

# Archiving how exactly



## *note*

this part of the journal was created in two stages:

First is as recollection of the project development - written and edited retroactively from the end of January up until the end of March (2025);

Second is consistent notes on the last phase of the project, updated weekly until ~~end of May~~ mid June.

# Interiors Buildings Cities

## MSc3/4 | *Palace*

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# Contents

03-01   <b>deSingel Continued</b>	06
Reconfigurations	
Brief Research on Stairs	
03-02   <b>A Difficult Whole</b>	36
P3   <i>The Fragment</i>	
03-03   <b>Refinements</b>	60
Changes	
P4   <i>Shared Foundations</i>	
03-04   <b>Shared Foundations</b>	98
In Between	

03 - 01

deSingel  
Continued

## *P2 feedback*

After the P2 I started to work from analysing the notes and comments I got from Sam, Amy and Jurjen.

Most of the feedback concerned my general ambition - how I see the VAI as part of deSingel and as the institution hosting the archive.

I found Jurjen's comment particularly appealing - his view on the fact I should investigate the existing from the foundations, not even to demolish less but to be aware where exactly I build upon.

☐ Discussion: reflection on research method, data and answer in a broader context, such as position in society or academic debate and possible relation with design

## NOTES:

All under ONE roof

Research questions

Address De Singel as a cultural campus

The mission of a contemporary architecture archive?

How to intervene in De Singel?

Maybe you do too much. Dive into the matter, columns, foundations, etc. "P"

Q slide 18: What happened in the zone for the red and blue hall in its original state?

Q p39: yellow red, why are you demolishing buildings on the ground floor or only part to create an entrance?

Q All the institutions under one roof: which roof? It could be more evident.

Q Demolition: You removed the ground floor additions next to the big courtyard. Why all, and not more precisely, when you place new functions in this location? Same remark as Jurjen's further.

Q Why depot in the existing auditorium?

Q View from the highway: expression of your addition: what is the materiality?

Q: What would impact the courtyard when entering through it? Will the ground remain grass?

Questions Amy

- Uniting institutions but creating a new institution for the Vai (new identity). How do you allow for a specific institutional identity? What kind of institutional culture would you like to develop for VAI?
- How does the VAI relate to the city?

Questions Jurjen

- Showing what you demolish and build. Have you considered 'weiterbauen' idea? De Singel is an interesting idea as a continuously refurbished building. Have you considered not considering demolition but continuing to build on existing foundations? On one foundation instead of under one roof.

Questions Amy

- Could the building act like a sound barrier?

Tips:

Slide 4 You can mention that the studio has made these exceptionally well-made models.

Beautifully arranged presentation, however text on some slides is way too small.

You might also want to explain to an external what the Vai means. Flanders Architecture Institute

[Click here to  
finalize text](#)

## MENTOR TEAM

Not  
present

Mentor Team

Names

- ☐ Main mentor
- ☐ Second mentor
- ☐ Third mentor
- ☐ Delegate of the Board of Examiners
- Other

Sam De Vocht

Matthijs Klooster

Amy Thomas

Laura Cipriani

## EVALUATION COMPLETED

Sent on:

With this referral, (further) study delay may be avoided, optionally with the aid of the graduation group.

Save

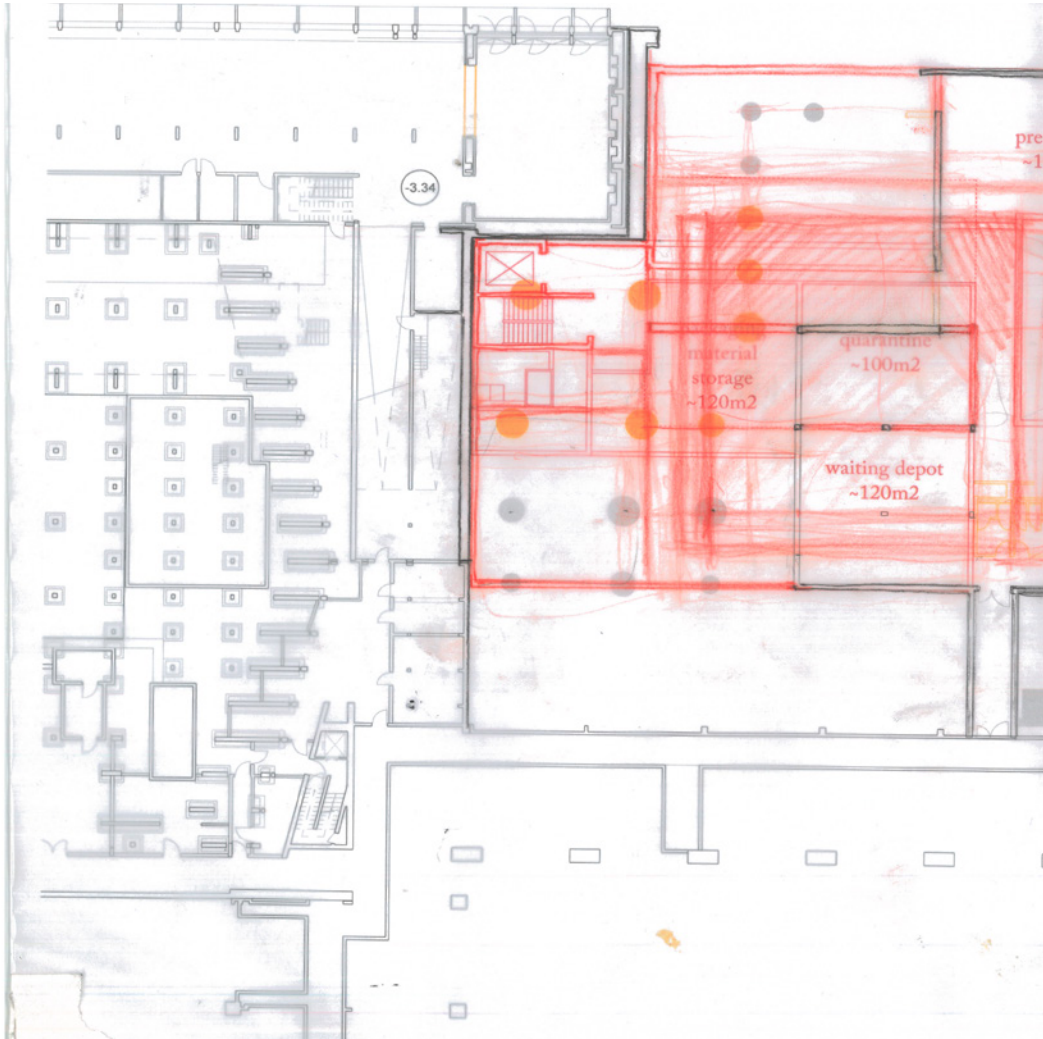
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mentors and delegate

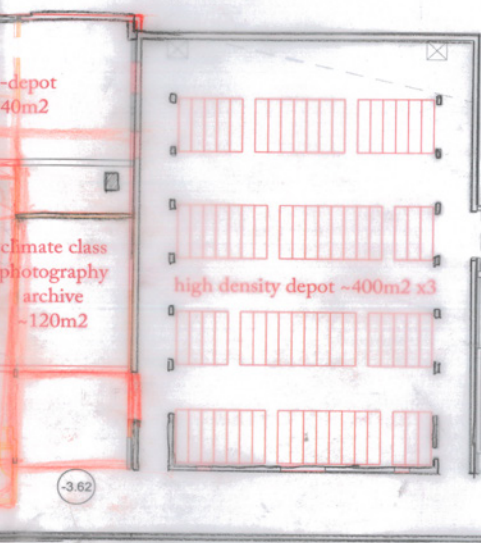
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# Reconfigurations

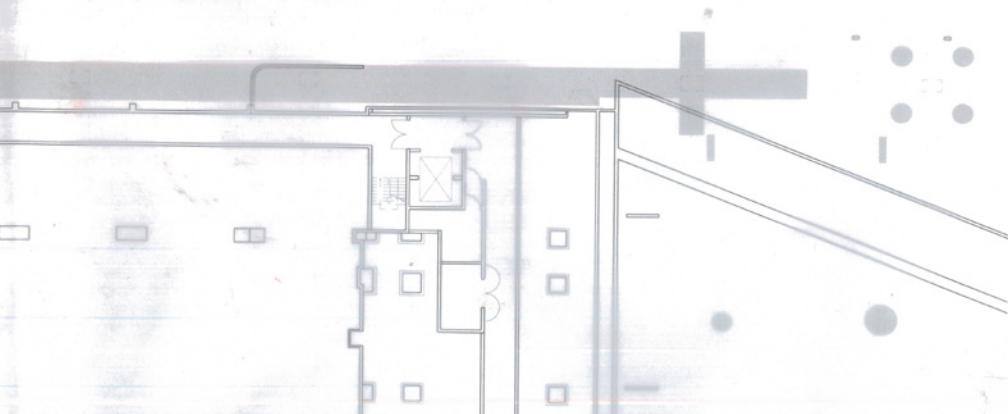
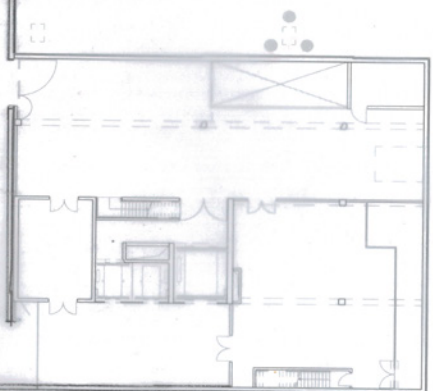
According to the major comment from my P2 presentation I started to investigate the possibilities of flipping the vector of my interest towards the existing structure and how can i build on top of that. I took the comment about consideration

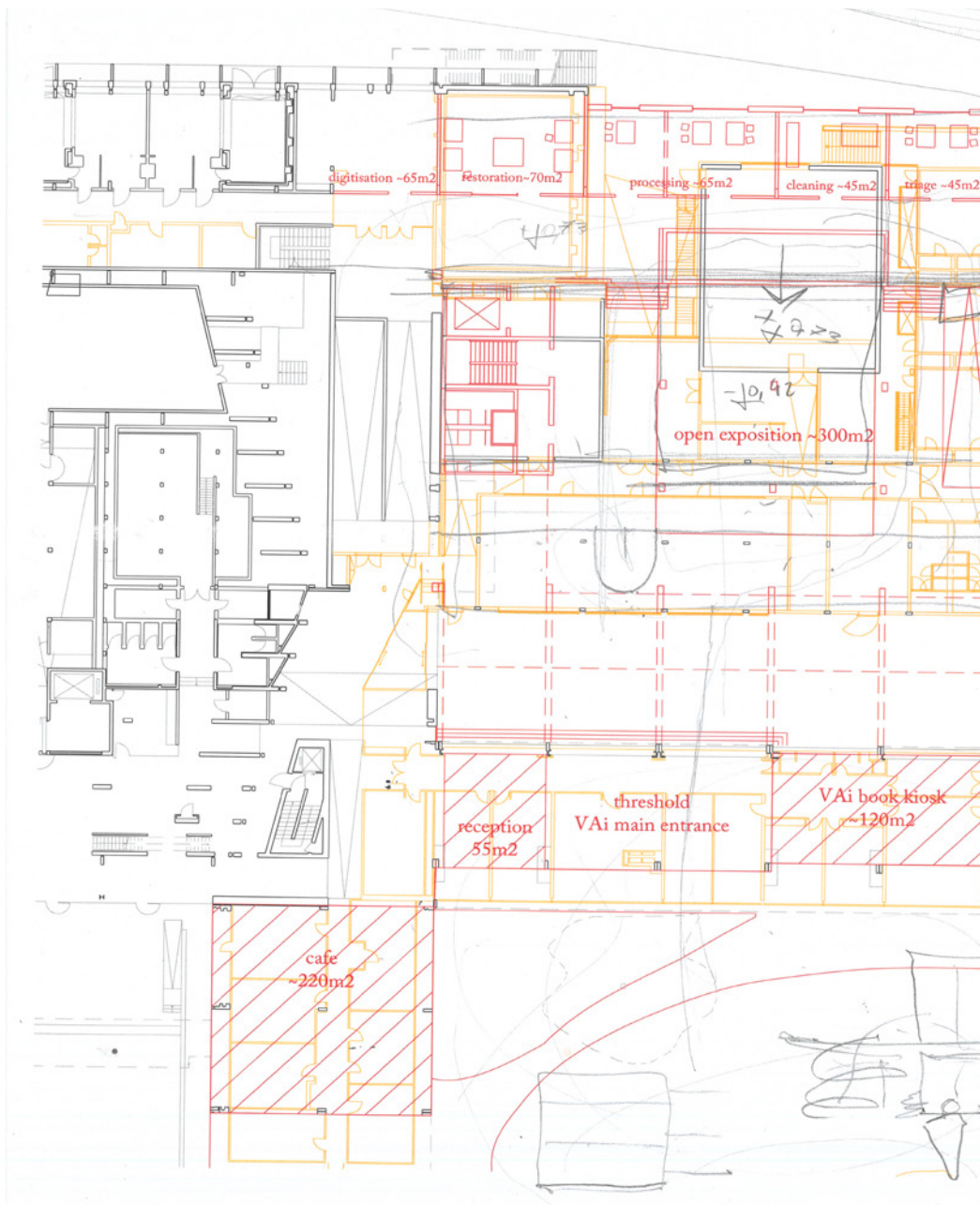
of existing foundations literally and began to reconfigure building's layout from the basement level. Those changes then affect how the layout start to shift on the upper levels.



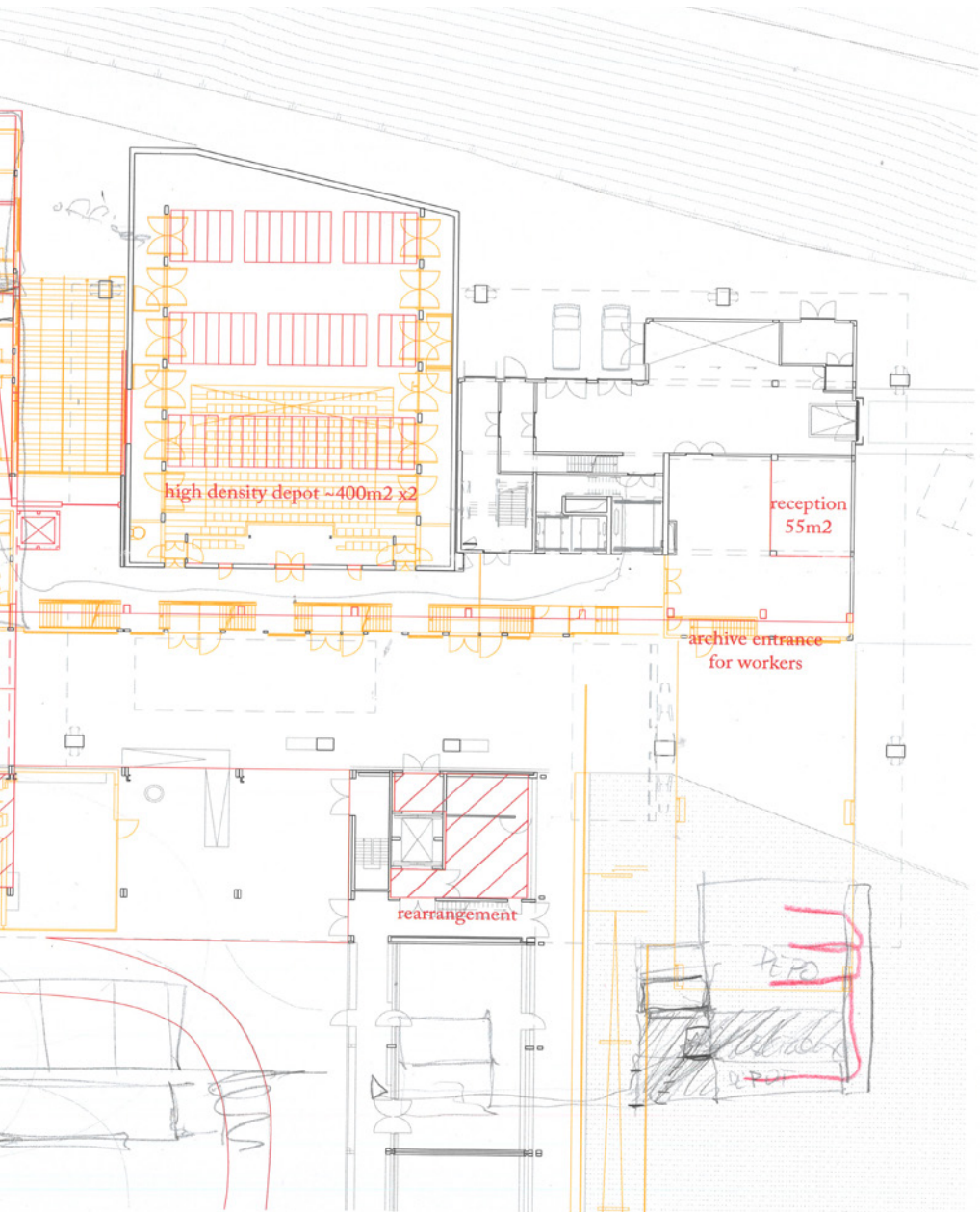


NEW FOUNDATIONS TO DICTATE  
THE STRUCTURAL GRID?







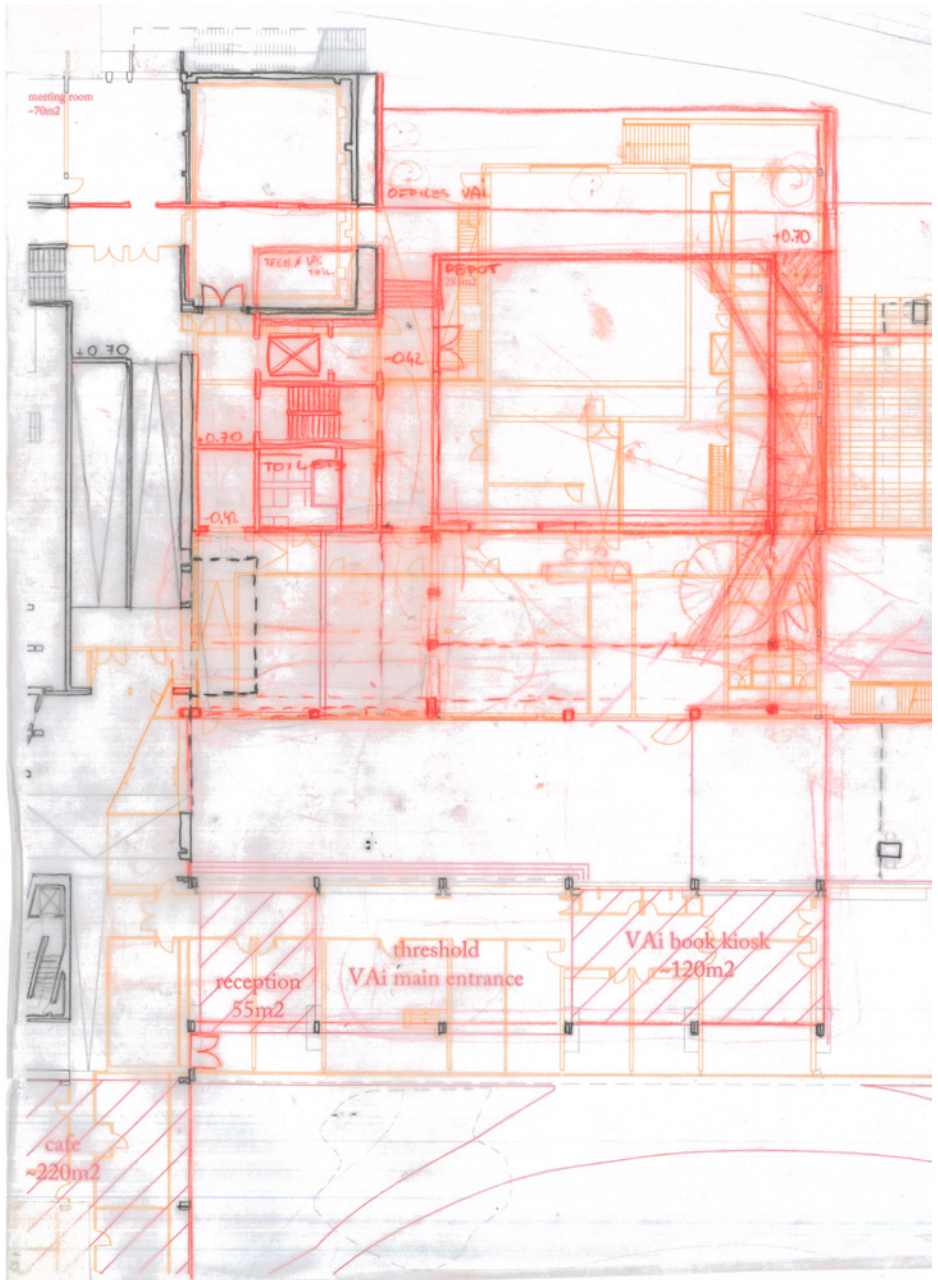


## *Levels and core*

The changes made in the basement floor affect the upper levels. Considering the fact of the level difference - being one of the main design problems for the whole proposal - I began to play a little bit more with positioning of the core - trying to optimise the circulation only with its location.

Apparently, moving the core more towards the inside of the plan allows for an easy connection of the levels (-0.42m; +0.70m; +2.95m; +4.83m).

When to look at all of them in a sequence it becomes apparent that they are really half level away from each other and a core that serves to both sides solves a lot of problems.



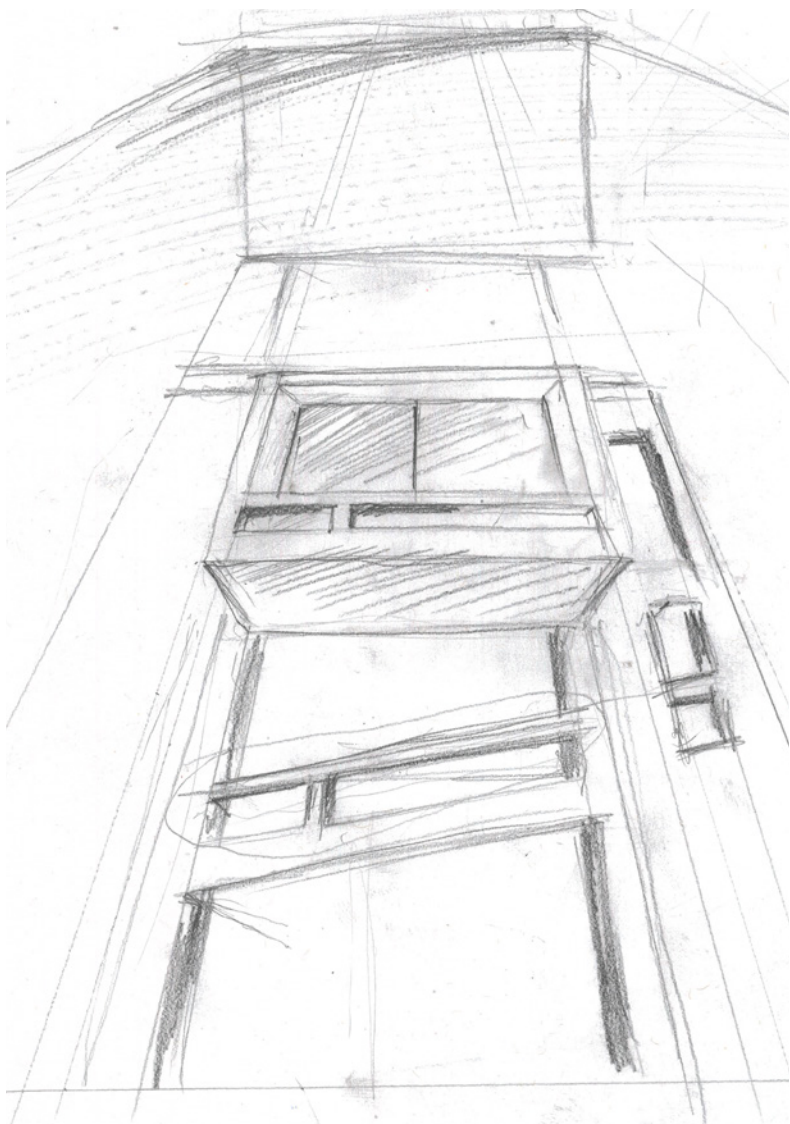
## *Koninklijke loge*

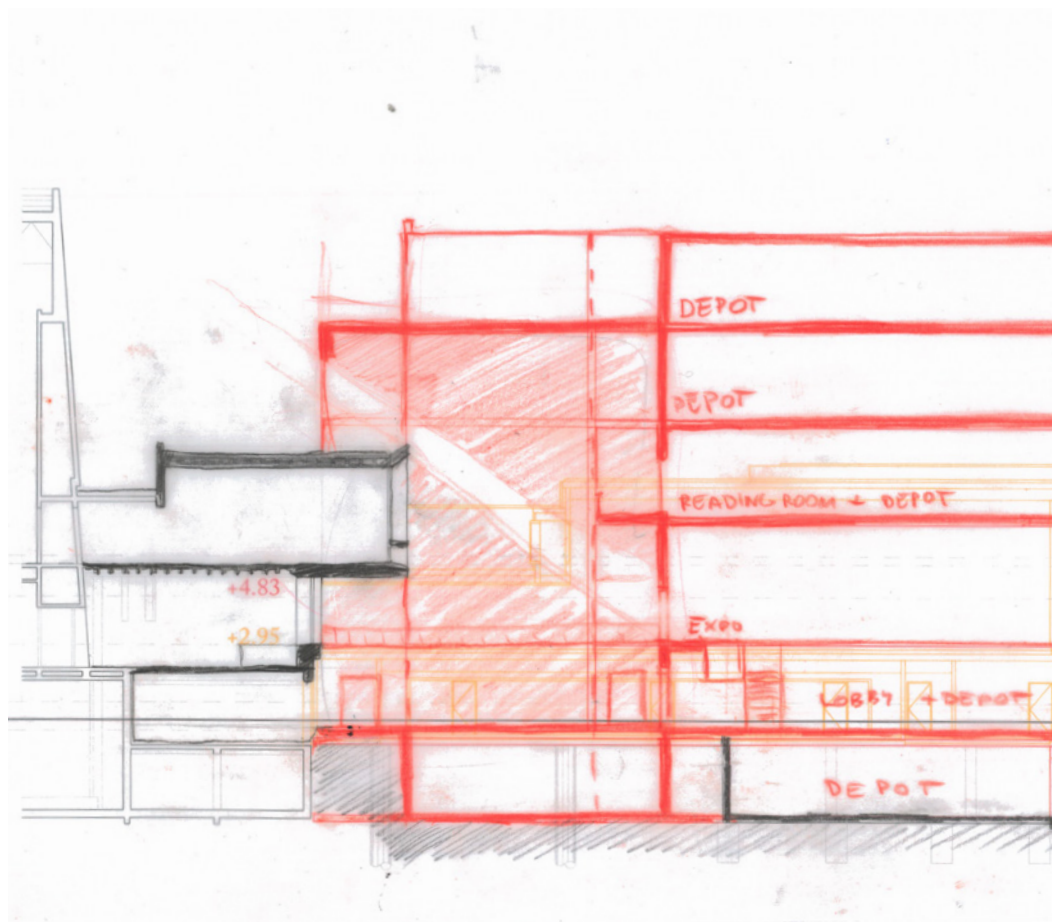
When speaking to Daniel right after the P2 he made a point asking me what is a position of my proposal towards the Royal Loggia.

In fact, up to this point, the design was pretty much ignoring the fact of the loggia being a crucial formal feature of this side of Stynen's building - the side that I directly try to connect my building to.

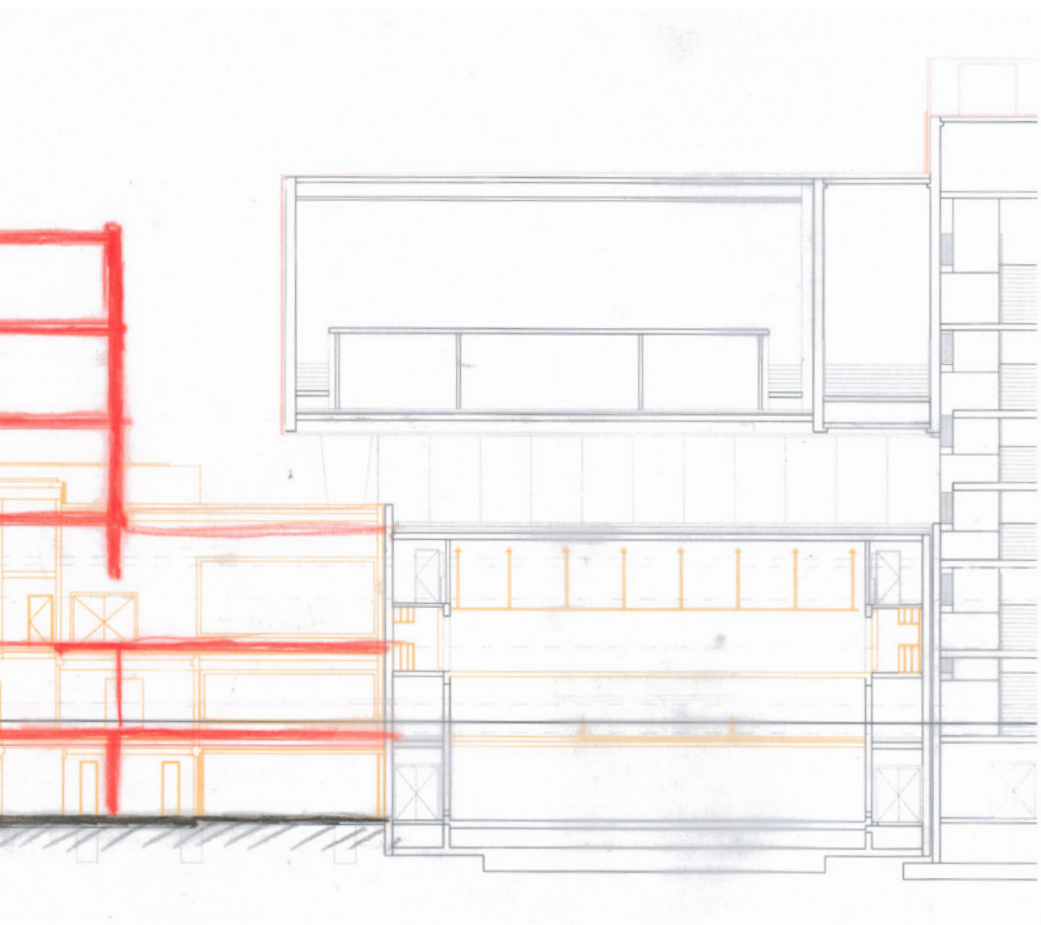
It is actually hard to twist my design in a way that the loggia becomes a present element of the public interior, however, I can create a separate interior for the loggia. A sort of light well; an up-scaled box; a giant archival container in which the loggia can be looked upon to and passed underneath.

I don't really know the other purpose of such a room yet but that will be found out in the process.



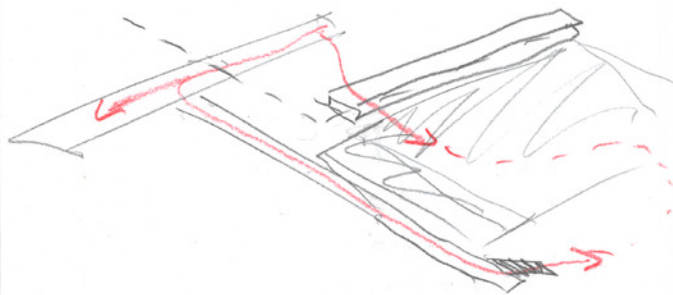






*One tough Thursday.*

- EXTENDED LANDSCAPE
- AMBITION! - FORMULATE
- MODEL - EVEN ABSTRACT
- LESS PROBLEM SOLVING
- HANS SCHAROUN - BERLIN LIBRARY
- WHAT IS THE BOX?  
WHAT IS AN INTERMEDIATE LEVEL?
- HOW CAN THE GARDEN CONNECT WITH THE FOYER
- CHANGE OF DIRECTION





This week was a tough one for my design process. The tutorial ... wasn't the best, but it had a lot of insightful comments. I heard I should reconsider what is the main ambition of the project because that is not very clear so far.

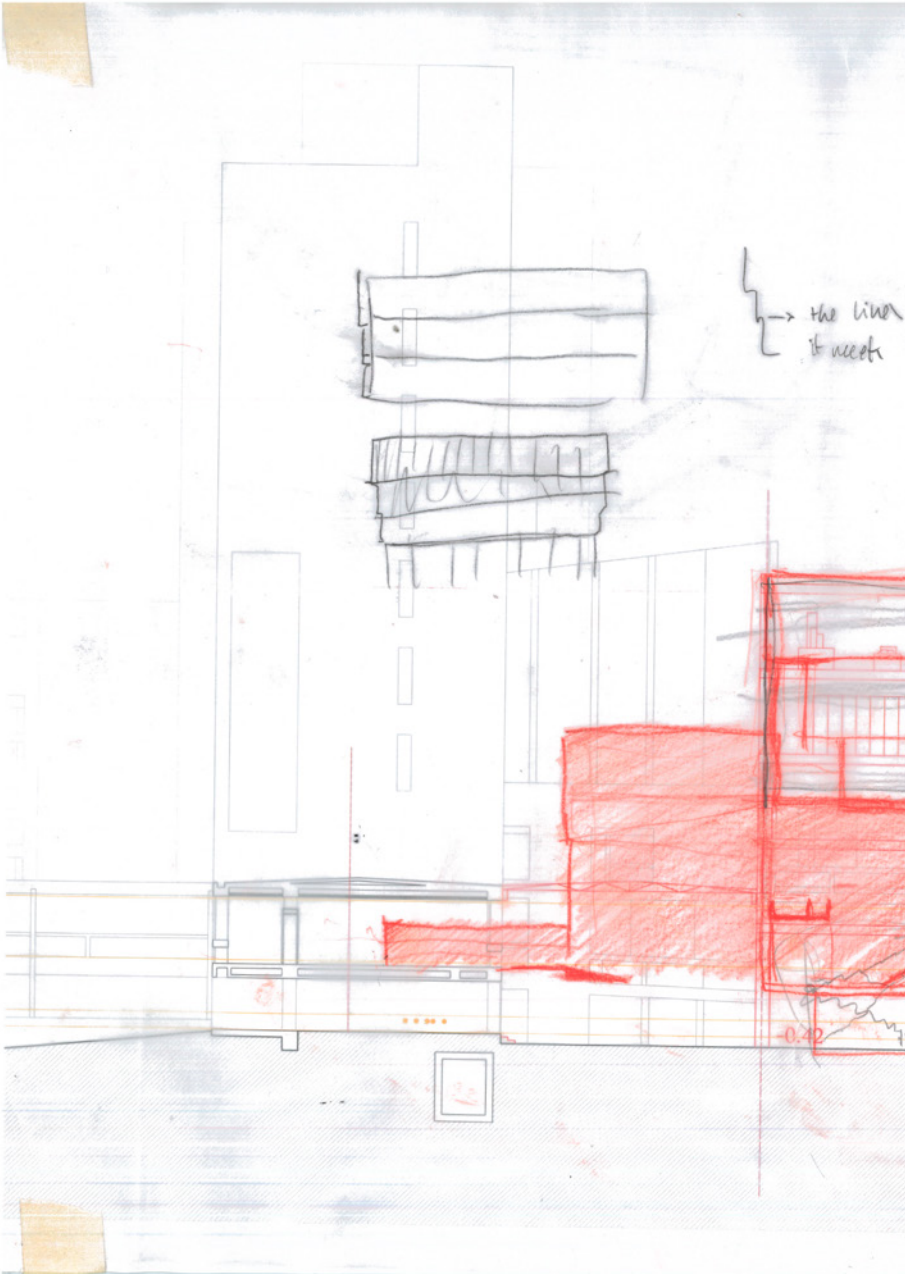
I should think of somehow twisting the levels so the expo becomes a part of the first floor - deSingel's main level where all the public spaces come together; it should somehow connect to the garden at the ground level and maybe the archive itself should hang above all that - like the book depot in State Library in Berlin (Hans Scharoun).

I was encouraged to make a model to investigate these relations - so I made a very scrappy one in the scale of 1:100 - that I forgot pictures of and beside one photo (below) the product has been lost in the process (thrown away as quick as it was shown on the next tutorial).

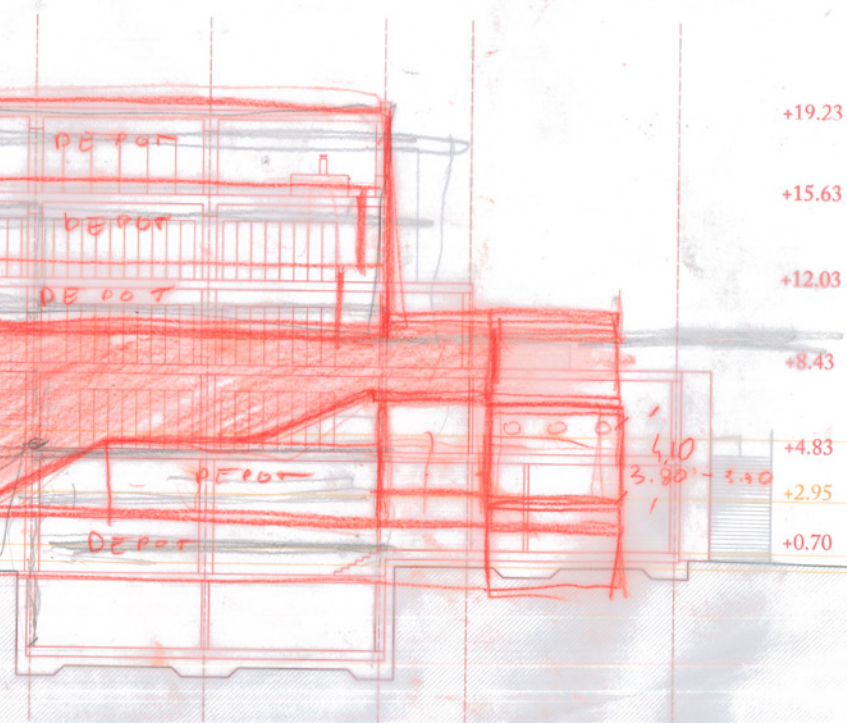
However, the model didn't really help that much in this case, but it was crucial for the BT tutorials with Matthijs - for him to understand what the building could become, and what are the technical challenges occurring.

He suggested investigating the possibility of using Vierendeel truss as a structural system, which I think I will use in the end.





depending on where  
the other structure



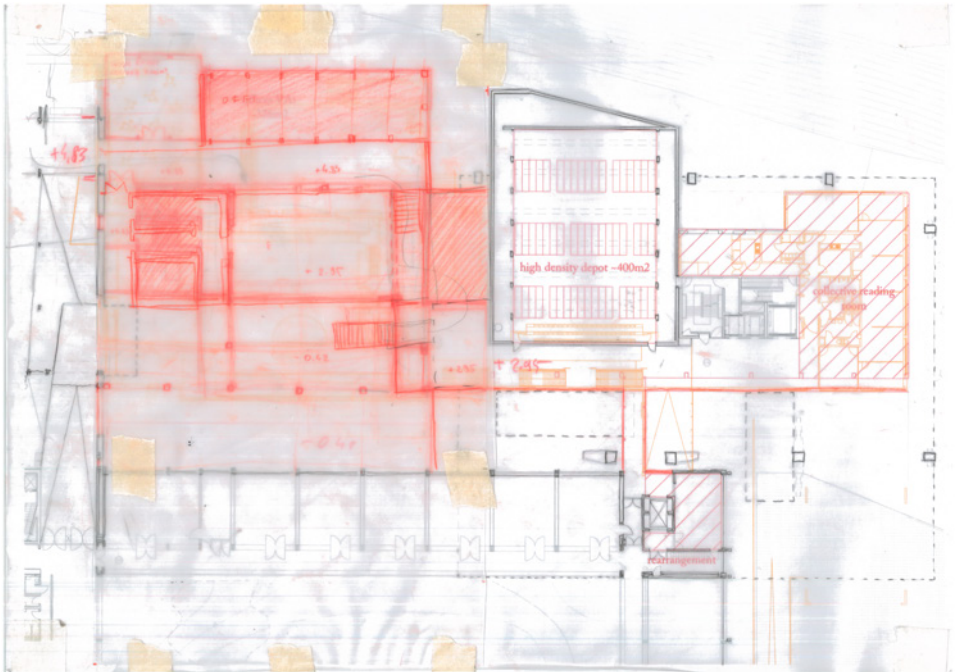
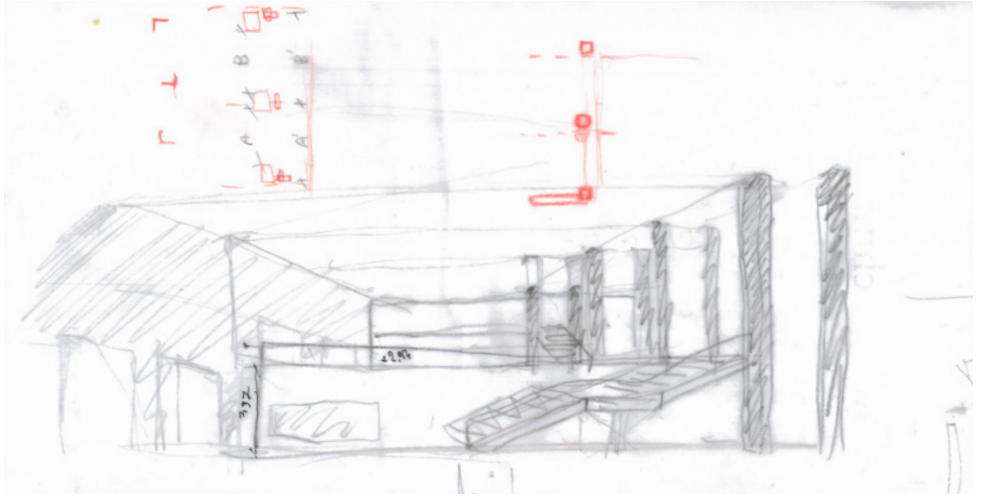
## *Artificial landscape and how to achieve that*

What my project seem to lead towards is in fact an extension to Stynen's original idea - the modernist landscape - altered from the natural conditions and extended by the artificial, architectural methods - as in Denys Lasdun's countless examples.

But how to achieve that effect - especially in a closed condition of an interior, and with a large volume hanging above it;  
How to span this volume?

I investigated multiple ways alongside with a specific vision of the interior where the perimeter is marked with a wall from one side and columns from another. The other question is where to place the stairs. But this will come.

In effect I have now: a lobby space at ground level (-0.42); an expo level at the intermediate level (+2.95 - connected to Beel's first floor) and a back foyer continuation at the first floor (+4.83 - connected to Stynen's foyer level). Under the middle level I can place the view depot that can be looked into from the lobby space.



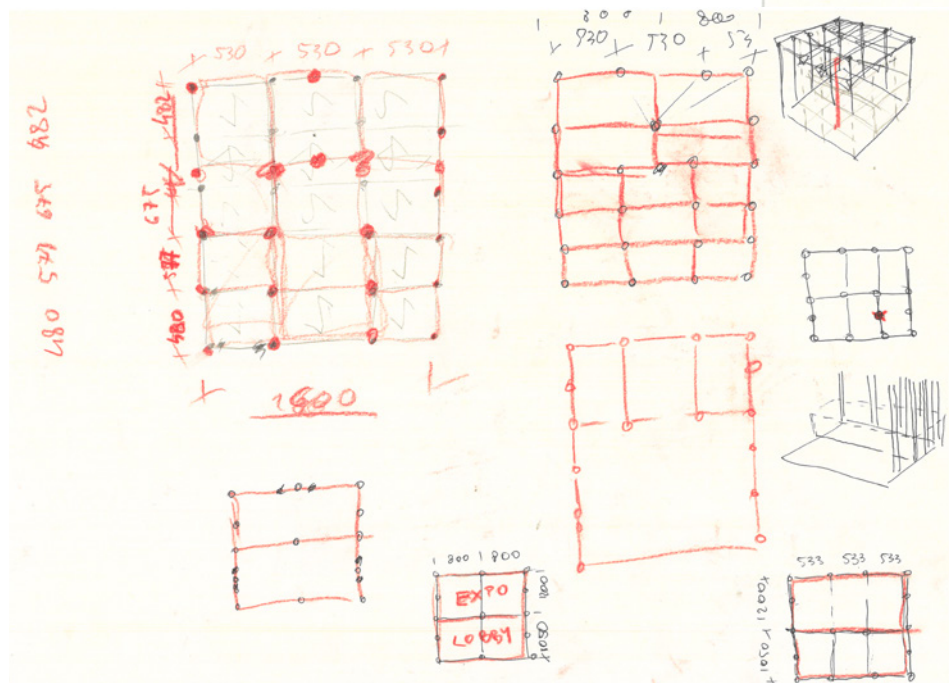


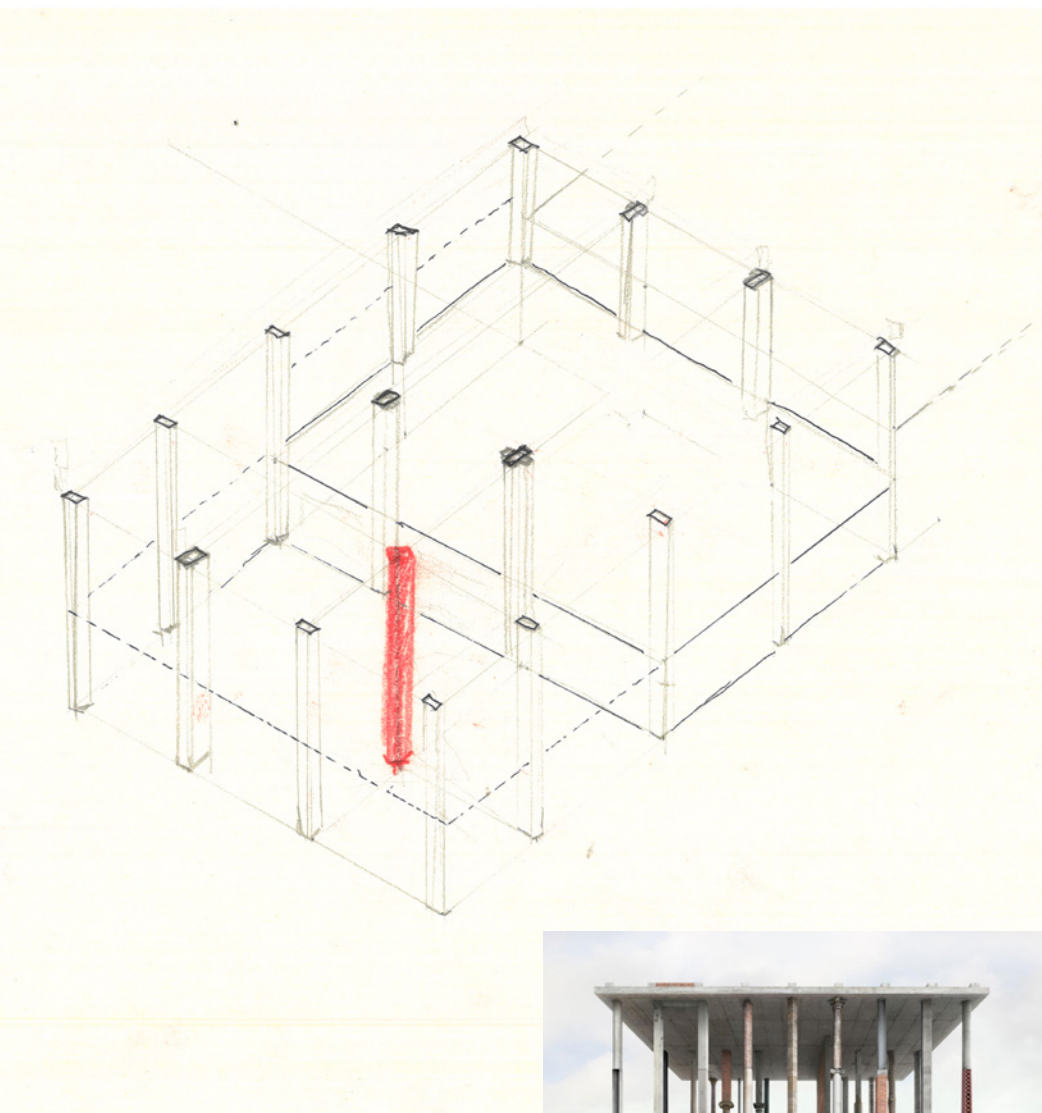
## Structural layouts

Happy with the functional layout I was still skeptical with the structural aspect of the design. I took a longer while to investigate where to place the walls or columns, how big should they be to hold the floors of depot above.

I found Filip Dujardin's photo-montage from Jan De Vylder curated BRAVOURE (Belgian Pavilion at Venice Biennale 2016) that gave me an idea that the big amount of columns could actually look quite good in that scale.

I positioned the columns on the footprint of existing columns in Beel's building hoping that I can literally build upon them and their foundations.





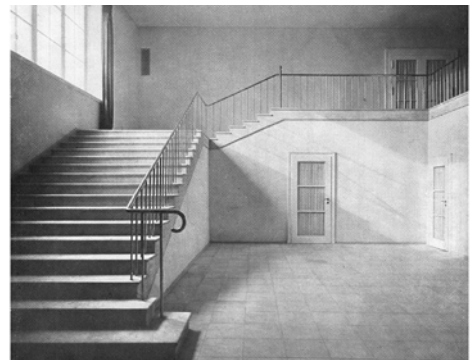
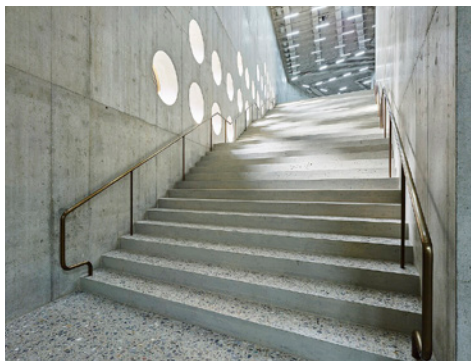
# How to climb up

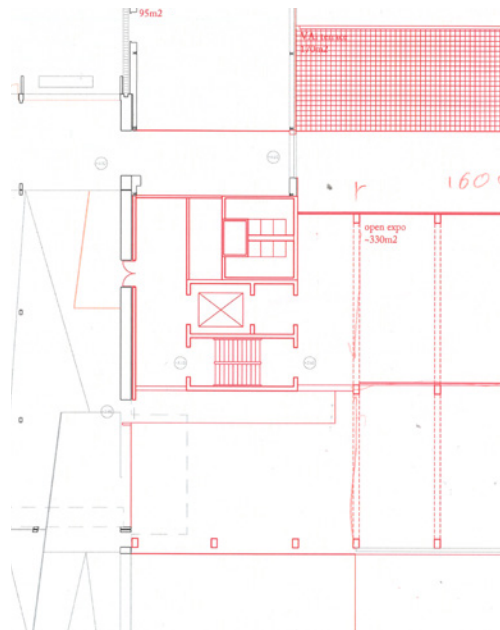
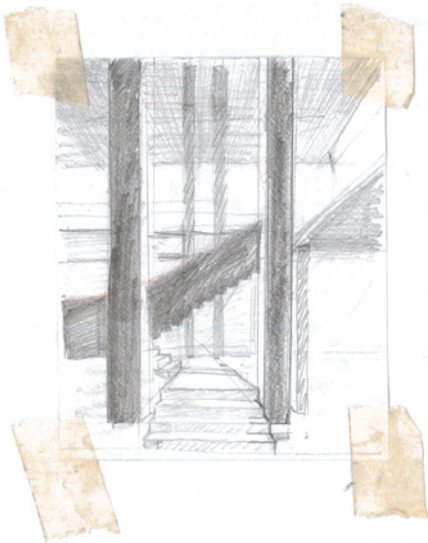
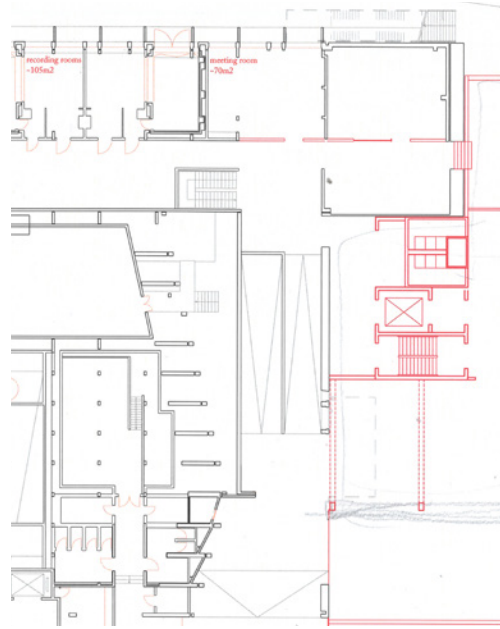
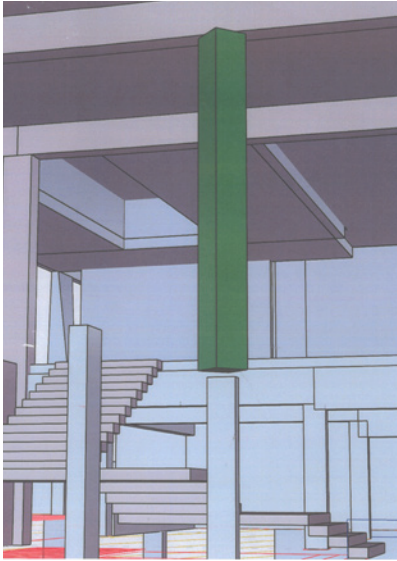
Brief research on the staircases in the public interior

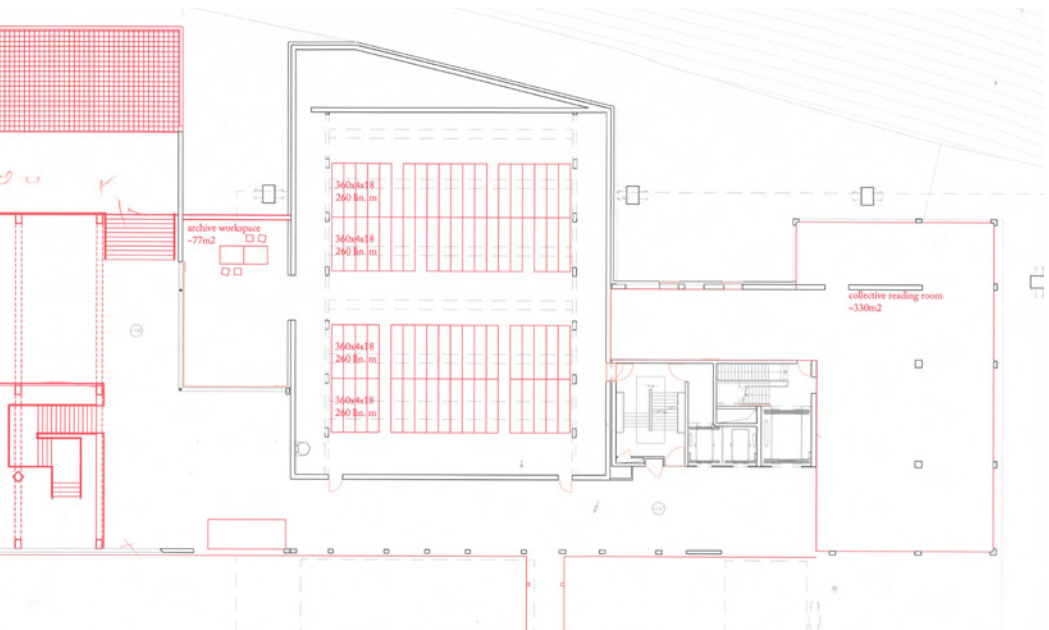
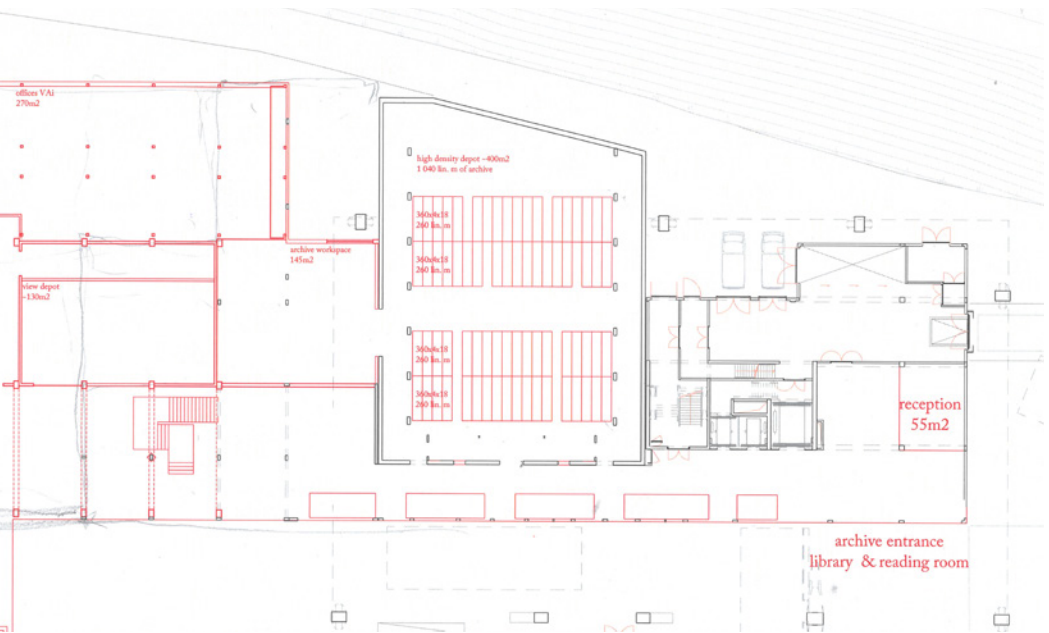
Maksymilian Bernady



When trying to discover what the stairs in my addition should be, I looked at numerous references of stairs in the public interiors - mostly museums and galleries. In order to keep the tool of reference useful to both have a quick look whenever I want and to communicate the approaches to colleagues and tutors I qualified the examples in a compiled little catalog that I called *How to climb up*.







## *As a figure - facade studies*

Around the end of March I found myself lost in my own process. I didn't really know where to proceed and if the design ambition remains really mine (or was it affected by tutorials and peer reviews too much).

I recalled my P2 statement (below) and extracted the key phrases: to close the figure.

How to close the figure in any other way than by finally approaching the facade of my addition. The main ambition of the building appearance was/is to somehow hide that the buildings stands on giant legs but - in the same time - to embrace the box on top of them.

The following pages are a collection of all the iterations made in the process of attempting the facade.

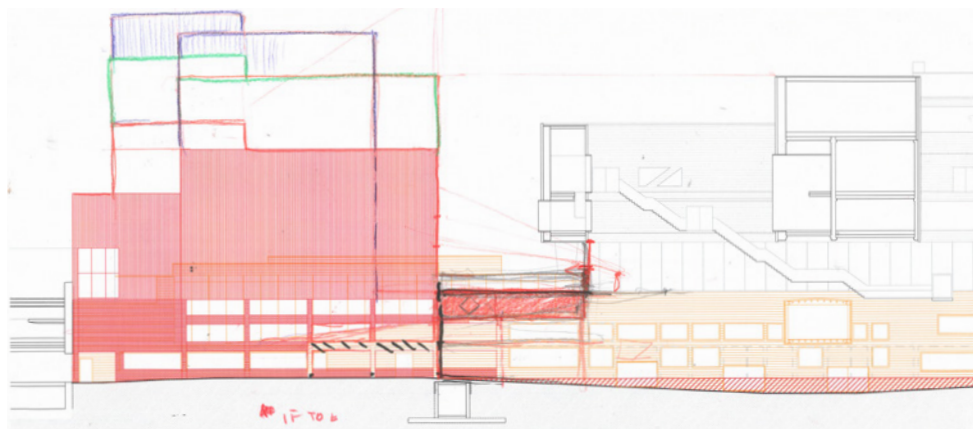
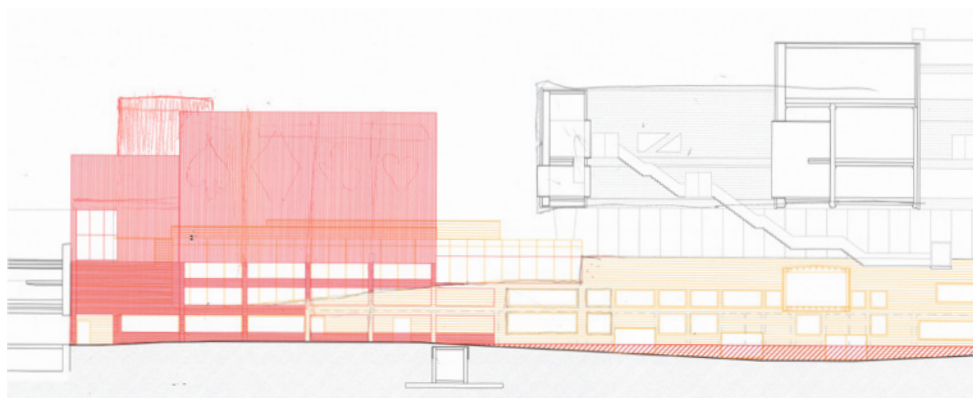
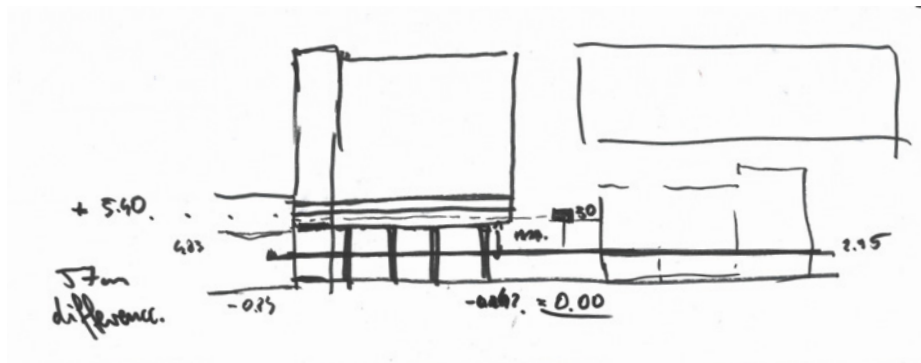
As VAI and deSingel are profoundly bonded together in terms of sharing both similar mission of promoting its cultural domain to the public and same common spaces in deSingel's current condition, they should also share a common self-image. As VAI has already failed with building its own, individual headquarters, their institutional necessity to have its own material presence in the city of Antwerp and the Flemish Belgium could be seen as an opportunity to unite deSingel structurally and architecturally.

To close the figure;

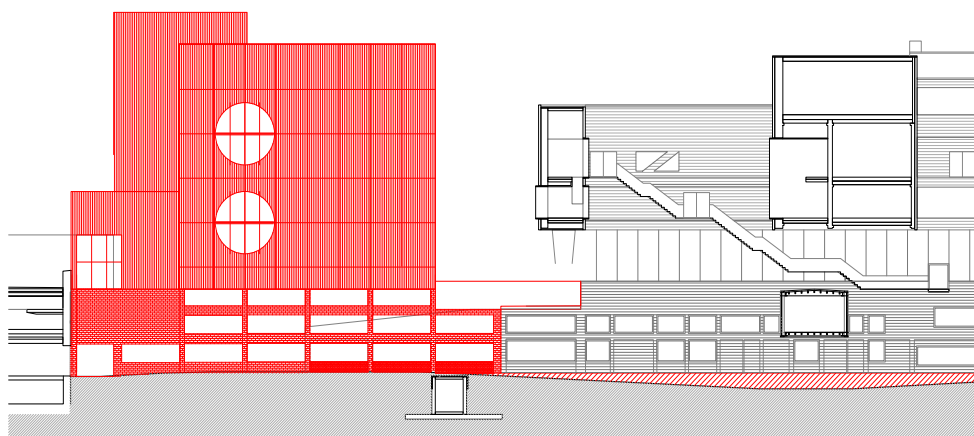
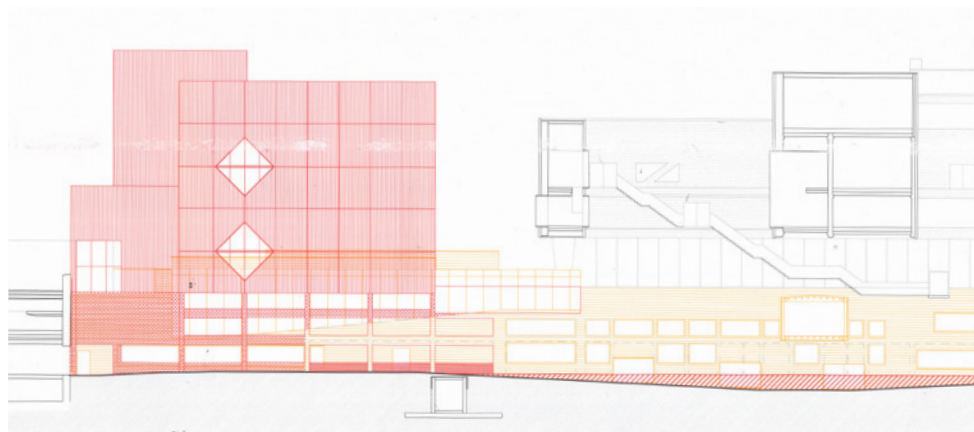
To attempt the next step of deSingel's evolution;

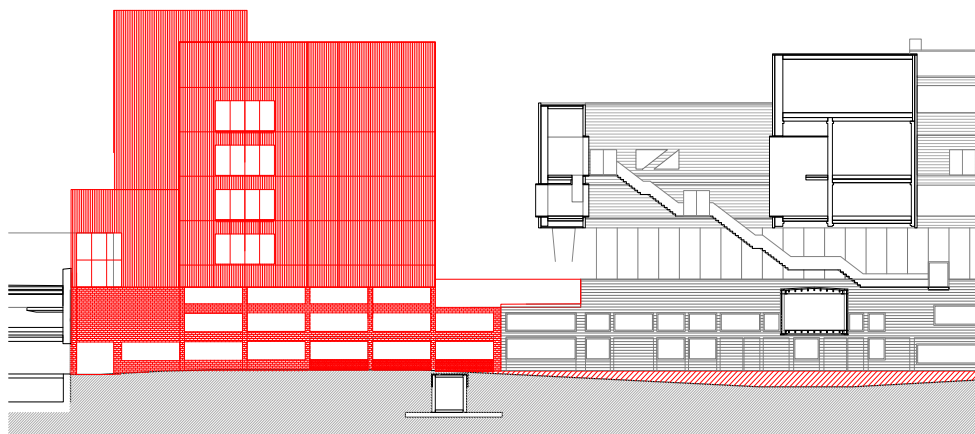
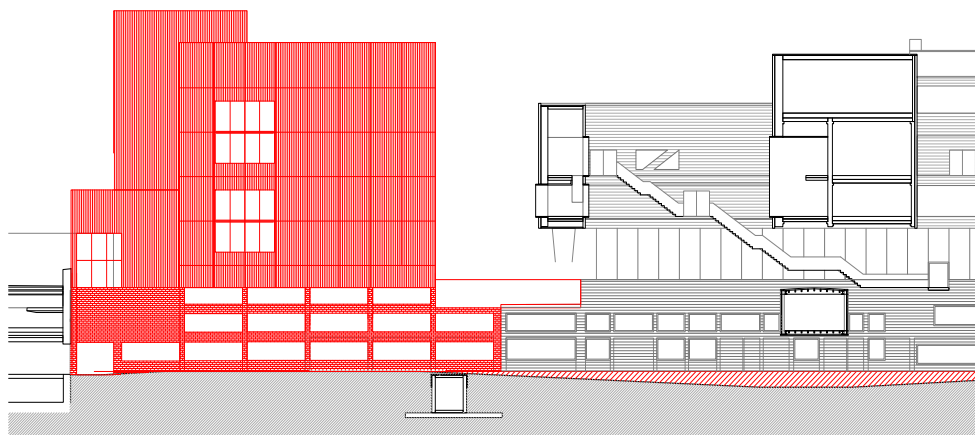
To finally put all of them under one roof.







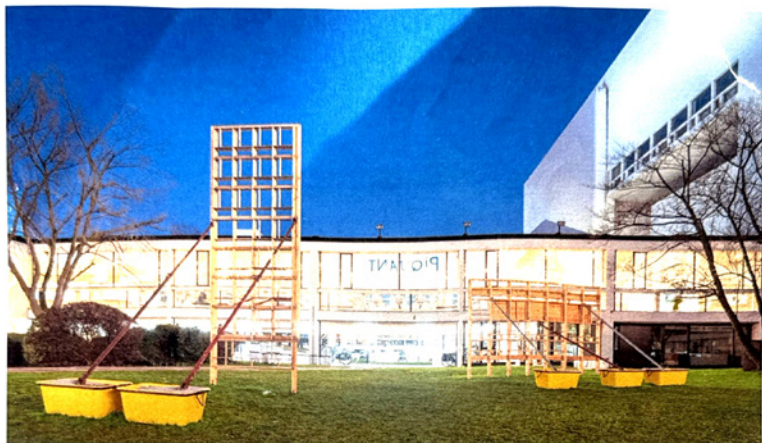




03 - 02



# A Difficult Whole



Stynen Scaled, Flanders Architecture Institute, 2019.  
Photographer: Jasper Leonard

## A Difficult Whole

*"An architecture...able to admit the paradox of the whole fragment: the building which is a whole at one level and a fragment of a greater whole at another level...It is the difficult unity through inclusion rather than the easy unity through exclusion."*

Robert Venturi, *The Obligation Toward the Difficult Whole*, in: *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*

Confronted with the messy realities of the contemporary city, engaged in fragments of the past and addressing the uncertainties and challenges of the future, the thoughts of the American architect Robert Venturi on the possibilities of the difficult whole, written half a century ago, continue to have resonance. Beyond the, sometimes failing, formalities manifested in the work of Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown, it might represent the possibility of a negotiative architecture: one that looks outwards with a welcoming gesture, which enjoys what it finds; which searches for wholeness, rather than unity; which is open and political and has agency.

De Singel Antwerp might, on first glance, be considered a kind of unity – the different phases built under Léon Stynen and Paul Demeyer – but in reality it might be considered the embodiment of the difficult whole of which Venturi speaks, expressed in its urban situation, away from the City of Antwerp, adjacent and

set between the most important traffic arteries of Flanders; in the radically different architectural expression of Stéphane Beel's additions; in the current interior transformations that are taking place without an architectural vision; in the vacant rooms spread throughout the building complex. Stepping beyond it, the relation to two other Stynen realisations in the immediate area, constructed with the same or different techniques, or an echo to the now lost picturesque landscape – in the courtyards, the realisation of a triangular pond and a solitary tree planted at the entrance – can all be understood as fragments, whose disjunctions and tensions elaborate on this complex whole, as well as offering both qualities and challenges to the ways in which it is experienced.

Your project will add yet another new fragment or fragments to the ensemble. Through this brief we would like you to begin to explore the creative tensions in the moments where things meet through volume, ground, façade, colour, material or composition for example.

*"The building is in the stone."* Martin Heidegger

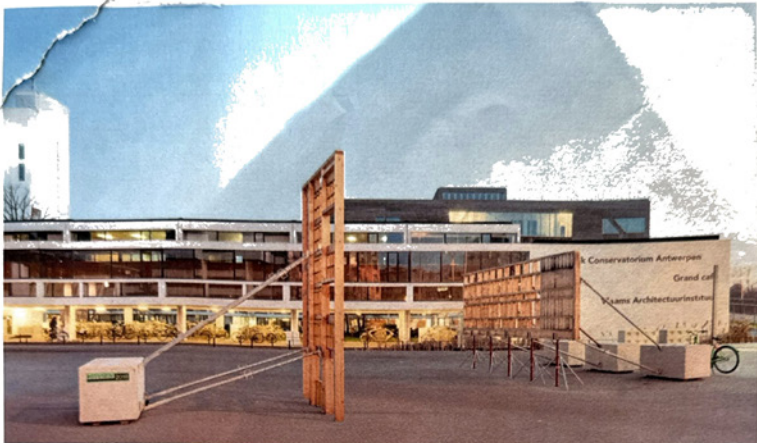
This brief asks you to think at the scale of the fragment in a more traditional sense, elaborating in detail upon a moment where your project must negotiate its relationships with other

Interiors  
Buildings  
Cities

Palace

# Archiving Architecture

2024-25 MSc3 AR3A1100  
Brief 04



'Stynen 2018', Flanders Architecture Institute, 2019.  
Photographer: unknown

things – whether existing buildings or landscape or both, while also exploring its own scale, proportion, structure, order and materialisation in more detail. The outcome will take the form of a physical model of a fragment of your building and the existing element or elements that it engages, made with an equivalent level of detail and care. The model might include spatial or structural components and more than one surface – for example roof and wall.

The model may be made in any material or technique you wish but should be precise in its form and relationships. It should be supported by drawings of varying scales and projections which establish in the context of your wider project, through a description of the whole, while also exploring the constructional relationships you seek to resolve, through detailed elaboration of the external face in plan and section. The elaboration of the building section will be particularly important in developing the way in which the interiors of new and existing relate to one another. The moment you are looking at should be agreed upon by next week's tutorial with a sketch version of the model completed the week after. The final, photographed version, and its accompanying drawings, should form part of your P3 presentation.

Interiors  
Buildings  
Cities

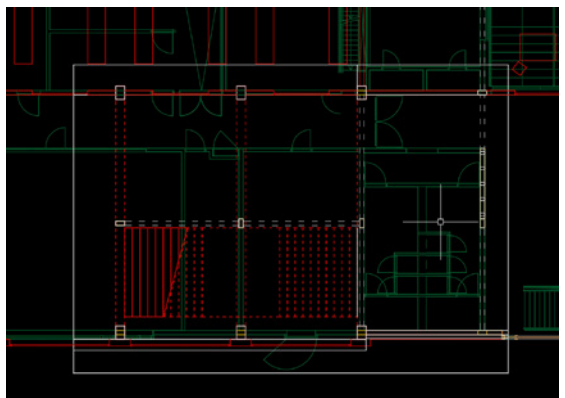
Palace

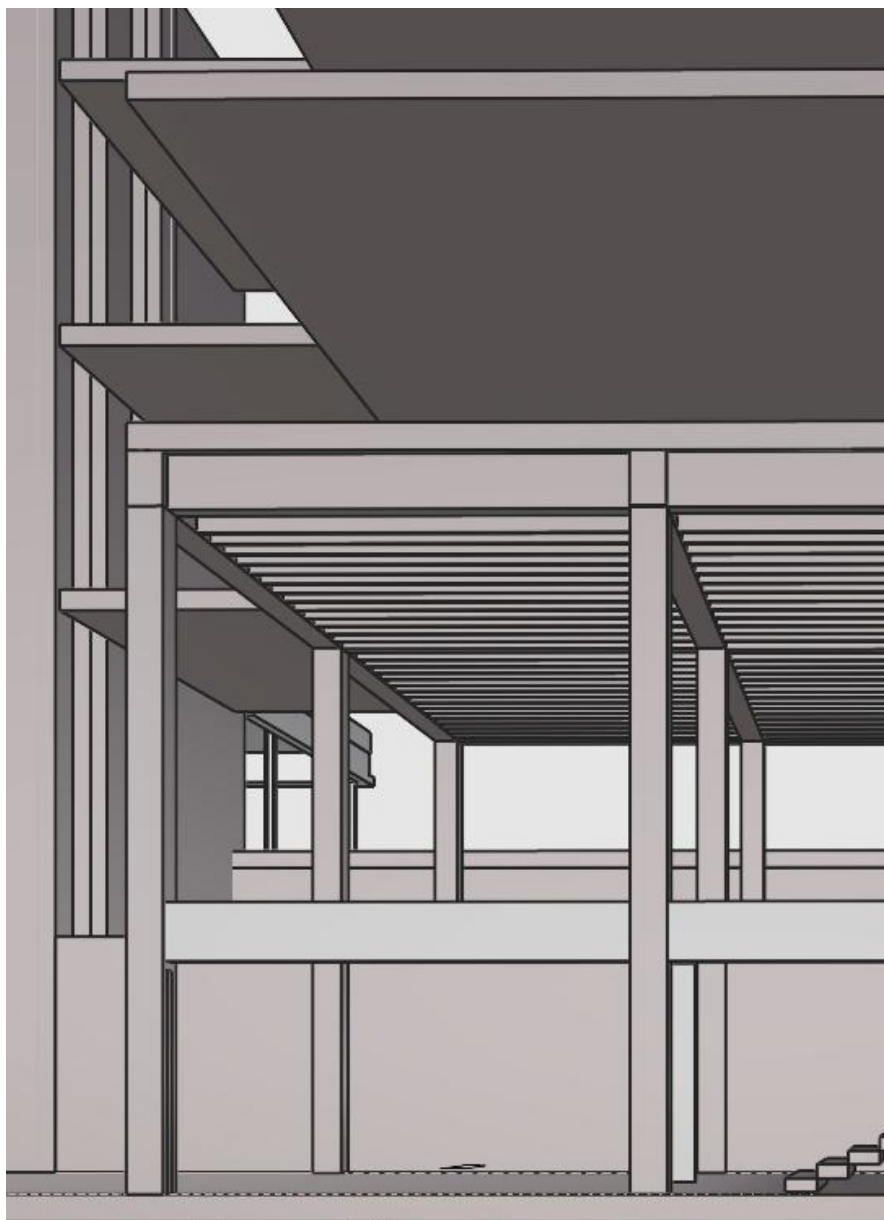
## *Which fragment*

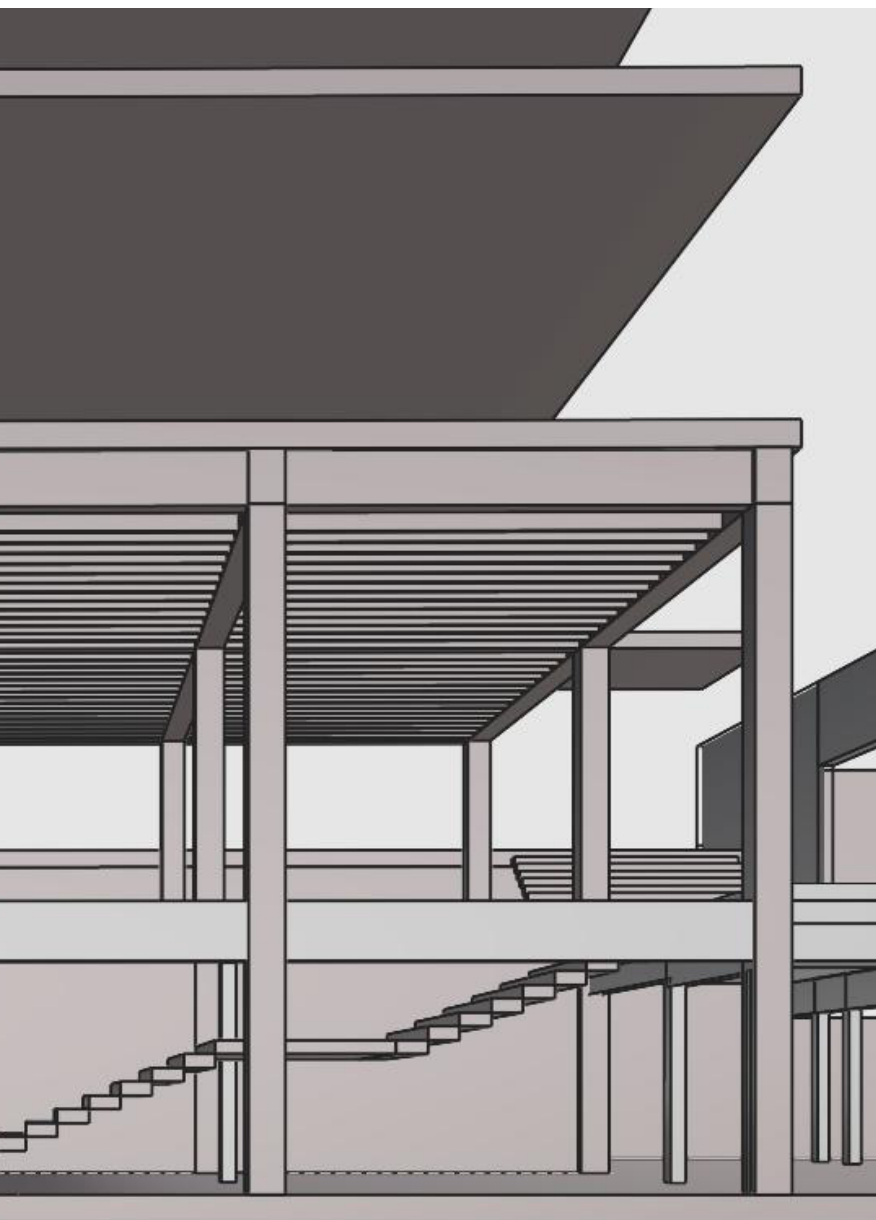
The new brief appointed us to choose a fragment where the new building touches the existing in a particular way.

Subsequently, the fragment was supposed to be realised in a scale model of 1:33 with complementary drawings.

As my proposal meets the existing from both sides I had to choose very carefully. Deciding on not choosing the connection with Styne's - as my proposal rather sticks to the existing boundary - I chose a connection with Beel's first floor for several reasons: I save the floor slabs of Beel's addition from the west; I place the staircase in a way that it touches those floor slabs; in that fragment I can show the connection between the ground level and the first floor.







## *A pubic interior in references*

While working on the fragment and deciding on the materiality of designed interior I investigated some references again - specifically in search for the possibilities of the appearance of the ceiling.

Out of many of examples two entrance lobbies came across as the most memorable: the first Wallraf Richartz Museum in Cologne by Rudolf Schwartz (1955) and the one in Walsall Gallery by Caruso St John (1999).

The first became important for the elegant presence of high columns (approx. 8m) in the interior - their position to the glazed facade and the stairs against the wall. The second remained mostly as

a reference for the atmosphere of the interior I aim for.



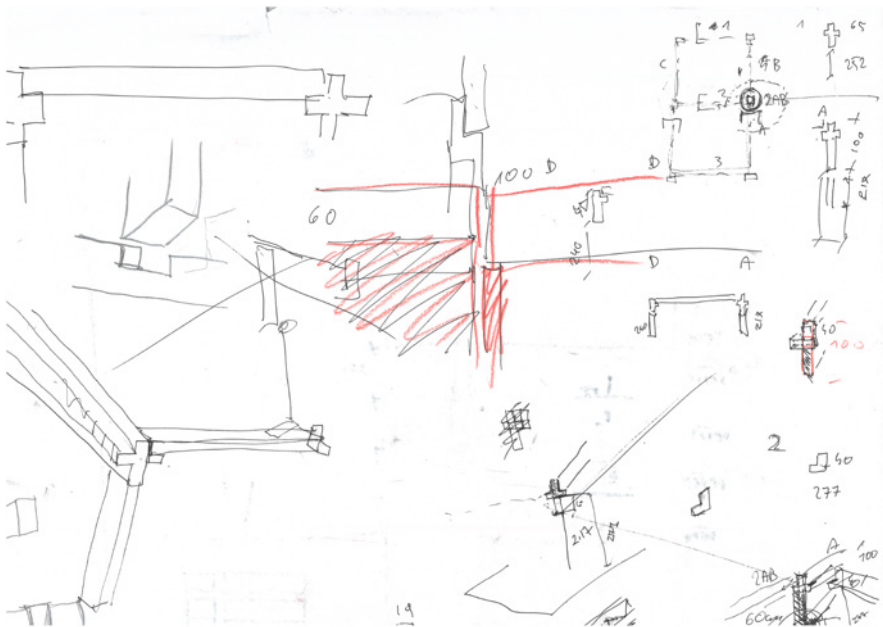




## Model making

The next two weeks passed in a quite specific dynamic of design by making the model.

Without having many pictures I have worked towards the P3 while constantly evolving the design - by investigating the existing and by looking carefully at what I have made.



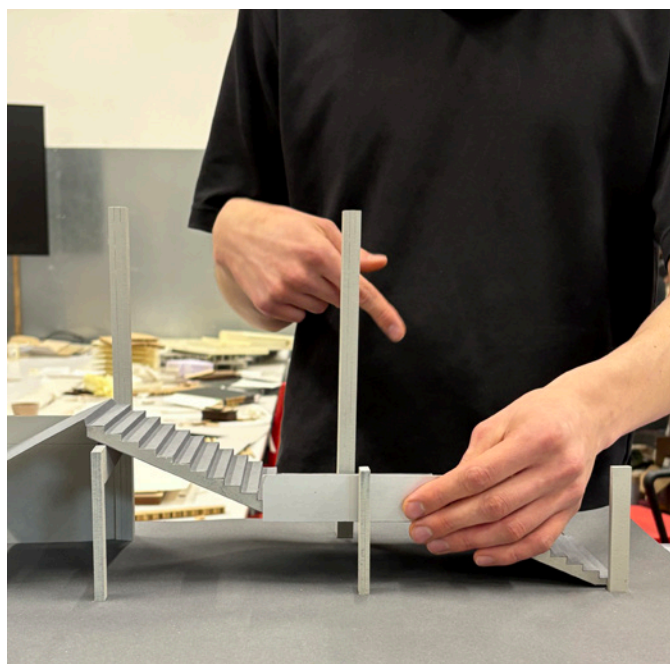


## *A mirror to Stynen*

After a comment from Daniel: *you're not designing a stairs for the V&A but a second entrance/ interior of the whole deSingel* - the stairs have evolved from rather narrow and twisting between the columns to wide and straight divided in two runs. The way I started to think about them was a mirror to Stynen's stairs in the entrance lobby and specifically - its position next to the facade.





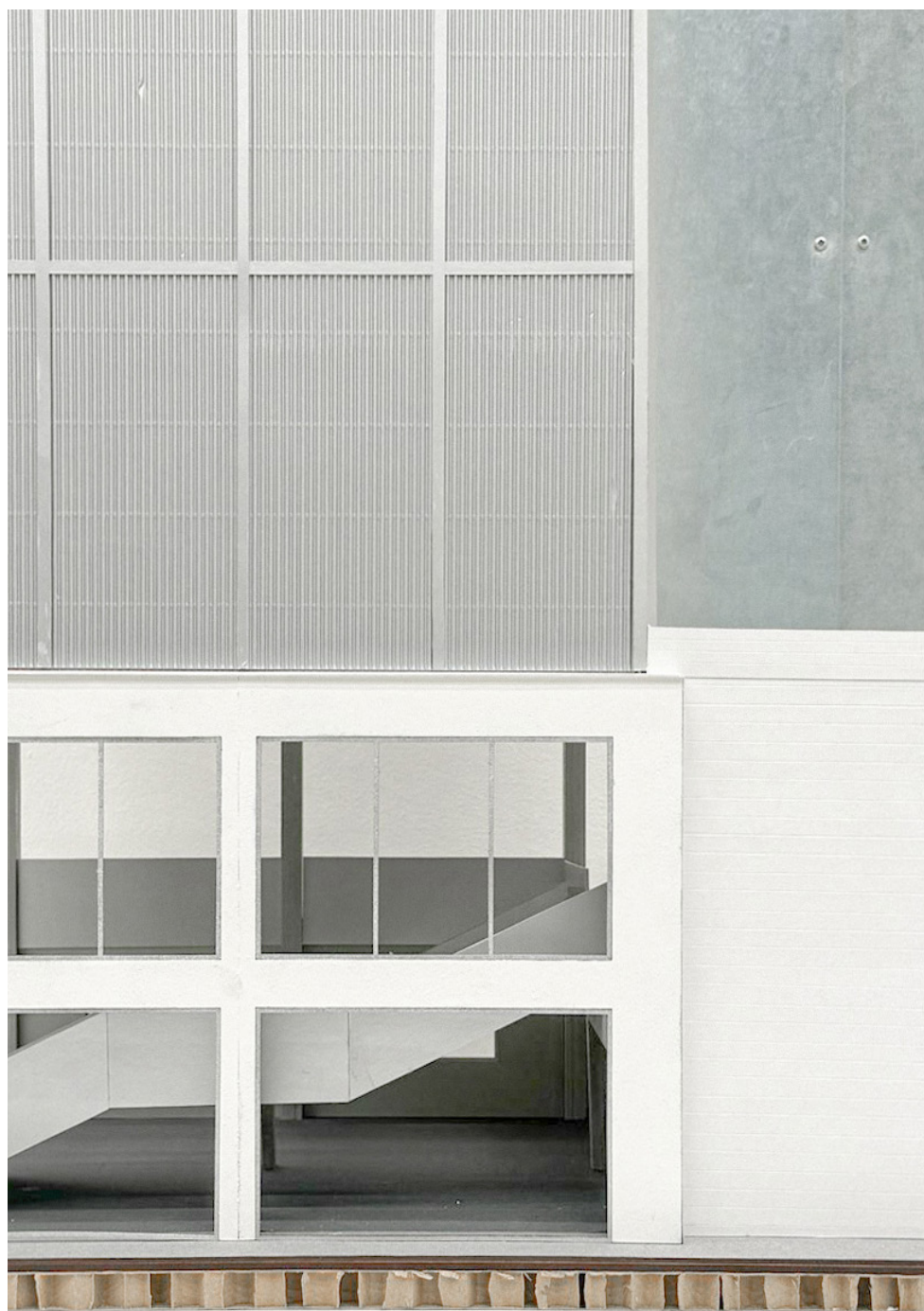


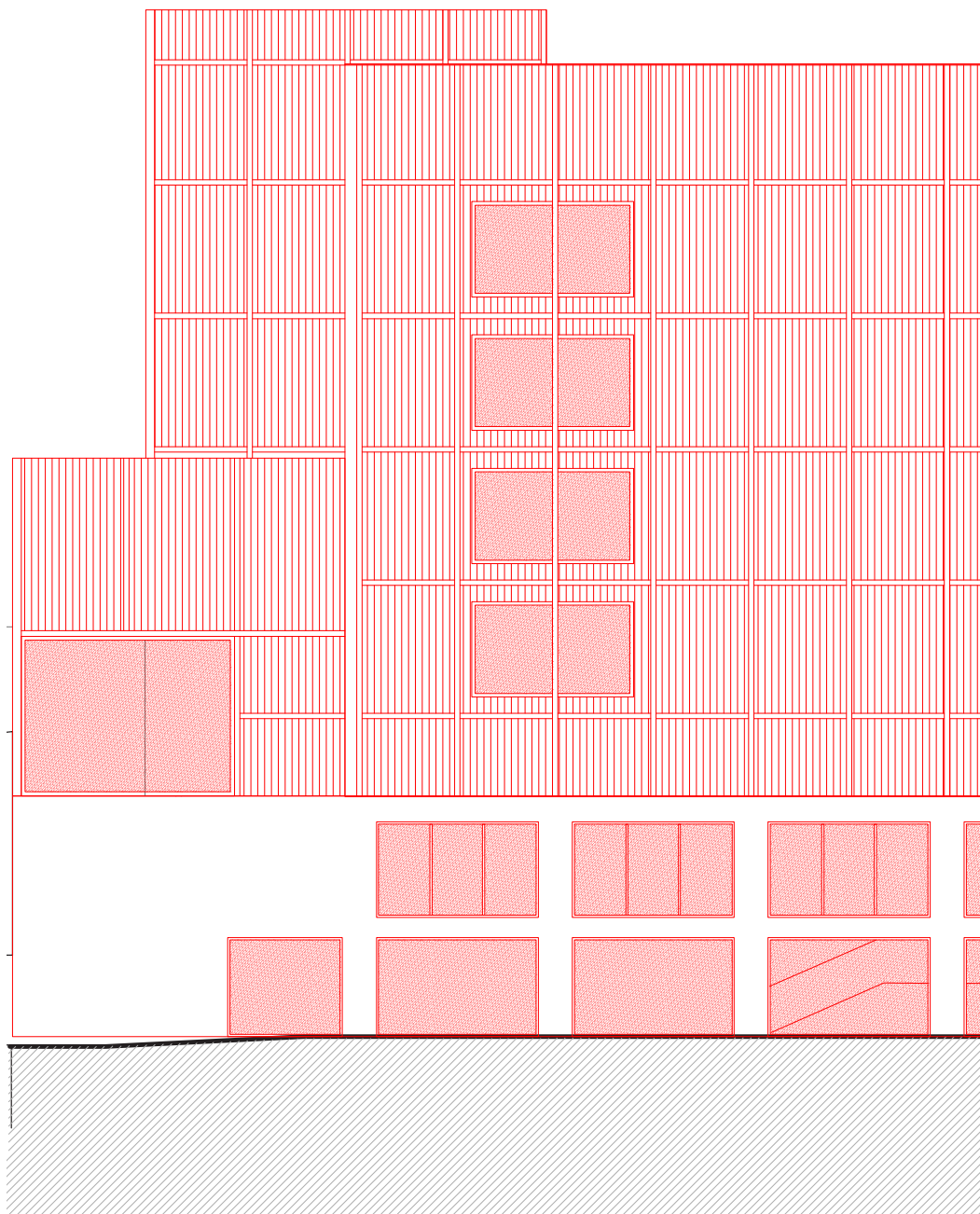
## P3 | The Fragment

The work until P3 was a moment for experimentation with what I want to achieve with the building, through a quite detailed execution of a model.

I allowed myself to play with the colors of beams and accents (Yves Klein Blue), while keeping the rest of the model restrained to white, gray and metallic silver,.

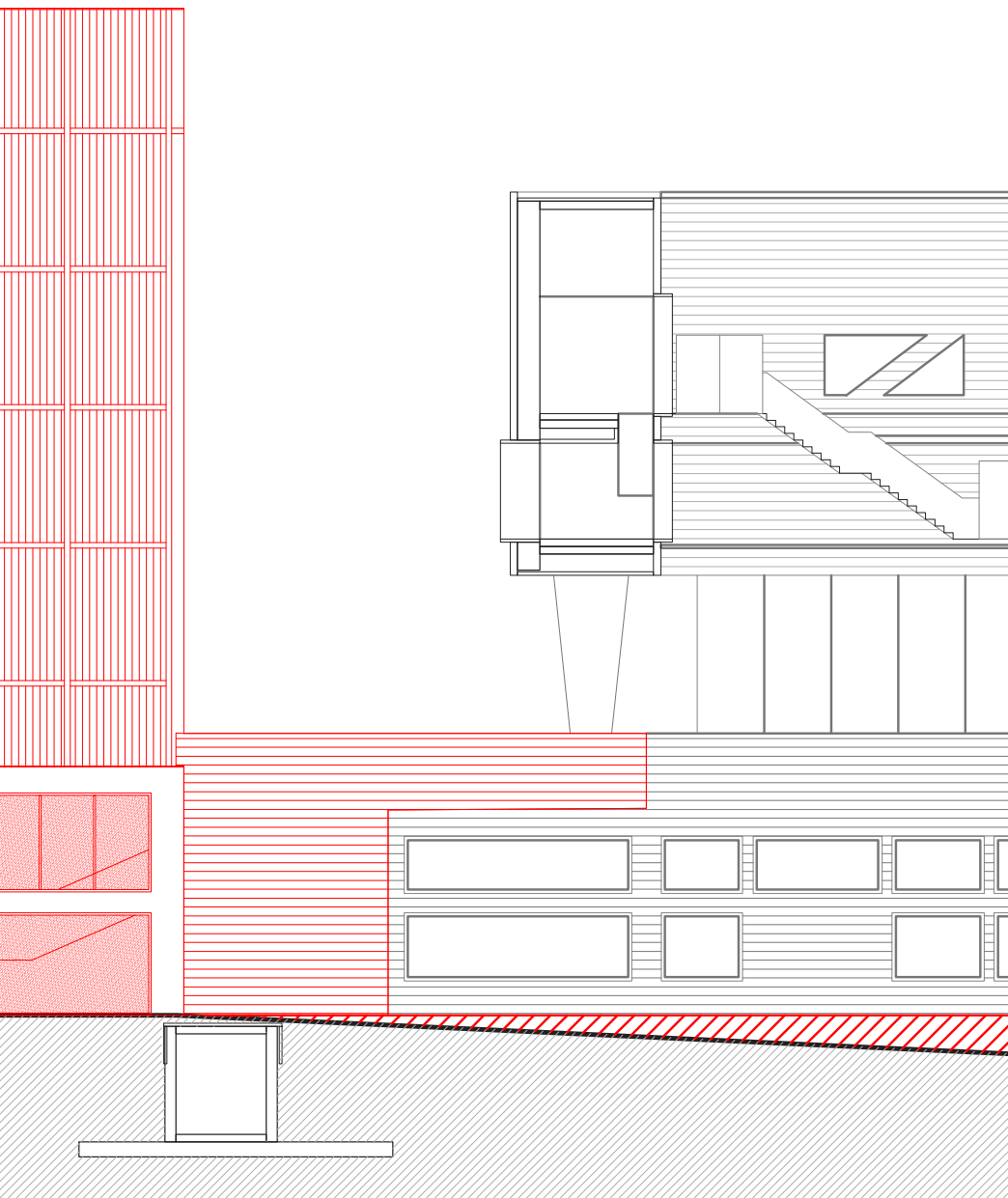
I have made a decision to play with two-fold façade articulation to clearly express the duality of my project, the void of the lobby/expo space, and the boxiness of the archive above it. Therefore, I treat the lower part of my building as continuation of the Stynen, whilst the top is a corrugated steel Box.

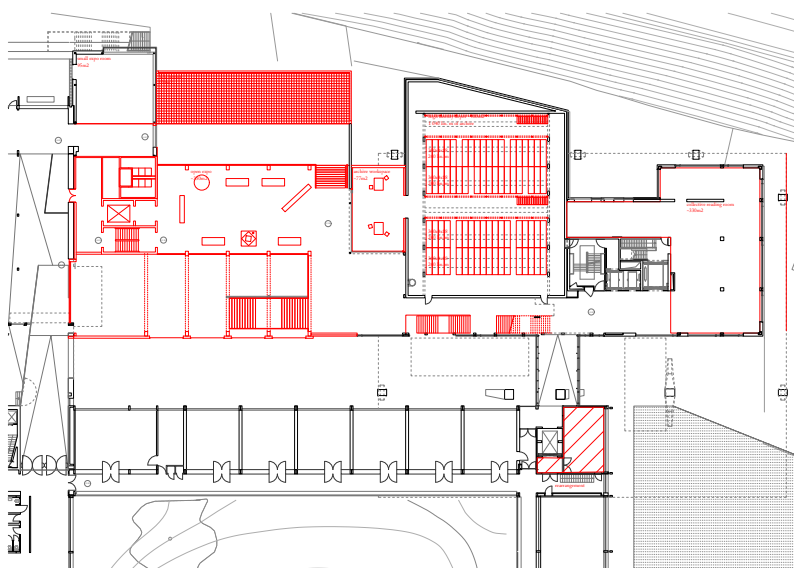
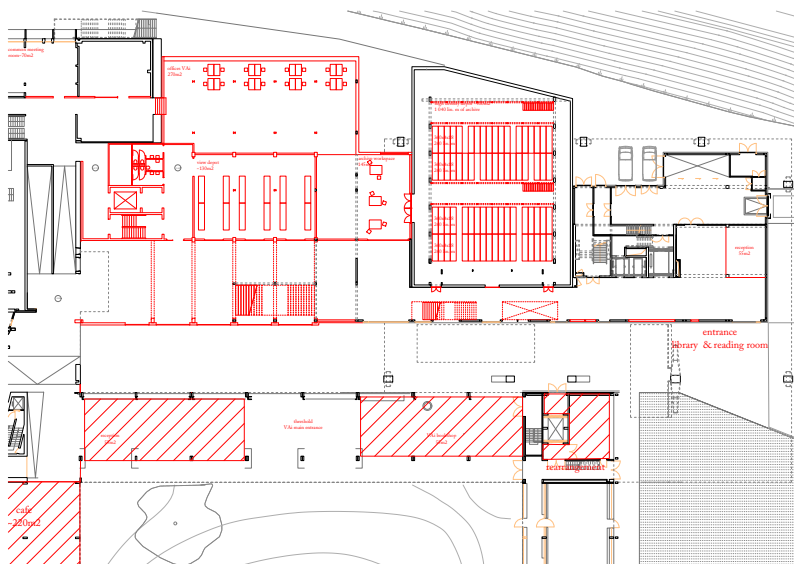


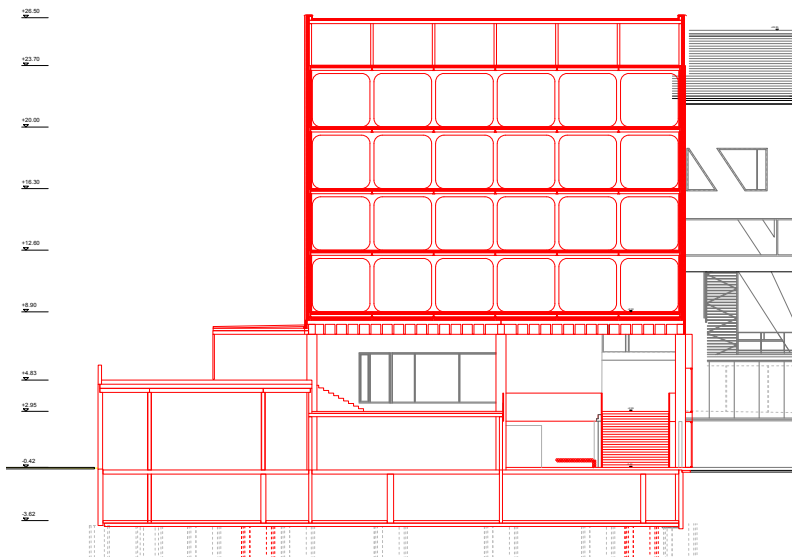
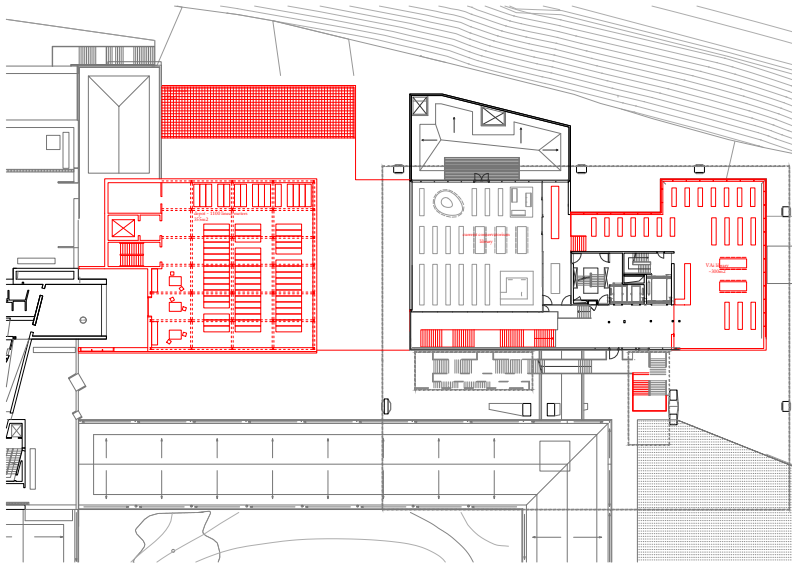


1:300 façade | P3 iteration









## *P3 feedback*

At the P3 crit we had a guest in person of director of Vlaams Architectuurinstituut: Dennis Pohl;

Questions noted in chronological order of being posed:

I: Why whitewashing Beel's façade?

Dennis:

- Where are the expos?
- Does the façade relate to Beel's openings?
- It remains ambiguous which is referenced more, Stynen or Beel?
- Take a position - to be visible, or not visible; there's no need to fit in between;

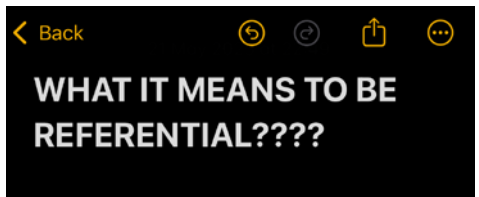
Daniel:

- Which height does the depot has?
- Possibility of making third "figure" all the way to the ground floor instead of weaving between the two precedents;
- Continuity of façade skin in a singular volume;
- If both of them (Stynen's and Beel's deSingel) are self-referential; maybe it is better to become a little bit more self-referential as well?
- Staircase should be moved away from the façade to allow the continuity of the corridor and make a gesture for fully public façade.

Daniel's last general comment during the crit;

I'm pretty sure he phrased it exactly in this way; Although, looking at the correctness of Daniel's English, I think I might have committed a mistake by noting it so quickly;

I was tired...-at least it looks funny here now - in the journal



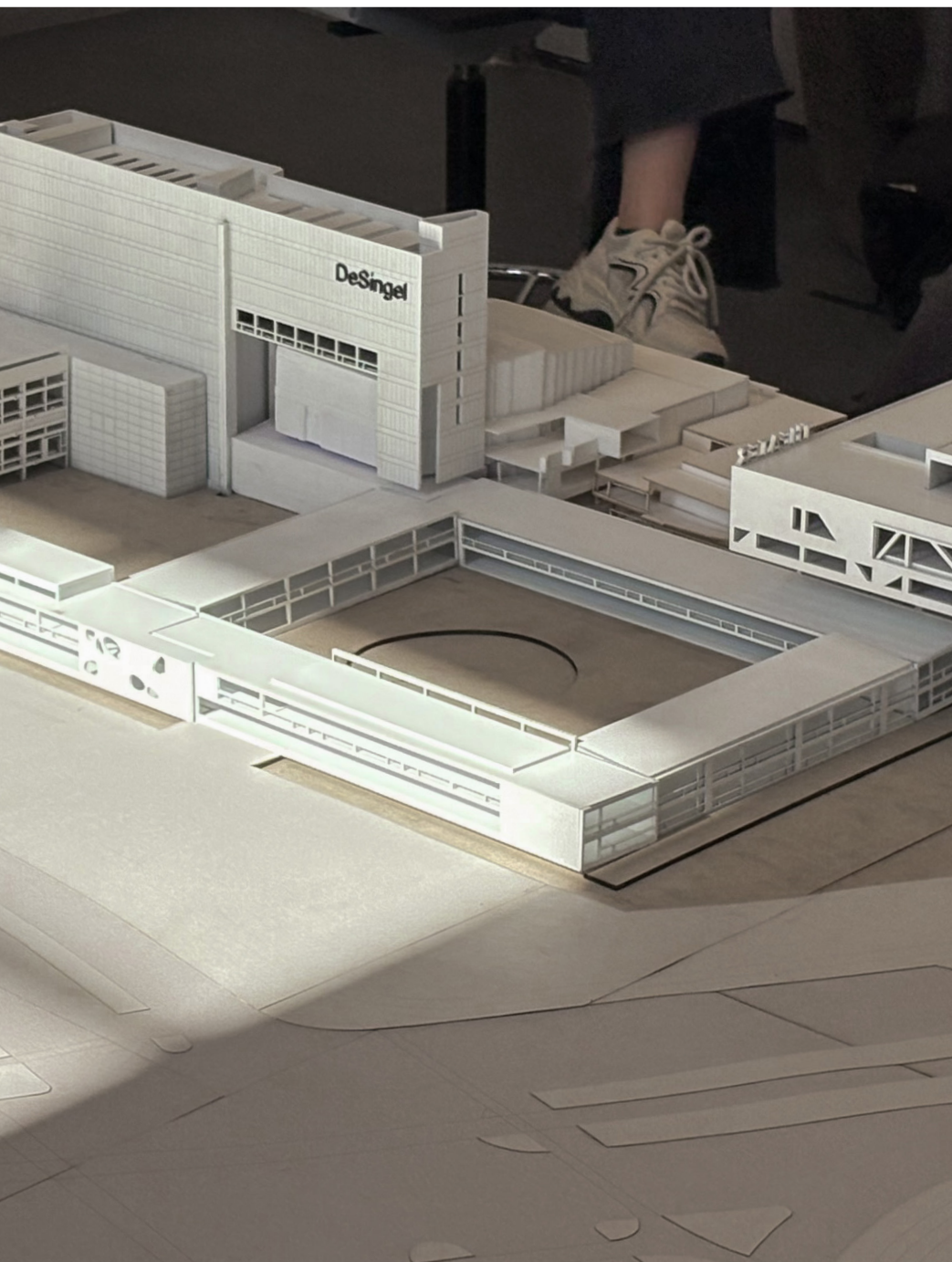


***'TRADITION IS TO FEED  
THE FIRE, NOT TO  
PRESERVE THE ASHES.'***

**Interview with Quintus  
Miller, architect of the office  
of Miller & Maranta, held in  
Basel on 31 March 2008**







03 - 03



# Refinements

## *All of us - collected*

At P3 everyone from the studio had to show the area and shape of their intervention in a form of a simple deSingel plan logo (in the template made by Veronica; *grazie mille*). After the crit, all of those logos were compiled and displayed in the studio on a collective poster.

It was nice to finally see and understand the range of our intervention in comparison to the others. It showed tendencies and anomalies.



Jenny Fang



Anna Klaver



Jianui Xing



Yuqing Zhang



Bruno Teles Xavier



Stanislaw Killian



Silas Windrich



Dilek Zaid



Laura Tjichon



Daan Franken



Iris Niederer



Maksymilian Jaszczuk



Yunke Li



Yueyi Liang



Jakub Nowak



Maksymilian Bernady



Margaux Lomax



Romain Touron



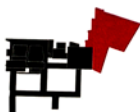
Veronica Danesin



Liren Chu



Ertug Çiftçi



Jur Sinia



Alessandra D'Acunto



Sem Verwey

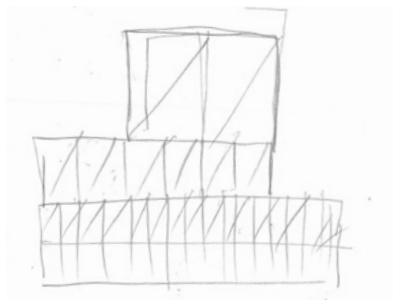
# Changes

After P3 I have decided to change some parts of the design quite drastically.

First and foremost, I have made some significant shifts in the layout of the plan - so the discussed

topic of stairs could be more resolved and bring more clarity to the project.

The next steps I took concerned the image of the

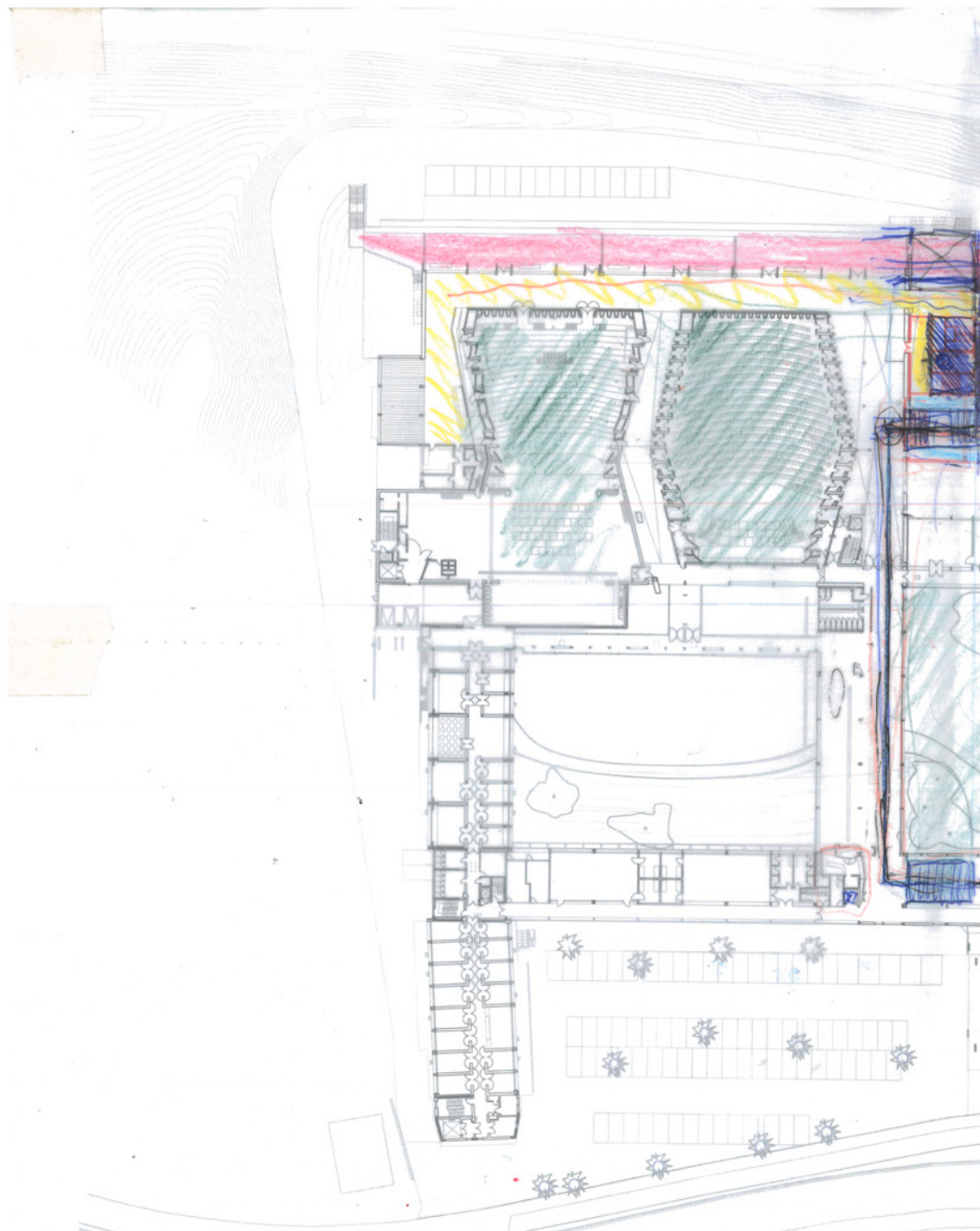


archive, referring to the comments of ambiguous relation coming from the duality of my façade to the rest of the complex. Therefore I decided to elaborate on the new proportional scheme of the façade and thus, the whole building.

Finally, I have started to investigate my proposal also from the south, looking more carefully into what the archive should represent from the highway's side.

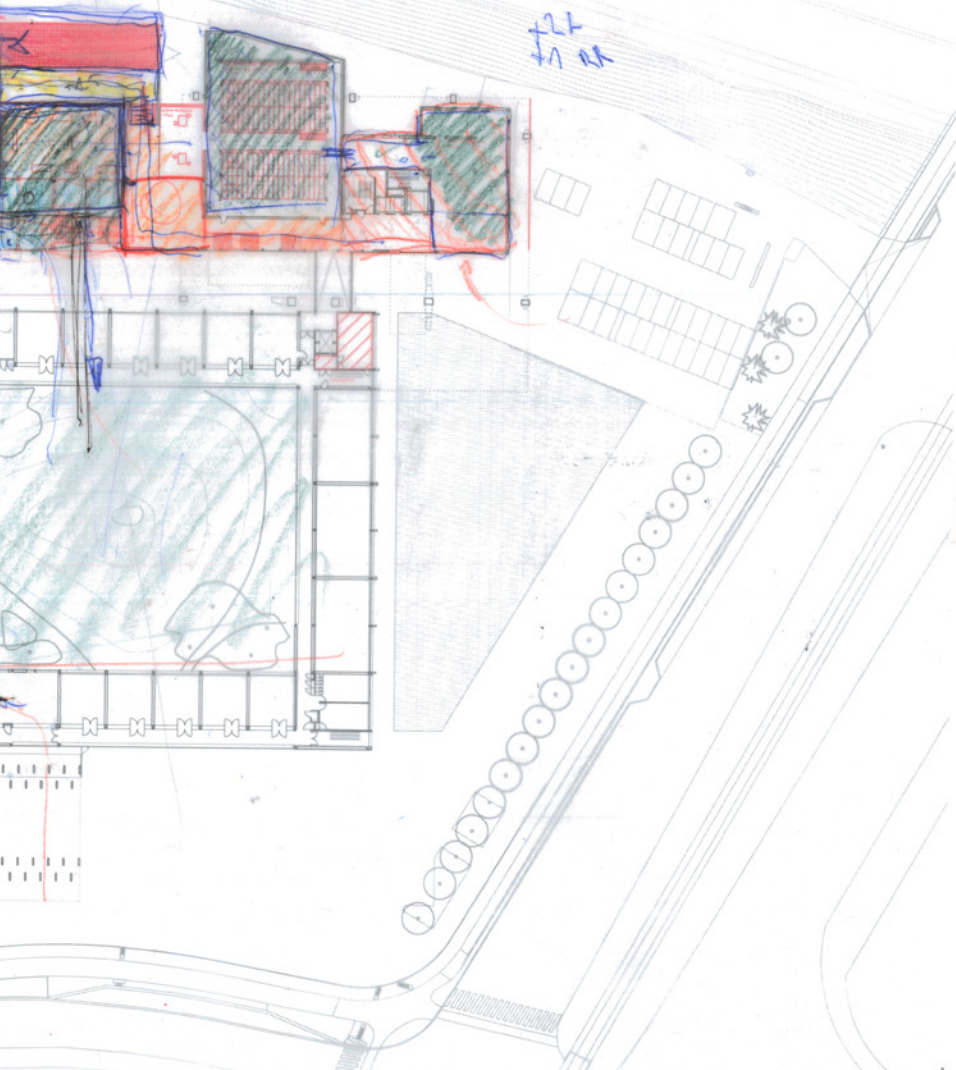


*It's good to design an accident*

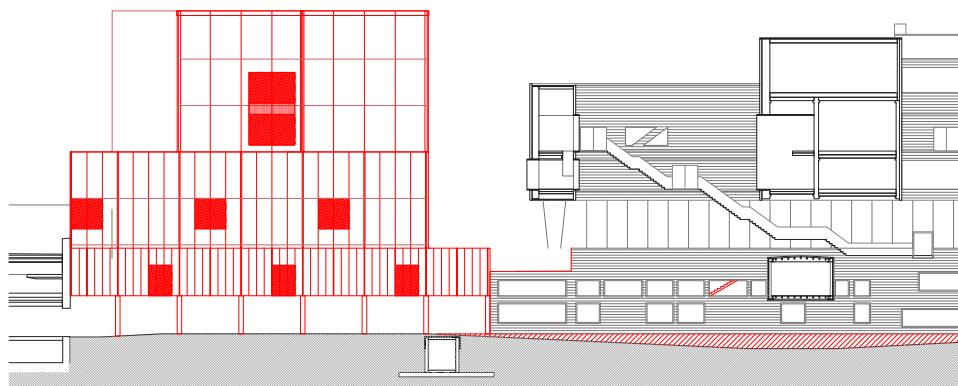
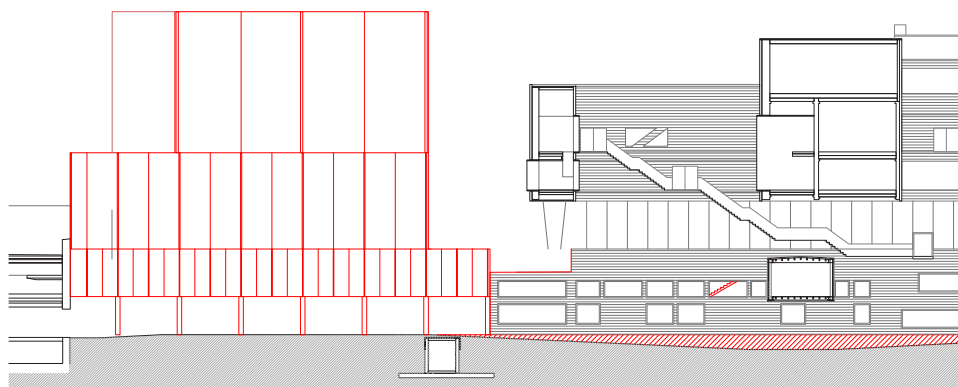
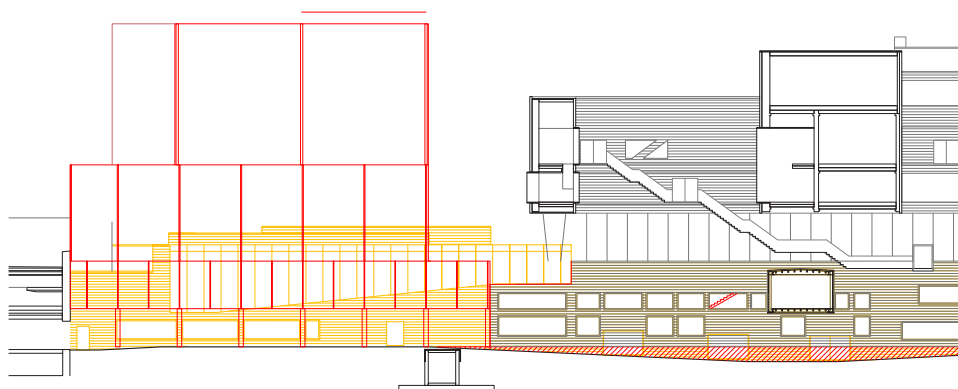




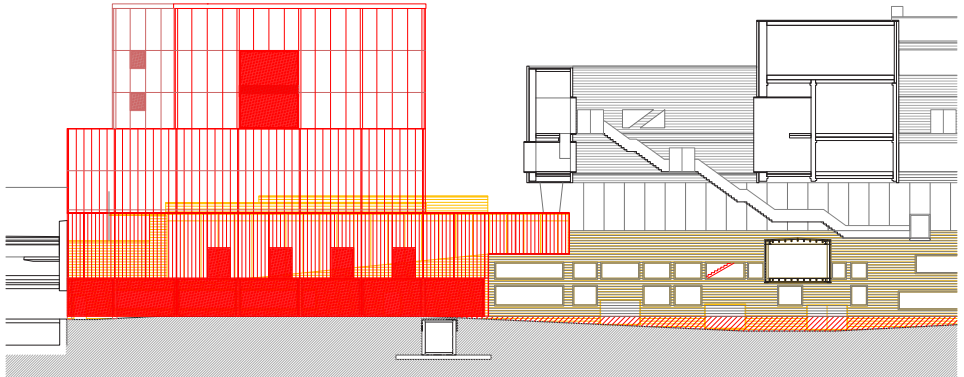
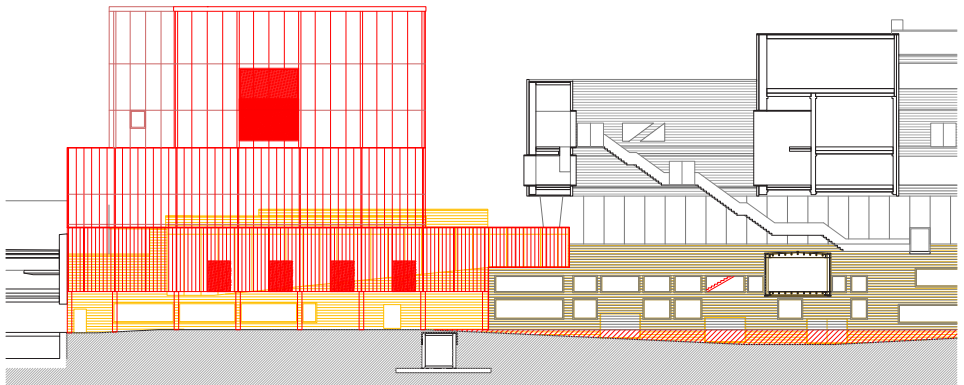
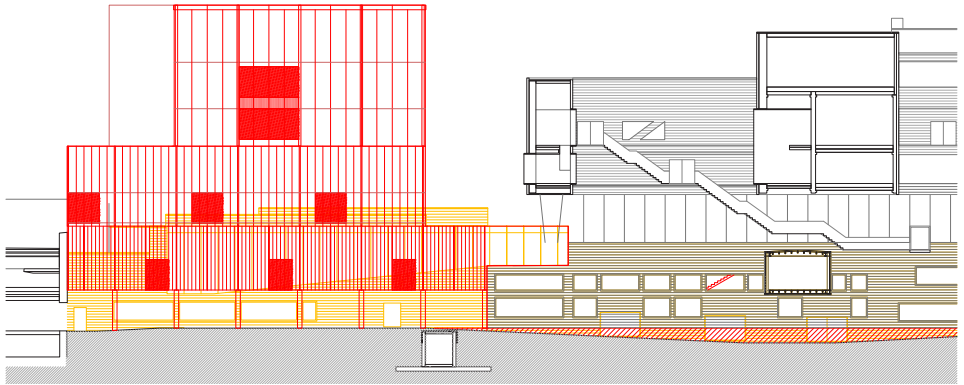
IT'S GOOD TO DESIGN  
THE ACCIDENT ~ SAM



*Proportions, sequences, accents*







## *Materiality*

While examining the façade composition I have intensively thought about it's materiality having in mind a strong reference of 6a's MK Gallery.

Following the idea of the on/off grid of the archive box, I tried to find a different, more poetic and less rational presence.

In the way I dug into a prominent reference of Tony Fretton's Lisson Gallery - being almost essential to the general thinking of the studio and of the British wave of poetic realism - 6a architects, Caruso St John, Sergison Bates, and so on...

The other reference, that came in terms of a steel materiality of the box - is Probenhaus of Luzerner Philharmony by Enzmann Fischer.

The latter became a key point of discussion on what the archive should be in terms of its thermal and climatic performance and detailing dispute with Matthijs.

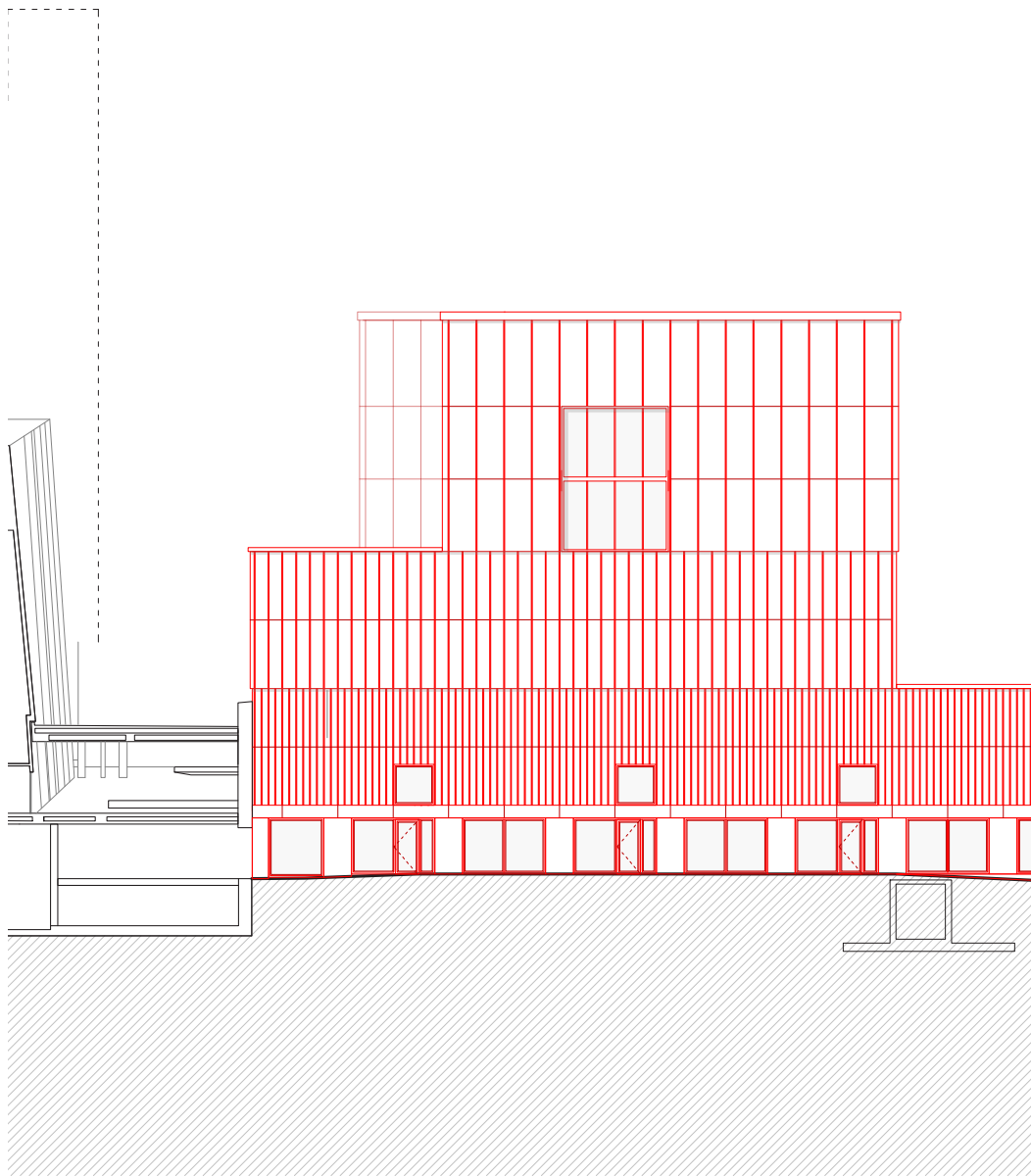


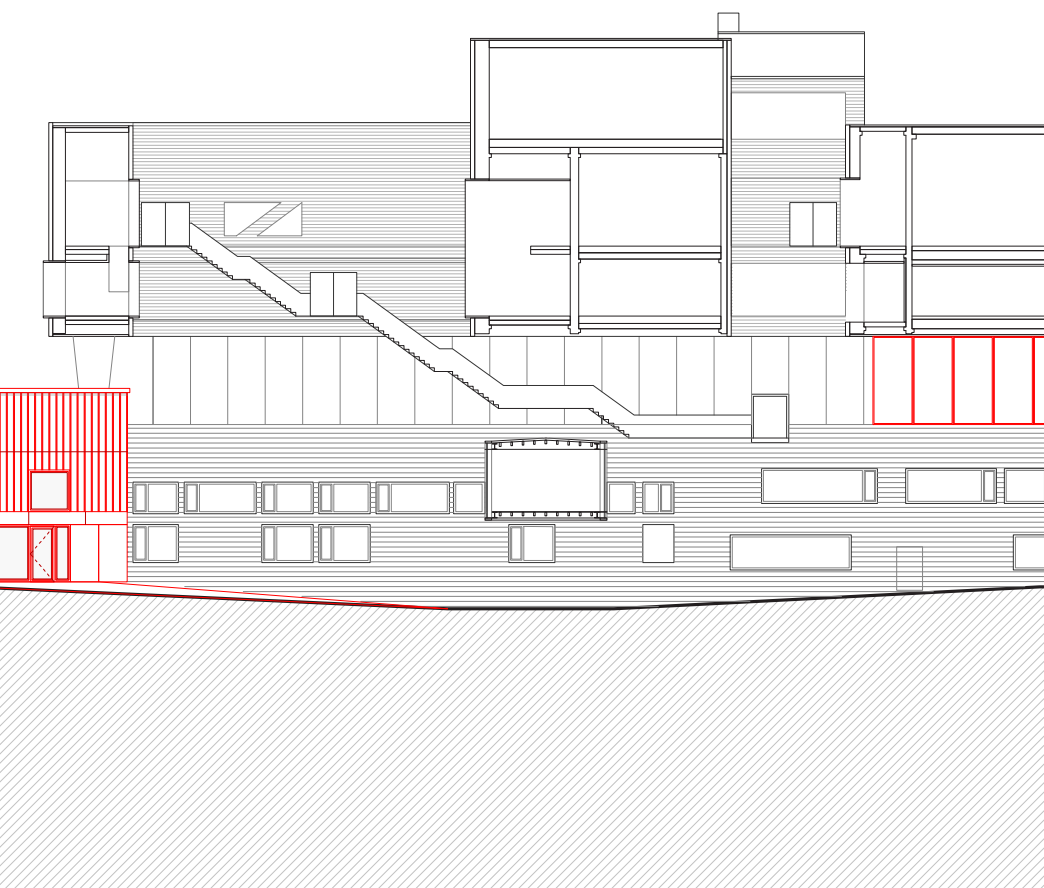






*Lost in the process | final presence*

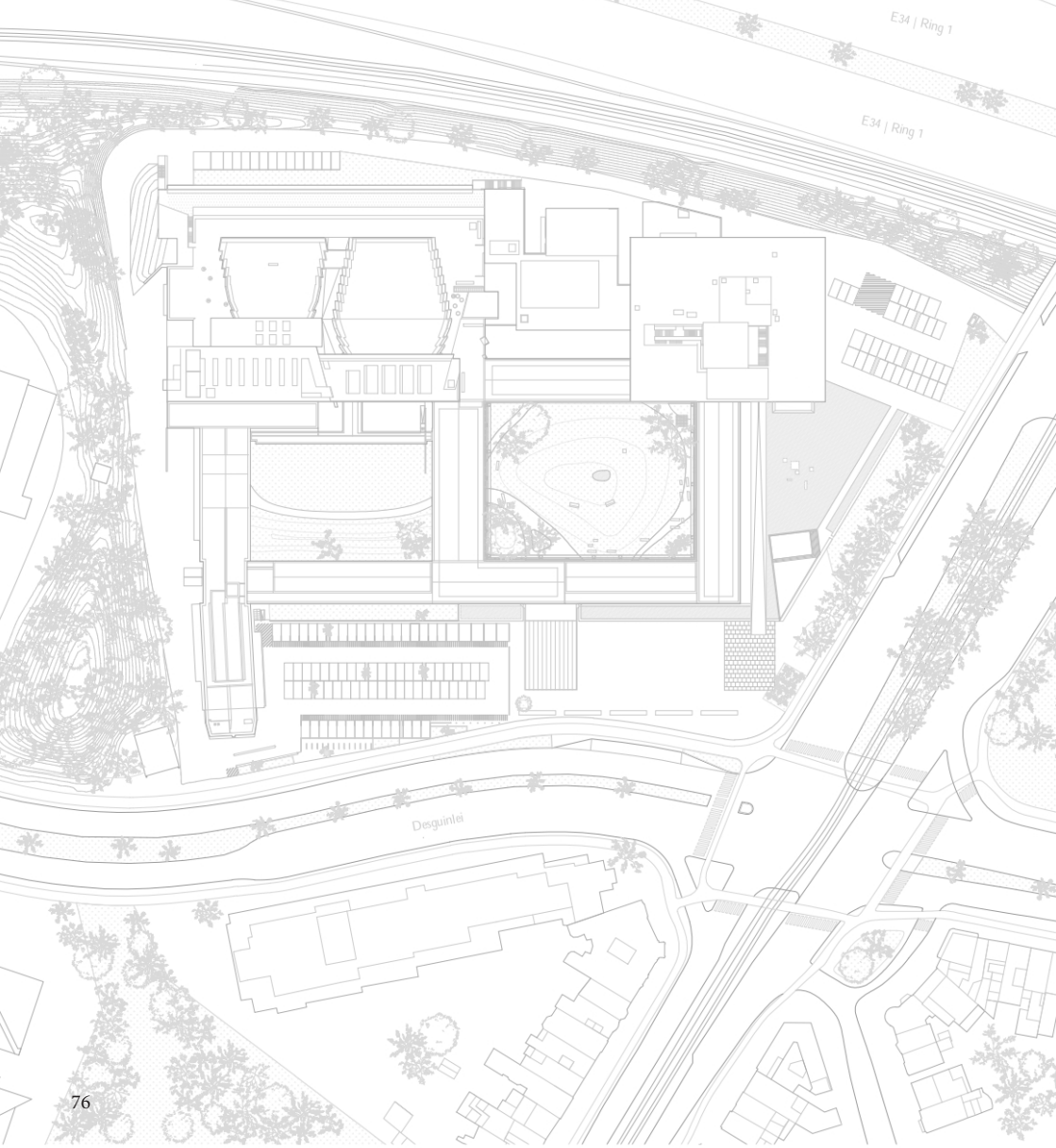




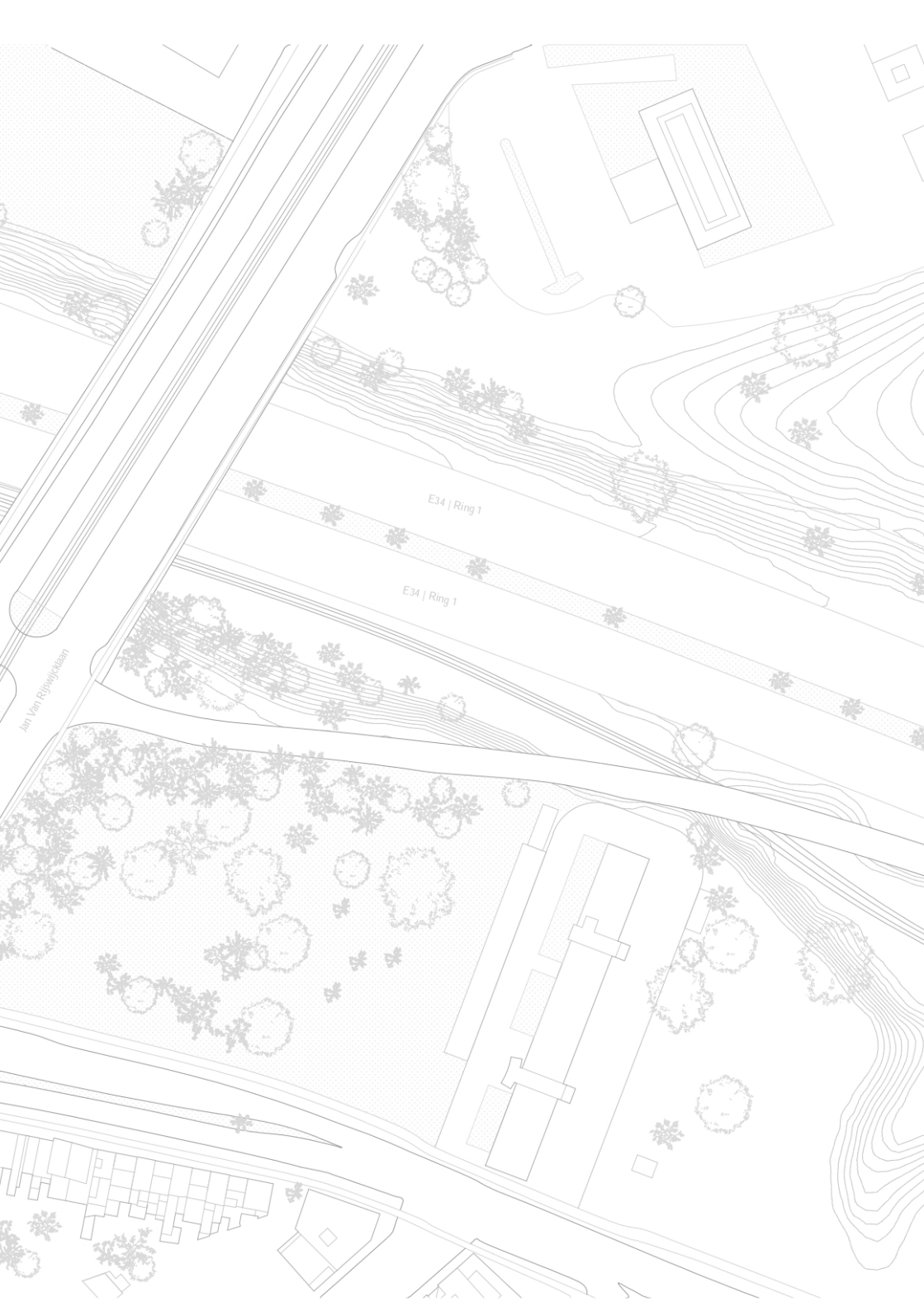
*I'm particularly happy about the situation plan I made*

3+ working days of making a drawing that tells  
nothing, but the site.

Then I shared it with some colleagues.



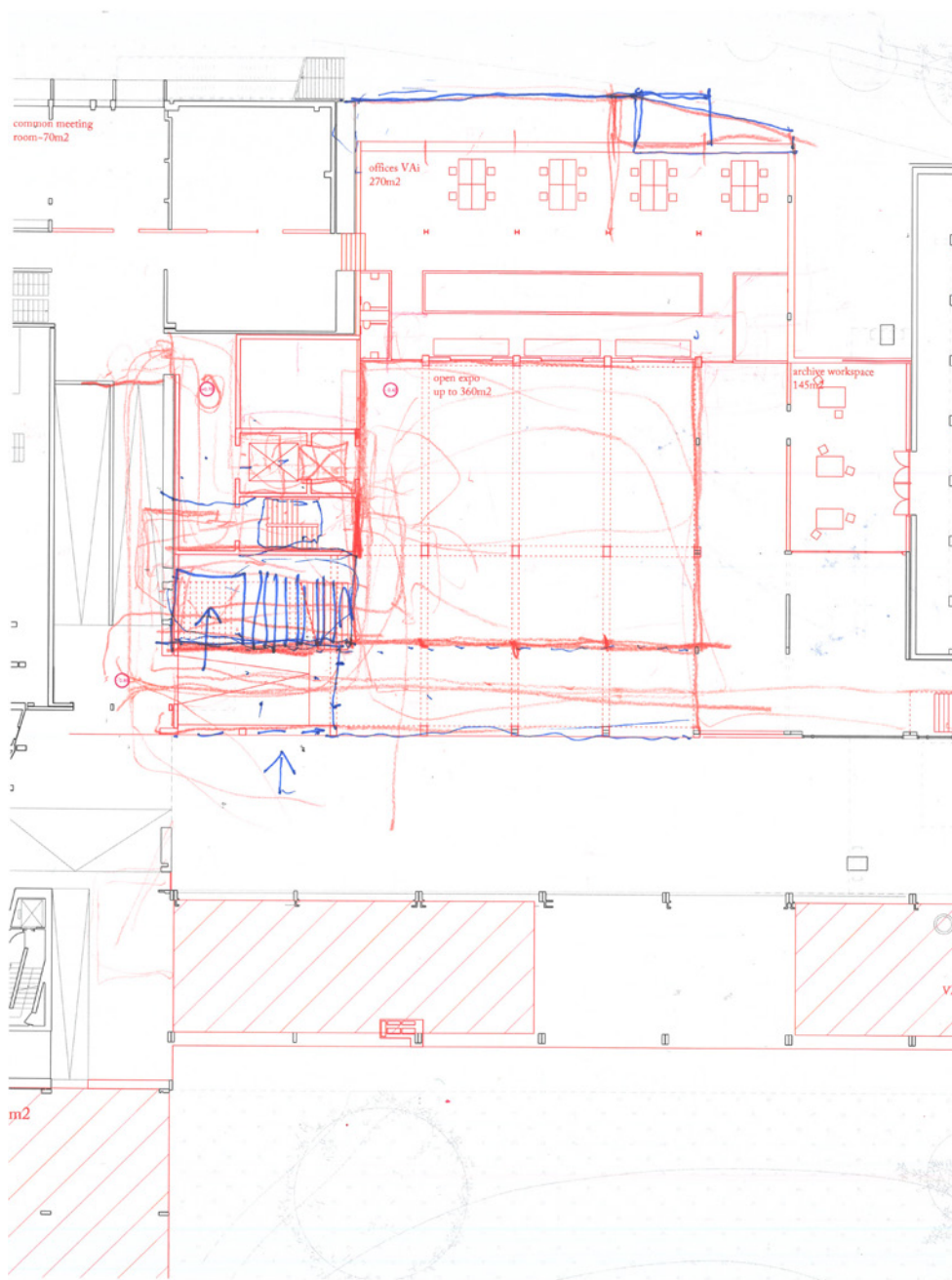




## *Fast forward | last tutorial*

My last tutorial was with Daniel and Susanne, I explained the changes that occurred and presented them in plan and façade.

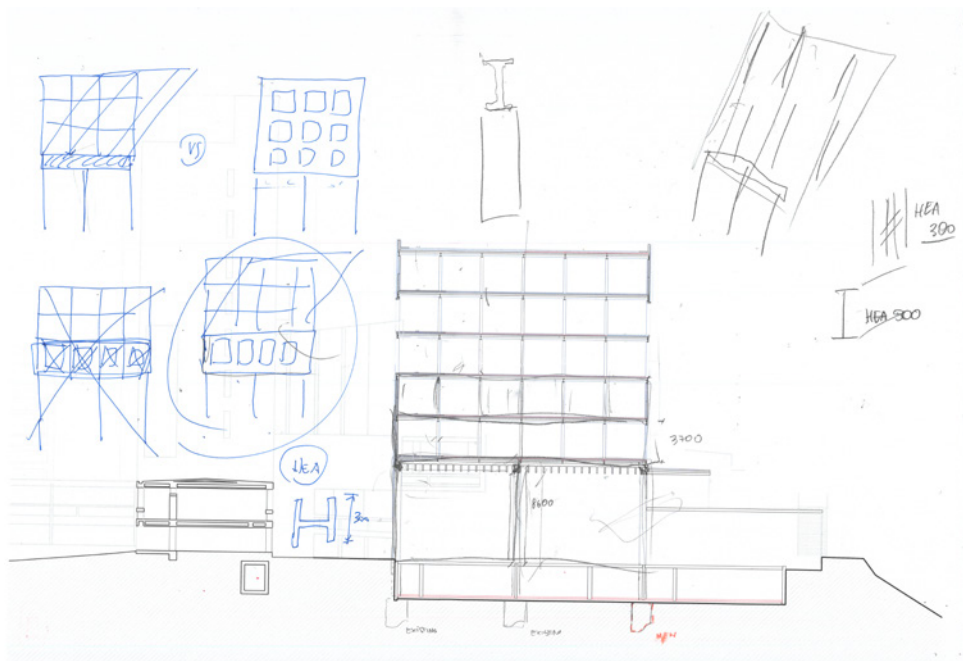
Daniel suggested to do shifts for even bigger clarity of the project. Everything was discussed on one drawing. So here it is.

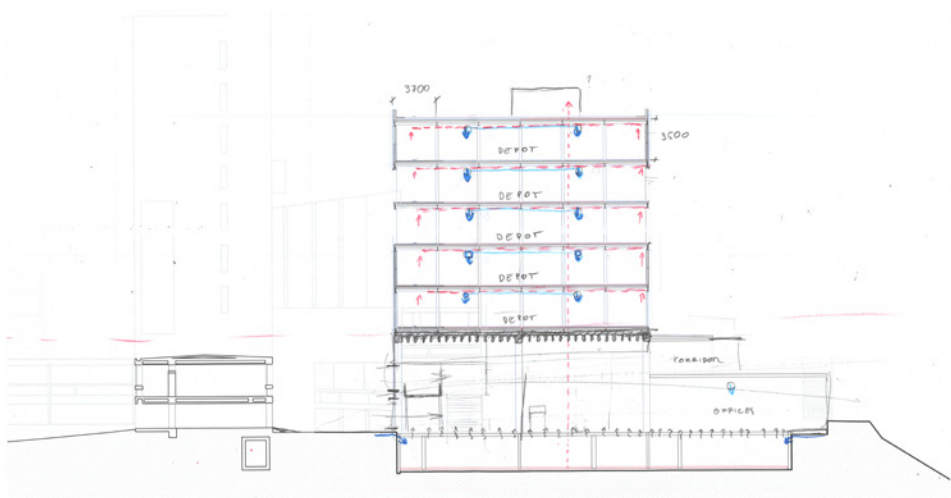
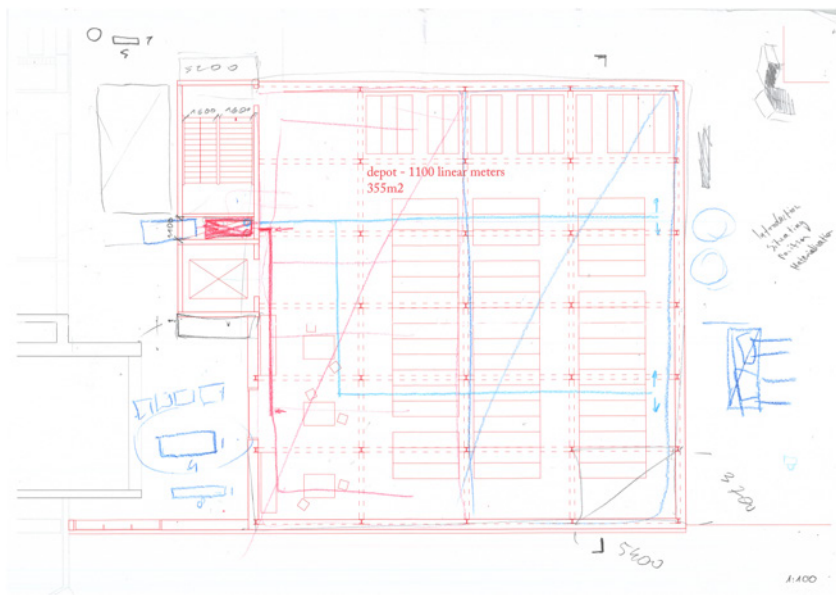


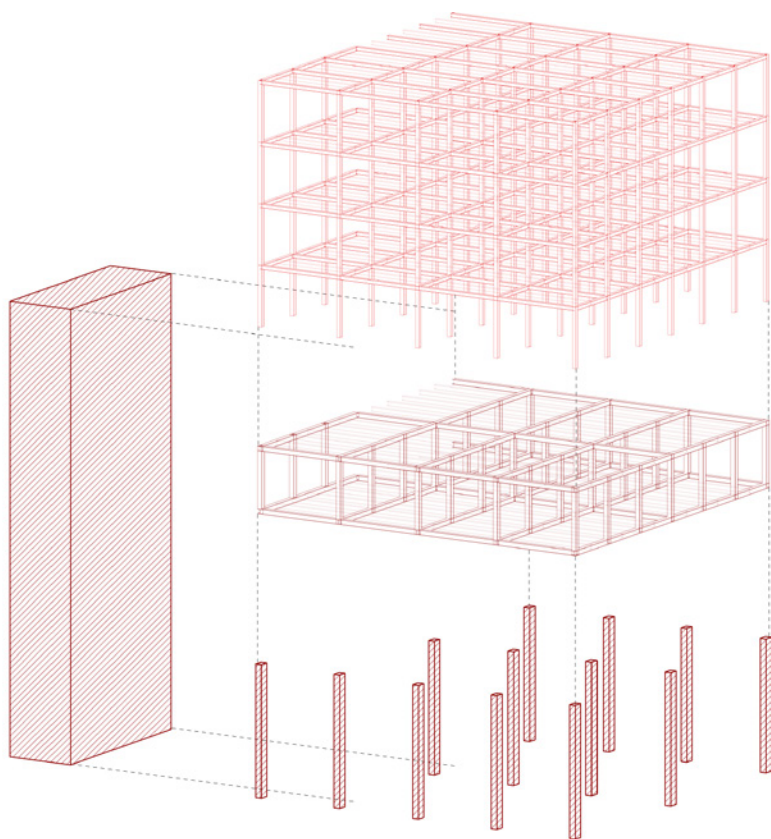
## *Consulting climate and structure*

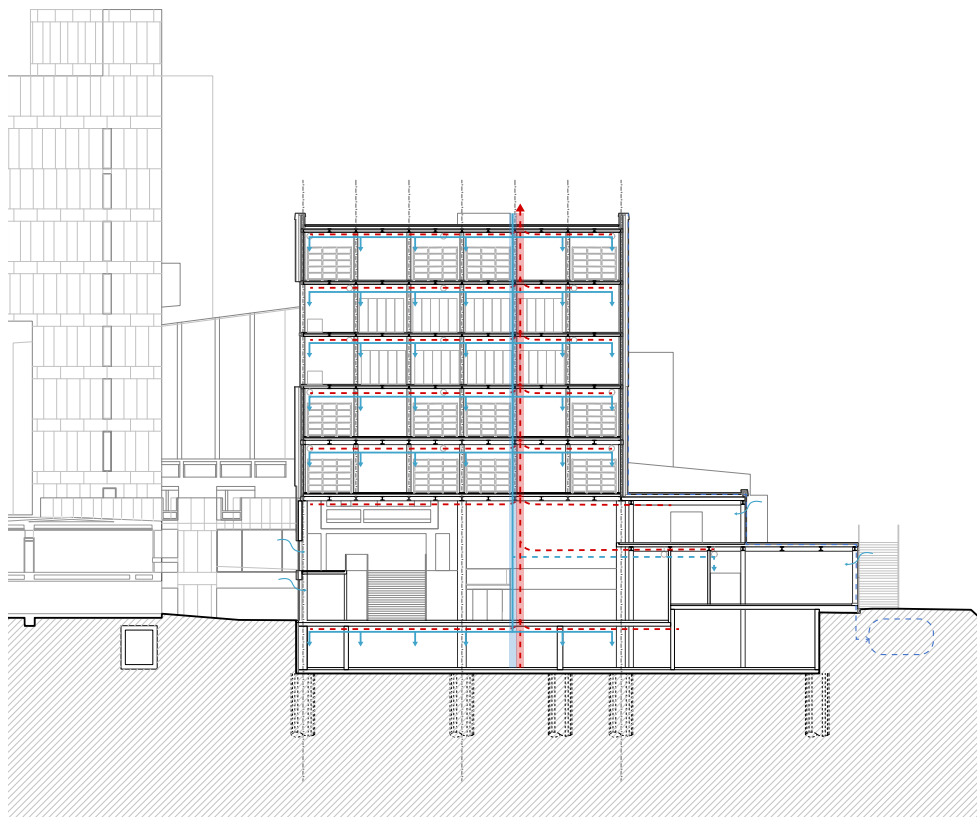
During the consultations held two weeks before the P4 week I got to know that structurally my project is an overkill with a na extensive use of Vierendeel trusses on each floor. Therefore I was suggested to change my structure slightly for a more optimal combination: a truss instead of a transfer slab, and a regular steel frame on top.

Climate-wise my project needed an optimisation in the dimensions of a shaft, which was slightly changed.



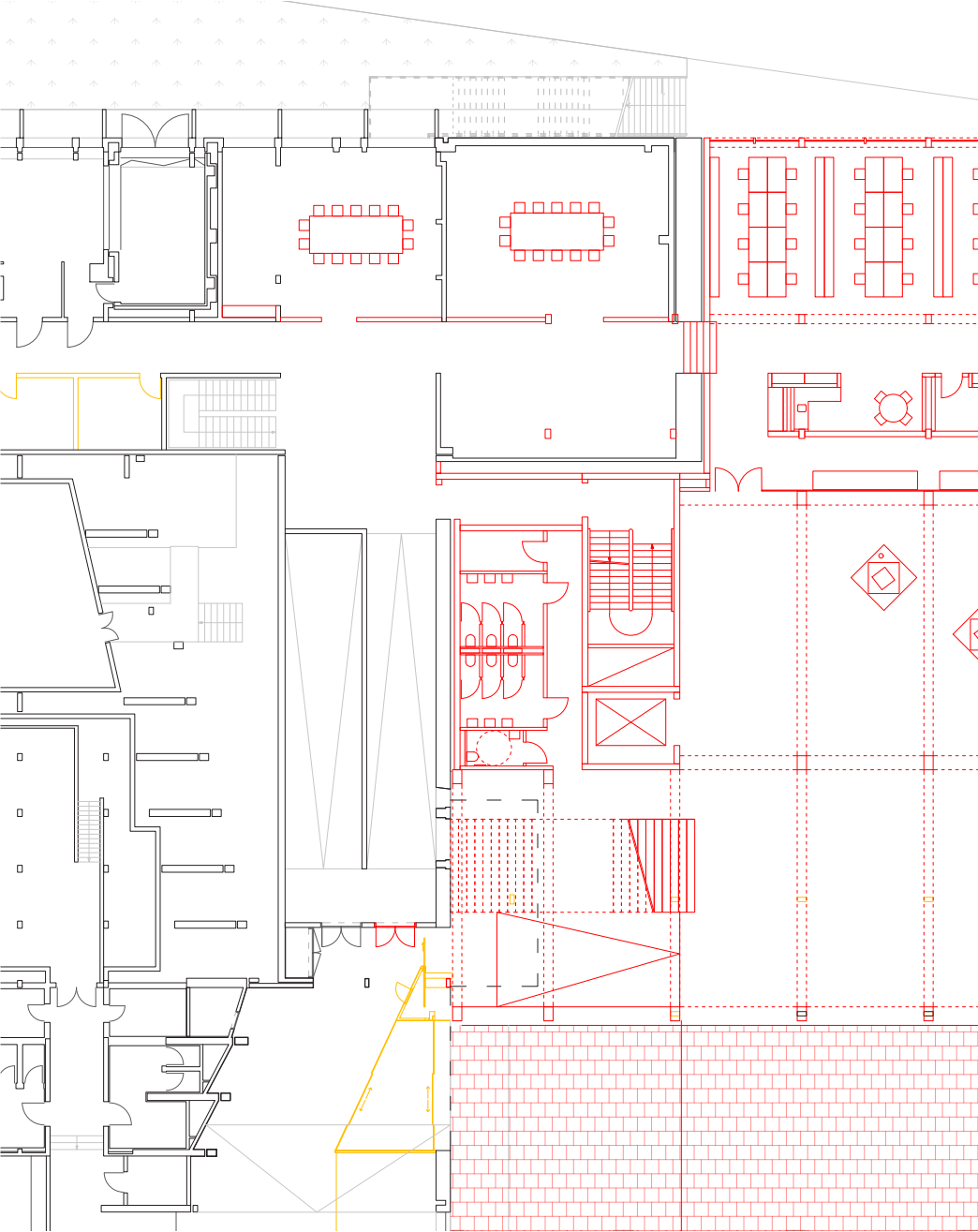


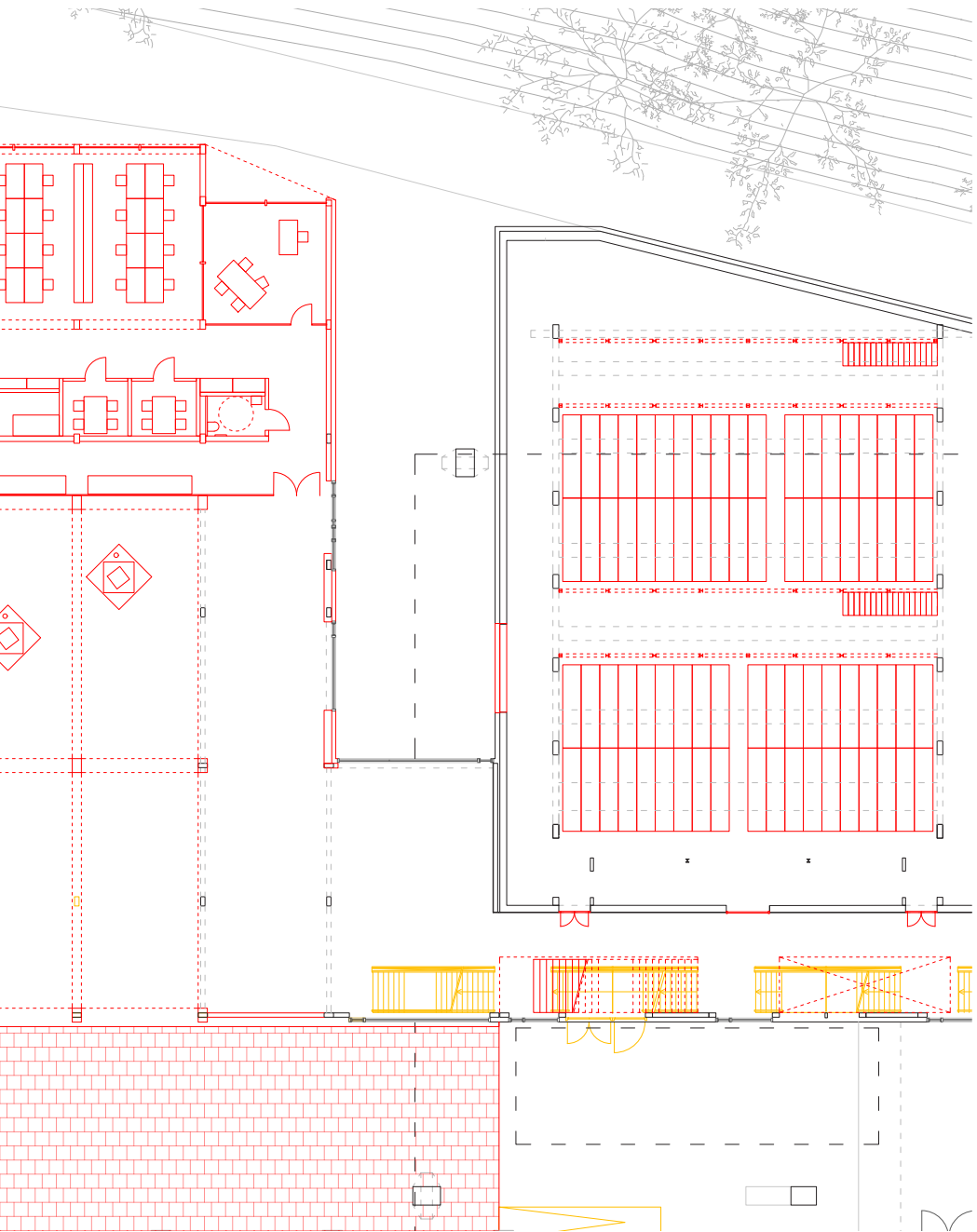






*Towards P4 | Plans*





## *Pre-P4 | The narrative*

Althought I haven't managed to prepare a proper presentation for pre-P4, I have discussed my narrative, what should be more prominent and what are the focus points.

I read a note that was made after my tutorial with Jurjen a few weeks back which was refereing to ways of telling the story in a convincing way.

At this point, I focused solely on finishing all the drawings and additional material for the incoming P4 moment.

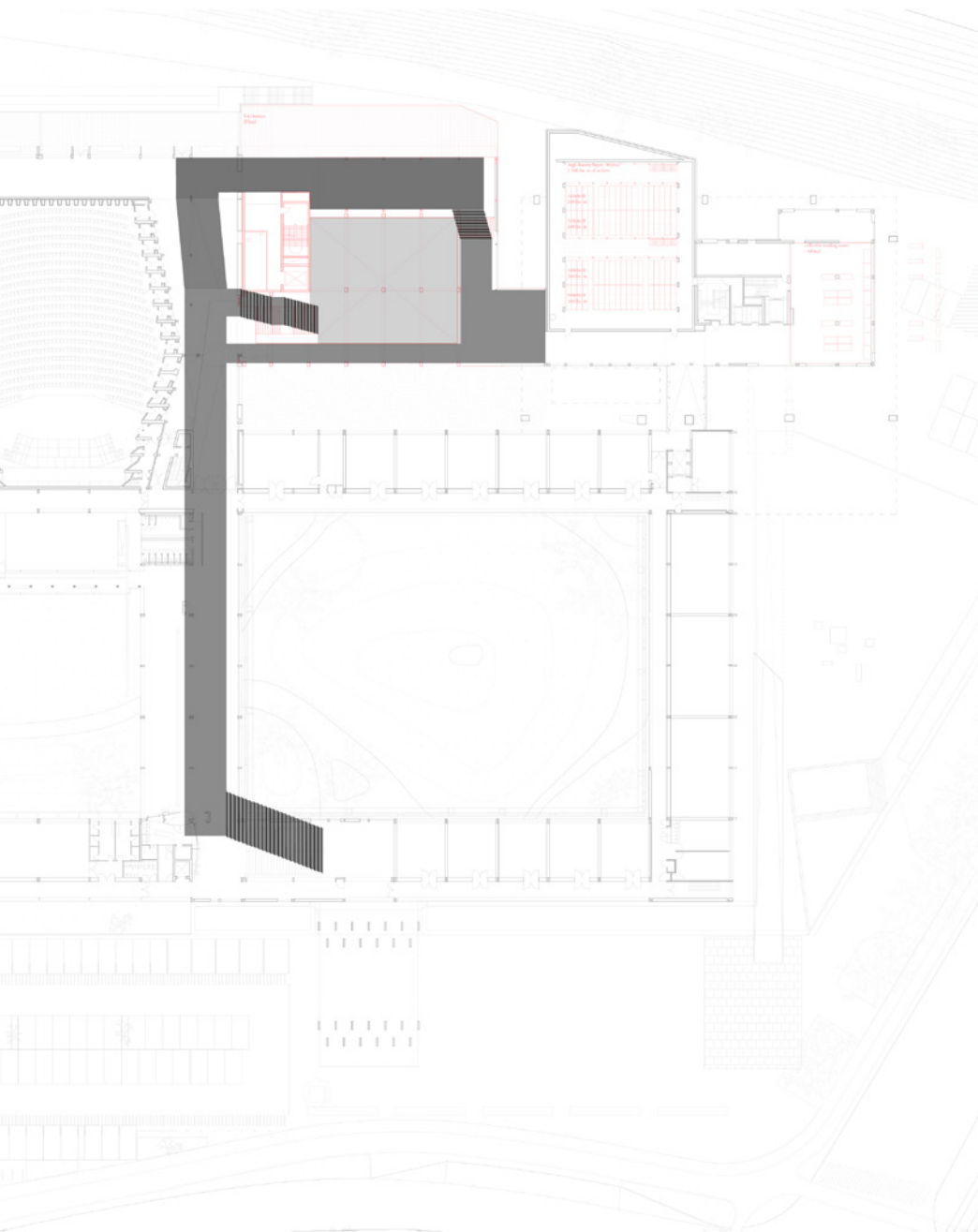


chaos vs clarity  
old new  
one image  
learning in and out  
+ sections to help to understand the project

Storytelling  
based on the  
narrative how  
you walk through  
the building and  
approaching it

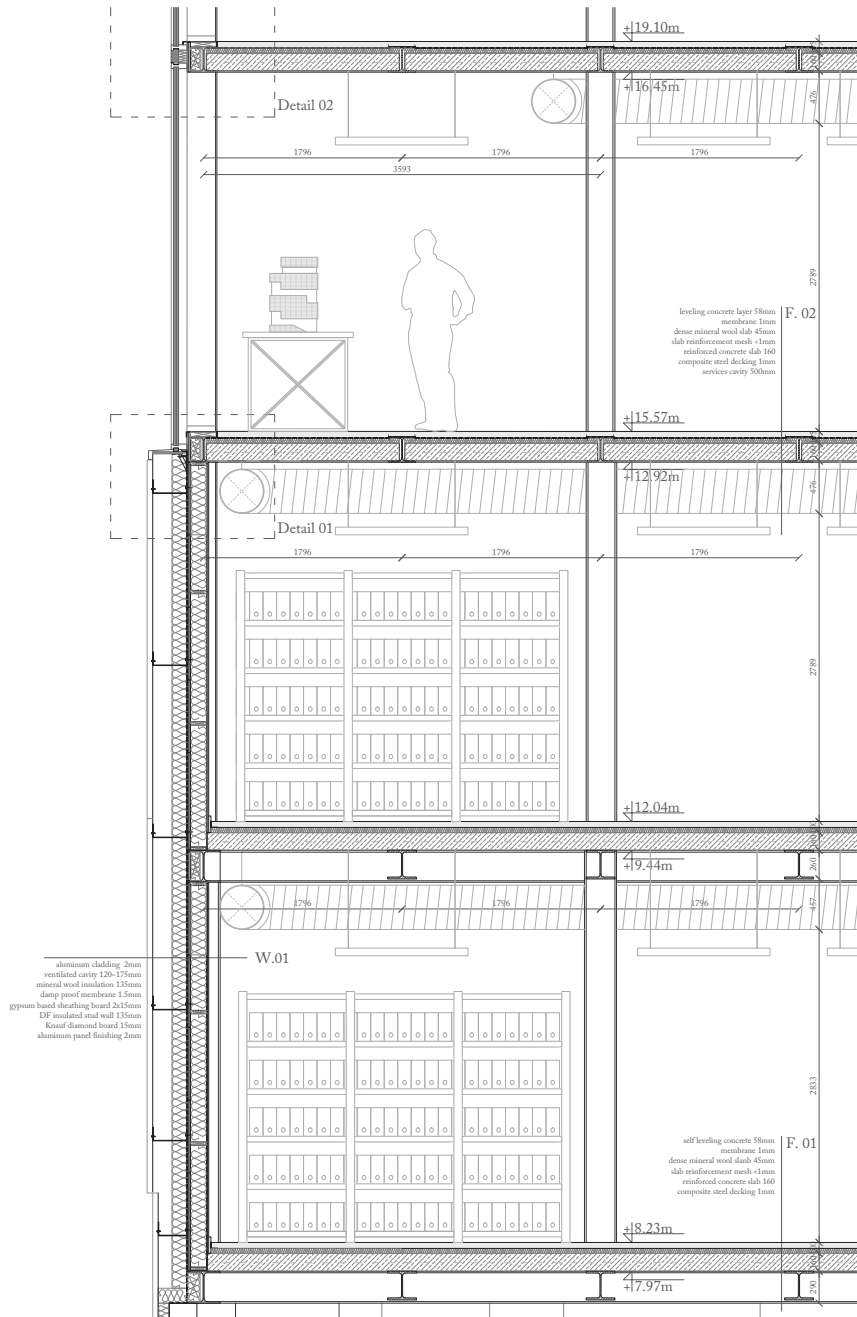
+ the beautiful  
favourite year  
making :)  
story about how  
only your project  
didn't also existing building

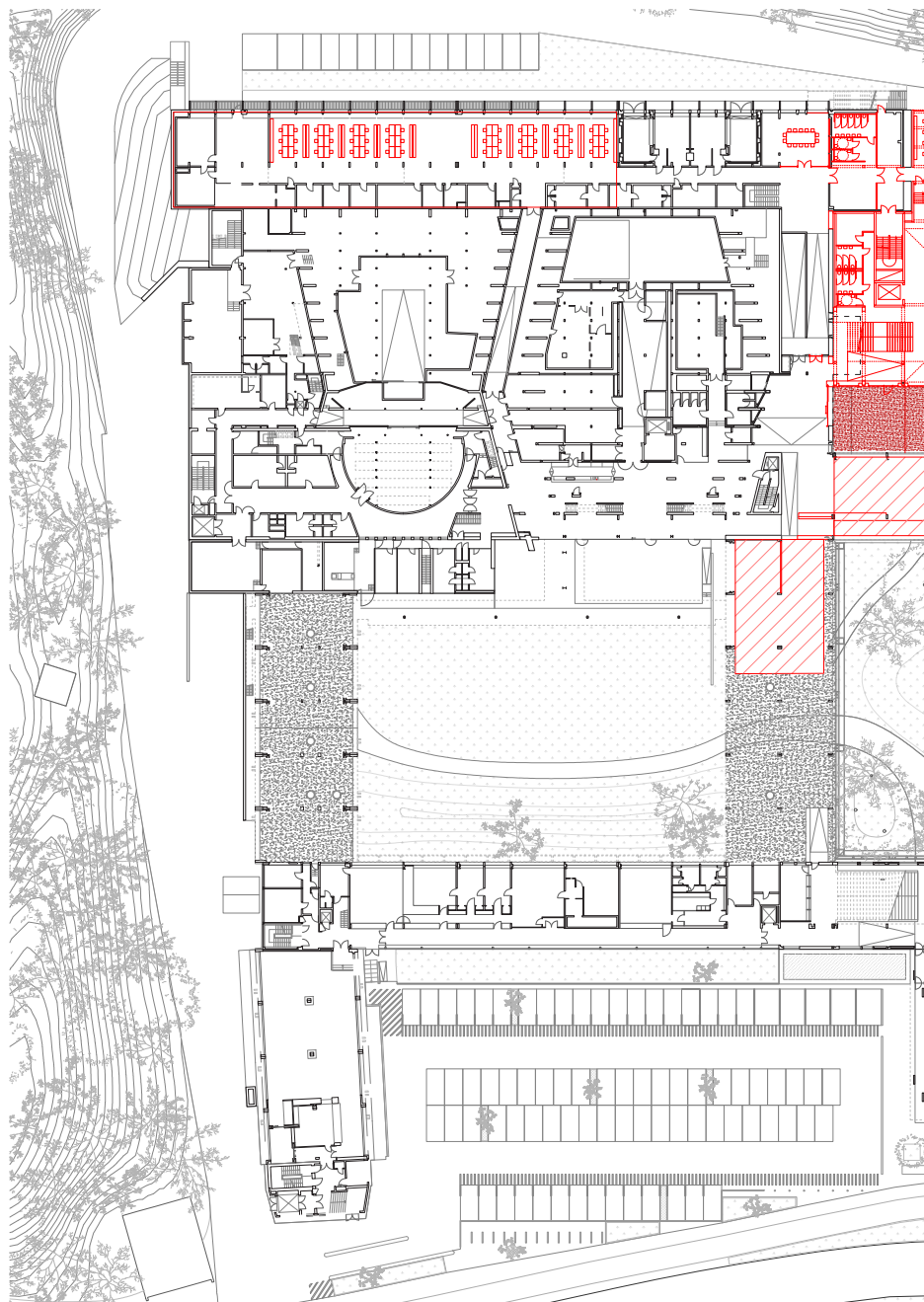


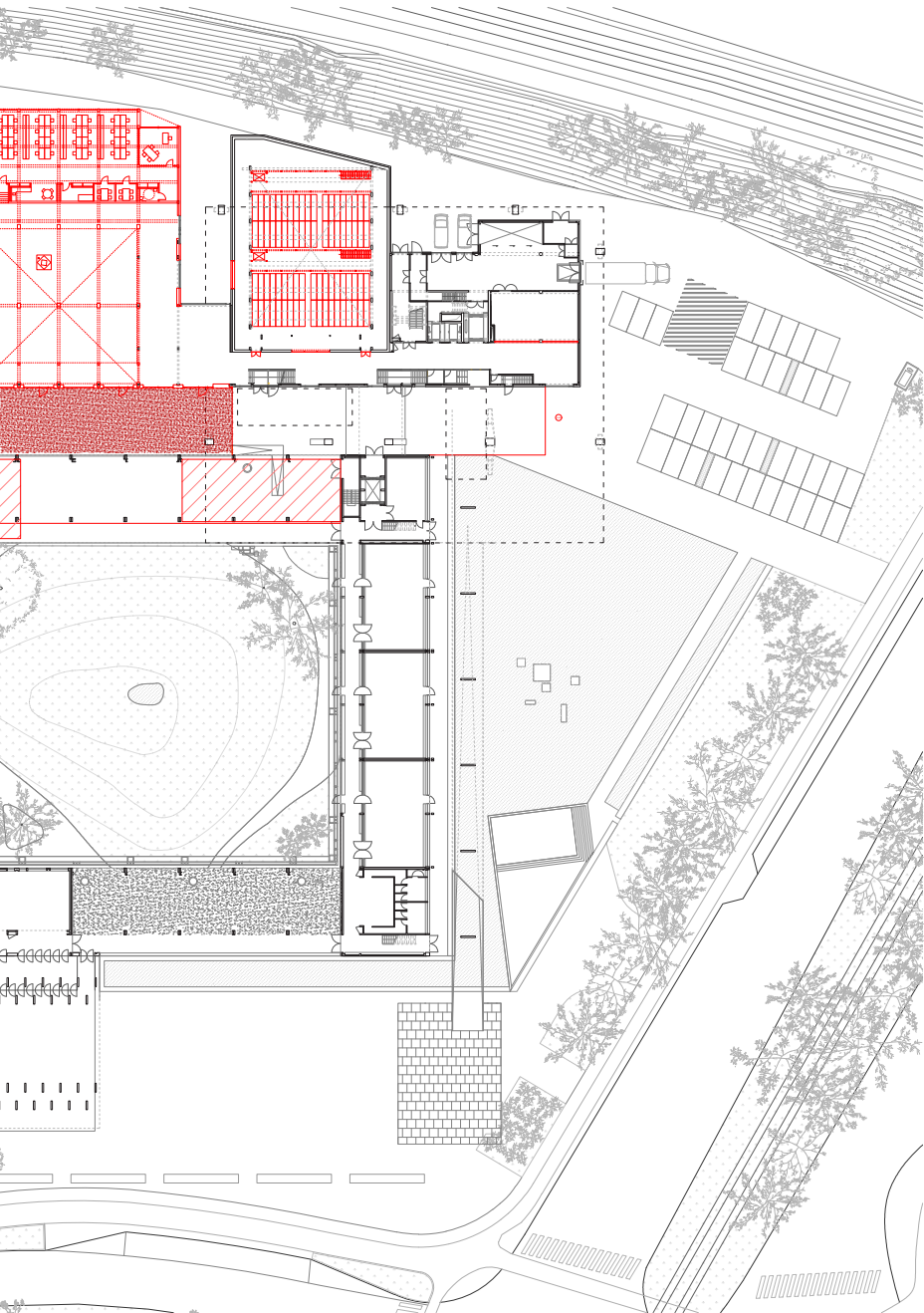








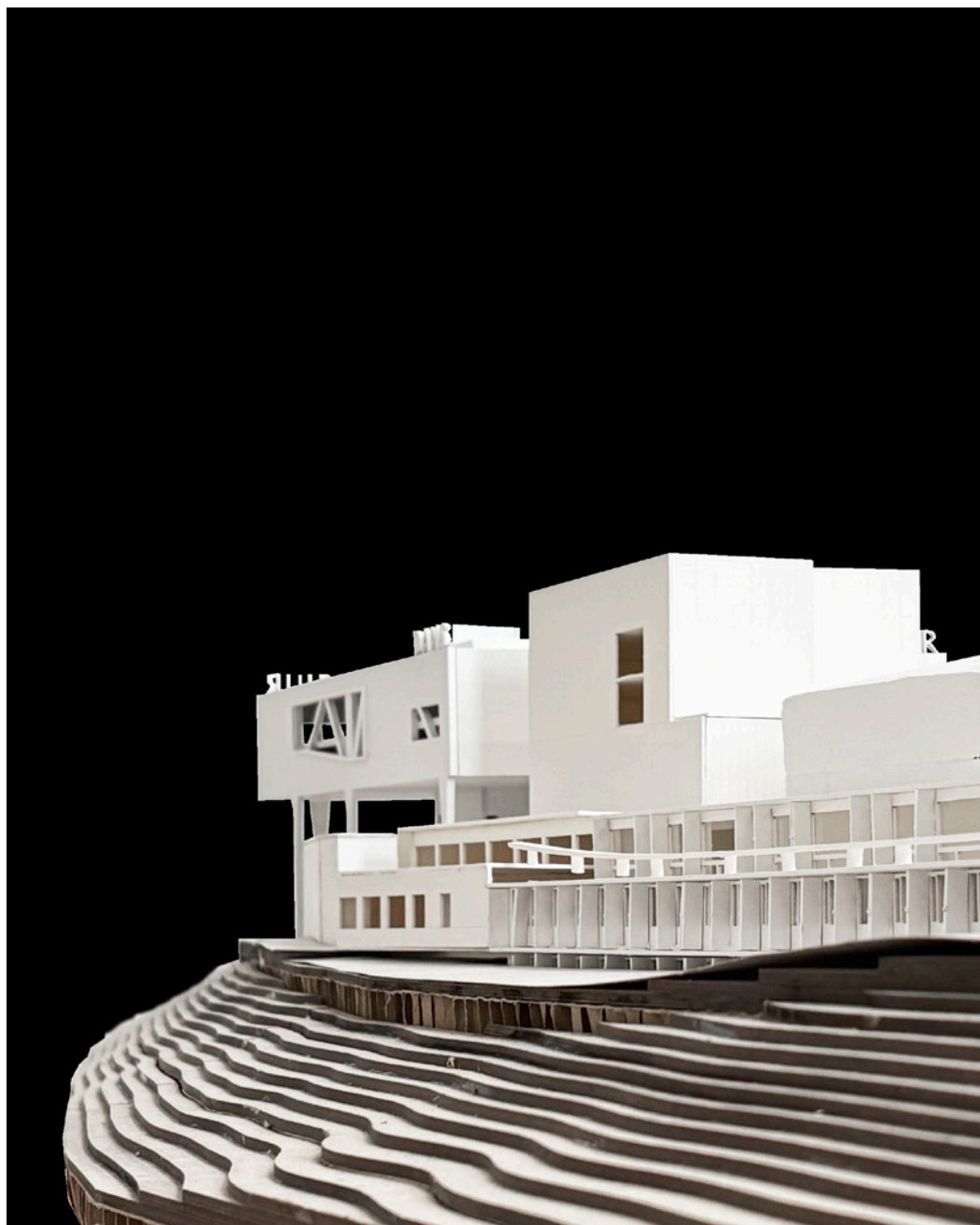


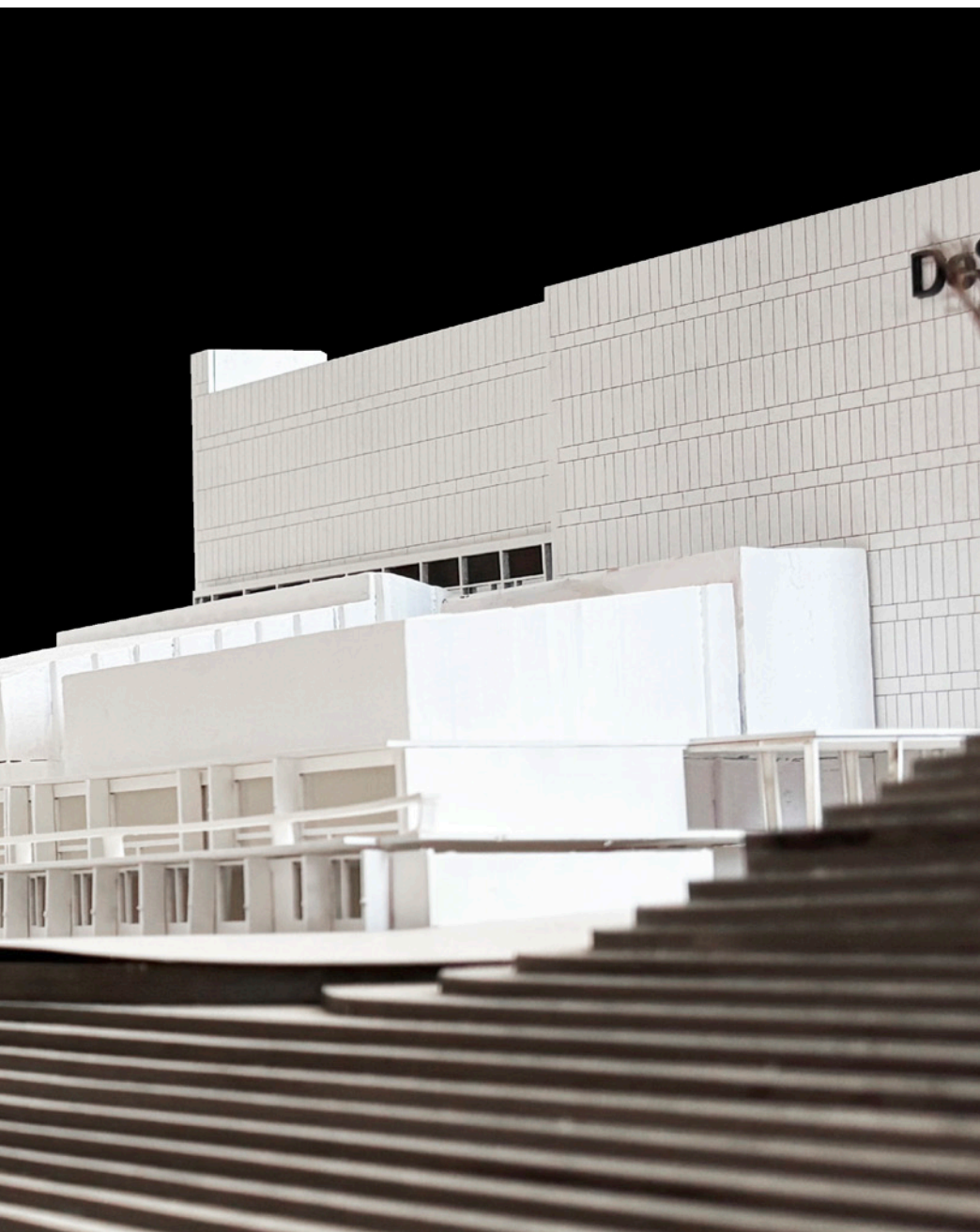














03 - 04

# Shared Foundations

# In Between

My P4 went surprisingly well.

From the questions I got from both Sam and Matthijs I understood my project suddenly became a story about ... windows. I considered that to be a potential leitmotif of my proposal my P5 presentation.

Considering the time given between the two presentations: 12 working days - I decided to prioritise elaborating on atmosphere of the building through the views - a set of visuals and drawings.

One of them, I started to make straight after the P4, before realising how tired I am after all those days of constant preparation.

## NOTES:

### Observations and questions Sam

#### Presentation

Very well done and clear presentation, Maks. You take the listener by the hand and walk us through your story.

04 highlight the important aspects you read in the text of SDC

15 maybe showing the railway station allows people who have been to Antwerp to locate the current archives and De Singel

17 brief is very small

19 is it important to show the church-archive on a map as well?

25 where would be the original location of the Guiette fresco?

29 could you please share this photograph with Liren with my compliments?

50 It would be good to show a photo of the existing building that you suggest demolishing before showing what you propose.

76 what are the existing and what are the new foundations? Not clear enough

88 really nice sketch, I would love to see more in your final presentation.

Q You build on the existing foundations. You take on the footprint of an existing building. Could you reflect on what that means for the VAI as an institution? What kind of institutional culture would you like to develop for VAI? > position of the VAI > Reuse is important to them. Pragmatic choice reflecting the VAI's

Q Window question: The large window looking back to the city of Antwerp, the large window looking towards the ringway, the window of the royal lodge. It would be good to address this as a theme in your P5 presentation because your answer addresses key experiences of the building.

Also, zooming out a bit, you situate yourself between Stynen and Beel, a friendly face between their buildings.

Talk more about the architectural expression in the facade but also inside the building.

What is the atmosphere of a building with a friendly face sitting in between the severe Stynen and somewhat frightening Beel.

You can also talk about the facades and

#### Questions Matthijs:

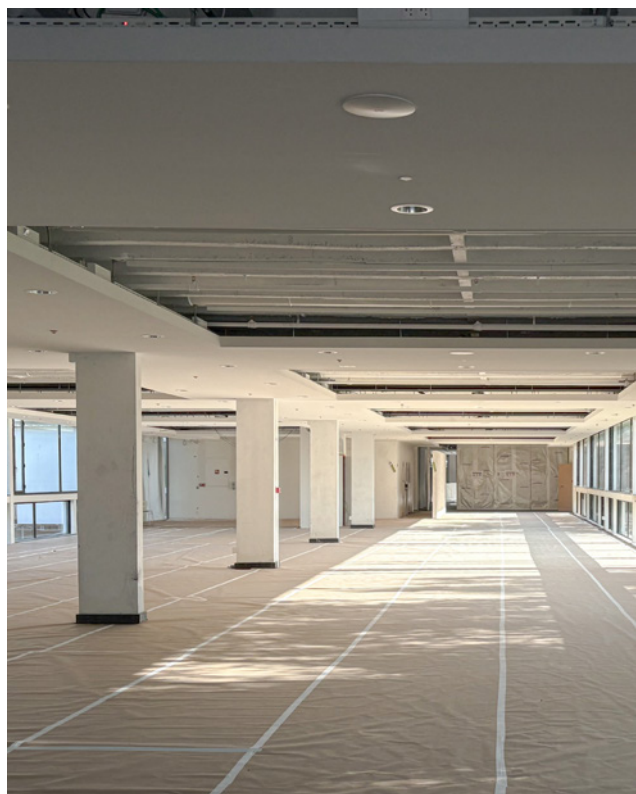
78 Climate diagram: how am I to understand the ventilation via the windows

98 Material of the building: aluminium panels: how are they treated?



## *deSingel, once more...*

I went back to Antwerp for a one day general city trip. However I couldn't hesitate to go to deSingel once more, to take some pictures, to get inspired, to reflect on what I designed for the site.













## *Images*

A process of making images, collected through a Whatsapp chat with my peers.

