

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: **The Side-Stage**
A Critical Cultural Awareness Forum in Washington, D.C.

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Throughout history culture and place have been dynamic concepts. Major factors contribute to both their evolution and deterioration as recognizable characteristics of a society. Since humans began manipulating and adding to the environment some of the notable influences on place and culture have been the inventions of language, the printing press, electricity, the automobile, and many others. With the recent innovations associated with electronic media, namely television and the Internet, place and culture have once again been dramatically altered.

There is never a seamless transition when societies adopt new ways of communicating and interacting, rather, there are periods that require the re-balancing of morals and values. Lacking in the public realm and urban fabric of U.S. cities are places to partake in the discourse and deliberation associated with shifts in communication and interaction rituals due to the ubiquity of electronic media. This thesis reclaims a vital part of the urban experience in the form of a public forum while at the same time celebrating the creation, critique, and consumption of culture associated with electronic media.

Located in downtown Washington D.C., this project appropriately situates itself amidst the FBI building, the Spy Museum, and a number of cultural institutions. The political nature and scope of this thesis, therefore, is dramatically strengthened due to its surrounding context as the capital of the United States of America.

THE SIDE STAGE
A CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS FORUM IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

By

Matthew Aaron Peters

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Merlin, the Microsoft Word Assistant, for tirelessly helping me put this document together.

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INTRODUCTION

*There is a great need to revise and broaden our view of the human situation, a need to be both more comprehensive and more realistic, not only about others, but about ourselves as well. It is essential that we learn to read the silent communications as easily as the printed and spoken ones. Only by doing so can we also reach other people, both inside and outside our national boundaries, as we are increasingly required to do so.*¹

Edward Hall

*Most of our difficulties stem from our own ignorance. Honest and sincere people in the field continue to fail to grasp the true significance of the fact that culture controls behavior in deep and persisting ways, many of which are outside of awareness and therefore beyond conscious control of the individual.*²

Edward Hall

setting the stage

a spectator sport

this will enrich that

Setting the Stage

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players. ³

When Erving Goffman wrote in the 1950's about social interactions in his book, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, the often repeated quote by Shakespeare took on a more elaborate meaning.

Goffman defined social interactions as performances that are dependent on having an audience. This act can occur between two people as much as it can occur between hundreds, and more, with the simple foundation of having an audience and performer. Furthermore, Goffman divides space into two categories; front-stage and back-stage, both of which play out in a social establishment; the definition being “any place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place.” (238)

Describing the front-stage, Goffman refers to “the expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance.” (22) This most easily relates to the usual social role and performance that an individual plays when interacting with others.

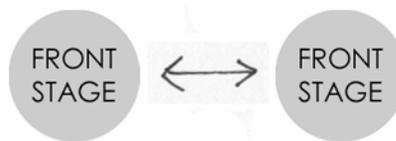


Figure 1 - Diagram of Front Stages, Interactive and Reciprocal Relationship

(Source: author)

The back-stage is “defined as a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course.

It is here that the capacity of a performance to express something beyond itself may be painstakingly fabricated; it is here that illusions and impressions are openly constructed.”

(112)

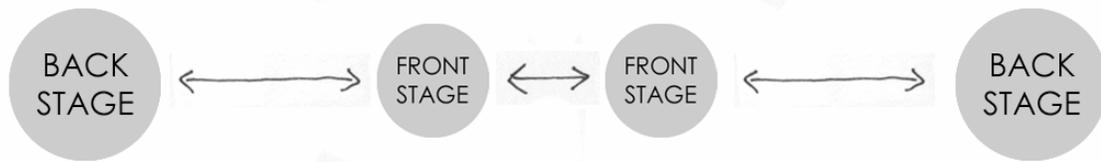


Figure 2 - Diagram of Front Stages and Back Stages, where the Back Stages are hidden from the opposing Front Stage

(Source: author)

These two poles illustrate how society interacts in everyday situations. A typical classroom at school illustrates how these stages are played out. During class, the student occupies his normal role; this includes taking notes, looking attentive, asking questions, etc. At the same time, the teacher performs his/her role presenting material, fielding questions, etc. Goffman, though, identifies much more that is involved within each of these roles. The student, therefore, must look observant and compliant. He must look interested. All of this occurs in the student’s front stage. However, when the teacher is not looking the student can escape into his backstage and relax, pass notes, make gestures towards the teacher and so on. The same holds true for the teacher. While presenting material to the class, giving a lecture, etc., the teacher is in her front stage. But, while the students are taking an examination and the teacher is at her desk looking at notes, refreshing herself as to what to say next, she is actually in her backstage.

This pattern of front-stage and back-stage, according to Goffman, applies to all social performances. Goffman then adds the idea of teams. This concept refers to “any set of individuals who co-operate in staging a single routine.” (79) In using the same example of the classroom, the students are all part of one team where they share both a

front and backstage depending on the teacher. In between classes when teachers relax together in the lounge and talk about past or future classes, they too are exhibiting characteristics of teams in a back-stage.

Therefore, what defines Goffman's notion of team is not just sharing front and back-stages; but keeping others out of *their* back-stages. This maintains other teams unaware of the preparation that goes on in order to put on a successful performance on the front-stage. One can imagine how awkward it would be if for some reason a student barged into the teacher lounge while they were all relaxing and gossiping about the students. It would be equally awkward if a teacher went with some of the students in-between classes to smoke a cigarette behind the back of the school.

Prior to the Internet, in the early 1960's, Marshall McLuhan wrote of the dramatic effects of media (both analog and digital) upon society, stating that "the medium is the message" (7) in his book, Understanding Media. In stating this, McLuhan focused on the actual medium instead of its content, articulating the idea that new technologies are extensions of ourselves and that they introduce a new scale to society and alternate forms of communication, thus transforming the way we interact. ⁴

Between Goffman and McLuhan there is a chasm where Goffman talks of face to face interaction; and McLuhan of the effects *on* interaction by media, namely print, photograph, press, telegraph, telephone, movies, radio, and television.

In his book, No Sense of Place, Joshua Meyrowitz confronts this gap and explores possible conclusions resulting from combining Goffman's and McLuhan's theories.

While Goffman's model of back and front region behaviors describes a static set of stages and is limited to face-to-face interaction, the principles implicit in it can be adapted to describe the changes in situations and behaviors brought about by new media. Implicit in the region model is the interdependence of back and front regions. Individuals' onstage performances depend on the existence of a backstage area, isolated from the audience, where performers can learn their roles, rehearse them, discuss strategies with teammates, or simply relax or lapse into inexpressiveness. Thus, if performers lose the ability to keep their back region behavior separate from their front region behavior, they not only lose aspects of their privacy, they also lose the ability to play certain parts of their front region roles. (46)

Seeing Goffman's region model as limiting, Meyrowitz introduced a third stage to the mix; the middle region or side-stage.

Middle region behavior develops when audience members gain a 'sidestage' view. That is, they see parts of the traditional backstage area along with parts of the traditional onstage area; they see the performer move from backstage to onstage to backstage. (47)

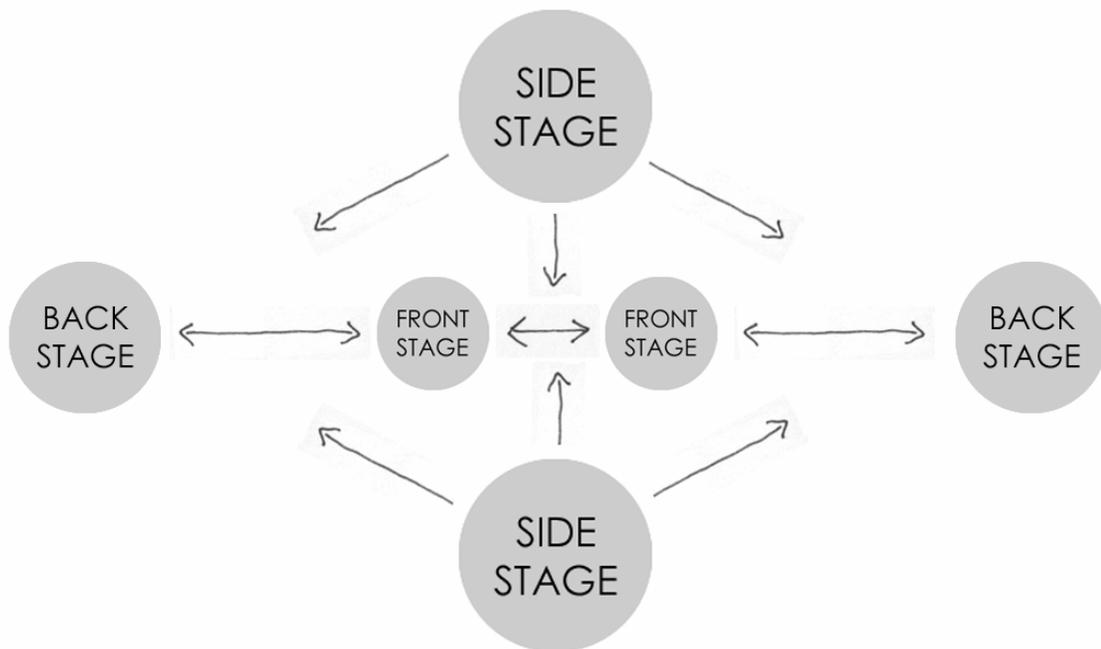


Figure 3 - Front Stages, Back Stages, and Side Stage; where the Side Stage has a View of the Transition between the Performer's Front and Back Stages

(Source: author)

What permits the side-stage to develop as an equally prominent region is media, primarily electronic media. In the example of television, even the most conservative of television programs involving a family will reveal both the front and back-stages of all members of the family in the course of the show. This sanctions the viewer at home to start becoming aware of the back-stage behavior of other teams. In more specific terms, children now watch television programs that reveal the anxieties on-screen parents have over raising their on-screen children. The children at home can watch a sequence of parents scolding their children and sending them to bed early and then going upstairs to second guess themselves regarding the punishment they enforced. The child at home, therefore, has a side-stage view of parental regions. Although seeming like a big assumption, Meyrowitz suggested that, in allowing access to back-stages of the parent team, children would be more likely to disrespect and question their parent's knowledge and authority, since they now see that parents do not necessarily have all the answers and repeatedly question their actions when it comes to child discipline.

Television removes much of the doubt as to what subjects one's children or parents know about. Any topic on any popular situational comedy, talk show, news program, or advertisement – be it death, homosexuality, abortion, male strippers, sex-change operations, political scandals, incest, rape, jock itch, or bras that 'lift and separate' – can be spoken about the next day in school, over dinner, or on a date, not only because everyone now knows about such topics, but also because everyone knows that everyone knows, and everyone knows that everyone knows that everyone knows. (92)

Exaggerating this point, there are talk shows constantly playing throughout the day catering to parents looking for better ways to raise their children. What is seldom taken into account, though, is that there is very little stopping children from watching these shows and becoming savvy to the back-stage character of the information being

shared amongst the “parent” teammates, exploiting the admission that parents need help with their children.

Although the decline of religious authority in western cultures have also lent a hand in making more subjects less taboo, it is (electronic) media that facilitates these subjects to be broadcast to a greater population at a faster rate.

The Internet provides an even better seat at the side-stage, where teammates can quickly and easily gain access to other team’s information, making the lines between social groups less obvious.

When referring back to Goffman’s definition of social establishment as “any place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place,” (238) the notion of what a fixed barrier is becomes an issue of importance within the current context of the “Digital Age.” Prior to electronic media, social group identities and territories were more or less synonymous since for the most part, only groups near the physical source of information had access to it, creating stronger delineations of teams. Ever since media has permeated our society, though, the dependency on place has eroded for group identities. Consequently, the “children” team can now be broadened to include the entire national population of children that watch television programs that reveal backstage behaviors of parents.

The relationship between group identity and group territory is tied to the traditional relationship between place and information access. To be ‘in’ a group – to share its experience and information – one once had to be in the proper place. (57)

What Meyrowitz claims, therefore, is that the availability to share experiences on a vastly greater scale due to (electronic) media greatly diminishes the boundaries between

social groups. Electronic media, unlike print media, allows far greater access due to the ease of deciphering its code. With print media, one must first learn to read, in order to understand what something means, what information is being presented. However, electronic media is quite the opposite since it is primarily based on imagery. As Meyrowitz states, “Television’s code of electronic signals, which produces facsimiles of everyday sights and sounds, has basically one degree of complexity. Once you know how to watch and listen to one television program, you essentially know how to watch and listen to any television program.” (76)

Social group identities have been blurred since the ubiquitous nature of (electronic) media. Many front-stages and back-stages have become accessible to “teams” that traditionally would not be allowed access. Many of the consequences of such changes in social behavior have already been observed, although, too often the finger is pointed at the wrong source.

Some issues that face us due to the above dilemmas are education related. Because of the amount of time children spend watching TV they are gaining access to more and more information that would traditionally be hidden from them until they reach an “appropriate” age. The linear education system which is based on reading skills is being greatly challenged by the effects of media. The old paradigm was teaching young children to read by introducing them to ideal situations presented to them via controlled written material. However, when that child goes home and turns on the television or connects to the Internet, there are no controls that make sure the child only sees happily married parents that never fight or dogs named Spot that run around the backyard surrounded by a white-picket fence. Instead, they are exposed to divorce, drugs, explicit

language, war, etc. that, even in the most conservative of situations, the images presented are much more easily digested than those written down in a classroom. In addition, the vast bodies of knowledge that are presented on TV are easily and quickly learned due to their visual nature, as opposed to relying on literacy levels. This creates uneven learning curves and standards amongst age levels.

This is only one issue since (electronic) media has become a vital part of our lives. Although many people would be quick to censor or protest, there are alternate ways of dealing with new forms of technology and their impacts on society. What needs to be done, therefore, is to pay more attention to the relationships that exist between electronic media and society; accept its presence and find alternate and new ways of moving forward, not trying to assign backward roles that no longer apply to current and future trends.

Spectator Sport

In the past decade a genre relatively new to television has come to define a large portion of American culture. Reality TV bases its success on mediated voyeurism and the American viewing public has embraced this programming scheme whole-heartedly.

In his book, Voyeur Nation, Clay Calvert defines mediated voyeurism as “the consumption of revealing images of and information about others’ apparently real and unguarded lives, often yet not always for purposes of entertainment but frequently at the expense of privacy and discourse, through the means of mass media and Internet.” (2)

Calvert continues by stressing the relationship that voyeuristic media messages have with culture, in that the media, or rather the producers behind the media, construct and prescribe a social reality for the public to happily consume.

Although the dystopia presented by George Orwell in his book, 1984, where Big Brother was an omniscient governmental eye watching all of society, keeping everyone in line and making sure they acted according to strictly defined social norms, sounds eerily close to the here and now, there is more to take into consideration before looking to join the Brotherhood. Instead, the current situation, highlighted by the popularity of Reality TV, hovers between Orwell’s 1984 and Aldous Huxley’s A Brave New World. Huxley’s dystopia, rather than focusing on fear to control, uses entertainment and pleasure to numb and manipulate the masses. Collins and Skover put it as the “non-stop distractions...[are] used as instruments of policy, for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of the social and political situation.” (6) As Neil Postman states, “Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us, Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us.” (viii) Through the use of soma, Huxley’s pleasure drug, and

an overabundance of entertainment, the citizens in A Brave New World remained easily controlled by the government that supplied the entertainment.



Figure 4 – The home viewer being controlled through surveillance

(Source: author, <http://asymmetric.net/recent.php>, <http://digital-cinemas.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=21>, <http://www.steve4u.com/usflag/printflag.htm>)



Figure 5 – The home viewer being controlled through entertainment

(Source: author, <http://www.steve4u.com/usflag/printflag.htm>, <http://digital-cinemas.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=21>, <http://tecnologia.tiscali.it/sfondi/celebrita/>)

Huxley and Orwell were not writing about new phenomenon, characteristic of just modern, western civilization. In ancient Rome, it is well documented that it was commonplace to constantly provide entertainment in order to control the enormous population living in the city. With literally hundreds of holidays and “events,” Caesars managed to pacify their citizens through entertainment, keeping them occupied while they tended to politics.

Reality TV, then, represents a confusing and frightening stance somewhere in the middle of these two extreme dystopias. In describing the role of this genre, Mark Andrejevic explains that

The promise deployed by reality TV is that submission to comprehensive surveillance is not merely a character-building challenge and a ‘growth’ experience, but a way to participate in a medium that has long relegated audience members to the role of passive spectators. It therefore works neatly as an advertisement for the benefits of submission to comprehensive surveillance in an era in which such submission is increasingly productive. Its promise – that of access to the real via comprehensive monitoring – lines up alongside those of the interactive revolution generally: spectators shall become participants. The many shall take on the role previously monopolized by the privileged few: power will be shared with the people. This revolution will, moreover, ostensibly result in the overthrow of the rule of the culture industry and replace the homogenized pabulum of mass-produced pop culture with the vital fare of the ‘real.’(2-3)

Andrejevic seems a little more optimistic than others in that he sees the possibility of the act of participation aiding in the re-taking of our culture, instead of it being a mass-produced commodity handed out to be blindly consumed.

Viewing Reality TV as just another program on the screen, it does serve the function of providing a shared experience for people to relate to, talk about, and around which to develop a sense of community. However, due to its intrusive nature upon real lives and real society, one can’t help but be weary of its consequences.

The idea of watching others is so basic an idea and such an everyday activity that to see it produced on-screen is easily mistaken for a natural evolution and something to be embraced. Calvert, in his study of Reality TV, makes frequent notes of how society is justifying this surrender of privacy and acceptance of surveillance, not just in our own lives but in the lives of others.

The more accepting we are of having our own behavior visually monitored and recorded, the more our comfort level with watching others' activities increases. (91-92)

When television newsmagazines use the voyeuristic technique of the hidden camera investigation so popular with audiences, they are essentially acting as pseudo-law enforcement agencies. We accept their secretive technique as a legitimate intrusion on others' lives because we have come to accept the surveillance camera as an omnipresent reality of our own lives. (92)

We expect to be watched, and, concomitantly, we expect to be able to watch others. (94)

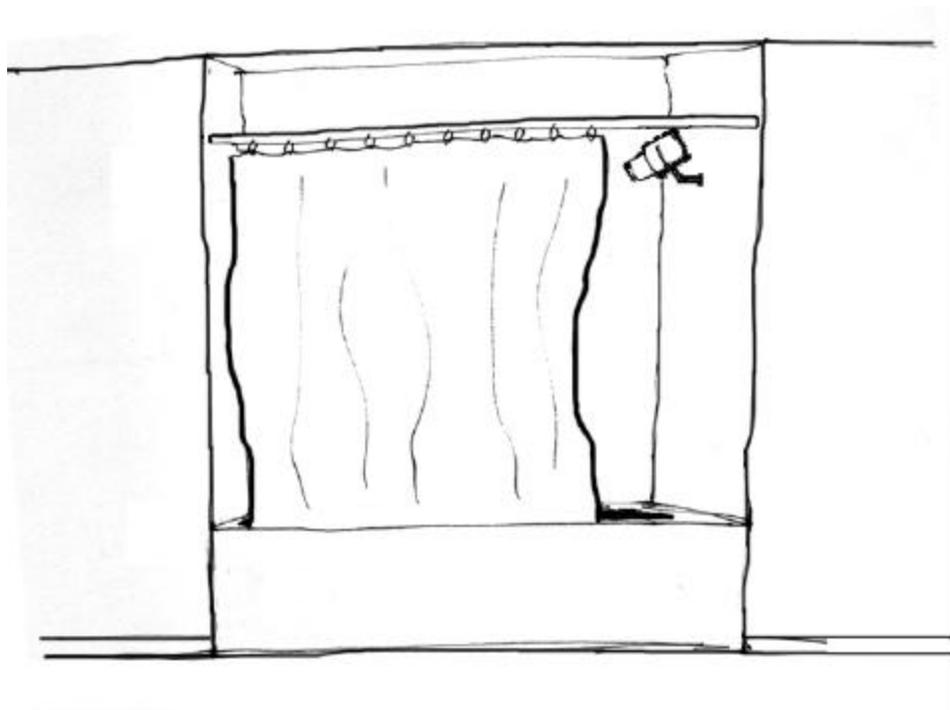


Figure 6 - A not too shocking image

(Source: author)

The genre of Reality TV does not stop at bickering twenty-somethings that are locked in a house for the public's enjoyment. Unfortunately, the techniques employed by Reality TV are also used in politics. Referring to it as a "voyeuristic spectator sport,"

(116) Calvert explains three ways how television supports politics as voyeurism:

- (1) news coverage that often focuses on the private, titillating, or prurient aspects of politicians' lives;
- (2) political talk shows in which dialogue is denigrated and spectacle is celebrated; and
- (3) horse-race coverage of campaigns that suggests politics is something to be passively watched rather than actively joined. (116)

Adding to this notion, Collins and Skover explain how

Television creates an electronic network that connects several hundred million people across a continent to a single source of entertainment and information. It provides us with a common set of direct experiences, a shared body of images, situations, and events. Its meaning for us lies in this interconnection; we perceive its programs not simply as news or entertainment, but as *national* news or entertainment. Thus television is intimately linked to our concept of citizenship... Indeed, this activity may be the average person's most important political act. (60)

The problem is not that television presents us with entertaining subject matter but that all subject matter is presented as entertaining, which is another issue altogether. (Postman 87)

The popularity of Reality TV and voyeuristic techniques employed by news and television magazine programs brings the notions of Orwell's and Huxley's dystopias to the forefront of cultural concern. With every new season there are more and more shows on television that employ the techniques listed above to capture more audiences for advertisers. There are constantly more behind-the-scenes looks at how celebrities are made, how shows are produced, and how "real" people react under strange circumstances and under extreme pressure. The ordinary person, it is implied, can become an instant celebrity by appearing on any number of the contemporary reality TV shows. As a result,

the traditional celebrity is forced to reveal more and more about herself to remain different and special, discrediting her role as celebrity while trying to protect it at the same time.

The demystification of the role of the American presidency is a great example of how media has altered societal roles and their perceptions. As Meyrowitz pointed out, “before the 1920’s, most people had never heard the voice of a President or received any direct evidence of his humanness or personality,” (168) there was a clear line that distinguished the president’s front and back-stages. In fact, prior to the 1920’s, the American public rarely had any knowledge of the president’s back-stage information; the details that were given to the public were almost always scrubbed or cleaned prior to entering the public realm. Additionally, it was conveyed in the written form (prior to radio), avoiding any traces of speech impediments, mispronunciations, accents, time fillers, etc.

There is no surprise that when we look back at the American presidents, they are revered with great awe, since most of the information we have had access to was always filtered through the process of manipulation in order to provide the best image. We know very little about the sexual habits, illnesses, operations, and so on about our leaders prior to the ever-present nature of (electronic) media. And the information that we might have concerning those subjects was never exploited in comparison to today.

As we currently see the role of the presidency, there are incredible differences that have been consequences of media. To use a very recent example, in the movie, *Fahrenheit 911* by Michael Moore, one of the opening scenes is of President George W.

Bush in a kindergarten classroom. It is here where the President learns of the planes crashing into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Because there were cameras fixed on the president, the entire American public, thanks to Michael Moore, got a side-stage seat of how the President moved from front-stage to back-stage, handled hearing the news, his reaction, and how long it took for him to do anything other than “lapse into inexpressiveness.” (Meyrowitz 46)



Figure 7 - The President of the U.S. Shifting Stages

(Source: http://www.classbrain.com/artmovies/publish/article_295.shtml)

If we temporarily abstain from and ponder how any of our founding fathers might have responded upon hearing similar news, their reactions would have been delayed as well. Unfortunately, though, the way the media functioned during the beginning of our nation, there were long periods of time before any reactions were publicized. It would be fair to say that once the terrorists crashed into the towers, there would be no rush to respond either publicly or in any other manner because that information would only have been available to those directly affected, namely the people killed in the towers and those that were there watching it happen. Most likely news of the event would reach the White House in a day; the President would deliberate over the situation and make an announcement that would reach a limited number of literate people who had access to

newspapers. This would all be normal. This is not the case, however, anymore since the instantaneous accessibility to information demands instantaneous responses, forcing lines between front-stage and back-stage to disintegrate.

In the case of George W. Bush, he was caught by the cameras in his back-stage when being told of the events that unraveled that morning. It didn't help that he was also caught on video with a children's book in his hands, surrounded by kindergarteners, instead of being exposed through print, limiting the number of interpretations and audience able to decipher his (in)actions.

The above example illustrates how media mixes the public and private realms; and advertises them. Because of the accessibility that we now possess, semi-private actions are recorded and criticized publicly. Roles like the American presidency that formerly did not have to rely heavily on make-up artists and other similar assistants traditionally associated with the performance arts have dramatically been altered. Everyday there are more people watching, there are more people recording, and there are more people criticizing.

Everyone can have their own surveillance cameras focused on their loved ones. Everyone can turn on the TV and numb themselves through entertaining programming sponsored by their favorite beverage, soap, vehicle, or clothing store. They can assume the role of Big Brother one minute and then take their soma pill the next so they can rest better.

This Will Enrich That

In his book, Notre Dame of Paris, Victor Hugo included a chapter that seemed to deviate from the story of a hunchback living in the bell tower of Notre Dame Cathedral. Entitled, “This Will Kill That,” Hugo talked of Gutenberg’s printing press killing architecture as mankind’s collective mode of communication and expression.

It was the pulpit and the manuscript, the spoken and the written word, taking fright at the printed word; something like the stupor felt by a sparrow were it to see the angel legion unfold its six million wings. It was the cry of the prophet who already hears the restless surge of an emancipated mankind, who can see that future time when intelligence will undermine faith, opinion dethrone belief and the world shake off Rome. (189)

This was the presentiment that as human ideas changed their form they would change their mode of expression, that the crucial idea of each generation would no longer be written in the same material or in the same way, that the book of stone, so solid and durable, would give way to the book of paper, which was more solid and durable still. (189)

Hugo felt that prior to the printing press architecture had represented not just the culmination of all of the arts, but time and space as well. Society expressed itself through edifice and although many could decipher its principles, only a privileged few (the religious authorities) could interpret architecture and its intricate symbolism for the people. However, according to Hugo, Gutenberg’s press devalued architecture and its role as reflecting and prescribing culture and society. It cheapened its power and allowed local ideas to cross borders and endure the passing of time.

In its printed form, thought is more imperishable than ever; it is volatile, elusive, indestructible. It mingles with the air. In the days of architecture, thought had turned into a mountain and taken powerful hold of a century and of a place. Now it turned into a flock of birds and was scattered on the four winds, occupying every point of air and space simultaneously. (196)

In the end, Hugo was pessimistic regarding the effects of new technology and new media on traditional and existing forms. “The great poem, the great edifice, the great creation of mankind will no longer be built, it will be printed.” (200)

An example that tragically demonstrates how, however compelling, Hugo’s prophesy has not manifested is the September 11 attack of 2001. Instead of electing to destroy books, communication devices or television antennas, the terrorists went after one of the most powerful architectural symbols in the western world. In one sense, they supported the strength of architecture and its ability to represent place and culture. The ideals of an entire nation were enveloped in the glass and steel structure that once strongly defined the skyline of the most recognizable city in the world.

Had the printing press really displaced architecture as the manifestation of our society the above mentioned act of atrocity would not have happened as it did; rather the terrorists would not have chosen a building as a target. Therefore, before adopting the opinion that technology such as the printing press and more recently digital media are distractions and negative components of society that act more to divide and segregate communities, the antithesis is a more realistic perspective.

In Digital Ground, Malcolm McCullough defends digital media and its positive role in creating “place.”

The built environment organizes flows of people, resources, and ideas. Social infrastructure has long involved architecture, but has also more recently included network computing. The latter tends to augment rather than replace the former; architecture has acquired a digital layer. As with past layers of technology, such as electrification, mechanical equipment, and transportation, so now digital technologies extend architecture’s reach. (47)

As another layer in architecture and urbanism, digital media adds an alternate form of infrastructure with the potential to link nodes in similar manners as the railroads, highways, and rivers once did as cities and whole nations expanded in their infancies.



Figure 8 - Laugier's Primitive Hut with Digital Layer

(Source: author and http://www.csbe.org/e_publications/theory_in_architecture/fig8.htm)

Places emerge at crossovers between infrastructures. Where one flow prompts, regulates, or feeds another, development occurs. Where the boats met the trains, great cities grew. Increasingly, such connections occur between digital and physical infrastructures. Electronic communication has intensified, not undermined, the hubs of activity in the world's entrepôts. This intensification is reflected in the current practices of urban design. As cities everywhere move to correct the separation of use wrought by the industrial age, we have rediscovered how the flows of people, goods, and information are most valuable wherever they are most closely intermingled. (McCullough 48)

Additionally, William Mitchell, in his book e-topia, makes a strong argument that there has always been and continues to be a close relationship between digital media and the need for "place" in the traditional sense of built environment for a congregation of people. In fact, as digital media becomes more and more pervasive in society, the importance of a place to hold face-to-face meetings and relationships becomes even more important.

In a broader context, the growth in telecommunications during the 1980s and 1990s has – seemingly paradoxically – been accompanied by burgeoning demand for hotel meeting facilities and convention centers. Some of this, no doubt, has dimply been due to general economic expansion. But much of it results from a characteristic behavior of geographically distributed businesses, professional organizations, and interest groups; they form and sustain themselves by means of electronic telecommunication, then they find that they need annual face-to-face get-togethers to refresh relationships among members and to reestablish trust and confidence. And conversely, face-to-face contacts at these meetings stimulate subsequent telecommunication. The two are inextricably intertwined. (91)

Although to a certain extent many architects around the world are incorporating this digital layer into their buildings, there are still endless ways to explore this relatively new relationship. In other words, this will not kill that.

Glossary of Terms and Phrases

Front-Stage - The expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance. (Goffman 22)

Back-Stage - Defined as a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course. There are, of course, many characteristic functions of such places. It is here that the capacity of a performance to express something beyond itself may be painstakingly fabricated; it is here that illusions and impressions are openly constructed. (Goffman 112)

Side-Stage - Middle region behavior develops when audience members gain a 'sidestage' view. That is, they see parts of the traditional backstage area along with parts of the traditional onstage area; they see the performer move from backstage to onstage to backstage. (Meyrowitz 47)

Mediated Voyeurism - The consumption of revealing images of and information about others' apparently real and unguarded lives, often yet not always for purposes of entertainment but frequently at the expense of privacy and discourse, through the means of mass media and Internet. (Calvert 2-3)

City - The city in its complete sense, then, is a geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theater of social action, and an esthetic symbol of collective unity. On one hand it is a physical frame for the commonplace domestic and economic activities; on the other, it is a consciously dramatic setting for the more significant actions and the more sublimated urges of a human culture. The city fosters art and is art; the city creates the theater and is the theater. It is in the city, the city as theater, that man's more purposive activities are formulated and worked out, through conflicting and cooperating personalities, events, groups, into more significant culminations. (The Culture of Cities, Mumford)

Orwellian and Huxleyan Dystopias - What Orwell feared were those who would ban books. What Huxley feared was that there would be no reason to ban a book, for there would be no one who wanted to read one. Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we could become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies, the orgy porgy, and the centrifugal bumblepuppy. As Huxley remarked in *Brave New World Revisited*, the civil libertarians and rationalists who are ever on the alert to oppose tyranny 'failed to take into account

man's almost infinite appetite for distraction.' In 1984, Huxley added, people are controlled by inflicting pain. In Brave New World, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure. In short, Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us, Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us. (Postman vii-viii)

Huxley's nightmare is one in which government has no need to censor dissent, no cause to hide truth, and no ground to ban serious discussion. It is a world of pleasure and trivialization, a world whose citizenry euphorically digests narcotic 'soma tablets.' The brave new world offers a surfeit of entertainment, 'non-stop distractions of the most fascinating nature (the feelies, orgy-porgy, centrifugal bumble-puppy)' that ensure a state of perpetual amusement and happiness. (Collins and Skover 6)

The purpose of this 'happiness' is to numb. The 'non-stop distractions...[are] used as instruments of policy, for the purpose of preventing people from paying too much attention to the realities of the social and political situation.' (Collins and Skover 6)

Social Establishment - Any place surrounded by fixed barriers to perception in which a particular kind of activity regularly takes place. (Goffman 238)

Place - Place is a geographical sign of 'betweenness,' endowed with both specificity and generality, and always understood in terms of past and future, change and permanence. (McCarthy)

Culture - Culture is the link between human beings and the means they have of interacting with others. (The Silent Language, Hall 182)

Teams - A set of individuals whose intimate co-operation is required if a given projected definition of the situation is to be maintained. A team is a grouping, but it is a grouping not in relation to a social structure or social organization but rather in relation to an interaction or series of interactions in which the relevant definition of the situation is maintained. (Goffman 104)

Architecture -The articulation of space so as to produce in the participator a definite space experience in relation to previous and anticipated space experiences. (Bacon 21)

Architecture is derived as a consequence of the initiation of discourse enabled by the gathering. (Dripps 21)

Architecture is no longer simply the play of masses in light. It now embraces the play of digital information in space. (Mitchell 41)

CHAPTER ONE – RAISON D'ETRE

*By broadening our conception of the forces that make up and control our lives, average people can never again be completely caught in the grip of patterned behavior of which they have no awareness.*⁵

Edward Hall

*A real understanding of what culture is should rekindle our interest in life, an interest which is often sorely lacking. It will help people learn where they are and who they are. It will prevent them from being pushed around by the more voracious, predatory, and opportunistic of their fellow humans who take advantage of the fact that the public is not usually aware of those shared formal norms which give coherence to our society.*⁶

Edward Hall

Raison d’Etre

Prior to electronic media allowing incredibly easy and instantaneous access to worldwide information, knowledge was mediated by major institutions, corporations, and government agencies. If an American citizen wanted information regarding the culture of Spanish citizens, for example, one needed to consult the appropriate government authorities, books, and periodicals.

Since the Internet has become a commonplace tool for communication, news, and information, an American citizen can now have direct access to the individual as well as the collective views of Spanish citizens. What this results in is a distinction between Spain the government and Spain the people; and America the government and America the people. An example that clearly illustrates this occurred in the aftermath of the attacks on September 11, 2001.

As President George W. Bush was rushing into a preemptive attack on Iraq without the consent of the UN, the majority of countries all over the world were in opposition. However, due to deals conducted behind closed doors and applied economic pressure (amongst other reasons), Spain decided to join the “Coalition of the Willing,” supporting Bush’s decision to enter Iraq. Upon learning of their government’s decision to join the U.S., the citizens of Spain staged numerous protests on a daily basis for weeks on end voicing their opposition towards both the war in Iraq and their government’s involvement. Similarly, a large portion of U.S. citizens demonstrated a clear divide in their affiliations, protesting across the country against the preemptive war.

Electronic media played an important role in enabling sympathy and understanding amongst citizens of various countries. U.S. citizens were able to turn on

the TV or connect to the Internet and witness “first-hand” protests and dissensions concerning the war both on U.S. soil and in countries like Spain. Electronic media exposed the incongruence between government and its citizens. What resulted was a mutual sympathy between the Spanish and American people where they no longer made the direct association between government opinions and public opinions. No longer can people blindly assume that all of the citizens of a country subscribe to the viewpoints of their government since they now have readily accessible information that can demonstrate the contrary.

Since such changes in social relations on a global scale due to electronic media, there needs to be recognizable nodes where such discourse and realizations can take place. There is lacking a forum where face-to-face interaction and discussion can occur amongst a variety of peoples and cultures, embracing what opportunities the Internet and electronic media have offered. Although currently located in cyberspace, there is still a need to physically gather, to congregate and discuss relevant cultural and political topics of the day in order to communally advance in a world where there is more understanding and sympathy towards our neighbors (both local and global).

By introducing a building in the heart of downtown Washington D.C. with a program to facilitate such dynamics, a vital step will be made. Containing three institutions that focus on the research, study, policy, and issues raised by electronic media, technology, politics, art, and culture, a foundation is laid to start a conversation regarding the above issues. In addition there will be a higher education component in order to involve Masters and PhD students in the conversation and help critique, refine, interpret, and generate the issues dealt with amongst the institutions. There will also be a

public realm that incorporates the public in the cycle of creation, critique, and consumption of culture that this building facilitates. As a side-stage, then, the building acts as a place to critically examine, discuss, and improve current cultural conditions and relationships that have resulted from electronic media. It will provide each user type (researcher, student, citizen) with a perspective allowing them to see both the back-stage and the front-stage of culture in a number of its manifestations.

Washington, D.C. is the perfect city to begin this architectural exploration. As the capital of the U.S., the city offers great resources from which to take advantage. It is a global hub of tourist activity welcoming people from all countries to visit. Politically, the city is a collective of highly charged opinions, government institutions, and entities that shape national as well as global policies. Urbanistically, Washington, D.C. is a very successfully designed city that handles a number of transportation systems, diverse population, and a healthy economy. This project, therefore, will draw on the above advantages and improve the existing urban experience while enlightening the general public as well.

In order to further capitalize on the advantages that electronic media has offered, the building will also connect to similarly programmed buildings in a number of technologically rich ways across the globe. This will add a digital layer to the urban environment and continue the trend of bringing people together in the hopes of cultural sympathy and understanding.

CHAPTER TWO – SITE

site history

site documentation

site analysis

The Site

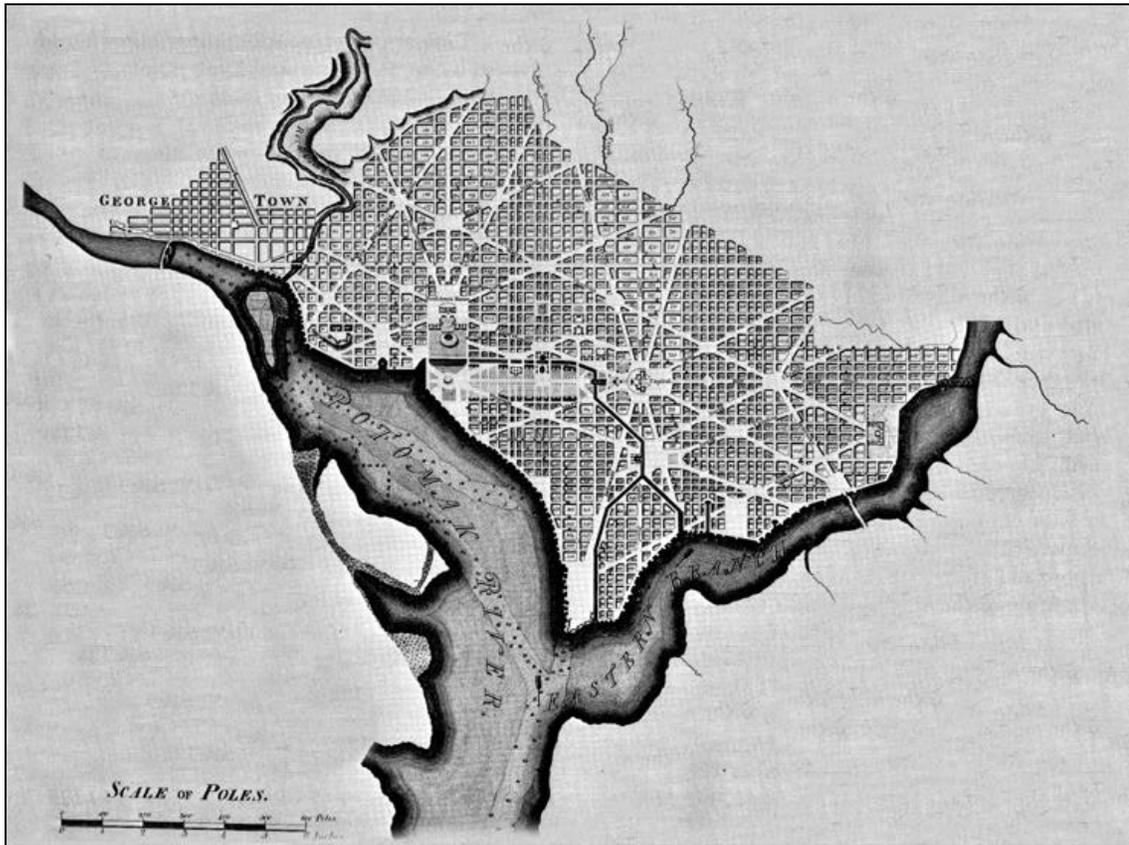


Figure 9 - Engraved plan of the Federal City, by Andrew Ellicott, based on the drawings of L'Enfant, 1792

(source: [Washington Architecture 1791-1861](#))

The original boundaries of the capital city were suggested by George Washington himself and once surveyed by Pierre L'Enfant in 1791, confirmed to include 5,700 acres, including the areas of Georgetown and Alexandria and stretching along the Potomac River and the Eastern Branch. ⁷

Unlike most capital cities, Washington D.C. was designed with the initial purpose for housing the government of the United States. Before permanently moving to its current location, Philadelphia served as the last temporary capital from 1790-1800.

Because of the topography, L'Enfant had planned for the location of the major public buildings to be sited on the higher elevations and link them both visually and through a network of roads that would facilitate communication amongst the government. Additionally, the central public walk (the present Mall) was to consist of a very generous carriage drive and offer grand views between the President's House and the Congress House, with the Potomac on the south. The general intentions of where most of the public buildings should be located defined a clear center and were meant to generate growth and therefore expand the capital. ⁸

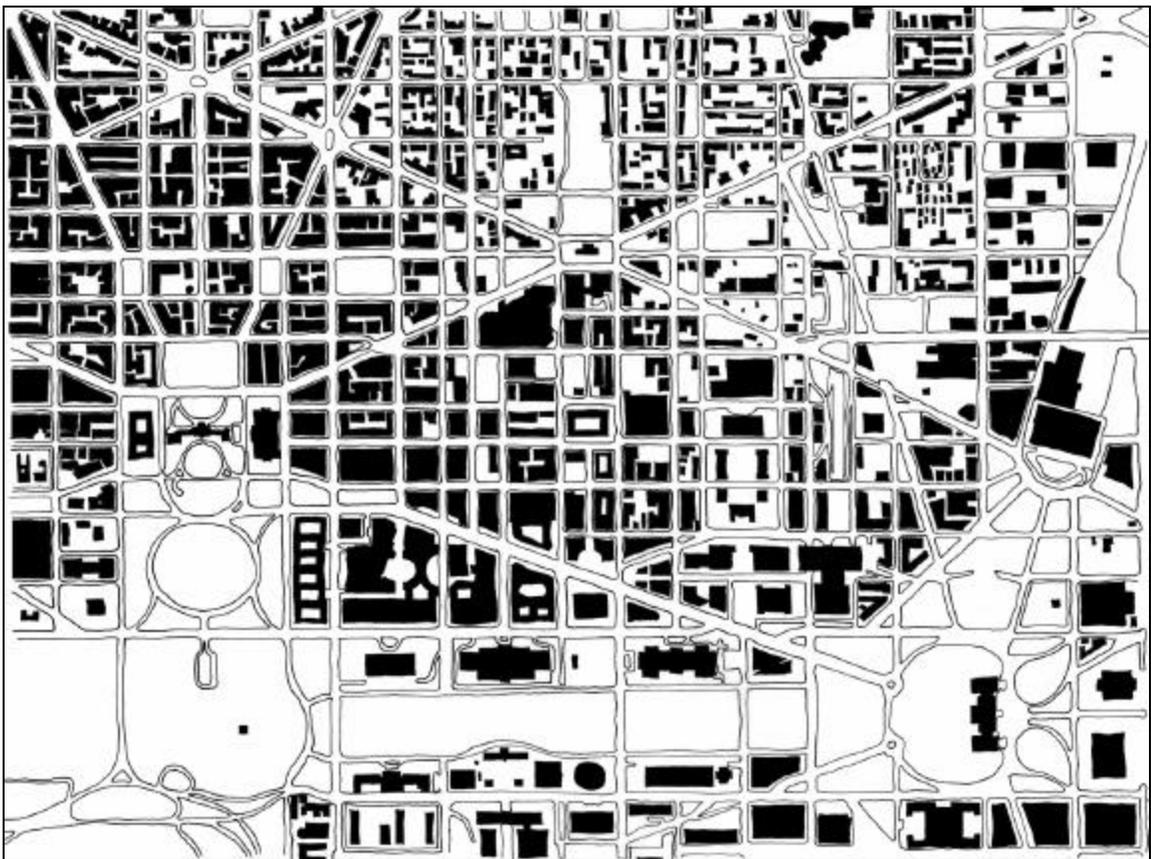


Figure 10 - Figure Ground of Central Washington, D.C. including the National Mall

(Source: author)

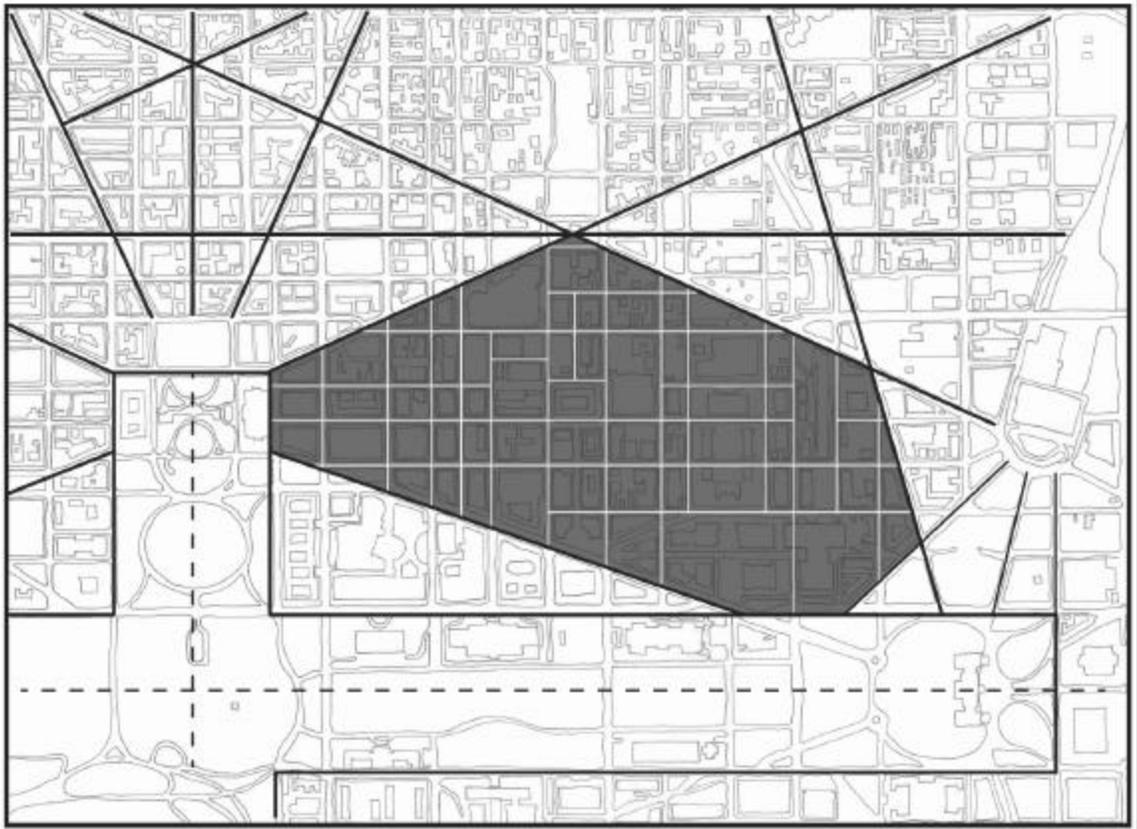


Figure 11 - Ordering Principles in the D.C. Plan

(Source: author)

The above diagram shows the axes, diagonal gestures made by primary streets, the grid that exists between the diagonals, and the strong order imposed by the National Mall to the south of downtown. Shaded in gray is the defined downtown zone.

Washington D.C. still maintains its diagonal geometry that, besides offering strong axial relationships, helps to identify distinct areas and transitions between them.

In addition to the development that has occurred since the conception of the capital city, a major identifying feature is the National Mall as a prominent public green space. It provides a clear positive edge on the south and is where most of the major museums and civic buildings are located.

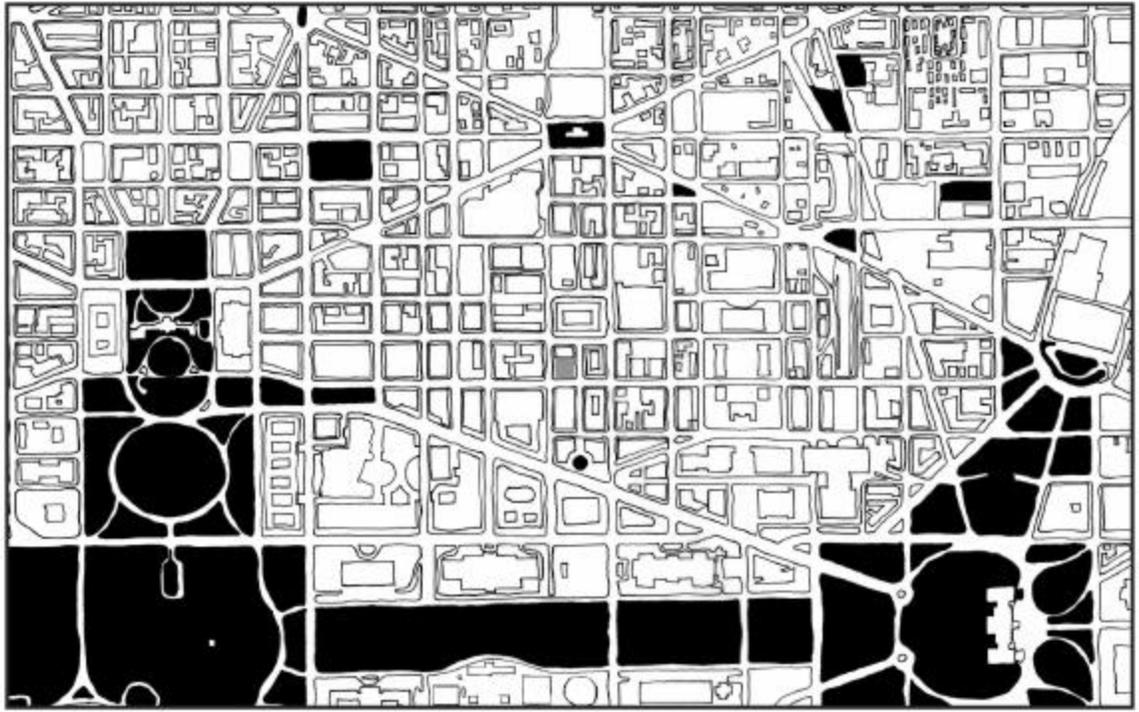


Figure 12 - Open Green Space in and around Downtown

(Source: author)

Barring only a couple of exceptions, there is no public green space within the downtown. This aspect tends to keep most public gatherings on the National Mall and prohibits more people from entering and staying within the downtown for longer periods of time. There is a strong opportunity for introducing an open, public realm further into the heart of the downtown. This would attract more visitors, residents, and employees of the area to vitalize the area through economic contribution and social interaction.

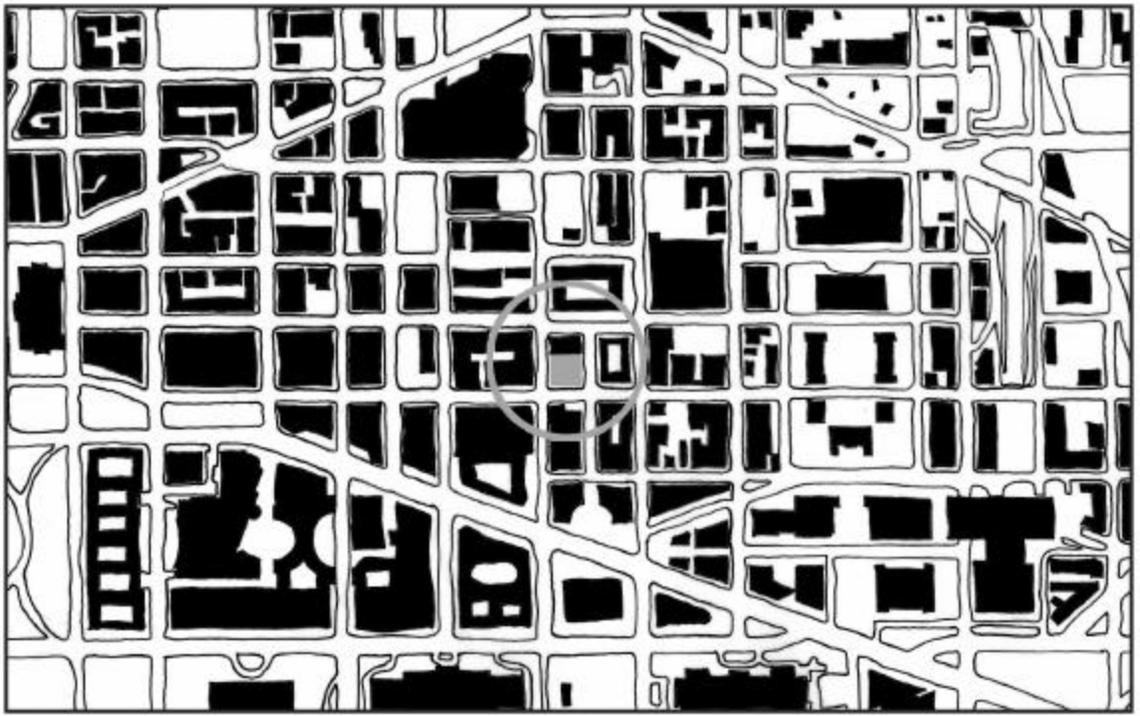


Figure 13 - Figure Ground of Downtown

(Source: author)

Currently, the downtown serves as a conglomerate of activities including cores of retail, entertainment, residential, culture, commerce, and as a destination for tourists and visitors. The downtown is defined by New York Ave (to the north-west), Massachusetts Ave (to the north-east), Pennsylvania Ave (to the south), and 15th St. (to the west). This area measure 2/3 of a mile (3200') north south (from Mount Vernon to the National Archives) and 1 1/3 miles (7000') east-west (from 15th St. to North Capital St.).

The thesis site is included not just in the downtown area but also in the areas defined by the city as the “entertainment and retail core,” the “traditional core,” and the “theater district.”

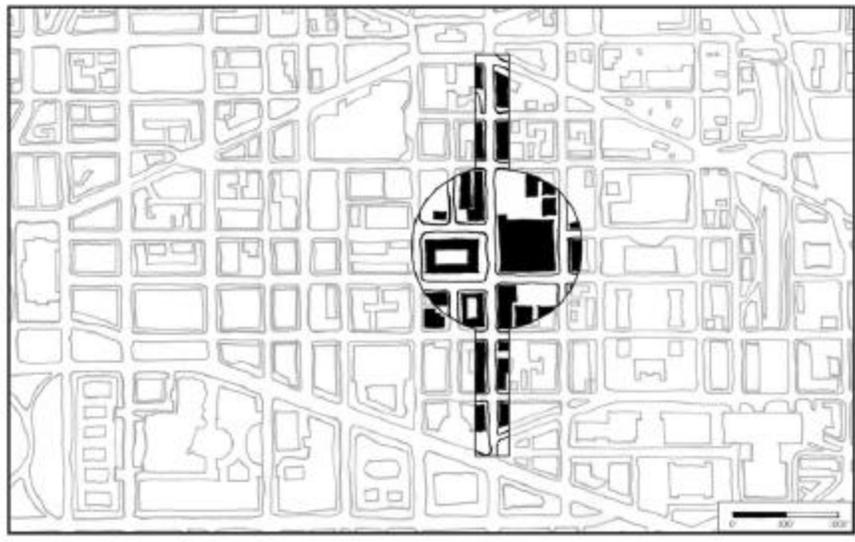


Figure 14 - The Downtown Entertainment and Retail Core

(Source: author)

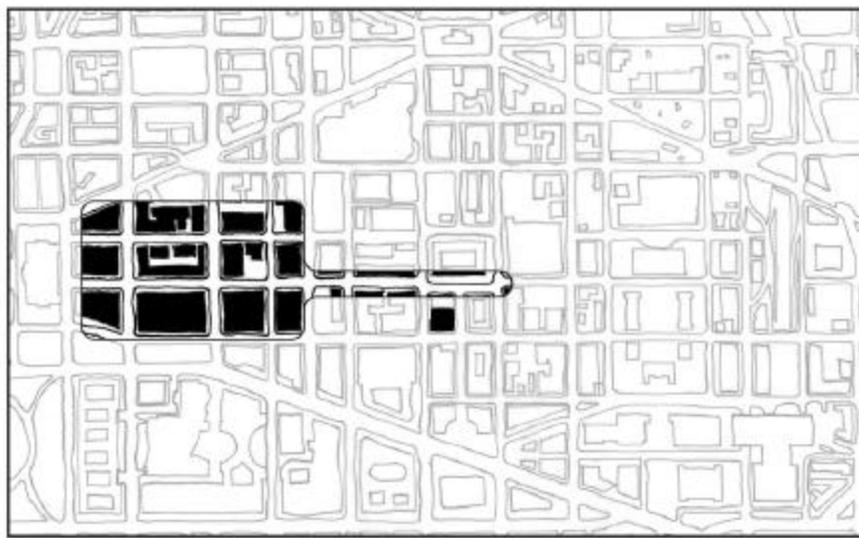


Figure 15 - The Downtown Traditional Retail Core

(Source: author)

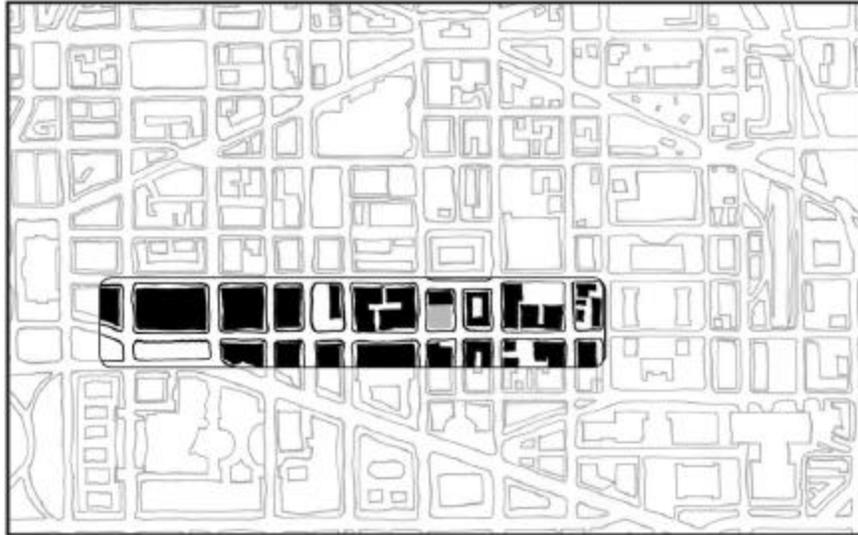


Figure 16 - The Downtown Theater District

(Source: author)

One of the successful features of Washington, D.C. is its metro system. Besides providing myriad connections within the city, the metro also links the surrounding suburbs to the capital, making the city a much more accessible and popular place to visit for residents from outside the area.



Figure 17 - Washington, D.C. Metro System
 (Source: <http://www.wmata.com/metrorail/systemmap.cfm>)

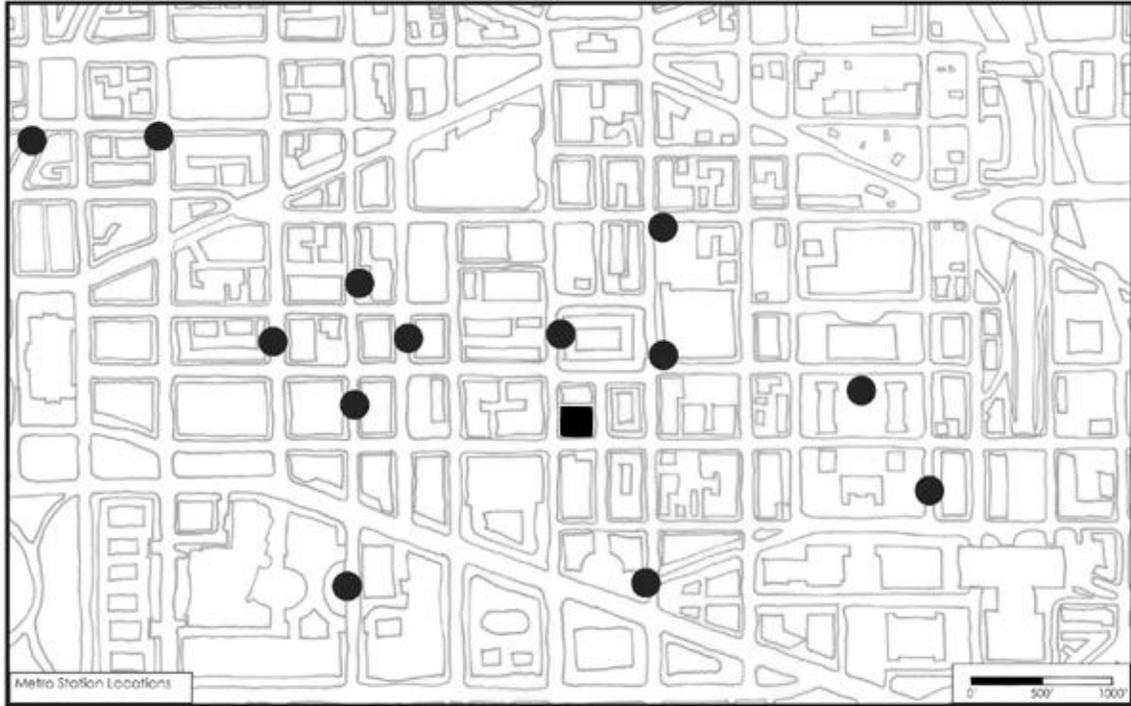


Figure 18 - Metro Station Locations in Downtown

(Source: author)

The proposed site is located in the heart of Gallery Place on square 406, where there is currently surface parking. One block north is the National Portrait Gallery, established in 1856. Prior to housing the National Portrait Gallery and the National Museum of American Art, it was originally the United States Patent Office and United States Civil Service commission Building.



Figure 19 - The National Portrait Gallery (South Facade)

(Source: <http://www.si.edu/opa/accessibility/access/npg.htm>)

Diagonally South-West of the site is the FBI Building (1967 – 1972) built under the authority of then director, J. Edgar Hoover. It is a huge building that fronts Pennsylvania Avenue and imposes a stark modernity on its surrounding neighbors. Although originally designed with retail to be located on the ground floor, due to security reasons, the building stands alone with only shade trees attempting to act as mediator between the building and its context.



Figure 20 - The FBI Building (Northeast Corner)

(Source: author)

Opening in 1997, the MCI Center is located north-east of the site (directly east of the National Portrait Gallery) and is a popular venue for performances as well as the home of the sports franchises: Washington Wizards, Mystics, Capitals, and Georgetown Hoyas.



Figure 21 - MCI Center (Southwest Corner)

(Source: author)

Two blocks south of the site is the Navy Memorial which is an open plaza that faces the National Archives. The National Portrait Gallery and the National Archives terminate an axis that defines a strong corridor four blocks long within downtown that includes the proposed site.



Figure 22 - Looking at National Archives from Navy Memorial

(Source: author)

To the immediate East of the site is the old United States Tariff Commission Building (1839 – 1842). This building now serves as a hotel and restaurant.



Figure 23 – Old U.S. Tariff Commission Building

(Source: author)

Currently the Spy Museum, housed in the Le Droit Building occupies the northern half of the proposed site. Although originally from 1875, the Le Droit Building has been restored to house a number of newer functions; the primary of which is the Spy Museum, established in 2002.



Figure 24 - The Spy Museum North Façade

(Source: author)

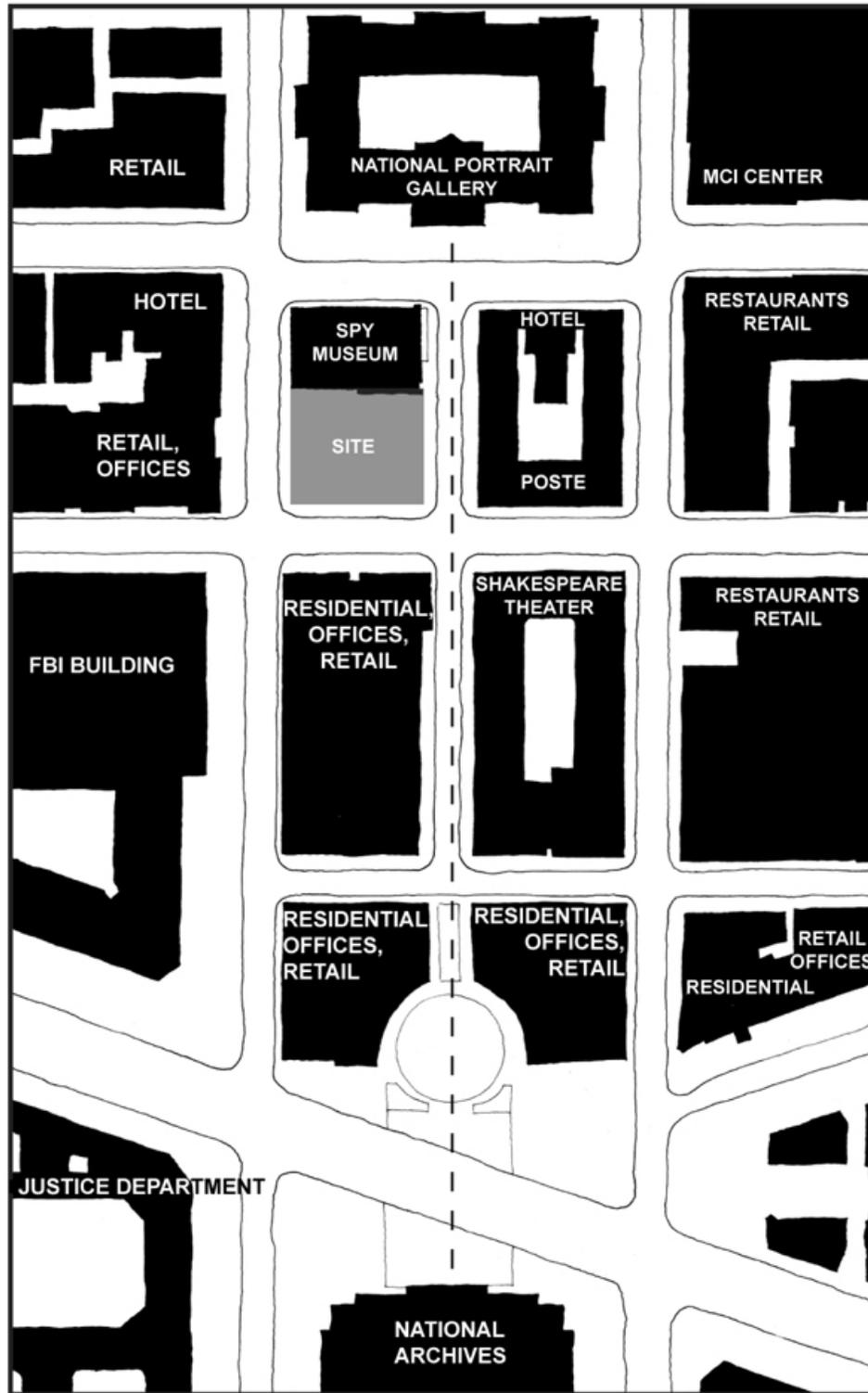


Figure 25 - Local Axial Order and Uses

(Source: author)

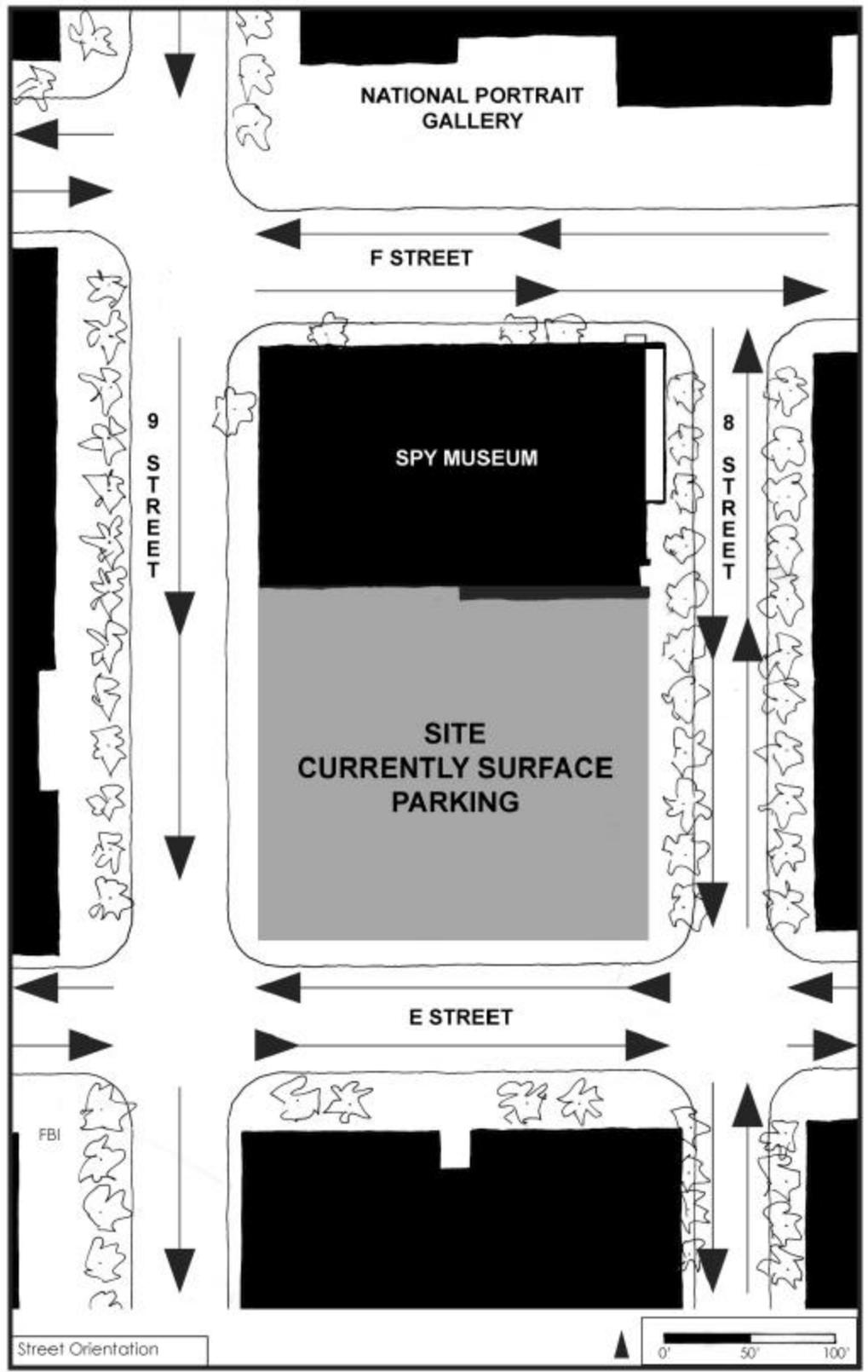


Figure 26 - Street Orientations and Traffic Directions

(Source: author)

The proposed site is located on the southern half of square 406 where there is currently surface parking. The block sits just to the south of the National Portrait Gallery which terminates a local axial order that extends south one block of Pennsylvania Ave, ended by the National Archives.

Although surrounded by the grid, the site does have some idiosyncrasies that provide design opportunities. 9th street, which is to the west, is a one-way street running south. All of the other streets are two-way; however at the intersection of 9th and F (northwest of the site) the block jogs and loses the continuity usually associated with an orthogonal grid.



Figure 27 - Aerial Photo of Central Washington, D.C.

(Source: City of Washington, D.C.)

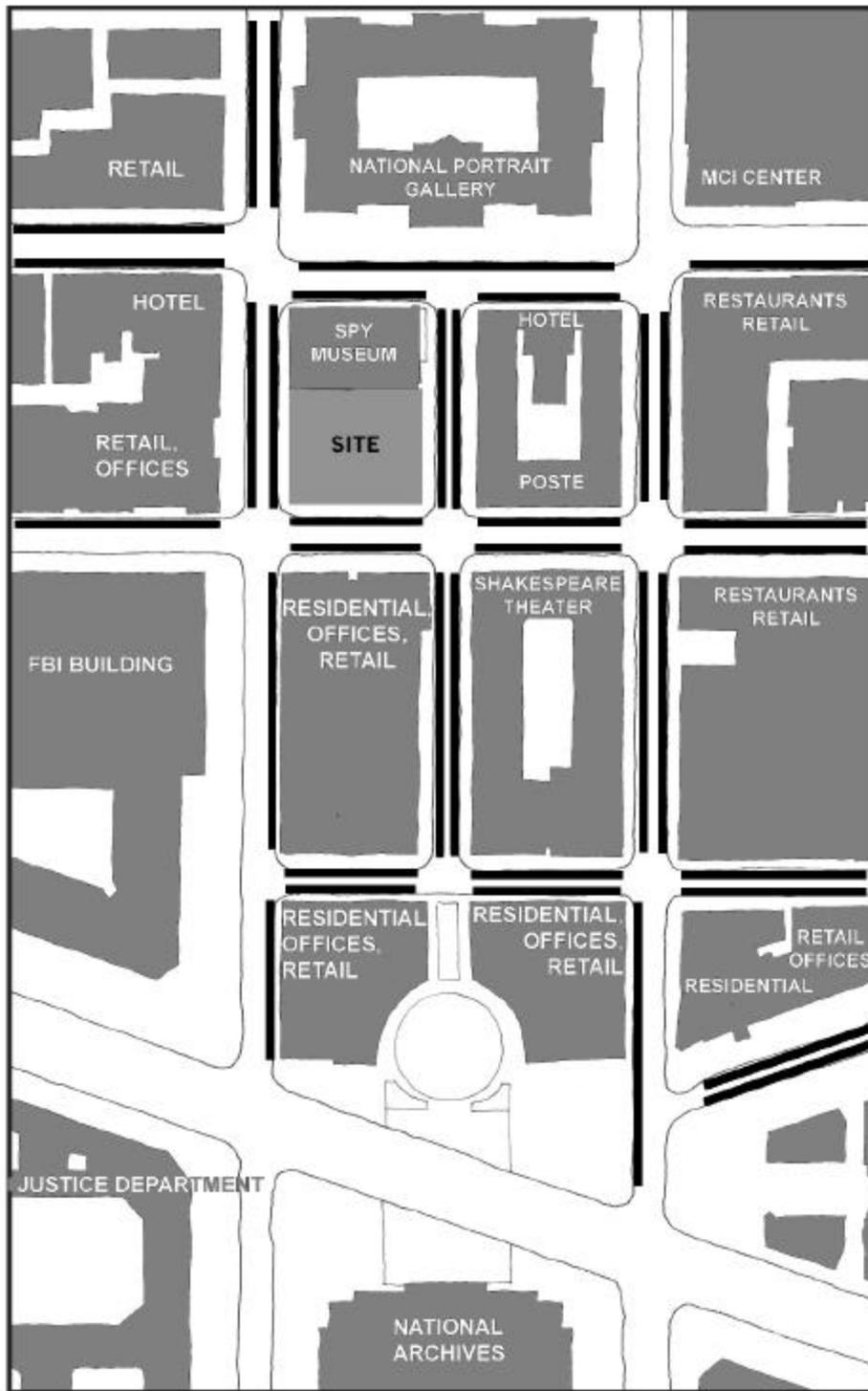


Figure 28 - On Street Parking Locations around Site

(Source: author)

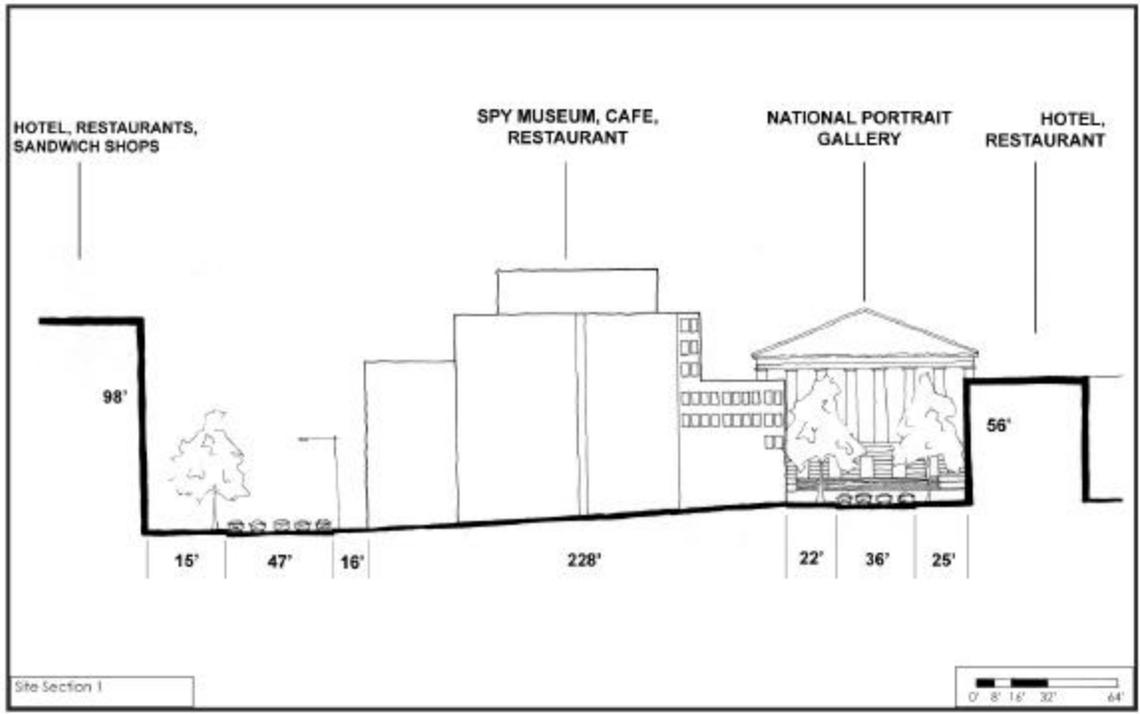


Figure 29 - Section through the site (East/West) showing building heights and street widths

(Source: author)

Sectionally, the surrounding buildings conform to the height restrictions codified by the zoning department. Although minimally, topography does effect the site with a 10' drop from the northeast to the southwest corner. On both streets that straddle the site there is parking on both sides. The Spy Museum that is on the northern half of the block does have windows that face south and therefore introduces a design issue to be dealt with.

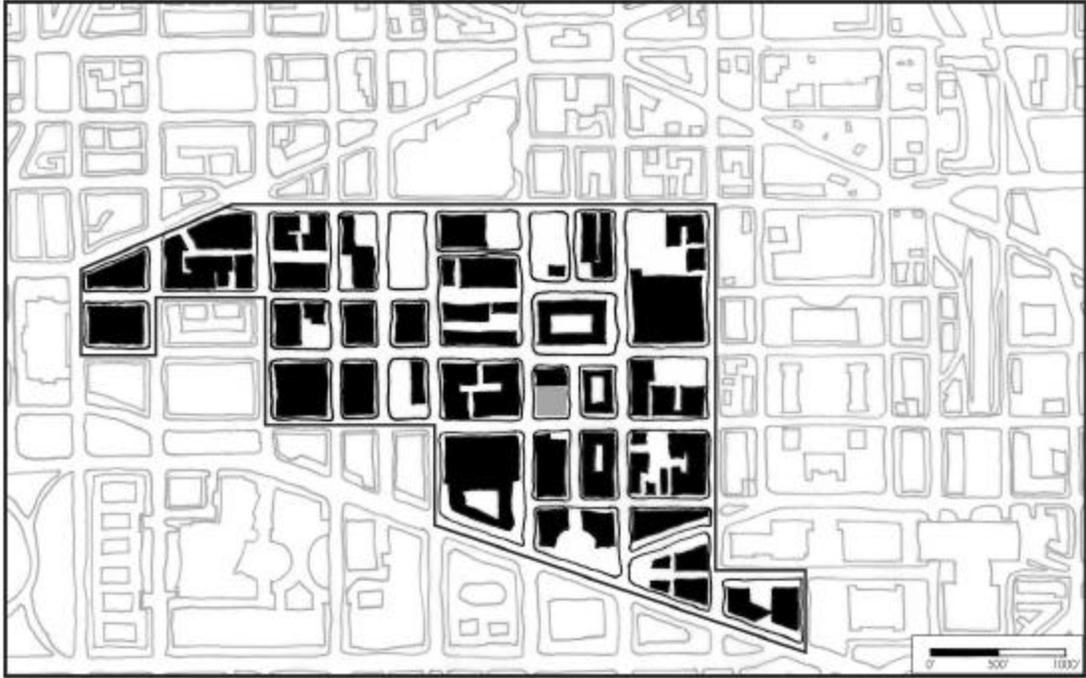


Figure 30 - Zoning within the Downtown

(Source: author)

The highlighted area in the above diagram marks the C-4 Zoning district within the downtown.

C-4 Zoning - The downtown core comprising the retail and office centers for Washington DC and the metropolitan area, and allows office, retail, housing and mixed uses to maximum lot occupancy of 100%, a maximum FAR of 8.5 to 10.0, a maximum height of 110 feet and 130 on 110-foot adjoining streets. (Maximum height and FAR depend on width of adjoining streets.)

As a part of the Downtown Arts District as defined by the D.C. Planning Office, there are a couple of relevant zoning regulations to be noted:

Retain, expand, and support a concentration of spaces and activities for the arts and artists, including the performing and visual arts, cultural facilities, entertainment, and arts-related retail uses;

Create two (2) strong arts-entertainment corridors within the following areas:

- (1) A spine of theaters, movie theaters, restaurants, nightclubs, and arts-related retail uses along E Street from 6th to 14th Street, N.W.; and
- (2) A pedestrian-oriented concentration of museums, art galleries, other performing or visual arts uses, and festive retail-entertainment uses along 7th Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to north of G Street ¹⁰

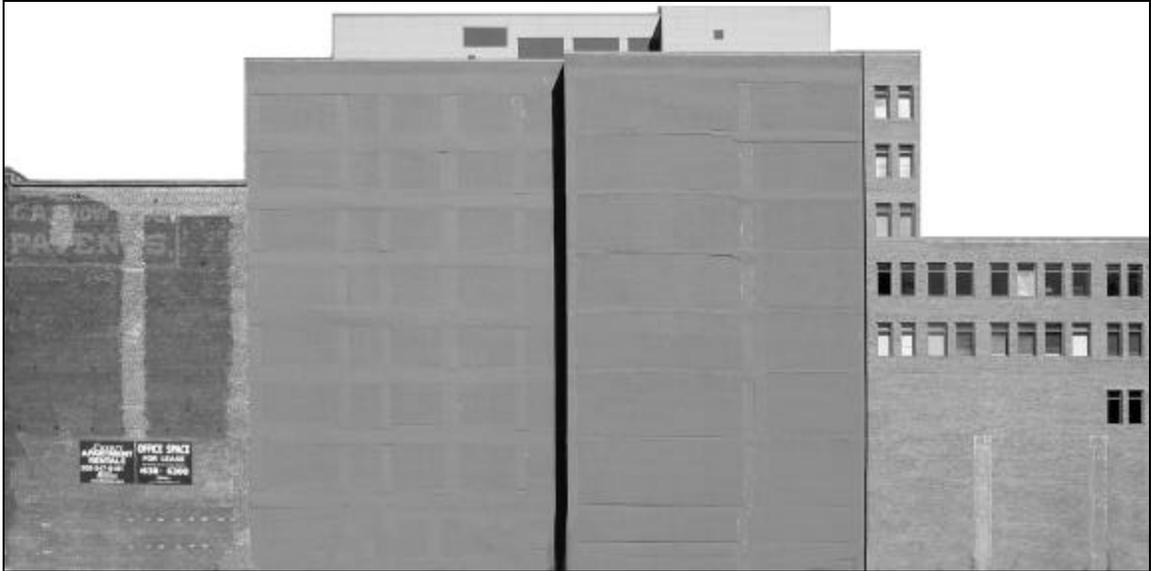


Figure 31 - Photo of South Elevation of the Spy Museum.

(Source: author)



Figure 32 - Photo of Elevation across the street (south)

(Source: author)



Figure 33 - North-West corner of the Spy Museum

(Source: author)



Figure 34 - Photo Looking North from the Navy Memorial

(Source: author)

CHAPTER THREE – GOALS AND ISSUES

*One of the great tragedies in public discourse in the United States is that what we need most (powerful intelligence) we forbid. This happens through shallow assumptions about genre (philosophy and pop culture don't belong together: pop is for us, philosophy is for academics); a centuries-old disdain for intellectuals ... and the rigidity of the mass media itself, its impermeability to thought. In discussing Radiohead in the context of the thought of Theodor Adorno, I have performed an unnatural act (as Lenny Bruce once called sex between the Lone Ranger and Tonto [or Tonto and Silver!]).*¹¹

Curtis White

design goals

design issues/challenges

Design Goals

Demonstrate how theoretical concepts such as those talked about above can translate into architecture and the production of “place.”

Although there is no direct correlation between a concept and a physical representation of that concept, there are still designs that allow for a more recognizable relationship between the two. Employing a consistent vocabulary of design elements, ranging from the abstract to the specific in order to comprehensively transform theories concerning social interaction and culture into built form is vital to a successful design.

Create a continuous and understandable relationship between the creation, the critique, and the consumption of contemporary culture.

Enabling a constant and cyclical relationship between these three components demands innovative ways for connecting spaces and functions. The institutions, students, and public that are in the Side-Stage should all be able to interact and take advantage of this inter-connectedness, allowing for a more dynamic discourse to take place.

Create a savvy public, enlightened to the production, evolution, and dependency of culture since the ubiquitous nature of electronic/digital media.

Instead of seeing electronic media as a hindrance to place-making, contemporary forms of communication and technology will act as layers in the design, enriching the architectural experience of the users of the Side-Stage. Not to be exploited as a constant exhibition, or as a passive, overlooked aspect of the environment, the technological components of the design will be seamlessly interwoven into the architecture.

Design a building that reflects both its local (time and place) culture and its position in the broader context of globally networked cultural nodes.

Dichotomies such as private vs. public, inside vs. outside, open vs. closed, local vs. global, etc. are issues very much related to this project and can be addressed through a number of design decisions including materiality, control of light/shadow, etc.

Special Design Issues/Challenges

When attempting to translate from theories concerning electronic/digital media and their effects on culture, what are the ramifications for scale and the dynamics that are inherent in mixing media which could be viewed as placeless versus architecture and its nature of having an identifiable address?

With the creation of a place where the critique of culture can be undertaken, how does the design and the overall program stay away from the critique that it is doing exactly what it professes should not be done?

How do the ideas mentioned above get successfully translated into form so as to become recognizable to the public?

CHAPTER FOUR - PRECEDENTS

If public life is not to disintegrate, communities must still find ways to provide, pay for, and maintain places of assembly and interaction for their members – whether these places are virtual, physical, or some new and complex combination of the two. And if these places are to serve their purposes effectively, they must allow both freedom of access and freedom of expression.¹²

Mitchell

the paris opera house – charles garnier

the bbc radio center – norman foster

tokyo international forum – richard rogers

the sendai mediateque – toyo ito

Paris Opera House
Charles Garnier – 1875 – Paris, France

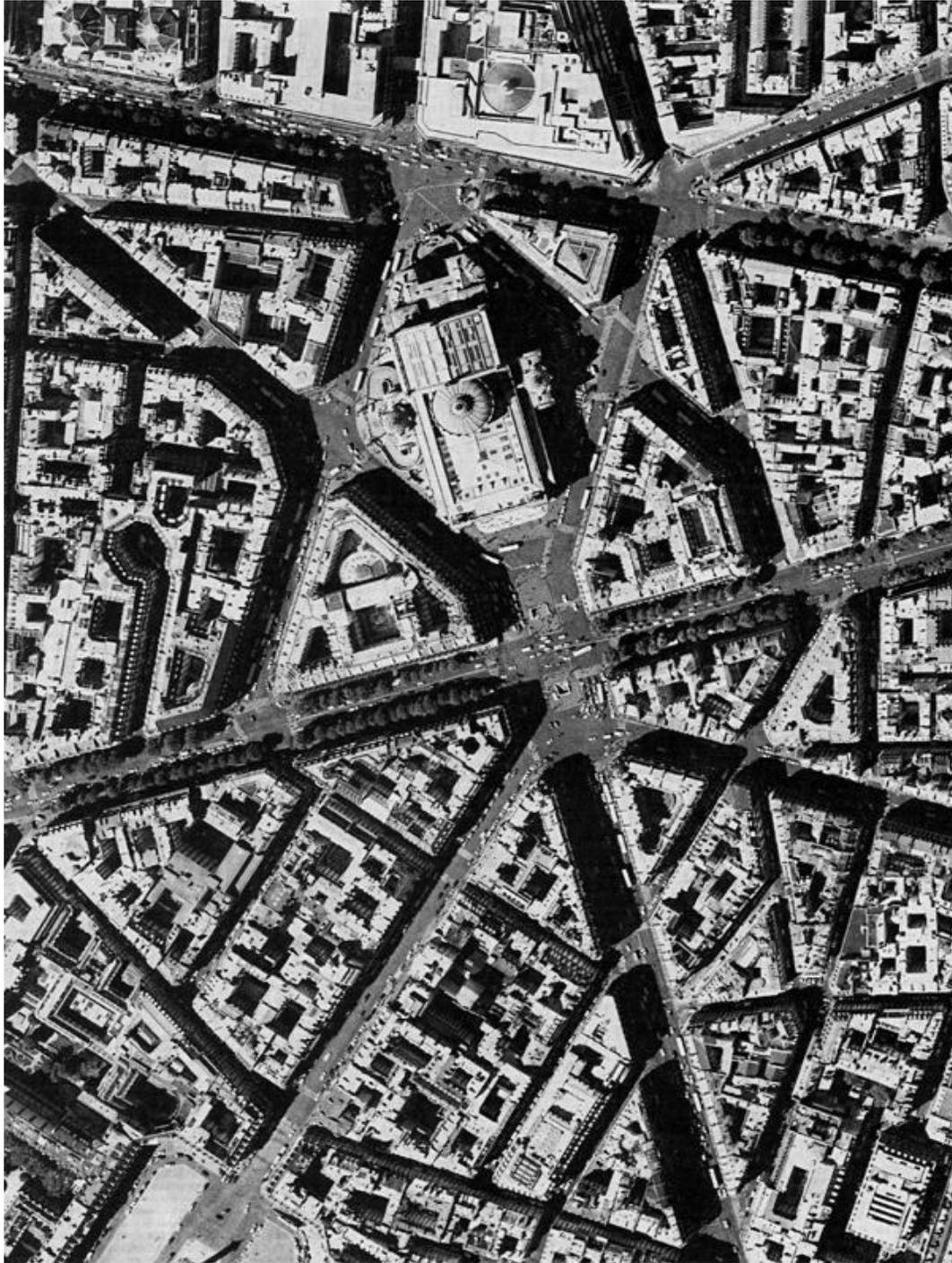


Figure 35 - Aerial Photo of Opera House in Context

(Source: Charles Garnier's Paris Opera)

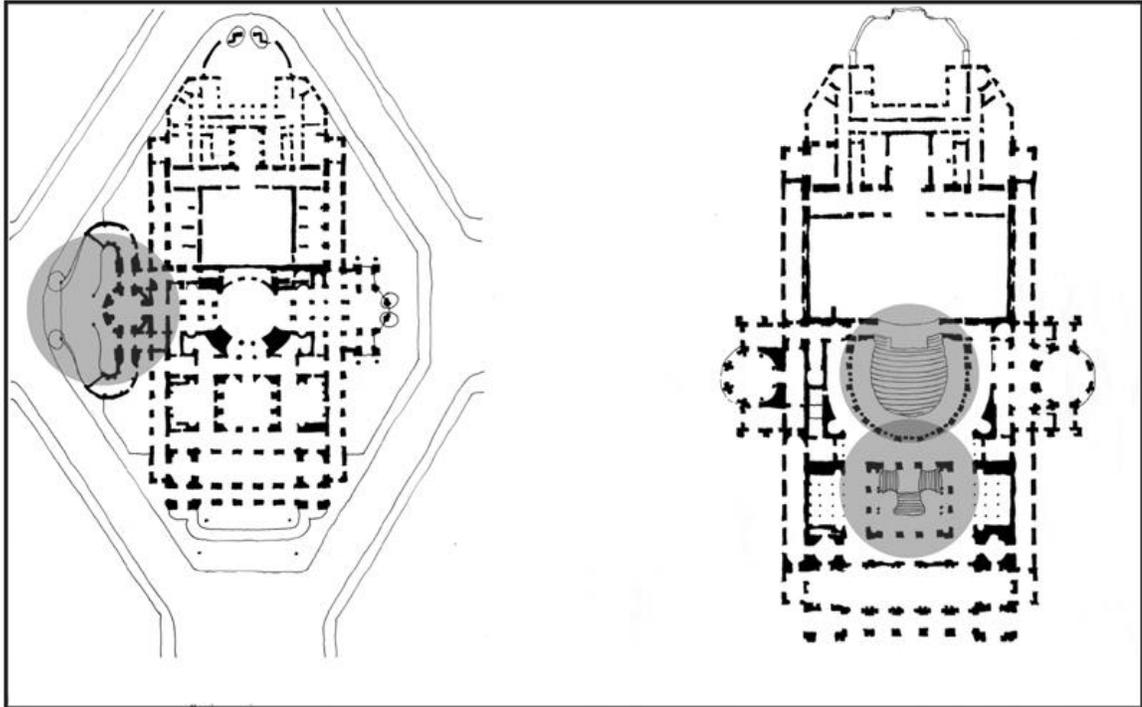


Figure 36 - Plans of Opera House showing major nodes of interaction

(Source: author)

Mise-En-Scene - The arrangement of performers and properties on a stage for a theatrical production or before the camera in a film ¹³

The Paris Opera is located in the urban context of Paris, France. It was designed by Charles Garnier to not only house the performances of operas but the performances of society as well. This notion of creating a stage for society drove the design process in creating sequential spaces that led the visitors through the opera house in a manner so as to celebrate the idea of watching and being watched. Garnier exploited the circulation systems to accommodate his motives and therefore the stairs serve as center stage for the public's performances.



Figure 37 - Perspective Photo of Main Stair

(Source: Charles Garnier's Paris Opera)

The most notable feature is the main stair in the lobby where all of the circulation systems overlap either visually or physically. The public is lead in a circuitous manner up the grand stair where they are then on display to perform their societal role and be watched by the audience members looking on from the balconies surrounding the foyer. The entire composition is designed to put the visitors on stage, where all of the members of society can enter into a constant cycle of watching and being watched. ¹⁴

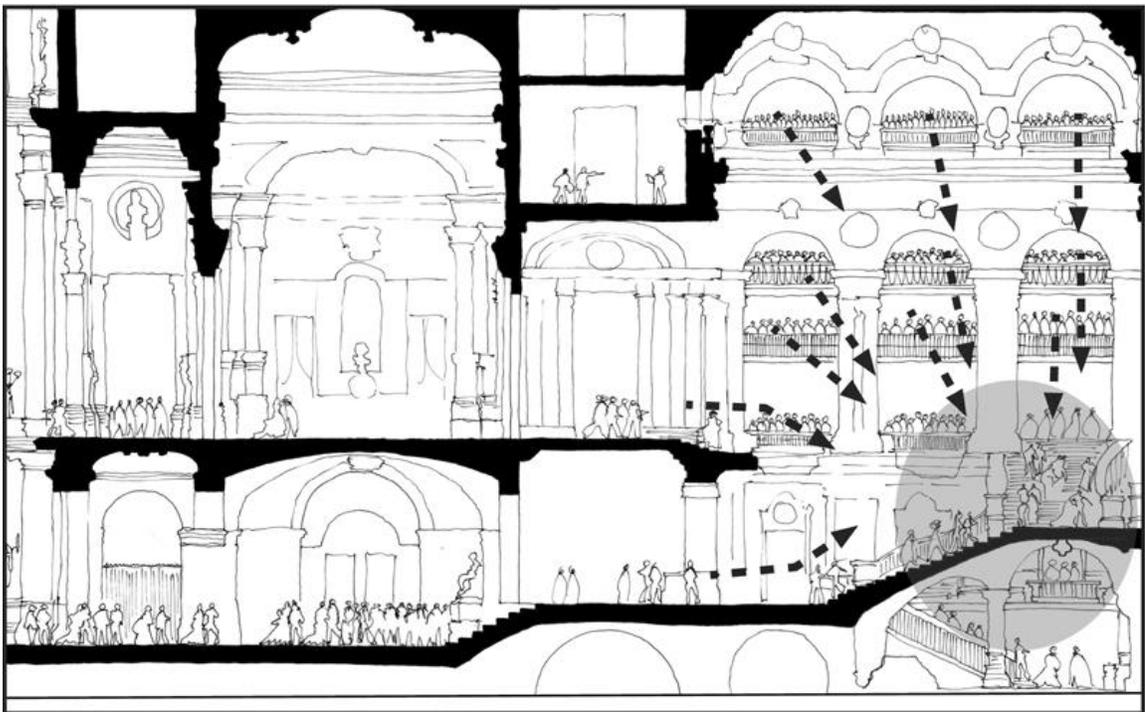


Figure 38 - Section through Main Stair showing focus of attention on "Societal Performance"
(Source: author)

BBC Radio Center
Norman Foster – 1982 - 1985 – London, England

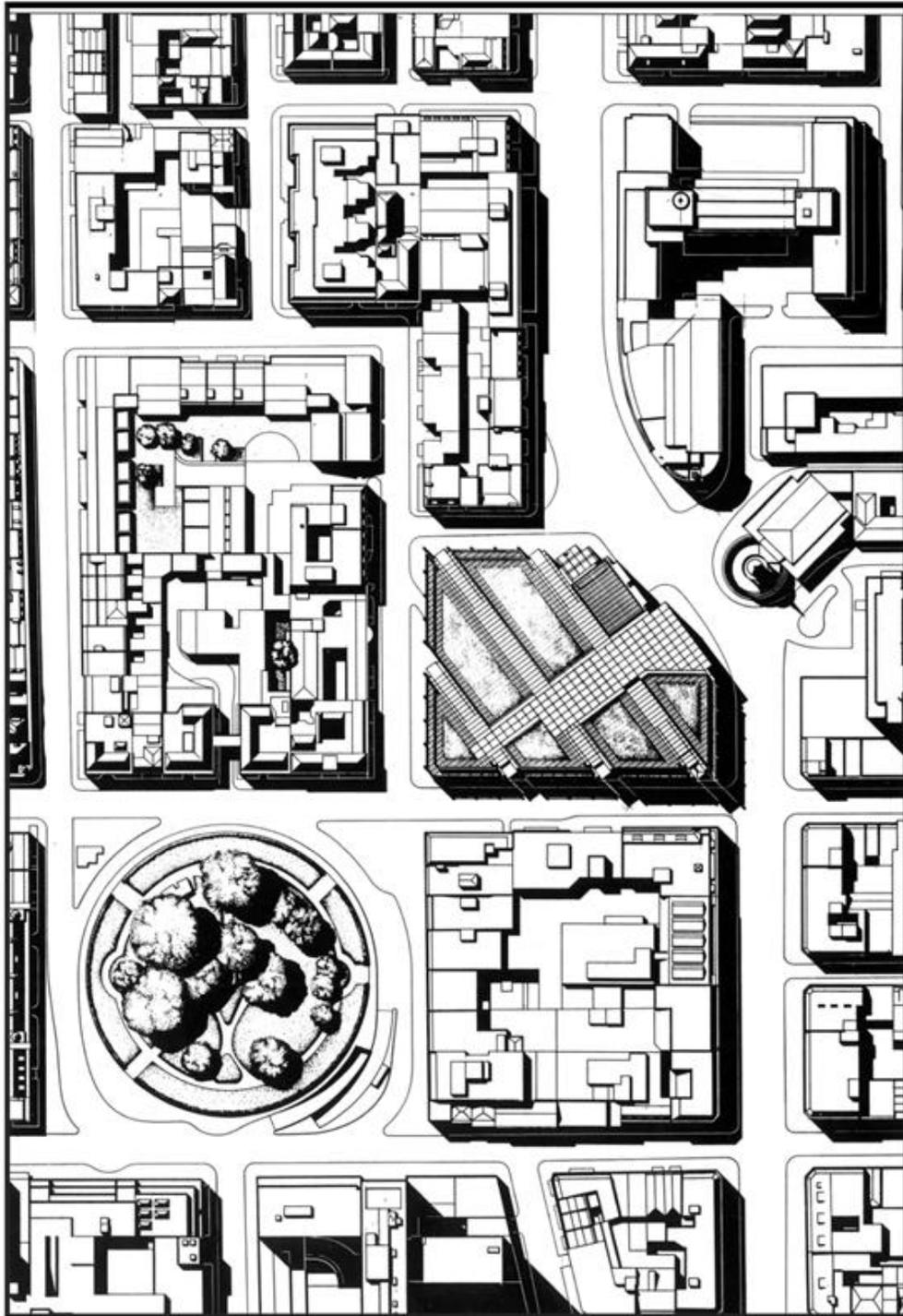


Figure 39 - BBC Radio Center in Context on Regent Street

(Source: Norman Foster)

The BBC Radio Center (never built) was a project that was supposed to re-introduce the public to radio by way of building the new headquarters of BBC Radio in the downtown of London. Its proposed site is directly across from All Souls' Church on the prominent Regent Street. Foster's intentions included creating a seamless connection through the ground floor of the building which was to be open to the public, celebrating the public nature of BBC Radio.



Figure 40 - Model of BBC Radio Center showing relationship with All Souls' Church

(Source: [Norman Foster](#))

Taking advantage of the site's geometry, the building has a strong relationship with the church via the glazed atrium and public nature of the program on the ground floor. Most of the vertical circulation is expressed on the exterior corners providing powerful views up and down Regent Street. There is also access to the roof, enabling users to continuously experience downtown London in different ways.

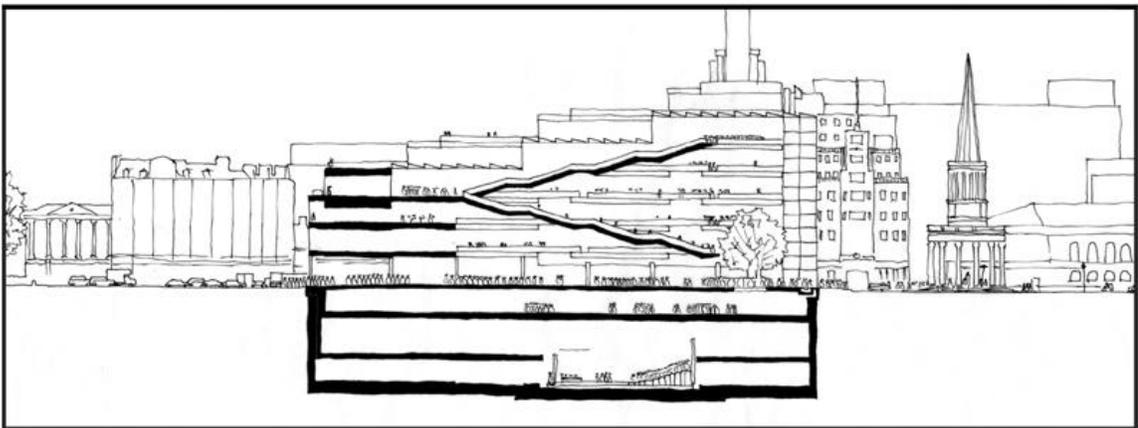


Figure 41 - Section through BBC Radio Center showing Public Access

(Source: author)

The section of the BBC Radio Center clearly shows the continuation of the public realm from the street, into and through the building, and out to the street again. Although using modern materials, there is an obvious respect for its context.

Programmatically, the building consists of myriad studios, sets, and auditoriums. Most of them provide access to the public either in the form of watching through screens, glazed walls, or being able to enter and physically experience them.

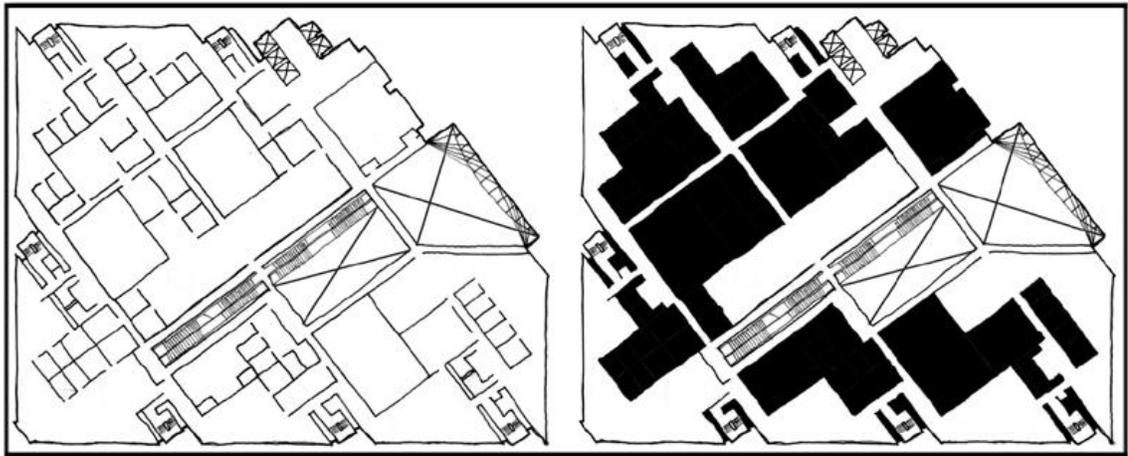


Figure 42 - Plan of Typical Office Floor with Diagram showing offices in black and open space and circulation areas in white

(Source: author)

Norman Foster, in the design of the Radio Center, juxtaposed a square box as façade and diagonal structural system to create dynamic spaces within the building. The benefit of having a diagonally planned grid within a square was the hierarchy it imposed on the different sized rooms as offices neared the corners. This helped in assigning departments with different size necessities by giving them locations that not only matched their needs but also provided an identity for them.¹⁵

In addition, Foster placed major vertical circulation elements on the perimeter, freeing up the center for an open atrium letting light in and allowing for dramatic views out. This feature also helps blur the lines between inside and outside and public and private, gaining motivation from BBC's public nature amongst media institutions.

Tokyo International Forum
Richard Rogers – 1990 – Tokyo, Japan

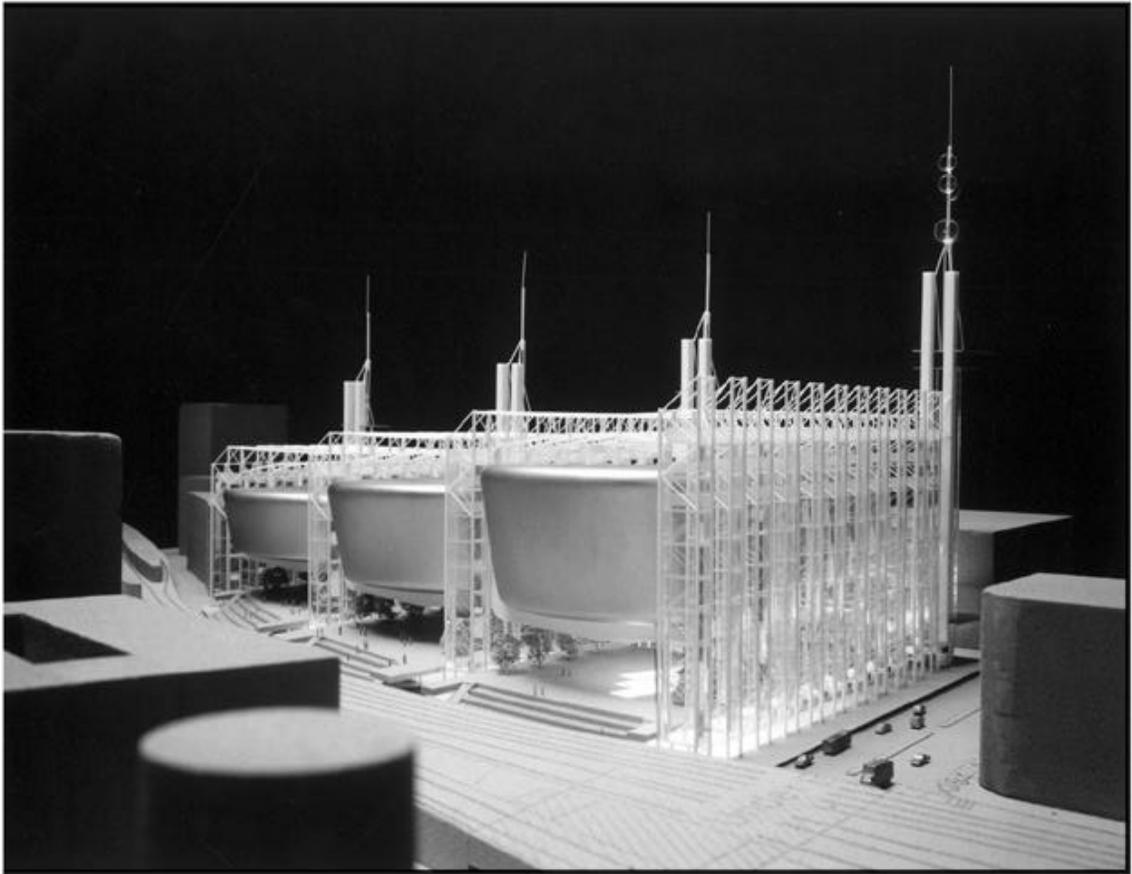


Figure 43 - Model Photo of Tokyo International Forum

(Source: Richard Rogers)

Located in Tokyo, Japan, the Tokyo International Forum was supposed to be a huge cultural and conference center, with auditoria and exhibition space. Its site was to be in the heart of the commercial area in Tokyo, near the Imperial Palace. Rogers interpreted the project to be a true focus for the city, a place for meeting, conversation, and celebration, as well as serving as an escape from the busy streets of Tokyo. ¹⁶

The final scheme solved the programmatic issues by suspending the three auditoriums over a large public space. This huge covered space would then be used as the forum, containing shops, cafes, as well as introducing landscaping features.

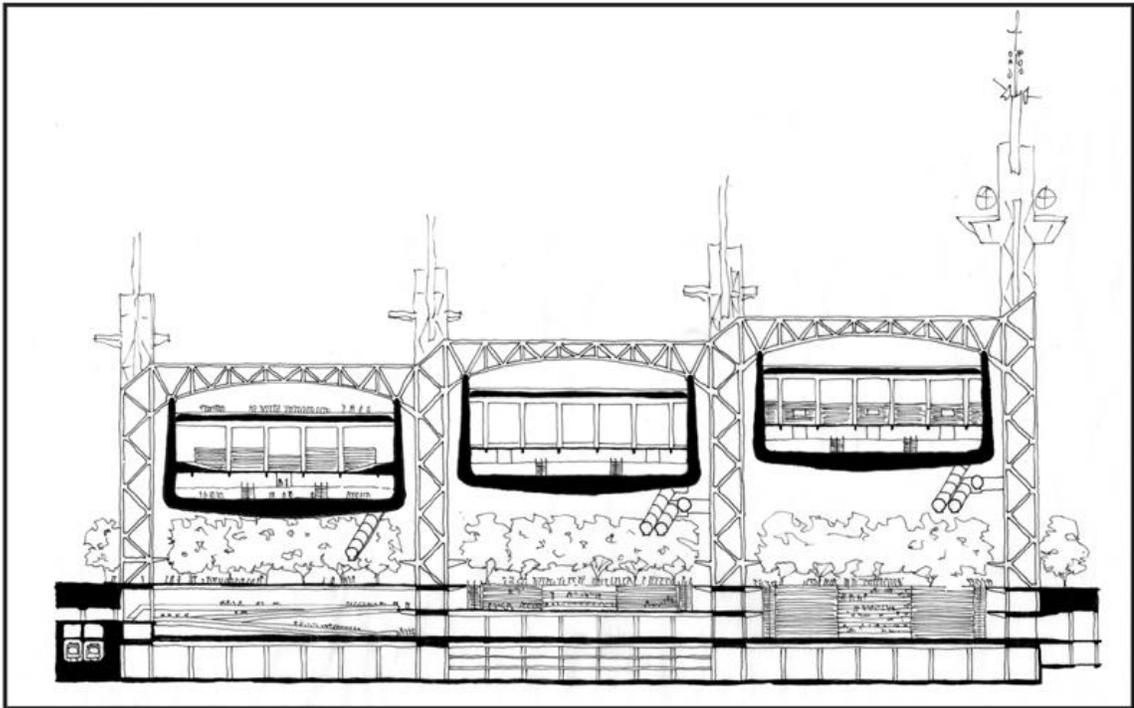


Figure 44 - Section through Auditoriums showing Forum Space
(Source: author)

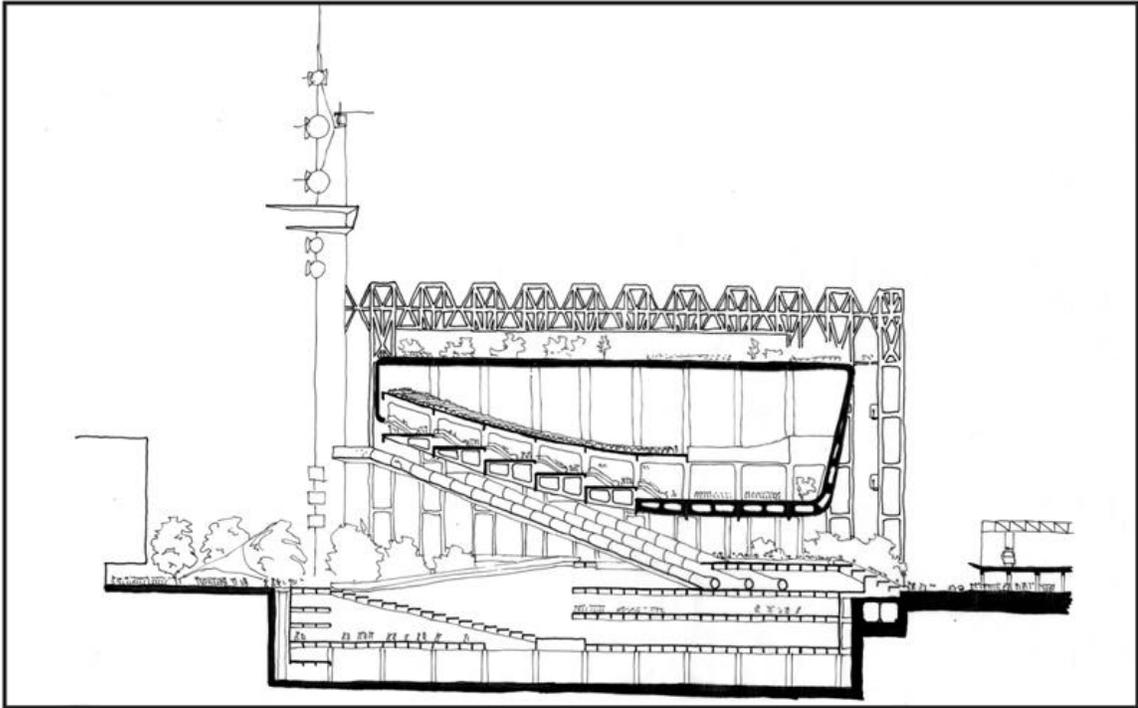


Figure 45 - Section through Auditorium showing relationships between levels

(Source: author)

The entire project was developed in three dimensions so as to maximize the experience of the user. The intention was to create a continuous public realm where people could freely move horizontally, vertically, and diagonally through the space, supplying unlimited perspectives on not just the architecture but on society as well.

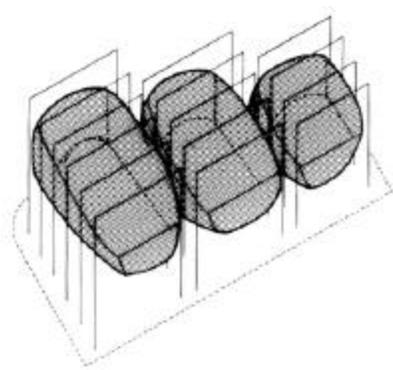


Figure 46 - Diagram of Spatial Relationships between Auditoriums and Frame

(Source: Richard Rogers)



Figure 47 - Model Photo of Elevation

(Source: Richard Rogers)

Sendai Mediatheque
Toyo Ito – 2001 – Sendai-shi, Japan

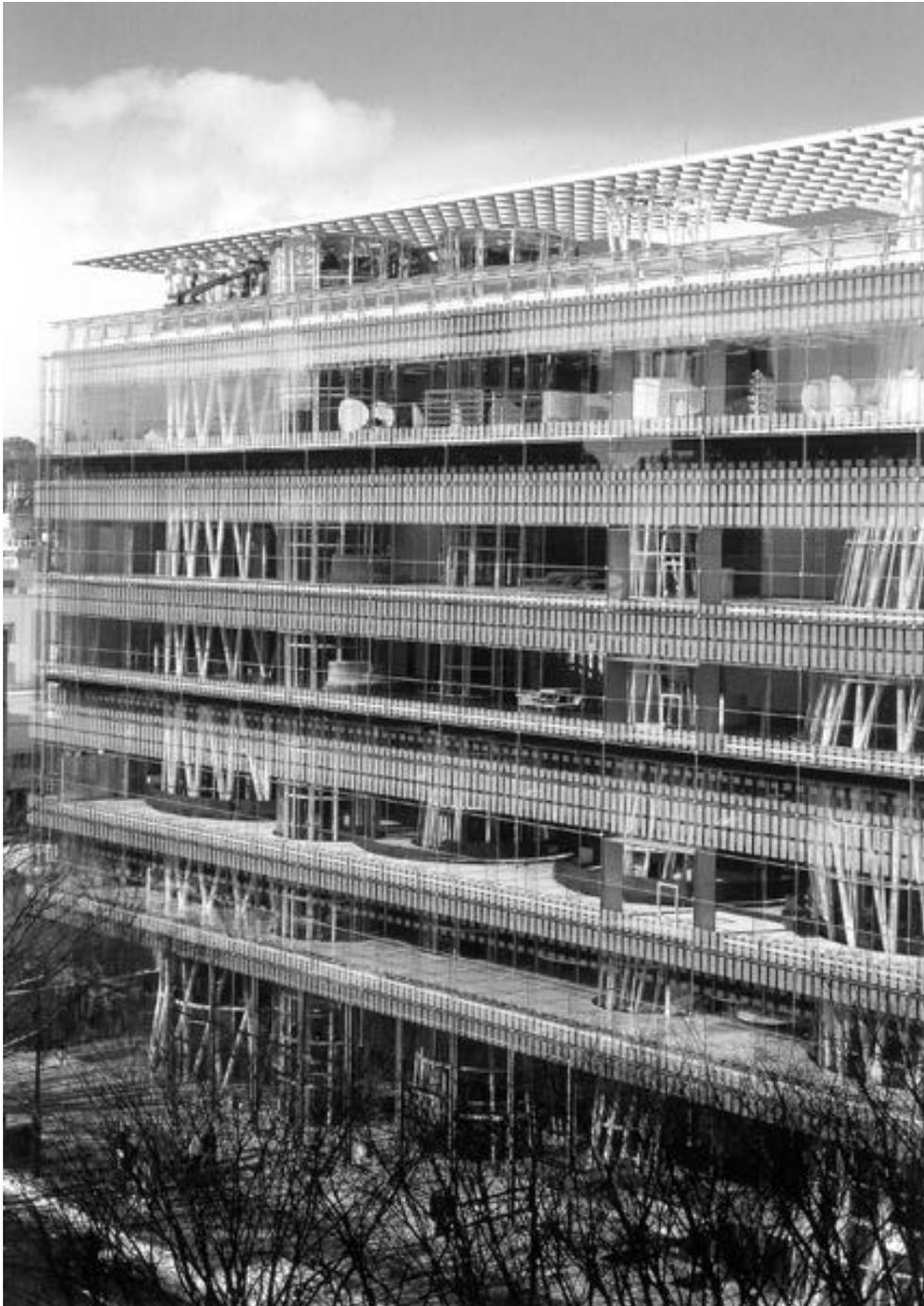


Figure 48 - Exterior Photos of Mediateque, Day and Night

(Source: Toyo Ito)

The Sendai Mediatheque is located in the city of Sendai-shi, Japan, about two hours from Tokyo. It fronts a busy street in a dense urban environment and attempts to celebrate the mediation between physical and virtual environment.

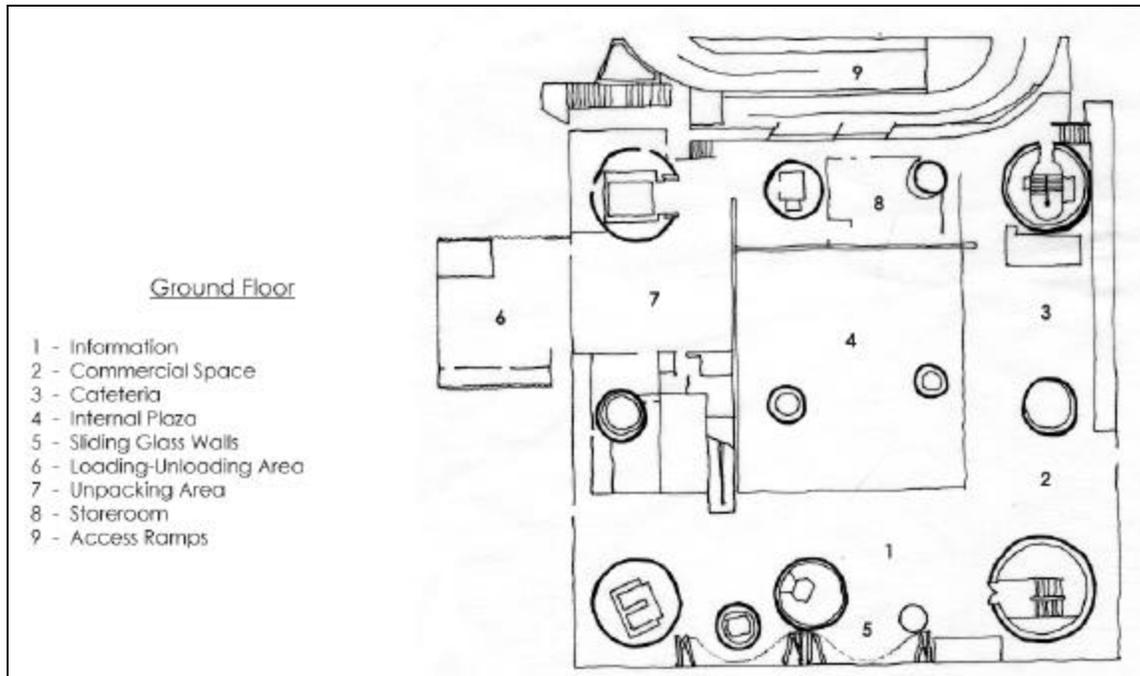


Figure 49 – Mediatheque Ground Floor Plan with Uses

(Source: author)

The entrance into the building is through a large hall on the ground floor. Intended to convey the feeling of a covered plaza, it is completely open to the urban surroundings. The facades are constructed entirely of glass and on the main façade the glazed walls can be opened up to further diminish the boundary between inside and outside.

The program on the ground floor includes a shop, café, information counter, bathrooms, service areas, and an open square that serves a variety of functions. This open square is a multi-purpose venue measuring 65' per side with a height of 23' and is geared towards accommodating movie screenings, workshops, lectures, and theatrical

performances, amongst other similar activities. The space can be divided in a number of ways through the use of screens and partitions.

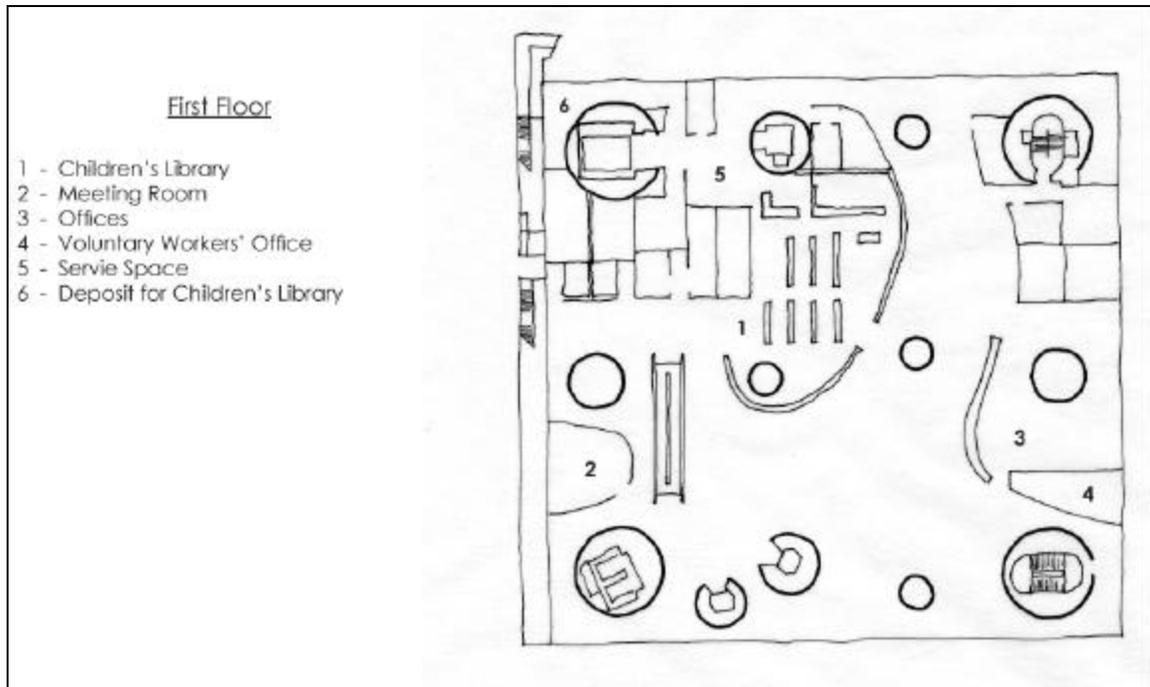


Figure 50 - Mediatheque First Floor Plan and Uses

(Source: author)

The first floor houses the children's library, reading rooms, offices, child care, and meeting room

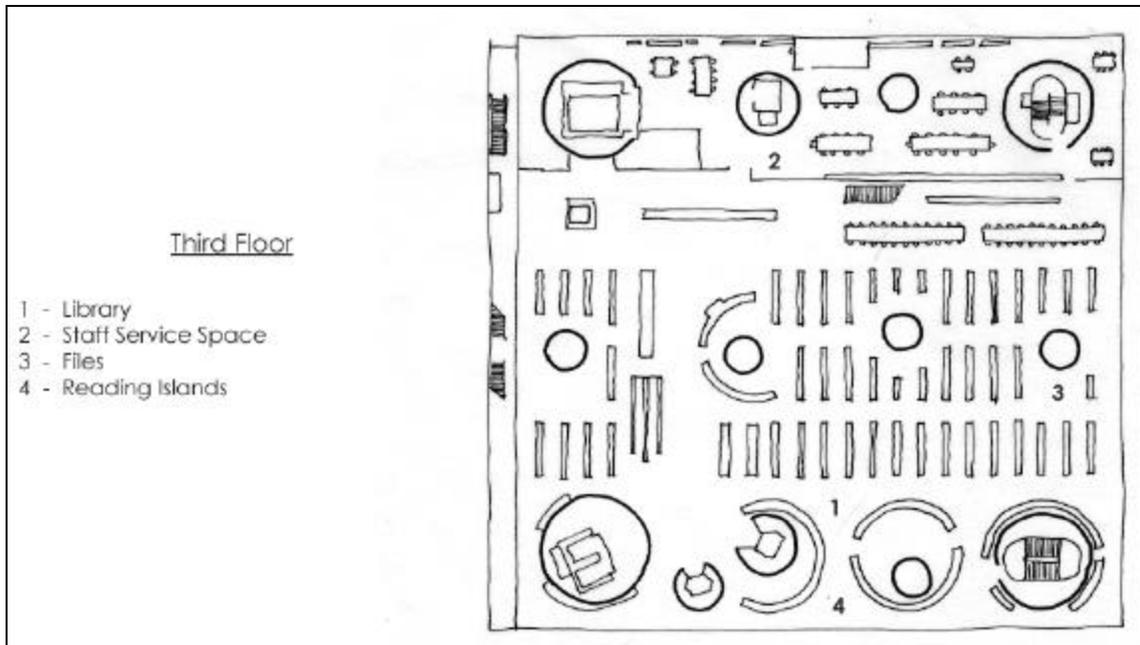


Figure 51 - Mediatheque Third Floor Plan and Uses

(Source: author)

The third floor accommodates the main library and reading areas

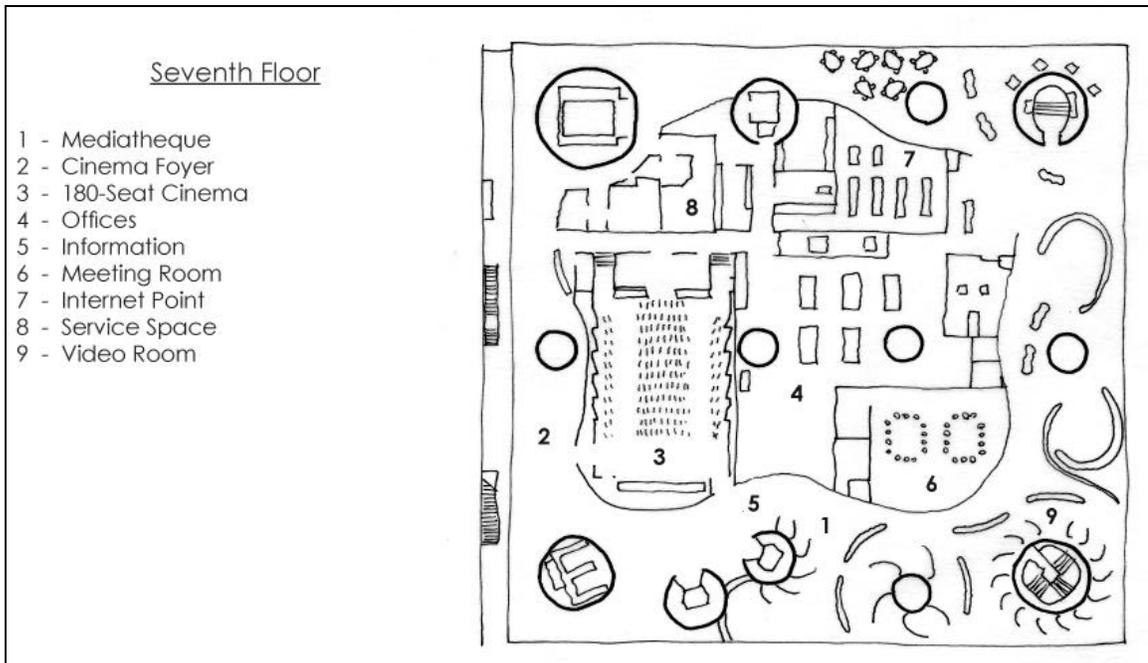


Figure 52 - Mediatheque Seventh Floor Plan and Uses

(Source: author)

The seventh floor contains the 180-seat theater, offices, Internet area, multimedia library, meeting rooms, offices, and studios

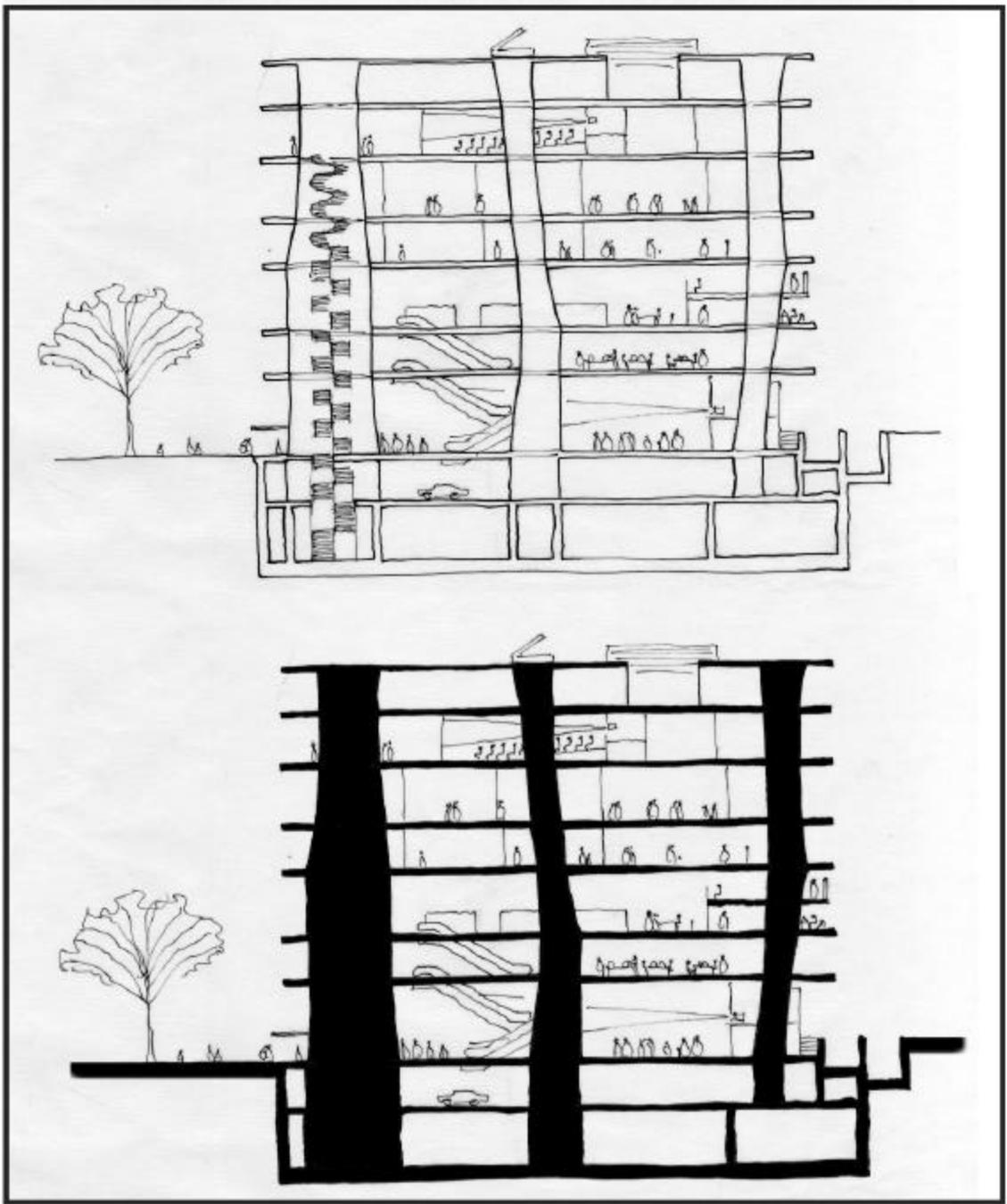


Figure 53 - Sections showing vertical connections

(Source: author)

The design of the mediatheque is a free plan within a glass box measuring approximately 160' per side. Thirteen columns traverse the space vertically providing the structural necessities in addition to organizing the space, filtering light from above, housing elevators and stairs, and containing the cables and ducts. In order to satisfy all of these roles, the columns are tubular and very transparent.

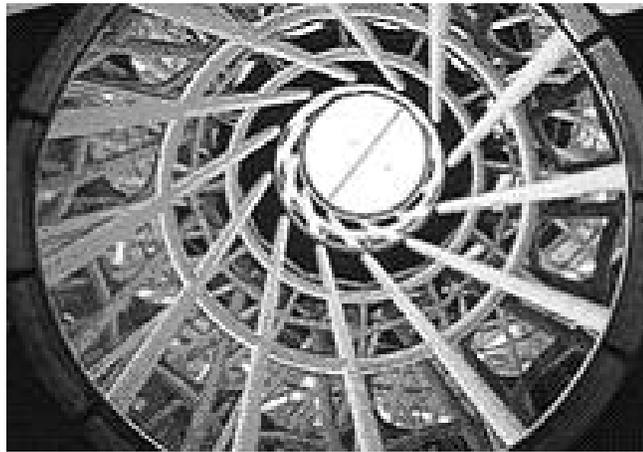


Figure 54 - Photo of Tubular Column

(Source: <http://www.smt.city.sendai.jp/en/smt/about/character/>)



Figure 55 - Photo of Open Square with Screen creating space

(Source: <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/sendaimediatheque/>)

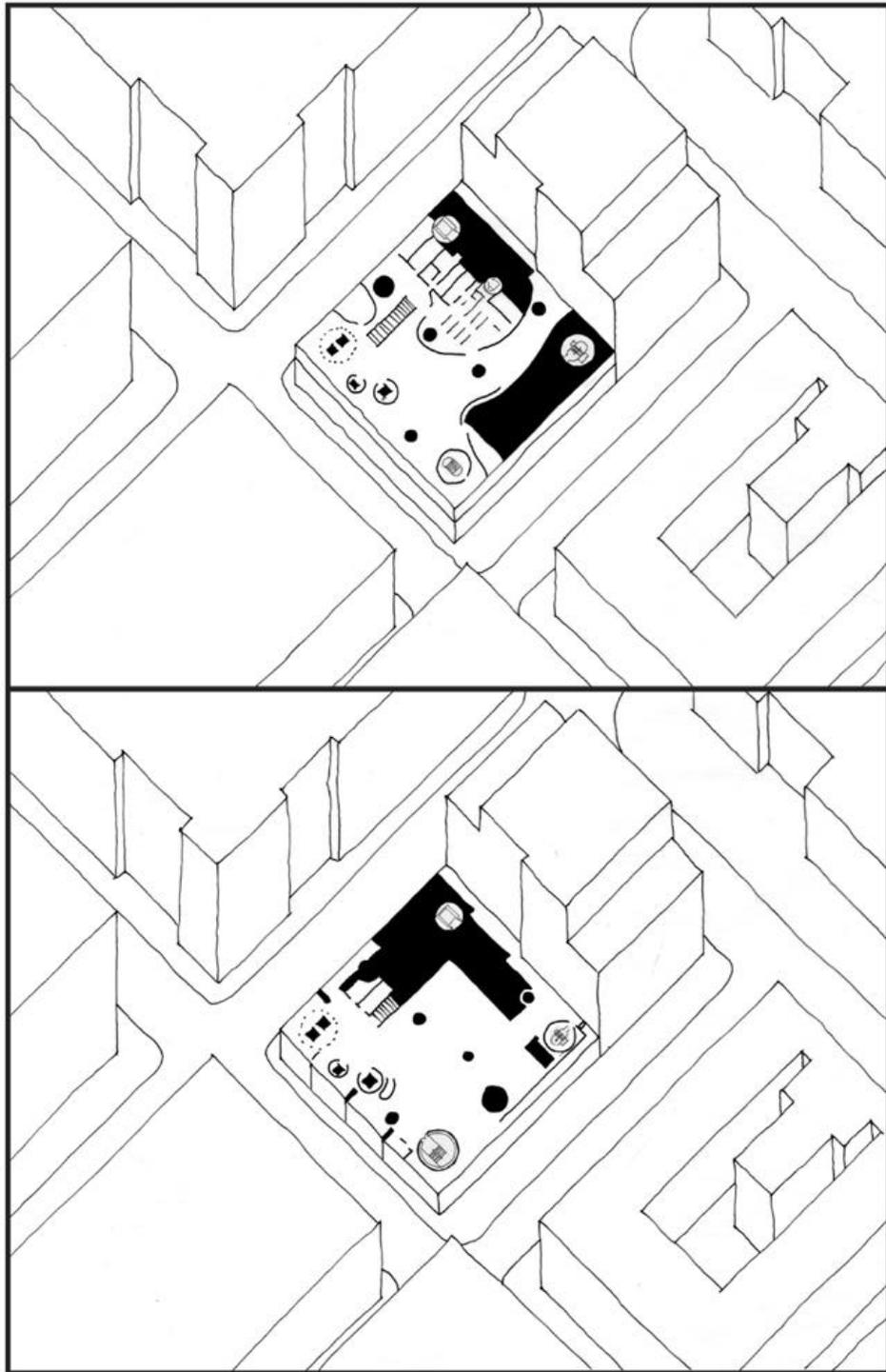


Figure 56 - Mediateque Massing Study on Washington, D.C. Site

(Source: author)

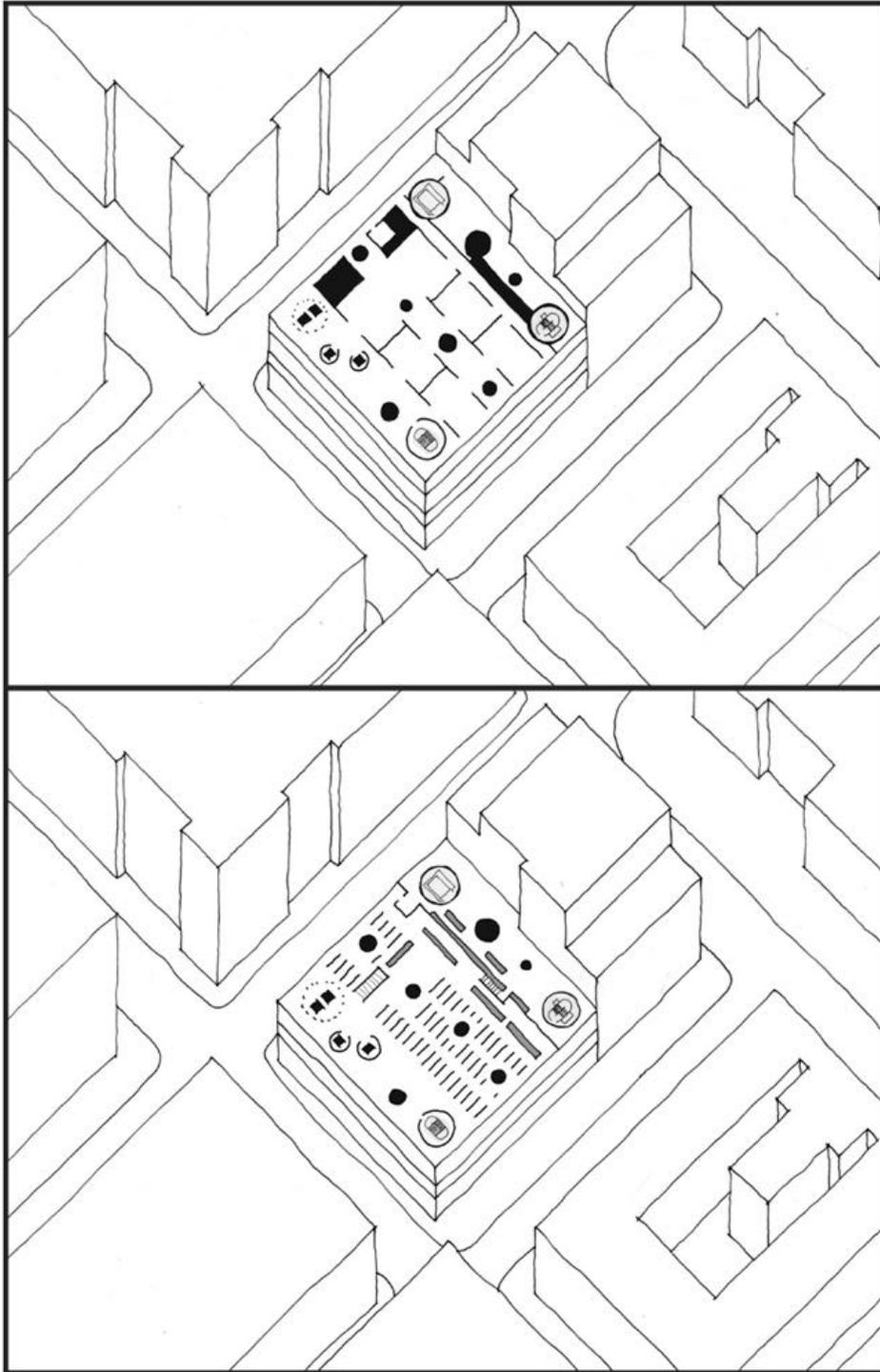


Figure 57 - Mediateque Massing Study on Washington, D.C. Site

(Source: author)

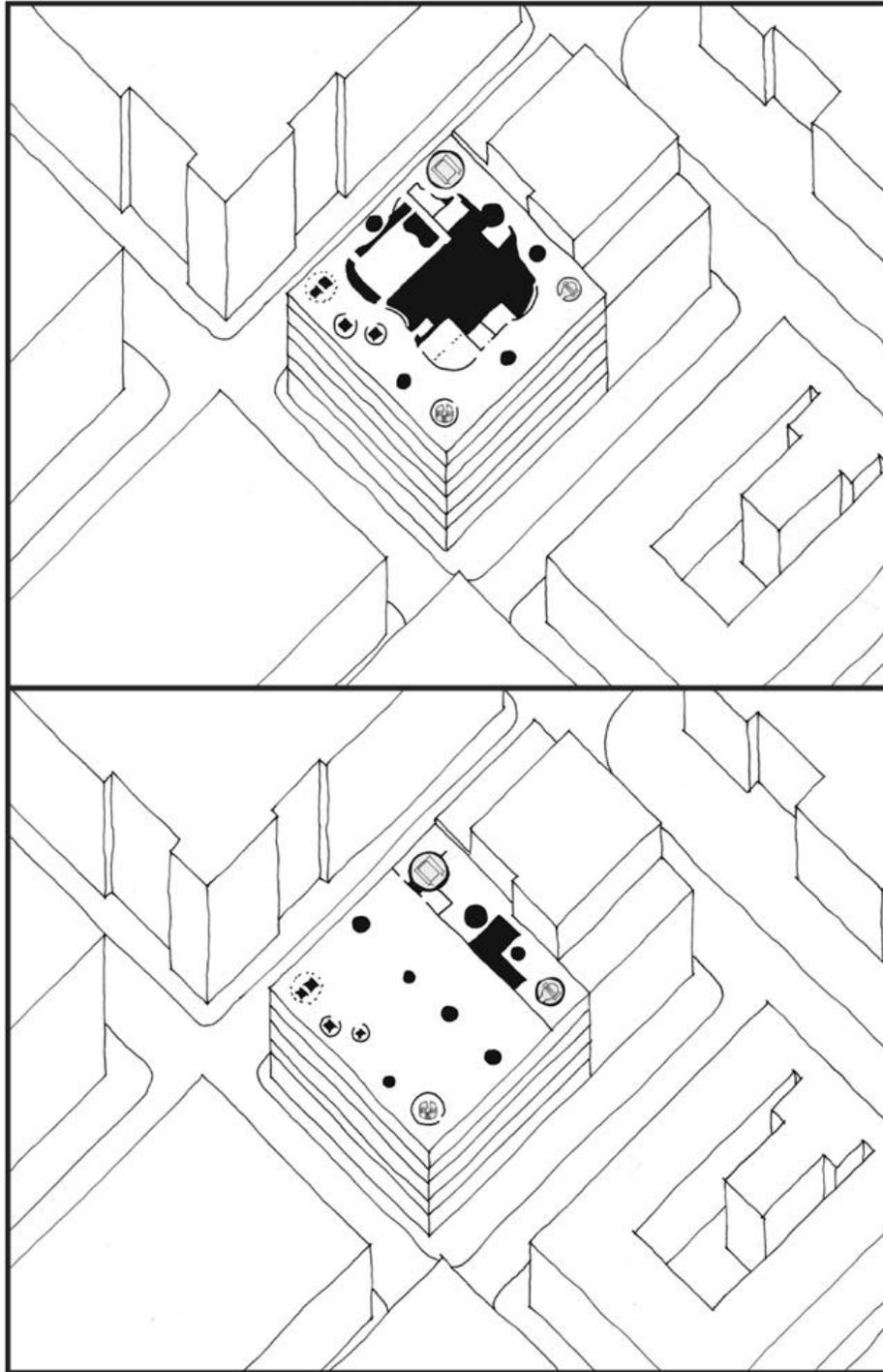


Figure 58 - Mediatheque Massing Study on Washington, D.C. Site

(Source: author)

The above are a series of diagrams showing how the Sendai Mediatheque would fit on the proposed site in Washington D.C. The dimensions of the building are

extremely close to those that define the site boundaries providing a helpful massing and programming study. The maximum height reached once all of the floors are stacked is roughly 100', complying with the height ordinance of downtown.

| Function | SqFootage | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------|--|--|
| Basement | 32,480 | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| First Floor | | Ceiling 22.3 ft | | | |
| Open Square | 4,930 | | | | |
| Shop | 825 | | | | |
| Café | 961 | | | | |
| Café Pantry | 216 | | | | |
| Information Counter | | | | | |
| Toilet (Men) | 300 | | | | |
| Toilet (Women) | 300 | | | | |
| Surveillance Room | 400 | | | | |
| Bicycle Parking | | | | | |
| Delivery Yard | 1,762 | | | | |
| Coin Lockers | | | | | |
| Book Return Post | | | | | |
| Freight Elevator | 9.8 X 13.1 ft | | | | |
| Staff Elevator | 5.25 X 4.4 ft | | 13 people | | |
| Vistor Elevator (3) | 4.6 X 6.25 ft | | 17 people | | |
| Escalator | | | | | |

Figure 59 - Mediatheque Program Tabulation of Basement and First Floor Uses

(Source: author)

| Function | SqFootage | | | | | |
|--|-----------|----------------|---|--|--|--|
| Second Floor | 25,824 | Ceiling 9.5 ft | <p>The second floor provides comprehensive guides to the users of the mediatheque. Information on how to use the facilities and equipment is given, and applications to lease facilities are accepted. Simple inquiries about the use of the facilities can be asked, although consultation in detail is given by staff in charge.</p> <p>The 2nd floor also consists of children's books of the Sendai Shimin Library, information-browsing terminals, meeting rooms and a childcare room.</p> | | | |
| Information Browsing Lounge | | | | | | |
| Counter for Inquiries | | | | | | |
| Conference Desk | | | | | | |
| Inquiries | | | | | | |
| Newly Arrived Newspapers and Magazines | | | | | | |
| Volunteer Office | 362 | | | | | |
| Meeting Room | 517 | | | | | |
| Children's Books | 2,282 | | | | | |
| Library Workspace | 256 | | | | | |
| Group Reading Room | 140 | | | | | |
| Group Reading Room | 104 | | | | | |
| Story Book Room | 311 | | | | | |
| Child Care | 280 | | | | | |
| Baby Care | 129 | | | | | |
| Quiet Room | 214 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Men) | 377 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Women) | 459 | | | | | |
| Office | 1,967 | | | | | |

Figure 60 - Mediatheque Program Tabulation of Second Floor Uses

(Source: author)

| Function | SqFootage | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Third/Fourth Floor | | Ceiling 17 ft | The Sendai shimin library has 110,000 books in open-shelf reading rooms (including children's books on the 2nd floor) and 300,000 books in closed-stack rooms. | | | |
| Reference Materials on Local History and Culture | 6,128 | 20000 Books | | | | |
| Seats for Reading Local Mats | | 54 seats | | | | |
| Terminal For Book Search | | 12 terminals | | | | |
| General Books | 19,233 | 110000 Books | | | | |
| Reading Seats | | 44 Seats, 108 Sofas, 50 Stools | | | | |
| Library Office | 5,136 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Men) | 222 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Women) | 444 | | | | | |
| Fifth Floor | 25,844 | Ceiling 11 ft | The 5th floor is a gallery space with an 11' ceiling. It is divided into rooms with fixed walls. Along with the exhibition space, there are anterooms and a room for unpacking delivered materials. | | | |
| Gallery Space | 11,616 | | | | | |
| AnteRooms (9) | 86 | | | | | |
| Foyer | 5,464 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Men) | 310 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Women) | 262 | | | | | |
| Unpacking Room | | | | | | |
| Sixth Floor | 25,898 | Ceiling 14 ft | The 6th floor is a gallery space with a 14' ceiling height. Along with the exhibition space, there are anterooms and a room for unpacking delivered articles. | | | |
| Gallery Space | 14,195 | | | | | |
| AnteRoom (2) | 107 | | | | | |
| Foyer | 5,464 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Men) | 287 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Women) | 438 | | | | | |

Figure 61 - Mediatheque Program Tabulation of Third/Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Floor Uses

(Source: author)

| Function | SqFootage | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|--|--|--|--|
| Seventh Floor | 26,032 | Ceiling 11.5 ft | <p>The studio on the 7th floor consists of a multimedia library and a workspace for editing and creation of information and data. There is a full-scale studio theater with the capacity of 180 seats where 35mm film can be shown. At the multimedia library, audio-visual materials can be viewed. The art and culture library provides exhibition catalogues from Japan and abroad. The studio, furnished with information equipment, is a space without partitions so that it can be used in a number of ways.</p> | | | |
| Multimedia Library | | | | | | |
| Screening Room | 110 | | | | | |
| Meeting Room (2) | 527 | | | | | |
| studios (4) | | | | | | |
| Studio Inquiry | 1,830 | | | | | |
| Recording Rooms (2) | 60 | | | | | |
| Output Station | 325 | | | | | |
| A/V Editing Room | 143 | | | | | |
| Net Server | 911 | | | | | |
| Office | 3,608 | | | | | |
| Cinema | 1,830 | 180 seats | | | | |
| AnteRoom | 49 | | | | | |
| Regulation Room | 251 | | | | | |
| Art and Culture Library | | 20000 Books | | | | |
| Foyer | | | | | | |
| Lounge | | | | | | |
| Toilet (Men) | 318 | | | | | |
| Toilet (Women) | 318 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | |
| Site Area | 42,504 | | | | | |
| Building Area | 31,572 | | | | | |
| Total Floor Area | 233,385 | | | | | |
| 2 Floors Below Ground | | | | | | |
| 7 Floors Above Ground | | | | | | |
| Rooftop | | | | | | |

Figure 62 - Mediatheque Program Tabulation of Seventh Floor Uses and Total Area Calculations

(Source: author)

CHAPTER FIVE - INTERVENTIONS

networked urbanism

congestion charging

pedestrian street

Networked Urbanism

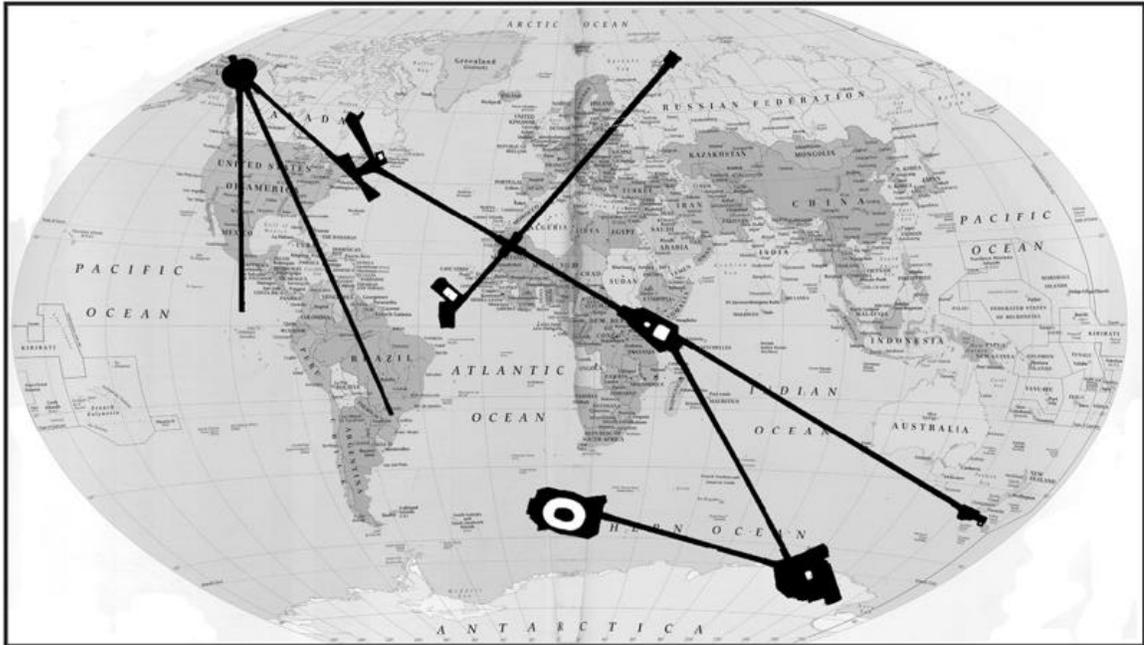


Figure 63 - Networked Urbanism - Pope Sixtus V Rome Plan laid over Earth

(Source: The Times Atlas of the World and author)

One of the central themes for this thesis is the relationship between electronic media and architecture. Attempting to provide places analogous to chat rooms that currently exist primarily in cyberspace, the proposed building will be linked not just to the Internet in general, but will have direct, real-time feeds to similarly programmed buildings around the world. Interpreting electronic media as another layer in architecture and taking advantage of its potentials as multiplier of place rather than limiter, the network of place through public architecture will be explored. This could entail live video feeds that transport the virtual, real-time images of citizens in Berlin, for example, to screens in Washington D.C.

Currently there exists a multitude of ways to communicate via the Internet with other peoples and places, however, this interaction demands that people are physically

isolated behind their own personal screen, normally in a home or individual room. It is this aspect that attracts so many people to the idea that electronic media destroys place. The fact that so many people communicate with each other via the Internet regarding topics as broad-ranging as dinner recipes to politics should be a clear notification that discourse is not dead; it just lacks a public place to keep up with the evolving forms it takes.

Congestion Charging

On the local scale of Washington D.C., a congestion charging zone is proposed as a way to handle current traffic problems and its many associations.

There is no question that the area in and around Washington D.C. is one of the worst congested areas in the United States. It is constantly ranked as either second or third in the nation behind Los Angeles and the Bay area (San Francisco/Oakland). In using London's congestion charging scheme as a precedent, and starting within the district, a major step can be taken in not only improving traffic problems but also being more environmentally friendly and getting more Americans to start taking public transportation seriously.

The city of Washington D.C. chose a study area that included the entire downtown in addition to the National Mall and areas further south and west to explore possible interventions. The boundaries extend from 23rd St, NW (on the west), M St, NW (on the north), North Capitol St (to the east), M St (to the South) and the Potomac River (southwest). The area included is almost 5 square miles.

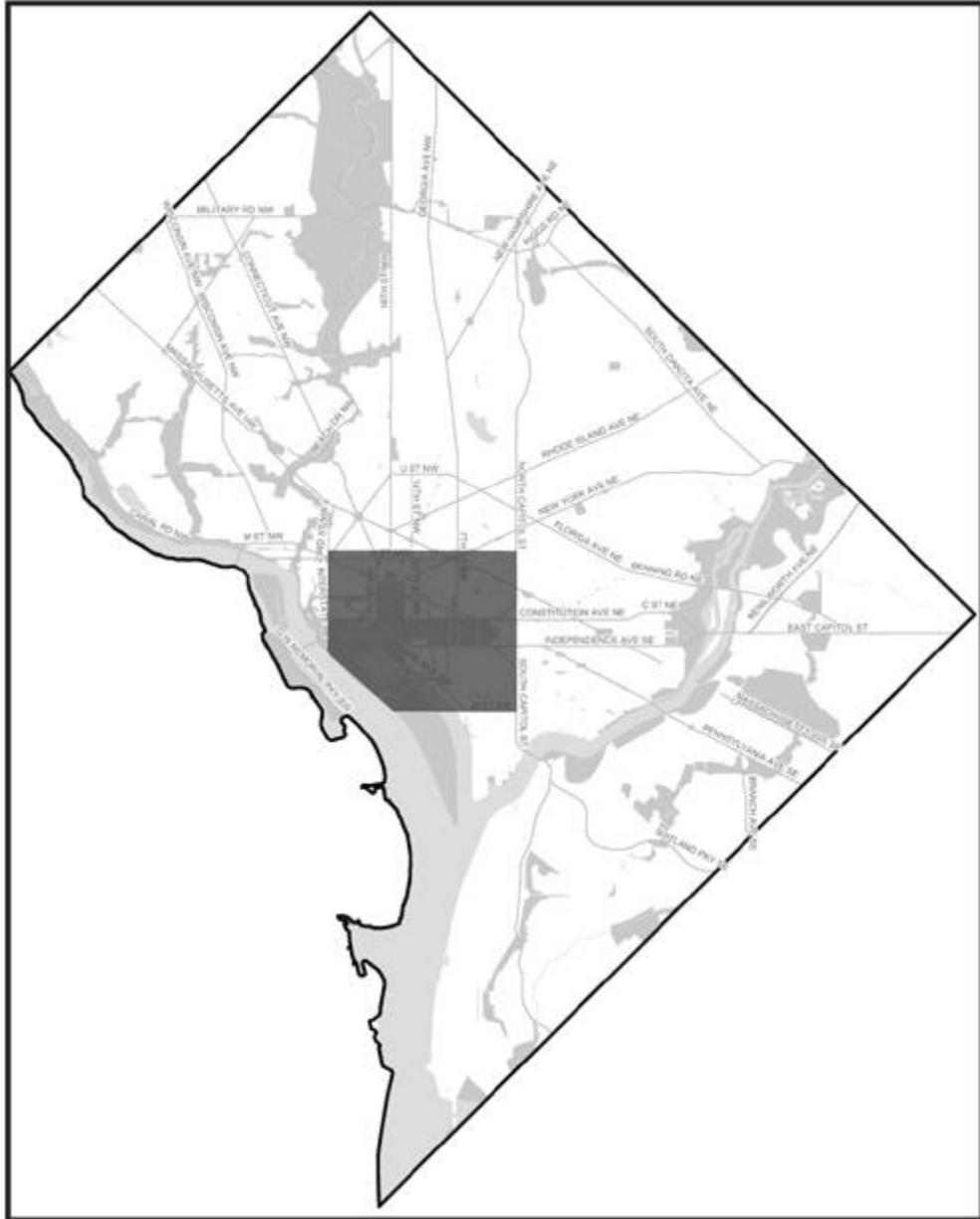


Figure 64 - Proposed Congestion Charging Zone within Washington, D.C.

(Source: City of Washington, D.C. and author)

In the summer of 2004, the city of Washington D.C. arranged a Downtown Congestion Task Force to study the issues related to congestion in the capital city. Amongst a few short-term solutions, the Task Force looked at imposing a congestion charging scheme similar to that of London's.

The London Congestion Charging Scheme

The area includes 8 square miles within the city and incorporates the downtown, along the Thames River.



Figure 65 - Map of London with Congestion Charging Zone and Thames River Highlighted

(Source: City of London)

The congestion charge is £5 (\$9) daily for driving or parking a vehicle on public roads within the defined zone between the hours of 7:00am and 6:30pm, Monday to Friday, excluding weekends and public holidays. Payment of the fee allows the vehicle to drive around, leave and re-enter the zone as many times as required in the day paid for.

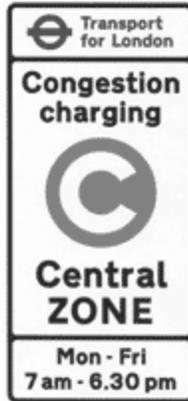


Figure 66 - Example of Road Sign for the Congestion Zone

(Source: <http://www.transalt.org/press/askta/040220.html>)

Distinct signs in and around the area notify drivers that they are approaching the zone, giving ample time to either understand that they are entering or find another route to bypass the charging zone.

There are no tollbooths, barriers, or tickets; instead one pays to register the vehicle with a database records the license plate numbers of paid vehicles to cross reference them when those vehicles enter the charging zone.

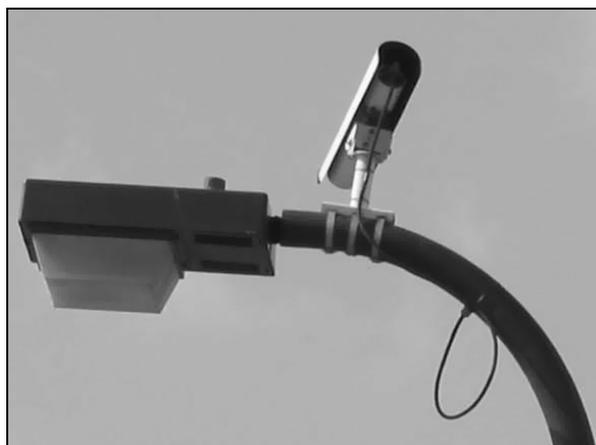


Figure 67 - Typical Surveillance Camera for Monitoring registered vehicles

(Source: <http://www.electronicnetwork.org/assemblage/zone1/details1.htm>)

Cameras are mounted throughout the zone, primarily around the perimeter, but also within the area, easing the process of cross-referencing registered vehicles recorded on the database. The driver has until midnight of the same day entering the zone to pay the registration fee. If one enters the zone without paying, a fine of £100 (\$185) is assessed. If the fine is paid within 14 days, the fine is reduced to £50 (\$93). After 28 days of not paying the fee, the fine is increased to £150 (\$278).

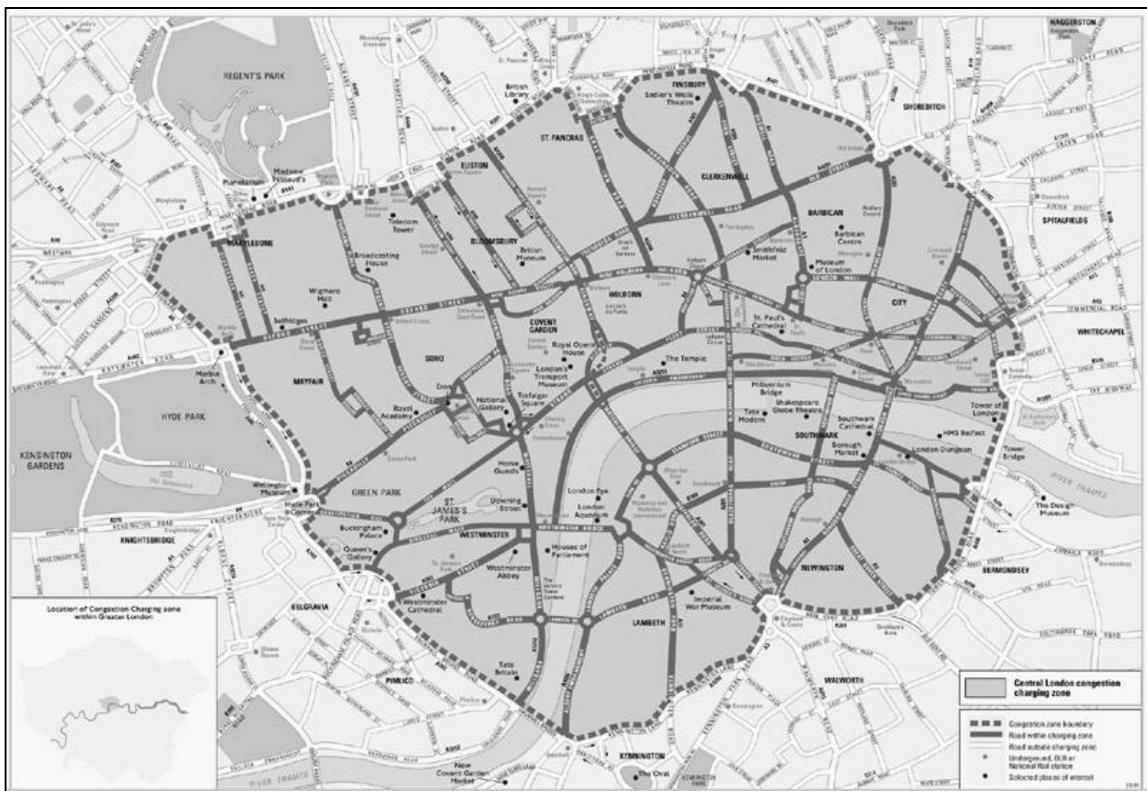


Figure 68 - Downtown London Congestion Zone

(Source: City of London)

The city offers exemptions to the following recipients:

Motorbikes, mopeds, and bicycles; London licensed Taxis, and mini-cabs;
Emergency service vehicles; Vehicles used by disabled persons; Disabled passenger-carrying vehicles; Licensed buses with 9 or more seats

The following discounts are offered:

Residents living within the charging zone receive a 90% discount; Electrically propelled vehicles; Certain alternative fuel vehicles meeting strict emissions standards; Recovery vehicles; Military vehicles

The congestion charging scheme was implemented on February 17, 2003 and was continually supported by the mayor, Ken Livingstone, who after one month in office had started tackling congestion issues and deeming it as a very high priority for the city of London. The impacts on traffic that the Association of London Government found after tracking the progression of the scheme were the following:

Total traffic entering the zone across the charging day has declined by 20%;
Total traffic circulating inside the zone (excluding two wheelers) has declined by 16%;
Traffic on the inner ring road has remained at pre-charging levels; it had been predicted to increase by 10%;
There is no evidence at this stage of any displaced traffic finding its way to other orbital routes around the charging zone ;
Indicative analysis of sample speeds indicates that there has been an increase in traffic speeds in the charging zone;
There has been a 14% decrease in the journey time of longer distance trips from London into the charging zone ¹⁷

The impacts found on public transportation were the following:

- Bus patronage to the charging zone has increased by some 6,000 passengers compared to autumn 2002. This includes the effect of underlying patronage increases. Bus ridership is increasing by 12% per annum across the network as a whole;
- The number of buses to the zone has increased by 19%;
- The level of bus kilometers not operated due to traffic congestion fell by half for routes into the charging zone;
- Bus speeds remain above those for 2002 inside the charging zone;
- The excess waiting time – the additional wait forced on passengers through service irregularity – has fallen by one third for routes into the charging zone;
- The average passenger waiting time for buses on routes into the charging zone has fallen from 6.0 minutes to 5.0 minutes;
- There has been an increase of 17,000 passengers on the underground network, an increase of 0.6%¹⁸

The net revenue from the registration fees and fines for the first ten years must be spent on improving transport in London.

Further bus network improvements; Increasing late-night public transport; Road safety and security improvement schemes; Improvement to the walking and cycling environment; Contributions to the cost of developing tram or high quality segregated bus schemes; Accelerating road and bridge maintenance; The development and funding of expanded Underground and rail capacity with new services across central London, together with improved orbital rail services; New Thames Gateway river crossings; Selected improvements to London's road system.¹⁹

In addition to following London's bold and successful steps, Washington D.C. can use revenue from the congestion charging scheme for the following benefits:

- Research for alternate energy sources to fuel vehicles to lessen the dependency on foreign-owned oil supplies;
- More rigorous campaigning for public transportation, walking and bicycling;
- A National priority to address the obesity problem in America; which easily could be associated in some part with the dependency on the automobile.

An issue that permeates the congestion charging scheme is the notion of surveillance. This is no small concern and although there is a need to monitor vehicles so

as to keep track of registration fees, there must be clear evidence and checks that the government is not taking advantage of this aspect.



Figure 69 - The Proposed Congestion Charging Zone

(Source: City of Washington, D.C.)

The above is the area under proposal for the congestion charging zone. As more people start to see and reap the benefits of this program, the zone can be enlarged to ultimately include the entire district. Additionally, with the revenue, enough improvements can be made for alternate forms of transportation around the beltway.

Extended lines, circular routes, more frequent buses and metros, and higher capacity, more comfortable public transportation systems can easily be achieved.

The 8th Street Pedestrian Mall

An opportunity that the site provides is the conversion of 8th Street into a pedestrian mall for two blocks. Currently there is a local axial order defined from the National Portrait Gallery to the north and the National Archives to the south, just across Pennsylvania Ave. The Navy Memorial is located one block north of the National Archives and encompasses two squares similar to the condition that the National Portrait Gallery displays. This makes 8th Street discontinuous, unable to extend through the National Portrait Gallery or the Navy Memorial.

Since there is a conscious effort by the city of Washington, D.C. to create an 18 hour downtown and energize the area with more theaters, retail, cultural and entertainment venues, the proposal for closing the two block stretch of 8th Street between the National Portrait Gallery and the Navy Memorial is an opportunity to provide a safer and more accommodating public right-of-way for pedestrians on foot.

One of the precedents that this intervention draws from is the Pearl Street Mall in downtown Boulder, Colorado.

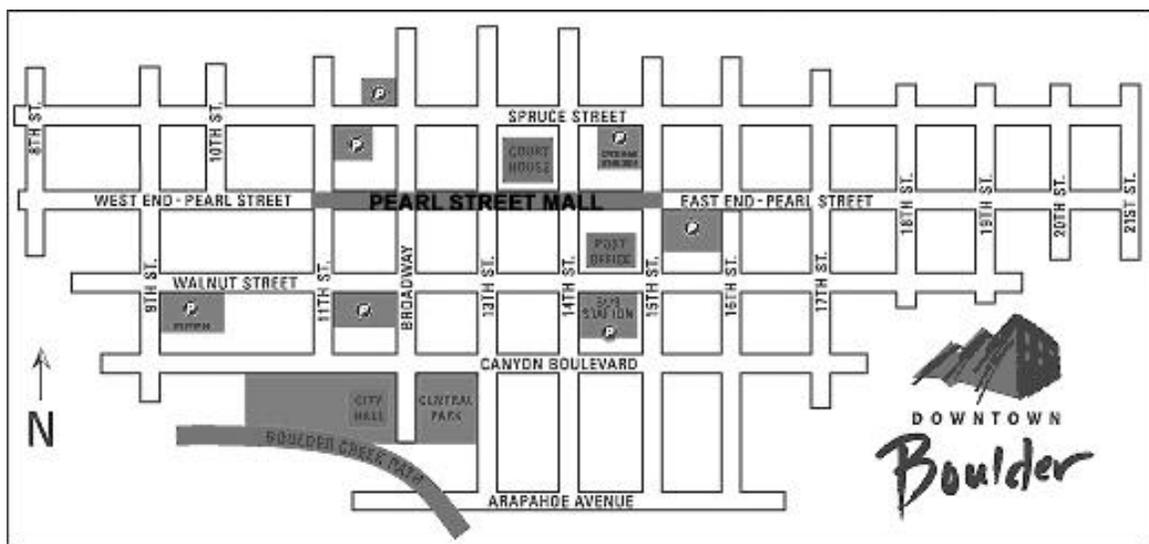


Figure 70 - Plan of Downtown Boulder Highlighting Pearl Street Mall

(Source: author and <http://www.downtownboulder.com/visitors.asp>)

All of the cross streets, 11th, Broadway, 13th, 14th, and 15th Streets run through the pedestrian mall.



Figure 71 - Photo on Pearl Street Mall

(Source: <http://www56.tok2.com/home/colorado/scene/boulder/>)



Figure 72 - Photo on Pearl Street Mall

(Source: <http://www56.tok2.com/home/colorado/scene/boulder/>)

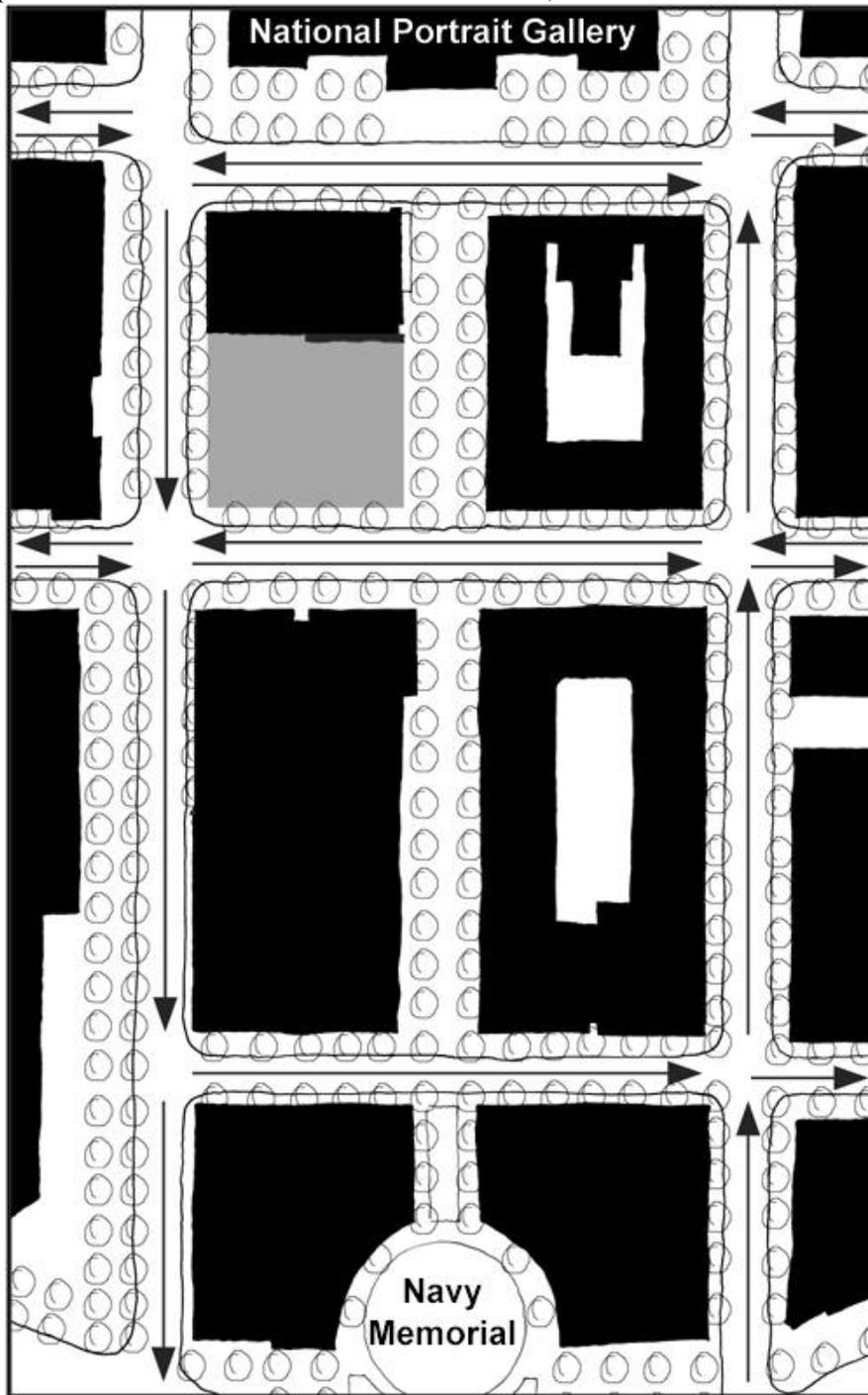


Figure 73 - The Proposed 8th Street Pedestrian Mall

(Source: author)

9th Street, one block to the west, is currently a one way (south) street, and to help control traffic flow, 7th Street would be turned into a one way (north) street. Although

the Mall would run north and south between the National Portrait Gallery and the Navy Memorial, the cross streets, E, F, and G would remain open to vehicular traffic.

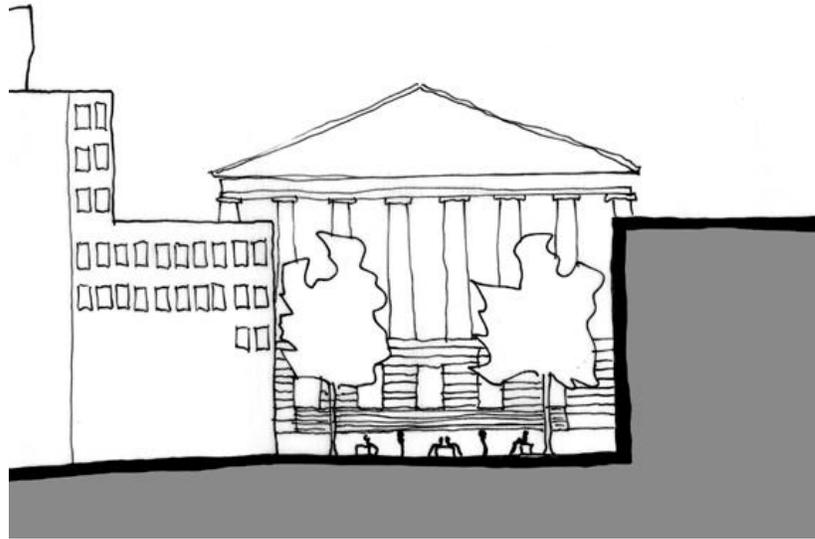


Figure 74 - Section through Proposed 8th Street Pedestrian Mall Looking north towards National Portrait Gallery

(Source: author)

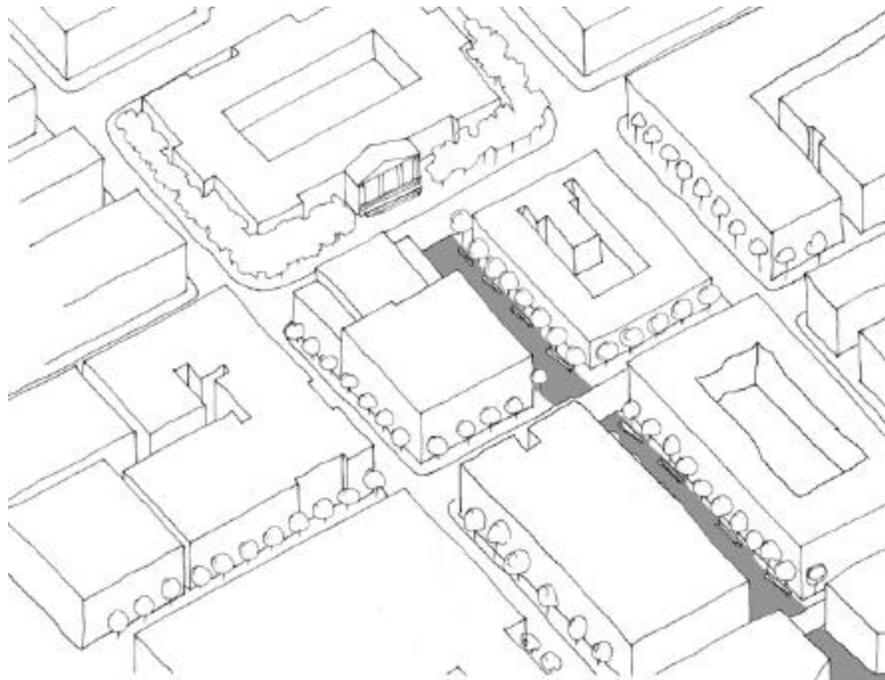


Figure 75 - Axon including the Proposed 8th Street Pedestrian Mall

(Source: author)



Figure 76 - Photo of 8th Street as it is currently

(Source: author)



Figure 77 - Photo Collage of Proposed 8th Street Mall

(Source: author)

CHAPTER SIX - PROGRAM

*“We, the most powerful democracy in the world, have developed a strong norm against talking about politics.”*²⁰

Lawrence Lessig

institutions

higher education

public forum

surrounding building information

Institutions

The Benton Foundation

Mission: To articulate a public interest vision for the digital age and to demonstrate the value of communications for solving social problems.

Since 1981, three core values have guided our programmatic approach—access, equity and diversity. The Benton Foundation still believes in these values and the power of using communications to strengthen communities, whether they are defined as communities of place (such as neighborhoods) or affinity (such as cultural groups).

Recognizing the serious threats to the public of current developments in media policy, the foundation has decided to focus its activities on an area of longstanding and core interest – ensuring that the public benefits from the emerging digital communications environment. Its goals moving forward include articulating and promoting a public interest vision and communications policy alternatives for the digital age, raising awareness among funders and nonprofits of their stake in the critical policy issues of the digital age, and enabling communities and nonprofits to produce diverse, decentralized and locally responsive content.²¹

Center for Democracy and Technology

Mission: To promote democratic values and constitutional liberties in the digital age. With expertise in law, technology, and policy, CDT seeks practical solutions to enhance free expression and privacy in global communications technologies. CDT is dedicated to building consensus among all parties interested in the future of the Internet and other new communications media.²²

The Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit public policy organization dedicated to promoting the democratic potential of today's

open, decentralized global Internet. Our mission is to conceptualize, develop, and implement public policies to preserve and enhance free expression, privacy, open access, and other democratic values in the new and increasingly integrated communications medium.²³

CDT pursues its mission through research and public policy development in a consensus-building process based on convening and operating broad-based working groups composed of public interest and commercial representatives of divergent views to explore solutions to critical policy issues. In addition, CDT promotes its own policy positions in the United States and globally through public policy advocacy, online grassroots organizing with the Internet user community and public education campaigns, and litigation, as well as through the development of technology standards and online information resources.²⁴

The Center for Arts & Culture

Mission: To inform and improve policy decisions that affect cultural life. The guiding principles of that mission include freedom of imagination, inquiry and expression, as well as freedom of opportunity for all to participate in a vital and diverse culture.²⁵

The Center commissions research, holds public roundtables, and publishes new voices and perspectives on the arts and culture.

Higher Education

George Mason University

Cultural Studies – PhD program - 58 students

Special strengths of the program include gender/sexuality, film and media, and culture and political economy ²⁶

Georgetown University

Communication Culture and Technology – Masters and PhD programs - 10 students

Technology & Information Policy; Politics & Media; Cultural Studies; Technology, Art & Representation; Issues in Globalization; Networking Technology & Social Change; Technology, Business & the Economy ²⁷

George Washington University

Human Sciences – PhD program - 25 students

The Body; Ethnography; Gender Studies; Psychoanalysis; Cross-Cultural Study ²⁸

University of Maryland

Cultural Design in Contemporary Society – Masters and PhD programs – 20 students

Architecture and Design; Psychology; Media and Communication; Cultural Studies; Politics

The proposal is not to transplant the above programs but to offer branch classrooms, lecture halls and facilities to be taken advantage of in the Side-Stage. The educational programs can offer classes, an internship to work directly with the institutions, set up workshops and exhibitions, or any number of other academic uses.

The Public Realm

Forum – A multi-use area designed to accommodate large gatherings, workshops, and screenings of events. This space is to be “democratic” in nature and should inspire discourse on topics either brought up by the institutions upstairs or current political events publicized in various forms within the forum space.

Auditorium – A space to accommodate between 150 and 200 people for lectures, debates, and other similar performances.

Mediatheque – A media library and access point to digital information that facilitates the direct interaction with both people and knowledge.

Information Center – An area for learning of upcoming events, how to use the building, programs available, etc.

Café – A place to enjoy non-alcoholic beverages, small sandwiches, and snacks while experiencing the Side-Stage. The café will act as transition space between outside and inside, as a place for regulars to attend and around which to create a sense of community.

Exhibition and Gallery Space – Area devoted to the display of media art installations

Shop – a place to buy media products, art, and literature associated with the Side-Stage

Television and Radio Studios – Studios to be used to broadcast public announcements and events organized through the constituents within the Side-Stage. These spaces can also be rented out by third parties looking for studio space.

Square Footages

| Center for Democracy and Technology | | The Center for Democracy and Technology works to promote democratic values and constitutional liberties in the digital age. With expertise in law, technology, and policy, CDT seeks practical solutions to enhance free expression and privacy in global communications technologies. CDT is dedicated to building consensus among all parties interested in the future of the Internet and other new communications media. |
|--|------|--|
| Office Administrator | 200 | |
| President | 200 | |
| Executive Director (2) | 400 | |
| Associate Director (2) | 400 | |
| Internet, Tech and Policy Project | 200 | |
| Global Internet Policy | 200 | |
| Policy | 200 | |
| Webmaster | 200 | |
| Conference Room | 1000 | |
| Total | | 3000 |

Figure 78 - List of Program Elements for Center for Democracy and Technology

(Source: author)

| Center for Arts & Culture | | The Center for Arts and Culture aims to inform and improve policy decisions that affect cultural life. The guiding principles of that mission include freedom of imagination, inquiry and expression, as well as freedom of opportunity for all to participate in a vital and diverse culture. |
|--------------------------------------|------|--|
| President | 200 | |
| Senior Program Officer | 200 | |
| Program Officer | 200 | |
| Program Administrator | 200 | |
| Program Assistant | 200 | |
| Conference Room | 1000 | |
| Total | | 2000 |

Figure 79 - Program Elements for the Center of Arts & Culture

(Source: author)

| Benton Foundation | | Our mission is to articulate a public interest vision for the digital age and to demonstrate the value of communications for solving social problems. |
|------------------------------|------|---|
| Executive Vice President | 200 | |
| Director Public Policy | 200 | |
| Senior Fellow | 200 | |
| Editor | 200 | |
| Senior Associate (One World) | 200 | |
| Program Director (One World) | 200 | |
| Senior Associate (One World) | 200 | |
| Conference Room | 1000 | |
| Total | | |

Figure 80 - Program Elements for the Benton Foundation

(Source: author)

| Common Program | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Kitchen | 500 |
| Lounge | 1000 |
| Library | 2000 |
| Bathroom Male | 400 |
| Bathroom Female | 400 |
| Total | 4300 |
| | |
| Institutions Total | 11700 |

Figure 81 – Common Program Elements for the Institutions

(Source: author)

| Higher Education | | |
|---|--------------|---|
| George Mason University Cultural Studies | 58 Students | Gender/Sexuality Film & Media Culture & Political Economy |
| Georgetown University Communication Culture and Technology | 10 Students | Technology & Information Policy, Politics & Media Cultural Studies; Technology, Art, & Representation; Issues in Globalization; Networking Technology & Social Change; Technology, Business & the Economy |
| George Washington University Human Sciences | 25 Students | The Body Ethnography Gender Studies Psychoanalysis Cross-Cultural Study |
| University of Maryland College Park | 20 Students | Architecture and Design Psychology Media and Communication Cultural Studies Politics |
| Lecture Hall | | 1000 |
| Bathroom (Male) | | 300 |
| Bathroom (Female) | | 300 |
| Lounge/Kitchen | | 1000 |
| Seminar Room | | 400 |
| Office | | 400 |
| Dark Room | | 200 |
| Studio Space | | 1000 |
| Computer Lab | | 500 |
| Multi Use Studio | | 1000 |
| Library | | |
| | Total | 8500 |

Figure 82 – Program for the Educational Facilities

(Source: author)

| Service | |
|-------------------|------|
| Surveillance Room | 400 |
| Loading/Unloading | 1200 |
| Total | 1600 |

Figure 83 - Service Program

(Source: author)

| Studios | |
|-------------------|------|
| Television Studio | 2000 |
| Radio Studio | 1000 |
| Offices | 500 |
| Bathroom (Male) | 300 |
| Bathroom (Female) | 300 |
| Service | 500 |
| Total | 4600 |

Figure 84 - Program for Studios

(Source: author)

| Public Space | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Public Forum/Open Square | 5000 |
| Permanent Gallery | 24000 |
| Exhibition Space | 5000 |
| Auditorium | 3000 |
| Shop | 800 |
| Information Center | 200 |
| Bathroom (Male) | 300 |
| Bathroom (Female) | 300 |
| Café | 5000 |
| Total | 43600 |

Figure 85 - Program for the Public Realm

(Source: author)

| Mediateque | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Multimedia Library | 5000 |
| Screening Room | 200 |
| Meeting Rooms | 400 |
| Meeting Rooms | 400 |
| Studio (Editing) | 300 |
| Information | 300 |
| Recording Studios | 300 |
| Output Station | 300 |
| Administration | 400 |
| Offices | 3500 |
| Cinema | 2000 |
| Waiting Rooms | 300 |
| | |
| Total | 13400 |

Figure 86 - Program for Mediateque

(Source: author)

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Grand Total | 83400 |
|--------------------|--------------|

Figure 87 - Total Programmed Square Footage

(Source: author)

| Surrounding Building Information | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Spy Museum | 64000 sf | 500,000 people/yr | March 22 - Oct 31 Hours - 10am - 8pm |
| Zola Restaurant | 5500 sf | 9259 people/wk | Nov 1 - March 19 - 10am - 6pm |
| Spy Café | 3000 sf | 1322 people/day | |
| Retail | 5500 sf | | |
| National Portrait Gallery | 382000 sf | 432,000 people/yr | 10am - 5pm |
| | | 8000 people/wk | |
| National Portrait Gallery | 57,000 sf | 1143 people/day | |
| Smithsonian American Art | 95,000 sf | | |
| Museum Store | 5000 sf | | |
| Visible Conservation Center | 94,000 sf | | |
| Auditorium | 10,500 sf | | |
| Café | TBA | | |
| FBI Building | | 259,775 people/yr | 8:45am - 4:15pm |
| | | 4811 people/wk | |
| | | 687 people/day | |
| Poste | | 174 Seat Rest | 7am - 10:30pm |
| Hotel Monaco | | 180 Guest Rooms | |

Figure 88 - Relevant Information Regarding Buildings Surrounding the Proposed Site

(Source: author)

CHAPTER SEVEN – PRE-SCHEMATIC ALTERNATIVES

Pre-Schematic Alternatives

For the process of pre-schematic explorations, the organization and adjacencies of programmed elements provide abstract directions where this project can go formally. In this exercise, each major programmed component was kept separate from the others, stacking vertically. The rectangles represent approximate sizes of program and heights of spaces.

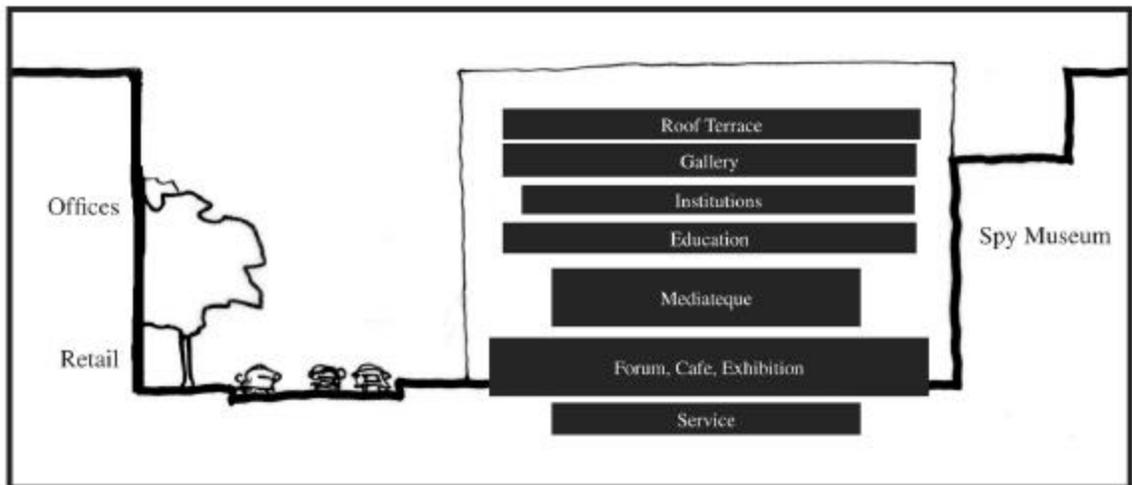


Figure 89 - Diagram of Program Organization on Site

(Source: author)

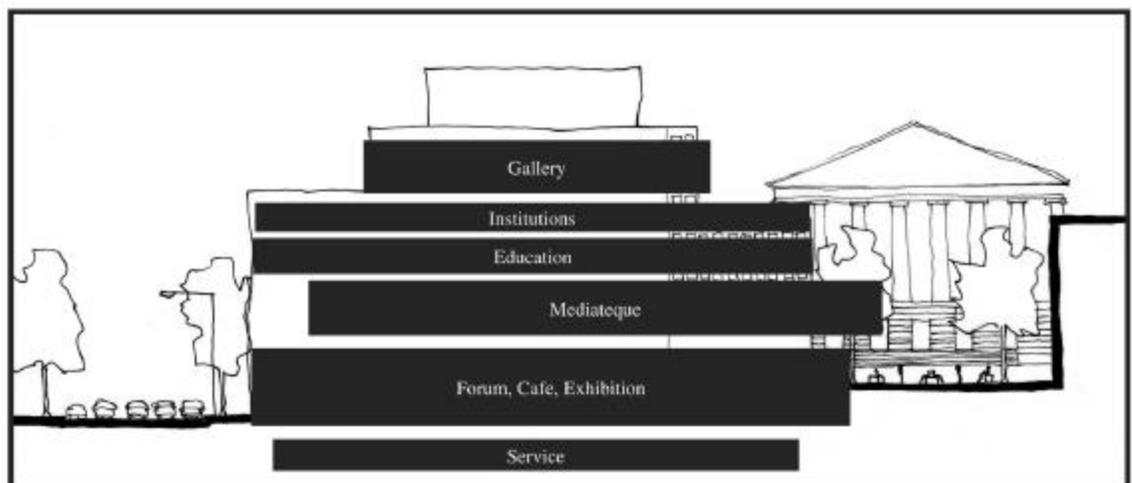


Figure 90 – Alternative Diagram of Program Organization on Site

(Source: author)

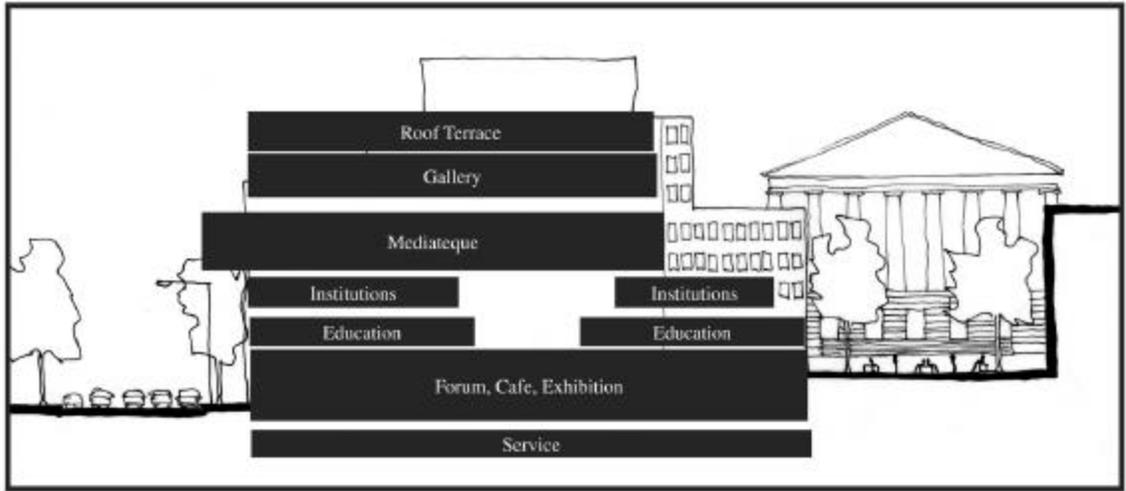


Figure 91 - Alternative Diagram of Program Organization on Site

(Source: author)

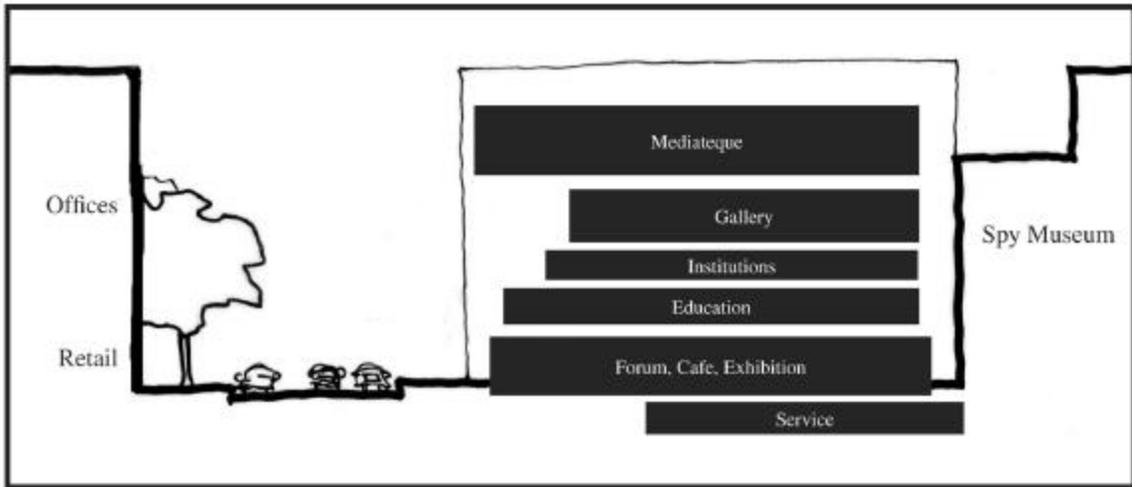


Figure 92 - Alternative Diagram of Program Organization on Site

(Source: author)

CHAPTER EIGHT – CONCLUSIONS AND SYNTHESIS

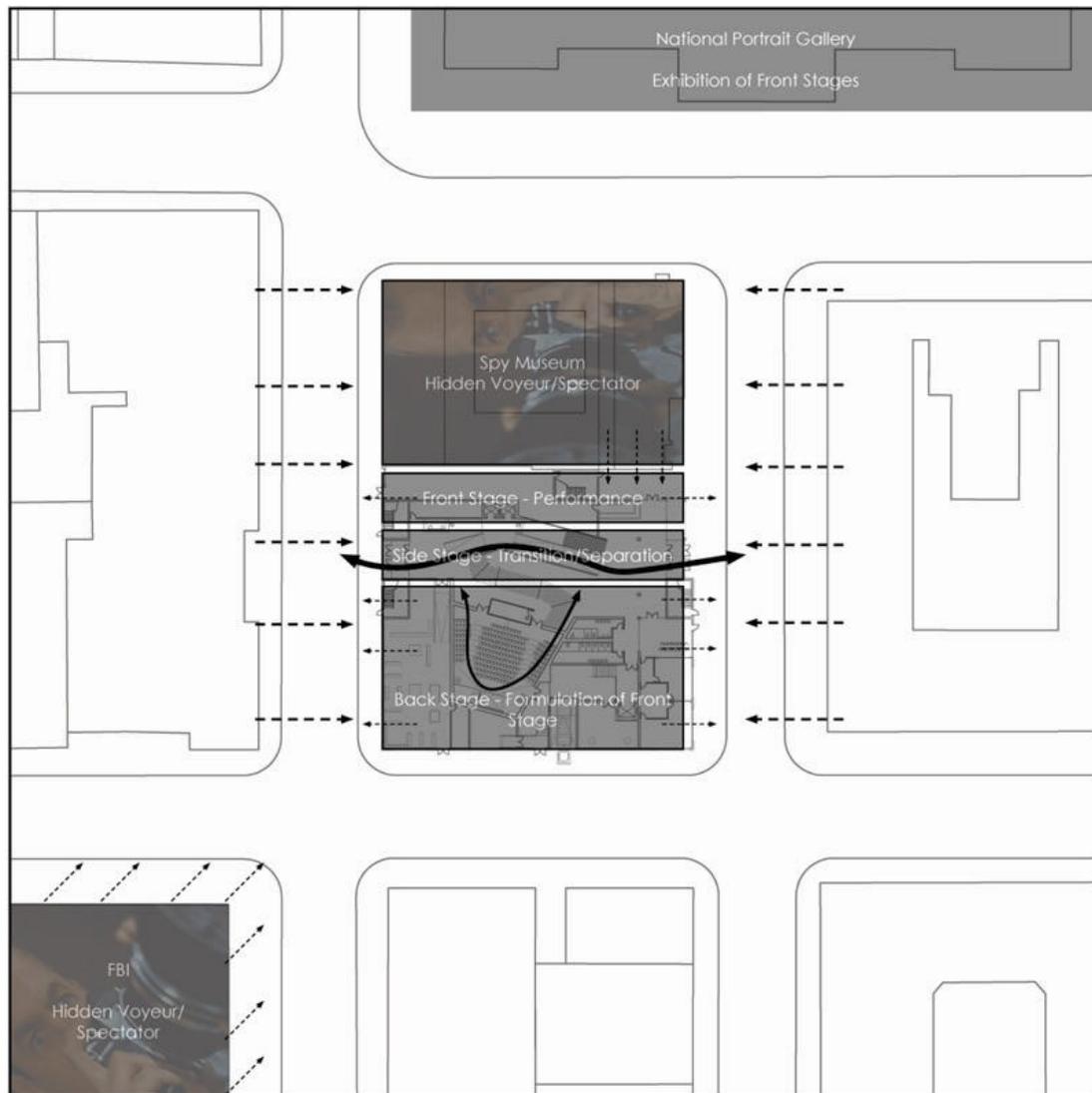


Figure 93 - Site Roles and Organization

(Source: author)

Throughout the entire design process there was a constant push and pull between concept and form. The program and organization of the building stayed true to the thinking that laid the foundation of the project, but formally there was a point where although consistent with the concepts, it seemed that the role of architecture was tested. This thesis attempted and successfully employed a coherent string of theories that were founded in social psychology, using them as principles for plan and section organization,

materiality, and representation, challenging some conventions while updating others so as to make them relevant in a project that deals with a contemporary program such as this one.

In terms of site organization, the role of context was re-interpreted to include the ideas of Goffman and Meyrowitz. The National Portrait Gallery, as exhibition of front stages, the Spy Museum as hidden spectator, and the FBI building as hidden voyeur, all help identify the site for this project as a Side-Stage and mediator between such poles.

The strategy for the ground floor was to create an agora that would read as an extension of the city into the building which would spill into the auditorium that would then in turn pour back out and up the building and define the main public spaces. This agora, both in plan and in section would act as the Middle Region where all of the activity in the building would be apparent and push and pull on its formal characteristics.

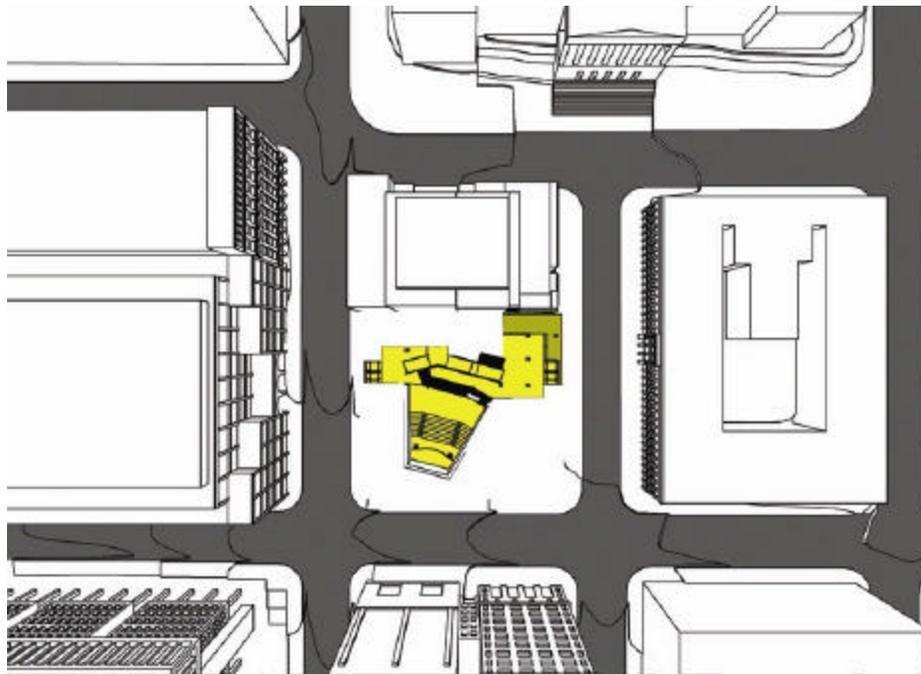


Figure 94 - Plan Perspective of Ground Floor Agora

(Source: Author)

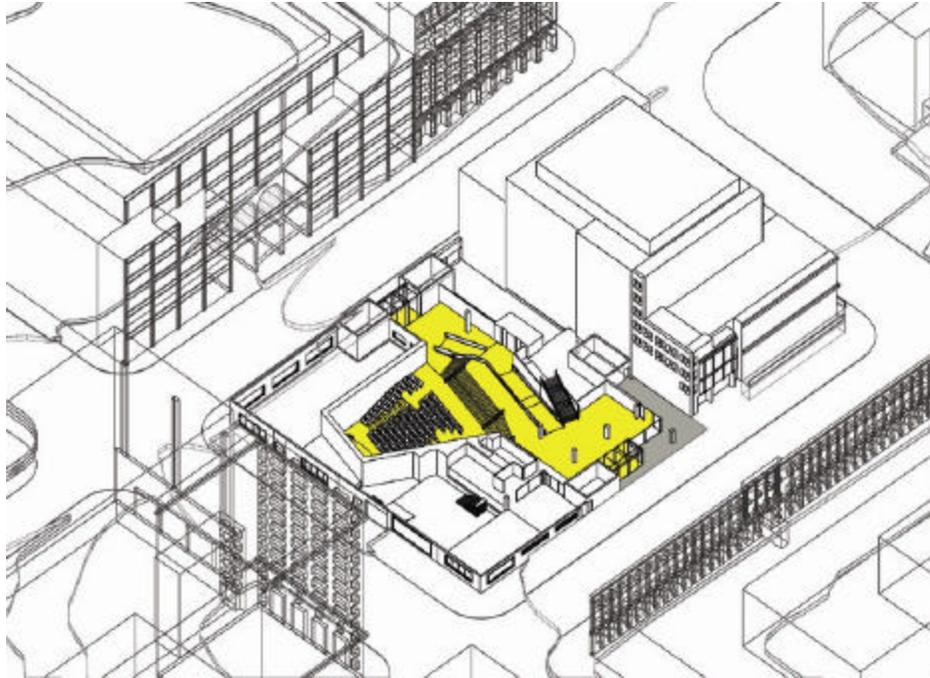


Figure 95 - Axonometric of Site with Ground Floor

(Source: Author)

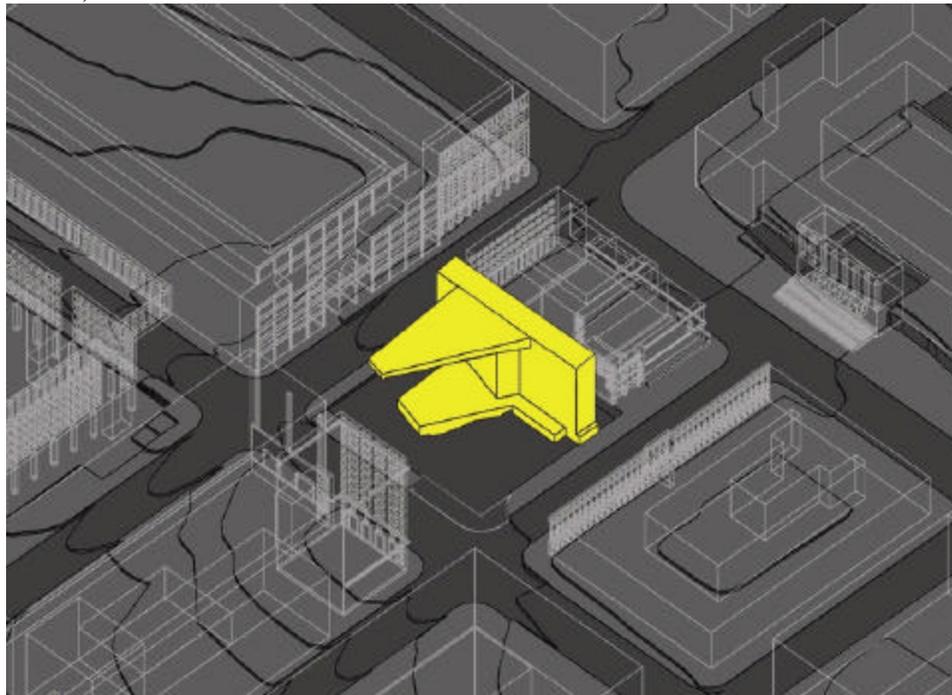


Figure 96 - Site with Middle Region (void) as Solid

(Source: Author)

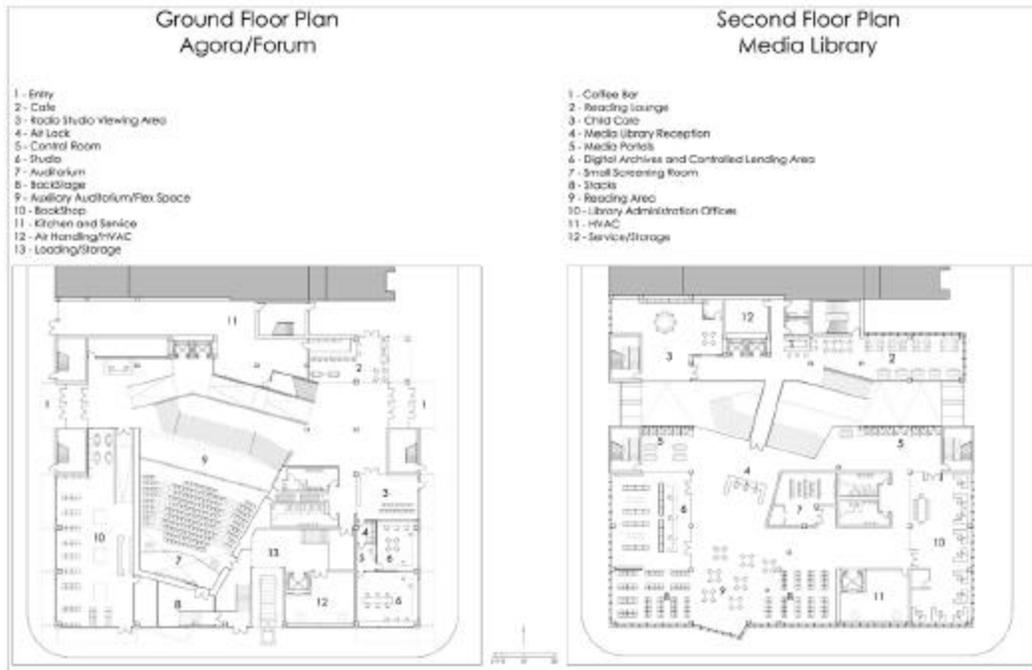


Figure 97 - Ground and Second Floor Plans

(Source: Author)

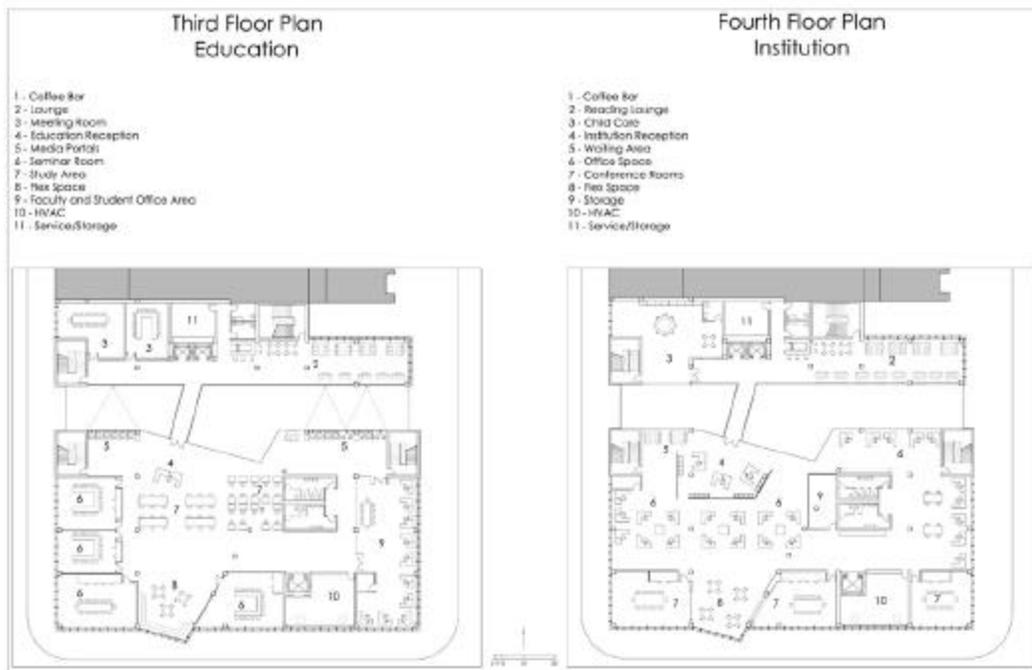


Figure 98 - Third and Fourth Floor Plans

(Source: Author)

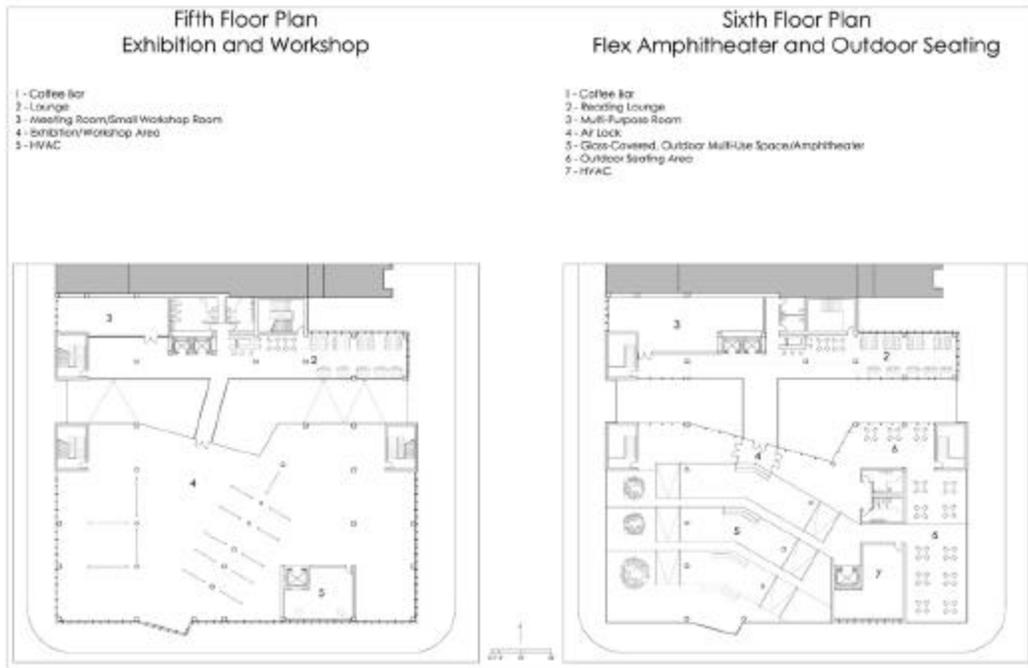


Figure 99 - Fifth and Sixth Floor Plans

(Source: Author)

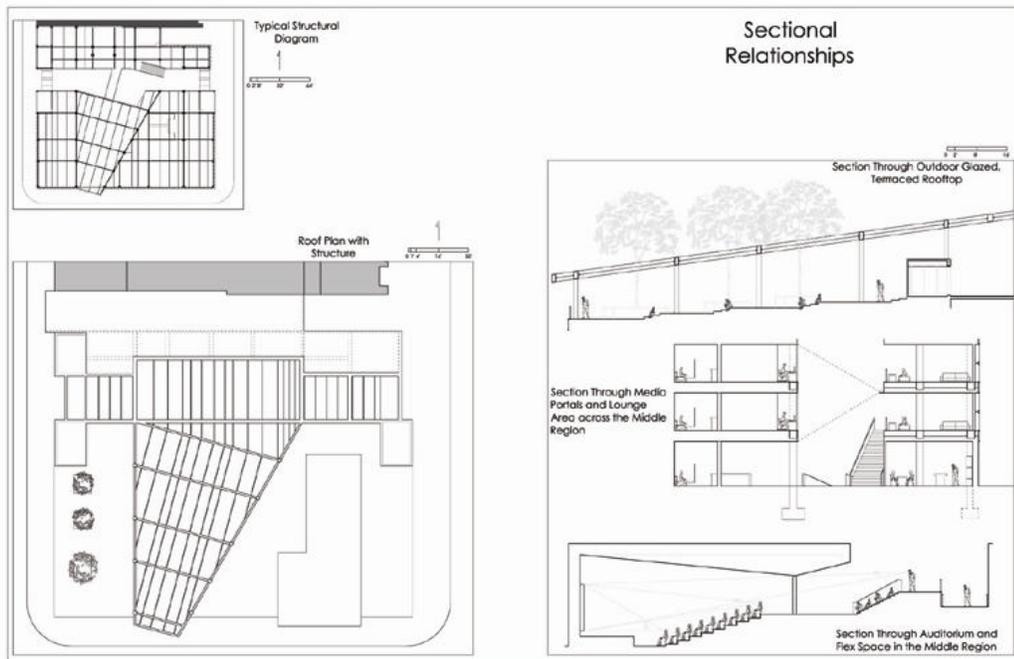


Figure 100 - Structural Diagrams and Sectional Relationships

(Source: Author)



Figure 101 - WireFrame Exterior View

(Source: Author)

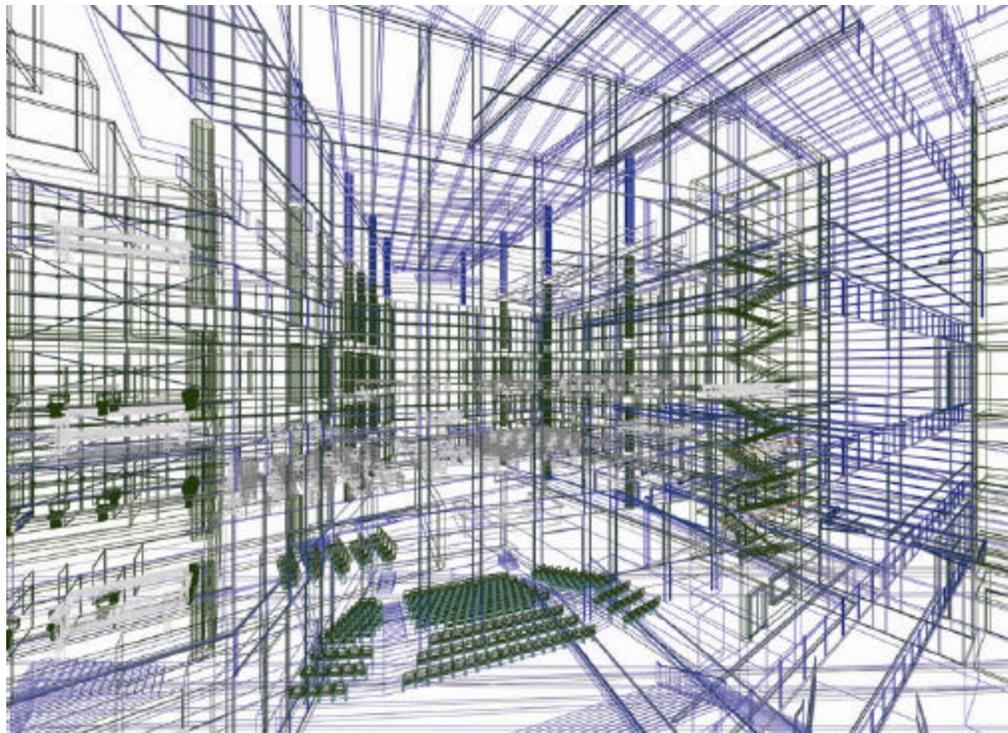


Figure 102 - WireFrame Interior View

(Source: Author)

Prior to fully engaging in the design process, one of the intentions was to convert 8th Street into a pedestrian mall. After further analysis that idea was changed to maintain 8th Street as it currently stands due to surrounding access issues of service and parking. On the urban scale the building engages the public by placing the radio station and bookstore at ground level, accessible both visually and physically. There are two main entrances to the building, one located on 8th Street and the other on 9th Street.



Figure 103 - Exterior Perspective from SE Corner

(Source: Author)

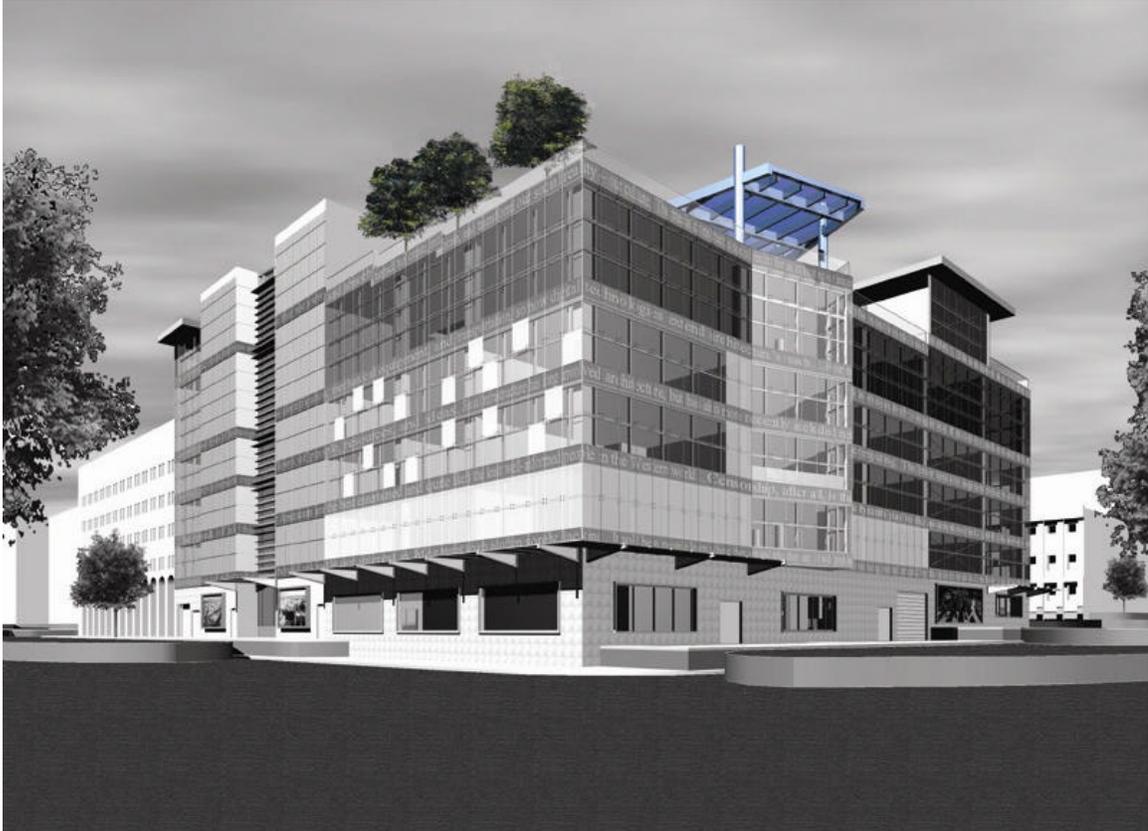


Figure 104 - Exterior Perspective From SW Corner

(Source: Author)

The exterior of the building is composed of a glass curtain wall on top of a concrete panel ground floor. Instead of spandrel glass there are LCD panels that publicize text messages produced from the institutions inside, projecting messages of culture for to the public to contemplate. At the ground level, besides windows looking into the spaces there are LCD screens that display images that are live feeds from other locations around the globe, blurring the notion of window, scale, time and place. A canopy provides shelter from the elements as well as giving hierarchy to entrances and corners.

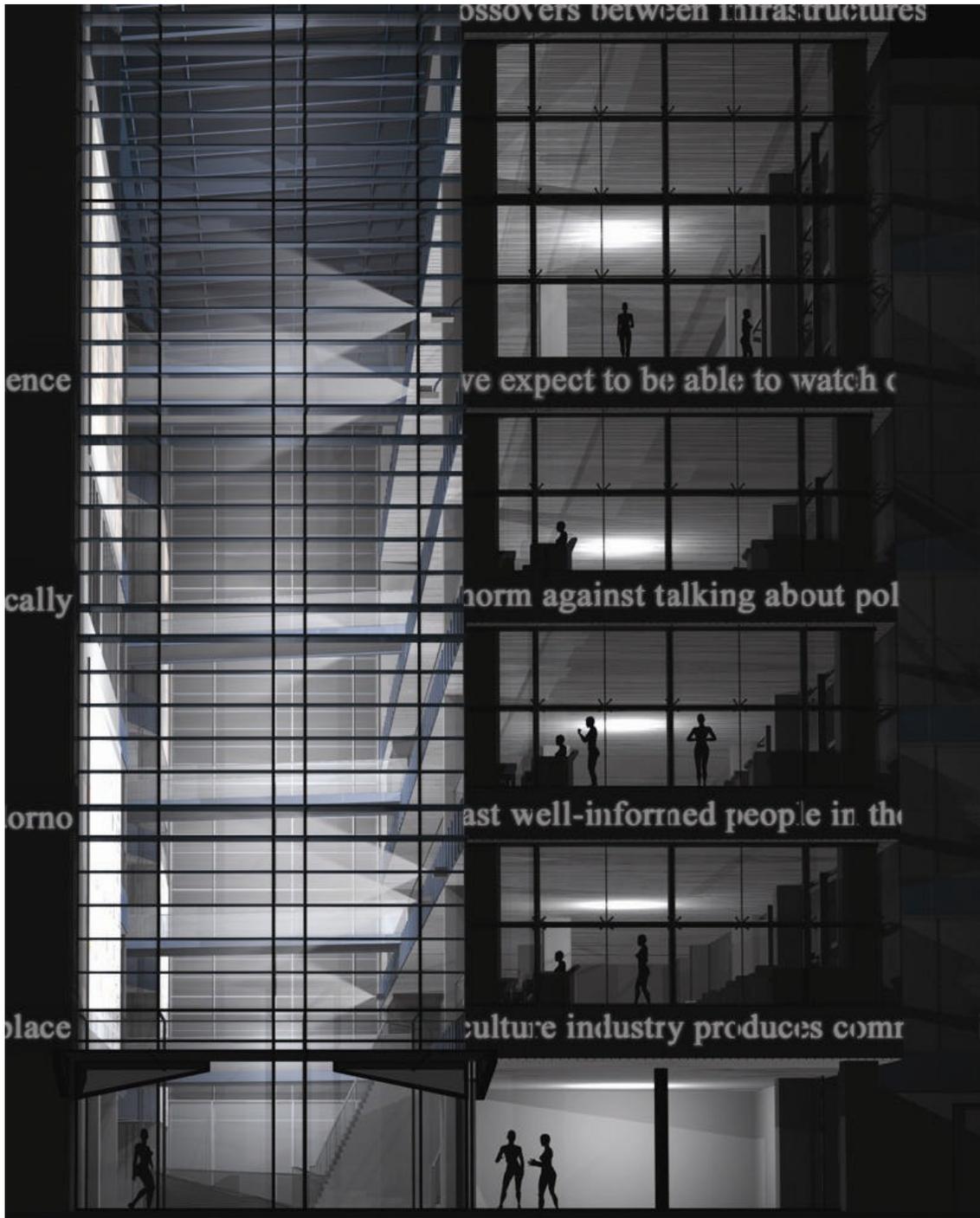


Figure 105 - Exterior Night Perspective of East Entry

(Source: Author)

The main entries are called out by being fully glazed and spanning the full height of the building, being protected from the sun by a system of louvers.

The north façade that faces the Spy Museum continues the glass curtain wall and is where the lounges, reading areas, café, and coffee bars are located, providing a strong visual relationship between the users of the Side Stage and the employees of the Spy museum.

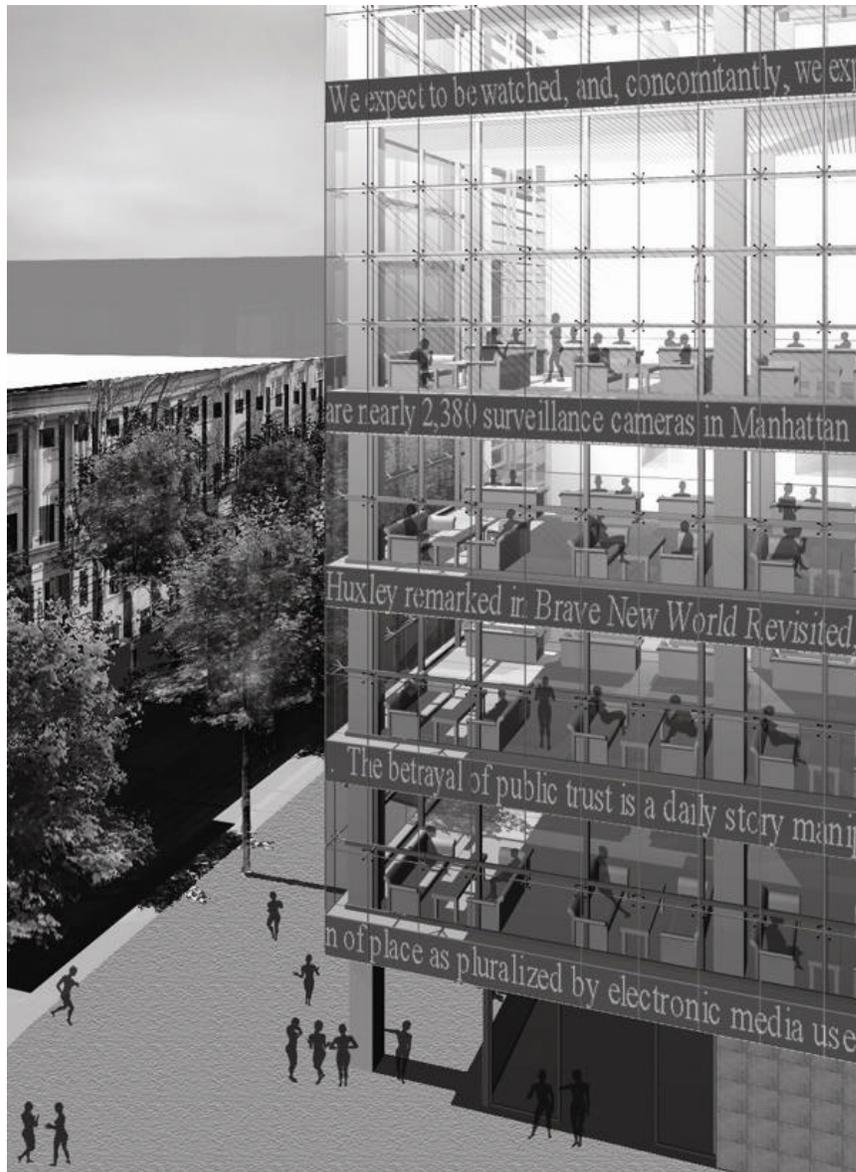


Figure 106 - Exterior Perspective of North Façade

(Source: Author)

Both entries open into the middle region where the user is immediately confronted by the stimulation inspired by the overlapping influences of digital media and social interaction rituals.

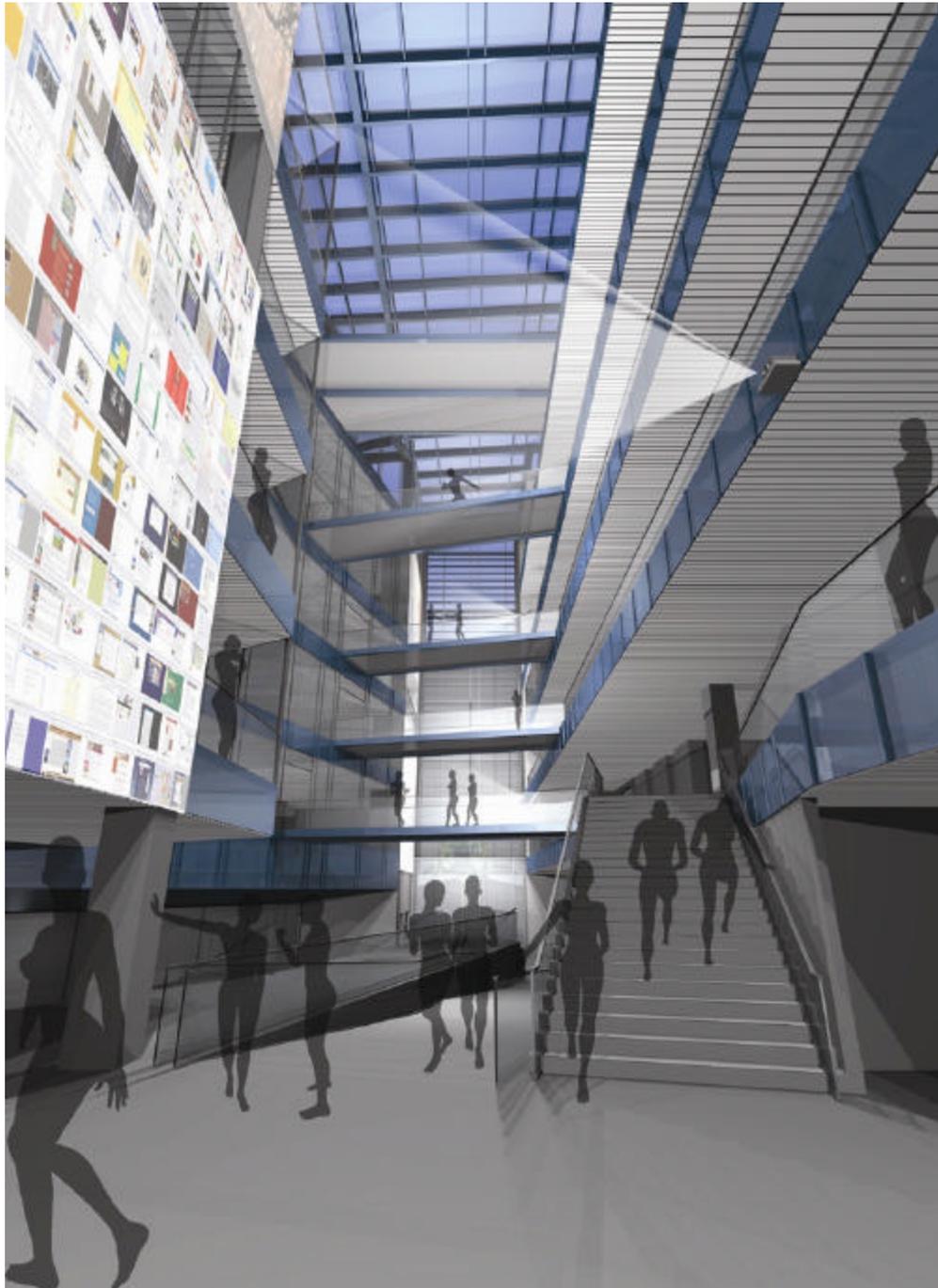


Figure 107 - East Entry Perspective

(Source: Author)

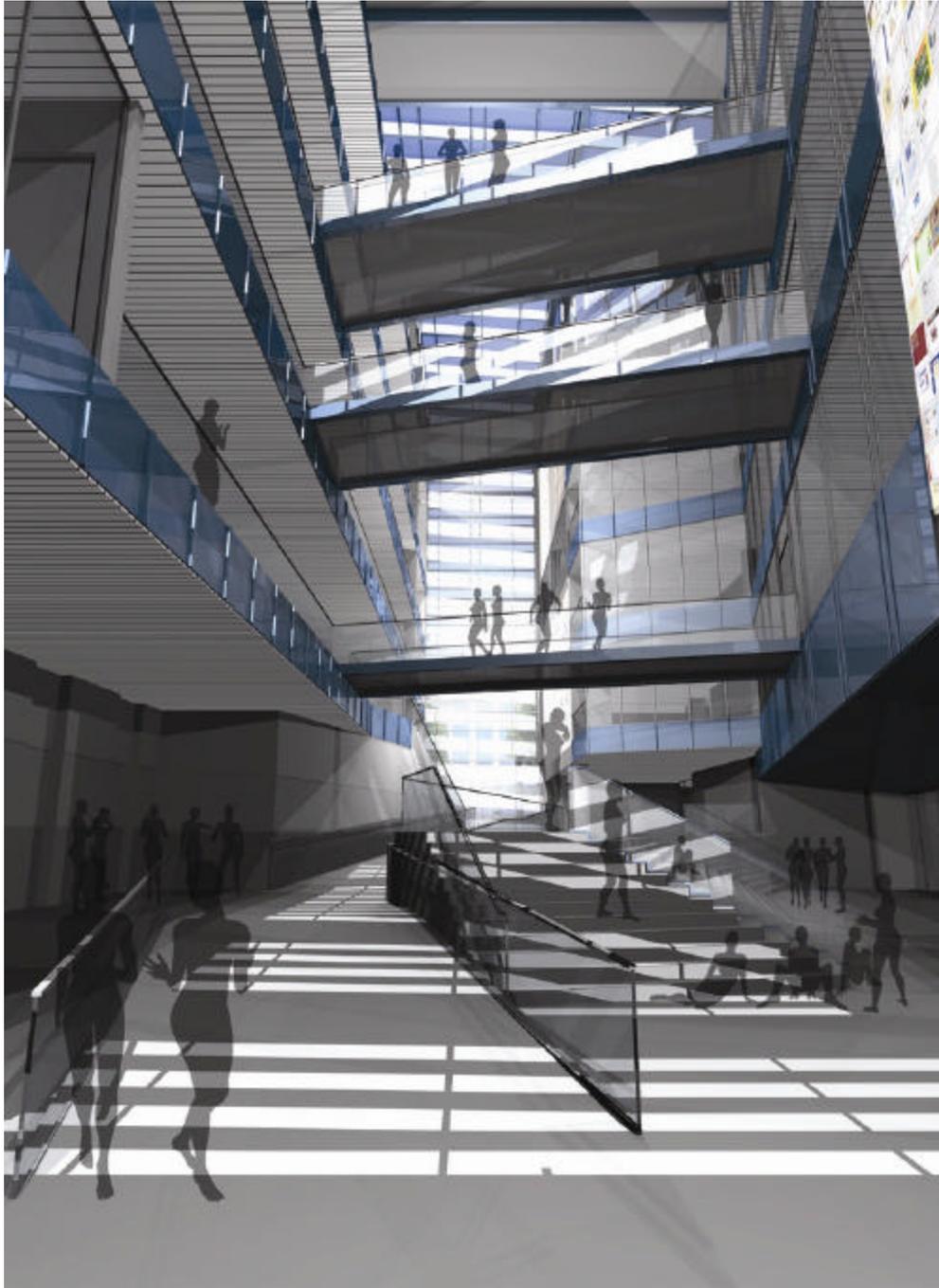


Figure 108 - West Entry Perspective

(Source: Author)

Bridges span across the middle region linking different activity zones of overlapping users. Besides enabling the user to get from one side to the other, the bridges

cultivate a stratification of gazes amongst the users of the building. The orientation of the bridges is perpendicular to that of the ground floor agora, further crossing lines of perspective and gazes.

In order to mediate between the grade change from east to west, a series of ramps traverses the ground floor. In the middle of the space the ground plane steps down and turns into an informal theater which can be incorporated into the main auditorium. These spaces, from the auditorium back into the middle region, and up to the roof read as a fluid space that has activities, users, information, and gazes constantly crossing and being affected by its formal gestures.

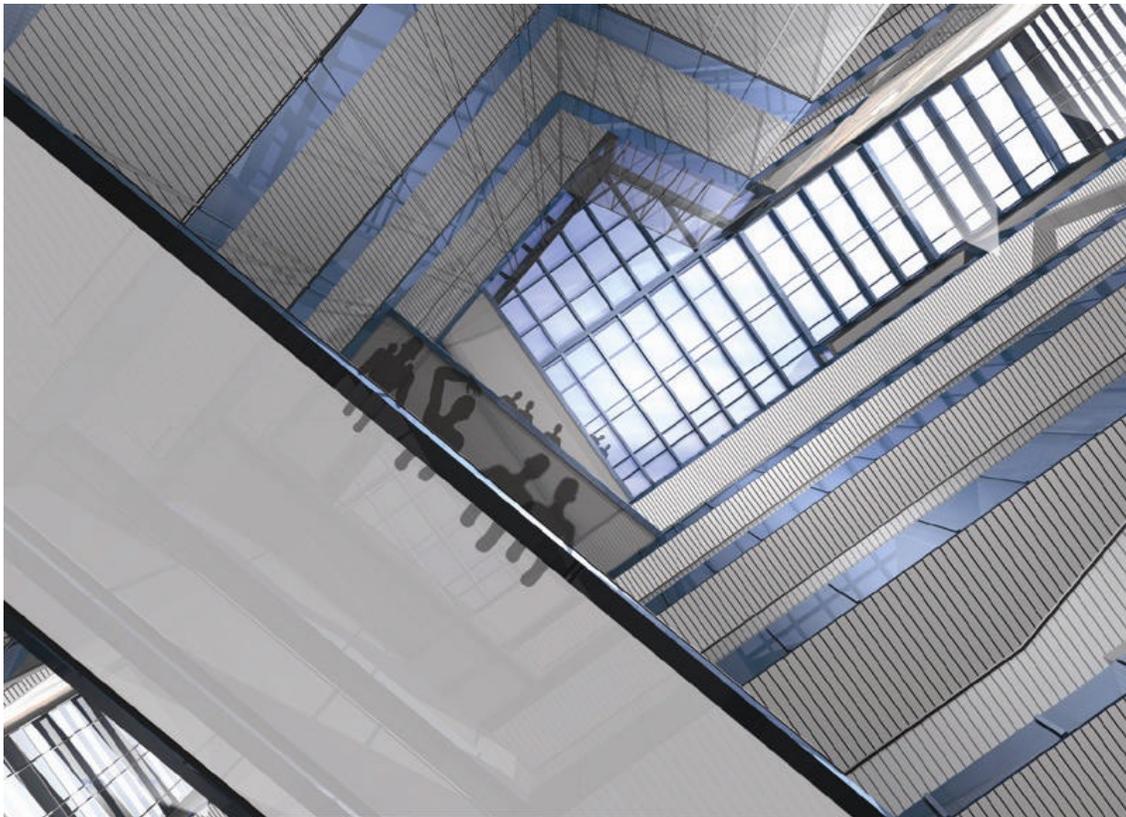


Figure 109 - Looking Up Through the Middle Region

(Source: Author)

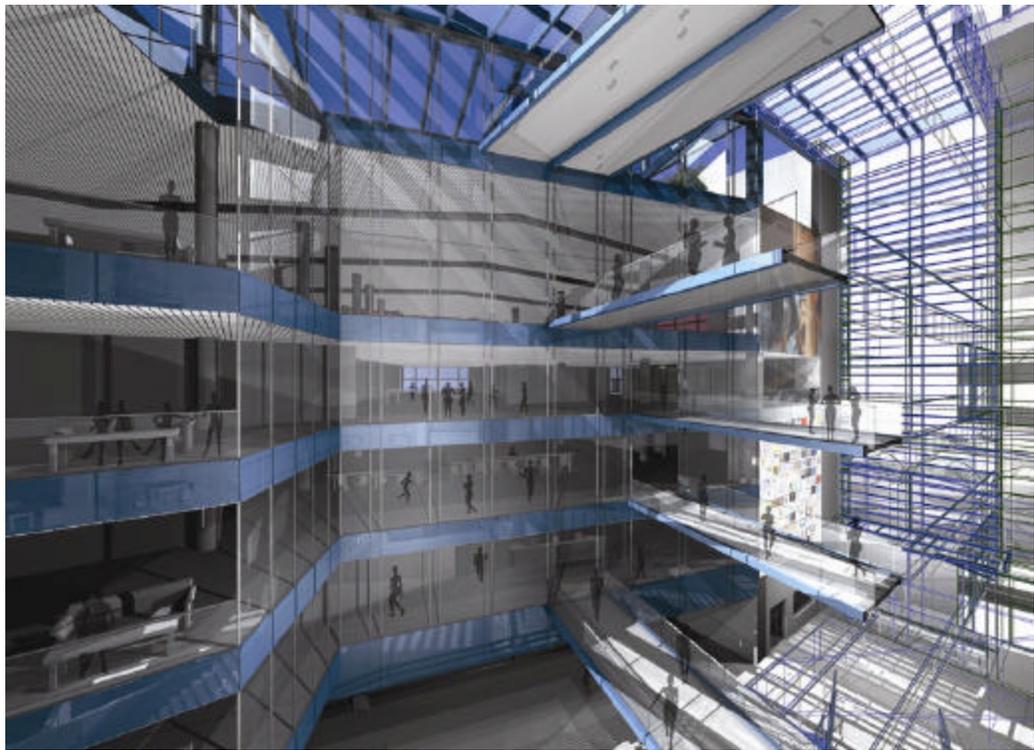


Figure 110 - Looking Across the Middle Region from Lounge

(Source: Author)

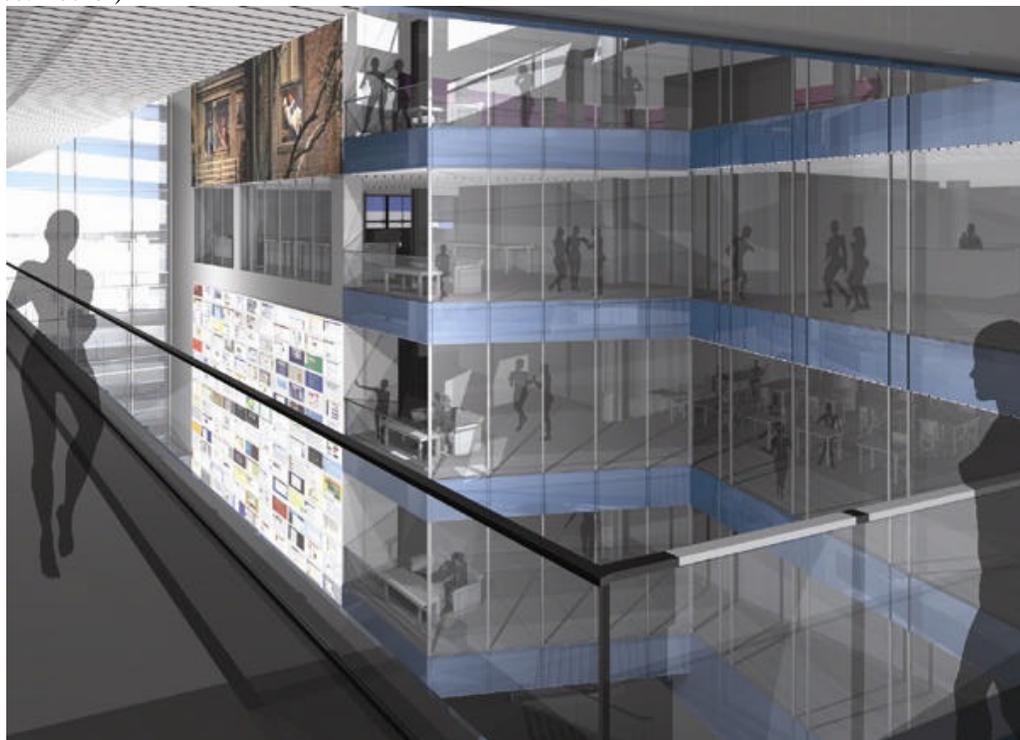


Figure 111 - Perspective from Bridge

(Source: Author)

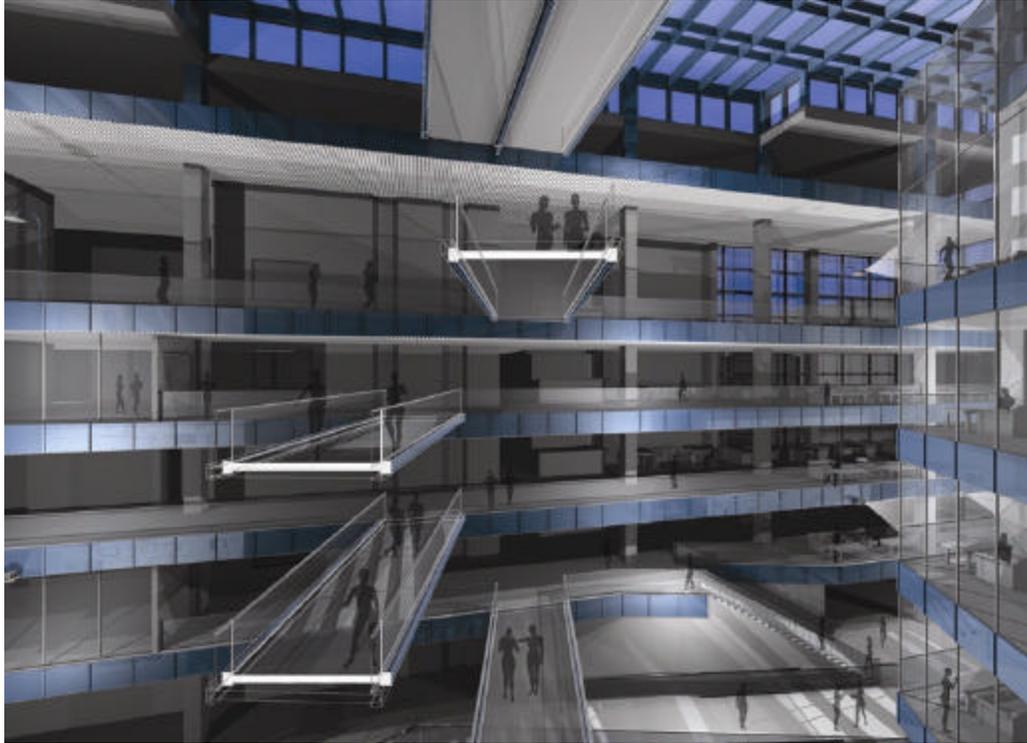


Figure 112 - Perspective Looking Back Across the Middle Region towards the Lounges
(Source: Author)

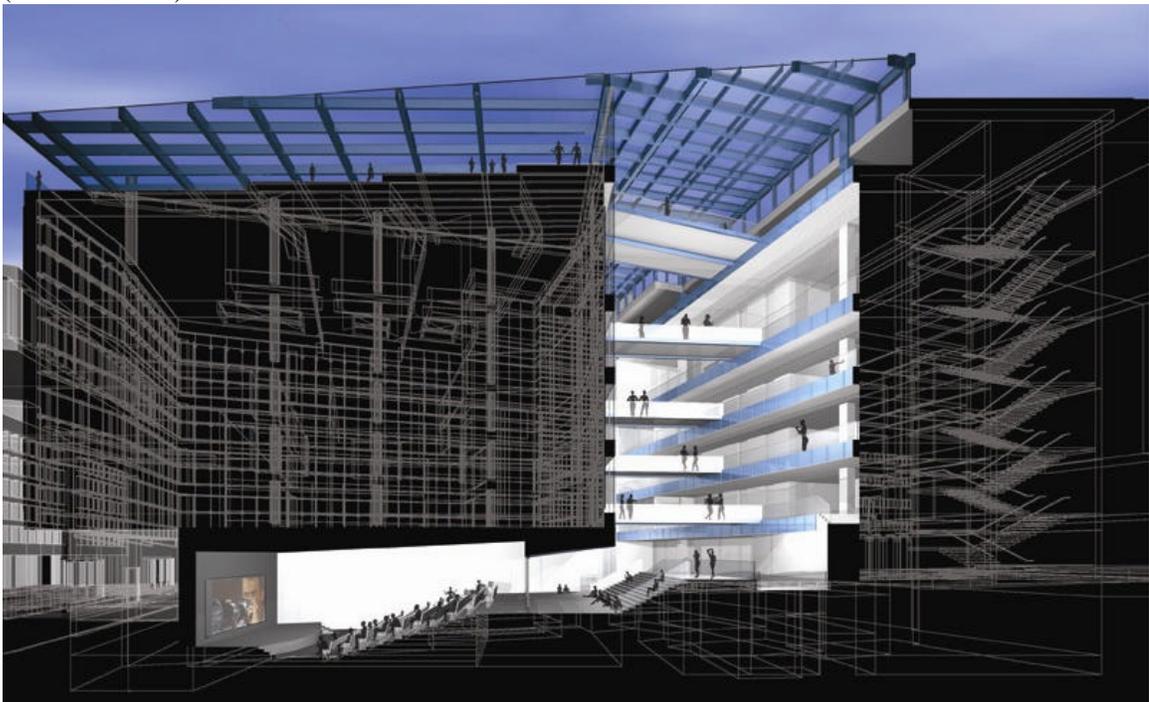


Figure 113 - Section Perspective Through the Middle Region Showing its Continuity Throughout the Building
(Source: Author)

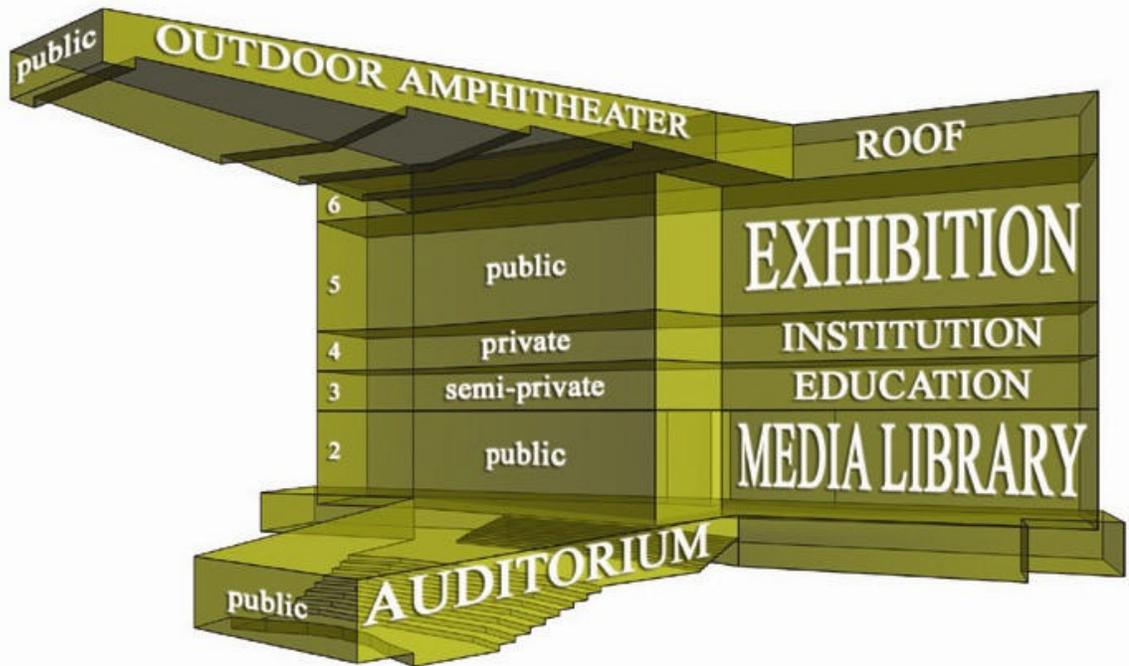


Figure 114 - The Middle Region as Solid with Relationships between Activity Zones

(Source: Author)

In addition to the spatial dynamics initiated by the middle region, the interior facades add another layer that enriches the project even further. Part of the program of the Media Library on the second floor is a cyber-café where there are media portals for the public to utilize for purposes that range from research to pleasure. On the educational level, there are more portals for the students to use that provide the same function. The screens of these computers are fed into a central computer controlled by the library administration and are re-projected back onto the interior façade that the computers are behind. Most of the time these screen shots will be too small for the people sitting in the lounge to read, but big enough to understand that they are looking at other people's computer screens. Since the screens will be multiplied and arrayed in a random fashion, the user and their screen will not be directly related spatially, giving the user anonymity.

On the exhibition level the same phenomenon occurs; although what is projected will normally be thematically related with the exhibition or workshop going on at the time.



Figure 115 - Perspective of Interior Façade

(Source: Author)

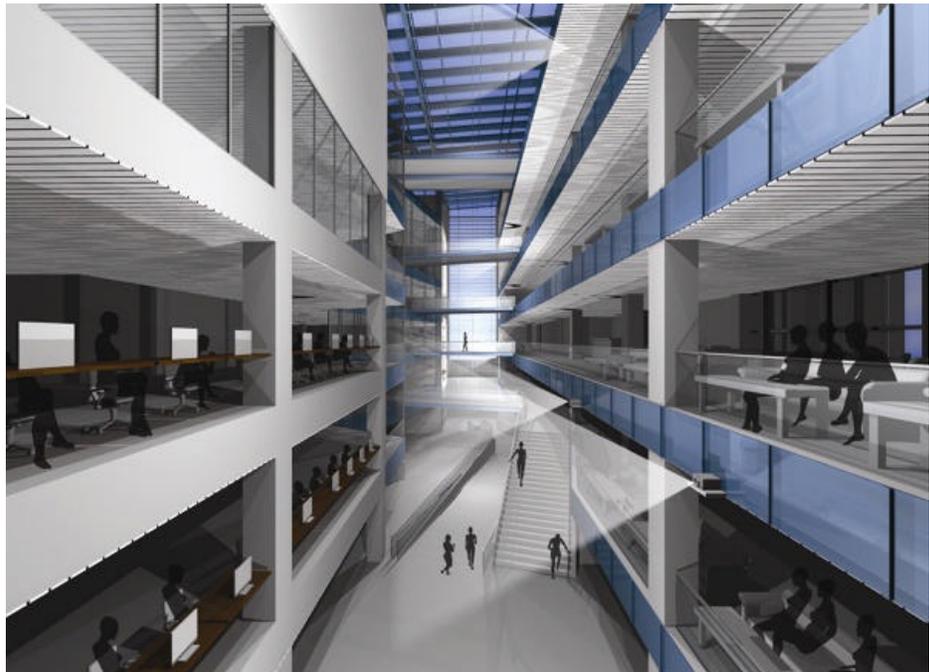


Figure 116 - Perspective of Interior Façade showing Cyber-Cafe Users

(Source: Author)



Figure 117 - Interior Façade

(Source: Author)

The Side-Stage as an architectural design thesis was an incredible undertaking in realizing the role of architecture and the incorporation of theory. Although there is no direct one-to-one relationship between concept and form, creating a divide between the intentions of the architect and the user's interpretations of those ideas, theory in architecture can serve as a very powerful foundation and organizing principle in the design process. A major goal of the Side-Stage was to stimulate the users to actively engage the building and continuously re-interpret the spatial characteristics of the project.

The final review process demonstrated a successful project by way of the panel very actively engaging and animatedly interacting with every facet of the design from a theoretical to a formal level.

NOTES

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- ¹ The Hidden Dimension by Edward Hall, p.6
 - ² The Silent Language by Edward Hall, p.25
 - ³ As You Like It – Act II - Shakespeare
 - ⁴ Understanding Media by Marshall McLuhan; full quote reads, “...the medium is the message. This is merely to say that the personal and social consequences of any medium – that is, of any extension of ourselves – result from the new scale that is introduced into our affairs by each extension of ourselves, or by any new technology.”

 - ⁵ The Silent Language by Edward Hall, p.182
 - ⁶ The Silent Language by Edward Hall, p.182
 - ⁷ Washington Architecture 1791-1861 by Daniel Reiff
 - ⁸ Washington Architecture 1791-1861 by Daniel Reiff
 - ⁹ Information retrieved from the D.C. Office of Zoning
 - ¹⁰ Information retrieved from the D.C. Office of Zoning
 - ¹¹ The Middle Mind by Curtis White, p.59
 - ¹² e-topia by William J. Mitchell, p.97
 - ¹³ Charles Garnier’s Paris Opera by Christopher Mead, p.113
 - ¹⁴ Charles Garnier’s Paris Opera by Christopher Mead
 - ¹⁵ Norman Foster Buildings and Projects Volume 4
 - ¹⁶ Richard Rogers p.159
 - ¹⁷ Information retrieved from the City of London
 - ¹⁸ Information retrieved from the City of London
 - ¹⁹ Information retrieved from the City of London
 - ²⁰ Free Culture by Lawrence Lessig, p.42
 - ²¹ Information retrieved from the Benton Foundation
 - ²² Information retrieved from the Center for Democracy and Technology
 - ²³ Information retrieved from the Center for Democracy and Technology
 - ²⁴ Information retrieved from the Center for Democracy and Technology
 - ²⁵ Information retrieved from The Center for Arts & Culture
 - ²⁶ Information retrieved from George Mason University
 - ²⁷ Information retrieved from Georgetown University
 - ²⁸ Information retrieved from George Washington University

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