

'In The Wings'

'A place to fly freely'



This project is a response to last year's Supreme Court judgement on the meaning of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 that has triggered a backlash toward to LGBTQ+ community. 'In the Wings' is a cabaret theatre that offers a space for the LGBTQ+ and wider communities to come together in a safe and accepting environment, where they can be free from the conventional attitudes of society. The focus of the design is to embody 4 key pillars to create a welcoming space: acceptance, mingling, non-conformity and security



- Bars/entertainment establishments
- LGBTQ+ spaces
- Waverly cinema

Once a purpose built cinema, this striking example of Egyptomania and Art Deco architecture has been abandoned since its closing as Tusk nightclub and bar in 2009. It has since has fallen into dereliction, with vandalism and neglect replacing its once vibrant character.

This proposal re-imagines the former entertainment venue, drawing inspiration from its vibrant past and distinctive Art Deco character. The movement's tendency to blur traditional representations of gender informs a new purpose for the space: a hub that addresses contemporary issues affecting the LGBTQ+ community while celebrating inclusivity and cultural expression.

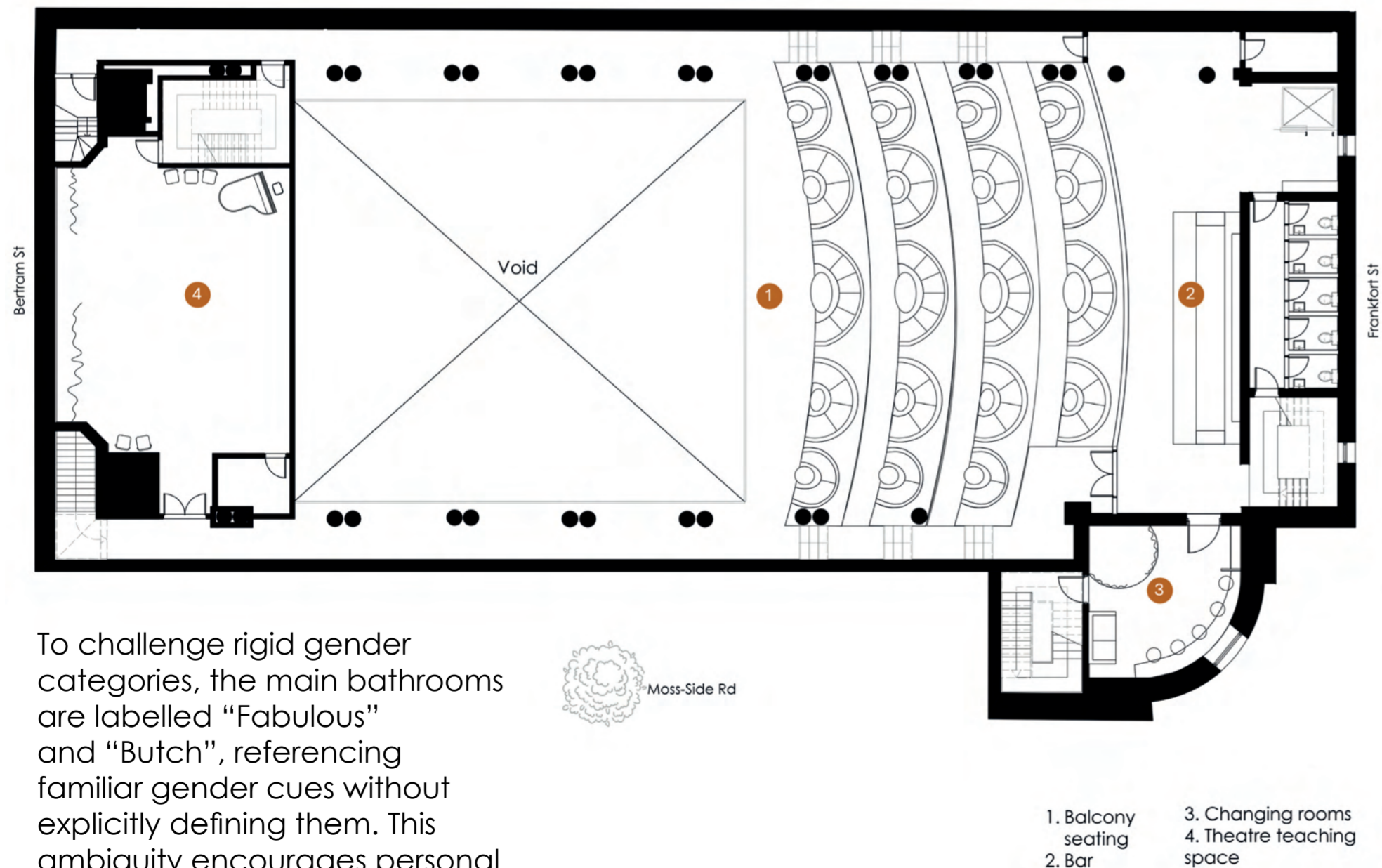
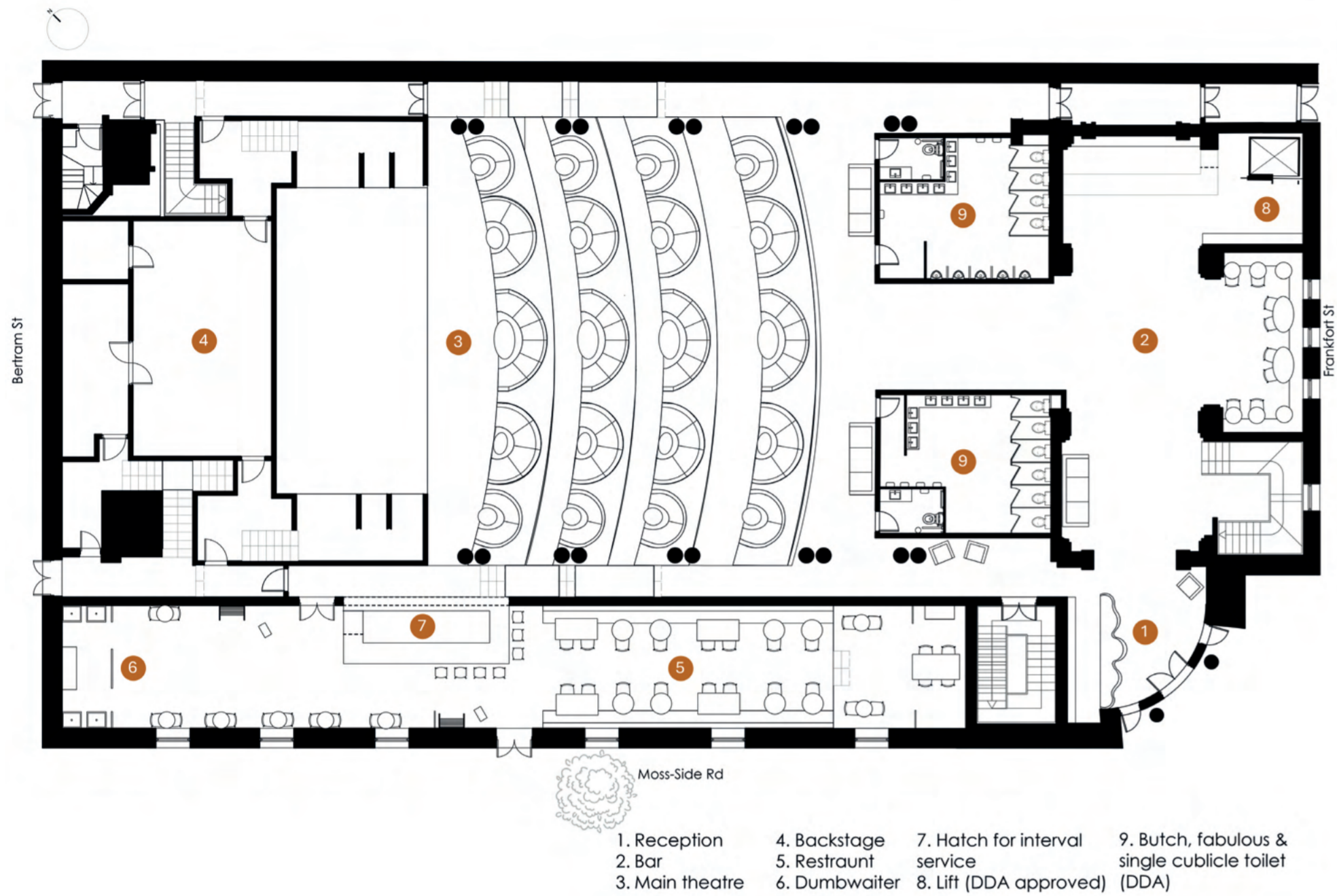


LGBTQ+ Community...

LGBTQ+ Performers & Artists...

Wider Community...

The proposal

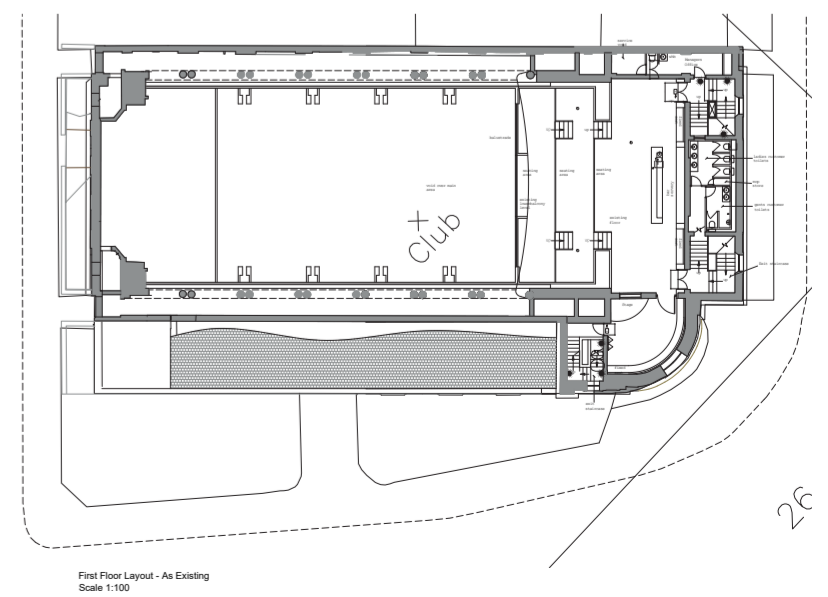
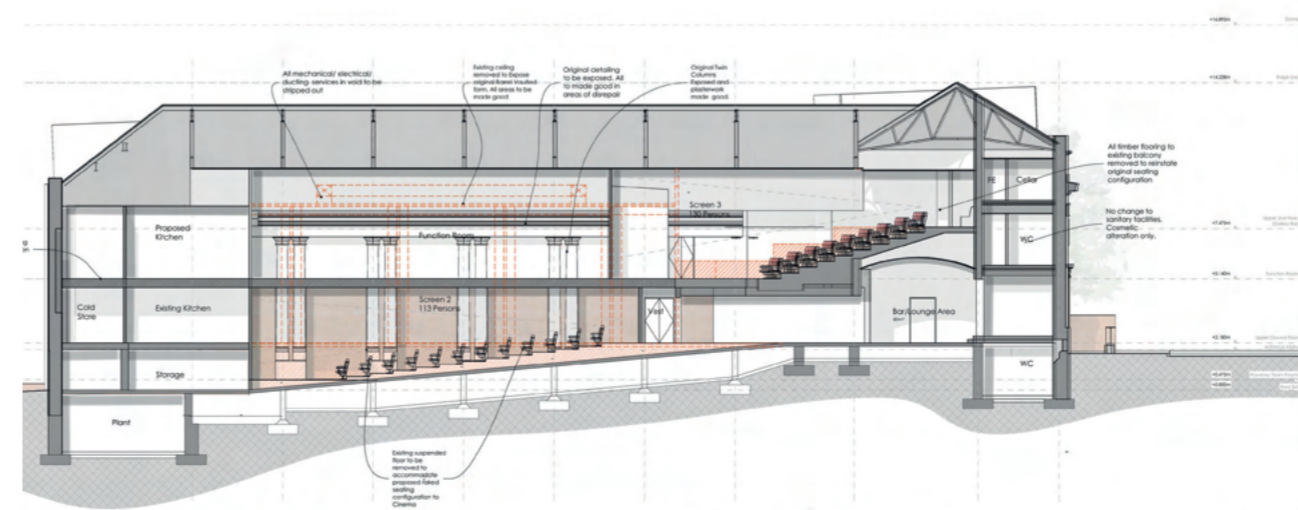
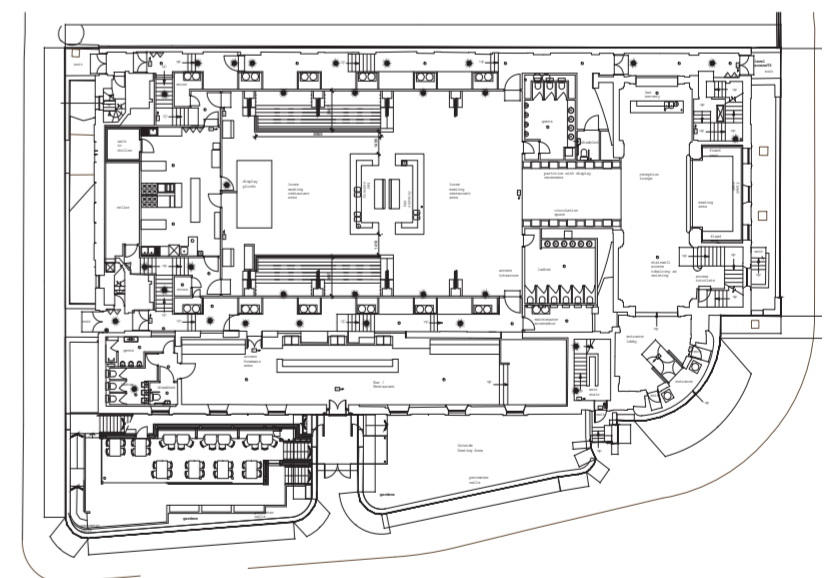


To challenge rigid gender categories, the main bathrooms are labelled "Fabulous" and "Butch", referencing familiar gender cues without explicitly defining them. This ambiguity encourages personal interpretation and inclusivity.



Responding to the existing sloped floor, a tiered floor was integrated into the main theatre to support the banquet style seating. The tiered design enhances visibility throughout the space, providing improved sightlines to the stage and performances.

Existing Plans








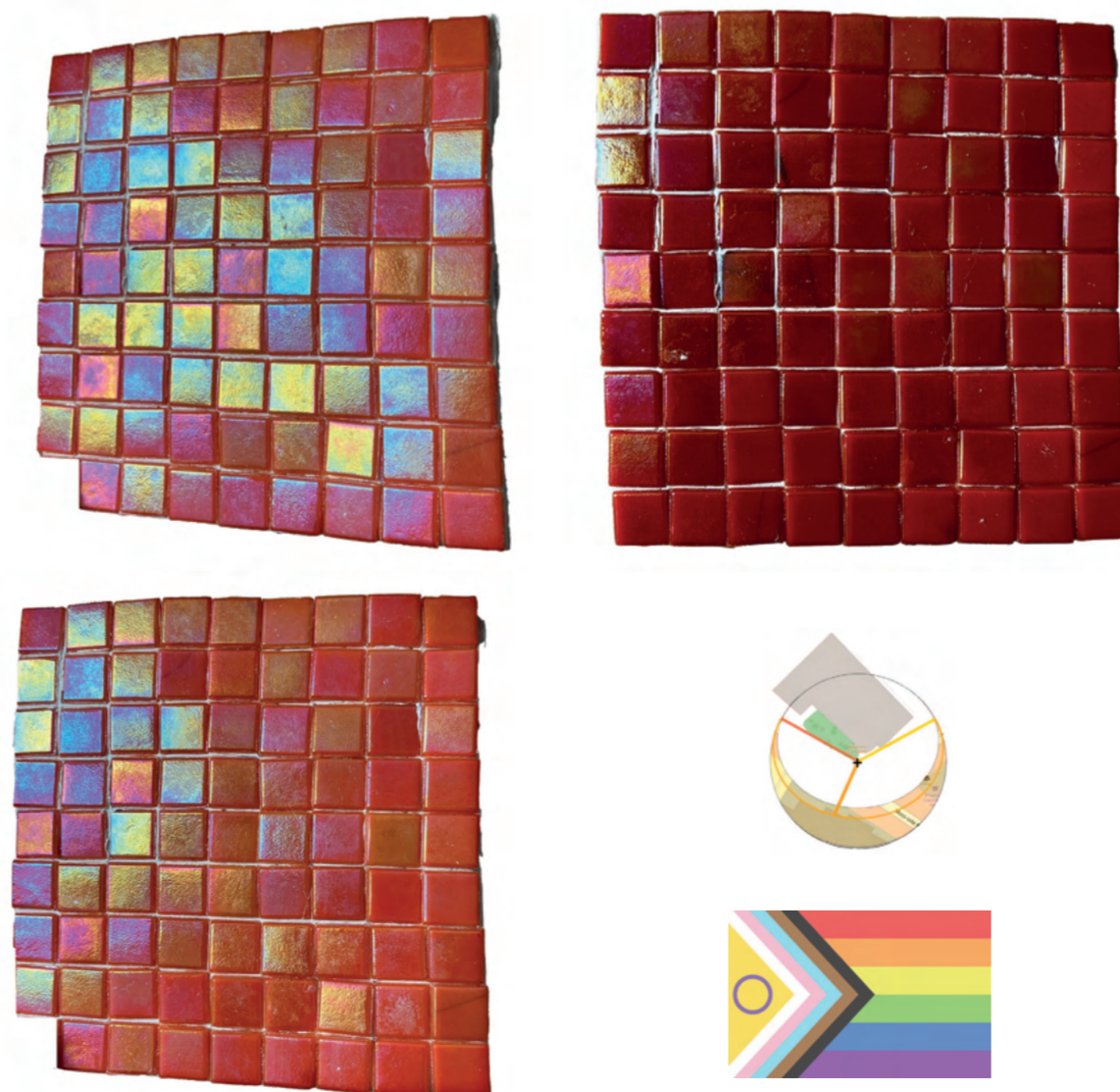
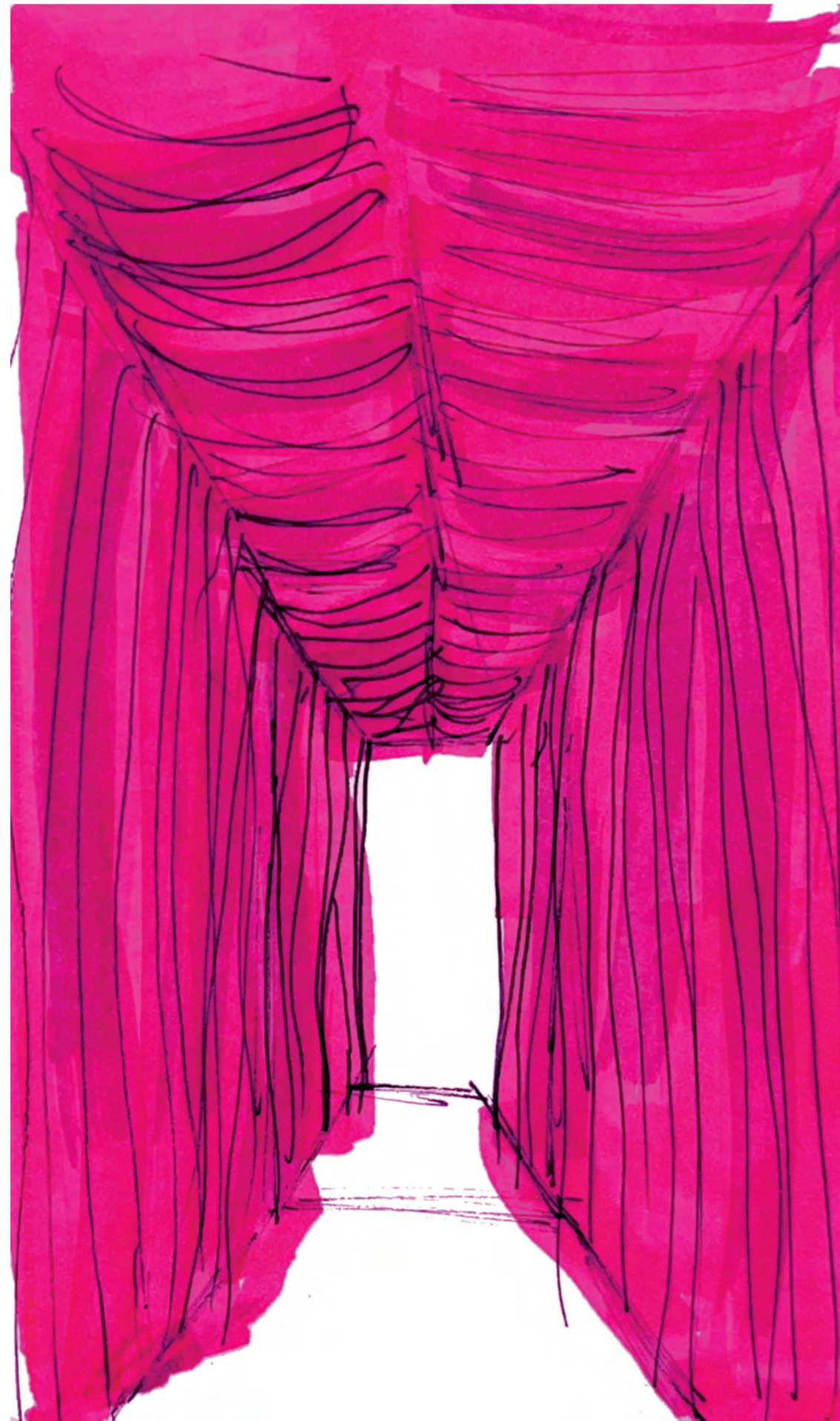
Entrance

Acceptance

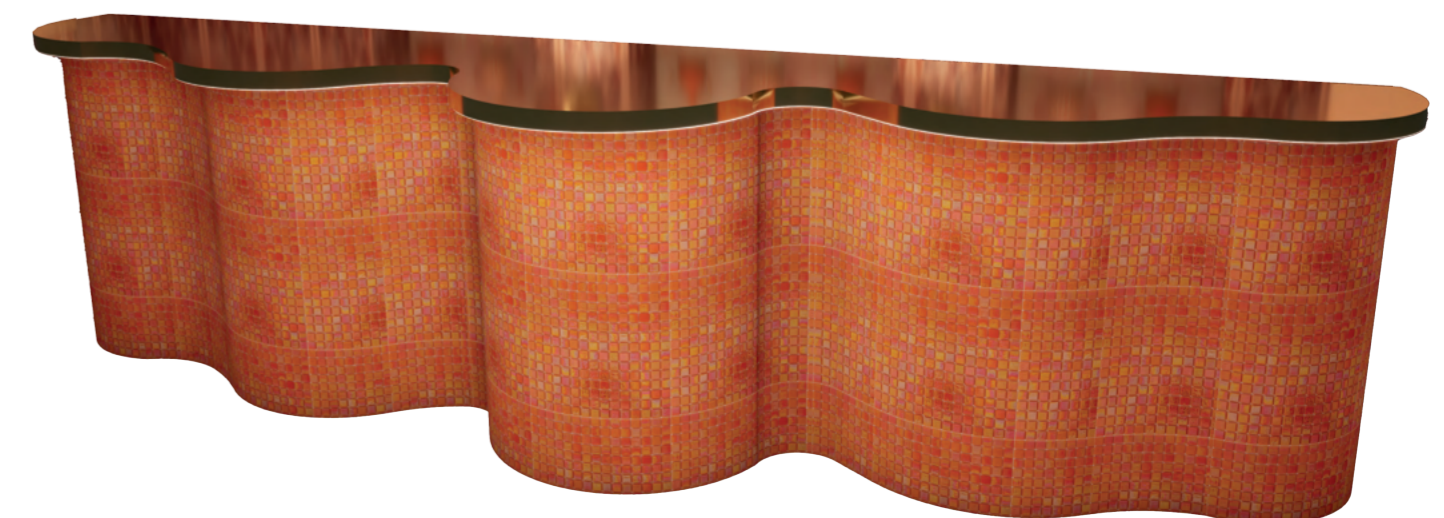
Naturally the entrance fell into acceptance. Iridescent orange tiles evoke the colours of a rainbow, referencing the inclusive Pride flag. As discussed in *The Need for Inclusive Queer Spaces*, edited by Petra L. Doan, the visible presence of Pride symbolism can foster a greater sense of acceptance in a space.

As visitors move through the theatre, hallways lined with magenta curtains pay homage to the building's original colour palette while signalling its transformation into a contemporary cabaret venue. The draped fabric introduces softness and warmth, creating an inviting transition into the performance spaces beyond.

-  Female Figure Wallpaper
-  Magenta Viscose
-  Orange Iridescent Tiles
-  Bellewood Mural Wallpaper
-  Polished/Brushed Brass



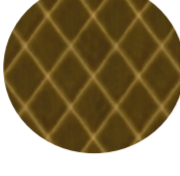


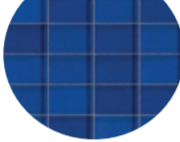


The desk's organic, flowing geometry draws inspiration from the fluid spectrum of human sexuality, embodying movement, change, and individuality rather than rigid definition.



The Changing Rooms Non-Conformity

Visitors are met with the option to head up to the changing room where they can continue this transition by using the vanity stations, changing room which has been adapted from a previous stage or communal wardrobe to become whoever they would like to be in the safe and accepting environment of the theatre. Recognising that communal environments may feel overwhelming, particularly for first time visitors, private changing rooms are also available, offering a more intimate and comfortable setting.

-  Bee & Skep
-  Embroidered Bee Fabric
-  Yellow Velvet
-  Winged Leopard Wallpaper
-  Polished/Brushed Brass
-  Navy Tile



The interior narrative is further reinforced through the decorative scheme. The mystical creatures in the wallpaper enhance the idea that people don't need to meet societies norms while peacock motifs symbolise self-appreciation, confidence, and the discovery of beauty within oneself.







Restaurant Mingling

Moving into the restaurant, the aim was to encourage mingling and community, so a bold bright orange felt right for the space. The Anopura Sumatra fabric featuring plants growing also reinforces this idea of communities and people intertwining.

The bar in the restaurant also has a hatch allowing it to be used to serve the audience during the intervals



- Anopura Sumatra Fabric 
- Blue Marble 
- Blue Velvet 
- Cambodia Pattern Wallpaper 
- Polished/Brushed Brass 

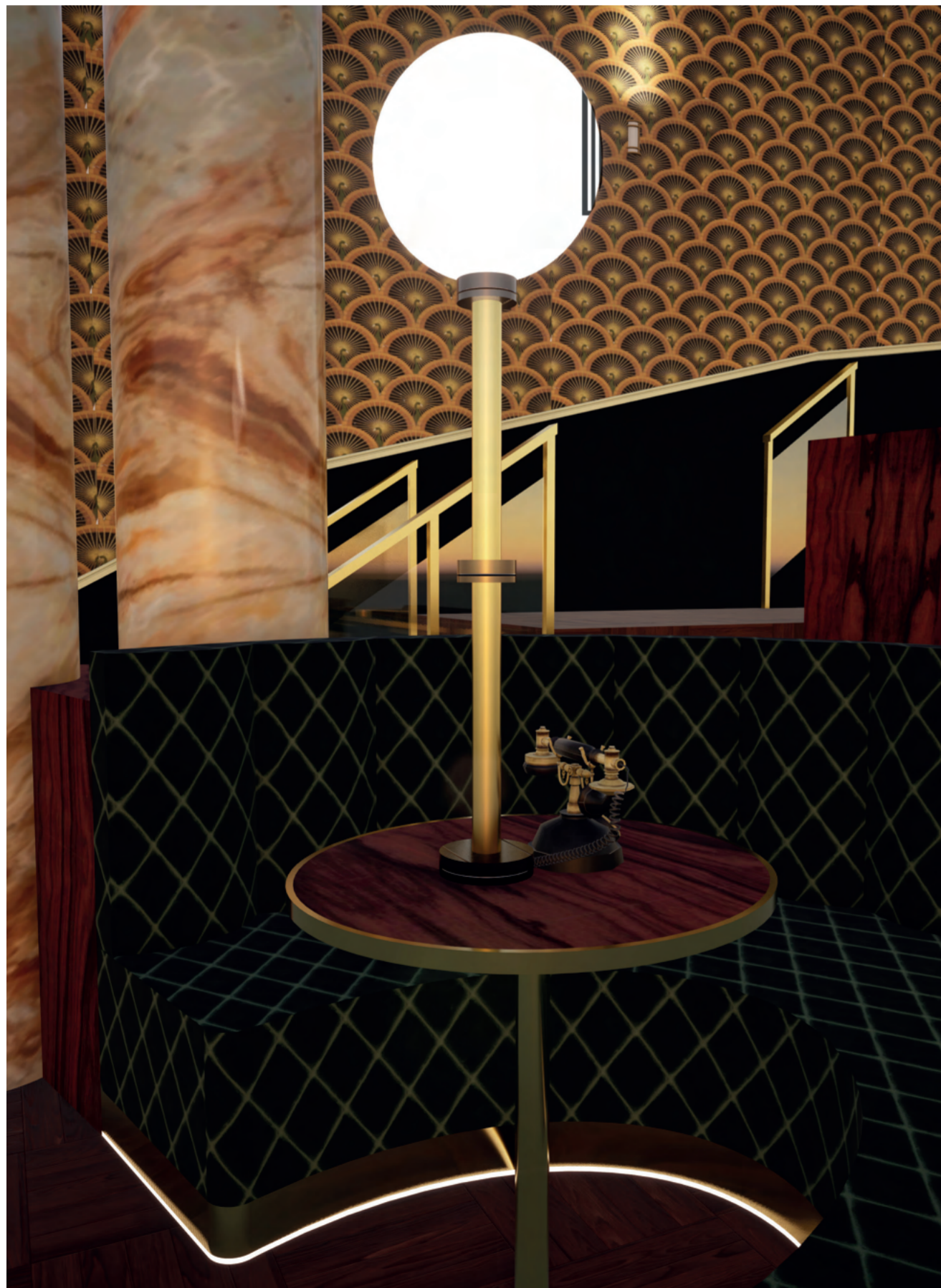
Theatre Security

Heading into the main theatre the lights dim and you are met with this gentle green hug. The peacock Art Deco wallpaper also nods to the Art Deco design elements present on the exterior of the building.

Sexual emancipation was a critical component of cabaret which is amplified by the flirting phones present which can be used to phone another table, chat, flirt, or even ask them on a date.

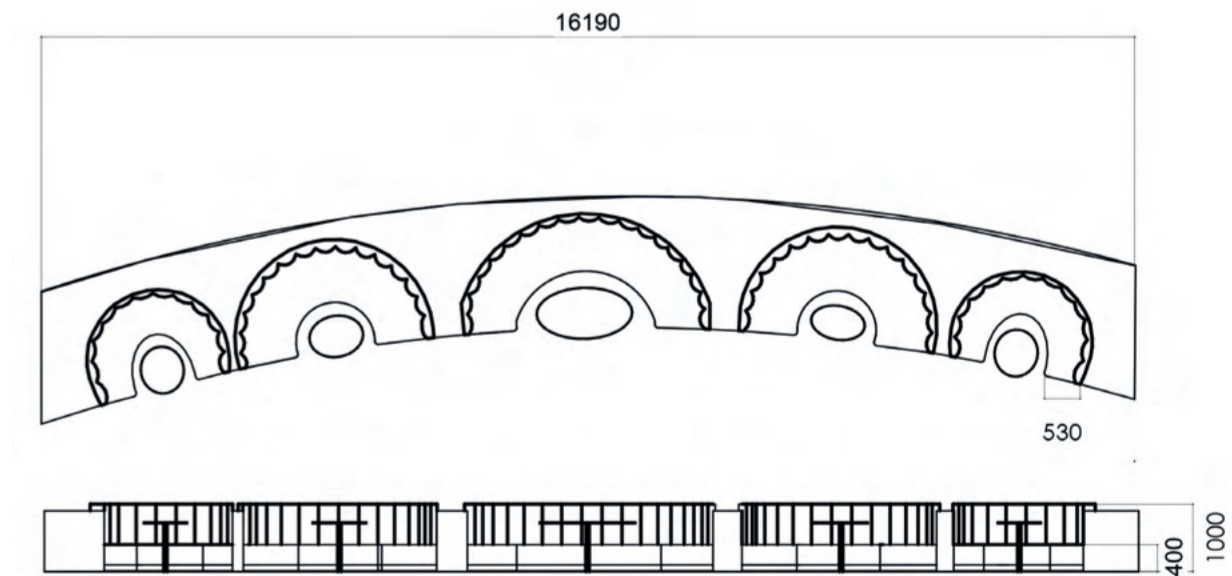
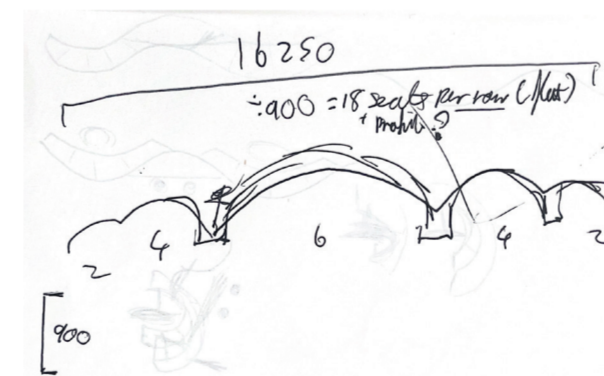
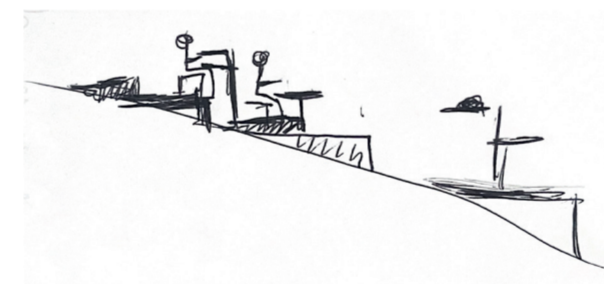


Man using the flirting phone at Ballhaus.



-  Santos Palisander (Vitro)
-  Orange Marble
-  Peacock Wallpaper
-  Green Paint
-  Green Velvet
-  Polished/Brushed Brass

The eclectic lamps extend the idea that we are a mismatch of elements and experiences. Much like the collection itself, these differences are not resolved but celebrated, sowing the seeds of security in our own bright character to create one luminous collective.



The theatre seating is arranged along a curved geometry to optimise sight lines to the stage from every position. Fixed seating is complemented by booths of varying sizes to accommodate different group configurations. Integrated circulation lighting provides discreet wayfinding during performances while preserving the ambience of the space. Generous seat depths create a lounge-like level of comfort, while subtly raised backs enhance privacy.

