A surreal, low-poly 3D cityscape. The sky is a gradient of purple and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the center, a large, glowing yellow sun is partially obscured by a dark, horizontal bar. The city is composed of various geometric shapes, including rectangular blocks, cylindrical towers, and floating platforms. The buildings are rendered in shades of purple, blue, and orange. The ground is a dark, flat surface with a grid of yellow lines. The overall style is minimalist and abstract.

Zooming Between Myths

“Zooming Between Myths”

Cities within the City

An Archipelago of Buildings within Buildings

2.5-D City

City of Hidden Menus

City of Multiple Speeds

City of Screens

The Flying Fleet of Social Zones

Public Spaces: Citizen’s Congregation

An Abundance of Rooms

Epilogue:

Zooming Between Myths

Downtown Los Angeles is a city of unseen myths. Above, beneath, within, and between the densely populated buildings, there are unspoken gems hidden in plain sight everywhere. In this speculative re-reading of DTLA, we zoom between the myths and present a series of visions to highlight and reveal architectural and urbanistic undercurrents of DTLA through the format of diagrams and drawings.

As a love-letter to Downtown Los Angeles, this project will exhibit a collection of seemingly impossible ideas that already exist amongst us. From a fleet of flying social zones hovering above DTLA, to an archipelago of buildings inside of buildings, or a 2.5-D terrain that intersects infrastructural layers of structures - these unlikely myths are all present within Downtown Los Angeles. With this project, we deliver a lens to relook at our city's special urban conditions.

This project is by no means a definitive endpoint of a story. Instead, we propose it as a start to open many new ways of understanding our city differently. In time, further studies into each category would allow us to become more knowledgeable of just how marvelous DTLA already is and the many untapped potentials still burgeoning within.

STAPLES CENTER

LADBS

BONAVENTURE HOTEL

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER

THE STANDARD HOTEL

THE BROAD MUSEUM

LA CENTRAL LIBRARY

CALIFORNIA PLAZA

DISNEY CONCERT HALL

ACE HOTEL

BOTTEGA LOUIE

DCBID

ONE WILSHIRE

MOCA

LAAC

PERSHING SQUARE

Cities within Cities

OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS

RAMON C. CORTINES SCHOOL

THE JEWELRY DISTRICT

ST. VINCENT CT

ACE HOTEL EASTERN BUILDING

THE BROADWAY ARCHADE

THE LAST BOOKSTORE

EASTERN BUILDING

LA CITY HALL

COLE'S

CAL-TRANS

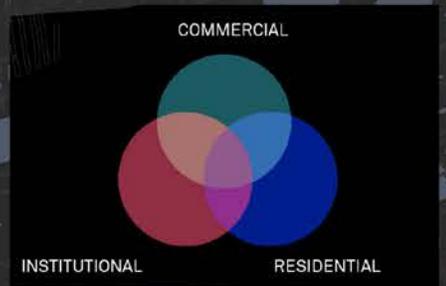
WELLER COURT

STAR APARTMENT

ENTERTAINMENT HOBBY SHOP JUNGLE
KOYASAN TEMPLE

FAR BAR

THE GEFFEN



Cities within the City

Downtown Los Angeles is a city that contains multiple cities. There is a vibrant patchwork of overlapping cultures within the relatively small urban geography of DTLA. As a pedestrian, one can noticeably detect the cultural changes by just taking a twenty-minute walk. Scale, texture, materiality, color, and other atmospheric factors reflect the various sub-communities' high-contrast with a strong sense of independent identities. What makes a neighborhood is not necessarily the ethnicity or history, but the existing sub-cultures and lifestyle. In this study, we looked at a few ways to create urban boundaries.



STAPLES CENTER



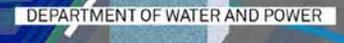
LADBS



BONAVENTURE HOTEL



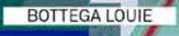
THE STANDARD HOTEL



DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER



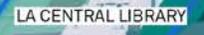
ACE HOTEL



BOTTEGA LOUIE



DCBID



LA CENTRAL LIBRARY



CALIFORNIA PLAZA



THE BROAD MUSEUM



DISNEY CONCERT HALL



LAAC



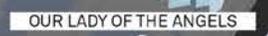
ONE WILSHIRE



PERSHING SQUARE



MOCA



OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS



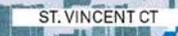
RAMON C. CORTINES SCHOOL



ACE HOTEL



EASTERN BUILDING



ST. VINCENT CT



PERCH



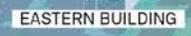
EASTERN BUILDING



THE BROADWAY ARCHADE



THE LAST BOOKSTORE



EASTERN BUILDING



LA CITY HALL



COLE'S



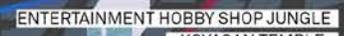
CAL-TRANS



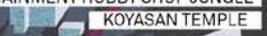
WELLER COURT



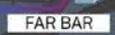
STAR APARTMENT



ENTERTAINMENT HOBBY SHOP JUNGLE



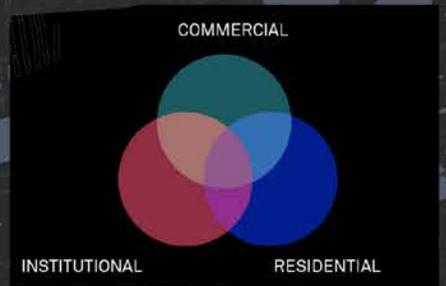
KOYASAN TEMPLE



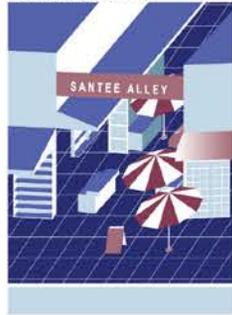
FAR BAR



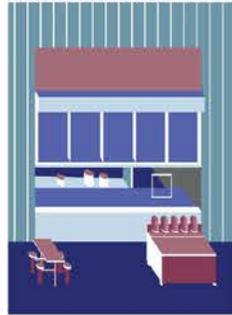
THE GEFFEN



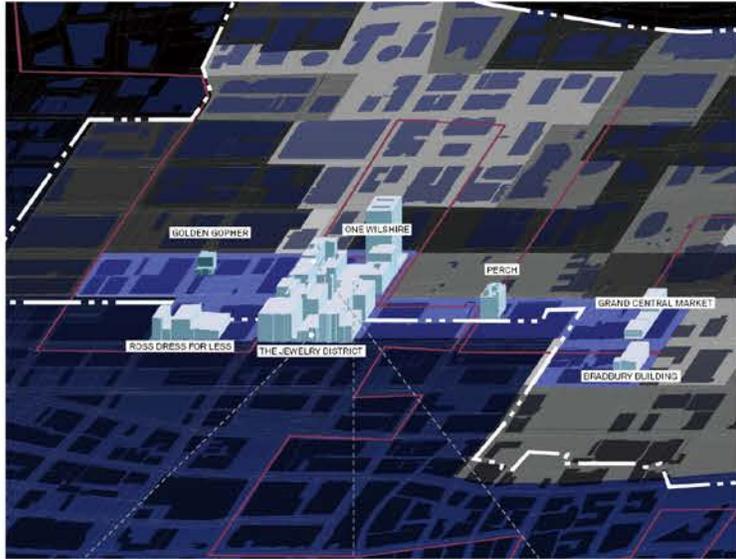
THE SANTEE ALLEY - FOOD STALL



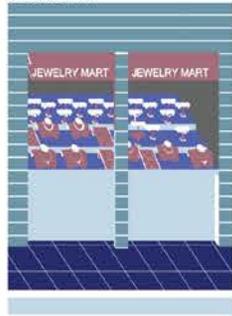
THE SANTEE ALLEY - ENTRY MOMENT



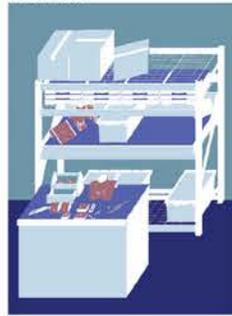
THE SANTEE ALLEY - CLOTHING STORE



JEWELRY DISTRICT



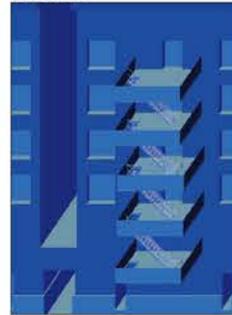
JEWELRY REPAIR



THE JEWELERS MALL



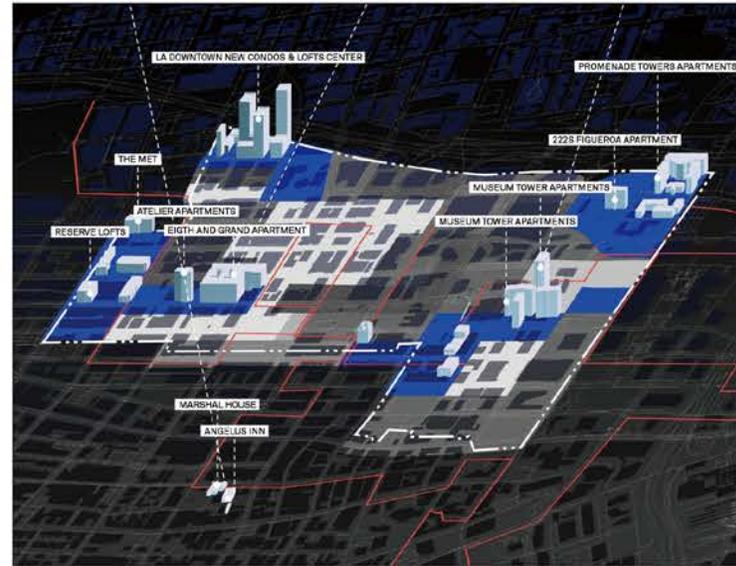
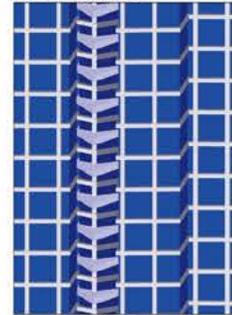
MARSHAL HOUSE



EIGHTH AND GRAND APARTMENT



MUSEUM TOWER APARTMENT



SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY (MARSHAL HOUSE)

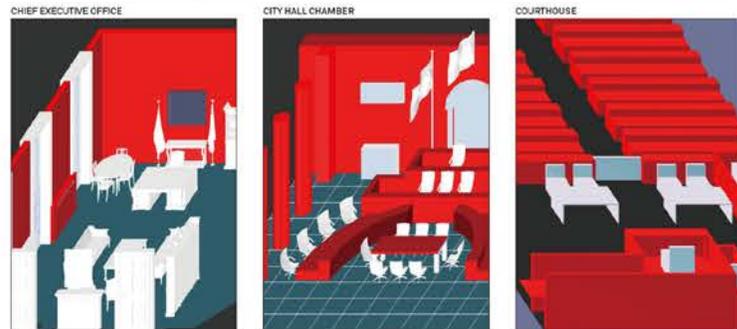
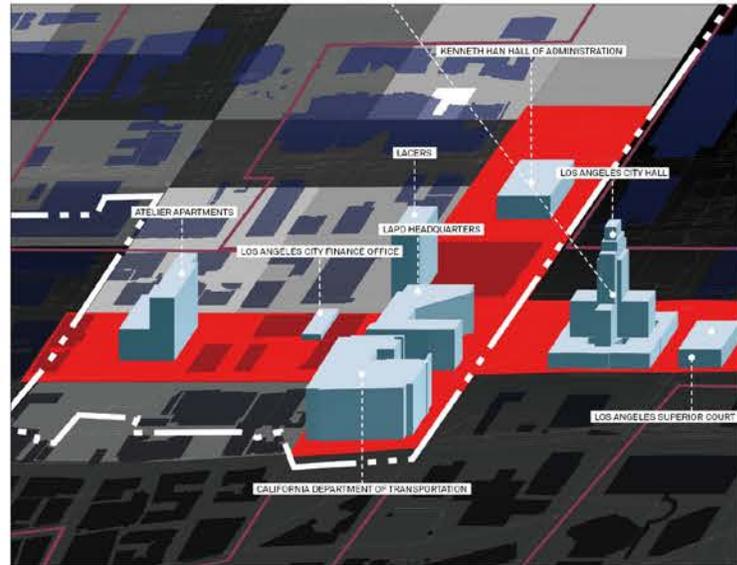
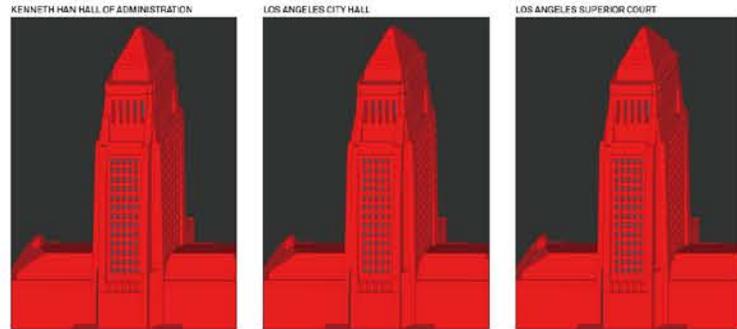
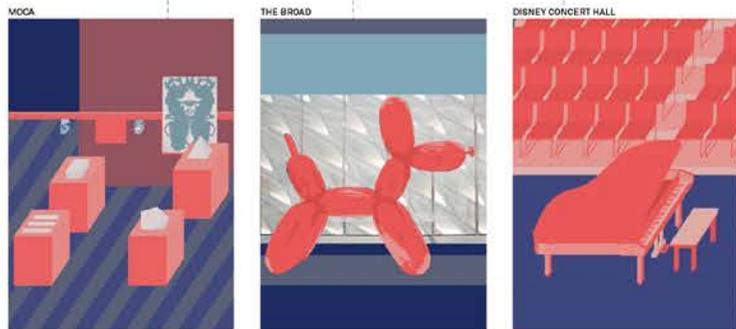
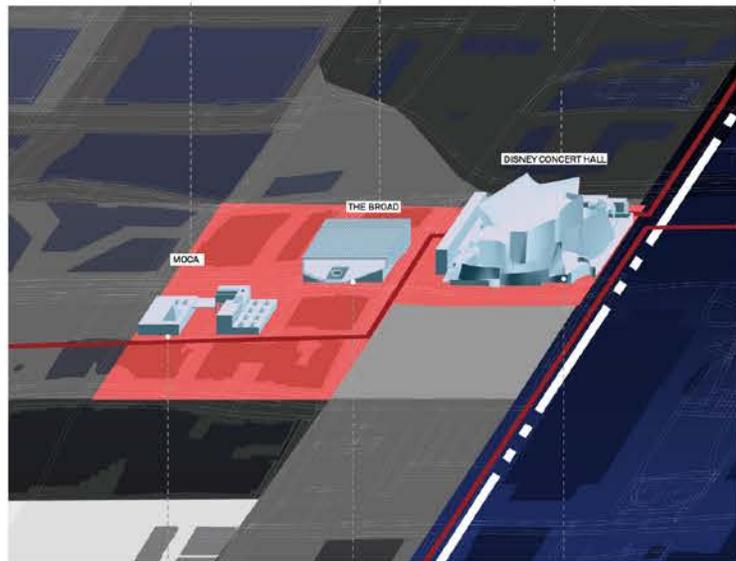
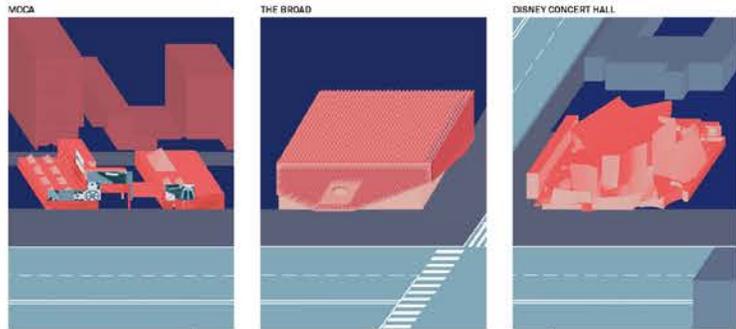


STUDIO (EIGHTH AND GRAND APARTMENT)

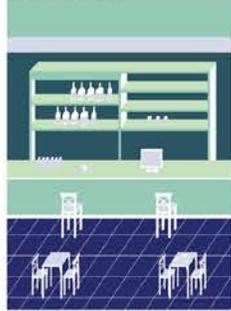


ONE BEDROOM (MUSEUM TOWER APARTMENT)





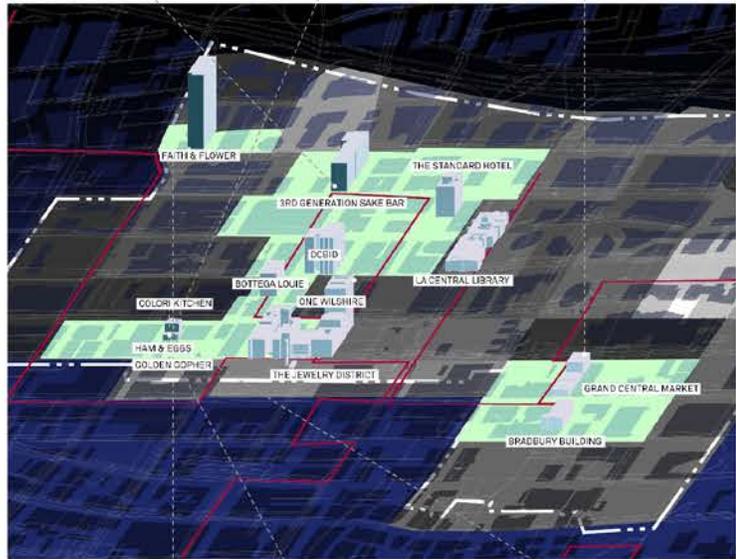
3RD GENERATION SAGE BAR



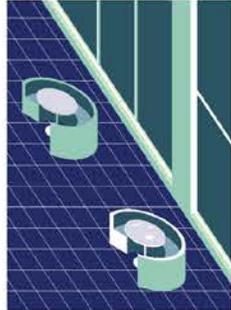
HAM & EGGS



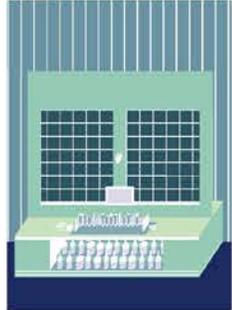
GRAND CENTRAL MARKET



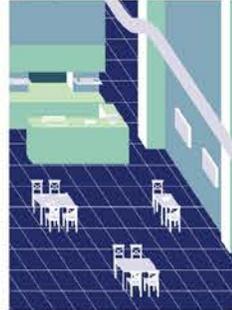
FAITH & FLOWER



GOLDEN GOPHER



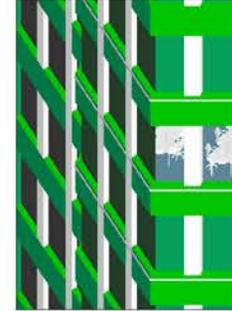
COLOR KITCHEN



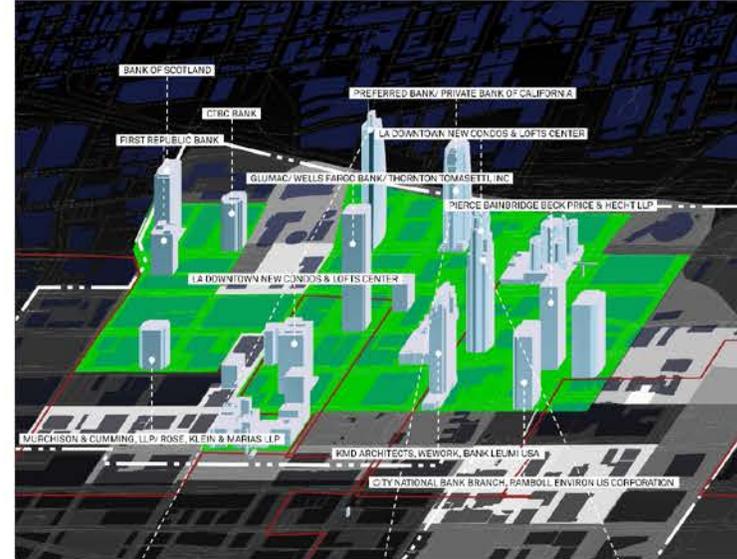
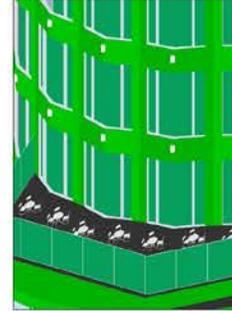
WILSHIRE GRAND CENTER



FIGUEROA WILSHIRE



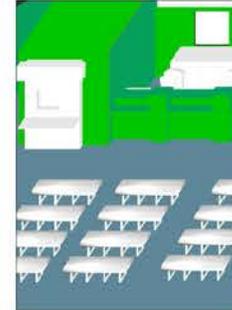
US BANK TOWER



WILSHIRE GRAND CENTER

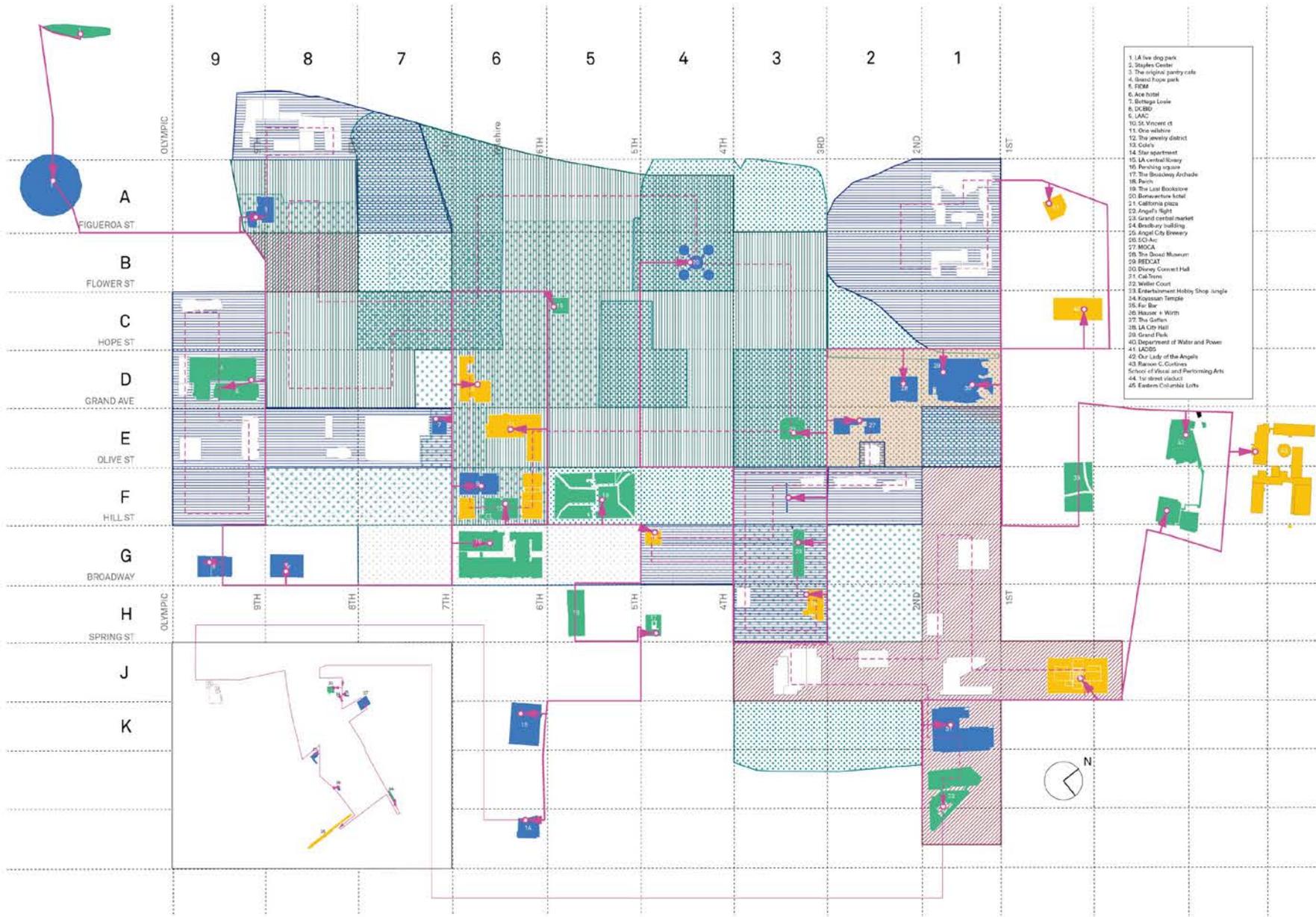


FIGUEROA WILSHIRE



US BANK TOWER





Buildings within Buildings



Buildings Within Buildings

In Downtown Los Angeles, there are many large interior spaces subdivided into smaller properties. At times, these properties within properties read almost like buildings within buildings. The idea of an interiorized urban condition with storefronts for consumer activities is not new. Still, In Downtown Los Angeles, these coexisting structures under one roof have very special design articulations. The Spring Arcade, for example, is an instance where there is a massive influx of well-designed bars and restaurants through an “interiorized exterior.” The Jeweler’s Mall is another example where each booth almost feels more like a mini-golf round with interiorized architectural specialties.

In the case of the Grand Central Market, these buildings within buildings behave more like an archipelago of designed structures, facilitating tight gaps between the shops to achieve high density. Through artificial light, signages, graphic design, and architectural features, there is an urban quality about the interior of the Grand Central Market.

GRAND
CENTRAL
LIQUOR

ข้าวเหนียว
STICKY RICE

FRESH SEAFOOD

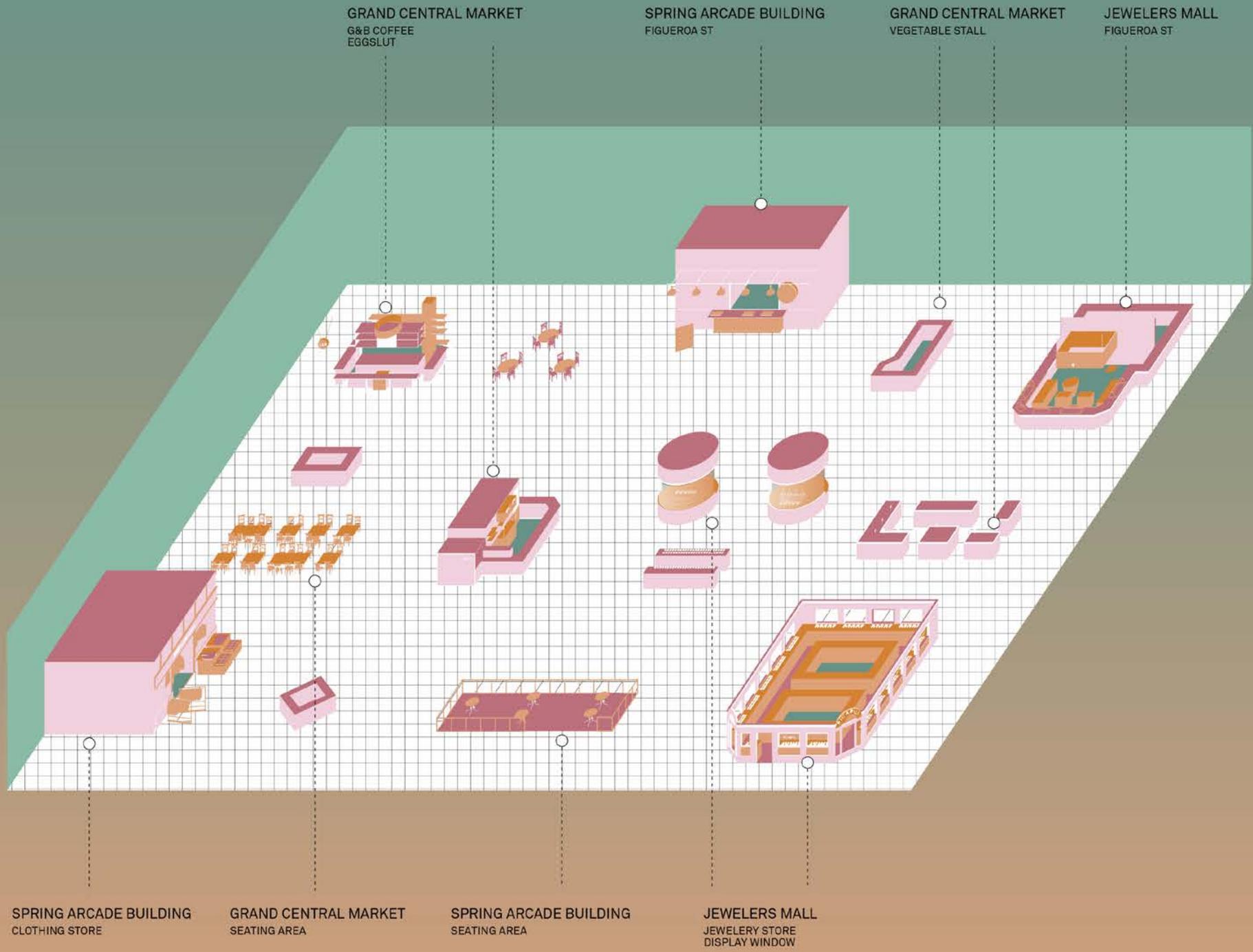
EGGSLUT

BERLIN CURRYWURST

VILLA
MORRIANA

OPEN UNTIL 10 P.M. NIGHTLY





GRAND CENTRAL MARKET
G&B COFFEE
EGGSLUT

SPRING ARCADE BUILDING
FIGUEROA ST

GRAND CENTRAL MARKET
VEGETABLE STALL

JEWELERS MALL
FIGUEROA ST

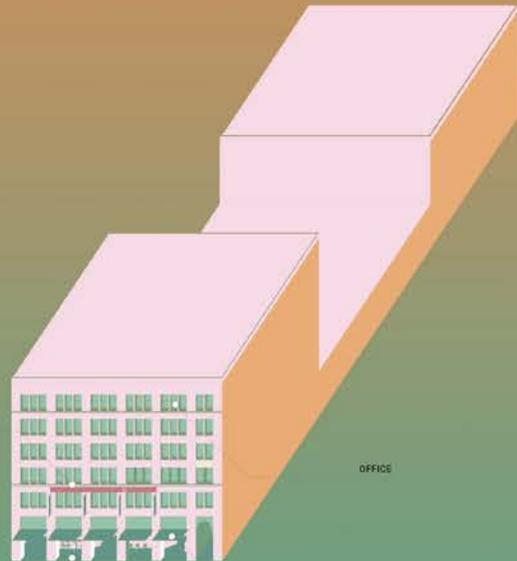
SPRING ARCADE BUILDING
CLOTHING STORE

GRAND CENTRAL MARKET
SEATING AREA

SPRING ARCADE BUILDING
SEATING AREA

JEWELERS MALL
JEWELRY STORE
DISPLAY WINDOW

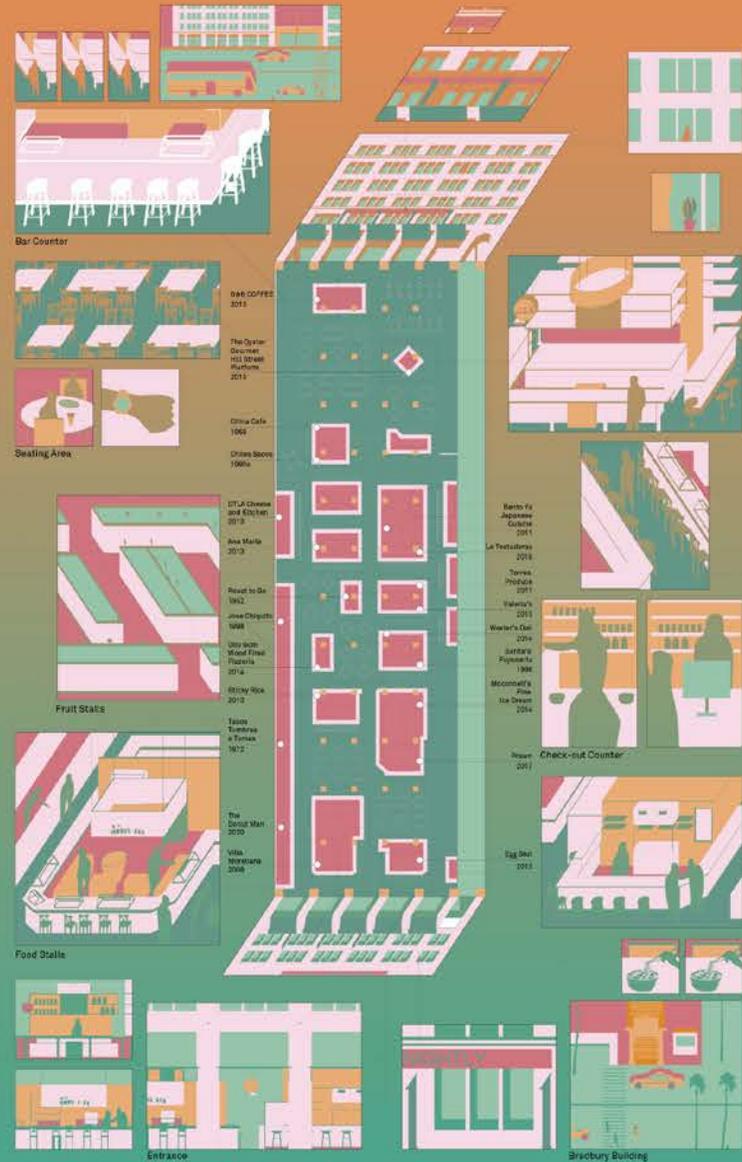
SIGNAGE

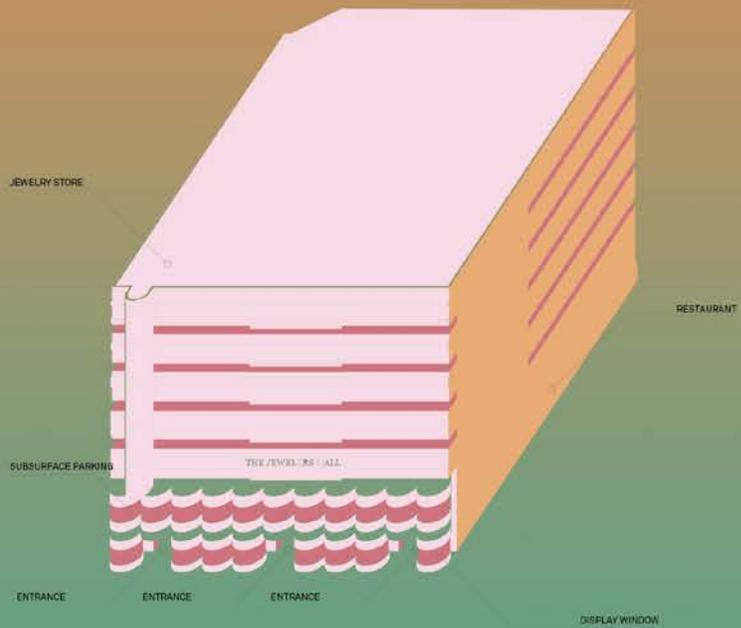


FOOD STALLS

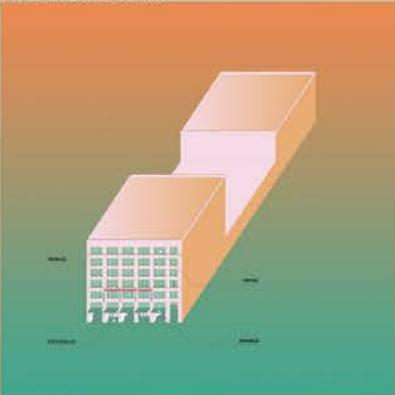
OFFICE

AWNINGS

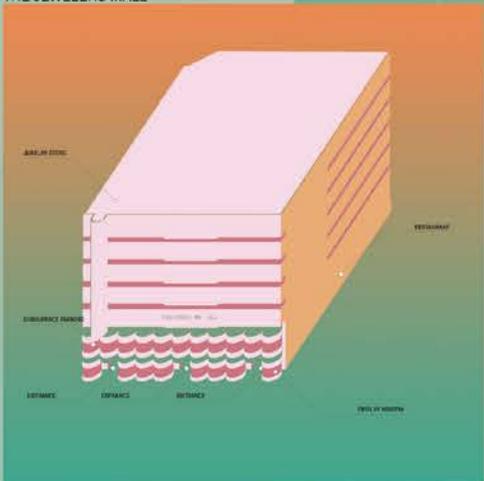




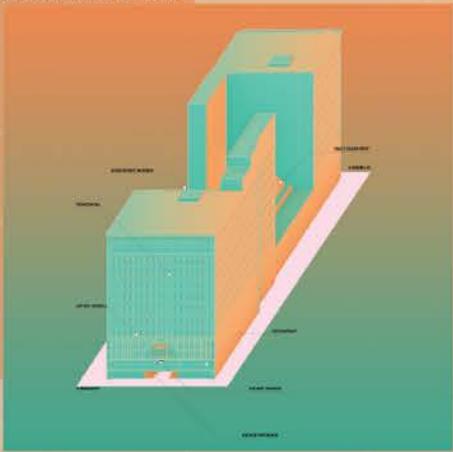
THE GRAND CENTRAL MARKET

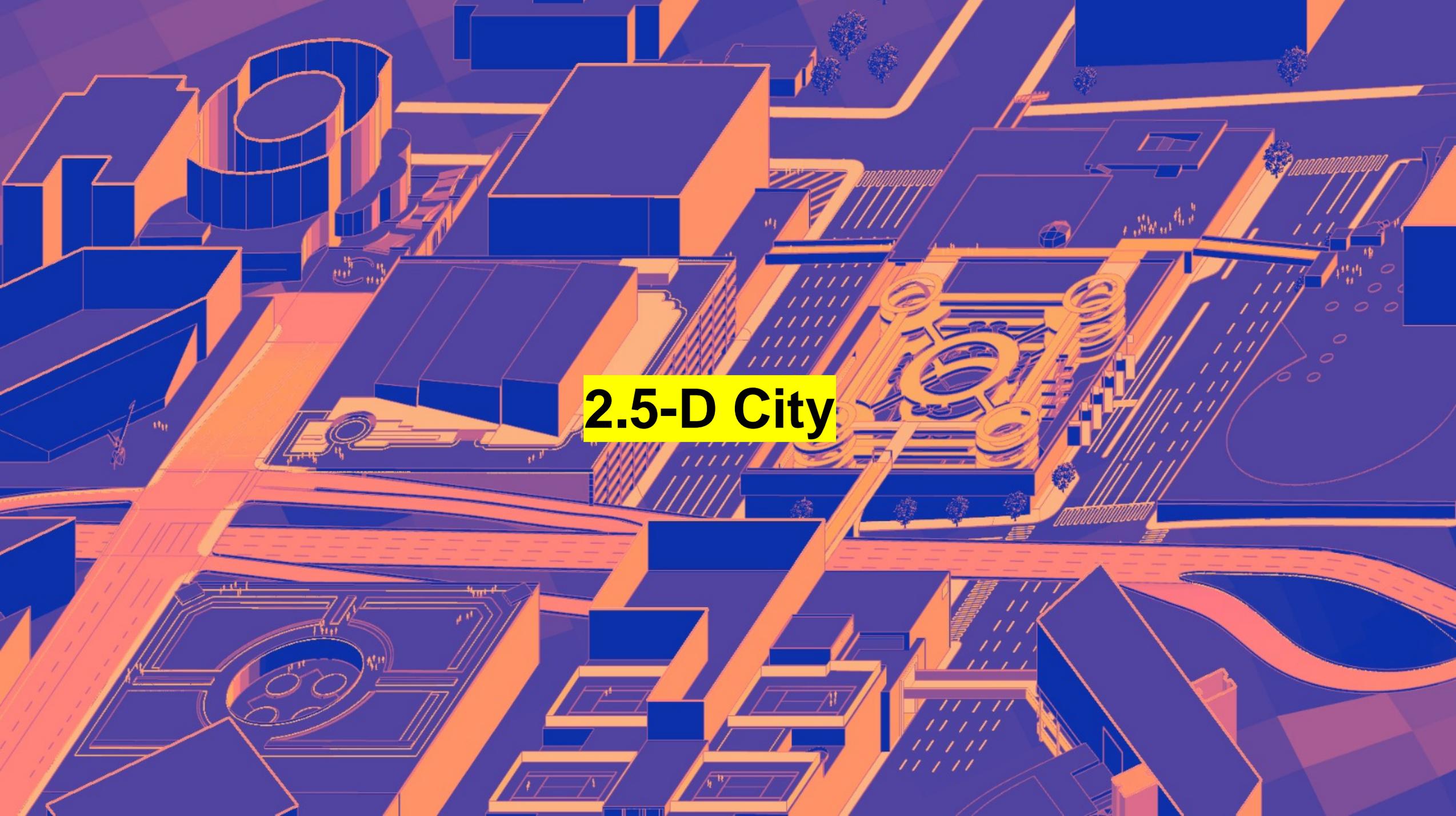


THE JEWELERS MALL



SPRING ARCADE BUILDING



A stylized, isometric illustration of a cityscape in shades of blue and purple. The scene features various buildings, streets, and a central area with circular structures. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "2.5-D City".

2.5-D City

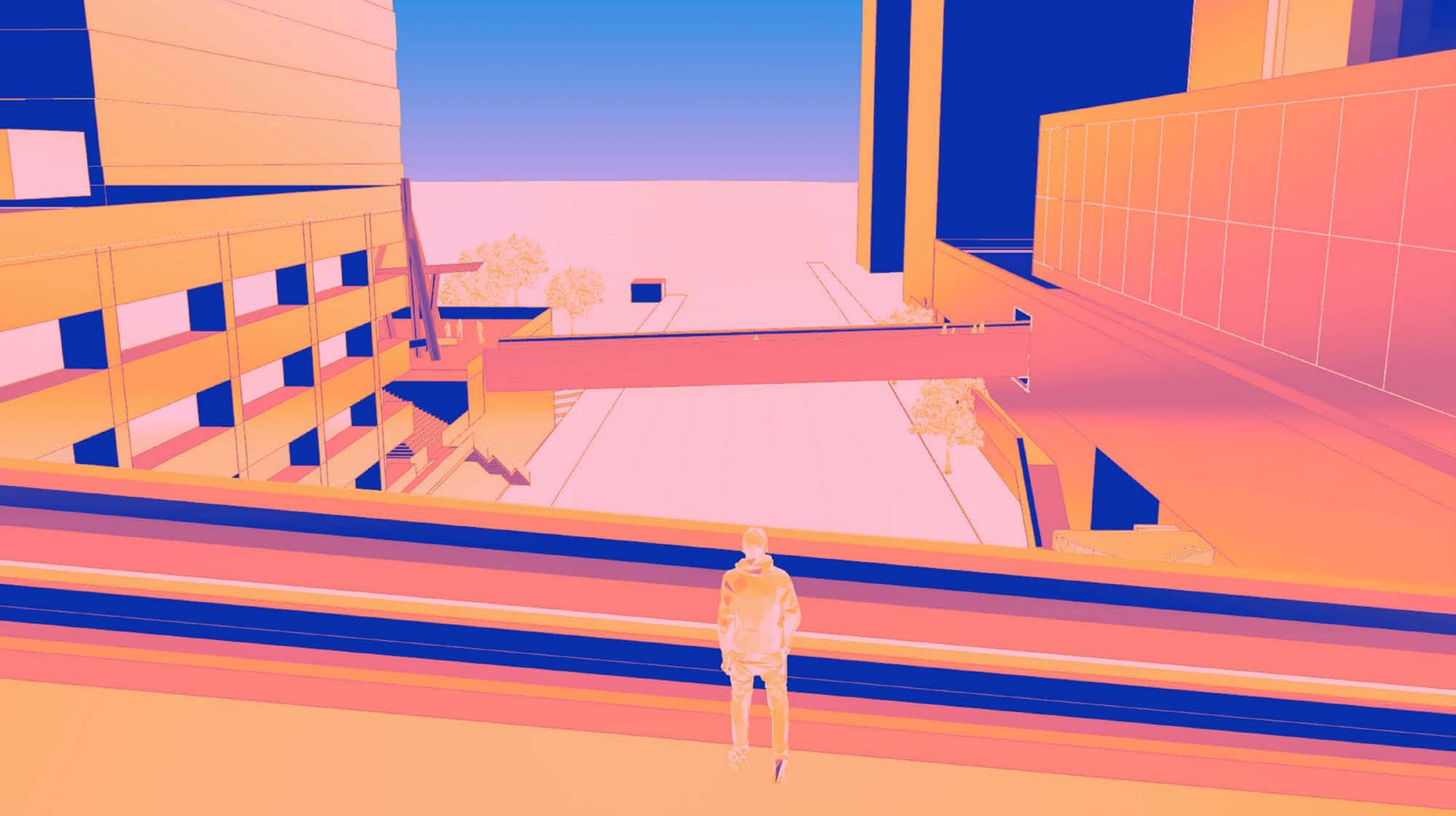
The 2.5-D City

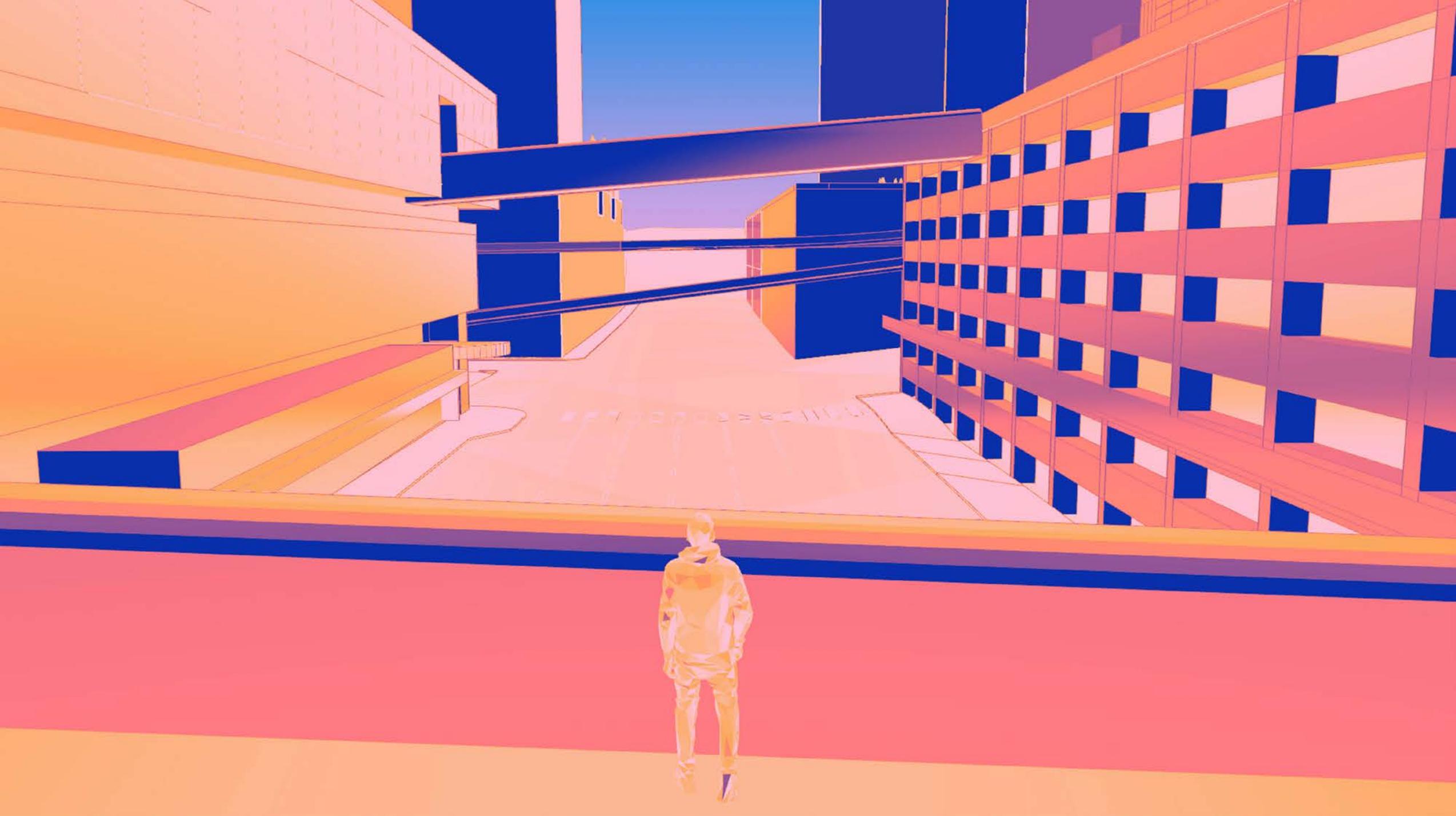
Downtown Los Angeles, especially Bunker Hill, is a 2.5-D City. For example, the 5th Floor of the Bonaventure Hotel directly connects the ground level of the Ketchum YMCA/Westin Bridge as a seemingly coplanar surface. Furthermore, the experience of walking from the Ketchum YMCA to the Bradbury Building would make up the elevation drop of Angel's Flight without ever leaving the datum by taking an elevator, staircase, or a ramp. The richness of 2.5-D quality about Los Angeles is primarily visible from the Westin Bridge - above, below, between the pancakes of infrastructure, there are secret pockets to be studied amongst the many layers.

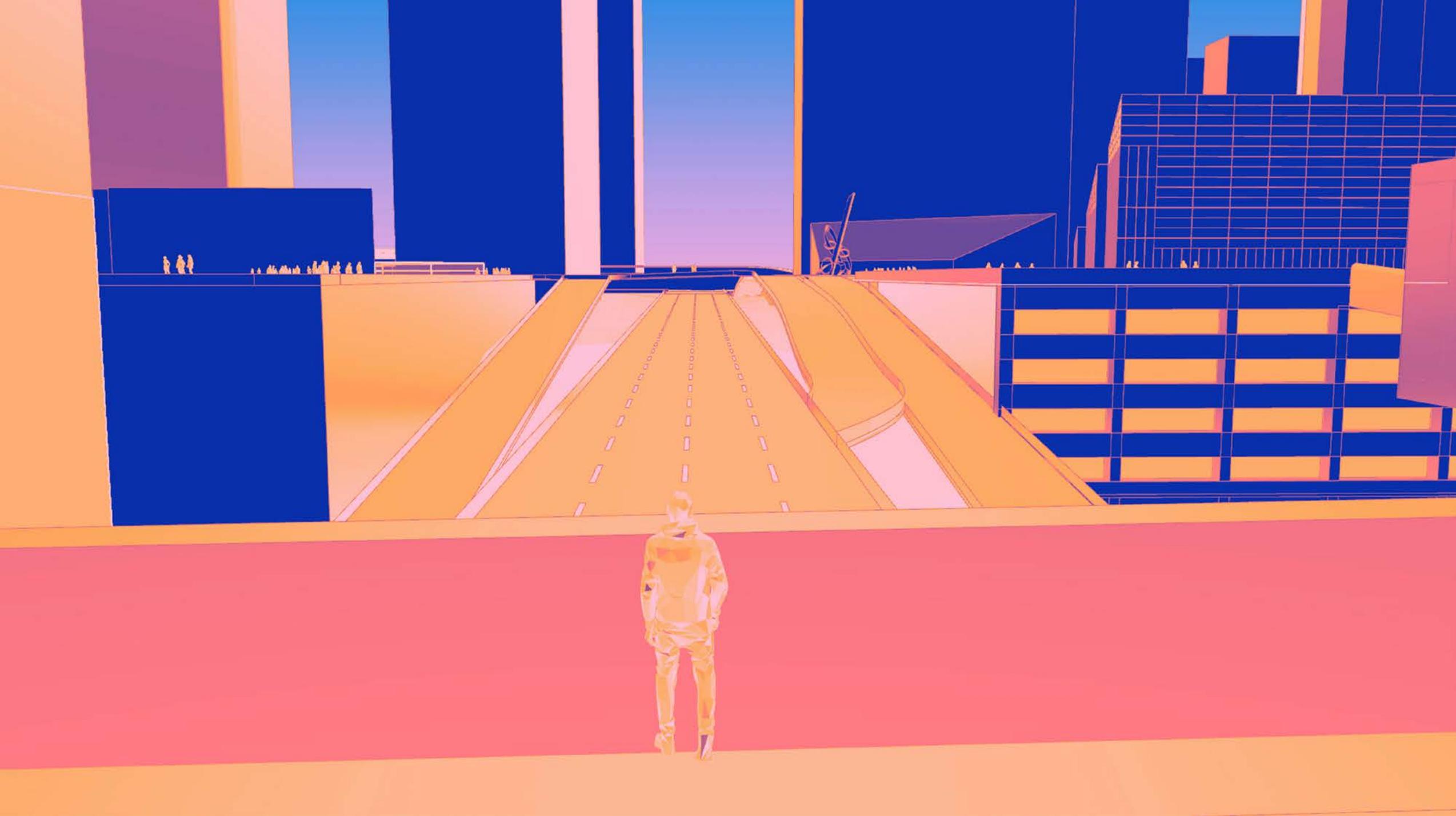


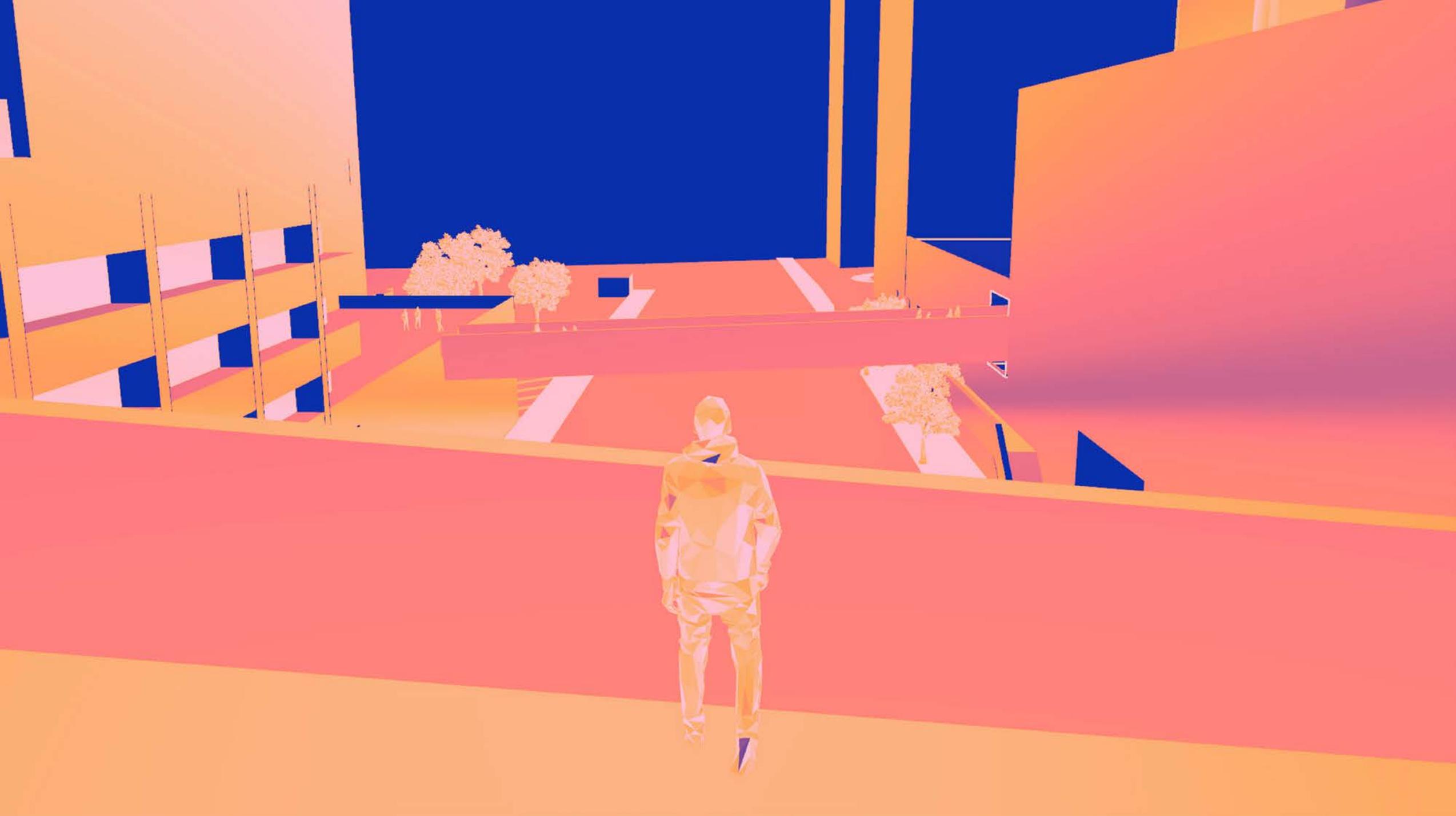




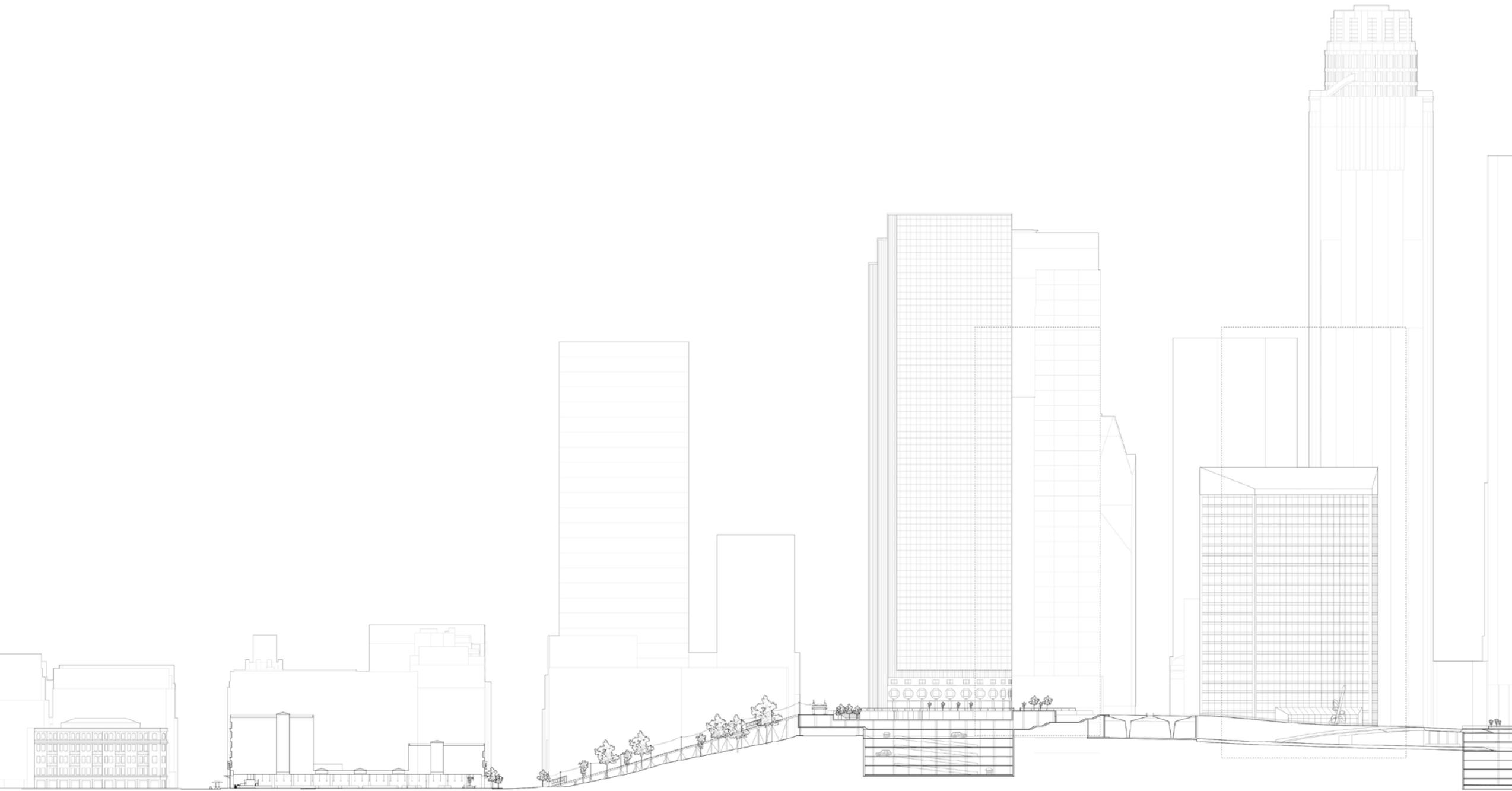


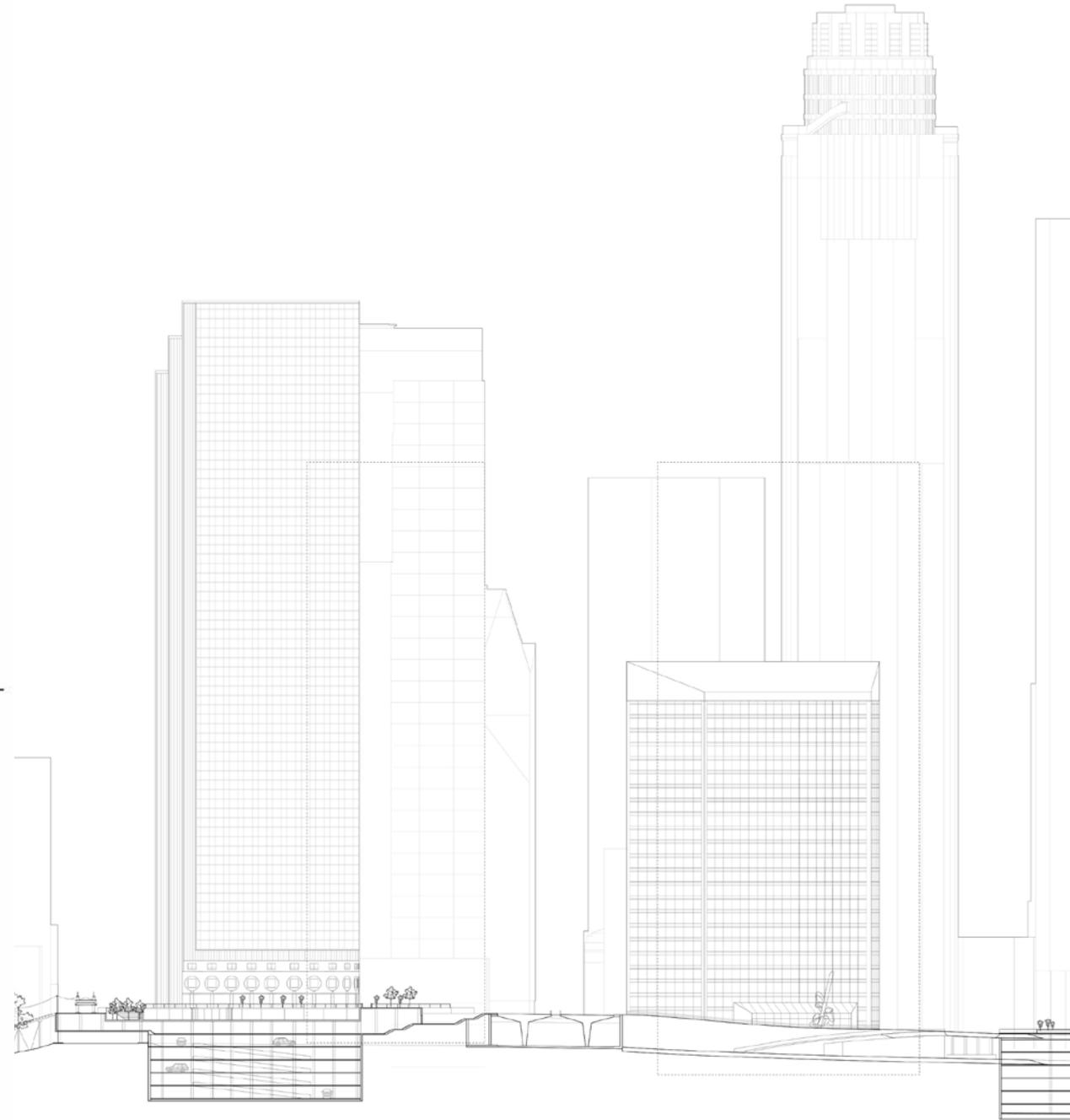
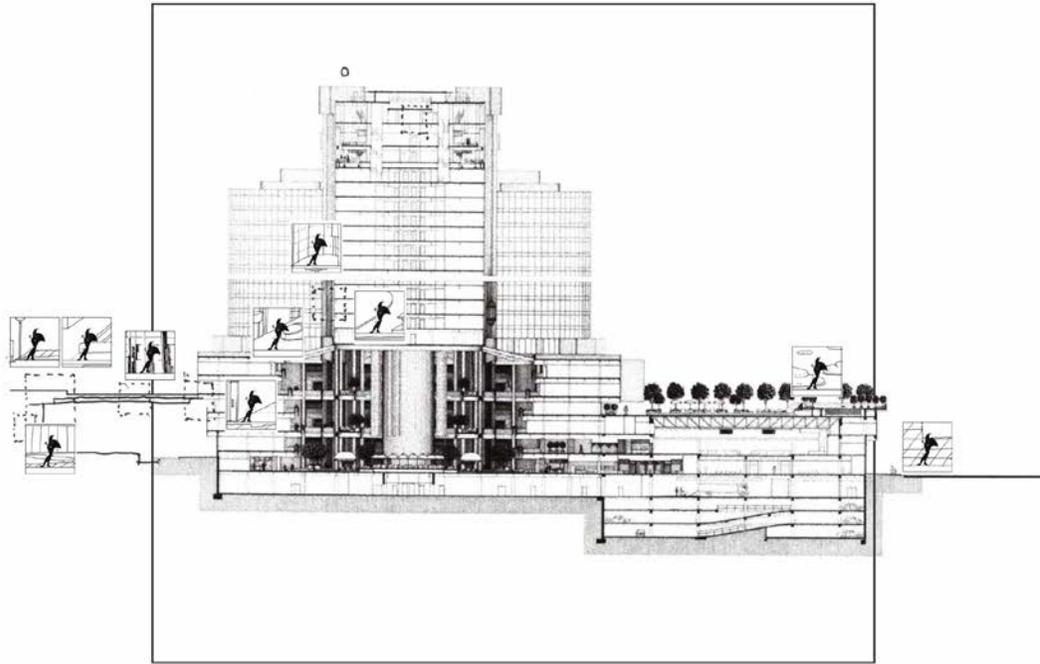














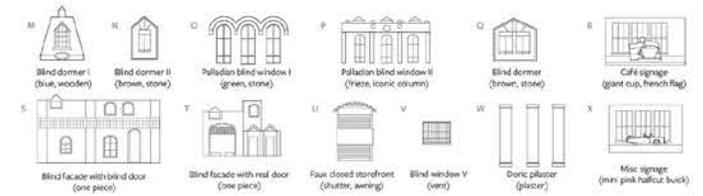
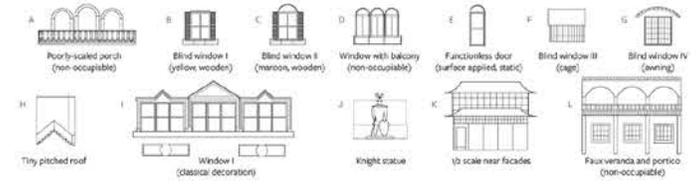
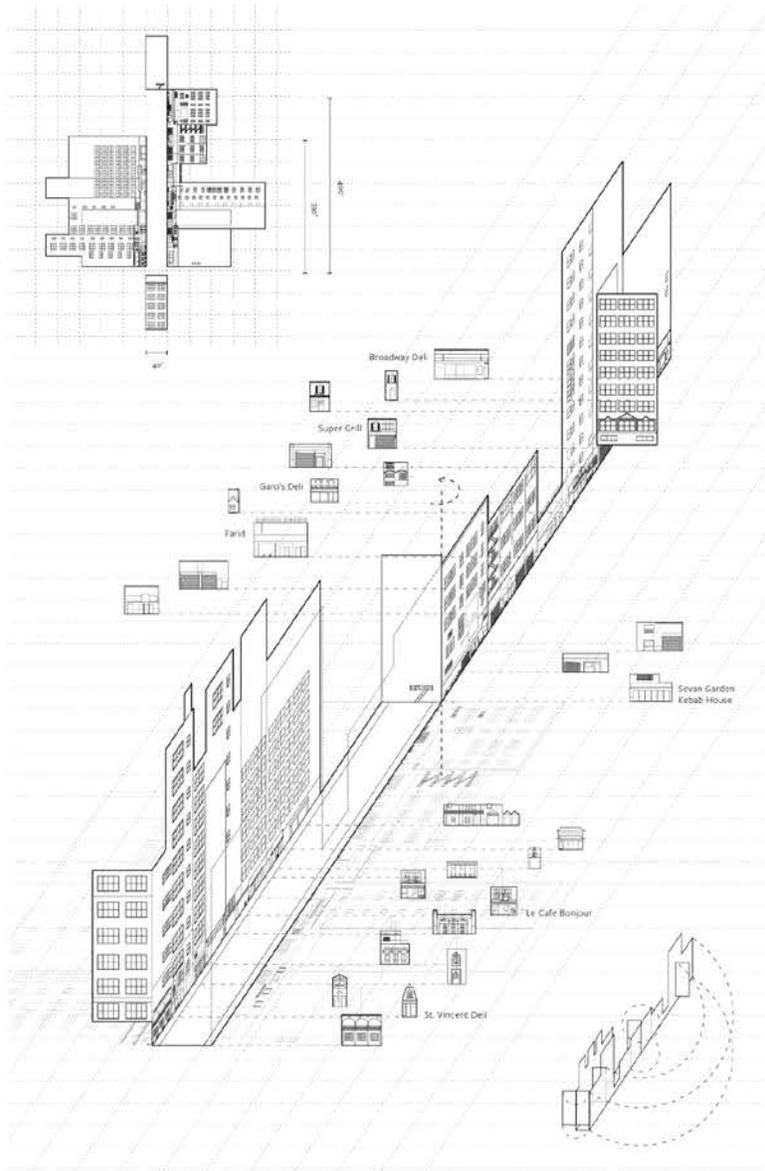
City of Hidden Menu

DTLA, the Ultimate “Secret-Menu”

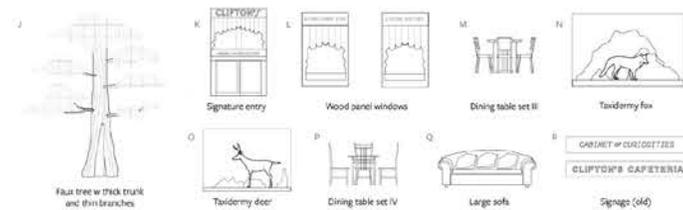
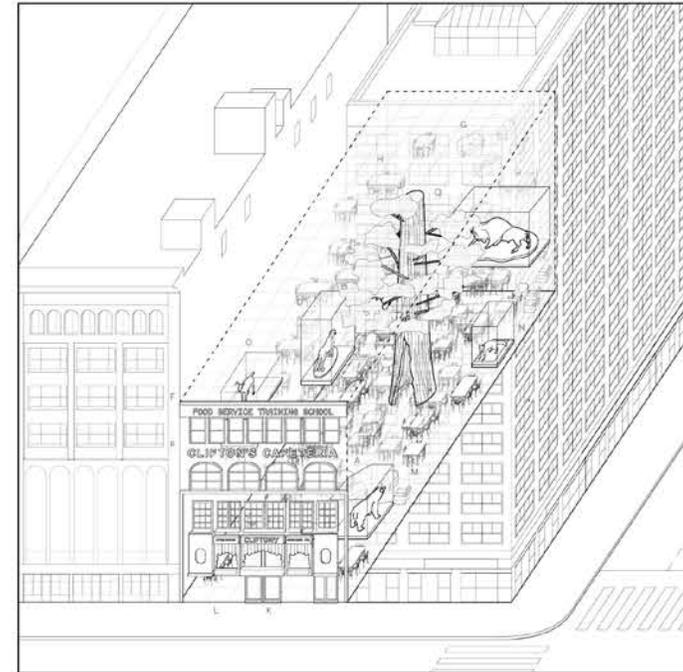
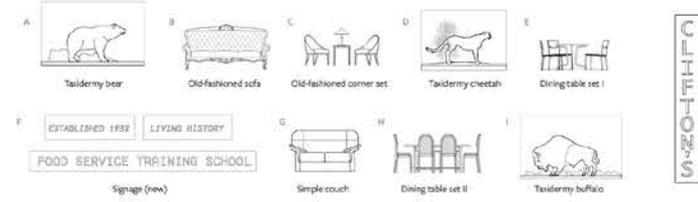
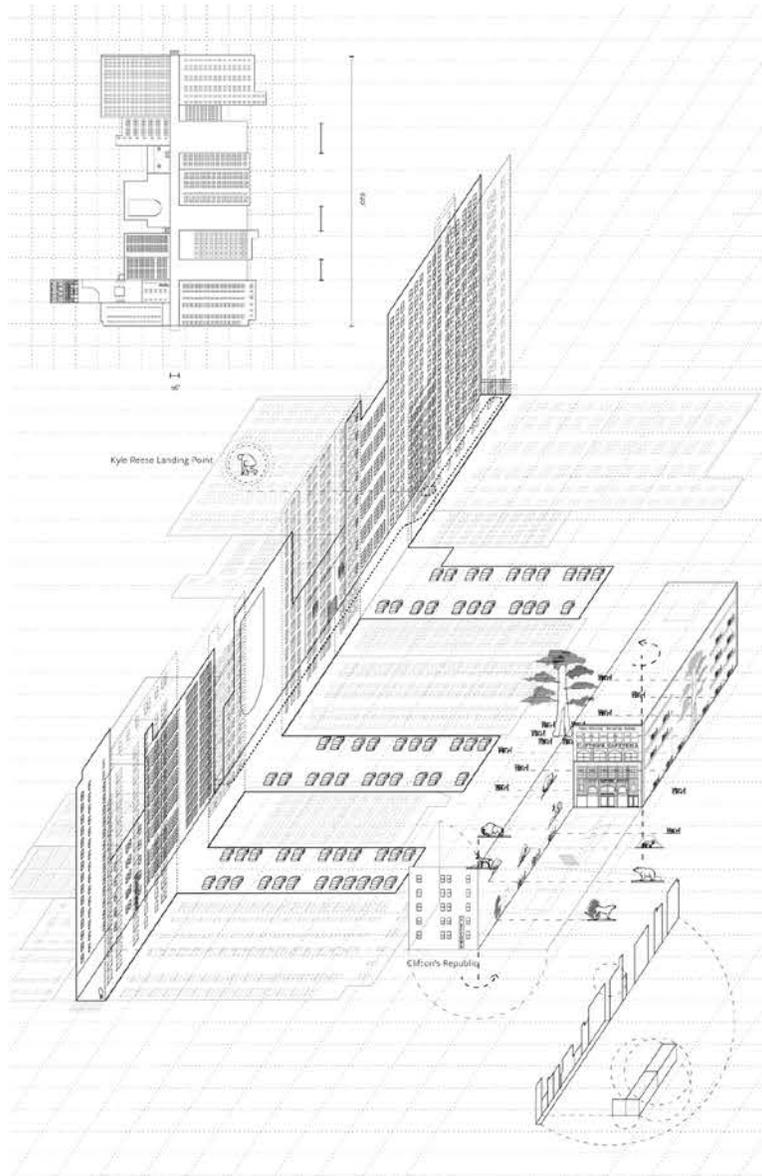
DTLA is full of hidden gems and unseen surprises. There is a high density of discrete subcultures between the alleys, courtyards, and rooftops, bubbling from gaps between high-rises. Los Angeles is a scavenger hunt game where being “in-the-know” is part of the joy of becoming familiar with the city’s details. The many nooks and crannies that shelter the many off-the-menu architectural and urban items are distinguishing factors about the identity of DTLA.

In this portion of our study, we unrolled some of the alleys and enclaves to reveal some under-the-radar qualities. Some of the speculative thinkings are directly within DTLA; others are just outside of it. There are most likely even more B-Sides waiting for further studies.

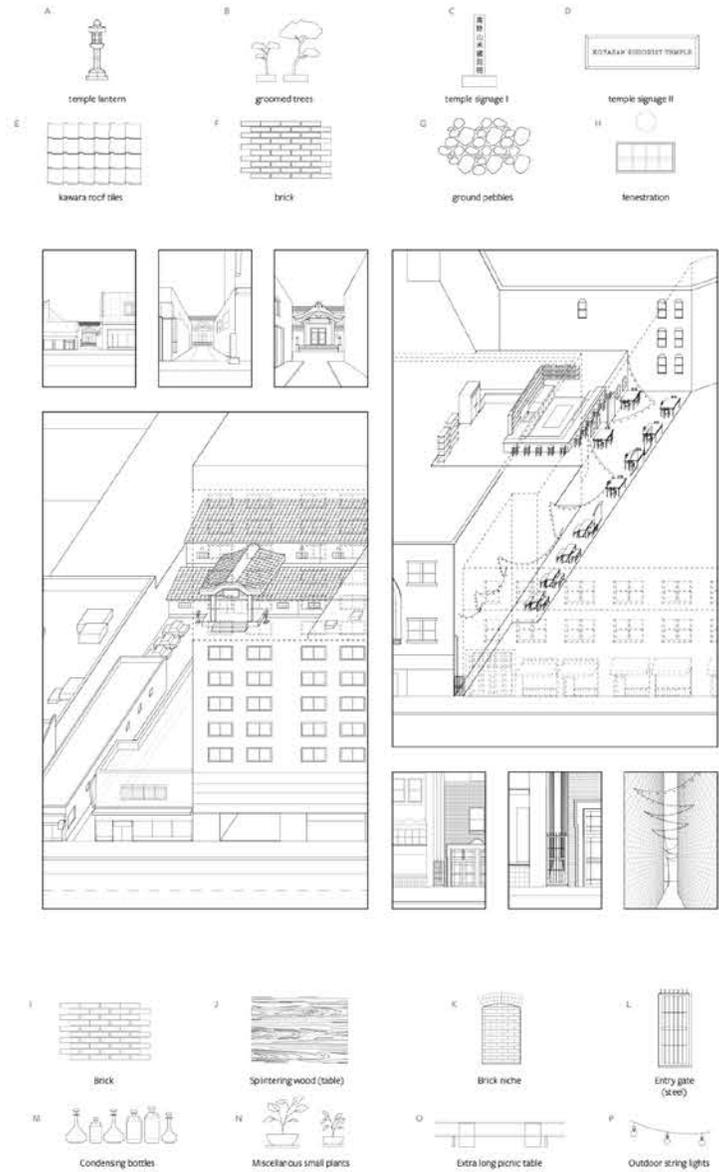
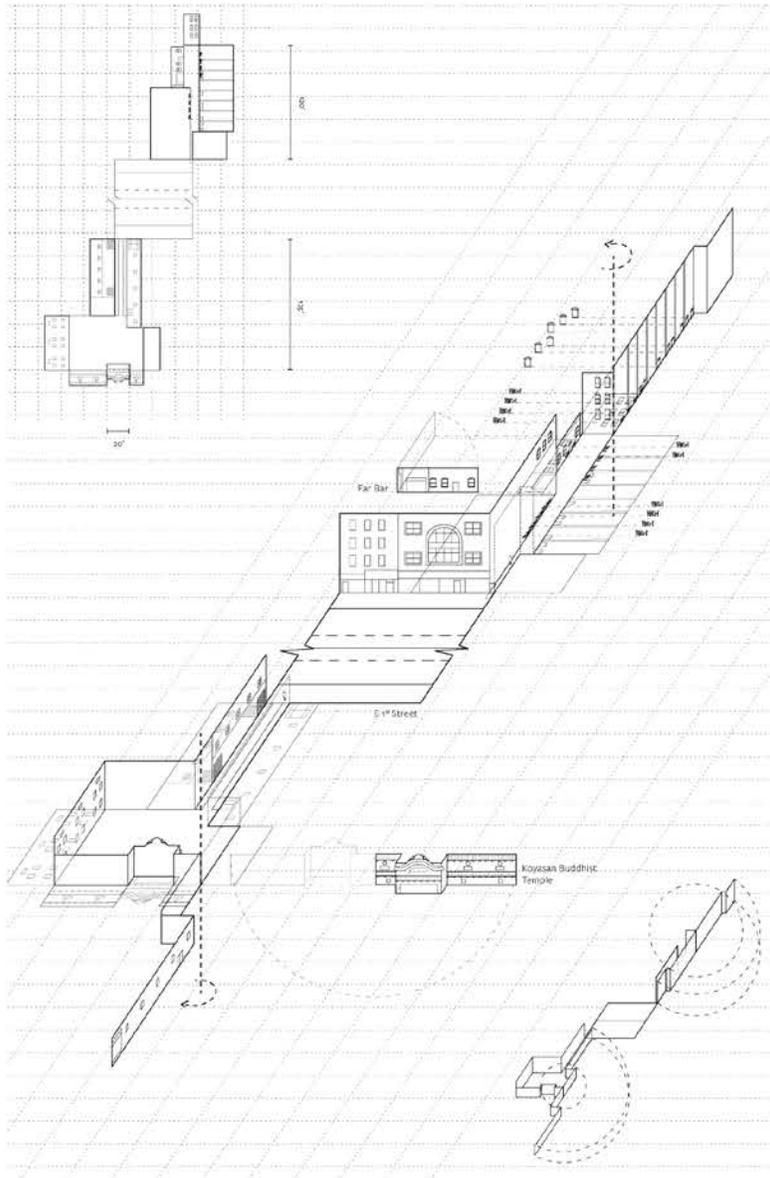




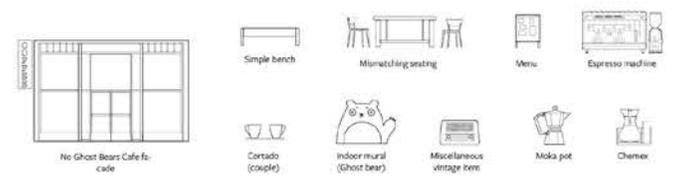
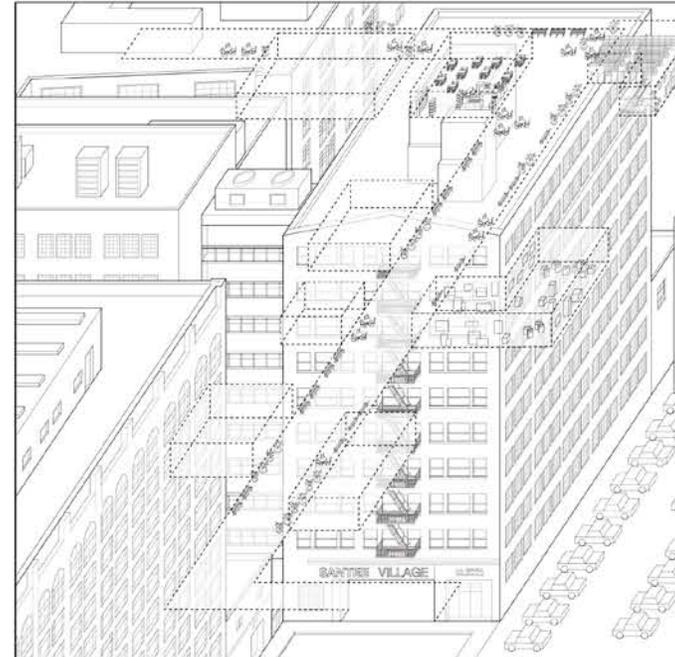
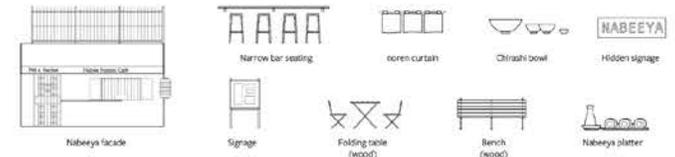
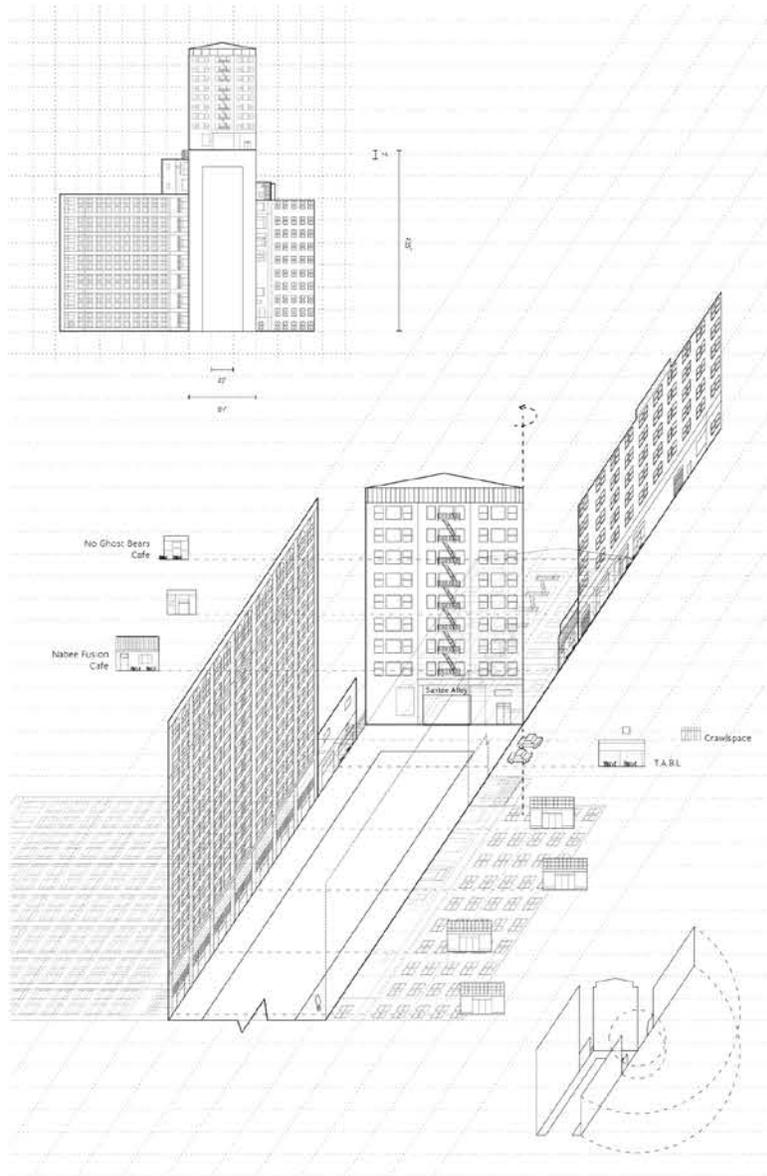
St. Vincent's Court



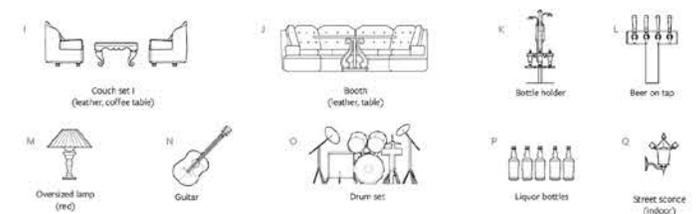
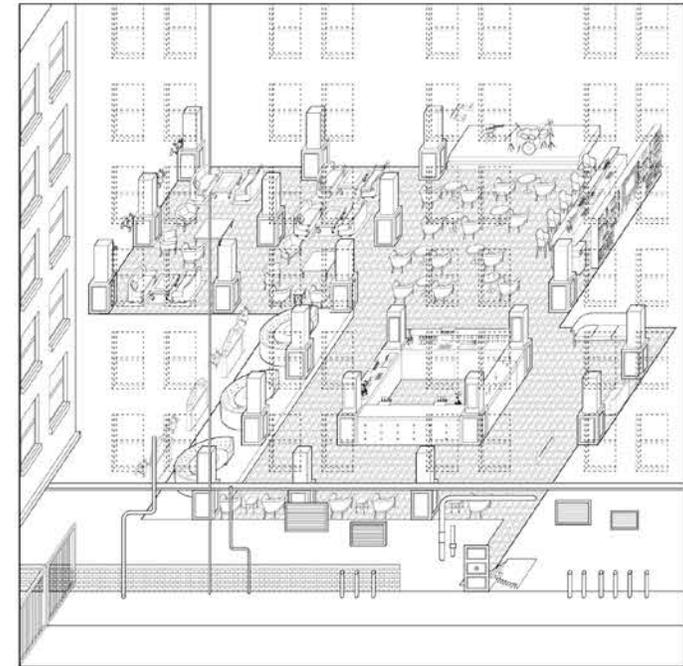
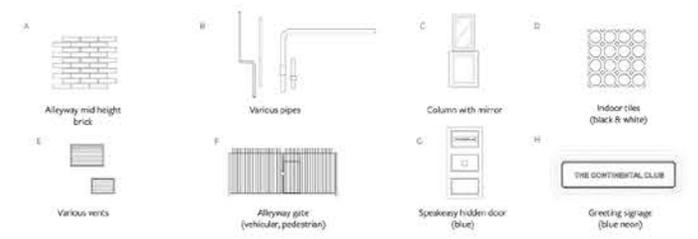
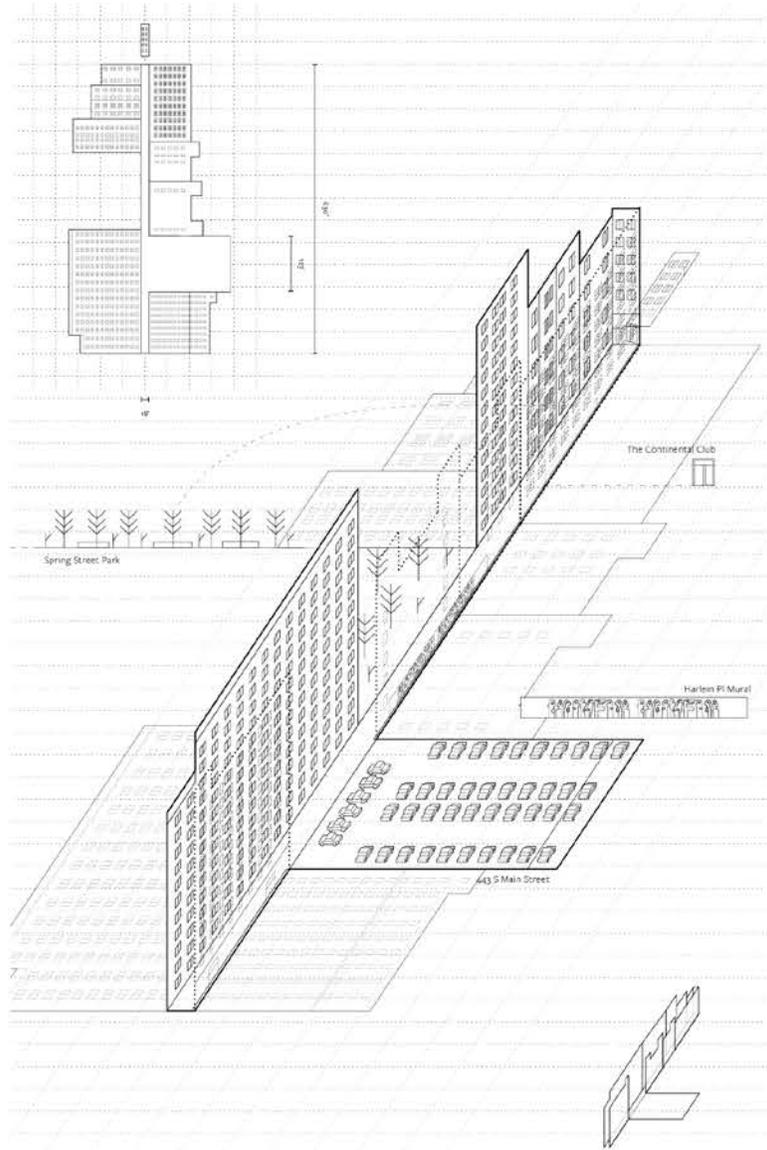
Clifton's / Haas Alley



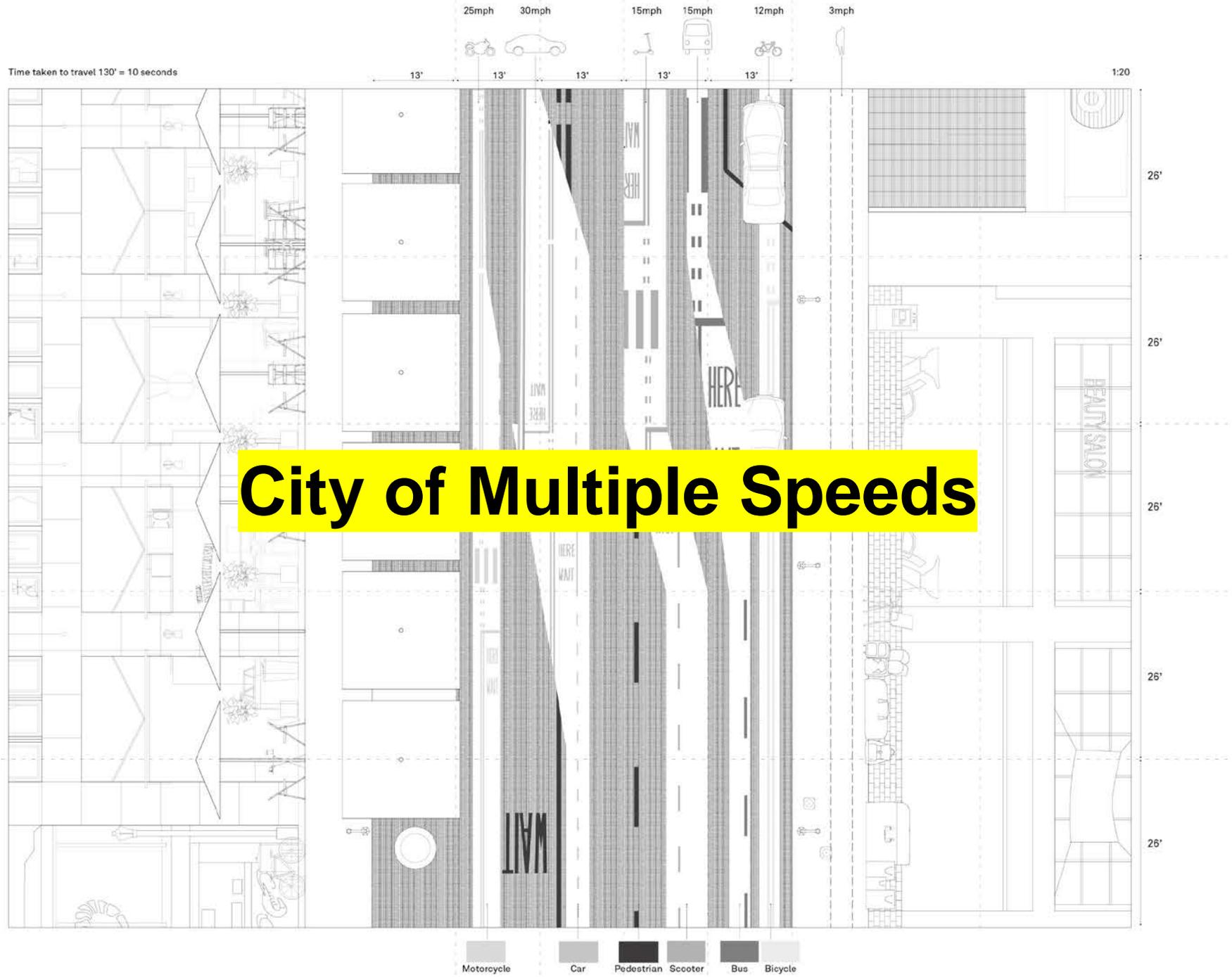
Far Bar / Koyasan Temple



Santee Court / Alley



Harlem Place



City of Multiple Speeds

Motorcycle Car Pedestrian Scooter Bus Bicycle

City of Multiple Speeds

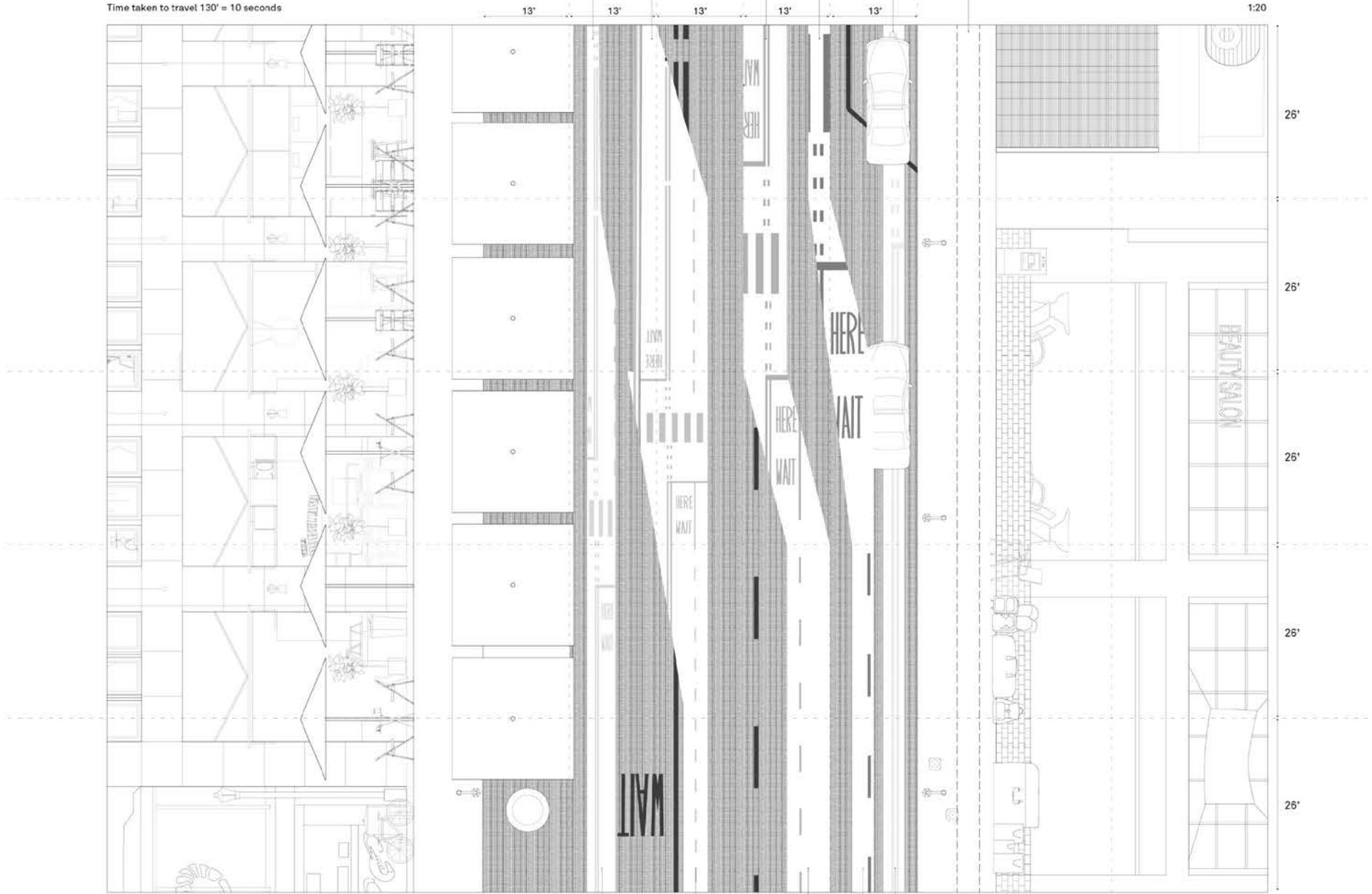
While the rest of Los Angeles drives, Downtown Los Angeles takes on a more complex set of transportation modes. Cars, buses, subways, bicycles, scooters, joggers, and pedestrians are just some of how multiple speeds harmoniously coexist within DTLA. This mixture is indicative of the graphic patterns painted on the streets, instructing how fast or slow each mode of transportation is, like well-orchestrated dance choreography.

The lower the travel speed, the higher the resolution in experiencing the urban details. Conversely, someone traveling at a higher rate will miss street details and understand the city at a lower resolution. A mixture of speed, as a consequence, would allow for people within the same urban space to attain different appreciations of the city.

25mph 30mph 15mph 15mph 12mph 3mph

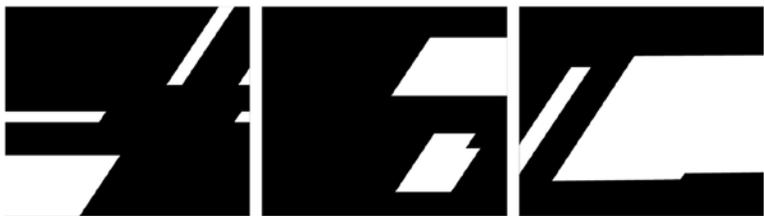
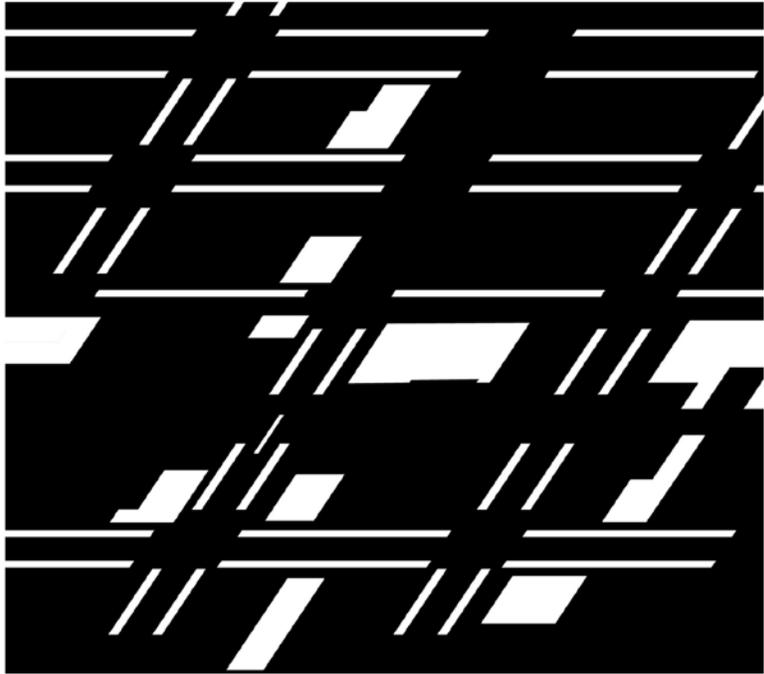


Time taken to travel 130' = 10 seconds

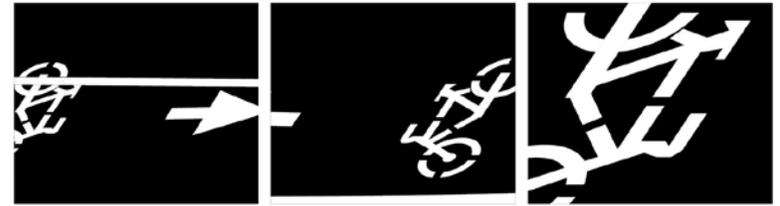


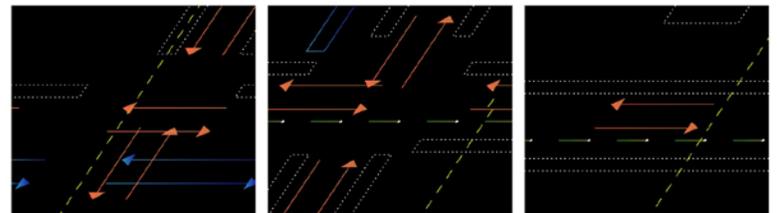
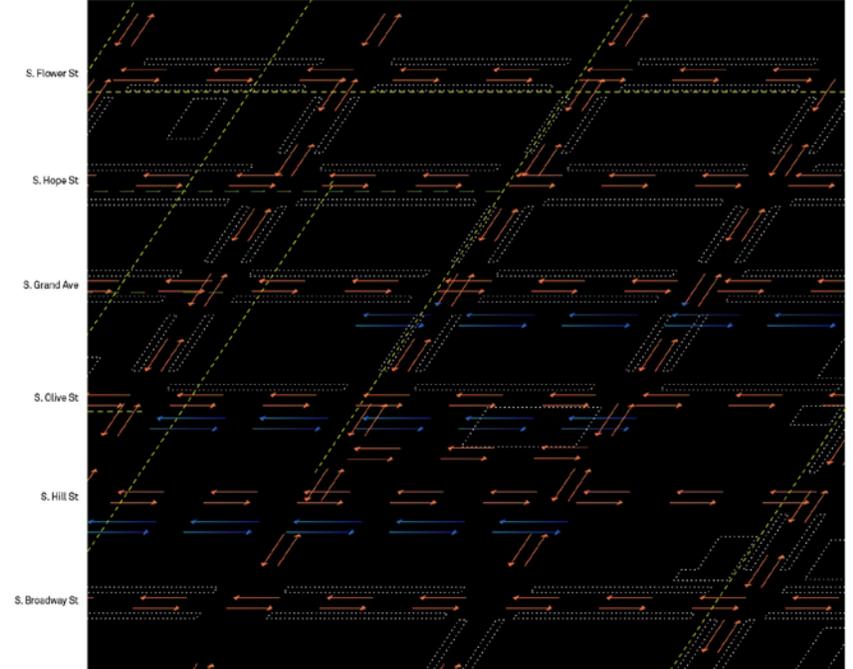
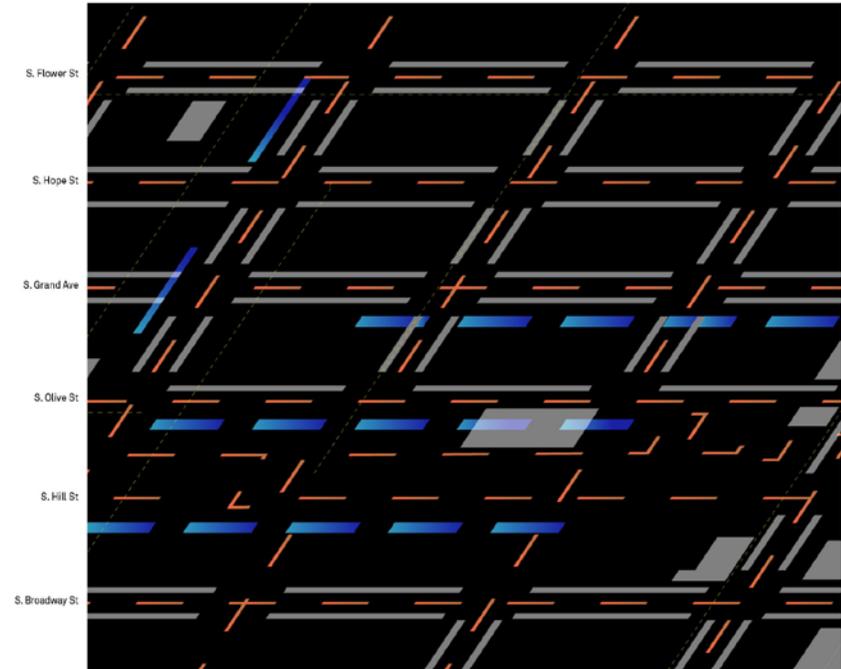
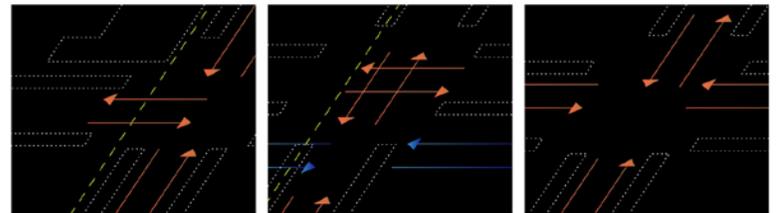
Motorcycle Car Pedestrian Scooter Bus Bicycle

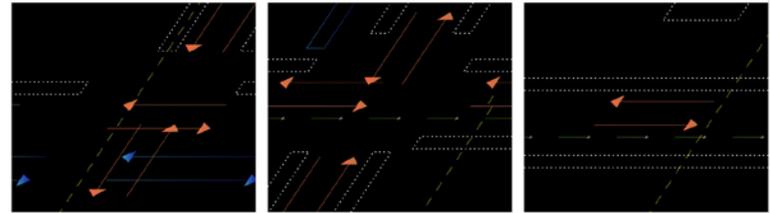
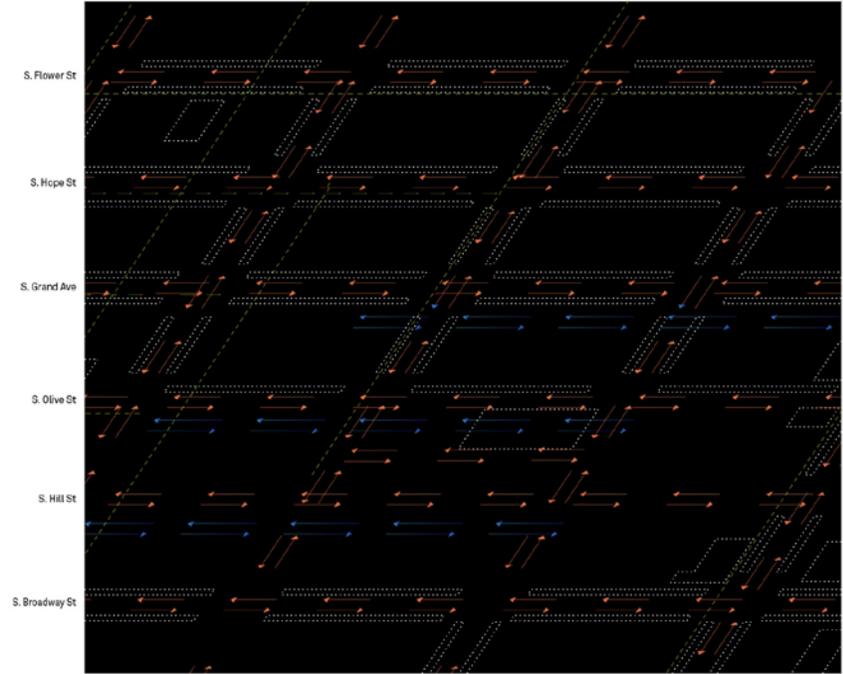
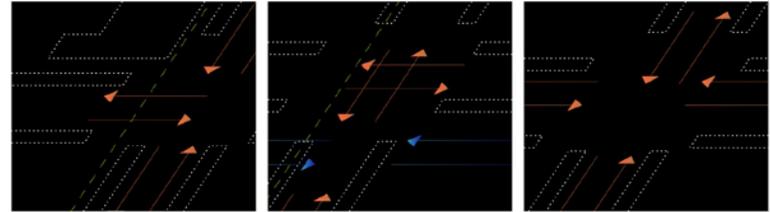
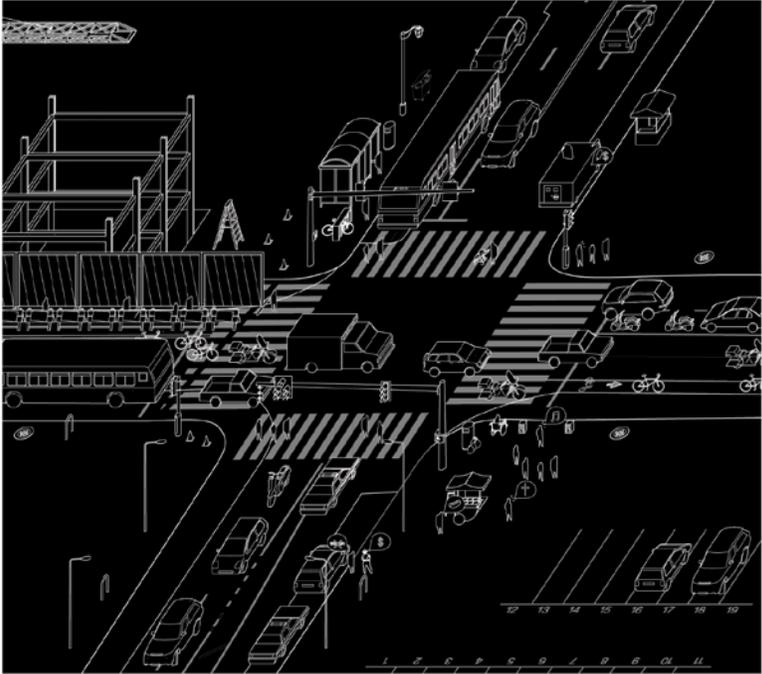
Figure Ground Nature of Parking



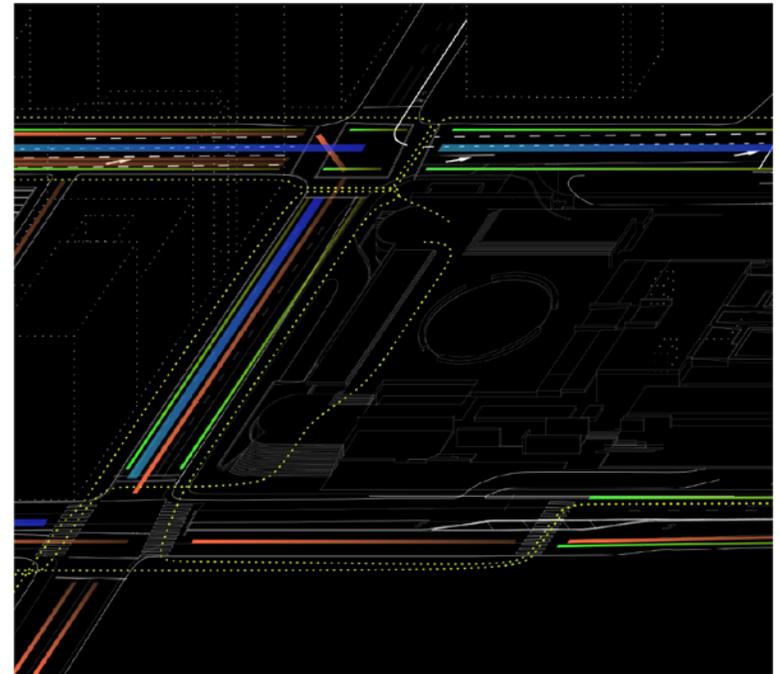
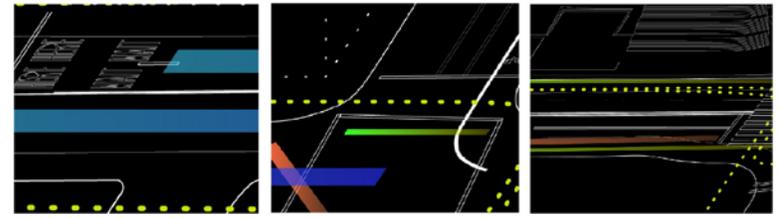
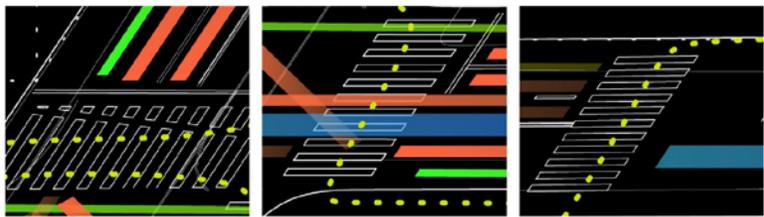
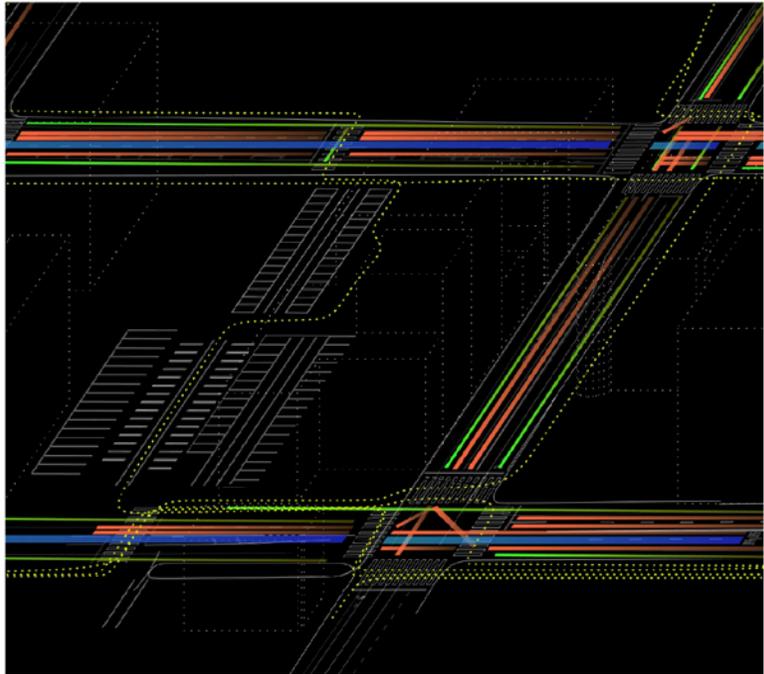
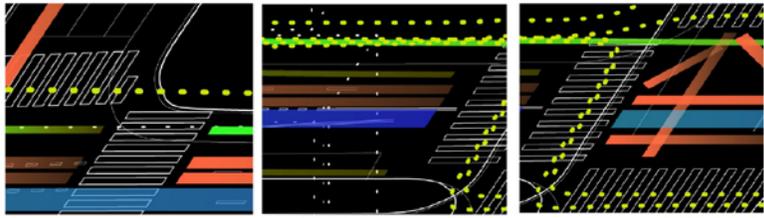
Graphic Markings on the Streets

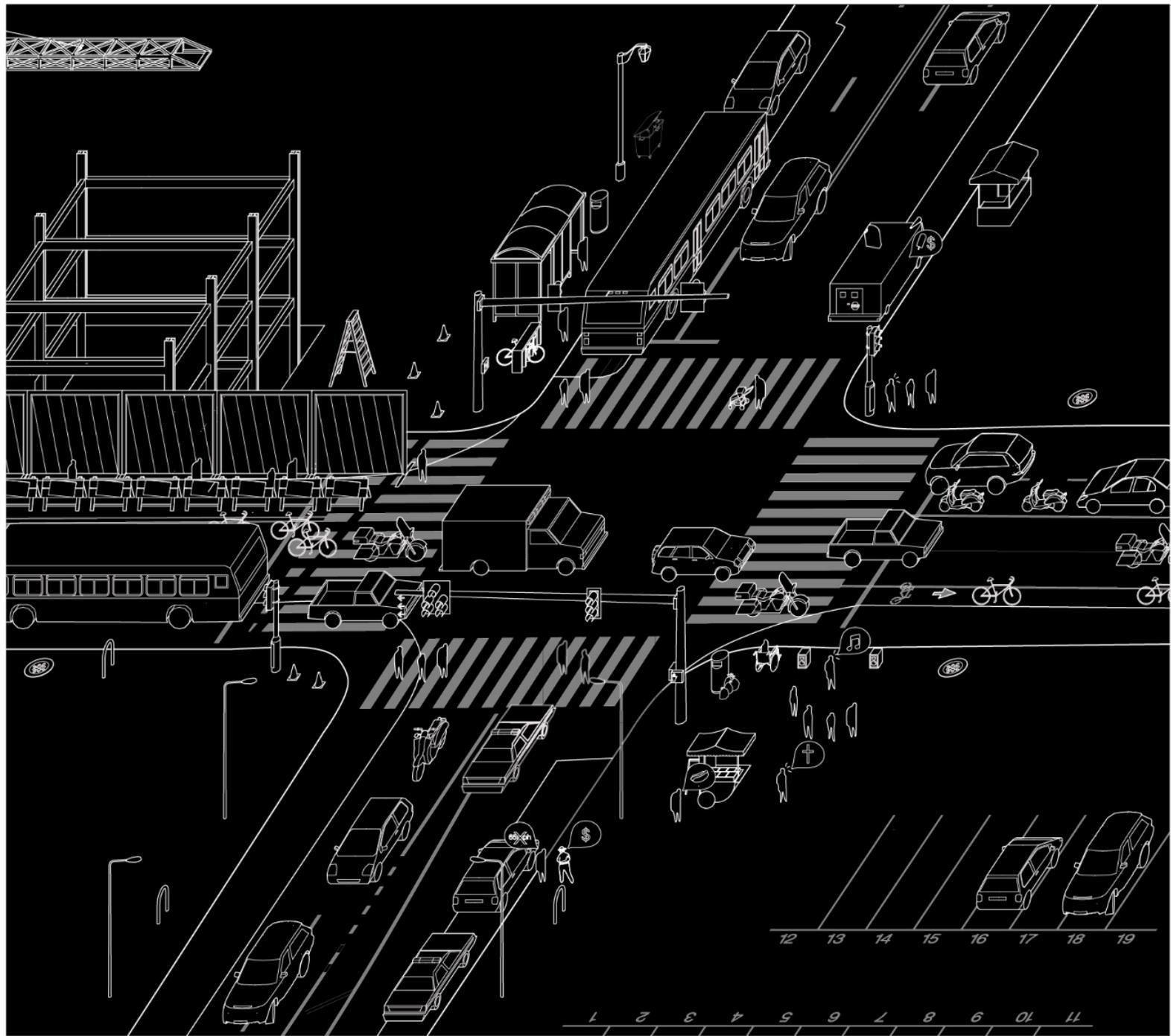






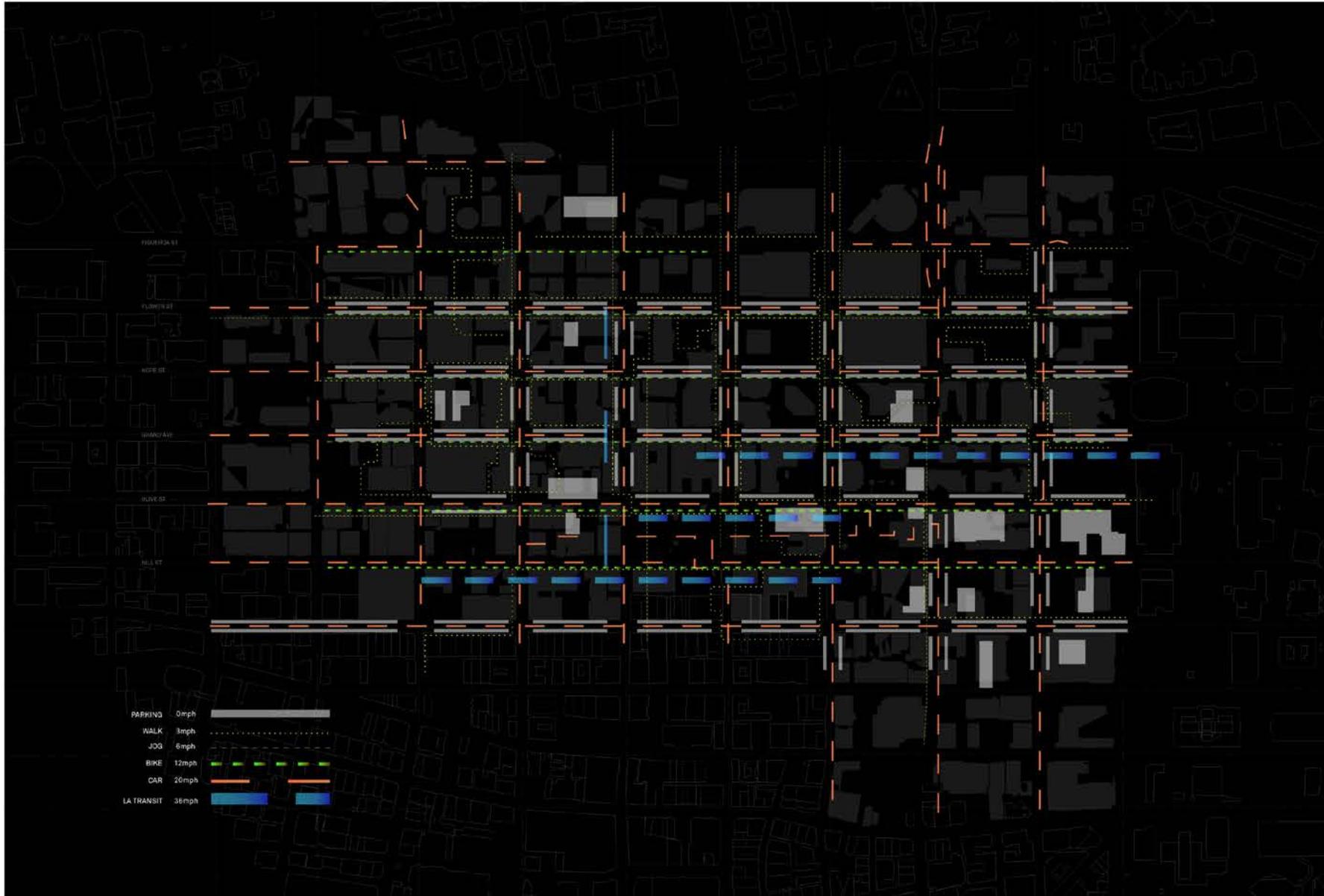
PARKING	0mph		BIKE	12mph	
WALK	3mph		CAR	20mph	
			LA TRANSIT	36mph	



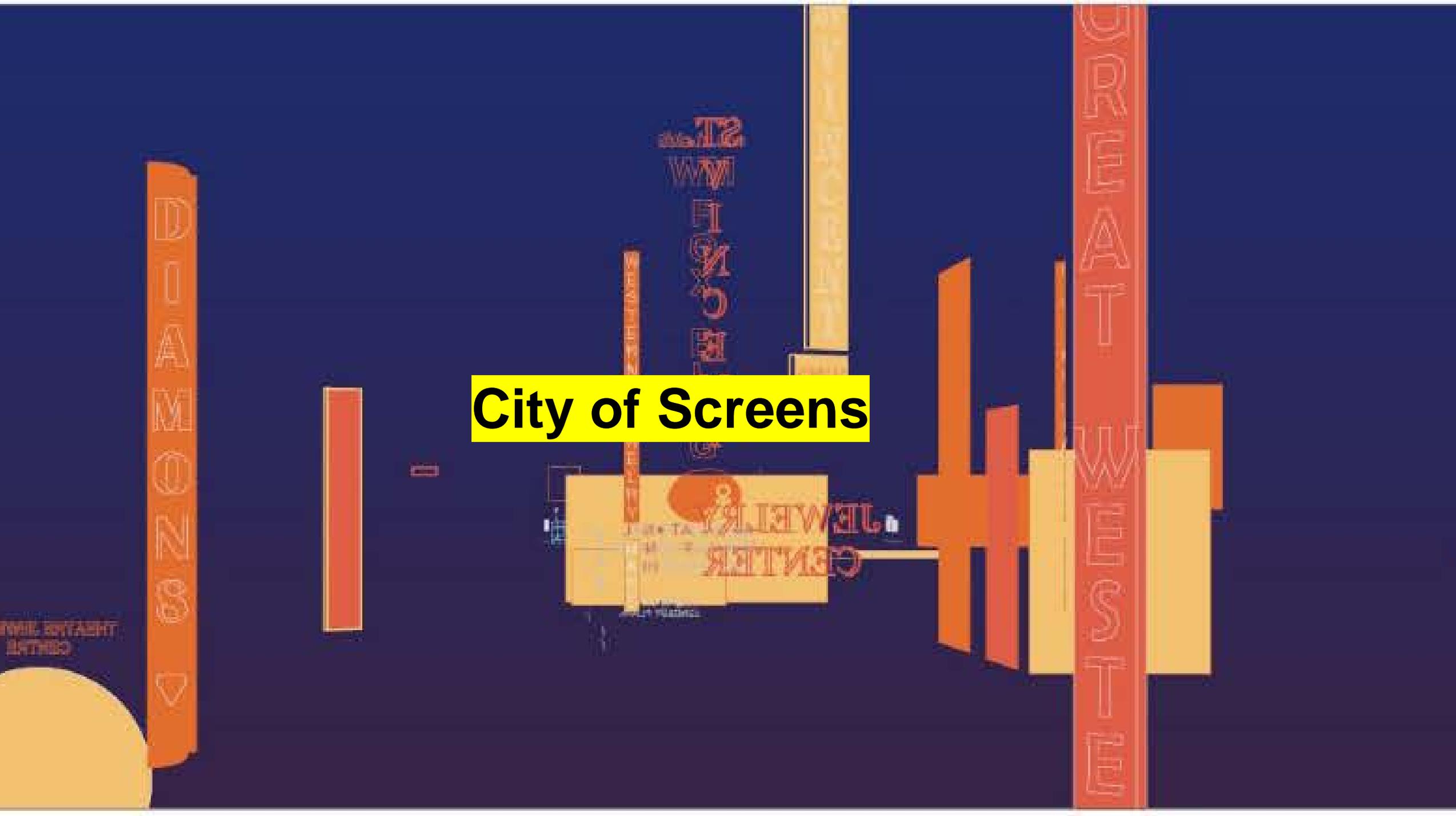


11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19



City of Screens



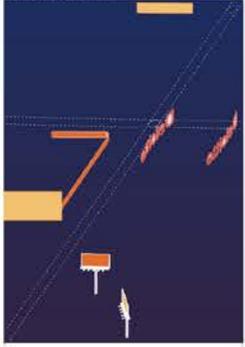
City of Screens

There is a mid-to-low density to the number of murals, adverts, and screens in Downtown Los Angeles. Unlike places like Shibuya (Tokyo) or Times Square (New York City), where the density of information is exceptionally high, the mid-range density of DTLA allows for screens to almost function as a background whisperer of hidden messages.

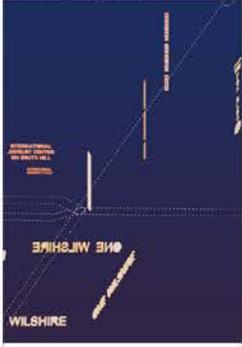
They Live (1988) offered an abstract look into billboards' subliminal power in Downtown Los Angeles. When isolated as blank patches of speech acts, the city is speaking softly back at the citizen. Blade Runner (1982), on the other hand, promised us flickering interactive advertisements on building facades (alongside flying cars, artificial intelligence, and constant rain). Through these cinematic retellings, we gain a better understanding of how a city like Los Angeles takes advantage of its massive blind facades as opportunities to speak.

From the historical to the contemporary, the city has continually evolved strategies to articulate through our buildings. Advertisements, murals, projections, virtual reality, and augmented reality via a mobile device are some of the ways our city has become interactive with us.

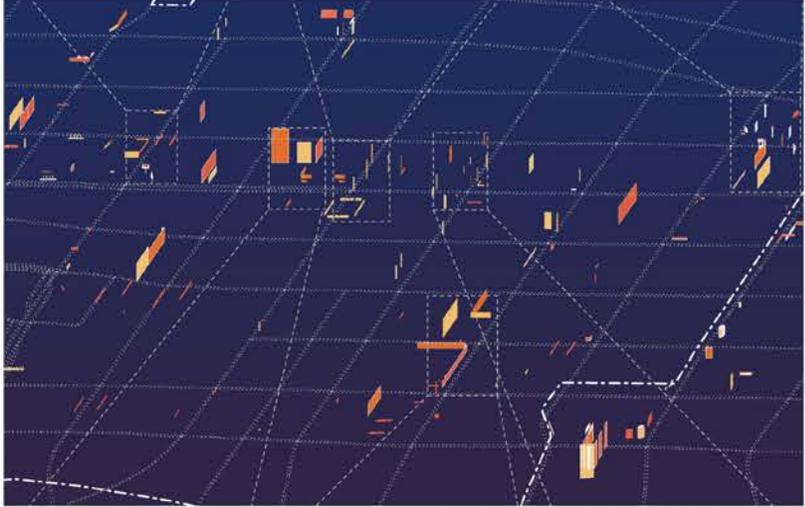
BILLBOARDS | MURALS



ADVERTISEMENT | SIGNAGES



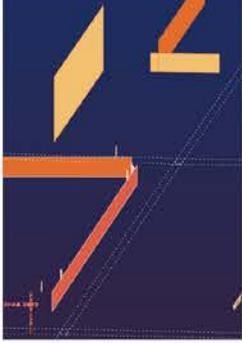
MURALS | SIGNAGES



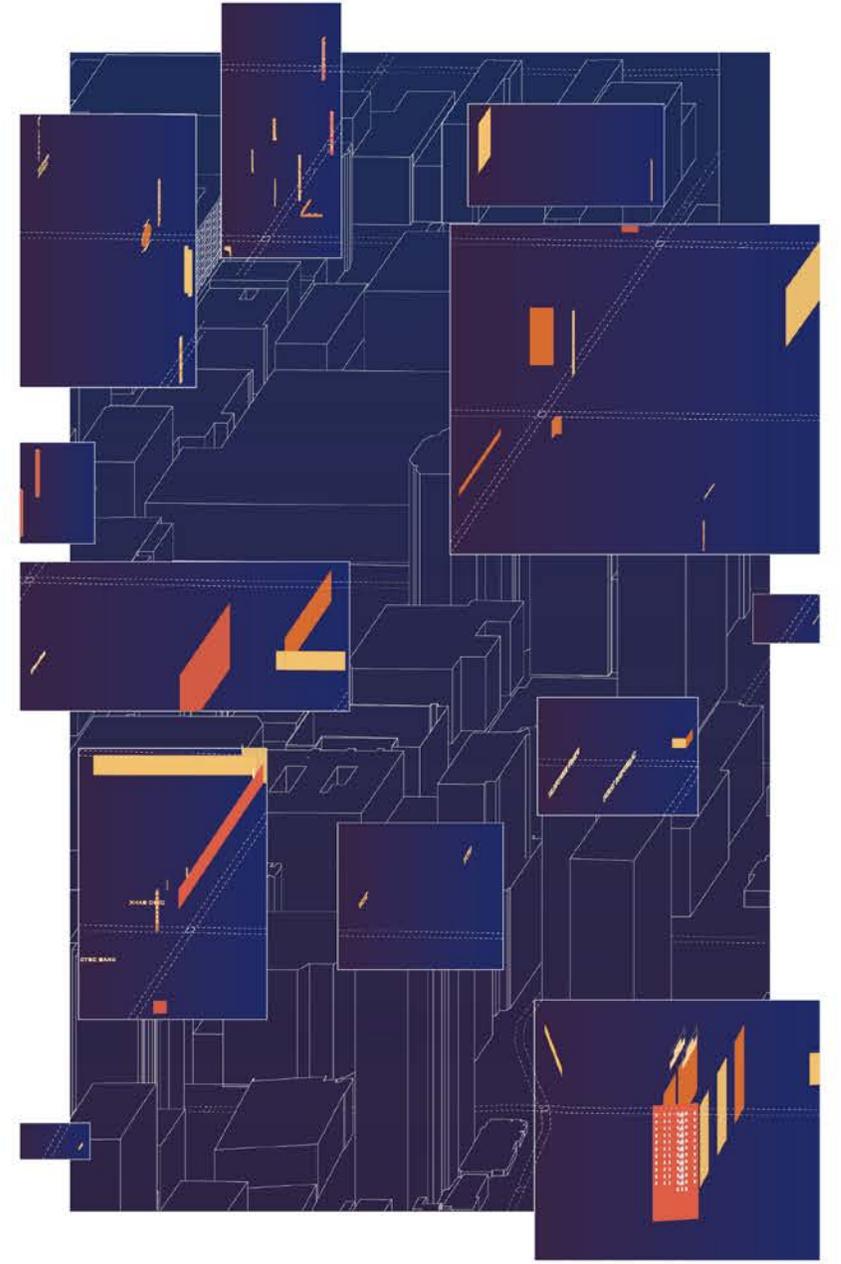
MURALS | SIGNAGES



MURALS | SIGNAGES



SIGNAGES



STATIC - PLANE



STATIC - LINE



STATIC - POINT



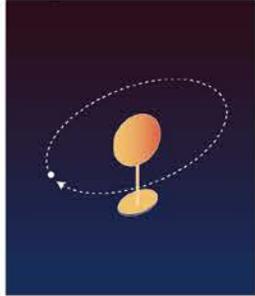
PHYSICAL: NOT STATIC - PLANE



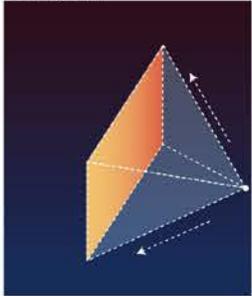
PHYSICAL: NOT STATIC - LINE



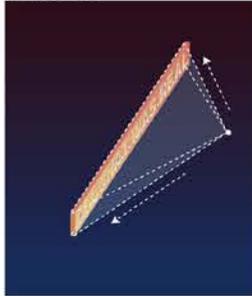
PHYSICAL: NOT STATIC - POINT



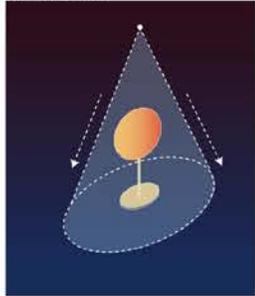
PROJECTION - PLANE



PROJECTION - LINE



PROJECTION - POINT



VIRTUAL: NOT STATIC - PLANE



VIRTUAL: NOT STATIC - LINE



VIRTUAL: NOT STATIC - POINT



BUILDING WITH MULTIPLE MEDIA



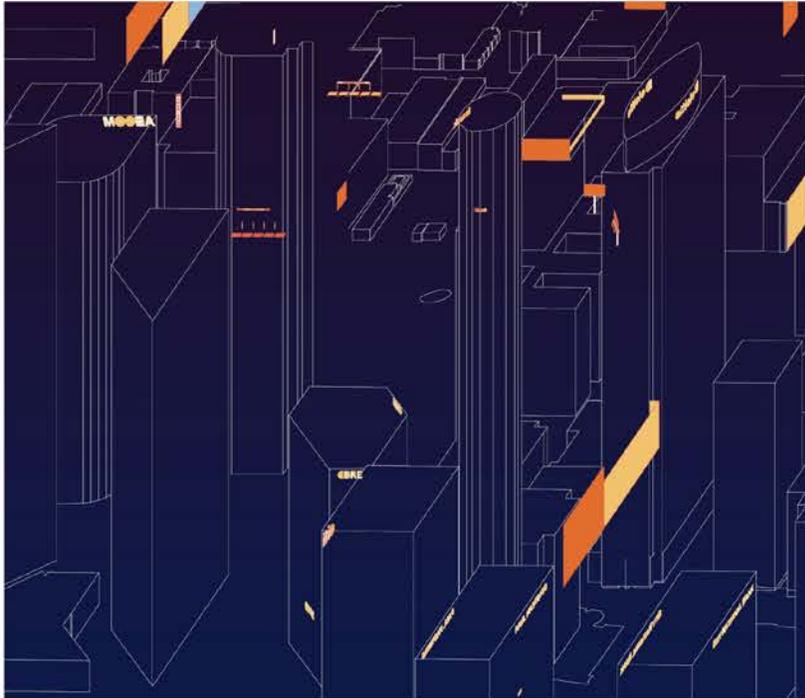
CIBC BANK



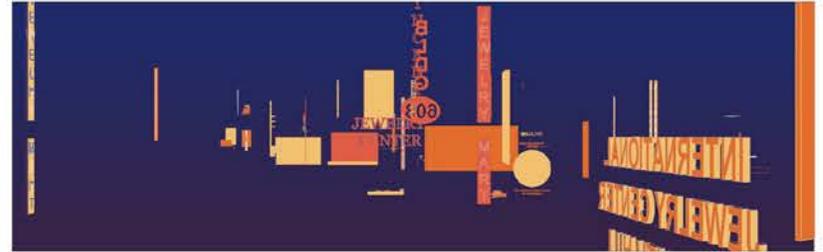
WESTERN JEWELRY MART



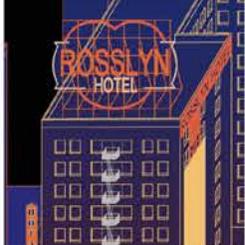
HOTEL ROSSLYN



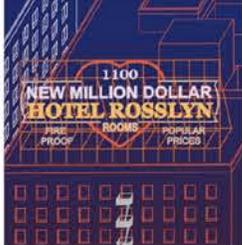
CITY OF SCREENS



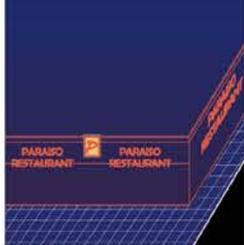
HOTEL ROSSLYN

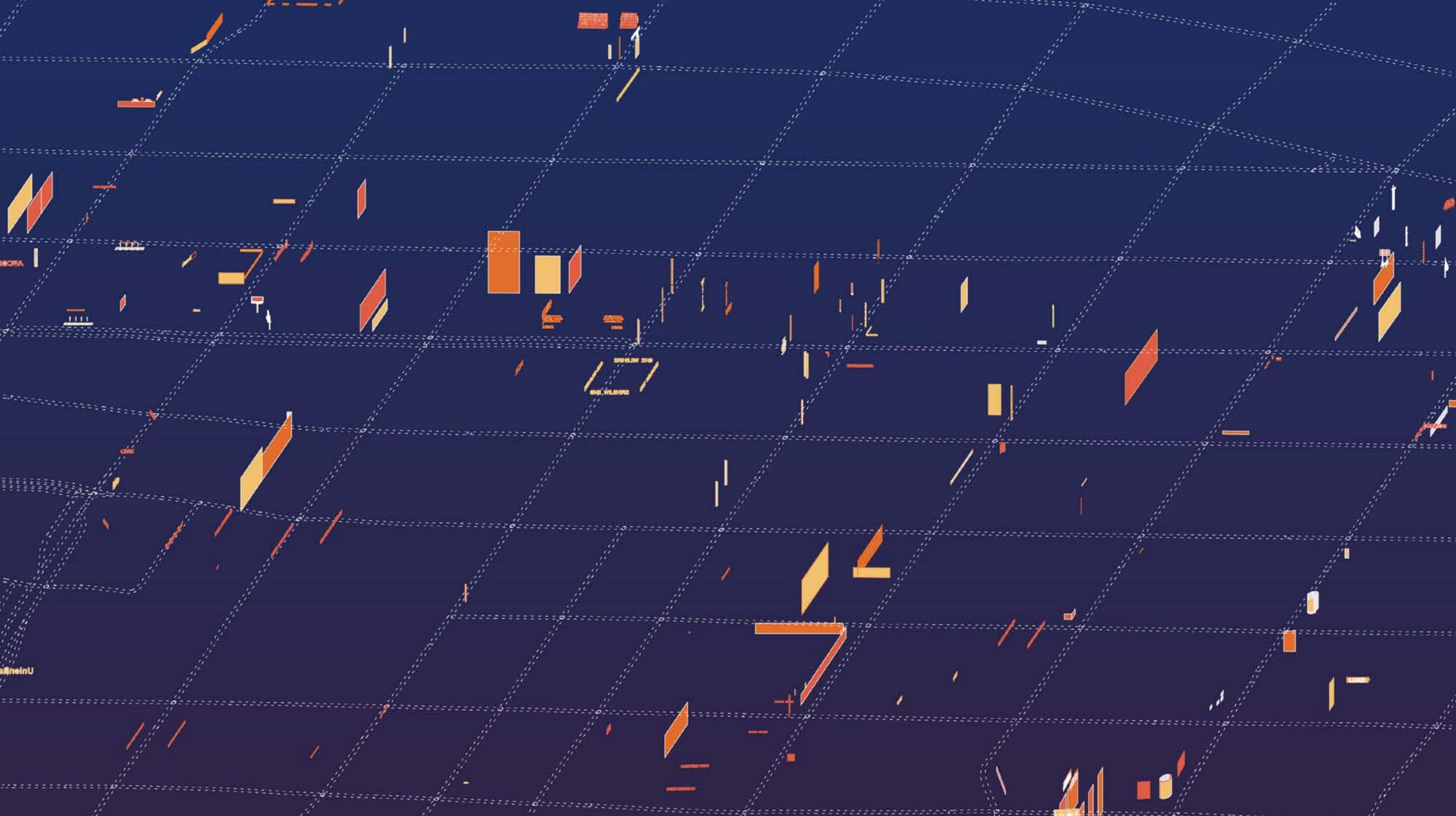


HOTEL ROSSLYN

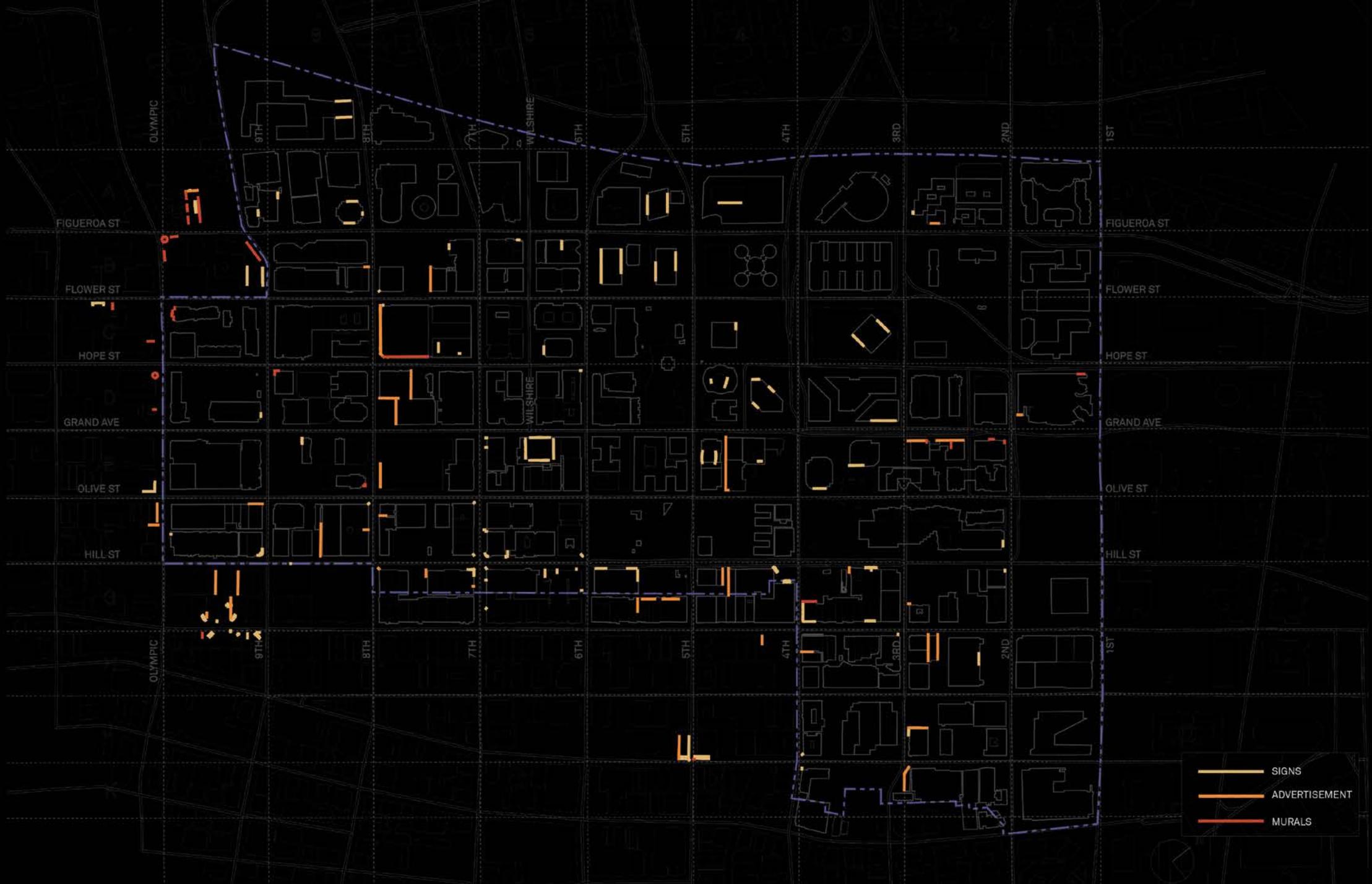


PARAISO RESTAURANT









FIGUEROA ST

FLOWER ST

HOPE ST

GRAND AVE

OLIVE ST

HILL ST

FIGUEROA ST

FLOWER ST

HOPE ST

GRAND AVE

OLIVE ST

HILL ST

OLYMPIC

9TH

8TH

7TH

WILSHIRE

5TH

5TH

4TH

3RD

2ND

1ST

9TH

8TH

7TH

6TH

5TH

4TH

3RD

2ND

1ST

OLYMPIC

WILSHIRE

3RD

— SIGNS
— ADVERTISEMENT
— MURALS

A vibrant, stylized illustration of a futuristic cityscape. The scene is dominated by a warm color palette of oranges, yellows, and pinks, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. In the center, a large, bright sun glows. The architecture is highly geometric and futuristic, featuring numerous floating, rectangular buildings and structures of various sizes and orientations. Some buildings have thin, vertical supports, while others appear to be suspended in the air. The ground is a dark, reflective surface with a grid pattern of white lines. The overall atmosphere is one of a high-tech, advanced urban environment.

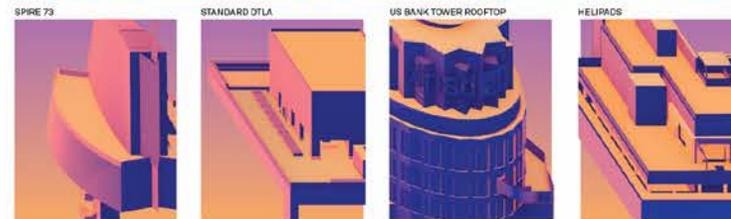
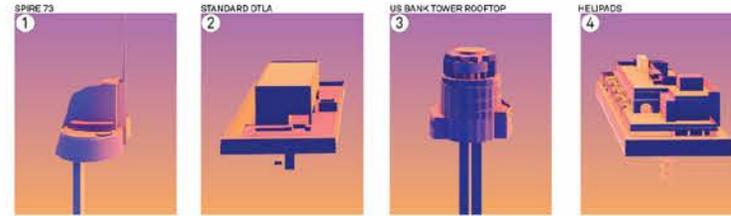
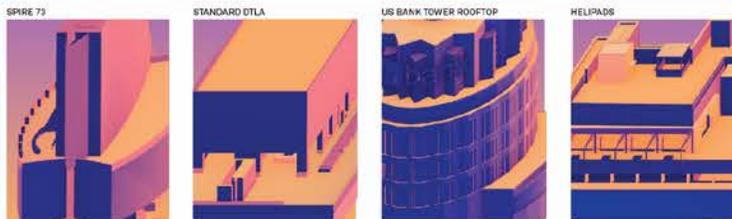
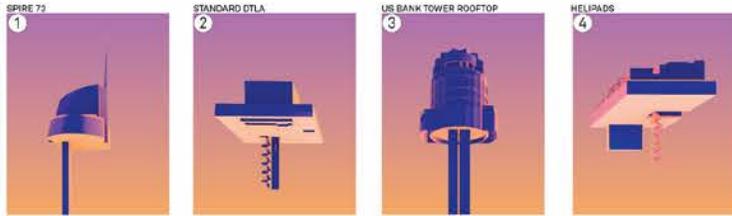
The Flying Fleet of Social Zones

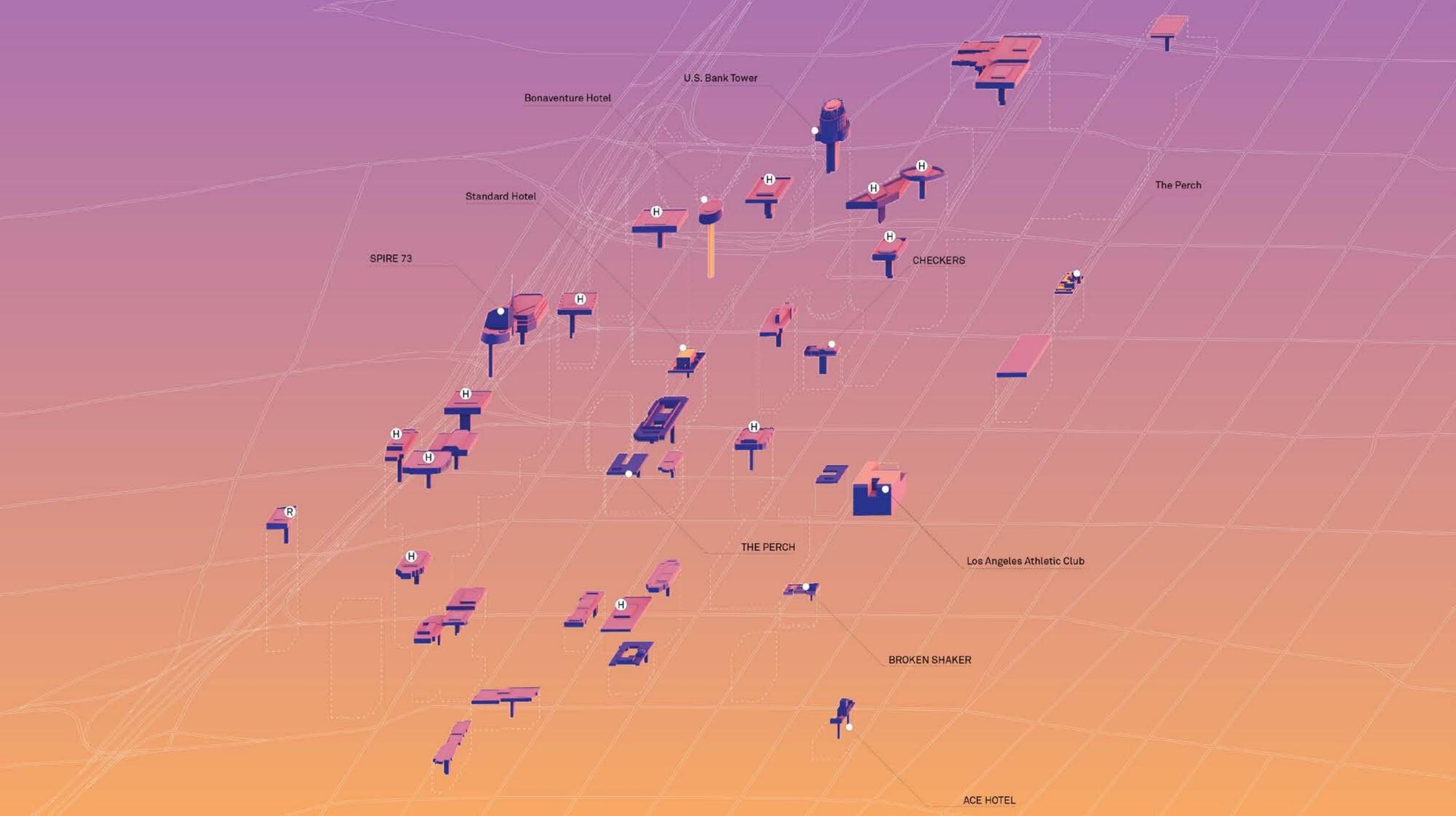
Flying Fleet of Social Zones

There are roof bars, restaurants, helipads, and other public or semi-public places atop Downtown Los Angeles. These spaces are like a fleet of floating social zones flying over the cityscape. These spaces are accessible by most citizens. Some of these spaces are very exclusive, while others are welcoming to the general public for business. Like a cohort of hovercraft spaceships, these social zones beam up citizens like a mass-abduction event.

Like a series of 90° rotated cul-de-sacs, the city's sectional quality resembles suburban plans. The sectional cul-de-sacs display signs of both inclusivity and exclusivity. The roof is the nearly unattainable dead end, where only a small number of people can congregate. The detachment from the ground questions exclusivity, which is a question about lifestyle in the sky.







Bonaventure Hotel

U.S. Bank Tower

Standard Hotel

SPIRE 73

The Perch

CHECKERS

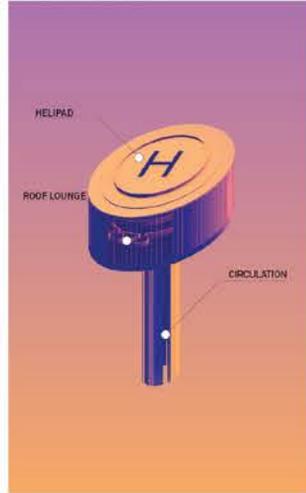
THE PERCH

Los Angeles Athletic Club

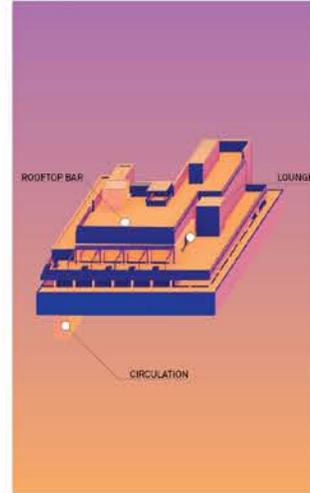
BROKEN SHAKER

ACE HOTEL

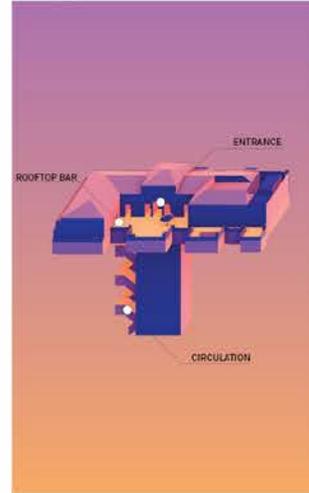
THE BONAVENTURE HOTEL



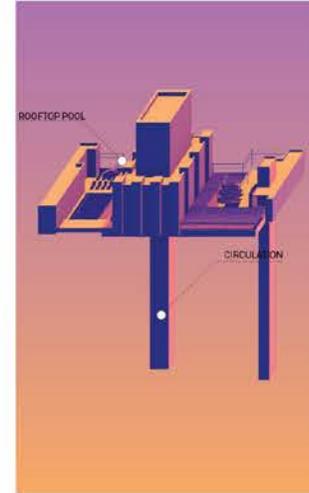
THE PERCH



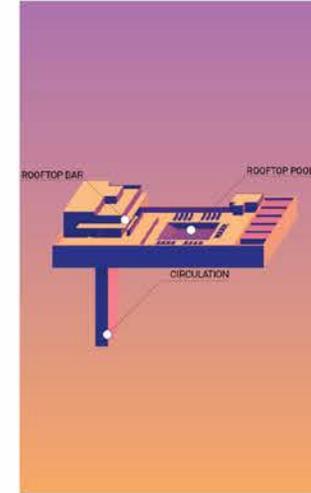
CHECKERS



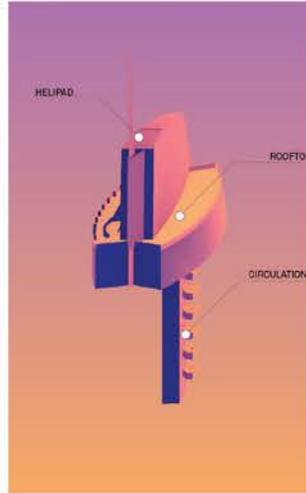
ACE HOTEL



BROKEN SHAKER



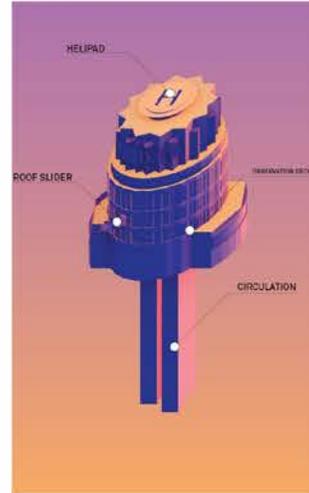
SPIRE 73



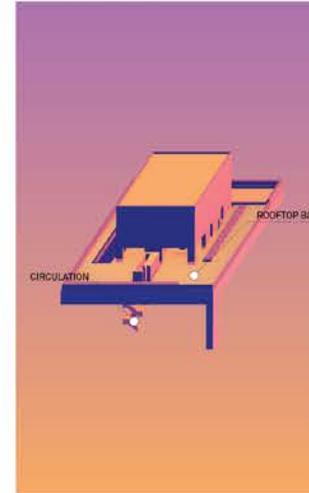
THE GAS COMPANY



US BANK

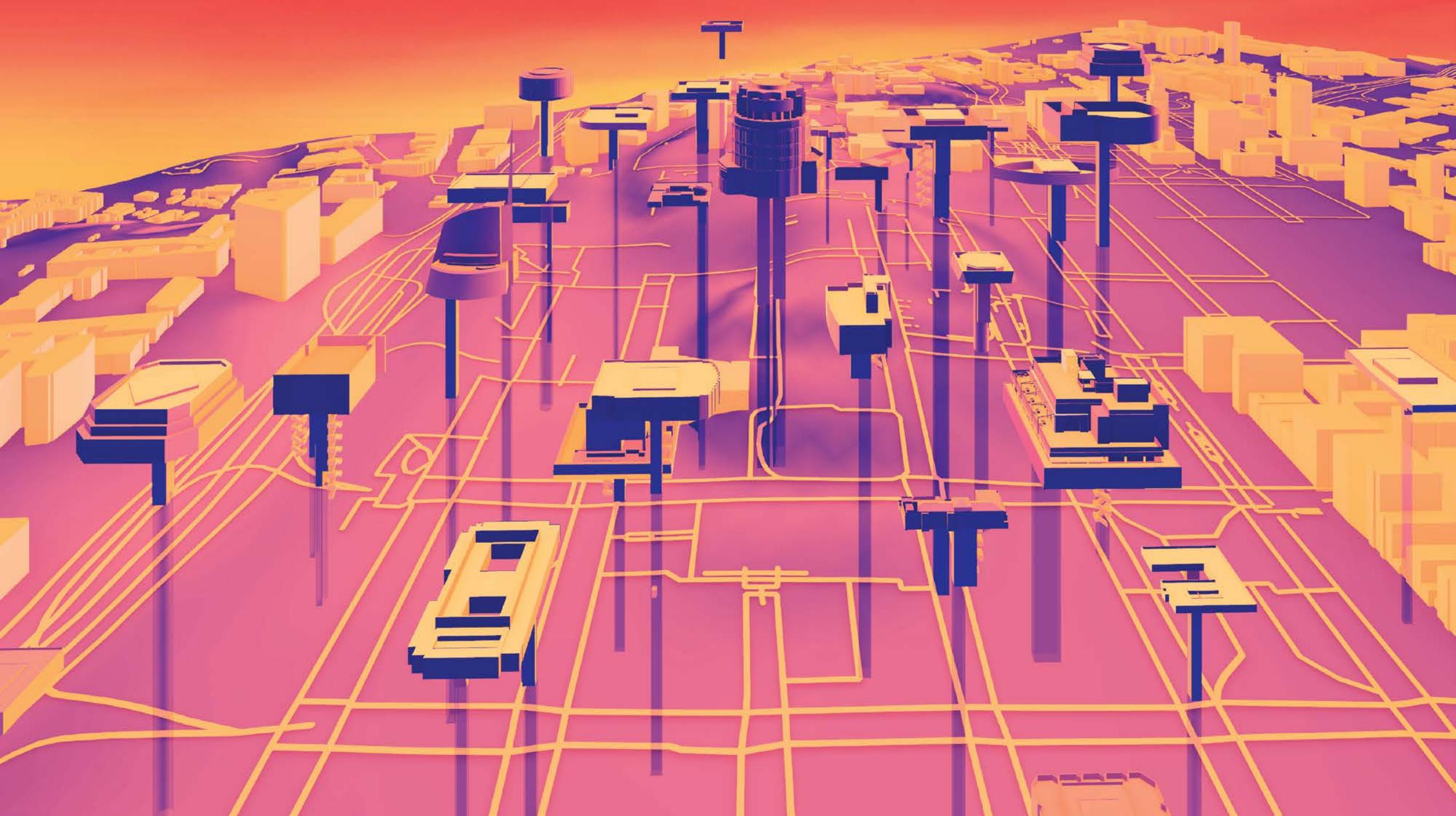


THE STANDARD HOTEL



LOS ANGELES ATHLETIC CLUB









**Public Spaces:
Citizen's Congregation**

The Citizens' Congregation

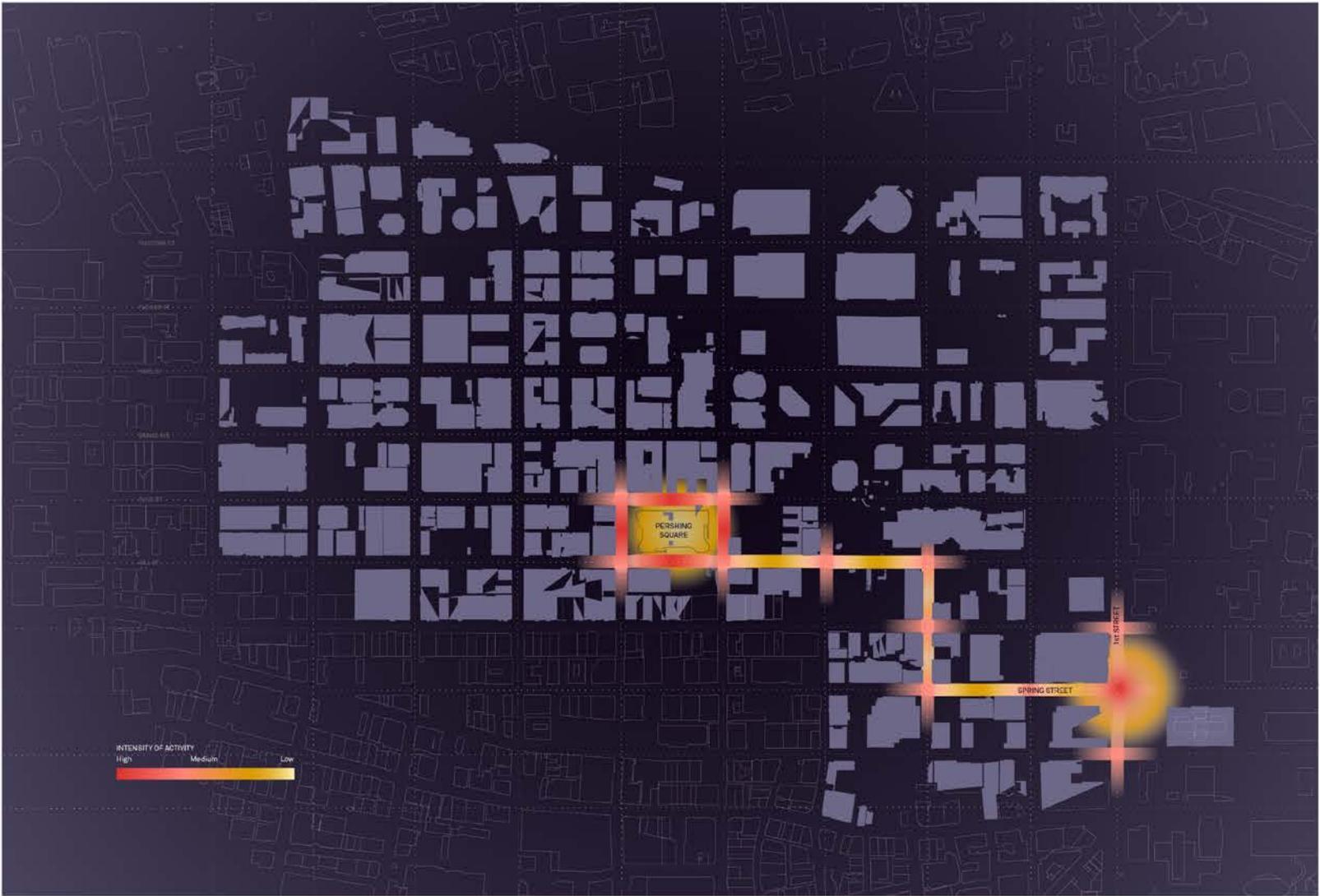
The spring and summer of 2020 saw massive social unrest all over the United States. In Los Angeles, the intersection between 1st and Spring is especially of political importance. Between the City Hall and the LAPD Headquarters, this corner is of wields great significance to Los Angeles. When citizens rise and voice their opinions, they take their protests to the intended audience's location. 1st and Spring, therefore, ceases to function as vehicular infrastructure and undergoes a functional transformation during times of unrest. Designed initially only for vehicular traffic, both 1st and Spring Streets temporarily suspend their original function for transportation and assume the new role of infrastructure for a civic congregation. Not unlike Rome's forums, the 1st and Spring crossing becomes a political space that allows the City Hall and LAPD to hear the people's voices. Unlike the platforms or piazzas designed as spaces that anticipate citizens' congregation, traffic engineers did not design 1st and Spring crossing as a space that doubles as a civic forum. This chapter looks at how the 1st and Spring crossing assumes the responsibility of nearby public-spaces like Pershing Square.







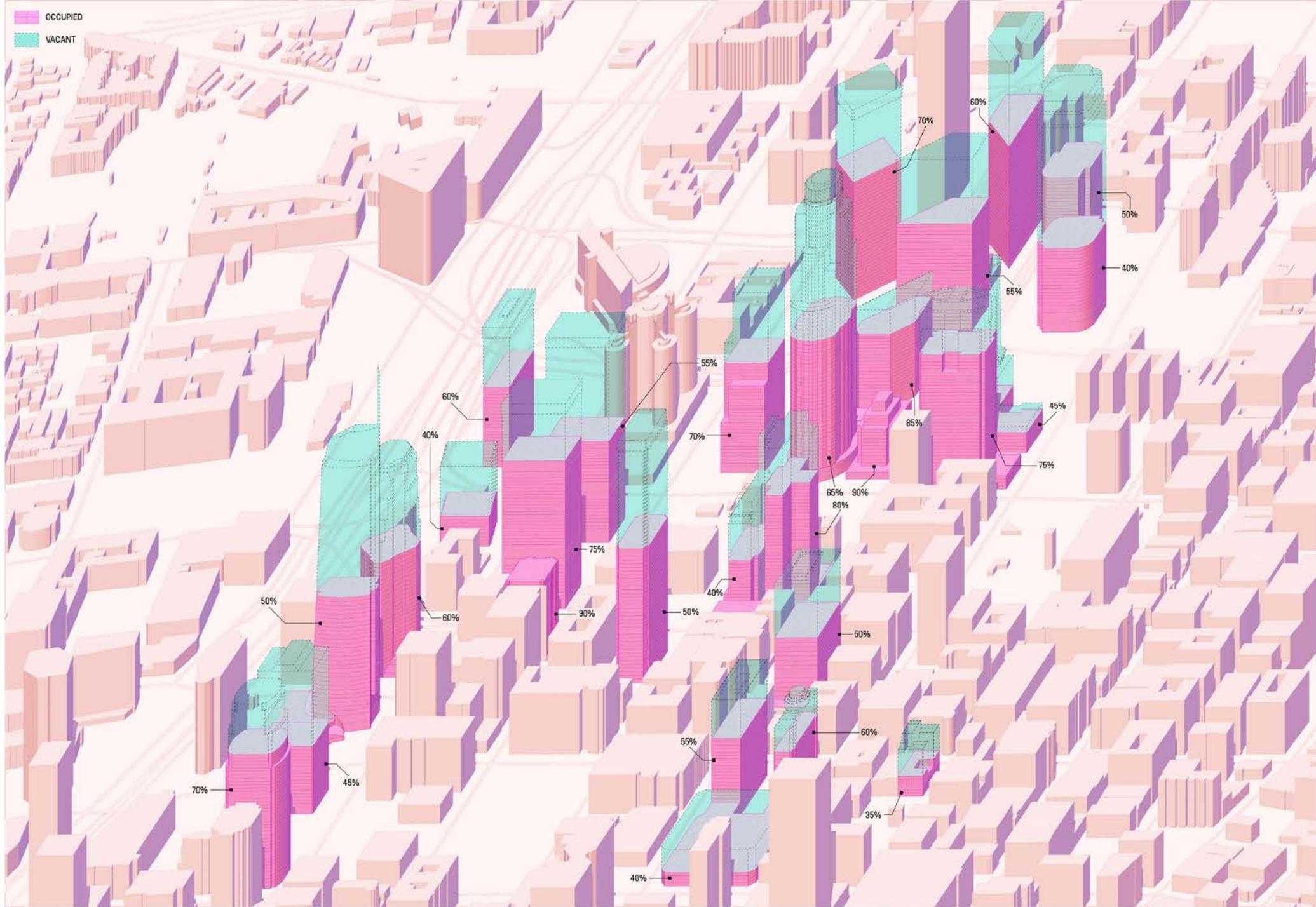




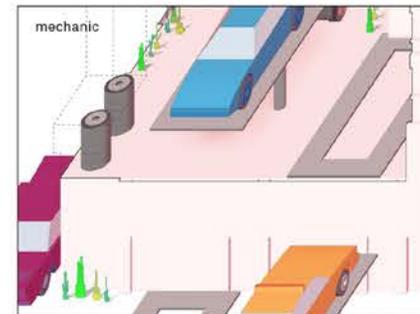
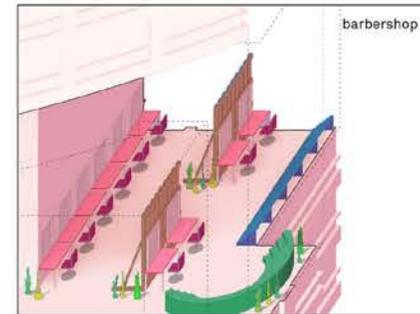
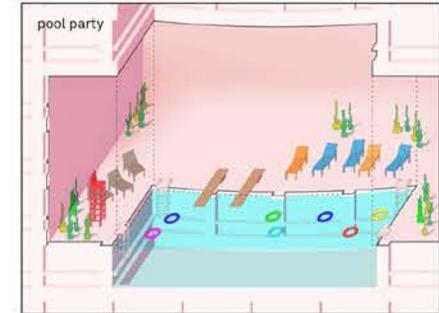
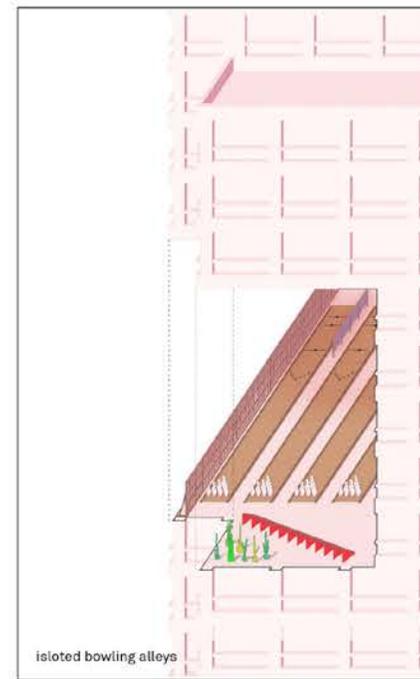
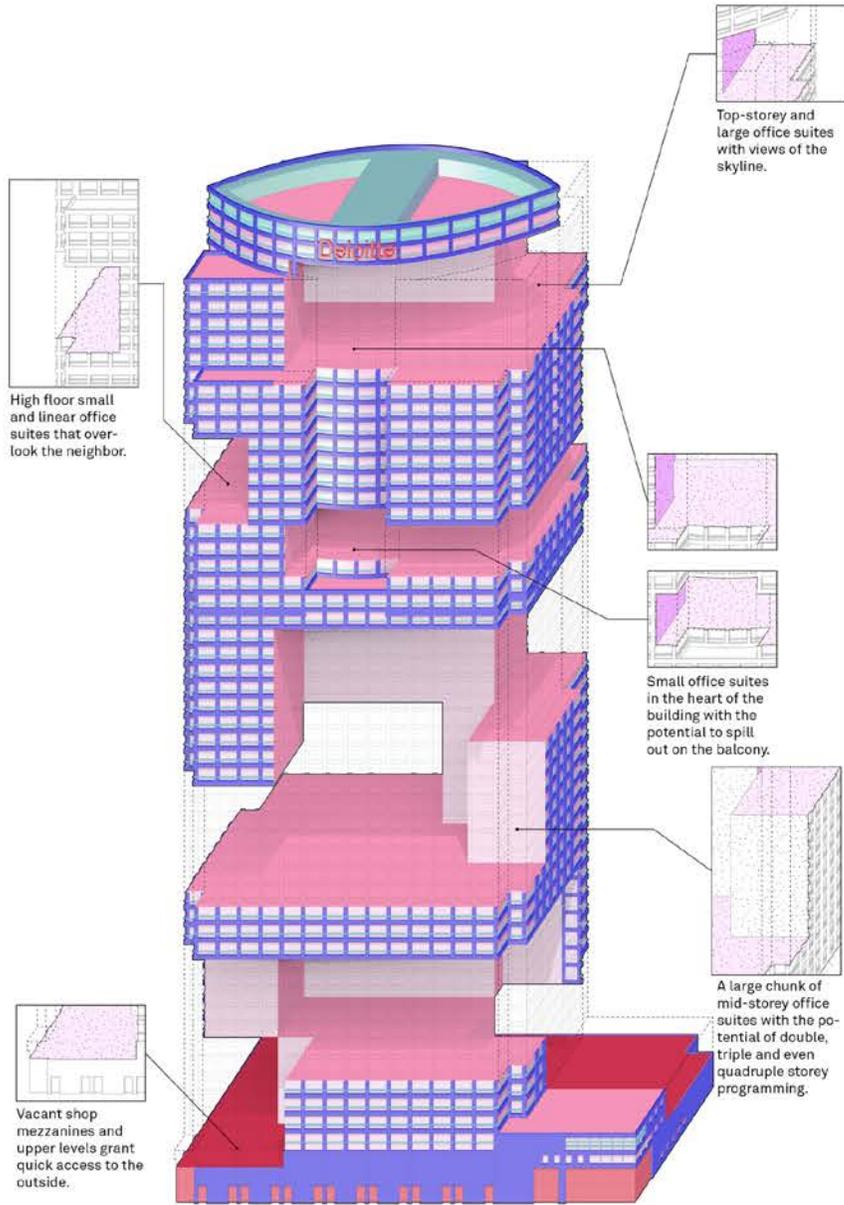
Abundance of Rooms

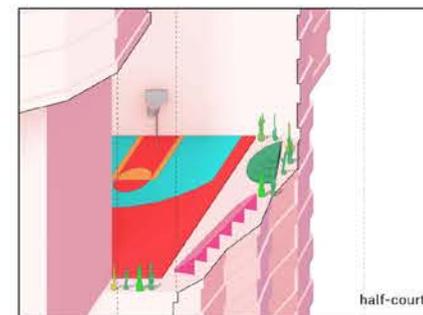
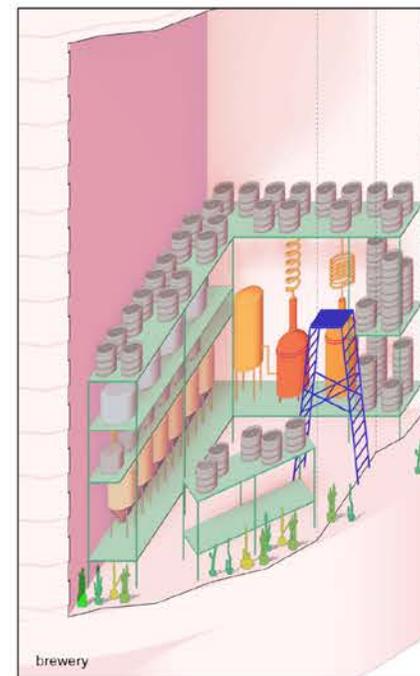
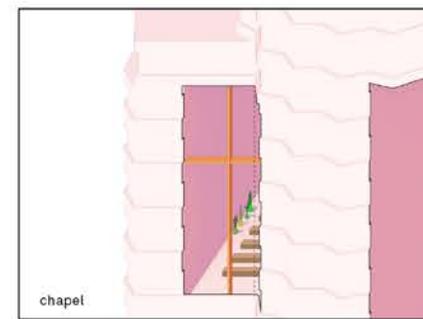
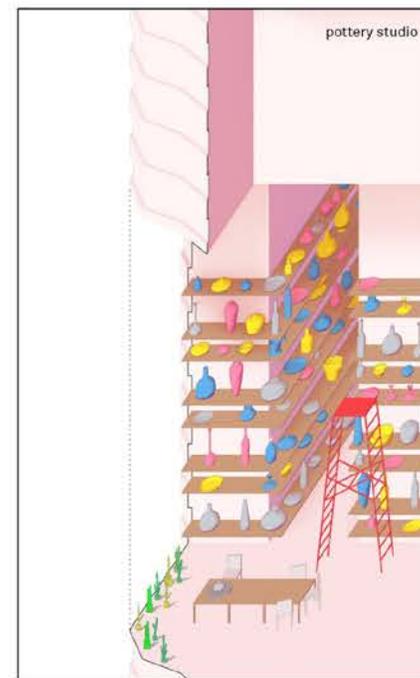
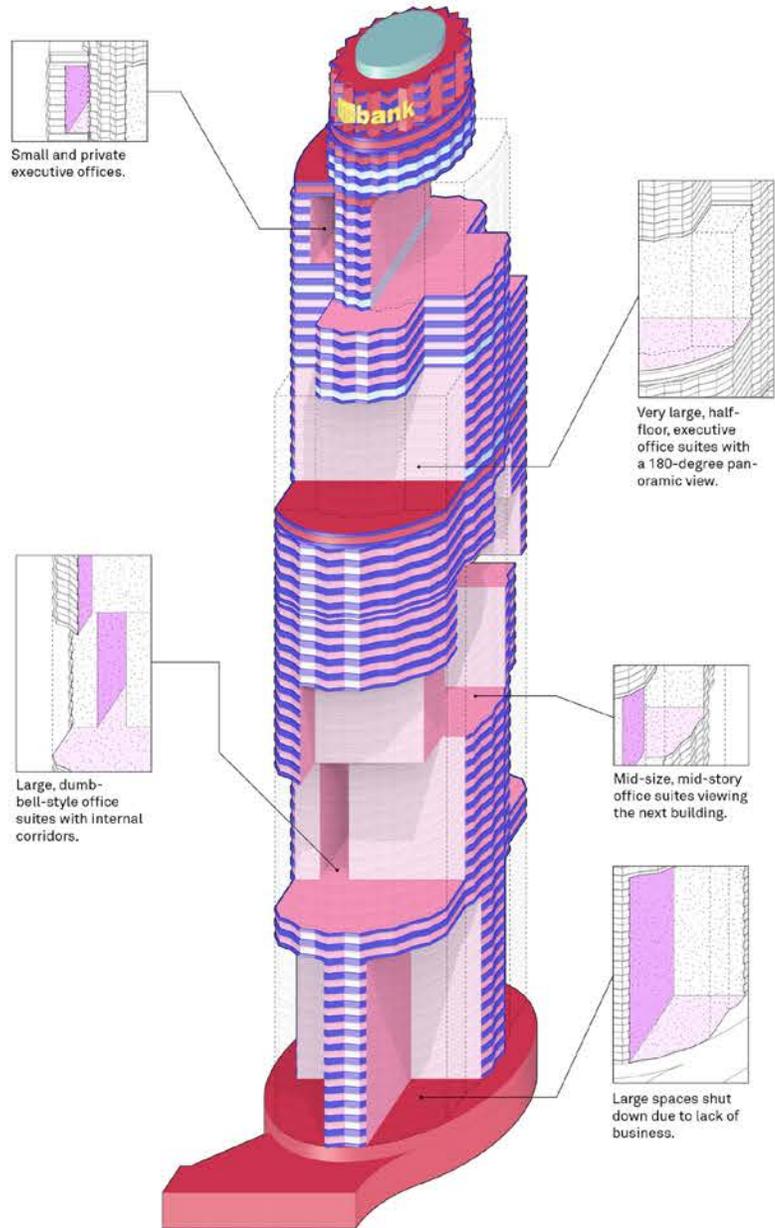
Across the rentable spaces in Downtown Los Angeles, renters do not fully occupy all properties. These vacancy conditions are sometimes proportionally high or low, depending on the buildings' age and the state of the economy. During the COVID-19 Global Pandemic and the waves of protests in 2020, these events reveal DTLA properties' vulnerability. Shops and restaurants boarded up the storefronts, while other paycheck-to-paycheck residents could no longer afford the rent. It is during these times of crisis the occupancy level becomes more apparent. Whether residential condominiums, office buildings, or commercial spaces, larger chunks of properties will become available for reimagination in the foreseeable future.

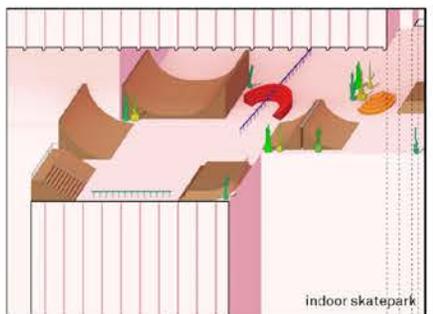
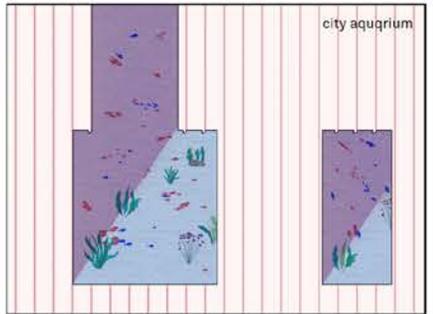
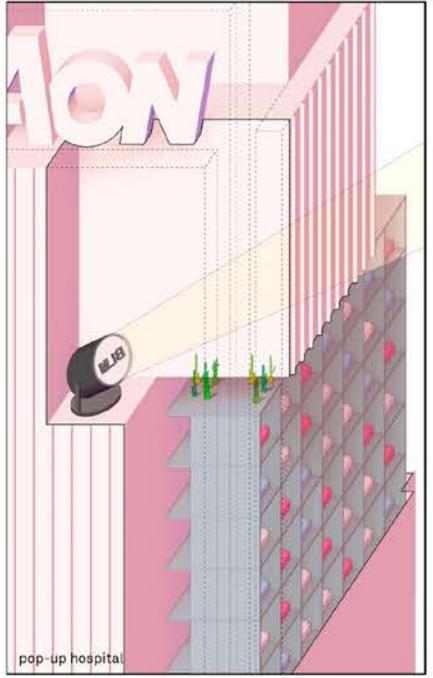
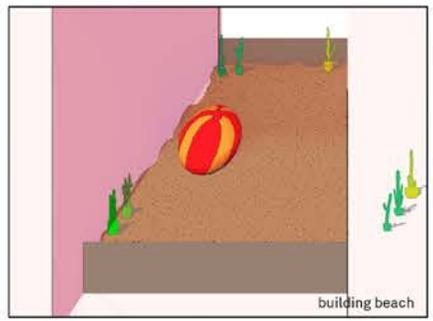
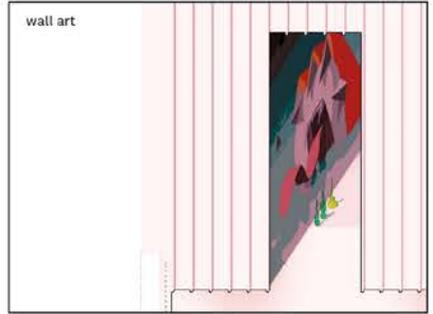
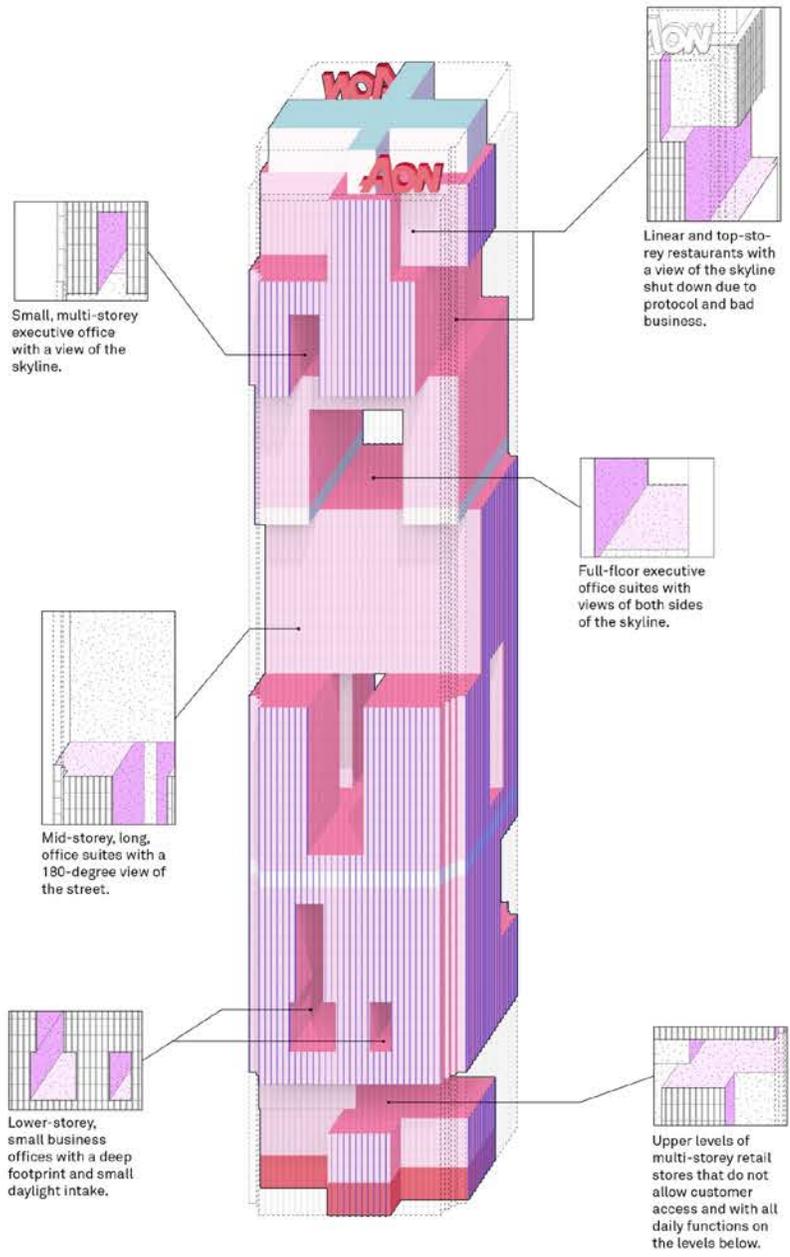
The magic of DTLA, over the past twenty years, has been a miracle where the impossible is imaginable. In this segment, we present a series of speculative visions of unlikely potentials in the city.



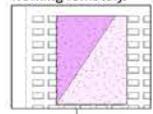




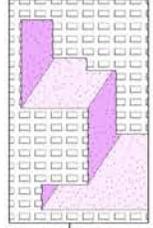




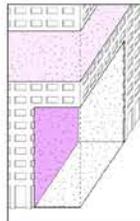
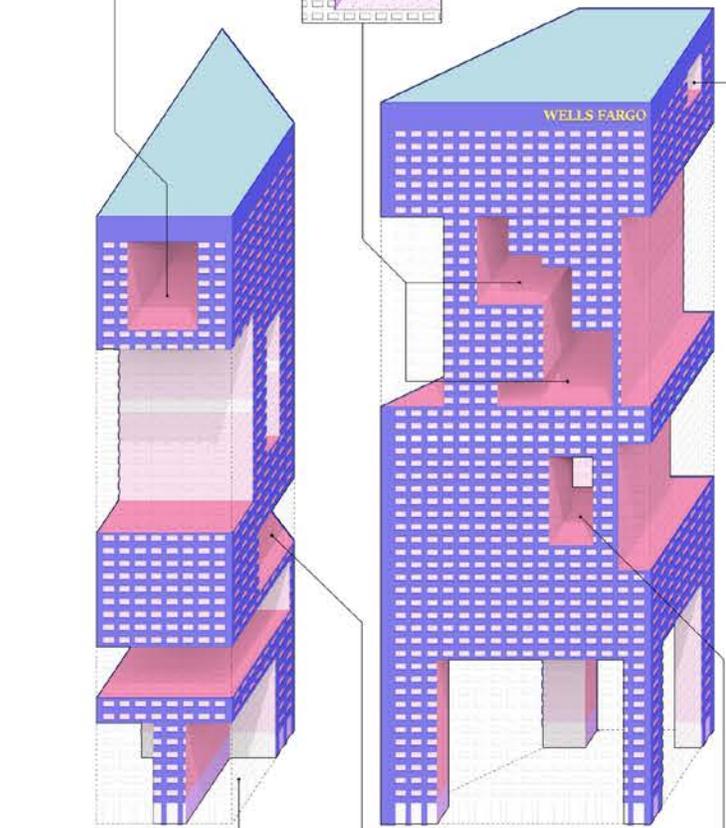
Top-storey private offices that are now working remotely.



Multiple offices and office suites carving abandonment in the heart of the building.



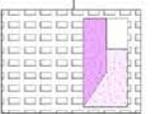
Multiple offices and office suites carving abandonment in the heart of the building.



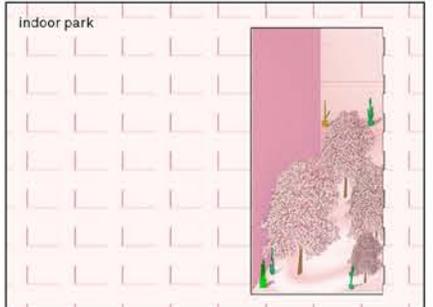
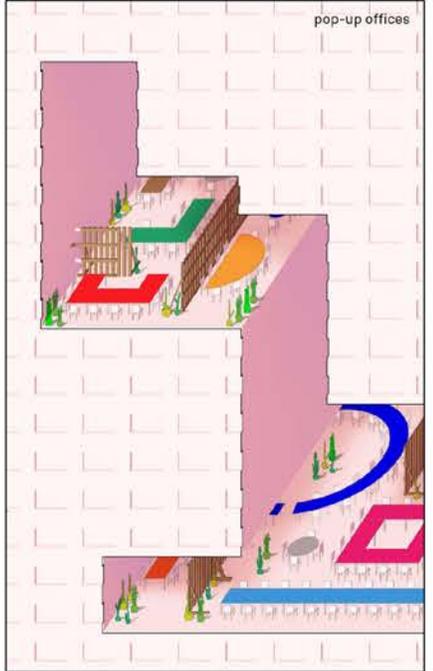
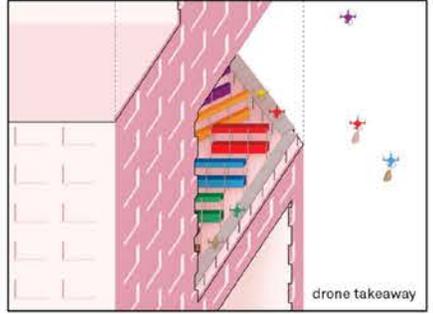
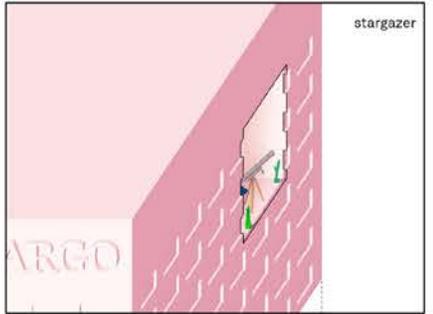
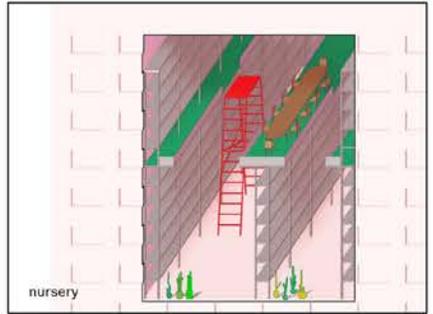
Large, almost full-floor retail and food and beverage spaces working as takeaways or shut down permanently.



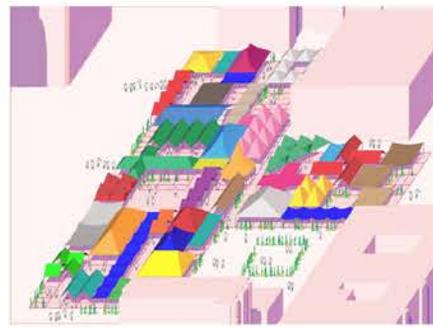
Lower level corner office suites with a view of the neighboring twin

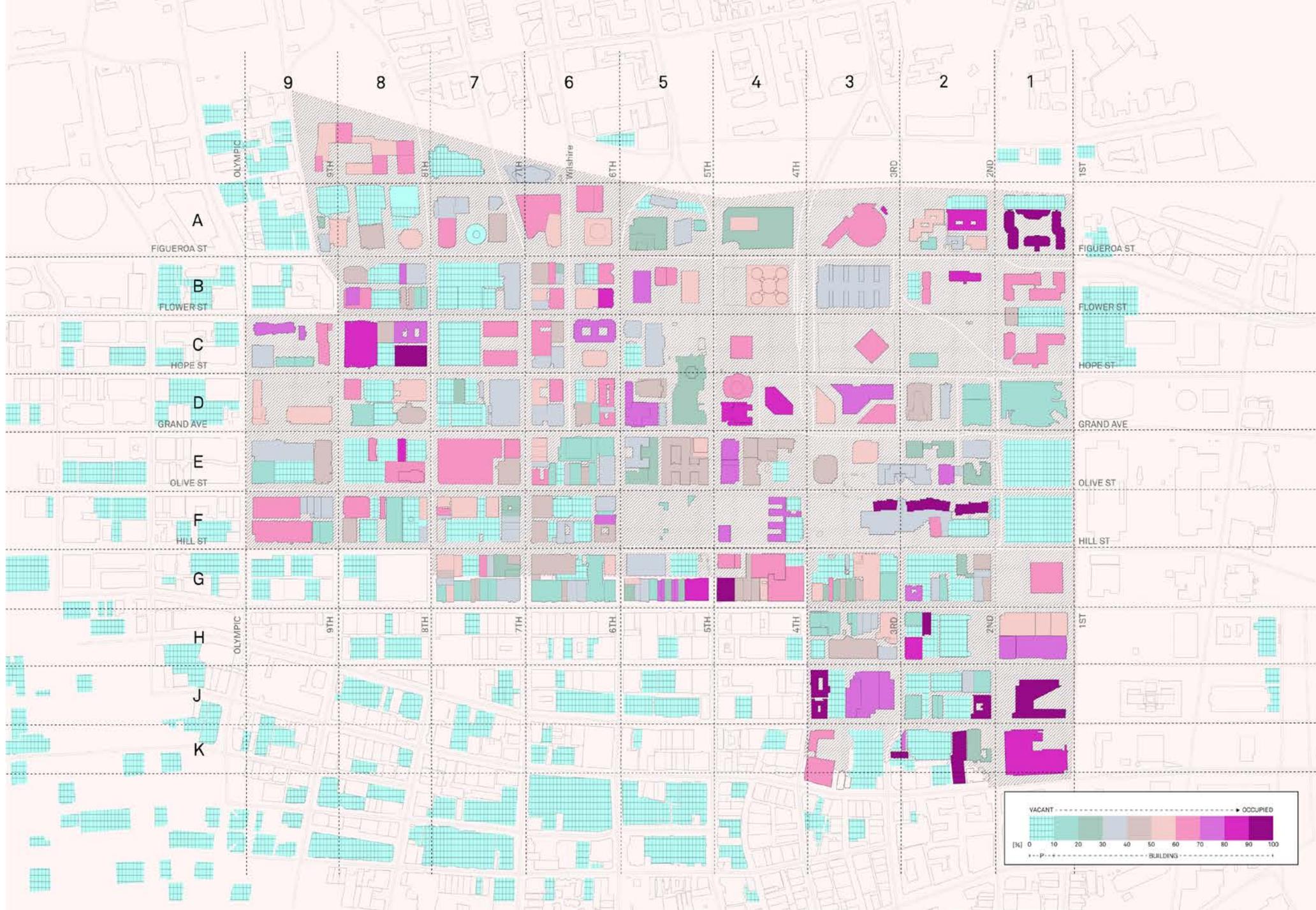


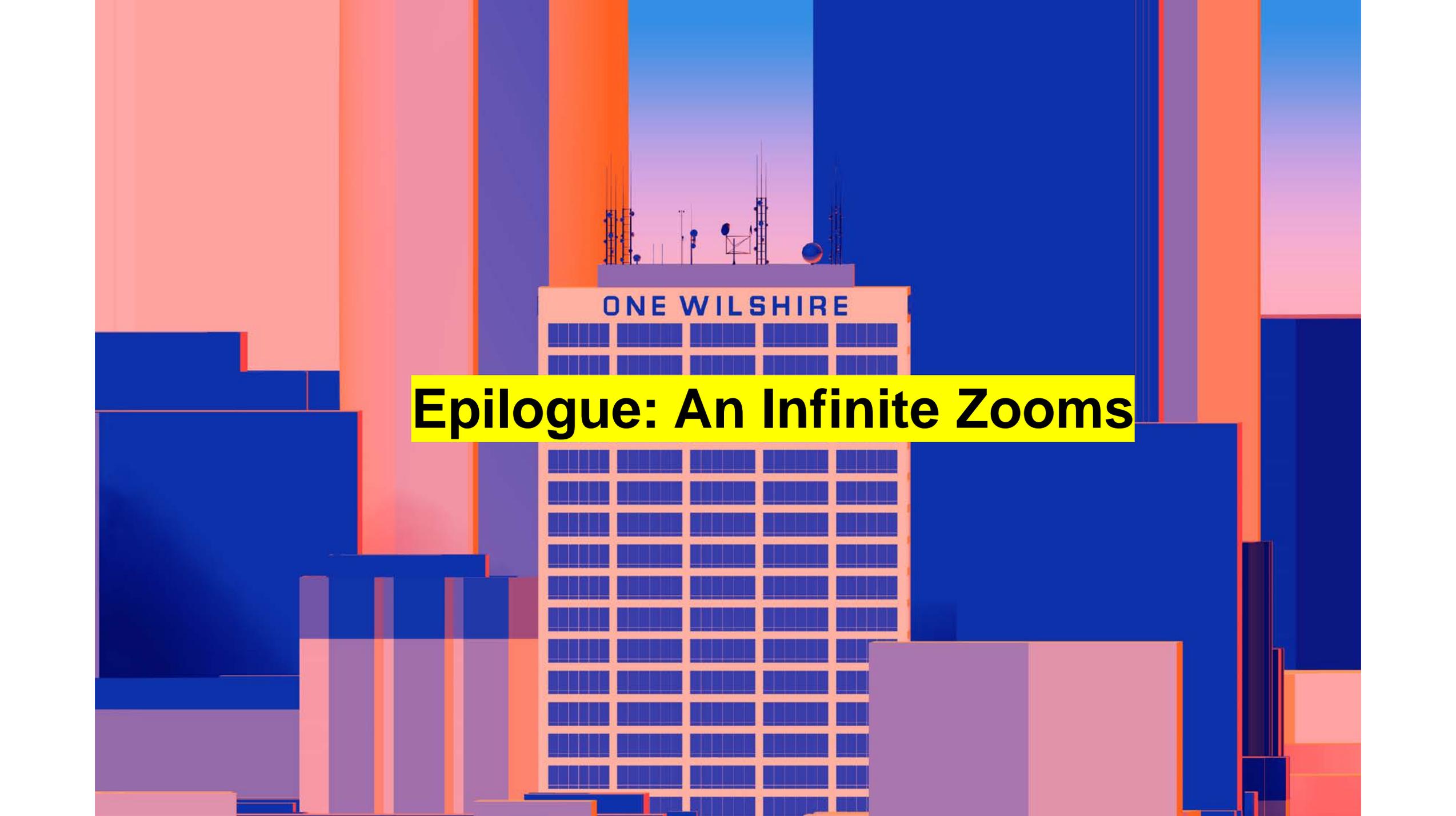
Small, mid-storey creative office suites. Deep and less sunlight.



- ground level parking lots
- buildings as parking
- rooftop parking lots





A stylized, abstract cityscape composed of various rectangular blocks in shades of blue, purple, and orange. The central focus is a white building with a grid of windows, labeled "ONE WILSHIRE" in blue capital letters. On top of this building are several communication antennas and a satellite dish. A bright yellow horizontal bar is superimposed over the middle of the image, containing the text "Epilogue: An Infinite Zooms" in bold black font. The background features vertical bands of color, suggesting a sunset or sunrise sky.

ONE WILSHIRE

Epilogue: An Infinite Zooms

Epilogue: An Infinite Zoom

In his 2005 article *Centripetal City*, author Kazyz Varnelis talks about the building One Wilshire in Downtown Los Angeles. In this article, Varnelis describes One Wilshire as no longer an office building for human workers but rather a data center for information processing.

In this final epilogue, we tell a story about Downtown Los Angeles inside of One Wilshire. One Wilshire, a building inside of a skyline, a skyline inside a model.



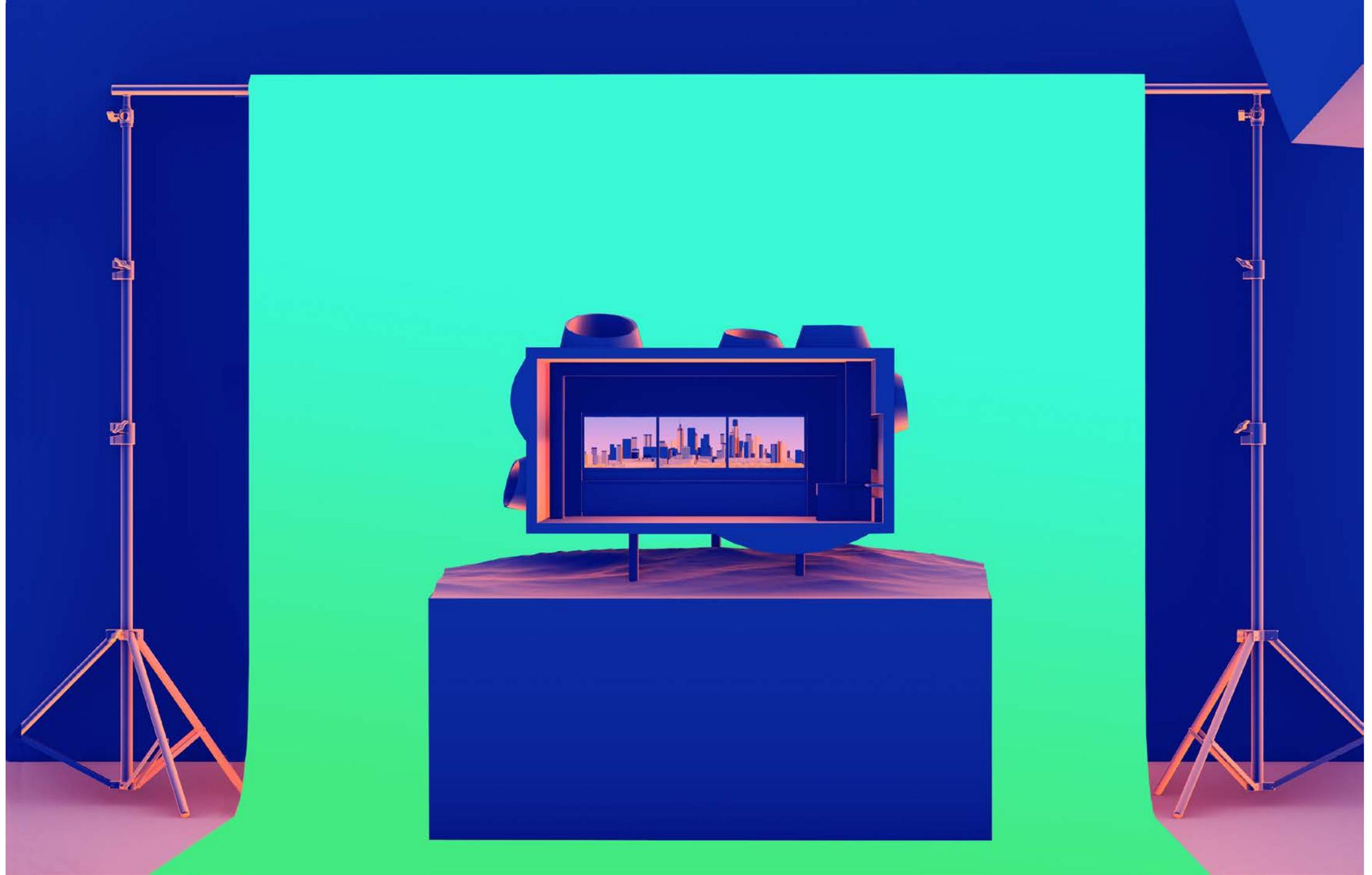
ONE WILSHIRE



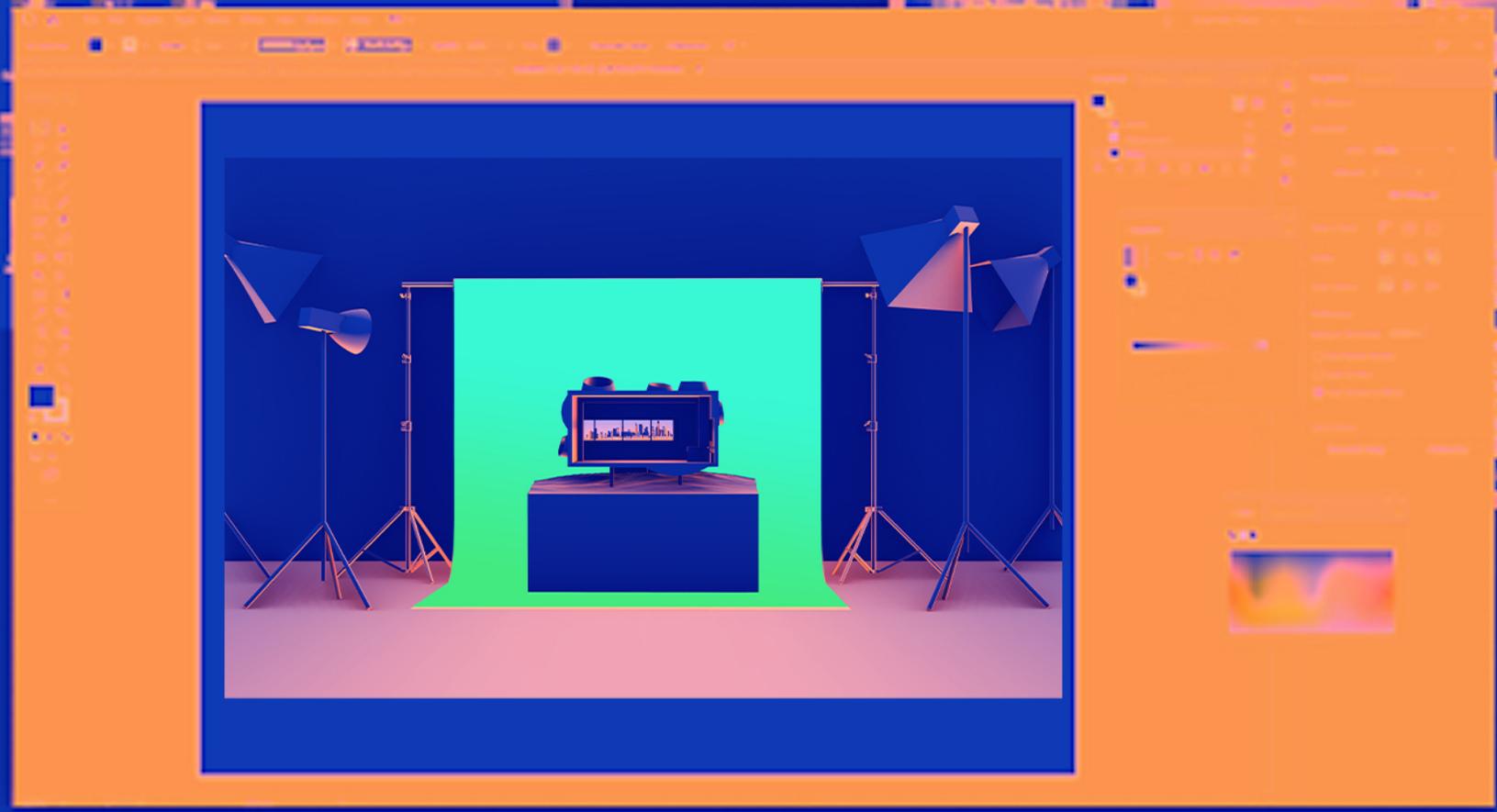
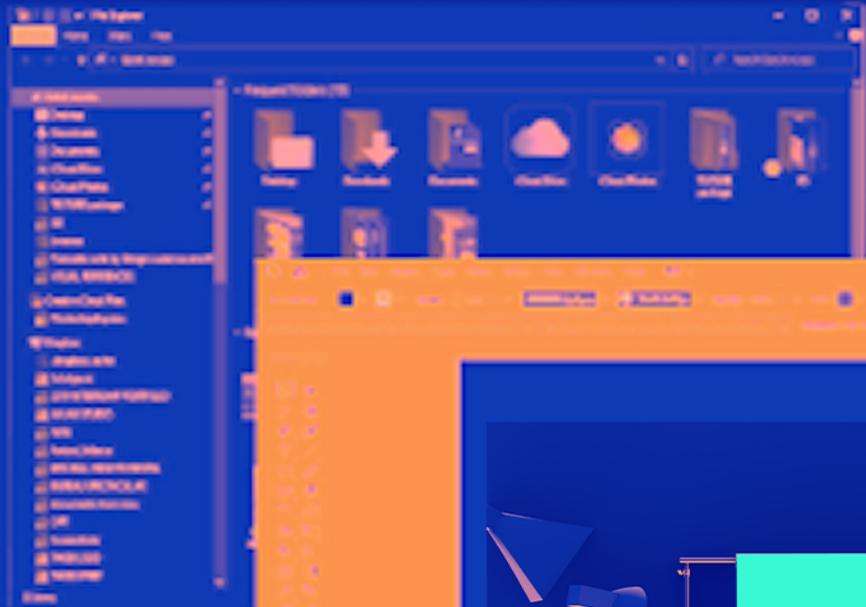


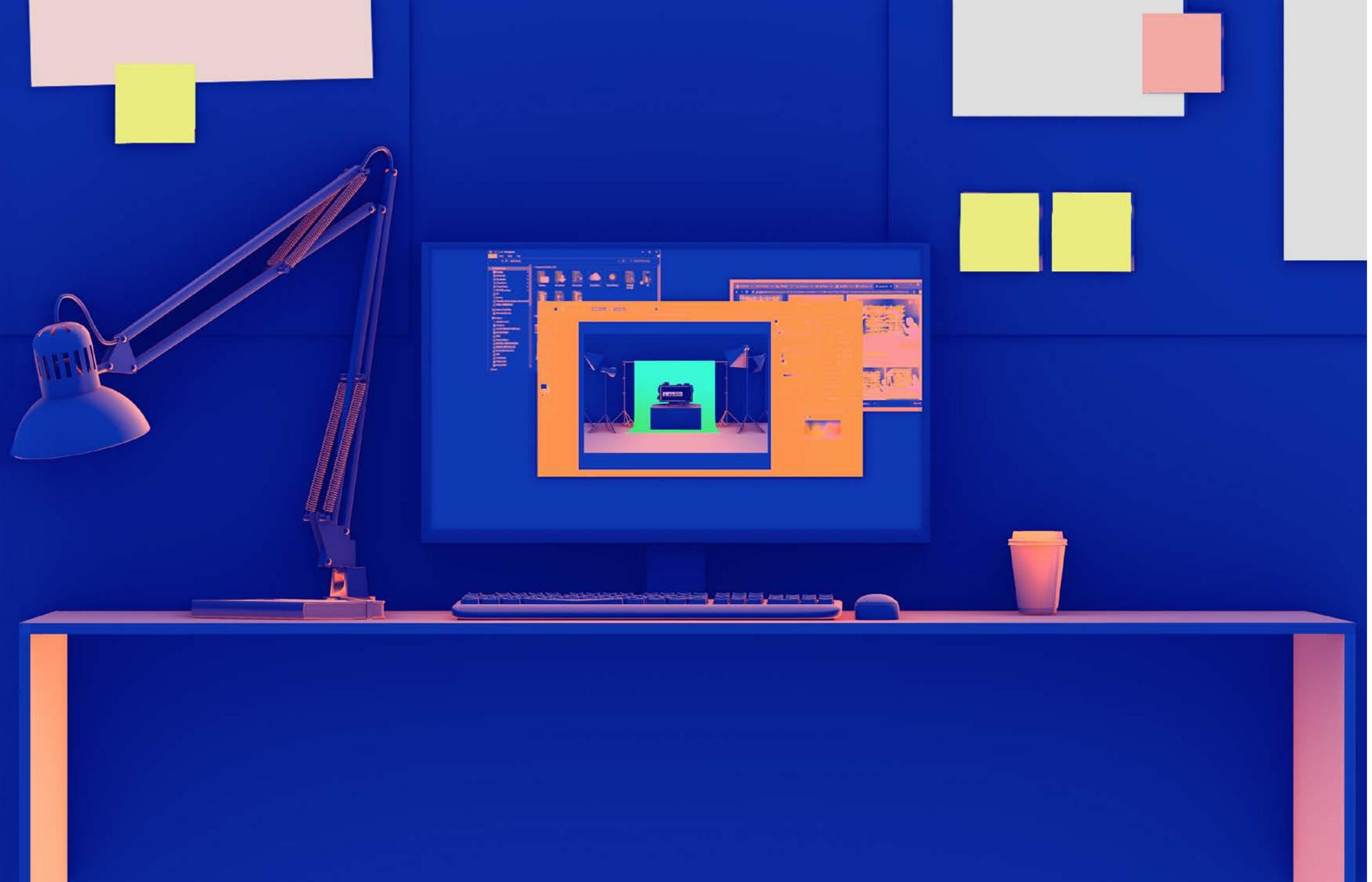
















Project Untitled 2 Media Browser Motion Audio Clip Mixer Libraries

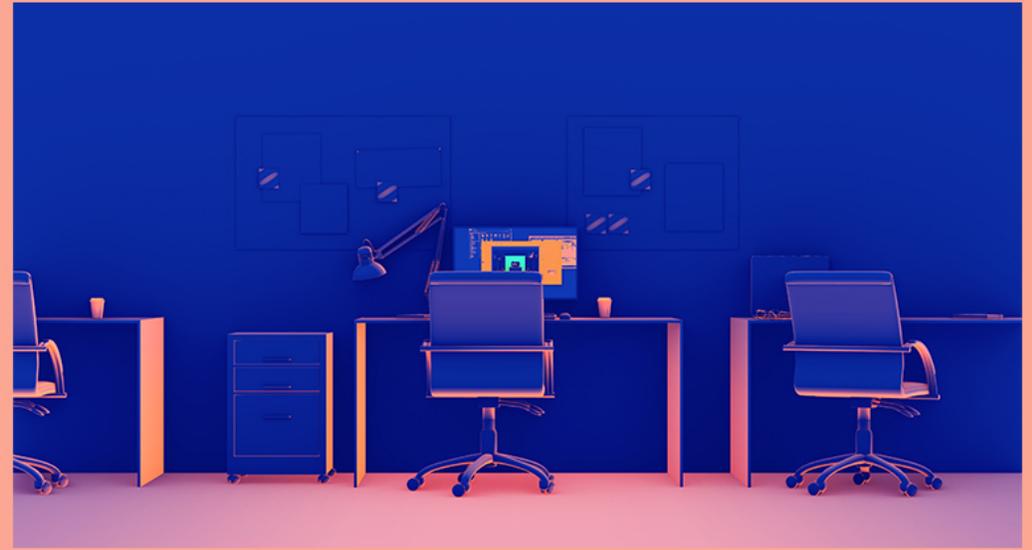
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Import media to start



Program (no program) 2 Source (no clip)



00:00:00:00

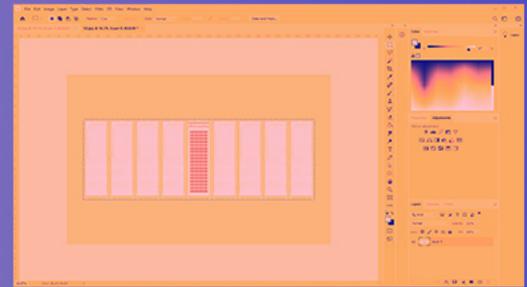
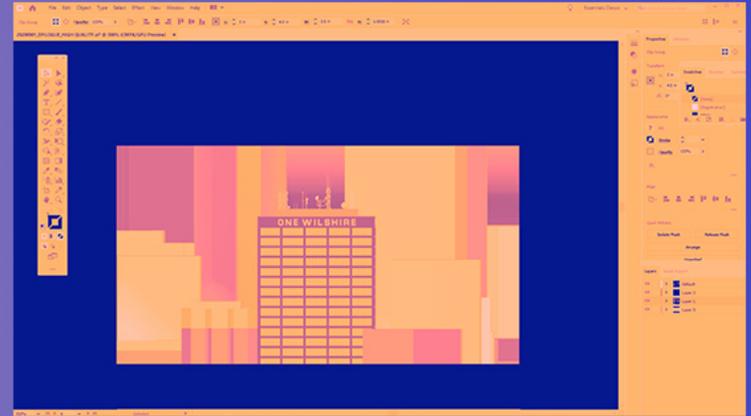
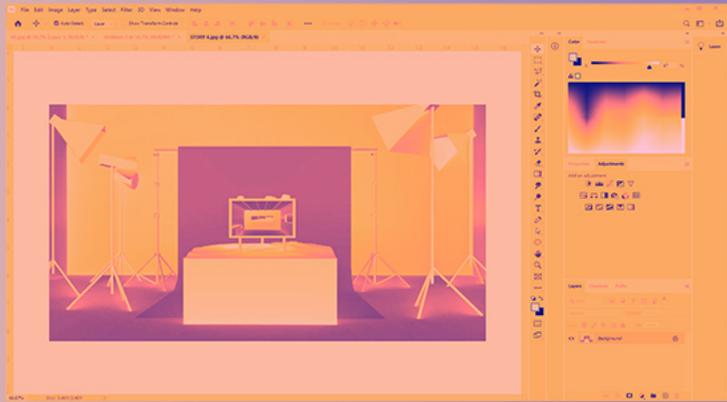
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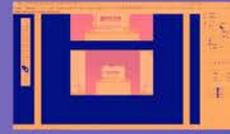
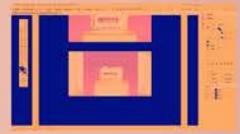


Timeline (no program) 2

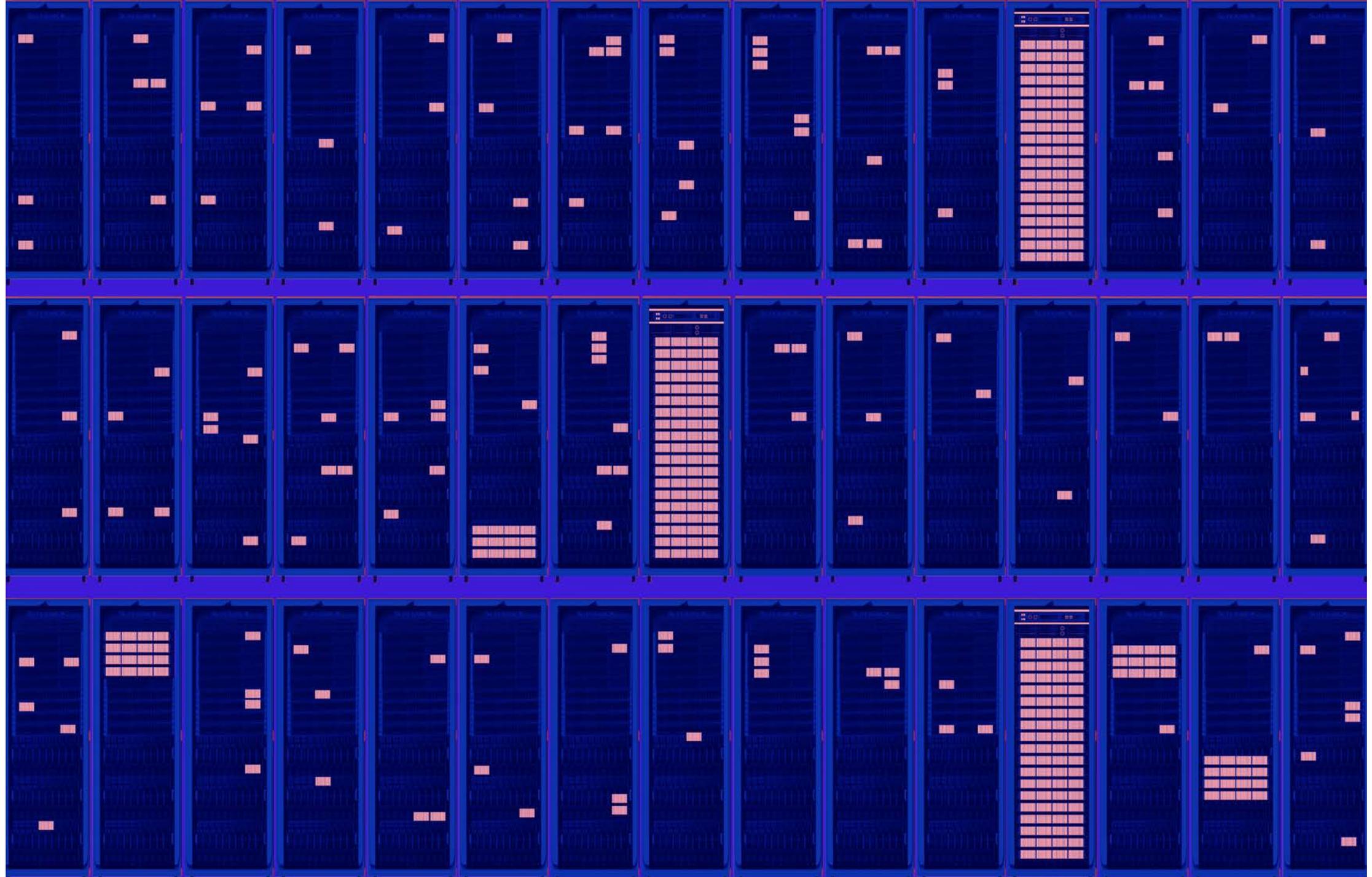
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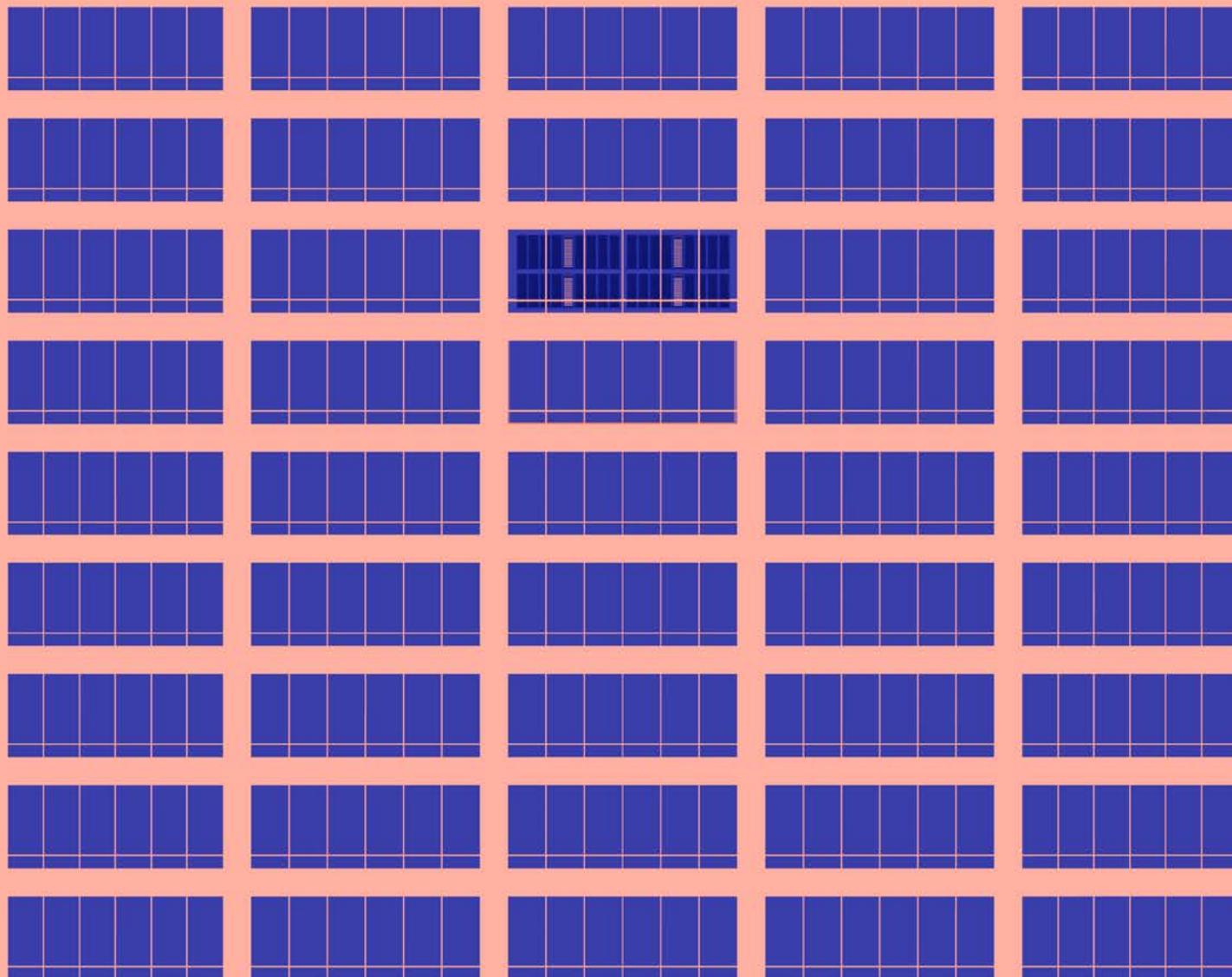




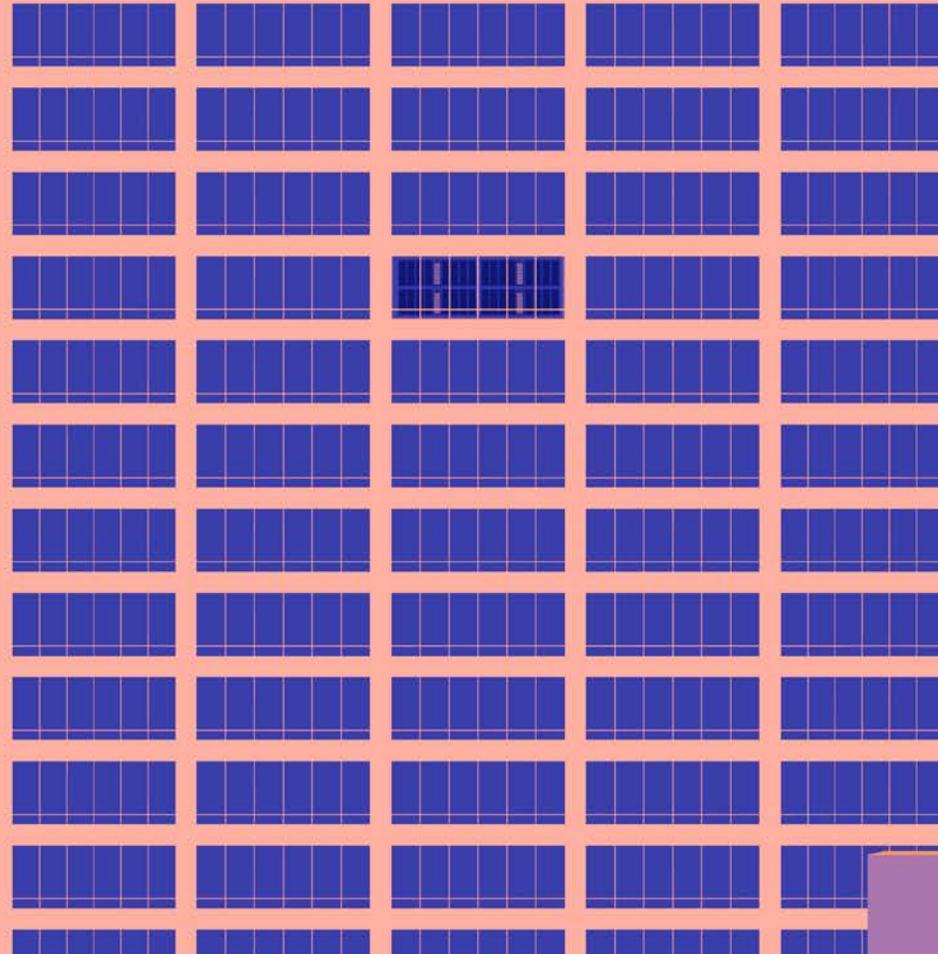




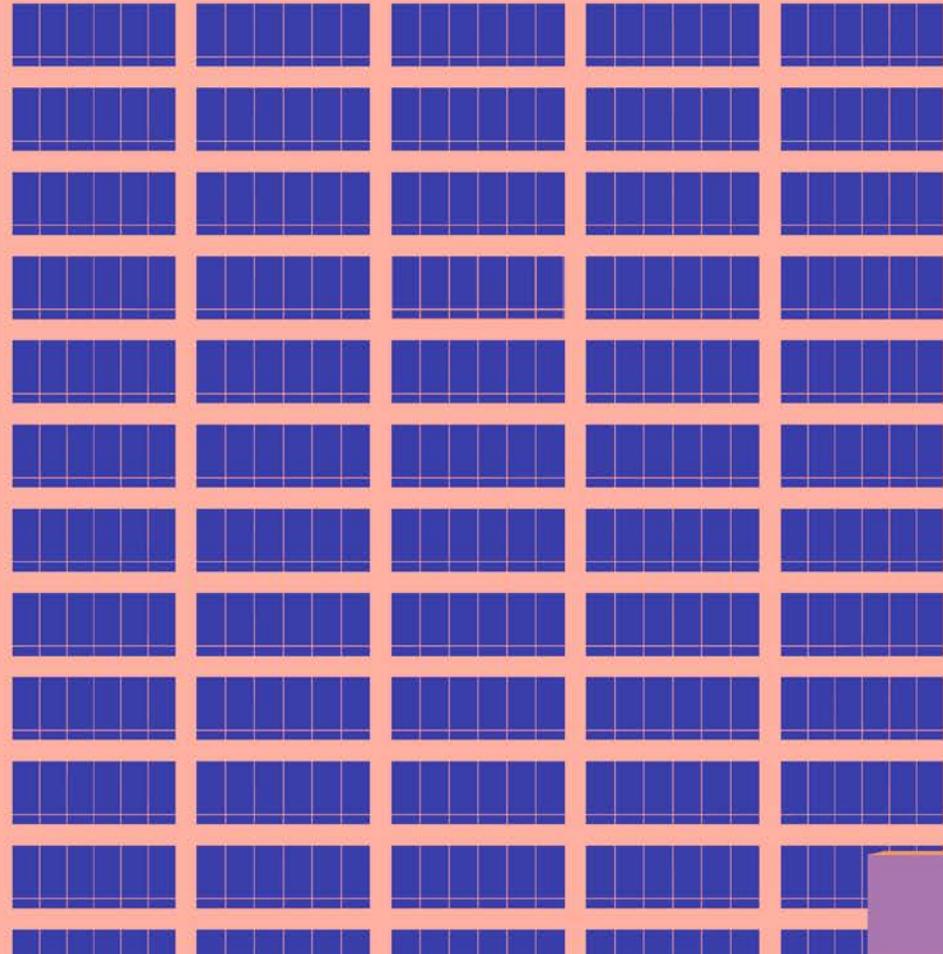
ONE WILSHIRE



ONE WILSHIRE



ONE WILSHIRE





ONE WILSHIRE





