

BLUE HOUR



Blue Hour

A 24-Hour Building

ETH ZÜRICH 20FS

MASTERTHESIS TOPIC C
BAU 127

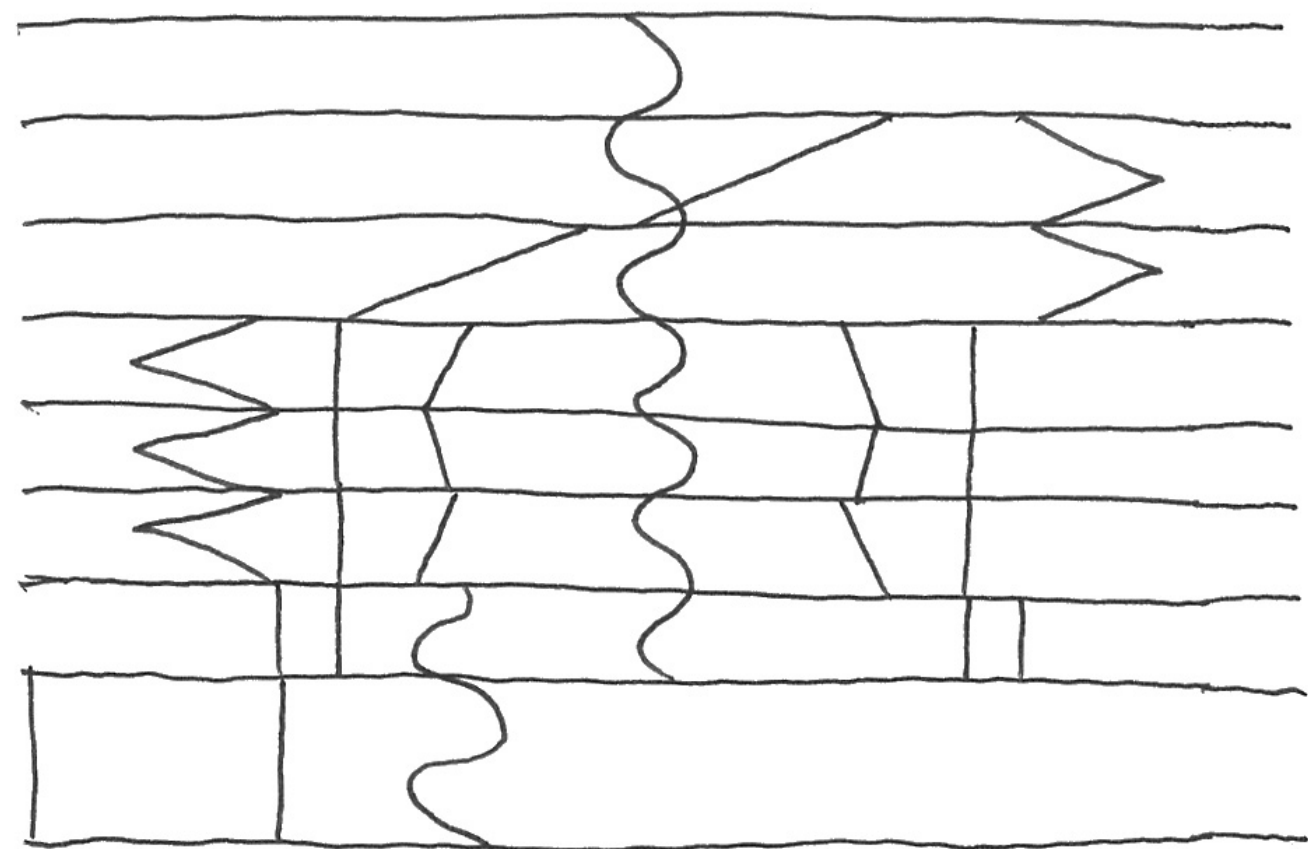
<https://bluehourthesis.com>

Nina Flurina Rickenbacher
rnina@student.ethz.ch

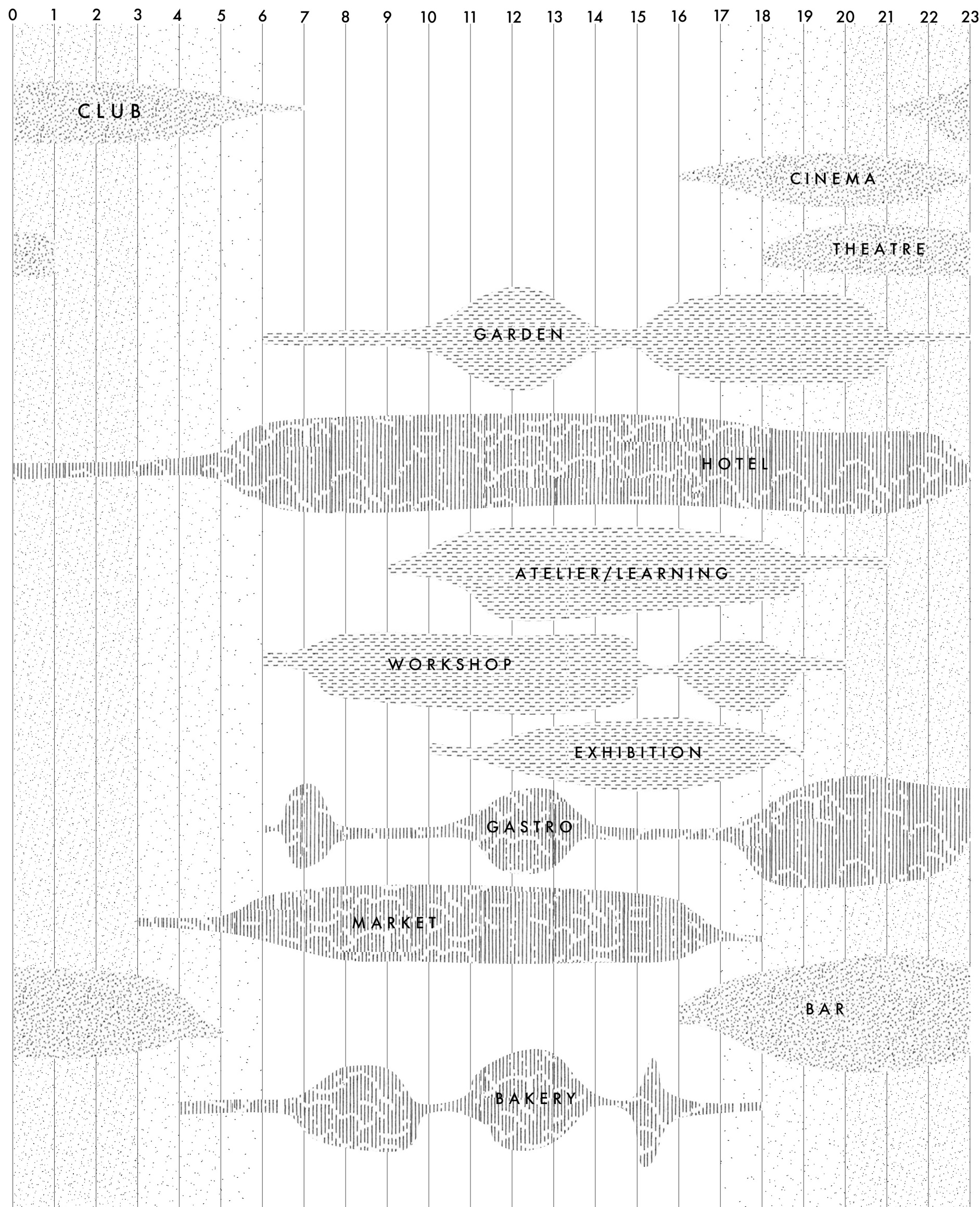
Studio An Fonteyne
www.fonteyne.arch.ethz.ch

Begleitfach Kunst
www.sander.arch.ethz.ch

Begleitfach BUK
www.buk.arch.ethz.ch

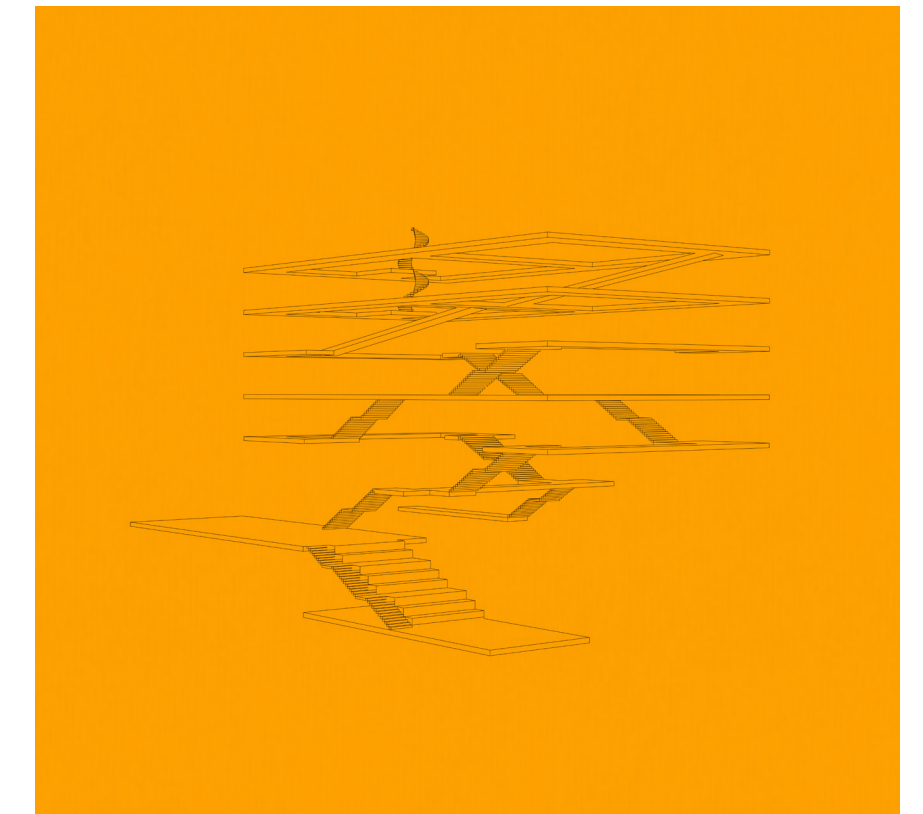


Blue Hour



Wedged between the Rhine and the square, the laboratory building rises as a well-proportioned volume that completely reflects its neighbours. It seems to suppress a possible connection between the two sides by turning completely against the outside space through its introversion.

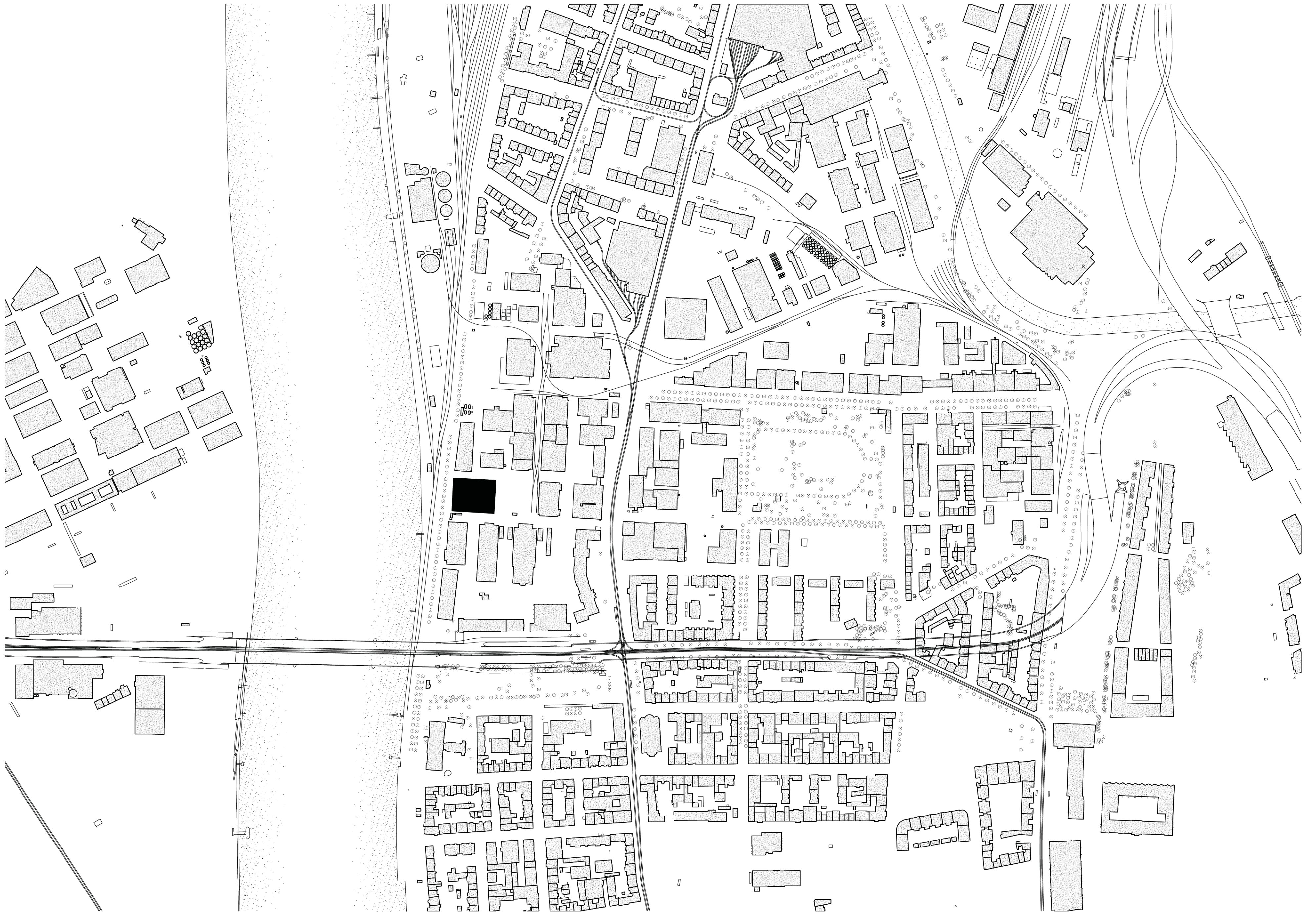
A very rigid, strongly dimensioned and mostly clad concrete structure forms the laboratory building, whereby much potential can be discovered in the spatial, onion-like layering and the resulting lighting situation. Outer and therefore bright, very elongated rooms meet dark, inner boxes, which are connected by a development layer. This world is protected by a fully circumferential, curtain-wall mirrored facade based on the post and beam principle. Two differently coloured



enamelled glass bands give rhythm to the rigid surface.

First of all, I distinguish between three clearly separated parts of the building: bright rooms that are active during the day, dark rooms that are active at night, and the transition zone that serves as a communicative, opening encounter zone for the various users. The result is a 24H building, in which worlds meet, complement each other, but also create a tension. They sense each other and exist next to each other. The moment of separation and meeting of different people with very different thoughts and goals is the core of this work.

Left: Peak Hours
Top: Circulation through Night and Day

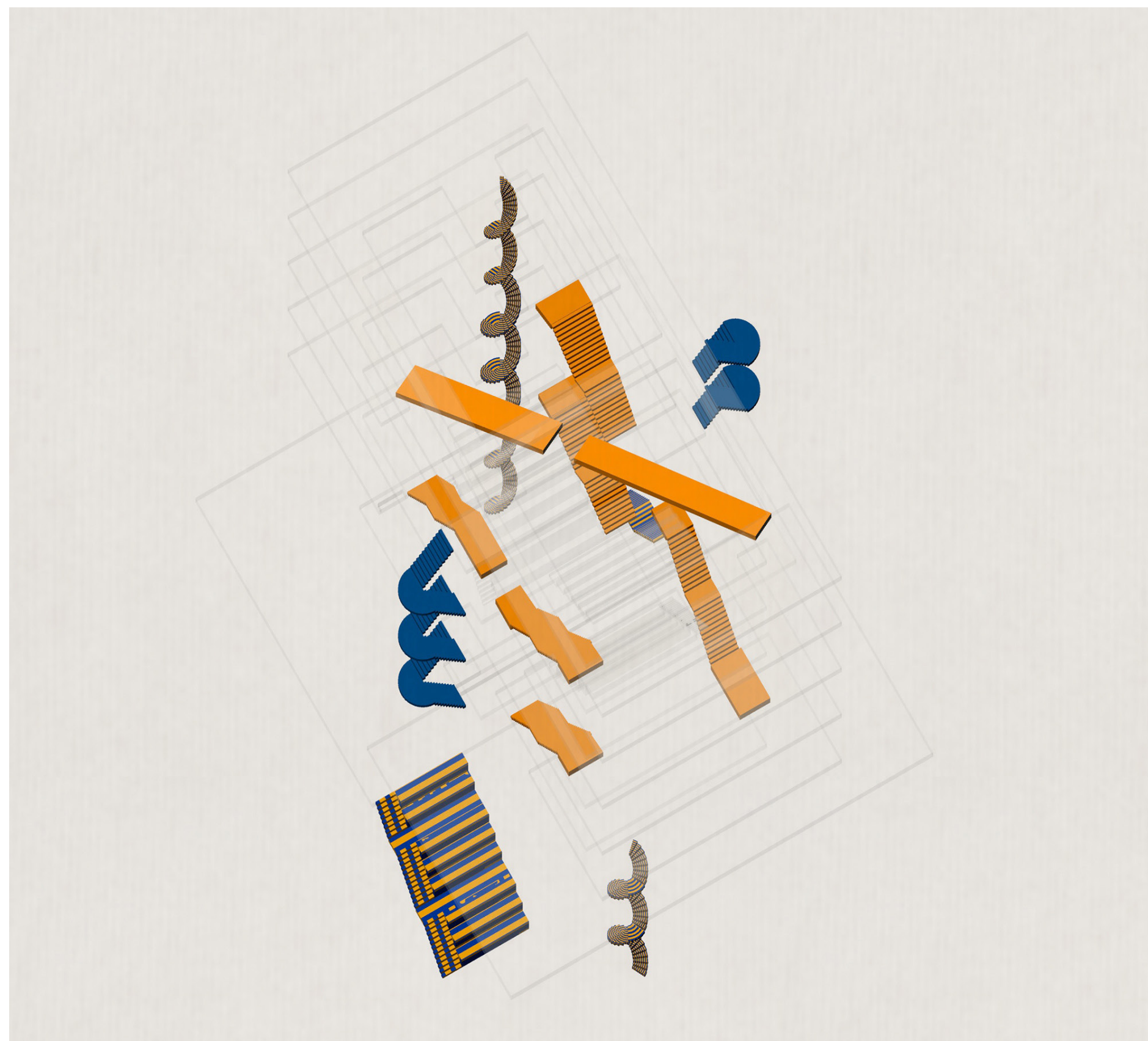


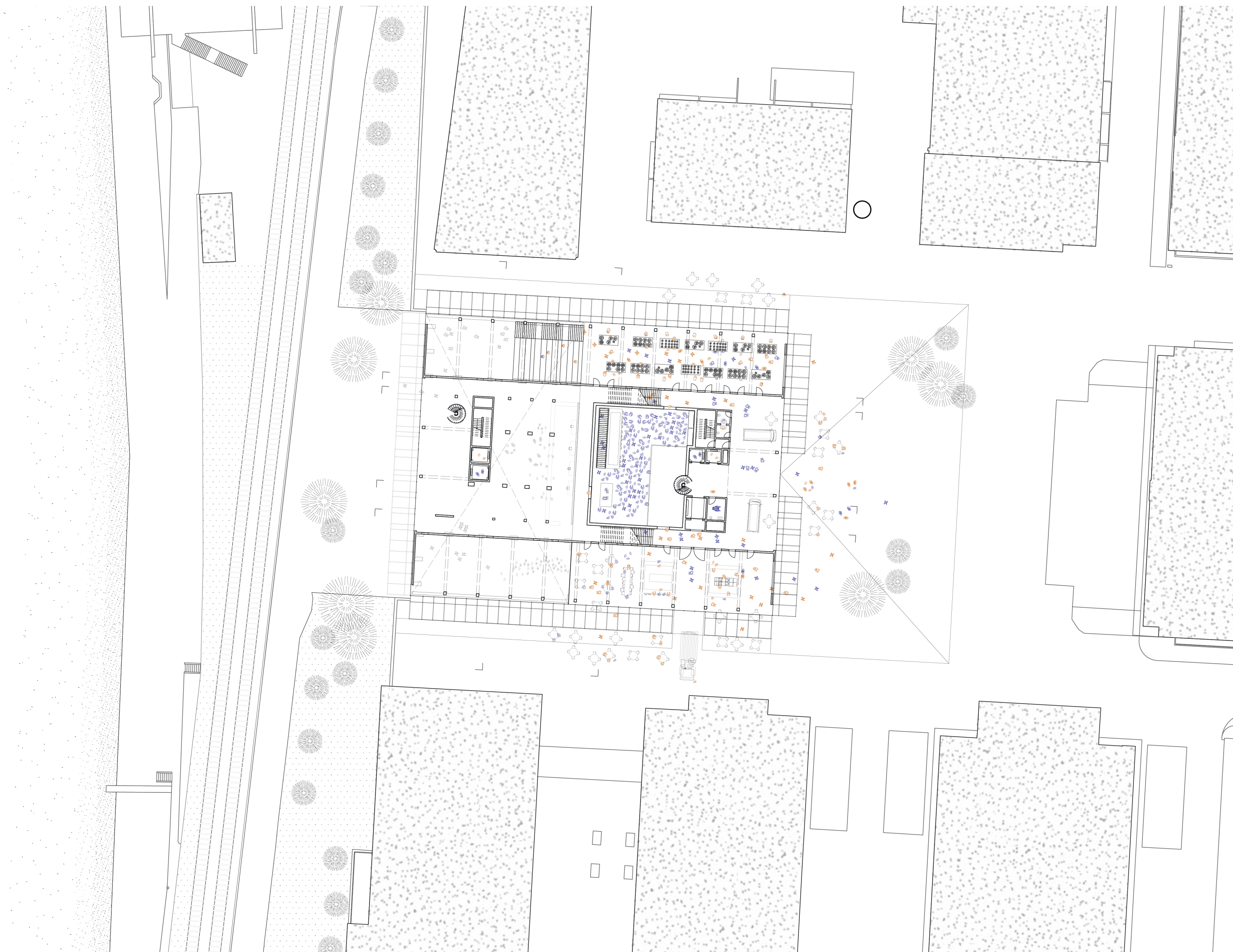
The former laboratory building offers a lot of potential for this story about its differentiated lighting situations and the spatial onion-like layering, where light meets dark and creates an interspace that turns out to be very significant.

Night-time activities such as clubs, cinemas, theatres fill dark rooms with life, while day-active programmes such as workshops, studios, learning rooms give meaning to the bright rooms. These two worlds are held together by transition programmes such as gastronomy, market and a hotel.

Since I bring different users into the building at different times, I am interested in their circulation in the building and how they can coexist as parallel worlds and anticipate each other by dealing with the building.

The mixing of the users on the lower three floors, which together form a generous, two-storey entrance to the Rhine and the square and are connected by stairs as a grandstand, allows for situations like a joint visit to the baker.





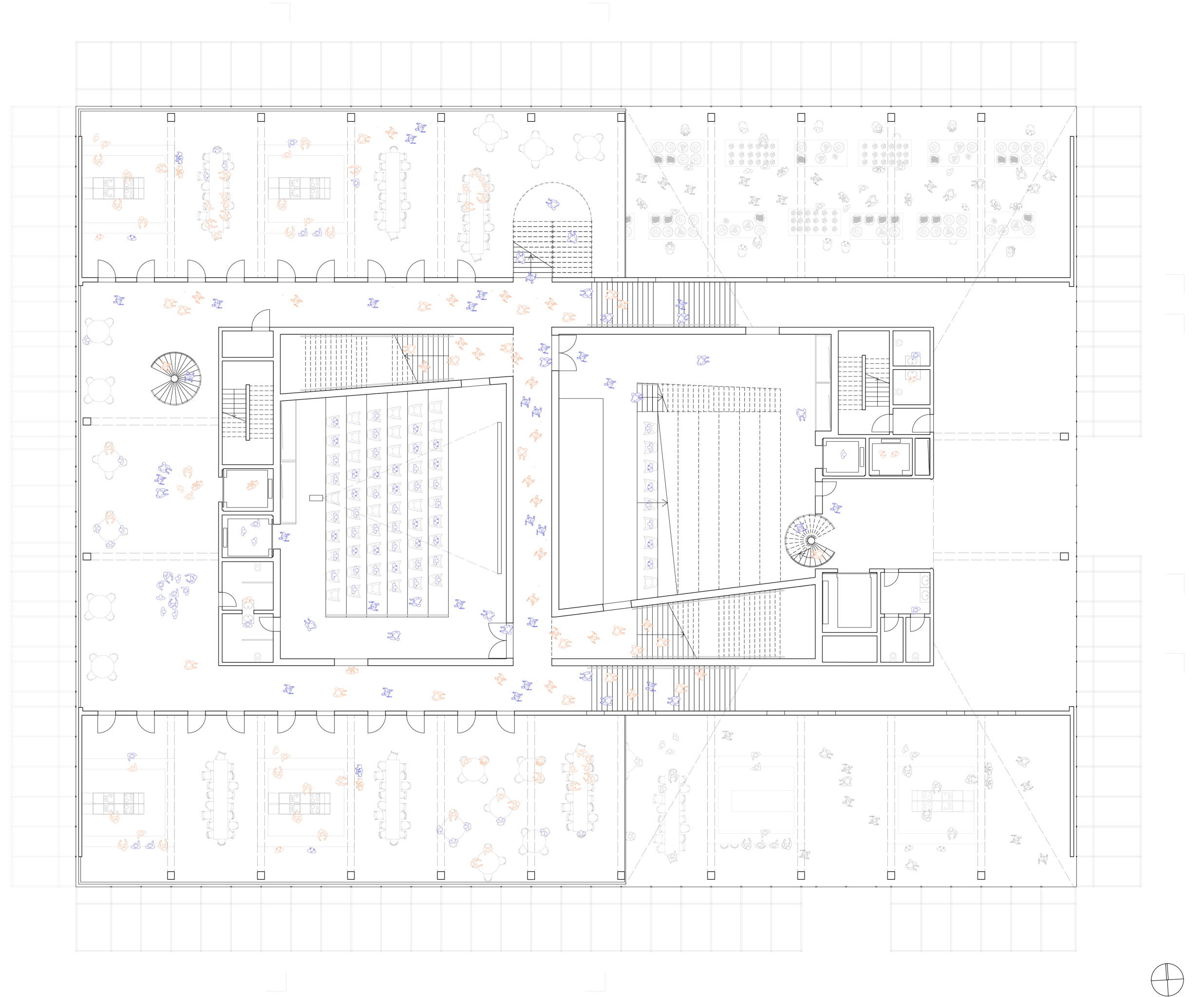
From the first floor onwards, a distribution takes place, whereby the users experience moments of visual reference or reunion during their movement.

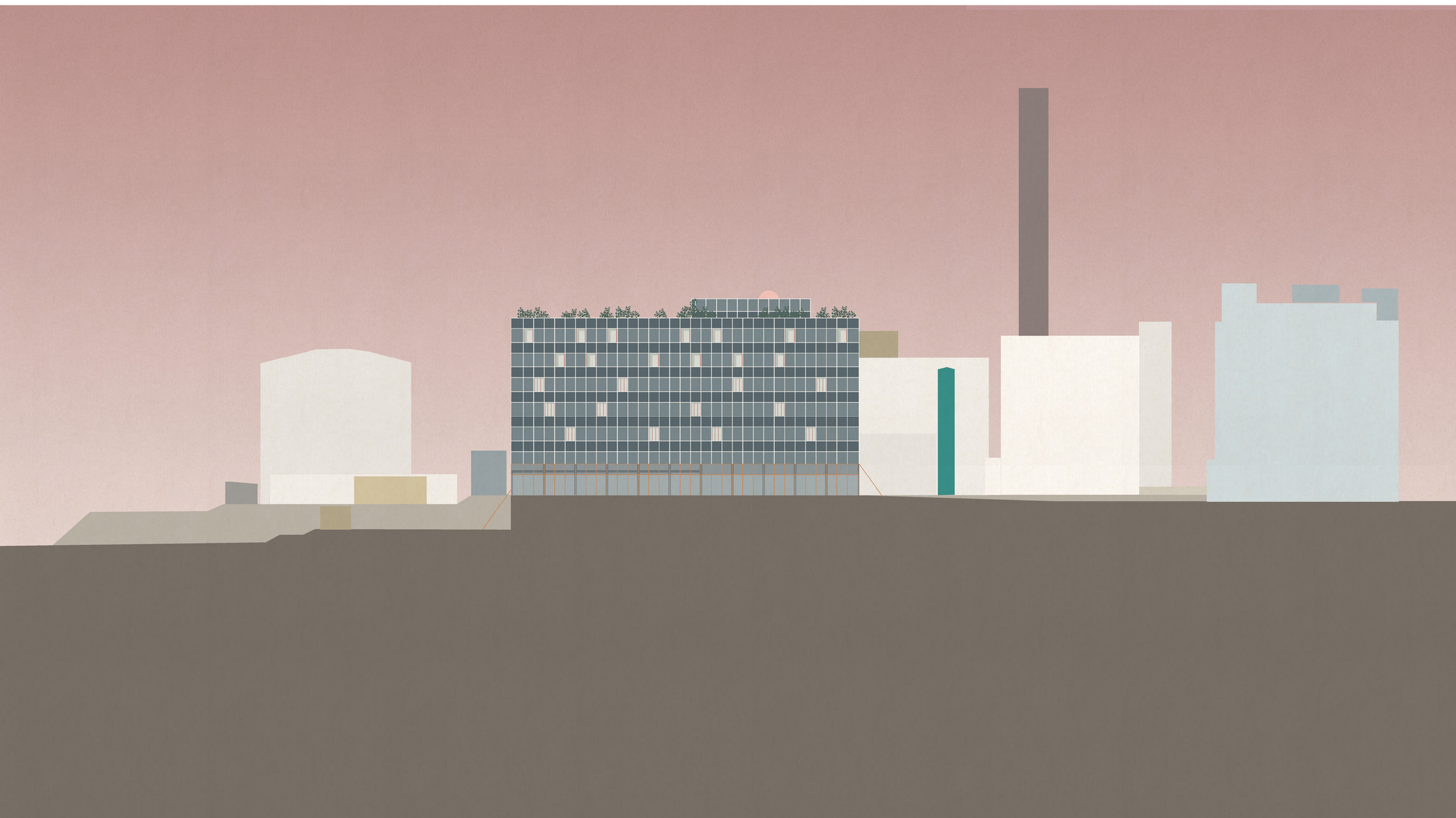
The users during the light hours reach the bright rooms via the staircase, apparently cut out of the massive core, where they gain insights into the darkness. The night owls take the stairs intended for them, which seemingly accompany them into a bright, filigree world, but without making them accessible, in order to finally enter the dark world. By playing with existing doors as windows and cutting out the corridor, clear paths can be defined and visual references generated across the floors. People meet on the stairs, in the corridor or in the foyer and a communicative space is created that gives you a sense of other worlds.

If one were to experience the building as a hotel guest, the lift would probably be the most convenient way to get up. But these holidaymakers cannot resist the temptation of the lower floors. Thus, the two staircase systems continue in slight changes up to the top, once noticeable in a change of place, once as a transformation into a ramp.

Those who prefer to go only to the roof can take a spiral staircase as a shortcut and on the way rest on the cool steps to watch the spectacle.

Left: Ground Floor 1/500
Next Page: First Floor 1/200

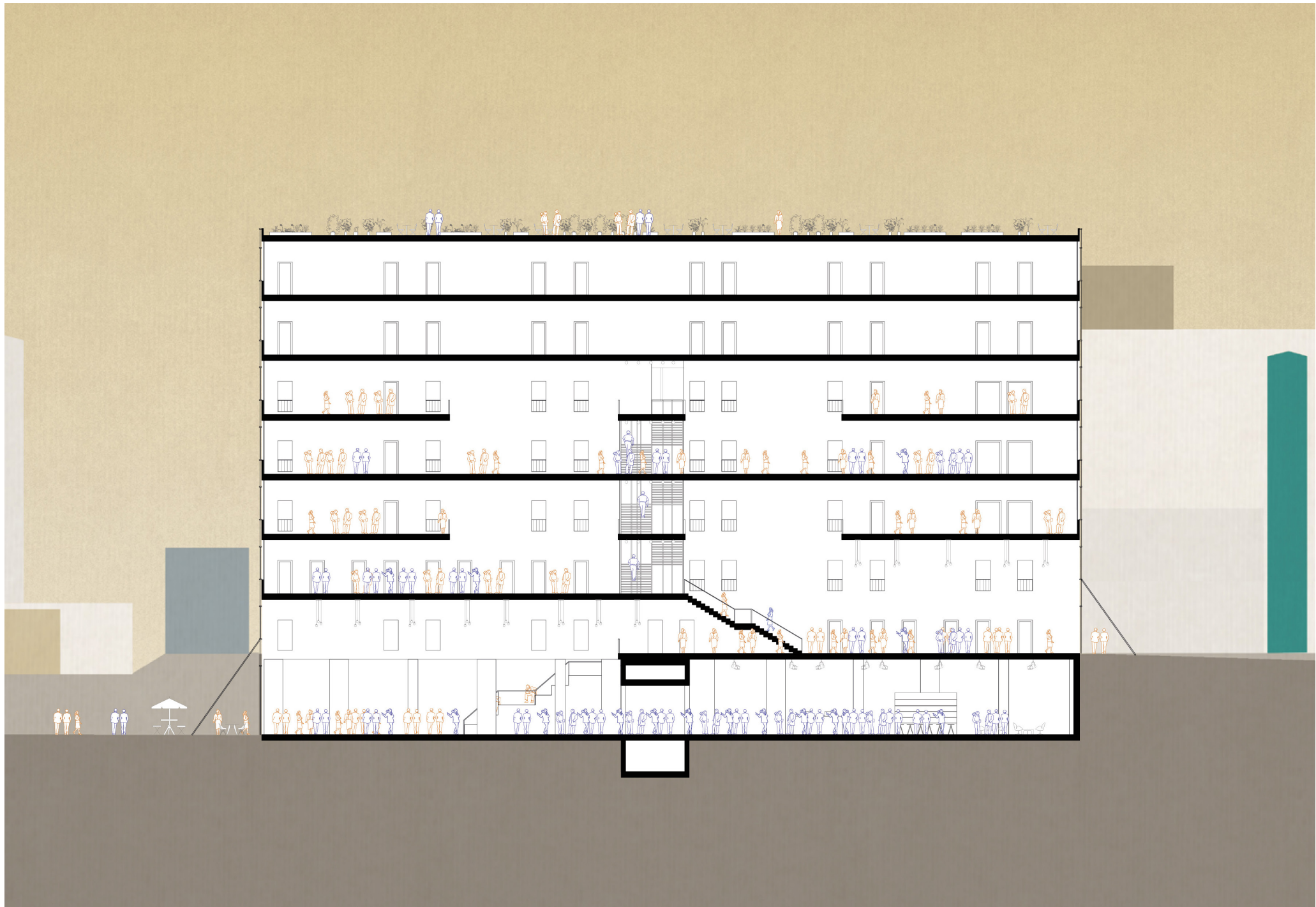




Elevation South



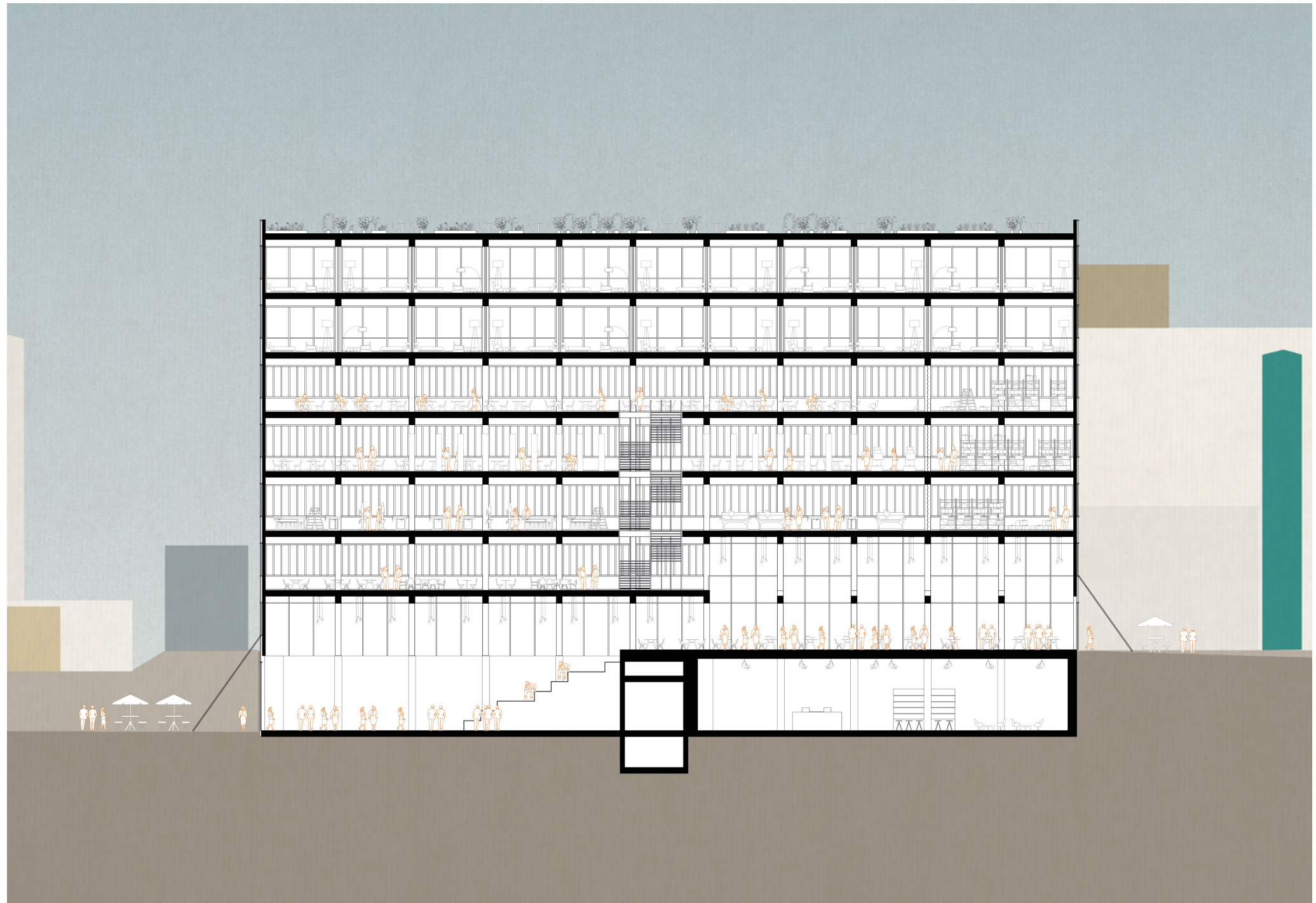
1



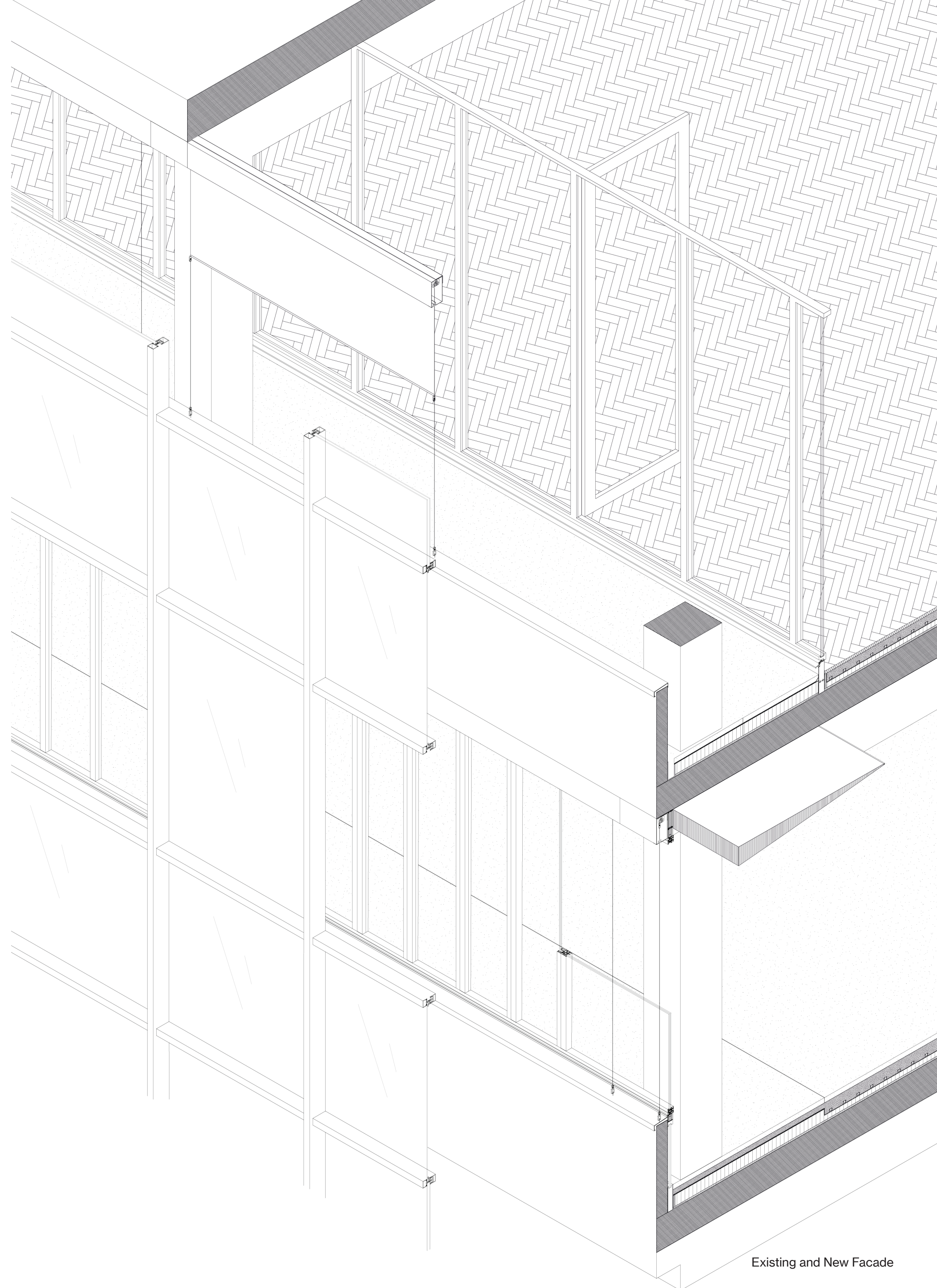
3
Longitudinal Sections: Blue Hour, Night, Blue Hour, Day



2



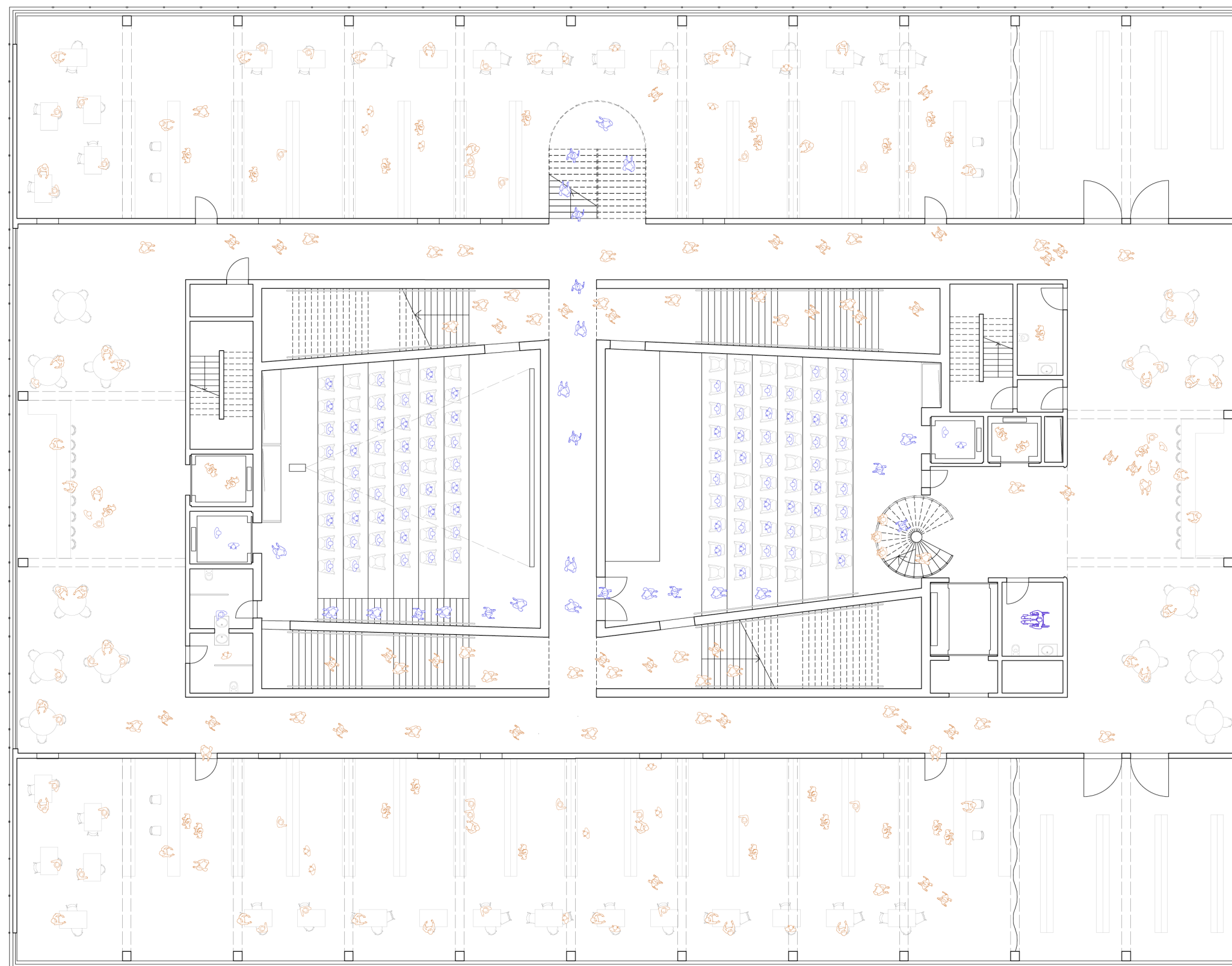
4



NIGHT OWLS

Glowing eyes on a pink background flash towards us and show us the way across the square and up the ramp. One last, enjoyable sip of the cool white wine and we enter a new world. Different lights are sticking out of all openings and we luckily find the last seat at a crowded bar. Next to us, two buddies are drinking a beer after work, both still in work clothes, whose day has probably lasted longer than ours. In the course of the evening my friends have already turned into noisy characters and we meet some critical looks. But that doesn't bother us, because we are more and more drawn into the dark world. Before we dance sweaty to deafening music, we promised a friend to marvel at his short play. We venture uncertainly up a staircase that gives us insight into an unexpected world. The scent of wood still hangs in the air and suddenly we are dazzled by some glowing screens. Shocked, we are struck by the eyes of a man who was probably still concentrating on his work until then.

Left: Third Floor 1:200

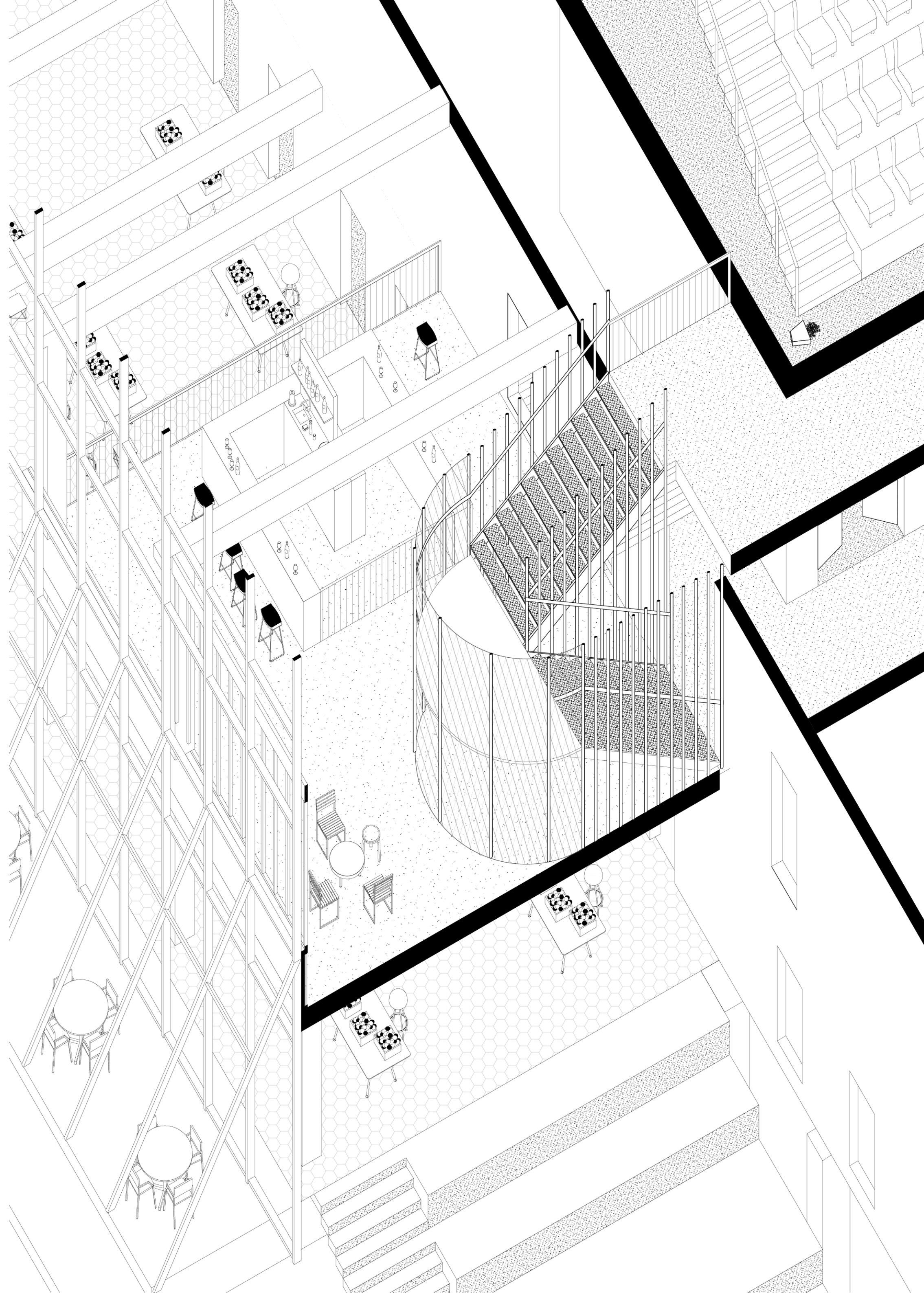




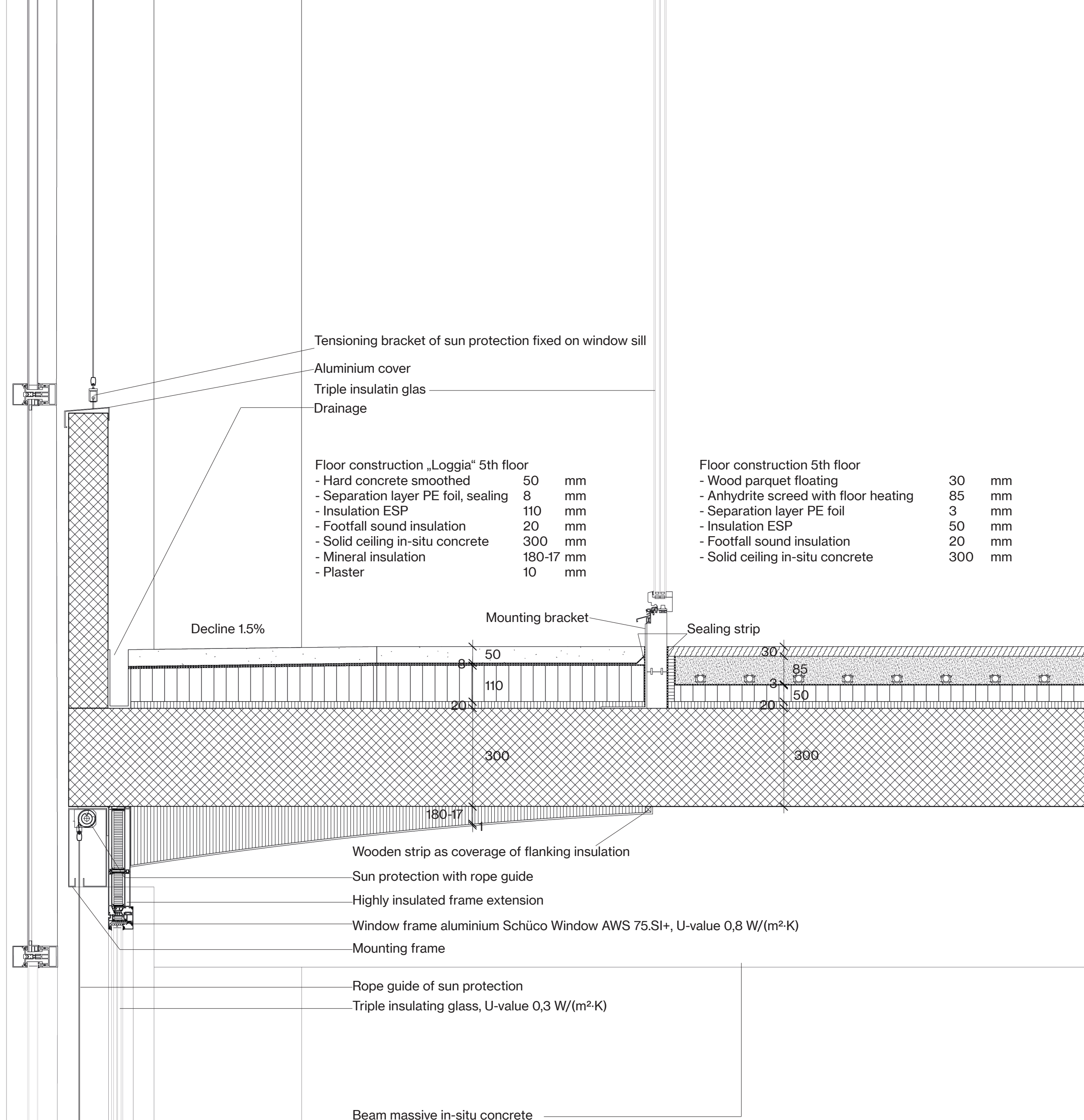
We quickly leave and after a few steps we arrive breathless at the top, the lights of the small theatre hall attract us like magnets. Night-blue curtains open themselves up and with a few drinks more in my blood the picture in front of me becomes blurred like a chaotic painting. Figures jump and move wildly. I can't remember if I'm still sitting in the theatre or if I'm already a puppet of the DJ himself, giving strange dance movements. While purple clouds pass by again, I notice that we finally landed on a huge dance floor in the basement. Some strangers are observing

us through a window and as if stung by a bee, I suddenly take a French leave. A wonderful scent seduces me to take a little detour before the house spits me out again and I soak up the morning mood along the Rhine. The master baker gives me so much energy for the way home that I would love to kiss him. Next to me is the one guy from the bar in his work clothes again, freshly rested and ready for a new day.

Top: Night Owls
Right: Circulation through Night
Next page: Catching a Glimpse



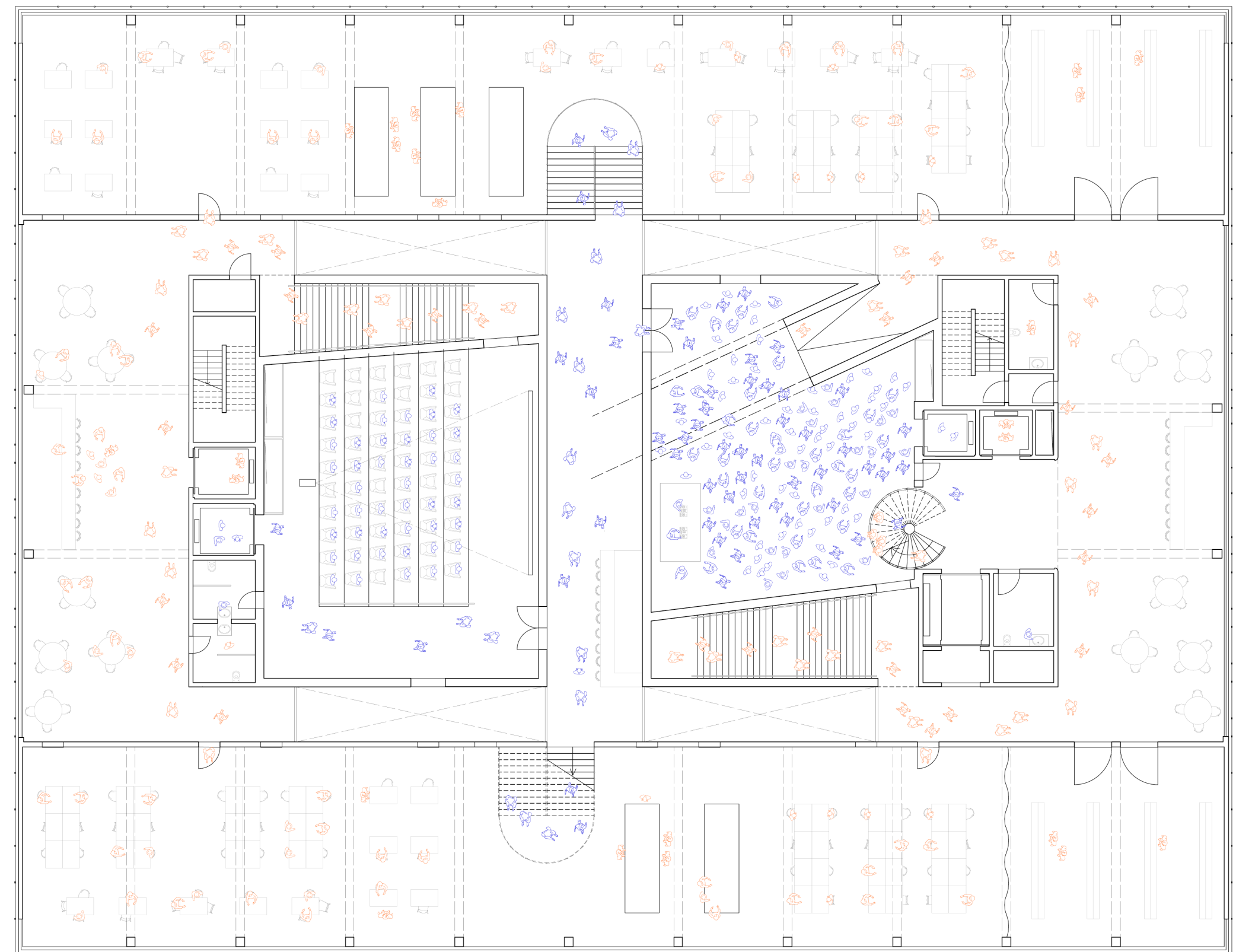


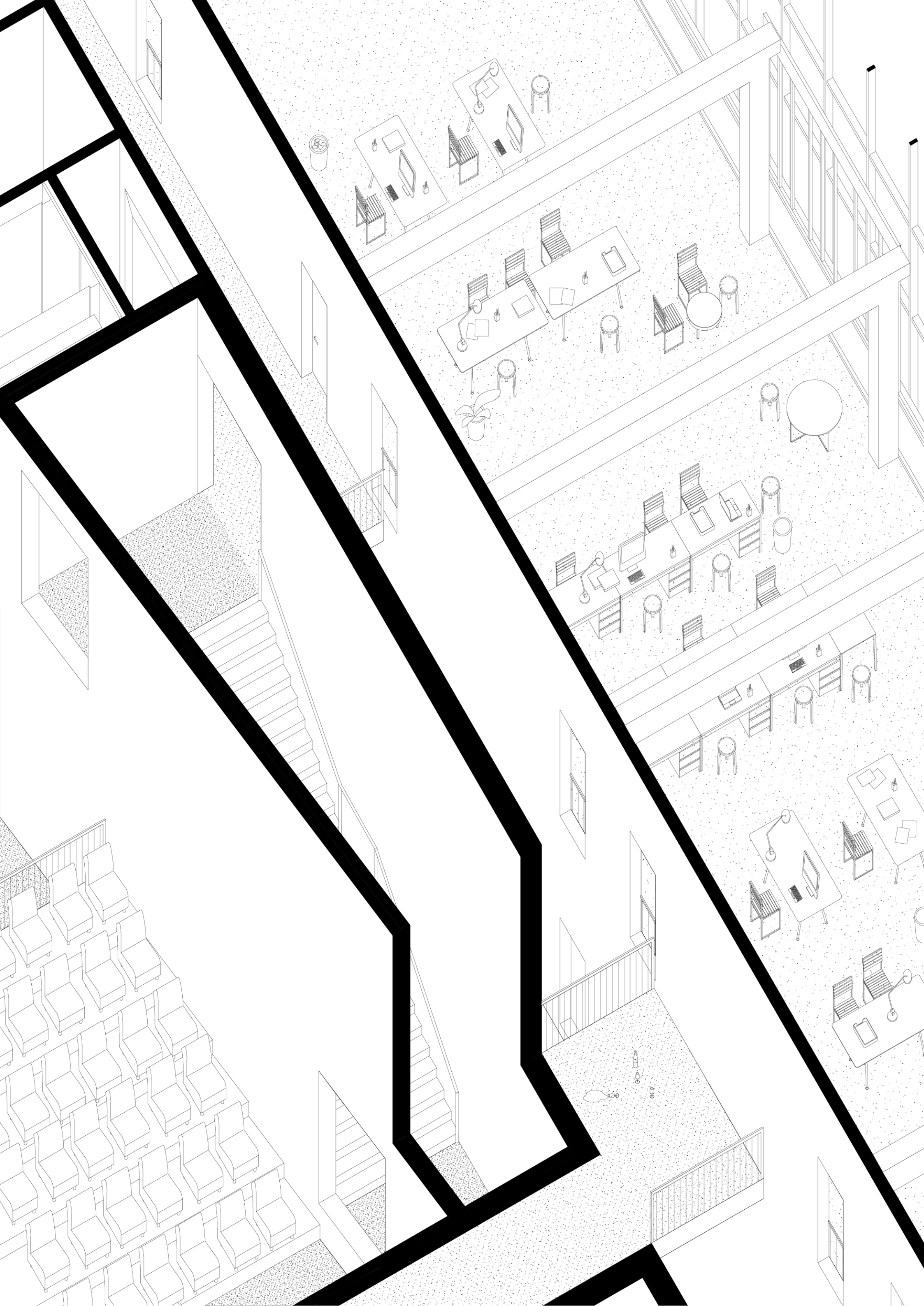


EARLY BIRD

My bike reflects pink colours onto my leg as I race through the familiar streets. Even before the sun blinks out over the horizon, I set foot on the big stairs, colliding with a tired, dishevelled looking and not too fresh smelling woman. Along my usual path I can almost never resist the temptation of fresh fruit, coffee or a croissant and I stand in line with anticipation. At these times the bakers have their hands full feeding all the hungry mouths. In the corner I discover a young man who would probably rather be curled up in bed in his blanket than hanging there halfway in his chair. As I pass him and accidentally graze his leg, his eyes, suddenly opened, look at me questioningly. Outside, the sun has taken its place and a pleasant, warm light floods the interior. I catch a brief glimpse through a window onto a dance floor where the last dancers are still bobbing back and forth, which makes me smile.

Right: Fourth Floor 1/200



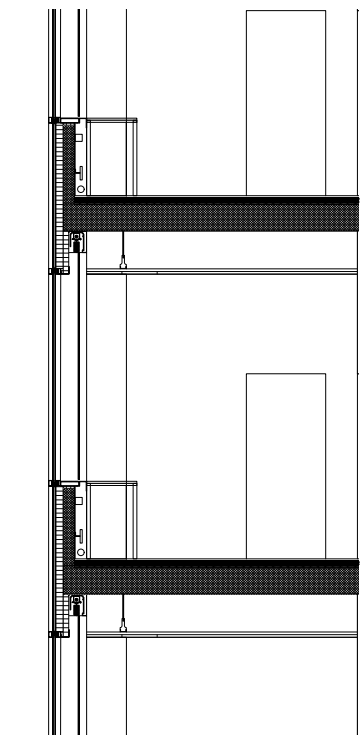


Unfortunately, I cannot take part in the spectacle, because a very demanding day will suck all my energy. I leave crumbs on the orange steps and loud laughter echoes through the corridors. As an early riser I am always the first one at my workplace and I switch on the light, which changes with the dawn into a colour that is only visible at these hours. I now hear resounding laughter again and a group staggers down the stairs, rumbling like a herd of elephants and crashing against the

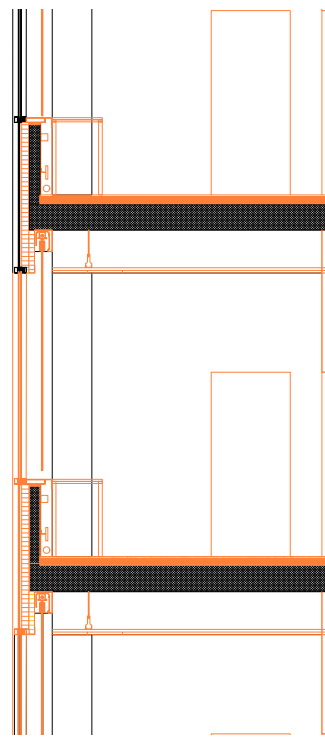
railing. I enjoy the quiet hours of the day filled with birdsong before my batteries run out and I can enjoy a well-deserved beer. Back on my bike with the wind in my face, I leave many noticeably well-dressed people behind me in an endless queue. It must be a good theatre to entertain the night, whereby I prefer my warm bed.

Top: Early Birds
Left: Circulation through Day
Next page: Unexpected Get-Together

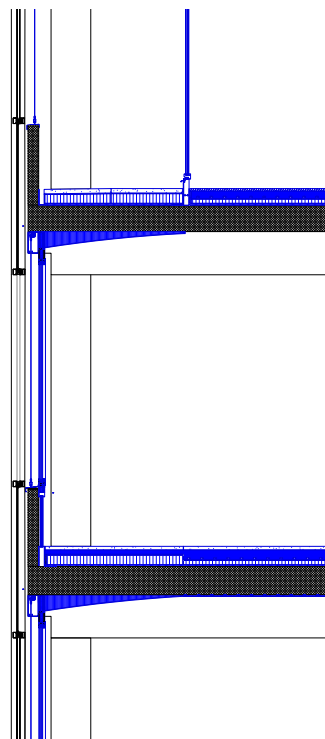




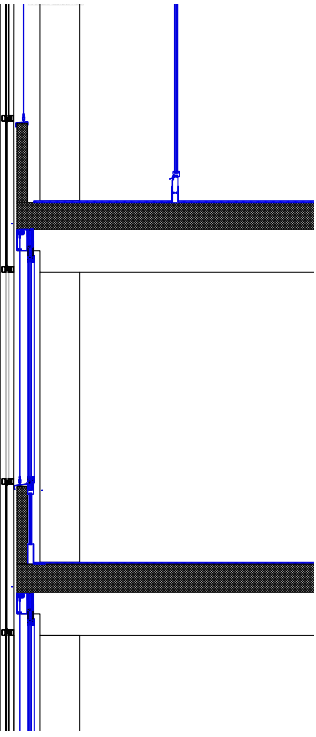
Existing building structure



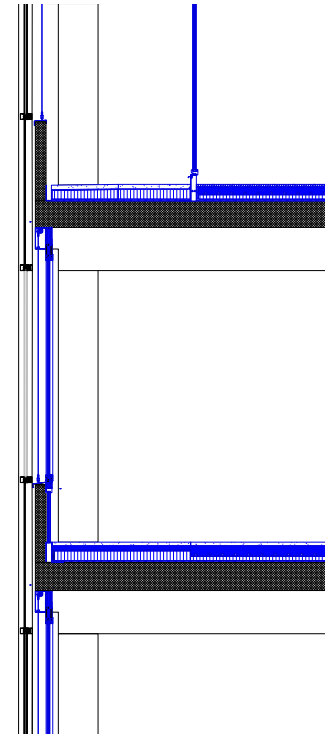
Demolition



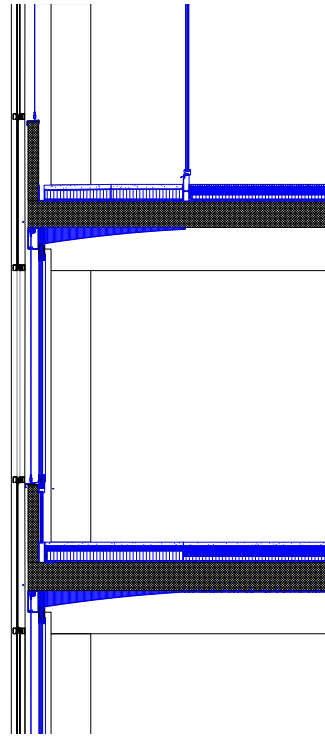
New construction



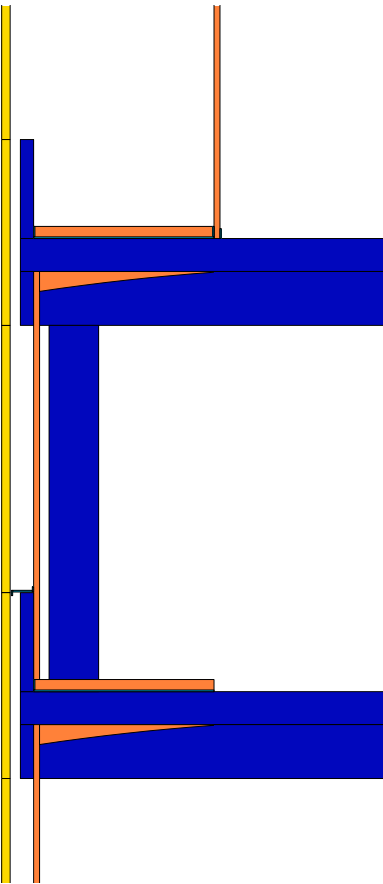
Construction process: 1)
sun protection, window
layer, footfall sound insu-
lation



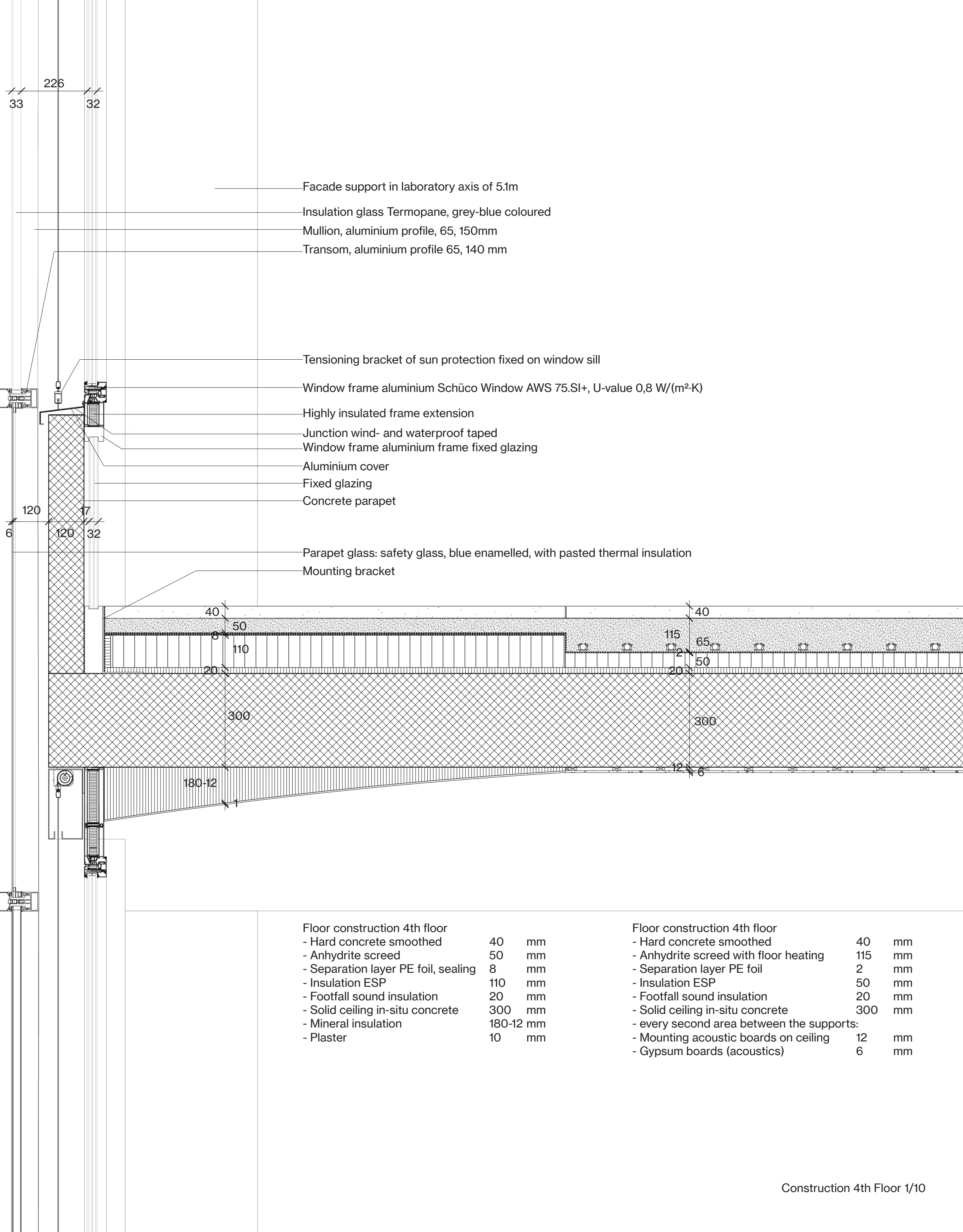
Construction process: 2)
floor construction

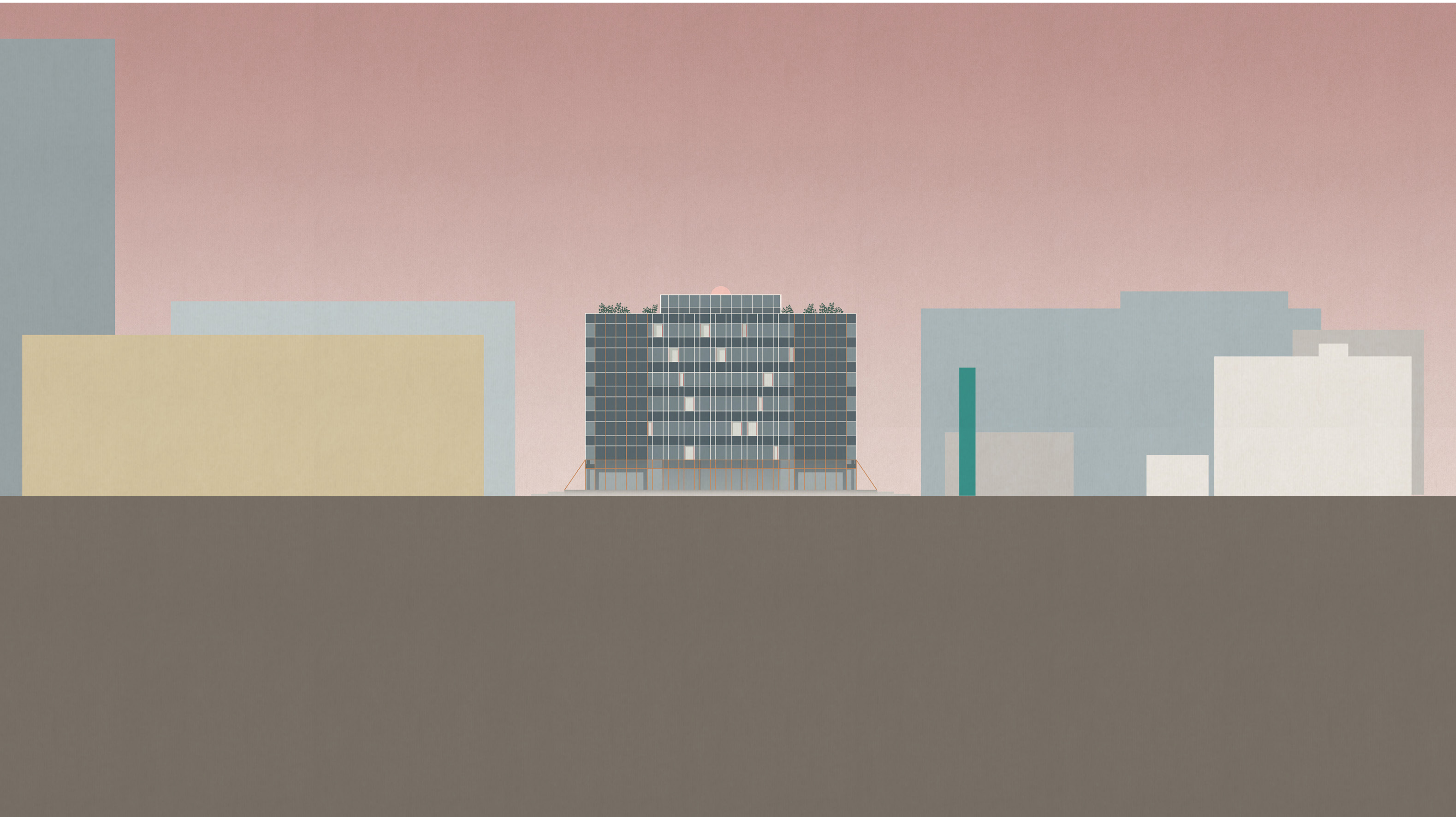


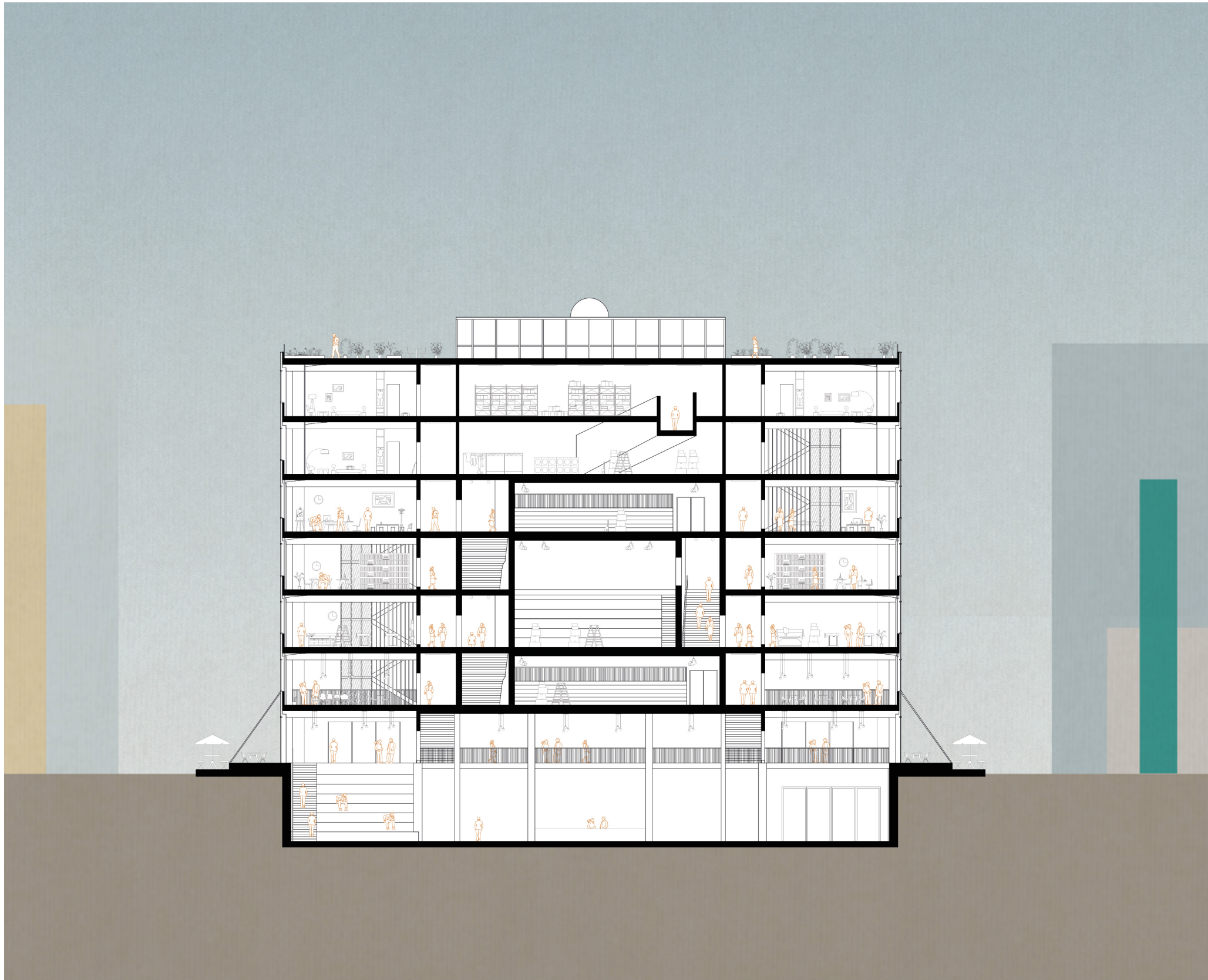
Construction process: 3)
flanking insulation,
ceiling



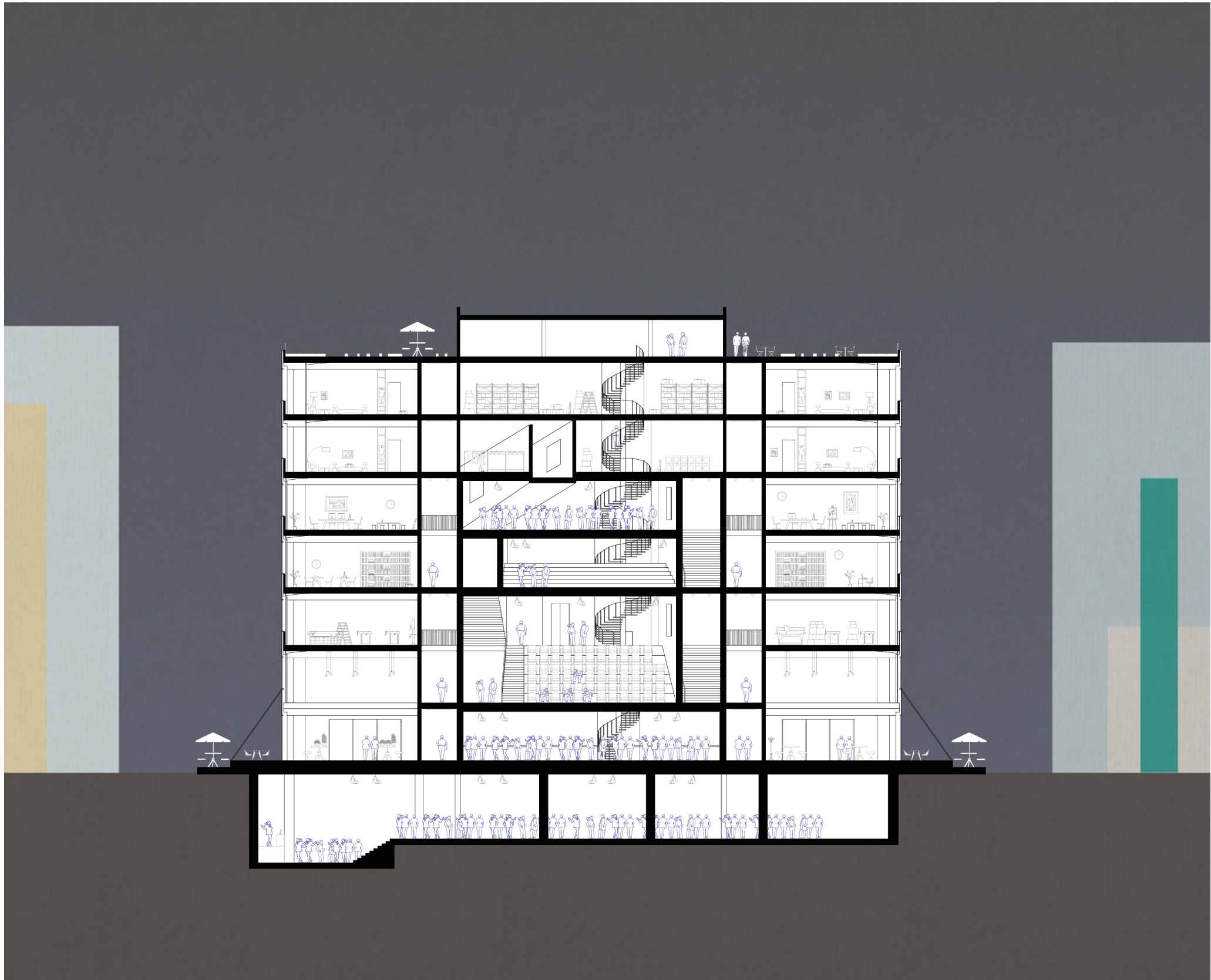
- Bearing
- Protecting
- Insulating
- Sealing







1



2

