

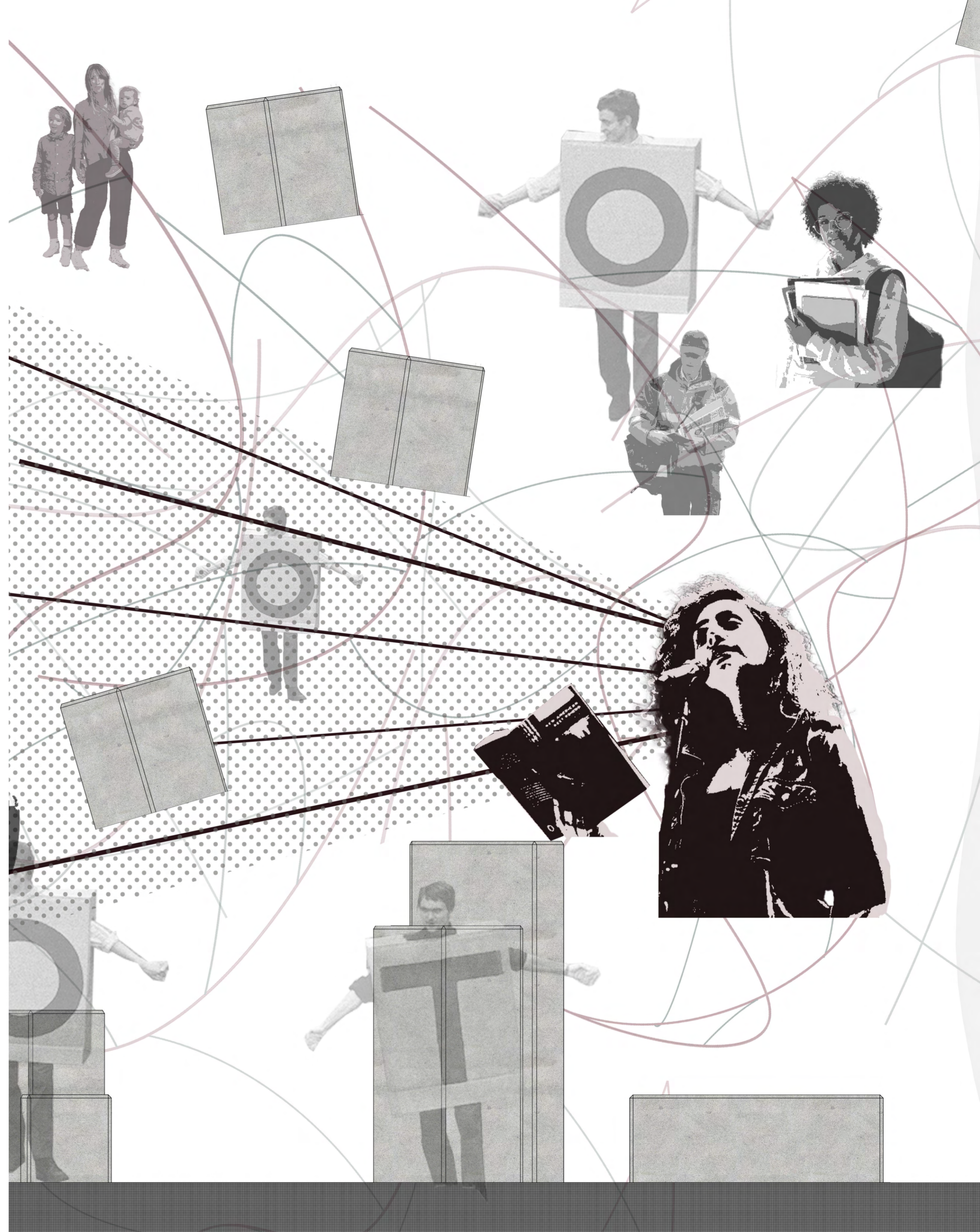
Collective Expression

A poetry pavilion

The project Collective Expression is a proposal for a temporary pavilion and civic space at the annual Oxford Literary Festival, where the Oxford Civic Society and spoken poets come together to express the Zeitgeist of today.

In a time when common people struggle to form a powerful voice in the face of poverty, inequality and corruption, the proposed space encourages the general public to share their opinion about political changes that need to take place and to stir up change. The pavilion design is led by local poets and writers. It is inspired by the idea of civic colonisation of public space and uses the adjacent buildings to project the work of local activist poets.

The project was conceived out of interdisciplinary collaboration between interior architecture students, with academics and poets from Oxford Brookes and Oxford University and thus reflect multiple perspectives concerning the design of the pavilion and its programme.

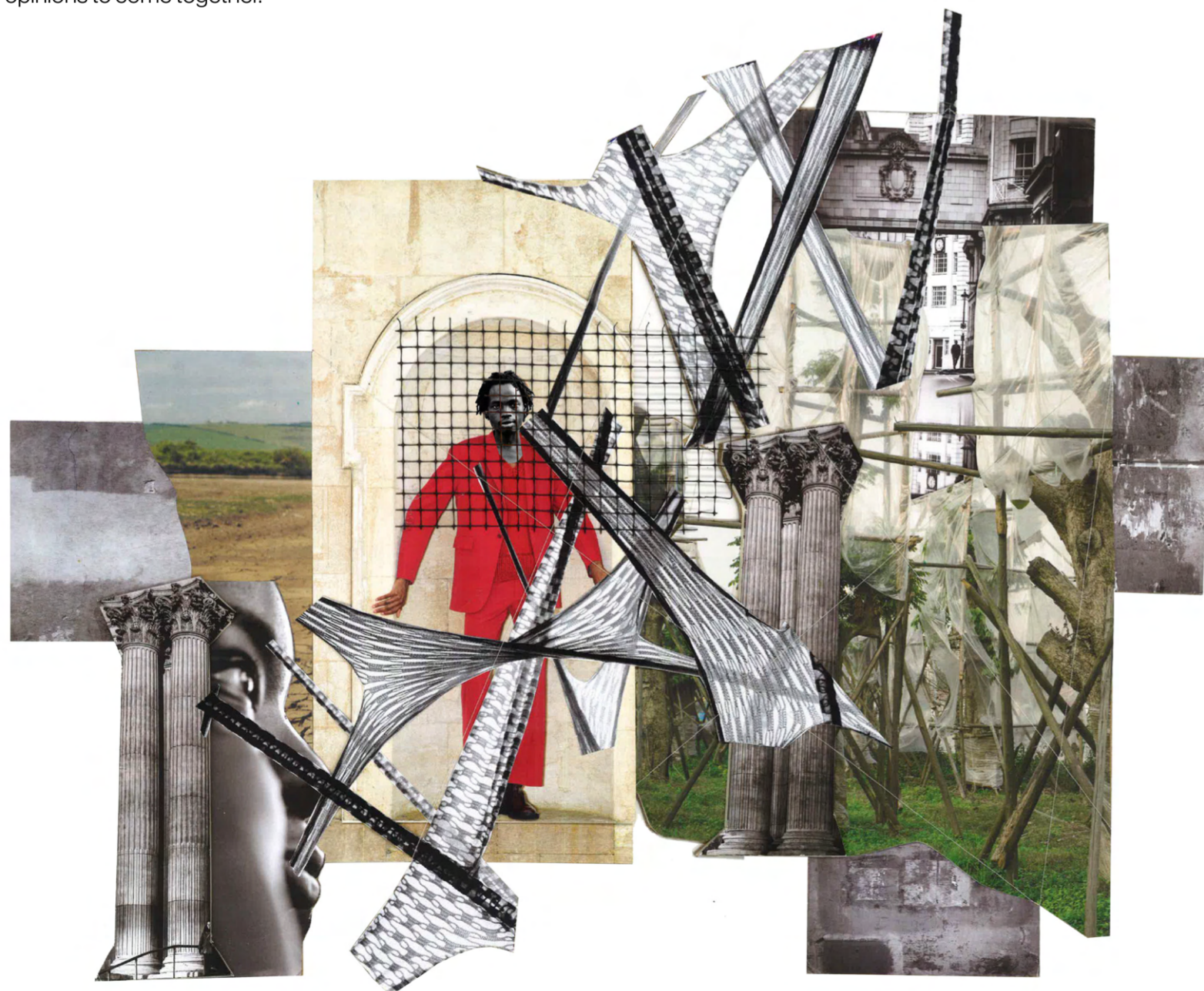


Challenging systems and structures

The project was prompted by a study of the author, Marechera, and the tension that he experienced between the systems and structures which oppressed him, such as universities, the Rhodesian government and passport protocols.

The tension between the systems and structures which Marechera challenged are of importance today in an unsettled time with economical difficulties including, workers strikes, cost of living crisis and mortgage rates increasing.

These issues affect most households and the general public do not have a physical space to discuss, share and give feedback to the government. The poetry pavilion aims to bring different views together to create a physical space for idea exchange and opinions to come together.



"I don't like what I think I've become, even the success of my own books has made me part of the very system which is an intellectual rape of the black people."

Marechera, House of Hunger film + Documentary



Threads through the Soul: Wearable device created to give the wearer a sense of the tension that Marechera experienced between the systems around him. Made as part of a project between interior architecture students, with academics and poets from Oxford Brookes and Oxford University.

Expressing the Zeitgeist through the spoken and written word

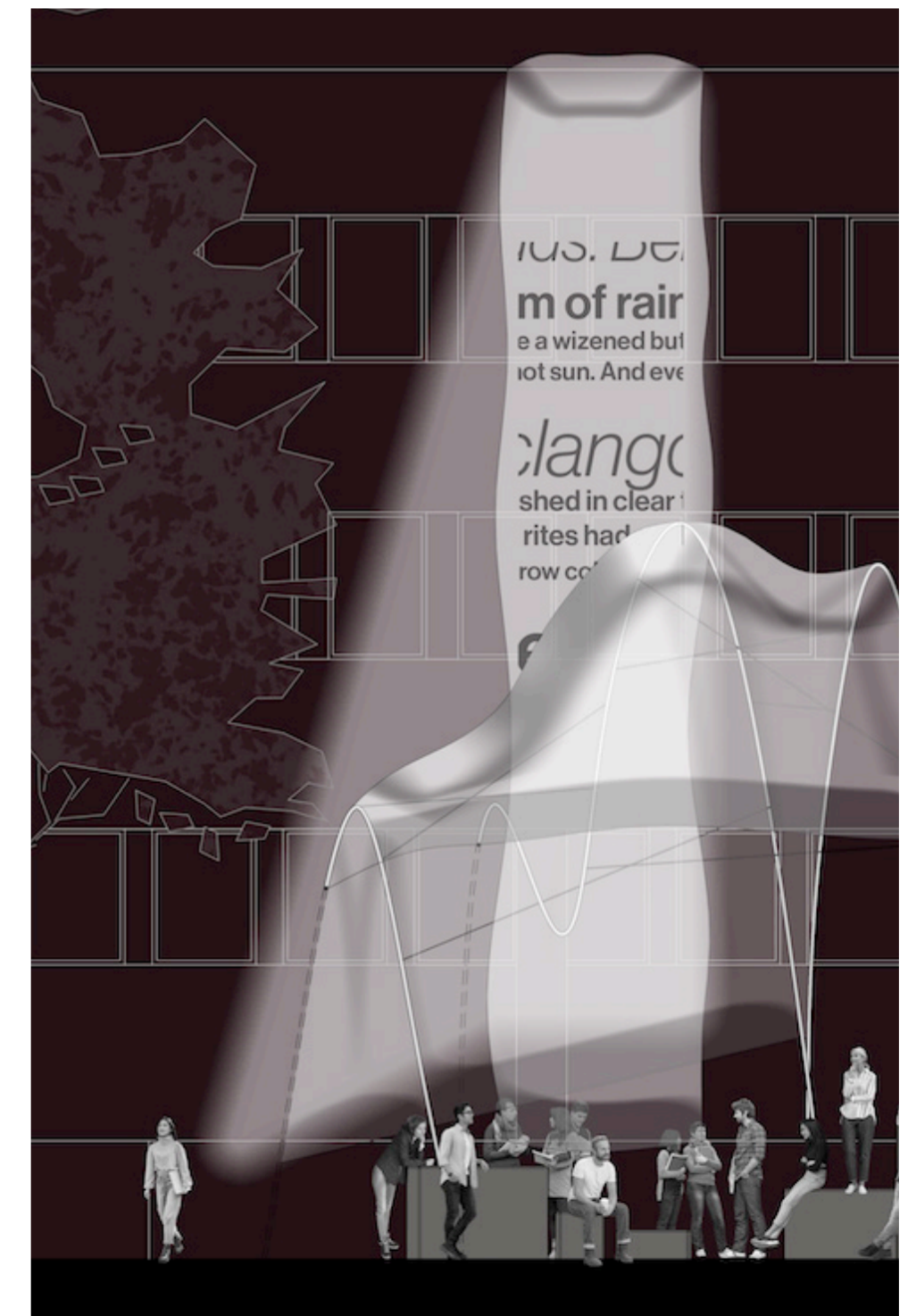
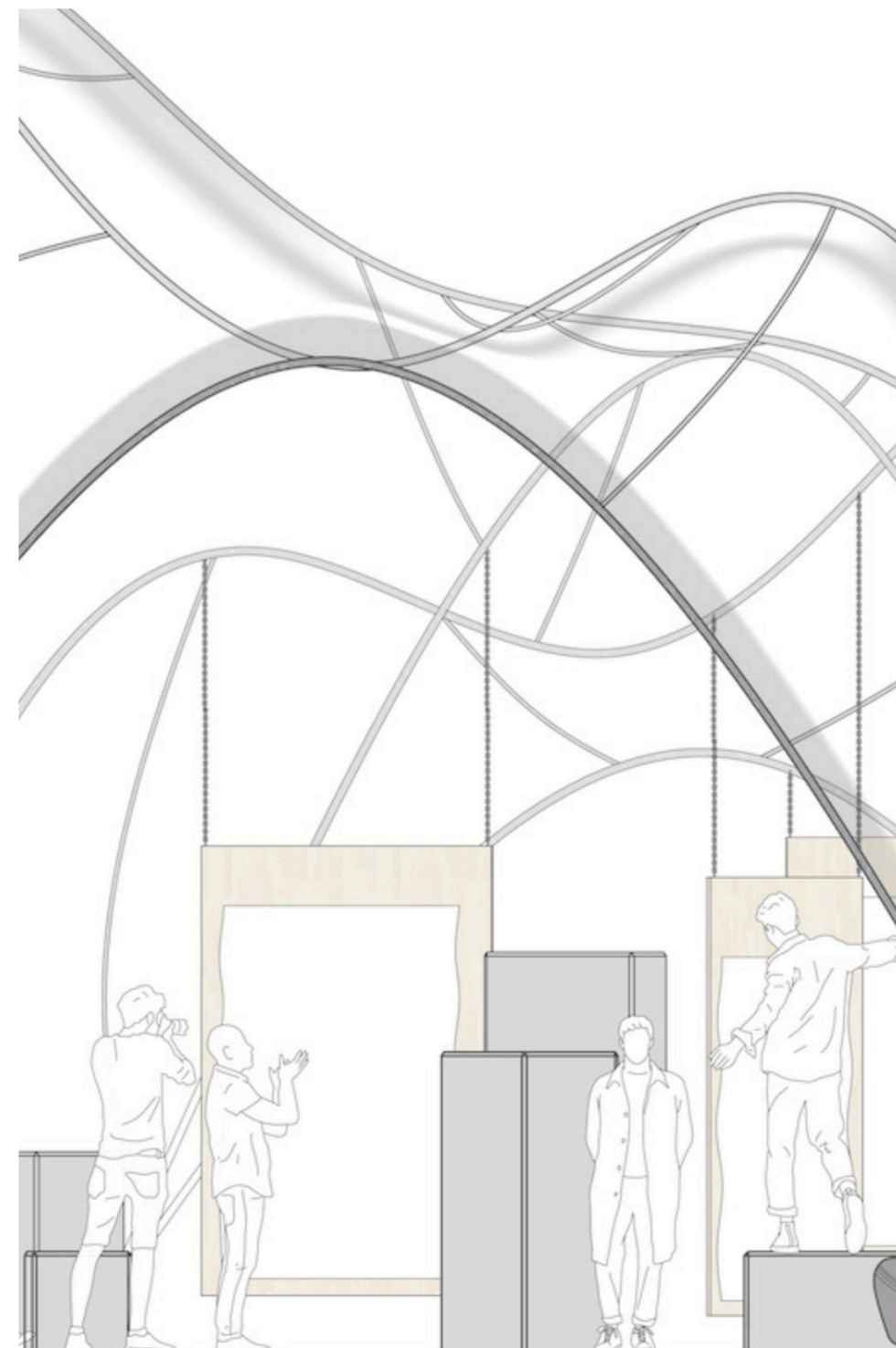
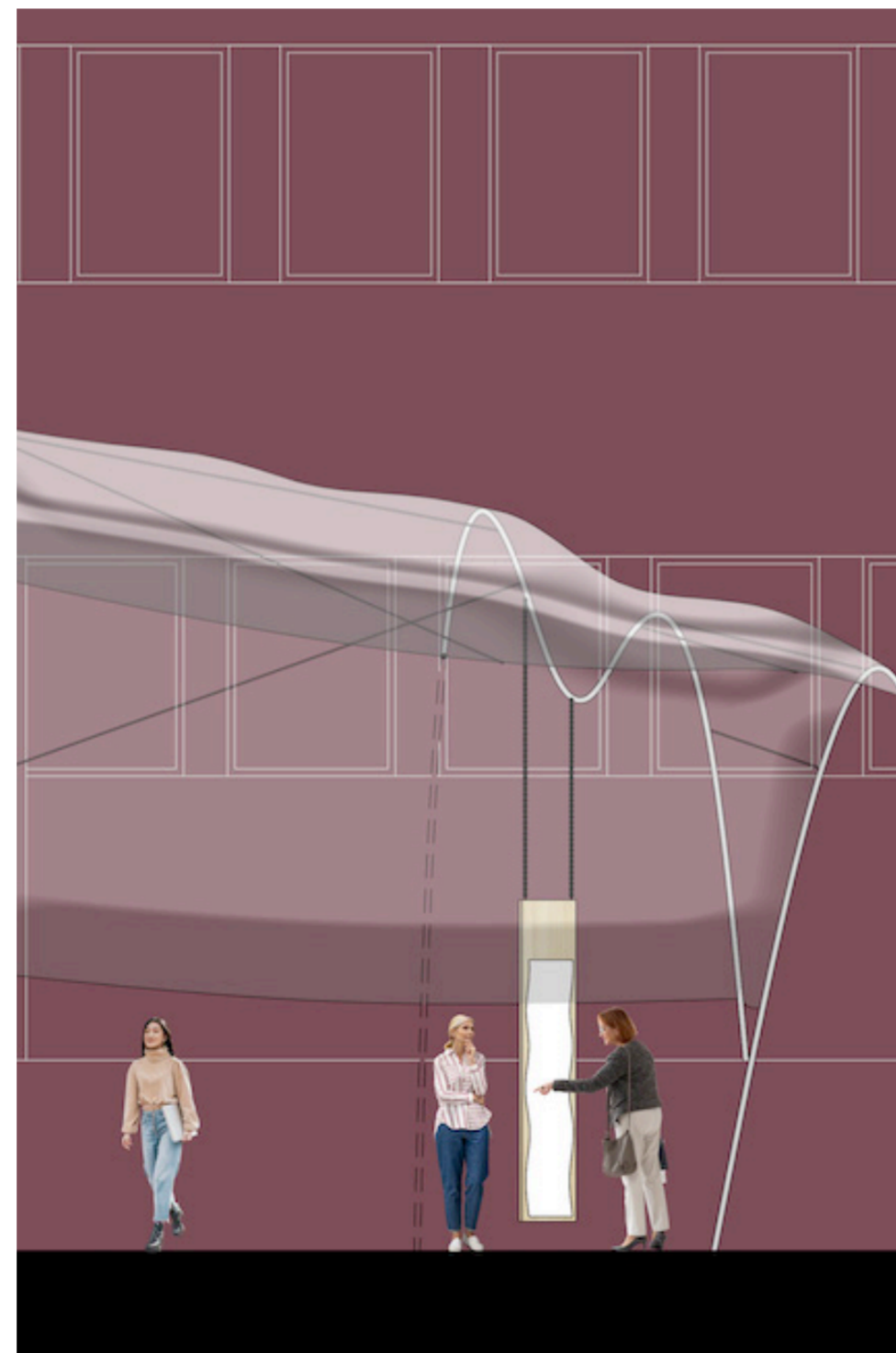
Oxford Civic Society and various spoken poets will come together for two weeks during the Oxford Literary Festival to collect and share society's views of today. Using prompts, the poets will travel around the city, gathering responses, similar to Marechera as a story doctor. Videographers will capture interviews and performances to collate into a film at the end of the project.

The poets will come together to produce performances shown on selected evenings through the two weeks. Local City Councillors will be invited to watch and join in with the dialogue. A series of talks and discussions will take place during the pavilion during the day, with authors from publishers such as Verso discussing relevant topics. Large banners will be draped from the adjacent buildings, where comments from the public will be added each day, accumulating over the two weeks. This will also be projected onto during the evenings.

At the end of the two weeks, the videos of the interviews and performances will come together in a film. This will be sent to Oxford City Council, along with the large banners.

FTWeekend
OXFORD LITERARY FESTIVAL
OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY
 AN INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR OXFORD SINCE 1969

L-R:
 Collecting opinions throughout the city and in the pavilion.
 Spoken poet performing and is captured on video for the film.
 Thoughts and opinions overtake surrounding buildings in the evening.



Disrupting pedestrian flow to encourage interaction



Source: documentjournal.com



Source: smithsonianmag.com



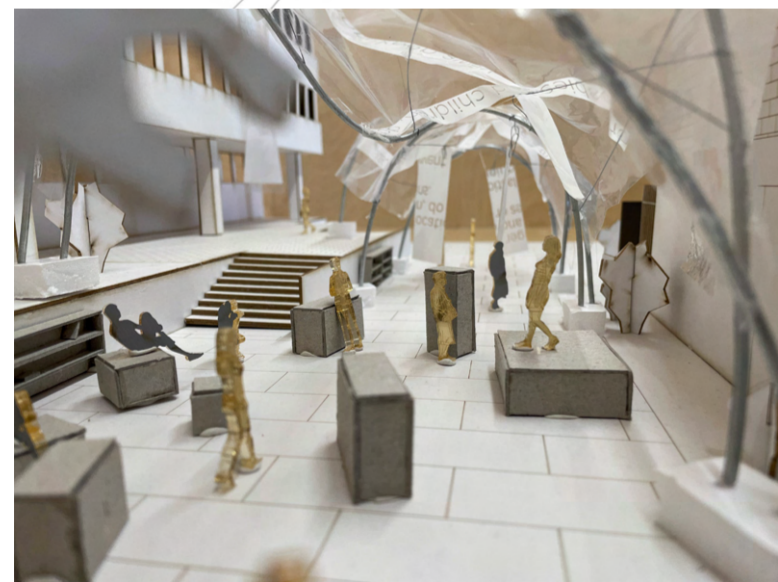
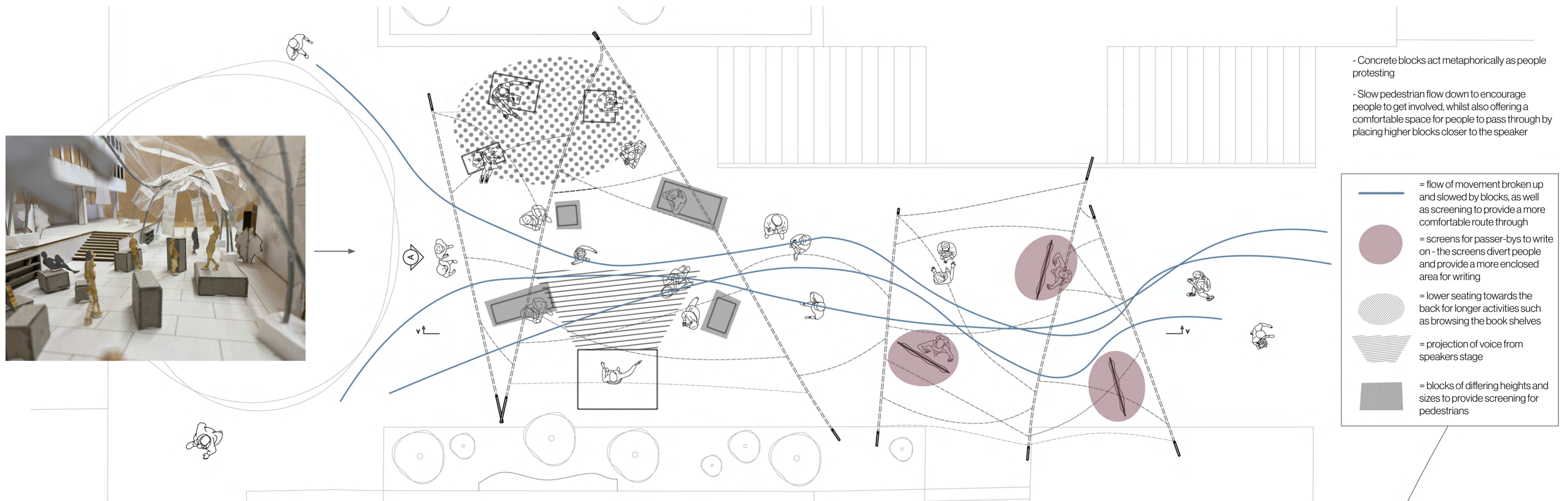
Source: lcs.com

Learning from protests

1968 Paris Protests

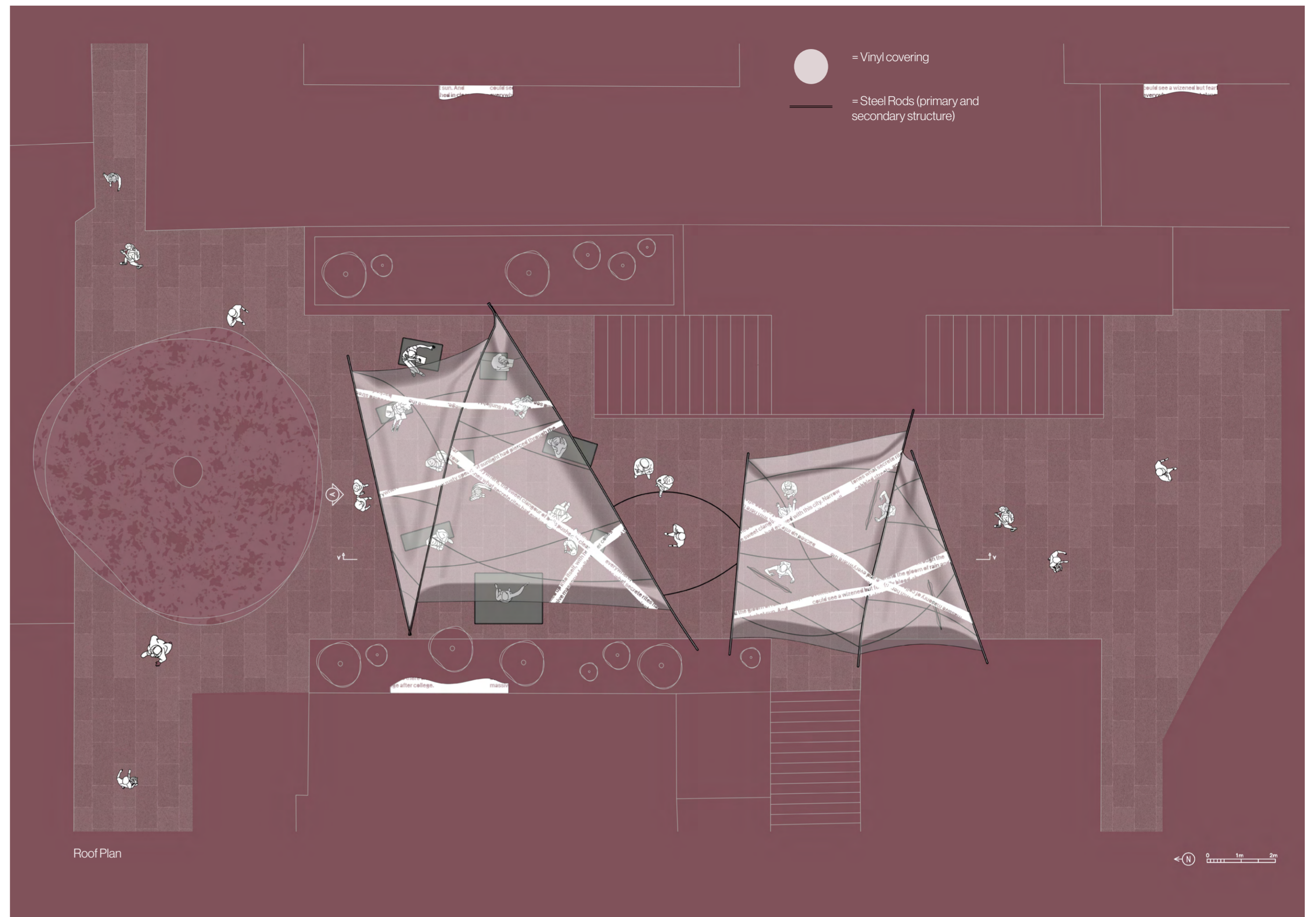
"three weeks of social unrest known as 'Les Événements.'" (documentjournal.com)

- people blockading the street
- spreading out holding hands - use of blocks to metaphorically act as people protesting
- use of banners

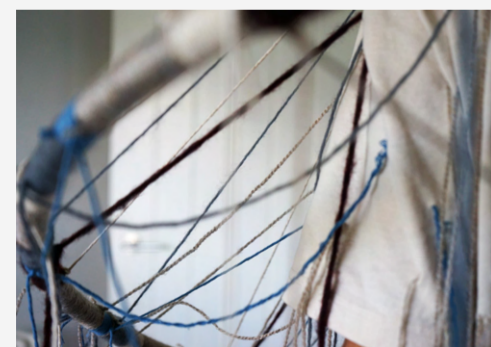


The structure as a collective network of threads

The primary structure, made from steel rods, acts as a network of collective threads. The variation of higher and lower ceiling space, provides different areas, for example, the speaker's voice can travel throughout the more expansive area, whereas a smaller zone allows for one-to-one conversations and people to add their thoughts to the writing boards.



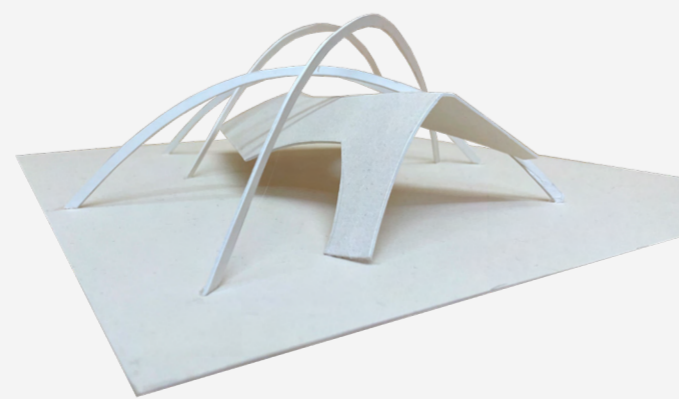
Pavilion design progression



threads through the soul - wearable device



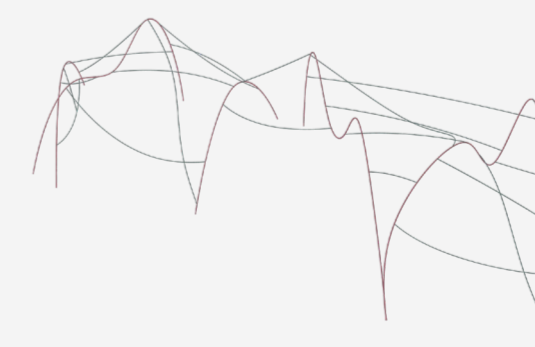
device to pavilion - collaging the device over the pavilion site



forming a tension structure



various materials woven for the skin as a 'collective'



move towards a network of threads using Selgascano precedents to allow for more internal space



the structure balancing off the social space below