

Recognizing the Existing Potential of an Industrial Landscape

by

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for the degree of Master of Architecture

at

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

Conceived of and established as a fortified city, Halifax developed a naval and industrial relationship with its harbour. The waterfront was seen as a strategic area for military defense, not for public amenities. In an effort to streamline the movement of goods, an imposing rail line corridor was developed along the peninsula's waterfront. This industrialization effectively dislocated Point Pleasant Park from the rest of its urban fabric. The severing of this vital and historic artery symbolized the evolution of Halifax's harbour from being fortified to industrialized. As a result, today's waterfront is largely privatized for the military, large industry and high-end single family residential. The focus of this investigation is to explore a methodology that recognizes the potential of the decaying rail line corridor and surrounding industrial environment. The intent of this intervention is to graft new vital arteries between Halifax's urban fabric and its industrial waterfront in a manner that celebrates the monumental nature of the landscape.

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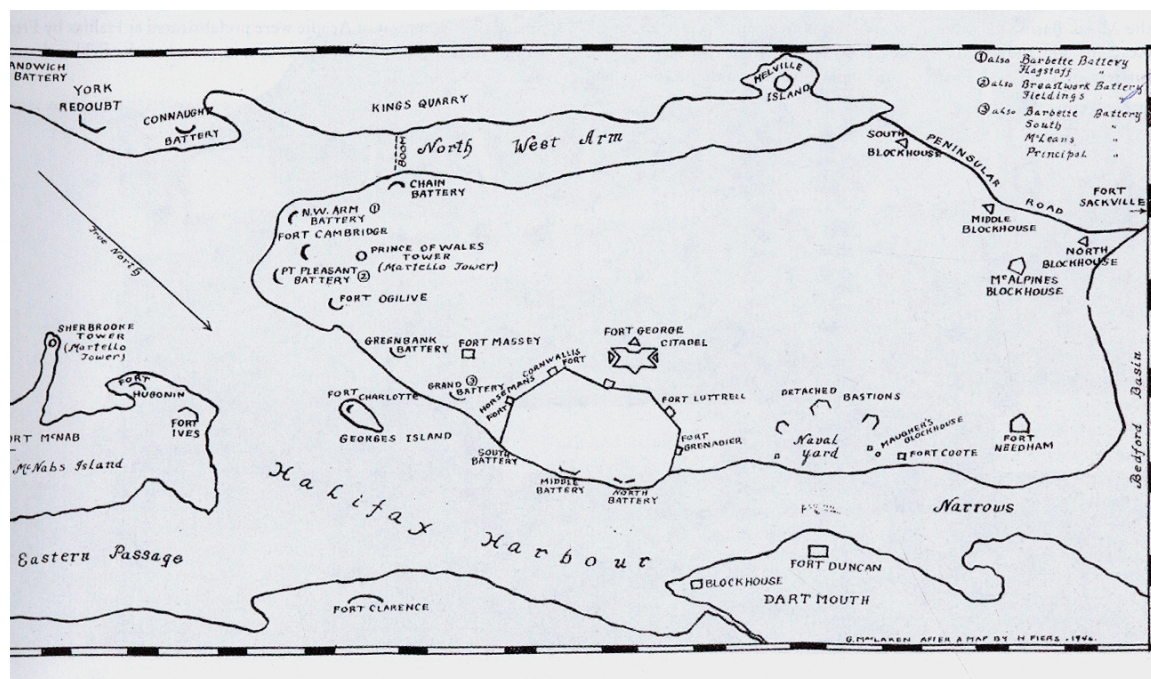
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Context

The primary ambition of my thesis is urbanism, particularly how one can approach the issue of industrial sites on our urban waterfronts. These expansive sites are often out of scale and break down the urban fabric of our cities. Like a disease they produce decrepit forgotten neighborhoods in their direct vicinity. I am interested in examining how the pedestrian realm can co-exist in these environments without interrupting current industrial infrastructure, and in doing so, convert these industrial sites into porous hubs that allow the surrounding urban fabric to healthily interact more meaningfully with these zones. I feel compelled to explore the potential of introducing architectural interventions that celebrate the existing phenomenological qualities of the site. The Halterm industrial park is fascinating, as it is composed of monumentally scaled buildings that work together like a machine. This man made brutal material pallet is contrasted by the unyielding presence of nature determined to reclaim this site. The constant battle between man and nature has produced a piece-meal language, a collage like quality that is undeniably beautiful and embodied with character, “incomplete and eroding surfaces and forms initiate and stimulate dreaming in the same way that an ink-blot figure in the personality test invites figural interpretations” (Pallasmaa 2011, 74).

A Fortified Harbour

Halifax as a fortified city, was involved in seven colonial era wars and played an important roll in both world wars (Parker 2004, xi). Halifax's naturally deep and protected harbour made it ideal for ship construction and repair. As a result Halifax's harbour has always been populated with naval dockyards, dry docks and massive piers. Since its inception, Halifax's harbour has been a valuable resource for naval and industrial requirements. As a fortified town, the peninsula's shoreline was protected from its urban fabric by forts, blockhouses and batteries; the waterfront was seen as a strategic area for military defence, not for public amenities.

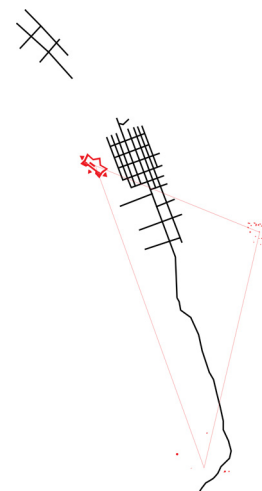


Harry Piers, The Evolution Of The Halifax Fortress 1749-1928 (Parker 2004)

Evolution of the Peninsula

Strategic Positioning

The settlement of Halifax in 1749 was defined by a requirement for strategic military positioning and fortification. The steep natural landscape on the east side of the peninsula formed by a glacial drumlin was ideal for the symbolic presence of Fort George on Citadel Hill (Parker 2004, 2). The development of Halifax as a town was directly influenced by its placement within the protection provided by the Citadel, Point Pleasant and Georges Island. At this time there was a very strong connection between Halifax's urban center and its relationship to Point Pleasant Battery.



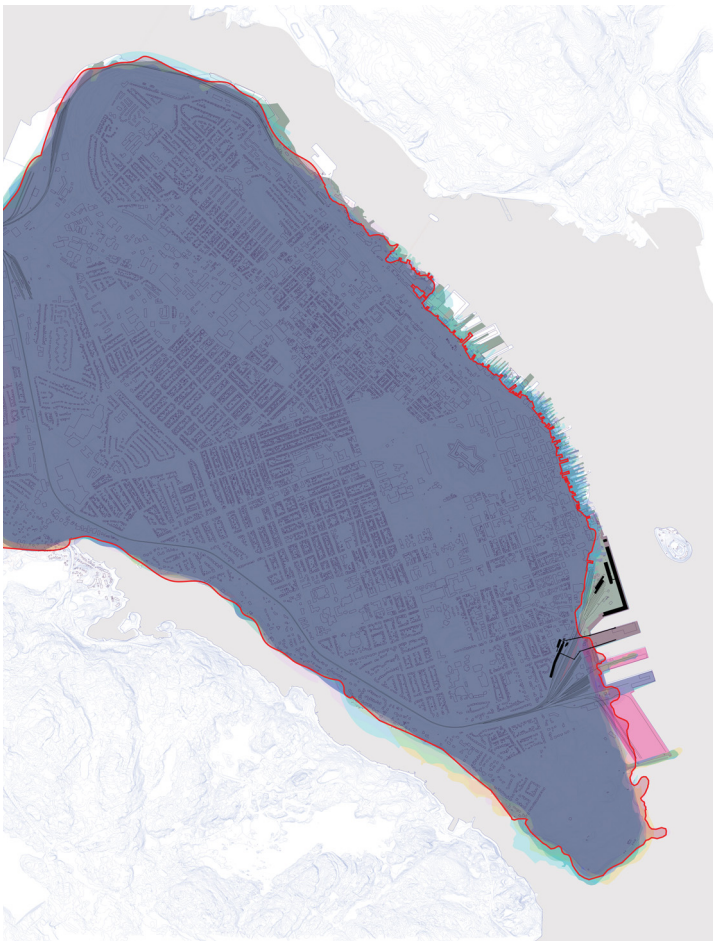
Map of original Halifax settlement.

Industrial Development

As the emphasis on merchant shipping increased in the early 1900's Halifax introduced rail road infrastructure in an effort to meet increased demand on the movement of goods. Originating inland, the rail lines descended from the west side of the peninsula and cut across the narrow southern portion of the land in order to serve the 'Halifax Ocean Terminals'. In an effort to streamline the movement of goods, the industrialization of the southern portion of the harbour effectively dislocated Point Pleasant Park from the rest of Halifax. The severing of this vital artery symbolized the evolution of Halifax from a fortified harbour to an industrial harbour.

Reclaiming Land Into The Harbour

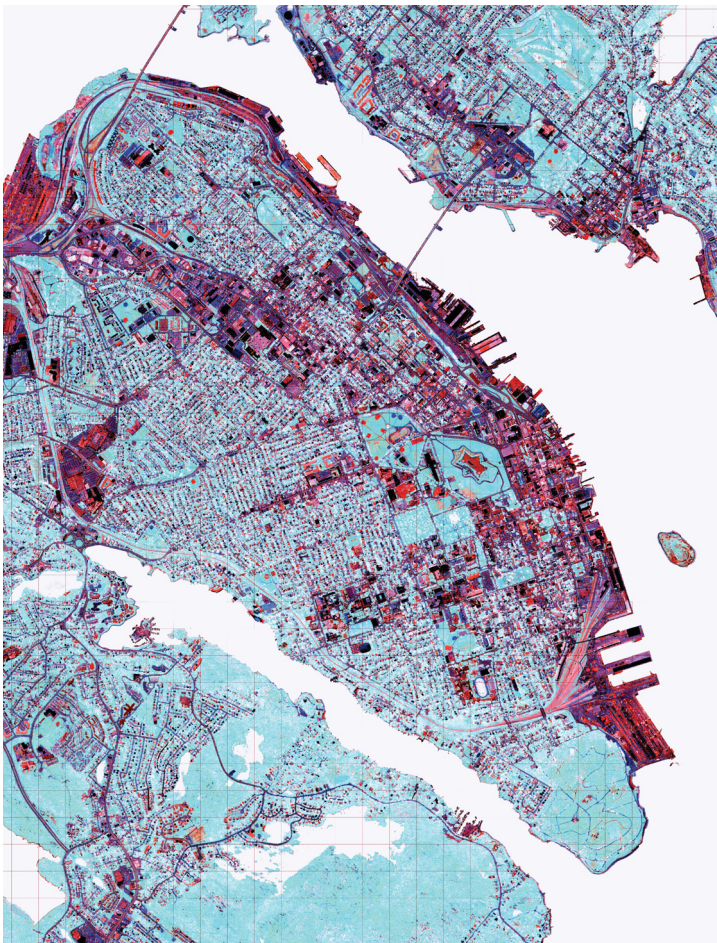
Halifax's harbour is a valuable economic resource for the city. The harbour has always been a resource to serve the functional requirements of the movement of goods, ship building, and the fishing industry. As a result of this heavy economic focus, there no longer exists a natural water's edge on the east side of the Halifax peninsula. In the illustration below, the red line represents the water's edge of the peninsula in 1749, each layer of color identifies significant developments from Halifax's first settlement to the present.



Evolution of the Halifax Peninsula

An Industrial Edge

The effect of Halifax's industrial harbour is made evident in this map which contrasts hard-scapes and soft-scapes. The Fairview Container terminal in the northern part of the peninsula and the Halterm Container Terminal in the southern section of the peninsula form Industrial bookends that connect through a band of high density development. Halifax's industrial harbour has produced a notably harder edge on the east side of the peninsula. The greener and softer landscapes are more prevalent the farther one moves away from the Harbour.



Manipulated map of Halifax (Google 2012)

A Working Harbour

Case Study: Vancouver vs. Halifax

Vancouver

As a relatively young city, Vancouver has had the opportunity to develop itself as a major urban center that emphasizes its priority in providing infrastructure for the public realm. Its critical position is that the waterfront must always be accessible and public. This is articulated through the implementation of the public Seawall that surrounds the peninsula. It connects a network of public facilities, such as parks, beaches, pools, and markets. The seawall is a visual symbol for a city that places the pedestrian as its first priority.



Manipulated map of Vancouver (Google 2013)

Halifax

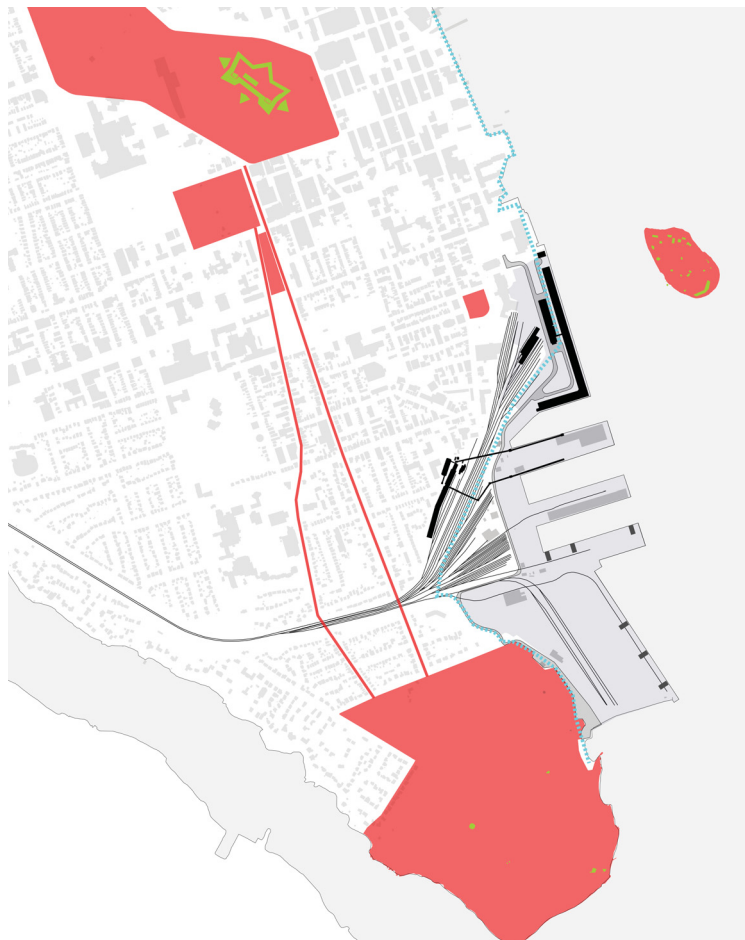
In contrast, Halifax is deeply rooted in its naval and industrial history. Halifax has a very similar land typology to Vancouver, but due to its background has developed very differently. At present only the original settlement east of Citadel Hill is successful at integrating the pedestrian sphere with the waterfront. Point Pleasant Park, situated on the southern tip of the peninsula should also be a successful urban park, but the industrial development of Halterm Container Terminal and the rail line infrastructure has almost entirely removed the park from the urban fabric. Halifax's urban waterfront is largely privatized for military, large industry and high end single family residential homes.



Manipulated map of Halifax (Google 2013)

The Urban Core

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) identifies the area south of Citadel Hill as the 'Urban Core' of Halifax. All of the major parks and green spaces: Citadel Hill, Public Gardens, and Victoria Park are connected to Point Pleasant Park by two roads that span over the rail line corridor. This produces an interesting urban core typology where the major green spaces are situated as book ends on either side of the dense urban fabric. This linear typology means that these public green spaces function as destinations rather than integral parts of our urban fabric.



Designated 'urban core' of Halifax, highlighting its relationship to major parks and its proximity to Halterm Container Terminal.

Thesis Investigation

Strengthening The Connection Between Halifax's Urban Fabric And It's Waterfront

How Can A Site That Is Responsible For Disconnecting The Urban Fabric From The Waterfront Be Transformed Into A Device For Urban Porosity?

The Halterm Container Terminal, the rail line corridor that services it, and the Grain Elevators are of an incredibly large industrial scale. Located in the 'urban core' of Halifax this brutal landscape disconnects the harbour-walk from Point Pleasant Park and removes the connection between the urban fabric and the harbour. Functioning like a fortified wall, these elements literally hold back the public realm from spilling into this landscape that borders the harbour.



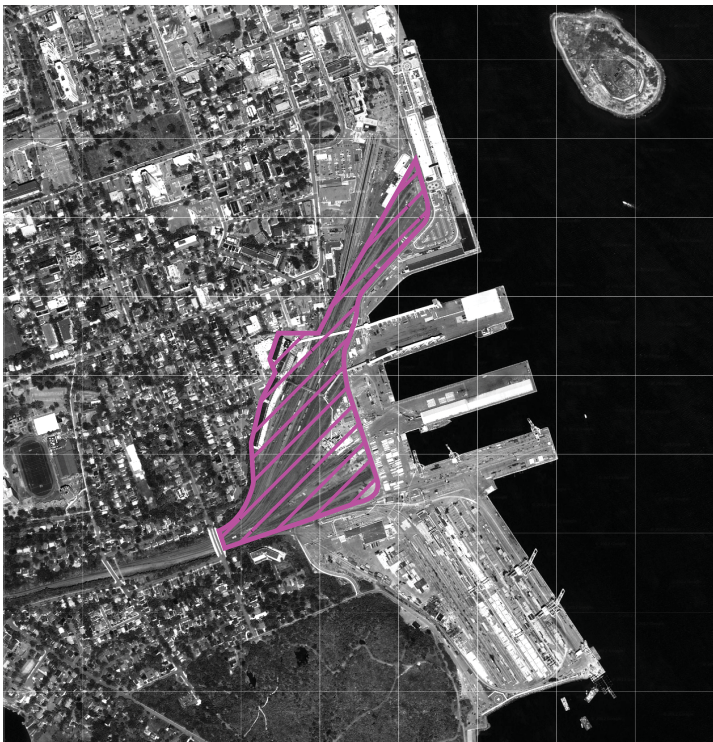
Manipulated map of Halifax highlighting the rail line corridor.
(Google 2012)

Site

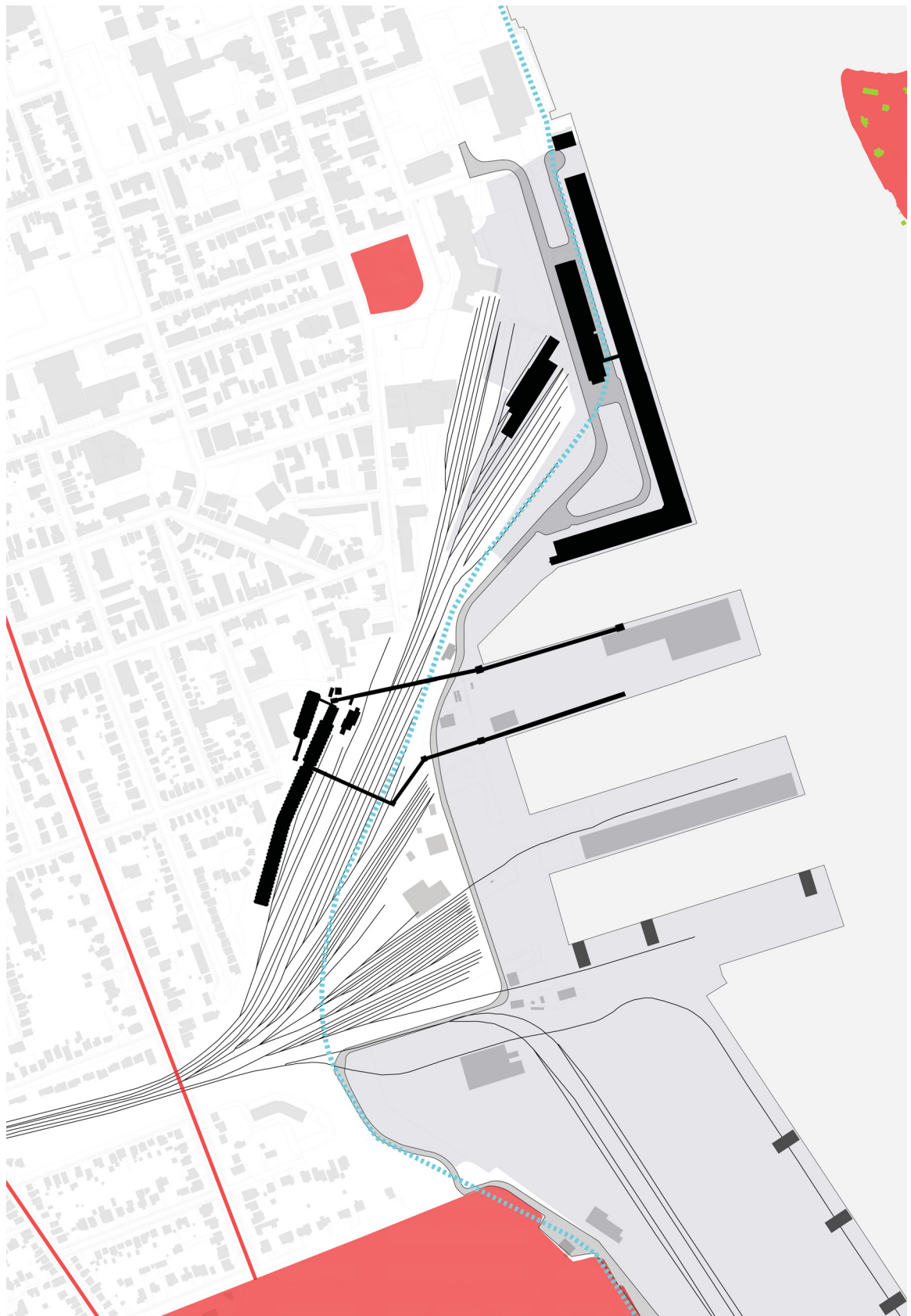
Halterm Container Terminal

Grain Elevators and Rail line Corridor

Transportation is a primary industry in Halifax, the Container terminals are a thriving part of its economy and a large source of employment. Therefore, it is my critical position to introduce urban porosity and integrate the pedestrian realm into this industrial environment without disrupting existing industry. Consequently, I do not propose to make any architectural or urban interventions to the Halterm Container Terminal where it borders the harbour. Instead, I believe that the greatest potential for intervention resides with the decaying rail line infrastructure and the monumental Grain Elevators.



Manipulated map of Halifax showing the site. (Google 2012)



Map of site and surrounding urban fabric.

Phenomenological Experience Of The Rail Line Corridor

The Halterm industrial shipping yard is a man made reclaimed site, composed of a brutal material palette and littered with unfamiliar machine-like buildings of a monumental scale. It is a thriving part of our economy, and for this reason requires much more than simple tabula rasa practices. The train tracks spill into this site like veins and provide an incredible opportunity for adaptive reuse. Amongst the rail track infrastructure is the resilient presence of nature that forms a green belt through the site. The organic matter is contrasted with the brutality of concrete and asphalt, its scarcity heightens its preciousness; emanating with energy, it is a vivid juxtaposition of landscapes. Moving through the industrial park on the road (the designated pedestrian and vehicular route) is loud, dangerous and anything but engaging, in comparison the green belt formed by the tracks creates an entirely different experience. The ground cover tells a collage like story of a dynamic history made evident by the layering of materials embedded in the earth. There are moments when the rails crumble away from neglect or where nothing but the wooden rungs are left and almost overgrown by grass. The grain elevators and the shipping yard frame the view along this grassy rail corridor. There is an incredibly compelling urge driven by curiosity to explore this scarred landscape. The grain elevator provides an unexpected natural spectacle- a large flock of birds congregate on the grain elevator and as the grain passes through the elevated hallways the vibrations send the flock into a performance that resembles the infinity loop symbol- a natural phenomena



Photograph of birds at grain elevators.

I have never experienced before, yet it exists in this unexpected landscape.

As Pallasmaa explains, “Architecture frames, structures, re-oriens, scales, refocuses and slows down our experience of the world and makes it an ingredient of the embodied sense of our being; it always has a mediating role instead of being the end itself” (Pallasmaa 2011, 100). I want to capture these vivid moments along the path, to frame them, mask them, and celebrate them by engaging the user, focusing on specific sensory stimuli to create a connection between the user and the landscape.



Panoramas of rail line corridor, these pictures illustrate the dominating presence of nature in this industrial environment.

The Nocturnal Site

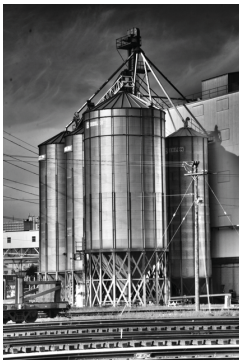
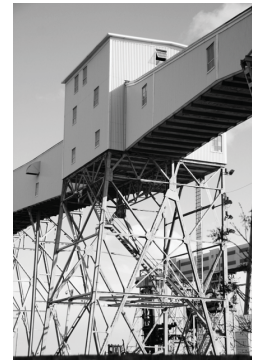
Nocturnal architecture explores the transformative qualities of form and how it relates to space during the night. It is based on the idea that architecture absorbs light during the day and emits light at night. I believe that the relative quietness and stillness of this industrial site at night provides a very powerful experience in this environment. The mundane and the ugly disappear into the darkness while the monumental forms are romanticized by light, the small lights scattered over these tall structures form constellations that add to the night sky. At night this site becomes a place of contemplation, a momentary silence of the machine. I intend to explore how programmatic spaces along the rail line corridor can become light boxes or beacons that are reference points and way-finders that illuminate the path. I imagine them to play on, and be in conversation with the formal qualities of the existing structural constellations.



Photograph of grain elevators at night.

Monuments

Scattered along the site are old industrial relics that take on the presence of monuments. Their scale and their playful forms define your experience as you move through the space. This rail line corridor summons the experience of moving through a German sculpture park. To move through, below, and past these structures engages you in this artificial landscape, it tells the story of its industrial heritage. It is raw and alive with energy. Each monument plays an integral role in the operation of this machine-like environment. These monuments are of the site, they exemplify its industrial character, they are shining beacons of our industrial heritage. These monuments must not be removed.



Montage of the 'industrial monuments' along the rail line corridor.

Methodology

Beyond a certain scale, architecture acquires the properties of bigness. The best reason to broach bigness is the one given by climbers of Mount Everest: “because it is there”. Bigness is ultimate architecture... Bigness is no longer part of any urban tissue. It exists; at most, it coexists. Its subtext is fuck context.

(Koolhaas et al 1995, 502)

The Halterm Container Terminal, rail line corridor and Grain Elevators are of such an immense scale that they do not interact with the rest of Halifax’s urban fabric in any way. These industrial monoliths exist in isolation surrounded by an urban fabric that has been forced to awkwardly grow around it. The goal of this investigation is to strengthen the connection between these two co-existing elements: the urban fabric and the industrial site. How can a site which is currently responsible for disconnecting itself from the urban fabric be transformed into the element of urban porosity? I intend on transforming the rail line corridor into the hub that reinforces the idea that our urban waterfronts are also for people.

Steven Holl expresses a need to depart from the outdated practice of creating ‘monofunction buildings’ and strive for architecture with “rich programmatic juxtaposition” (Holl 2009, 11). By fusing landscape, urbanism and architecture, Holl believes new projects will redefine the programs of neighboring sites and create a more animated and active public experience; a catalyst for urban rejuvenation. By re-animating urban centers and introducing new programs, it is contributing to the ‘psychological field’ of architecture; the elements of

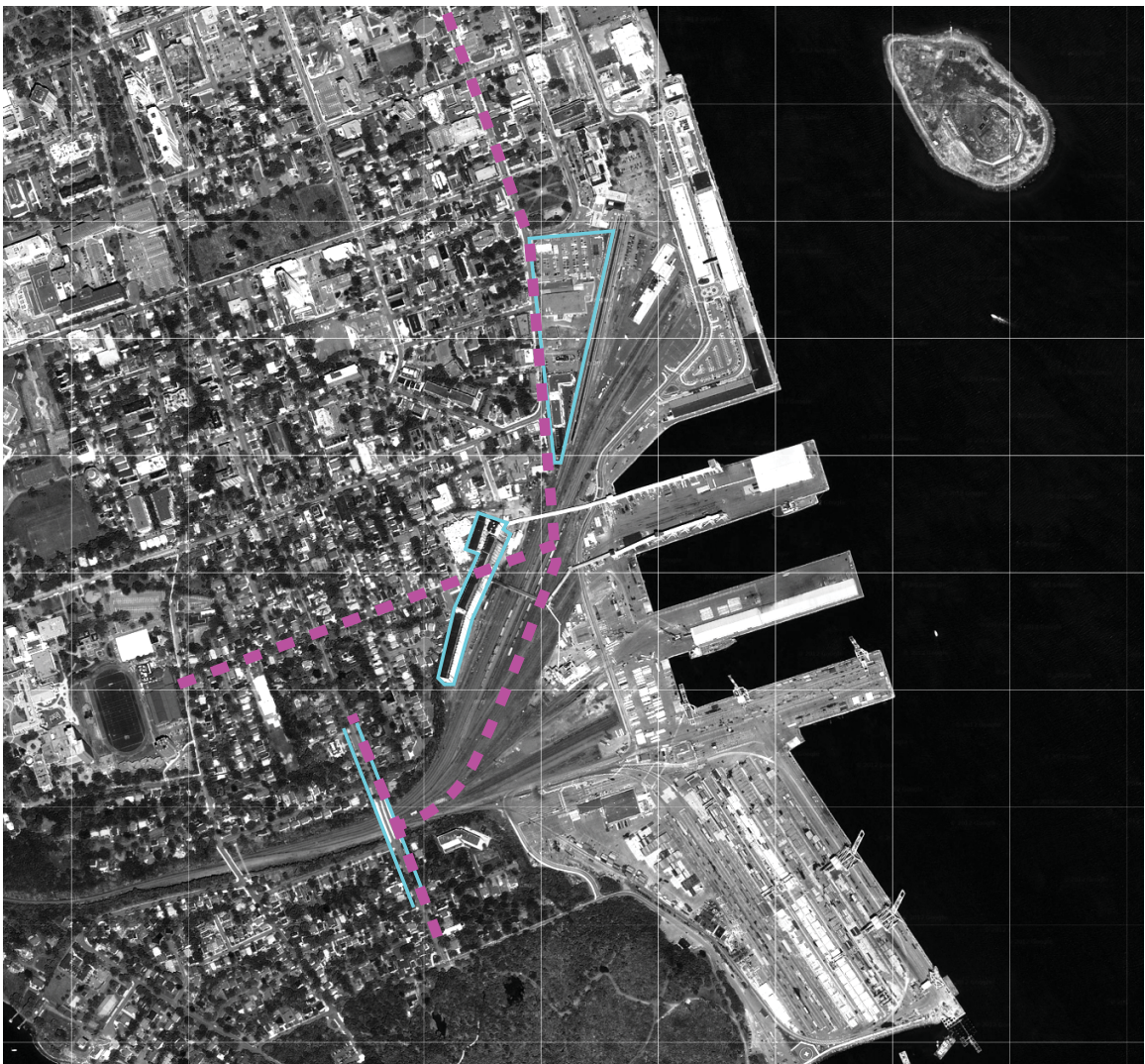
urban movement, materials and light that “manifest in the spirit of an urban place...(and) can represent an experience we never had before and want to see more of” (Holl 2009, 29).

The methodology I have developed is to identify the elements that currently are most responsible for disconnecting the urban fabric from the site and transform those into the architectural devices or land markers of porosity.



Manipulated map of Halifax showing the elements of disconnect. (Google 2012)

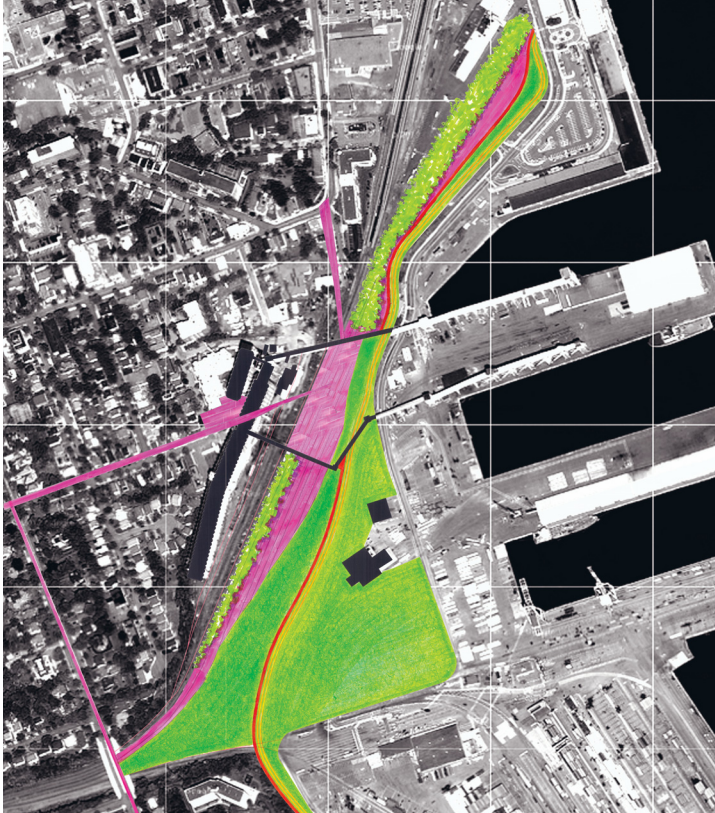
The areas most responsible for disconnecting the industrial site from its context become the arteries that promote urban porosity. These arteries are articulated as pedestrian corridors that emphasize their vibrant, playful and engaging qualities. The intention is to fully integrate this industrial environment into the urban fabric by creating multiple points of access in and out of the site.



Manipulated map of Halifax showing the elements of porosity. (Google 2012)

Program

My intervention is intended as a hybrid space that attempts to bridge urban scale strategies with human scale experiential phenomena in a powerful way. The architectural intervention is an experience of procession, drawing its rhythm from the urban fabric, industrial monuments and the dramatic contrasts in landscapes. The artery of focus that I have developed beyond master planning is the breach in the Grain Elevators. The program of this artery is largely focused on the spatial sequencing of moving through the incredible threshold of the Grain Elevator and ending in an elevated gallery/viewing device. At night the gallery will also serve as a light beacon/ land marker that orients the user towards the central public square.



Collage of proposed site intervention.

Cities For People

Jan Gehl's *Cities for People* focuses on the human dimension of our urban environments. Gehl argues that for decades the human dimension has been overlooked by urban planners, while other issues such as the rise in car traffic has been a primary focus of the urban environment. 'Dominant planning ideologies' have put a low priority on public areas, pedestrian-ism and the role of city space as a meeting place for urban dwellers (Gehl 2010, 3). People who use city space have been increasingly poorly treated by issues such as: limited space, obstacles, noise, pollution, risk of accident and dilapidated conditions (Gehl 2010, 3). These issues act to reduce the opportunities for pedestrian-ism, "the traditional function of city space as a meeting place and social forum for city dwellers has been reduced or phased out" (Gehl 2010, 3). Gehl advocates for a greater focus on the needs of people who use cities by demanding lively, safe, sustainable and healthy urban sites (Gehl 2010, 3).

City life does not happen by itself or develop automatically simply in response to high density. The issue requires a more varied approach; lively cities require compact city structure, reasonable population density, acceptable walking and biking distances and good quality city space (Gehl 2010, 69).

Why An Urban Scale Intervention In An Industrial Environment?

Jan Gehl uses Copenhagen as a precedent to exemplify the success of adopting and implementing pedestrian oriented ideologies into our urban centers. Gehl explores the transition from Copenhagen as a city focused predominantly on industry in the 1800's to a city dominated by the advent of cars in the 1950's, and eventually into a society of leisure and consumerism focused on the public realm at the scale of the person. In recent decades dramatic changes in living standards, working life and the economy have contributed to the evolution of our urban centers. The book is based on the New City Life Study conducted in 2005 on various centers of Copenhagen and identifies qualities that are essential to its success as a city focused on the pedestrian (Gehl 2006, 10).

Gehl classifies today's cities into four types: the 'Traditional City', where activities are still carried out by foot, (these spaces tend to be viable and well balanced urban environments); the 'Invaded City', serves the single function of car traffic and transport; the 'Abandoned City', where the public life has been neglected and no longer exists; and finally the 'Re-conquered City', a new balance of the three historically vital functions of a city: the meeting place, market place and connection space (Gehl 2006, 11).

Gehl reminds us that an increased focus on the livability of a city does not mean substantial infrastructure changes and large capital investments. Establishing

transport systems that promote walking and bicycling are free, quiet, and environmentally sustainable. Public spaces that are activated by people either walking or biking encourages the user to experience the city at a different speed, meaning the user becomes more involved and activated by their urban environment. The simple principle of implementing good transit systems will promote a healthier urban population, encourage social interaction, recreation, inspiration, democracy, diversity, friendliness and a feeling of security (Gehl 2006, 16-17).

CHAPTER 2: DESIGN

An Honest Site

There exists a very playful scattered quality to these industrial relics and their relationship to the elevated grain corridors. It is incredible how light on the ground these structures are. What I admire most about this site is that everything is done for a functional reason. Together all of these interconnected structures work like a machine keeping this industrial site alive and vibrating with energy. All of these structures are elevated so that they can coexist with the rail line corridor that passes beneath them.



Pencil and marker drawing of the elevated bridges on site.

An admirable quality about this site is its industrial practicality. Everything serves a purpose, it has a piece meal quality and it appears as though extensions were added as required without any recognition of a master plan or

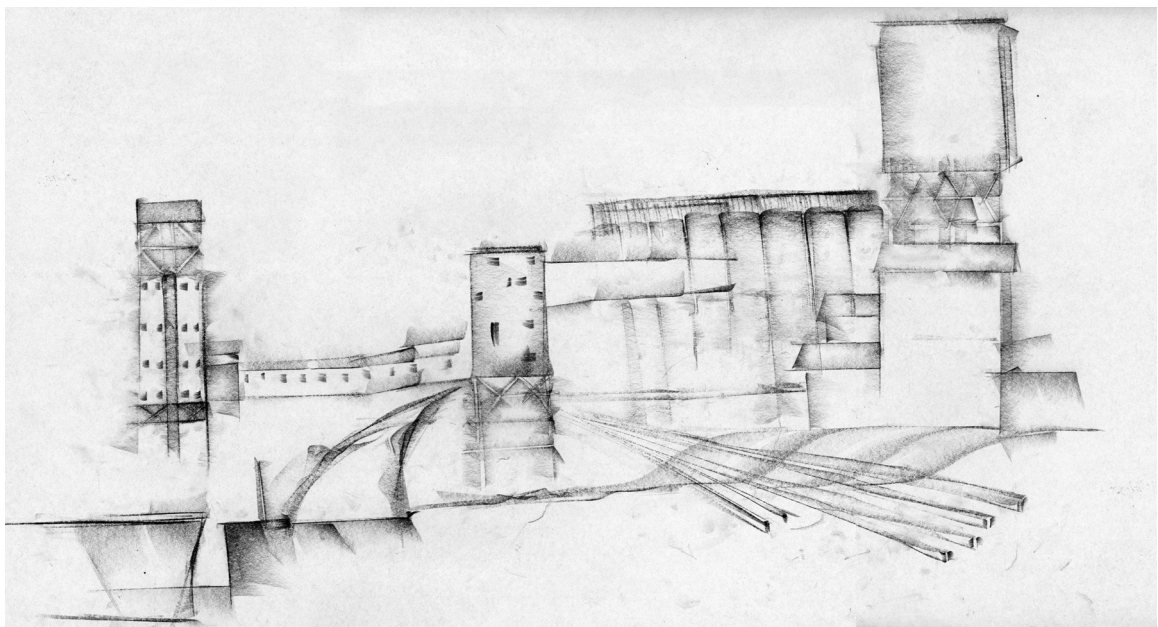
greater logic. If a programmatic or structural element was required it was built in exactly the way it was needed and sited exactly where it needed to be in order to produce maximum efficiency. There were no overriding aesthetic principles that led to any form of compromise. As a result this site is incredibly honest, it is what it is, its bare bones revealed. This has produced an undeniable beauty that has resonated with me and informed my design intentions. What is fascinating about such a raw and truthful site is that every form of intervention must draw entirely from its context and must reflect the exact function it is trying to achieve, otherwise it would look awkwardly pretentious and out of place. This understanding of architectural form and presence is best articulated by Peter Zumthor:

The presence of certain buildings has something secret about it. They seem simply to be there. We do not pay any special attention to them. And yet it is virtually impossible to imagine the place where they stand without them. These buildings appear to be anchored firmly in the ground. They make the impression of being self evident part of their surroundings and they seem to be saying "I am as you see me and I belong here"... Every new work of architecture intervenes in a specific historical situation. It is essential to the quality of the intervention that the new building should embrace qualities which can enter into a meaningful dialogue with the existing situation. For if the intervention is to find its place it must have us see what already exists in a new light. We throw a stone in the water, sand swirls up and settles again. The stir was necessary. The stone has found its place. But the pond is no longer the same. (Zumthor 1999, 17-18)

My design process began to focus on the structure of the existing forms, the materiality, formal qualities, and the playfulness of the site. It was my intention to identify a language which would firmly route my intervention in the site and allow its minimal presence to resonate with this fantastical environment.

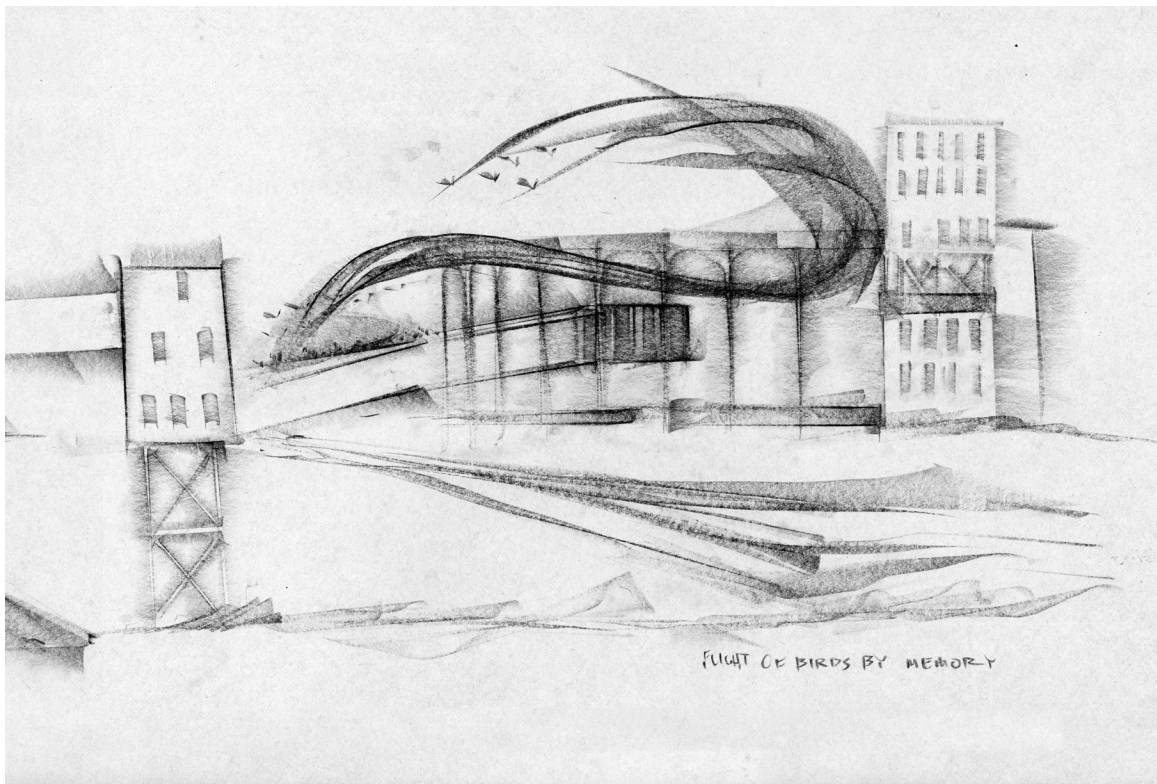
The Grain Elevators

The grain elevators are the most iconic and monolithic monuments on the site. The elevators appear to be the heart from which all the other monuments depend. Divided from the container terminal by the rail line corridor the grain elevators appear to reach out and embrace the site with its two elevated bridges. To imagine oneself moving through these spaces along the elevated bridge conjures an exciting processional experience, a new kind of urban experience.



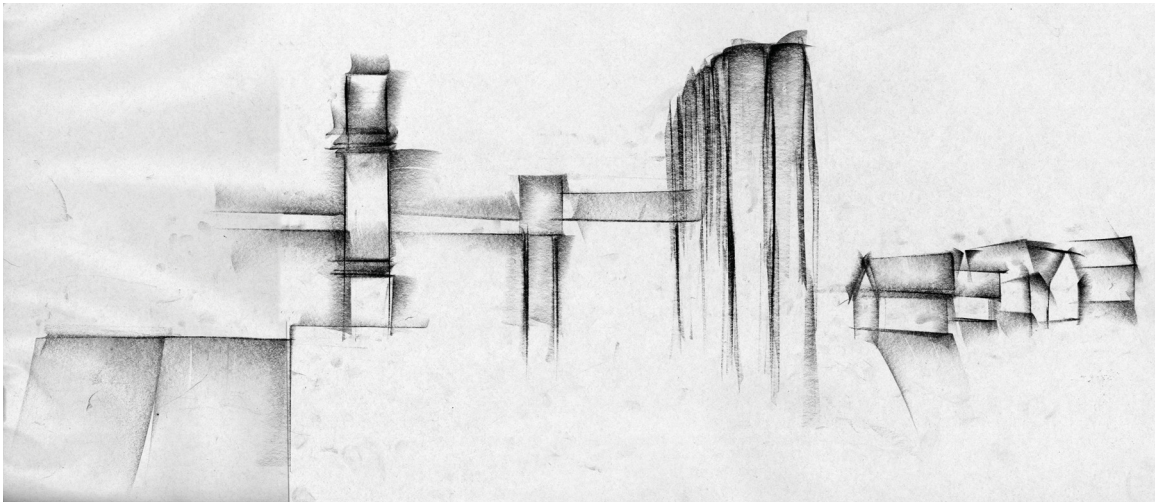
Conte drawing showing the bridges that connect the 'monuments' back to the grain elevators.

As grain passes through the enclosed bridges that connect the grain elevators with the smaller monuments the vibrations send the resident birds into flight, as if confined by the grain elevator the birds fly within its boundaries for minutes on end in patterns that resemble infinite loops. This phenomena resonated with me, because it is in this moment that industrial processes and nature overlapped, producing a bravura performance of industrial theatre.



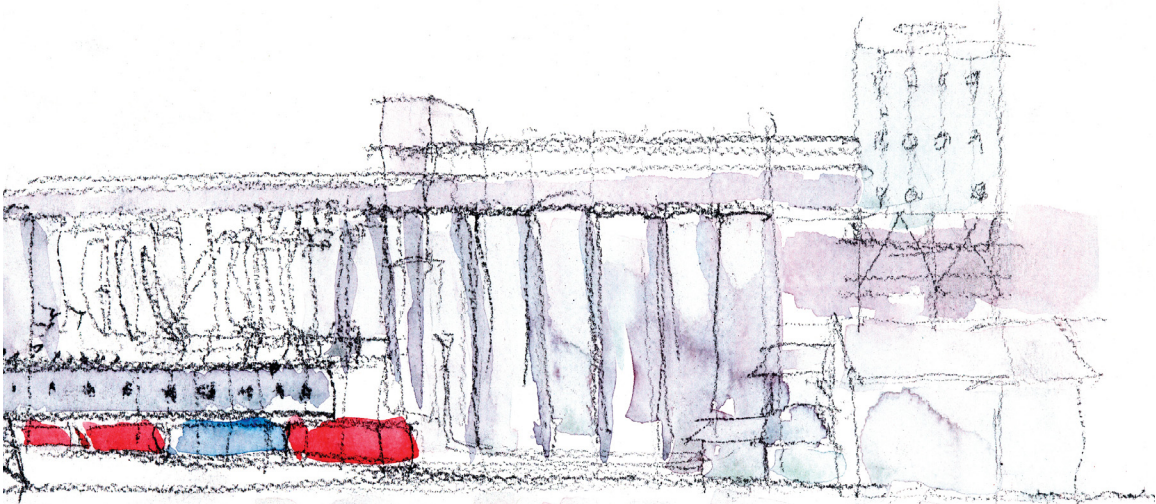
Conte drawing that captured the phenomena of birds and how they interact with the elevators.

The grain elevators function like a wall that divides the surrounding urban fabric from the site. This condition produces two parallel worlds that never blend. The grain elevators are then connected by elevated bridges to towers that feed the container ship terminals.



Conte drawing showing the site's proximity to the surrounding urban fabric.

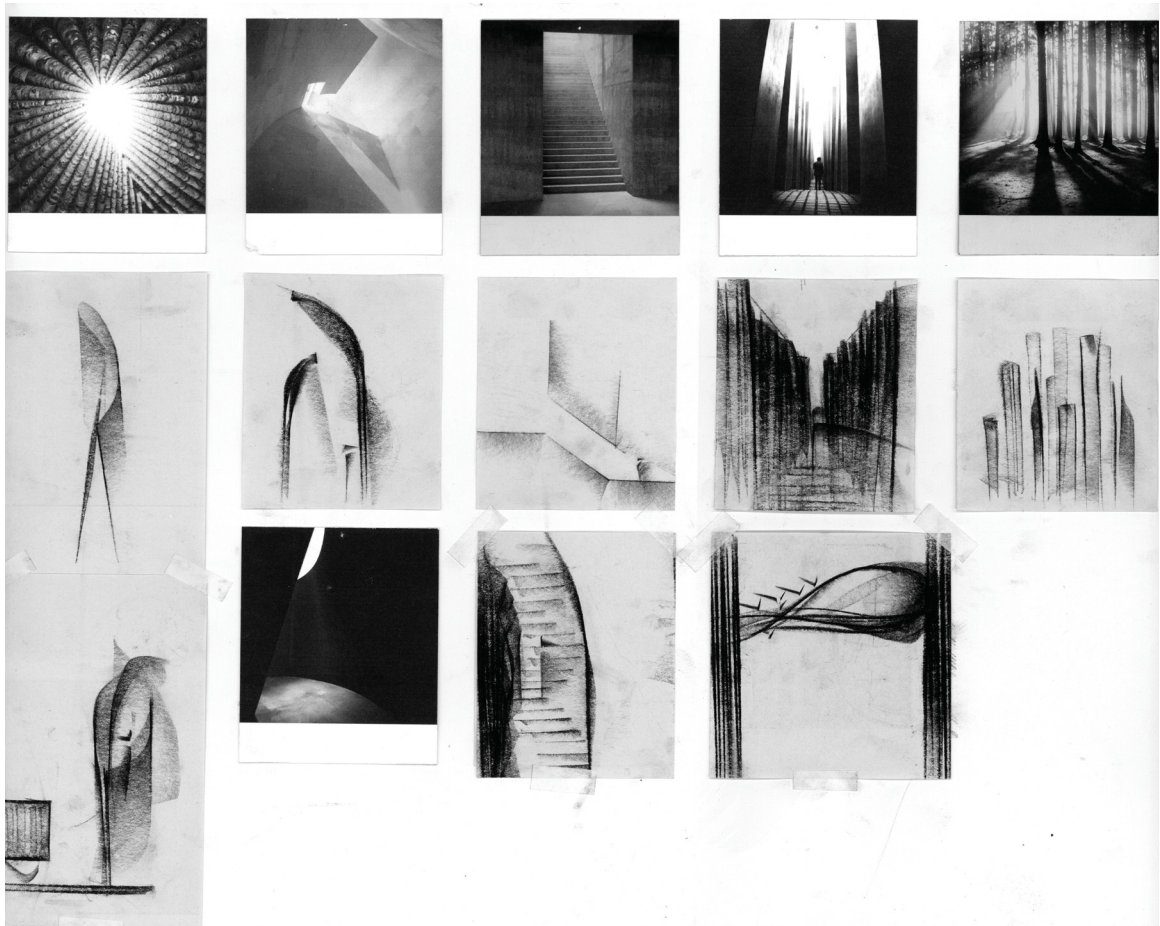
The monumental scale of the grain elevators is incredible. Like an industrial cathedral this monument appears to stand guard over the site, its presence is felt at all times. The relationship of the site with this structure gives the site its unique and humbling atmosphere.



Watercolor study of the grain elevators.

Formal Investigations

I explored the use of forms and materiality that captured the dynamic and engaging qualities of light that I felt the site was missing. There is a feeling of sensory overload in this rail line corridor, therefore I was interested in how formal compositions could manipulate lighting conditions but also provide forms that focus experience and allow the user to more successfully engage with their environment.

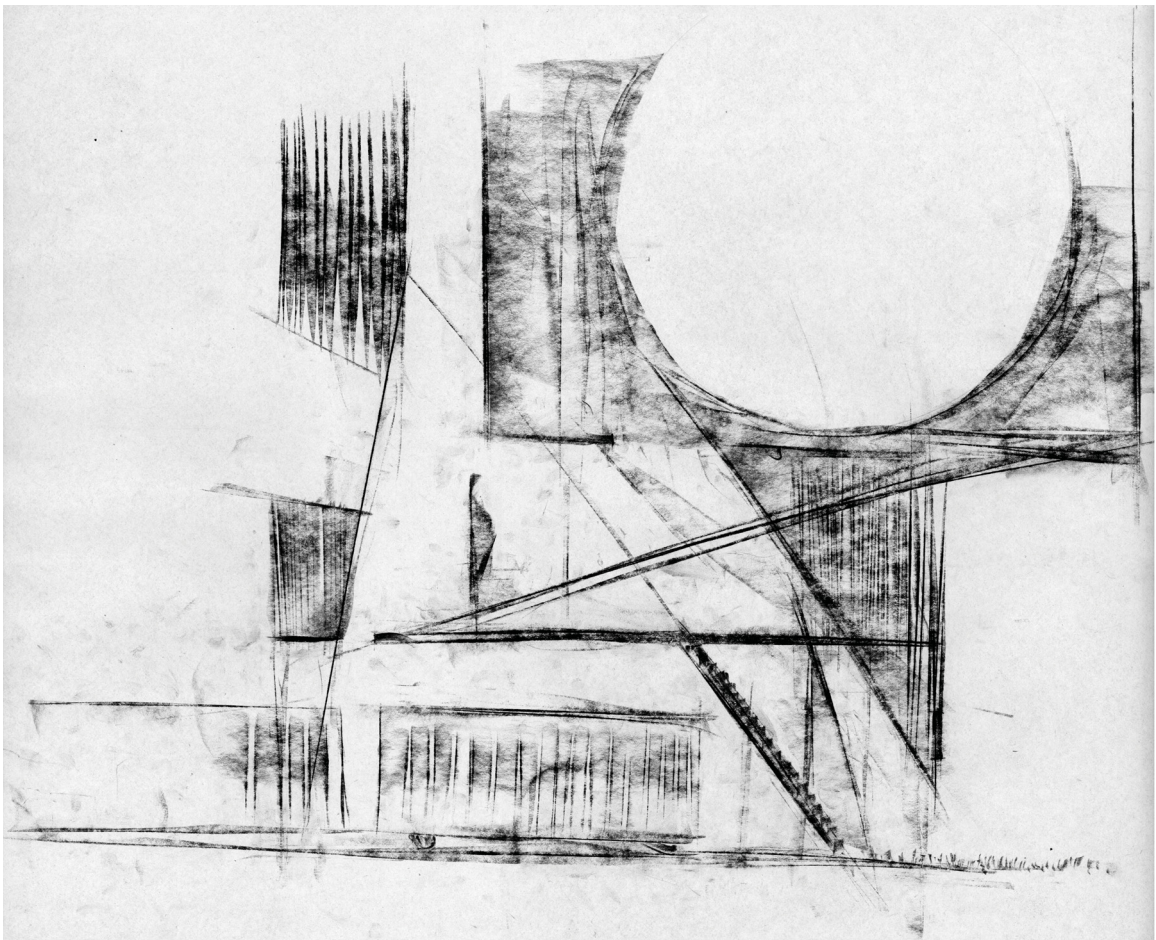


Montage study of various examples of light in architectural spaces.

Developing A Language

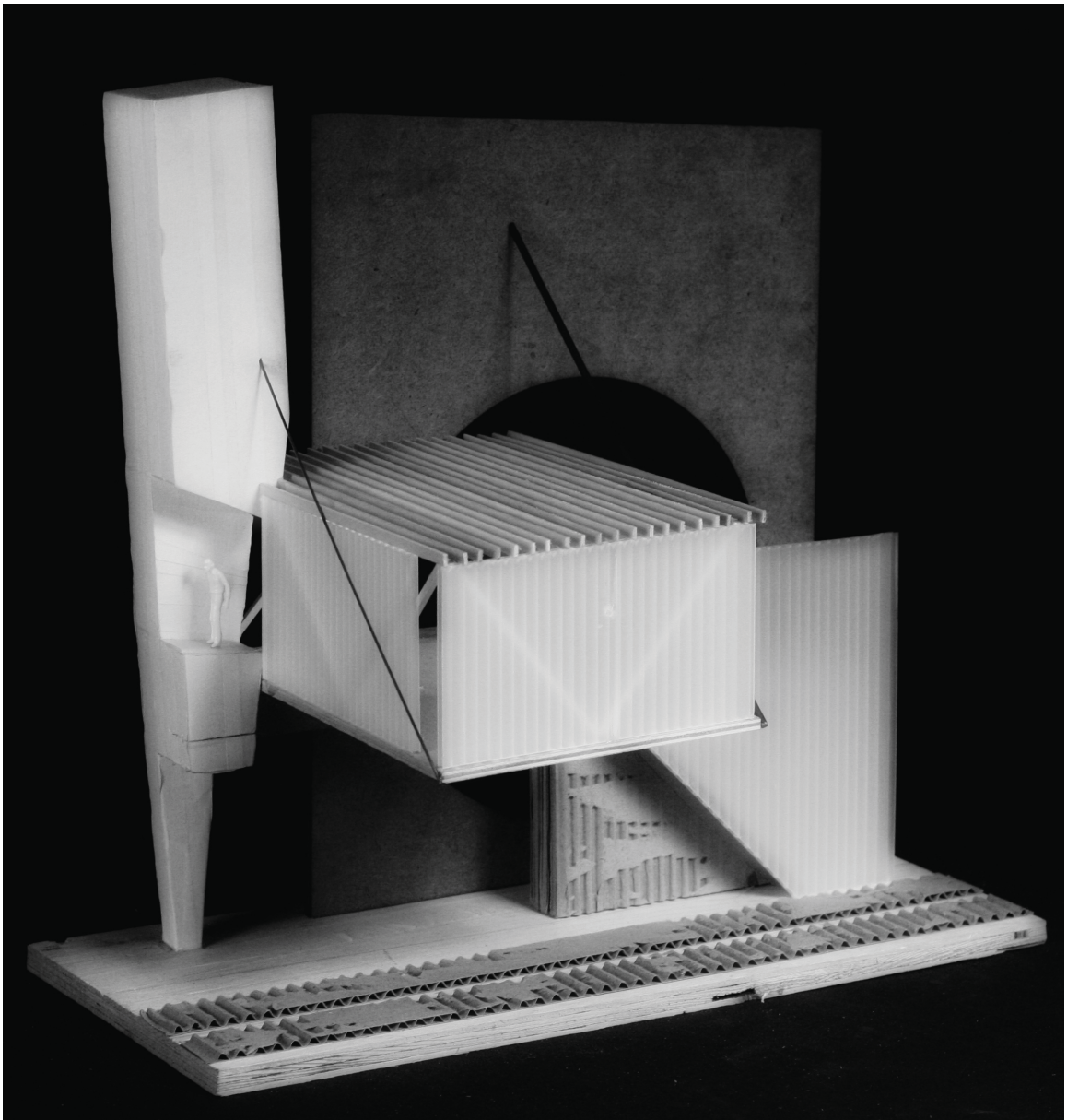
The Viewing Device

Informed by the existing structures I began sketching forms that were composed of monolithic compression members and light weight tension elements. The intention was to collage formal qualities that referenced different elements of the site in a manner that connected the user with their environment. As a basic program these architectural interventions became devices for framing specific experiences in an effort to contextualize, celebrate and break down the massive scale of this environment.



Conte design study drawing.

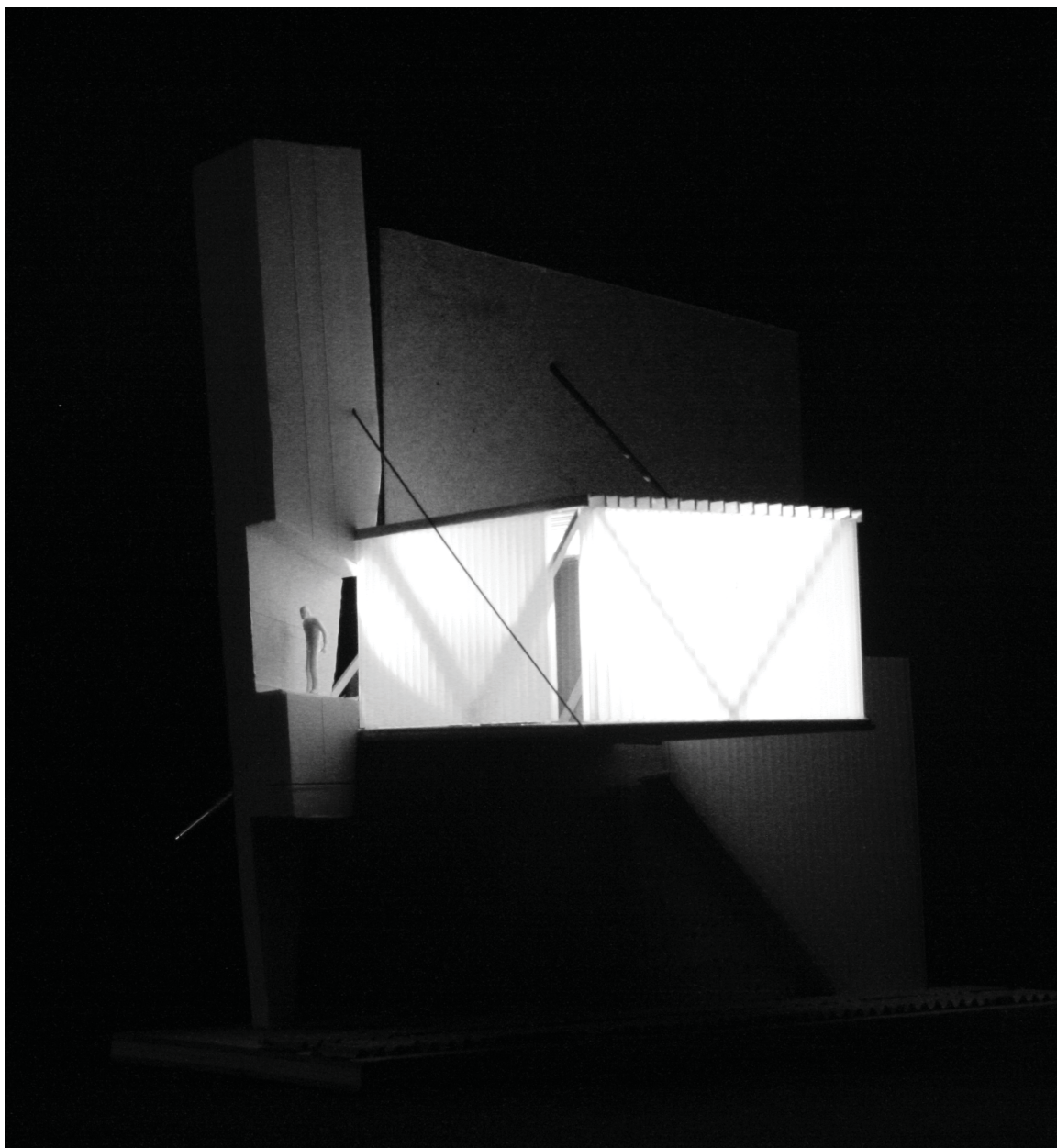
My process involved translating the sectional conte sketch into a physical model. I was interested in understanding the spatial sequencing that this formal composition created. My ambition was to create a powerful processional device with a relatively small intervention.



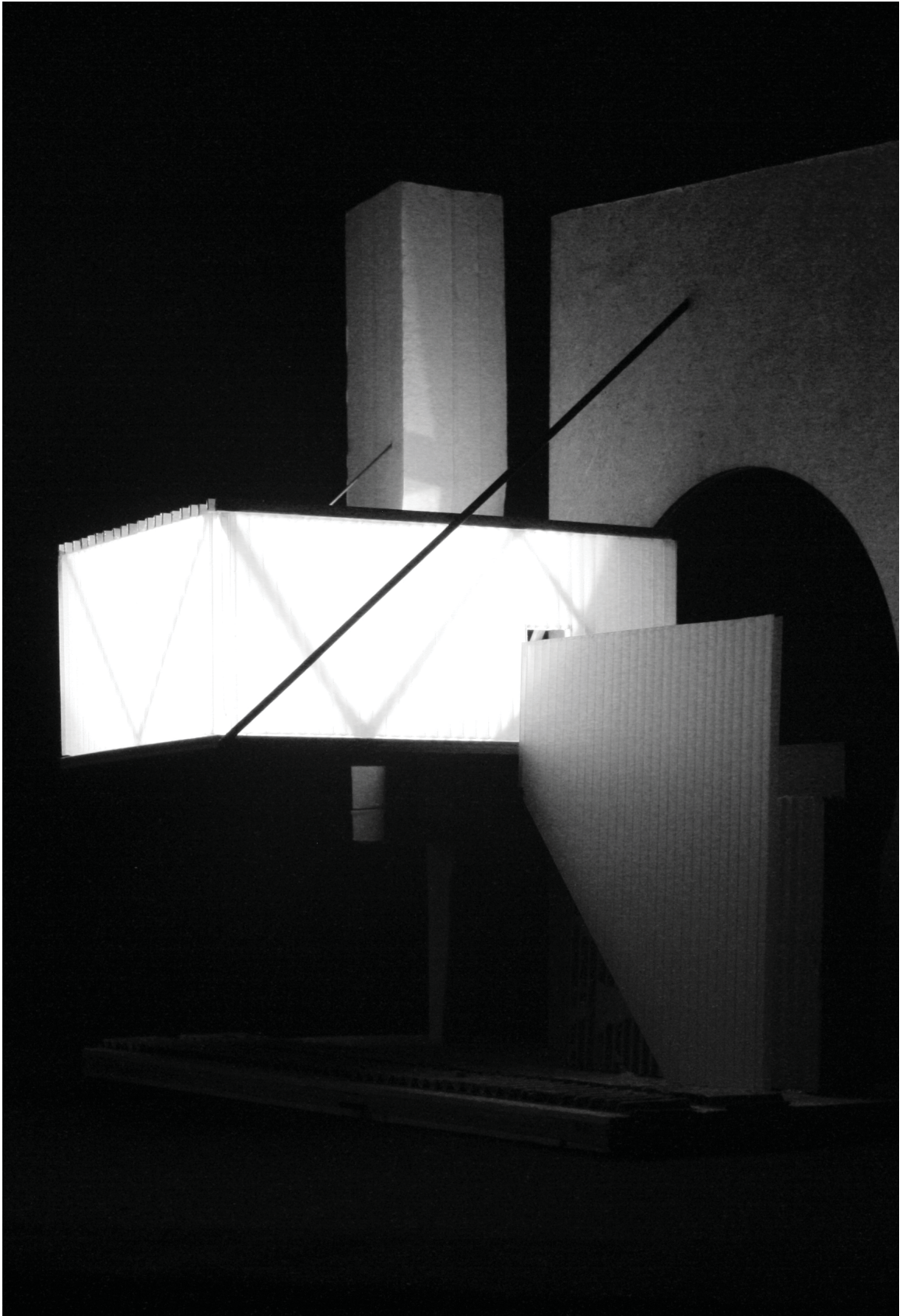
Sketch model, a study in translating the conte sketch into physical model.

A Way-Finding Device

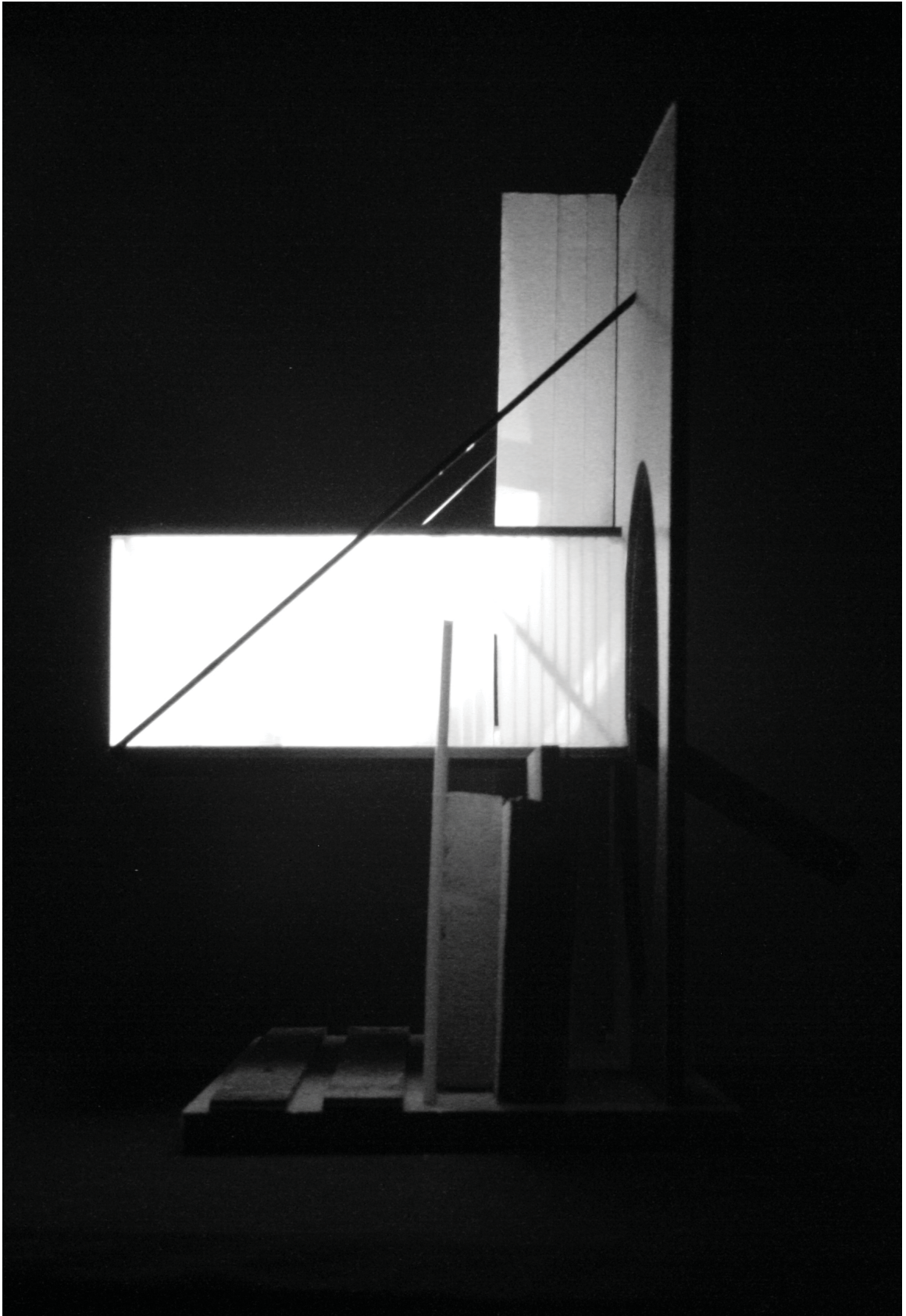
It was important to understand how the suspended programmatic spaces that floated above the rail line infrastructure could act as light beacons at night in order to provide a way finding device so that users could orient themselves in relation to these interventions along the pedestrian corridor.



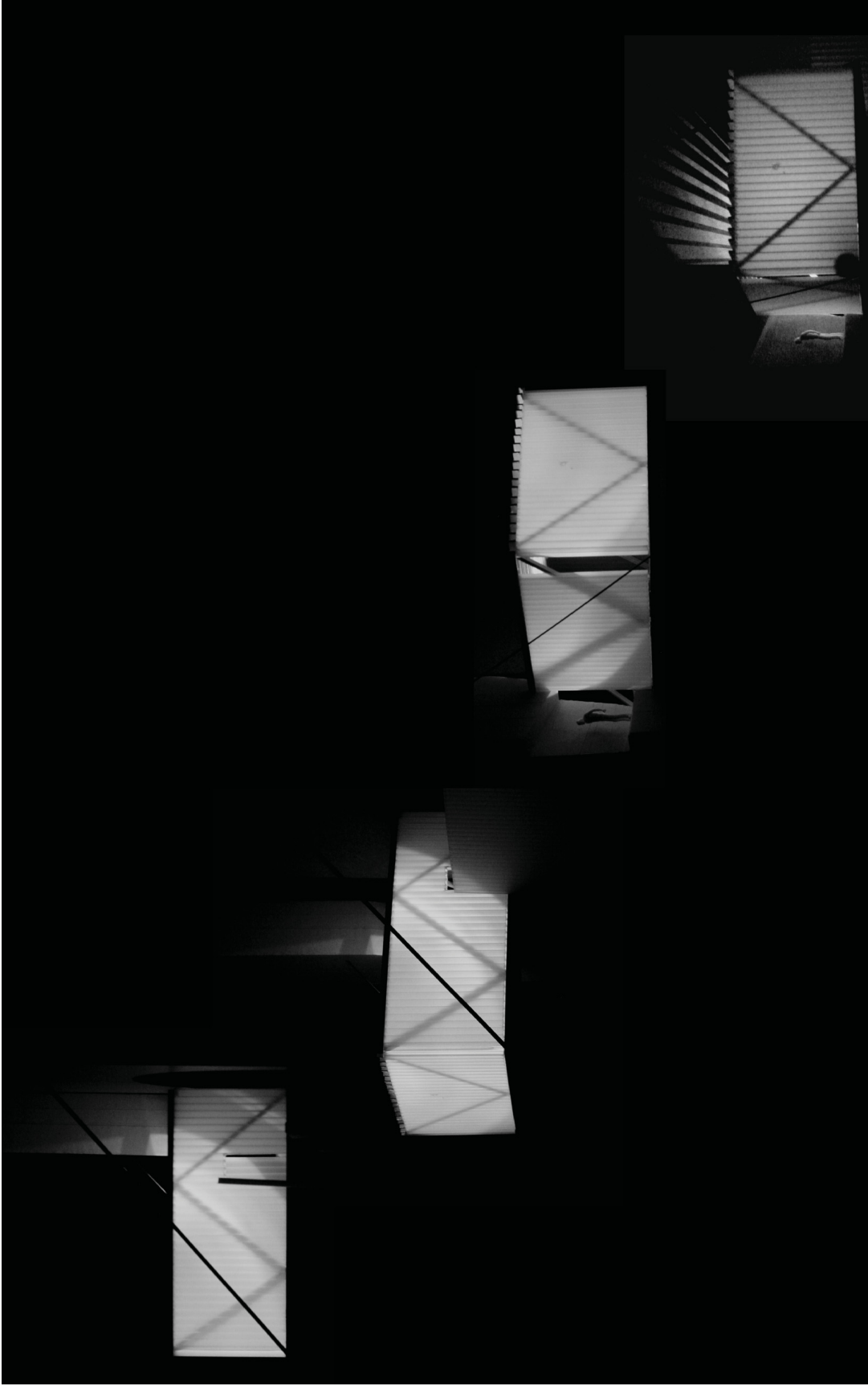
Light study with model.



Light study with model.



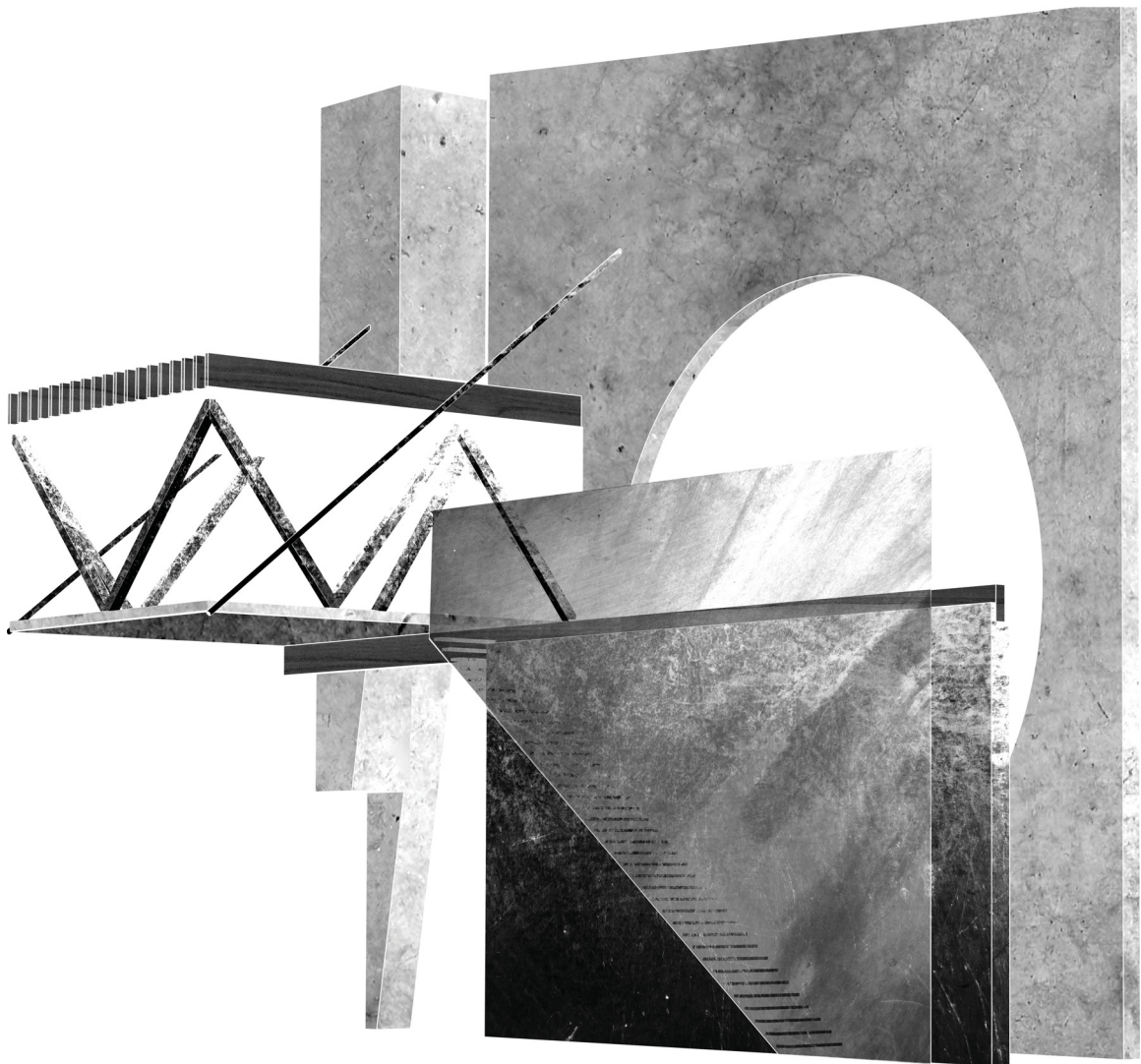
Light study with model.



Montage of light studies, articulating an idea of interventions along a path that act as way finding devices to guide the user through the space at night.

Materiality and Tectonics

By collaging materials and textures over photographs of physical models I began to study how I could establish a consistent material language. Materiality and tectonics were entirely informed by the sites existing typology of monolithic concrete compression elements and light weight steel tension elements.



Collage study over photograph of physical model.

The Architectural Intervention And The Urban Scale

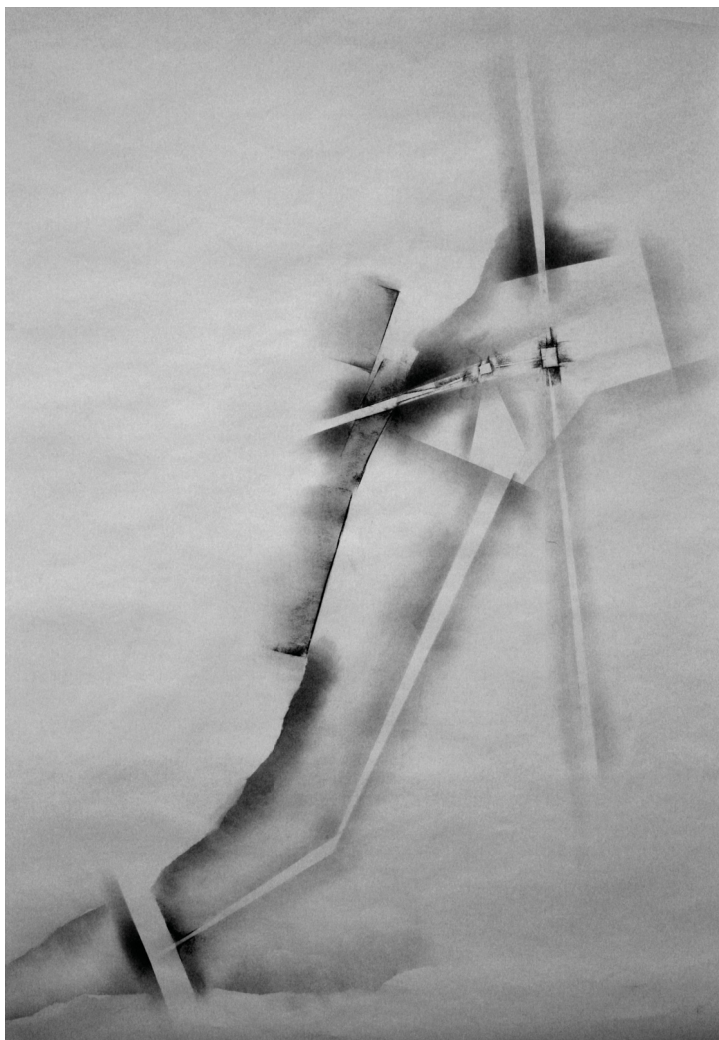
I realized that this design iteration did not contribute to any additional dialogue with its environment, it was a form purely interested in its own aesthetic. I learned from this investigation that in order for my intervention to earn an honest functional presence amongst the existing monuments it must be connected directly to my urban scale interventions. By integrating an ambition of urban porosity with experiential view finding devices my proposed design would become an integral part of this new urban system- its presence would be both functional and aesthetic.



Collage study.

Introducing Porosity

In order to integrate my architectural intervention into this industrial environment I propose three 'arteries' that integrate the surrounding urban fabric with the site. The three arteries are made up of the extension of Barrington Street, a connection from Young Avenue Bridge, and the main intervention which extends Atlantic Street through the grain elevator. Where all three arteries intersect defines the new 'heart' or pedestrian square of the site.



Conte drawing showing proposed pedestrian arteries.



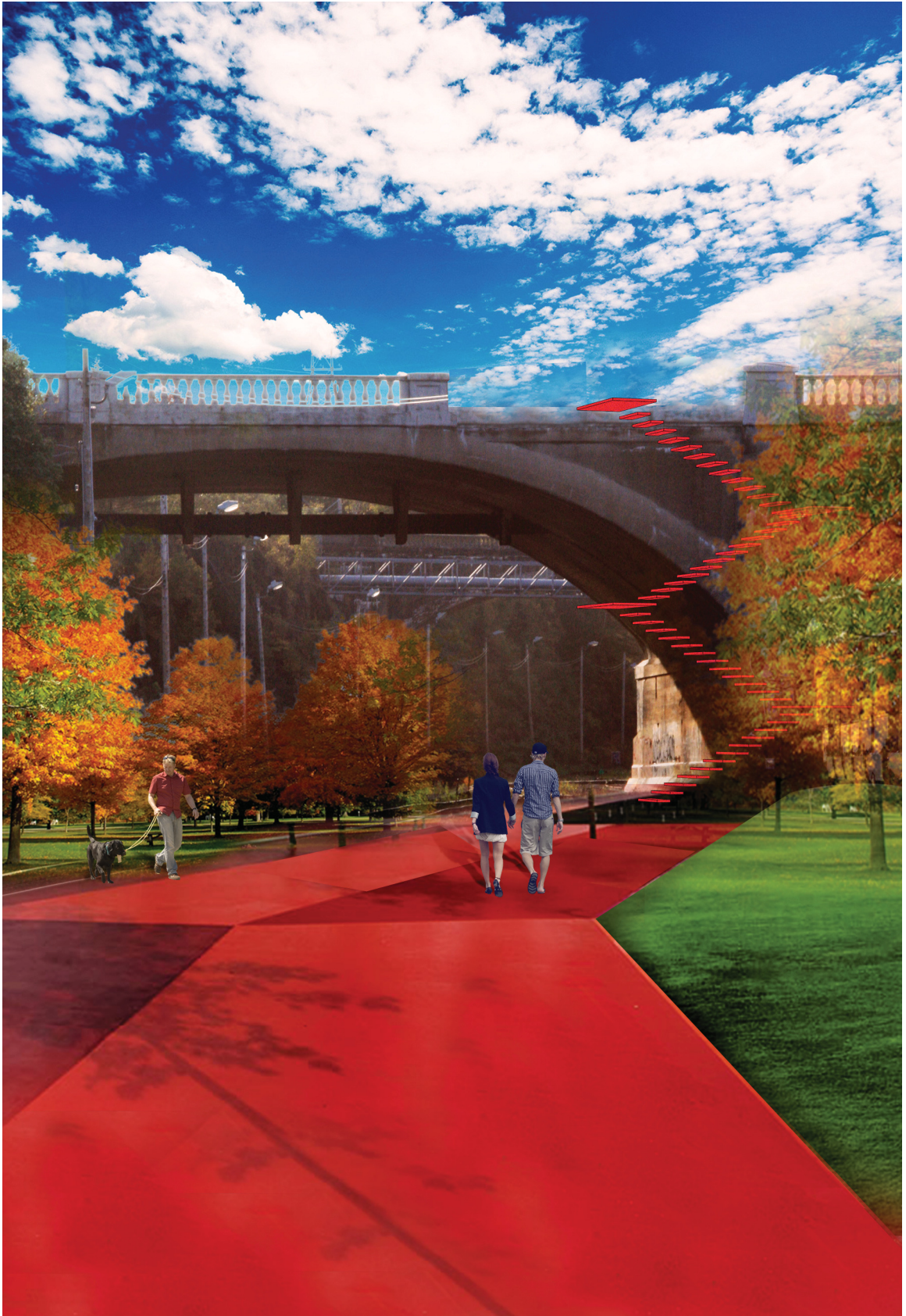
Montage of pedestrian intervention through the Grain Elevators.



Montage of public square within the industrial environment.



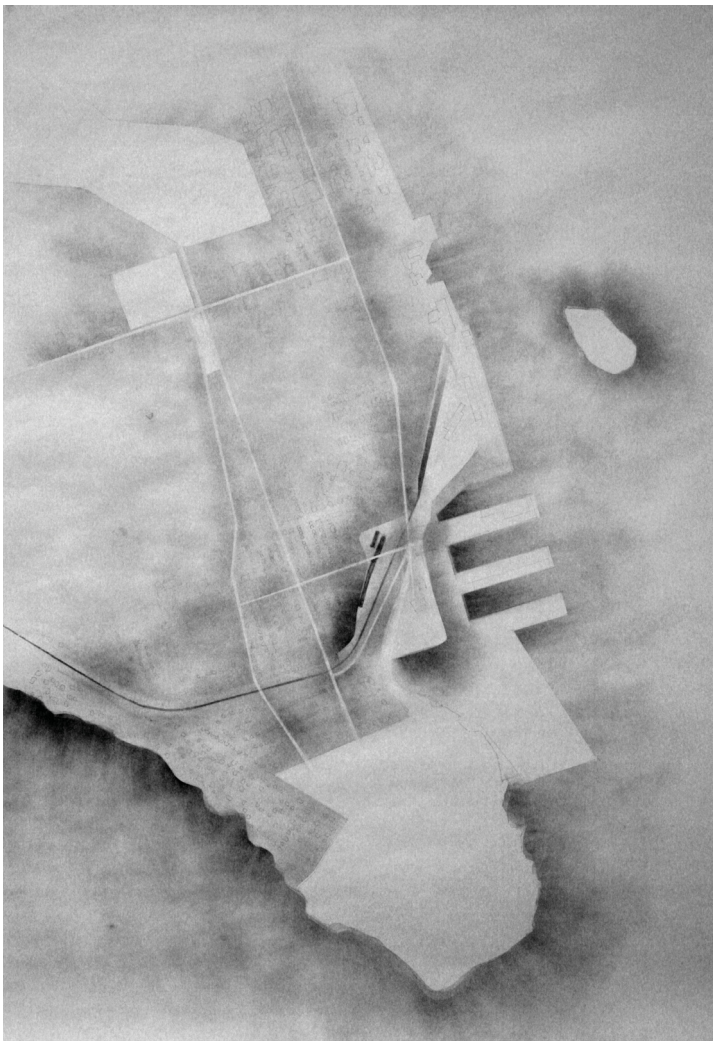
Montage of pedestrian intervention extending Barrington at grade onto the site.



Montage of Pedestrian connection from Young Avenue bridge onto the site.

Master Plan

By extending Barrington Street, Atlantic Street and Young Avenue onto this industrial site I have introduced a loop network between the parks, the waterfront and public spaces that more thoroughly integrates the urban core with these environments. By introducing this urban porosity the sea-walk and Point Pleasant Park also become much more accessible urban spaces.



Masterplan integrated into existing parks and waterfront network.

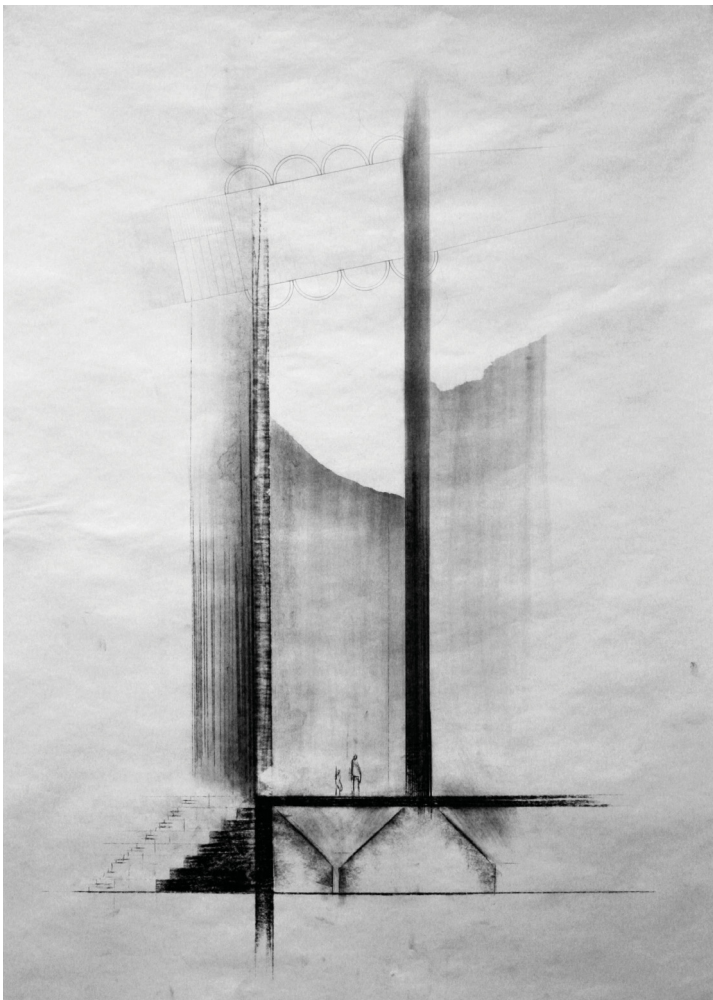
Directly Integrate the Urban and Architectural Intervention!

The elements of an industrial environment that are most responsible for disconnecting itself from its surrounding urban fabric give the most potential for exciting and meaningful interventions. These types of brutal industrial environments must not be viewed as areas composed of monumentally scaled problems, but as landscapes waiting for creative and powerful adaptive solutions. For instance, by transforming the grain elevators into an element of porosity, this simple intervention transcends its physical and architectural qualities and begins to function as a symbolic beacon that represents a new urban pedestrian resilience.

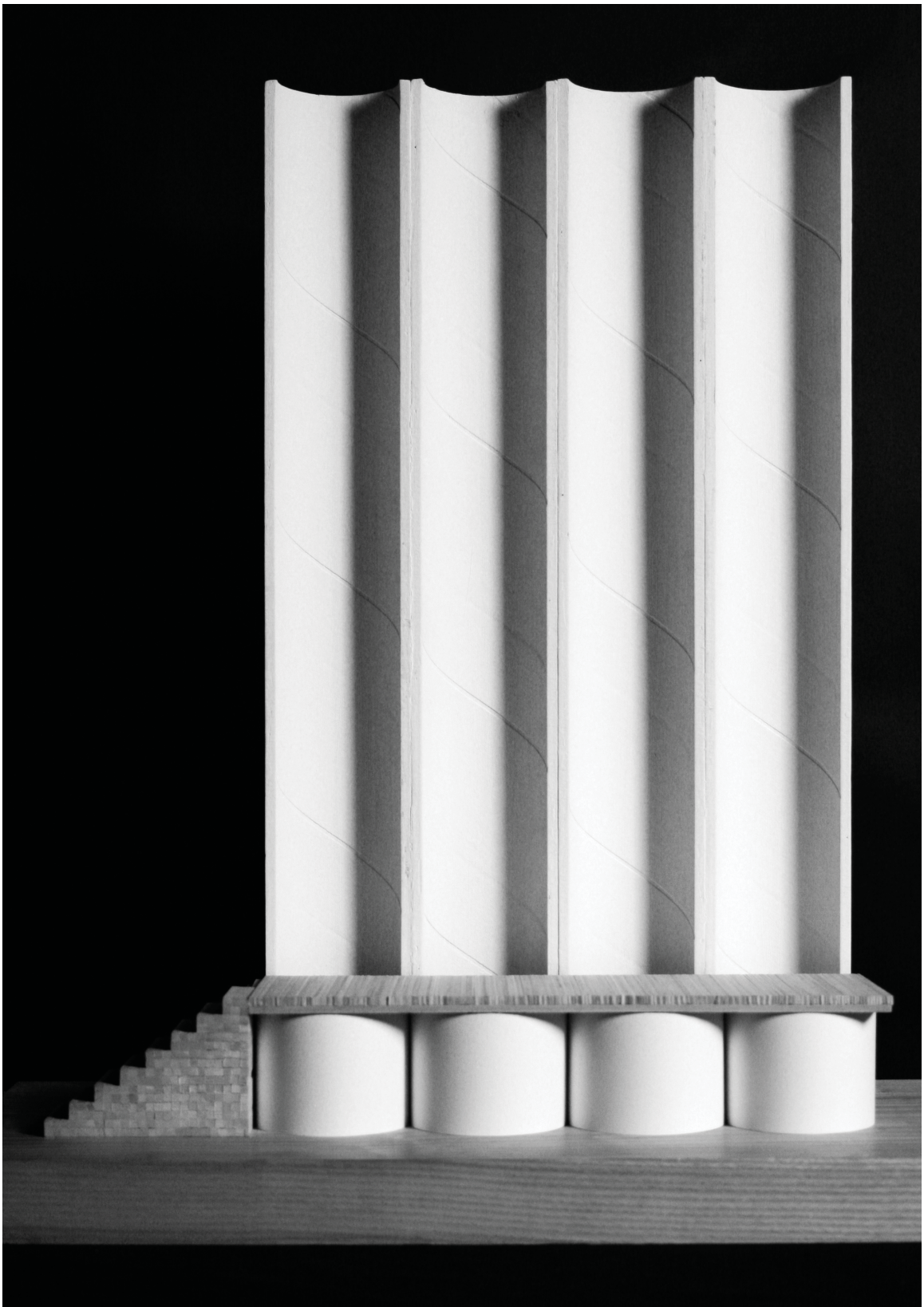
Final Iteration

The Grain Elevator Intervention

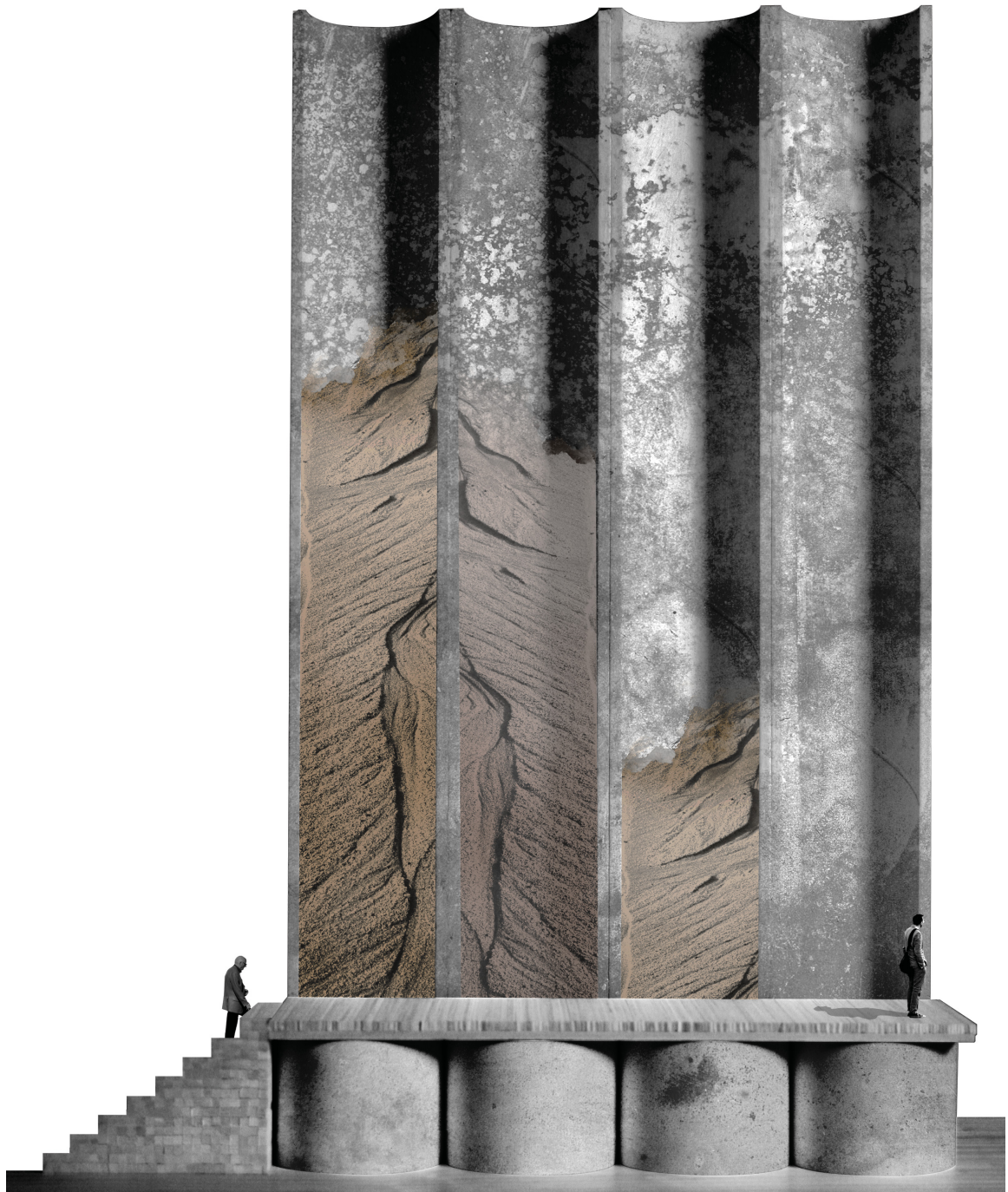
The intervention through the grain elevator is about revealing the existing potential of the site. By breaching the wall with a pedestrian corridor, the grain elevator is transformed from a monumental urban scaled problem into a monumental gateway that symbolizes urban porosity. Its purpose, power, and experiential qualities are all given by the elevators; architecture serves as a facilitator to experience the environment in a new way.



Conte/graphite drawing of the grain elevator intervention.



Sectional model of intervention through the grain elevator.



Collage demonstrating the material experience of the grain elevator intervention.

The Operational Rail Corridor

Connecting the grain elevator intervention to the first 'monument' is a pedestrian bridge that spans over the existing and still operational rail line corridor. The structural language and formal qualities of this intervention are entirely informed by the existing elevated bridges that connect the grain elevators to the harbor.



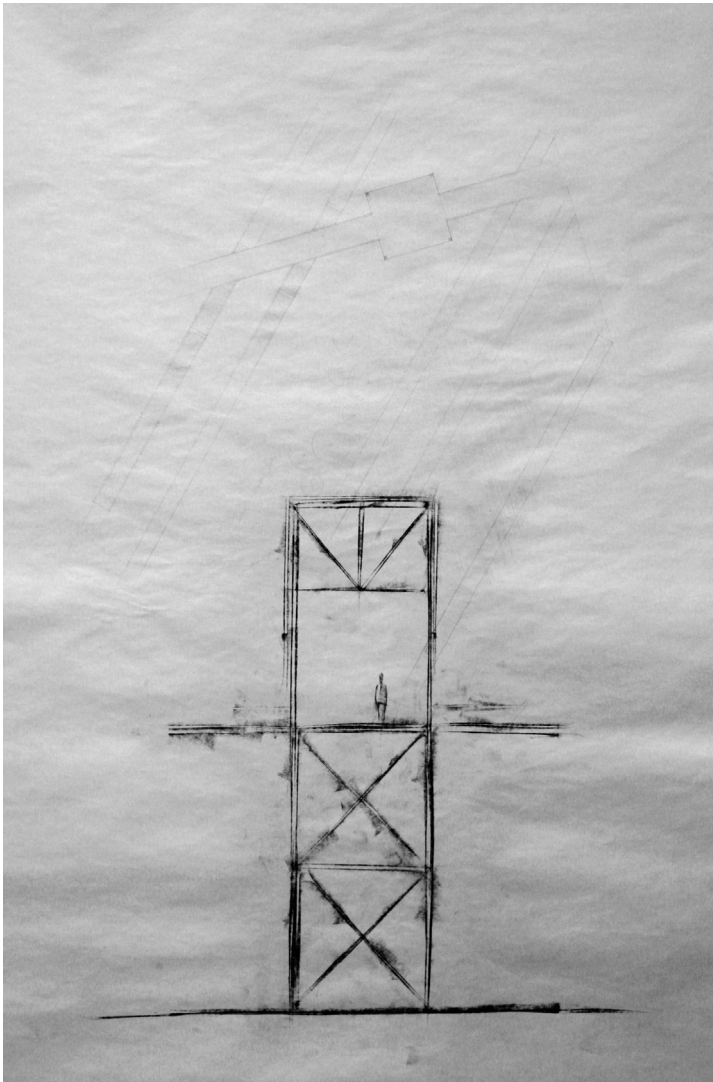
Conte drawing of pedestrian bridge spanning over existing rail line corridor.



Model of pedestrian bridge spanning over existing rail line corridor.

The Dividing Monument

The placement of this monument in the industrial landscape marks the division between the still operational rail line corridor and the decaying non-functional rail lines that inform the placement of the new public square. The existence, structural language, strategy and formal qualities of this intervention are informed by the existing monuments in their context.



Model of intervention that divides active rail line corridor and pedestrian square.



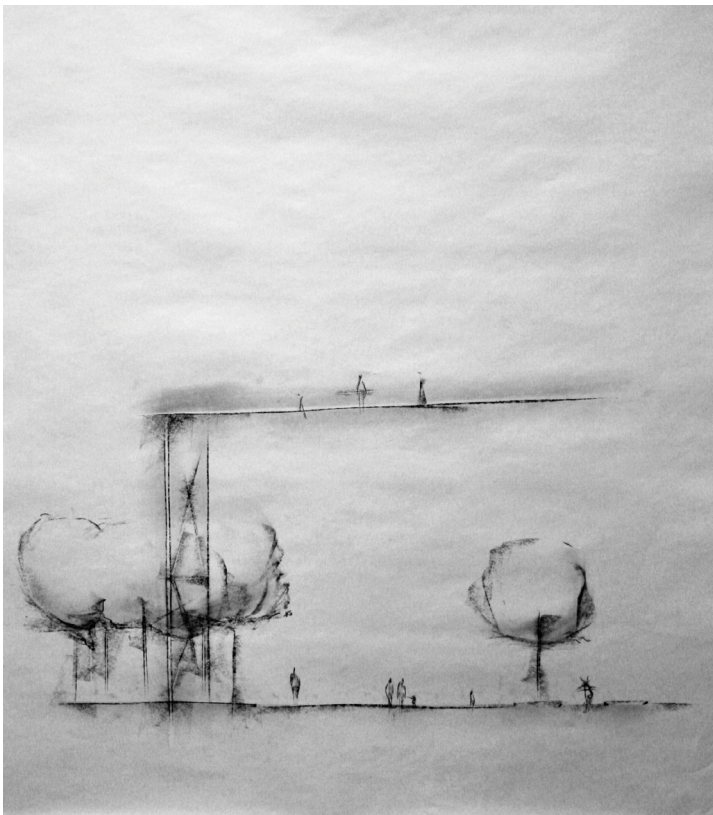
Model of intervention that divides active rail line corridor and pedestrian square.



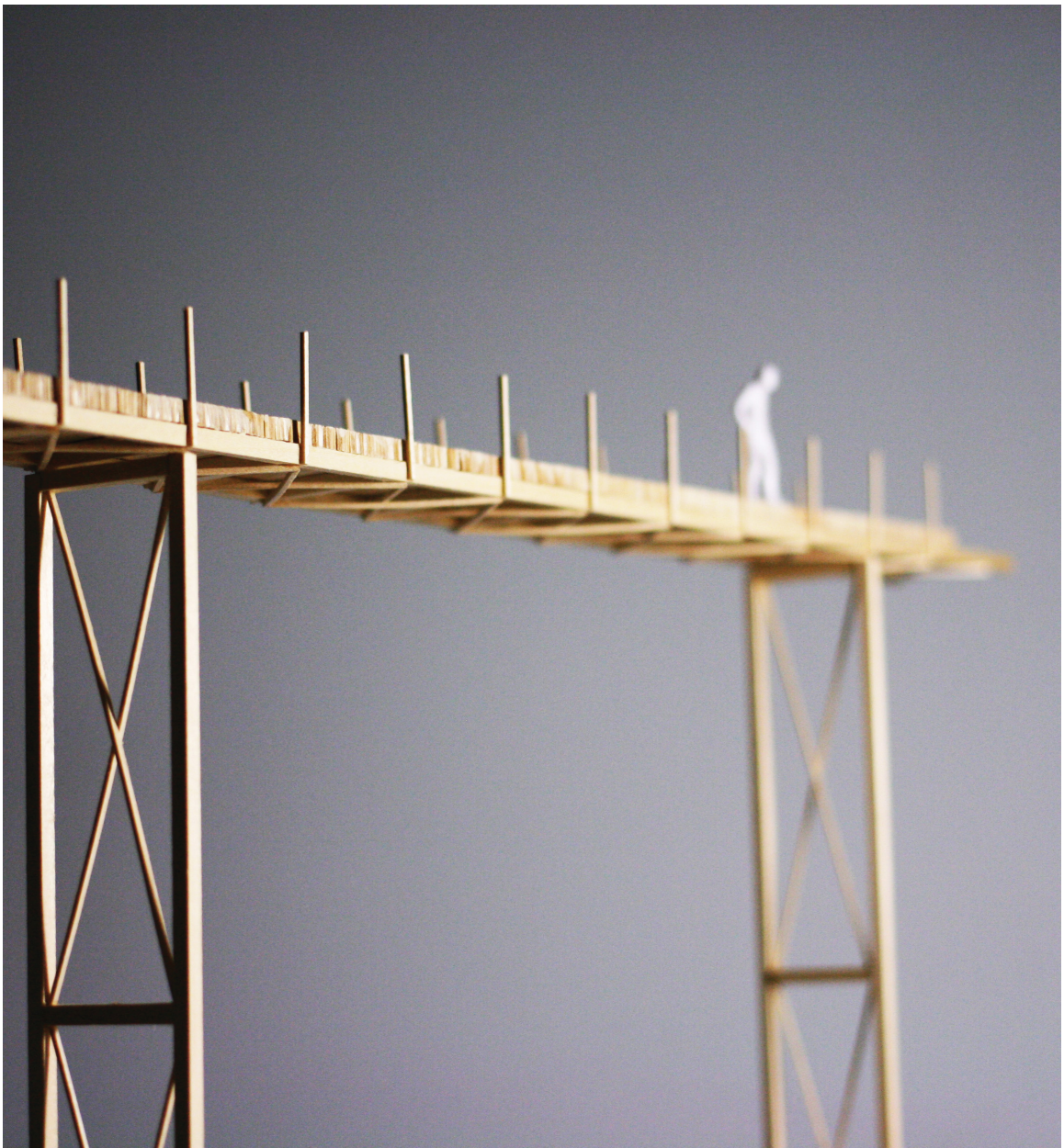
Collage exploring the possibility of an art installation.

The Bridge and The Square

Connecting the 'Dividing Monument' with the 'Vertical Gallery' is the pedestrian bridge that spans over the new public square. The experience of passing over a public square in this industrial environment contrasts with the earlier experience of passing over the operational rail line corridor. The middle monument serves as a threshold marking the conversation between the existing landscape and the public square. The spatial and experiential sequences of moving through these spaces are entirely defined by the existing qualities of the site. The architectural interventions derive their meaning by allowing the user to experience the dynamic qualities of the site in a processional manner.



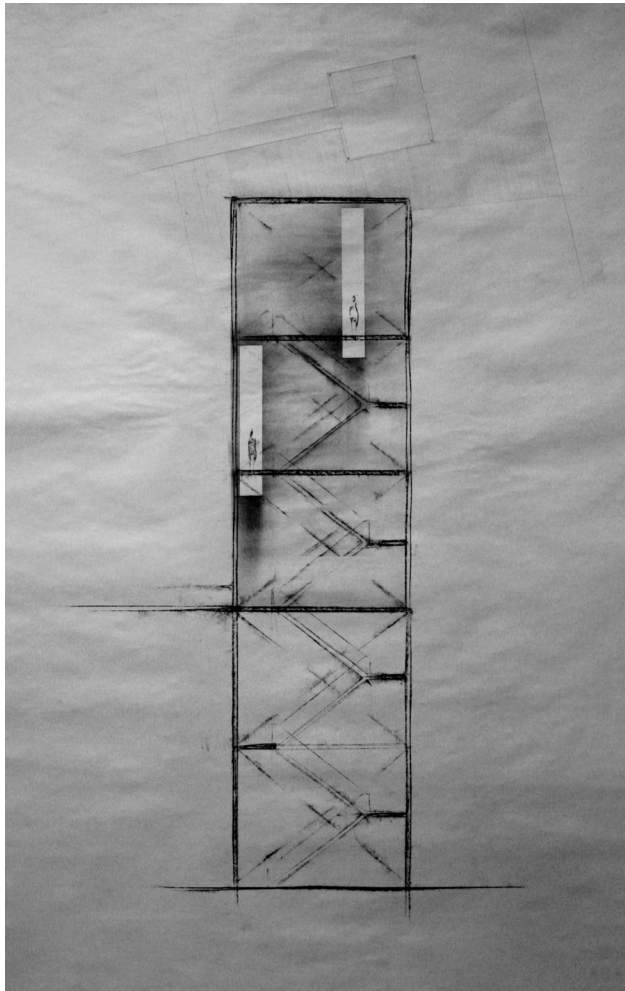
Conte drawing of pedestrian bridge spanning over public square.



Pedestrian bridge spanning over public square that connects to vertical gallery.

The Vertical Gallery

The 'Vertical Gallery' marks the end of the processional movement through this industrial landscape. It is not a gallery in the traditional sense where architecture is used to internalize works of art. Instead, architecture is used as a device to focus the user towards the two driving influences of this site; its relationship with the city and its relationship with the harbor. An incredible aspect of the Halterm container terminal is that it is such a foreign landscape that one feels entirely removed from urbanity and nature; it is for this reason that the gallery serves to reconnect the user in a celebratory manner.



Vertical gallery.



Vertical gallery.



Vertical gallery.



Vertical gallery.



Collage of vertical gallery showing light installations on the semi-transparent facades.



Collage of vertical gallery showing light installations on the semi-transparent facades.

CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSION

The Halifax harbour has its own unique and powerful presence. It defines the peninsula and speaks to the character and history of its relationship to the sea. We should not be trying to mask or hide these monumental landscapes. Our focus should be directed towards embracing the existing potential of our industrial harbour and adapting it to create a meaningful dialogue that contributes to the rich character of its urban fabric.

In order to successfully introduce porosity in to an industrial environment and engage it in an integral manner, the industrial site and its surrounding context must not be thought of as two distinct environments, they must become so interwoven that their psychological boundaries disappear. This is achieved by making it an integral part of pedestrian movement on an everyday basis. This industrial intervention cannot be a destination if it is to be successful, it must instead take on the typology of a loop with many points of access in and out of the site. By introducing a well integrated pedestrian loop system the site takes on a practical application. This plants the seed for secondary leisure activities to animate the space with people and vibrant activities, all aspects that will further perpetuate the success of this urban intervention.

The architectural intervention should not strive to be a beautiful object in a landscape. In order to transcend itself and resonate with its context it must draw from and celebrate the embodied qualities of the existing environ-

ment. The end goal is to change peoples perspective and expectations about industrial landscapes, to draw out and display their incredible architectural qualities and uncompromising presence. By this mode of thinking, architecture becomes a facilitator or device to experience a place in a new way.

Ultimately, this thesis investigation is a recognition of what is, not what could be. It is about exploring the experiential phenomena of engaging with the existing; architecture that derives its reason, influence and meaning from its context. This approach proposes a peaceful coexistence between urbanism and industrial landscape, grafted together by a modest design intervention derived from a poetic reading of place.

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