

REVOLUTION AS FESTIVAL ARCHITECTURE

by

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Bachelor of Architectural Science, Ryerson University, 2009

A thesis

presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture
in the Program of
Architecture

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2017

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Author’s Declaration

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Abstract

This thesis argues that if we as a society value the free expression of social and political matters, our built environment needs to provide more accessible opportunities for individuals or groups to produce their own spatial expression.

In contemporary societies, wealth presents the power to frame the spatial conditions of our living environment. The presence of commercial and economic power overshadows the needs for individual expression through the production of space.

Based on theories concerning the spatialization of power and the production of space developed by Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre, this thesis will propose an architectural response for the spatial existence of free expression in Toronto. It aims to manifest the power of civic action that transforms social and political narratives. In addition, it will propose an architectural intervention designed to express and facilitate the exercise of collective action that challenges the dominant narrative in society.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Marco Polo, for providing me with a theoretical foundation in the development of my exploration, challenging some of my preconceived notions as to architecture’s role in social movements. His enthusiasm, knowledge and patience broadened my understanding of architecture in relation to power structures in societies. Everything I learned in this thesis will shed new light on my career as an architect as well as an instigator of social change.

I would also like to express my gratitude towards my committee members, Cheryl Atkinson and Baruch Zone. Both have played an instrumental role in developing my thesis ideas, and sharing their sincere and candid perspectives regarding my thesis development throughout the year.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family and friends, especially my partner Maya Orzechowska, for their support and encouragement.

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REVOLUTION AS FESTIVAL ARCHITECTURE

the space where they stand into a platform to voice their opposition to the oppress
capacity is critical because it serves a practical and a symbolic function for those who en
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POWER STATION FOR CIVIC ACTION

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THE REVOLUTION IS LIVE



WHAT IF ...
NOBODY FOUGHT FOR **RACIAL EQUALITY**



WHAT IF ...
NOBODY FOUGHT FOR **GENDER EQUALITY**



WHAT IF ...
NOBODY FOUGHT FOR **SEXUAL LIBERTY**

Figure 3

INTRODUCTION

Burning Man is a massive art festival which takes place in the Black Rock Desert in Nevada. Every year from the last Sunday in August to the first Monday in September, thousands of participants gather to create Black Rock City, a temporary community containing experimental sculptures, buildings, performances, art cars and other creative mediums. At the end of the week, all participants depart leaving no trace behind. Its co-founder, Larry Harvey described the event as an experiment in community and art, influenced by principles such as inclusion, self-expression, community cooperation, civic responsibility, de-commodification, and leaving no trace.¹ Burning man is a manifestation of free expression through the production of space. The participants solidify their individual expression through the production of a temporary community, in which each individual affirms their own existence in the Black Rock Desert through spatial production.

Similar to Black Rock City, the manifestation of free expression in our built environment relies on the practitioner's ability to produce space. Legal structures such as Freedom of Speech can provide all members of society the right to address public concerns with regard to civic matters. However, the transformation of shared concerns into actual improvement must rely on the production of space through collective action.

For instance, the 1960s Civil Rights movement confronted the reality of racial inequality in America. Thousands of concerned citizens publicly denounced social policies that undermined the idea of a free society. On August 28, 1963, a leader of Civil Rights Movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. gave the speech "I have a dream" in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Over 250,000 people who gathered to listen to King's speech transformed the National Mall into a spatial expression of King's message to the American government. (Figure 4) The ability of the Civil Rights movement to influence the decision making process would have remained as a discourse if it had not been exercised in the built environment. King's speech would not have had the same impact without the spatial expression in the public realm of the National Mall.

1. "The 10 Principles of Burning Man," last modified 2016, <http://burningman.org/culture/philosophical-center/10-principles/>



Figure 4



This thesis argues that if we as a society value the free expression of social and political matters, our built environment needs to provide more accessible opportunities for individuals and groups to produce their own spatial expression. The goal is to propose an architectural response for the spatial existence of free expression in Toronto. It aims to manifest the power of civic action that transforms social and political narratives. In addition, it will propose an architectural intervention designed to express and facilitate the exercise of collective action that challenges the dominant narrative in society. This will involve a review of critical and theoretical discussions of architecture's role in the expression and spatialization of power, and an analysis of case studies of civic action that challenges the dominant power structure.



Figure 5

Chapter one will examine the ways in which architecture had been used to represent power as outcomes. Using case studies such as Adolf Hitler's architectural vision of Welthauptstadt Germania (World Capital Germania), Haussmann's renovation of Paris and Casa del Fascio in Como, by Italian rationalist architect Giuseppe Terragni, this chapter will highlight that monumentality cannot express the spontaneous nature of civic action. Furthermore, in order to identify the power of free expression, this thesis will examine Michel Foucault's theory of the spatialization of power, in which he proposes that power operates through a network of social relations, and the transformation of power relations exists through physical space. The objective is to use the findings to explore architecture as a spatial expression for the exercise of civic action.

The power of free expression can remain as an abstraction without the spatial means for its existence. In an inclusive society, the public realm is a collective expression of different social existences. Interaction of different social backgrounds and beliefs take place in the fabric of our built environment. An alternative narrative can be produced through civic action, in which people with shared concerns produce temporary spatial expressions, such as demonstrations, to challenge the status quo in the built environment.

Based on Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, in which the ability to produce space is instrumental to any social existence, chapter two will examine the relationship between spatial production and the agency of civic action. This will involve an analysis of case studies such as the events of May 1968 in Paris, the Toronto Pride movement and the mass arrest at the Toronto G-20 summit in 2010. The objective is to explore architecture's capacity to facilitate the exercise of civic action as spatial production.

In the final chapter, this thesis will propose design strategies that can express the production of civic action. The proposed design aims to accommodate various scales and forms of gathering, and explore spatial flexibility that supports spontaneous events. Furthermore, a productive environment that is capable of supporting both collaborative and independent work will be provided in conjunction with the proposed programs.

EXPRESSION OF POWER

- Power as a Relational concept
- Spatialization of Power
 - Case Studies
- Conclusion

The first part of this chapter will analyze civic action using Michel Foucault's theory of power relations. The objective is to identify the power of civic engagement as a relational concept, in which the mechanism that transforms social conditions exists through civic action.

In order to explore the role of architecture in the expression of power, the second part of this chapter will examine Foucault's theory of the spatialization of power, and investigate case studies of architecture and urban planning that express the narrative of dominant power structures. The objective is to use the findings to propose an architectural intervention that is suitable for expressing the power of civic engagement.

Power as a relational concept

In order to identify the power of civic engagement, this thesis proposes that power is a relational concept rather than an independent force. According to Foucault, the exercise of power exists as a mechanism or procedure operated by two interdependent elements. Instead of viewing power as a direct tool for suppressing or controlling the behaviour of others, Foucault analyzed the way power is applied in social relations.

In a 1978 lecture at the Collège de France, Foucault argued that power is not a substance that derives from a particular source, it is a reciprocal relation that can establish, maintain or transform mechanisms of power.² The relational concept of power can be explained using common social relations, such as medical practice where the knowledge of medicine enables the power relation of doctors and patients to exist. The mechanism of power in this relationship revolves around the practice of medical procedures that provide healthcare for those who need it. The objective of this relation is not to subject patients to doctors' power, but to establish and maintain the operation of medical care and services.

2. Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population - Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*. Edited by Michel Senellart, translated by Graham Burchell. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2007): 17.

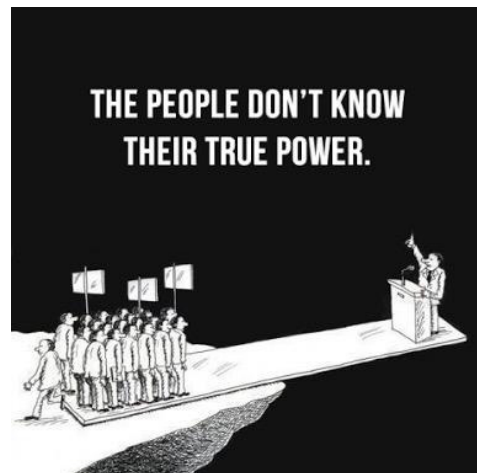


Figure 6

According to Foucault, a power relation does not imply consent, it is understood that the outcome of action from either side of a power relation is dependent on the reaction of the opposite side. He wrote; *"a power relationship can only be articulated on the basis of two elements which are each indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that 'the other' (the one over whom power is exercised) be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up."*³ The power relationship between doctor and patient exists only if the patient is willing to recognize and respond to the doctor's action. In other words, power relations operate in a circular way, in which the mechanism can induce power over its subject and be effected by the subject's reaction.⁴

In regard to the exercise of civic action, the rights to freedom of speech and expression give power to ordinary citizens to address their concerns on political, social or cultural issues. Individuals or groups in societies can manifest this power through civic action such as petition, demonstration and sit-in. These collective efforts can be interpreted as mechanisms of power that were established by the relations between controlling powers such as government and their subjects. Foucault described the relationship between the power of government regulations and the reactions of the populace as interdependent relationships in societies. (Figure 6) He noted: *"government not only has to deal with a territory, with a domain, and with its subjects, but that it also has to deal with a complex and independent reality that has its own laws and mechanisms of reaction, its regulations as well as its possibilities of disturbance. This new reality is society."*⁵ Based on Foucault's theory, our societies can be considered as networks of relations, where social or political issues present unstable elements that provoke action and resistance. In order to transform social conditions, the power of civic engagement exerts its mechanism in the form of civic action to contest the power of dominant narratives.

3. Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power." *Critical Inquiry*, Volume 8, Number 4, Summer, 1982, 777-795, (The University of Chicago Press): 789.

4. Foucault. *"Security, Territory, Population"*. 2007: 17.

5. Foucault, Michel. "Space, Knowledge and Power." In *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow, 239-256. (New York: Pantheon. 1984.): 242.

Spatialization of Power

The system of power relations proposes a concept of power structure in which actions and reactions operate in a circular way. It is an on-going phenomenon that takes place in our everyday life. Since physical space is necessary for any human relations to operate, our built environment plays an important role in the expression of power relations. Foucault recognizes the capacity of space to create constraints or offer access for human actions in power relations. In *Spatialization of Power*, a discussion of the work of Michel Foucault, Gwendolyn Wright and Paul Rabinow note that Foucault's concept of power relations can transform into the actual exercise of power through the use of space.⁶ To further the example of power relations between doctors and patients, a hospital embodies the spatialization of power in which medical knowledge gives doctors power over their patients through the space of hospital. In order to explore the role of architecture in the expression of power relations, the following section will analyze case studies of architecture and urban planning using Foucault's theory of the spatialization of power. The objective is to understand the ways in which power operates in the built environment, and the expression of power through architecture.

Case studies

Since the built environment is controlled by those who possess the resources to build, the expression of power can be alienating when architecture's expression is used to represent power as an end. This phenomenon is explored in Deyan Sudjic's book, *The Edifice Complex*, in which he argues that architecture has been used as propaganda to glorify personal interests. Those who hold power use building materials, technologies, scale and formal expression to shape the world. Sudjic uses Adolf Hitler's plan to renovate Berlin as an example of how architecture is used as a representation of power.

Welthauptstadt Germania was Hitler's plan to renovate the capital of Germany, Berlin, after his anticipated victory of World War II. It was an urban renewal project for Berlin, which Hitler believed was too provincial and unfit to represent the Third Reich. Albert Speer, the first architect of the Third Reich designed a new chancellery for Hitler as part of the beginning of Hitler's grand vision. Its scale was deliberately and exaggeratedly oversized to intimidate both visitors and the population at large, with halls that were 30 feet high and doorways that were 17 feet high. Other examples of Speer's proposed monumental

6. Wright, Gwendolyn, and Paul Rabinow. "Spatialization of Power – A Discussion of the Work of Michel Foucault." *Skyline March* (1982): 14-15.

architecture included a 400,000 seats stadium (Figure 7) and a gigantic, 1,000 foot high dome that would have accommodated 180,000 people (Figure 8).

Hitler's Germania is an example of the use of architecture to represent a totalitarian power. Its architectural style and expression resembled that of ancient Rome, which in Hitler's mind represented the image of a victorious race and dominant civilization. Hitler's master plan was intended to be a monument that reminds those who do not have the means to build that they have no ability to form their own individuality. According to Sudjic, "To imagine the completion of Germania is to imagine the victory of Adolf Hitler."⁷



Figure 7

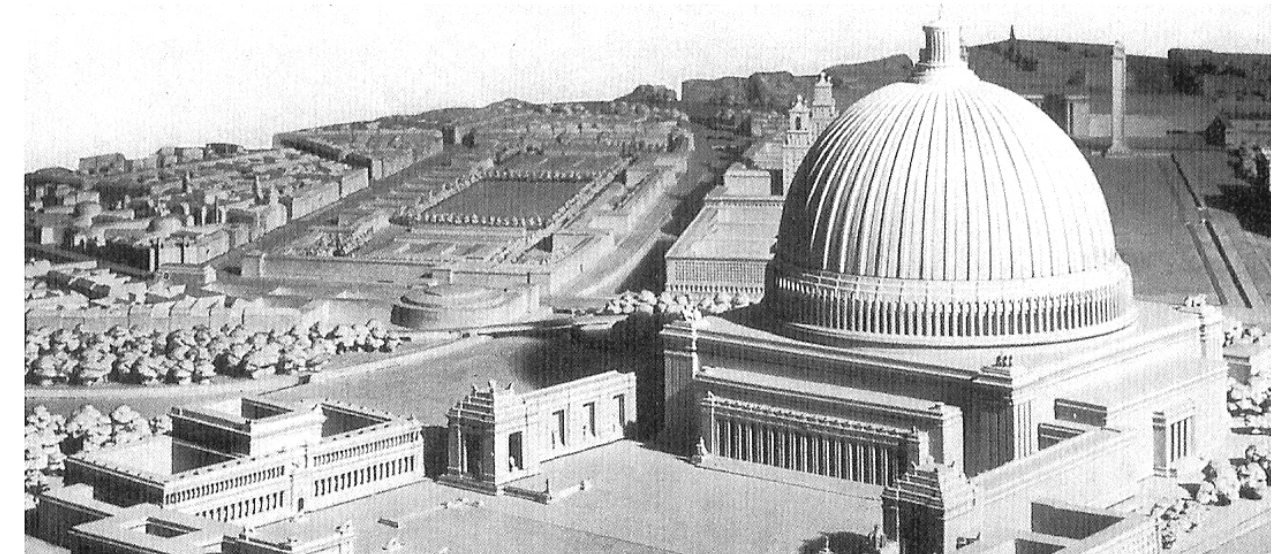


Figure 8

7. Sudjic, Deyan. *The Edifice Complex: How the Rich and Powerful Shape the World*. (London: Penguin Books Ltd. 2005): 45

The expression of a centralized and dictatorial power can be imposed by architecture's concrete presence. Germania is a clear example in which architecture was designed to intimidate its beholder into submission. Although Hitler's plan was never realized, another large scale urban renewal scheme imposed by a centralized power succeeded decades before Hitler's master plan. The renovation of Paris by Baron Georges-Eugene Haussmann between 1853 and 1870, represents an example of dramatic modification in the relation of power and space. The power relations between the French second empire at the time and the daily life of the Parisian population was modified through the renovation of space.

According to Foucault, architecture can be used as a technique or function to address the order of a society. It reflects the dominant power's interest or belief that shapes the built environment. He noted, "... one sees the development of reflection upon architecture as a function of the aims and techniques of the government of societies. One begins to see a form of political literature that addresses what the order of a society should be, what a city should be, given the requirements of the maintenance of order; given that one should avoid epidemics, avoid revolts, permit a decent and moral family life, and so on."⁸ Similar to Germania, the value of Haussmann's renovation of Paris was predetermined by a small and powerful group of elite. It expresses the power to demolish an existing power relation and replace it with a new one, where commercial and economic interests take precedence.

The built environment of Paris before the renovation presented many challenges such as unhealthy living conditions and poor traffic circulation. These conditions were contrary to the way Napoléon III, who seized power with the help of a military coup in 1851, envisioned Paris. He gave a public speech in 1852, declaring: "Paris is the heart of France. Let us apply our efforts to embellishing this great city. Let us open new streets, make the working class quarters, which lack air and light, more healthy, and let the beneficial sunlight reach everywhere within our walls"⁹ The renovation of Paris was the spatialization of a new order of the city fabric. On one hand, it brought healthier living conditions to Paris by improving the sewer system, aqueducts and parks. The renovation also greatly improved circulation within the city by replacing narrow and overcrowded streets with wide boulevards. (Figure 9) On the other hand, Haussmann introduced a new spatial identity to Paris by demolishing many historical part of the city. He commissioned the construction of

8. Foucault, Michel. "Space, Knowledge and Power." In *The Foucault Reader*. Edited by Paul Rabinow, 239-256. (New York: Pantheon. 1984.): 239

9. de Moncan, Patrice. "*Le Paris d'Haussmann*." (Les Éditions du Mécène, 2012): 28



Figure 9

two new railroad stations, six new theatres including the Paris Opera (now Palais Garnier), a new network of municipal schools, the reconstruction and enlargement of the city's oldest hospital - the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris - and several new markets, including the reconstruction of Les Halles, the central market, replacing the old market buildings with large glass and iron pavilions, designed by Victor Baltard.

Although Haussmann was dismissed in 1870, the renovation continued until its final completion in 1927. During his 17 year tenure, Haussmann was met with praise as well as criticism. There have been debates about the purpose of the boulevards other than connecting the city's many new landmarks such

as the train terminals, the Paris Opera and markets. Anthony Vidler argues In “*The Scene of the Street: Transformations in Ideal and Reality, 1750-1871*”, that the boulevards’ other function is to allow quick deployment of troops for suppressing armed uprisings. Paris had experienced several periods of urban unrest before the renovation, all in the narrow streets. The conception of wide boulevards was supposed to make smaller forces who fought in uprisings more vulnerable to artillery fire. Soon after the collapse of the French Second Empire, a radical socialist revolution called the Paris Commune occupied Paris from March 18 to May 28, 1871. Vidler argues that the great long avenues allowed the Versailles troops to use artillery fire against the Commune’s barricades. He wrote: “The triumph of the Versaillese was the signal for the massacre of the inmates of the rebellious city”.¹⁰

In May 1968, several general strikes as well as occupations of universities and factories across France brought the entire economy to a halt. Paris was once again the centre of demonstrations, where students and workers used cobble stones and automobiles to build barricades on major boulevards. Hundreds of thousands of protesters held back the police and took control of several civic buildings. Due to popular support for the insurrection, military intervention was planned but not deployed on the streets of Paris. Haussmann’s boulevards were instead claimed by the public mass to demonstrate its discontent. Eventually, the strikes forced the government to hold parliamentary elections on June 23, 1968.

Power relations can be applied through spatial means such as public streets to transform mechanisms of power. In the case of Haussmann’s boulevards, they served both the mechanism of suppression as well as resistance. To Foucault, physical space cannot be a dedicated force for liberation or resistance. When asked if he could think of any example of architecture that has a liberating effect, Foucault responded; “I think that it can never be inherent in the structure of things to guarantee the exercise of freedom. The guarantee of freedom is freedom”¹¹

The previous examples highlight architecture’s role in using built form to express power relations as outcomes. Subsequently, the subjects of these power relations used collective action as a mechanism to transform the spatial expression of power. According to Foucault, the mechanism of power can be both the cause and effect of a power relation.¹² Therefore, collective actions can be applied through space to

10. Vidler, Anthony. *The scenes of the street and other essays* (New York: The Monacelli Press. 2011): 113

11. Foucault, “Space, Knowledge and Power.” (1984.): 245



Figure 10

challenge as well as to support a dominant power. The following case study will examine Casa del Fascio (House of Fascism) in Como, Italy, at which the power relation of the Fascist government and the public was shaped through the manipulation of collective action in public space.

Casa del Fascio is the work of Italian architect Giuseppe Terragni. It was built to function as a party headquarters for the National Fascist Party in Como. The four storey building is approximately a half cube, with the height of the building set at almost half the dimension of its square base. The four facades are entirely finished with white marble. The minimal exteriors made them ideal spaces for showcasing the Fascist narrative such as a large portrait of the leader of the Nation Fascist Party, Benito Mussolini. (Figure 10) The simplicity and clarity of Casa del Fascio’s formal expression can be conceived as a modernist representation of a new cultural identity under the Fascist regime.

12. Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population - Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*. Edited by Michel Senellart, translated by Graham Burchell. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2007): 17.

The interior space is configured around a two storey high atrium located in the centre of the building. It features a glass tiled ceiling that brings natural light to the interior space. On the ground floor, the atrium served as a meeting hall that can host up to 250 people for public gatherings. The spatial openness of the atrium contained those in the meeting hall under the surveillance of the National Fascist Party. (Figure 11) Terragni, who referred to the masses as a disciplined and orderly crowd,¹³ designed Casa del Fascio as a place at which the formation and circulation of the public mass could be controlled through the expandable space between the interior and exterior. The public square in front of the building and the meeting hall are separated by a continuous series of eighteen glass doors, located at the main entrance. On some occasions, all the doors would be opened to connect the meeting hall with the public square, creating a continuous public space.¹⁴

The Fascist ideology did not consider power as a relational concept in which the public could influence the narrative of the Fascist Party. Conversely, the power structure was supplied by the Fascist ideology and applied through the spatial condition of Casa del Fascio. "Terragni's aim was to create a building that was the spatial representation of a specific aesthetic, ideology and view of history, but also it intended to redefine, through a poetics of spatial experience, the notion of public space under Fascism, in terms of the visualization of the spatial relationship between power and people."¹⁵



Figure 11

Casa del Fascio attempted to provide a visualization of public support for the Fascist regime through the use of public space. (Figure 12) The collective participation and identity of the Fascist subject were controlled rather than expressed by the architecture. The openness of the public space combined with the image of Mussolini on the building facades served as a stage that aimed to exhibit public support. The public mass were simple bodies that filled the role in a predetermined and mediated power structure.

13. Storchi, Simona. "Il Fascismo È Una Casa Di Vetro": Giuseppe Terragni and the Politics of Space in Fascist Italy." *Italian Studies*, 62:2, (Autumn 2007): 242.

14. Storchi, "Il Fascismo È Una Casa Di Vetro" (2007): 236.

15. Storchi, "Il Fascismo È Una Casa Di Vetro" (2007): 233.



Figure 12

Conclusion

Architecture can represent power through its built form and scale. In cases such as Germania, the renovation of Paris and Casa del Fascio, the design intentions were to assert control over their subjects and discourage the notion of resistance. However, Foucault argues that the power of oppression or liberty is a practice. The relational concept of power suggests that the exercise of power is not permanent, the subjects in any power relation can transform the mechanism through their own actions. “The liberty of men is never assured by the institutions and laws that are intended to guarantee them. This is why almost all of these laws and institutions are quite capable of being turned around. Not because they are ambiguous, but simply because “liberty” is what must be exercised.”¹⁶ For that reason, architecture’s role in the expression of civic engagement should manifest the process rather than the end of social change.

In order to express the power of civic engagement, two study models were built to explore architecture as building process rather than finished product. Both models depict the exercise of civic engagement in the forms of temporary structure. (Figure 13 & 14) The goal is to give the impression of power as a transitory cycle, where the unfinished built forms and scattered building components can be interpreted as either a process of construction or demolition. Images of civil disobediences attached to the model illustrate that power relations in societies can be challenged and transformed. Finally, civil liberties is being shown as the only definitive sign of progress in the model. (Figure 15)

This thesis will propose an architectural intervention that can accommodate and facilitate the transformation of power relations in societies. The objective is to express the mechanism of collective power by providing the means for the exercise of civic action. In addition, it will aim to facilitate and support various forms of civic engagement and community events. The following chapter will examine the ways in which civic engagement transforms the power in social relations through the collective participation of civic action. It will investigate different instances where collective actions in the built environment transformed dominant narratives.

16. Foucault, “Space, Knowledge and Power.” (1984.): 245



Figure 13

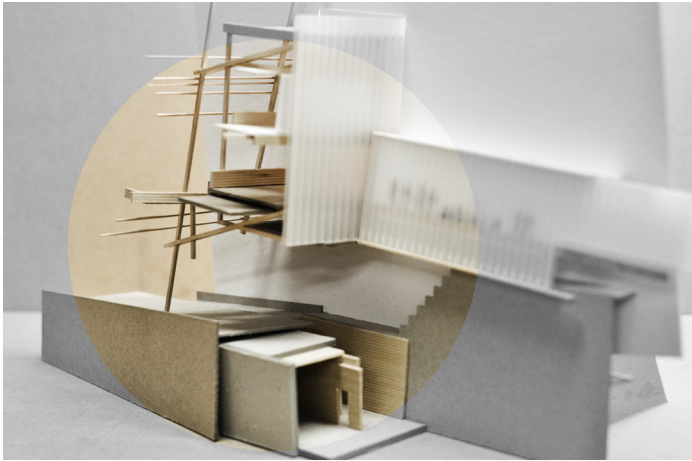


Figure 14



Figure 15

FACILITATION OF CIVIC ACTION

From Digital Space to Real Space

Change life, change space!

Case Studies

Conclusion

Space is fundamental to the ways in which societies function. Foucault asserted that transformation of power in social relations must be applied through physical space. In order to transform social conditions, the agency of civic action must take place in the physical environment.

Based on Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, in which the ability to produce space is instrumental to any social existence, this chapter will examine the relationship between spatial production and the agency of civic action. This will involve an analysis of case studies such as the event of May 1968 in Paris, the Toronto Pride movement and the protests at the Toronto G-20 summit. The objective is to explore architecture's capacity to facilitate the spatial production of alternative narratives that challenge the status quo.

From Digital Space to Real Space

Civic action is driven and sustained by personal commitments to address social or political issues. Discourses regarding public concerns can transform into actions or movements through the appropriation of space in the built environment. In this regard, civic actions that challenge issues in the real world must take place in real space. Conversely, there are increasing numbers of people engaging with political or social issues in the space. Technologies such as social media provide individuals with the power of self-expression and instant connection with people around the world. However, many critics such as journalist and writer, Malcolm Gladwell argues that social media represents a weak willingness to commit to a cause of action. In his article: Small Change - Why the revolution will not be tweeted, Gladwell argues that the increased tendency to engage civic issues through social media cannot replace the impact of personal engagement in civic action.

Gladwell refers to the Greensboro sit-ins to elucidate the importance of personal commitment to social change such as the American Civil Rights movement in the 1960s. The Greensboro sit-ins were nonviolent protests in Greensboro, North Carolina. They started on the afternoon of February 1, 1960 by four young African-American students who studied at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. They were Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair Jr., and David Richmond, and their plan was to occupy the racially segregated lunch counter at the Woolworth store in downtown Greensboro. After being refused



Figure 16

services at the "White only" lunch counter, they refused to leave the store and started the first day of the sit-in. The next morning, twenty seven students from the same university of the original four joined in the sit-in. (Figure 16) By the end of the week, the number at the sit-in had reach six hundred, where most of the protesters stood on the street outside the store. The following week, the sit-in had spread to several towns up to fifty miles away. By the end of February, there were sit-ins throughout all Southern states in America. Over seventy thousands people eventually took part in the movement. The Greensboro sit-ins were among the most influential and significant events in the Civil Rights Movement. Gladwell noted that it happened without the use of digital media such as e-mail, texting, Facebook or Twitter.

Social media can provide an indication of the number of people who are concerned about certain issues. However, it cannot demonstrate the personal commitment and willingness to sacrifice for the cause of

action. Gladwell refers to sociologist Doug McAdam, who concluded that activism that challenges the status quo can involve high risk consequences, which requires strong personal connections within the movement to be successful. He notes that social media's fundamental function is to connect people without face to face connection. It creates a weak-tie connection that is more suitable for open dialogue or organizing casual social activities.¹⁷ Civic action that confronts deeply rooted social issues can provoke very unfavourable reactions, and it must rely on the participants' personal commitment and connections to each other to carry out these actions.

Despite the nonviolent nature of the Greensboro sit-ins, Gladwell notes that there were many attacks and violent reactions toward the protesters throughout the movement. The Greensboro sit-ins took the original four students nearly a month of discussion and planning to carry out the operation. It was their personal friendship and commitment to the cause of action that eventually allowed them to overcome their fear as to the consequences. Racial segregation is a spatial strategy for expressing inequality in the built environment. Therefore, it must be confronted in the physical space where it exists. The Greensboro sit-ins would not have been effective if seventy thousands participations demonstrated their supports by means of a click on social media.

High risk activism, such as the Greensboro sit-ins require resiliency and adaptability, which cannot be experienced through social media. The operation of bringing about meaningful change to societies requires personal sacrifices in time, resources or safety that take place in real space. Gladwell notes "Facebook activism succeeds not by motivating people to make a real sacrifice but by motivating them to do the things that people do when they are not motivated enough to make a real sacrifice. We are a long way from the lunch counters of Greensboro."¹⁸

In 2013, UNICEF Sweden challenged the impact of social media with their "Likes don't save lives" campaign. They pointed out the supports they received from social media such as Facebook cannot save life. (Figure 17) The power of collective actions is generated and sustained by the relation of participants and the cause of action. In order for the shared concerns in digital space to make an impact on social issues, organization of real action in real space is required.

17. Gladwell, Malcolm. "Small Change – Why the revolution will not be tweeted," *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010, accessed July 14, 2016, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-malcolm-gladwell>

18. Gladwell, Small Change: *The New Yorker*.

Figure 17

**IF WE GET
1,000 LIKES
ON FACEBOOK,
THIS CHILD
WILL RECEIVE
ABSOLUTELY
NOTHING.**

Change life, change space!

A society is comprised of spaces produced by different social existences such as inhabitation, politics, and commerce. The relationships between these social existences can be established and transformed through the production of space. Similar to Foucault's view on the spatialization of power, Lefebvre concurs that without the ability to produce space, social relations can only remain as discourse and cannot be fully integrated into our daily life.¹⁹ He claims that the transformation of social relations must begin with the transformation of space. In *The Production of Space*, he wrote: "Change life! 'Change society!' These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space."²⁰

A civic action such as the Greensboro sit-ins succeeded due to its appropriation of space. It is an instance in which the transformation of a racially segregated lunch counter became an expression of racial equality that confronted and challenged the status quo. The temporary spatial expression that started at a lunch counter became a contributing factor to desegregation in many commercial and public spaces in the Southern states. It demonstrated the transformation of a problematic social relation through the transformation of space.

Lefebvre notes that in the past, the production of space in societies had been predominantly shaped by the lived experience of its inhabitants. The built environment was anchored in the network of social existences such as inhabitation, religion, work or leisure. Many historical cities and their spatial productions still function in the modern day due to the fact that they were built on social practices that are still relevant. Conversely, social existences that contradict lived experience produce abstract space, which can only be perceived by the producer's ideology instead of practice. For instance, state sponsored racism in the United States produced segregation in different cities. The segregated space such as the lunch counter in the Greensboro sit-ins is a production of abstract space. Therefore, it was an abstraction that exists only through the ideology of state sponsored segregation, but was opposed by the practice of everyday life.

19. Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. (Oxford: Blackwell publishers Ltd, 2008): 53.

20. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 59.



Figure 18

The power of global commodities and economic productivity produce abstract spaces in order to assert the ideology of monetary power rules over everyday life. Lefebvre argues that the overwhelming network of bank towers and business headquarters in our built environment has disintegrated the lived experience in our everyday life.²¹ For instance, Yonge-Dundas square in Toronto is an example of abstract space produced by the ideology of consumerism. It is surrounded by towers of billboards, commercial venues and a major shopping centre. (Figure 18) The commercial narrative is the most visible element in the square. Based on Lefebvre's argument, the lived experience of a public square, a gathering space for all members of society, has been disintegrated by the commercial narrative of billboards and the nearby shopping centre. Abstract spaces produced by consumerism have made it difficult for civic engagement to produce its own

21. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 53-59.

space. The production of space in contemporary societies has become a privilege for the few. As a result, everyday life for the majority of people has become inseparable from consumption. Those who look for lived experience by engaging in civic issues can feel alienated in the built environment. Lefebvre notes, “The everyday can therefore be defined as a set of functions which connect and join together systems that might appear to be distinct. Thus defined, the everyday is a product, the most general of products in an era where production engenders consumption, and where consumption is manipulated by producers: not by “workers,” but by the managers and owners of the means of production (intellectual, instrumental, scientific).”²²

Lefebvre notes that social movements such as peasant revolutions and urban guerrilla actions produce differences to resist abstract space. Lefebvre’s theory of differences began with social existences that are excluded in societies. The transgression of differences being absorbed into normality can take place through the practice of civic action. Therefore, the appropriation of space can be a mechanism or instrument for the transformation of social relations.

Lefebvre distinguishes between two kinds of differences emerging out of the spatial production in societies: minimal differences, which are induced by centralized power such as government and the capitalist system to homogenize differences to a minimal and controllable level, and maximal differences which are produced through the appropriation of space.²³ According to Lefebvre, the development and enrichment of social relationships is established by the production of maximal differences. The ability to produce or appropriate space can provide an effective means for the public to express a different narrative.

For instance, in the wake of former NDP leader Jack Layton’s death, many Torontonians personally visited his impromptu memorial at Toronto City Hall. In Nathan Phillips Square, a public space in front of the Toronto City Hall, thousands of hand written messages regarding personal memories of the late politician covered almost the entire square. (Figure 19) These messages written in chalk produced a temporary diversion of spatial experience. The self-expression of remembrances transformed Nathan Phillip Square through the appropriation of space. It is an example in which a different social narrative was manifested through the spontaneous and temporary production of space by the public at large.

22. Lefebvre, Henri. “The Subject and Power.” *Yale French Studies*, No. 73, *Everyday Life* (1987), pp. 7-11, (Yale University Press): 9.

23. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 371-373.

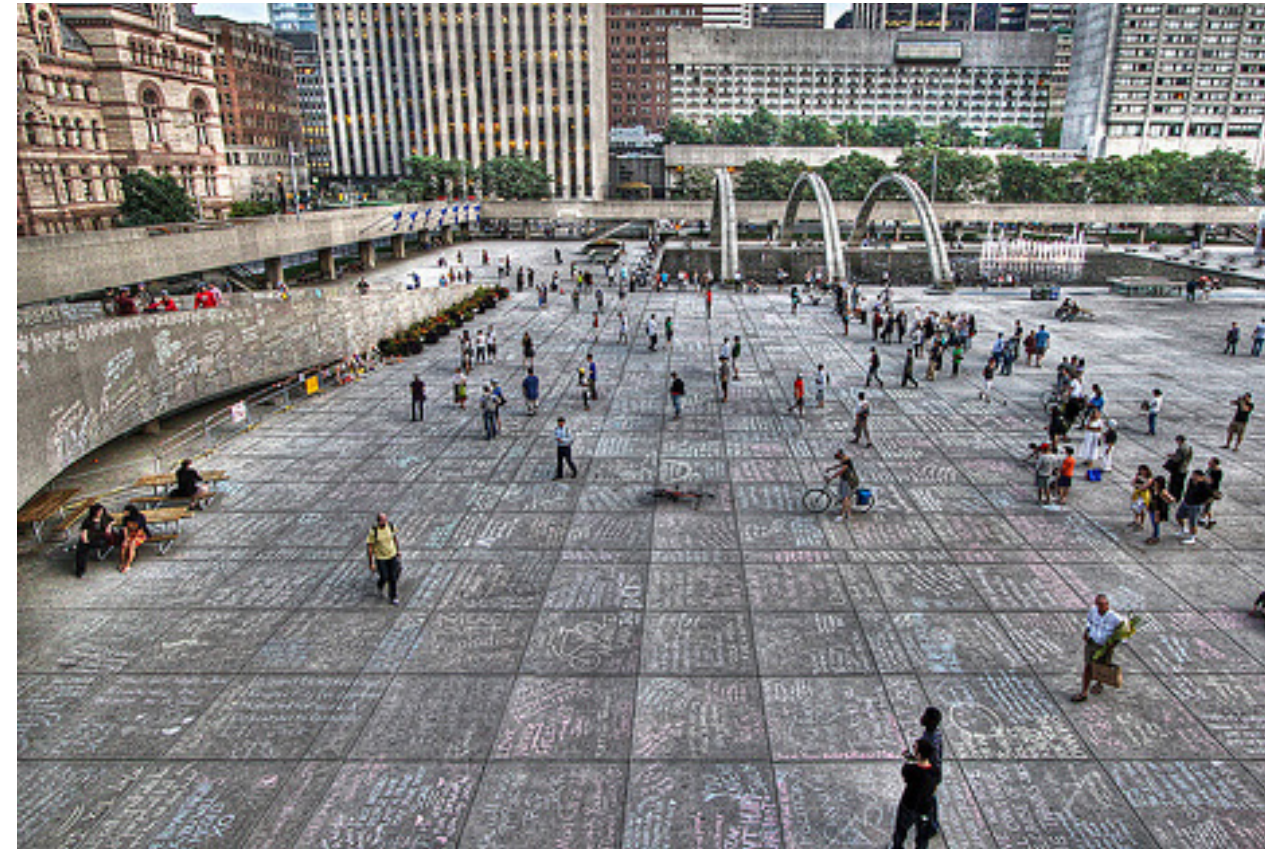


Figure 19

Space plays an operational and instrumental role in the existence of social relations. The ways in which civic action brings about different narratives can manifest itself through the production of space. Civic action expresses the self-determination in confronting the status quo, and its spatial production can evoke different social outcomes in our daily life. The following case studies demonstrate the ways in which maximal differences emerged out of the appropriation of space. In addition, the concept of festival will be used to examine each case study in order to determine the creative capacity in social transformation.



Figure 20

Case studies - May 68

The events of May 1968 in Paris was a civil revolts and the largest general strike in French history. May 68 as it came to be called, began when students occupied an administration building at Paris University at Nanterre. They were protesting against class discrimination in French society and government control over university's funding. The university responded by shutting down the campus and called in the police to suppress the protests. Between May 2nd and May 12th, mass protests and demonstrations erupted demanding that the university be reopened. (Figure 20) Confrontations between students and police led to hundreds of arrests. On May 13th, labour unions organized a general strike in support for the students' revolt. In the following week, riots had spread to most Parisian universities, and the number of striking workers reached 7-8 million. Finally, on May 24th, French president Charles De Gaulle called for a referendum on "a renovation encompassing the university system, the society and the economy".²⁴

24. Velvet, Aro. "40 Years is Enough: Myth and Memory in French Commemorations of May 1968." Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2010. 2-6

In "Taking back the street, Paris 1968-78", Sarah Bonnemaison describes the demonstrations of May 68 as the largest popular manifestation since the end of the Second World War. It was in part a reaction to the spatial transformation of Paris that had impoverished the living experience of Parisian life. As stated by Lefebvre, everyday life was disconnected from the built environment due to the abstract space produced by the homogenization of differences. Bonnemaison depicts the new urban developments in the name of modernity and commodity as the main reasons for Parisians' increasing disenchantment with their social conditions.²⁵ The students expressed their alienation towards the normality induced by the establishment with satirical slogans such as, "Return to normality", (Figure 21) illustrating the populace as sheep in normality; and "Be young and shut up", (Figure 22) depicting French president's Charles De Gaulle's hand silencing a youth.

May 68 was an instance of the appropriation of space disrupting the homogenization of differences in the built environment. Street activities that were normally directed by state power or commercial interests became autonomous during the mass protests. Lefebvre sensed the excitement in May 68 and considered the disruption a reclamation of cultural identity. He wrote, "Paris has not completely lost the excitement that characterized it

as a city of festival in earlier times. As 1968 showed, it is still a crucible, still a focal point. There is an acute contradiction here: it is not in the interests of the political establishment and the hegemonic class to extinguish this spark, for to do so would effectively destroy the city's worldwide reputation - based, precisely, on its daring, its willingness to expose the possible and the impossible, its so-called cultural development, and its panoply of actions and actors."²⁶

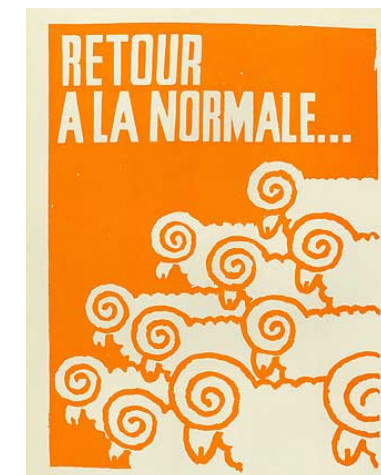


Figure 21



Figure 22

25. Bonnemaison, Sarah. "Taking back the street, Paris 1968-78." In *Festival Architecture*, edited by Sarah Bonnemaison and Christine Macy, 275-307. (New York: Routledge. 2008): 277

26. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 386.

The protests and demonstrations signified new social existences and reshaped the streets using a large numbers of barricades. The transformation of spatial expression echoed Lefebvre's principle of the production of maximal differences. It brought together dissociated aspects and disparate tendencies, by which different materials were used for building the barricades ; cars, buses set on their sides, (Figure 23) with cobblestones filling the gaps and street sign poles for attaching hand painted flags.²⁷ One of May 68's slogans: "Sous les pavés, la plage", (Beneath the cobblestones, the beach), depicted the protesters' disenchantment with the built environment of Paris. It signified the desire to break from the spatial representation of the status quo and revealed the longing for new social experience.

Bonnemaïson compares the excitement among protesters in May 68 to the celebratory atmosphere in festivals. The transparent quality of celebration brought people together and created a joyful disruption of normality. She cites testimonials from participants who described a sense of intense and joyful liberation during the university occupations, "We lived the festival, a time of miracles, the liberating power of speech. After we pushed away the night and conquered "the force," we were going to change life, live free at last, equal, brotherly, happy ..."²⁸

Bonnemaïson refers to Lefebvre on the concept of revolution as festival in which the act of celebration manifests collective power to perpetuate social existences. Similar to Foucault's view, the transformation of social order exists when it is put into action. Festival operates as a mechanism for criticizing political order and modifying power relations in societies. May 68 demonstrated the way in which transformation of social relations can be applied through the transformation of space. It was an instance in which the excluded social existences used the celebratory aspect of collective action to overturn the spatial representation of the status quo. The concept of festival can be further examined using examples of civic action that dismantled the abstract space produced by uneven development or discriminating spatial practice.

27. Bonnemaïson, Paris 1968-78, 285

28. Bonnemaïson, Paris 1968-78, 279



Figure 23



Figure 24

Case studies - Pride Toronto

The gay rights movement in North America began in the late 1960s. It continues to celebrate differences and diversity in social existences. The movement is deeply rooted in protesting the discriminatory spatial practices of the status quo. The most significant event that sparked the movement was the Stonewall riot in New York City. In the early morning of June 28, 1969, a police raid took place at the Stonewall Inn, a well-known gay bar located in the Greenwich Village neighborhood in Manhattan. It quickly turned into violent confrontation between the police and the crowd gathered outside the Stonewall Inn. In the following days, a series of spontaneous demonstrations against the police united many members of the gay community who formed several groups and publications that challenged discriminations against homosexuals. On June 28, 1970, commemorative marches in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago marking the first anniversary of the Stonewall riot became the first Pride parade in the United States. Gay Pride events, such as Pride week in Toronto, are held annually throughout the world toward the end of June to mark this historic event.

Currently, Pride Toronto is a not-for-profit organization that aims to unite and empower people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions. It represents the LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, or Questioning) community in Toronto and the annual Pride Toronto festival, which is a major cultural event in Canada and the largest Pride celebration in North America. (Figure 24) The success of Pride Toronto today began as a relatively humble group of individuals, founded soon after Canada decriminalized homosexual acts for consenting adults over the age of 21 in 1969.



Figure 25

The Toronto pride parade began on August 1, 1971, with a picnic on Hanlan's Point beach to demonstrate the display of gay solidarity. It was organized by the University of Toronto Homophile Association, Toronto Gay Action Now, and the Community Homophile Association of Toronto. The gathering was small in comparison to the modern day week long celebration. Despite the fact that homosexual acts were legal at the time, the gay community continued to be subjected to discrimination by the more prominent homophobic culture in Toronto. As a marginalized social existence, the picnic at Hanlan's Point was the gay community's first attempt to produce its own space.

On February 5, 1981, the Toronto police raided several bathhouses in the Toronto Gay Village. It resulted in one of the largest mass arrests in Canadian history, with over 300 people arrested. (Figure 25) The next day, over 3000 people staged a mass protest in Toronto that blocked traffic at several major intersections. The event inspired other protests in major Canadian cities the following year. It marked the beginning of a nation-wide gay rights movement. The mass demonstration in Toronto eventually evolved into the current Pride parade that takes place at the end of June every year.

The notion of homophobia, similar to racism, exists in our built environment through the production of abstract space. In order to homogenize different social existences into a controllable normality, the dominant power denies certain groups in society the ability to produce their own spaces. In cases such as the Stonewall riots and the Bathhouse raid, the actions by the police aimed to take away the capacity of spatial production from the gay community and thereby deny their existence in society.

On June 22, 2016, 35 years after the Bathhouse raid, the Toronto police department acknowledged their discriminatory spatial practice, admitting that the police did not treat the gay community as part of society. The chief of police Mark Saunders officially expressed regret for their action, “The Toronto Police Service expresses regret for those very actions” and “for treating those communities as not fully part of society,” Saunders said during the 2016 Pride reception at police headquarters.²⁹

Toronto’s Pride parade is a celebration that affirms the existence of the LGBTQ community. The transparent quality of the parade invites all participants to appropriate the spatial representation of exclusion in our built environment. The objective was to spatialize collective power to challenge the discriminatory spatial practice by the status quo, and to perpetuate the values of inclusive existence for all members of society.

The Pride movement has successfully transformed its power relation in Toronto. Since the Bathhouse raid, the relationship between the LGBTQ community and the Toronto Police department has changed dramatically. In an effort to advocate for inclusiveness and credibility within the LGBTQ community, uniformed police officers have been marching in the Toronto Pride parade since the year 2000. In addition, the Toronto Police established a special response unit to monitor and address instances of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In recent years, the Toronto’s Pride parade has established its social importance both culturally and economically. The celebration has grown into a month long event that is known as Pride Month. Its estimated economic impact in 2013 was \$286 million, and generated \$61 million in tax revenue.³⁰ The commercial success of the parade has led to other social movements such as the Toronto chapter of Black Lives Matter to question Pride Toronto’s relationship to its political roots, and they believe the parade should return to its tradition of protest.

Black Lives Matter is a chapter-based national organization working for the validity of black life. It responds to the reality in which black lives are being systematically and intentionally targeted by police violence. Its

29. Winsa, Patty, and Robin Levinson King. “Toronto police regret 1981 bathhouse raids, chief says” *The Toronto Star*, June 22, 2014. Accessed July 31, 2016. <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2016/06/22/toronto-police-regret-1981-bathhouse-raid-says-chief.html>

30. Hains, David, “Toronto’s Pride Festival evolves into economic powerhouse” *The Globe and Mail*, June 23, 2014. Accessed September 7, 2016. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/torontos-pride-festival-evolves-into-economic-powerhouse/article19284190/>

main objective is to dismantle all forms of anti-black racism and affirm black existence in society.³¹ Black Lives Matter is in a similar situation as was the gay community before the Bathhouse raid. It represents an excluded and marginalized group that is seeking to produce its own space in order to advocate for the importance of their social existences.

In 2016, Black Lives Matter staged a sit-in on Yonge Street and brought the Pride parade to a standstill for more than 30 minutes. (Figure 26) One of the sit-in participants was the original co-organizer of Toronto’s Pride parade, Gary Kinsman. He explained his decision in the opinion section of CBC news, stating: “Black Lives Matter carried with it the spirit of Stonewall and the activist roots of Pride - not Pride as it now, defined by corporations, by mainstream political parties, by the police. Pride is our biggest gathering, our greatest opportunity to stand against aggression.”³²



Figure 26

31. “About Us – Black Lives Matter Toronto,” last modified 2016, <http://blacklivesmatter.ca/about/>

32. Kinsman, Gary, “Point of View - Black Lives Matter Toronto recaptures Pride’s activist roots” *CBC News*, June 06, 2016. Accessed September 06, 2016. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/black-lives-matter-toronto-pride-kinsman-1.3665829>

Kinsman and Black Lives Matter believe that Pride’s founding political message has been minimized to a controllable level so that commercial interest and mainstream politicians can use the event for their own personal gains. Based on Lefebvre’s theory, the Toronto Pride parade has been absorbed into the spatial representation of the status quo, and is no longer a celebration that affirms the production of maximal difference. Through the occupation of the Pride parade, Black Lives Matter has replaced Pride Toronto as a mechanism which challenges the discriminatory spatial practice by the status quo.

The means which Pride Toronto used to challenge the status quo has become the end of its own production of differences. Similar to Foucault’s theory of power relations, Lefebvre’s concept of maximal differences are produced in relation to the ways excluded social existences challenge or resist the homogenization of differences. Alternative narratives existing outside of normality can produce their own spaces to manifest their maximal differences. However, as soon as they are absorbed into the cultural norms, their spatial production can be appropriated by other production of maximal differences.

The spatial production of May 68 and Pride Toronto presents the importance for excluded or alienated members of society to transform power relations. Civic action such as demonstrations, protests or sit-ins can counter discriminatory spatial practices by dominant narratives. The final case study will examine spatial tactics that aimed to suppress the spatial production for civil liberties, and the ways they were deployed during the Toronto G-20 summit in 2010. The goal is to reveal the necessity for individuals or groups to exercise the freedoms and rights of expression through the production of space.

Case Studies - 2010 G-20 summit in Toronto

The G-20 is an international forum for the governments and central bank governors from 20 major economies. Each year, the group meets in a summit to discuss global financial systems and the world economy. In 2010, the summit was held in downtown Toronto between June 26 and 27.

The two day summit attracted different narratives on social and economic issues. On one hand, political leaders and representatives of central banks focused their attention on the global economy. On the other hand, narratives that address the challenges of environmentalism, poverty and inequality were represented by various groups that gathered in Toronto to express their views in front of the G-20 attendees.

Although the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms affirms the rights of free expression and assembly,³³ the spatial production by the public to address their concerns during the G-20 was limited in the name of order and security. In order to avoid disruption to the summit, the Toronto Police department spent millions on security measures and limiting the capacity of free expression from both the public as well as the press. There were multiple incidents of police brutality and unlawful arrests during the two days summit. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association asserts that the high cost of security measures during the G-20 summit had failed to adequately fulfill its role to protect the public’s freedom of expression and assembly.³⁴ A total of 1118 people were arrested in connection with the G20 summit protests, the largest mass arrests in Canadian history, with nearly 800 of them released without charge.

To demonstrate the tactic that limited the spatial production of free expression, this case study will analyze two specific spatial productions by the Toronto Police during the G-20 summit. One of the most noticeable spatial productions deployed to minimize free expression was the G-20 security zone. It was erected in order to provide security for the world leaders who were attending the summit. During the G-20 summit, a central part of downtown Toronto was fortified and declared inaccessible. The material and spatial manifestation for the security infrastructure was a three meter high, six kilometer long fence, built

33. “Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,” last modified June 16, 2016, <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/const/page-15.html>

34. “G8/G20 Summits: Accountability in Policing and Governance,” last modified July 7, 2010, <https://ccla.org/g8g20-summits-accountability-in-policing-and-governance/>



Figure 27

to encircle the meeting place for political leaders and representatives of central banks. (Figure 27) The fence was anchored with hundreds of 800 kilogram concrete barriers, 12 kilometers of metal tubing and more than 100,000 drilled bolts.³⁵ The security zone was a spatial division of the dominant and alternative voices regarding social and economic matters.

Similar to the racially segregated lunch counter in Greensboro, the security zone was an abstract space that required regulation to legitimize its existence. With less than a week left before the summit, the provincial government invoked the Public Works Protection Act (PWWA) without any public hearing. It permitted police officers to search any citizen within five meters of the security fences. The little known law from 1939, which was enacted to protect critical infrastructure from the attack of Nazi Germany, was later proclaimed by the province's ombudsman as a subtle form of martial law.³⁶

35. Renzi, Alessandra, and Greg Elmer. *Infrastructure Critical: Sacrifice at Toronto's G8/G20 Summit*. (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Arbeiter Ring, 2012): 45

The security zone was a spatialization of power that represented the inability to accept dissent and alternative narratives from the public at large. Similar to the spatial expression of Hitler's Germania, the security zone used the scale and materiality of built form to intimidate its beholders. In an incident outside the security fence, a police officer was caught on video telling a group of activists that there were no more civil rights near the security zone.³⁷ The security infrastructure in the G-20 was a reminder of what living conditions would be like in a police state.

Another spatial tactic to limit free expression took place on the major downtown intersection of Queen St. West and Spadina Avenue. On the last day of the summit, hundreds of people were held on the streets by a crowd control tactic known as "kettling". Police officers in heavy riot gear formed a temporary confinement to detain peaceful protesters and innocent bystanders for up to nine hours. (Figure 28) According to the police, they were trying to control a group of dangerously out of order individuals, who posted a threat to the public. In fact, it was confirmed later that pedestrians who were in the wrong place at the wrong time comprised the majority of those arrested. After being handcuffed in heavy rain, most detainees were released without charge on the same day. In August, 2015, a disciplinary hearing found the high-ranking Toronto police officer who ordered the "kettling" tactic guilty of discreditable conduct and unnecessary exercise of authority.³⁸

Unlike the security zone, which was intended to keep alternative expression away from the established convention of the G-20 summit, the kettling tactic tried to contain the spatial production of free expression. By encircling the protesters, the police prevented the crowd from increasing its size, or moving towards its destination. It was a spatial tactic to limit the growth and movement of the spatialization of free expression.

36. Renzi, Elmer. *Infrastructure Critical*, 46

37. Baute, Nicole. "G-20 officer: 'This ain't Canada right now'." *The Toronto Star*, January 20, 2011. Accessed October 22, 2015. http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/g20/2011/01/20/g20_officer_this_aint_canada_right_now.html

38. "Mark Fenton, G20 police officer behind mass arrests, guilty of discreditable conduct" *CBC News*, August 25, 2015. Accessed December 8, 2015. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/mark-fenton-g20-police-officer-behind-mass-arrests-guilty-of-discreditable-conduct-1.3202686>



Figure 28

Conclusion

The strong security measures implemented at the G-20 summit implied the danger of dissent and calls for change. The collective power that aims to transform the established power structure and social narratives can be attained as long as the capacity for the production of space is not limited. “A revolution that does not produce a new space has not realized its full potential” Lefebvre states; “A social transformation, to be truly revolutionary in character, must manifest a creative capacity in its effects on daily life, on language and on space.”³⁹ In order to improve the agency of civic action, and prevent outcomes similar to those of the G-20, this chapter will advocate for a dedicated space for ordinary citizens to exercise free expression and engage in civic action.

To explore the idea of civic action as spatial production, a series of study models were made to illustrate the expansion and transformation of spontaneous gatherings. (Figure 29 - 31) The objective is to propose the use of built forms as a framework to facilitate the growth and movement of civic action. In the next chapter, this thesis will propose an architectural intervention to support the preparation, dissemination and operation of civic action. The Power Station for Civic Action will be a place where new space can be produced for social transformation.

39. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 54.



Figure 29

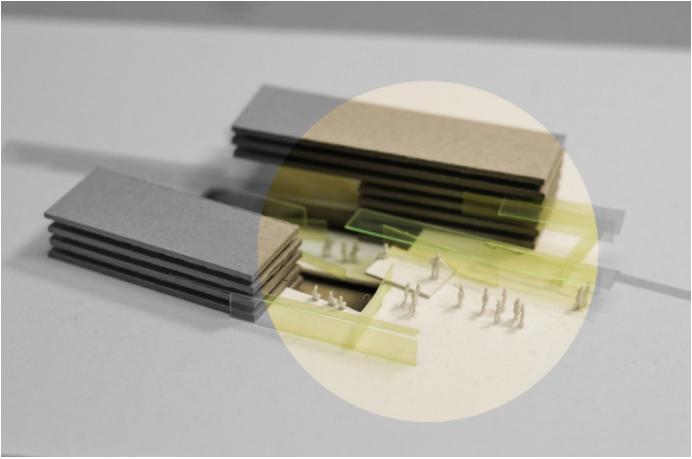


Figure 30

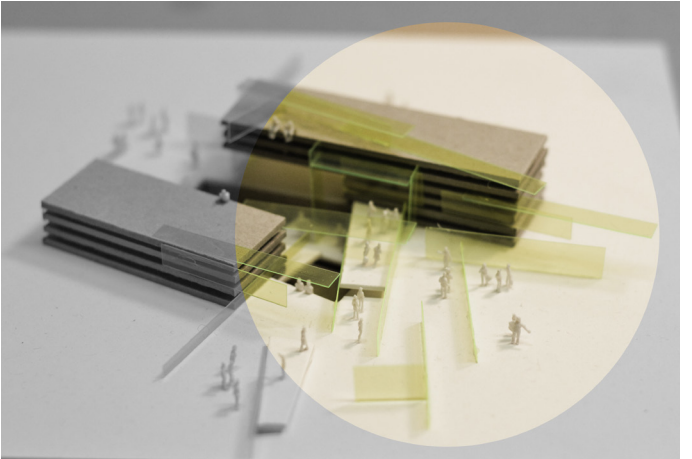


Figure 31

POWER STATION FOR CIVIC ACTION

- Design Objectives
 - Transparent Expression
 - Transformative Condition
- Site Proposal
- Program Proposal
- Design Proposal

Design Objectives

The power of expression can be conceived through wealth, status, force or collective action. It enables social entities to affirm their existences and functions in relation to each other. Foucault proposes that power is a relational concept that can establish, maintain or transform social relations. However, the existence of power will remain as a discourse or an abstraction until it is put into action in the built environment.

In order to manifest the existence of social relations, the expression of power must be perceived through the production of space. Lefebvre asserts that a social existence can only become lived experience when it produces its own space. Germania was an attempt to convey the ideology of Nazism into a physical manifestation of Hitler's power; Casa del Fascio was a spatial representation of the public endorsement for Fascism. These were instances in which architecture represented power as a decided outcome. Conversely, this thesis proposes that architecture can present a spatial expression that exhibits power as a process to be determined.

Civic action is a spatial expression for addressing public concerns. It presents the power of free expression that can modify living conditions and transform social relations. Civic action exists when it is put into action through spatial production in the built environment. Its capacity to transform established and dominant power structures can be attained by the public as long as the production of space is not limited. Lefebvre proposes that to change society, we must first change space. In the events of May 1968 in Paris, the protesters transformed the spatial representation of the status quo into a space for the celebration of new social relations.

In the spirit of Lefebvre's concept of social change, this thesis argues that if we as a society value free expression in civic matters, our built environment needs to provide more accessible opportunities for alternative narratives to produce their own spatial expression. This thesis proposes the Power Station for Civic Action, a dedicated place for the spatial production of alternative social existences and the transformation of social relations. The architectural expression will manifest the importance of free expression, and facilitate the exercise of civic action.

Transparent spatial expression

May 68 constituted a joyful disruption of the minimal differences in normality. The spatial manifestation on the streets of Paris dissolved the abstract space that was produced by state control and commercial interests. Inspired by the atmosphere of May 68, the Power Station will propose the transparent quality of festival to express the liveliness and collaborative production of civic action. The objective is to propose a public facility that can accommodate different scales of production, gathering and collaboration for marginalized social entities to challenge dominant narratives.

Permeability and openness will be key considerations to encourage interaction between activities in the Power Station and those on the public streets. The goal is to invite the public to experience civic action as a joyful activity. A flexible spatial arrangement will be proposed to maximize the possibilities of spontaneous and non-programed activities.

Flexibility was a key consideration in Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano's winning entry to the competition for the Centre Pompidou. For instance, the concept of multiple entrances was implemented to provide options for entry. The open space connects the ground level of the building to the city streets and invites the public to enter the building from different directions. (Figure 32)

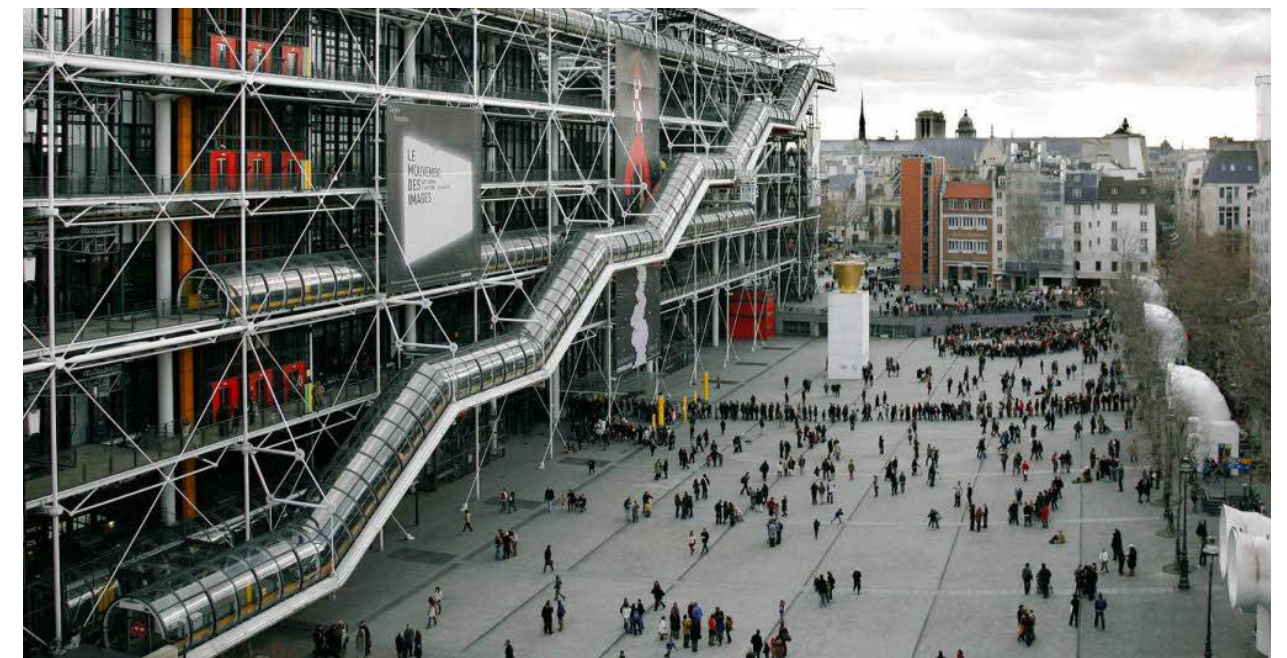


Figure 32

In addition, structural and mechanical systems were pushed outside of the building envelope in order to maximize the flexibility of interior space.⁴⁰ As a result, the Centre Pompidou appears to reveal all structure and mechanical equipment that are usually concealed. The exposed mechanical elements are painted in bright colours to convey a cheerful and transparent architectural expression. (Figure 33)



Figure 33

Spontaneous and non-programmed activities will be encouraged in the Power Station. In order to accommodate different scales of activities, the Power Station will offer flexible spaces to foster amiable interactions similar to those of a festival. Inspired by the Centre Pompidou, the Power Station will provide multiple entrances to maximize possibilities to enter or leave the building.

Production activities will be made visible to the street as a way to invite the public to experience the production of maximal differences. By revealing the production in full view, the Power Station becomes a reminder that society is changeable by those who are willing to participate.

Two study models were made to explore ways to maximize the visibility of civic action by exhibiting the activities and the cause of action beyond its building site. The objective is to manifest personal commitment and foster dialogue regarding civic issues with the public at large. (Figure 34 & 35)

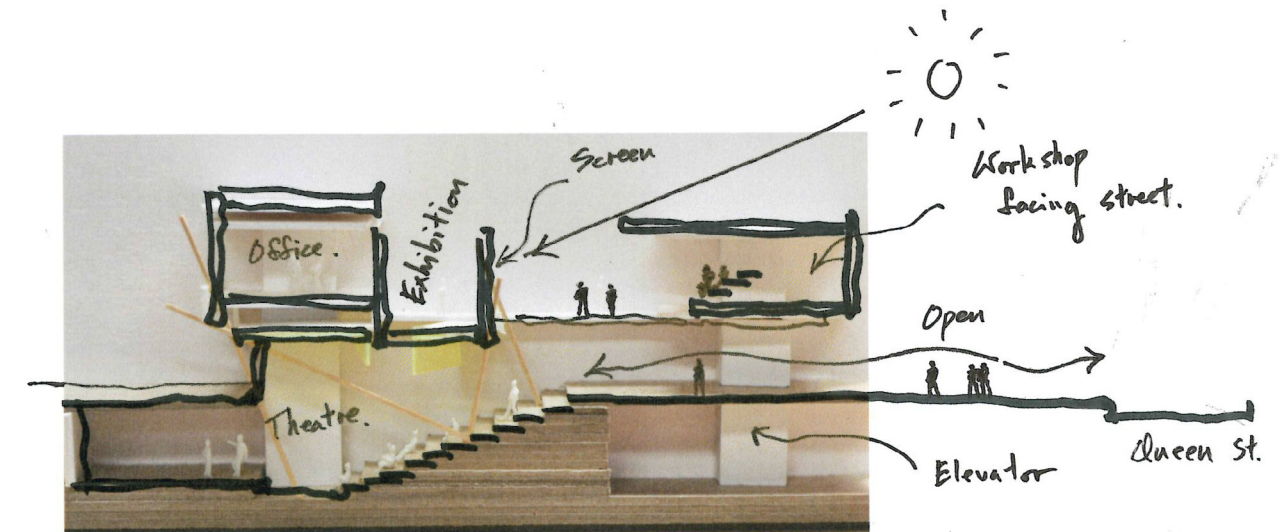


Figure 34

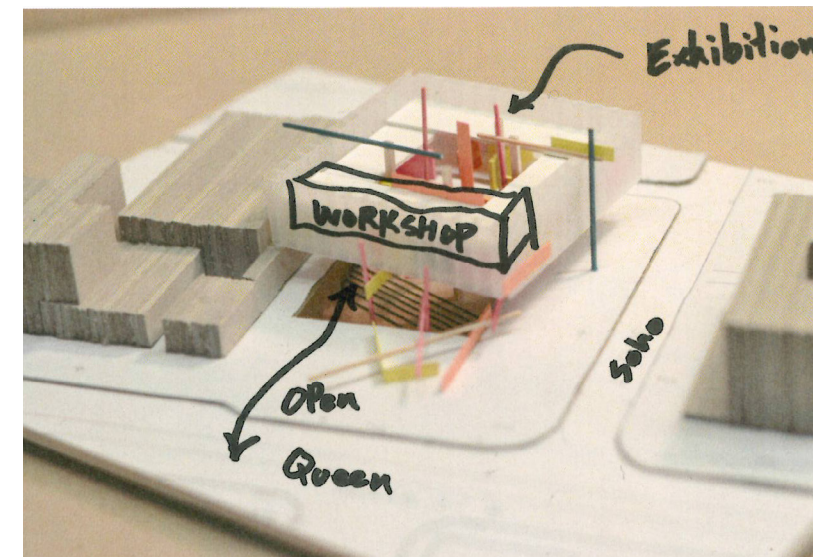


Figure 35

40. Silver, Nathan. *The making of Beaubourg: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris*. (Cambridge: The MIT press. 1994): 24-25

Transformative condition

Rogers and Piano proposed open space to advocate for “non-programmed” activities for the Centre Pompidou. The piazza in front of the centre would have accommodated ad hoc performances, outdoor movies and different play areas. (Figure 36) Unfortunately, budget cuts and a lack of political will have left the piazza a mere empty space.

Open space for spontaneous events and gatherings will be a central part of the Power Station. In addition to being a public space for everyday activities, it provides a platform for the spatial production of free expression. Architectural features or amenities will be proposed to enhance the possibility of open discussion of civic issues.

Piano felt that the spatial design of the Centre Pompidou should foster possibility. “We have a book of rules for the client. There is a five year transformability. Then there is a one year transformability. And a one week transformability.” Piano explained: “In a few years there could be another May 1968. We need to understand the permanence and the change.”⁴¹

Lefebvre’s concept of maximal differences presents the transformation of alternative social narratives through the appropriation of space. The ways in which Pride Toronto gained social status through the spatial production of protests, and then was subsequently disrupted by Black Lives Matter and their production of maximal difference, has shown that social change is an on-going and cyclical process.

In order to maximize the rate of replacement in the production of civic action, the Power Station will not offer permanent work space. The goal is to avoid letting the potential success of any one entity dominate production in the Power Station. It needs to ensure that excluded social entities are afforded the opportunity and space to produce maximal differences.

Furthermore, the Power Station is not an exclusive facility for full time activists. It is a means for all members of society to manifest social narratives through the production of space. In order to accommodate different scales of production, the proposed working space should be able to expand or contract in size. In addition, visual and spatial connections between different types of production will be proposed to foster the possibility of collaboration.

41. Silver, Nathan. *The making of Beaubourg*. 179-180



Figure 36

Site Proposal

Toronto is the fifth largest city in North America and the largest in Canada. It is a city where financial and commercial activities take precedence in the built environment. As in many cities, those with the greatest financial means can express their existence in the most central and prominent areas. For instance, the financial district occupies a densely built area in downtown Toronto. It is a spatialization of high-powered banking companies, corporate headquarters, accounting firms, insurance companies and stockbrokers.

According to Lefebvre’s theory of differences, the financial district is an abstract space designed to induce minimal differences in downtown Toronto. Its architecture represents the power of wealth creation according to the capitalist system. Due to high property values and lack of available space, social entities that are not part of this economic narrative find it difficult to establish their presences near the financial district.

Lefebvre proposes that the transformation of social conditions began with the transformation of space. In order to emphasize the importance of free expression and manifest the right of civic action, this thesis proposes that the Power Station be located on a vacant lot, currently used for parking, at the northwest corner of Queen Street West and Soho Street. The proposed location aims to situate the production of maximal differences near the financial district in downtown Toronto. The goal is to disrupt the spatialization of economic power and express civic action’s right to the city of Toronto. In this regard, David Harvey writes:

“The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights.”⁴²

42. Harvey, David, “The Right to the City,” *New Left Review* 53 (2008): 23.

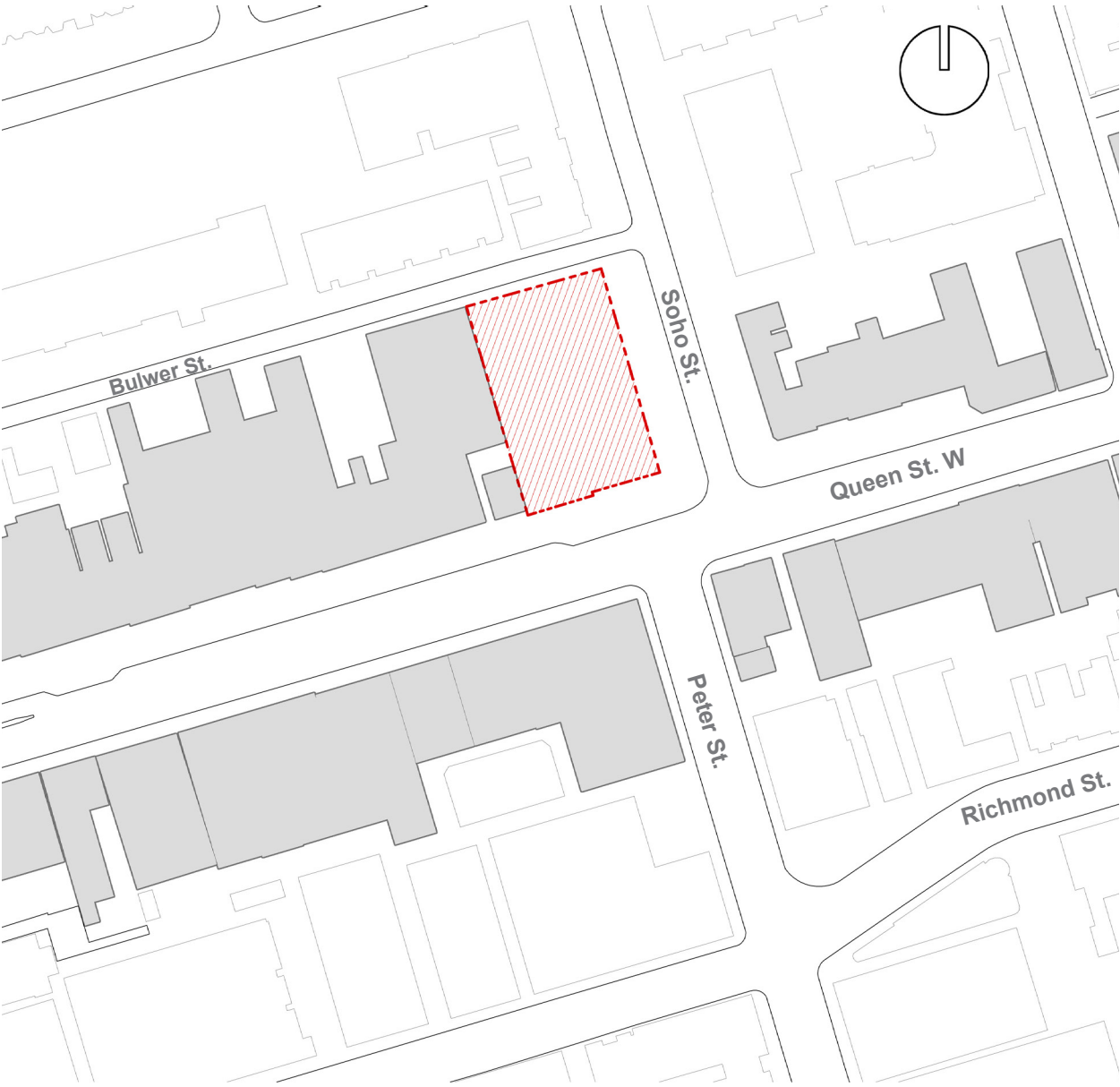


Figure 37



Figure 38

The proposed site is located at 300-308 Queen Street West, at the northwest corner of Queen St. and Soho St. It is South of Bulwer Street, a one-way street that runs East and West connecting Soho Street and Spadina Avenue. Peter Street, which begins at Queen Street West, is directly south of the proposed site. Northbound traffic and pedestrians on Peter Street can view the Power Station as a focal point.

The proposed site can be reached by two different forms of public transit, making it more accessible to people who do not live in downtown Toronto. Streetcar stops are located at the northeast corner of Queen Street West and Soho Street, as well as the southwest corner of Queen Street West and Peter Street. The Spadina streetcar line is less than 5 minutes' walk away from the proposed site. Osgoode subway station is approximately 10 minutes' walk away.

One of the main reasons for the site selection is its proximity to several government buildings, including Toronto City Hall, the seat of the municipal government of Toronto; Osgoode Hall which houses the Ontario Court of Appeal, the Divisional Court of the Superior Court of Justice and the Law Society of Upper Canada, all within 10 minutes' walk from the proposed site. Furthermore, Queen's Park, the site of the Ontario Legislative Building, which houses the Legislative Assembly of Ontario is within 25 minutes' walk from the proposed site.

There are three universities near the proposed site. Ontario College of Art and Design University is less than 5 minutes' walk away from the proposed site. The University of Toronto and Ryerson University are both within 25 minutes' walk from the site. The creative production at the Power Station can potentially involve nearby university students from programs such as visual art, social work and journalism.

Another significant context of the proposed site is nearby John St. It is a direct link between the downtown core of Toronto and its waterfront. There are two major news network companies along John Street, CityTV at Queen Street and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) at Front Street, which has a long history of reporting citizen-driven advocacy, and can be an important channel in promoting any citizen-driven activities that are proposed on the site.



- 1. Queen's park - Ontario Legislative Building
- 2. Toronto City Hall
- 3. University of Toronto
- 4. Ryerson University
- 5. Ontario College of Art and Design University
- 6. CityTV media network
- 7. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
- 8. Osgoode subway station
- 9. Union station

Figure 39



View A: Standing at North-East corner of Bulwer St. West and Soho Street, facing West. Figure 40



View B: Standing at South-West corner of Queen St. West and Peter Street, facing North. Figure 41



View C: Standing on Peter Street, facing North looking towards the proposed site. Figure 42



Figure 43

10m



View D: Standing on site, facing South looking towards Peter Street. Figure 44

Program Proposal

Artistic and creative aids in civic action can add an element of celebration and humor in the confrontation of opposite ideologies. For instance, the Collective Enmedio is a group based in Barcelona, Spain which explores creative ways to challenge the status quo. The collective was founded by a group of designers, filmmakers and artists who were unsatisfied with the lack of connections between their professional fields and political action. They use colourful costumes, inflatable props, music and dance parties to bring about a scene of celebration to disrupt the abstract space of dominant narrative.

“Enmedio. In the midst of nowhere and everywhere. From here, we explore the transformative power of images and stories through spectacular interventions using all the means within our reach: photography, the media, design ... that’s how we create interference in the dominant narrative, disruptions in the official account of the world.”⁴³

The Power Station for Civic Action proposes makerspace and workshops to provide the production of physical objects. This will involve electronic equipment such as CNC machines, laser cutting machines, 3D printers and various power tools. Both spaces should be located on the ground floor for vehicle access.

An art Studio for two dimensional art making will be located on the second floor. It will include large studio space for group activities as well as individual work spaces for computer graphics production. A printing area will be located within the studio space for computer generated graphics such as posters or banners. The second floor studio will also include a film editing room and a small screening area.

The preparation of civic action requires resources such as funding, organizational skills, communication skills and an understanding of the bureaucratic system. The Power Station will include an archive and information centre on the third floor. It provides historical case studies in civic action, as well as material documenting contemporary social movements and their strategies.

A theatre will be located on the top floor, providing a community performance space in the heart of downtown Toronto.

43. “Enmedio – About Us,” last modified 2016, <http://www.enmedio.info/en/about-us/>



Figure 45

This **Revolution** is brought to you by those who make ...



Balloons from the makerspace

Original music from the recording studio

Video in the film studio

Banners from the printshop

Costumes from the workshop

Proposal of public space as transformative spatial condition

Civic action produces maximal differences through the appropriation of space. The occupation of prominent spaces in the built environment can disrupt daily routine and share civic concerns with the public at large. The prominent location of the proposed site provides opportunity for social entities to demonstrate alternative ideas in a populous area. The proposed public space for the Power Station will invite spontaneous gatherings or events to transform its spatial expression.

To encourage the potential gatherings or events to cross the boundary of the building site, there will be no visual or physical barrier between the city-operated sidewalk and the proposed open space. In addition, the public space slopes down toward the building where most activities are visible to the public. This condition is intended to invite pedestrians to naturally wander onto the site and discover the on-going progress of civic action.

The overall objective is to obscure the line between the active participants and spectators of civic action. By blurring the division between activists and ordinary citizens, the Power Station aims to reveal the spatial production of civic action in everyday life.

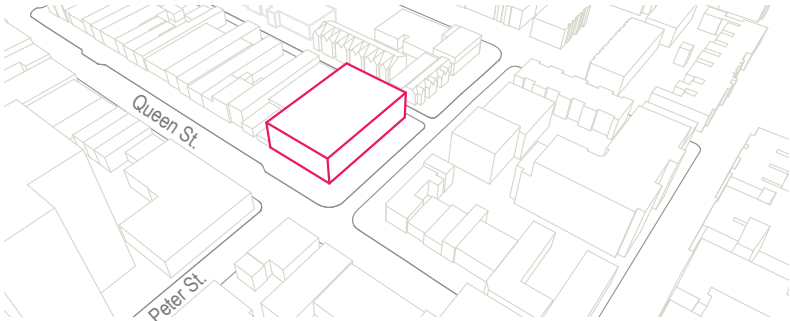


Figure 47

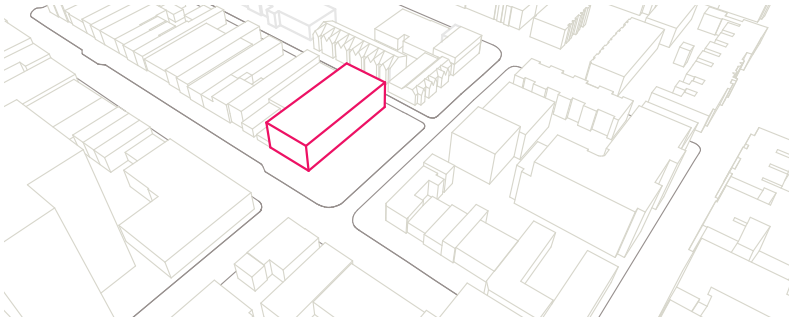


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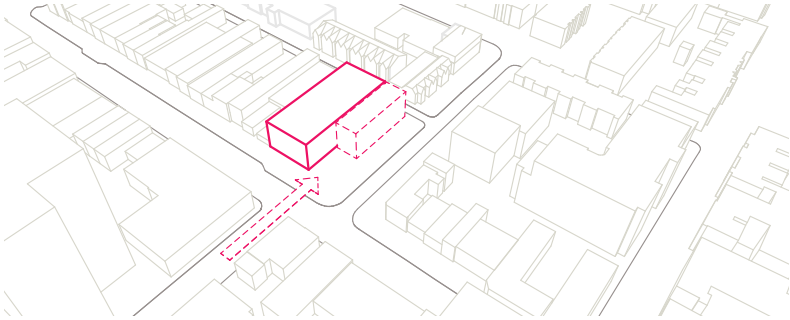


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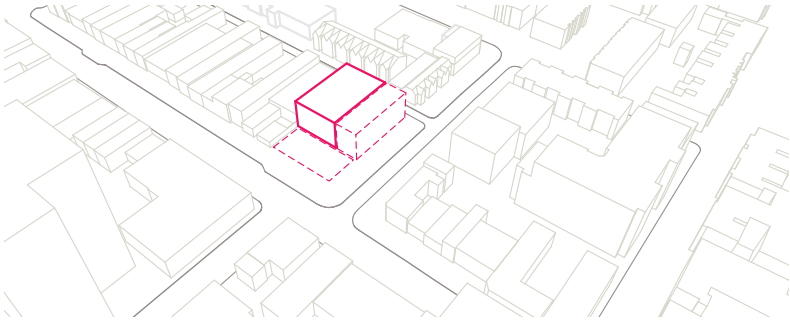


Figure 50

Proposal of atrium as transparent spatial expression

The transparent quality of the Power Station is expressed by obscuring the boundary between actors and spectators. The atrium proposes an environment that encourages social interactions between the various forms of creative production, and ultimately expand the celebration beyond its production site. The objective is to reinforce personal involvement and foster dialogue regarding civic issues with the public at large.

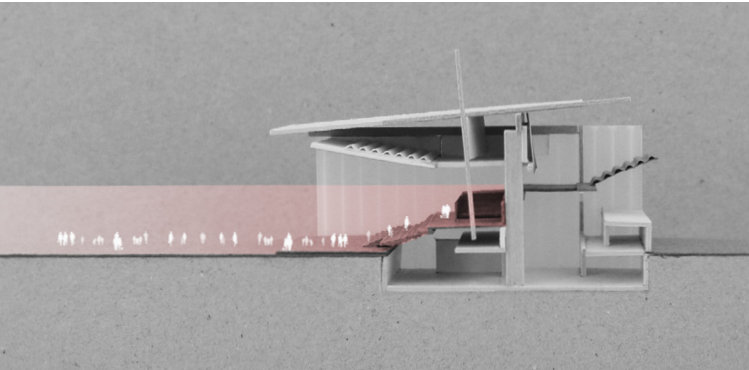


Figure 51

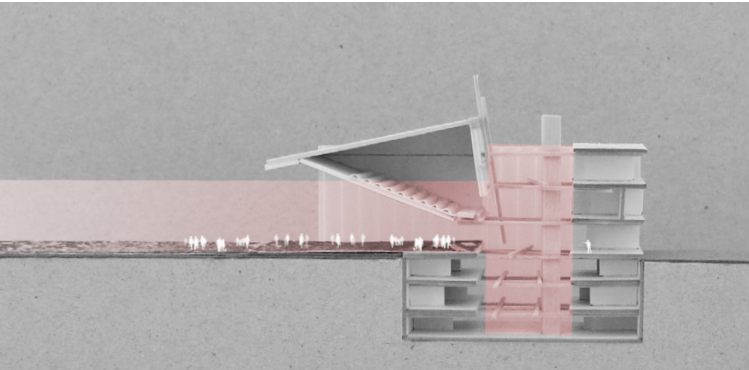


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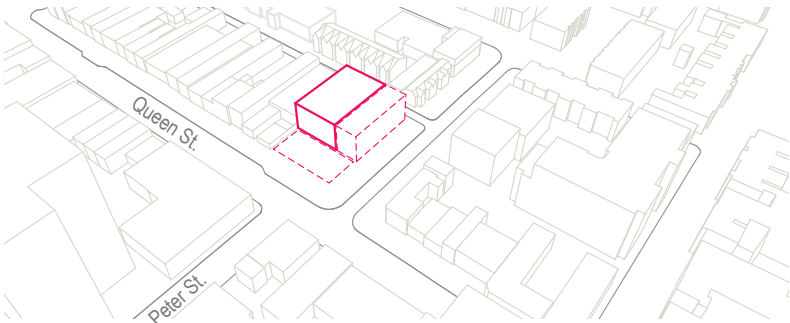


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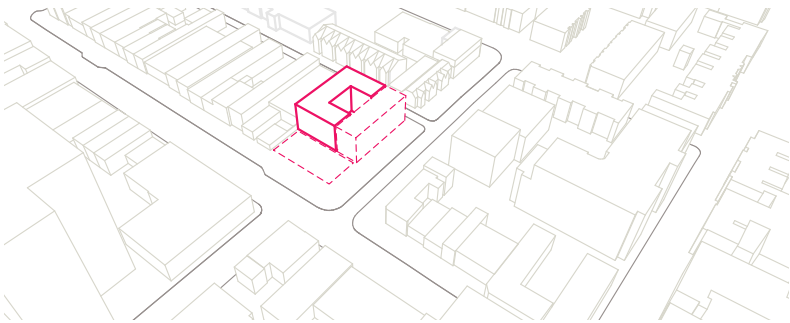


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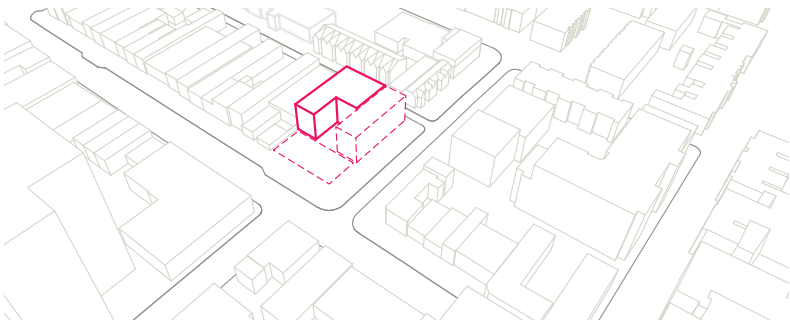


Figure 55

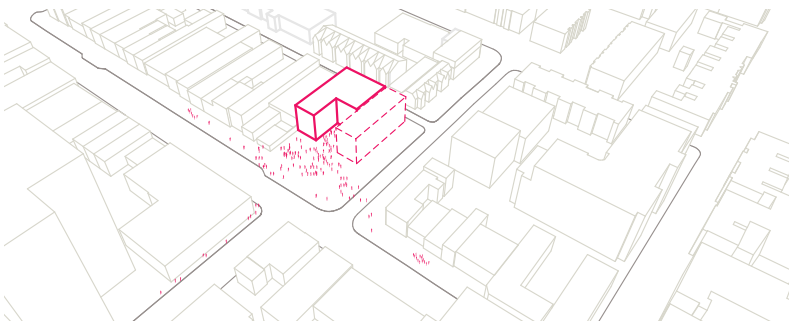


Figure 56



Figure 57



Floor Plan - Ground Level

Queen Street West



Figure 58

The atrium presents the first stage of expansion in which production activities in the workshop, makerspace or art studio can expand their activities if necessary. The next step is to merge the public space and the atrium into one spatial expression. A large operable glass partition is proposed to join the exterior public spaces with the interior programs, thereby blurring the concept of public and private space. The operable partition provides a continuous possibility from production to expression, and maximizes the visibility of civic action beyond the building envelope.

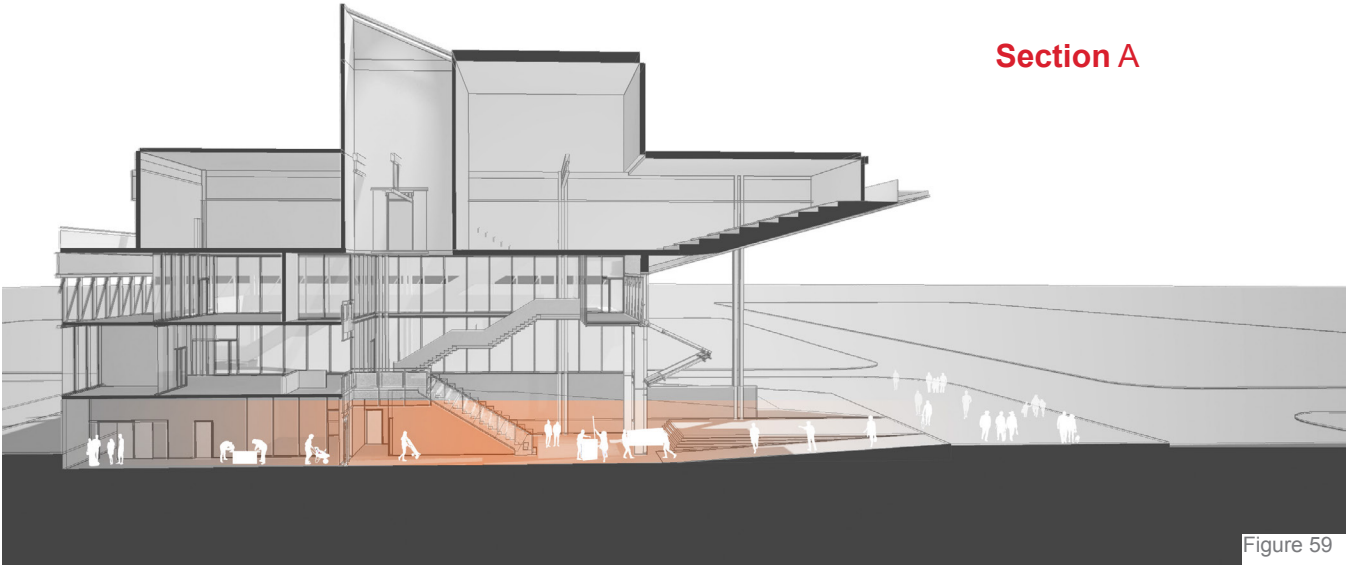


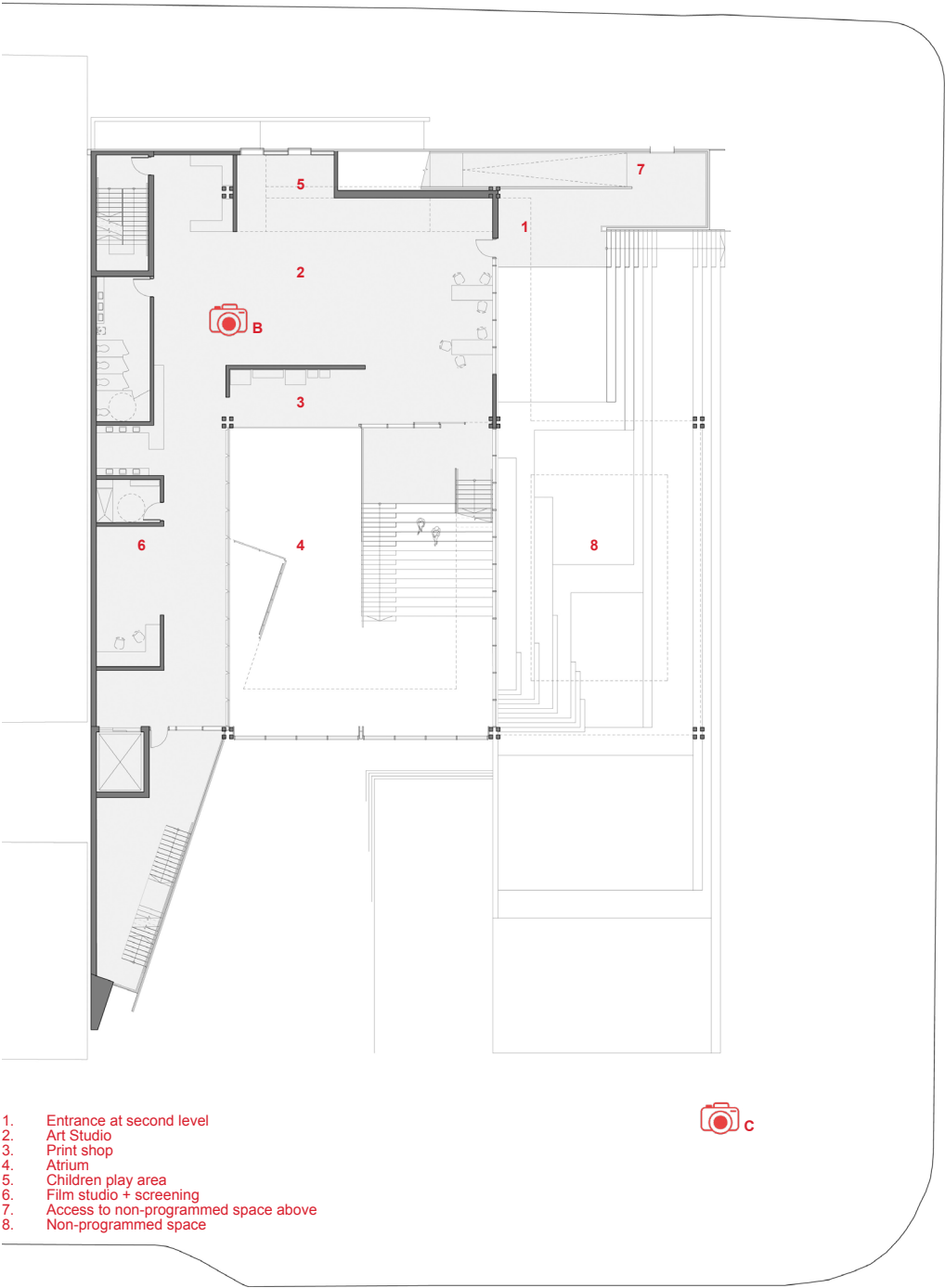
Figure 60



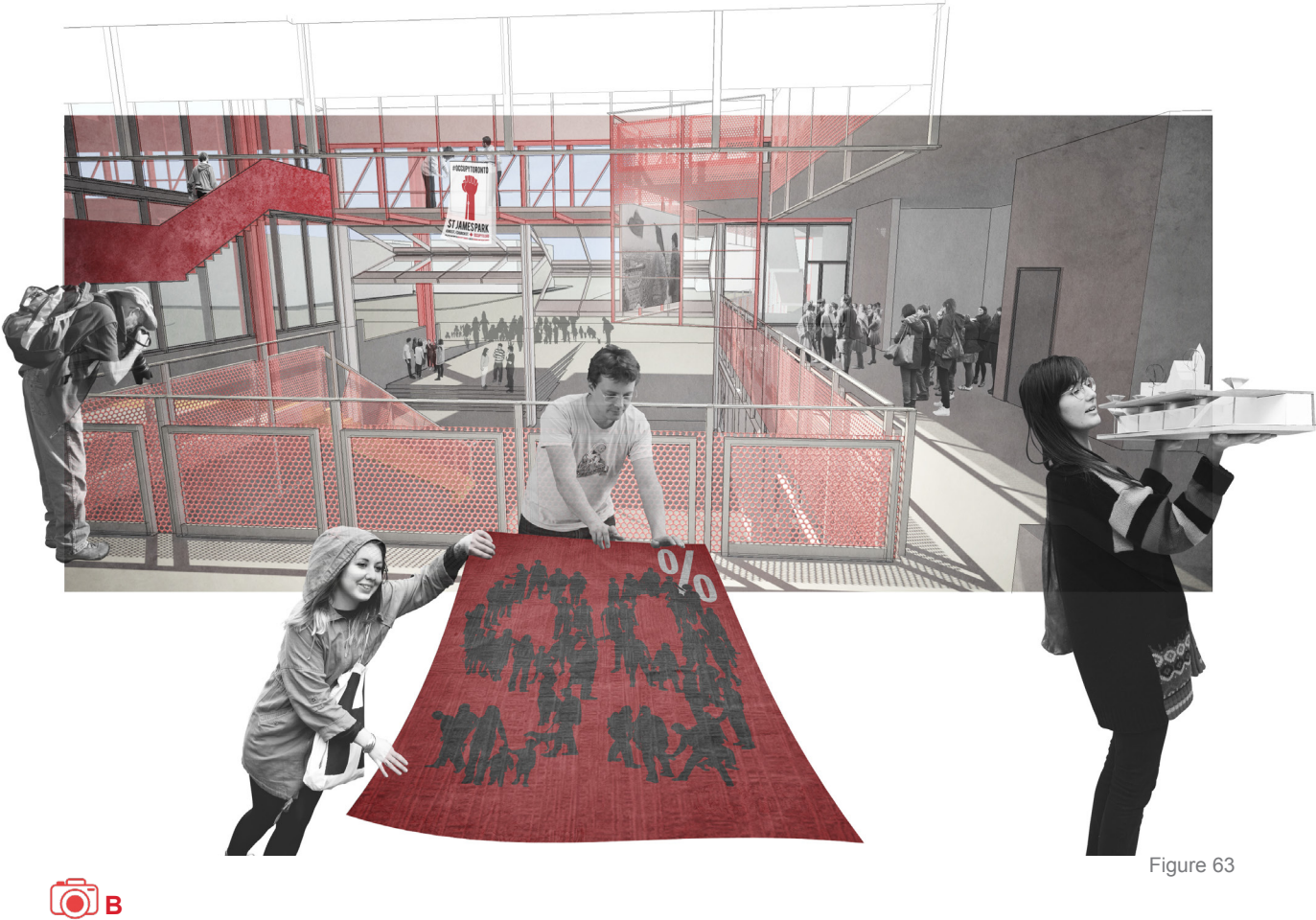
Figure 61



Figure 62



Floor Plan - Second Level



The free expression zone

The proposed free expression zone is a ramp structure that connects the sidewalk along Queen Street West and the entrance to the second floor art studio. The East side of the ramp will incorporate stairs and seating along the sidewalk on Soho Street. It presents a wheelchair accessible space for impromptu speech or informal public expression on civic issues. The goal is to transform the commercial street corner into a spatial production of civic expression.

In addition to informal public expression, the free expression zone can also be used for scheduled presentations or lectures. A retractable screening panel can transform the sidewalk into an ad hoc lecture hall. (Figure 44 - 46) The steel structure connects the free expression zone and the third floor through a wheelchair accessible ramp. It provides a framework for installing information panels to support any scheduled presentation.

The ramp structure of the free expression zone also provides an ideal rallying space that faces the intersection of Queen Street West and Peter Street. The goal is to a rallying point for addressing the public and hopefully create spontaneous gatherings at the intersection.

A community radio station is proposed on the North-East corner of the site. It is located under the highest part of the ramp structure, where the entrance of the second floor art studio is. The main entrance of the radio station faces Soho Street, adjacent to the seating area. The community radio station will mainly broadcast the latest developments in community activism and advocacy. Its recording studio can be booked by community members for individual projects.

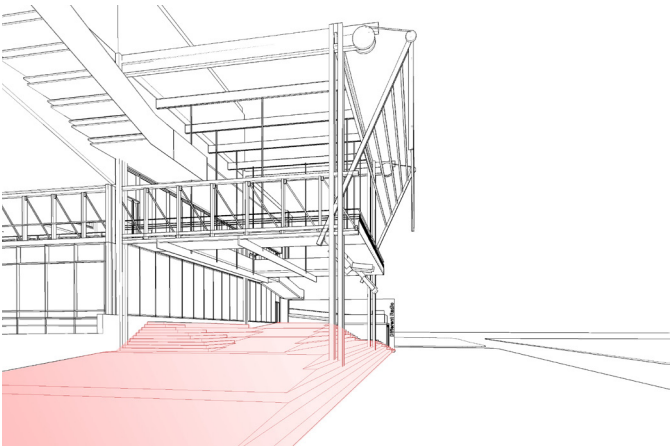


Figure 64

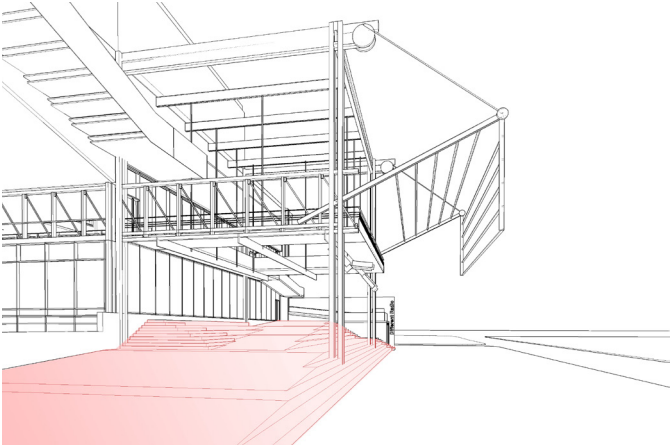


Figure 65

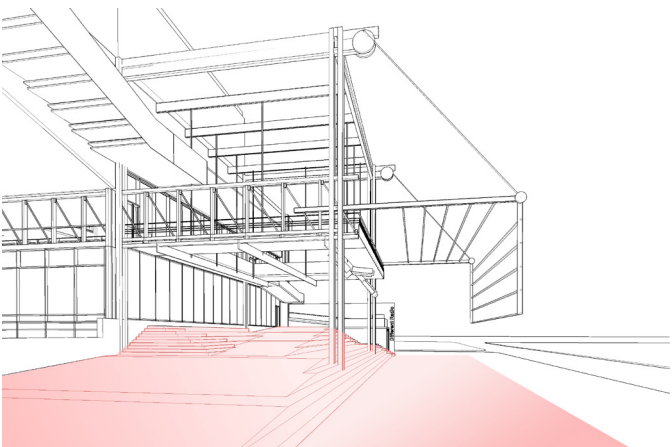


Figure 66



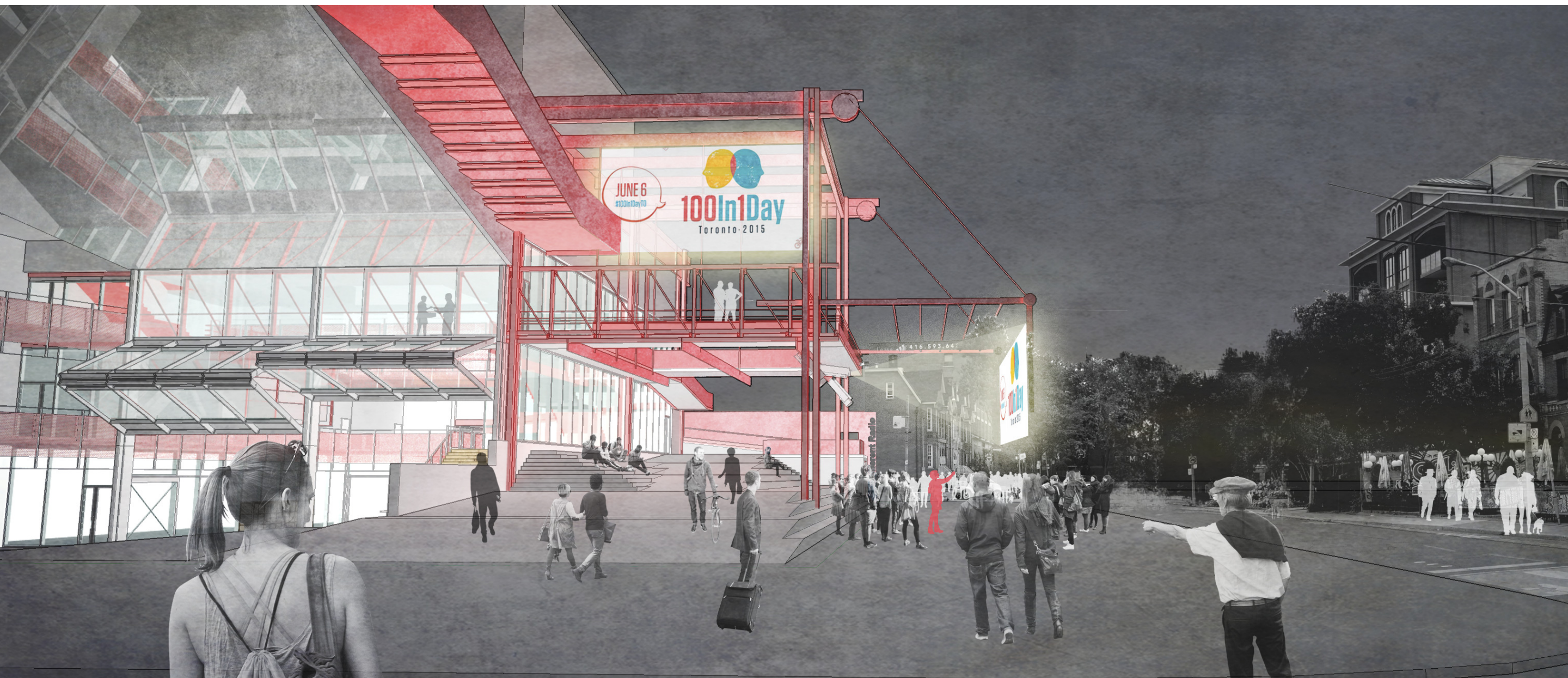
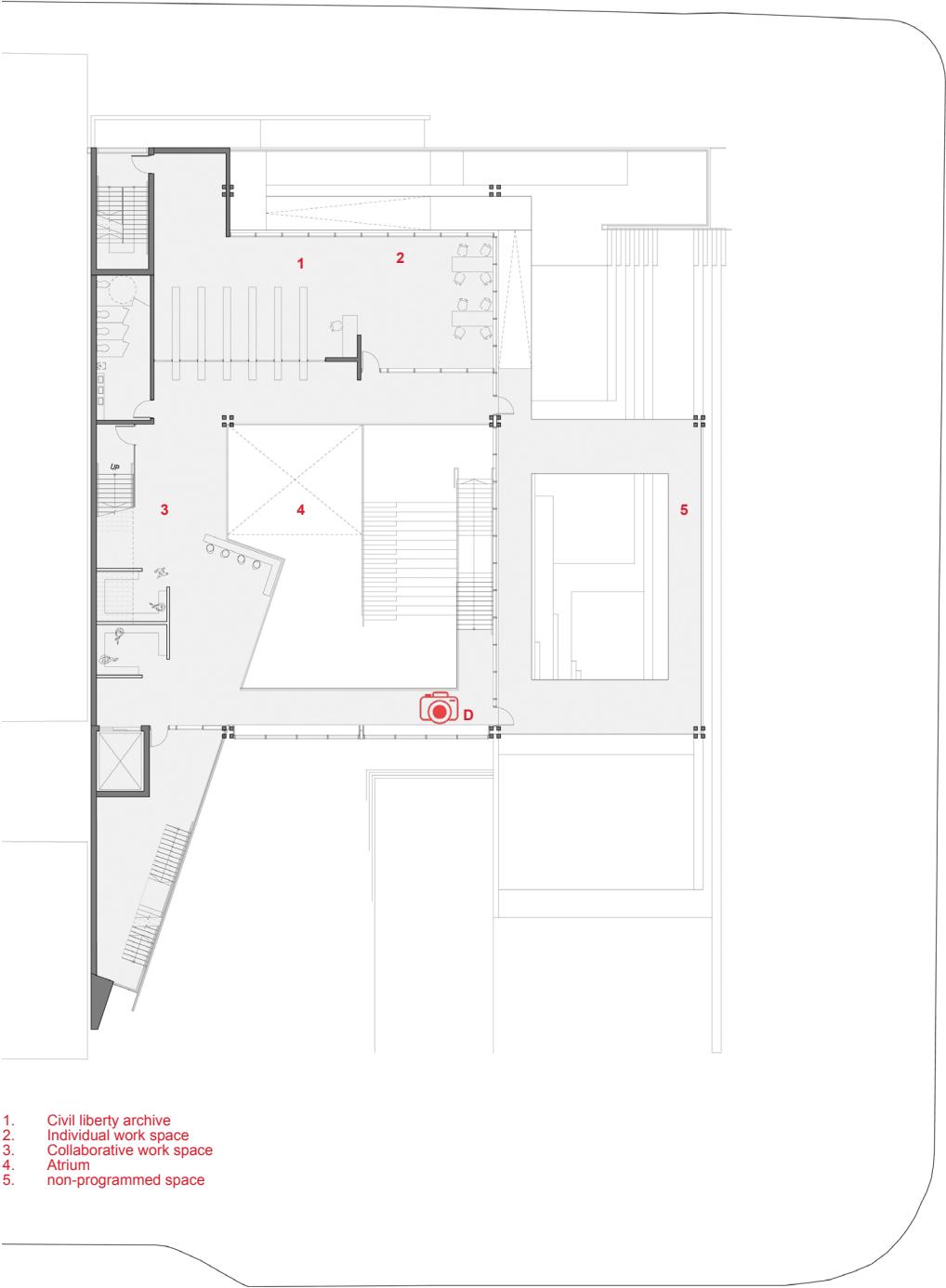


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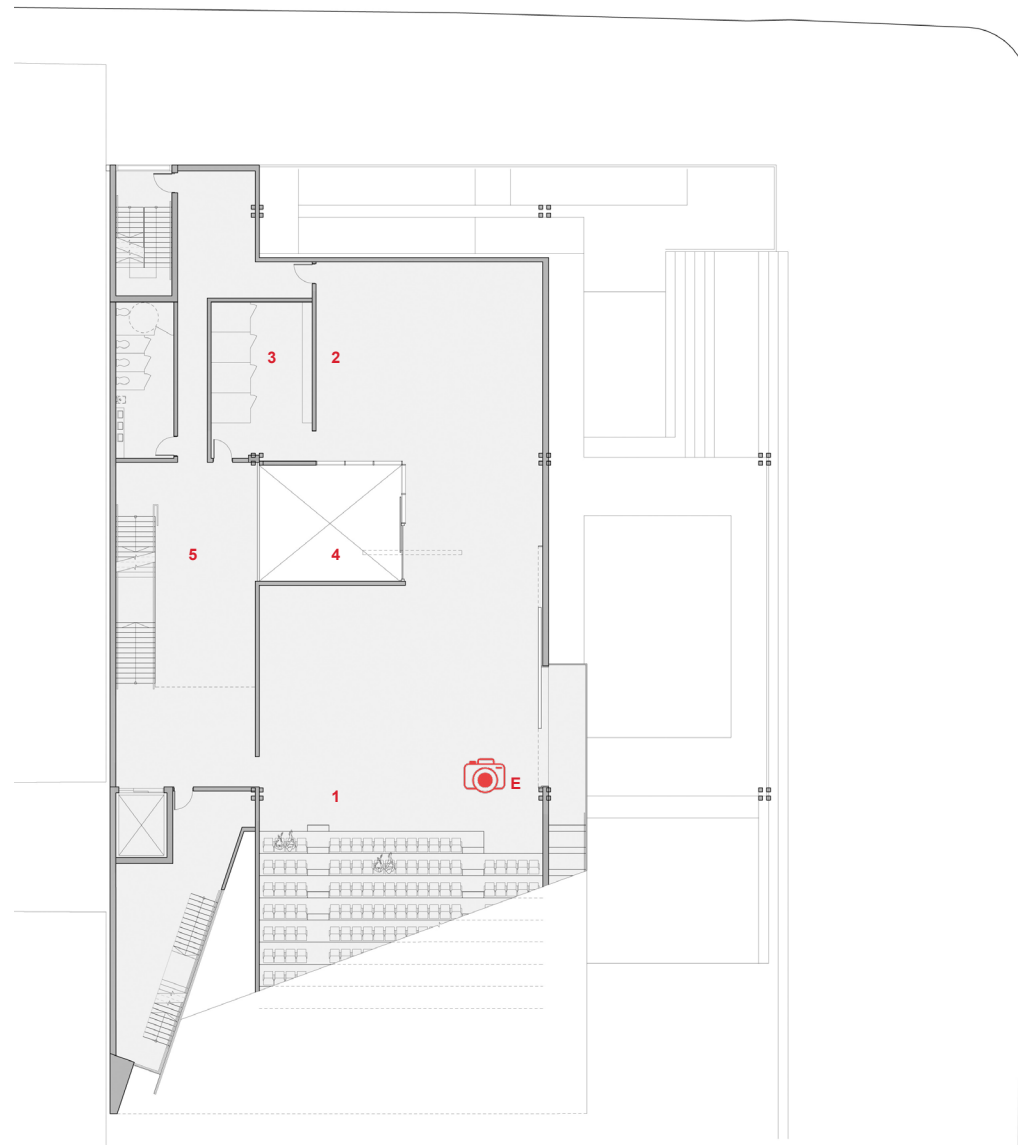


- 1. Civil liberty archive
- 2. Individual work space
- 3. Collaborative work space
- 4. Atrium
- 5. non-programmed space

Floor Plan - Third Level



Figure 68



1. Community theatre
2. Backstage
3. Change room
4. Atrium
5. Theatre lobby

Floor Plan - Fourth Level

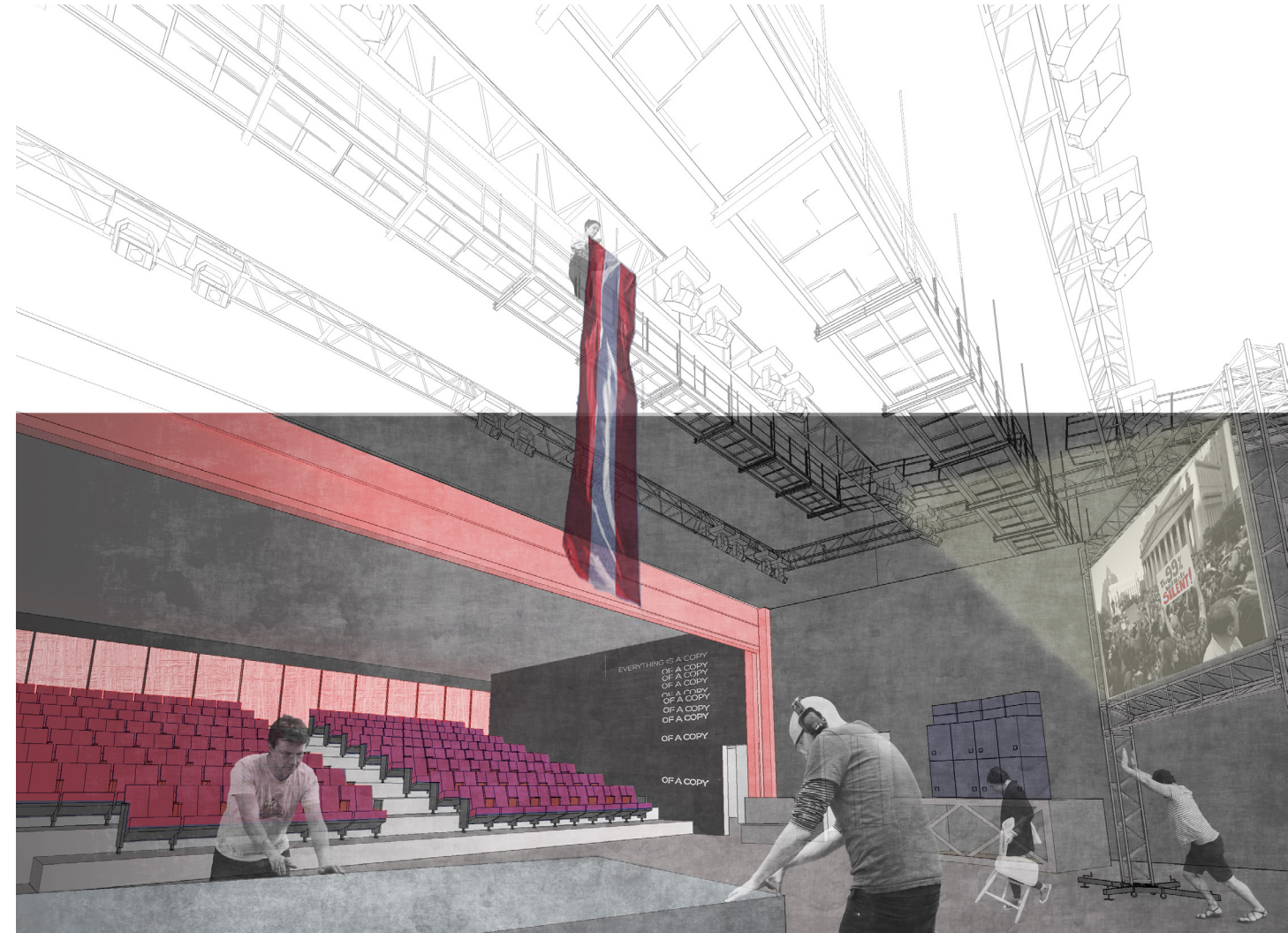
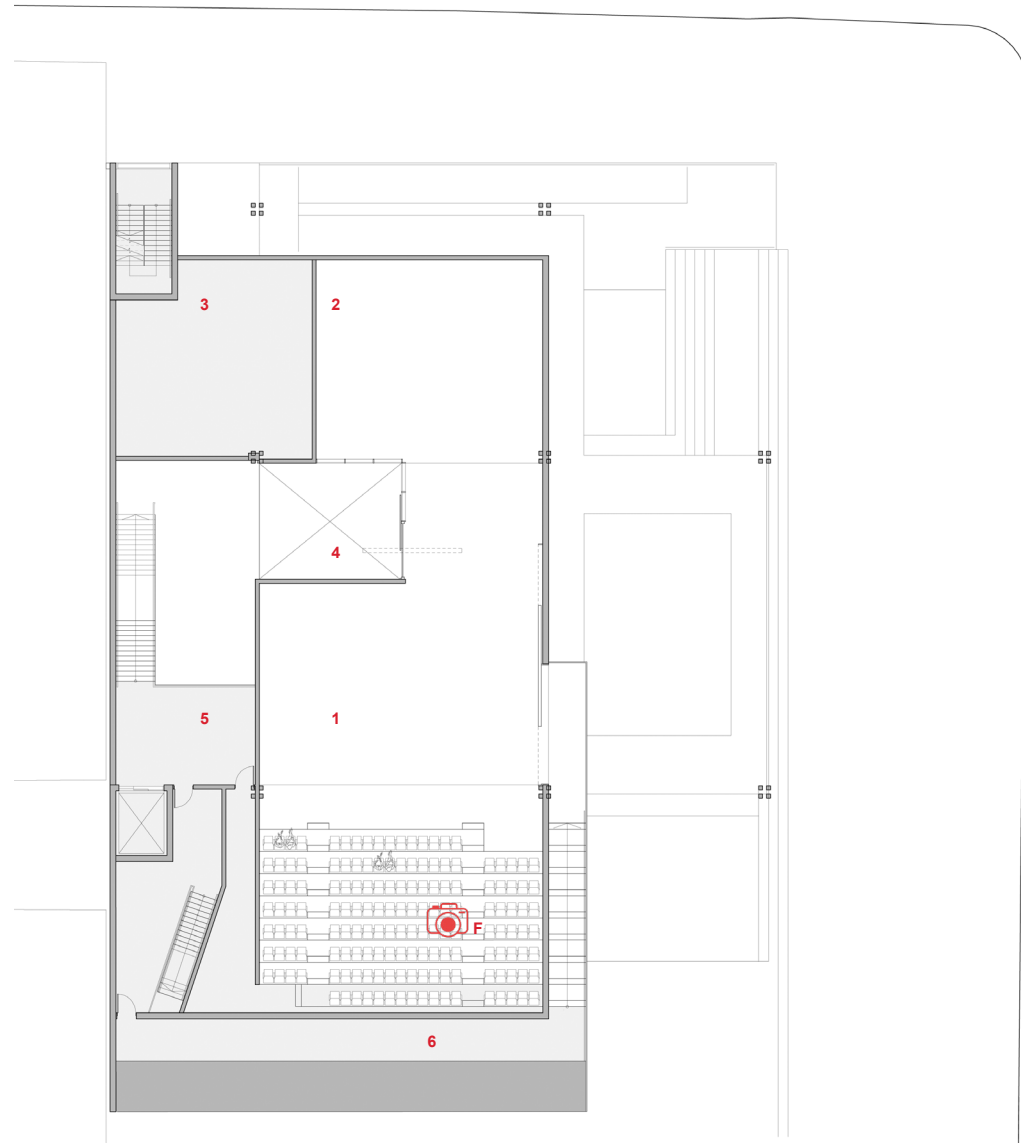


Figure 69



1. Community theatre
2. Backstage
3. Mechanical area
4. Atrium
5. Theatre lobby
6. Exterior walkway

Floor Plan - Fifth Level

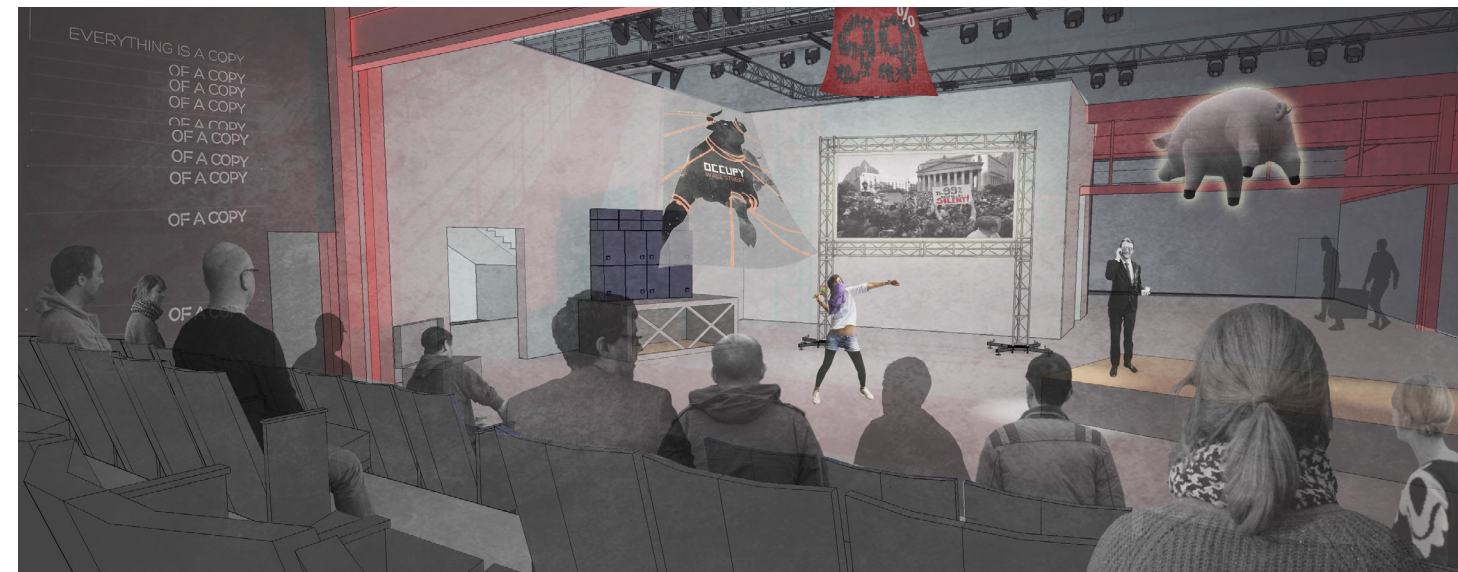


Figure 70



Reflection

This thesis began with the ambition of engaging social issues through architectural intervention. The goal was to explore architecture's role in producing spatial expression for social narratives in the built environment.

The design research in this thesis identifies that architecture's permanent presence can manifest the influence and importance of social existences. The theoretical exploration suggests that the transformation of power can exist through the production of space. Furthermore, the research reveals that marginalized individuals can affirm their social existences through transforming the spatial representation of established power. Instances in which collective actions challenge dominant narratives demonstrated the means by which to produce alternative possibilities outside of the existing system.

The proposal for the Power Station for Civic Action is a resource for the propensity of free expression and the facilitation of the operations that overcome social limitations. It aims to express the exercise of civic action as a celebration, and provides reinforcement for those who engage in the front line of social change.

However, the juxtaposition of the resource-intensive aspect of architecture and the ephemeral nature of civic action remains as a challenge for this thesis. The reality of physical, financial and political constraints presents an inherent challenge for architecture to provide spatial expression for marginalized social existences.

In response, this thesis presents a conceptual framework for social relations between power and people. Instead of visualizing the outcome of social change, the proposed architecture expresses the process of civic engagement as a prominent and important social existence. The goal is to imagine a dedicated place where the production of new spatial expression is an on-going cycle.

Upon reflection, the most enjoyable part of this thesis was during the early stages of conceptual development when impossible ideas were open for consideration. Design development in architecture is intrinsic to the imagination of new social conditions. Architecture can visualize impossible ideas and remind us that a better world is within our grasp. The challenge ahead is to incorporate architects' design thinking with the personal commitment to change society.

Figure 71



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