

**De(mock)ratizing the Nova Scotia Legislature:
A Socio/Architectural Deconstruction**

by

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to the Federal Government of Canada for providing the capital for this work at a fixed interest rate of prime + 5% (whatever that means).

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores architecture as a mode of criticism. The project interrogates the western neoliberal status quo through an architectural deconstruction of the Nova Scotia Legislature in the heart of downtown Halifax. The legislature represents a stage upon which socio/economic and political hierarchies play out. This project's critical statement is executed through an adaptive reuse of the existing neoclassical legislature building. The resulting architectural proposal examines how the different social subjects (building users) interact and how existing hierarchies can be made explicit and questioned. The project's narrative examines the interrelation of its subject through the decentralization and manipulation of the existing legislature's programmed spaces. The architectural folies that result from the legislature's deconstruction are then articulated in ways that interrupt their associated hierarchies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Christine Macy for encouraging my anachronistic obsession with postmodern architecture and for helping me overcome my designer's block. Thank you to Christine, Diogo Burnay, and Hans Ibelings for backing my Marxist tendencies and talking to me about various weird things.

To Izak Bridgman, thank you for your modernist (borderline tyrannical) organizational input and for volunteering those long hours near this project's completion.

Special thank you to Charles MacKay (Chief Clerk of the Prince Edward Island Legislature), Neil Ferguson (Chief Clerk of the Nova Scotia Legislature), Michael Laffing (Facilities Manager, Province House, Nova Scotia), James MacNutt (author of *Building for Democracy*), and Lars Lerup for taking the time to talk.

Finally, thank you to my family, friends, and loves for dealing with me during this time. I hope you will accept me back into your lives now that this is finished.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The Question of Preservation

An irony exists at the centre of our western capitalist society: The basis of our sociopolitical system, western democracy - a political system defined by a preservation of the right to dissent - and its ever evolving inner workings are housed in a two hundred year old heritage preserved and protected building. No matter how the needs or demands of this form of government evolve over time, the building, by and large, has remained static and unchanged. For some reason, we have consented to the petrification of our most important official building. We have declared that this architecture,



Perfect preservation of the institution in a historical bubble; base photo from Bing Maps.

which represents our political life, must not change. What if this were not the case? How might an adaptive reuse of this existing legislature represent the relationships between subjects of a contemporary democracy? How can architecture and architectural drawing function as a critical language for questioning social power structures?



Separation from the public realm of the street.



Sacrificed to the requirement of the automobile.



Demarcated as private space.



Made accessible as public space for play.



Incorporating alternative programs.



Public space for alternative gardening.

Critical Discourse

Postmodern and critical theory are potent modes of cultural analysis widely employed in many academic disciplines from the field of literature to that of philosophy. Nowhere more than in the academic field of architecture have these modes of inquiry fallen out of vogue and been labeled obsolete or “dead”. Instead, architecture has been increasingly aligned with the interests of big capital touting the neoliberal (and no longer clever in its bastard form) cliché of “yes is more!” This supercapitalist mantra appears especially out of place in the current context of an increasing apprehension of growing economic inequality, expanding reliance on foreign production, and escalating desiccation of the planet’s natural resources. The architectural discourses that are capable of critically engaging with these and other social issues through design - i.e. postmodern architectural discourses - have fallen to the periphery. However, this project argues that the richness and depth of architectural thought and criticism has never been greater than in the postmodern movement. The period between Venturi’s *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) and Heinrich Klötz’s *A History of*

Postmodern Architecture (1988) could even be referred to as a renaissance of architectural theory. In a current context, these discourses have a renewed relevance as they offer architects the tools and perspectives for critically engaging with the power of architecture as a cultural practice.

The post-modern architectural movement involved an explosion of paper-based architectural design as a result of economic conditions that precluded many architects from executing buildings. Today, we find architects on the other side of capital, with renewed power; some of those who once designed solely for the drafting table, “have become the epitomization of architecture’s regained power in late capitalist/cultural production”.¹ Yet this project questions, in



Former avant garde architect Frank Gehry colluding with big capital in the form of Mark Zuckerberg and company; from *Digital Trends*

a present-day climate of economic inequality and ecological cataclysm, how so many of the architectural intelligentsia can continue to build ever more massive structures with moral impunity. Like the work of Massimo Scolari and Leon Krier, this project contends that:

¹ Andreas Lechner, “Determining Indeterminacies,” *San Rocco* 5 (Fall 2012): 140.

Daring [can] take the place of the building, and [can] claim a great validity. On this view, architects who build are corrupt; an architect should not build but should record his concepts in drawings. Building is dominated by local bureaucracies, and corporations lack true interest in architecture. Krier and Scolari have set themselves up against “ a society of thieves and murderers, who are the only ones who still have money for building.”²

“Green” Architecture

The origins of this project stem chiefly from environmental concerns, usually relegated to the branch of the discipline termed “green” or “sustainable” architecture. However, these clichéd terms are usually portentously employed in the service of capital while the architecture to which they refer does little to actually improve the ecological realm. The relationship of “green” architecture projects to capital has changed in the digital age: in real world projects, scale must



Glenn Murcutt profits from the image of aboriginal children naturalizing his architecture while promoting the corporate interests of big steel in the form of Bluescope and BHP Biliton corporations. Bluescope not only funds Murcutt’s projects but also a student scholarship in his name; from Peter Hyatt, *Touch the Earth Lightly* (1992).

² Heinrich Klotz, *A History of Postmodern Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988), 404.

keep pace with capital development. Currently, architecture facilitates capital growth (a type of growth that is continual and based on an unlimited consumption of natural resources) and therefore contributes to ecological devastation and economic disparity. Believing in contemporary notions of “green” architecture is like believing the paradoxical marketing gimmick that you will in fact save the rainforest if you buy enough Starbucks coffee.

This project contends that real sustainability and “green” design is impossible due to socio/economic inequalities, political corruption, and hierarchical thought paradigms. The silver bullet of some advanced “green” technology may in fact save our doomed species one day, but until then (and toward that end) this project explores an architectural narrative that exposes and questions hierarchies lying at the heart of our social system. This project symbolically situates the heart of our social system at the site of the Nova Scotia Legislature and engages with social hierarchies through an adaptive reuse of the legislature’s neoclassical architecture. Until individuals are comfortable engaging with the forces at play within our democratic system and until the “Rabble” can freely call these forces into question, issues of sustainability will never be sincerely addressed.

CHAPTER 2: DESIGN

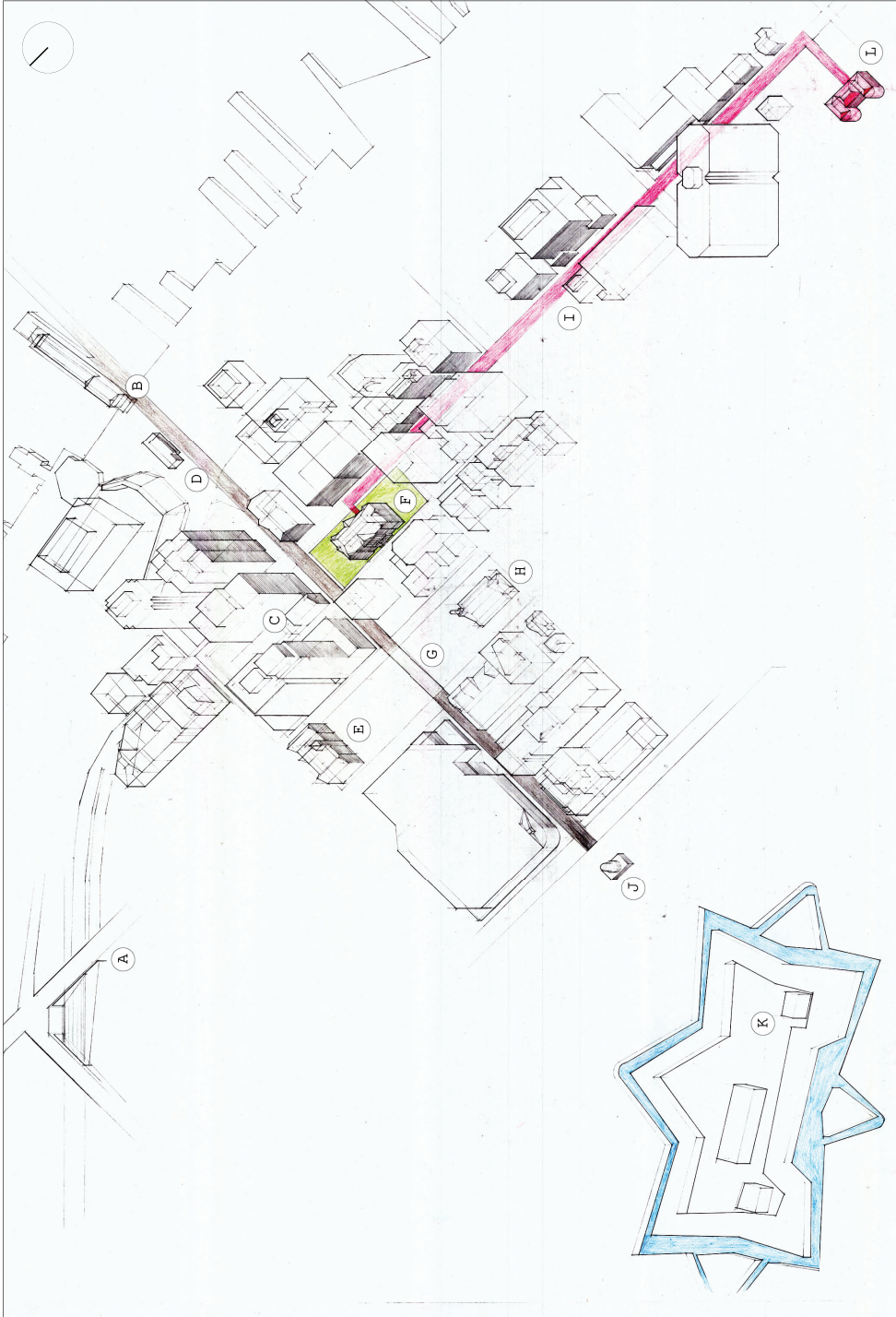
Frustrating Power Structures

The location of the existing Nova Scotia Legislature at the intersection of George and Hollis streets, whether intentional or serendipitous, is of primary symbolic significance within the city of Halifax. This axial juncture is between the city's two most important arteries: 1. George Street - linking the harbour to the Citadel (seat of military power) and bisecting Parade Square (containing the seat of religious and municipal authority in the form of St. Paul's Church and City Hall). 2. Hollis Street - connecting the residence of the Lieutenant Governor (representing British authority in the province) and Halifax's main commercial institutions. The intersection of these two axes representing contrasting urban programs, initiated the first stages of this thesis' design narrative. The narrative focuses on the collision and interrelation of different program elements on this socially, economically, and historically charged site. In the alternative narrative proposed in this thesis, the forces at play within and surrounding the legislature's intimate site are first made explicit and then frustrated through an architectural proposal that reorganizes the existing legislature's architecture. As Lars Lerup describes his architecture in the book *Planned Assaults*, "This work is an assault [...] part exploration, part attack, part construction, part fiction".³ The project identifies program subjects (building users) and proposes an architectural stage upon which their programs take place.

Play Element of Official Architecture

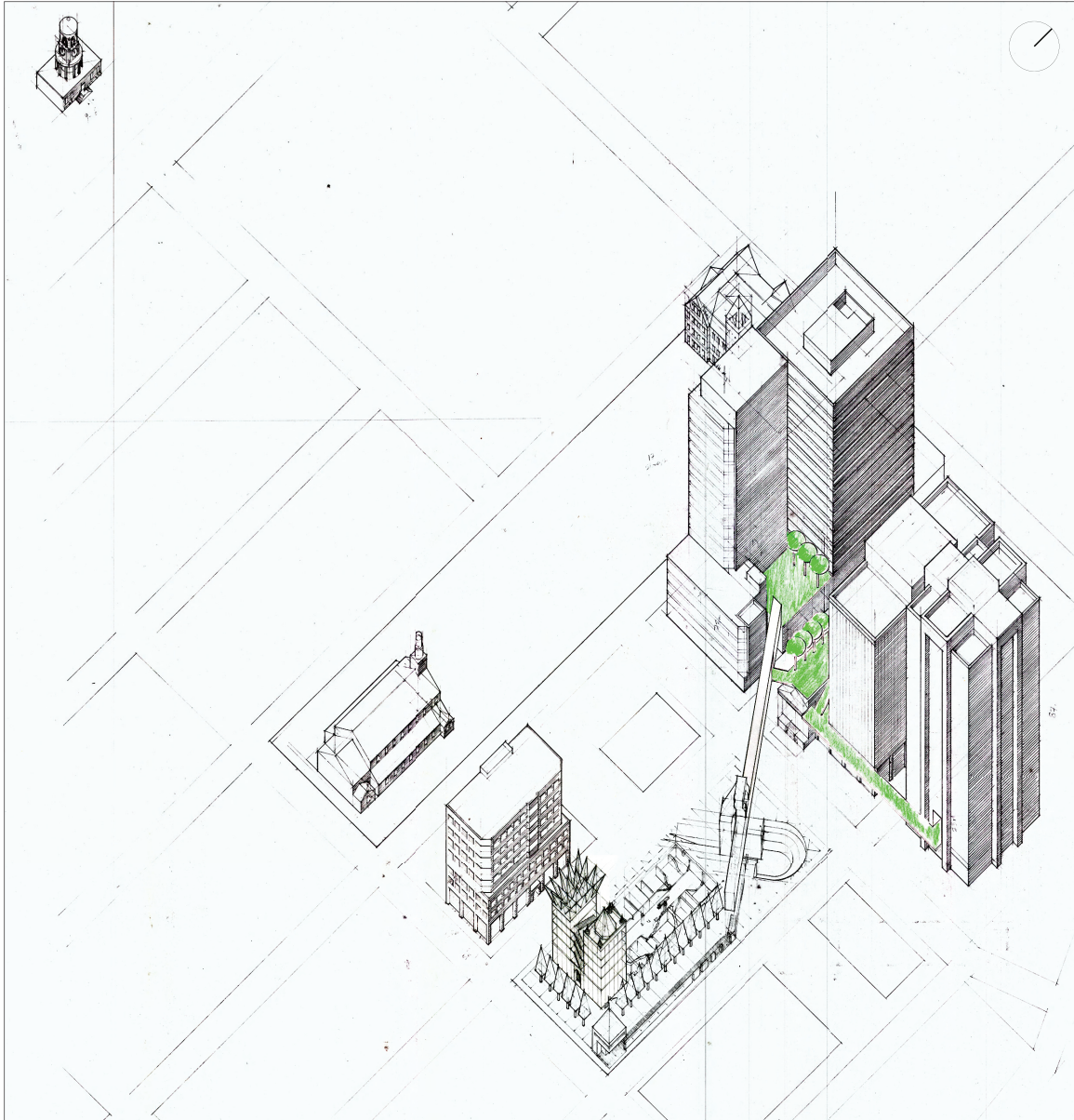
Instead of the permitting the word "legislature" to disengage

3 Lars Lerup, *Planned Assaults* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), 15.

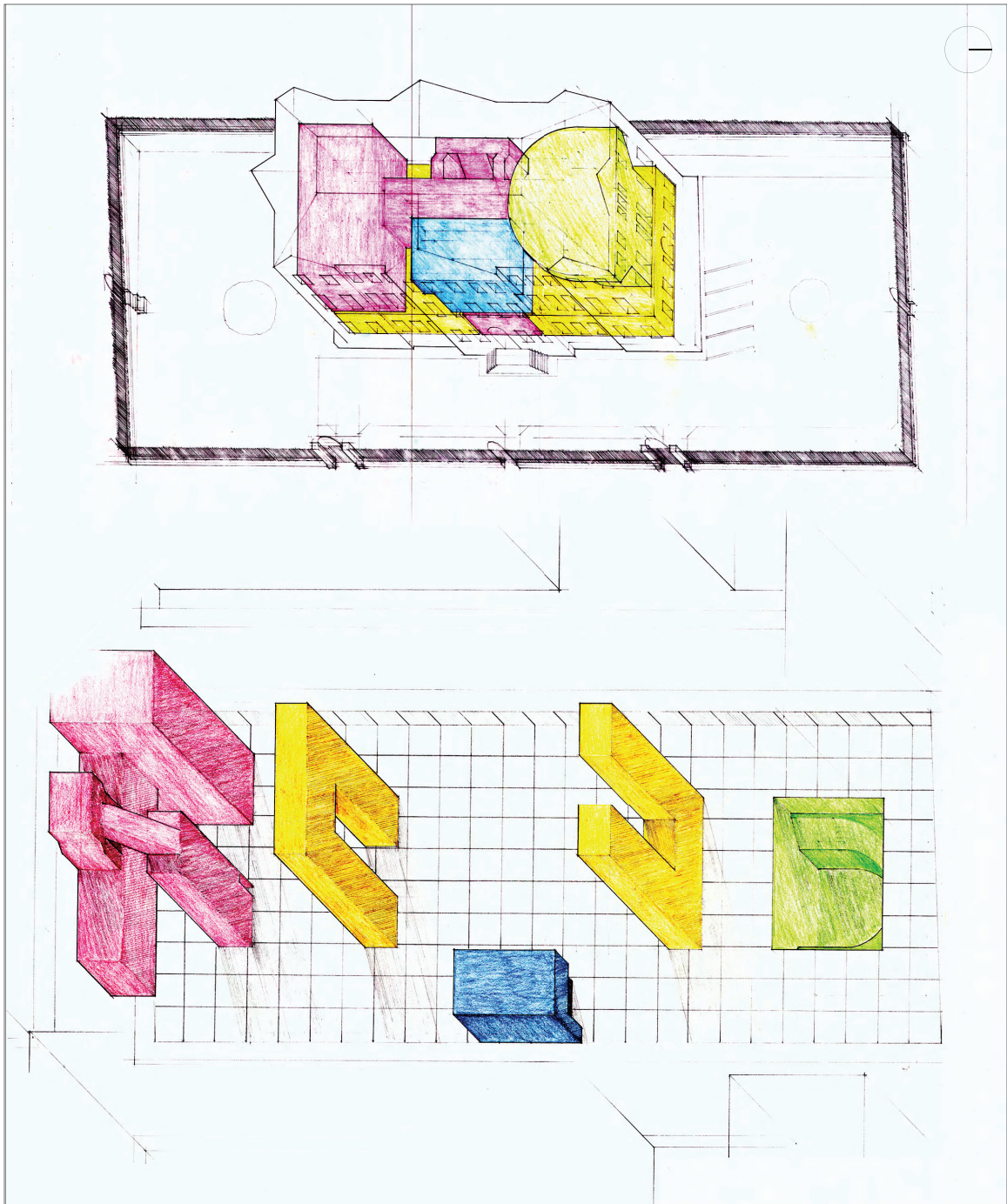


- A. Cogswell Interchange
- B. Harbour terminus of George Street axis
- C. The Banks
- D. George Street axis
- E. Halifax City Hall
- F. Province House/the Legislature
- G. The Grand Parade
- H. Saint Paul's Church
- I. Hollis Street axis
- J. Town Clock
- K. Fort George
- L. Government House

The site's symbolic location relative the surrounding urban context.



The proposed legislature campus design takes influence from the decentralized plan of the Grand Parade, with structures deployed to the periphery of the block. Urban connections are consummated along George and Hollis Streets. The dominating presence of the banking towers is evident and their illicit connection to the legislature is formally and publicly expressed.



The thesis narrative frees the programmatic elements of the legislature and its programmed spatial volumes, from their original insulated and isolated context, allowing for a richer conceptual understanding of the legislative program. The decentralized layout of Parade Square (Halifax's urban room for the people located at the top of George Street) with its buildings pushed to the site's edges serves as a precedent for organizing the newly freed spatial volumes-cum-folies on the legislature site.

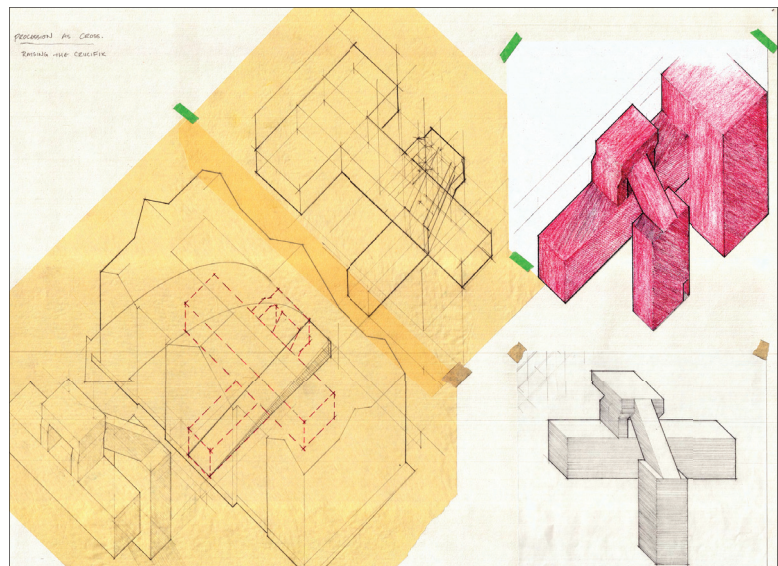
the viewer, this project treats the program of the legislature like a game or play involving various characters, a more familiar scenario that aims to integrate and engage the public, the outsider, and the revolutionary. As Johann Huizinga notes,

The arena, the card-table, the magic circle, the temple, the stage, the screen, the tennis court, the court of justice, etc., are all in form and function play-grounds, i.e. forbidden spots, isolated, hedged round, hallowed, within which special rules obtain. All are temporary worlds within the ordinary world, dedicated to the performance of an act apart.⁴

The analogy also serves as a critique of traditions and methods used in the legislative process as embodied in their traditional colonial architecture. The thesis narrative and its accompanying analogy provide a vehicle for reimagining the neoclassical architecture of the British imperial legislative building.

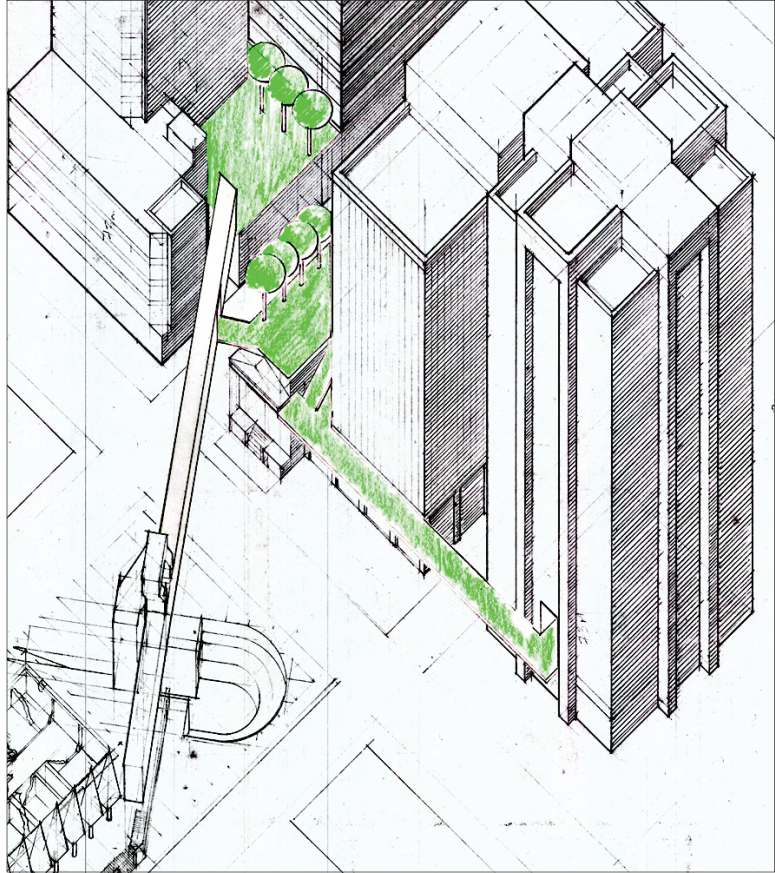
Site Organization

The thesis narrative frees the programmed spatial volumes of the existing legislature from their original insulated



A circulation space becomes a crucifix.

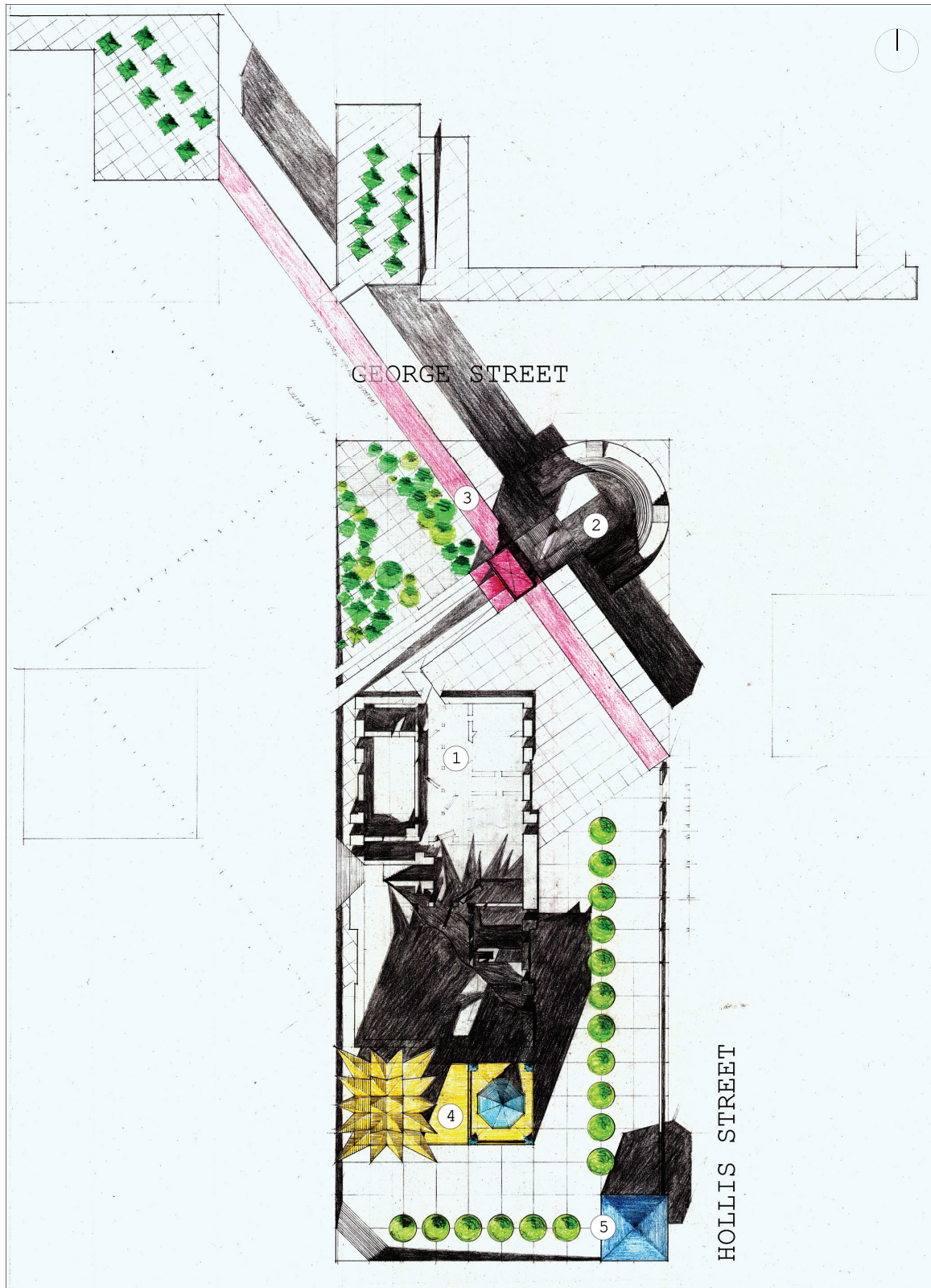
⁴ Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), 10.



The Bankers' Bridge explicitly connecting the financial towers to the Assembly Chamber.

and isolated context, allowing for a richer conceptual understanding of the legislative program. The decentralized layout of Parade Square (Halifax's urban room for the people located at the top of George Street) with its buildings pushed to the site's edges serves as a precedent for organizing the newly freed spatial volumes-cum-folies on the legislature site.

In order to mediate the two critical axes of George and Hollis Streets, the semi-circular Assembly Chamber is rotated, displaced to the northeast corner of the site, and sunk into the earth in a manner reminiscent of a classical amphitheatre, now made accessible at street level.



Plan view of the program volumes redeployed on the legislature site.

The ceremonial circulation space in the existing legislature is tilted forward and up like an immense crucifix; rotated toward the banking towers, its cross member forms a bridge between the towers of finance and the Assembly Chamber. The vertical volume is planted into the ground and provides vertical circulation from the Bridge to the Chamber.

The U-shaped administrative spaces at the north and south of the Legislature's ground floor are stacked and tilted vertically to the south of the original foundation to form a twin tower. These stand like a headstone above the ruins of the now exposed foundation of the old building. The part of the first floor that remains serves as a plaza to the north of the tower.

In the center of the piano nobile, the room that formerly served as the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia and was subsequently converted into a lavish Victorian library complete with mezzanine is now pushed to the southeast corner of the site to become a turret and apartment for one above the monarch's gateway to the site.

With all of the volumes centripetally displaced from their original centralized configuration, the foundation of Province House now lies bare, in ruin.

Mode of Representation

Using architectural drawing techniques, mainly hand-drafted axonometric and plan oblique parallel projection, began as a means of research that engaged with a critical design process exemplified in the work of several postmodern practitioners. Working in this mode led to the discovery of other architects working in a similar way. Eventually,

the design assumed an aesthetic that aligned it with a postmodern architectural discourse.

The use of traditional technical drawing conventions revealed the additional function of serving to critique the growing hegemony and arbitrariness of digital design. As Hal Foster asks of Frank Gehry's numerous international buildings:

Why this curve, swirl, or blob here, and not that one? Formal articulation requires a resistant material, structure or context; without such constraint architecture quickly becomes arbitrary or self-indulgent.⁵

The adoption of axonometric drawing as the chief representational mode for this thesis is an attempt to approach an objective mode of representation, one that calls attention to the presence of the creator's hand and one that refuses arbitrariness. These analogue techniques belong to an exploration of meaningful, intentional architecture, which rejects the architectural excess and spectacle so common in contemporary practice.

Architectural Subterfuges

In the process of being freed and manipulated on the site, the original program volumes adapt to their new contexts transforming into independent folies. The social relations they have always embodied become manifest on their surfaces and in their organization. The initial design intent behind the volumes evolves into explicit architectural expression. These cracks serve to disrupt the narrative relationships between subjects as represented under the term "legislature". To paraphrase Lerup, since the daily narratives are so all-consuming with the subject rarely pausing, cracks must be inserted to expose the margins of

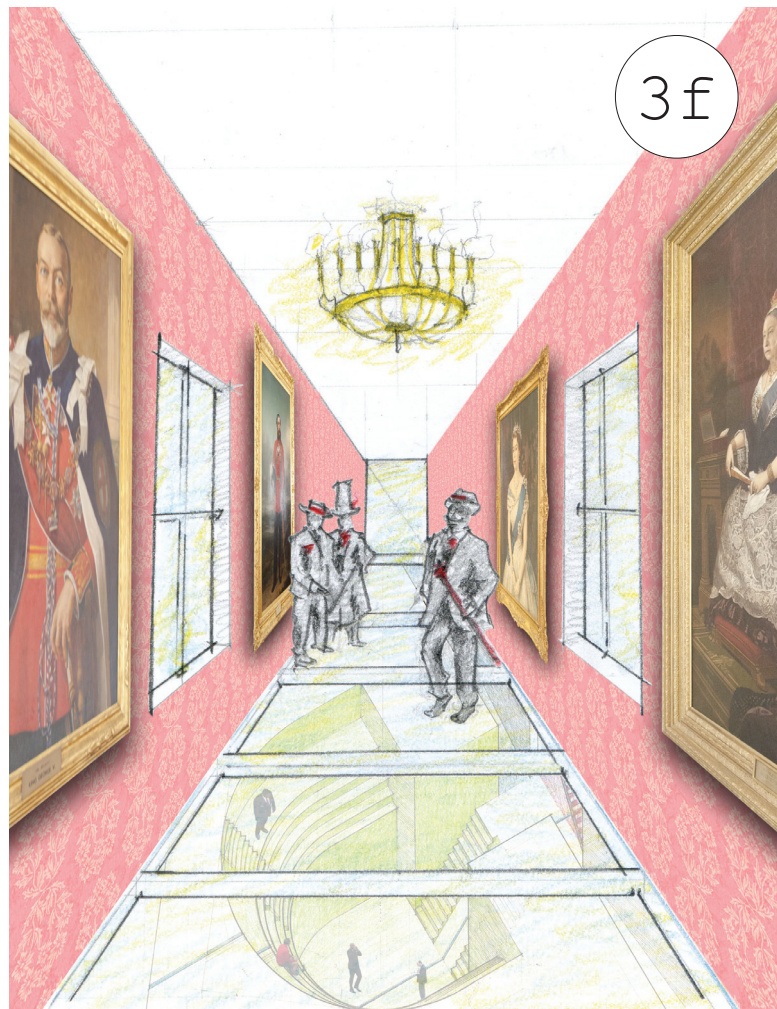
⁵ Hal Foster, *Design and Crime: and Other Diatribes* (London: Verso, 2003), 40.

the social relations embodied by the legislature.⁶

Grain Elevator for Rich People

Designed to resemble a grain elevator, this four story structure directly links the banking towers to the Assembly Chamber. Its erection stands at the point where the chamber (head of the legislature) is severed from its ruin (corpse).

One-Way Mirror Floor



The grain elevator for rich people with one-way floor.

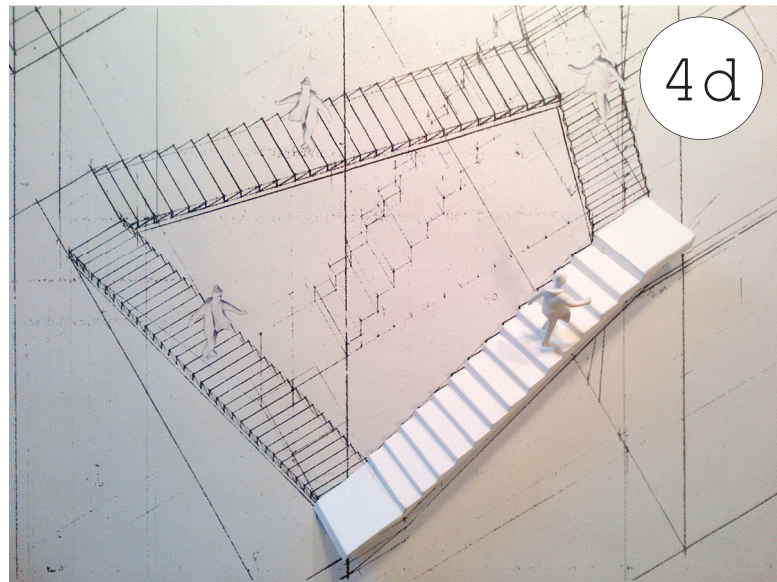
As a reminder of the precariousness of their social position,

⁶ Lerup, *Planned Assaults*, 32.

the Bankers' Bridge is designed with a one-way mirror floor made of two by three meter laminated glass panels. The floor literally dematerializes beneath the feet of the user. From the top, it is transparent, invisibly allowing full view of the rabble below. With repeated use, the uneasiness of walking on a transparent floor is soon forgotten. From underneath and visible only from the outside, the floor is reflective. When the Rabble looks up at it, the Rabble sees itself.

The Impossible Stair

Designed in the language of technical drawing conventions, this stair connects several floors efficiently and resolves in a closed circuit. However, as conceived in a 30/60 degree



The impossible stair.

plan oblique parallel projection view, the stair is impossible to represent in all other views. The very design convention employed in its conception subverts it as a viable piece of architecture. Its impossibility elicits notions of the futility of expanding administrations in administering democracy.

Accomplishing the simplest administrative task is rendered impossible by the impossible stair.

Open-Air Amphitheatre

Reconnecting with classical origins of its design, the Assembly Chamber reverts to an exterior amphitheater in the classical Greek tradition. Now more than ever, in the current climate of impending ecological cataclysm, the theatrical processes of government must be exposed to the elements. No longer can politicians ignore the direct effects that their legislative actions have on climate change.

Surveillance Turret

Through the architecture, the role of the Sergeant-at-Arms is translated from figurative to literal. A horizontal slit of a window allows the Sergeant to monitor the arrival of the Queen. The turret is equipped with every conceivable technology that can possibly contribute to the Sergeant's performance of his duties.



The Surveillance Turret.

The Rabble's Procession

The Rabble marches on the site of the legislature to take their place at its center. The center was previously occupied by the old legislative building, now laid to ruin. Entering the site via a ramp at the corner of Granville and George streets, the Rabble marches along beneath the mirrored underside of the Bankers' Bridge; they look up and see themselves reflected. This experience has the intended yet unfortunate effect of causing the Rabble to identify with the Bankers. Immediately after seeing themselves reflected in the Bankers' Bridge, the Rabble enters the Assembly Chamber to lobby their representatives to pass bills that encourage corporate expansion resulting in their own enslavement. Their entry to the site is counterposed spatially and hierarchically to that of the Bankers. Descending the ramp, the Rabble comes face-to-face with the monarch's entry ramp. The Rabble can either enter the Assembly Chamber to their left or proceed to the right, passing underneath the Bankers' Bridge tower, into a narrow passage that culminates inside the ruin of the old legislature, the Rabble's Ruin. Here the Rabble congregates at the site of their metaphoric and economic ruin. The Ruin is always overshadowed by the twin tower of the Administrative building. Despite being attached to the Ruin, the Administrative Tower is inaccessible.

The Objects and Their Subjects

Architecture is commonly defined as the relationship between object and subject - the user and the space occupied. Now individuated and put on view, the old legislature's exposed, reoriented volumes become objects that retain the memory of their original context but gain a haunting character. They are forms that are familiar and yet

not, ghosts of their original condition, each representing a particular subject.

I. The Rabble's Ruin

A pun intended (the legislature exemplifies the economic and ecological ruin of the Rabble). The legislature, only now, lying in ruin, becomes the space of the people.

The Rabble - Protagonist

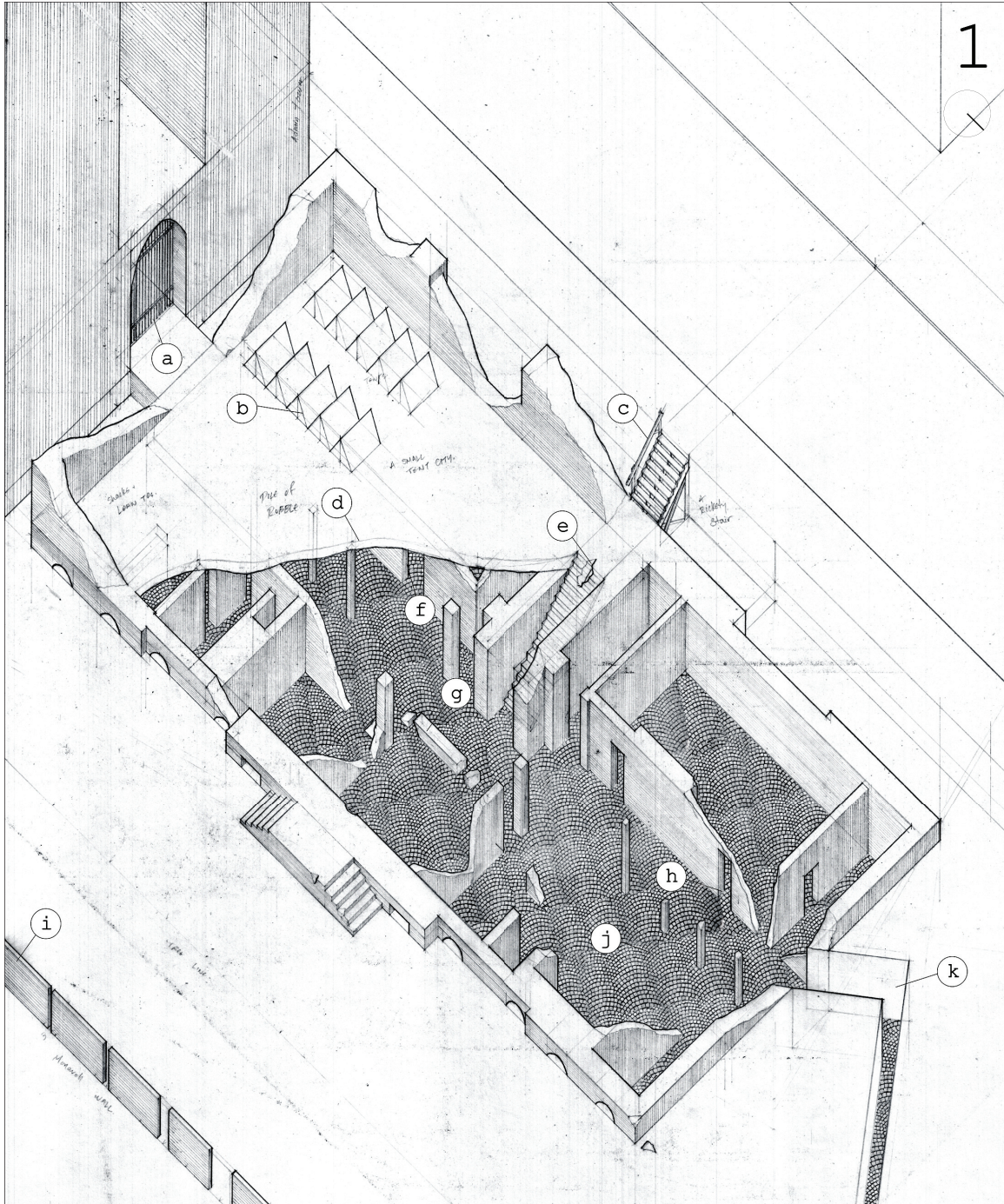
Urban Zone - Grand Parade

Urban Axis - George Street

The Masses, the mob, the throngs, the unruly hordes are the unlikely protagonists in this story. Unified they wield unrivaled power; divided they ensure self-perpetuated enslavement, subjugation to the ruling class, the Bankers. Ironically, many individuals within the Rabble long to become Bankers - part of the very group responsible for their subjugation - ensuring that the Rabble's collective political position aligns with that of their overlords.



Joseph Michael Gandy, "An Imagined View of the Bank of England in Ruins." Drawing. 1830; from *Art Prints on Demand*.

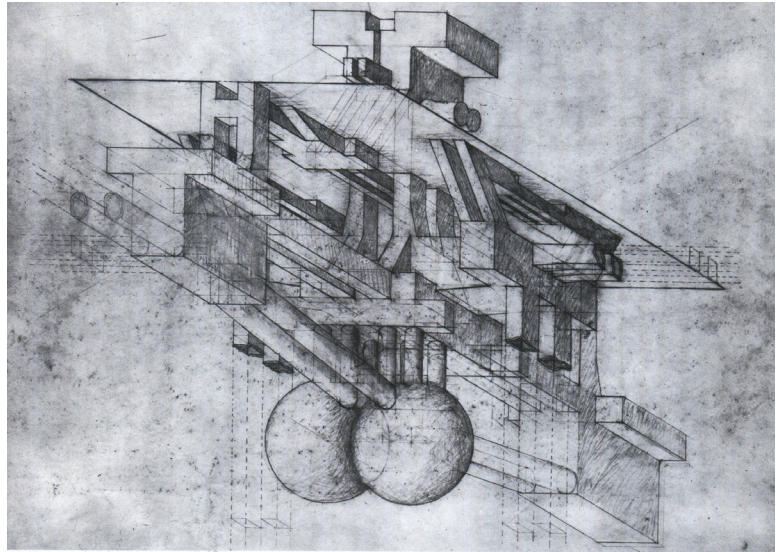


- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| a. An impasse. | g. A column turned bench. |
| b. A small tent city. | h. A redundant door. |
| c. An improvised stair. | i. The monarch's processional wall. |
| d. Remains of the ground floor. | j. Parisian cobblestone floor. |
| e. A Ruined stair. | k. Connection from the ruin to the Assembly Chamber. |
| f. Door to a ruined water closet. | |

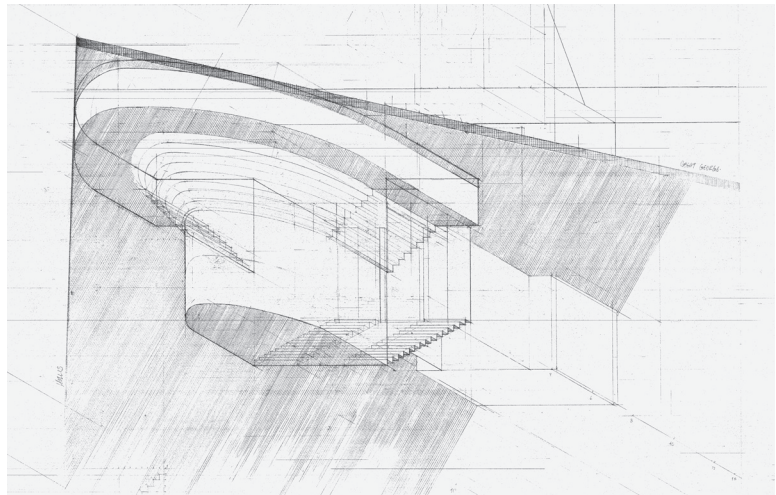
The Rabble's Ruin

2. The Assembly Chamber

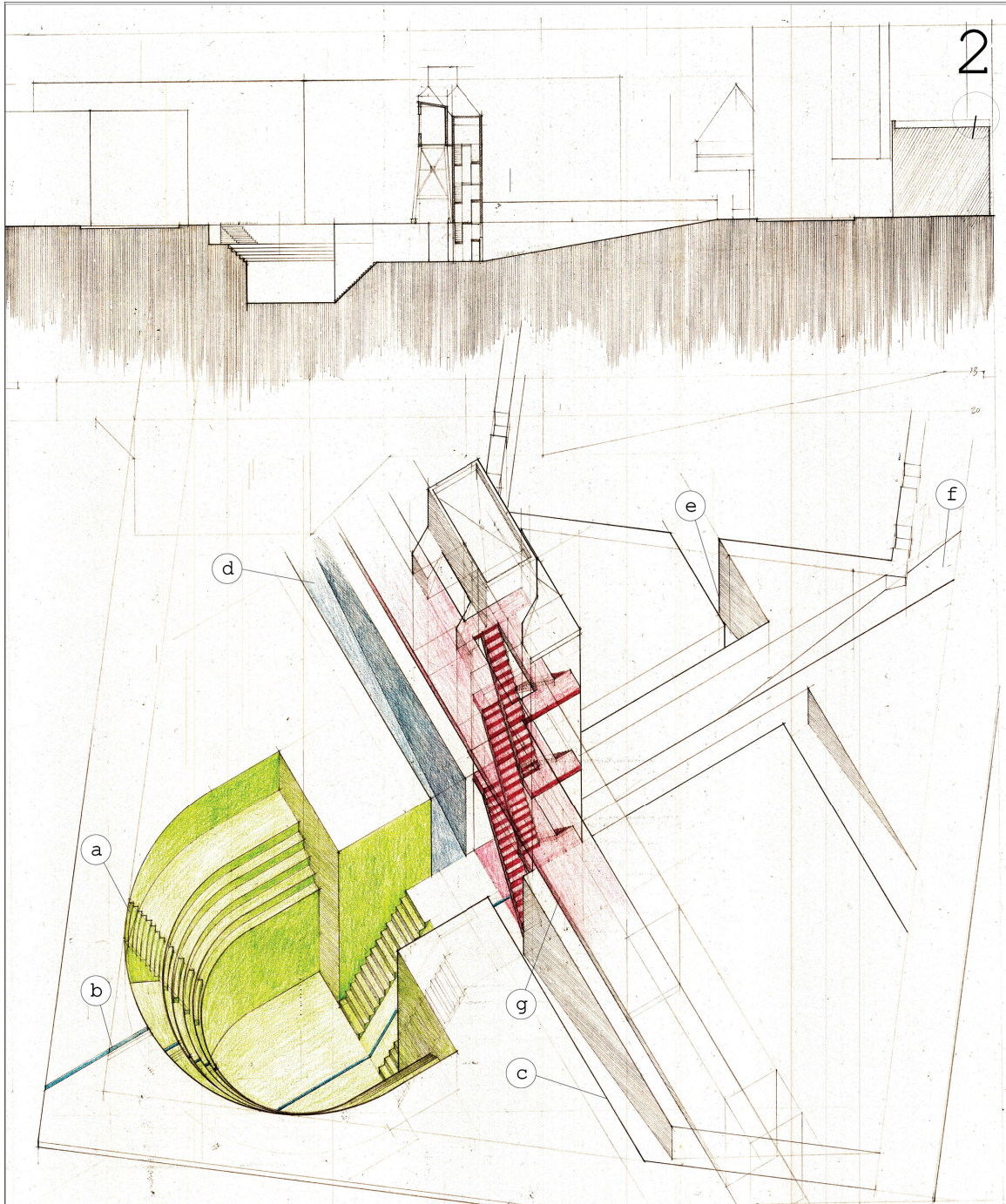
Submerged, an occupiable classical column capital becomes a toilet, the throne of the people. The semi-circular form mediates the two historical axes, George and Hollis Streets, joining the Rabble with the Queen and yielding an intermediary subject, the Legislators. The rotation of the chamber from the main grid formally severs it as the head



Walter Pichler, *Center of An Underground City* (1963), view from below; from *Walter Pichler: Drawings, Sculpture, Buildings*.



Preliminary subterranean worm's eye view of the proposed Assembly Chamber.



- a. Street access to the Assembly Chamber.
- b. Central Reveal dividing the Assembly Chamber.
- c. The Rabble's entry ramp (Great George Street).
- d. The Monarch's entry ramp (Hollis Street).
- e. Passageway between the Assembly Chamber and the Rabble's Ruin.
- f. Axial entry ramp (Granville Street).
- g. Banker's bridge .

The Assembly Chamber

of the democratic process from its corpse, the ruin of the legislative building (Rabble's Ruin). The Chamber is open to the sky so the Legislators cannot easily forget the existence of the natural world. The Granville Street entrance ramp divides the Chamber in two, the ramp culminating in a reveal within the Assembly Chamber. To one side are the banks; to the other, the monarchy (present and past). The split also divides the power and the opposition within the Chamber. This is where the two ruling parties assemble in agonistic play.

The Legislators

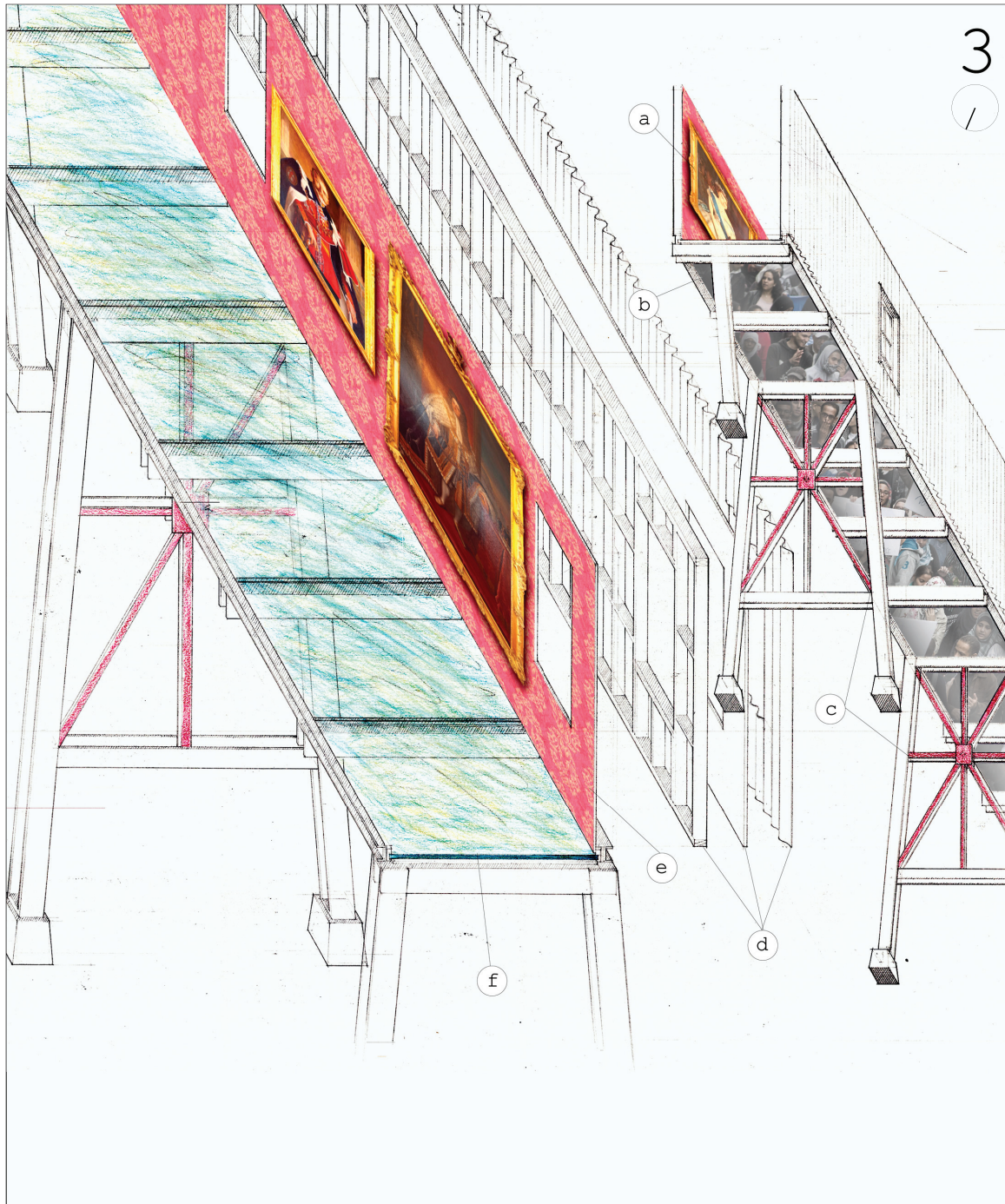
Urban Zone - I Government Place

Urban Axis - Granville Street

Torn between representing their constituents (doing their job) and satisfying their financial benefactors, the Legislators talk in circles until the political session is closed. The Rabble is consistently deceived while the Bankers successfully and surreptitiously determine policy.

3. The Bankers' Bridge

The close relationship between privately owned financial institutions and the epicenter of the province's democracy is visible in the city's urban fabric. The pedestrian bridge between the legislature and the adjacent banking towers makes this relationship explicit. The wealthy elite symbolically take their place at the head of state, circulating, unimpeded, literally above the heads of the Rabble and over top of the Assembly Chamber. Its floor is comprised of a one-way mirror - when looking up at it, the Rabble see themselves, when looking down through it, the Bankers look down on the Rabble. The Bridge's structure is similar to that of industrial grain elevators; this ersatz grain elevator expresses



- a. A portrait of Queen Elizabeth II.
- b. The highly reflective underside.
- c. Lateral bracing and vertical support is efficiently provided by crosses like those found in the upper left corner of the former flag of Rhodesia.
- d. Light wood framing typical of vernacular grain elevator construction.
- e. Lavish interior finishes befitting the ruling class accented with original artwork from the former legislative building.
- f. A highly transparent glass floor creates an impression of unease that, with repeated use, is soon forgotten.

The Bankers' Bridge

the reliance of the legislative program superstructure on the economic base of the province's grain commodities industry. The interior, however, is richly adorned. The walls are lined with enormous paintings of past monarchs. This structure props the bankers up above the Assembly Chamber just as the Rabble prop the Bankers up in their privileged social position.



Grain elevators of the Port of Halifax.

The Bankers - Antagonist

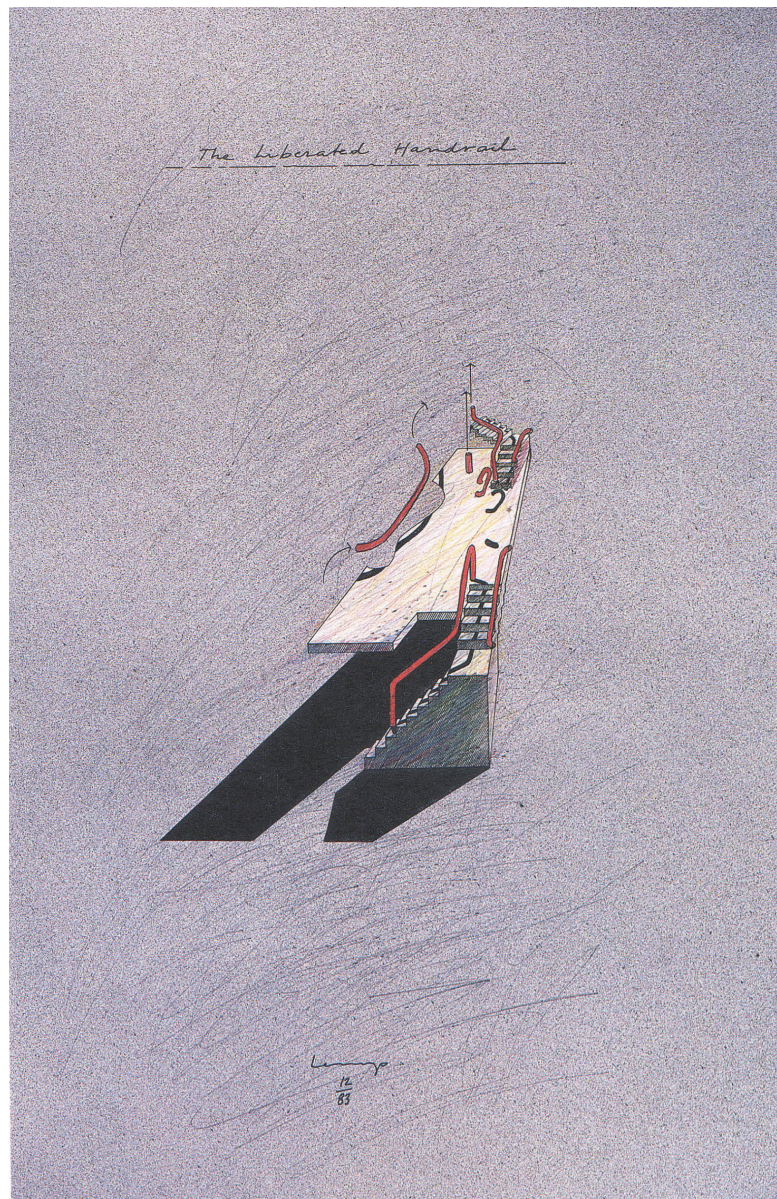
Urban Zone - Banking Towers

Urban Axis - George and Hollis Streets

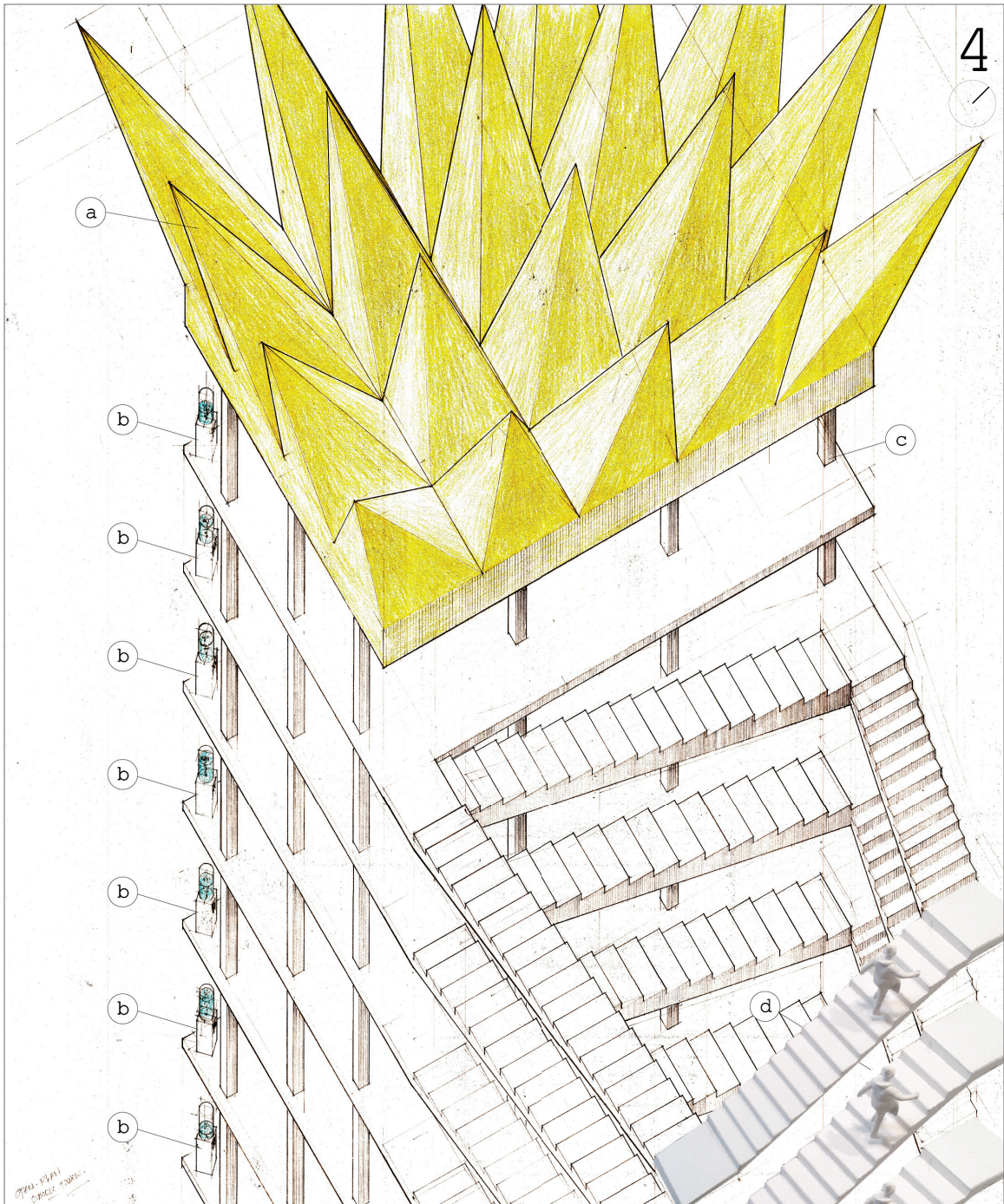
As the towers in which they work expand ever upward, the Bankers' sense of entitlement grows too. Unwilling to walk among the Rabble, they have successfully lobbied lawmakers for the construction of an elevated walkway, keeping them well out of reach of the Rabble. In order to exert their influence, and without ever touching the ground, the Bankers move unimpeded between their towers and the seat of government.

4. The Administrative Tower

As the administrative needs of the program grow larger, the Tower, with its Dom-ino Slab construction, is able to expand upward, casting an ever larger shadow over the site of the legislature. This daylight darkening of the grounds alludes to the harmful impact that expanding bureaucracies tend to have on the execution of democratic functions. The Penrose inspired vertical circulation represents a reimagining of



Lars Lerup, "The Liberated Handrail!" Drawing. 1978-1982; from Lars Lerup, *Planned Assaults*.



- a. A golden crown.
- b. A water cooler.
- c. Dom-ino House slab construction.
- d. An impossible stair.

The Administrative Tower

the inaccessibility of the original legislature building; the Administrative Tower is completely impenetrable. Were anyone to gain entry - an impossibility - they would be hopelessly lost and unable to accomplish the simplest task let alone do so in a timely manner. The east tower is capped with a church-like spire and the west tower with a crown. The spikes of the crown cast ominous shadows into the Rabble's Ruin.

The Administrators

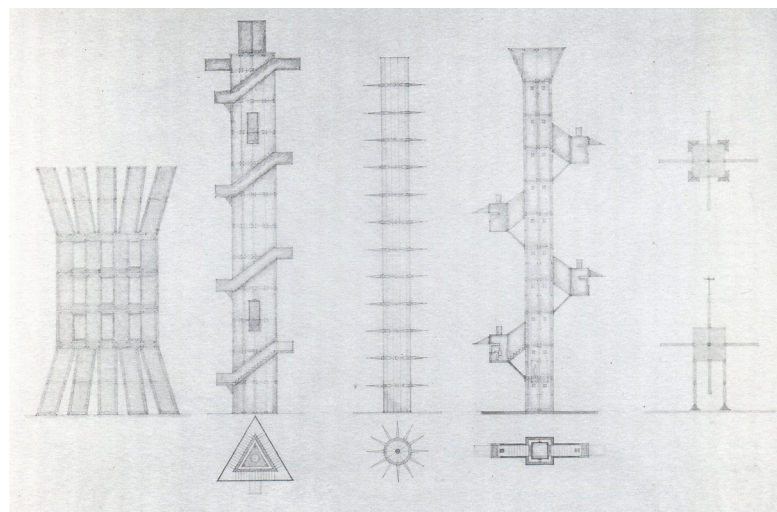
Urban Zone - none

Urban Axis - none

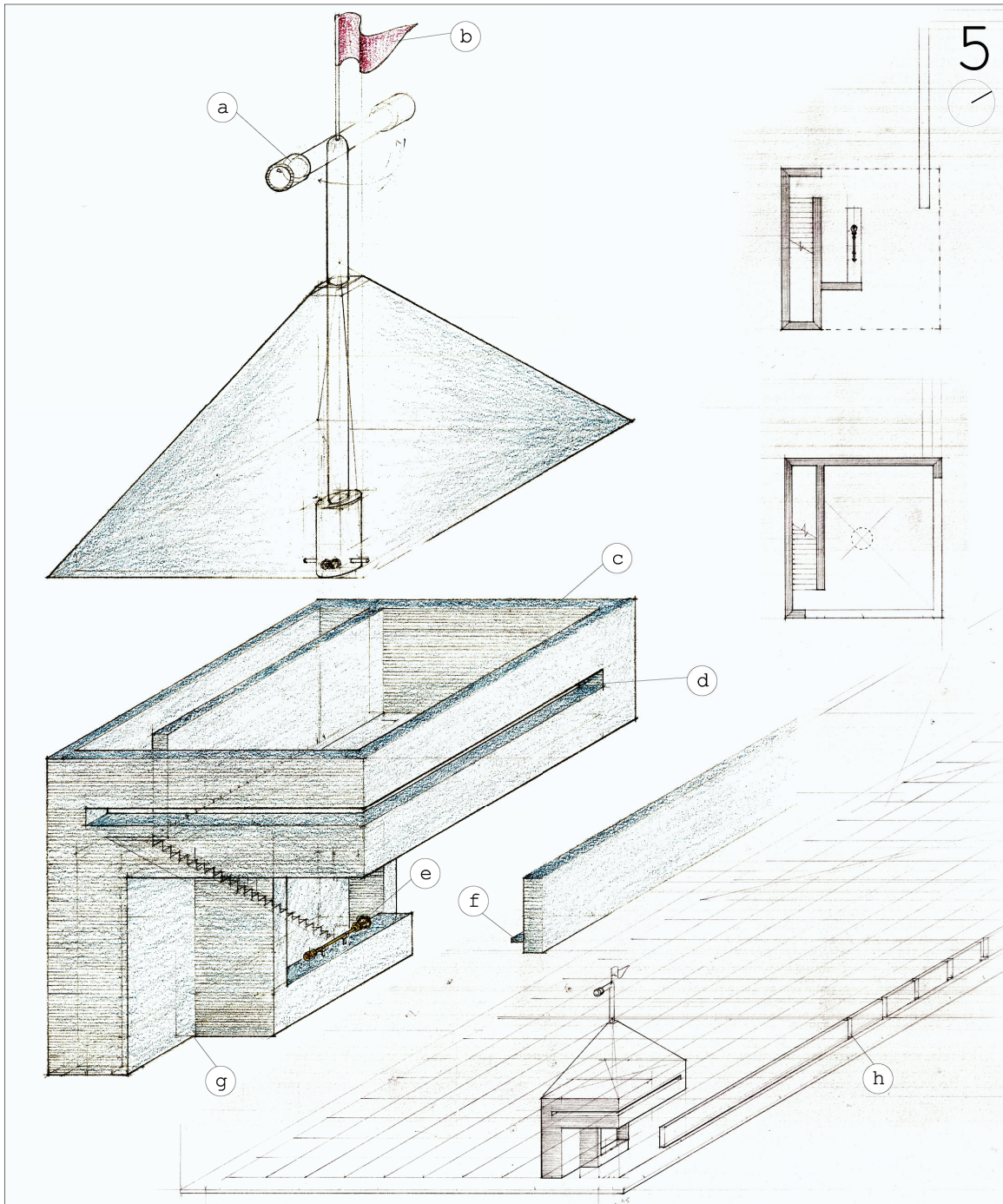
Generally uninformed and unwilling to take on the risk of offering incorrect information, the Administrators avoid answering the questions of the Rabble, re/misdirecting inquirers to other personnel located in increasingly obscure areas of the tower.

5. The Guardhouse

The Guardhouse is equipped with digital cameras, telescopes, a periscope, radar technology, sonar technology, a fishing chair,



John Hejduk, "The Retired General's Place." Drawing. 1990; from John Hejduk, *The Lancaster/Hanover Masque*.



- a. A periscope.
- b. Ceremonial pendant - usually found on the masthead of a war ship - symbolizes the naval superiority of the British Empire.
- c. The apartment of the Serjeant-at-arms.
- d. Turret opening.

- e. Ceremonial mace, the primary weapon of the Serjeant-at-Arms.
- f. A bench for repose.
- g. Sentry space in which the Serjeant-at-Arms stands in wait for the Queen.
- h. Processional wall with openings.

The Guardhouse

army cot, satellite telephone, and the internet, everything the Sergeant-at-Arms needs to predict the arrival of the Queen and to ward off intruders. The Guardhouse features a display console for the ceremonial mace. The mace is used by the Sergeant-at-Arms to bash a path through the Rabble to allow the Queen safe passage to the Assembly Chamber.

The Queen

Urban Zone - Government House
Urban Axis - Hollis Streets

The Sergeant-at-Arms

Urban Zone - The Legislature
Urban Axis - Hollis Street

The Sergeant watches over the Queen's entrance pavilion with great diligence, ready to spring into violent action at the first sign of vagrants. Upon seeing the approach of the Queen from his apartment above, the Sergeant-at-Arms smooths his clothing and hair before bounding down the stairs to collect the ceremonial mace and greet the monarch with the utmost deference.

CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSION

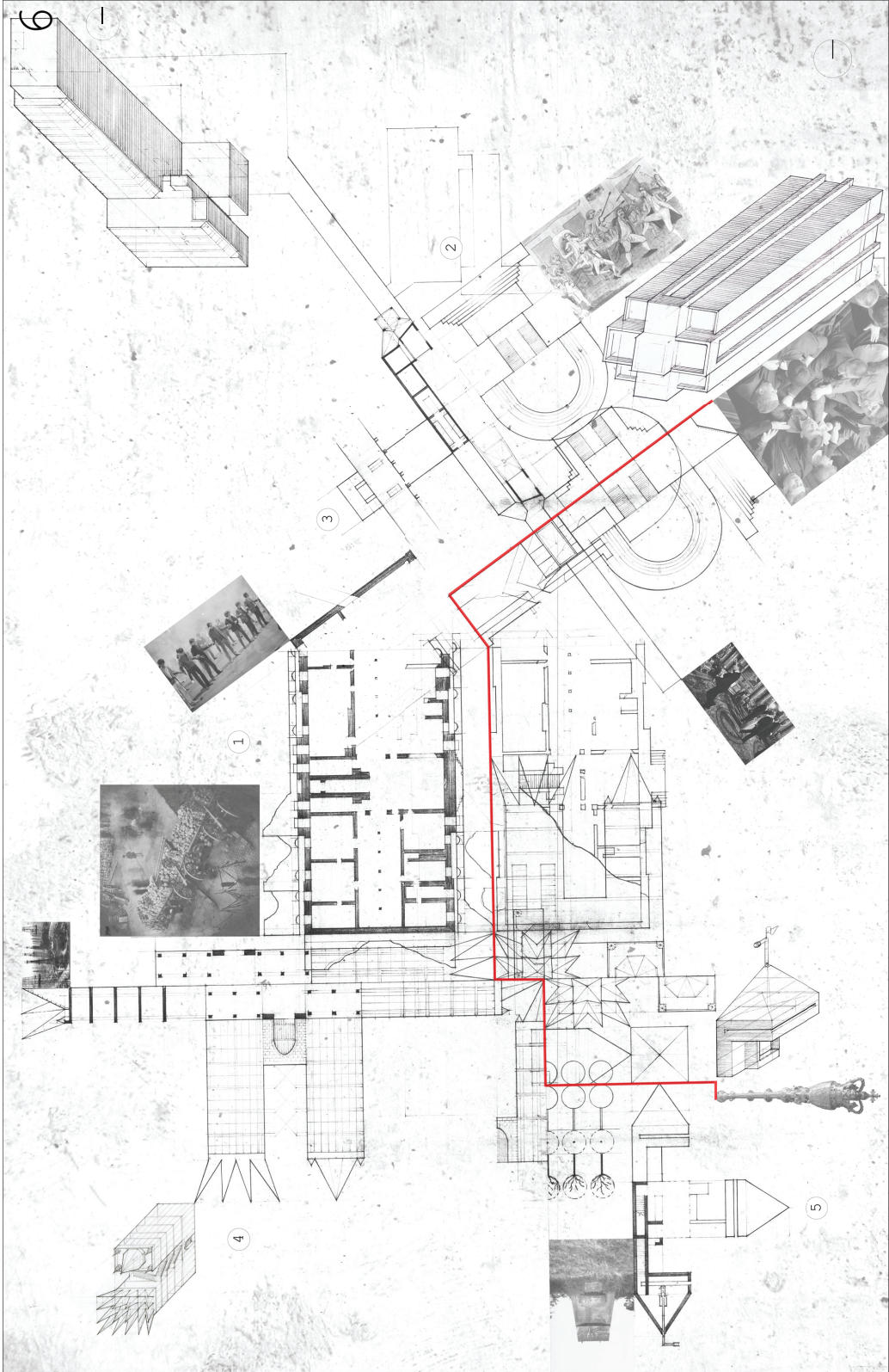
As a means of conceptualizing an end to our deconstructed exploration of the Nova Scotia Legislature, I turn to Wim van den Bergh's description of John Hejduk's work:

We can proceed without worrying about what direction to take, there is no need to arrive anywhere: we are bound up in the [characters] and drift along with them. This is a game of imagistic awakening, characterized by a simultaneous engagement and distance. Like Hejduk, we have to join in the game. We also know it is a game which can be followed by yet another game, but we do not know in advance what the encounter will entail: the poetic appears only after the encounter, after the playing of the game.⁷

The moral of our story is that ideological stance and critical process are essential to a contemporary architectural practice. This project has sought to re-engage outmoded discourses, ones that apply critical design processes and assert particular ideologies. Our present condition of ecological edge-teetering seems to demand a re-engagement with a critical architecture that, rather than frivolously courting big capital, questions the implications of capital's involvement in architectural design processes. To quote Markus Miessen, "this is what I find so funny, that if you look back, throughout the twentieth century there have been certain movements in architecture. If you look at the situation now, there's no movement". The contemporary architect must, "have an agenda that supersedes the individual project, and that agenda can then be tested in the long term".⁸ This thesis forms the departure point for shaping my architectural agenda toward a critical practice; the issues addressed herein are those that

7 Wim van den Bergh, "Icarus' Amazement, or The Matrix of Crossed Destinies," in John Hejduk, *The Lancaster/Hanover Masque* (Montréal: Centre canadien d'architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1992), 87.

8 Markus Miessen, "From Written Word to Practiced Word," *Volume 36* (2013): 100.



- 1. The Rabble's Ruin
- 2. The Assembly Chamber
- 3. The Bankers' Bridge
- 4. The Administrative Tower
- 5. The Guardhouse

The five objects unfolded about a central axis (red).

have shaped my point-of-view and design ideology as I enter into the architecture profession.

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