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PLOT 987; Rethinking The Egg

The Dome, Downtown Martyr Square

Noor Al Jundi



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INTRODUCTION

The civil war was born in 1975 The country started to boil into religious conflict. You had lying there; an outlandish structure, sunny-side up in the middle of downtown Beirut. It resembles a broken egg, a sort of black swan to the dazzling Al-Amin mosque and the modern silhouette around it. While the war hardened in downtown Beirut, shelling cracked the tower to wreckage and army men stole seats in the lavish cinema room. Forgotten and broken drainage systems flooded the underground shopping center. The egg coincidentally nested along what is known as the Green Line, the “no man’s land” that divided East and West Beirut; where mother nature took over after long years of untouched land after the civil war had ended. The cinema egg’ oval’ mushroom’ aliespace ship’ eventually was chopped into leftovers of a “Lebanese Humpty Dumpty” who once sat on a great hall and had a great spall because of a great fall (the war). Of course the vision for the downtown cinema dome and shops underneath, all sunk in its bleeding yoke. The egg can’t seem to hatch. Then for 15 years after the civil war, the Egg decided to party. It brought the Lebanese citizens together. It was used as a cultural public space, hosting exhibitions; theater plays and raves while at the same time several proposals were considered for its renovation (including one by BO18 Bernard Khoury, who wanted to enclose the outside shell with reflective panels, turning it into an alien space ship. And then in 2005, they shot Hariri and had everything on pending mode once again. After Hariri’s assassination, Solidere sold the land to the Abu Dhabi Investment House (ADIH) as the Beirut Gate project. It pissed off a lot of people because it sort of ensured the Egg’s destruction and the “Dubaization” of Beirut that so many lebanese cant digest. Our beloved Egg has since then traded baskets once more: the Olayan Group bought the land in 2009 and had a new plan for the area that would have had the Egg turned into the restaurant of a luxury hotel; the egg has been served; almost. “Octavio Paz once said that “architecture is history’s unbribable witness,” and in that - the Egg is serving its duty, affirming everyday the hurting past it witnessed since the day it stood, and many want to protect that. In opposition, others perceive it as “the Soap”, and wouldn’t mind washing the culture away to make way for a new history. Until this moment, the Lebanese Humpty Dumpty lies, broken and awaiting the stitch- maybe surgery but many would plead, just please not plastic.

'Since its construction till today, the Egg has seen the different life cycles of Beirut: During the pre-war golden years when it functioned as a theatre, then the fifteen years of civil war when the Egg was used as a bunker, and the post war reconstruction period when it became the monolith of Beirut.'

Only one tower was ever constructed, and it is now long gone. But after 15 years of civil war and decades of threats of demolition, the bullet shot, concrete egg shaped icon still stands



"Architecture is history's unbribable witness" Octavio Paz

All Projects Halted till present

2016

The Olayan Group bought the land in 2009 and commissioned a new plan for the area that would have had the Egg turned into the restaurant of a luxury hotel.

2009

Assassination of Hariri in Downtown

2005

2013

%80 of the buildings listed as historical landmarks, after the end of the civil war have been destroyed

After Hariri's assassination, Solidere sold the land to the Abu Dhabi Investment House (ADIH)

Post war reconstruction period when it became the monolith of Beirut

For about 15 years... revival. It was u... space, hosting... tal theater play

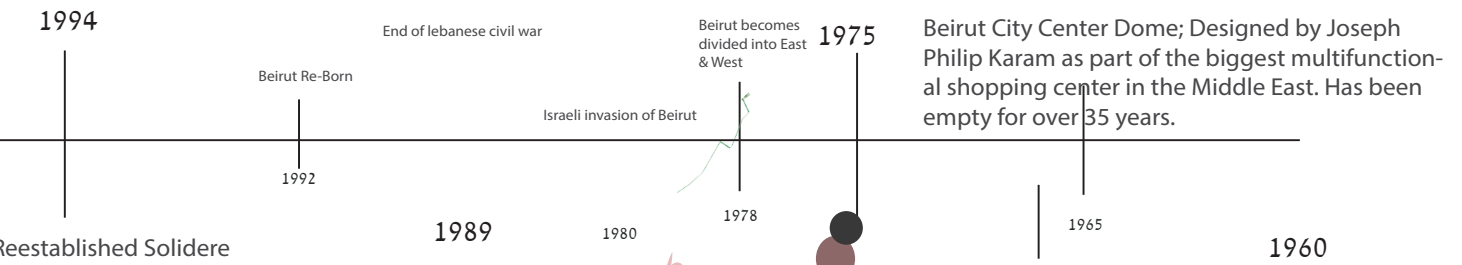
Prime minist... used the D... headquarte... foundation... basement f... the Egg bef



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 used as a cultural public
 exhibitions, experimen-
 s and raves



3 LIFE CYCLES OF THE EGG



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 s and four
 floors next to
 fore aborting.



Civil War

Fifteen years of civil war when the Egg was used as a bunker





Design and Research Questions



When it boils down to rethinking the Dome, we must think of what it was deisgend to be from the beggin- ing; a huge space that historically was supposed to include “three blocks that were to house 144 shops, a 100-m2 supermarket and a 100 seater movie theater; with three separate towers of 8, 12, and 21 floors with a total capacity of 800 offices.” (Villanueva ,2014). However, three years later the only structure built was only one bock and one tower that are currently in ruins due to the civil war. Transforming that one block with the iconic “Dome” that was supposed to house the theatre- with its existing five story underground space- is a potential for a great landscape project.

How can I transform the Egg into a public space with- out losing its cultural heritage and ruining its facade as a Heritage and Iconic Site?

How Do I transform the building and the space to be all inclusive and inviting to all different people from different backgrounds, and not just the elite consumers of our Downtown area?

What is Beirut as an inclusive entire city in need of, especially in Downtown Area; in terms of infrustruc- ture and space?

How can we merge architecure and landscape architec- ture together into a functional space?

What are the rules and implication (politically) in Downtown area, that can be worked with and around for this project?

Questions to pose for the Lebanese citizens to aid with design:

- What would you like the space of the Dome to be, in terms of a space you could use?
- What is your impression of the Dome now?
- What do you find missing in your neighborhood area, in terms of activities?
- would you be interested in a space that combines the different neighborhoods around you together?
- What do you love most about your city/ neighbor- hood?
- Do you dislike surrounding neighborhoods? would you or do you visit most/ which ones?
- What would get you out of your neighborhood?
- Where do your favorite experiences happen?
- Would you like to see more access to the waterfront? As well as more large parks/ Open green spaces?
- What makes a cities building iconic?
- Would you stop to admire a historic building?

METHODOLOGY

Method: To approach this site as a Heritage site, and continue analysing it with a perspective of preservation but at the same time reuse of abandoned sites.

I looked into the laws governing Heritage sites in Lebanon and Beirut Central District to find proof that this could method could work.

According to a case study written by the Association for the Protection of the Lebanese Heritage (APLH) (2016), there are several circumstances by which a law can protect a building or any historical site that would be deemed worthy of as a cultural treasure. A development committee from a consultancy firm by Khatib and Alamy proposed 5 stages that would render a structure or location as a historical treasure. Firstly, historical buildings, or any kind of historical location linked to a certain aspect of historical value or does not exceed 34 buildings is a good means to protect under law. Secondly, any building that does not partake in a historical event yet has architectural standards that exceed excellence. Thirdly, any building similar to that of the second point yet has been caused damage by war and was unrepaired. Fourthly, buildings that have no historical importance yet their key architectural elements are of great value and importance. Lastly, buildings that are less than 60 years old, are of different unique architectural criteria, architectural designs are altered, are of danger to the public, are too expensive to maintain in shape. Therefore, these intrinsic aspects of the case study lead to an outcome that enables the dome to be maintained and protected by law. What's more, the dome has three of the 5 points discussed in the case study, yet it has no pure age limit or extreme historical importance. However, the dome does hold important architectural value that would enable it to be a beacon of an era where war was present. Furthermore, the architectural potential available within the dome adds value to the eminent ideals portrayed in most of downtowns structures.

“The committee, a group of architects and architecture consultants, ruled that 592 out of the 1051 buildings do not meet all the criteria required to render them ‘protected’, leaving only 459 buildings to protect in Beirut.

Still, owners of old buildings continued on pressuring the ministry of culture until it re approached the government to ‘revise’ their decrees; this happened with legislative decree 33 (5/2/1998) and legislative decree 7 (20/5/1998) and with putting the development Committee in charge of reviewing which buildings should be protected and which could be demolished.

The study made by the Development committee and the consultancy firm Khatib and Alamy, classified old buildings in 4 categories:

A: historical buildings, linked to historical figures, featuring special architectural and artistic qualities, generally in good shape and requiring a minimum of restoration work: 34 bldgs

B: buildings not linked to specific historical periods but featuring high architectural standards or a distinct structural build: 127

C: are the category B buildings except that those buildings suffered significant damage caused by disrepair or war: 48

D: buildings with no significant historical value and not linked to a specific period but which feature distinctive architectural elements: 161

E: buildings with no historical or architectural value for the following reasons:
-for being less than 50-60 years old
-do not follow traditional architecture criteria
-the original architecture/design was fundamentally changed/altered
-considerably altered by the introduction/use of new materials
-are dangerous to live in or in the vicinity of, due to flawed structure
-are too expensive to maintain in shape.”

SOURCE:

Home - APLH. (2016). Protect-lebaneseheritage.com. Retrieved 18 December 2016, from <http://www.protect-lebaneseheritage.com/assets/Uploads/applications/law-background-.rtf>

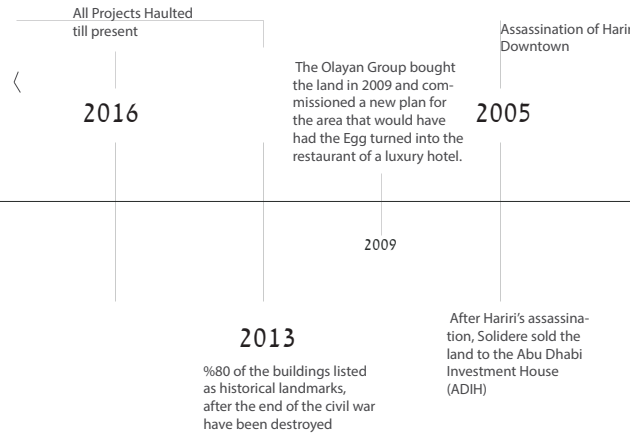


DECONSTRUCTION OF THE DOME WITH TIME



'Since its construction till today, the Egg has seen the different life cycles of Beirut: During the pre-war golden years when it functioned as a theatre, then the fifteen years of civil war when the Egg was used as a bunker, and the post war reconstruction period when it became the monolith of Beirut.'

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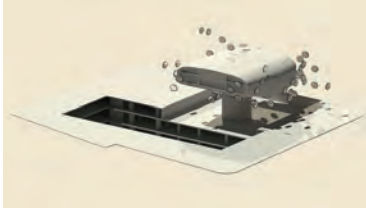
Roman Ruins



Place

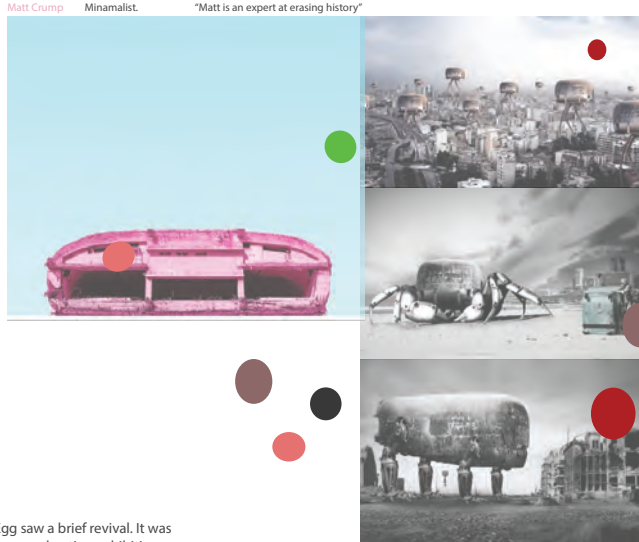
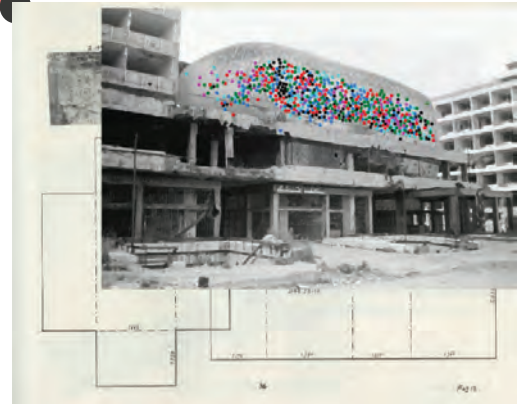


Anthony Saroufim



ALIEN LIKE STRUCTURE

ARTWORKS DEDICATED TO THE DOME

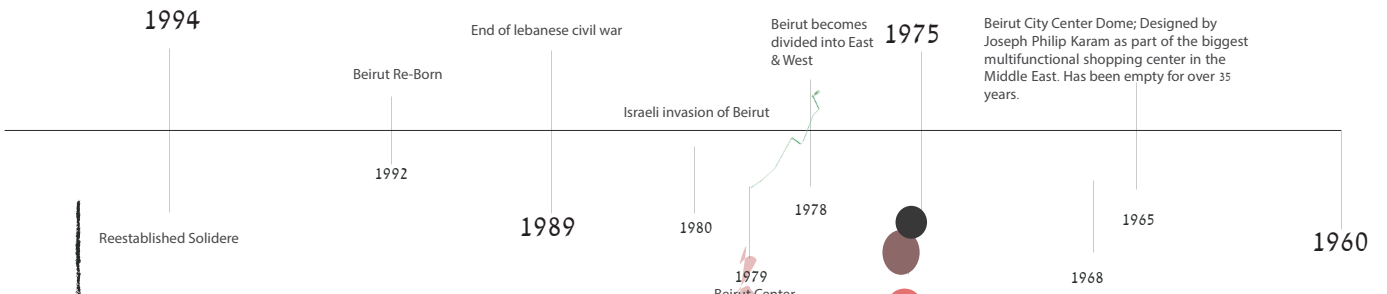


Matt Crump Minimalist. "Matt is an expert at erasing history"

Bernard Khoury

For about 15 years the Egg saw a brief revival. It was used as a cultural public space, hosting exhibitions, experimental theater plays and raves

3 LIFE CYCLES OF THE EGG



Prime minister Hariri, used the Dome as his headquarters, he laid the foundations and four basement floors next to the Egg before aborting.

Pre-war golden years when it functioned as a theatre

SURROUNDING HISTORICAL SPACES



Fifteen years of civil war when the Egg was used as a bunker

REVIEW

Creative Reuse of Buildings: Volume One
By Derek Latham

“Creative Re-use’ is more than just the conversation or rehabilitation of a property for a new, or continued use. It is a process that harnesses the energy and quality of the original building, whether of special architectural or historic interest or simply a work-a-day redundant building, and combines this with the new energy and activity that the new use brings. The balance between the existing building and the new use is variable dependent upon character, condition and the needs of the user. The aim is to achieve a harmonious balance, celebrating both..”

This book introduces “creative Re’use” as an active force, a worthwhile option, that is more likely to achieve a balance of user needs and wider community responsibility than demolition and redevelopment, or in many cases development on greenfield site

Addressing the Vacant and Abandoned Property Problem

John Accordino,
Gary T. Johnson

One of the most visible and demoralizing signs of inner city decline is vacant and abandoned property—houses, apartments, commercial and industrial buildings, and lots—that sit and deteriorate, undermining the appearance and economic value of blocks, neighborhoods, and city districts. Such property is defined here as a building or lot that has been vacant for two years or more (cf., United States General Accounting Office, 1978).

Adaptive Reuse; Preserving our past, building our future

The benefits of adaptively reusing heritage buildings

- Environmental

One of the main environmental benefits of reusing buildings is the retention of the original building’s “embodied energy”. The CSIRO defines embodied energy as the energy consumed by all of the processes associated with the production of a building, from the acquisition of natural resources to product delivery, including mining, manufacturing of materials and equipment, transport

and administrative functions. By reusing buildings, their embodied energy is retained, making the project much more environmentally sustainable than entirely new construction.

Social:

The reuse of heritage buildings in established residential areas can provide the community with new housing and commercial property opportunities. In the greater Sydney region, for example, a number of large publicly owned sites containing heritage buildings are being redeveloped including the former Parramatta, Lidcombe, and Rozelle Hospitals. Location, access and public transport availability will always attract developers, and the size of the sites, and variety of buildings available for reuse mean that a good mix of dwelling types can be offered, with broad appeal to buyers as a result.

Economic:

A study for the NSW Heritage Council that included four adaptive reuse or redevelopment sites revealed that “the combination of financial incentives and the commercially oriented nature of the adaptive re-use schemes outweighed any extra heritage related costs and project risks”. The study also concluded that “these sympathetic adaptive re-use schemes have created commercially viable investment assets for the owners”.

Promoting Innovation:

The adaptation of heritage buildings presents a genuine challenge to architects and designers to find innovative solutions. As development pressures increase in our cities, more heritage buildings are being reused, producing good examples of creative designs that retain heritage significance.



Case Studies

From Rubble to the Ritz – Revitalizing Abandoned Sites

Play points – Maybe when you hear the word “play” you relate it to kids, but at Duisburg-Nord there are play points for everyone. You can find diving courses in the former Gasometer, now among the most innovative diving center in Germany. Also, high ropes and climbing walls, which are built on the ore bunker. There is also horse riding, archery courses, BMX riding, and lots of kid’s playgrounds full of surprises!

There is great balance between architecture, history, and nature, which is being maintained and developed through time. You can find ecological farming and agriculture that composed the landscape before the industrial era. Now they form the environmental education program, with classes for children, teaching them about food and animals. The West Ruhr region’s biological station is also located on the territory of the park.

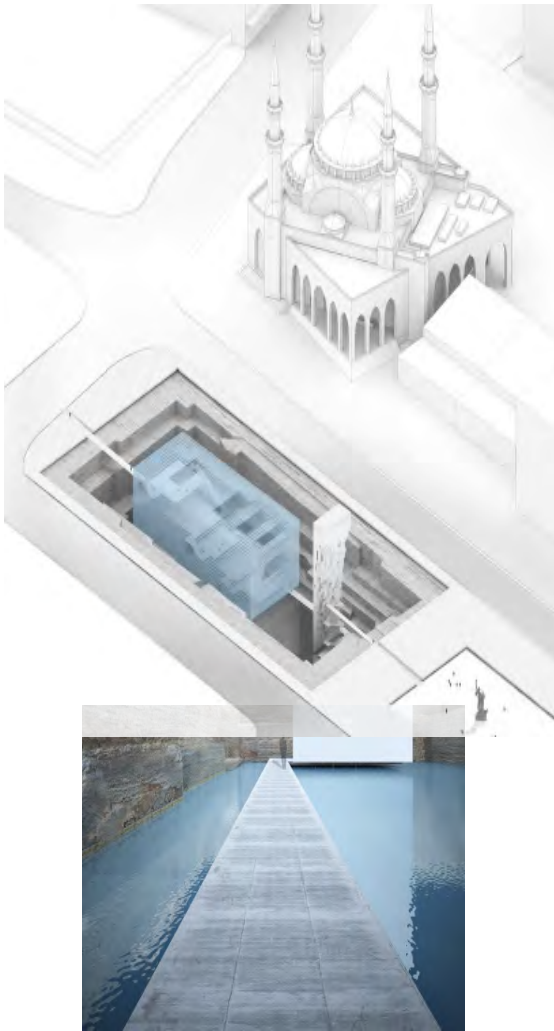
Landscape Park Duisburg-Nord has now been hosting numerous events, such as festivals, exhibitions, sports events, trade fairs, summer cinema, local arts festivals (Ruhrtriennale), parties, and many more.



Anthony saroufim proposes to transform beirut’s egg into a camera obscura

As a witness of the city’s evolution, the egg was then transformed into an actor, constantly shifting roles and adapting to the changing theatrics of the city. taking this into consideration, anthony saroufim aims to transform the egg into a huge camera obscura. the bullet holes on the site are transformed into optical devices, where a magnifying lens is placed in the void. the uncalculated and unpredictable effect of the bullets on the building becomes the only visual contact with the other side.

the way the optical lenses were placed around the egg is related to the density of the damaged areas of the skin. the circulation, made of bridges and stairs, links the lenses together. since the placement of the lenses is related to the amount of destruction, the added exterior structure supports not only the lenses and the circulation system, but also the weak parts of the egg. thanks to this new system, the interior spaces of the site remain untouched and inaccessible to the visitors, representing the part of war that can’t be changed.



GM architects sinks museum of civilizations into beirut square

As a proposal for a reflective experience deeply rooted in its city's history, lebanese studio GM architects has envisioned 'museum of civilizations', sunk into the landscape of beirut's martyrs' square. the proposal excavates through various strata of earth, which contain traces from greek, roman, byzantine, ottoman, and french societies. the large hole is then infilled with two structures – a massive gridded scaffold and tall white tower – which are connected by a singular circulation path. a succession of voids break through the tressle-like block, and are occupied by platforms for exhibition use as well as general observation.

The earth walls surrounding the sunken site express lebanon's rich and multicultural history. This dense legacy has produced what the designers describe as, 'an amalgamation of arrangements and styles' in the built environment. in turn, the proposed structures, although visually and spatially non-referential, serve as an addition to the culturally complex mixture.



Superkilen

An urban park project in Copenhagen divided into three main areas: The Red Square, The Black Market and The Green Park. While The Red Square designates the modern, urban life with café, music and sports, The Black Market is the classic square with fountain and benches. The Green Park is a park for picnics, sports and walking the dog.

The people living in the immediate vicinity of the park relate to more than 50 different nationalities. Instead of using the designated city objects/furnitures used for parks and public spaces, people from the area was asked to nominate specific city objects such as benches, bins, trees, playgrounds, manhole covers and signage from other countries. These objects were chosen from a country of the inhabitant's national origin or from somewhere else encountered through traveling. The objects were either produced in a 1:1 copy or bought and transported to the site.

CONTEXT



Site Selection & Background

Site Chosen: The Dome abandoned building in Downtown Martyr Square. What is so convenient to the location of the Egg- is that it lies directly on the green line- a creation and result of Beirut's civil war

The fragile geographical spot that separated Beirut into two opposing spatial units got the name Green Line because of the lush green belt that emerged in the spot when trees and grass grew in the midst of the streets and buildings that were nearly demolished, destroyed and abandoned in the land untouched by men for years. Many of the buildings along the Green Line were severely damaged or destroyed during the war, including the Egg.

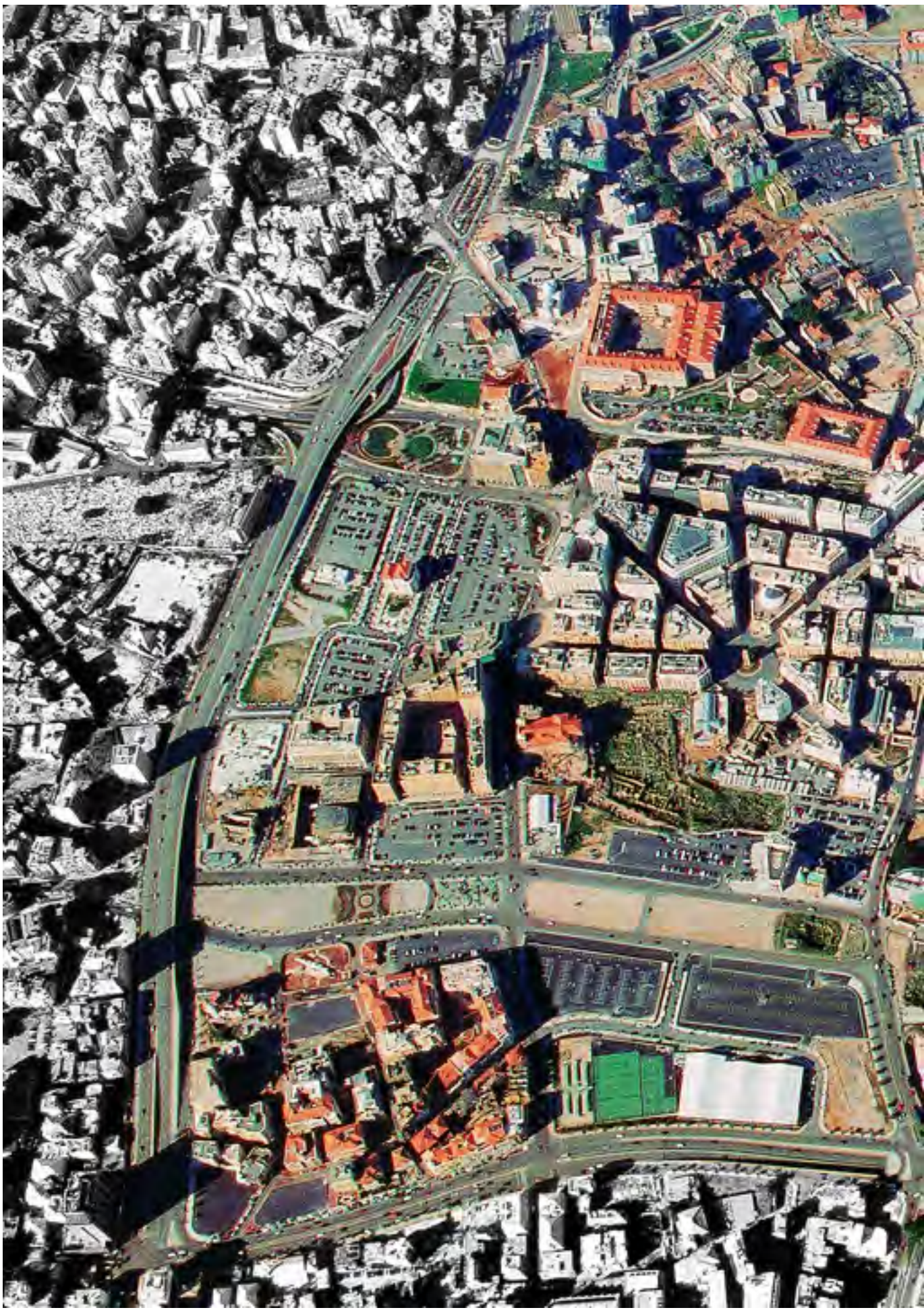


It lies directly between Al Amine Mosque and the abandoned church of Saint Vincent. Directly adjacent to the Dome is a huge parking lot and also office buildings, commercial shops, and residential sky scrapers.

The building of The Dome was built by Joseph Philippe Karam; it is now part of Solider and owned by Olayan Group; they plan on transforming it into a Hotel and Club.



Downtown Martyr Sq.





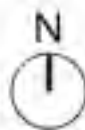
The City & The Site



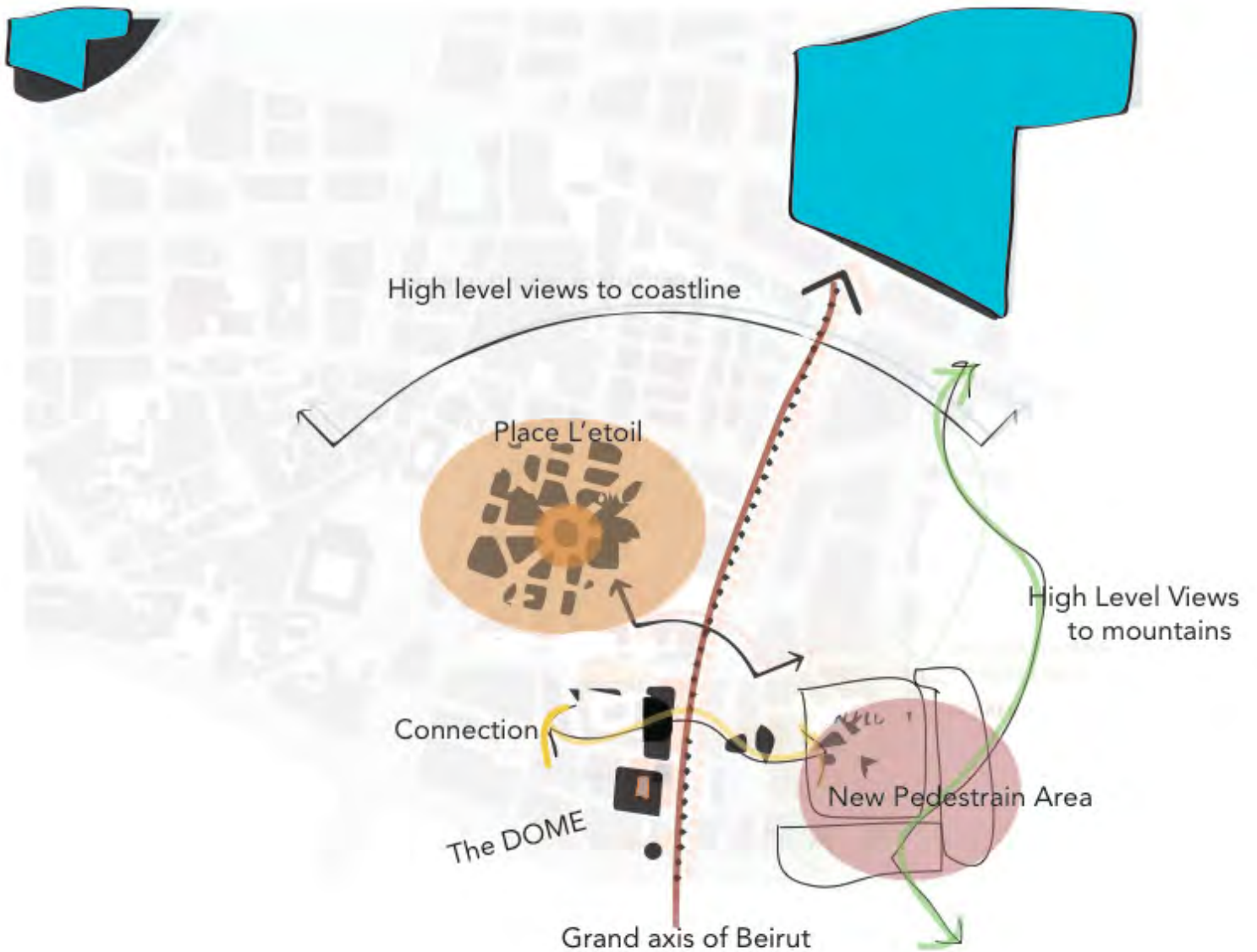


LEGEND

- 1 MARTYRS STATUE
- 2 RUE BECHARA EL KHOURY
- 3 AVENUE DU GENERAL FOAAD CHEHAB
- 4 PLACE DE L'ETOILE
- 5 FIRST BASIN OF BEIRUT PORT
- 6 GRAND SERAIL
- 7 COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION
- 8 LEBANESE PARLIAMENT
- 9 MINISTRY OF FINANCE
- 10 SAINT GEORGES GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
- 11 SAINT GEORGE MARONITE CATHEDRAL
- 12 MOHAMMED AL-AMIN MOSQUE
- 13 THE DOME
- 14 SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH
- 15 PROPOSED GATEWAY TOWER
- 16 GARDENS OF FORGIVENESS
- 17 THE SOUKS



INVENTORY



Context & Location Strategy

The strategic location of the egg could also be the reason why it would destroy it.

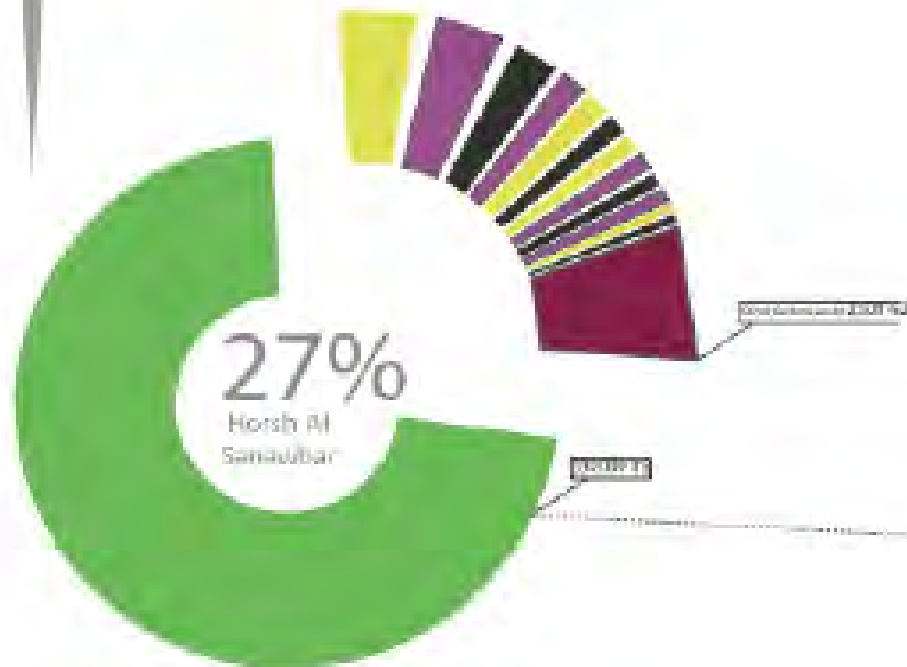
What is so convenient to the location of the Egg contextually is that high end corporations would find it geographically strategic due to the high level views to the coast as well as to the mountains-making it favorable for constructing high rise hotels or commercial spaces- which more likely would not preserve the

Religious Dispersion



Site Inventory

Percentage of public gardens and open spaces in Beirut



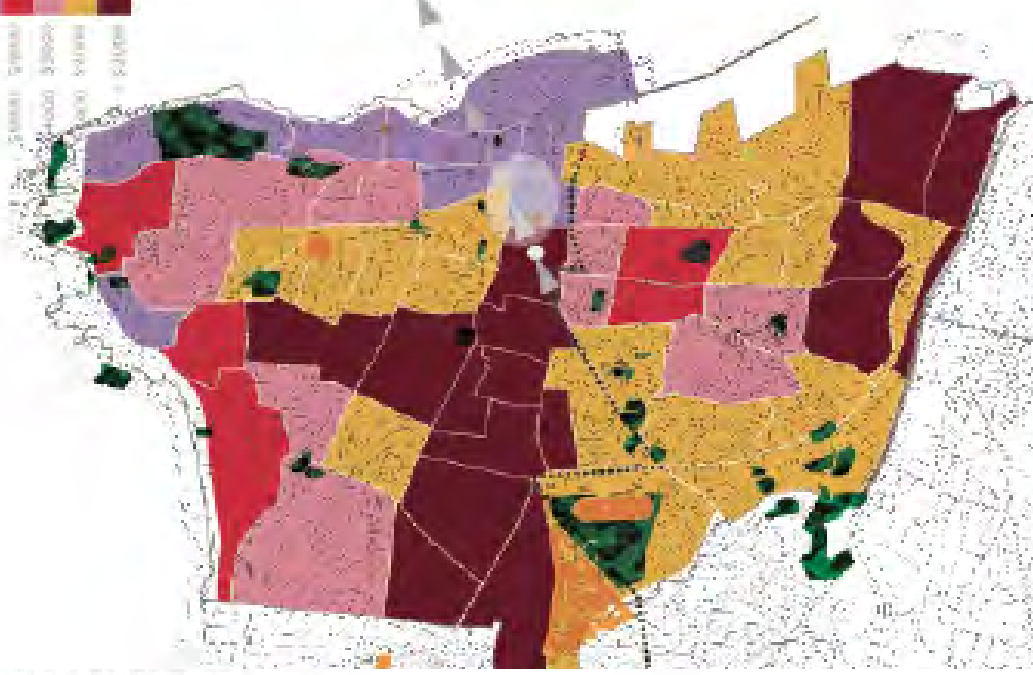
Green Areas



Prices by highest/sqm



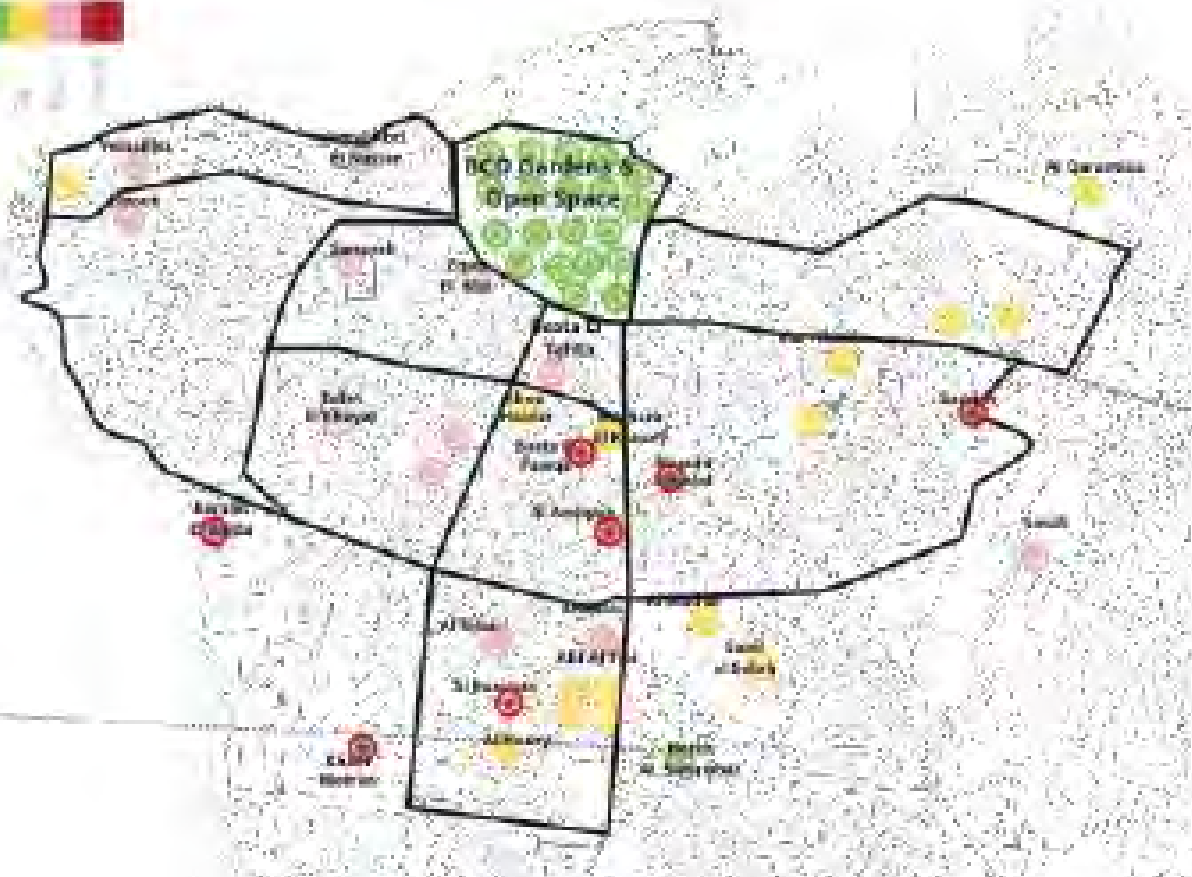
$\le 5,000$
 5,000 - 7,500
 7,500 - 10,000
 10,000 - 12,500
 12,500 - 15,000
 15,000 - 20,000



Public Gardens in Municipal Madrid



1-2
 3-4
 5-6
 7-8
 9-10
 11-12
 13-14
 15-16
 17-18
 19-20
 21-22
 23-24
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 97-98
 99-100



BORDERS

- Public space
- Private space
- Public space (green)
- Public space (blue)
- Public space (yellow)
- Public space (orange)
- Public space (red)
- Public space (purple)
- Public space (brown)



Accessibility

- Public space
- Private space
- Public space (green)
- Public space (blue)
- Public space (yellow)
- Public space (orange)
- Public space (red)
- Public space (purple)
- Public space (brown)





DESIGN PROCESS



Art Exhibition Dome



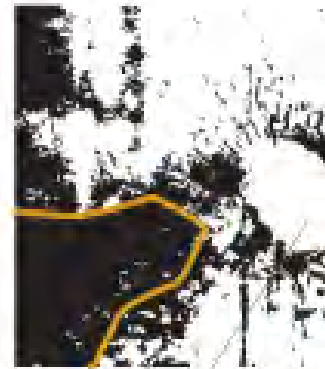
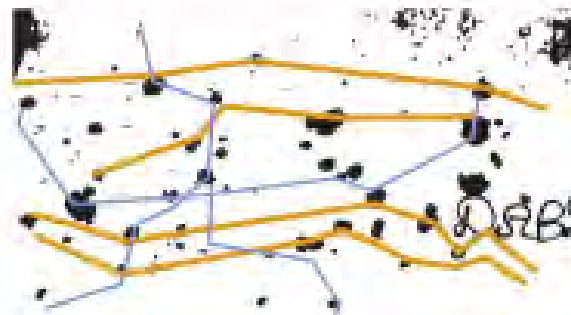
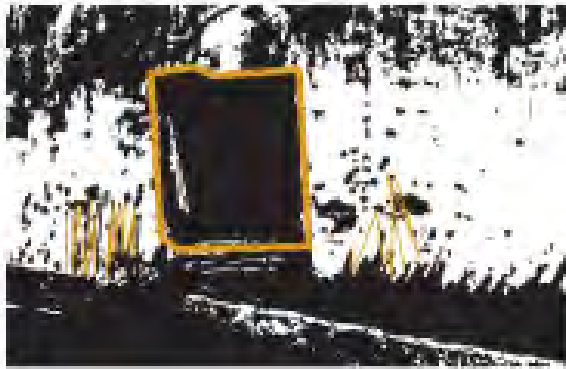
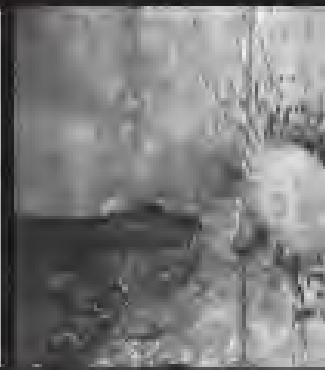
Remnants and Characteristic of Building (Existing Old in contrast with New but abandoned Reconstruction)



THE EGG

Design Patterns Morphology

Cracks & Bullet Holes



Elements: cracks and bullet hole patterns on the ground that shift the ground and create an experience walking above pathways with view into underground memorial park

Some bullet holes were exaggerated into cannon like openings to allow sunlight into underground park. Showing that war still brings about a rejuvenation of Beirut. Similar to the green line between cement and destruction



s - translated into the
functions. Some break
experience where you're
views to the basement

ated and created
might to enter to our
the destruction from
ion of the earth in
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PROPOSAL

Using Art to transform my design patterns into functions and reclaiming the unused abandoned building and transforming it into multifunctional spaces that blur the divisions between inside and outside (Architecture and Landscape).

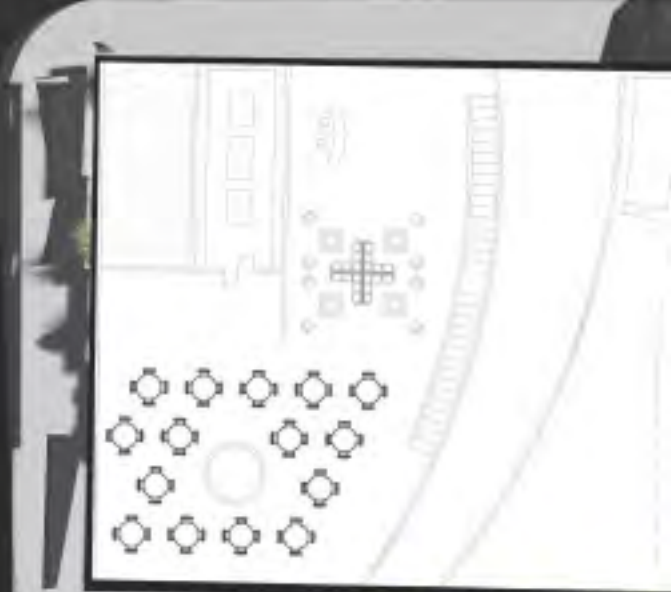
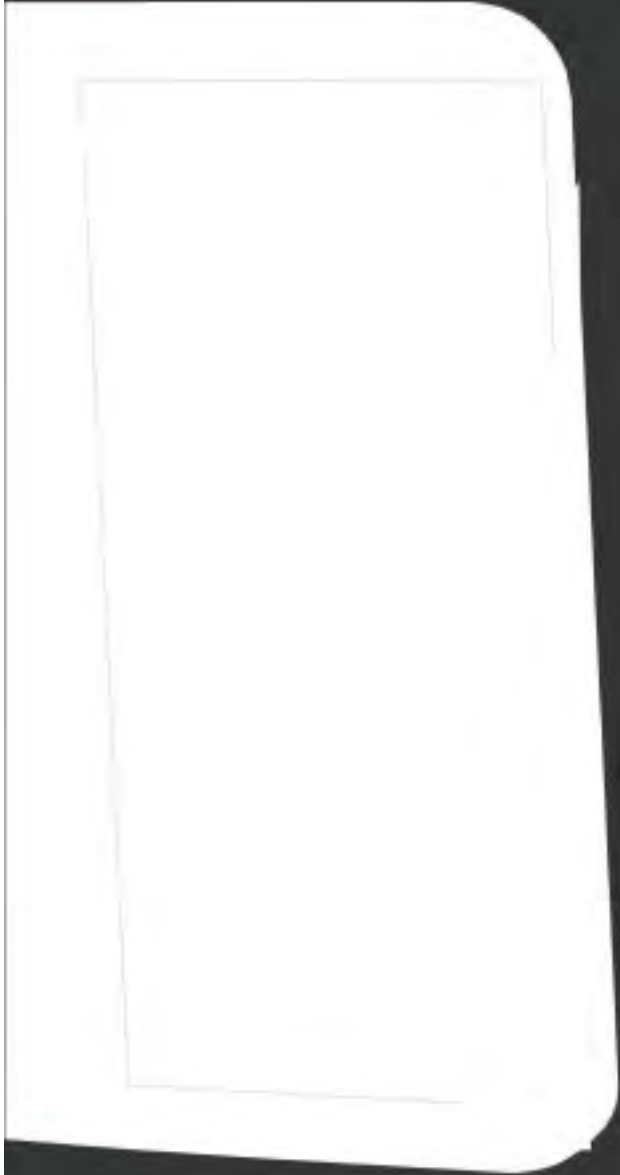
The Civil war was born in 1975
The country boiled into religious conflict
you had lying there, an outlandish structure- sunny side up in the middle of Downtown Beirut
It resembles a broken egg, as lebanese people point at it and call it "El Baydah".
It was never finished and never rebuilt- Designed by the prominent lebanese architect; Jospheh Phillipe Karam.
Originally was supposed to function as a Theatre (The dome) and a shopping mall with underground parking.
My design methodology is to show it is possible to design more vibrant urban spaces through design strategies that preserve and blur traditional distance between architecture and landscape.

DESIGN



Master Plan





Ground Floor Plan
1/100



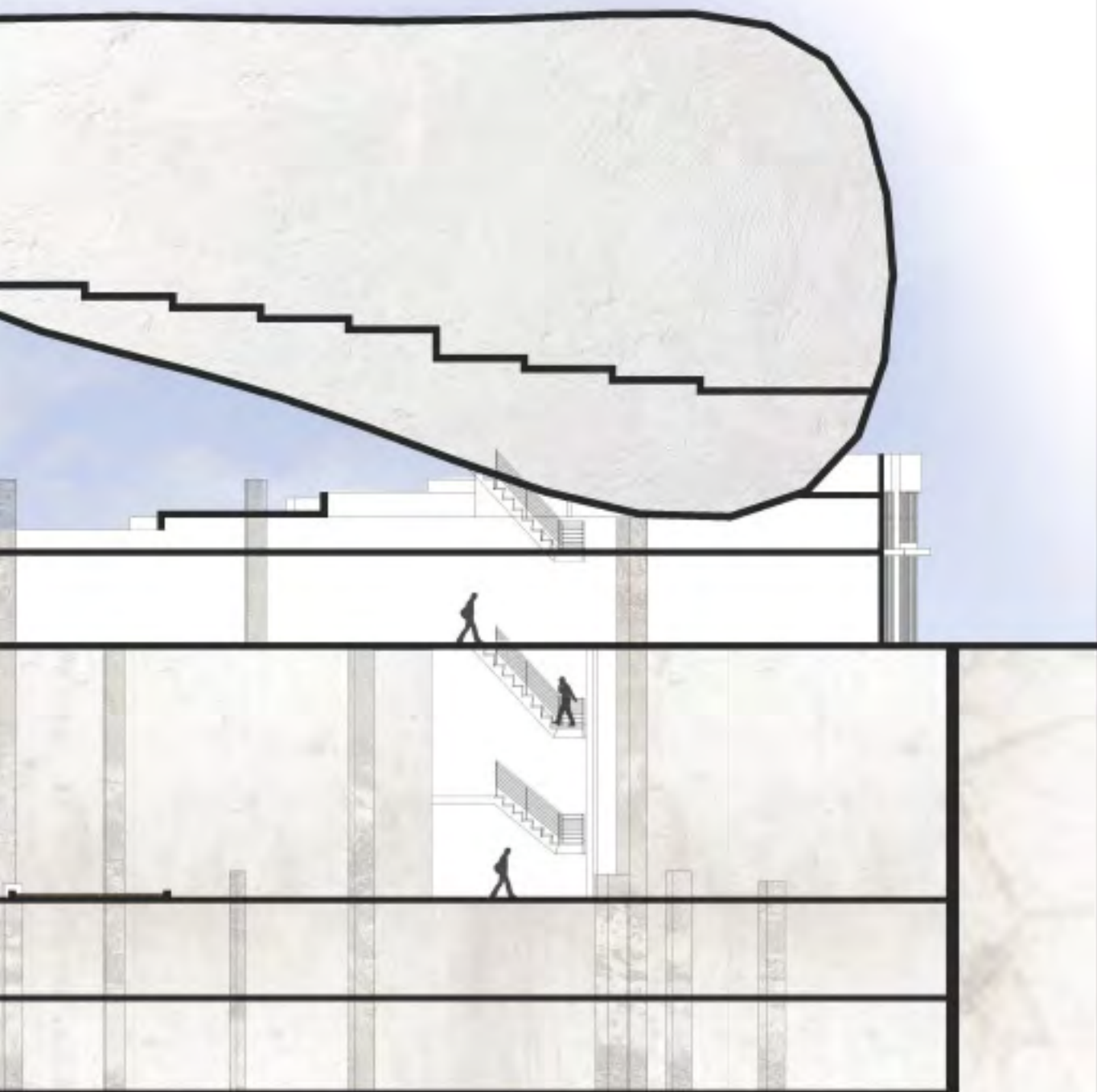
Basement Floor Plan
1/100







Proposed Design Vertical Circulation



Section
1 / 100

PERSPECTIVES

A mix between the Old and the New, not ignoring the main context of Downtown Beirut, but also leaving evident traces of history by using the Dome itself and the inside basement levels for historical tourism purposes. In contrast, the outside landscape responds to contextual needs, while the inside mirrors the history.

The Dome becomes a sculpture and almost a landmark- lighting up at night from the bullet holes radiating the LED lights from the inside.

While during the day the sun lights up the Egg from the inside

Ground Floor (Sculpture Void)

I used a minimalist approach at the GF level, calling it the Sculpture Void- because it stemmed out of art made from the shell of the Dome, translated onto the ground



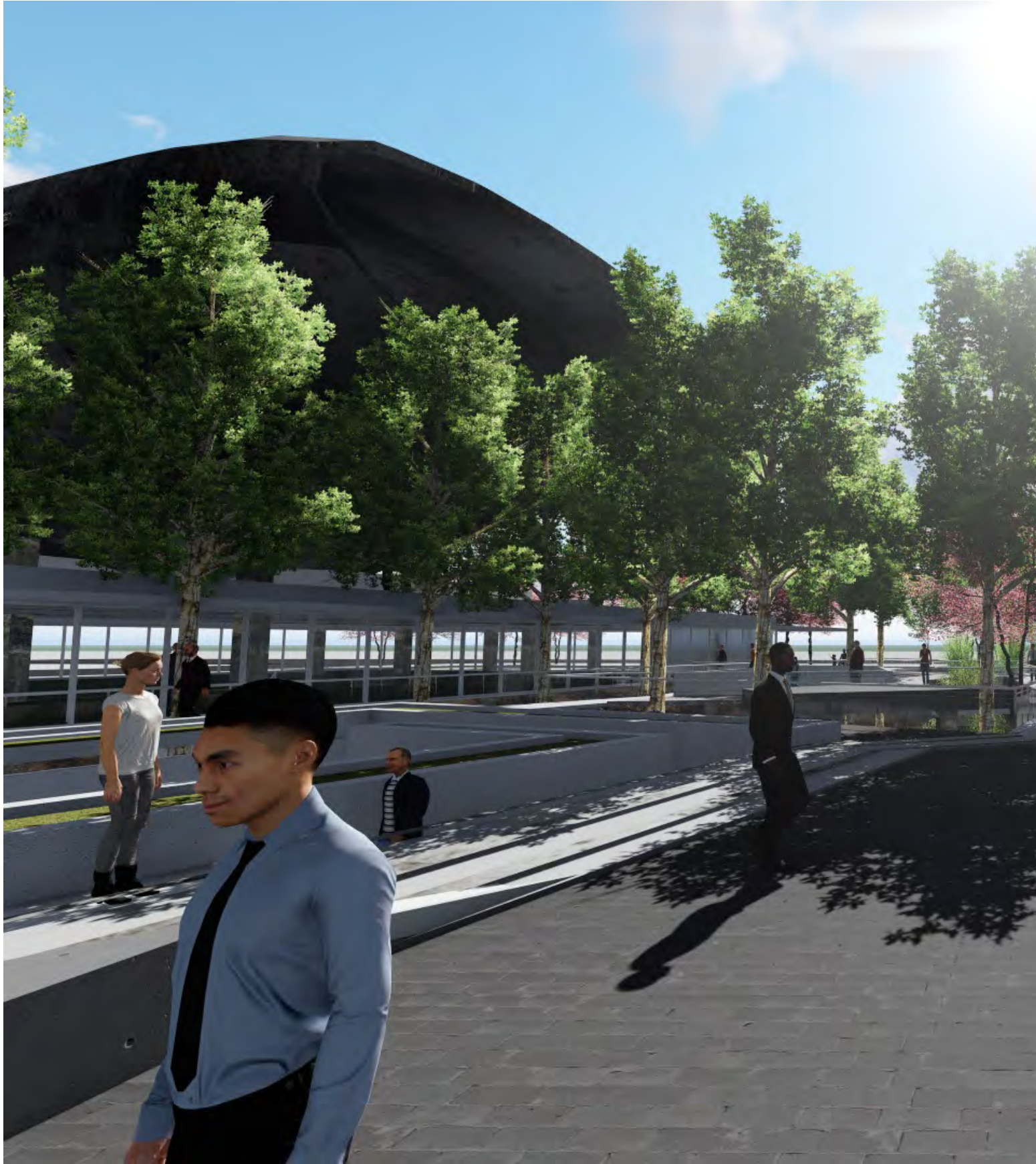














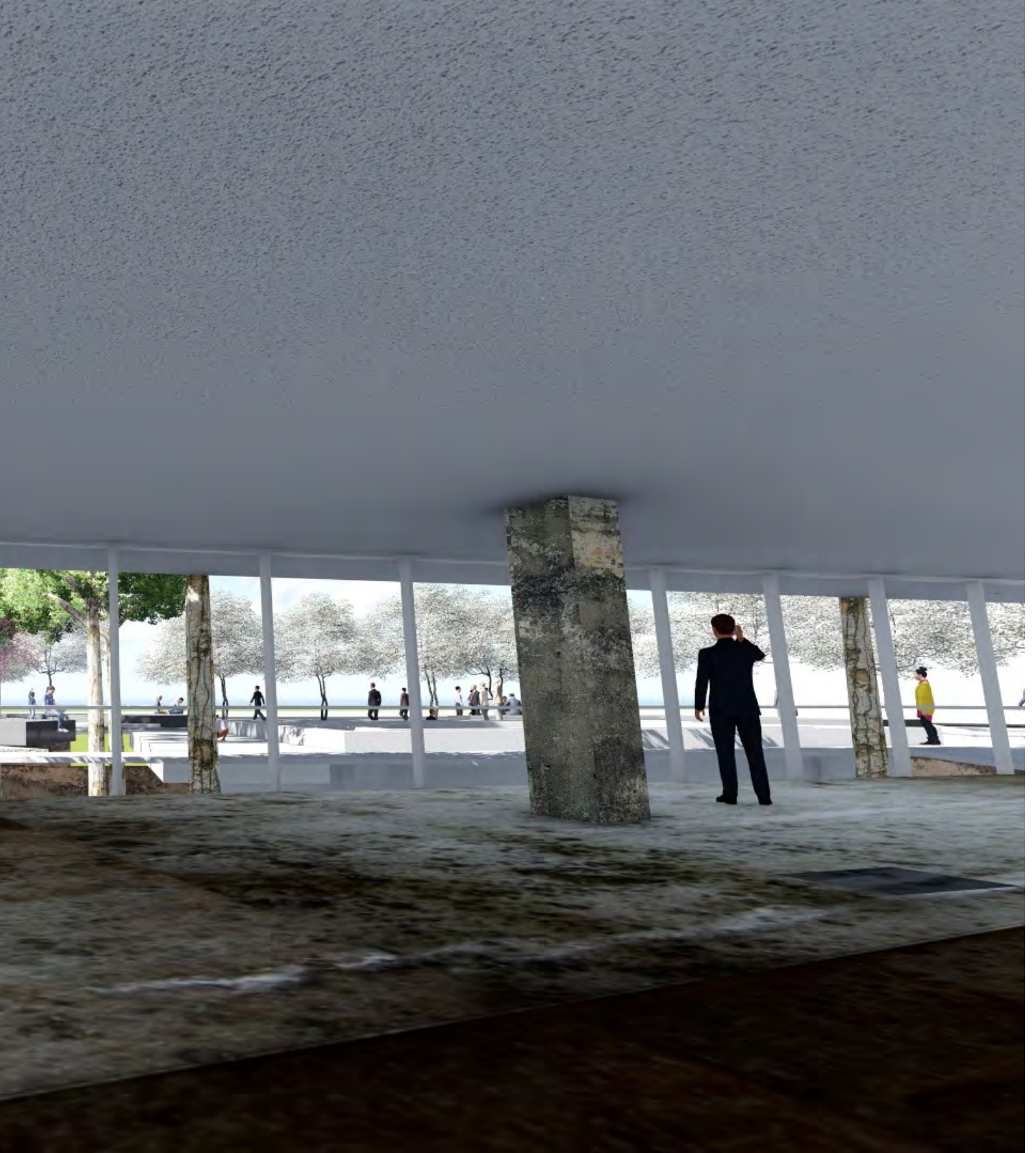












BASEMENT

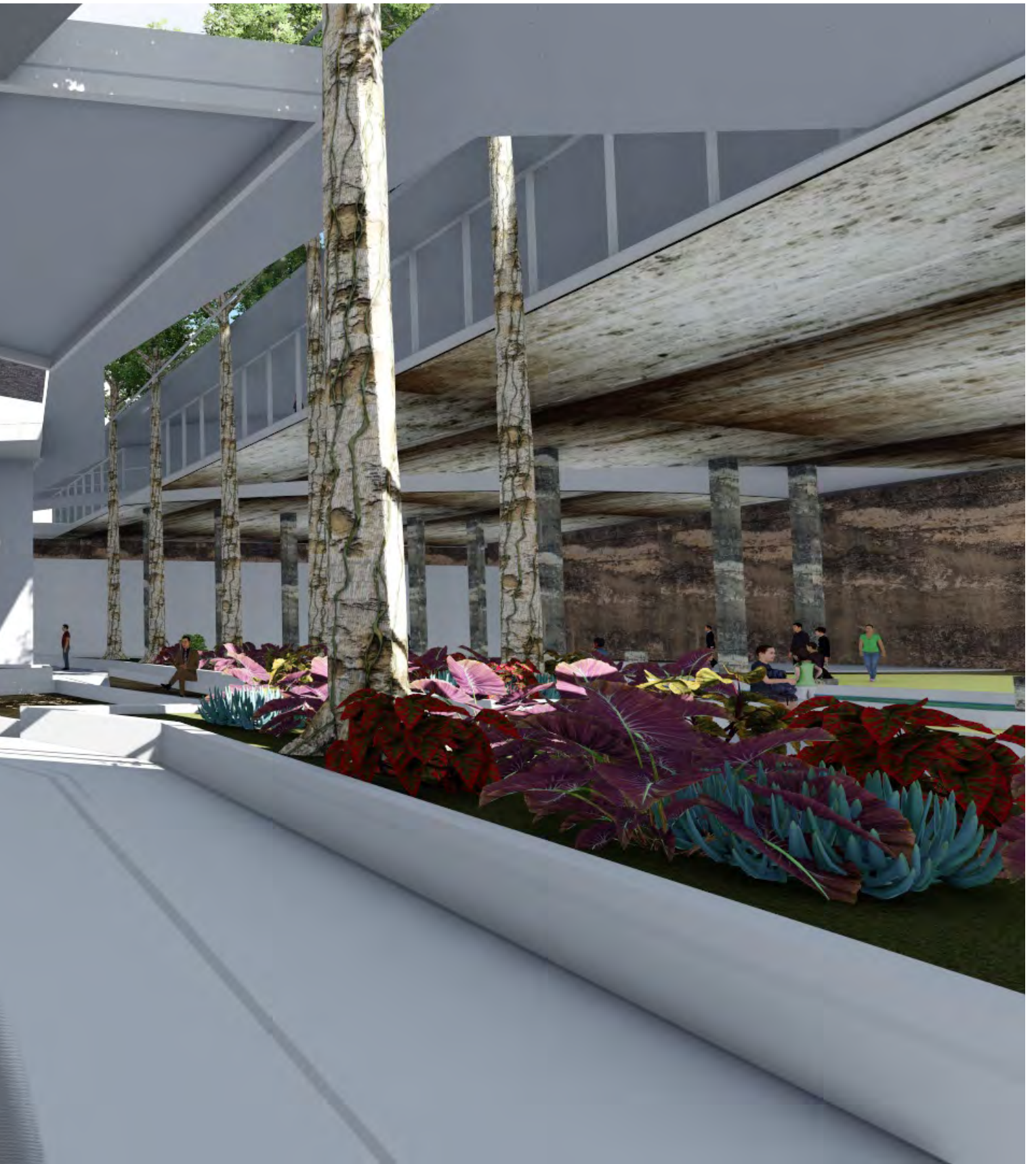
(The Yoke)

The Yoke; because it represents The Egg (Dome), rising from abandonment into life. It's what gave the space life to begin with.

A mix between the Old and the New, not ignoring the main context of Downtown Beirut, but also leaving evident traces of history by using the Dome itself and the inside basement levels for historical tourism purposes. In contrast, the outside landscape responds to contextual needs, while the inside mirrors the history.

Multifunction Space to host events of the renters choice (i.e art exhibitions)

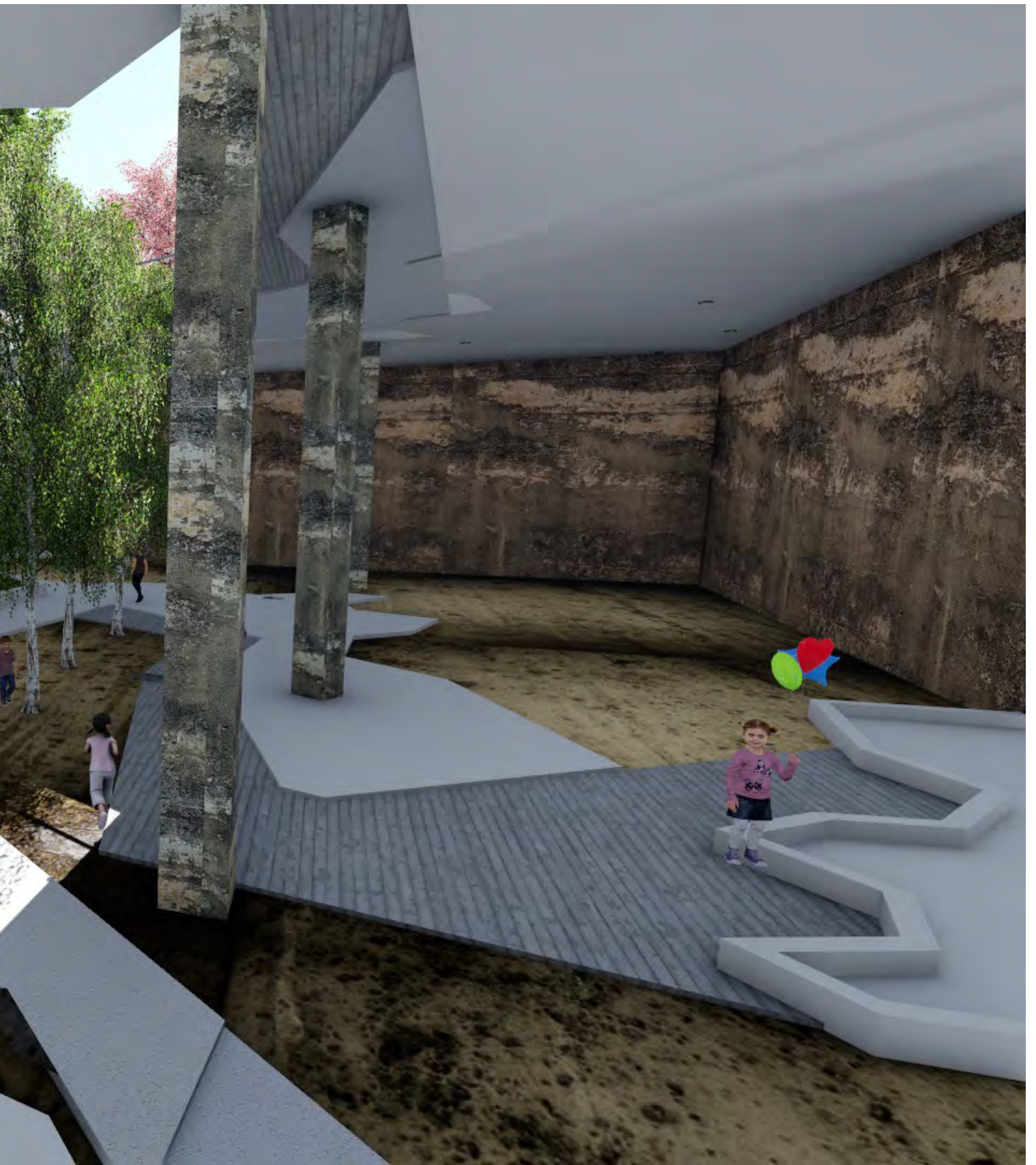










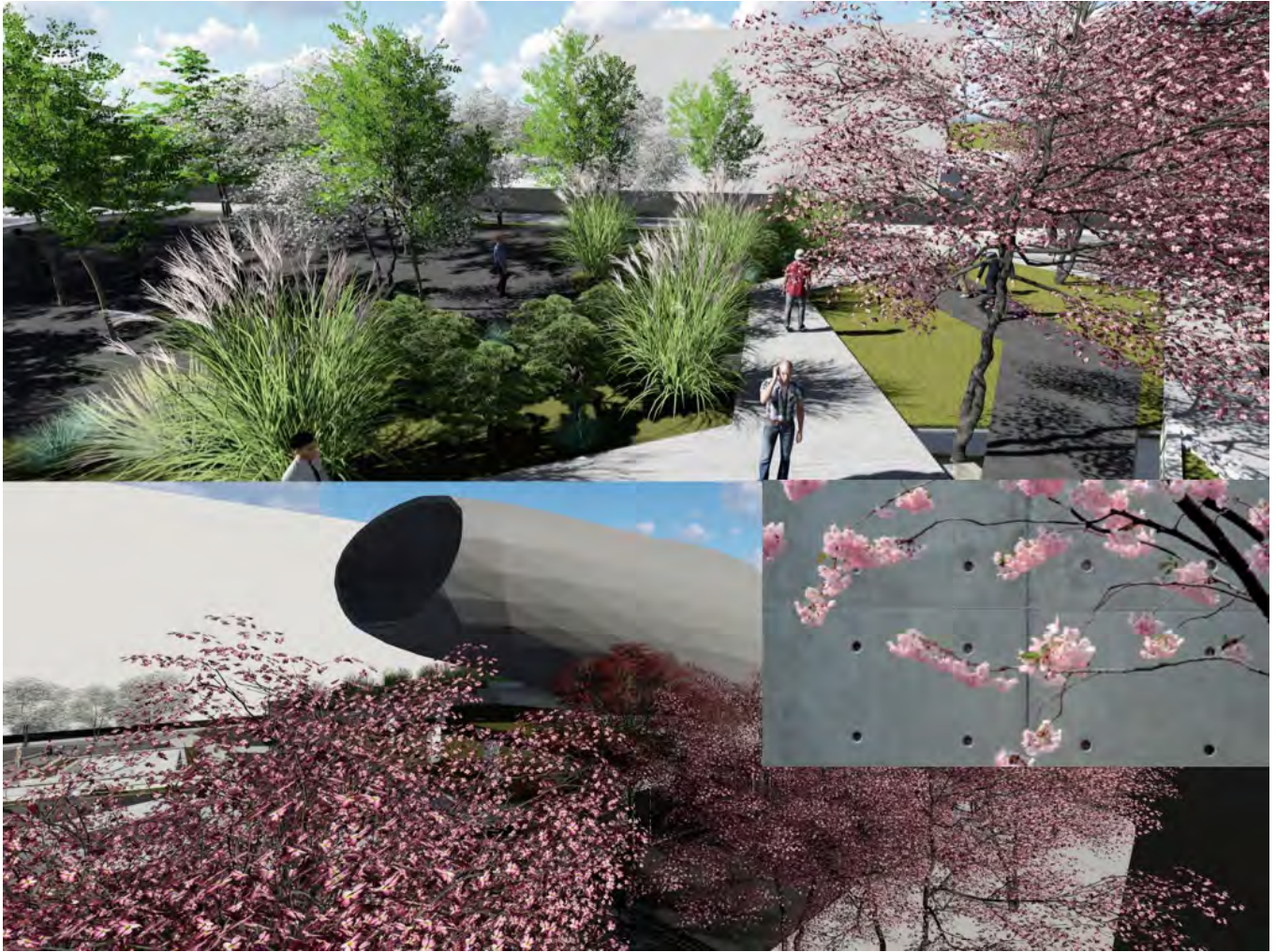






Softscape





Hardscape

LEGEND:

1. BRASS
2. (SOLIDERE) DARK GREY GRANITE
3. (SOLIDERE) LIGHT GREY GRANITE
4. ABSOLUTE NERO
5. TRAVETINO CLASSICO



1



2



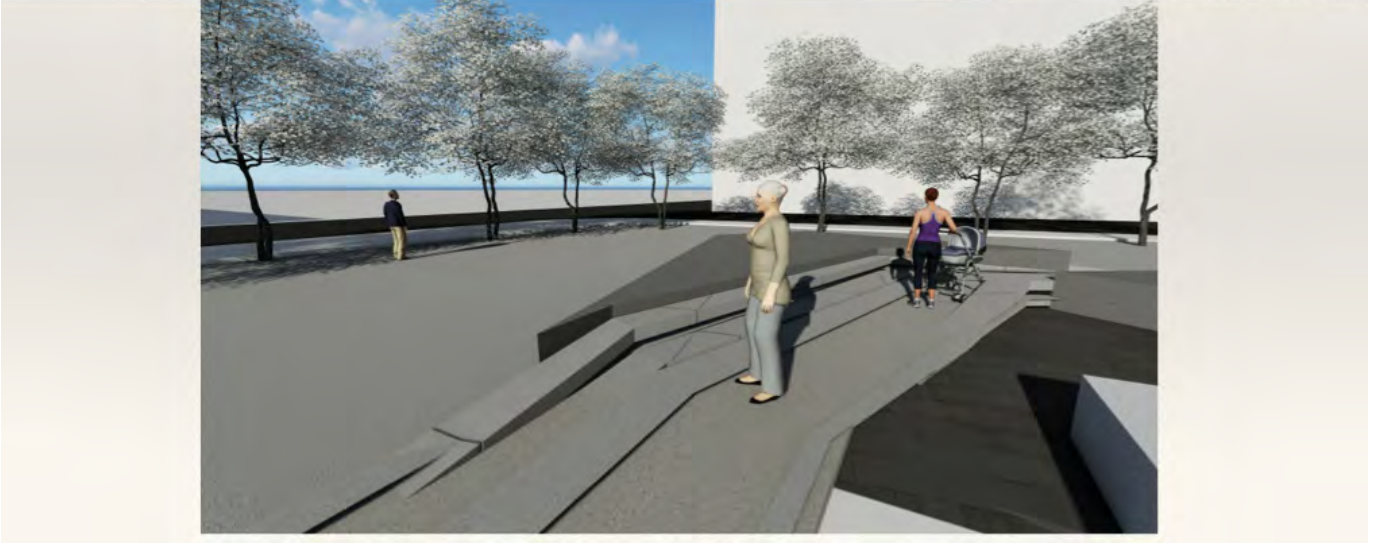
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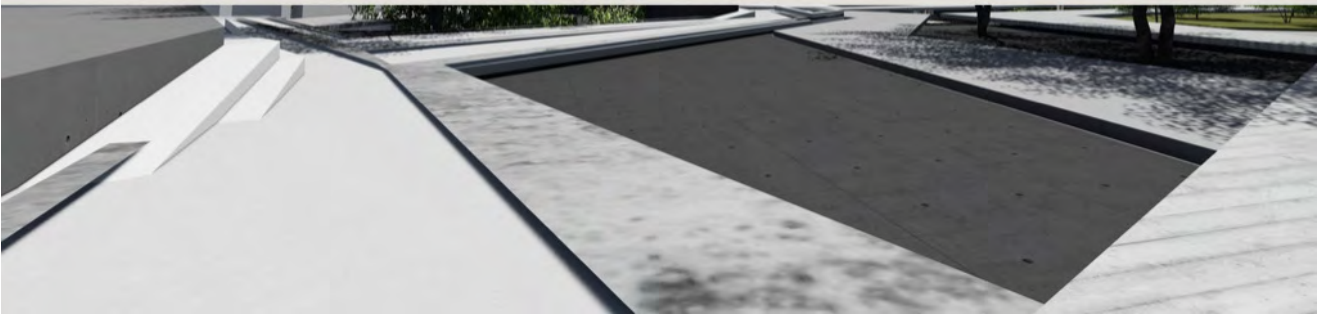
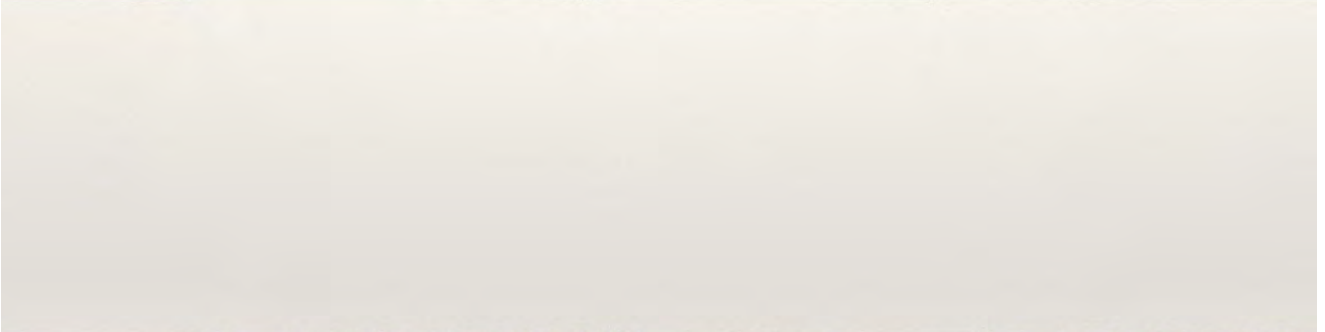


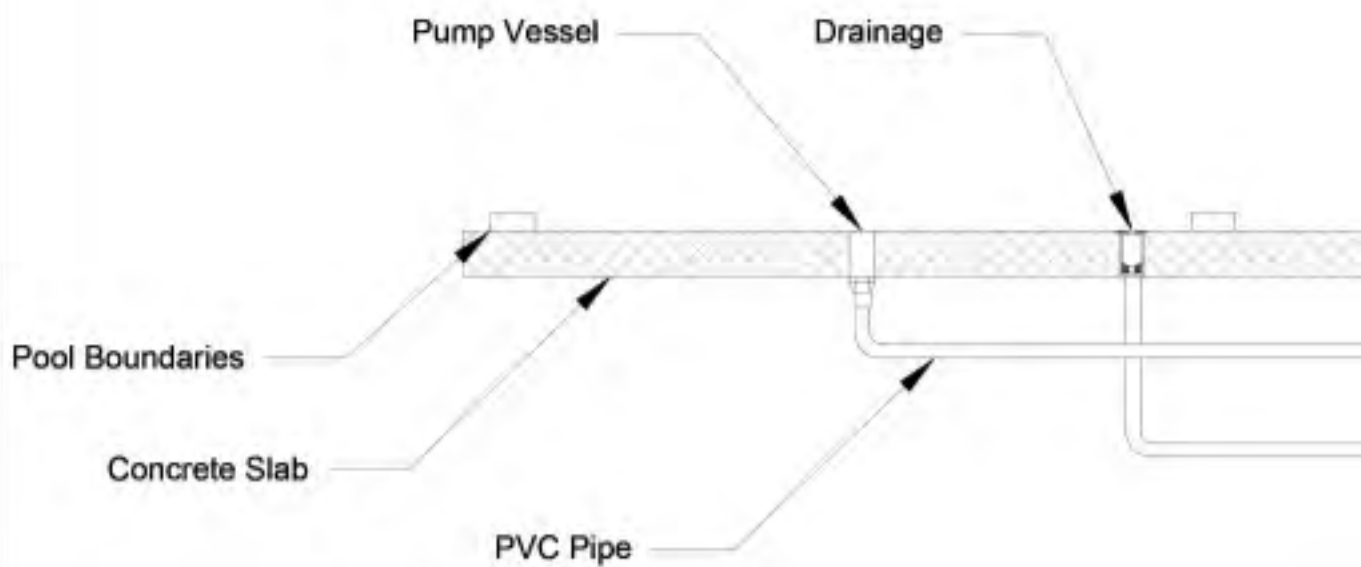
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5





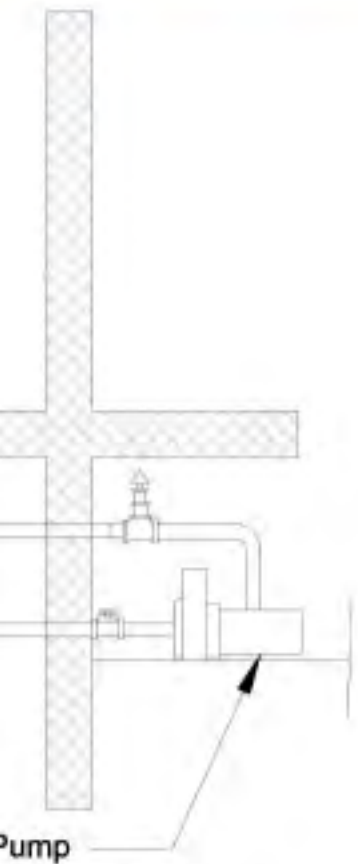


Water F
Pool

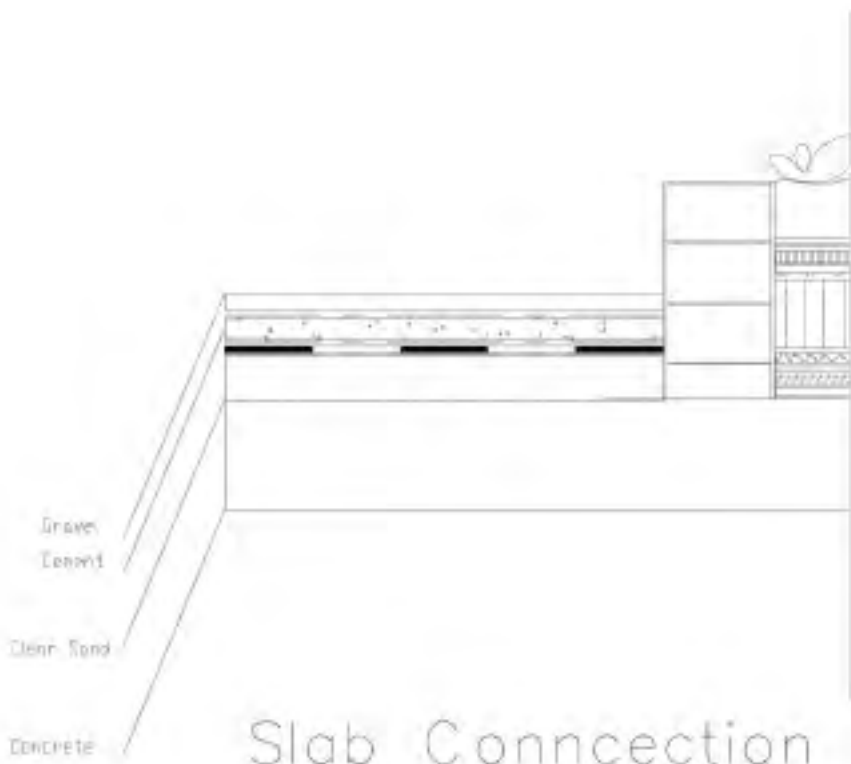


Slab Detail
1/10

Design Detailed Sections



Pump
Detail
1/10



Slab Connection Detail
1/5

The Dome becomes a sculpture and almost a landmark-lighting up at night from the bullet holes radiating the LED lights from the inside.

While during the day the sun lights up the Egg from the inside







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