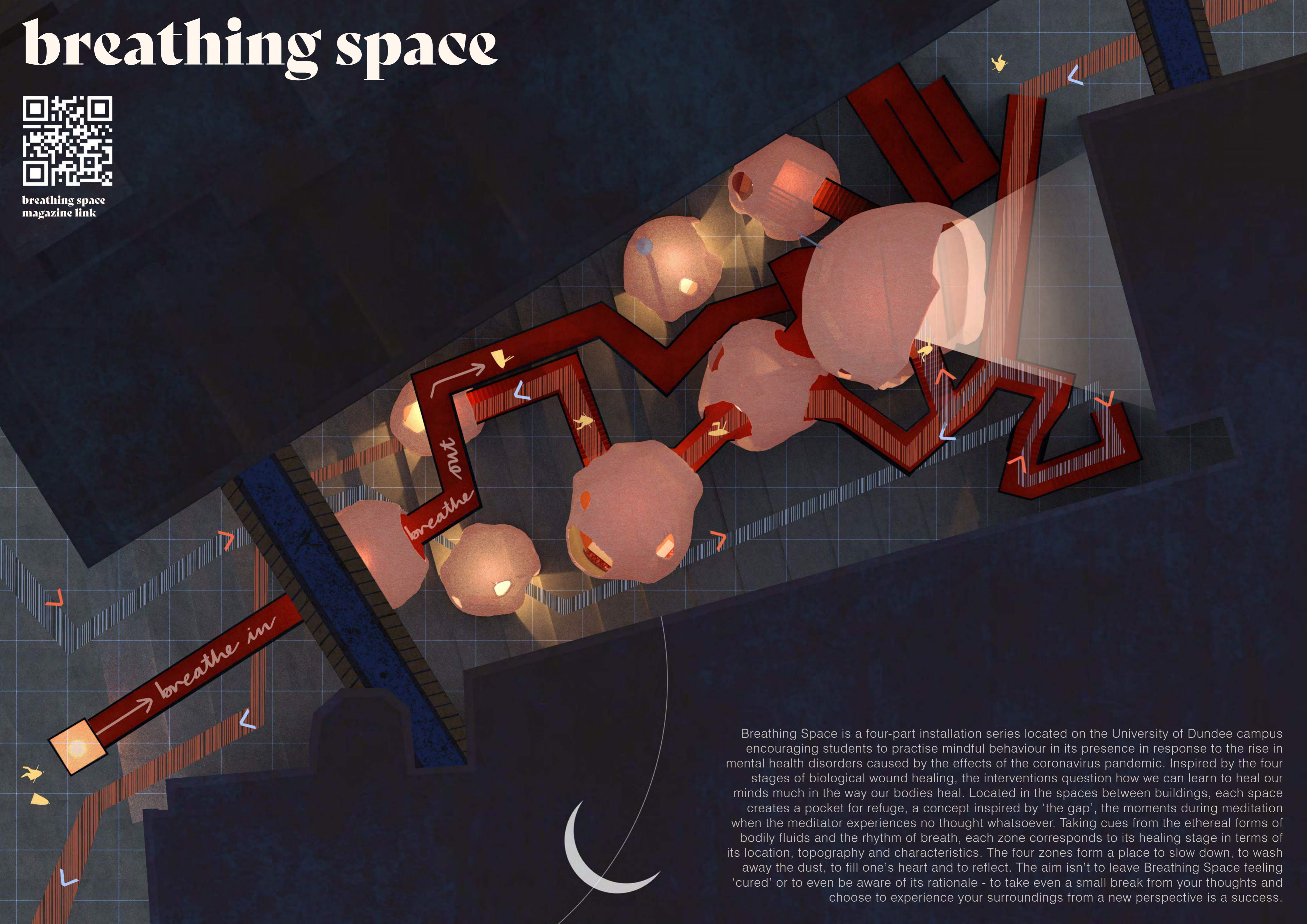


breathing space



breathing space
magazine link



Breathing Space is a four-part installation series located on the University of Dundee campus encouraging students to practise mindful behaviour in its presence in response to the rise in mental health disorders caused by the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Inspired by the four stages of biological wound healing, the interventions question how we can learn to heal our minds much in the way our bodies heal. Located in the spaces between buildings, each space creates a pocket for refuge, a concept inspired by 'the gap', the moments during meditation when the meditator experiences no thought whatsoever. Taking cues from the ethereal forms of bodily fluids and the rhythm of breath, each zone corresponds to its healing stage in terms of its location, topography and characteristics. The four zones form a place to slow down, to wash away the dust, to fill one's heart and to reflect. The aim isn't to leave Breathing Space feeling 'cured' or to even be aware of its rationale - to take even a small break from your thoughts and choose to experience your surroundings from a new perspective is a success.

the issue

67% of young people (aged 13-25) believe that the pandemic will have a long-term negative effect on their mental health.

how old are you?

aged 21 - 29

18-20

does hygiene-related impact the time you spend with others?

no

yes

is this ↑ experience new to you?

no

yes

does breath focus meditation calm you?

no

yes

I don't know

I've not tried it

Chart of the week: Lockdown loneliness and anxiety across the generations

People aged 18-24 reported worse mental health and wellbeing during the 2020 UK lockdown.

Nearly three quarters (73%) of students said that their mental health declined during the lockdown.

COVID's mental-health toll: how scientists are tracking a surge in depression

Pandemic's mental health burden heaviest among young adults

Has the pandemic really caused a 'tsunami' of mental health problems?

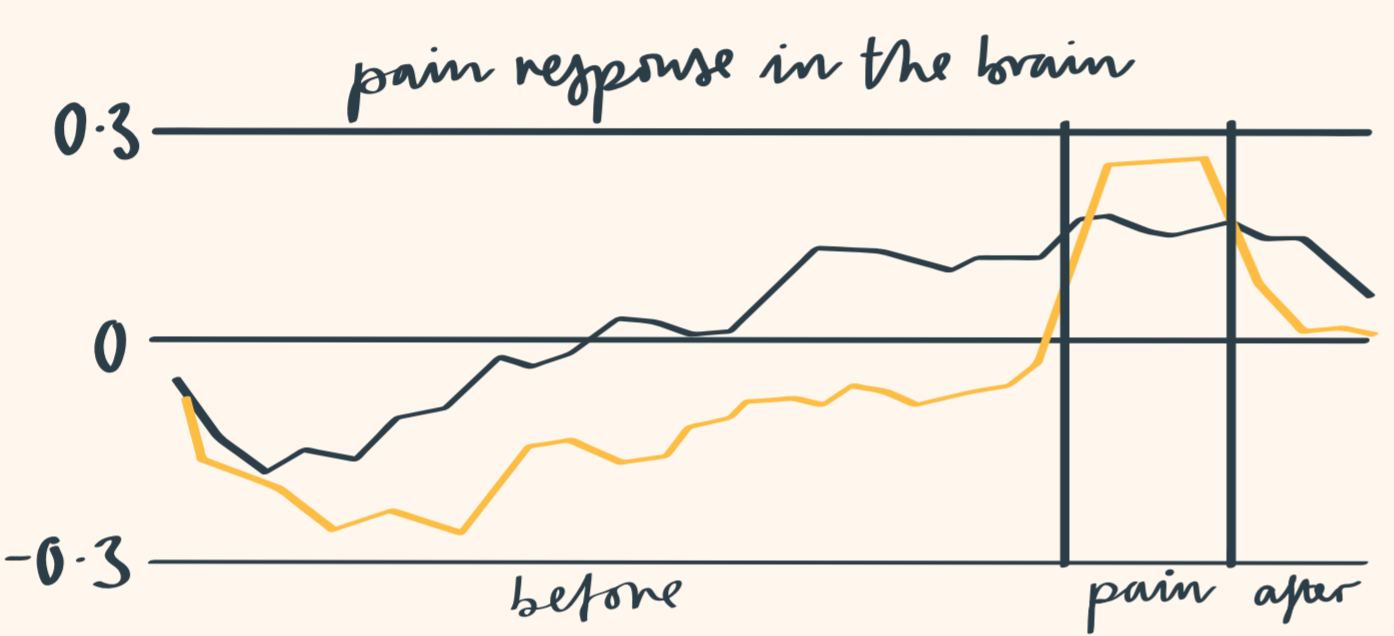
University students at significant risk for mental health effects of COVID-19 lockdown

I was just so lonely: students on mental health impact of Covid

Shedding light on anxiety amongst students

the solution

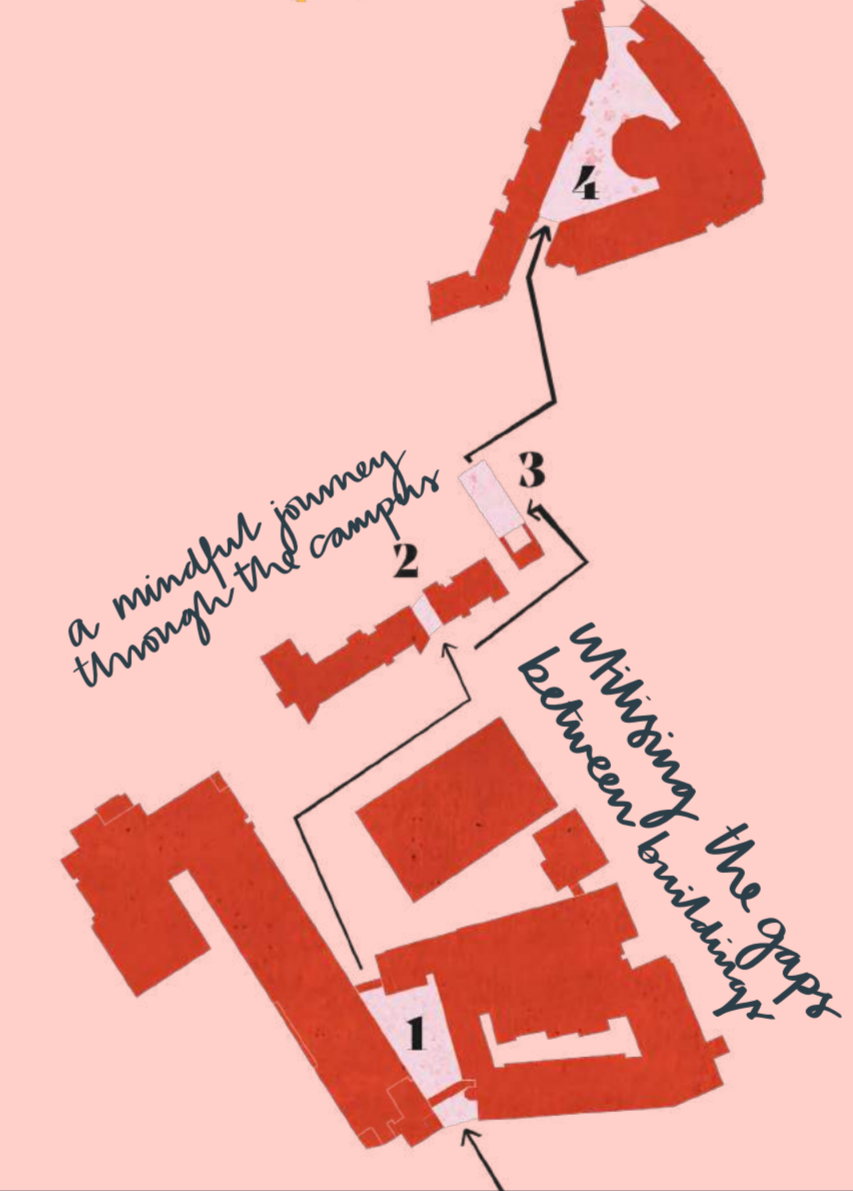
'The gap' is moment between thoughts one can experience whilst meditating. Taking inspiration from this concept, the installations take place in the gaps between buildings allowing for breakout areas away from the rush of everyday life.



RESEARCH

the four sites

The University of Dundee

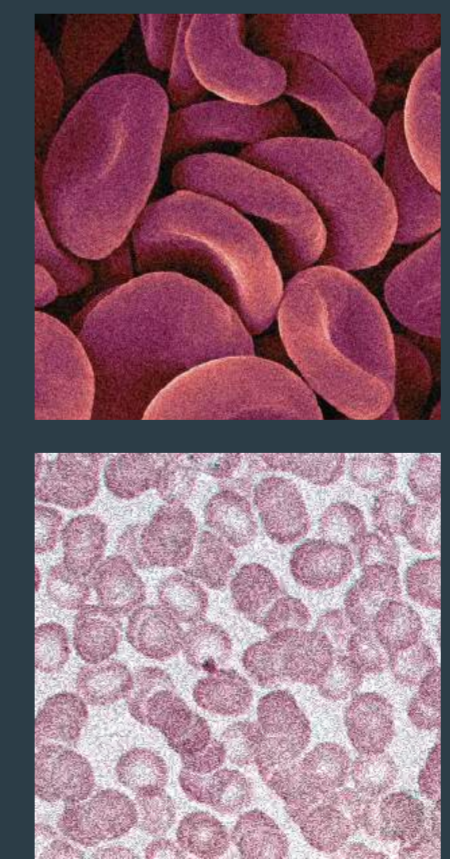


biological influences

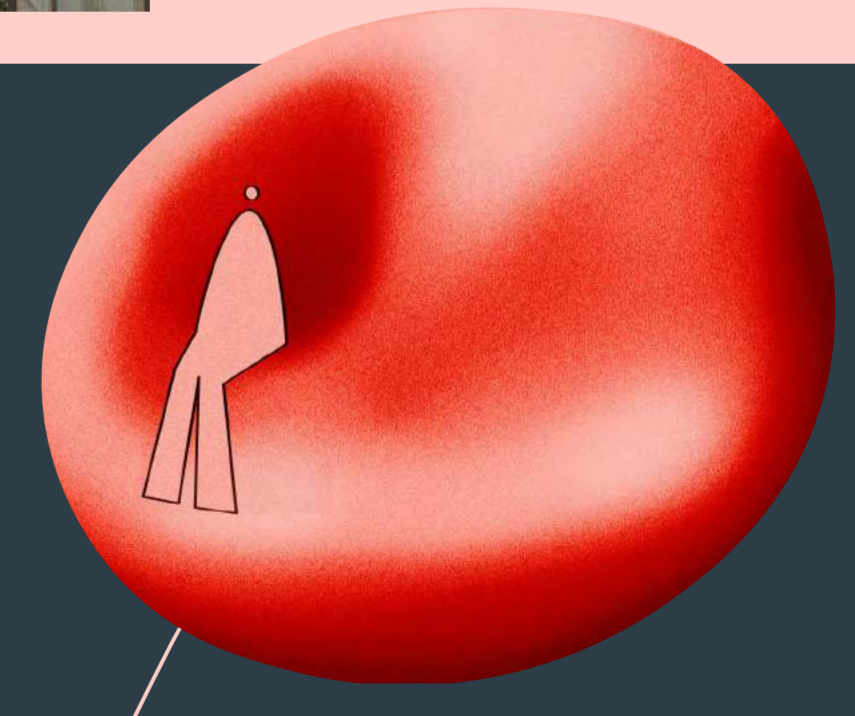
the four stages of wound healing



"learning to heal our minds in the same way our bodies heal themselves"



red blood cell structures

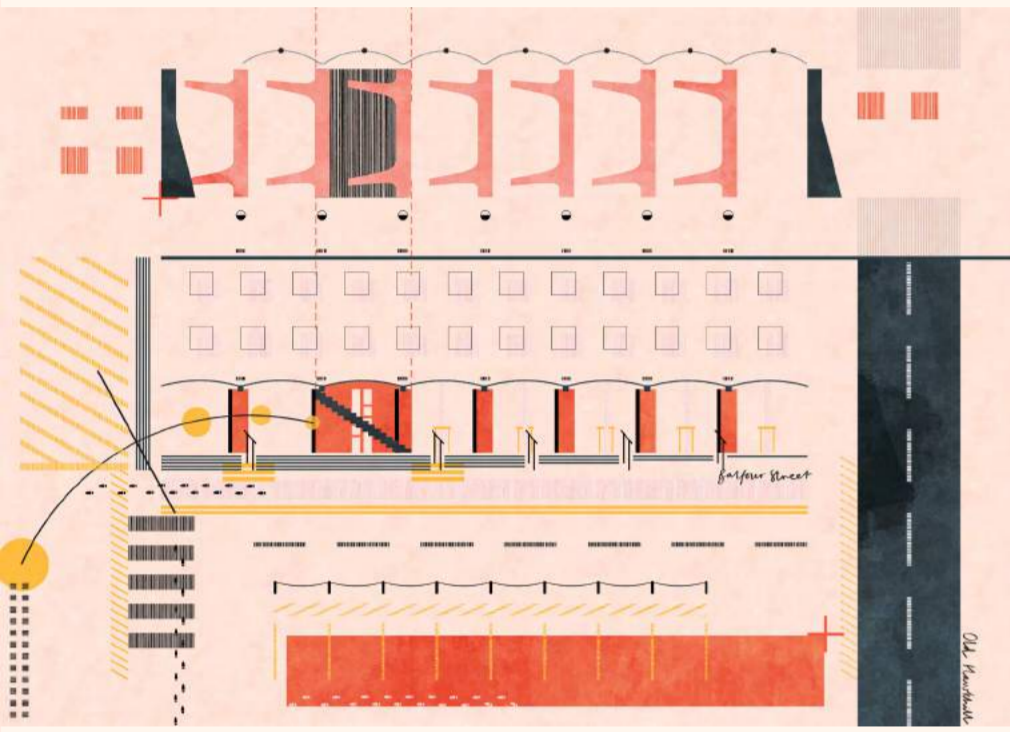


Whilst blood is inherently repulsive to many people, biology textbook images of red blood cells have a playful charm to them, their appearance soft and squashy like a red lilo or deflated beach ball. By harnessing this jovial aesthetic, the installation would become a path to conscious awareness of the body in a way that would disgust or scare, but instead spark joy.



1

3

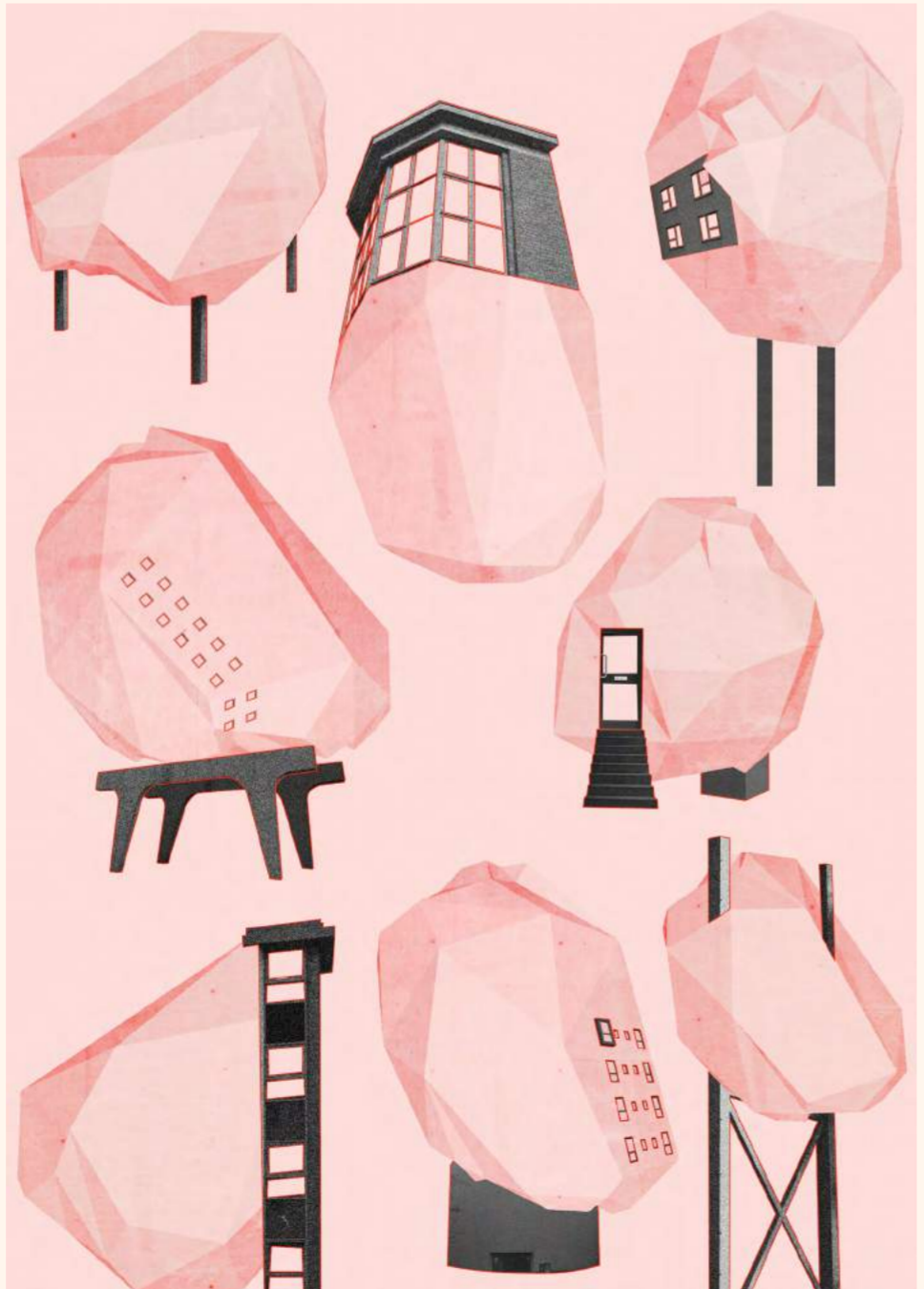
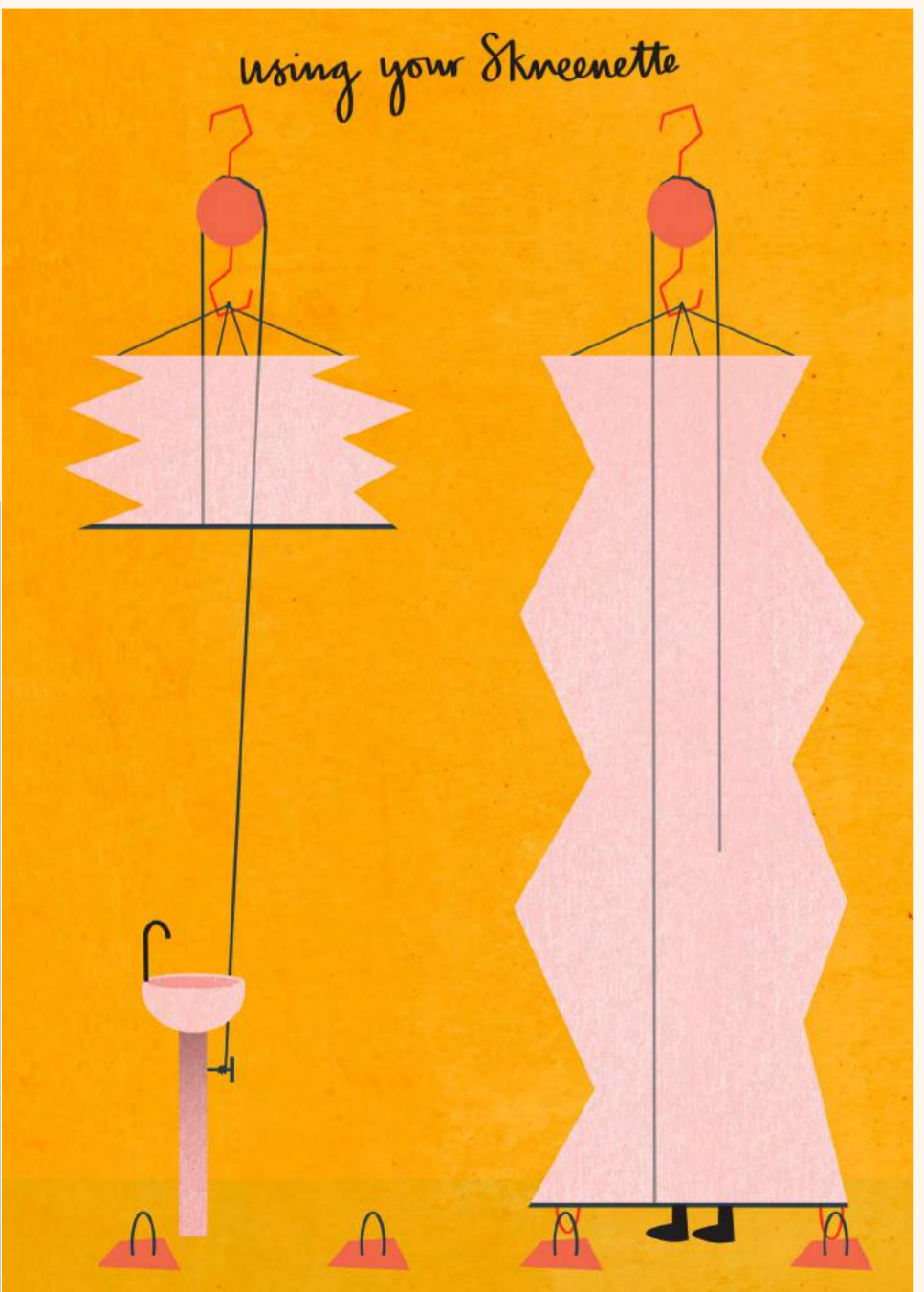
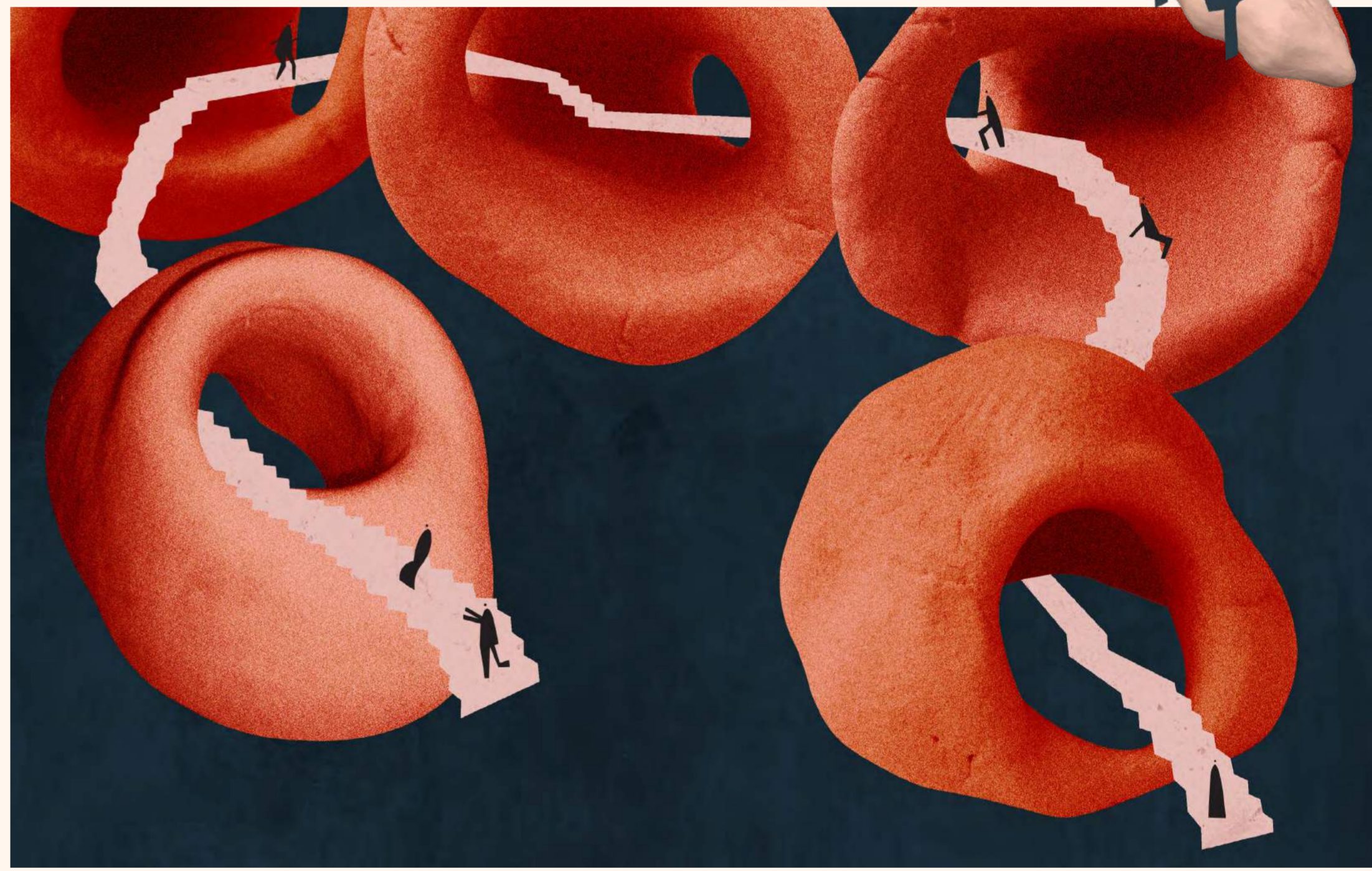


4

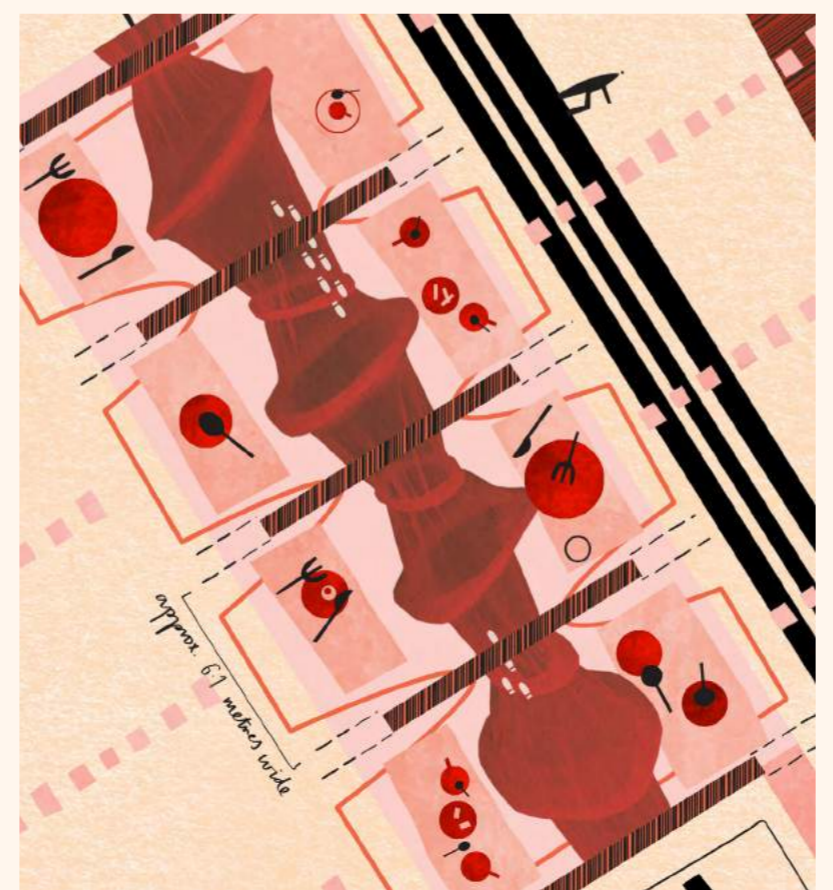
experimenting with clay and mark making to encourage user input

site rhythm mapping and mark making

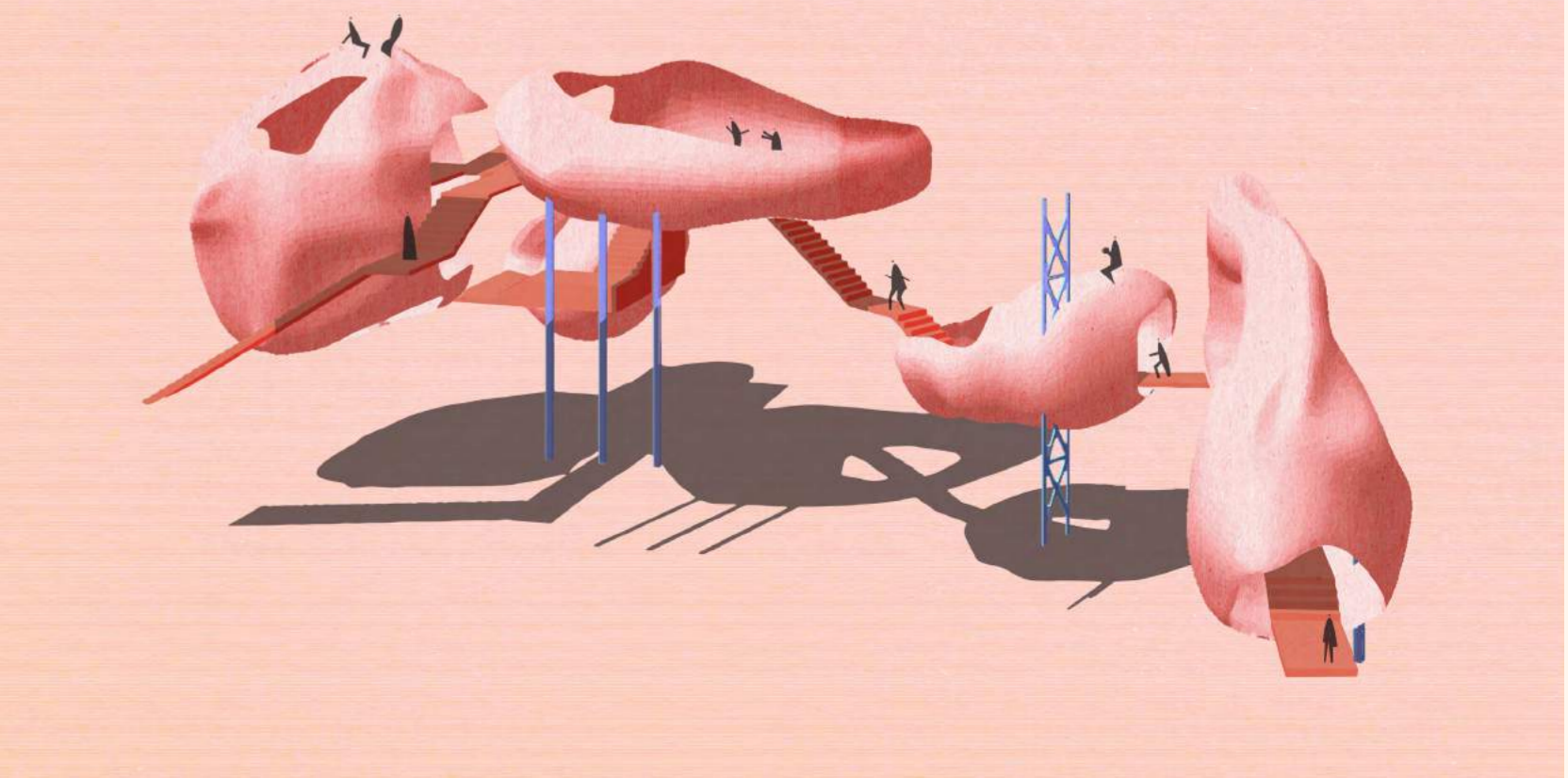
DEVELOPMENT



collaging models and graphics



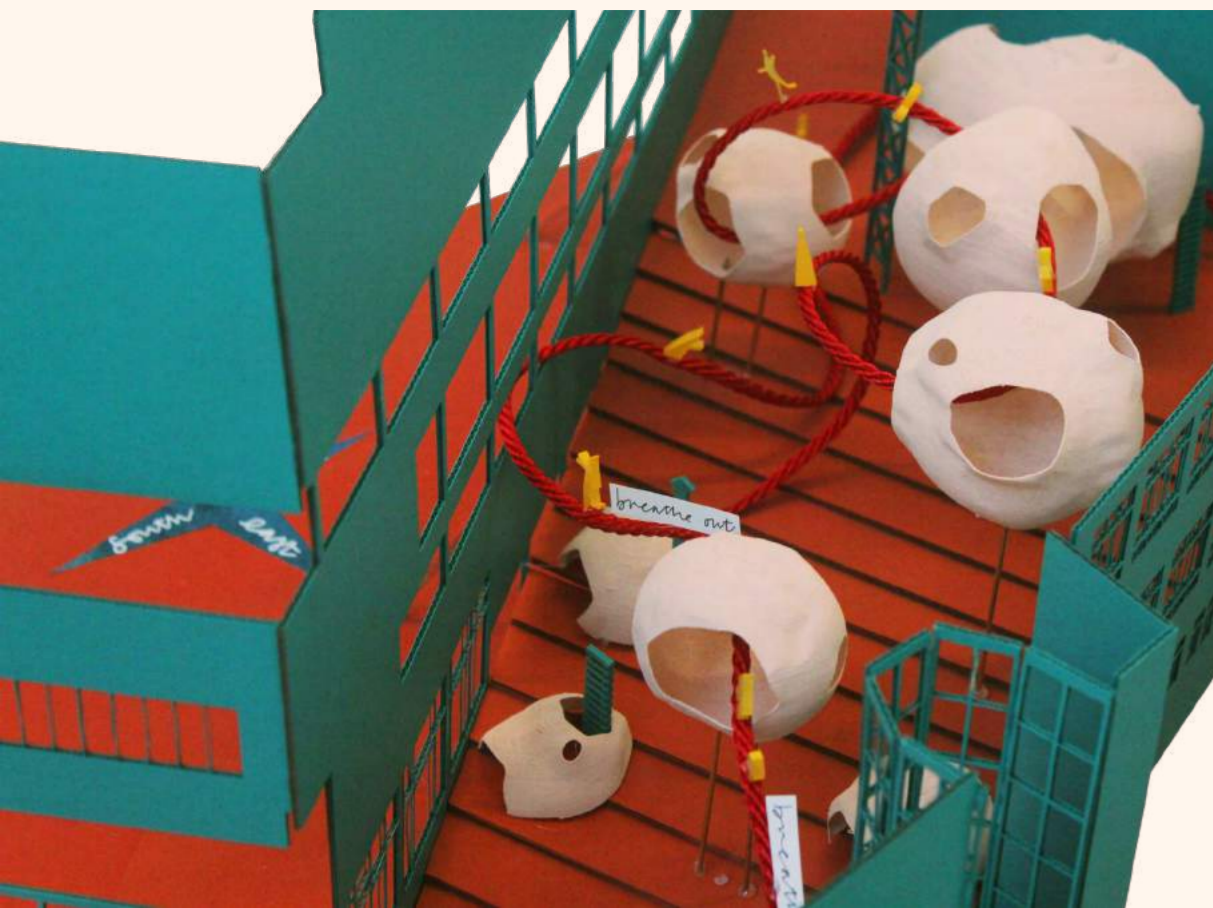
first site initial design



developing interactions : site 2

utilising pre-existing site features to draw connections between site and installation

FINAL PROPOSAL



plan view



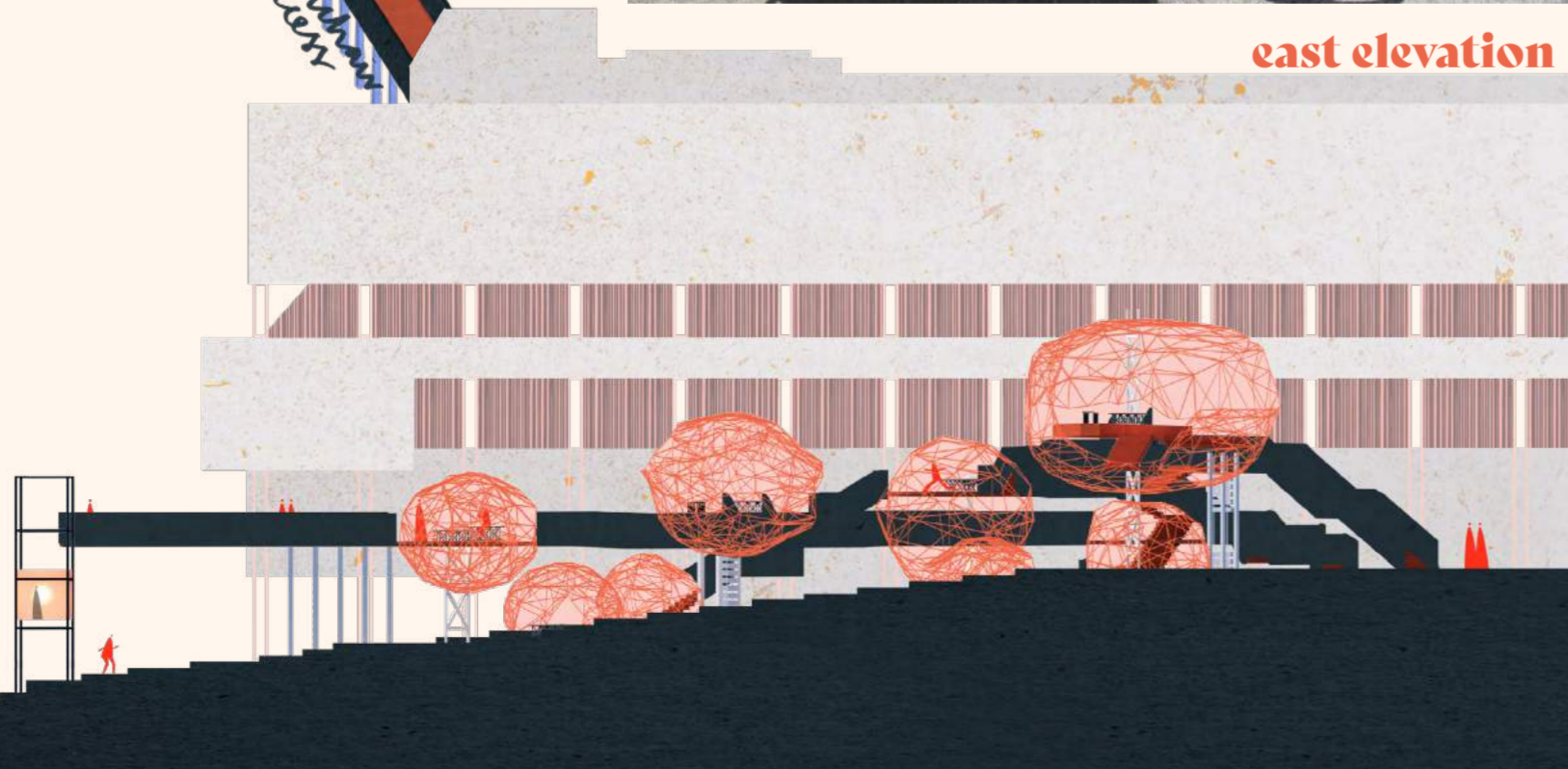
axonometric view



east elevation

the capillaries

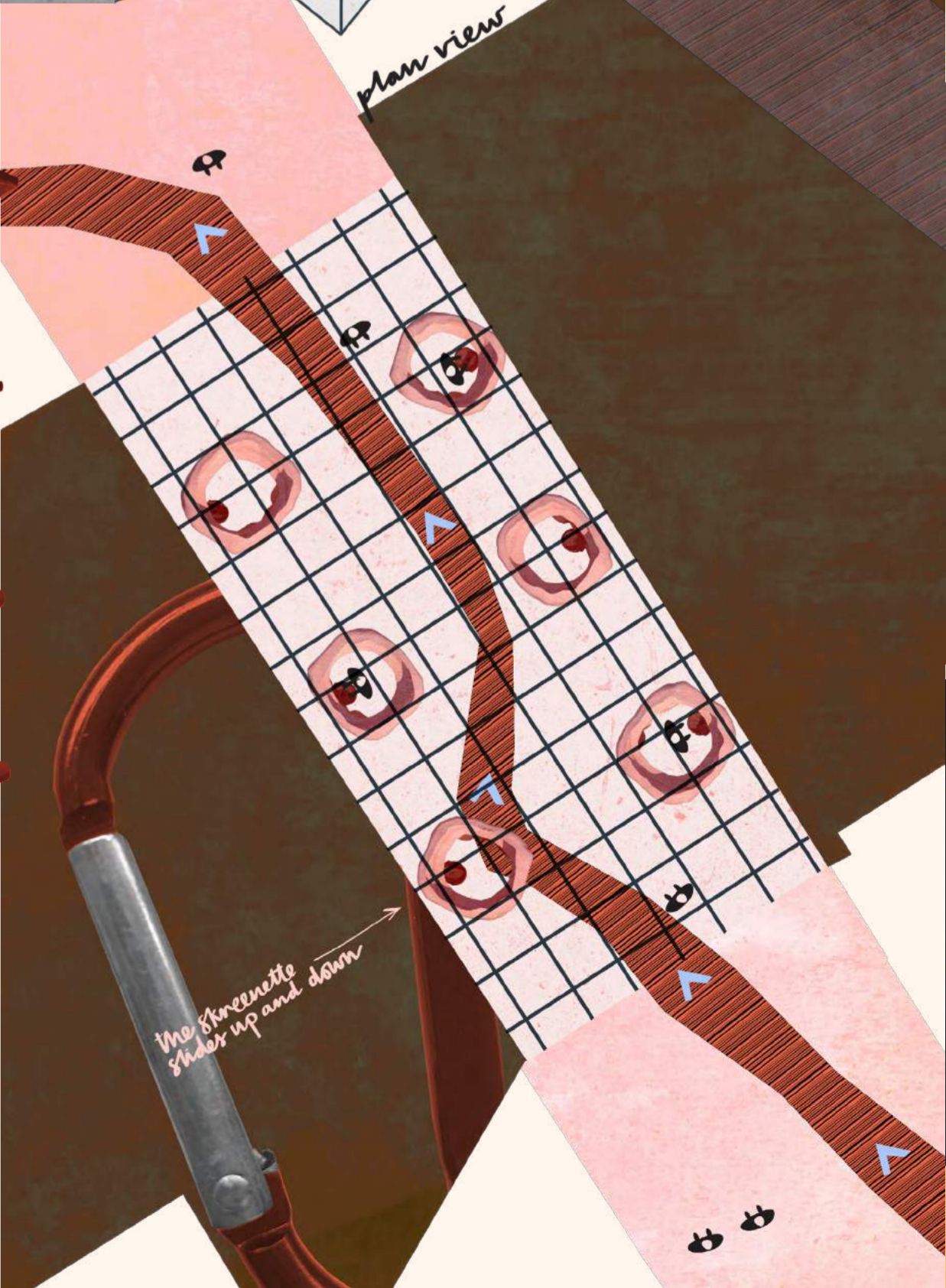
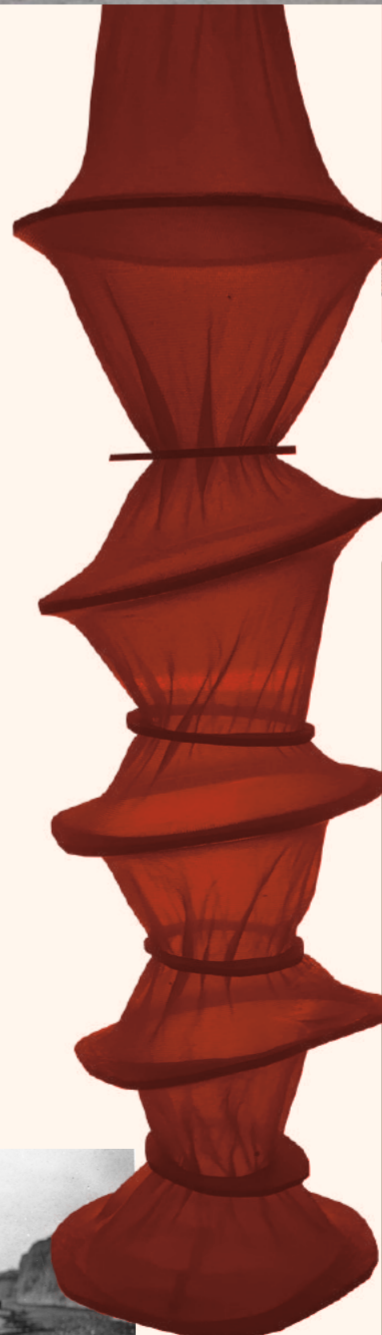
Site 1 takes place between DJCAD buildings the Matthew Building and the Crawford Building. The space consists of 8 pods inspired by red blood cells with two walkways winding through them to allow for travel from one end of the hill to the other. Large concrete steps beneath offer a smooth incline to the top or alternatively a lift is available and suitable for disabled access, leading to a ramp at the top of the hill. As the first phase of healing, hemostasis, the blood flow, or rather the flow of people, is slowed by the natural incline of the route. Capillary action is one of the only ways in which liquid can travel against gravity, something that gave site 1 its name The Capillaries. Each walkway - or capillary - sucks the visitor up and into the blobs.



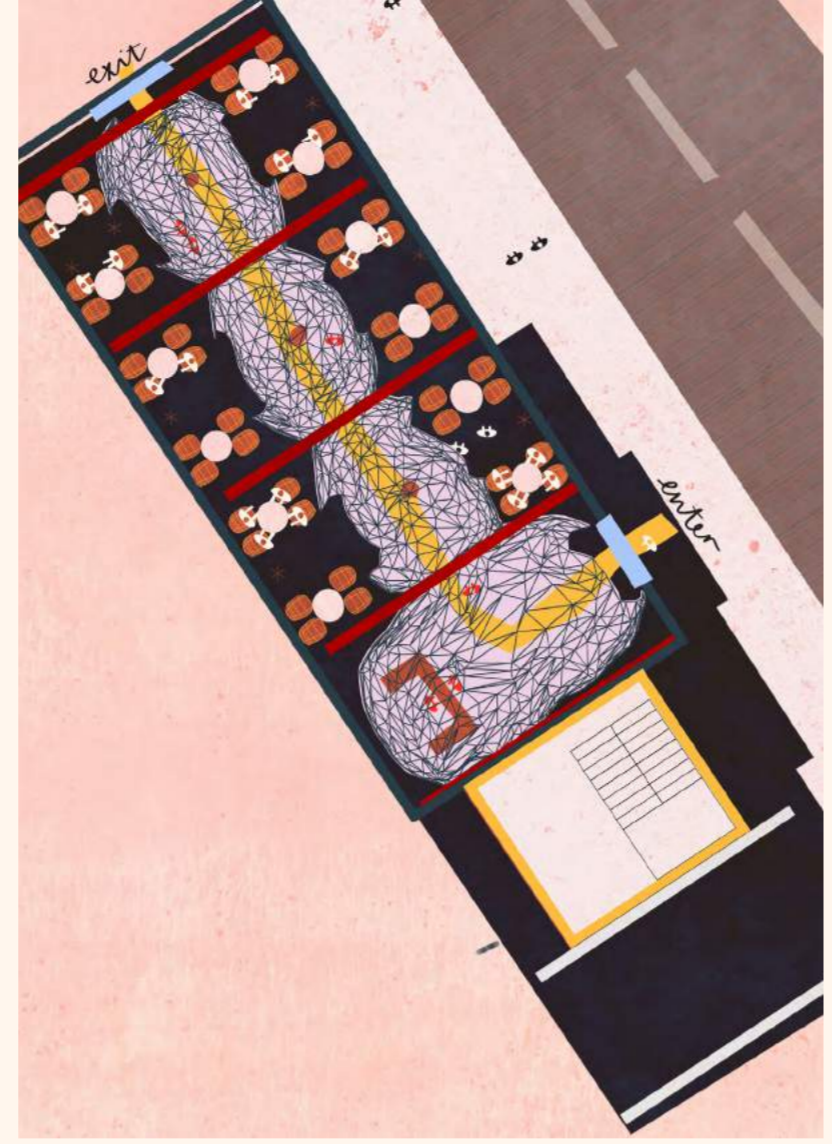
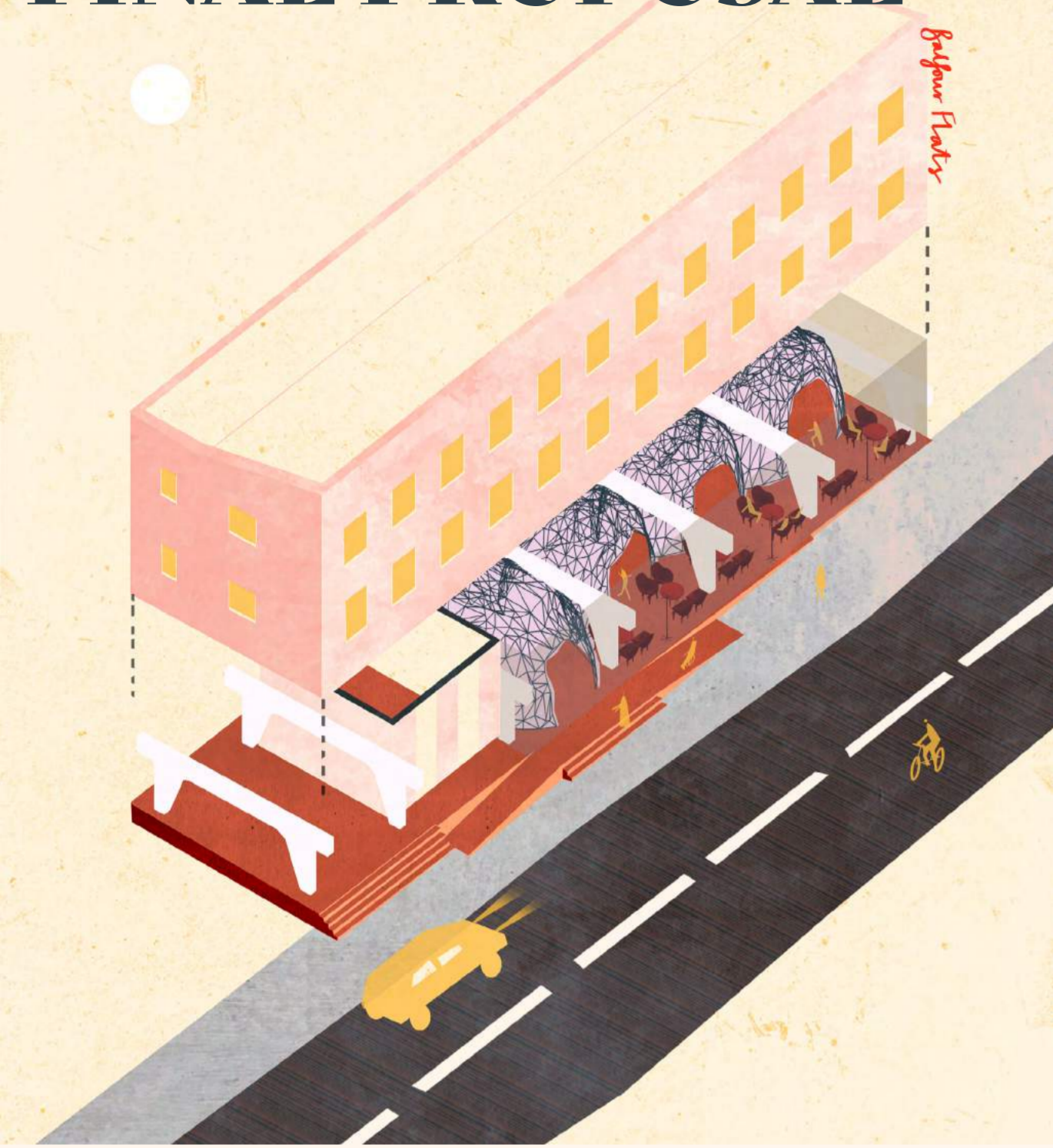
plan view

the skreenettes

The second of the four sites, The Skreenettes, was inspired by vintage changing cubicles of the same name, little tents designed for the beach that were used in the 1920s. As part of the defensive phase of the healing process, six 2 metre distanced sinks sit beneath the alleyway under Belmont flats providing a space for sanitisation for students so as to encourage COVID safety. Optionally, an opaque film cubicle can be lowered over each sink to facilitate a moment of privacy for the visitor. In the same way one may use the toilet for its privacy to have a cry, The Skreenettes provide an enclosed space of comfort when one may require it.

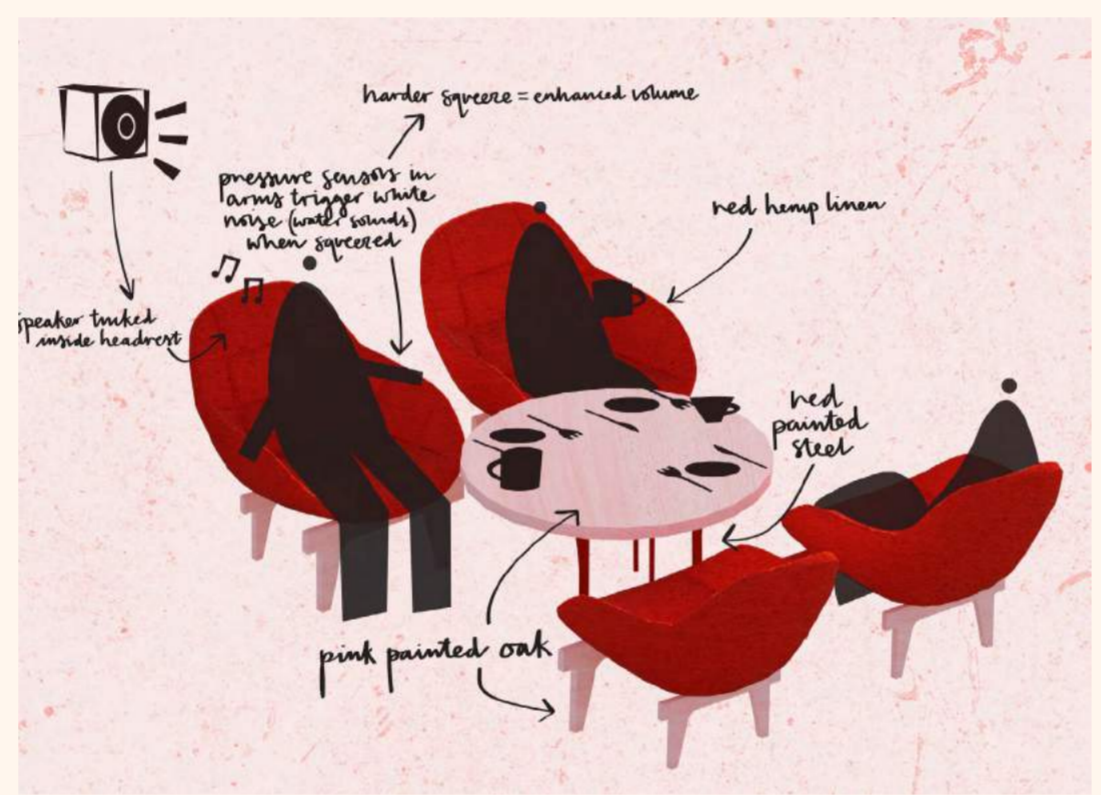


FINAL PROPOSAL



the pond

'The Pond', floods the gap between the Dalhousie Building and Heathfield Flats with water. As a space designed to encourage reflection, it is occupied by 21 pods. The Pond is a place for comfort and consolation, to be visited alone or with others. Each pod is distanced 2 metres from the next to allow for COVID-safe socialisation, reducing potential anxiety between friends who are concerned about transmitting the virus. Water acts as a representation of saliva for its natural healing properties. The walls of the pond are reminiscent of the forms seen in saliva. The wall inclines to the north, following the hill and allowing for the maturation phase through the means of an easier walk off the campus.



the squeezebox

Site 3 'The Squeezebox' is an on-campus cafe open 24 hours a day. The space provides somewhere to fill the wound, much like the proliferative phase, though instead you may choose to fill a mug and in turn fill your heart. Inspired by an accordion, the Squeezebox tent squashes itself beneath the beams of Balfour Flats, covered in translucent pink linen for partial seclusion. Each table is socially distanced and provides privacy for conversations.

The Squeezebox aims to raise awareness of misophonia, a mental health disorder in which certain sounds can trigger negative emotional or physiological reactions. Eating sounds can do this, so to combat the issue the space features chairs with pressure sensors in the arms - the harder they are squeezed, the louder the headrest speaker emits white noise, thus creating a form of stress-ball furniture.

