

Poetry of
Proportions

- LIBRARY -

AHLAWAT GUNJAN

INTERIOR DESIGN

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART, LONDON

A spatial CELEBRATION and EXTENSION

*of poetry through the dusty lanes of letterpress
and literature*

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Poetry of Proportions

is a spatial celebration
and extension of poetry
through the dusty lanes
of LETTERPRESS
and *LITERATURE*.

THIS LIBRARY PROJECT emerges from the elegant proportions of the letterpress tray, adapting its modular grid into a comprehensive design language for the interior. From shaping the exterior façade to extending deeply into the interior, organising bookshelves, defining spatial relationships, and orchestrating the floor plan. This geometrical strategy creates a cohesive vocabulary where form and function gets inextricably linked.

Central to the design is the choreography of natural light—a vital intervention in what was once a dim, neglected space. Strategically opening of the void and carefully positioned windows and doors create a hierarchy of illumination zones, each calibrated to support different modes of reading and contemplation. Keeping gentle layering of light and unobtrusive views through the day transforms the atmosphere, fostering the connection

with the natural world around the space. Furthermore, it creates multiple layers of visual connection: between the reader and nature, between the intimate scale of books and the expansive horizon beyond.

The library accommodates both solitary reflection and communal discovery through a diverse palette of spaces. Formal reading areas with structured seating give way to informal breakout zones with comfortable, flexible arrangements. This dual character allows the library to serve multiple rhythms of use while maintaining its contemplative core.

Exposed glulam beams and weathered red brick celebrate the beauty of reuse, creating spaces rich with history and environmental responsibility. These material choices reinforce the library's role as a place of cultural continuity—where stories are preserved, shared, renewed.

Compression Artifact

WUNDERKAMMER formed the heart of my compression artefact, where a found letterpress tray served as a connecting platform between the river, plith, site and Canary Wharf by incorporating lost and found objects from the Thames foreshore. Each artefact contributed to a dialogue between the past and the present, transforming the site into a living chronicle of history and imagination.

What did I learn from the COMPRESSIONS ARTIFACT?

That buildings are systems that are formed of various small and big components that work together and independently

What characteristics excite or annoy you the most?

What you can or/and cannot change?

An understanding of building's history, style, previous use and current state

New forms and assemblage of thinking



*What does
CANARY
WHARF
need?*

Businesses/ideas that doesn't exist in the area

New group of people who haven't used the space.
Certainly not the bankers, IT, and other cooperates

Something that is not templated like the area

Something that feels natural, organic, free flowing, easy
on the senses (*clearly not formica desks and strip lightings*)

Something that makes the area feel more London,
creative, engaging and unique

Something that can generate curiosity, an avenue to
discover new ideas and things each time

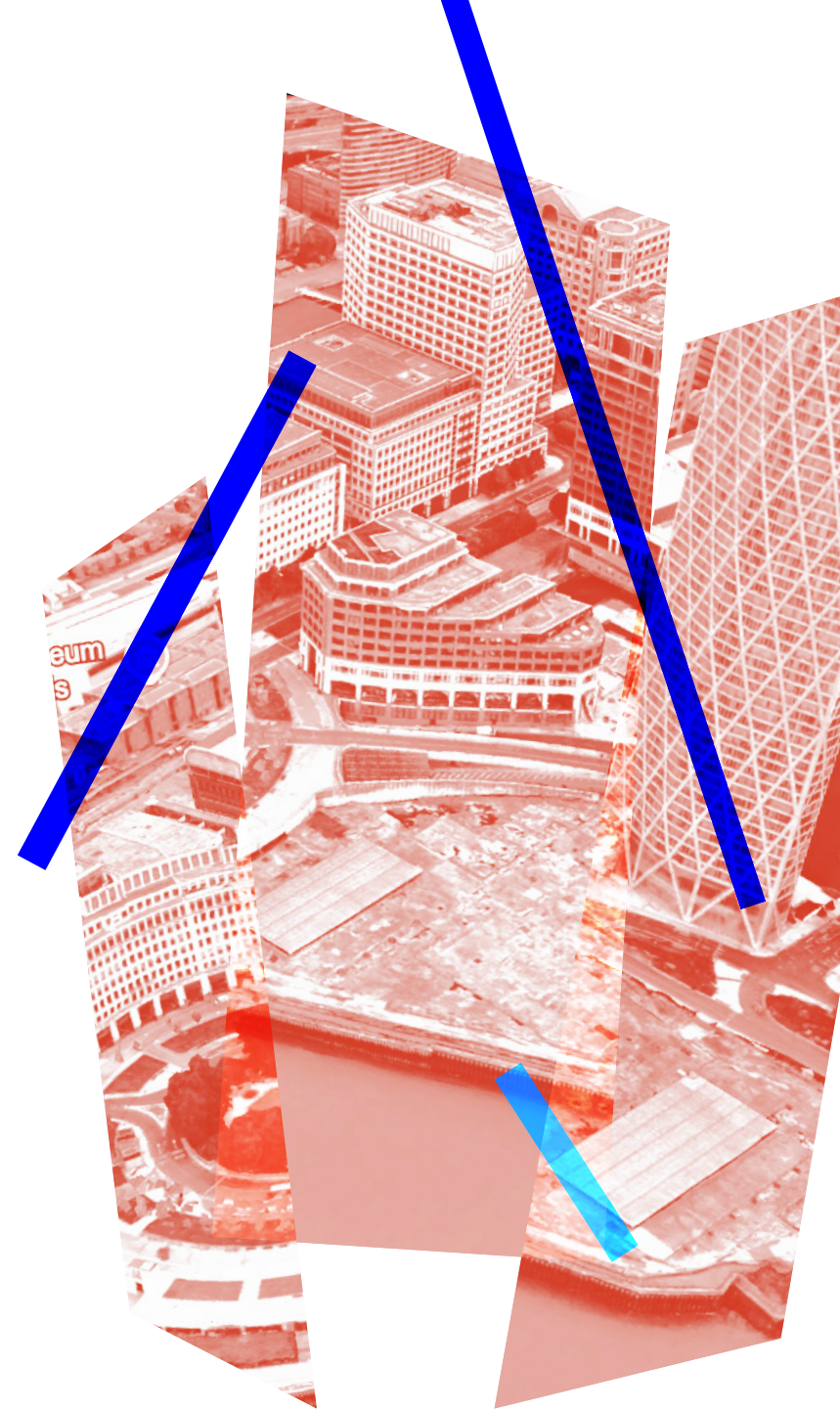
*What can
I take from
COMPRESSIONS
ARTIFACT
and apply
to the site?*

Understanding how micro systems can be applied to
larger functions, enabling complex conversion through
interaction between old and new, before and after and
all points in-between

Atmosphere and qualities that are missing

History and art

Connection to the nature from its intense urbanity



The Site

15 WESTFERRY CIRCUS is a 16,250 m² (174,900 sq ft) building located on the upper level of Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf (*on the West India Docks on the Isle of Dogs*).

The building was designed Terry Farrell & Partners to fully incorporate the requirements of the tenant, Morgan Stanley. It is a staggering structure spanning over ten floors, with roof height of 146 ft (44.5m).

It has Thames on the South West and India Avenue on South East. Only three floors are occupied by offices at the moment.



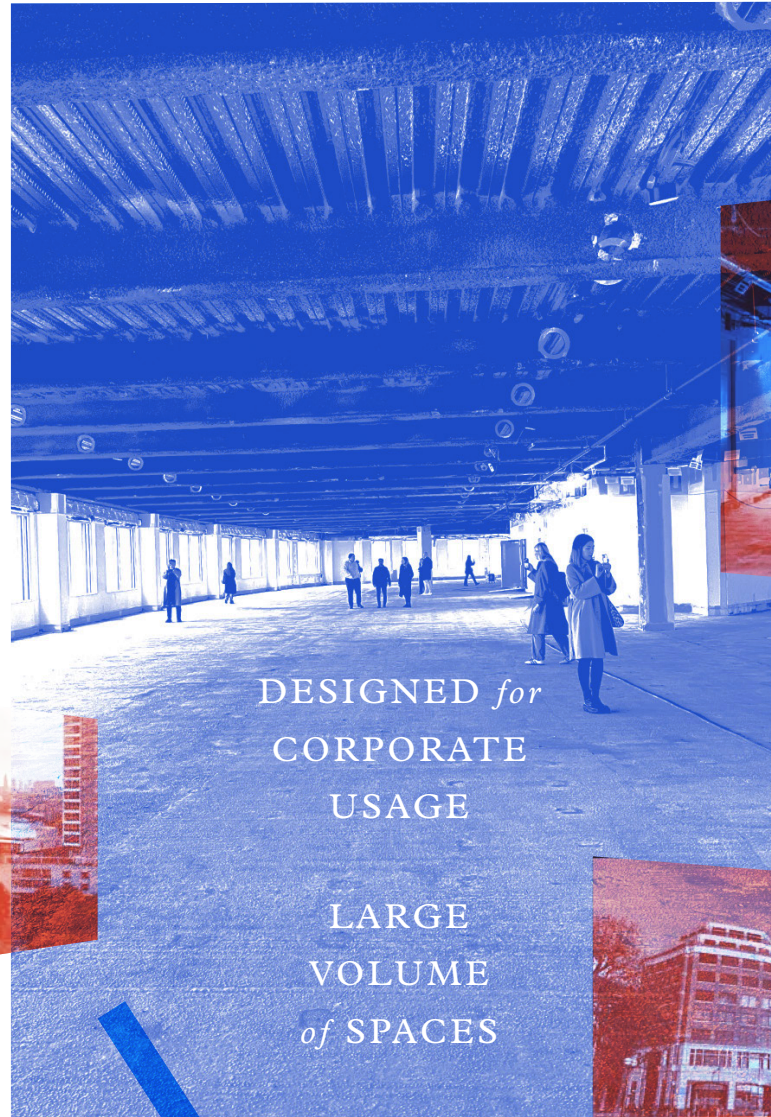
Site Analysis

LOW *on* NATURAL
LIGHT & VENTILATION

BUILT *on* COLUMNS,
NO STRUCTURAL
WALLS (*sort of*
spatial and visual
continuity)



SCENIC RIVER VIEW
on the SOUTH WEST
SIDE



DESIGNED *for*
CORPORATE
USAGE

LARGE
VOLUME
of SPACES

OPEN CIRCULATION



TWO FUNCTIONAL
VOIDS *for* SERVICES



POST-MODERNIST
in OUTLOOK

Prospective Uses of the Site

Museum of
AESTHETICS

Docks

Museum of
MUDLARKING

*Notion of stuff coming in,
getting stored and circulated*

Museum of
SLOWNESS

History

Museum of
LOST & FOUND

Migration

ART RETREAT



Transition

Museum
of **ORAL**
HISTORIES

Cabinets of curiosities

Museum of
TYPOGRAPHY

Movement

Museum of
FALLEN BONDS &
BROKEN OBJECTS

*Starting with ART RETREAT,
the idea evolved to a*

BOOK MAKING
RETREAT

WHAT
is the
BIG
IDEA?

How do you design a retreat in the middle of the bustling city, with same level of focus and solitude and privacy and public interaction?
SILENCE IN THE HEART OF LONDON.

Narrowing it down from the city, to the building to a room!

Understanding the spatial quality of the building (*where light comes from, which area is more private, more noisy, more scenic*), I looked into a series of ideas, with strong spatially strategy based on the aspects of

RETREAT

BINDING *and* CONNECTIVITY

SPINE *and* PASSAGES

THRESHOLD

COURTYARDS

And then to establish a resonance between the building and its new use. Between private and public, there are many small semi places *to* PERCH, TALK, SIT, CONTEMPLATE.

ZONING *for the overall site*

wouldnt exist

RESTAURANT **7F**

RESIDENCES + GREEN SPACE + YOGA **6F**

RESIDENCES + GREEN SPACE **5F**

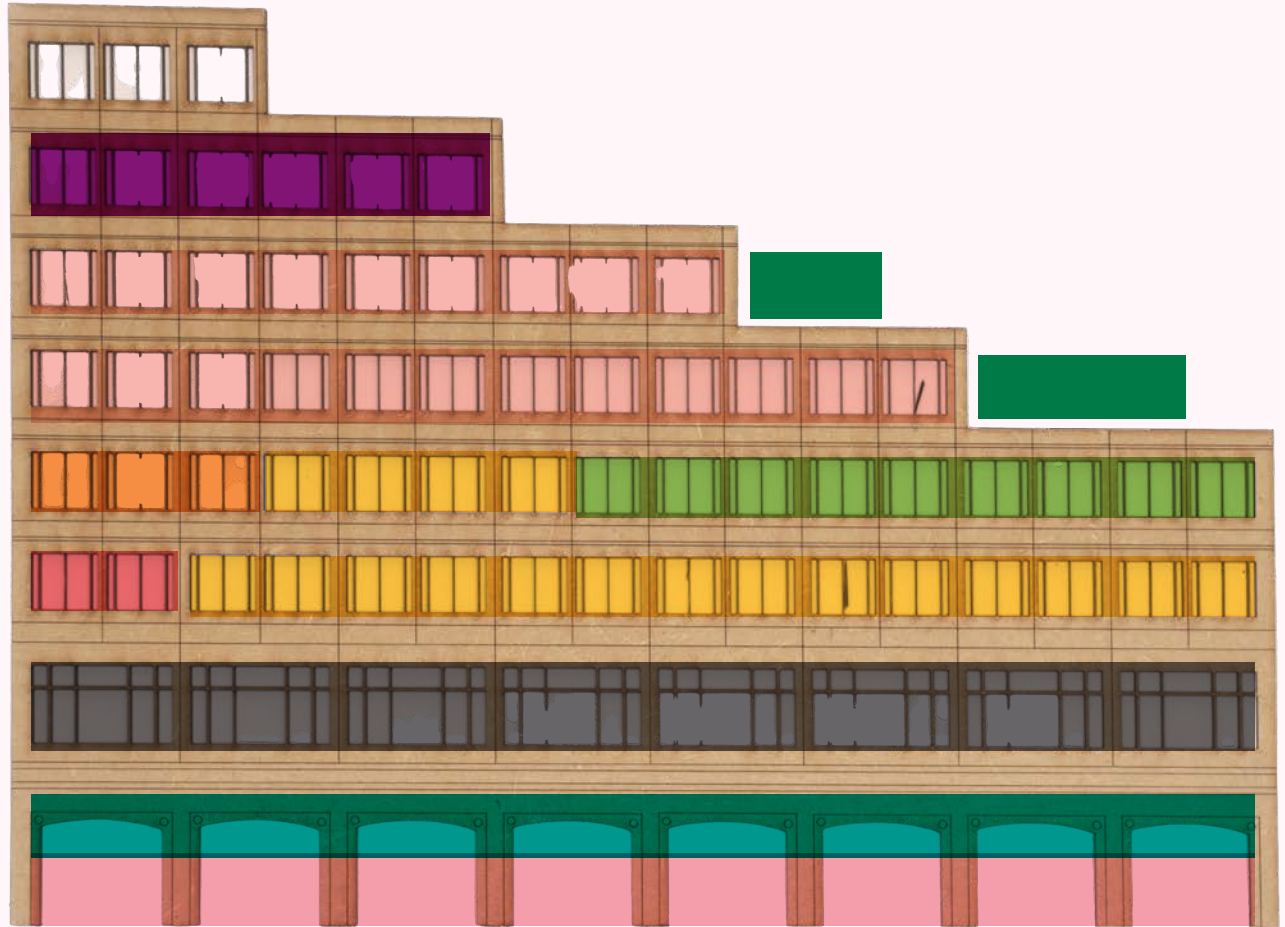
LIBRARY + STUDIOS + BOOK MAKING FACILITIES **4F**

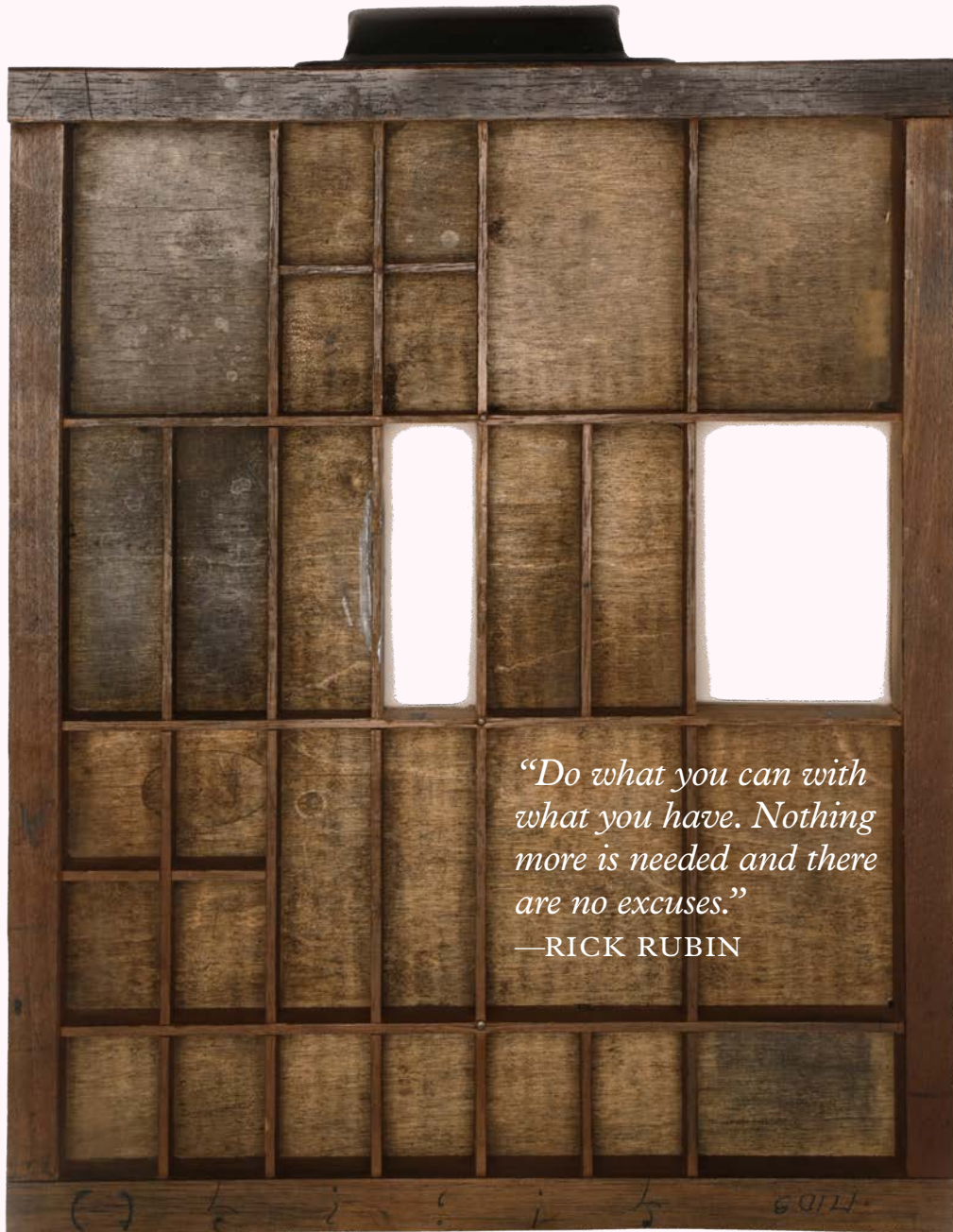
RENTAL FOR PUBLISHERS **3F**

LIBRARY + SEATING **2F**

PUBLIC EVENTS + EXHIBITIONS **1F**

RECEPTION + OPEN PUBLIC SPACE + GARDEN **G F**





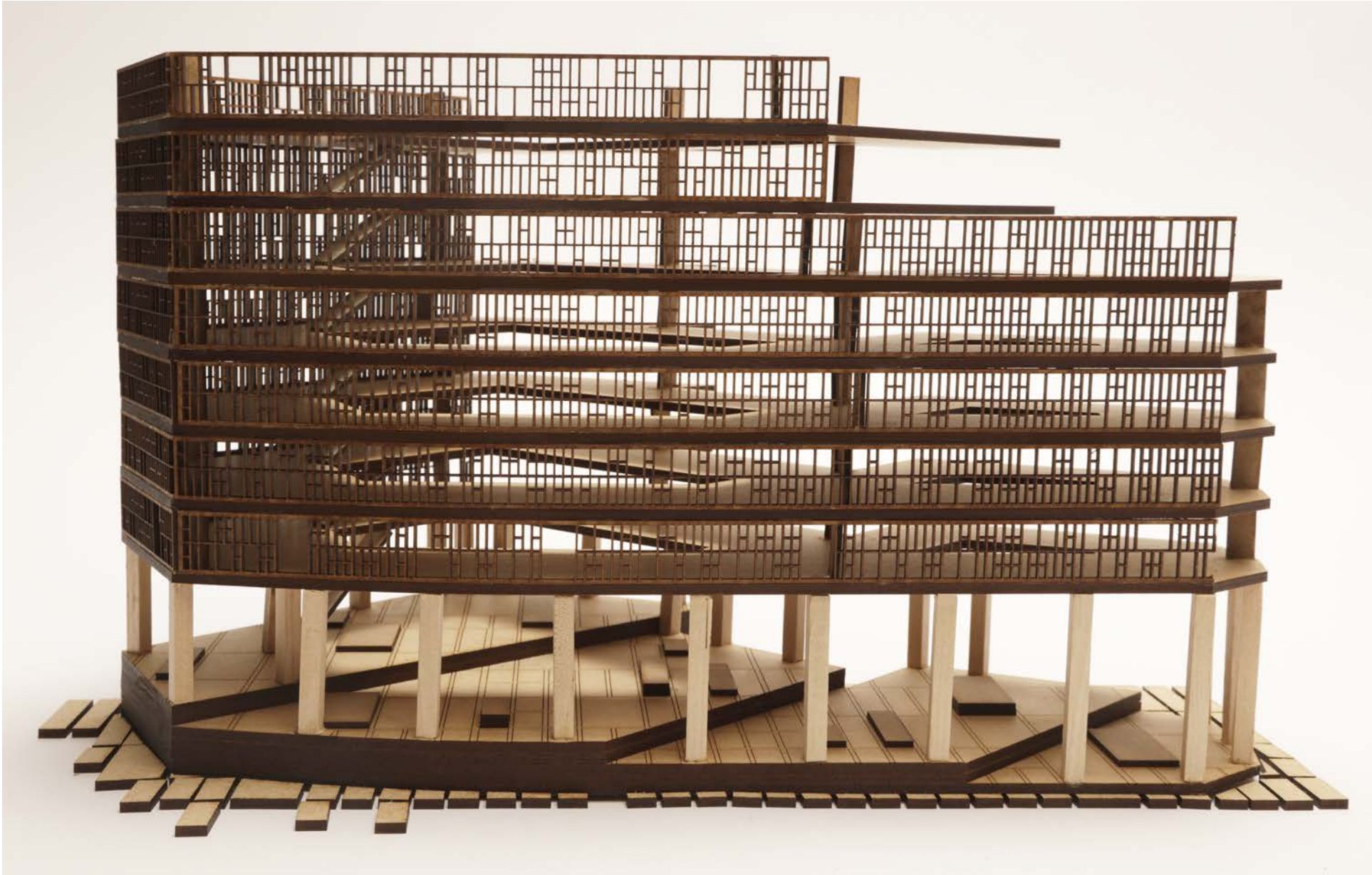
*“Do what you can with
what you have. Nothing
more is needed and there
are no excuses.”*

—RICK RUBIN

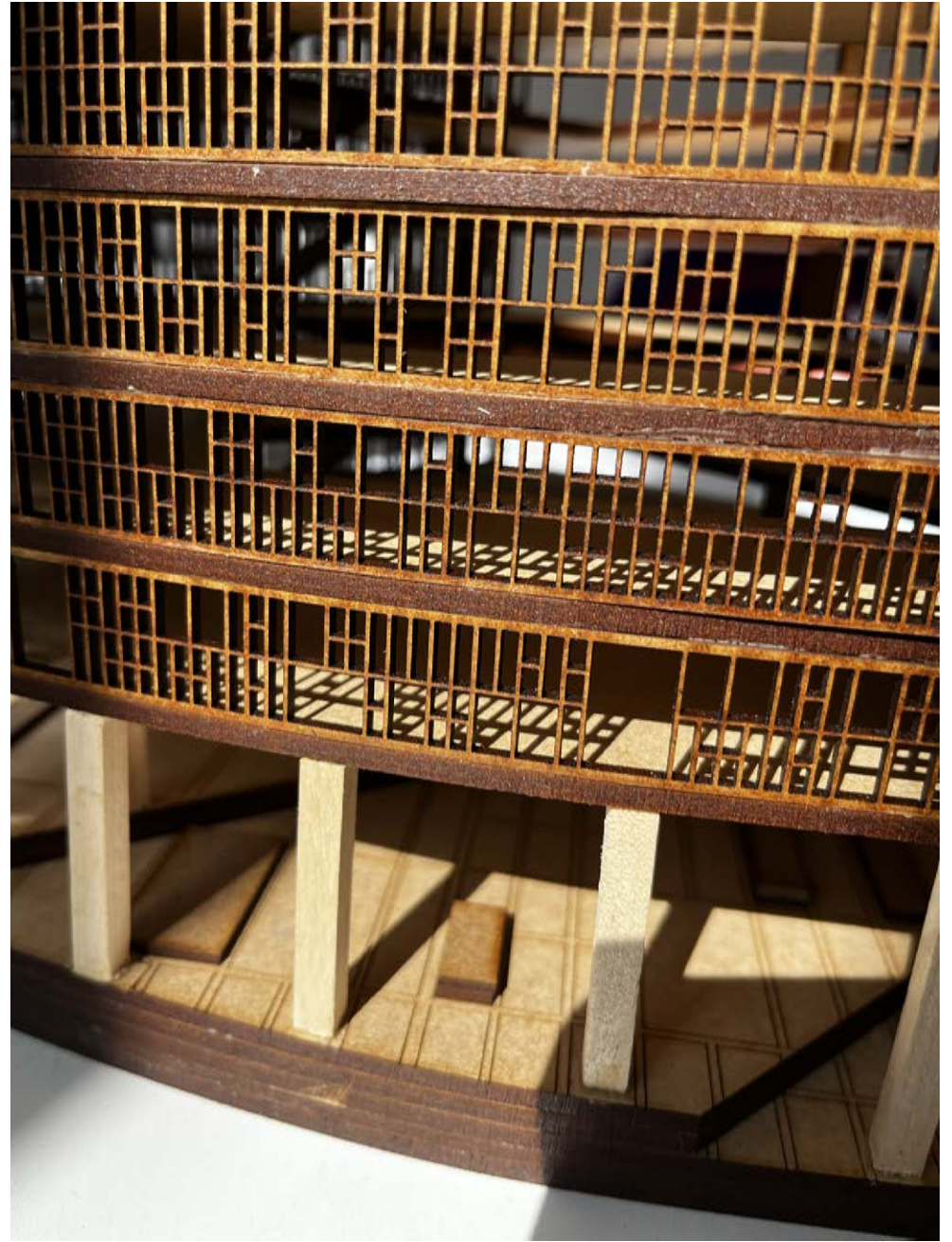
THE SECRET SOCIAL LIFE OF PROPORTIONS

*“We never just look at one thing; we are always looking at the
relation between things and ourselves.”*—JOHN BERGER

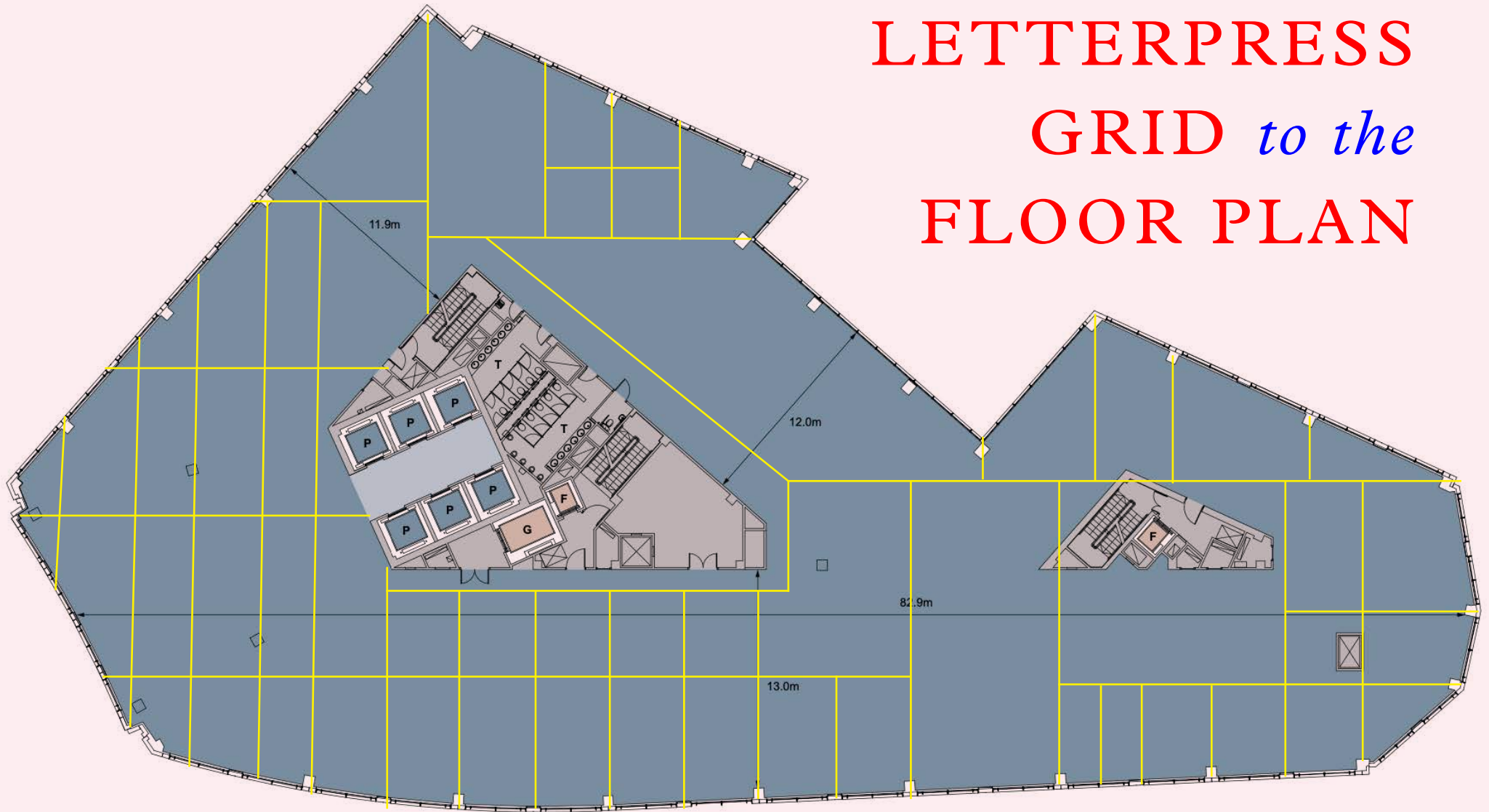
PROPORTIONS do not exist in isolation; they lean, borrow, and balance. The world is stitched together — not in loud declarations, but in the subtle ratios of togetherness. Sometimes, we look too far, too fast, forgetting that answers whisper all around us. Proportions teach us interdependence, how nothing stands alone. They are the ARCHITECTURE OF ATTENTION, revealing their quiet social life only to those who pause, observe, and absorb.







TRANSPOSING
LETTERPRESS
GRID *to the*
FLOOR PLAN

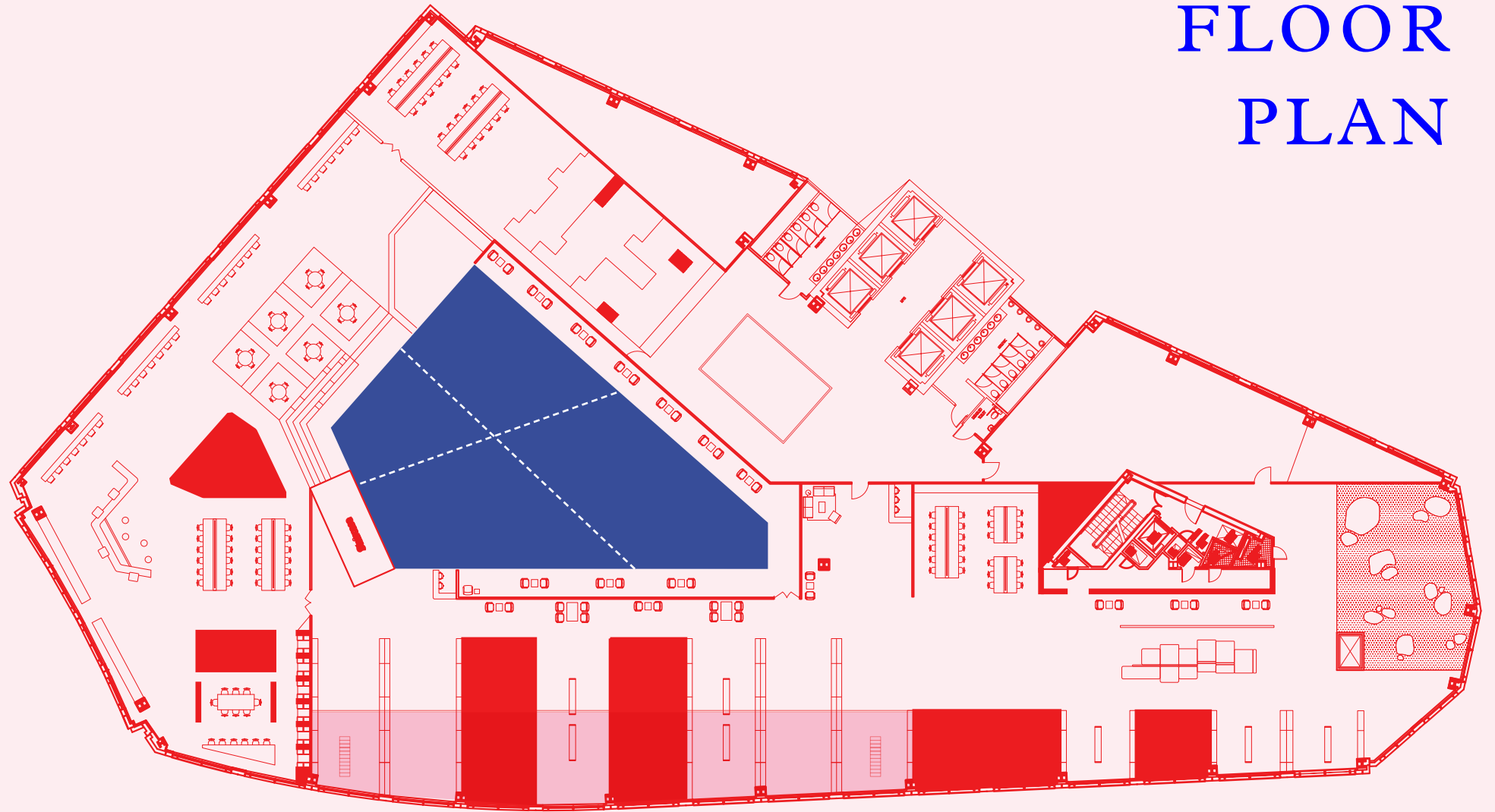


ZONING

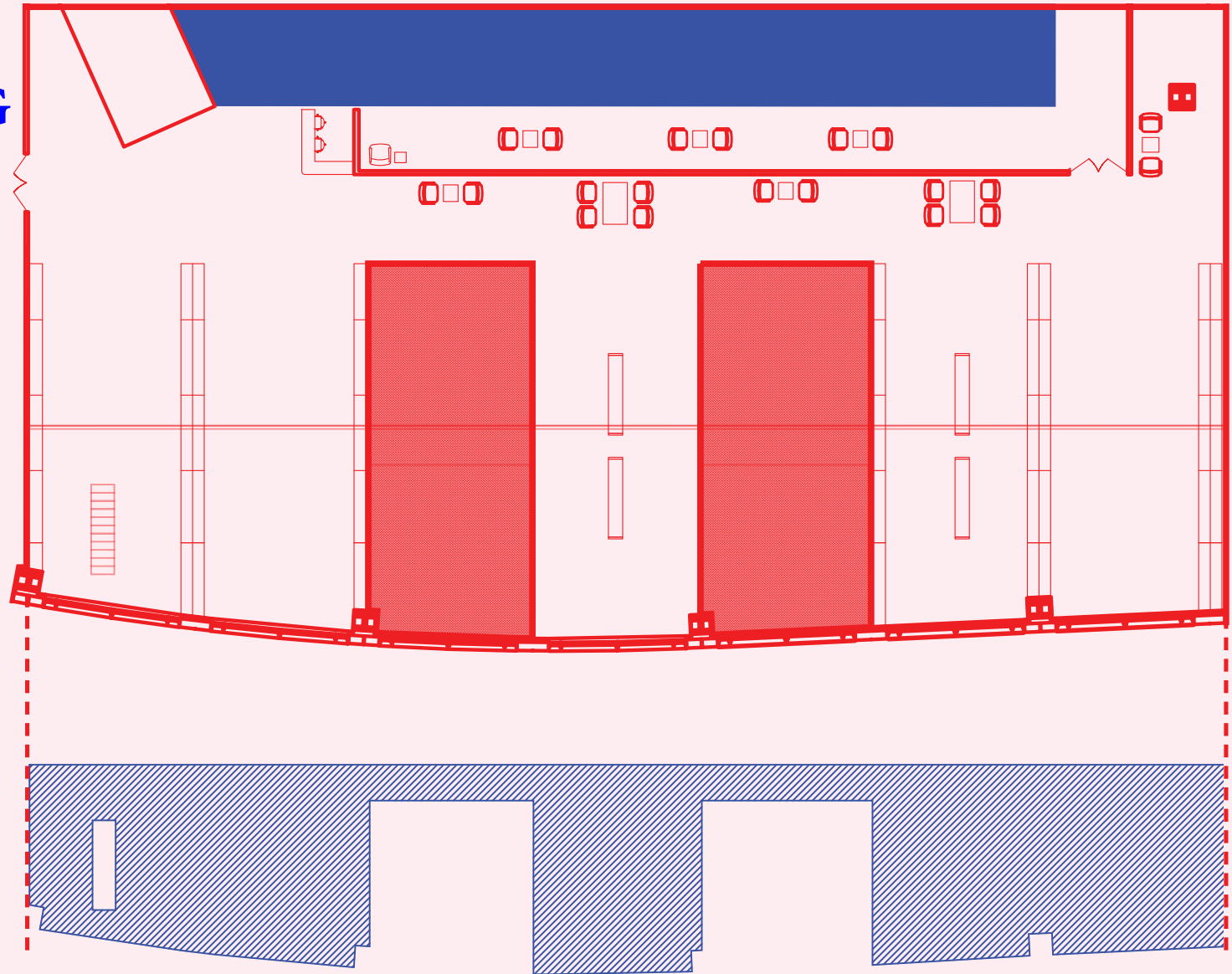


- Entry/ exit
- Green spaces

OVERALL FLOOR PLAN

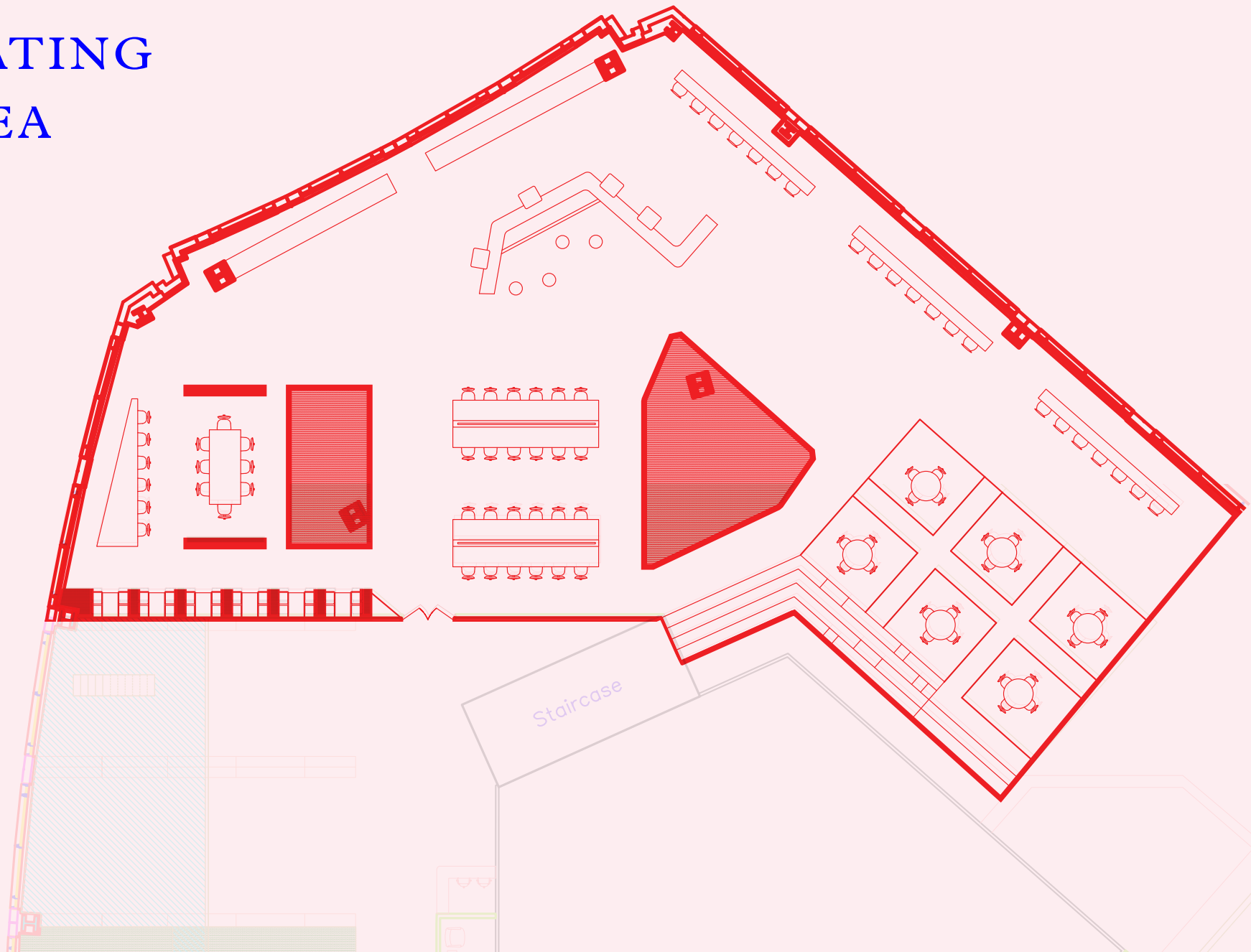


BOOK
BROWSING
AREA

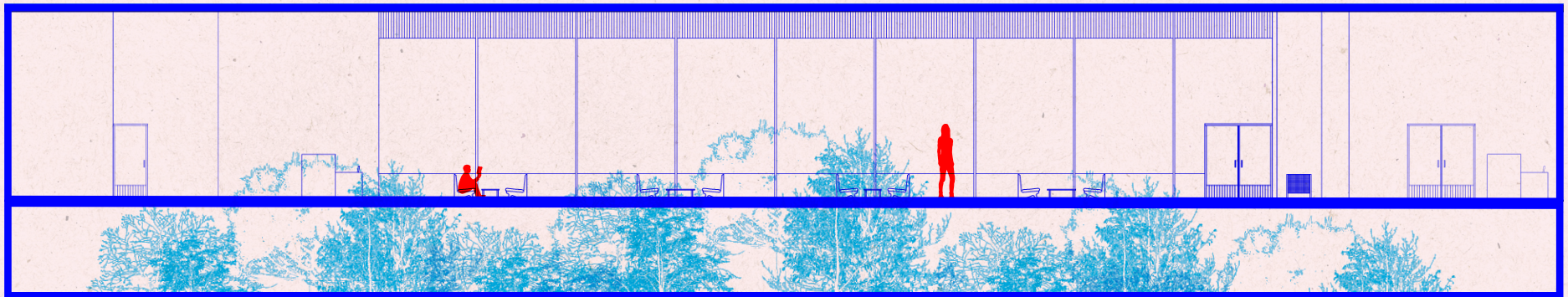
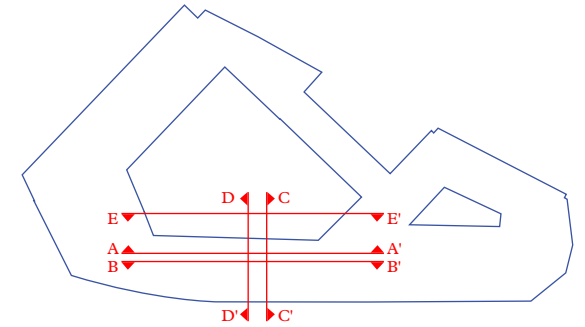


Mezannine

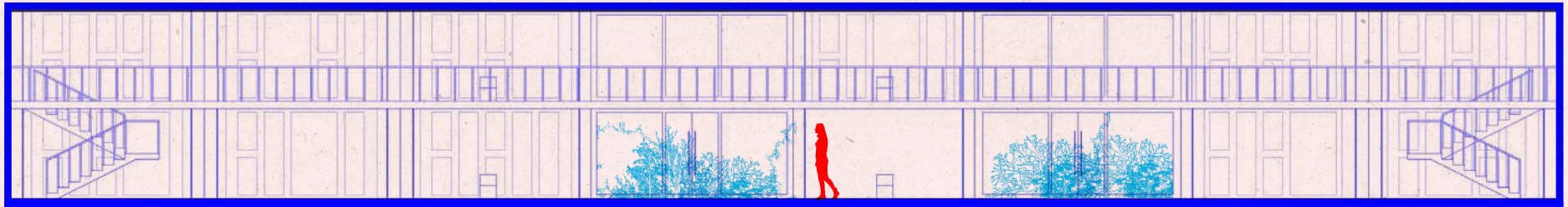
SEATING AREA



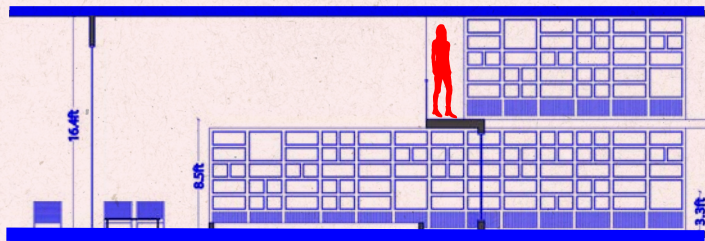
BOOK BROWSING AREA



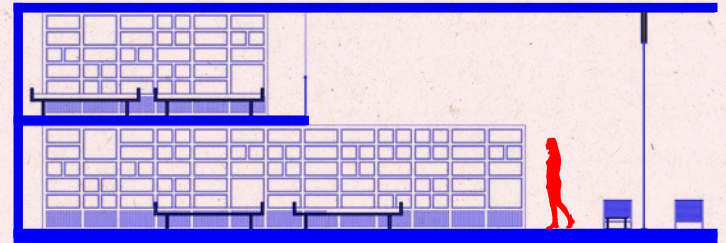
A-A'



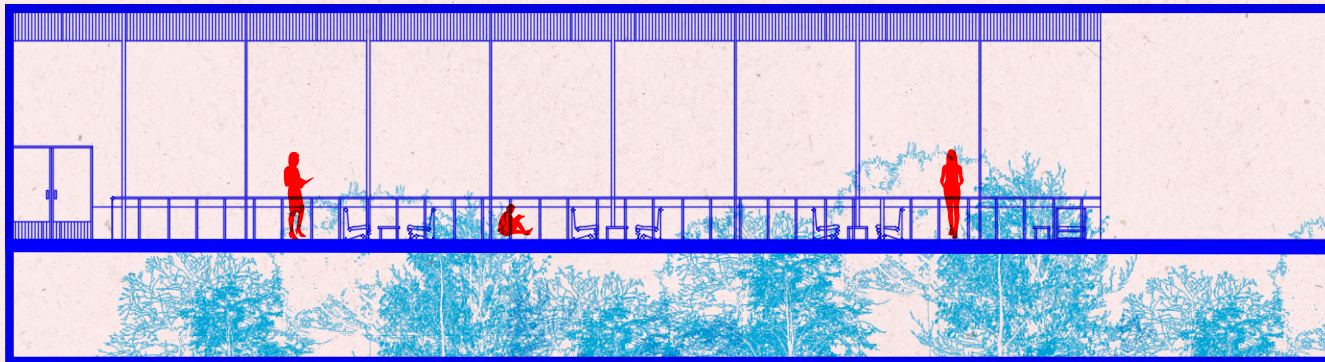
B-B'



C-C'

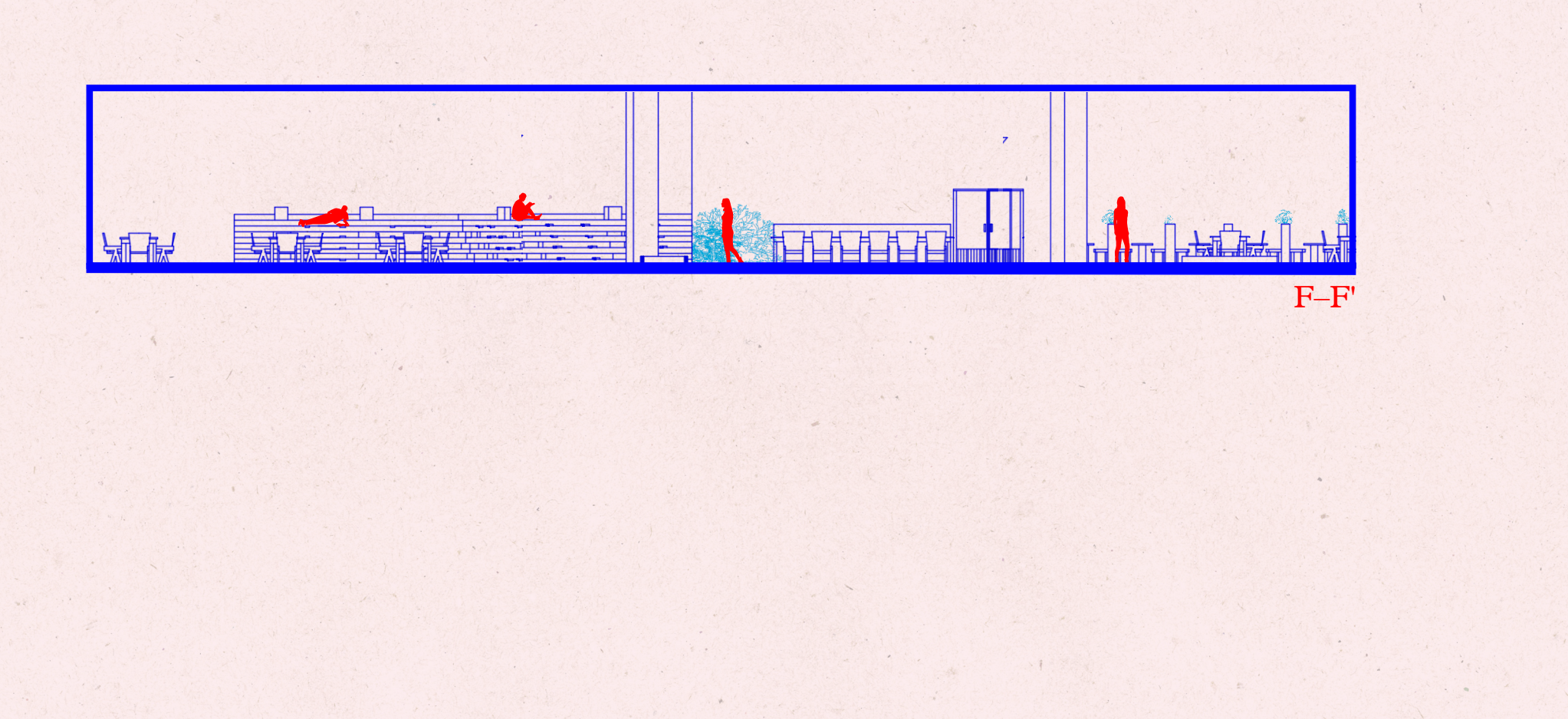
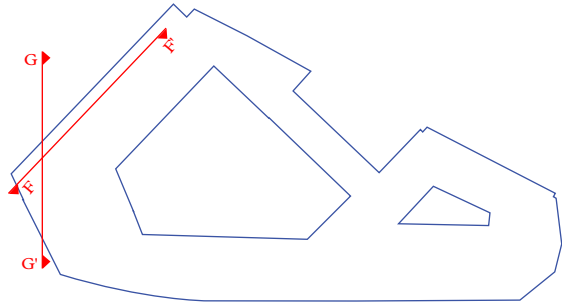


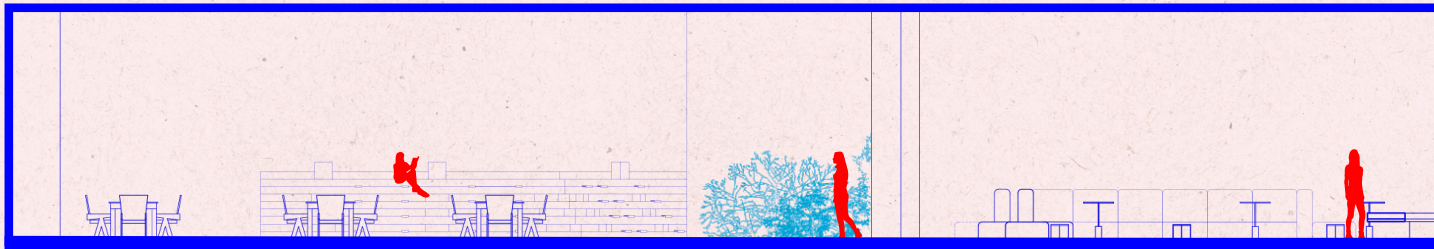
D-D'



E-E'

SEATING AREA



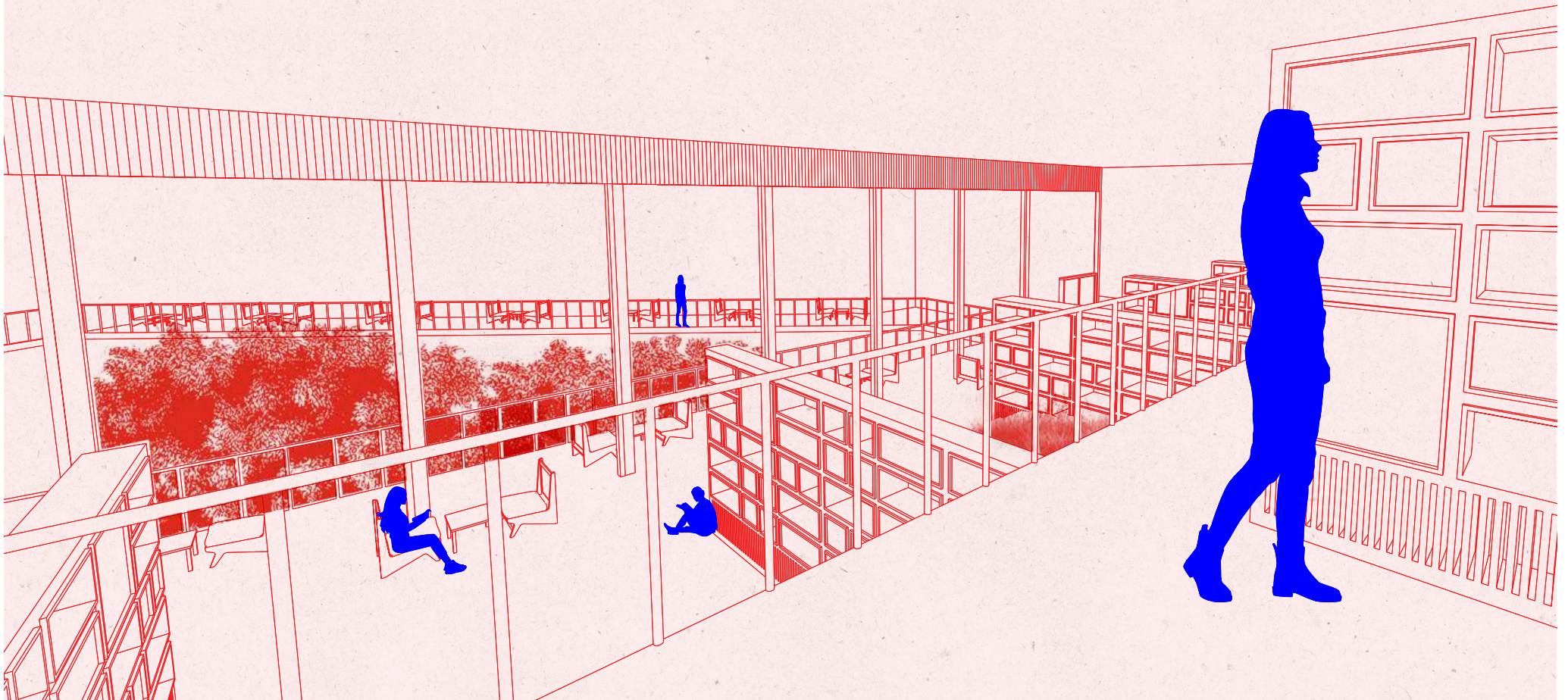


G-G'

BOOK BROWSING

AREA VIEW 1

Looking from the mezzanine to the main floor and the garden through the void.



BOOK BROWSING

AREA VIEW 2

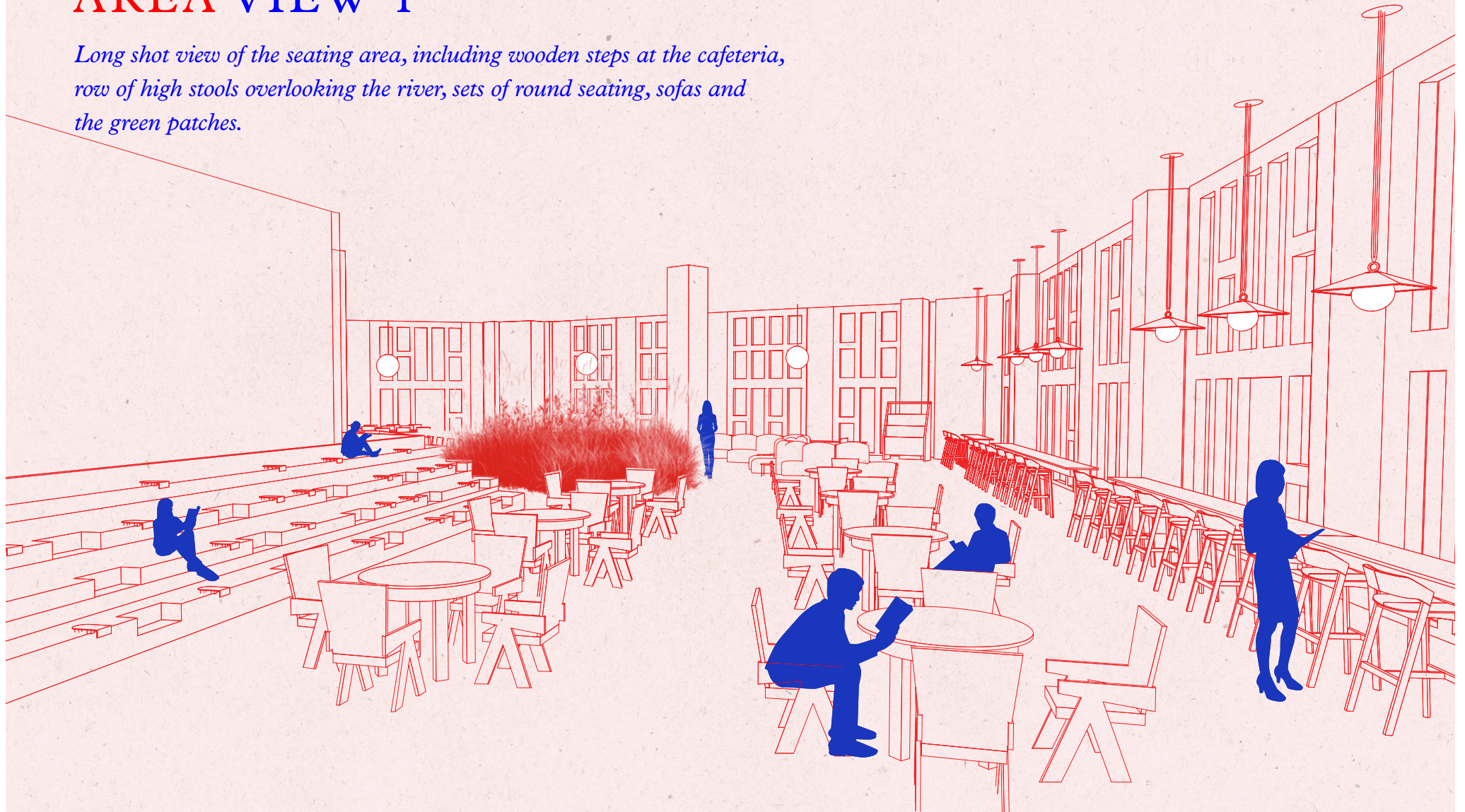
*Standing in the balcony overlooking
the greens in the void, main and
mezannine floor.*



SEATING

AREA VIEW 1

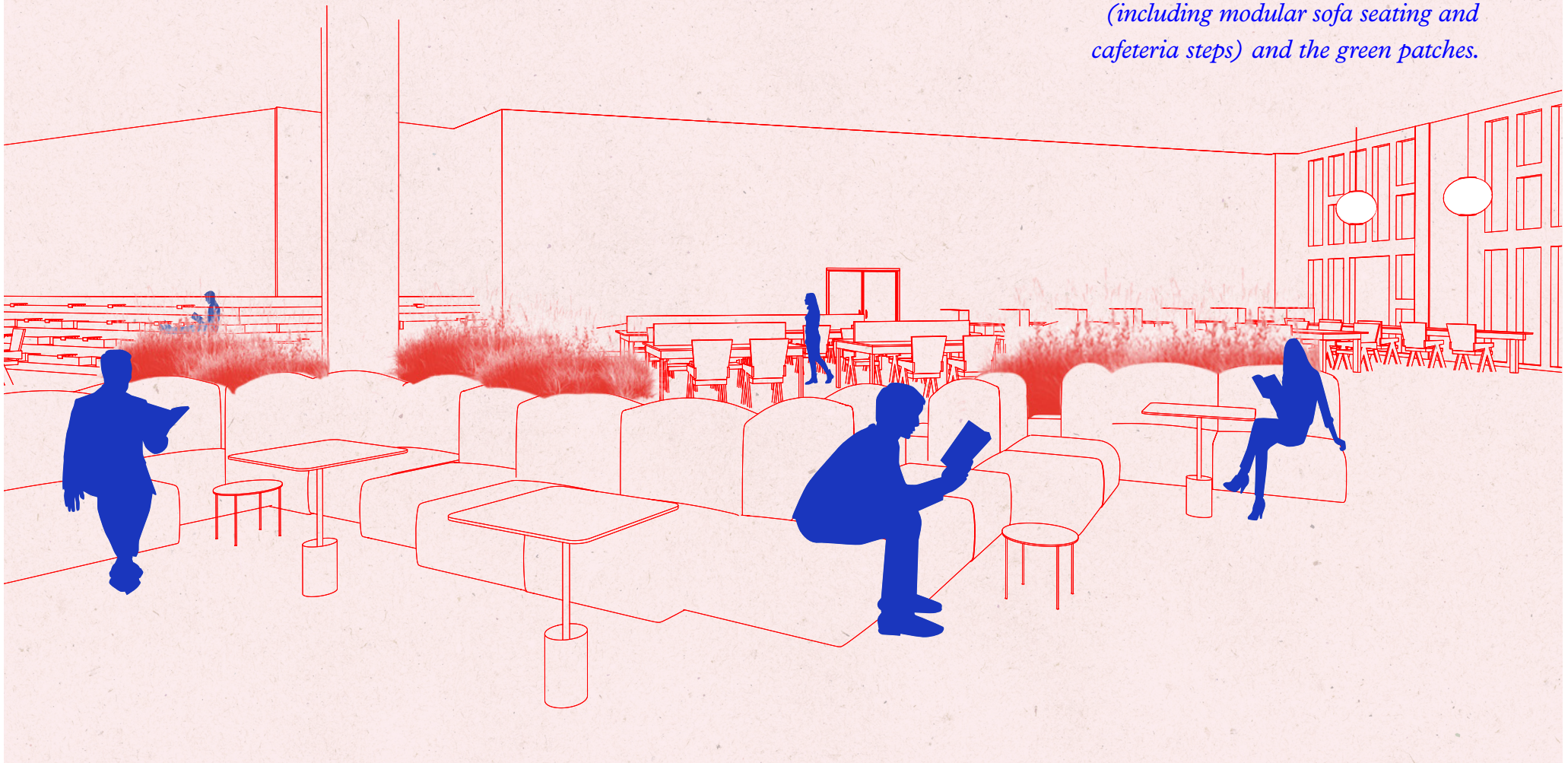
Long shot view of the seating area, including wooden steps at the cafeteria, row of high stools overlooking the river, sets of round seating, sofas and the green patches.



SEATING

AREA VIEW 2

*View from the semiformal seating area,
showing formal and informal seating
(including modular sofa seating and
cafeteria steps) and the green patches.*



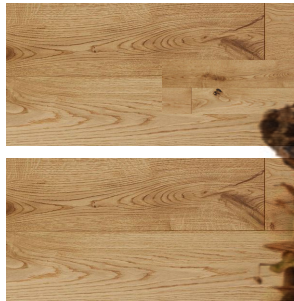
MATERIAL PALETTE

Glulam for the outer facade, all internal partitions and book shelves

Beige wool based carpet for Browsing Area

Birch floor for the Seating Area

Reclaimed wooden tables and benches

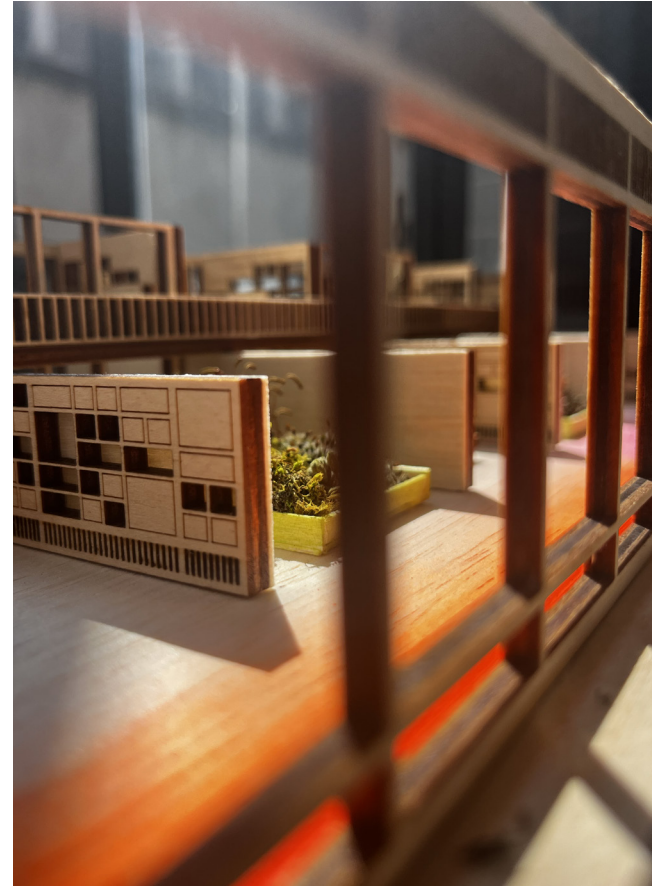


VIEWS *from the model*
OUTER FACADE

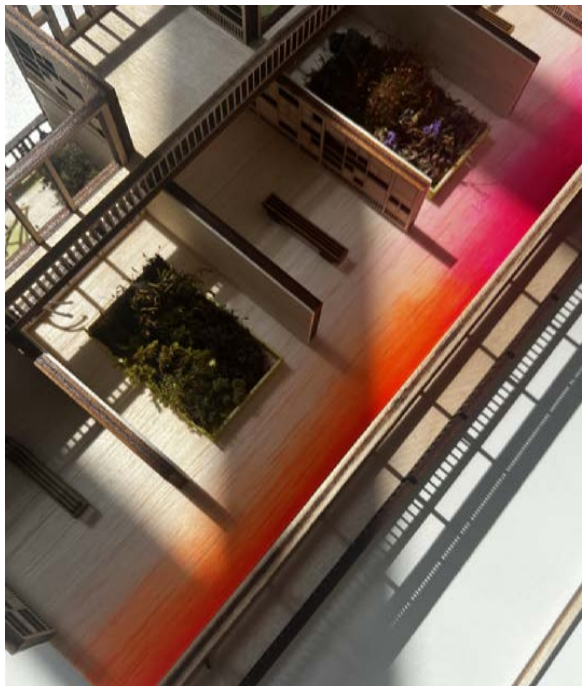


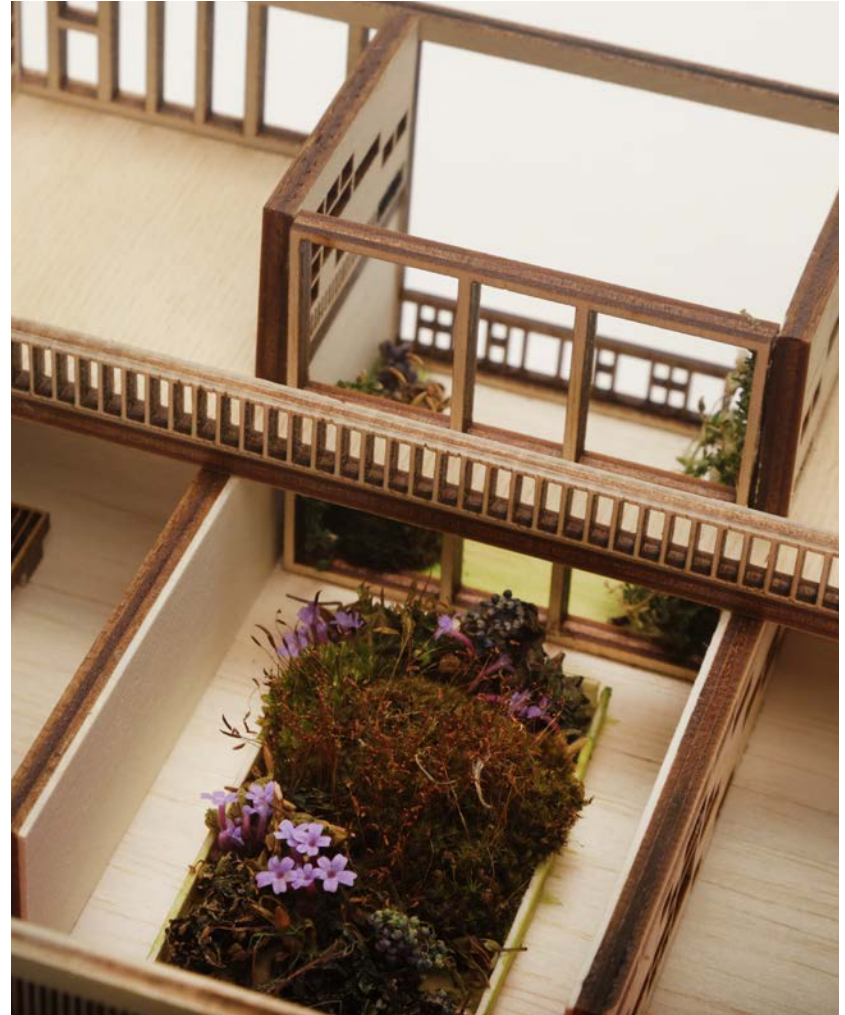
VIEW FROM THE GREEN VOID





*Light
always
finds
its
way*





*Wilderness is not a luxury but
a necessity of the human spirit*

EDWARD ABBEY





*In rooms built of angles and wires,
where light hums from bulbs instead of stars,
we invite the greens inward—leaf by leaf,
stone by stone, a whisper of wildness.*

*This is the art of remembering—
how the mind, even swaddled in concrete,
yearns for the geometry of trees,
the fractal lullaby of ferns unfolding.*

*NEUROAESTHETICS, they call it—
a marriage of mind and moss,
where science listens to the pulse
of a heart calmed by green.*

*It is the knowing that woodgrain
can soften the sharpness of grief,
that a vine trailing across a windowpane
can untangle the knots in the brain.*

*Here, psychology and beauty
walk hand in hand beneath skylights,
mapping the quiet miracles
of sunlight on skin,
of water's hush in a waiting room.*

*To bring nature indoors
is not to escape the world,
but to restore it—
from the inside out.*



Poetry of
Proportions

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THANKS

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