“It's easy to play any musical instrument: all you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself”.

J.S. Bach
PRECEDENT STUDIES
BASELINE, NEWTOWN, JOHANNESBURG

Located south of the Newtown public square, this humble and intimate live performance area is dedicated to the late Brenda Fassie; a top selling South African artist. This precedent was chosen to determine the requirements for a live performance venue as well as the requirements for both user and performer and the interaction between the two.

The building comprises of a bar and two stages. The first stage is simply a raised platform and acts as a stage for upcoming artists. The performance area is intimate and is preferred by most performing artists. The second stage is both visually and physically separated from the first stage and is far more formal and accommodates more accomplished artists and a larger audience.

FIG. 5.1 Main stage

FIG. 5.2 Statue of Brenda Fassie at entrance of Bassline
BARACITY MARKET AND TAXI RANK, SOWETO

Although the primary function of Baracity does not directly correlate with building typology of the final design, other factors contributed greatly to the understanding and needs of people that make up the potential client base similar to that of the Paul Kruger precinct.

A main undercover axis route links different buildings and functions as a typical arcade found in the Pretoria inner city. Permanent stalls allocated for the use of market areas are scattered along the undercover axis. Locals however are not favourable of the permanent nature of these stalls as they do not allow for the changing needs of the user. Areas for taxis and buses are separated. Only bus areas are undercover much to the dissatisfaction of taxi drivers as they prefer to have protection against the elements.
FIG. 5.5 Street facade of library

FIG. 5.6 Paving detail
The University of Pretoria Law Faculty is a building that forms part of the environment yet at the same time stands out as a three-dimensional form in the landscape. The concept of merging exterior with interior is achieved by taking the exterior paving into the building's interior courtyards. Conceptually, the building becomes a mini campus in its own right as the building always remains “open” although interior buildings can be locked when needed.

The massing of the building is such that forms are arranged in such a way that different activities spill out into the same courtyards thus enabling the building’s function to become extremely flexible.

There is a great emphasis on pedestrian movement throughout the building as expected from a building on a university campus. This is achieved through “open-air” pedestrian bridges and vertical circulation nodes throughout the building linking the different massing of the building further enriching the idea of activities of different spaces overlapping and interacting.
FIG. 5.9 Main auditorium
The main auditorium of Casa da Musica forms the core of the building with all other spaces wrapping around it. The main auditorium, however, is quite unique in the sense that the facade behind the stage is glass creating a sense of transparency within the building as a whole. This adds to the human senses as users are now able to “listen” with their eyes. The concept of transparency is taken further by spaces around the main auditorium being able to open to the exterior allowing passers-by to view activities within the building.

This precedent study thus informed the proposed project with the concept of merging spaces both indoors and outdoors thus ensuring that the interaction between user and performer is never interrupted.