

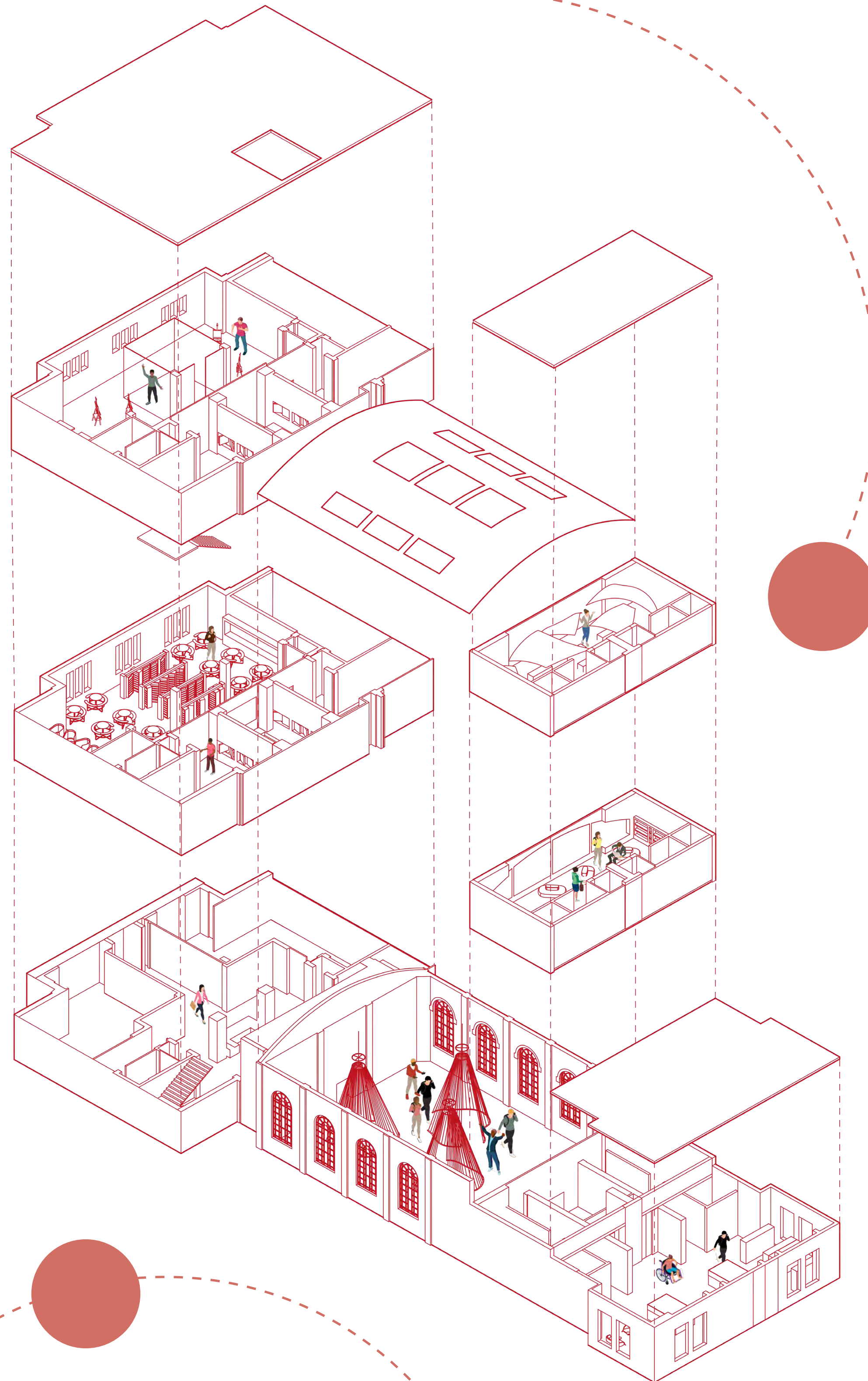
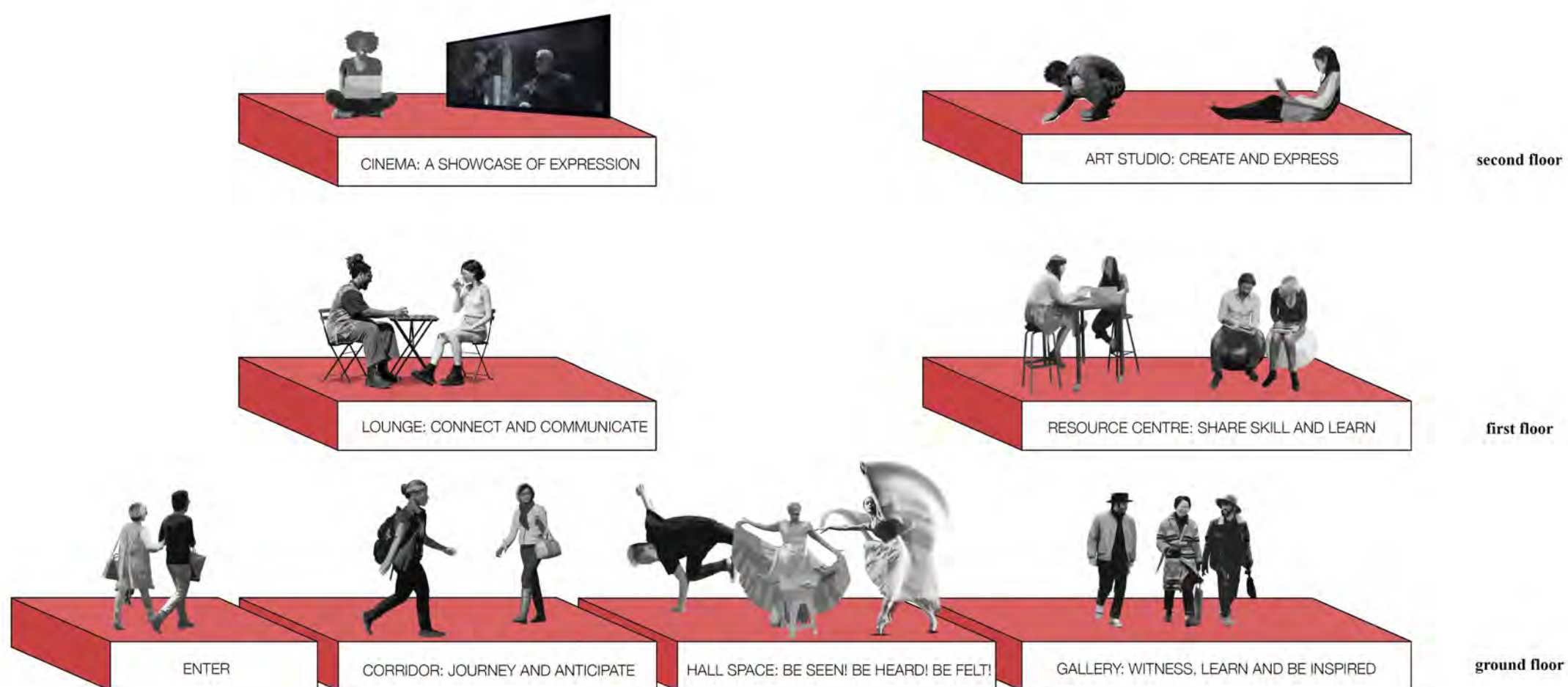
GIVE US SPACE

INTRODUCTION:

"Give Us Space" is a project created in retaliation to the unjust changes to the laws surrounding protesting in the United Kingdom, and the impending affects the risks of criminalisation will have on the fundamental rights of freedom of expression and speech for individuals in our society.

This threat to social justice and dignity inspired The Albany Expression Centre, a public arts space which confronts and responds to the threat to protest as we know it. The core values of freedom, autonomy and connection allow individuals to channel their thoughts and feelings into expressive endeavours within the space, with the hope of giving everyone the platform to speak their mind and change the world whilst exploring, learning and connecting with one another.

All spaces in the centre have been designed to enhance connection and creation, from foyers to meet and gather, to spaces to view and celebrate expression, to studios to create. In the centre of the building is a voluminous hall space featuring installations which connect and intercept the fabric of the building. This space acts as the epicentre for activism and expression, providing the acceptance for noise, unity and vibrancy for anyone to stand up for what they believe in.



DESIGN INSPIRATION



Kill The Bill:

Protests across the UK in 2021 retaliated to the draconian modifications to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which outlined harsher penalties and an increased authority to police forces. The impact of these changes mean even aspects of peaceful protesting could be criminalised, therefore changing the course of democracy and human rights in the UK as we know it. The thought of being criminalised for standing against threats like global warming or police brutality is a fearful prospect, which sparked a deep interest to create a space which could withstand this threat.



Bernard Tschumi - Architecture is Violence:

Tschumi's ideas explore how the relationship of people and places is one of violence, with users violating the spaces they encounter and dismantling or changing the initial values and uses of the space. These ideas channelled the value of the user in relation to the building in the Albany Expression Centre, and ensured that any action of the user upheld the design itself and directly enhanced the experience of expression, violation and personalisation.

100% of survey participants think that protest has an **essential role in society**

The most popular outlet for expression is

social media, with **60%** of survey participants revealing that they have used social media to voice their opinions in the past.

100% of survey participants were found more likely to voice complaints, opinions and hopes if they had a **designated space to do so.**

“Public spaces should fundamentally allow for expression” - Shin-pei Tsay

Studies show that learning is a **social process** enhanced by **community.**

40% of survey participants expressed opinions through **speeches, debates and discussions with peers.**

20% of survey participants channelled frustration views and opinions into **creative outlets** such as drawing and painting.

The 3.5% Rule: Studies have shown that just 3.5% of a population have to participate in protest to incite change.

Arts and creativity **aren't typically easily accessible for all**, and providing these resources can bring creativity to those who may not have space or resources for it.

Creative expression has been proven to **promote and enhance well-being.**

“Creative self-expression **reduces stress** and increases a sense of well-being.”





THE MARK FOR CHANGE

NARRATIVE

From whispers to revolution.



Intercept:

Installations violate space in a physical manifestation of the expressive energy that violates the building. The installations also respond to the creative intentions of the building.



Activate:

A large open central space invites users to shape the environment with their own actions. It is key for this part of the space to be free of limitations for users to act upon the space in whichever way they choose.



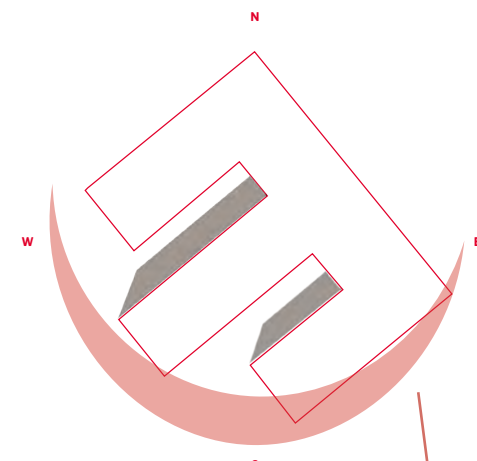
Interact:

Pivoting display boards allow opportunity for creative works to be showcased within the atrium. As well as being interactive between users within their movement, the boards also intercept the void of the atrium space by connecting in and out of the space.

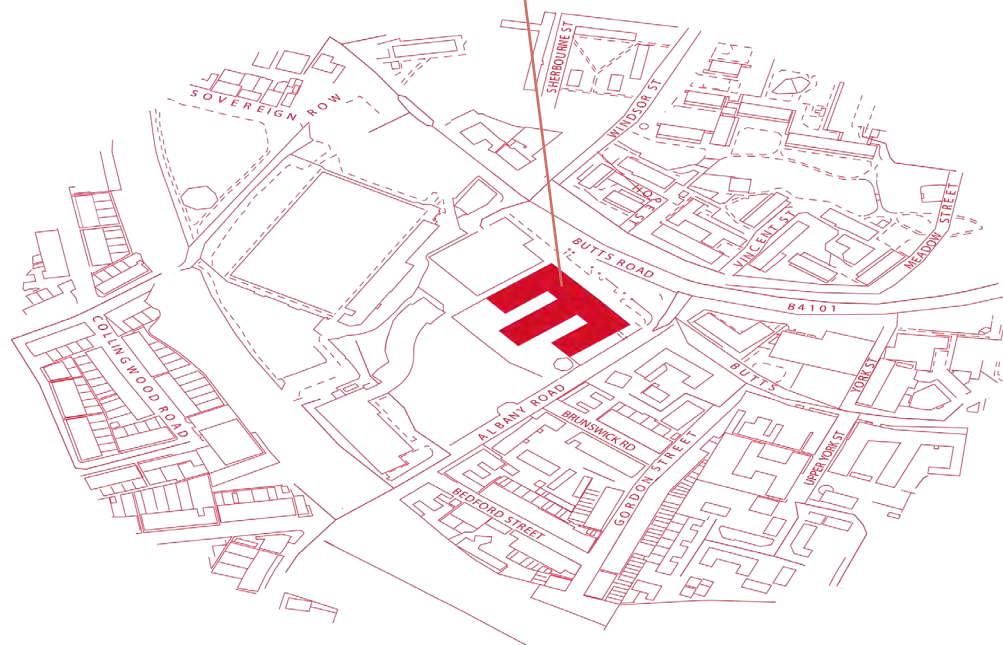
SITE CONTEXT



The Albany Theatre, built in 1935 is a former technical college and lecture theatre converted into a performance theatre for modern day use. Existing features of the original theatre remain, including the stained glass art deco windows of the foyer and an ornate vaulted theatre ceiling.



Site Sunpath

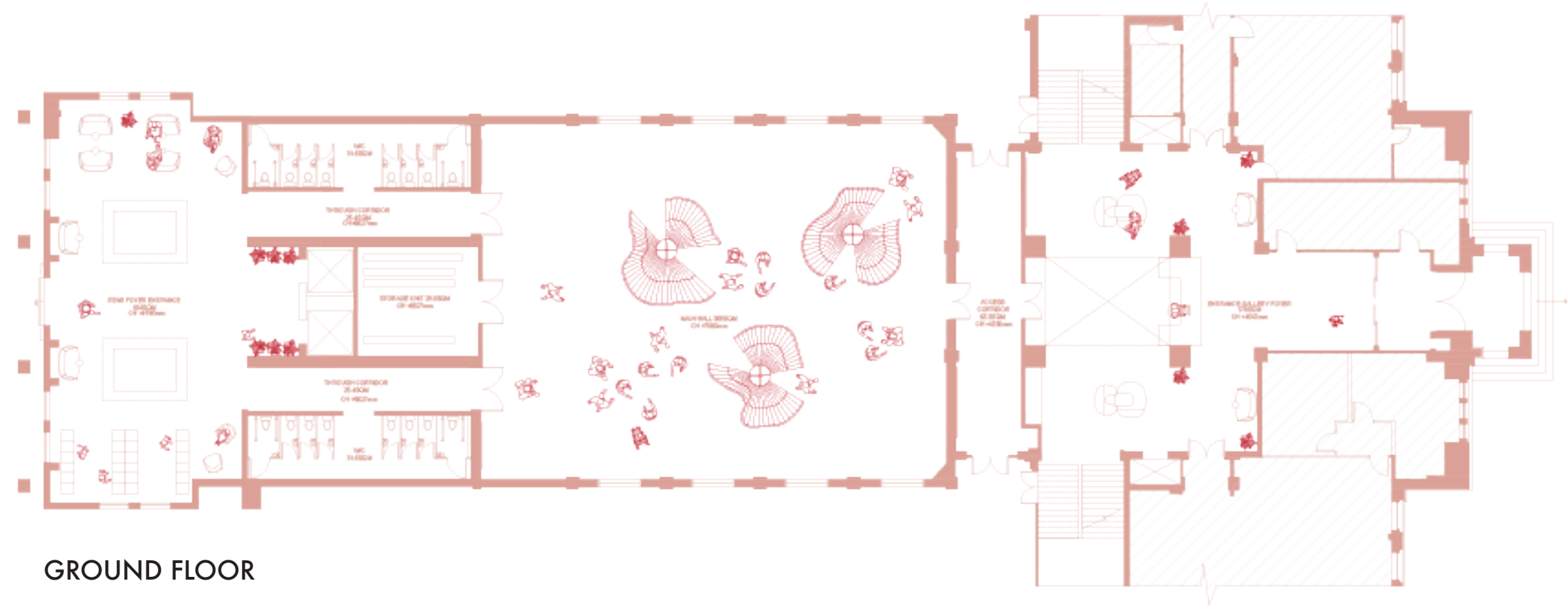


Albany Expression Centre's design re-communicates the key ideas of conflict and violence, driven from activism, back into the fabric of the building. The design stemmed from the unjust threat to protest and freedom of speech which is being experienced in British society by the draconian alterations to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts bill. The limitations to this bill enable an outright lack of expression and public demonstration, therefore inspiring a centre with expression at the forefront of its design.

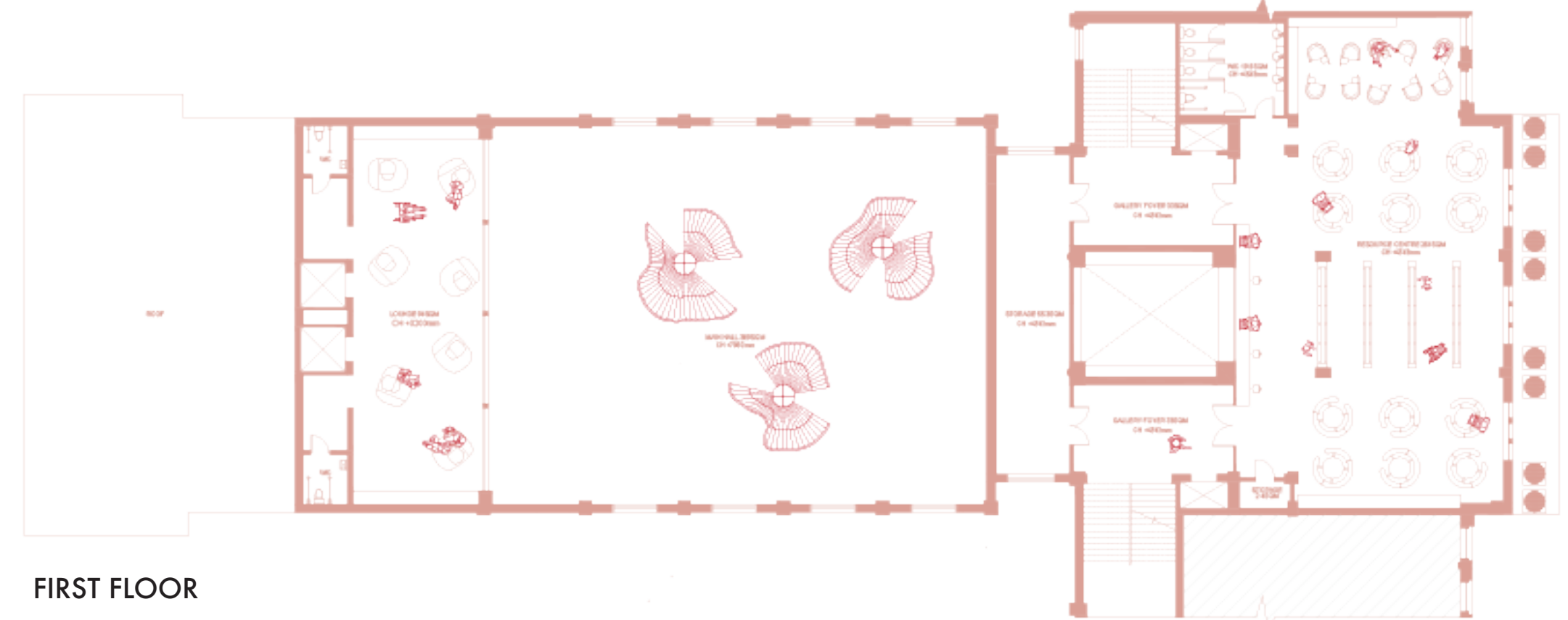
The circulation enables a confrontation of choice as users are offered multiple entrance and exit opportunities whilst moving through the space. The spaces designed provide opportunity to learn, connect and express emotions, opinions and individuality. Spaces such as an artistic expression studio, a resource centre and a projection room offer ways for users to create and showcase their creative outlets. Design has been used to intercept the existing fabric of the space by creating movable and obstructive elements which provide interaction and immersion.

The main hall space, the centre and hub of the design, showcases 7 metre tall tensile installation pieces which disrupt the calm nature of the space and interact with the large volume and scale of the hall. Furthermore, pivoting art frames enable user interaction both through use and through observation. The frames can be rotated on a pivot by user to explore creations on both sides of the board, and this changing shape interacts with the central void of the atrium space.

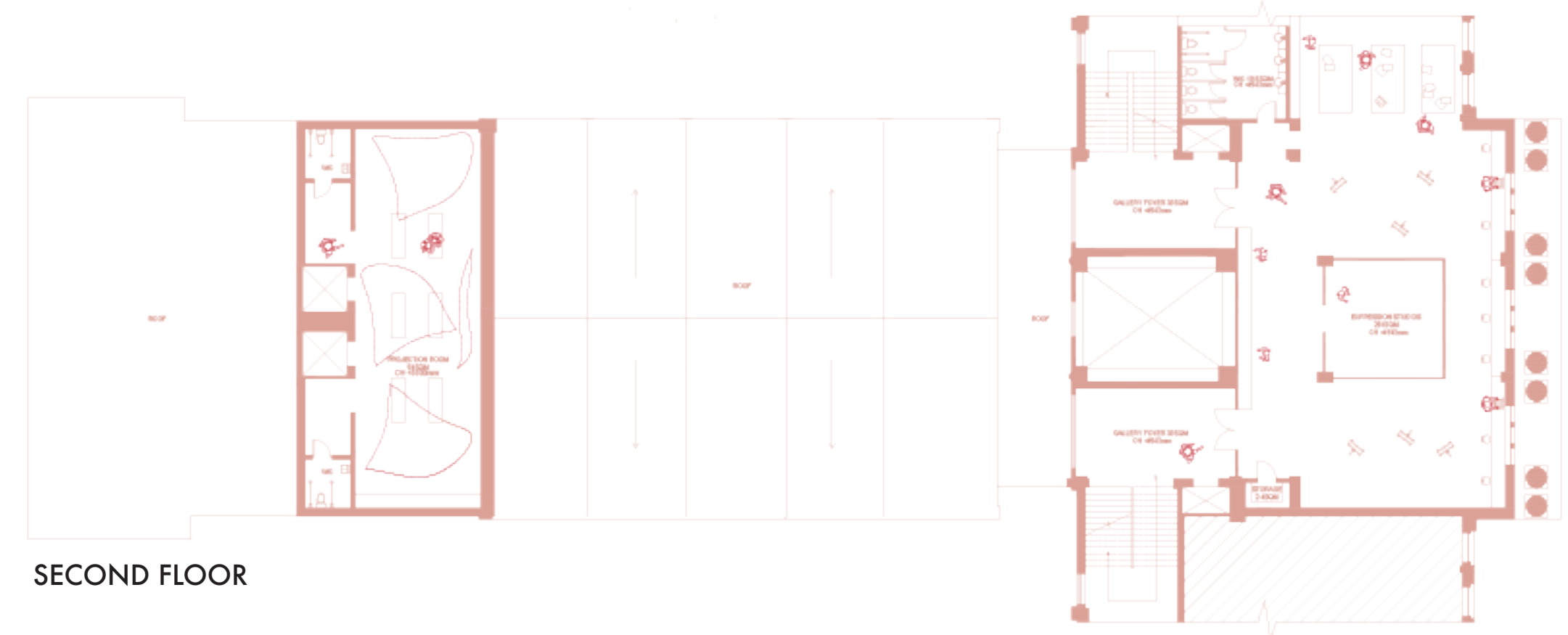
ALBANY EXPRESSION CENTRE FLOORPLAN



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

Not to Scale*



REAR FOYER ENTRANCE



LOUNGE



SHOWCASE

THE EXPRESSIVE JOURNEY
GIVE US SPACE



MAIN HALL

PROTEST



RESOURCE CENTRE

LEARN



GALLERY FOYER

EXPRESS