

THE HANGING GARDENS

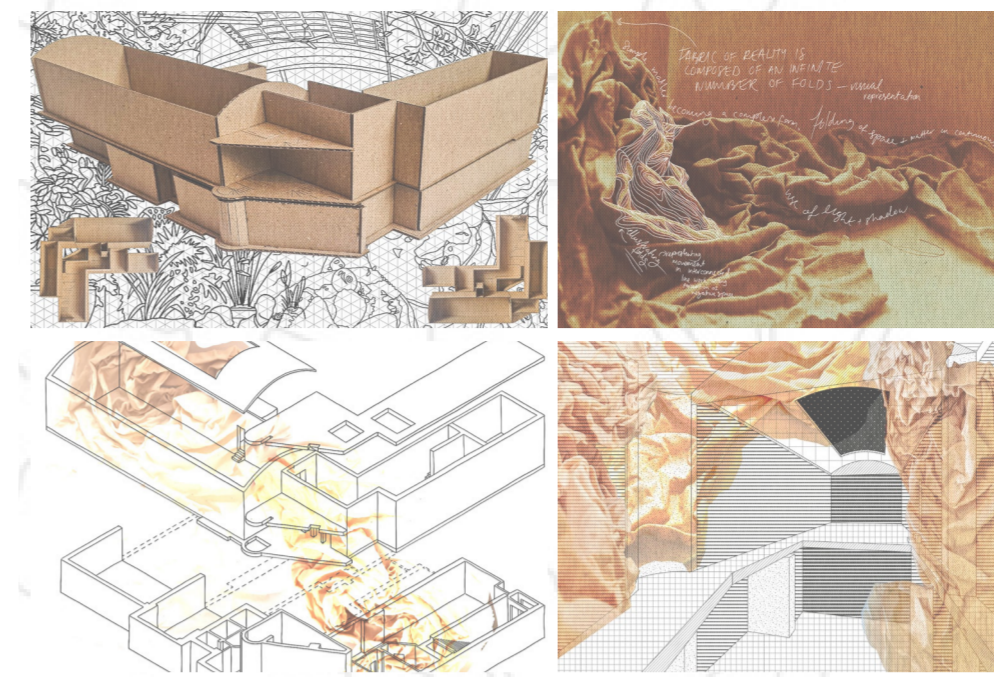
OF BIRMINGHAM

By Elsie Gribbon

THE HANGING GARDENS OF BIRMINGHAM is not just a place to be inspired by the nomadic spirit of street kitchens but an allegory for the historic excitement of the circus built through sensory journeys, bound together and separated by the folds of baroque architecture and art. It is a celebration of the vertical intricacies of baroque, the absurd and the bacchanalia, a space in which the diners become the performers within their circus and one that elicits a multi-sensory response for the individual actor.

This project has been a celebration of the joy found within Interior Architecture & Design processes, opting to allow the space to form as the research unfolded naturally. With a design process influenced chaos theory, moving in an unpredictable fashion and formed of a number of interacting entities, the project was able to pull from the richness of different media, philosophies and perspective to create an original interpretation of the source materials. Though interior design may have an overarching linear approach within an educational setting, this design embraces the by-products of systemic chaos and the philosophy of shifting and changing over time to create a fusion of complex elements that interact in an unordered but distinctly linked way for the users.

In this project I have focused on refining skills in two main areas: Development work and Technical Ability. I have attempted to translate philosophical and complex research in to a cohesive and well-planned scheme, with a focus on utilising research skills to inform design decisions, and practically testing these concepts throughout, in physical, sketch and digital. I have aimed to present work of the highest quality I am capable of, spending time ensuring the work is accurate, academically complex and of professional quality. I have rediscovered a love for design and the built environment, using the opportunity to develop my individual style. Most importantly I have learnt to embrace the Journey of design, of not having a set goal or destination, of simply being guided by the project as it unfolds.



Existing Site Model // Bridging Matter & Spirituality // Concept of The Fold in Space

The Baroque house: an allegory // finding the folds

As in Baroque Architecture, the space is moulded by philosophic ideas. The chosen ideas were set out in The Jumping Universe, the principles of Chaos theory & Deleuze's The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque. The practical model was inspired by the fold in its simplest form, the fabric of space and time folding on to itself and around itself. This was then further developed with reference to the chapter "The Baroque House: An Allegory" in which Leibniz's philosophy is explained surrounding the division of "levels" with the lower level representing matter and physicality and the upper the spiritual and metaphysical. My folding feature was conceived to be a connector between the two levels, continuously folding and interacting and bridging these two spaces. These ideas have similarly been utilised within the concept of the space, with consideration given to the continual shifting and interaction of the space by creating a botanic garden, the changes that occur from day to night, and the circulation route allowing for the user to create their own journeys.



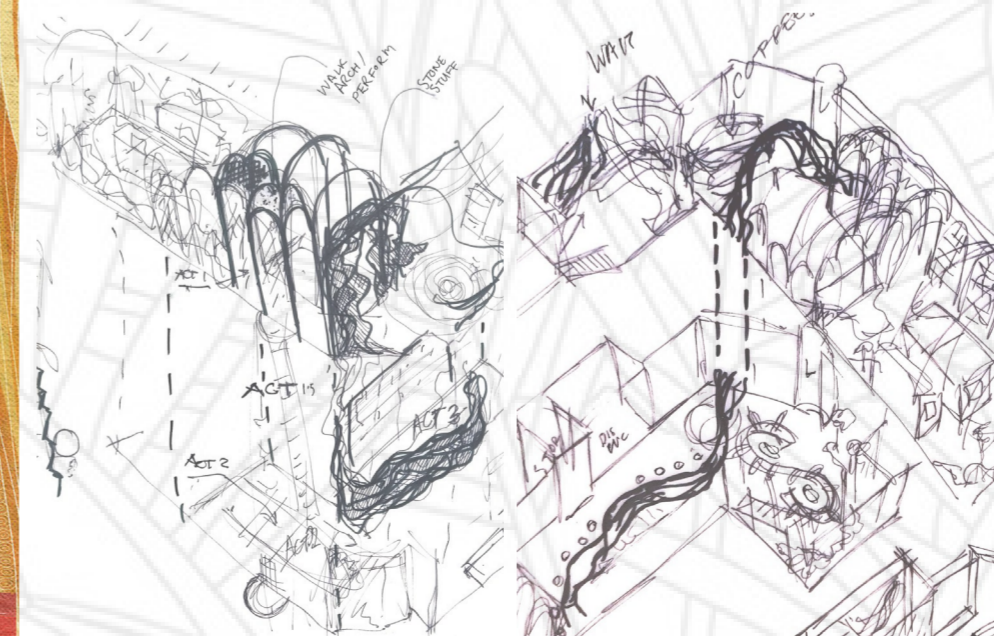
Analysis // Initial Idea // Test One // Lighting // Fold & Light // Spatial in 3D // Seating Area // Testing Scales in 3D

Model Development

Continuing the physicality of the design process, all the major elements in the concept were brought to life in 3D testing, allowing the space to form flexibly before any technical software was used. This allowed for adaptations and change as further research was interpreted and utilised.



Nomads of the Circus // Concept Collage // Baroque Styled Circus Carriages // Process Sketches in Axonometric View



La Fabrica - Ricardo Bofill (1973) // Hanging Gardens of Babylon - Nebuchadnezzar (562 B.C.)

Design references

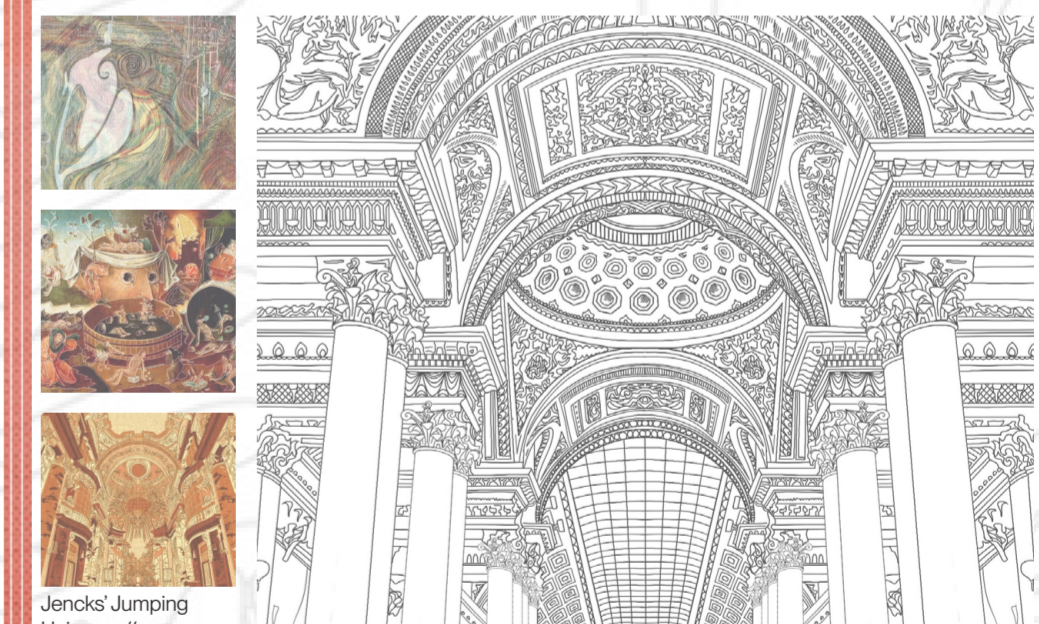
Design cases were presented throughout each stage of the development process to aid in comprehension and to justify design decisions. The two most prominent were found during initial research phases. La Fabrica was used to illustrate balance between man made design and the natural environment through material selection, vertical height and use of framed views throughout the architecture focusing on planting. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon were presented to give context to the connection of separate spaces through a shared garden alongside being one of the first examples of botanic gardens as Landscape Architecture.



Existing Site Storyboard - A Journey in Taste & Smell

Site & Space

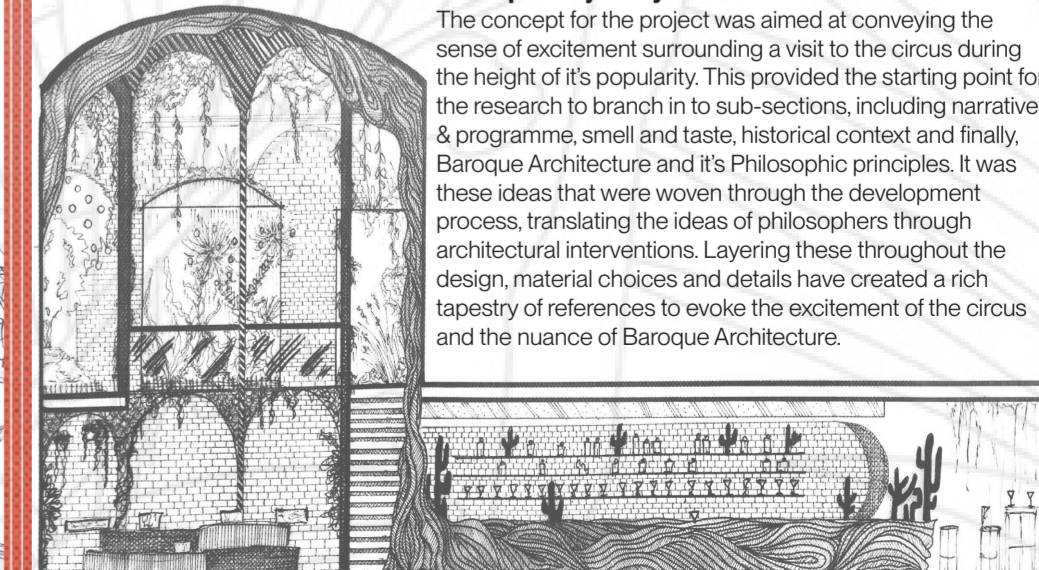
The site was chosen due to the potential for a narrative within the user journey, with the current site offering spaces that sequentially open up to reveal larger spaces, punctuated by the smells of food and coffee. The opportunity to combine atrium space with narrower enclosed spaces, as well as finding potential solutions for naturally lighting the space alongside the structural constraints, presented openings to explore narrative storytelling through design.



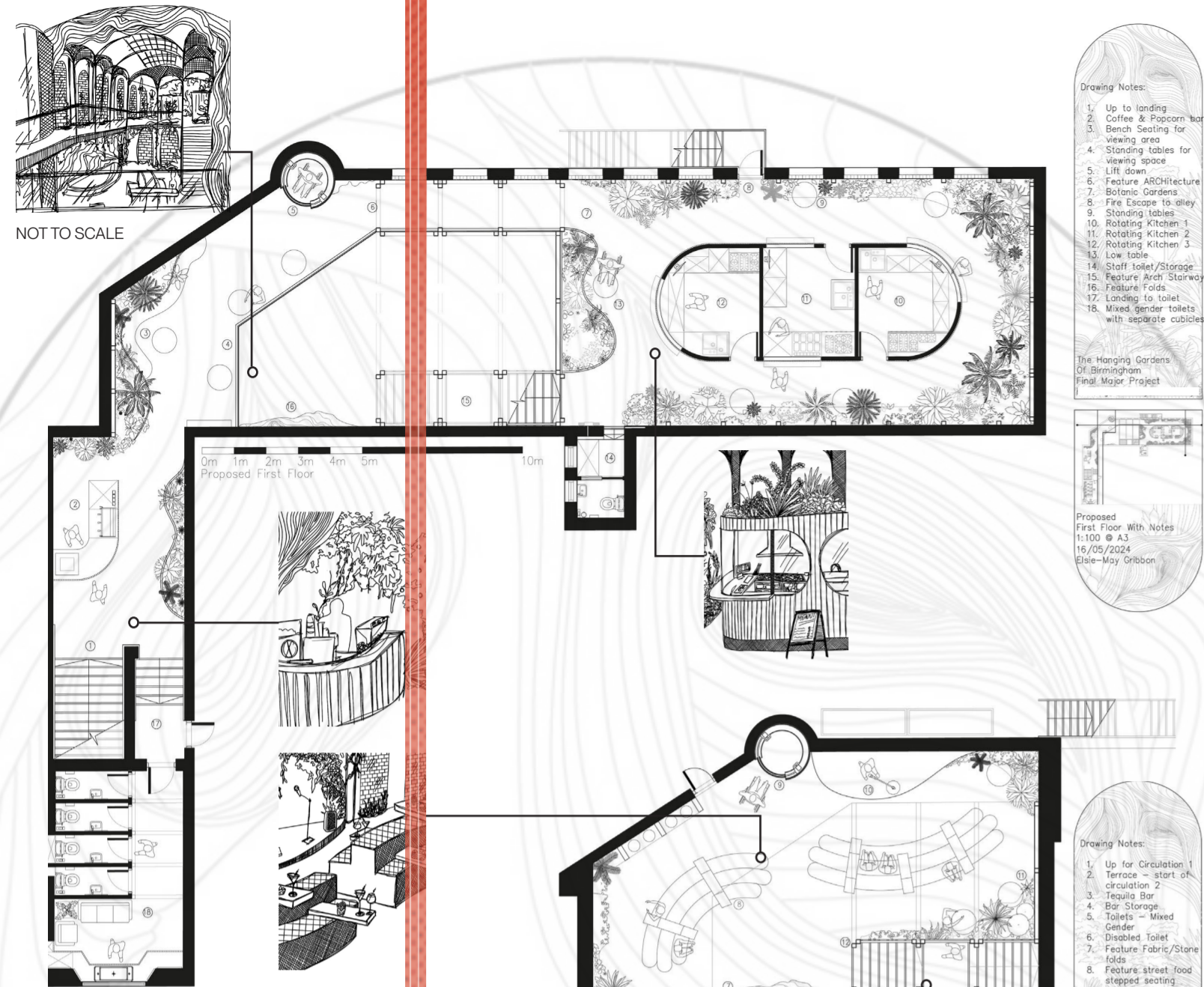
Jencks' Jumping Universe // Hieronymus Bosch // Baroque Line Drawing // Baroque Interior

Concept & trajectory

The concept for the project was aimed at conveying the sense of excitement surrounding a visit to the circus during the height of its popularity. This provided the starting point for the research to branch in to sub-sections, including narrative & programme, smell and taste, historical context and finally, Baroque Architecture and its Philosophic principles. It was these ideas that were woven through the development process, translating the ideas of philosophers through architectural interventions. Layering these throughout the design, material choices and details have created a rich tapestry of references to evoke the excitement of the circus and the nuance of Baroque Architecture.

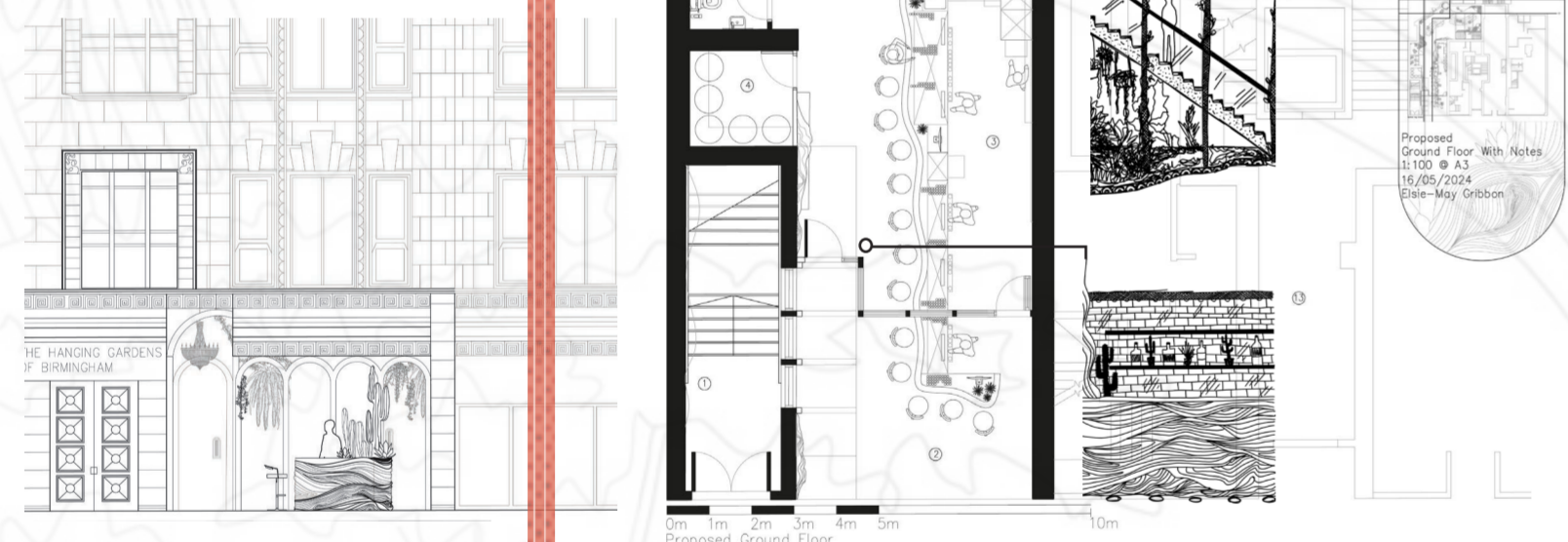


Section Sketch Design Development

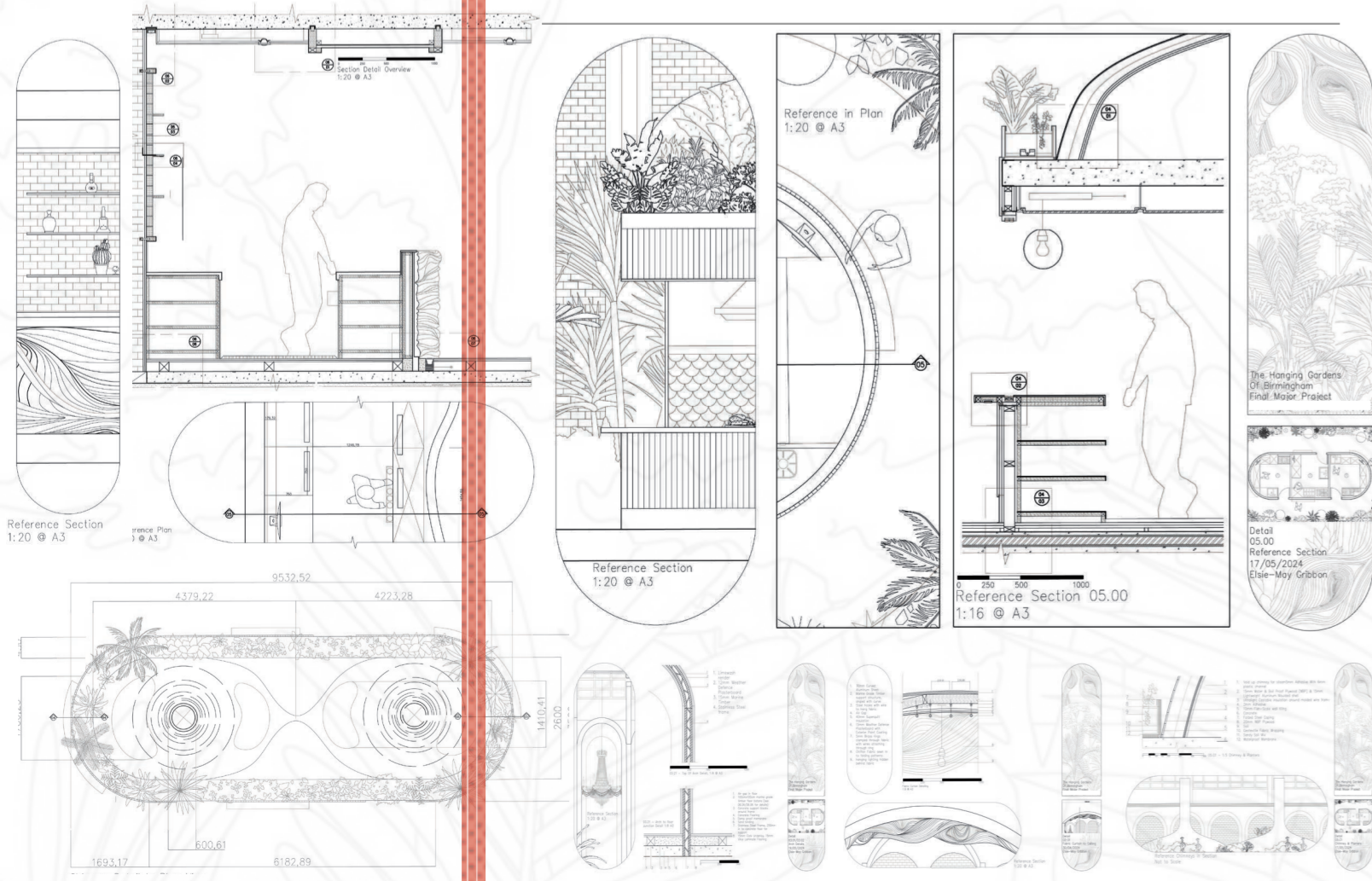


- Drawing Notes:
1. Up to landing
 2. Coffee & Popcorn bar
 3. Bench Seating for viewing area
 4. Standing tables for viewing area
 5. Lift down
 6. Feature Arch/Structure
 7. Botanic Gardens
 8. Fire Escape to alley
 9. Standing tables
 10. Rotating Kitchen 1
 11. Rotating Kitchen 2
 12. Rotating Kitchen 3
 13. Low table
 14. Staff toilet/Storage
 15. Feature Arch/Storage
 16. Feature Folds
 17. Landing to toilet
 18. Mixed gender toilets with escape routes
- The Hanging Gardens of Birmingham
Paul Major Project
- Proposed First Floor With Notes
1:100 @ A3
16/05/2024
Elie-May Gibbon

Circulation, 3 Act Structure & Chaos Theory
The circulation was developed in a two-fold process, with an overarching narrative structure styled after that of the 3 Act structure used within Circus Programmes, but allowing for a secondary unfixed route through the space for multiple visits with the principles of Chaos theory in mind.



- Drawing Notes:
1. Up for Circulation
 2. Terrace - start of circulation
 3. Feature Bar
 4. Bar Storage
 5. Toilets - Mixed Gender
 6. Disabled Toilet
 7. Feature Fabric/Stone folds
 8. Feature street food stepped seating
 9. Lift to Atrium
 10. Small live music stage
 11. Planting
 12. Feature Arches & Staircase
 13. Surrounding buildings
- The Hanging Gardens of Birmingham
Paul Major Project
- Proposed Ground Floor With Notes
1:100 @ A3
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Bar Area
The bar makes use of the lower, darker area by contrasting texture with lighting and an indoor/outdoor bar as a focal point. The space can be used as either the start or the end of the circulation route, designed to be a point of intentional collision and excitement.



Entrance
Making use of the smells of coffee and popcorn from the Research, the space draws the user through to the botanic garden and view of the Atrium Food Hall.



Resolution: Artistic Direction

The rendered visuals were created in a hybrid manner, using rhino and autocad for the base model, followed by illustrator, procreate and photoshop for other elements. The decision to choose the smallest of the available sites allowed for the entire space to be realised in detail and time spent conveying the atmosphere through hand drawing. The colour palette for the project was chosen at the beginning of the project from Circus imagery, and slowly transformed in to a blend of Baroque and Circus colours, in an updated, modern fashion whilst continuing to allow hidden details to reveal themselves on every viewing of the renders and sections. The technical work for this project was also treated with as much visual attention as the renders for the project.



Section Render from Development



Plaster-Cast Model 1:50