IDIOSYNTOPIAS

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This thesis focuses on the **social and cultural issue of normalized behavior and subjectivity that is reinforced through current architectural spaces and imagined utopias.** It presents an alternative to social constructs of 'utopia' through **an argument for 'idiosyntopias.'**

Arguing from the angle of virtuality, there is a **critique of architectural models that prioritize singular virtualities exemplified in centuries of imagined and reimagined utopias, many of which seek impose specific societal ideals and behaviors.** An examination can be made of these various utopian representations from the standpoint of the particular subjectivities that they imply, specifically, how limited and non-diverse those subjects are. From the Futurama exhibition at the 1939 World Fair to the technological optimism and Space Age ideals represented in Googie architecture and the subsequent development of various studies of space stations such as the Stanford Torus, the designs of these architectural utopias emphasize existing notions of utopia and a narrow view of societal normalcy and values.

In contrast to these utopias, idiosyntopias are defined by architectural strategies of incompleteness, excessiveness, and imperfection which prioritize individuals' unique and creative interpretation of space. Incompleteness refers to a deficit of information leaving room for interpretation, excessiveness refers to too much information that allows for a multiplicity of readings, and imperfection refers to a conflict of information resulting in incongruous readings that must be negotiated.

This thesis project is located between 2 unspecified office buildings to visually represent contrast, and to demonstrate idiosyntopias designed as spaces of leisure and creative appropriation. It presents a series of mixed-use spaces that can be interpreted to be used for **performances, lectures, dancing, eating, parks space, leisure or recreation** designed with incompleteness, excessiveness, and imperfection. It serves as an urban scale example of architectural strategies for idiosyntopias applied in various programmatic conditions.

IDIOS [ONE'S OWN]
+ SYN [TOGETHER]
+ TOPO [PLACE]

Union 76 Station in Beverly Hills from *Architectural Digest*, Beau Peregoy, 2016.

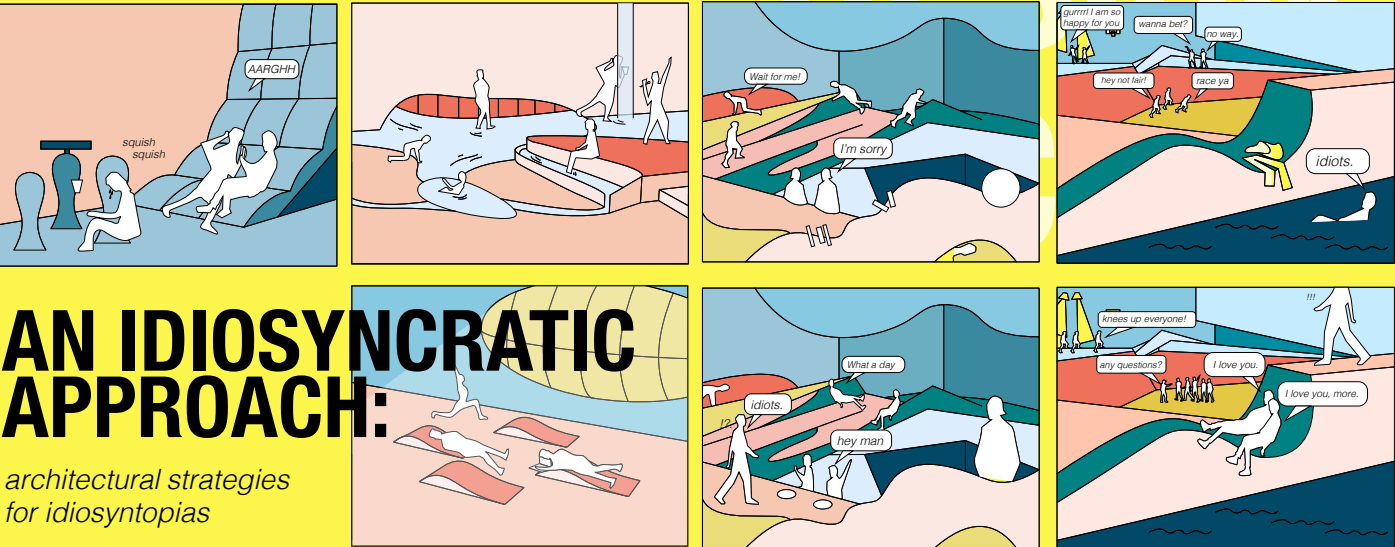**Theme Building LAX** from *Architectural Digest*, Beau Peregoy, 2016.

Interior of a Stanford torus, painted by Donald E. Davis

I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE

Futurama Balconies at 1939 World Fair, New York.

AN IDIOSYNCRATIC APPROACH:

architectural strategies for idiosyntopias

Lefebvre describes in his Critique of Everyday Life that it is through the development of the conditions of human life—rather than abstract control of productive forces—that humans could reach a concrete utopian existence. While development of human life conditions spans numerous fields of study—economics, social studies, politics, etc., architecture can reevaluate utopias as, rather, idiosyntopias to improve human life conditions. This can be done through designing for openness and otherness and a continual resistance to being defined, categorized, or directed to a specific subject through ambiguity of formal and spatial qualities. The ambiguity of the architecture can be qualified by:
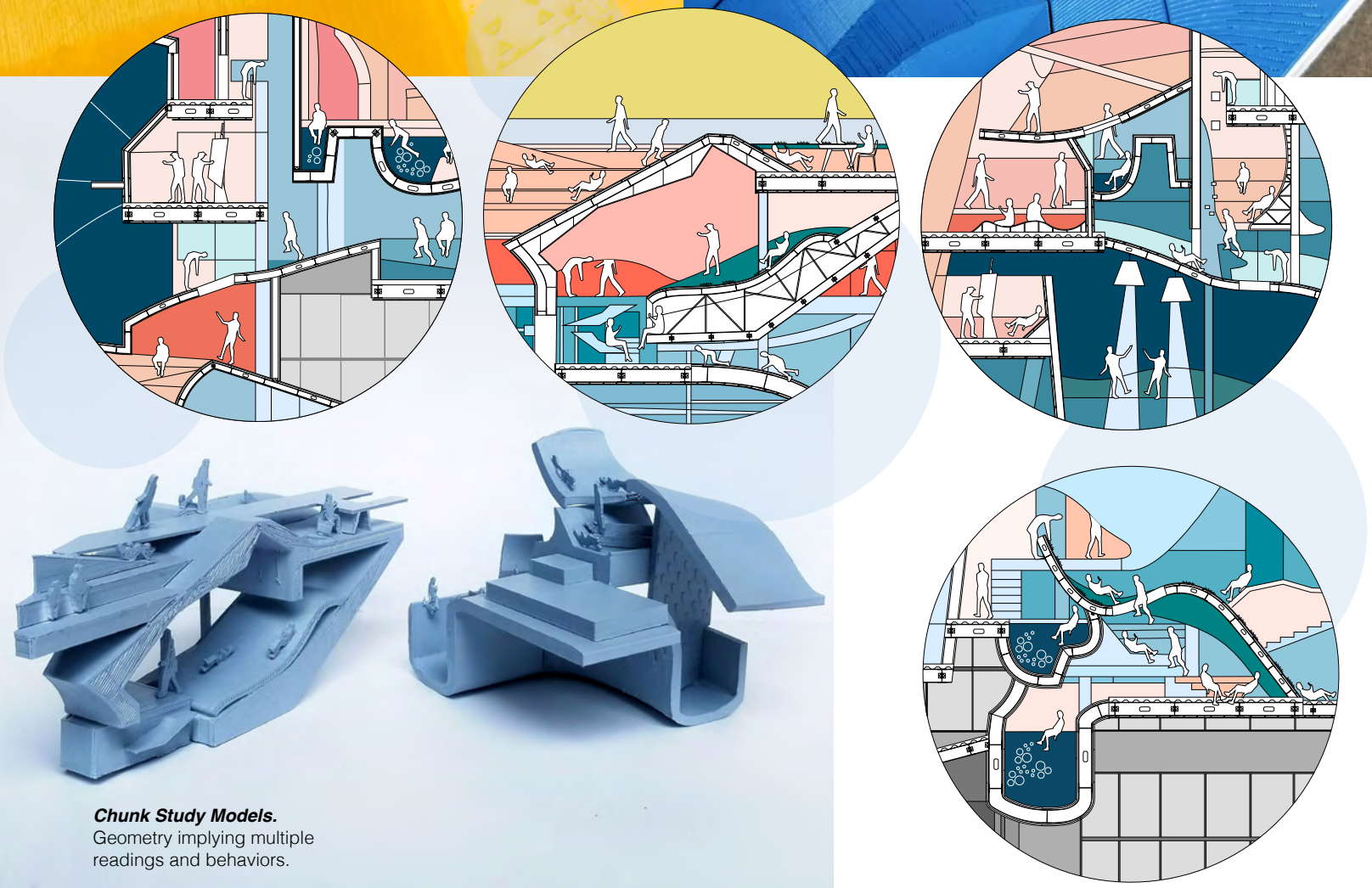
INCOMPLETENESS
EXCESSIVENESS
IMPERFECTION

Chunk Model photos.
Individual interpretation of space and programmatic agacencies.
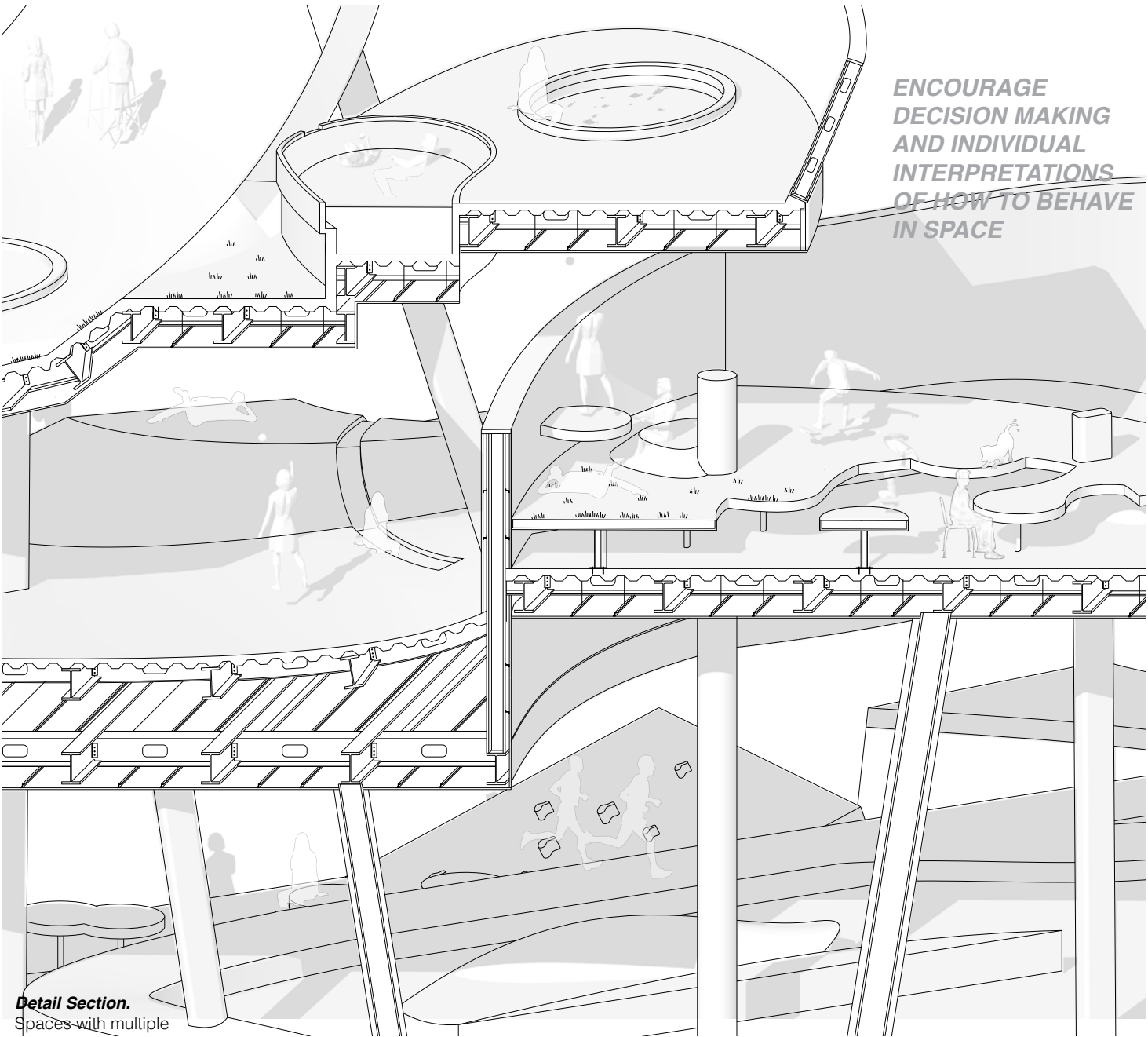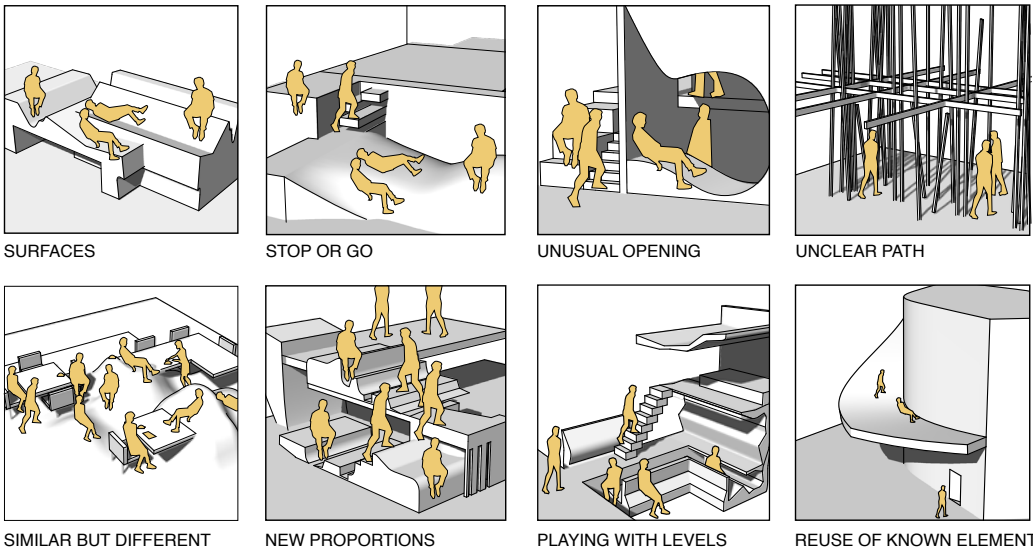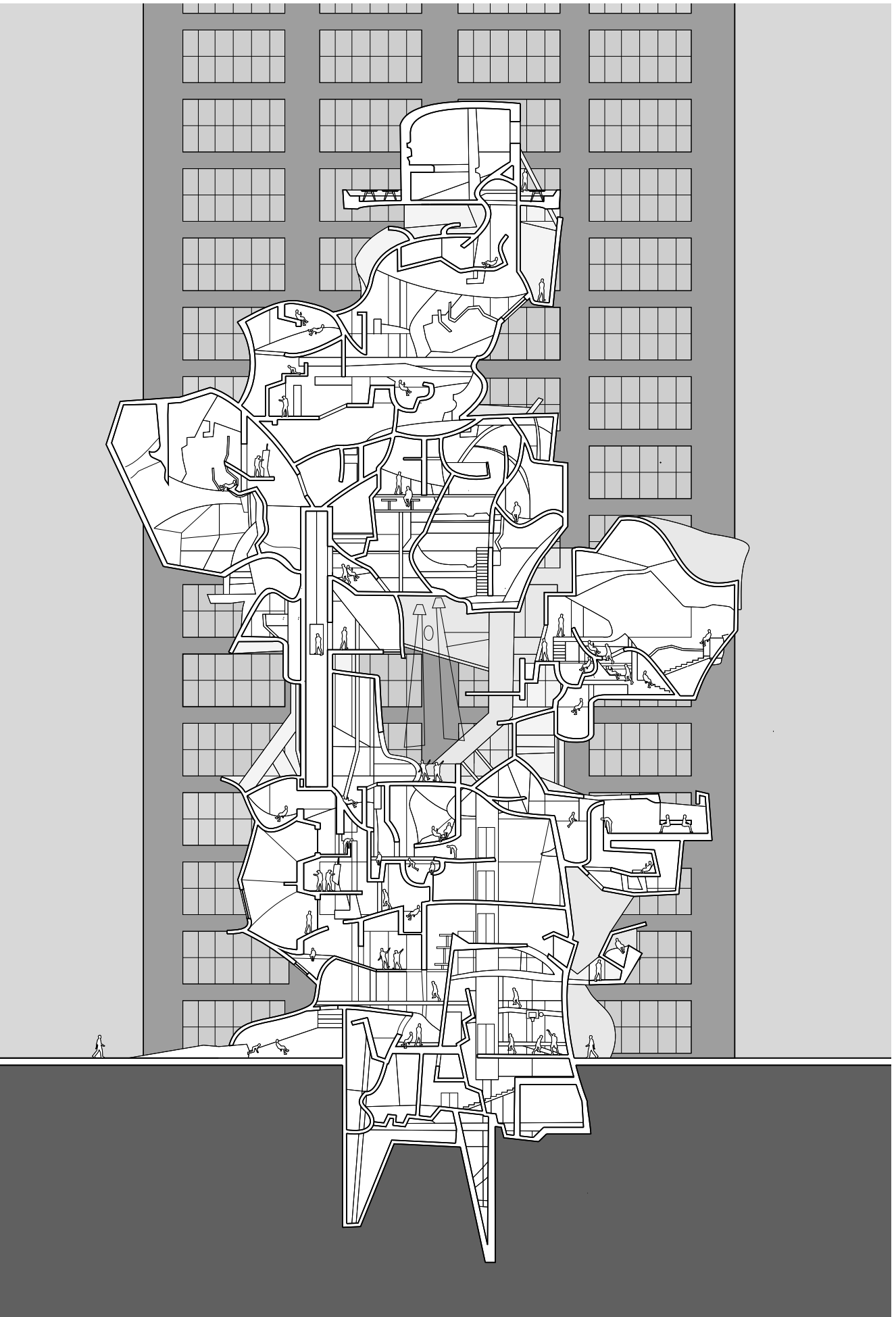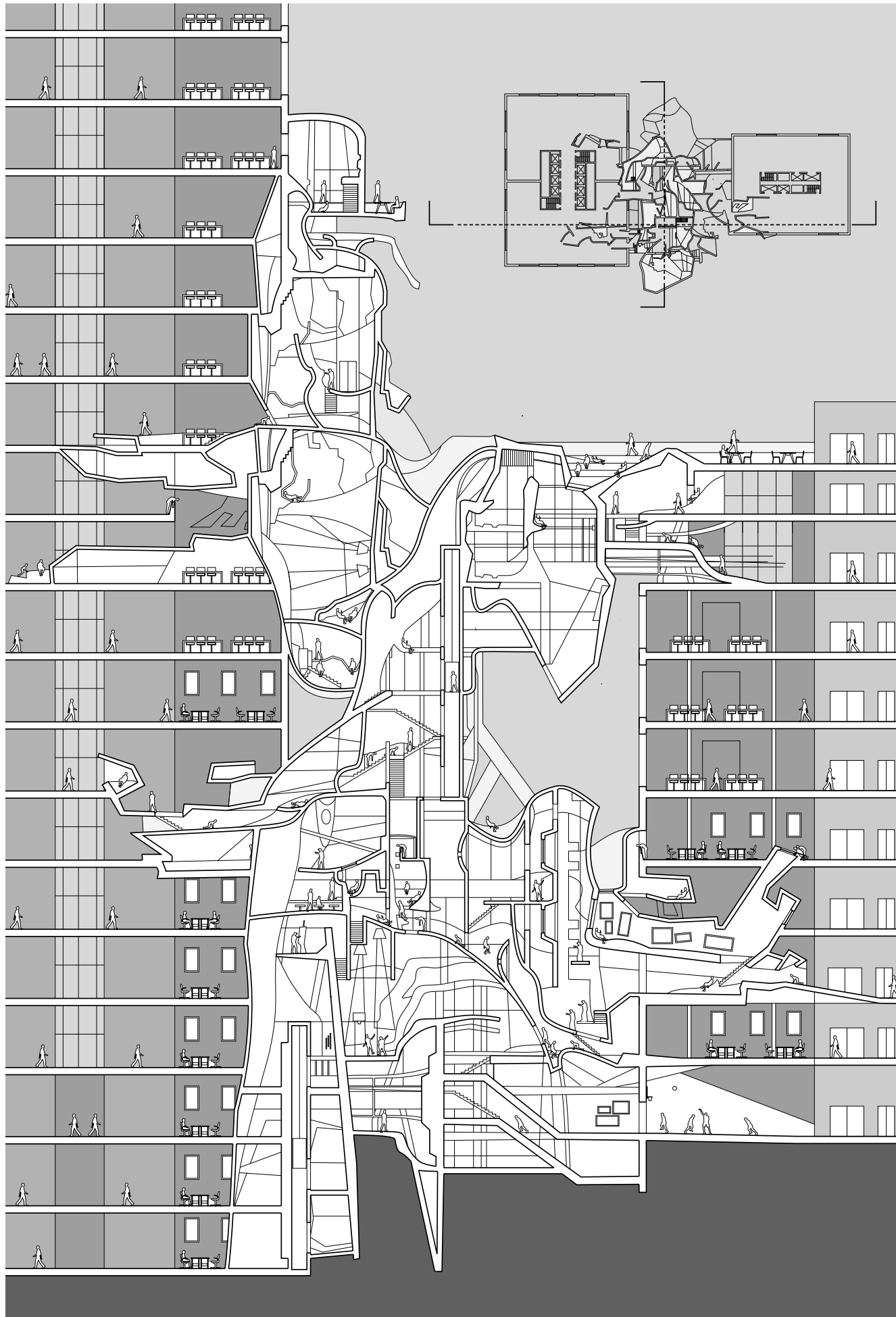

SECTION STUDIES:

Chunk Study Models.
Geometry implying multiple readings and behaviors.

DESIGN TECHNIQUES:

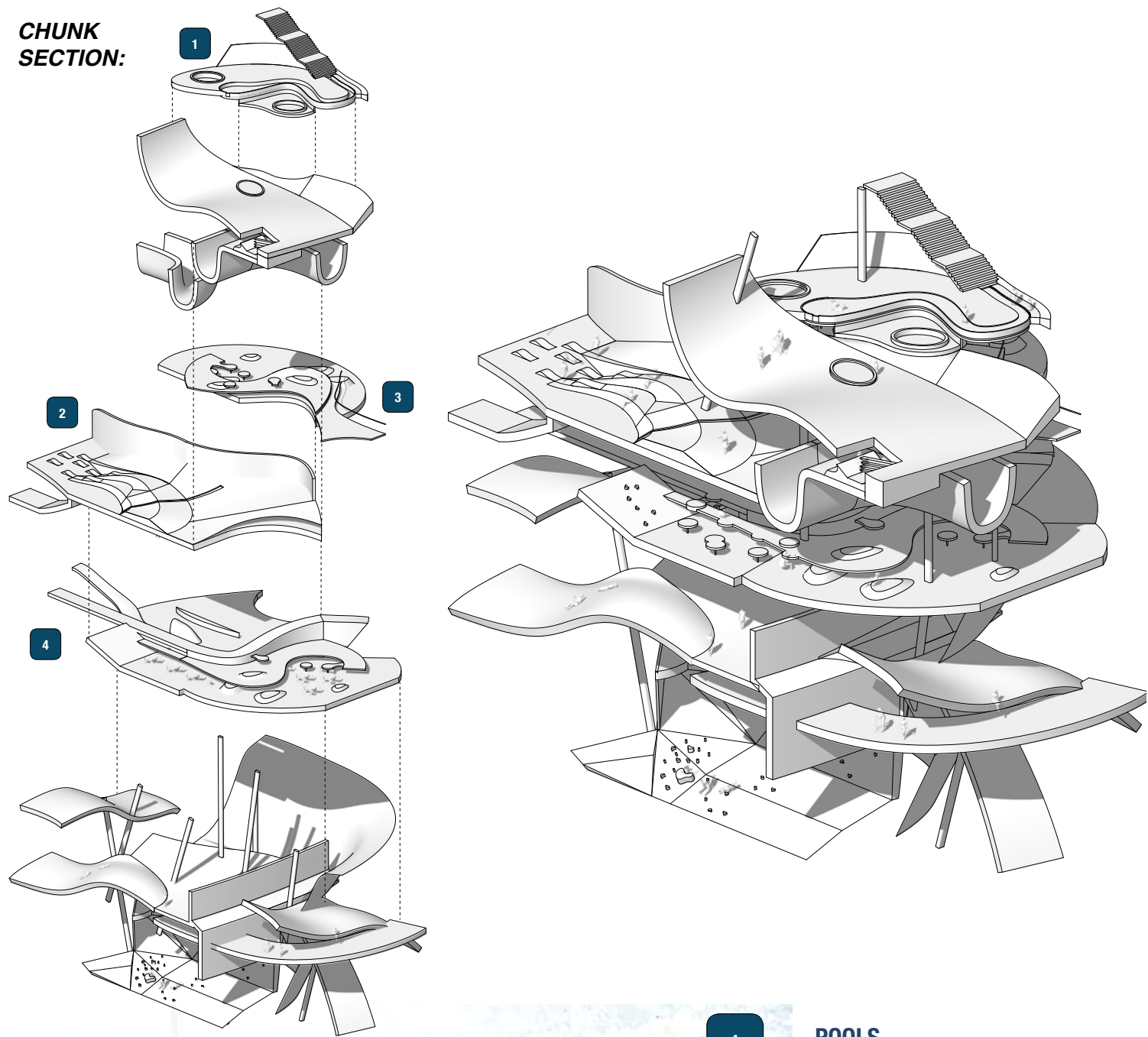|			
SURFACES	STOP OR GO	UNUSUAL OPENING	UNCLEAR PATH
SIMILAR BUT DIFFERENT	NEW PROPORTIONS	PLAYING WITH LEVELS	REUSE OF KNOWN ELEMENTS

ENCOURAGE DECISION MAKING AND INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATIONS OF HOW TO BEHAVE IN SPACE

Detail Section.
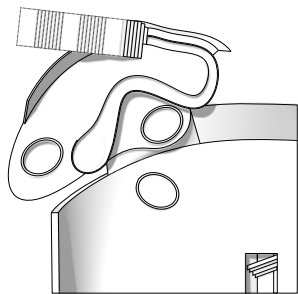Spaces with multiple programmatic interpretations.

CHUNK SECTION:

TANNING PATHS

The "tanning beds" imply surfaces for laying and they the warp into paths of various materials. It is unclear what each material and pathway is suggestive of and so users are able to make a decision on how to behave and how they interpret the blending of the laying surfaces with the path. They also serve as a placemaking tool for the whole area, implying activities such as yoga and stretching.

GRASSY TABLES

Grassy park space blends into the table surfaces of a cafe setting. Individual interpretation of these material differences and suggestions of surface height provide opportunities for individuals to feel enfranchised by making choices on how to perform in the space.
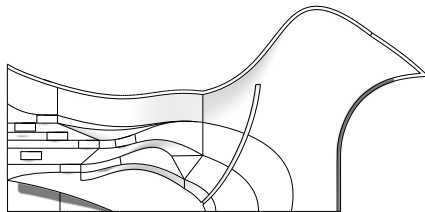
POOLS

There are fish in some pools and not in others, establishing mixed interpretations of what that means for how to behave. The water from one pool flows to the bottom of the stair, suggesting the possible interpretation of walking into it in addition to the possibility to walking past it or sitting on the ledge next to it. The width of the narrow end of the pool may cause conflict between those desiring to walk through it vs. sit on the ledge.

PATHS? TABLES? OR DIVISION OF SPACE?

Pathways can be used to travel along while also dividing space, but they are placed at heights that could be interpreted as tables. One could choose to cross over between the spaces over the paths, go along the paths, or use them as surfaces to eat or work on. These are suggestive but open to different interpretations.
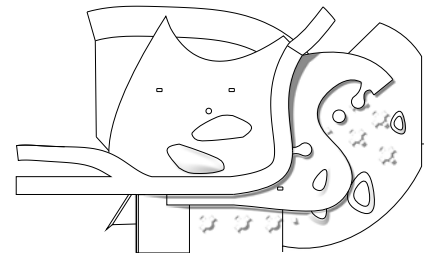
PAREIDOLIA

[parr-i-DOH-lee-ə]

DEFINITION: The tendency to interpret a vague stimulus as something known to the observer, such as seeing shapes in clouds, seeing faces in inanimate objects or abstract patterns, or hearing hidden messages in music.

INCOMPLETENESS
through
PAREIDOLIA
between the real and virtual, familiar and unknown

This furniture study serves as a bridge between the real and virtual. It is an experiment of a possibility of formal qualities that allow users to enter virtual space, engaging imagination and alternate possible realities. [Virtual space refers to the space of illusion that a representational object or architecture brings the mind to.]

The experiment consists of draping material over a variety of medium sized "everyday" objects to imply complexity in geometry that can be interpreted differently among individuals. The objects are dismantled, rearranged, and wrapped loosely to create a variety of spaces for the human body to interact with it. Overlaying fragments of known objects establishes an unknown condition open to interpretation amongst individuals. There are variations of blended surfaces overlaying the objects that appeal to the body and a variation of body-object interactions.

The technique of using objects as a base for the geometry creates a flexible [multi-use], indeterminate [vague], and disruptive [unusual] spatial condition that triggers variable effects within individuals that encourages access of the unknown.

VARIOUS INTERPRETATIONS DEPENDENT ON INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTIVITIES