

ESALA 2019

Master of Architecture

**CITY FRAGMENTS:
PALERMO INSTITUTIONS**

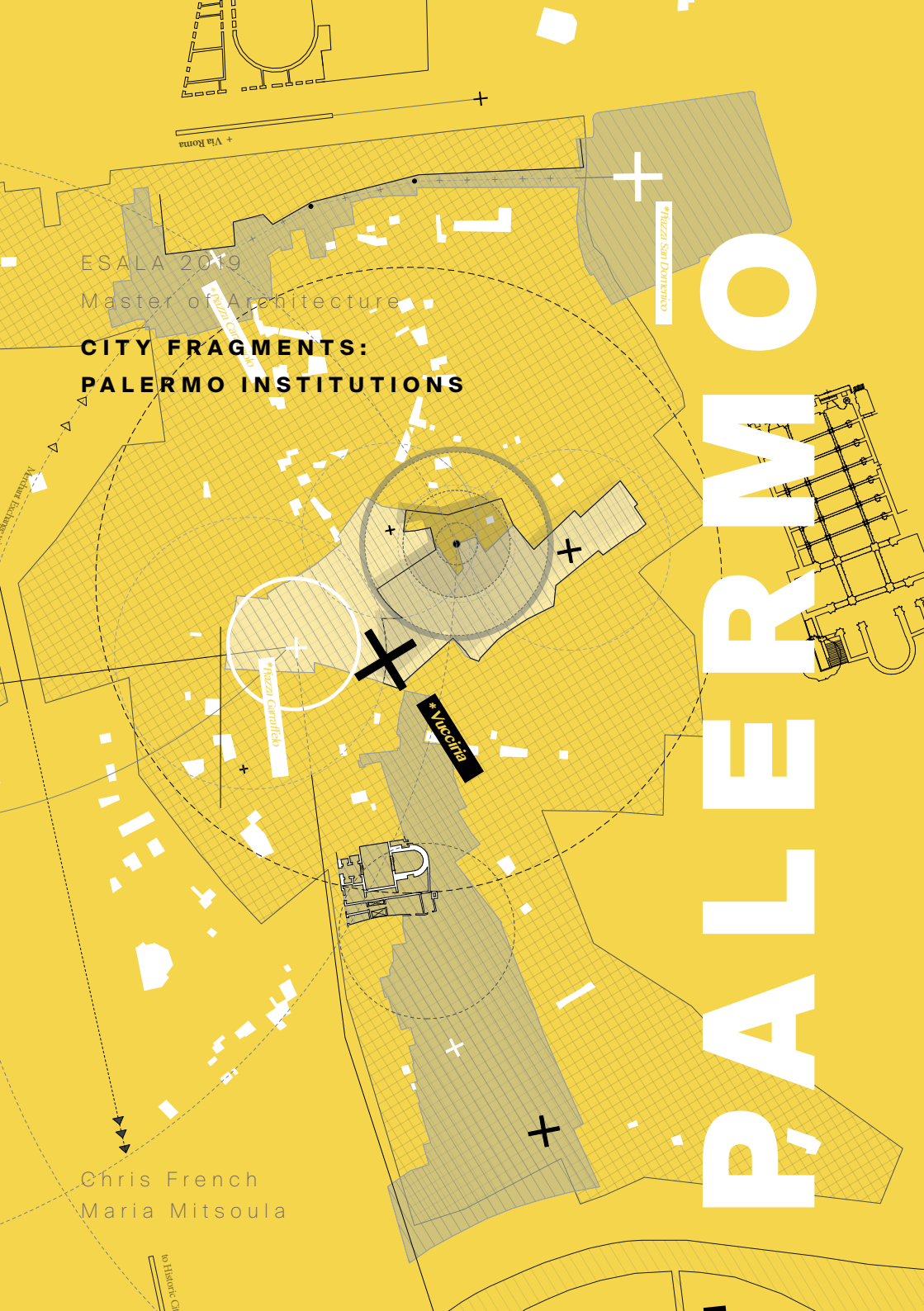
*Piazza San Domenico

*Piazza Garibaldi

*Vucciria

Chris French
Maria Mitsoula

PALERMO





Foro Italico, Kalsa.

12:04, Sunday 14th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.



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Catalogues 2018-19:

City Fragments: Palermo Institutions.

island territories vi: MANHATTAN *scapeland*

eSTRANGEMENT / disPLACEMENT.

Parasituation [Calcutta/Kolkata].

The Other Paris.

The Streamlines, Vortices, and Plumes of the Blue

Lagoon/Bath.

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City Fragments: Palermo Institutions.

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Chris French
Maria Mitsoula

PALERMO

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View to Monte Pellegrino from Via Roma 111.

20:15, Friday 19th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.





Palazzo Forcella de Seta, Kalsa.

16:32, Sunday 14th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.

CITY FRAGMENTS: PALERMO INSTITUTIONS

Palermo is a city of ancient empires. It was founded by the Phoenicians in 734BCE as *Ziz* (meaning ‘Flower’), and colonised by the Ancient Greeks, who knew it as *Panormus* (‘Sheltered Harbour’). It was conquered by the Carthaginians, the Romans and, in 831CE, by the Arab empire. Through Arabic, the Greek *Panormus* became *al-Banurmu*, and subsequently *Bal’ harm*, which we receive today as Palermo. As part of the Arab Emirate of Sicily, the landscape surrounding Palermo and *Monte Pellegrino* was transformed by planting; a sophisticated irrigation system supplemented the seasonal rivers that edged the old town, supplying citrus groves, pistachio and almond trees, and sugar cane plantations. This agricultural landscape became known as the *Conca d’Oro*, the Golden Basin. In 1072, Palermo fell to the Normans, and under King Roger I became the most-populous city in Europe. The city passed to the Holy Roman Empire, to the Angevin, and to Aragon. It was handed to the Savoy in 1713, but was in Bourbon hands by 1734. In 1860, after centuries of colonisation, General Giuseppe Garibaldi entered Palermo with the *Mille*, and the following year Sicily became part of the unified Kingdom of Italy. For over two millennia the city, its spaces and occupants have been re-shaped by the cultures, religions and regimes of these different civilisations. Temples have become basilica become churches become mosques become cathedrals.

City Fragments: Palermo Institutions focuses on two recent events in this long history: the bombing of Palermo in advance of the Allied invasion of Sicily in 1943, which left swathes of the historic city in ruins, and the destruction of the *Conca d’Oro*, caused by rapid urban expansion—now

known as the ‘Sack of Palermo’—enabled by post-war planning policy that prioritised construction on agricultural land over the restoration of damaged building stock. The studio explores the consequences of these events for the contemporary city and its landscape.

Despite the ruination of the old city (“involuntary monuments,” Giorgio Vasta notes, “to everything that hasn’t happened” in the city in the past sixty years)ⁱ and a continuing battle with criminality, Palermo is slowly re-entering global consciousness, with all of the attendant complications this brings: the Norman palaces and cathedrals in the historic centre are now recognised as a UNESCO world heritage site, bringing protection but also tourism and gentrification;ⁱⁱ in *La Loggia*, one of the four historic districts still badly affected by bomb-damage and neglect, scaffold hoardings display renders of renovated interiors, highlighting the need for regeneration but foreshadowing a real estate boom that will likely make the area unaffordable to its current occupants;ⁱⁱⁱ and in 2018, the city hosted the twelfth iteration of the nomadic art biennale *Manifesta*, curated by architects OMA. While, as Alessandro Gallicchio notes, the reception to *Manifesta 12* has been largely positive,^{iv} Franco La Cecla’s criticism that the biennale masked larger problems affecting the city seems pertinent.^v Outside the recently re-furbished *Teatro Garibaldi* in *Kalsa* (the central space of *Manifesta 12*) fresh graffiti depicting a stencilled female figure brandishing a rifle as a broom stands below the message: “Tourism is Colonialism! Go Home.”

These complex and contradictory social, political, cultural conditions are the context within which the projects documented in this catalogue operate. The studio proposes a new series of institutions charged with re-thinking the landscape of Palermo (the lost landscape of the *Conca*

i | OMA. *Manifesta 12: Palermo Atlas* (Milan: Humboldt Books, 2018), 285.

ii | Director Franco Maresco notes: “Palermo... is losing its unmistakable identity... Gone are the small shops, the artisans in the alleys and the street vendors with their *abbanniate* [cries]. Now you find the same shops that you find in Turin and in Milan...” “OMA in conversation with Franco Maresco” in OMA. *Manifesta 12: Palermo Atlas*, 267-8.

iii | That development was halted by organised crime, and that developers claimed to be responding to artist Uwe Jäntsch’s calls to restore Vucciria after evicting him, speaks to the complexity of working in Palermo. See Anello, Laura. “In Palermo, Mafia Takes Aim at Historic Vucciria Market.” *La Stampa*, 4th October, 2017.

iv | Gallicchio, Alessandro. “Palermo’s urban space in the context of Manifesta 12 (Palermo Atlas by OMA).” *Senza Cornice*, No.19 (November 2018 – February 2019). Available at: <<http://rivista.senzacornice.org/#!/articolo/124>> (Accessed 15th April 2019).

v | La Celca, Franco. “Manifesta 12, Palermo: considerazioni di un nativo e antropologo.” *Il lavoro culturale*, Vol. 18 (July 2018). Available at: <<http://www.lavoroculturale.org/manifesta-12-palermo/>> (Accessed 15th April 2019).

d'Oro, but also landscape more generally as a confluence of spatial and temporal patterns and territories) and the historical situation of the city. Collectively, these new *Palermo Institutions* operate to explore how architecture might nurture economic, social or political specificities.^{vi} They develop 'molecular mutations'—to use Félix Guattari's term—within the city, structures within which small-scale, diverse agents might work by aggregation to affect broader social practices.^{vii}

The studio responds, in part, to the provocations of *Manifesta 12*. The biennale focused on immigration (an obvious concern perhaps for a city on the edge of Europe and at the centre of various migrant 'crises', although this is not necessarily the view of Sicilians)^{viii} and the lost landscape of the *Conca d'Oro*. To frame both of these concerns, OMA developed landscape architect Gilles Clément's notion of the 'Planetary Garden' as a theme and brief.^{ix} Clément uses the phrase to describe an image of the world in which humanity is understood not as an exploiter of material but as a gardener, caring for and working with nature. For the organisers, the *Conca d'Oro* was emblematic of the historical diversity of the city, of a working with landscape. As Giuseppe Barbera writes in OMA's briefing document *Palermo Atlas*, Francesco Lojacano's painting *Veduta di Palermo* (1875), which depicts the city seen from the *Conca d'Oro*, brings together Mediterranean olive trees, Japanese loquat, citrus trees from India and China, African dates, prickly pears and agave from Central America and Persian Eucalyptus.^x It is a site of many civilisations. The destruction of the *Conca d'Oro*, therefore, framed through the notion of the 'Planetary Garden' marks a neglect that is both ecological and social; it highlights a lack of care for the productive capacities and ecological multiplicity of the landscape and a lack of concern for those who, collectively, worked that landscape.

vi "Architecture," Guattari reminds us, "has always occupied a major place in the fabrication of the territories of power" (Guattari, Félix. *Soft Subversions* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2009), 294). *City Fragments: Palermo Institutions* develops architectures that do not operate to 'power' paradigms.

vii "Changes do not have to come about from large-scale socioeconomic conditions... Molecular mutations do not always assert themselves on a large scale... [we must] aim these molecular revolutions (whose aggregative effect is discontinuous...) toward the construction of new social war machines." Guattari, *Soft Subversions*, 29-30.

viii In 2015, the mayor of Palermo Leoluca Orlando drafted the Charter of Palermo, which calls for the right to mobility to be considered a basic human right.

ix See Clément, Gilles. *"The Planetary Garden" and Other Writings*. Trans. Sandra Morris. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.

x See Giuseppe Barbera, "An Encounter with Diversity" in OMA, *Manifesta 12: Palermo Atlas*, 158-162.



What is Above is What is Below. Cooking Sections, 2018. Santa Maria dello Spasimo, Kalsa.

16:32, Sunday 14th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.

While responses to the biennale brief explored (to differing degrees) the 'planetary', the question of the 'garden' was largely unexplored.^{xi} In light of contemporary conceptions of landscape this is perhaps understandable; Clément himself notes that with increasing awareness of migratory and climatic patterns the premise that the garden is distinct from the landscape is no longer tenable.^{xii} However, in architectural terms this distinction still has significance: the garden is the space in which the vicissitudes of landscape (of—to invoke Michel Serres—an exposure to *temps*, to time and weather)^{xiii} and the security of the domestic enclosure that is at the root of the word garden are brought into relation; the garden is an interface between the world to which the body is exposed and the world within which the body is sheltered.

At the city scale, this understanding of the garden as an interface suggests a series of possible reterritorializations of the city-landscape. Where once, for instance, we might have conceived the surrounding *Madonie* mountain range as walls to garden of the *Conca d'Oro*, gathering ground water into the aquifer below and the city nestled within, now the walled city, with its ruins and abandoned piazzas, might be considered a *hortus conclusus* in a vast, constructed city-landscape that extends into the mountains. The spatial relationship between the city and the landscape has inverted. In this context, the ruins and abandoned spaces of the historic quarters of *La Loggia*, *Monte de Pietà*, *Albergheria* and *Kalsa* might be re-thought as interstitial spaces operating between buildings and landscape, as interfaces that register the conditions of a landscape (be it of planting, animal or marine life) and bring them into the domestic scale and realm.

At the architectural scale, this reterritorialization of the city-landscape necessitates a re-formulation of buildings-as-interfaces. Architecture must become, to invoke Andrea Branzi, enzymatic: it must register and incite latent conditions found within landscape.^{xiv} This architecture

xi Exceptions include Clément's *Becoming Garden*, completed with Coloco in ZEN; *What is Above is What is Below*, a new Pantellerian Garden in the *Santa Maria dello Spasimo* by Cooking Sections (Daniel Fernández Pascual and Alon Schwabel); and *Giardino*, an installation by Renato Leotta in Palazzo Butera.

xii Clément notes: "With the advent of ecology, people realized this enclosure, though essentially under our control, is an illusion. Butterflies, wind, birds, seeds, even people: everything communicates..." Clément, *"The Planetary Garden" and Other Writings*, 79-80.

xiii Serres, Michel. *The Natural Contract*, trans. Elizabeth MacArthur and William Paulson (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 27.

xiv See Branzi, Andrea. "For a Post-Environmentalism: Seven Suggestions for a New Athens Charter" in *Ecological Urbanism*, eds. Mohsen Mostafavi and Gareth Doherty (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2010), 110-113.



Portrait of Eleanor of Aragon, Francesco Laurana, 1468. Palazzo Abatellis, Kalsa.

16:32, Sunday 14th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.

might be driven by landscape; by thinking of architecture as part of the *terroir* of particular botanical and zoological agents (of papyrus, hemp, mulberry, lemons, sumac, or prickly pear, as selected projects documented in this catalogue do) we might attune architecture more carefully to the urgencies of particular landscape conditions. Alternatively, architecture might bring to the fore cultural conceptions of landscape. Santo Giunta suggests that Carlo Scarpa's work in Palermo operates in this way. The green and blue *stucco lucido* panels of the Palazzo Abatellis—the fifteenth-century palace damaged by bombing during World War II and refurbished to form the Galleria Regionale della Sicilia—Giunta suggests, echo the hills of Antonello da Messina's triptych of *Crucifixion* paintings.^{xv} The interior of the museum therefore becomes a means by which the landscape of both Sicily and a shared cultural history is registered, in all its cultural complexity (as the site of the crucifixion, as part of renaissance iconography, as idealised through particular representational conventions, and so on); it is a space in which landscape is brought into architectural consciousness.

Through this invocation of landscape through material Scarpa develops a museum-architecture that frames a particular understanding of time, and of relations in time. Describing Scarpa's work more generally, Manfredo Tafuri notes that "the sequence of materials... always has a precise aim: the work [displayed] is subtly, yet decisively, "alienated" from its context, suspended in its own specific time... This alienation... endows the works with new "auras"; individualized, they join in a silent colloquy."^{xvi} The architecture of the museum—the coloured panels, brackets, hinges, joints—separate pieces from the context within which they were produced, and allows them to communicate with one another across time and space. Scarpa's architecture, understood in this way, is frequently described as fragmentary, gathering together disparate pieces from different periods, but Tafuri offers the term 'figure' as an alternative description for Scarpa's architecture of spoils.^{xvii} The figure, Tafuri notes, "opens up a different mode of completion" to the fragment,^{xviii} one not affected by the inherent nostalgia or sense of loss attached to the idea of the fragment. The figure

xv See Giunta, C., "Scarpa in Sicily: The Memory of our Senses" in *Drawing (...) City (...) Body, Dwelling on Earth*, ed. Pedro António Janeiro (London: Taylor & Francis, 2019), 189–201.

xvi Tafuri, Manfredo. "Carlo Scarpa and Italian Architecture," in *Carlo Scarpa: The Complete Works*, eds. Francesco Dal Co and Giuseppe Mazzariol (Milan: Electa Editrice, 1984), 79.

xvii Tafuri, "Carlo Scarpa and Italian Architecture," 77.

xviii Tafuri, "Carlo Scarpa and Italian Architecture," 89.

is separated from the time of its making, and capable of engaging with the multiplicity of historical time (past and present).

City Fragments: Palermo Institutions aims to develop new fragment-figures for contemporary Palermo, a city still largely in ruins and one that, without conscious resistance, would be easily reducible to a narrative that focuses on what has been lost (palaces, landscape, wealth, etc.). Instead, by bringing together concerns for landscape and by understanding the city as a landscape, the projects documented here propose a re-figuration of the city, a figuration concerned less with the figure as conventionally understood in architectural practice (namely, the figure of figure-ground relations so readily reducible to a geometric pattern) than with the figure as a piece specific to a particular time and space. It aims to establish a landscape of new institutions made up of enzymatic, molecular figures that are—in response to both Branzi's and Guattari's terms—delicately attuned to the specifics of the situation of contemporary Palermo and capable of instigating changes within that situation.

Chris French and Maria Mitsoula



View to the *Madione* Mountains from Via Roma 111.

20:15, Friday 19th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.

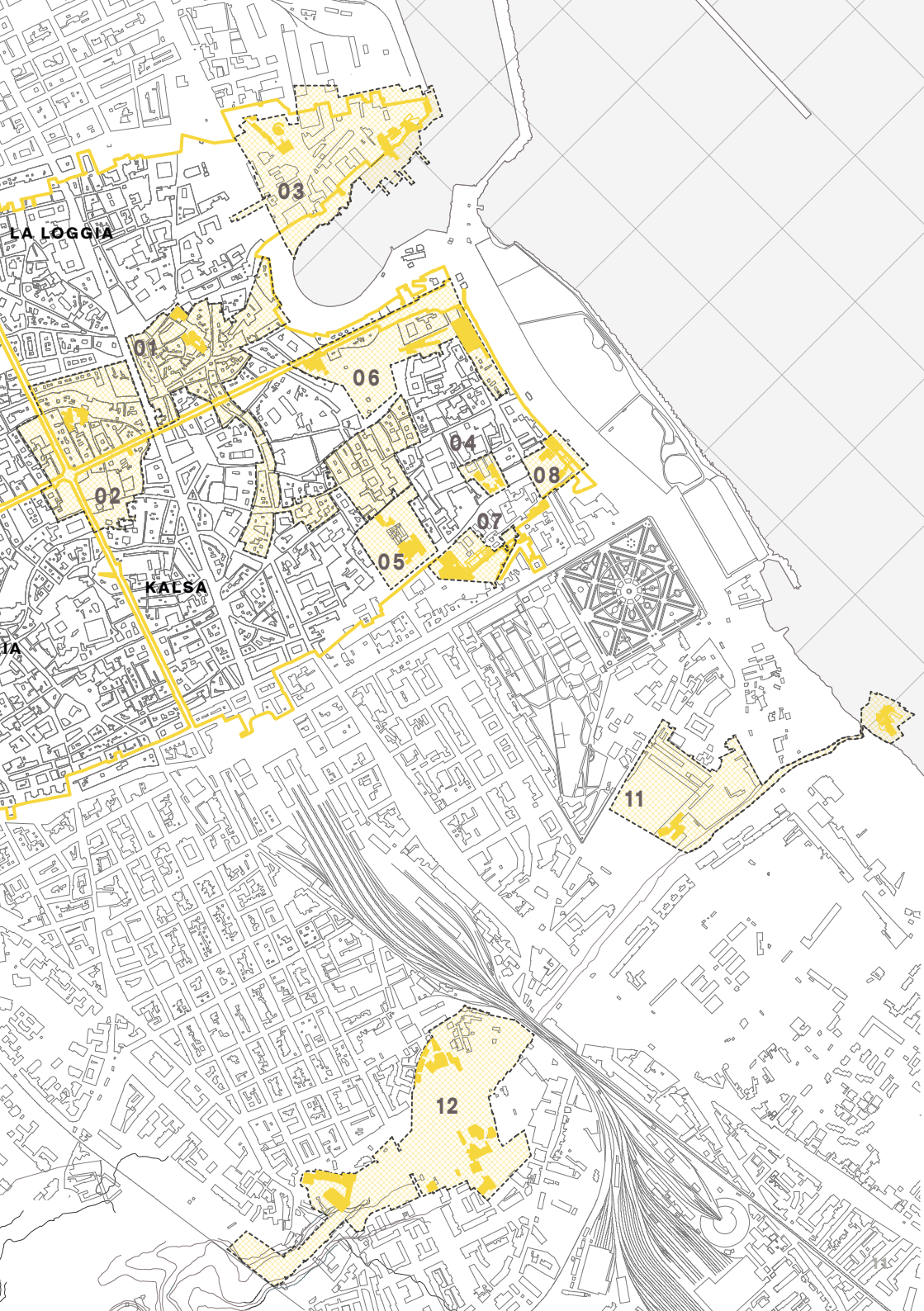


MONTE DE PIETA

ALBERGHER

(Re)Figuring Palermo

Institutions and Territories as Fragment Figures



LA LOGGIA

IA

KALSA

03

01

06

04

08

02

05

07

11

12



Piazza Garraffello, Vucciria, La Loggia.

14:38, Saturday 20th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.

L'ALLOGGIA



Site: Piazza St. Eligio, Piazzetta Appalto and Piazza Garraffello, Vucciria. La Loggia.
Programme: Broadcasting Studios; Performance Spaces.

01

PERFORMING LA VUCCIRIA

PRIVACY—PAPER, PIAZZA, PALAZZO—PUBLICITY

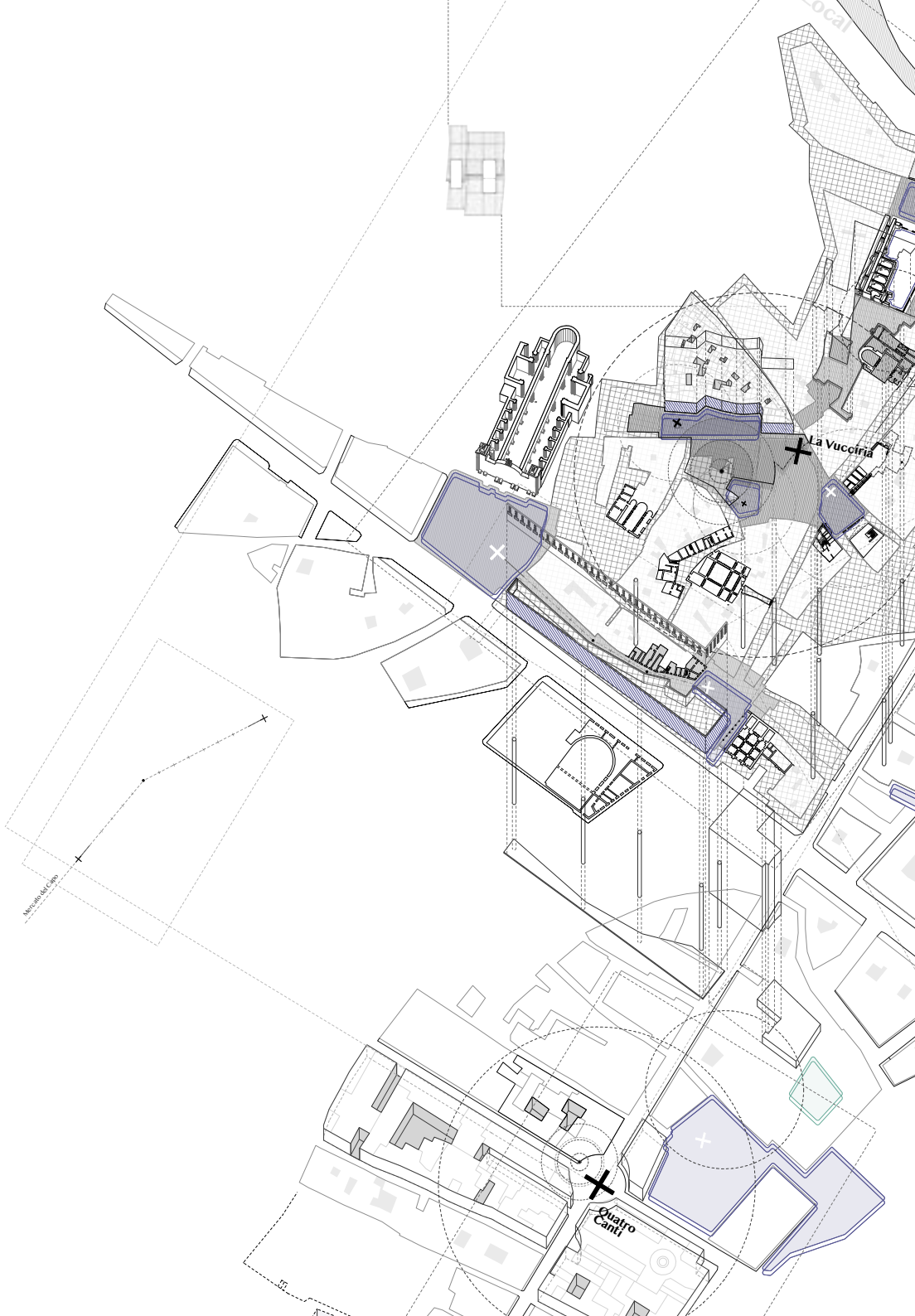
JOE COULTER | ARIANA MONIOUDIS

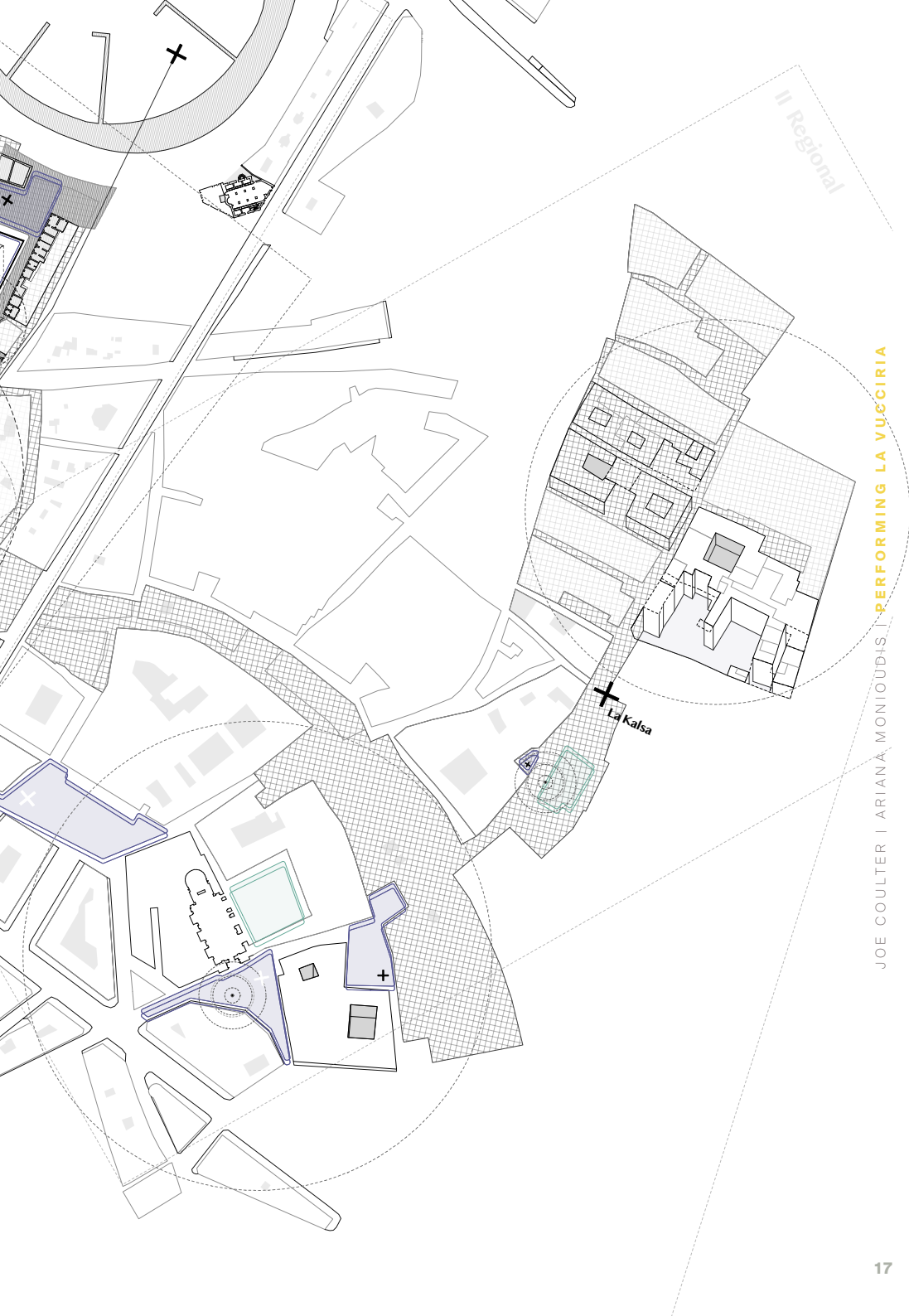
Palermo is a city of pomp, performance and pageantry. It is home to the largest Opera House in Europe, the *Teatro Massimo*, built to celebrate the unification of Italy (*Risorgimento*). At its height, during the *Belle Époque*, the urban *palazzi* of the princes of the city – adorned with material that announced the wealth of an aristocracy at odds with a population in relative poverty – hosted extravagant balls and feasts (memorably described in Lampedusa's *The Leopard*). Today, the *palazzi* are in ruins, a result of profligacy, the bombings of World War II and the abandonment of the old city. Theatres lie closed or in ruins. Despite increasing economic disparities, UNESCO funding and money deriving from the integration of the city into global real estate networks has resulted in only high-value restoration projects, spaces off-limits to many. The local response has been to reclaim the abandoned palaces; desolate buildings are being re-appropriated by agents motivated to expose the cultural fractures present in the city. These re-appropriations re-figure classical notions of publicity and privacy, *piazza* and *palazzo*, and performer and spectator, culminating in new public palaces composed of interiors where publicity is performed. The city has become a stage; a new era of affective theatricality is emerging.

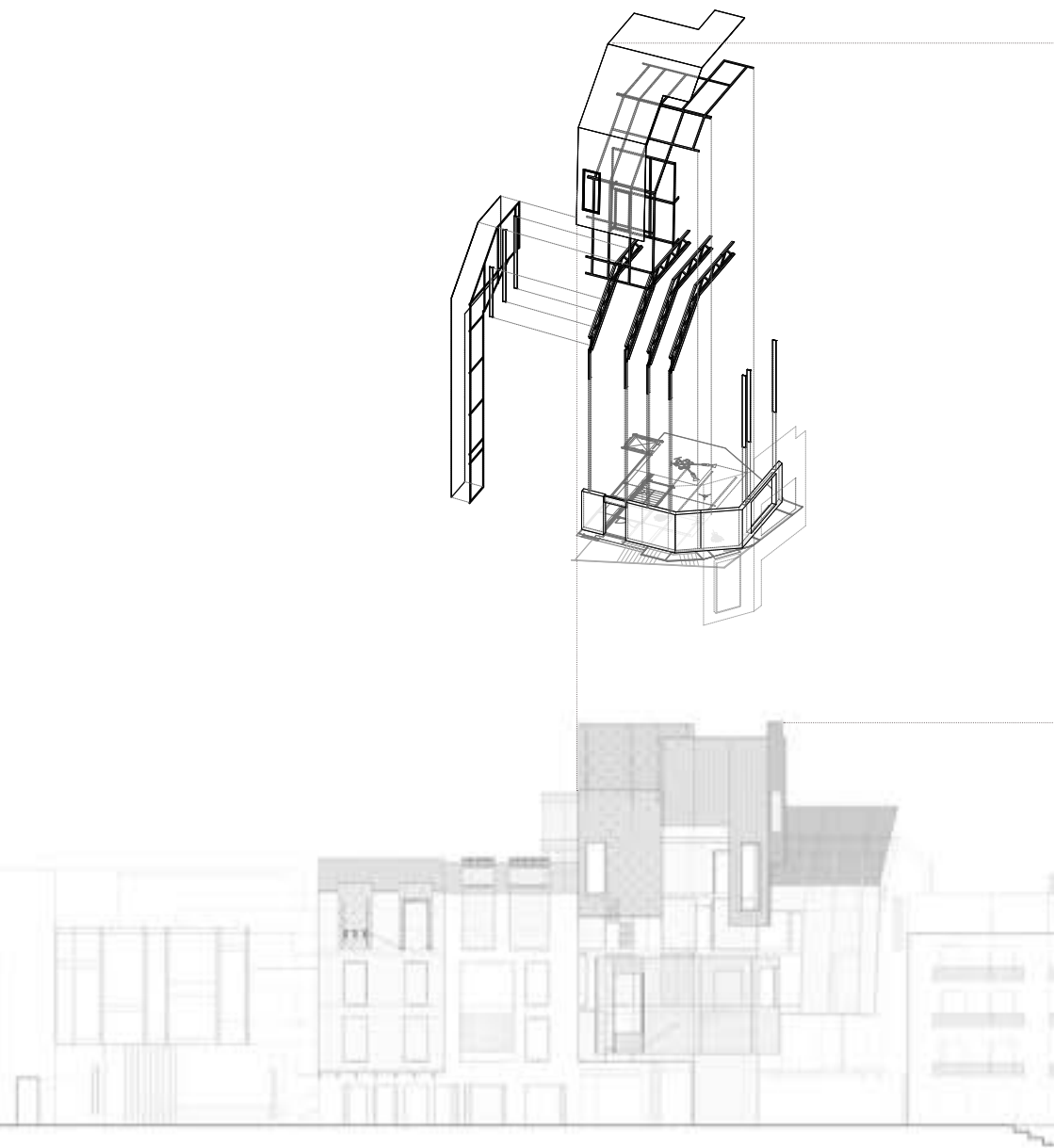
Performing La Vucciria proposes a performative tectonics of masks, curtains and veils. An Institution for Television and Radio Broadcast in the heart of *La Vucciria* provides a platform for emerging creative practices, allowing them to be recognised and heard.



11 Lost Landscape: Folding Paper/Papyrus/Palermo.
Drawing/installation exhibited in the Matthew Architecture Gallery, November 2018



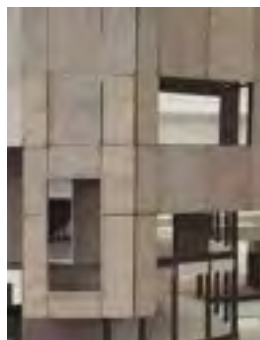
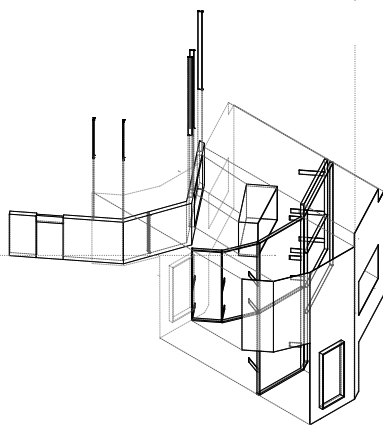
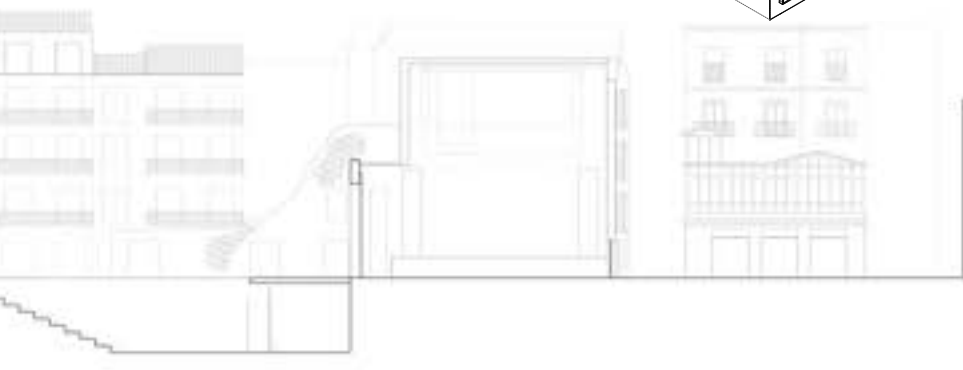


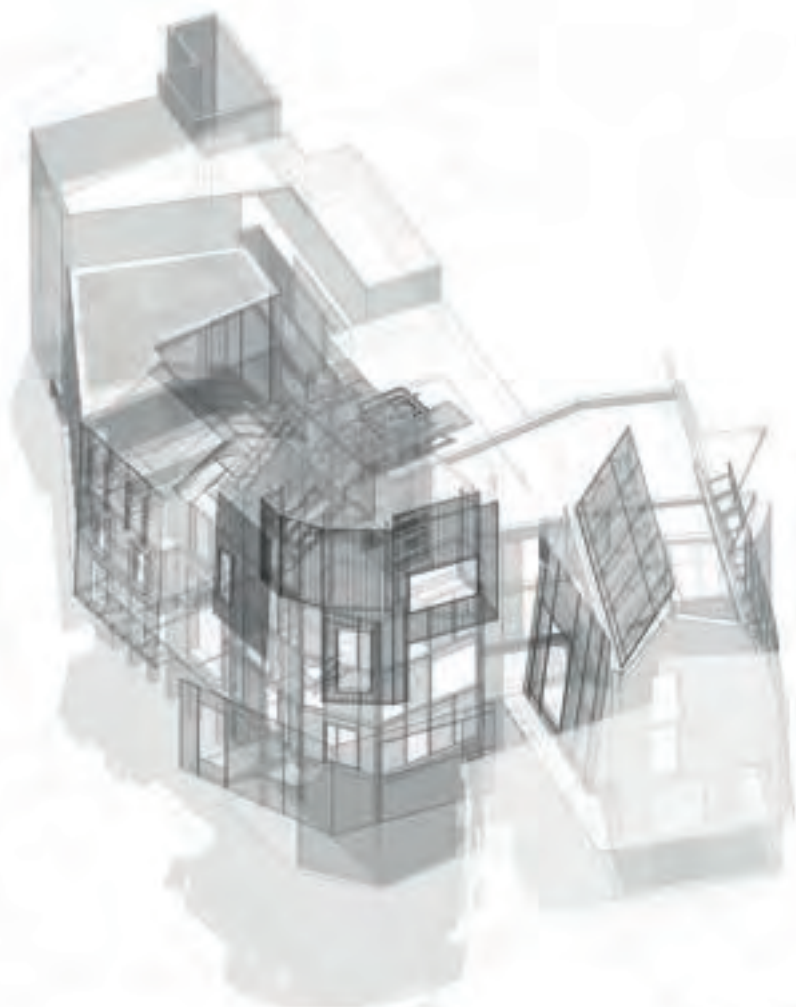


2 | (previous page) Theatrum Mundi: Institutional Territories and Field(s) of Performance

3 | Piazza S'Eligio: Street Elevation of Institution and New Public Theatre with Extruded Fragment Masks

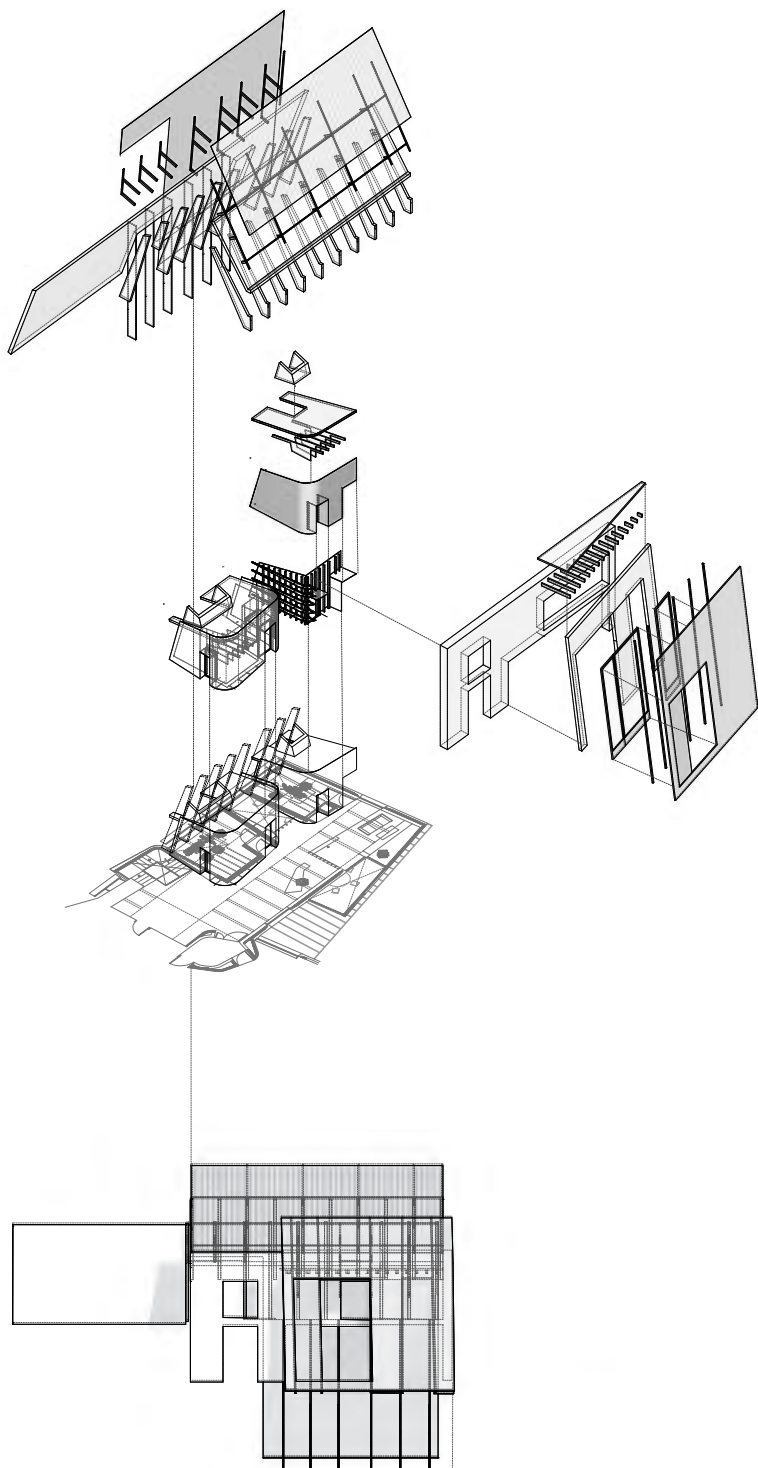
4-6 | Photos from Final 1:50 Model of Proposition



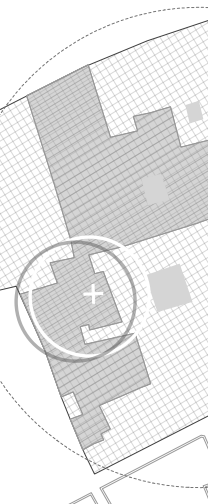
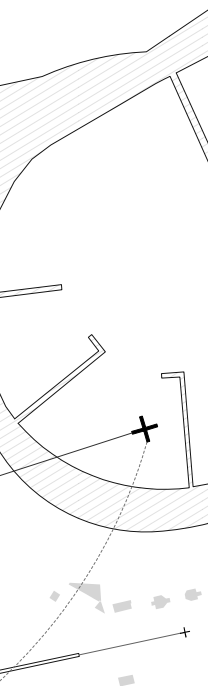


7 | Axonometric: Paper Tectonics in Vucciria's lost Papyrus Landscape

8 | Exploded Axonometric: Layered Composition of Radio Booths and Mask









Site: Piazza Parlatoio, La Loggia.
Programme: Letizia Battaglia Archive and Museum; Addiopizzo Offices.

02

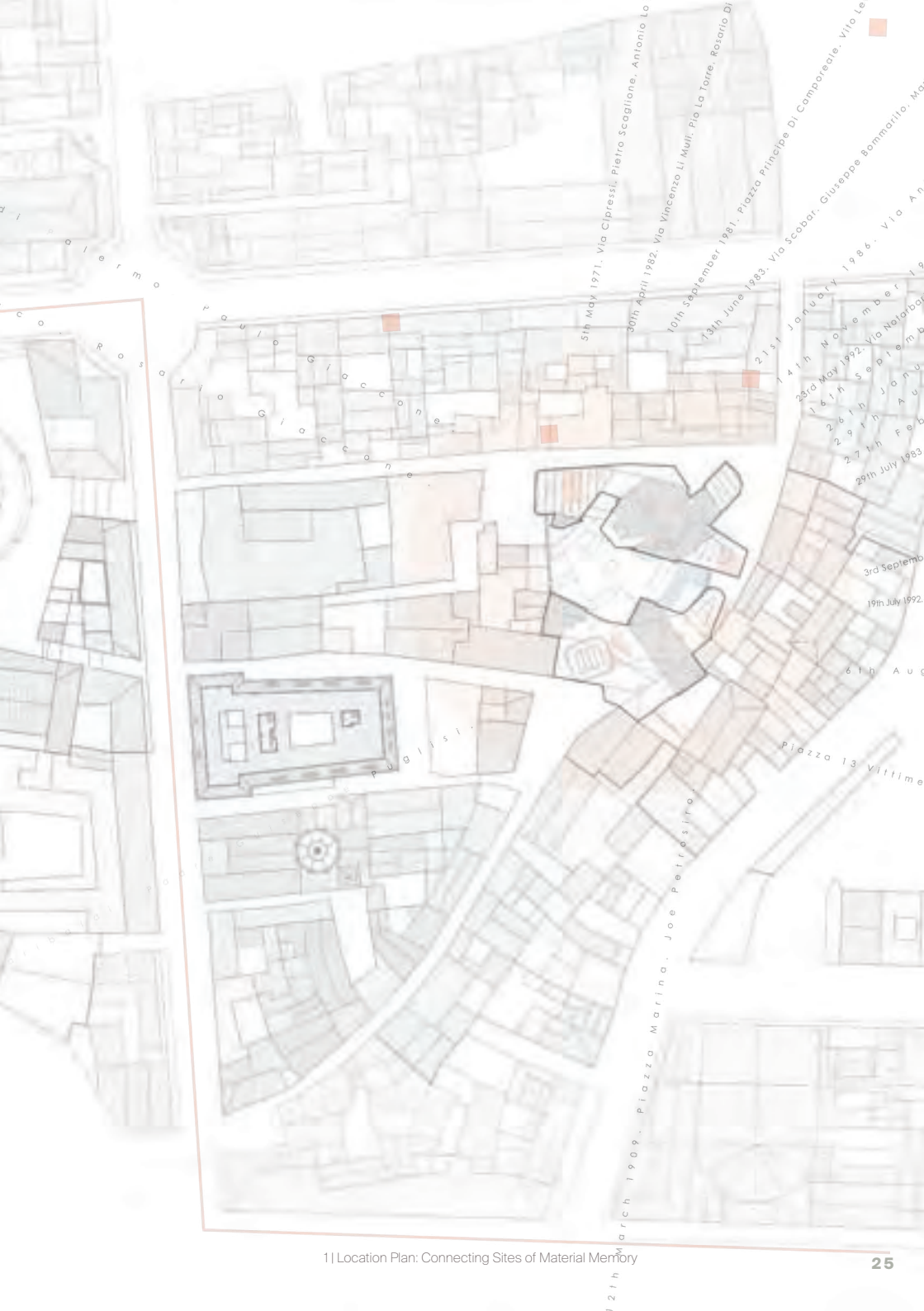
(IN)VISIBILITY AND MATERIAL MEMORY

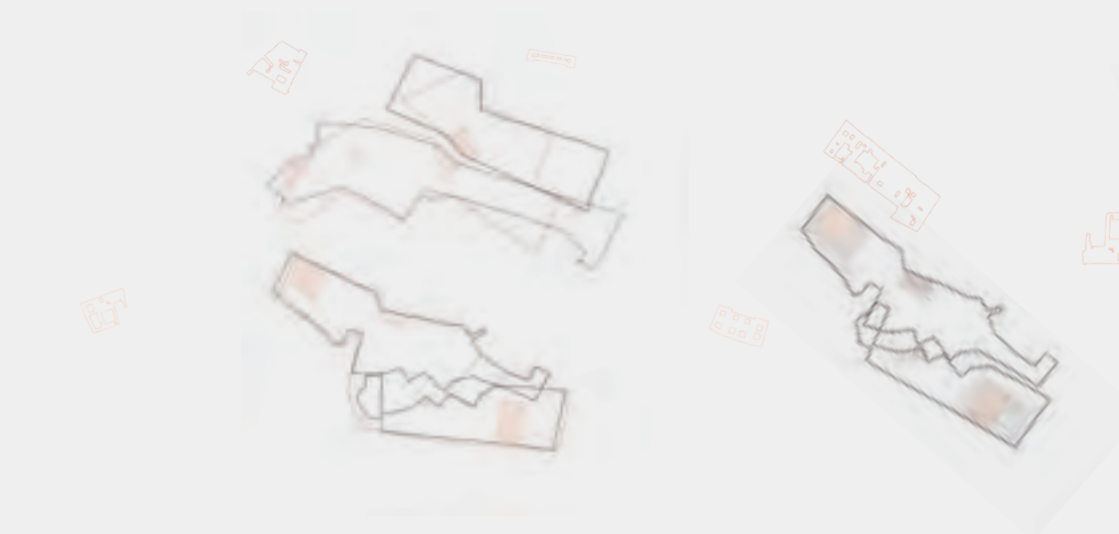
ENFOLDING *PASSEGGIATA* AND *ADDIOPIZZO*

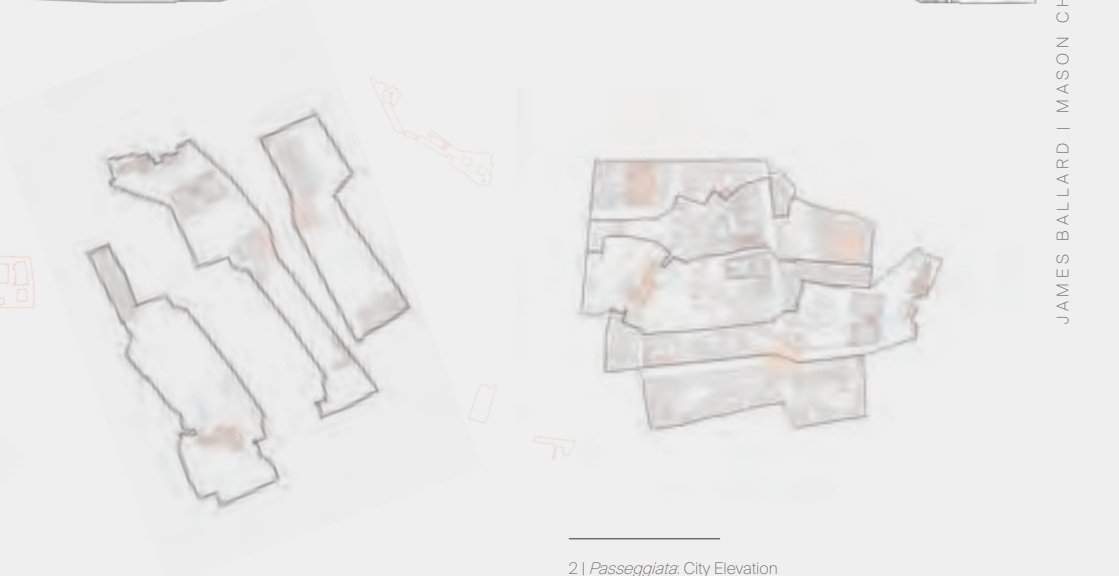
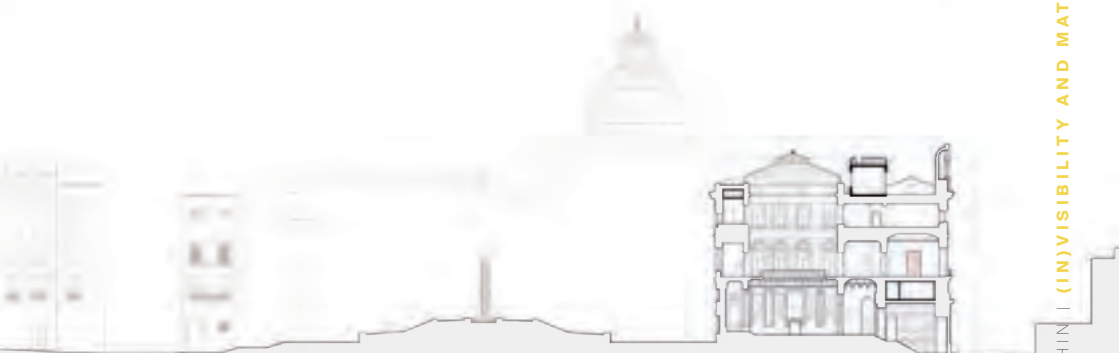
JAMES BALLARD I MASON CHIN

Between 1955 and 1975 the *Conca d'Oro*, the historical landscape of Palermo, was destroyed by rampant development facilitated by relaxed planning policy and a growing mafia influence. Many of the developments that smothered the *Conca d'Oro* were built illegally in plain sight, a visibility that reflected the apparent invisibility of the perpetrators. Palermo was run by Mafiosi operating publicly in secret. Following the assassinations of judges Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino in 1992, the public began to turn against the mafia; today there is a visible rejection of this criminality. Members of *Addiopizzo* display orange stickers in their windows, declaring their refusal to pay protection money, the *pizzo*; demonstrations and speeches, most recently by Pope Francis, have denounced the Mafiosi; seized buildings have been given to citizens as a symbolic stand against organised crime (crime boss Salvatore Riina's home has been converted into a Police headquarters, his offices transferred to *Addiopizzo*).

The sites of Falcone and Borsellino's assassinations are marked by memorials, but the more poignant tributes are the notes pinned to the magnolia tree outside Falcone's home. Many similar, everyday sites of trauma are not recognised or marked. By bringing together the performativity of the *Passeggiata* (the Sunday promenade) with the securing agency of an archive, *Presence, Visibility and Material Memory* gathers and makes visible these sites of material memory, enabling public performance and allowing the *Palermitani* to re-engage with the making of their city.







-
- 2 | *Passeggiata*: City Elevation
 - 3 | *Passeggiata*: City Section
 - 4 | Enfolding Site and City Pieces



Villa Cusenza
Via Duca della Verdura
1954



Palazzo Barresi
Via Libertà
1938



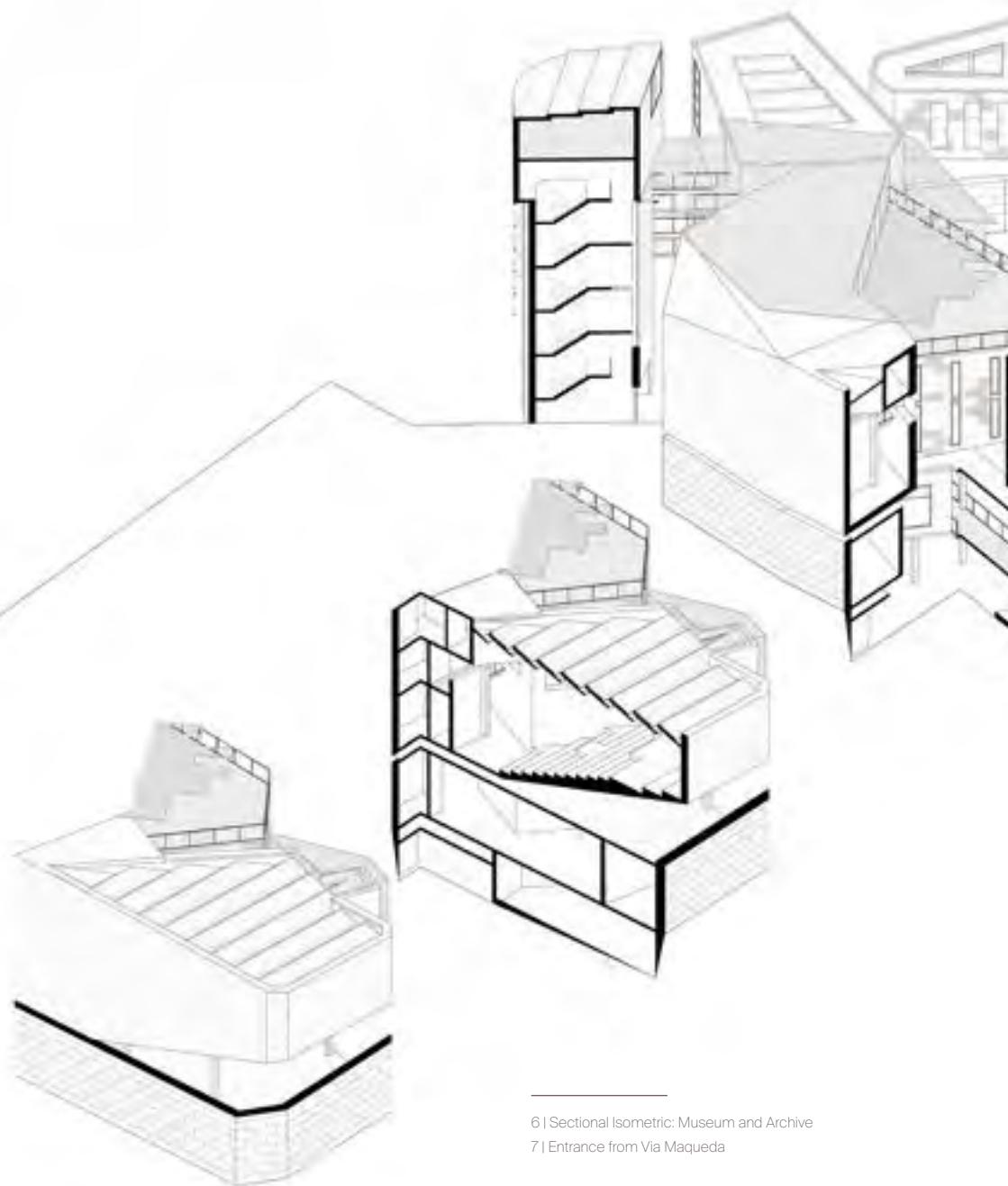


Villa Rutelli
Via Libertà
1959



Villa Deliella
Piazza Crocci
1940





6 | Sectional Isometric: Museum and Archive
7 | Entrance from Via Maqueda





8 | View of Main Circulation Overlooking Amphitheatre

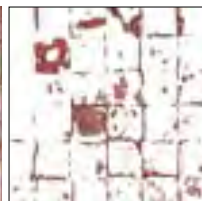
9 | View of Central Amphitheatre

10 | Model of the Institution of Material Memory



Site: Castello a Mare, Via Filippo Pati. La Loggia.
Programme: Boat Maintenance Workshops; Theatre; Ticket Office; Museum.

03



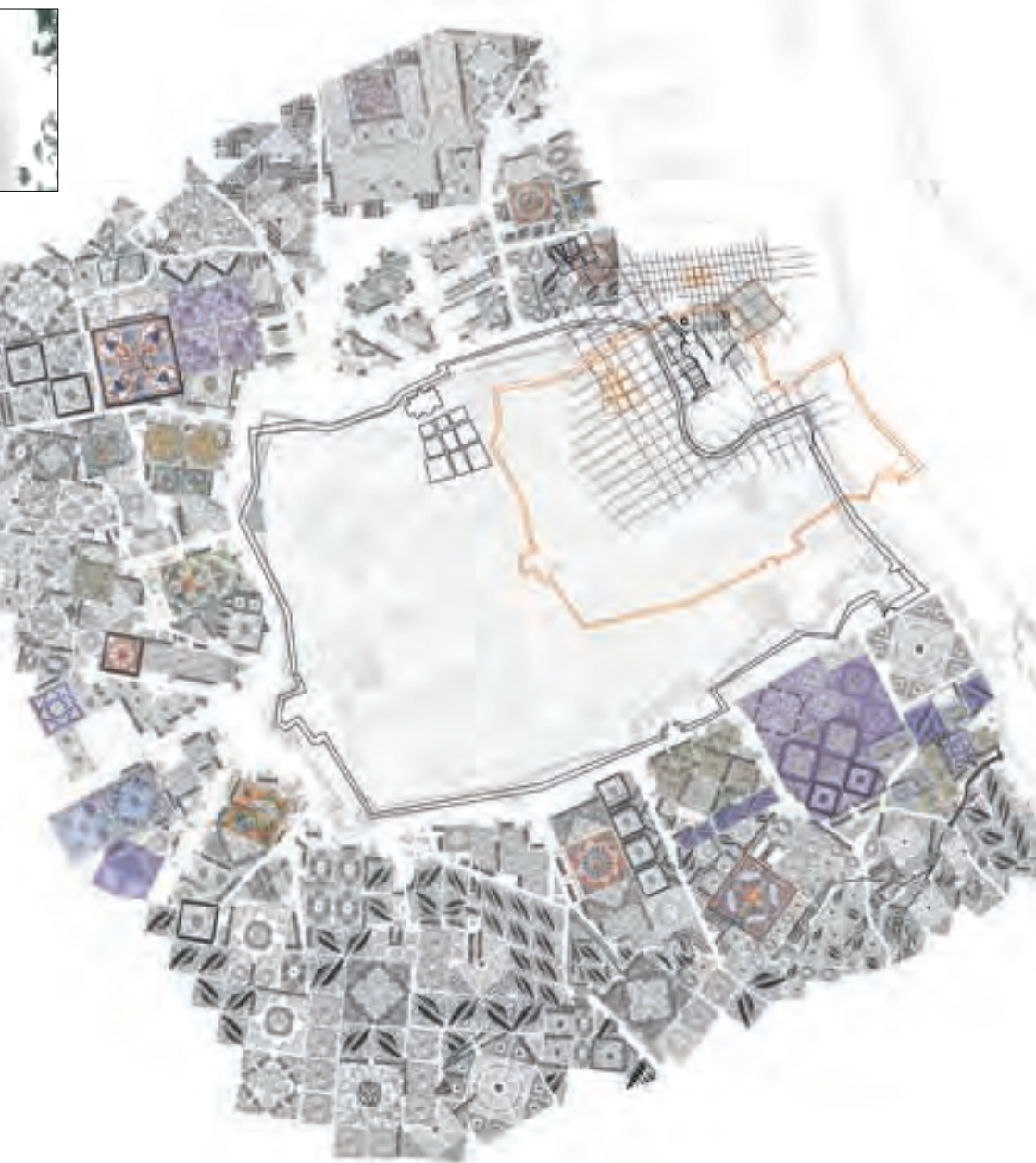
TRACING INCIDENTALITIES AND IDEALITIES

CULTIVATING A CITY IN *CASTELLO A MARE*

YUNZHOU FAN | RONALD NG

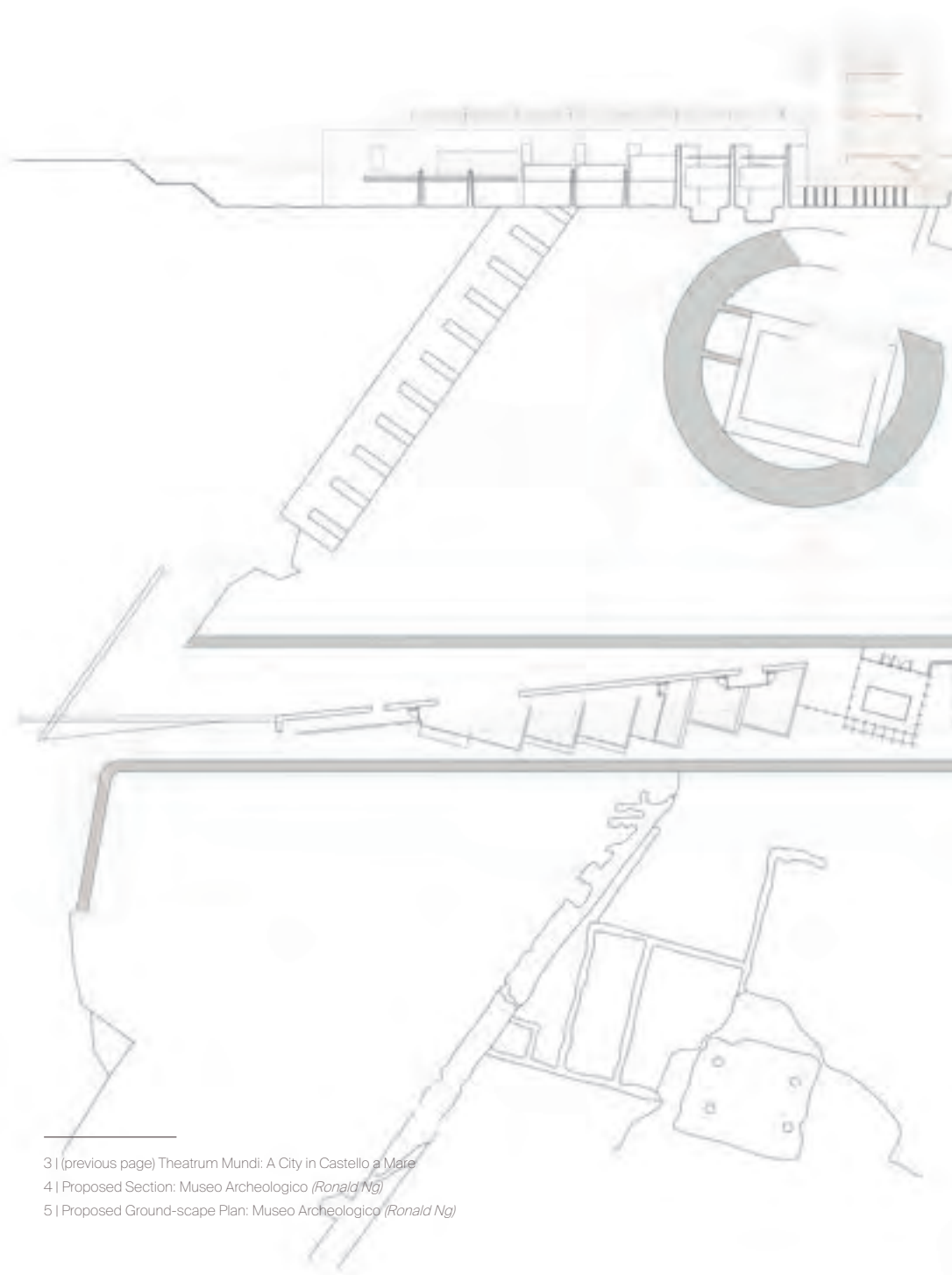
Palermo is an enduring city. Over the course of two thousand years it has developed its own orders and irregularities, compound patterns of *ad hoc* occupation and formal planning. This is most evident in *La Loggia*, one of the city's historic districts, which was shaped by the (lost) river *Papireto*. The Phoenician city wall followed the river banks, and the dense morphology of the area is a lasting trace of both the presence of the wall and the incidentality of the river landscape that shaped it. In contrast, Via Roma – a 19th Century linear incision through *La Loggia* – is a project of ideology and rationality that both opened up and re-faced *La Loggia*.

The clashing morphologies arising from these two conditions embody different understandings of pattern: one of time (dwelling in landscape), the other of geometry (order over landscape). Working in Palermo means working between these two patterns, extremes of incidentality and ideality. *Tracing Incidentalities and Idealities* develops from the colours and patterns of Sicilian tiles (and the landscapes they both describe and idealise) and the relics of the ancient city walls and *Castello a Mare*. The tiles, which adorn dwellings and palaces, are deployed as markers of the landscapes they represent, investing sites with the possibility to cultivate growth. Archaeological fragments are developed into architectures that work with the patterns of this new tiled landscape, and the overlapping histories of the city and site, creating a miniature of the city inside *Castello a Mare*. This new city-in-a-city reconciles the interface between the harbour and the city.









3 | (previous page) Theatrum Mundi: A City in Castello a Mare

4 | Proposed Section: Museo Archeologico (*Ronald Ng*)

5 | Proposed Ground-scape Plan: Museo Archeologico (*Ronald Ng*)





8 | Sectional Model: Boat Workshops (*Yunzhou Fan*)

9 | Exhibition: Studio 5, Minto House, May 2019



YUNZHOU FAN | RONALD NG | **TRACING INCIDENTALITIES AND IDEALITIES**



Palazzo Forcella de Seta, Foro Italico Umberto I, Kalsa.

14:07, Sunday 14th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.



KALSA

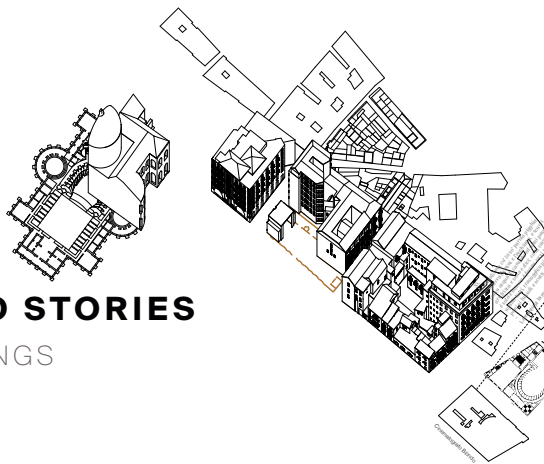
Site: Via Santa Teresa, Via Spadaro and Vicolo Tramonte. Kalsa.
Programme: Library; Rehearsal Spaces; Print Workshops; Recording Studios.

04

RE-SCRIPTING PALERMO STORIES

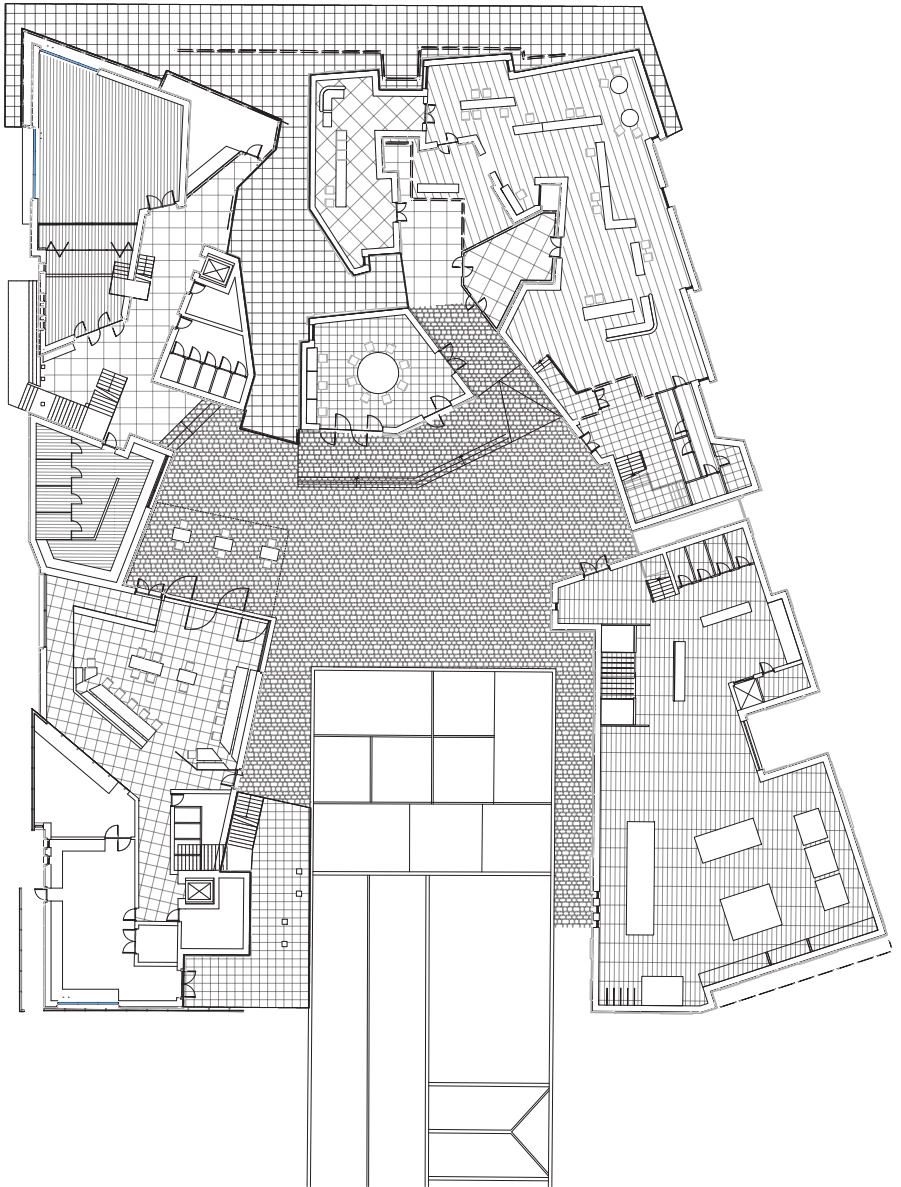
PLOTS, SHOTS, LINES AND LININGS

SOPHIA BHARMAL | ILIA STRINGARI



The *Quattro Canti* at the heart of Palermo is the intersection of the ancient street *Càssaru* and *Via Maqueda*. Around this intersection, four façades front the four districts of Palermo. These façades are arranged in four horizontal bands (*ordini*): four fountains at ground level reflect the four ancient rivers of Palermo (Papireto, Kemonia, Oreto and Pannaria); four statues above allude to the four seasons (depicted by Ceres, Venus, Bacchus and Aeolus); the four Aragonese sovereigns stand on four balconies; the four Patron Saints of Palermo (Cristina, Ninfa, Agata and Oliva) occupy four niches at attic level. This space folds together the landscape (its rivers and seasons), the city (its streets and rulers), architecture (its classical orders) and myth.

Quattro Canti was one of the first examples of Baroque town planning, (completed in 1620). It foregrounded a morphological formality that reached its apotheosis with the districts of *Liberta* and *Politeama* in the late 19th Century. *Re-Scripting Palermo Stories* sets out an alternative approach to organising space, one built on the structures of film, literature and poetry (particularly the *cantastorie* of radical Sicilian poet Ignazio Buttita). Narrative, sequence, and frame replace order and geometry as governing strategies. The four *Canti* (meaning ‘corners’ but also ‘districts’ and ‘songs’) are inverted to form a forum for performances; a library, rehearsal spaces, print workshops and recording studios surround public spaces of debate. The classical order and materiality of the *Quattro Canti* is challenged; stone is detached from ground, allowing an appropriation of city space.

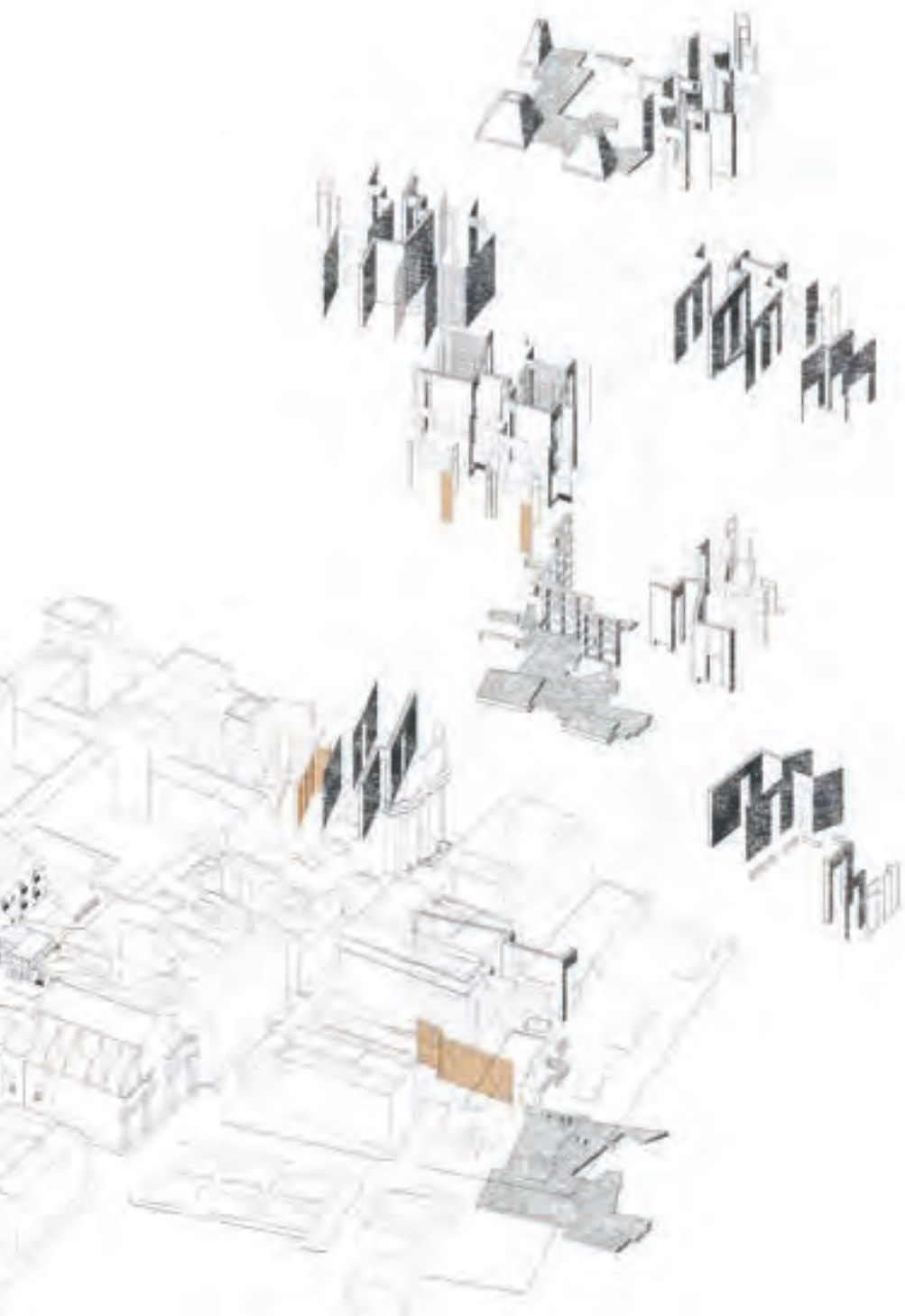




2 | Proposed Ground Floor Plan

3 - 4 | Proposed Sections









5 | (previous page) Palermo Hub: Isometric of Architectural Fragments

6-8 | Studies of Workshop and Library Spaces

9 | Study Model: Palermo Hub (Library)





Site: Piazza Sant'Euno. Kalsa.
Programme: Palermo Institute of Forestry; Terracotta Museum, Tile Workshops.

05

CURATING OBJECTS AND TERRITORIES

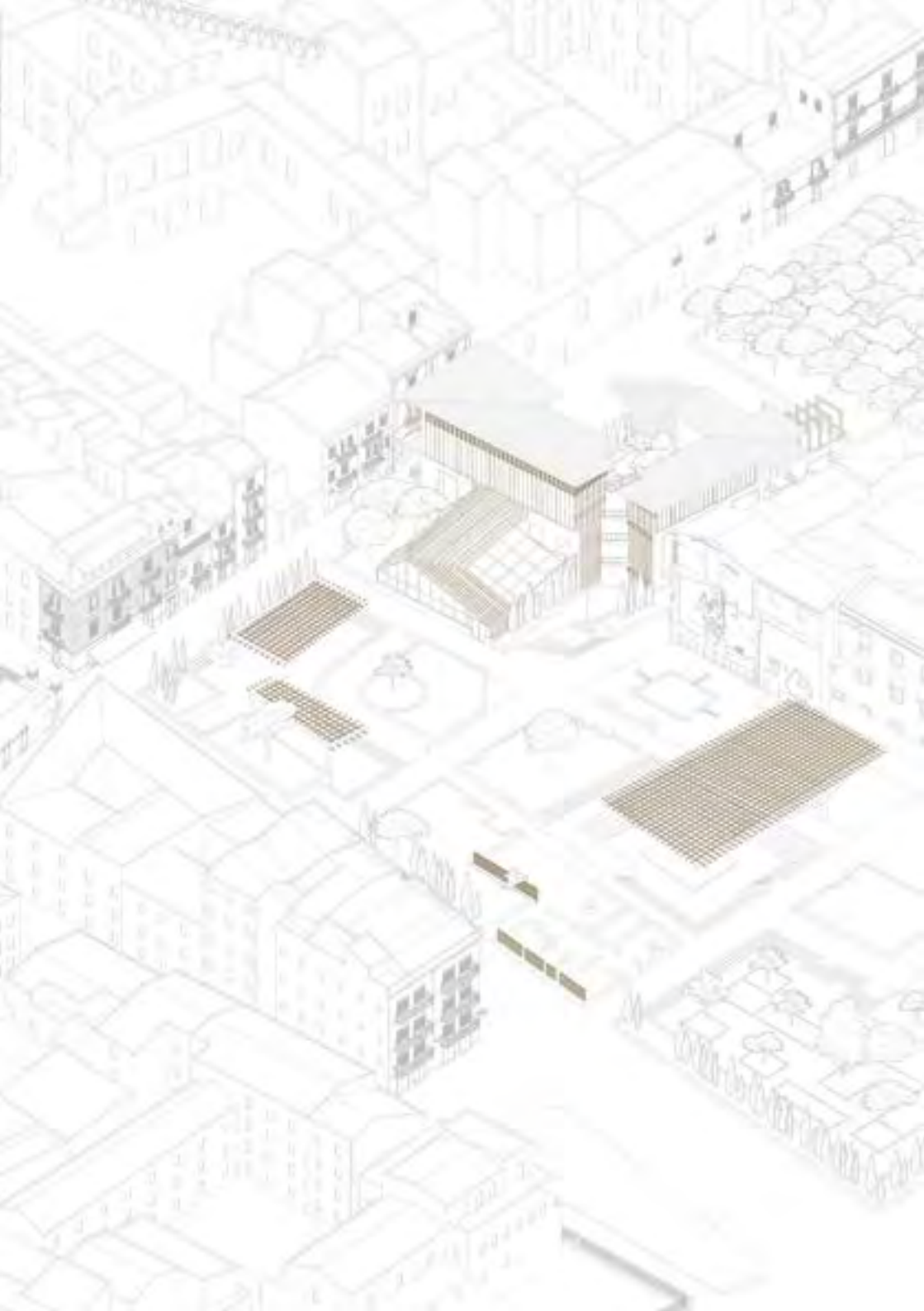
GROUND-WOOD-CLAY WORKS

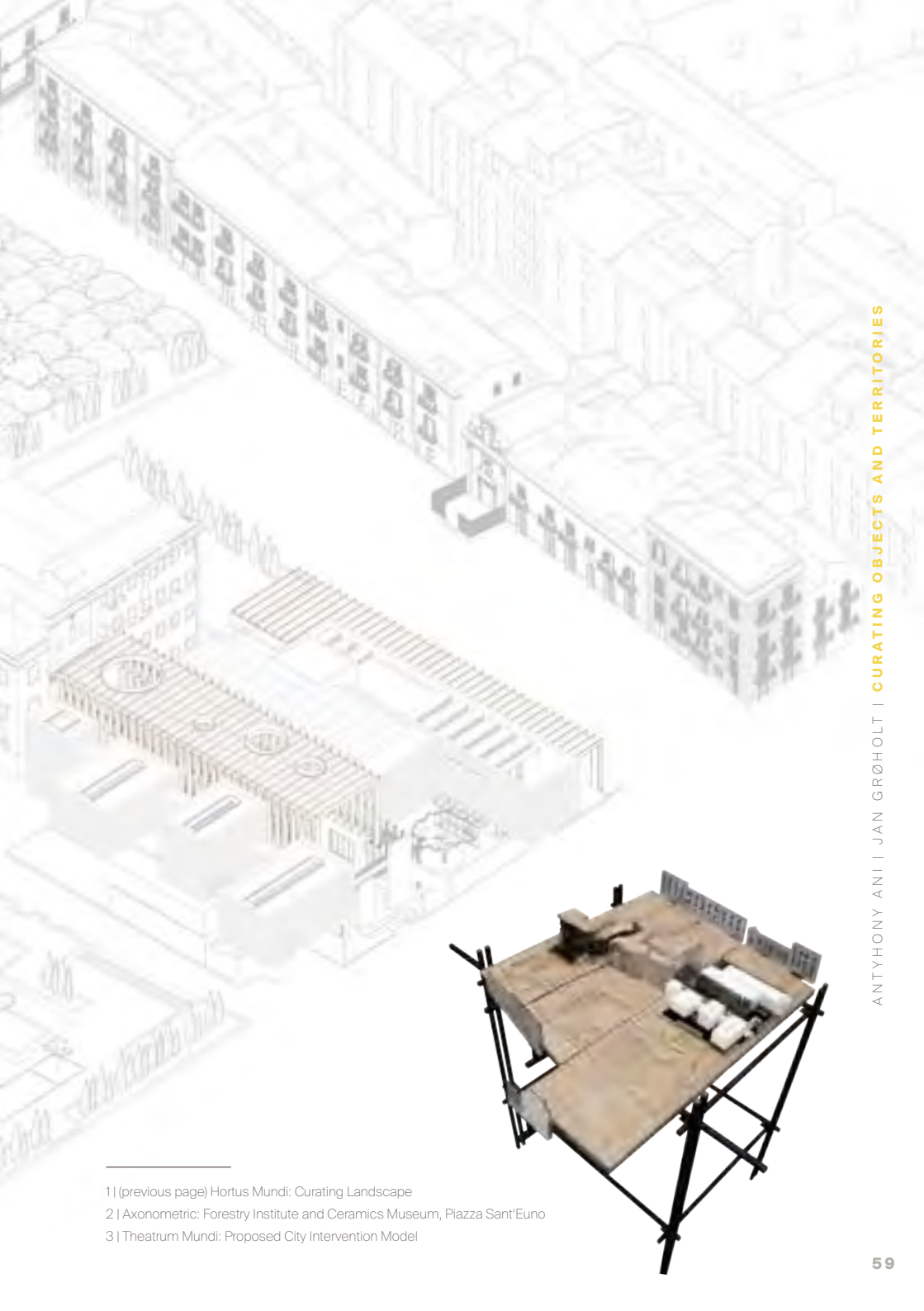
ANTHONY ANI I JAN GRØHOLT

Palermo is a city of abandoned spaces. Despite recent investment from the local government, the old city is still a combination of unattended ruins, abandoned *palazzi* (although the classification of some of these spaces as 'abandoned' is problematic), and incomplete restoration projects. *Curating Objects and Territories* intervenes in these abandoned sites to create productive spaces charged with both managing abandonment and generating the material and economic support, craft skills and labour force required to engage with the on-going maintenance of Palermo. Through a headquarters for a new Forestry Institute, and a Terracotta Museum (housing the collection of Sicilian sculptures catalogued by Maria Lucia Ferruzza held by the Getty Foundation) and tile workshop, it aims to curate (in the short and long term) the city and its landscape.

This curatorial agenda operates at the scale of city, the site, the building and the objects contained within the buildings. At the city and landscape scale, *Curating Objects and Territories* sets out planting and harvesting schedules for trees and sites for processing clay, identifying sites in which material can either be produced, prepared, ordered or exhibited. It re-forms abandoned plots as public parks, piazzas, forests and institutions of timber and clay production. At the site scale it curates relations between new interventions and existing territories, their histories and significant architectures (building-scale objects). At the building scale it curates artworks in wood and clay, presenting objects from Palermo past and present.







1 | (previous page) Hortus Mundi: Curating Landscape

2 | Axonometric: Forestry Institute and Ceramics Museum, Piazza Sant'Euno

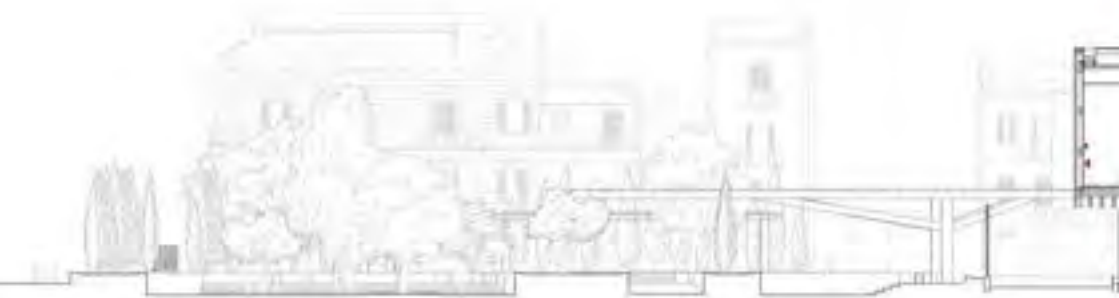
3 | Theatrum Mundi: Proposed City Intervention Model



4-6 | Spaces of the Forestry Institute (Anthony Anj)

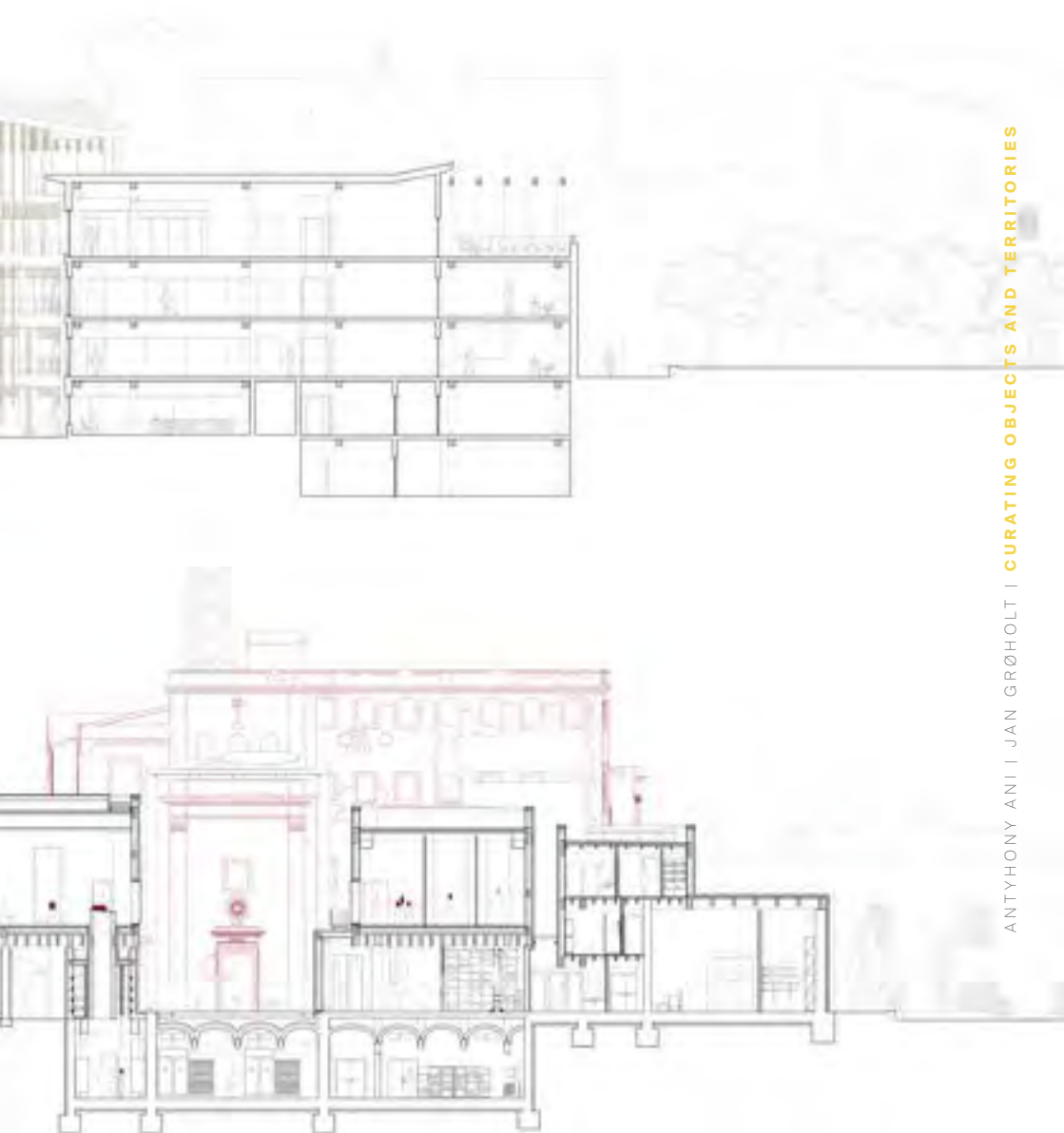
7 | Site Section: Forestry Institute (Anthony Anj)

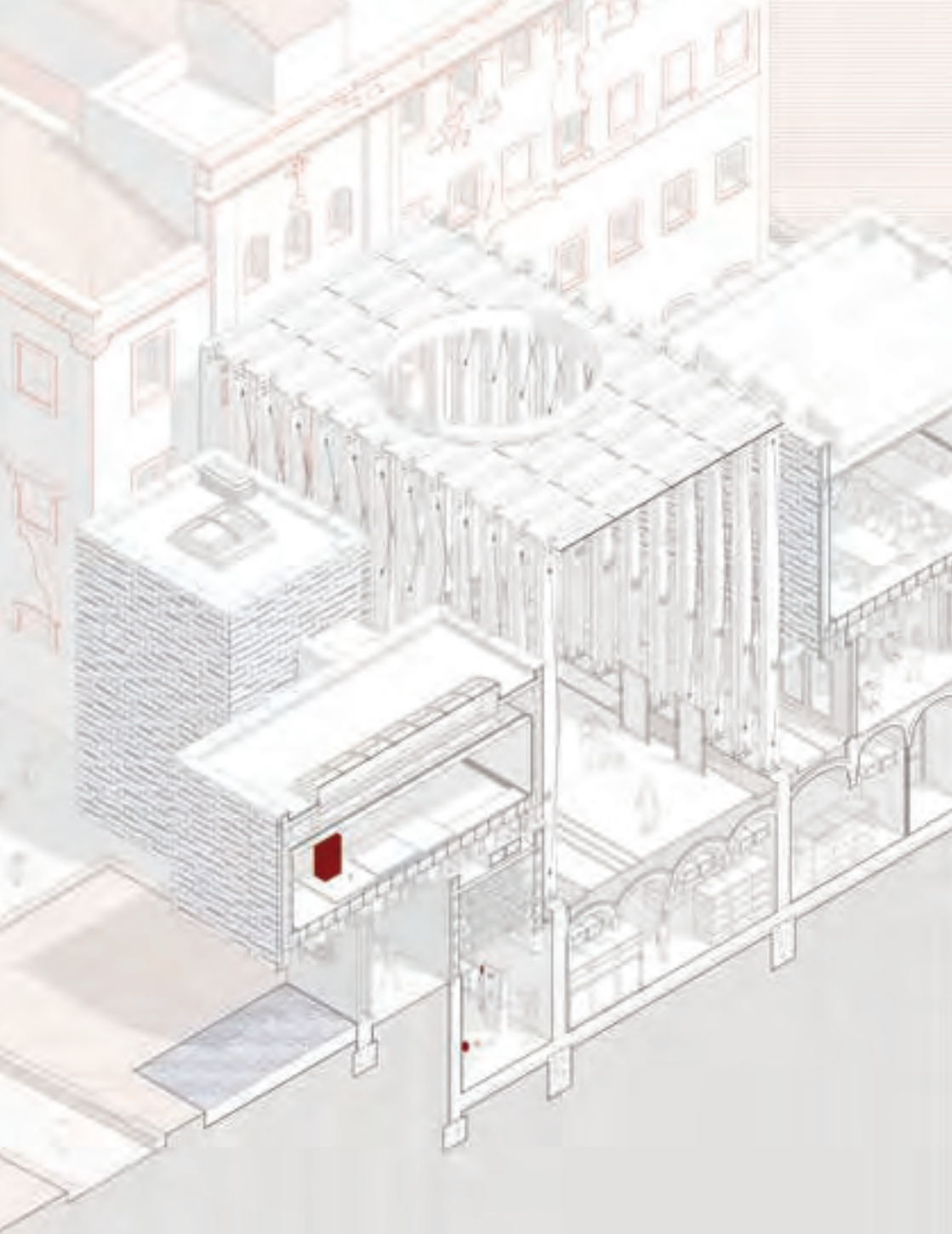




8 | Site Section: Forestry Institute (*Anthony Ani*)

9 | Site Section: Ceramics Museum (*Jan Grøholt*)







10 | Sectional Isometric: Ceramics Museum (*Jan Grøholt*)

11-13 | Spaces of the Ceramics Museum (*Jan Grøholt*)

Site: Piazza Marina, Piazza Antonio Pasqualino & Palazzo Butera. Kalsa.
Programme: Printing School; Seminary; Ceramics School; Puppet Makers & Theatre.

06

CRAFTING KALSA

IDIOSYNCRATIC MAKERS AND MAKINGS

AZMINA GULAMHUSEIN | ANNA MCEWAN | BEN TSENG

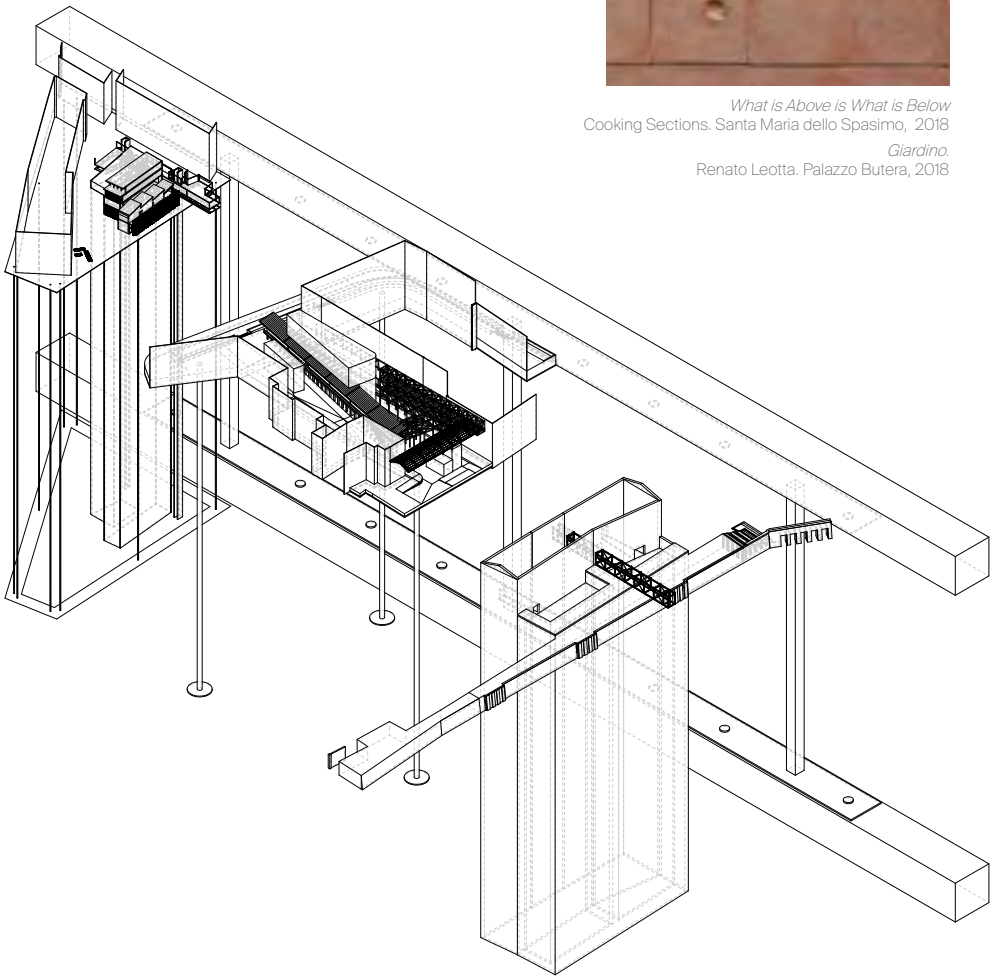
Via Vittorio Emanuele II (still known as *Càssaru* to Sicilians) is the oldest street in Palermo. It is perfectly straight, and runs for 1.8 km from the *Porta Felice* at the coast, through the *Quattro Canti* to the *Porta Nuova*. This street is the axis from which the city of Palermo has grown, the site of processions, institutions and embassies. Until the introduction of Via Maqueda in 1599, which formed a crossroads at *Quattro Canti*, *Càssaru* also provided access to the narrow, blind alleys (*vicoli ciechi*) which terminated into the city walls, homes to artisans, traders, monks and beggars. This street brought together all crafts, trades and peoples.

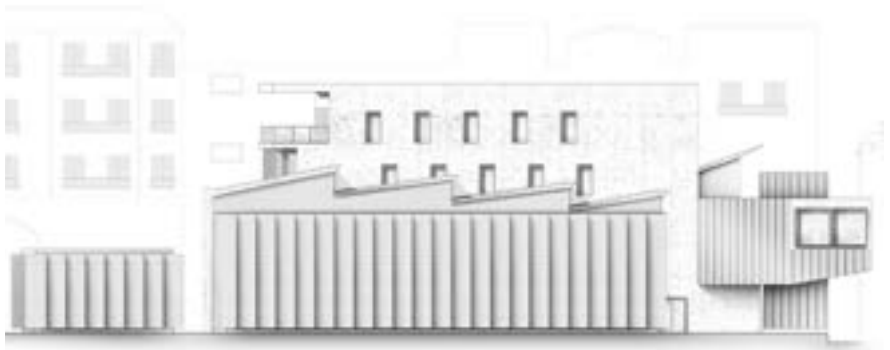
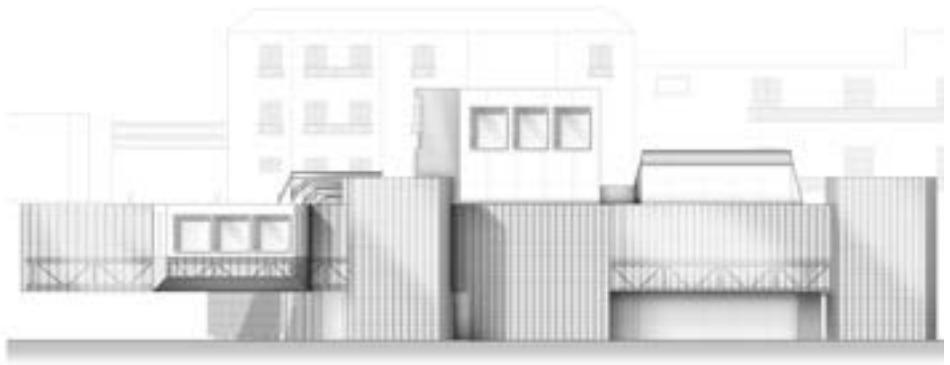
With the expansion of the Baroque city, the removal and overcoming of the city walls, and the abandonment of the historic centre, the status of *Càssaru* as the major social axis in the city waned. Simultaneously, those crafts (the making of majolica tiles, puppets of cypress wood, prints and lace) once esteemed in Palermo fell out of use. By providing sites for these idiosyncratic making practices to re-emerge and re-inhabit sites in Kalsa, *Crafting Kalsa* provides spaces for each craft to develop (and to drive particular architectures). In dialogue with the city, *Crafting Kalsa* puts forward a new urban corridor, a drifting piece of *Càssaru* sheared from its ancient axis, which organises the interventions in Kalsa. A Printing School links Piazza Marina, *Càssaru* and the harbour, a Ceramics School operates from the Widow's Walk at Palazzo Butera, and an *Opera dei Pupi* (Puppet Theatre) and Seminary reactivate Piazza Antonio Pasqualino.



What is Above is What is Below
Cooking Sections. Santa Maria dello Spasimo, 2018

Giardino.
Renato Leotta. Palazzo Butera, 2018

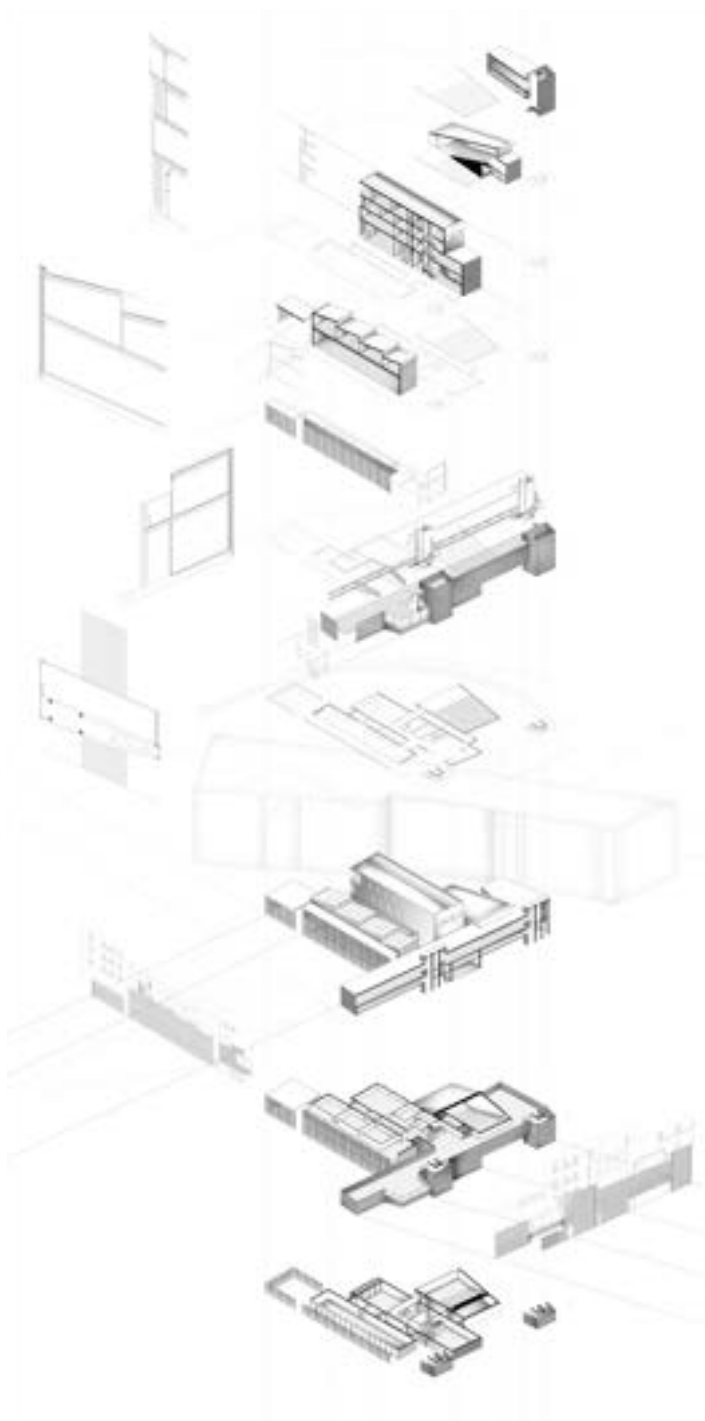


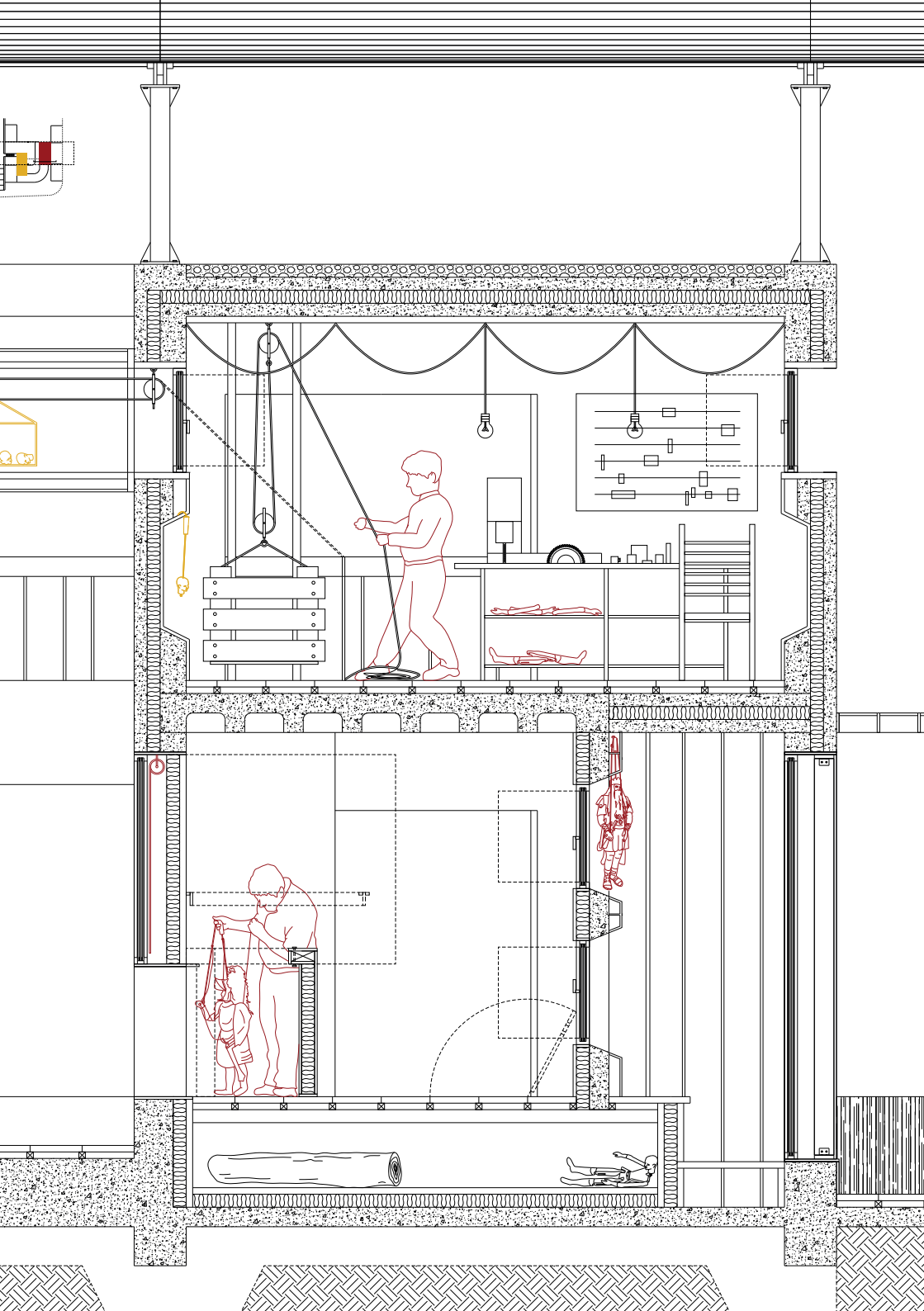


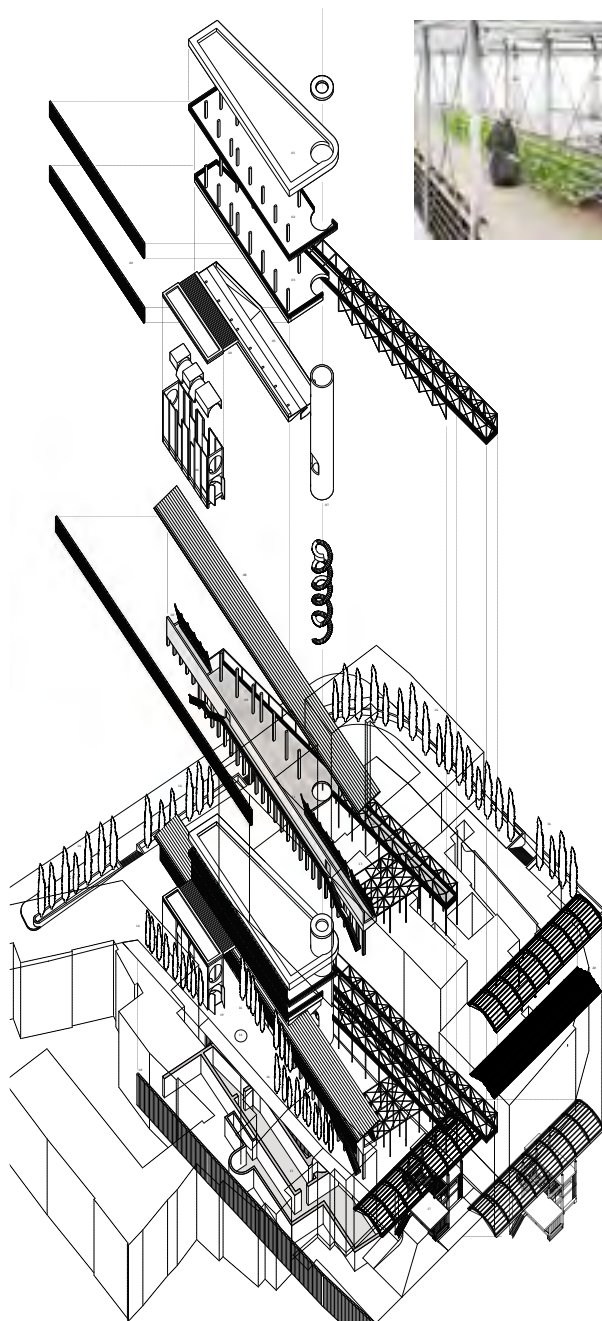
2 | Printing School: Beam Elevation (*Azmina Gulamhusein*)

3 | Printing School: Short Elevation (*Azmina Gulamhusein*)

4 | Printing School: Exploded Isometric (*Azmina Gulamhusein*)

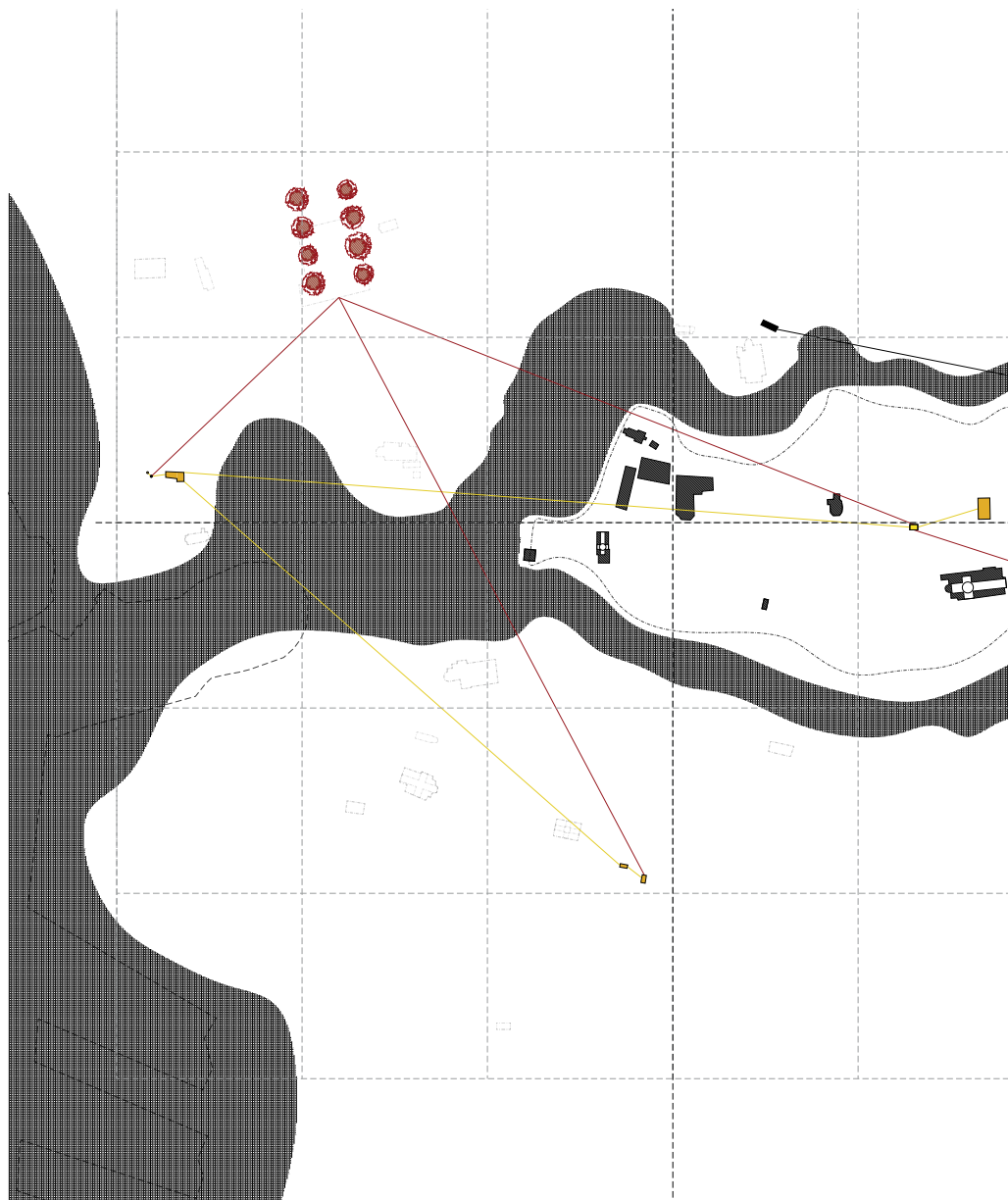






5 | Section of Puppet Workshop (*Ben Tseng*)

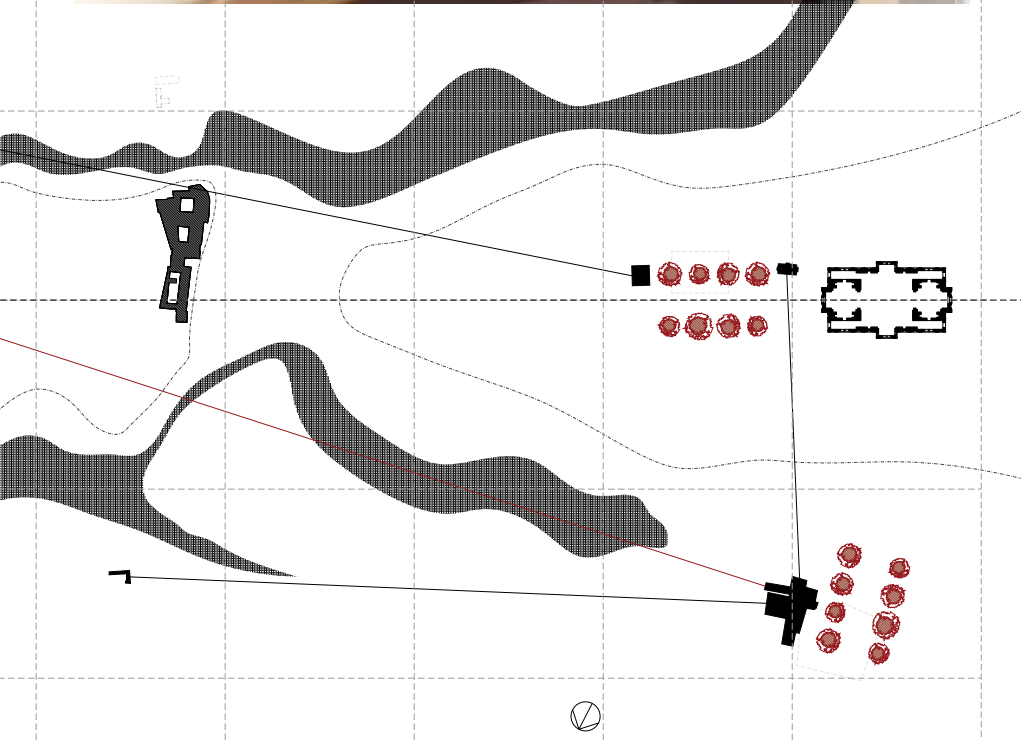
6 | Exploded Axonometric of Proposal (*Ben Tseng*)



7 | Hortus Mundi: Re-animating Cypress Groves and Cemeteries (*Ben Tseng*)

8 | View of the Capuchin Corridor, Library (*Ben Tseng*)

9-10 | Museo Internazionale delle Marionette Antonio Pasqualino (*Maria Mitsoula*)



Site: Santa Maria dello Spasimo, Via dello Spasimo. Kalsa.
Programme: Public Workshops; Library; Surveyors and Archaeologists Offices.

07

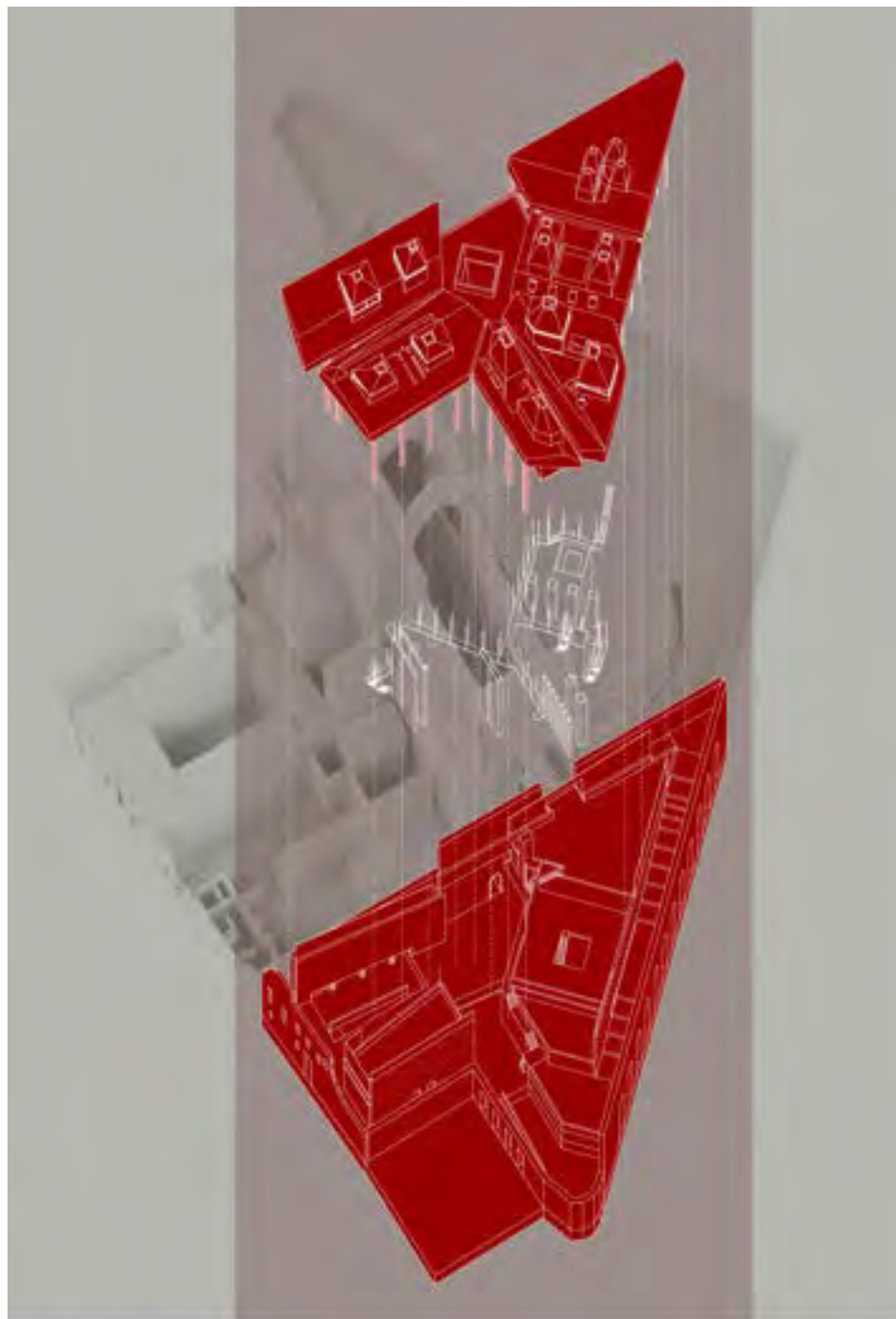
(SURVEYING) ARCHAEOLOGIES OF PALERMO I

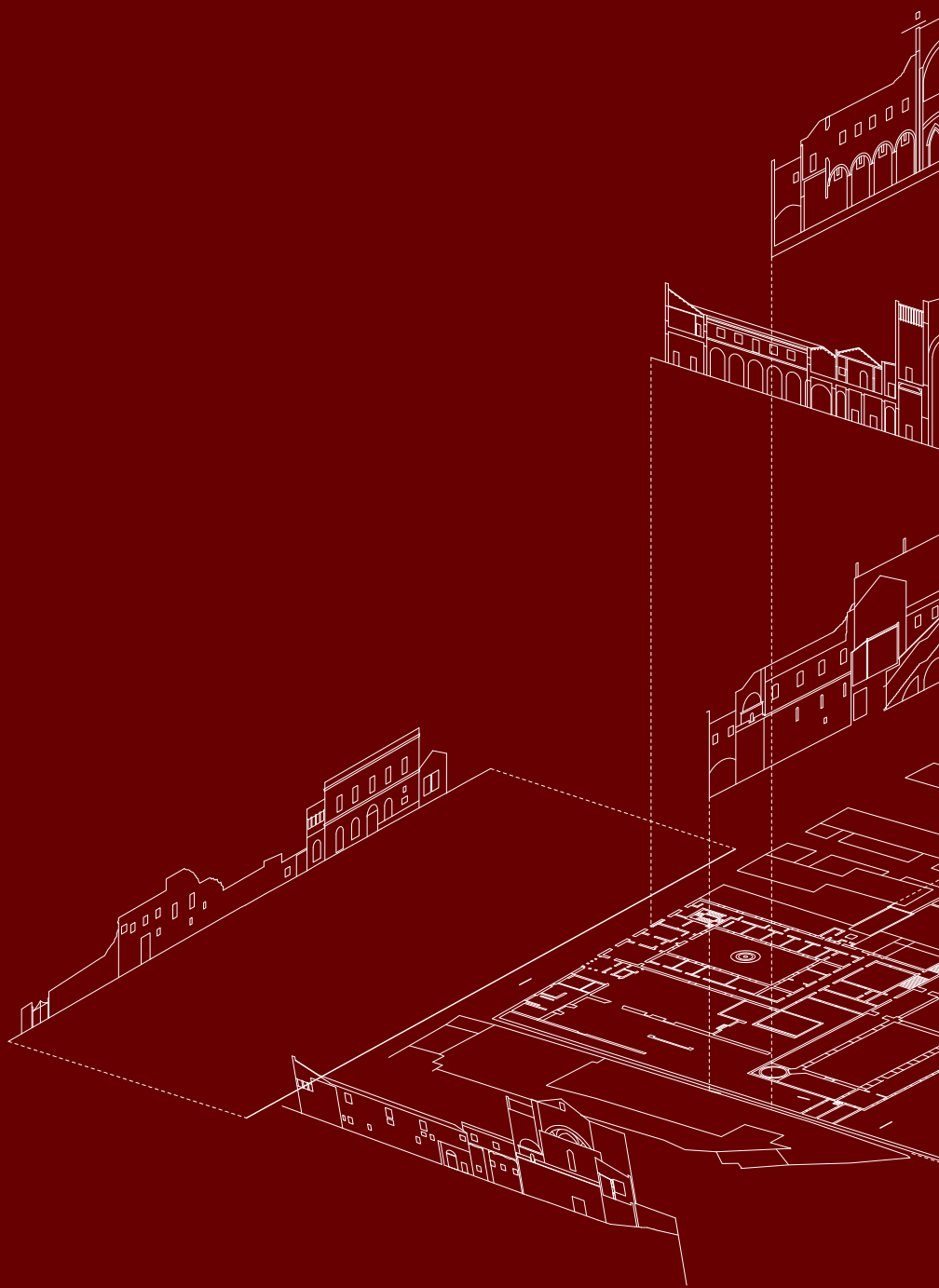
TIMES AND TEMPORALITIES OF THE *SPASIMO NUOVO*

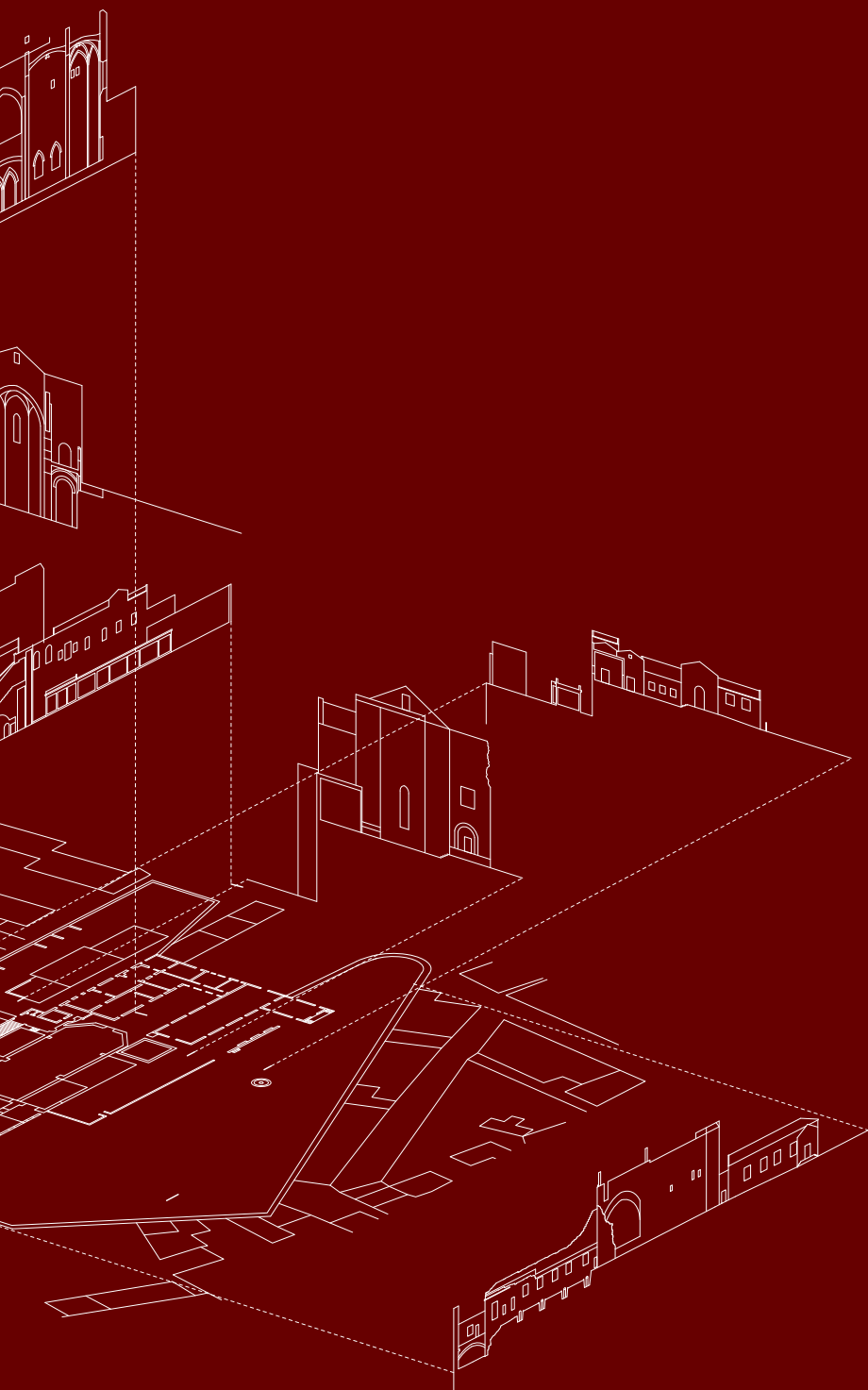
GIGI SO I GABRIELLE WOOD

In 2015, seven sites in Palermo – examples of the syncretism of Norman, Islamic and Byzantine architecture – were granted UNESCO World Heritage status. One of the features of these buildings identified as having particular significance were the red Arabic domes atop the churches, but these iconic red domes – which have become synonymous with Palermo – were the result of an inaccurate restoration, a misinterpretation of the colour of underlying decorative strata. These sites, therefore, bring together two understandings of the city in history: the first sees the city as an interweaving of different cultural influences (the city as a dynamic entity), the second sees the city as a place to preserve (the city as outside of time). These two conceptions of history (of temporality and time) are perhaps most clearly visible in the architecture of the *Santa Maria dello Spasimo*, an unfinished church started in 1509 but abandoned in 1537 when funds were diverted to reinforce the city walls. The *Spasimo* exists today in the same form as in 1537 (in stasis) but has been used as a theatre, *lazaretto*, hospice, depository, and, most recently, the Palermo Brass and Jazz School (in flux).

Mindful of the times and temporalities of the city, the *Spasimo Nuovo* is an institution for restoring Palermo, for addressing the decay and dereliction brought about by a protracted period of abandonment and neglect. Nestled between a bastion in the Arabic city walls and the *Santa Maria dello Spasimo*, the institution forms a hub of workshops, educational spaces and (Pantellerian) gardens along the city wall, reclaiming the walls for civic use.









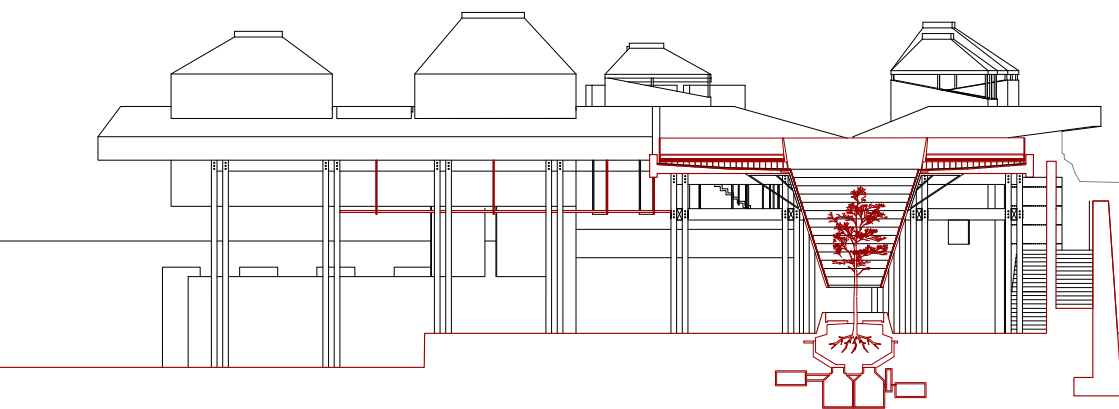


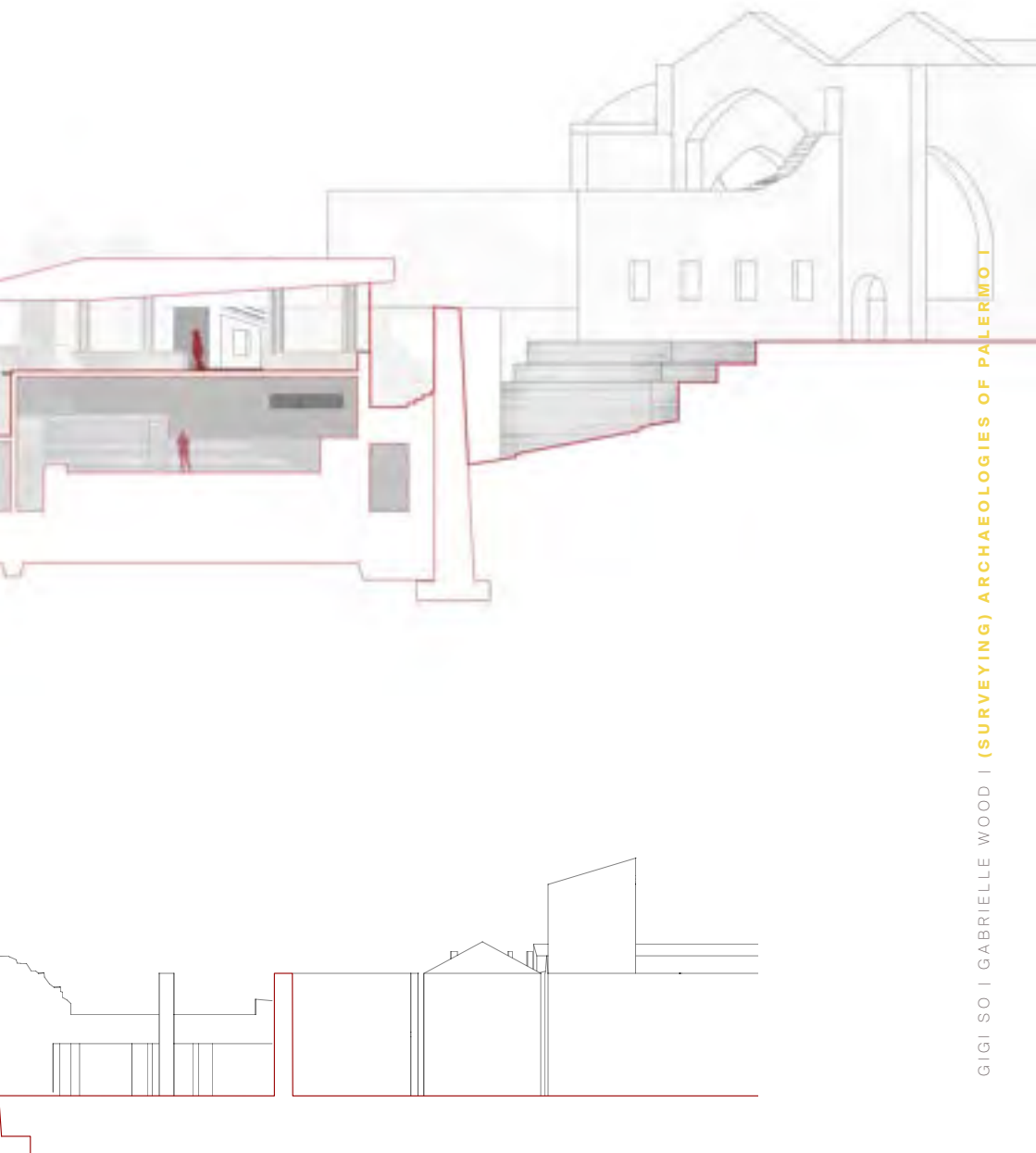
2 | (previous page) Surveying the Santa Maria dello Spasimo

3 | Axis Mundi: Siting the Spasimo Nuovo

4 | Infra-scape: View of the Public Workshops

5 | Ground-scape: View of the Masonry Workshops





6 | Site Section: Spasimo Nuovo and Santa Maria dello Spasimo

7 | Section through the proposed Pantellerian Garden: ventilation funnel, water collection and storage spaces



8 | Proposed Installation, Minto House *(with Jon Withers)*

9 | Modelling the Spasimo Nuovo in the City *(with Jon Withers)*



Site: Palazzo Forcella de Seta, Piazza Kalsa, Foro Italico. Kalsa.
Programme: Archaeological Museum and Restoration Workshops.

08

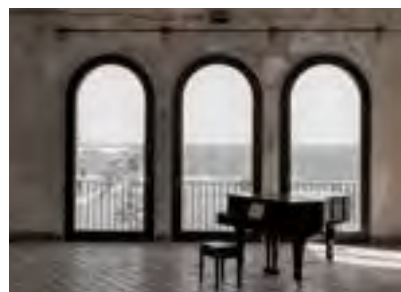
(SURVEYING) ARCHAEOLOGIES OF PALERMO II

TRAJECTORIES AND TRACES OF THE *FORO ITALICO*

JON WITHERS

The Allied bombings that preceded the invasion of Sicily in 1943 damaged and destroyed large parts of Palermo. The resulting rubble – containing architectural fragments from the various periods of the city's 2,000 year history – was dumped into the sea just outside the historic city walls, forever shifting and contaminating the coastline. In Kalsa, this resulted in a thickening of the historic promenade around the city walls along the coast, known variously as the *Passeggiata della Marina*, the *Foro Borbonico* or the *Foro Siciliano*, first constructed in 1582; the coastline was pushed back almost 200m, creating a large park known today as the *Foro Italico*. This is a unique piece of archaeology, a repository of building matter (refined and raw) from within the city displaced beyond the walls, a visible reminder of a city now largely lost.

State investment since 1992 has transformed the ruined old town (with notable exceptions); around 60% of the historic buildings in the centre have been restored. However, a more serious survey of the *Foro Italico* is needed, as well as means by which to present this survey to the city. This must carefully consider the relationship between the *Foro Italico* beyond the city wall and the city within, and the movement between the two (a new *Passeggiata della Marina*). A series of workshops and exhibition spaces occupy the space between the Palazzo Forcella de Seta and the city wall, forming a new gate house to the *Foro Italico* and refiguring Piazza Kalsa. These spaces facilitate the recording, preservation and presentation of architectural remains.



1 | Sections through Piazza Kalsa, the Foro Italico and the proposed Gatehouse



1.



2.



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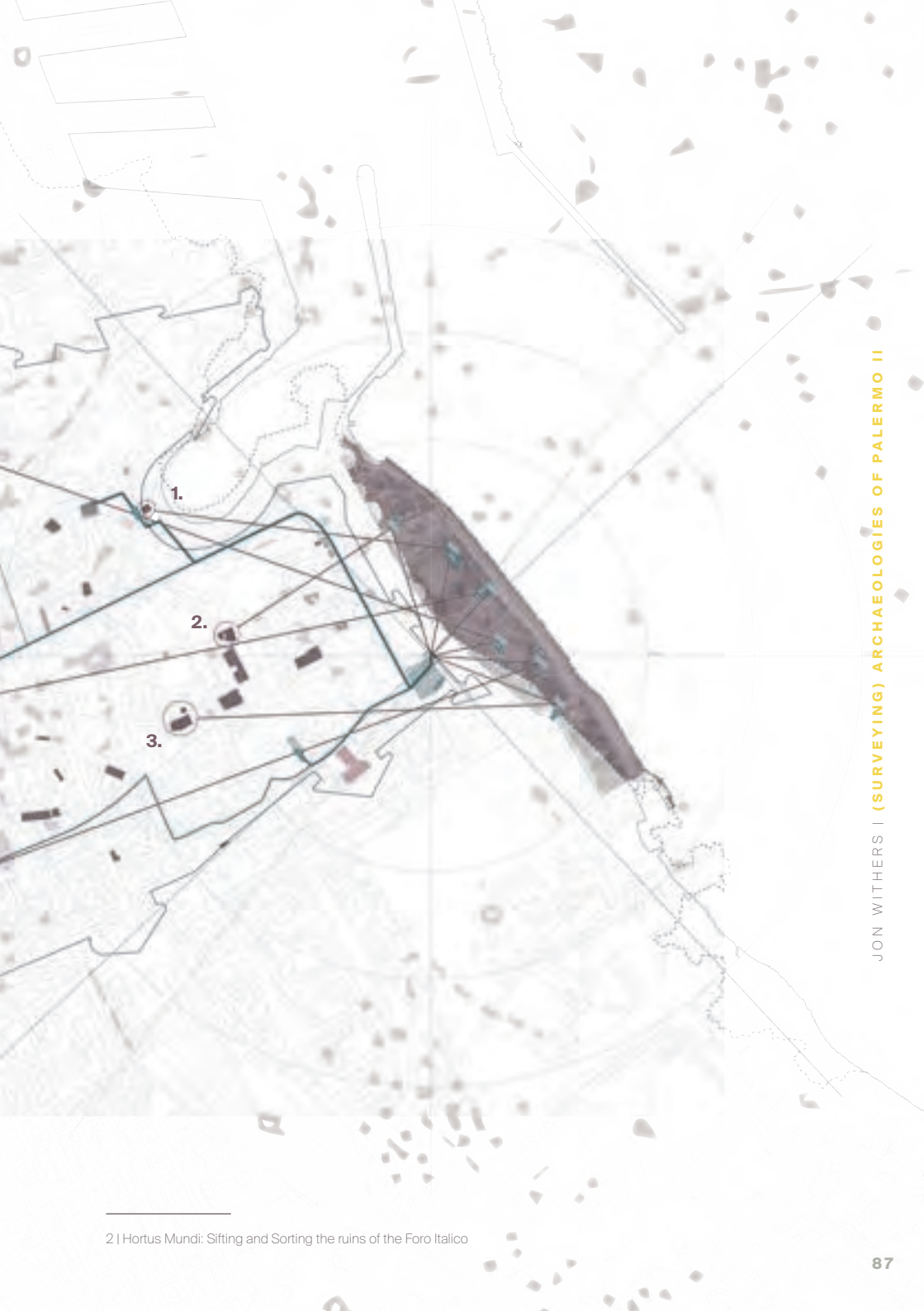


4.



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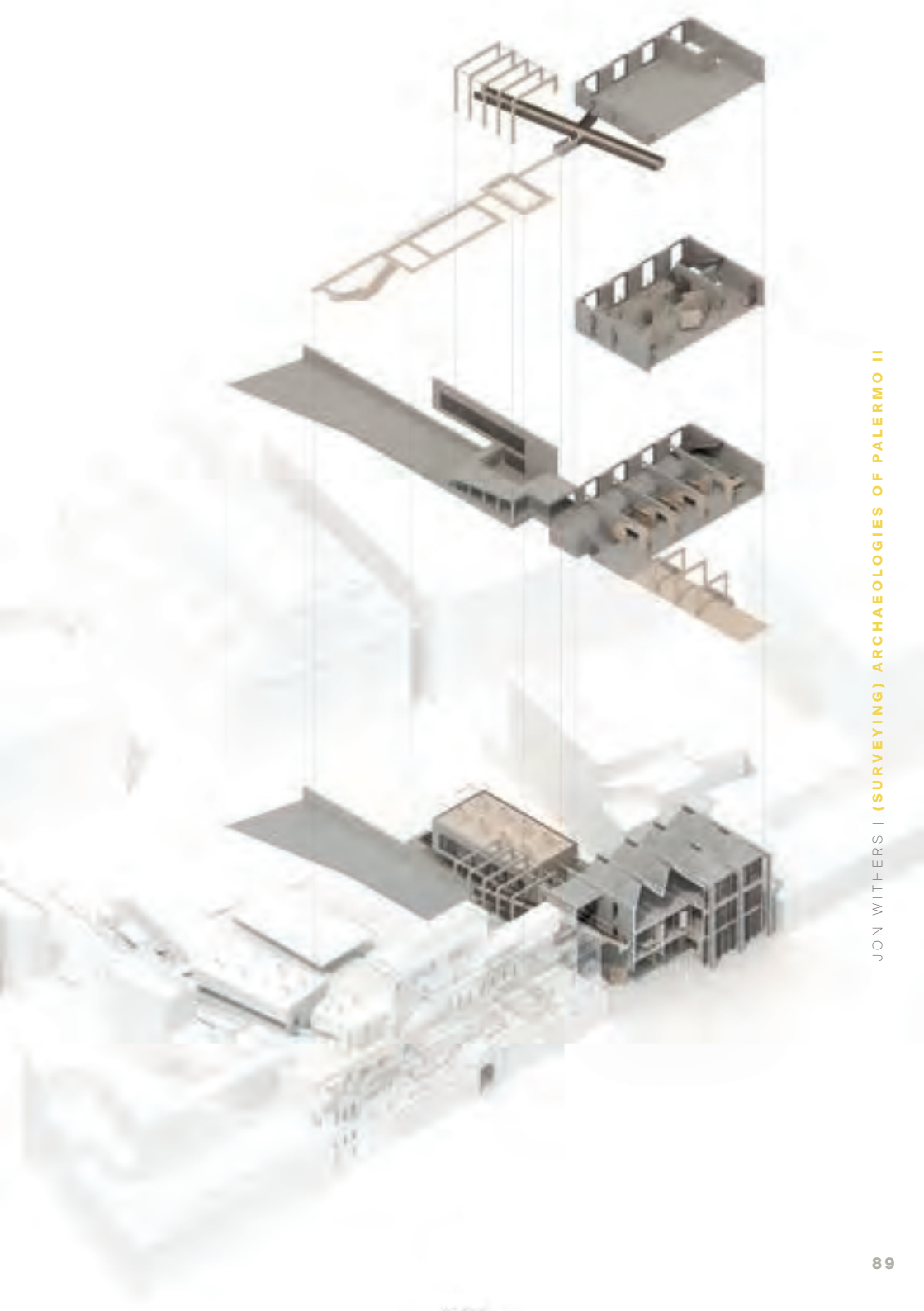






5-7 | Gatehouse to the Foro Italico: Views to and from Piazza Kalsa

8 | Axis Mundi: Exploded Isometric Section through the Gatehouse and Palazzo Forcella de Seta





Via del Celso, Monte de Pietà (Il Capo).

14:24, Friday 19th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.



MONTE DE PIETÀ

Site: Via del Ceslo and Via Sant Isidoro. Monte de Pietà (Il Capo).
Programme: Dye Production Workshops; Weaving Studios; Kitchens; Dining Rooms; Water Harvesting, Collection Towers and Filtration Systems.

09

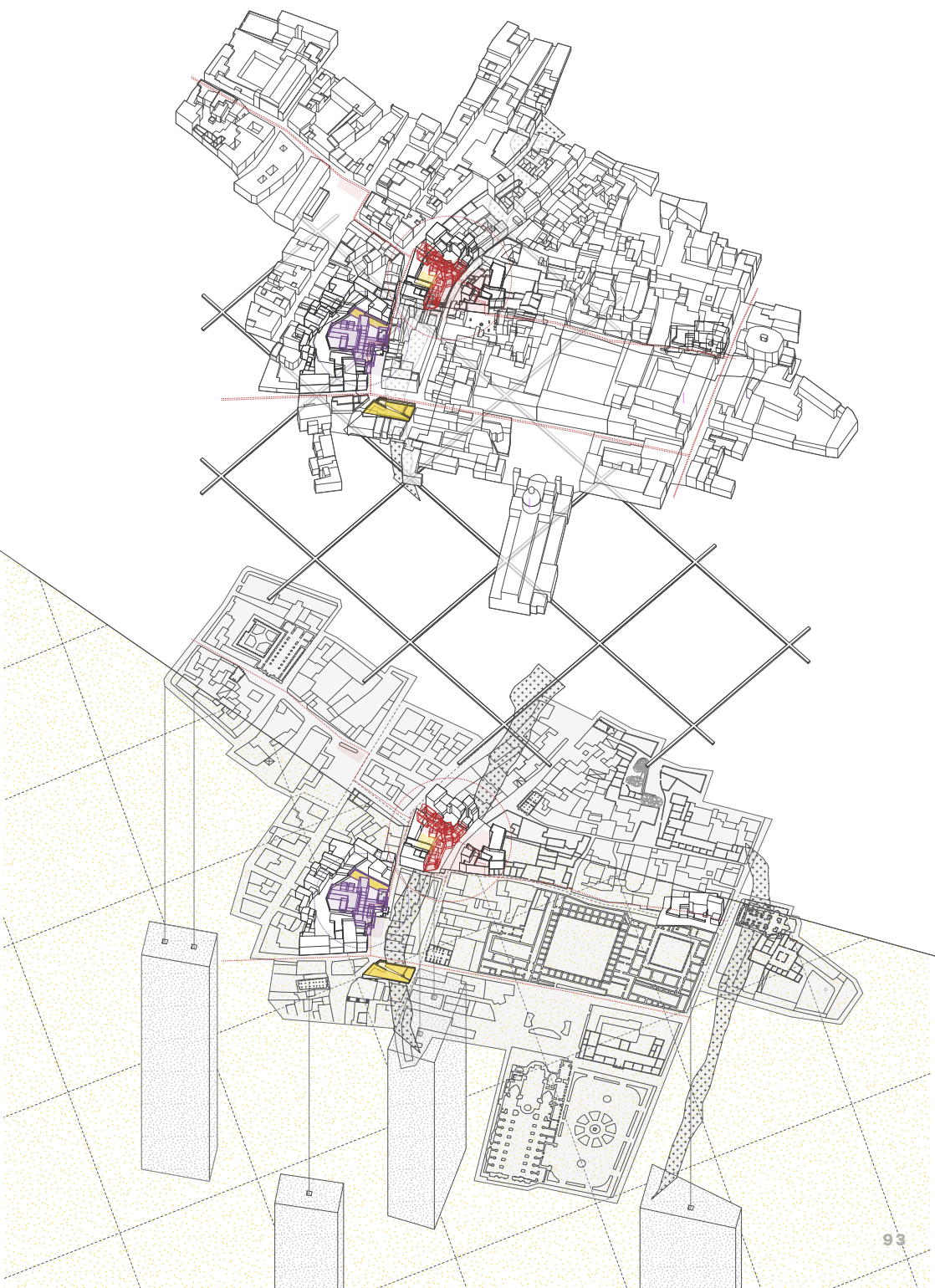
THE SYNCRETIC CITY

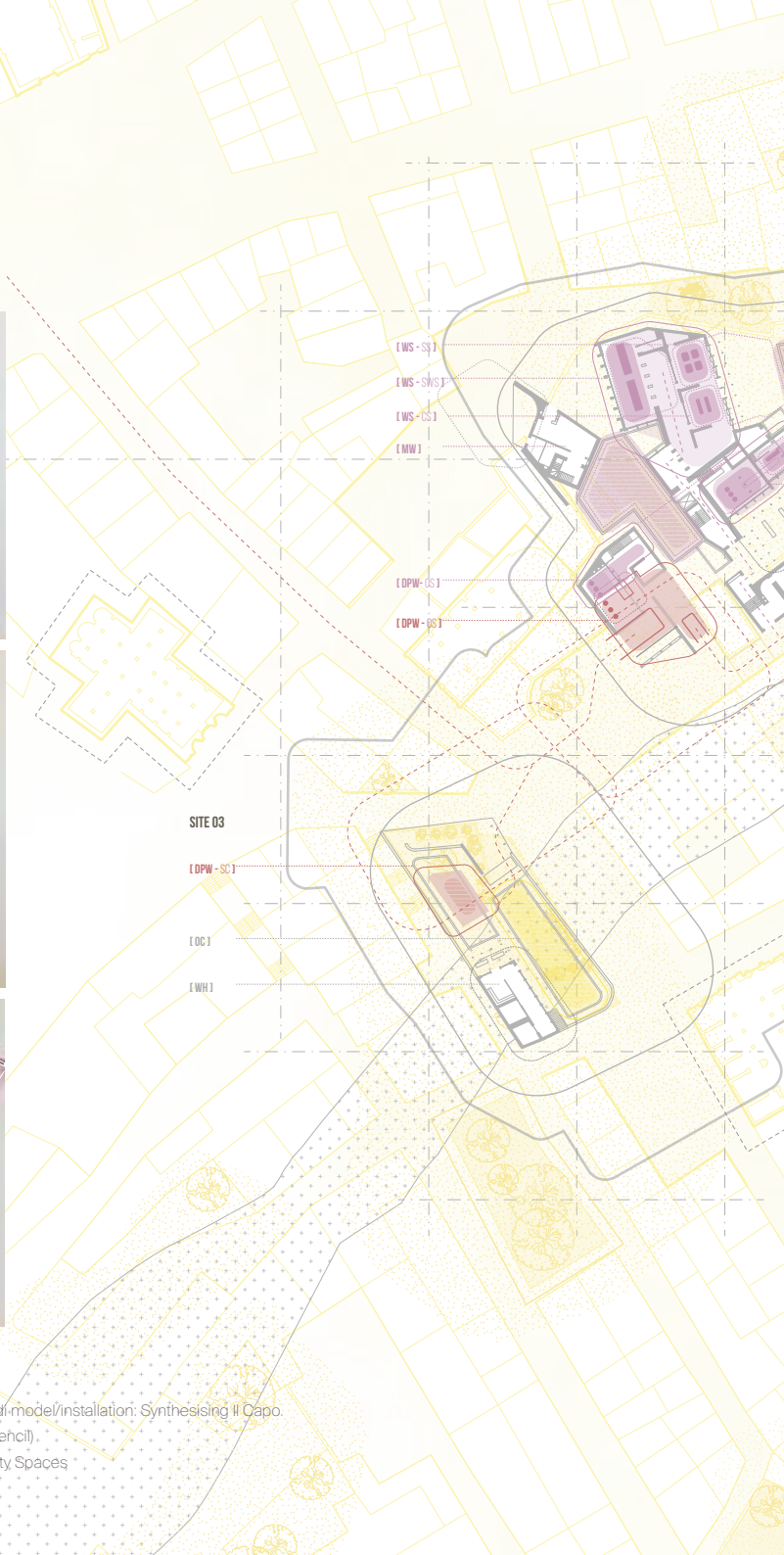
GARDENS OF PROCESSION, WITHDRAWAL AND SUSTENANCE

HARRIET GARBUTT | MILES HEATH

The Syncretic City explores the emerging and re-emerging religions (Hinduism and Islam), past and present botanical (prickly pear and sumac) and craft (weaving and dyeing) economies, and ancient and new landscapes of Palermo. It brings gardens and workshops to *Il Capo* (Monte de Pietà), and allows non-ecclesiastical religions means to engage in the city, to become recognised as part of the community of Palermo. It develops syncretic spaces, in which the particularities of practices inform and act upon the city. The spaces of the cloister and monastery are re-figured to operate alongside Islamic and Hindu spaces, bringing together religions and programmes; practices associated with both faiths fold into the everyday space of the city.

Colour is the means by which this syncretism is made material. In Islam, the prayer mat is woven with images of the Garden of Paradise in greens, reds and golds. In Hinduism colour is symbolic, representing specific feelings and morals. *The Syncretic City* uses colour as means to both give form and material to architecture, and to set out gardens – a yellow pollen drifting from the ancient *Conca d'Oro*, settling on the contemporary city-landscape – housing irrigation systems, water harvesting and storage tanks, permaculture gardens, dyeing baths, botanical and agricultural archives and weaving facilities. These gardens, which are key to both religions – plants and vegetables are cultivated to produce dyes for the textiles of Islam, and food and spice for Hindu ceremonies – bring Sicilian plant life into *Il Capo*, fostering new productive, syncretic relations between city and landscape.

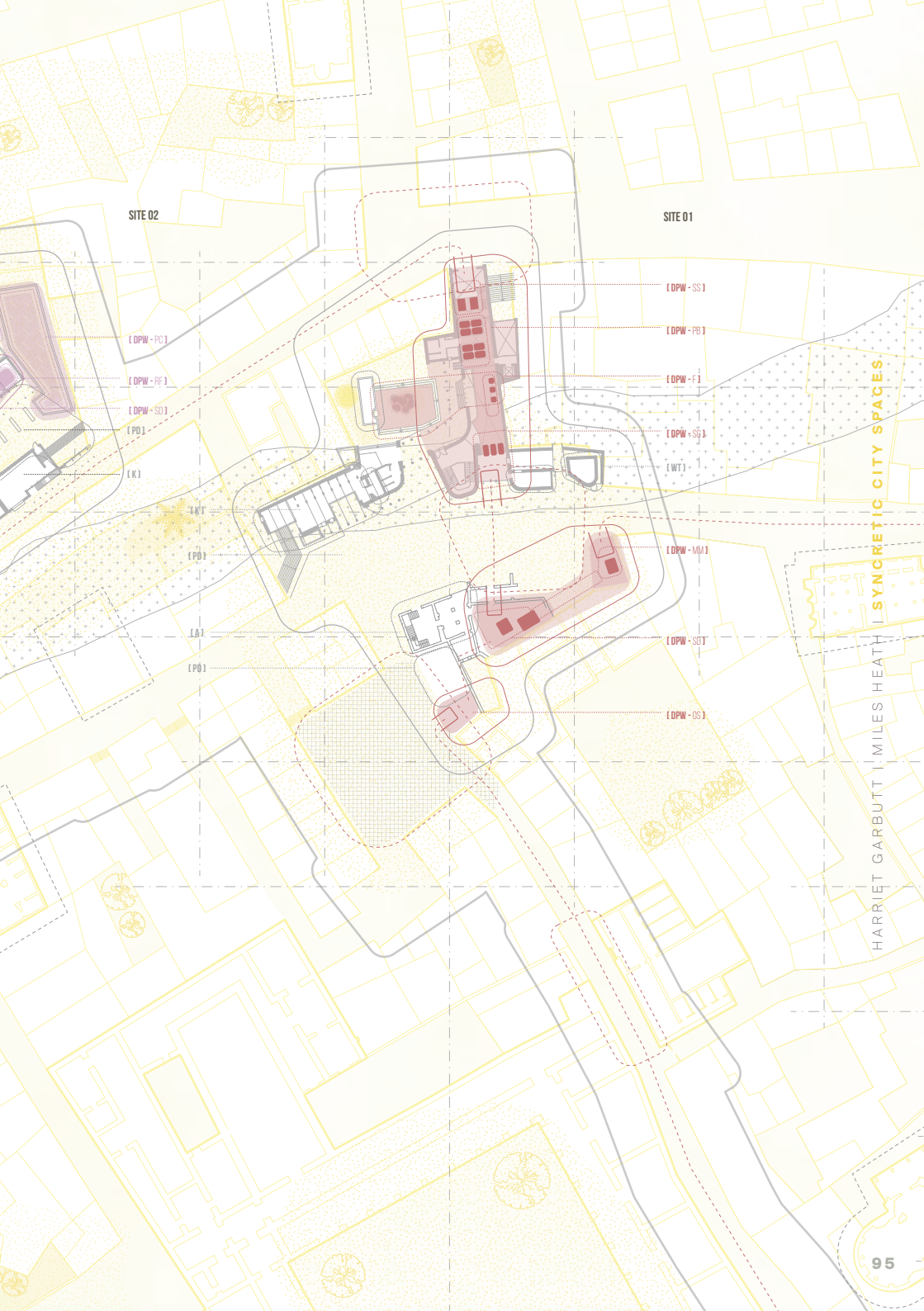




1 | (previous page) Theatrum Mundi: model/installation: Synthesising # Capo.

2-4 | Colour Studies (pastel and pencil).

5 | Theatrum Mundi: Pollinating City Spaces



SITE 02

SITE 01

[DPW - PC]

[DPW - RF]

[DPW - SD]

[PD]

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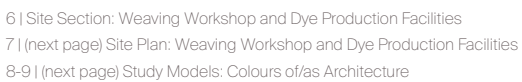
[WT]

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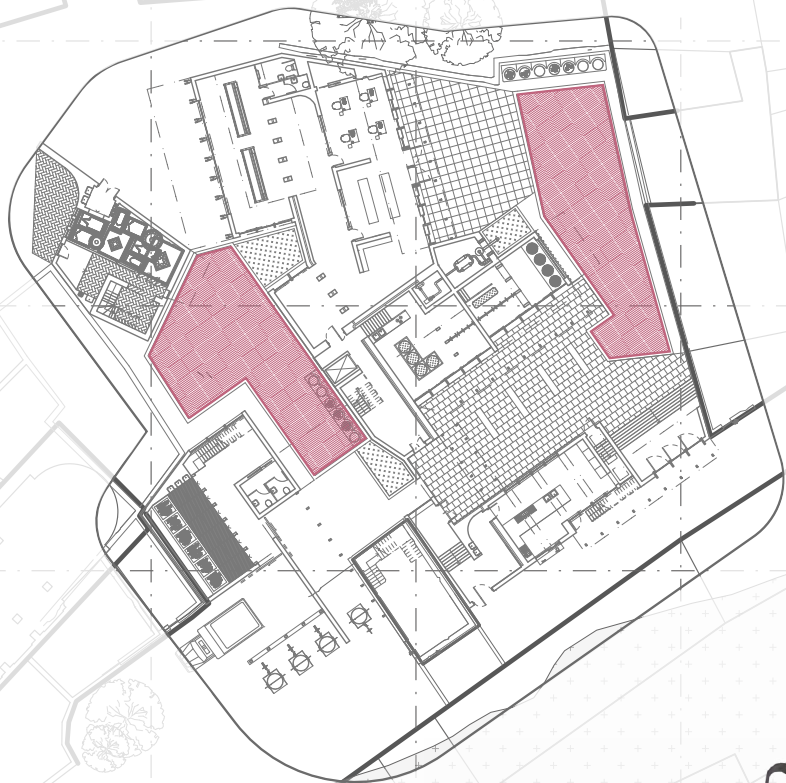
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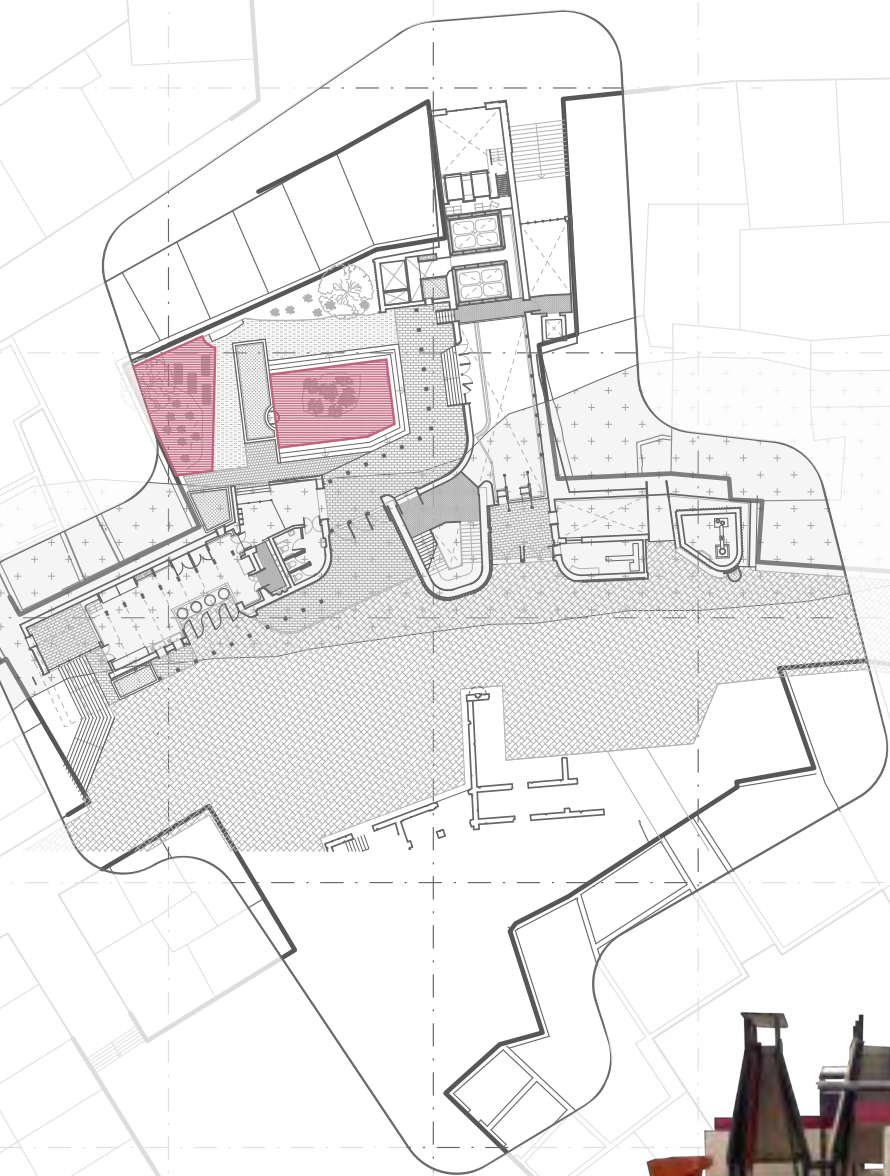
[DPW - OS]

HARRIET GARBUTT | MILES HEATH | **SYNCRETIC CITY SPACES**





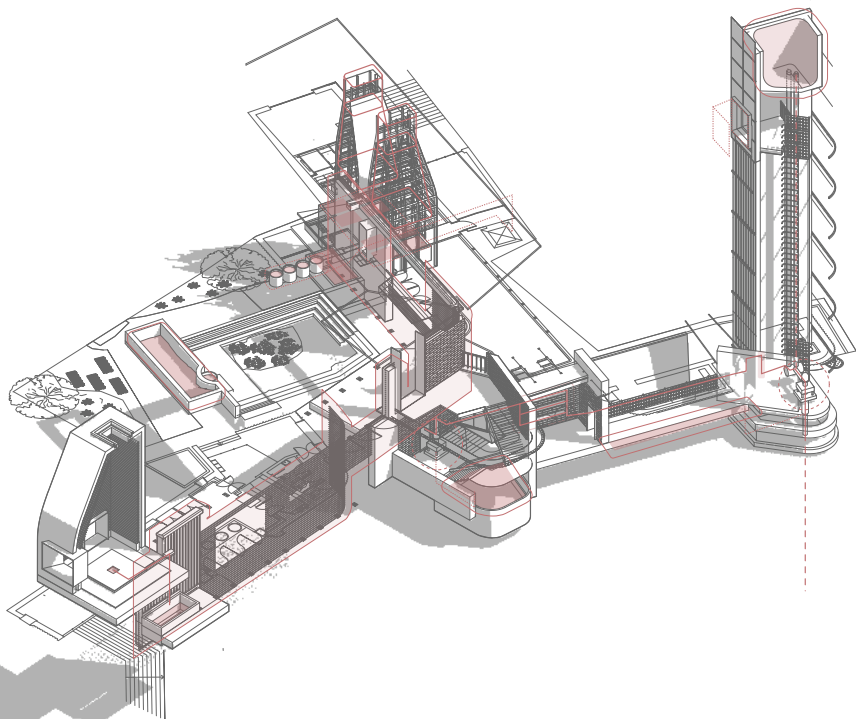
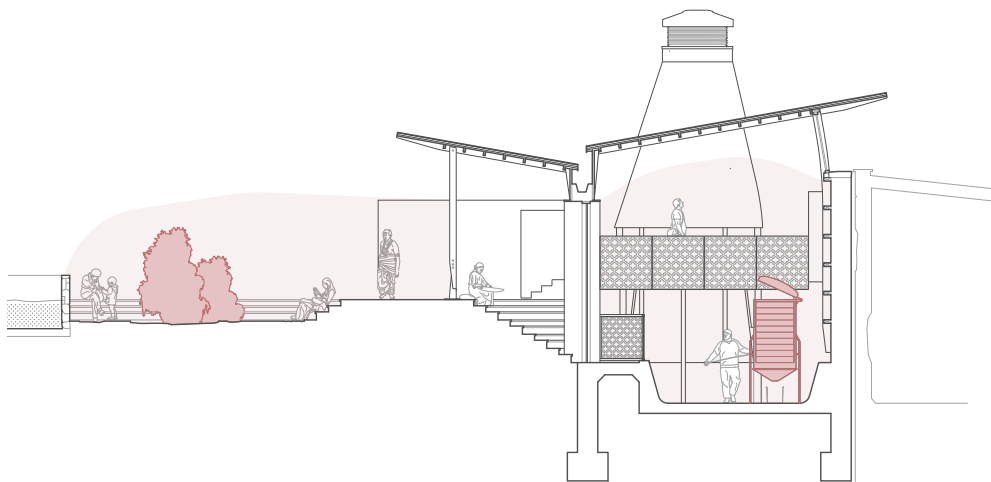






10 | Section and Elevation: Weaving Workshops (*Harriet Garbutt*)

11 | View of the Space for the Looms (*Harriet Garbutt*)



12 | Section: Dye Production Facilities (*Miles Heath*)

13 | Axonometric: Spaces of Procession through the Dye Production Facilities (*Miles Heath*)

14 | (next page) Hortus Mundi: Pollinating II Capo





Site: Via Imera and Corso A. Amedeo. Monte de Pietà (Il Capo).
Programme: New Palermo Court: Observatory, Residences, Train Station, Theatre, Gallery, Library, Gardens.

10

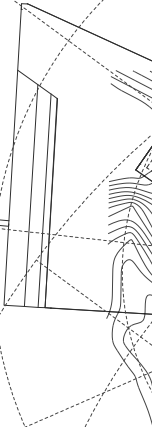
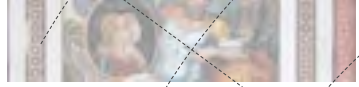
CITY-ROOMS

THE LEOPARD, THE LION AND THE GENIUS OF PALERMO

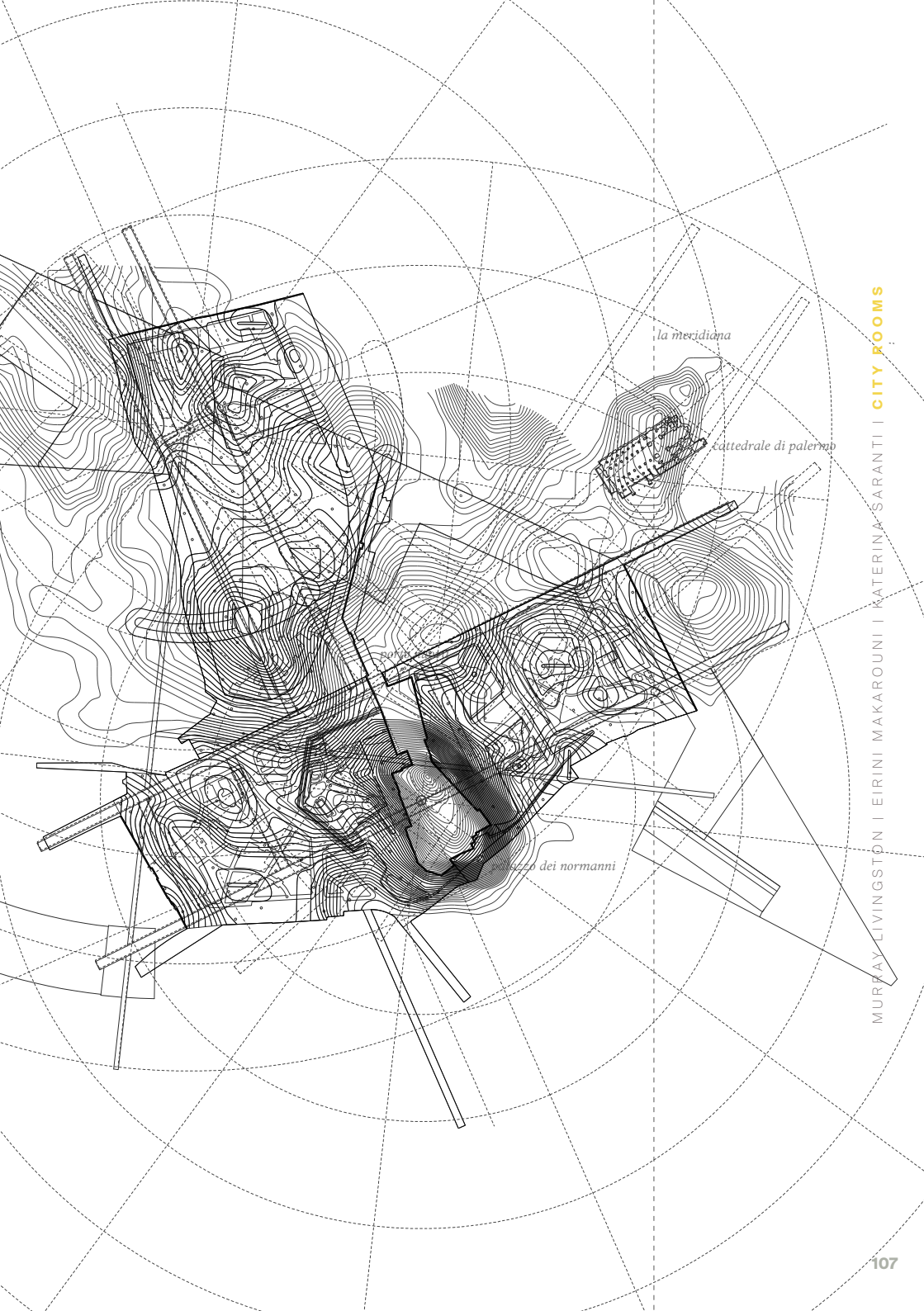
MURRAY LIVINGSTON | EIRINI MAKAROUNI | KATERINA SARANTI

City-Rooms explores three periods of Sicilian history through three figures. Through Don Fabrizio, The Leopard, the novel *Il Gattopardo* articulates a moment in which Sicilian practices and northern Italian etiquettes collide. From his study, Don Fabrizio watches as the relationship between the landed (the aristocrat) and the urbanite (the politician) shift. In 1954, Carlo Scarpa (a Venetian, a Lion) completed the Gallery of Sicilian Art in the Palazzo Abatellis, a 15th Century palace damaged by bombing. Scarpa's presentation of the *Croce Dipinta* articulates a disconnection from ground, while his Venetian plaster backdrops evoke the Sicilian landscapes of Antonello da Messina. The Genius of Palermo (a mythical figure purportedly based on General Scipio) occupies eight sites in the city. The Genius describes the relationship between Sicily and ancient Rome, but has become associated with those myths that shape the city. Through *City-Rooms* these figures are given space in a new Palermo Court sited near the ancient home of the Sicilian Parliament in the *Palazzo dei Normanni*. Through Louis Kahn's description of the architecture of the room and of the city (described in a series of drawings made in 1971, in which Kahn notes: "Architecture comes from the making of a room... The street is a room by agreement..."), *City-Rooms* surveys the city, articulating through the movement of the eight Geniuses (and the marble and limestone landscape from which they are hewn) a re-figuration of Palermo. It forms both a cosmology of interiors into which the city is enfolded, and an orrery recording this cosmology. It holds rooms-as-figures in relation to a ground-as-uncertain landscape.





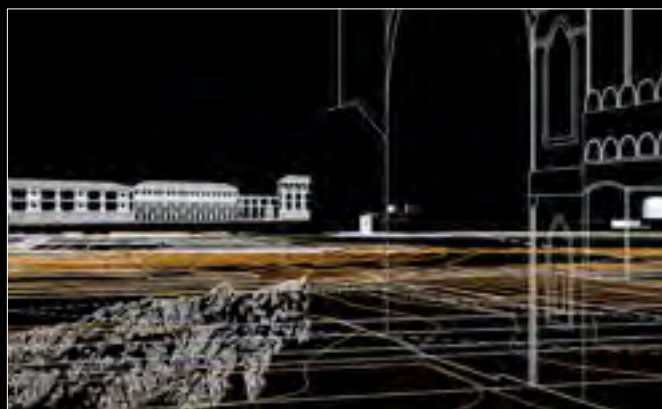
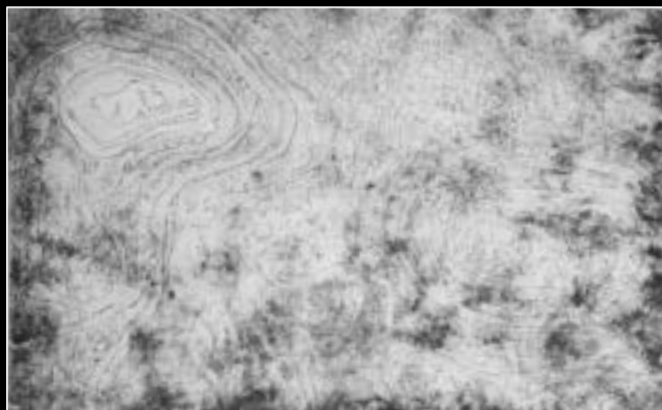
-
- 2 | Imprinting Landscape (ink pressing)
- 3 | City Orrery: Arranging Rooms and Figures



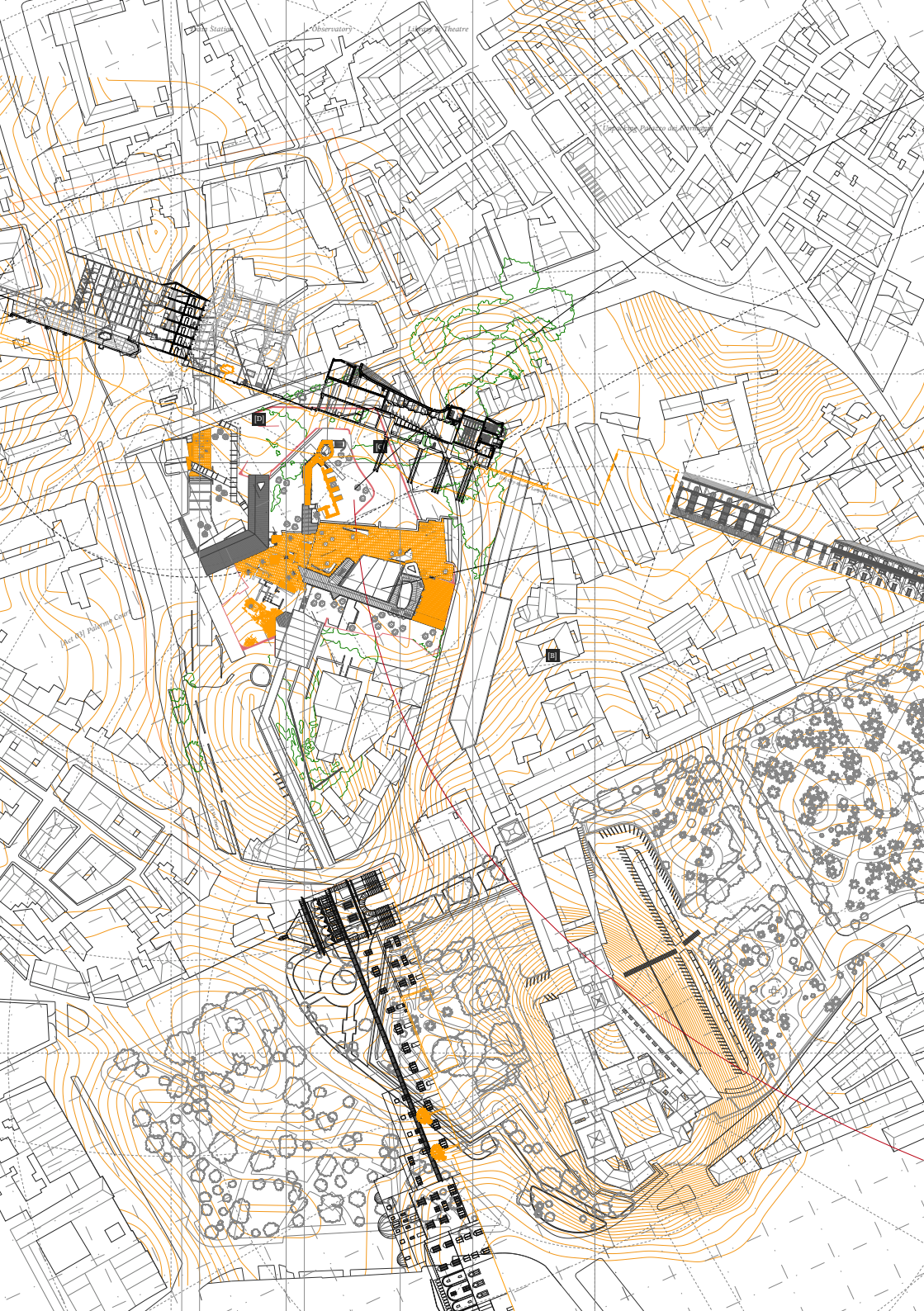
la meridiana

cattedrale di palermo

palazzo dei normanni

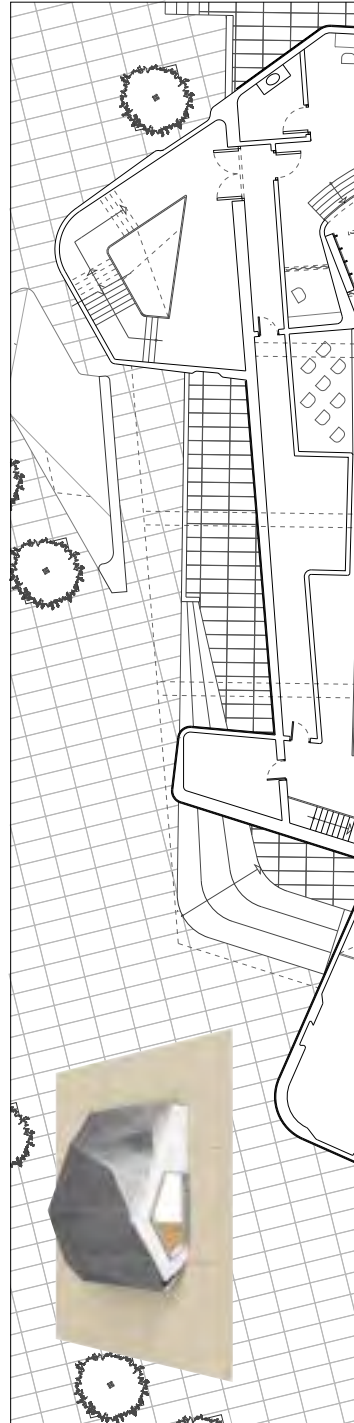
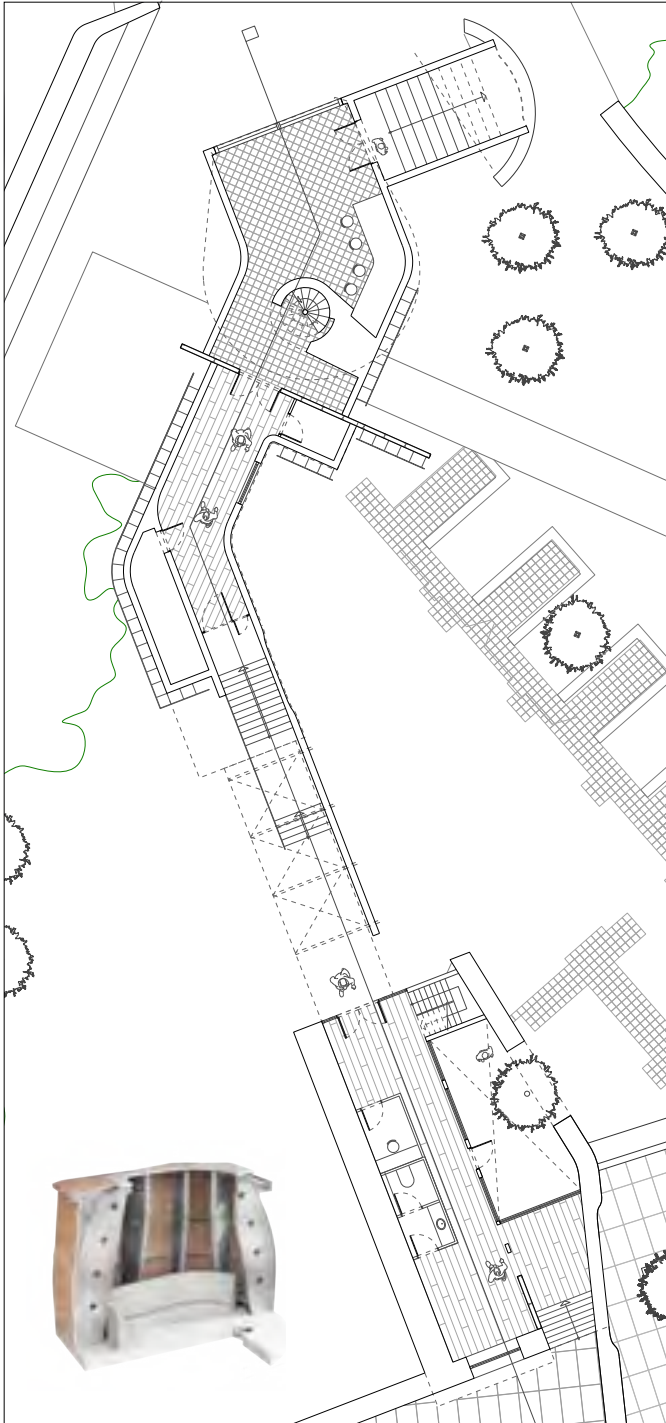


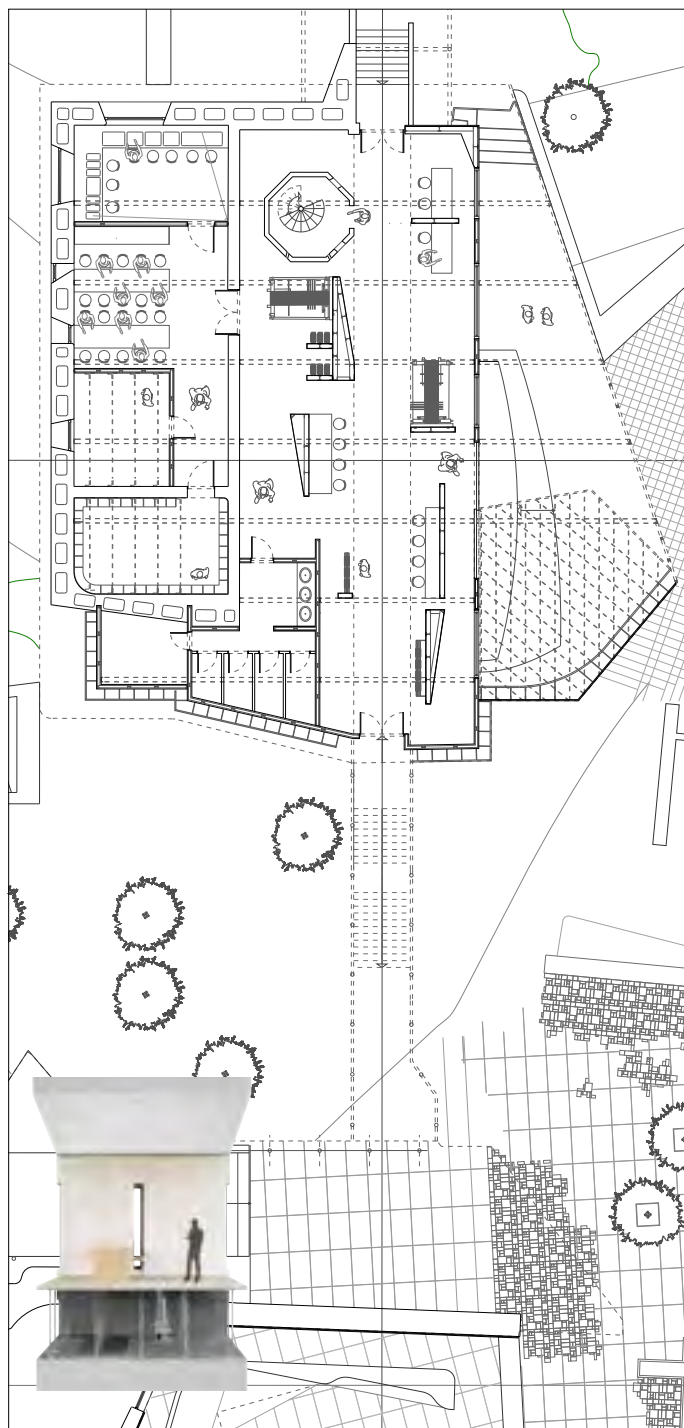
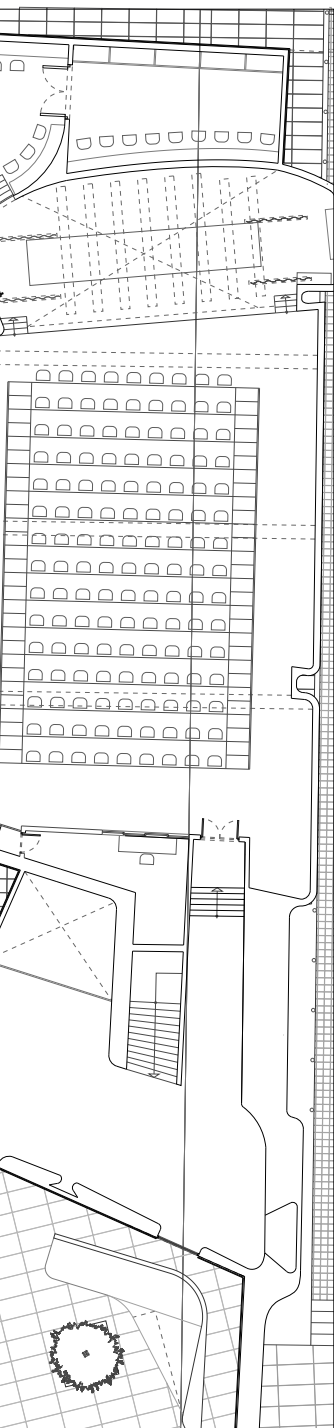


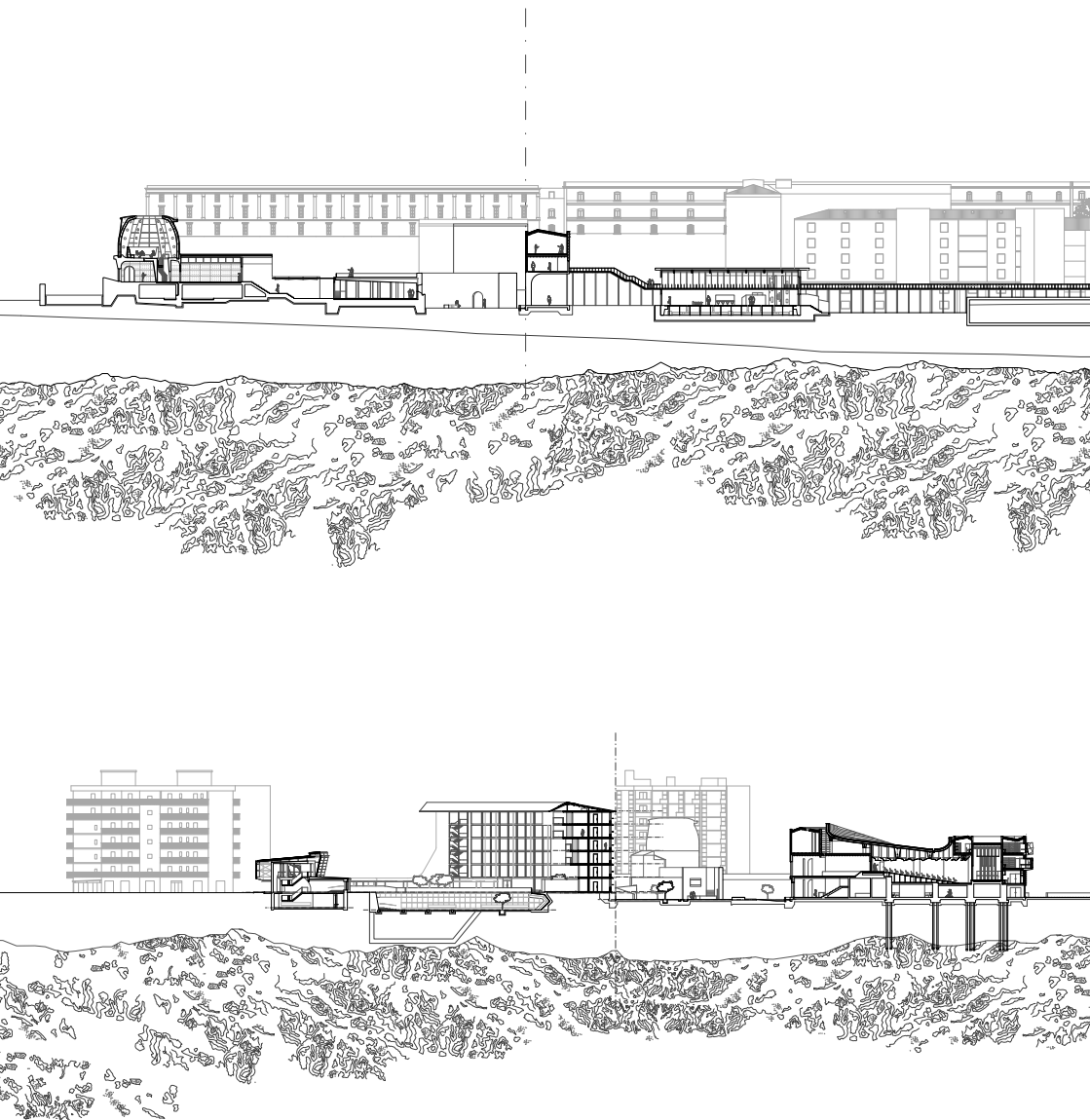




La Meridiana & Cathedral



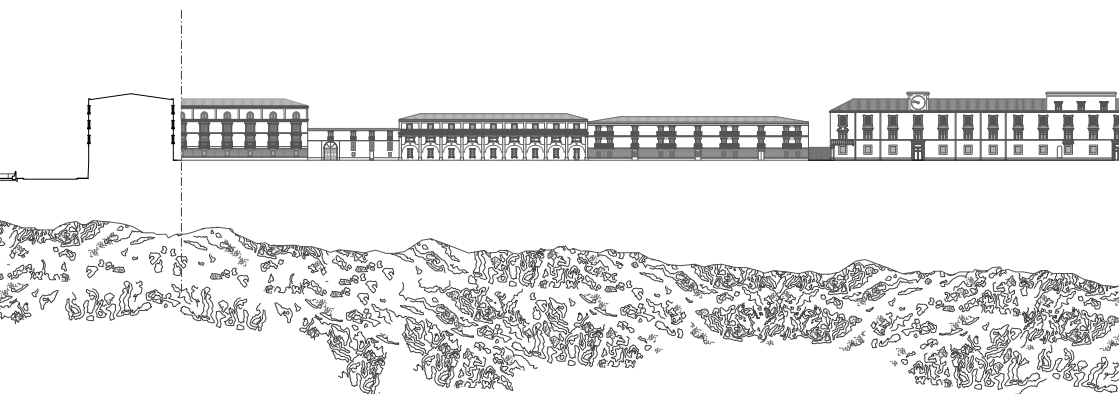
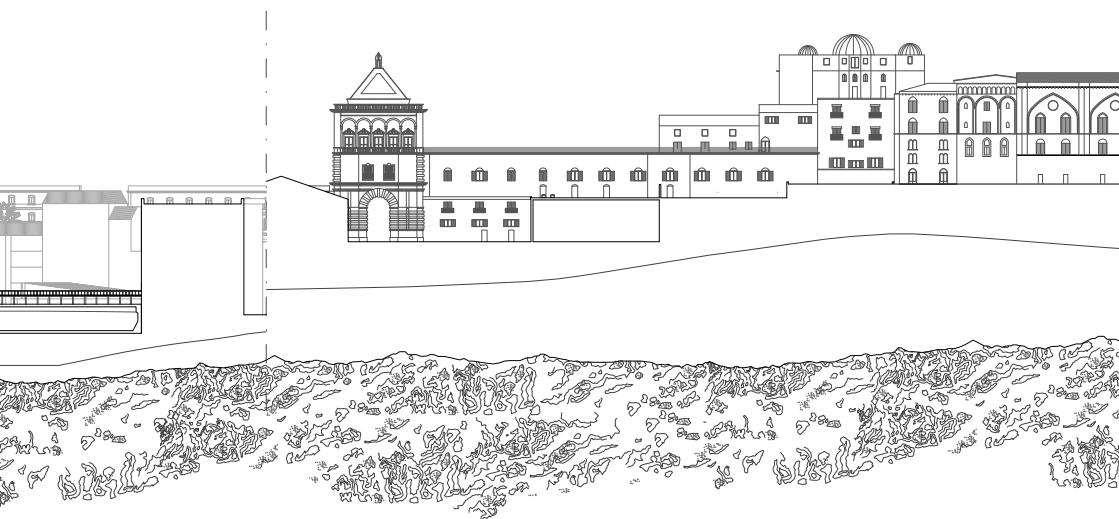


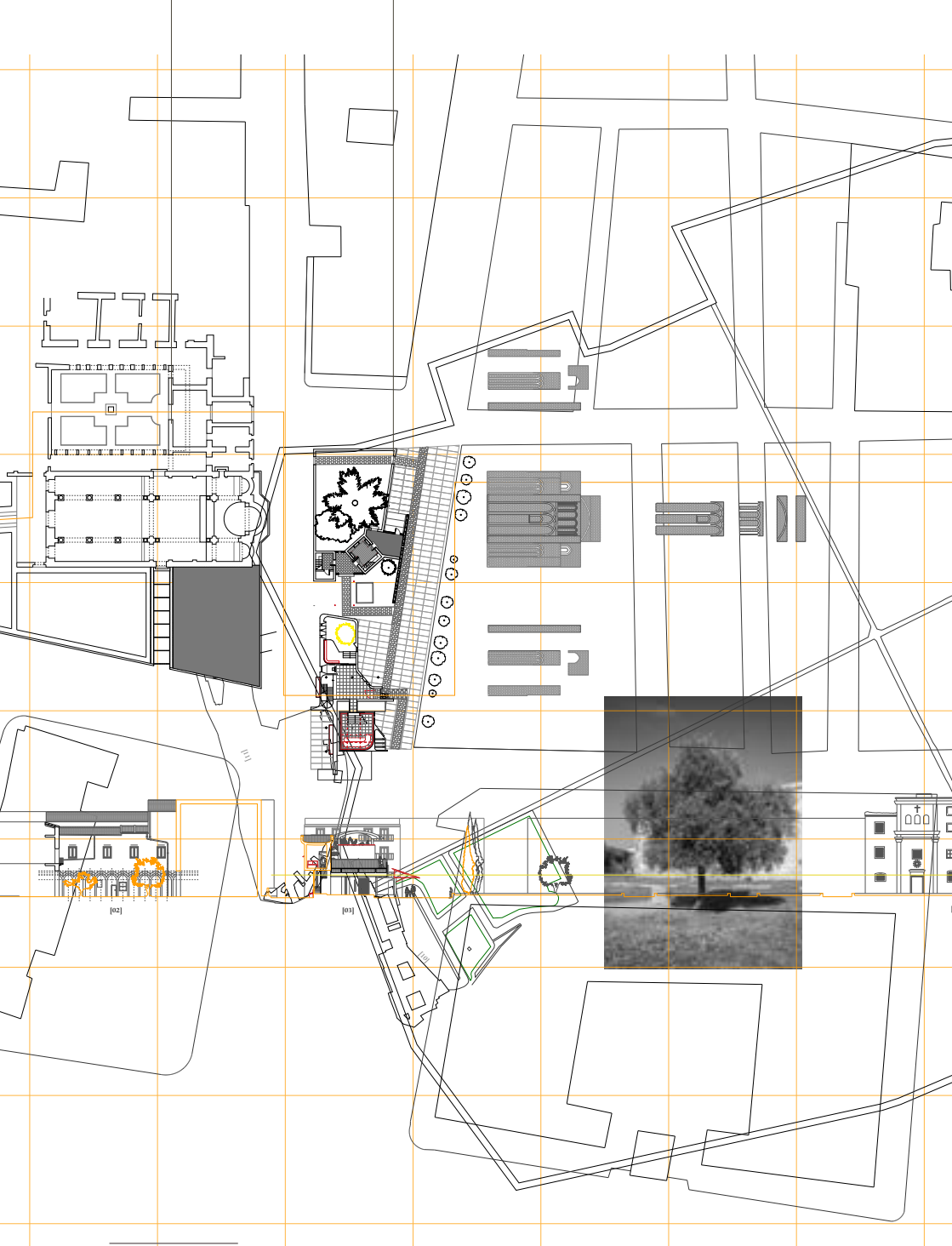


14 - 16 | (previous page) Proposed Plan(s):

Il Gattopardo (*The Leopard*) - Observatory, Il Leone (*The Lion*) - Theatre & Library, Il Genio (*The Genius*) - Workshops

17-18 | Proposed Site Sections









Villa Giulia, Via Lincoln, Costa Sud.

12:08, Monday 15th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula.

CONCA D'ORO



Site: Via Tiro a Segno, Fiume Oreto and Parco dell'Oreto. Costa Sud.
Programme: Winery; Fashion School; Mulberry Fields; Coral Protection Agency; Public Swimming Pools; Seaweed Nursery and Cultivation, Fishing Net Production.

11

SEAFARERS AND PEASANTS

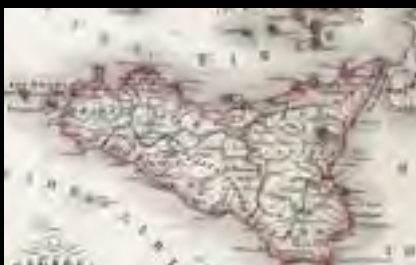
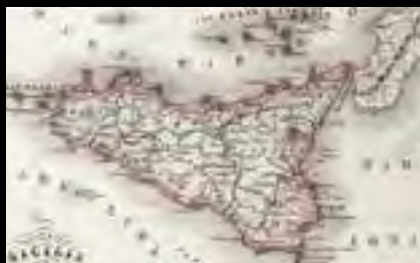
ECOLOGIES OF AN URBAN AGRICULTURAL ARCHIPELAGO

BRANDON CURTIS | KATE MURPHY

Historic depictions of Palermo represent the landscape with the same intensity as the city. Braun and Hogenberg's map of 1572 draws fields with the same morphological intensity as city blocks, while a 17th Century map of the *Conca d'Oro* depicts the city as a walled void in a network of gardens, an island in a vast landscape. This suggests a conscious understanding of the correspondence between the figures and patterns of city and landscape. The sea, Palermo's second -scape, is rarely given the same attention, but is equally significant. The ancient city was a walled island, built between the Papireto and Kemonia Rivers and the Tyrrhenian sea, fed by both land and sea. The city was, literally, an island. This understanding of the city was given architectural form in the Palazzo della Cuba, built for William II in 1180CE. This palace, which was built in the middle of a two-metre deep raised water tank surrounded by citrus groves, was Palermo in microcosm.

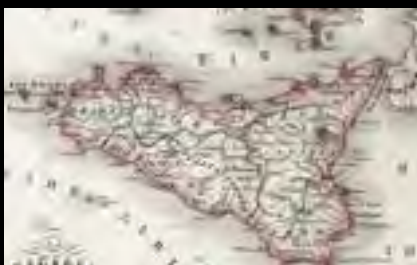
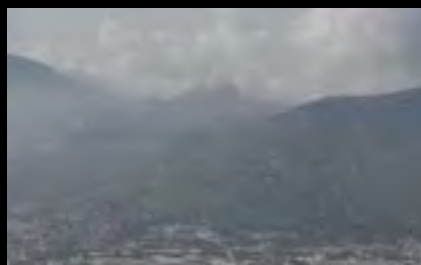
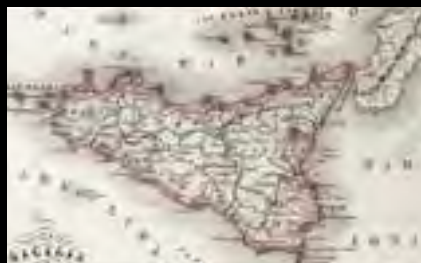
In the wake of the Sack of Palermo – and the associated dumping into the sea which shifted the coastline and harmed marine life, and the destruction of the *Conca D'oro* – the city has, both literally and figuratively moved away from both its land- and sea-scapes. Where once the city was understood as an island poised between land and sea, today landscape is the space leftover between islands of city, the sea contaminated. *Seafarers and Peasants* re-conceives these new islands as means to bring back the intensity of the two -scapes of Palermo. Through a series of productive public programmes it seeks to re-establish the productive relationship between land, sea and city.





11 (previous page) Hortus Mundi: Land- and Sea-scapes of Mulberry and Coral.

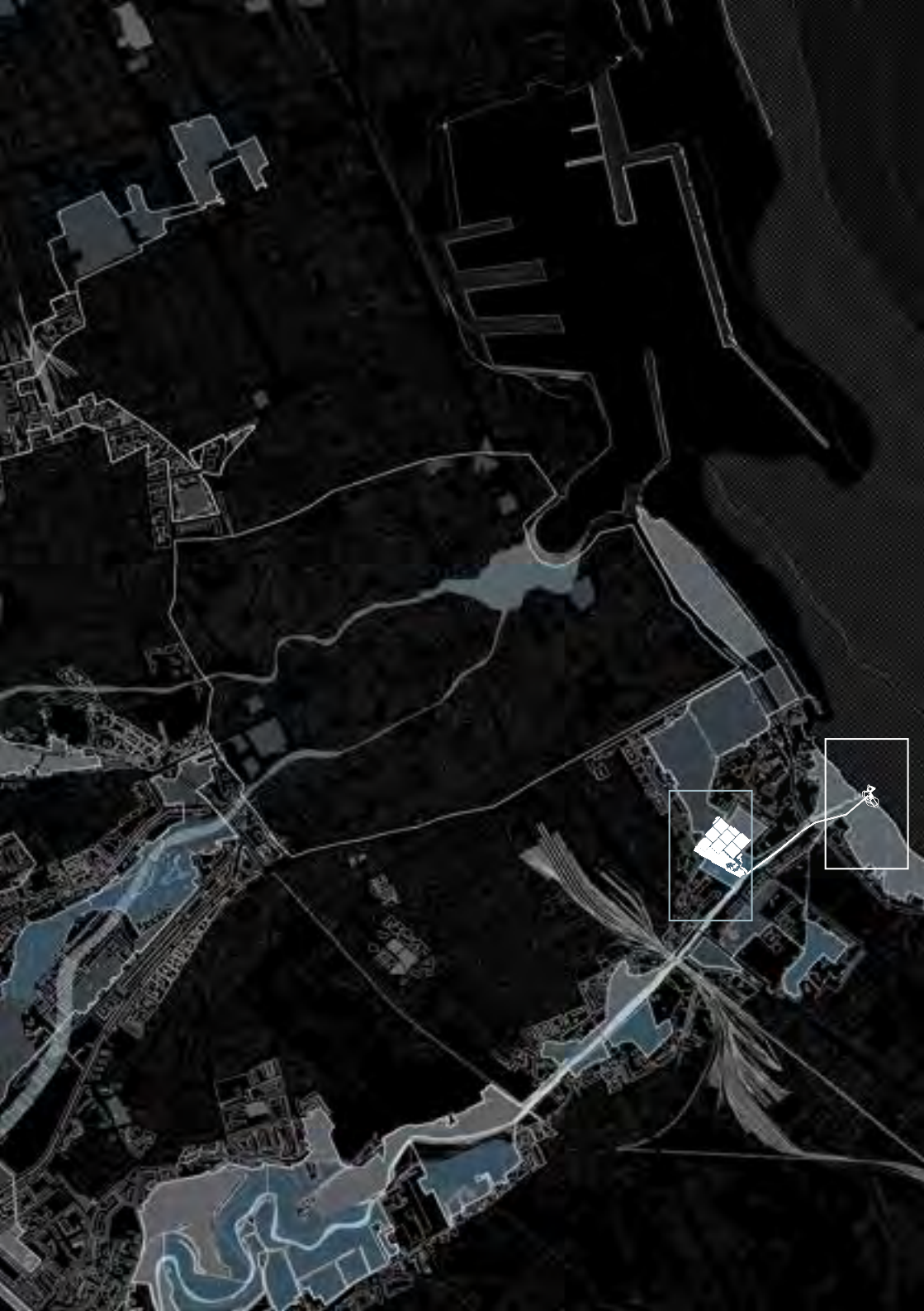
2 - 9 | Scenes from *Palermo Exposures Vol. I: Of Farmers and Weather*

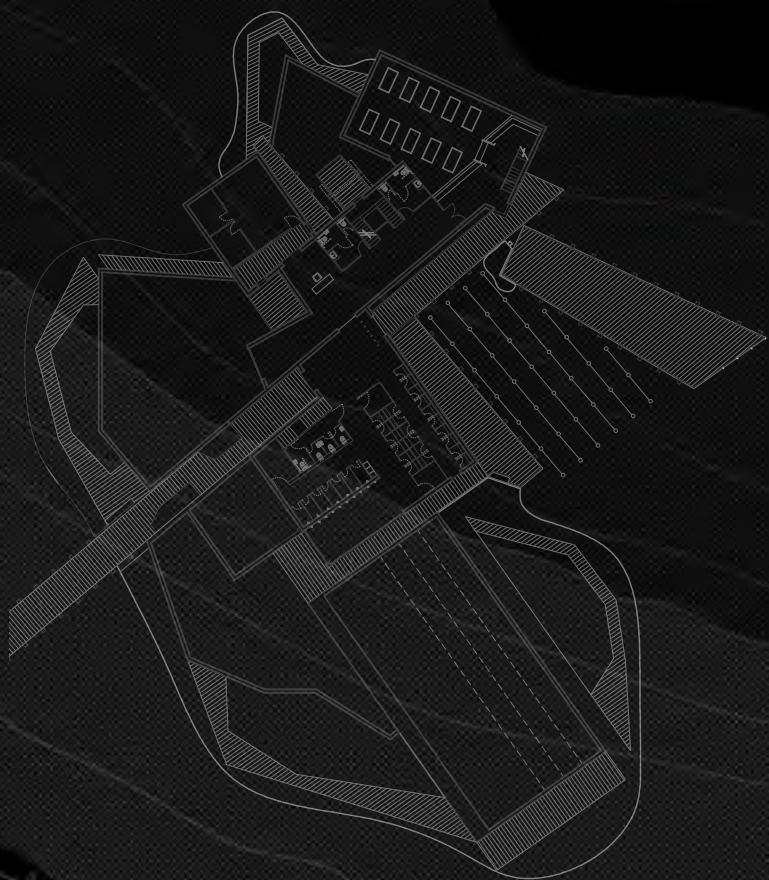


10-17 | Scenes from *Palermo Exposures Vol. II: Of Farmers and Weather*

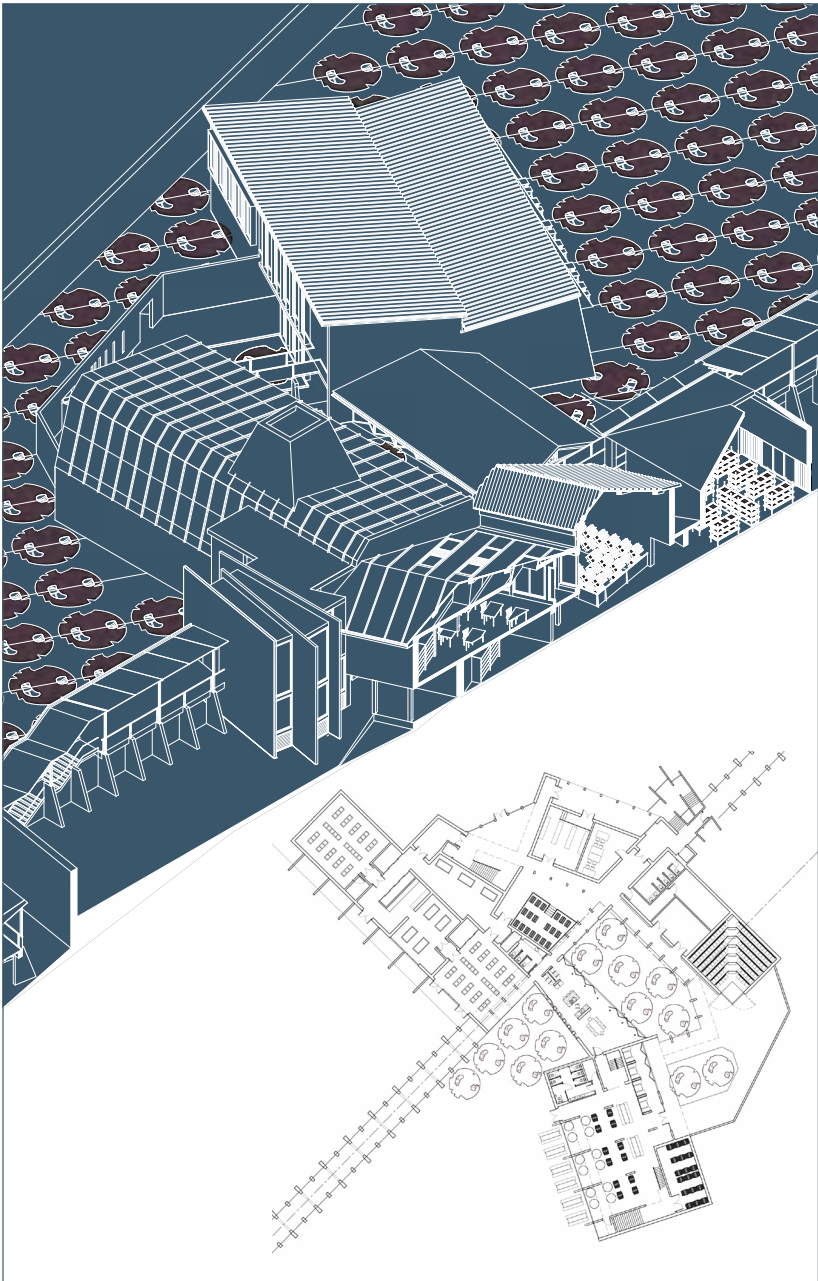
18 | (next page) *Theatrum Mundi: Islands, Tanks and Terrain*

19 | (next page; inset) *Sea-Level Plan: Coral Protection Agency (Kate Murphy)*



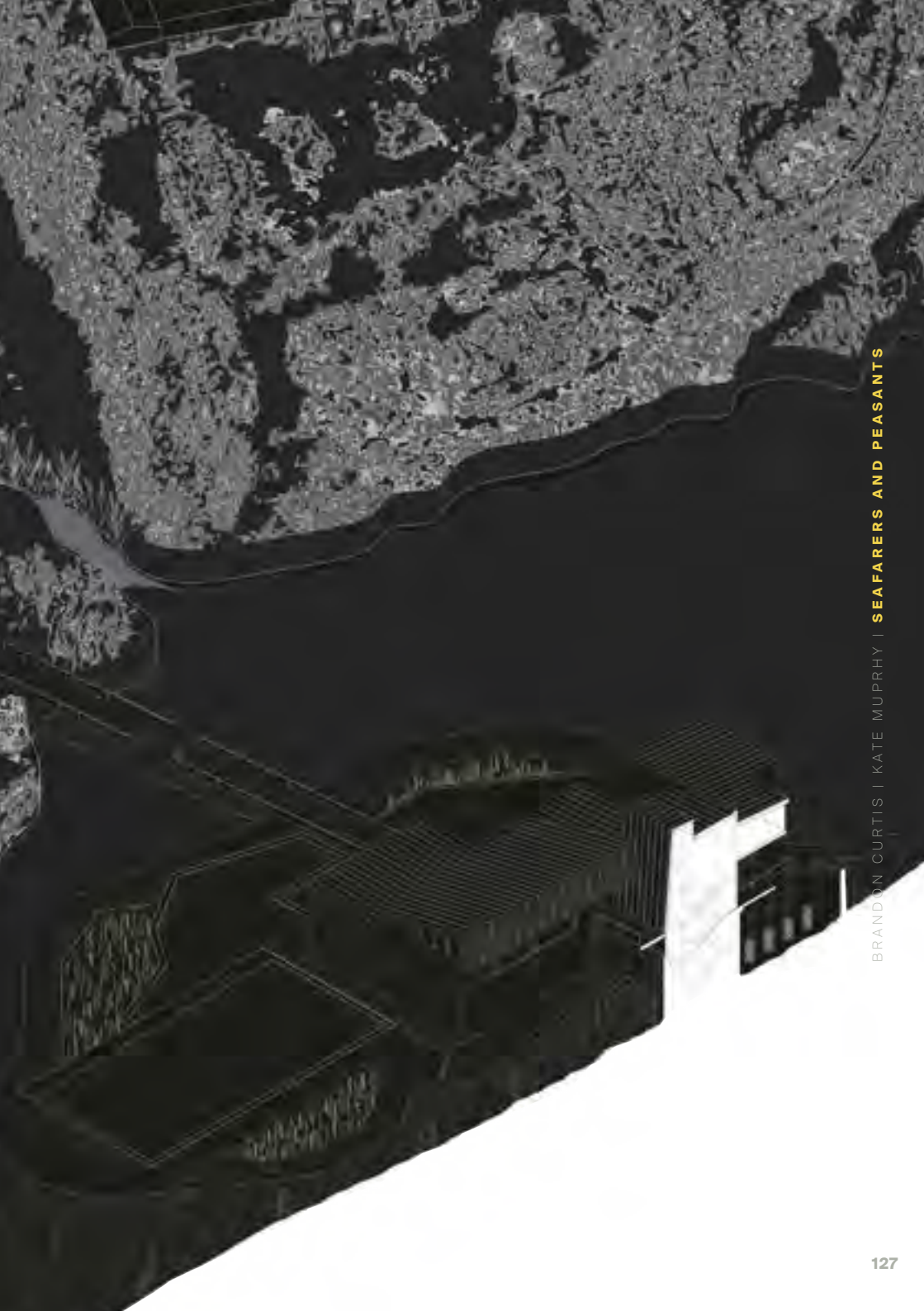


BRANDON CURTIS | KATE MURPHY | **SEAFARERS AND PEASANTS**



20-21 | Isometric Section and Ground Floor Plan: Winery and Fashion School (Brandon Curtis)

22 | Isometric Section: Coral Protection Agency and Public Swimming Pools (Kate Murphy)



BRANDON CURTIS | KATE MURPHY | **SEAFARERS AND PEASANTS**

Site: Via Emanuele Paterno. Fiume Oreto.
Programme: Culinary School & Restaurant; Public Swimming Pools; Market Hall.

12

MARKET FORCES

COUNTERS, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

RUBY TAI | ZHANG WANG | ZHU YANLUN

Three of the historic districts of Palermo are known locally by the names of their respective markets: *La Loggia* is known as *La Vucciria*, *Il Capo* is used interchangeably with the formal *Monte de Pietà* (or the Arabic *Seracaldio*), and *Ballaro* in place of *Albergheria*. Of these three markets the largest is the oldest: *Ballaro*, stretching from the line of the old Phoenician city wall to the *Porta Sant'Agata* in the Arabic City wall. In *Ballaro* are all the products of the landscape: tomatoes, fennel, melons, grapes, and beans. The market therefore can be seen as an index of the productive capacity of a landscape, and of the seasons and conditions of the landscape.

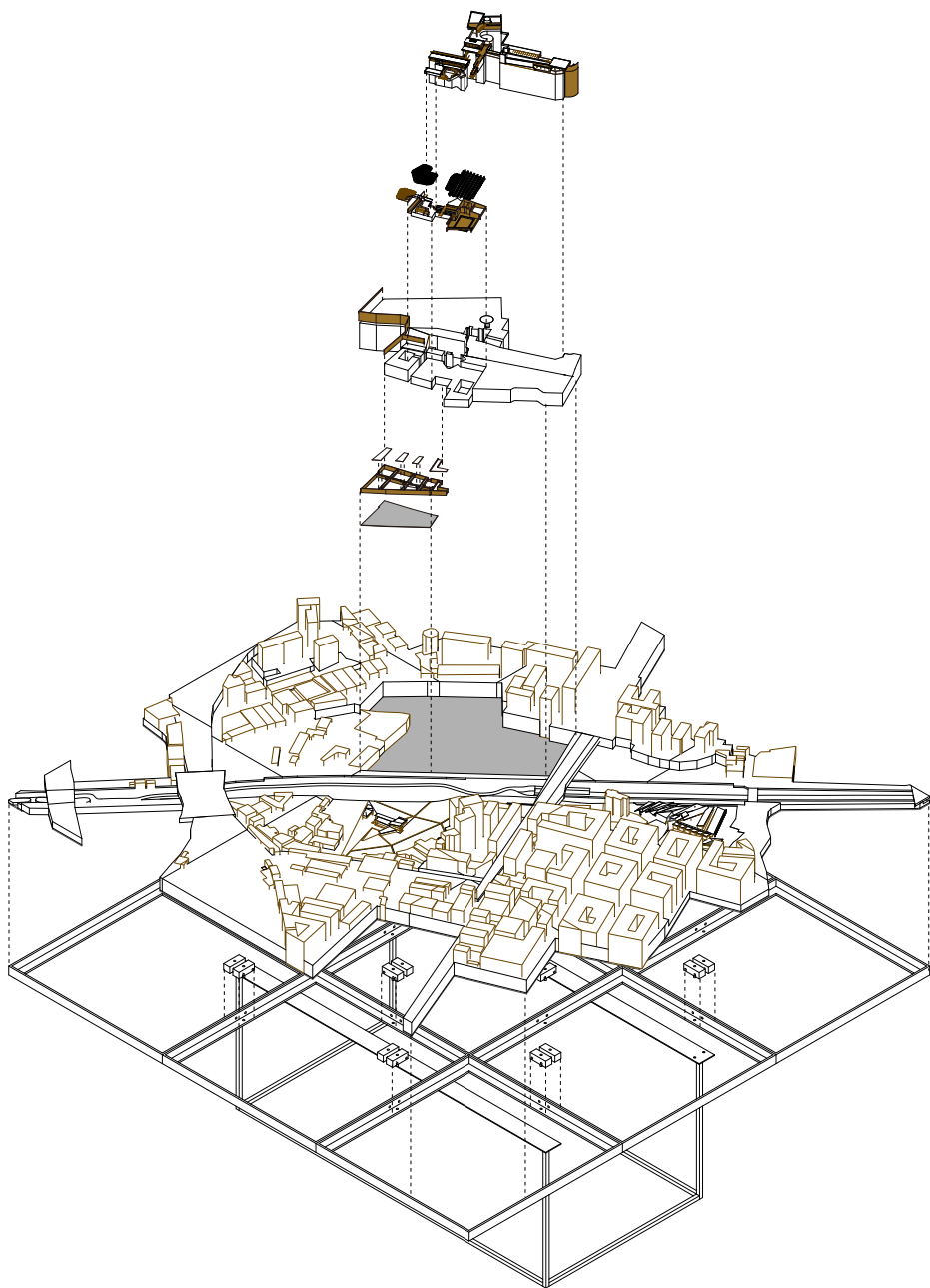
As Palermo has developed, its productive landscape has been stressed to the point of near exhaustion. Following the sack of the *Conca d'Oro* what farmland remains occupies *terrains vagues*, spaces along the river Oreto and beneath railway bridges, spaces that are insufficient to sustain the markets. *Market Forces* reactivates the Oreto river as space of agriculture in the city by developing a tectonics of markets and gates (*porta*). The Oreto flood valley is one of the last un-built landscapes in Palermo. By understanding how the market operates (its infrastructures, produce, seasons, landscapes), these proposals bring an understanding of season, ground and soil to this neglected river. Three programmes – a Culinary School, a Water Treatment Laboratory paired with public swimming pools, and a Botanical Centre and Market – collaborate to reactivate abandoned farmland and the surrounding community, and to sustain the historic market at *Ballaro*.



1| Theatrum Mundi model/installation: Building-Landscapes







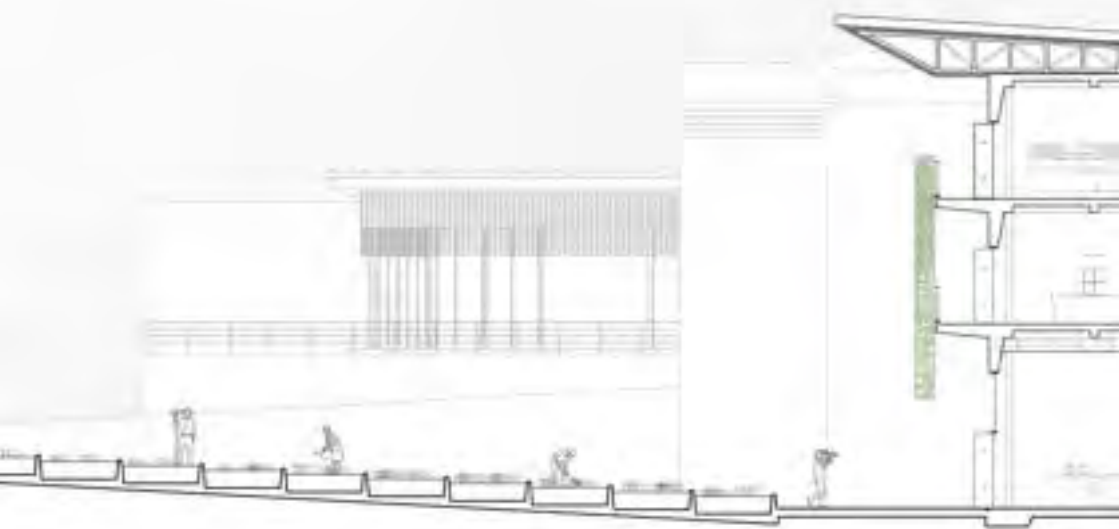
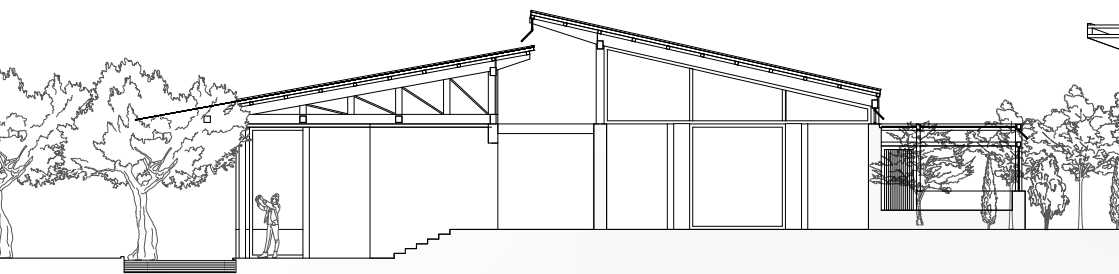


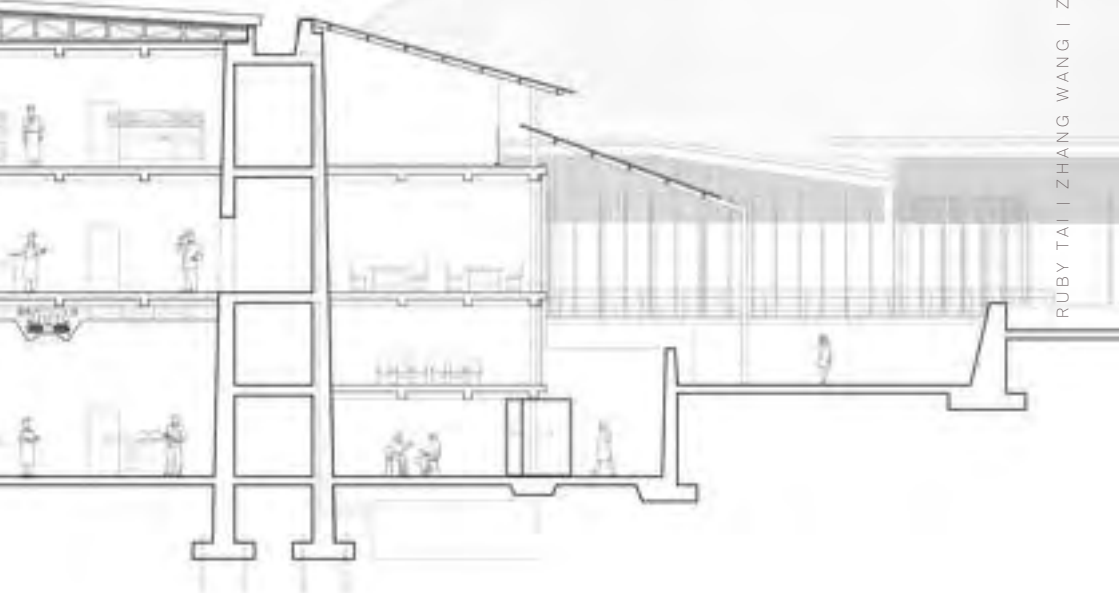
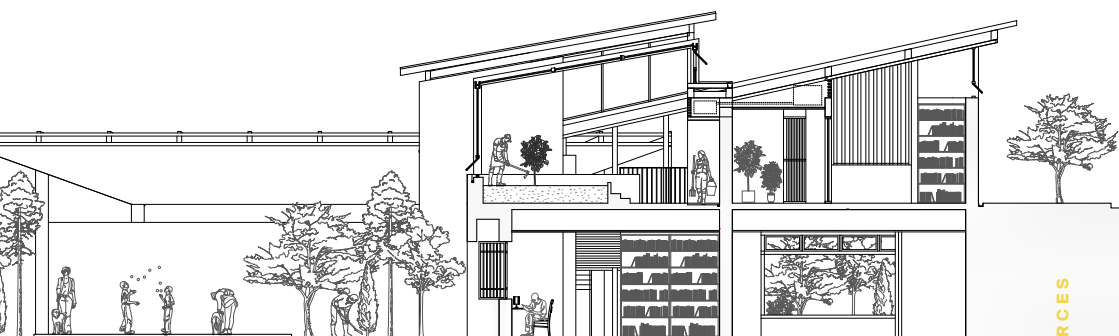


13 | Proposed Exploded Isometric (*Zhang Wang*)

14 | Proposed Site Plan (*Zhang Wang*)





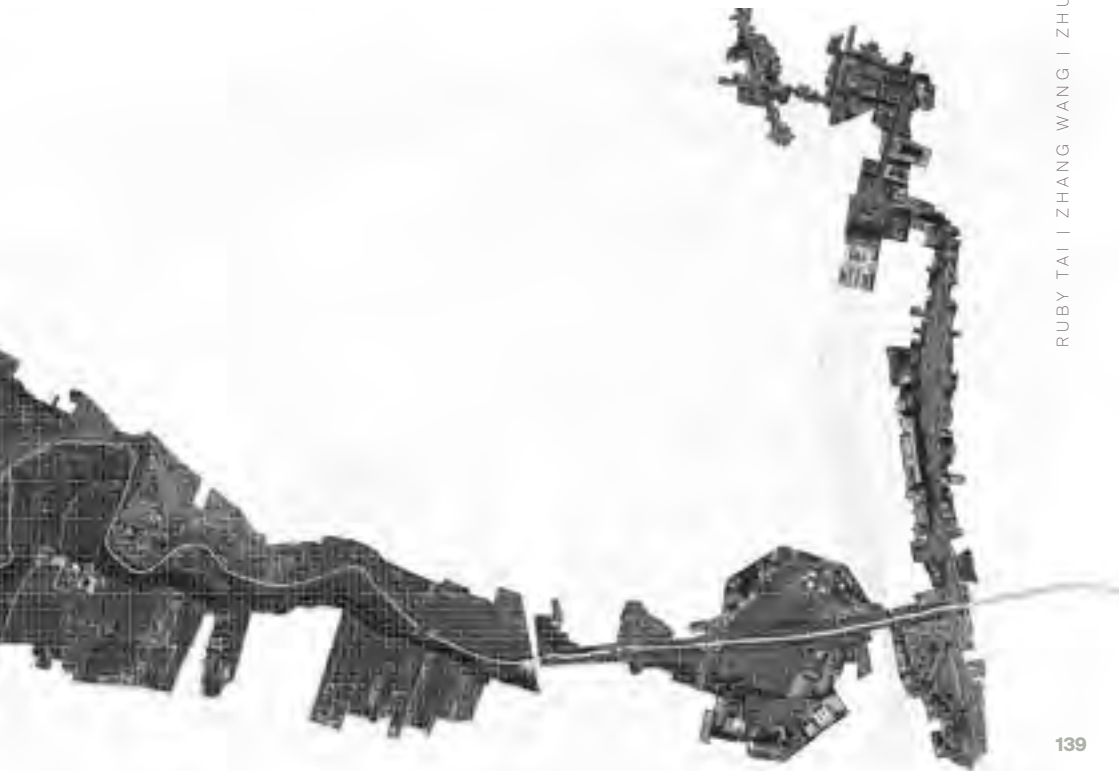






17-19 | Site Photographs, Oreto River. October 2018 (*Zhu Yanlun*)

20 | Hortus Mundi: Productive territories of the Oreto River Valley



Site: Via Cappuccini, Piazza Danisinni. Danisinni.
Programme: Research Laboratories; Public Meeting Space; The Museum of Qanats.

13

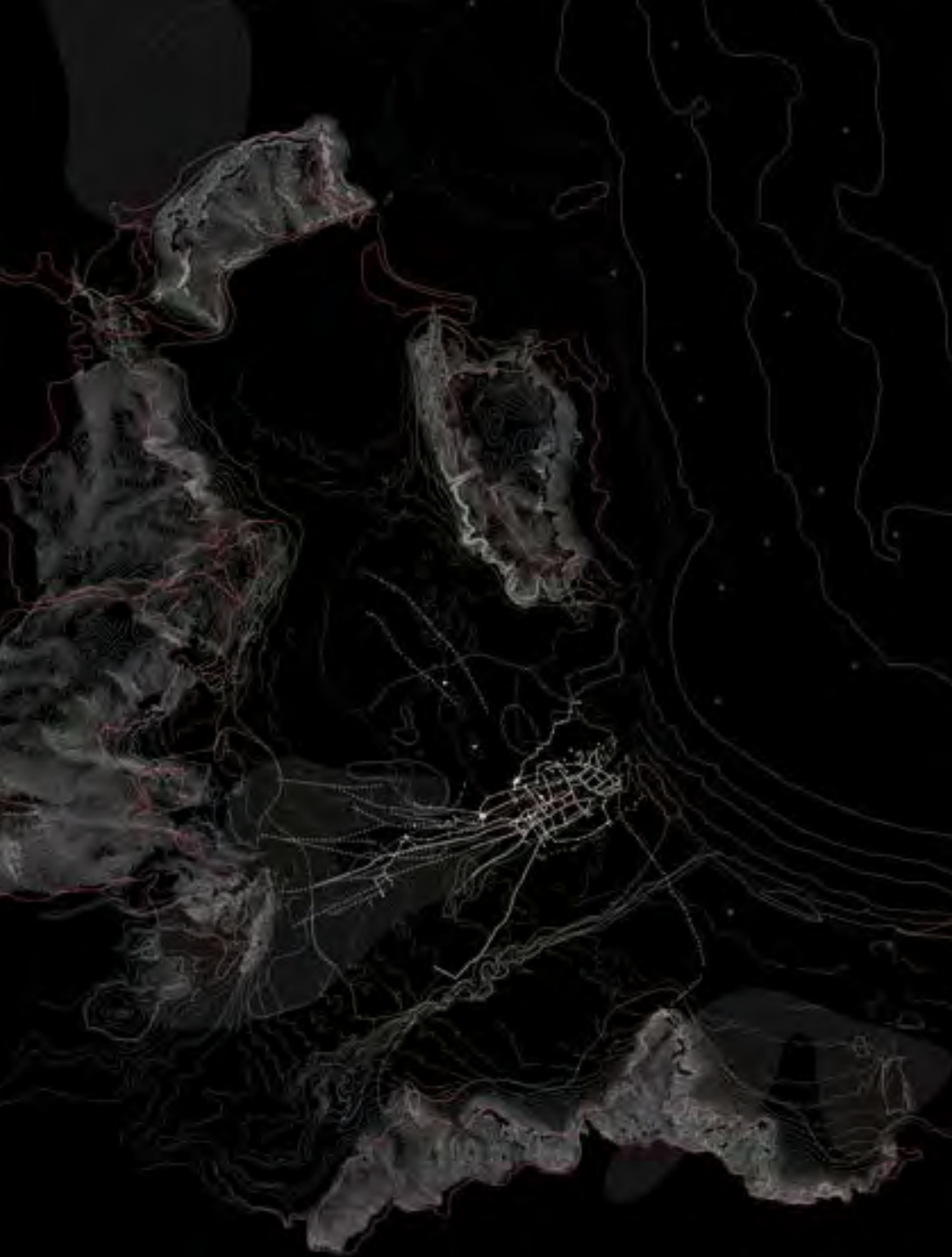
UNCHARTED WATERS

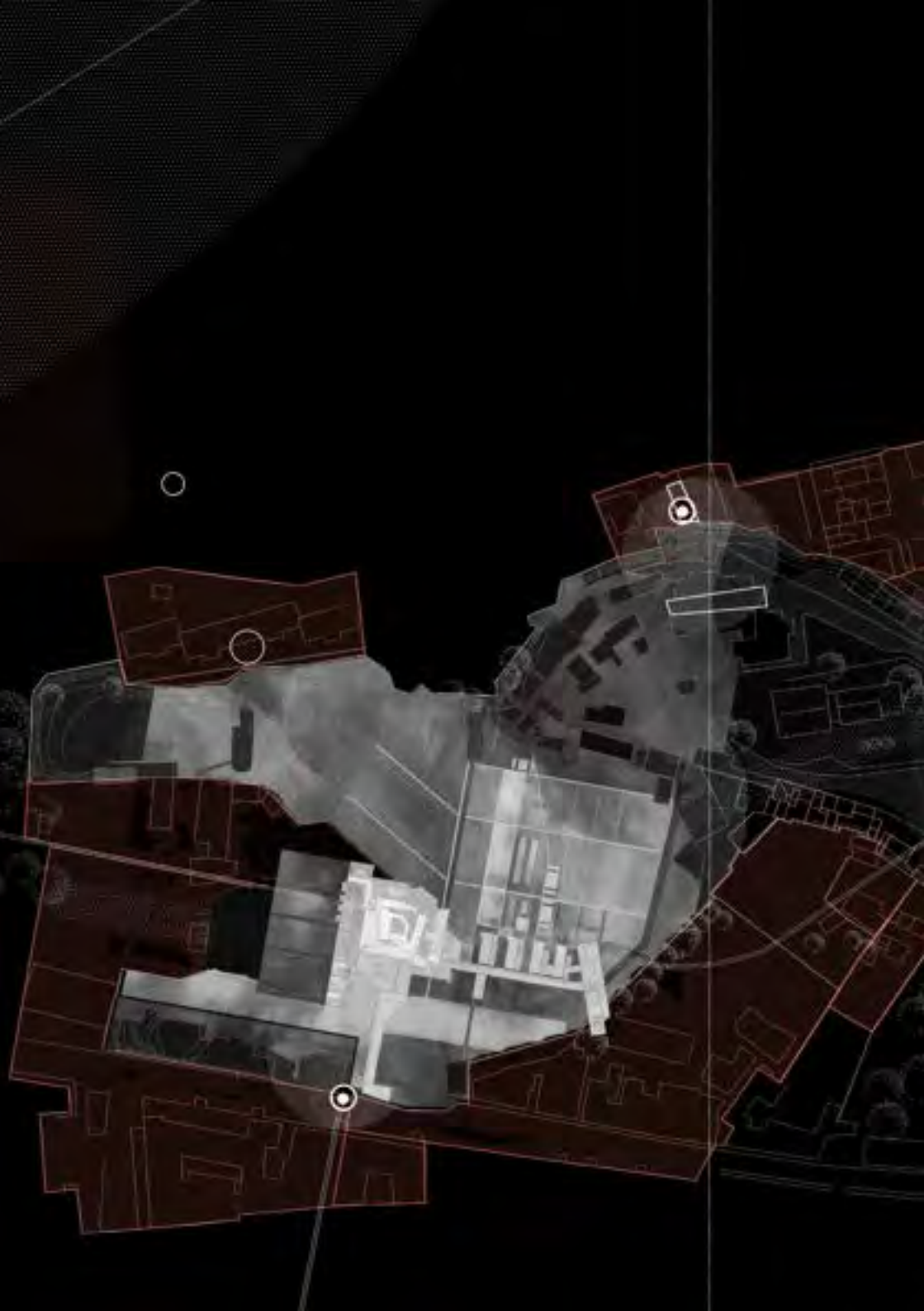
NEW (OLD) INSTITUTIONS OF WATER

HOLLY POULTON | MALIINA TOIVAKKA | HANNAH WILLIAMS

Palermo was once a city of water. Four rivers flowed through the city, and below ground a shelf of dense clay – stretching from the *Madonie* mountains to the Tyrrhenian sea – held naturally filtered water in a vast aquifer. This aquifer, exploited since the period of Arabic Rule (827-1061CE), was vital to the fertility of the *Conca d'Oro* and, by extension, the wealth of the city, which flourished as a result of this vast agricultural landscape. Ancient infrastructures exploited this aquifer passively. Thousands of wells and channels (*Qanats*) brought water to the city, water distribution towers (*Castelleti*) built into the city walls provided free drinking water through bundled clay pipes (*Catusi*) and sustained fountains for cooling public spaces, small stone reservoirs (*Gebbia*) fed gardens and fields. Today, these infrastructures are dormant, and any appreciation of the delicacy of this water-landscape has been lost. The intense (and largely illegal) expansion of the city in the wake of World War II separated the city from its aquifer, both literally and in the minds of Palermitani, to the extent that Palermo, a city frequently in drought, now sells its water to passing cruise ships.

Uncharted Waters seeks to bring a new porosity to the concrete skin cast over the *Conca d'Oro*, reconnecting Palermo to its subterranean water source. *Catusi*, *Qanats*, Scirocco rooms and *Gebbia* are deployed as contemporary programmes – testing facilities for developing water filtration techniques, drought resistant and halophyte crops, and educational and community facilities – re-vitalising Palermo's water politics.







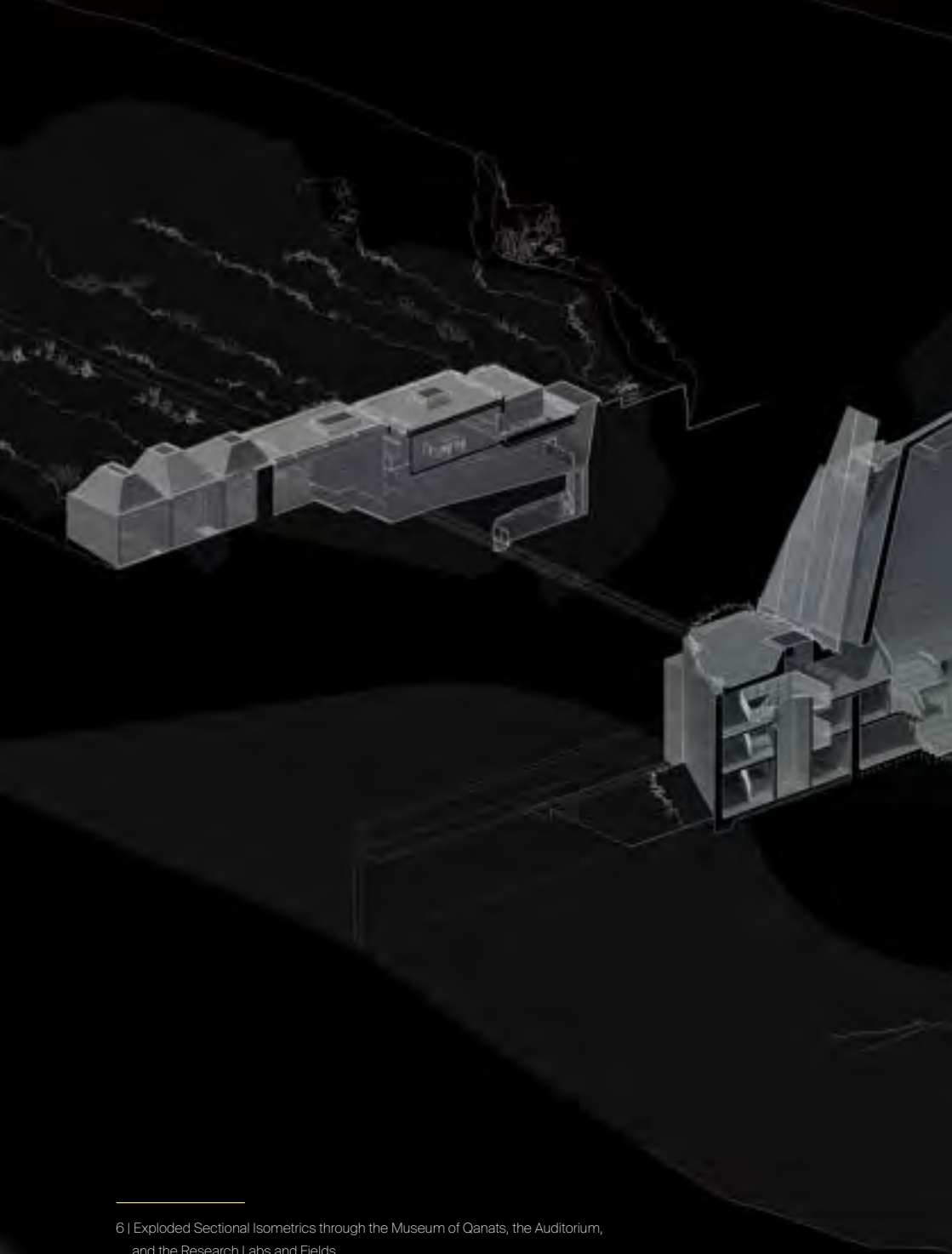


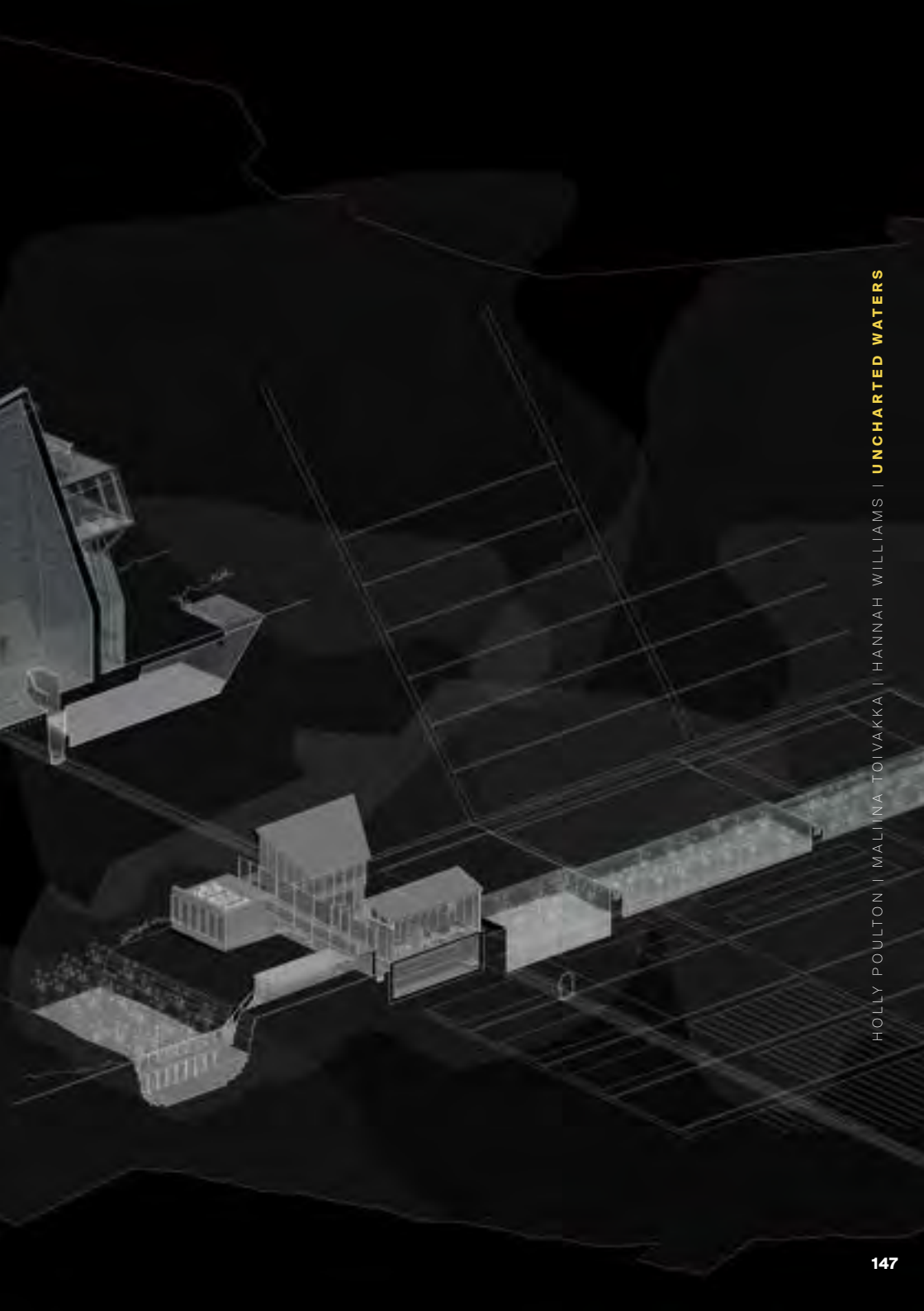


2 | (previous page) Site Plan: Agronomical and Hydrological Institute, Danisinni

3 | Model of the Agronomical and Hydrological Institute

4-5 | Views of the Auditorium and Qanat Museum







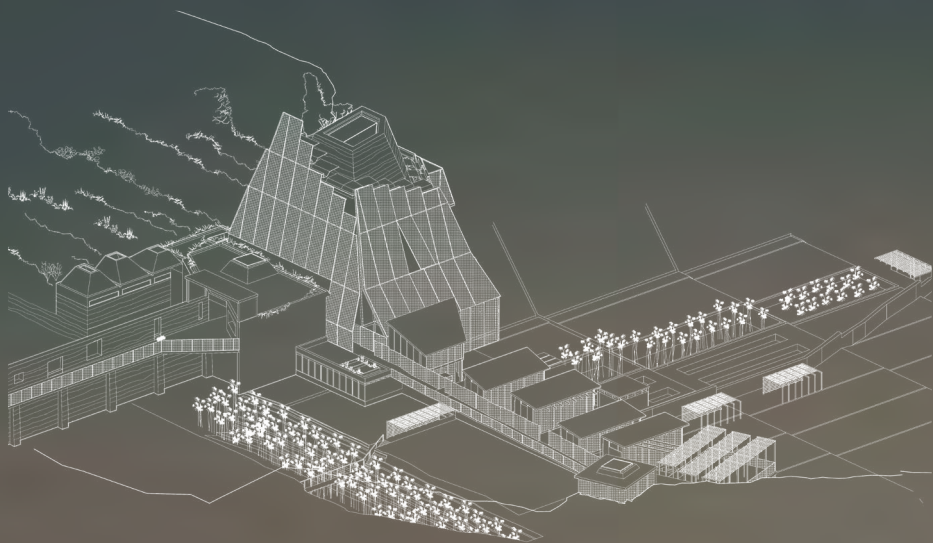
7-8 | Site Sections: Agronomical and Hydrological Institute

9 | (next page; inset) Isometric: Agronomical and Hydrological Institute

10 | (next page) View of the Research Labs, Fields and Auditorium



HOLLY POULTON | MALIINA TOIVAKKA | HANNAH WILLIAMS | **UNCHARTED WATERS**



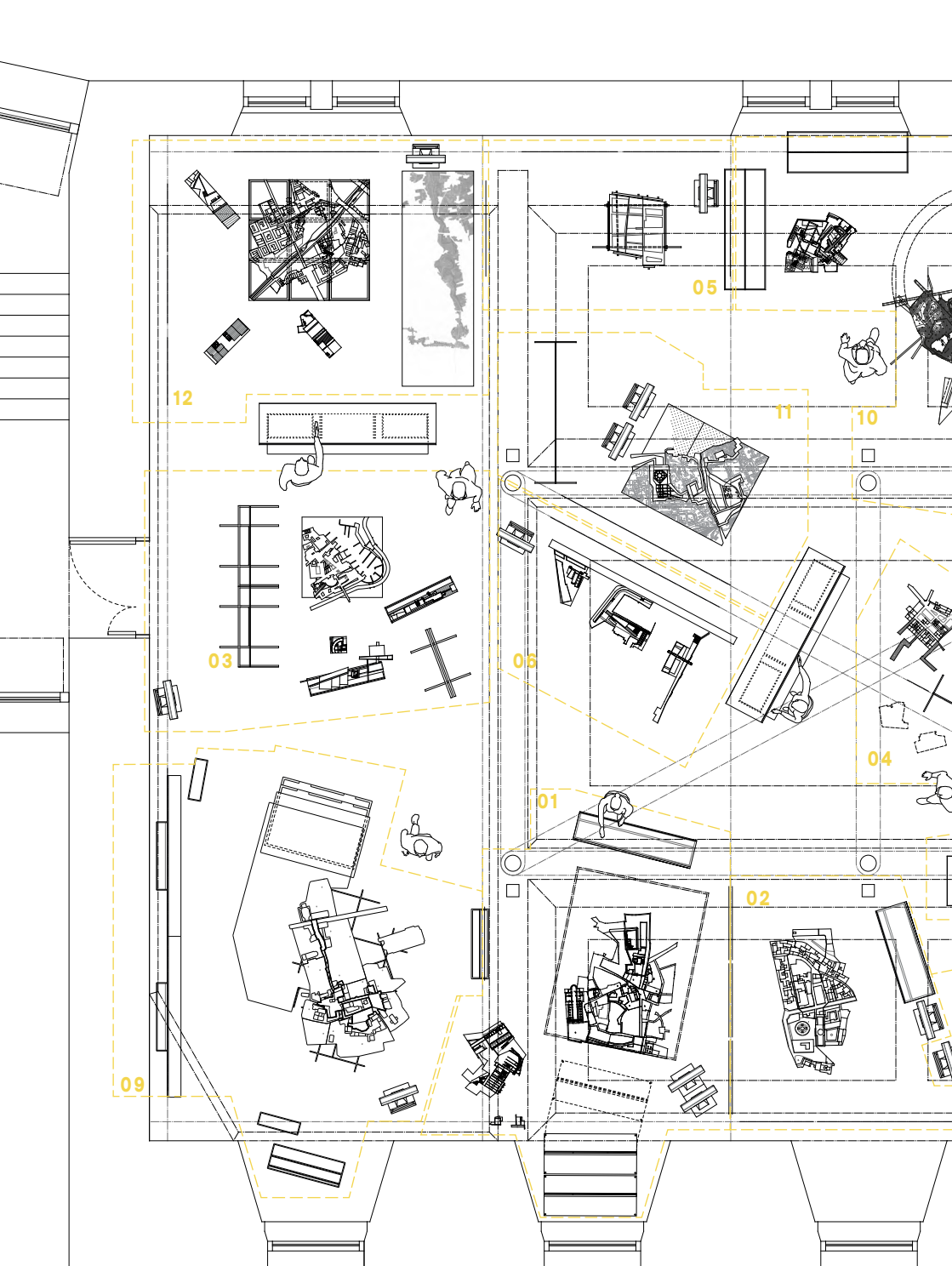


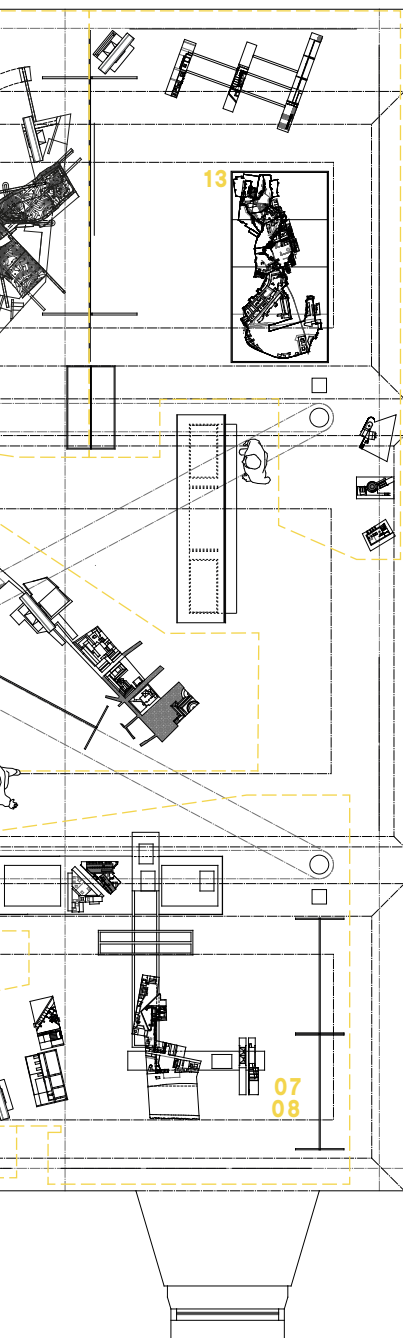


Parco dell'Oreto, Costa Sud.

14:24, Friday 19th October, 2018. Maria Mitsoula







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Exhibition: Studio 5, Minto House.

May 2019, Maria Mitsoula.

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IMAGE REFERENCES

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Inside Back Cover | Foro Italico, Kalsa, Palermo, Sunday 14th October, 2018, Maria Mitsoula



Foro Italico, Kalsa.

12:13, Sunday 14th October, 2018, Maria Mitsoula.





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