

The Disrupted Town Hall

Coal's Drop Yard was redeveloped in 2018 by Thomas Heatherwick, after being left abandoned in 2003 following a shooting incident. This trend of turning abandoned spaces into expensive, trendy commercial areas is common in London, as seen with examples like Battersea Power Station. However, this kind of redevelopment, smoothing of a city, often erases the previous traces of occupancy and history, creating regulated spaces for specific activities, and not tolerating any activities outside the designated purposes. Since the redevelopment, Kings Cross has been surrounded by many commercial and expensive developments, such as Google and Samsung offices, as well as luxury apartments like R8, a 13-story building, and many more. Despite being marketed as affordable and welcoming, the reality is different.

The process of gentrification is affecting areas like Somers Town and Camley, slowly encroaching into

their residential areas. For instance, St Margaret's Nursery was demolished to make way for the HS2 rail, despite local opposition and continuous meetings with the Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum. As a result, the community of Somers Town has a significant amount of graffiti on shops, billboards, and hoardings, representing the voices of people who are against gentrification and unstable developments.

These decisions are made by the Camden Council without considering the importance and attachment held by the people to these places. It is evident that having a website and conducting meetings is not enough. Neighborhood forums should have dedicated spaces within a town hall to ensure that their voices, plans, and ideas are heard. Therefore, my project aims to disrupt the town hall to interject the community's voice, and not only disrupt the town hall but also Coal's Drop Yard.



Site map of Coal's Drop Yard.



Wolf and Badger.



Arch opposite of Wolf and Badger.



Town hall spaces are organized in a linear and neat manner, but I aim to disrupt and transform the spaces to create community-dedicated areas that encourage a healthy debate about 'Who is the Author of the transformation of cities?'

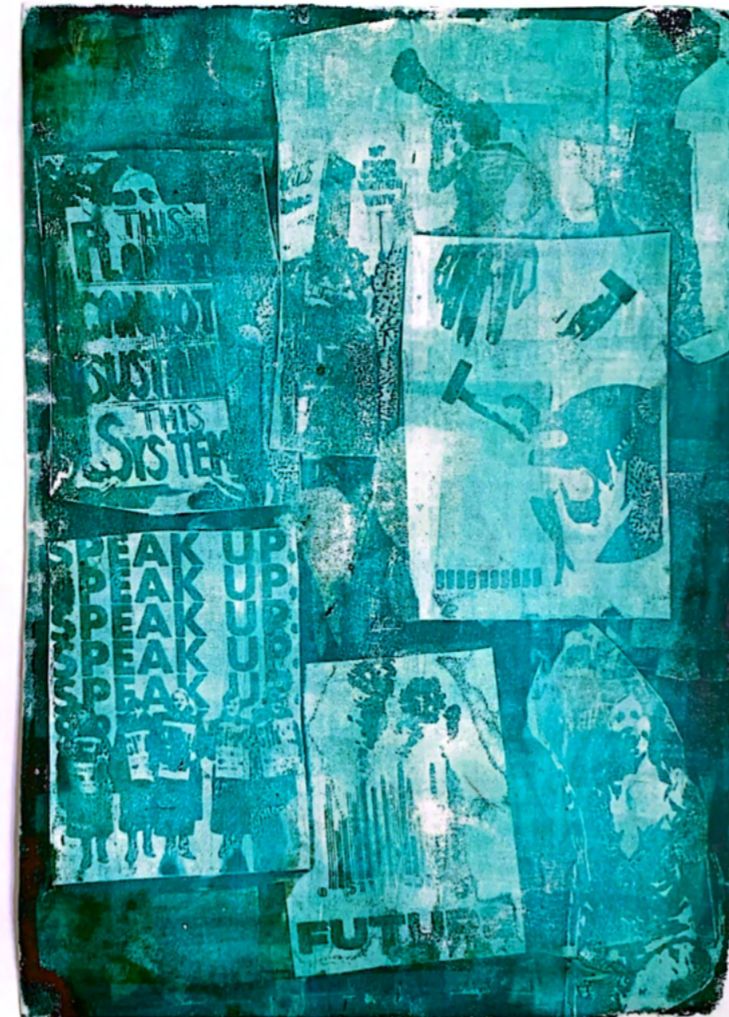


Teaser Image.

Users



The Undercroft and The Debate Forum.



Poster for the Undercroft and the Debate Forum (created by image transferring on a gelli plate). The undercroft consists of spaces such as the Community Meeting Space, Collage and Drawing, Screen Printing, Recording studio, and Printing station. Hovering above the undercroft is the Debate Forum.

The Town Hall.



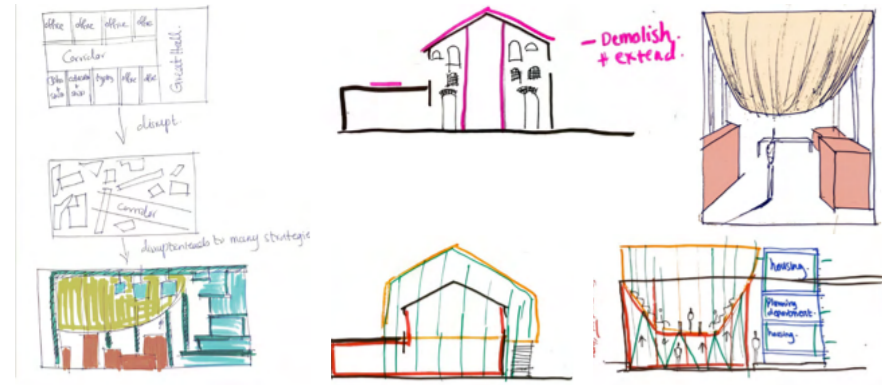
Poster for the Town Hall. The town hall is located on the ground floor and on the upper viaduct floor consisting of five departments, Jobs and Skills department, Education department, Planning department, Housing department Registry and the Environment department.



Manifesto representing the disrupted town hall which empowers people's voice and emotional power.

Strategy - Disruption

Sketches exploring strategy.



Disrupting the town hall spaces and rhythm to creates scattered spaces for the town hall and stacking them giving me more spaces for the community. The debate forum is above and provides a underbelly and atmosphere for the underground workshop.

Exploring strategy and tactics through AI image, collage and model

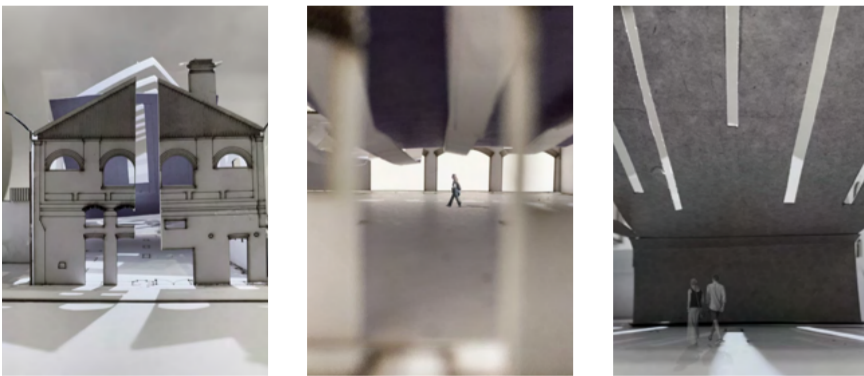


After creating AI images I started to collage them to create a range of spaces and experiences to determine tactics. This model represents my intention and ambition. Then I took this model into photoshop to create the final manifesto as seen on page 1.



Tactic: Slits provides transparency and allows the voice and activity travel inside and outside.

Tactics: Views, Underbelly, Slits and Exoskeleton.

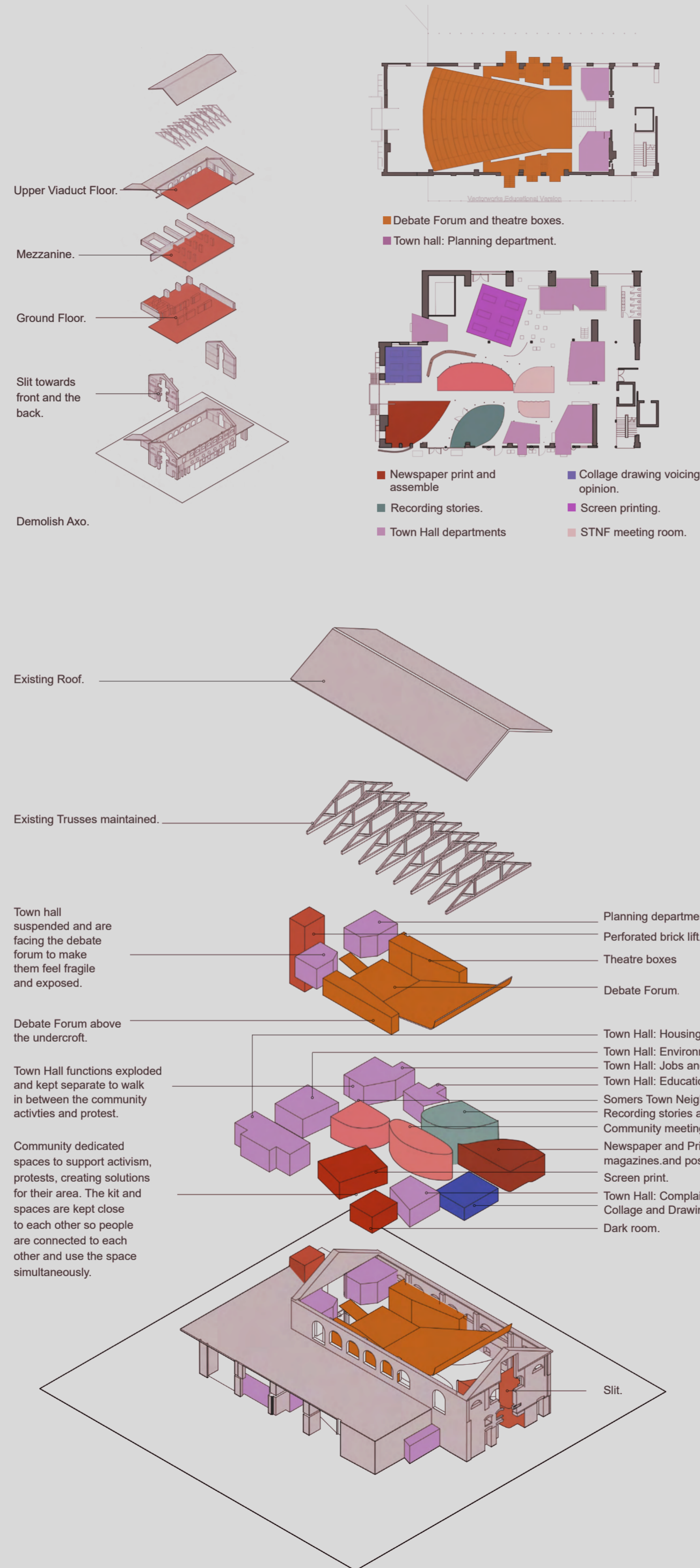


Slit on the facade. Underbelly. Glowing debate forum.

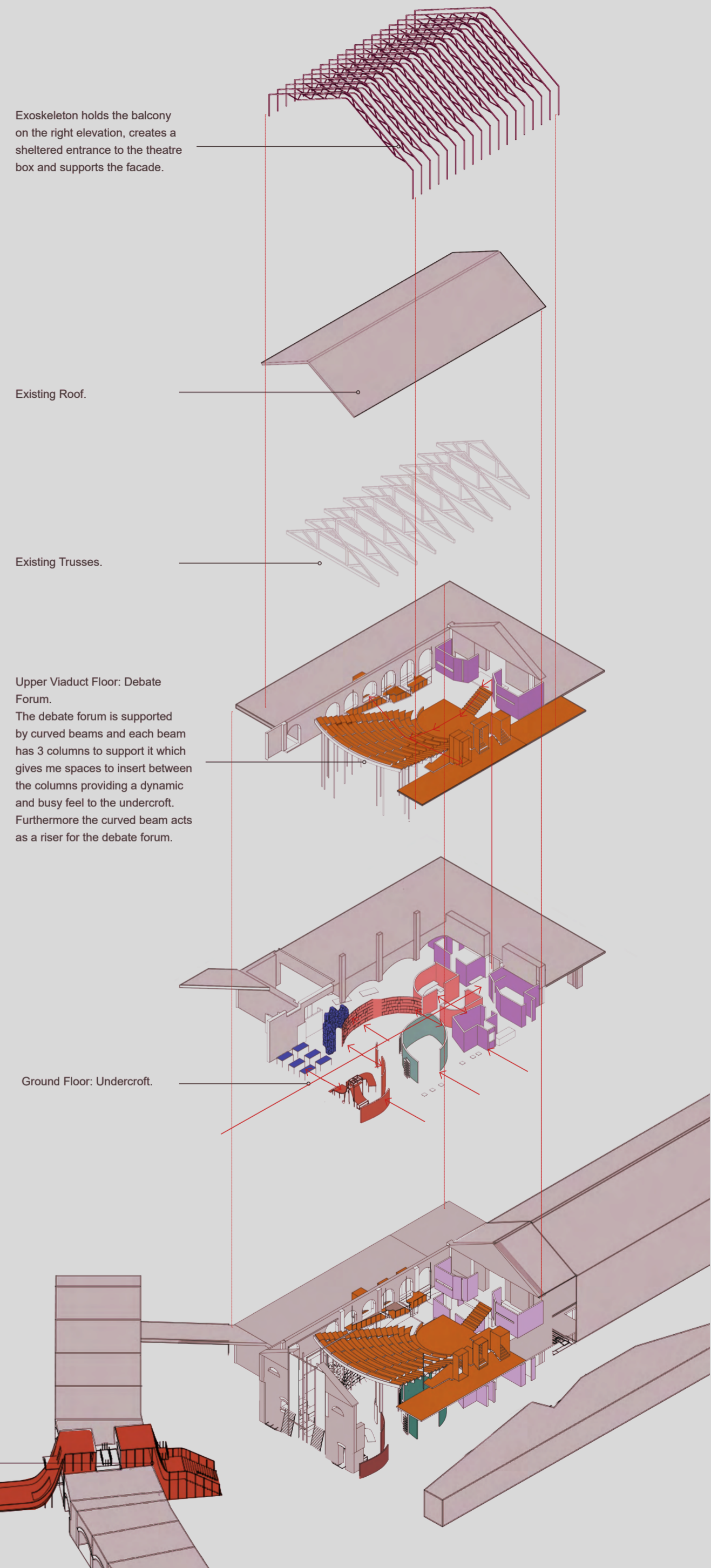


Balcony extending from the right. Balcony - entrance to theatre boxes. Views and glimpses from the windows.

Spatial Organisation.



Axonometric of Final Design.

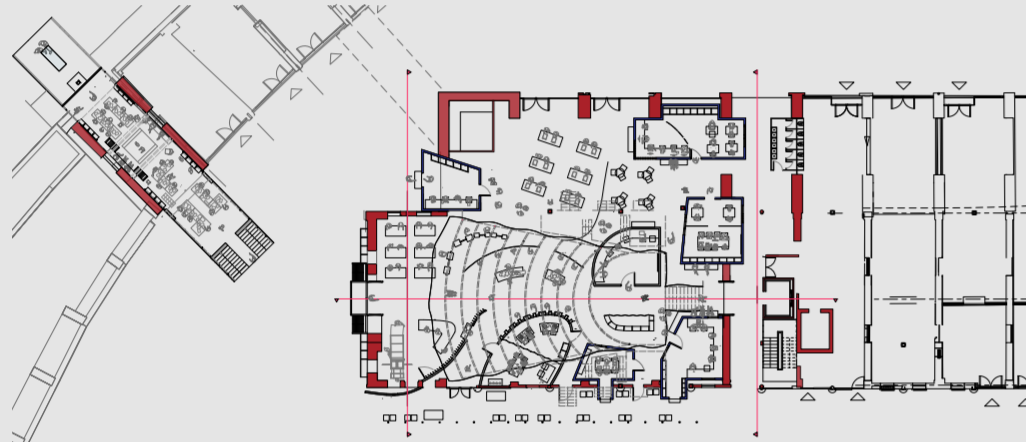


The Facade.

The building's facade features a long vertical slit that allows the public to pass through freely and catch a glimpse of the illuminated debate forum and the undercroft filled with various devices. The facade includes sliding corten steel doors that close at different times of the day. Additionally, there is a ladder for attaching a large political poster announcing the topic and dates for the debate. The railings are connected to the exoskeleton, which supports the balcony on the right and serves as an entrance to the theater boxes in the debate forum. The archive stores the artwork created by people in the undercroft.



Front elevation showing corten steel, ladders and the slit.



Ground Floor showing the Town Hall and the Archive.



1:50 detail model showing atmosphere.



Slit frames the archive.



Sliding corten steel doors.

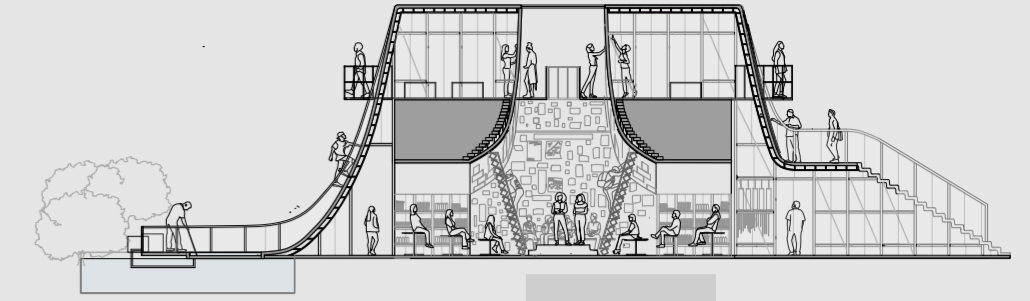


Front elevation showing slit protest, Town Hall complaints department peeking out, poster reveal and glowing theatre.

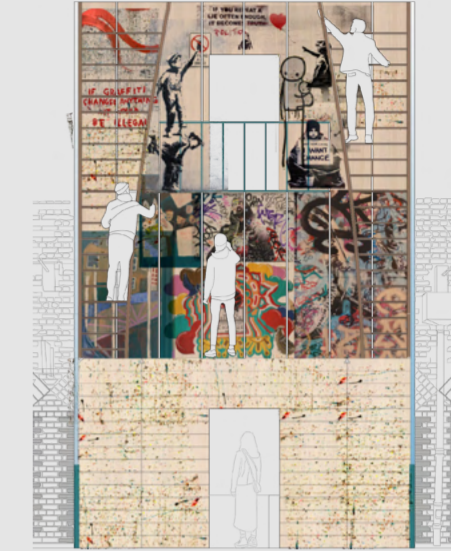


Archive and the Town Hall are close to each other to keep the area busy and to store people's artwork.

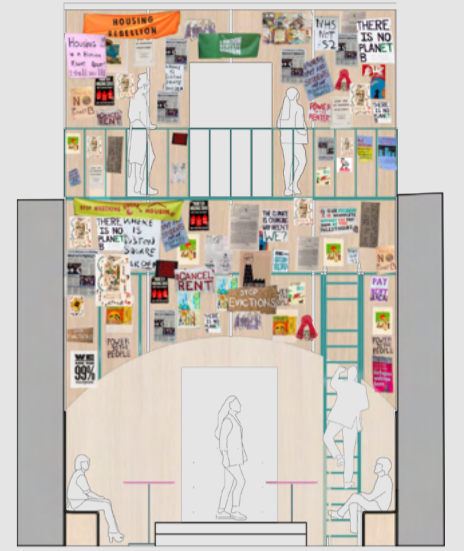
The Archive



Archive section AA. Displaying people's artwork for an exhibition and give a chance to people to talk about their artwork.



Threshold - people paint murals and create political graffiti.



Section BB - respository of people's voices.

The archive is made up of plywood panels which are removable and can be washed towards the back for reuse. Additionally, it allows some art to be easily transported to another museum to be displayed like the people's museum in Somers Town.



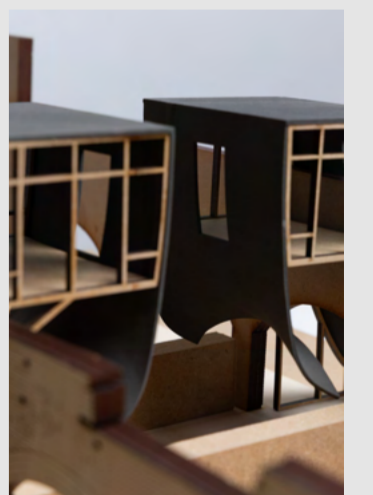
Section AA closeup of artwork being displayed and people having a small seminar.



Plywood 1:1 sample. Batten allows for easy removal of the panels to be washed, reused and exhibition.



Archive on Arch 7.



Skins flowing in and out of the arch.

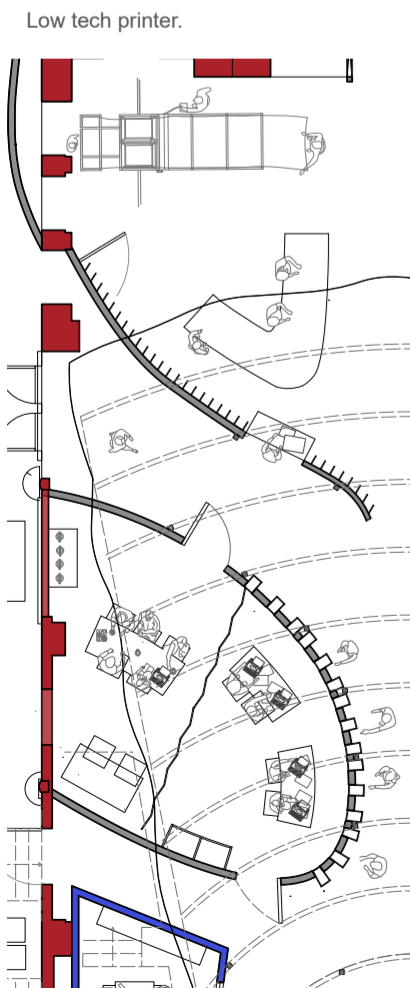
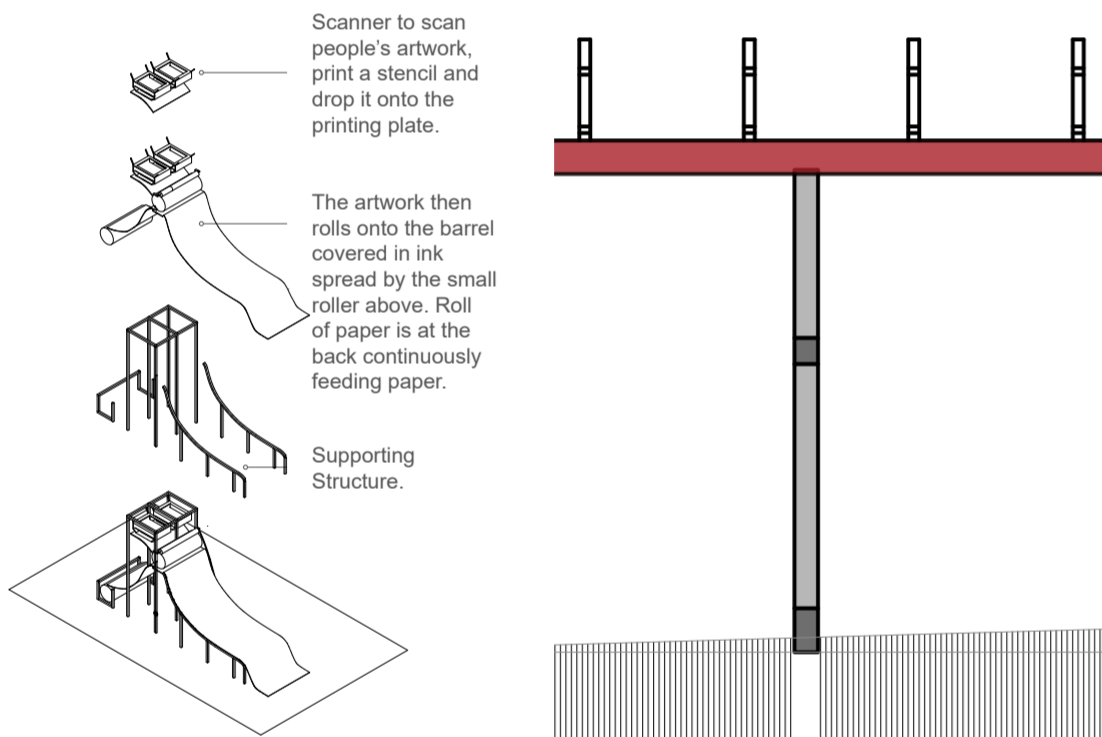
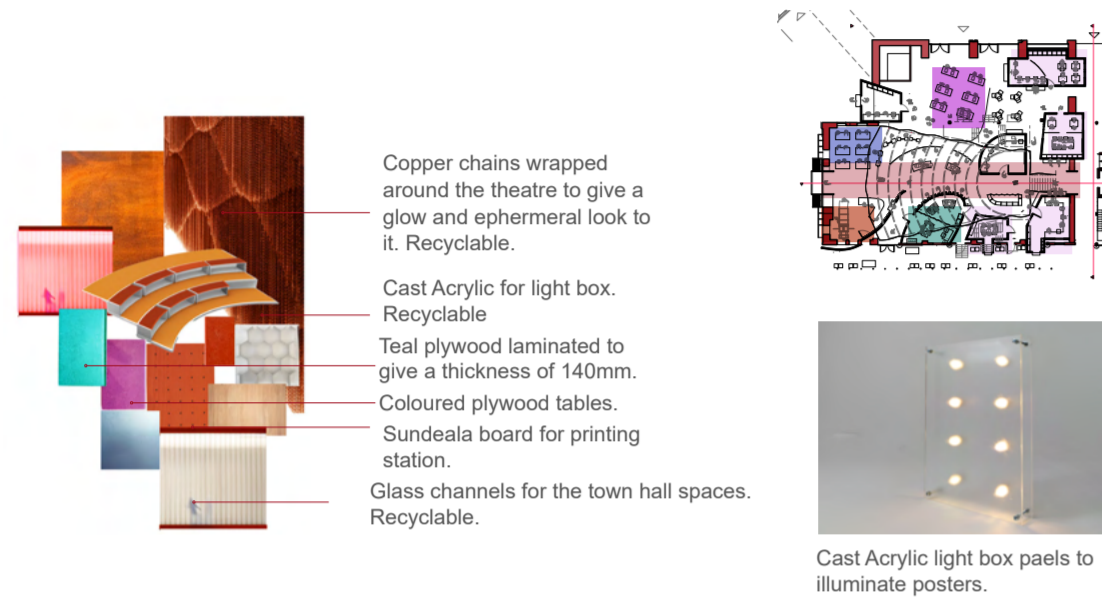


Archive towards the Regent's Canal where panels are washed.

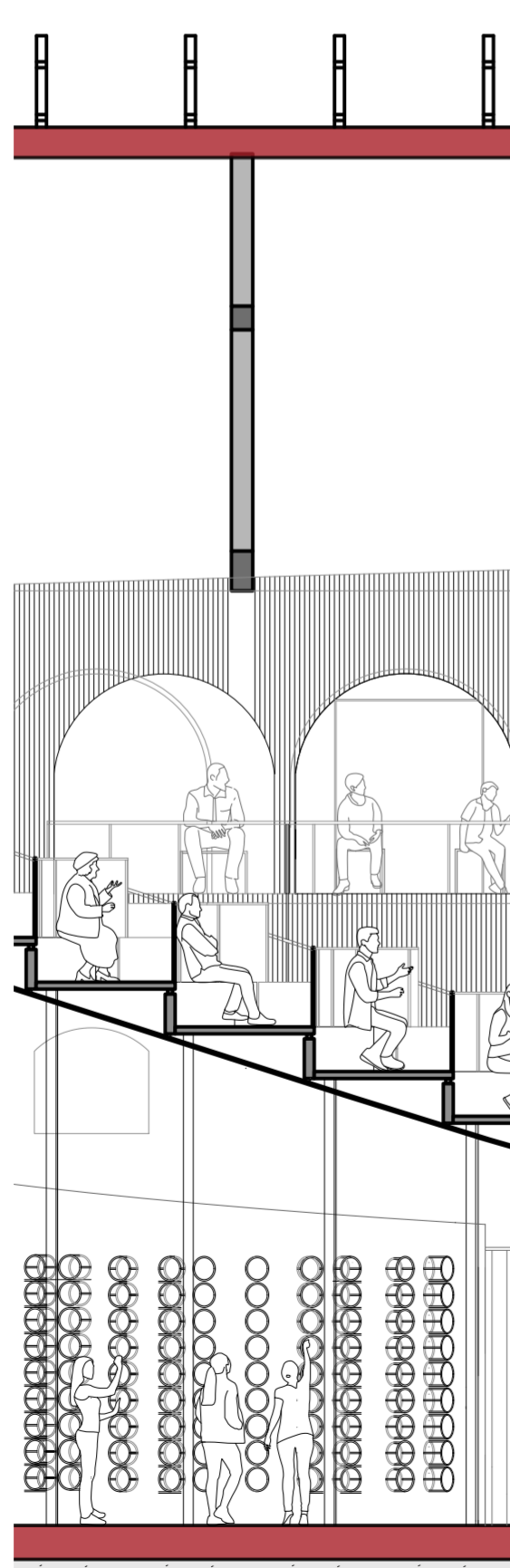
The Undercroft - The Devices

The undercroft workshop is equipped with various tools that enable individuals to express their opinions and have their voices heard. The Collage and Drawing space features Paternoster shelves that store supplies such as spray paint and papers. In the community meeting area, small cast acrylic panels allow people to display and illuminate their posters. The printing station includes a low-tech printer inspired by a mimeograph, which is used to print political posters and compile them into newspapers and zines.

The town hall features windows that serve different functions. These are used to schedule appointments, ask questions, and submit reports or documents to the councilors and their colleagues.



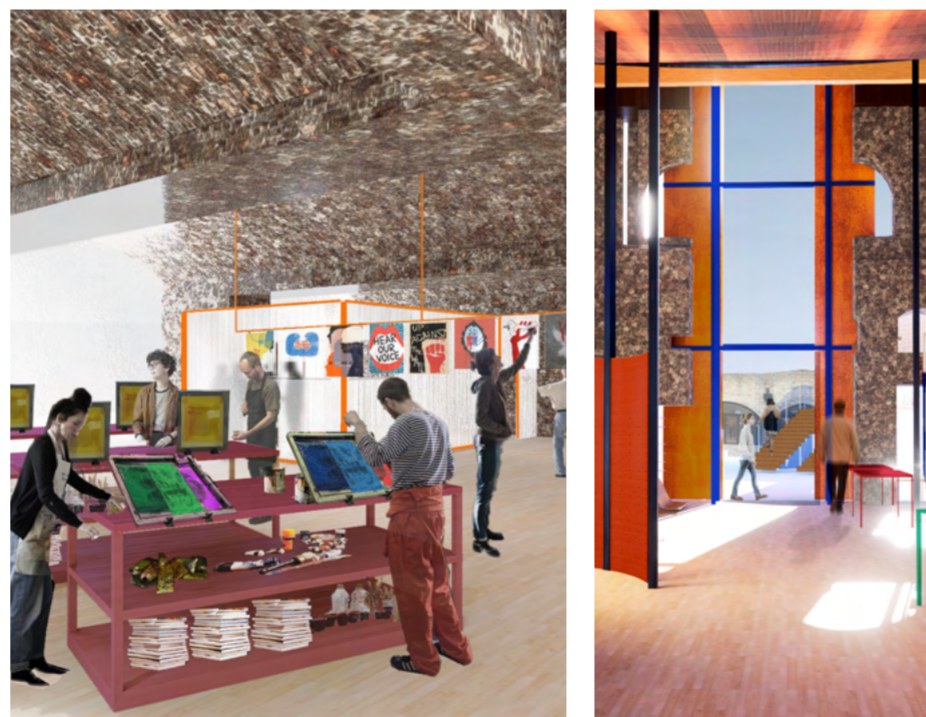
Recording studio detail. The shelves can be accessed from the inside and outside.



Section AA closeup of the debate forum and recording studio



Community meeting area, Recording studio, and Somers Town Neighbourhood forum office and perforated brick lift framed by the slit at the back of the town hall. The debate forms an underbelly for the undercroft and the metal chains provide a glow and floating impression. The community meeting area is where they discuss certain topics, gather evidences to prepare for the debate.



Screen Printing space and Town Hall at the back. Placing the town hall across the space makes the councilors aware of what is happening around them. Screen printing is used after creating posters through collage and drawing, and then converting them into screen prints.

View of the archive framed by slit



Printing device and tables for collage and drawing



Collage and drawing with a paternoster shelf storing kit and Town Hall at the back so they can observe the activity and see people's opinions and the fragility of their state.



Printing station to print political posters for newspapers, zines and announce the date for debate,



Printing device and tables for collage and drawing

The Town Hall.



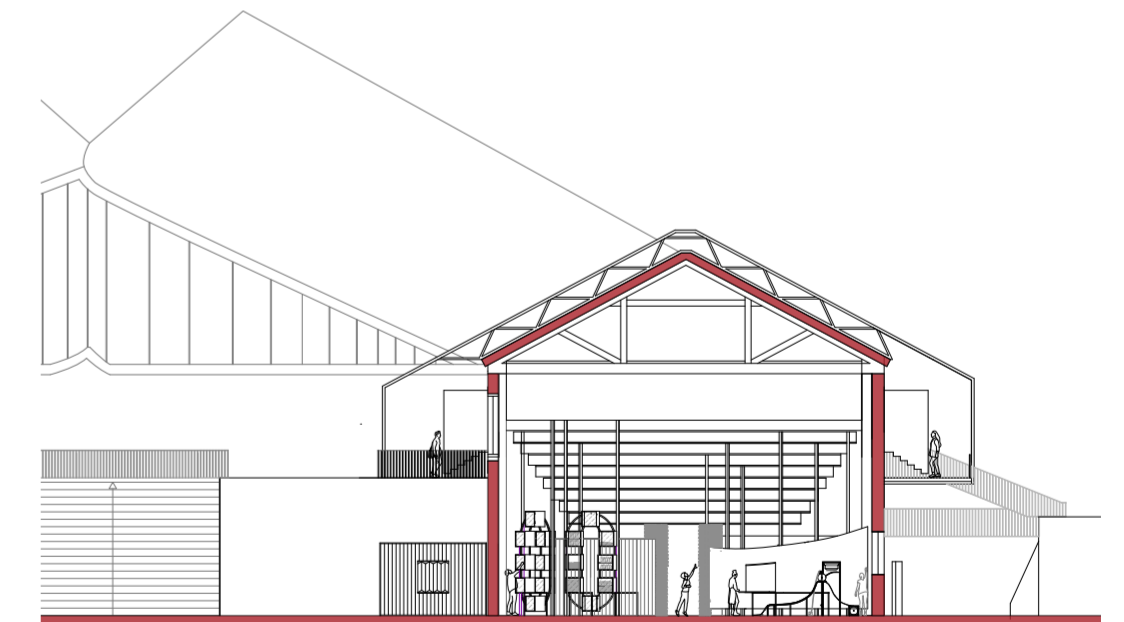
Town Hall is made out of glass channels to give them privacy while exposing their silhouettes. The windows are asymmetrical and provide a peek through into the spaces. The windows open for different functions for example asking a question



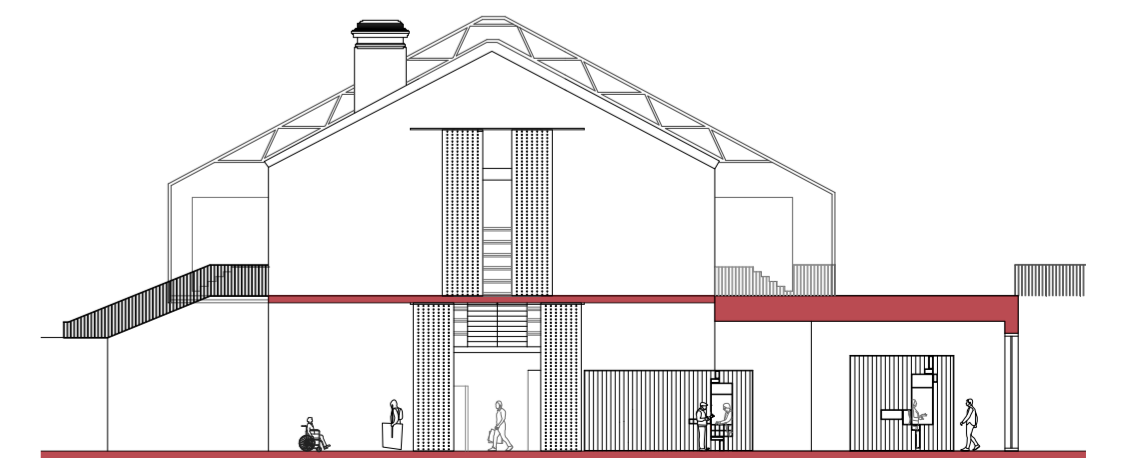
The windows are used for depositing reports to the other departments of Town Hall.



The windows are used to request for appointment.



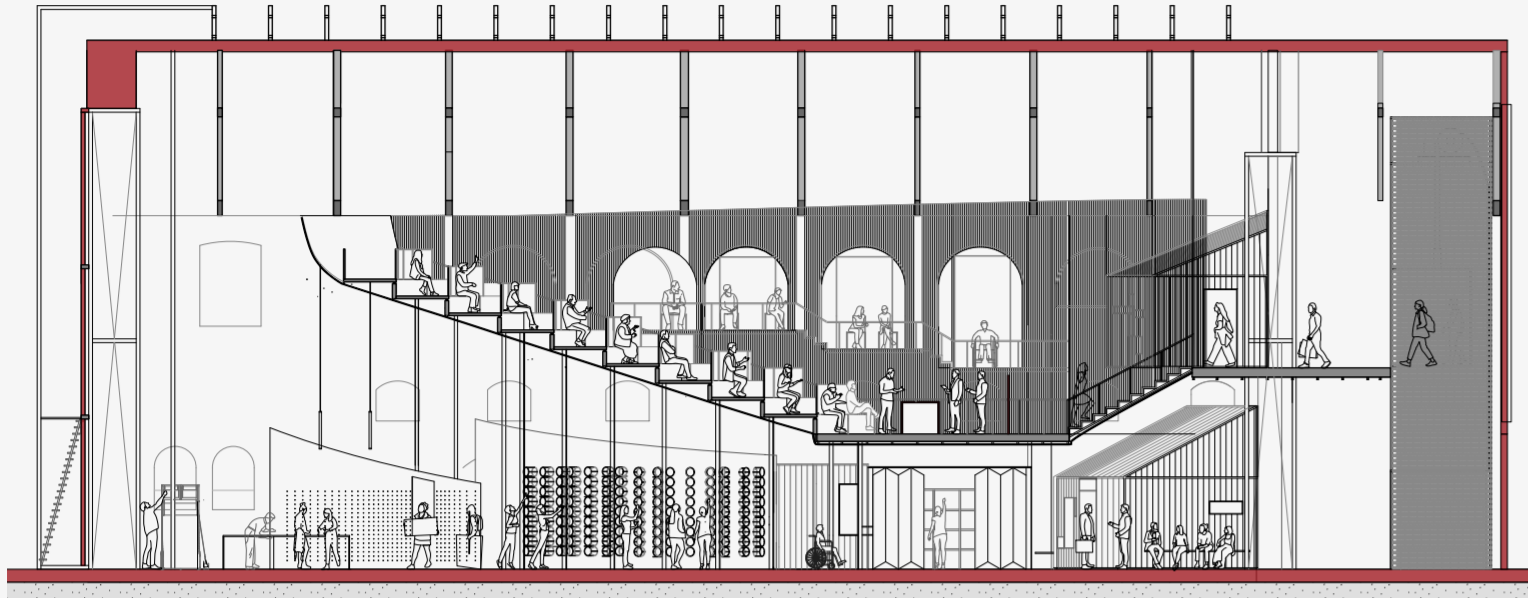
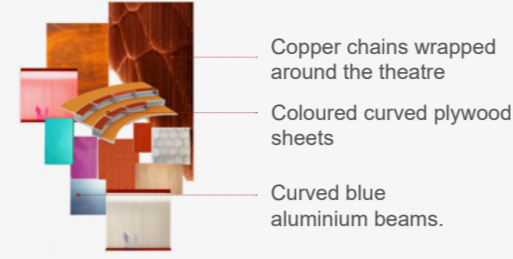
Section BB. The debate forum is supported by curved beams and each beam has 3 columns to support it which gives me spaces to insert between the columns providing a dynamic and busy feel to the undercroft.



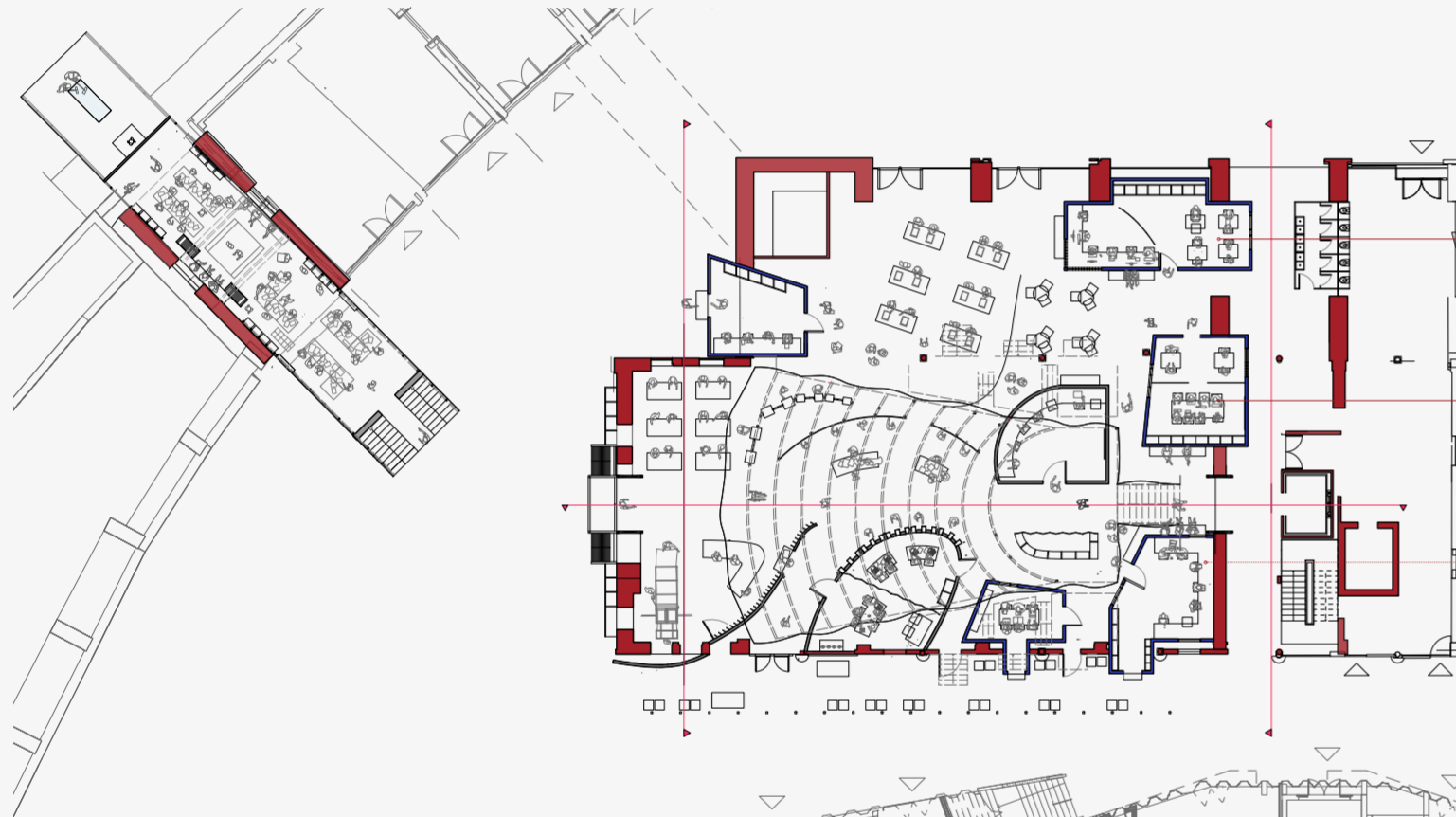
Back Elevation. Town Hall peeks out from the back to cater the people coming from the back.

The Debate Forum.

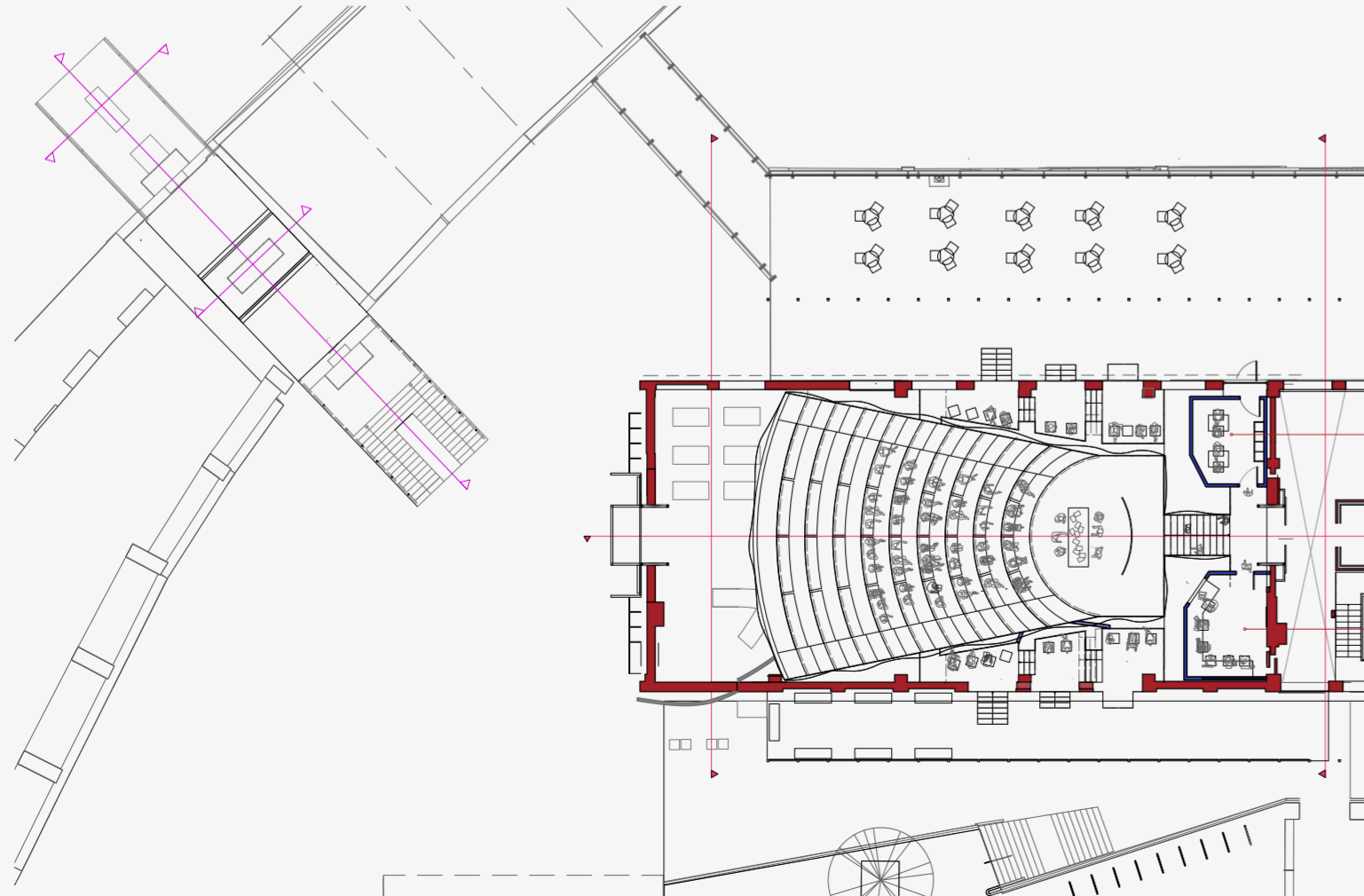
After listening to the voices of the people and preparing for the argument in the undercroft with the help of the community, the neighborhood forum can present their case to the Town Hall councilors to ensure sustainable developments that foster communal identity. Copper chains are wrapped around the theatre to maintain an intense and visible atmosphere. Whenever there's a heated discussion and stomping of feet, the chains move and create sounds that reflect the emotions of the debate. Due to the slits in the front and back, the sound of the debate and the moving chains can be heard and seen from the outside, intriguing people to come in the debate forum through theatre boxes.



Section AA showing debate forum, undercroft and town hall departments



Ground Floor showing archive, undercroft and town hall departments.



Upper Viaduct Floor showing the Debate forum and town hall departments facing the debate forum.

Town Hall Housing department.

Town Hall Environment department.

Town Hall Jobs and skills.

Town Hall Planning department.

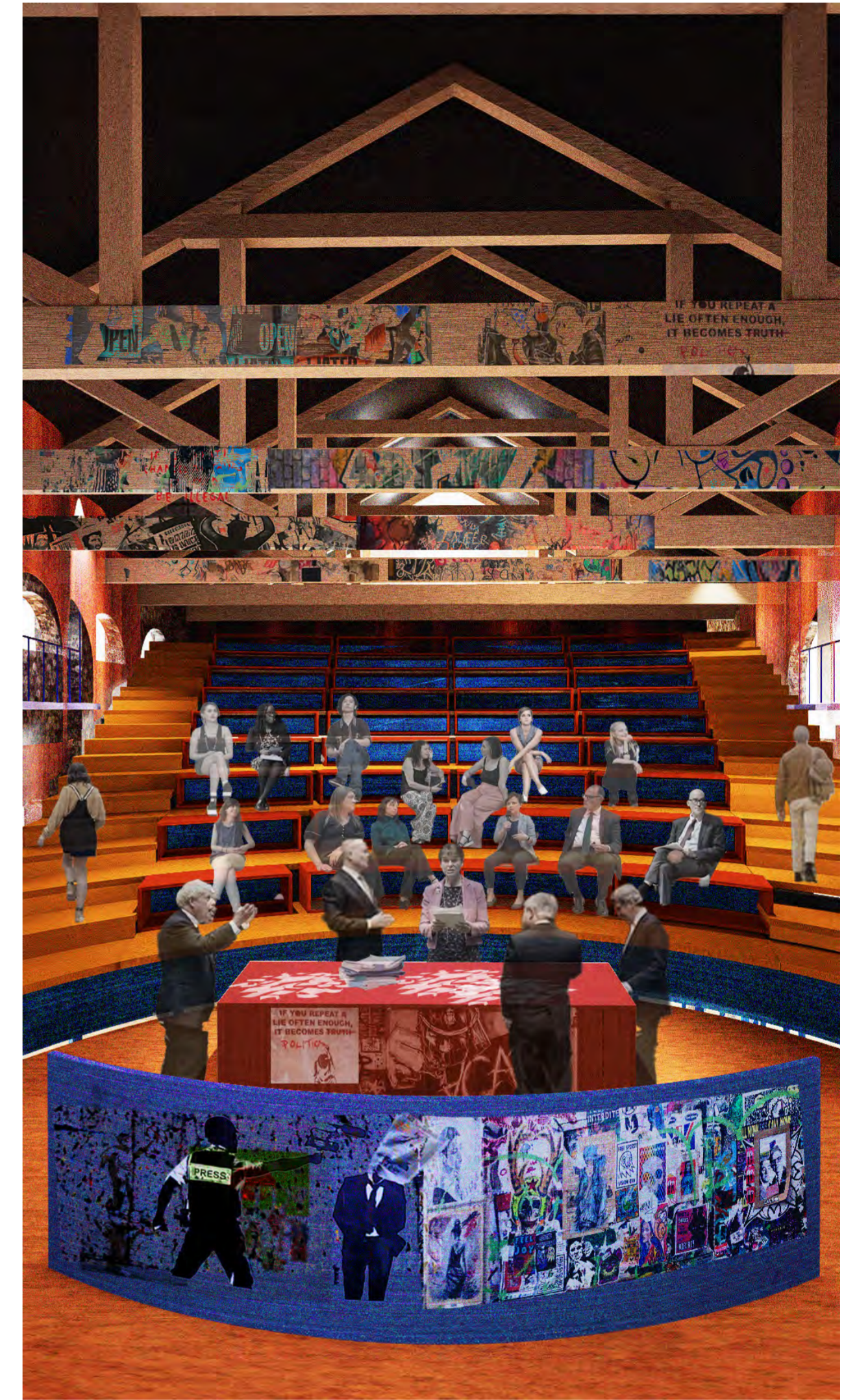
Town Hall Planning department.



View of the debate forum while sitting down.



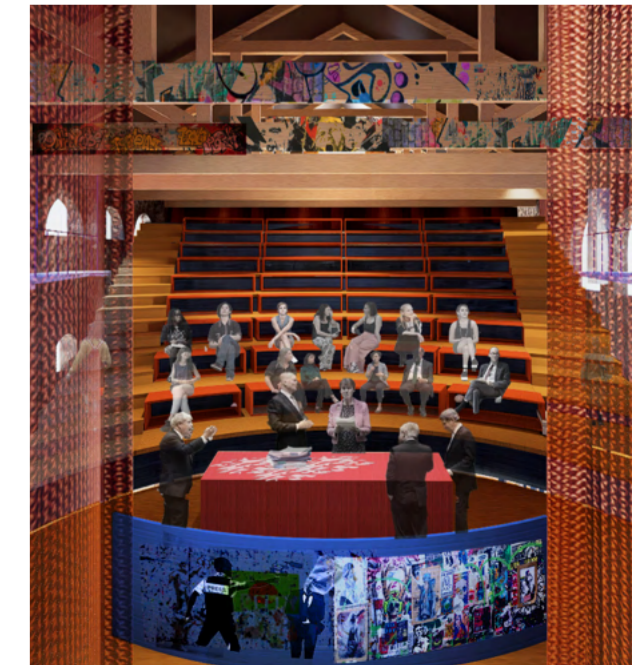
Entrance to the theatre boxes from the balcony.



Debate forums have been customised by the community by adding posters and graffiti to leave a mark and encourage others to be opinionated.



Entrance from the back.



Descending to the Debate Forum.