

08 CONCLUSION

CHAPTER

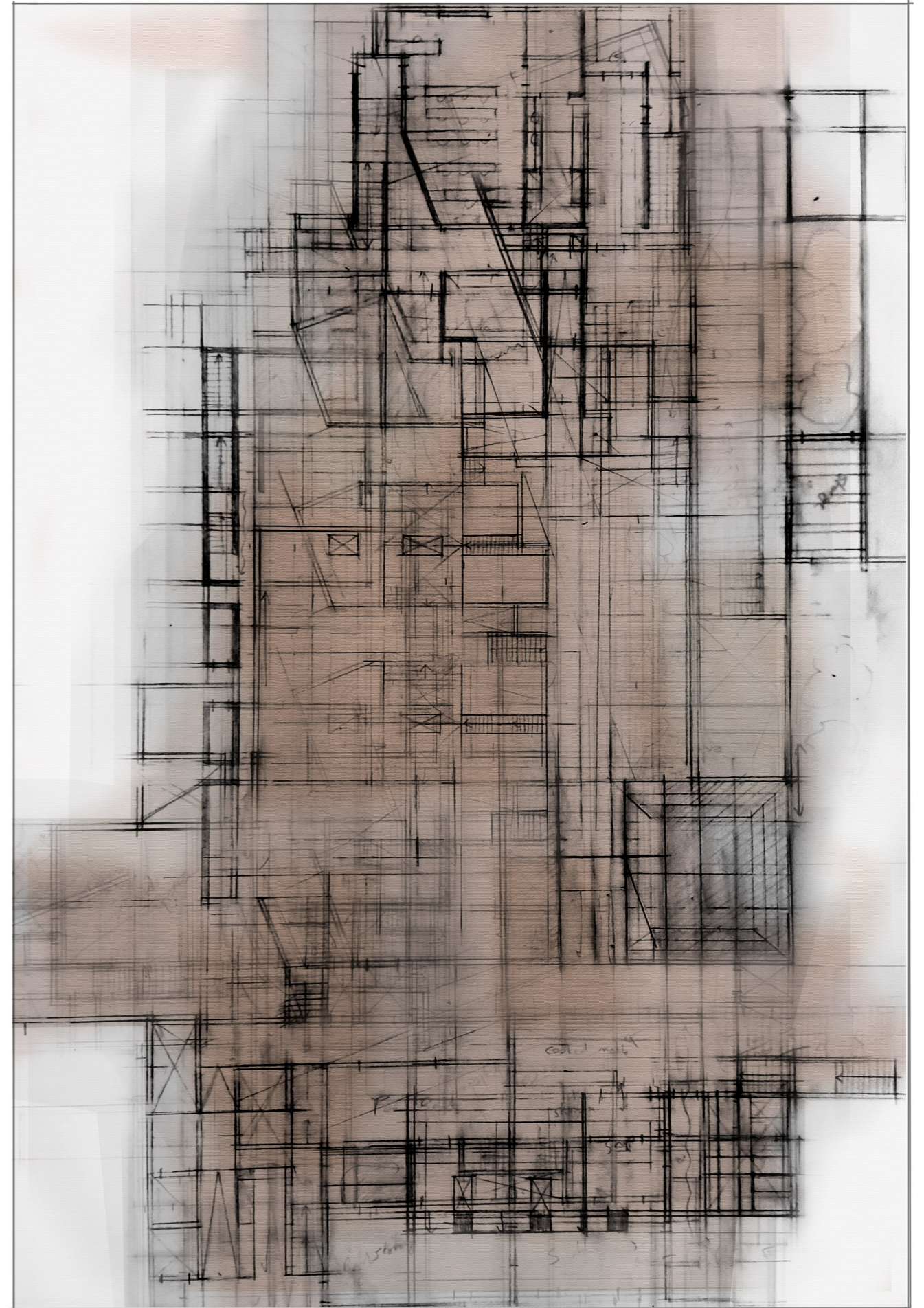


Fig. 163: Overlay of process drawings (Author 2021)

The intention of this dissertation was to explore how architecture can facilitate temporary acts of refuge for the mobile urban dweller, in the inner city of Pretoria. Spatial and technological explorations were guided by the dialectical relationship between refuge and exposure, in the context of the inner city.

The intention of the architectural solution was to create a place of temporary refuge that would address the mobile urban dweller's experience of anonymity, transience and indifference to place. This was achieved by using Lefebvre's (1991) spatial triad as a theoretical framework to develop a new method of analysing, conceptualising and designing a place of urban refuge. According to this process, refuge was explored from three different perspectives: (1) the experience of refuge, (2) the physical characteristics of refuge space, and (3) the act of refuge. This approach created a design that not only responds to our shared human desire for spatial refuge, but also reinterprets refuge according to the particularities of the users, their existing spatial practices and the built fabric of the site.

This dissertation aimed to address some of the gaps in architectural research related to the fundamental and universal human need for refuge and exposure. In the dissertation it is argued that it is the act of taking refuge in a space, that transforms an ordinary space into a place of refuge. The spatial characteristics of refuge such as intimacy, familiarity, privacy, isolation, enclosure and order, can not create a place of refuge on its own. It can however be used to effect how space is perceived and subsequently how it is used by the occupants.

Even though the architectural solution is highly specific to its site and the selected user groups, it has the potential to serve as a prototype for future development in leftover inner city spaces and buildings that aim to respond to the city's courtyard and arcade typologies. The arcade and courtyard typologies were re-imagined and combined to challenge the conventional boundaries between public and private space in the inner city. The research has identified and explored the needs of the mobile urban dweller, which is a user group often ignored by inner city projects.

The dissertation questions the fractured relationship between the architectural object and the spatial needs of its users. It proposes an alternative approach where architecture acts as a facilitator of the user's existing spatial practices and everyday rituals, opposed to a form or aesthetic-driven approach to space-making.

It is important to reflect on the process through which this dissertation was produced. The process did not initially start out by exploring refuge as the primary theme of inquiry. The site was selected, the initial theoretical framework was developed and the users and programmes were identified prior to an in depth understanding of refuge. Based on Lefebvre (1991)'s spatial triad, the theoretical framework guided my interpretation of the site and its users' needs. According to the particularities of the site, the need for refuge was identified and conceptualised. The reason why the sequence of events are important, is because the architectural solution might not be a typical example of a place of refuge. However, it is precisely for this reason that the dissertation has achieved its aim. The confrontation between a wide variety of informants and concepts that are not typically paired with one another, have created a process that challenged the conventional approaches to space making in the inner city of Pretoria.

As I reflect on my design process during the course of this year, I have realised that it is primarily guided by intuition. I would argue that a process driven by intuition, is a form of architectural research, as it is informed by the designer's experience and creativity to solve complex problems. As one transitions from the academic to the professional realm, we are forced to rely on intuition, rather than research to guide our design decisions.

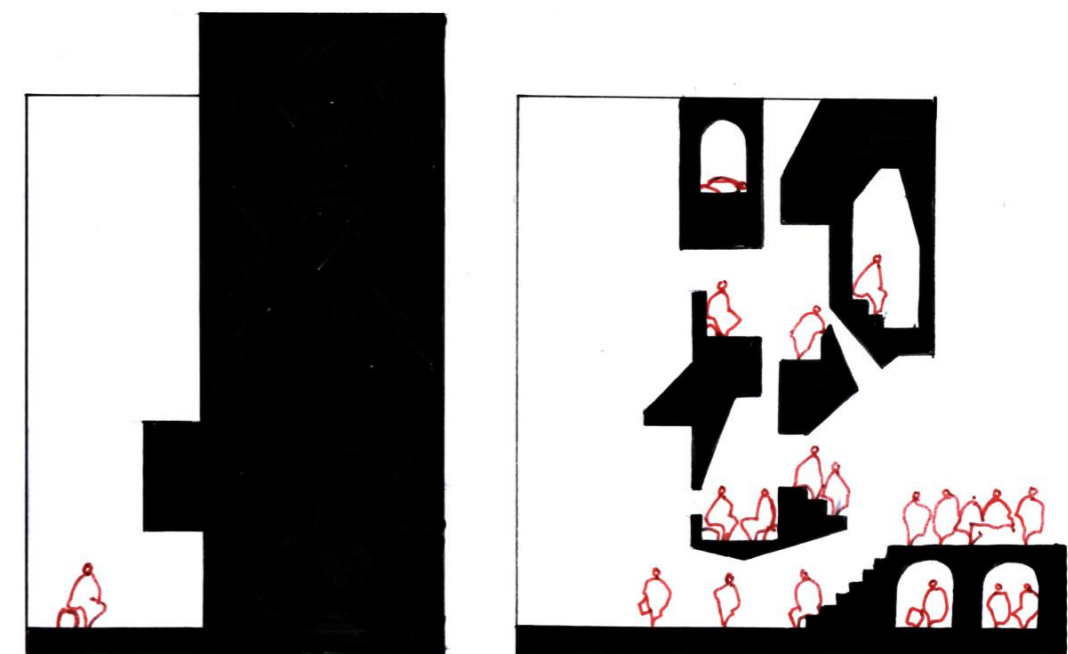


Fig. 164: A place of refuge (Author 2021)



Fig. 165: Photo of final exam pinup (Author 2021)

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Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology

Fakulteit Ingenieurswese, Bou-omgewing en
Inligtingtegnologie / Lefapha la Boetšenere,
Tikologo ya Kago le Theknolotši ya Tshedimošo

9 June 2021

Reference number: EBIT/79/2021

Ms A van Aswegen
Department: Architecture
University of Pretoria
Pretoria
0083

Dear Ms A van Aswegen

FACULTY COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Your recent application to the EBIT Research Ethics Committee refers.

Conditional approval is granted.

This means that the research project entitled "Masters Professional Mini-Dissertation in Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Interior Architecture (Group / Blanket)" is approved under the strict conditions indicated below. If these conditions are not met, approval is withdrawn automatically.

Conditions for approval

This application is approved based on the summaries provided.

Applications from each student (including application forms and all necessary supporting documents such as questionnaire/interview questions, permission letters, informed consent form, etc) will need to be checked internally by the course coordinator/ supervisor. A checklist will need to be signed off after the checking.

All of the above will need to be archived in the department and at the end of the course a flash disc / CD clearly marked with the course code and the protocol number of this application will be required to be provided to EBIT REC administrator.

No data to be collected without first obtaining permission letters. The permission letter from the organisation(s) must be signed by an authorized person and the name of the organisation(s) cannot be disclosed without consent.

Where students want to collect demographic the necessary motivation is in place.

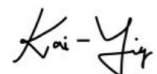
This approval does not imply that the researcher, student or lecturer is relieved of any accountability in terms of the Code of Ethics for Scholarly Activities of the University of Pretoria, or the Policy and Procedures for Responsible Research of the University of Pretoria. These documents are available on the website of the EBIT Ethics Committee.

If action is taken beyond the approved application, approval is withdrawn automatically.

According to the regulations, any relevant problem arising from the study or research methodology as well as any amendments or changes, must be brought to the attention of the EBIT Research Ethics Office.

The Committee must be notified on completion of the project.

The Committee wishes you every success with the research project.



Prof K.-Y. Chan

Chair: Faculty Committee for Research Ethics and Integrity
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