

This student project has been nominated for the Interior Futures Award as it seeks to understand the core values, demands and needs of the professional dancer as an individual through proposing a new approach to designing spaces for dance. It is forward looking in material specification with flexibly sustainable space planning but also provides an approach to the design of each space as a 'place' to support the increasing understanding of the criticality of the health and wellbeing of a dancer within the 21st century whilst generating a stronger, more inclusive sense of community within the industry.

The student describes their project as, "aiming to elevate the status of dance in society by showcasing its profound impact on health and well-being. Recognising the challenges facing professional dance and the lack of funding and appreciation it receives, the DanceWorks mission is to inject higher value and recognition into the whole community and industry. DanceWorks is not just a dance centre –

it is an entire movement".



Survey

Analysis

This survey helped to identify the elements that were missing from existing dance venues and what was deemed as more adequate rehearsal, performance and rest spaces by the sector. I also explored opportunities for fostering a more inclusive sense of community within the dance industry. By incorporating the feedback obtained from the questionnaire, DanceWorks is able to be a space that was not only functional but also aesthetically pleasing and conducive to the physical and mental well-being of the dancers.

Summary and analysis of results
The survey was completed by a mix of industry professionals, aspiring professional. Affordability was the primary barrier to involvement in the industry for 38% of non-industry respondents, while 25% cited a lack of opportunities. All respondents agreed that dance has a positive impact on mental health and well-being. In terms of dance practices, 40% of dancers dance more than four times per week, while only 17% of industry professionals watch non-mainstream dance performances. A significant proportion of respondents (60%) reported inadequate dance practice spaces, and 60% were currently out of work due to the pandemic, with a corresponding lack of work and industry funding cuts affecting 60% of those surveyed. Respondents also highlighted the lack of support or training when they are out of work (50%), a perceived wealth bias in the industry (60%), and a lack of

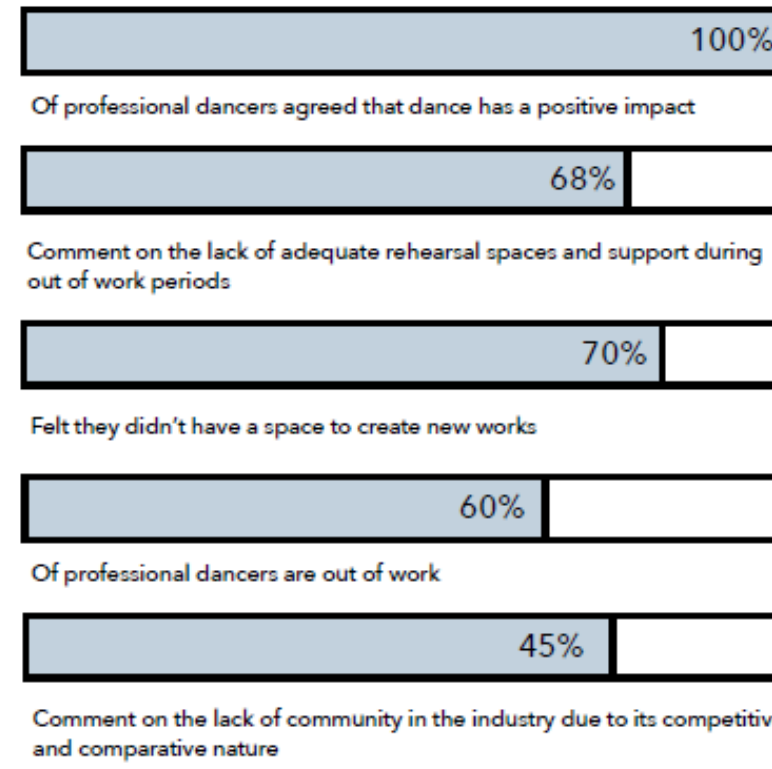
community within the sector (60%). Finally, 70% of respondents felt they did not have a space to create new works. Overall, the findings indicate some of the challenges faced by those involved in the dance industry and provide insights into areas that may require attention and improvement.

Design response:

In response to the information gathered in this survey, I am proposing a space that will be hireable to touring professional companies/practicing out of work industry professionals.

1. Fixing the challenges faced by the dance industry will require a multi-faceted approach, involving the collaboration of various stakeholders. Here are some potential solutions:
2. Increase funding for all the arts: Governments, foundations, and other organisations should increase funding for the arts, particularly for small and mid-sized dance companies and studios.
3. Expand access to affordable dance training: More scholarships and other financial assistance programs should be made available to aspiring dancers, particularly those from underrepresented communities.
4. Foster a sense of community: Dance companies, studios, and organisations should work to create a sense of community within the industry, through events, mentorship programs, and other initiatives.

Survey Findings



DanceWorks can contribute significantly to achieving UN goals by promoting gender equality, creating decent work opportunities, and reducing inequality through its programs and initiatives.



Ensure gender equality in all dance programs through equal opportunities and gender-sensitive policies. Train staff and dancers on gender equality through workshops to promote awareness and understanding.



Create decent work opportunities by hiring trained staff with fair wages. Offer freelance instructors space to teach and administrative support. Promote dance as an art form to contribute to economic growth and showcase local talent.



Reduce inequality by offering dance programs to underserved communities and marginalised groups. Partner with local organisations and offer financial aid to low-income participants to ensure accessibility.

Dancer health

A holistic approach

Dance is a high intensity sport that puts a lot of strain on a dancers mental and physical health, therefore dancers must prioritise the following:

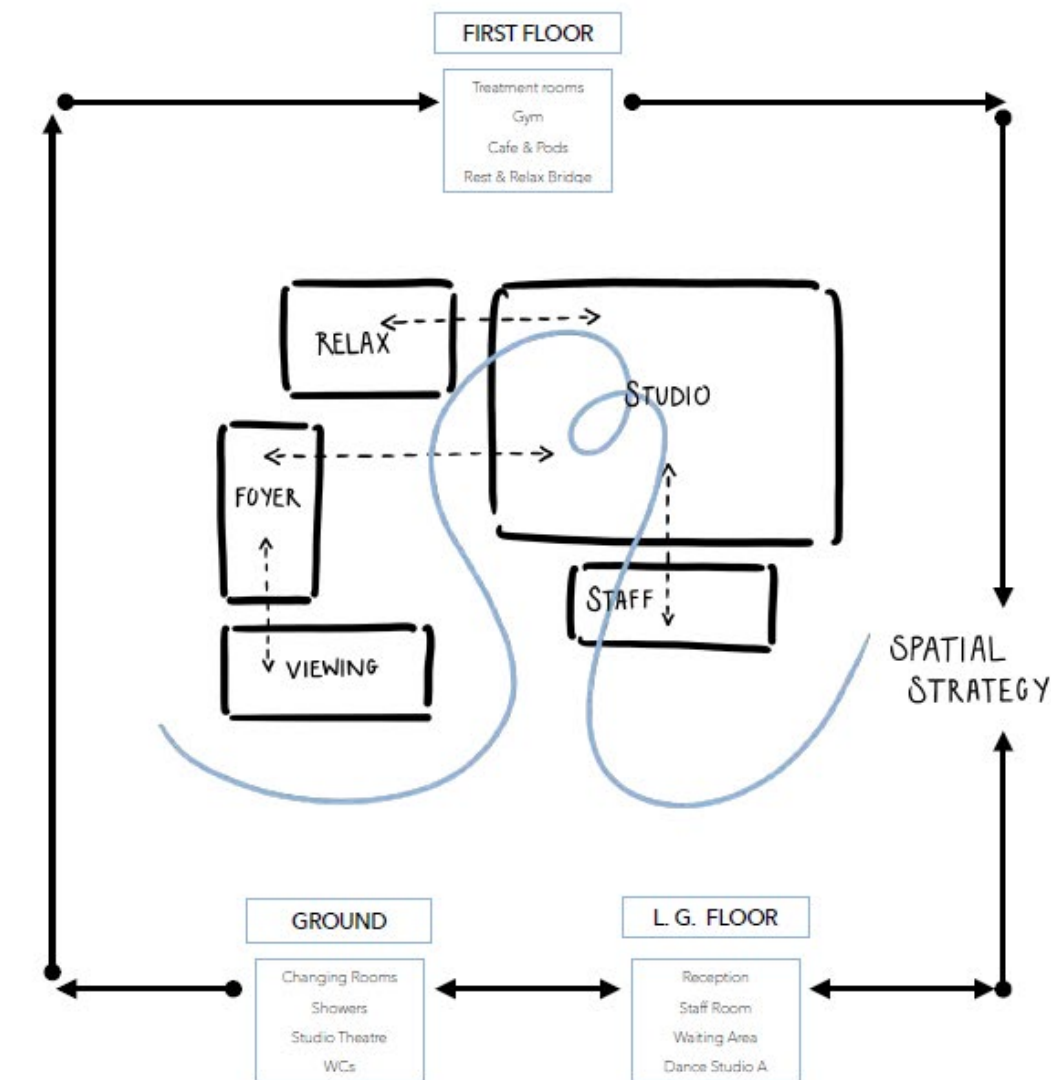
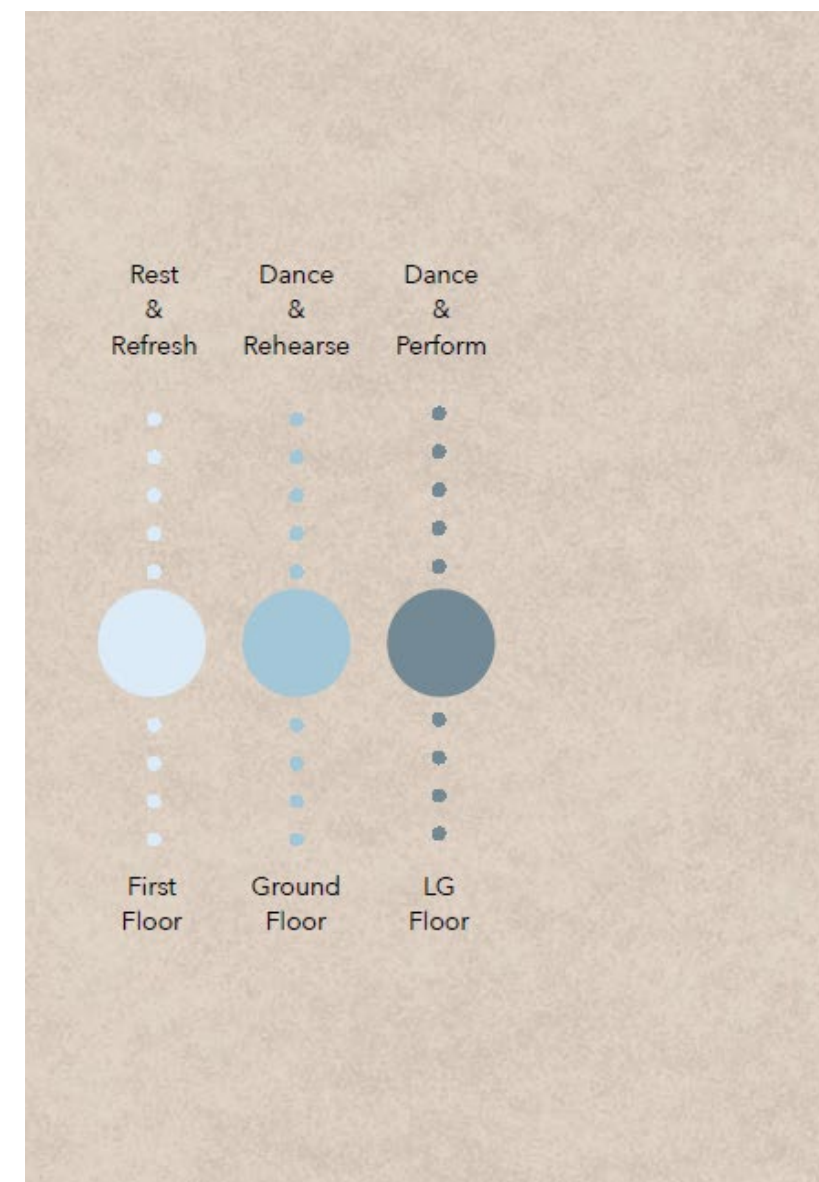
Proper nutrition: Dancers require a balanced diet that provides them with the necessary nutrients, vitamins, and minerals to support their physical demands.

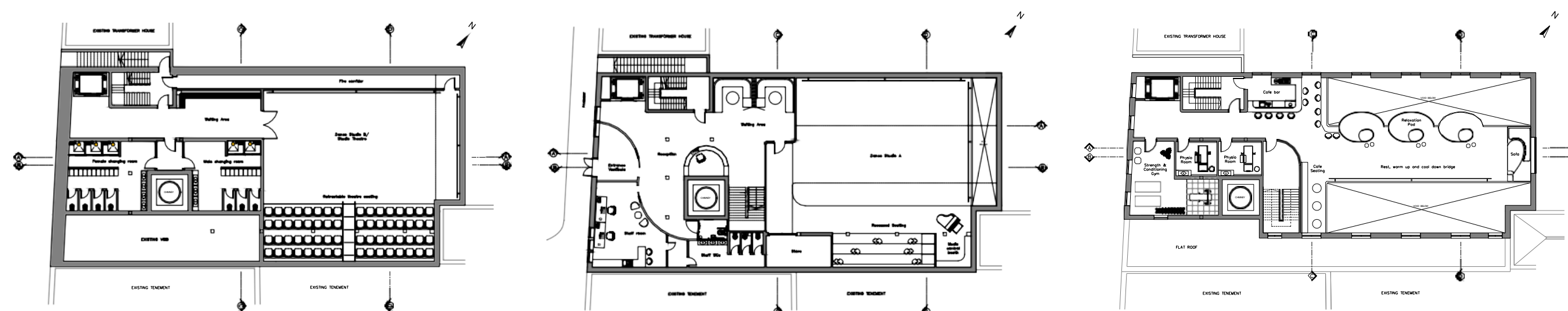
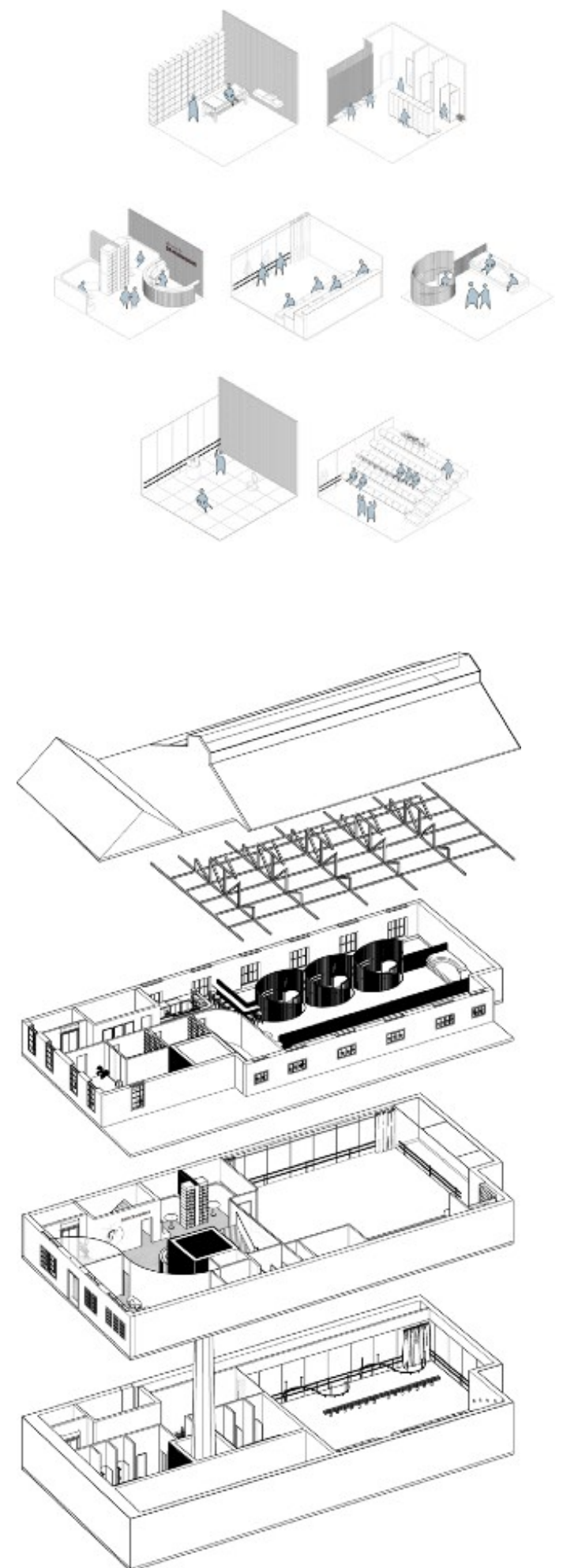
Adequate rest and recovery: Dancers should ensure they get enough rest to allow their bodies to recover after intense rehearsals or performances.

Cross-training and injury prevention: Dancers should engage in cross-training activities such as strength training, Pilates, or yoga to build strength and prevent injuries.

Proper warm-up and cool-down: Dancers should always warm up and cool down before and after rehearsals and performances to avoid injuries and maintain flexibility.

Mental wellness: Dancers should focus on their mental wellness by practicing mindfulness, meditation, or seeking support from a mental health professional when needed.

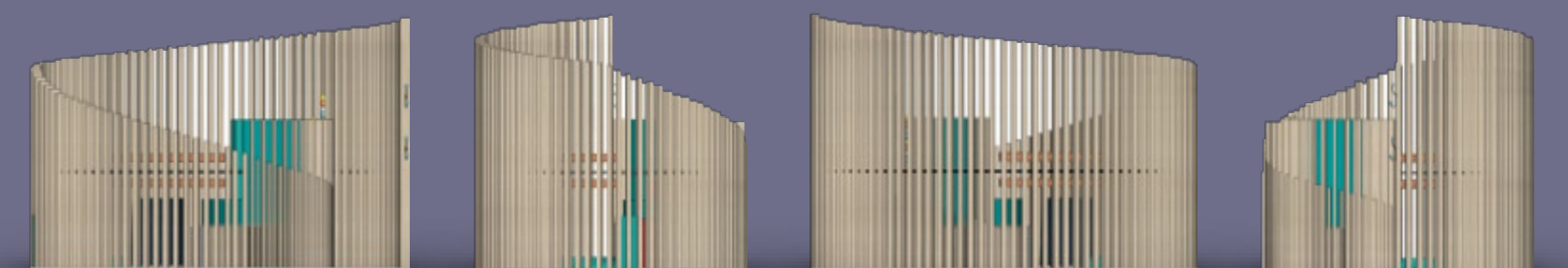




A redesign and repurpose project transforming a former historic public wash house in Edinburgh into a new dance centre for professional dancers. With a focus on the journey of a dancer from rehearsal, to health right through to performance.



DanceWorks is more than just a dance centre - it is a visionary project that seeks to revolutionise the dance industry by prioritising the holistic development of professional and semi professional dancers. Our innovative approach will provide much-needed rehearsal and conditioning spaces for the city, whilst generating a stronger, more inclusive sense of community within the industry. A key feature of this project was the detailing of three 'relaxation pods', cantilevered off a bridge stretching through the double height space below.



Designed for dancers to stretch, warm up/ cool down, relax and rest in

