Disruptions

"Things die as they become formal... That's obtuse thinking, so let me reference that: when a thing does not have any life at all, it seems to have a lot of manipulation for manipulations sake. And I suppose that's the way I interprete the word "formalism". At the same time I do recognise that certain kinds of activity can be essentially formal without being rigid or mortuistic. The failing of the architectural stage set mentality is its homogenious accessibility to all and an oppressive mania for influencing the entire fabric in all its details, over all its surfaces. Nothing is left alone. The professional devotion to care and responsibility leaves no space untreated, no surface uncovered. Its final effect is a lifeless emptiness, completely opposite to the emptiness at the end of the road, at the top of the stairs or at any point of non-use."

Gordon Matta Clark

Context

The Kasernenareal has been built in 1876, as a representative military complex in the outskirts of Zürich. However, it did not keep its military purpose for such a long time. Until today, these buildings have served as; a place for patriotic fests, a big field for experiments, a place for a revolt during 68, a space to host asylum seekers, an area to host the temporary, the circus. Today, the parade field serves as a prison as well as for the Gay Pride. Despite all this programme madness, the buildings haven't changed, only layers of traces have accumulated.

Other than the programme, the relative position of the Kasernenareal towards the city has changed as well. At the time of its construction, it was the first of the important buildings built on the Aussersihl. Fifty years later, it had become the city center. Cities tend to define themselves by their center. However, in Zurich, the center is now a huge and empty site, surrounded by old buildings which keep changing function. Being eager to define what the idendity of Zurich is, since the 1930's a lot of people have called the Kasernenareal a dysfunctional area and tried to formalise it into a stable, clear position.

Approach

I would tend to take the opposite direction. I think that it is a great opportunity to have a question mark in the center of our city. A place that accumulates specific traces of history and exposes them. A place that constantly questions the image of the city. For this reason, I don't want to formalise, or stabilise the site. The architecture school will be a new layer on this site, that will also one day be covered. The existing buildings are disguised hangars. A heavy, representative facade hiding a pragmatic steel/wooden grid. To some extend, the old Kaserne, the Zeughaus, the prison, the circus, the balloon, the new buildings, are actors wearing costume, taking part of a mascarade, of an architectural mise-en-scène. New actors are introduced, some by the architecture school, some others arrive by themselves, most were actually already hiding on the site.

Programm

So, the site will not get formalised by the arrival of the great institution of the ETH, but the institution will have to squeeze, to adapt to this undefined place. Most of the studios place themselves in the existing buildings, continuing the logic of occupation of the area. The new buildings bring the missing functions of a school of architecture, but they are at principally additions to the city, as stages, bars, or covered market area.

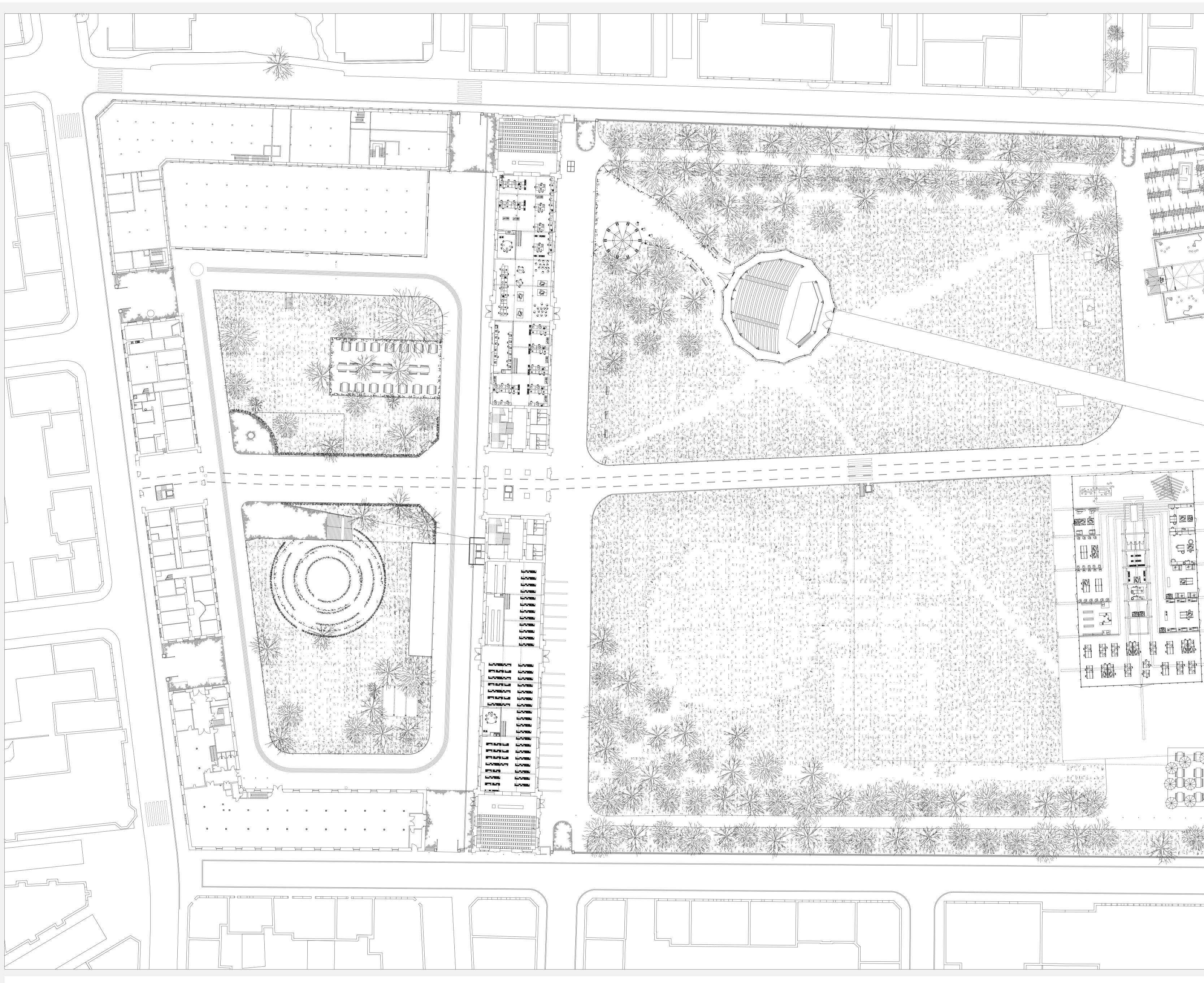
Tectonics

On the stage, the actors wear costumes. Shiny plates of copper, drapes, glass, or imposing stones. Once passed under the robe, the roughness of the everyday, of the functional is discovered. The uncanny meeting of the banal life of a building and its (also in a way banal) layer of representation tends to create productive disruptions. Places that have a strong resonance but stay undefined.

Landscape

The site is divided into the main stage and coulisses. Small scale entrances at the back of the buildings, hidden behind the trees. On the other hand, A completely open field, a few actors looking at each other, and the life of the architecture school being played out. The landscape is reflective of the process of this place. Elements are added on top of each other, abstract traces are activated at different times by their operators.

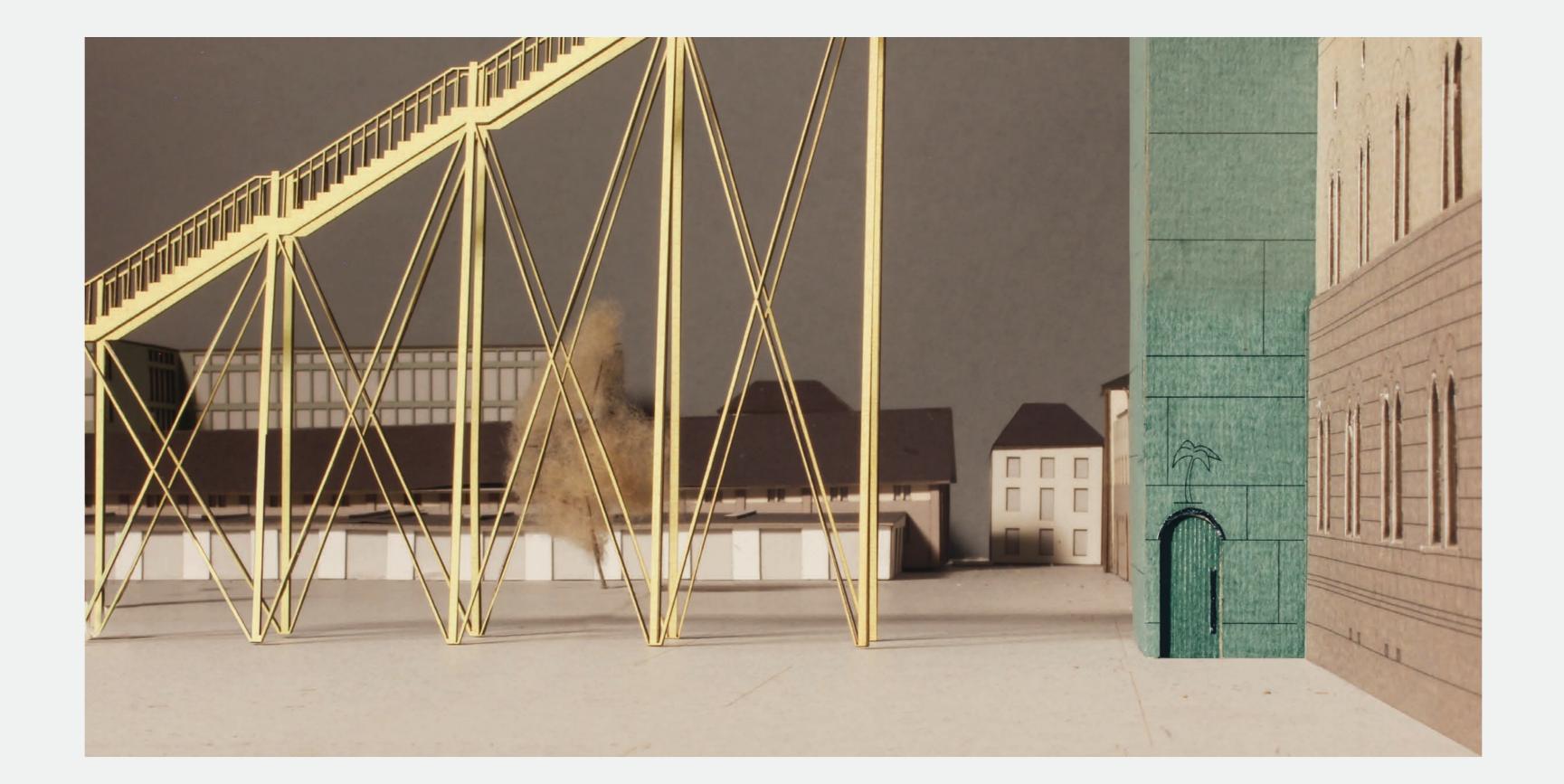




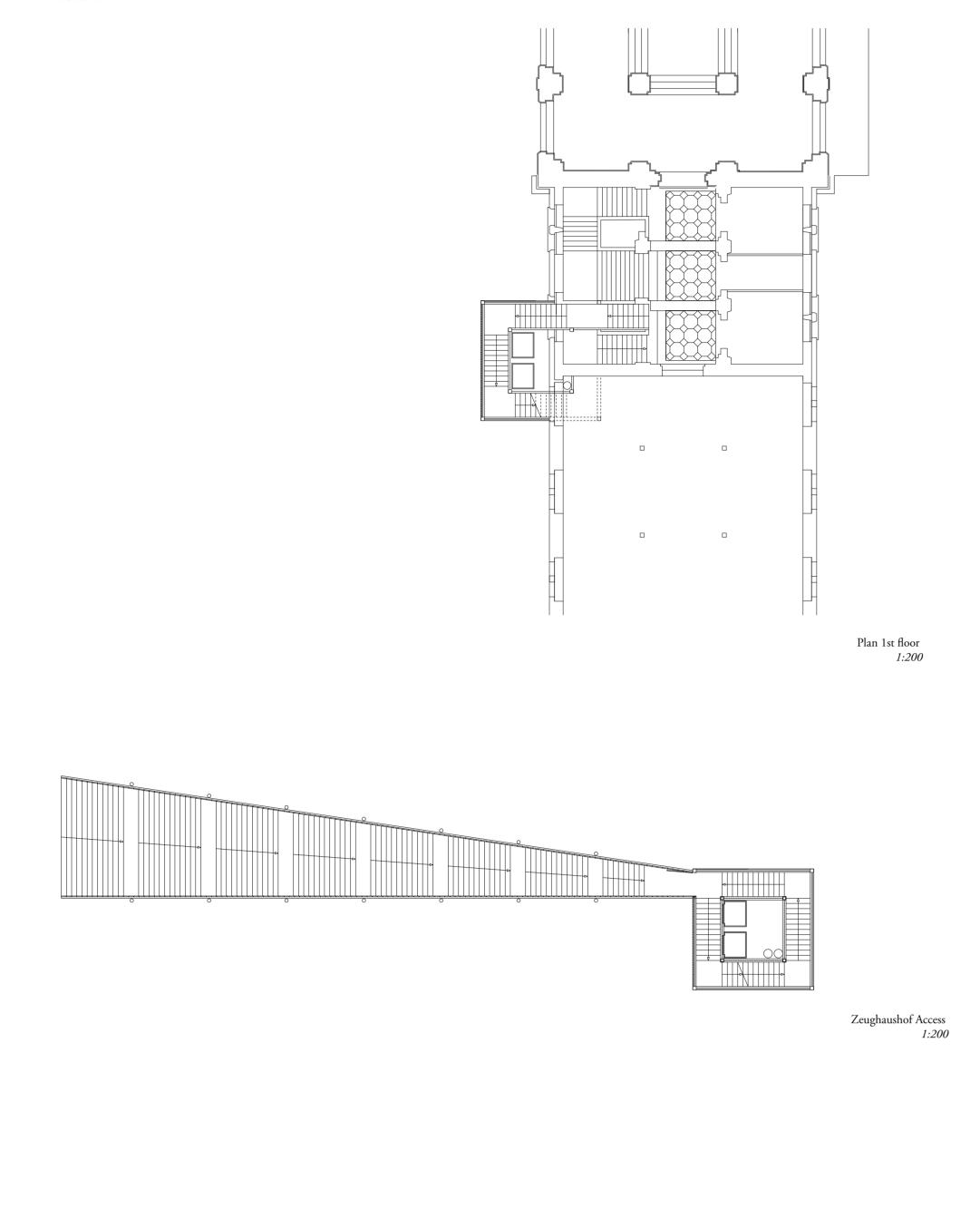
Journaux de bord

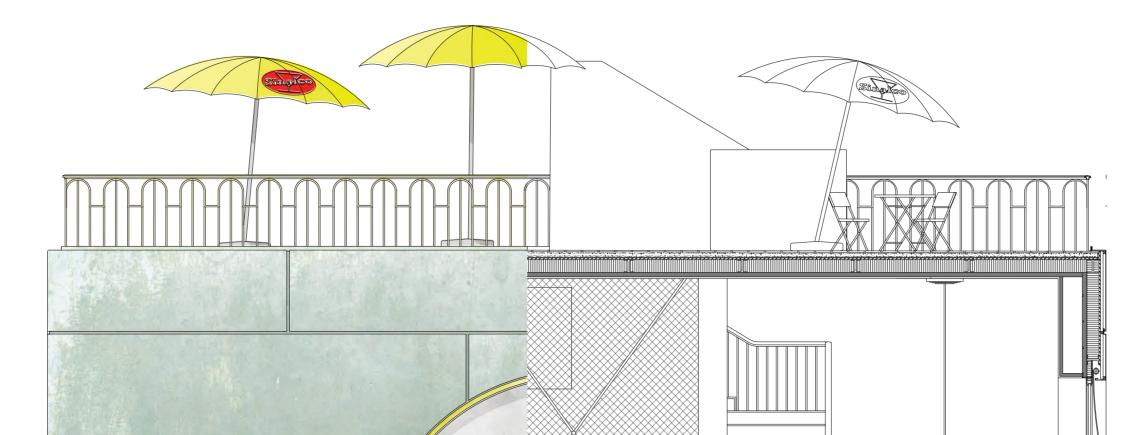
Cast:	
1	Old General Kaserne
2	Old General Zeughaus
3	Good Soldier
4	Bride
5	Cat
6	Ghost
7	Рирру
8-24	Magic Beans
25-33	Centaurus
34-39	Strangers

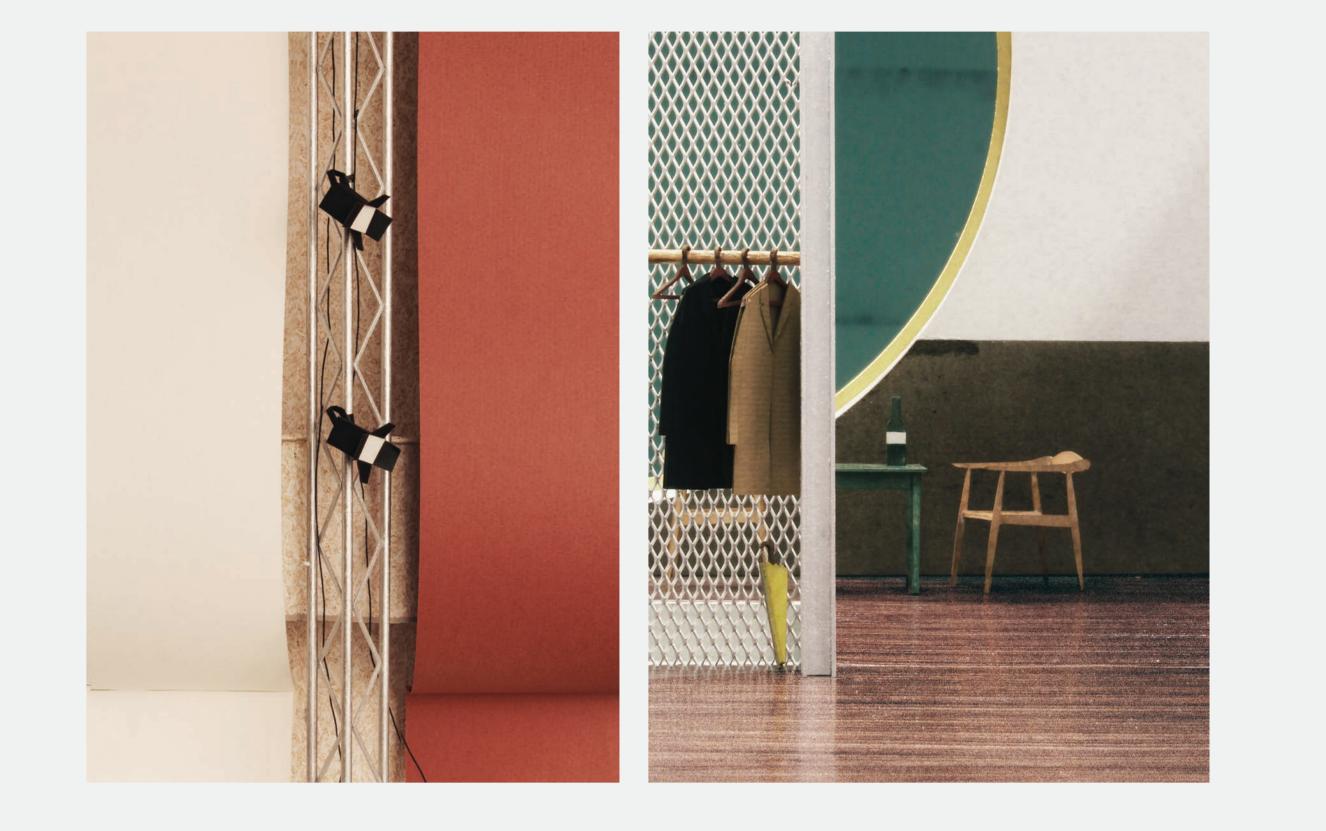
0800 800 Later Appropriate CHARLES HOLD IN THE Distanting of the Can Databate p || mananana t the static static Webstack Webs KAN KANKANAN Charles and the second s 1946 3 44 4 44 87 198 (444 4 4 4) Groundfloor plan 1:350 50m

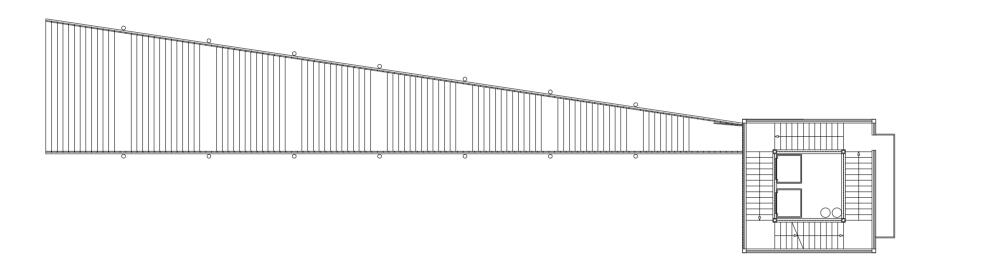


4 Stretching up, the bride looks over the Kaserne to the tall and elegant Urania observatory. As soon as her husband passes away, she will harvest the money and leave. Up there is a great place to drink a 15.- Spritz. The courageous people who climbed the stairs get a discount.

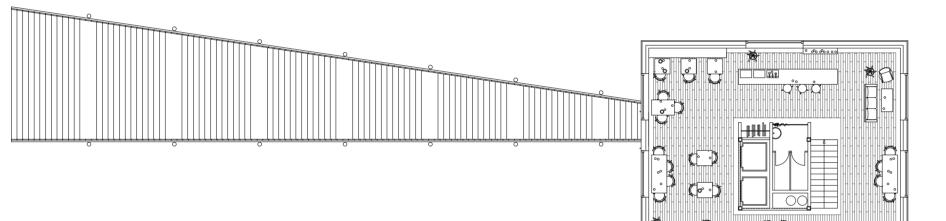


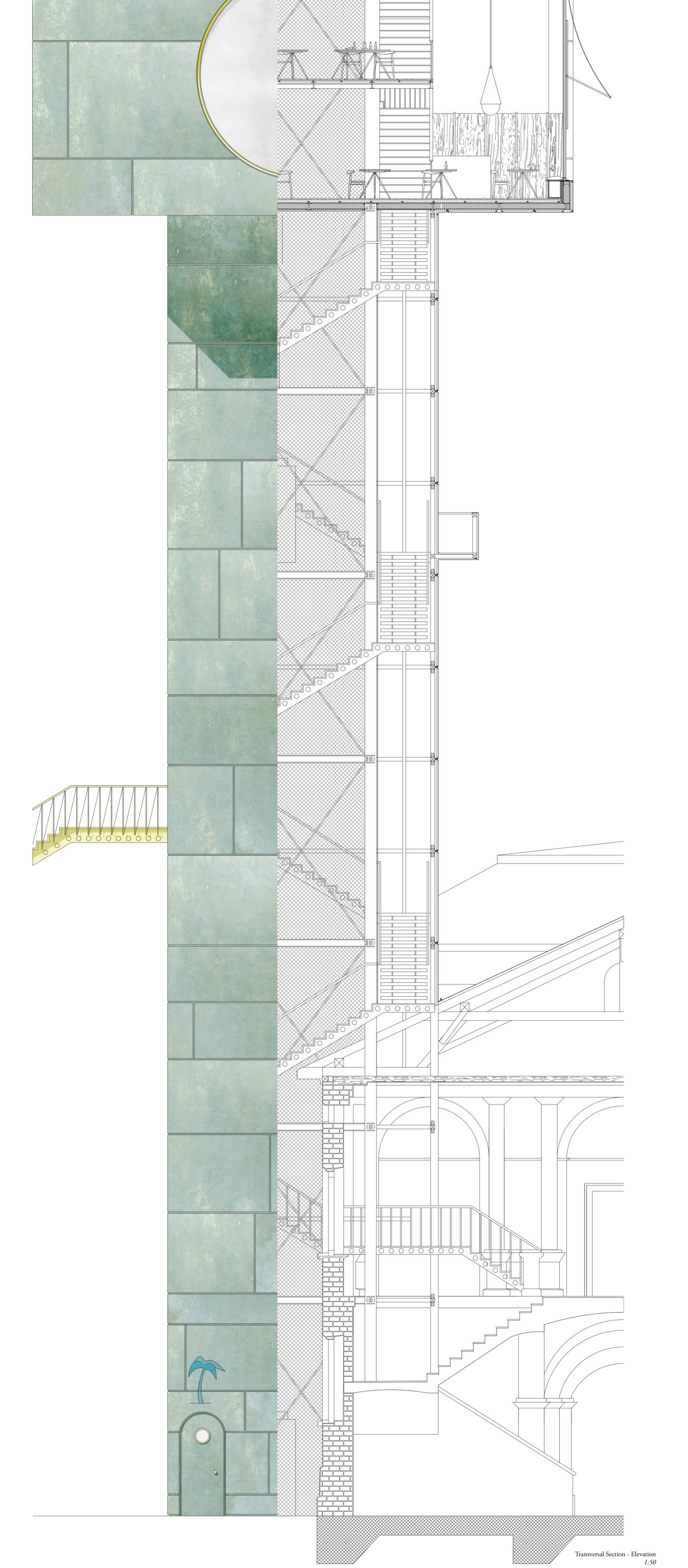




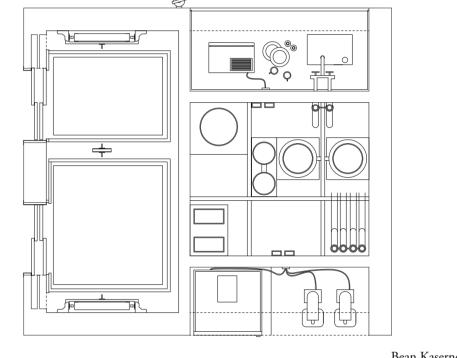




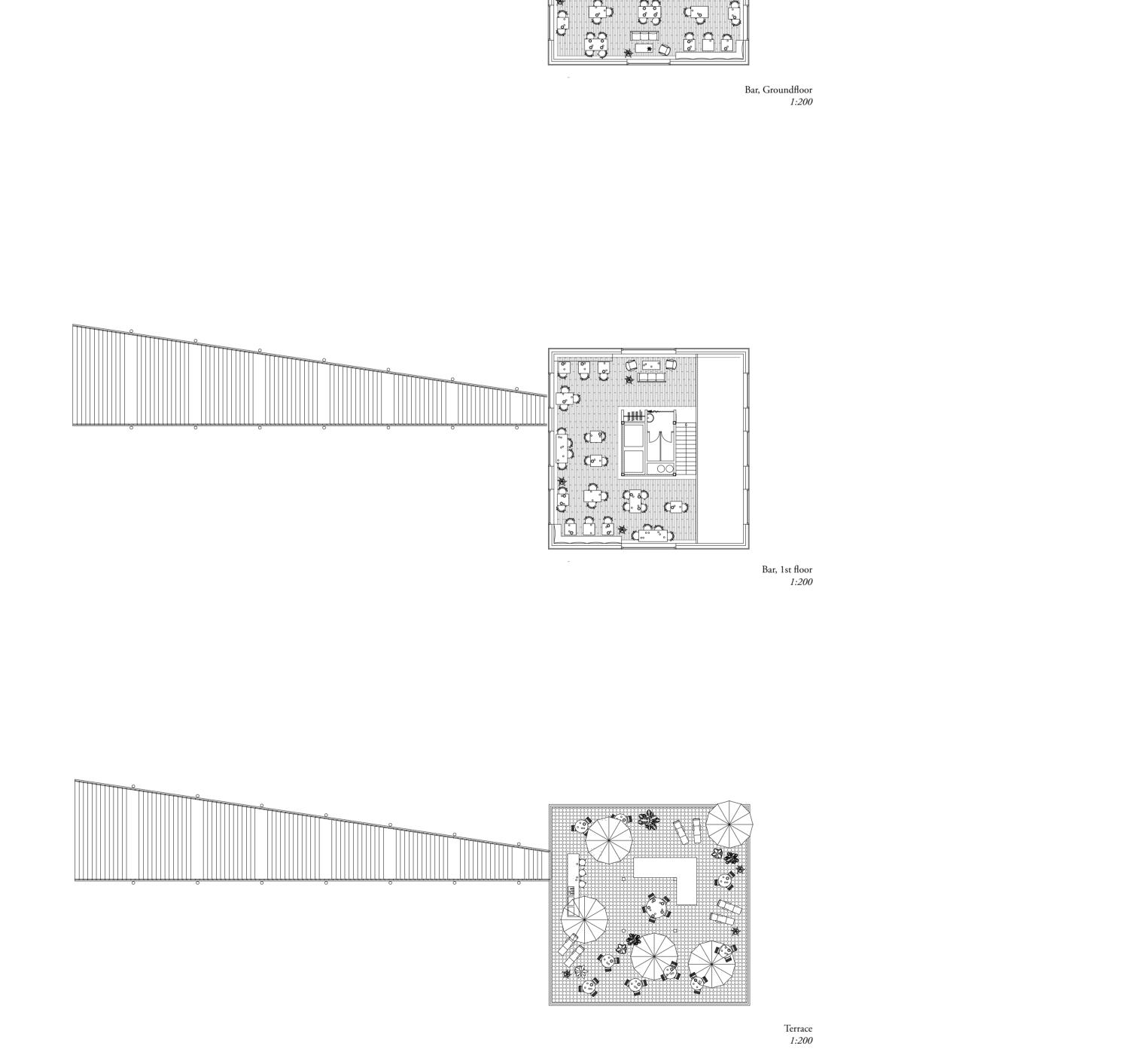


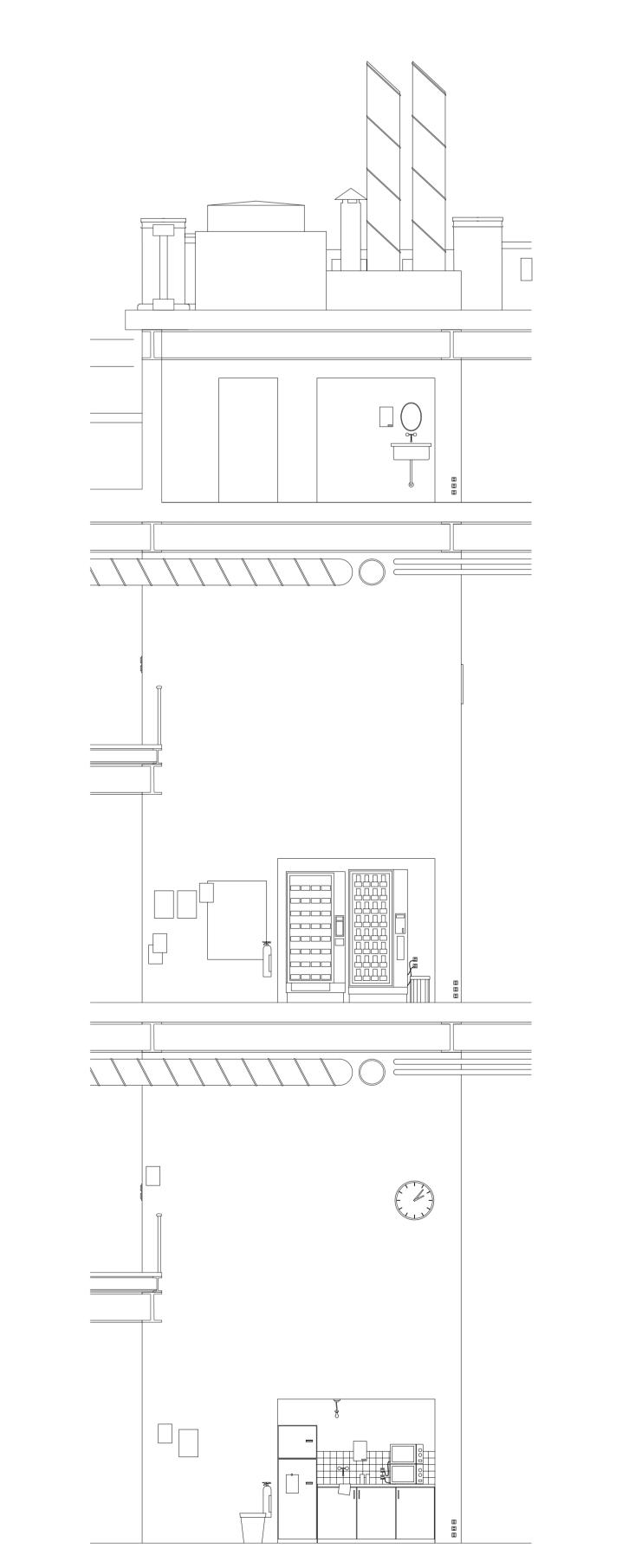


8-24 Inside of each character is a magic bean. The actors try to keep them hidden; they do not fit that well with their shiny costumes as they represent the rough reality of their tectonics and everyday use.

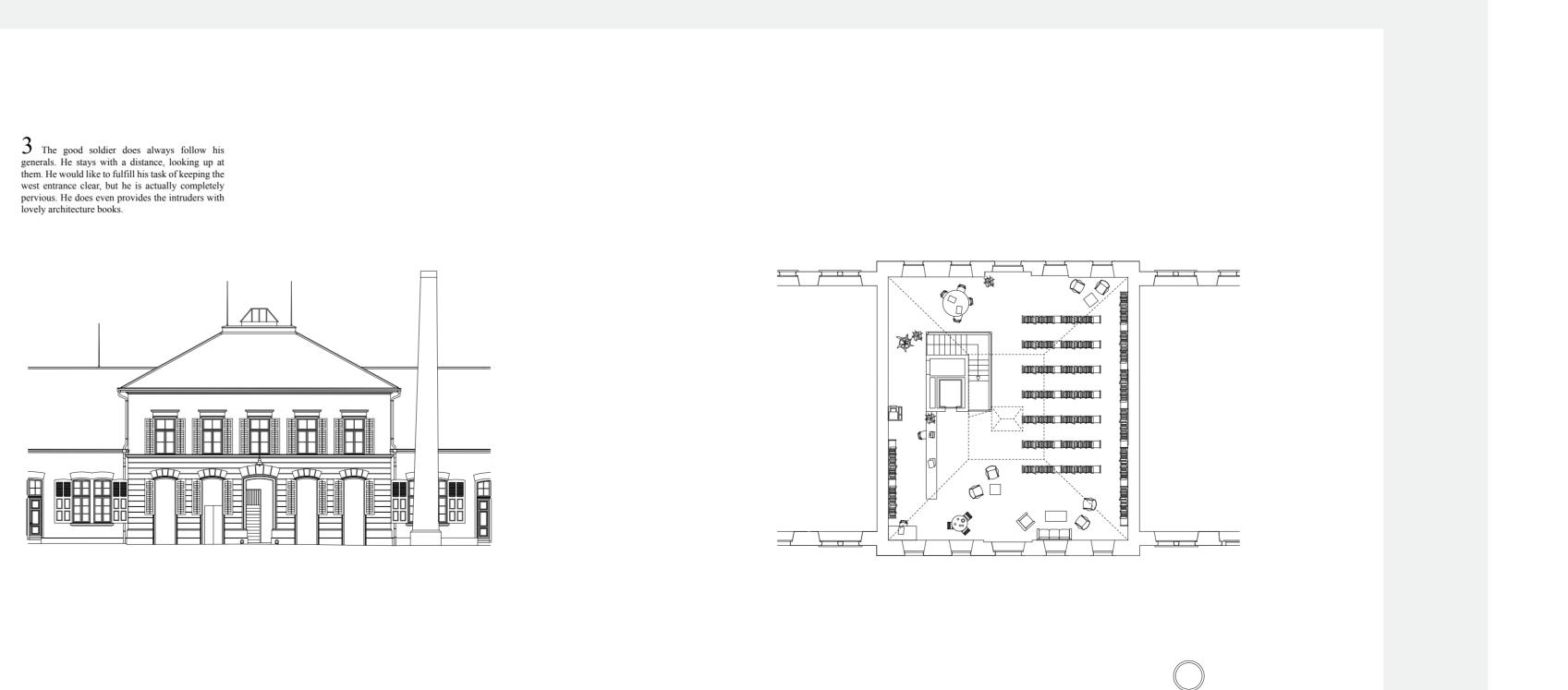


Bean Kaserne, Plan 1:50



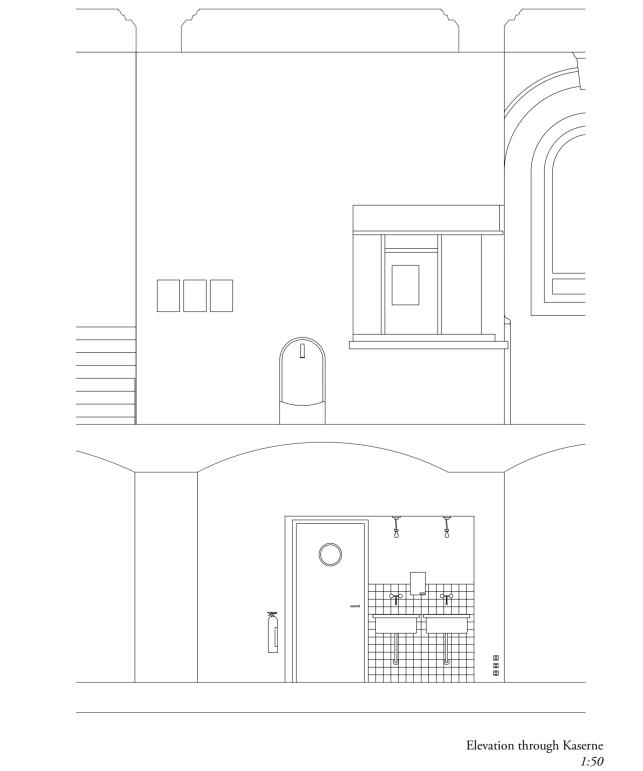






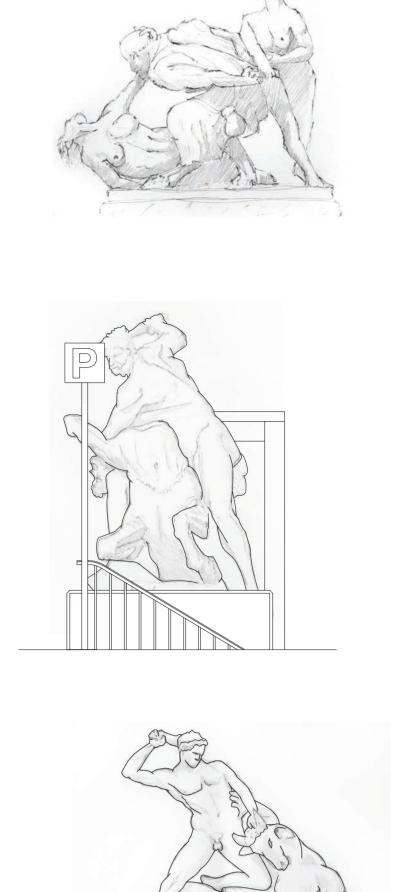
1st floor Plan *1:200*

Elevation 1:200

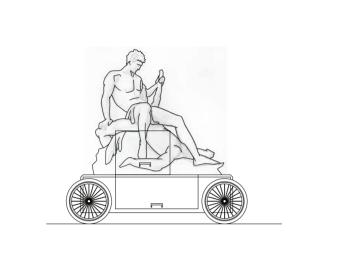




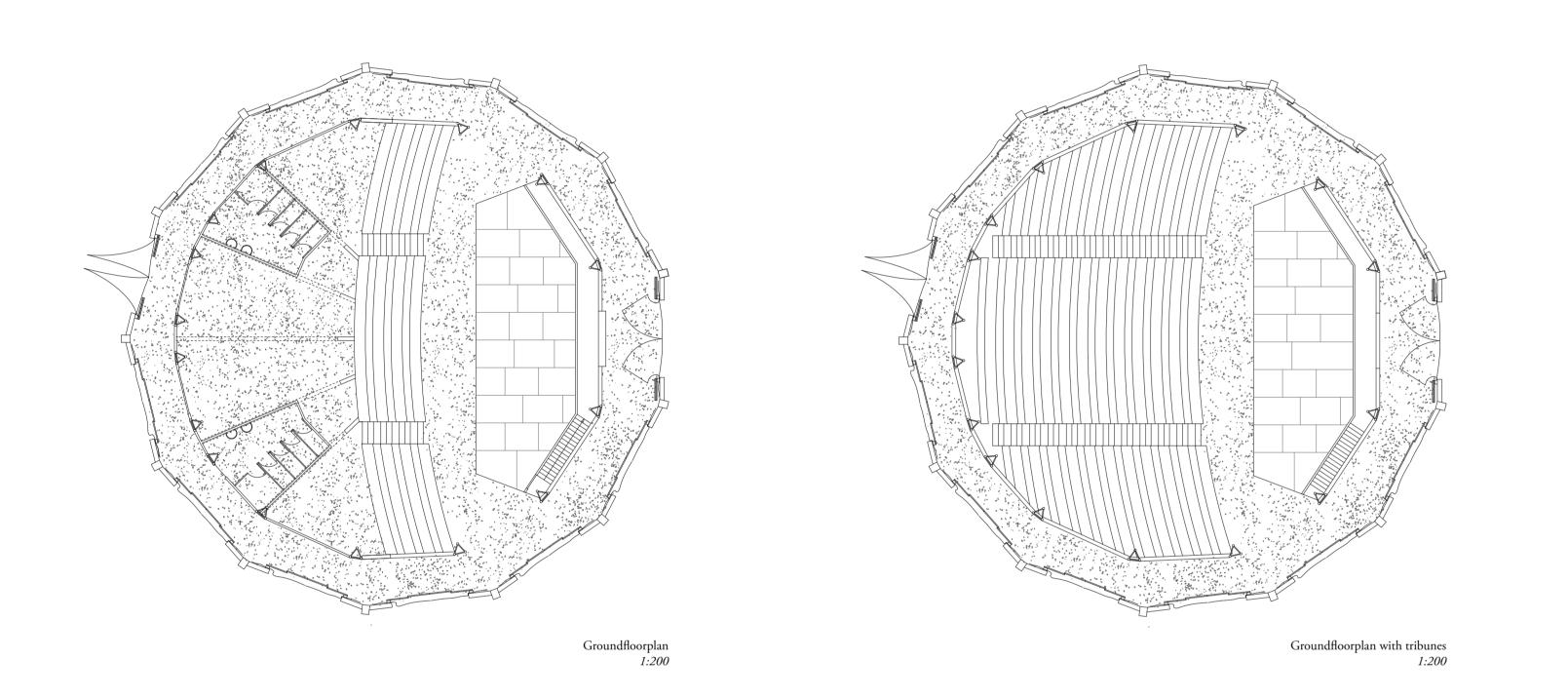


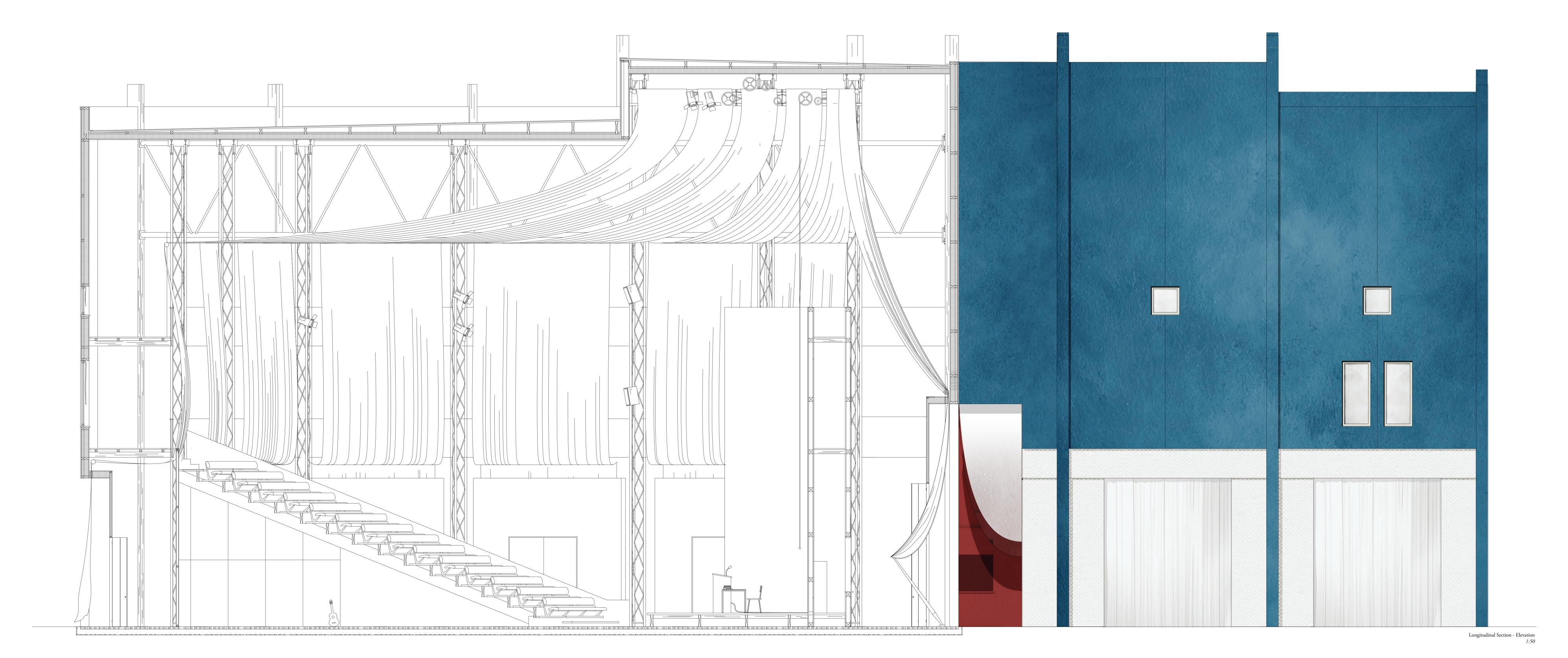


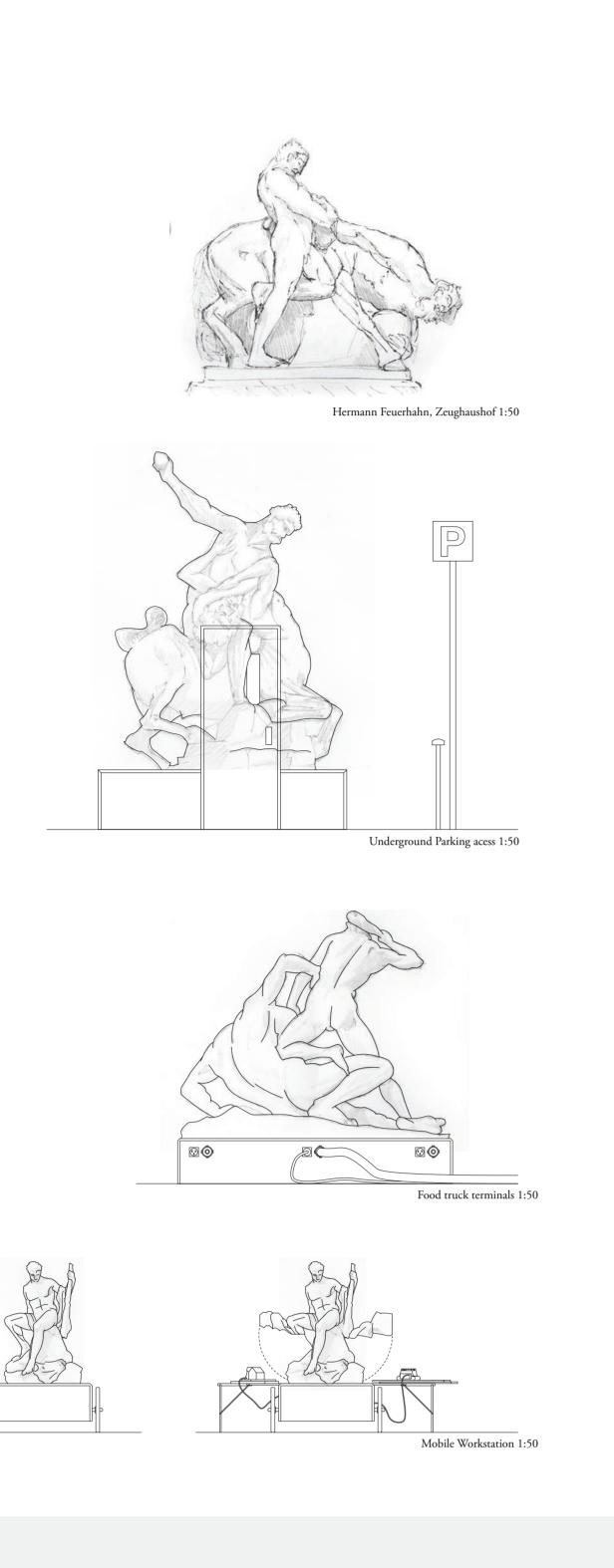
25-33 Remaining sculptures from Hermann Feuerhahn recall the swiss military mythology. The architecture school adds some new ones to the collection. Men fighting centaurus, the good fighting the evil, the constant struggle of the architecture student.



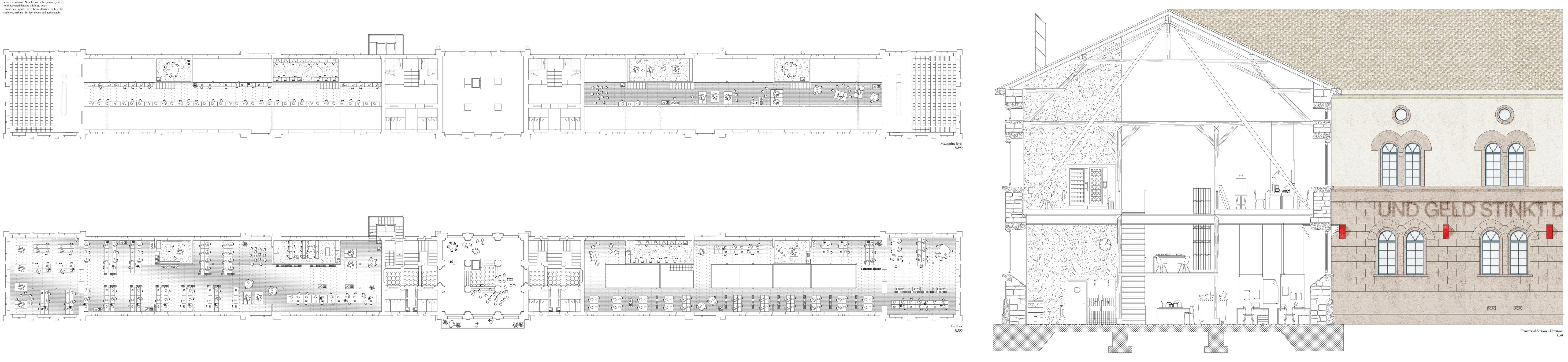
6 Coming out of the forest, the ghost enjoys haunting the old generals. However it does mainly spend its time fooling around. In the morning, architecture professors deliver their profecies to sleepy students. In the evening, the whole neighborhood stays awake to the sound of the metal band playing inside.

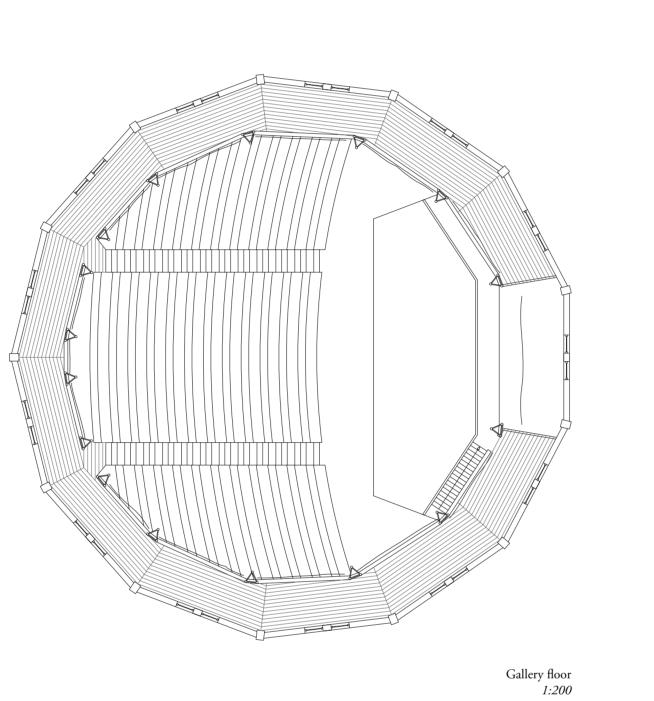


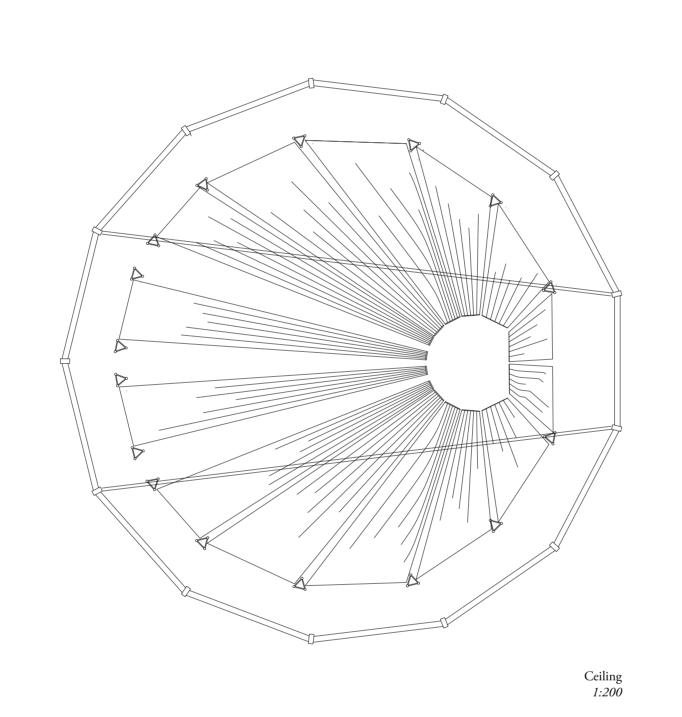




2 Despite being an old general, the Zeughaus has never fought in a battle. He is actually fine with that, since he is rather of a romantic. As he got retired, his first move was to find himself a young and attractive woman. Now he keeps her jealously next to him, scared that she might go away. Brand new splints have been attached to his old skeleton, making him feel young and active again.

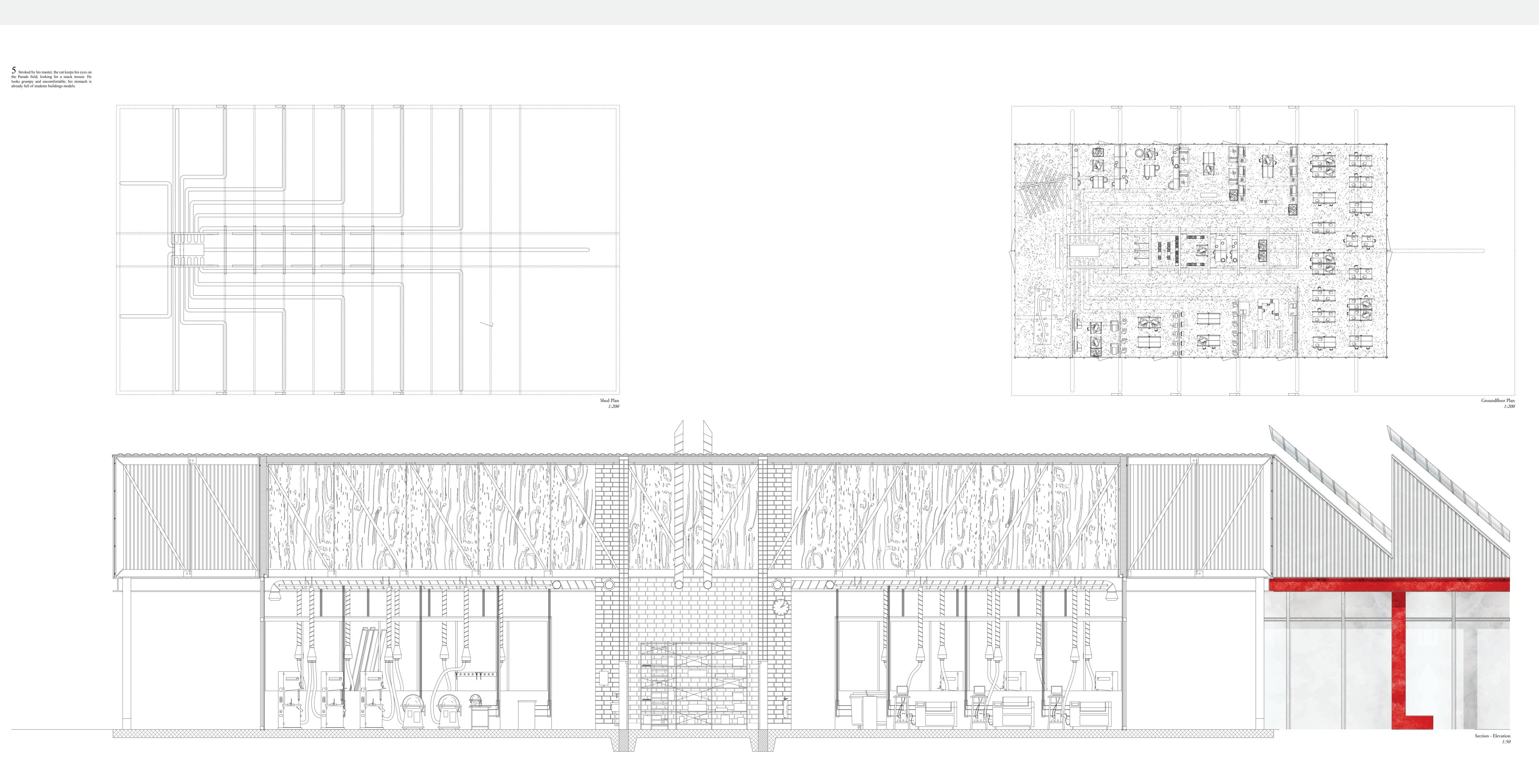


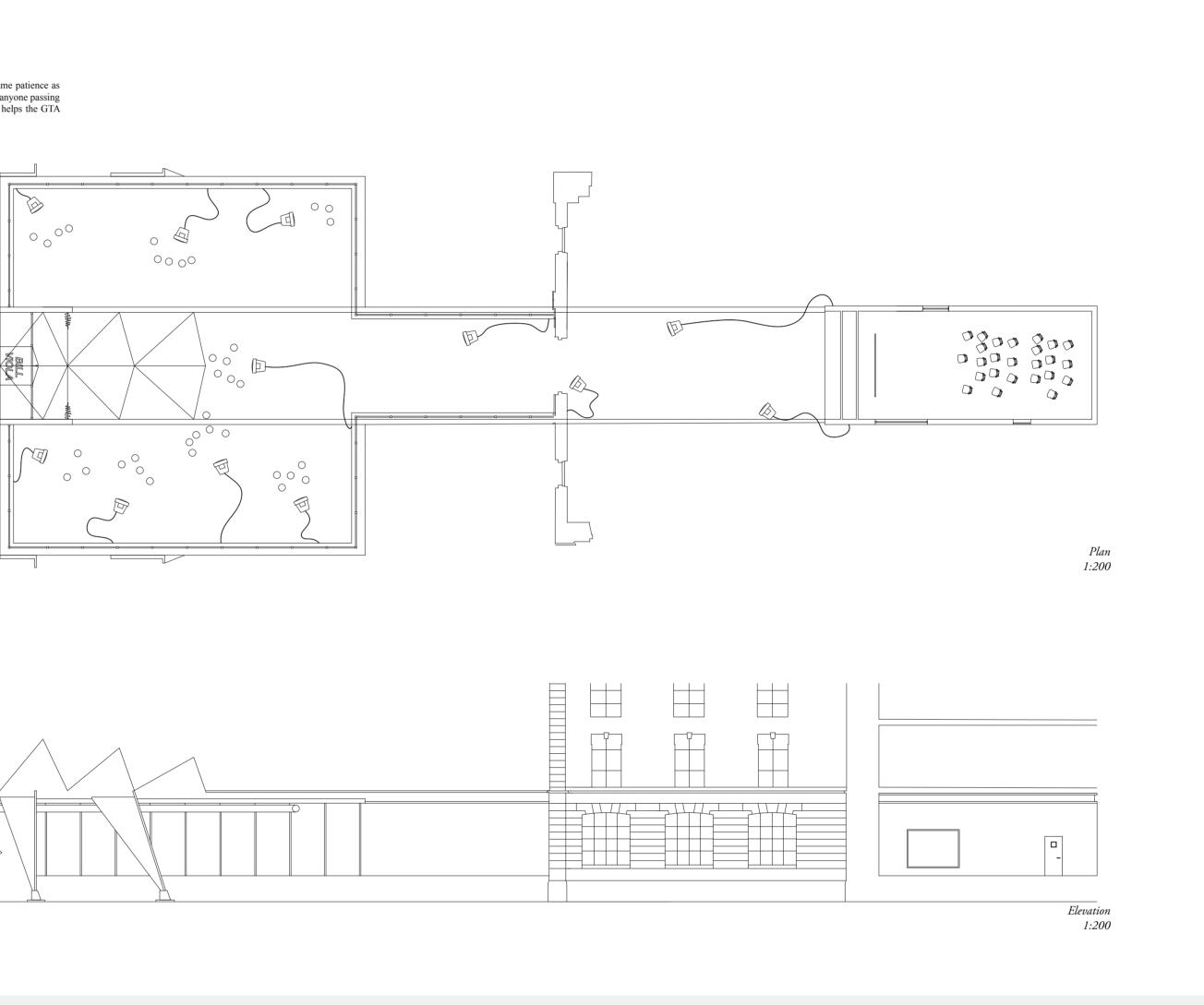


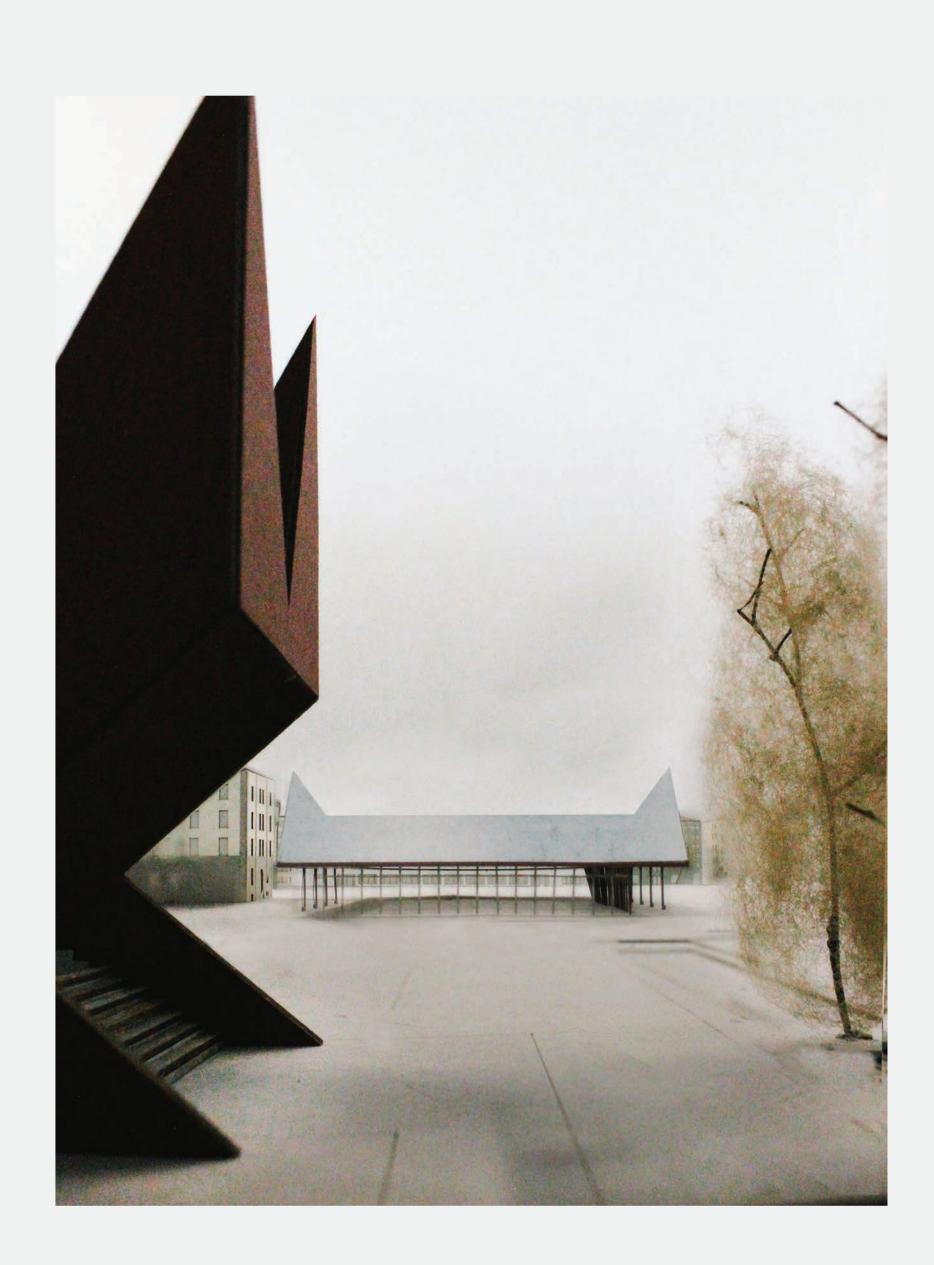








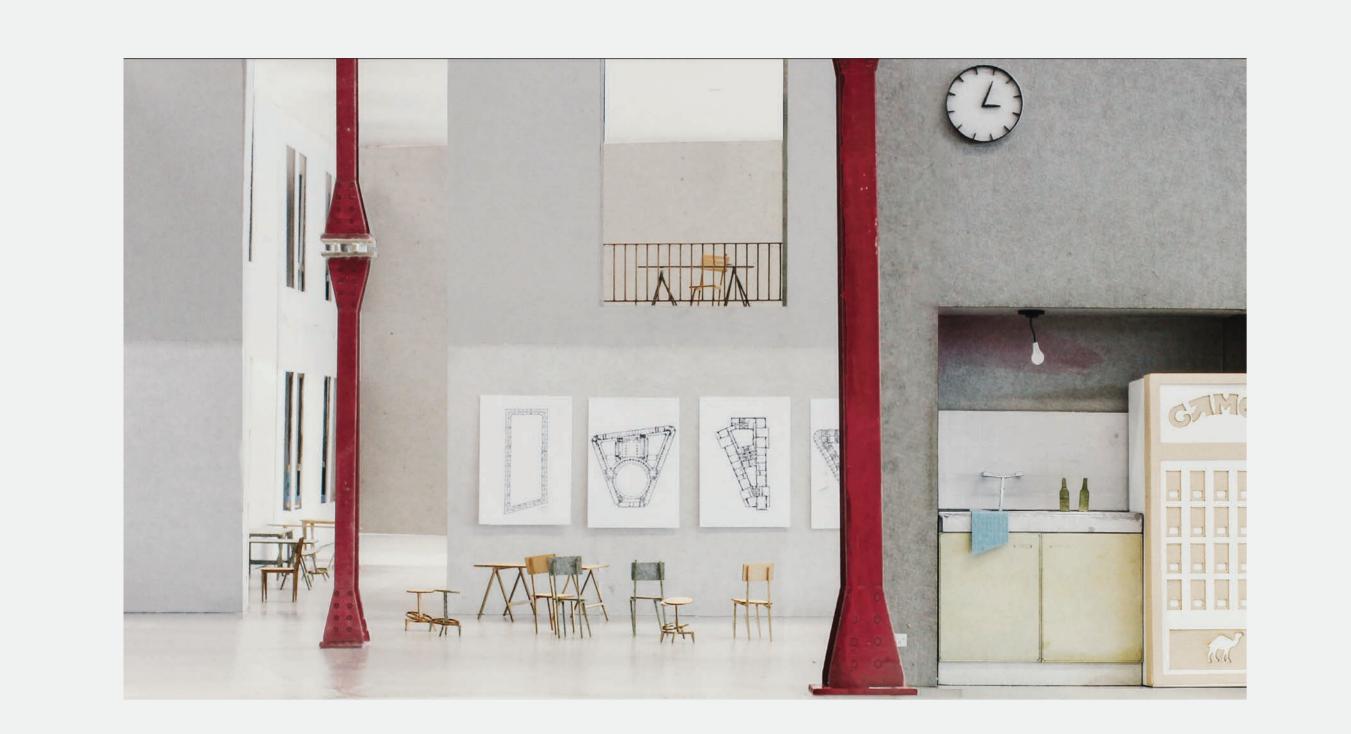




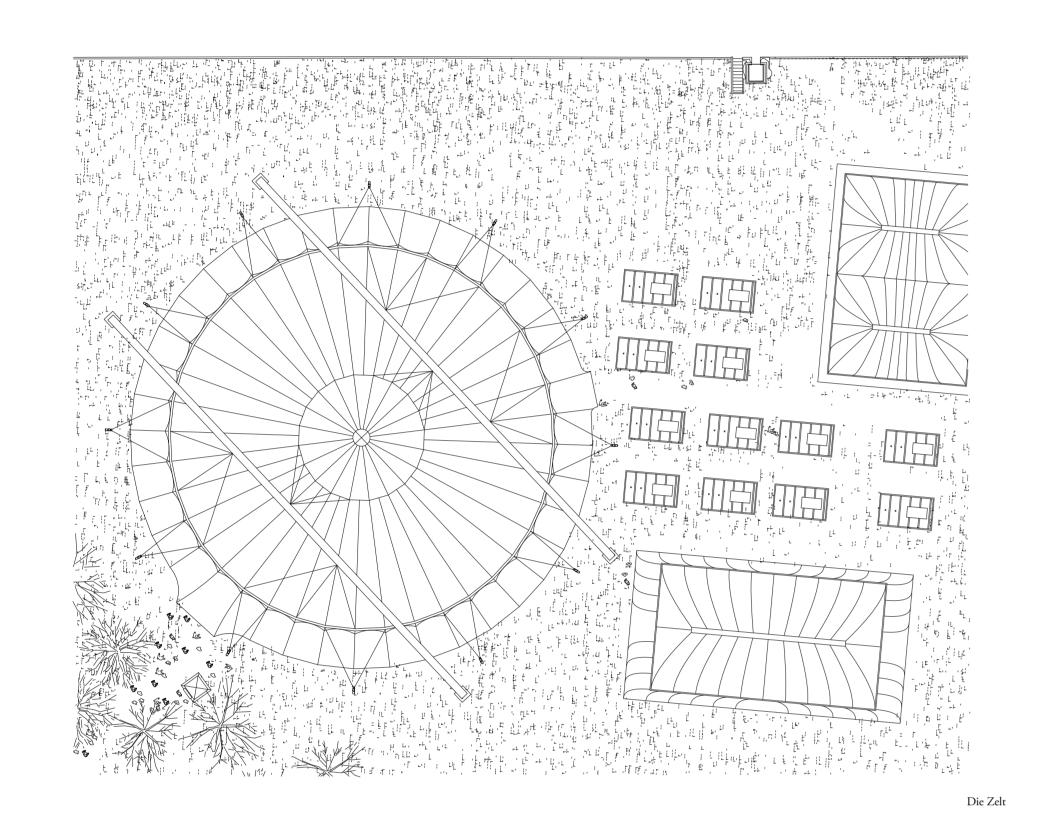


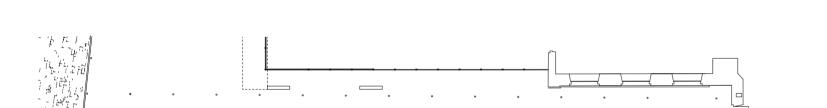
1 The Kaserne enjoys spending his day talking about his glorious days of battle. Indeed very few believe, nor listen to him. Hence, it stays angry on the side of the site, behind his beloved cat and his young puppy. He used to be very happy with his previous inhabitants, comfortable policemen who would arrive each morning at 8, do some administratif work and leave early. Then, the architects arrived, destroyed his carefully planned cells and started messing around days and nights. How anoying!

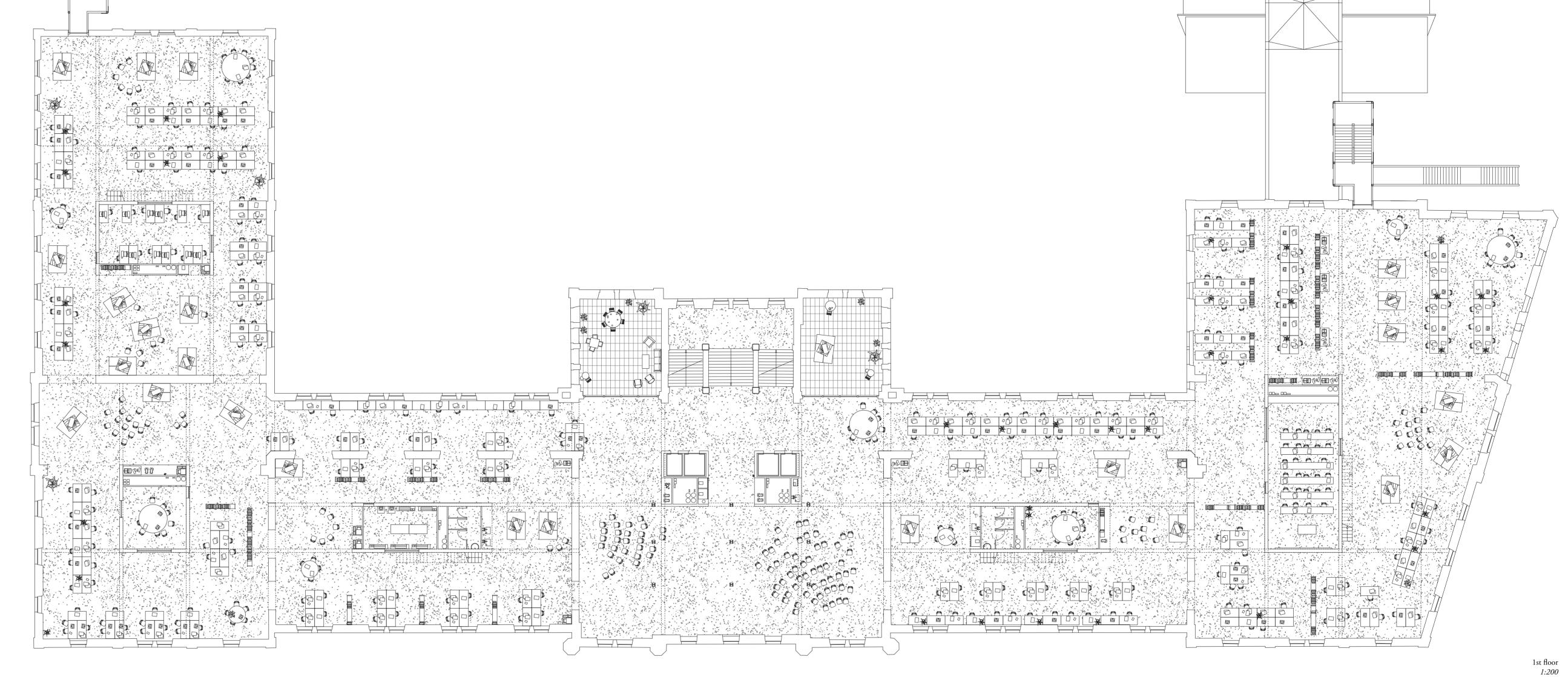
e – –

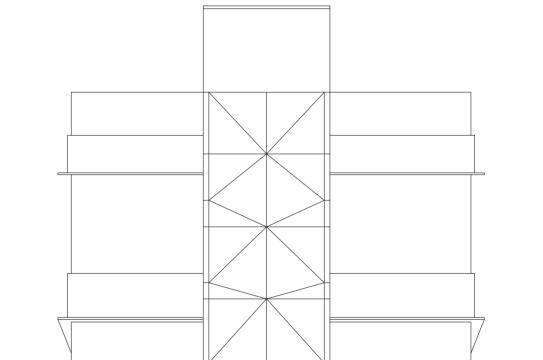


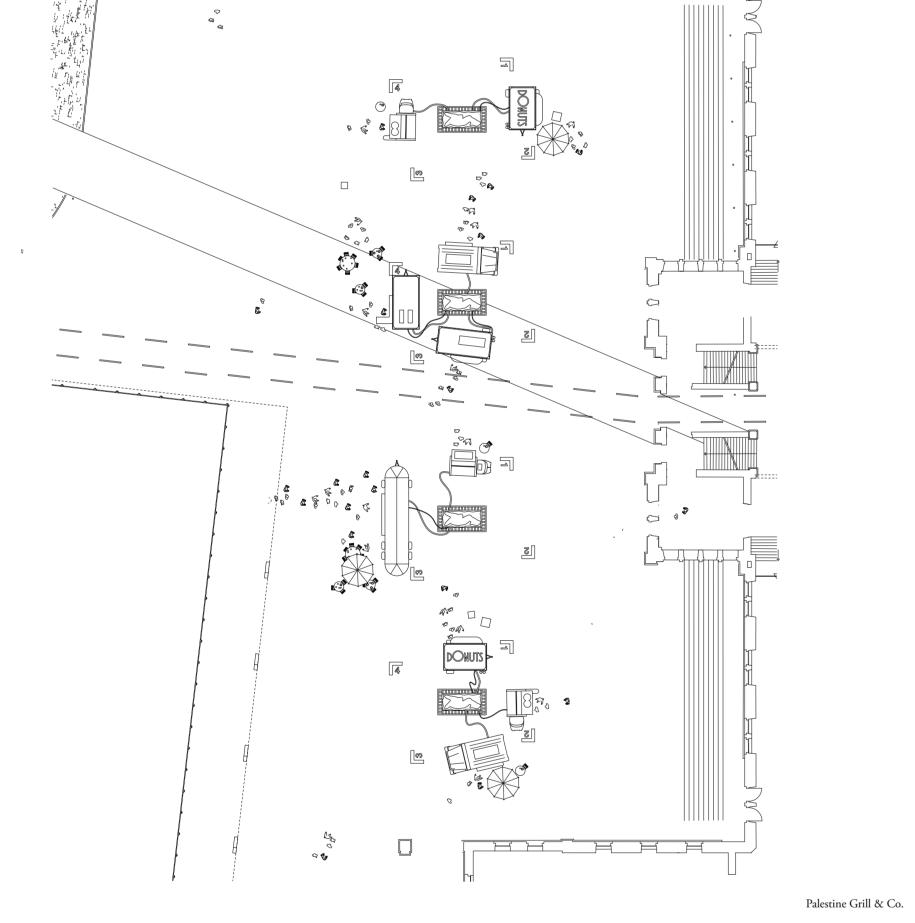
34-39 On different frequencies, strangers join the play. Cyclists cross the site at high speed, ringing their bell at the people on their way. Each morning the food carts parade through the central axis and plug their trucks to the statues. The circus passes by twice a year to keep company to the ghost (and entertain the students). At the begining of the semester a new structure built by the Emerson studio pops up on the stage. On other occasions masses take control of the whole area to protest again the evil capitalism.



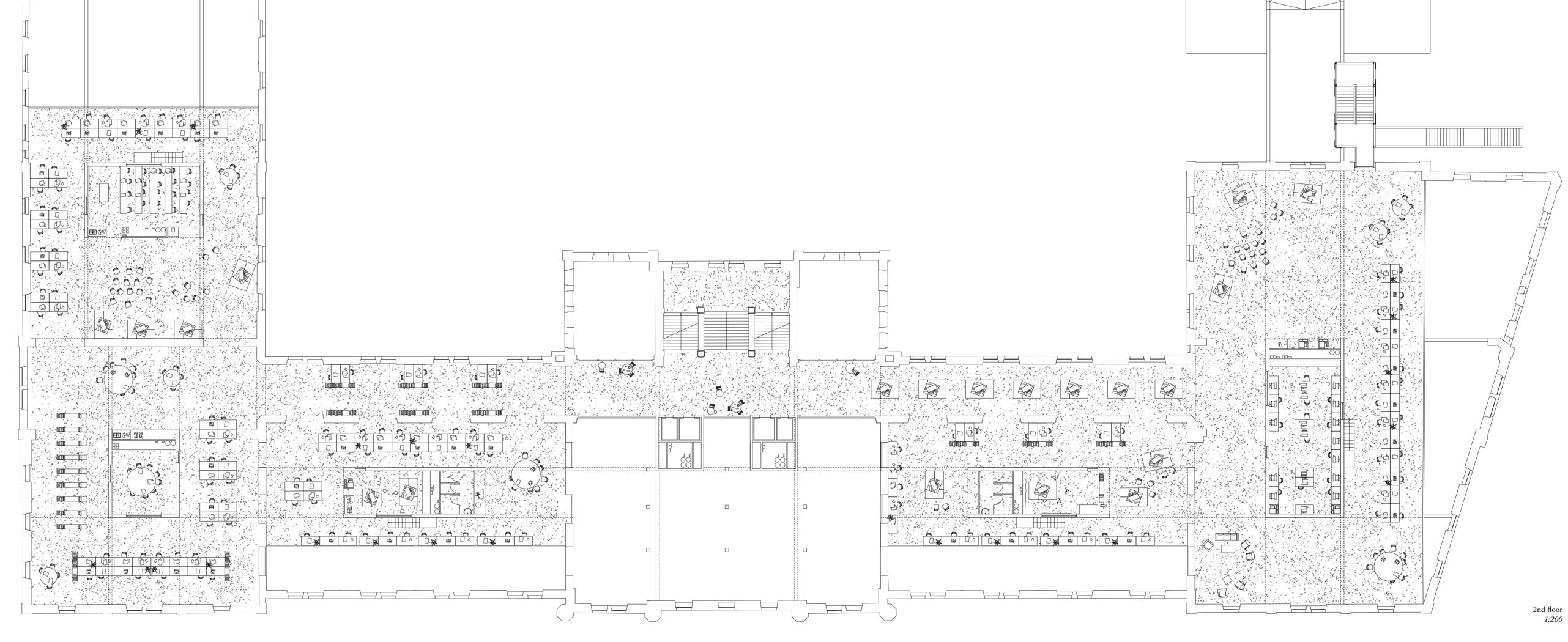


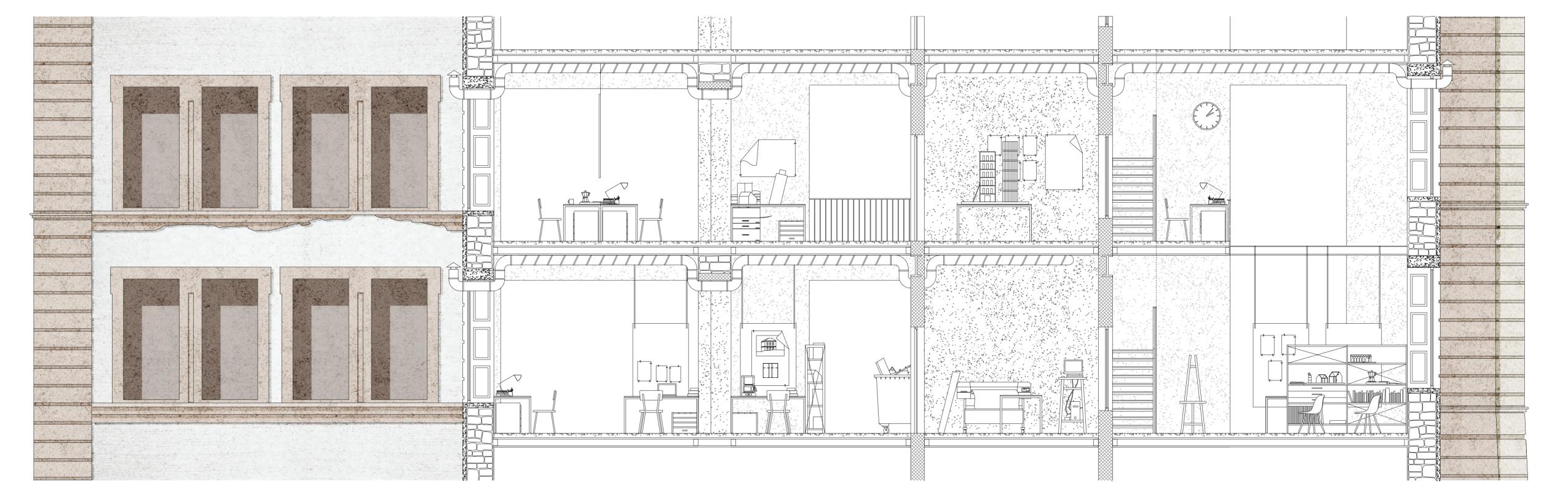




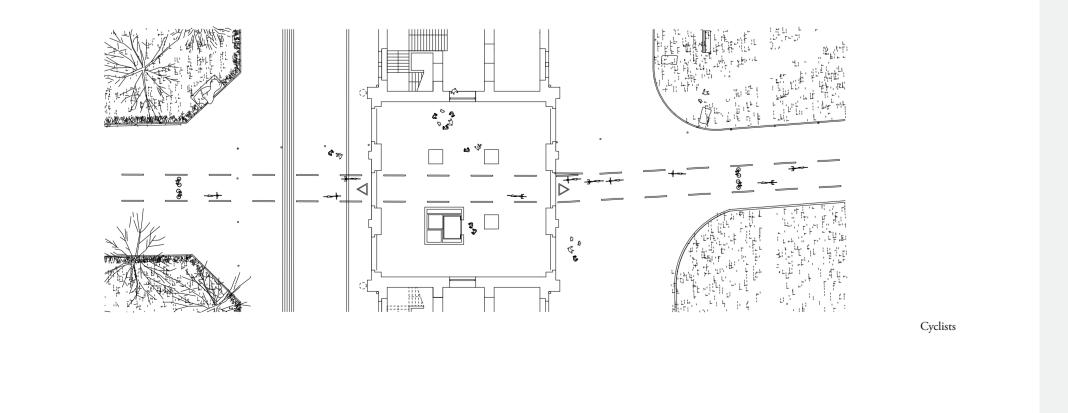








Ы



Studio - Transversal section 1:50