

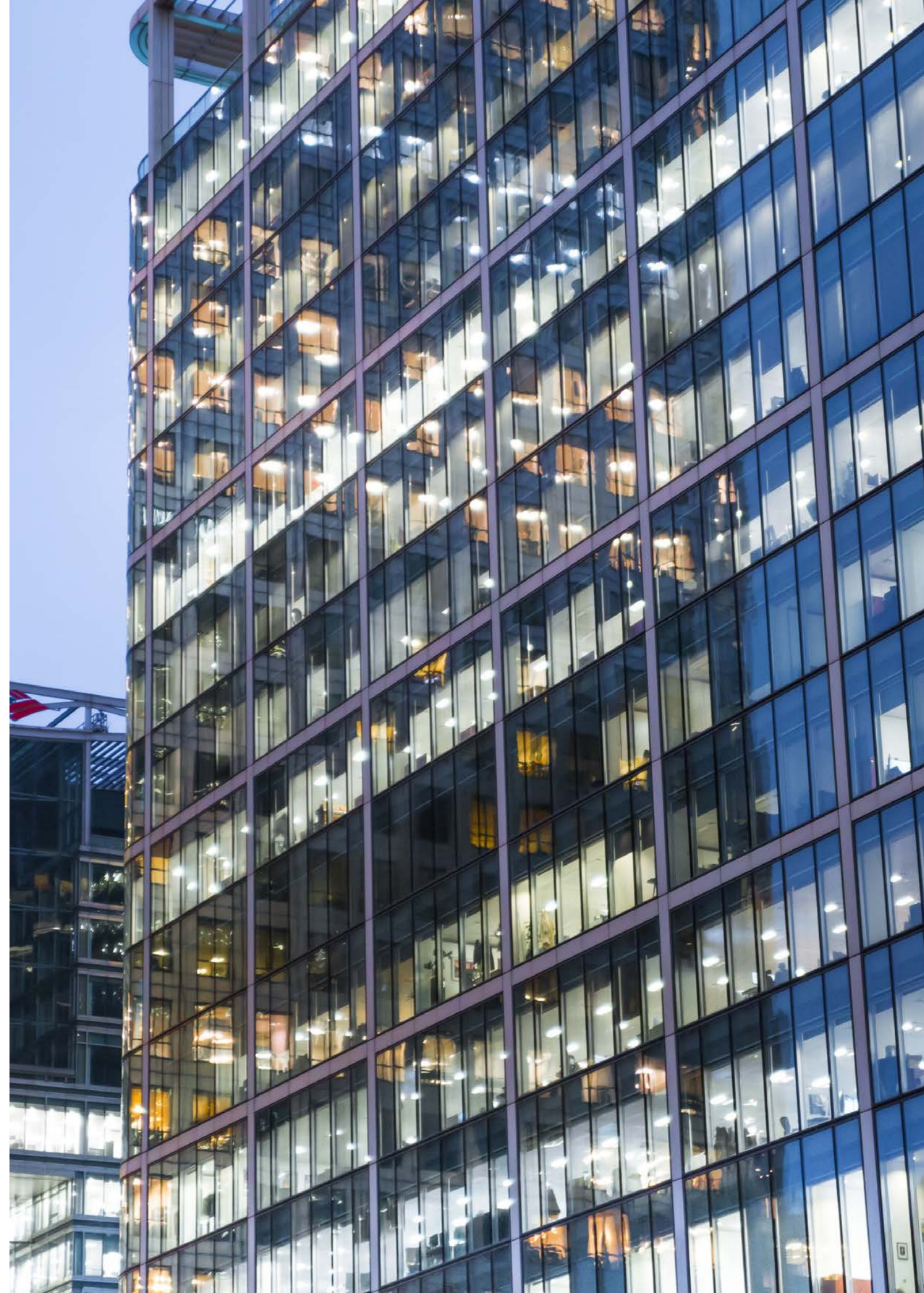
RE:BLOCK

FREE THE WORKSPACE, SAY HELLO: THE WORKSPACE HAS NEW NEIGHBORS!

The International Style of architecture was originally conceived for efficiency and flexibility, prioritizing energy performance, open floor plans, and expansive windows—often sealed to minimize energy loss and operational costs. Within these buildings, the workspace was structured as a highly controlled environment, where elements like fluorescent lighting, uniform shelving, standardized tables, and chairs transformed the interior into a machine of productivity.

However, this pursuit of control often led to the isolation of individuals, both physically and socially. Workers became detached not only from their environment but also from one another, and from the urban life unfolding just beyond the façade.

To counter this, there is a growing need to free people from the confines of the office building by reconnecting them with new neighbors—not just adjacent buildings, but restaurants, library, and public spaces. By introducing proximity, permeability, and human-scale interaction, the boundaries between workplace and city can dissolve, allowing the office to reintegrate into the vibrant, diverse fabric of urban life.





J: I'm overwhelmed with work.

S: Want to take a break? Maybe go to the park downstairs?

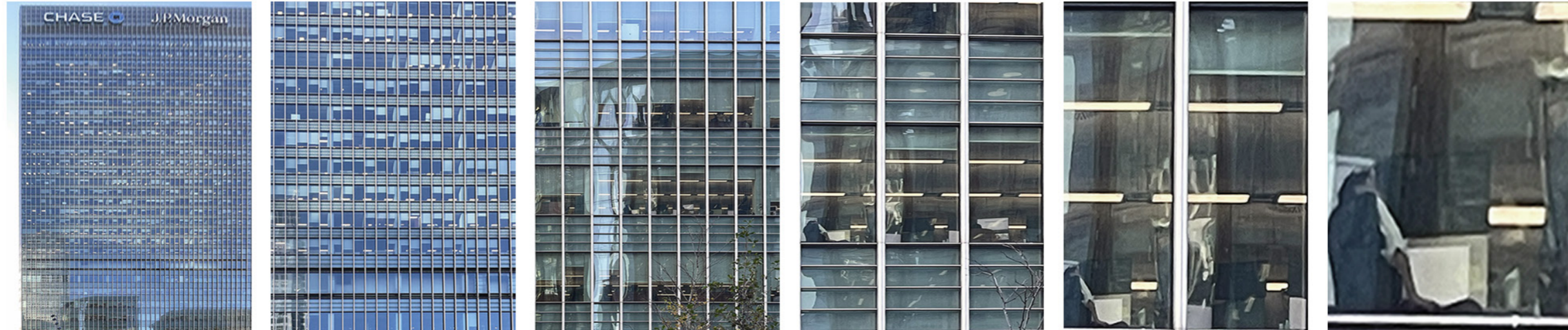
J: No, it takes too long to wait for the elevator.

S: So what would you do?

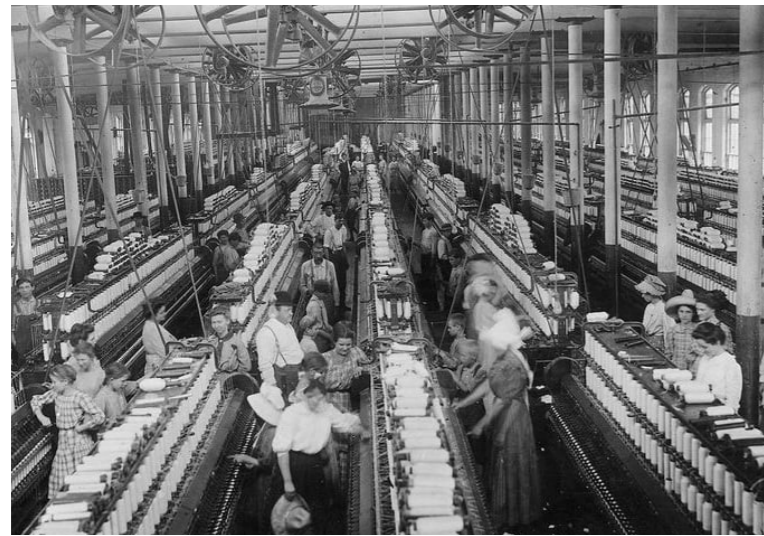
J: I think I'll just go to the toilet.



POWER OF TEN



To what extent do humans respond to the scale of a massive skyscraper? Inspired by Powers of Ten, directed by Charles and Ray Eames, this short film invited viewers to contemplate the boundaries of our understanding of reality. Beginning from a picnic blanket in a Chicago park, the film took audiences on a journey stretching to the scale of 100 million light-years away and then zoomed back down to a single proton. Applying the same mindset to this project, started from the City of London and narrows down to a single individual at Canary Wharf. At the smallest scale, the bounding box here aligns appropriately with human proportions. Each individual unit contributes to forming a single floor, and by stacking these floors together, a skyscraper emerges. Multiple skyscrapers like this come together to form the entire Canary Wharf.



INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION (18th Century)

A typical scene in a textile mill during the Industrial Revolution reflects a factory layout heavily influenced by Frederick Taylor's scientific management theory.



CUBICAL FARMS (1960s)

A similar concept in Europe, Burolandschaft, emphasized flexibility, but corporate interests distorted these ideas into cubicle farms, creating an illusion of privacy while maintaining the open-plan nature.



ACTION OFFICE (1980)

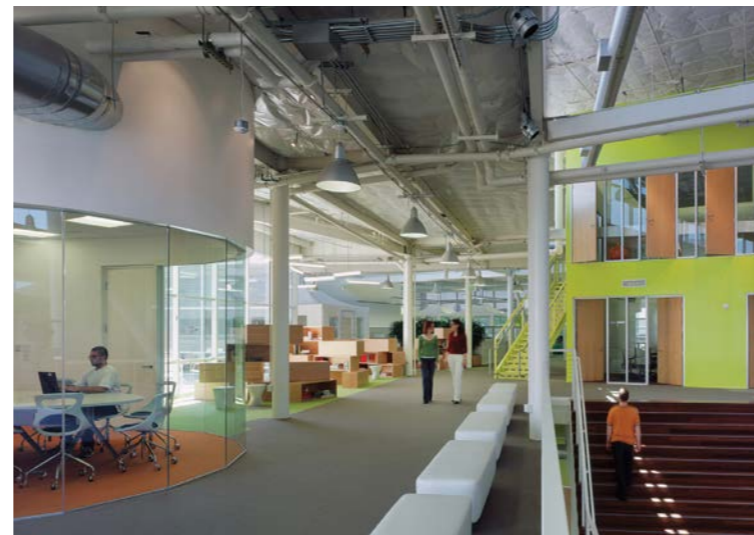
Robert Propst attempted to liberate workers by introducing the Action Office, a flexible system with movable partitions and personalized workstations aimed at enhancing creativity.

AT WHAT POINT DID OUR WORK ENVIRONMENT TURN INTO A GRID?



MODERN CORPORATE OFFICE

An example of office layout in One Canada Square.



THE TURN TOWARD HUMAN-CENTRIC

Leading example like Google offices are known for their bright colors, funky decor, and unconventional design elements, such as slides, climbing walls, and themed meeting rooms.



CO-WORKING

Coworking spaces offer flexible membership options, unlike traditional long-term office leases, making them attractive for startups and small businesses that need cost-effective solutions.



Early 1900s

1920-1930

1950

1960

WORKSPACE SCALE OVER TIME

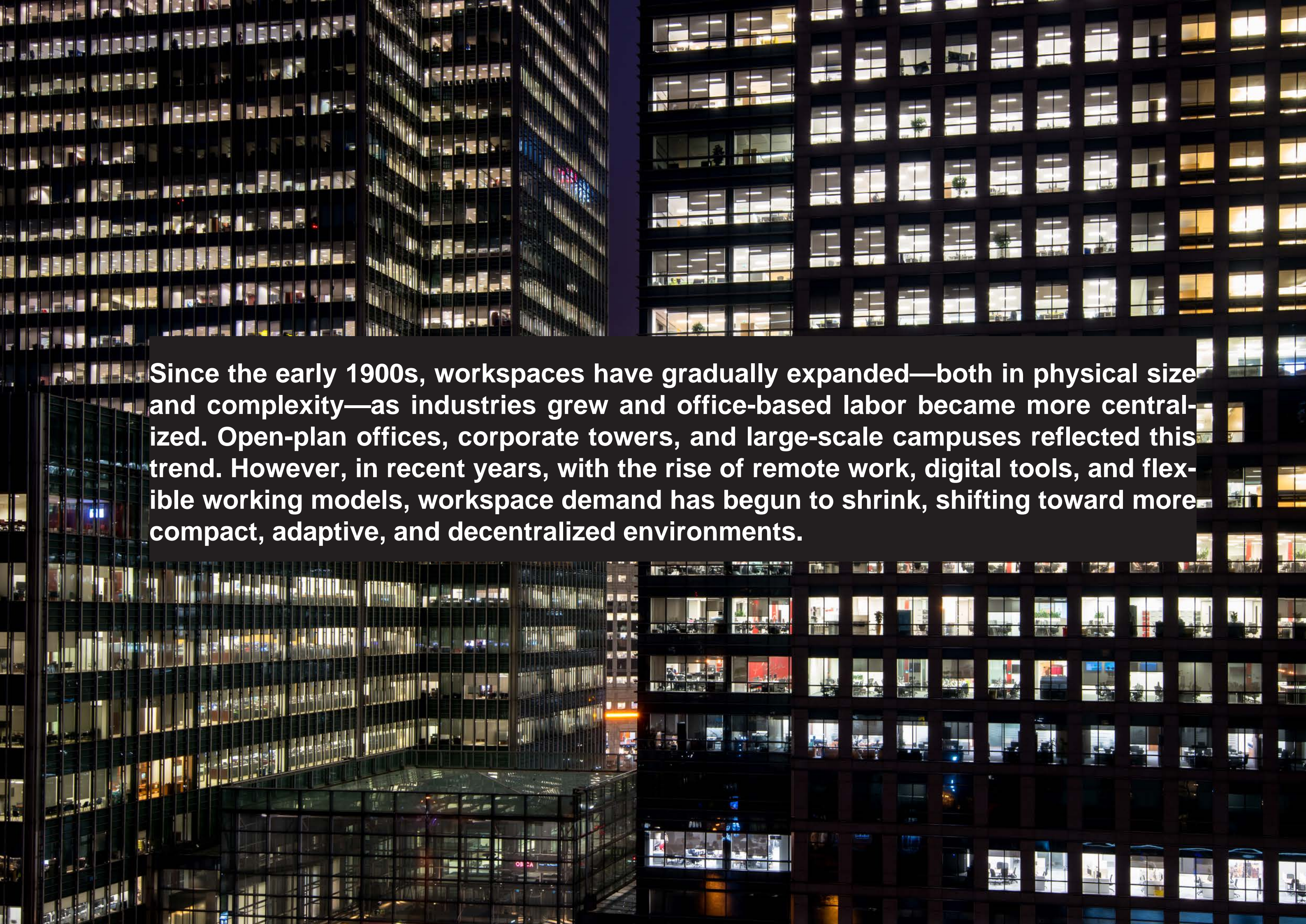


1970

2000

2010

2020



Since the early 1900s, workspaces have gradually expanded—both in physical size and complexity—as industries grew and office-based labor became more centralized. Open-plan offices, corporate towers, and large-scale campuses reflected this trend. However, in recent years, with the rise of remote work, digital tools, and flexible working models, workspace demand has begun to shrink, shifting toward more compact, adaptive, and decentralized environments.

**THE FUTURE OF THE OFFICE:
THE ERA OF CUBICAL-FARM OFFICES HAS ENDED—AND IT WILL
NOT BE MISSED.**

“The ideal office of the future will be conceived and designed as a place that cultivates social capital. Social capital, simply defined, is the presence of networks, relationships, and connections within any organization or, more broadly, community or culture.”

Quoted from “The Future of the Office” by McKinsey & Company



A TYPICAL WORK JOURNEY IN CANARY WHARF





WORK

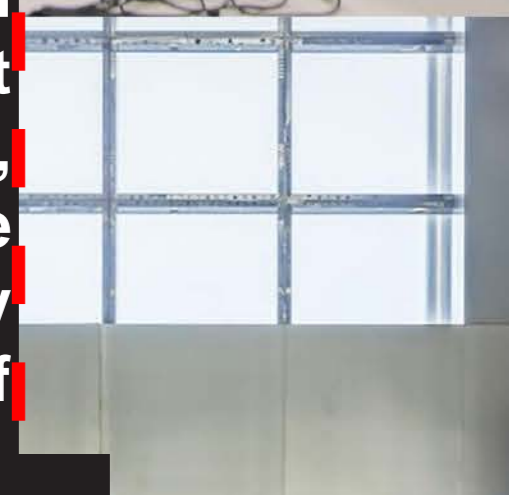


EAT



WORK

Each morning in Canary Wharf, workers move seamlessly from train platforms into towering glass blocks. Inside, the majority environment is controlled and repetitive: white walls, identical desks and chairs, flat ceilings, and uniform lighting. Though surrounded by others, the space feels isolating. Designed for efficiency, it quietly strips away spontaneity and human warmth, turning the workday into a system of silent routines.



ARRIVAL

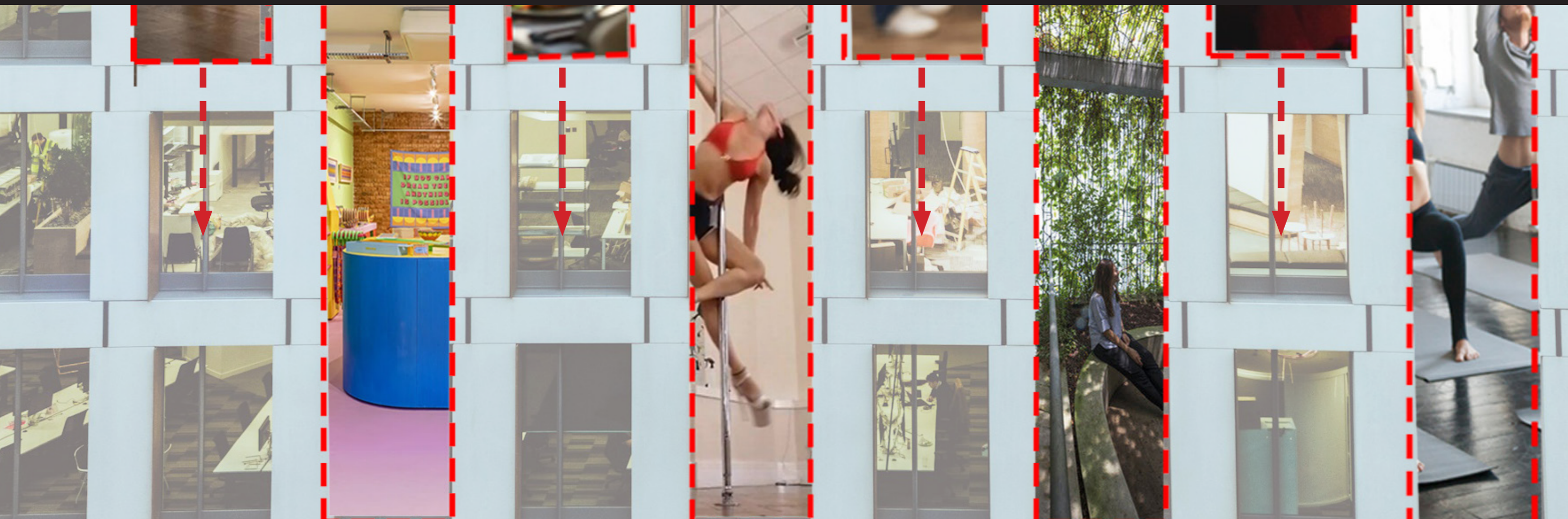


DEPARTURE





BETWEEN HOURS: INSERT NEW NEIGHBORS





**NETWORKING
EVENTS**

HOBBIES

TERRACE

WELL-BEING

RE: BLOCK



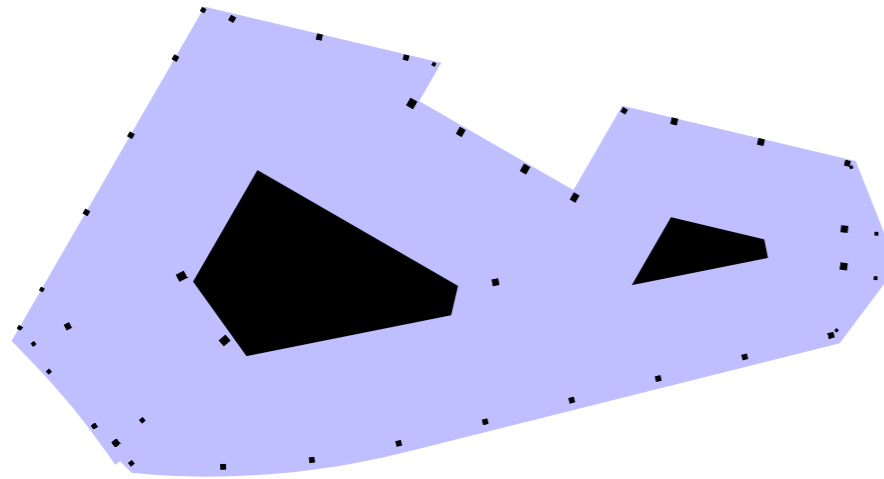
VISUAL ART

FOOD & DRINK

LIBRARY

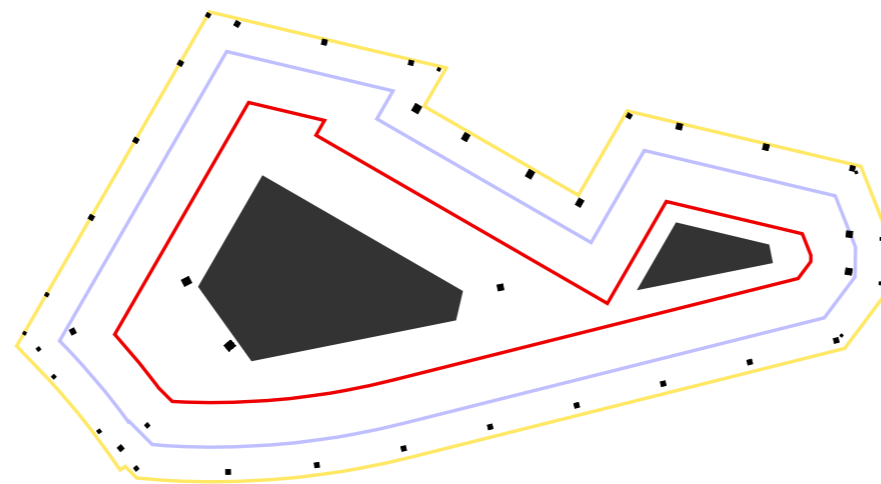
NIGHT LIFE

ON/OFF: INSERT NEW NEIGHBORS



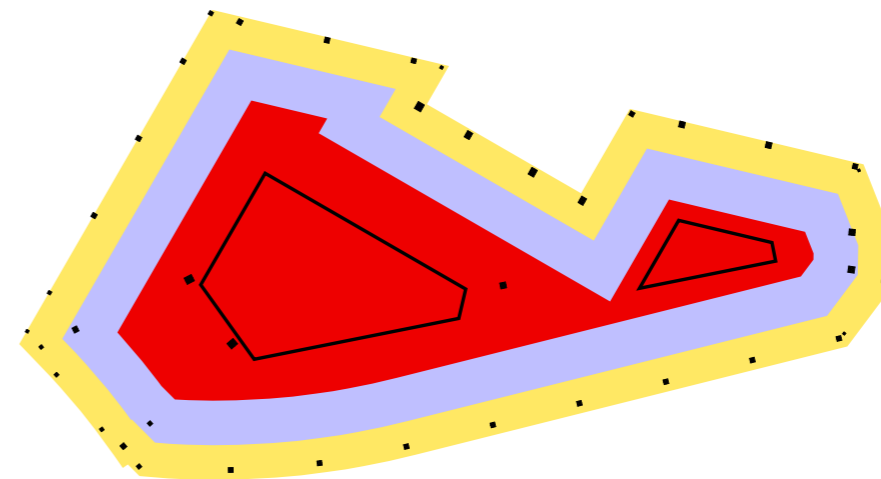
01. ORIGINAL FLOORPLAN

A wide, open layout occupied solely by offices—serving a single function.



02. OFFSET & SPLIT

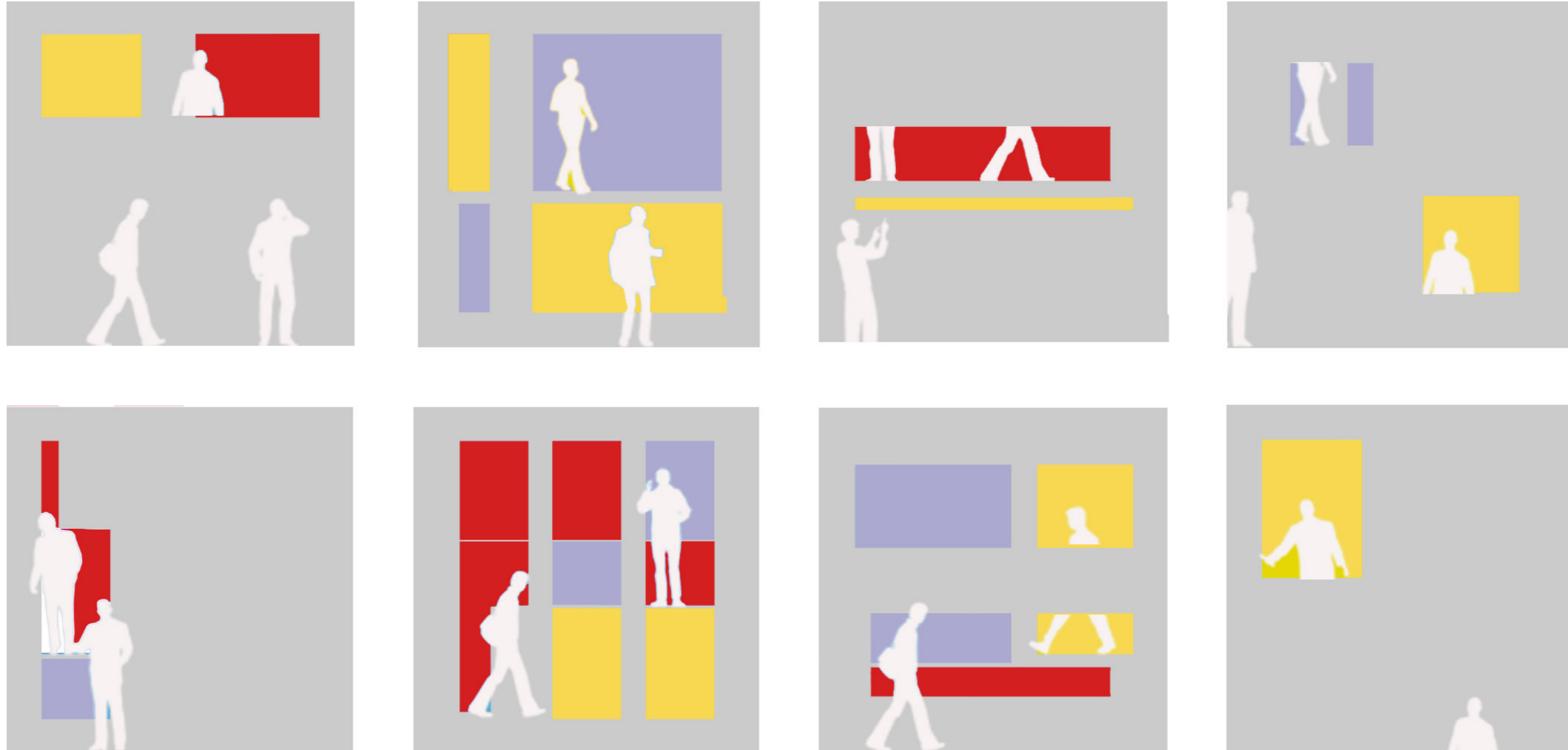
The original floor plan was divided to create three distinct zones



03. FLOORPLAN WITH NEW PROGRAM

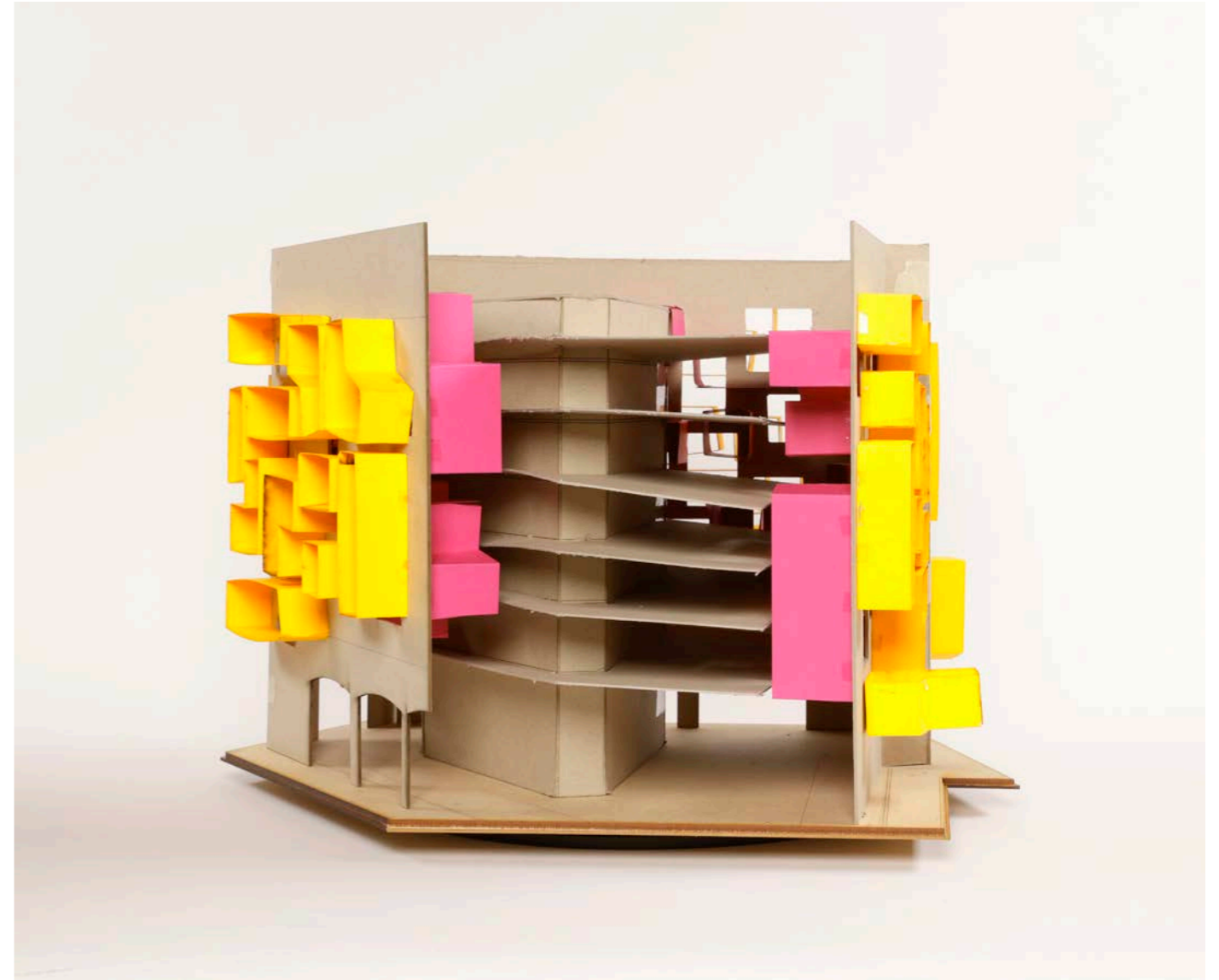
Zones are defined by layers, with the core opened up for curated commercial activities

Say Hello to Your Neighbors



THE “BUMP-INTO” MOMENTS

Placing the working zone between the library and curated commercial spaces creates opportunities for spontaneous encounters—bringing new neighbors into the daily routine of those in the workplace.



THE BUMPED INTO MOMENTS

Spaces with high user turnover, such as libraries, tend to have lower interaction frequency and weaker relational depth. In contrast, spaces with relatively stable users—like co-working zones—encourage routine interactions and foster a sense of familiarity. Connecting high-turnover areas with more stable, routine-oriented zones can bridge casual presence with sustained engagement, enhancing daily interaction across user types. Unlike the brief and casual encounters typical of the reading zone, the curated space supports longer, more immersive experiences—such as exhibitions, talks, and community-led events. This activates the workspace beyond its conventional use

ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS

	LIBRARY	CO-WORKING	CURATED
LIBRARY	X	○	○
CO-WORKING	○	○	△
CURATED	○	△	△

X light engagement ○ Observational interaction △ high engagement

WITHIN THE READING ZONE

Limited interaction among users; short-term stay; encourages public flow and light engagement.

WITHIN THE CO-WORKING SPACE ZONE

Facilitates both formal and informal collaboration, peer learning, and social co-presence.

CO-WORKING SPACE ZONE & CURATED SPACE ZONE

Offers a post-work transition zone for relaxation, exploration, and inspiration. Stronger linkage; workspace users may contribute to or initiate curated content, fostering hybrid use.

LIBRARY & CO-WORKING SPACE ZONE

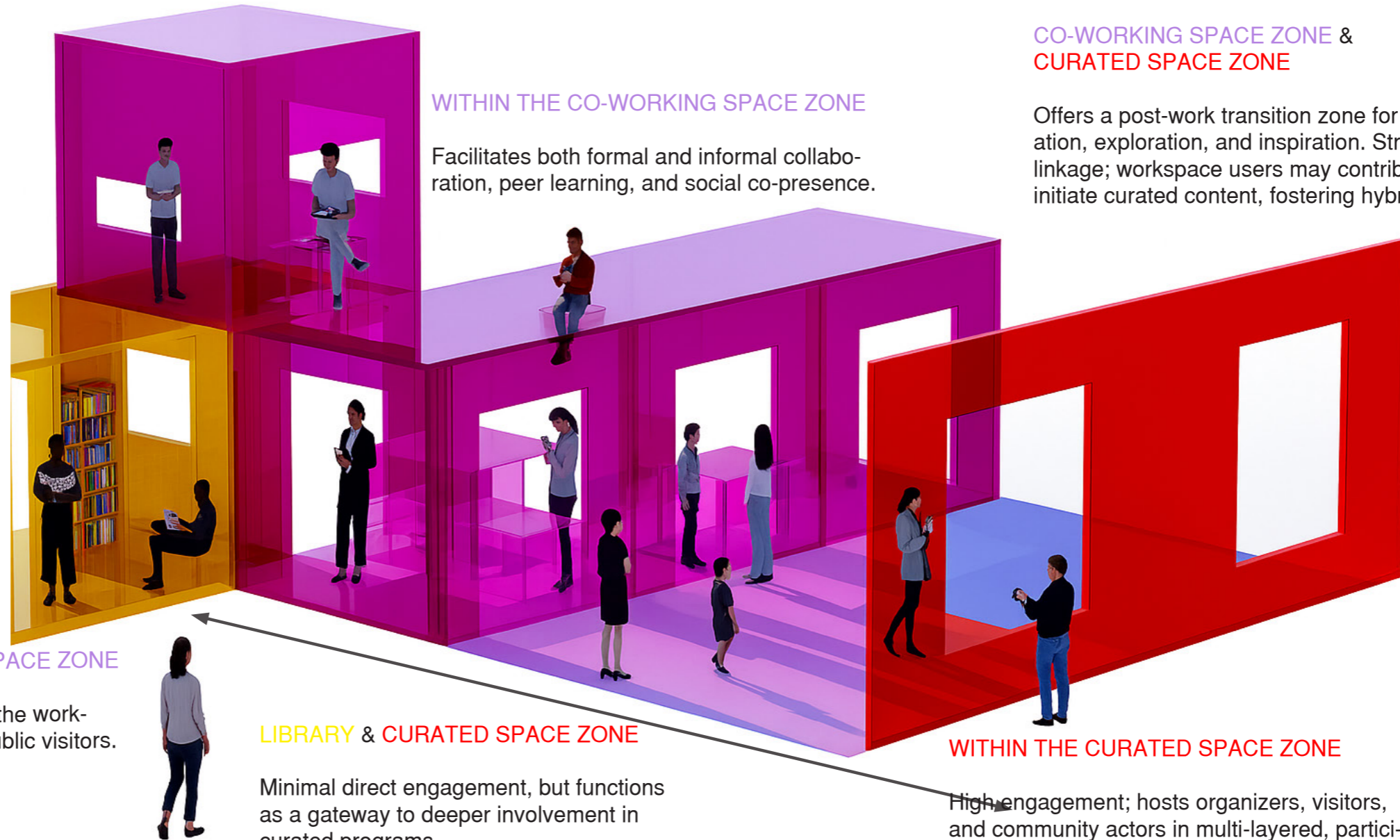
Observational interaction with the workspace; invites curiosity from public visitors.

LIBRARY & CURATED SPACE ZONE

Minimal direct engagement, but functions as a gateway to deeper involvement in curated programs.

WITHIN THE CURATED SPACE ZONE

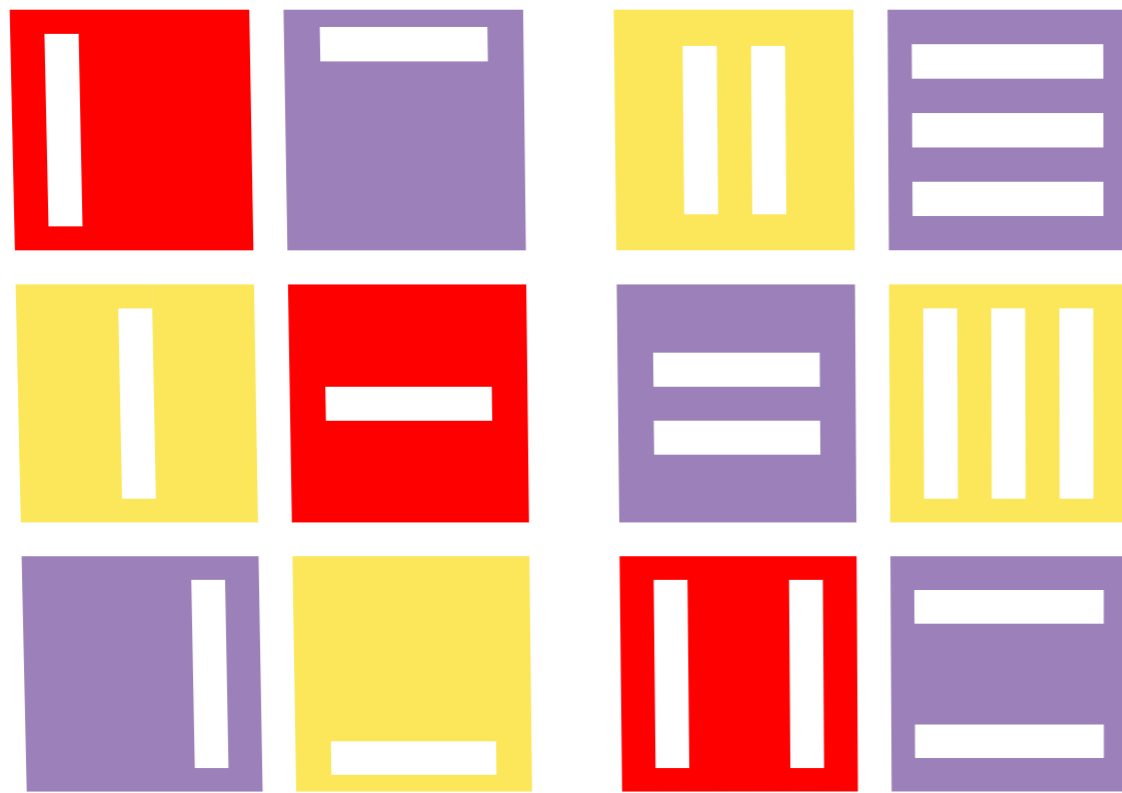
High engagement; hosts organizers, visitors, and community actors in multi-layered, participatory ways.



WHERE BOXES MEET

Single Opening
Light Engagement

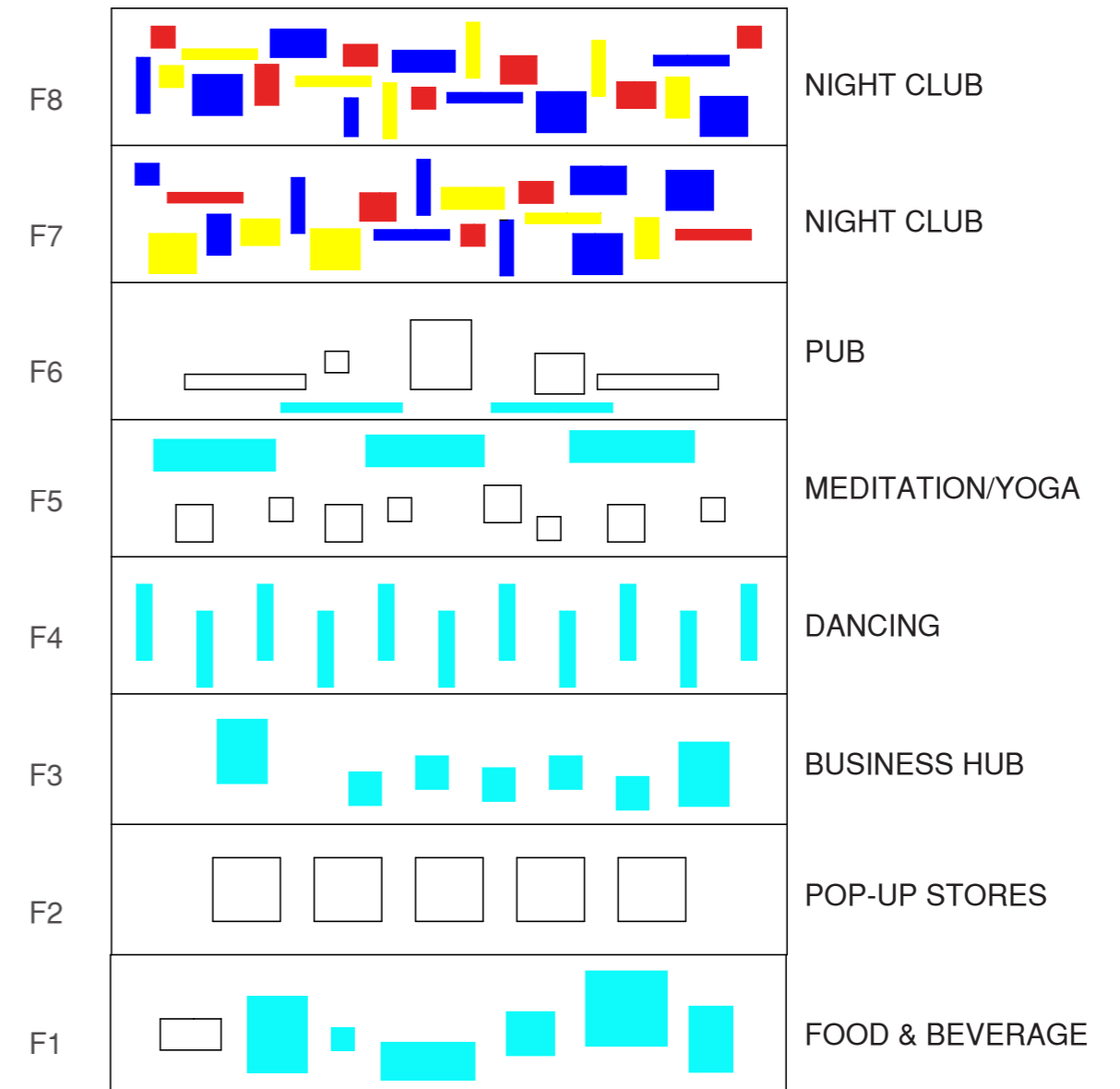
Multiple Openings
Observational Interaction



The boxes are defined by distinct functions, and the surface openings shape how people observe and potentially engage with the space. These logics consist of two types: light engagement and observational interaction. Light engagement frames views to invite spontaneous moments, while observational interaction offers greater transparency and encourages dialogue to take place.



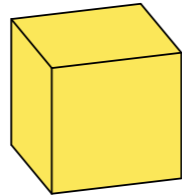
The diagram below shows the window and opening combinations of curated commercial spaces by floor. Multiple stained glass panels are applied in the nightclub to create an immersive ambiance, while transparent glass is used in functional spaces such as the pub, business hub, and well-being floors to enhance visibility and openness.



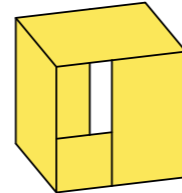
WHERE BOXES MEET

The box forms originate from a cube, with each cube featuring an entrance and an exit. The co-working cube's exit guides users to the library entrance. Although the library has only one entrance, its rear façade offers visual access to the exterior landscape—creating a sense of openness without requiring physical circulation.

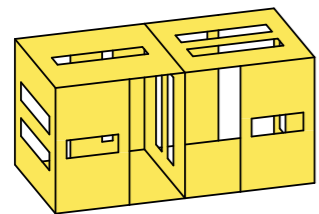
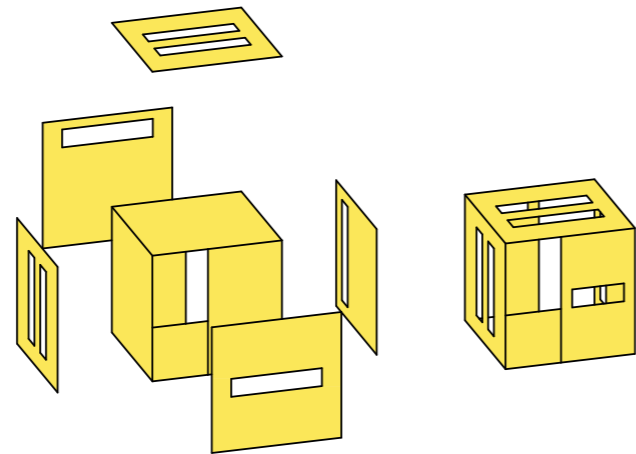
01. Cube



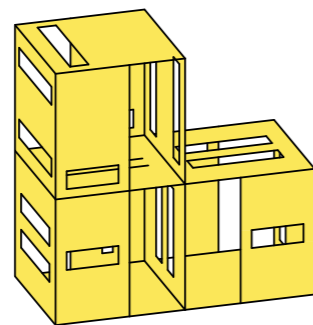
02. Created Entrances into the Block



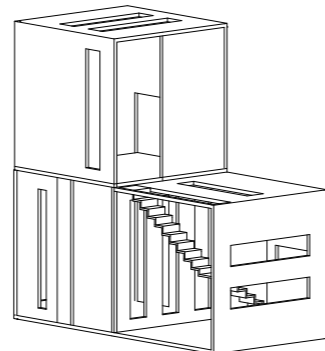
03. Building Block with Integrated Openings



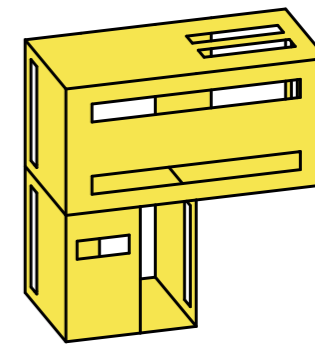
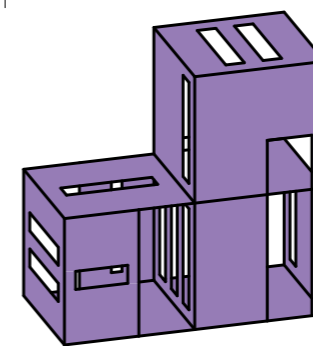
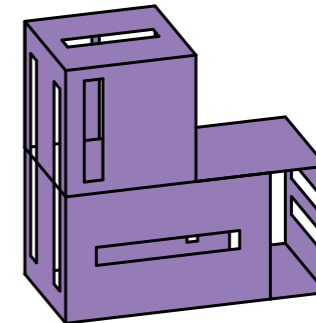
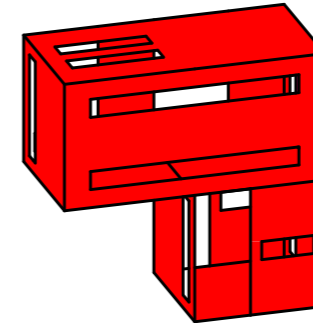
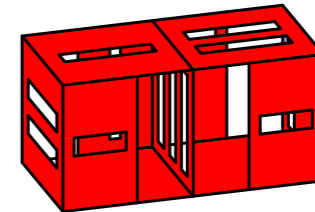
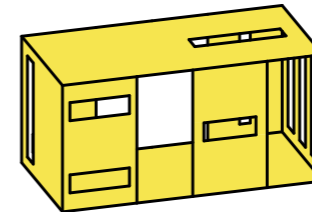
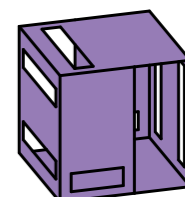
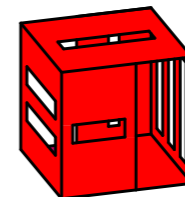
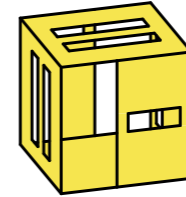
04. Horizontal Combined Unit



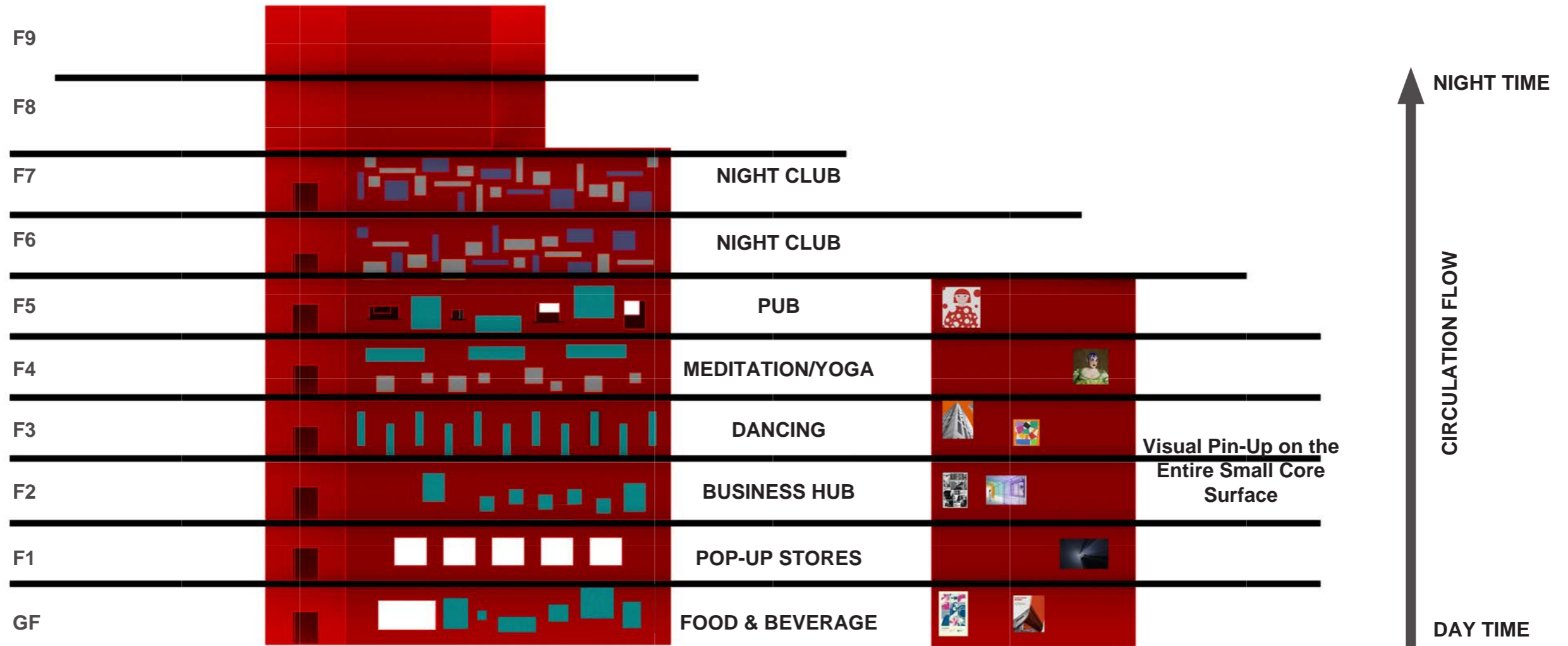
05. Vertical Combined Unit







06. Vertical Combined Unit with Stairs

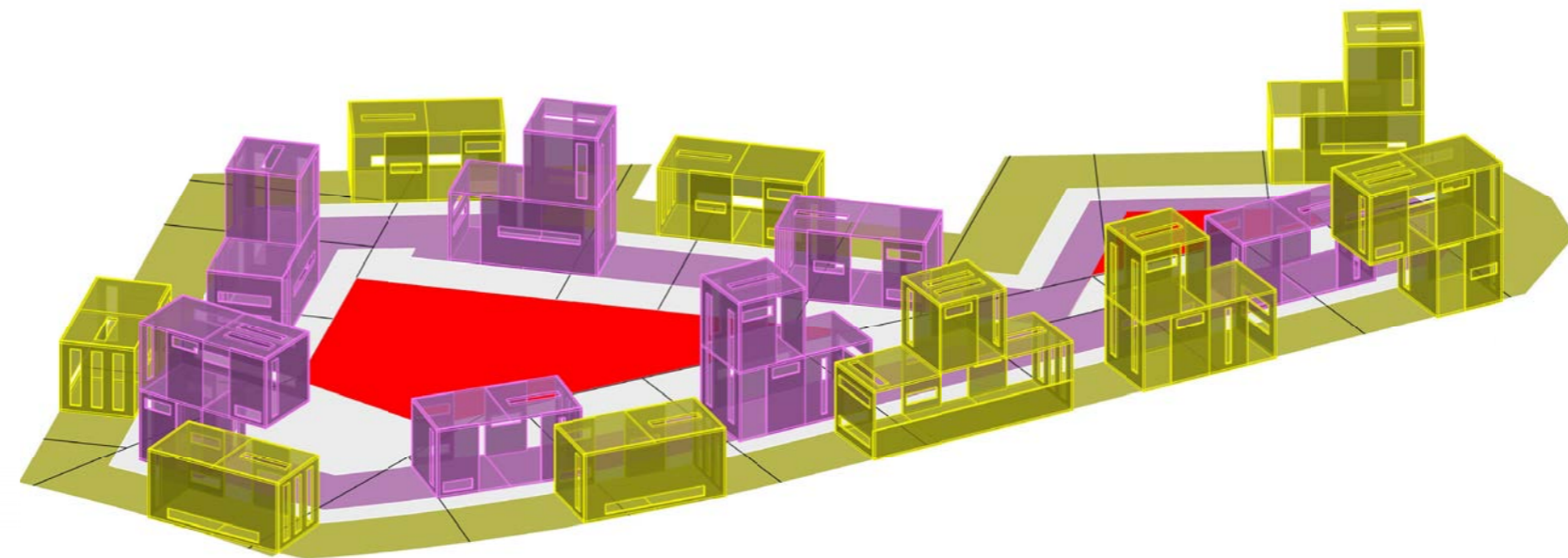
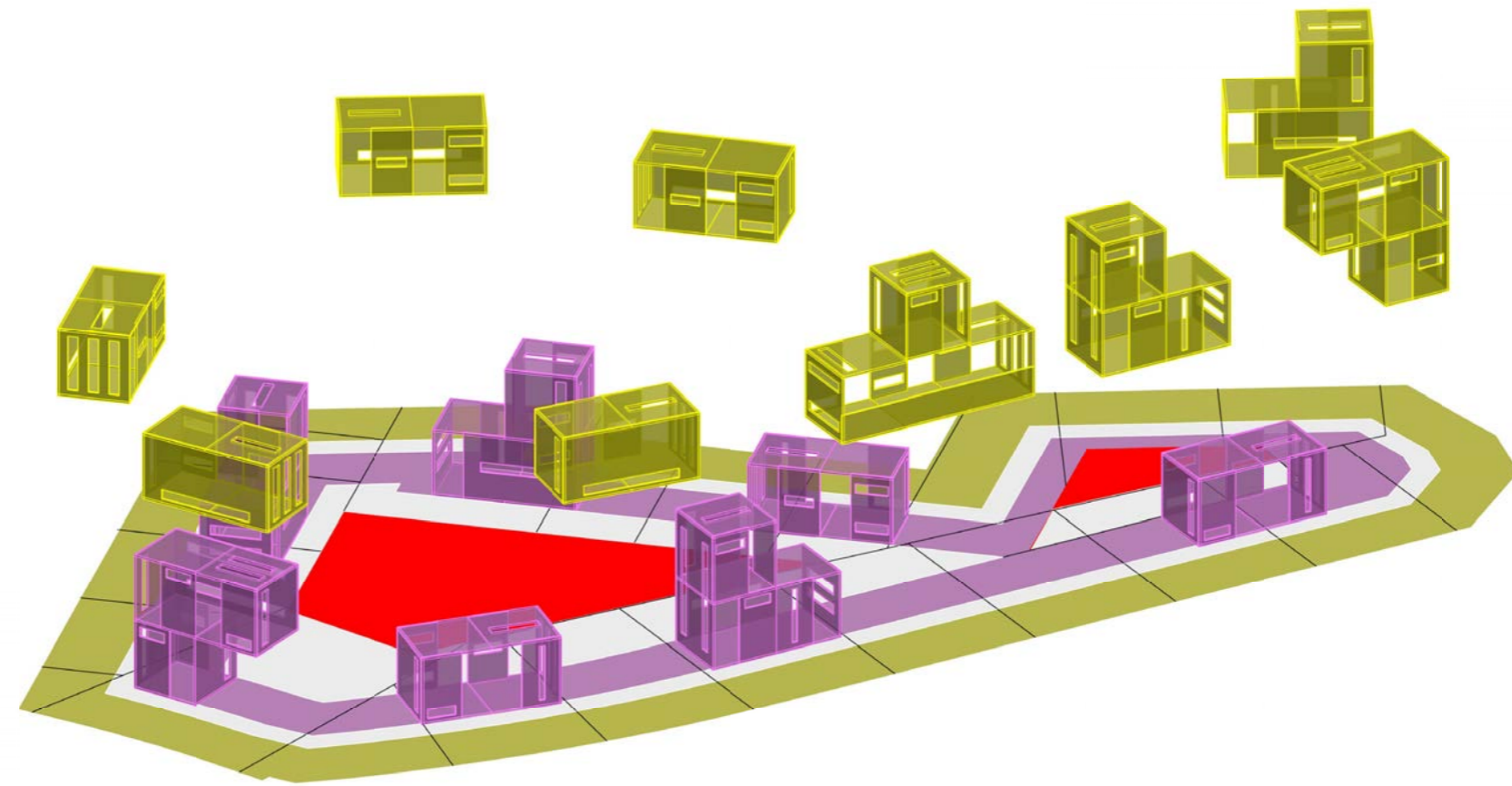


WHERE BOXES MEET



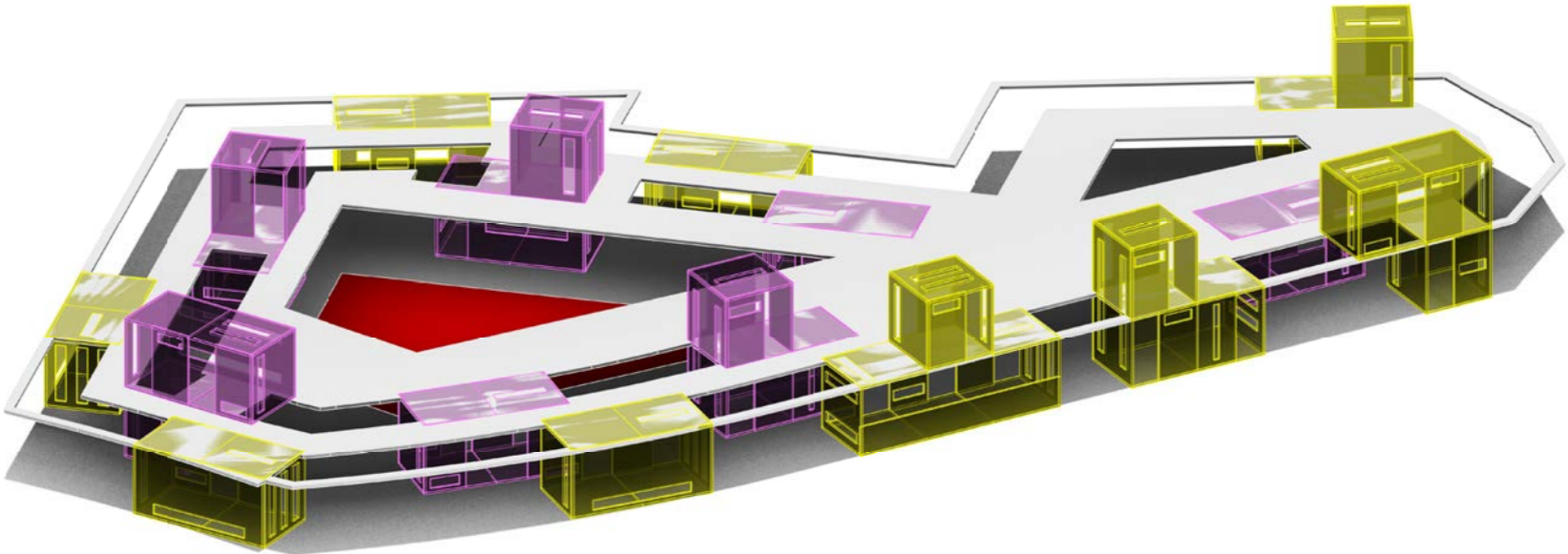
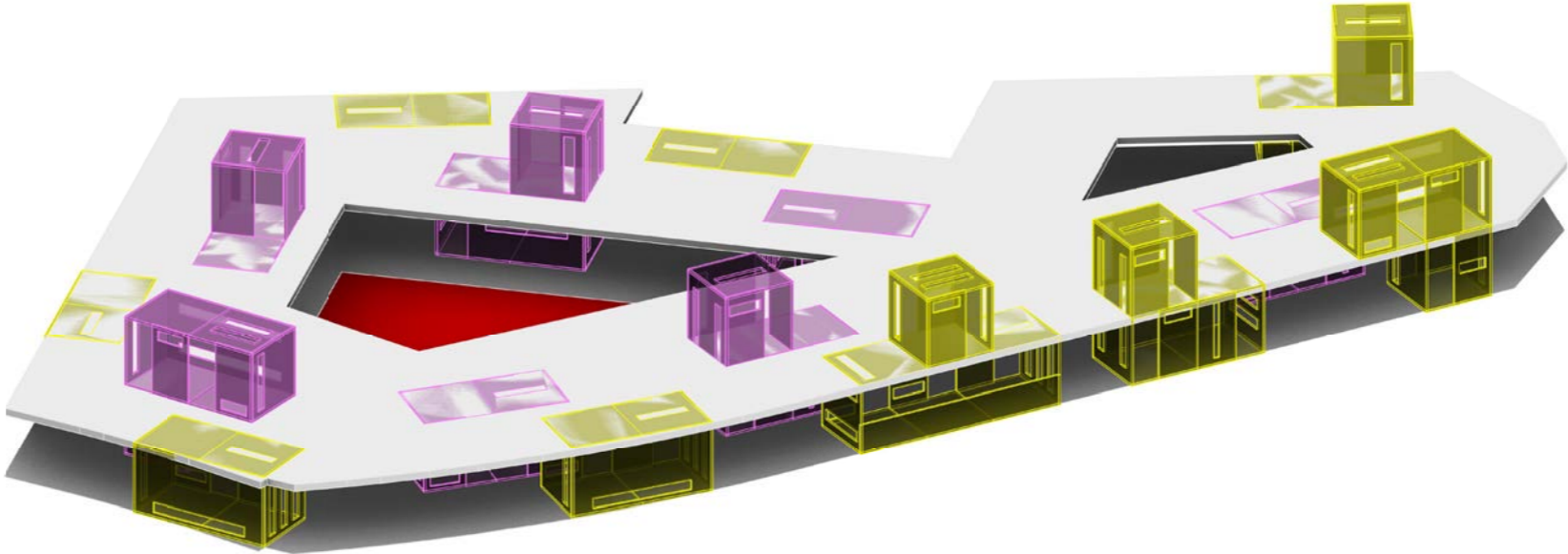
INSERT BOXES

-  CO-WORKING ZONE
-  LIBRARY
-  CURATED COMMERCIALS
-  Beam



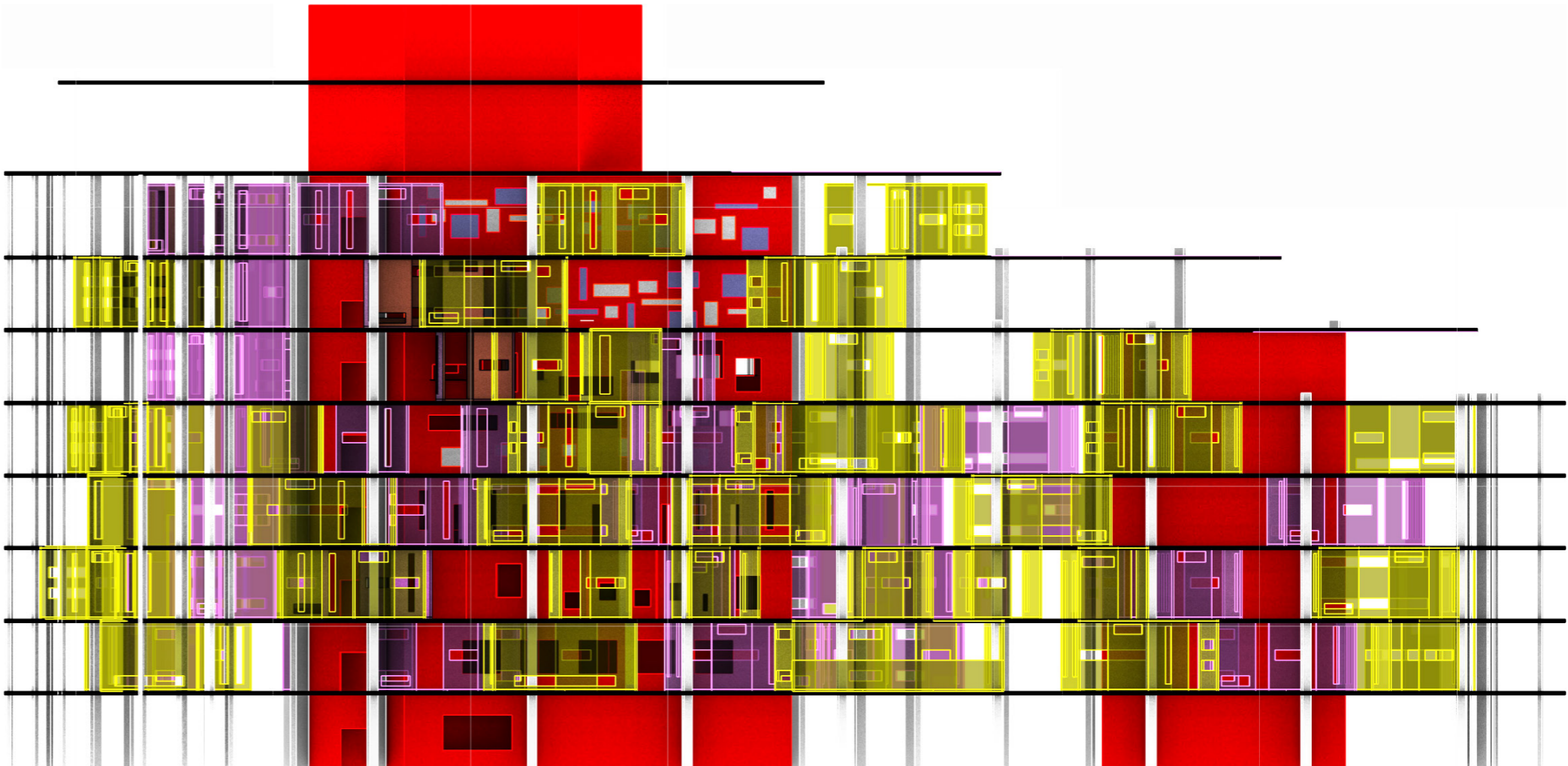
INSERT FLOOR

- CO-WORKING ZONE
- LIBRARY
- CURATED COMMERCIALS



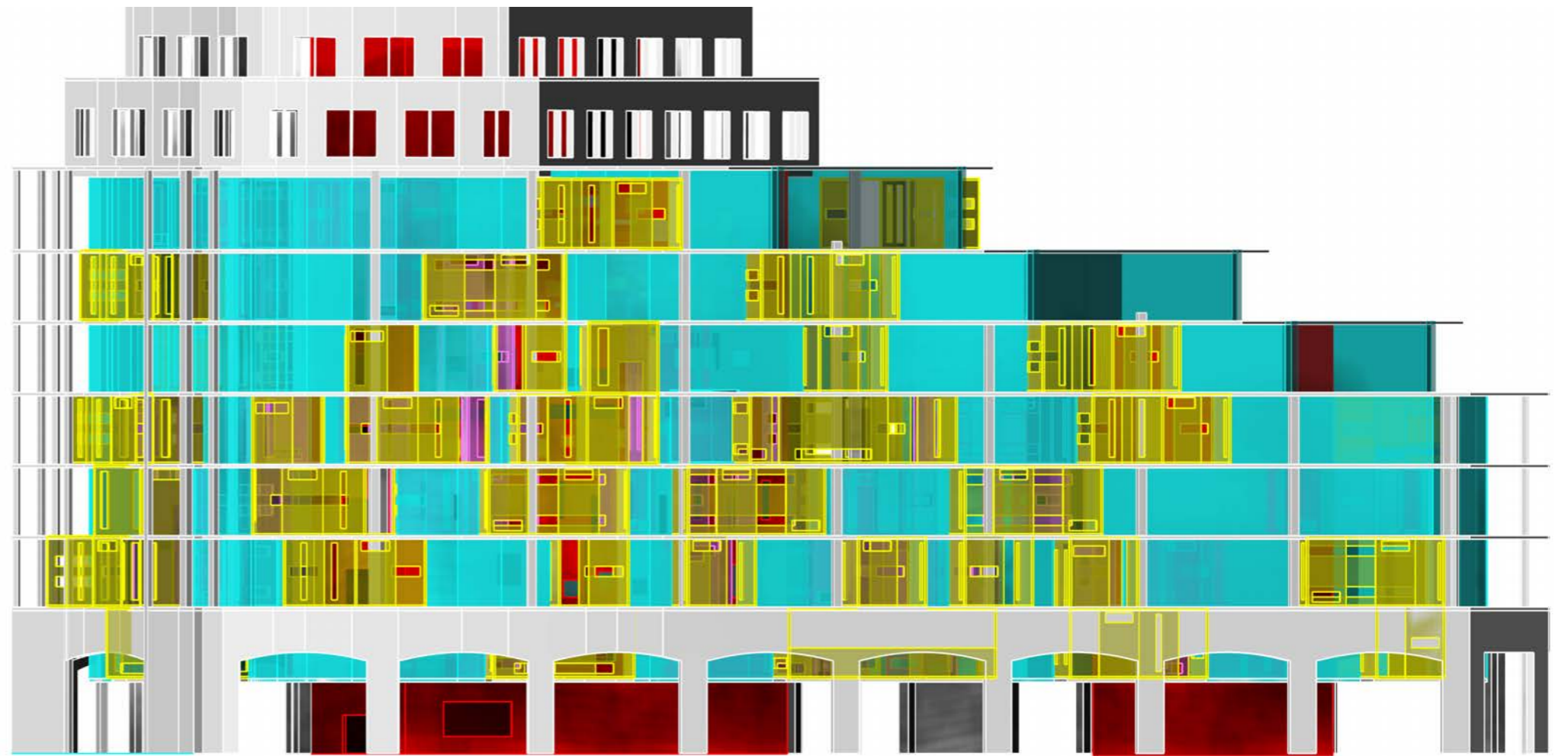
WHERE BOXES MEET

- CO-WORKING ZONE
- LIBRARY
- CURATED COMMERCIALS



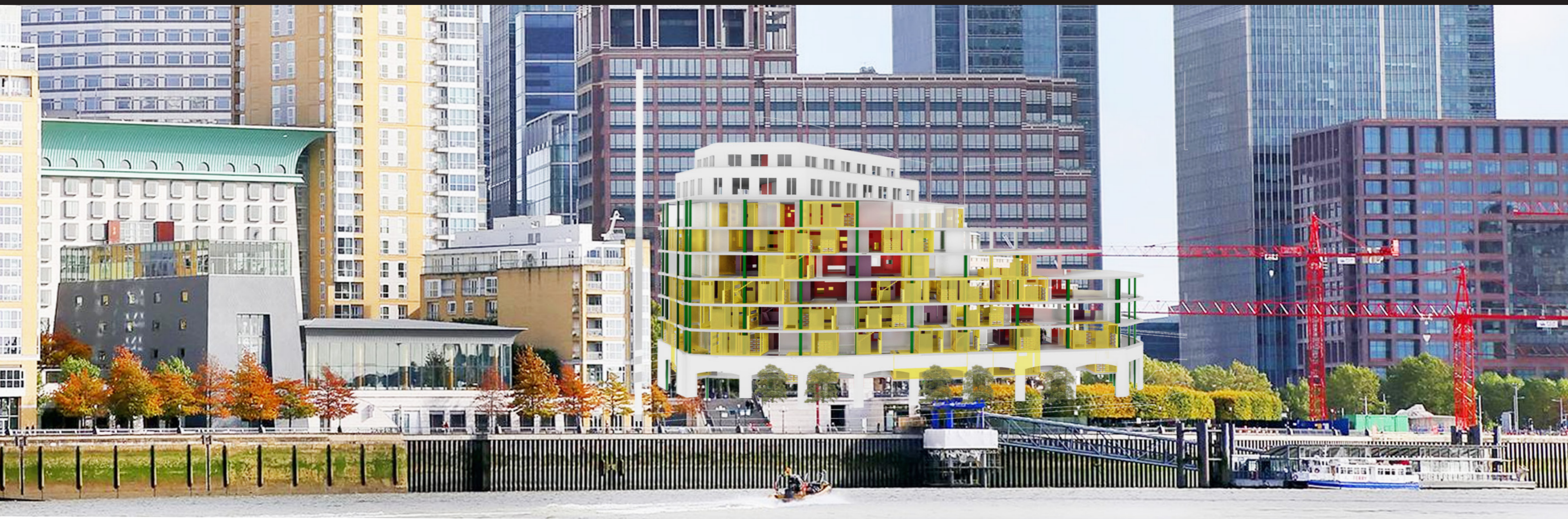
FASADE

- CO-WORKING ZONE
- LIBRARY
- CURATED COMMERCIALS
- FASADE





POWER OF TEN



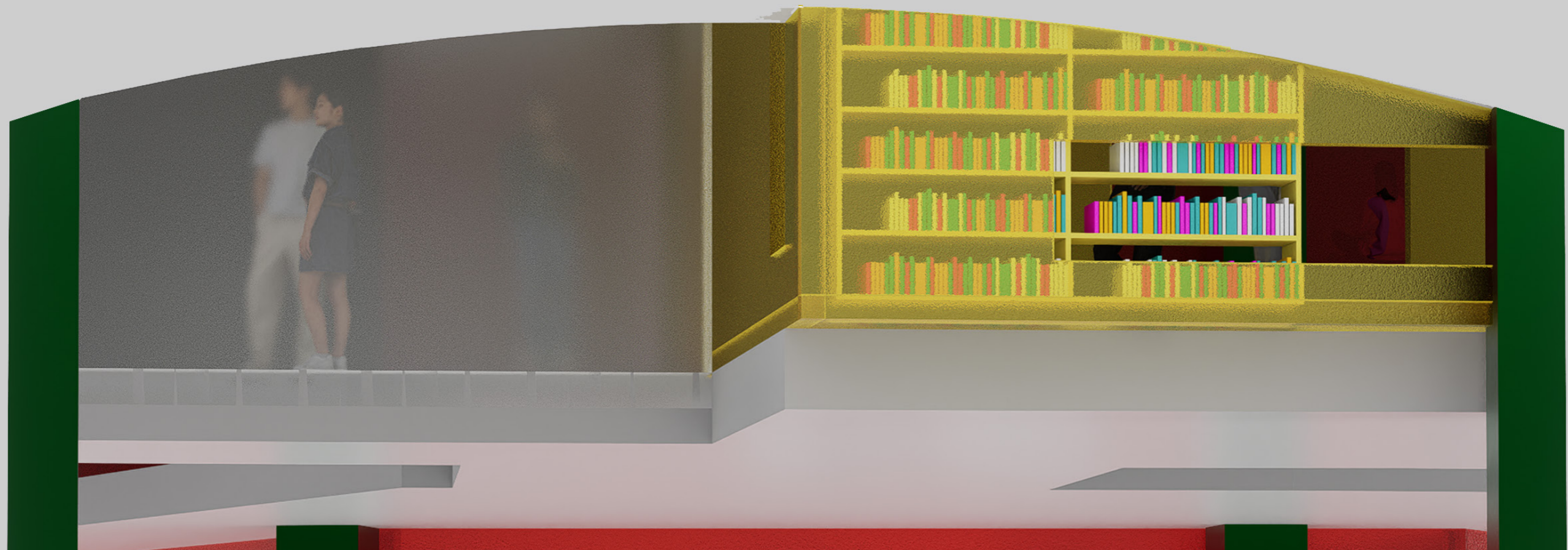












A NEW JOURNEY





Grab and Go



Meet your colleagues



Passing by the library



Passing by a co-working block



Balcony

TOWARD A VERTICALLY CONNECTED COMMUNITY

In the end, the evolution of office spaces is not unique to Canary Wharf. Across global cities, work environments are undergoing radical redefinition—shifting away from rigid, monofunctional layouts toward more integrated, community-centric systems. Canary Wharf in London is no exception. The Canary Wharf Group has demonstrated a clear ambition to reposition the area from a purely financial business district into a more inclusive urban hub. Numerous initiatives—such as weekend markets, cultural exhibitions, pop-up wellness events, and public realm activations—signal this transition.

However, public perception of Canary Wharf still largely remains tied to its International Style architecture and corporate identity. The area is still predominantly occupied by office workers, and this functional singularity continues to limit broader engagement. That's where this project offers a new proposition: to turn a single building into a trial for a new kind of urban experiment—one that challenges the sterile homogeneity of modern offices and asks: What if a certain level of spatial chaos and social overlap is not only acceptable, but desirable?

By blurring traditional boundaries between working, living, and social functions, the building becomes a miniature vertical community. If this experiment proves successful, it can serve as a prototype for the wider regeneration of Canary Wharf, offering a replicable strategy for transforming other isolated office blocks into vibrant, layered urban ecosystems.