

[DE]construction and [RE]construction | A Promenade Theater

Thesis Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Architecture in the Department of Architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design.

By Jingjing Zhao

Rhode Island School of Design
2017

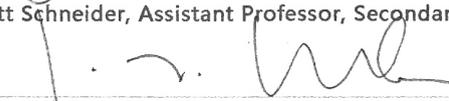
Approved by



Christopher Bardt, Professor, Primary Thesis Advisor, Architecture



Brett Schneider, Assistant Professor, Secondary Thesis Advisor



Jonathan Knowles, Associate Professor, Thesis Coordinator, Architecture

REFRAME THE COMMONPLACE

I see corners, ceilings, openings and steps.

I see the whole through gathering the spatial fragmentations.

I see the extraordinary phenomenon within the frame of domestic life.

I see the potential for being anomaly from what we usually take for granted.

Spaces are entities propelled by the phenomenological, the conceptual and the physical. Built and spatial forms serves as functional and structural vessel to capture, balance and rearrange the multiple forces between the common and the abnormal, between the real and the abstract.

Capturing the domestic moments in daily life and reframe the fragmentations into certain from as a whole. Through strategic but simple maneuvers of the architectural language, simple but significant manipulations could lead to a extracted but powerful existence.

Reframing

This is a non-full, non-simple, non-complete and non-hierarchy space.

Probe

This is a space that one can only experience the partial and imagine the whole through gathering the pieces of space-time fragments; however, an endless loop of different identities in the process gets revealed.

Relate

This is a space sited in the process of emerging and dissolving; it is also a process of creating spatial illusion.

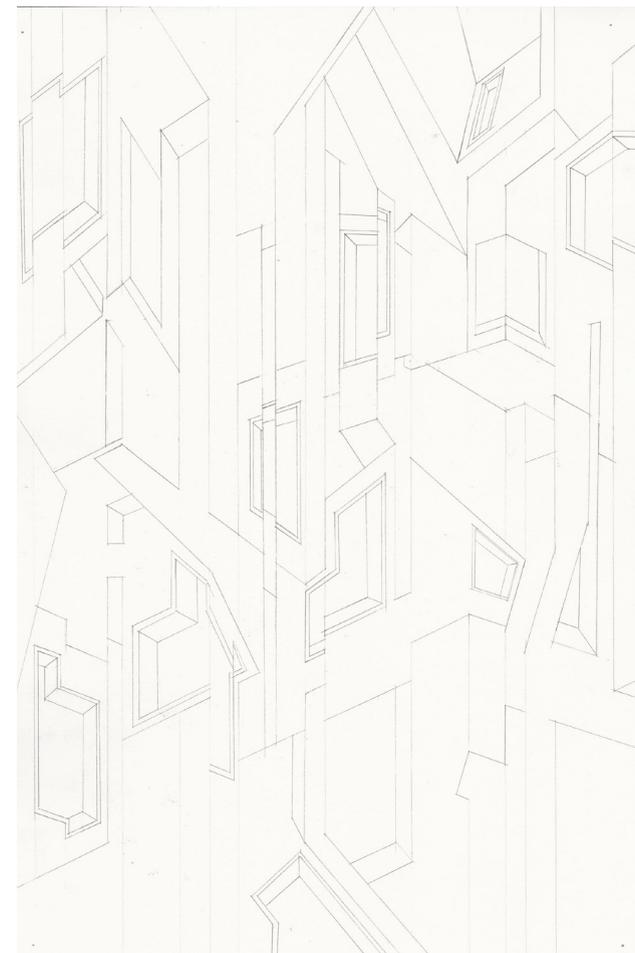
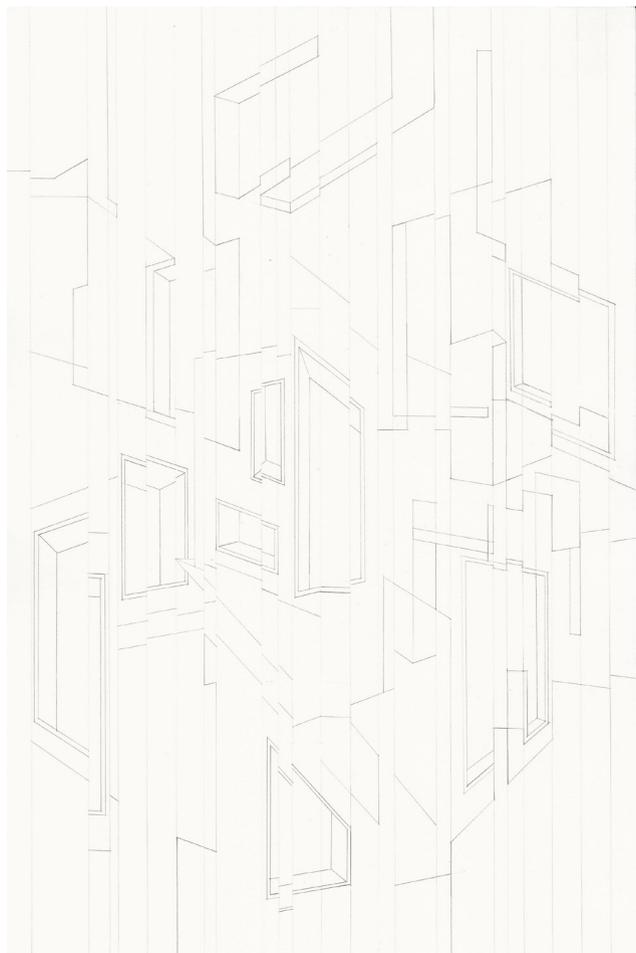
[DE]construction and [RE]construction

This is a space of complex orientations, blurred boundaries, enigmatic edges and indiscernible depth, questioning normality in structure and a social construct, questioning that which it is containing, for an audience that is caught in a world of illusion architecture becomes a part of enlightenment redefining a ever-changing rhetoric.

Incompleteness

Limelight Effect

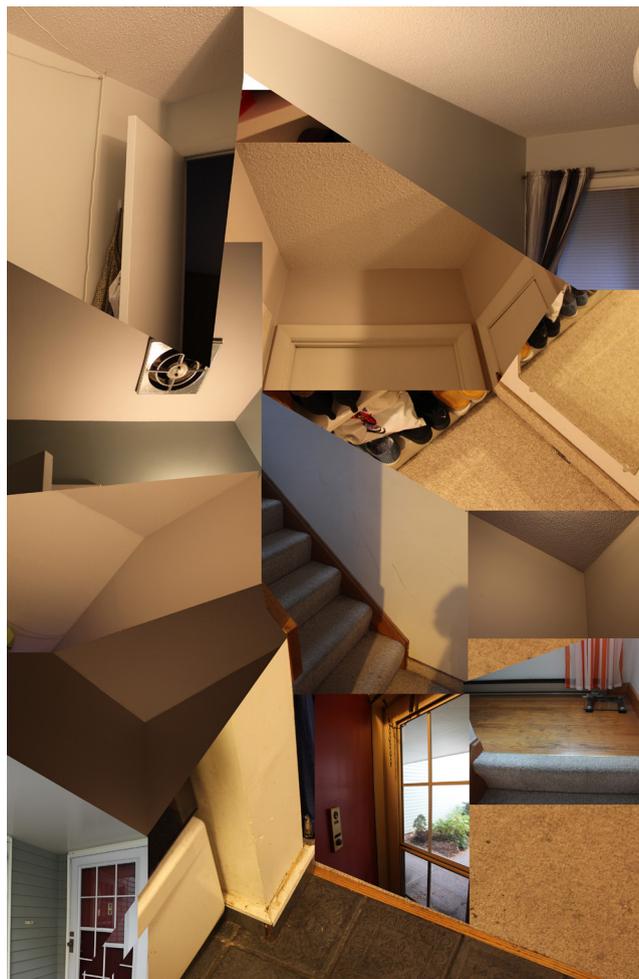
A welcoming of inquiry, the space's elusiveness for the viewer allows a discovery of newness in thought.



Reframing

My exploration started with shooting domestic scenes in my apartment, both interior and exterior. And then, broke them down into fragments, and reframed according to the corner condition and edge condition, making the reframed space perplexing.







As shooting photos is actually collapsing a three dimensional space into a flat sheet surface, the images still contain the complexity of multiple spatial layers and orners described by surfaces of different orientations. So that is the first multiplicity within the spatial fragments.

Taking the part of spatial fragments which start to lose their completeness when chopped out without their surroundings and regardless of their scale, recomposition according to the corner condition and edge condition creates a new landscape throughout the piece.

Such elusiveness is also produced through this process. Is it going in, or popping out? Space start to lose its own identity.

The juxtaposition of both interior and exterior layers brings out a new relationship inbetween. Whether they touch with each other, whether the opeings on either side indicate the spatial complexity behind? It is a brink of uncertainty.

Probe



Relate

间 JIAN



Space 空间

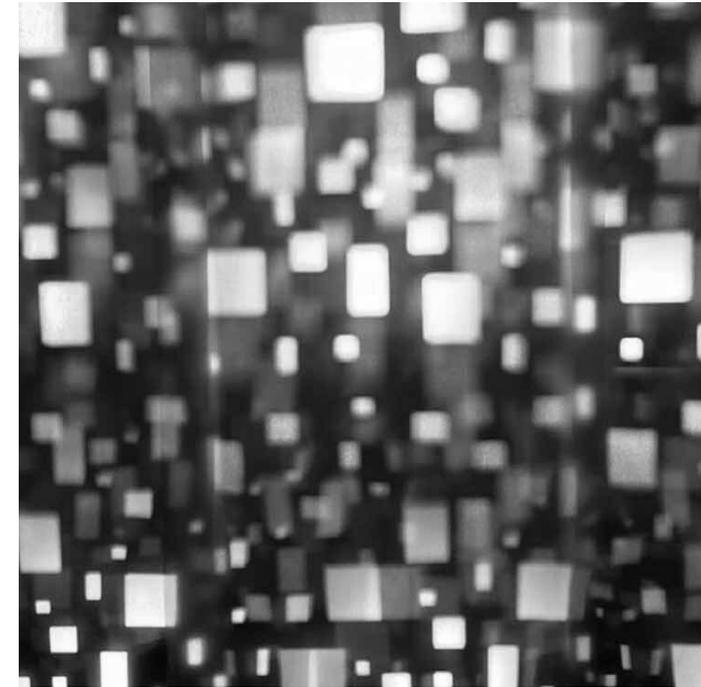
Between Emptiness

Time 时间

Between Moments

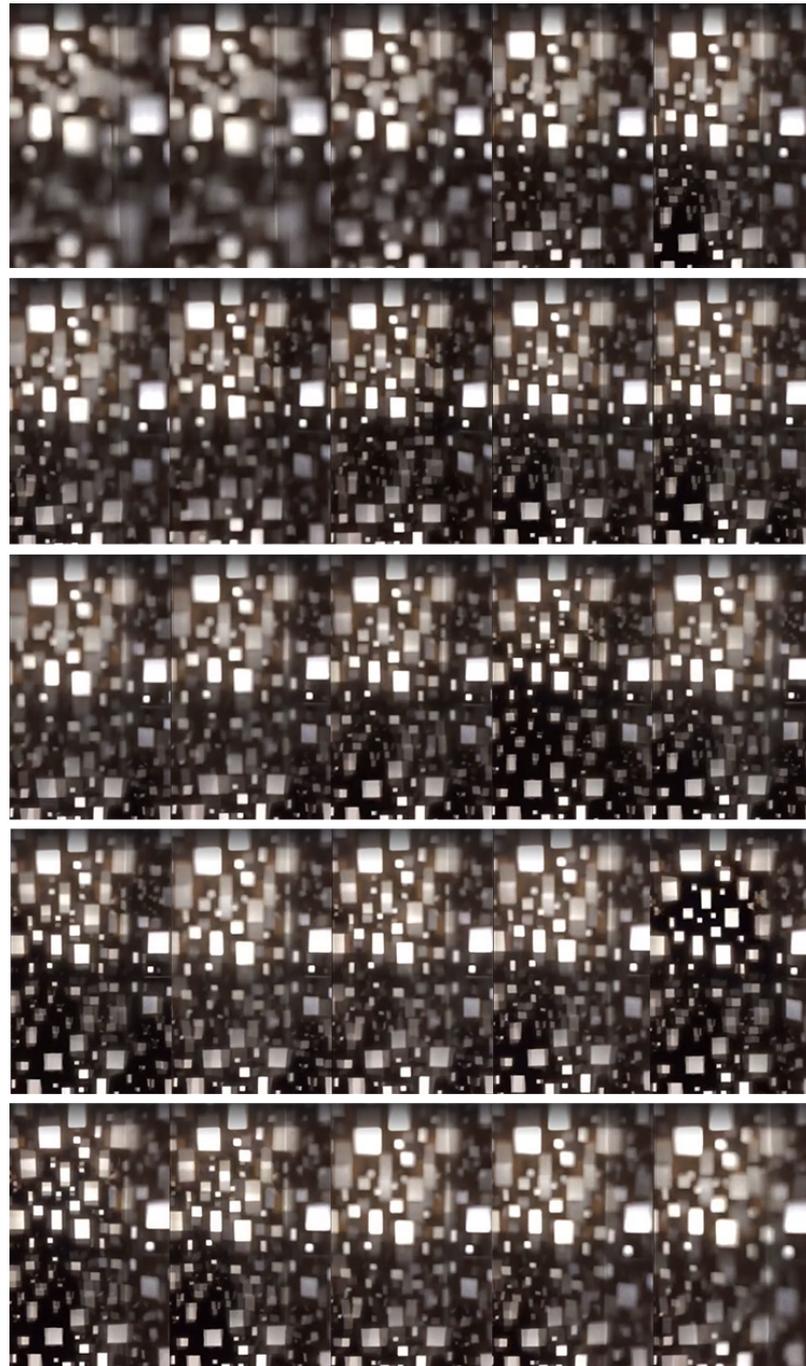
Mundane World 人间

Between Humans



The Chinese character “间 (JIAN)” is originally composed of a character ‘door’ and a character ‘moon’ within the door. It refers to the space of a door gap revealed by the moonlight shining through it. This poetic initial definition has evolved into multiple meanings throughout the character’s historical development, including “between/among”, “separate”, “moment”, “room”, “bay(space between two columns)”, “estrangement” and “intermingle”, etc.

These derived meanings range from the measurement of space and time to the description of human behaviors. Three Chinese words ending with JIAN maybe best illustrate the complexity and subtly of this character: “空间 (space)”, literally means “between emptiness”; “时间 (time)”, literally means “between moments”; and “人间 (mundane world)”, literally means “between/among humans”. It is worth noticing how these precise terms in English were translated into somewhat uncertain ambiguities in Chinese with the use of JIAN.



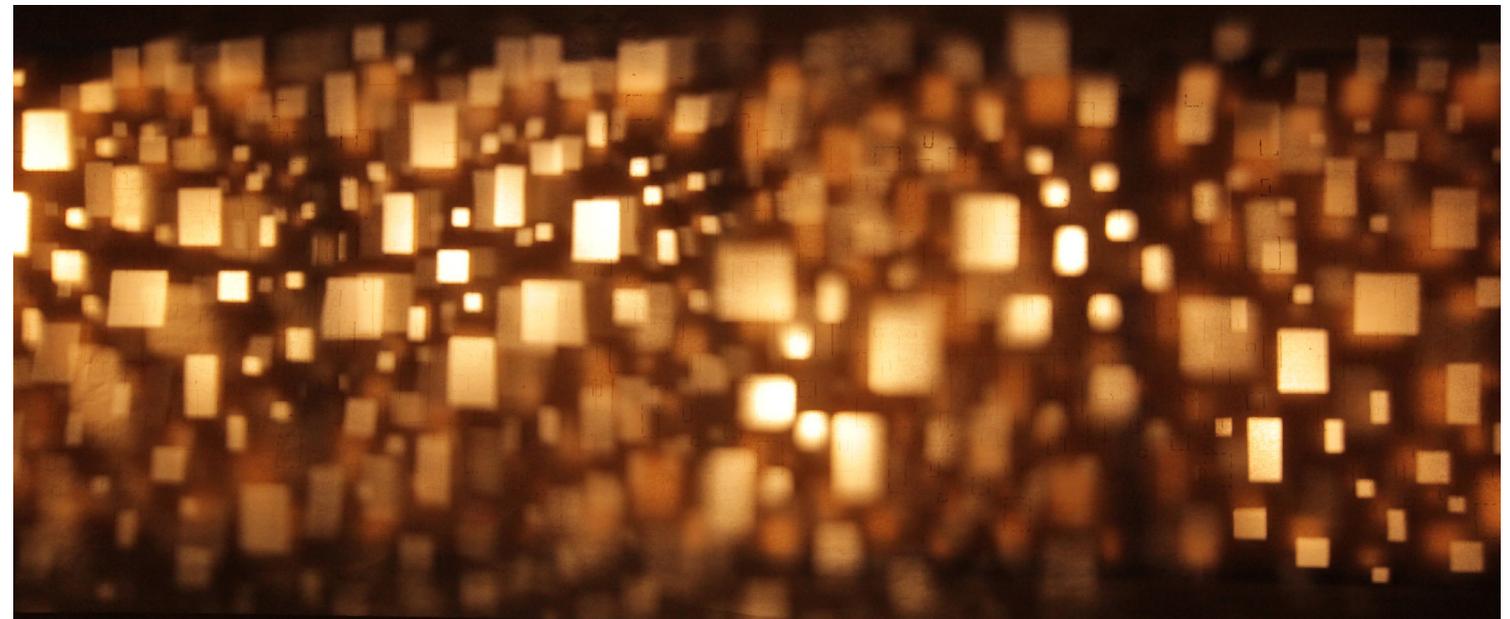
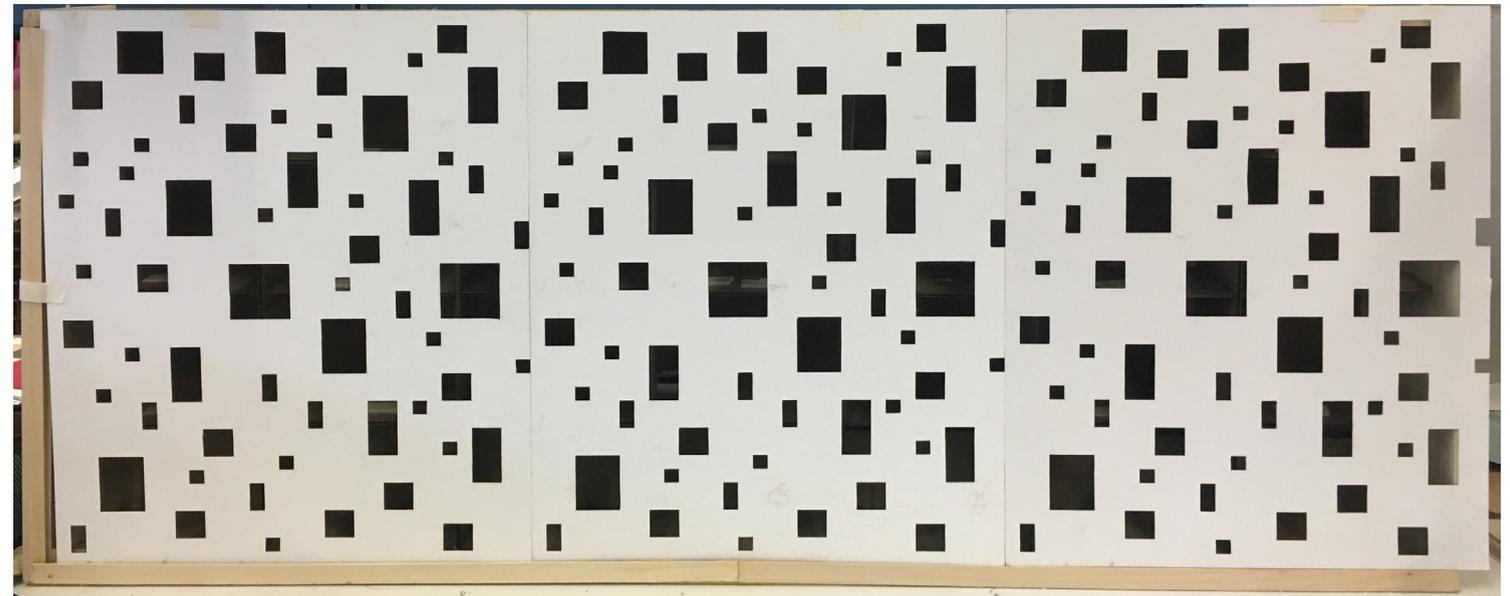
As indicated by the three word, JIAN describes the situation of one entity being constantly intertwined with other entities. In other words, it means the status of being related. Today we heavily rely on “object” rather than “relation” as the basis for understanding the world: for example, we declare certain particles rather than forces as the fundamental composing elements of the universe. However the ontological emphasis on relation is an equally ancient concept which can be traced in many Eastern philosophies such as the social harmony theory in Confucianism and the balance of Yin and Yang in Taoism, etc.

Imagine all kinds of beings are constantly generating concentric ripples from themselves; the ripples gradually move outwards and fill up all the voids, and when ripples meet each other, new ripples are generated and overlap with the original ripples... These interactions go on infinitely and all beings are finally connected and integrated by the ripples. The void of ripples thus offers the most abundant and unpredictable possibilities. This void is JIAN; its flexibility and fuzziness lead to a moderate approach and a humble balance of various intentions. The result is a kind of “field” or “atmosphere” in which the tension can neither be achieved by sculpturing individual elements nor manipulating the overall form; but by respecting the spontaneous connections among the individuals to resolve the whole ensemble.

This installation is made for considering the boundary situation. Boundary situation is always an issue when reconstruct a new space out of spatial fragments.

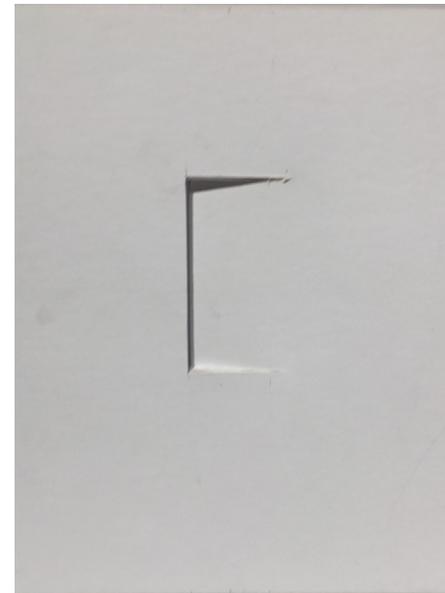
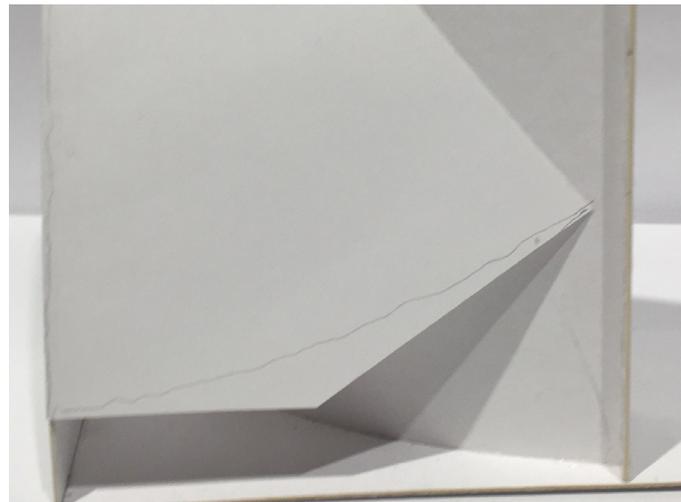
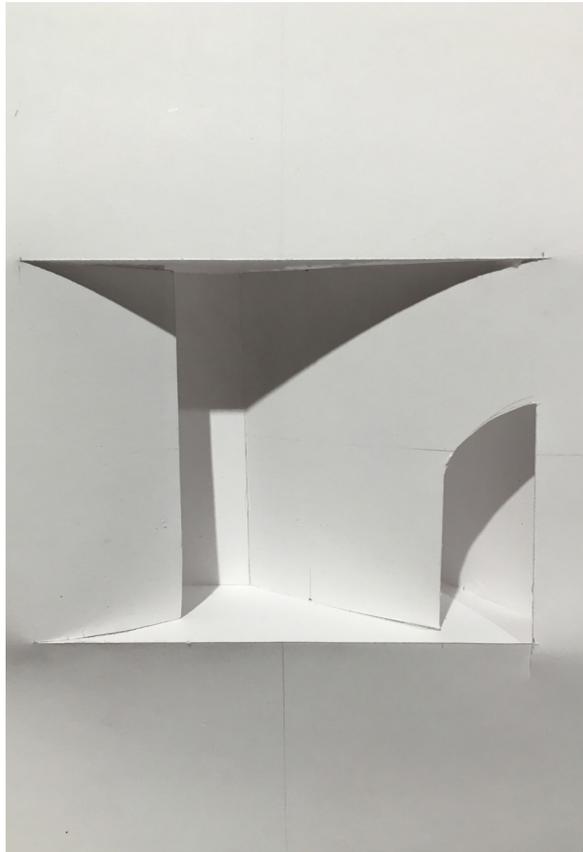
Installation:
The defined cutting-out openings on the interior filter become blurred, scattered, overlapped, dynamic when light projecting onto the exterior screen.

This feature allows me to dissolve the boundary and lead me to take promenade theater as my program of use for the architecture proposal.



[DE]construction and [RE]construction

A Space that cannot be seen or perceived clearly alludes to a perplexity of yourself within it. While conventional space is that which one can always knowingly experience the entering, walking through and exiting and know the extents of, the space I am pursuing, the labyrinth space is of complex orientations, blurred boundaries, enigmatic edges and indiscernible depth. It is an architecture itself questions normality in structure and the perception of a viewer.

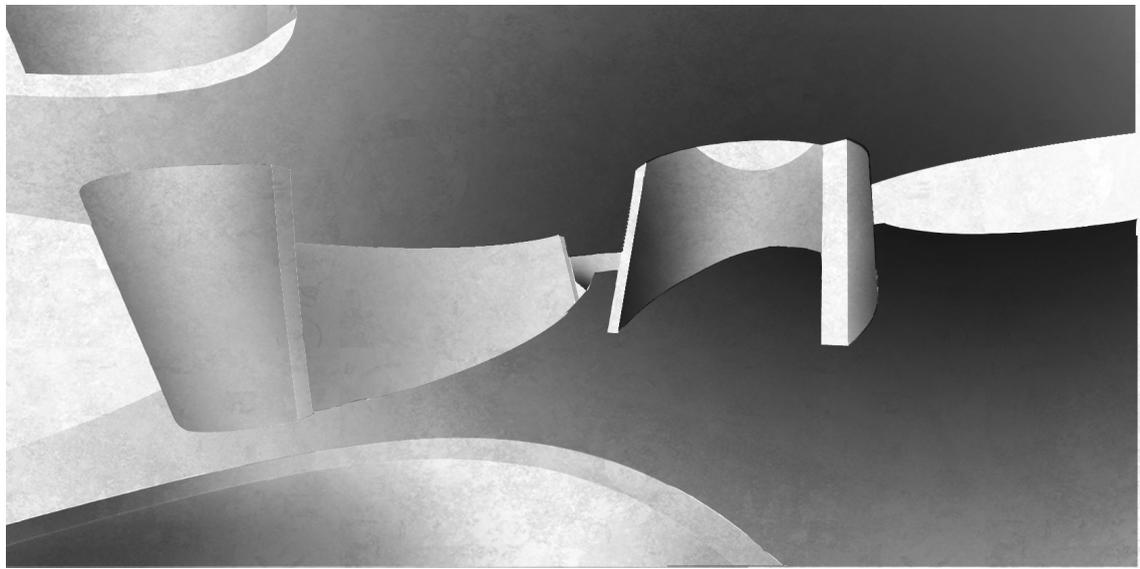
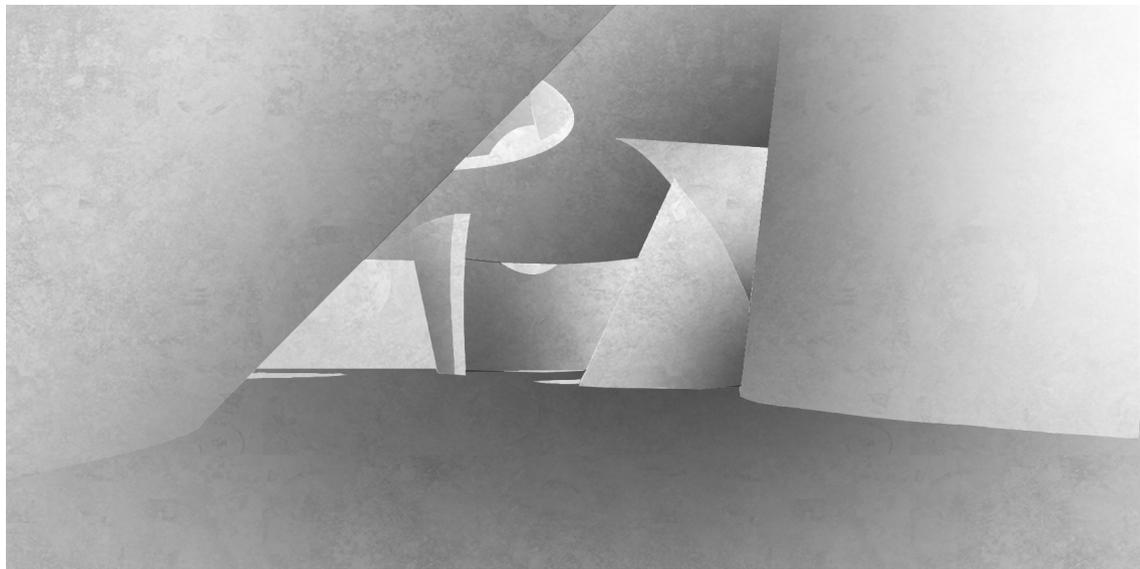
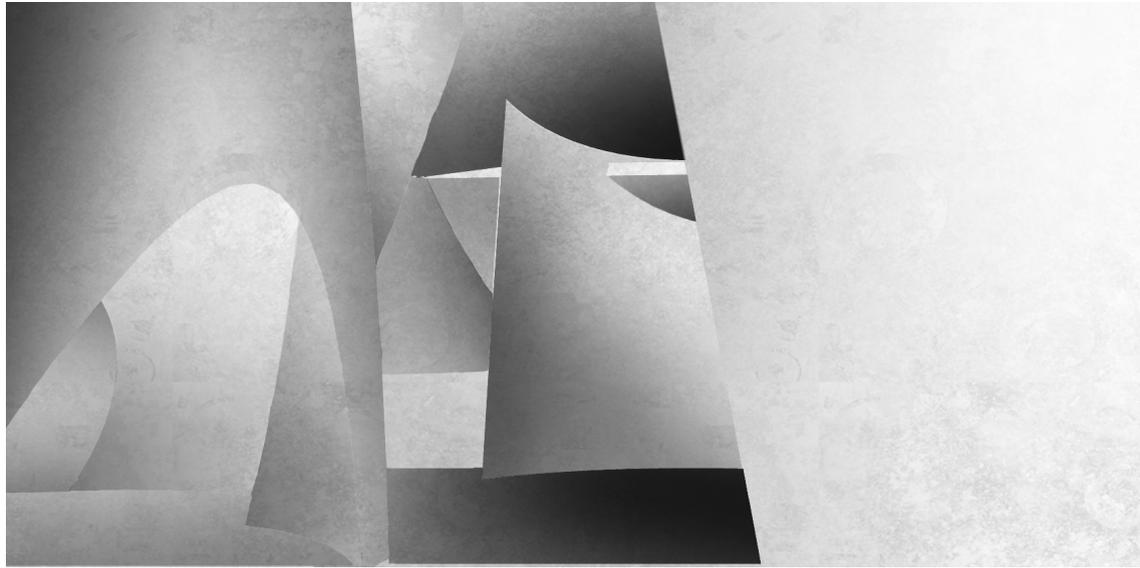


Incompleteness

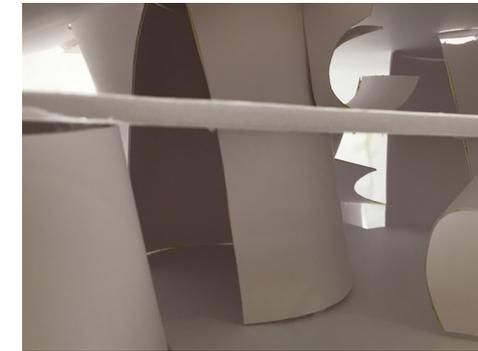
Using basic geometries, cylinders and truncated cones, break them down in to incomplete forms, subtracting and combining with each other.

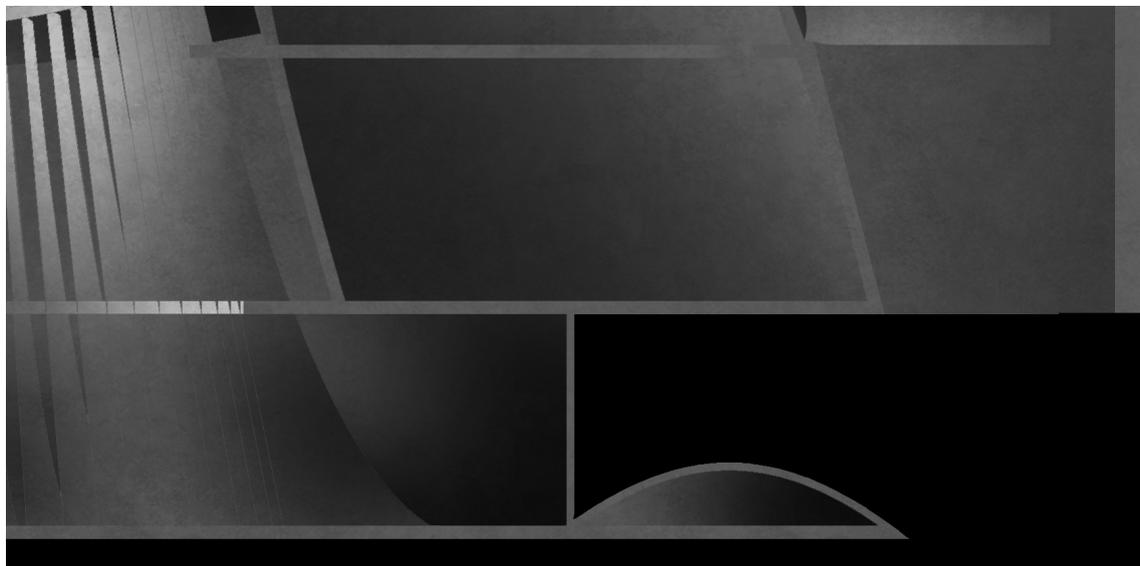
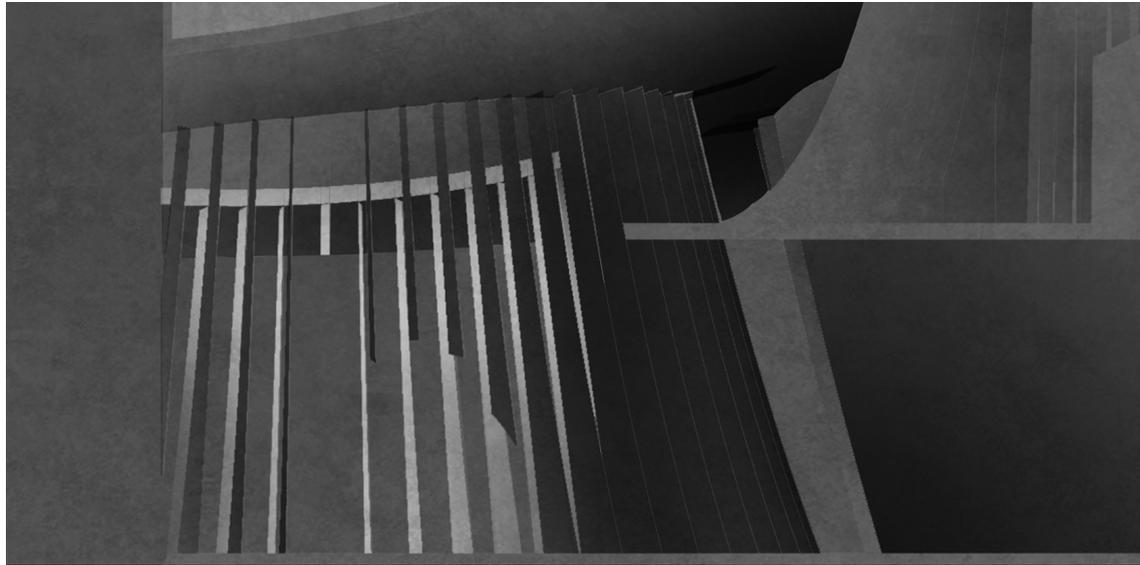
Some cut-outs are actually creating the illusion of the spatial depth;
and some are when seen from one specific direction, the cut-outs on different curved surfaces line up, and feels like they are on the same surface;
some are only when you walk around to certain position, you realize there is another spatial layer below or behind the wall that you thought was the boundary of the space.





As passing through the illusion architecture from different directions, an audience can always redefine the story and space as a 'never again' experience. The confusion of intertwined circulation/ sequence expands the infinite time-space within a limited physical construction, and project a different understanding every time it is perceived.





Limelight Effect

One of the features of performance space is that it always has a focus point. In conventional theater, this point is the center of the stage, which projects out a viewing fan-shaped zone. But in promenade theater, the focus point is actually scattered in the play route, so as the 'stage'. Several emphasized space could be the enlargement of the route, integrated with centered space.

The phenomenon of this kind of centered space is:

As the audience walking around, people can see and can only see the focus point.

Inversely, the focus point is always lit up by the surrounding light source, while the rest of the space is always covered by the multiple shadows of the 'louvers'.



Site:

Washington St and Mathewson St,
Downtown Providence

in the vacant parking lot,
surrounded by existing building

