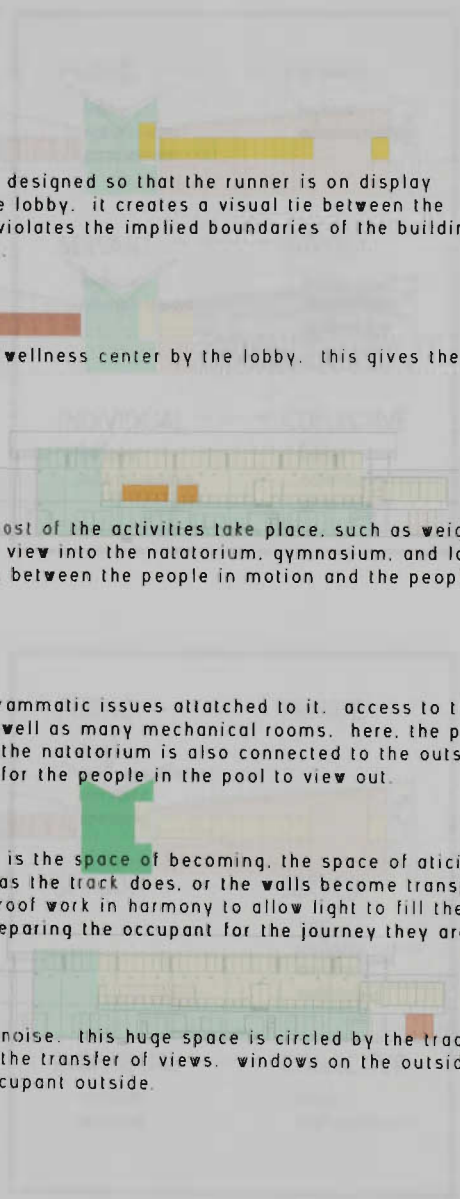
the natatorium is a large element that has a multitude of programmatic issues attached to it. access to the private sectors like lockers, offices, and lifeguard stations, as well as many mechanical rooms. here, the private areas are used to divide the natatorium from the gymnasium. the natatorium is also connected to the outside by means of a large window placed at 'pool' height - designed for the people in the pool to view out.

LOBBY 3784 sf

the most defining space in the building is that of the lobby. it is the space of becoming, the space of anticipation. the programs are either puncturing through the corridor walls, as the track does, or the walls become transparent to allow viewing of the gym and natatorium. the columns and roof work in harmony to allow light to fill the space and give a sense of lightness and responsiveness, therefore preparing the occupant for the journey they are about to embark on.

GYMNASIUM 7609 sf

perhaps the most active space, both in terms of activities and noise. this huge space is circled by the track above and by glass that creates a physical barrier yet permits the transfer of views. windows on the outside at the entrance begins to pull the pedestrian inside and the occupant outside.

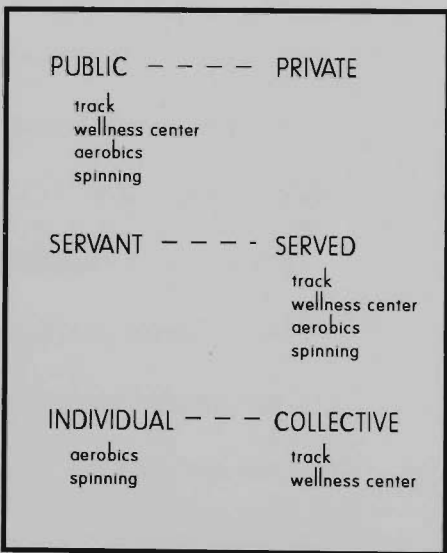
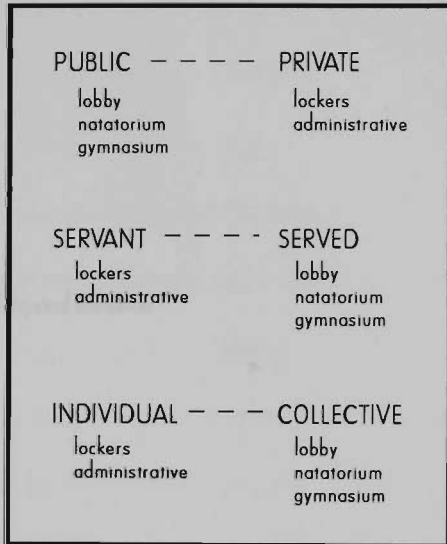


The Spaces

RELEVANCE

The North Oakland YMCA is a project that explores the overlaps and divisions that take place in a fitness environment. The program understands the notions of private/public, servant/served, and individual/collective. It's spaces are divided, yet at certain moments in the building, particularly when the track breaks into the lobby space, the spaces break the conventional divisions and create a spacial quality that implies the unification of the different elements.

After analyzing this project I see an opportunity to look at my program and to try and discover where my program spaces can begin to overlap. The divisions that are created between spaces can be as important to the spatial experience as the overlaps are. The way that the lobby is seperated from the gym and pool strengthens the overlap of the track with the lobby. I see an opportunity to implement this idea into my project but first, I must analyze the relationships of the different program spaces and see how and where an overlap or division should occur.



In order to put my intentions of creating an architecture as mediator, I will now take a closer look at the expectations of the circumstance. The overall program for my thesis will be an 'alternative fitness' fitness center. This program will cater to those activities that aim to not only strengthen, but also revitalize or rejuvenate, the body, mind, and spirit. The relation of inhabitant to outside, the spaces within, and between bodies and edges will be mediated throughout the architecture. The major components that will work together in order to create a seamless transfer of energy through the spaces and inhabitants of the building will include a space for Tai Chi, Yoga, Aerobic activities, such as a track for walking or running, a pool, and a health food area. These activities have been identified so as to eliminate the assumption that a fitness center must have endless rows of machines, treadmills, and free weights. Rather, the idea behind the alternative forms of fitness is that some of the routines and disassociation that commonly occurs with a typical fitness center will be eliminated from the experience.

The building will take advantage of the site and the surrounding context of the Harmonie Park district. The building will maintain and strengthen the urban fabric of the site by acknowledging the relationships the existing buildings have and using those as precedents for how the building sits in the site. For example, the surrounding buildings are around three and four stories tall, are tightly packed together, and open up to the centrally located Harmonie Park. The building will also be a welcoming element to the pedestrian. It will invite the person to participate. Spaces will be revealed slowly through interaction and exploration and some will be held out in the open for all to see. These spaces will work together to create an experience that emphasizes transitions and a relation to edges such as whether the edge is crisp and clean or blurred and subtle. There will be spaces that encourage interaction for example, viewing and listening to the inhabitants as they partake in their quest for total rejuvenation, or talking and sharing with the people who have finished or have yet to begin their workout.

However, this program is not intended to become a social club by any means. In order for a person to rejuvenate themselves, they may need isolation. One of the goals of the project will be to articulate a space that provides and instills the feelings of meditation and escape without the need for headphones.

The body must be relaxed and calm to allow itself to transform and the program will try to bring the building and user together so that they work in harmony as the body, mind, and spirit work together. This will be done with the use of controlled lighting mixed with natural light and ambient sounds that allow the person to relax and focus on becoming.

The building will become the mediator through which the activities going on inside will be seen on the outside and within the building itself. Pedestrians on the street may sit in Harmonie Park and watch silhouettes of Tai Chi artists methodically dance across part of the façade. Meanwhile, a jogger appears and disappears as she streaks across the track that weaves through the different programs as though trying to link them together. The entrance will be a space of becoming, a space that prepares the person for the journey that they are about to embark on. I picture it being minimalist in its form and composition, yet complex in its qualities. Plays of light and shadow, harsh and soft, loud and silent, will present itself to the occupant with the intention of relating to the dualities that are preached about in Tai Chi and Yoga. The color palette should be pure so as to direct the attention to the person, rather than the walls. Sunlight, concrete, glass, and steel are beautiful as they are and are powerful enough to inspire feelings and emotions.

Yoga is an art form that focuses on the breathing and positioning of the body. Therefore, the yoga aspect will be housed in a room that may take on characteristics of breathing, such as exhaling and inhaling. I picture walls that react to the air and allow the flow of air in and out of the permeable room. The track will

look to exaggerate the journey that one embarks on as they run, both internally and physically. The track should have destinations rather than an endless loop that becomes monotonous and uninspiring. Tai Chi is used as a means of reaching a higher plane and therefore the space that houses it will also try to emphasize the transformation of one space to another. It will be a link, such as a link from the outside to the inside. Possibly be an outdoor activity that can be manipulated to become an inside space emphasizing the link and transformation.

Water will be used more for the qualitative effects it has rather than solely as a medium through which one exercises. The pool area will be one of relaxation, rebirth, and cleansing. It will be more isolated from the other activities and will be inwardly focused so as to be the final layer of the rejuvenation process.

Overall, the building will be an individual that works collaboratively with the context to strengthen the urbanity of the site. It will also house separate programs that will join together collectively to form an all encompassing experience for the users needs.

The Site

Quantitative Study

Study and design of existing and potential conditions

The site is located in Harmonie Park directly across Randolph and sits in between two three story brick buildings. The size of the site is approximately 18,000 sq ft which is roughly 0.41 acres. The existing condition of the surface is asphalt for a parking lot, and an alley backs up the site and another, much larger, parking lot is directly across the alley.

The site is extremely accessible by both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Gratiot and Broadway help define the park area and, along with Randolph, are all major arterial roads in the downtown area. Parking and local attractions surround the site, as well as the People Mover, making pedestrian traffic around the site feasible. Major landmarks, such as the Renaissance Center, Compuware Headquarters, Ford Field, and Comerica Park are all viewable from the site and even more sites are viewable the higher up in the site the person goes.



Given the urban fabric of the site, there should be no setback. The building should meet the street, for the most part. However, given some of the spatial conditions that the wall in Harmonie Park creates, a slight setback for part of the sight may provide a release from the confinement of the site.

Total Plot Area

General Services and Compliance (661/66)

Total Building Program

35,100 GSF

17,400 SF

48,500 GSF

Program Quantitative Study

Body mind spirit | mediating the (meta)physical transition

| Outdoor Spaces | Quantity | Capacity | Net SF | |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|------------|----------------|
| | | | Individual | Total |
| Café Seating | 1 | 20 | 1500 | 1500 |
| Urban Garden | 1 | 20 | 1000 | 1000 |
| Service Rubbish | 1 | | 200 | 200 |
| Total Site Program | | | | 2700 sf |
| Indoor Spaces | | | | |
| Martial Arts | | | | 5200 |
| Independent Class | 3 | 10 | 1000 | |
| Storage | 1 | 20 | 2000 | |
| | 1 | | 200 | |
| Yoga | | | | 2700 |
| Independent Class | 3 | 8 | 500 | |
| Storage | 1 | 16 | 1000 | |
| | 1 | | 200 | |
| Natorium | | | | 4550 |
| Pool | 1 | 30 | 4000 | |
| Aquatics Director | 1 | 4 | 150 | |
| Showers | 20 | 20 | 50 | |
| Lifeguard Office | 1 | 3 | 100 | |
| Storage | 1 | | 250 | |
| Track | | | | 100 |
| Storage | 1 | | 100 | |
| Offices | | | | 900 |
| Employee Offices | 5 | 4 | 100 | |
| Manager Offices | 2 | 4 | 200 | |
| Locker Rooms | | | | 3400 |
| Men's | 1 | 40 | 1500 | |
| Women's | 1 | 40 | 1500 | |
| Storage | 2 | | 200 | |
| Café | | | | 3400 |
| Kitchen | 1 | 5 | 500 | |
| Dining | 1 | 30 | 2500 | |
| Storage | 1 | | 400 | |
| Aerobic | | | | 4800 |
| Rooms | 4 | 16 | 1000 | |
| Storage | 4 | | 200 | |
| Free Weight | | | | 1050 |
| Space | 1 | 20 | 800 | |
| Storage | 1 | | 250 | |

Total Net Area

26,100 NSF

General Service and Circulation (60/40)

17,400 SF

Total Building Program

43,500 GSF

Program Quantitative Study

Body Mind Spirit | mediating the [meta]physical transition

| Public | Private |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lobby Martial Arts Natatorium Track Café Free Weights | Yoga Aerobic Offices Locker Rooms Kitchen Storage Spaces |

| Servant | Served |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Storage Spaces Kitchen Locker Rooms Offices | Lobby Martial Arts Natatorium Track Café Free Weights Yoga Aerobics |

| Individual | Collective |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Locker Rooms Offices Storage Spaces Martial Arts Yoga Kitchen Track | Martial Arts Yoga Natatorium Track Free Weights Aerobic Café Lobby |

Space Details Sheet

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Martial Arts Independent | 10 | 3 | 1000 | 5200 |

Purposes / Functions

To provide spaces for people to independently pursue their martial art. Capacity is limited to ten people so as to keep the room personal to the individual.

Activities

People will practice various forms of the Martial Arts here with focus on the art of Tai Chi. People will be stretching, flexing, inhaling, exhaling, extending arms and legs. They will move with grace and purpose, every inch will be controlled and deliberate. It will be a space where meditation meets movement.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to the Martial Arts Class space. This portion of the building should stand out against the rest of the building; therefore it may become adjacent to many other spaces, such as, the lobby, the track, the natatorium, and the aerobics rooms. This space should be viewable from multiple places in the building. This space should also incorporate balconies so that people will have the opportunity to perform outside and will also establish more of a visual connection to Harmonie Park.

Direct access to storage rooms and balconies will be provided.

Special Considerations

Natural light will be the primary source of light as well as operable windows being used for fresh air.

Entrance into the space should be emphasized as the entrance is the first step towards the meta-physical transition that one encounters from the Martial Arts.

Equipment / Furnishings

Floor space should be left open.

Removable mats may be placed in the space from the storage area but will not be permanent pieces of the space.

Behavioral Considerations

Inhabitants will enter and move through space on edges so as to not interfere with others.

| <u>Space Name</u> | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>No. Units</u> | <u>NSF/Unit</u> | <u>Total Net Area</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Martial Arts Class</u> | 20 | 1 | 2000 | 5200 |

Purposes / Functions

This space will be for the guided instruction of various Martial Arts classes. Capacity is 20 persons and is geared towards inspiring the persons to explore the Arts independently after they become comfortable with the Art form.

Activities

People will practice various forms of the Martial Arts here with focus on the art of Tai Chi. People will be stretching, flexing, inhaling, exhaling, extending arms and legs. They will move with grace and purpose, every inch will be controlled and deliberate. It will be a space where meditation meets movement.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to the Martial Arts Independent space. Most likely this class would be on the lowest level of the total Martial Arts space, so that a hierarchy is established. The more advanced you become, the higher up you perform. This portion of the building should stand out against the rest of the building; therefore it may become adjacent to many other spaces, such as, the lobby, the track, the natatorium, and the aerobics rooms. This space should be viewable from multiple places in the building. This space should also incorporate balconies so that people will have the opportunity to perform outside and will also establish more of a visual connection to Harmonie Park.

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Behavioral Considerations

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| <u>Space Name</u> | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>No. Units</u> | <u>NSF/Unit</u> | <u>Total Net Area</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Yoga I Independent | 8 | 3 | 500 | 2700 |

Purposes / Functions

These spaces should be places for independently guided meditation. These will be places that will allow the user to reflect and rejuvenate their mind and spirit. The spaces will be quite but the energy embodied will be intense.

Activities

This is a space where people will embark on journeys without ever leaving the space. The movement of air in and out of their lungs will be the main focus of movement in this space. Extending the body to both its physical limits and pushing even farther past its metaphysical limits. This space will be the container of energy as it moves through out the bodies which appear to be at rest. Bodies will stretch and pause. Minds will escape and run free. Spirits will be reinvigorated.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to the Yoga class space. This portion of the building should stand out against the rest of the building; therefore it may become adjacent to many other spaces, such as, the lobby, the track, the natatorium, and the aerobics rooms. However, the interior of this space should be private, so as to prevent distractions from ruining the spiritual release. Frosted glass or similar may be the barrier of the Yoga Space from the rest of the building. This will provide an ambience to the interior of the space as it will have a soft glow and the gentle movement of silhouettes across the walls. This space should be viewable from multiple places in the building. This space should also incorporate balconies so that people will have the opportunity to reflect outside and will also establish more of a visual connection to Harmonie Park.

Direct access to storage rooms and balconies will be provided.

Special Considerations

Natural light will be the primary source of light.

Entrance into the space should be emphasized as the entrance is the first step towards the meta-physical transition that one encounters from Yoga.

Equipment / Furnishings

Floor space should be left open.

Removable mats may be placed in the space from the storage area but will not be permanent pieces of the space.

Behavioral Considerations

Inhabitants will enter and move through space on edges so as to not interfere with others.

Support / Structure

This space is for the storage and display of information. This will be achieved through walls, floors, ceilings, and reflect and refract light, color and sound, as well as the various props and objects. It should be designed to support the various methods. The storage of the data and the energy embodied will be essential.

Activities

This is a space where people will be looking for things without ever looking for them. The things they are looking for and out of their hand will be the main focus of movement in the space. The things they are looking for are physical things and things that have a physical form. The space will be designed to support the things they are looking for as they move through out the space which appear to be at rest. The things they are looking for will change and move. The things will be integrated.

Spatial Relationship

Should be directly adjacent to the large independent space. This portion of the building should be adjacent to the rest of the building therefore they become adjacent to many other means, such as the large the back, the collection, and the display space. However, the nature of the space should be designed to prevent distractions both to the people and the machine. The space should be designed to prevent the large space from the rest of the building. This will provide an ambient light source. The building will have a soft glow and the space movement of information across the walls. The space should be visible from multiple points in the building. This space should also be separate from the rest of the building will have the opportunity to be a space and will also contain some of a space and will be designed to be a space.

Good access to storage systems and facilities will be provided.

Special Considerations

Natural light will be the primary source of light.

Windows into the space, especially on the ground is the first step towards the information collection and exchange from here.

Equipment / Furnishings

Door space should be left open.

Furniture may be placed in the space from the storage area and will not be designed to be a space.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Yoga Class | 16 | 1 | 1000 | 2700 |

Purposes / Functions

This space is for the guided meditation by an instructor. This will be a place that will teach the user how to reflect and rejuvenate their mind and spirit, as well as the various poses and movements and breathing methods. The spaces will be quite but the energy embodied will be intense.

Activities

This is a space where people will embark on journeys without ever leaving the space. The movement of air in and out of their lungs will be the main focus of movement in this space. Extending the body to both its physical limits and pushing even farther past its metaphysical limits. This space will be the container of energy as it moves through out the bodies which appear to be at rest. Bodies will stretch and pause. Minds will escape and run free. Spirits will be reinvigorated.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to the Yoga independent space. This portion of the building should stand out against the rest of the building; therefore it may become adjacent to many other spaces, such as, the lobby, the track, the natatorium, and the aerobics rooms. However, the interior of this space should be private, so as to prevent distractions from ruining the spiritual release. Frosted glass or similar may be the barrier of the Yoga Space from the rest of the building. This will provide an ambience to the interior of the space as it will have a soft glow and the gentle movement of silhouettes across the walls. This space should be viewable from multiple places in the building. This space should also incorporate balconies so that people will have the opportunity to reflect outside and will also establish more of a visual connection to Harmonie Park.

Direct access to storage rooms and balconies will be provided.

Special Considerations

Natural light will be the primary source of light.

Entrance into the space should be emphasized as the entrance is the first step towards the meta-physical transition that one encounters from Yoga.

Equipment / Furnishings

Floor space should be left open.

Removable mats may be placed in the space from the storage area but will not be permanent pieces of the space.

Behavioral Considerations

Inhabitants will enter and move through space on edges so as to not interfere with others.

Response / Activities

The pool will provide observation opportunities through which the public will be able to observe the activities that take place. The location of water, observation, and maintenance of the pool will be used to design and maintain themselves. It will have low-visibility through which people will not be able to see the pool.

Activities

People will pull through the pool and will be able to see the pool. The maintenance will be able to see the pool. People will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool.

People will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool.

Special Considerations

The pool will be located on the ground floor with the directly adjacent to the adjacent level to the ground floor. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool.

Mechanical rooms and the water tower will be directly adjacent but not in view when in the pool.

Special Considerations

It is possible that the edge of the pool may be used and the water will spill over the edge of the pool and the water level will be automatically maintained.

Natural light will be the primary light source.

Equipment / Furniture

Life savers and proper medical devices, including first aid kits, will be located in the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool. The pool will be able to see the pool.

Rails or shelves will be embedded in the wall to the outside of the pool to allow for observation.

Behavioral Considerations

People may be able to enter the space pool and the pool will be able to see the pool.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Natorium I Pool | 30 | 1 | 4000 | 4550 |

Purposes / Functions

The pool will be the alternative medium through which the person will explore the reciprocity of building and user. The notion of water as a cleansing and renewing force will be used to help the person rejuvenate themselves. It will function as a medium through which people will relax as well as exercise.

Activities

People will pull, stretch, flex, kick, as well as, inhale and exhale. The movements will be smooth and fluid, yet appear frenzied and chaotic. The person will glide through and across the water with elegance and determination.

Pause and rest will overlook the aquatic dance as the body replenishes itself from the exhausting pull and push it had just encountered.

Spatial Relationships

The pool will be located on the ground floor and be directly adjacent to the showers and locker rooms. Various activities will look into the space or invade the space as it will be at least a two storey space. The Aquatics Director and Lifeguard Office will be on the same floor and directly adjacent, as well.

Mechanical rooms and the storage rooms will be directly adjacent but not in view when in the pool.

Special Considerations

It is possible that the edge of the pool, the water, will be blurred and the water will spill over the edge of the pool and the entire floor will be submerged about 1 or 2 inches.

Natural light will be the primary light source.

Equipment / Furnishings

Life savors and proper medical devices, i.e. stretchers, will be hung on the walls. Exit ladders will be at the appropriate points on the edge of the pool. Overflow gutters will be placed along the edge of the walls.

Hooks or shelves will be embedded in the wall so that people have a place to store towels.

Behavioral Considerations

People must be able to enter the space, pool, and showers with ease and with a non-slip floor.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Natorium Aquatics Director | 4 | 1 | 150 | 4550 |

Purposes / Functions

This is an office that will house the Aquatics Director. The Aquatics Director is the manager of the Natatorium and is in charge of the safety and activities of the pool and locker rooms.

Activities

Typical bookkeeping, management, and activity planning. Also, meetings with the lifeguards about life-safety issues and training.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to the pool and the locker rooms. Also be in close proximity of the lifeguard office and storage spaces.

Special Considerations

Possible to overlook the pool, as from a mezzanine level. Should have large glass windows so that the Director can oversee the activities of the Natatorium.

Equipment / Furnishings

Standard desk and file cabinets, but may be integrated into the walls.

Behavioral Considerations

The office should be inviting and open. Allowing guests to interact with the Director, therefore putting the Director in a better position to make positive changes to the activities.

| <u>Space Name</u> | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>No. Units</u> | <u>NSF/Unit</u> | <u>Total Net Area</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Natatorium Showers | 1 | 20 | 50 | 4550 |

Purposes / Functions

The showers are mandatory with pools to wash the person before entering and after swimming. They will be semi-private because they are primarily used to rinse off and not shower.

Activities

The showers are the warm-up and cool-down to exercising in a pool. The body becomes adjusted to the new medium in which it is about to be submerged in.

Spatial Relationships

The showers will be in between the pool and the lockers. It will be necessary to walk through the showers in order to access the pool deck.

Special Considerations

Non-slip floor covering, sufficient ventilation, and artificial lighting.

Equipment / Furnishings

Individual shower heads and stalls. Wall-hung semi-private dividers. Access to water mechanical room.

Behavioral Considerations

People must walk through the shower area before entering the pool, therefore, the showers should be designed as part of the process of entering the water.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Natorium Lifeguard Office | 3 | 1 | 100 | 4550 |

Purposes / Functions

This is an office that will house the Lifeguards. The lifeguards will have a place to store their belongings and stay up-to-date on life-safety standards and procedures.

Activities

Research and training, also, collaborative meetings with the Aquatics Director about activities..

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to the pool and the locker rooms. Also be in close proximity of the Aquatic Director and storage spaces.

Special Considerations

Possible to overlook the pool, as from a mezzanine level. Should have large glass windows so that the lifeguards can oversee the activities of the Natatorium.

Equipment / Furnishings

Standard desk and file cabinets, and TV, VCR, DVD to aid in training, but may be integrated into the walls. First Aid station and large countertop to lay an injured person on.

Behavioral Considerations

The office should be a little more private so that the lifeguards helping someone aren't distracted by the activities of the pool, but should also be open so that they can always be watching the area.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Track Track | * | 1 | * | * |

Purposes / Functions

The track is to be designed to provide adequate space for walking, jogging, and or running. It will function as a plane rather than a confined path at certain points but at others, it will be a container housing moving bodies.

Activities

Walking, jogging, and running will become the movement of the body and the body will become the carrier of energy through out the space. The energy will spill out into other parts of the program and then be contained within the boundaries of the track as the space squeezes closer together. The space will become as much about the energy as the activity is about the energy.

Spatial Relationships

The track will be adjacent to all the active public sections of the building. At times it will be on the same plane as the other elements and other times when it will be its own level. The track will also be part of the façade as it tries to make a connection with the pedestrians outside and in Harmonie Park. Therefore, it will primarily be on one of the upper levels.

Special Considerations

There will be several points of entry and exit.

Equipment / Furnishings

Railings will need to be installed on certain legs of the track, as well as non-slip flooring.

Behavioral Considerations

The track will try to express the reciprocity of building and user and how architecture mediates our relationships to inside/outside and edges. It shall strive to weave the program pieces together.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Cafe Kitchen | 5 | 1 | 500 | 3400 |

Purposes / Functions

The café kitchen will make and supply food and drink that emphasizes Healthy diets. The kitchen will remain primarily private and will make any of the hot food entrees.

Activities

The aroma of fresh baked breads and steamed vegetables will fill the space. It will be an active space as the food gets prepared daily and served to the customers.

Spatial Relationships

The kitchen will be located directly adjacent to the dining area and will have one large storage room directly adjacent to it. It will have visual access to the dining area and bar.

Special Considerations

The storage room should back right up to the alley for easy drop off. The kitchen should also be well ventilated and lit. The rubbish area should also be close by the storage room outside.

Equipment / Furnishings

Industrial size oven, sinks, freezer, refrigerator. Large tables for chopping and preparing.

Behavioral Considerations

Should be designed to circulate materials from storage room, to oven, to prep table, and to customer, with easy and efficiency.

Environmental Considerations

The people should never feel hot or be immersed in the odors of the building without naturally wanting to feel as though they are physically working their own bodies.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|---------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Cafe Dining | 30 | 1 | 2500 | 3400 |

Purposes / Functions

The dining area will be a place to relax and enjoy some healthy food. There will be an indoor and an outdoor section. Foods is the fuel for the body so here people can refuel themselves before going back out into the world, or just stop in and eat the food.

Activities

In the dining area people will be able to eat, drink, rest, or converse. It will serve as the relief from the intensity of the rest of the program. Here the energy mellows down yet, even though the people will still see the activities around them, they will be able to enjoy them as spectators rather than participants.

Spatial Relationships

Most importantly is that the café be located directly adjacent to the lobby because it is not for members only. The café should also be in the midst of the activities because the goal is to allow the occupants of the café become spectators rather than participants. The kitchen also must be directly adjacent to the dining area. An outdoor space will also be provided to strengthen the connection of the building to the site and surrounding.

Special Considerations

Access to the café should be straightforward, that is, not have to check-in or show a pass.

Equipment / Furnishings

8-10 portable tables with chairs will provide the seating. Possibly wall mounted bar tables will provide more seating as space becomes tight. Access doors to the outside.

Behavioral Considerations

The people should enter the café and be immersed in the activities of the building without actually having to feel as though they are physically working their own bodies.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|-----------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Aerobic Rooms | 16 | 4 | 1000 | 4800 |

Purposes / Functions

Aerobic activity is crucial in total body health and is constantly modifying itself. Therefore, these spaces will be designed to accommodate those changes.

Activities

These rooms will contain the most active energy in the entire building. Bodies will be worked to exhaustion and then rebuilt. These rooms will provide the initial burst of energy that will flow through out the building.

Spatial Relationships

These rooms should be placed in a central location close to the Martial Arts and Yoga spaces because those two activities are evolutions of aerobic activity. These rooms should also overlook the Natatorium and be in constant play with the track. The four rooms themselves may be at different levels depending on the topography of the floors. Storage rooms should be directly adjacent to Aerobic spaces.

Special Considerations

Access to the rooms should be fluid and open. They may not be totally enclosed so that the sounds and energy flow through out the spaces without obstacles.

Equipment / Furnishings

Floors should remain clear and free of obstacles. Mats may be brought out of storage but are not permanent. Any walls should be floor to ceiling mirrors.

Behavioral Considerations

Access to the rooms should be fluid and open. They may not be totally enclosed so that the sounds and energy flow through out the spaces without obstacles.

| <u>Space Name</u> | <u>Capacity</u> | <u>No. Units</u> | <u>NSF/Unit</u> | <u>Total Net Area</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Free Weight Space | 20 | 1 | 800 | 1050 |

Purposes / Functions

Free Weight training is crucial in total body health and to other activities such as Martial Arts, Yoga, and Swimming. This space is to be designed so that people have the opportunity to work on their physical strength as though they work on their mental and spiritual aspects.

Activities

Strenuous pushing and pulling, in conjunction with the intense inhaling and exhaling of the lungs will make this space an intensive energy producing space.

Spatial Relationships

This space should be totally open and directly adjacent to the aerobic rooms and near the Martial Arts and Yoga spaces. The track may be integrated into the floor of this space as each of the activities lead to the other in terms of benefits gained.

Special Considerations

This space should be open to the rest of the building.

Natural light will be the primary light source.

Equipment / Furnishings

Various free weight benches will be used rather than machines. The idea is to keep the energy of the activities flowing and with free weights, the energy is much more intense plus one would typically need a spotter, unlike machines, where one could essentially never encounter another person. This is disruptive to the flow of energy in the space and building.

Behavioral Considerations

Access to the space should be wide open and necessary. It is possible that this space is an extra wide corridor that also houses the casual movement from one space to another through out the building.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Locker Rooms Men's & Women's | 80 | 2 | 3000 | 3400 |

Purposes / Functions

The locker rooms are to provide a place to change and store items that belong to the person. Will act as the threshold into the activities of the building.

Activities

People will change, prepare, cleanse, and converse. It is the space of preparation and clean-up.

Spatial Relationships

Directly adjacent to the lobby and the Natatorium, as well as the circulation to bring the person to the various programmatic areas. The lockers will also contain the showers for the pool.

Special Considerations

The lockers will be completely private from the rest of the building. Possible to have split levels to differentiate the pool entrance from the dry entrance.

Equipment / Furnishings

The lockers will contain enough lockers for maximum occupancy as well as, toilets, showers, sinks, and benches built into the ground.

Behavioral Considerations

People should be able to flow in and out and through the locker rooms and into the desired spaces of the building.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|--------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Offices Employee | 4 | 5 | 100 | 900 |

Purposes / Functions

These offices will be used for customer relations. The employees will meet with the customer to set up memberships or work out problems.

Activities

Typical bookkeeping, management, and activity planning. Also, meetings with the customers about memberships and complaints.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to lobby but also directly adjacent to some of the major components of the building, such as, the pool, the Martial Arts, and Yoga. All the offices should be close to each other.

Special Considerations

Mostly glass so that the customer can see through or completely open.

Equipment / Furnishings

Standard desk and file cabinets, but may be integrated into the walls.

Behavioral Considerations

The office should be inviting and open, as well as offer inspiring views of the activities.

| Space Name | Capacity | No. Units | NSF/Unit | Total Net Area |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------|----------------|
| Offices / Manager | 4 | 2 | 200 | 900 |

Purposes / Functions

These offices will be used for customer relations, as well as meetings with some or all the employees.

Activities

Typical bookkeeping, management, and activity planning. Also, meetings with the customers about memberships and complaints, or the employees.

Spatial Relationships

Should be directly adjacent to lobby but also directly adjacent to some of the major components of the building, such as, the pool, the Martial Arts, and Yoga. All the offices should be close to each other.

Special Considerations

Mostly glass so that the customer can see through or completely open.

Equipment / Furnishings

Standard desk and file cabinets, but may be integrated into the walls.

Behavioral Considerations

The office should be inviting and open, as well as offer inspiring views of the activities.

Technical Systems

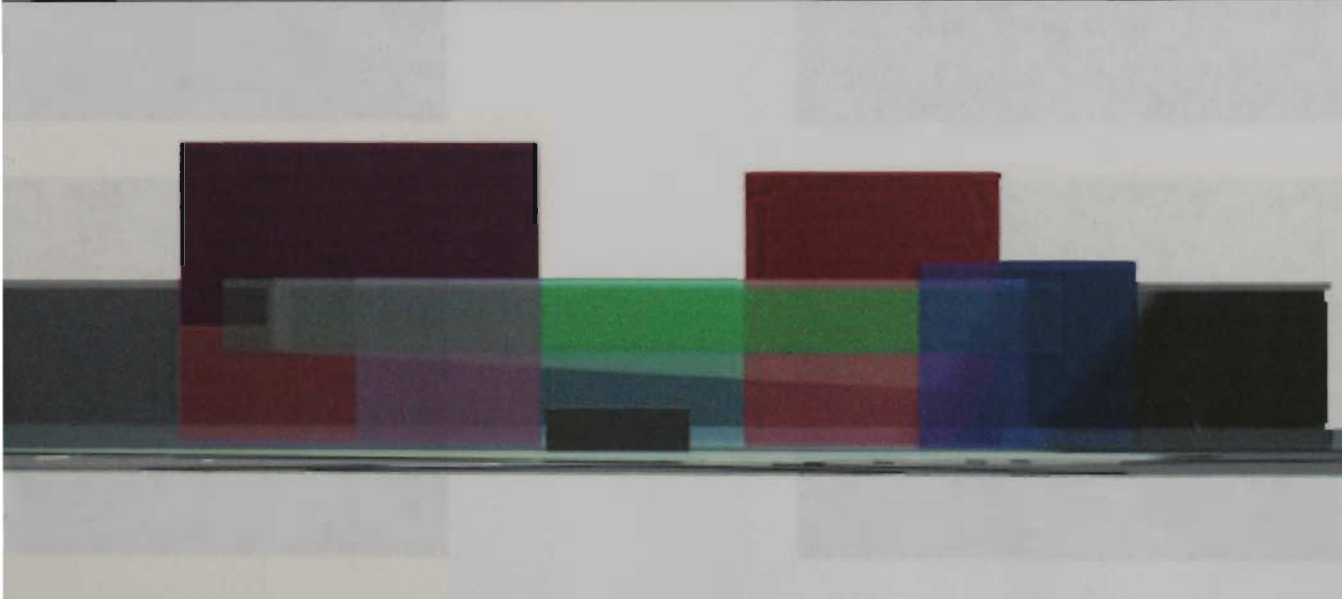
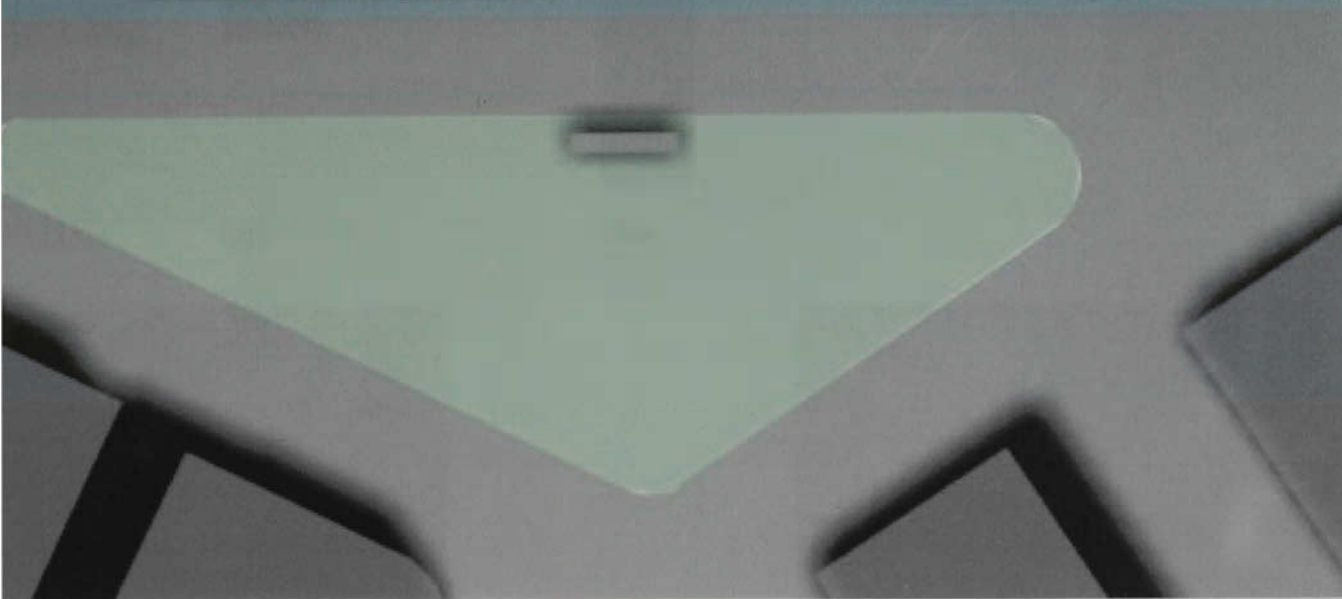
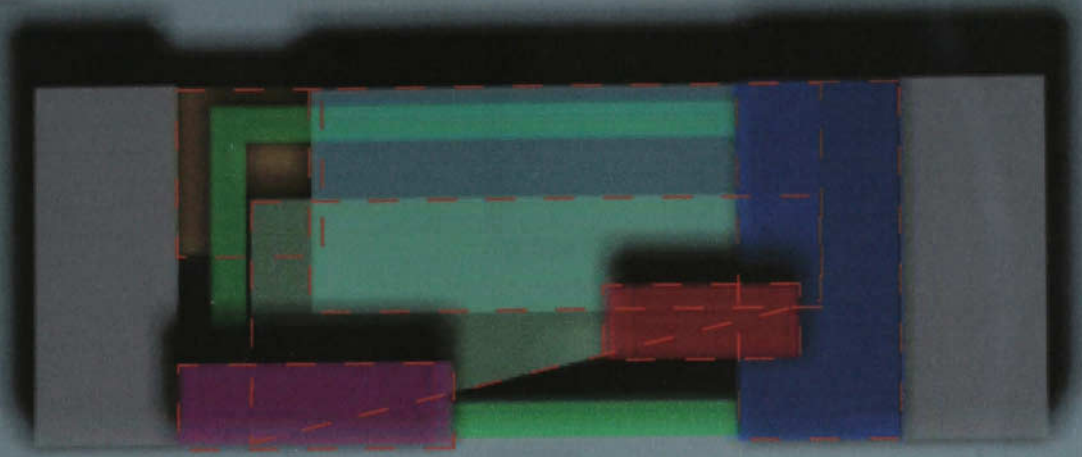
The details of the structural, mechanical, and constructional issues will evolve with the project. As of now, it is evident that the structure will have to be one that will be capable of spanning large distances. Certain areas, such as, the free weight space, the natatorium, and the café, should most likely be as column free as possible. With this in mind, I feel that steel would be the most effective material to support the building. Steel also lends itself to creative and expressive solutions to structural problems. I feel that this will be important since the program and building are about the flow of energy, and responding to the energy of gravity is crucial for any building, therefore the building should be designed to celebrate this energy. That lends itself to focusing on connections. Such as how the building will meet the ground and how a ceiling meets a wall and how a wall meets the floor.

The Natatorium and showers will require special attention from the mechanical systems. The pool itself will have its own mechanical system and that will have to work with the systems that support the space that the pool is housed in. The lockers will need sufficient ventilation to prevent the build up of mold and other things that are associated with dark, damp showers. The rest of the building will also need plenty of air movement to keep fresh air circulating. This will require special attention when it comes to the wide open spaces, so that the air can be thrown across the space without making disturbing noises.

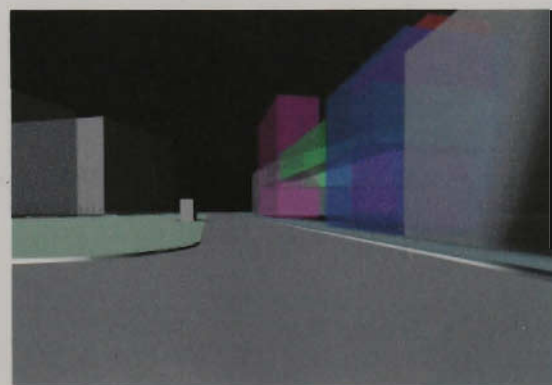
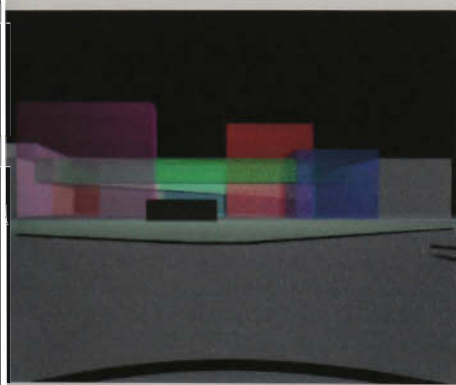
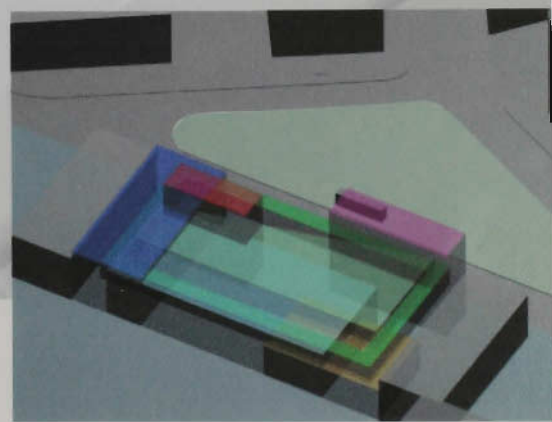
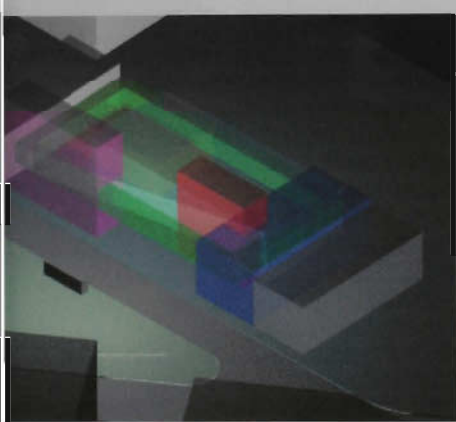
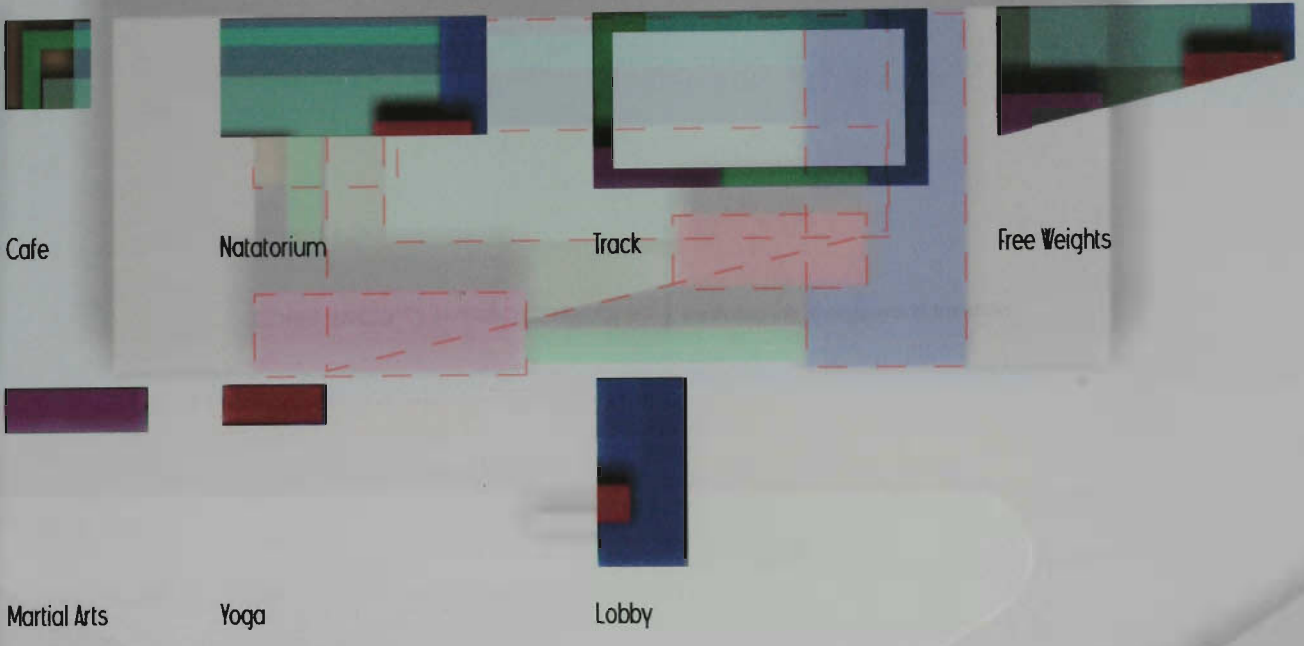
The program does not require any special constructional methods as of now. As always, the integration of certain constructional elements, such as construction joints, and expansion joints will be acknowledged and integrated into the design.

AREA RELATION DIAGRAM | mediating the [meta]physical transition

Relation Diagram



Relation Diagram





The design process begins with a series of site visits to the site, where the architect and the client discuss the site's potential and the building's role in the site's overall context.



As the design process progresses, the architect and the client work together to develop a series of conceptual drawings and site plans that define the building's form and its relationship to the site.

DESIGN PROCESS | mediating the [meta]physical transition

The initial design process begins with a series of site visits to the site, where the architect and the client discuss the site's potential and the building's role in the site's overall context. This process involves a series of conceptual drawings and site plans that define the building's form and its relationship to the site.

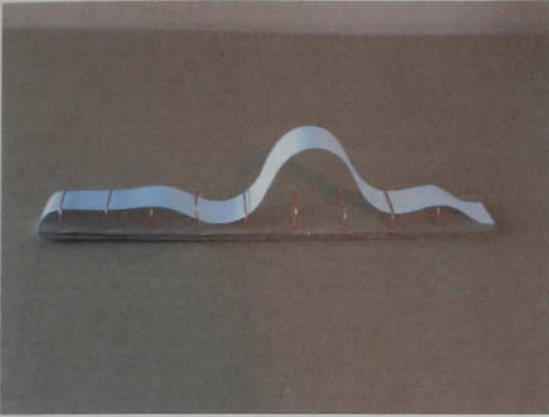
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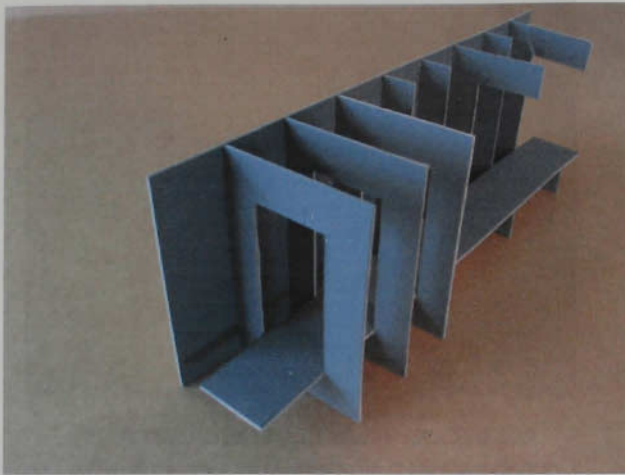
First study model of how energy might move through a rigid element. It began the investigation of the spaces between objects. What are the possibilities and what is it like to be between or outside, close or far away?



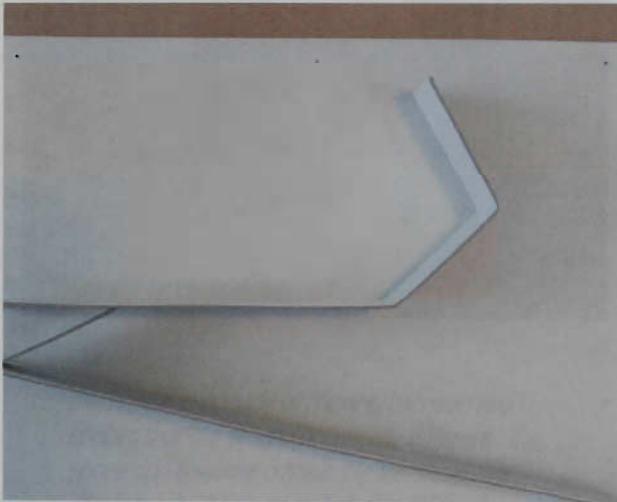
This is a study of different methods of ascent. Comparing the movement of a ramp with the movement of a stair.

The schematic design process began with a closer look at the site and Harmonie Park, directly across the street. I wanted my building to respond to the qualities of the park, to enforce the reciprocal relationship that I am exploring between building and site. I noticed that the park has a wall that begins to compress the spatiality of the site so my first move was to provide a release by pulling the building back at that point. This also sets up a dialogue with Harmonie Park, as my building creates its own outdoor public spaces. This observation helped guide me through the rest of the design because I realized that the reciprocity of building and user is not necessarily as obvious as a person opens a door, therefore interacting with the building, but rather, architecture can mediate a reciprocity between building and occupant at much larger, more meaningful scale.

When I began to zoom in on specific moments in the program I found myself jumping back and forth between models and sketching. This helped



This is another study model of movement and the flow of energy. This time, the model looks at a rigid movement through a dynamic element. How does the movement become emphasized by the structure and does the structure mediate the movement or does the movement mediate the structure?

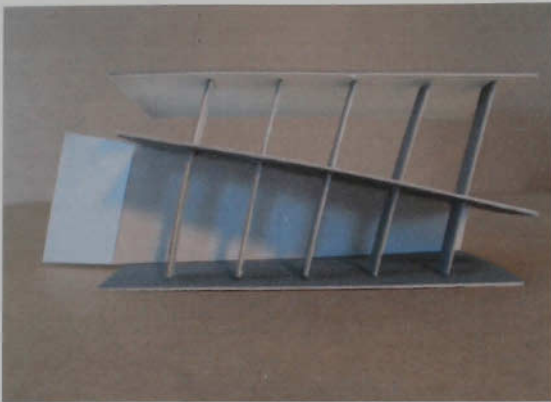


This model looks at the relationship of different levels and how they can be articulated to establish a dialogue with each other while mediating the body to edges.

me examine the specific moments both in section and as a volume. This method helped me begin to see the thesis question that I am exploring at a much more intimate scale. I saw the opportunity to take advantage of the program I have chosen to explore how spaces that differ programmatically and in terms of a persons pace, begin to interact and where the thresholds, edges, and overlaps occur.

Throughout my process, I have constantly been trying to explore the notion of architecture as a mediator and how the building responds and influences the person and how the person interacts with the architecture. That means that through my explorations in the schematic design phase I am constantly looking for the opportunities to weave the activities of the space with the architecture itself.

Looking back on the thesis and the schematic design, I feel that I needed to be more specific in my definition of architecture as a mediator. I feel that there are an infinite number of ways a



This model is another look at how structure and different floors can mediate the body throughout the space. This model also looks at the effect of ramping a floor, such as the ceiling of the floor below becoming sloped.

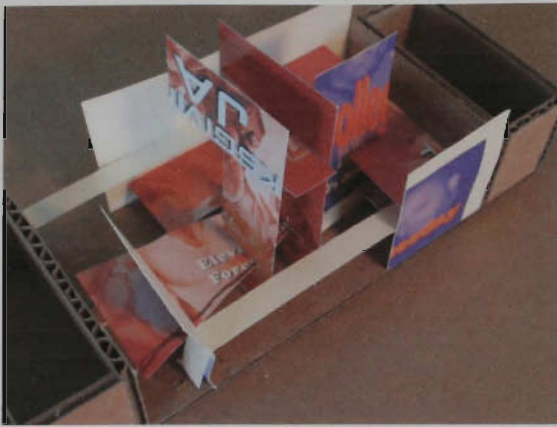


This model is a study of moving between two spaces that are programmatically different. The space can become a habitable threshold that mediates the body, as well as the different program spaces.

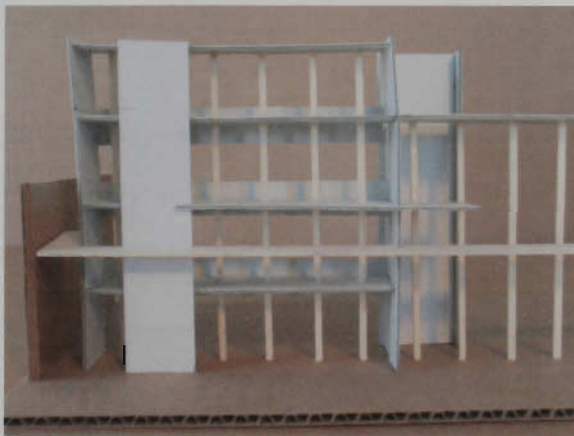
building may respond and influence a person, and I feel as though my intentions were a little bit broad. Now I find myself having to make design decisions rather than having a process which tells me what to do. However, my process has guided me towards a more formal way of exploring the thesis. I am now testing various means of defining edges and thresholds on the drafting board in both plan and section. This current method is helping me because the nature of the thesis is extremely architectural and this method helps me really grab hold of the project and discover the architecture in the project as I continue to guide this investigation towards the final legs of the journey.

The Flow

The process evolved from the moment explorations into a building proposal rather quickly. Program elements were beginning to take shape and develop a relationship with one another. However, as time and the process



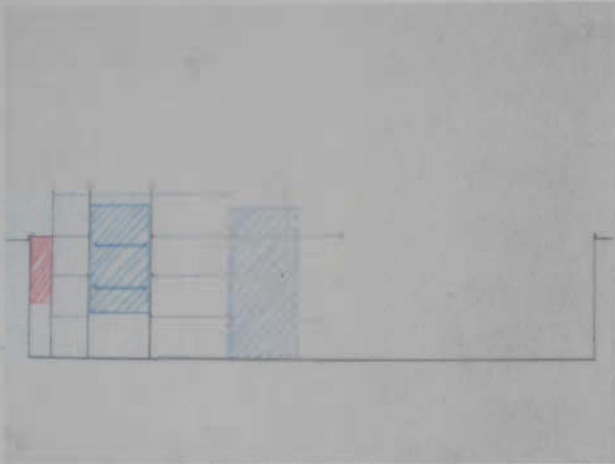
This model is an abstract study of how the building would sit in the site and the relationships that it would create with the site. It also introduces some of the initial programmatic groupings.



This was the first Martial Arts space that was looking at establishing a street front that was a wall of Martial Artists with the track breaking down the scale. It began to look at the relationship that the track could have with the site and the Martial Arts space.

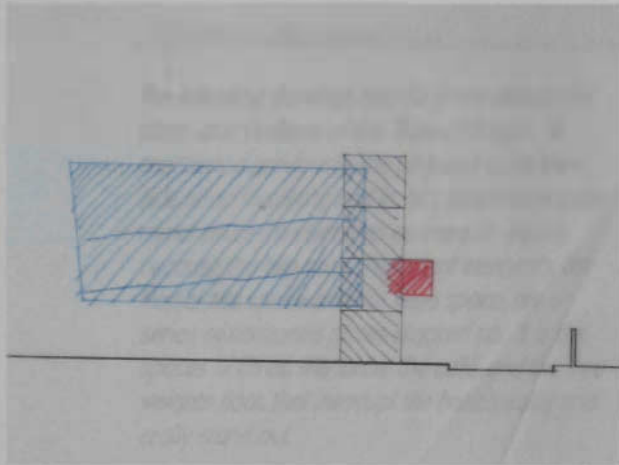
continued. I began to run into problems that stemmed back to the conceptualizing of the current proposal. Something had gone wrong, been misinterpreted. The proposal that sat on the desk wasn't clearly demonstrating how architecture becomes a mediator. The more I tried to adjust and reconfigure, the more the problems surfaced until I was working with a project that was obviously flawed. The questions for the investigation now became, how did this happen and why did it continue to evolve?

As I look back over the first proposal's process, I can now begin to see the causes of those problems a little more clearly. The lack of hierarchy from the beginning and the absence of an order, I feel, are two of the main causes of this dilemma. Initially, the project evolved naturally from the various studies I did that explored the spaces of transition from one space to another, however, this led to the design of a building that did not have a clearly defined beginning, middle, and end, figuratively, but

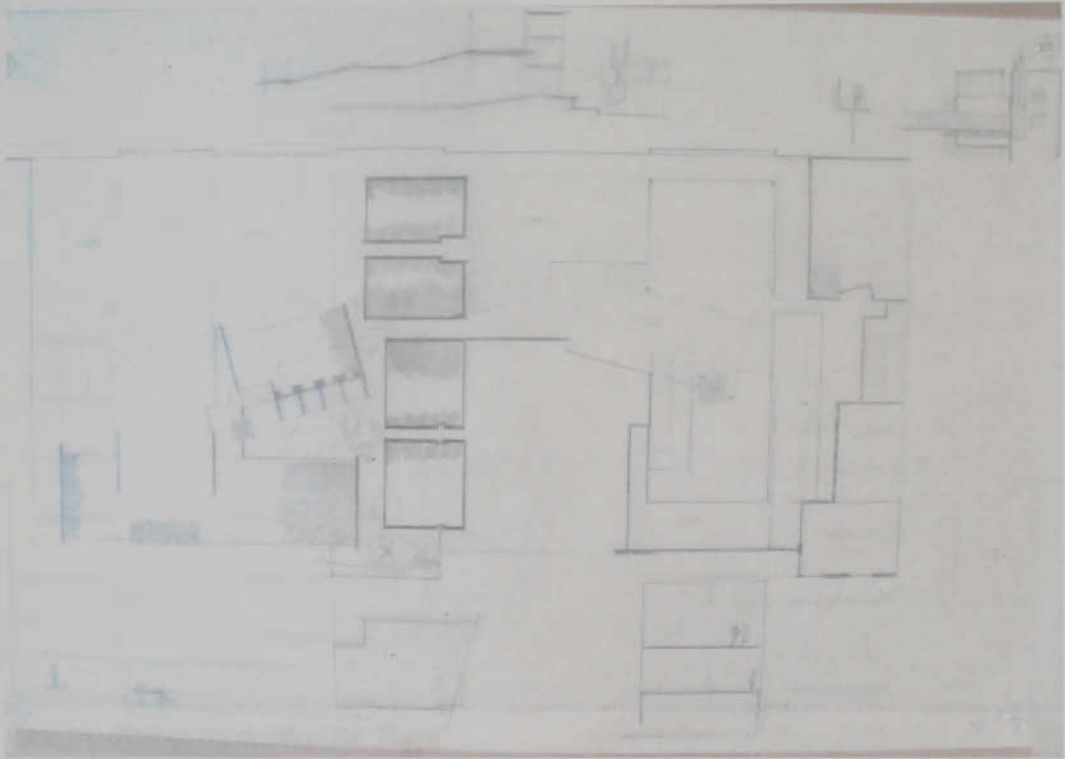


rather a number of middles. This was my proposals flaw which then initiated a complete restructuring from the ground up.

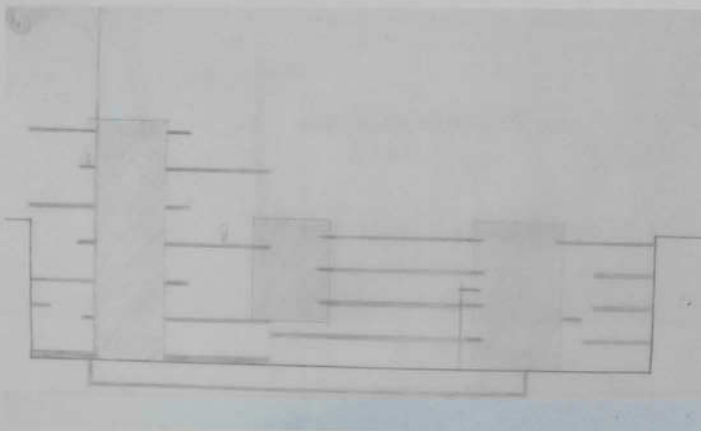
This is an initial drawing that analyzed the spatial relationships between the Martial Arts space and the other core elements that would puncture into the horizontality of the Martial Arts space.

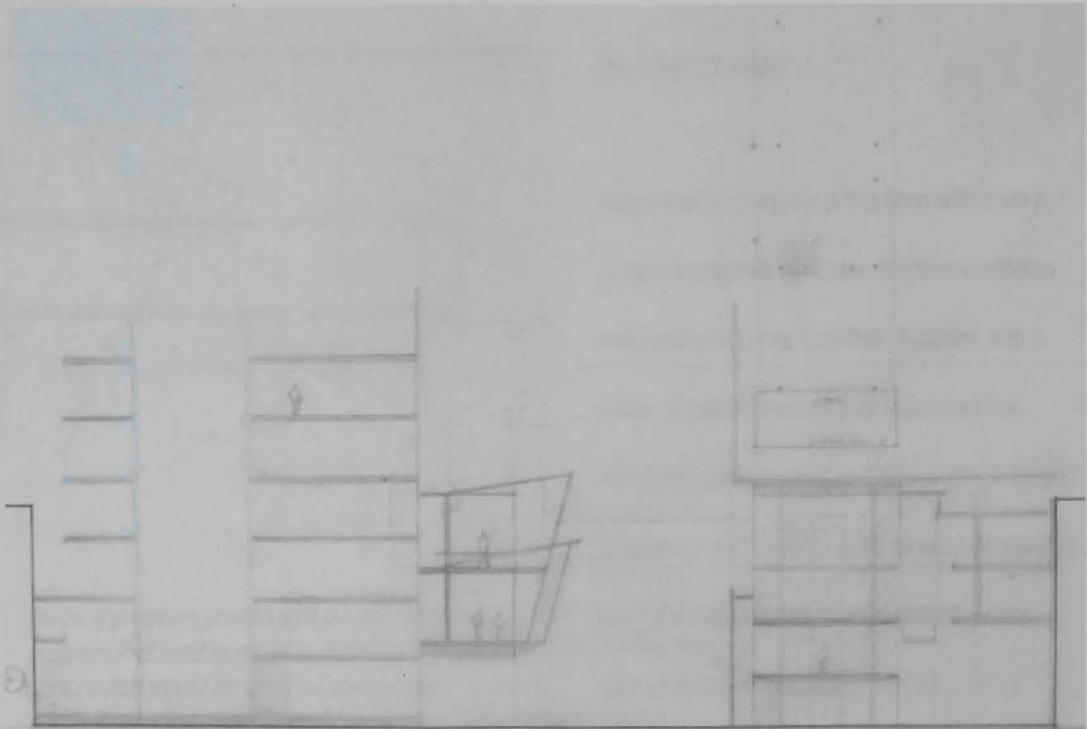


Another initial drawing that looked at a possible arrangement of the Martial Arts space and the free weights floor and track.

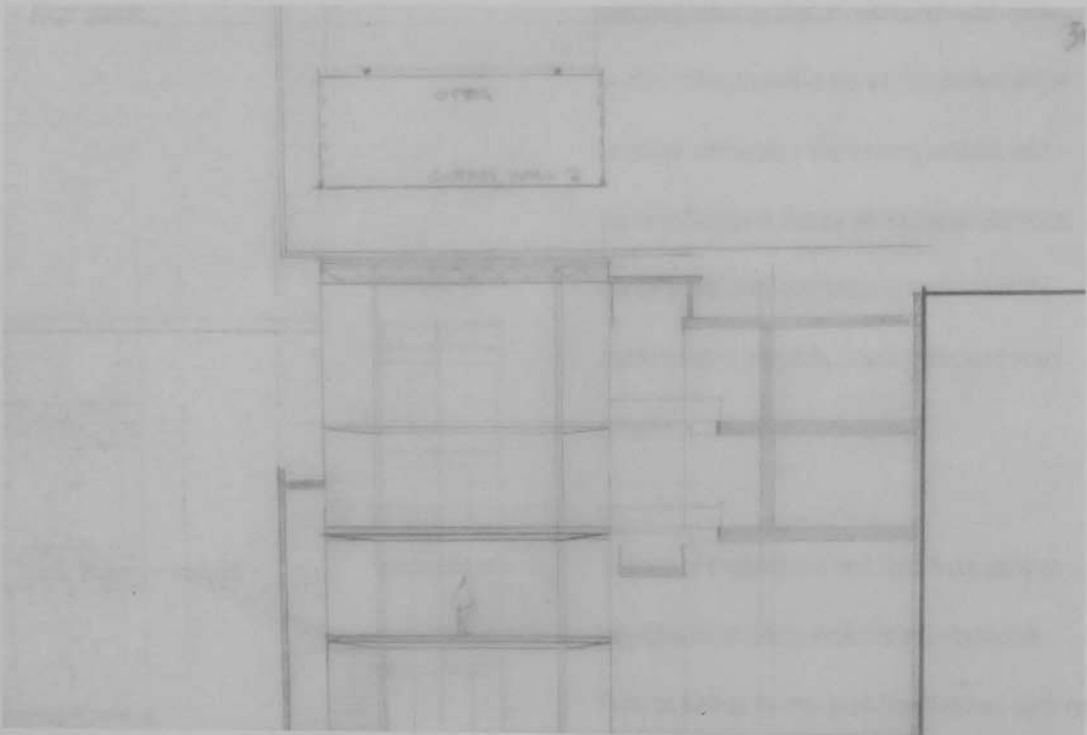


The following drawings are the more developed plans and sections of the 'flawed' design. As mentioned previously, the proposal contained little or no hierarchy and in fact, emphasized the minor program elements as a result. Mostly because the two most important elements, the Martial Arts space and the Yoga space, are a series of horizontal plates stacked up. It is the spaces such as, the lobby, the café, and the free weights floor, that interrupt the horizontality and really stand out.



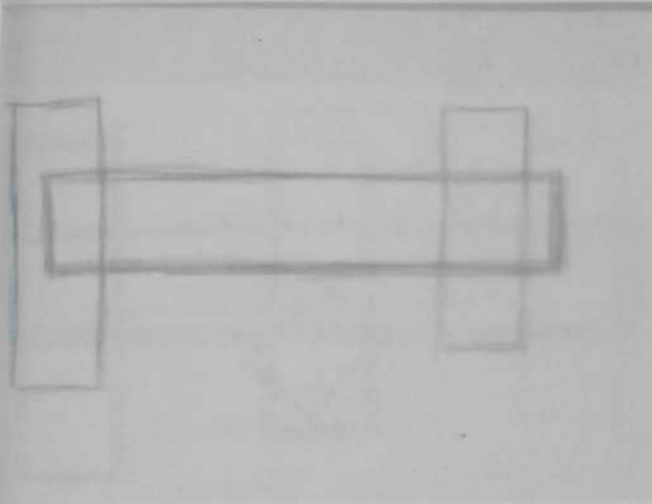


These two drawings are details of the 'flawed' proposal.



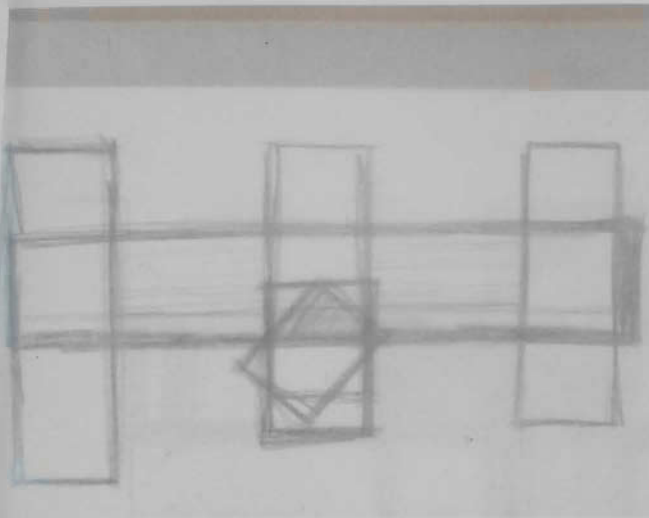
The Proposal, again

I approached the project this time with a very clear understanding of how all these elements were going to come together. I started with a series of parti-diagrams that illustrated the hierarchy of the spaces and how they will begin to overlap and mediate each other. I decided to have the lobby space, martial arts, and yoga spaces stand distinctly from the rest of the program. The pool, free weights, track, and aerobics, were located in relation to each other so that three distinct levels of movement will be explored and tested. Swimming, walking, and running, began to dictate where these elements are to be situated in relation to each other, the outdoors, and the lobby, martial arts, and yoga spaces.



The new proposal started with a basic parti-diagram that tried to make a distinction between spaces that would be used for movement, primarily running, walking, and swimming. This space would be sliced through by the main elements, such as the Martial Arts space and the Yoga space.

A series of explorations and tests were done to see how the building interacts with Harmonie Park, as well as its own park-like features, such as

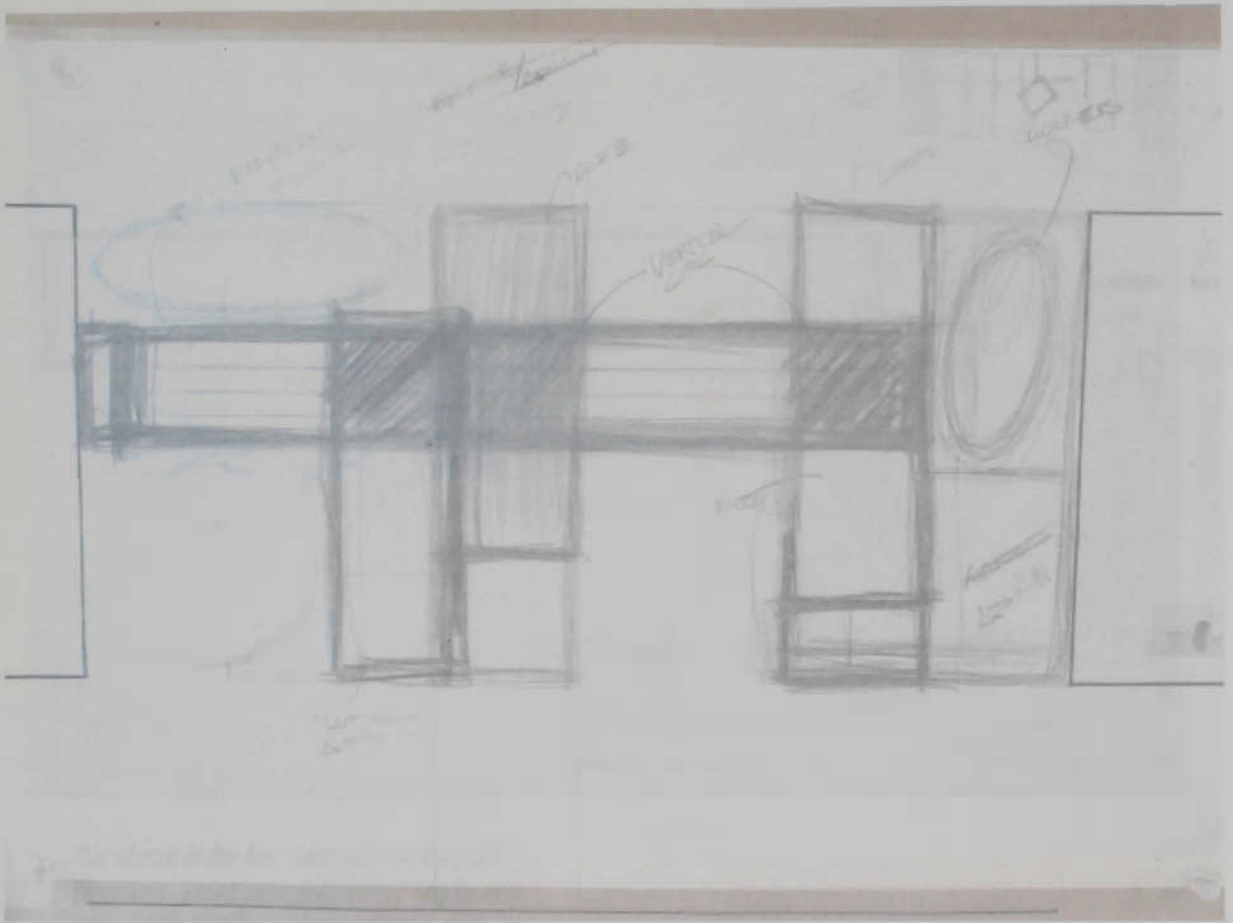


The parti-diagram continued to evolve and this particular diagram continues the idea that the main program spaces would intersect the space of movement. This drawing starts to examine what happens at those overlaps and what that space would be like, both inside and outside.

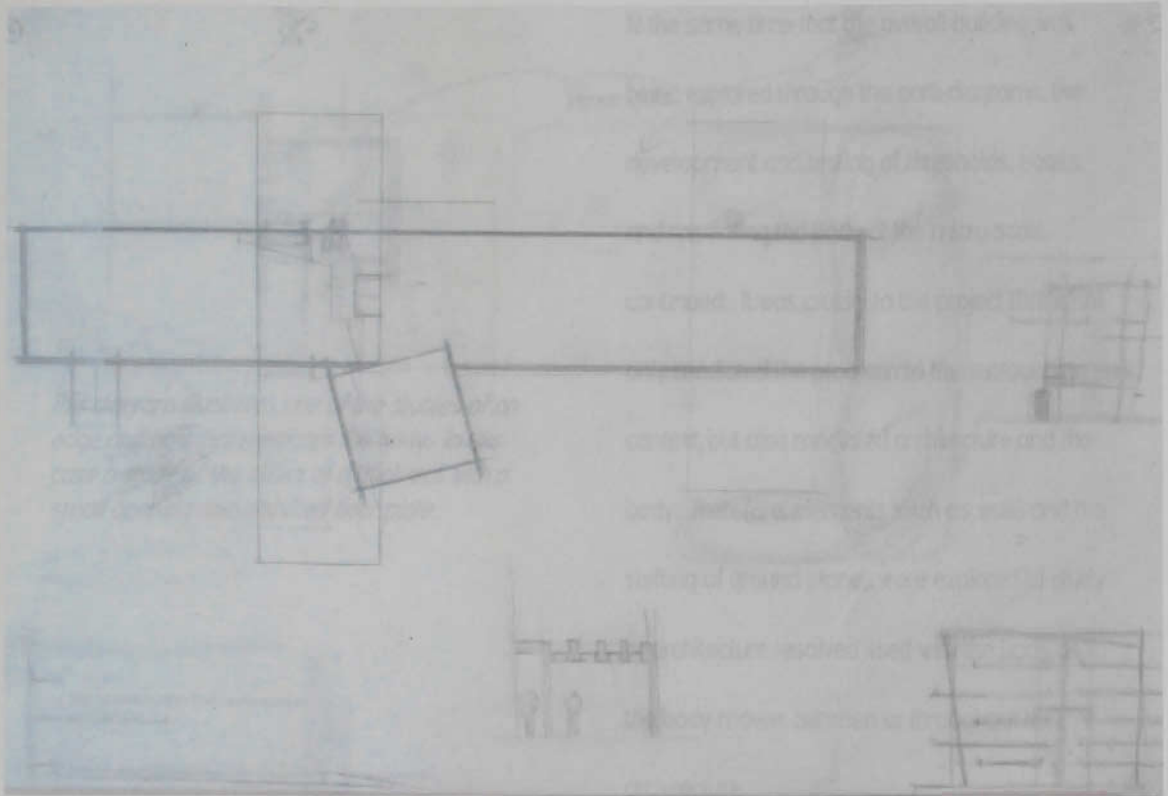
I began to see many possibilities come from this organization and that burst of ideas fueled the investigation, allowing it to start to develop itself, as opposed to forcing it like in the 'flawed' proposal.

a courtyard or plaza space. A study of what is public and what is private began to shape how these spaces are integrated into the circumstance.

The result of those investigations led to the establishment of a push and pull relationship with Harmonie Park and the sidewalk. Through the development of the parti-diagrams, it became clear that by pushing volumes up to the property line created voids that would pull the space, and inevitably people, into the space of the building. This language also established a repetition of rectilinear masses that continued with the existing building language. Ultimately, the goal of this move was to emphasize the edge of the site by breaking it and allowing the void to be part of what defines space.

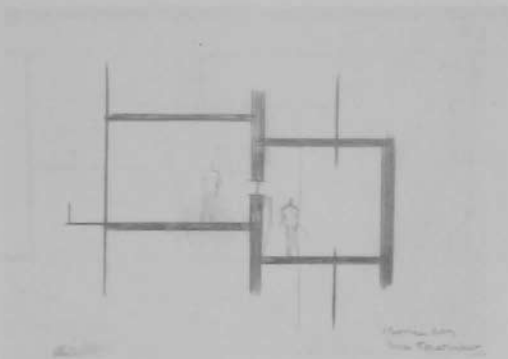


This sketch is a study that further explored the overlaps of the main program spaces and the space of movement. It was a tool that aided in the organization of the building development.

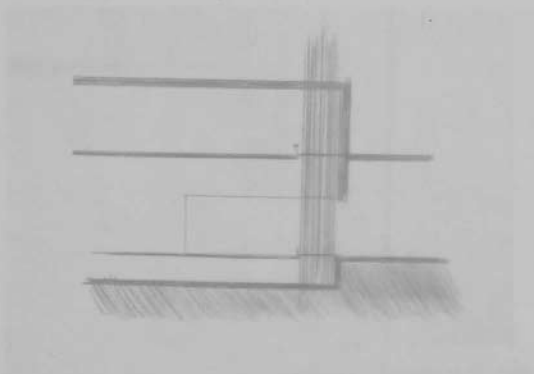


This sketch is the first translation of the parti-diagrams. I tried to maintain the integrity and main ideas that were captured in the parti, yet start to integrate the building elements such as circulation, entrances, and the program requirements.

Ultimately, this translation turned out to be too literal to the parti, however, I see it as that crucial step that was needed in order to keep progressing and developing the design.

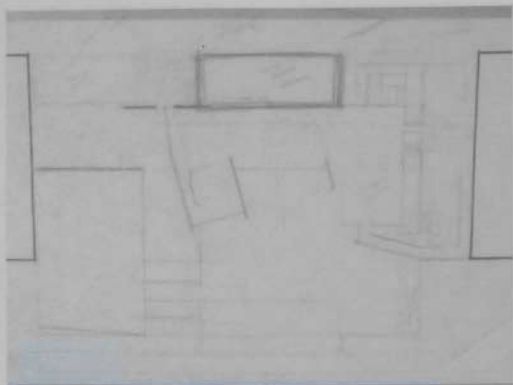


This diagram illustrates one of the studies of an edge and how that mediates the body. In this case a study of the effect of a thick wall with a small opening and a shifted floor plate.

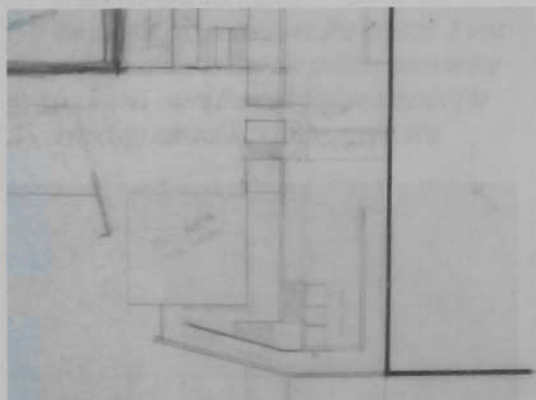


This diagram is a study of the space of a threshold and where it is perceived to be a habitable space and where it is perceived to be an entrance or exit of another space. Also, what does it feel like to be in that space? In this case, the threshold is a tall vertical space, therefore the feeling of the space will be one that brings the person's attention up. In that case, what do they see? Are they the ones that are being watched?

At the same time that the overall building was being explored through the parti-diagrams, the development and testing of thresholds, edges, and mediating the body at the micro scale, continued. It was crucial to the project that it not only mediated the program to the surrounding context, but also mediated architecture and the body. Therefore, elements such as walls and the shifting of ground planes were explored to study of architecture resolved itself with the body as the body moves between or throughout the architecture.



This is a ground floor plan that begins to detail the locker room sequence and the thresholds that mediate the body and the program.



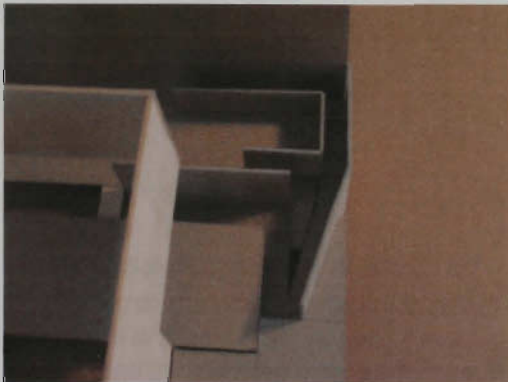
This is a detail of the locker room procession to the pool and how it begins to carve a path into the ground.

In looking at the parti-diagram, an opportunity to express the notion of movement became one of the main driving forces behind the design. In particular, the act of swimming and what it meant to enter into a space that contains water. The pool space was placed in the basement in an attempt to emphasize an act of carving into the ground. This concept was further emphasized by the way the body enters the pool level. The entrance is designed as a path that carves itself into the ground and is articulated by a series of ramps and heavy walls that wind the body down and then opens up to provide a release from the act of moving through the ground plane.

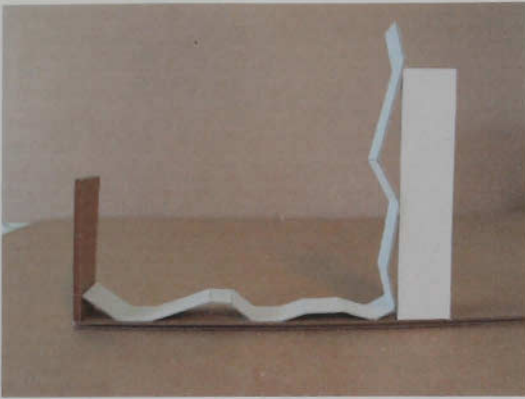
The entrance sequence of the pool aligns itself with the threshold that separates the locker rooms from the rest of the building. This was done to celebrate that threshold and the act of entering into the space of water and movement.



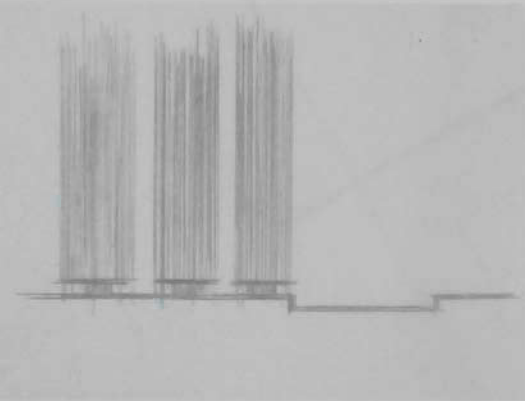
This is a study model of the entrance sequence to the pool level. It is part of a careful study of the space because the qualities of the space and the experience were very important to the success of this moment in the design. It was important that the feeling of carving was felt as the person progresses into the ground. It was also important to find the point to release the body and where the appropriate moment to introduce natural light to the space was.



The space of the threshold, of entering and exiting the activities of the building is one of the thresholds that I paid special attention to. This is the threshold of the locker rooms; the beginning and the end of the workout ritual. This transition space is accentuated by a void that spans the vertical space that the spine creates when it overlaps the lobby space. Thin bridges link the two sides and force the body to be aware of the spatial and programmatic transition that is occurring. The entrance to the pool is also emphasized by a long ramp that starts to define the street edge and carves out the ground as the person enters the pool area within the threshold.

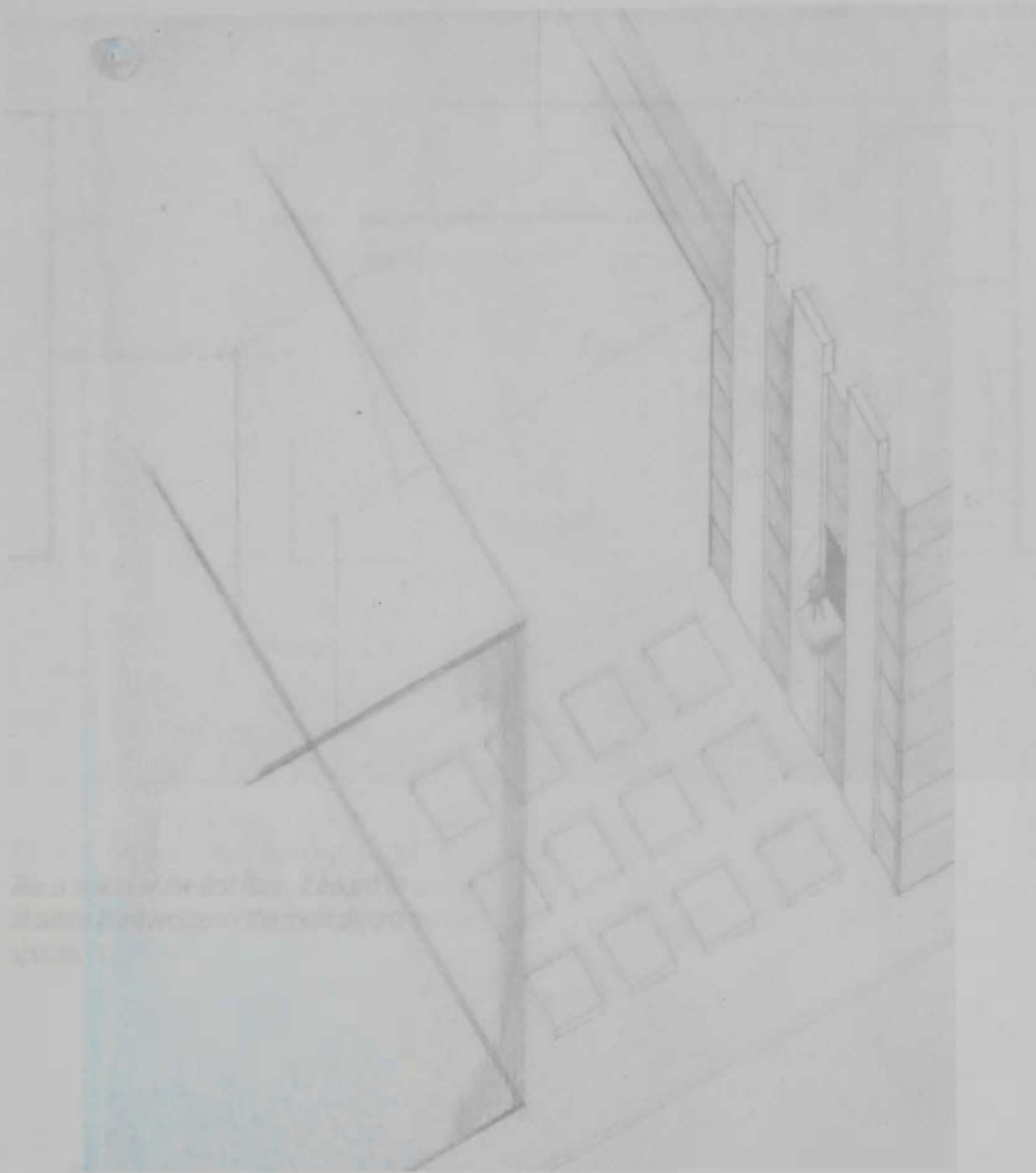


This is a study model that illustrates the desire to have the ground plane continue vertically so as to blend the energy, that would take place in the plaza, with the energy of the building.

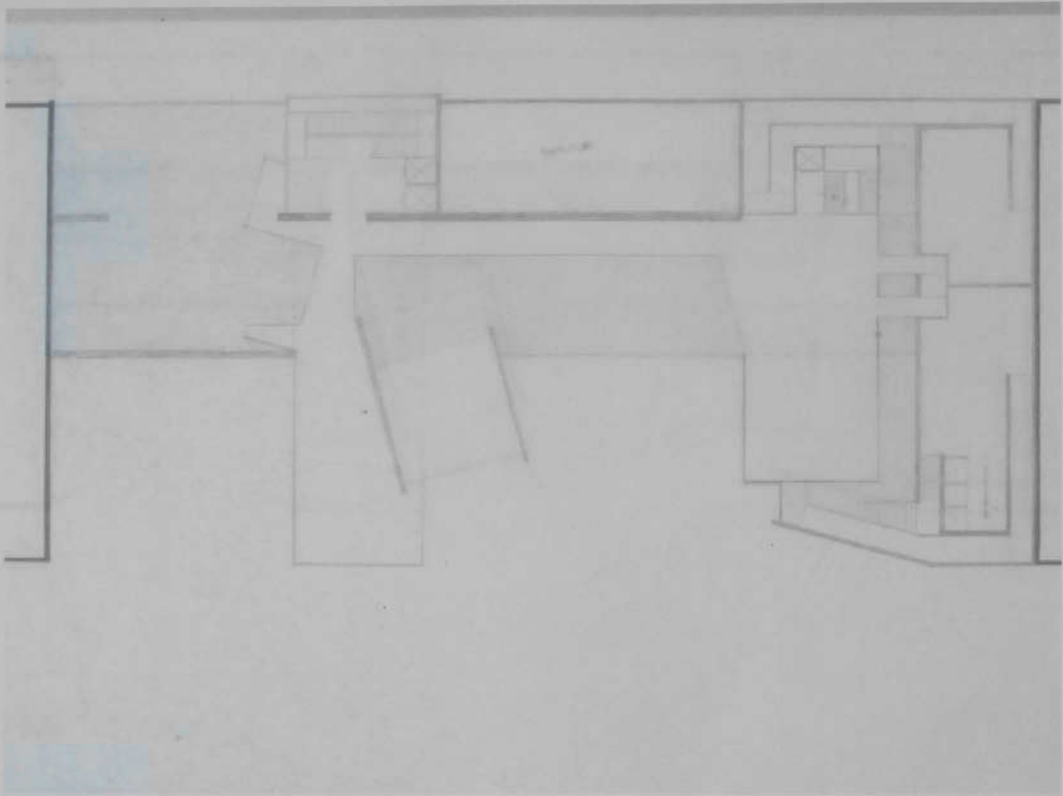


This parti-diagram is a study of the effect of creating an implied edge through the creation of a series of raised plates. The vertical lines represent the space that a martial artist would occupy and the energy being translated up to the sky, therefore creating a user-defined edge.

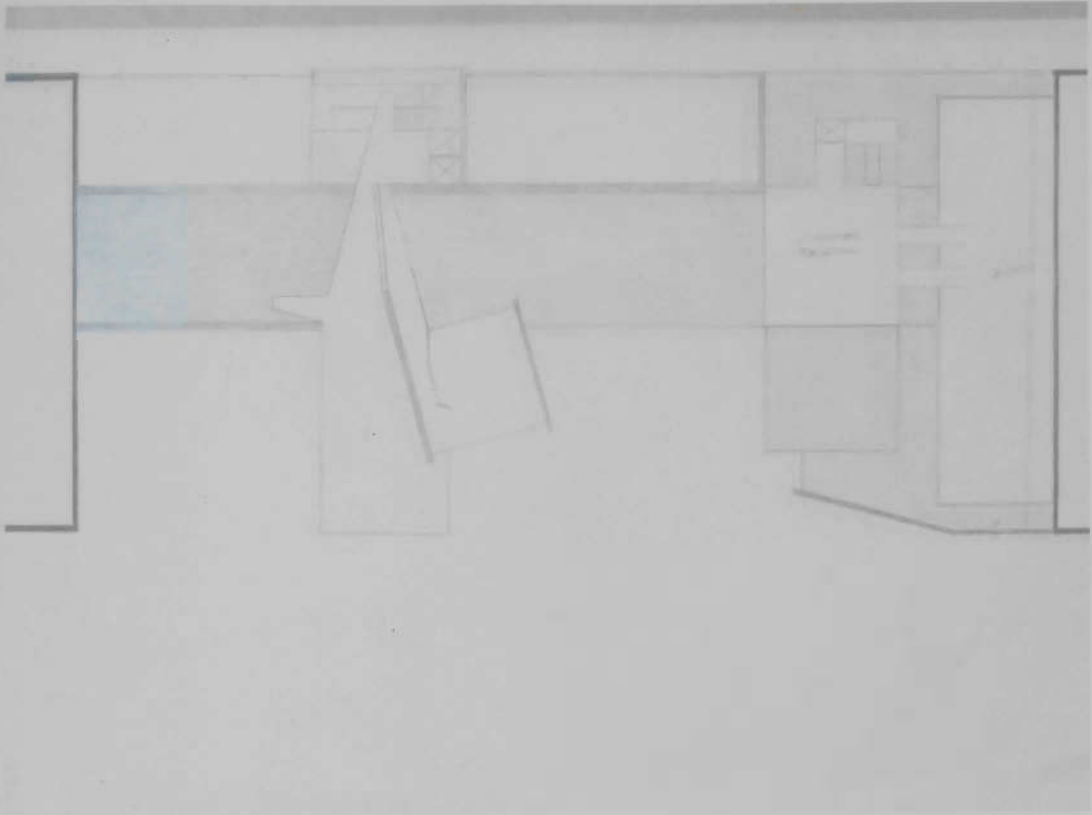
The following images document a study of how the outdoor space is created. The space needed to define the edge of the site, while at the same time, remain porous and open to the public. I also wanted the energy from the martial artists, who will use the site to be translated into the building in some way. This study led to the creation of podiums that the artists stand on and perform, or become an active backdrop to the inhabitants of Harmonie Park. The rows of podiums create an implied edge and that edge will be strengthened when the artists are occupying them. The rows also were translated into vertical planes on the façade of the building and they allow for balconies to puncture out and start to allow the vertical space to be inhabited.



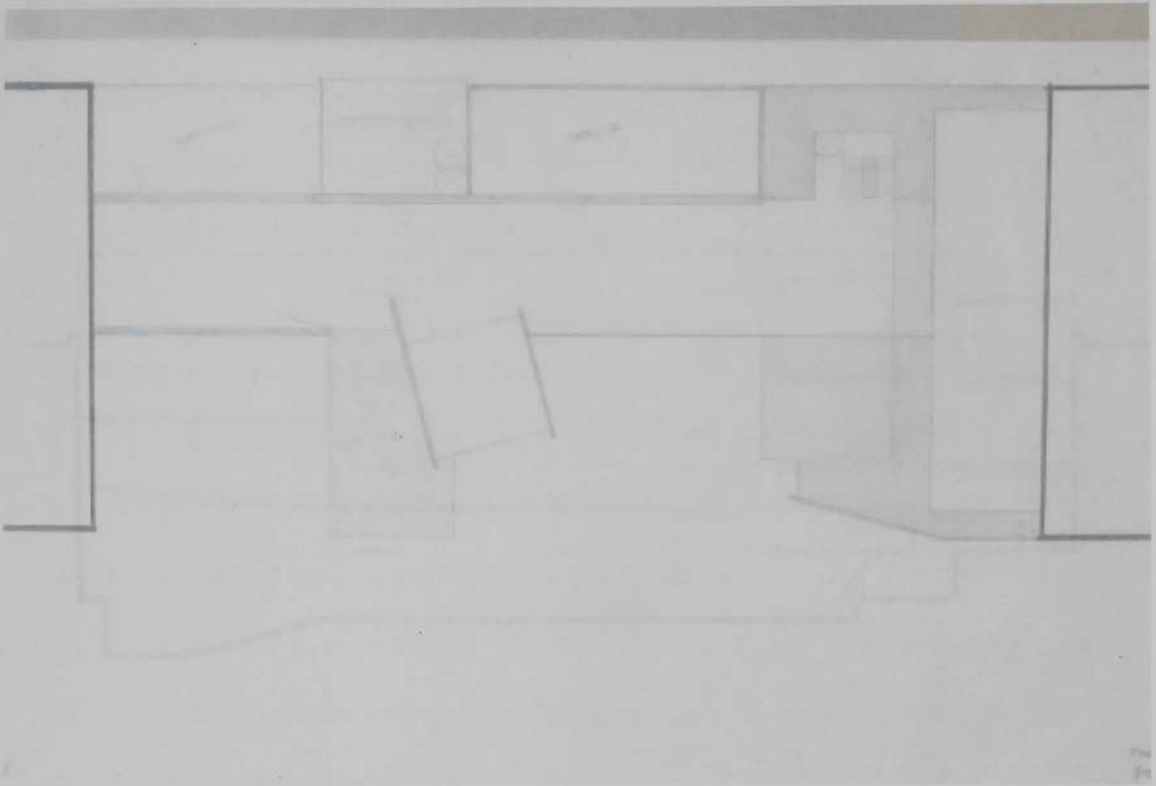
This is an axon drawing of what that space would look like. It is on the north side of the site, situated between the existing building and the Martial Arts space.



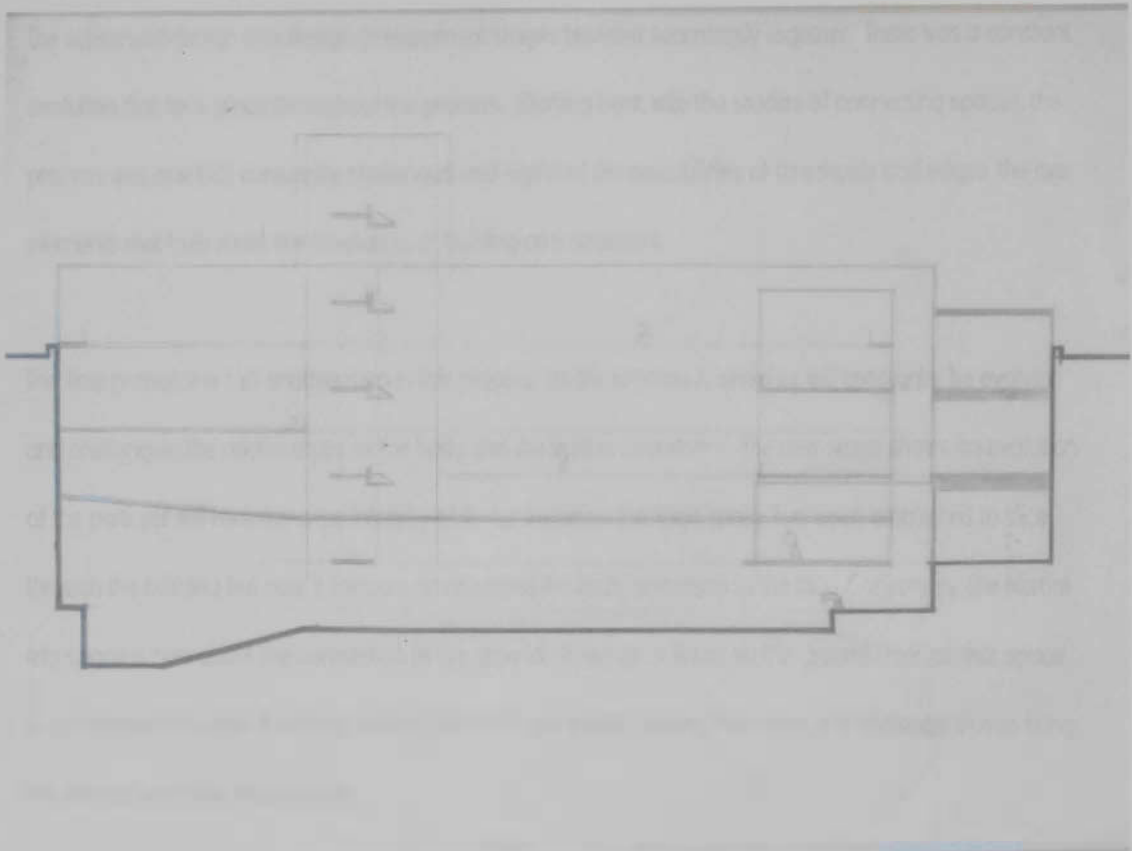
This is a plan of the first floor. It begins to illustrate the overlaps of the main program spaces.



This plan illustrates a typical Martial Arts and Yoga floor. The idea was to arrange them so that they helped define each other, as well as overlook the rest of the building.



This plan shows the free weights floor and it is obvious in this drawing the direct relationship to the parti. It raised the question, is it too much like the parti? This question started a series of refinements that led to the final design.



This section also raised the issue of whether the building had become too horizontal and that there were not enough vertical interruptions.

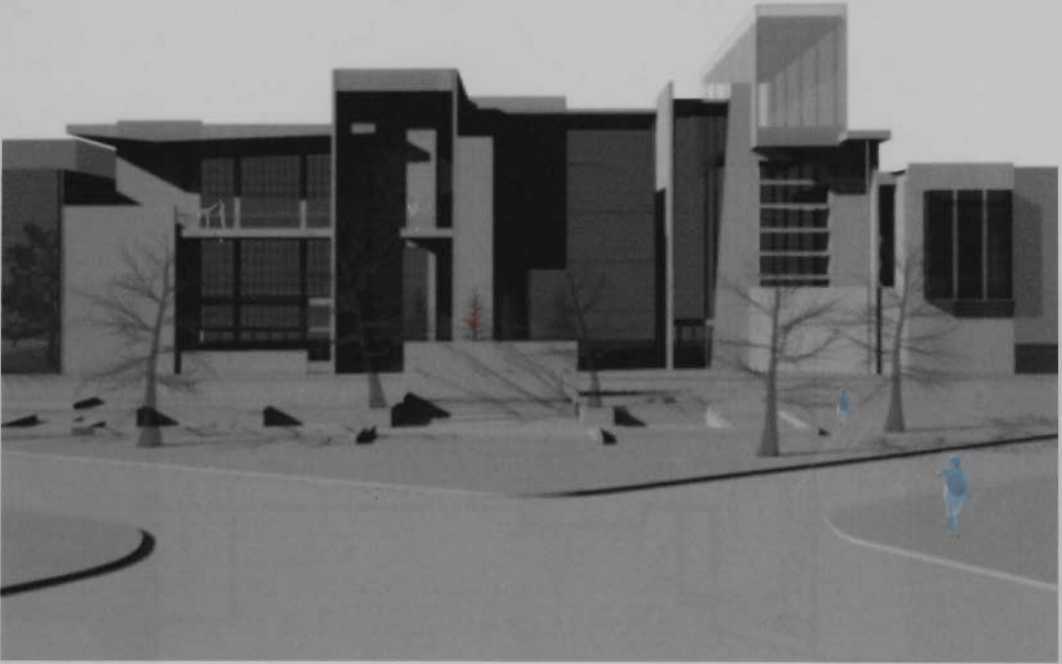
The schematic design and design development stages blended seamlessly together. There was a constant evolution that took place throughout the process. Starting back with the studies of connecting spaces, the process was one that constantly challenged and explored the possibilities of thresholds and edges, the two elements that truly mark the mediation of building and occupant.

The final proposal is just another step in this process, as the process is one that will constantly be evolving and challenging the relationships of the body and the built environment. The next stage shows an evolution of the parti yet still maintains the integrity of it. For instance, the Yoga space has been articulated to slice through the building but now, it focuses on releasing the body and mind to the sky. Conversely, the Martial Arts space is now about the connection to the ground. However, it is not on the ground floor, as that space is designated for public functions such as the café and a retail space. Therefore, the challenge was to bring the ground up to the Martial Artists.

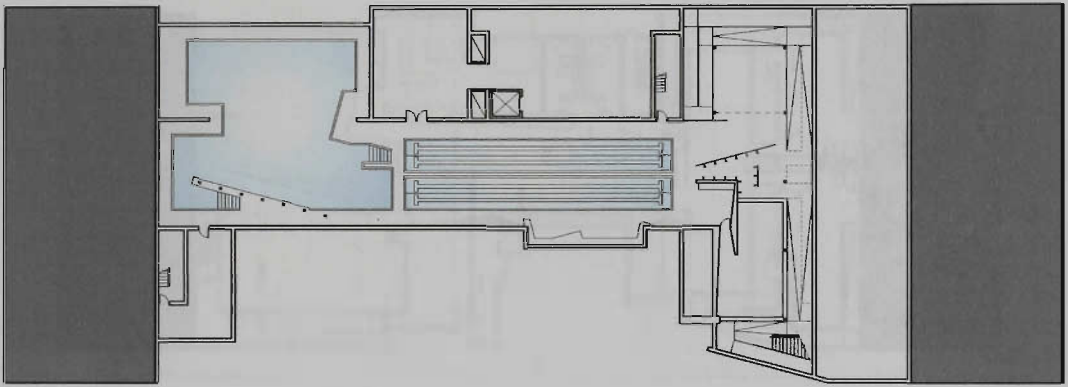
Another development is the incorporation of vertical voids that act as light wells to bring light into the middle of the building. These also create special moments of habitation, as they are a vertically oriented space in a horizontally dominated arrangement. There are also moments in the light wells when a person can occupy the void, such as a meditation balcony for a Martial Artist.

Lastly, in order to have a stronger connection to the public, the café and a retail space are incorporated on the first floor allowing an edge that may be blurred between what is inside and what is outside, as well as, what is perceived public and perceived private. This creates a more defined street edge and emphasizes the recession of the building façade across from Harmonie Park.

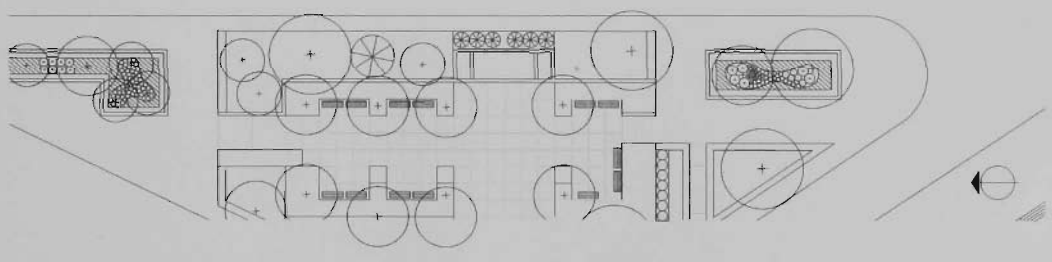
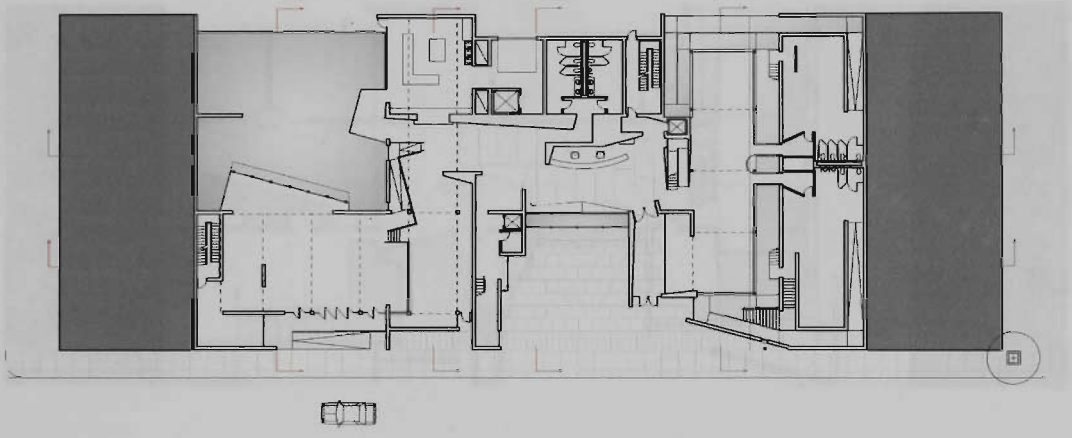
FINAL DESIGN | mediating the [meta]physical transition



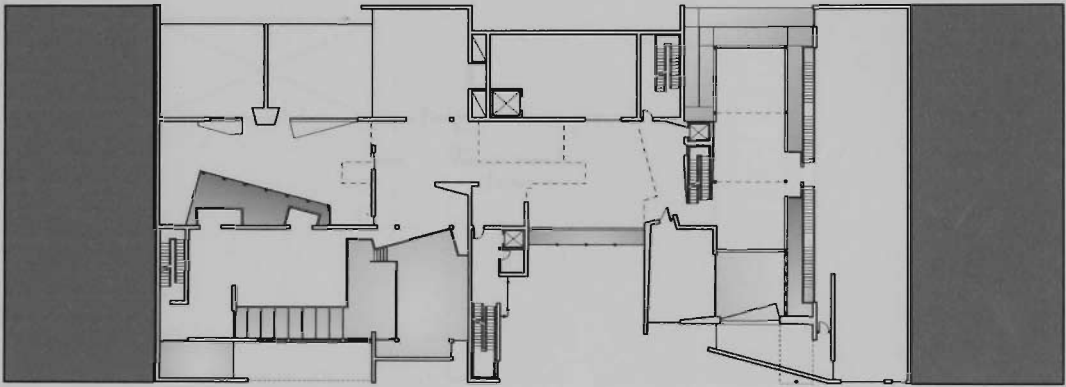
Elevation



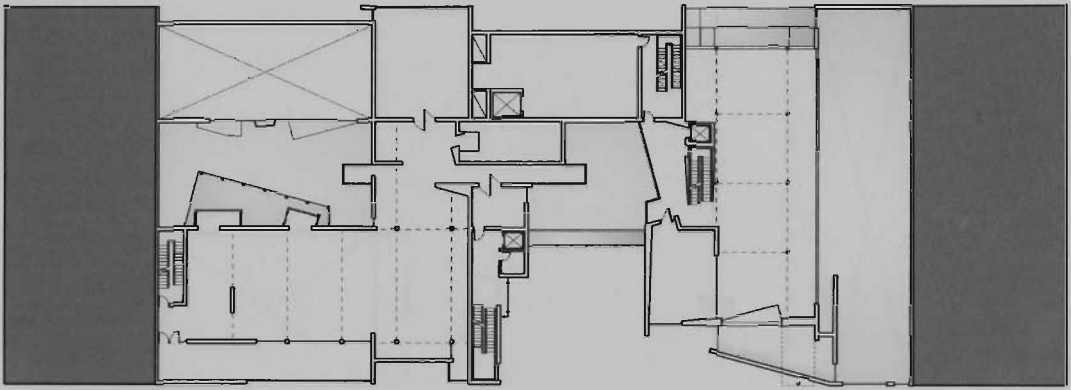
Basement Plan



Second Floor Plan
First Floor Plan

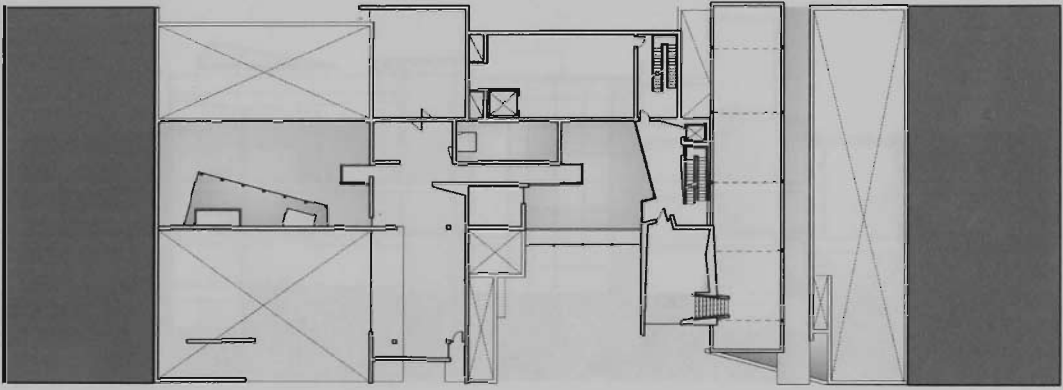


Second Floor Plan

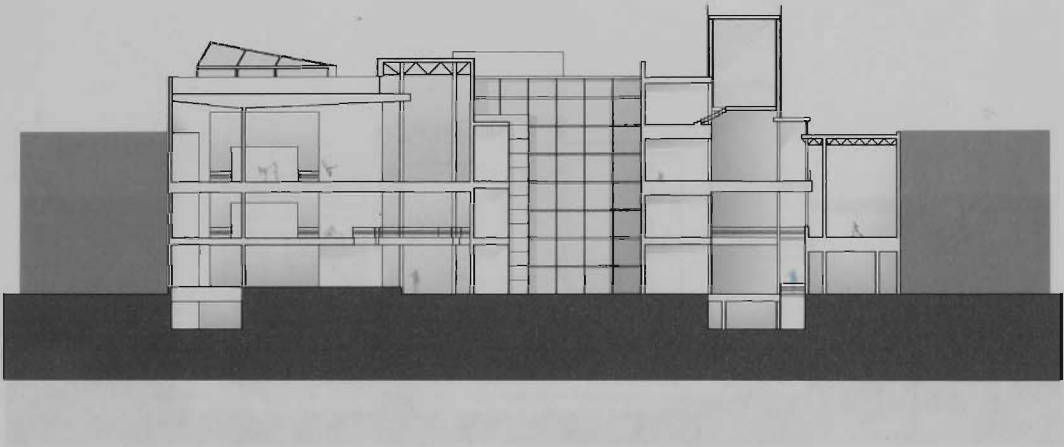


Fourth Floor Plan

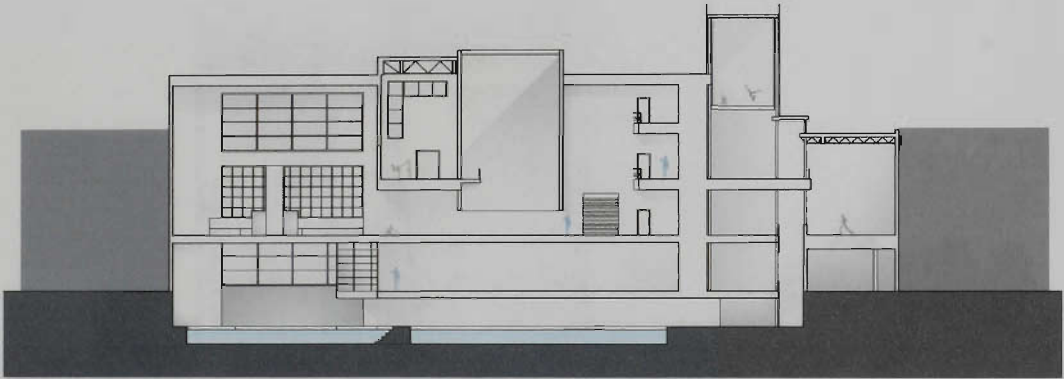
Third Floor Plan



Fourth Floor Plan



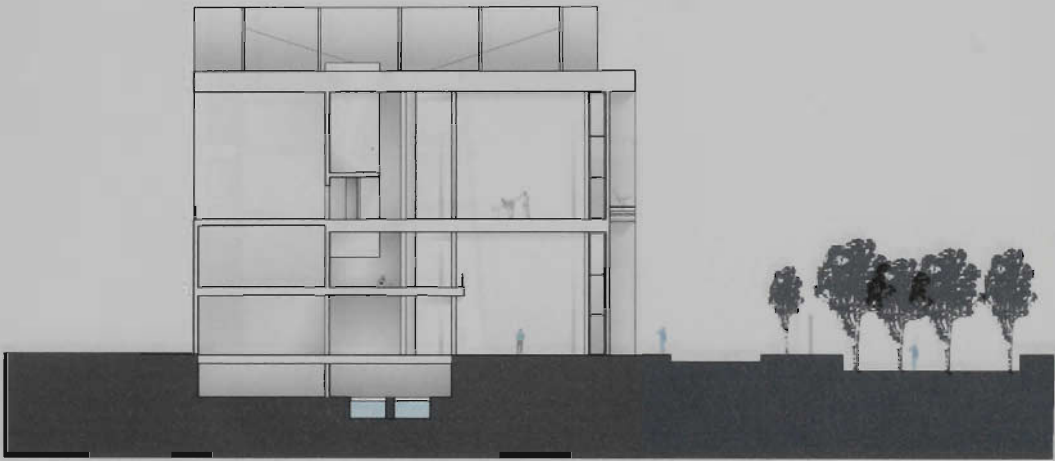
Section 1



Section 2

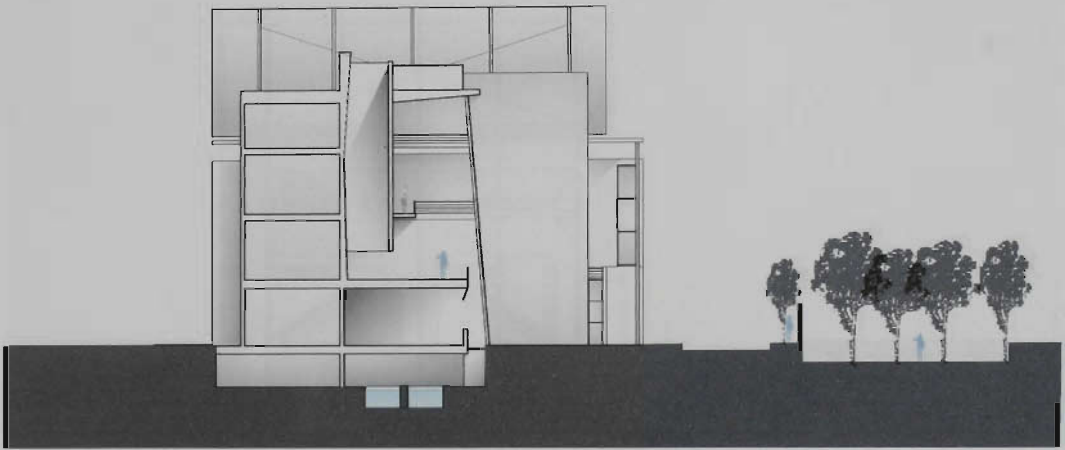


Section 3

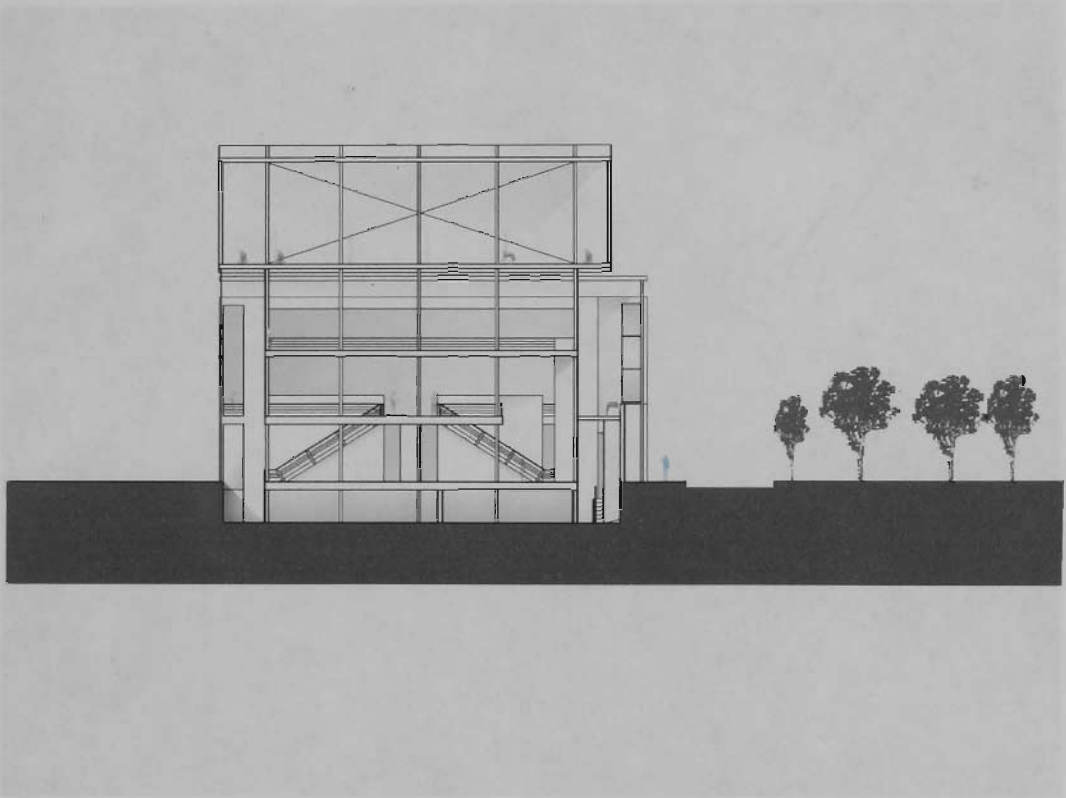


Section 4

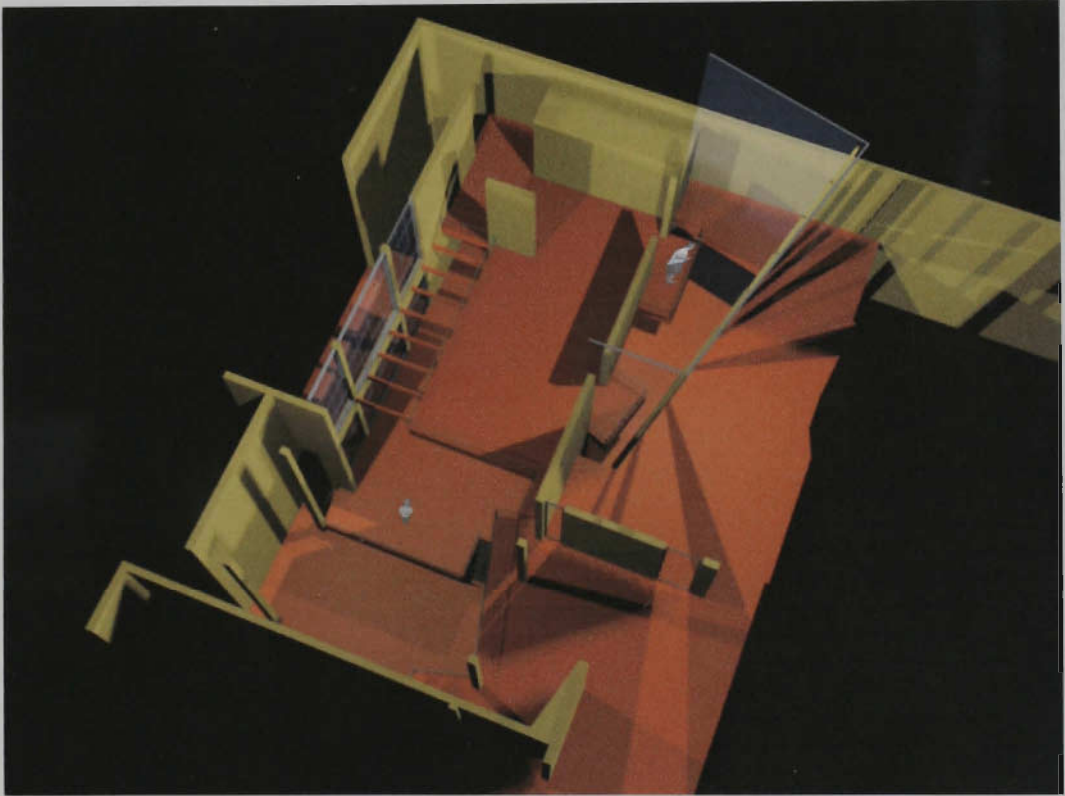
Section 5



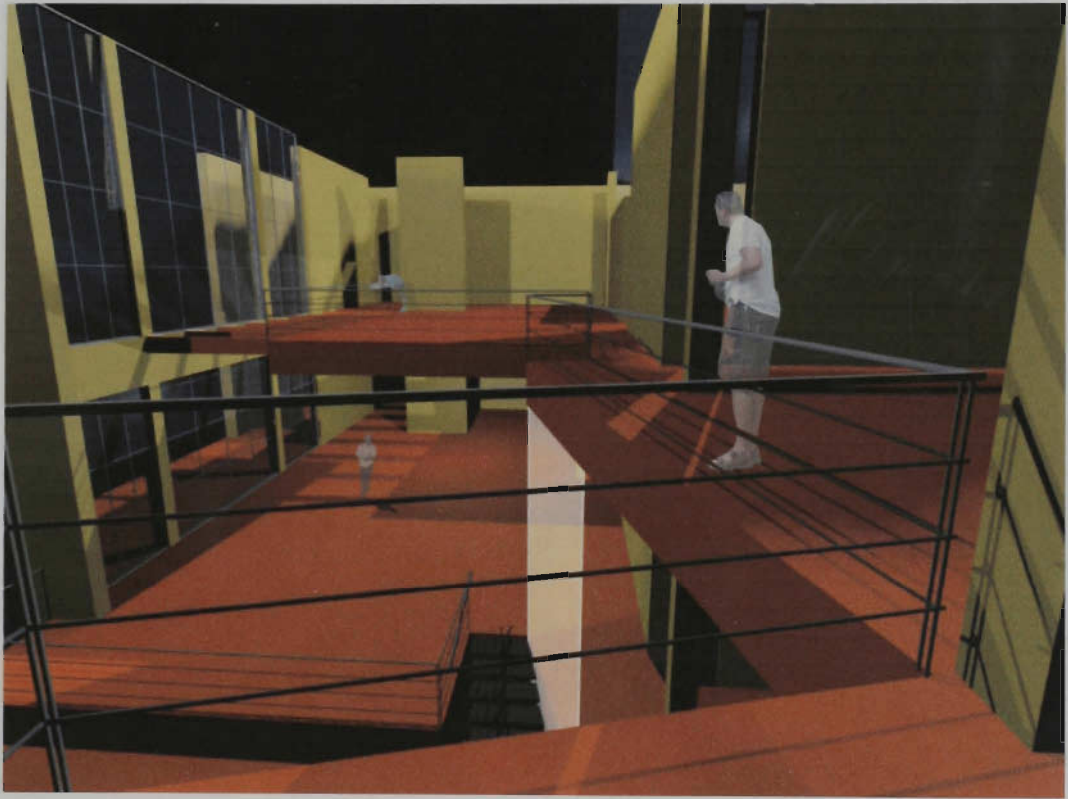
Section 5



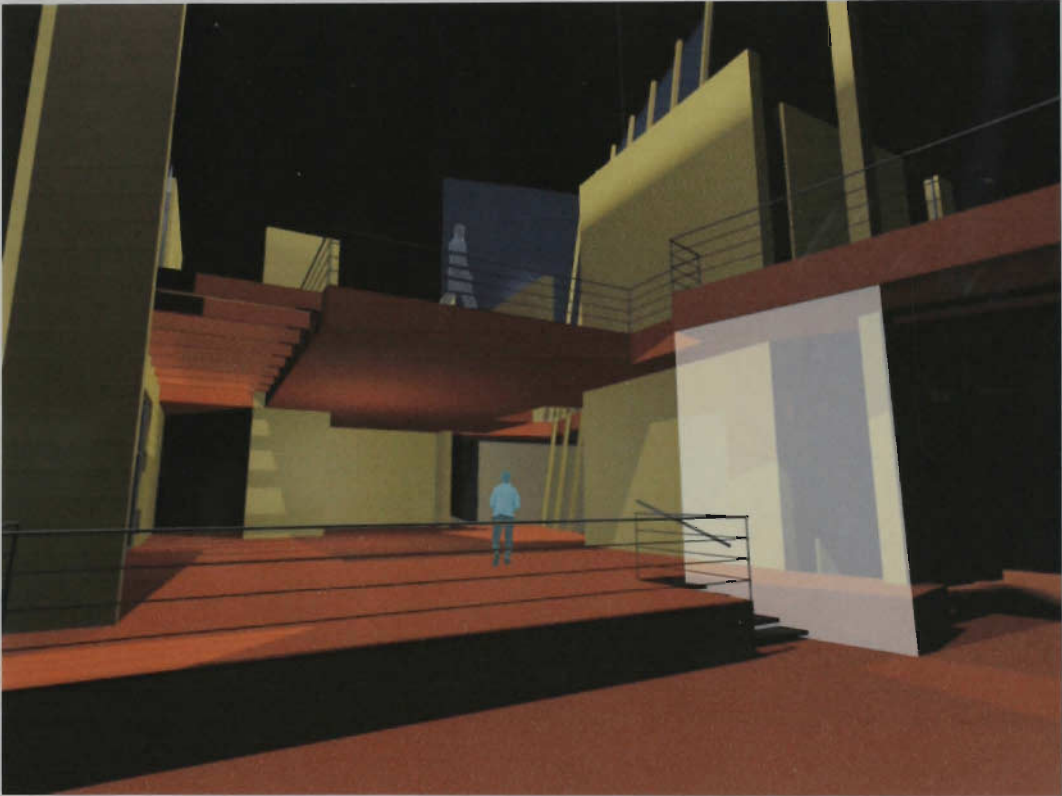
Section 6



Café



Café



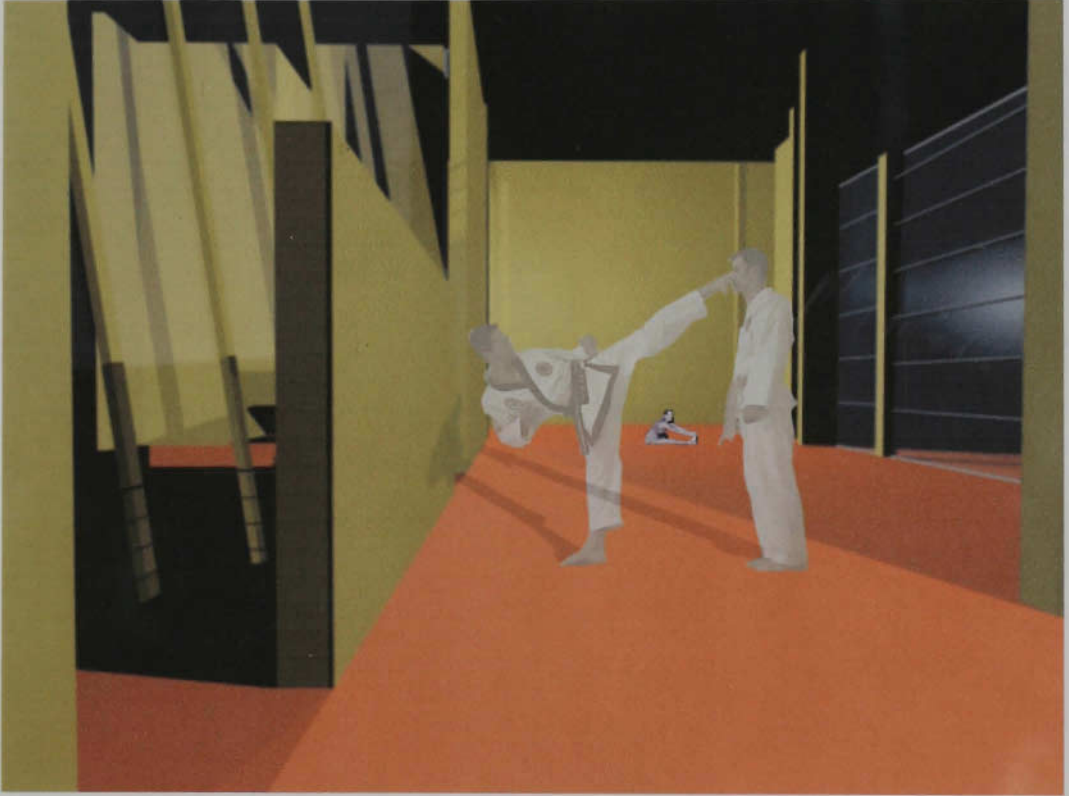
Café



Café



Martial Arts



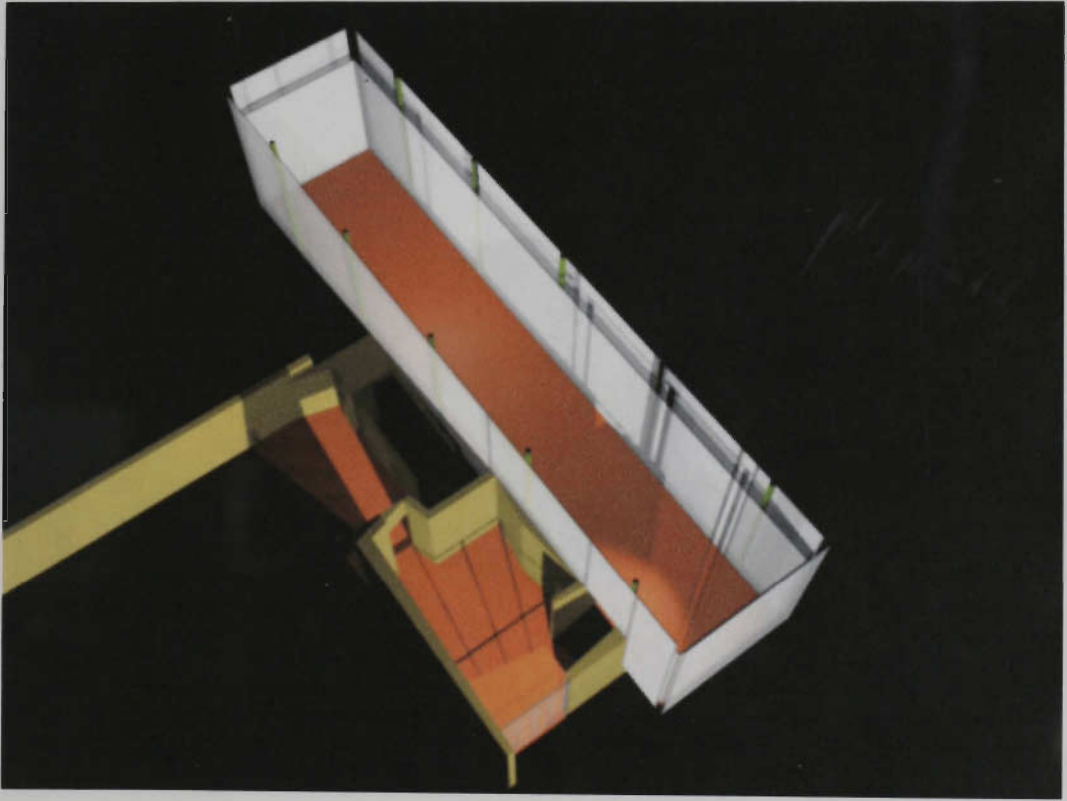
Martial Arts



Martial Arts



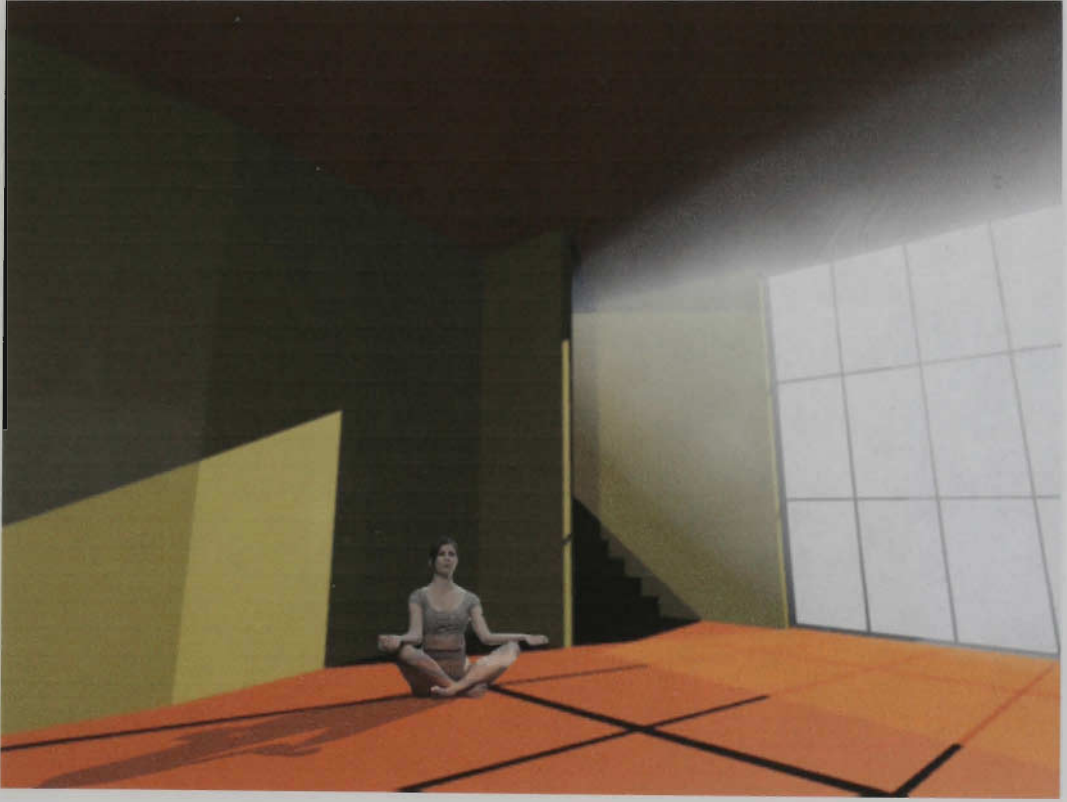
Martial Arts



Yoga



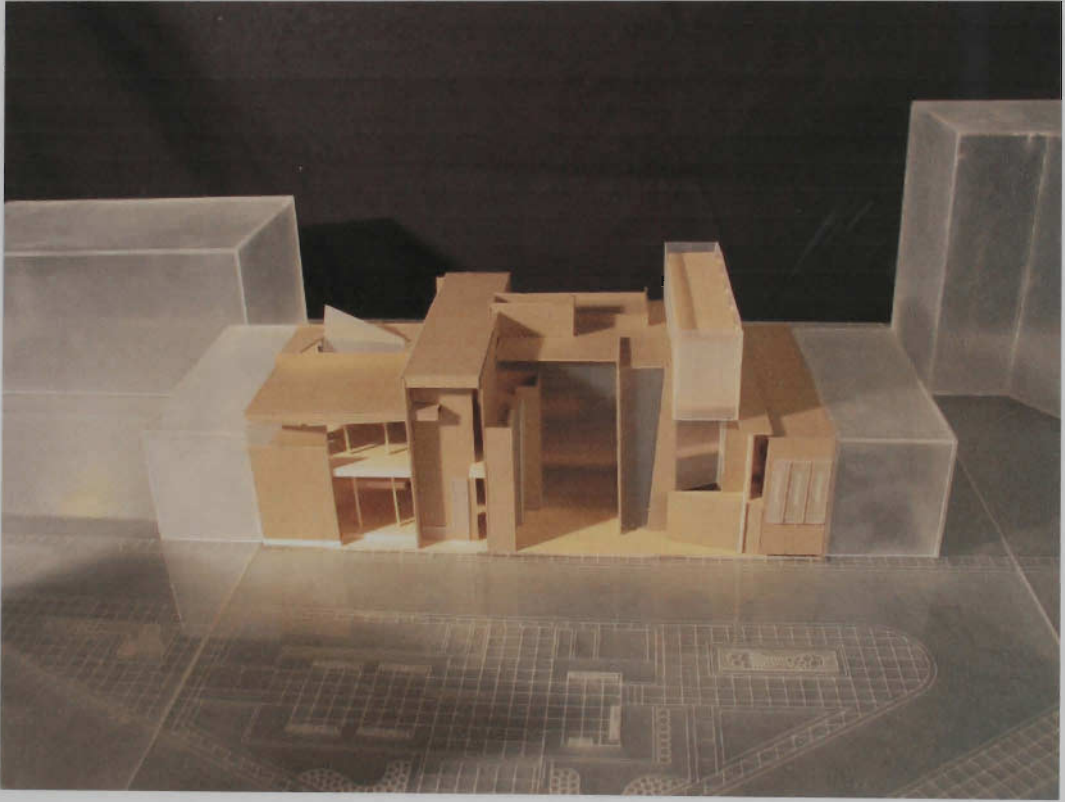
Yoga



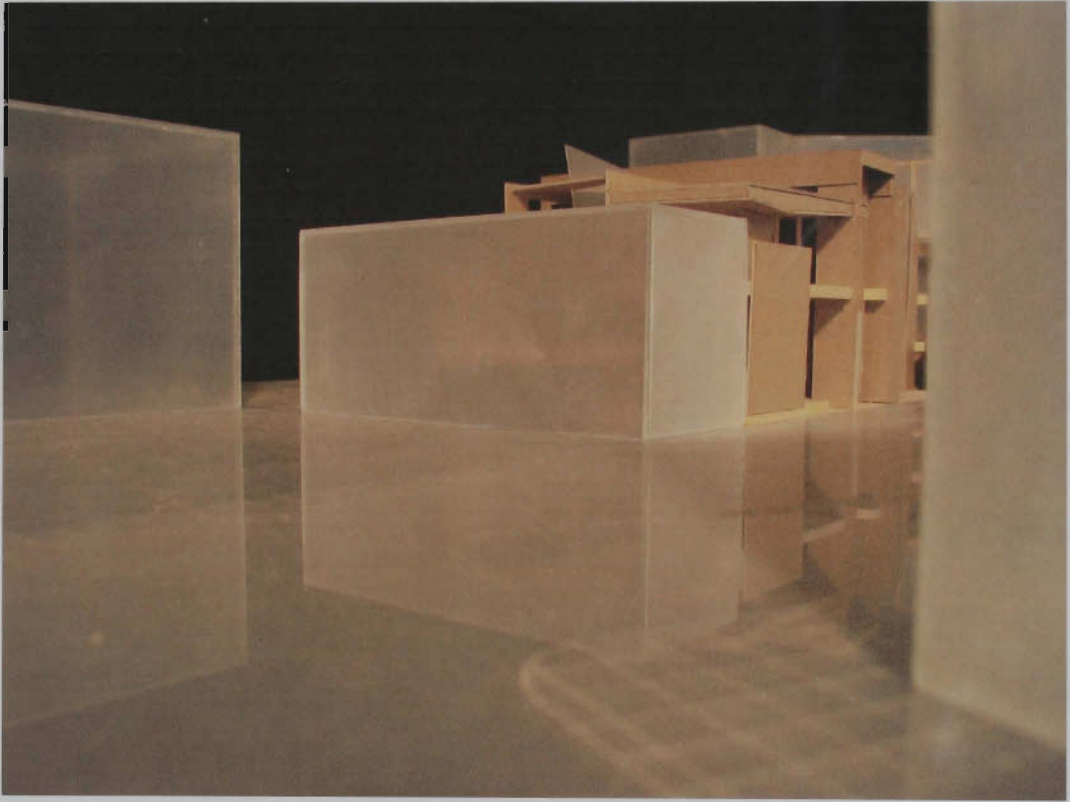
Yoga



Yoga



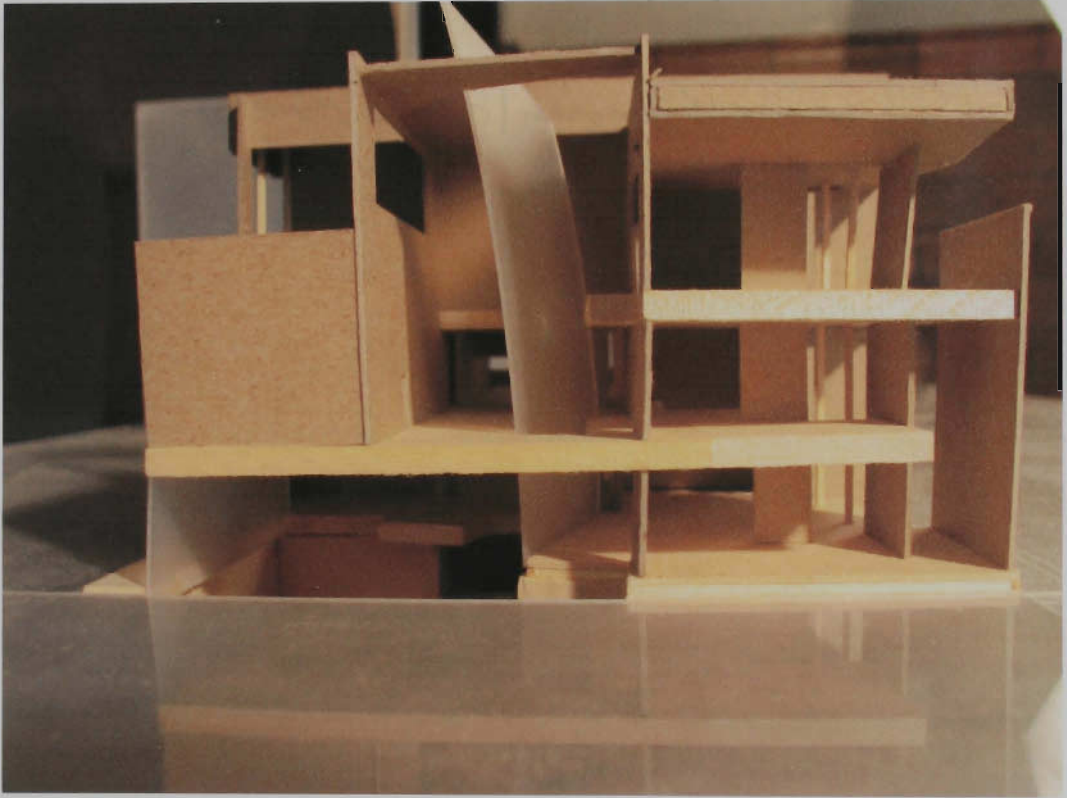
Model



Model



Model



Model

The investigation of how architecture mediates the body-to-edge, floor-to-ceiling, inside-to-outside and the space within has begun to clarify and articulate a language, or rather, culture about architectural design. The process is one that will never come to a definite conclusion. Instead it will continuously be pushing and probing, more writing, and experiments. The investigation can be seen as a method of breaking down a design problem into moments that one would design for. In particular, how the body and the architecture continuously communicate with each other and it is through this communication that architecture truly mediates. The body-to-edge, floor-to-ceiling, inside-to-outside, and the space within is establishing an outside that will in time become second nature when it comes to the design and articulation of space.

conclusion | mediating the [meta]physical transition

As I review the project, I see the beginnings of a design method. The project has taken me through an extensive exploration as to what constitutes an edge, or a threshold, or a space of becoming, or the act of entering or leaving. I have begun to develop the rhythm of my design method by looking at those aspects of architecture where there is a door, or a vestibule, or balcony. All of these can be so much more. Architecture carries with it a spirit, an energy, and that can be transferred to the occupant if given the chance. Hence, architecture mediating the body. It can resolve the inherent difference or struggle between man and the built environment.

To have dwelled in the built environment for so long that a concrete wall may have little effect on someone, until it is used to intentionally compress the feel of the space. All of a sudden that concrete wall has a much larger impact on the individual. It has an even greater impact when it is juxtaposed to a piece of glass. It is that kind of outside-to-inside, between man and his built environment, that makes architecture so powerful and therefore makes this investigation even more valuable. I feel that it is

This investigation of how architecture mediates the body to edges, thresholds, inside/outside, and the spaces within, has begun to clarify and articulate a language, or rather, attitude about architectural design. The process is one that will never come to a definite resolution. Instead, it will constantly be pushing and instigating more exploring and experimenting. The investigation can be seen as a method of breaking down a design problem into moments that one would design for. In particular, how the body and the architecture continually communicate with each other, and it is through this communication that architecture truly mediates. Therefore, this investigation has succeeded in taking the first step to establishing an attitude that will in time become second nature when it comes to the design and articulation of space.

As I review the project, I see the beginnings of a design method. The process has taken me through an exhaustive exploration as to what constitutes an edge, or a threshold, or a space of becoming, or the act of entering, or leaving. I have begun to develop the rhythm of my design method by looking at those aspects of architecture, rather than as a door, or a vestibule, or balcony. All of those can be so much more.

Architecture carries with it a spirit, an energy, and that can be transferred to the occupant if given the chance, hence, architecture mediating the body. It can resolve the inherent difference or struggle between man and the built environment.

We have dwelled in the built environment for so long that a concrete wall may have little effect on someone until it is used to intentionally compress the feel of the space. All of a sudden, that concrete wall has a much larger impact on that individual. It has an even greater impact when it is juxtaposed to a piece of glass. It is that kind of attitude and dialogue, between man and his built environment, that makes architecture so powerful and therefore makes this investigation even more valuable. I feel that it is

important to keep architecture at the human scale, yet, on the same hand, it must maintain the same level of communication with the surrounding context.

The formal investigation may have come to a close, but the meaning of the investigation, the spirit, will continue to be a driving force as my pursuit of architecture continues. The answers will never be completely answered; rather, they will breed new questions, new investigations, and pose new problems to be solved. The question why, will always be the first question and the last question because it is so important to question the moves that are being made, therefore questioning the preconceptions and assumptions. I will always find myself asking, how can I make this space sing?

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