NARRATIVE FACTORY

Figure 1 (previous page): *Tower of Babel as foundation for the Telkom Towers* (Author 2013). Conceptual photomontage using Bruegel's *Tower of Babel*.

NARRATIVE FACTORY

An Illustrated Fiction
by Stephen Steyn

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Course Co-ordinator: Arthur Barker

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
Magister of Architecture, MArch (Prof), to the Faculty of Engi-
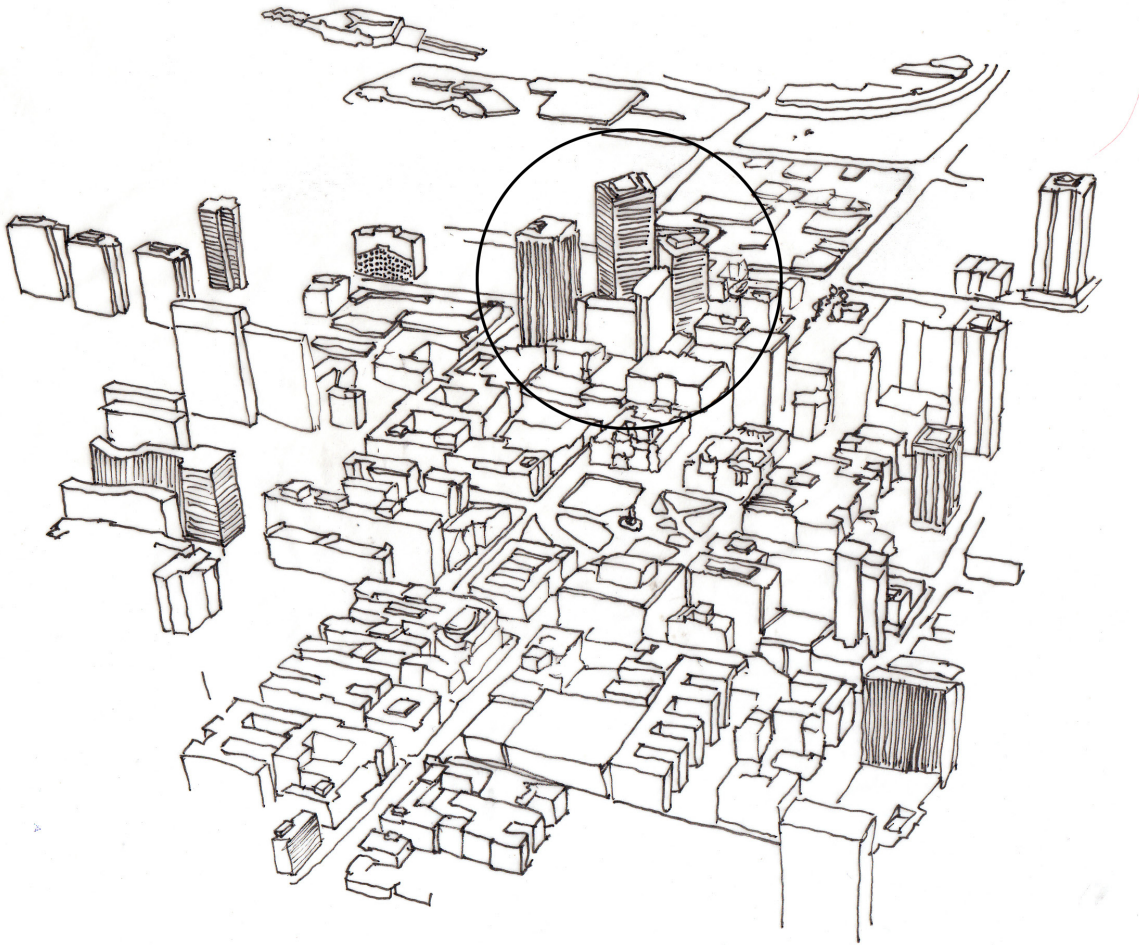neering, Built Environment and Information Technology.

2013

Figure 2: *Pretoria CBD - Site location* (Author 2013).

Sites:
Telkom Towers North
c/o Bosman and Johannes Ramokhoase streets
erf 3264
Pretoria
25°44'35"S   28°11'10"E

Masada Building
erf 2894

Forum Building
erf 2861

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the potential of narrative as a design generator and illustrates way of extracting narratives from architecture through themed analyses of the proposed scheme. Discussions of cinematic and literary space — media traditionally dominated by narrative construction — augment discussions of architecture. The site, in both its formal and programmatic history, is discussed as the primary generator of both programme and form for the Narrative Factory. A critical stance is taken in order to respond to the material legacy of apartheid, which, it is argued, is a latent quality of much of Pretoria's urban fabric. The use of lost space is discussed as points of departure from which to approach this legacy.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis ondersoek die potensiaal van die verhaal as 'n ontwerp ontwikkelaar en illustreer wyses waarop verhale van argitektuur deur tematiese ontledings van die voorgestelde skema onttrek kan word. Besprekings van film en literêre tekse — media wat gewoonlik deur vertelling oorheers word — dra by tot die besprekings van argitektuur. Die terrein, in beide sy formele en programmatiese geskiedenis, word bespreek as die primêre skepper van program sowel as vorm vir die Narrative Factory (oftewel, die Verhaalfabriek). 'n Kritiese standpunt word geneem om te reageer op die materiële nalatenskap of erfenis van apartheid, wat — so word dit betoog — 'n latente maar nietemin wesentlike faktor van baie van Pretoria se stedelike weefsel is. Die gebruik van verlore ruimte word bespreek as 'n uitgangspunt van die benadering tot hierdie nalatenskap.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Architecture is a text. Compared to other texts, urban architecture occupies a unique position in that there is always, *literally*, something already "written" on the "page". In the city, there is no outside architecture.

The Narrative Factory has neither a beginning and end, nor back and front in the conventional sense. Therefore, the document which describes it starts somewhere inside and meanders through its spaces from a variety of viewpoints. These viewpoints are made possible within the framework of a work of fiction. Information about the design process and the resulting scheme is woven into a fictional narrative by the literary device of an imagined convention *at* the Narrative Factory *on* the Narrative Factory. At this unconventional convention, theorists and employees analyse and describe the Narrative Factory from various positions. The first paper delivered at this convention is titled "Lost [in] Space" and it covers the theoretical premise of the scheme as well as a formal site analysis and design development. The second paper is titled "Praetorian Guards" and deals in detail with the development of the programme and nomenclature as well as the historical context. The third paper, titled "Volunteers from the Audience", discusses the production of meaning in texts of architecture and analyses the spatial and material details of the scheme.

The use of narrative is necessitated by the speculative character of any unbuilt architecture. As Siri Hustvedt defines it: "Narrative is a mental movement in time" (2012, pp. 5). Narrative is the mental equivalent of occupying architecture. The experience of any unbuilt work is necessarily related trough drawings, theory, and descriptions. But the Narrative Factory employs fiction as an additional measure in order to create a sense of the experience of architecture from self-consciously subjective points of view. Narrative is also used to generate architecture, a practice eloquently summarized by Jean-Pierre de la Porte in the conclusion of *10+ Years 100 Buildings: Architecture in a Democratic South Africa* when he writes that:

> "Globally, current art and social history, as well as spatial geography, have become the scholarly ciphers to an ideal public realm. In South Africa, a new kind of architect has emerged using these disciplines like a novelist, who formulates a fictitious but particular reader before characters and events can unfold. Hence, buildings can be conceived as interventionary props and civic adjuncts in the lives of conscientiously imagined users" (2009, pp. 442).
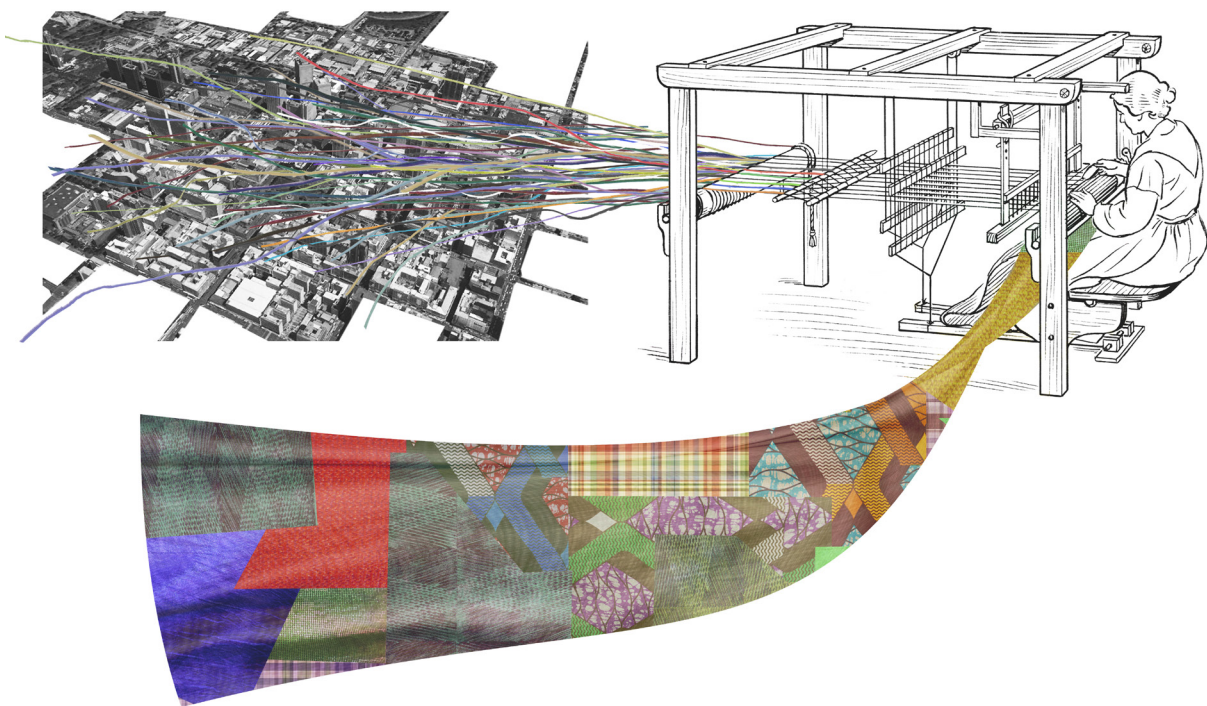
Figure 3: *Photomontage illustrating the Narrative Factory's programmatic intention - the interpretation and transcription of local narratives into comprehensible art products* (Author 2013).

THE CHARACTERS

A: An Academic

A has been studying the Narrative Factory for some time and is here today to deliver the resulting lecture. Over the months she spent regularly visiting the Narrative Factoty she has developed friendships, some closer than others, with those who work there.

B: A Full-Time Flâneur

B's encounter with the Narrative Factory was a chance meeting. To his surprise, and that of his audience, he turned out to be the ideal guest. He illuminated the Narrative Factory's programmatic purpose when he confided in a stranger and retold his secret history.

C: A Confessor

C was at work, translating theatre scripts from Xhosa into English. He was about to deliver a paper at the convention when he made a new friend and remembered an old one. It was a good day at work — the new friend had given him an idea for a story.

D: A Curator

D is the curator of the Square Kilometer Archive housed in the Ediotheque. Today she is delivering a paper, called *Volunteers from the Audience,* at the convention. As she ambles around the miniature gardens, squares and streets of the Narrative Factory, she reflects on the stories and histories that she extracts from the urban realm.

E: A Scholar

E attends the school immediately to the north of the Narrative Factory and is seeking a career in acting. The Narrative Factory is a step in the right direction, she goes to the Kwamonstrarium with a particular goal in mind, but finds a different insight altogether.

Glossary

Ediotheque: an archive where the history of the surrounding area (approximately one square kilometer) is curated, stored and made available to the public.

Conficulae: five inflatable 'discussion rooms' where artists and writers — employed by the Narrative Factory — gather personal histories from members of the public.

Cryptagora: a landscape which connects the Ediotheque and the Conficulae. Planted with indigenous veld grass, it reveals the hidden wilderness beneath the city.

Glossarcaria: personal offices for writers employed by the Narrative Factory. A Glossarcary is designated to each of South Africa's 11 official languages.

Logocentre: a small, brick-paved public square which contains the Glossarcaria.

Kwamonstrarium: an 'internet theatre' where patrons access the internet and project themselves into the public sphere.

Synthetory: three 'conversation rooms' where artists visualise, digitise, project and discuss their projects.
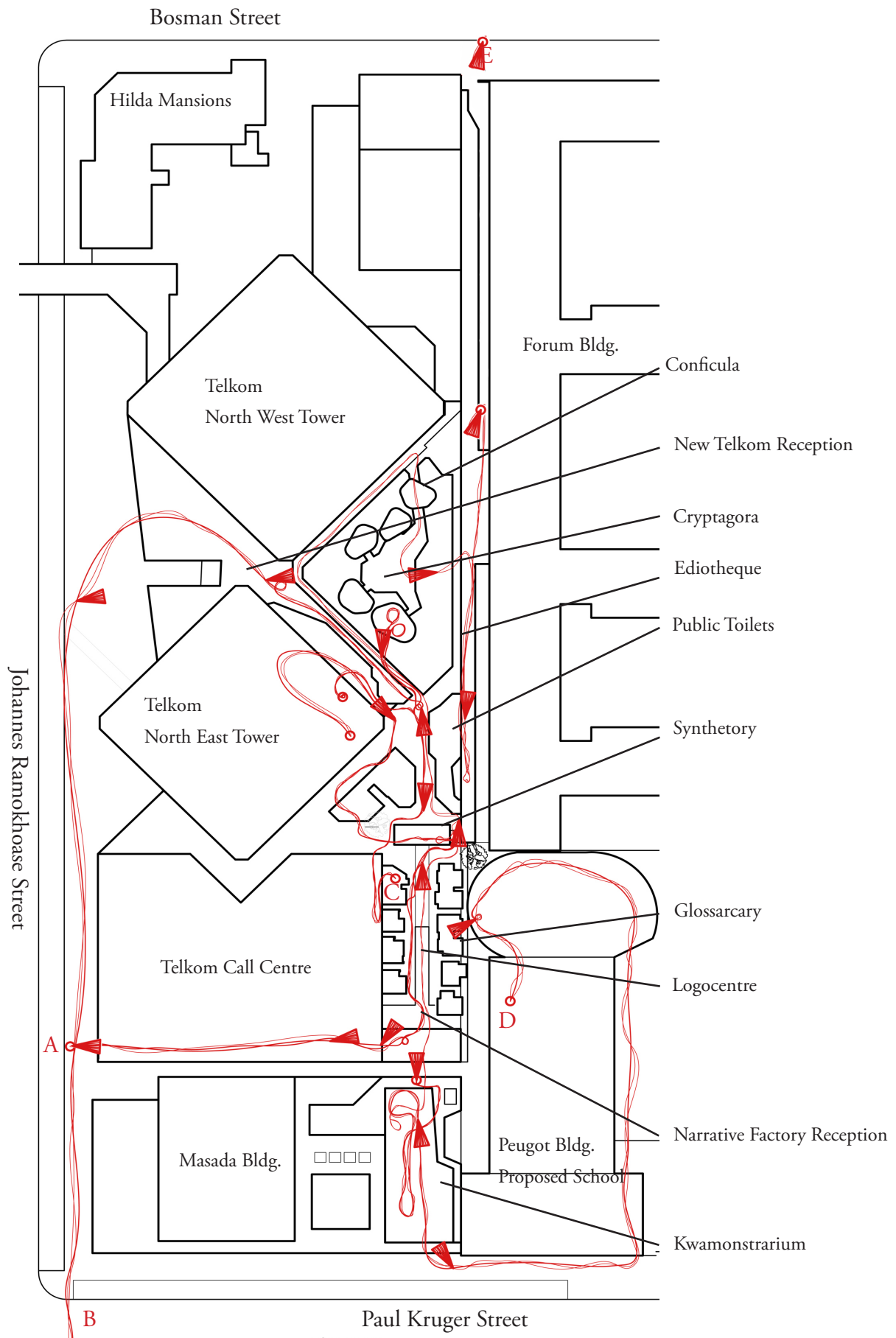
Figure 4: *Map of each character's movements through and around the Narrative Factory. Triangles indicate the location of perspectives* (Author 2013).

A: An Academic

She arrives at the nondescript main entrance of the Narrative Factory almost-late (Figure 5). Though she despises the "live fast, die young" motto chanted by those who *go* and *get*, she is perpetually racing from one miniature crisis to another. A mother and writer, her default setting is *go*. It's the getting that's perpetually deferred. It's on mornings like this, with printouts of the paper that she's about to read fluttering anxiously in the wind, that she thinks of the internet meme commanding us to "live slow, die whenever".

But she will have to live slow later. She wants, needs to go over her illustrative PowerPoint presentation one more time at the Synthetory before she'll be really ready to deliver her paper. The paper is titled, "Lost [in] Space", and is a reworking of a paper she's read to her peers several times before. The response has so far been somewhat ambivalent but, adapted for the Narrative Factory, it seems more apt than usual. The use of brackets has gone out of fashion so recently — after the practice reached fever pitch with yet another season of abused (re)creations and in(filtrations) — that it has elicited more than a few suppressed smiles and elbow-nudges among her audience.
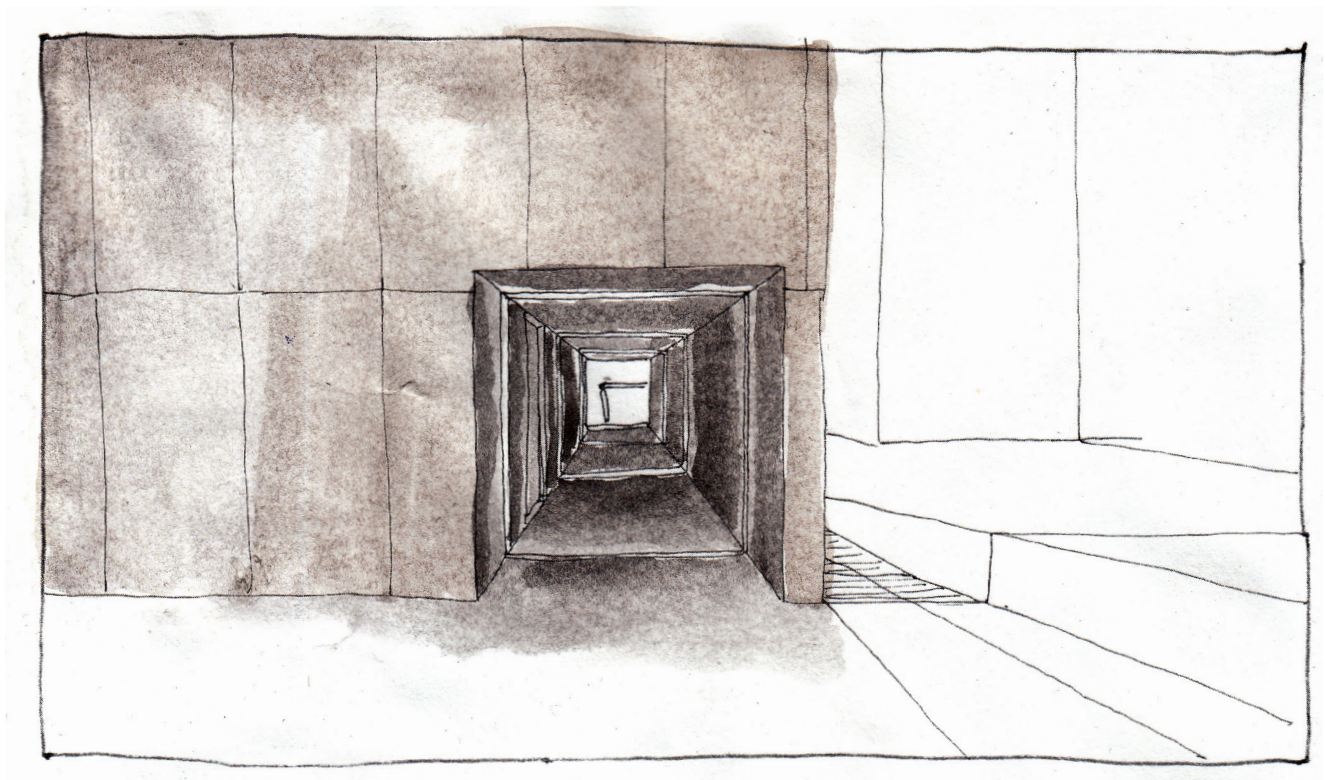

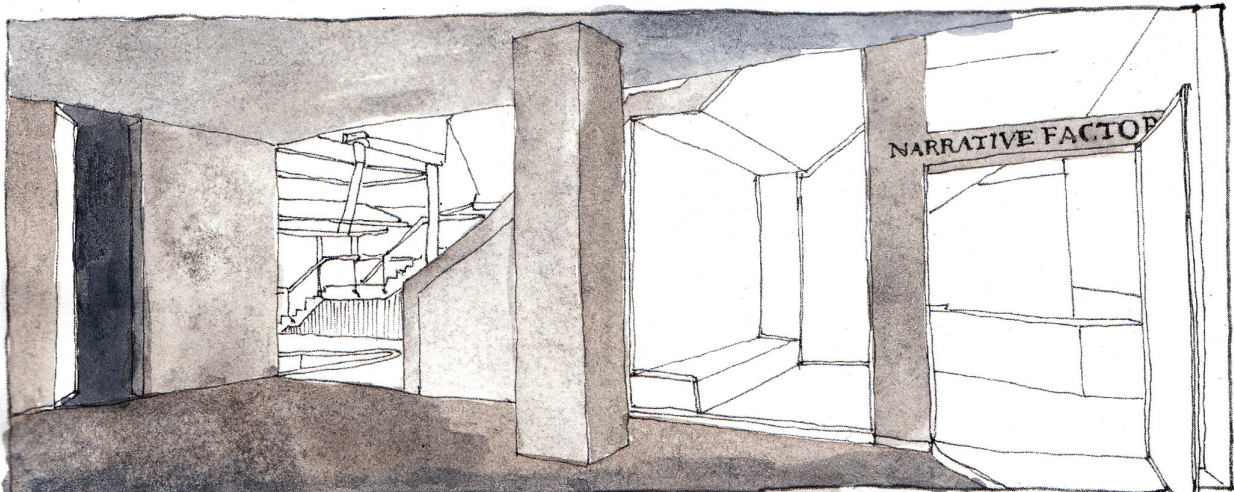Figure 5: *Entrance to the main reception* (Author 2013).

Figure 6: *Main reception with view to Logocentre* (Author 2013).

But she couldn't resist. She considers herself immune to fashion, though one wouldn't think so from what she wears to the convention today. She is impeccably dressed and anything about her appearance that seems dishevelled on the surface is revealed, upon further inspection, to have been meticulously calculated to present the exact amount of insouciance that she needs. She makes her way down the tunnel, lit intermittently by square strips of light that define and accentuate the perspective (Figure 5). At the end of the tunnel, she reports to the Reception (Figure 6) and, though she has promised herself that she won't, asks the receptionist if C has reported for the convention yet.
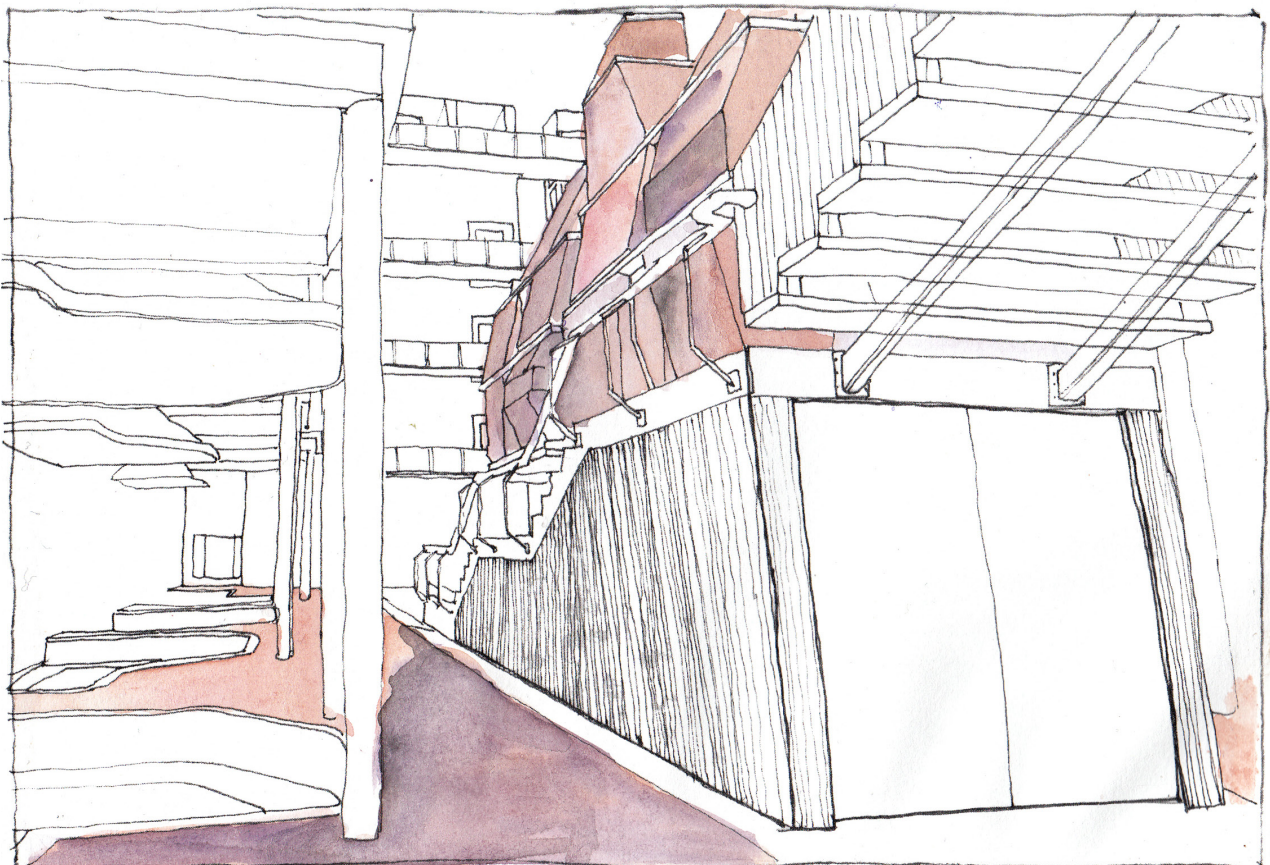

Figure 7: *View of Logocentre looking West* (Author 2013).

He has. The receptionist gives her a knowing smile which can only mean that A has been, despite her best intentions, utterly transparent. She wanted to seem indifferent, interested but not urgently so. But she must have overdone it. "In fact," she beams knowingly, "he works here". A stares at her blankly, dying to ask what she knows, but she stops herself. Who knows what she might know. A's quondam love affair with C could have been cast in the most romantic and most lurid light alike.

And there is no telling which version of this story the receptionist may have heard. "Thank you". A says this curtly, mid-turn, as she swings around to leave the reception for the Synthetory a little too urgently. "He works in the fifth Glossarcary on the left, Xhosa," the receptionist calls after A and points up to one of the Glossarcaria floating above the Logocentre (Figure 7/8). A walks briskly, making sure not to look up at any of the Glossarcaria's darkened windows. She imagines him standing in every window. But he isn't in the window. He comes into view as she turns the corner past the Synthetory on her way to the elevator. He's in the Cryptagora talking animatedly to a man. After all this time, she still recognizes him even over a distance and from the back. He has a memorable skull profile, she thinks. She slips into the Synthetory quickly before he sees her. Before she can berate herself for this wormy escape (he'll be in the restaurant when she delivers her paper anyway) she runs, literally, into D. They had met a few times before when A was doing research in the Ediotheque for this paper. A is glad to see a face that's familiar, but less familiar than C's. "A, it's so nice to see you, how are things, how are your children?" A responds with "3 years old and about 437 pages long." They laugh. "You *must* excuse me, I've got to run through my presentation, I'll see you inside." After a quick run-through, she is comfortable with the argument but now properly late.

As she runs to the restaurant (Figure 9), she can see that everyone (really only fourteen people or so, including C) is already seated, waiting for her. She settles into a fast walk and heads straight for the front of the room. She ascends the makeshift pine-clad stage. Thank god, she thinks, a lectern. Something to hold on to, a *shield*. She sends a quick prayer of thanks to an ancestral stalwart of academia — she chooses Edward Gibbon. She's had gibbons on her mind ever since one took a swipe at her through the rusty mesh at the National Zoo two blocks north of where she is standing now.

Figure 8: *View of Logocentre looking East towards Kwamonstrarium* (Author 2013).

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We haven't forgotten even after all this time, she thinks to herself as she becomes aware again of that feeling in her stomach — Sartre called it *Nausea* — that our soft bellies are the delight of carnivores. The sting of uncertainty that habitually precedes the alien sound of her own voice over the loudspeaker, is softened when she looks out through the window at the restaurant's pools (Figure 9). They place small groups of diners on islands and reflect the awe-inspiring north east tower into the murky abyss below. Yes, she thinks, the Narrative Factory is hostile to history - it exaggerates the enormity, and ultimately, the monstrosity of the tower in the landscape. She clears her throat and begins confidently:
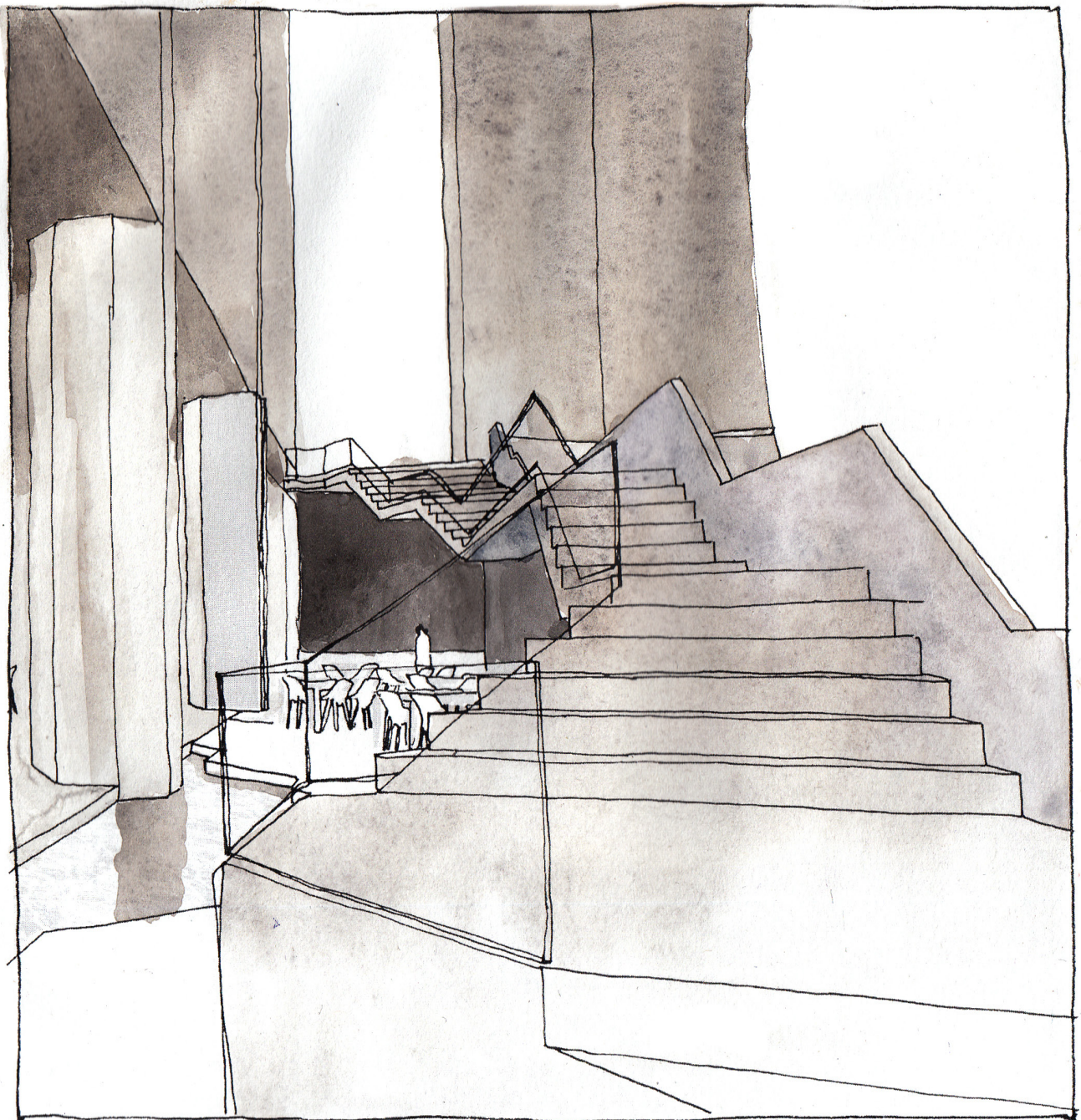

Figure 9: *View of restaurant and staircase to lobby roof* (Author 2013).

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LOST [IN] SPACE

An Investigation of the Agency of Space and Spaces of

Agency in the Narrative Factory.

A Brief History of Space

The instinctive impulse is to view architecture as the *receptacle* of space: a material container of which space is a by-product. This impulse is an inheritance from Renaissance thinking which, having been, in many ways, a revival of Classical Greek thought, was concerned primarily with mass in space, rather than with space as an architectural substance (Van de Ven, pp.191). In Marc-Antoine Laugier's *Essai sur l'architecture* this impulse is uncontested as he discusses architecture in terms of its elements, as they were defined at the time, namely the column, the entablature and the pediment. Though Laugier does argue for the separation of columns from walls (1755, pp.15), he does so only in order to reveal the inherent, natural aesthetic of the column and not to free space from structure. By positioning architecture as the fulfilment of the basic human need for shelter founded on "principles of simple nature" (1755, pp.11), Laugier defines architectural discourse around discussions of the aesthetics of elements and of physiological needs. With the advent of modern architecture, which Cornelis Van de Ven posits occurred in the "early 1890s" (1978, pp.239), there was a fundamental shift in the definition of architecture. This shift was the result of the introduction of space as an inherent, immaterial dimension of architecture rather than being seen as the incidental result of elemental composition. A useful definition to illuminate this thinking would be one where architectural space is geometric space occupied. In other words, architectural space is where volume, container, and Euclidian space intersect with activity, movement and interpretation (Figure 10). It is at this intersection that it becomes evident that architecture and all manner of activities that occur within it have a reciprocal relationship. Through space, matter can inform activity, and through design and occupation, activity can shape matter (Figure 11).

This conflation of space with activity presented an ethical imperative to architecture. If architecture is socially active, if it informs behaviour, could it make society "better"? In his seminal treatise *Towards a New Architecture* (1931), Le Corbusier elaborates on the socially formative capacity of architectural space with a strong diagnostic overtone. He refers regularly to the "modern man" and describes the features of this emerging character in such minute detail that, alarmingly, the modern man's eye level is determined at 5 feet and 6 inches. It was with a society comprised of these "new men" in mind that Le Corbusier was writing. His argument centres on the assumed appreciation this society would have for the machine aesthetic or engineer's aesthetic. Machines represented to Le Corbusier a rational, harmoni-
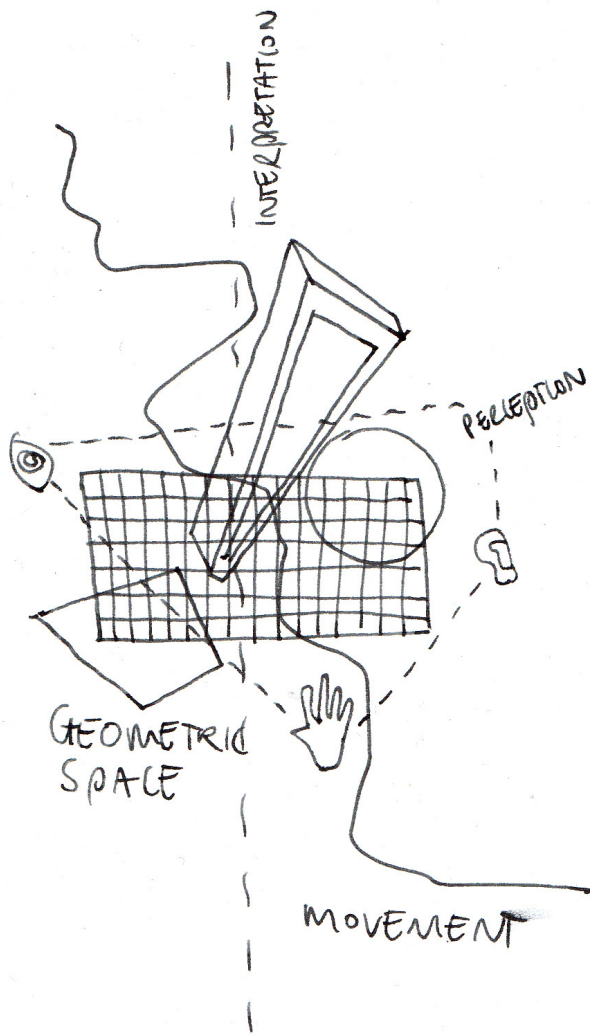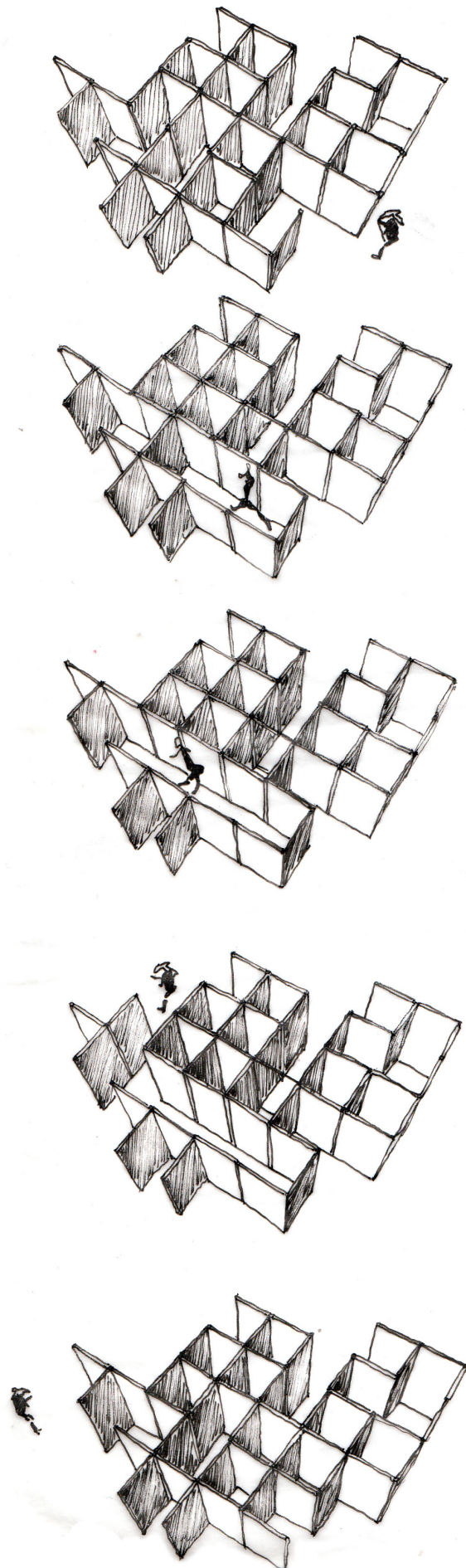
Figure 10: *Spatial concept* (Author 2013).

Figure 11: *Production of space through occupation* (Author 2013).

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ous, and poetic beauty hurtling towards perfection. If architecture could emulate this perfection, and could influence cultural identity and behaviour, it follows that a perfected society could emerge from his harmonious, perfected architecture. But if the machines of the 1920s had these attributes — simplicity, elegance and harmony — they no longer have them today. Already in the 1980s Neil Denari illustrated the architectural implications of the increasing complexity of our machines. This architecture has lost its rational harmony and instead presents an unfinished world, deliriously prolific and saturated with glitches (Figure 12).

The ethical dimension of architecture has particular significance in the South African context. The "New South Africa" will be twenty one years old in 2015. With the transition to democracy came the concept of the New South African. Unlike Le Corbusier's "modern man", the New South African is vaguely articulated and simplistic assumptions about her/his aesthetic preferences would be counterproductive. The imperative for South African architecture is thus shifted from satisfying assumed desires, as had been the case with "modern man", to *producing* and *articulating* desires and identities. The inexactitude of the New South African identity is, however, essential in allowing for the development of a complex and diverse culture in the long term. It is essential that this emerging society is not prematurely determined.

The danger of overdetermination of cultural identity through architecture is beautifully critiqued by Superstudio when they take Le Corbusier's open floor plan to its logical extreme. Le Corbusier's approach calls for the separation of elements according to their function so that each element can represent its *raison d'être* as accurately as possible. With the inclusion of the open floor plan in his *Five Points of Architecture*, he advocates for the separation of the structural frame from elements defining space in order to liberate the space-forming mass from structure. That Superstudio shared Le Corbusier's belief in spatial agency is evident when founding member Adolfo Natalini writes:

> "To live in a house is not a spontaneous, natural operation, but requires a large dose of culture, power to reason and poetry. Every house is structured as a spatial projection of its inhabitants' desires, ambitions, necessities and histories. The house becomes an image, the figurative projection of its users. And in its turn, the house, as a complex of spaces, objects, images and intentions, imposes itself on its inhabitants, modifying their behaviour" (2003, pp.73).
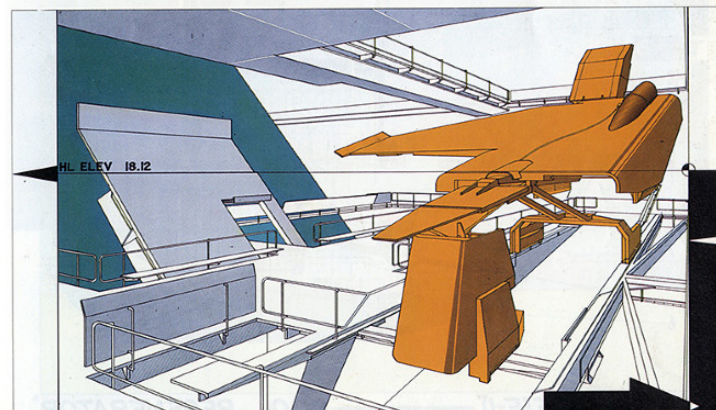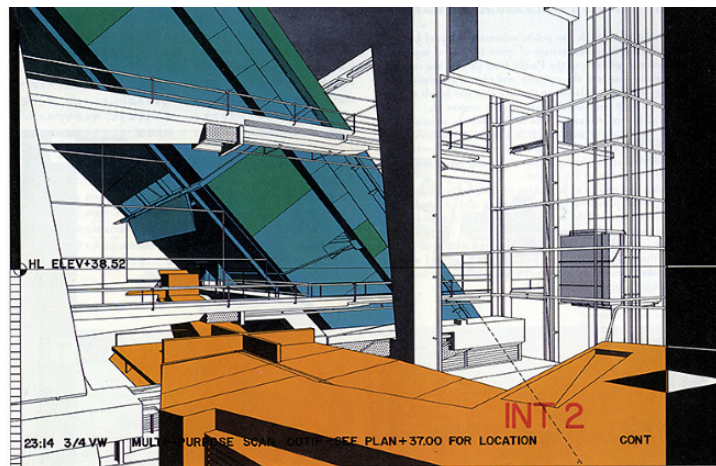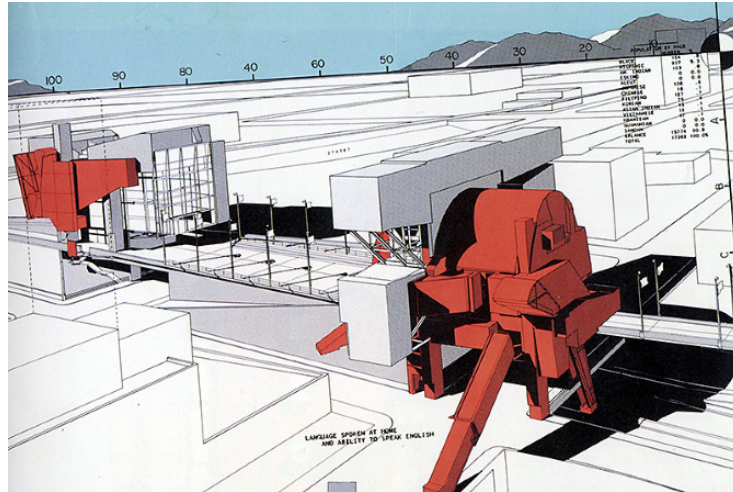
Figure 12: *A + U 246* (Denari, N. 1991).

Sardonically criticising the dictatorial character that they perceived in much of Modern architecture, Superstudio answered by removing as much material as possible from their projects. If there is no architecture, it cannot oppress its dwellers. As the space they created approached a Cartesian ideal of perfectly free abstraction, both structure and program started to dissolve. Their *Continuous Monument* of 1969 presents an enormous homogenous mass with a regular grid as its only defining feature. It is telling that all of the drawings for the *Continuous Monument* show the "building" from the outside — as though the interior is a space so empty that it cannot be occupied even by a point of view. Like the cinema screen, these consumable spaces await meaning to be projected onto them from elsewhere. They are immune to the landscape and the artificial atmospheres that are created inside them maintain relentless stability. They generate no identity of their own, they make no demands on their occupants and, acknowledging no history, they are unable, or rather unwilling, to produce programme through site memory (Figure 13). Superstudio's conceptual musings on a problem-free existence in *Supersurface-Life* of 1972 — in which the grid is further abstracted to two dimensions — is represented, not incidentally, by an object-free existence: happiness in the stasis of the perfectly free plan (Figure 14).

The removal of material from architecture, the minimalist impulse, is revealed by Superstudio's conceptual projects to be an attempt to avoid cultural overdetermination and architectural responsibility. Other means of avoiding overdetermination have to be investigated.

Discontinuous Monuments

Since it has been argued that the ethical imperative of South African architecture is the *production* and *articulation* of desire and identity, it is necessary to conceptualise an inversion of the *Continuous Monument*: Discontinuous Monuments. In *Urban Components,* (1984) Léon Krier criticizes the inhuman scale of urban blocks and argues for such a discontinuous urban architecture (Figure 15). He continues to critique the application of homogenous form to various urban buildings and argues instead for discrete buildings which break up urban blocks and communicate their content through typological conventions. What is suspect about this approach, however, is that it does not allow for the spontaneous development of new practices — it would require a stable and relatively static society which adds new practices conscientiously, one by one, and develops typologies for them as they emerge. In addition
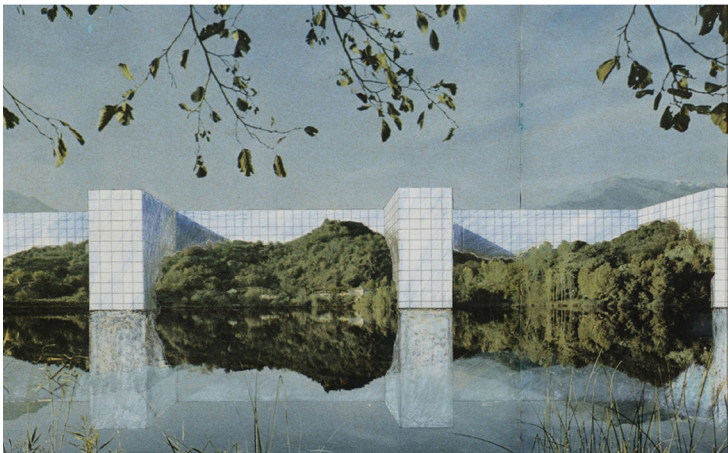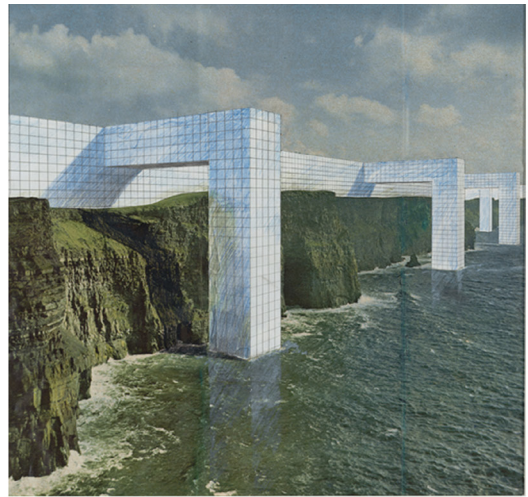
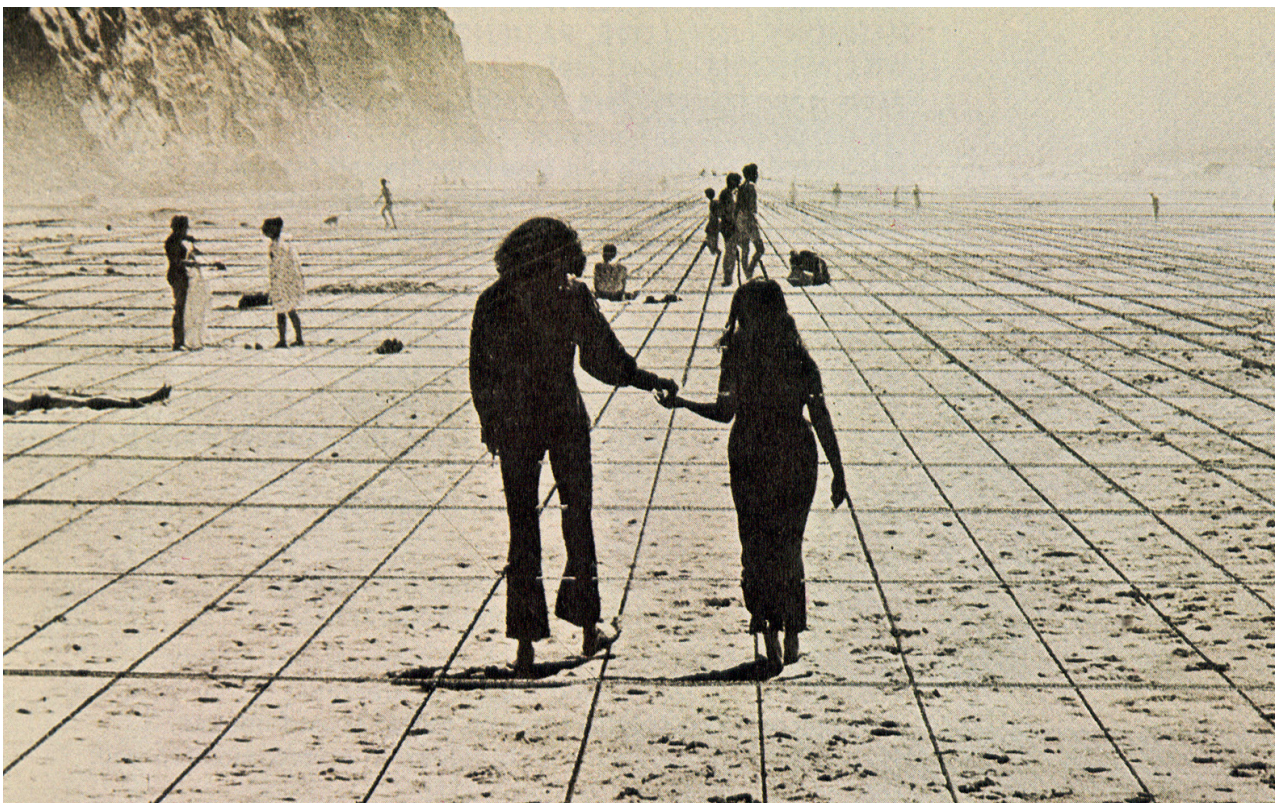Figure 13: *The Continuous Monument* (Superstudio 1969).

Figure 14: *Supersurface Life* (Superstudio 1972).

to this practical concern, is the problem that Krier's typological approach is based on slightly adapted neoclassical conventions and does not recognize place as a significant design informant. To apply such conventions in the South African context would be to leave imperial legacies uncontested.

Krier's provocative, often humorous, and at times poignant diagrams argue unambiguously for a clear communication of programme (Figure 16). This clarity, it is argued, would create environments of psychological comfort since dwellers are not bewildered by the endless possibilities presented with modernist form. Krier's insistence on clarity is a true functionalism, since it transforms even the semantic dimension of architecture into a function to be optimized and economized. With *firmitas* as an assumed basis, it transforms the medium for the experience of *venustas*, into *utilitas*. To Krier, usefulness is beauty.

But the comfort, the beauty, of this clarity may come at the expense of cultural production. In *Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Urban Life* (2007), Karen Franck and Quentin Stevens roughly outline the ways in which the public are encouraged to create new practices when architecture communicates ambiguously. They term such spaces "loose". According to these theorists, *loose spaces* are those that do not clearly define the limits of the activities that may be carried out within them. They can be squares, wide sidewalks, staircases, building thresholds and abandoned sites. Ambiguity and inexactitude find a material equivalent in thresholds. In-between two defined conditions, a third, as-yet-undefined condition of liminality exists in architectural thresholds. The significance of liminality is summarized by Quentin Stevens when he writes that "[r]itual performances of liminality are crucial to identity formation through the discovery of new understandings of the self" (2007, pp.74). Liminal spaces present a moment of agency in which dwellers are required to take an active role in the occupation of space. A cinematic example of the formative capacity of thresholds can be found in director Alejandro Amenábar's film *The Others* (2002). In the film, space is used as a narrative device on several levels. A mother, waiting for her husband to return from World War II, becomes obsessed with keeping light out of the large house which she occupies with her two children and a handful of staff. She believes her children to be extremely photosensitive and restricts them to darkened spaces in the house. In order to prevent light from spreading through the house, all the occupants are instructed to lock doors behind them, sealing each room into an autonomous unit. By cauterizing as many thresholds as possible, the spaces in the film are given a decidedly claustrophobic air. It is later revealed that all the characters in the film are ghosts.

a) (ugly or beautiful) TEDIUM (poor or rich) — Baroque Beaux-Art Academic systems

b) (ugly or beautiful) TEDIUM (meaningless or meaningful) — mechanical (industrial) Repetition

c) (ugly or beautiful) TEDIUM (articulate) — Clones, Identical Reproduction

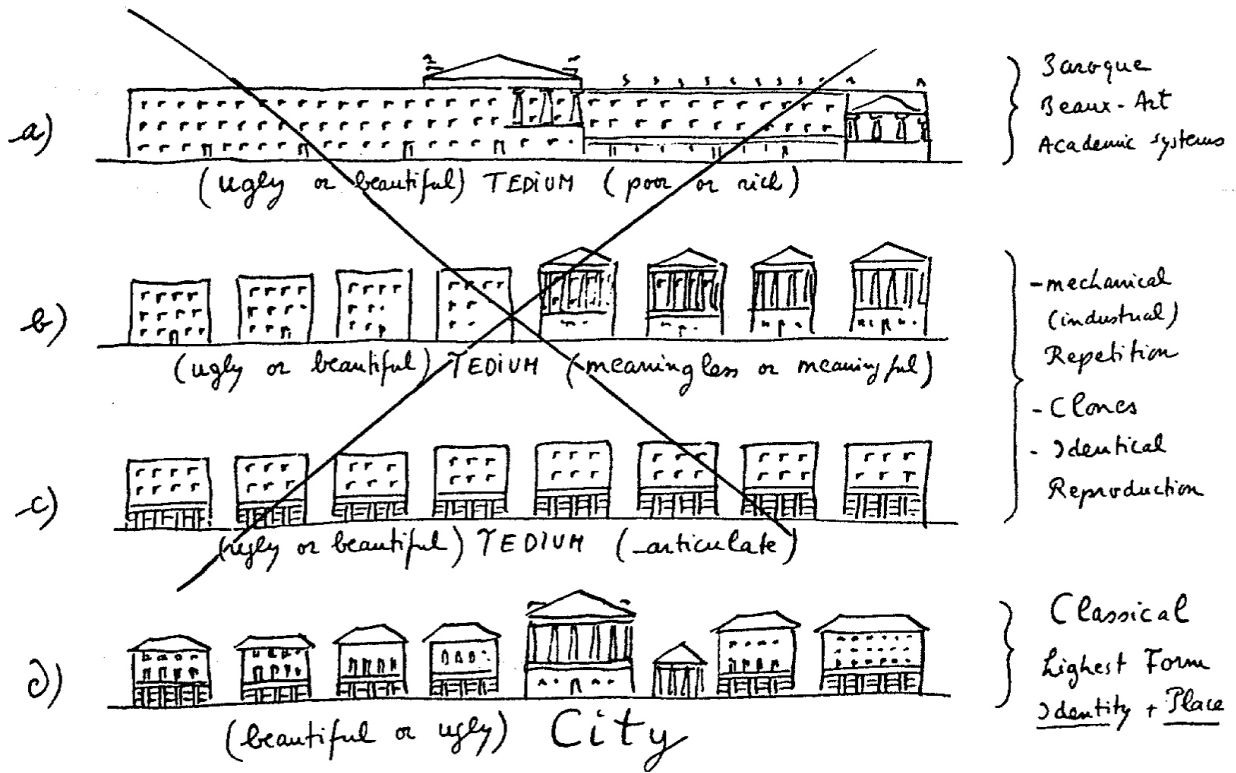d) (beautiful or ugly) City — Classical Highest Form Identity + Place

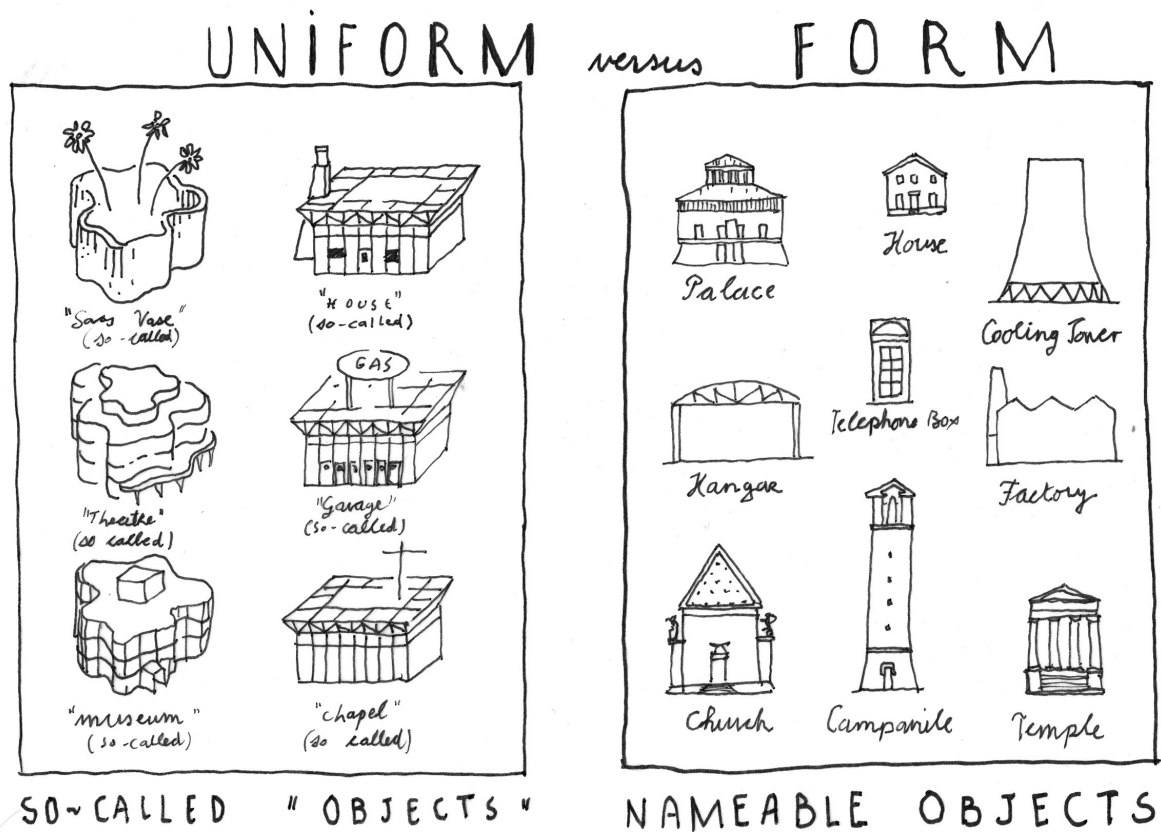Figure 15: *Beautiful or Ugly* (Krier, L 1984).

Figure 16: *Uniform versus Form* (Krier, L. 1980).

With this revelation, the relationship between thresholds and identity formation is illustrated. Death is the end of identity formation and, as such, is manifested in a house of isolated rooms.

In the interest of the development of cultural identity, discontinuous architecture with complex and ambiguous thresholds could be of particular interest in emerging cultures such as our own. In contrast to Krier's predetermined formal language, Bernard Tschumi's own discontinuous monuments, the *folies* of the *Parc de la Villette* (1983-1987) (Figure 18) present examples at the opposite extreme. From Tschumi's own writing on *La Villette* at the time, it is evident that he does not eschew the influence of content over form but advocates instead for a more complex understanding of the content of architecture. Rather than simply assuming that "use" is the content of architecture, *La Villette* employs more basic notions of the occupation of space as its point of departure for the scheme overall. As Tschumi put it:

> "...the game of architecture is neither function (questions of use), nor form (questions of style), nor even the synthesis of function and form , but rather the bringing together of possible combinations and permutations between different categories of analysis — space, movement , event , technique, symbol, etc." (Cited in Blundell Jones, 1989).

The fact that several of the *folies* have subsequently been occupied by a variety of shops, restaurants, and even a television studio attests to the possibility of use to adapt into existing form. The appearance of the *folies*, however, contradicts notably with Tschumi's dismissal of postmodern historicism (1981, pp. 174). The formal reference is undoubtedly to the constructivist movement and to the *Fantastic Compositions* of Iakov Chernikhov (1931) in particular (Figure 17). So despite his critique of formalism, the *folies* rely on nostalgia for their appearance since Deconstruction does not provide formal solutions to architectural questions. In her critique of the *folies* in *Images or Intelligence*, Catherine Cooke notes that "there is no reason for the architecture of deconstruction to look like this" (1989, pp.xii). In the absence of specifically imagined occupation, Tschumi relies on apparently arbitrary (he calls it "meaningless") references to modern architectural forms. To avoid such historicist referencing, programming can thus be a significant informant for design, even if the forms that result should not represent this programme simply or directly.
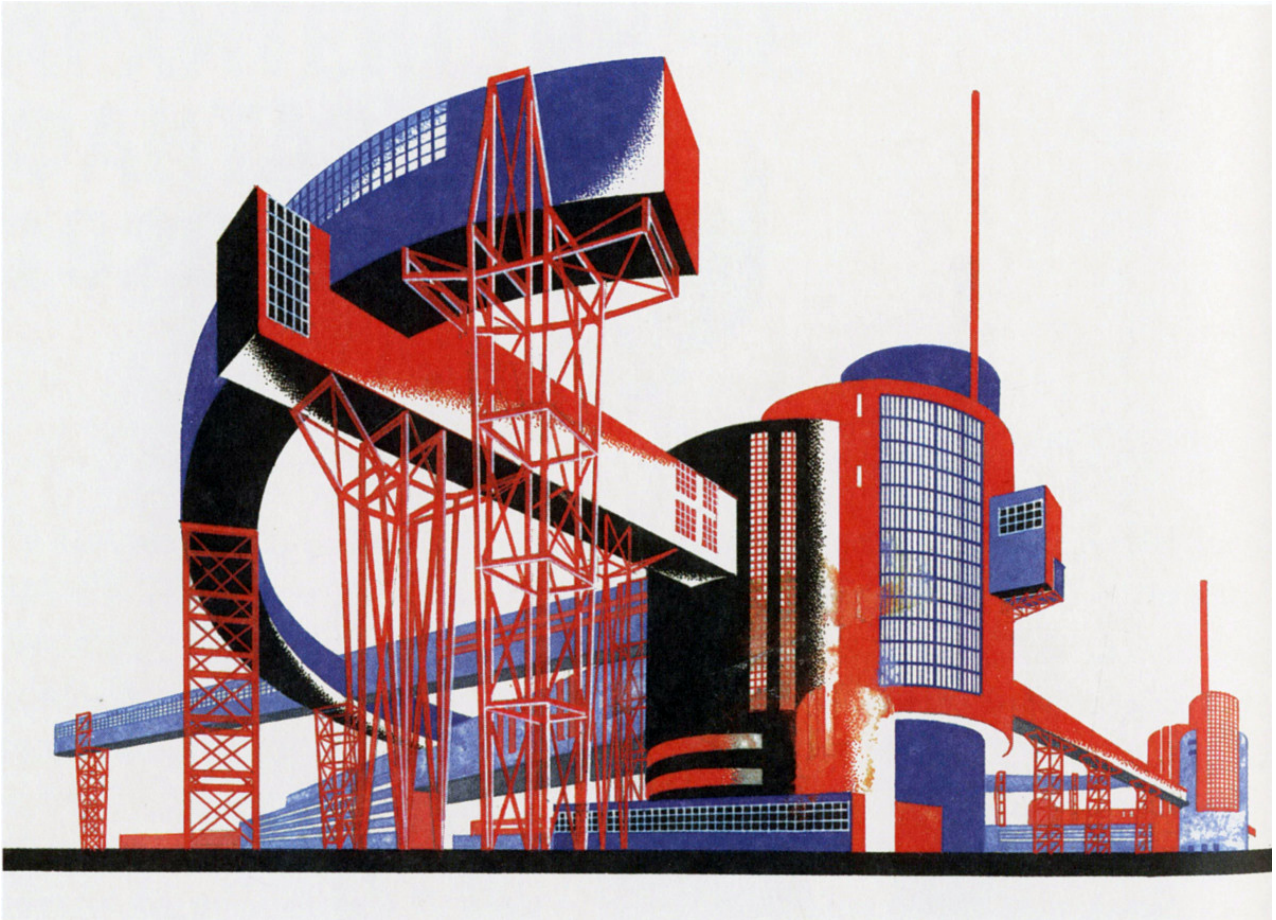
Figure 17: *Fantastic Composition* (Chernikov, I. 1931).
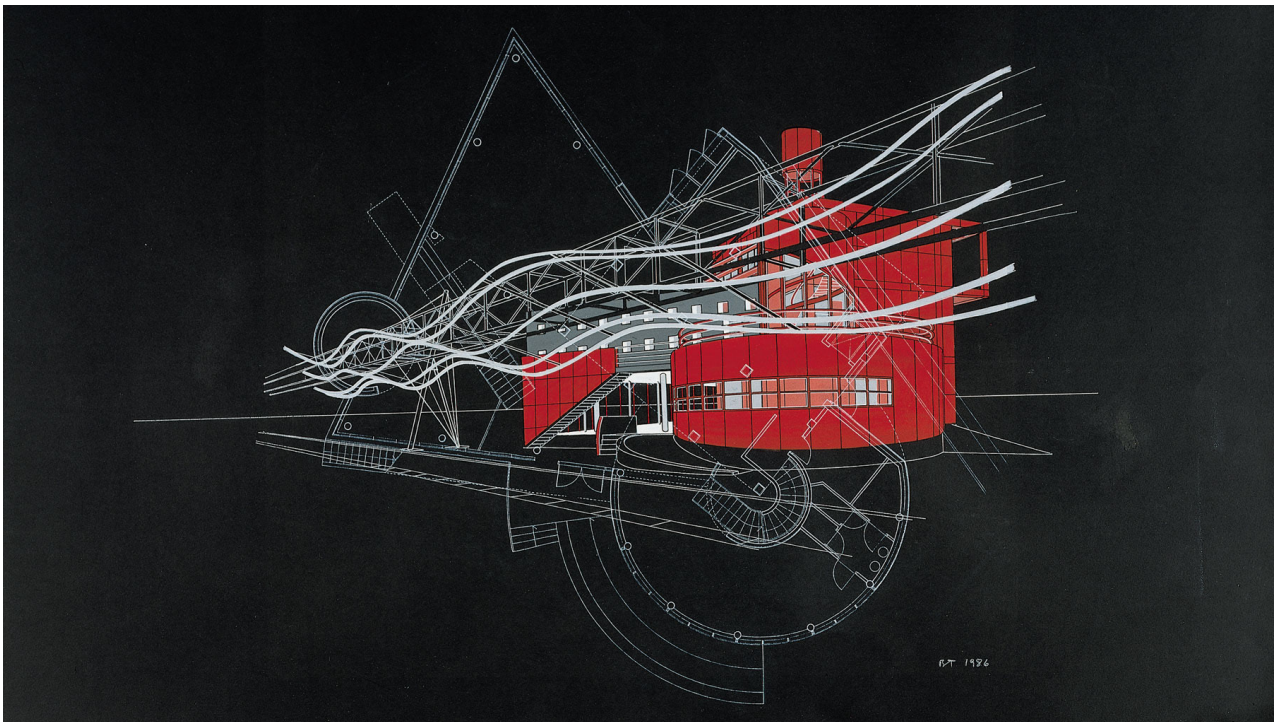

Figure 18: *Folie le Parc de La Villette* (Tschumi, B. 1982 - 1998).

The definition of architectural space as the intersection of mathematical space and social occupation makes creative programming part of the architectural project. Insistence on "needs assessment" and "problem solving" negates the creativity of a reciprocal relationship between form and programme. As Deleuze puts it, "L'art de construire un problème, c'est très important: on invente un problème, la position d'un problème, avant de trouver une solution" ["The art of constructing a problem is very important: you invent a problem, a problem-position, before finding a solution"] (cited in West-Pavlov, pp 182). In the case of the Narrative Factory, the problem is developed from the site. In order to generate specifics of programme (the details of which are discussed in "Praetorian Guard"—the next paper in the series) the site is investigated as a primary informant. The investigation is, however, not aimed at problematizing the site into an environment in need of straightforward "improvement". Rather, the analysis takes a metaphysical approach in order to create problems that inform interventions for creative occupation through reprogramming.

The City

Lúcio Costa, the town planner responsible for the master plan of Brasilia, a "city in the wilderness", which he described as a "deliberate act of conquest", (cited in Stäubli pp.12) begins his design with "two axes crossing at right angles". The origin of Brasilia in axes crossing at ninety degrees is comparable to the Cardo and Decumanus of Paul Kruger and Church streets which cross to form an *axis mundi* of sorts at Church Square. More analogies could be made between Pretoria and the capital of Brazil. Both are self-consciously identified as capital cities and the central position that they occupy in their respective nations binds them as centres for the administration of a vast area — they are both centres of national identities. A notable distinction, however, is that Brasilia was stamped onto 5771 square kilometres of uninhabited scrubland in only three years, and was conceived by Costa as a "complete picture" (Gerneke, pp.221), while Pretoria developed over more than a century. For the successive visionary urban plans of Pretoria, the "wilderness" has, even before the introduction of the grid in 1856, already been a cultural landscape (Figure 19).
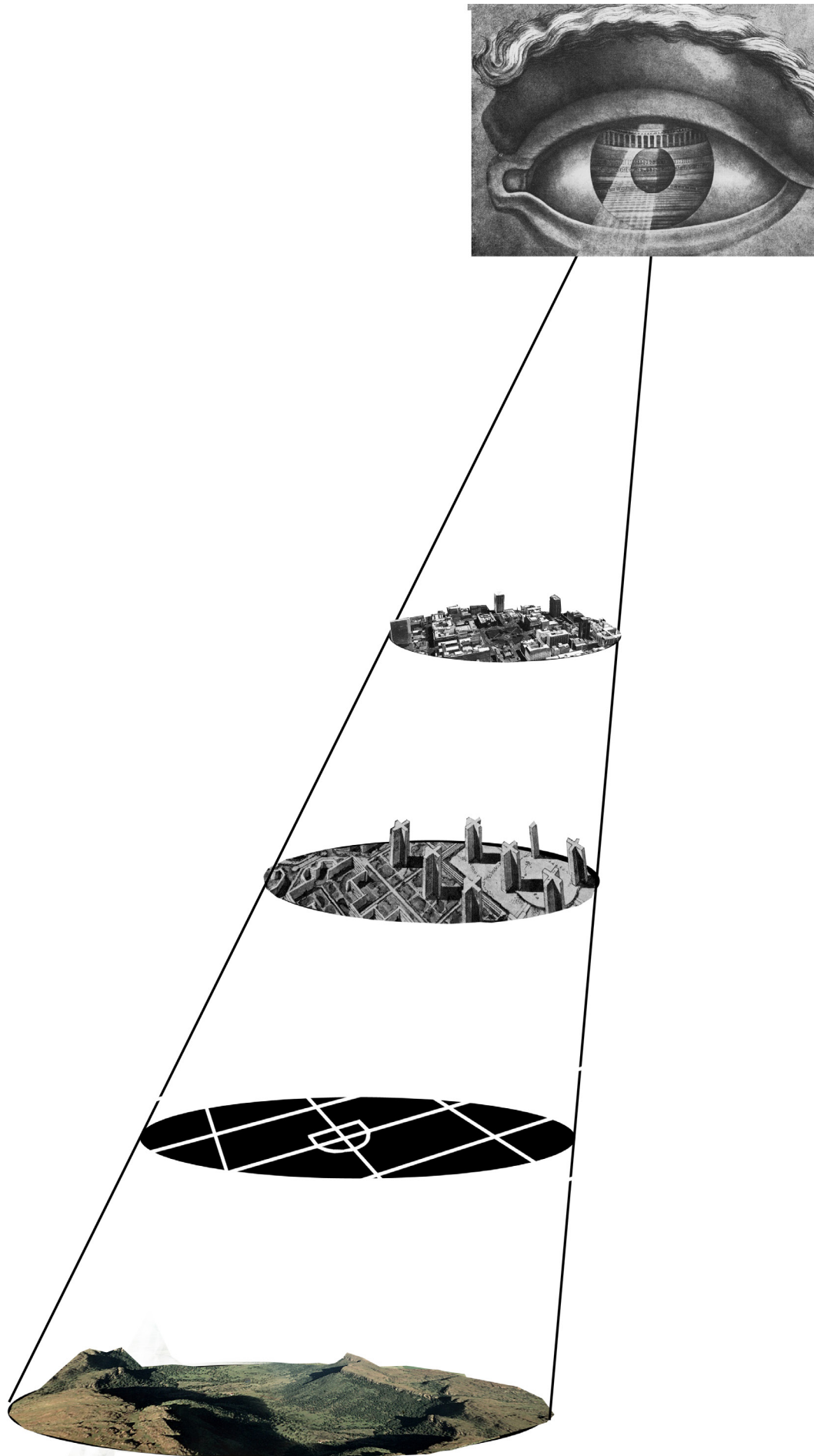
Figure 19: *Layering of urban visions* (Author 2013).
Photomontage using Ledoux's *Eye enclosing the Theatre at Besançon*.

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Interventions in Pretoria's Central Business District are insertions into a layered landscape of ideologies. It is therefore important that, when using existing site conditions as a primary generator, a critical approach be taken. Straightforward interventions that aim to ameliorate or gentrify the inner city ignore the brutal aspects of its history, and through inertia, may further the separations and cauterizations that have been enacted upon it. To assume that architecture does not carry ideology is to deny the impact of its cultural dimension. As Léopold Lambert explains: "There is no politically neutral cultural production and, by extension, there is no politically neutral architecture. The very idea of neutrality is a simulacrum of a production that embraces the dominant relationships of power that it emerges from" (2012, pp. 56). In the interest of contesting the "dominant relationships of power" that gave Pretoria its built form, we turn to the concept of lost space. There are a variety of manifestations of lost space — they can be spaces that have been abandoned, spaces that were deliberately designed to remain unoccupied or incidental spaces that have emerged unintentionally between buildings over time. Of particular interest when challenging political forces on urban sites, are those lost spaces that have arisen by accident. Between plans — between buildings with their individual or collective ideologies, agendas and purposes — exists a network of spaces that are shaped by the conflicting ideologies that surround them. They do not align neatly with the ideologies that have shaped them and, as such, they may be the closest architecture can get to being politically neutral. It is from this kind of lost space that the Narrative Factory is developed (Figures 20 and 21).

The Site

Site selection is informed by the theoretical interest in the communicative dimension of architecture and an assumption that formally and historically complex sites are particularly fertile ground for architectural investigations. The lost spaces surrounding the Telkom Headquarters in the north-western periphery of the CBD were selected, firstly; for the general associations that they have with communication as a result of their proximity to an institution dedicated to communication, secondly; for the presence of several governmental departments on the rest of the site, which enriches their political history and thirdly; for the dramatic formal complexity created by the leaps in scale from the street to the towers. In order to understand the space created by the buildings on the site, the material/space relationship is inverted by creating a plaster cast of the voids on the site (Figure 22). Space becomes mass which can be carved

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Figure 20: *Lost space - walkway under Forum Building* (Author 2013).

Figure 22: *Plaster model with site voids cast as mass* (Author 2013).

Figure 21: *Service yard behind Telkom Call Centre* (Author 2013).
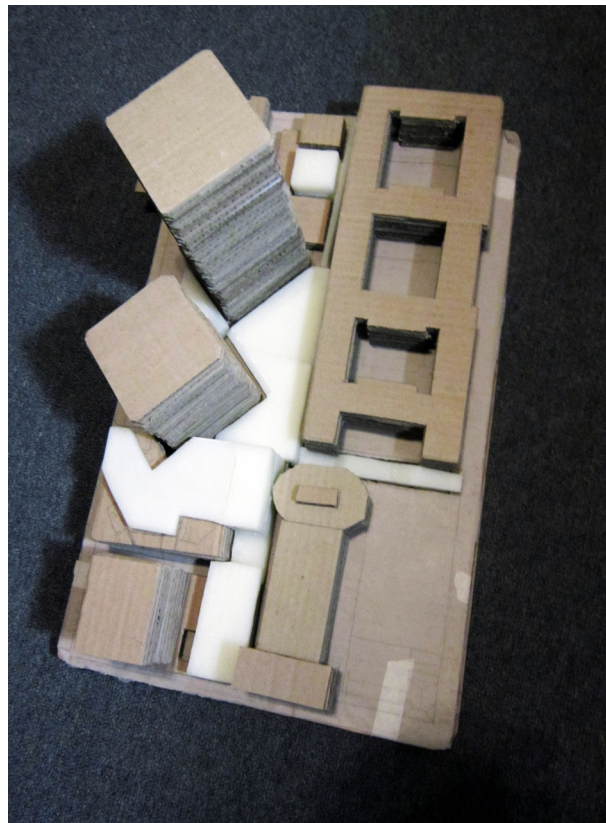

Figure 23: *New 'property lines' in three dimensions - wax and cardboard model* (Author 2013).

away to form a new, transcendent, property line in three dimensions (Figure 23). Specific lost spaces that permeate the site are mapped with metaphoric collages that describe their atmospheric character as well as their occupation status. The various means by which lost spaces are "occupied by loss" — are kept lost — are discussed in detail in Appendix A. Four significant occupation types, and the atmospheres that they create, are explored by Figures 24 to 27. In Figure 24, the towers themselves claim the spaces at their bases through their extreme verticality. It is as though supporting structures, invisible but perceptible, occupy the forecourt and service yards. In Figure 26 the spaces above flat roofs are conceptualised as uncontained, overflowing volumes, the effects of which never quite reach the streets below. Figure 25 indicates the spatial density created at the lowest points on the site. Space "flows" from the enormous volume created by the towers into the crevice that give access to the basement of the Forum building. Through its length and darkness, the entrance to the service yard (Figure 26) creates a sense of transition into a secret realm. The light at the end of the tunnel is a view into a forbidden territory. These collages combine visual descriptions of the spaces in question and some of the imagined, virtual and subjective qualities that they possess. With his *Building Cuts* series of architectural art interventions in the 1970's Gordon Matta-Clark touched on the virtual dimension of architecture. As Jorge Otero-Pailos summarizes:

> "Gordon Matta-Clark takes a building in New Jersey, an ordinary vernacular building that's never been considered architecture, and by cutting and slicing into it and opening it up, he creates something new, a space both physical and conceptual within which new questions emerge. How is this house habitable? How does it restrict my movements? How does the light come in? How does it shape my experience? In a real sense we can say that Matta-Clark *installs* architecture into the existing building, making it emerge from within" (2010).

For the Narrative Factory, the "ordinary vernacular building that's never been considered architecture" is replaced with lost space, the incidental nature of which negates their status as architecture. The design process employs virtual space literally, in order to "install" architecture into them.
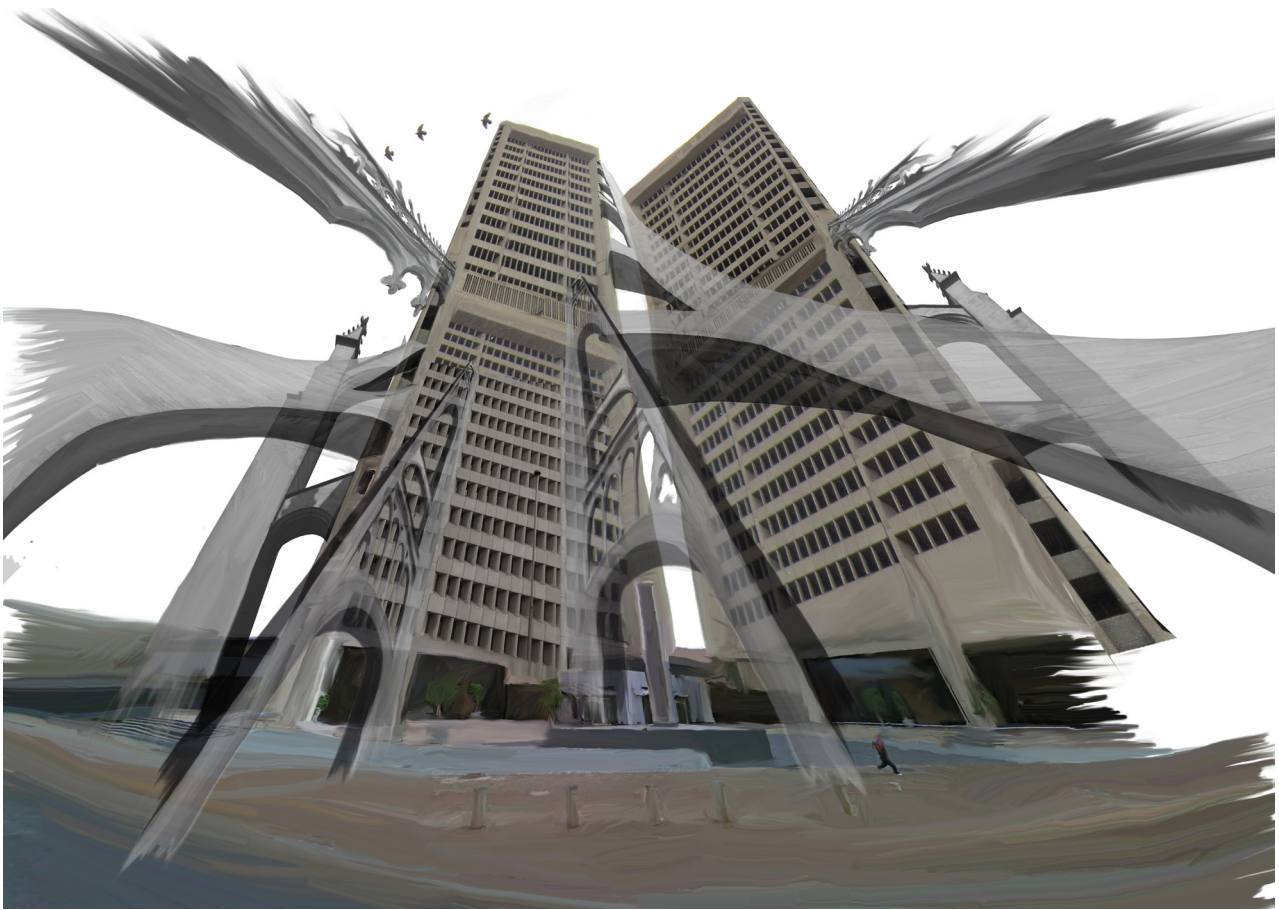
Figure 24: *Conceptual collage showing an imagined structure occupying the forecourt* (Author 2013).

Figure 25: *Conceptual collage describing space flowing into crevices* (Author 2013).
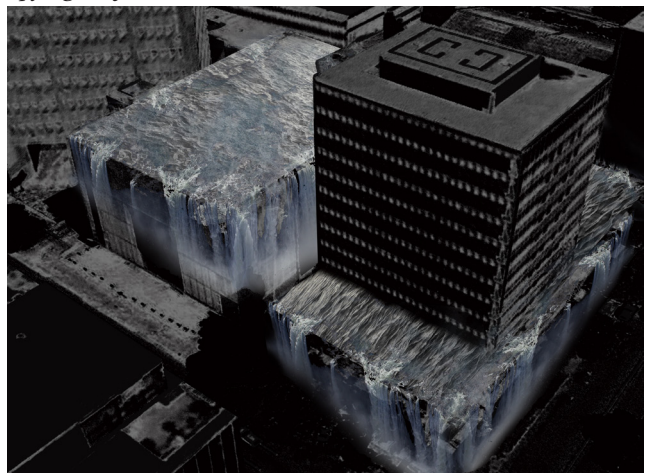

Figure 26: *Conceptual collage - space flowing from rooves* (Author 2013).

Figure 27: *Conceptual collage - tunnel revealing the space beyond, keyhole illustrating impenetrable space* (Author 2013).

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Virtual Space in the Narrative Factory: Echo Chamber

The agency of the lost spaces that exist on the site are allowed to influence the design development of the Narrative Factory. This influence adds depth and anchoring to an otherwise highly theoretical project. The generative capacity of forms is illustrated by Slavoj Žižek in his analysis of cinematic form in the work of directors Tarkovsky, Kieslowski and Hitchcock. He states that "form is not only here to imply, articulate, express [or] contend, it has a message of its own" he continues: "beneath the level of meaning — spiritual meaning but also simple narrative meaning — we get a more elementary level, of forms themselves communicating with each other, interacting, reverberating, echoing, morphing [and] transforming one into the other." In the design of the Narrative Factory, three-dimensional virtual space acts as a laboratory where design decisions that were made on paper are combined, consolidated and tested. Software provided free of charge by *Trimble Sketchup* [Online. Available at http://www.sketchup.com/] provides an echo chamber in which existing site conditions are modelled and responded to three dimensionally (Figure 28). The software allows for specific placement of design interventions with more or less accurate solar modelling and a high degree of pliability. This pliability is particularly useful in a highly dynamic design process, where formal and spatial echoes cause big changes in the design scheme at a rapid rate. The input into this "echo chamber" is highly mediated by extensive hand sketches and literature surveys. This technique allows the existing site conditions to have a formative impact on the design without overpowering the drive towards an architecture that also contests and confronts the context.

Occupying Johannes Ramokhoase Street (née Proes Street): Contesting Urban Space

The site in question is adjacent to an urban processional route (Figure 29) which starts ceremoniously with the train station at the southern end, but peters out with little fanfare at the northern end. The Narrative Factory responds positively to this condition by providing a significant marker along the route with the Kwamonstrarium (Figure 78).But it contests the scale of this urban procession by introducing a meandering route through the block to the west at a distinctly human scale. This meandering route is also an acknowledgement of the arcades employed to the south of the CBD to break up large urban
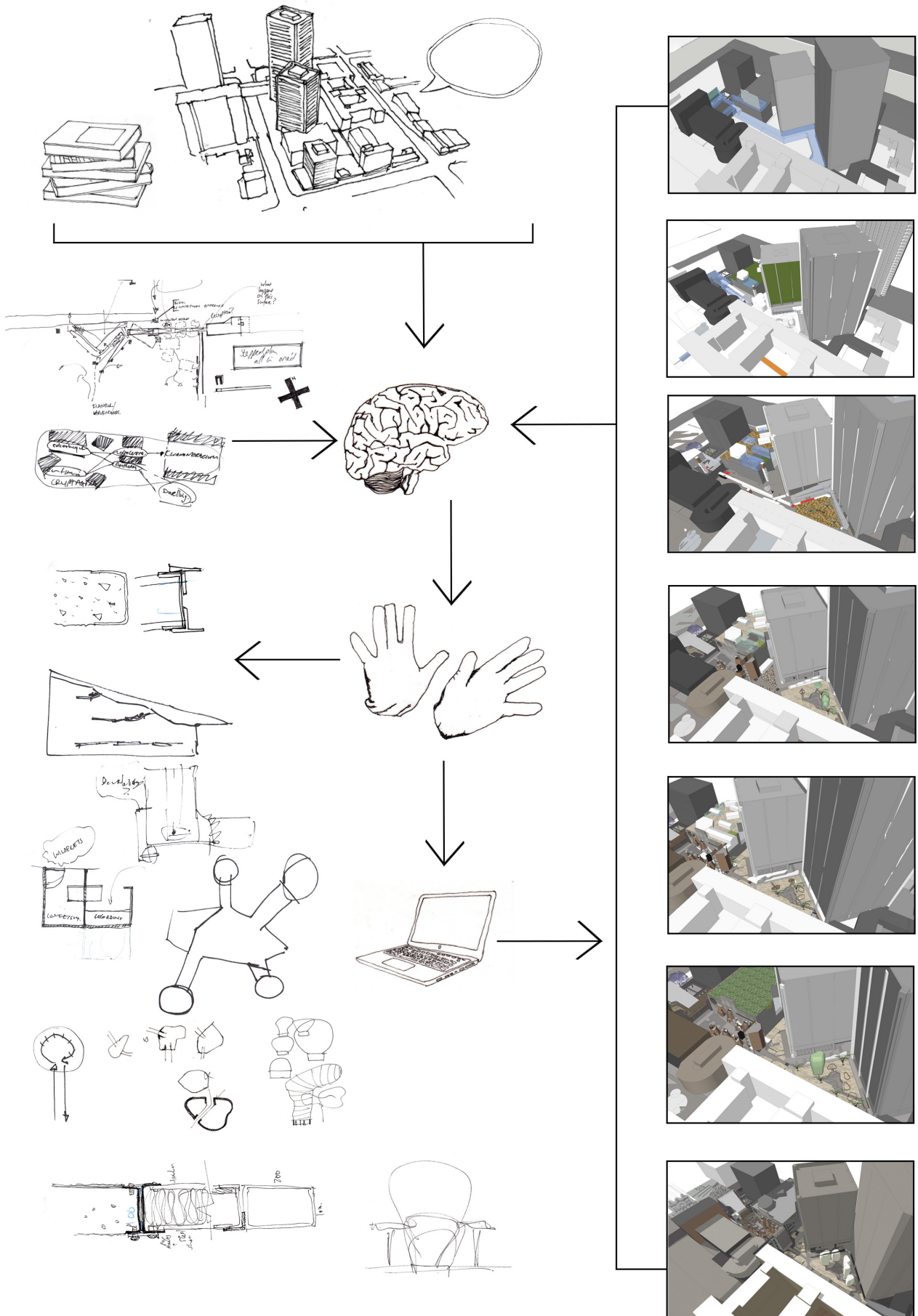
Figure 28: *Design process showing relationship between inputs, paper space and virtual space* (Author 2013).

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blocks. In this instance, however, the arcade is conceptualised as an *infiltration* of the urban block (Figure 45). This agonistic approach is a response the insular nature of Pretorian bureaucracy. The societies which occupy South African city streets today are radically different from the ostensible society for which they were constructed. And many of the institutions currently occupying the buildings that frame these streets, appear to be wary of the public. Their entrances are zealously guarded, even during operating hours. At the Masada building (Figure 4), the lobby has an added level of defence - a security guard placed outside the entrance ensures that one cannot enter the building at all without justification. The Old Synagogue (Figure 29 top right) across Paul Kruger street to the east is currently used as storage and public access is effectively prevented by the Kafkaesque administrative maze to be negotiated in order to gain entry permission. Illicit entry to the site is prevented with a double layer of razor wire fencing. At the Telkom towers themselves an appointment is required an for entry beyond the lobby and any seemingly purposeless visit, even to the forecourt and lobby, is strictly denied.

A further contribution by the work of Gordon Matta-Clark is provided by his eloquent critiques of the relationships between power and architectural thresholds in *Building Cuts* (Figures 30 and 31). *In Walking Through Walls*, Eyal Weizman makes the contemporary significance of Matta-Clark's work evident through his examination of the use of architectural theory, including those of Bernard Tschumi, Gilles Deleuze and Matta-Clark, by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) to dominate contested (Palestinian) urban territories. The IDF uses Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of smoothed and striated space in order to cut through the urban fabric and defy the relatively predictable spatial logic of city streets, courtyards and squares. Smoothed space is characterized by fluidity of movement and the impotence of thresholds. The ideal smoothed space is illustrated by Superstudio's *Supersurface-life*, discussed earlier in this paper, where thresholds are completely absent. Striated space is highly occupied, divided and sectioned space (Lambert, 2013. pp.35-50). As such, the myriad security measures present in the Pretoria CBD represent a striated condition. The supreme irony of the IDF's use of *smoothing* to dominate and control urban territory reveals an additional responsibility for architecture when it contests the materialised relationships of South African cities. To subvert material legacies, the smoothing of striated space must be accompanied with a re-striation that is self-consciously oppositional to the thinking responsible for the material context *as it is*. In the Narrative Factory, the analysis of the thinking behind the construction of the Pretoria CBD is focused on the Telkom towers.
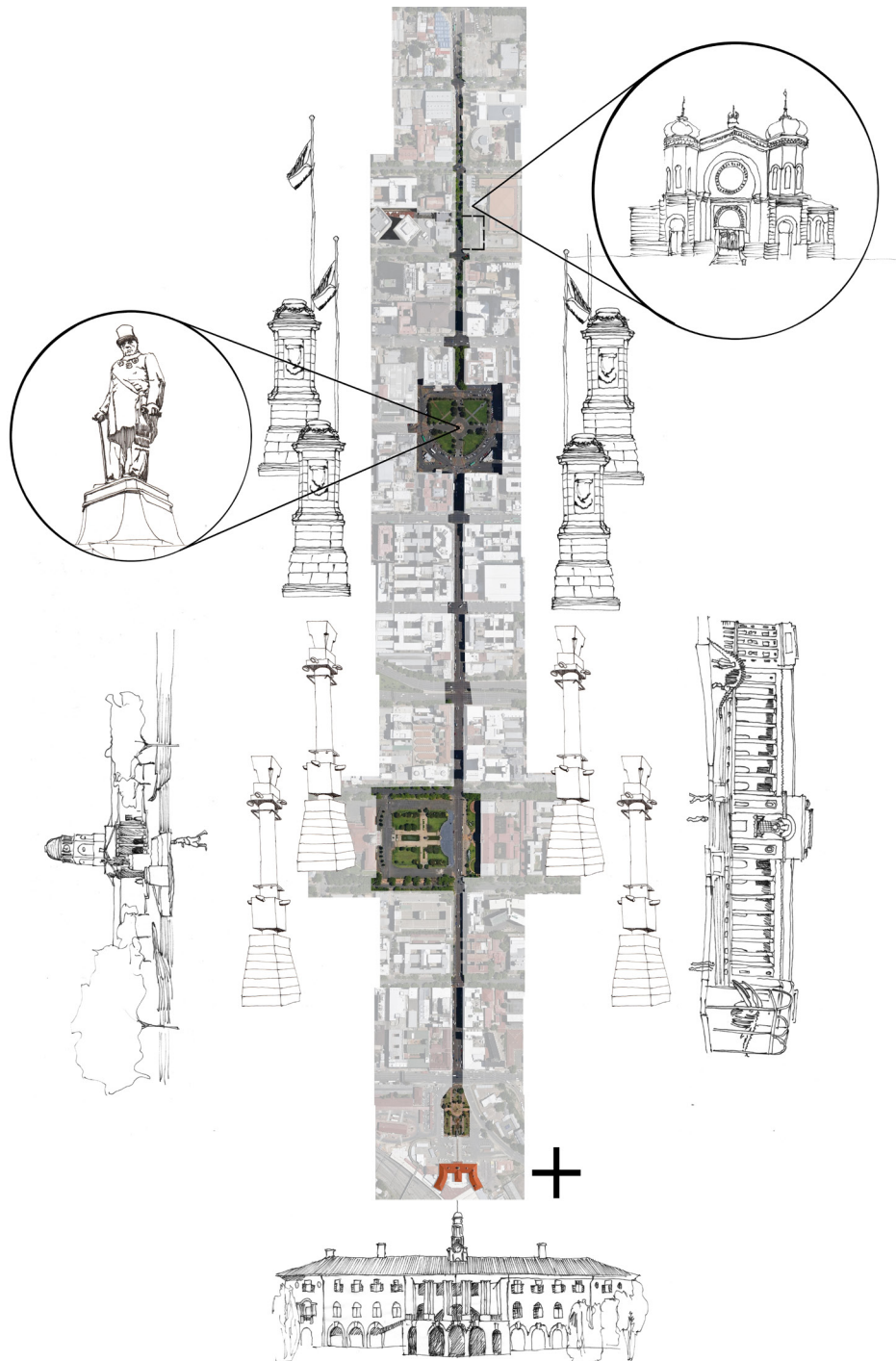
Figure 29: *Urban procession through Pretoria CBD* (Author 2013).

Figure 30 (left): *Pier In / Out* (Matta–Clark, G. 1973).

Figure 31 (middle & right): *Building Cuts* (Matta–Clark, G. 1970's).

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The towers present us with a material embodiment of the dualist sensibility underlying the pre-post-apartheid political landscape. Here, unambiguous distinctions between objects and landscape, inside and outside, us and them, good and evil are exalted through the duality of the tower in the landscape. For architecture, the dualist sensibility is severely problematic. In the age of landscape architecture and interior architecture as separate disciplines, little room is left for the role of architecture as a spatial practice. If there is a definitive separation between the inside and the outside, and if the interior and the landscape fall under the jurisdictions of interior and landscape architecture respectively, then architecture is reduced to a material threshold at the expense of its spatial thresholds.

The material threshold is mythologized by the figure of Janus, the roman god of doors and gates as well as ends and beginnings (The month of January is named after him). Janus is represented by a man with two faces facing in opposite directions. One facing the future, the other the past. One facing the inside, the other the outside. To mythologize *spatial* thresholds, an inversion of the Janus figure will be useful. The material dimension of Marina Abromovic's performance art piece *The Artist is Present* of 2012 presents just such an inverse of the Janus figure. The project involves, quite simply, the presence of the artist, Abromovic, sitting in a chair in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City (Figure 32: Centre). A chair and table are placed facing her and participants from the gallery-going public can sit in the chair facing her for an unspecified length of time. The piece creates a moment of intimacy in the public gaze, and by doing so, comments on the tension between interpersonal relationships and public life — the kind of tensions that are materialized in urban architecture. The title of the work may be a reference to Henri Lefebvre's comments on the qualitative, primitive experience of space in *The Production of Space* when he writes that "[t]he 'other' is present, facing the ego: a body facing another body" (1974, pp. 174).

The spatial development of the Narrative Factory commences from such a primitive concept of space. It complicates the inside/outside dualism by introducing several distinct interventions to the site which are linked to one another through programmatic interactions and landscape interventions (32 :Bottom). This way, it produces several insides and outsides and enables metaphorical experimentation with formal and programmatic relationships. The results of these experiments will be discussed in more detail in the last paper titled "Volunteers from the Audience", the last in the series.
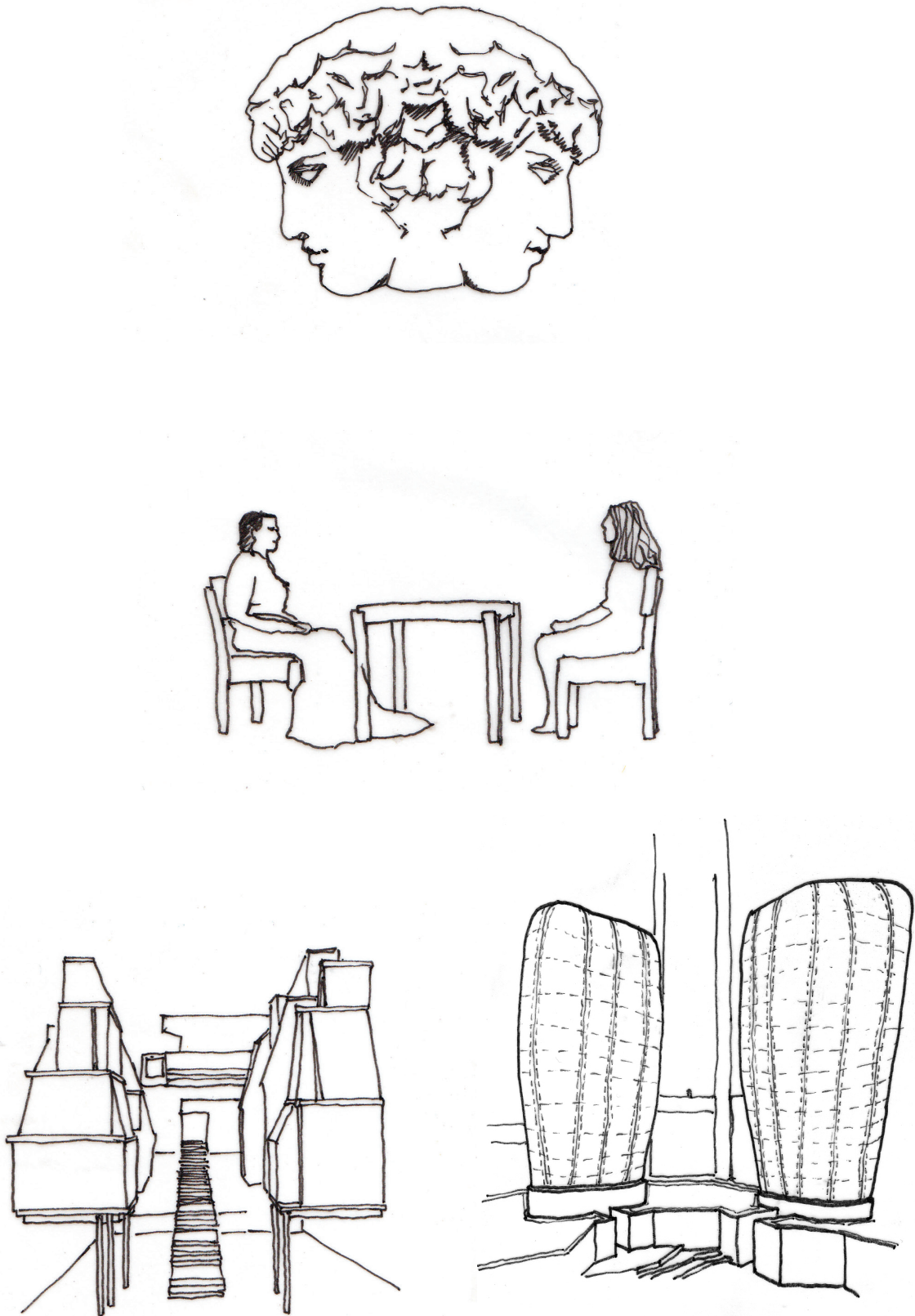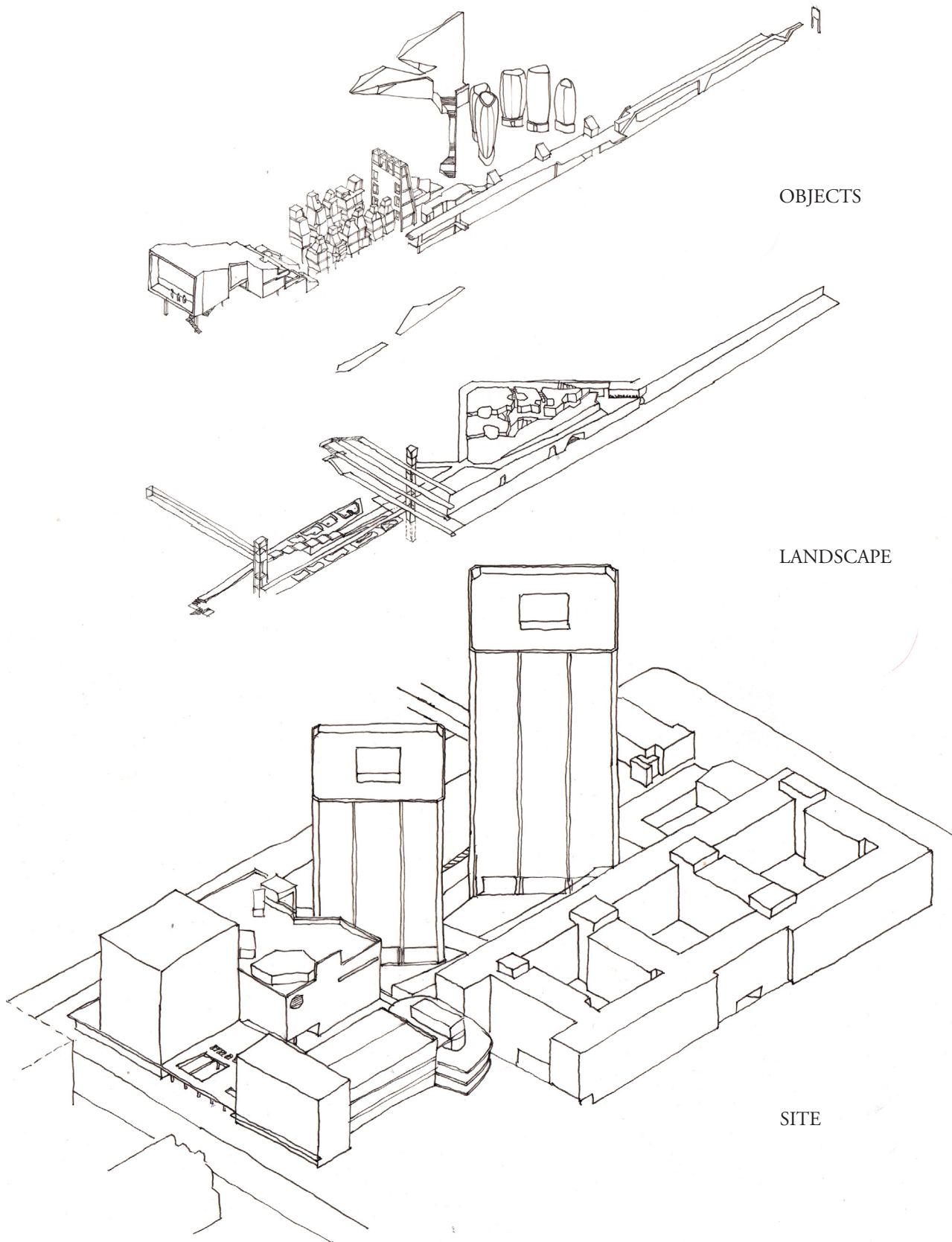
Figure 32: *Spatial concept* (Author 2013).

OBJECTS

LANDSCAPE

SITE

Figure 33: *Layering* (Author 2013).

FICTION

B: A Full-Time Flâneur

B had been involved in a cat-and-mouse game with the "CID cops" for one week and two days. It started when, on the day in question, he had decided that he would misunderstand an absurd question. "What are you doing here?" came the voice from behind as he strolled — in the nonchalant manner he considered his trademark, that detatched half-strut that marks men of means and those with little to lose alike — down Johannes Ramokhoase street. He was walking west and had just crossed Paul Kruger street. "Hey, you! what are you doing here?". The disembodied nature of this voice let him wonder, only for a moment, whether the interrogation was spiritual in nature. "Good question, what *am* I doing here, what are any of us doing here, what does it all mean?" he smiled to himself before bothering to investigate the source of this ambiguous inquiry. He turned to find a mortal after all, a *City Improvement District* security official tasked, apparently, with preventing good people the world over from being overrun by the bad ones. Being a full-time flâneur, B has the appearance of the latter. He knew that there is no arguing, that an argument could only worsen the tenuous civility that existed between him and the dedicated, but ultimately mistaken, public servant. His extensive experience in roaming the Tshwane/Pretoria — Prewane, Tshworia — streets served him well in situations such as this one. He saw a fissure in the dense urban fabric, gave the "officer" a wry smile and replied "what I'm doing, is escaping" and while quickening his pace to a confident trot, he skipped over a shallow pond and scaled a slope culminating in a crevice between two concrete towers (Figure 34).

Through the mild haze of delight that habitually accompanies a narrow escape from tedious confrontations, he became aware that where he had been and where he was headed were two very different places. The crevice now seemed like an enormous doorway into another world. He pushed and prodded the off-shutter concrete banister as thoroughly as he could without arousing the suspicions of bystanders. He had long since learned that dreams and hallucinations are unaffected by pinching himself and, instead, had acquired the habit of checking the surroundings for inconsistencies - an unpainted underside of a rock, a window with two different landscapes on either side, or a subtle change in gravity. Though such telltale signs were absent, the vision was a strange one. Having skipped over a pond to get to where he was, he'd been convinced, though not troubled by it, that he'd broken some rule.

Figure 34: *'Entrance' between Towers* (Author 2013).

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But from this point of view, he could see a staircase leading up to where he was steadying himself against the westernmost tower. The point between the two towers was, it seemed, a destination when approached from the inside and a barrier only from the outside. Directly in front of him stood five translucent masses (Figure 35). Tents, balloons, jumping castles, mushrooms? None of the associations they triggered created plausible explanations for what they were. People were ambling about the narrow paths that criss-crossed the site. They seemed unperturbed, content even, and B had little reason to suspect that the structures served sinister purposes. He was still deciding whether he would ask a member of the ambling class at the bottom of the stairs what these masses were for. He descended the staircase, half-approaching them but still undecided. Having not made up his mind by the time he'd reached his destination, he soon found himself in the awkward position of walking almost-but-not-quite towards a stranger who had noticed him and was anticipating a meeting, making eye-contact. But B pretended to be looking at something in the background, obliquely behind the man, and walked past. Luckily there was something to see in his new line of sight so it wasn't implausible that the stranger had simply been mistaken, that A had not been approaching him at all. He was now facing a building, apparently, covered in veld (Figure 36).
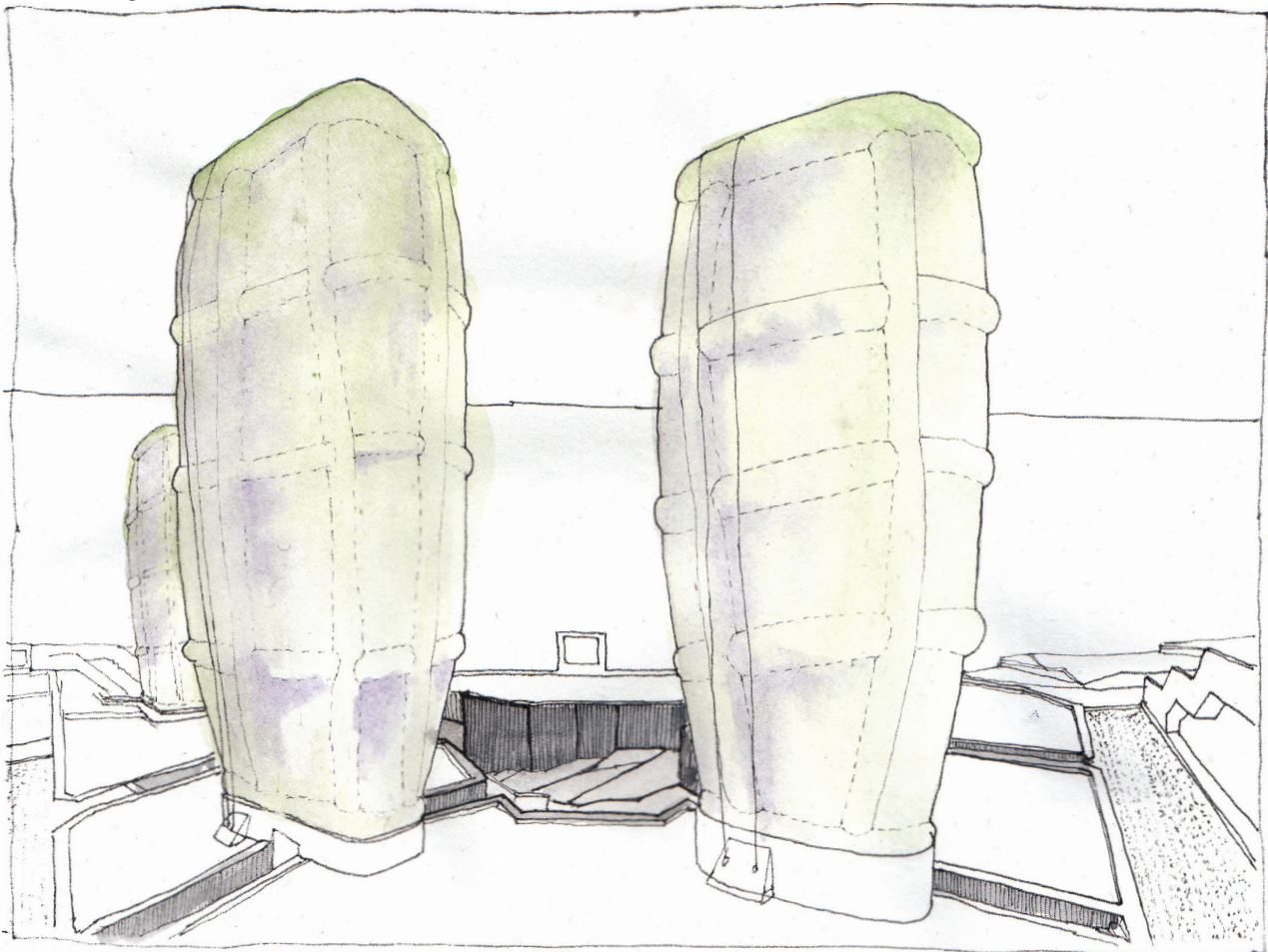

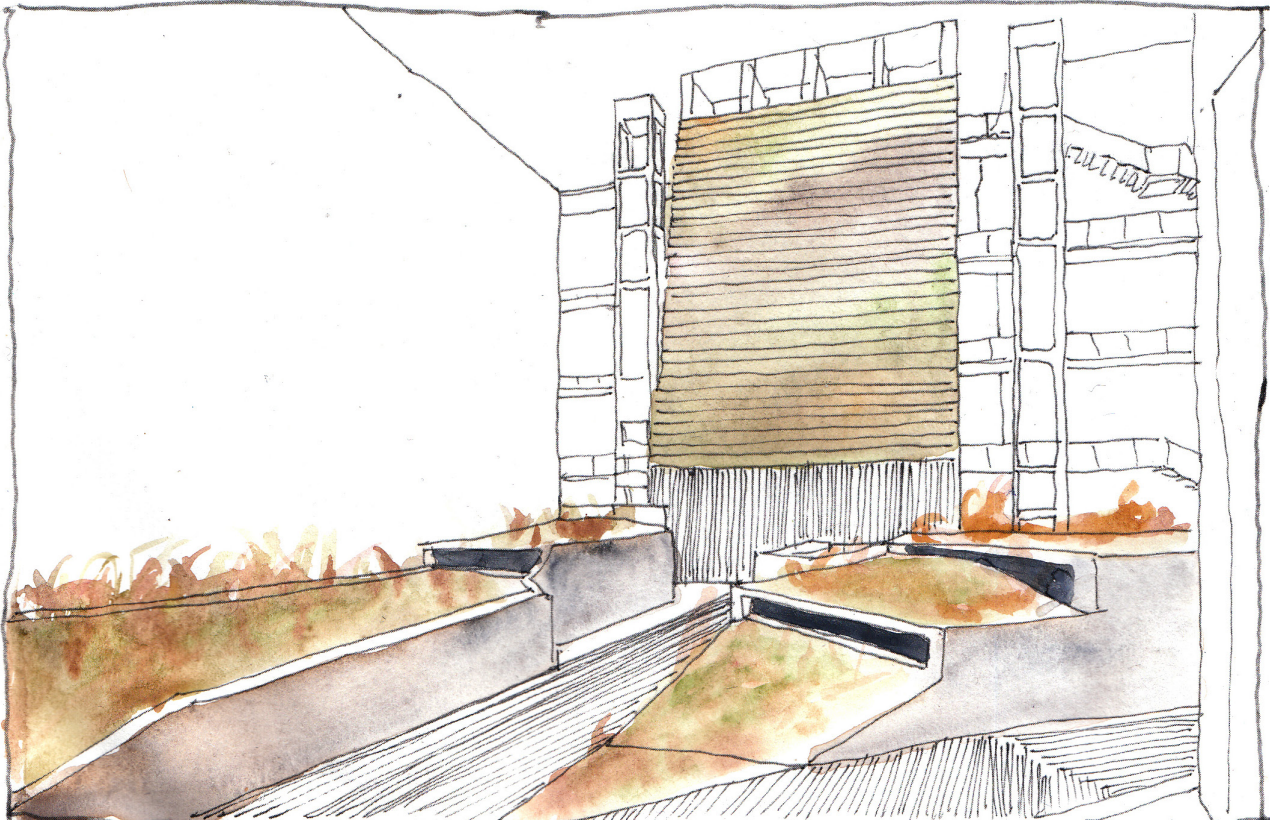Figure 35: *View of* *Cryptagora from 'Tower entrance'* (Author 2013).

Figure 36: *Synthetory and public toilets* (Author 2013).

His intrigue was approaching a level of intensity ordinarily reserved for human drama, not buildings. Luckily, a man with an outstretched hand and a broad smile was striding towards him. "C, pleased to meet you, you haven't been here before, I can tell". He was gregarious, talkative, so talkative in fact that B needn't have, couldn't have, asked what the strange little town in the alley was all about. Without being prompted, C explained quickly, with sweeping gestures and complicated words. B could really only make out that it was a social place, that people talked here and that he, B, would soon be in one of the Conficulae, talking to C.
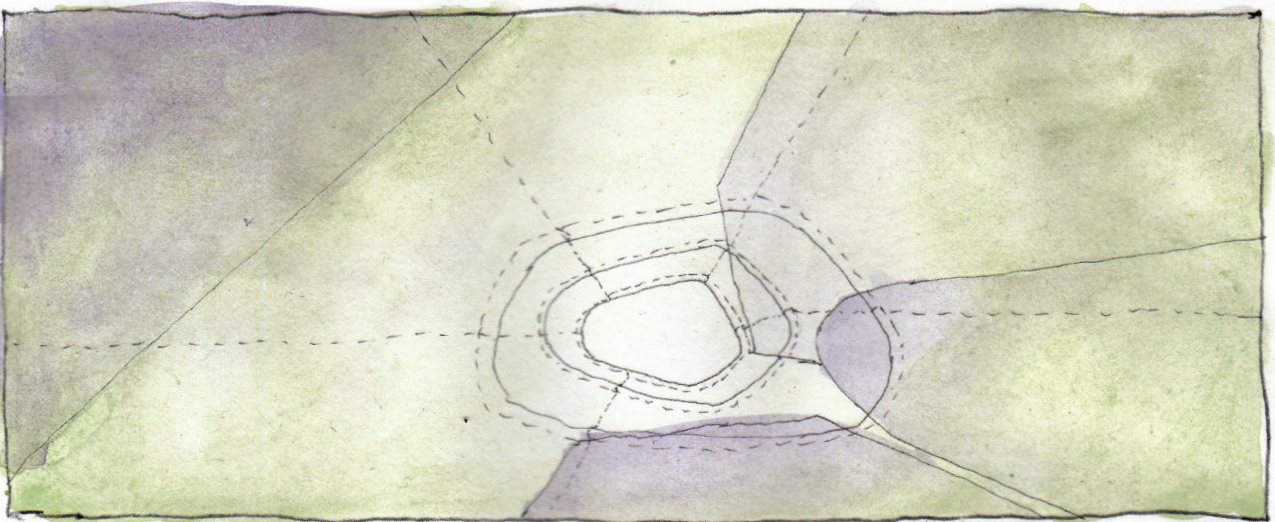

Figure 37: *Interior of Conficula* (Author 2013).

C: A Confessor

Did I cover that takeaway menu with the opera schedule before I left my office?, wondered C, almost aloud, as it occurred to him that his new research assistant would probably be dropping off the Ntshona papers in his Glossarcary before he returned from the "hearing". He was approaching the easternmost Conficula, which has, simply through habit, become his favourite (Figure 38) . It really wasn't worth turning back for, his assistant would know him well enough soon enough. Besides, he had just spotted a man with a story. For some time C had prided himself on his special ability to separate the dull visitors from those who had narrative gold within them. The man was taking in the atmosphere of the Cryptagora, trying conspicuously to look casual. His unfashionable, even anti-fashionable choice in facial hair style, reminiscent of Marx — Groucho not Karl — was a dead giveaway. This was amplified by his glasses which, having no lenses, were a fashion statement and probably objets trouvé. C made an effort to be as approachable as possible, it would pay off. He continued with B to the Conficula, explaining as they walked some of what the Narrative Factory was for. C was uncertain of the vocabulary to use, the speed at which to speak and where to start describing the Narrative Factory. He started with stories. He explained that the Narrative Factory was a place where history was stored. And that here, history wasn't considered to be the tales of people assumed to be "important" but that it included us all. C explained that B had a contribution to make to the history of this place and if that he'd be so kind as as to indulge C, he could make this contribution right now, in the Conficula. C could gather from B's furrowed brow that he hadn't made himself very clear. It didn't matter much, he thought, since it was really B who would talk. C was more of a listener after all.
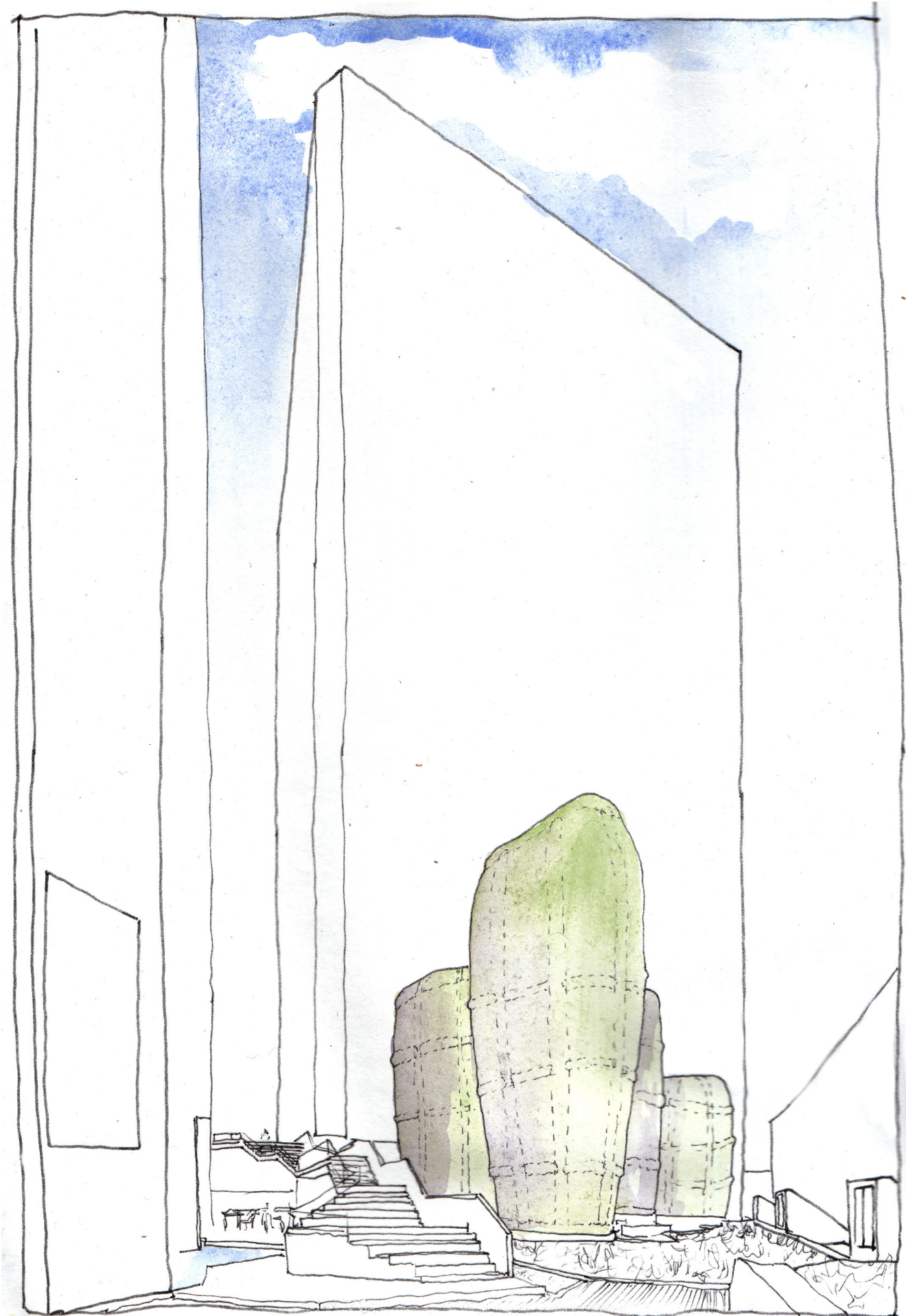
Figure 38: *Cryptagora and staicase leading to gap between towers* (Author 2013).

In the Conficula (Figure 39), C asked only vague, general questions, a technique he believed would encourage the "tellers", as he called them, to wander into the tales they thought were most significant. They often did, but in B this technique seemed to produce anxiety and confusion. C resorted to plan-B, which involved asking a very specific question, setting a starting point from which the teller could build towards experiences that had meant more to them. "Where were you in the winter of 1991?", he selected from a repertoire of specifically unspecific questions. C remained silent while B started gradually. He recounted how he had come to Pretoria in search of excitement and opportunity. He spoke of a younger incarnation of himself, trying desperately to get access to the coded moods of the city. Urbanites wore their urbanity like a badge and they were magnetically attracted to the novice. They were blasé, he was entranced. "That's not how we do that in The City", they would say or "You can't go out dressed like that, not in Pretoria". They needed him, without him, they felt ordinary. In his presence, they were sophisticated by default, they owned Pretoria, understood its secret language. His induction would be paid for with myriad imperceptible humiliations, and a few significant ones.

It was when B tentatively revealed a relationship with the apartheid government that C knew that he had struck a vein, or rather, hit a nerve. This story would not be a comedy after all, despite his initial impressions. B confessed, reeling slightly at the imprudence of his trust in C's judgement. He spoke about his life as an informant for the apartheid police, recounting how he had lead a double life carrying information from his friends to his enemies. In reality, he had only enemies. As he spoke, C had already started the reconstruction of his story into a fiction. He wanted to ask, "did you ever lie to the police?" but couldn't get himself to interrupt B. The literary implications, the dramatic potential of this story revolved around such a moment. As an informant, he could lie. He could settle a score with an old enemy, lover or thief. The story was of a victim of apartheid violence turned villainous — doubly so for embracing his tormentor. Wielding all the power of the militant state apparatus against the antagonists of his past, the South African anti-hero could be among the most infamous of literary characters.

As B spoke C made notes in a scrawl so illegible that even as he wrote them, he knew that there would be no hope of deciphering them later. The writing was a mnemonic device, he thought, it helped him to remember. When B ran out of steam C had to stop the "session". He was about to deliver his paper, "Praetorian Guards" at the conference being held in the restaurant which forms the eastern edge of the
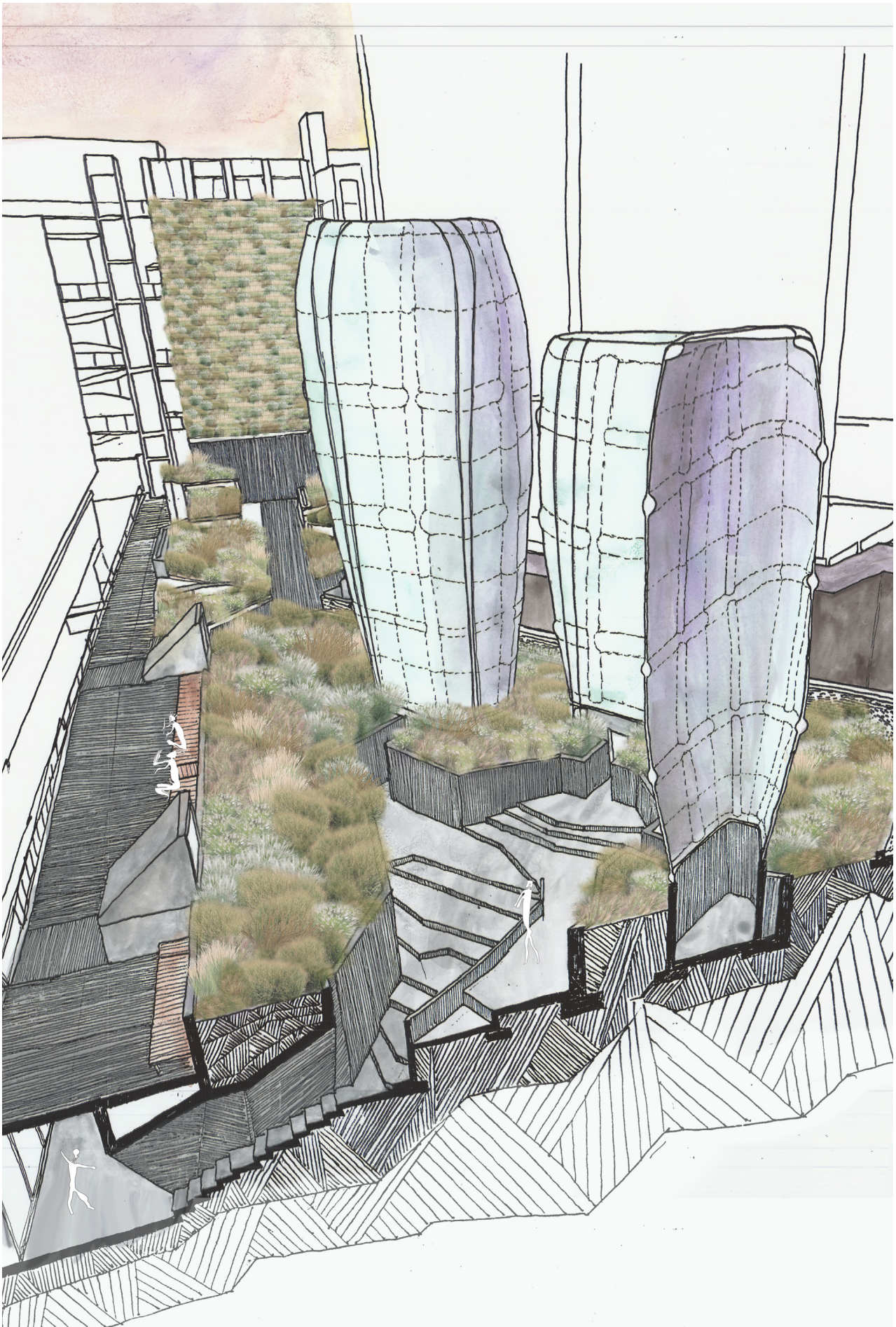
Figure 39: *Section through Conficula, Cryptagora and Ediotheque* (Author 2013).

Cryptagora.

He told B to drop by whenever he felt like it (as long as it was during office hours). "Go to the reception under the stairs there" he said as he pointed east "and ask for C, they'll call me." He left the Conficula in a scurry since he still had to go back to his Glossarcary (Figure 40) to formalise the notes from that session and and to pick up the printout of his paper. He was number two on the list, immediately after A. He was looking forward to seeing her, was excited even but thought better of it. I'm sure she doesn't even think of me that often.
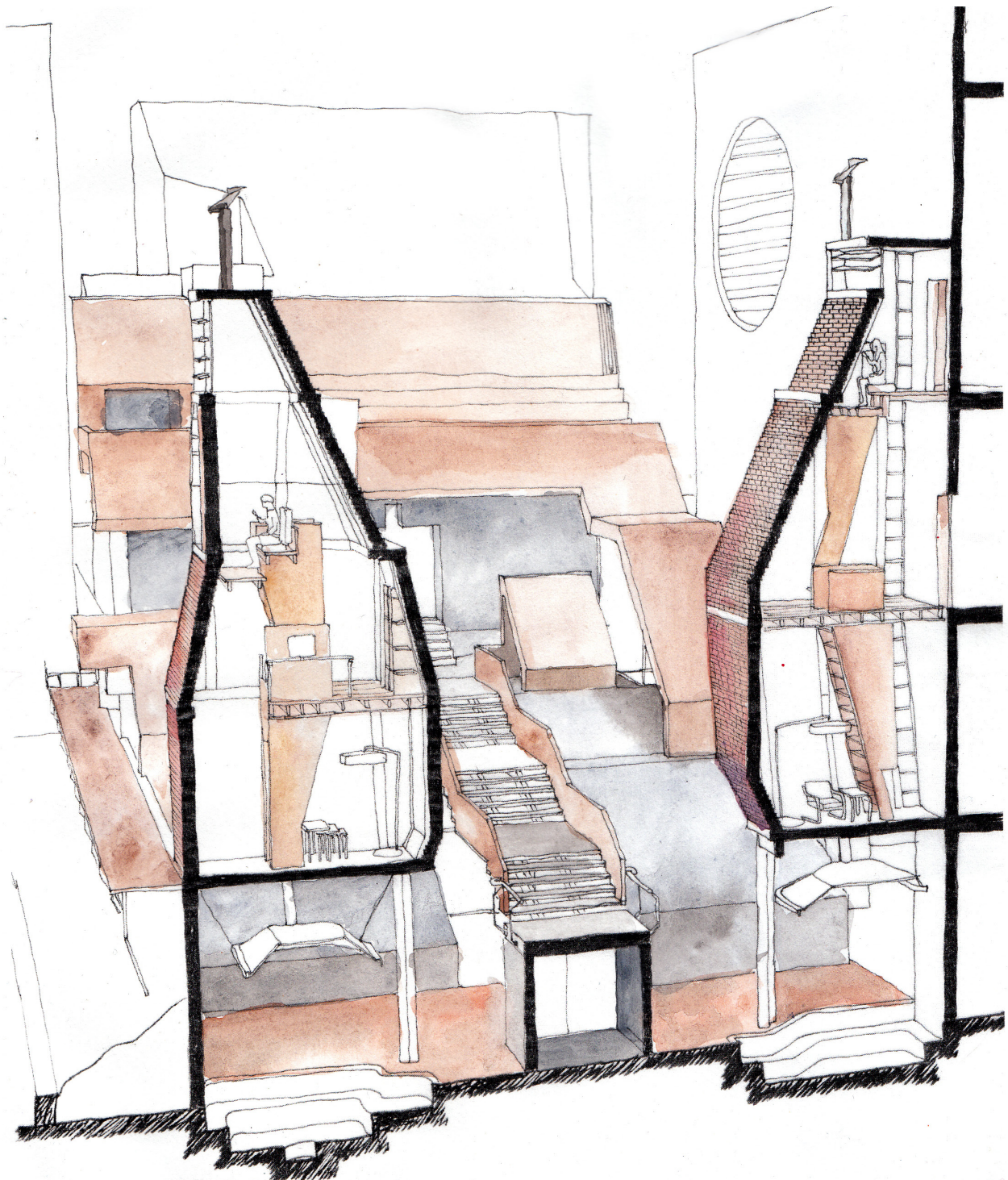

Figure 40: *Section through Logocentre and Glossarcaria* (Author 2013).

PRAETORIAN GUARDS

An origin myth for the Telkom Towers and a speculative
reading of the Narrative Factory programme.

In June 1969 the *Pretoria Amendment Scheme* No 1/152 increased the maximum building height in Pretoria to 138m (Brittan, pp.260). This legislative concession, combined with Pretoria's "overriding desire to possess international symbols of modernity" (Brittan, pp. 253) initiated a short-lived, but potent wave of skyscraper construction in the CBD. The crest of this frozen wave is still clearly visible on the Pretoria skyline (Figures 41). Emanating primarily northward from Church Square, it terminates abruptly in the north west onto several blocks which are almost completely vacant (Figure 42). The buildings which occupied these vacant blocks — low-rise residential buildings which formed Marabastad — were demolished in 1967, ostensibly to make way for a new freeway which would take the N4 Highway through the west of the city (Meyer Pienaar Tayob, 1998). Unlike the impressive downtown section of the M1 Highway in Johannesburg, which weaves among the tall buildings and emphasises their exhilarating promise of a technologically advanced society, the N4 proposal would have offered a view of Pretoria from the outside, making Pretoria's skyscrapers part of an *image* of a city. The fortunate fact that this highway was never constructed has, however, meant that the conglomeration of tall buildings are set in stark contrast to the semi-desolate landscapes immediately to the west of the CBD. On the north-western periphery of this dense conglomeration, where the juxtaposition of the tower in the landscape is at its most dramatic, stands the Telkom Headquarters (Figure 43).

Constructed in phases from 1970 to the late 1980s, the Telkom complex stands today as a monument to the aspirations of a nationalist minority. The disjuncture between the towers and their setting — the sudden drop in density to a post-urban veld condition — stands as a monument to the dissolution of those aspirations.

As a means of grasping the metaphorical significance of this site, I have selected to appropriate the well-known story of the Tower of Babel in order to mythologize the origins and decline of these brutalist structures, and to reveal their ideological foundations as set in a homogenous utopia. The construction of the tower in the City of Babel was commenced by a society "of one language" (Genesis 11: 1-9. King James Version). It was conceived as a defensive measure "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." (Ibid.). It was intended to keep a society prone to dispersal together. The parallels with the architecture of Afrikaner nationalism (with which any large-scale construction of the apartheid era is automatically associated) are reasonably straightforward. Stanley Uys (1988, pp.208) argues that

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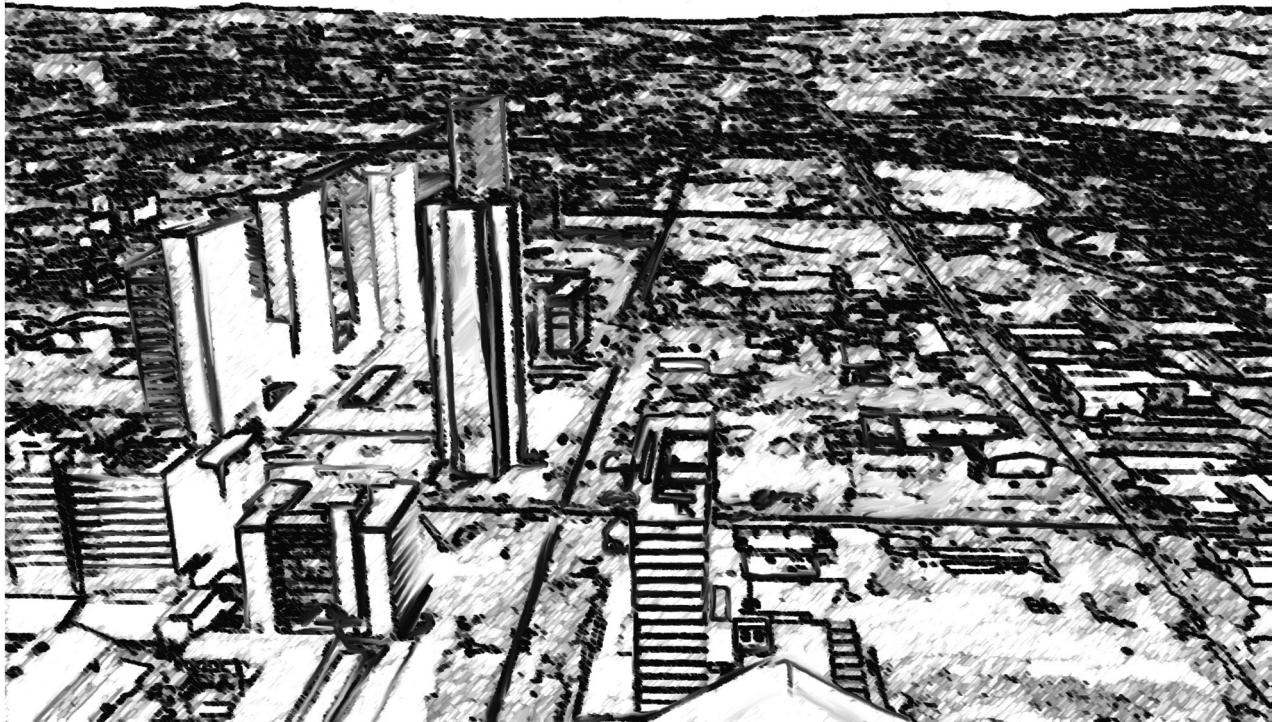Figure 41: *View from Telkom Towers looking south-east* (Author 2013).

Figure 42: *View from Telkom Towers looking west* (Author 2013).

Figure 43: *Satellite image showing location of the site* (Author 2013).

a backbone of the Afrikaner nationalist ideology was the belief that their supremacy had been divinely ordained. It is somewhat ironic, then, that, though apparently fated to rule, it remained an imperative of the apartheid state that a permanent presence be elaborated and strengthened at the bureaucratic heart of the nation: Pretoria. In *Erecting Capital Icons*, Philip Brittan and Gary van Wyk (1998:253) eloquently connect this permanence, this presence, with size. The Telkom Towers present us with both physical and institutional enormity. Under the (then) *Minister of Transport and Communication*, the administrative offices of the *South African Posts and Telecommunications*, was established at the inter-section of Bosman street and Proes street (now Johannes Ramokhoase street) as the headquarters of a centralized, national communication network. This arrangement effectively monopolised the services of the Post Office as well as telegram and telephone services. It represented a monolithic ideal for communication in South Africa, and a vision of a bureaucratic utopia (Horwitz,1999). Materially, the towers are nothing if not large. The absence of a plinth - the mediating element often employed to soften the impact of a tall surface meeting the horizontal ground plane - emphasises the awe-inspiring height of these concrete monoliths (Figure 44).

With the backing of a highly interventionist state, and a monopoly on communications technology, the South African Post and Telecommunications (SAPT) was a step towards the creation of a homogenous culture based on white-minority rule, and the creation of a "people of one language" (Genesis 11: 1-9. King James Version), in this case, Afrikaans. The Soweto Uprisings of the 16th of June 1976 were a direct result of a protest against the introduction of Afrikaans as a primary medium of instruction in South African schools (Uys, 1988). The biblical narrative introduces the subject of conflicting languages with a relatively benign act of divine intervention, when God says: "Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." The violence of the South African language conflict, a conflict of understanding, contrasts sharply with its mythological precedent, but the eventual effects have their similarities. Time-lapse compositions of satellite imagery of Pretoria spanning the previous thirty years or so reveal a snail-paced eastward exodus of major construction projects. While it is true that the city centre of Pretoria is by no means abandoned, it is clear that major construction currently favours the periphery. This movement echoes the end of the story of the Tower in the City of Babel in which "they left off [building] the city".
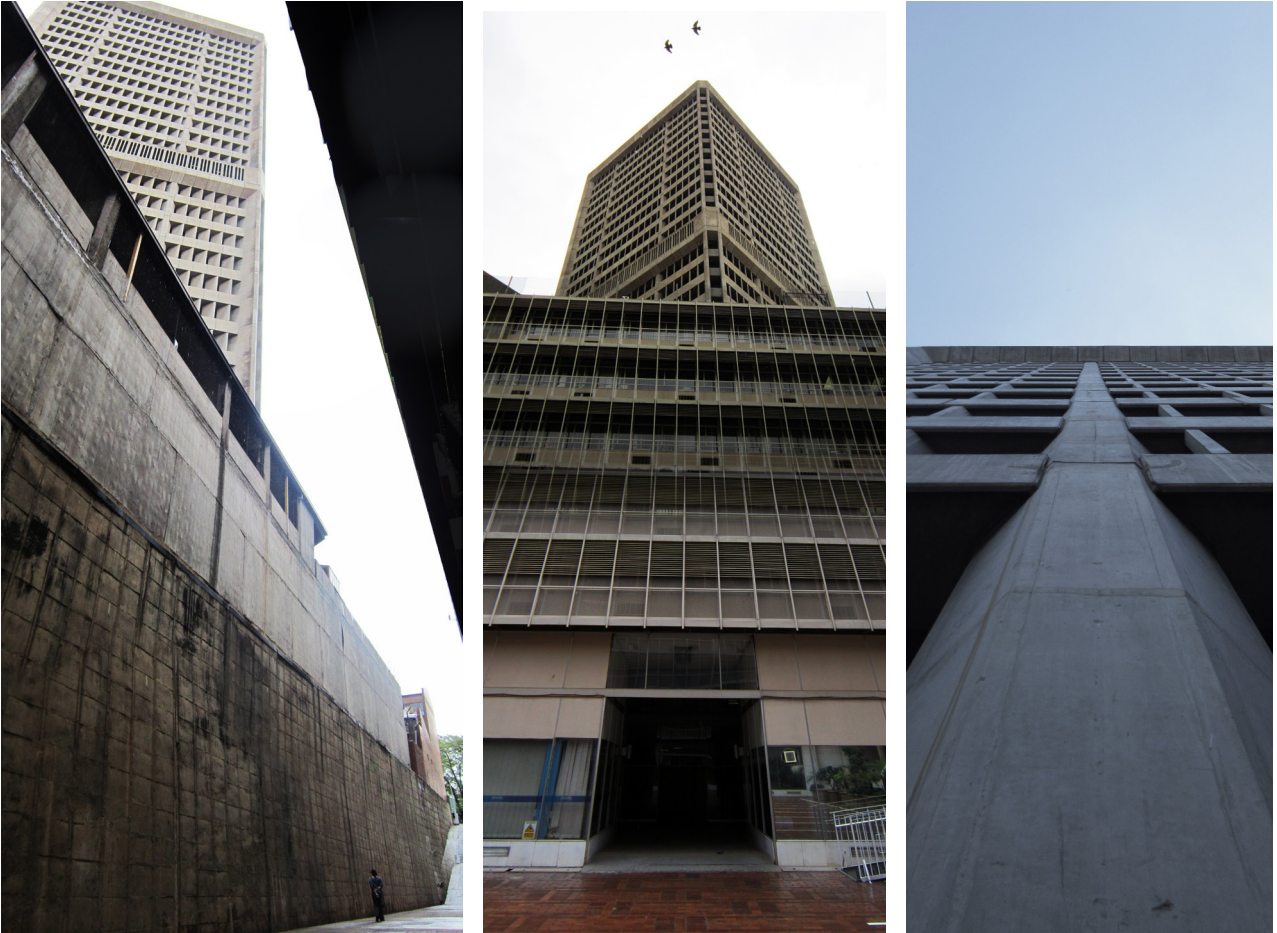
Figure 44: *Site photographs* (Author 2013).

The SAPT was more or less dissolved in 1991 when Telkom SA was established as a company. This formed part of the State's gradual move towards less invasive administration of national infrastructure (Telkom is currently 39% government owned). It was assumed that institutions would be more efficient and less expensive to manage within a more corporate culture (Horwitz, 1999). Without the backing of nationalist ideology, South African institutions were forced into searching for new sources of legitimacy. The first step in this search, in South Africa, revolved around confession and forgiveness. *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission* was established, in part, in order to purge South African institutions of the memory of their Apartheid heritage. Leman-Langlois and Shearing summarized the process as follows:

> "Forgiveness as a sensibility was hailed out at the hearings in ways that enabled the hearing to become a mechanism for recruiting South Africans as forgiving citizens, on the path to a new South Africa in which State institutions will be established as sources of unity and pride" (2008, 213).

While the complexities of truth, confession and forgiveness present many complications for individuals, it is even more problematic, if indeed not impossible, for systems, infrastructures and, ultimately, architecture to confess and to be forgiven.

In J.M. Coetzee's Booker Prize winning novel *Disgrace* we are offered a glimpse of the systemically pervasive nature of Apartheid and its aftermath. Overwhelmed by the intensity of the inhumanity of what befalls him, the protagonist, despairingly proclaims that it is "[n]ot human evil, just a vast circulatory system, to whose workings pity and terror are irrelevant" (1999, pp.98). As such, the "confession" that institutions must enact, as well as the forgiveness that must be bestowed on them, are systemic, and implicate all of society and it's various embodiments in architecture. Peter Sloterdijk calls this vast circulatory system "monstrous" (2012, pp. 165) and describes our complicity by stating that "If you ask a modern person 'where were you at the time of the crime?', the answer is: 'I was at the scene of the crime' — that is to say, within that totality of the monstrous which, as a complex of modern criminal circumstances, encompasses its accomplices and accessories." (2012, pp.165). And so we are implicated. This is the soil in which the Narrative Factory has cast its roots.
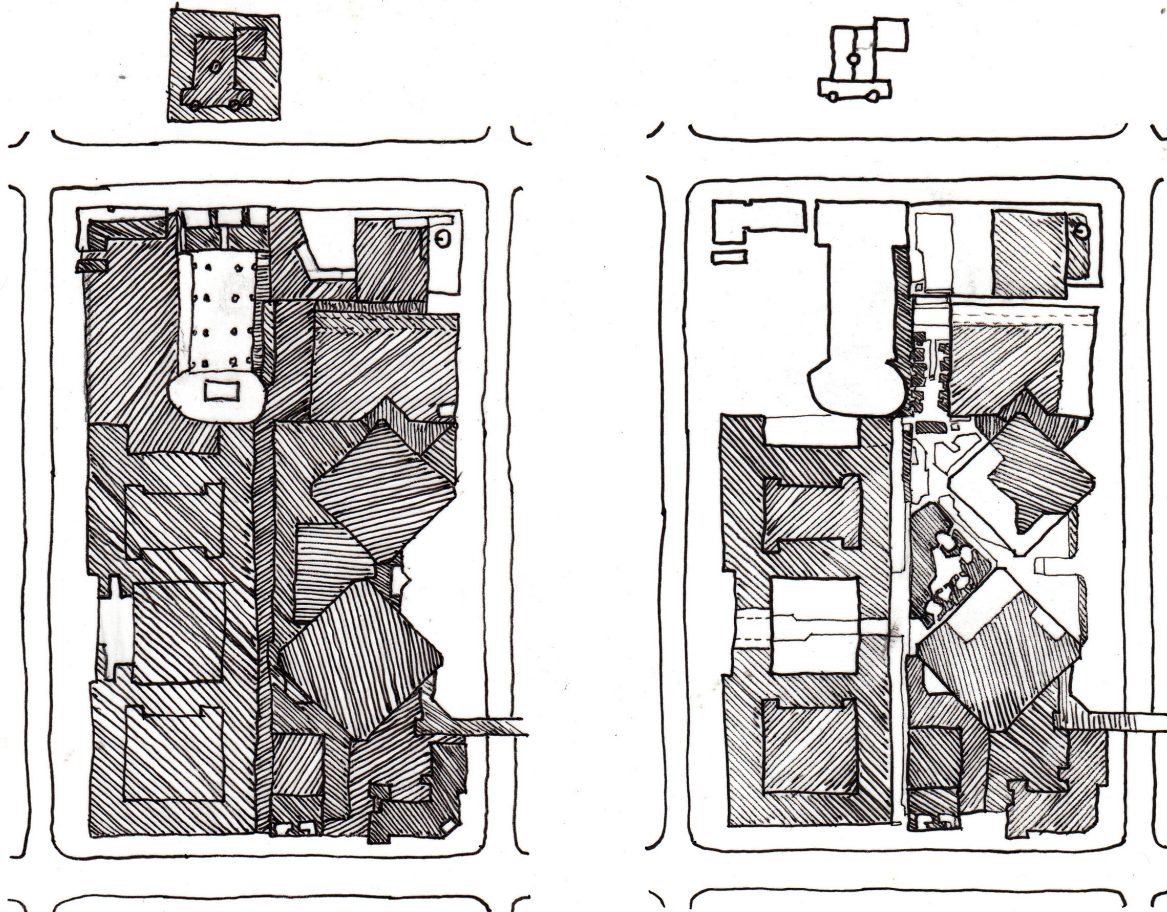
Figure 45: *Site plans indicating access to site before (left) and after (right) intervention* (Author 2013).

The first step in an intervention like this one is the development of a programme. Here, the site-history was a primary informant (Figure 46). The site on which the Telkom complex now stands was previously occupied by the Post-Office Museum and across the street to the west, is the Government Printing Works (1926), the public office of which faces Paul Kruger street on the eastern edge of the Telkom block. The site is steeped in memories revolving around communication.

The Narrative Factory attempts to combine this memory with the imperative for a space of public dialogue in which new identities can be formed in a reconciliatory atmosphere. I will do a reading of the programme through this lens from west to east. The easternmost component of the Narraive Factory is the *Ediotheque* (Figure 47). The title of this archive is derived from an unusual mix of associated words from diverse sources. First, there is the Nguni prefix *e-* which denotes place as found in "eThekwini". This is followed by an appropriation of the Greek root *idio* which translates roughly as "peculiar", "distinct" or "specific" (it is the primary association in the words idiosyncratic and, humorously, idiot). When seen as a first step in the programmatic development of the site, the *Ediotheque* introduces the first concept on which the Narrative Factory relies. As a response to the enormity of the condition in which any archive exists — that of an indescribably dense mass of experience generally known as history — the *Ediotheque* challenges the conventions of organizing historical information. The narratives with which we ordinarily store, categorize and describe history often rely on themed subjects and notable persons or events. The *Ediotheque*, however, connects histories to their physical location instead. As an archive dedicated to a comparatively small area (less than one square kilometre) it uses physical proximity as its primary organizing device. I imagine it could be quoting William Faulkner when he said "I discovered that my own little postage stamp of native soil was worth writing about and that I would never live long enough to exhaust it" (1968, pp.255).

One emerges from the *Ediotheque* into the *Cryptagora*. The name of this intervention is oxymoronic since the Greek root *Kruptos* translates as "hidden" or "secret" while the agora is closely associated with openness and the public. It is appropriate as a name for a public space hidden from view. It is public in so far as that it gives access to an urban space from which it was previously denied but it is hidden by its ambiguous entrances. Accessed exclusively through other buildings, the *Cryptagora* forms a sanctuary in the most dramatic of the spaces on the site — the enormous volume created by the towers themselves.
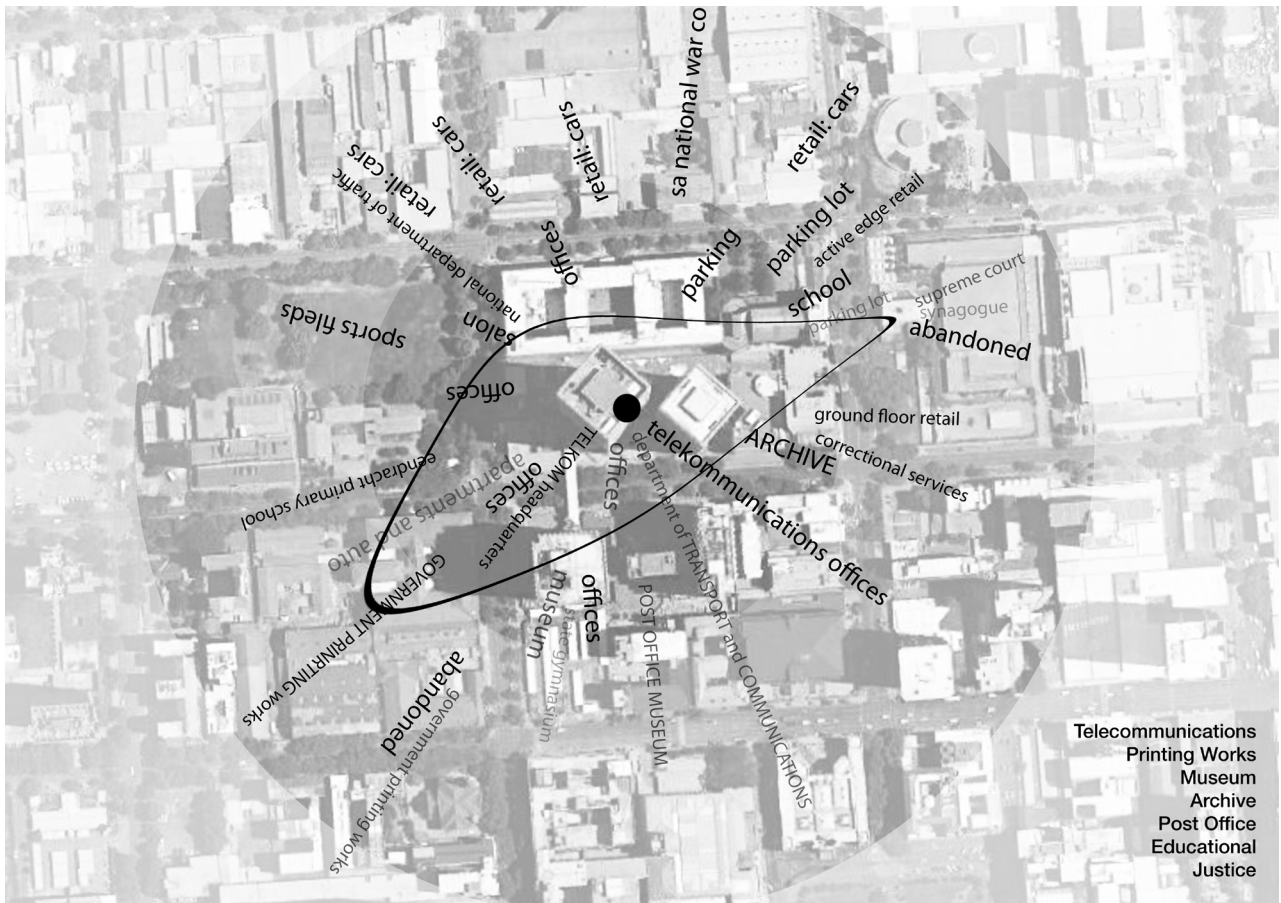
Figure 46: *Site plan showing existing and former programmes on the site* (Author 2013).

It is within this space that the *Conficulae* are situated. These pneumatic structures form spaces where the *Ediotheque's* concept of localized historical organization is expanded to include the public in the present. Here, members of the public relay their personal stories to the writers and artists employed by the Narrative Factory, to be translated into art works. The naming of the *Conficulae* produces interesting echoes. The name is derived from the Latin prefix *con-* which means "together" or "with", *fat-* meaning "to speak or "say" and *-culus*, a Latinate diminutive suffix. The reference here is to the ancient Roman, Gothic and Renaissance aediculae: spaces within spaces that house and demarcate a sacred realm. Speech — specifically face to face dialogue between two people — is venerated and the profane and sacred are hybridised. It is important to note, however, that here the *-cula*, as seen in the singular *Conficula*, could also be associated with the Latin word *culpa* which translates as "guilt" or "blame" and is, as such, a reference to the implication of all individuals in the "monstrous" of our time. One could argue that to tell our personal stories is to confess our implication and that that realization is a forgiveness of sorts.

Moving east from the Cryptagora, one approaches the *Synthetory* — a place of synthesis. Here, artists are given the opportunity to visualise, project and refine their projects digitally while discussing them with other artists from various disciplines. The *Synthetory* forms a significant threshold on the site and marks a fundamental transition in the program. While the *Ediotheque* and *Conficulae* serve as repositories and resources of culture, the *Synthetory* marks the transition into the self-conscious production of cultural artefacts out of these resources. On its western edge, the *Synthetory* defines the *Logocentre*, a small public square.

Like the *Cryptagora*, the *Logocentre* is hidden from public view, which creates a sanctuary from the bustling commercial streets. The *Logocentre* acts as a container for the *Glossarcaria* — essentially eleven "offices" for writers. The name is derived from the Greek *glōssa* meaning "language" or "tongue" and the Latin word *arca* meaning "chest". The suffix *-ary,* present in the singular form, *Glossarcary*, is used to denote places or receptacles as in "library, "dictionary", and "seminary" and presents interesting second readings. In the plural *Glossarcaria*, the *-aria* may also refer to the musical concept which is defined as "an elaborate accompanied song for a solo voice" (1986: pp 78). This second meaning is significant as a statement on the generally individual pursuit of writing. The writers of the *Glossarcaria* are tasked with translating archival material from the *Ediotheque* and the personal narratives collected in the *Conficulae*
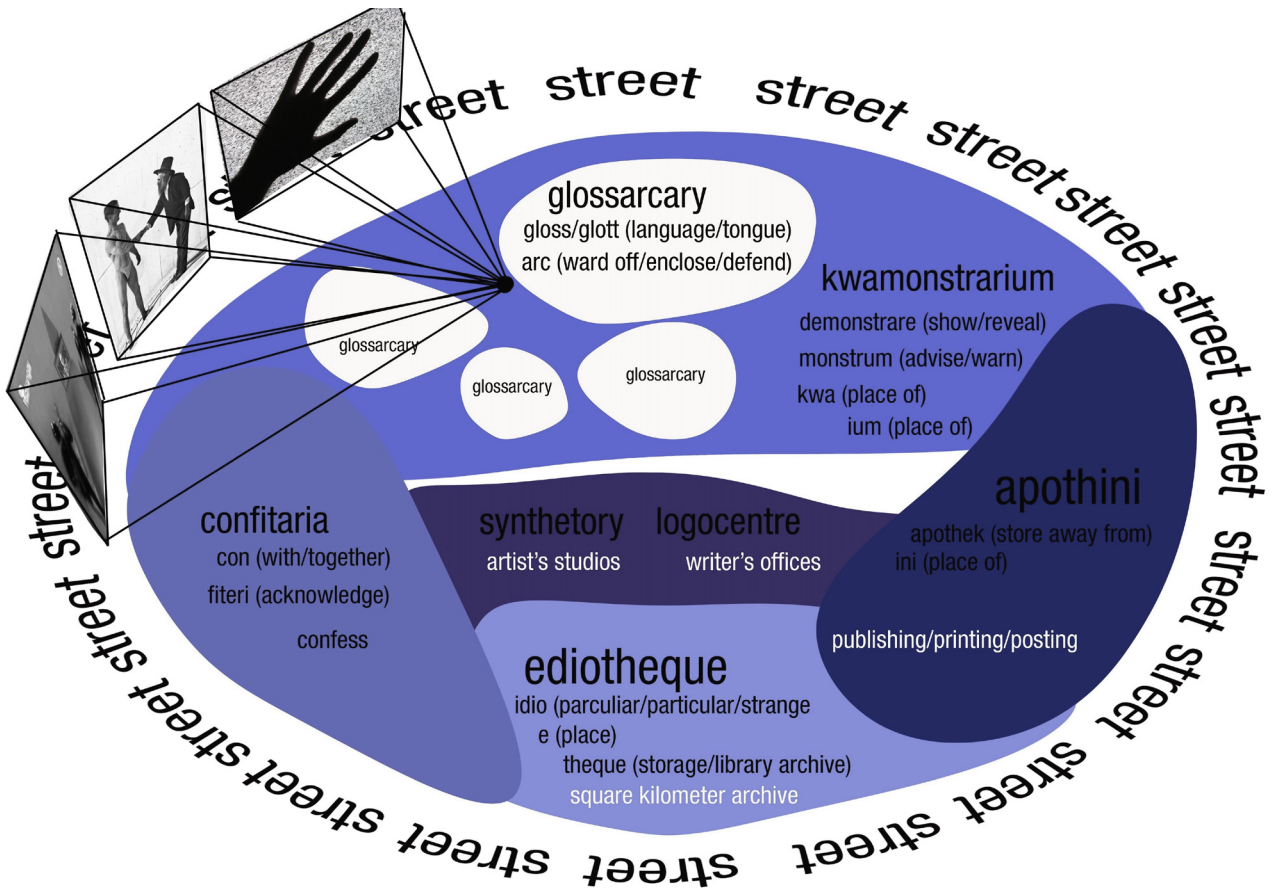
Figure 47: *Programme concept* (Author 2013).

into literature and poetry. This is intended to expand the presence of the 11 official languages of South Africa. The position on indigenisation is a relatively moderate one. Spatially, English placed on an equal footing with the other languages (rather than simply inverting the existing linguistic hierarchy where English is conspicuously at the top) by providing similarly sized *Glossarcaria* for all 11 languages. While the *Glossarcaria* provide distinct territories for each language, the Logocentre which contains them, acts as a mixing chamber of sorts where members of the general public engage with one another in a variety of languages.

The westernmost component of the Narrative Factory is the *Kwamonstrarium*. This is the most conspicuous part of the Narrative Factory and it is the primary public amenity. Here assistance is offered to members of the public in setting up and managing online personae. It is also, more simply, a point of access to the internet and, consequently, the global media. The title *Kwamonstrarium* is derived from a combination of the Nguni prefix *Kwa-* which denotes place (as in KwaZulu-Natal) and the Latinate *mōnstrāre* which means "to show". A secondary reading, probably a first reading for most, is a relationship to "monster" which is derived from to the Latin word *monēre* which translates as "to warn". The word monster has many associations, it can denote "something large" (a monster of a marathon) and, more obviously, a frightening and unnatural mix of things. In Afrikaans, in addition to the meanings mentioned above, a "monster" is also a "samlple". The echoes in this naming produces many variable readings and may in fact be a metaphor for the myriad viewpoints present on the internet.

It is from the *Kwamonstrarium* that this paper takes its title. The Praetorian guards were the bodyguards of the Roman Emperors until the 4th century. Their proximity to the emperor gave them an inordinate amount of power and soon the Praetorian Guard was dispensing with unwanted emperors and selecting new ones (Rankov, 1994). With this in mind, I would like to posit a possible, specific warning function of the *Kwamonstrarium*. There is, of course the obvious reading, that one is now in a space which is a "sample" of "something very large" which has an aspect of danger. A detail in the context however, puts the warning into a sharper and more direct focus. The *Kwamonstrarium* is placed "floating" over the existing public interface for the Government Printers. By doing so, it enables a reading of the *Kwamonstrarium* that it is simultaneously a celebration of the democratization of the media currently under way (through internet technologies), and a warning to potential "emperors" that a diverse, emerging South
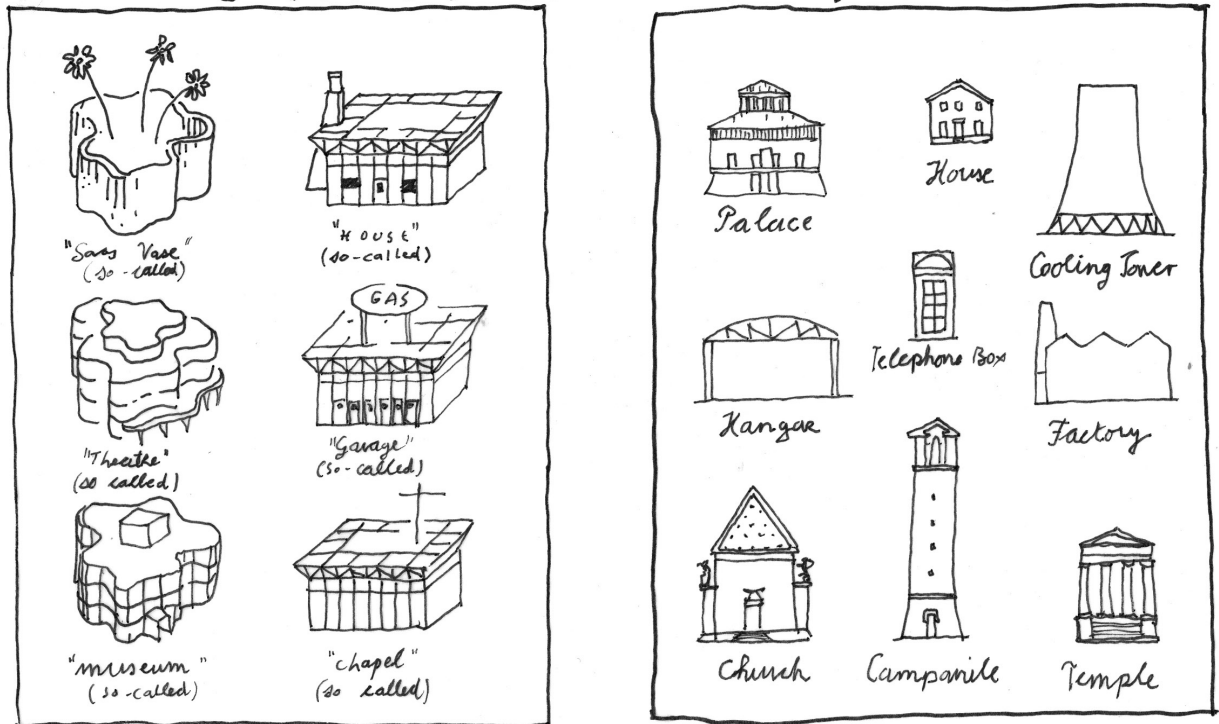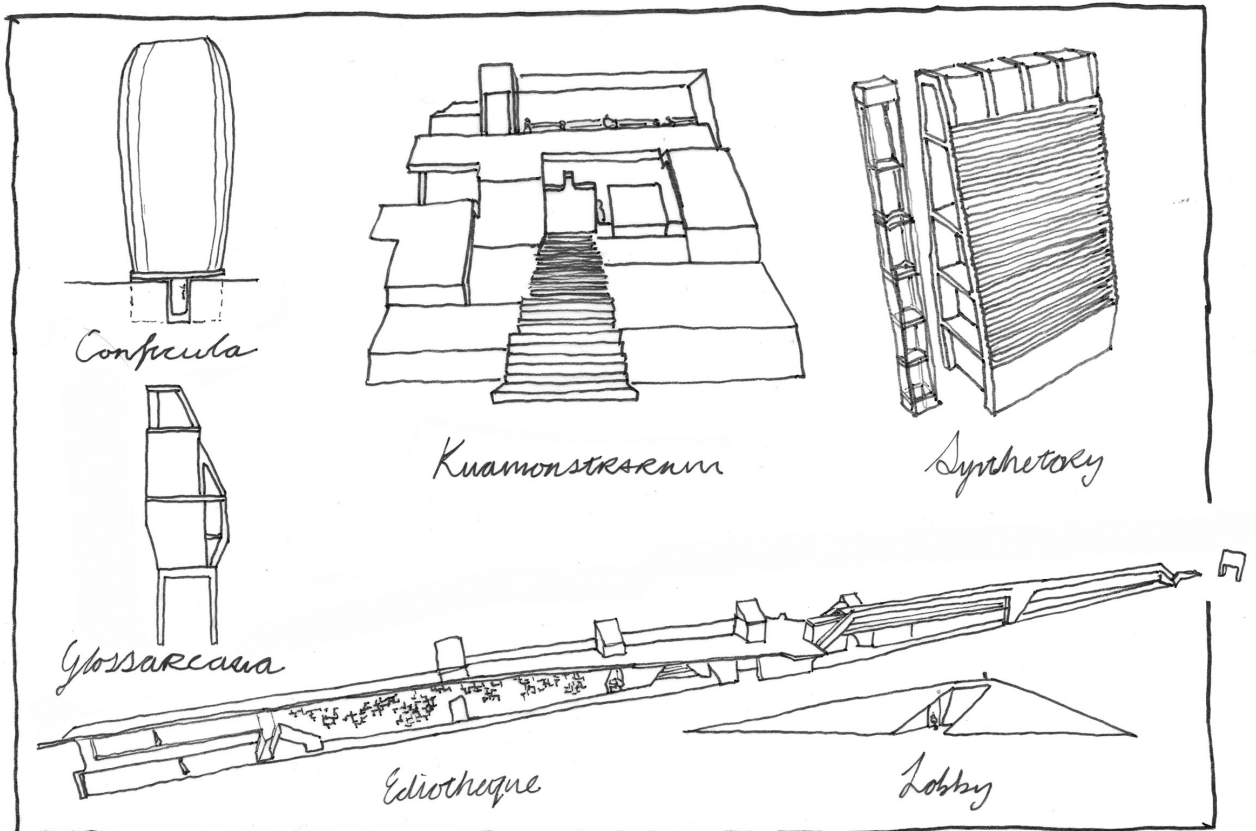
Figure 48: (above) *Uniform versus Form* (Krier, L. 1980). (below) *Ponderable Objects* (Author 2013).

African public is the guardian of national identity.

FICTION

D: A Curator

From the top drawer of the writing desk in her office, D removes a small butcher-paper wrapper and applies a conservative dose of the *Chanel No. 5* which she unwraps from it. After almost 60 years, it still takes her back to a particular summer in her youth. She has taken care all her life not to use this perfume too often, for fear that the memory would be overwritten. It hasn't. And in the way that only a smell could do, she is transported, dramatically, to another time. She's been seduced by the number, No.5, ever since she heard the rumour that Coco Chanel had extracted it from the paving stone patterns on the pathways of Cistercian orphanage where she grew up. The intersections of life and architectural details like paving patterns, is a cause dear to her heart. It is the early morning and in two hours she, D, will be delivering her lecture "Volunteers from the Audience" at and on the Narrative Factory. Though her audience probably expects details of her work at the Ediotheque, she intends, rather, to discuss the details of details. D has given many lectures in her life and has internalised the techniques required for the seamless delivery of complex ideas. The most important part of this technique, by far, more important than passion or conviction (she is suspicious of them both) is to consider her argument calmly before her lecture. For this purpose, she is about to leave the Ediotheque for a reflective stroll around the Narrative Factory as it blooms into the activity of the day. As she descends the staircase from her office into the archive-gallery she is reminded of her first impression of the shelves set into the wall (Figure 49).
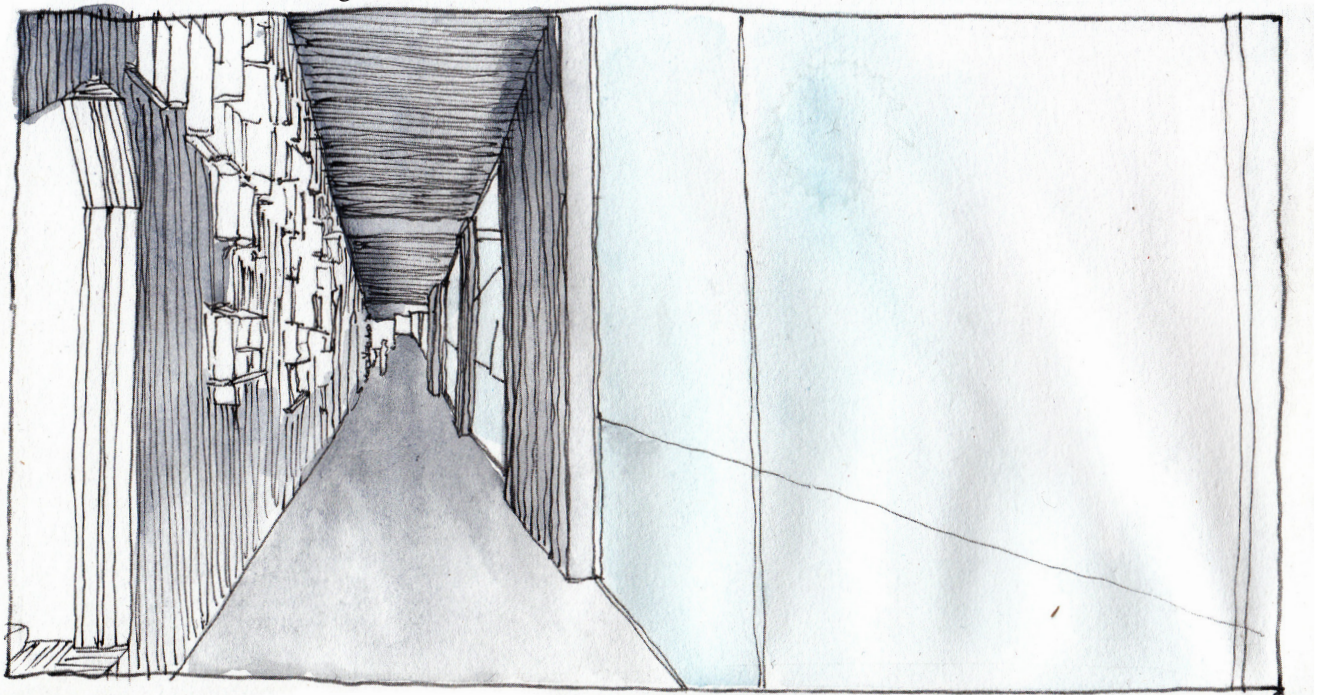

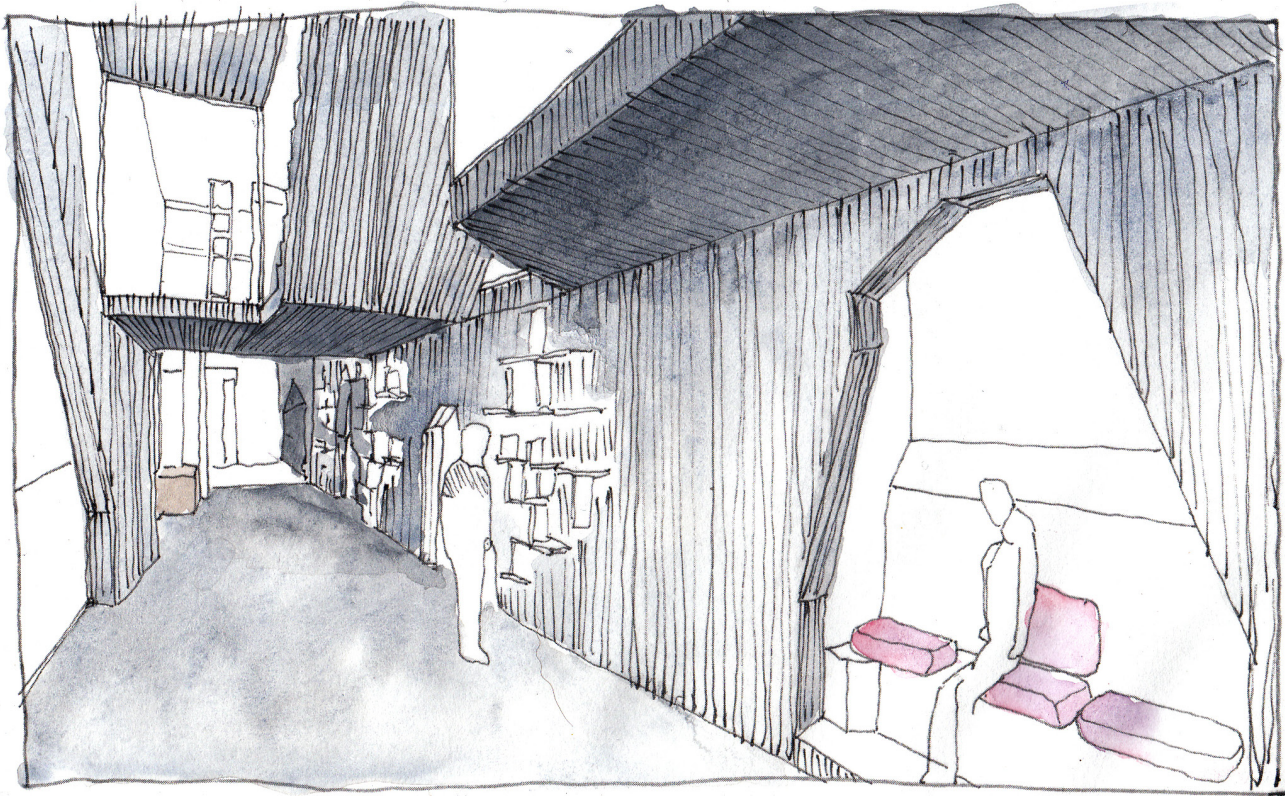Figure 49: *Ediotheque interior view looking west* (Author 2013).

Figure 50: *View of Ediotheque interior showing reception, seating niches and shelving* (Author 2013).

Though the shelves were stacked with historical documents, images and artefacts, rather than prayers, the southern wall made her think of the *Wailing Wall* at the temple in Jerusalem, where pilgrims stuff their prayers into cracks and crevices — as though their God were buried deep inside the mass, retrieving their messages from the darkness within. That culture seems to be aligned with the dictum "God is in the Detail", attributed to Mies van der Rohe. But, she thinks, we must remember that the devil is also said to be in the details. She passes the Ediotheque reception where the receptionist is making himself a cup of coffee.

> "Would you like me to print out your lecture?" he asks as he looks up from his ascetic, sugarless coffee.
>
> "Thank you, but I've memorised it."
>
> "Every word?"
>
> "I used the Narrative Factory as a *Memory Palace*, it should work."
>
> "I'm looking forward to it already, see you later."

She smiles, turns and ascends the stairs up to the Crypatgora (Figure 51). The air is crisp and refreshing but she gives a theatrical shiver for the benefit of G who is starting up the pump to inflate the second Conficula. The westernmost Conficula is already fully inflated, allowing her to use it as a thor-

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oughfare to get to the upper level. As the gravel path crunches under her Nike flats, she lifts her head, as she always does at this point. The vertigo that the towers affect in her have, over the months that she has been here, looking at the towers from this point almost daily, taken on a benevolent, familiar air. I suppose familiarity doesn't breed contempt after all. D walks around the staircase leading down from the split between the two towers. The staircase appears to have been fractured from the towers by some sort of seismic event, I'll have to work that into *Volunteers* somewhere. She approaches the Synthetory by walking directly down the centre of the walkway which terminates in its west facade, her arms slightly outstretched. She makes a point of walking right up to the wall, almost brushing against it before she turns to walk around. It's still closed. On the way back to the restaurant she'll take her stroll inside to speak to H, the incautiously intimate, and therefore endlessly fascinating, Synthetory receptionist. On the other side of the Synthetory, she looks up at the sheer facade rising out of the Logocentre walkway. When she first saw the Synthetory from this angle it reminded her of Stanley Kubrick's famous monolith. With people hurrying back and forth on the external walkways, it was as though they were attempting to infiltrate a bulk from another dimension (Figure 52). The doors are cut into the facade as though they were carved from an existing mass, like Abu Simbel or the churches of Lalibela. H waves around the corner and gestures to D to join her in the Synthetory, her expression says *gossip*.

"I'm not above it, what have you got for me?".

H tells her that she has just been informed by the main receptionist that two of the conference guests who will be presenting today have "what you could call a *history*."

"I can't divulge who, but it's A and C! Can you believe it? I can't, but I do."

The details are sketchy and seem implausibly theatrical at times, but it is apparent that their love story has all the hallmarks of a classic tragicomedy. After a moment's silence, in which both H and D nod solemnly to themselves, D turns around to leave for the restaurant to ensure that everything is set-up for the lectures. She is startled to see A about one fifth of a centimetre away from her, and approaching quickly. After the impact, D assesses A's face for expressions that would reveal that she has overheard their indiscretion. But no, A seems oblivious and is in too much of a hurry and *must* be excused. "See you inside" they smile and go their separate ways while H turns to her computer and types away even though it is still switched off. Later, after the lectures by A and C have finished without incident, D approaches the podium and, after tapping on the mic begins:
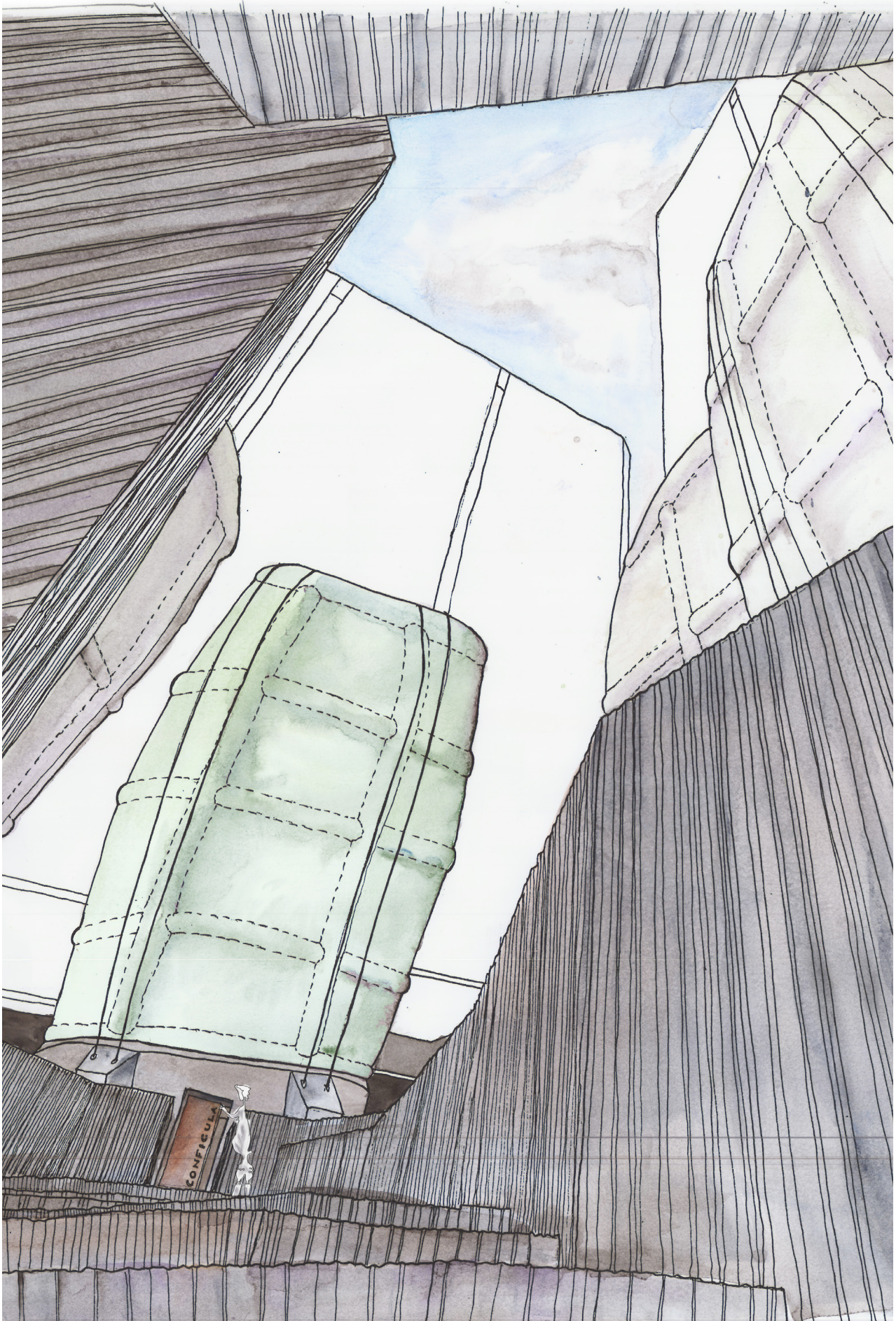
Figure 51: *Entrance to Cryptagora from Ediotheque* (Author 2013).

"My colleague A has touched on the importance of creative users in the occupation of architectural space and the role of ambiguity in the production of new practices. I would like to augment that with this paper, which deals with the production of meaning by creative readers of the texts of architecture."

Figure 52: *Synthetory north facade and entrance* (Author 2013).

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VOLUNTEERS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Authorship and Authority in Architectural Production and a
Speculative Reading of the Narrative Factory

A particularly interesting piece of legislation regarding the relationship between a design, its author, and the site for which the design was developed, is the *Copyright Act, no. 98 of 1978*. Section 2 of the act covers the copyrights related to "original artistic works" which include works of architecture — defined as buildings, their models, and architectural drawings (McKenzie. 2009, pp.134). In this section, the *Copyright Act* makes an implicit statement about authorship in architecture. Copyright on works of architecture remains with the "original author" and is not transferred to the owner of the work – the client. Accordingly, the client is not permitted to reproduce the work without the consent of the author. A client may also not construct the building on another site and, if the site is sold, the license to produce a building *on* that site, according to the plans provided *for* that site, is extended to the new owner and their agents. While it is interesting to note that a design is legally tied to its site — that the *genius loci* is legally protected — this paper will focus on the issues of authorship raised by this legislation.

An implicit assumption of the *Copyright Act* is that there is a single author, or closely associated body of authors working as a unit, responsible for a work of architecture. And final authority regarding a work of art resides with the author of a work, and not the owner. As such, it is symptomatic of a broader culture which desires to understand the "true meaning" of texts through access to authorial intent.

Two potential manifestations of authorial intent are examined briefly in Steven Groák's *The Idea of Building* (1992). He discusses the German poet Friedrich von Schiller's division of poets into two categories — the naïve and the sentimental — as a classification that may be applied to architects as authors. Schiller describes naïve poets as those who see Nature simply or directly, and says that, in the work of these poets, "we are not conscious of the personality of the author" (1992, pp. 159). Whatever narratives emerge from their work have thus been constructed unselfconsciously or intuitively. Groák's architectural analogue for the naïve poet is an architect who works on the level of "image". Schiller's sentimental poets, on the other hand, give us a mediated view or "intellectual reconstruction" of the world (Groák, 1992: 159). The sentimental poet has a message, that is to say, a consciously constructed narrative, and

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stresses that what is being read does indeed originate from the author. For Groák the equivalent in architecture is the architect who "work[s] on the level of an idea" (1992: 159). While there appears, on the surface, to be a fundamental difference between naive and sentimental poets and between architects who work "on the level of image" and those who "work on the level of an idea" a more postmodern view reveals underlying similarities. Writing on Gaston Bachelard's critique of the "directness" of intuition, Gary Cutting points out that "apparently simple objects of our intuition have later proved to have complex hidden structures" (1987, pp.64). So while those working on the level of image may appear to see nature directly, the translation of this view into an art product can never be direct and will always, to some degree, involve "intellectual reconstruction". The presence of the author in the work of sentimental poets, on the other hand, can be critiqued with the theory expounded in Roland Barthes' famous essay *The Death of the Author*. He states that "the voice [of the author] loses its origin", that "it has always been that way" (1978:2), thus suggesting that the concealment or "death" of the author — as would be the case with Schiller's naïve poets — is the natural condition, and that in order to reveal the supposed origin of a text, an author would need to specifically announce his or her presence (as Schiller's sentimental poets do). Unlike works of poetry and literature, buildings generally do not bear the name of their authors. And the South African public is unlikely to be well enough acquainted with the unique tendencies, preferred expressions and recurring concerns of individual architects to be able to identify an author simply by looking at a building. It can therefore be argued that Barthes' assertions on the primacy of the reader in the determination of the meaning of a text is particularly applicable to works of South African architecture.

The filmmaker Peter Greenaway draws on this notion of Barthes's, and takes it a step further, when, in 2007, he declares the death of the cinema at the hands of the remote control on the 31st of September 1983 (he does not specify a time) (2007: Video). He extrapolates the rise of interactivity as the big transformative force of our time into the destruction of narrative in cinema, which he dismisses as "boring". Parametricism, the "new style...enunciated during the 11th Architecture Biennale in Venice" (Schumacher. 2010) can be seen as an architectural parallel to Greenaway's argument. According to Groák's classification, parametricism can be seen as an attempt for architecture "on the level of an idea" to appear as architecture on the level of "image". It attempts to appear as architecture which is uncontaminated by subjective intellectual reconstruction.

In the interview titled *Cinema = Dead* (2007:Video), in which Greenaway expounds his theories, he describes a new cinematic invention of his, which he argues will release cinema from the dogma of narrative. His invention involves a series of machines with which users interact in order to create live, three-dimensional media environments. In the practice of parametricism, a machine is placed between the work of architecture and the architect in order to obscure the agency and subjectivity of the author. This approach negates the authority of the author but does not empower the reader since it actually reduces the perception of architecture as a text. Users are even more unlikely to creatively ponder intended meanings produced by a non-subject. The importance of this pondering is illustrated by Bernard Tschumi's assertion, in one of his *Advertisements for Architecture* of 1975 (Figure 53), that "To really appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder". If reading causes the *death of the author,* then, logically, it follows that *reading is murder*. In other words, in order to really appreciate architecture, you may need to read architecture without access to authorial intent.

In his semi-fictional, semi-theoretical book *Diary of a Bad Year*, J.M. Coetzee discusses the authority of "great authors". The irony is not lost on Coetzee when he quotes Kierkegaard asking us to "[l]earn to speak without authority" (2007: pp.151). By citing Kierkegaard, he invokes the latter's authority despite the fact that Kierkegaard insists that he has none to begin with. Authority is always deferred: Coetzee defers his authority to Kierkegaard who has, in turn, deferred it to a "higher force". For Greenaway, this higher force is the viewer, whom he elevates to the role of filmmaker and for parametricists, the higher force is found in computational algorithms. By handing over his craft to the ubiquitous "user", Greenaway seems to be arguing for the deposition of the author. But his method for "liberating" the "user" from the author, is also eschewing the use of narrative in the *construction* of an art product. Surely, authors could hand over the authority of determining meaning in a text to a "reader" without also handing over the act of "writing" to the reader, or more ominously, a computer. It is this negation of the subjectivity involved in the production of a text that Camille Paglia criticizes when she writes that "[m]ost pernicious of French imports is the notion that there is no person behind a text." (Paglia. 1990: pp 34).
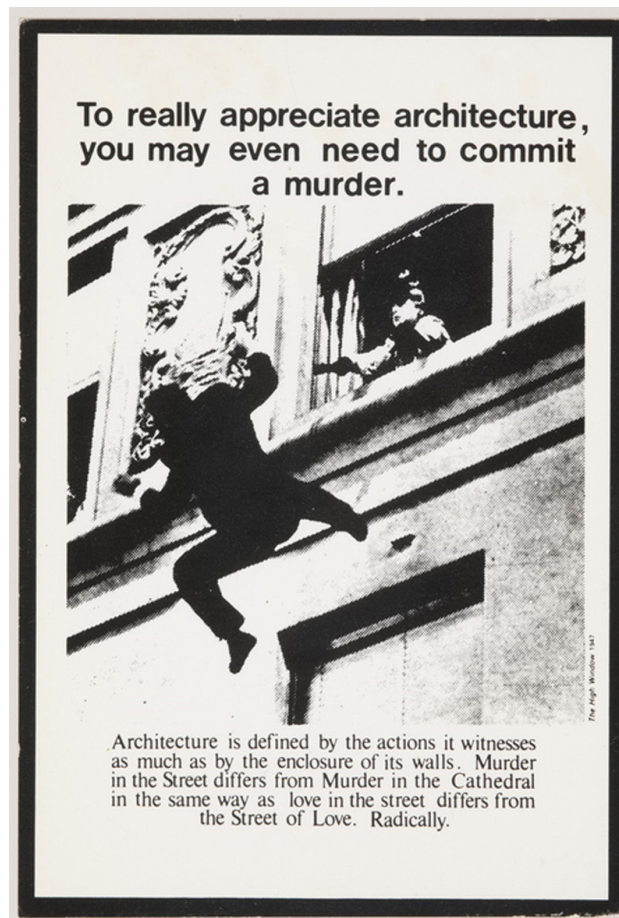
Figure 53: *Advertisements for Architecture*
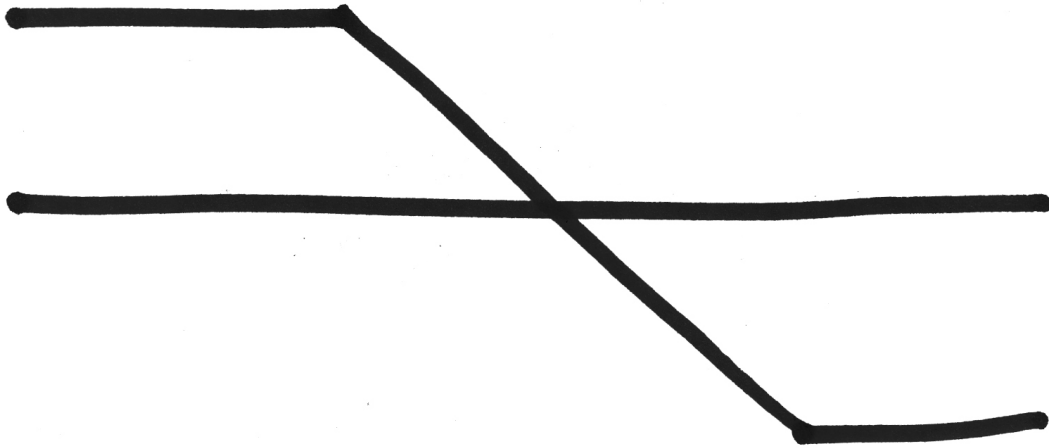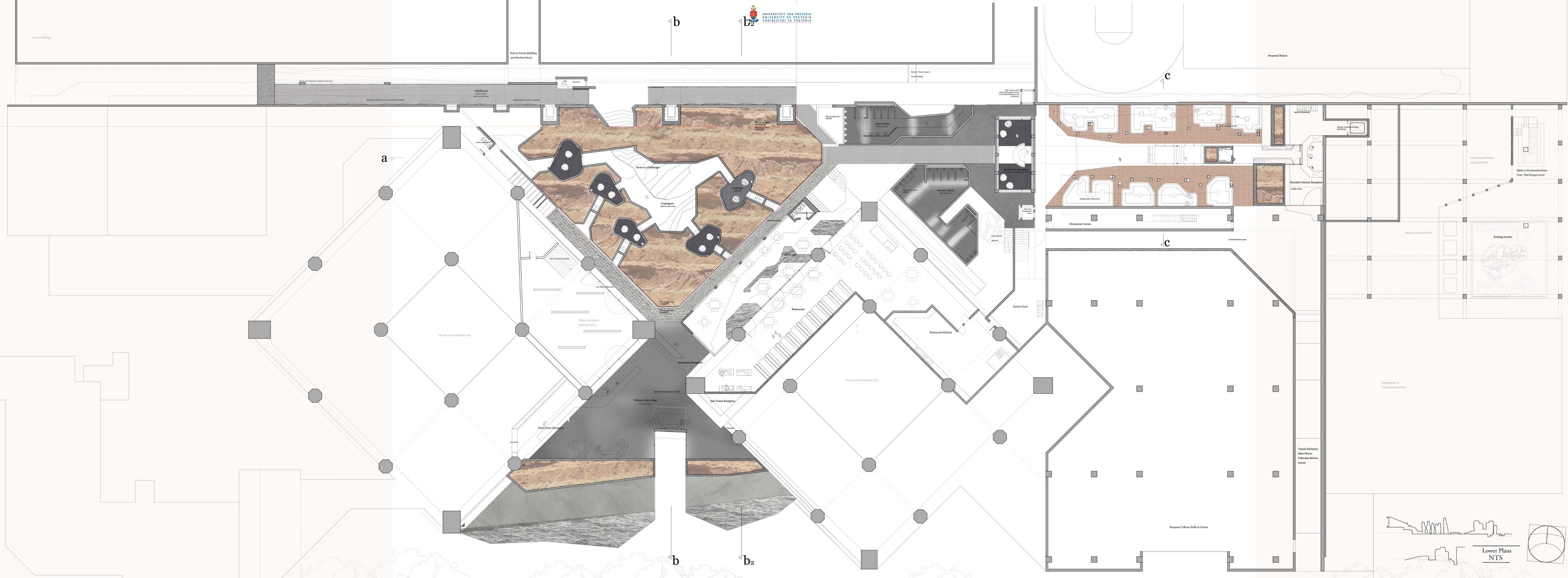(Tschumi, B. 1976-1978).

Figure 54: *Parti diagramme* (Author 2013).

Figure 55 (opposite): *Lower level plans* (Author 2013).

Lower Plans
NTS

The tendency to take a concept such as "the death of the author" and to use it to imply that the construction of narrative in art is defunct is very problematic. While narrative should not be interpreted absolutely, it is still a useful tool in the production of art. Barthes titled his thesis "Death of the Author" and, importantly, not "The Author is Dead". This "death" refers to the author's loss of authority when the text is handed over to the reader, and is seen a process rather than a condition or end-state. It is indeed the underlying natural process inherent in every form of "writing". Barthes stresses that this "death" is not lamentable; in fact he invokes Stéphane Mallarmé (1978:2) to argue that the text is at its most potent when the author is concealed, when it seems as though the text itself is speaking.

To summarize, it is less important for an architect, as an author, to make it clear what should be read from a building, than to make it known to the "reader" that it is a text and that it should be read. The Narrative Factory approaches this challenge by subverting the habitual readings or non-readings encouraged by the use of predictable typologies — of established activities represented in established formal language. The opening quotation from Ovid's *Ars Amatoriae* serves as an example of the agency of undefined meaning. The absence of a translation requires active participation (in this case in the form of a brief internet search) in order to understand the text. By doing so, the text takes on an active role and makes demands on the reader to translate and interpret. This participatory approach underlies the Narrative Factory's design development throughout.

In this spirit, I will venture a reading of the Narrative Factory through its material and spatial details. It is not intended to be definitive or absolute, but instead, will serve as an example of the potential for the production of narrative through architecture that the Narrative Factory aims to achieve. To extract a reading from the Narrative Factory, I will employ the structure described by Marco Frascari in "The Tell-The-Tale-Detail" when he writes that "[u]sing a conceptual analogy, it is possible to define architecture as a system in which there is a 'total architecture', the plot, and a detailed architecture, the tale" (1984, pp.503). In other words, there is an overall concept or idea expressed over the building as a whole, and there is a detailed manifestation through construction.

A Plot

The overall concept for the Narrative Factory is based on its immediate context, the site is dominated, in general, by the theme of communication and The Narrative Factory draws on this history to locate formal and programmatic relationships.

A reading from west to east (or left to right) reveals a gradual climb from a subterranean realm to an aerial, suspended condition (Figures 54 and 68). Such a linear reading is only one of many — the site has several entrances and various promenades, and can also be read in the opposite direction or along meandering routes. The "climb" is repeated from south to north (Figure 57). This progression is a response to the natural ground plane on the site which slopes downward towards the north west. The west-east reading reveals a technological progression whereby predominantly stereotomic construction in the west is incrementally replaced by more tectonic details to the east. Kenneth Frampton describes the metaphoric significance of tectonic and stereotomic construction as follows: "[tectonic] framework tends towards the aerial and the dematerialization of mass, whereas the mass form is telluric, embedding itself ever deeper into the earth. The one tends towards light and the other towards dark" (1990, pp.522). The material concept employed in the Narrative Factory is illustrated by (figure 56). Materials are placed on a graded scale ranging from soil on the stereotomic extreme to air on the tectonic extreme. The gradation employs Gottfried Semper's definitions of the tectonic and stereotomic which Frampton relates as "members of varying lengths... conjoined to encompass a spatial field" and "compressive mass that...is constructed through the piling up of identical units" respectively (1990, pp.521). Qualities such as artificiality and ancientness are loosely applied as secondary ordering devices. Accordingly, timber members, for example, though lighter (and therefore, arguably, more immaterial) than steel members are placed closer to the ground because of their less artificial origin. The Narrative factory relates this material scale to abstract concepts by placing the "future" in the air and "past" in the soil. This is then used to determine the locations of programmes on the site which is evident in the placement of an archive submerged beneath ground level at the westernmost end and an "internet theatre" suspended overhead at the other. This is in keeping with a metaphorical reading in which the narrative progresses from "history" in the west to "the future" in the east. Accordingly, the interventions along this route echo the development of

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AIR

PLASTICS

GLASS

STEEL MEMBERS

TIMBER MEMBERS

TIMBER PANEL

CONCRETE FRAME

STEEL SHEETS
BRICK STRUCTURE
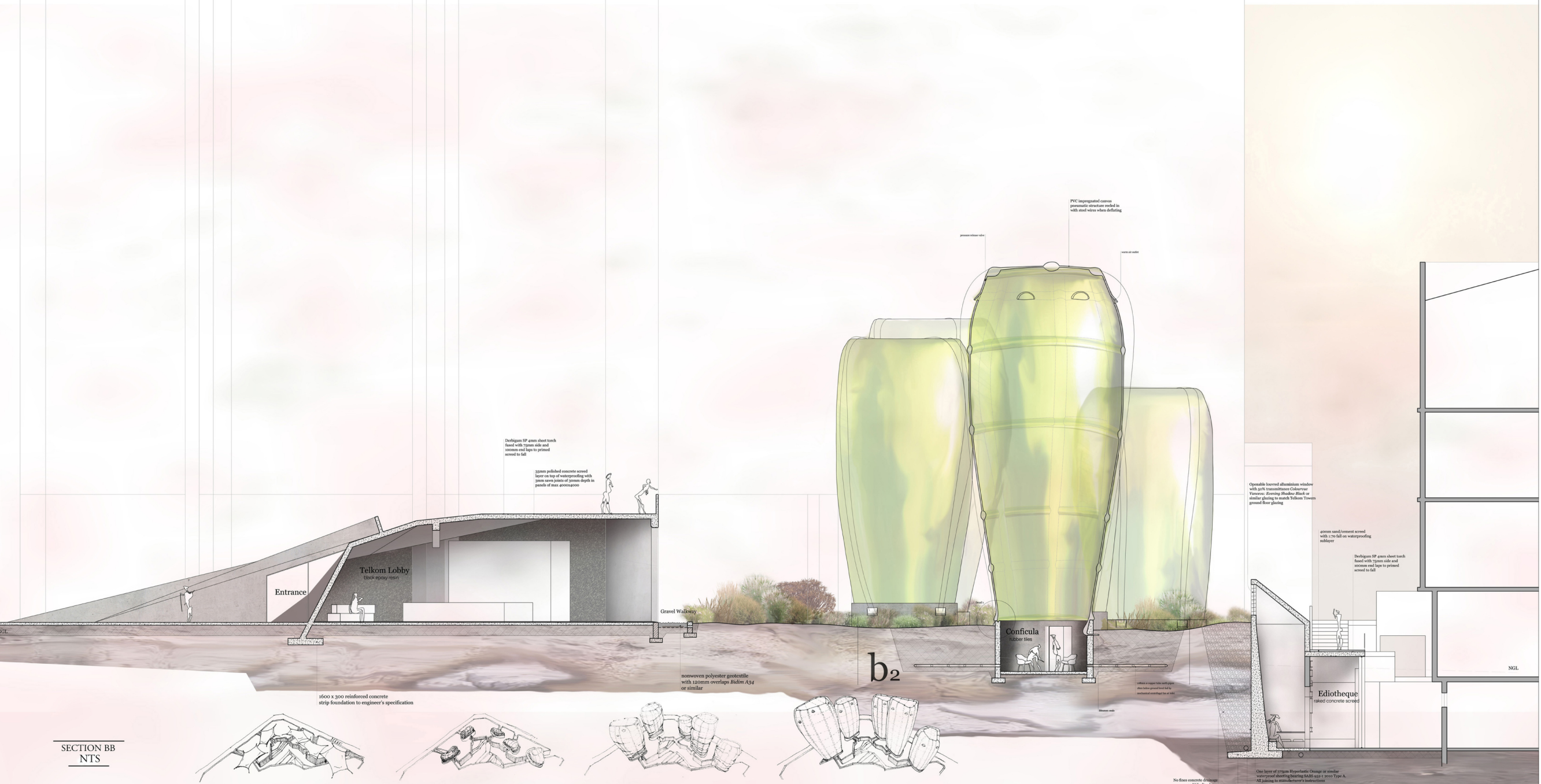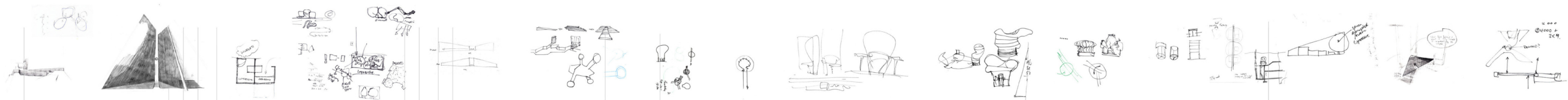BRICK SURFACE

CONCRETE BLOCK

STONE

CONCRETE MASS

SOIL

Figure 56: *Conceptual collage of material hierarchy* (Author 2013).

Figure 57: *North / South section: BB* (Author 2013).

PVC impregnated canvas
pneumatic structure reeled in
with steel wires when deflating

pressure release valve

warm air outlet

Derbigum SP 4mm sheet torch
fused with 75mm side and
100mm end laps to primed
screed to fall

35mm polished concrete screed
layer on top of waterproofing with
3mm saws joints of 20mm depth in
panels of max 4000x4000

Openable louvred alluminium window
with 50% transmittance *Colourose
Vanessa: Evening Shadow Black* or
similar glazing to match Telkom Towers
ground floor glazing

40mm sand/cement screed
with 1:70 fall on waterproofing
sublayer

Derbigum SP 4mm sheet torch
fused with 75mm side and
100mm end laps to primed
screed to fall

Telkom Lobby
black epoxy resin

Entrance

Gravel Walkway

Conficula
rubber tiles

Ediotheque
raked concrete screed

NGL

nonwoven polyester geotextile
with 120mm overlaps *Bidim A34*
or similar

b₂

1600 x 300 reinforced concrete
strip foundation to engineer's specification

Reinforced concrete retaining
wall and footing to engineer's
specification

No fines concrete drainage
and blinding layer

One layer of 375μm Hyperlastic Orange or similar
waterproof sheeting bearing SABS 952-1:2010 Type A.
All joining to manufacturer's instructions

150 pvc pipe with 1:250 slope
wrapped in nonwoven polyester
geotextile

SECTION BB
NTS

human communication through speech (the Conficulae), mark-making (the Synthetory), and writing (the Glossarcaria) to projection (the Kwamonstrarium).

The overall narrative also involves progressions of legibility of construction details. The west-to-east reading reveals increasingly expressive detailing. The Ediotheque, which is constructed primarily of cast-in-situ concrete, presents obscure and illegible details - horizontal waterproofing, for example, is concealed under a raked screed layer (Figure 57). The construction details are at their most straightforwardly legible at the Synthetory, after which point they are again increasingly concealed. This concealment culminates in the Kwamonstrarium, where details are hidden behind steel-sheet cladding. This progression is a comment on the impact of technology on understanding. Up to a point, communication technologies (mark-making, writing, speech) appear to increase understanding but, by the advent of digital communications the proliferation of meanings produces a new kind of obscurity. The manifestations of this narrative will be discussed in more detail in analyses of the individual interventions.

Before discussing the individual pavilions, I would like to digress for a moment into the relationship between the Brutalist movement in architecture and the Narrative Factory. Brutalism is characterised by massive *béton brut* (unrefined, exposed concrete) buildings designed with economy and longevity in mind. The aesthetic sensibilities revolved around exposure, unfinished textures and a starkness that gives the name Brutalism, with its severe — even brutal — aesthetic, a fitting double entendre in English. The term Brutalism was coined by architects Alison and Peter Smithson in 1953 (Scalbert, 2001). Though Burg, Lodge and Doherty's Telkom Towers present us with a rather watered down , "international styled" Brutalism, the underlying principles evident in the early works of New Brutalism of the 1950's in Britain can aid in assessing hidden significance. In "Architecture as a way of Life: The New Brutalism 1953-1956" Irénée Scalbert discusses the conditions surrounding the emergence of the movement. Though vaguely defined, Brutalism can be elaborated by the shared preoccupations which Scalbert asserts were evident in the exhibition organized by Scottish artist Eduardo Paolozzi and Peter and Alison Smithson, titled *Parallel of Life and Art* held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London in 1953.

Firstly; there was a shift of focus from wholes to parts, as Scalbert puts it when describing an image of a

Figure 58: *Typewriter, as shown at Parallel of Life and Art* (Paolozzi, E. 1953).

Figure 59: *Conceptual collage: Telkom Towers as found objects with M. Duchamp's signauture from "Fountain" (1917)* (Author 2013).

disected typewriter (Figure 58) displayed at *Parallel of Life and Art*:

> "Every part being discreet, the image gave no clue concerning their functioning. It was no longer the signification of the whole which mattered, but that of the parts. These, now lost to the manufacturer, drifted in a semantic field of their own, open to the musings of the observer. The parts had become constituted as signs. They became pictograms of a language shorn of its syntax, of a language whose grammar was not so much forgotten as it was waiting to be spontaneously invented by the observer."

Secondly, there is an appreciation for things as they are "found" — *objets trouvés*. The exhibition contained a large variety of found "personalia" loosely organised around themes. And thirdly; there was a preoccupation with "visual analogies between natural and man-made artefacts" (2001, pp. 65). The characteristics listed above have more in common than they may appear to have on the surface. As truly unselfconscious constructions, objects of nature are the ultimate found objects. Any meaning attributed to them must necessarily be projected onto them from subjective, human points of view. The natural objects with which Brutalism makes analogies are those created by geological events. Like giant stones, mountains and cliffs, Brutalist architectures appear like inscrutable masses which have risen from the earth. Being that concrete is composed of minerals, shale, limestone and aggregate, it is essentially geological in its origin (Wegelin 2006: 6.1 and 7.1). Concrete architecture presents us with an allochthonous geology. Allochthon are geological formations that are located in an area away from the locations where they were formed. On the geological timescale, this is the nature of brick and concrete architecture. In urban architecture — and the architecture of Brutalism in particular — the found object, the artefact and works of art are conflated. The Narrative Factory, as a whole, recontextualises the Telkom Towers by acting as a sort of gallery, from which the Towers can be viewed anew.

Entrance Between the Towers:

In a rare occasion of defining the movement, Alison Smithson revealed a connection between the sensibilities of Brutalism and traditional Japanese approaches to materiality. She stated that Japanese architecture had 'a reverence for the natural world and, from that, for the materials of the built world' (2001,
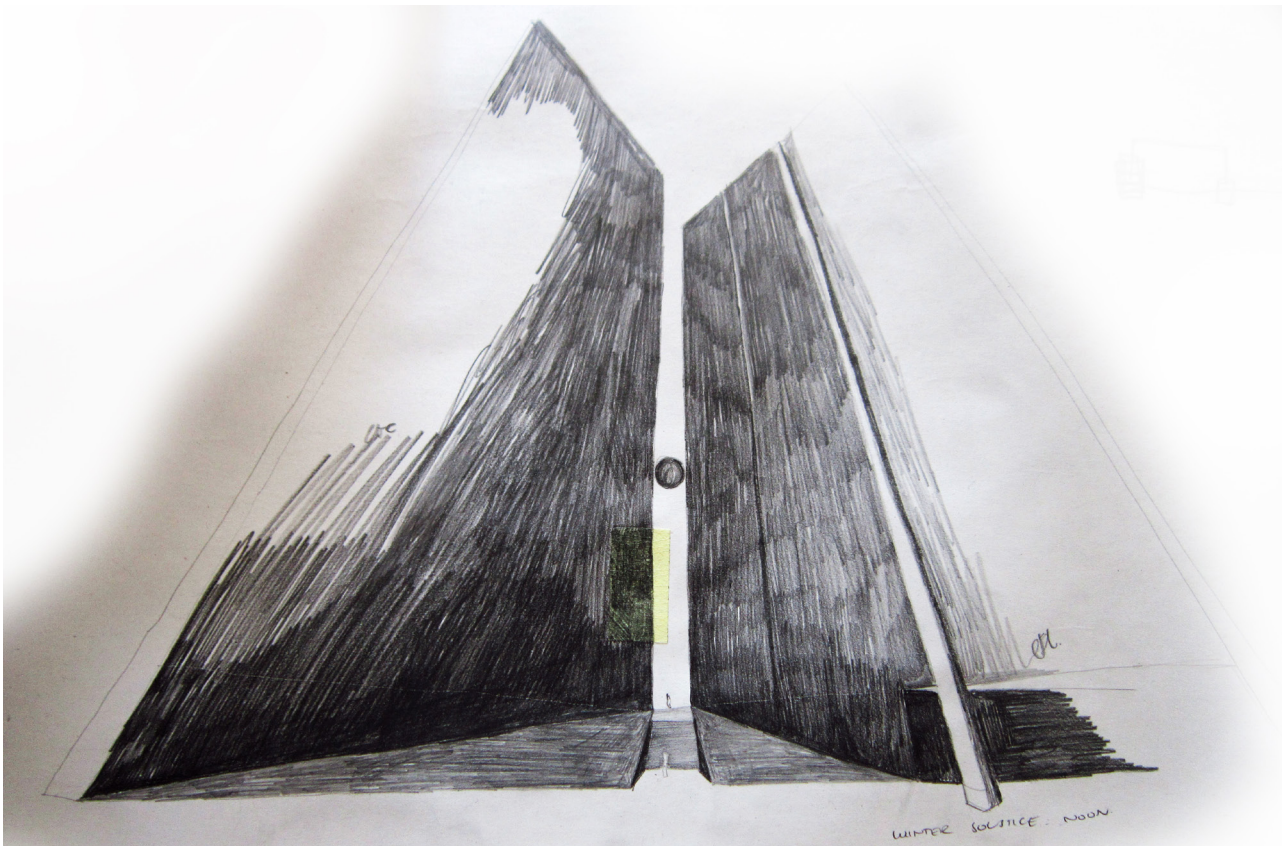
82

Figure 60: *Concept sketch for 'entrance' between towers* (Author 2013).

83

pp.57). The Narrative Factory makes an implicit connection to this part of the Brutalist sensibility with its treatment of the primary entrance. The entrance comprises a lobby on the ground floor and an unofficial entrance overhead (Figures 57 and 60). Notions of the incidental — prevalent in Japanese aesthetic theory — are referenced by the overall form. It is as though the weight of the towers have pushed this lobby up out of the ground. The entrance to the lobby is carved out of the slope and, in order to emphasise a connection with place, the slope of the northern wall of the entrance points to the solar zenith at the equinoxes. The slope from which this entrance is carved also allows access to the gap between the towers. Though the slope is not strictly an access point to the Narrative Factory, those willing to skip over the shallow ponds at its base and climb the 17 ° incline can experience this gap as an entrance. The reference here is to the *Nijiriguchi* entrances of Japanese tea houses. The *Nijiriguchi* are very small doors through which guests enter the Tea House (*Chashitsu*). They ritualise a gesture of humility by forcing guests to crawl into the space beyond. According to Kumakura Isao, *Nijiriguchi* have their origins in ancient theatre entrances called "mouse wickets". He writes: "By crawling through the mouse-wicket, people entered a world of the theatre separate from the everyday in which they usually move. They entered, indeed, a world of dramatic space" (1995, pp. 51). The entrance formed by the two towers has a similar impact and also introduces a "world of dramatic space". Here, however, it is the enormous scale of the entrance rather than its smallness which defines it as a peculiar threshold.

The Ediotheque

The entrance to the Ediotheque from Bosman street (Figure 61) introduces the conceptual underpinning of this part of the Narrative Factory. The portal entrance is separate from the Ediotheque itself and is, instead, embedded into the Forum building immediately to the north. The concept of embedded details, introduced by this entrance is repeated throughout the Ediotheque (Figure 57). The walkway which forms the roof of the Ediotheeque is an extension of the ground plane of the Cryptagora, which roots it to the context. Seating niches are nested in the southern wall. The use of the original ground plane as a floor surface further emphasizes the connection to the site. The extensive use of cast-in-situ, off-shutter concrete corresponds to the material concept according to which concrete has telluric connotations and associations with history as an experience of metaphorical density.
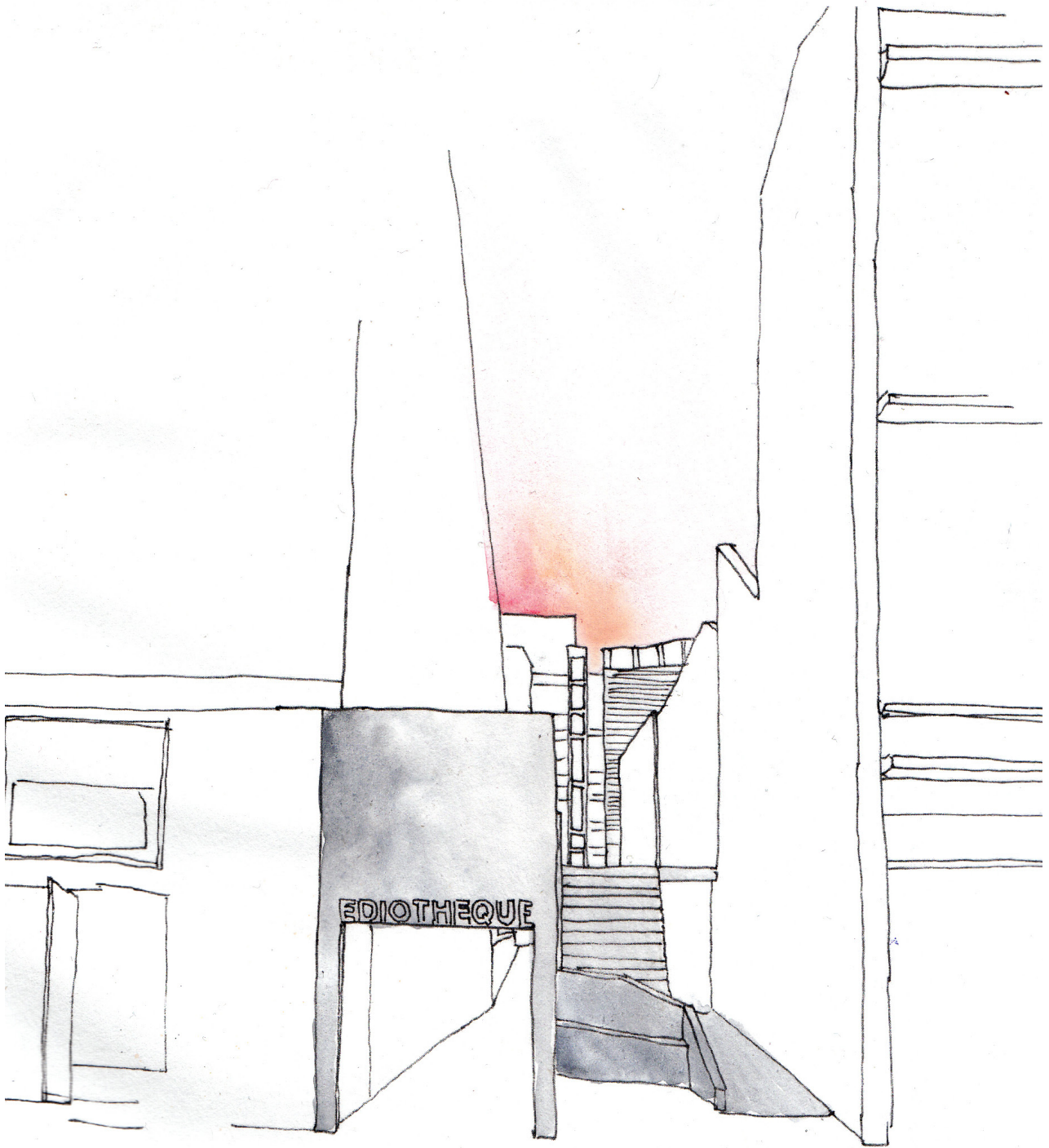
84

Figure 61: *Entrance from Bosman Street* (Author 2013).

The Cryptagora

The echoes of existing forms are combined with a representation of an underlying, foundational "wilderness" — on which a variety of urban visions have been imposed — to form the Cryptagora (Figures 55, 57 and 63). Here, the layers of urban interventions that have occurred over time are peeled back to reveal an "original" condition of the site. Indigenous grasses connect this part of the site to its pre-human history and in doing so, juxtaposes ancient history and the contemporary technologies used in the Conficulae. In its centre, the Cryptagora sinks into the ground to connect to the Ediotheque (Figures 55 and 57). It is as though the volume created by the towers have an unbearable weight which carves into the ground plane, allowing space to flow dramatically from this volume into the Ediotheque. When the Cryptagora is entered from the Ediotheque, this configuration allows for the towering volume to be entered from below, thus emphasising its spectacular scale.

The Conficulae

The Conficulae present an interesting dichotomy. They combine materials and forms from both extremes of the conceptual diagram (Figure 56). The ground surface is embedded below the ground plane of the Cryptagora and inflatable PVC-coated polyester structures reach out into the volume created by the Telkom Towers. The use of air is particularly apt here since it is the medium of speech and the temporary nature of the inflatable mimics the temporary nature of sound attenuating in space. The height of these structures is simultaneously a response the enormous volume which contains them (it is as though the volume created by the towers has a negative pressure, pulling the Conficulae up and out of the ground) and occupant comfort. The height allows for hot air to rise naturally to the top which extracts cool air from copper earth pipes embedded at the base. The Conficulae are inflated and deflated on a daily basis (Figure 57: bottom). A double layer of PVC impregnated canvas allows for the Conficulae to be inflated without the need for an elevated air pressure in the occupied interior. Galvanised steel wires attached to the top of the PVC structures allow for the inflatables to be steadily deflated as the wires are reeled in at the base. Since the wires are attached to the concrete base and are located all around the circumference of the base, they also give the structures added stability when they are inflated. When deflated, the membranes fold into the bases and are covered with colour-matched tarpaulin sheets. The
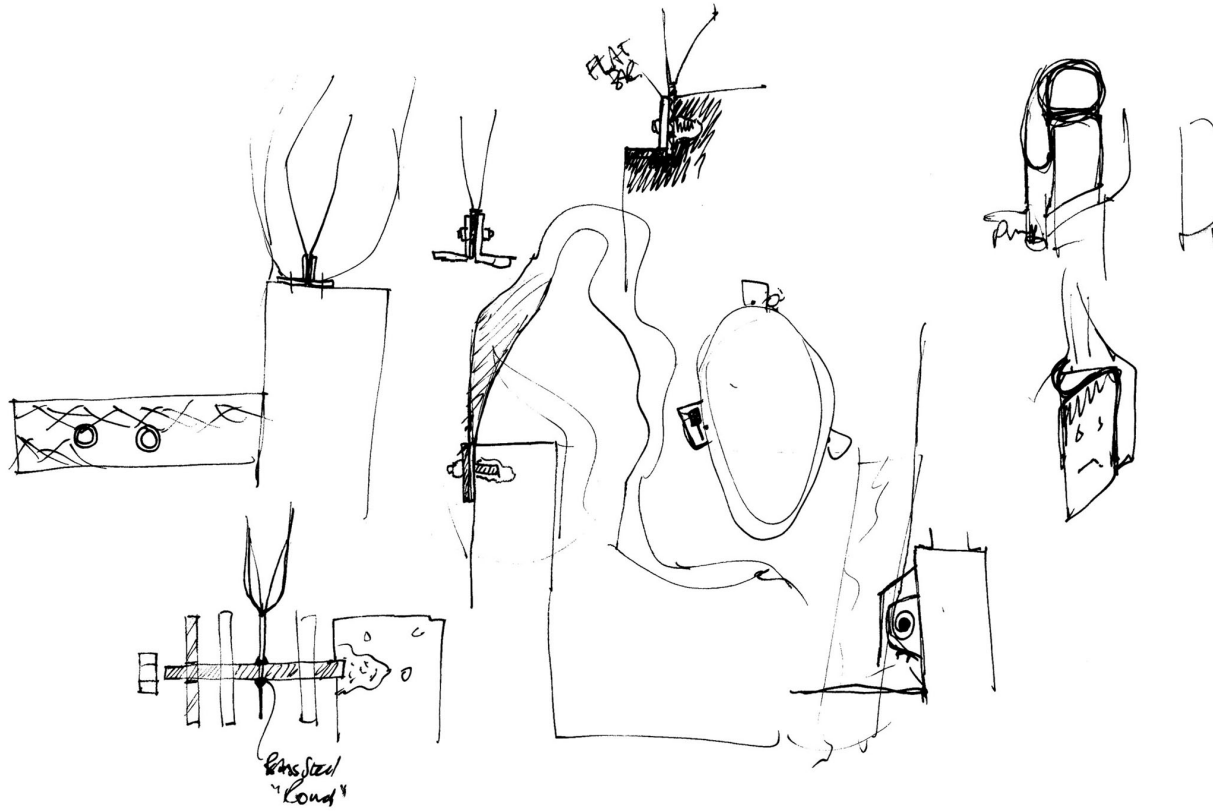
Figure 62: *Detail development for Conficula (see also section BB far right)* (Author 2013).

Conficulae are spaces that can keep secrets. The space in which personal histories are retold, confessed even, literally disappears after a discussion. Like burying a secret letter, a Conficula "clears the air" and then folds secrets into itself.

Public Toilets

Like the Conficulae, the public toilets are also in a semi-submerged position. This is in keeping with the "plot" of a landscape rising out of the ground towards the east. They connect the horizontality of the Cryptagora with the verticality of the Synthetory (Figure 68). The use of concrete blocks mediates between the concrete mass of the Ediotheque and the concrete frame of the Synthetory. As one of the last remaining gender-segregated spaces in the western spatial traditions, the toilets are placed on either side of the primary route which emphasises this existing social practice (Figures 55 and 63).

Synthetory

The concept of mark-making, which is the programmatic focus of the Synthetory, is treated as a crossroads or watershed of sorts. The historical significance of the advent of human inscription can hardly be overstated. In contrast to the localised transience of the voice, inscriptions send messages through time and space. Upon its development as a technology, image production set the trajectory for millennia of accumulated knowledge. The Synthetory is placed conspicuously on top of the primary axis of the overall scheme (Figures 55 and 63). It interrupts the route and divides the site into a western volume and an eastern volume. In contrast to the organic and naturalistic forms employed to the east, the Synthetory introduces more self-consciously artificial (tectonic) detailing. The west and east facades are both obscure but the north and south facades allow for vision into the interior, as well as a view of the structural system in use. The construction of the Synthetory, through the use of distinct structural elements and "skin", presents the first instance of a concept of a progression of legibility of construction details. When approached form the north or south, the elevations reveal the underlying structure. The Glossarcaria to the west takes this concept further. Here, details are obscure from the exterior but are revealed on the

Figure 63 (opposite): *Upper Level Plan* (Author 2013).

b b₂

c

a

a

c

a

a

Kwamonstrarium
Plan
NTS

Upper Plan
NTS

b b₂

89
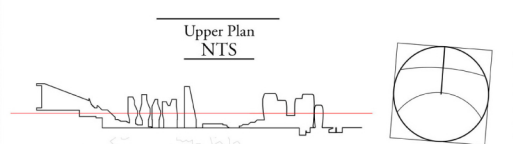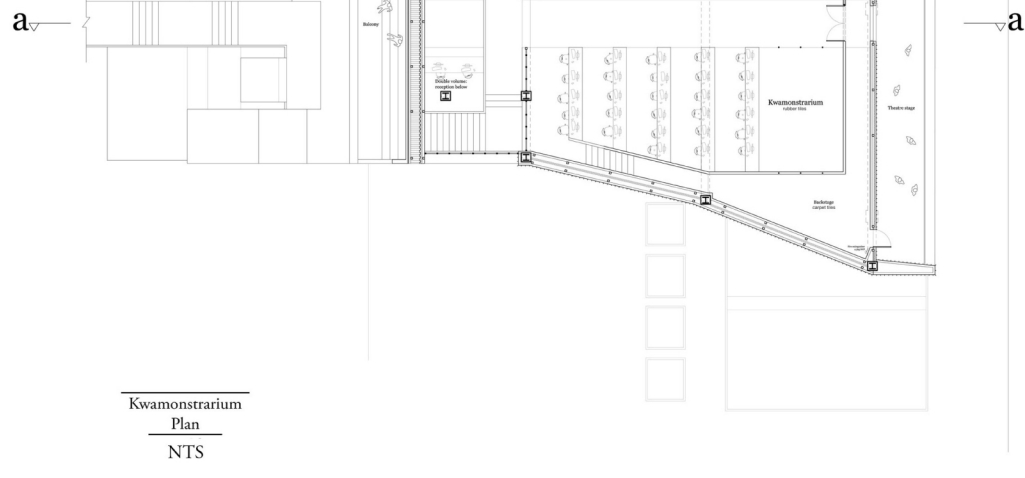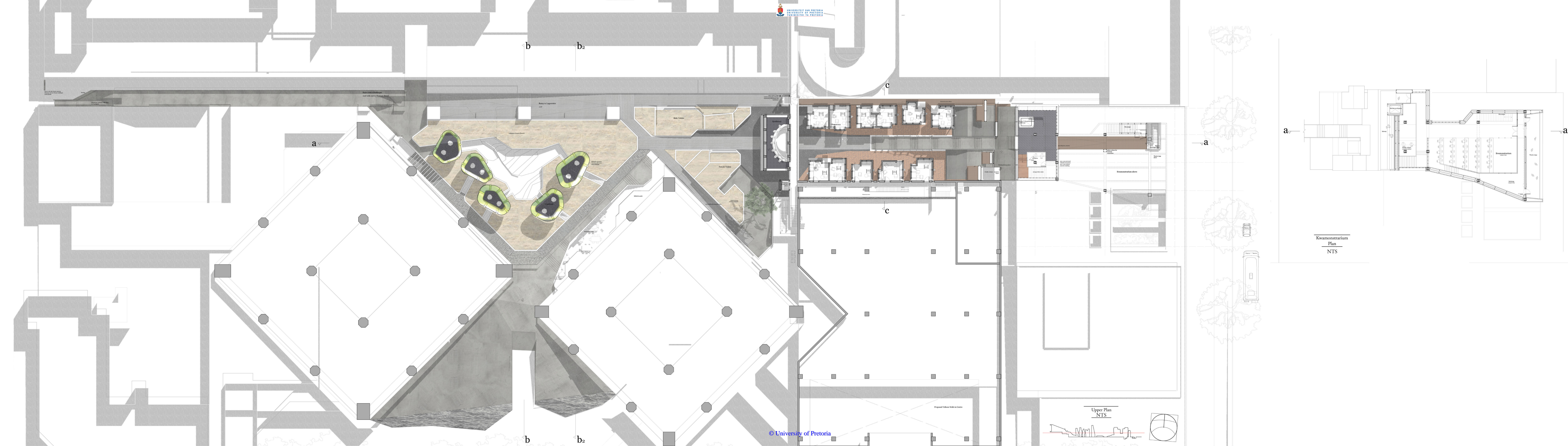
interior. The stepped concrete columns of the Synthetory (Figure 68) allow the construction of a semi-vertical landscape which conforms with an overall plot — that of structures rising out of the ground. This technology also anticipates the brick corbelling used in the Glossarcaria. When approached from the west the Synthetory's stepped columns introduce the corbelling technology which follows, and when approached from the east, they echo it.

Logocentre

The Logocentre contains the Glossarcaria, the staircase leading up to the Kwamonstrarium as well as the Narrative Factory Reception. The ground surface is paved in bricks which match the brickwork of the Peugeot building to the North. As such, it presents a middle ground between the concrete-panel-clad north facade of the Telkom call centre and the concrete framed brick-infill Peugeot building. Some way up the stairs to the Kwamonstrarium, the detailing changes abruptly. This change occurs at the point where the space underneath the stairs is tall enough to be occupied. As such, this point represents the moment at which "ground" switches over into "enclosure" (Figure 64). The moment is marked by a change in the floor surface as well as a change in the nature of the handrails. To the east of this point, the floor surface of the stairs is a concrete surface bed on compacted ground fill and the handrails are thin steel members which are conspicuously attached to the staircase. To the west of this point the stairs are detached concrete elements cast in permanent steel shuttering and welded to a steel frame. The delicate handrails are replaced with a steel structure clad in composite decking, creating the impression of solidity. This is in keeping with the concept of increasing legibility of detailing over the course of the site which is replaced at the eastern extreme with a new obscurity. This obscurity culminates in the Kwamonstrarium where details are concealed behind steel-sheet cladding.
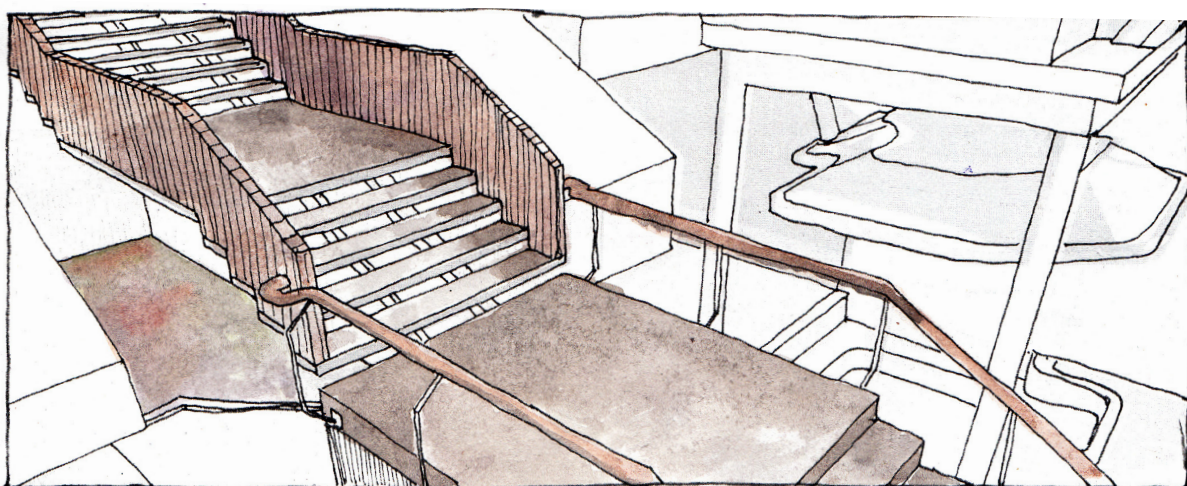

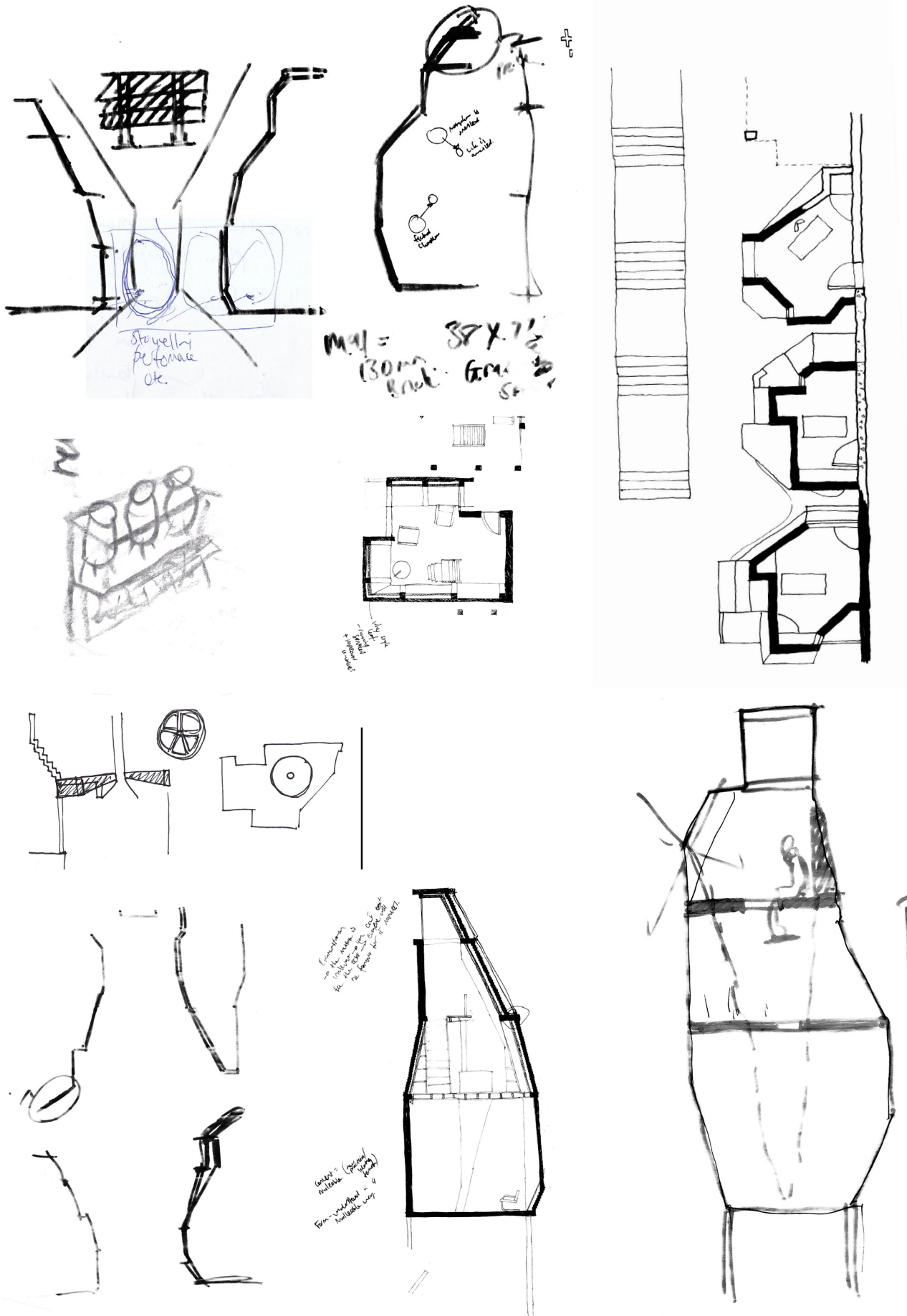Figure 64: *Transition from ground to overhead condition* (Author 2013).

Figure 65: *Design development of the Logocentre and Glossarcaria* (Author 2013).

Glossarcaria

The narrative of buildings rising out of the ground is at its most apparent in the relationship between the Glossarcaria and Logocentre which contains them(Figures 8, 40 and 66). The Glossarcaria allude to this narrative by mimicking materials from the ground plane - the brick and concrete with which the Logocentre is paved. Underneath each Glossarcaria is a hearth intended for recreational use by the public. The hearths are concrete constructions and, as such, they appear like holes which were left in the Logocentre surface when the Glossarcaria were removed from it. The concrete ring beams visible on the Glossarcaria's exteriors, allude to the strata of geological formations which become visible when masses of rock are pushed from the ground by tectonic forces. This reference to geology connects the Glossaracria to the Brutalist call centre immediately to the south of the Logocentre. The 5 Glossarcaria on the side of the call centre intersect with the call centre's north facade (Figure 63 and 66). With this intersection, they make the concept of infiltration apparent.

The detailing of the Glossarcaria refers to the act of writing as an informant. While writing is by no means a new practice, the specificity of this programmatic condition — where writers are positioned, in a sense, as the guardians of their language — informs a new approach to the creation of a space specifically for writing. The construction method of the severe, implausible corbels is revealed on the interior — a reinforced concrete frame supports the ring beams which carry the bricks and the bricks themselves are laterally supported by a steel structure of 101.6 diameter circular hollows attached to the brick with expanded steel mesh built into the mortar joints (Figures 67). Like writing, what appears relatively straightforward on the surface, is in fact supported by complex artifice.
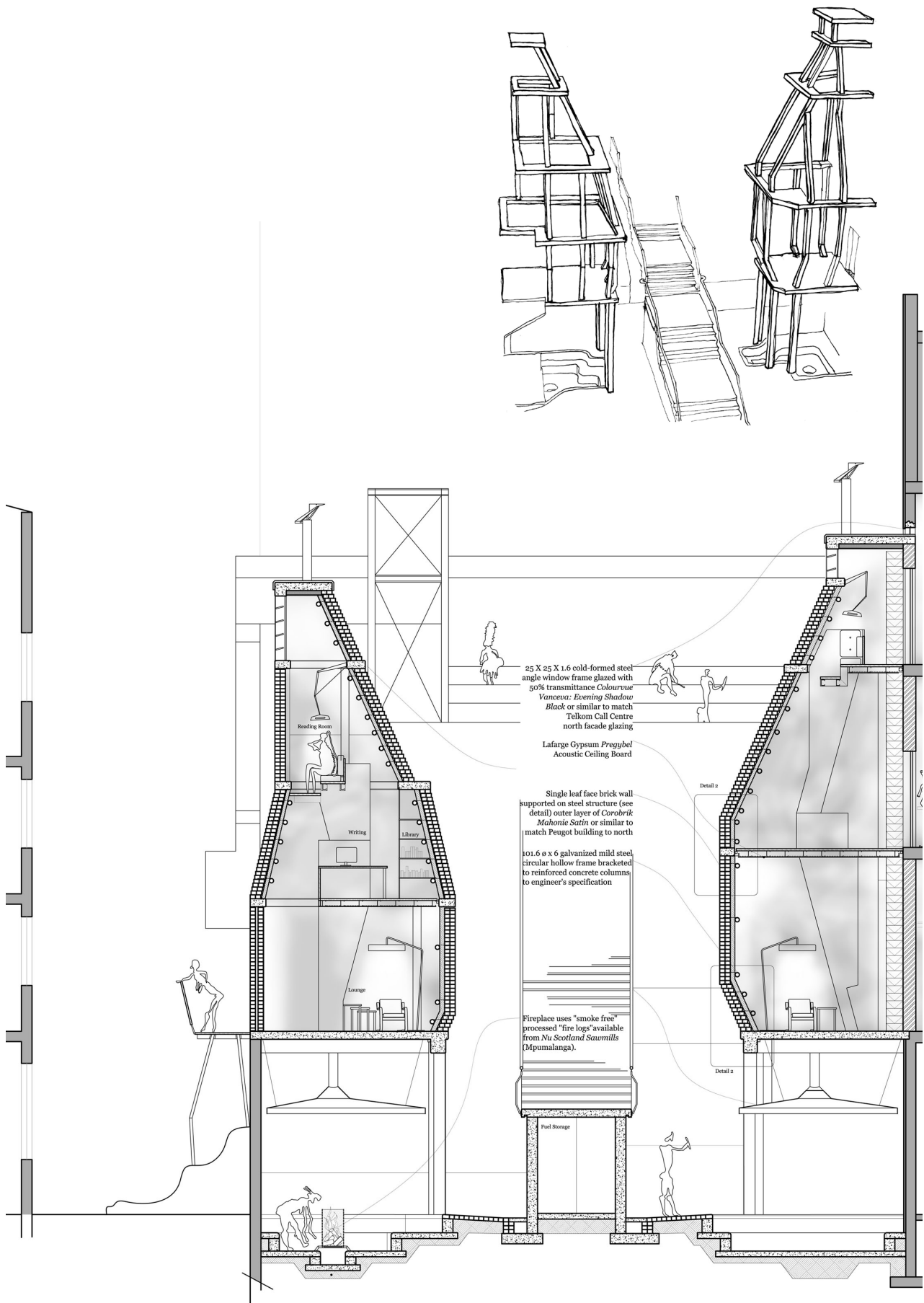
25 X 25 X 1.6 cold-formed steel
angle window frame glazed with
50% transmittance *Colourvue
Vanceva: Evening Shadow
Black* or similar to match
Telkom Call Centre
north facade glazing

Lafarge Gypsum *Pregybel*
Acoustic Ceiling Board

Single leaf face brick wall
supported on steel structure (see
detail) outer layer of *Corobrik
Mahonie Satin* or similar to
match Peugot building to north

101.6 ø x 6 galvanized mild steel
circular hollow frame bracketed
to reinforced concrete columns
to engineer's specification

Fireplace uses "smoke free"
processed "fire logs"available
from *Nu Scotland Sawmills*
(Mpumalanga).

Reading Room

Writing   Library

Lounge

Fuel Storage

Detail 2

Detail 2

Figure 66: *Section CC with structural diagram* (Author 2013).

23°

2 brush painted layers *of Köster NB 2 white (negative side mineral waterproofing system for masonry and concrete)* or similar mineral based negative side waterproofing system applied to primer layer of *Köster Polysil TG 500* sprayed onto pre-wetted interior brick surface reinforced concrete columns and beams to manufacturer's specification

100 mm *Insulpro Thermo Board* or similar resin-bonded, semi-rigid, non-combustible mineral wool board. Plain white finish

Movement joints sealed with *Köster Joint Sealant FS* to manufacturer's specifications

Bitumen and neoprene pad joints between reinforced concrete members and brickwork

"Natural white" LED strip light available from *LED Lighting SA*

125 X 75 X 3 cold-formed mild steel lipped channel floor joists welded to end-plate, expansion bolted to reinforced concrete beam

14mm phase change material mats (23°C) with average equivalent mass effect of 130mm brick wall, *bioPCM* or similar, available from *Phase Change Energy Solutions South Africa* stapled to plywood panels

Lafarge Gypsum Pregybel acoustic ceiling board or similar (white) fastened to steel lipped channel with 6mm round head self tapping screws (black)

Internal layer of solid imperial non-facing plaster bricks laid in stretcher bond with 10mm flush class 2 mortar joints

3 coats of *Shell Flintcote 3* or similar brush-painted onto interior surface of brick walls and concrete beams

18 x 150 SA Pine bookshelves tied to expanded steel with 0.15mm steel wires through pre-drilled holes at 450mm centres

101.6 ø x 6 galvanized mild steel circular hollow at 500 max centres on corbelling and racking back and 1200 max centres on adjacent vertical brickwork bracketed to reinforced concrete column to engineer's specification

600 x 100 x 3 expanded steel sheets *Mentex* "304/VEM 320G" or similar welded to steel frame and embedded in mortar joints

67°

Detail 2
NTS

330

"natural white" LED strip light available from *LED Lighting SA*

Figure 67 (above): *Glossarcaria corbelling and "racking back" details* (Author 2013).

Figure 68 (opposite page): *East / west section AA and Conficula Detail* (Author 2013).

Paul Kruger street

Government Printers: existing

Main Reception

Reception

Kremasterium

Original

Washing Room Wet

Viewing Balcony

Theatre stage

Backstage

Logocentre

Synthetory

Female Toilets

Cryptagora

Confinula

Kwamonstrarium

When approached from the west, the Kwamonstrarium is introduced by a composite-deck pavilion (Figures 8 and 68). The material choice here is part of the overall plot expressed in the parti diagram (Figure 54). A deck is almost always an accessible surface — a surface to be walked on. As such, its associations with the ground plane are employed to create the impression of a landscape rising into the air.

A primary concern for the Kwamonstrarium is the re-socialization of the spaces of media consumption and production. In Immaterial Architecture, Jonathan Hill notes that the computer, in comparison to other means for media consumption, is "the most enveloping, in part because it is viewed alone, unlike the television". This trajectory could be traced back further — through cinema, the theatre and, ultimately, to its origin in storytelling — to reveal the incremental erosion of the social aspect of the interface between the subject and the media. The social nature of identity is illustrated by John Russel when he looks at the context of Francis Bacon's "Heads" series of 1949. He comments on the use of the windowless room as the setting for these distorted, inchoate subjects. He writes: "What painting had never shown before is the disintegration of the social being which takes place when one is alone in a room which has no looking glass" (1979, pp. 38). In the Kwamonstrarium, the "looking glass" and the projection screen are conflated. Hill equates the computer screen with the window when he states that "a painting is a window, and so are the television and computer screens" (2006 pp.21). He describes the computer screen as a threshold that could be opened and closed, and one which, much like a window, makes the viewer "aware of his or her separation from the world outside, while also [making them feel] immersed within it to some degree" (Ibid). The Kwamonstrarium references such a conflation of the concepts of window and screen with the treatment of its eastern facade. Members of the public project the images that define their public (online) personae simultaneously onto the inside and outside of the eastern screen wall (Figures 69 to 72). "They" are thus projected back to themselves and the audience which surrounds them as well as being projected into the street. This conflates existing and emerging forms of public life, brining the virtual public realm in touch with the physical.
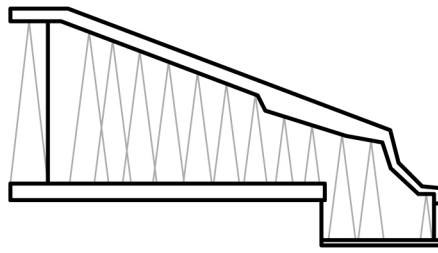
Figure 69: *Kwamonstrarium's artificial lighting* (Author 2013).
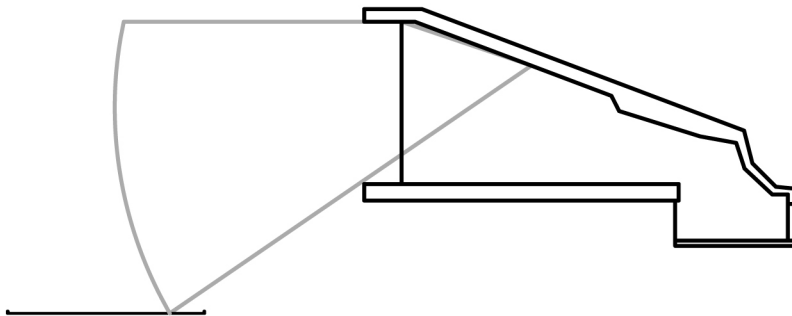
Figure 70: *Kwamonstrarium as artificial lighting through projection* (Author 2013).
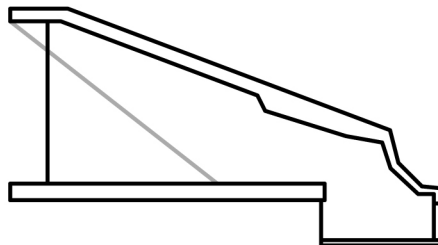
Figure 71: *Daylight on winter mornings (while not projecting)* (Author 2013).
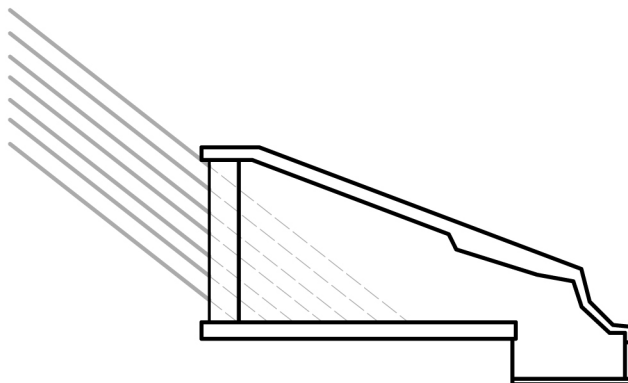
Figure 72: *Daylight on summer mornings, steel curtain drawn (not projecting)* (Author 2013).

FICTION

E: A Scholar

"He's dead, dead! E, think about it, how would you feel? I'm guessing bad". E was trying desperately to live herself into the role of Juliet. The audition was the next day, and she was talking to herself discreetly, opposite a mirror in the otherwise unoccupied girls' toilets. But she was already rolling her eyes halfway through that sentence. She had recently become acquainted with *the method* and had committed to it after a successful audition for Titania in an anodyne adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* — for which she had spent several nights camping in her parent's garden. But, though she had practiced and mastered Claire Danes' now infamous sob, she could not find a way to apply the method to this role. Living the reality of Juliet, what with all that death, love and violence was not an option. It occurred to her then, that others would in all likelihood have had similar trouble with Juliet and *the method*. On her way to the Kwamonstrarium where she would google her predicament, as she descended the spiral ramp (Figure 73) which would lead her down to the city street, she fantasized about a band, her band, named *Juliette and the Methods* achieving international pop-stardom.
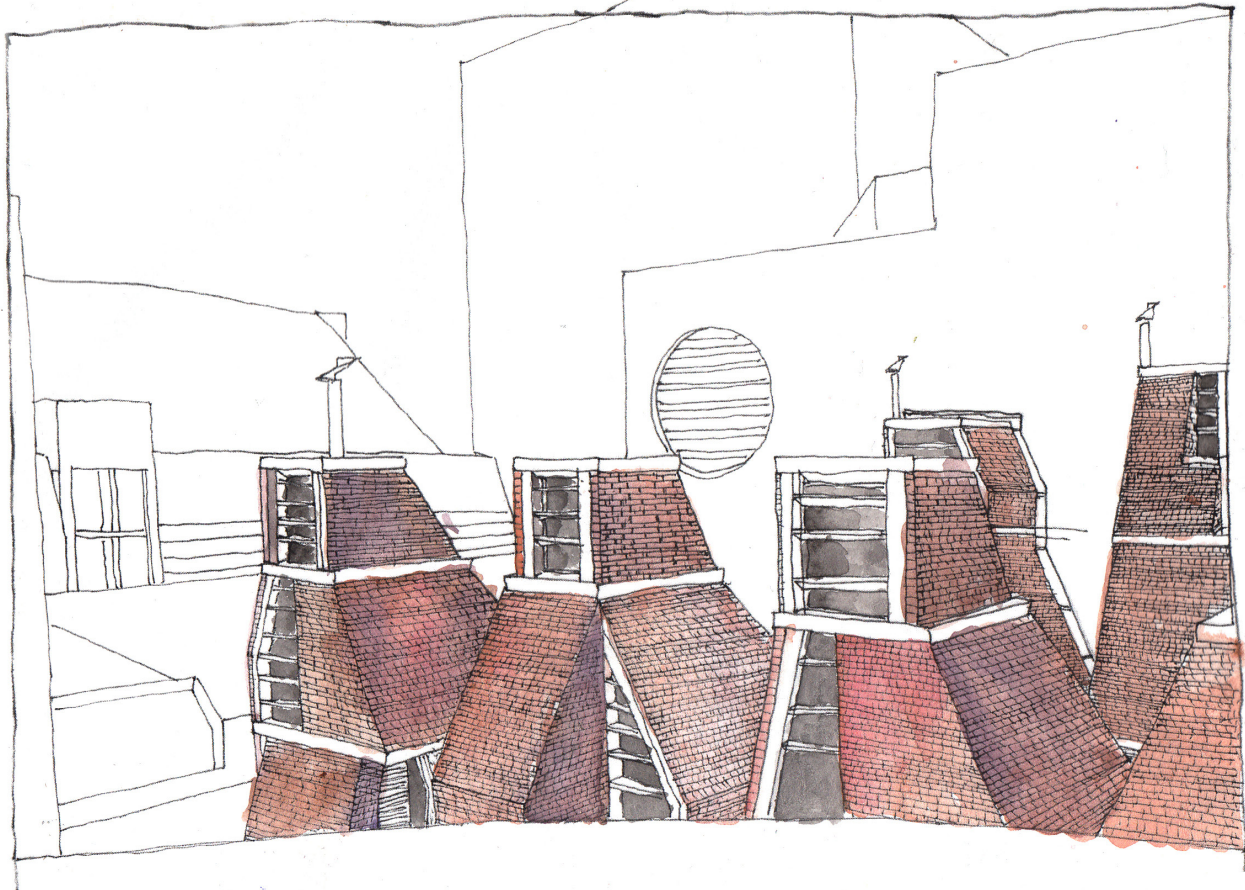
Figure 73: *View from the ramp at school to the north* (Author 2013).
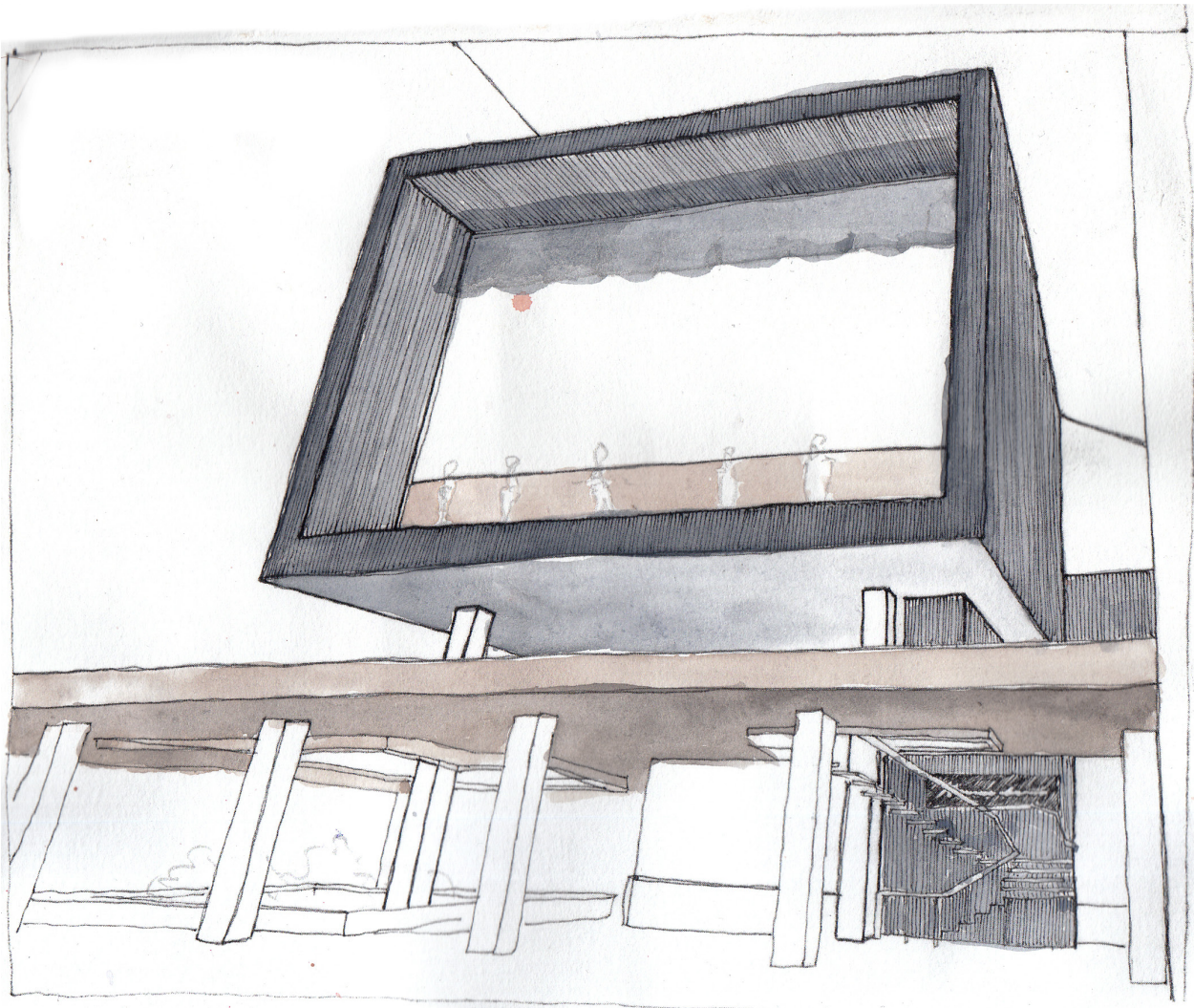
Figure 74: *View of Kwamonstrarium east facade from Paul Kruger Street* (Author 2013).

By the time she reached the surprisingly inconspicuous staircase (Figure 74) which connects the Kwamonstrarium to the sidewalk of Paul Kruger street the fantasy had collapsed, spectacularly, under the weight of her creativity. She'd already had such a clear image of the surface of fame that her thoughts soon started filling in the practicalities of balancing international acting fame and international music fame, details of tour dates, conflicting schedules, maintaining artistic integrity in the face of recording contracts, and was it wrong to have a butler?

It was a Friday afternoon, and the Kwamonstrarium was busy. Not only was her preferred computer station occupied, but an elderly woman had craftily snuck in and taken the last remaining station just as E had spotted it. She'd have to take a number and wait in the Net (Figures 68 and 75). Her friend J waved from below. She was about to go on screen. "Look out for my new pout" J shouted as her face appeared on the screen. "It's a-ma-zing" said E when J opened a photograph of herself posing with some

of their mutual friends, pouts all round. "Don't worry, the camera adds ten pounds" E remarked jokingly as J's face flitted by and was replaced with some unexciting searches being performed by another patron. E wondered who could possibly care about the Rand/Kwacha exchange rate on a Friday. She knew she didn't. The receptionist called her number and she rolled over, got up on all fours, scrambled out of the net and descended the staircase to the lower floor, where a search station was waiting. It was the station next to J. Before she could begin she had to sign in. Though she knew it was probably unwise, she used the same password for absolutely every online activity. She agreed to the terms and conditions without even considering reading them. There was always an almost subliminal fear when she ticked the Terms and Conditions but she remembered, vaguely, some American lawsuit in which it was argued, successfully, that Terms and Conditions are so boring that no one could reasonably be expected to actually read them, and that no one could be held responsible for agreeing to them.

She ticked a box on the screen asking her if she would like to project her activity onto the screen. She did, she always did. Her mother would *die* she thought. She was wary of the internet and was drawn ineluctably to the sinister satisfaction of reading articles — online no less — of the invasive practices of search engines and social networks in collusion with governments and perverts. But E felt that if it was true that the internet really isn't a private place, then the Kwamonstrarium makes this evident and really
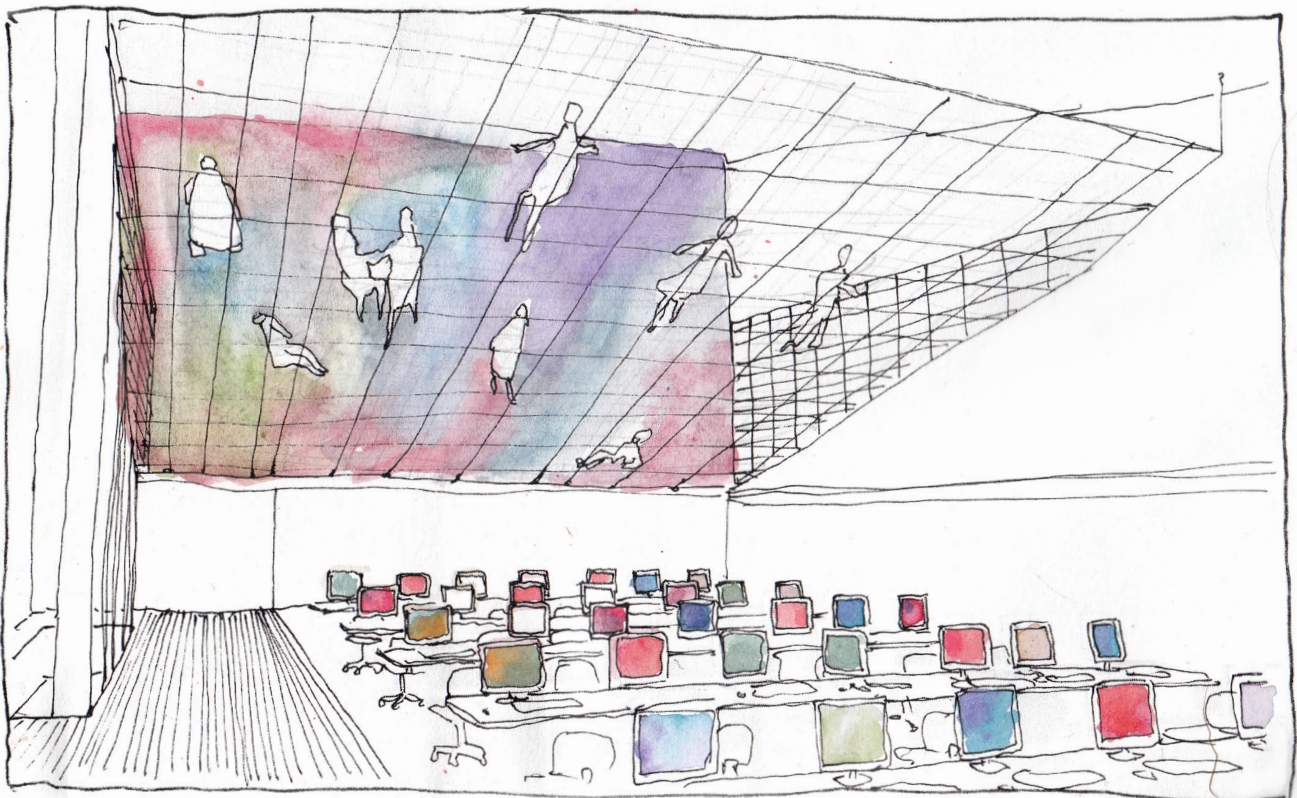
Figure 75: *Kwamonstrarium interior looking east* (Author 2013).

only reveals the internet for what it is: a public place. Besides, she thought, talent scouts for acting could be anywhere, even in a bank, even in a Kwamonstrarium, and she needs to get her face recognised.

After exactly two and a half minutes of searching, her screen appears on the eastern wall of the Kwamonstrarium. Suddenly, her search seems boring. She decides to open a video of her Titania performance instead.

"Gold, theatrical gold" said J as she leaned in to see the smaller version of the same image on E's screen.

"I guess it's more like 20 pounds".

After a brief moment of fame, E's face disappeared from the screen and was replaced by an article from the *Mail and Guardian Online* on a joint retrospective of Walter Battiss and Norman Catherine's work to take place at the Telkom Art Gallery just 100 metres from where she was. What a remarkable coincidence, she thought. She gave the administrator a glare for cutting off her performance so abruptly. But the administrator was focused on the screen from which she manages the projections and didn't flinch. Having found only one half-meaningful post from a woman in Jakarta on ways to play Juliet, and having tired of the whole business, E decided to leave the Kwamonstrarium and retire to the balcony. J was engrossed in the profile of a young man she'd admired for months but hadn't spoken a word to (she had not ticked the projection option on the login screen and was furtively flipping though his family holiday photos). Outside, she did not light a cigarette (because she's a teenager) and sat on the composite decking pavilion overlooking the Logocentre. As the sun set, the memory of Titania's face, her face, projected onto Paul Kruger street brought her musings on fame back to the fore. She contemplated Andy Warhol's witticism "In the future everyone will be world-famous for fifteen minutes". Paul Kruger street isn't quite "the world". Perhaps, she thought, instead of being world-famous for fifteen minutes, we would all be ever so slightly famous all the time.
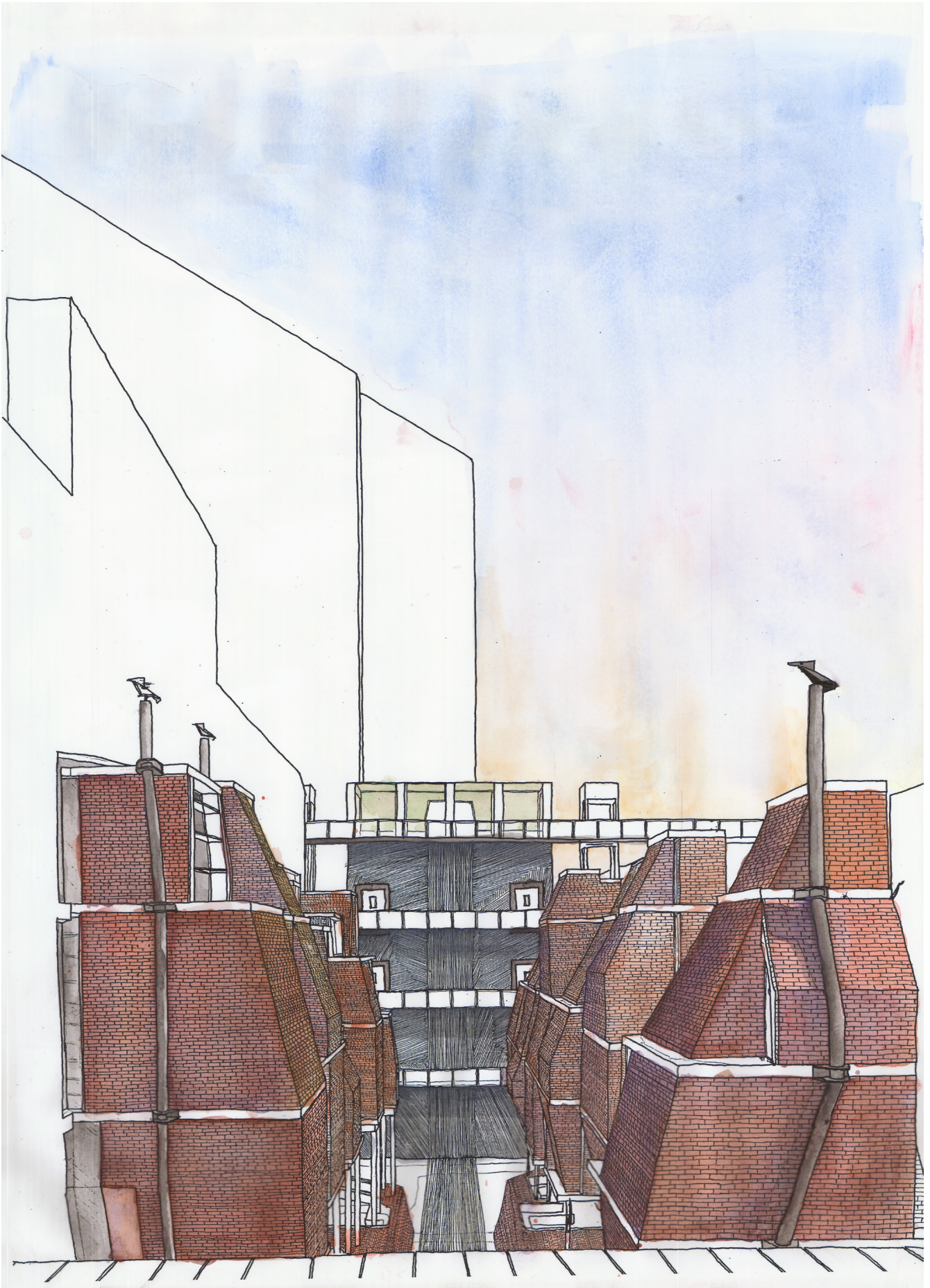
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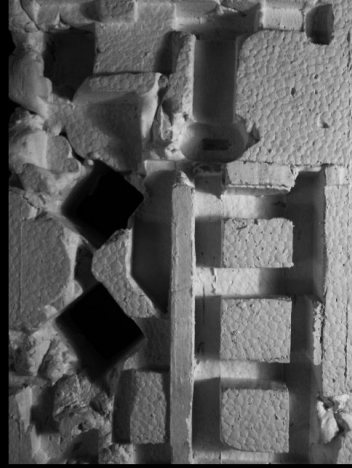
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APPENDIX A

leftovers.

Index

Introduction

The reciprocal relationship between human desires and human artefacts is at the core of the development of urban forms. Our programmes create unique spatial arrangements when our cities distribute and manage dynamic flows of material and inhabitants. These spatial arrangements, in turn, produce novel programmes when practices adapt to complex changes in density and distributions. In cities, the human scale is amplified; here the forms we inhabit are shaped not only by the needs and desires of human bodies but are also subject to the forces of mass culture. Individuals, subcultures, media, and government coagulate to form visions and zeitgeists which give additional, often radical, shape to the city. The ebbs and flows of these forces occasionally dislodge spaces from the programmes for which they were designed or necessitate the deliberate design of empty space. This disconnection has left the city punctuated with "Lost Spaces".

City as Laborotory

Loss is more: Loose Space

The programmatic vacuum that exists within these lost spaces is precisely where the productive potential for new practices is at its most concentrated. It is, however, necessary to socialise these spaces if they are to become productive (Franck. 2007). Karen Franck and Quentin Stevens calls such productive spaces "loose". The defining characteristics of loose spaces is that they share programs that do not clearly define the limits of the activities that may be carried out there. They can be squares, wide sidewalks, staircases, building thresholds and abandoned sites. It is in the interest of the profession, and no doubt society in general, for to architects make original programming part of the design process and to take advantage of the productive capacity of ambiguous urban sites. While the history of a lost space and an investigation into its former functions may be useful in directing the generation of new programmes, attempts to refill these spaces with the programs that have abandoned them would be to deny them their creative potential.

Generators of Loss

For the purposes of this investigation, the various causes of lost space are investigated only in order to classify and analyse lost spaces, and not in order to remediate the forces that have created the current urban condition.

These superhuman forces are classified under the general headings of Grand Visions, Automobiles, Suburbanity, and, ultimately, Fence Fetishism.
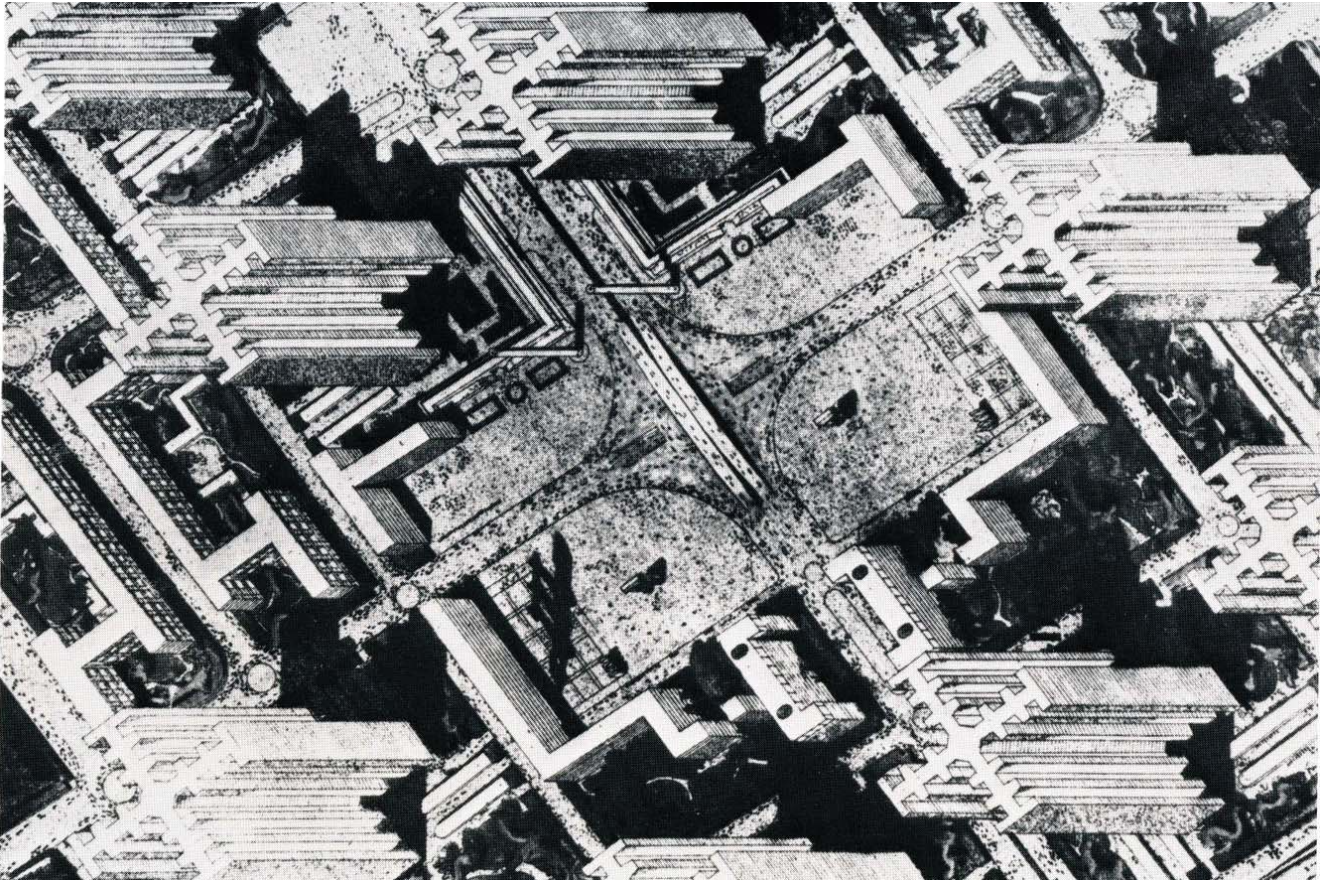
1) Grand Visions:

The use of architecture as flags of brand identity has proliferated the occurrence of object buildings as each brand attempts to stand apart from competitors and detractors. Object buildings often necessitate the design of empty spaces devoid of any purpose other than the provision of adequate viewing distance. Grand schemes of urban planning conspire with object buildings to produce "open space" on an urban scale.

2) The Automobile:

The mechanical model of the city, which rose in popularity dramatically during the first half of the 20th century, (Lynch. 1984. pp360) has placed emphasis on economy and efficiency as the primary principles influencing the management of urban space. The speed at which goods and people could be distributed through the urban fabric became closely associated with progress, while density and congestion were recast as undesirable complications which smother development. The rise of the automobile has meant not only that additional space had to be made for the bulk of metal occupying the urban territory, but also that a perceptual distance between the occupants of vehicles and the spaces outside has been created.

3) Suburbanity:

The rise of the automobile has enabled cities to grow well beyond the scale of animal and human based transport. The tendency of peripheral urban land to be more affordable than central sites has encouraged horizontal growth and a loss of density. This spread has also led to the development of many compact new centres, to which formerly urban programs flow - abandoning traditional city centres in favour of highly adaptable, and often predictable, shopping malls.
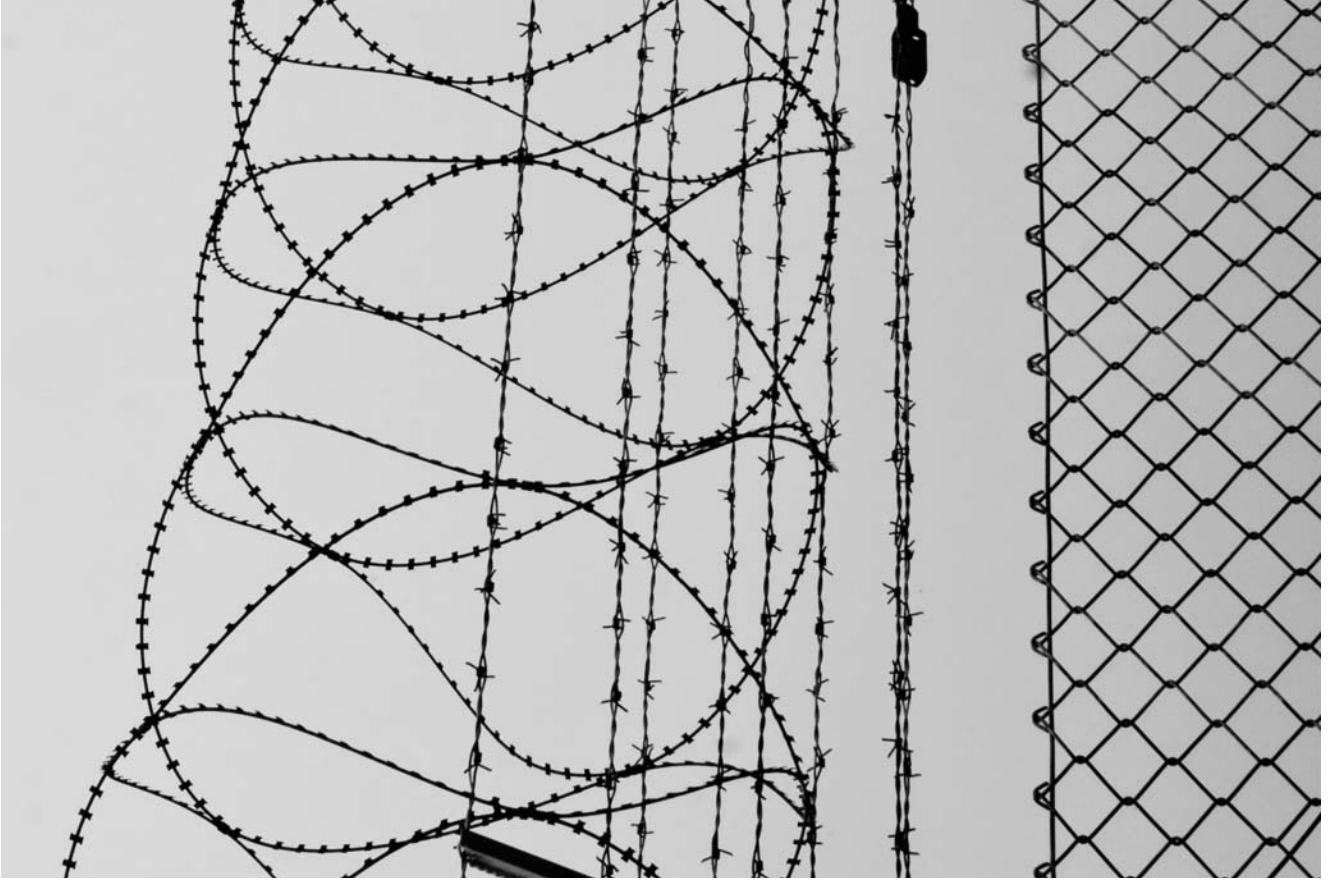
4) Fence Fetishism:

The uncertainty engendered by loose space carries an element of danger. This is confirmed by Karen Franck when she writes that it is "[p]recisely because the activities occurring in loose space are varied and unpredictable, [that] there is always a degree of uncertainty which, in and of itself, may be seen by some as a substantial risk." The aversion to vagarious activities has led to the widespread erection of fences and the closing of auxiliary entrances (and even primary thresholds) to public buildings in the city. The logic seems to be that relatively predictable lost space is more palatable than loose space, and, since "social ills" occur only in inhabited spaces, removing people from spaces will make potential sites of danger benign. This cauterization and segmentation of urban space has become one of the most significant current engines driving the production of lost space.

The Landscape - Pretoria:

The Pretoria city form is a direct result of the landscape in which it is situated (Visit Pretoria. Online). The natural boundaries that defined the original city centre included the Apies river on the Eastern edge, Redoubt and Gezina Hills on the north, Magazine and Timeball Hills south and Steenhoven Spruit west. (Jordaan. 1989: 26).

Land Parcels - Farms:

The landscape over which Pretoria has been constructed, was previously the territory of Ndebele tribes who were forced to flee with the arrival of the Voortrekkers in 1836 (SAHO; online). The first permanent occupation of the area occurred with the setting out of the Elandspoort farm by the Bronkhors brothers in 1842. Over the next decade various other farms were established resulting in a division of the land as individual claims to portions were staked out by the early settlers (Honiball; 67-67). Thus the Pretoria valley was gradually divided along agrarian boundaries (Alkayyali; 16-17). These farm boundaries remain evident in the layout of the city suburbs for example Waterkloof farm and Irene farm.
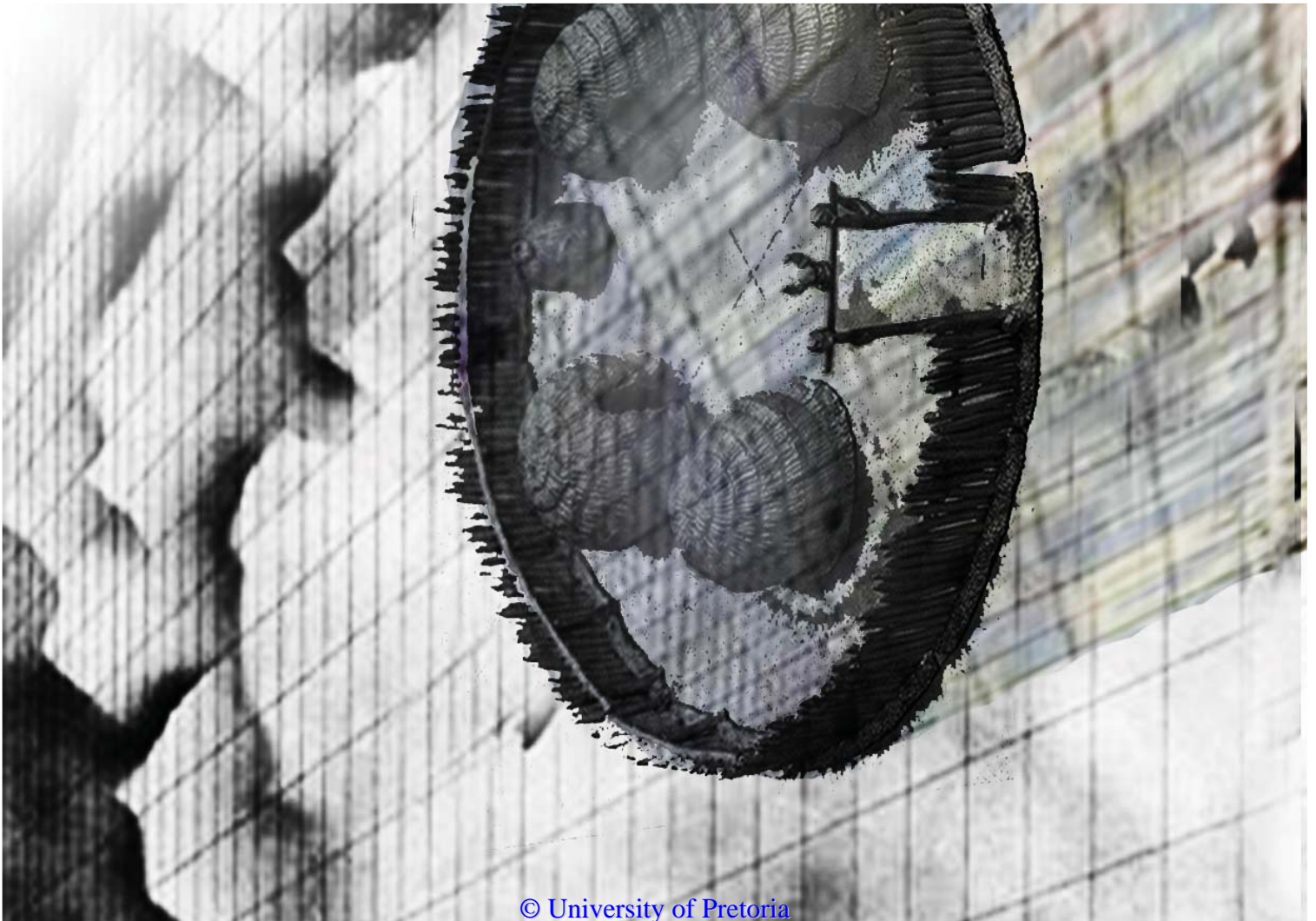
The City Grid:

By 1853 a community had formed around the religious congregational needs of the many farmers in the area, and in November of that year the Elandspoort and Daspoort farms were declared a town. In 1856 the town of Pretoria was pegged out by Andries Du Toit as an imposed grid following the traditional roman Cardo- Decumanus layout (Alkayyali; 16-17). This grid divided the area into ever smaller territories now defined by a grid of roads and property boundaries. Pretoria was granted official city status in 1931. (SAHO; online).
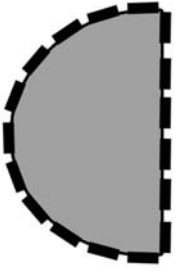
Stratified Rainbow:

During the 1990s the perception of safety and trust in the government's ability to provide security waned. This perception, combined with the the high incidence of crime, conspired to enact the privatization of security services and the formalization of segregation in spatial rather than legislative terms. (Mellin. 2011)
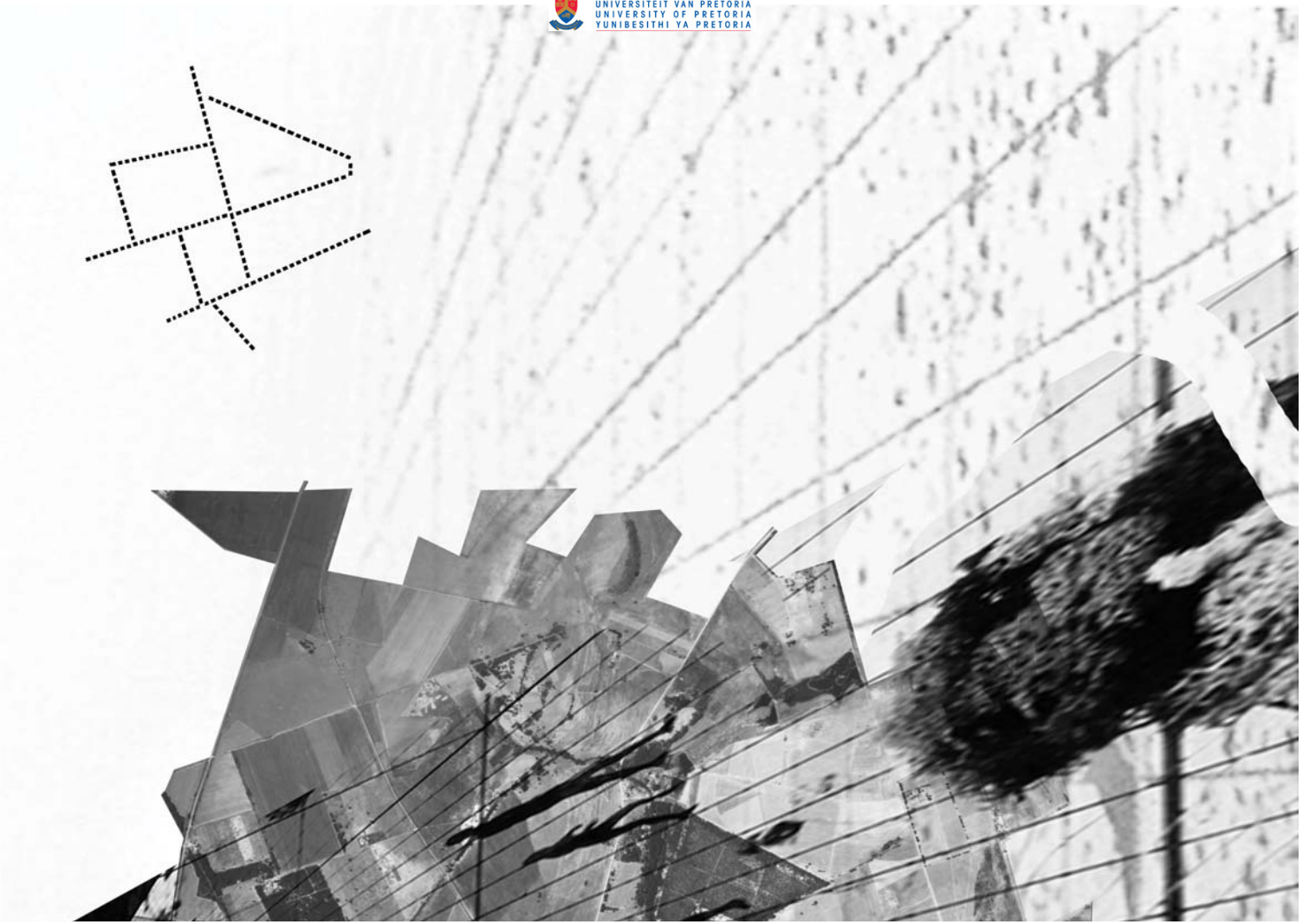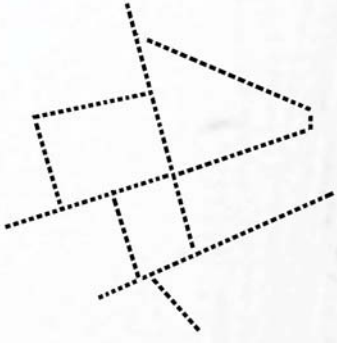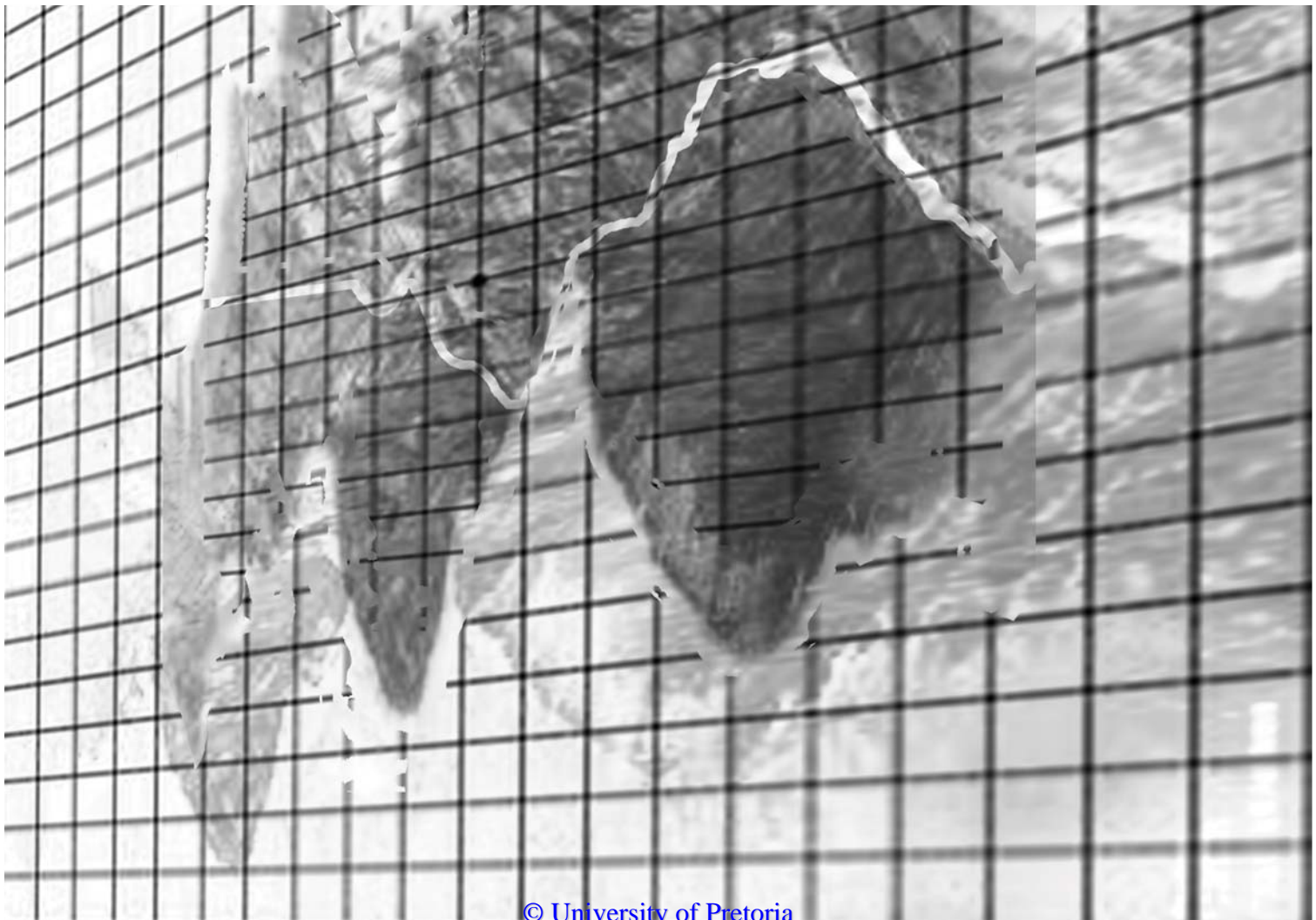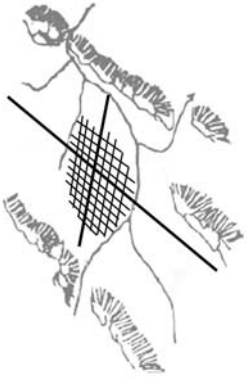
Genealogy of Fences

A brief history of the fence in South Africa will be useful in setting the context and establishing the totemic significance that have made them so commonplace. The genealogy will trace the evolution of fences in South Africa from the kraal to the city grid.

The Kraal:

In pre-colonial African settlements, the kraal was an enclosure for livestock which consisted of a circular boundary of mud wall or reed-palisade fence construction. The term originates from Dutch or Afrikaans and since early colonisation it loosely refers to the settlement as a whole, including the traditional huts that circumscribe the animal stockade (McCall: 1984: XX). The kraal offers nocturnal security for the livestock, whilst the settlement as a whole provides the infrastructure for a social unit where the chieftain is located on the end opposite to the singular entrance and is adjacent to a reception hut for visitors and meetings (Kidd; 1984: 41).

The Laager:

In the mid-1800s 'South Africa' was mostly a territorial expression, made up of various independent political states devoid of any real unity (New History. 2010). It was within this context that the laager originated – essentially a military camp made up of a ring of 50 or more pioneer wagons (New History. 2010). The wagons were both a means of transport and shelter as well as part of a collective fortress when grouped together in a circular formation and reinforced with additions of thorn bushes and sticks. The laager was possibly adapted from the African kraal as a circular settlement with the hut and thorn bushes as the defensive barrier (Van Rensburg. 2009). Like mobile huts which formed a communal kraal for the defence of people and animals in the centre.
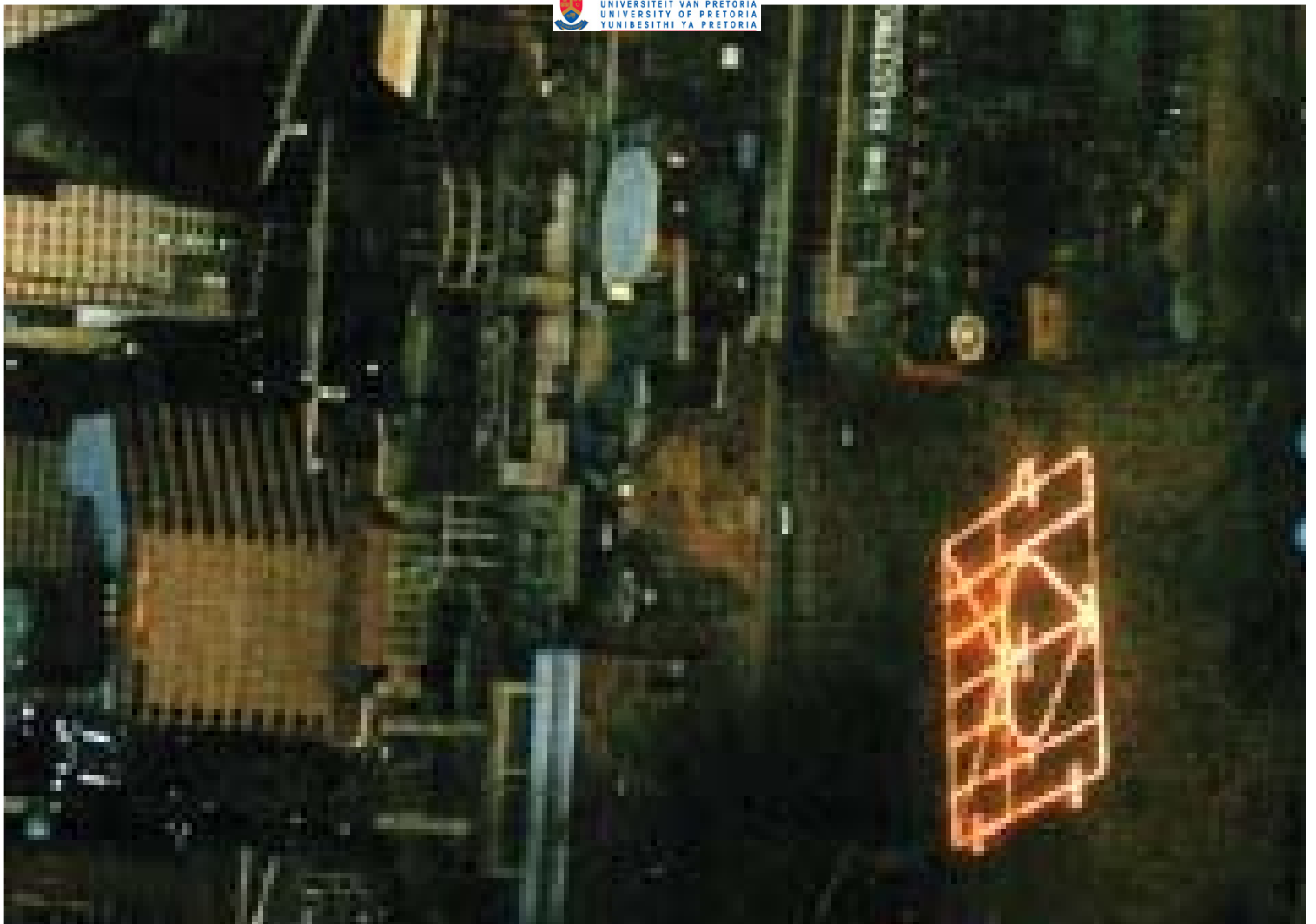
Various Manifestations of the fence

Etymologically the concept of the fence is related to defence, fencible and fend (as in "to fend for oneself" - to be independent) and essentially represents a manner of separating and claiming space. A fetish is defined as "an inanimate object worshipped for its supposed magical powers or because it is considered to be inhabited by a spirit" (OED. 2010). With fences, these "magical powers" or "spirits" revolve around security, containment, ownership, privacy and control. There are, however, various ways in which buildings, symbols and activities claim space and control access. They vary in subtlety - from degrees of deterring occupation perceptually, to straight-forward obstacles.

Scale as Fence:

The difference between the human body and the size of a surface or volume influences the desire for proximity. The larger the deviation from the human scale, the more likely it is to appear repellent to a person on the street.
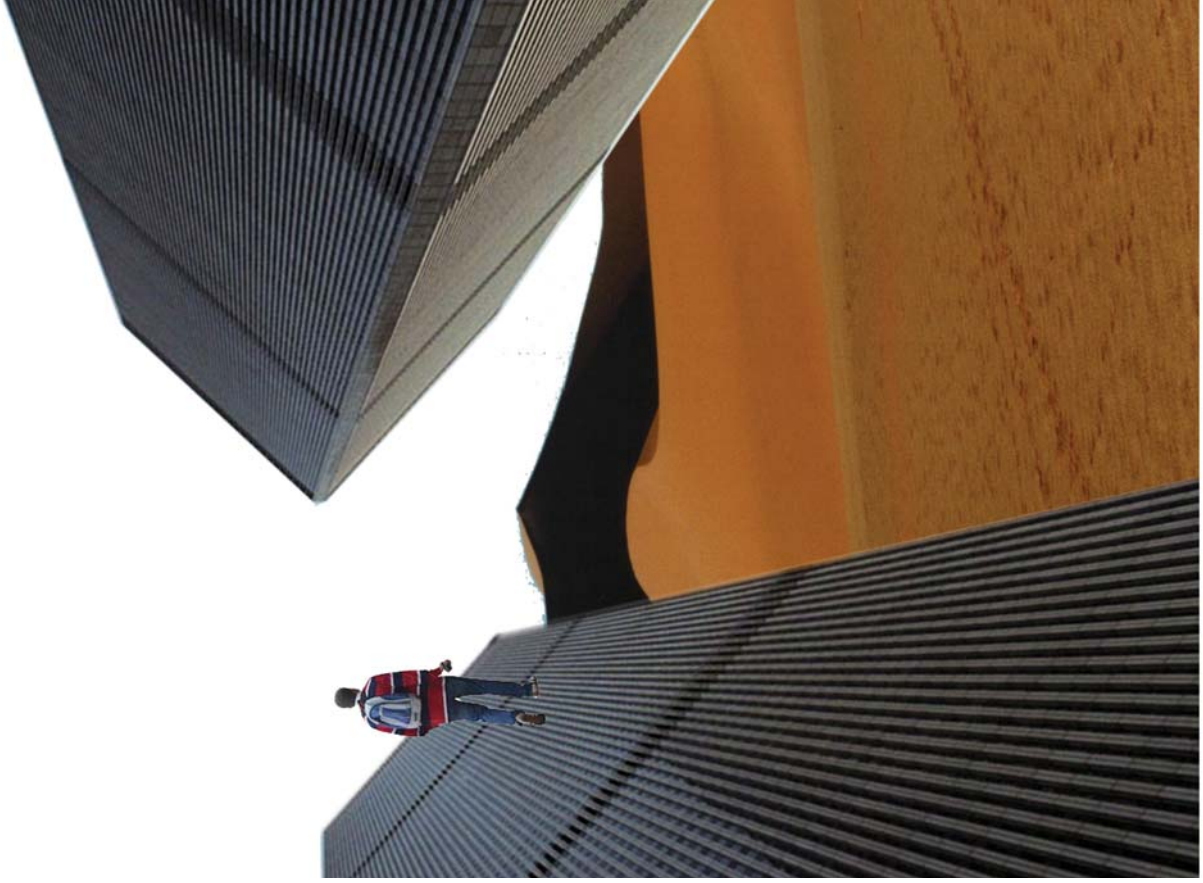
Hostility as Fence:

Spaces that do not conform to conventions of comfort or that do not have attributes that are considered inviting may act as perceptual fences by discouraging occupation and movement.
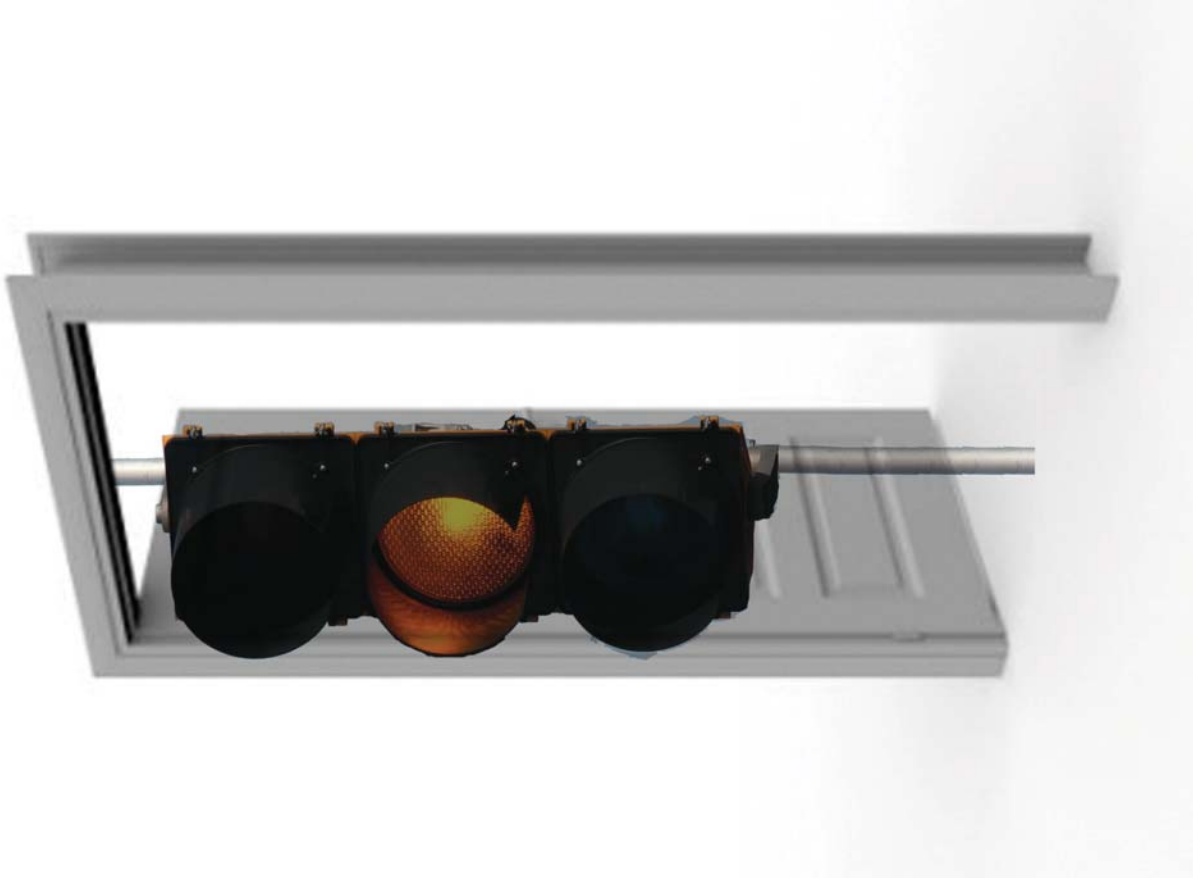
Use as Fence:

When sites are defined by particular uses, the ingress of other uses is, to some degree, restricted. The memory of former uses and events can also create impressions that continue to define territories. Abandonment and the ensuing lack of use can also discourage occupation.

Signage as Fence:

Language and imagery serve to demarcate the boundaries of a territory. They indicate permitted or forbidden practices with a limited material dimension.

Level as Fence:

Raised surfaces act as fences when they make spaces physically inaccessible. Staircases, ramps, elevators or escalators act as "gates" in these "fences".

Fence as Fence:

Material fences, which have ability to control access without obscuring vision, have become the ubiquitous manifestations of the desire for security and control.

Approaches

Selected sites are treated as laboratories for the diachronic analysis and manipulation of the existing "fence" types. In doing so, a selection of spatial forces can be used as informants for the exploration of various site-specific interventions.
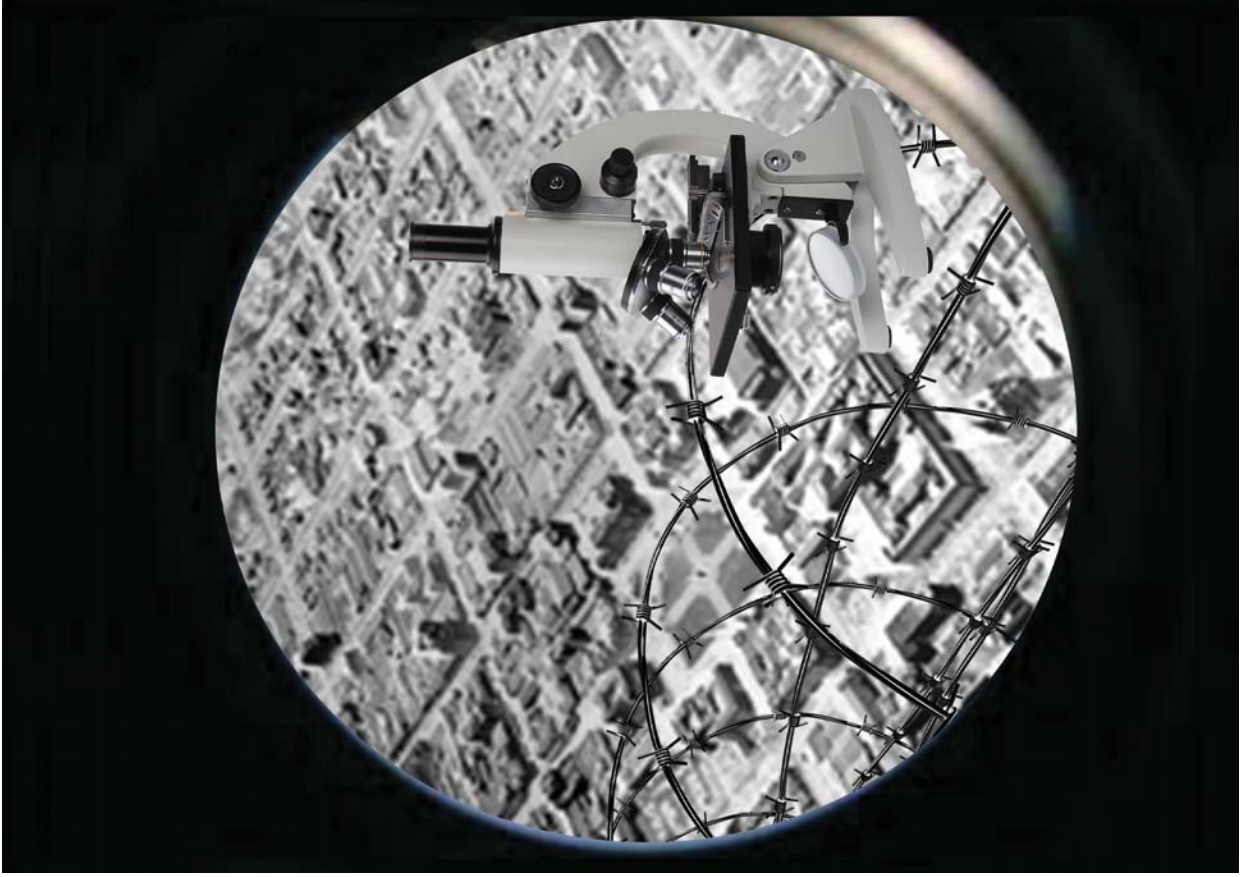
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