

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: CINEMA AND ARCHITECTURE: DESIGNING FOR THE
PUERTO RICO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Merián L. Fuentes-Figueroa, Master of Architecture, 2011

Directed by: Luis Diego Quiros, Assistant Professor, School of
Architecture, Planning and Preservation

Reality and Fiction collide, opposites interact and the local film culture is enhanced with the design of a home for the Puerto Rico International Film Festival. PRIFF is an opportunity to create a formal destination for individuals passionate about film and to establish the basis for a Puerto Rican film culture in a setting where users will interact and exchange ideas while they experience the shift between reality and fiction expressed in the architecture. The project is a hybrid idea that combines Cinemas, Cultural Center and Production Studios. It is a cultural hub that seats at the heart of a new master plan for an undeveloped site at the shore of the San Juan Bay.

CINEMA AND ARCHITECTURE: DESIGNING FOR THE PUERTO RICO
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

By

Merián L. Fuentes-Figueroa

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Advisory Committee:

Luis Diego Quiros, Assistant Professor, Chair

Brian P. Kelly, AIA, Associate Professor

Carl Bovill, Associate Professor

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Dedication

To my mother, Margarita.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my parents for their support and encouragement throughout the process and my sister Marangelly for being patient with me and supporting me along the way. I would like to thank Diana Manso for her assistance and for staying up with me during many “arropes”.

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On Film Festivals

*"There is an air of persuasive optimism, as though the festgoers fully believed that, sometime during the next hours or days, they would surely be both entertained and ennobled by witnessing a true work of art."*¹

- Peter Bart

A Film Festival is an organized festival that features cinema, usually produced during the past year, which lasts from a few days to a few weeks. Typically festivals are annual events that take place in one or more venues around the same locality. The films presented during the festivals range from short features to full-length films, International or local and with different focus or genres. These events represent the union between art, commerce, tourism and adoration for film, particularly films outside of the mainstream that have influenced many cities and communities. Film Festivals are well known for their tourist business since tourists are the main supporters and source of income for film festivals and the cineastes that mount the events.

The first event that resembled a film festival was a one-time activity held in Monaco in 1898, which was perhaps the beginning of Cannes Film Festival. Later in 1907 the Lumière Brothers hosted a contest in Rome which was the first known film competition. This event in Italy opened the door for the possibility of an activity that would give hope of prosperity to a nation that was coming out of a depression and almost two decades later an individual whose name has been lost in time had the idea of an international film exposition, which is considered the beginning of

¹ Peter Bart, *The Variety Guide to Film Festivals* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1998), Introduction.

modern film festivals, the Venice Festival. Cannes Film Festival was born after Venice in 1939 sponsored again by a Lumière. Unfortunately, World War II started that same year affecting the realization of the festival, which lasted only for one night, but right after the war was over the festival was resumed full schedule in a small theater in 1946.² Berlin followed soon after Cannes, but with a very different environment because of the conditions the war left the city in. Berlin was “a city without splendor where a film festival was expected to bring colorful spectacle and creative people into a divided world.”³ The festival was successful in uniting Eastern and Western European filmmakers.

America showed some resistance to accept and being part of European festival or creating their own. Since at the beginning festivals were sponsored by governments, movies were also entered to the festivals by governments and not by producers. This limited the United States to share films only with the most popular festivals, Venice, Cannes and Berlin. It was not until the appearance of independent filmmakers that American Films flooded the festivals abroad because the directors were finally the ones to choose the entries.

Film Festivals play a main role in exposing and promoting independent and experimental films and are “an essential mean of creating word of mouth and visibility for the independent film firms”⁴, but this has not been the only reason why

² Gerald Pratley and Leonard Klady, *The Variety Guide to Film Festivals* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1998), 2.

³ Gerald Pratley and Leonard Klady, *The Variety Guide to Film Festivals* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1998), 2.

⁴ Gerald Pratley and Leonard Klady, *The Variety Guide to Film Festivals* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1998), 5.

Film Festivals have proliferated all over the globe. These events are made up by a greatly diverse amount of “motives, politics, and intentions, astonishing and bewildering financial whirlpools surrounded by culture, commerce and ideology.”⁵

The product of Hollywood was rejected for many years by European film festivals and critics until the 60's when they started seeing American films as "reflective of change instead of resistant and reactionary." Now a day, European festivals are constantly asking for American contributions in both film and celebrities, which is what attracts audience the most. This has led America to be known by moviegoers everywhere and most festivals owe their success to work produced in Hollywood.

Although, Film Festivals have become so popular that entering a film to one of the high profile festivals could give a film all the exposure it needed to be successful, it could also damage and tear it apart because it would make the film a perfect target for very influential critics. For that reason, a lot of directors and producers think about it twice before entering their films to the festivals.

Audiences of festivals have change throughout the years, since festivals started appearing around the world the regular visitors were mostly college students. Today it is not college students the main audiences but the now grown up students that visited festivals in the 60's and 70's. The domination of Hollywood films in European theaters has stolen festivals their young audiences.

Film Festivals are ordered and scheduled events, full of rituals and rules. André Bazin compared the history of film festivals to the creation of an Order when he

⁵ Gerald Pratley and Leonard Klady, *The Variety Guide to Film Festivals* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1998), 3.

expressed that “if an Order is something defined by its rules as well as being inseparable from a life of contemplation and meditation, in which people join in holy worship of a common transcendent reality, then the Festival is a Religious Order.” The visitors of the festivals, particularly the fully engaged patrons, experience a change in their usual way of living because their lives are now ruled by the schedule of the activities of the festivals. Most Festivals also have a strict dressing code for some of the events and generally food is not allowed in the theaters. Realizing this, the Toronto International Film Festival started to loosen some of those rules in their new venue, the TIFF Bell Lightbox, which resulted in an increase of visits from the general public and not just film critics or people from the industry.

Film Festival venues have helped to establish rules and rituals as well, even when visitors are not aware of it. In the Palais des Festival (Cannes Film Festival) the hierarchy of the visitors is clearly established by the location in which the different groups of visitors seat in the auditorium. The Palais is described as a “challenge to the way people conduct themselves at the Festival”⁶, particularly because of the way people enter and exit the auditorium. The entrances are really narrow which causes difficulties, especially when it is raining. In the Venice Film Festival, the venues have more open areas that allow for better interaction among visitors.

⁶ André Bazin, *Dekalog³: On Film Festivals*. (London: Wallflower Press), 17.

PRIFF - Puerto Rico International Film Festival

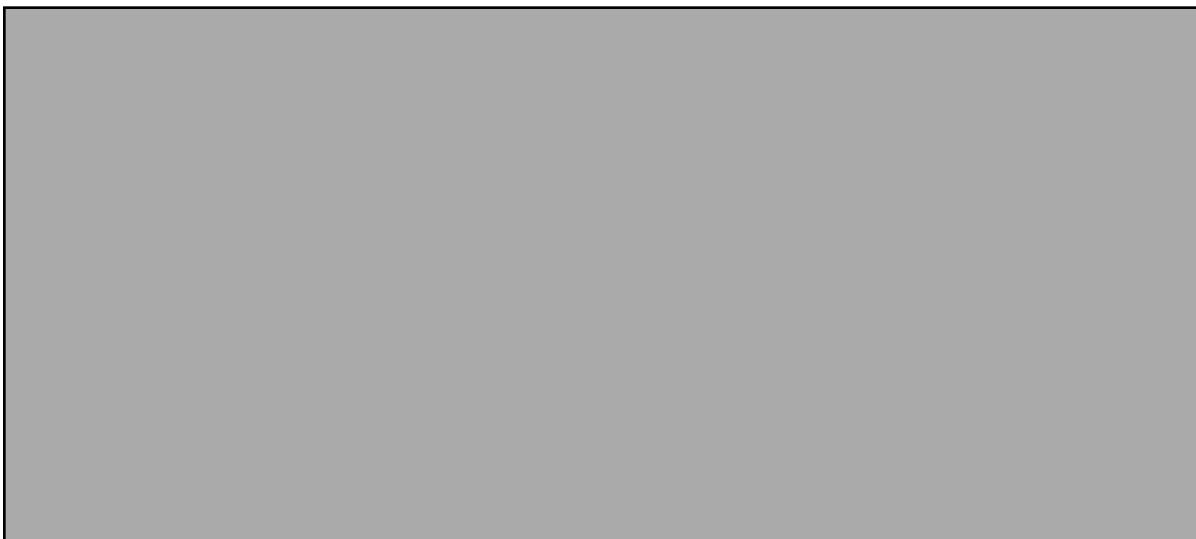


Figure 1: PRIFF Posters
(Source: Jose Artemio Torres)

History

The PRIFF (Puerto Rico International Film Festival) takes place every year in October in the Capital of Puerto Rico, San Juan. The festival started in 2000 under a different name, The San Juan Cinemafest, and it originally took place at the movie theaters of Plaza Las Americas Shopping Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Five years later they moved to San Patricio Plaza Shopping Center in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico and had to rename the festival to Puerto Rico Cinemafest because it was no longer taking place in San Juan. Finally, in 2007, the festival moved to the Metro Cinemas in San Juan and adopted the name that has today, The Puerto Rico International Film festival (PRIFF).

The festival focuses on Puerto Rican, regional and international films and it shows from thirty to thirty five films each year, usually six films a day. It is created for two different groups, the general public and film professionals and students, with activities for each group. Screenings of films for the general public are

complemented by activities for the film industry such as forums, lectures and filmmaker meetings. In addition, there are interdisciplinary activities that link film with theater, literature, the fine and the culinary arts. This festival is the biggest film festival in Puerto Rico. It is also the broadest, covering most areas of cinema and is has the most audience. The festival is also visited by international filmmakers, news reporters, journalists and film sales agents. The core of the festival is full-length fiction films but documentaries and animation films are also shown. It has three sections and a side section of shorts that is currently shown at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus in San Juan.

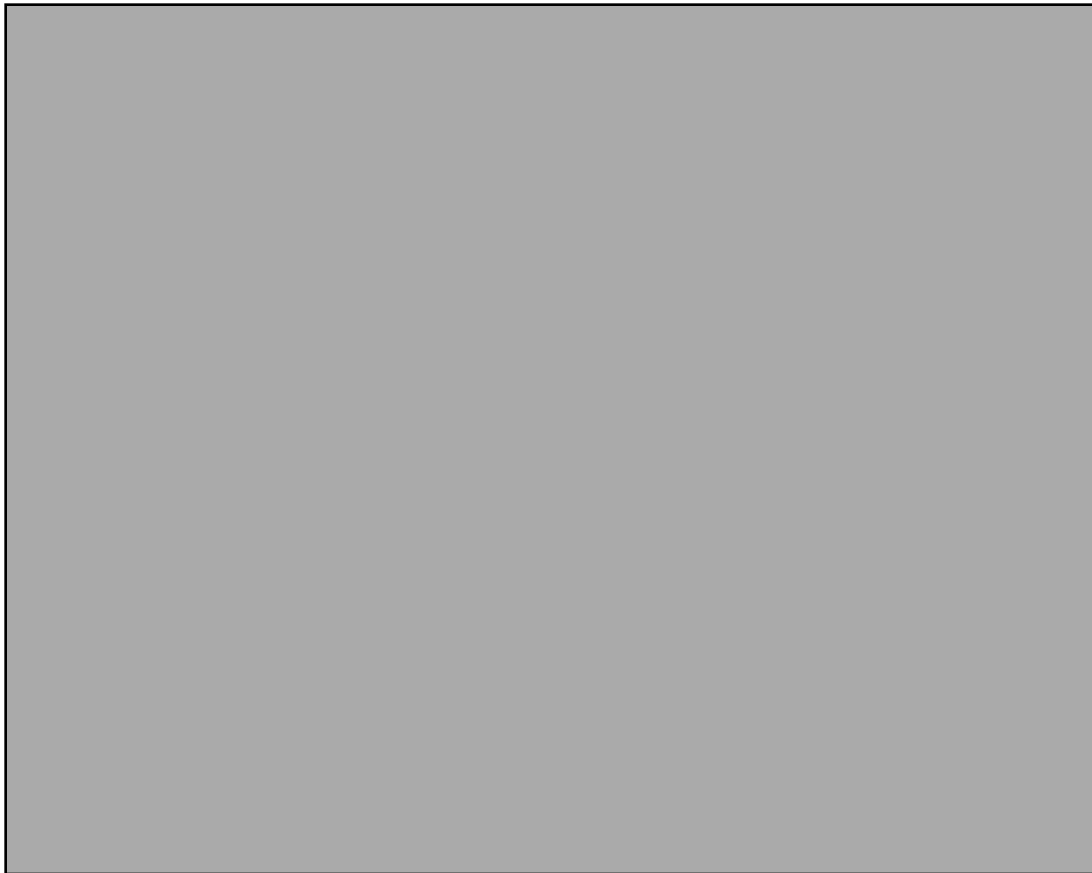


Figure 2: PRIFF Program
(Source: Jose Artemio Torres)

Visitors of the festival are often professional adults who have graduated from Highschool or have a College degree. Usually they are also in the middle to upper class and have purchasing power. Most of the festgoers also have a particular interest in Film and visit theaters offer, especially Fine Arts Theater or they are interested in other types of cultural activities such as theater, dance and music. The younger audience usually has a professional interest for film.

PRIFF has three full time employees, but when the festival is taking place it has about 25 employees that work at the movie theaters and at the different activities that occur during the festival week. The executive director of the festival, Jose Artemio Torres, is a director and producer of film and TV commercials and has been working with film festivals since he hosted the first Experimental Film Festival in the Puerto Rican Athenaeum. He was also the director of the San Juan Cinemafest (1992-2000) from which the Puerto Rico International Film Festival was born. He has published a couple of books on Puerto Rican Film such as *Historia del cine puertorriqueño* (History of Puerto Rican Cinema), *La gran enciclopedia de Puerto Rico* (The Great Puerto Rican Encyclopedia) and *Idilio Tropical* (Tropical Idyll).

Marely Gutiérrez is the coordinator of the festival. She is in charge of coordinating the events, press conferences, presentation of products and corporative seminars. She used to be the coordinator of guests and activities of the San Juan Cinemafest since its foundation in 1989. Also working with the festival is

Alvaro Calderón Martínez, who is an award winning film producer and works at the festival coordinating the master classes.

There are also International delegates. These professionals collaborate with the festival by recommending films and making arrangements with other festivals, government entities and distributors from other countries. Ramiro Cristóbal (Spain), Mario Viseppó (Argentina) and Fernando Cámara (Mexico) are among these delegates.

Film Festival Sections

A. Caribbean Competition

The Caribbean Competition confers an award to the Best Caribbean Film chosen by an international jury. This award is named after Ricardo Alegría, founder of the Puerto Rican Institute of Culture and the Center for Advanced Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. The Caribbean region is experiencing an increase in film production with the opening of new studios in Venezuela, the continuing production in Cuba, the extraordinary leap in Mexican filmmaking, and the increase in production both in Colombia and Puerto Rico due to new film-related legislations, and in the Dominican Republic due to private investment. Central America is also producing films. This year's winner was the Colombian film, *Retratos en un mar mentiras* from Colombian director Carlos Gaviria.



Figure 3: Caribbean Competition 2010 Nominees
(Source: Jose Artemio Torres)

B. World Cinema Section

This section includes non-Caribbean films. The goal of the festival with this section is to offer the best international films from the most important film festivals of the world and/or favored by the public in their native countries of origin.

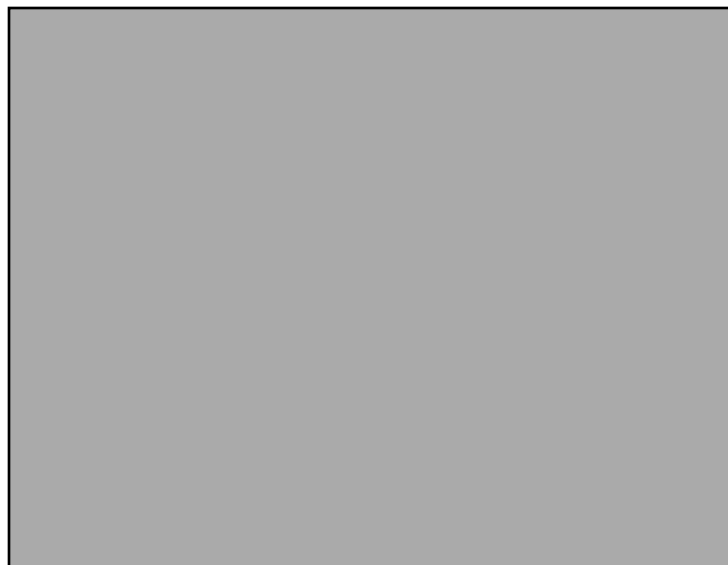


Figure 4: World Cinema Section Program 2010
(Source: Jose Artemio Torres)

C. People's Choice Award

During the festival the public votes for their favorite film. This film is then conferred the People's Choice Award that is be named after the late Francisco Díaz Herrero, who served as an inspiration for the festival.

D. San Juan Screenings

Film institutes and other Caribbean film promotion agencies are invited to present their most recent productions. International film sales agents are also be invited and given the opportunity to view these productions and to consider representing them.

E. Master Class

A recognized film expert is invited every year to offer a master class on a crucial aspect of film production: editing, sound, directing, cinematography, etc. This course is typically aimed at film professionals. In addition, other courses are offered to the general public by film professionals.

Program

“An architect studies the program as the reality of the future activities or acts played in the building.”
- Juhani Pallasmaa

Based on precedent studies and conversations with the director of PRIFF the program for the project was defined in order to satisfy its objectives of being the headquarters for the festival, a cultural center and a production studio. The project is divided in four areas: Film Festival, Production Studios, Cultural Center and Administrative Offices. Each of these four areas will be located separate from each other to prevent conflict of schedules, privacy requirements and noise interruptions.

The main objective of the Film Festival part of the program is to provide adequate facilities for the activities of the festival. The venues in which PRIFF currently takes place, Metro Cinemas, are not enough to accommodate the public that attends the festival. The theaters at Metro Cinemas have 150 seats, however, for the past three years PRIFF audience has grown surpassing 300 visitors for each of the main screenings. The new facilities for PRIFF will have three theaters, two of them with 150 seats and a bigger one with 400 seats that will adapt to PRIFF's schedule of up to nine films a day and up to three simultaneously and also to accommodate the current festival public and its possible growth. In addition, the Film Festival part of the program will have an area for concessions and smaller screening rooms that accommodate up to forty people.

The Administrative Offices area houses the offices of the other three areas and will be located at a reasonable distance from each part. The Production Studio area provides state of the art facilities for the production of films, commercials and photography. It counts with a Soundstage, sound recording rooms and editing rooms, which provide support for a great variety of projects. The Cultural Center area is a place for the community to learn about film and to foment the growth of the Puerto Rican film culture.

Even though the main four areas will be apart from each other, they will be connected by a common space, a Plaza. The Plaza is an area where the users of the project will have the opportunity to interact and exchange idea, opinions and culture.

Program Precedent

The Toronto International Film Festival and Cannes International Film Festivals are the only two festivals in the world that have their own headquarters, the rest of the festivals use regular movie theaters and other venues.

TIFF Bell lightbox – Toronto International Film Festival

Location: Corner of King and John Streets, Toronto, Ontario

Size: 175,000 s.f. (without residential tower)

Design Architect: KPMB Architects

Architects of Record: Kirkor Architects & Planners



Figure 5: TIFF Bell Lightbox
(Source: www.fest21.com)

Founded in 1976, the Toronto International Film Festival is a charitable arts organization that has grown to have an annual economic impact of more than \$67 million for the City of Toronto. “The festival is held every September and is recognized as the most important film festival after Cannes. It operated its programs from 200 venues throughout the city for 28 years. A few years ago the Festival hit its maximum capacity in terms of its ability to keep evolving its

programs. For this reason, a client group was formed between the not-for-profit TIFF and the King and John Festival Corporation. Producer/Director Ivan Reitman donated an underutilized site in Toronto's downtown entertainment district. It is a hybrid concept that combines a five-story cultural institution with a 42-story residential/commercial tower. TIFF Bell Lightbox is designed to be highly animated at street level. A large-scale canopy projects over the King Street entrance and defines an arcade that wraps around the corner to John Street. Five cinemas, restaurants, cafes, and multiple gathering places ensure that the building is animated throughout the day and night."⁷

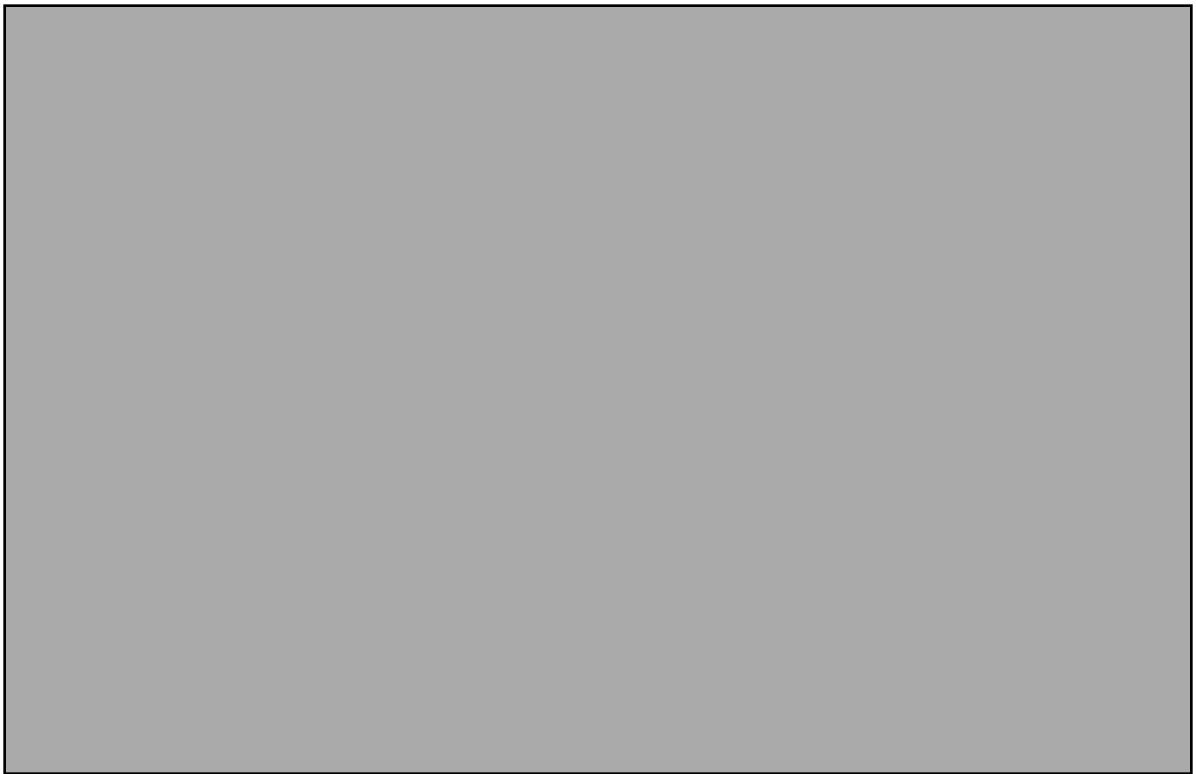


Figure 6: TIFF Bell Lightbox
(Source: www.fest21.com)

⁷ www.kpmb.com

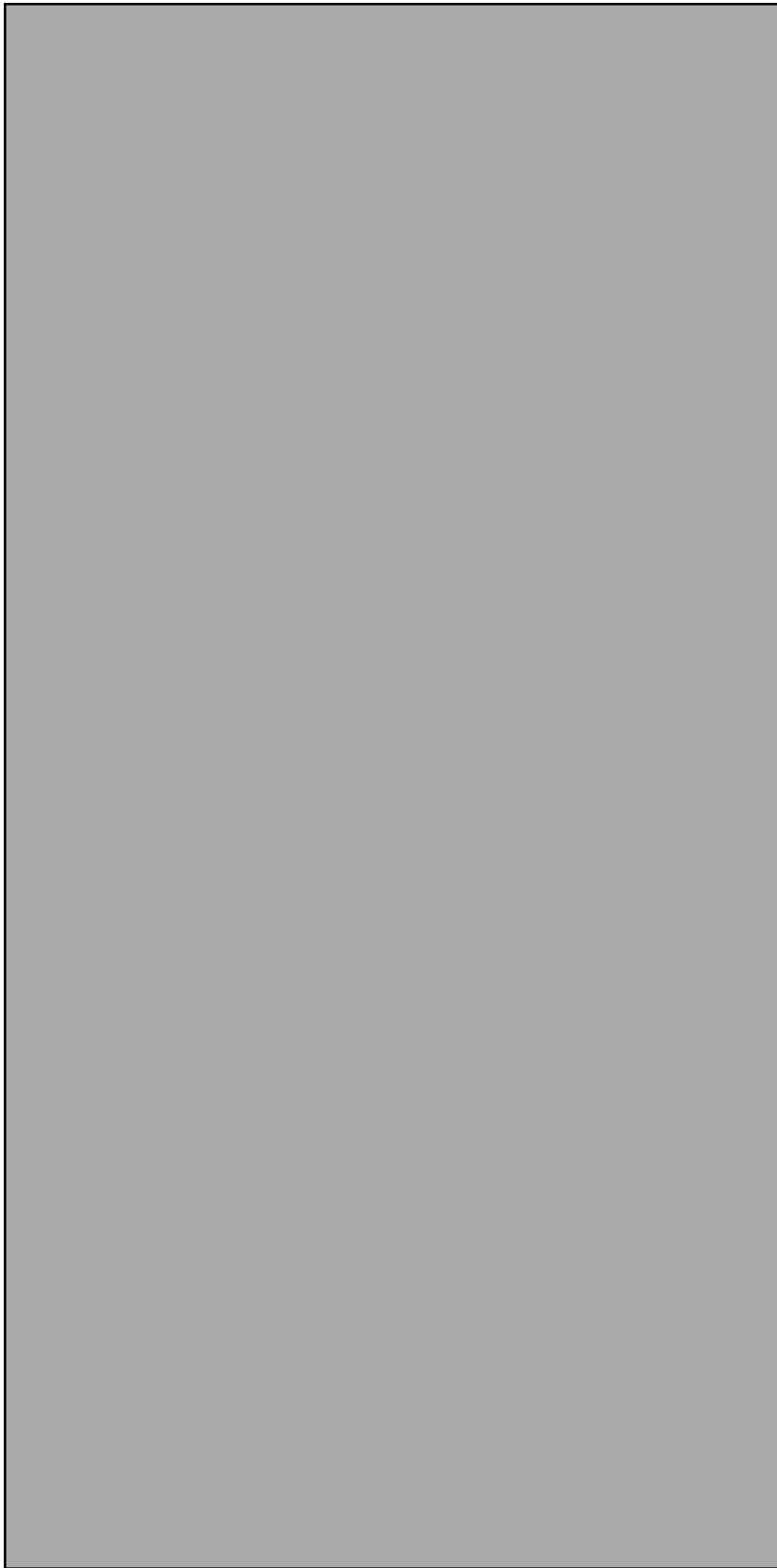


Figure 7: TIFF Bell Lightbox Program Axonometric Diagram
(Source: arts.nationalpost.com)

Program Description

“The architects primary talent is not in the capacity to fantasize spaces but to imagine situations of real human life.”

- Aulis Blomstedt

A. Film Festival

This part of the program includes all the areas that form part of the Film Festival. It is the most public/interior part of the project and potentially the area that will have the mayor quantity of people. The theaters for the Film Festival have different sizes to provide versatility and the opportunity to host different types of activities in them. Also, the exterior screening areas will serve as both a space for lectures and for showing films at night.

1. Main Theater

The main theater of the PRIFF, with 400 seats, will hold the main screenings of the festival, such as the films for the Caribbean Competition and some of the most awarded films of the World Cinema Section.

2. Secondary Theaters (2)

These theaters, with 150 seats, will host the rest of the films from the World Cinema Section as well as the Short Film Section and Documentaries.

3. Screening Rooms

These rooms will be used for special screenings to small audiences, o test or show films that want to get representation, for the cultural center workshops and classes, for the San Juan Screenings Section of the festival and by directors and/or producers of the films created in the Production Studio facilities.

4. Exterior Screening Areas

The exterior screening areas will accommodate films mainly at night and other lectures and conferences from the festival and cultural center. It will also host the Caribbean Competition Awards and the opening and closing ceremonies of the festival.

5. Digital Projection Box

The digital projection box is the space from where all the screens in the complex are controlled. It holds the equipment for digitally projecting films, control lighting and control sound. This space will be viewed from the lobby of the Film Festival building.

6. Film Vault

This space will be dedicated to store films and other materials acquired by the festival. It will have different climate control to protect and preserve films and books and it will be located close to both the theaters area and the administrative area.

7. Storage and Maintenance Room

General storage space for cleaning supplies and utilities such as curtains, light bulbs, seat cushions, projection box materials and other components of the theaters and screening rooms.

8. Vestibule / lobby

It serves as the entrance way of the building and contains the Concessions Stand, a waiting area, access to the theater on the first level and access to the second level. . It will have view of a screen on the second level.

9. Concessions Stand

Stand located in the lobby of the festival to sell snacks and beverages to costumers.

10. Box Office

Located near the entrance with access from both the interior and exterior, it is the place where people will buy the tickets for the shows.

11. Drop off

With direct access to the lobby the Drop off area will not only give close approach to the entrance but will also host the red carpet when the festival is taking place.

B. Administrative Offices

The administrative offices of the three parts of the project, the Film Festival, The cultural Center and the Production Studios, will be located in the same area sharing some spaces like the lunch room, the copy room, the reception, storage and meeting rooms.

1. Reception

The administrative offices of these three components should have access to this area. There will be a desk for a receptionist who will direct people to the respective areas they want to go. There will also be a waiting area and a restroom for visitors.

2. Copy Room

Space that holds printers, copiers and other office materials.

3. Lunch Area

Kitchenette area with a small refrigerator, cabinets, small sink and tables. This area will be shared by the administrative personal of the Film Festival, the Cultural Center and the Production Studios.

4. Meeting Rooms (2)

The meeting rooms will be shared by all the administrative sections (Film Festival, Cultural Center and Production Studio) to host gatherings and meetings between the staff with visitors and clients.

5. Director's Office (3)

5.1 Film Festival Director's Office: This person is responsible of planning and coordinating all the film festival activities during the time the festival is in session and during the rest of the year. Also, he is the person in charge of choosing what films will make it into the festival and in which theaters they will be shown.

5.2 Cultural Center Administrator's Office: This person is responsible of administering and coordinating the activities and programs of the Cultural Center.

5.3 Production Studio Administrator's Office: This person is responsible of coordinating and scheduling the use of the Production Studio facilities. Also, this person is in charge of the personal that will work there.

C. Cultural Center

The Cultural Center program includes cultural and community center facilities for the surrounding communities. These facilities provide spaces for the master classes and other courses for the community.

1. Seminar rooms

These rooms are meant for group work, class discussion and other collaborative learning projects.

2. Studio Space

Multi-purpose space for activities such as classes, castings, and rehearsals.

3. Library / Gallery

In this area the festival organizers can have exhibitions of the history of the festival and of Puerto Rican film to promote the support of the organization and the film industry or any other type of film exhibition to bring history and the new creations to the local public and visitors. Also, the library will offer the community a place where they can find information and research material on cinema, particularly Puerto Rican cinema.

D. Production Area

The Production Studios have a Soundstage and other spaces that will support the production of films, commercials and photography.

1. Soundstage

A controlled environment used for the production of motion pictures and short films. This will be an “enclosed stage” type of space, large enough to accommodate movie sets and it has to be soundproofed. It has a metal framework to hang cameras, light and catwalks.

2. Sound Recording Rooms

Space designed by an acoustician to record music and voiceovers for films, TV shows and animations. It consists of two rooms, the control room and the studio. The control room is the place where the recording equipment for recording and editing sound are located and the studio is the space where vocalists perform.

3. Editing Room

Space where users of the Production Studio can edit their projects with advanced editing equipment.

4. Dressing Room

A change room for users of the production studio. It is located next to the Soundstage with direct access to it.

5. Equipment Room

Storage space for props and other equipment.

6. Reception Area

There will be a desk for a receptionist who will direct people to the respective areas they want to go.

A. Plaza

This part of the program is an open area from where all the parts of the project can be accessed. It is a place of mayor interaction that unites the Film Festival, the Cultural Center, the Production Studios and the Administration areas. The plaza will provide a space in which visitors and users of the different facilities will have the opportunity to interact and exchange experiences. It is a hub where the local communities will come in contact with tourists and foreign visitors to share impressions of film and culture. It also contains the Box Office and one of the exterior screening areas.

Program Special Problems and Issues

The proximity of the different methods of transportation, airport, cruise ship and highways could affect the performance of spaces like the theaters and the production areas. The placement of these programmatic elements is important to prevent them form being affected by the noise that the surrounding transportation elements create. The existence of the park on the left side of the site will work as a buffer of noise.

Program Summary

FILM FESTIVAL SUBTOTAL: 28,938ft²

Main Theater 400 seats	7,500ft ²
Secondary Theaters (2) 150 seats	3,000ft ²
Exterior Theater 150 seats	3,000ft ²
Screening Rooms (3)	300 ft ²
Storage	300ft ²
Film Vault	300 ft ²
Projection Box	300 ft ²
Vestibule	2,000 ft ²
Concessions	200ft ²
Box Office (2)	80ft ²
Drop off / Red Carpet Area	600 ft ²
Restroom	1,000ft ²
30% Circulation	6,678ft ²

ADMINISTRATION SUBTOTAL: 4,010ft²

Director's office (3)	180ft ²
Secretary	125ft ²
Administrative assistants offices (8)	80ft ²
Reception	400ft ²
Copy room	36ft ²
Lunch area	180ft ²
Meeting room	300 ft ²
Storage	64 ft ²
Restroom	500ft ²
30% Circulation	760.5ft ²

CULTURAL CENTER SUBTOTAL: 15,730ft²

Seminar Rooms (2)	300 ft ²
Studio space	3,900ft ²
Library	3,500ft ²
Gallery	3,000 ft ²

Computer Lab.	300ft ²
Reception Area	300 ft ²
Restrooms	500ft ²
30% Circulation	3,630ft ²

PRODUCTION STUDIOS

SUBTOTAL: 21,684ft²

Soundstage	10,000ft ²
Control Room	150ft ²
Cyclorama	1,000ft ²
Sound Recording Rooms (4)	120ft ²
Editing Room (2)	800ft ²
Dressing Room (2)	450ft ²
Equipment Area	1,600ft ²
Reception Area	300 ft ²
Production Office	150ft ²
Restrooms	500ft ²
30% Circulation	5,004ft ²

EXTERIOR PLAZA	15,000ft ²
RESTAURANT	5,000ft ²

TOTAL PROGRAM: 90,362ft²

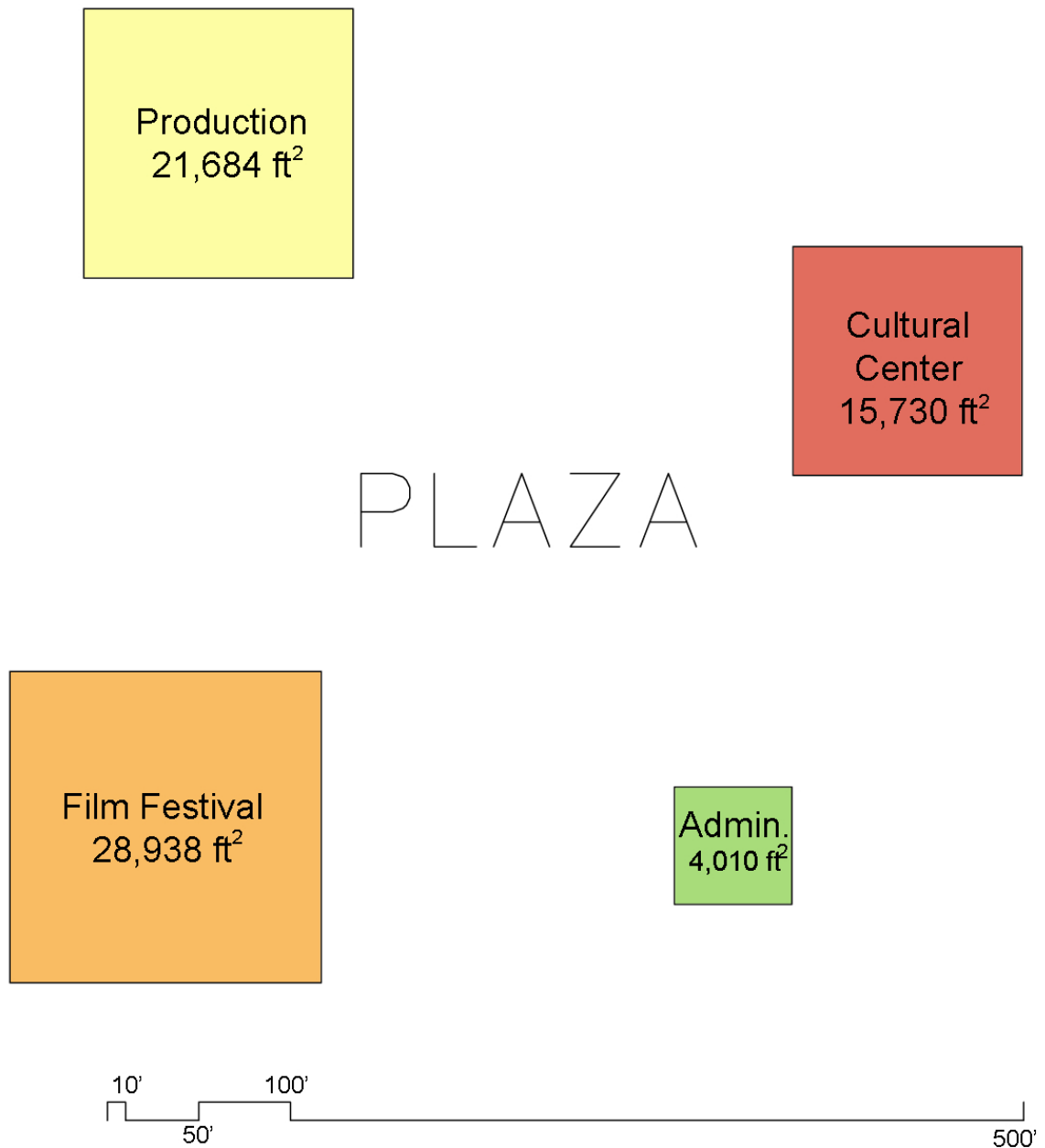


Figure 8: Space Allocations and Relationships
(Source: Author)

The program was divided into four parts, the Film Festival, the Production Studios, the Cultural Center and the Administrative Offices. These four areas are to be connected by an exterior plaza space. (Figure 8,9)

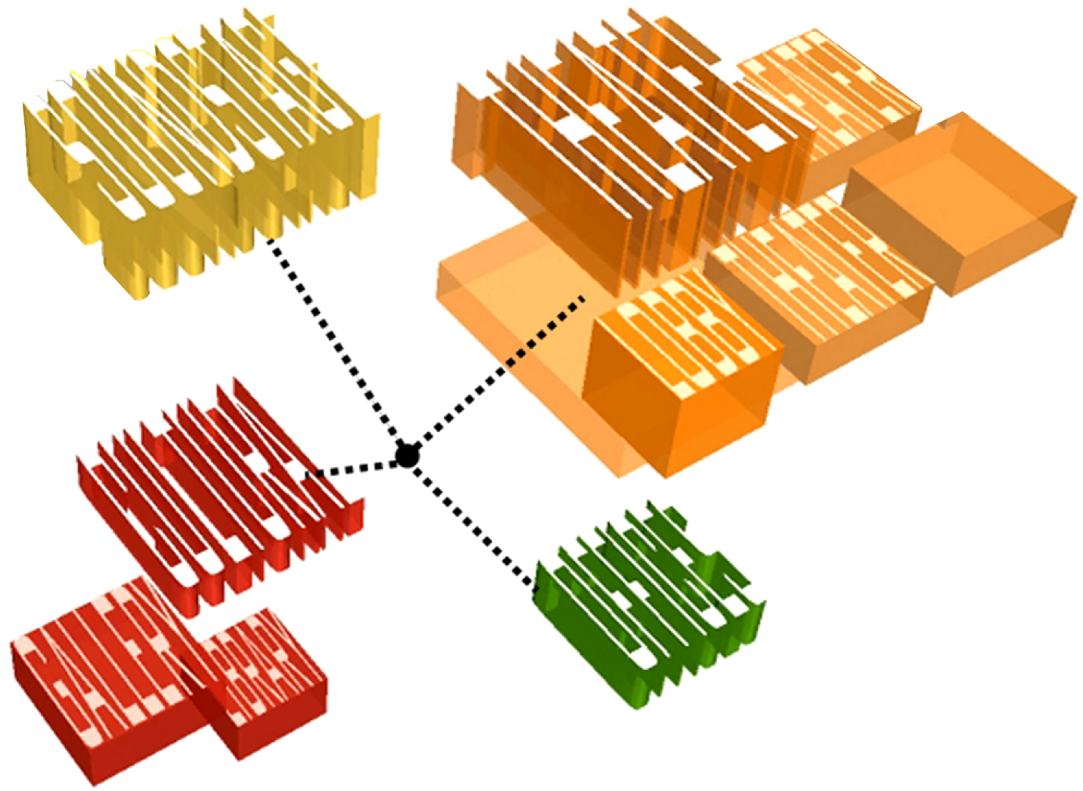


Figure 9: Programmatic Relationships
(Source: Author)

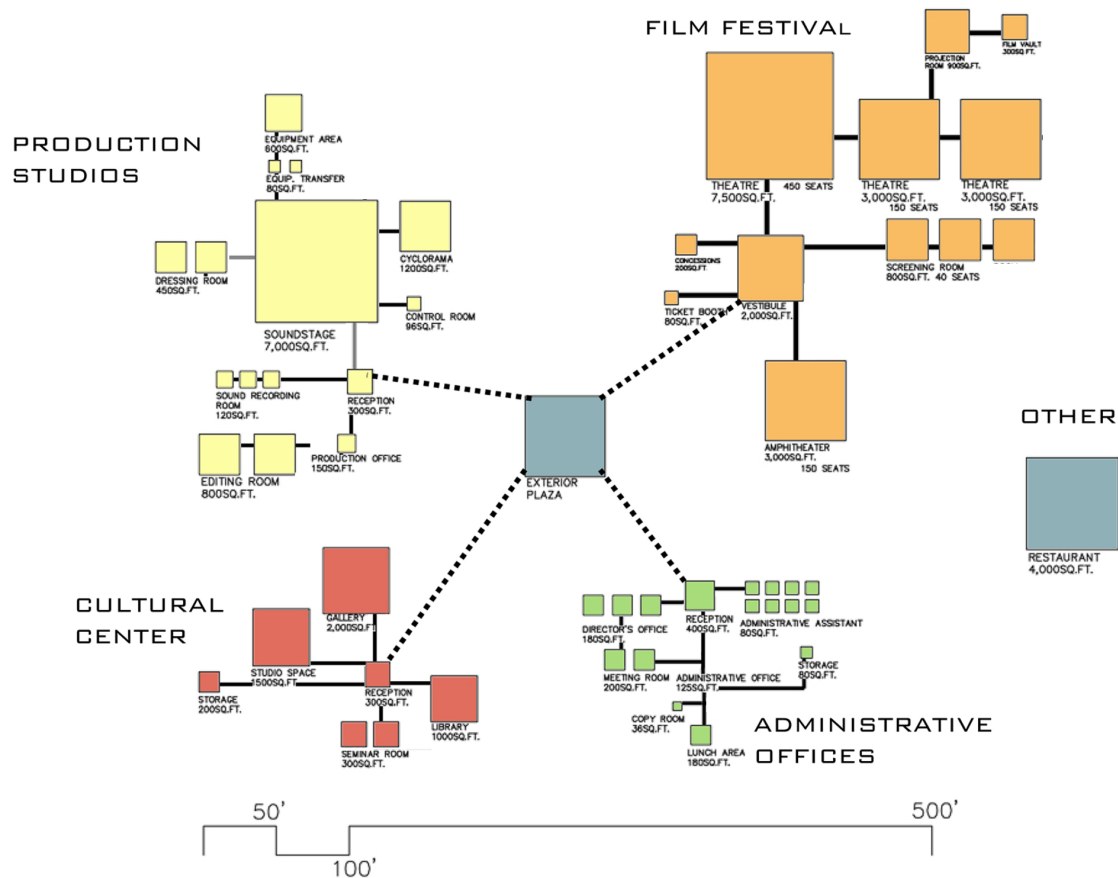


Figure 10: Space Allocations and Relationships
(Source: Author)

Figure 10 shows the connections between spaces in each of the four major components of the project and their relationship to one another. In each of the parts, spaces are connected to one reception or vestibule space from which you can access the rest of the areas. At the same time each of the four parts are connected to the exterior plaza, which allows all the parts of the project and its users to interact in a common space.

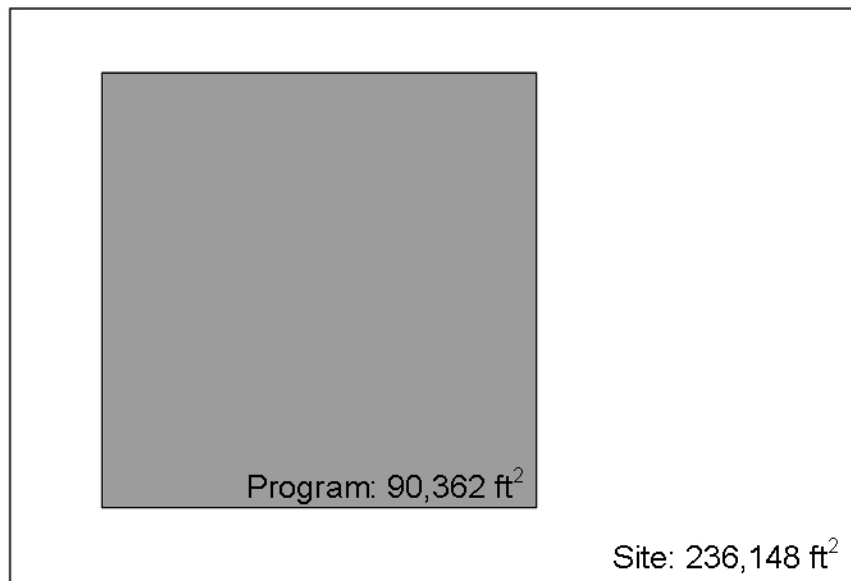


Figure 11

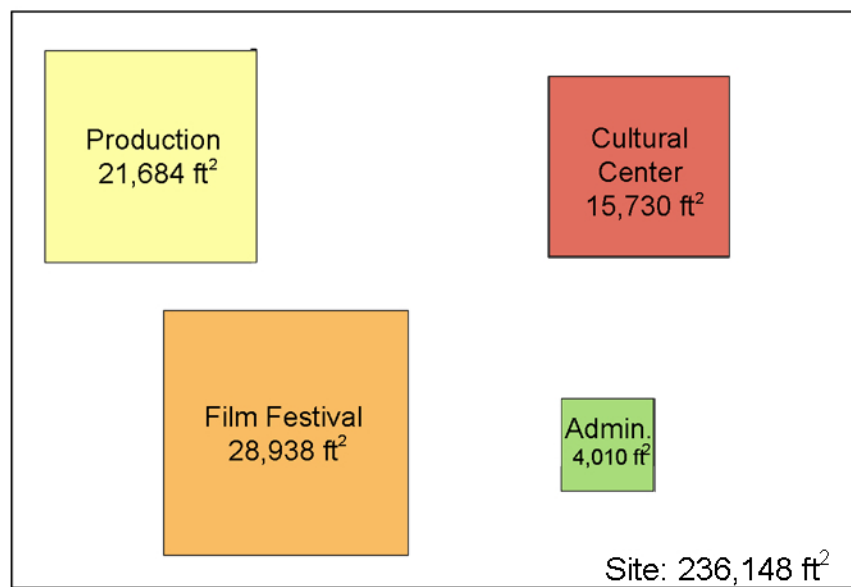


Figure 12



Figures 11 & 12: Programmatic elements and their relationship to the site
(Source: Author)

Figure 11 shows the total area of the site compared to the total area of the program. Figure 12 shows the area of the site compared to the program divided into Film Festival, Production Studios, Cultural Center and Administrative Offices.

"The real strength of artistic image is being suspended between reality and fiction, equally." - Juhani Pallasmaa

The Arts: Cinema and Architecture

"I don't see a fundamental difference between architecture and film in the sense that architecture is a matter of staging human events and situations particularly to give certain clarity to those stages to elevate human interaction."
-Juhani Pallasmaa

The Arts, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, are the "various branches of creative activity that express or apply human creative skill and imagination, producing works that are appreciated primarily for their beauty and emotional power". They are basically a subjective interpretation of reality, where the artist takes what he or she values in reality and expresses it in painting, sculpture, music, literature, film, photography and architecture. "Since the late 1970's, architecture has fervently sought connections with other fields of art."⁸ Historically, music has been regarded as the art that relates most to architecture, but it is actually cinema the art that is closest to architecture.

Both Architecture and Film develop in time and space; they "articulate lived space... and create and mediate comprehensive images of life."⁹ They can also be implicit and explicit in the sense that their interpretation can be both literal and symbolic. Film tells a specific story that can be literally understood but also symbolically interpreted. Architecture is explicit in the fact that its program is clearly

⁸ J. Pallasmaa. *The Architecture of Image*. pp. 13

⁹ J. Pallasmaa. *The Architecture of Image*. pp. 13

read – a theater is clearly a theater because of the elements that compose it, chairs, screen, etc.

Film and architecture have shown an amazing ability to influence each other. Cinema has possibly been a greater influence in architecture than the reverse. Since the end of the XIX century, imaginary spaces, reconstructed spaces or spaces simply recorded by camera have modified radically urban spaces and the way in which urban space is inhabited.¹⁰ The spaces they present and represent have facilitated the development of history, in both fact and fiction.

Experiencing Cinema and Architecture

Both forms of art, Cinema and Architecture, “define the dimensions and essence of existential space; they create experiential scenes of life situations.”¹¹ In the mind, “the modes of experiencing architecture and cinema become identical. In the art of architecture a mental image is transferred from the experiential realm of the architect to the mental world of the observer, and the material building is a mere mediating object”¹², while in film the projected images transfer a mental image from the screen to the observer. In the mental space, “the fact that images of architecture are eternalized in matter, whereas cinematic images are only an illusion projected onto the screen, has no decisive significance.”¹³ However, this is not the case in the physical experiential world.

¹⁰ V. Sánchez Biosca, G. Fernández Hoya, V.J. Benet, C. Martí Arís, J.A. Ramírez Domínguez. *Los espacios de la ficción: cine y arquitectura. (Spaces of Fiction: Cinema and Architecture)* pp. Introduction

¹¹ J. Pallasmaa. *The Architecture of Image*. pp. 13

¹² J. Pallasmaa. *The Architecture of Image*. pp. 18

¹³ J. Pallasmaa. *The Architecture of Image*. pp. 18

In the physical world, experiencing film is different from experiencing architecture. While watching a film in a movie theater, the architecture becomes just a backdrop, a simple container of the world that film sets up inside the theater. The worlds that film creates transcend the materiality of architecture allowing spectators to become part of them with their imagination. Even though the senses of viewers are more focused while watching a film, viewers can only experience these fictional worlds and scenarios with their sight and imagination. Architecture, on the other hand, has the capacity to create worlds that can be experienced with all the senses in the physical world.

	PHYSICAL	MIND	VISUAL	TOUCH	TASTE	SMELL	LISTEN	REAL	FICTION
ARCHITECTURE	ACTIVE	ACTIVE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FILM	STATIC	ACTIVE	✓				✓		✓

COMPARISON OF THE EXPERIENCE OF ARCHITECTURE AND FILM

Table 1
(Source: Author)

Architecture and film share several attributes in the way they can be experienced, like the fact that they both have an active mind component. Architecture is experienced when the subject moves through the space, it addresses all the senses, while film really hits hard on two: sight and hearing. In the interaction of film and the viewer, the viewer is static and the movement happens only through sight when the frame moves. Architecture touches both the real and fictional environments, but film only touches fiction, even if film is trying to project a real story.

REALITY + FICTION = ?

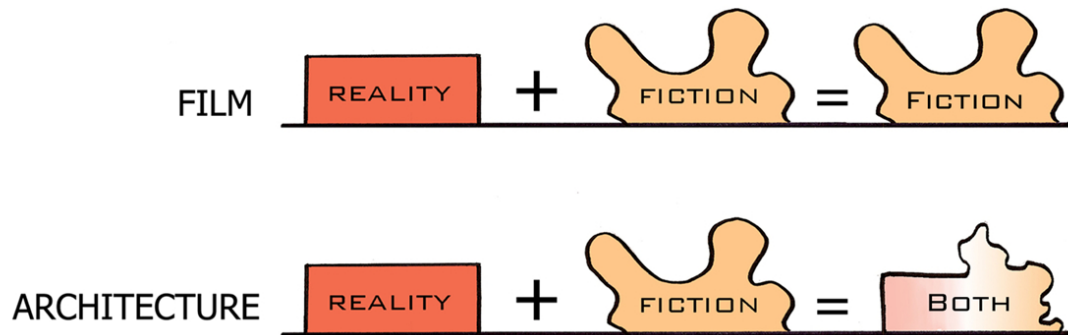
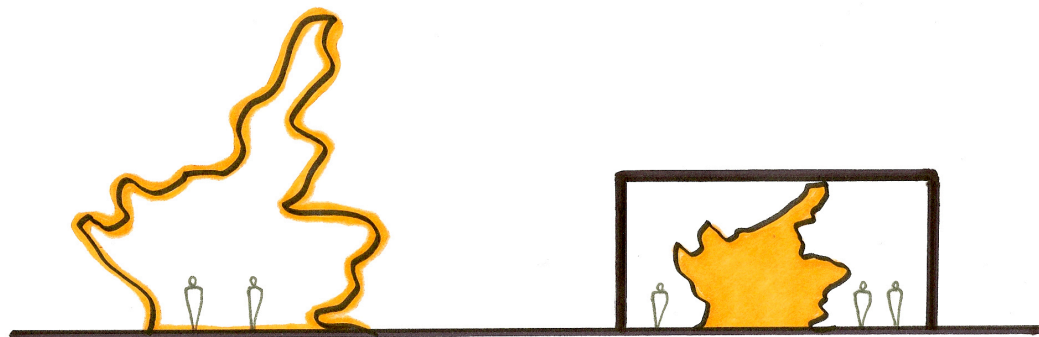


Figure 13: Reality + Fiction
(Source: Author)

Figure 13 shows the results of adding Reality and Fiction in Film and Architecture. Reality plus fiction in film equals fiction while reality plus fiction in architecture equals a union of both.



Architecture as fiction

Architecture as container of fiction

Figure 14: Building as fiction or building as container of fiction
(Source: Author)

If architecture has the capacity of being both real and fictional then it is no longer just a container of stories (Figure 14). It becomes “a device for storytelling as narratives are woven into its foundations. While the human mind spins its tales through memory and thoughts, each space—with its history, program, materials, and design—produces a unique set of narratives.”¹⁴

¹⁴ Tali Krakowsky. www.imaginaryforces.com

“A writer must be sure that the story that he tells is grounded in reality, otherwise the readers imagination will reject it”

– Jorge Luis Borges

“The reality of architecture is grounded in the physical world. When it loses connection to this it turns into fantasy, it doesn’t touch my soul at all.”

- Juhani Pallasmaa

Architecture Reality

Reality is conceived as the state of things as they actually exist and not as they are perceived or interpreted and it includes things that are or have been.

In the book *For An Architecture of Reality*, Michael Benedikt interprets postmodern architecture and what he considers is the essence of reality in architecture. According to Benedikt, the realness of architecture should be felt consciously and subconsciously by the simple act of experiencing it. One should move with the movements of the spaces and be drawn to inhabit areas of seeming emptiness without explanations. “Real” buildings serve a specific purpose of being as efficient as possible and of having a specific significance and use for its dwellers. The moment when a person discovers the importance of a building is defined by Benedikt as a “direct experience of the real”¹⁵.

Peter Zumthor talks about the separation between the invented meaning behind an object, which is often subjected to cultural or personal knowledge, and “real things” such as water, light, earth and vegetation. For him, real architecture is not either a message or a symbol. He considers that “buildings can have a

¹⁵ Michael Benedikt. *For An Architecture of Reality*. pp.4

beautiful silence that is associated with attributes such as composure, self-evidence, durability, presence, and integrity, and with warmth and sensuousness as well; a building that is being itself, being a building, not representing anything, just being.”¹⁶ Similarly, Steven Holl is known for an “architecture that considers place, time, and the senses of the viewer.”¹⁷ In addition, Pallasmaa considers that one way to express this idea of reality through the senses is reach with the tectonics of the building. He expresses that “tectonic language is very sensorial because it shows the truth of construction, the truth of materials, the truth of the elements and the truth of gravity.”¹⁸

These ideas are in contrast with the postmodernist architects who believed that architecture should convey a meaning. Postmodern architects returned to the representative and symbolic value of architectural elements and forms. Robert Venturi, one of the mayor exponents of this movement, expressed that “Architects can bemoan or try to ignore the ornamental and decorative elements in buildings or even try to abolish them, but they will not go away. Or they will not go away for a long time, because architects do not have the power to replace them.”¹⁹ However, once a building incorporates symbolic expressions it detaches itself from the real world since it goes against the pure definition of reality, which establishes that reality is made of things as they are and not as they are interpreted.

¹⁶ Peter Zumthor. *Thinking Architecture*.

¹⁷ Steven Holl. *House: Black Swan Theory*

¹⁸ Juhani Pallasmaa. Lecture: *Reality and Fiction*. University of Minnesota.

¹⁹ Robert Venturi. *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*.

*"I hear you say 'Why?' always 'Why?' You see things and say 'Why?' But I dream of something that never existed; and I say 'Why not?'"*²⁰

- George Bernard Shaw

Architecture Fiction

Fiction is an invention, a fabrication, something feigned and imagined, as opposed to fact. It is a made-up story, an imaginary thing or event, a belief and/or a statement that is false, but that is often held to be true because it is expedient to do so.

Pallasmaa defines Architecture fiction as "architecture that is not grounded in the realities of physical world or the realities of human life."²¹ According to the Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture, architecture fiction is animated and dynamic. This type of architecture depends on its users and their knowledge base (Figure 15), it changes as ideas change and so it is considered an unpredictable and nondeterministic system. Its intelligence depends not on rules and laws but on experience and interpretation, being free from the conventional restrictions of reality. It contains different levels of overlapped information, interpretation and reading, which result in multiple layers of meaning and relationship. Also, it can create or impose inauthentic cultures and heritages, it can turn local into foreign and vice versa. Digital technologies can be used when creating architecture fiction since they transform architecture from "static environments into kinetic, cinematic, informative, and interactive spaces that offer an endless anthology of stories."²²

²⁰ George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, New York: Ballantine Books. (1999)

²¹ Juhani Pallasmaa. Lecture: *Reality and Fiction*. University of Minnesota.

²² Tali Krakowsky. www.imaginaryforces.com



Figure 15: Three types of knowledge
(Source: Author)

Architecture fiction can be non-linear in sequence while still being linear in experience because the totality of the experience creates one single overall scenario. Like a movie trailer, architecture fiction is made of a “compilation of parts, fragmented elements, sometimes discontinuous with a significant degree of asyndeton to achieve the recognition of a global scenario from a singular scenario.”²³ It is a non-linear synthesis of an overall idea made of parts that are autonomous and related, like a holistic composition of discontinuous fragments that reinterprets and transmits the idea at the same time.

²³ Manuel Gausa. *The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture*. P.633 (2003)

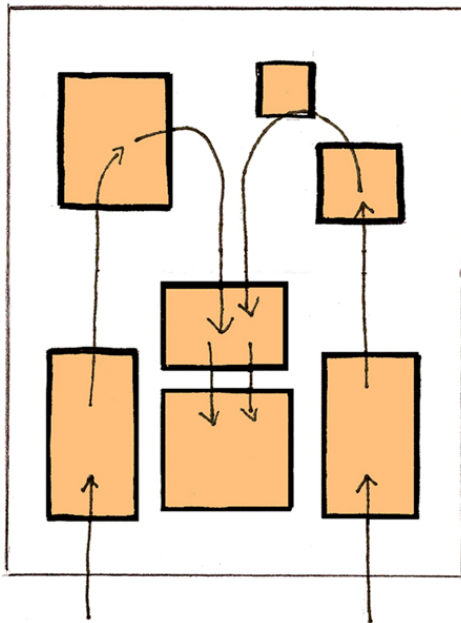


Figure 16: Linear Experience
(Source: Author)

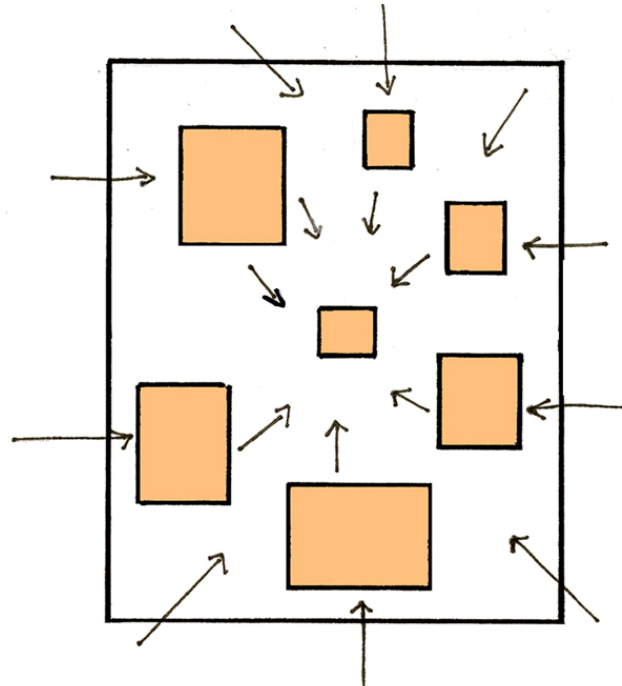


Figure 17: Fragmented Experience

The way films are experienced is always linear, it has a beginning and an end. The traditional movement through a building is not unlike that way of experiencing films because there is a procession, like a promenade in which there is a beginning and a culmination. But experiencing architecture in a fragmented way, like a movie trailer can lead to dynamic action and interaction between all the parts.

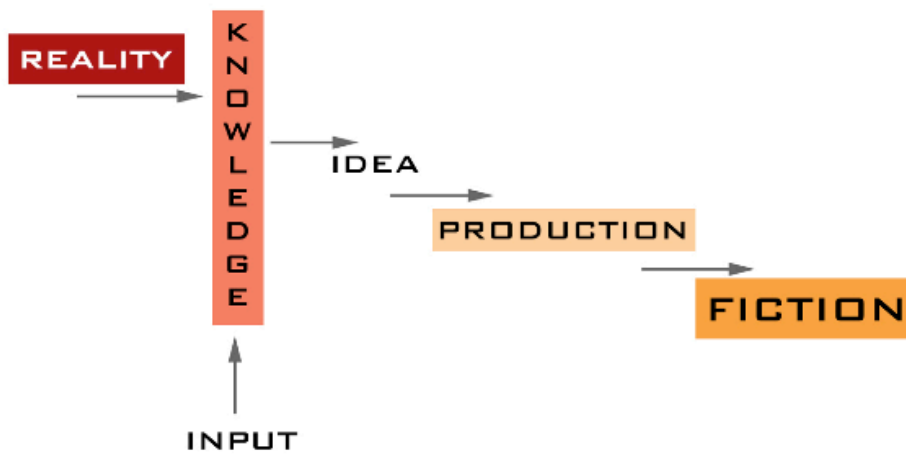


Figure 18: From reality to fiction
(Source: Author)

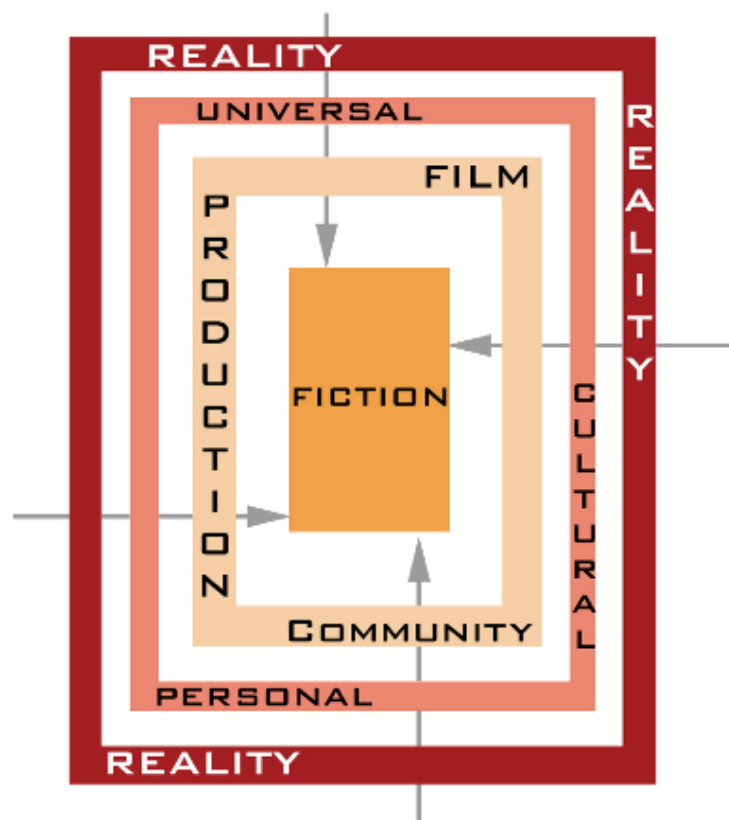


Figure 19: From Reality to Fiction
(Source: Author)

Buildings are always grounded on reality and have components that help perpetuate that, like dealing with climate, structure, gravity and materiality. Fiction arises from the combination of those components. The images, elements and situations of life that the building creates are defined when they are influenced by the knowledge each individual brings. When they encounter and interpret these scenarios a personal fictional image is created (Figures 18, 19)

Architecture as a balance between reality and fiction

Juhani Pallasmaa talks about the necessary balance between reality and fiction in architecture. For Pallasmaa, “All artistic work exists in two worlds, reality of matter and the world of imagination. A painting is always both paint on a canvas and an image that takes place in an imaginary world, a sculpture is both things as well. Architecture is the same, utilitarian and at the same time it is a proposition of an ideal human situation, where every piece is a metaphor of a better world and if that doesn’t happen then there is no architecture.”²⁴ Pallasmaa believes that if architecture doesn’t evoke the ideal mental dimension it remains vulgar. On the other hand, if it expresses too much an ideal image it becomes sentimental.

Pallasmaa considers that the enticing quality of any artwork rises from the double focal that we have; in film, we see the real thing which is the actor and the fictional thing which is the act. This dual tension creates a mental short-circuit of disbelief in a very positive sense that contributes to our self-understanding. Every work of art that is too explainable or too fussy fails to create this tension between the two

²⁴ Juhani Pallasmaa. Lecture: *Reality and Fiction*. University of Minnesota.

worlds.²⁵ Someone that combines both reality and fiction is architect Luis Barragan. His architecture is strongly grounded in Mexican tradition. It is almost the rebirth of vernacular architecture, but goes very far to the ideal and imaginary world.



Figure 20: Luis Barragan
(Source: erreefe)

Pallasmaa believes that reality and fiction are not exclusive entities; they belong together, but that we are going too far into the fictitious worlds as opposed to the natural way things are. Today's architecture, particularly the computer driven, tends to completely forget or underestimate this need for architecture to be grounded in reality. He also states that it is unhealthy when the imaginary world becomes the predominant condition, when there is no check of reality anymore. The reality we experience today is increasingly manipulated and fabricated. We are living in a world that is thematized, projected on settings completely untrue.²⁶

²⁵ Juhani Pallasmaa. Lecture: *Reality and Fiction*. University of Minnesota.

²⁶ Juhani Pallasmaa. Lecture: *Reality and Fiction*. University of Minnesota.

Site

"The architect studies the site to get an understanding of the reality of the place."

Juhani Pallasmaa



Figure 21: Site Location

(Source: Map: www.caribbeaninteractivemedia.com - Diagram: Author)



Figure 22: Site Location

(Source: Google Earth)

The Site is located in San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico, in the Isla Grande peninsula at the southwest Area of Santurce.



Figure 23: Isla Grande location in Santurce, San Juan
(Source: Lauren Eason)

Santurce, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Santurce is surrounded by water on all sides except for a small portion of 800 meters to the East, which connects with Carolina City. Most of this territory used to be covered by mangroves and swamps that were eventually filled the U.S. NAVY, particularly the area of Isla Grande. Its territorial boundaries are established by The San Juan Bay to the West and the San Antonio Channel which separate Santurce from Cataño City and the Old San Juan Island. To the East, Santurce is surrounded by the San Jose Lagoon, Los Corozos Lagoon and Carolina City, where the tourist area of Isla Verde and the Isla Verde International Airport are located. The Southern boundary is established by the Martín Peña Channel, which separates Santurce from the Business and Financial Districts of Hato Rey and the northern shore of Santurce runs five kilometers of coast by the Atlantic Ocean. (Figure: 23)

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Santurce has a total population of 94,067 people. It is the most populated area in Puerto Rico and the most densely populated area in San Juan (6,931.2 residents per km²), even after losing half of the maximum population it has reached (1950's) (Figure 24). It is also the area with the greatest number of people born outside of Puerto Rico. Also, there is a great fluctuation between areas of high income to the northeast and areas of low income to the southeast. Santurce's most populated areas; Miramar, Condado, Barrio Obrero and Loiza are considered cultural hot spots for art, music, cuisine and fashion.



Figure 24: Population per km (Census 2000)
(Source: Javier Rodriguez Galarza)

The reduction of the population after the 1950's was due to the displacement of suburbs that had proliferated along the Martín Peña Channel and the migratory movements to the United States and other part of the metropolitan area of San Juan. This drop in population alarmed the government who decided to develop various projects to revitalize and repopulate Santurce. Among these

developments are some adaptive reuse projects of historical structures to house cultural institutions like the Museum of Contemporary Art of Santurce, The Museum of Art of Puerto Rico and the Puerto Rico Music Conservatory, as well as the plan for the development of commercial, residential and touristic projects in the Isla Grande peninsula, which includes the Convention Center District (Figure 25).

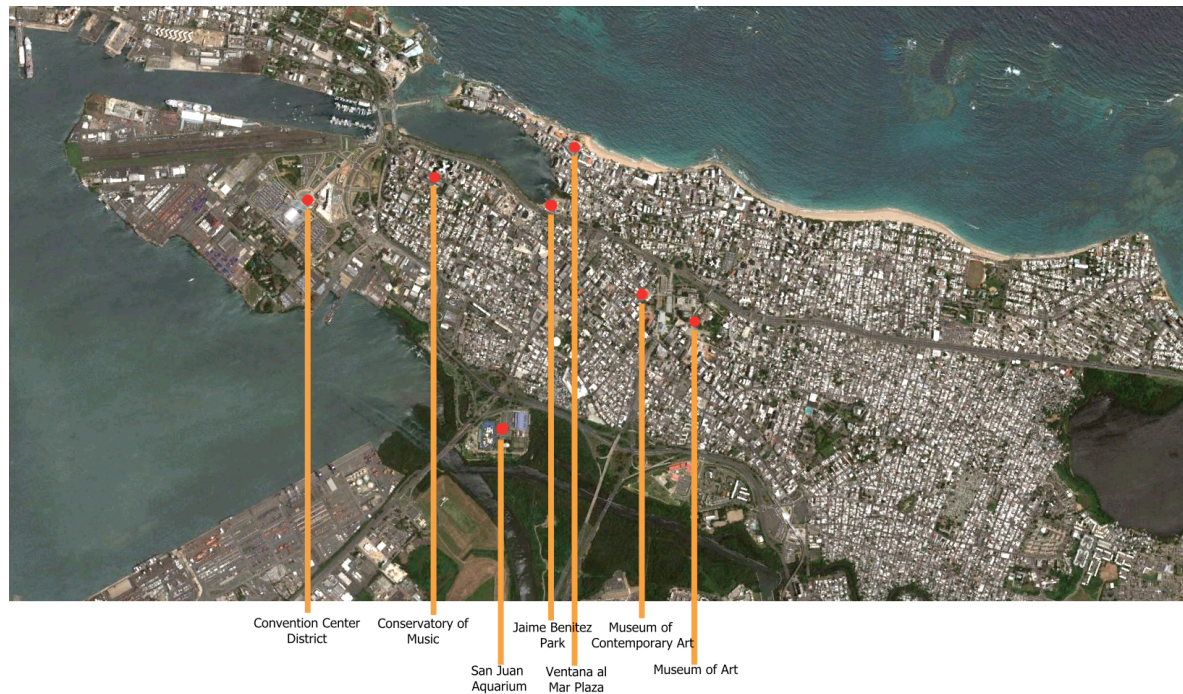


Figure 25: Projects to revitalize and repopulate Santurce
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

Santurce's economy is mainly based on services. The areas that offer the most job opportunities are social educational and health services (14.8%) and the entertainment, art, lodging, food and recreation (12.3%). Due to its location between the historic part of San Juan and the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport and the beaches along the shore, Santurce is the area with most hotels and touristic activities in Puerto Rico. The most important hotel is the Sheraton Puerto Rico Hotel & Casino located in the Convention Center District in Isla Grande and

adjacent to the site. Most of the commercial activities are located along the principal avenues like the Ponce de Leon Avenue, the Ashford Avenue, the Fernandez Juncos Avenue and the marginal streets of the Baldorioty de Castro Parkway (Figure 26). While 72% of the working population is employed by private companies and 11% own their own business, the government employs a significant percent of the population with 17%, since the biggest governmental offices complex of Puerto Rico, the Governmental Center of Minillas, is located in Santurce.

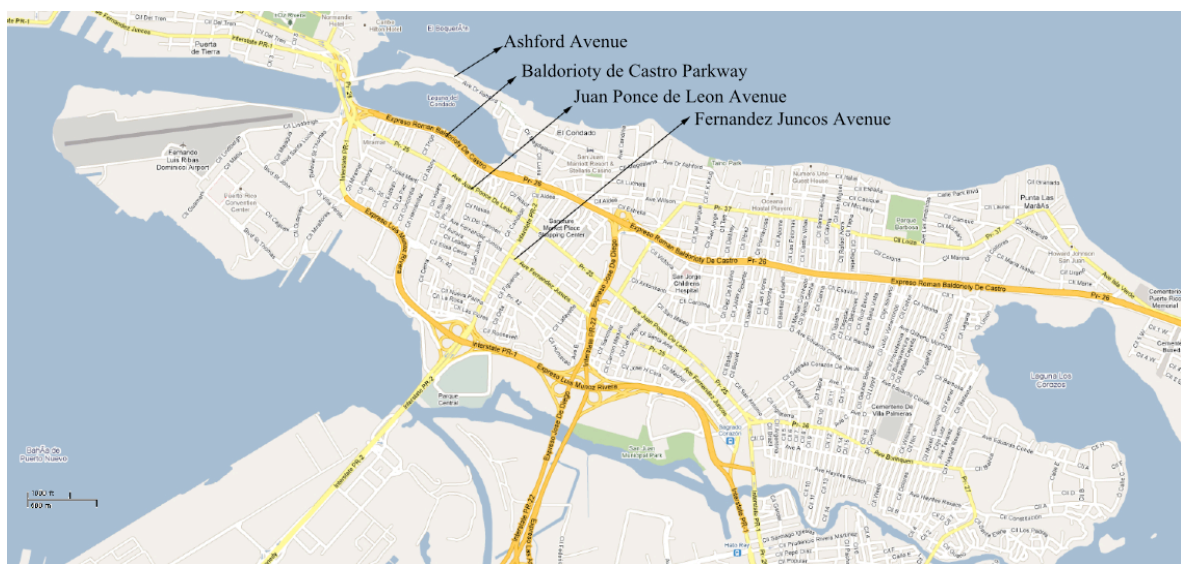


Figure 26: Principal Avenues in Santurce
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

Isla Grande



Figure 27: Isla Grande's location in Santurce
(Source: Javier Rodriguez Galarza)

Throughout history, Isla Grande has played an important role due to its central position at the bay of San Juan. The majority of its uses have been those of military purposes, but recently it has begun to be used for other more domestic and commercial purposes. Some of those uses include a small airport, a cruise-ship port, various government facilities, and recently, the Convention Center District. Isla Grande was once a part of a group of small islands among mangroves (Figure 27) but was quickly turned into a lookout and a defense outpost for the Spanish army, a function it would serve for around four centuries. Later when the United States gained control of island, Isla Grande became one of the strategic places that they invested a great amount of funds and work into to improve and expand its uses. One of the improvements was joining the island with the coast of Puerto Rico in the 1920's.



Figure 28: 1920's View of the San Antonio Channel, San Juan Bay, Old San Juan and Isla Grande with wetland (Source: ARP1757)

The land was used as a naval and coast guard base and for the first International Airport built in Puerto Rico by the Pan American Airways System (PANAM) (Figure 29). Today the airport is called Fernando L. Ribas Dominicci (1929). During the construction of the airport, the land that currently houses the Convention Center District was used for housing.



Figure 29: 1948 Proposal for runway expansion, more landfill is required (Source: University of Puerto Rico, School of Architecture)

Later, the airport was used by the US NAVY as a Naval Air Station (NAS) during World War II (Figures 30 and 31). It was part of the neutrality patrol program created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1939. It was not until 1940, when the US Government and its NAVY decided to build the San Juan Base as a strategic military reference in the Caribbean (Figure 31). During World War II, Isla Grande was completely used by the military. Almost all the facilities that still stand today date from that period. After the war, in the 1950s the island was handed to the local government, but by this time the Isla Verde International Airport had been inaugurated, diminishing the uses of Isla Grande.

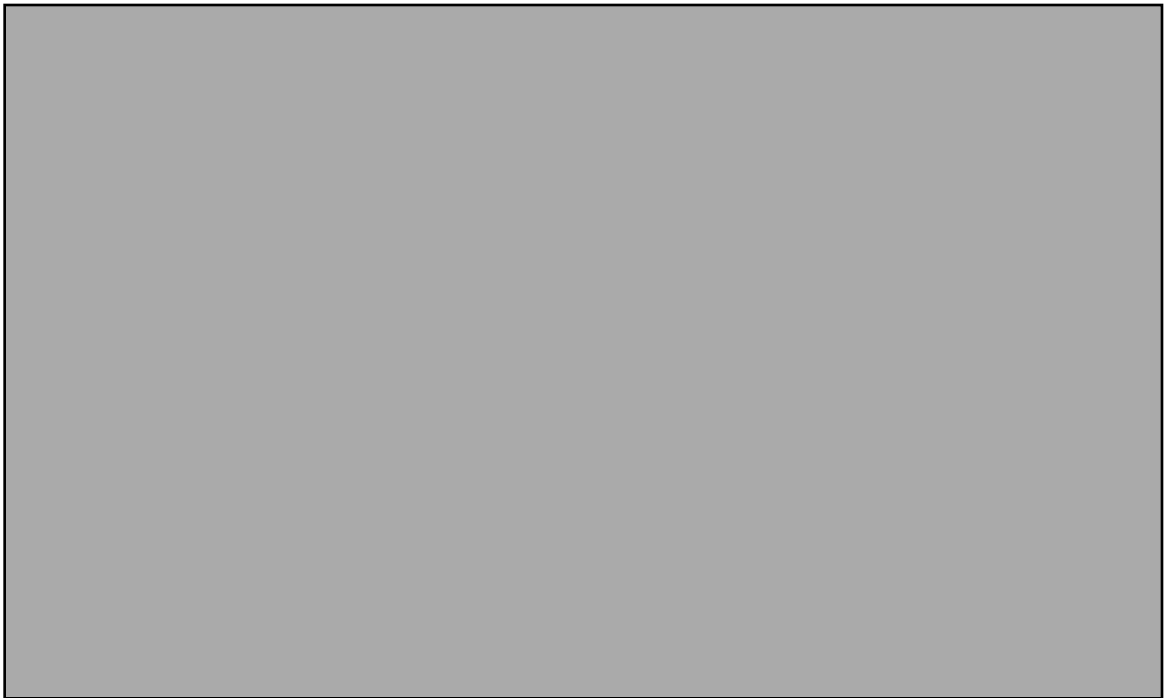


Figure 30: 1972 Aerial Photo of Isla Grande Naval Air Station and Airport
(Source: University of Puerto Rico, School of Architecture)

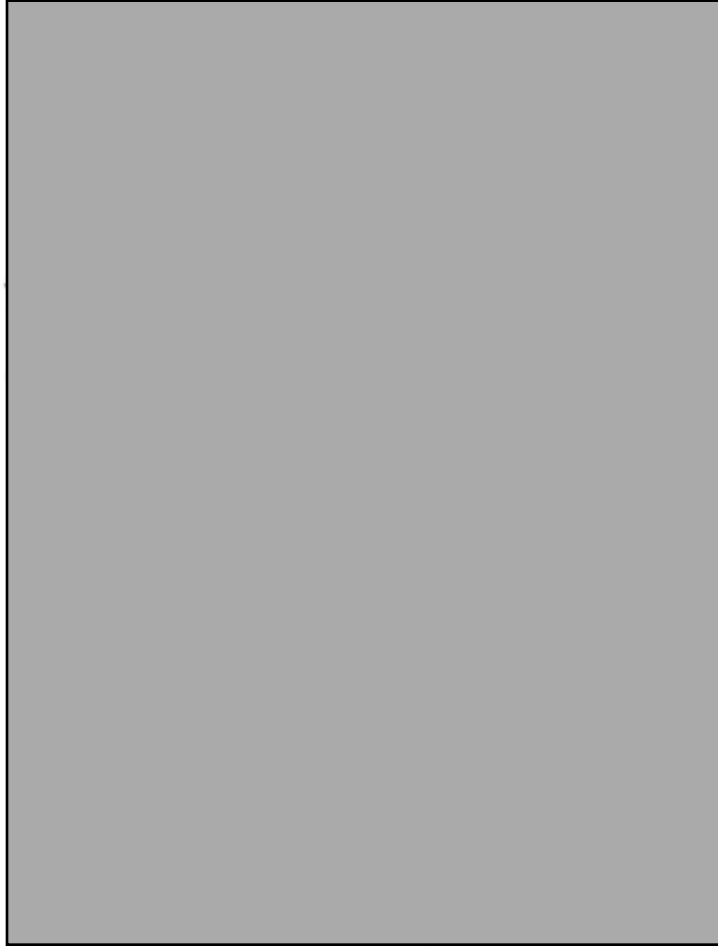


Figure 31: Old Naval Base plan
(Source: University of Puerto Rico, School of Architecture)

The peninsula remained almost untouched until the 1990s becoming an underdeveloped zone. In 1995 the area was selected for the development of the Convention Center District and an Urban Residential District. The Convention Center was officially inaugurated, being followed in 2006 by its surrounding areas, including a hotel that is administrated by The Sheraton.

Adjacent Developments

Puerto Rico Convention Center District



Figure 32: Puerto Rico Convention Center District Master Plan
(Source: www.prconventiondistrict.com)

The Puerto Rico Convention Center District was developed by the Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority as a series of projects that “aim to create a new neighborhood of diverse uses” that provides residential area, offices, commercial space, entertainment venues and facilities for civic and cultural activities that “complement and support the Convention Center’s operations in order to promote Puerto Rico’s appeal as a tourist hub, and to foster its economic development.”²⁷ It restored part of the underutilized area that used to be the Naval and Coast Guard Base allowing its economic rebirth, turning it into a “prominent waterfront development”²⁸ and acting as a catalyst for other developments in the area.

²⁷ Convention Center District Authority: www.prconventiondistrict.com

²⁸ STRUCTURE magazine



Figure 33: Convention Center District Proposal for uses in the Isla Grande Area
(Source: www.prconventiondistrict.com)

The Convention Center District is located in a 113 acre area that is adjacent to the site, in the Isla Grande peninsula and it is strategically located next to the Isla Grande Airport and the Cruise Ship Port Terminal in order to facilitate guest travel to the Center. Other points of interest nearby are Old San Juan, the Condado District (Hotel District), the San Juan Central Park (Parque Central), and Plaza Las Américas Shopping Mall. The district will house 1,170 new hotel rooms in order to collaborate with the tourism company's objective of increasing the hotel room inventory in the island and to provide the Convention Center with a place where its users can stay and make use of the rest of the commercial facilities. The new community that is being developed in the Convention Center District will house more than 500 families and the further development of 563 residential units is also being planned. In addition, the District is also the new Business Center of San Juan with 718,000 square feet of office space planned.



Figure 34: Sheraton Hotel, Residential Building and Convention Center
(Source: www.prconventiondistrict.com)

The District is also the home to the new park and fountains of the Convention District, which has some 13 acres of greenery, walkways and fountains that connect the new Convention Center to the San Juan Bay and the Miramar, Condado and Puerta de Tierra communities.

San Juan: The Walkable City



Figure 35: The Walkable City Master Plan
(Source: www.pr.gov)

The project's intents are to “introduce an integrated public transit system; implement a state-of-the-art public realm, establish a pedestrian waterfront loop, pedestrianize Old San Juan, revitalize the rundown neighborhoods, protect the Isleta from erosion and sea level rise, protect and celebrate the Isleta’s cultural and historic assets, develop and integrate the north and south waterfronts, diversify and repopulate the Islet and expand, diversify the Islet’s tourist assets and improve the connection the Islet and Isla Grande.”²⁹ (Figure 36)

²⁹ www.pr.gov



Figure 36: The Walkable City connection to Isla Grande
(Source: www.pr.gov)

Site Analysis



Figure 37: San Juan historic area and Naval Base remaining buildings
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

The site is located 1.7 miles from the historical area of San Juan, which allows it to have views of it as well as views of the Cruise Ship Port on the other side of the San Antonio Channel. It also has views of the coast of Cataño and Isla de Cabra. Figure 37 shows the area of Isla Grande that still has some structures from the Naval Base.



Figure 38: Possible Interactions
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

There are many opportunities for interaction between the different parts of the Isla Grande Peninsula (Figure 38). The Film Festival facilities could benefit from the Convention Center District since the district already started to revitalize and reactivate the area. The festival could benefit from the Convention Center by hosting some of their activities there. Also, the new Sheraton Hotel could accommodate visitors of the Festival. At the same time, the Convention Center, the Hotel and other commercial areas would benefit by having the visitors of the Festival facilities use the Convention Center District facilities increasing its earnings. Relationships between these two projects could also be based on the possibility that the Film Festival Headquarters could be administered by the Puerto Rico Film Commission, which is part of the same agency that administers the Convention Center District and the Ports Authority.

The proximity of a local airport also creates a beneficial relationship between the airport and the Festival Facilities. This small airport is the main traffic reliever of the Isla Verde International Airport having most of the private air traffic and some commercial flights. Visitors of the Film Festival Facilities that come from other parts of the Island or from outside of Puerto Rico have the option of arriving at this airport, which would put them only steps away from their destination and would increase the airport's traffic and gainings. The site's proximity to the waterfront provides with visual connections and possible interactions between the activities that take place at the San Juan Bay and the activities at the Festival Headquarters.



Figure 39: Locals and Tourists
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

The site is located adjacent to the most populated area in Puerto Rico to the East and the most popular and visited tourist locations to the north, making it a hub where locals and foreigners will come together, interact and exchange culture, ideas and experiences. (Figure 39)



Figure 40: Transportation
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

The Site in Isla Grande is supported by various methods of transportation. The peninsula has one of the San Juan Bay Cruise Ship Ports, which brings tourists and people from other countries and other areas of Puerto Rico to the site. In addition, the new San Juan Tramway has a total of four stops inside the area of Isla Grande, one of them right next to the site. It connects Isla Grande with the Old San Juan Island to the North and crosses through part of Santurce following the Juan Ponce de Leon Avenue and connecting with the last stop of the Urban Train in Sagrado Corazon Station. The Urban Train then takes the users to others parts

of San Juan passing through the Business and Financial Districts, The Puerto Rico Coliseum, The University of Puerto Rico, Hospitals and other commercial and residential areas in the City of San Juan, Guaynabo City and Bayamón City. (Figure 40)



Figure 41: Topography
(Source: www.pr.gov)

Although in other parts of Santurce there are topographic slopes that go from sea level to 32 meters in height, the Isla Grande peninsula is relatively flat.

Aerial Views

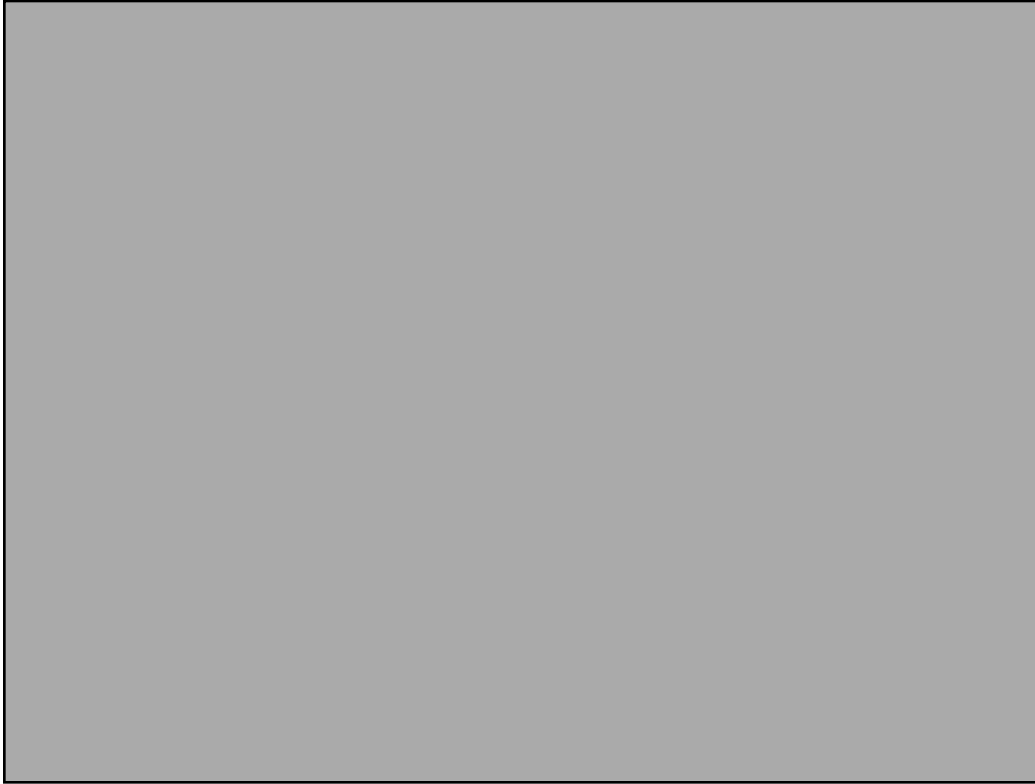


Figure 42: Aerial View of Isla Grande
(Source: Alexis19 www.skyscrapercity.com)

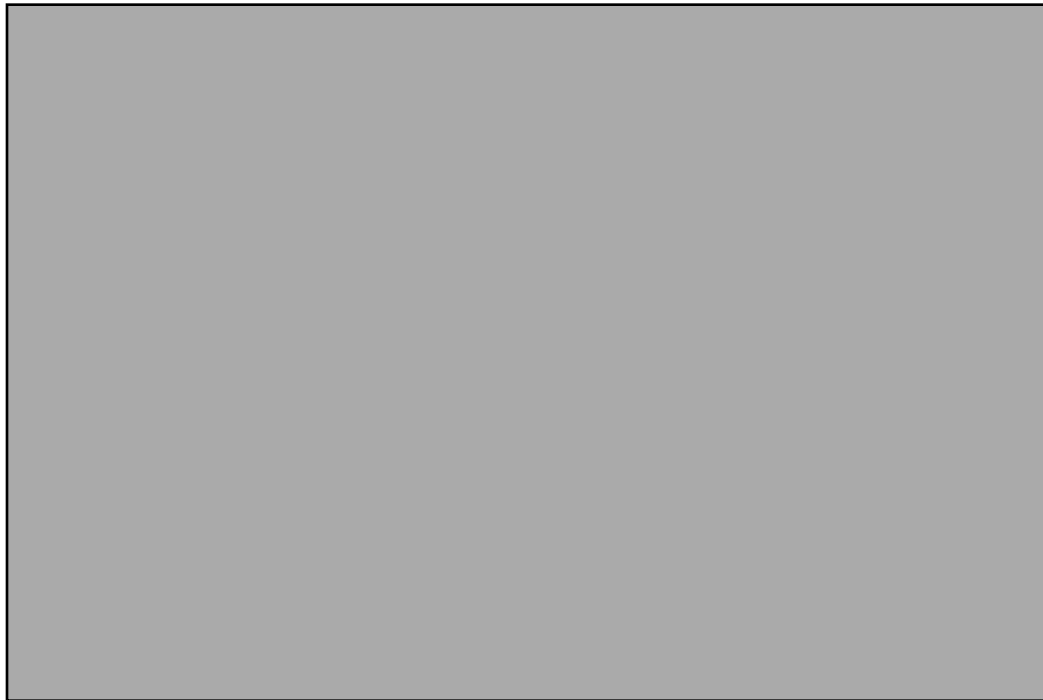


Figure 43: Aerial View of Isla Grande and Puerta de Tierra
(Source: Robert Torres)



Figure 44: Aerial View of Isla Grande and Puerta de Tierra
(Source: Isa Venturin)

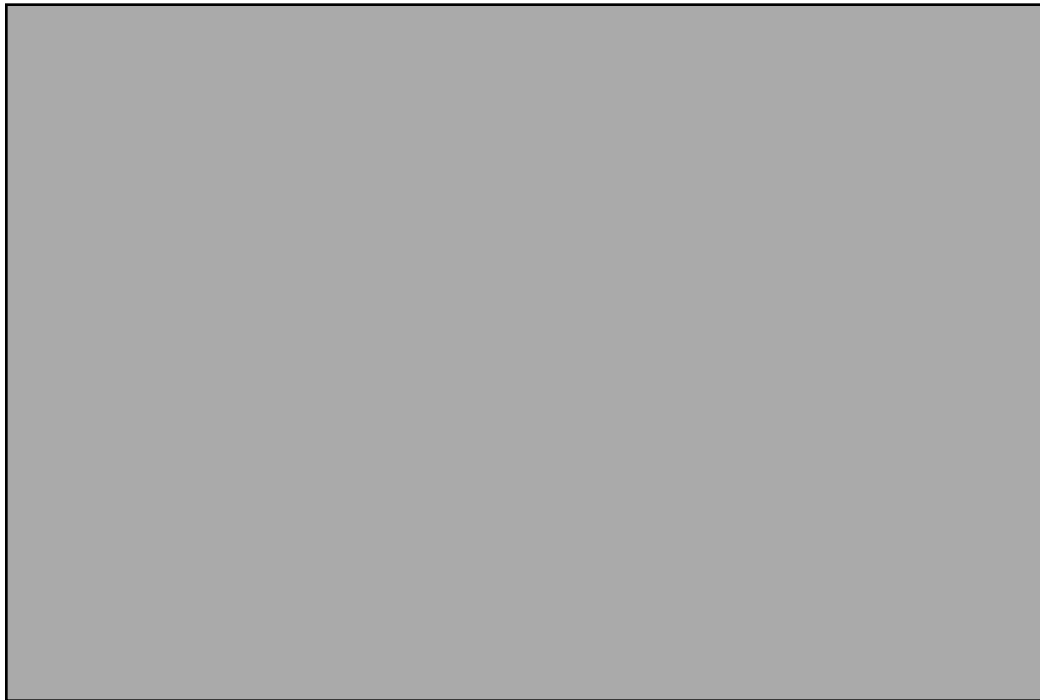


Figure 45: Aerial View of Site, Convention Center and Sheraton Hotel
(Source: Alberto Delucca)

Existing Structure

“Ruins have a special hold on our emotions because they challenge us to imagine their forgotten faith.”

- Juhani Pallasmaa

“Ruins have maximum reality because... defeat restores to things their individual reality.”

- Jean Paul Sartre



Figure 46: Hangar Exterior
(Source: Author)

The site has an existing structure; a military aircraft hangar built in the 1940's and designed by architect Albert Kahn. The plan of the Convention Center District completely erases the part of the Naval Base on which it stands. By keeping Albert Kahn's building and adapting it to the needs and new uses of the festival facilities, this new intervention will take into consideration the historic

aspects of the Isla Grande peninsula, instead of erasing this chapter of Puerto Rican history.

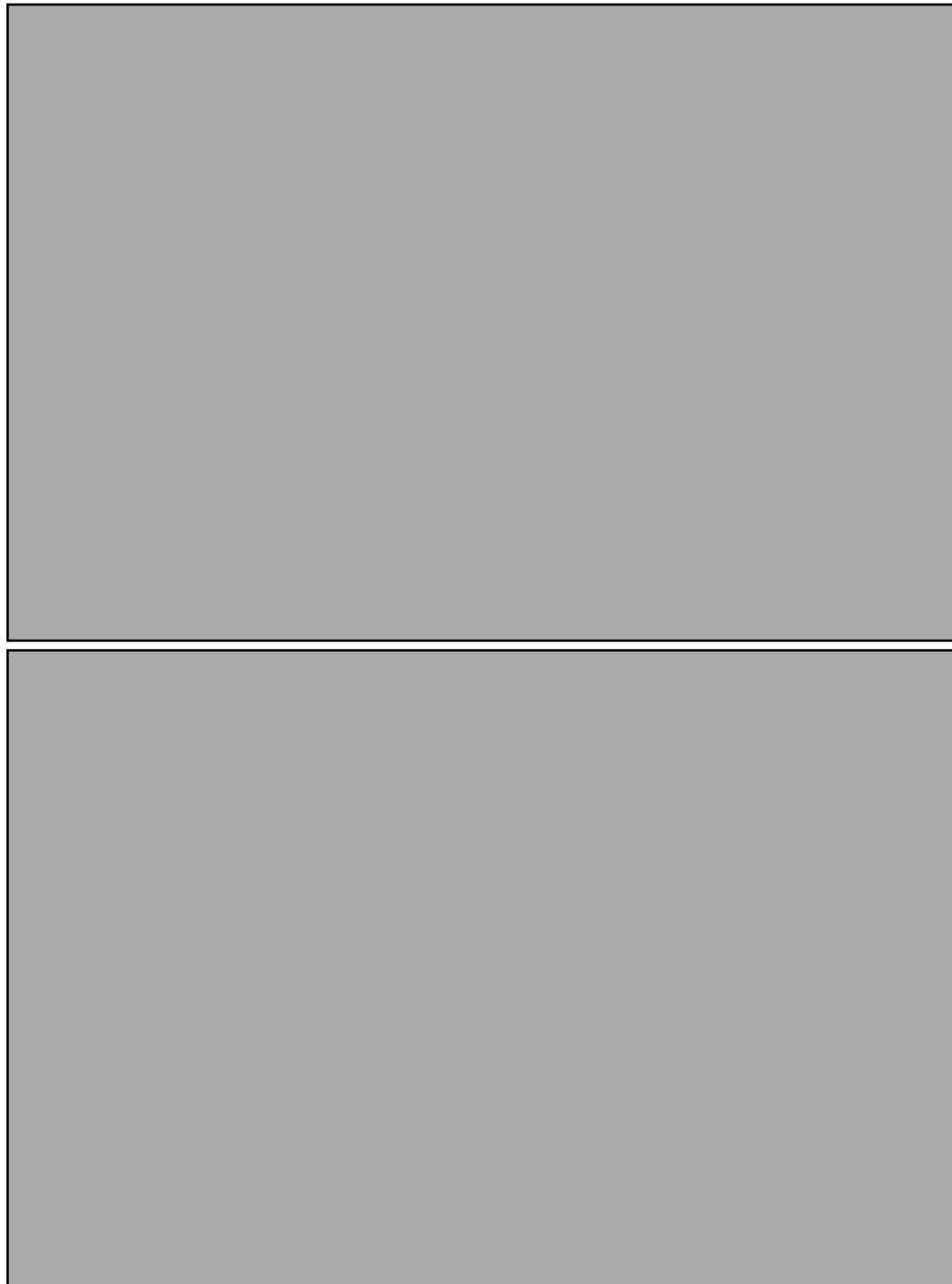


Figure 47: Hangar Elevation, Sections and Detail
(Source: ACCUPR)

Military Hangar Typology

Earlier Hangars tend to be unique products of their historical contexts while later types often comprise multipurpose design solutions implemented across multiple historical periods. The truss system of this particular hangar is a custom construction that combines the gable monitor and gable fink truss styles that were later standardized for use in the military.

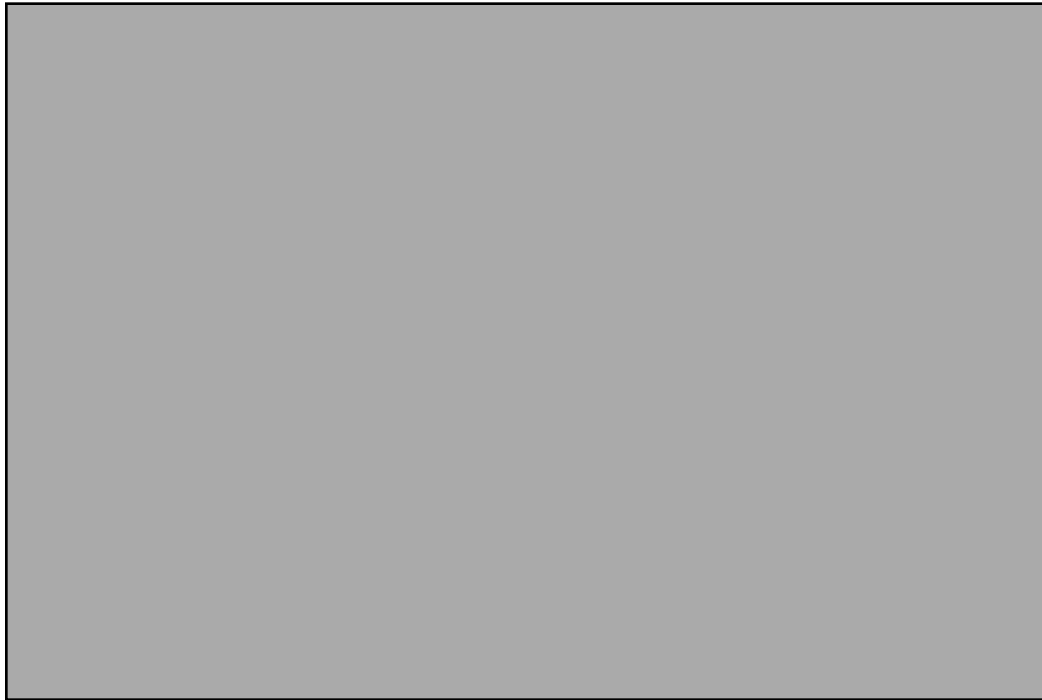


Figure 48: Hangar Details
(Source: Author)



Figure 49: Hangar form Airport
(Source: Taino www.panoramio.com)



Figure 50: Hangar Doors
(Source: Author)



Figure 51: Hangar Interior
(Source: Author)



Figure 52: Hangar Interior
(Source: Author)

Master Plan

Even though there has been a lot of development around the site, the area of the hangar building has been left abandoned (Figures 53,54,55). The area presents issues of underutilized and vacant areas, lack of maintenance, lack of connectivity to the waterfront, misuse of methods of public transportation, building decay and a poor pedestrian environment. At the same time, the area has a series of assets and opportunities such as the possibility of it becoming a touristic destination with the closeness of the Convention Center District, the San Juan Bay and the historical part of Old San Juan, the creation of a good walking experience for pedestrians given the peninsula's dimensions, the abundance of abandoned and decayed buildings which gives an opportunity for new developments, abundance of vacant lots and underutilized stunning waterfronts.



Figure 53: Current Conditions of the Site
(Source: Author)



Figure 54: Current Conditions of the Site
(Source: Author)



Figure 55: Current Conditions of the Site
(Source: Author)



Figure 56: Area of Mater Plan
(Source: Satellite Image – Google Earth, Diagram – Author)

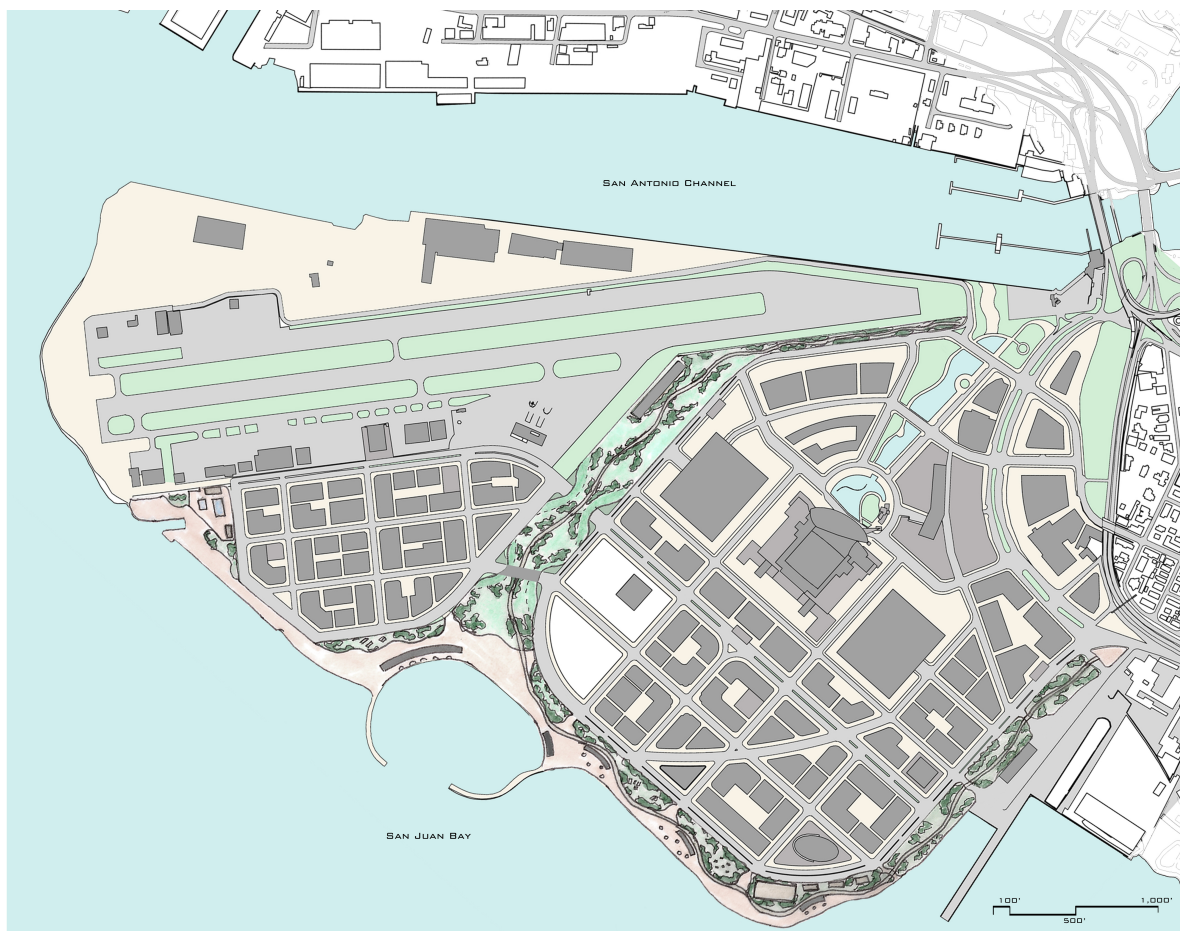


Figure 57: Master Plan
(Source: Author)

A master plan was designed for the area that was not included in the convention center district plan and was not part of the airport.

The principal objectives of the Mater Plan are to:

1. Improve pedestrian experience and vehicular accessibility and connection to the waterfront and between the site, the Fernando Ribas Dominicci Airport and the Convention Center District.

2. Make better use of the existing methods of public transportation.

3. Ensure economic development for the area.

4. Preserve cultural and historical aspects of the district.

5. Provide spaces that take into account the natural assets of the peninsula.

6. Provide spaces that promote congregation and interaction.

7. Turn the underutilized area of the peninsula into a vibrant touristic destination.

The master plan gives better access to the whole district and connects the convention center to the water. It also keep the hangar building as a way to bring a cultural and historical amenity into the district. This master plan will bring communities closer to the site and will turn the area from a container storage site to a prominent location.

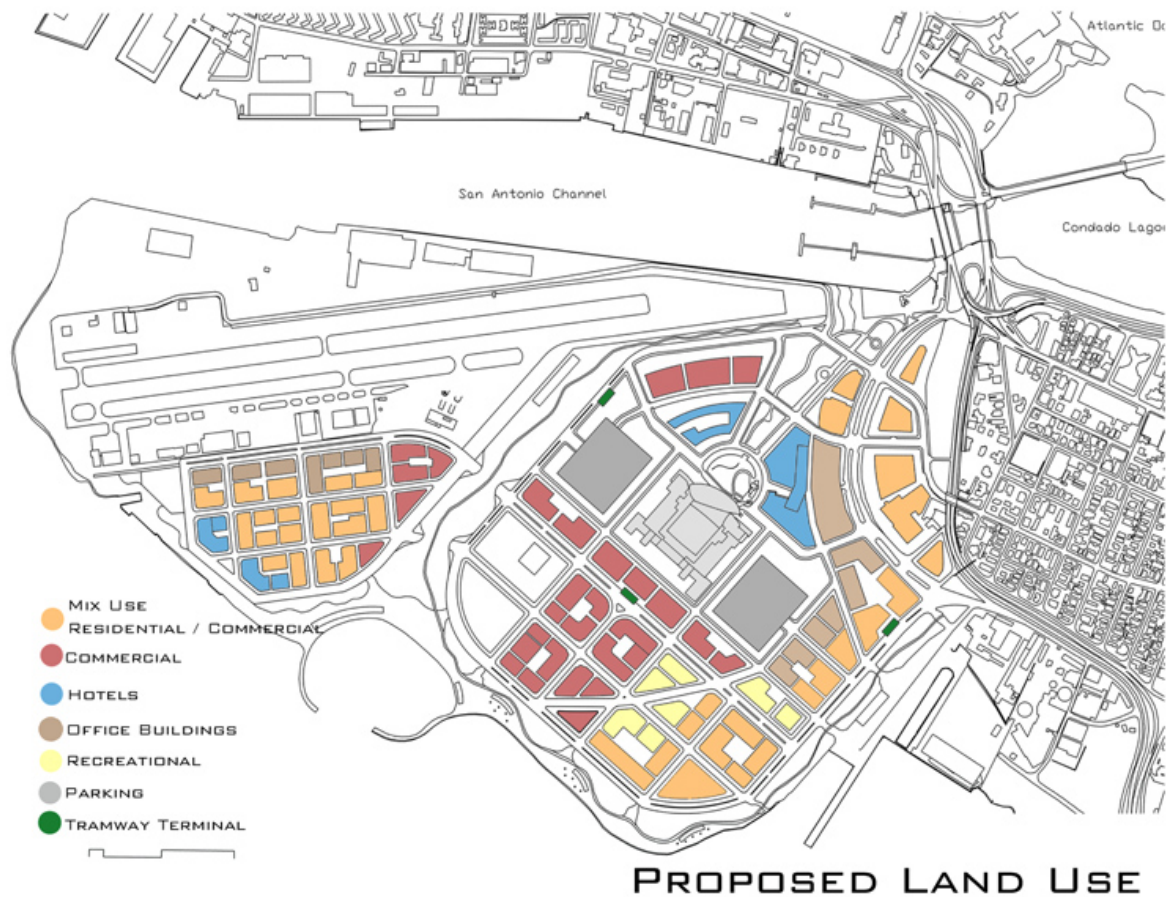


Figure 58: Proposed Land Use
(Source: Author)

Land use: the plan includes mixed use residential and commercial areas, commercial areas around the site, hotel area by the waterfront, office buildings, recreation and entertainment areas, parking, a park that wraps around the area connecting all the parts, a waterfront promenade and harborside public open space.



Figure 59: Master Plan
(Source: Author)



Figure 60: Master Plan
(Source: Author)



Figure 61: Master Plan
(Source: Author)



Figure 62: Master Plan
(Source: Author)

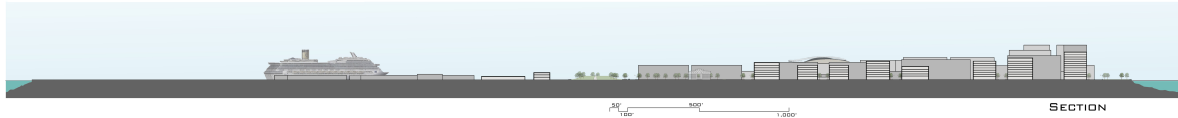


Figure 63: Master Plan Section
(Source: Author)

Due to the proximity of the bay and the airport, the buildings grow in height as they move away from the center of the airport runway and the waterfront to allow all the buildings to have views towards the bay.

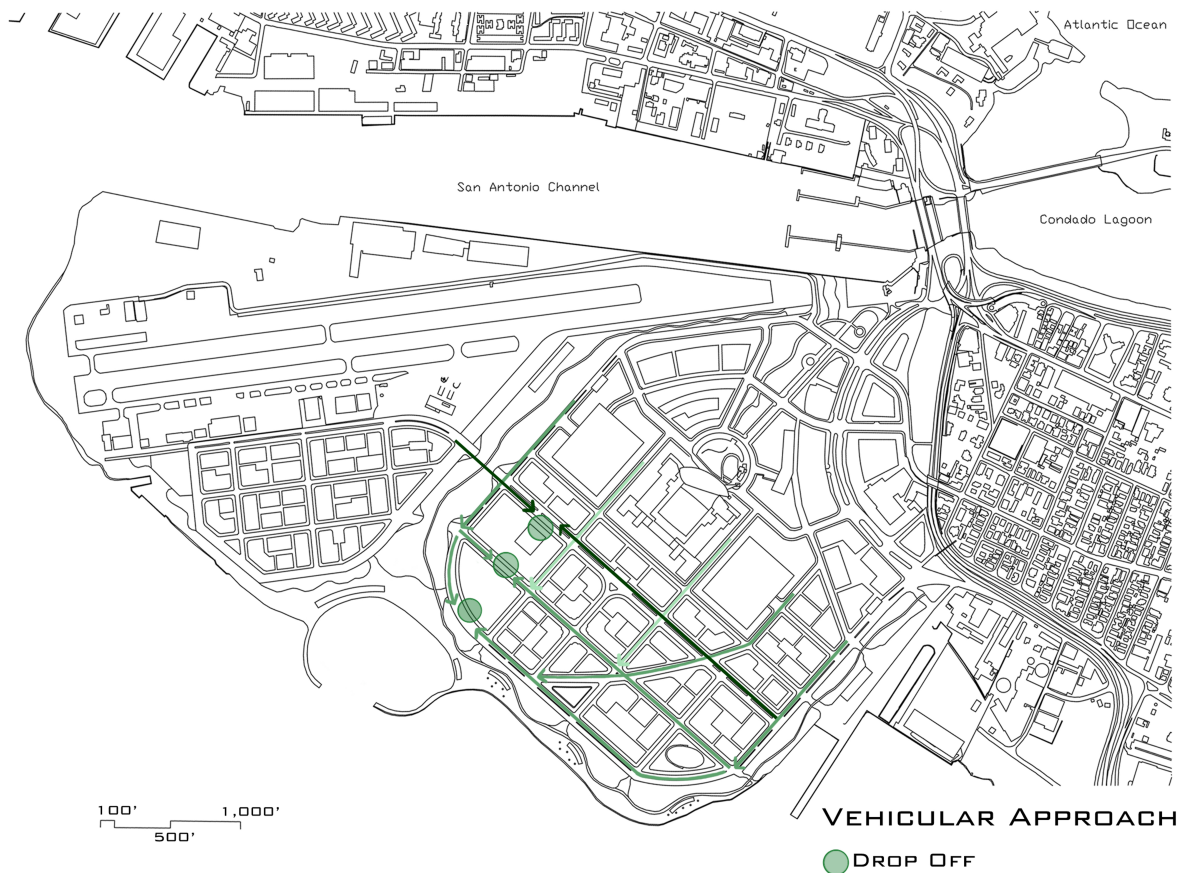


Figure 64: Vehicular Approach
(Source: Author)

Analyzing the vehicular approach to the site showed the street that will potentially have the most traffic as well as the optimal areas for drop offs.

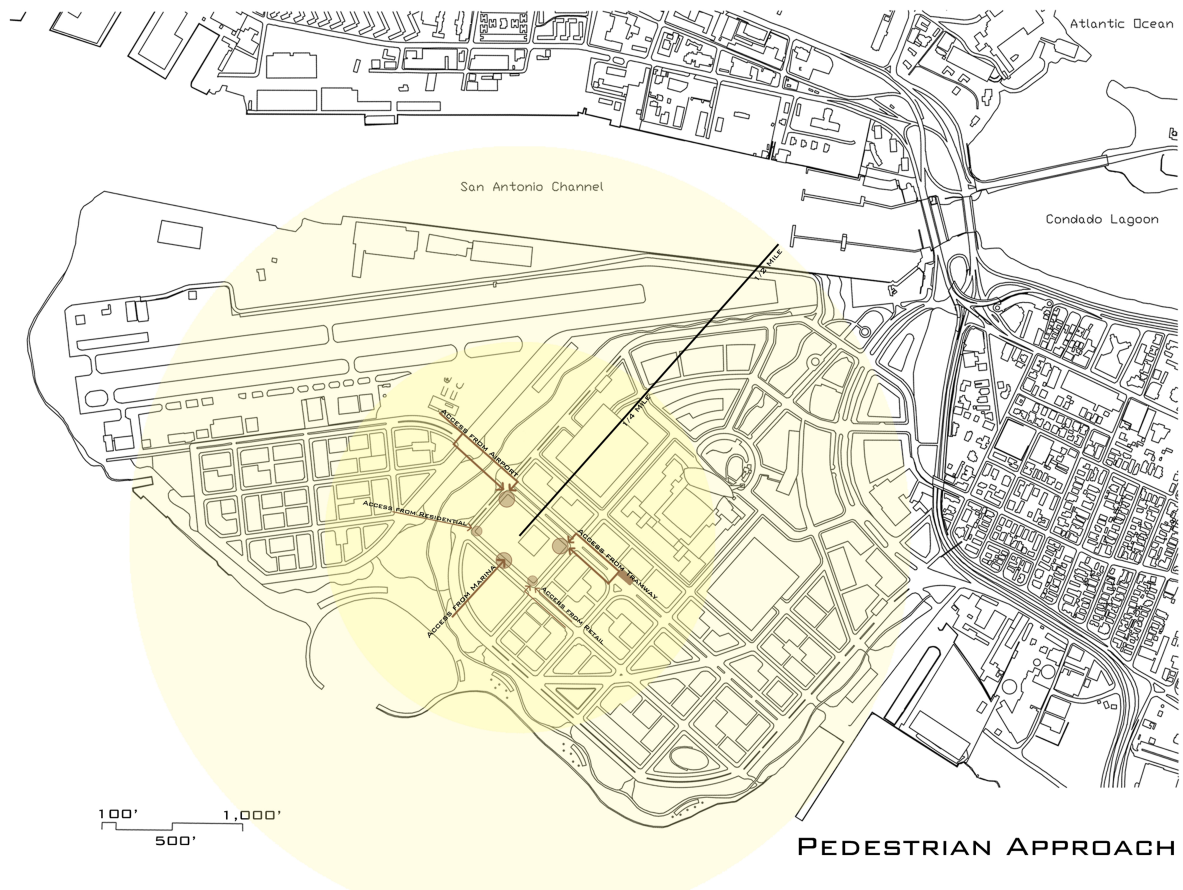


Figure 65: Pedestrian Approach
(Source: Author)

Analysis of the pedestrian approach to the site showed the areas that would potentially receive more people. The upper corners of the site will receive pedestrians coming from the Tramway stop and the Airport Terminal. Also, it shows the walkable distance from the center of the site which almost covers the entire peninsula.



Figure 66: Noise
(Source: Author)

The areas of the district that produce more noise are located North of the site. The park located adjacent to the site helps to buffer the noise coming from the Airport.

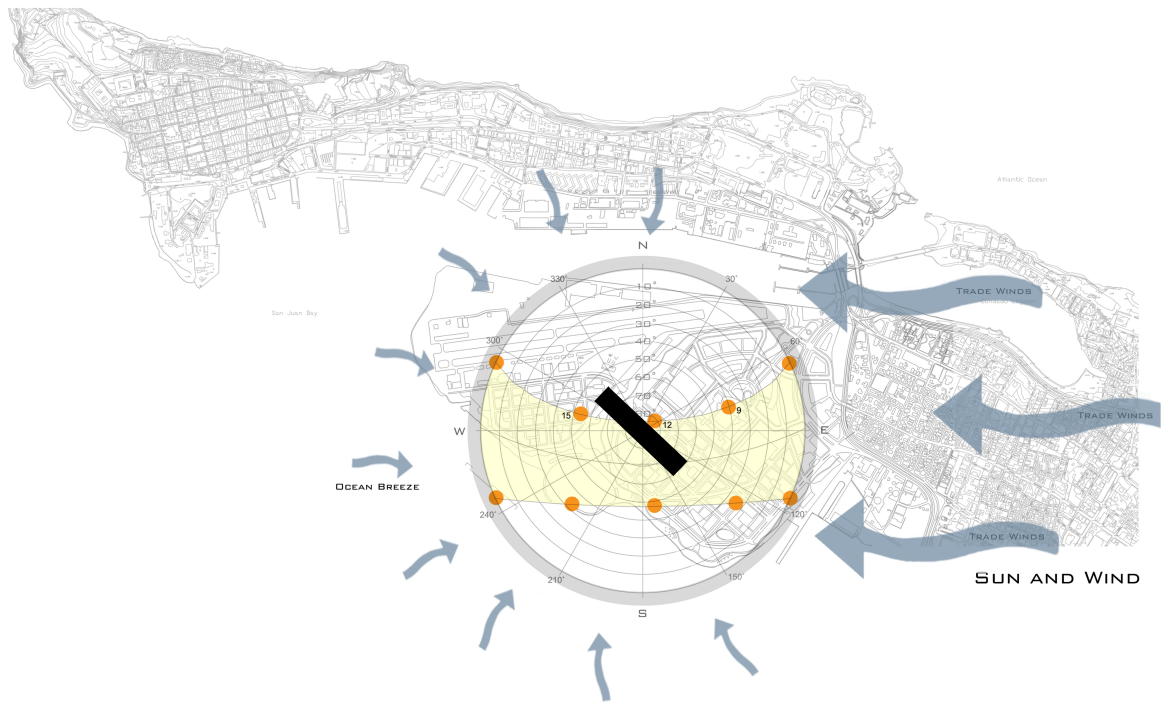


Figure 67: Sun and Wind
(Source: Author)

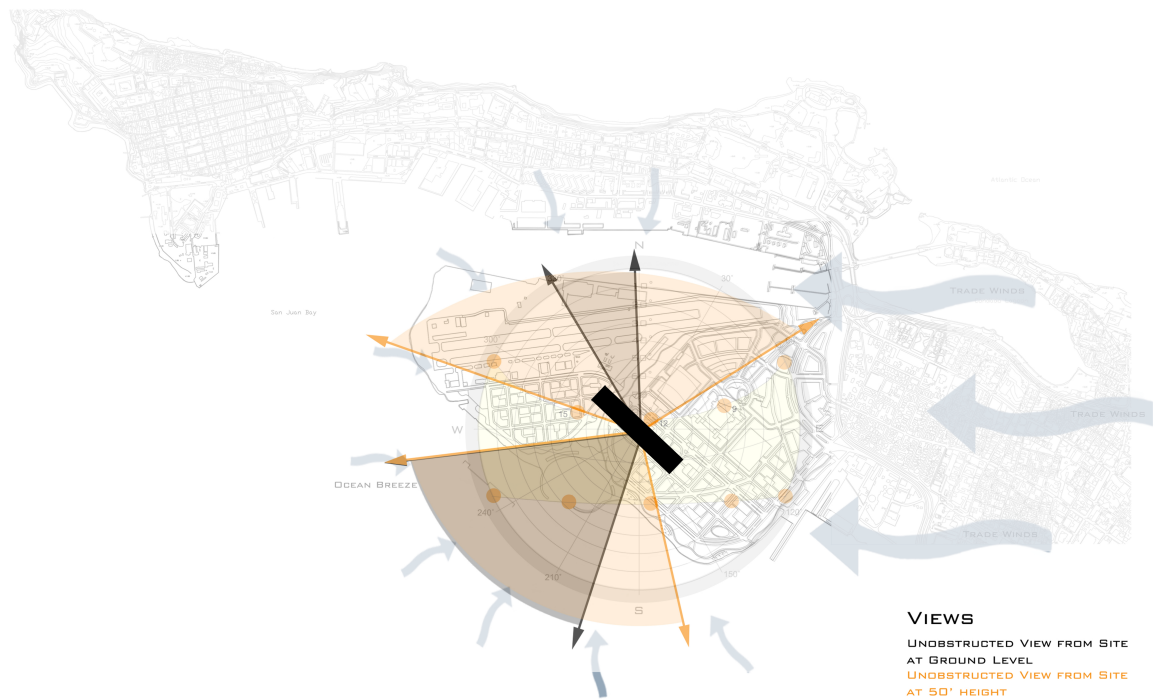


Figure 68: Views
(Source: Author)

Taking into account the climatic aspects of the area, the best orientation for the building is Northeast-Southwest to capture the Trade winds and protect from Sunlight(Figure 67). At the same time, this orientation maximizes views towards the bay. (Figure 68)

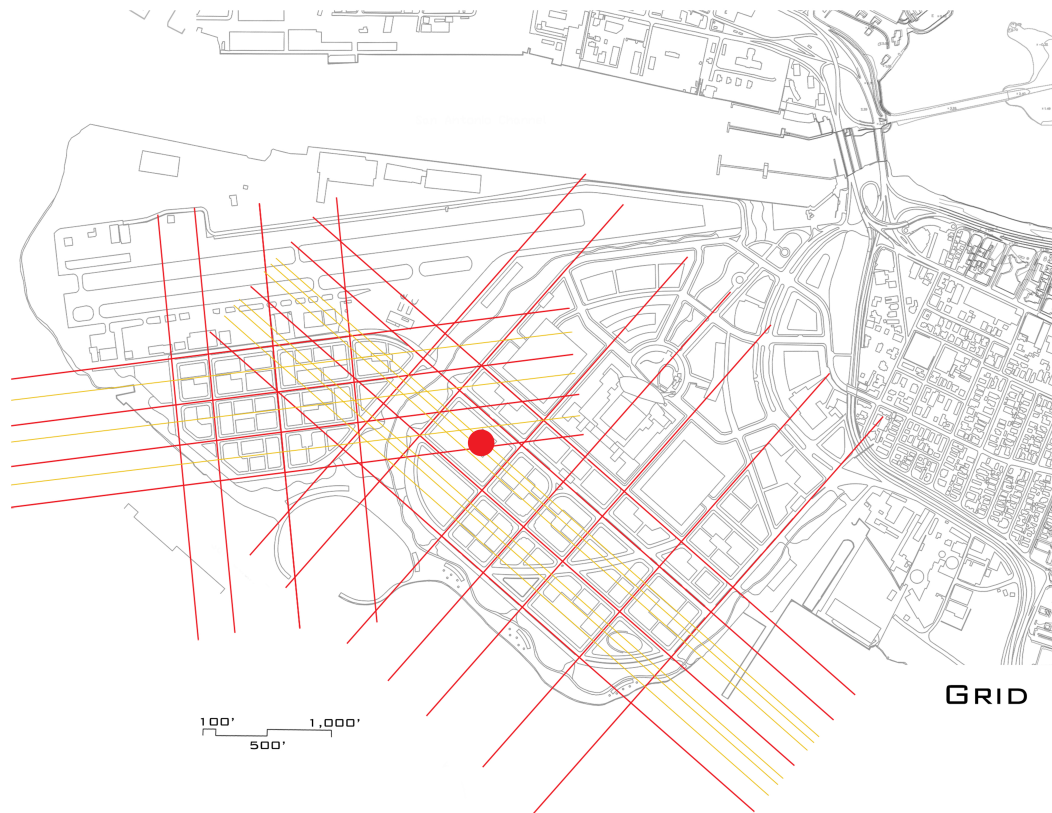


Figure 69: Urban Grid
(Source: Author)

These guidelines were traced following the urban form surrounding the hangar. They serve to establish the location of the building in the site according to those lines to maximize views and access to the site from the surrounding streets.

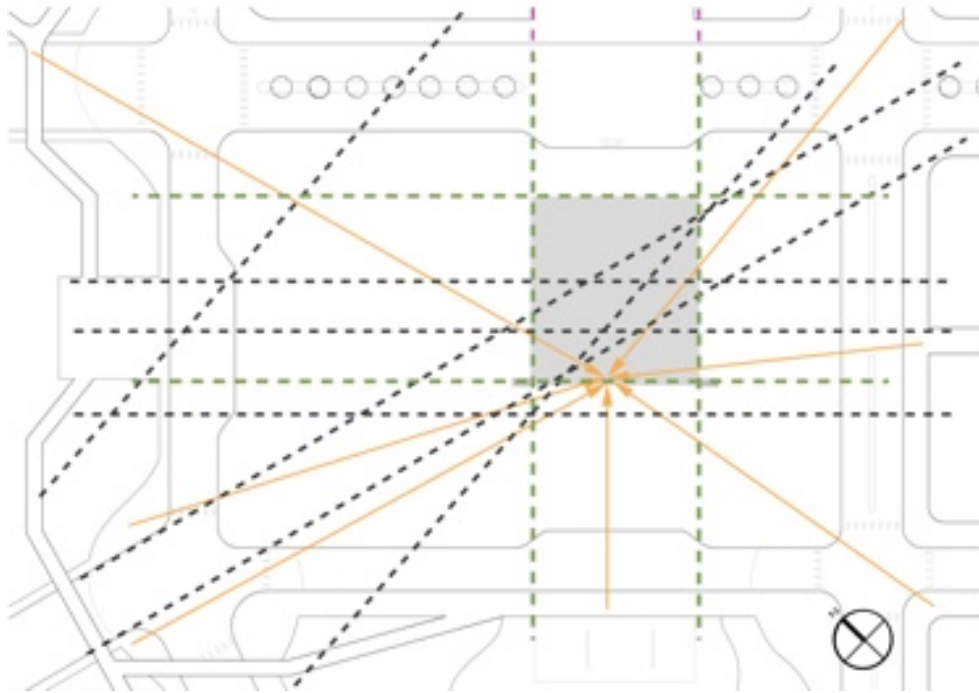


Figure 70: Urban Grid and Views towards the site
(Source: Author)

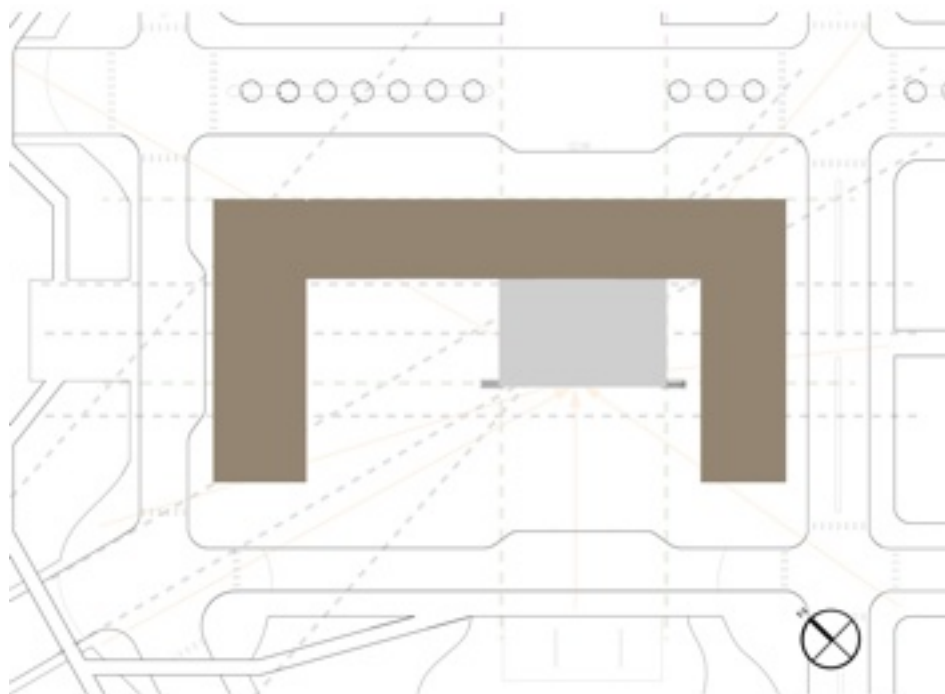


Figure 71: C Shape
(Source: Author)

Figure 70 represents the urban grid and views towards the Hangar building in the site. A C shaped volume was inserted in the site following the lines of the Hangar building for its original position (Figure 71). This shape allows the building to open up towards the water and provides a defined space for the Hangar building to heighten its importance in the project. The building starts as a regular shape that changes and adapts as new inputs are applied to it, such as climate, transportation, urban grid, program, etc.

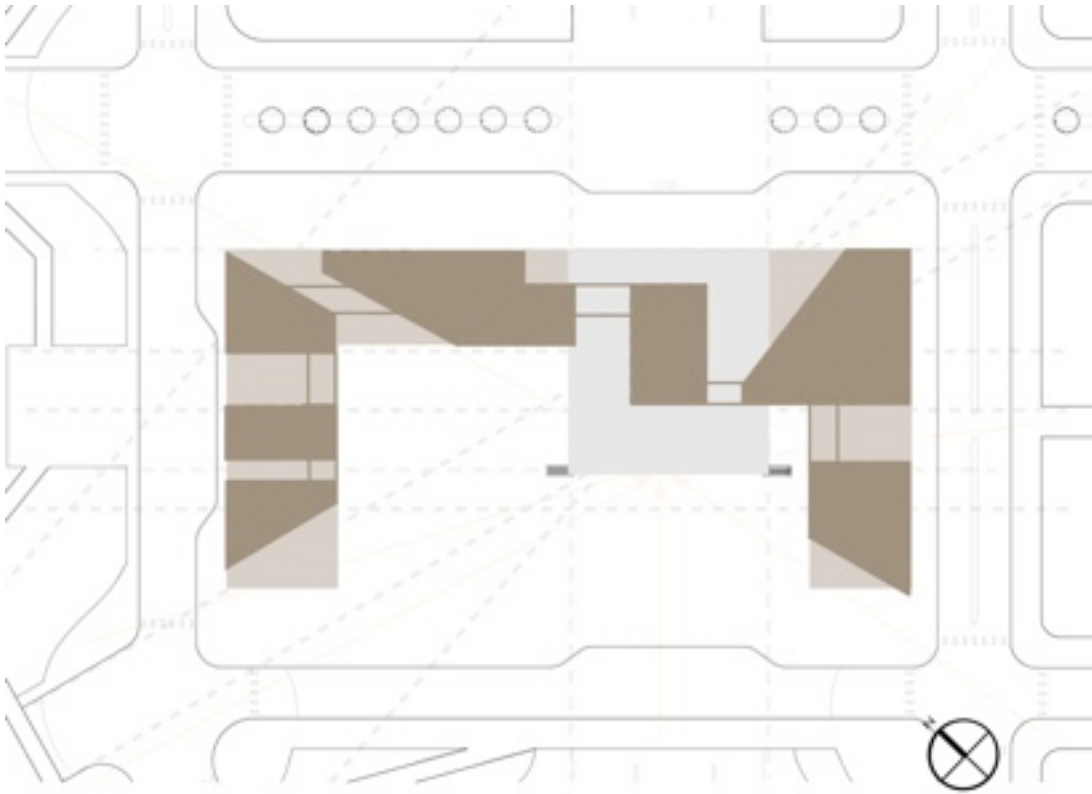


Figure 72: Penetrated Volume
(Source: Author)

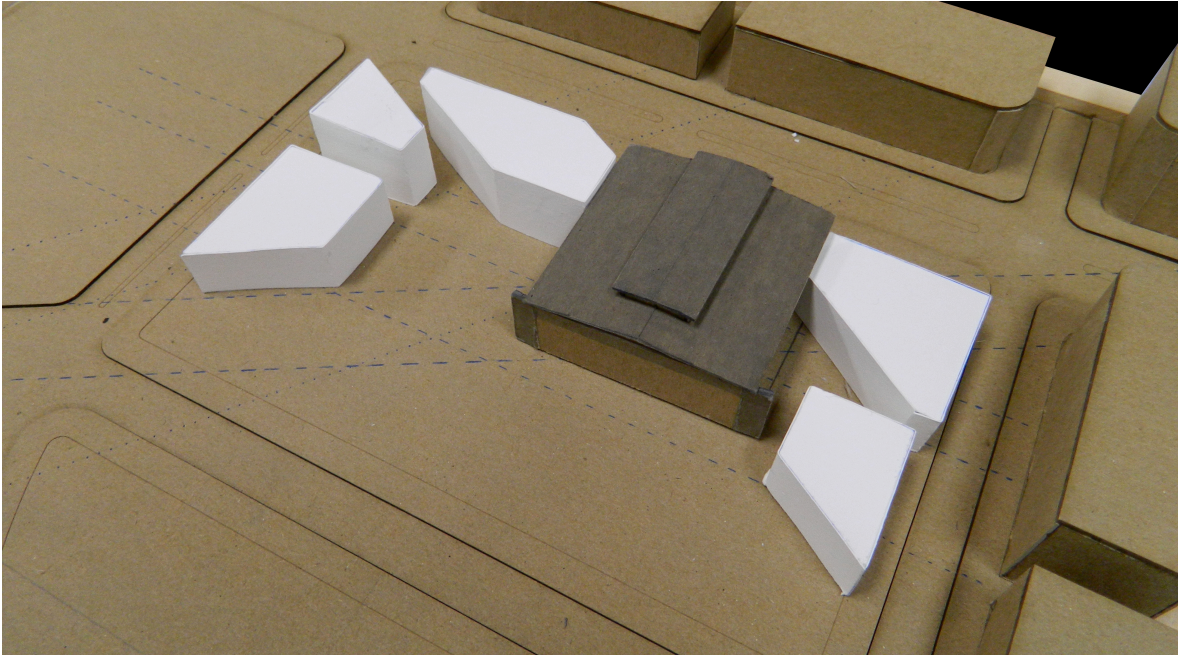


Figure 73: Model of Penetrated Volume
(Source: Author)

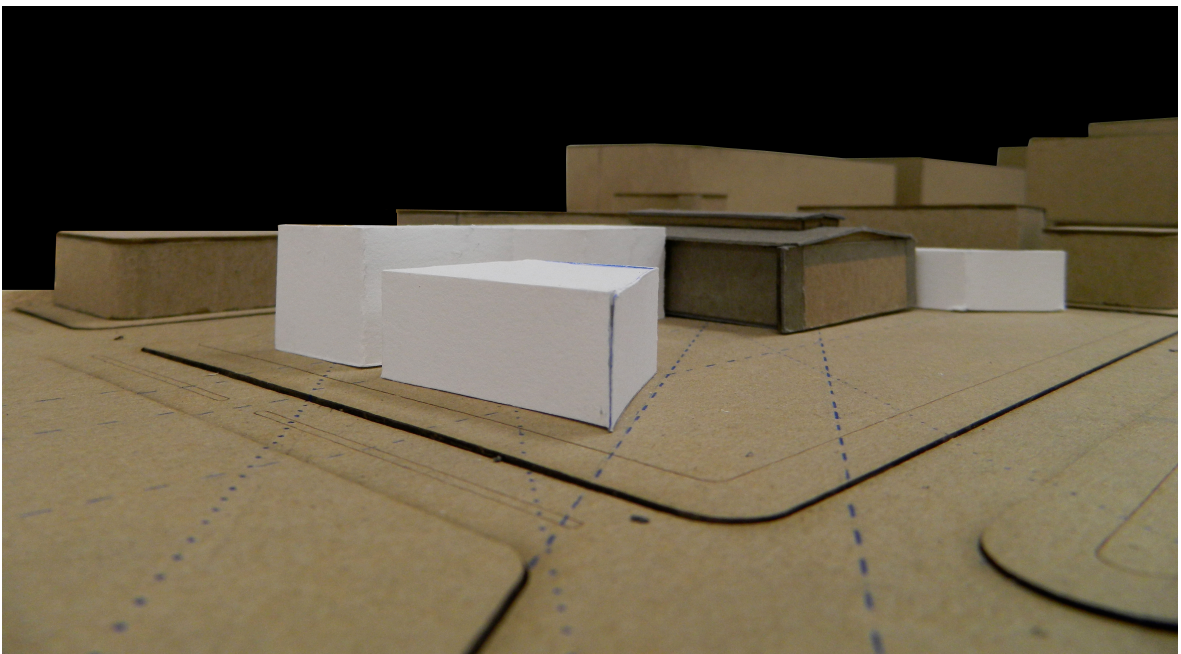


Figure 74: Model of Penetrated Volume
(Source: Author)

The previously traced grid was used to penetrate the site. Figure 72 starts showing mayor changes to the original form and the first steps of incorporating idea of fiction through changes in geometry.

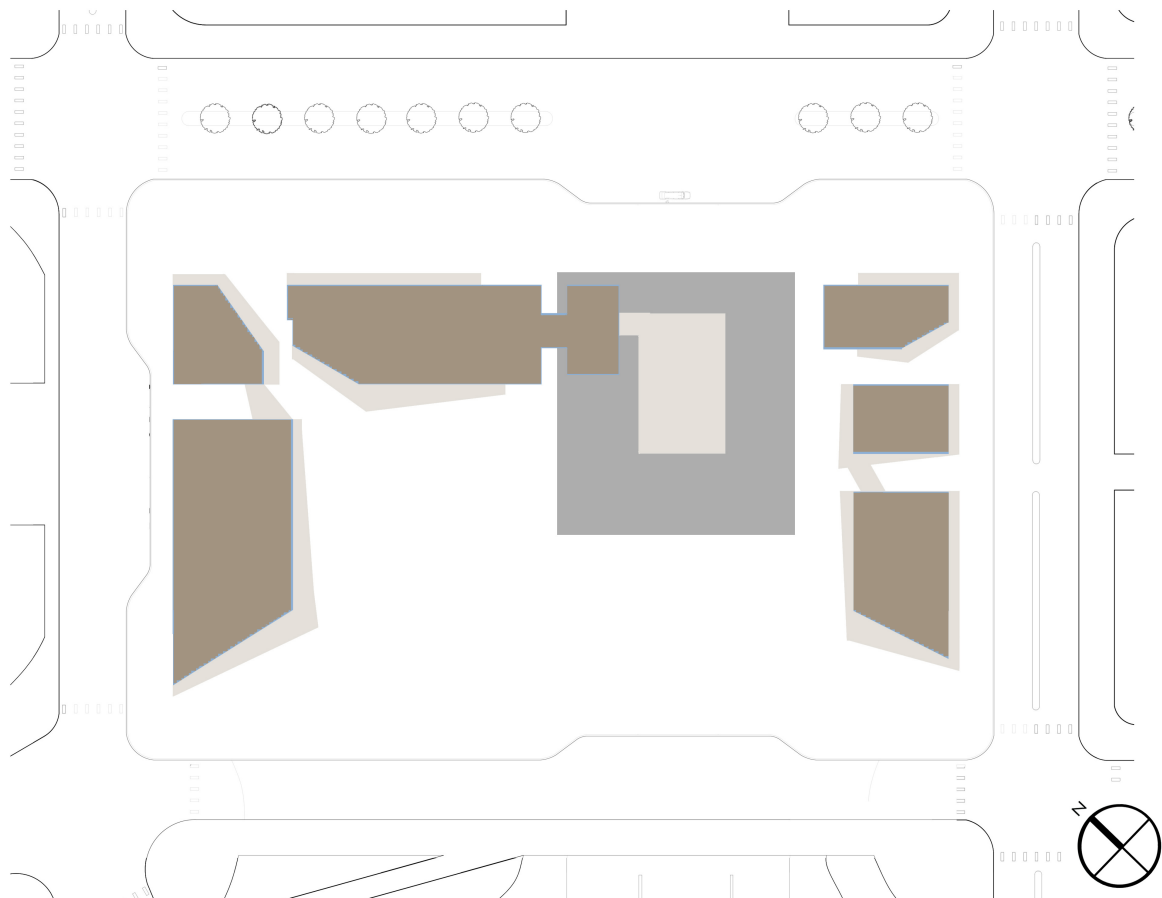


Figure 75: Volumes with angled walls
(Source: Author)

Figure 75 shows the ground level in darker brown and gives an idea of the second level in lighter brown. The second level projects further than the first to provide the perimeter of the ground level with shade.

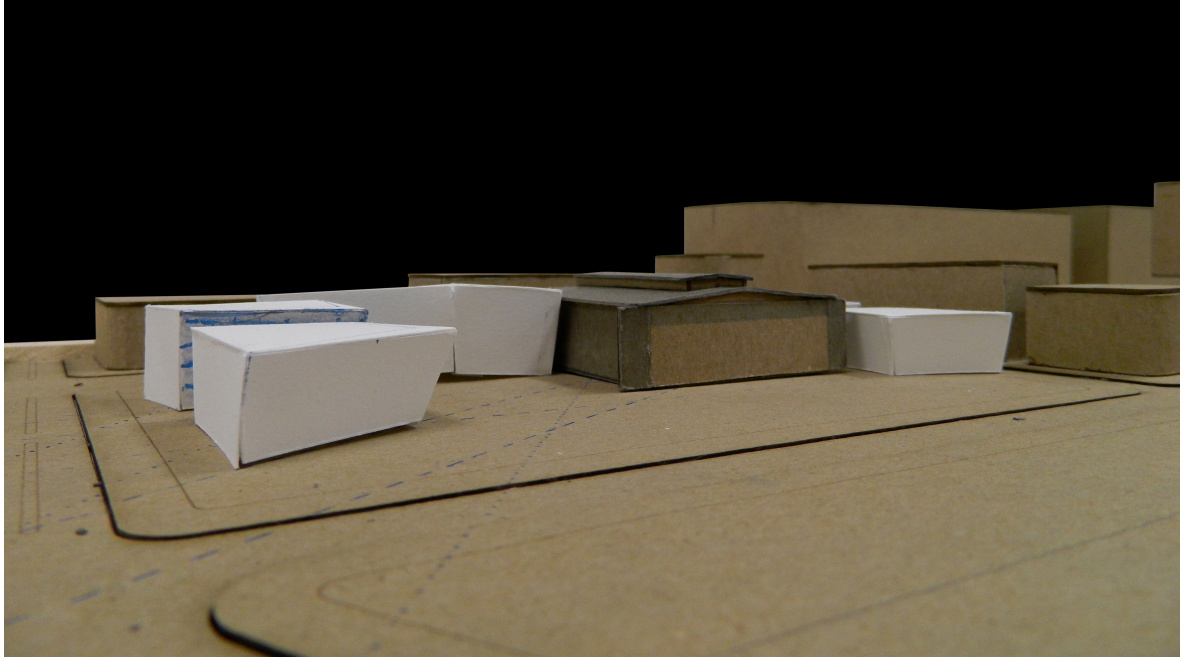


Figure 76: Model of volumes with angled walls
(Source: Author)

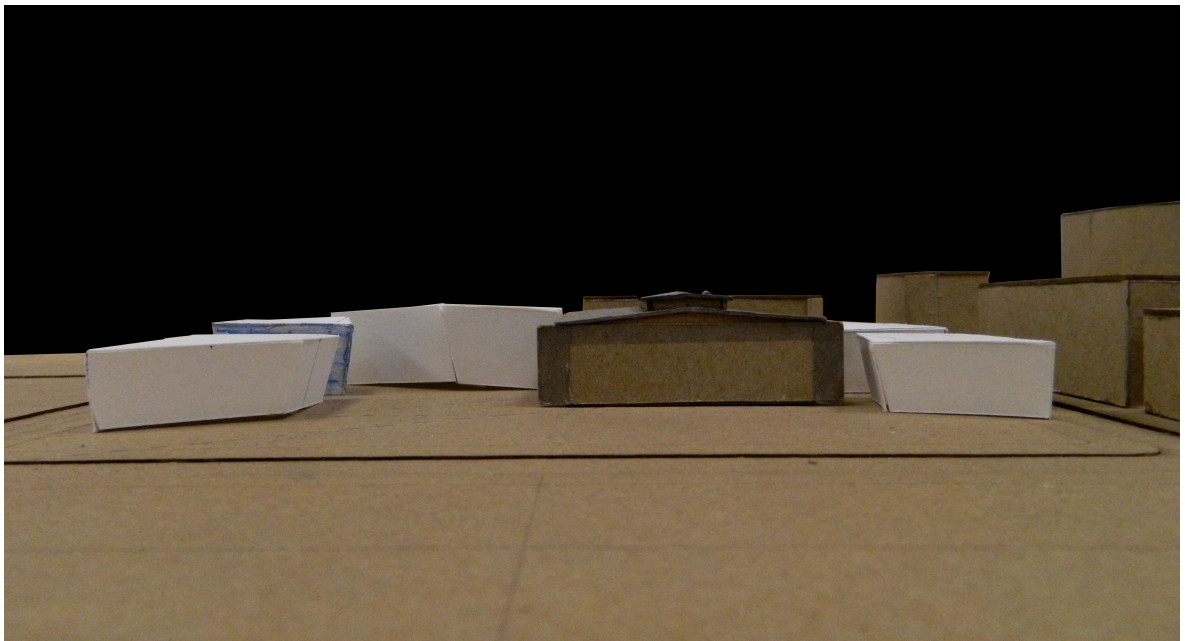


Figure 77: Model of volumes with angled walls
(Source: Author)

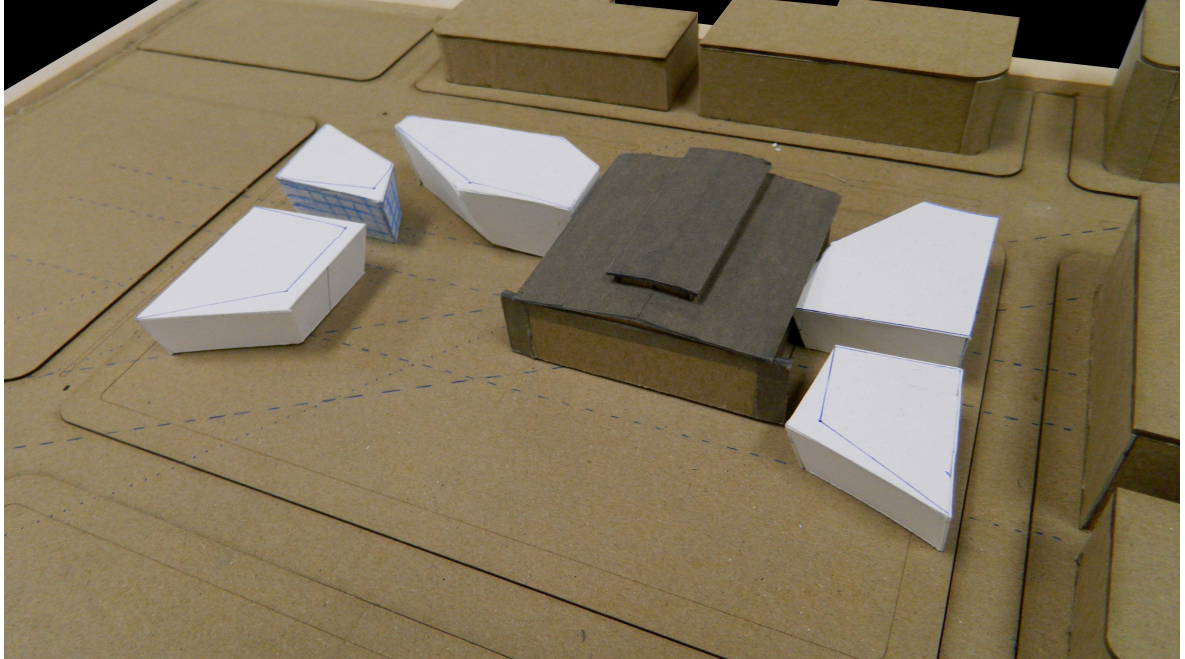


Figure 78: Model of volumes with angled walls
(Source: Author)

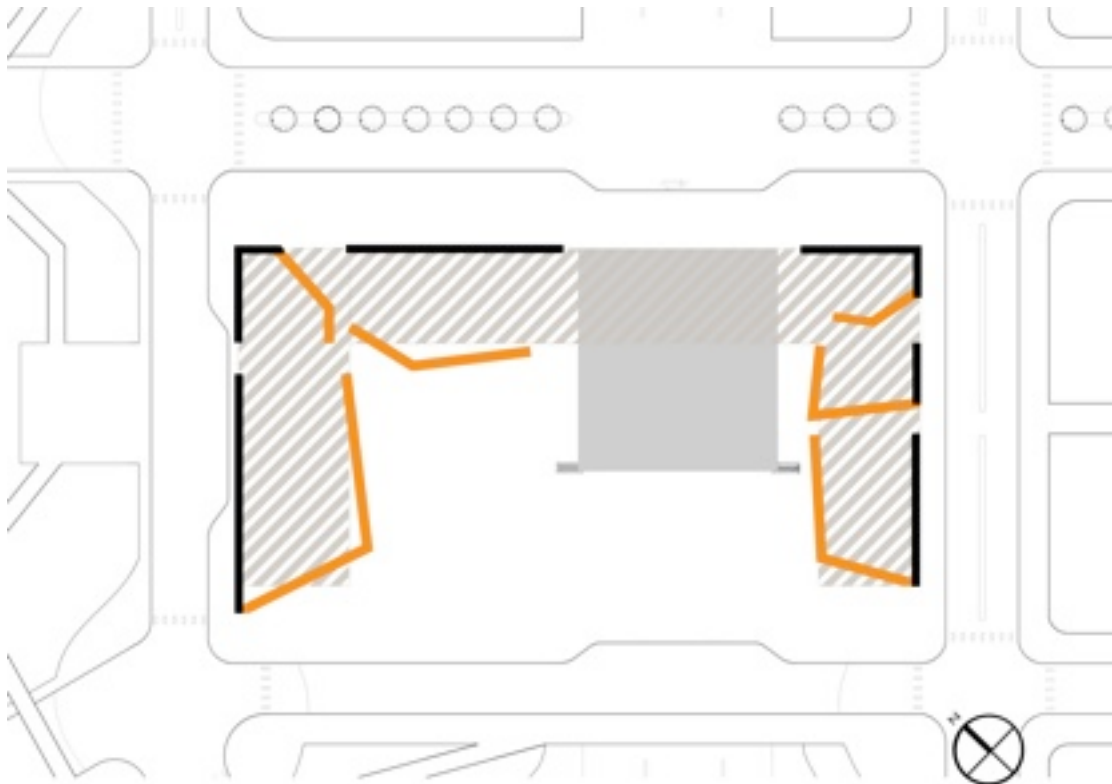


Figure 79: Contrast in Geometry
(Source: Author)

The exterior faces of the volumes maintain straight lines to provide urban continuity. The interior faces of the volumes are rotated to orient views towards the interior of the site and to allow the second level to have more square footage. The rotated faces are also angled to protect the interior of the building and perimeter of the ground level from sunlight (Figure 79)

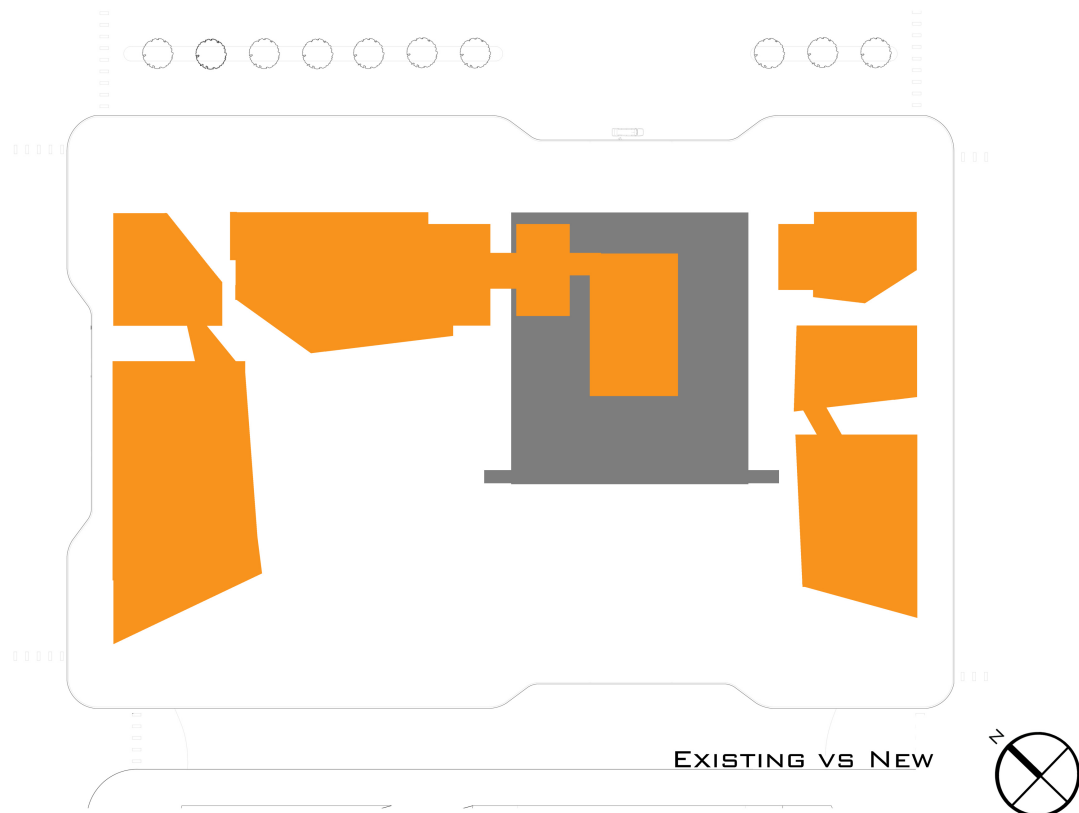


Figure 80: Existing Structure and New Building
(Source: Author)

Figure 80 represents the existing structure, the Hangar building, and the new building, which can also be interpreted as an element of fiction because of the contrast between the two.

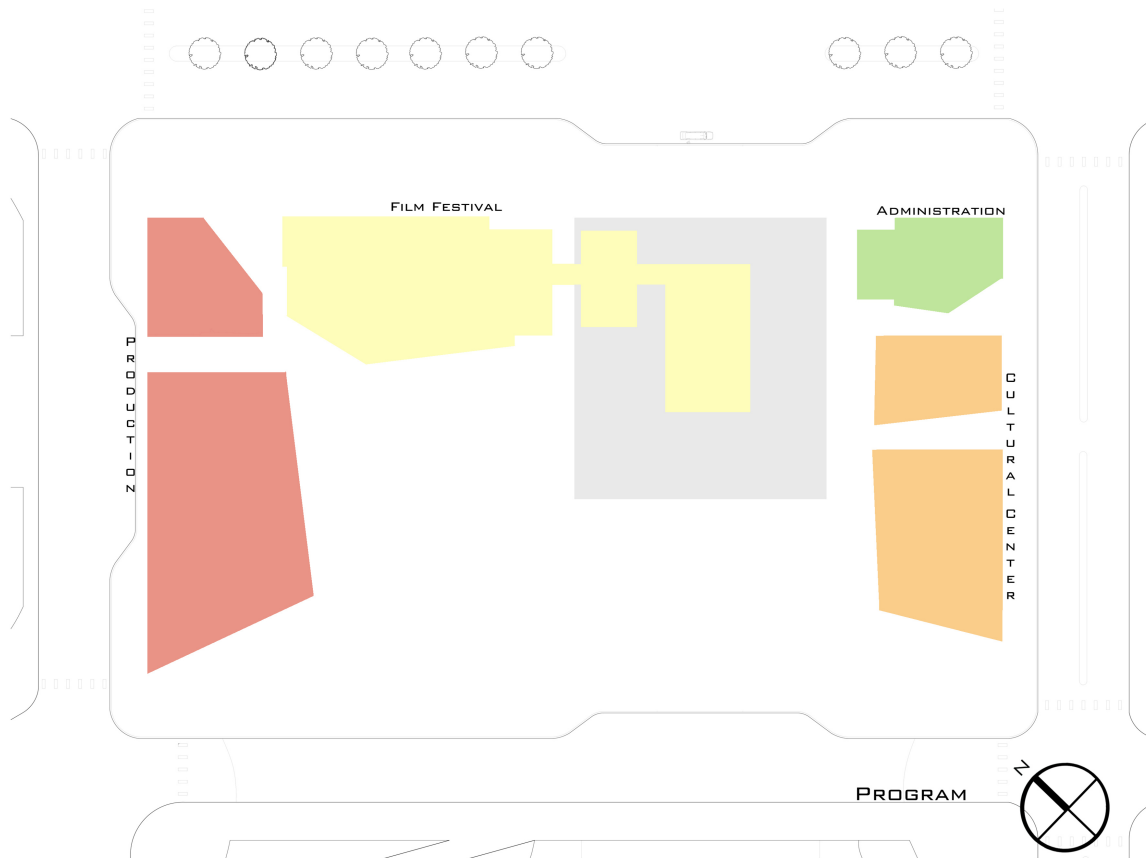


Figure 81: General Program Distribution
(Source: Author)

Figure 81 shows the general distribution of the program, with the production studios on the left, the film festival program next to and inside the hangar, the administrative offices and cultural center on the right. The Film Festival and Cultural Center program are located on the streets with more commercial activity.

Project



Figure 82: General view
(Source: Author)

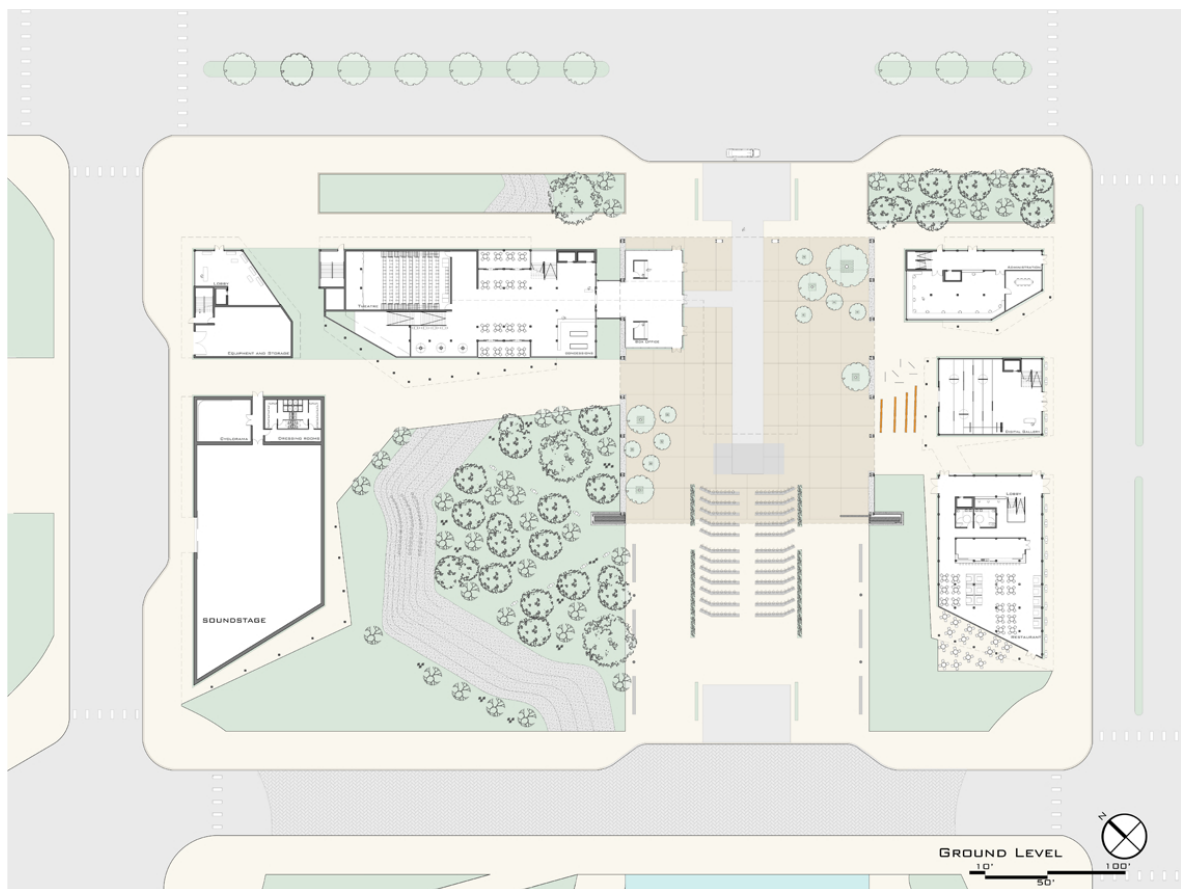


Figure 83: Ground level Floor Plan
(Source: Author)

The ground level has the Film Festival building, which has a theater for 150 people and a concessions area, the Production Studio, the Administration Offices, a Gallery and a Restaurant.

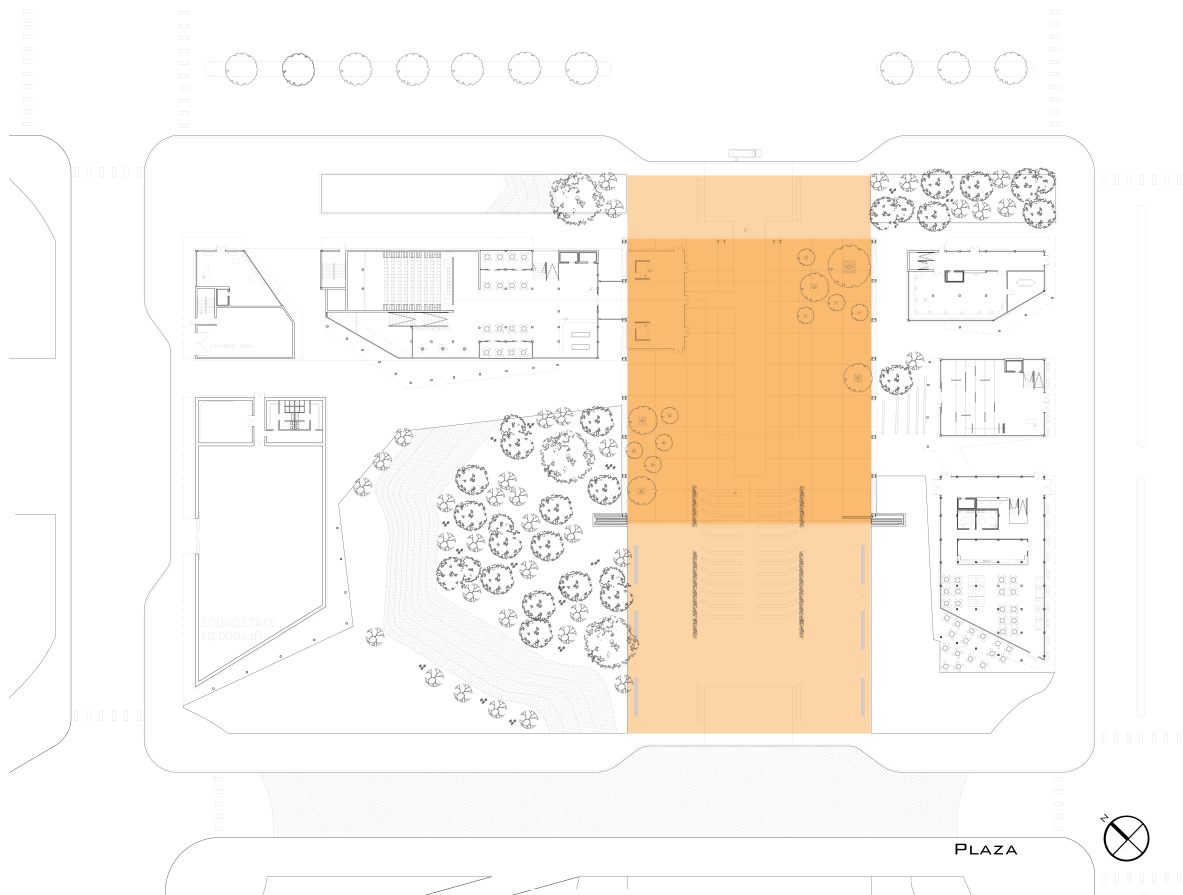


Figure 84: Plaza
(Source: Author)

There is a plaza that crosses beneath the hangar building. It serves as the main entrance to the complex. From this area users can access all parts of the complex. This plaza space also relates to the blocks in front and behind the site (Figure 85). Inside the Hangar building there is a glass volume that had the entrance to the Film Festival building and the Box Office. Also, there is a theater

that hangs from the roof of the Hangar building and has a digital screen on one of its exterior walls that projects movies and other media to a seating area located in the plaza (Figure 86).



Figure 85: Aerial View
(Source: Author)



Figure 86: Plaza theater
(Source: Author)

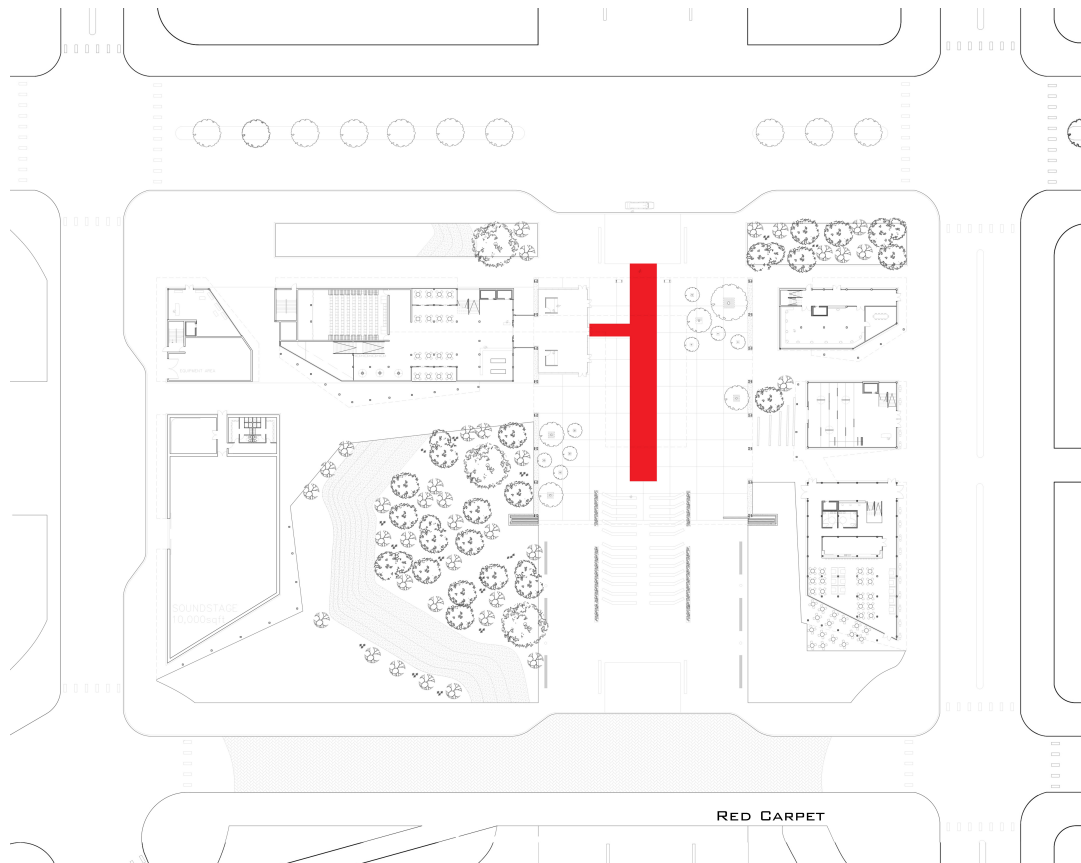


Figure 87: Red Carpet
(Source: Author)

In addition, the red carpet area is located in the plaza underneath the Hangar building (Figure 87).

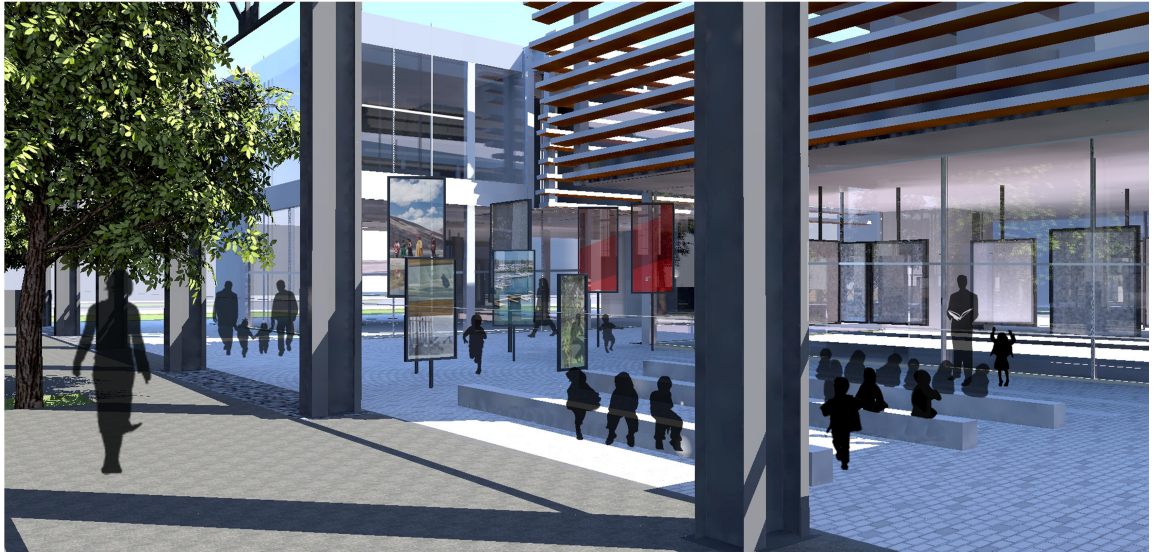


Figure 88: View towards the gallery
(Source: Author)

To the right of the plaza, there is the area of the cultural center with a digital gallery area that comes out to the plaza with a series of screens that project different events around the site. In addition, this area offers a multi use seating area that is also utilized by the library on the second level for activities such as storytelling and talks.

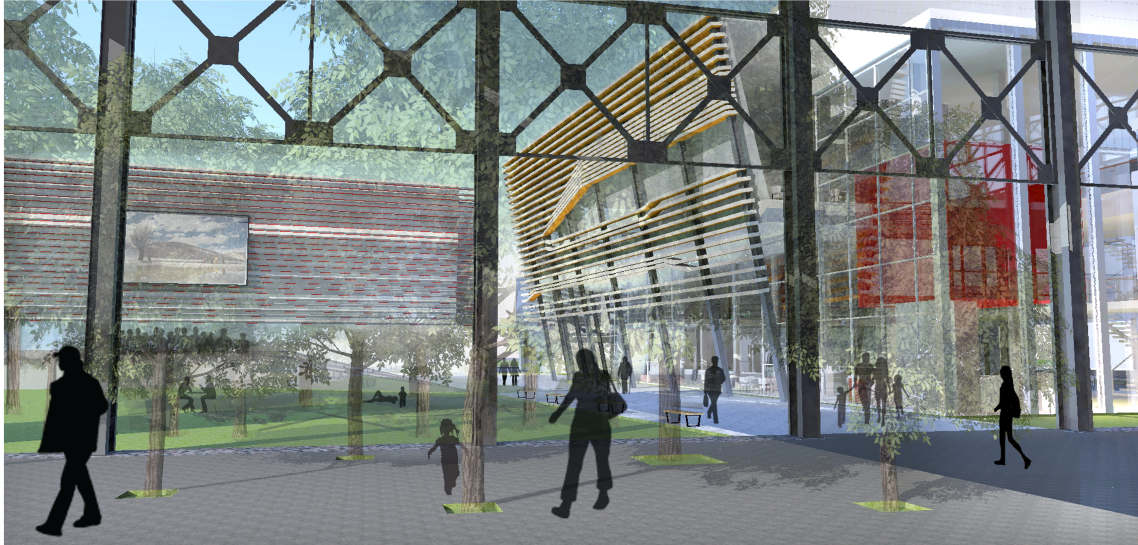


Figure 89: Inside the Hangar
(Source: Author)

Inside the hangar there are tree areas that offer a contrast between the natural and the man-made.



Figure 90: Exterior Seating Area
(Source: Author)

There are areas with exterior seating like the exterior amphitheater in front of the production studio and exterior seating for the restaurant (Figure 90)

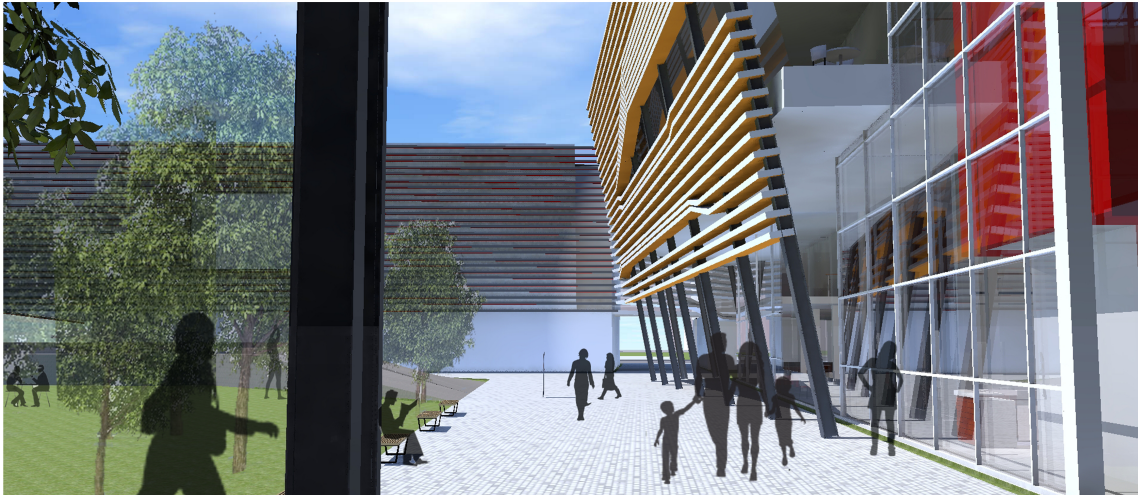


Figure 91: View of side entrance
(Source: Author)

Figure 91 shows the side entrance to the plaza inside the hangar building that passes in front of the Film Festival building. It connects to the park This entrance connects to the park next to the site (Figure 85).



Figure 92: View of Film Festival building lobby
(Source: Author)

Inside the main lobby there is an area to buy concessions and an seating area with tables. From the lobby people can enjoy projections on the screen in the second level.

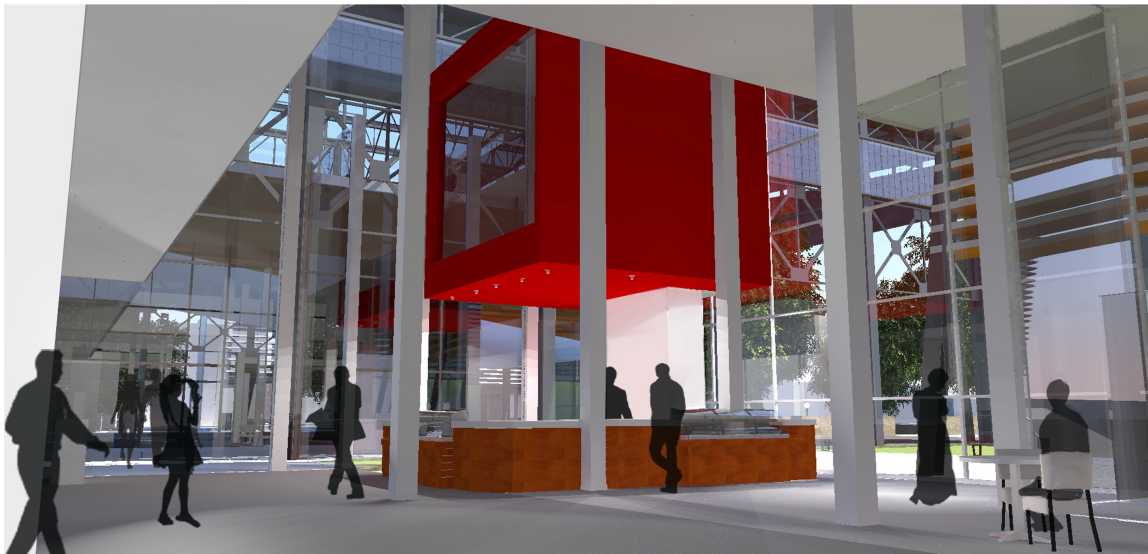


Figure 93: View of the Projection Box
(Source: Author)

Also, from the lobby users have a view of the projection box that controls all the screens in the complex (Figure 93).

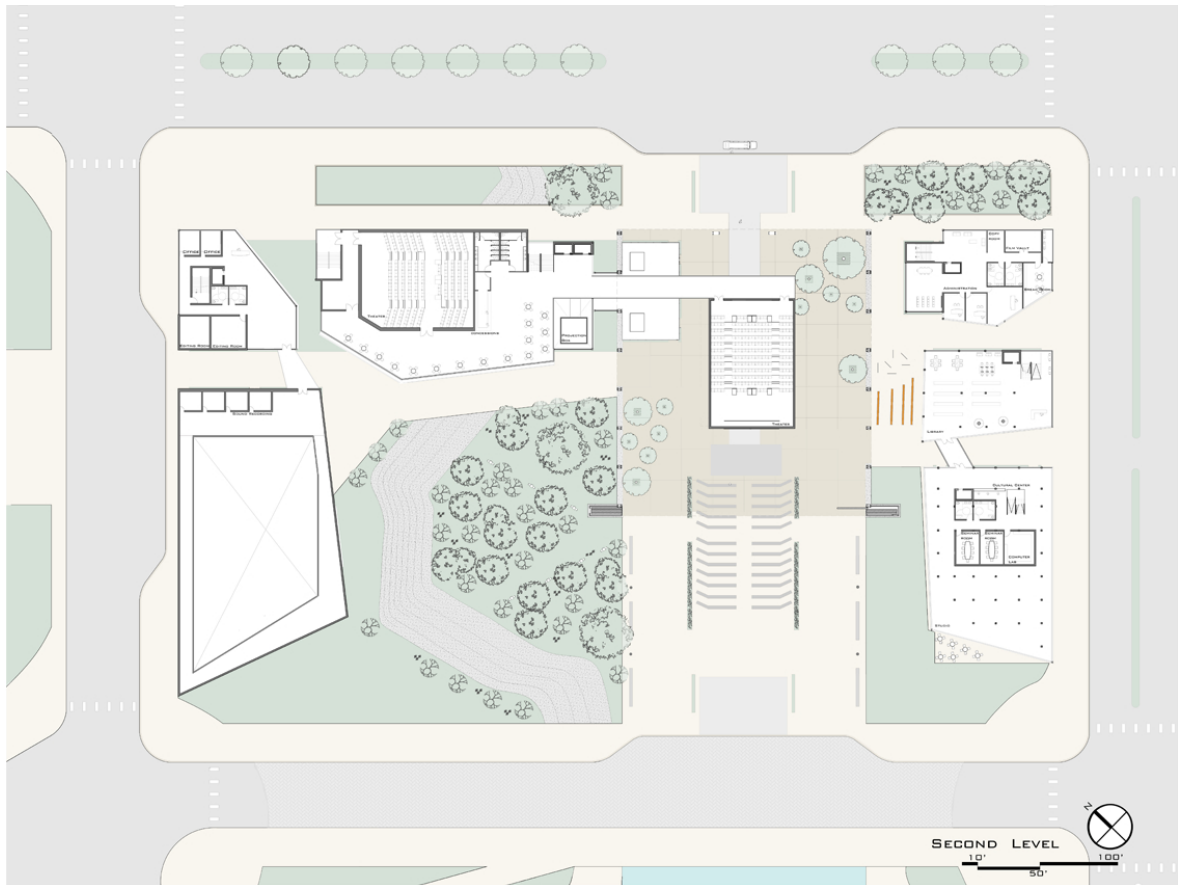


Figure 94: Second Level Floor Plan
(Source: Author)

The second level has the main theater for 400 people, the second level of the Production Studio and supporting spaces, the second level of the Administrative offices, a Library and the Cultural Center. It also contains the access to the theater that hangs from the roof of the Hangar building.



Figure 95: View of the Second level lobby
(Source: Author)

The lobby of the second level has direct views towards the San Juan Bay.



Figure 96: Section
(Source: Author)

The section shows the access to the Hangar theater.

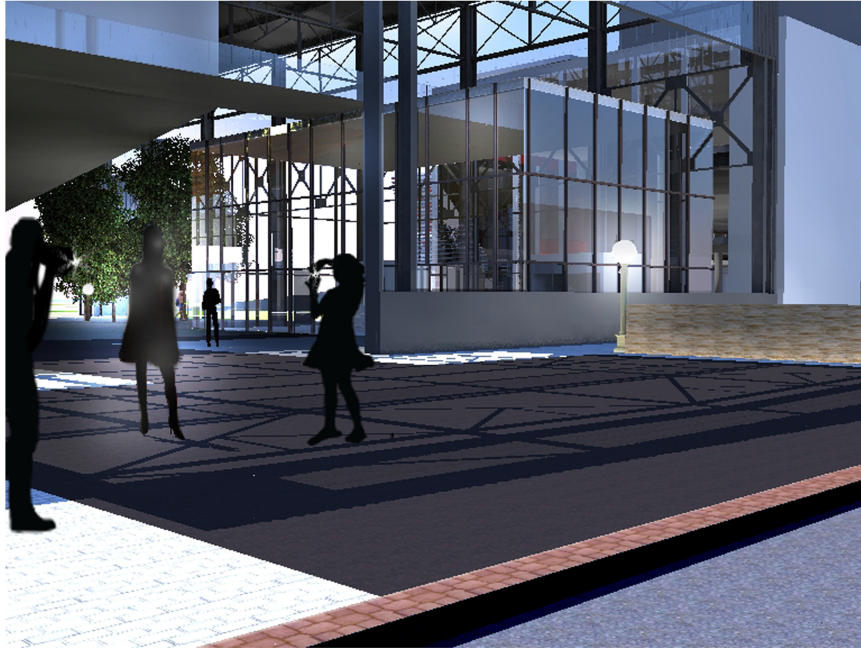


Figure 97: View of back entrance to Hangar plaza
(Source: Author)

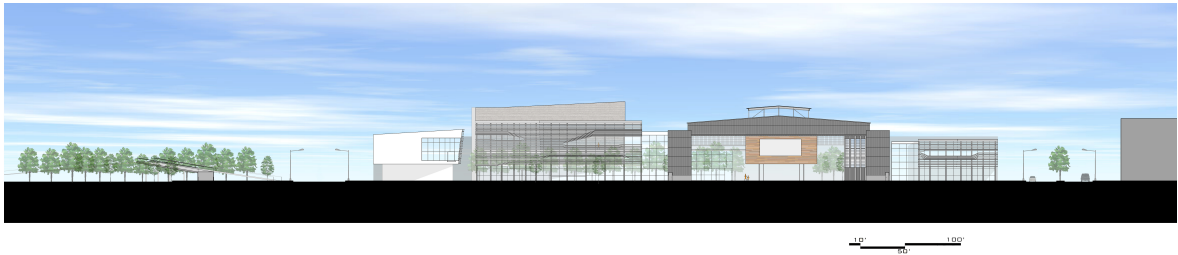


Figure 98: Interior Elevation
(Source: Author)



Figure 99: Northeast Elevation
(Source: Author)

The exterior walls of buildings in the complex are all glazed except the parts of the program that require close and silent environments. The glass is protected by louvers that peel back and open up depending the program inside or to allow views to the bay and the park (Figures 98, 99,100).

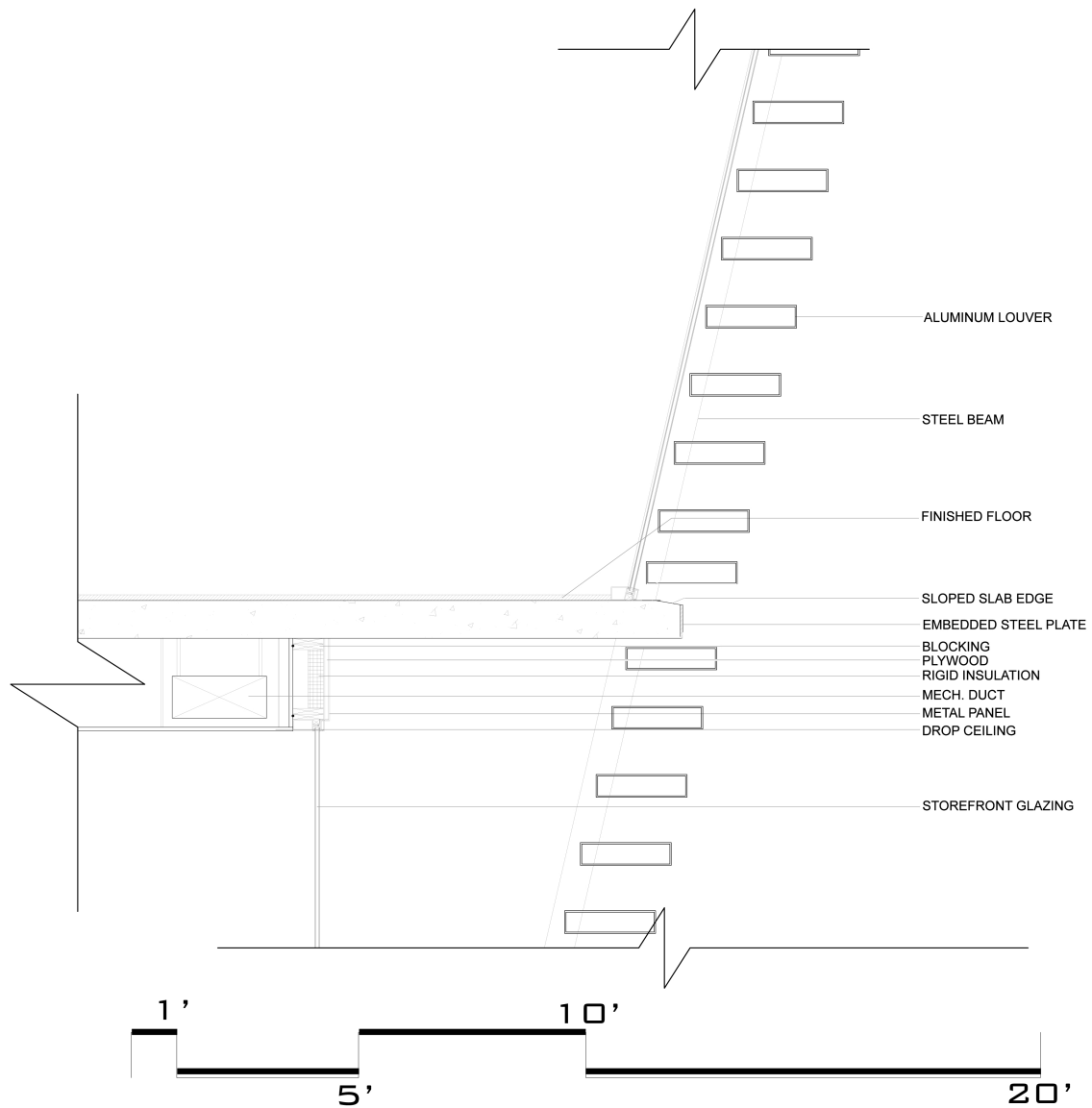


Figure 100: Facade Wall Section
(Source: Author)

Conclusion

During the thesis public presentation of this project, some of the jurors commented about how the idea of reality and fiction would not necessarily be clearly read by the users of the project. Suggestions were made about exploring those ideas further so that they can be more clearly read by users. The original intent of the incorporation of ideas of reality and fiction was not to have a series of defined elements that would represent fiction and reality in the architecture because that would lead to an architecture that is merely symbolic and fictional, instead of a balance between the two. The ideas of reality and fiction are based on the interpretation and experience of contrasting elements and events by the users individually. It is not meant as a global recognition of these elements but a personal experience and perception of them by each individual. Taking into consideration the suggestions of the reviewers, more contrasting element, such as altering the topography and incorporating more digital technologies, could be added that would reinforce the concept and help trigger the perception and interpretation of these ideas of an architecture that is balanced between reality and fiction.

Some comments were made about the influence of the urban grid and view lines in the shaping of the volumes of the project. Jurors questioned the decision of choosing which lines were considered and why. The urban grid and view lines were considered in the process of design as one of the series of inputs that informed the shape of the volumes to allow for better access and guarantee views towards the hangar building, but the decision of which lines influenced more than the others was not clearly expressed in the diagrams. The view lines and the

lines that came from the existing hangar building had more influence over the design than the lines coming from the urban forms (Figure 101). On the other hand, As one juror commented, the PRIFF building is a cultural institution that could stand out from the urban surroundings without needing to follow or be constraint by the urban conditions. If this is considered then the PRIFF building could adopt a more free and contrasting form that could reinforce the ideas of reality and fiction.

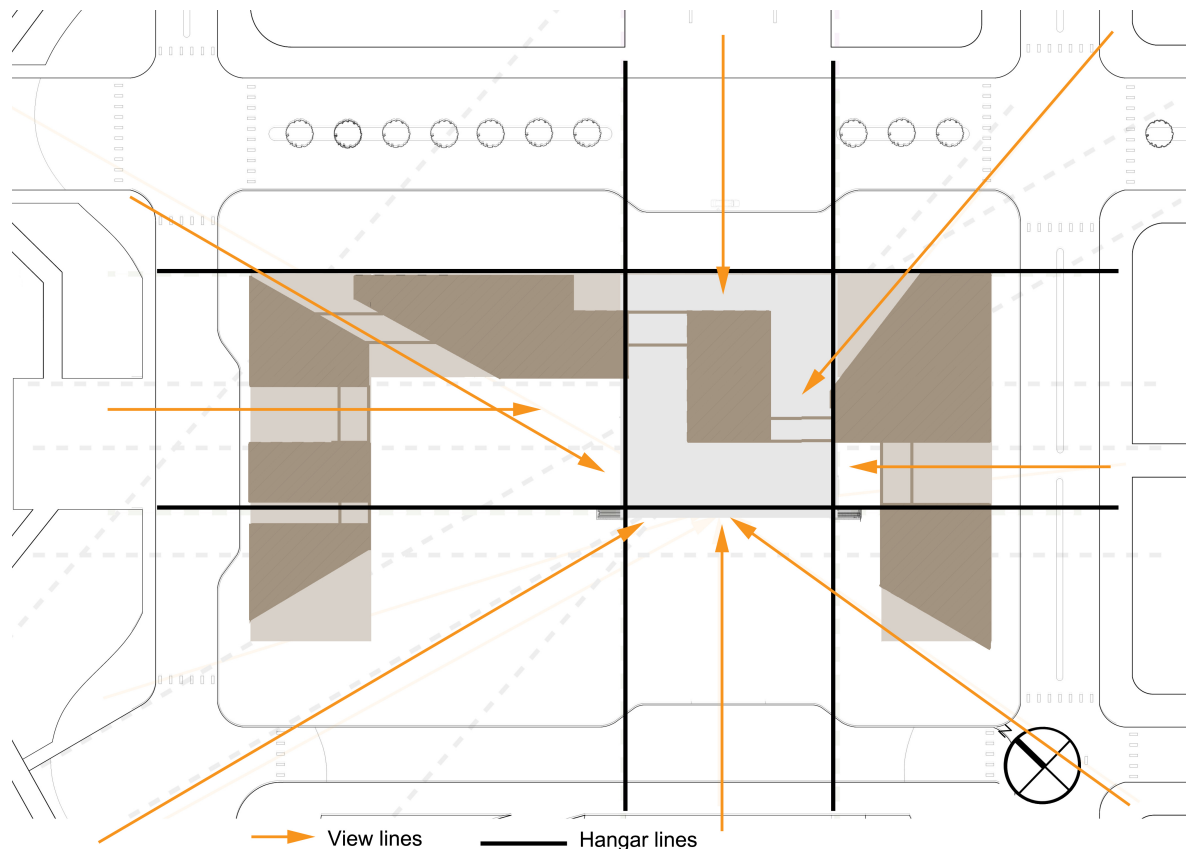


Figure 101:View lines and Hangar lines
(Source: Author)

Another topic that was discussed was the relationship between the project and the park on the left, the plaza in front of it and the waterfront. These relationships need to be studied even further to provide an integration of all the

parts so that each of them can take advantage of the others reinforcing the strength of the PRIFF facility as a cultural institution and prominent location in the San Juan metropolitan area. Also, it was suggested that other issues of inclement weather, like hurricanes, should be considered when designing for a location like Puerto Rico. The facade of the building could be further developed to address these issues and to serve as a protector screen for the areas of the buildings that are made of glass.

Looking at the entire process and experience of this thesis, this project gives the opportunity to consider and study a typology that has only been studied twice before in the headquarters for the Toronto International Film Festival and the Cannes International Film Festival. It offers an awareness of the possibilities and opportunities that this typology provides and how it can easily become a trigger and hub for culture and the making of civic space.

Since this project started at the scale of the city with the design of the master plan for the Isla Grande peninsula, it allowed for the exploration of urban ideas that take into consideration the many attributes of the area as well as its constraints. It also made possible the study and design of a proper site for the PRIFF building to allow it to be a prominent element in the area. Finally, this thesis allowed for architectural explorations at the scale of the building with the design of the headquarters for the festival, the adaptation and reuse of an existing historical building and the creation of public exterior spaces.

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