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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

UNDERGRADUATE DESIGN THESIS
IN
ARCHITECTURE

SUBMITTAL FORM

VISIBLE INC.

by
TALA SALMAN

ARCH 508/509– FINAL YEAR THESIS I & II
FALL/SPRING 2019-2020

ADVISOR: RAAFAT MAJZOUB

Approved by Thesis Advisor:

Raafat Majzoub, Lecturer
Architecture and Design

Date of Thesis final presentation: May 19th 2020

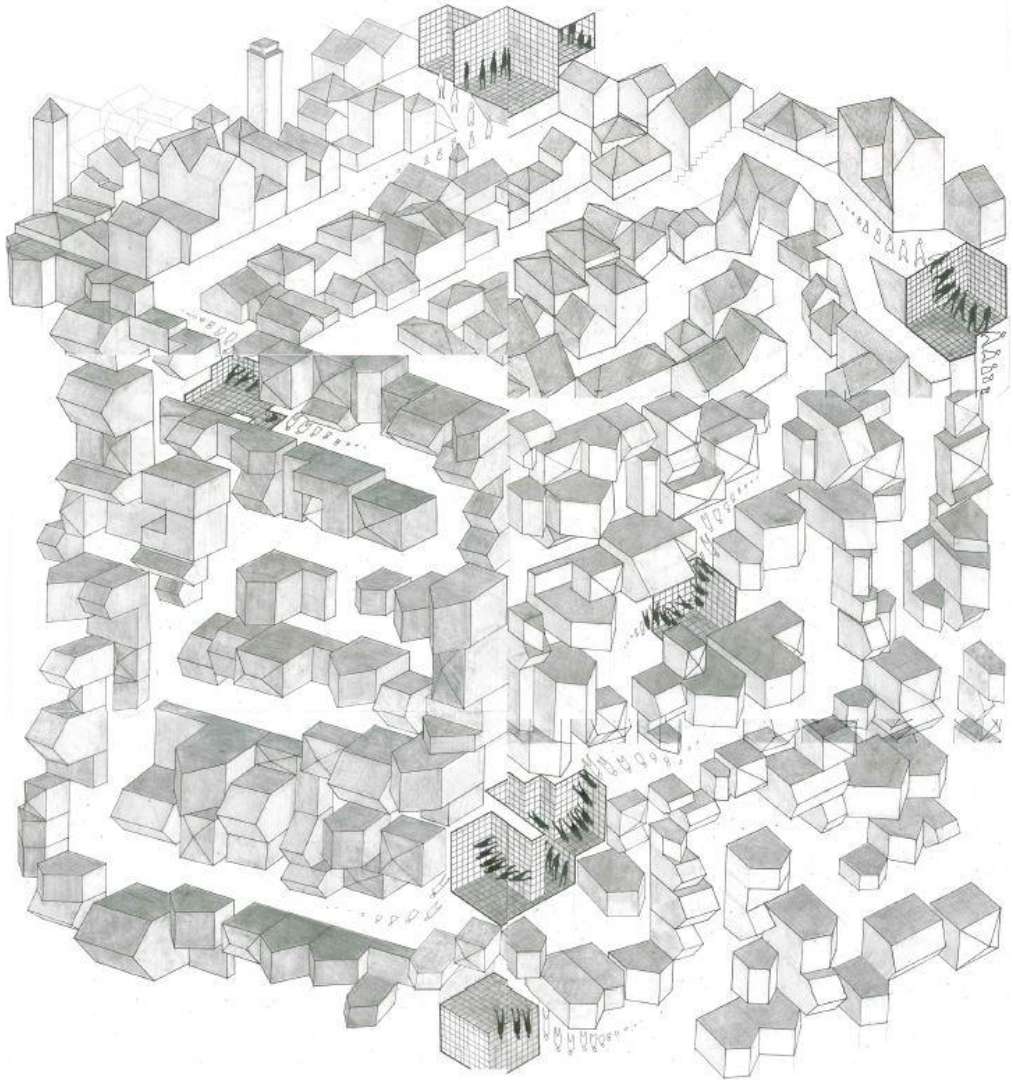
A special thank you to my advisor **Raafat Majzoub** for his constant help and encouragement & to all my friends & family's daily dose of love & support

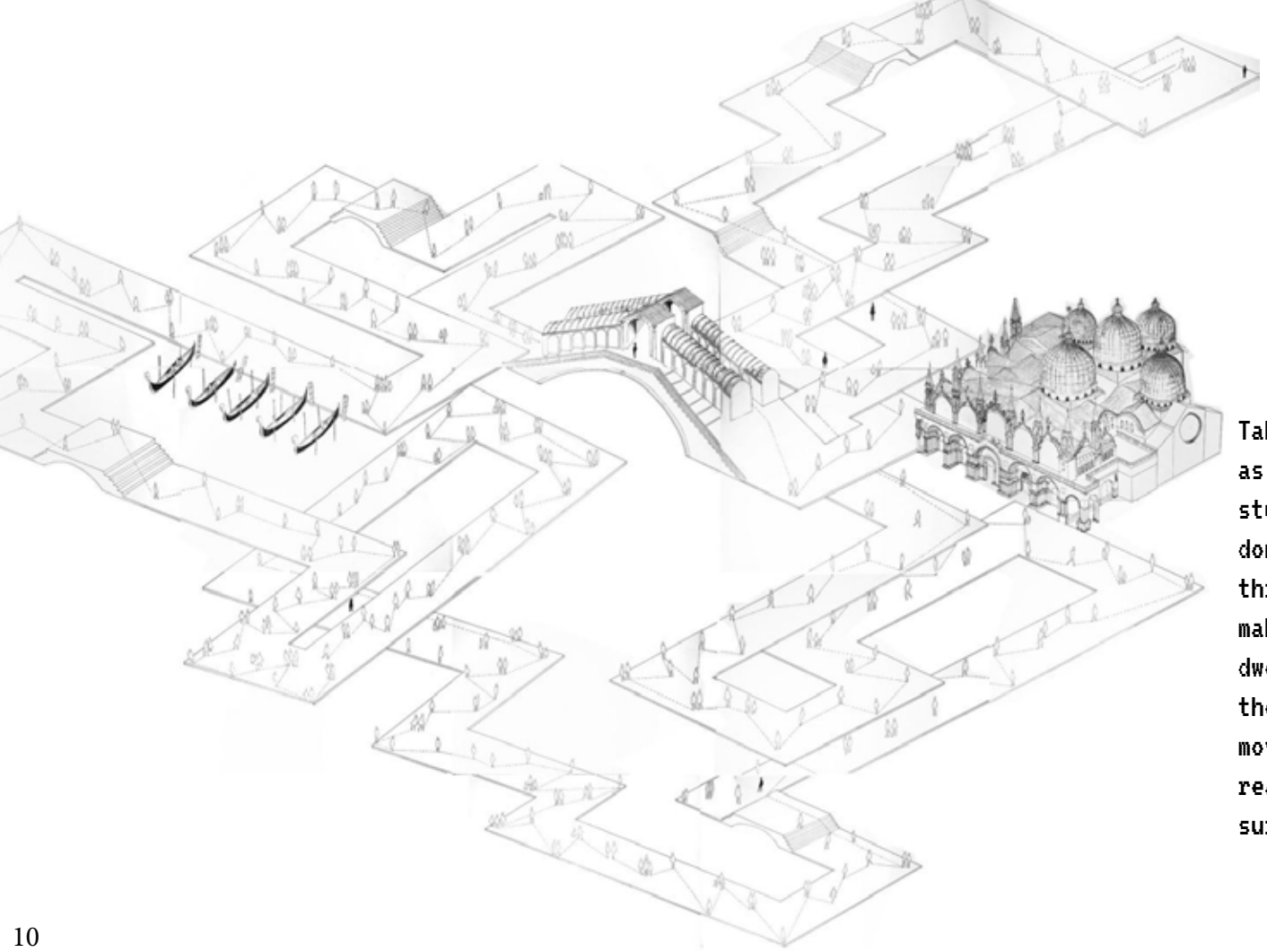
If orientation is a matter of how we reside in space, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence, of how we inhabit spaces, and who or what we inhabit spaces with

Sara Ahmed

FYP 1 Intro

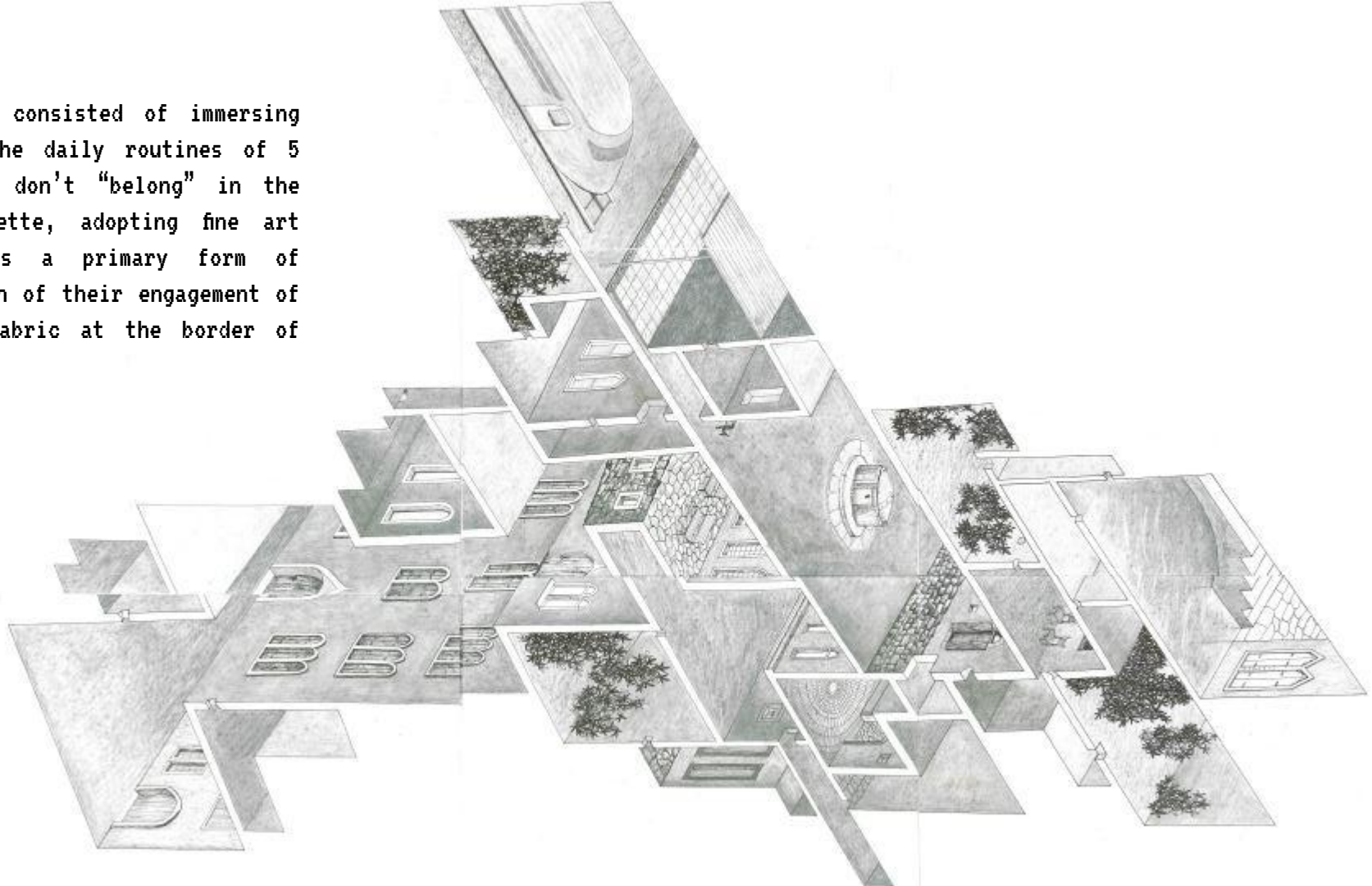
My research tackled the systems created by marginalized communities to earn the right to dwell where they are deemed illegal





Taking Venice (Italy) as a case study, I study the stages of domesticating a land through recordings I make of numerous dwellers who use their spaces and movements as a reaction to their surroundings.

My research consisted of immersing myself in the daily routines of 5 people that don't "belong" in the Venice vignette, adopting fine art sketching as a primary form of documentation of their engagement of the urban fabric at the border of legality



Transition to FYP 2

Back to Lebanon, my work now borrows from this engagement with the right of marginalized communities to dwell and thrive in public.

In such a judgmental society, for people who do not belong to an “established norm” to exist, they need to find creative ways to live.

LGBTQI+ Hamra

My project currently explores hidden layers that could host, entertain and empower the LGBTQI+ community in Beirut, that is one of the most violently assaulted of the city’s dwellers.

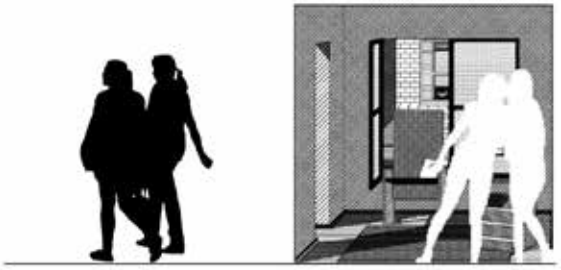
If I could just wear what I WANT!
I want to perform on the street
A safe space would be a huge place simply filled with books with music with a theatre and stage
A spotlight in the middle where I would just sing dance and scream my heart out freely
with those huge old shamed library
How? I don't know
William

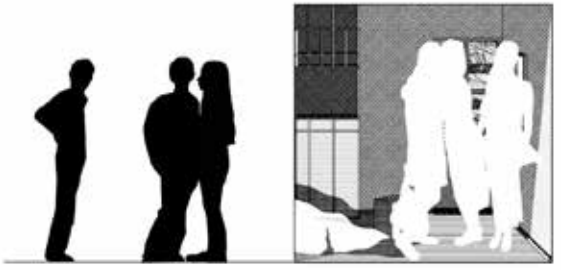
Problematic

On the premise that the LGBTQI+ culture is still considered on the legislative system as illegal and since the community has partial spatial presence that is contested,

The community is manipulated and considered in a transitional phase until the legal system changes; I aim to intervene in this phase to facilitate legalization and make this persistence more enduring.

My approach is that at this particular point since the legal system is still impermeable to the attempts of Helem and other.. I am designing interventions// a virtual queer layer on the current layer to allow for a personalized experience of a city everyone should be able to enjoy.





A new Augmented Reality

A personalized experience

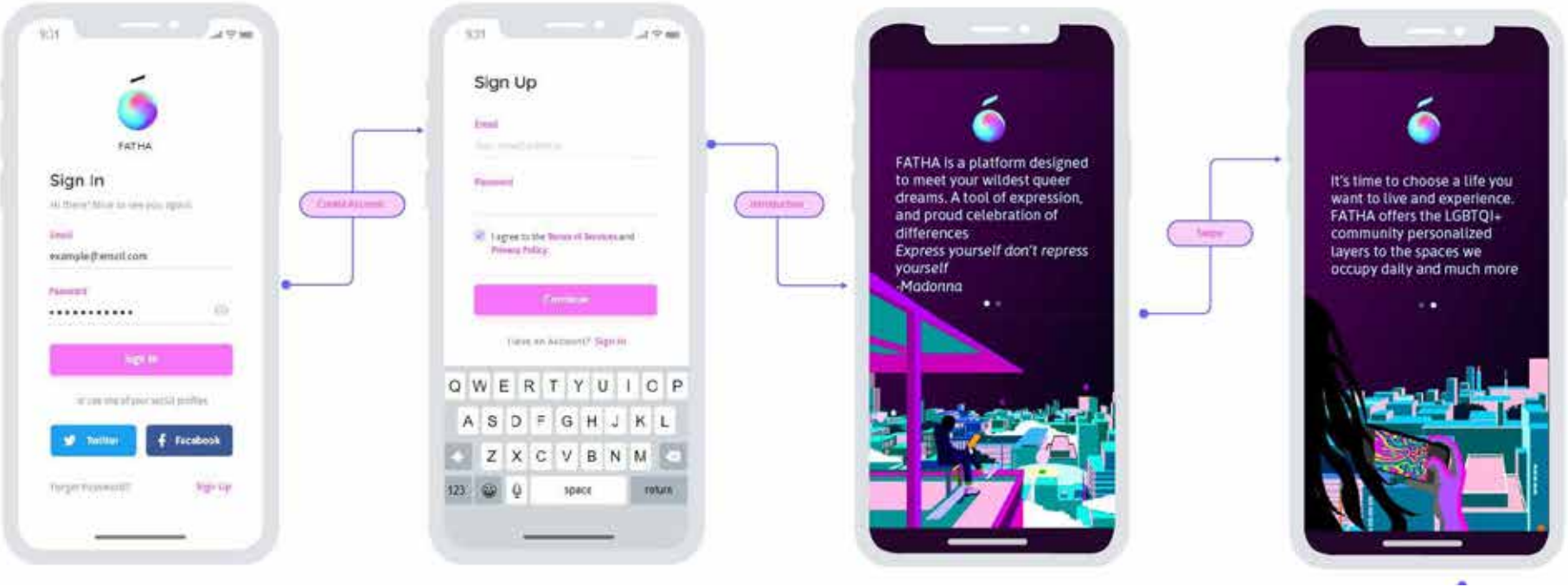
Through designing and AR experience in Hamra, I intend to create systems that would allow the queer community to claim and explore Hamra street, and engage with it both culturally and economically, the app also Develops a new relationship with the street and offers community-building happenings through events

SIMULATION

A new Augmented Reality

FATHA APP

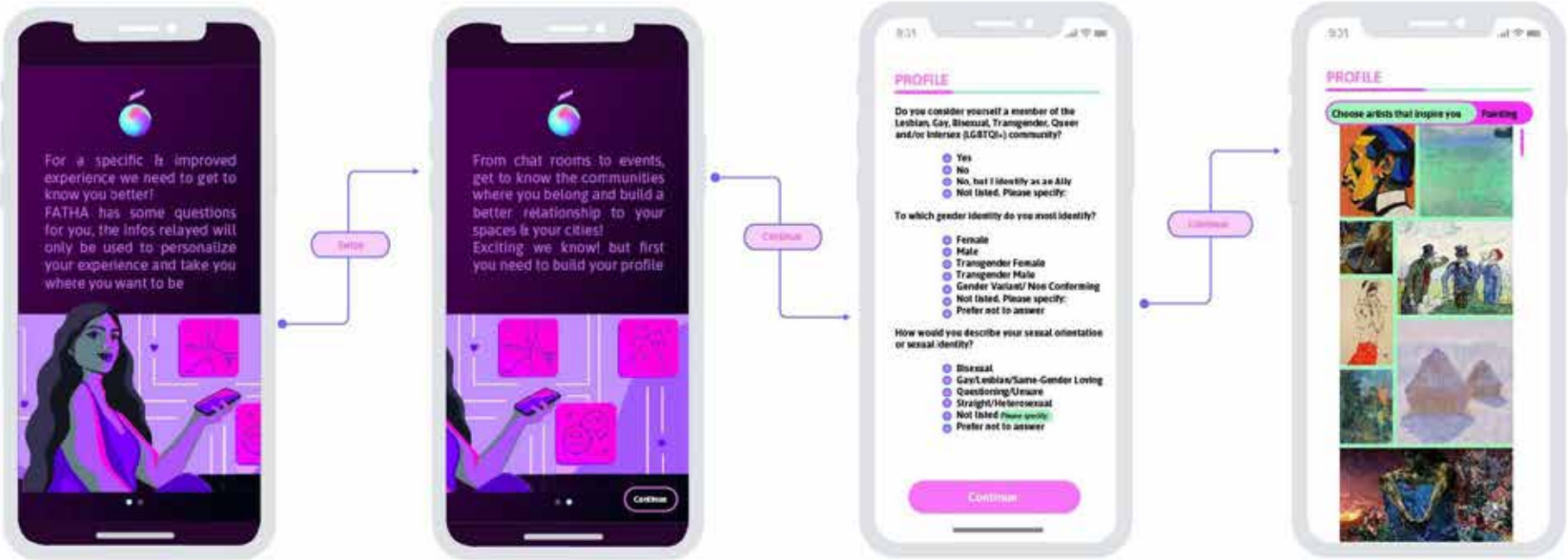
Scenario I // What is FATHA? How is it used?



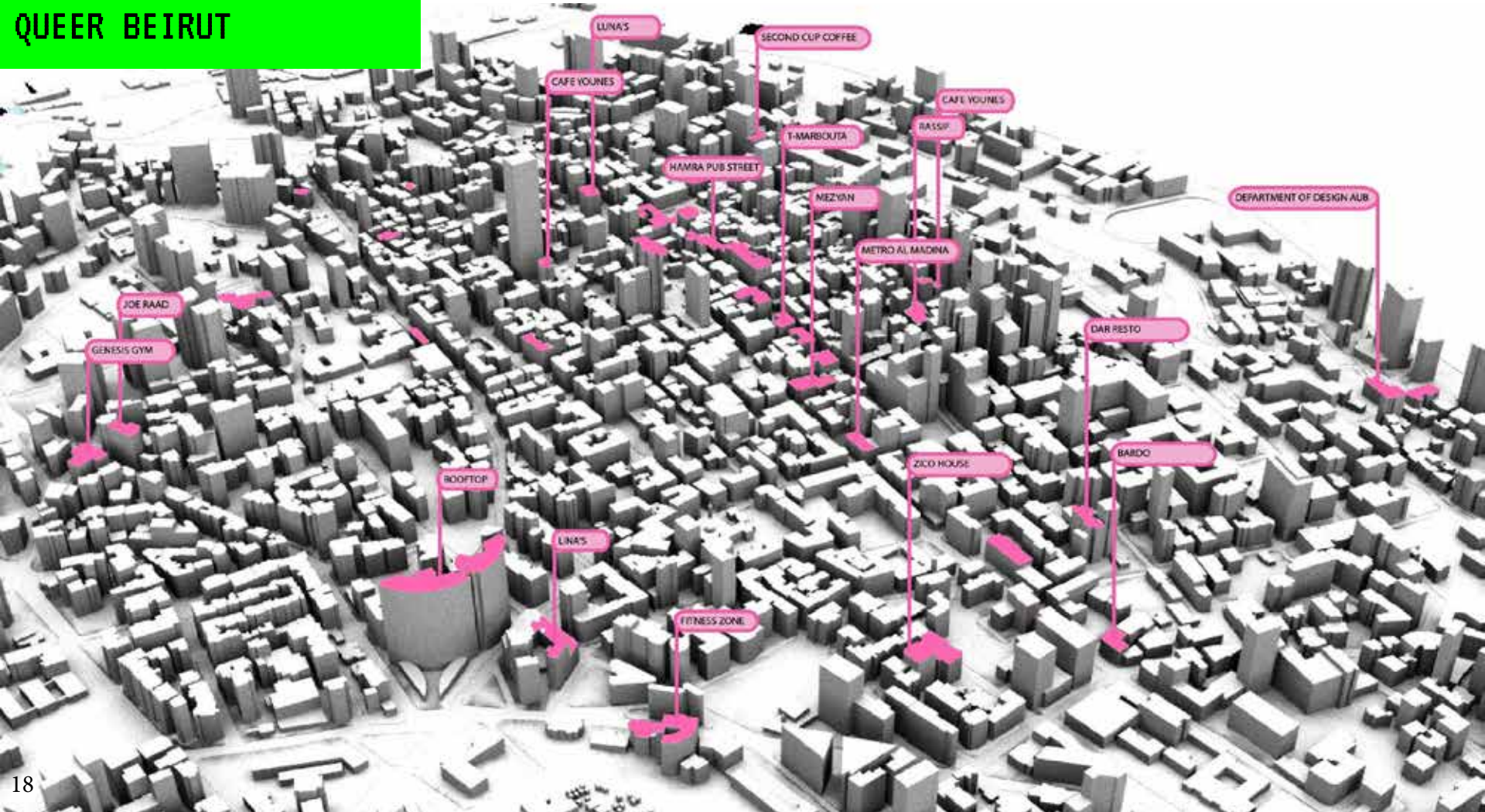
Personalize

Individual experience

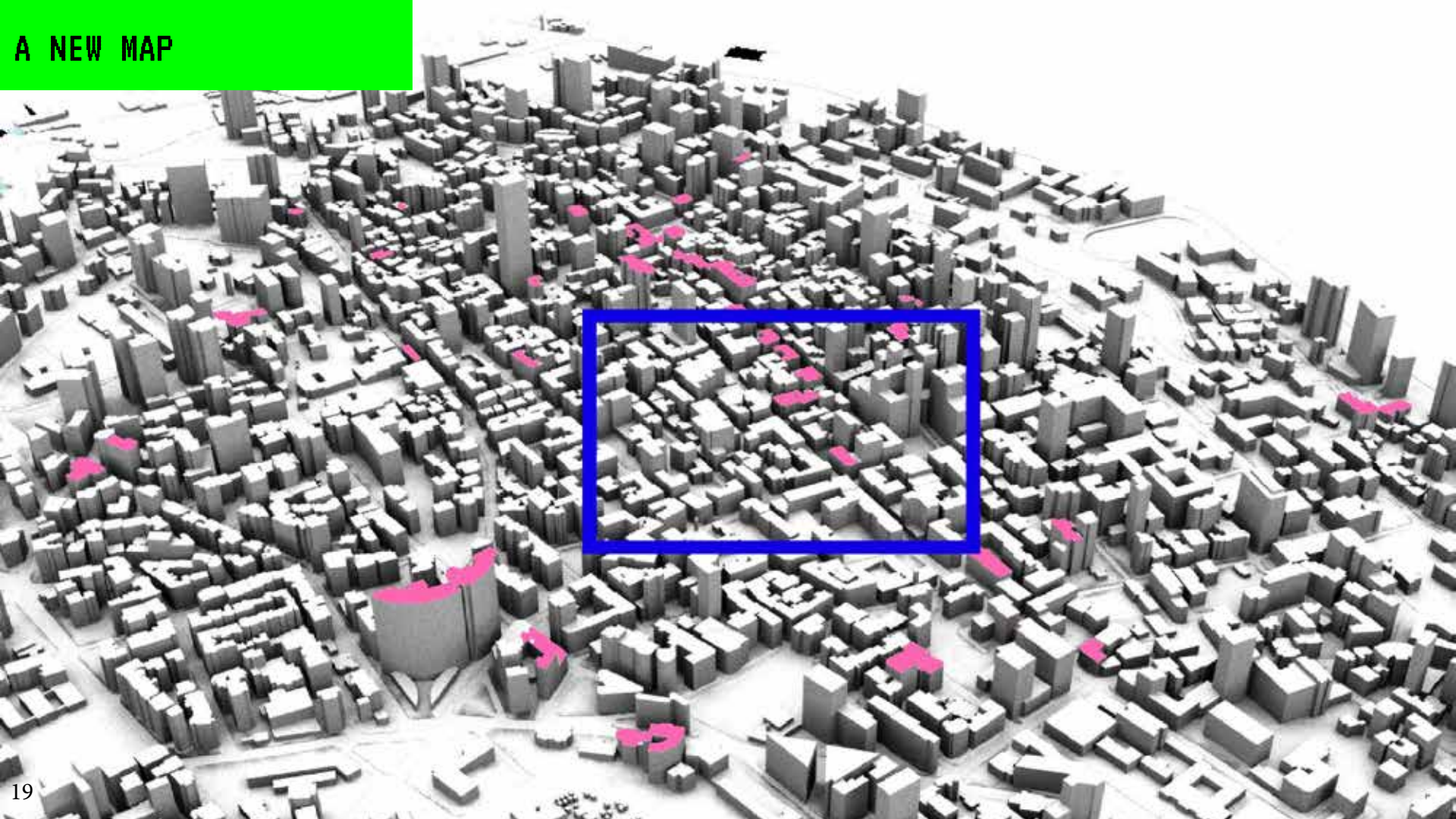
Scenario II // Customized experience to answer the user's preferences



QUEER BEIRUT

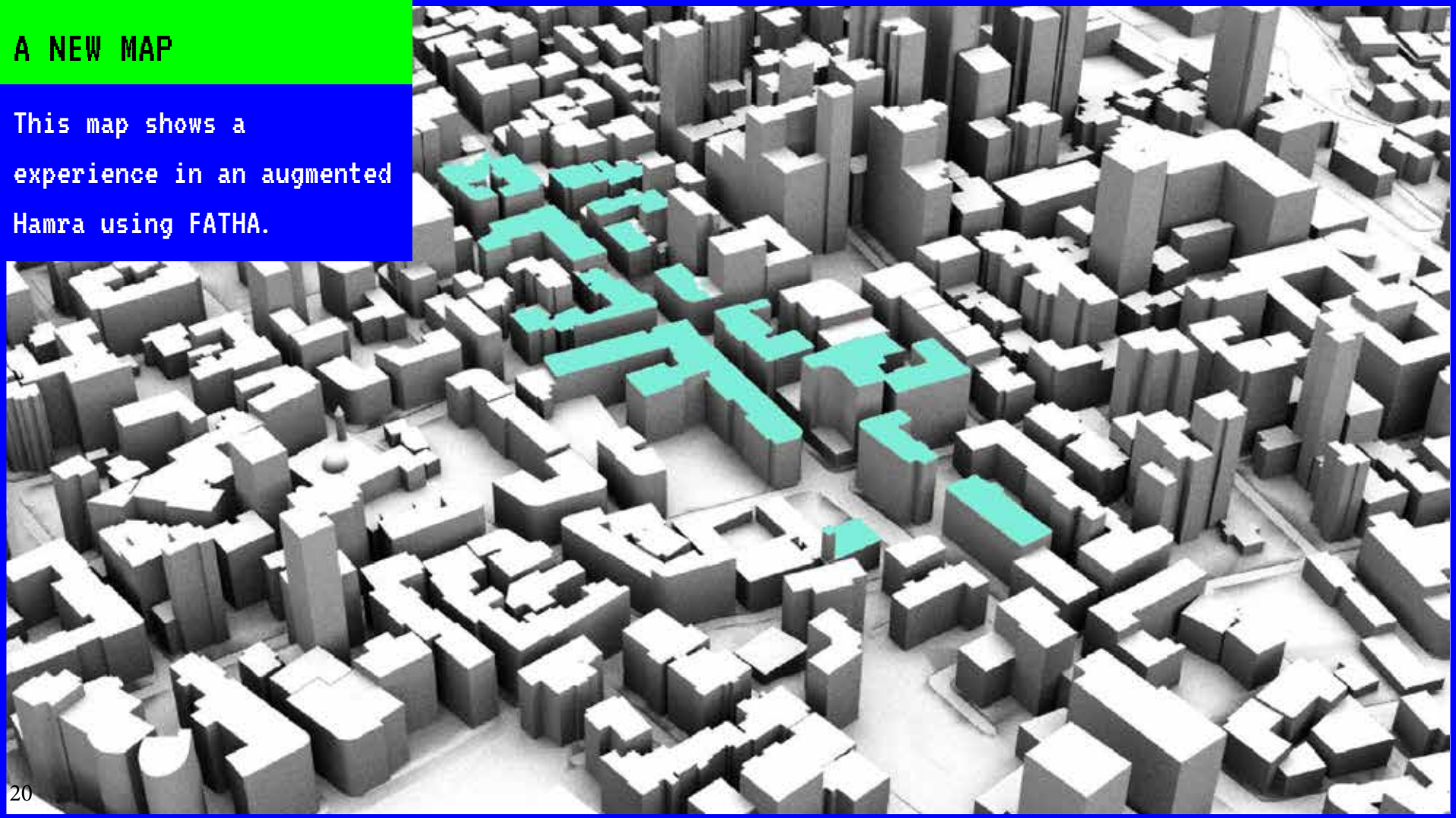


A NEW MAP



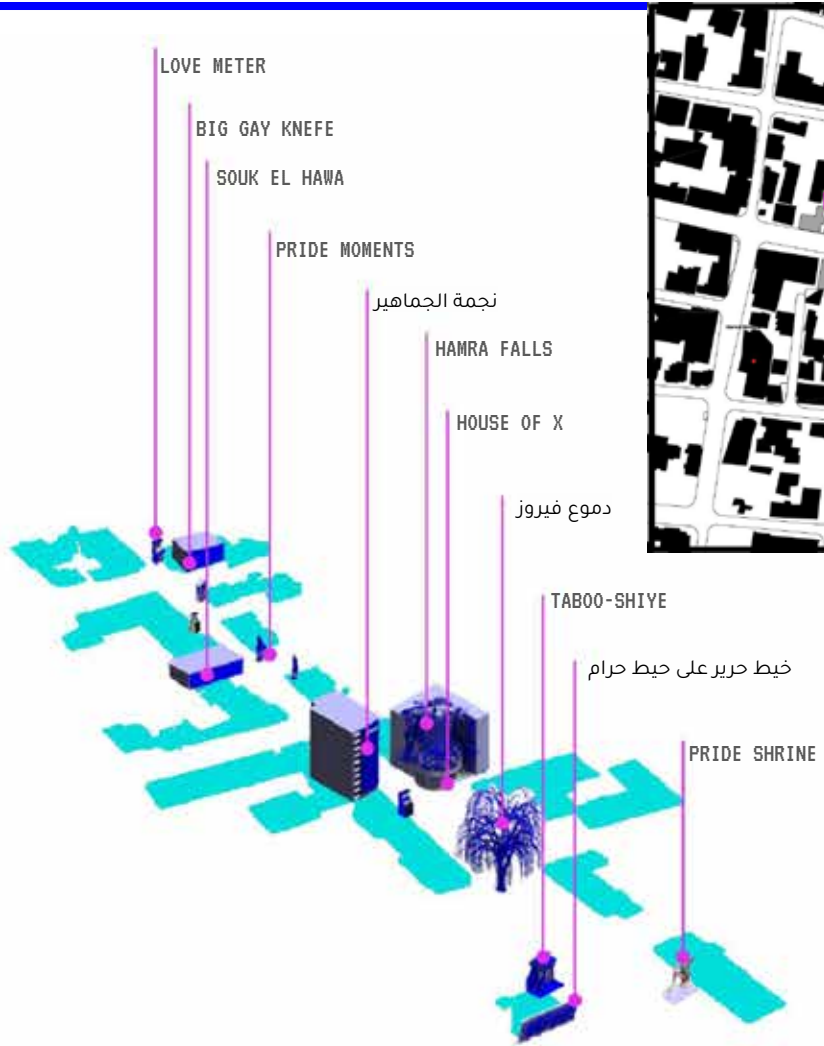
A NEW MAP

This map shows a experience in an augmented Hamra using FATHA.



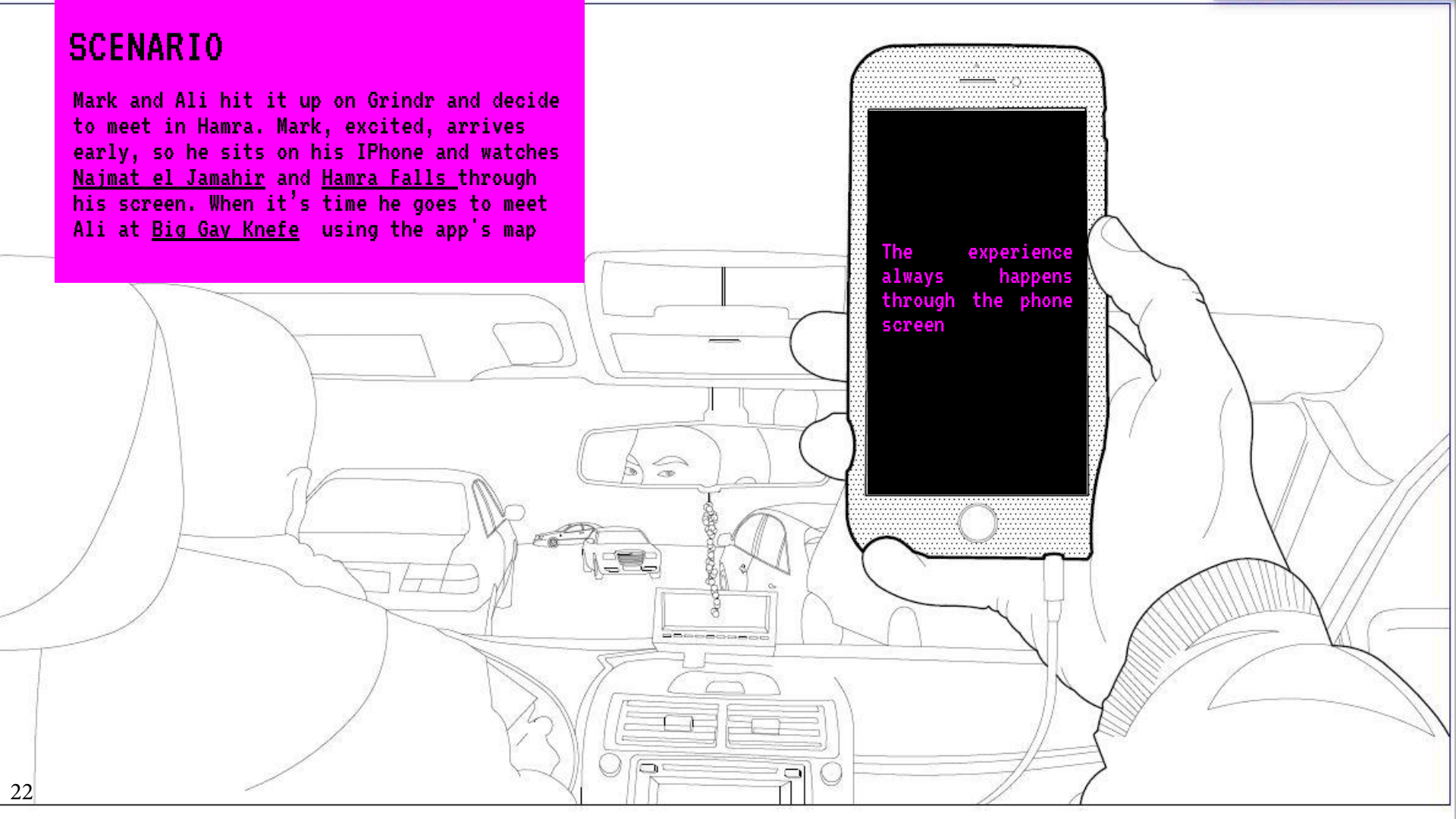
NEW URBAN TREASURES

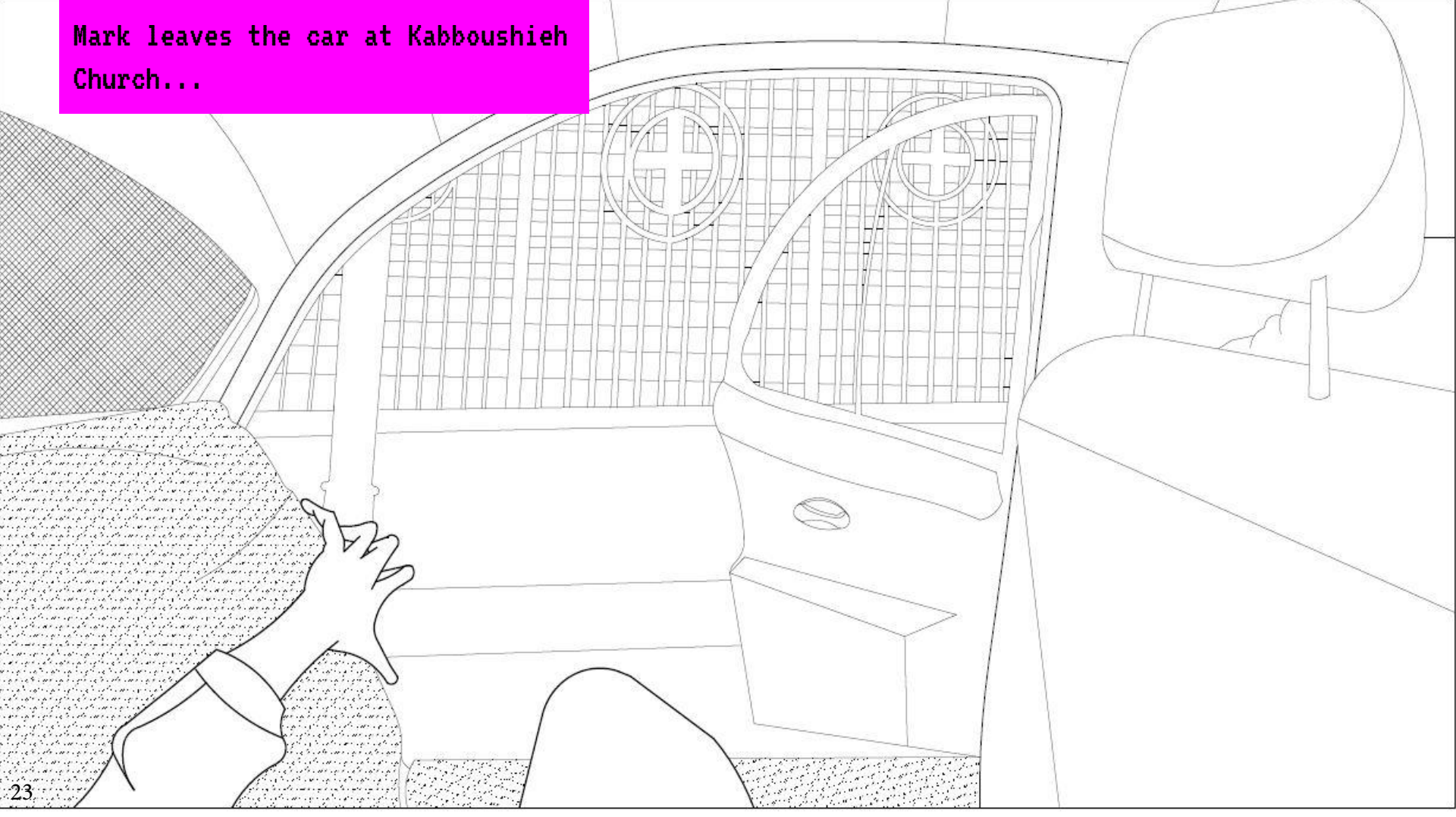
Through humorous and critical insertions in the city, I aim to create a parallel universe for meeting, expression and agency that is not possible today due to social and legal policing/ judgement

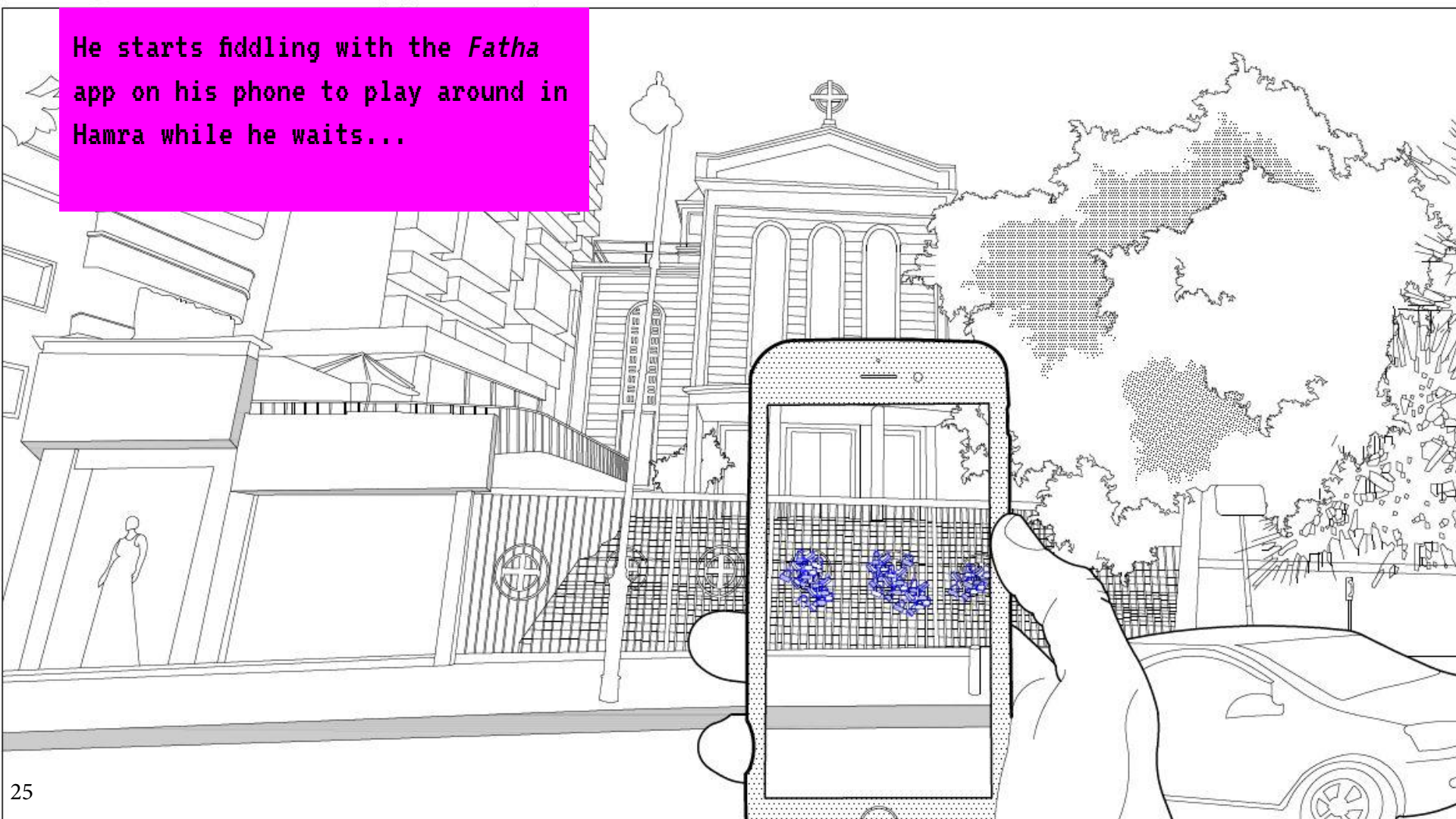


SCENARIO

Mark and Ali hit it up on Grindr and decide to meet in Hamra. Mark, excited, arrives early, so he sits on his IPhone and watches Najmat el Jamahir and Hamra Falls through his screen. When it's time he goes to meet Ali at Big Gay Knefe using the app's map




Mark leaves the car at Kabboushieh Church...

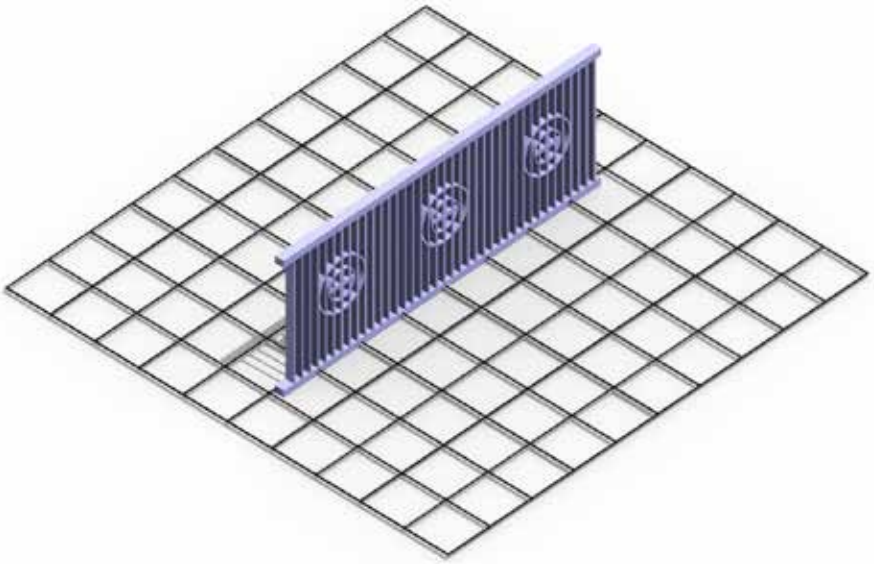

He starts fiddling with the *Fatha* app on his phone to play around in Hamra while he waits...

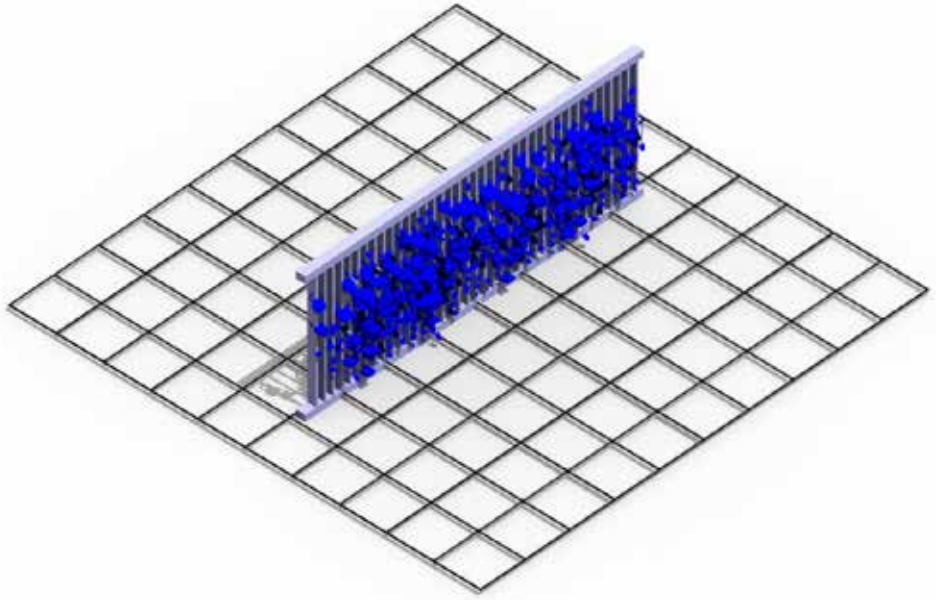
خيط حرير على حيط حرام

Garden of locks

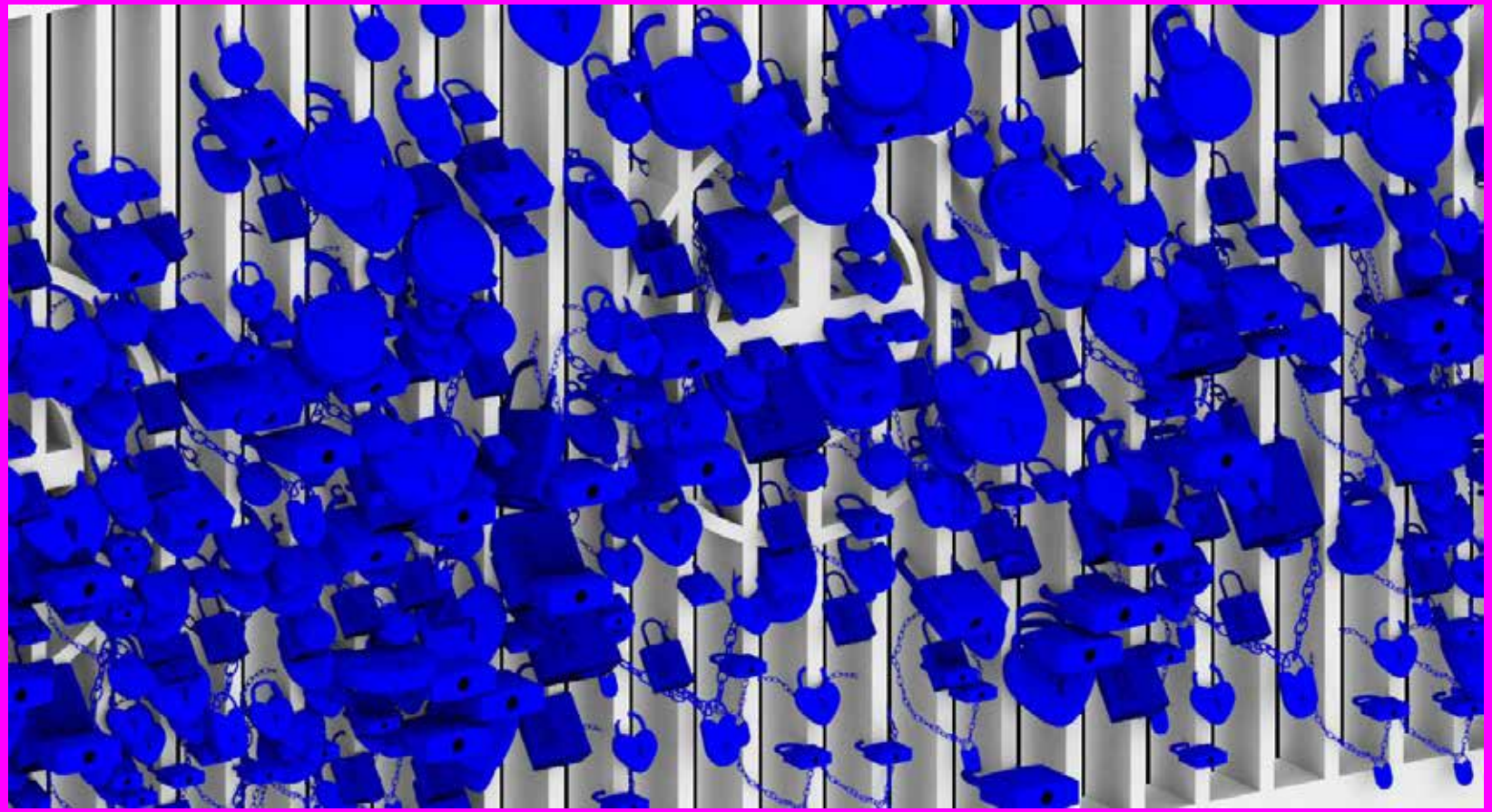
E-Commerce

The users assigns data to each lock to promote, express or confess. The data is accessible by everyone who uses the app becoming a social platform





A closer look at the intervention



LOCKS MENU GUIDE

Written recorded Photo format

Memories..Poetry..
Letters..Pictures

Written recorded format

Confessions// Not accessible

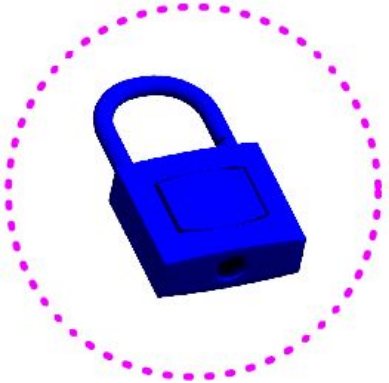
Written recorded format

Confessions// Accessible

E-Stores recorded formet

Audiobooks tackling the queer community

E-Stores written format



E-Books/novels tackling the queer community

E-Stores Photo format

Photographic archives tacklin the queer community

INTERACTION SIMULATION

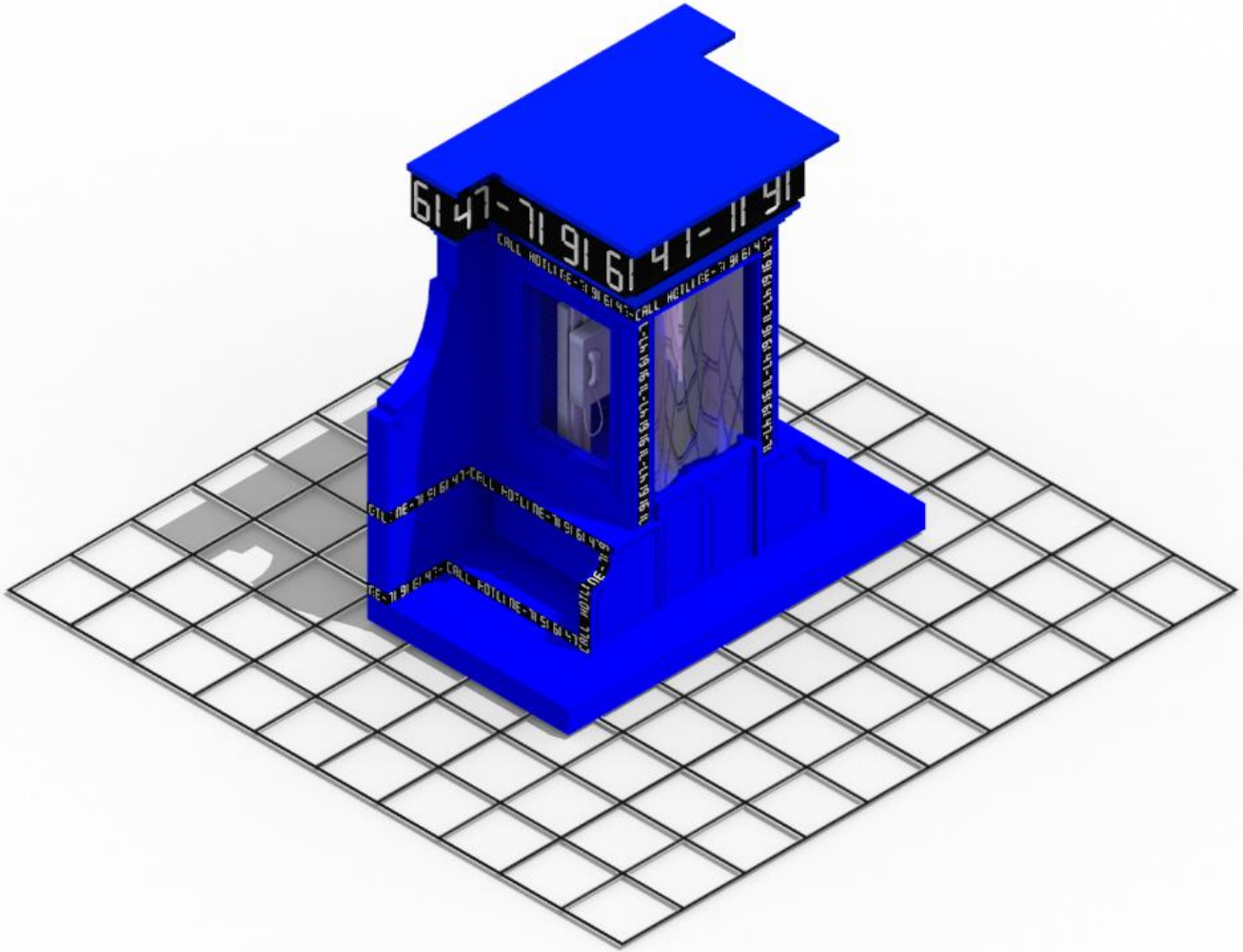
INTERACTION SIMULATION

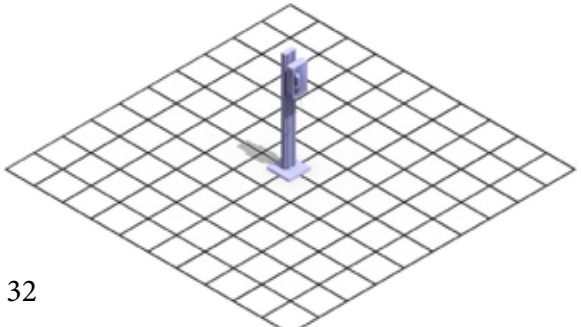
And then he remembers
the community hotline that his
friend Linda
mentioned last night and gives it
a test..

TABOO-SHIYE

Phone Confession Booth

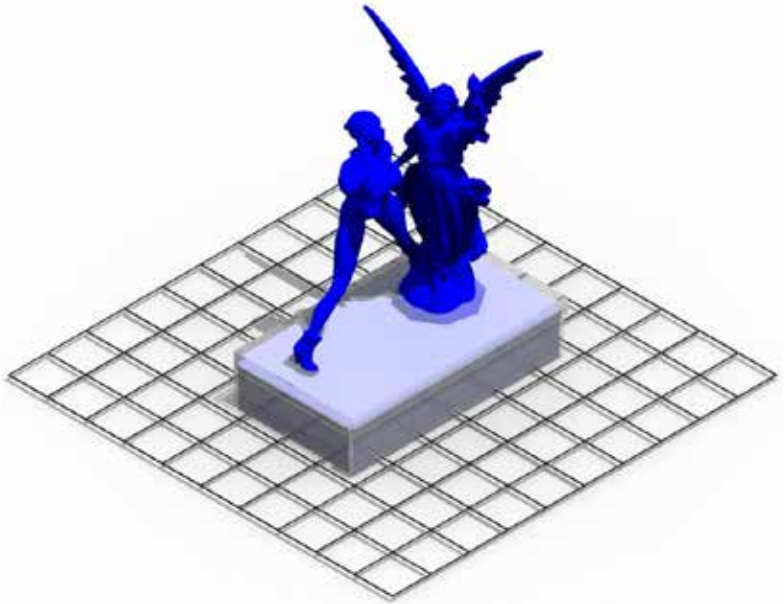
Direct hotline to God//Confess and De-Stress
The number on the confessional booth links the user to professionals from Helem and others





INTERACTION SIMULATION

Then turns around for a little queer history at the interactive monument at the entrance of Metro al Madina, an underground cabaret he likes..



PRIDE SHRINE

Monument

Figures celebrating LGBTQI+ & informing the user of myths and gods that are historically queer

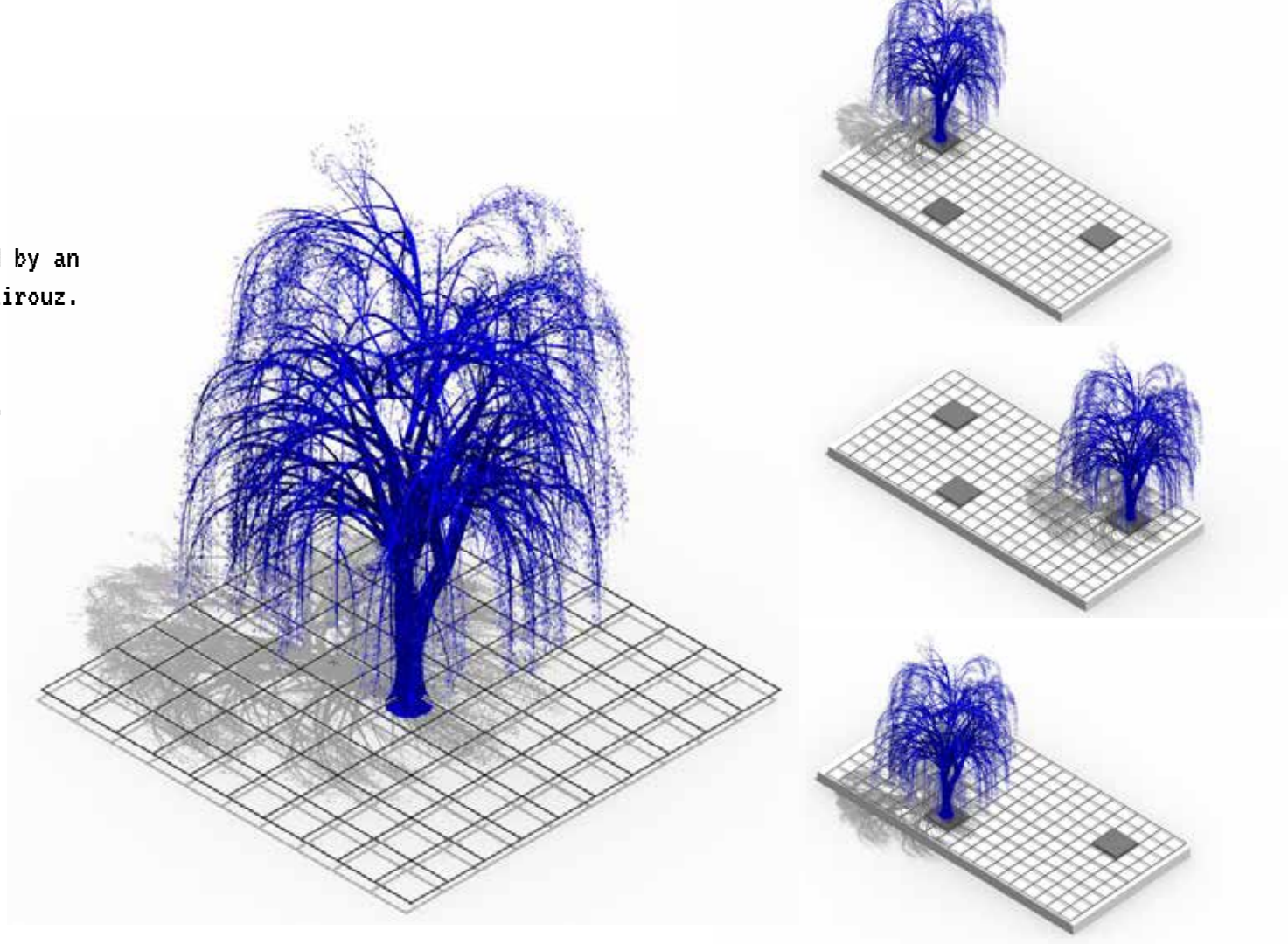
INTERACTION SIMULATION

And passes for the emo tree to see if any of his friends are looking for some love..

دموع فيروز

Public Space

Meeting point overlooked by an iconic commemoration; Fairouz. A middle eastern legend, Lebanon's pride and most celebrated artist in the region



INTERACTION SIMULATION

Tea, tea, tea!..

INTERACTION SIMULATION

نجمة الجماهير

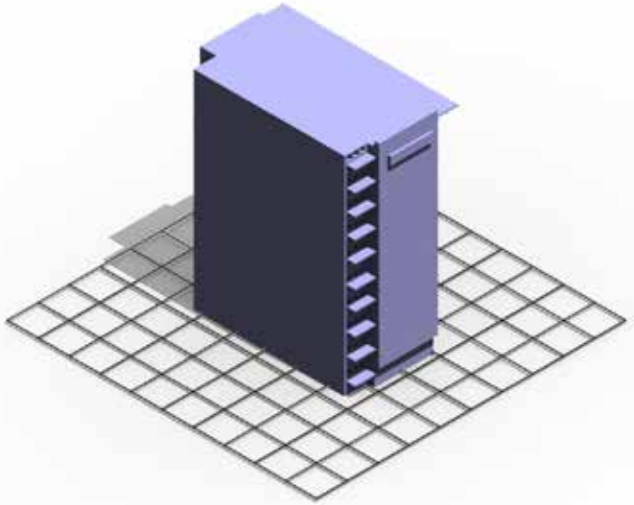
Screening | Billboard

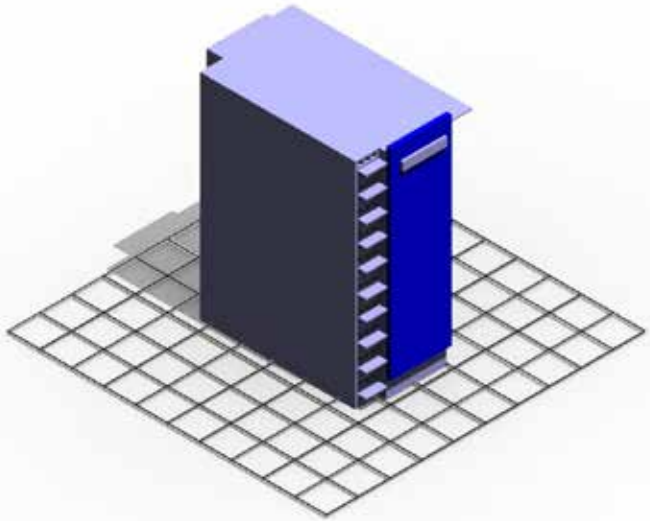
Screening on the Sabbouha wall

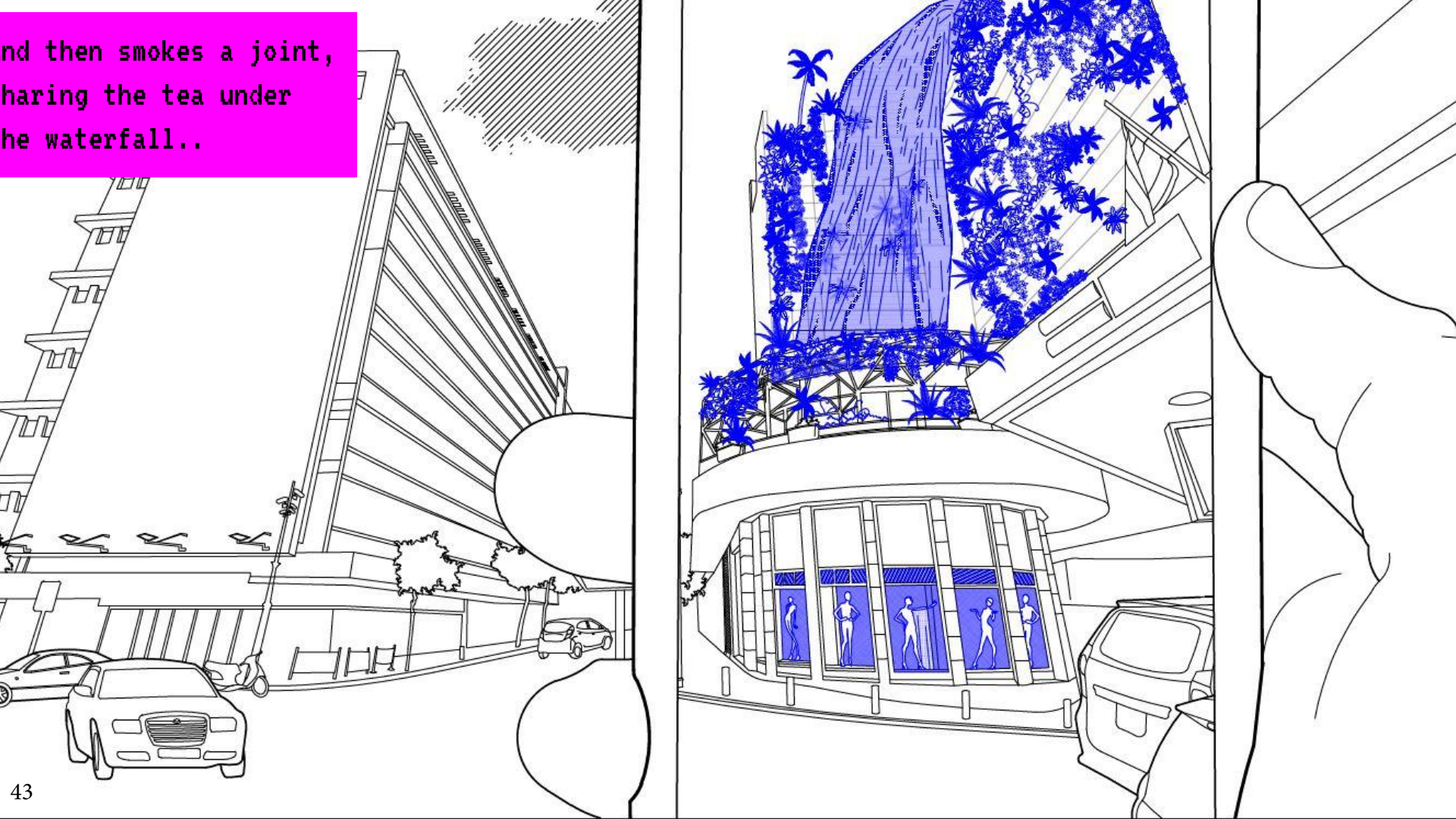
1.Tweets of lesbian icons

2.Queer Music Videos

3. Of purchased movies from Ahlam Hamra (slide 26)



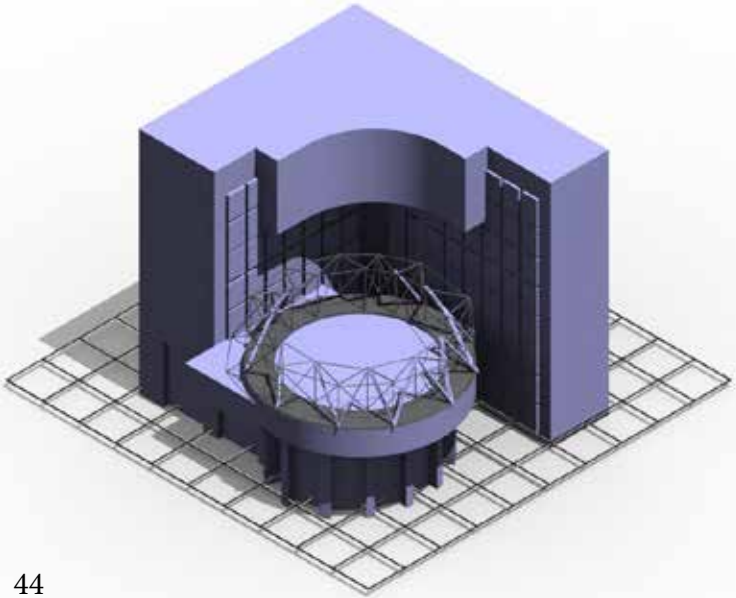


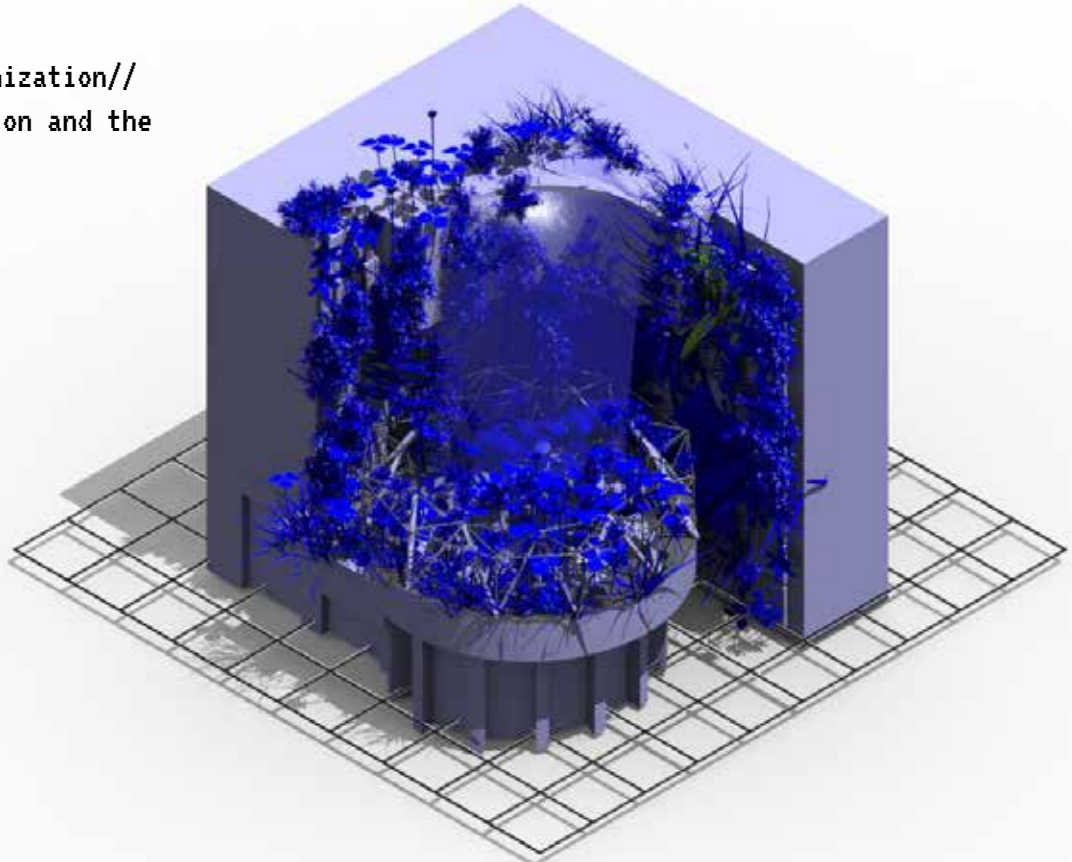

nd then smokes a joint,
haring the tea under
he waterfall..

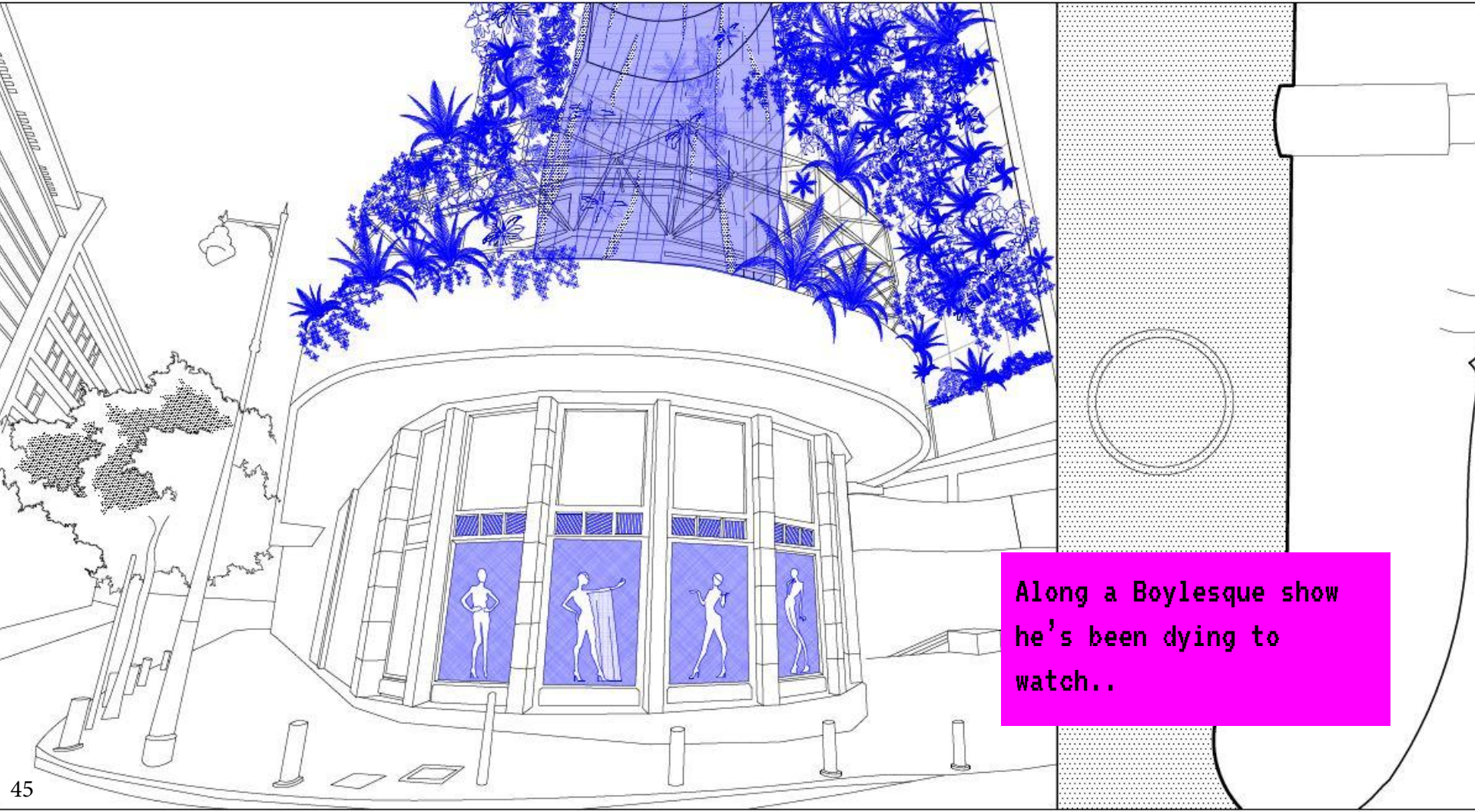
HAMRA FALLS

Show

Niagra Falls in Hamra// Commentary on Hyper urbanization// Absurdity in having a natural site in this location and the lack of it



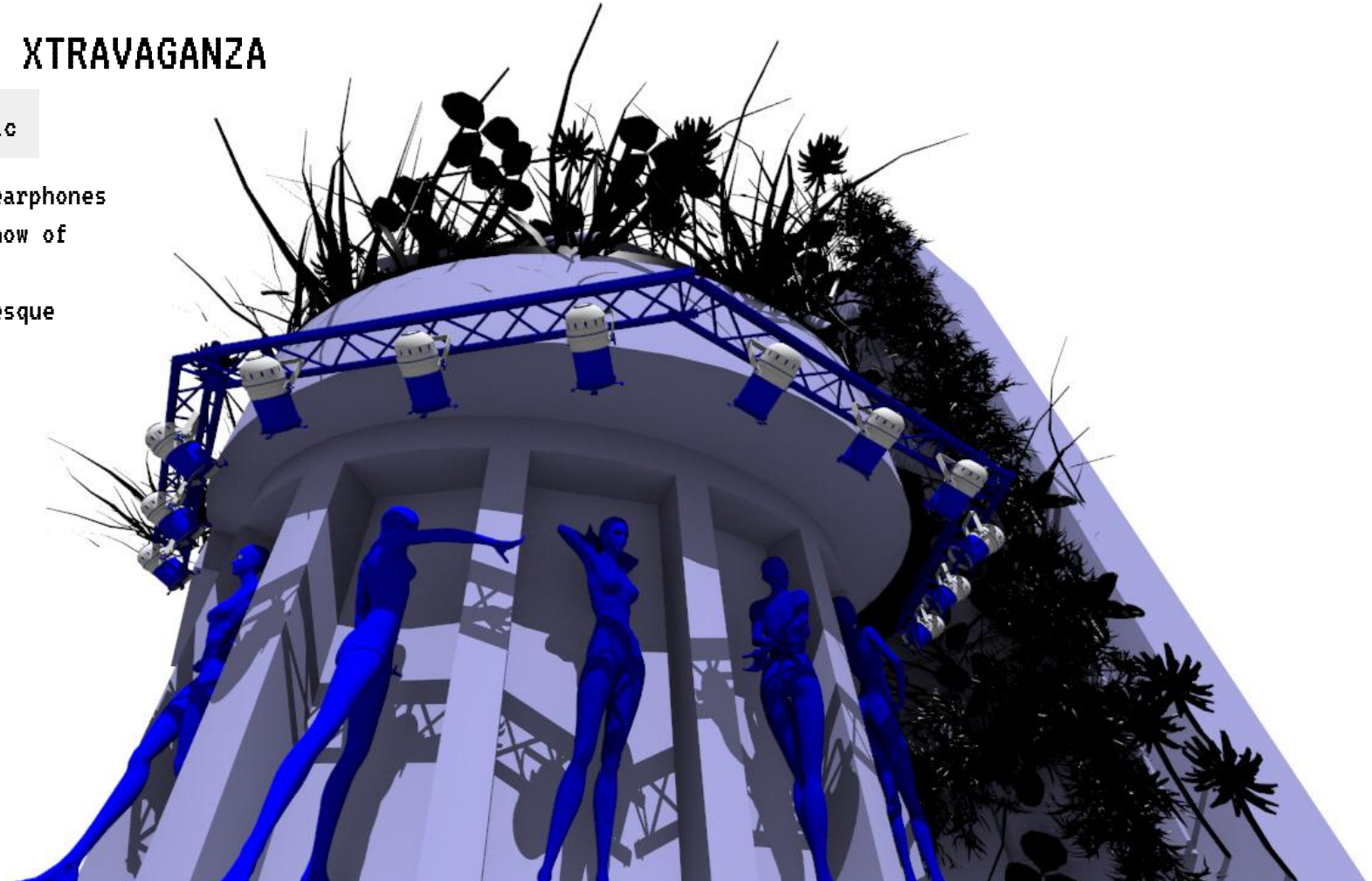


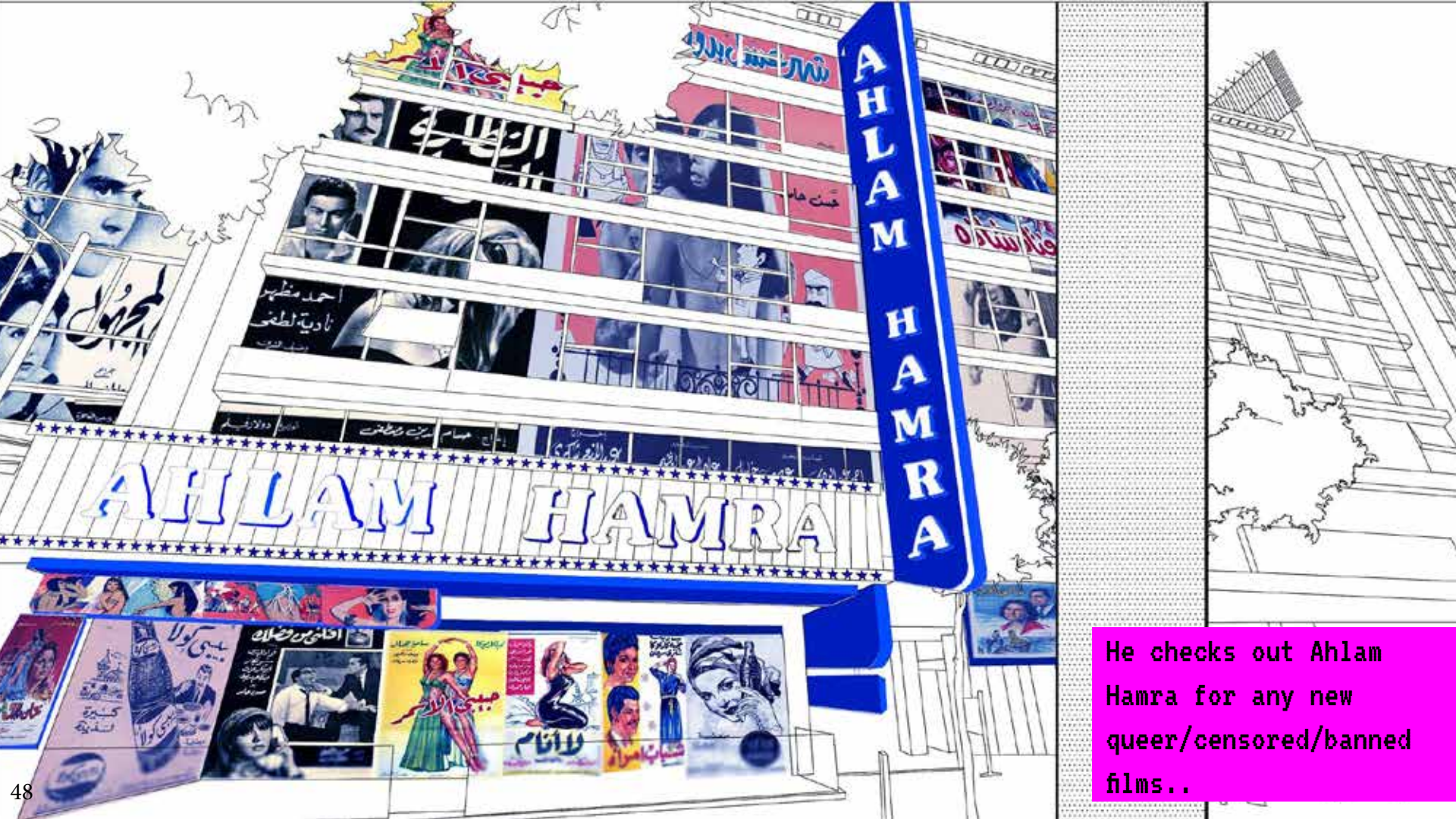

Along a Boylesque show he's been dying to watch..

HOUSE OF XTRAVAGANZA

Show Music

Plug in your earphones and enjoy a show of inclusivity//
Voguing//Boylesque
Burlesque

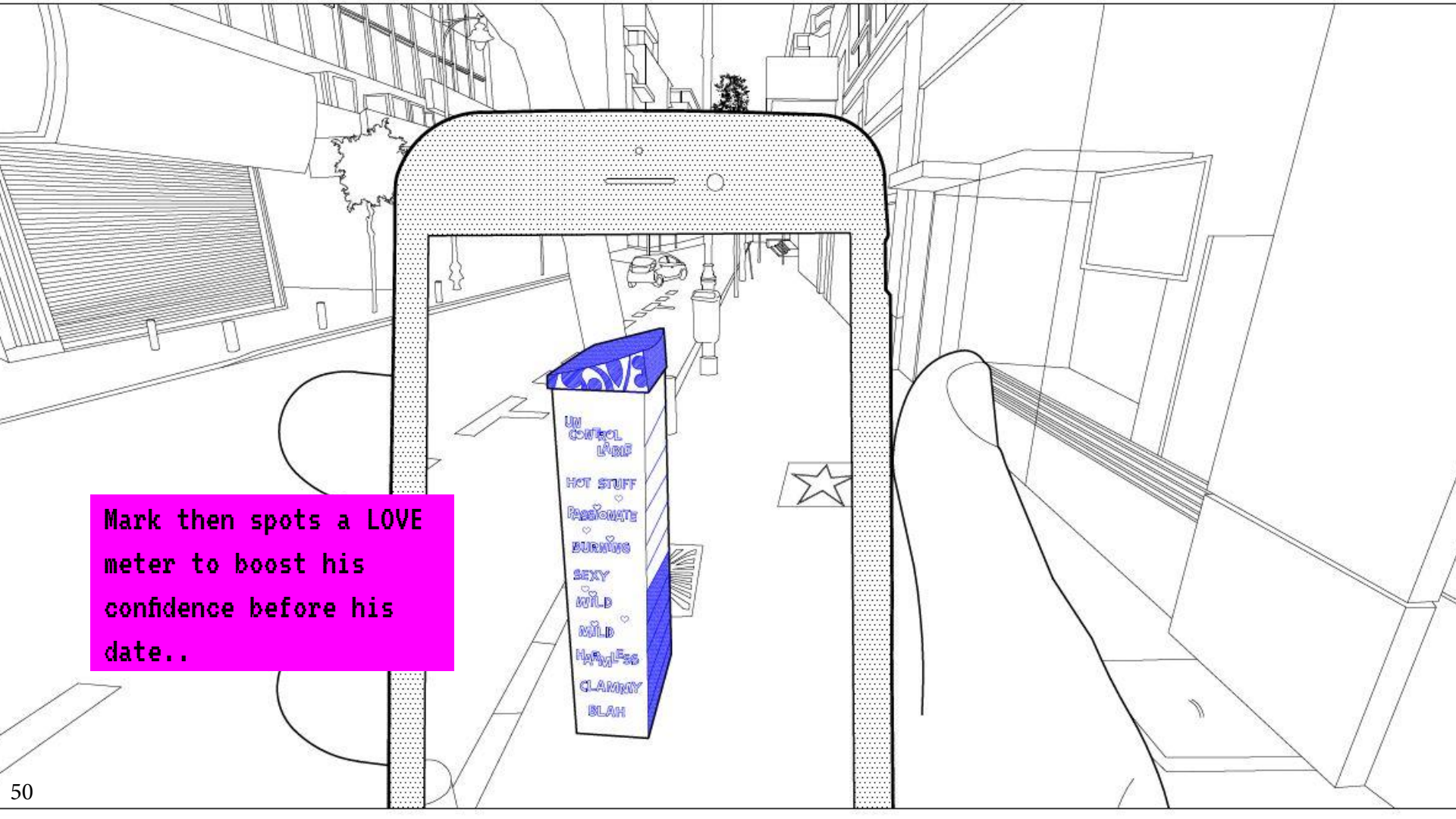



AHLAM HAMRA
AHLAM HAMRA
He checks out Ahlam Hamra for any new queer/censored/banned films..

أحلام حمرا

`Cinema Screening`

Uncovering hidden queer cinema in the time of Hind Restom++,
or any banned films and short movies.
A virtual ticket can be bought to access the screenings
through a link.
The building facades will serve as the screening background

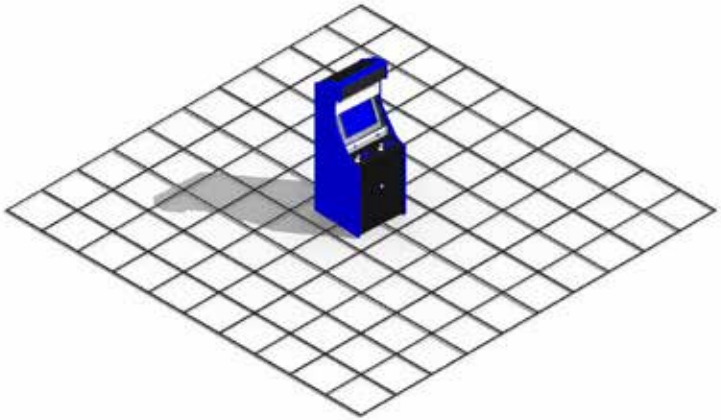


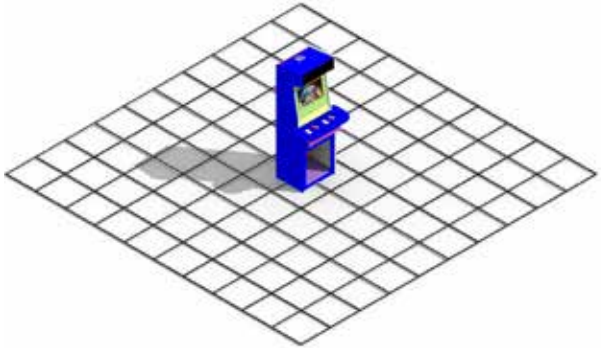
Mark then spots a LOVE meter to boost his confidence before his date..

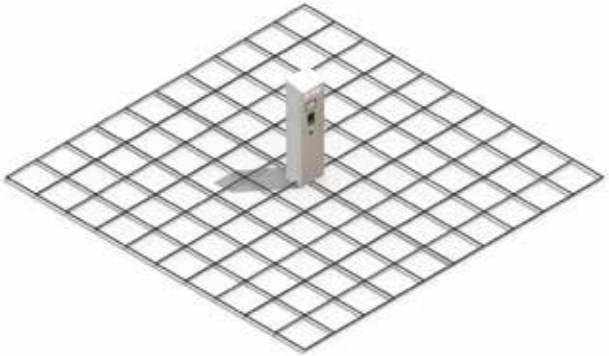
LOVE METER

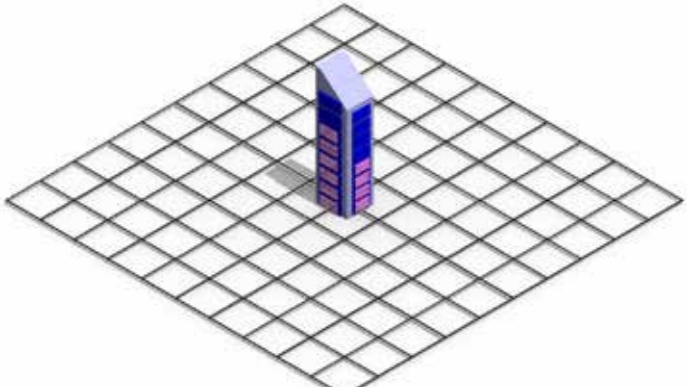
Public Space

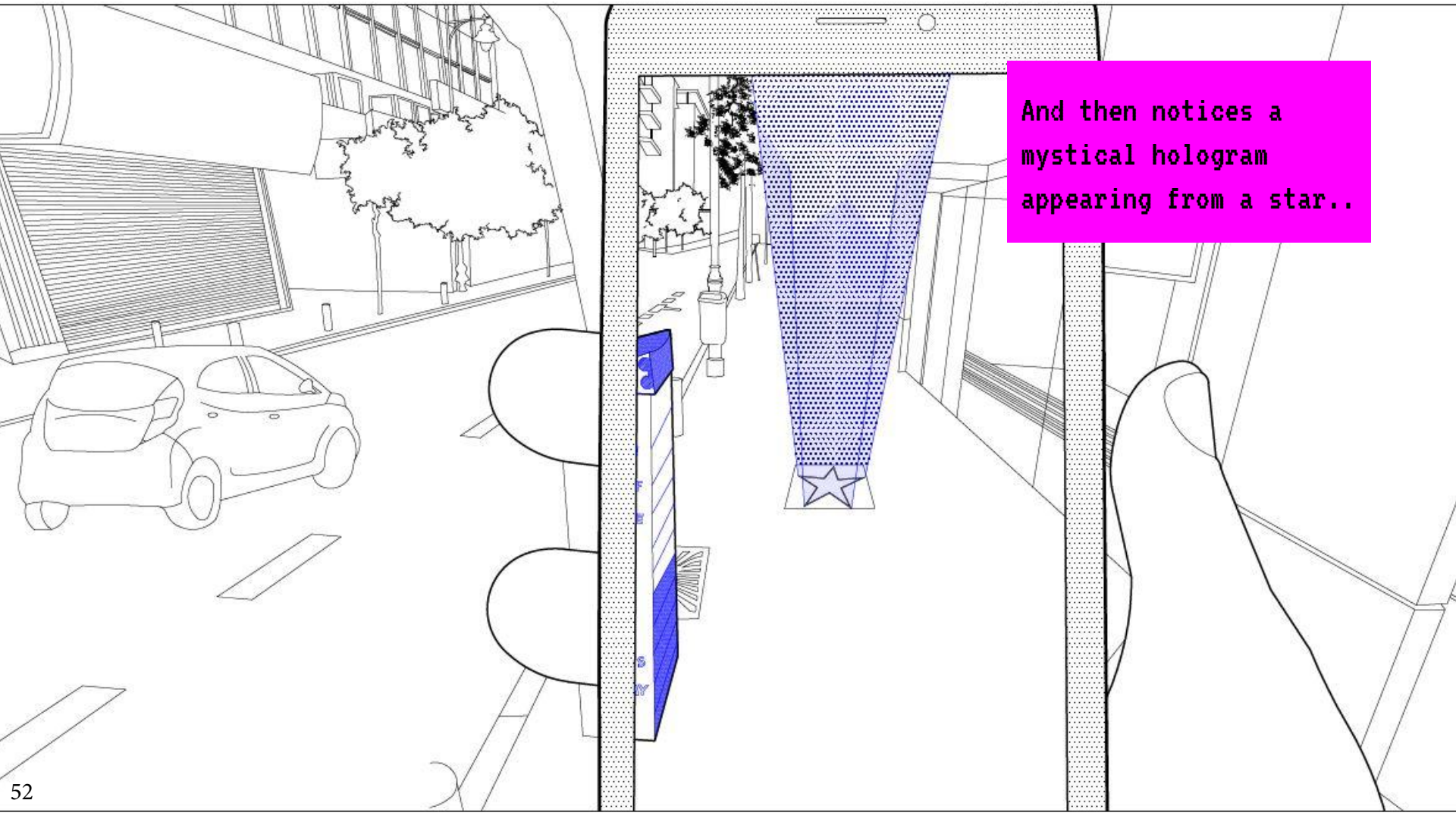
Love meter that measures the user's sex appeal
Also Interactive arcade spots







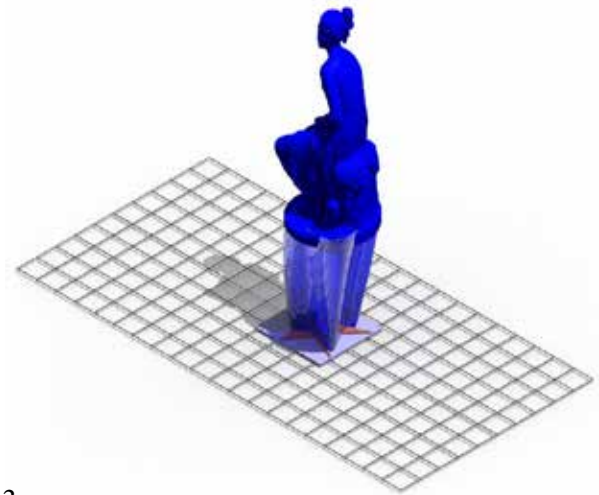


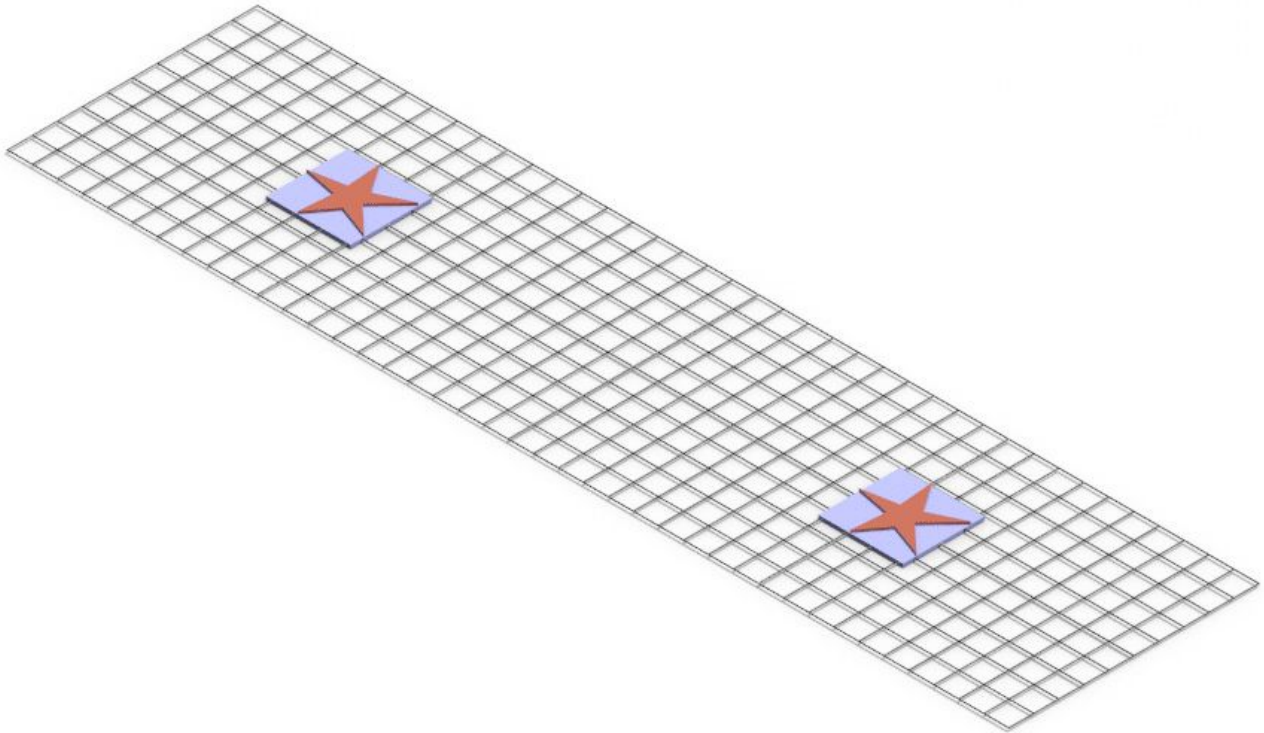

And then notices a mystical hologram appearing from a star..

Pride Moments

Monumental

Continuation of “Pride Shrine” (Slide 16) along the street of Hamra. The stars spots on the streets serve as paying tribute to queer legends



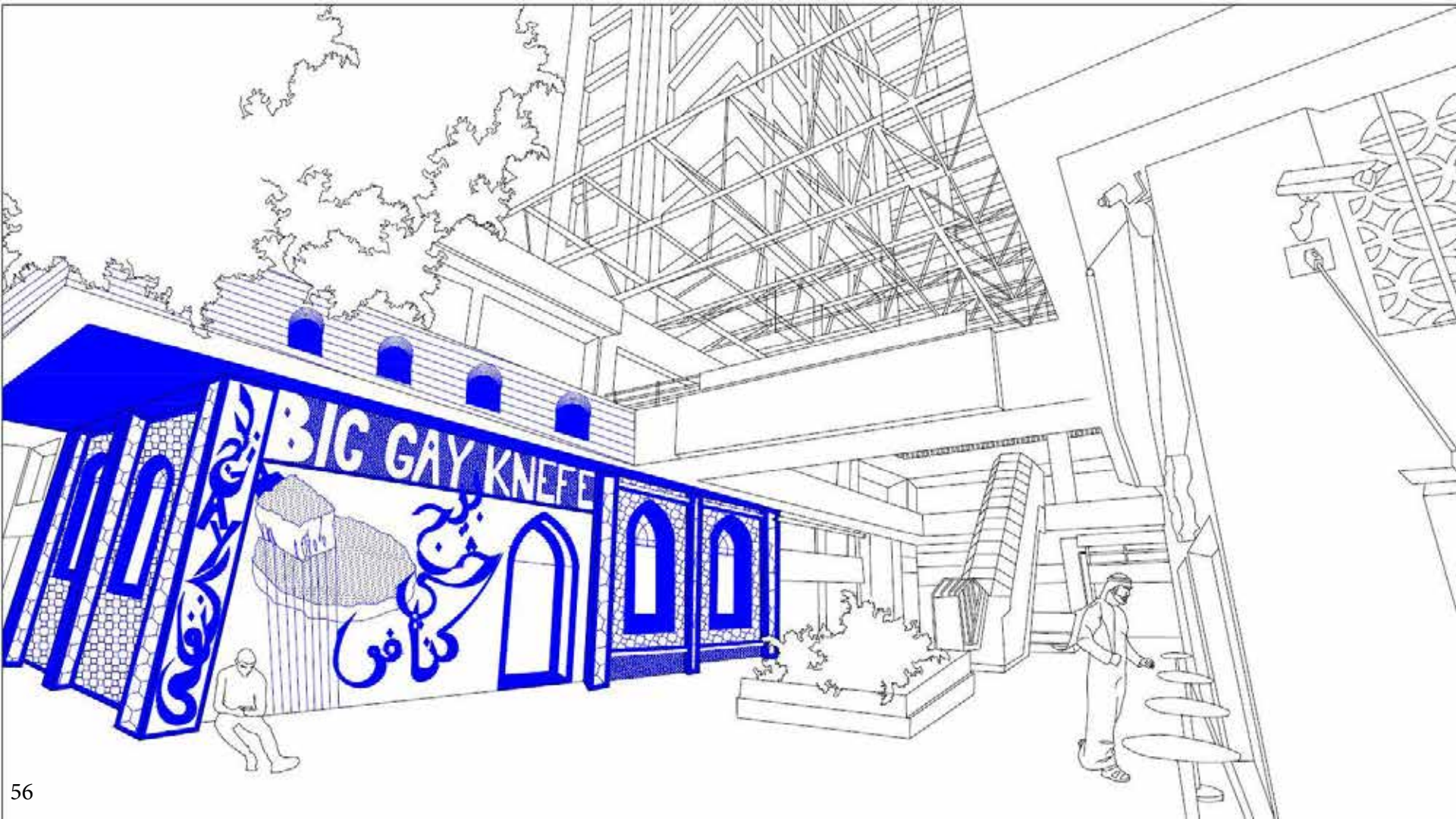


He then gets lost, enters Souk el Hawa where he discovers his BDSM dream

سوق الهوى

Shopping E-Commerce

Drag Fetish Souk
Shop for your next adventure,
browse and order online your
deepest darkest desires


BIG GAY KNEFE
كنافي

BIG GAY KNEFE

Shopping E-Commerce

A meeting point virtually presenting rainbow knefe, with arak-infused syrup.

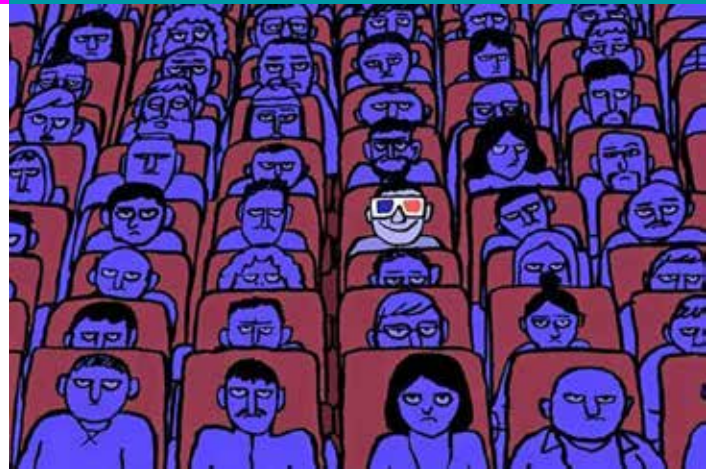
A new Augmented Reality

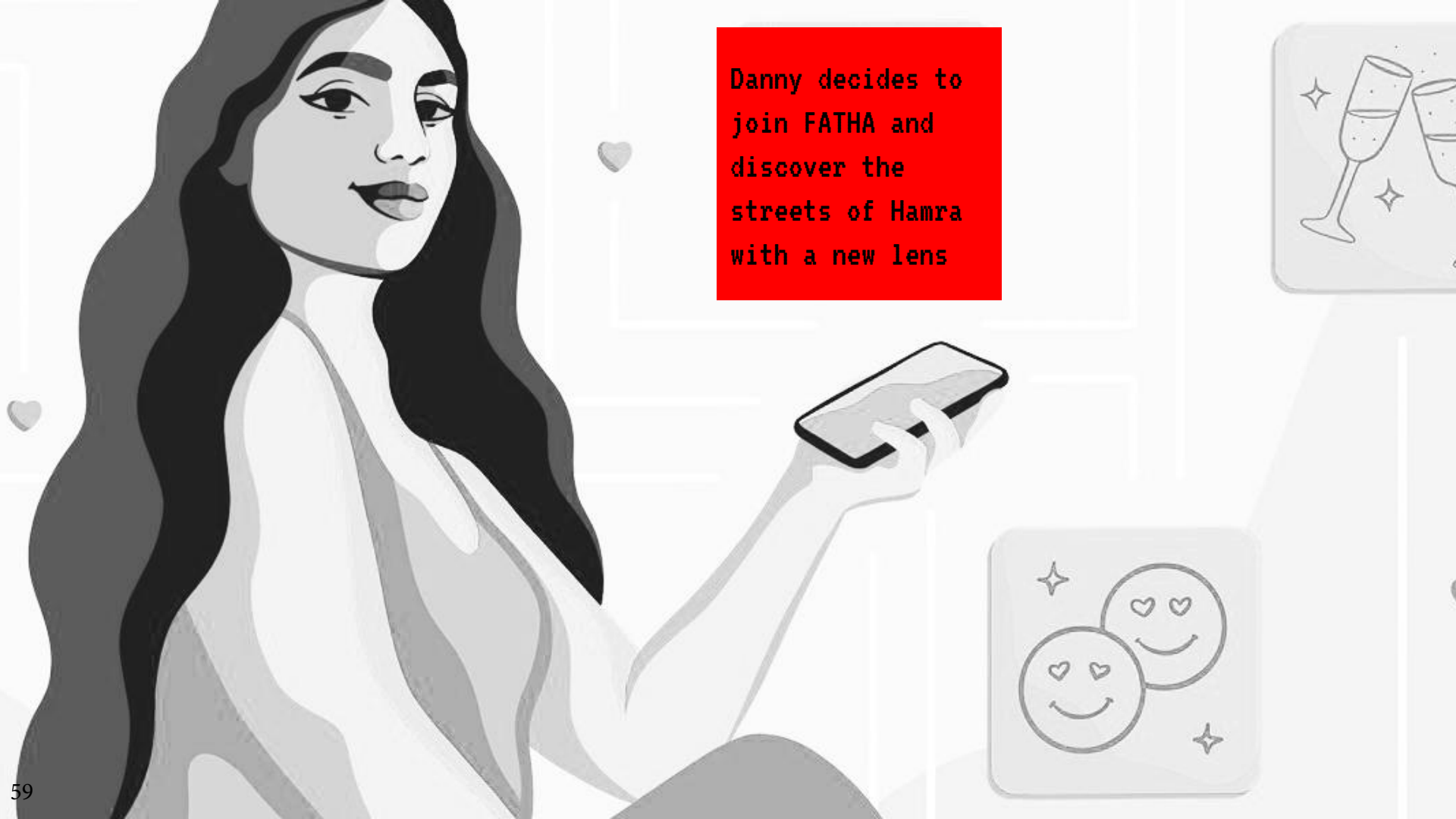
Customize the experience to answer the user's preferences

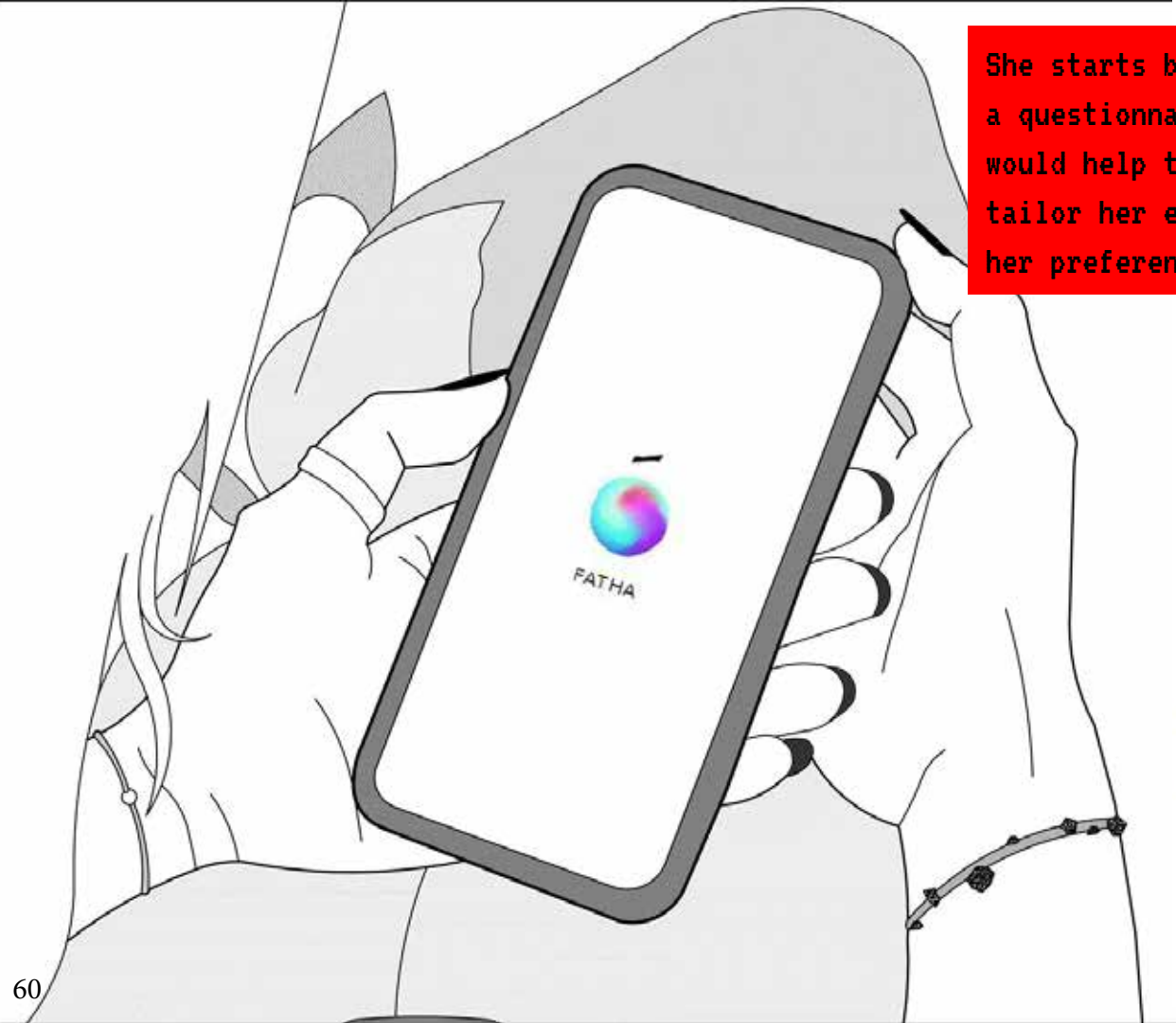
Profile Building// that could guide the user to a type of people that one would want to meet

Design monuments and insert in the world

Personalized experience




Danny decides to join FATHA and discover the streets of Hamra with a new lens



She starts by answering a questionnaire that would help the app to tailor her experience to her preferences..

Do you consider yourself a member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
mmunity?

ou most identify?

- Transgender Female
- Transgender Male
- Gender Variant/ Non-Conforming
- Not listed. Please specify:
- Prefer not to answer

How would you describe your sexual orientation or sexual identity?

- Bisexual
- Gay/Lesbian/Same-Gender Loving
- Questioning/Unsure
- Straight/Heterosexual
- Not listed. Please specify:
- Prefer not to answer

Name three artists that inspire you:

.....

Can't think of anyone? Choose from the list

Name three movies you would switch your daily life with:

.....

Can't think of anything? Choose from the list

What is the type of music that reaches your soul? Name a few songs

.....

What activities makes you feel alive?

.....

What do you think is missing in a city?

.....

Are you happy with your urban experience?

.....

HAMRA
COFFEE
Le Café
Rue 22

STARBUCKS COFFEE
THE BODY SHOP.
THE BODY SHOP.
beauty spa

GNC
LIVE WELL

Disturbing the urban condition

Public Spaces

FATHA becomes a catalyst for people to spend more time on the street, discovering the augmentations

FATHA is completely disturbing the space, **the streets of Hamra used as transitional passages become occupied by** the users of the app. Interacting with that space for several hours somehow integrates the user in the urban context.

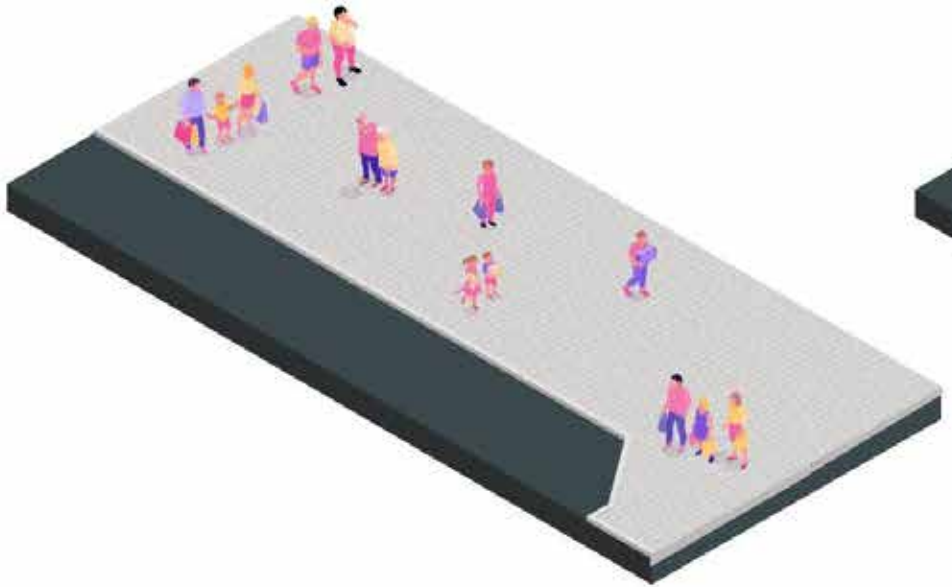
User view // overlooking the interventions

User view // overlooking the interventions

User view // overlooking the interventions

User view // overlooking the interventions

From a Transitional Space → To a Recreational Area



Mobilize

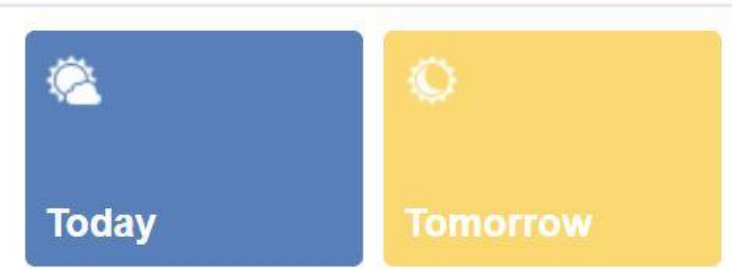
Design Events// Social Media Platform

Mobilizing from a certain situation into being part of the city, being part of the public

People become my site of action

Have designed events that would

Collective experience



Danny is invited to a protest against BDL through FATHA

A new collective body

Besides personalized experience of the city, this app also creates events to bring together people from within the community as well as allies for networking, making friends and inspiring physical impact.

A new collective security

The app is accessible by all and targets mainly the community;

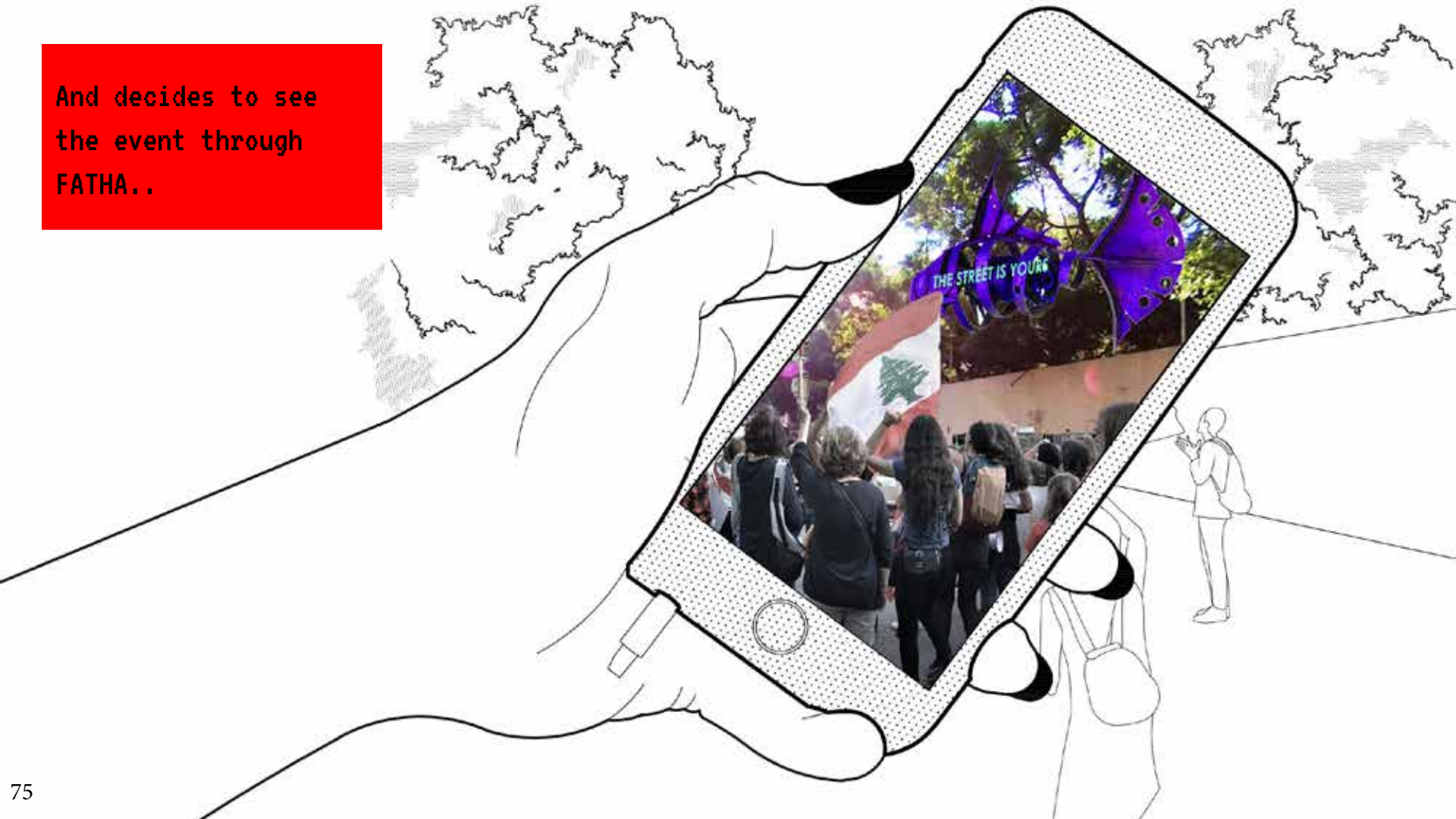
This app creates an alternative electronic policing systems that enforces and concentrates on the usually oppressed community and handles the “non-queer” as a lower priority.

Augmented reality spaces, Chat rooms, Health hotlines, security screening options and radio gardens are integrated features within.

To have access to the platform rules and regulations must be read and followed

Starting point being AUB medical gate, she arrives just on time

And decides to see the event through FATHA..



She notices that the App notifies her when her friends are around..

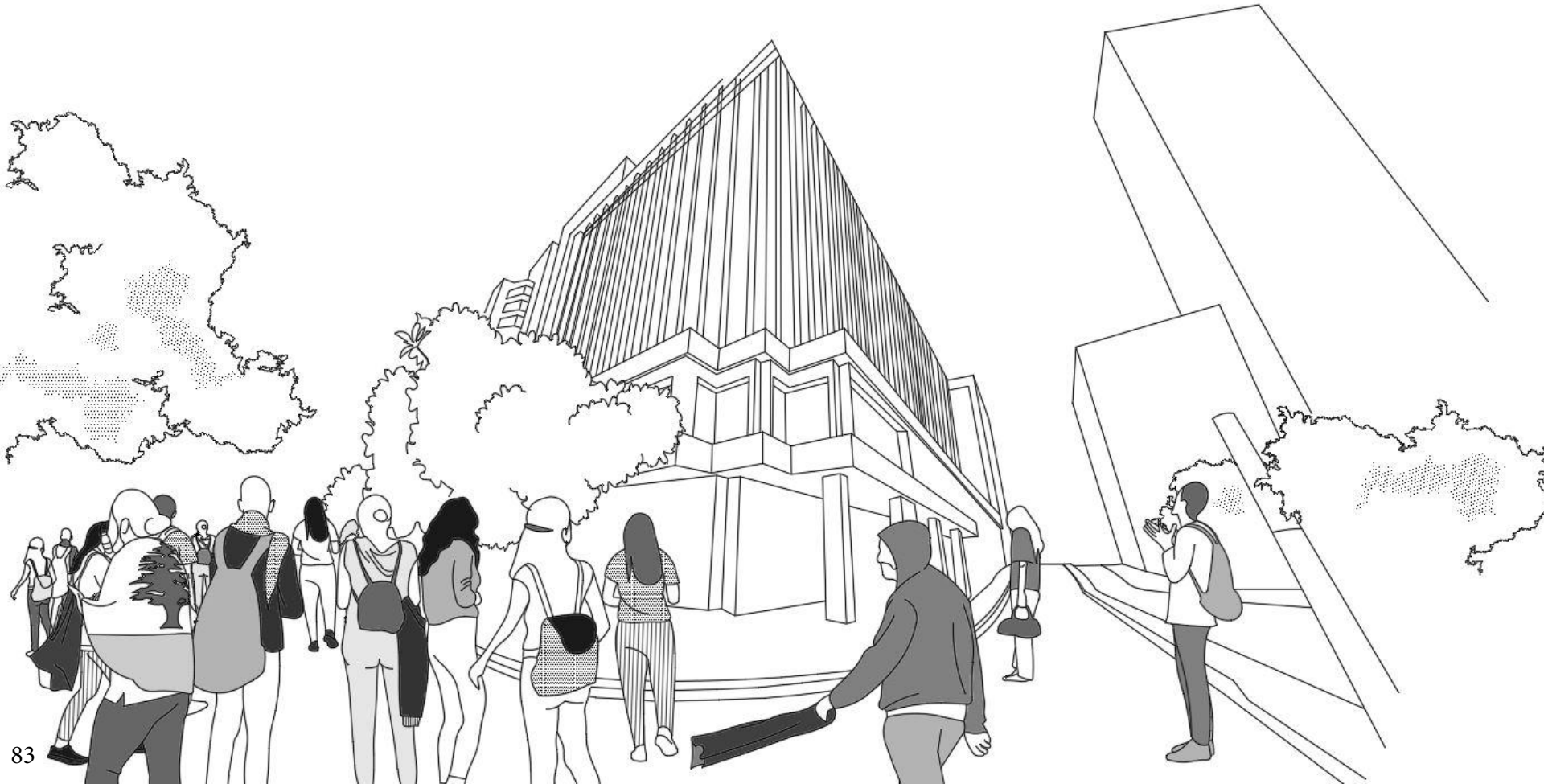
And that a flying fish is following her with crucial infos! Like the lawyers hotline..
EMERGENCY #
NOTE IT DOWN ON YOUR BODY!
Free speech lawyers
78 935579
SURVEILLANCE AHEAD

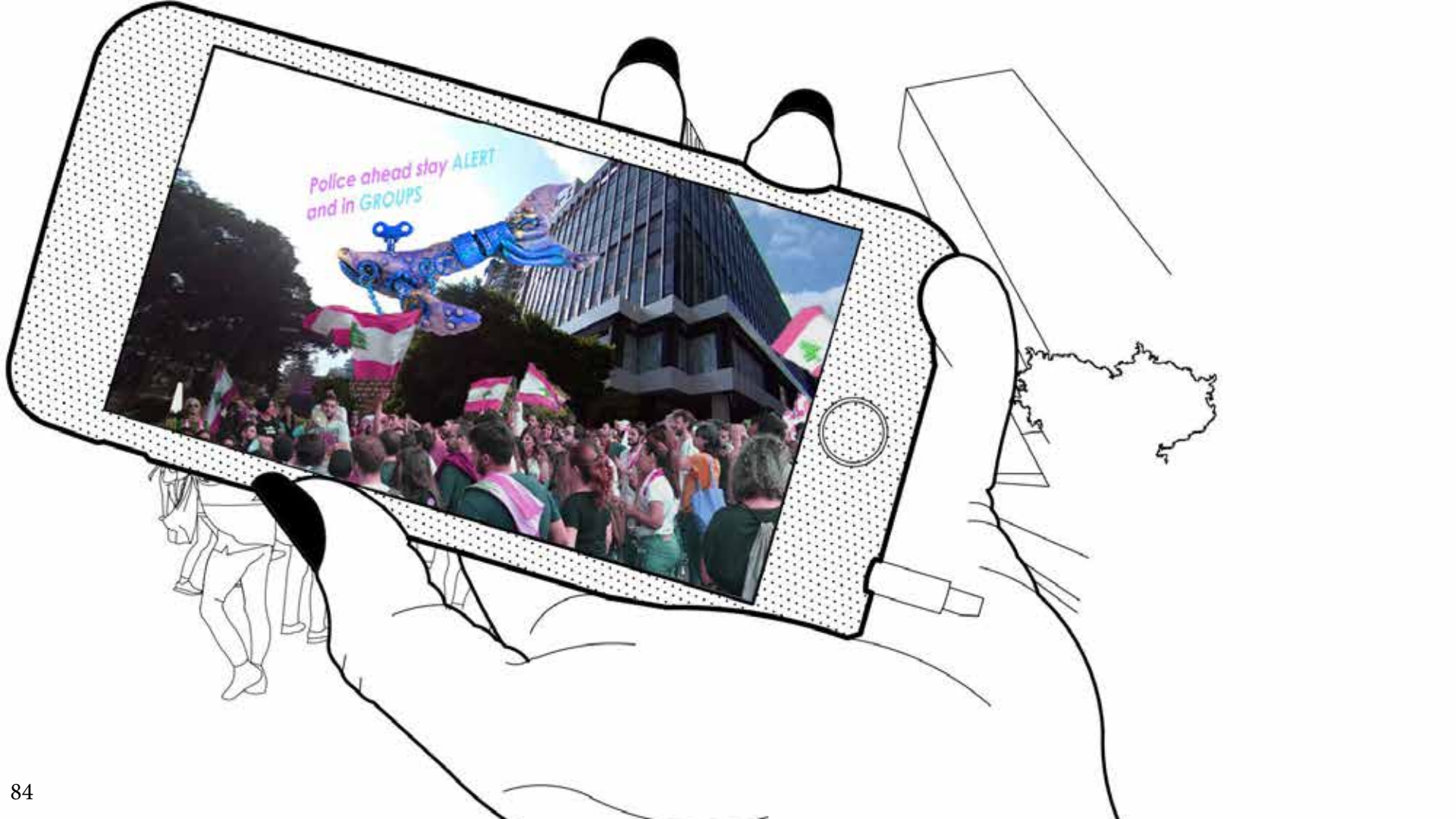
The app alerts her when there are security cameras or police officers in sight

It also allows other users to insert graffiti, signs and ideas in the street!

Tweet
@TalaSalman25
A colorful and rather special protest HAPPENING NOW, join us as we head to BDL!
Time to take a stand against exploitation, corruption and say no to those who have been making monetary profits off our back خلص
Add another Tweet
This is too cool she decides to share it with her friends on FB and Twitter!..

More art!..




Police ahead stay ALERT
and in GROUPS

I decided to work with the reality of my generation, Our relationship to the screen//

The city is now perceived through a screen, & COVID-19 is proof of how the phone has become an alternate key to the outside.

With the digital/ virtual being more inclusive in one's thinking & more embedded into our lives.

I am trying to claim architecture through a screen, the language of my time

I am mapping and designing a parallel realm and mobilizing communities, it's almost a response to the expiry date of the existing space that's unequipped for human evolution and can still develop a programming system as an architectural type.

Creating situations that create space (programming) and somehow withstand threats against it by not being so reliant and anchored in existing systems. We're seeing how fragile space can be