

ROOTS

Located in the Art Deco Albany Theatre in Coventry, ROOTS can be a library, a sensory museum, a lecture or concert hall, an escape... All in all it is a place shaped by people, an educational centre that focuses on raising awareness about sustainability and environmental issues by reconnecting people with nature in an inclusive, immersive and empowering way. It aims to challenge the idea of the “21st Century Library” that balances both digital and analog learning methodologies and creates a centre of ever-expanding knowledge presented in an ever-changing environment.

Based on Cedric Price’s concept of flexibility (Fun Palace), ROOTS is a reaction to the rigidity of the urban landscape as opposed to the natural environment which reacts and is malleable around the presence of people, making an interior space closer to what one would experience in a journey in the wilderness. The library offers the users control over their surroundings, resulting in a human-centric design, responsive to visitors’ needs and the activities intended to take place. Therefore, ROOTS is a space shaped by its inhabitants.

CHAPTER 1 - “FORM FOLLOWS FICTION” [THE JOURNEY BEGINS]

No.1 A Walk in the Woods
[linocut print]



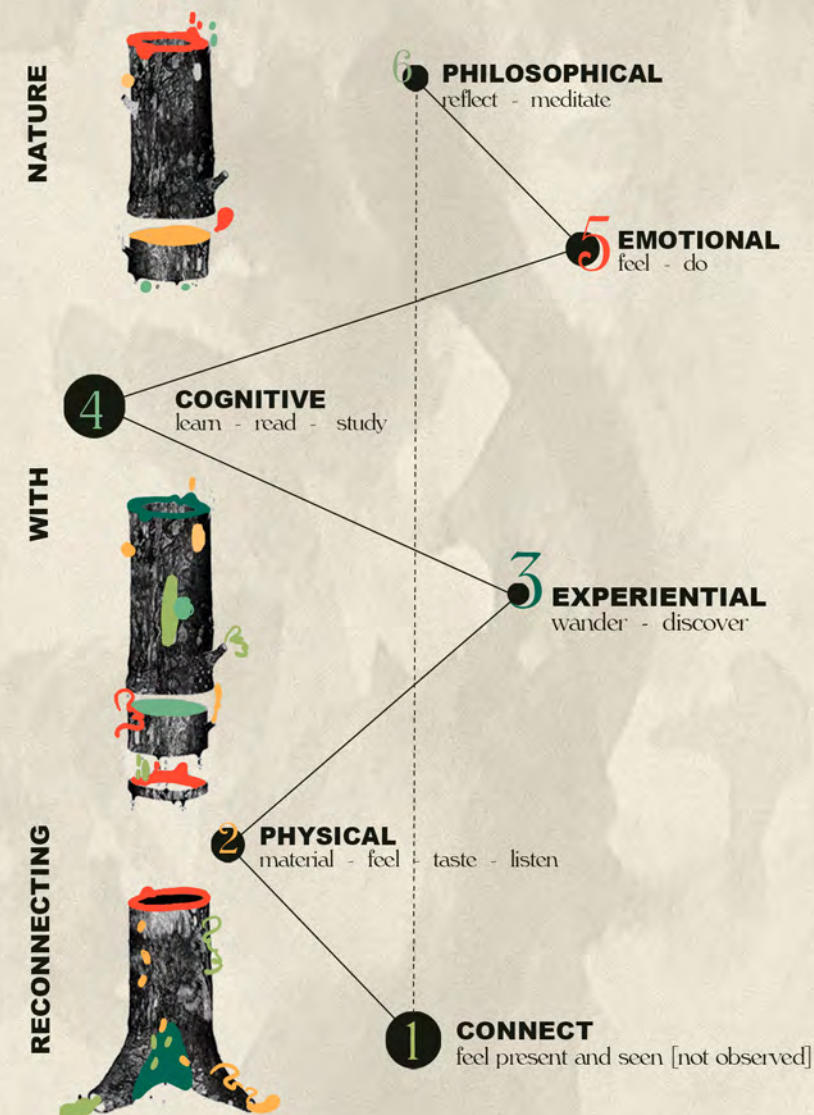
The storyline follows a metaphorical journey into the woods that provokes curiosity, thoughts, ideas and mimics (biomimicry) certain aspects from reality in order to create a subtle sensorial experience that immerses the user in the space.

No.2 Analysing the Narrative
[charcoal study]



The walk in wilderness influences the design choices in terms of recreating the change in atmosphere, colour & lighting, density and circulation in every step of the way, adding sensorial depth to the user journey through space.

No.3 Psychological Steps
[research]



In order to create an interest and raise awareness about environmental issues people must firstly reconnect with nature following these 6 steps which determined the use of each space by determining people’s needs to fulfill each step.

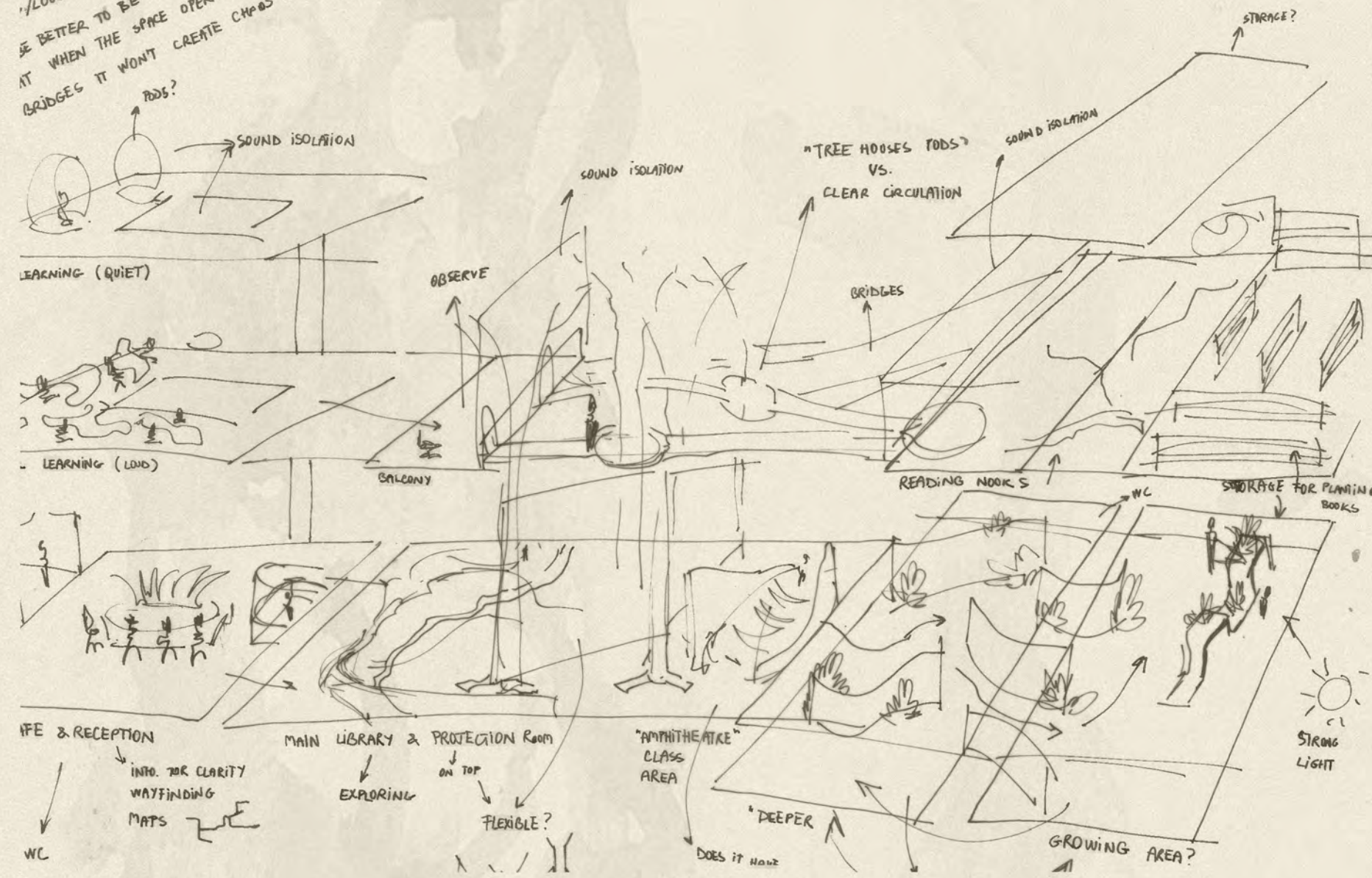
No.4 Transformative User Journey
[fineliner storyboard illustration]



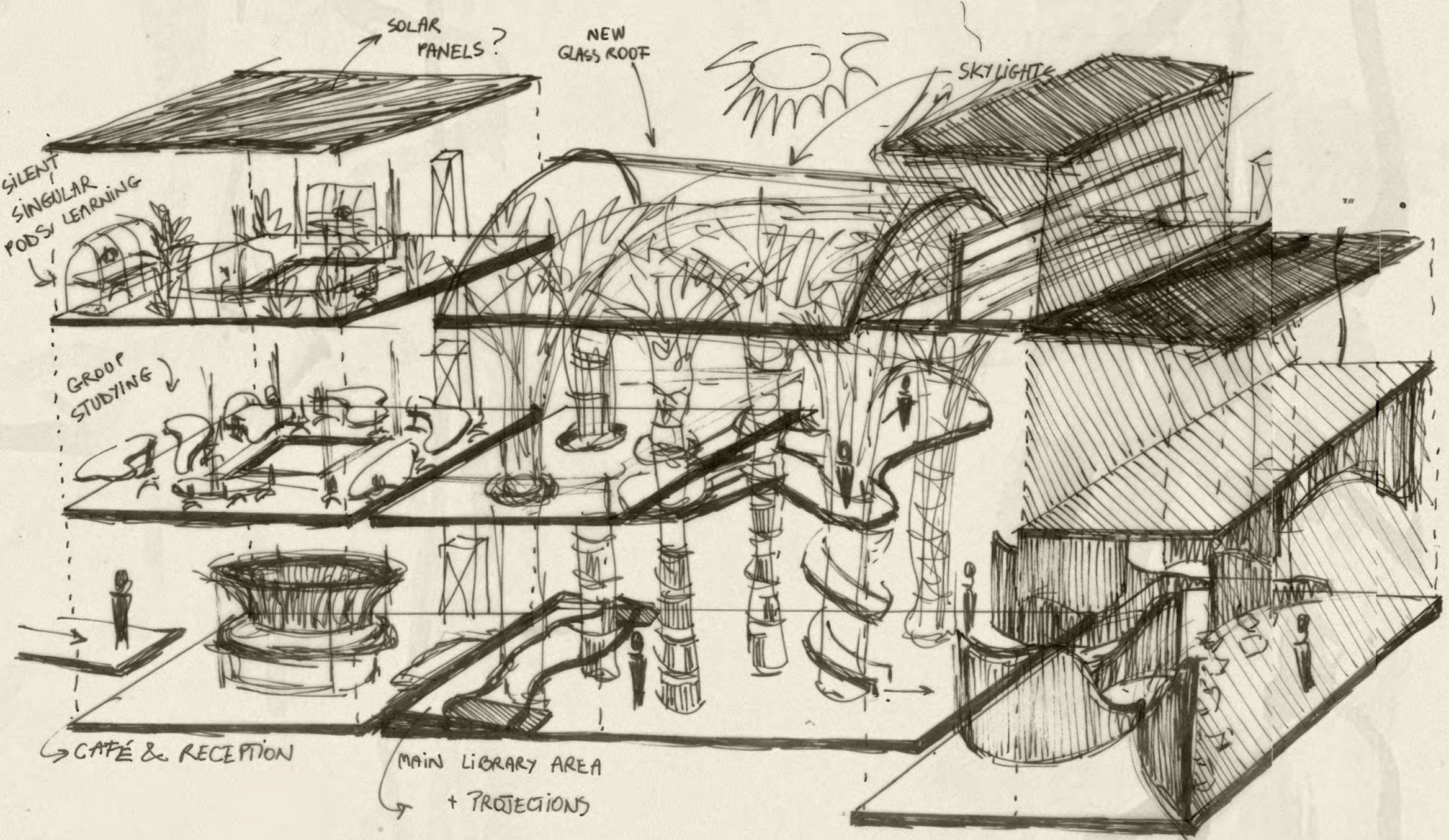
In literature, this journey is symbolically transformative for the character taking it, filled with tasks, adventures and magic. In this particular narrative, the user immerses themselves into the space, being guided by their curiosity. They follow the library’s curved paths exploring in depth the ever-changing volumes of the space, they follow the light and the shadows it creates and so on. Each journey of “going back to one’s roots” is different.

CHAPTER 2 - EXPLORATION

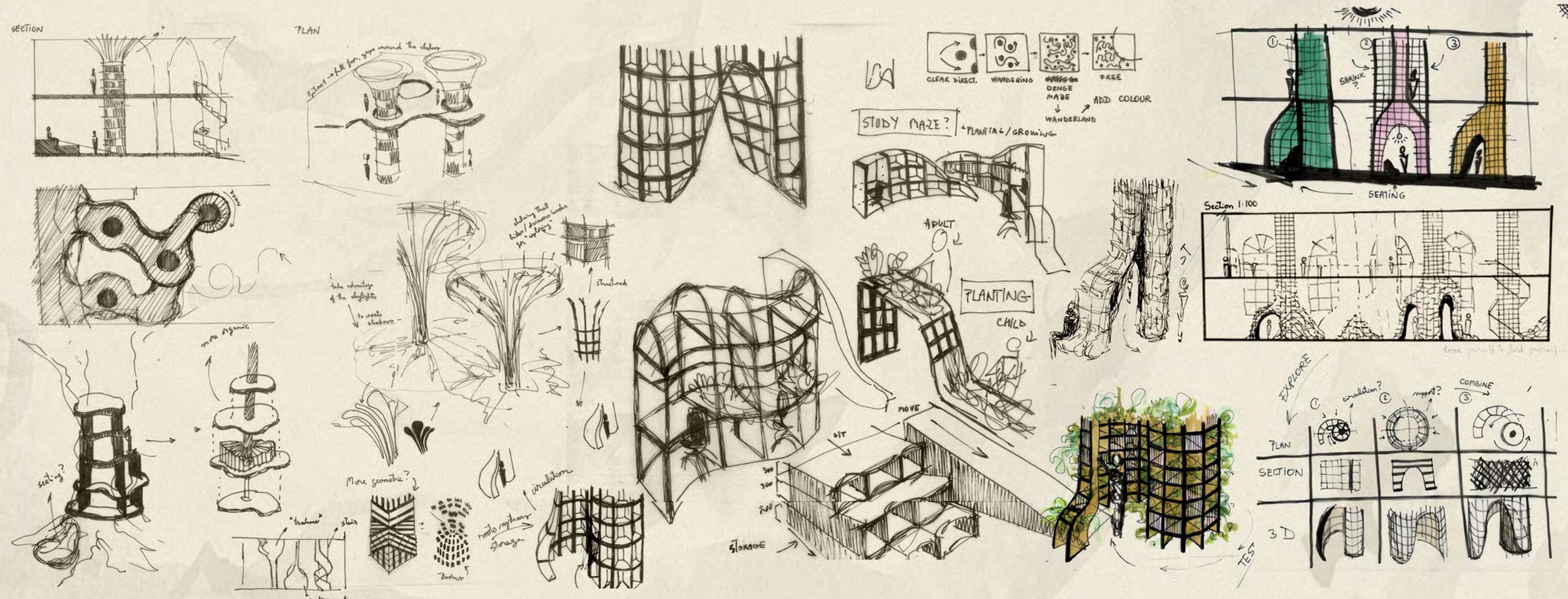
LOAD UPSTAIRS
 BE BETTER TO BE QUIET DOWNST.
 AT WHEN THE SPACE OPENS UP IN
 BRIDGES IT WONT CREATE CHAOS IN THE MAIN LIBRARY AREA



CHAPTER 3 - DISCOVERY



CURIOSITY: IN BETWEEN EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY (INSIGHT)



CHAPTER 4 - THE END

No.1 Singular Study



This space was created in mind with the ones who prefer to study by themselves but as well to soothe and isolate in case someone would get overstimulated by all the sensory input of the space in general, therefore it was isolated on the second floor.

No.2 Group Study



This space was created for the ones who thrive in social spaces when learning featuring bespoke curved tables (it has been proven that they encourage socialising, increase productivity) that are on wheels so that they can be moved around the space, according to their needs.

No.3 Bar / Cafe

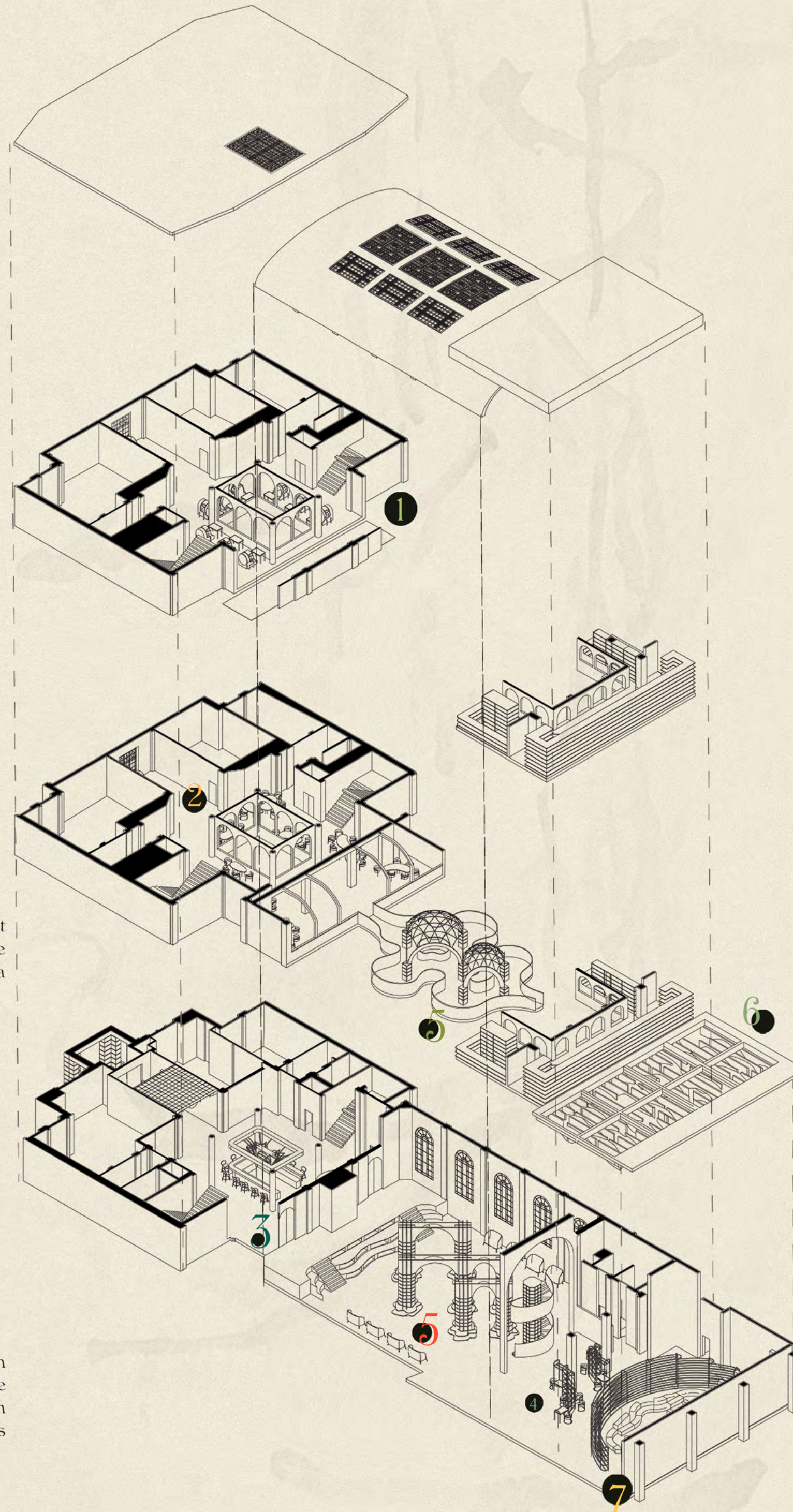


The bar's structure, colours and materiality are influenced by the theatre's Art Deco style but with a more contemporary atmosphere. The brass sculptural branches not only support the upper structure but also filter the natural light coming from the skylight above, creating a vertical connection in the atrium.

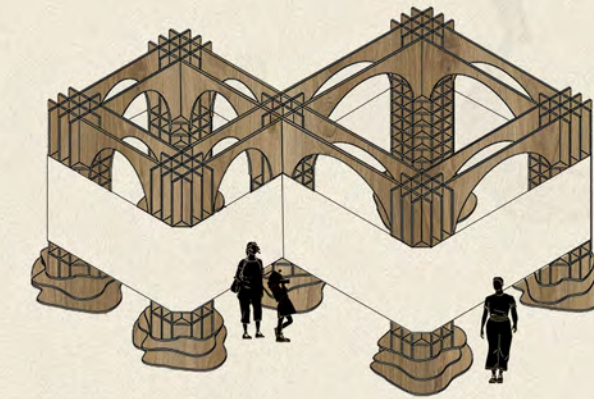
No.4 Study Maze



Going past the library, the journey into the metaphorical woods reaches the point of maximum density and minimum lighting. This was achieved by creating a bespoke structure with multiple rows of "pipes" that create the effect of a twisted maze of verticalities and transparencies. In terms of functionality, this "maze" offers multiple working spots with comfortable armchairs and incorporated tables.



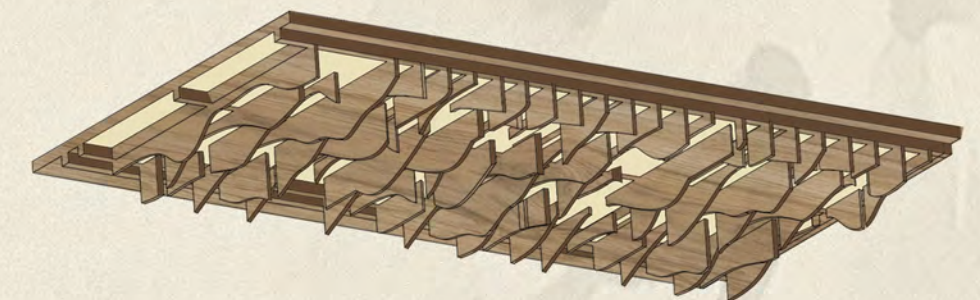
No.5 Library



The library is the "Axis Mundi" of the microcosmos. Built as a series of interlocking glulam boards. Although in the daytime it acts as a library, after the sun sets, the atmosphere shifts to a more mysterious one. The flexibility of the space allows it to transform into an extravagant bar, serving drinks and socialising between the tree trunks or even allows it to become a digitally immersive installation, bringing together the old and new ways of learning.



No.6 Acoustic Canopy



The original ceiling has been replaced by a timber waffle structure with skylights, acoustic fins to shape the "canopy" and an incorporated AuReuscoloured window cladding in which waste crops are turned into brightly coloured cladding that can generate clean energy from UV light.

No.7 Alternative Classroom



This partition acts as a barrier; as the end of the dense and dark woods and marks the beginning of the end of the journey: the clearing. With an airy and bright atmosphere, this open space can hold any type of activities, from classes to workshops to concerts to all kinds of activities by only changing the shape of the modular seating according to one's needs.

LIBRARY (FF)



SINGULAR STUDY

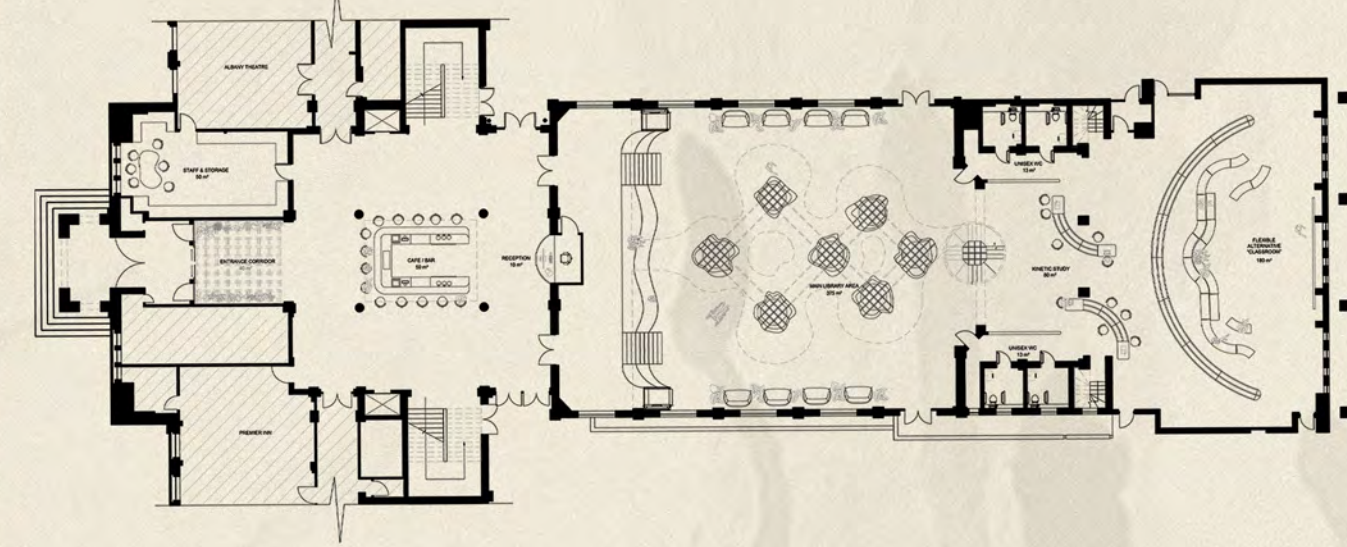


BAR / CAFE



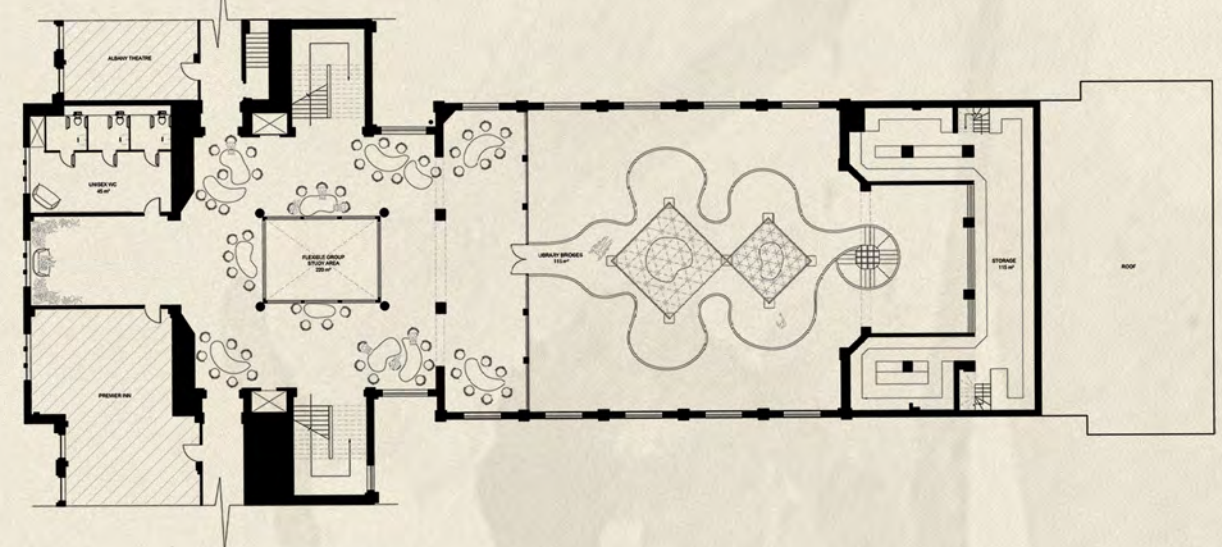
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

not to scale



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

not to scale



LIBRARY (GF)



STUDY MAZE



ALTERNATIVE CLASSROOM



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

not to scale



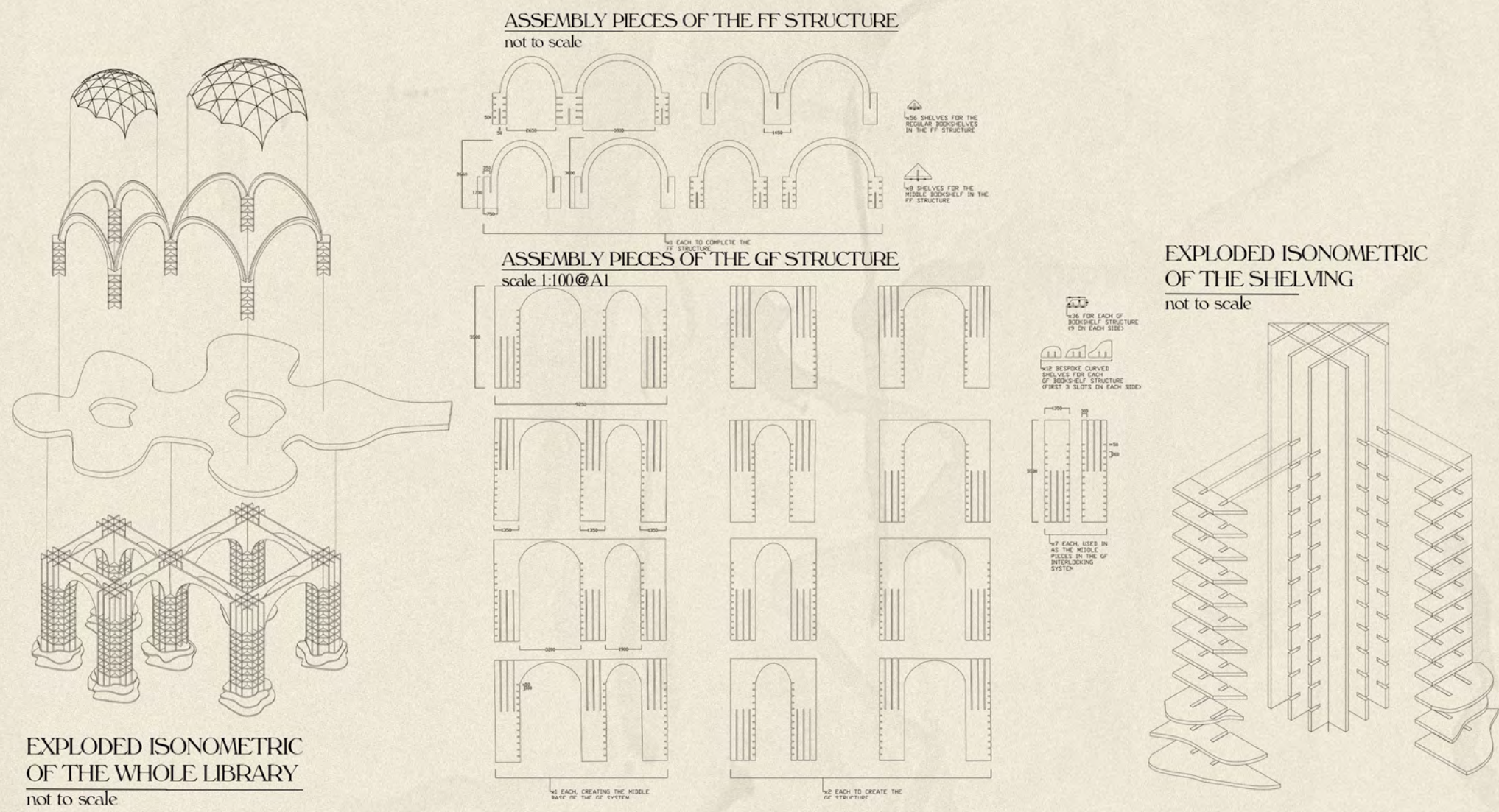
SECTION

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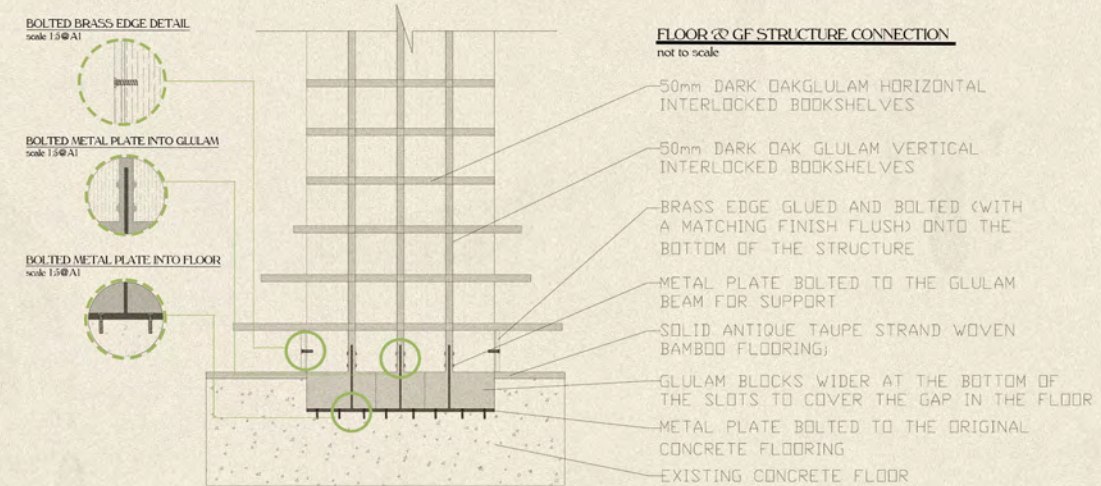


CHAPTER 5 - FROM FICTION TO REALITY

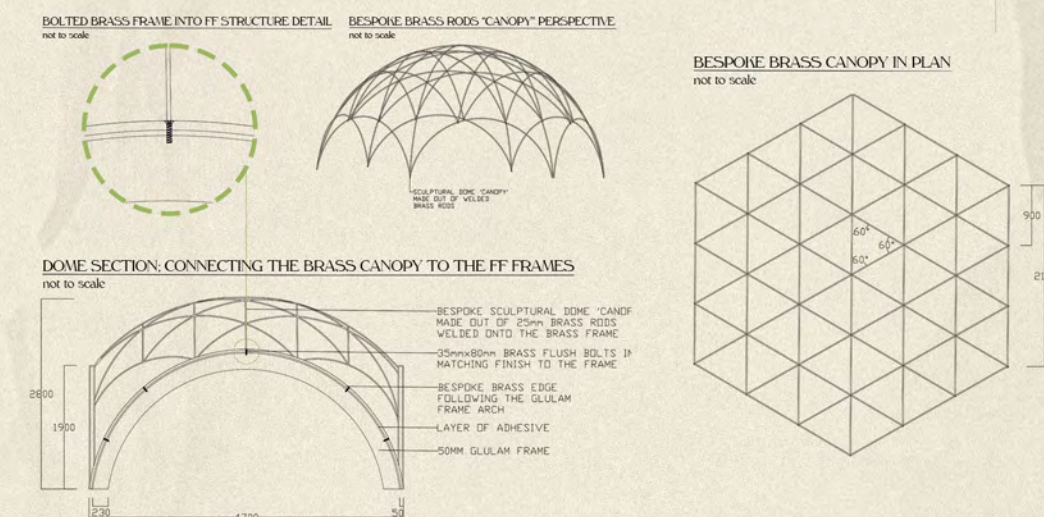
1. ASSEMBLY DIAGRAM



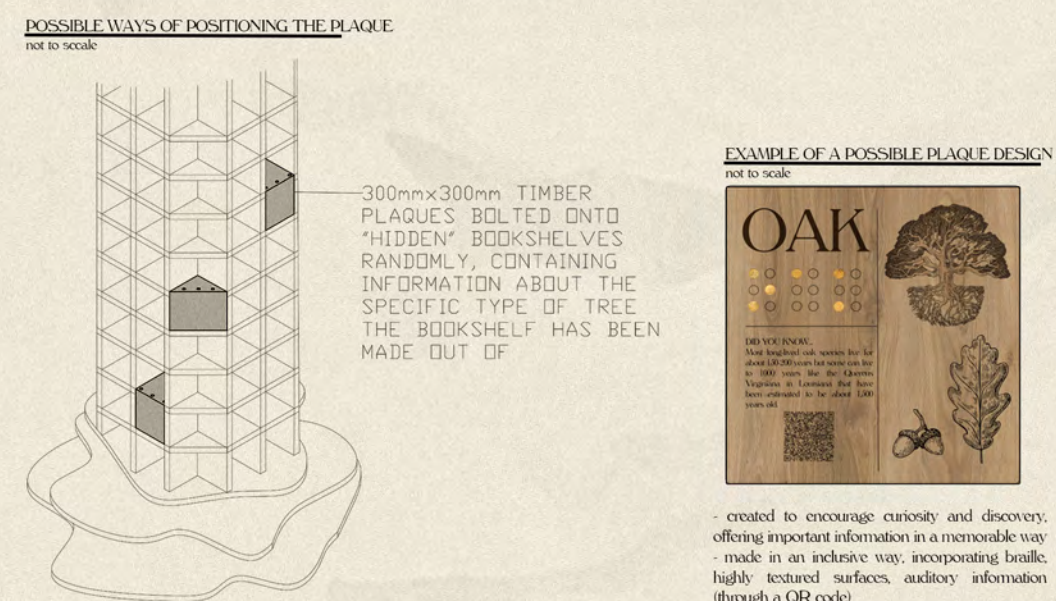
2. FLOOR TO GF STRUCTURE JUNCTION



3. BRASS CANOPY DETAIL



4. HIDDEN PLAQUES DETAIL



5. GF STRUCTURE TO BRIDGE JUNCTION

