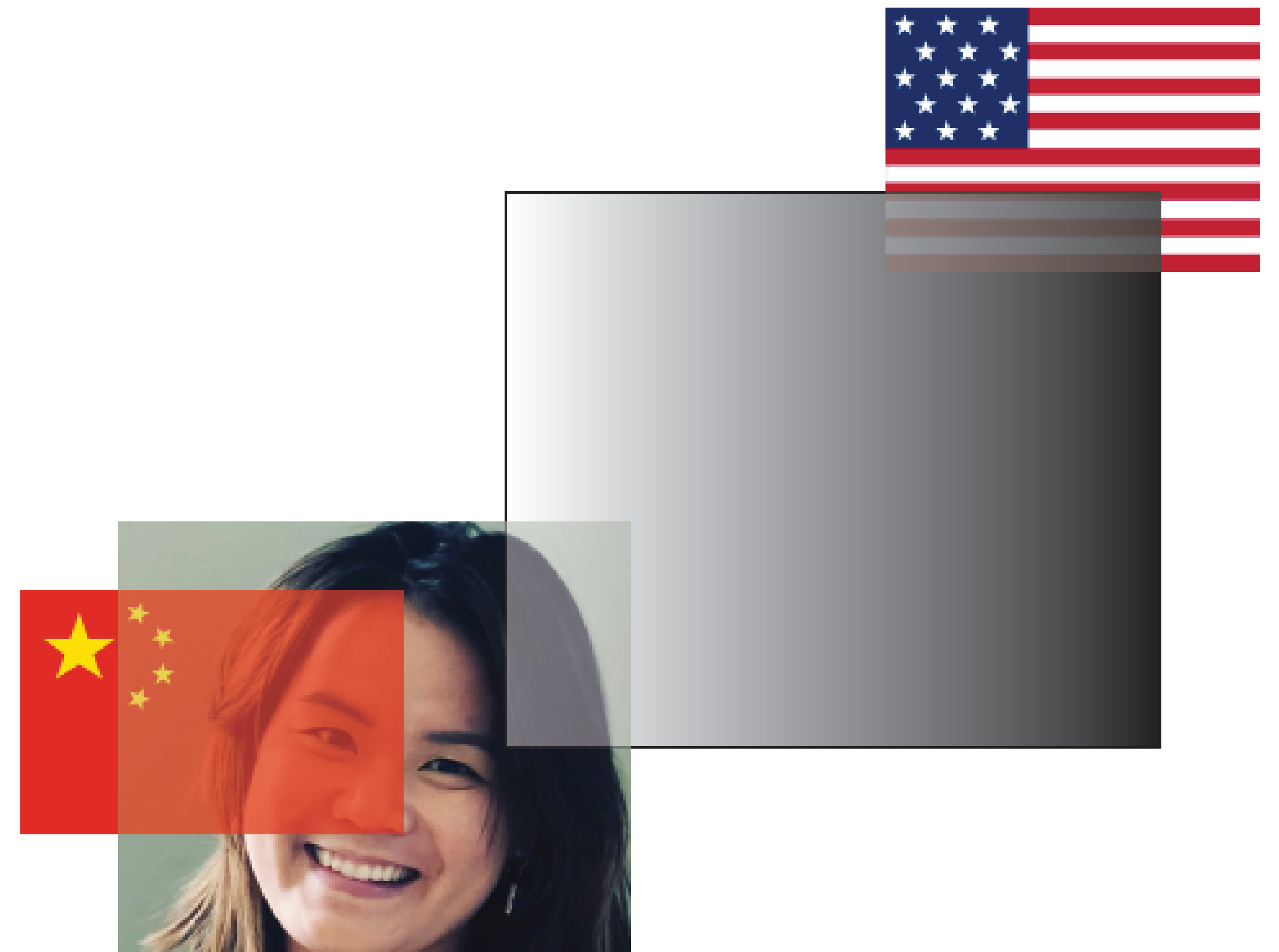


The In-Between Space Through Identity

Penn State University
Masters of Architecture
Stuckeman School



“wHEre ArE yOu FRom? nO, wHeRe ARe YoU REaLly FrOm?”

I’ve been asked this my entire life because my race does not match my nationality. This need to explain my origins is bothersome. It creates a sense of identity confusion and sense of belonging. Being in-between two cultures makes people of diaspora question their place in society.

This Capstone design will look at the exploration of identity, society and space through the lens of bi-cultural Asian Americans.

DIASPORA



IDENTITY Bi-Cultural

Diaspora, transnationalism, and Globalization

The experience of diaspora can be alienated

Not as diasporic but as transnational because they maintain relations only to the home/host societies and do not share a connection or history with compatriots living locally

Others may choose to adopt a singular national identity and reject the dual identification inherent in diasporic living

The goal is achieving social equality

SOCIETY



STEREOTYPE Model Minority

“Positive Image” - Highly educated and socioeconomically stable

“Sub-human” or “Super-human”

1965 Immigration Act-banned all immigration from Asia except for professionals and scientists

On the face it may seem to appear to be good, but the assumptions are overgeneralized and inaccurate

These observations reveal that this myth is problematic because it masks any of the struggles being faced

Diverts attention away from any discrimination that they may have faced and continue to face

SPACE



INCLUSION Belonging

Racially different than how they were raised

Assumed to only have traits based on the stereotype and not on other human qualities

Failing to meet the “Model Minority Image” can be decremental

Minority group against one another

Residence culture is so apparent when one goes back to their “Homeland”

“The In-Between”



Kuo, Julia. Illustration of "The many Asian Americans." The Vox, 12 May 2021, <https://www.vox.com/first-person/22421683/identity-Asian-American-pacific-islander-aapi-heritage-month-enclaves-cities-suburbs>

Asian Diaspora

It refers to emigrants and their descendants who live outside the country of their birth or ancestry, either on a temporary or permanent basis, yet still maintain affective and material ties to their countries of origin-

Migration Policy Institute

Diaspora is centrally problematic in that there are different understandings of diaspora. Si and Parrenas state; "We define diaspora as an ongoing and contested process of subject formation embedded in a set of cultural and social relations that are sustained simultaneously with the "homeland" (real or imagined), place of residence, and compatriots or co-ethnics dispersed elsewhere" (Siu and Parrenas p. 1). The concept can be analyzed in binary terms of homeland and the place of residence. The reemergence of diaspora studies in the late 1980s has brought Asian and Asian American studies closer together in the 1990s. The 1965 Immigration Reform Act was the starting point. The US Asian population went from American-born to mostly foreign-born Asian Americans. The legislation was class biased by favoring skilled and educated immigrant applicants.

In the concept of Asian diasporas, not all Asian migrations are diasporic in nature. "For instance, some migrants-people who physically relocated from one area to another regardless of their settlement-are better described not as diasporic but as transnational because they maintain relations only to the home and host societies and do not share a connection or history with compatriots living in other locals (Siu and Parrenas p. 7). Others may choose to adopt a singular national identity and reject the dual identification. They refer Asian diaspora as plural, not singular, by avoiding the construction of Asia as a homogeneous homeland. Each country has its own diaspora, which makes it the most important factor that distinguishes Asian diasporas from others.

Being diasporic in America, one inherently is bi-cultural. This involves finding one's bi-cultural identity, during which many individuals face conflict assimilating into both cultures or finding a balance between both. They face challenges assimilating into the whole collective culture, which can be hard mentally and emotionally. So to explore this challenge one can start to think of an environment that looks at self-knowledge, self-reflection, and self-expression of identity.

The Environment (Space and Society) affects one's Identity

SELF-KNOWLEDGE (Social)



<https://foursquare.com/v/tadashi/52d333e9498e2ed4f835cde8>

Self-Knowledge can be achieved in many different ways. It can be social, physical, and visual. Social self-knowledge can be attained through commensality (the act of eating together). This can spark conversation about identity. Physical self-knowledge can be expressed through a canvas. This could be a book, picture, or/and painting expressing identity through art. Visual self-knowledge can be shown through video. VR could be an asset for people to experience identity through most of the senses. Self-knowledge is part of understanding one's identity.

SELF-REFLECTION (Wellness)



Kung, Andrew. Photo of "Austin" (2019), CNN, 3 March 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/style/article/Andrew-kung-Asian-American-men/index.html>
Twiss, Karina. Photo of "Asian Wellness." Vogue, 18 March 2021, <https://www.vogue.com/article/aapi-community-wellness-resources>

Self-Reflection can be expressed through wellness. Wellness can be achieved through thought process in nature or private spaces. Nature such as courtyards is a great place to understand one's identity. Private spaces are also places of wellness for people to experience their place in the world. Self-Reflection is the inner most part of identity.

SELF-ADVOCATE (Political)



Baniga, Bryan. Photo of "Echo of Hate: Vincent Chin and the Racism We Face" Better Tomorrow Speakers Series, <https://ma-noa.hawaii.edu/speakers/echo-of-hate-vincent-chin-and-the-racism-we-face/>

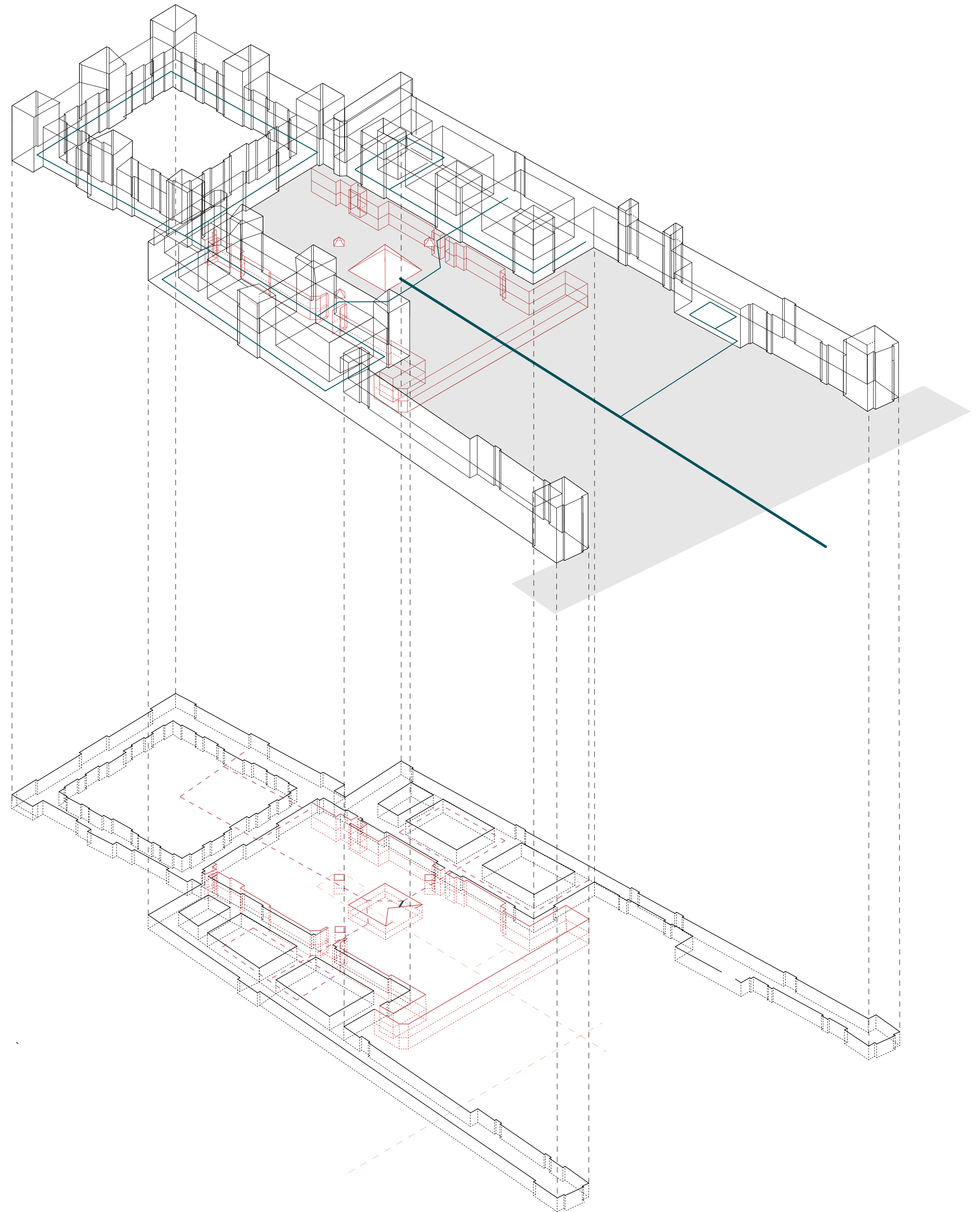
Self-Advocate can be shown through many medians. It can be expressed in speech, material, and media. Speech can be a powerful thing when one tells their story out loud for their identity. Material such as posters can be a way of identity expression through words. Media is also another platform for the voice of identity. Self-Advocate is the way to connect to others through identity.

Case Studies



LOUVRE- I.M. PEI

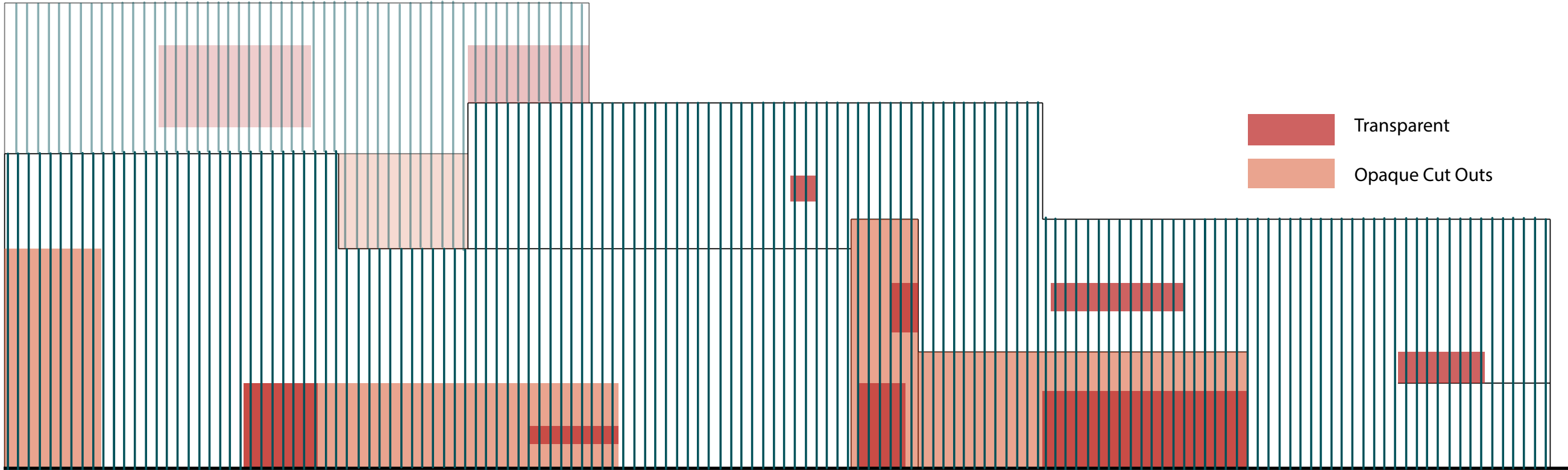
The Louvre design looks at the many different architectural principles. I analyzed the relationship between old/new and above and below in this precedent. The modern glass pyramid did not detract from the historical nature of the museum rather the juxtaposition of the modern structure and the French Renaissance style of the museum created a complimentary effect. Also the ability of the vertical threshold made an impact in the design making more space to expand its collection. This allows more square footage vertically than horizontally allowing the topography to attain more pedestrian friendly area.





JUNSHAN CULTURAL CENTER- NERI & HU DESIGN

Junshan Cultural Center really symbolizes verticality, in/ out, and nature. All programmed spaces are designed such that they are in proximity to nature. This blurs the boundary between inside and out. The layering of the primary courtyard and smaller gardens allow the architecture to merge harmoniously with nature. Also the vertically symbolizes growth making it an important principle in Asian Architecture.



PORTLAND JAPANESE GARDEN CULTURAL VILLAGE- KENGO KUMA & ASSOCIATES



The Portland Japanese Garden Cultural Village plays homage to nature and Asian Architecture. The project is a village positioned along the top of the hill, a form of modern monzenmachi where in the pilgrimage pays homage to the spirit of nature. It was built in the aftermath of World War II as part of a country-wide initiative to improve American-Japanese relations. Its facades are wrapped in screens of Alaskan yellow cedar, a naturally abundant wood that is often exported to Asia for the construction of temples and shrines. The use of natural materials is a great way to connect to Asian Architecture.



CULTURE CENTER

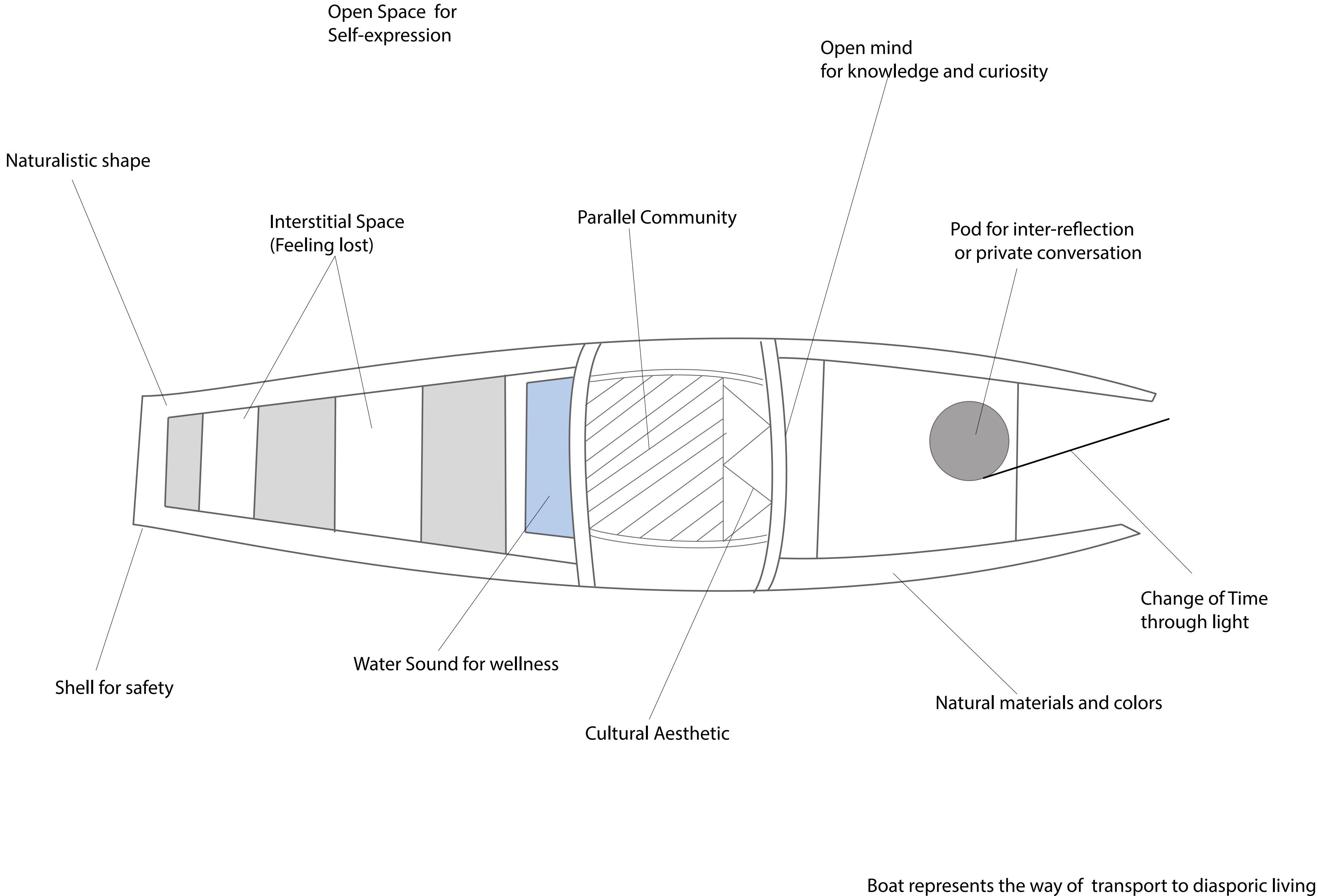


This in-between dilemma of identity has led me toward an inclusive culture center. The space will welcome Asian Americans and other bi-cultural individuals to safely express their identity through CONNECTION, CELEBRATION, AND ADVOCACY.

CONNECT

CELEBRATE

ADVOCATE



A sampan is a flat-bottomed wooden boat which includes a small shelter. It is often used as a permanent home. The sampan represents the way of transport of Asian immigrants to present day diasporic living.

Elements on the boat represent different ideas for the model of the inclusive multi-cultural space. The shape and materials of the boat are naturalistically important for the design of the building. The shell represents protection from the elements, just as my space will provide safety from the stresses of bi-cultural existence. The interstitial spacing on the bow of the boat is likened to identity confusion and a lost feeling. The main foci of the design of the space are the interstitial elements. The small shelter of the sampan is often ornamented; therefore, the space must be culturally welcoming as well. The shelter ornamentation sports parallel lines, which represent the parallel cultural communities that must live side by side.

The open ends of shelter allow flow of knowledge and curiosity of the cultural aesthetic. A solitary space on the stern cradles the occupant as they self-reflect. Manipulation of the rudder represents change of time through light of the model space. Lastly, as the boat floats on the vast sea of water, one is called to contemplate wellness of oneself and find the courage to embrace their identity.

MODEL- Inclusive Multicultural Space



Individual

01
LANA
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT



02
ANDY
YOUNG
PROFESSIONAL



03
EMILY
BABY



04
JULIA
MOM



05
TOURIST
MIXED



06
CULTURE
ORGANIZATION
MEMBERS



ANDY
YOUNG
PROFESSIONAL

Graduated in December at age 23
Works at google as a product designer
Commutes to work 4 days out of the week
Lives in Chinatown above grocery store
Oldest brother of 4
2nd Generation Chinese
Family lives in Toronto
Single

Nerd with few friends
Quiet and reserved
Loves to eat
Curious
Seeking connection

A socially awkward recent graduate is seeking a place to connect to his culture/community.

Eating food
Small gathering
Gathering knowledge



Restaurants
Social Pods
Library

JULIA
MOM

Adopted from the Philippines
Owner of a floral shop at age 38
Drives to work every other day
Lives in Sunset District with
husband and her 2 children
Her children are 7 and 13 years old
They are mixed (Slovenian/Philippines)
Middle class

Social entertainer
Loyal
Loves self-care
Share/understand her culture with her children
Interested in museums

A middle class mom wants her children to have a place to learn/
understand her culture.

Relaxing
Sharing knowledge with her children
Children learning



Spa
Children Area
Auditorium

CULTURE
ORGANIZATION
MEMBERS

Adopted Girls
BOTH
Asian American SF
Historically Ladies
Located in Chinatown,
Japantown, Downtown

Social
Celebrate
Activist

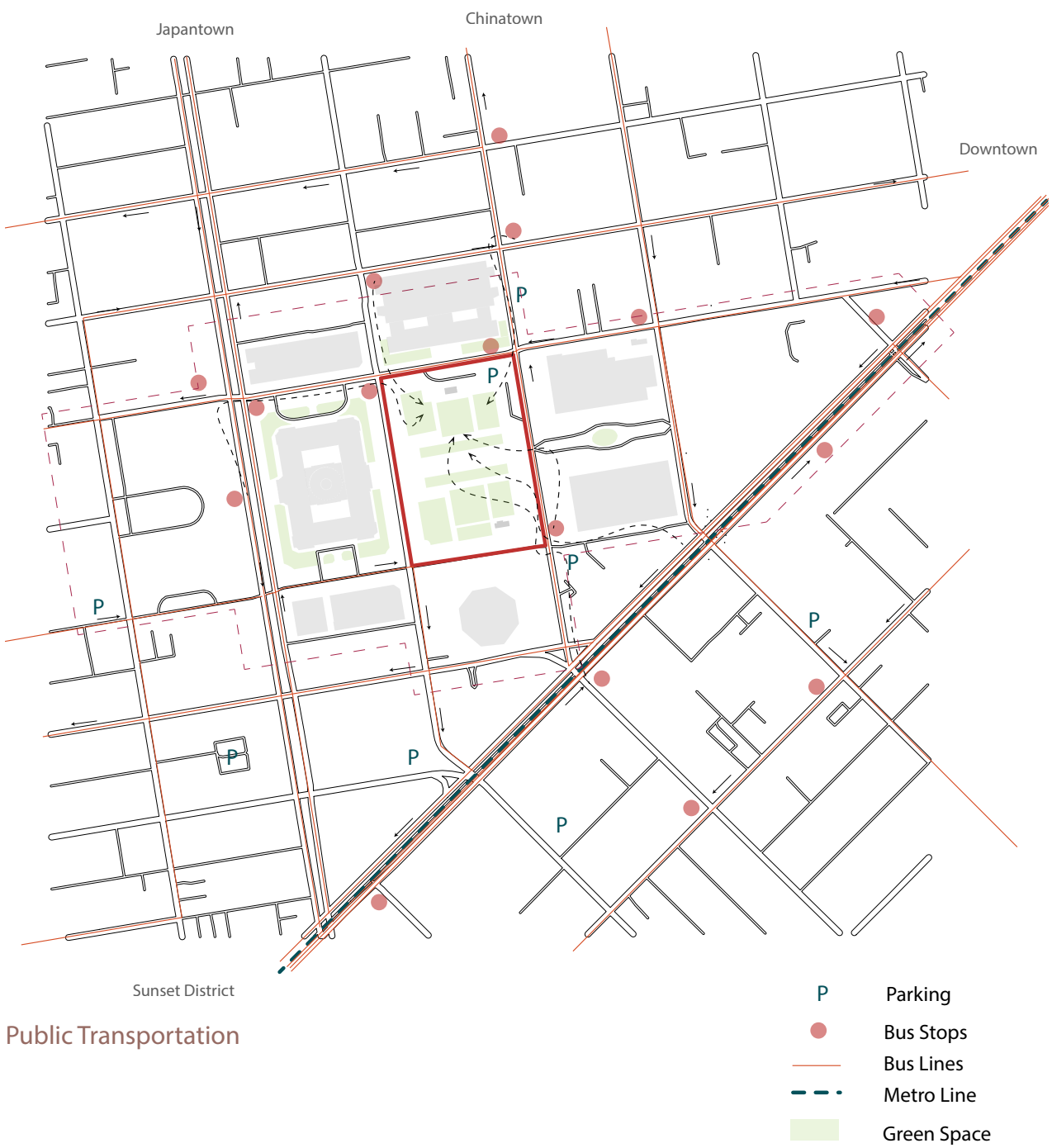
Members of BOTH needs a safe space to celebrate, gather, and
advocate their identity.

Gather to socialize
Protest racism
Celebrate their identity

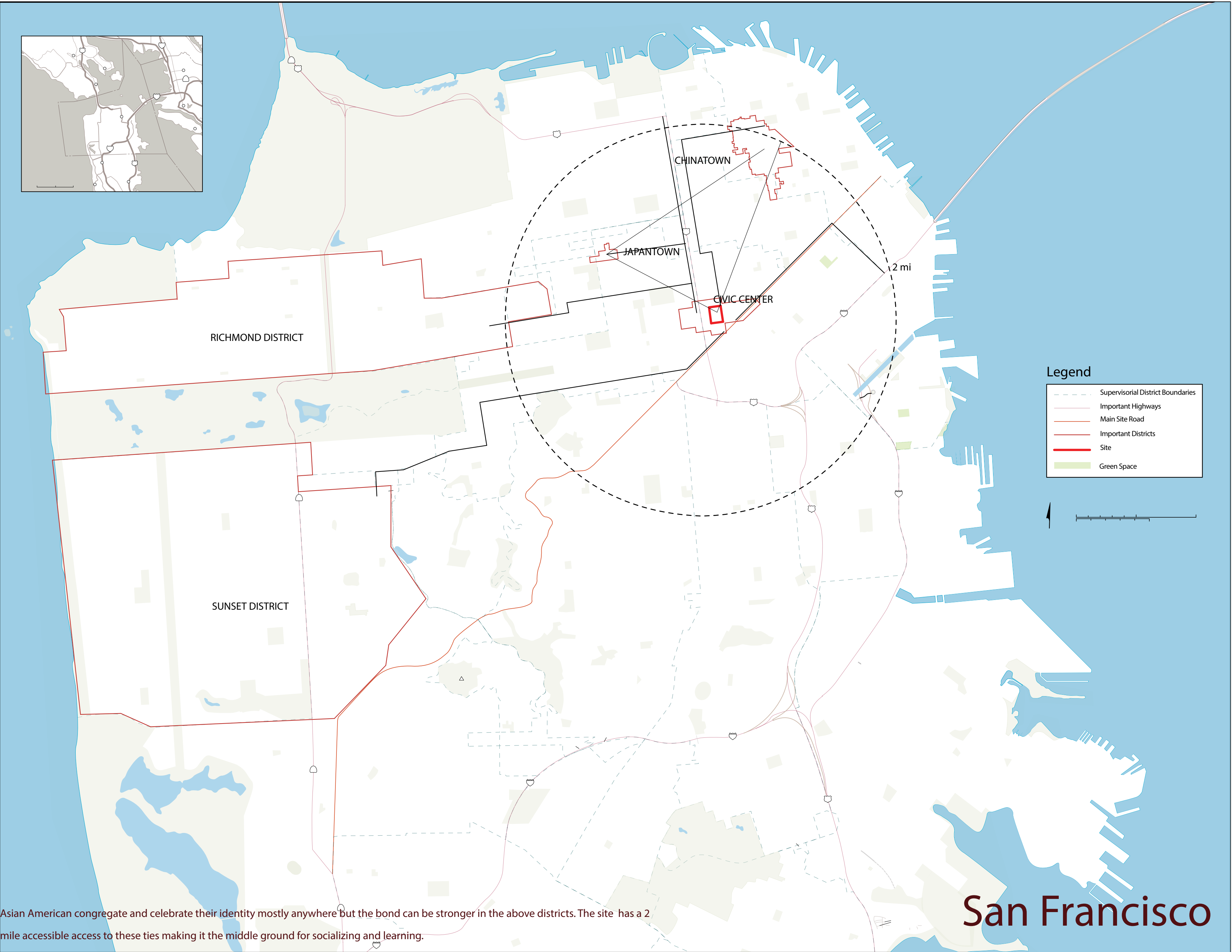


Meeting Room
Lecture Hall
Gallery

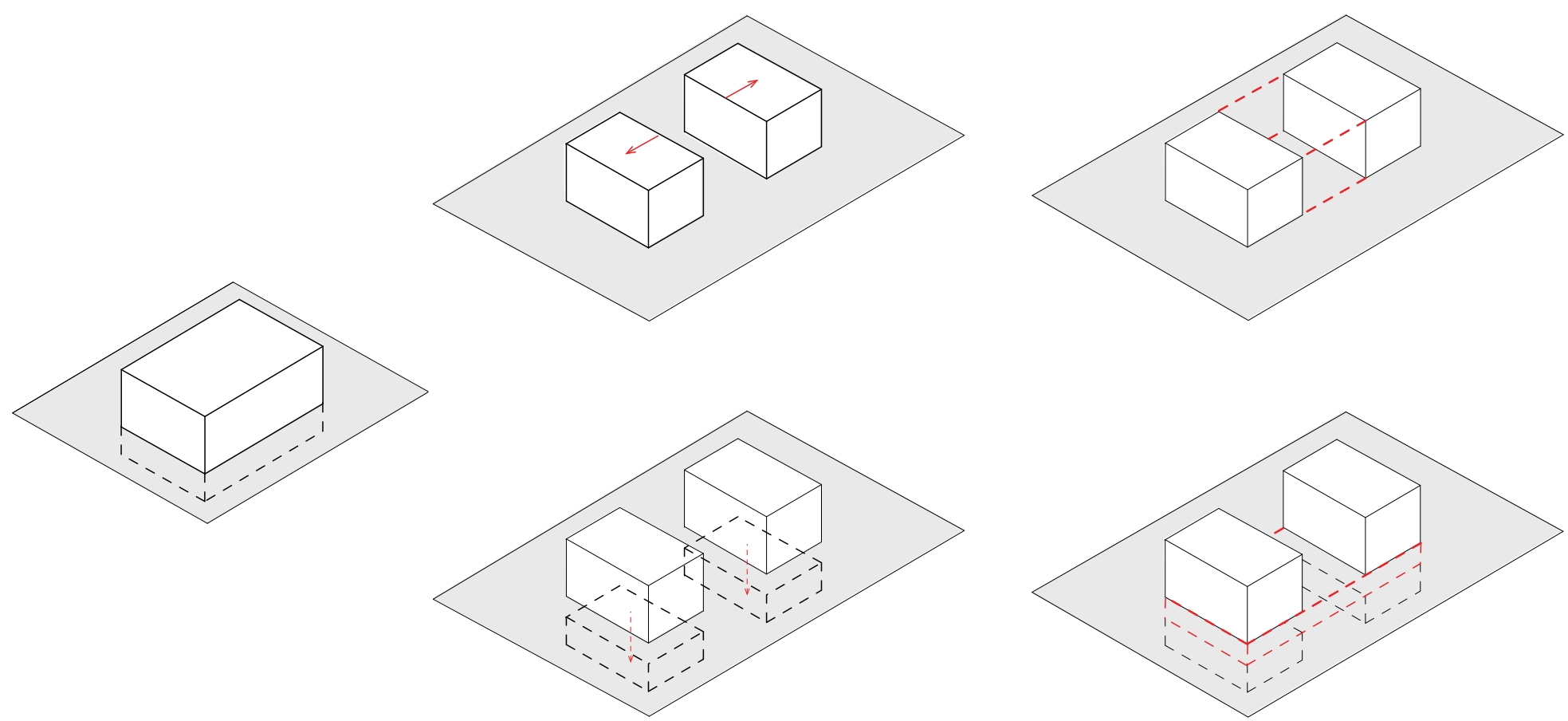
Site Analysis



Siting brings the model closer to reality. San Francisco is the symbol of Asian Americans in America. Its Chinese New Year parades featuring dragons and fireworks are icons of Chinese America. Its history and large Asian population make it an ideal local for an Asian American cultural center. Its proximity to the Pacific Ocean and the San Fran Bay makes it an easy choice for a water-based architecture. The plaza in San Francisco Civic Center allows access in all directions by transportation and by foot inviting local target community accessibility to this cultural center.

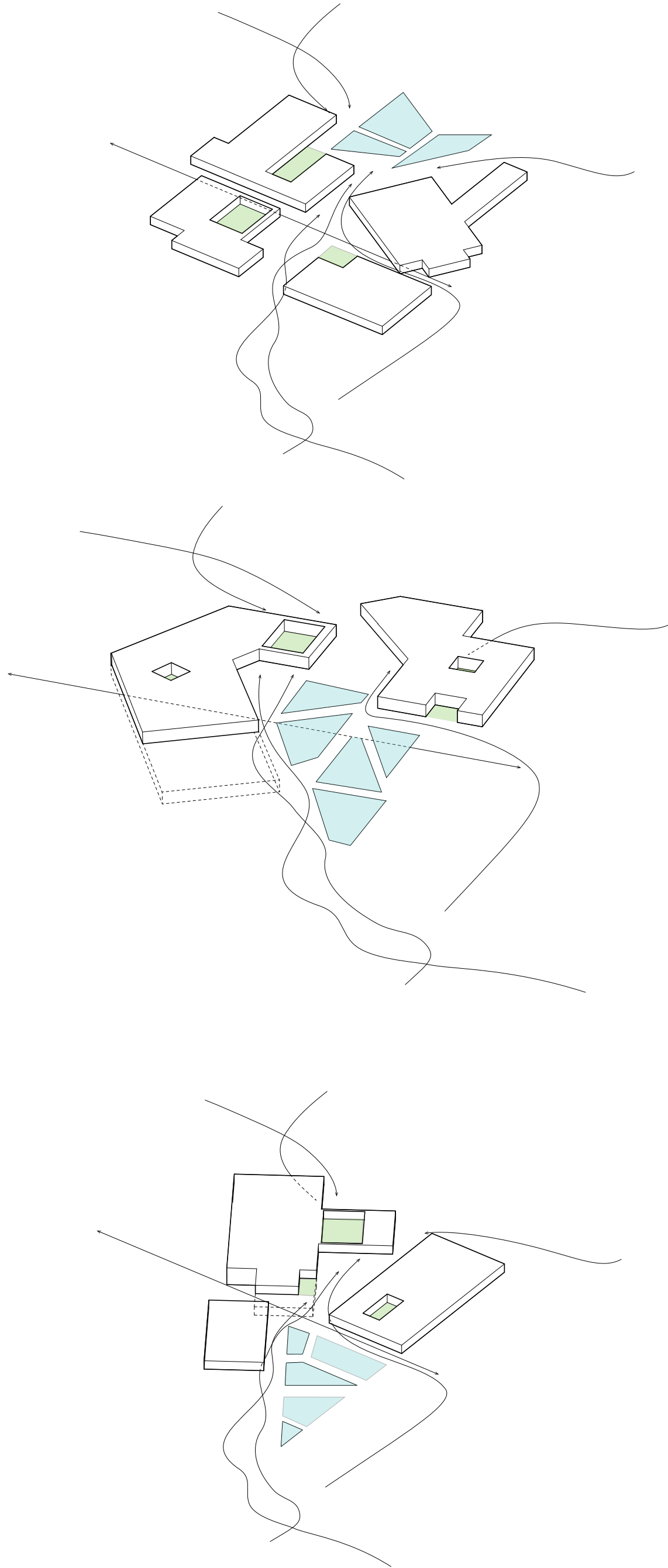
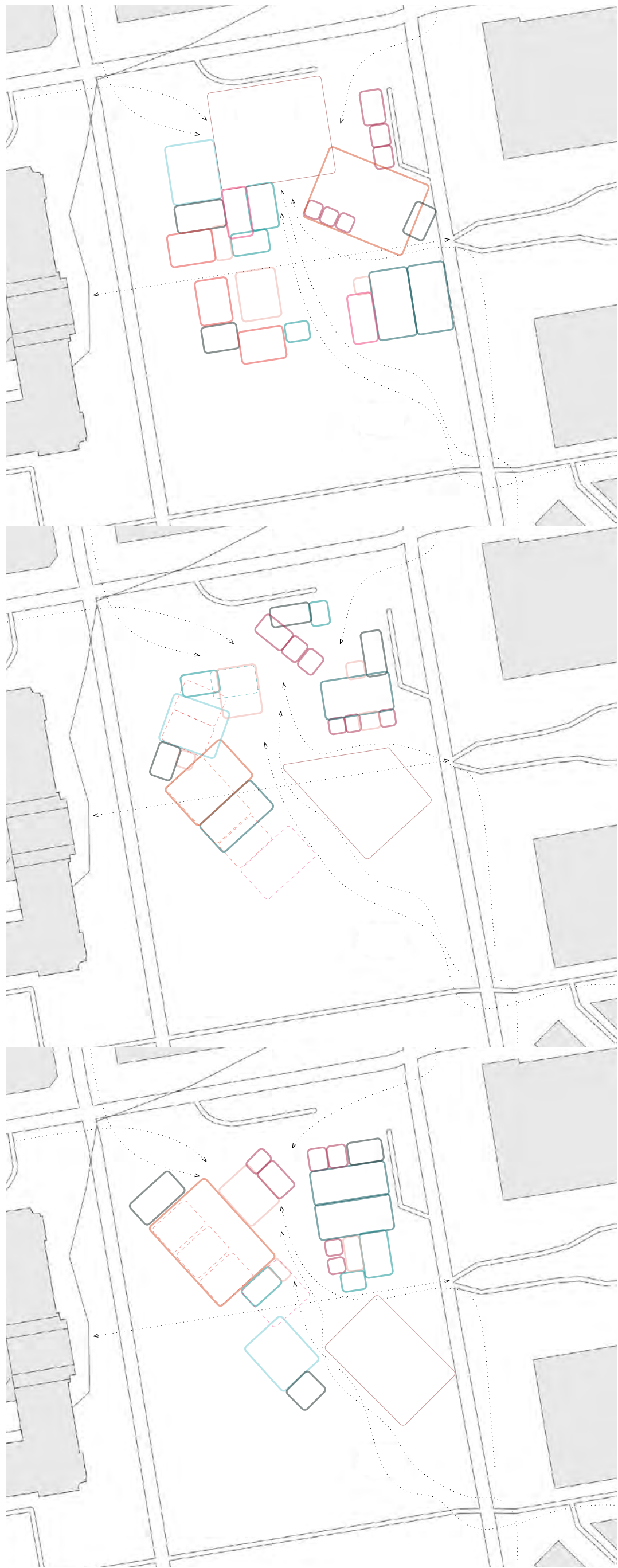


Concept



THE IN-BETWEEN

The In-Between allows for creativity in the details. Water beds and courtyards are placed between the village of buildings allowing that connection with nature. This shows the relationship of the in between spaces horizontally. Sky-lights and windows where light and people can view in the water beds play with the in-between spaces vertically. These design elements helps the culture center be more connected, celebrated, and advocated for Asian American identity.



Program

Meeting Rooms (2,250 sf)

- 3 small (250 sf each)
- 2 med. (400 sf each)
- 1 large (700 sf each)

Restaurants (10,000 sf)

- (5,000 sf each)

Galleries (2,600 sf)

- small (500 sf)
- med. (800 sf)
- large (1,300 sf)

Library (15,000 sf)

Film/VR (4,500 sf)

- 3 (1,500 sf)

Children's Area (3,000 sf)

Mechanical (2,000 sf)

Courtyards (2,900 sf)

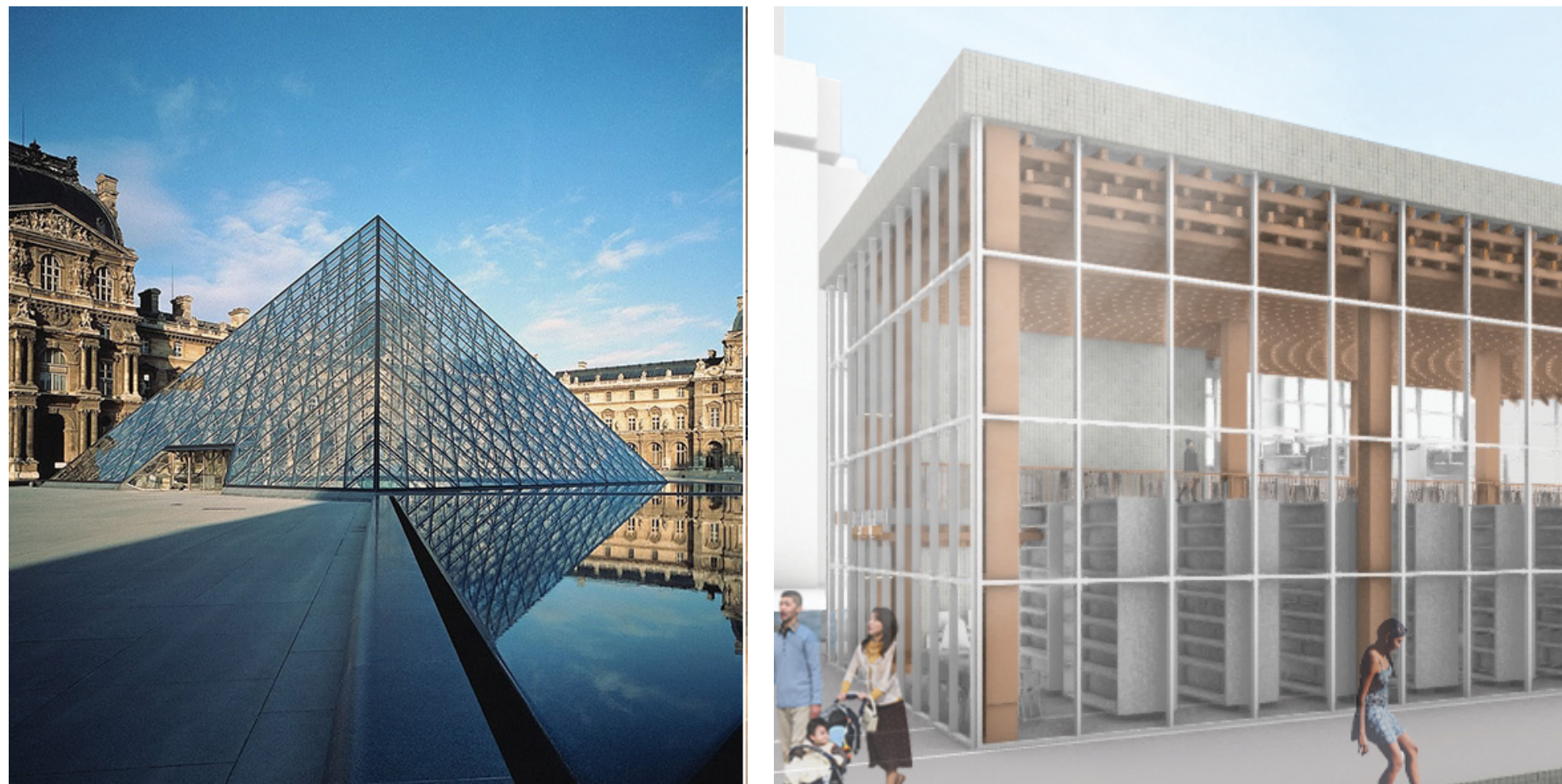
- main (2,000 sf)
- 3 small (300 sf each)

Water features (10,000 sf)

Storage (3,000 sf)

TOTAL: 50,250 sf

OLD/NEW



Old/New is shown through materials just like the Louvre. The old is connected to the ancient wood construction of Asia while the new is portrayed through glass.

ABOVE/BELOW



Above/Below plays with the horizontal in-between space. Designing these spaces allows sunlight to light up the basement spaces as well as allowing movement and flow through the center.

VEG/WATER

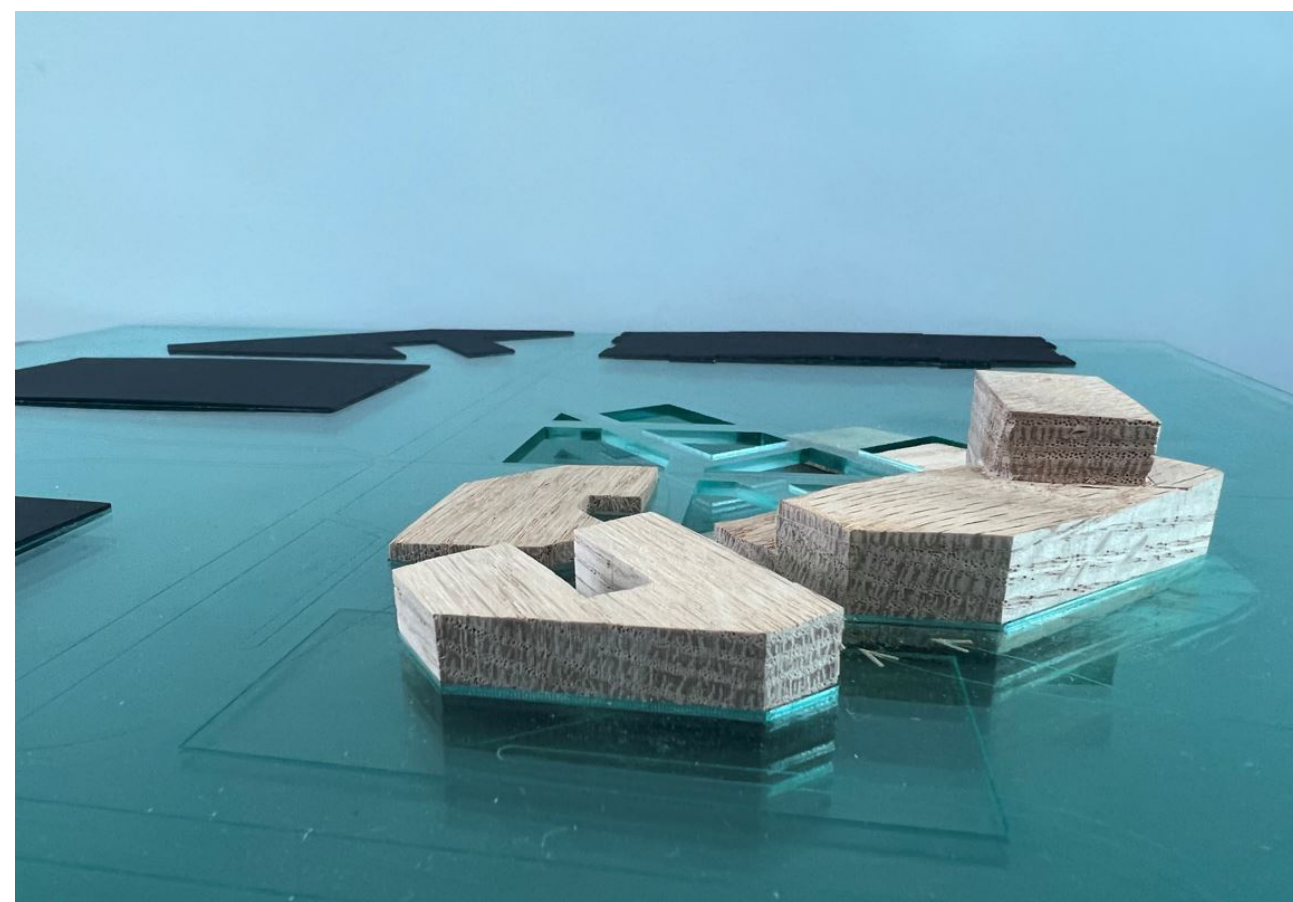
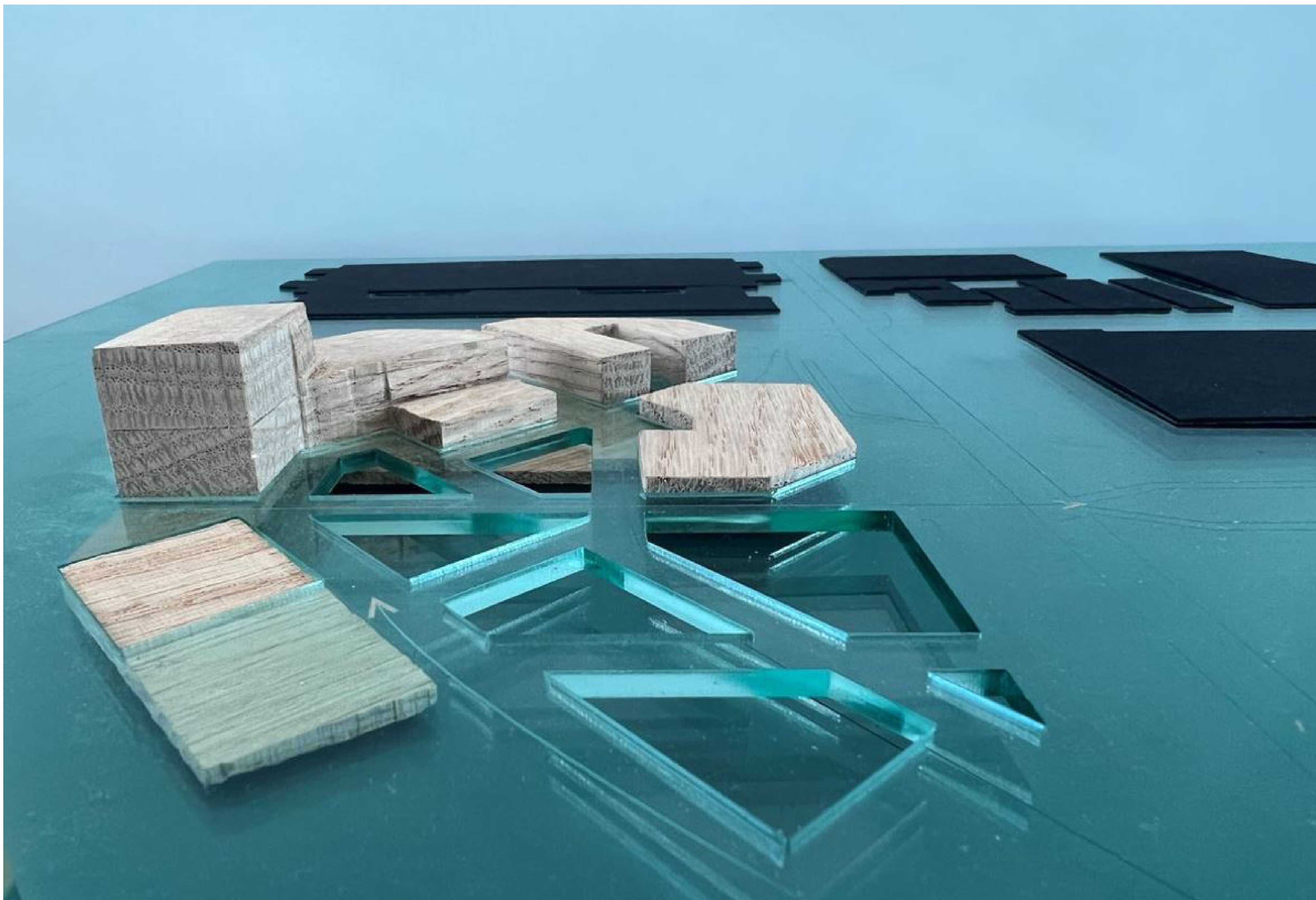


Veg/Water is an important Asian culture characteristic of harmony and peace. This is shown through courtyards and water pools which makes an homage to nature.

IN/OUT



In/Out is an experience of different variables. The variables consist of sun/shade, wind/no wind, and cover/open. This is an important element of Asian Architecture.



The model explores the experiences and relationships of the in-between spaces with a focus of the Ying Yang through water/vegetation and the above/below. Water is shown by cutouts which also shows the harmony of the underground vs above ground. There are many in-between spaces portrayed in this model; spaces between buildings, spaces between water, spaces between inside and outside, and spaces between above and below.

Plans

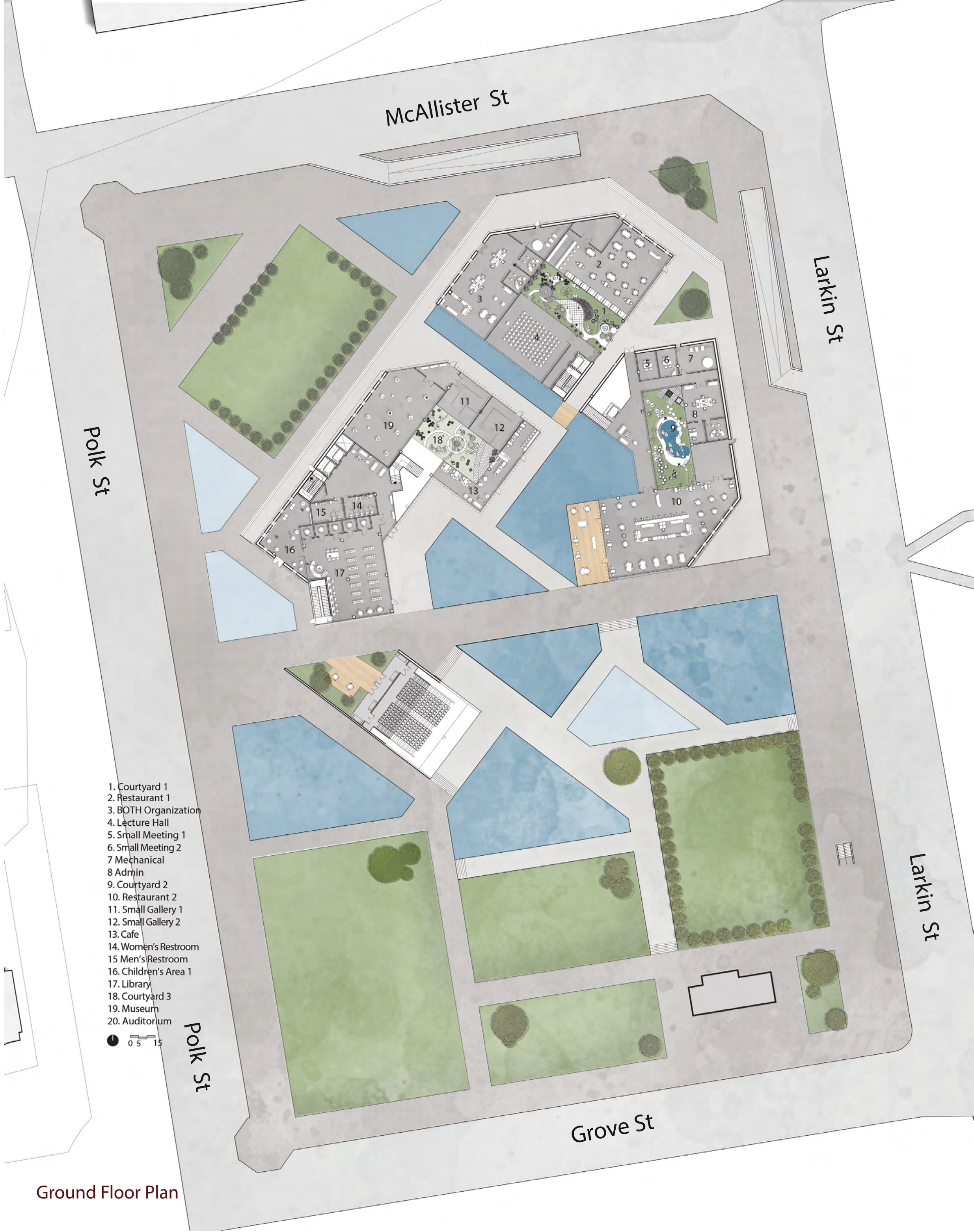


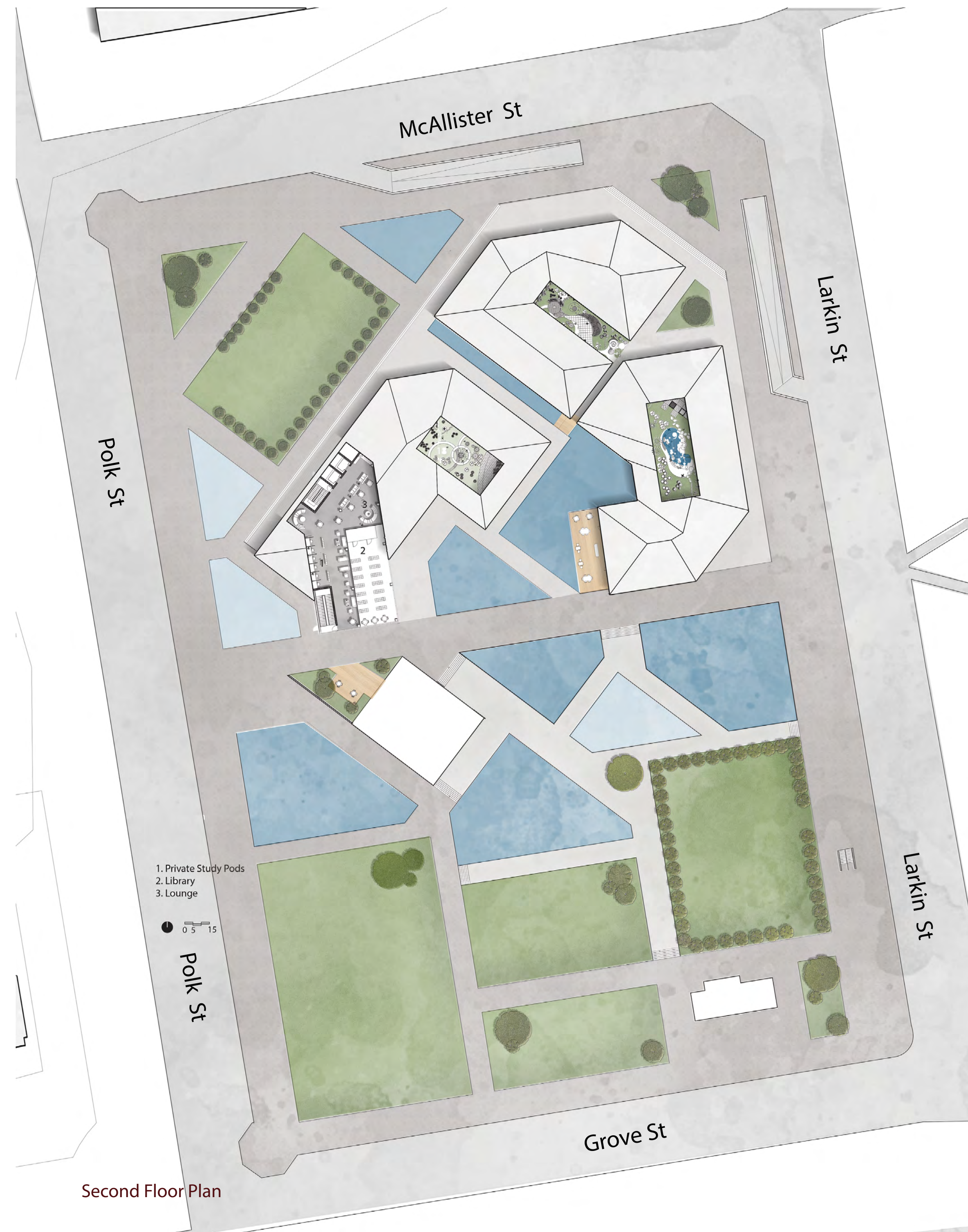
Asian Art Museum

The plaza in San Francisco Civic Center is surrounded by art and power making this site important to the image of identity. The Asian art Museum next to the site is not inclusive and is a bad example of Asian American diaspora. This neoclassical architecture holding Asian artifacts does not represent Asian identity well so the new Cultural center is a place to connect, celebrate, and advocate identity culturally better than its neighbor. This identity is shown through the Yin Yang of water/vegetation, old/new, in/out, and above/below.



Site Plan





SPACE for ASIAN AMERICANS

CASE for IDENTITY

PLACE for EXPRESSION



Transverse Section



Longitudinal Elevation

