

### The Odessy of Myself-- A Lesbian in China

Lai Zhou's LifeTimeline

18yrs

To Be Aware

Being a homosexual in China, I see the queer issue from a local perspective. Odyssey is my comprehension of a journey of struggling that queers will experience in life, especially in China where homosexuality remains an unspeakable secret.

The First project, Queering Chengdu, is to make the issue visible and immediate by presenting queer social space in a popular neighborhood to awaken awareness of the public and the queers themselves.

Once young queers start to have body contact, Grand (Gay)la, as the second period is a space to view and experience sexualities of queers and all humans, entwined with subtlety and wilderness, as experiences imbued with the sublime.

As queers start to wonder who they truly are, here comes the third story in the Odyssey. (Con)queer Club is for queers who are lost and in need of a space to explore true selves and be certain of their identity.

Finally, The Invisible is a project about those who are ignored by the nation and the mainstream social standard, not only queers but also elderly, disabled, anti-communism...Extending accessibility for them to reclaim existence of the city, and live a better life, as everyone grows old and become invisible at the end.

02

22yrs

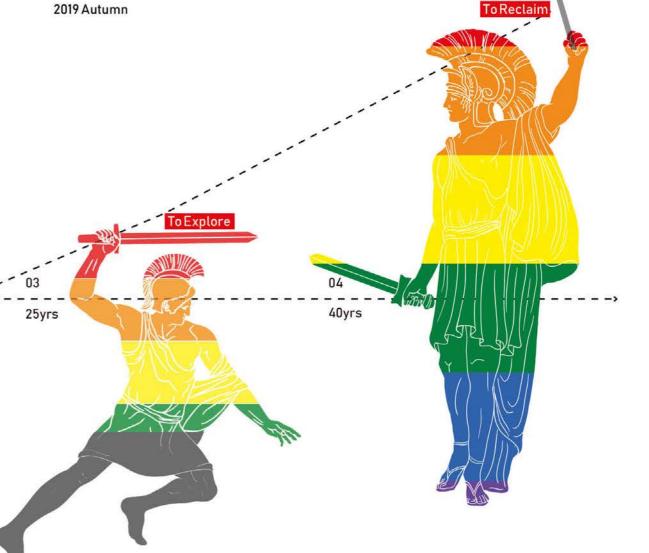
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#### THE GEOHISTORICAL TIMELINE OF PROGRESSION AND REGRESSION TO QUEERS OF THE WORLD

Queer history is a history of persecution and survival. Homosexuality has been a byword of shame and secrecy, and only lately been recognized, accepted, and brought back to mainstream narrative. Attitudes towards homosexuality in contemporary world also vary among countries. Queers

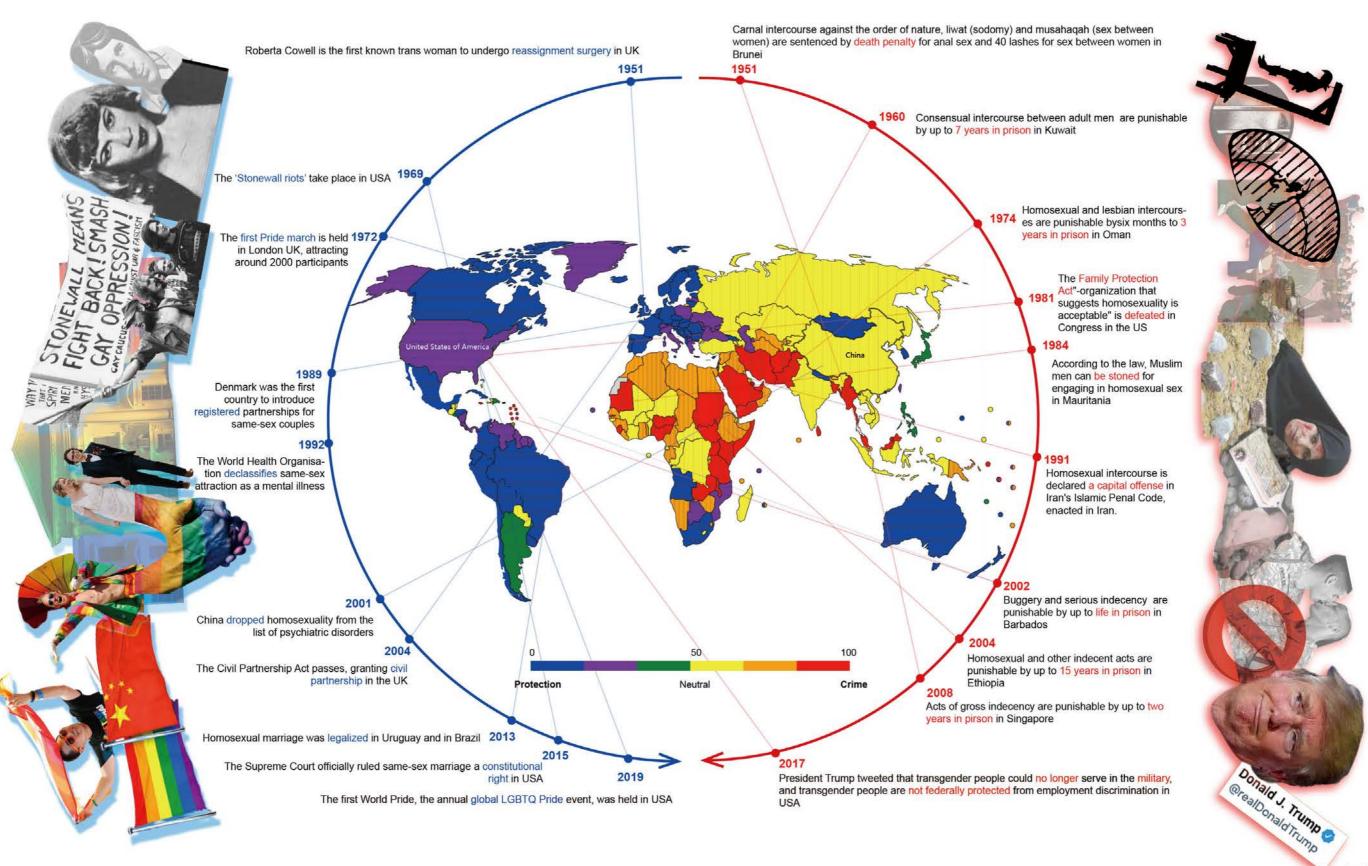
are protected by law in some, while being sentenced to prison or death in others. The map shows the attitude of major countries across continents in the world. The timeline on the left demonstrates the progressive events in history that stimulate the development of queer rights, shedding lights

and hope to the protections for speech and association of LGBT, advancing the well-being of LGBTQ individuals and expanding social understandings of sexuality and gender identity. The timeline on the right shows the regressive events of conservative countries where homosexual acts

remained illegal and were punishable by imprisonments. Queers are subjected to low tolerance or even constant discrimination and exclusion in these countries.

#### Progression

#### Regression



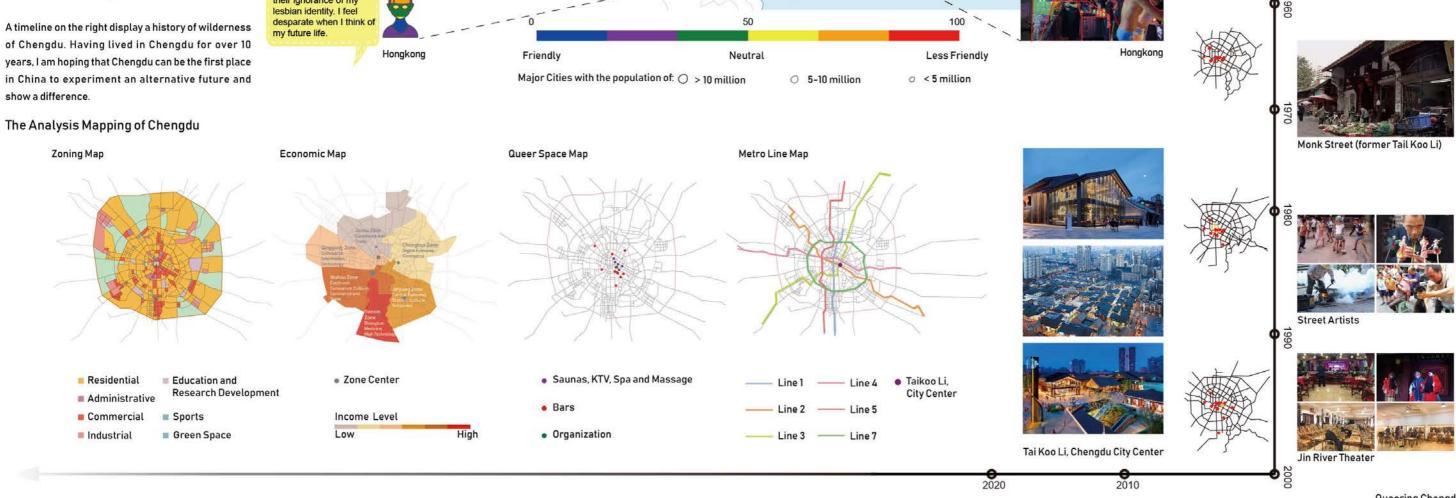
#### THE CURRENT SITUATION FOR QUEERS IN CHINA AND ANALYSIS OF CHENGDU CITY

In the map, it shows that Chengdu City is an interesting exceptional case. Coastal regions in China tend to display more lenient attitudes towards homosexuality as they have higher disposable income and higher exposure to information about LGBT movements from the western world. However, Chengdu, despite being the most inland city in China, is even more welcoming to LGBT community than metropolis such as Beijing and Shanghai. Chengdu is also colloquially known as the "Gay City".

Chengdu has always been the city of entertainment in China. Geographically, it is a basin with stable and comfortable climate. Politically, the city has never been elicited as a capital or political nexus. Therefore, people in Chengdu are living stressfree and prosperous lives without turbulences and struggles. Consequently, people are leading happy lives and following their pursuit for happiness and true selves more readily than other regions in China.

Even though some provinces are more open than others, queers in China still undergo a lot of pressure in the general context, the majority are unwilling to reveal their identity in the public sphere, and their activity areas are still limited to night time venues, such as dark rooms in bars, where they consider to be safe to momentarily come out.

A timeline on the right display a history of wilderness of Chengdu. Having lived in Chengdu for over 10 years, I am hoping that Chengdu can be the first place in China to experiment an alternative future and



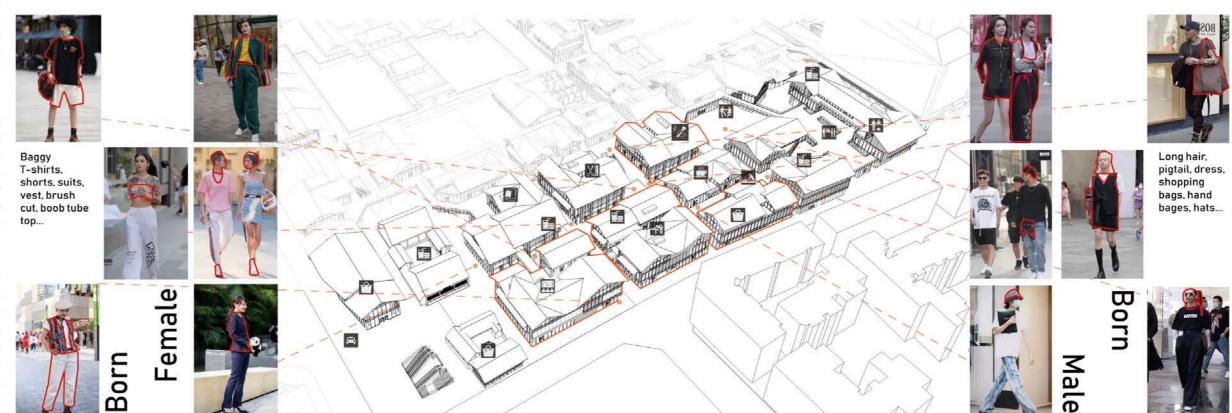
### THE STREET STYLE IN CHENGDU AND THE BLOCK DISSOLVING EXPERIMENT

The site of the project, situates at Taikoo Lane, one of the most famous commercial circles in China, as well as the city center of Chengdu. Chengdu's fashion has taken Tiktok by storm, and gathered fans around the world to watch the changes and innovations in fashion. Photographers captures the avantgardeness of Chengdu's fashion every day.

Chengdu's fashion shows qualities of defying stereotyping and blurring the gender boundaries in people's wear and appearance. For example, girls cut their hair in brush cut, and wear suits, male wears traditional fabric clothing and braid their hair long. The diversified expressions of models, or any fashion frantic and pedestrians fill in new vibes to Tai Koo Lane.

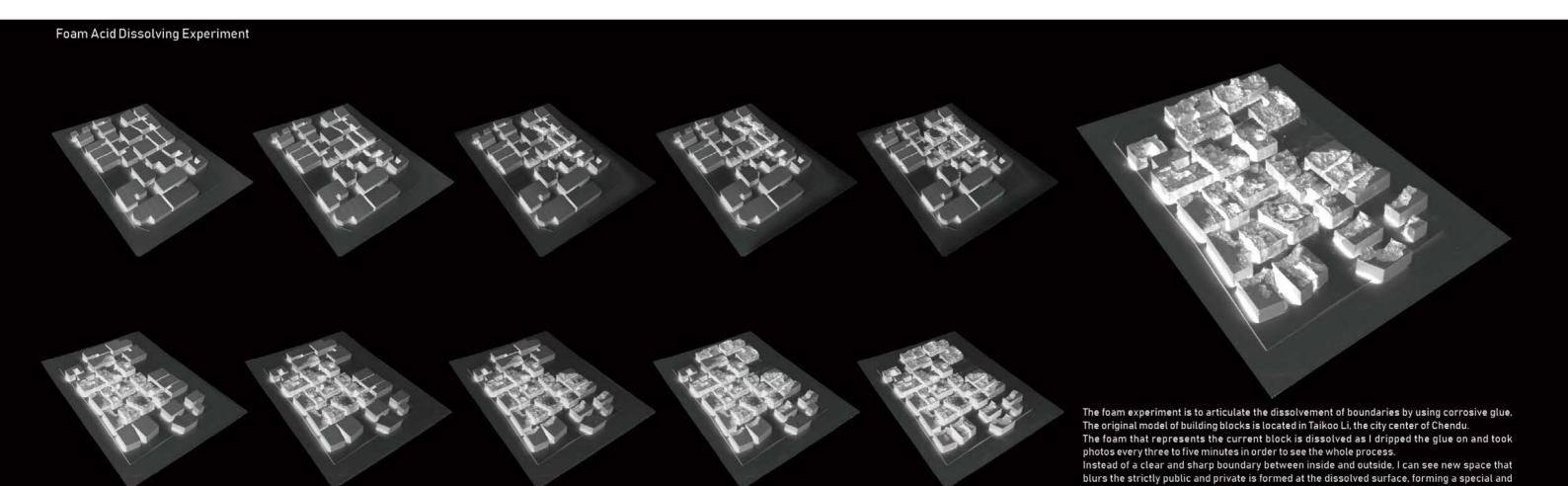
Tai Koo Lane, in itself, is a highly walkable commercial street, designed in comfortable human scale and provided vast public space. The neighborhood also signature traditional Chinese sloped roof, as an evidence of the collision of the new and old. Tai Koo Lane is now essentially a venue for expression, where contemporary young people express their self-perceptions while reconstructing their own identities.

### Exploring Street Style in Chengdu City Center



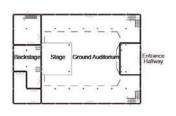
entire space system with the existing streets.

Queering Chengdu 04



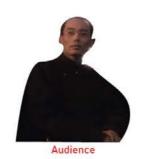
#### SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF QUEER LOVE IN CHINESE TRADITIONAL THEATER AND PLAN ANALYSIS

#### Plan of Chinese Traditional Theater



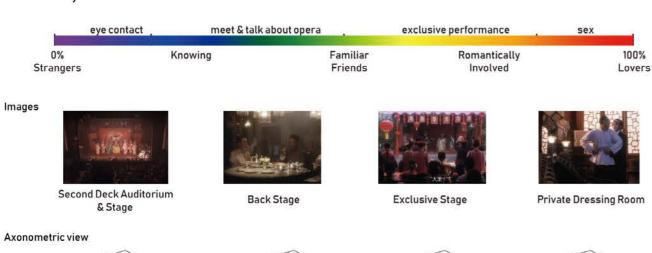


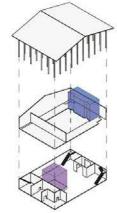


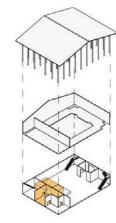


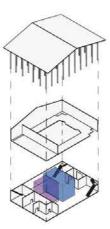
# Behavior Analysis between Ancient Audience and Actor

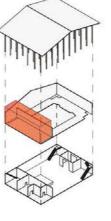
First Floor

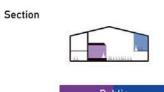


















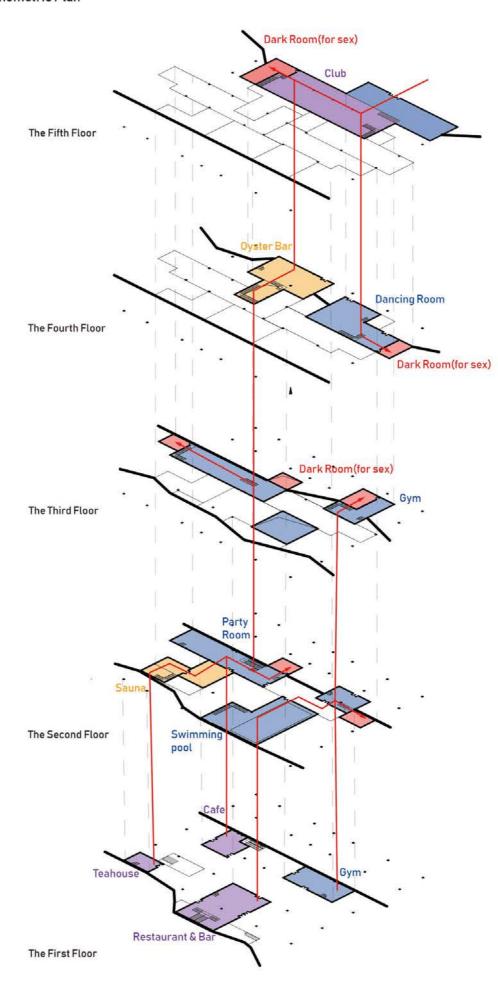
Semi-private

Behavior Analysis between Modern Queer Lovers



Gym, Party Room...

#### Axonometric Plan



In studying how space facilitated the process of the audience and actress meet, get along and fall in love in traditional Chinese theaters, I derived at a circulation suitable for modern queers to meet and develop relationships accommodating current queer's characteristics of being sensitive, shy, and passive.

People can experience the journey of the four stages, seduction, mingling, suspicion and tangling by either entering from the ground or the top floor. The four kinds of space vary in the extents of public and privacy, to enable queers have appropriate space to spontaneously develop a relationship.

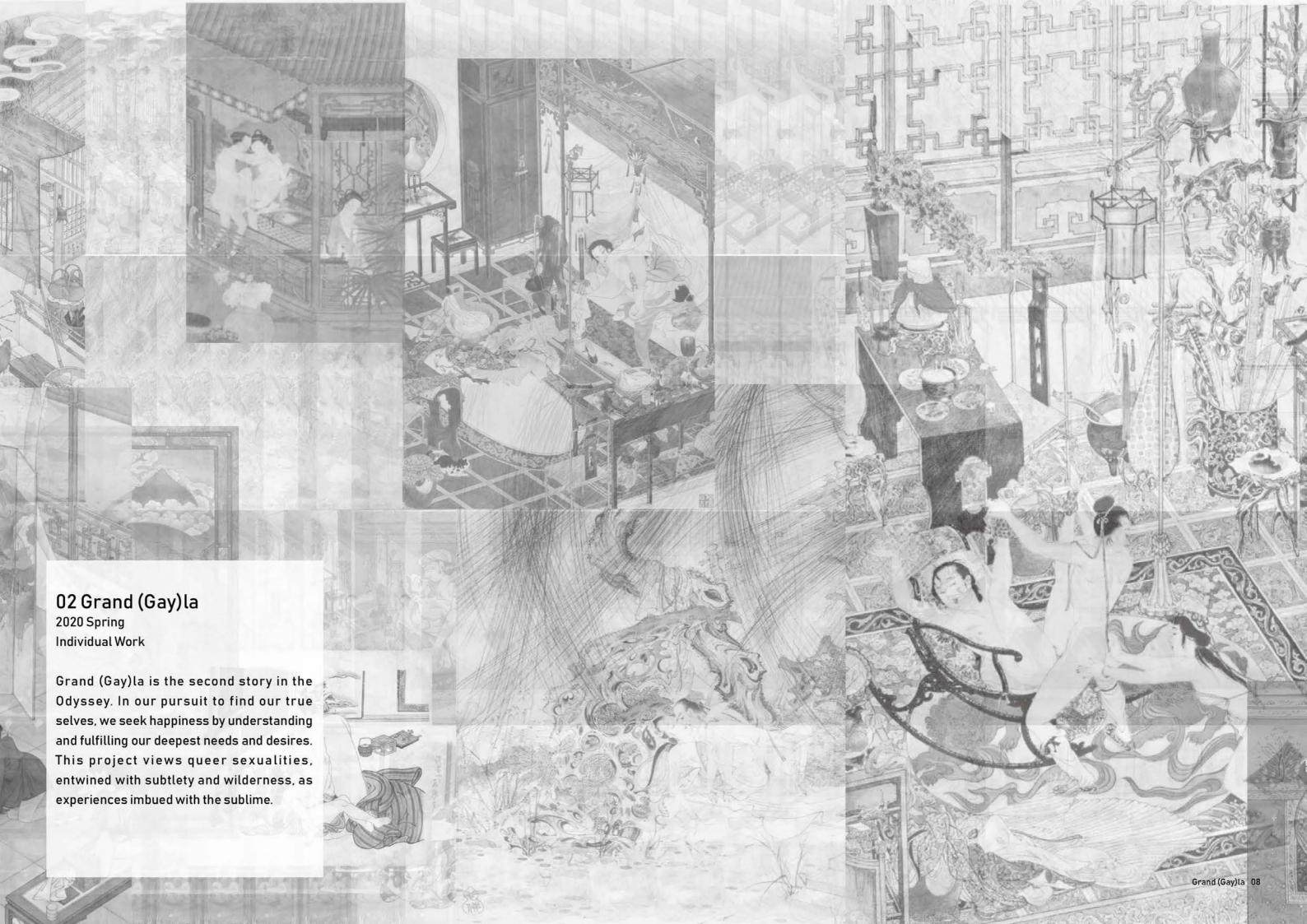
The fifth floor is a club, which serves as not only an entrance but also a final stop for pleasant sensation seekers.

The third and fourth floor are acceleration venues for new counters interested in developing next level intimacy, where lovers experience the throb and delicacy, and the easily reachable dark rooms are especially prepared for sexual activities.

The first and second floor are mainly public and semi-public space, providing space for seduction and mingling, subtle eye contact is the key when people are walking around and socializing. Likewise, dark rooms are arranged on the second floor to offer sexual intimacy for queers seeking a quick and exciting experience.







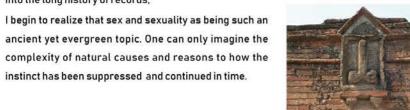
### Timeline of Human Erotic Enjoyment

Instances of homosexual love and sexuality has been recorded within almost all ancient civilizations in forms of relics, paintings, sculptures, scriptures and beyond. As I look into the long history of records,

1500 B.C. Ancient Rome: the first



800-146 Ancient greece: erotic arts



79 A.C. Pompeii: pennis shaped pattern on architecture



200 A.C. Buddism: mural and sculpture of sex for religous practice



di Caracalla, where people naked bating in public



266-420 Jin Dynasty: the Emperor invented a goat carriage to help decide which wife's room to sleep



618-907 Tang Dynasty: sex toy for lesbians



1750 Japan: "Nanshoku" the relationships between samurai and their boyfriends.



Qing Dynasty: The Plim in the Golden Vass, is the most influencial erotic Chinese classic.



1880 The first vibrator was invented to help ladies with their "female hysteria".



The first issue of Playboy is published.

The premier issue featured Marilyn Monroe on the cover as well as



1908 The first recorded blow up doll appeared in psychiatrists Iwan Bloch's book, "The Sexual Life of Our Time"



2000 Amsterdam Red Light District, was prostitution legalized.

#### Historical Events in Chinese Culture





Qin Dynasty (212 -207 B.C.): Burning all books and burying scholars alive

years,

and

erotic

Sexual Repression has been existing in China for 5,000

A recent survey found

that 20% of Chinese men

didn't know what the

clitoris is and 50 % of

Chinese women had never had an orgasm. A sex revolution is poised

undermining

debased

pleasure.



The Republican Period (1912-1949): Women must wore corset and baggy clothes, or else been arrested



The Cultural Revolutin (1966-1976): Academic and intellectuals were denounced, causing over 200,000 suicides







Now (2000-): Electroconvulsive therapy for homosexuals having sexual desire for the same sex; Grooms were teased and dressed as rapist on the street.



New China Period (1949-1956): People peaking at the bridal chamber is one of the custom of Wedding

### Modern Gay Couple's Life in Hong Kong -- The life of Intimacy, Conflicts, and Depression





Dancing in public kitchen









Sitting in corridor, frustrated



### SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF SEX SCENES FROM ASIAN EROTIC CLASSIC

The visual arts and traditional Chinese literature portraying queer sexualities suggest a universal societal fetishization of queer eroticisms. Analyzing these artifacts enriches the discourses on queer sexualities beyond the geographic and historical constraints of the West. Expression,

position, role, and sequence are all part of the erotic act. When translated through design, architecture can transcend its static conceptions and reclaim its central role in promoting and defining sexual imaginings.

Paintings from the Erotic Classic -- Plum in the Golden Vase from the

Qing Dynasty is especially solicited to provide inspirations of spatial qualities in creating different ambiences of backdrops of sexual activities.

# Ancient Erotic Drawings of Scenes in "Plum in the Golden Vase", a Chinese Erotic Classic, and Buddhism









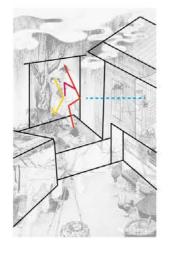


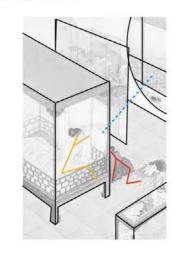


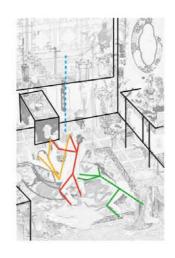


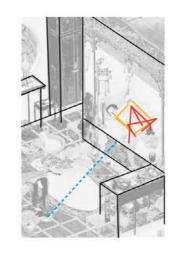


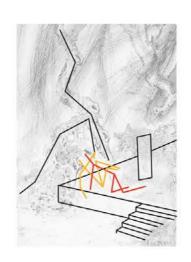
Human Body Gestures and Spacial Outlines



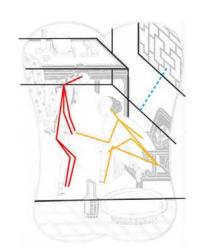


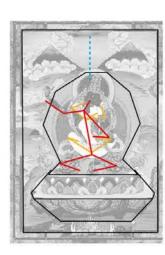




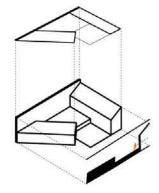


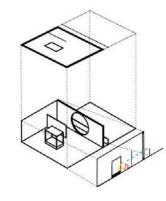


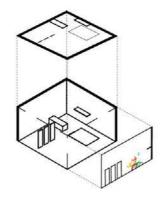


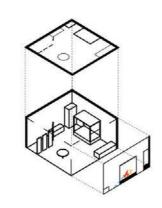


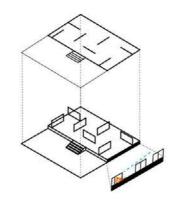
Recreating Spacial Models From Sex Scenes

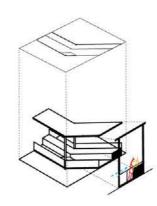


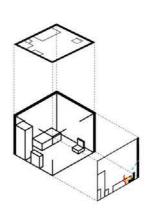


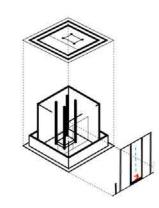








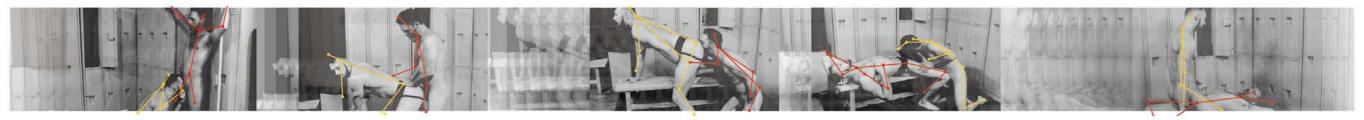




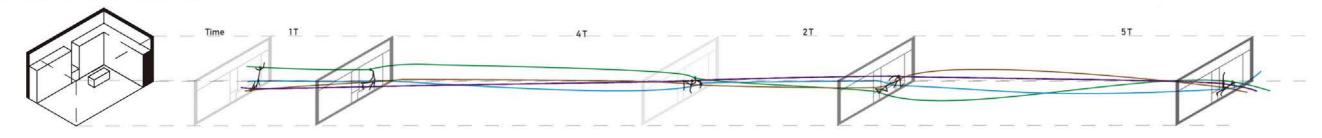
### ANALYSIS OF MOVIE SCENES TRANSLATING TO SECTION

# Gay Movie Scenes

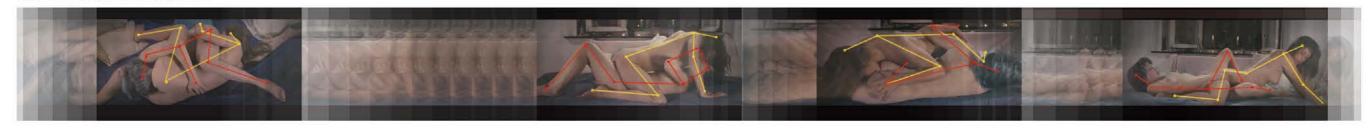
Gay Movie Captures And Body Gesture



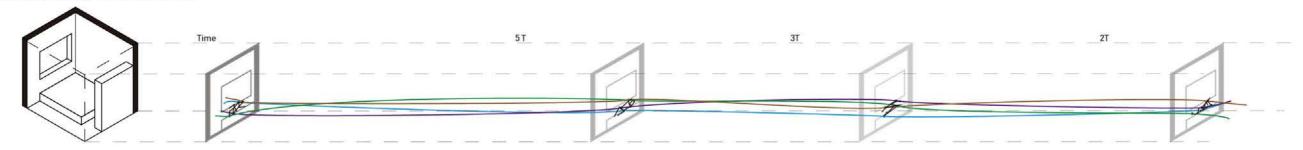
Tracking Movement Of Certain Parts Of Body



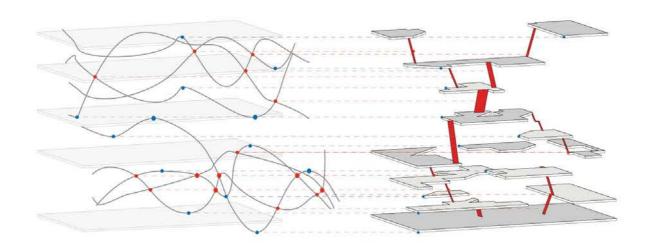
Lesbian Movie Captures And Body Gesture



Tracking Movement Of Certain Parts Of Body



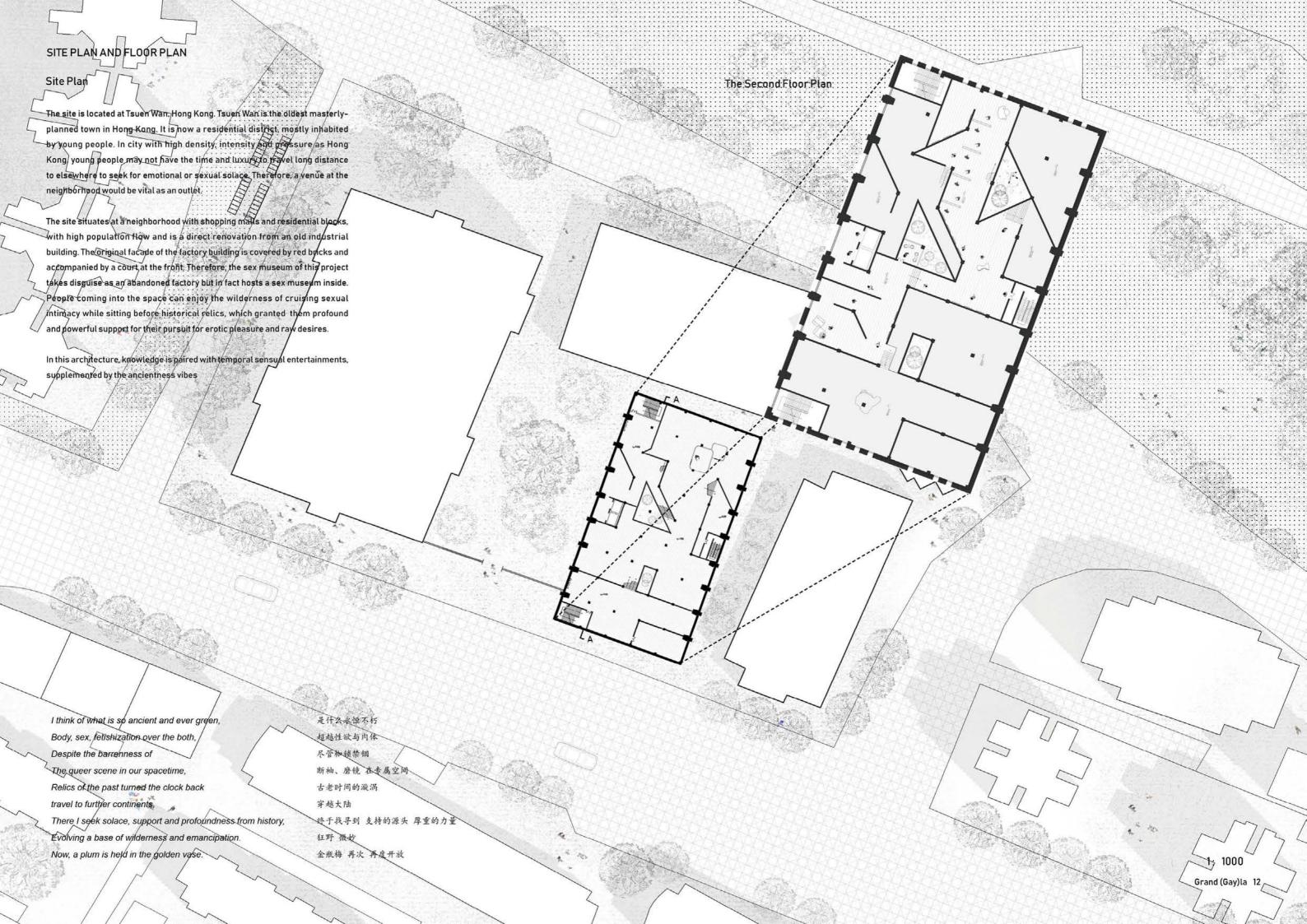
### Section Analysis According To Body Movement

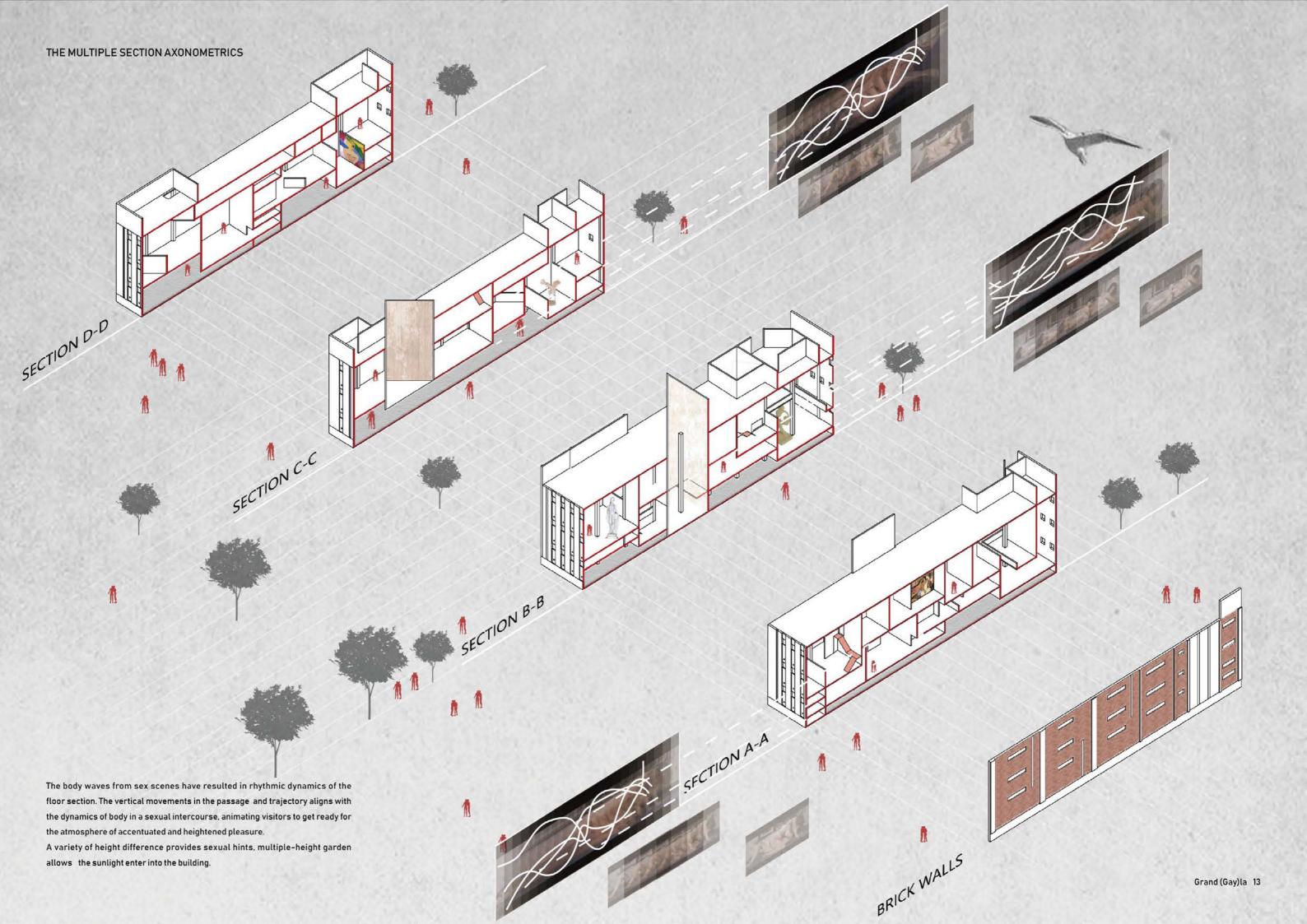


How can scenes from queer movies provide critical insights into the essence and uniqueness of queer eroticisms, and what do they tell us about architectural space? To answer this conceptually, the analytical frame of "erotic spatial interactions" is applied to understand the spatial implications of sexual embodiments for the practice of architecture.

This project uses bodies as drivers of architectural space where the erotic and the spatial are infused, with sexual manifestations organized along a sequential axis. This sequential axis articulates a route derived from the Chinese erotic classic Plum in the Golden Vase.

The design also takes reference from two erotic movies of gays and lesbians, the two movies vary in dynamics and orientation of body. In translating sex positions into architectural form, rhythmic curves are drawn by connecting body parts in movements along time. Curves of different body parts juxtaposed above each other, and as the curves intersect at each other, the intersection points bring up floors and stairs to connect different floor levels, as well as visual corridors to ensure one floor is visually reachable from another.







Exhibition Space







Con(queer) Club 15

### ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND NATURE AND ROUTES

### Relationship between Architecture and Nature

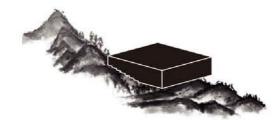
The process of self-discovery is reflected in a duality of experiential spaces, interlinked by the symbiotic relationships of architecture and nature represented in the five phases.

[Isolating] where architecture reigns supreme; [Encountering] where architecture remains dominant but allows for the landscape to perforate; [Challenging] where nature and architecture are in equilibrium; [Integrating] where nature consumes most of the architectural space, and finally [Becoming] whereby the architectural spaces are subsumed by the existing landscape.

Phase 1: Architecture Donminating----Isolating



Phase 2: Nature Sliding in----Encountering



Phase 3: Nature Challenging Architecture----Challenging



Phase 4: Nature beating Architecture----Integrating



Phase 5: Nature Dominating----Becoming

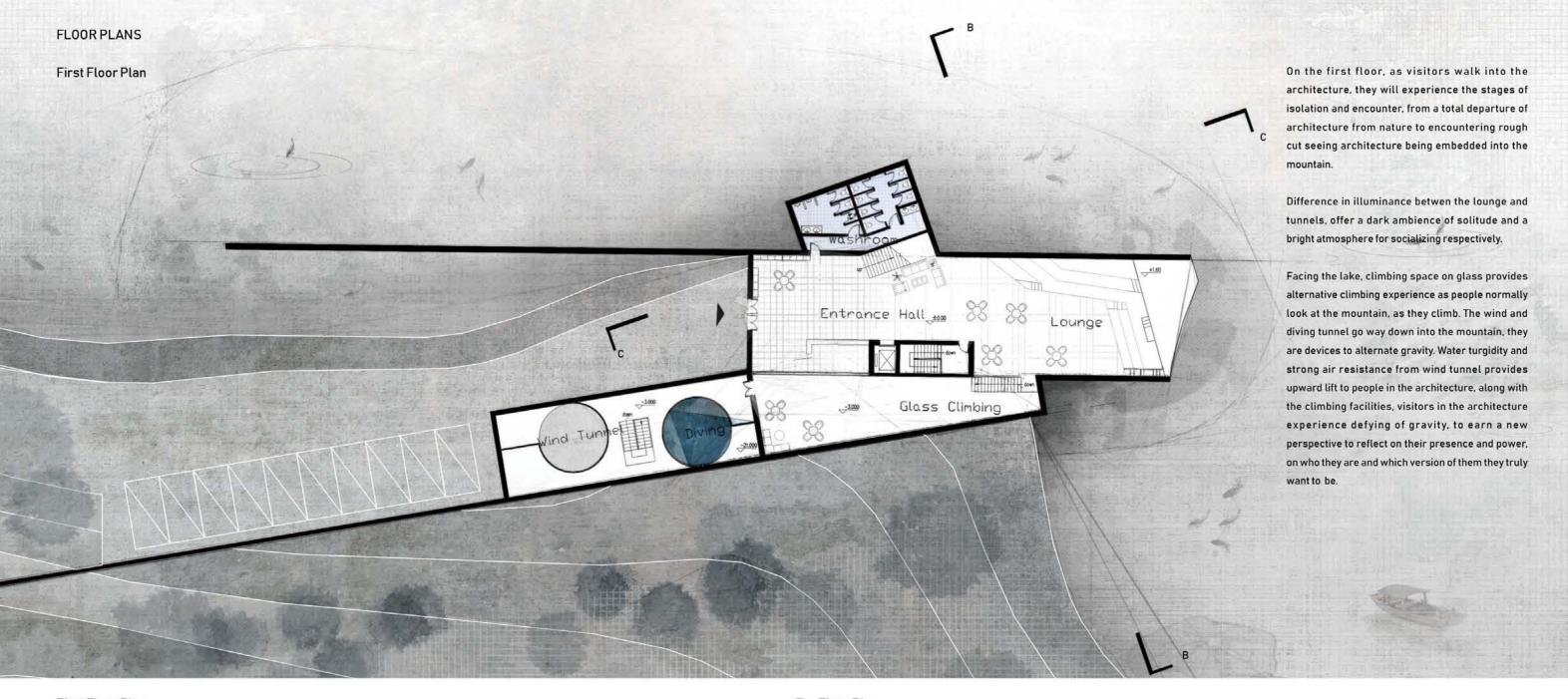


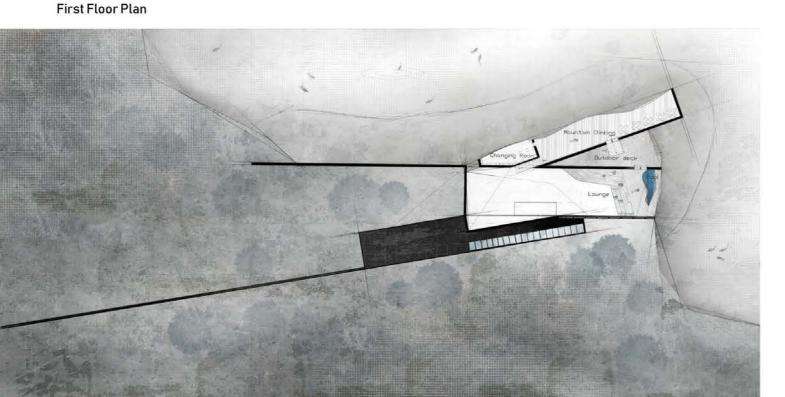
# The Opposite Two Routes to Experience Different Phases

The project has taken a metaphor in comparing the relationship BECOMING between nature and architecture to the relationship between queer and mainstream narratives. In the process of self- discovery, queers likely undergo 5 stages of real life encounter and psychological states, extrapolated by two opposite routes in the architecture. Spiritual Cave Observing Deck SOLATING CHALLENGING Climbing natural mountain **ENCOUNTERING** Climbing on Glass CHALLENGING Lounge INTEGRATING Diving Tunnel Entrance Hall ...... Embeded Entrance

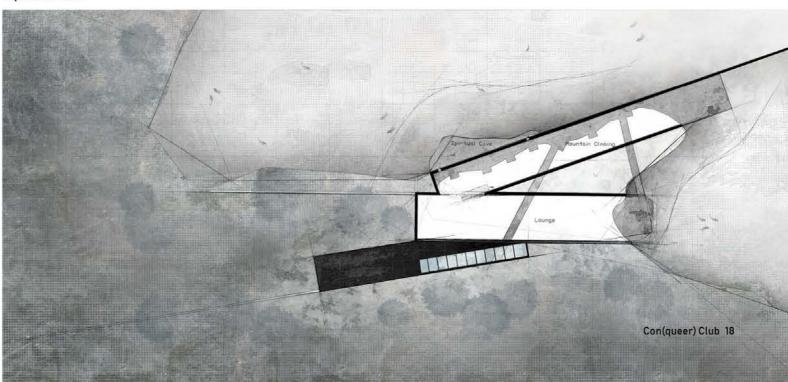
Con(queer) Club 16





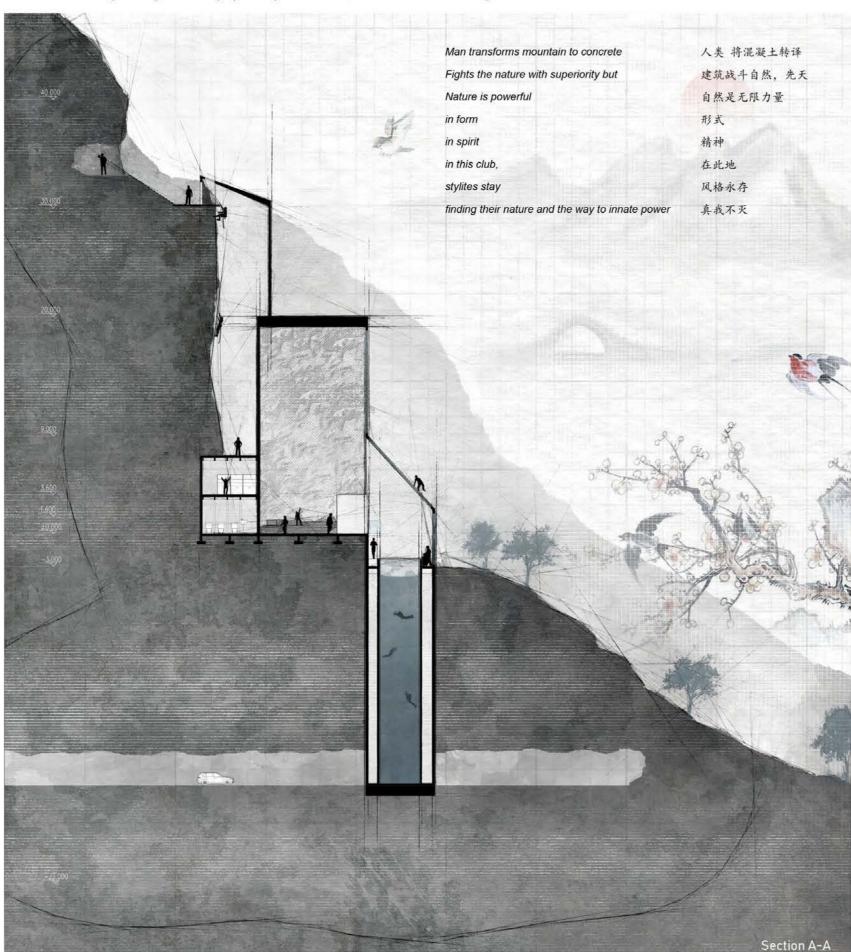


Top Floor Plan

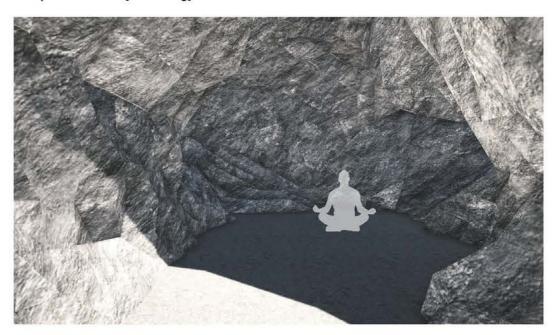


### THE SECTION AND RENDERINGS

The Section Cutting Through Climbing Space, Spiritual Cave, Entrace Hall and Diving Tunnel



# The Spiritual Cave - [Becoming]



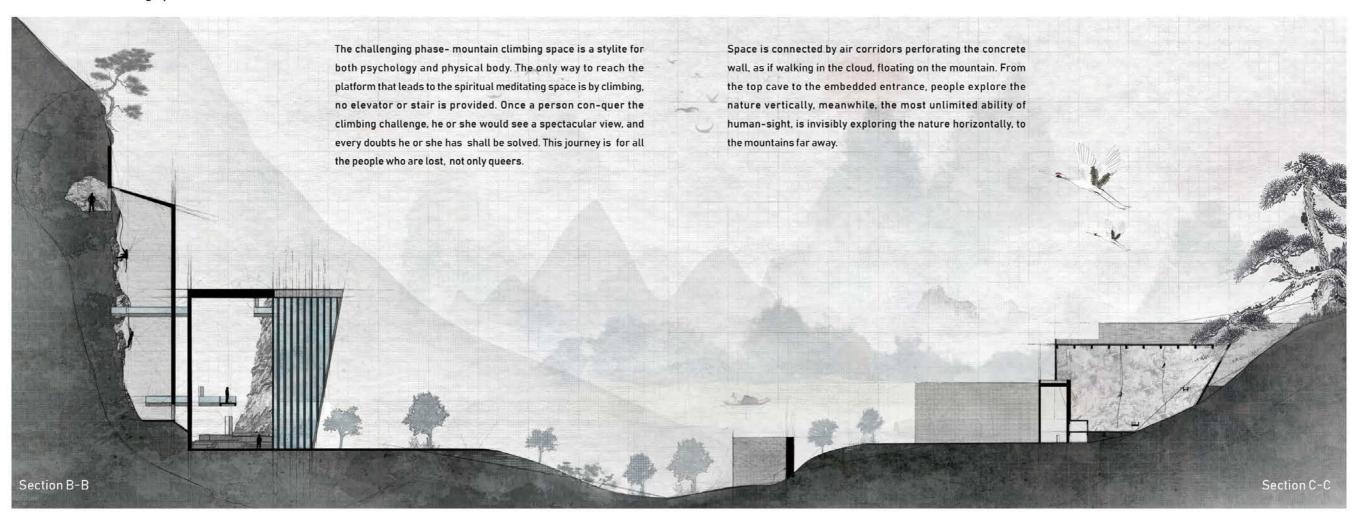
The only route to arrive at the becoming stage is through the stage of challenging. At becoming stage, visitors will arrive at a venue of augmented nature where they experience serenity and relaxation of living off the burden of manmade contexts.

 $The \ (Con) queer \ Club \ is \ filled \ with \ challenges, \ rewards, \ and \ surprises. \ The \ club \ goes \ way \ up \ the \ mountain \ through$ climbing to fight gravity, and goes down by wind and diving tunnel losing bounds by gravity. Meanwhile, the entrance hall stays in a neutral and stable state, sustaining an equilibrium with the mountain.

# The Climbing Space -[Challenging]



The Sections of Climbing Space, Entrance Hall and Air Corridor



# The Entrance Hall



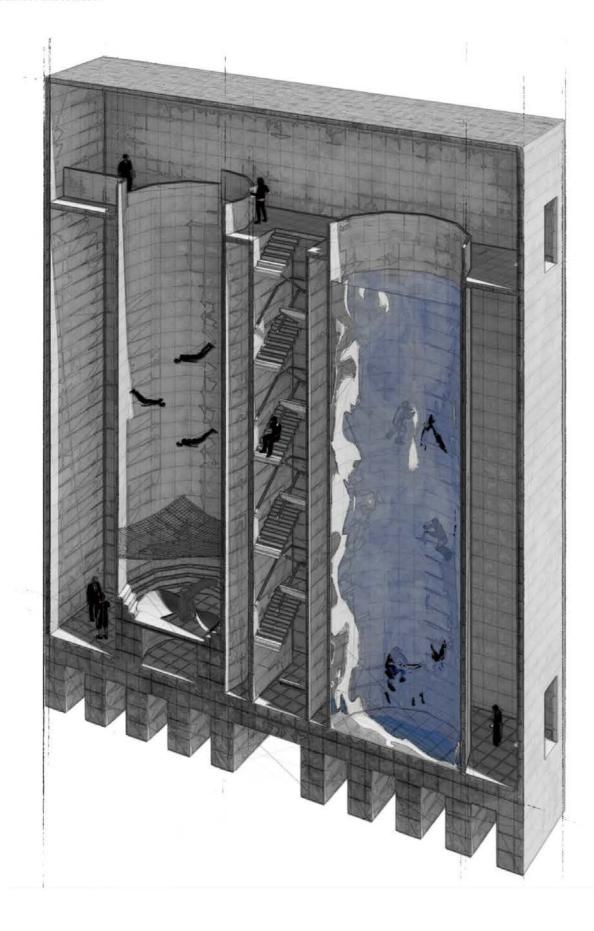
# The Air Corridor



### THE TUNNELS AND DETAILS

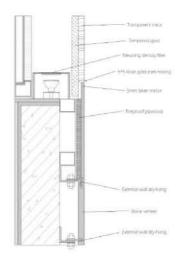
# The Section Axonometric of the Wind Tunnel and Diving Tunnel

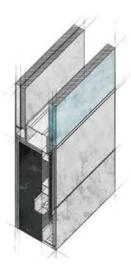
Walking down the stairs provides a visual experience of seeing events in the wind and diving tunnels from various heights and perspectives. In the space with limited illuminance from the glass on the ceiling of the tunnel system, provides a unique chance to confront themselves in calmness and solitude.



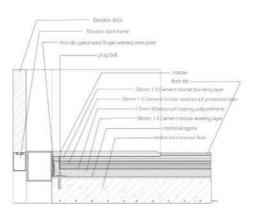
### The Details of Construction

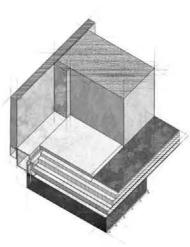
### The Floor and Glass



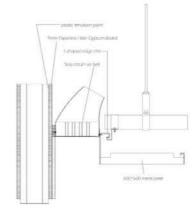


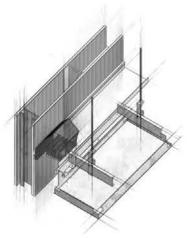
### The Floor and Marble





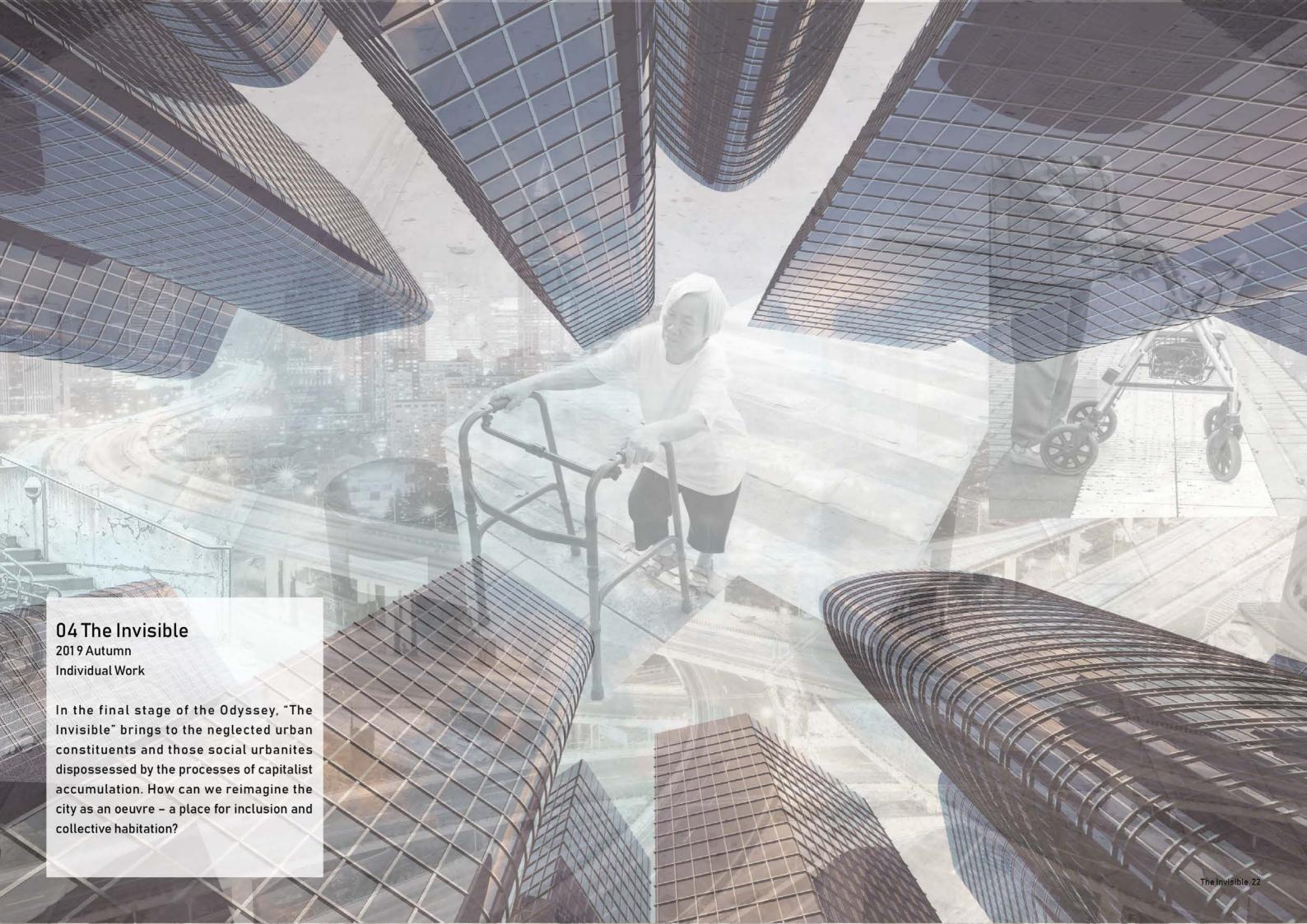
### The Air Outlet





By revisiting the architecture v. nature binary through the lens of heterosexism v. queerness, (Con)queer Club is developed in five processual stages dictated by the dialectical relationship between architecture and the natural landscape. The five stages are not mutually exclusive but conceived along a spectrum that oscillates between the domination of the landscape by architecture and vice versa; the subversion of architectural intervention to the existing landscape, making it a perfect demonstration of how queer individuals journey through life in their quest for self-actualization.

Con(queer) Club 21



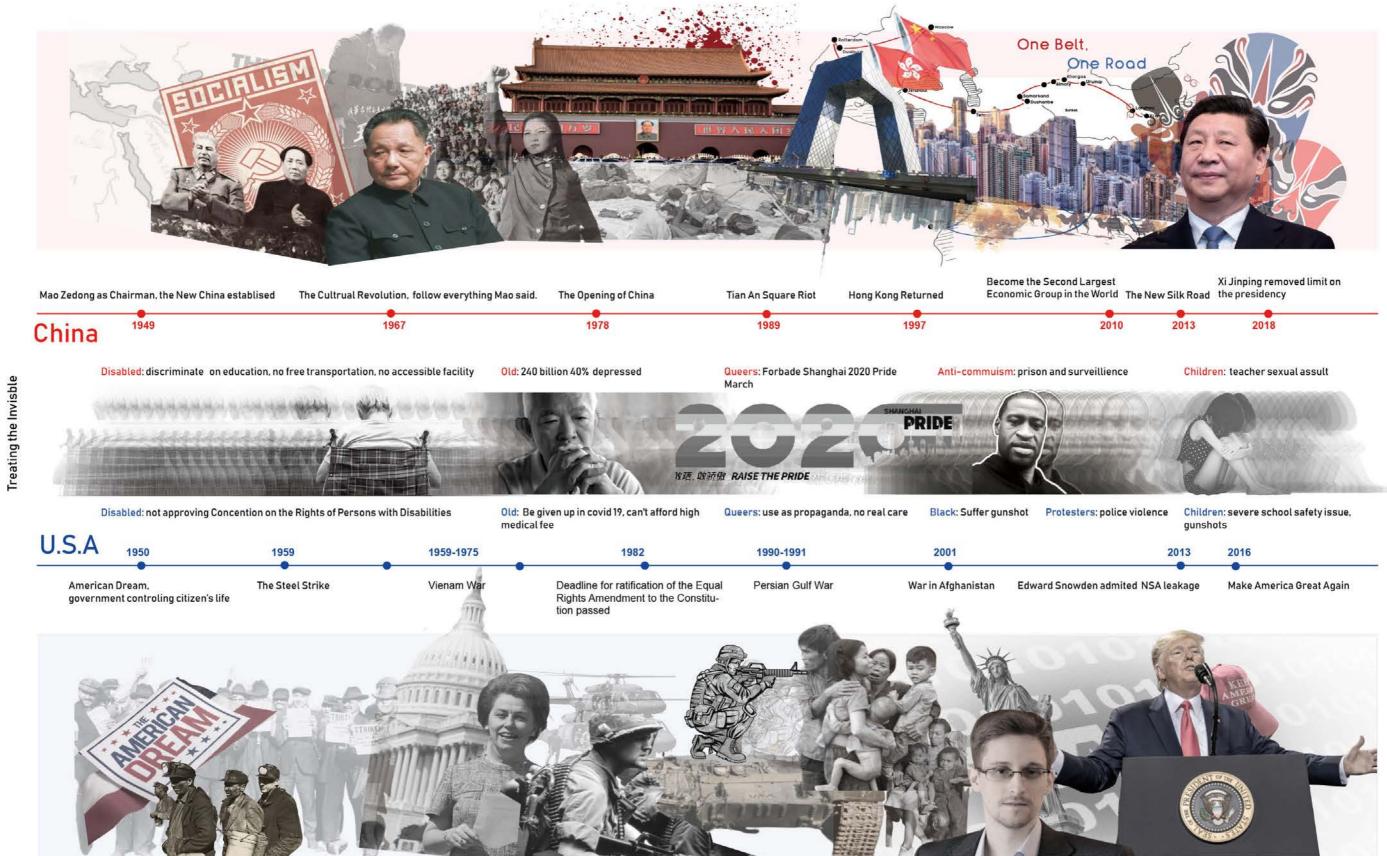
#### THE COMPARE AND CONTRAST OF CHINA AND USA ESTABLISHING PUBLIC MINDSET AND TREATING THE INVISIBLE

The legitimacy of the nation-state as an independent sovereign entity is sustained through collective identity; a shared national identity by which its members assert their citizenship rights. Urbanization and the built environment are undeniably part of the nation-state's agenda for the construction of a collective identity. Individuals unfit for the ideologies

are treated invisible, invaluable, and insignificant in nation-states, drawing queers, disabled, political criminals to the same alignment. French philosopher Henri Lefebvre theorized that a city as an oeuvre – a work of art construed through the collective effort of all its inhabitants. However, Lefebvre warned that when capitalist accumulation supplants

the use-value of cities with exchange-value, they no longer become places produced by the people but prescribed for them by those in power. To a certain degree, Lefebvre claims had some truth. In an increasingly globalized world, cities in nations of varying political systems have adopted standardized building codes and urban configurations designed

to facilitate habitation for its normative and "productive" classes. Excluded from these normative frameworks are those constituencies that have historically contributed to the making of the city but are no longer viewed as economically viable assets. Such constituents include the aging populations, senior citizens, individuals with physiological and psychological disabilities, among other vulnerable groups.



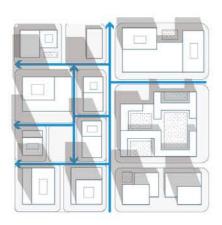
### STREET ANALYSIS FOR THE NOMAL AND DISABLED

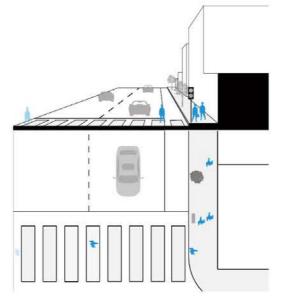
By analyzing some of the challenges they face in the "ordinary" spaces of the city, this project celebrates the shortcomings of ableism by proposing a connective infrastructure that weaves through several urban blocks in Shanghai as a prototypical public space that promotes collectivism and inclusivity. In the case of the disabled in the wheelchair, street width, height of traffic light call buttons ought to be adjusted to their scale. For the blind, curved corners in replacement or sharp corners act to protect, and guide in direction, sound devices at traffic light would tailor for the

convenience of passage. For the deaf, despite their vision capability, they too, need wider space for communication as their judgements depends on the response of other people, who they can see clearly the others' body parts. Also, whilst deaf are unable to respond to audio alarms, they

are unable to sense cars from behind, meaning wider street is essential to protect them from crashing.



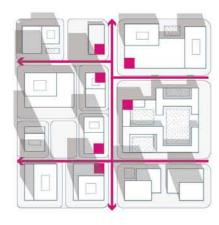


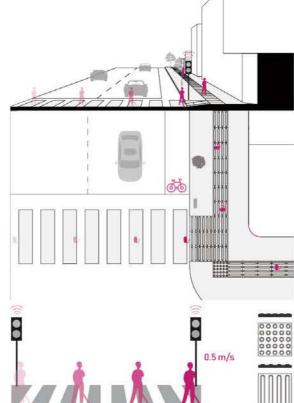


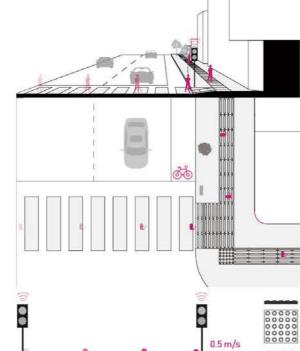


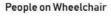


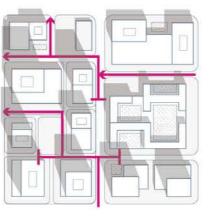
Blind People

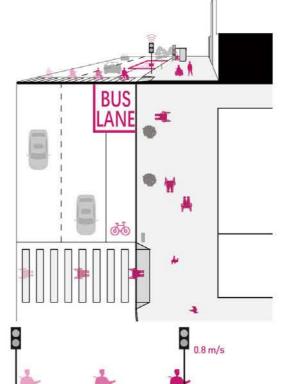










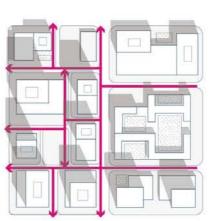




Deaf People

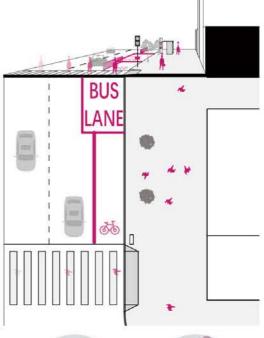












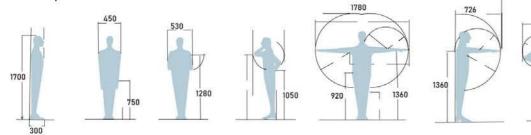




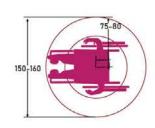
### HUMAN SCALE ANALYSIS AND THE NEED OF SUPER WALKING BLOCK

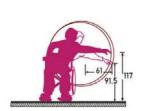
# Human Scale Analysis

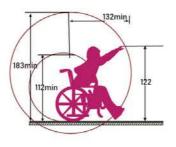
### Normal People

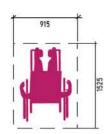


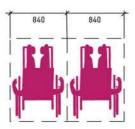
### People on Wheelchair

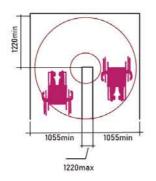




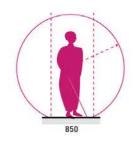


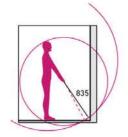


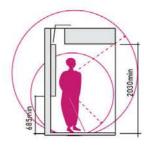


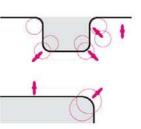


### Blind People

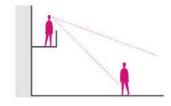


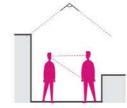


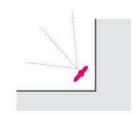


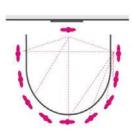


Deaf People

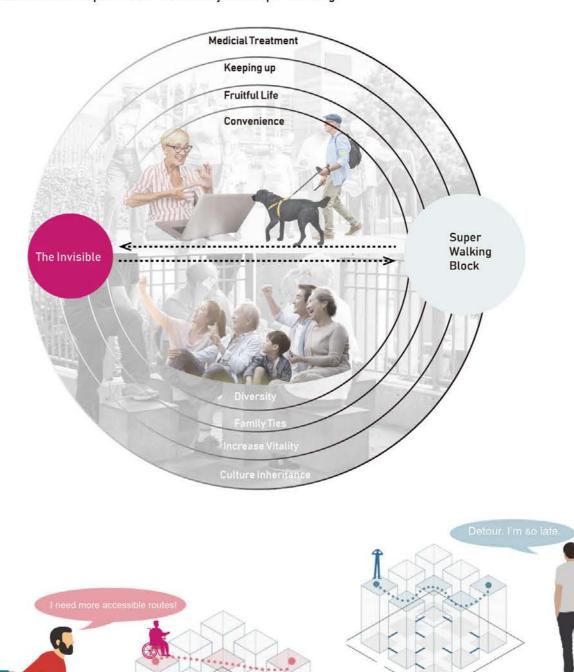








# Mutualistic Relationship Between The Elderly And Super Walking



In caring for the Invisibles in the community, the design of the city blocks finally arrive at a highly accessible, human-scale community, suitable for walking without depression from high-rise. In a way, other residents other than the Invisibles are equally mobilized to come out and move,

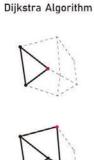
sharing more comprehensive facilities and enhanced community interaction. In day time, as the younger people drift to workplace and schools, the Invisibles maintain the vitality and essential warmth of the community.

### CALCULATING THE SHORTEST DISTANCE FOR BETTER ACCESSIBILITY

In order to provide accessibility for the ignored people, the key is to find a method for calculate the shortest distance between important spots and public space. The following research analyzes the four most efficient way of the shortest distance, and among them, the Wool-Thread Model provides solution for the shortest detour which fits the condition the best.

The Wool-Thread Model is based on four forces, two internals and two externals, making a balance of the shortest distance. The evolution analysis is about applying the model into a standard Shanghai block in three levels: first connect the whole block in a lower height, then connect major metro stations underground, and lastly applying to a higher level for skyscrapers.

### Multiple Model To Calculate The Shortest Distance



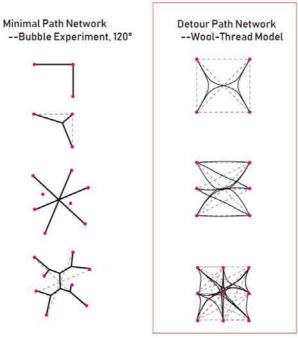


Direct Path Networks



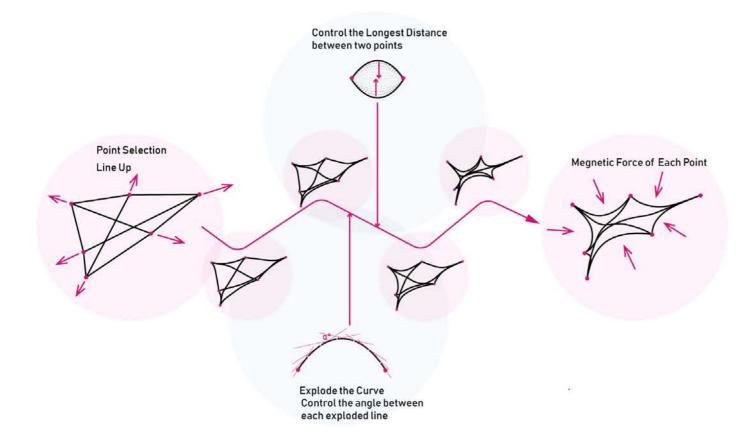






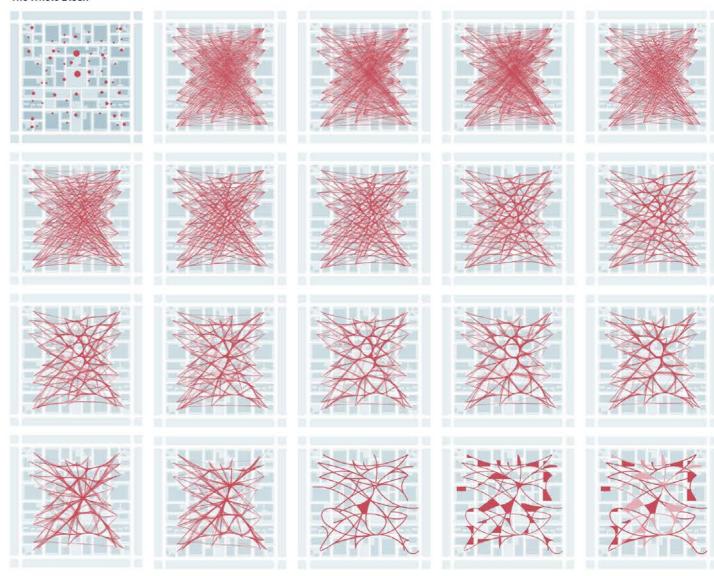
# The Functional Diagram Fo Calculating The Shortest Distance--The Wool-Thread Model

External Force Internal Force External Force

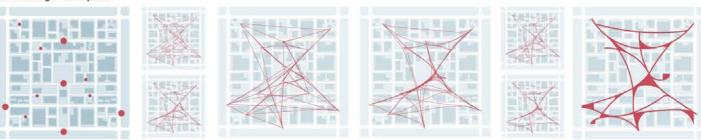


# **Evolution Analysis**

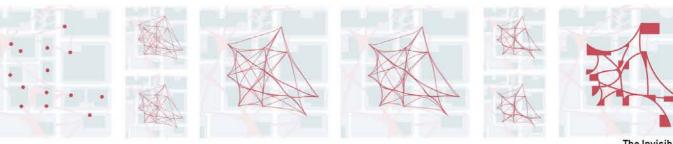
#### The Whole Block



#### The Underground Space



#### The Air Paths



#### THE SECTION CUTTING THROUGH SKYSCRAPERS

In a way the Odyssey makes an argument that we are all queer and by expanding the notion of queerness beyond sexuality to encompass those that are sidelined such as the old and the frail, urban justice becomes a question that centers on the spatial experiences of the most vulnerable among us. Once we stop making assumptions that we all see, move,

smell, feel, and hear the same way, we can begin to problematize the way standardized urban blocks and structures are naturalized. "The Invisible" accounts for the unique experiences of the blind, the deaf, and the physically immobile.

The air path system is based on the Wool-thread Model in order to provide the shortest detour to multiple important spots. The system is not only corridors in air, but also includes public deck and space in the original buildings as they penetrated through them. Function and details of those public space are more concerned for the invisible, such as the

astronomical observation, theater that allows wheelchair to move freely and the medical care. Apart from the space in current buildings, the ramp in the air also fits the wheelchair users, and is wide enough for disabled to walk side by side without been knocked down by people walking the opposite direction.



