

This project aims to assist in the urban regeneration of Lowestoft, the easternmost city in the UK, and focuses on the renovation and redevelopment of a long-abandoned old post office on the High Street.

In normal times it is a pleasant and beautiful square, a public reading room and a solution for working meals towards the heart of the city's business district, while in non-working hours it is a stage for everything. The special thing about it is that it can host many different events, from large to small, from quiet to noisy, from indoors to outdoors. Offering multiple stages, it offers total freedom of use. Giving the freedom of the square to people to find their own way to spread their ideas and let free minds collide. With the aim of bringing cultural renewal, vitality and energy back into the heart of the city.

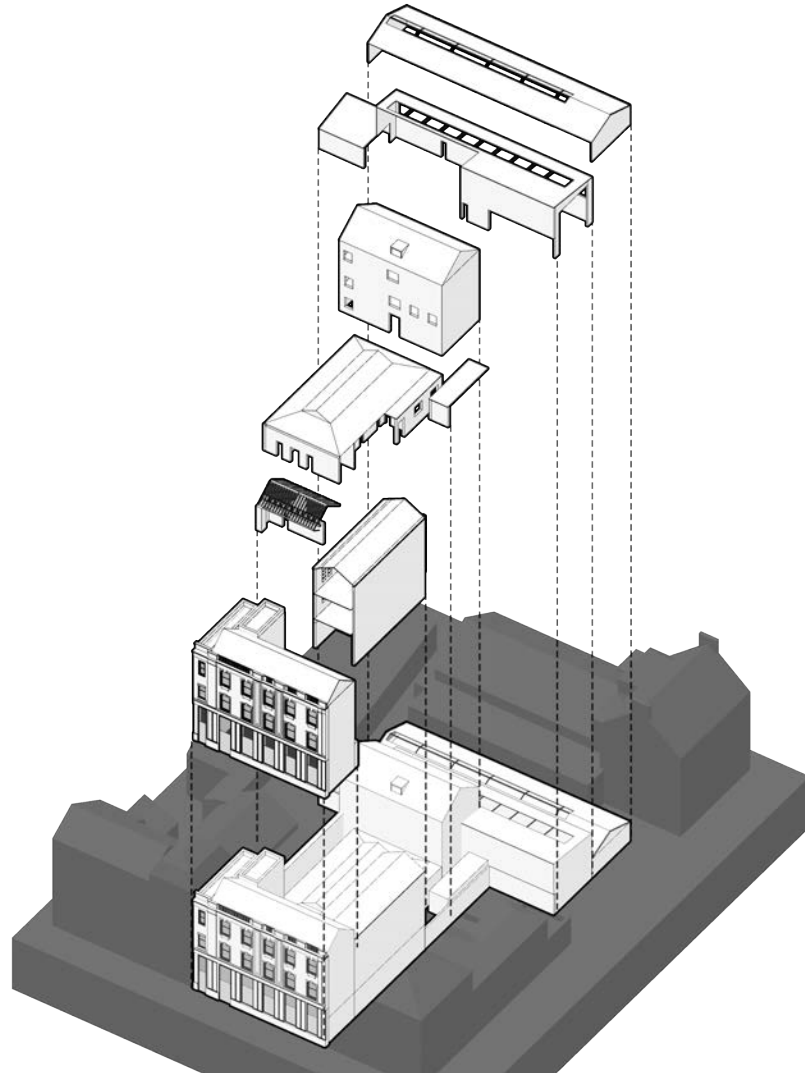


Lowestoft is on the North Sea coast, is the most easterly settlement of the United Kingdom. It is 110 miles north-east of London and 22 miles south-east of Norwich.

The entrance to Lake Lothing is where Lowestoft's only railway station, the A12 and the port are concentrated, making this the largest and main transport hub of the city. I found that the entrance to the city is surrounded by large areas of residential and commercial buildings, with little in the way of parks and town squares of a more relaxed scale. At the same time the economy of the commercial area is predominantly cheap and fast-moving.

The site for this project is located just 4 minutes walk from Lowestoft station on High Street, a multi-block complex of buildings up to 3 storeys high.

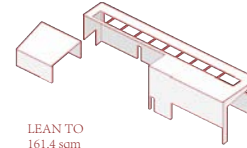
SITE STATUS



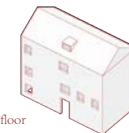
The Lowestoft Post Office is a now long-abandoned building complex which has been added to several times and now consists of seven individual blocks. We have given them special names.



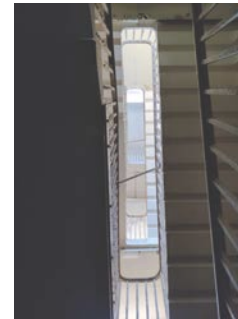
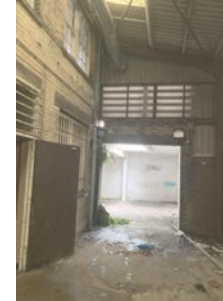
GLASS ROOF
221.7 sqm



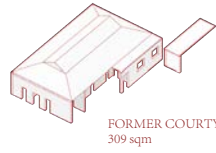
LEAN TO
161.4 sqm



GHOST TOURS
Ard 102 sqm each floor



SITE STATUS



FORMER COURTYARD
309 sqm



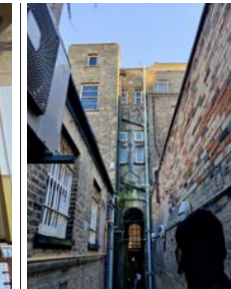
POST OFFICE WING
Ard 70 sqm each floor



GLASS ENTRANCE
126.9 sqm each floor

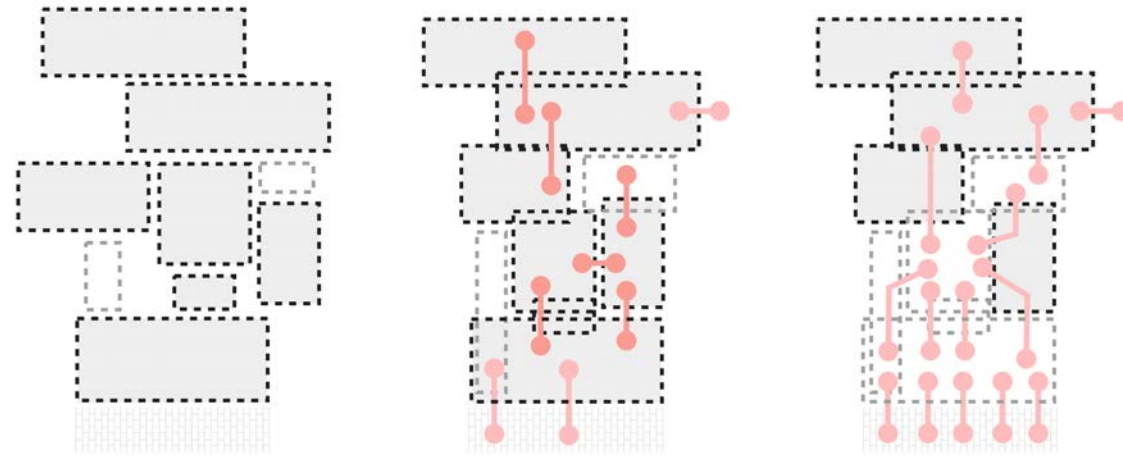


POST OFFICE PRORER
& ARCHES ALLEYWAY
19 sqm





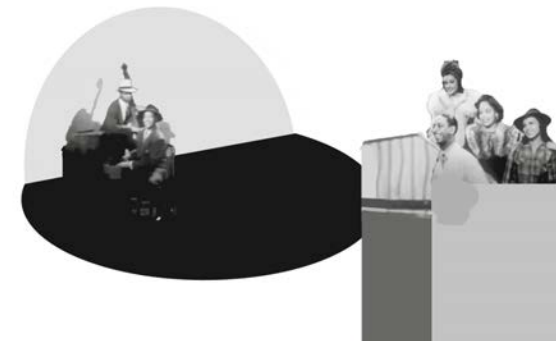
INSPIRATION



The whole of the building gives me a sense of individuality and interconnectedness, a harmonious presence. Each building is very different in structure and materials and has its own details, such as the style of doors, windows and staircases. Just like the city of Lowestoft, the locals and the pensioners and the visitors come from different cities and backgrounds and have different cultures, but live together. This reminds me of a jam session, a recreational activity. I wanted to strengthen the overall coherence of the site and provide a stage where culture, ideas and art could meet. It is a place where everyone is welcome, where different cultures can spread and where people want to stop and refresh themselves.

I have named it **Opinion Square.**

Jam Session Bar: musicians can bring their instruments on stage and play informally with the resident band, with no preparation, coming and going.





Decline of the British High Street and the Deterioration of traditional seaside towns

<https://chillisauc.com/blog/post-5c38a3da9272ca66d36e3c27>

A couple of the hottest topics surrounding local economies at the moment are the '**decline of the British high street**' and the '**deterioration of traditional seaside towns**'.

However, during our research, we noticed that a number of these towns are successfully reinventing themselves, and with a bit of

vision are using their historic and natural heritage to transform themselves into highly desirable places not just to visit, but to live and work.

Traditionally, seaside resorts have been associated with **low paying, seasonal tourism-based employment**, which has often been cited as the root cause of socio-economic problems. However, some towns are now hotbeds for **culture, art, media, and high tech businesses**, providing employment opportunities and salaries you'd usually associate with the most fashionable parts of London.

A shore thing: how art is helping to regenerate the English seaside

<https://www.theframeworks.com/frame-of-mind/a-shore-thing-how-art-is-helping-to-regenerate-the-english-seaside>



The wonderful **Quex Park** in **Birchington**, with its Edwardian Mansion and events programme, and the Powell-Cotton Museum, which contains a rather startling collection of taxidermy, have both become standout destinations in their own right.

Around the coast from **Margate**, Folkestone has promoted its Arts Triennial for a number of years with both temporary and permanent art concentrated in a small locality. The development of restaurants and businesses around the harbour draws people to the Cultural Quarter. Unlike Margate with its iconic building-led revival, Folkestone has focused on a core problem and come up with a defined plan within a small area of town.

Further afield, **Tate St Ives** is drawing large numbers of visitors. Even in Blackpool where, 15 years ago, The Great Promenade Show was established as a permanent outdoor public art gallery with 10 permanent installations spread over 2 km, we can see tourism returning to deprived areas.

Overseas, places like the **Guggenheim** in **Bilbao** remain testament to the positive effect that arts-led regeneration can have.



Celebrating Culture on the Edge, A New Dawn

Lowestoft is currently experiencing a cultural renewal in and around the town.

A New Dawn is central to bringing forward cultural regeneration and more creative opportunities for the town, making a positive contribution on people's lives and giving our rich and varied cultural assets the conditions to grow stronger and be more resilient. The Lowestoft Cultural Leadership Group, in partnership with East Suffolk Council, have prepared this Cultural Strategy for the town. Our ten key priorities all strive to make Lowestoft a place where being on the eastern edge of the country is celebrated. A place which is creatively edgy and leading in cultural leadership, place making, community participation and economic growth.

“ Lowestoft will become a vibrant and energised town with every resident enjoying and taking part in arts, heritage and culture. ”

LOWESTOFT

Town centres are changing all over the Country. We are seeing less retail units and more service and leisure units. A strong cultural identity is essential for our Town centre's survival. As a port town it developed out of the fishing industry and as a traditional seaside resort. But now that tourism and fishing have both declined, the city is looking for plans to rejuvenate itself.



STATUS RESEARCH

The shops and spaces at the entrance to the city lack vibrancy, a core that attracts outsiders to explore deeper, and a space that gives local life a REFRESH and gives locals a sense of freshness. This is fatal to the heart of a city.

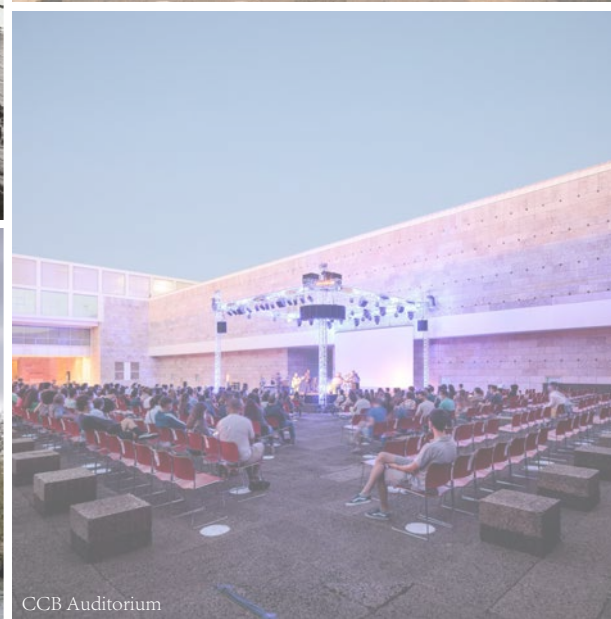
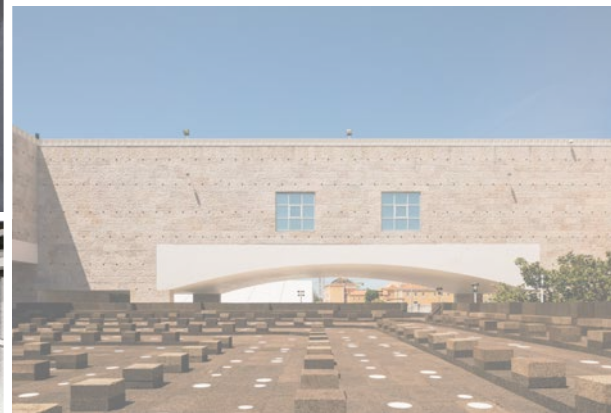
The town used to have an excellent tourism and sea-side resort culture, and in the last three years it has tried to host a number of cultural events. Lowestoft Rising Cultural Education Partnership is enabling every child and young person in the town to have access to cultural activity and the Marina Theatre is going from strength to strength, and they want to achieve more for our residents, the place in which we live, work and visit as well as the cultural sector who are providing us with these exciting and special experiences.

People want to be happier, resilient and more connected through taking part in cultural activity, and they long to feel a sense of belonging and pride through developing and having a say in culture in their communities.

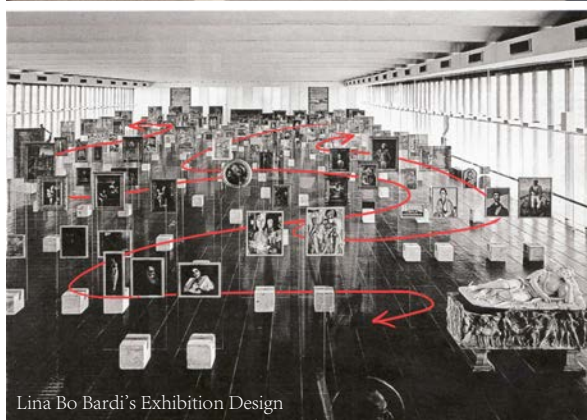




Hyde Park Speaker's Corner



CCB Auditorium

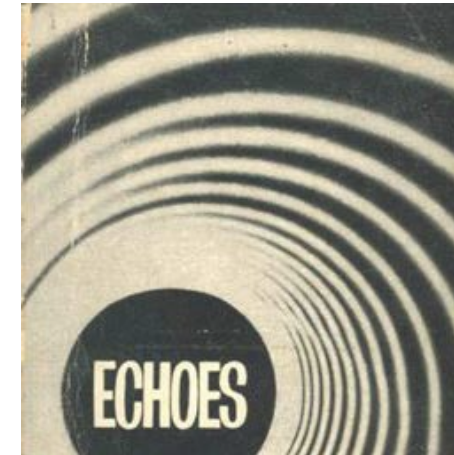


Lina Bo Bardi's Exhibition Design



Acoustic Mirror

CASE STUDY

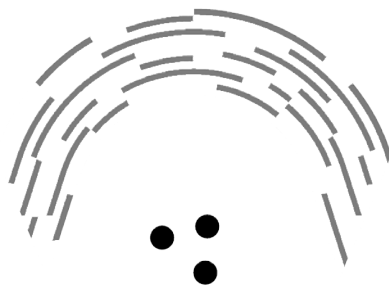


I researched a large number of social gathering events in squares to see how squares support people to gather, and why people gather, in what form, and how people's thoughts and voices spread. I also tried to explore a design solution that would give people back the freedom to use the space.

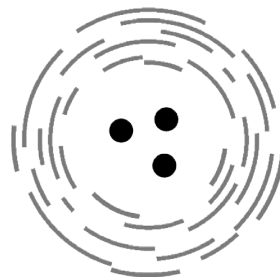
Social Gathering Type Research

I researched what is the freest way for humans to speak and discuss, and what gives people the greatest activation of their ideas. Then I discovered that it is to give people the freedom to choose and to make the most comfortable environment for themselves to use enjoy and speak out loud.

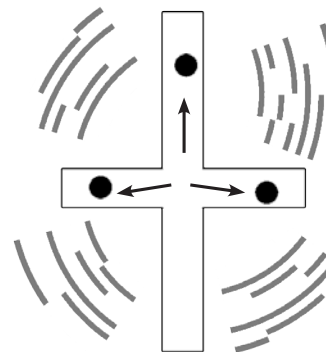
● Speaker → Moving Flow ■ Listener



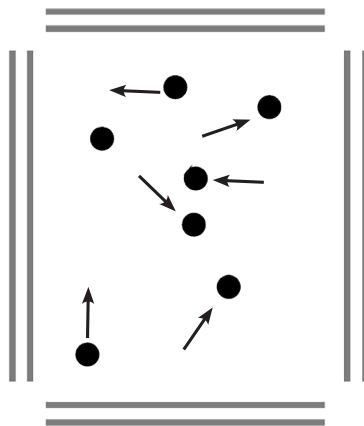
Lecture



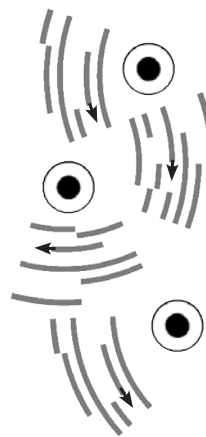
Panel Discussion



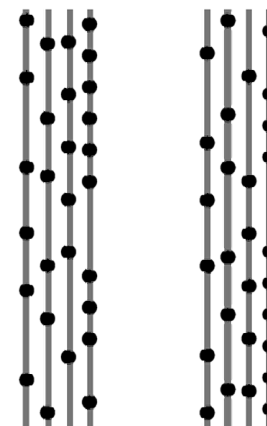
Catwalk



Social Gaming



Speaker's Corner

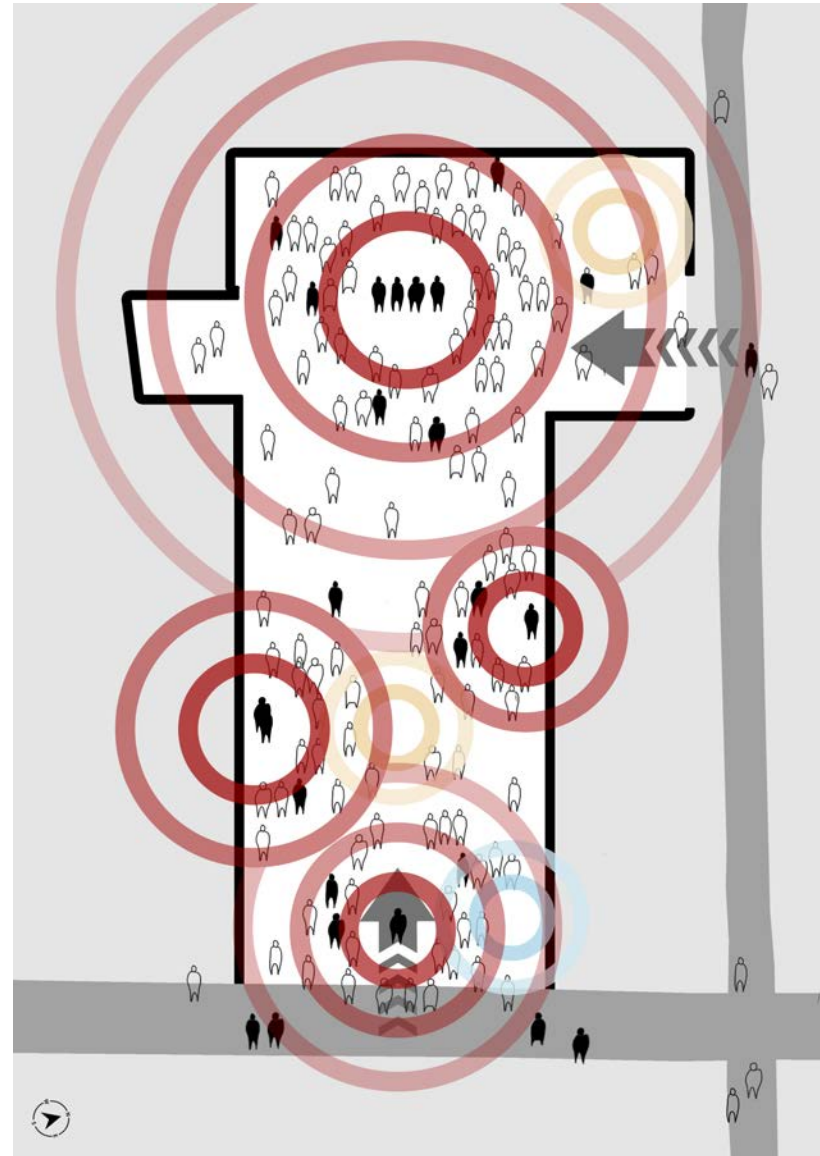
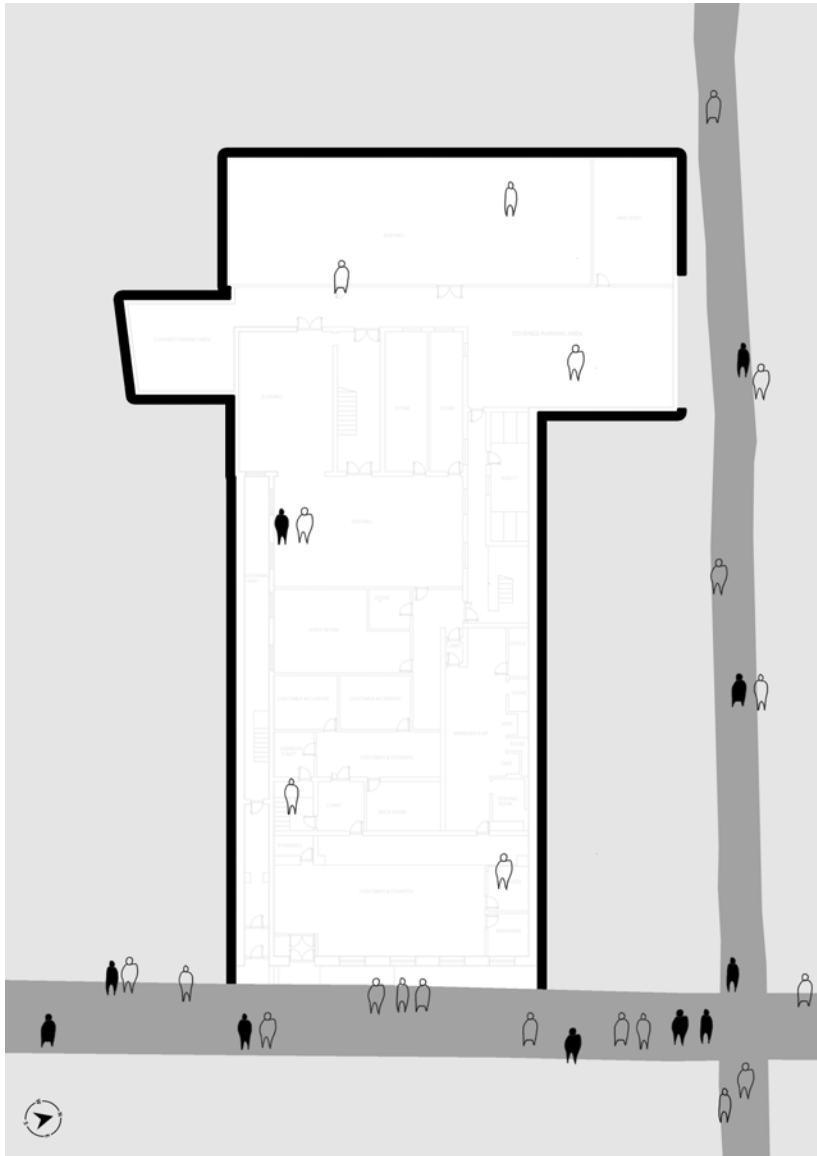


Parliament

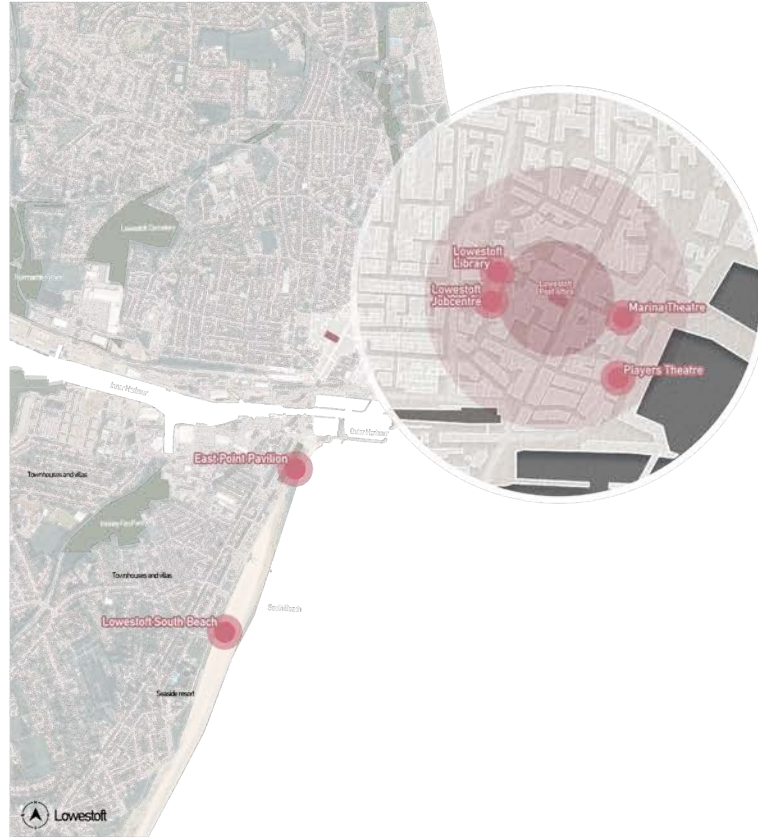


On investigation, I found that the central 'front yard' and the 'lean-to' and 'glass roof' at the rear were both later shed roofs that were once open. As the name 'front courtyard' suggests, it was used as a courtyard in its own right. The roof was added at a later date for storage and other functions of the building. At the same time the northern surroundings of the site are relatively open. Given the concept of this project, I thought, why not return the sunlight to these areas and create an open northern plaza?



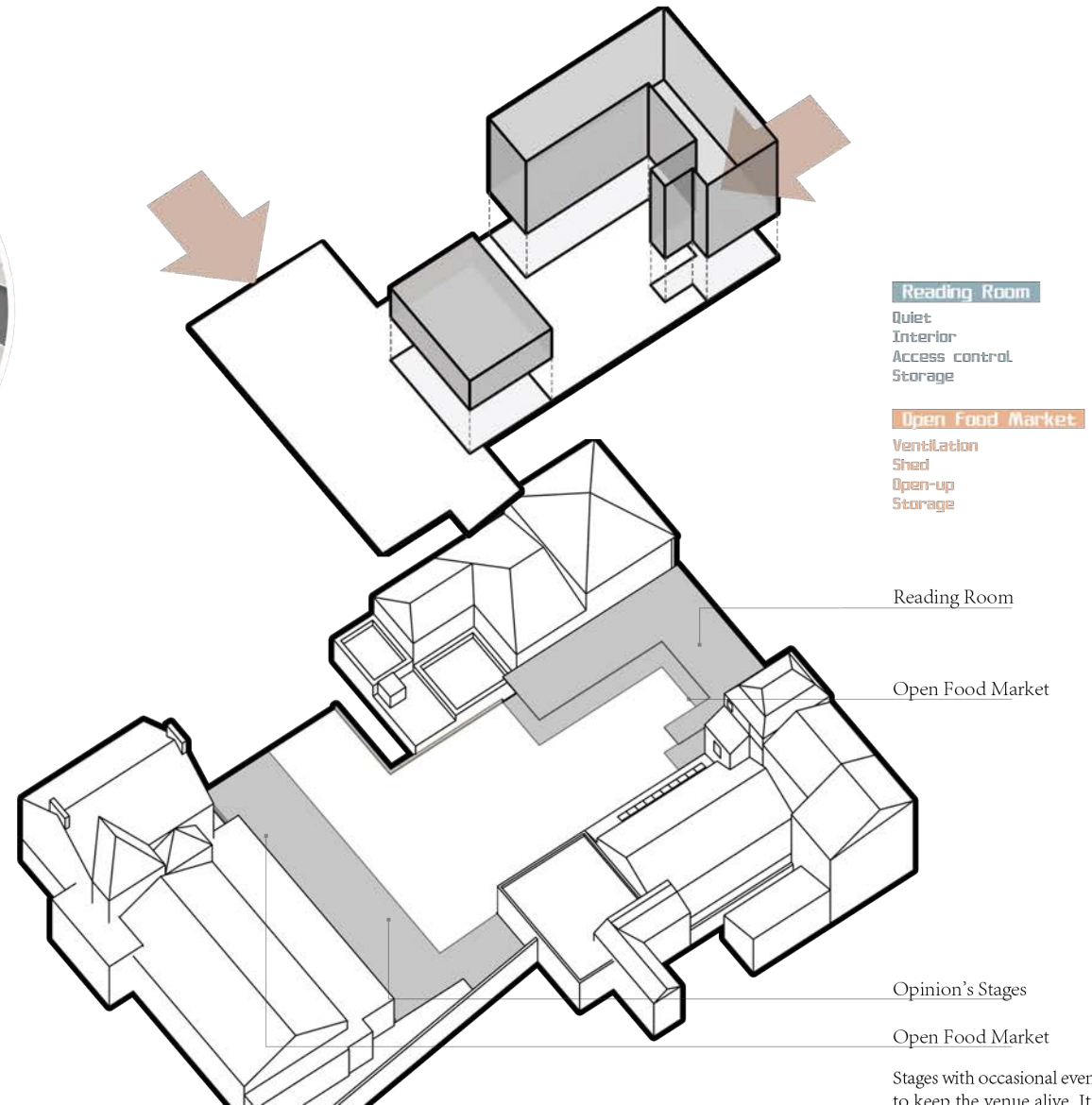


SPACE DEVELOPMENT



Taking into account the degree of conservation of the building and the need for indoor and outdoor space, I demolished the 'ghost tour' building, and added the reading room and food market to activate the site.

Attracting crowds with handy features that help bring pop in audiences to those who want to speak. Distinguishing the quiet and downtown areas according to the building itself also provides a better experience for those in the audience here.

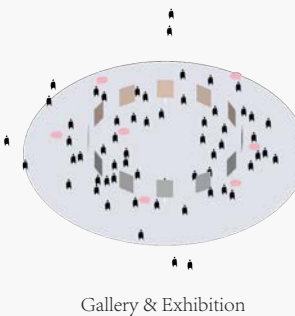
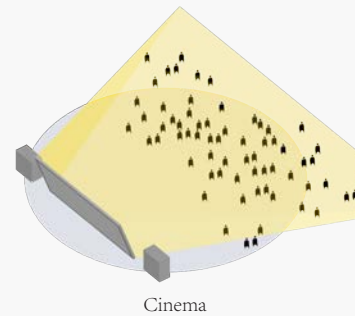
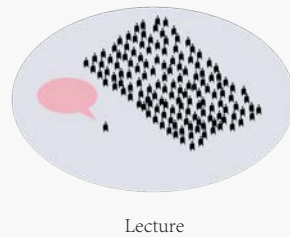
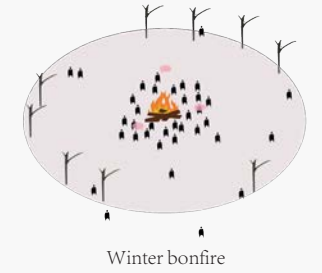
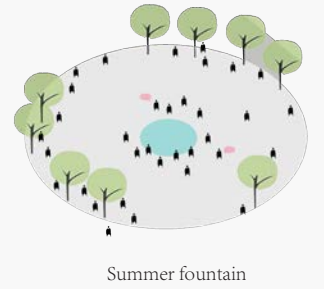
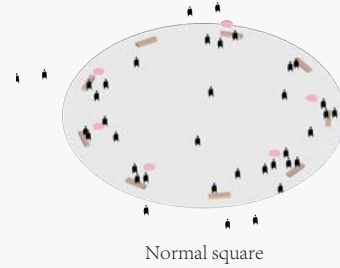
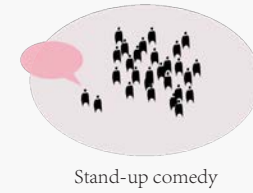
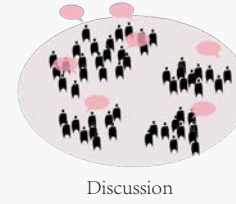
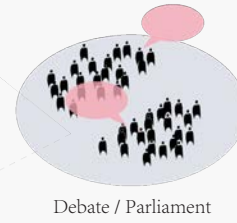
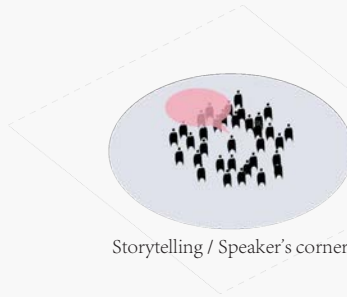


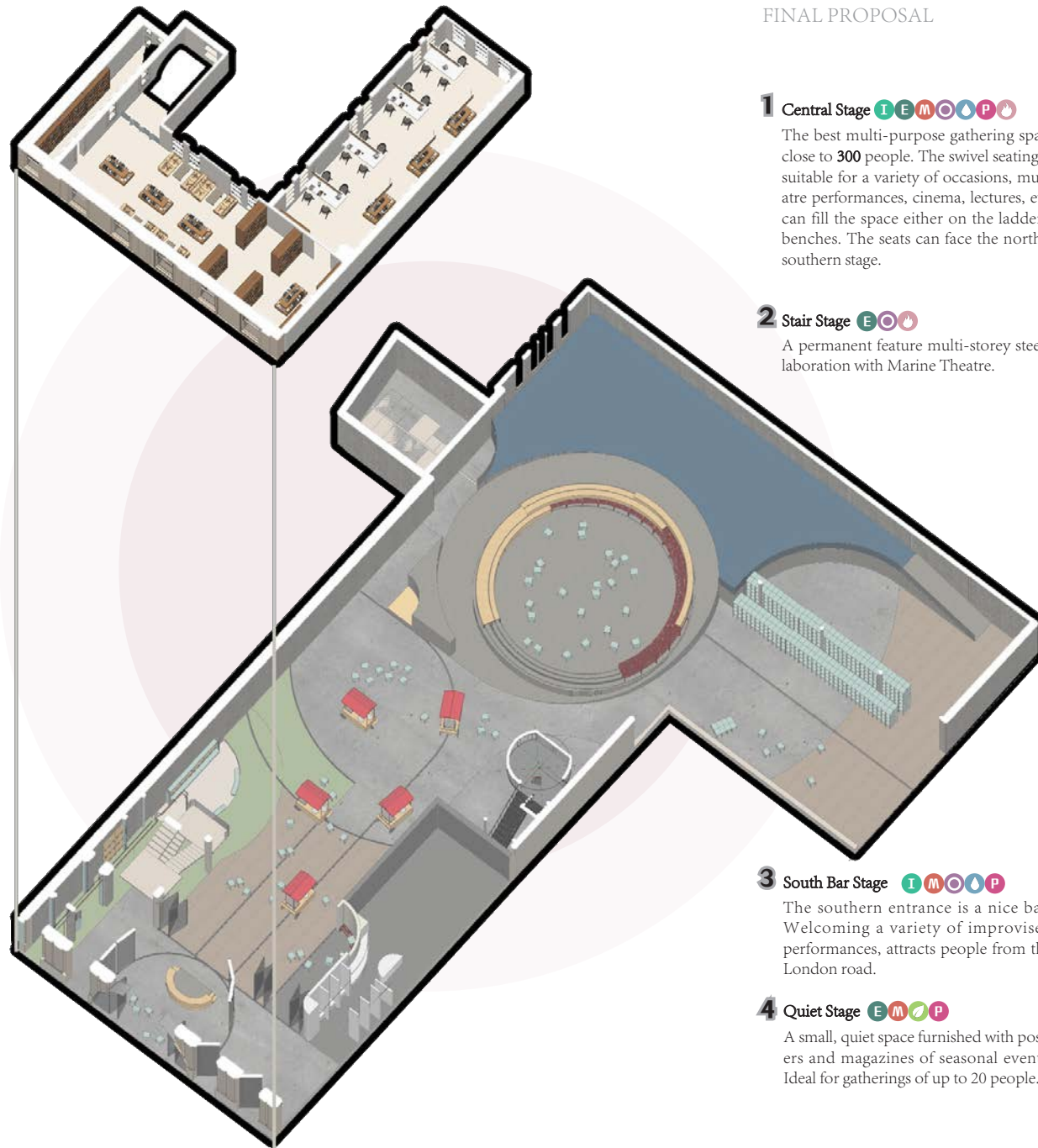
Stages with occasional events to keep the venue alive. It is linked to the city library, the theatre and the waterfront festival, bringing the whole city to life.



What Do People Do
Here ?

EVENTS / FUNCTIONS





1 Central Stage I E M O P

The best multi-purpose gathering space for parties of close to 300 people. The swivel seating makes the space suitable for a variety of occasions, music festivals, theatre performances, cinema, lectures, etc. The audience can fill the space either on the ladder seats or on the benches. The seats can face the northern stage or the southern stage.

2 Stair Stage E O

A permanent feature multi-storey steel stage in collaboration with Marine Theatre.

3 South Bar Stage I M O P

The southern entrance is a nice bar. Welcoming a variety of improvised performances, attracts people from the London road.

4 Quiet Stage E M P

A small, quiet space furnished with posters and magazines of seasonal events. Ideal for gatherings of up to 20 people.

5 Food Market E M P

The flat square can be used as a leisure square and as a weekend food fair. The food truck can also be used as an exhibition stand, providing space for exhibitions. Also Linked to the 24-hour music festival in the summer.

6 North Food Market E M P

7 Message Gallery I O

A silent speech gallery with networked displays. Screen panels for people who are not so keen to stand in front of people.

8 1F Reading Room I M O P

Toilet facilities for up to 180 women and 220 men

9 Backstage I O M

Part of the Open Square. Used as a backstage for the stage during the event season.

10 Cloak room & Backstage I A

Large capacity cloakroom for all kinds of large gatherings

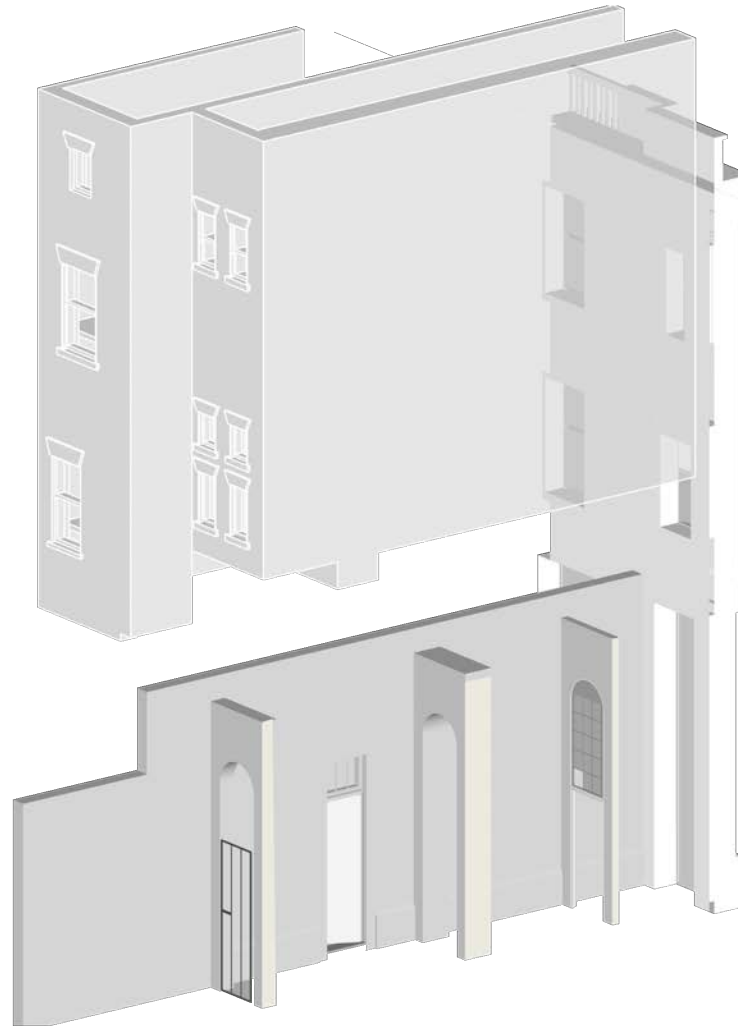
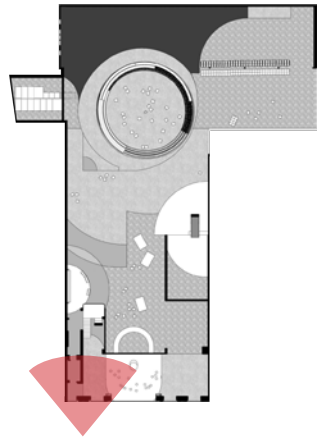
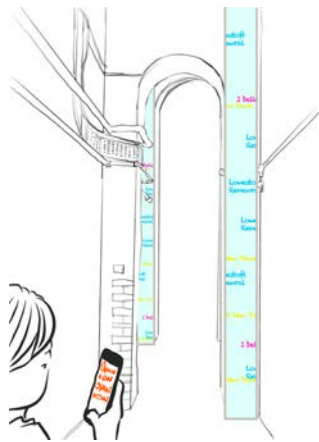
11 Toilet

Toilet facilities for up to 180 women and 220 men

Facilities

- I Interior
- E Exterior
- M Multi-function
- O Acoustic
- P Greening
- A Can be used in rainy weather
- P Suit for Pop-in speech
- P Suit for Big/Pre warmed event

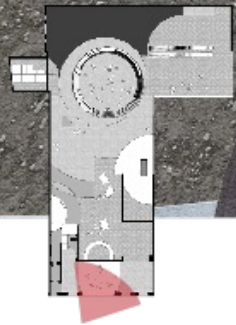
MESSAGE LONGHALL

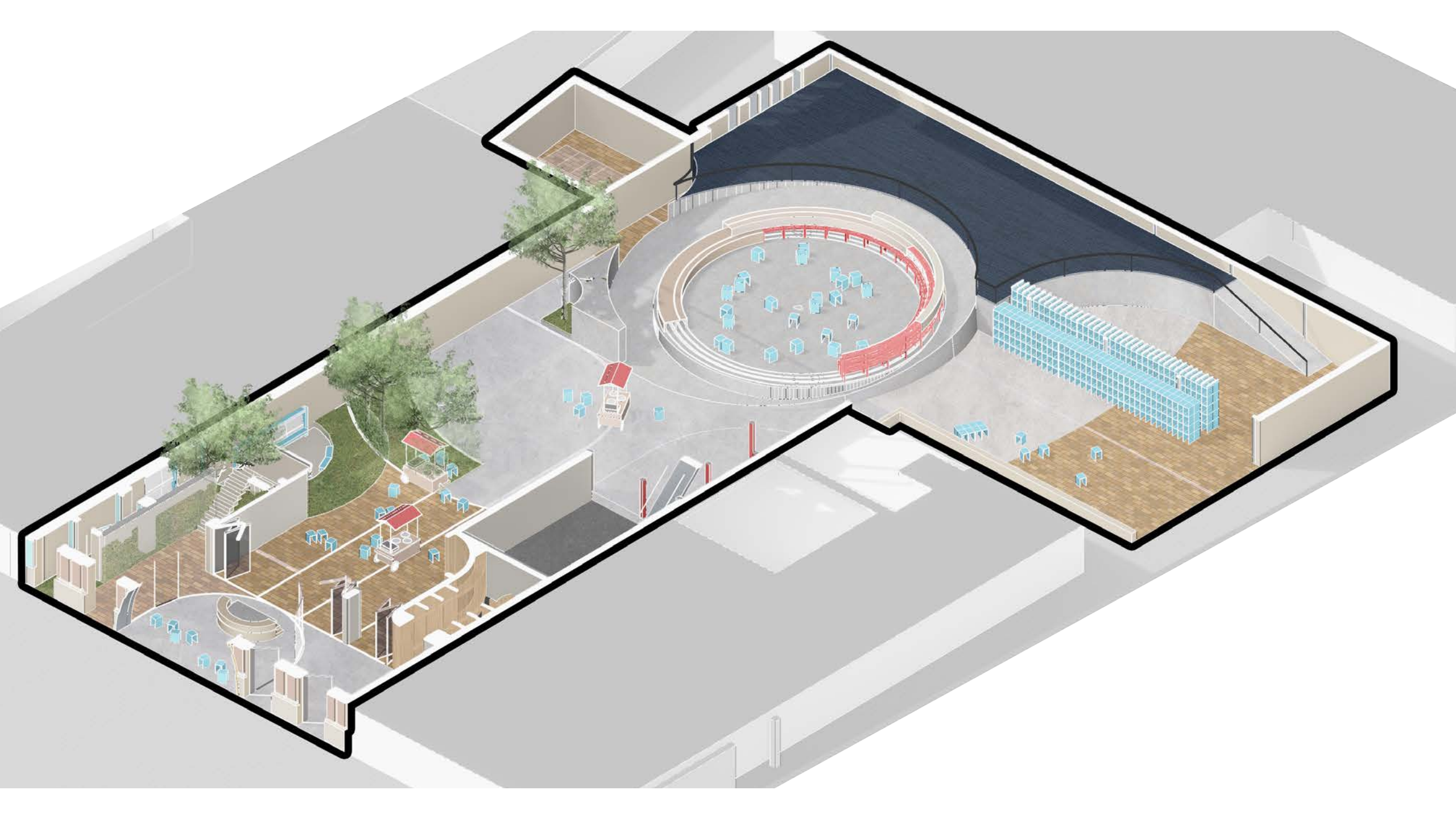


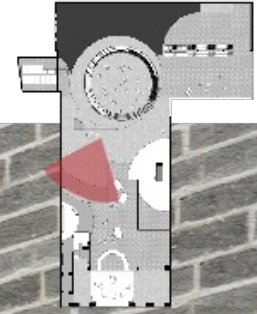


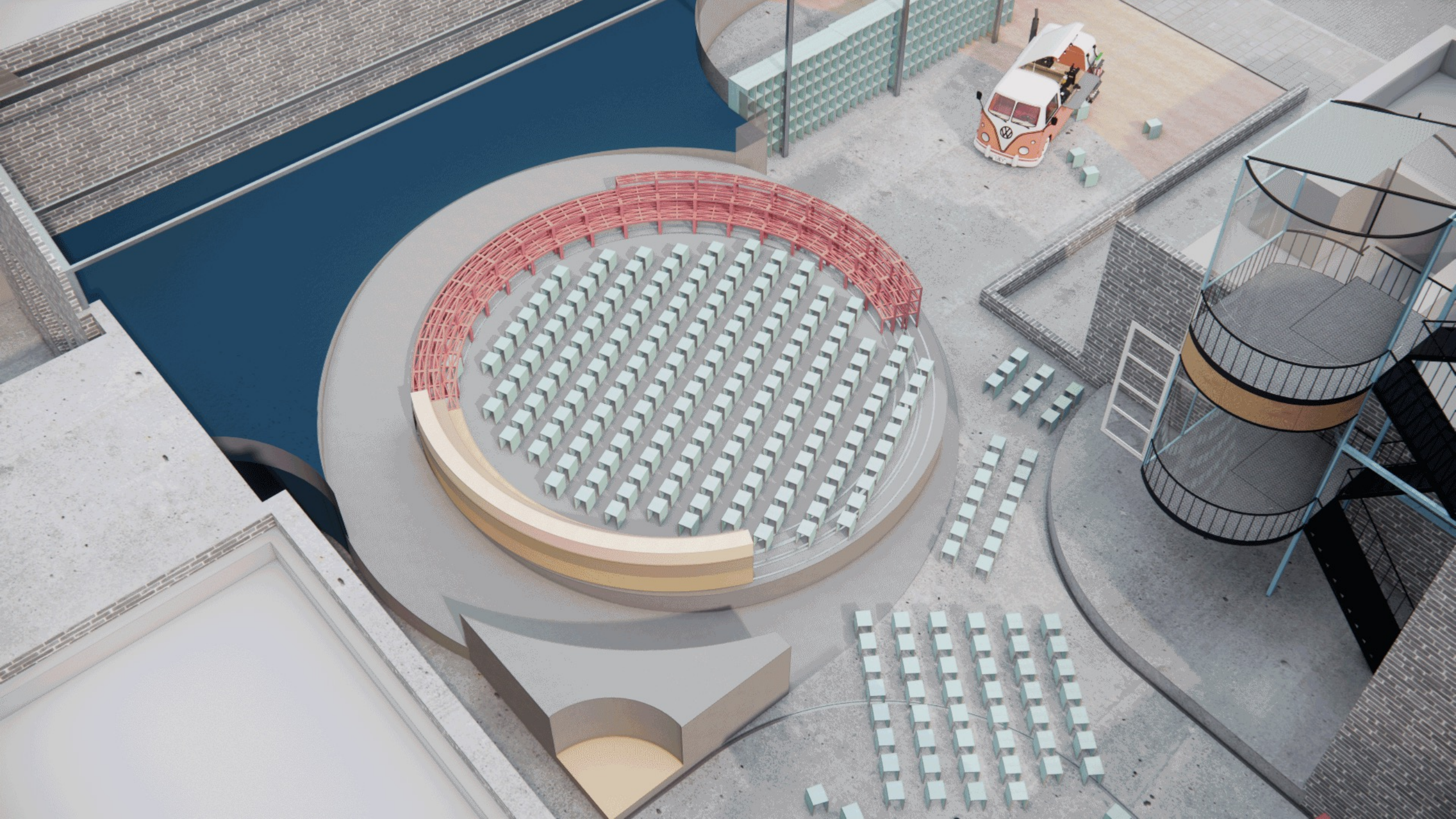


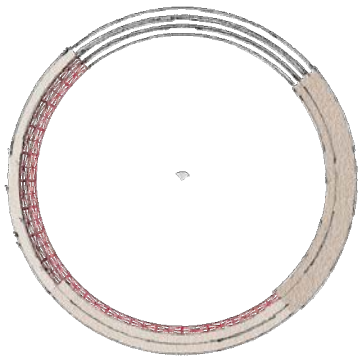
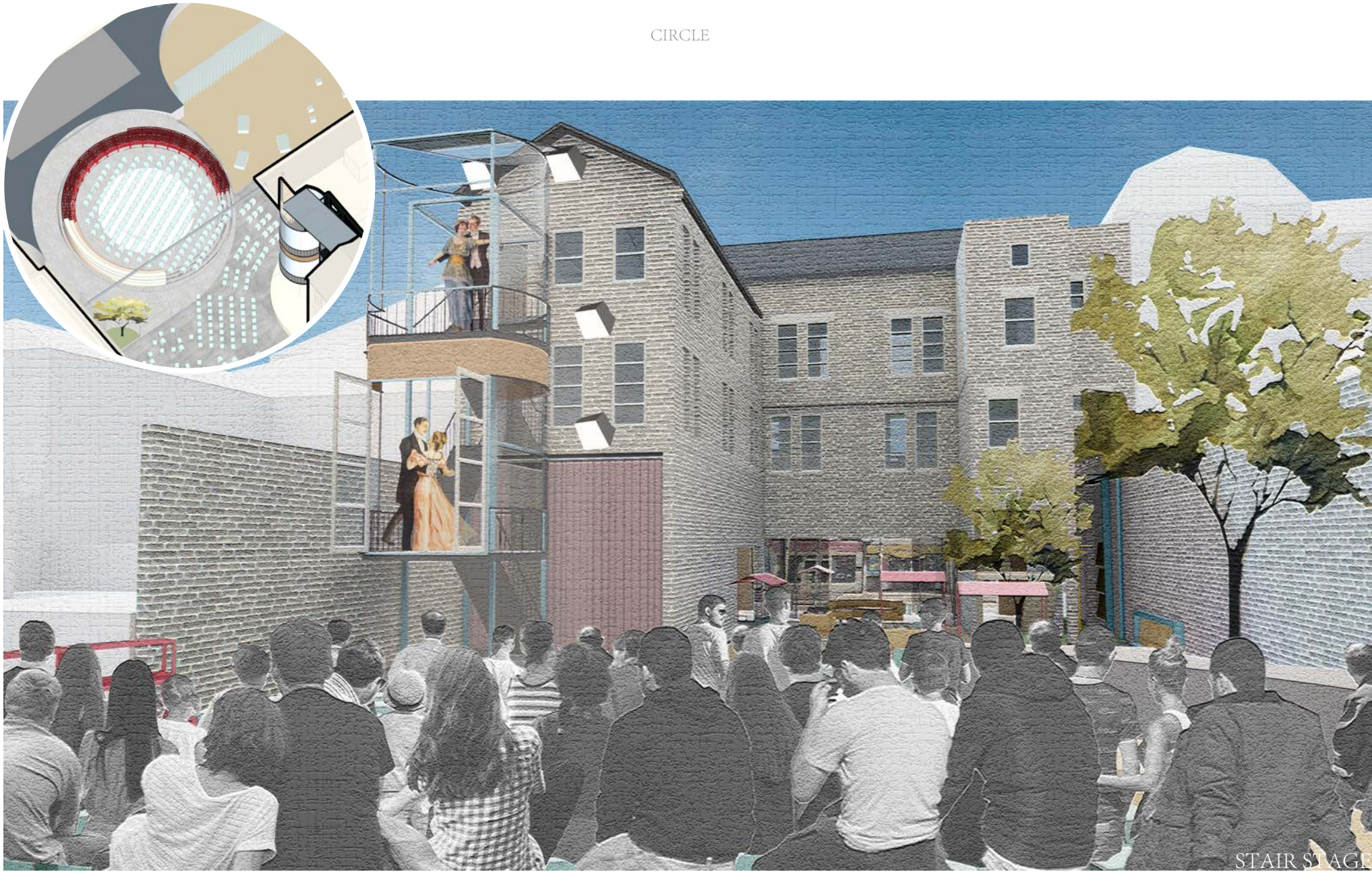




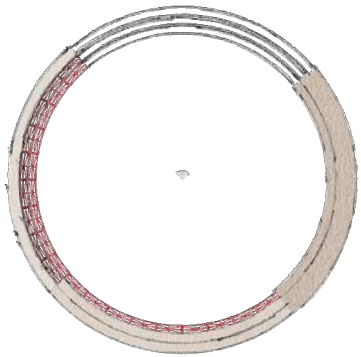
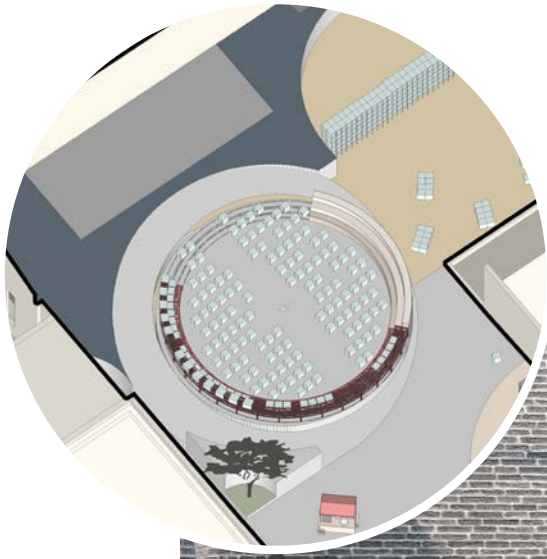






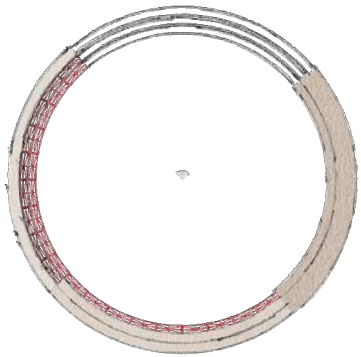
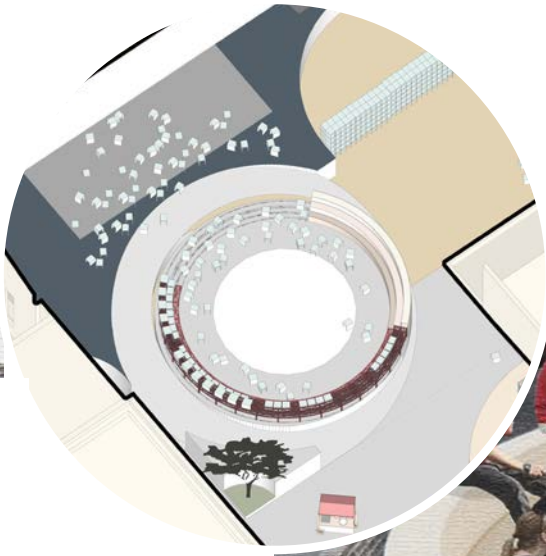


CIRCLE



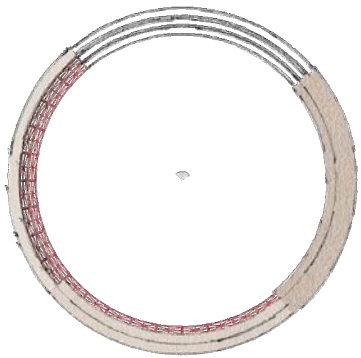
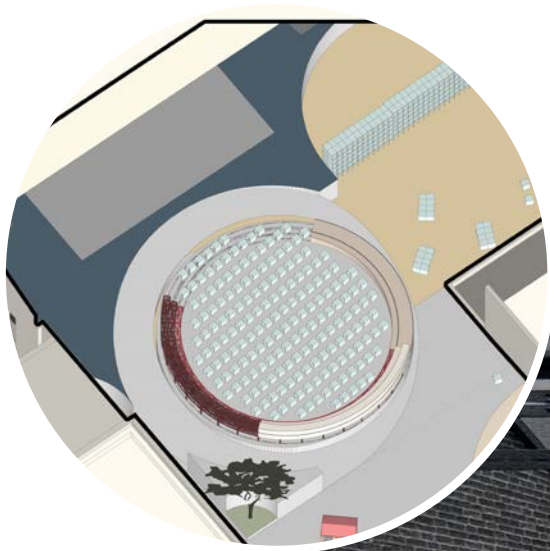
DEBATE

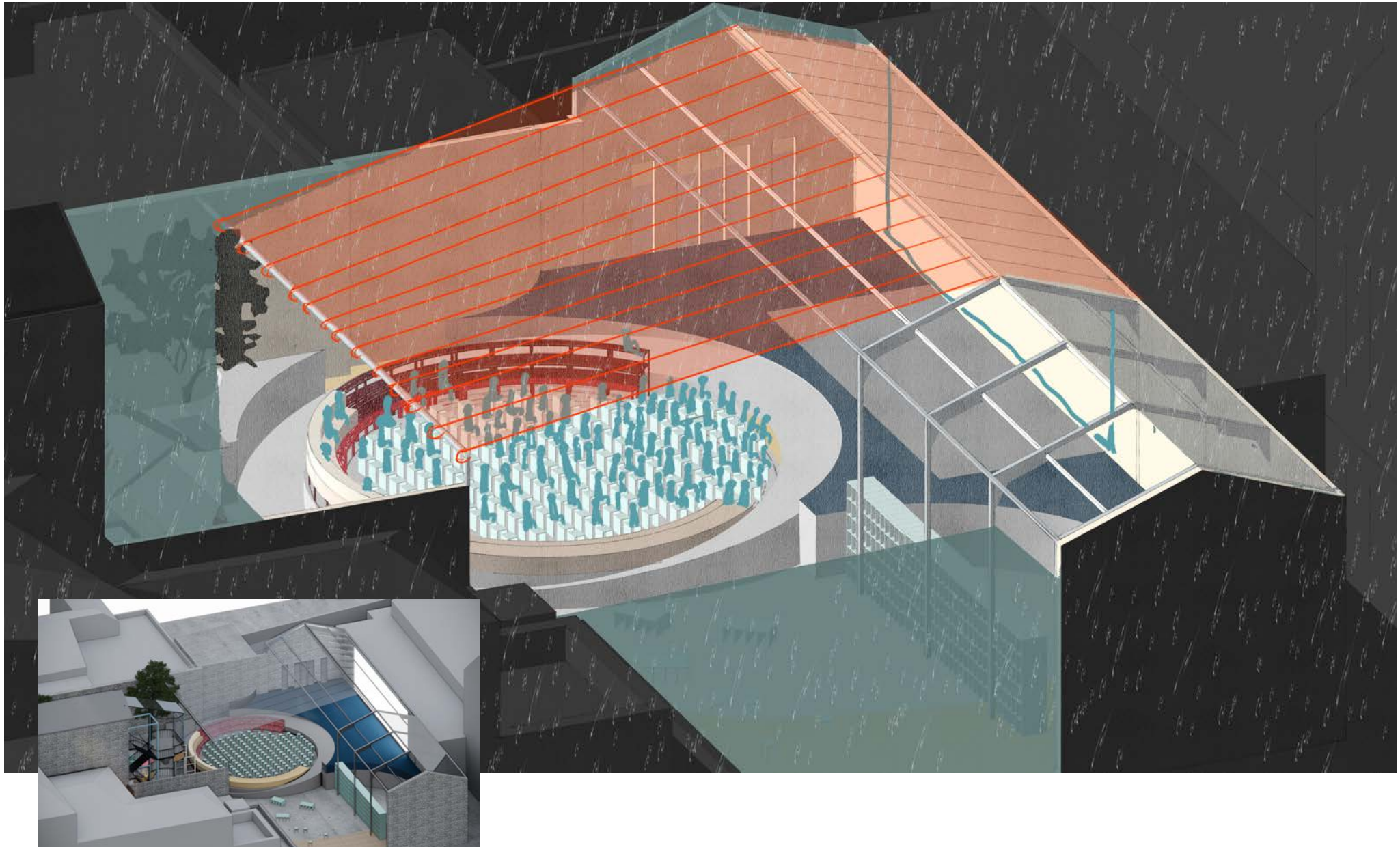
CIRCLE



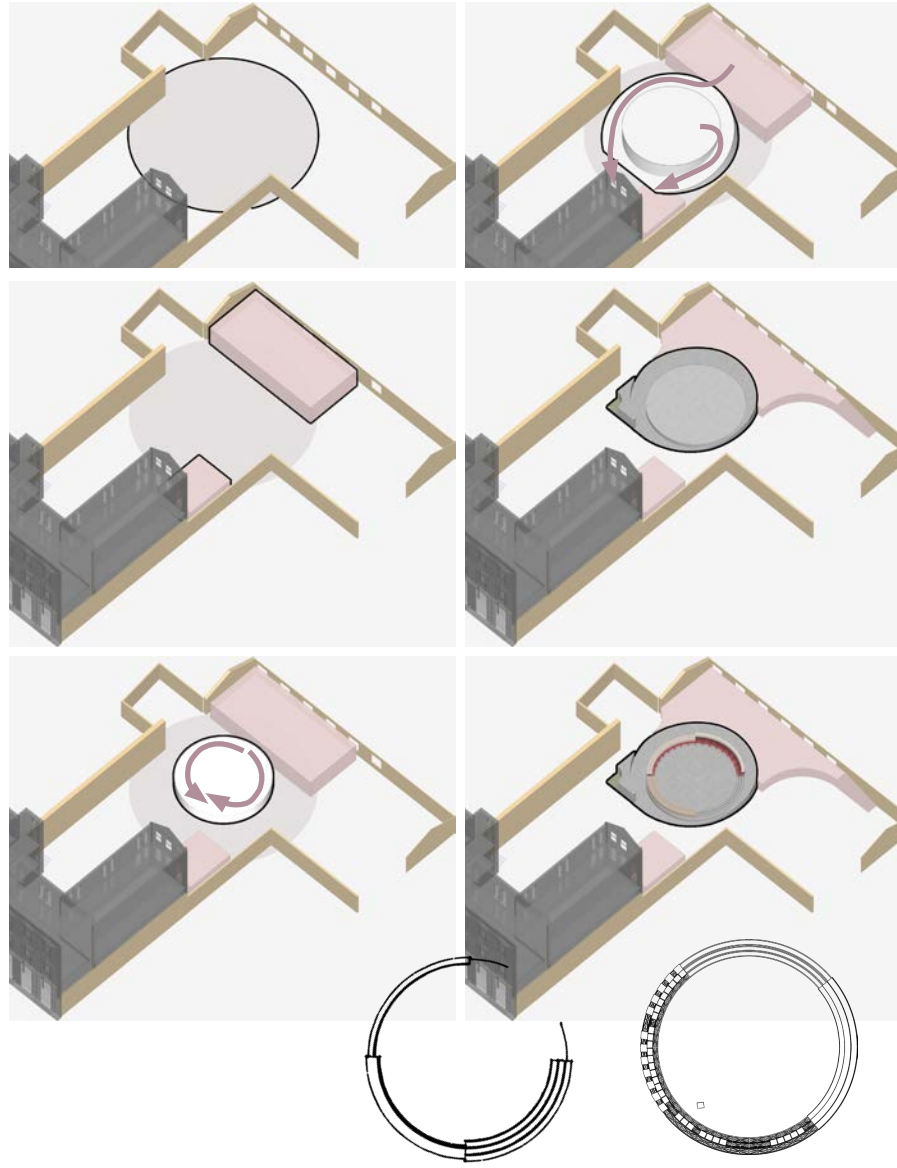
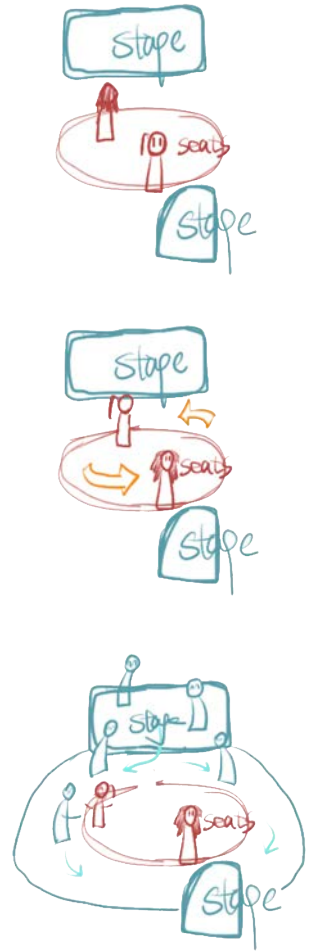
SOCIAL GAMING

CIRCLE

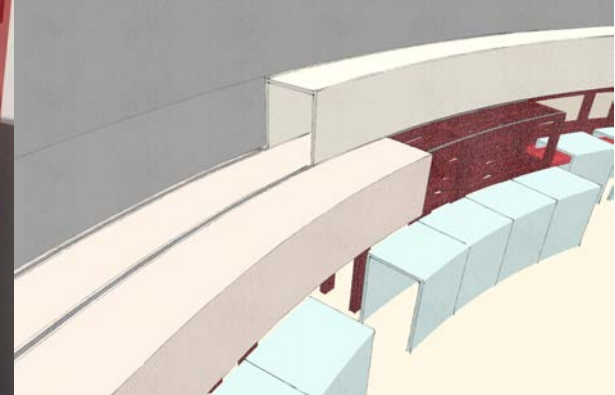
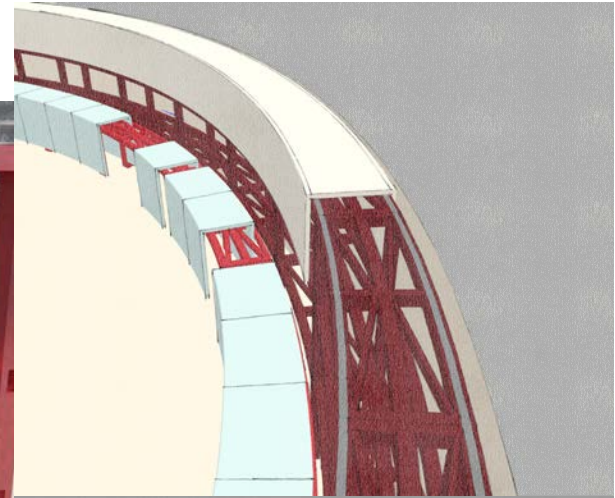




CENTRAL STAGE



CIRCLE



Steel frame

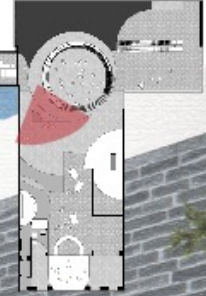


paint



plywood

FOOD MARKET





Food Market



Gallery / Exhibition



OPINION
SQUARE

05 JUNE - 11 JUN

Sun. **Pætry** writing and sharing session

Mon. "**Do you belive in alines**" to discuss about
ufos and whats NASA cover-ups

Tue. **Stand up comedy** --- open mic
You bring the attention, we bring the fun

Wed. **Country music live special perfoms** by se-
cret guest

Thur. **Stage play** rehearsal in public

Fri. **Movie** day

Sat. Random topic **drawing** activity

Please understand the activities may change

FIRST LIGHT FESTIVAL

MIDDAY SATURDAY 18TH
TO MIDDAY SUNDAY 19TH
JUNE 2022 / LOWESTOFT

24 hour Free Festival

HEADLINERS

LTJ Bukem / Andy Sheppard / Juanita Euka / Charlie Dark / Planet Positive / Mark Thomas / Secret Night Gang / Sam Kelly and the Lost Boys / Les Spaine / Luke Wright's First Word / Beach Feasts with Nicola Hordern / Natural History Museum / First Light Ensemble

10 ZONES / LIVE MUSIC / CINEMA / ARTS / WORKSHOPS / TALKS / FOOD / LOCAL TALENT

Stand-up Comedy OPEN MIC

Vol. 006

**OPINION
SQUARE**

07.June.2022

COME and STAND!!
COME and STAND!!
COME and STAND!!
COME and STAND!!

51 London Rd N, Lowestoft NR32

**OPINION
SQUARE**

Since June 2022

winter: bonfire party / christmas market / debate / movie night
summer: music festival / moive festival / sports event / concert / band live / jazz festival / first light festival
spring: theatrical activies / panel talk / band live / concert / concert / band live / jazz festival / first light festival
fall: stand up comedy / panel talk / band live / concert / concert / band live / jazz festival / first light festival

EVERYTHING YOU WANT AND MORE