

# the ballet baths

DIVERSIFYING BALLET.

## the brief

### WHO?

There are currently many issues with diversity in ballet as historically it has been a white, female dominated dance form.

### WHAT?

The Ballet Baths aims to make ballet an enjoyable part of everyday life. Could re-thinking ballet performance spaces help diversify the ballet industry?

### WHERE?

Hackney, a particularly diverse borough in East London with high levels of inequality.

### WHY?

Ballet needs to adapt to a more inclusive modern world and this space could help bring together a diverse community.

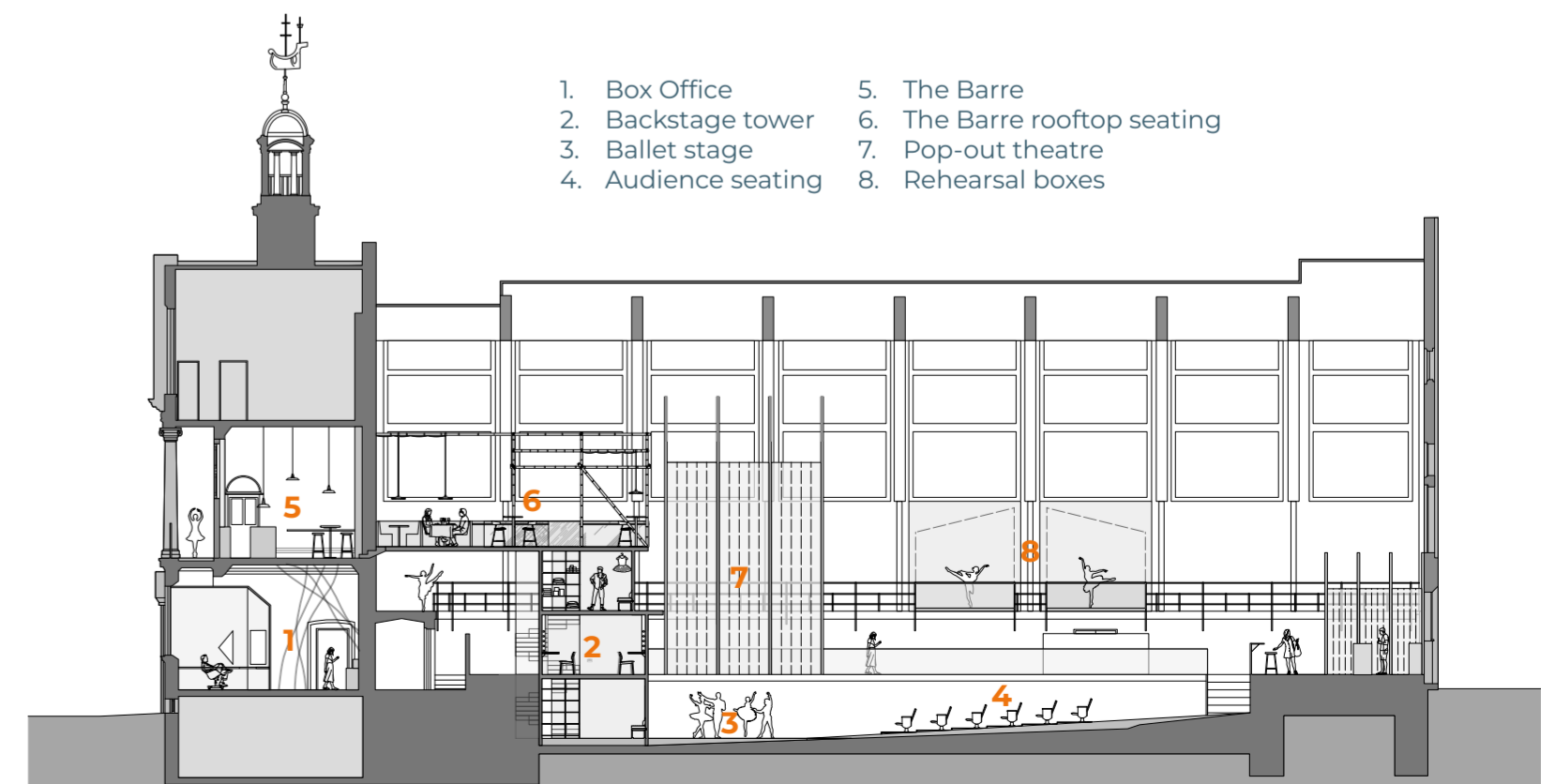
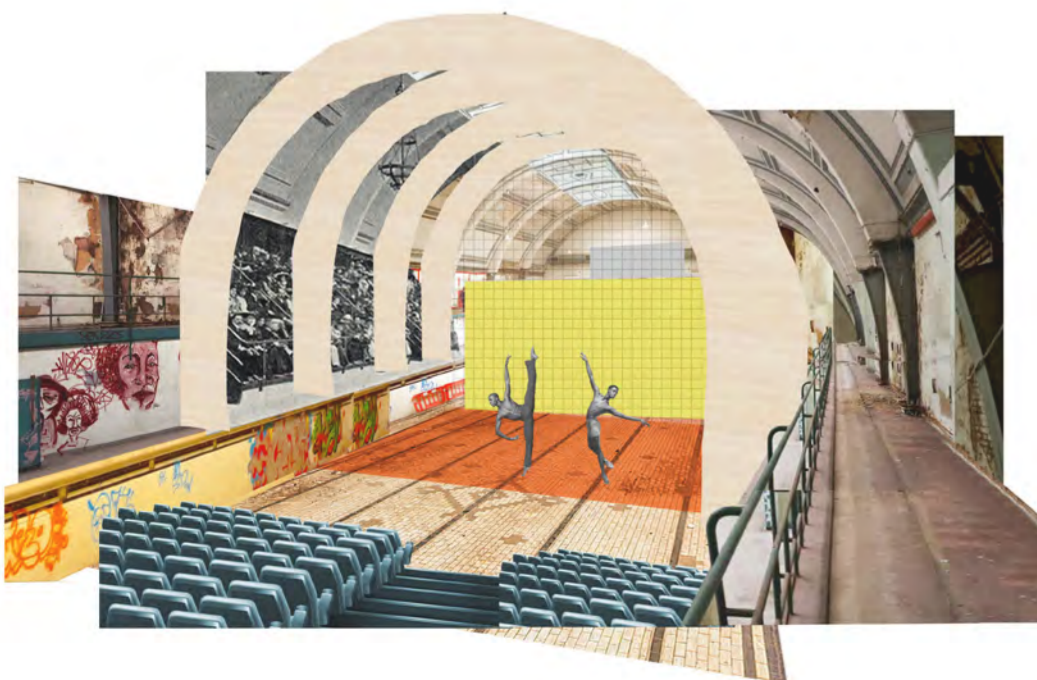


## the solution

In an increasingly inter-connected, diverse world it seems that ballet has some catching up to do. If the ballet industry doesn't push harder for inclusivity, there is a danger that ballet as a whole could be left in the past.

The Ballet Baths aims to break down the social barriers within the ballet industry whilst bringing together the diverse community of Hackney. By designing with a user-centred approach the space intends to welcome all with a vibrant, inclusive atmosphere. Showcasing different cultural dances, inclusive graffiti messages, multi-cultural textiles, and inclusive dancewear are just a few ways The Ballet Baths aims to achieve social sustainability.

By diversifying ballet and promoting a more casual approach to ballet participation, this project aspires to breakdown the strict, elitist stereotype of ballet and instead encourage a fun, social and casual enjoyment of ballet which celebrates diversity.



1. Box Office
2. Backstage tower
3. Ballet stage
4. Audience seating
5. The Barre
6. The Barre rooftop seating
7. Pop-out theatre
8. Rehearsal boxes



THE CURRENT ISSUE

**"IT'S NOT THAT THE DOORS AREN'T OPEN FOR DANCERS OF COLOUR, IT'S THAT WE NEED TO HELP YOUNG DANCERS OF COLOUR TO FIND THAT DOOR FULL STOP."**

**In 2012, 80% of adult attendees to ballet theatres were white.**

**ONLY IN 2018 WERE SKIN-TONED BALLET POINTE SHOES FIRST MADE IN THE UK.**

DAVE - AGE 45

**BEFORE BALLET BATHS...**

- Dave loved going to the pub with his mates
- Didn't have a great sense of balance
- He thought ballet was too feminine for him



**AFTER BALLET BATHS...**

- He meets his mates at the ballet gym twice a week
- Has improved his posture, balance and focus
- Dave has a new love for ballet and thinks everyone should give it a try

BALLET BLOKES USER JOURNEY



- 1 Dave stops off for a ballet gym class after work.
- 2 He then heads to meet his mate Bob for a drink at The Barre.
- 3 Bob joins in with Dave and the ballet blokes to plié for a pint.



- 1 Pearl heard about the new ballet project near her house, she's always wanted to try ballet.
- 2 She explores the baths and catches glimpses of inspiring ballet dancers rehearsing.
- 3 She even stumbles across a fun ballet gym class.



- 4 Pearl finds the dancewear shop and finds beautiful pieces of every skin tone.
- 5 Pearl was so inspired by the space that she decides to start taking ballet classes.



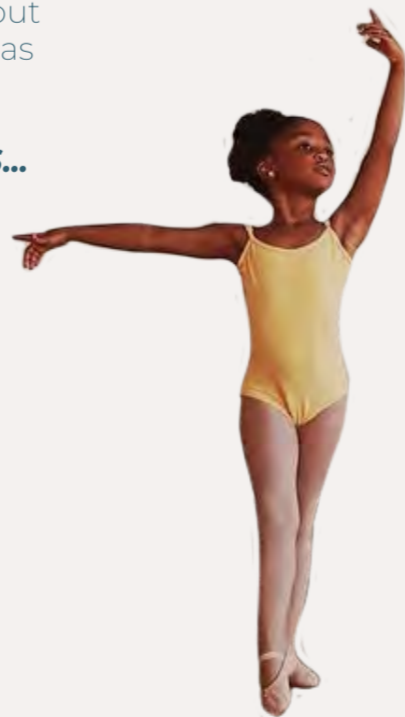
PEARL - AGE 9

**BEFORE BALLET BATHS...**

- She grew up dreaming of becoming a dancer but Pearl never saw ballerinas who looked like her.

**AFTER BALLET BATHS...**

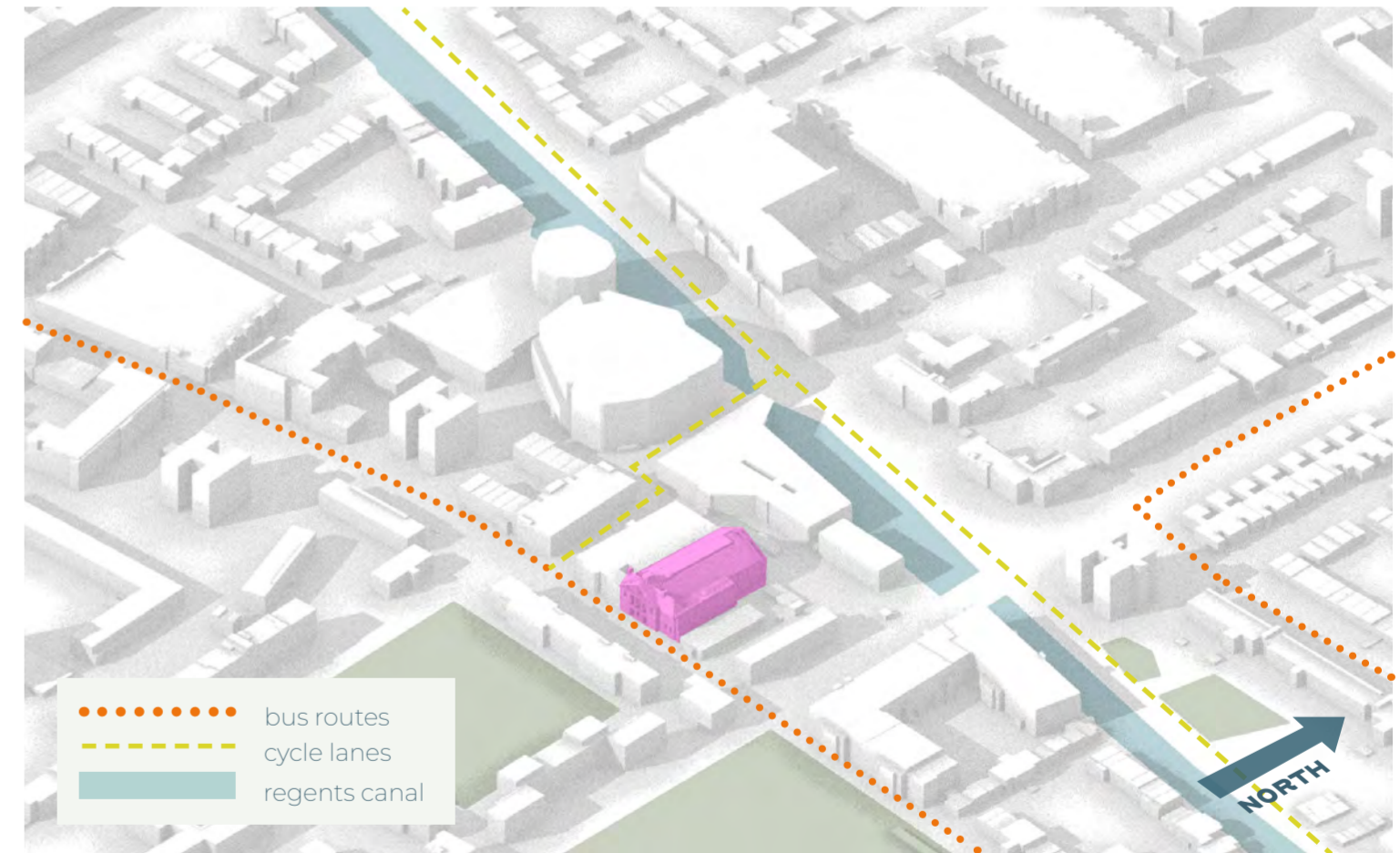
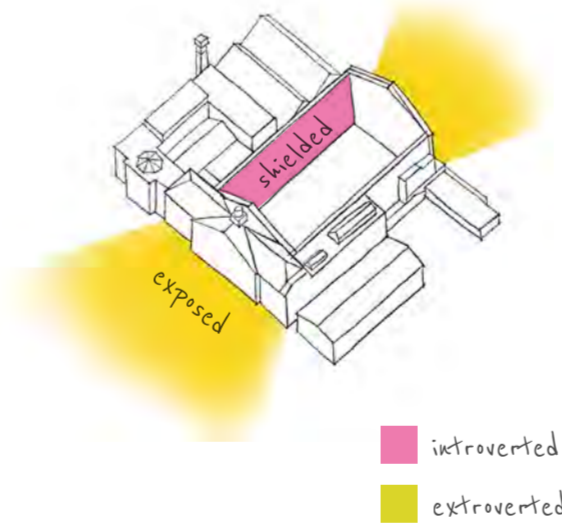
- Pearl began regular ballet lessons at The Ballet Baths which celebrated the diversity in her local community. It was a space she felt comfortable and welcomed and where she felt her dreams of becoming a ballerina could finally come true.



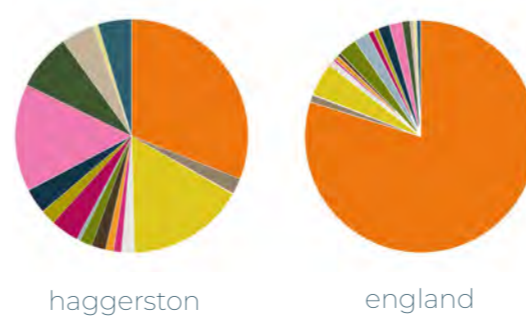
HAGGERSTON BATHS, WHISTON ROAD, HACKNEY E2 8BZ.

where?

HACKNEY, EAST LONDON.



PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS OF DIFFERENT ETHNICITIES (2011 CENSUS)



HOW THE BATHS WERE SEGREGATED IN THE 1900s

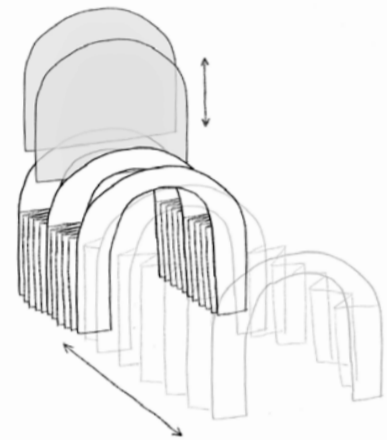
- Women's (general)
- Women's second class
- Women's first class
- Men's (general)
- Men's second class
- Men's first class



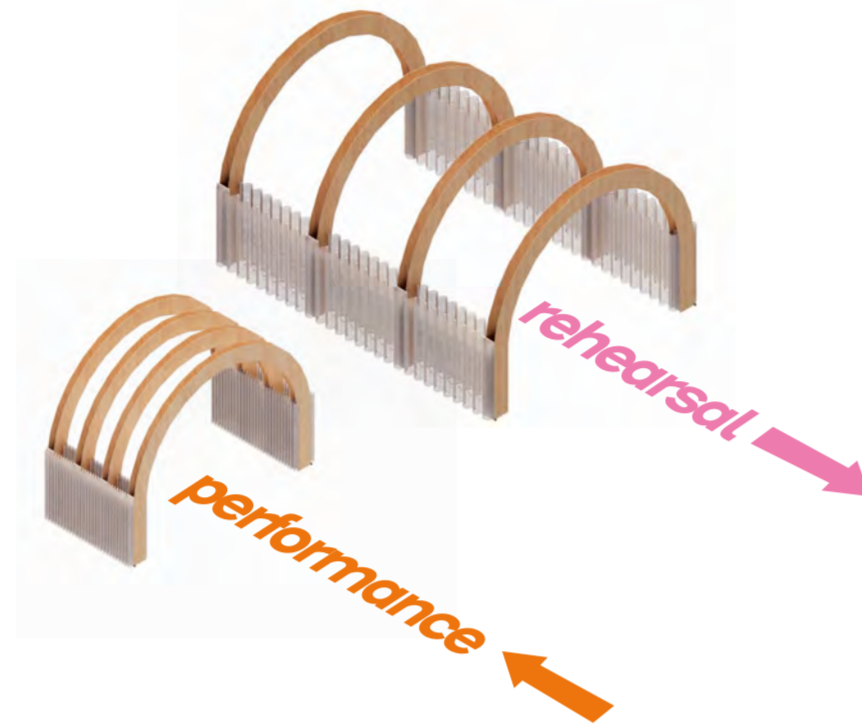
# the concept

## A POP-UP THEATRE

A pop-up architectural insertion inspired by paper toy theatres provides ultimate flexibility so the space can be adapted to suit rehearsals or performances.



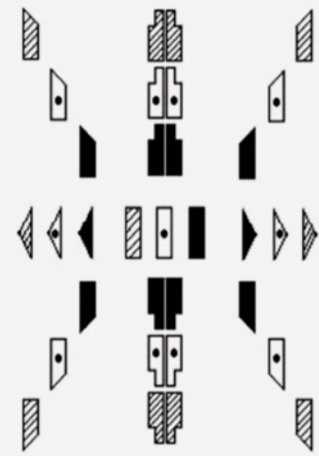
Backdrops can be lowered to divide the space into multiple rehearsal studios.



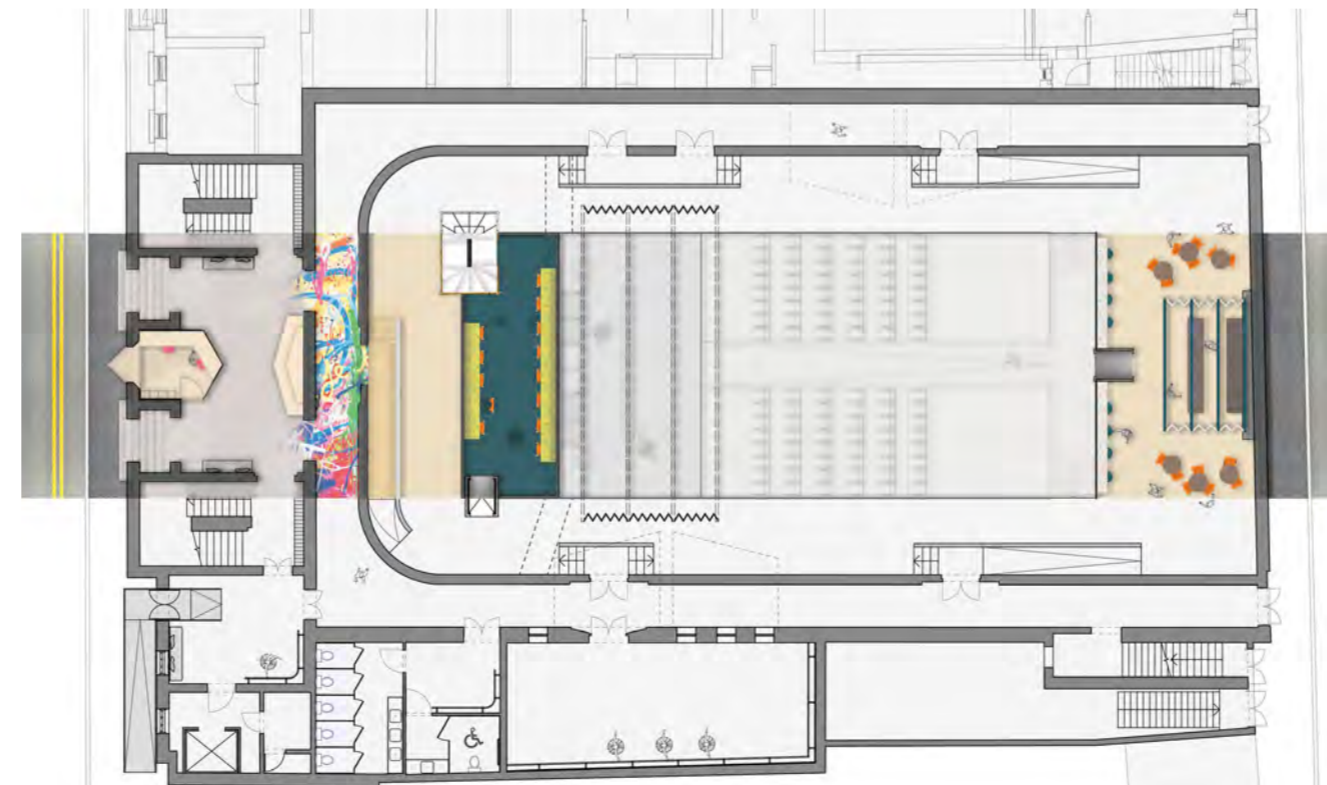
### LABANOTATION SYMBOLS

Labanotation is a system for recording human movement and dance choreography invented by Hungarian Rudolf Von Laban in the 1920s.

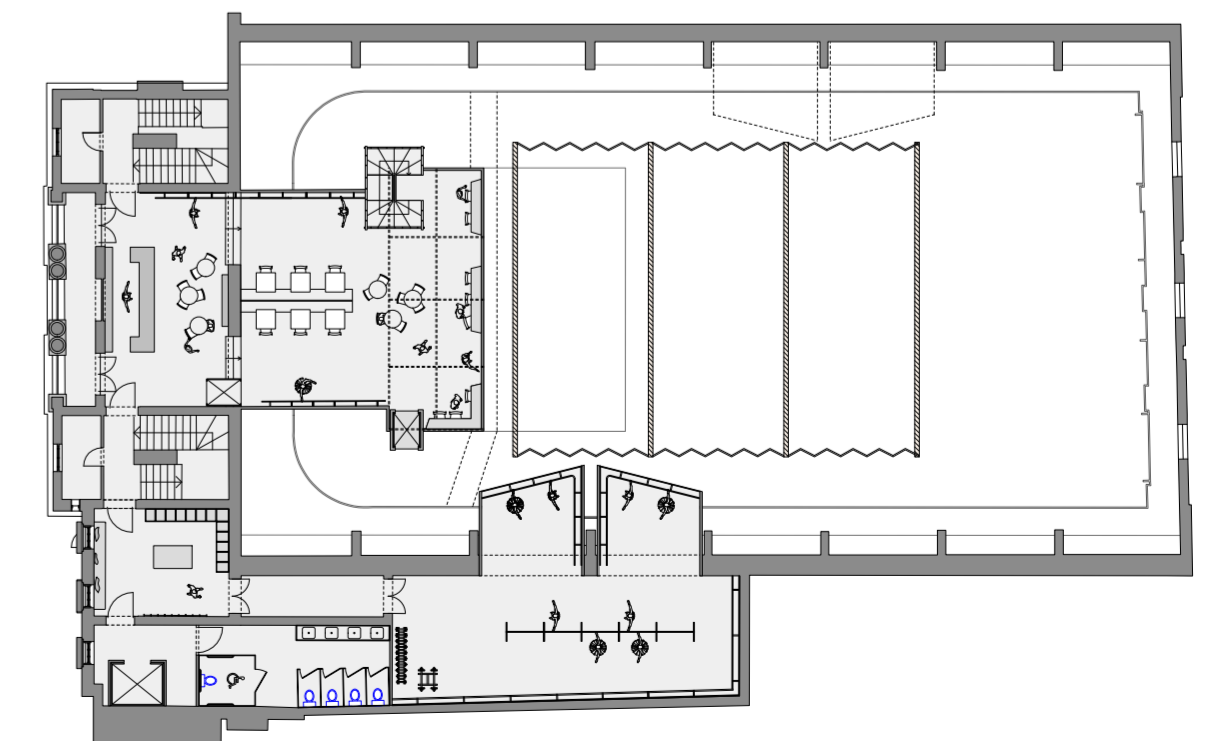
The symbols are repeated around the space, most significantly in the facade of the backstage tower where they frame glimpses of the dancers behind.



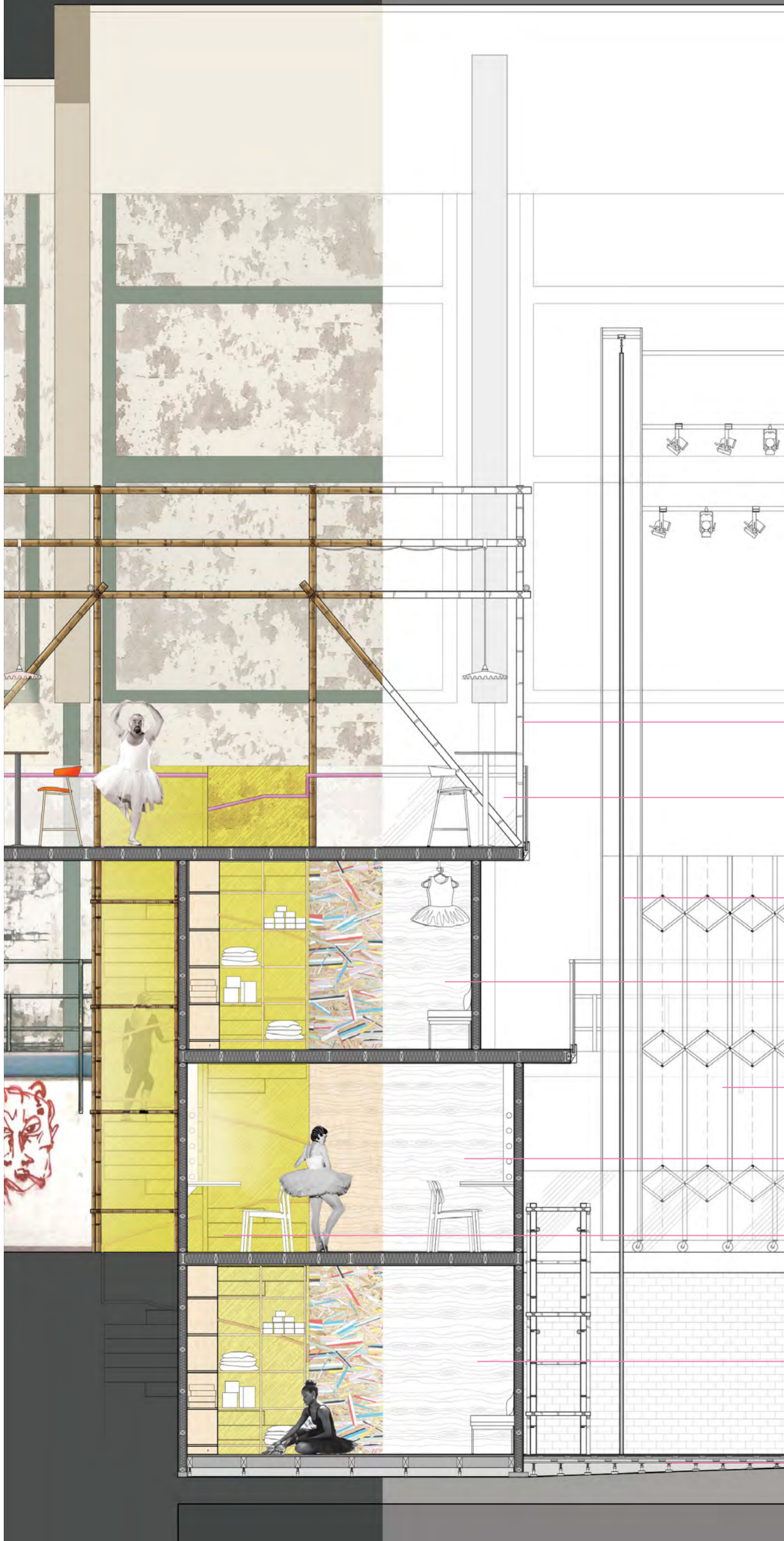
POOL FLOOR scale 1:300



GROUND FLOOR scale 1:300



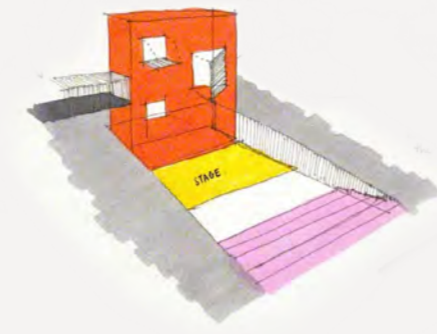
FIRST FLOOR scale 1:300



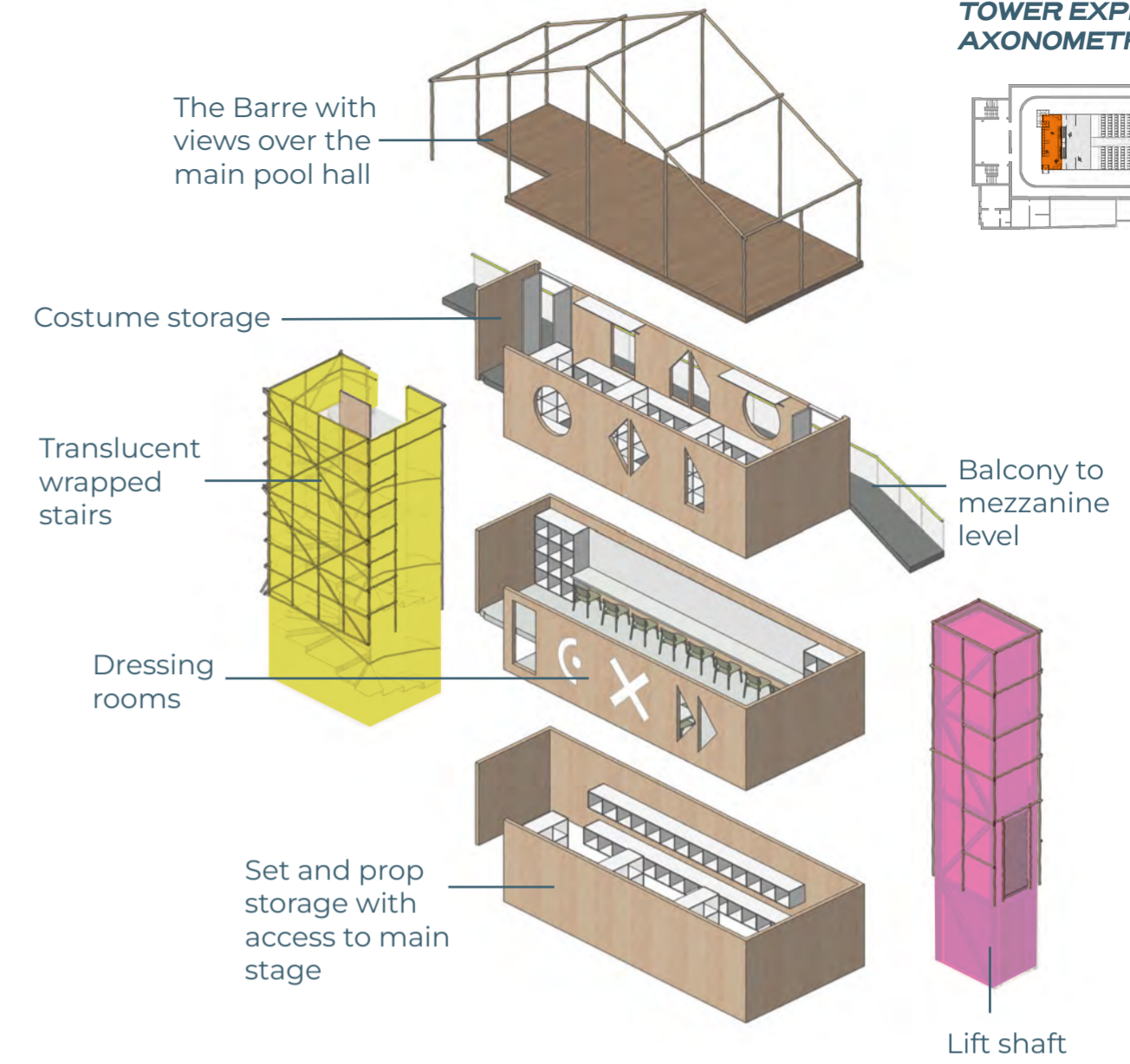
# backstage tower

**UNVEILING THE BEHIND THE SCENES OF BALLET.**

Translucent materials highlight the silhouettes of dancers backstage whilst respecting their modesty.



**BACKSTAGE TOWER EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC.**



- Bamboo frame
- The Barre seating overlooking the stage
- Stage backdrop
- Costume storage
- Concertina theatre
- Dressing rooms
- Translucent wrapped
- Set / prop storage
- Stage floor



The seating area for The Barre overlooks the practice areas adjoining the backstage tower. With the ballet gym also on display and visible from The Barre, ballet rehearsals which are often hidden from sight are now at the forefront.

# community graffiti

To create a welcoming environment for the Hackney community, graffiti will be used as a way for locals to 'make their mark' and feel represented.

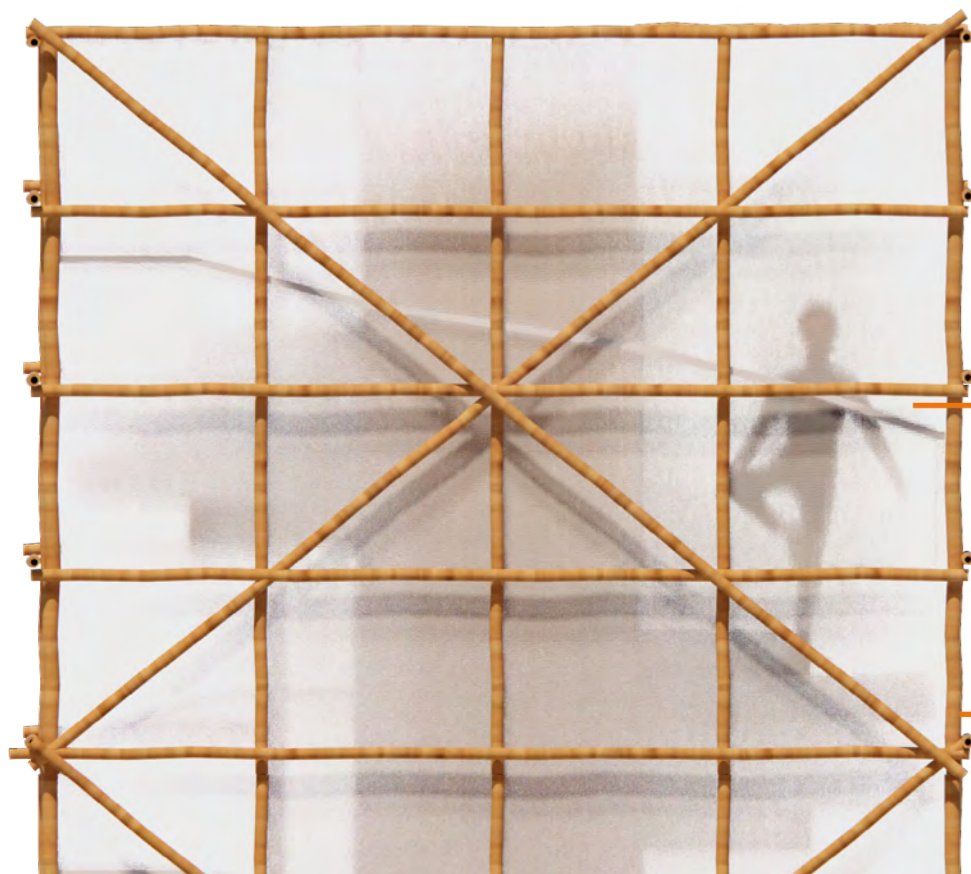
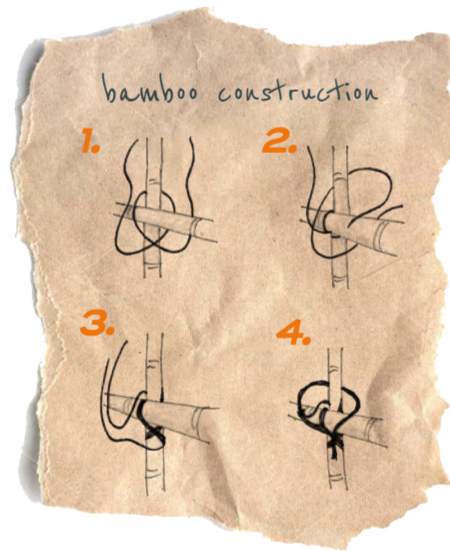
The facade of The Baths will feature inclusive graffiti messages and ballet dancers on the balcony which represent the diverse local community.



# materiality

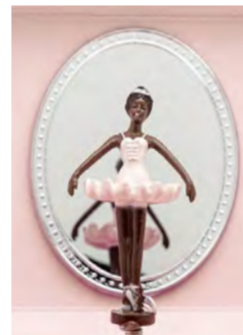
Translucent materials highlight silhouettes of the dancers backstage, revealing the often hidden side of ballet.

Functional, lightweight materials contrasting with the raw existing material quality of The Baths creates an unconventional, low-key and playful atmosphere to the theatre.



## DIVERSE MUSICAL BOX DANCERS

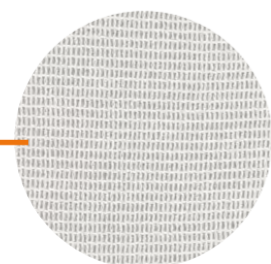
Members of the local community are represented on the Baths facade through cut-outs of diverse musical box dancers.



## KEY MATERIALS:



**MULTI-CULTURAL PATTERNS** - soft-furnishings are upholstered in multi-cultural fabrics representing the diverse ethnicities in Hackney



**THEATRE SCRIM FABRIC** - a translucent 100% linen material which shows silhouettes of dancers behind



**BAMBOO** - a frame of bamboo scaffolding that wraps around the staircase to support the translucent scrim fabric



## THE BALLET GYM ▶

Highlighting the benefits of ballet to be enjoyed in everyday life by everyday people. The gym extends out into the main pool hall so the gym goers are on display revealing a new type of ballet performance.



## THE BARRE ▶

Encouraging blokes and other unlikely ballet dancers to enjoy a casual combination of socialising and ballet.



## THE BOX OFFICE ▶

The entrance will provide a space to buy tickets for the theatre whilst also showcasing the diversity of the dancers with inclusive dance-wear..