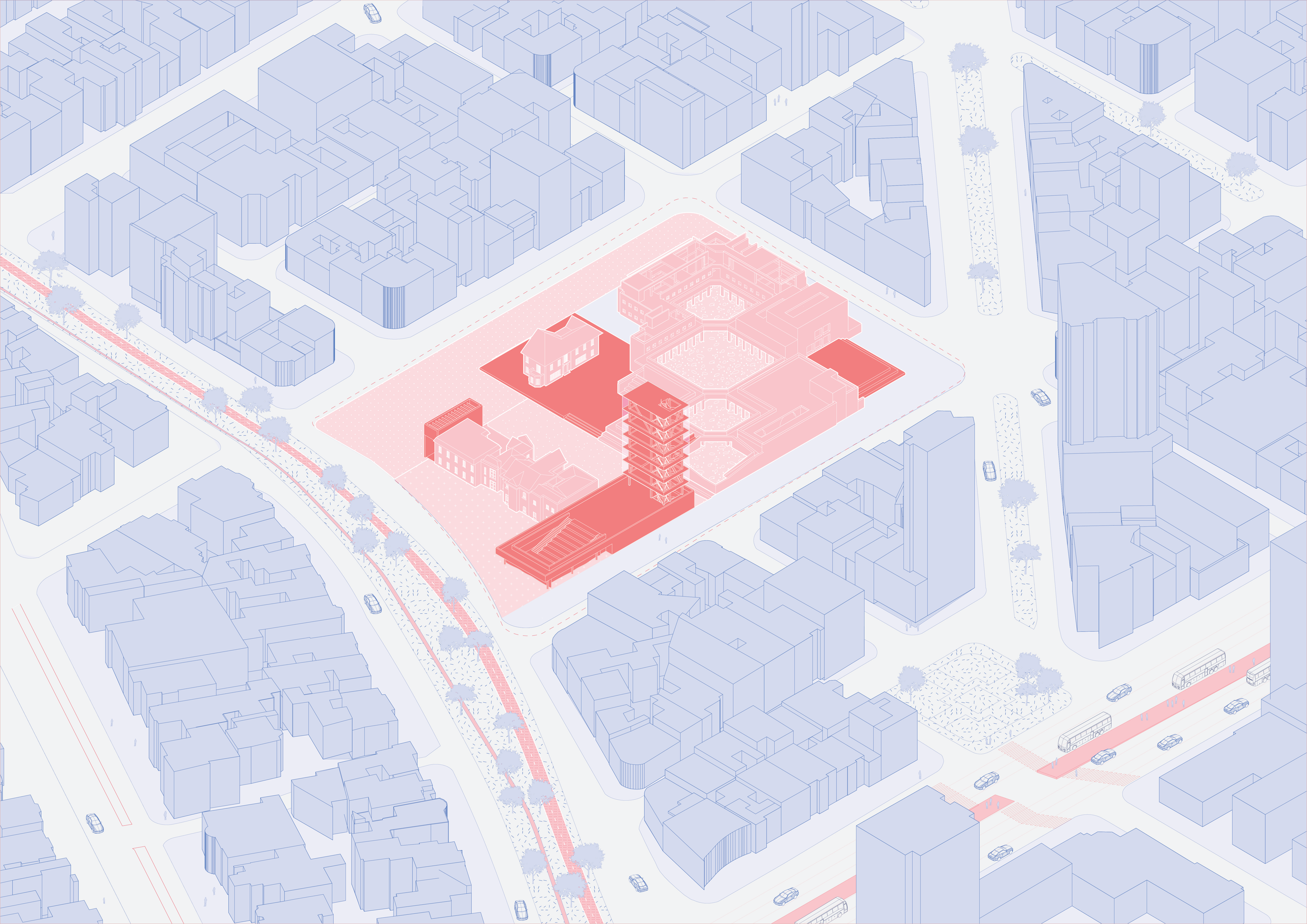
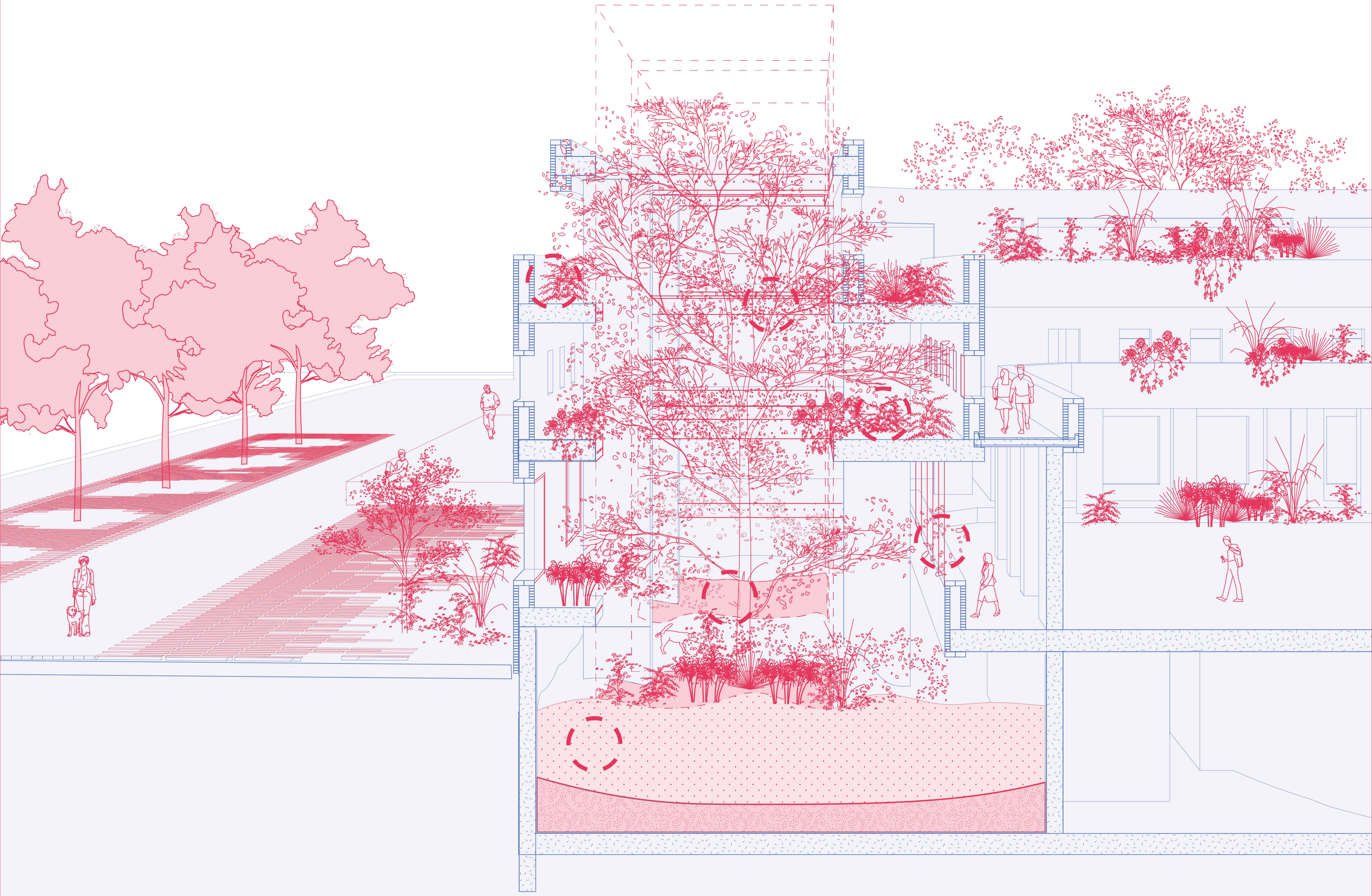
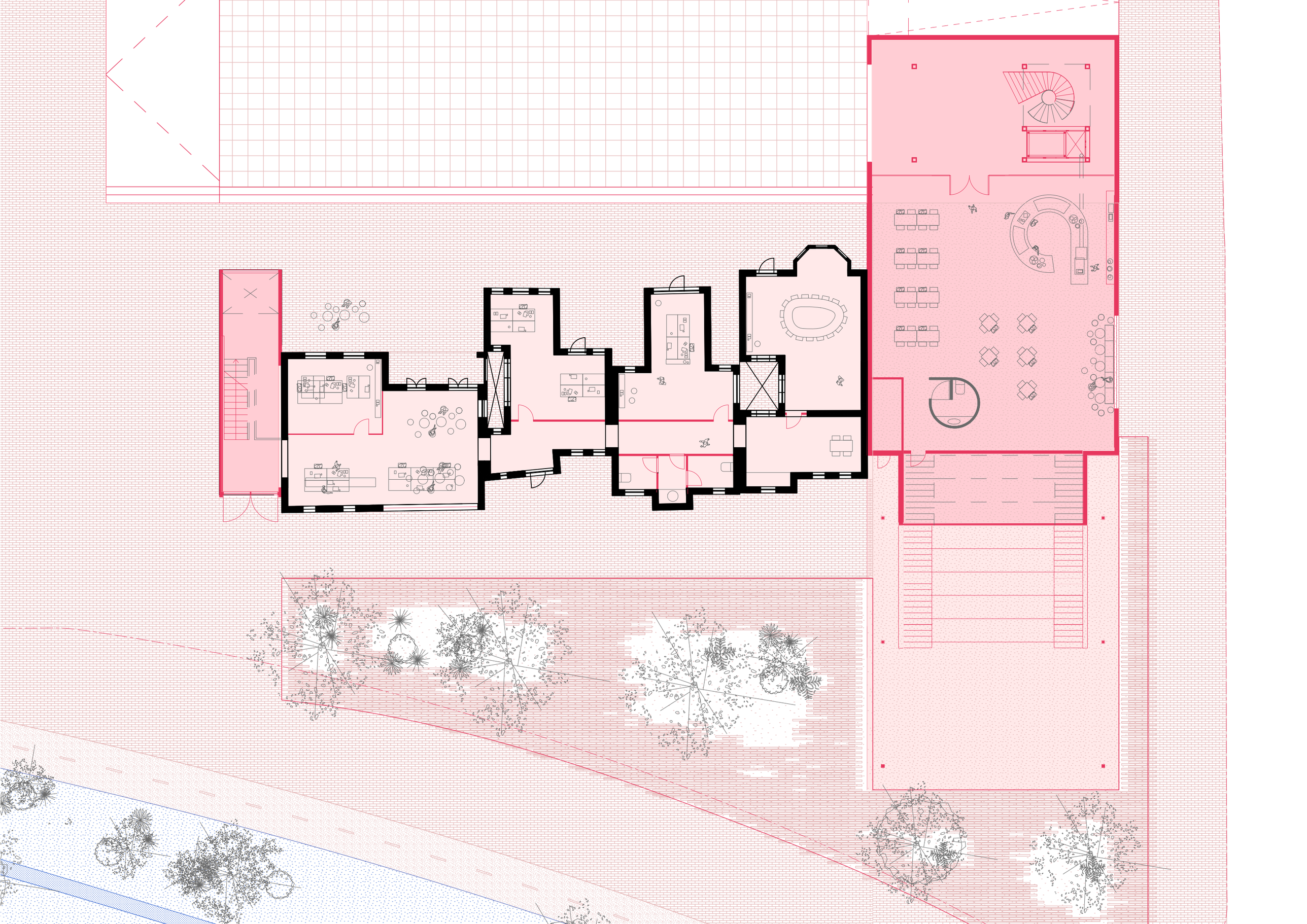






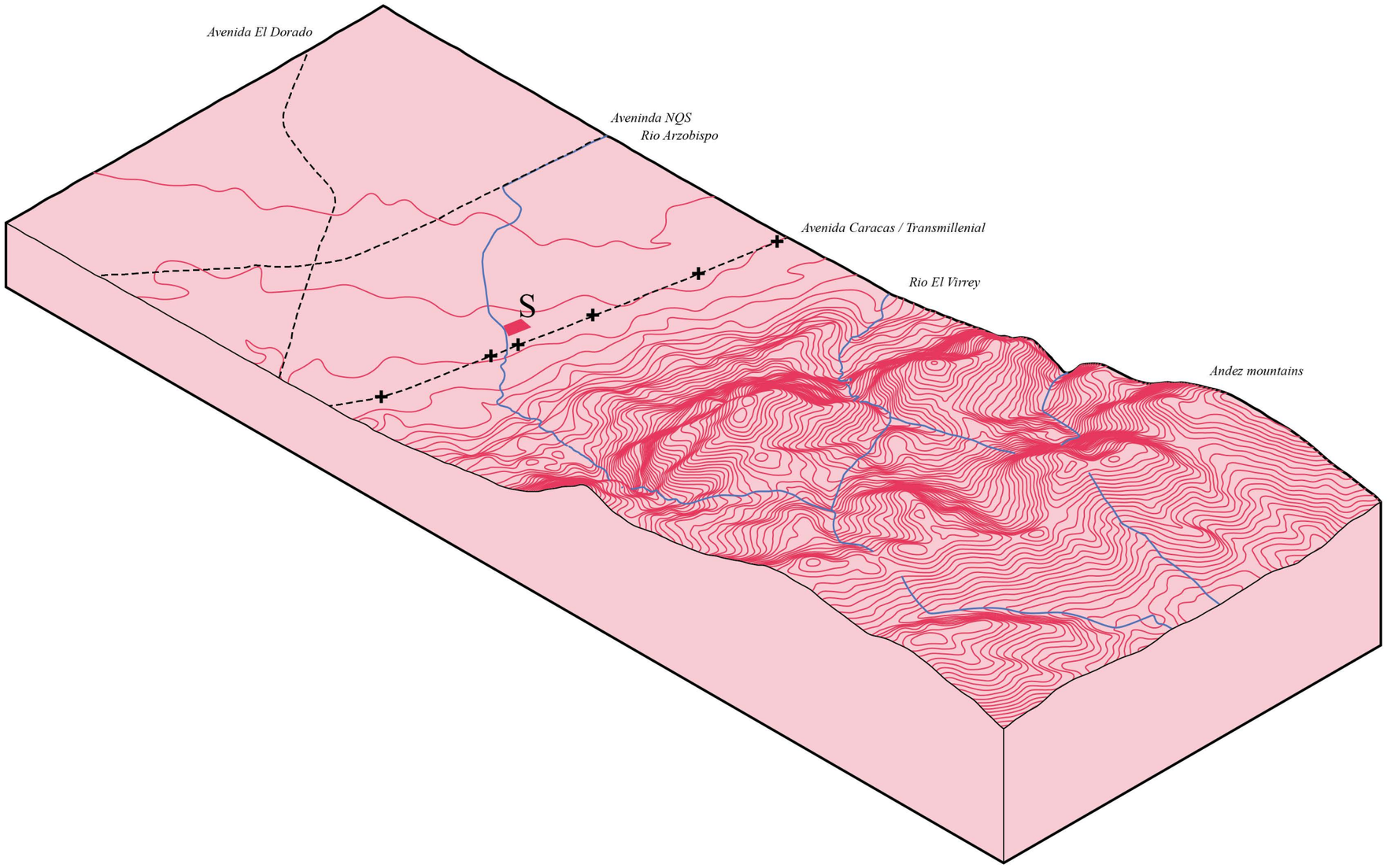
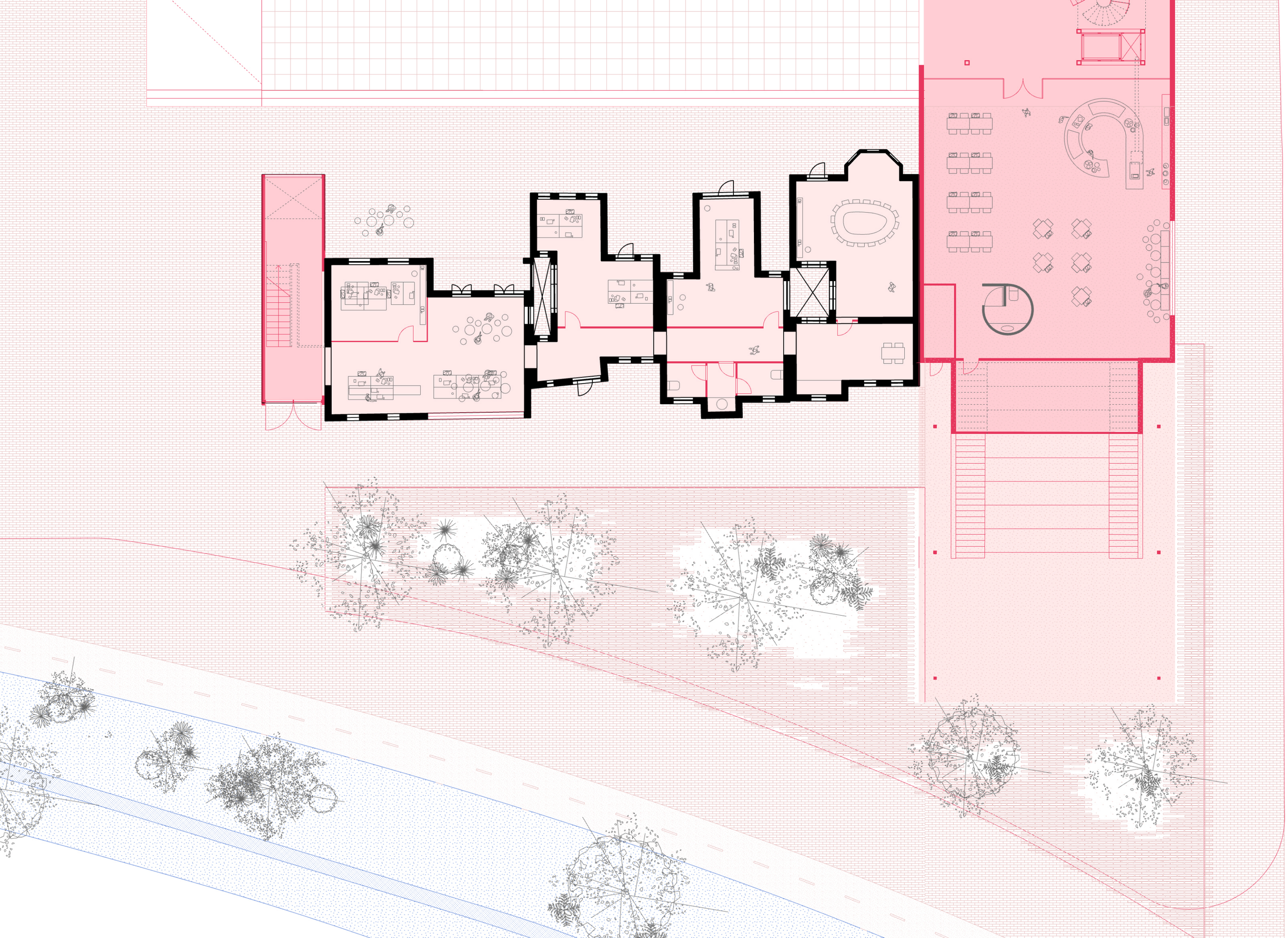
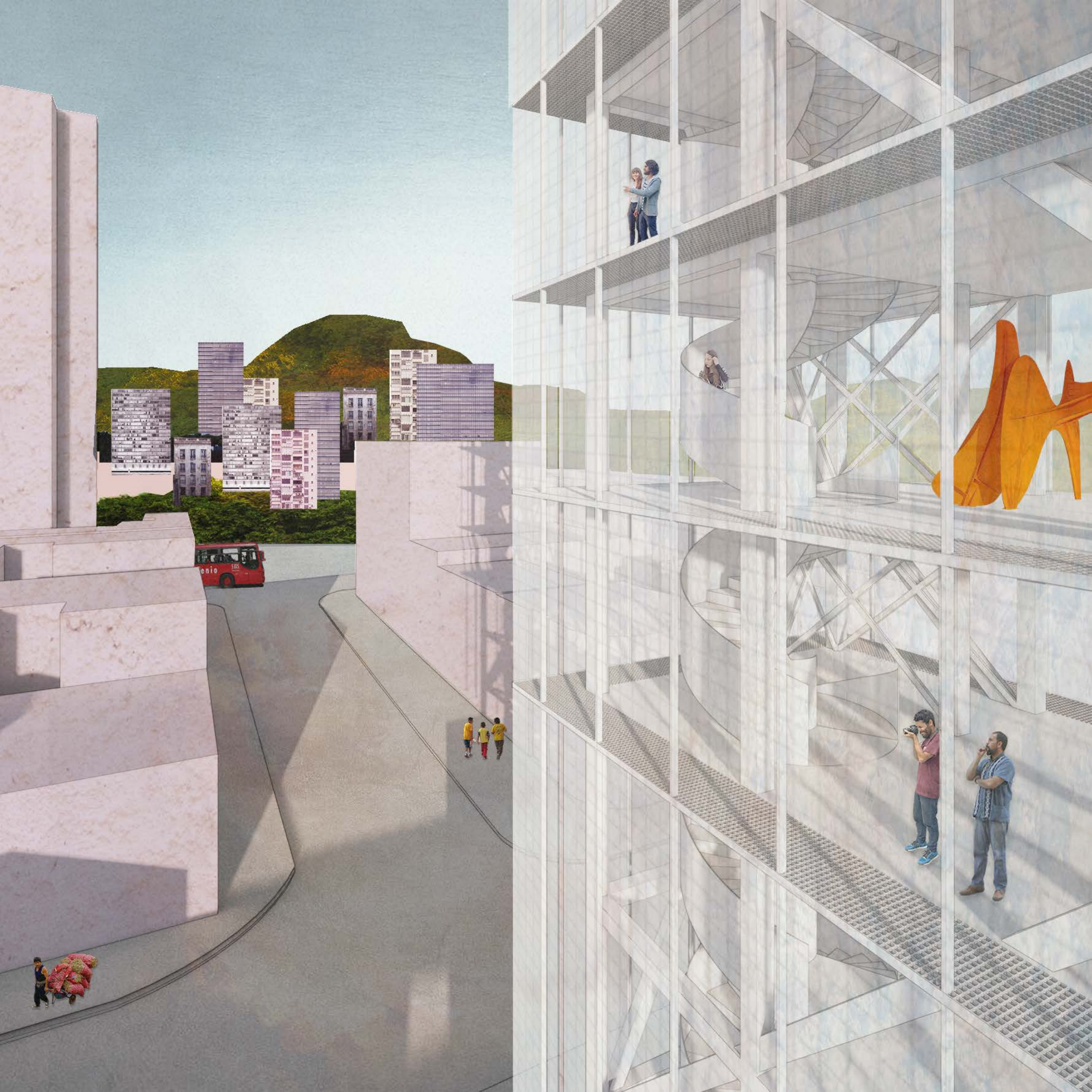

Avenida El Dorado
Aveninda NQS
Rio Arzobispo
Avenida Caracas / Transmillenial
Rio El Virrey
S
Andez mountains

Ilustración 1. Vista del eje lineal que conduce hacia el centro de Bogotá y que atraviesa el Centro Cultural Jorge Eliécer Gaitán diagonalmente. Fotografía del autor.

Ilustración 2. Vista desde el primer patio hacia el acceso principal al Centro Cultural Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. Fotografía del autor.

Ilustración 3. Vista del anfiteatro en torno al magnolio. Fotografía del autor.





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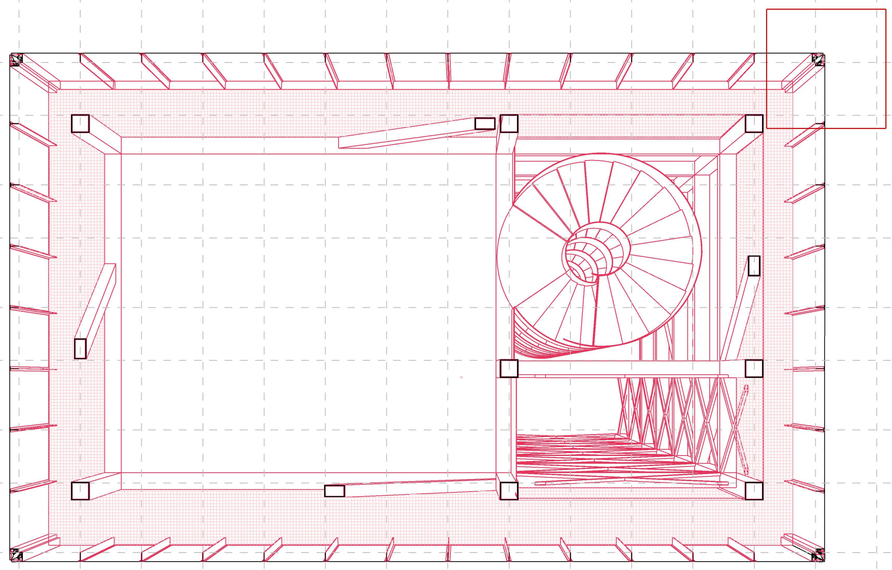

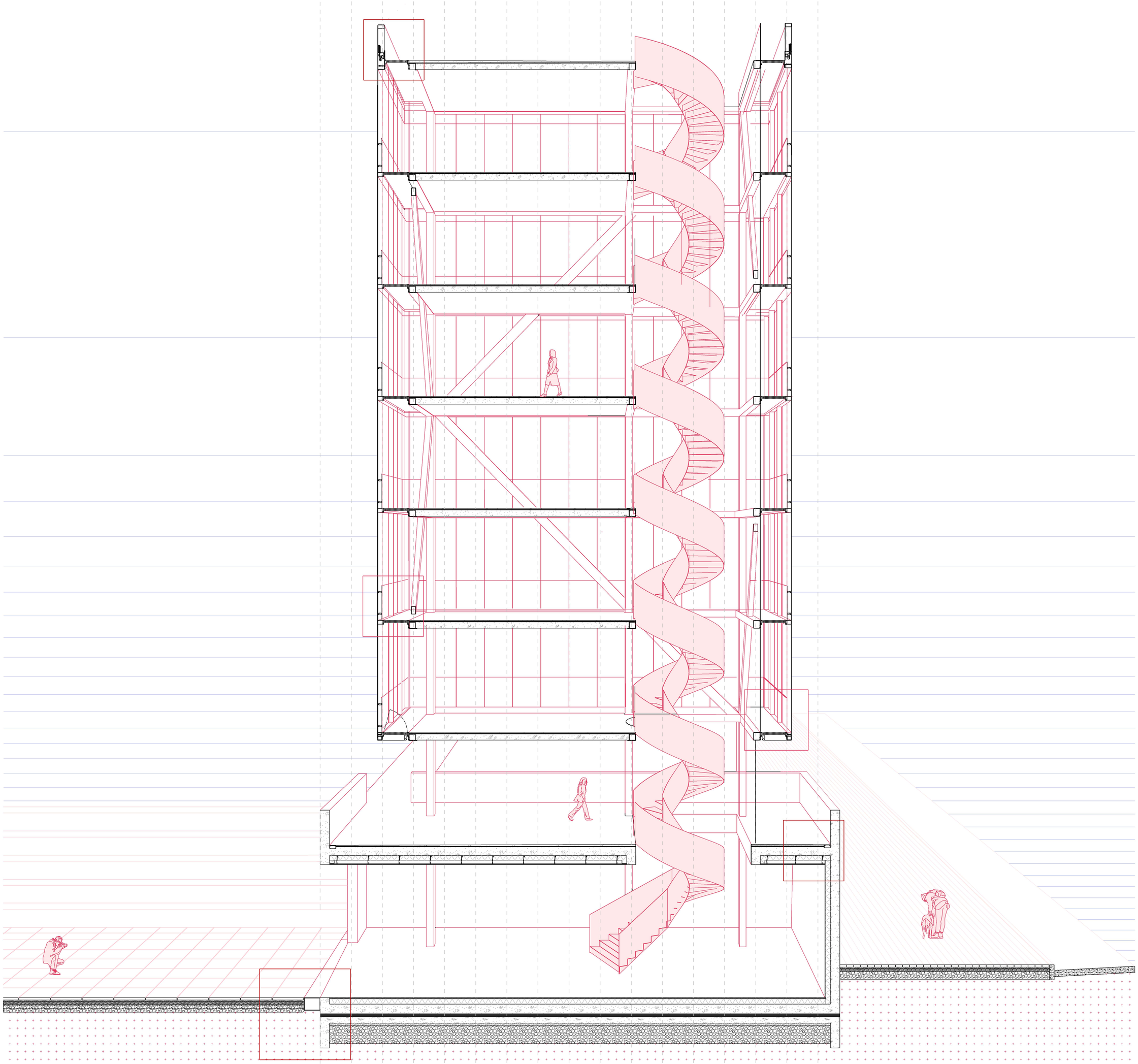

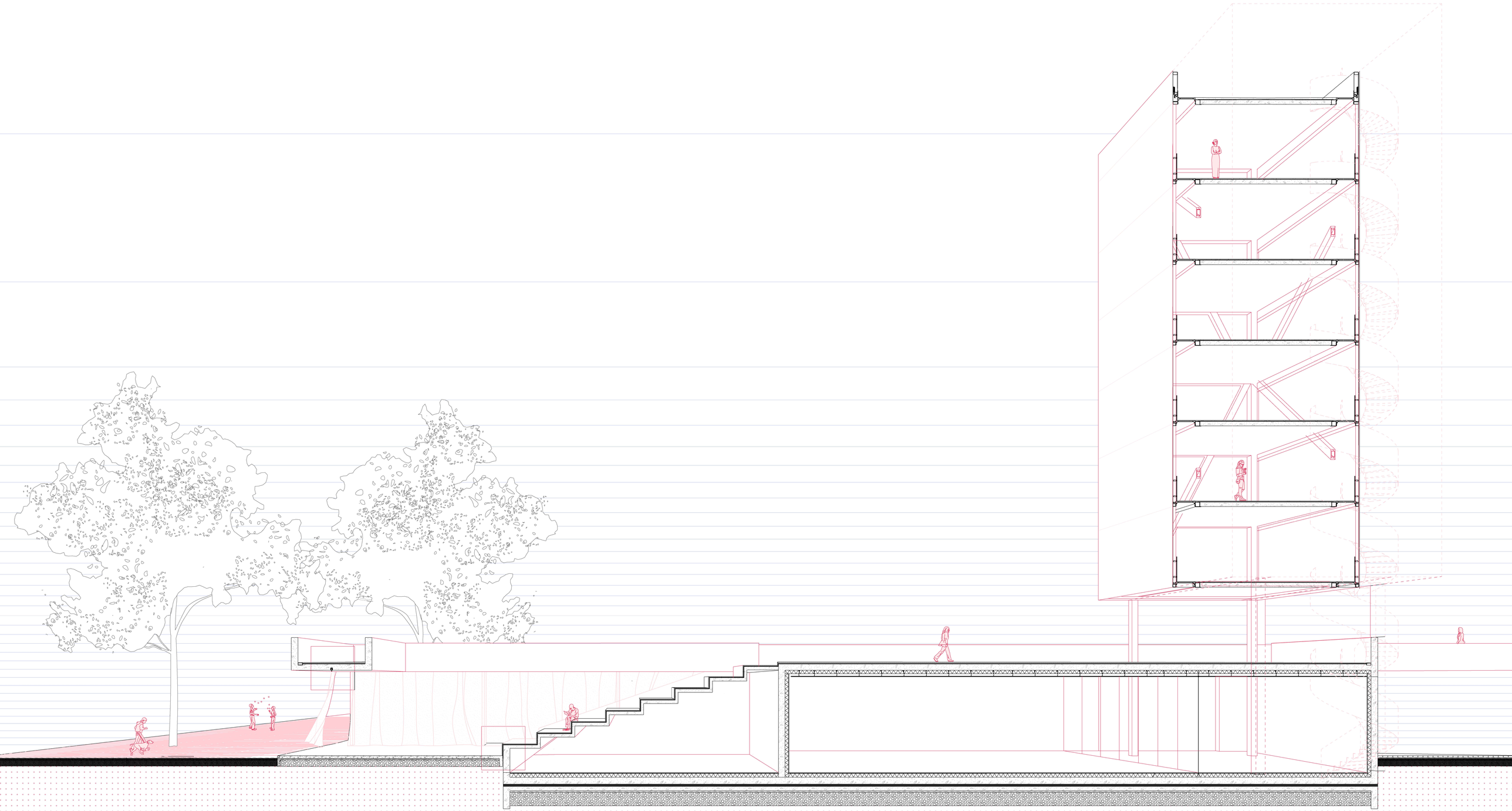

The Ruin

Architecture is the only art in which the great struggle between the will of the spirit and the necessity of nature issues into real peace: that in which the soul in its upward striving and nature in its gravity are held in balance. In poetry, painting, music, the laws governing the materials must be made dumbly submissive to the artistic conception which, in the perfect work, wholly and invisibly absorbs them. Even in sculpture the tangible piece of marble is not the work of art; what stone or bronze of themselves contribute to the work has its effect only as a means of expressing spirit. Although architecture, too, uses and distributes the weight and carrying power of matter according to a plan conceivable only in the human soul, within this plan the matter works by means of its own nature—carrying the plan out, as it were, with its own forces. This is the most sublime victory of the spirit over nature—a situation like that which obtains when we know how to guide a person so that he realizes our will through his own. His will has not been overpowered; rather, the very tendency of his own nature is made to execute our plan.

This unique balance—between mechanical, inert matter which passively resists pressure, and informing spirituality which pushes upward—breaks, however, the instant a building crumbles. For this means nothing else than that merely natural forces begin to become master over the work of man: the balance between nature and spirit, which the building manifested, shifts in favor of nature. This shift becomes a cosmic tragedy which, so we feel, makes every ruin an object infused with our nostalgia; for now the decay appears as nature's revenge for the spirit's having violated it by making a form in its own image. The whole history of mankind is a gradual rise of the spirit to mastery over the nature which it finds outside, but in a certain sense also within, itself. If in the other arts the spirit bends the forms and events of this nature to its command, in architecture it shapes nature's masses and inherent forces until, as if of their own accord, they yield and the artistic conception is made visible. But the necessities of matter submit to the freedom of the spirit, and its vitality is expressed without residue in nature's merely weighing and carrying forces, only so long as the building remains perfect. The moment its decay destroys the unity of the form, nature and spirit separate

excerpt from Georg Simmel

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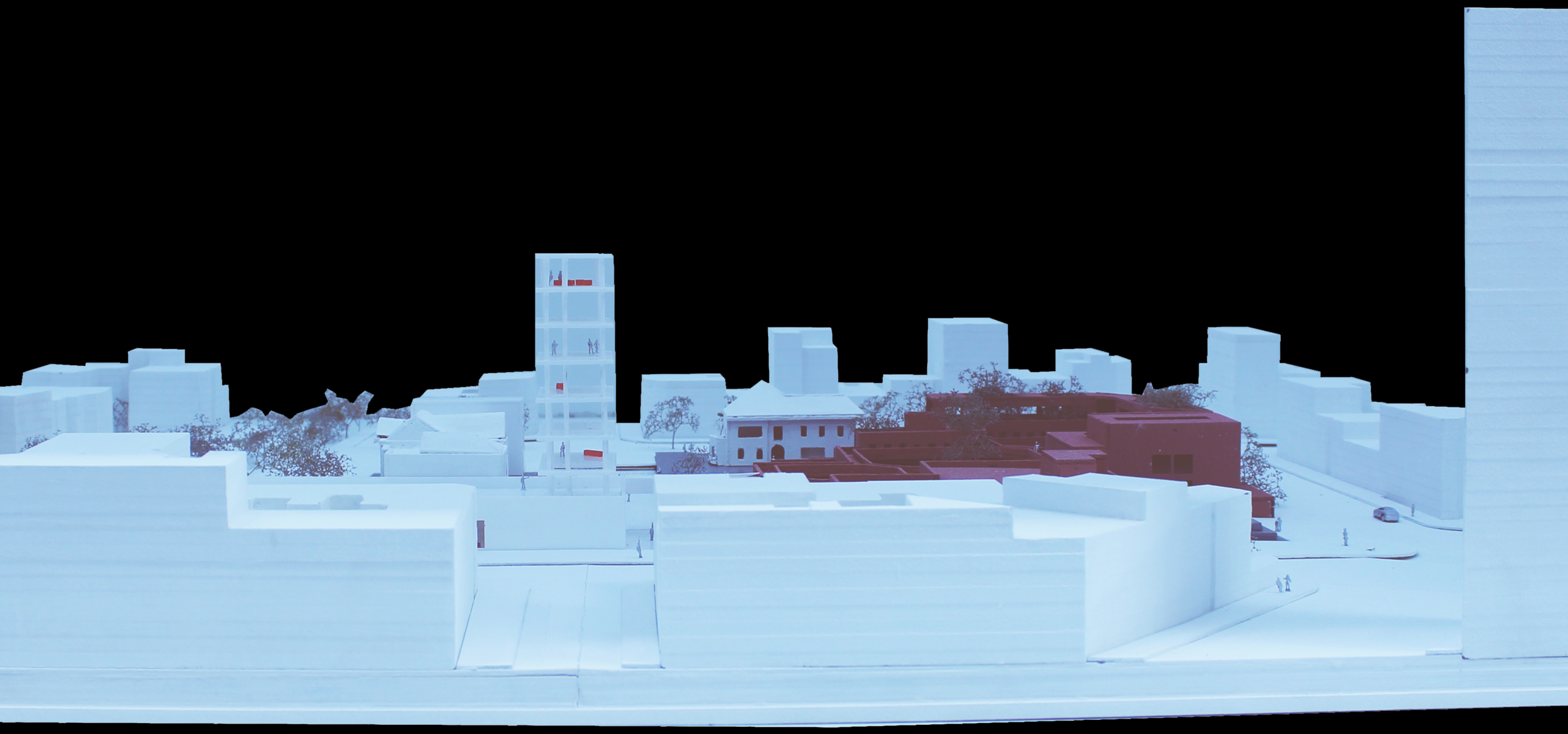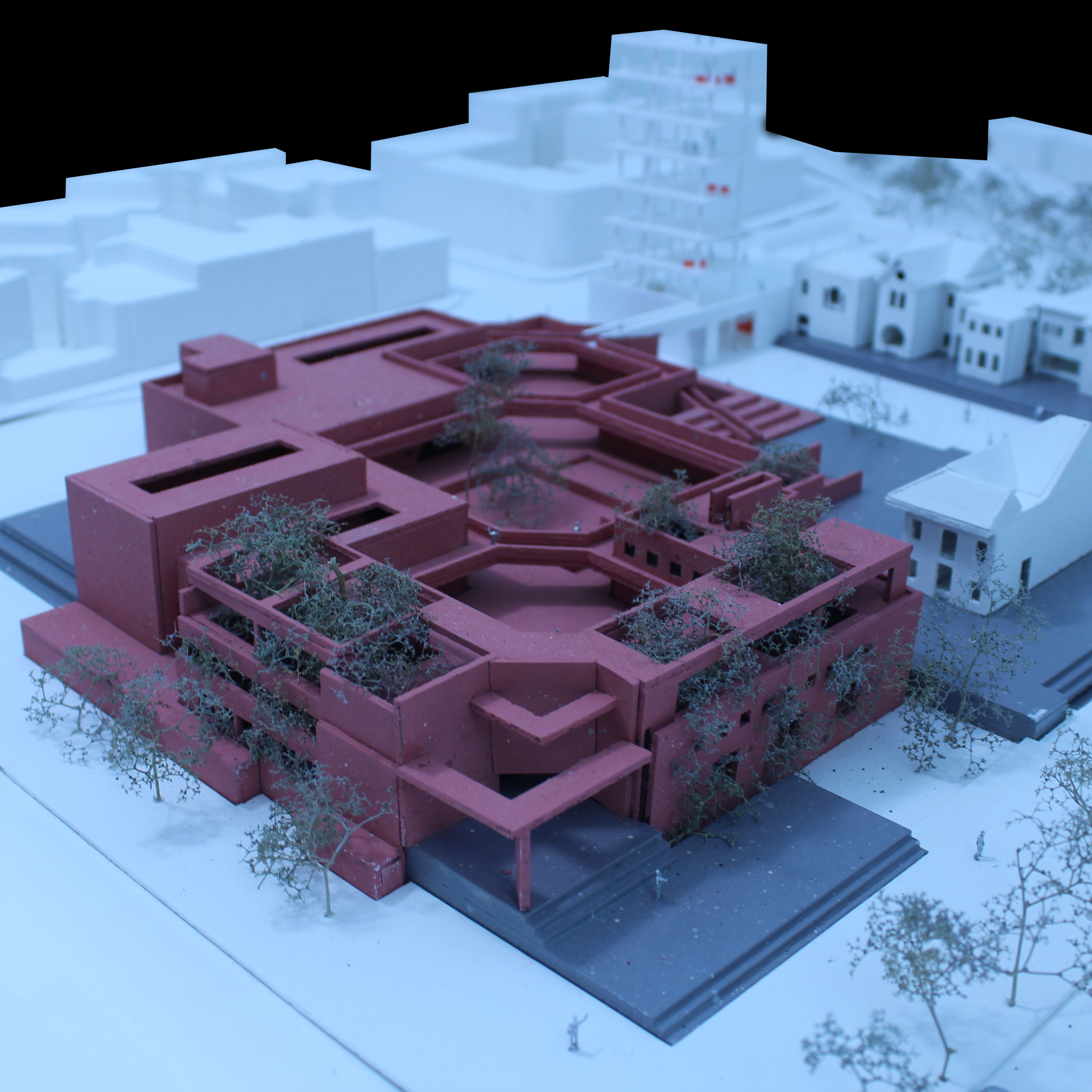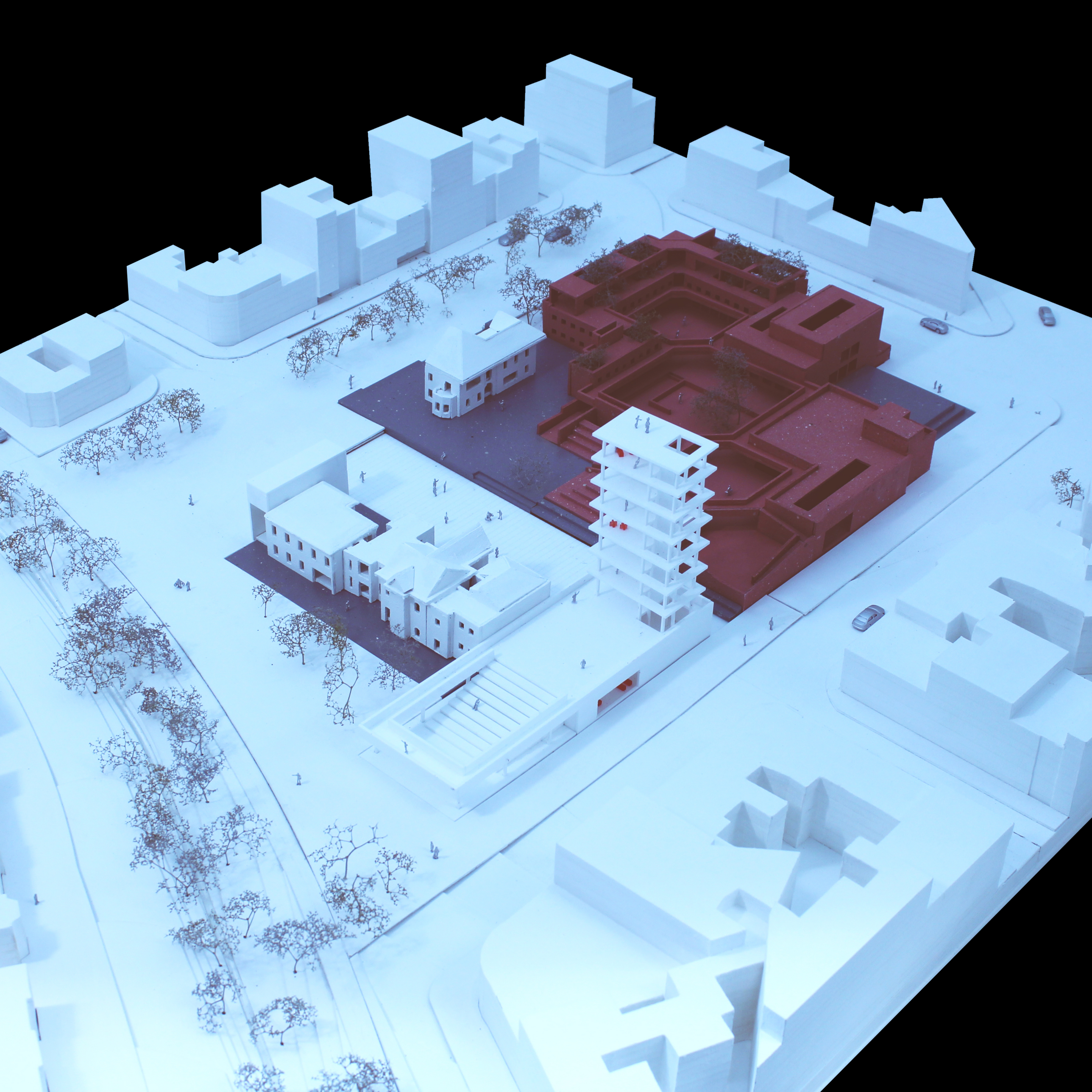
250 mm
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