

Objects of Home:

A place for architecture in the making of street-homes

by

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Bachelor of the Arts,
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SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE ON JANUARY 10, 2019 IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE

Abstract

Objects of Home re-imagines a home without walls, without roofs without doors, scattered throughout Rome - connected by patterns of use and coincidence. Immersed in a city that is not so anonymous to those who know it, these settlements upturn the tropes of the family and the private realm as the only site of intimate and fulfilling relationships. It seeks out the marginal, un-pretentious, hidden and symbolic spaces of the city and waits for the different imaginaries of often forgotten subjects to animate and re-form these anonymous spaces through their very difference. Focused on the homemaking practices of the urban street dwellers, five familiar homemaking patterns are traced to reveal the inconspicuous relationships formed between public space and its inhabitants. These moments of encounter produce places of social renegotiation, contestation, and collaboration that reshape the margins of a public space and through their recurrence and begin to transform the territory beyond a single ephemeral interaction. Repeated behaviors become ritualized, familiar encounters become community, and private possessions, gifted to the street, begin to organize new territories of individual personality. In the old but unrecognized processes of homemaking within the roman city, the body and living space become mutually constitutive - coexisting within the boundaries of private and public property.

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img 1
A man lights a
candle before
settling in to sleep
on the opposite
bench
Site Visit
Sep 19,2019
taken by me.

Introduction

The concept of home is not a straightforward one. The lack of inclusion of large swaths of urban inhabitants into housing projects reveals a pressing need to critically rethink what has historically been a mutually constitutive relationship between property, home, and personhood. The tendency to look at “homelessness” as a problem to be solved ignores the many intricate ways that these street-dwellers unbag their homes each night and the patterns through which - during the day - they forge connections with pedestrians, neighbors and commercial establishments to build social capital through objects and actions.

Architecture must instead seek a space intimately tied to the city fabric itself that extends and enables ancient but invisible forms of domesticity. The city must learn to take responsibility for the existence and architecturalization of these other domestic spaces.

The space that is created could be neither fully private nor fully disowned.

In the words of Arendt “to live an entirely private life means above all to be deprived of [...] the reality that comes from being seen and heard by others, to be deprived of an “objective” relationship with them that comes from being related to and separated from them through the intermediary of a common world of things, to be deprived of the possibility of achieving something more permanent than life itself.”¹

Yet, creating a space where occupation and temporary ownership is socially recognized is essential to the process of recognizing the value of this lifestyle. Today as in classical times, “property means no more of less than to have one’s location in the world and therefore belong to the body politic”.²

(1)
Arendt, Hannah,
et al. The Human
Condition. 2018.

(2)
ibid

For centuries, the boundary line between the private and the public is understood as something of a sacred law that shelters and protects both realms while at the same time separating them from each other. This wall has gone uncontested for too long as those who can claim neither side (once slaves - now the unhoused) are marginalized and rendered invisible by the architecturalization of this social divide. It is this very boundary that must be blurred, thickened and eroded to carve out new territory in the no-man's land between the two.

This thesis makes three arguments. First, that the city needs spaces that transcend the capital binaries of public and private property. Second, that the practices of unhoused populations suggest other ways of home-making within the border between property and street. And third, that the social constructs around domesticity itself must be redefined by inclusive architectures that enable and

extend millennial old practices of street dwelling and accommodate the daily reprogramming and reconfiguration of social spaces through the arrangement of personal possessions.



img2
Offerings left to
deseased street
dweller who lived
against the Aurelian
Wall
Site Visit
Sep 18 ,2019
taken by me.



img 3
Collage of eroded
Roman Social
Housing in 20th
century
by me

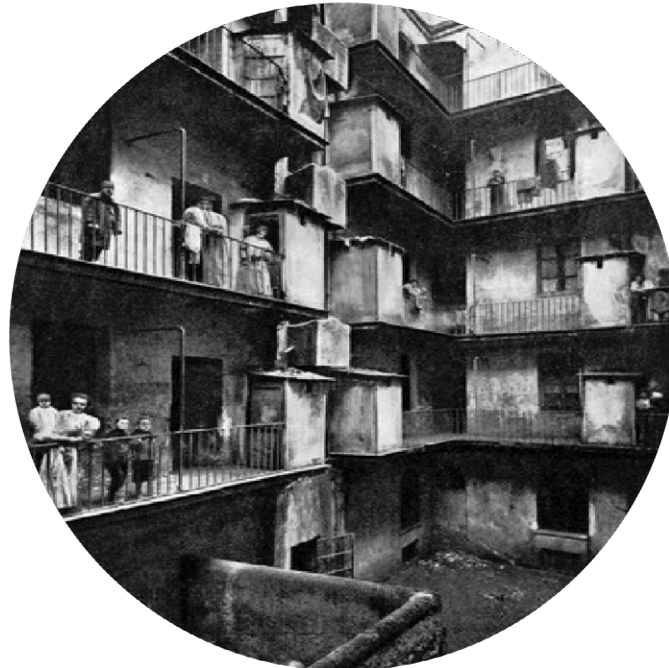
Top to Bottom
Social Housing
Borghi - borghetti
squatts - occupation
protests- recession
homelessness-
immigration

The Roman Context

In the Roman context, the case for legal redefinitions of housing is particularly pressing.

Since Rome was declared Italy's capital in 1870 it has consistently had to grow and sprawl to house Italians migrating from rural regions to the capital for work and, in the last three decades, from abroad. The city's housing policies written to provide for the thousands of new inhabitants each year have constituted a device of power that have often excluded a large strata of the urban population.

img 4
 Borghetto San
 Lorenzo , early
 1900s
[https://www.
 romasparita.eu/](https://www.romasparita.eu/)



87 illegal borghetti pop up to house thousands of people unable to afford corrupt prices of "affordable housing"

img 5
 Official Borghi
 Affordable Housing
 Developments
[https://www.
 romasparita.eu/](https://www.romasparita.eu/)



Popular housing demolished to make way for excavation and tourist promenade through the city.



Bergato: built in malarial area for people evicted from roman forum

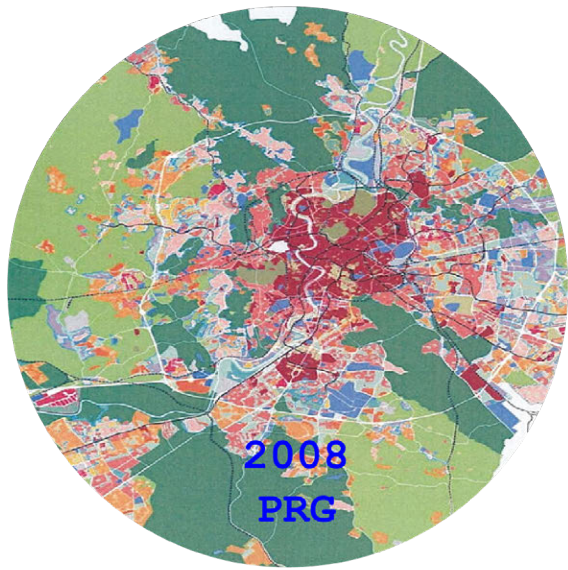
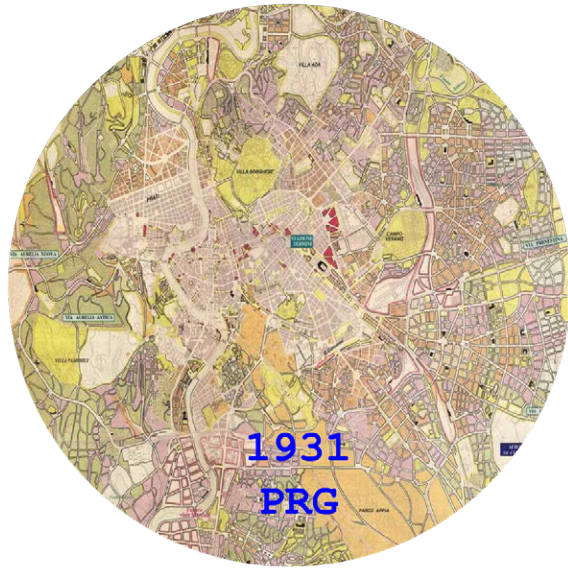
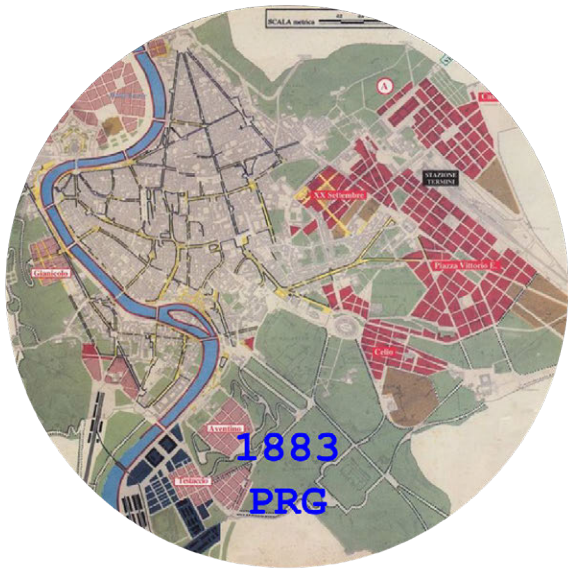
(3)
Mudu, Pierpaolo,
“Housing and
Homelessness in
Contemporary
Rome” (2014).

(4)
Castells, Manuel.
The City and the
Grassroots. (1983)

Despite efforts at the start of the 20th century to provide social housing developments for working class and low income Italians, later housing policies have resorted to the more retroactive approaches of legitimizing the informal settlements that were constructed in response to the corruption and price inflation that plague official developments. Many of the formally planned affordable housing developments were paired with the construction of inadequate housing “borghetti” a few blocks away- almost always near drinking “nasoni” fountains from which water could be sourced and near the electrical poles that served the new developments which could be tapped to serve the informal settlement.³

Interestingly, many “borghetti” were built by “muratori” – wall builders and construction workers who traveled to Rome to work on the housing complexes and urban plans from which they were excluded. Fascist Laws No 1092/1039 that

prevented urban migrants from accessing social services, housing and voting led to the construction of around 87 of these illegal borghetti to house thousands of people excluded from the 35 legal borgate. Rome’s foundational social housing created a state of urban marginality that persists to this day where the market economy and state policies remain unable to provide adequate shelter and urban services to an increasing proportion of city dwellers, including the majority of regularly employed salaried workers⁴



further real-estate speculation and accommodation of up to 5m inhabitants.

img 6
Master plans for
Rome
Comune di Roma
web site. 2019
<http://www.comune.roma.it>

(5)
Mudu, Pierpaolo,
“Housing and
Homelessness in
Contemporary
Rome” (2014).

Only after the end of Mussolini’s dictatorship in 1944, were new organizations created like the “Consulte Popolari Per la Casa” that was charged with surveying the informal settlements and formalizing them through reconstruction and the provision of services such as electricity, sewage, transport , and schools. The next few decades of publicly funded housing were dedicated to various attempts to incorporate the years of informal settlement into the formal legal housing network. Piano INA-Casa and the Tupin Law passed in 1949 by Parliament were aimed at creating more publicly funded housing and in the 1950’s gave rise to the “Periferia” - suburban developments for about 165,000 that, due to price inflation and corruption, still failed to provide for most of the borghetti dwellers and led to the construction of more illegal settlements.

In 1968 the Centro Cittadino delle Consulte Popolari reported

the continued existence of approximately 57 concentrations of shacks and borghetti with 62,351 counted individuals. In 1977 the same retroactive approach was taken to establishing the boundaries of the suburbs that had illegally expanded 3,000 ha. This approach has remained common even in contemporary housing policy.⁵



1988
*Coordinamento Cittadino Lotta per
la Casa created and 350 apartments
squatted in San Basilio*

img 7
Cittadini Loitta per
la Casa
S. Basilio-Roma
sparita 1974
www.romasparita.eu

In the 70s, after decades of uneven development spurred by capitalist economies that propelled the retreat of the welfare state, radical leftist organizations including the Italian communist party began to direct their attention to the struggle for housing. Fascist laws against urban migration were overturned. More visibly, the occupation of the home became politicized through extensive squatting campaigns throughout the 60s and 70s which peaked in 1971 when 3,300 apartments were occupied for 2 days by 14,000 families. This movement fought under the slogan “The house is occupied, occupation is defended”. Evictions and police brutality against squats increased and in 1974 a radical left wing activist, Fabrizio Ceruso, age 19, was killed during clashes between police and squatters at the San Basilio squat protest—escalating the conflict.

In 1979, the Equo Canone Law No. 392 capped rent at affordable prices

for low and medium income tenants. Yet so many years of exclusionary politics had transformed how the working class accessed housing such that squatting became a common means of permanent housing acquisition rather than only an act of protest.

During the 80s there was little new construction of social housing, although in 1980, 4,000 “improper houses” were demolished. To conceal the explosion of shanty-towns and squats, the 1981 census replaced the term “improper housing” with “other types of accommodation”. On the ground, squatting protests continued including the creation in 1988 of the organization “Coordinamento Cittadino Lotta per la Casa” which squatted 350 apartments in San Basilio that year and continues to organize short and long term squats to this day.



2009

Blocco Pecario Metropolitan organizes Metropoliz squat

img 8
Metropoliz Squat
with MAAM
museum 2019

(6)
Mudu, Pierpaolo,
“Housing and
Homelessness in
Contemporary
Rome” (2014).

(7)
FEANTSA country
Fiche, Homelessness
in Italy (2017)

The 1990s gave rise to the current landscape of Neoliberal Politics. Between 1994 and 2003, 71,000 apartments were sold with very poor results and the housing market fell entirely into the hands of speculators. Public housing became impossible to guarantee in most Italian cities and generated an environment of social segregation. These exclusionary policies spanned both the Left and Right-wing political parties. Between 1993 and 2008 the city of Rome, led by center-left coalitions sold apartments and shops in the city center to buy social housing in the suburbs and other municipalities in the province to try to hide the problem of social housing on the outskirts of the city. In 2001 only 8.2% of housing stock was owned by public institutions. As affordable housing stock became ever scarcer, 40,000 homes (almost 7% of all of Lazio’s housing) were illegally occupied in 2004.⁶

Before the 2008 recession Rome had Italy’s worst record for evictions: 1 of every 220 families. After the recession, the city experienced a catastrophic rise in unemployment and homelessness coupled with a sluggish recovery. In 2017, poverty in Italy was reported at its highest since the recession, with 5.1 million people living in “absolute poverty” (Reuters, 2017). Over 50,000 people were reported homeless in Italy of which more than 40% had been living on the streets for longer than 4 years.⁷ New social housing developments are slow to appear and with the return of neo-fascist governments, laws excluding the poor and marginalized from social welfare and housing are increasingly common.

The abundance of catholic charitable organizations, found every few blocks in the capital, have assumed the responsibility of providing a safety-net for many of those excluded from social housing. Yet the sheer numbers of unhoused individuals and the diversity of squats seen on the ground paint a more complicated picture beyond “affordable housing” and “organized squat”. Fear of arrest, institutions, mental health, or a preference for solitude led many to squat on the street rather than on property.

The act of hacking public space is radically different from the organized political squats that take over large apartments and public buildings in Rome. Yet, this form of home-making is also much more ancient and likely a permanent practice in a city where many extenuating needs can be met by charities. With little written on this ancient homemaking tradition, understanding pathways to housing charted by those living in a

corrupt housing economy is essential to situating this more informal practice in a context of diverse housing types. Rome’s history of retroactive housing formalization in the 20th century suggest a possible path for bringing legitimacy for 4+ year migratory street settlements in Rome.

Timeline

1880s THE RISE OF POPULAR HOUSING

1903 :

IACP created (institute for popular housing)

1923 - 1937 :Borgate planned and built

1924-1944: Fascist Dictatorship

1939-1945: WW2

1945- : RISE of illegal BORGHETTI



87 illegal borghetti pop up to house thousands of people unable to afford corrupt prices of "affordable housing"

1945:

Rome hosts 35 legal borgate (planned by the fascists)

1946 - :

PCI organized "Consulte Popolari Per la Casa" to obtain services such as electricity, sewage, transport, and schools

1949:

Parliament passes Law No. 43 - Piano INA-Casa and Law No. 408 - Tupini Law aimed at creating publicly funded housing

1950S: RISE OF PERIFERIA

1947 -1976

Christian Democrat Party

1951:

100,000 people 8.7% of the Roman Population found to be living in "improper housing".
(shacks, caves, basements, warehouses, and garrets) [CENSUS]

1960s

Construction of neighborhoods known as "167" after the Law No. 167 for about 165,000 people.

1961

Fascist Law No. 1092/1039 is revoked.

This law curbed migration to urban centers and prevented urban migrants from voting and receiving welfare assistance

1961

Census finds 70,000 people in Rome to be living in "improper housing."

1968

Centro Cittadino delle Consulte Popolari reports existence of approximately 57 concentrations of shacks and borghetti with 62,351 individuals

1970s "La Casa si occupa, l'occupazione si difende"

1970-1971

extensive squatting

of empty houses reaching peak on Oct 29, 1971 when 3,300 apts were occupied for 2 days by 13-14,000 families

1971

census finds 20,000 people in Rome to be living in "improper housing."

1974

Radical Left -wing activist killed during clash between police and squatters

1977

The "historical Periferia" suburb is surveyed and official boundaries established (55 illegal areas covering more than 3,000 ha.)

Water, sewage, gas, and electricity facilities are provided

1979

Equo Canone Law No. 392 caps rent at affordable prices for low to medium income tenants

1980s

Need for housing leads many to squat permanently, not just to negotiate

1980

4,000 "improper houses" are demolished.

1981

Census replaces term "improper housing" with "other types of Accommodation". Official figures now underestimate the most critical housing situations (545 in 1981, 184 in 1991, 147 in 2001)

1981

17% of housing stock is popular housing for rent directly managed by the city authorities and the IACP



1988

Coordinamento Cittadino Lotta per la Casa created and 350 apartments squatted in San Basilio

1990: Present Neoliberal Politics

1994-2003

71,000 apartments are sold with very poor results and the housing market falls entirely into the hands of speculators. Public housing becomes impossible to guarantee in most cities and generates social segregation

1993 - 2008

City of Rome led by center-left coalitions, sold apartments and shops in the center of the city to buy housing the suburbs and in other municipalities in the Roman province.

2001

8.2% of housing stock is owned by IACP and other public institutions

2004

40,000 homes (6.73% of all housing in Lazio) are illegally occupied

2005

Resolution 110 ratified on Rome's housing emergency to unlock funds and resources for public housing including "casa dello sfrattato" for evictees

2008

Rome has Italy's worst record for evictions: 1 of every 220, families

2008: RECESSION



2009

Blocco Pecario Metropolitan organizes Metropoliz squat

2017

40% of homeless people have been living on the streets for more than 4 years (FEANTSA 2017)

2017

Poverty in Italy reported at its highest in 10 years, with 5.1 million people living in 'absolute poverty' (Reuters, 2017)

2016

50,7424 homeless people reported in Italy (FEANTSA, 2017)

img 10
a small inlay saying
“private property”
marks an otherwise
invisible boundary
on the pavement
taken by me



The Failure of Property

Italy's legal definition of property has not changed since the modern constitution was adopted in 1946. Property is defined much like it is in other European constitutions as either private or public with certain conditions for expropriation, size limitations, and uses for the common good or to "ensure the rational use of land and equitable social relationships.

The Civil Code enacted in 1924 and based on Napoleonic Code, details in its volume on Property, the codes and conditions around "usucapione", adverse possession. In this document "ownership of immovable goods is acquired by virtue of possession over a continuous period of 20 years." Certain conditions are imposed that stand in contrast to the homemaking practices of the street-dweller. The Civil Code states that the occupation must be "Open and Notorious" to the legal owner, and "continuous and uninterrupted". These conditions bar practices that are temporary,

inconspicuous, and not on private property from accessing rights to property and in so doing, excludes the settlements of street-dwellers from visibility under the law.

The continued global presence of unhoused settlements requires serious consideration of how homemaking might in fact be something distinct from property. Part of the reason why governments fail to "solve homelessness" is that the term "homeless" erases the many intricate and intentional ways that street-dwellers assemble their homes each night, using their bodies, surrounding buildings, and the objects in their bags. The absence of property boundaries and constructed limits make it difficult to legitimize and design for these rituals that mimic in so many ways the classical, property-bound domestic and homemaking traditions.

To create new ground for the homemaking of the unhoused, this

Article 1159

Third Property Lots

DIMENSIONING OF SPACE

Between Private and Public property there is a third type of property born out of the production of ‘home-making’ territories that share a boundary with the public street. This allotment exists along the boundary/ wall of a specific property (as defined in Article 3), and may be anywhere between 50 cm and 500 centimeters in length and with an extension of 1.5 meters onto the street/public space in addition to whatever nook that is provided by the facade system. Height is determined on a case by case basis.

TEMPORAL STEWARDSHIP

Each lot is may only be occupied for 75% of a day after which time object must be reassembled, moved or discarded. During their period of occupation, the present user is deemed responsible for the present objects.

CLAIMING SPACE

Adjacent properties can only be appropriated into “Third Property Lot” system if the lot is managed by a National or EU government building, a company (private or public) building of net value over 3 million euro (at time of construction), or if the building is owned by a property management company that owns over 7 properties in the region. Additional properties can be transformed with the consent of building owners for a period of 4 years with options for permit renewal.

FORMALIZATION AND AMENITY EXTENSIONS

After a Lot is recognized and transferred into the “Third Property Lot” system, the Government will provide a suitable property TAX reduction to the adjacent allotment and subsidize additional costs of water, electricity and ventilation that are diverted to support the external lot. The government will also provide materials and equipment for the formalization of the space and equip each space with a motion activated camera to monitor appropriate use and for the security of the user. Cameras may not be tampered with. Amenities will be provided to the space in accordance with 3 possible home-making typologies: storage, leisure, and sleep. Once a lot transitions, it is formalized with primarily permanent features and structure as well as some mobile or temporary elements - such that the whole addition has an expected lifespan of 9 years.

(8)
Harvey, David,
“Space as a Key
Word”(2004)

thesis proposes the creation of a third property type based on the theory of Third Space as discussed in the writings of Henry Lefebvre, Edward Soja, and Martina Low. Their theories reveal the specific, intentional and poignant ways that objects assemble and disassemble the spatial politics of a THIRD space. A social and lived space that is produced by marginalization rather than by processes of planning and images.

(9)
Löw, Martina.
“The Constitution
of Space: The
Structuration of
Spaces Through
the Simultaneity
of Effect and
Perception.” (2016)

In a lecture in 2004, David Harvey describes how relational “Third Space” can be understood as different from absolute and relative space.

“If we regard space as absolute it becomes a “thing in itself” with an existence independent of matter. It then possesses a structure which we can use to pigeon-hole or individuate phenomena. The view of relative space proposes that it be understood as a relationship between objects

which exists only because objects exist and relate to each other. There is another sense in which space can be viewed as relative and I choose to call this relational space - space regarded in the manner of Leibniz, as being contained in objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself relationships to other objects.”⁸

In Low’s terms “Space is constituted through the selection and situating of social goods.” The reproduction of referential social arrangements through the thoughtful spatialization of objects and furniture constantly reconfigures and reprograms the social programs of a space. “In the thoughtful arrangement of the living room in preparation for a visit from the neighbors, the hostess recursively reproduces spatial structures.”⁹

Edward Soja discusses how the understanding of a third space enables a carving out of new ground



img 12
a corner is
cordoned off
between and old
building and the
Vatican walls.
Whose space is this?
taken by me

for the misfitting and marginalized subject.

“Postmodern culture with its decentered subject can be the space where ties are severed or it can provide the occasion for new and varied forms of bonding. To some extent, ruptures, surfaces, contextuality, and a host of other happenings create gaps that make space for oppositional practices which no longer require intellectuals to be confined by narrow separate spheres with no meaningful connection to the world of everyday.”¹⁰

This easily applies to the social relationships of the unhoused as it does to any other social relationship. In the words of Soja “all social relations become real and concrete, a part of our lived social existence, only when they are spatially ‘inscribed’ - that is, *concretely represented* - in the social production of social space.”¹¹

The challenge surrounding the homemaking practices of the unhoused is in part based on the objects and materials used to inscribe their social relationship with the city and its inhabitant. The invisibility or rough, recycled, and inconspicuous social objects could be offset by architectures that amplify their visibility.

To design for the homemaking of the unhoused I follow in the steps of all these sociologists who replaced the question “what is space?” with the question “how is it that different human practices create and make use of different conceptualizations of space?”¹²

(10)
Soja, Edward,
2009, “The City
and Spatial Justice”
(2009)

(11)
ibid

(12)
Harvey, David,
“Space as a Key
Word”(2004)

Art 1158 Codice Civile “usucapione” or squatting

‘Ownership of immovable goods, as well as limited real rights of enjoyment on the same property, is acquired by virtue of possession for a continuous period of 20 years’.

There are five basic requirements that must be met for someone to make a claim of adverse possession on Italian property:

1:

Actual Possession – the adverse possessor must have actual, physical control over the property.

2:

Open and Notorious – the use and possession of the land must be so visible and apparent that it gives notice to the legal owner that someone may make a claim to it.

3:

Exclusive Possession – the adverse possessor cannot occupy the land jointly with the titled owner or share possession in common with the public.

4:

Hostile Possession – Adverse possession must be hostile to the title owner’s interest in the property. The word “hostile” in an adverse possession claim does not mean showing ill will or that the adverse possessor and legal owner are enemies. Rather, it means that the adverse possessor maintains that he or she holds the property as an owner against all other claims to the land.

5:

Continuous and Uninterrupted – All elements of adverse possession must be met at all times through the relevant period of time. Occasional activity combined with long gaps in that activity fails the test of continuous possession.

The length of time (10 – 30 years depending on the case).

The adverse possession must be open for all to see.

The possession must be hostile to the legal owner of the land.

Gaining a title to property through usucapione requires a court judgment.

Italian Constitution on Property

Art 42

Property is public or private. Economic assets may belong to the State, to public bodies or to private persons. Private property is recognized and guaranteed by the law, which prescribes the ways it is acquired, enjoyed and its limitations so as to ensure its social function and make it accessible to all.

In the cases provided for by the law and with provisions for compensation, private property may be expropriated for reasons of general interest.

The law establishes the regulations and limits of legitimate and testamentary inheritance and the rights of the State in matters of inheritance.

Art 43

For the purposes of the common good, the law may establish that an enterprise or a category thereof be, through a pre-emptive decision or compulsory purchase authority with provision of compensation, reserved to the Government, a public agency, a workers' or users' association, provided that such enterprise operates in the field of essential public services, energy sources or monopolies and are of general public interest.

Art 44

For the purpose of ensuring the rational use of land and equitable social relationships, the law imposes obligations and constraints on private ownership of land; it sets limitations to the size of property according to the region and the agricultural area; encourages and imposes land reclamation, the conversion of latifundia and the reorganization of farm units; and assists small and medium-sized properties.

The law makes provisions for mountain areas.



A small older gentleman with a flair for fashion.
He meticulously unbags every little item from his numerous bags.
He arranges them around himself on the bench.
He returns them all, exactly as they were, to their respective containers.
Each thing with a blessing from his fingertips.

Case Studies

At the end of September 2019 I travelled to Rome to conduct a week long set of site surveys and interviews, revisiting many of the sites and organizations I had volunteered with during the 16 years I spent growing up there. The following photos were taken during this visit where I documented different arrangements of street dwellers personal items to understand the ways these object and arrangements mediated their interactions with their neighbors, passersby, and the city's infrastructure.

Some informal interviews were conducted (though no recordings were taken as consent was not given). Notes were taken and some excerpts paraphrased. Questions were asked concerning their selection of site, rituals of setting up, people they interacted with, frequency of return, other sites they occupied, objects and materials they collected, and the social services

they engaged.

The sites were synthesized in three arrangements of sleep, storage and leisure for which the significance of each object and its location was analyzed.

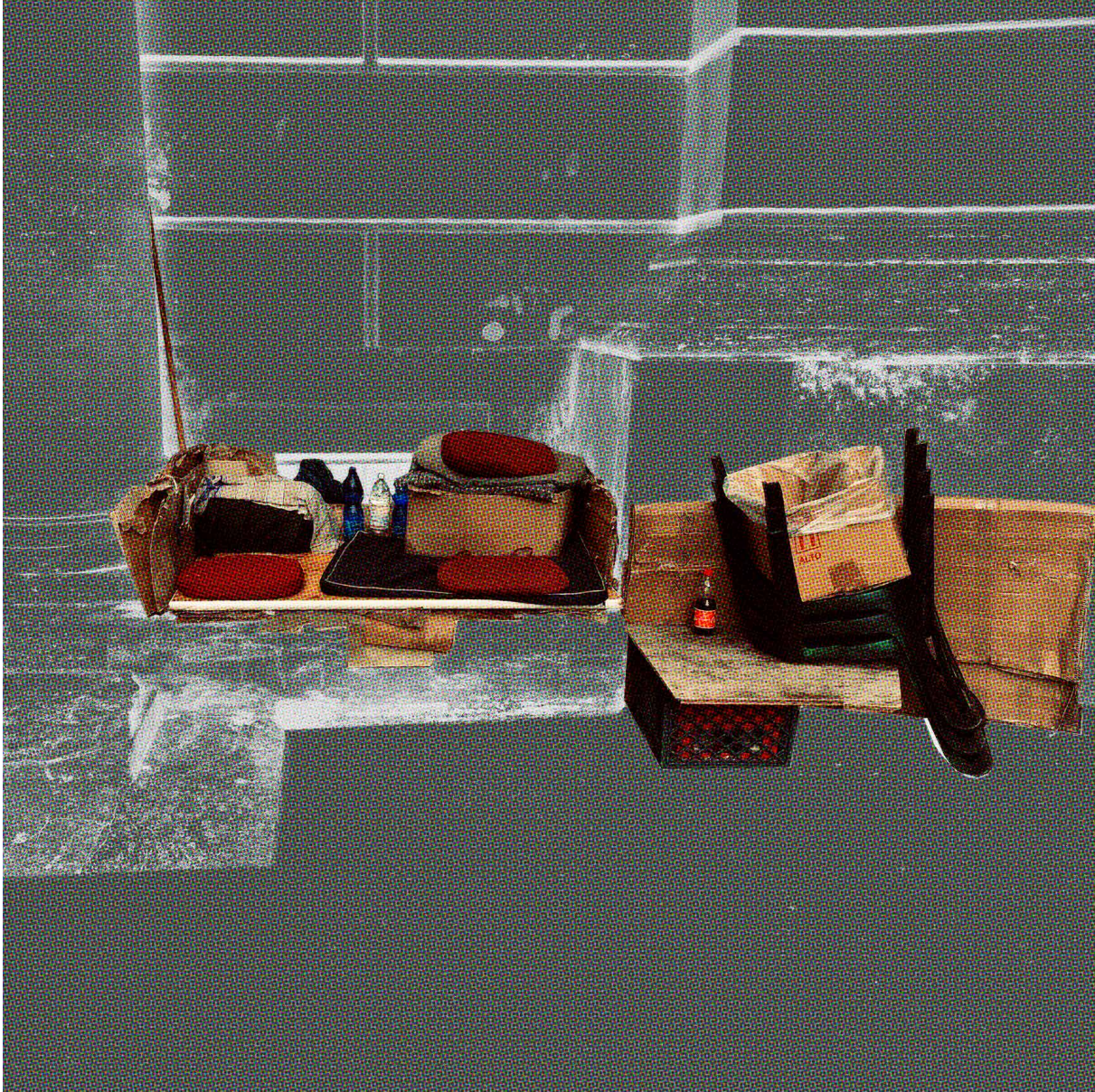
The following images were taken by me during the site visit and represent a selection of the many sites visited and surveyed



Collectedness stands in contrast to the wide openness of Piazza del Popolo.
A shadow will strike it at 6pm sharp.
With all these tourists milling about, who would bother to investigate?



They scoff at anti-homeless spikes.
Don't the banks know that this life is all about layers?
Ground, ledge, spike, box, cardboard, cardboard, cardboard, cardboard, cardboard, cardboard...



Something about red keeps things looking fresh.
3 pillows, 3 chairs... maybe three beds after dark.
Tucked into the nook of a modest church.
The cardboard defends one history from another.
Mutual acts of preservation.



If he had cards he would be playing solitaire.
He turns away from the Vatican crowds to confront his small stone friend.
They share a long moment of antisocial resistance.
Easily seen but uncomfortable to watch.



A man with an umbrella in a park full of trees.
This is not for shade and there is no rain.
It is green like the grass and hugs the outer edge.
A parabolic dish amplifying interiors.



A colonnade casts a shadow over a contained collection of home.
Tightly packed and concealed behind a heavy street barrier that was dragged there some quiet afternoon.
A sign request patience and kindness from anyone who stops to read.
A teddy bear watches over the things in the owner's absence.



A man sleeps on - between restaurants and bars.
It is only 5 in the afternoon and the street is teeming with people swerving past.
He seems unwell.
His expression morose, like that of the stuffed donkey toy hung beside him



Hippie or Homeless?
He shares some profound kinship with his canine companion.
Their heads turn in unison.
Their stomachs full on the same pizza.



A man on a chaise long looks out onto the throngs visiting St Peters Square.
He will not sit on the sitting stairs.



Friends have stepped out of the sun on this popular shopping street.
A step away but out of sight.
No one remarks on the chairs - the arrangement is familiar.
Making porches out of avenues.



A van so laden with flags you wonder how it moves.
Every shred of personality exploding on the outside, unabashedly existing.
Who is this carnival fiend?
With everything shown what is left to conceal... what sits inside?

Expanding Ideas of Home for the Unhoused

Current existing work on architecture for the unhoused consists almost entirely of providing free temporary housing or affordable housing. This has been the approach that has been more prevalent in the United States and it is undeniable that these projects have a positive tangible impact. The problem is that while housing provisions help most of the temporarily homeless that require affordable housing and certain social services, these programs continue to exclude a large majority of street dwellers from the assistance for settlement, safety, and health that they require.

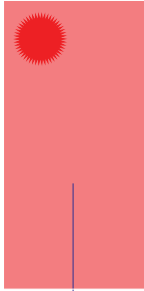
These responses are not enough as many homeless people will never choose to live in institutional housing either because of mental health issues, or because of histories of abuse in similar institutions, or because of habits that are not condoned by these homes which often require the users to be sober and on prescribed medications.

While many state and charitable organizations in Italy have provided certain amenities available to these marginalized populations, from toilets, showers, soup kitchens, and washing machines, these resources are often overcrowded, understaffed, and underfunded.

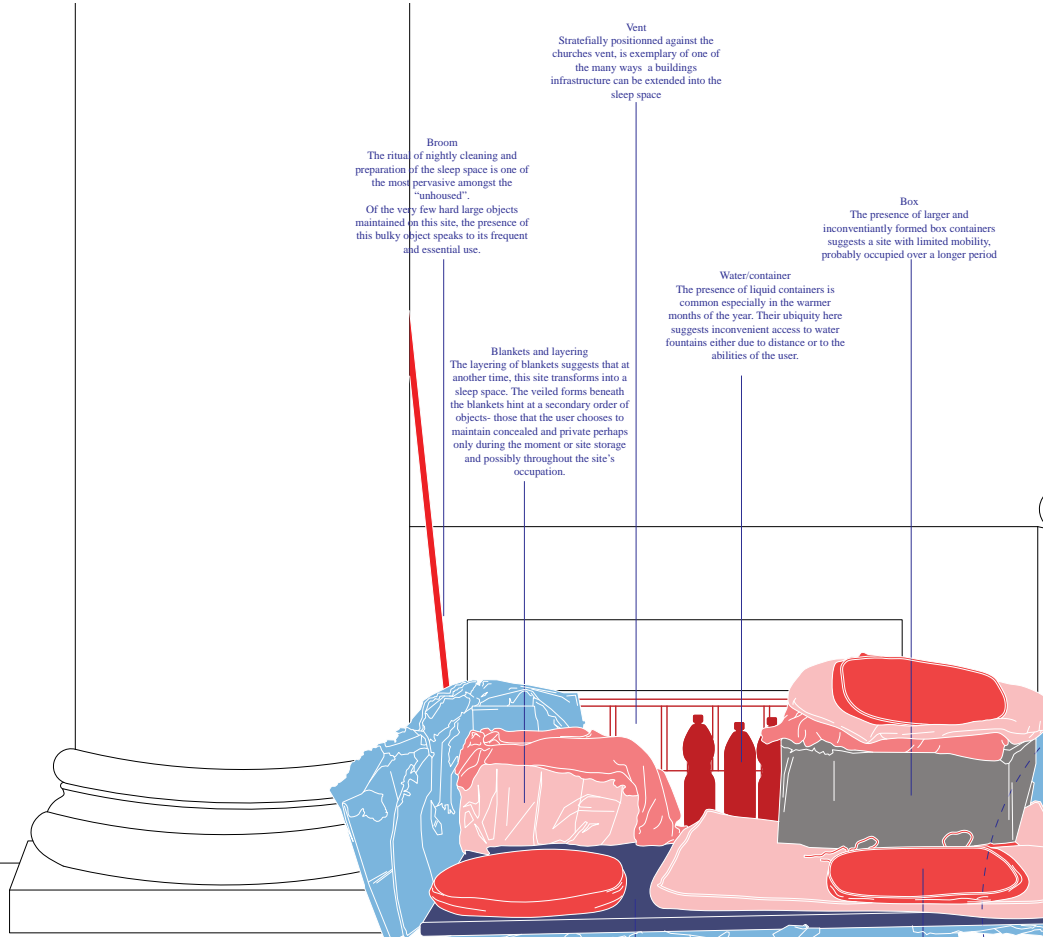
While an expansion of these amenities is definitely necessary, this is only part of the challenge as many of the risks to health and mental well-being are a result of simply sleeping for months to years in exposed environments. Homes are needed but more importantly, the definition of the minimum dwelling must be expanded to include the myriad ways that people continue to live in the public and external realms such that their living practices and domestic needs can also be accepted, assessed, met, and improved.

Third Space Analysis

Ordinary objects and recycled materials are given new meaning in the arrangements of the social sites of street homes. They delineate boundaries, indicate sociability, trust, and vulnerability. Some objects are the frivolities of personal taste - others are essential building materials, preciously guarded and worn to shreds before discarded. These things mark the separation of the street home from the public ground. They provide avenues for exchange of goods and services as well as opportunities to become seen in an otherwise anonymous social landscape.



Church and Shrine
By positioning itself against the facade of this religious institution, the site invokes the values of piety and sanctity inspired by religion even in an abstracted sense. Through proximity this settlement appropriates some of the heartfulness of the site for itself.



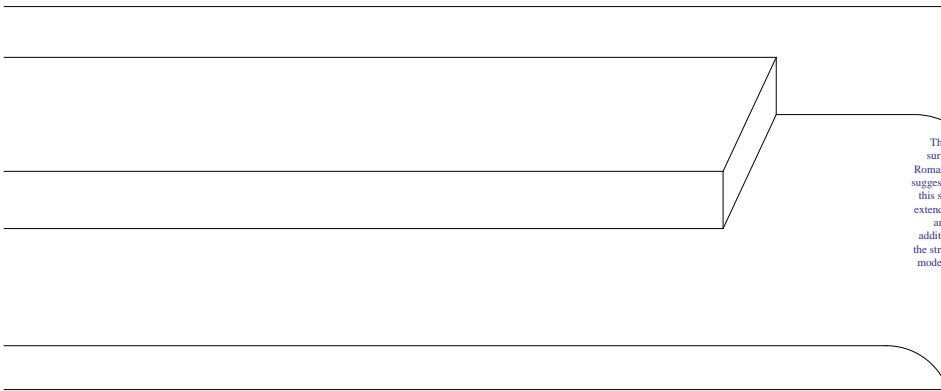
Vent
Strategically positioned against the churches vent, is exemplary of one of the many ways a buildings infrastructure can be extended into the sleep space

Broom
The ritual of nightly cleaning and preparation of the sleep space is one of the most pervasive amongst the "unhoused".
Of the very few hard large objects maintained on this site, the presence of this bulky object speaks to its frequent and essential use.

Blankets and layering
The layering of blankets suggests that at another time, this site transforms into a sleep space. The veiled forms beneath the blankets hint at a secondary order of objects - those that the user chooses to maintain concealed and private perhaps only during the moment or site storage and possibly throughout the site's occupation.

Water/container
The presence of liquid containers is common especially in the warmer months of the year. Their ubiquity here suggests inconvenient access to water fountains either due to distance or to the abilities of the user.

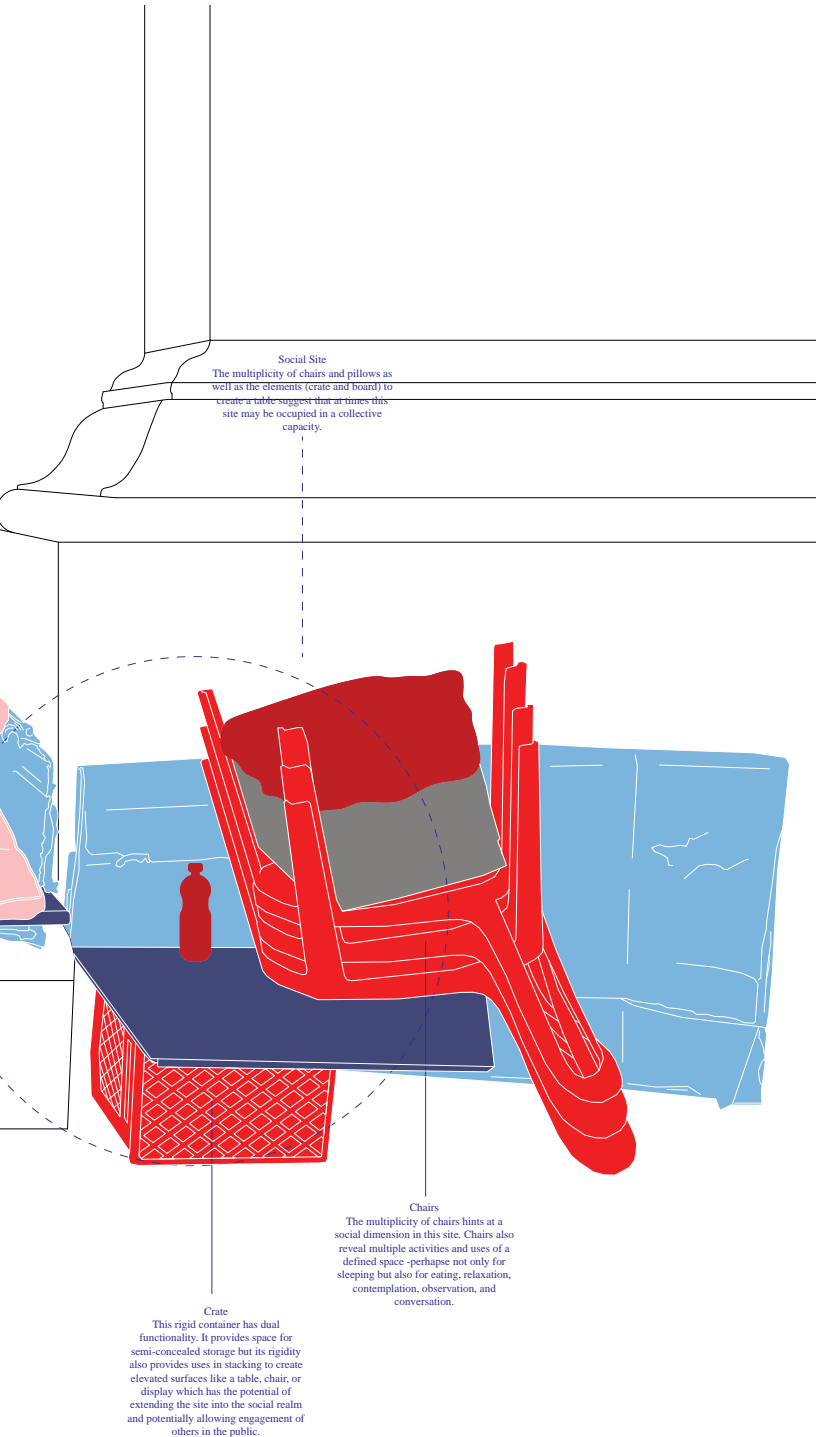
Box
The presence of larger and inconveniently formed box containers suggests a site with limited mobility, probably occupied over a longer period



Hard Wood Board
The presence of secondary hard surfaces is less common amongst Roman street homes. Its presence here suggest 1. the more permanent nature of this site 2. the possibility that this site extends its sleep space onto the ground and that the wood becomes an additional surface of separation from the street. This might be to accommodate more inhabitants or merely for added comfort

Pillows
This soft and bulky object has in it a mildly frivolous character. Its size and sturdiness makes its an inconvenient object to conserve while one is on the move which is indicative of the permanent character of this site. This object is indicative of a measure of indulgence and self care which is exemplary of return, home, and comfort.

Cardboard
Cardboard is one of the most ubiquitous and notisable markers of a street site. This lightweight portable surface allows for a separation from the grime of the street itself and a delineation of what is inhabited. It can be easily folded and stored and adds a layer of softness and warmth to an otherwise unforgiving ground.

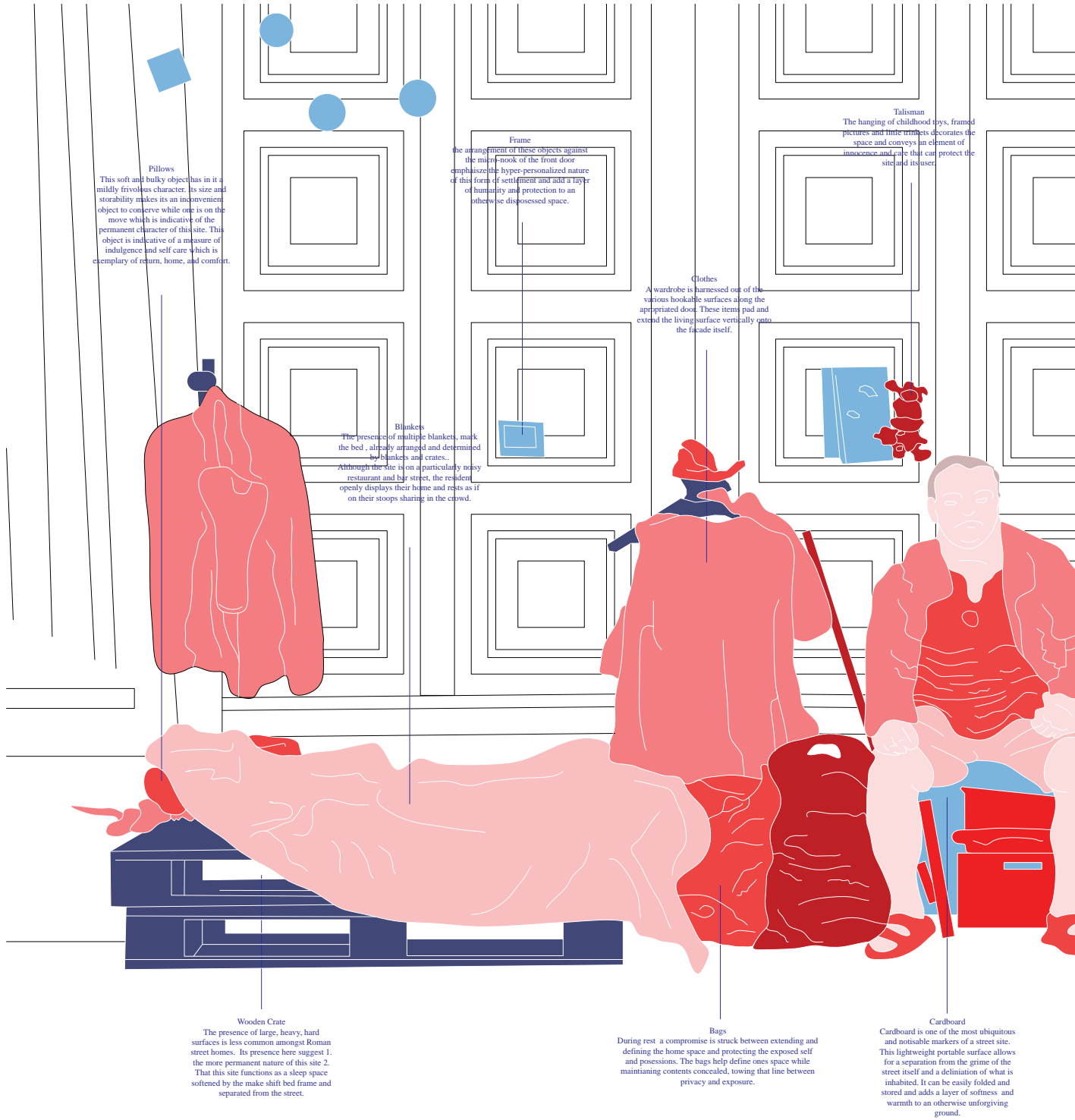


Store

In storage a site is chosen near a zone of constant transit where passersby do not linger long. Tourists, traversing long distances in a day, will not seek to interfere with objects they read as valueless and, even if they do, theft is less likely at the feet of a church.

Objects are organized in tight careful arrangements to defend against destruction.

The settlement must maintain its distinction from other collections of waste objects, often by collecting and organizing waste and scrap material so that their stored possessions cannot be mistaken for abandoned objects.



Pillows
 This soft and bulky object has in it a mildly frivolous character. Its size and storability makes its an inconvenient object to conserve while one is on the move which is indicative of the permanent character of this site. This object is indicative of a measure of indulgence and self care which is exemplary of return, home, and comfort.

Frame
 The arrangement of these objects against the mid-point of the front door emphasize the hyper-personalized nature of this form of settlement and add a layer of humanity and protection to an otherwise dispossessed space.

Talisman
 The hanging of childhood toys, framed pictures and little trinkets decorates the space and conveys an element of innocence and care that can protect the site and its user.

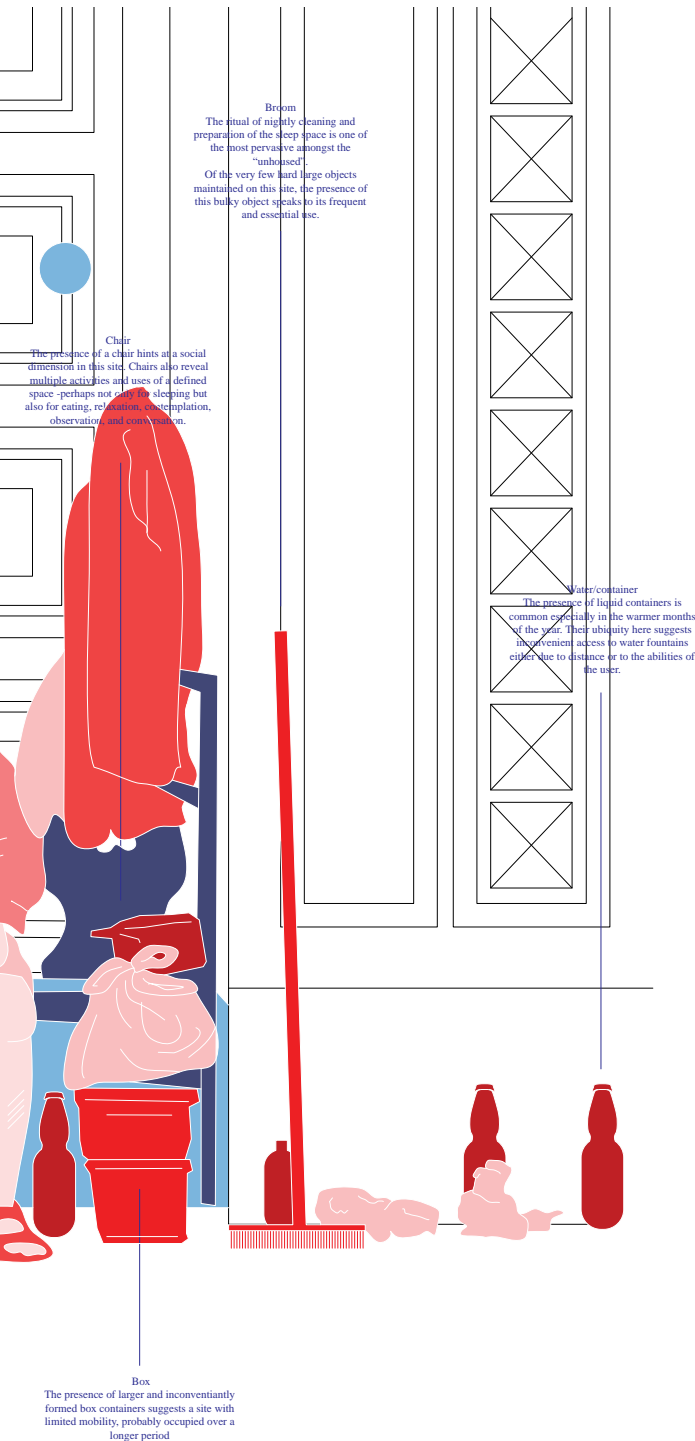
Clothes
 A wardrobe is harnessed out of the various hookable surfaces along the appropriated door. These items pad and extend the living surface vertically onto the facade itself.

Blankets
 The presence of multiple blankets, mark the bed, already arranged and determined by blankets and crates. Although the site is on a particularly noisy restaurant and bar street, the resident openly displays their home and rests as if on their stoops sharing in the crowd.

Wooden Crate
 The presence of large, heavy, hard surfaces is less common amongst Roman street homes. Its presence here suggest the more permanent nature of this site 2. That this site functions as a sleep space softened by the make shift bed frame and separated from the street.

Bags
 During rest a compromise is struck between extending and defining the home space and protecting the exposed self and possessions. The bags help define ones space while maintaining contents concealed, towing that line between privacy and exposure.

Cardboard
 Cardboard is one of the most ubiquitous and noticeable markers of a street site. This lightweight portable surface allows for a separation from the grime of the street itself and a delineation of what is inhabited. It can be easily folded and stored and adds a layer of softness and warmth to an otherwise unforgiving ground.

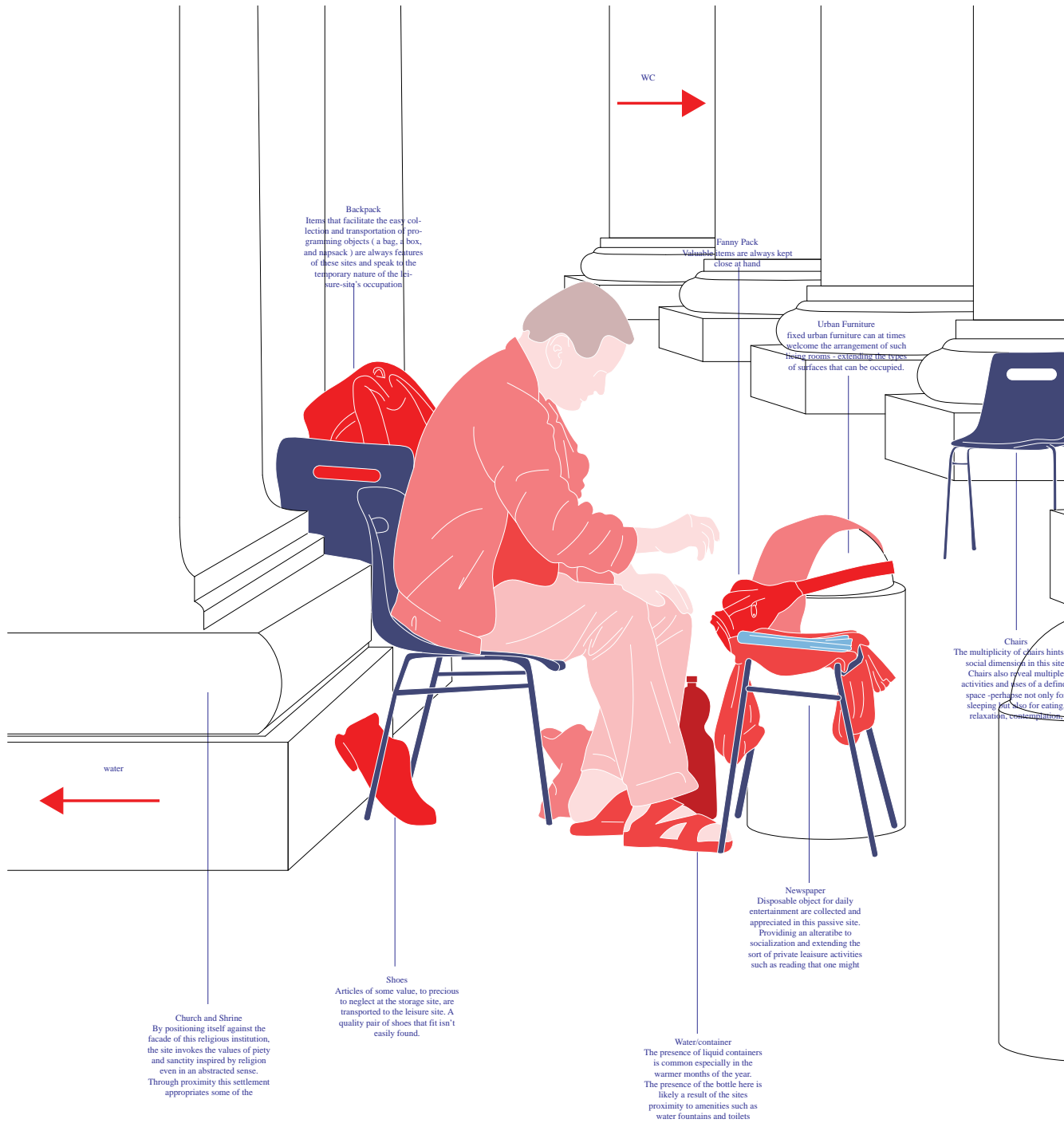


Sleep

A sight is chosen in the light - quiet but not too removed from night-life. In this case, a medium sized plaza adjacent to a popular tourist district.

A space is spread out - unpacked and arranged out of bags and boxes, softened by blankets and separated from the street by layers of cardboard or wooden crates. If the site is not proximal to a church or "benevolent" symbol, talismans like stuffed animals, pictures of saints, or candles are displayed or hung, humanizing the space by drawing references to societal beliefs about morality or innocence.

As the site is arranged, the area is cleaned, sometimes down the length of the street. This ritual of care and cleanliness proclaims to those habitating the vicinity that this sleeper is also aware and participating in the exchanges of a neighborly community.



Backpack
Items that facilitate the easy collection and transportation of programming objects (a bag, box, and rucksack) are always features of these sites and speak to the temporary nature of the leisure-site's occupation

Fanny Pack
Valuable items are always kept close at hand

Urban Furniture
fixed urban furniture can at times welcome the arrangement of such leisure rooms - extending the types of surfaces that can be occupied.

Chairs
The multiplicity of chairs hints social dimension in this site. Chairs also reveal multiple activities and uses of a defined space - perhaps not only for sleeping but also for eating, relaxation, contemplation.

Newspaper
Disposable object for daily entertainment are collected and appreciated in this passive site. Providing an alternative to socialization and extending the sort of private leisure activities such as reading that one might

Water/container
The presence of liquid containers is common especially in the warmer months of the year. The presence of the bottle here is likely a result of the sites proximity to amenities such as water fountains and toilets

Shoes
Articles of some value, to precious to neglect at the storage site, are transported to the leisure site. A quality pair of shoes that fit isn't easily found.

Church and Shrine
By positioning itself against the facade of this religious institution, the site invokes the values of piety and sanctity inspired by religion even in an abstracted sense. Through proximity this settlement appropriates some of the

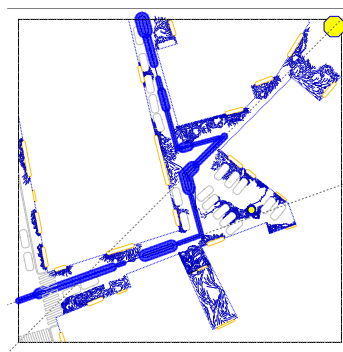
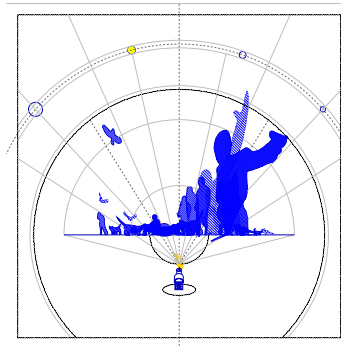
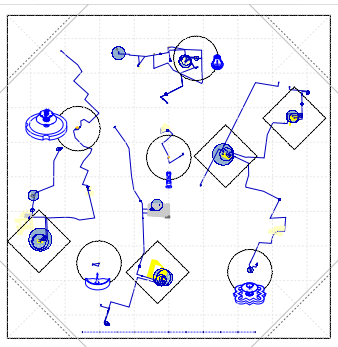
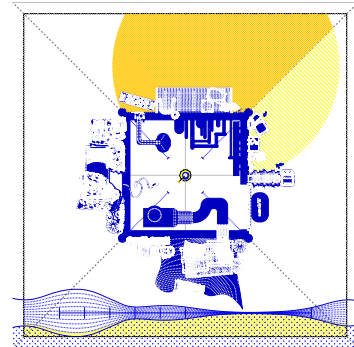
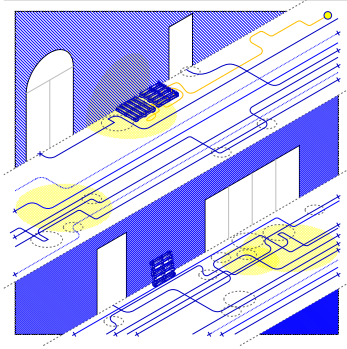


Sit

During the leisure hours of the day a quiet site is chosen where passive activity goes unremarked. Somewhere on a boundary between jurisdictions (commercial/residential) or a park perhaps. In this case a chair against the colonnade dividing the Vatican City from Rome is chosen. Proximity to water, bathrooms, and food is sought.

A chair or a bench, some shade or warmth, is ideal. Perhaps the chair will stay overnight when the user retires to their bed site. Perhaps the chair is carried. Also carried are the precious items which cannot risk theft. A backpack and bag, any money, valuables, precious garments, or instruments.

A social moment is carved out. Returning daily or weekly to the same site to see the same people - to talk and connect. An opportunity is created for passersby to participate in some form of contemporary indulgences, a donation for better karma, maybe even a spoken blessing.



Paths Home

Mapping the Objects of a Third Space

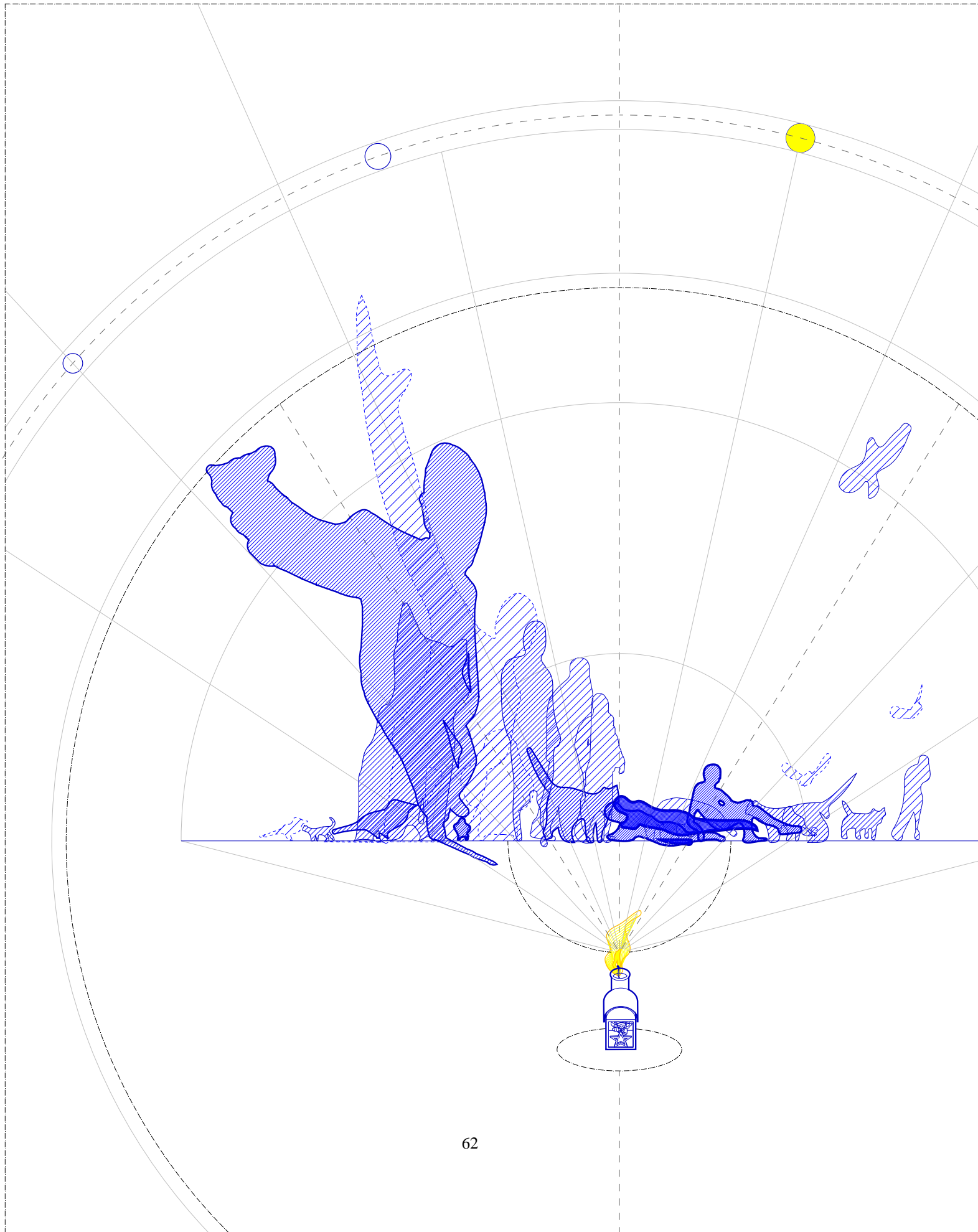
The case studies led me to trace the movements of 5 recurrent objects from the collected street homes. The movements traced reveal moments of encounter as the objects of connect individuals, form new social networks and mediate the relationship between the occupant of the street home and their urban companions. These objects animate the marginal, unpretentious and hidden spaces of the city, giving them new symbolism by resisting the anonymity of crossing lives.

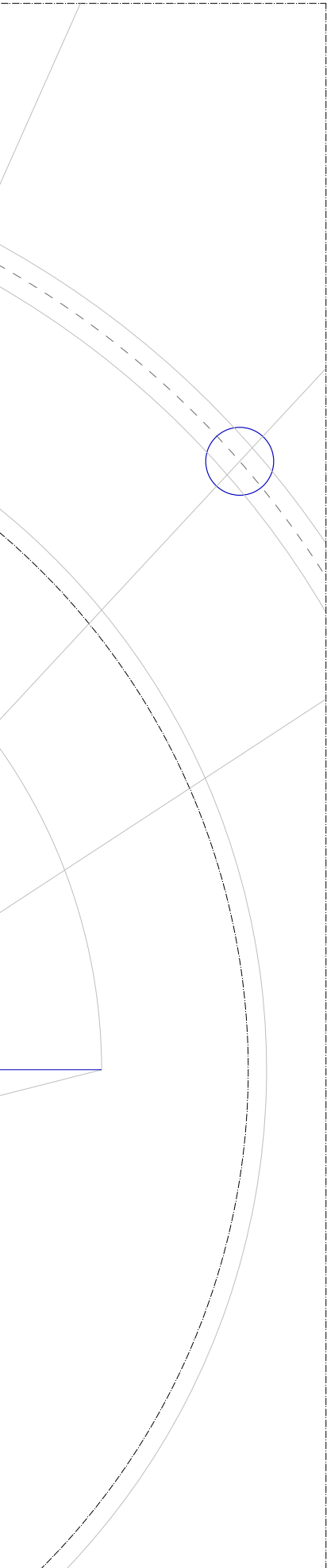
The night light, the broom, the pallet, the wall hanging, and the garment were selected for their visibility as agents of social cohesion.

Although representative of only a few of the hundreds of object-mediated encounters - inherent in all these objects is a level of codependency that paints the roman streets . It underscores the absence of a strict divide between government services and standardized behaviors in favor of more fluid, negotiated, and layered practices. In every one of these objects lies an

encoded political message of autonomy and redefinition that perpetually counteracts the normative codes and laws passed down from political bodies up high. Systems of control are quietly and unremarkably diverted. Public space is perpetually repossessed and redistributed again and again by its many inhabitants, only for a moment, as new powers are consolidated and dissolved again. Nothing is constant in the ebb and flow of popular and political opinion, the daily light cycles and the seasonal rotation of the earth.

These objects were pivotal to design spaces that suggest the presence of a place for something but resist the confines of domestic minimums - becoming homes only during a moment of occupation. The architectures proposed in this thesis seek to produce spaces of social renegotiation, contestation, and collaboration that reshape the margins of a public space and, through their recurrence, begin to transform the territory beyond a single ephemeral interaction.





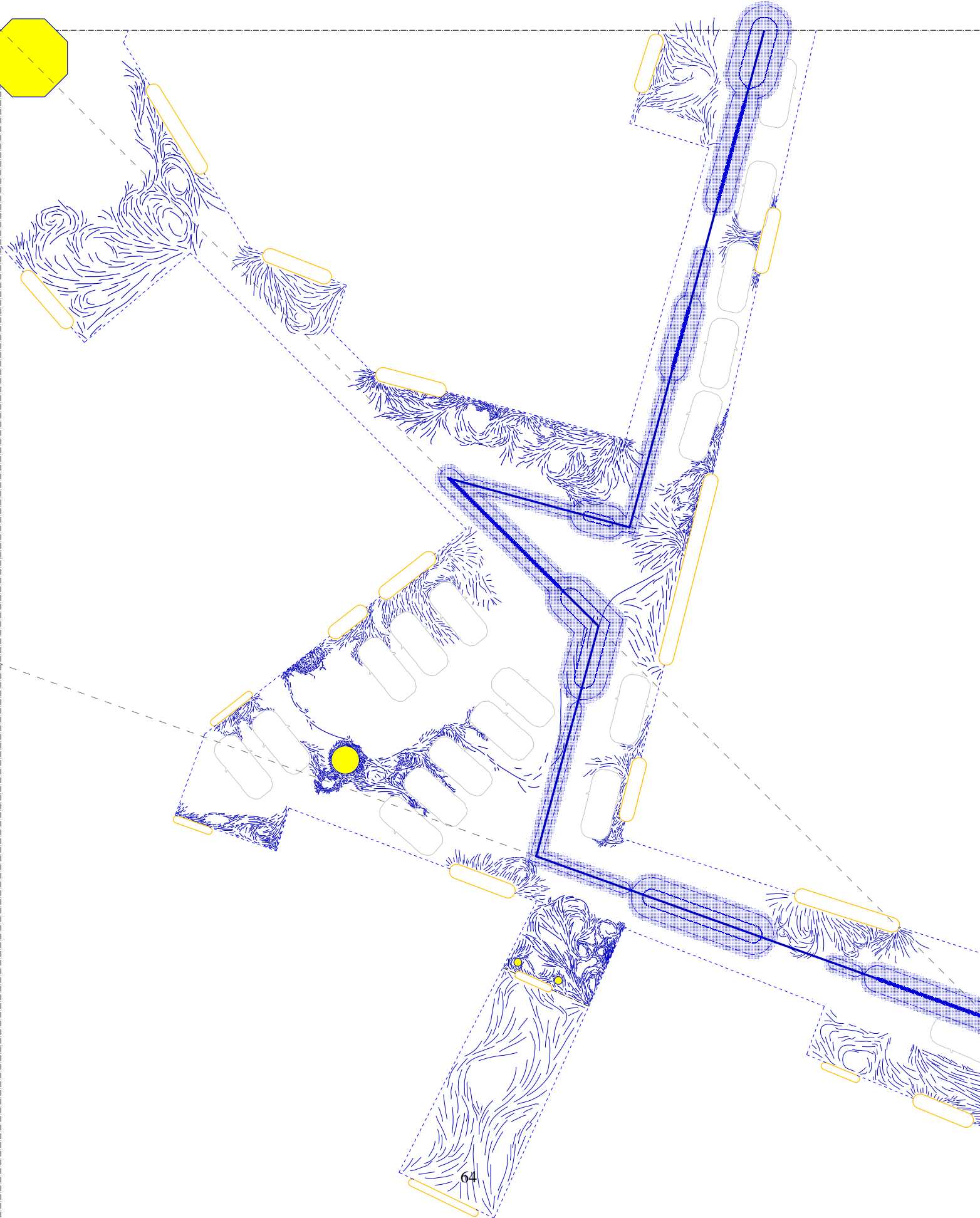
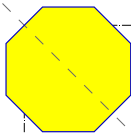
The Night Light

The candle is a talisman. It performs the spirit during moments of absence and in moments of sleep. It meets the person at a site of faith - a holiday display or a church and finds itself transposed into a new context - dematerialized and dispersed one - but continues to perform the same role - one of reappearing people and memories - the dead, the saints, and now the unhoused person who resists becoming invisible to the world. It performs in darkness - extending or amplifying the benefits of street lighting as purveyor of security. It activates a surface - lifting it out of its surroundings and in its flicker it brings movement and life to stationary or lifeless things.

It also casts its own shadow- a living one - and in this manner it distinguishes those in its light from those served by the institutional glow of standard street lamps. The flame elicits primal memories of the origin of human life - something sacred in antiquity - a small flame with a big shadow, who's sacredness has only been amplified by its incorporation into religious rituals and universal rights of passage. Unlike a light-bulb it is a living entity that expends itself and expires. It exudes aromas and warmth and these too act as a living thing would - establishing a space for itself - drawing some closer - and keeping others away. Extending the territory of its human companion.

img 16

Diagram tracing the shadows of the candles projections from the time it is lit until morning. Size indicates closeness to the light. Line thickness is proportional to the duration of stay per position



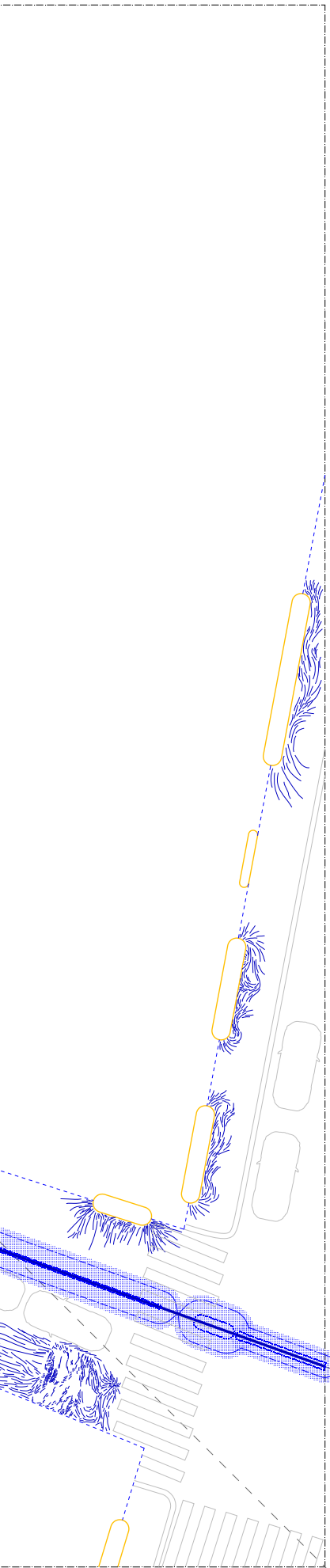
The Broom

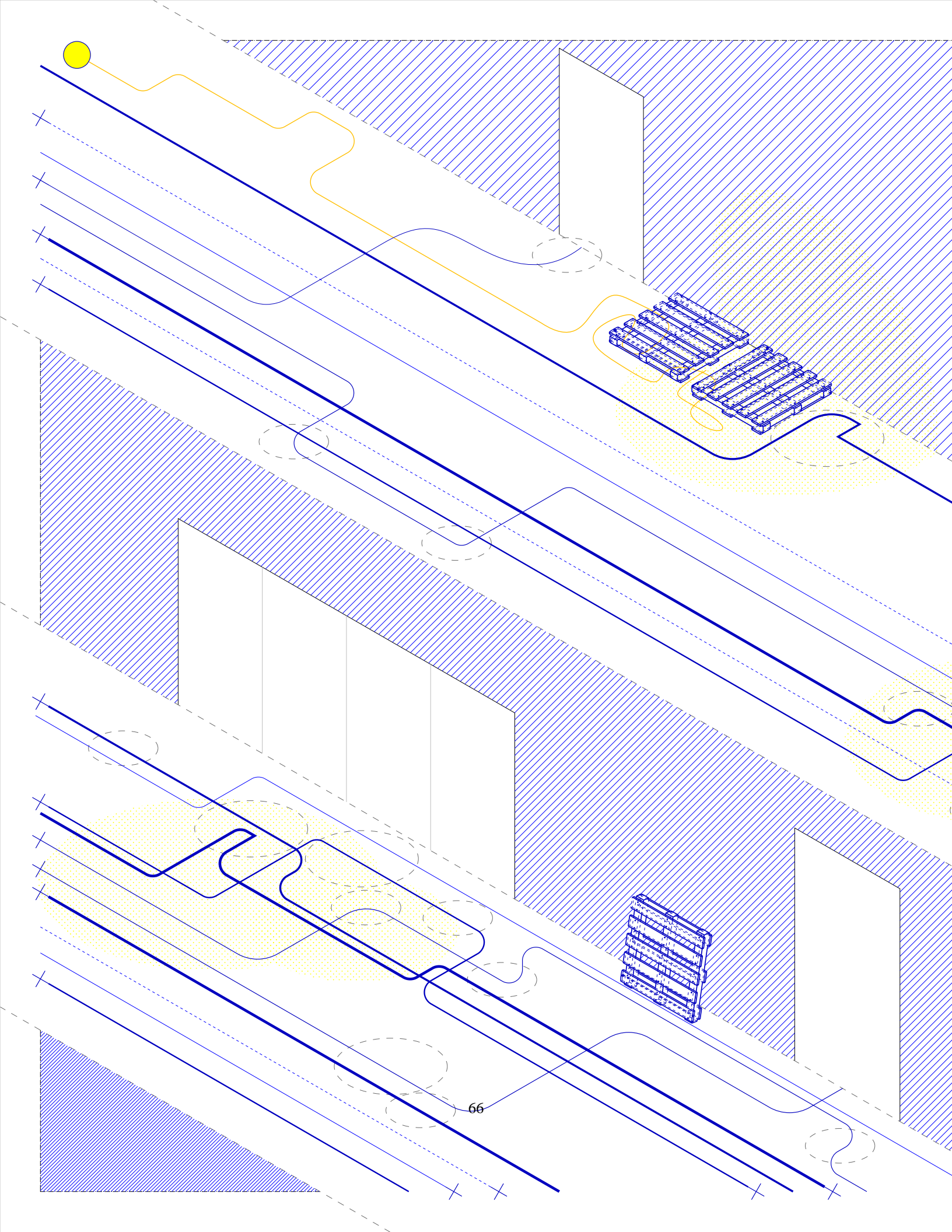
The broom paints the street, mapping areas of care and attention that are overlooked and fleeting. In the conversations and photographs taken of Roman street homes, the act of cleaning one's area before occupation and the presence of the broom were some of the most interesting reoccurring items.

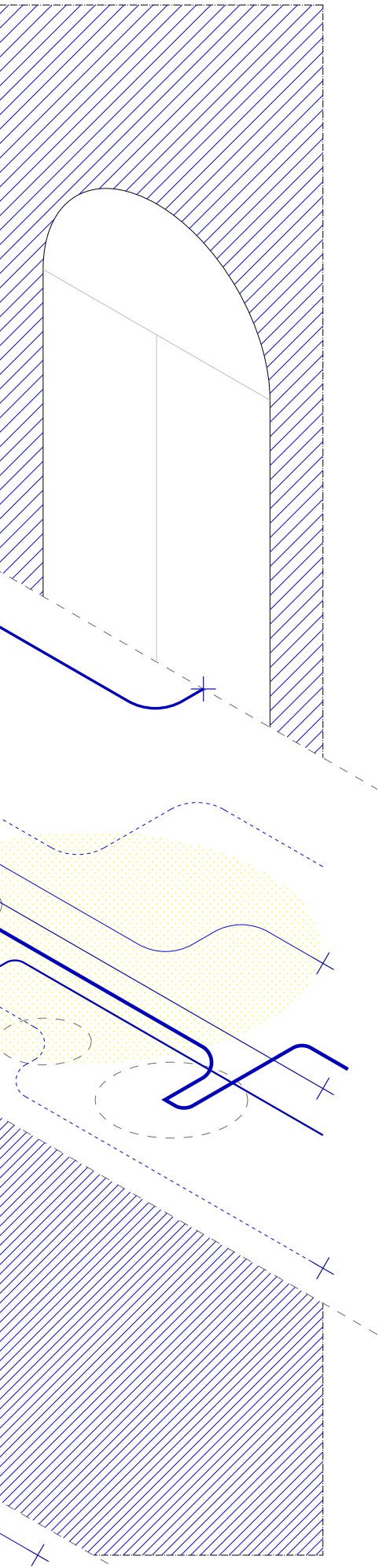
Some people spoke of extending the area they swept to include the entrances of stores and houses of people who were kind to them or offered them food or places to store things. The path of the broom marks spaces of social reciprocity between the street, neighboring establishments and neighboring homes. It traces at the scale of entryways – relationships of neighborliness and the sharing of personal ground between the street-dweller and the block's other inhabitants.

The presence of this service also highlights one of the many ways that the actions of the unhoused supplement lacking city services, in this case those of street cleaning. The scale of street homes permits their inhabitants to serve the nooks and crannies of the city that sweeper-trucks do not reach.

img 17
Diagram of broom strokes connecting (orange outlined) doorways, across the pavement. The thicker lines indicate the paths swept by the unhoused. The thinner lines are those swept by other residents. The hatched path is that of the street-sweeping truck.







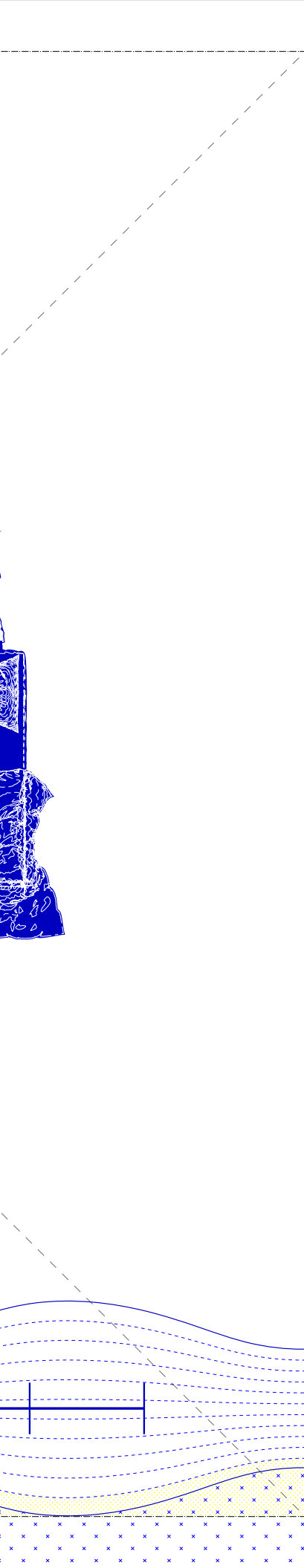
The Crate

Taken from a shipping container or fruit van or market, it is difficult to move and establishing of an element of permanence over the selected site. Often found as the principle element separating the unhoused sleeper from the ground, it appears in different positions depending on whether the site is in a state of occupation or storage. Like a stage, it allows the occupant to separate themselves from the bustling street while at the same time providing a fixed point of arrival for those who wish to share a moment with the pallet's inhabitant.

The mapping of the crate reveals how the object alters circulation along the street, producing bottlenecks and at time forcing moments of adjacency. It also shows how the speed of movements and conversation of passersby exist in relationship to the social interactions of the street-sleeper and the people who greet them.

img 18

Diagram of the crate during times of use and disuse. Lines trace the paths of pedestrians where speed is proportional to line thickness. (Thinner lines being faster). Dotted circles indicate conversations along each walk. The orange line is the path of the street-dweller.

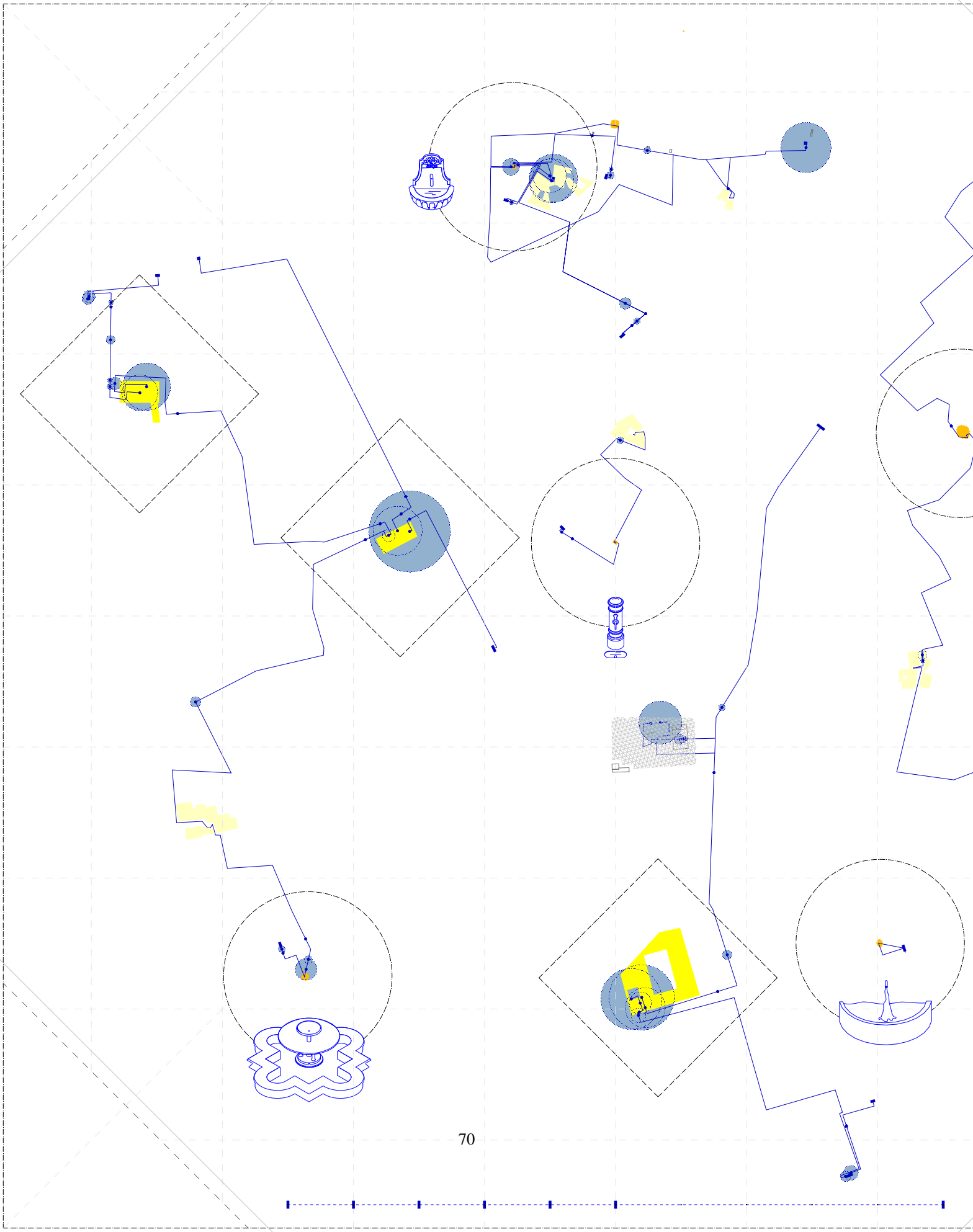


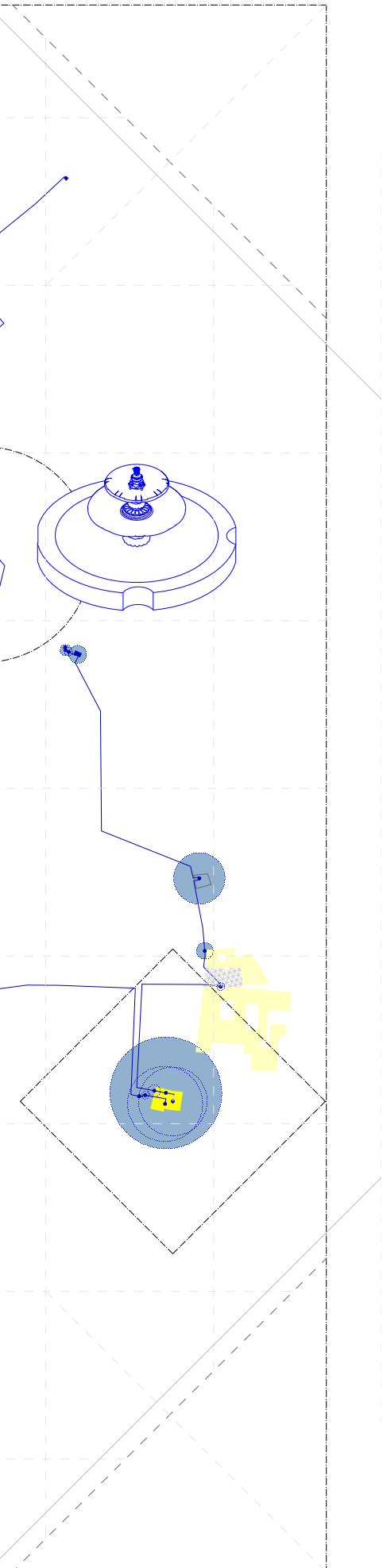
The Wall Hanging

The wall hanging reveals the accumulation of personal objects as they extend and thicken the infrastructure of the wall through different seasons and define new surfaces for living and expression. The seasonal relationship with the stall and the extension of its amenities to serve the street sleeper produce a deeper and denser border between public and private realm - creating in its texture, a third kind of urban fabric for those who cannot fit. In some ways this area is the synthesis of the third space – produced entirely out of personal objects, reconfigured to bound this other space

img 19

Diagram of objects accumulated against the facade throughout the seasons. Clockwise from top: summer, fall, winter, spring. The diagram also indicates the various ways that resources are seasonally tapped from surrounding building facades.





The Garment

The garment traces a culture of laundry and personal care as it connects to charities and fountain infrastructure across the city. Although there are quite a few charities that offer free laundry services to the unhoused, in the summer months some people still prefer washing their items in the many drinking fountains located in random corners throughout the city and laying them to dry on the odd rock or bollard.

The map of the garment's path traces the paths of the unhoused as they connect with social services, fountains, and small commercial establishments as they run this errand. The search for places to store personal items, the hunt for empty washing machines, the hours of waiting at a sunny corner all bring them into contact with other inhabitants of the city. The size of the circles that follow these paths mark the duration of the conversations that occur along the way. As the unhoused engage with the city's network of washing and drying infrastructure, they trace a new map of social networks crossing with social services.

img 20

Diagram tracing the paths of the unhoused as they navigate the Streets of Rome to do laundry. Bright yellow blocks are charitable institutions that provide free laundry services. Light yellow blocks indicate other institutions or friendly buildings visited along the way. Orange circles indicate public drinking fountains where clothes are sometimes washed. The blue circles indicate durations of conversations along each path.

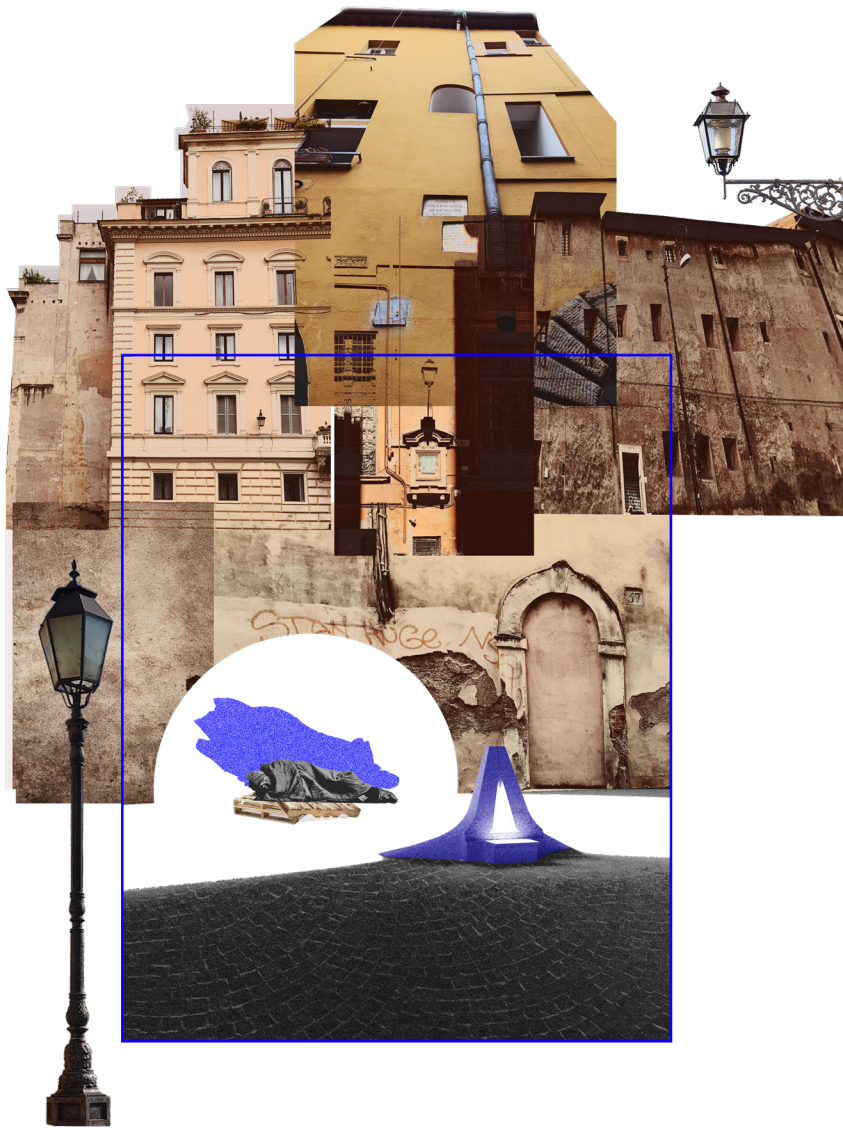
Spaces of Home

This thesis proposes five urban rooms - little appended nubs onto an already obzocky urban fabric - that enshrine and enable home making activities outside of the tradition of formal squatting or private domesticity. Their sometimes-extravagant texture exists only to make them more inconspicuous amongst the collage of different epochs embedded in the Roman urban fabric. In another city, their form and materiality could easily be entirely different.

They create spaces for the street sleeper as an active influencer of urban space and positions them on new ground with respect to other wanderers. Based on the mapping of 5 homemaking activities - these spaces represent only a sample of the many other relationships that the roofless individual forms with the city. Unoccupied, they stand as any other unprogrammed niche appearing as though from another time – invisible to passers-by. Only

when they are found and claimed by one or two of the many unhoused inhabitants of the city.

Each of these rooms is composed of a stair and social surface and a relationship of mutuality. None are roofed and none are meant for permanent occupation, but they are a place to belong - to occupy though never to own. They create spaces that materialize the intricate and intimate relationships forged between the unhoused, the city and its other inhabitants. The arrangement and aggregation of the personal items of the unhoused reference old and familiar orientations of domesticity. A space for sleeping, socialization, dining, storage, people watching, washing, praying, reading, or any number of other programs.

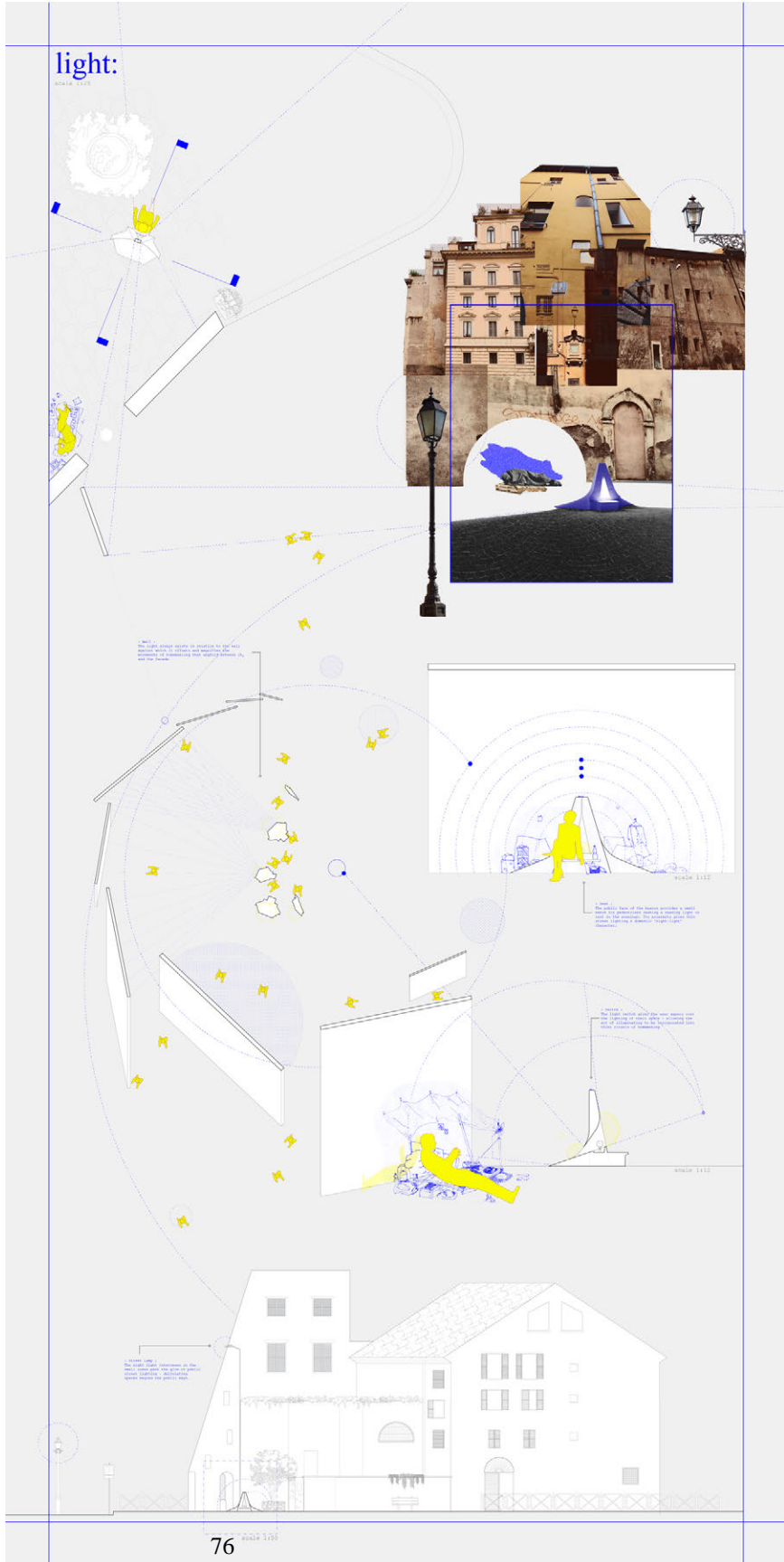


img 21
collage
“light” room

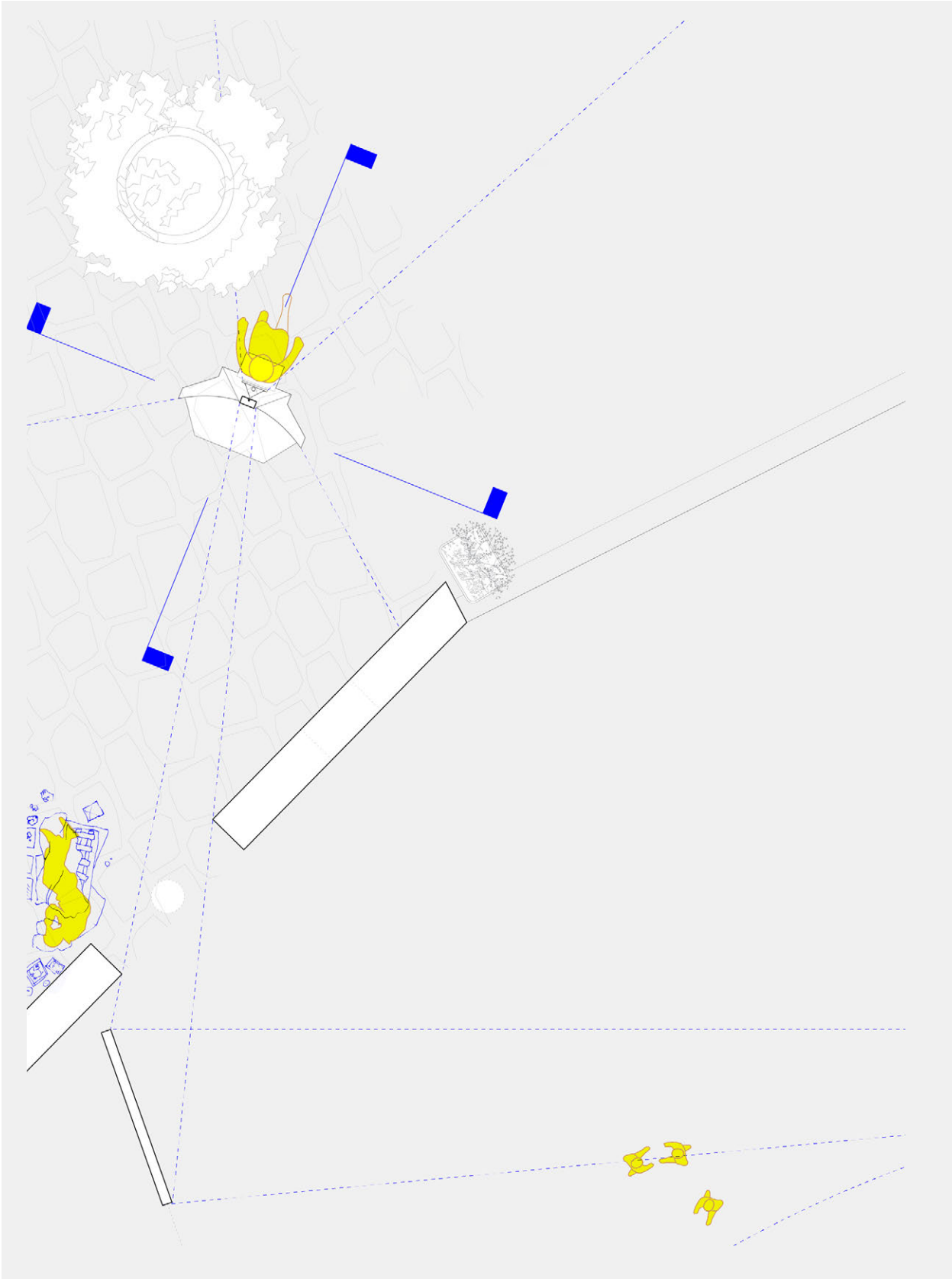
Light

A room is built out of the shadows by the flick of a switch. In my conversations with many Roman street sleepers, this primal attraction to light was universal in their home making practices. The night light exists in a binary relationship with a preexisting facade. Inside the light is magnified and dispersed amplifying and distorting the movements of the glows' inhabitant - making them appear larger than life.

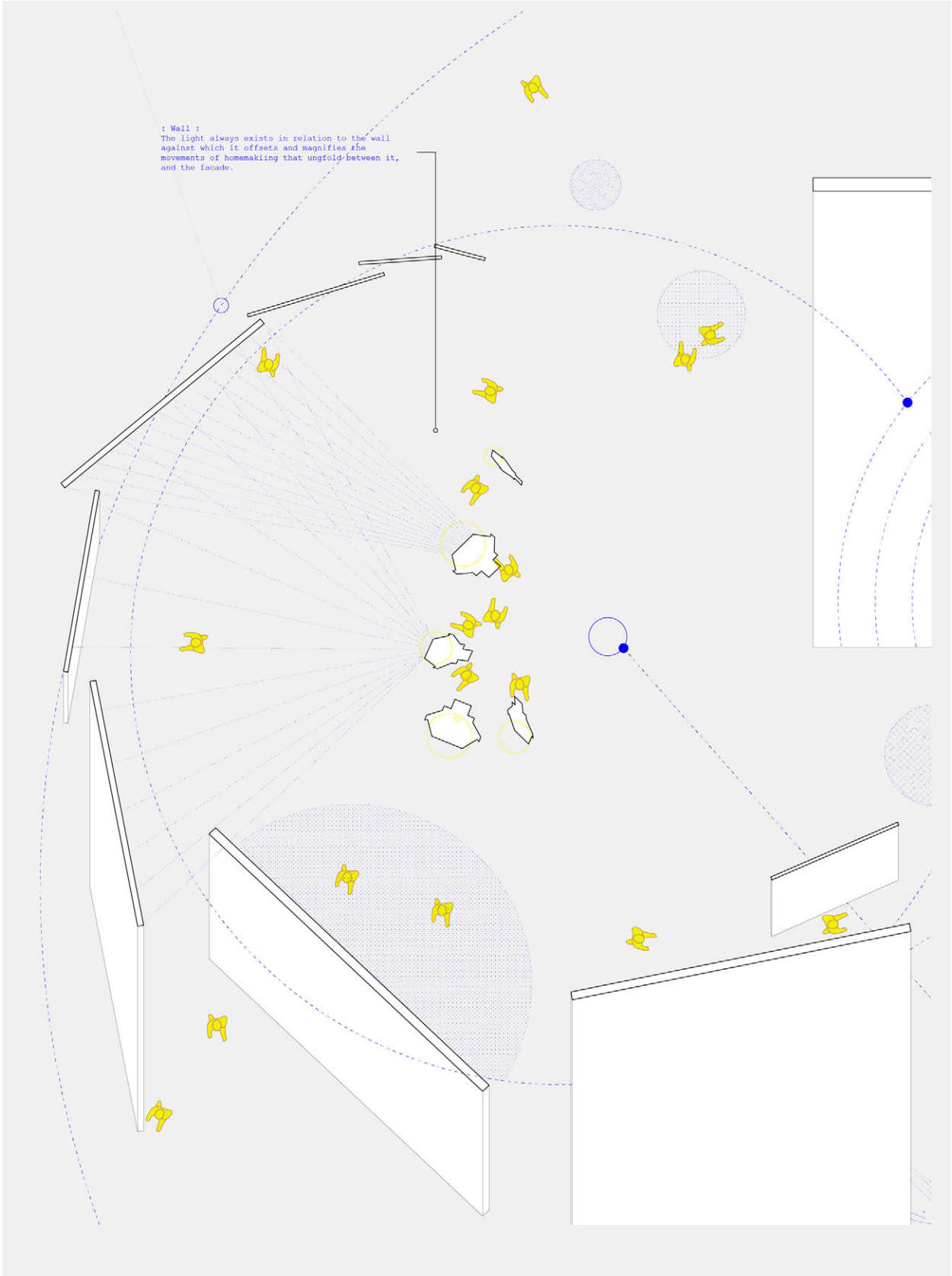
light:
ARCHITECTURE

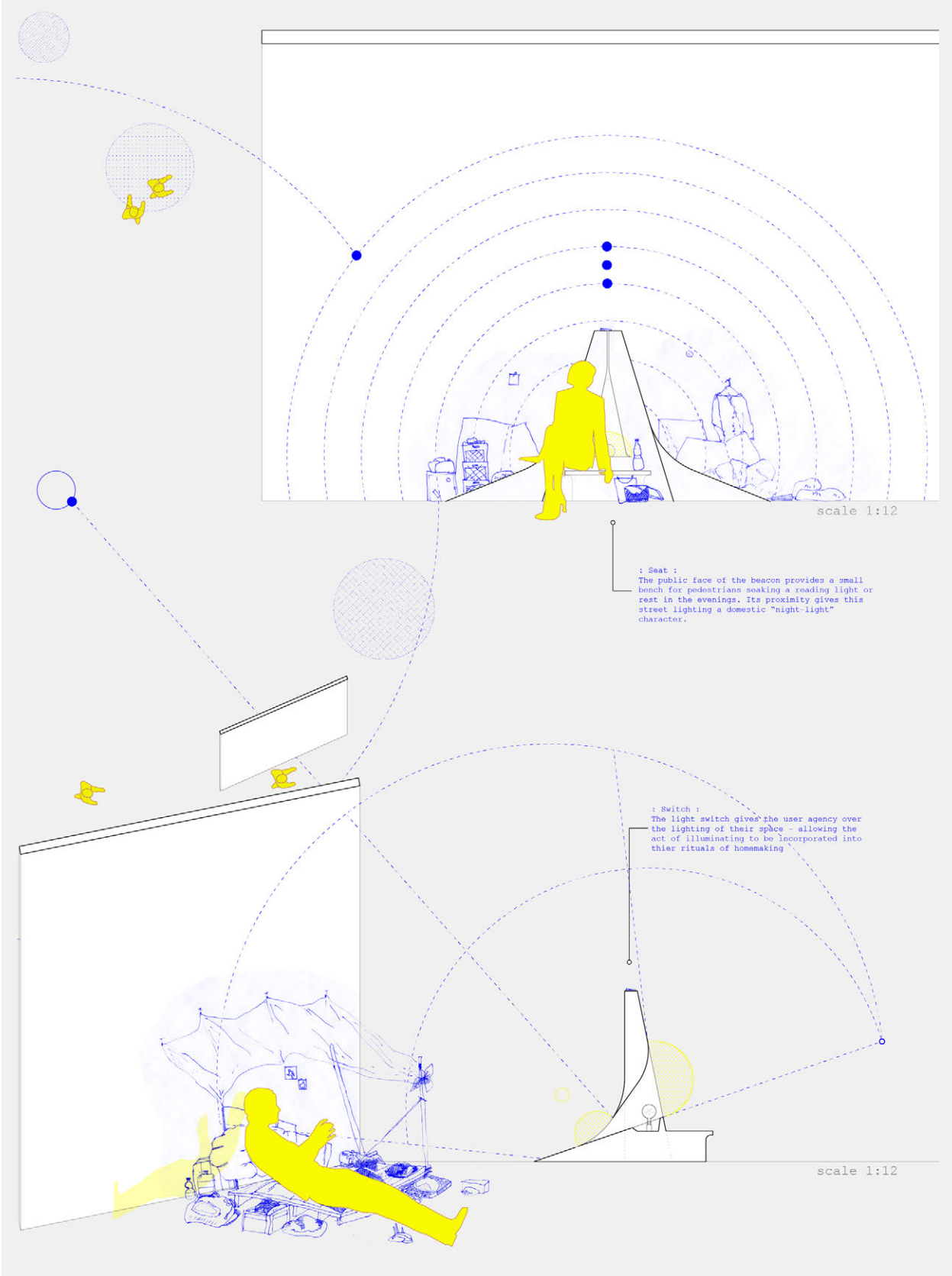


img 22
final review board
for "light"



: Wall :
The light always exists in relation to the wall
against which it offsets and magnifies the
movements of homemaking that unfold between it,
and the facade.

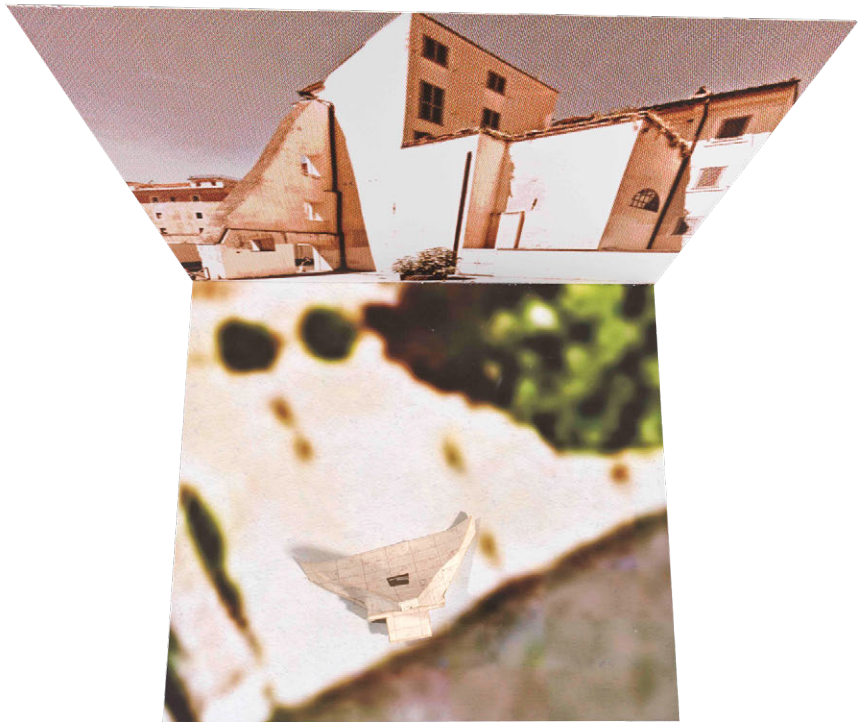








img 23 - 25
model for "light"
room in a potential
site
model photos by
Andy Ryan





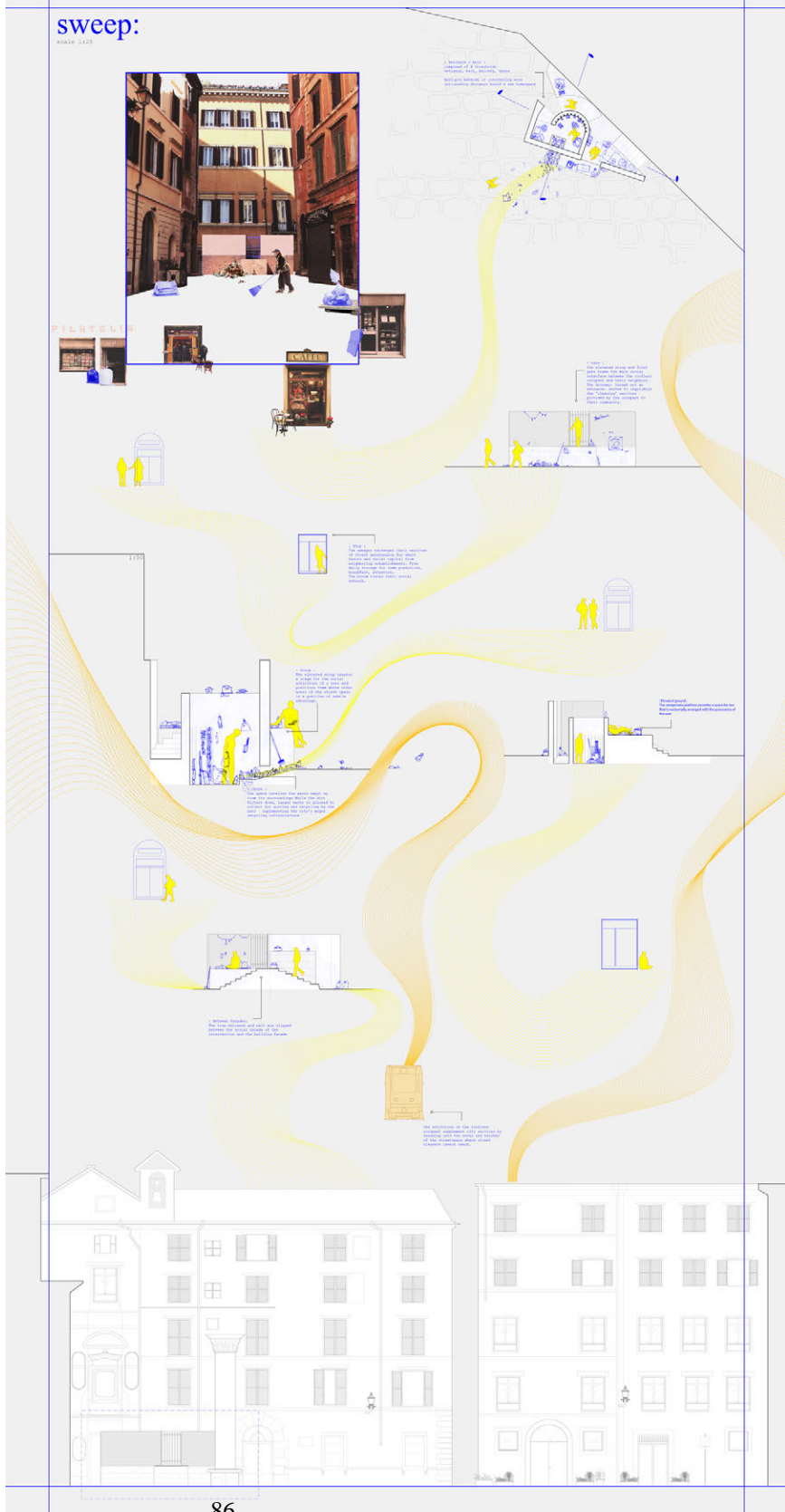


img 26
collage
"sweep" room

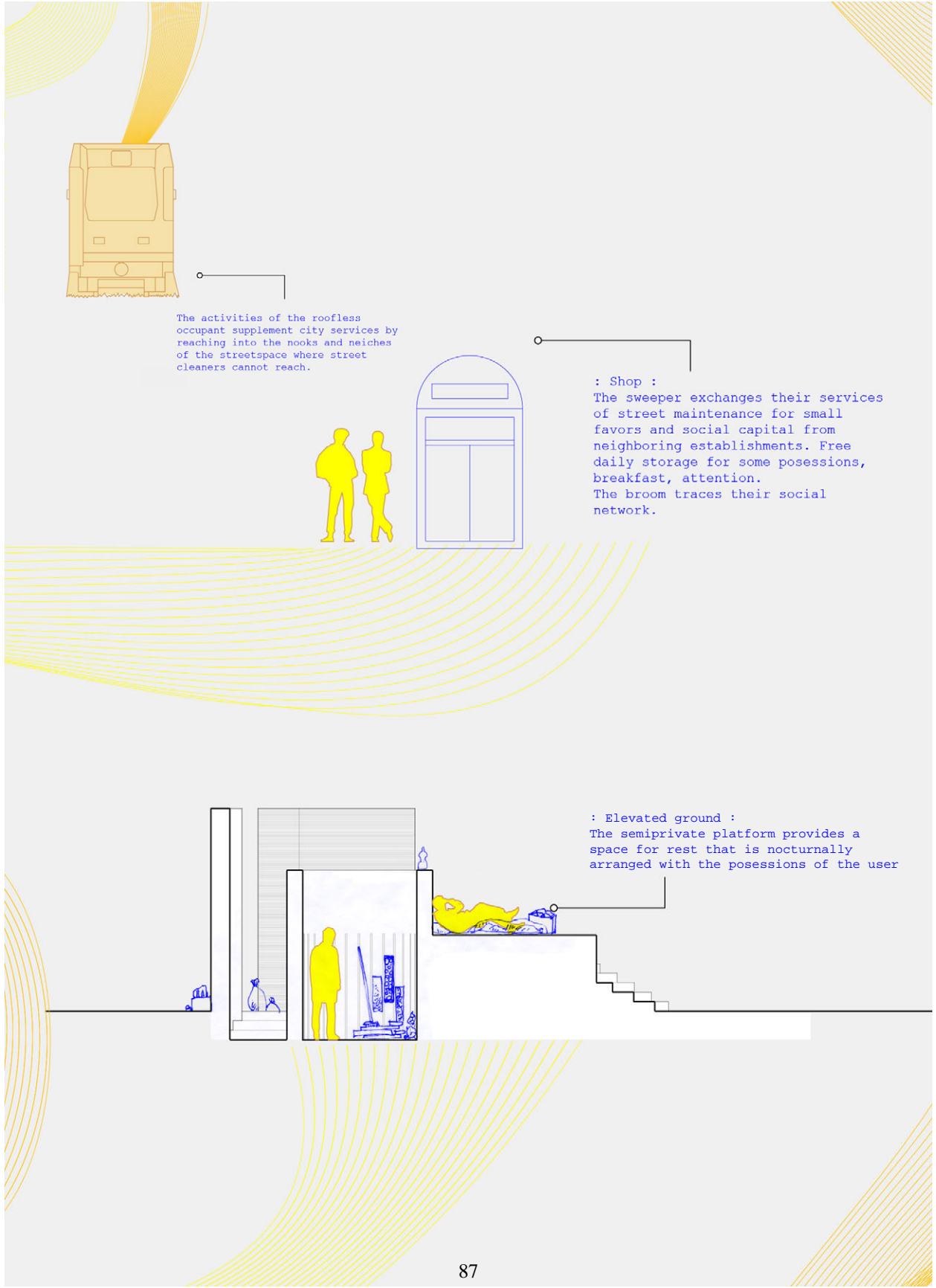
Sweep

A room appears as a gate amongst many other doorways. Where the light exists in reciprocal relationship with the existing urban fabric, this room is animated by the activities of street cleaning and recycling. The broom is a recurring object amongst most street homes and the act of sweeping and cleaning one's space is the first step in designating a space for occupation. In this room the doorway and the sweeping gutter become animated social surfaces off of which the inhabitant builds social capital - exchanging street-cleaning services for a small bite or the storage of larger personal bags. The chute filters out the dirt and debris from larger recyclable materials and so supplements that cities meager recycling infrastructure.

sweep:
MAY 1202



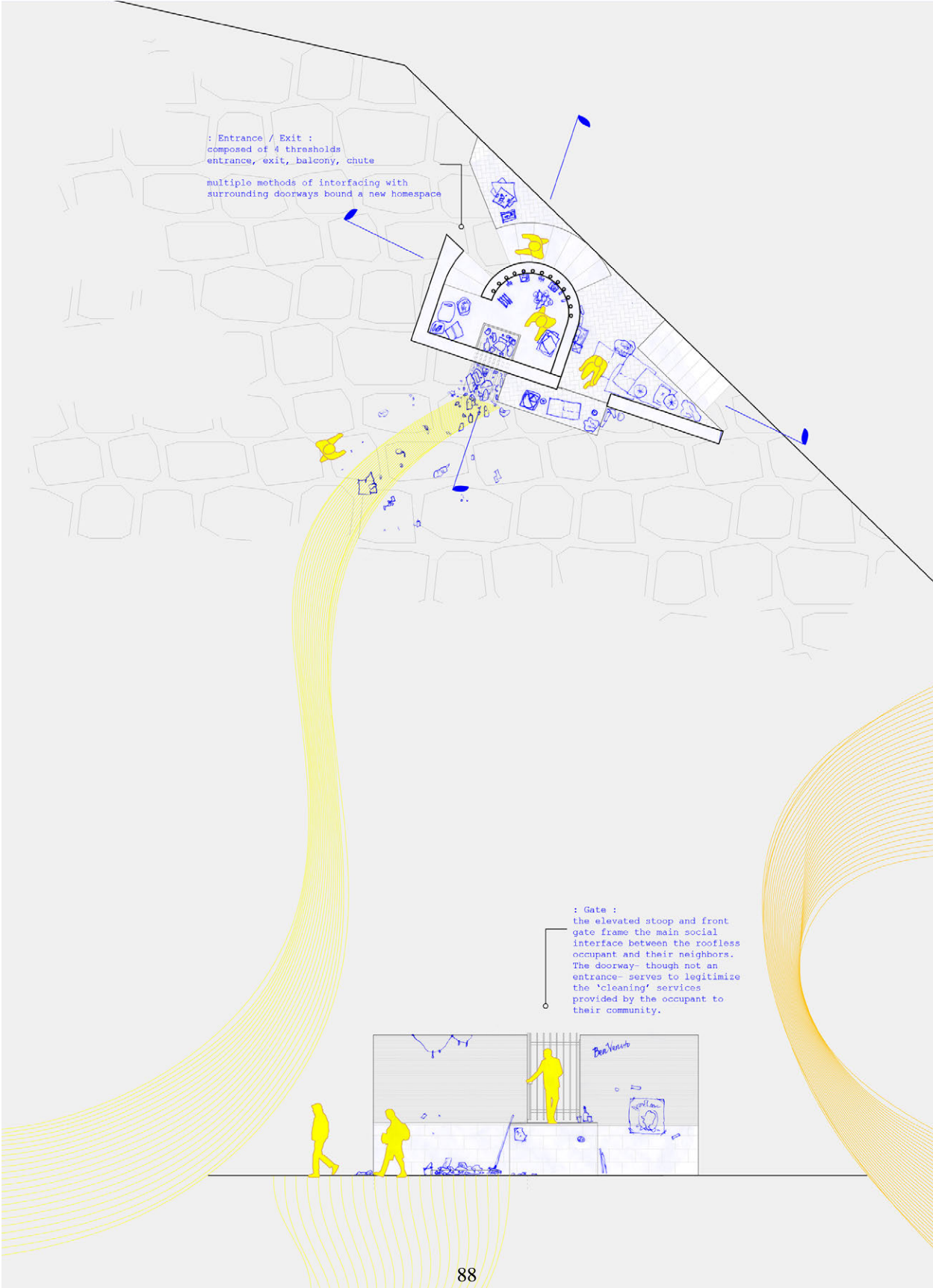
img 27
final review board
for "sweep"

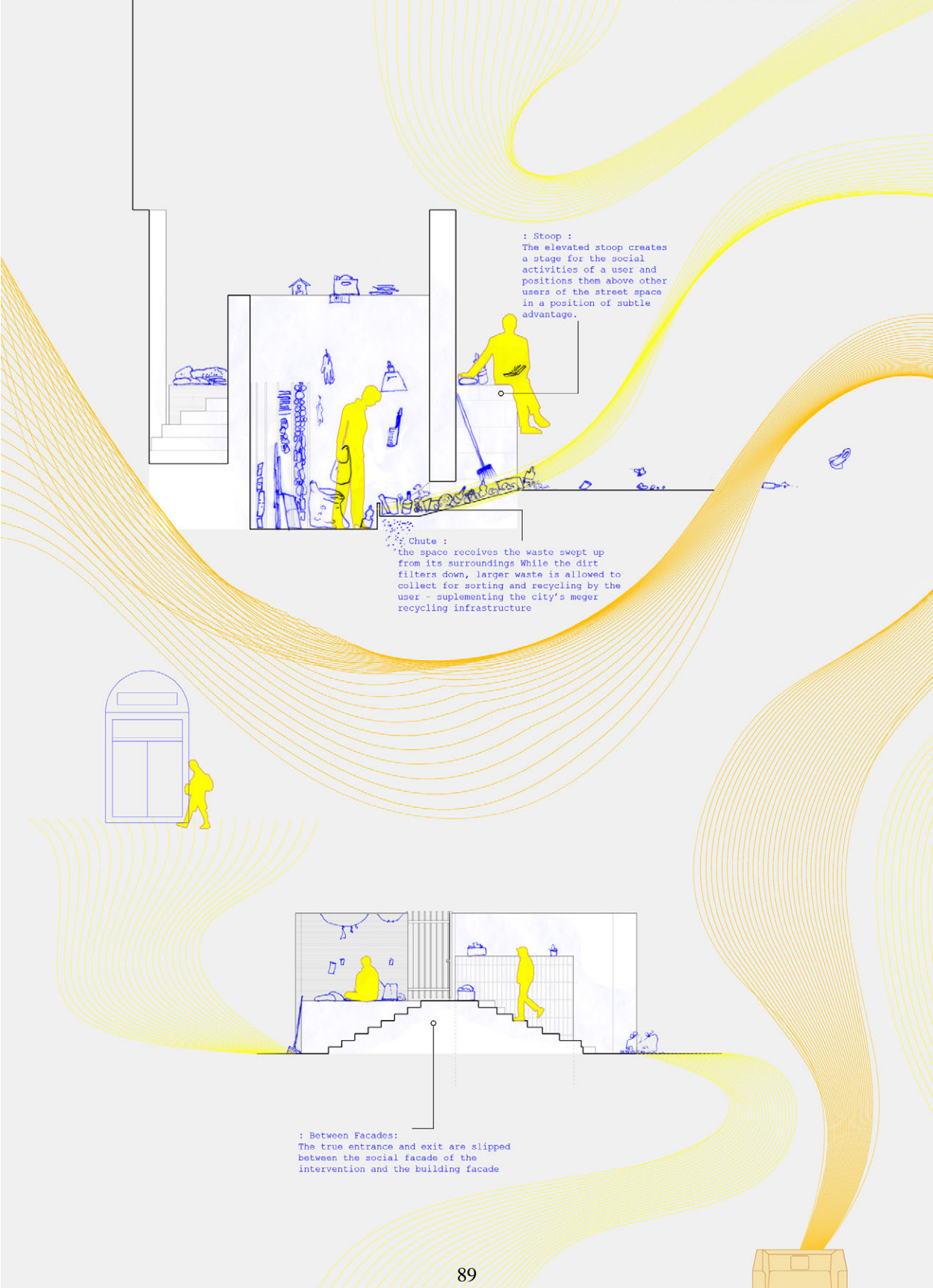


The activities of the roofless occupant supplement city services by reaching into the nooks and neiches of the streetspace where street cleaners cannot reach.

: Shop :
The sweeper exchanges their services of street maintenance for small favors and social capital from neighboring establishments. Free daily storage for some posesions, breakfast, attention. The broom traces their social network.

: Elevated ground :
The semiprivate platform provides a space for rest that is nocturnally arranged with the posesions of the user



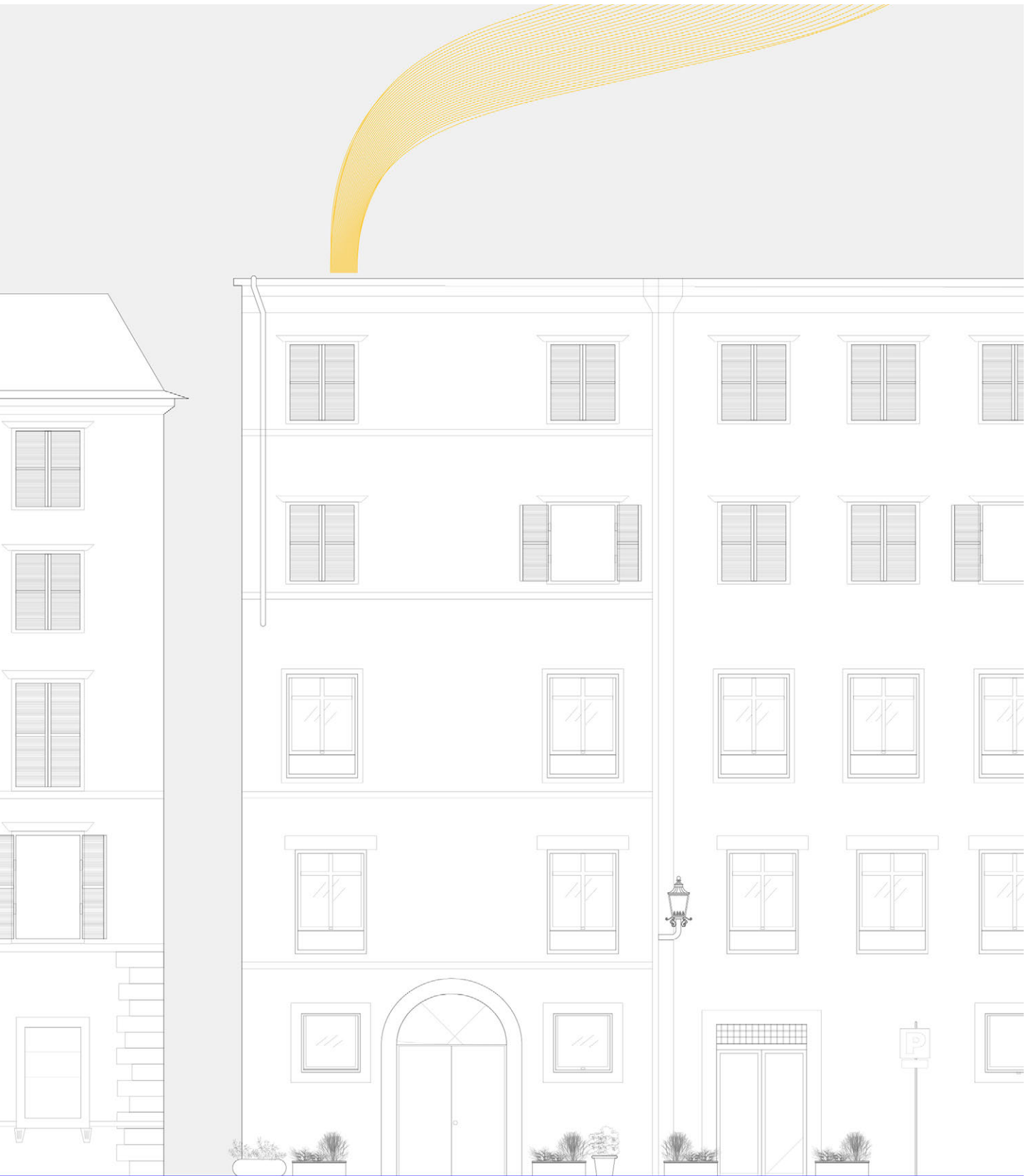


: Stoop :
The elevated stoop creates a stage for the social activities of a user and positions them above other users of the street space in a position of subtle advantage.

Chute :
the space receives the waste swept up from its surroundings. While the dirt filters down, larger waste is allowed to collect for sorting and recycling by the user - supplementing the city's meager recycling infrastructure

: Between Facades:
The true entrance and exit are slipped between the social facade of the intervention and the building facade



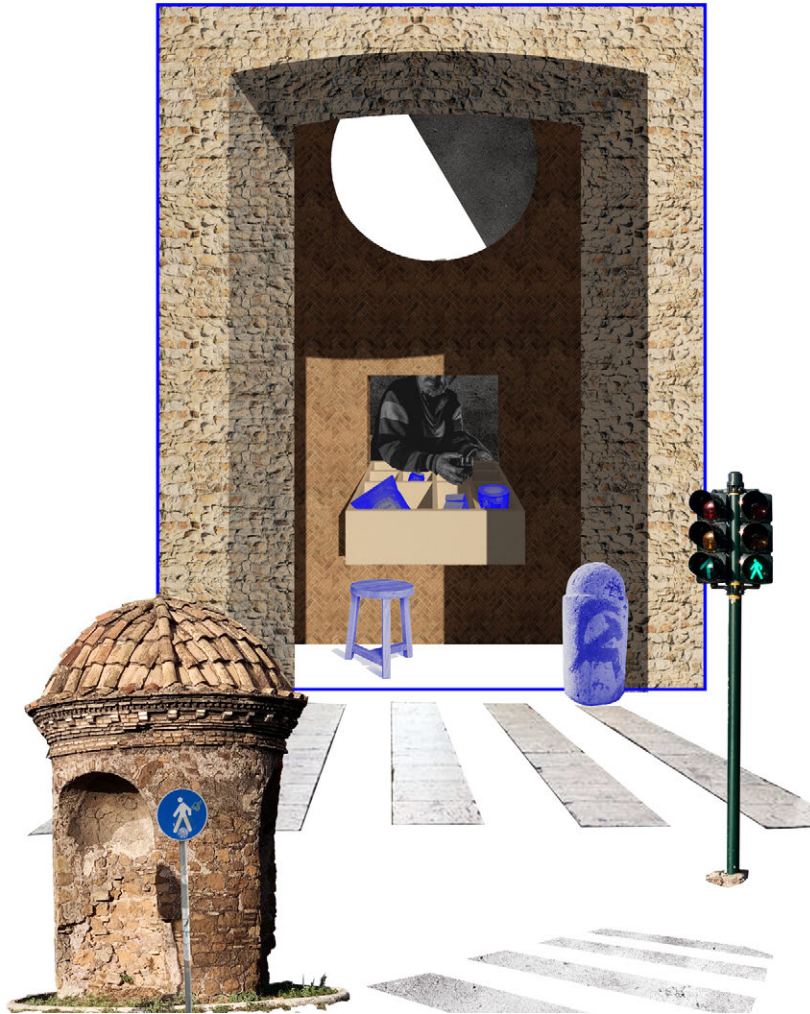




*img 28 - 30
model for "sweep"
room in a potential
site
model photos by
Andy Ryan*





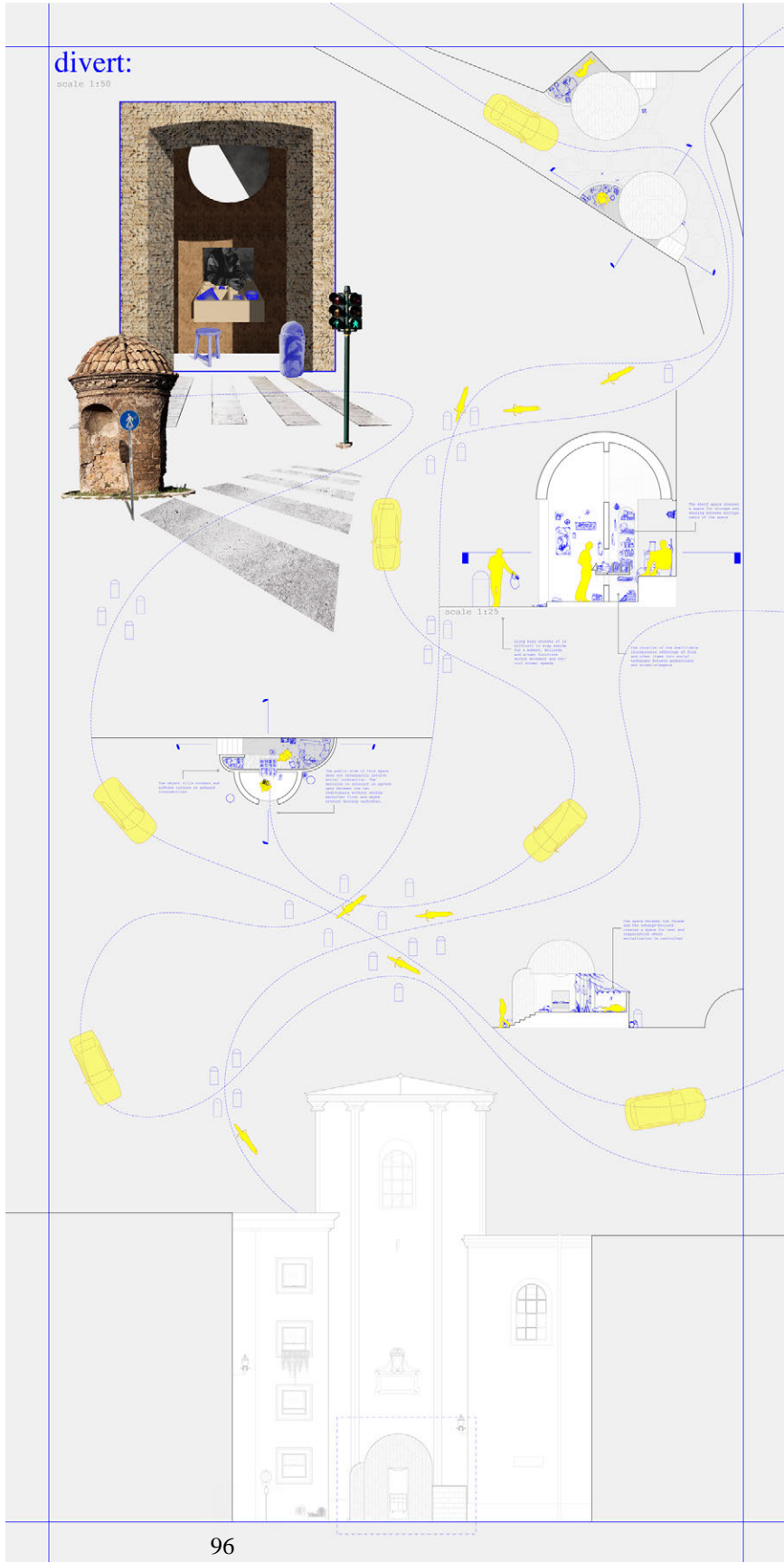


img 31
collage
“divert” room

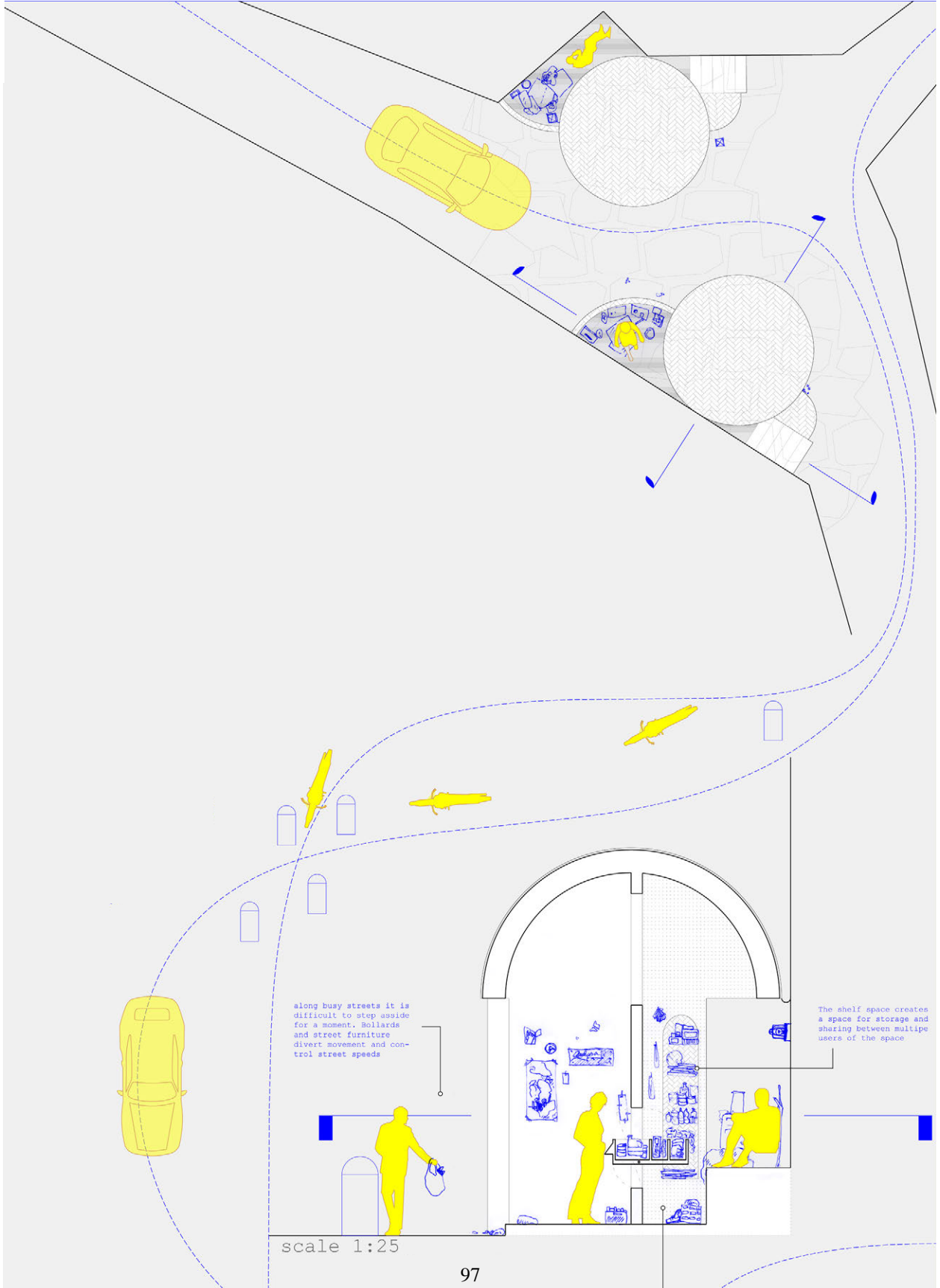
Exchange

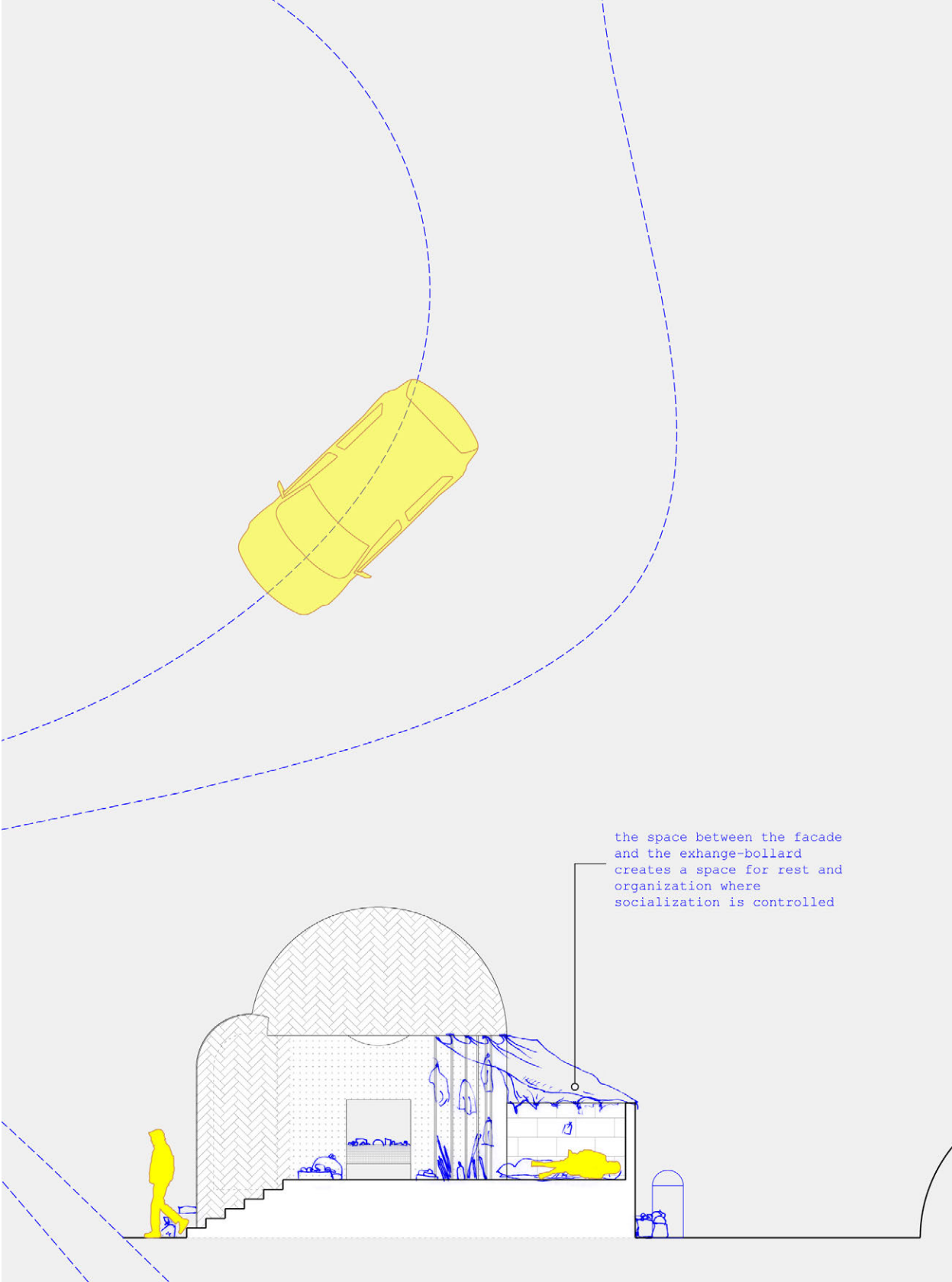
A room engages in social exchange mediated by the exchange of donations through a rotating shelf-window that becomes a table for sharing gifts and conversation.

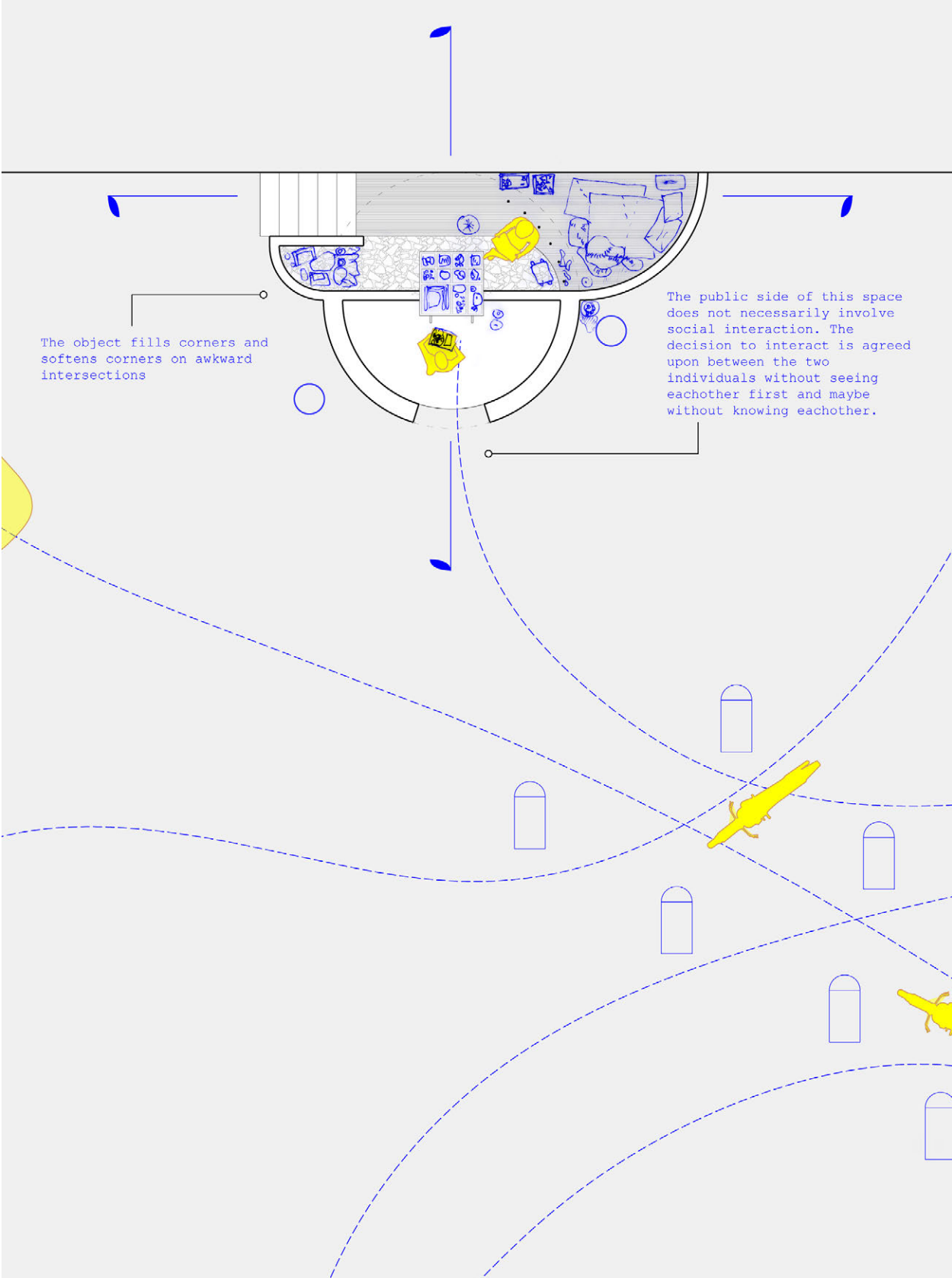
It exists at busy pedestrian intersections - slowing traffic and stopping for conversation. These individuals decide to engage in a social exchange without seeing or necessarily knowing each other first - requiring a level of trust and confidence to engage so directly with a stranger.

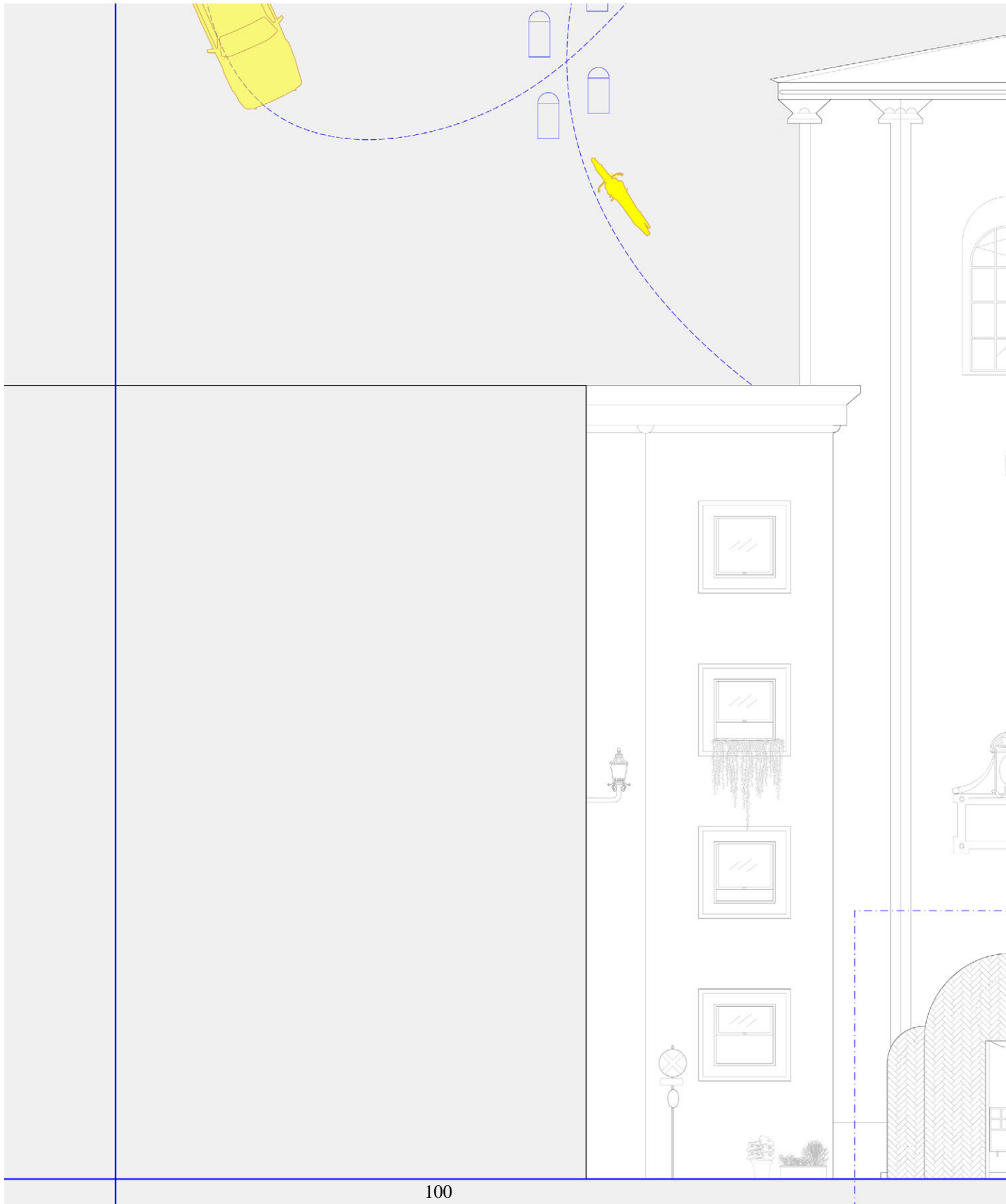


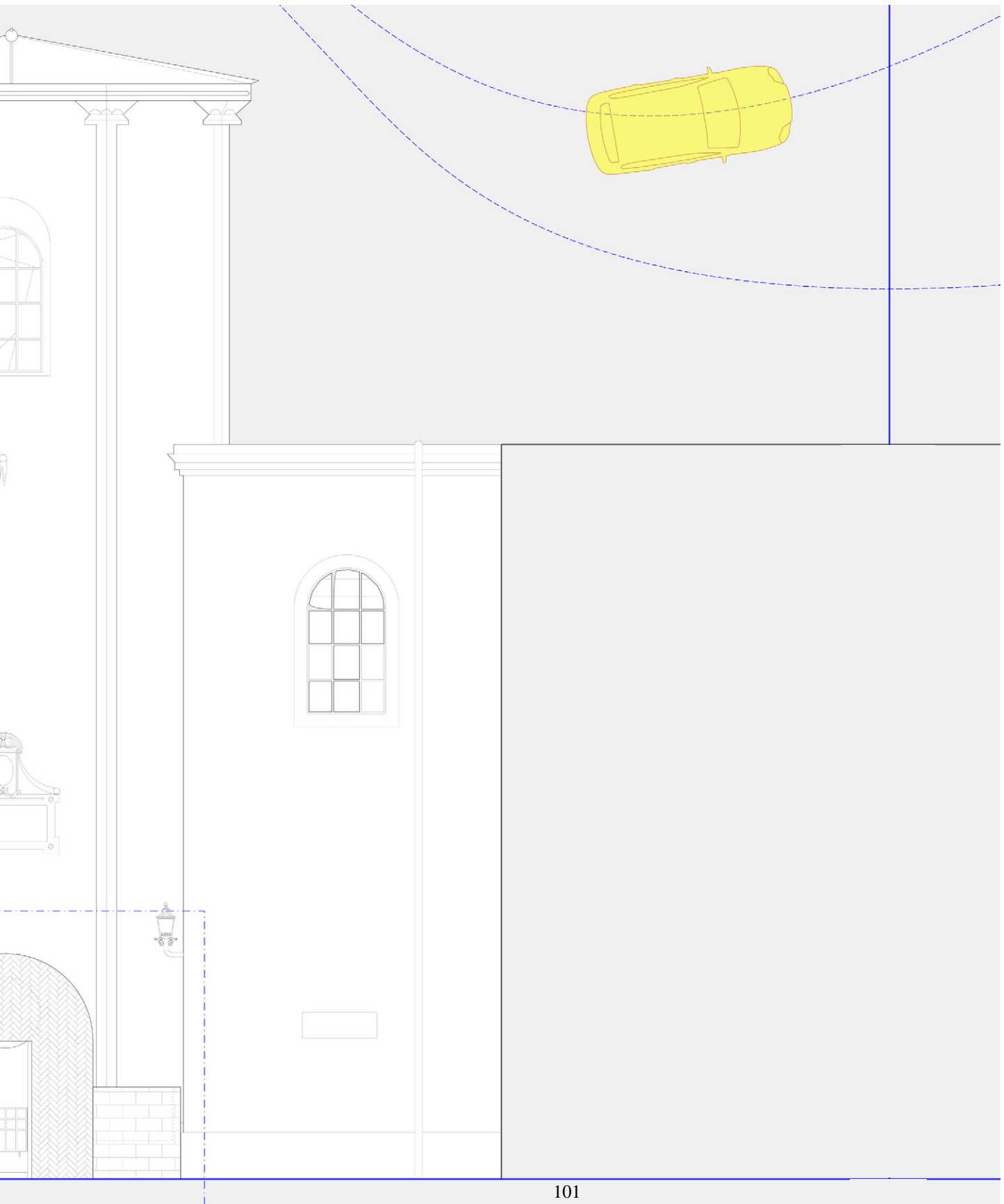
img 32
final review board
for "divert"

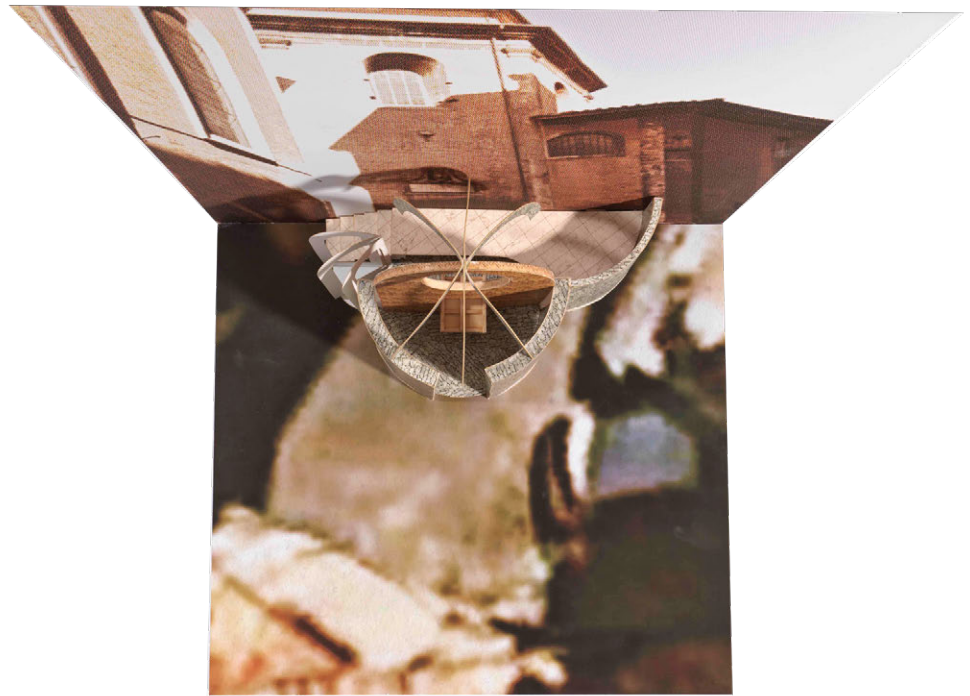






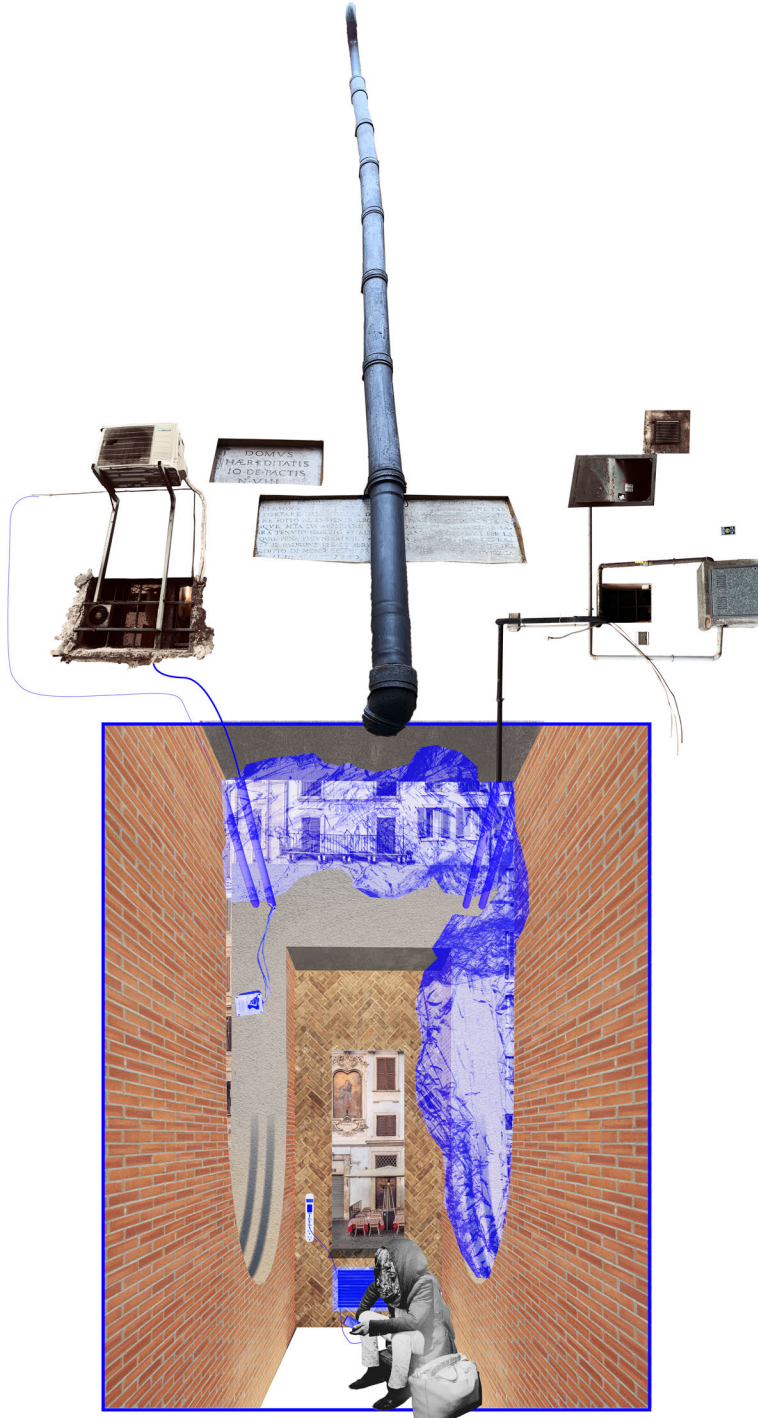






img 33-35
model for “divert”
room in a potential
site
model photos by
Andy Ryan





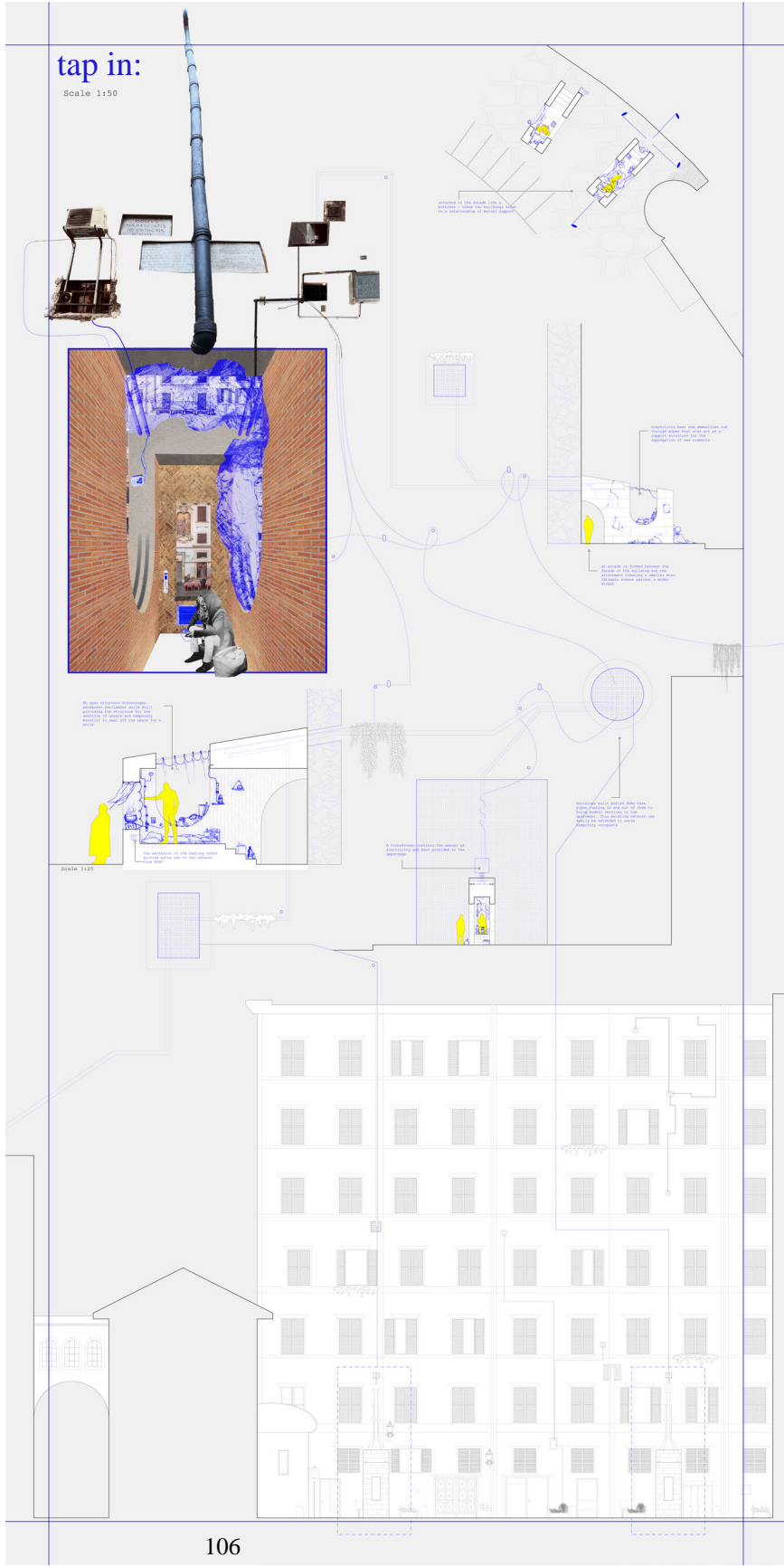
img 36
collage
"tap in" room

Tap In

A room taps into the infrastructural networks of the building that supports it - appearing in a relationship of mutual support through the form of a buttress. The network of new pipes that snake in and out of old buildings - bringing modern services - extend their network to the attachment. The share electricity and surplus heat from HVAC vents through pipes that also serve as scaffolding for the layering of tarps over this roofless room.

tap in:

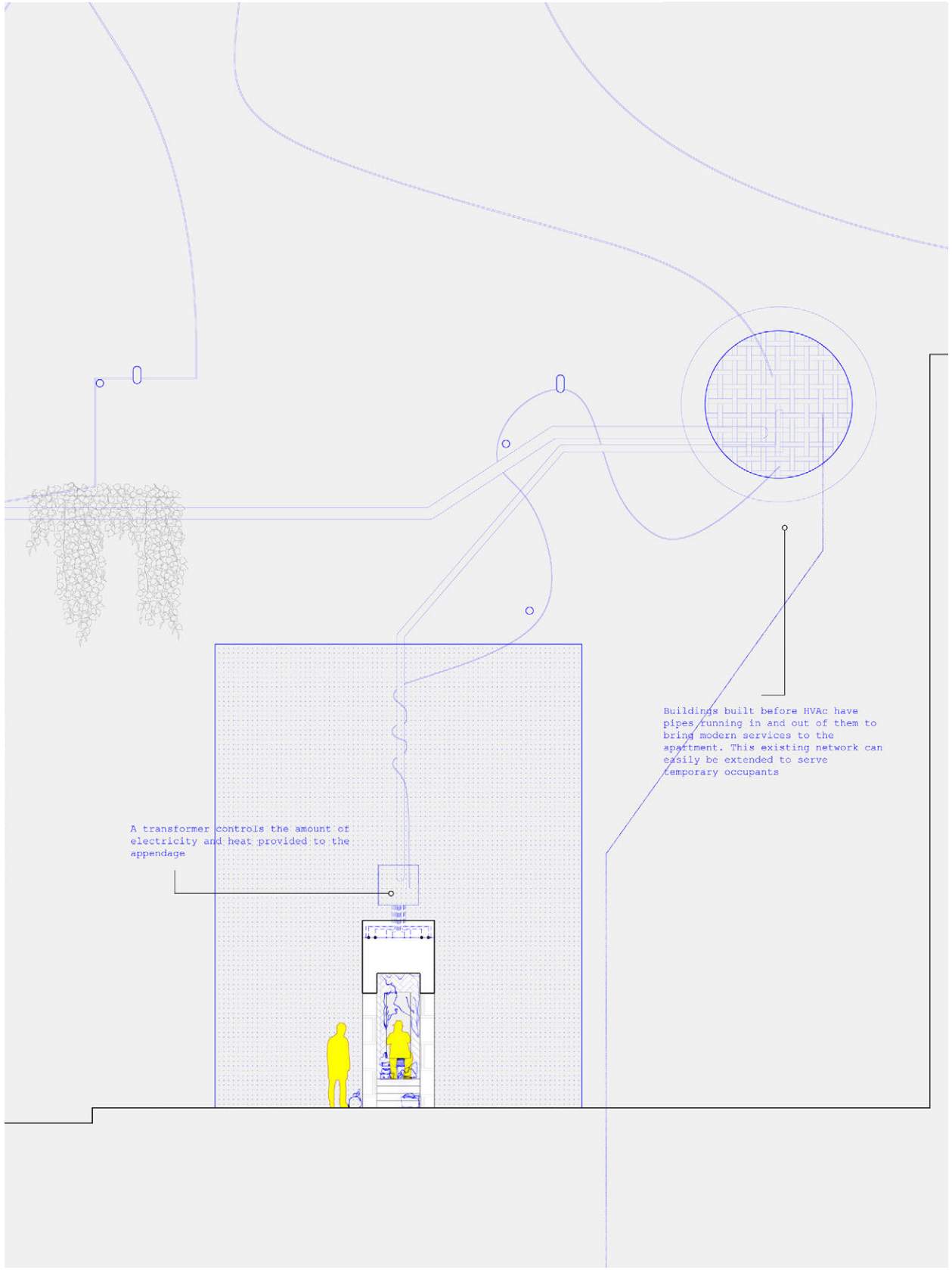
Scale 1:50

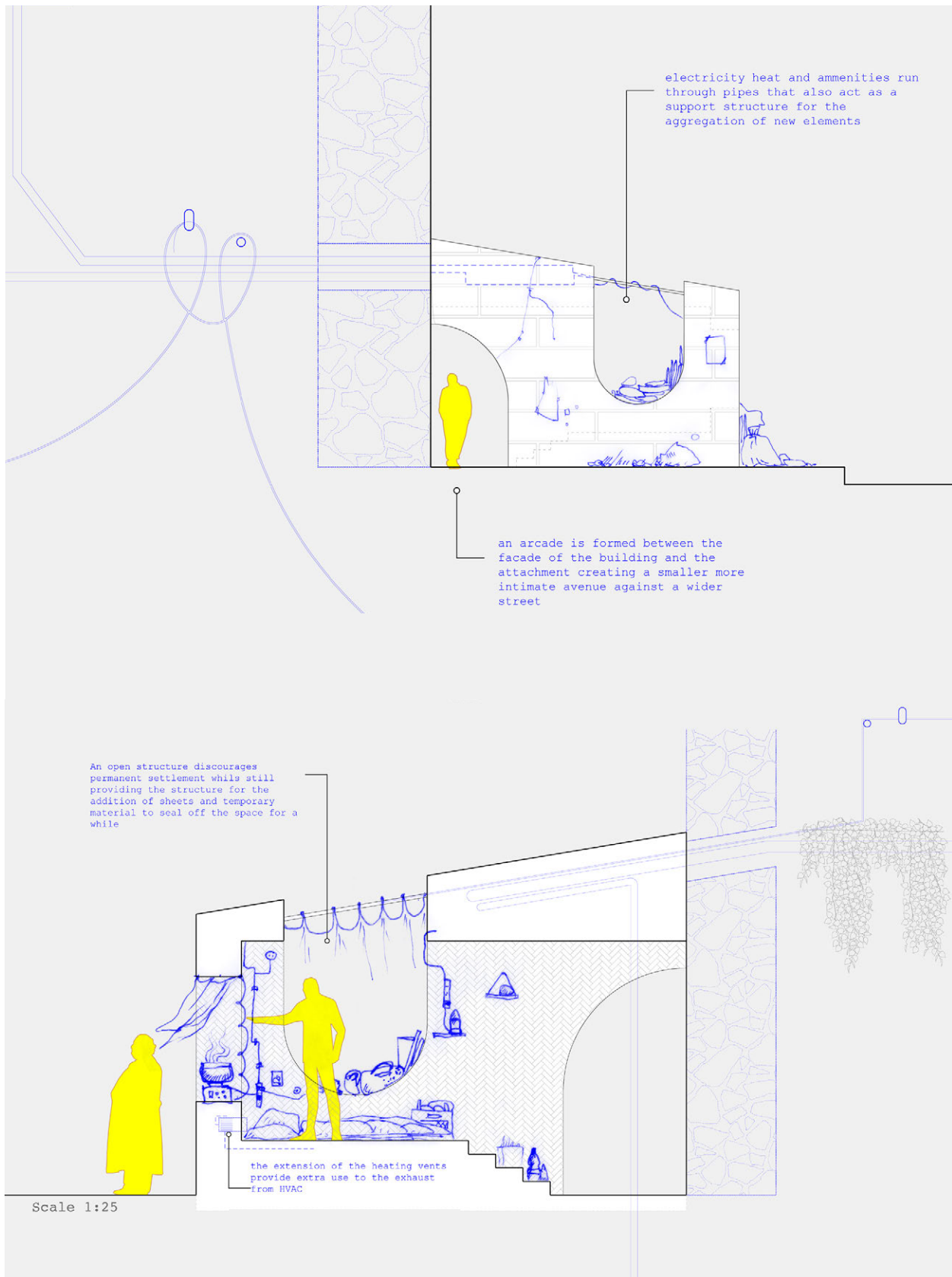


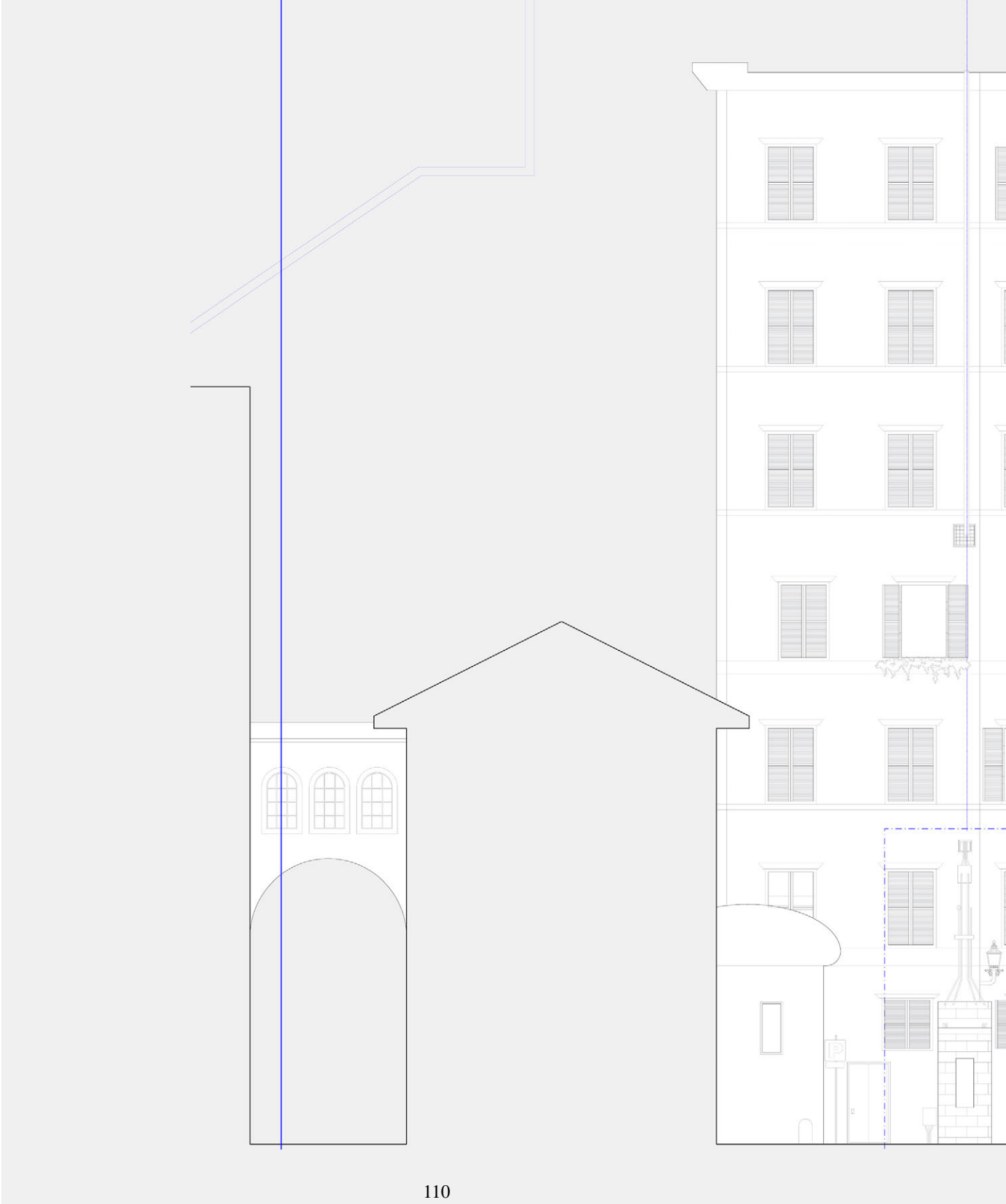
img 37
final review board
for "tap in"

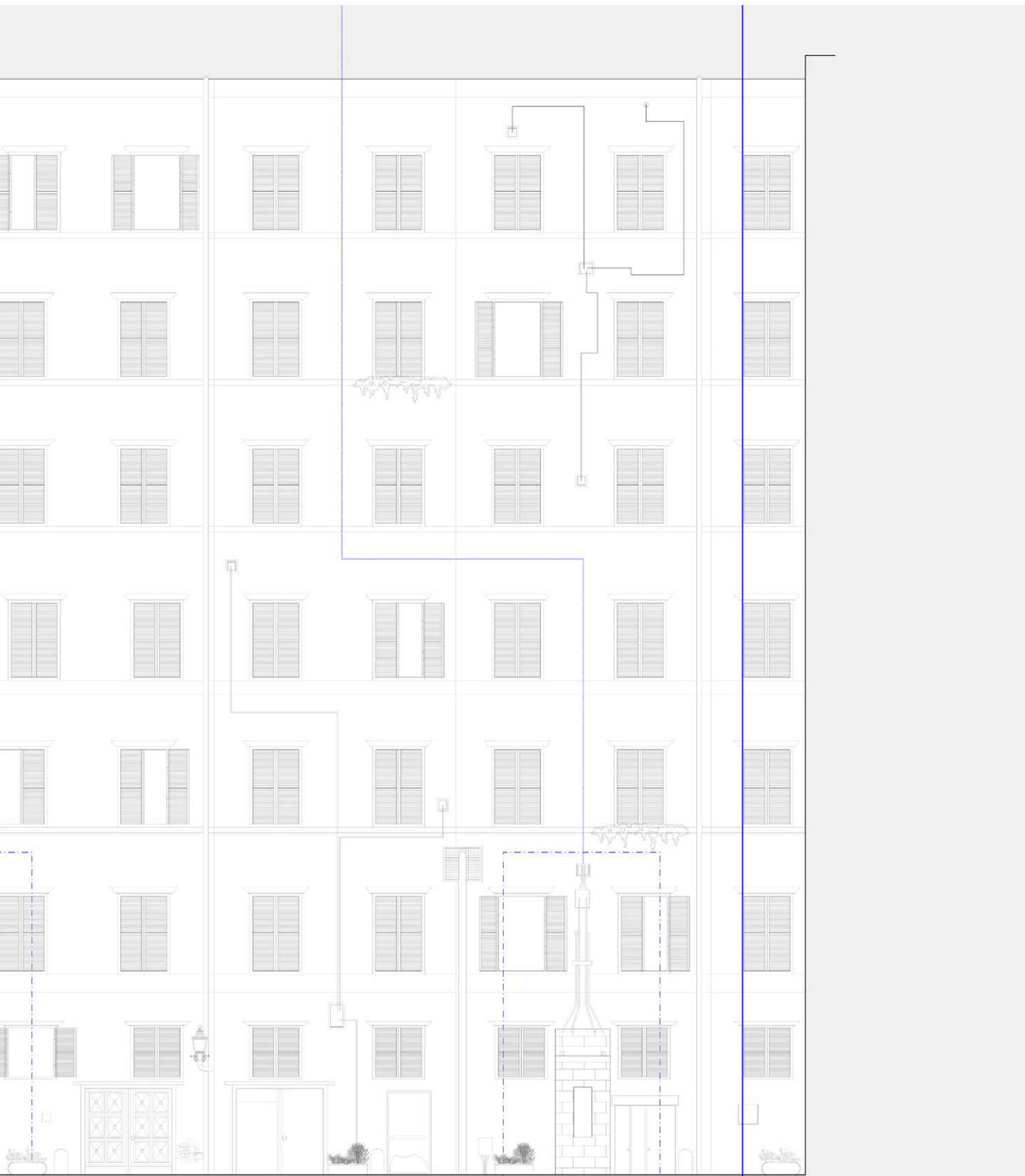


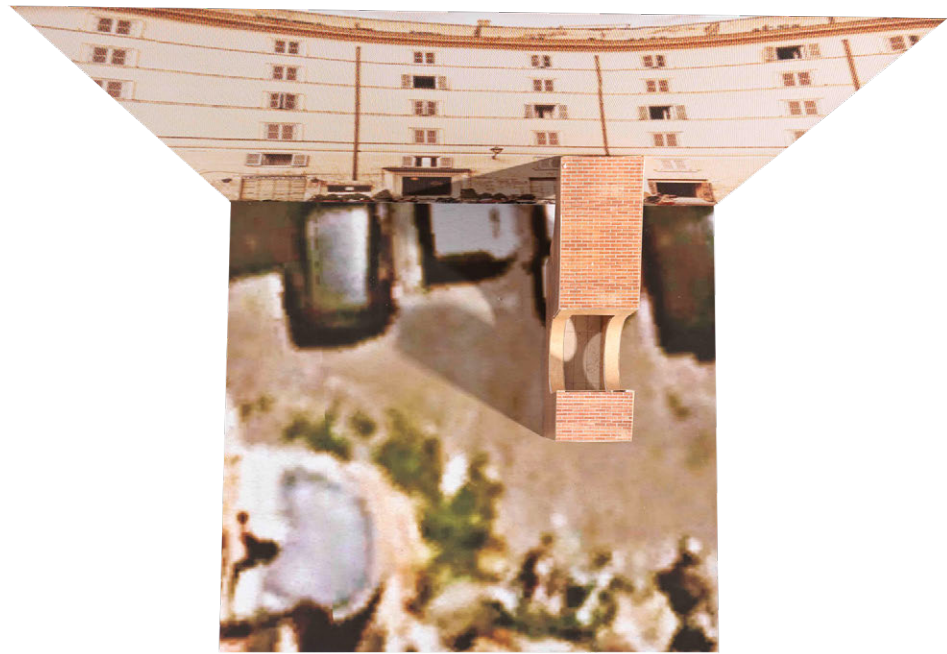
attached to the facade like a
buttress - these two buildings exist
in a relationship of mutual support



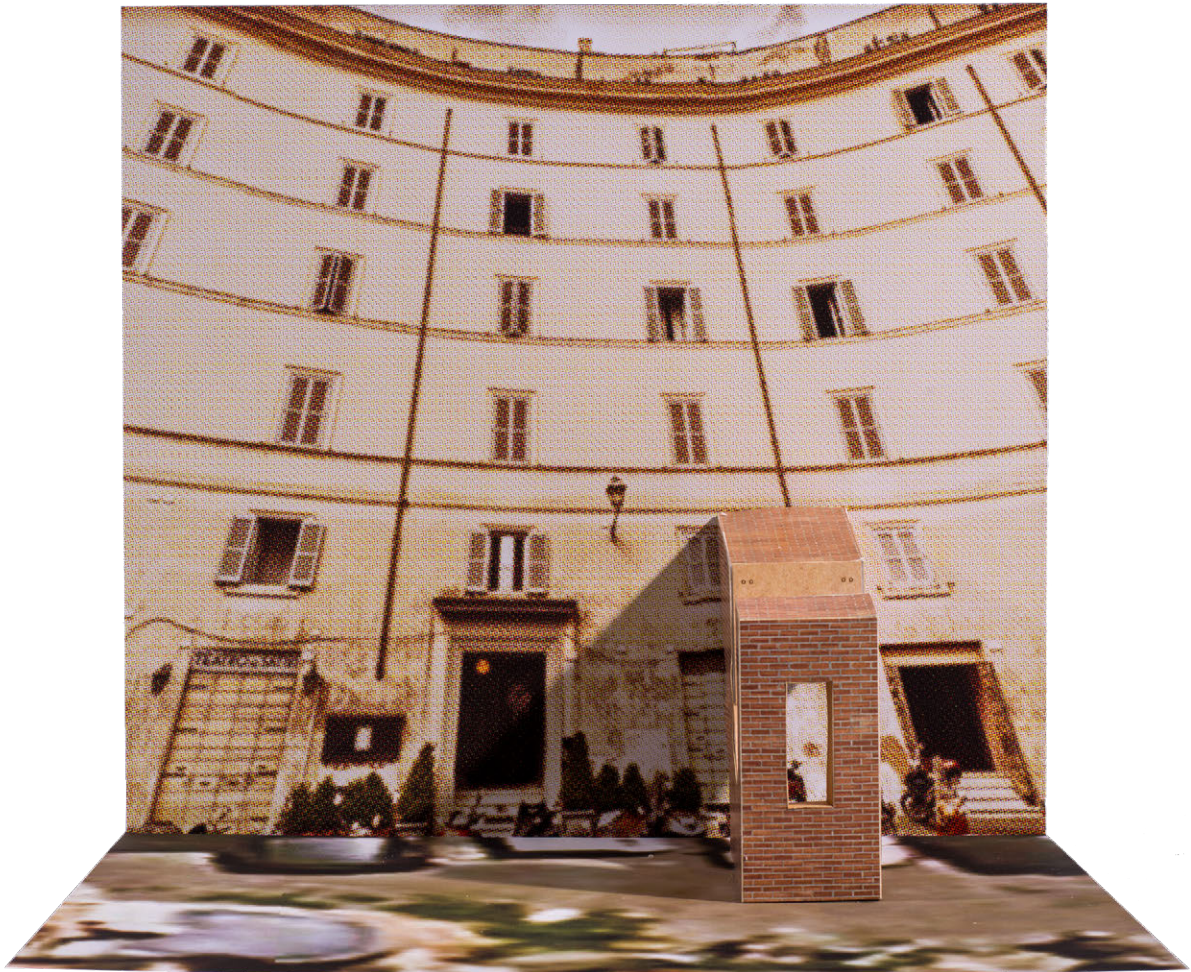


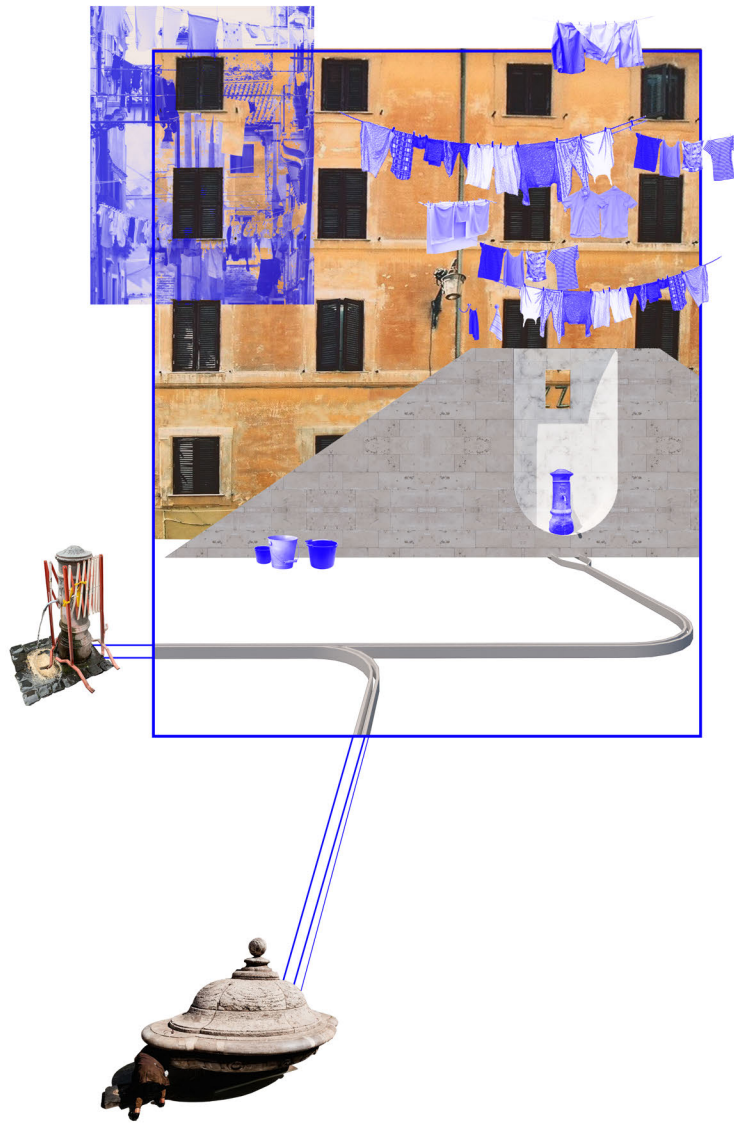






img 38-40
model for "tap in"
room in a potential
site
model photos by
Andy Ryan



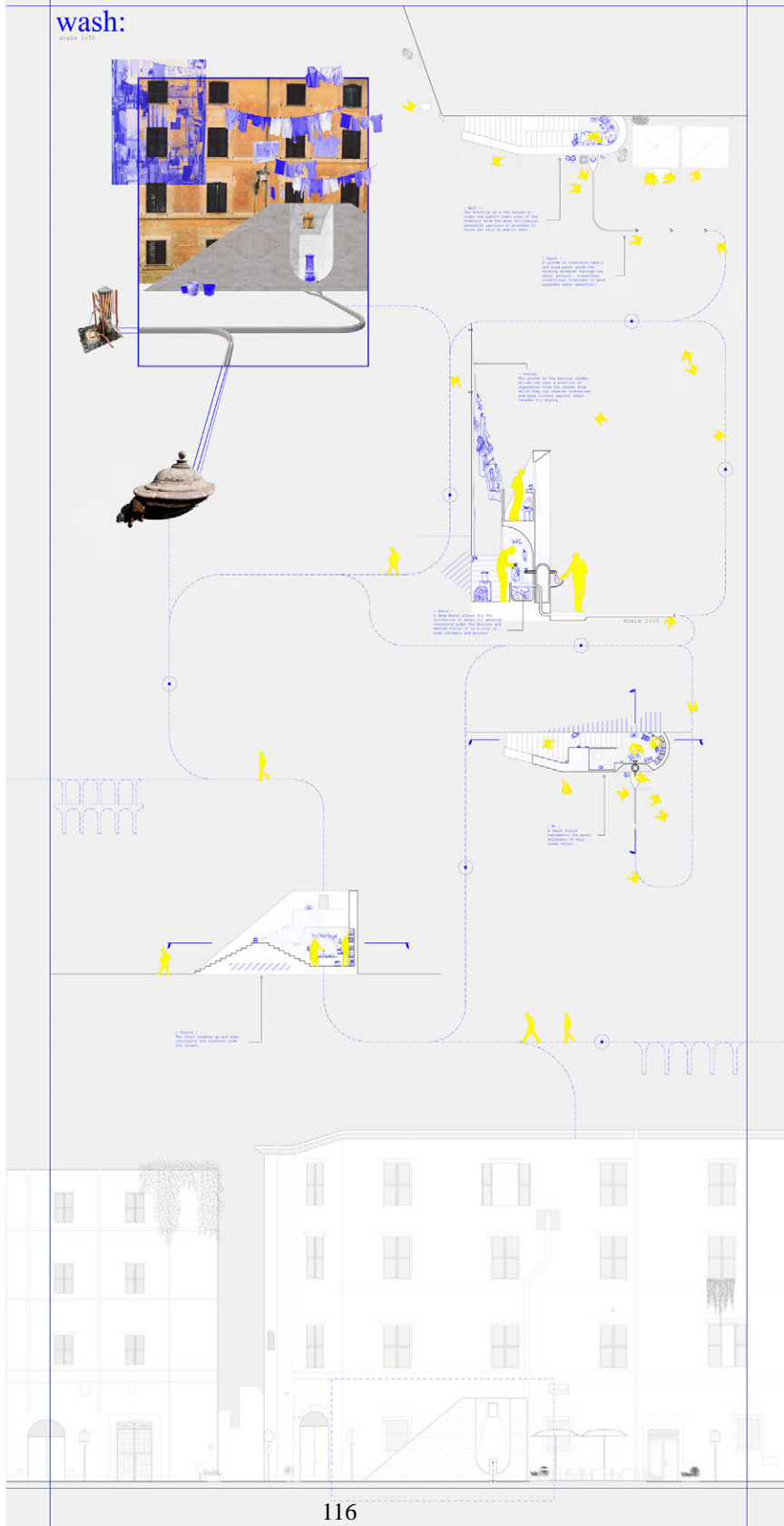


img 41
collage
"wash" room

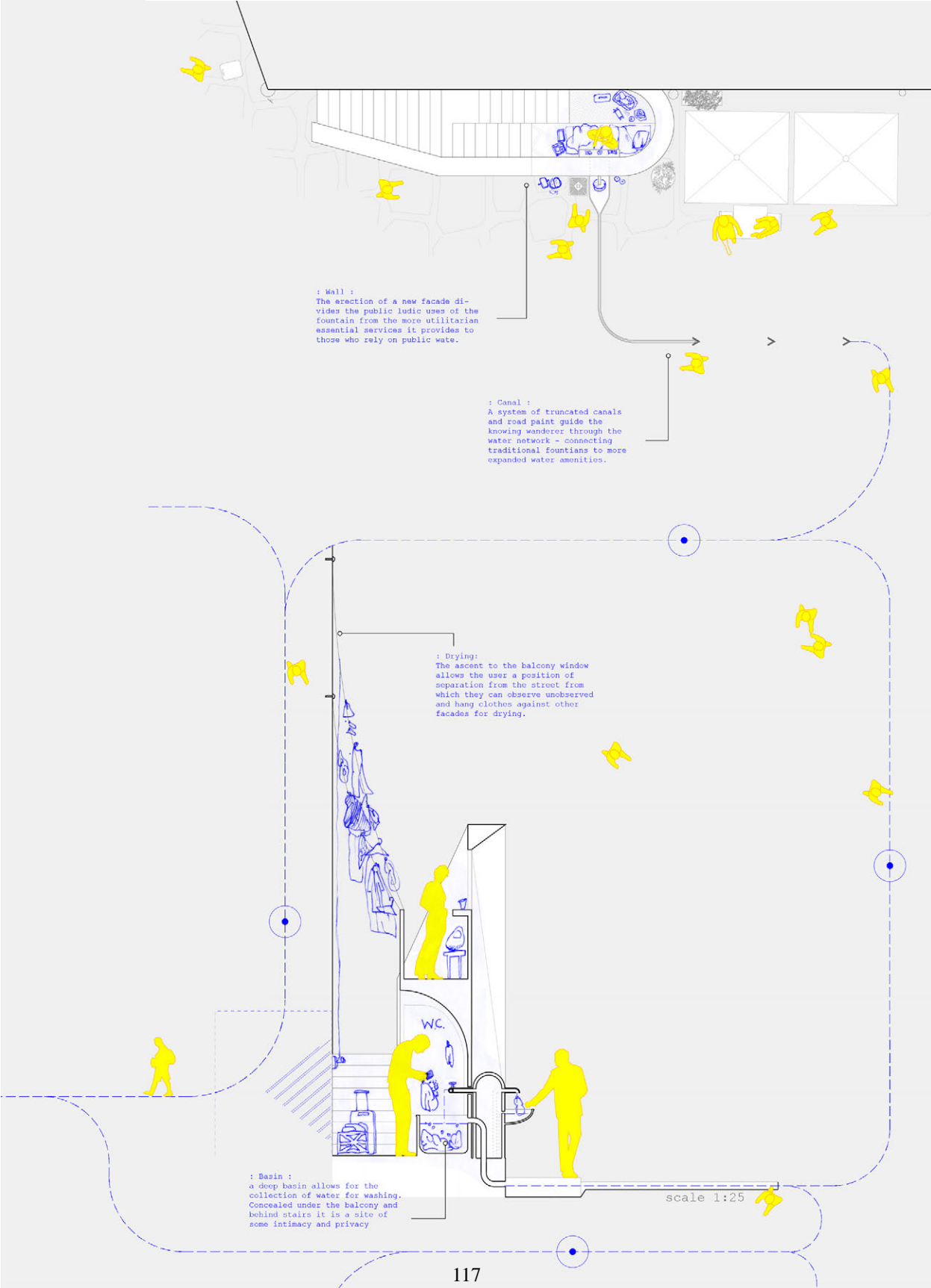
Wash

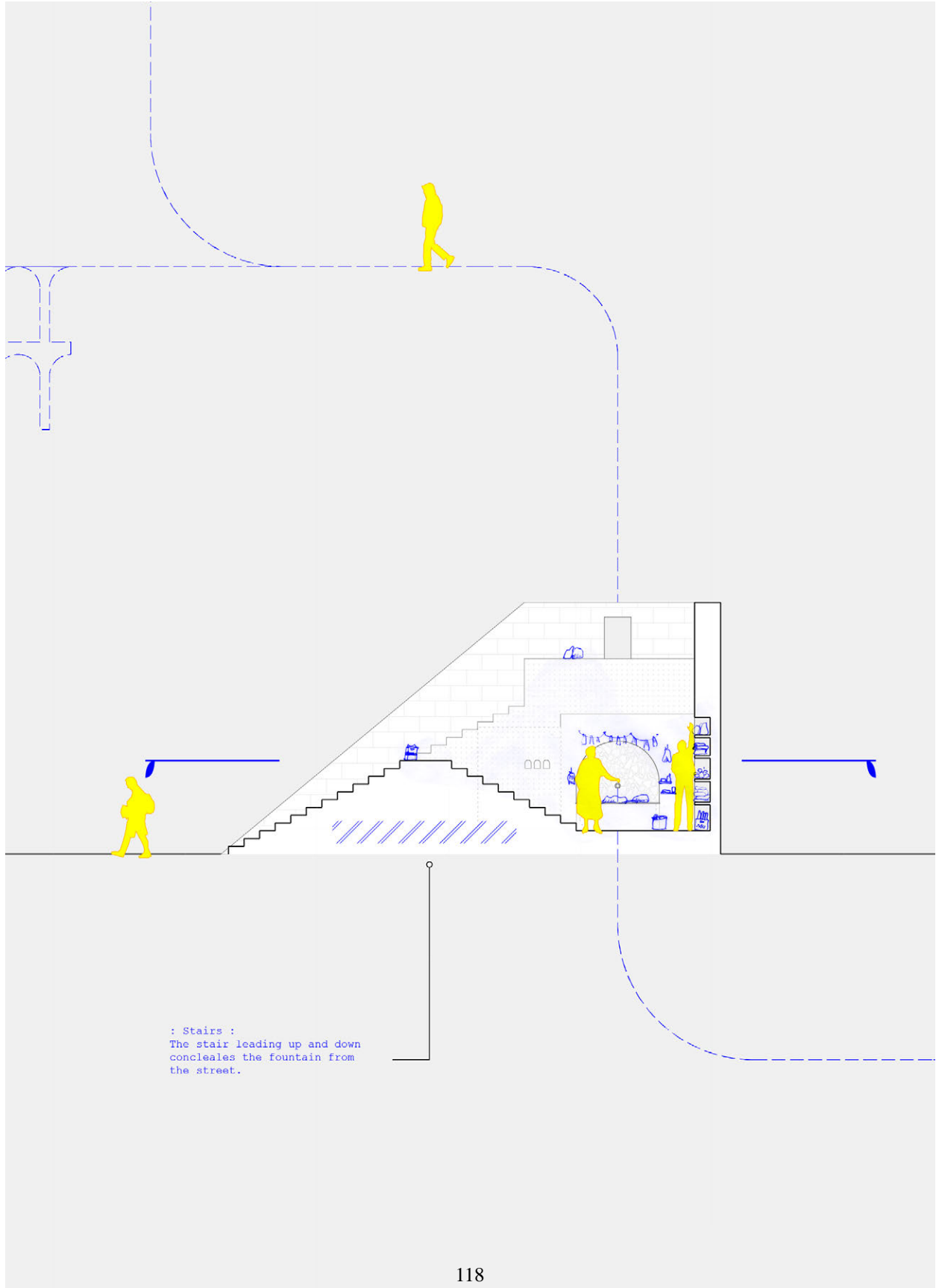
The street dweller also comes to engage with larger infrastructural and social networks through the room centered around water and the *nasoni* that pepper the roman topography. The public face of the *nasoni* dedicated to ludic and casual uses of water conceal the more life supporting and homemaking activities of clothes washing and bathing in a small room between facade and fountain. A little canal and road paint mark the extension of this intervention as it connects to other water and washing resources throughout the city - providing new information to those who know how to read it.

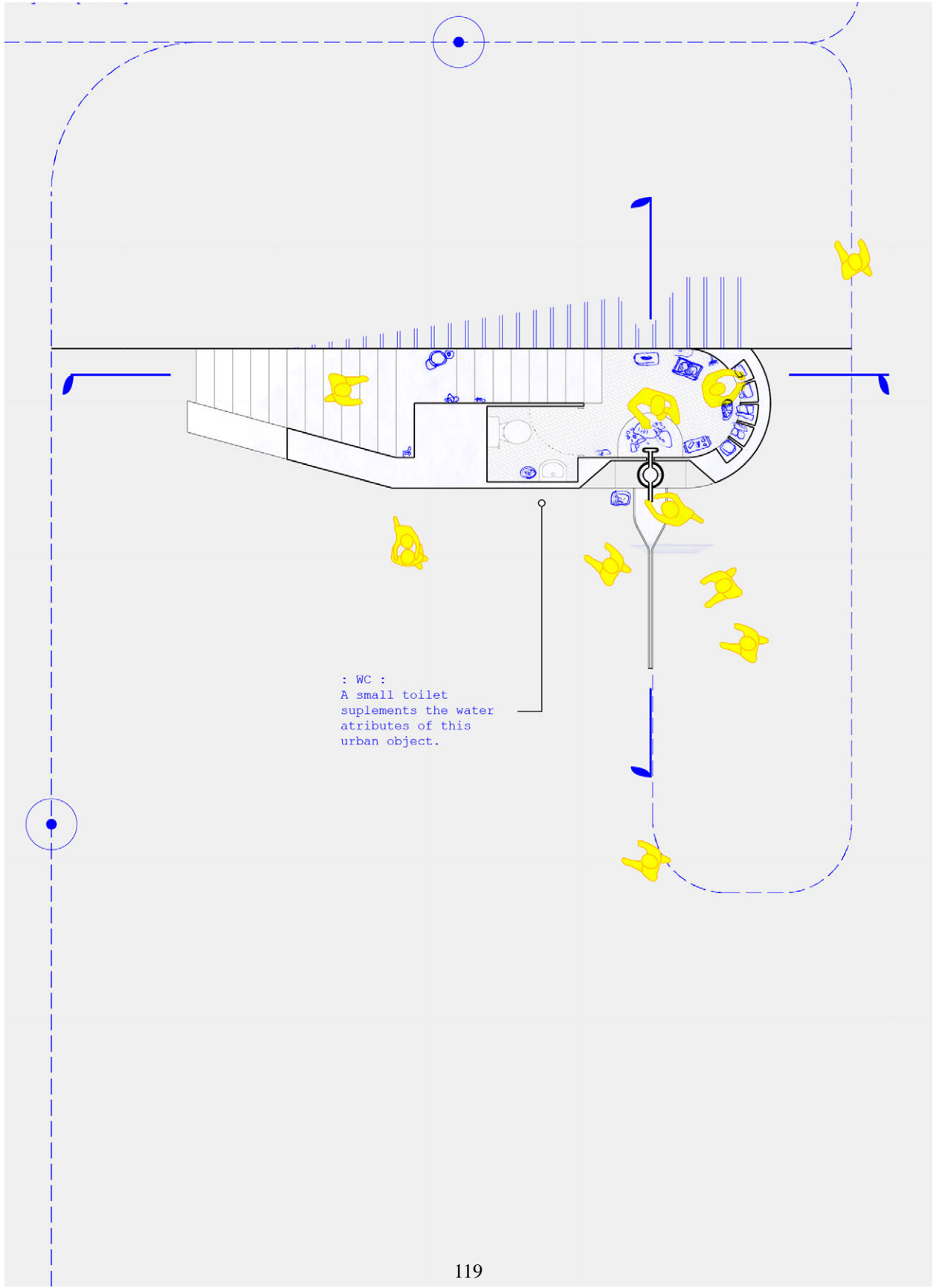
wash:
scale 1:50



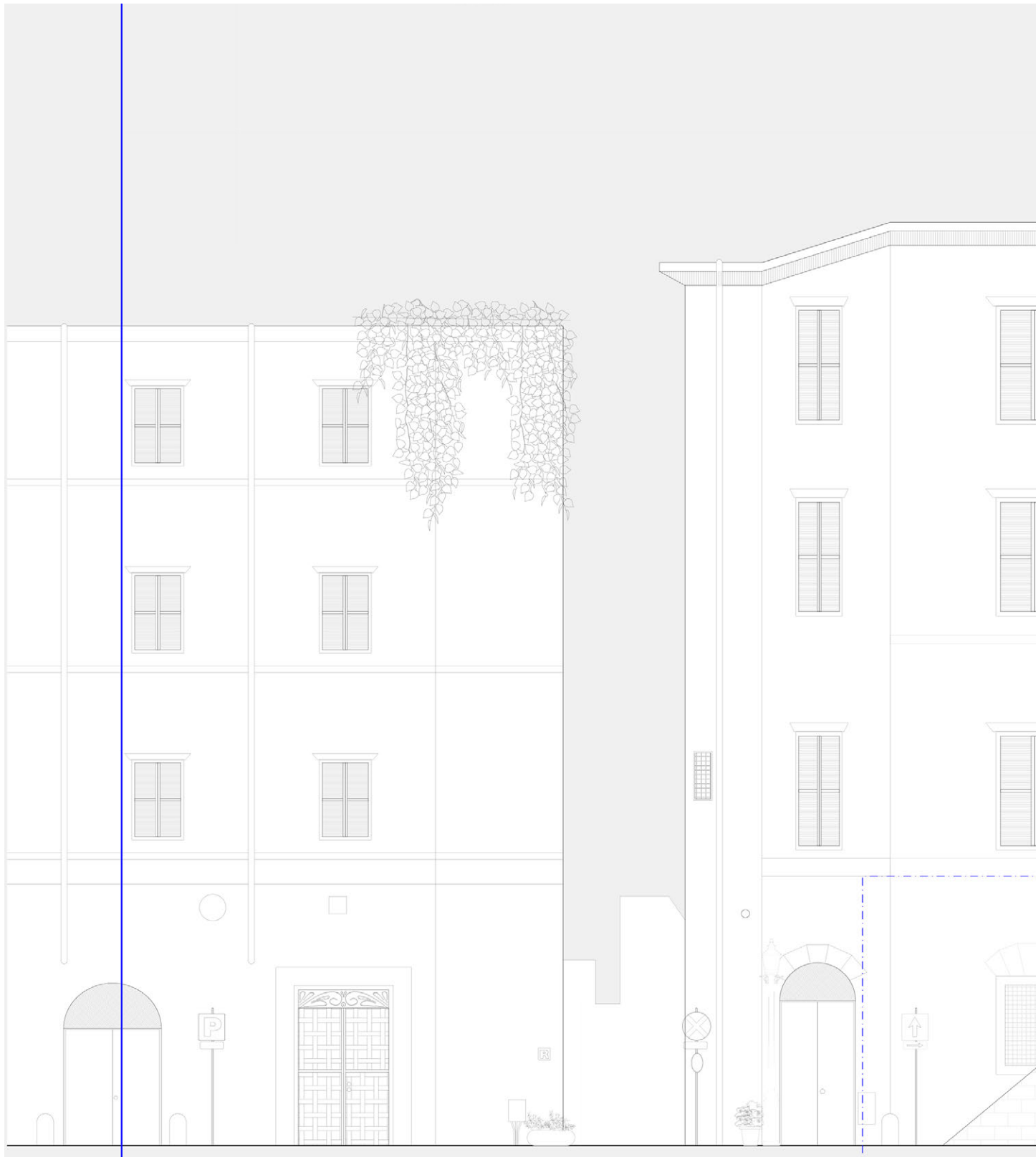
img 42
final review board
for "wash"

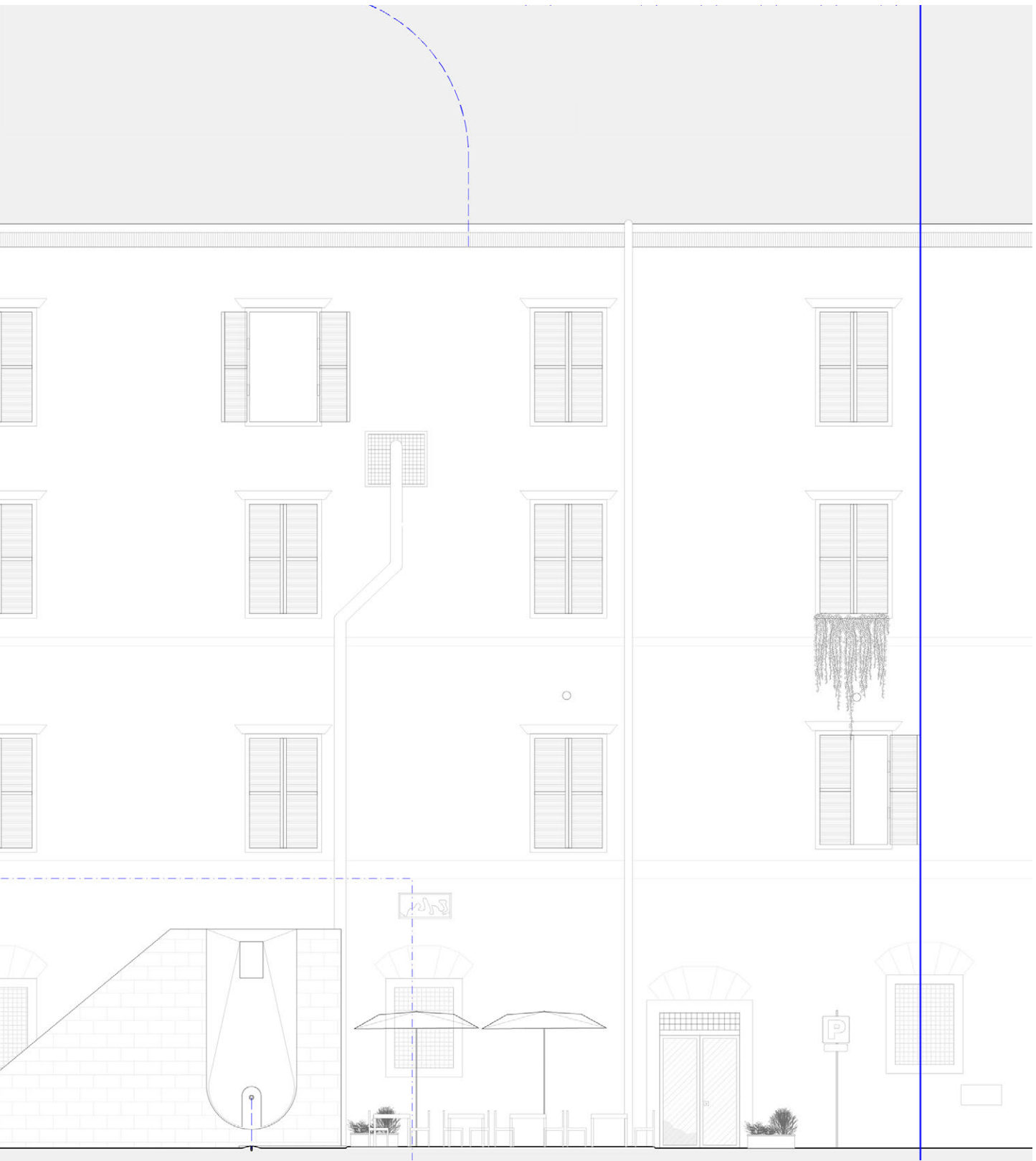


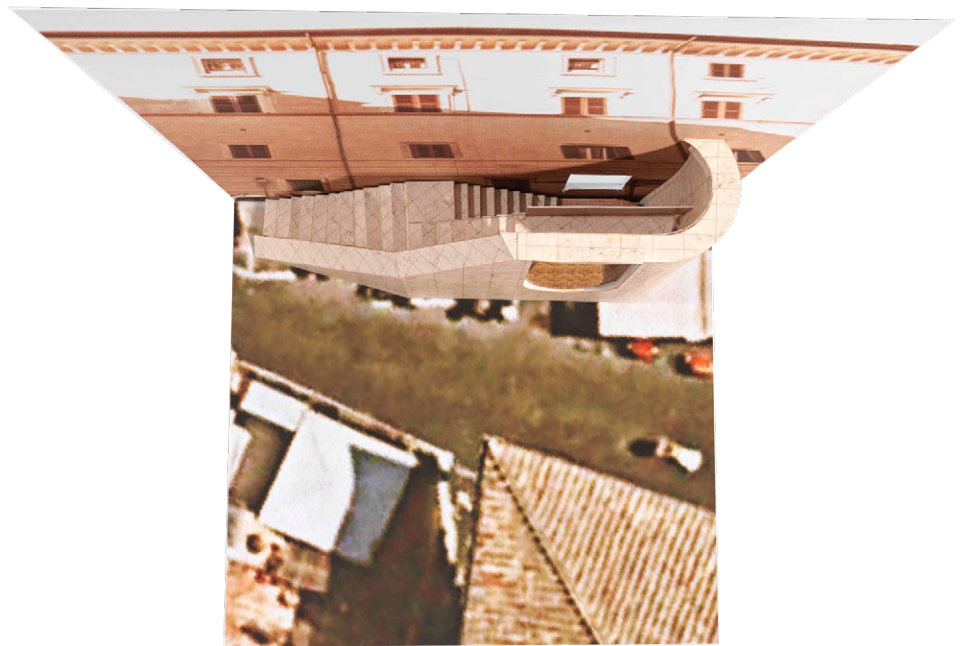




: WC :
A small toilet
supplements the water
attributes of this
urban object.







img 43-45
model for “wash”
room in a potential
site
model photos by
Andy Ryan





img 46
Site plan noli -style
model in concrete.
Blue tags mark
proposed sites for Third
Property Lots and the
construction of urban
rooms. Yellow tags
indicate social services
and charities.
Light blue pins indicate
water fountains.
Model photos by
Andy Ryan

Conclusion

Throughout the course of this thesis there were many moments in which I found myself forced to reconsider many of assumptions that structured my architectural thinking. This thesis focuses on the homemaking practices of the unhoused to think about the many ways that marginalized urban inhabitants carve out spaces for themselves within the city. This thesis proposes a need for another property type that is able to transcend the capital boundaries of public and private property. It studies the homes of the unhoused to re-frame the relationships a home can have with the polis, the city, and broader infrastructural networks. Most importantly, it seeks new types of architectures that center social objects as creators of domestic space as a way of making legible and legitimate the many ways that the unhoused remake their homes each night.

Inherent in my investigation of street homes what a distrust for the

boundaries of property. Legal lines on paper appear much more porous when built in stone. As in ecology, it was this boundary between two distinct ecosystems that seemed stretched to accommodate the many things that did not neatly fit. Private businesses often were found spilling over onto the street, pushing the potted plants as far out as pedestrians would permit as if to say, “you are already here”. The street garbage, which was surely someone’s once, but which now found it self stuffed in a corner was also hoping that someone would claim responsibility as an agent of the public or city service.

And then there are the unhoused, who prop their backs up against the homes they cannot possess. Untimidly revealing the mundane and essential rhythms of domesticity, an unfamiliar universality typically sheltered behind walls and curtains. To make the home seen redefines what it means to be a social creature

and inspires other questions on who takes responsibility and shares in the lives of the public home. These liminal third spaces are present everywhere in the city and have been for millennia. Rather than forcing a fit we must rethink the property boundaries we draw.

In watching the methods of homemaking used by the unhoused a curious relationship with the street and the adjacent building façade is formed. The façade often acts as a canvas for personal expression – accumulating the knickknacks, garments, and posters of the inhabitant. The arrangement of objects on or elevated off the ground delineate new boundaries of personal territory and suggest the types of socialization sought by the unhoused person. To understand the relationships of the unhoused to their surroundings, the object maps were drawn to help understand the varied and creative ways that the unhoused connect to and program the city

around them.

This thesis produced five urban rooms scattered along the private/public physical boundaries that seek to defy these very binaries by domesticating their intersection. The style of homes at this contested border makes apparent the urgent need for redefining the social constructs around architectures of domesticity. The homemaking practices of the unhoused have been rendered invisible by architecture's limited understanding of what makes a dwelling. Rather than providing roofs and walls, these architectures place the one or two unhoused users of each room on a new ground relative to the street. Each wall acts as a social surface, which, rather than enclosing, provides the surfaces, hooks, and corners that enable and extend the users' ability to create and reconfigure their spaces of home out of their personal possessions. These rooms provide a space for the creation of home as

the unhoused reproduce the tropes of room arrangement. It is only in their moment of occupation that these architectures can become bedrooms, dining rooms, washrooms, lobbies, kitchens, and more.

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Addendum

Photos from the Final Review

All
Thesis Presentation
photos by
April Gao







Presentation Script

As architects we are typically taught to design spaces for predetermined programs and activities. Yet in Rome as in many other cities, there exists a parallel culture of space making. One that is born out of objects - arranged and imbued with deeper meaning both personal and contextual.

In the writings of Henry Lefebvre and Edward Soja we are taught to see the specific, intentional and poignant ways that objects assemble and disassemble the spatial politics of a THIRD space. A social and lived space that is produced by marginalization rather than by processes of planning and images.

This method of interpreting personal territory stands in sharp contrast to the property driven nature of demand politics in Rome that takes the form of occupations and squats in the wake of eroded social housing promises - corrupted by private and capitalist interest.

The “catholic” message has often been coopted in support

of the demands by anarchist and communist organizations for looser property rights. In the early 80s, occupation begins to be a social right with pathways for appropriated properties to be reincorporated into traditional private-public property systems.

Yet, the church and its many charitable services have also nurtured an ecosystem of social and resource networks to support those who choose instead to live for some time on the street. Rome is in fact of the 30 cities to host the most unhoused population in the world and although there has been a recent influx of immigrants - Italians still represent about half of the unhoused population and over 30% have been living “rough” for over 4 years.

The tendency to look at “homelessness” as a problem to be solved ignores the many intricate ways that these urban dwellers unbag their homes each night and the patterns through which - during

the day - they forge connections with pedestrians, neighbors and commercial establishments to build social capital through objects and actions.

This thesis proposes 5 urban rooms - little appended nubs onto an already obzocky urban fabric - that enshrine and enable home making activities outside of the tradition of formal squatting or private domesticity.

They create spaces for the street sleeper as an active influencer of urban space and positions them on new ground with respect to other wanderers. Based on the mapping of 5 homemaking activities - these spaces represent only a sample of the many other relationships that the roofless individual forms with the city.

One room is built out of the shadows by the flick of a switch. In my conversations with many roman street sleepers, this primal attraction to light was universal in their home

making practices. The night light exists in a binary relationship with a preexisting facade. Inside the light is magnified and dispersed amplifying and distorting the movements of the glows' inhabitant - making them appear larger than life.

Another room appears as a gate amongst many other doorways. Where the light exists in reciprocal relationship with the existing urban fabric, this room is animated by the activities of street cleaning and recycling. The broom is a recurring object amongst most street homes and the act of sweeping and cleaning one's space is the first step in designating a space for occupation. In this room the doorway and the sweeping gutter become animated social surfaces off of which the inhabitant builds social capital - exchanging street-cleaning services for a small bite or the storage of larger personal bags. The chute filters out the dirt and debris from larger recyclable materials and so

supplements that cities meager recycling infrastructure.

Another room engages in social exchange mediated by the exchange of donations through a rotating shelf-window that becomes a table for sharing gifts and conversation. It exists at busy pedestrian intersections - slowing traffic and stopping for conversation. These individuals decide to engage in a social exchange without seeing or necessarily knowing each other first - requiring a level of trust and confidence to engage so directly with a stranger

Another room taps into the infrastructural networks of the building that supports it - appearing in a relationship of mutual support through the form of a buttress. The network of new pipes that snake in and out of old buildings - bringing modern services - extend their network to the attachment. The share electricity and surplus heat from

HVAC vents through pipes that also serve as scaffolding for the layering of tarps over this roofless room.

The street dweller also comes to engage with larger infrastructural and social networks through the room centered around water and the nasoni that pepper the roman topography. The public face of the nasoni dedicated to ludic and casual uses of water conceal the more life supporting and homemaking activities of clothes washing and bathing in a small room between facade and fountain. A little canal and road paint mark the extension of this intervention as it connects to other water and washing resources throughout the city - providing new information to those who know how to read it.

Each of these rooms is composed of a stair and social surface and a relationship of mutuality. None are roofed and none are meant for permanent occupation but they are a

place to belong - to occupy though never to own. They create spaces that materialize the intricate and intimate relationships forged between the unhoused, the city and its other inhabitants.



Final Layout



1942 - ARCHITECTURE Italy becomes a fascist state, 1970 - Capture of Rome from papal states

1880s THE RISE OF POPULAR HOUSING

1860 - FIRST MASSIVE CLASSICISM FOR POPULAR HOUSING
1880 - 1890 - Developments and history

1924-1944: Fascist Dictatorship
1924-1944: Fascist Dictatorship

1945 - RISE OF ILLEGAL HOMEOWNERS
1945 - RISE OF ILLEGAL HOMEOWNERS

1950s: RISE OF PERIPHERIA
1950s: RISE OF PERIPHERIA

1970s "La Casa si occupa, l'occupazione si difende"
1970s "La Casa si occupa, l'occupazione si difende"

1980s: Need for housing leads many to squat permanently, not just to negotiate
1980s: Need for housing leads many to squat permanently, not just to negotiate

2008: RECESSION
2008: RECESSION

1963 - 1970 - New Urban Master Plan
1963 - 1970 - New Urban Master Plan

Art 1158 Codice Civile "usucapione" or squatting

'ownership of immovable goods, as well as limited real rights of enjoyment on the same property, is acquired by virtue of possession for a continuous period of 20 years'.

There are five basic requirements that must be met for someone to make a claim of adverse possession on Italian property:

1. Actual Possession - the adverse possessor must have actual, physical control over the property.
2. Open and Notorious - the use and possession of the land must be so visible and apparent that it gives notice to the legal owner that someone may make a claim to it.
3. Exclusive Possession - the adverse possessor cannot occupy the land jointly with the titled owner or share possession in common with the public.
4. Hostile Possession - Adverse possession must be hostile to the title owner's interest in the property. The word "hostile" in an adverse possession claim does not mean showing ill will or that the adverse possessor and legal owner are enemies. Rather, it means that the adverse possessor maintains that he or she holds the property as an owner against all other claims to the land.
5. Continuous and Uninterrupted - All elements of adverse possession must be met at all times through the relevant period of time. Occasional activity combined with long gaps in that activity fails the test of continuous possession.

The length of time (10 - 20 years depending on the case)
The possession must be hostile to the legal owner of the land.
Gaining a title to property through usucapione requires a court judgment.

Article 1159

Third Property Lots

DIMENSIONING OF SPACE

Between Private and Public property there is a third type of property born out of the production of "home-making" territories that share a boundary with the public street. This allotment exists along the boundary wall of a specific property lot defined in Article 11, and may be anywhere between 50 cm and 500 centimeters in length and with an extension of 1.5 meters onto the street/public space in addition to whatever width that is provided by the facade system. Height is determined on a case by case basis.

TEMPORAL STEWARDSHIP

Each lot is only to be occupied for 75% of a day after which time object must be dismantled, moved or discarded. During their period of occupation, the present user is deemed responsible for the present objects.

CLAIMING SPACE

Adjacent properties can only be appropriated into "Third Property Lot" system if the lot is managed by a National or EU government building, a company (private or public) building of net value over 2 million euro (at time of construction), or if the building is owned by a property management company that serves over 7 properties in the region. Additional properties can be transformed with the consent of building owners for a period of 4 years with options for permit renewal.

FORMALIZATION AND AMENITY EXTENSIONS

After a Lot is recognized and transferred into the "Third Property Lot" system, the Government will provide a suitable property TAX reduction to the adjacent allotment and subsidize additional costs of water, electricity and ventilation that are devoted to support the external lot. The government will also provide materials and equipment for the formalization of the space and equip each space with a motion activated camera to monitor appropriate use and for the security of the users. Cameras may not be tampered with. Amenities will be provided in the space in accordance with possible home-making typologies: storage, leisure, and sleep. Once a lot transitions, it is formalized with primarily permanent features and structure as well as some mobile or temporary elements - such that the whole addition has an expected lifespan of 10 years.

Italian Constitution on Property

Art 42
Property is public or private. Economic assets may belong to the State, to public bodies or to private persons. Private property is recognized and guaranteed by the law, which prescribes the ways it is acquired, enjoyed and its limitations so as to ensure its social function and make it accessible to all.
In the cases provided for by the law and with provisions for compensation, private property may be expropriated for reasons of general interest.
The law establishes the regulations and limits of legitimate and testamentary inheritance and the rights of the State in matters of inheritance.

Art 43
For the purposes of the common good, the law may establish that an enterprise or a category thereof be, through a pre-emptive decision or compulsory purchase authority, with provision of compensation, reserved to the Government, a public agency, a workers' or users' association, provided that such enterprise operates in the field of essential public services, energy resources or monopolies and are of general public interest.

Art 44
For the purpose of ensuring the rational use of land and equitable social relationships, the law imposes obligations and constraints on private ownership of land, it sets limitations to the size of property according to the region and the agricultural area, encourages and promotes land reclamation, the conversion of fallow lands and the reorganization of farm units, and assists small and medium-sized properties.
The law makes provisions for mountain areas.





"In the evening, when I'm ready to settle down, I pick my things up from a bar a few blocks away and set up my space. I clean up. I sweep my bench and the space around me and I organize my things."



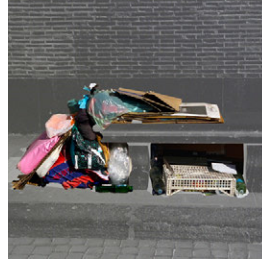
Space is constituted through the selection and situating of social goods.

In the thoughtful arrangement of the living room in preparation for a visit from the neighbours the hostess recursively reproduces spatial structures.



"When you live alone its nice... there is this bag with this, this other one with the radio, in this other one the clothes. There is a bar that keeps my suitcase. Then in the evening I tidy everything... I have everything right here"

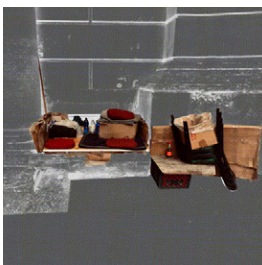
He gestures at three large shopping bags of hand-dyed clothes and collected flowers and little mementos.



There is another sense in which space can be viewed as relative and I choose to call this relational space - space regarded in the manner of Leibniz, as being contained in objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself relationships to other objects.

Martina Lina, "The Constitution of Space: The Structuration of Space Through the Simultaneity of Effect and Perception", European Journal of Social Theory 11(1): 25-49, 2008, p. 39

David Harvey, "Social Justice and the City", Social Justice and the City, Univ. of Georgia Press, 2006, p. 13.



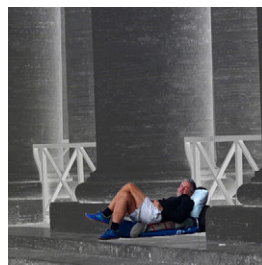
... all social relations become real and concrete, a part of our lived existence, only when they are spatially 'inscribed' that is concretely represented in the social production of space.

Edward Soja, Thirdspace: Journey to Los Angeles and Other Real- and-Imagined Places, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, p. 64



Everything comes in Thirdspace: subjectivity and objectivity, the abstract and concrete, the real and imagined, the knowable and the unimaginable, the repetitive and the differential, structure and agency, mind and body, conscious and the unconscious, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history.

Edward Soja, Thirdspace: Journey to Los Angeles and Other Real- and-Imagined Places, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, pp. 56-57



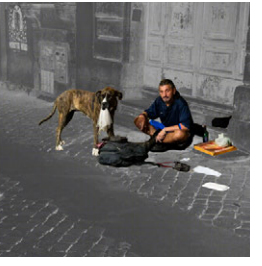
Postmodern culture with its decentred subject can be the space where ties are severed or it can provide the occasion for new and varied forms of bonding. To some extent, ruptures, surfaces, contextuality, and a host of other happenings create gaps that make space for oppositional practices which no longer require intellectuals to be confined by narrow separate spheres with no meaningful connection to the world of everyday.

Edward W. Soja, Postmetropolis: Critical Studies -Op. Cit., p. 204



The question "what is space?" is therefore replaced by the question "how is it that different human practices create and make use of different conceptualizations of space?"

David Harvey, "Space as a Key Word", Marx and Philosophy Conference, 29 May 2004, Institute of Education, London



"I try to find a place with light - it's safer. In the winter it is better to go somewhere warm. Sometimes you can find a building vent or a warm grate but those can be crowded and usually in unsafe areas. If I'm unlucky I try to snag a spot at a shelter but I prefer being alone so the summer is better."



"Finding a new spot is never easy. You want some place quiet but not too isolated. Yeah... I like this square. People will look out for you. Tourists are usually fine. Those over there... you know... [drunks] not so much."

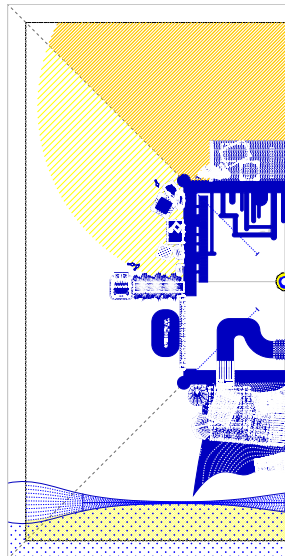
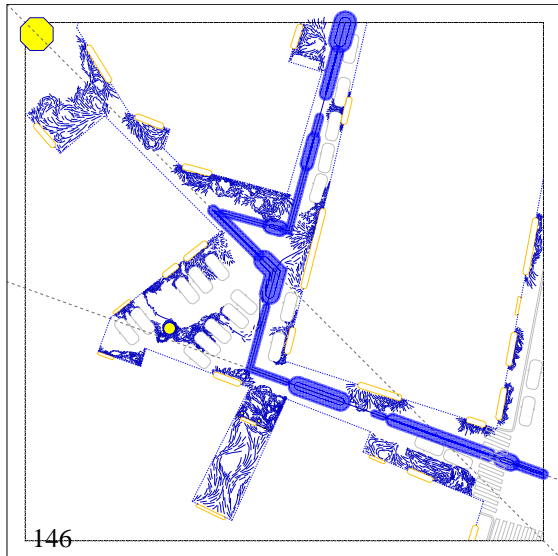
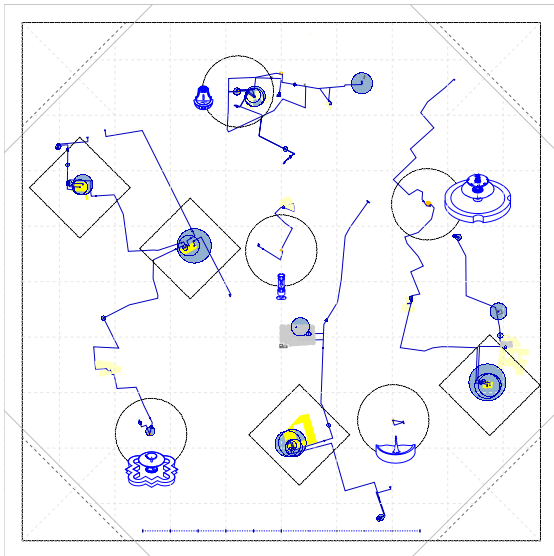


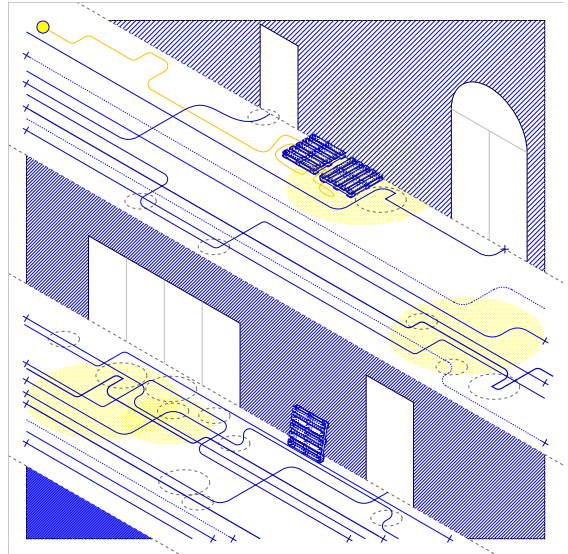
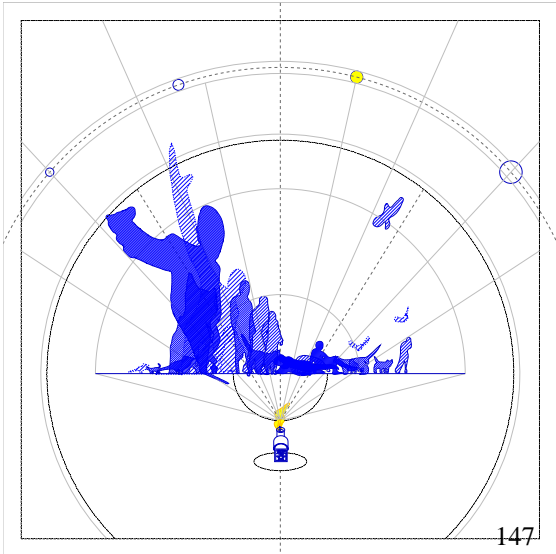
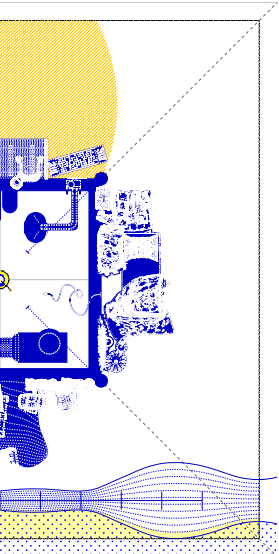
"This candle is my little spirituality. I light it every night when I'm ready to settle down. It protects me."

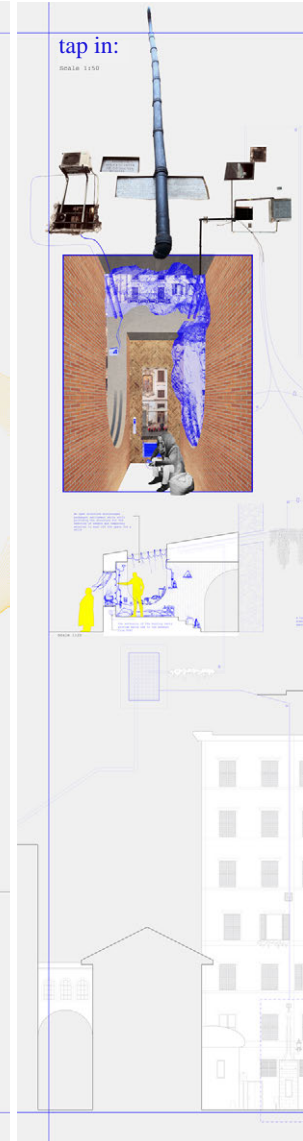
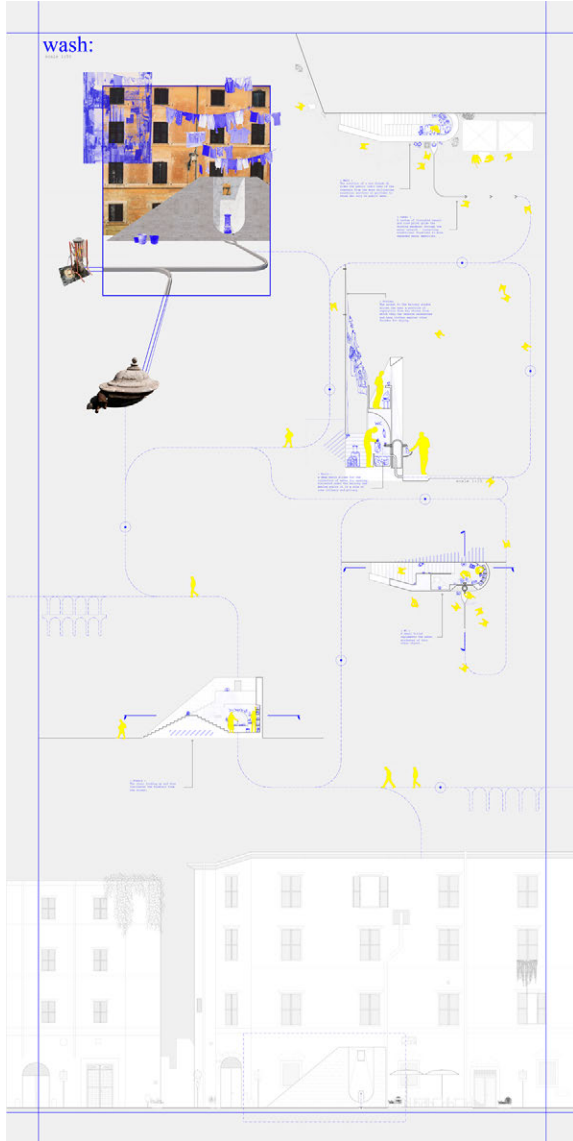


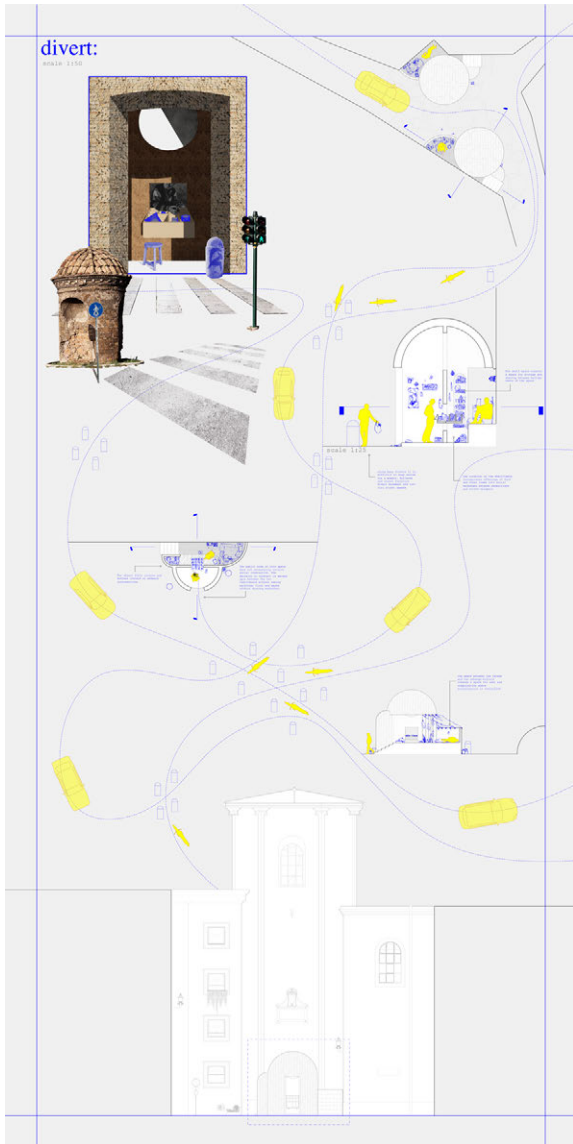
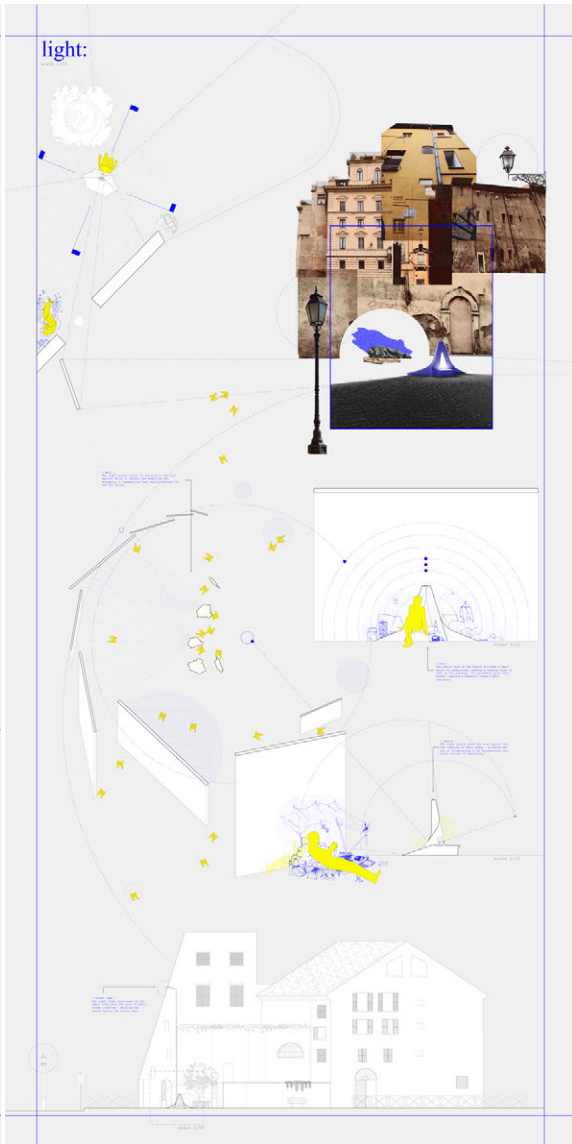
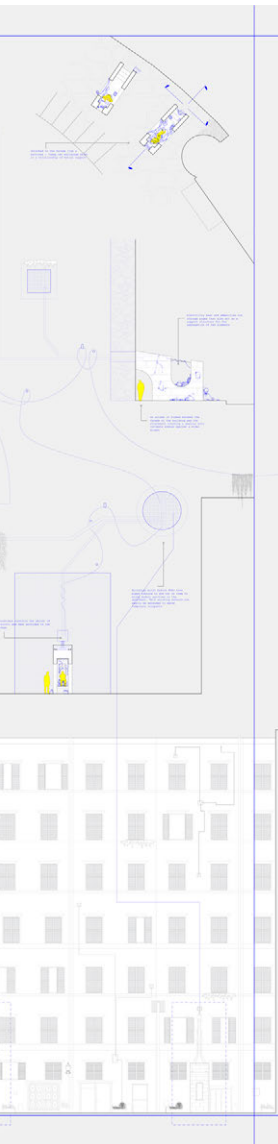
"I've been living here for a few years maybe. I'm not exactly sure how many. Before the store closed they used to let me leave my bag with them and I would watch the store at night. Now that they closed I just pack my things behind this grate out of the way and no one has taken anything yet."

*model photos by
Andy Ryan*









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