

Curation Experimentation: The Blurring of Art and Life Along Portland's North Park Blocks

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To my family and friends for their unconditional love and support.

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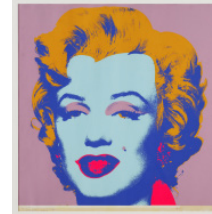
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INTRODUCTION

CURATION EXPERIMENTATION

The relationship between art and the public is continually being reshaped in contemporary culture by its context and modes of display. Over time art has become increasingly more accessible through the use of public exhibition and installations, thus challenging the very notion of the museum as the institution where art is to viewed. New forms of display integrated into the public realm offer a more informal manner of experiencing art that encourages engagement and social interaction over simple contemplation. This approach to experiencing displayed art has been transformative, creating an event, as opposed to a more traditional viewing, enhancing the connection between the art and its audience. The emphasis on taking art out into the streets and creating an event has created a need for public spaces to be reimagined and redesigned from an artistic perspective.

This thesis examines the transformation and expansion of the art museum, and argues for a museum that is part “shrine to the object” and part “social condenser.” Working within the context of Portland, Oregon’s North Park Blocks and reacting to the city’s flourishing, and a bit alternative, art culture, this thesis proposes a new type of art museum that aims to increase public accessibility to underutilized collections of art currently housed in multiple institutions by revealing these works through modes of visible storage and cross-curation. At its core, this thesis addresses the evolving three-way relationship between the public, art and architecture on numerous scales by blurring the edges between storage, exhibition and event.



"The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct as possible." - Allan Kaprow, "The Event"

CHAPTER ONE

THE MUSEUM TYPOLOGY TRANSFORMED: *Making Art More Accessible*

The typology of the art museum is one that has undergone transformation – physically, visually and socially. Although it has always existed as an important urban feature and civic institution, the museum has acquired several new roles and has transitioned from an inwardly focused container of art to a social condenser that aims to hybridize art, architecture and the city through its engagement with the public and the greater context. As contemporary culture evolves, the museum has become less about viewing art itself and more about viewing the city and oneself in a new way, encouraging social interaction between individuals. Given the continuous dialogue between the content and the context, contemporary museum’s architecture must continually challenge, reshape and reimagine the city in terms of its public uses and its users. The museum has become the place where culture is lived.

THE MUSEUM: *The Public Realm*

Around 1800 the modern art museum emerged, about the same time as the concept of the public, and it was the issue of accessibility to the public – its visitors – that turned a collection into a museum. Thus, coupled with its relationship to the greater context of the city, the museum is not solely about its use, but more importantly its users – the public. In his entry entitled ‘The Museum,’ Georges Bataille states, “we must realize that the halls and art objects are but the container, whose contents are formed by the visitors. It is the context that distinguishes a museum from a private collection. A museum is like the lungs of a city: each Sunday the crowd flows like blood into the museum and emerges purified and fresh.”¹ Since its formation during the Enlightenment, the museum has always been more than simply a piece of architecture, but rather is a social construct. Relying heavily on appearance, the museum is the “site of attraction”² that informs both our reality and the ‘public realm.’

Hannah Arendt argues in *The Human Condition*, “appearance – something that is seen and heard by others as well as by ourselves and constitutes reality [and the] feeling for reality depends utterly upon appearance and therefore upon the existence of a public realm.”³ This visible presence and contact with others “assures us of

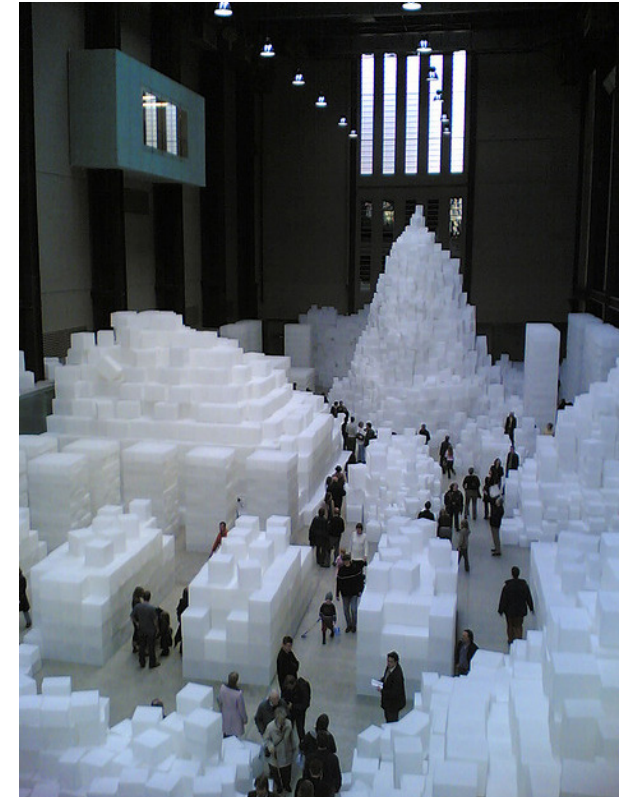


Figure 1: Tate Modern, London / Rachel Whiteread (installation)



Figure 2: MoMA PSI, NYC / Holding Patterns (installation)

the world and ourselves.”²⁴ The public realm relies on people to be visible to one another, this is synonymous with the verbal interaction individuals have with one another through the sharing of ideas and general engagement on a social level. The museum acts a catalyst for the public realm.

Jaques Herzog of Herzog & de Meuron observes that museums “should create important places where people like to linger, and that can mean a lot of people [...] I want people to be able to see things in such a way that they can make discoveries and enjoy surprises – so that they carry an experience that will live on in their everyday lives away from the museum with them.”²⁵ Thus, the roles of appearance and attraction have only intensified over time as concept of “museum as social condensor” evolved to become an event space that relies on social interaction and performance between individuals.

In *The Culture of Cities*, Lewis Mumford wrote that “Layer upon layer, past times preserve themselves in the city until life itself is finally threatened with suffocation: then, in sheer defense, modern man invents the museum.”²⁶ The relationship between the museum and the city, much like the public realm, has always been a complex one. At their core the two are intertwined. With time the museum, like architecture, becomes an “urban artifact”²⁷ as it transforms into more of an instrument in the city that “does more than express current social values and tastes; it also makes a cultural statement which goes beyond its own place in history.”²⁸ Over time, the museum replicates urban modes and “is like a city on a reduced scale [and consequently is defined] as a space for social encounters where the contemplation of art furnishes merely one of several options,”²⁹ as Herzog argues. Given its close relationship within the city, the museum has become less about the content and more about the context, creating a place where culture is lived and the city is ultimately reimagined.

THE MUSEUM TRANSFORMED: *The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*

While people and place have always been a vital component to the success of the museum, one must understand the transformation of the typology of the museum through history – as both architectural and social constructs – to fully grasp how the museum has changed into its current state, one which is much more outward focused, emphasizing performance over mere object and icon. Built in 1830, Karl Friedrich von Schinkel’s **Altes Museum** in Berlin is one of the earliest and best examples of a traditional museum that is open to the public. With Altes, the notion of the museum was transformed alongside Germany’s new growing class of bourgeoisie who had become more self-aware. New ideas about the relationship between the public and art evolved. It was believed art should be more publicly accessible and people should have better access to cultural education. The museum architecture borrowed heavily from Greek antiquity and classical architecture, the museum was seen as



Figure 3: Guggenheim, New York City / museum interior



Figure 4: Altes Museum, Berlin (Shinkel), 1830

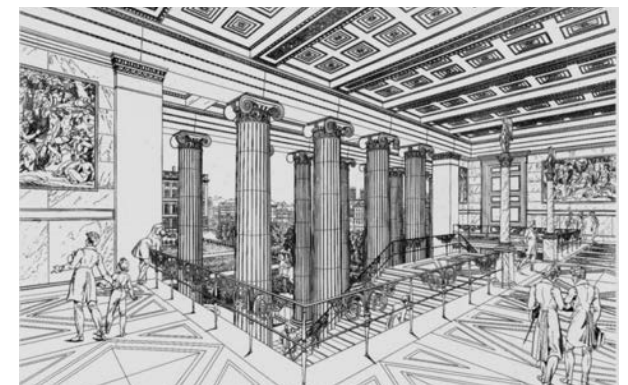


Figure 5: Altes Museum, Berlin (Shinkel), 1830

an artifact and, as Schinkle observes, “an object of innate beauty *and* an ornament to the city.”¹⁰ When Altes was built, “not surprisingly, palace architecture – grand, classical, urban, and horizontal – was a principal influence when the first museums were designed. But like most public buildings at the time, they were built in the classical style for other reasons as well, including classicism’s association with government and law (Roman basilicas), with the sacred (Greek temples and Italian Renaissance churches), and art of the past.”¹¹ Acting as a shrine to the object and resembling a temple of sorts, Altes incorporated many standard programmatic features such as courtyards, atriums, monumental stairs and natural lit galleries.

A century later the notion of the museum as a feature and icon, which was often located in an isolated place in the city, was transformed with the construction of the **Museum of Modern Art** in New York City built by Philip L. Goodwin and Edward Durrell Stone. The MoMA followed the belief that “a museum is best which is seen least, for it exists to display collections and it must not obtrude itself on them. It should focus attention on its contents by making itself least conspicuous.”¹² Built along traditional New York brownstones, the MoMA was integrated in the city. Blending in with the street, it was often mistaken for a domestic high-rise and became the antithesis of temple in the park but rather part of the urban fabric – becoming another layer of history in the city to be experienced by the public. The MoMA also utilized modern museum practices and “inaugurated the flexible white box.”¹³ The first in any major museum, the gallery floors of the MoMA were conceived to be completely adjustable, similar to those in a warehouse. Another level of flexibility was achieved through the museum’s simple interior that created a neutral background for the collection. This notion of flexibility and engagement with the public was realized to an even greater extent in Mies van der Rohe’s **New National Gallery** in Berlin a few decades later, stressing the concept of ‘universal space’ and the open floor plan. Built in 1968 and conceived of as an ‘urban’ museum, the National Gallery has an upper pavilion defined by transparent walls and a flexible interior space. Relatively speaking, this glass pavilion is a small portion of the whole building that acts as an architectural entry point and public gallery for larger art, while the building below the pavilion actually provides the built area and the functional spaces for galleries and support.

A true break with the traditional museum is seen in Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano’s **Centre Pompidou**, built in Paris in 1977. Chosen through a large, open competition held in 1968, the architect’s design turned its back on the traditional museum. Now a tourist attraction and embraced by the all, the building was at first controversial. The creation of the Pompidou represented the museum’s transformation in becoming a political and cultural instrument tied to the government. As art and politics joined forces, the Pompidou used art as a tool to communicate to the masses. Conceived of in 1968 in response to social unrest in Paris, the Pompidou was sponsored by the French government and represented the government’s commitment to the



Figure 6: Modern Museum of Art (MoMA), NYC, 1930s



Figure 7: New National Gallery, Berlin (Mies van der Rohe), 1968

people. Director Pontus Hulten first said, “We want to use the experience of the 60s – what one learned in those years [...] Being more open is the basic idea. Open at night in the sense that it’s not forbidding in any kind of way. Something not class oriented.”¹⁴ Upon completion, the Pompidou represented a new type of institution and became a symbol of a progressive and more open society. Packaged in a new type of architectural envelope and breaking the mold with its industrial aesthetic and all exposed structure, the museum embraced high and popular culture. Programmatically it displayed modern painting and sculpture and included a multimedia library, a performing arts space, a cinema, cafes, shops and views of the city. The Pompidou transformed the museum into a cultural center where viewing art became simply one of many activities for visitors to choose from and “its high-tech exterior embodied the concept of the ‘cultural factory,’ emphasizing processes of production and consumption rather than quiet contemplation. [It’s] carnivalesque elements responded to a desire to enliven the city and reconfigure it as a marketplace and spectacle.”¹⁵

THE CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM: *Spectacle, Event and Laboratory*

Beginning with the creation of the Pompidou, the contemporary architectural approaches to the museum have reshaped these typologies in an aim to increase the engagement with the public realm and the city from a social and visual stance. The classical notion of art staged in a white cube has become devalued overtime as performance and display have become the museum’s primary activities – at times having nothing to do with traditional, physical art itself. In order to survive in modern times, museums have realized the need to make art more accessible to the public. As a result, museums have developed new architectural, as well as economically and politically, related strategies to engage with the public.

Returning to back to the Bataille’s notion of appearance, the notion of the gaze and performance – seeing and being seen – is a theme that continues to transform contemporary museum design and played a significant role in Diller + Scofidio’s design for the **Institute of Contemporary Art** in Boston, completed in 2006. The architects, who have a preoccupation with the act of seeing, explained the building to be “an extension of the eyes. It is site specific.”¹⁶ Ricardo Scofidio remarked that, “the museum wanted to turn inward and site wanted to turn the building outward. The building had to have a double vision,”¹⁷ and thus the architects produced, as Elizabeth Diller explains, “a self-conscious object that ... wants to be looked at [and is] a machine for looking.”¹⁸ Architecturally, the building engages the context of the Boston Harbor and programmatically, the building functions as public from the ground up and intimate from the sky down. Read simply as a glass box placed on a staircase, the building is at its core an urban viewing platform that has been “designed as a series of public zones, with a museum and theater stacked atop a lobby and a stand of outdoor bleachers overlooking



Figure 8: Center Pompidou, Paris (Rogers & Piano), 1968-77



Figure 9: ICA, Boston (Diller + Scofidio), 2006

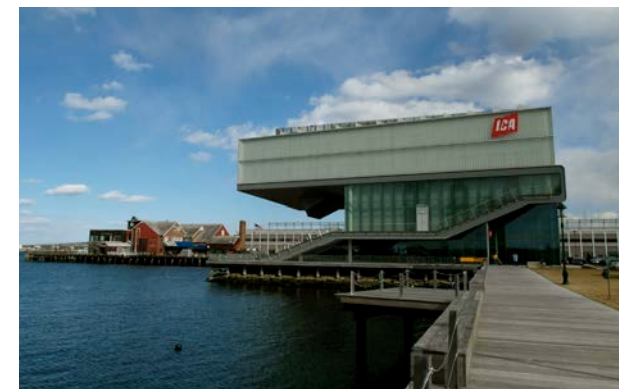


Figure 10: ICA and the Boston Harbour

the water.”¹⁹ Similar to Gilles Deleuze’s notion of “the fold,”²⁰ the HarborWalk acts like a pliable wrapper in the form of a continuous ribbon of wood that weaves inside and out, connecting and defining the building’s public and private spaces from the exterior to the interior and thus transforms the public into semi public space. The other defining element of the ICA is the iconic Mediatheque on the harbor front that is suspended below the cantilevered exhibition galleries. Along with being a social space, the media room is a “viewfinder”²¹ in which the water is framed and the landscape becomes the art. Acting like a billboard with the city as its audience, as people get closer to the window they become on display and part of the performance that is the ICA. The museum’s bleachers and the media room are architectural strategies that enable the art museum to be experienced, and the city reimaged, in a new way that is theatrical at its core.

As the architecture becomes a contemporary artifact, it is not necessarily the art but building itself that draws people back, forcing them to physically and visually engage its form and façade, and in doing so, engage with each other. This level of cultural engagement facilitated through art is most recently seen in SANAA’s **New Museum** in New York City. Completed in 2007, the New Museum is an urban infill project in the Bowery that is composed of as a series of shifting white boxes whose design creates the opportunity for roof terraces and long skylights along alternating edges, as well allows for a flexible program about which Ryue Nishizawa of SANAA says, “Wow – I can do anything here.”²² It is not a museum in the traditional sense, but rather “something between a gallery and an event space,” Kazuyo Sejima, the other partner of SANAA, explains. The project “renews [one’s] faith in New York as a place where culture is lived, not just bought and sold [and] succeeds on a spectacular range of levels: as a hypnotic urban object, as a subtle critique of the art world and as a refreshingly unpretentious place to view art”²³ The exterior of the New Museum is equally if not more important in the building’s civic relationship with the city than is its interior. The weightless aluminum screen acts like a blank canvas inviting experimentation and welcoming change, reflecting the New Museum’s mission of “new art, new ideas.” As part of the “Façade Sculpture Program,” artwork has been displayed on the façade, such as the iconic “Hell Yes” rainbow by Ugo Rondione, which was replaced this year by Isa Genzken’s “Rose II.” However, one of the more captivating transformations in terms of civic engagement took place in May 2011 during “The Festival of Ideas for the New City” in which, for one night only, the entire façade became a projection screen. As part of the “Flash:Light” event, the twenty-minute piece, entitled “Let us Make Cake,” was a collaborative effort in which “dozens of artists were asked to interact with scale models of the New Museum ranging in size from 11 inches to 11 feet, embracing the museum as both a canvas and vessel. The resulting footage [was] projection-mapped onto the New Museum, marking the first time projection has been used to animate the entire 174-foot façade and rendering the artist’s hand monumental on this downtown landmark.”²⁴ As the event’s creative director, Ryan Uzilevsky, explains, “Mainly this project is about radically



Figure 11: New Museum, NYC (SANAA), 2007



Figure 12: New Museum, outdoor viewing deck



Figure 13: New Museum, “Let Us Make Cake”, 2011

re-thinking the crystallization of urban architecture and considering how the human imagination could have a closer to real-time conversation with the monuments that surround us.”²⁵ Such an intervention that brings the public together reflects SANAA’s aim to, as Sejima says, “create a close relationship between the city and museum, to compensate for the disconnect between inside and outside.”²⁶

Another contemporary museum providing an experience of art and social engagement on a much more intimate level is the **Borros Collection** in Berlin-Mitte, Germany. Unlike the previous examples of public institutions, the Borros Collection is a private collection one not open to the masses, yet still represents the social and experiential transformation of the museum. In June 2008, Christian Borros opened his personal collection of contemporary art to the public in a bunker. The bunker, built in 1942, was converted into a museum exhibiting works which incorporate the bunker space itself, including “sculptures, room and light installations as well as performance works [which] create a new experience of the rooms in the bunker. Most of the works were installed and staged by the artists themselves. There was no curator. The artists sometimes altered or added to their works in order to overcome the sometimes difficult space, and some of the works were created especially for the bunker.”²⁷ The first permanent exhibition, which this book records, features work by lesser-known talents alongside famous figures such as Olafur Eliasson, Elmgreen & Dragset, Sarah Lucas, Tobias Rehberger, Anselm Reyle and Santiago Sierra. Along with the site specific art, the architecture itself is captivating in its own right, adding to the unique and intimate experience of the museum. The converted bunker initially had 120 rooms which were changed into 80 rooms and has room heights varying from 2.3 to 13 meters which were created after “many of the low intermediate floors were removed using diamond cutting technology – an extremely time consuming technique [...] The building’s monumental character has been preserved: all evidence of the war has been left on the outside and inside one can still see the different uses of the building.”²⁸ Lastly, the experience of the artwork is unique not only because of the existing conditions and restoration of the bunker itself, but also due to the way the tours are run. The private collection can only be viewed by prior appointment. Tours last 1.5 hours and are given for a max of twelve people. Guests are given complimentary coffee before starting the tour too – just one more detail adding this intimate viewing of art.

In rethinking art’s relationship to the public and the accessibility and temporality of the museum, two recent ventures by museums stand out. First, a unique joining of art, architecture and public space takes place in the large open triangular entrance courtyard and outdoor sculpture area in front of the **MoMA/PS1** in Queens, New York which is transformed with architectural installations each summer as part of the **Young Architects Program**. Established in 2000, the Program is an annual series of competitions that gives emerging architects the opportunity to design and build projects that engage the public through design as well as invites an element



Figure 14: Borros Collection, Berlin, 2008, Olafur Eliasson

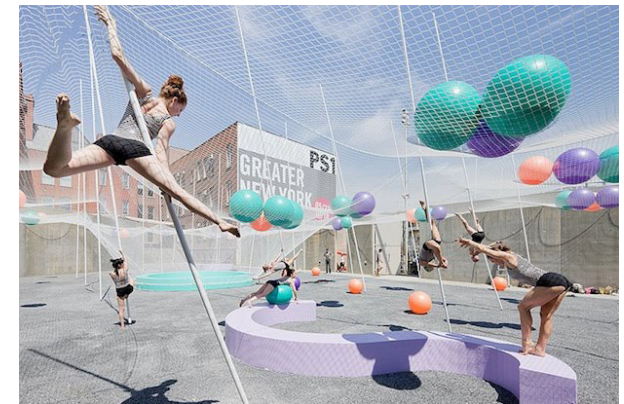


Figure 15: MoMA PS1, Young Architects Program, “Pole Dancing”



Figure 16: MoMA PS1, Warm Up, summer 2012

of play between architecture, art and the public, encouraging social mixing. These installations represent an “architecture which is not this or that, black or white, but a field of interrelated, constantly shifting, and morphing elements that together create a complex order.”²⁹ Along with giving new architects a place to experiment with materials and concepts as they relate to architecture and art, the objective of the Young Architect Program is to “provide visitors and the public with an outdoor recreational area for the summer—a much-needed refuge in an urban environment—making the best use of the pre-existing space and available materials. The architects follow a program with a tight budget, and are involved in every aspect of the design, development, and construction of the project. The site is an integral part of the museum’s popular music concert series, *Warm Up*, which features experimental music, live bands, and DJs.”³⁰

Also in conjunction with another New York City museum is the **Guggenheim’s BMW Lab Series**, a mobile laboratory that was initially setup in NYC last summer and then traveled to Berlin and Mumbai as Cycle 1, part of a six-year migration that consists of three distinct mobile structures and thematic cycles in nine cities. The design is intended to be easily adaptable to new environments. Although associated with the Guggenheim, the building is not iconic, but rather has a friendly neighborhood presence and even feels like an urban living room at times. Designed by Atelier Bow-Wow, the temporary structure has no walls and temporarily frames the urban space. On the streets of NYC, the structure was setup on once deserted open spaces in an effort to both change the space and attract attention by encouraging public interaction. In an aim to deal with the local issues of the city, the Lab Series takes the museum out into the streets. Led by international, interdisciplinary teams of emerging talents, the Lab is open to the public who is invited to attend free programs that address “issues of contemporary urban life through programs and public discourse” with goals that include “new ideas, experimentation, and ultimately the creation of forward-thinking solutions for urban life.”³¹ A crossover between an urban think-tank, a community center and an events space, the Lab is a hybrid that engages public discourse and creates a new type of urban space – a space which people feel ownership over and where they can learn from each other. Interestingly, however, the Lab did engage the public in ways it did not originally expect, creating some controversy in Germany. When the Lab travelled from New York City to Berlin, it first set up in Kreuzberg, an edgy part of town where some locals resisted because they “suspected creeping gentrification and condemned it as ‘some scrappy capitalist luxury project’ and even threatened violence.”³² Given such reactions, BMW found a more agreeable venue for the Lab and placed it in the already gentrified Prenzlauer Berg, at Pfefferberg, which is a former brewery complex housing cafés and galleries. However, after many found their way to the new site, they realized how unthreatening the project is, offering workshops, panel debates, films and city tours that are aimed at improving urban life generally and in Berlin in particular. This new form of ‘museum’ thus undoubtedly brought people together to debate, discuss, learn and interact.



Figure 17: Before: Guggenheim BMW Lab Series Lot, NYC



Figure 18: Guggenheim BMW Lab Series, NYC, 2011



Figure 19: Workshop: Guggenheim BMW Lab Series, NYC, 2011

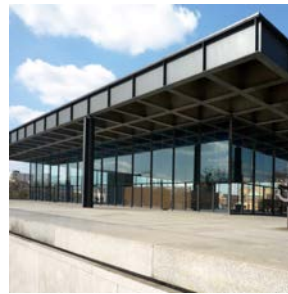
The Museum Typology Transformed: Nineteenth Century to Present ...



"Shrine to the Object"



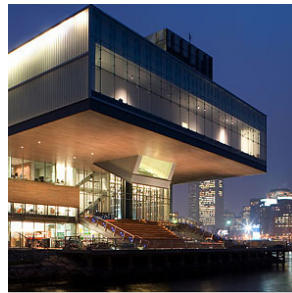
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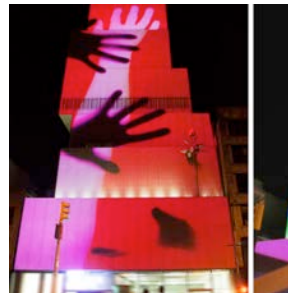
"Open Floor Plan"



"Marketplace"



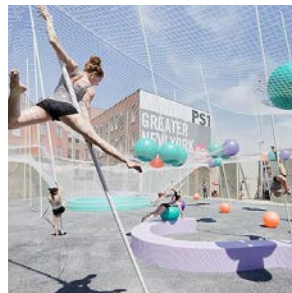
"Theatrical"



"Sculpture"



"Personal Experience"



"Event"



"Laboratory"

*... but what about the **object** and the **collection**?*

A CRITIQUE: *Loss of the Object and the Collection*

As significant as these physical, visual and social transformations of the art museum have been over the past centuries, this research concluded in a critique of the art museum as it is today. While undergoing such changes, the importance and prominence of the 'object' and the 'collection' in the art museum have arguably been lost as the museum has transitioned from an inwardly focused container of art to a sort of social condenser that aims to hybridize art, architecture and the city. This thesis thus argues for a return to the past and revisits the concept of the object and the collection. Beginning with Shinkel's Altes Museum in the mid-nineteenth century, the museum was a sort of temple and "shrine to the object," however, this attention to art as an object to be seen, and even worshiped with regard to the shrine, has seemingly been lost as the museum has transitioned into a venue for events and social functions. Given the argument that the museum's collection has lost its prominence with such a transformation, this thesis questions what a new typology of the art museum could be that reconciles this loss of the importance placed on the object and the collection while still maintaining the current trends and transformations of the art museum.

THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION: *A New Trend of Visible Storage*

Upon critiquing the current art museum typology with regard to the concepts of the 'object' and the 'collection,' the museum's 'storage' becomes a topic of significance. Viewable to the public, museums often showcase temporary exhibitions and works (traveling or on-loan), as well as have a portion of their permanent collection on display. The various objects (ranging in content, scale, medium and age) that make up the collection are what give a museum its character, substance and its livelihood. However, much of the museum's permanent collection is not seen by the public at any one time as anywhere from eighty-percent to ninety-percent of the collection is often secluded away in on-site and/or off-site storage facilities. In these storage facilities the objects are stored in various ways that aim to save space and feel like a library's stacks or a walk-in closet. Thus, much of a museum's collection is underutilized as its objects are stored and not visibly accessible to the public.

Given this dilemma of the 'underutilized collection,' there has been a new trend in museum display referred to as 'visible storage,' in which "museums are facing pressure to take artworks and collectibles out of warehouses and to put them before the public."³³ This is not a completely new trend however. Beginning in the 1970s, University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology displayed its collection in a way that democratized museum shows. In particular in the past decades this "idea of letting the public roam freely through what a library would call open stacks, and what some museums have called open study centers"³⁴ has continued in museums on a variety of scales. In New York City in the late 1980s, the MET opened the Luce Study Center for American Art that displays nearly over 18,000 objects that would have otherwise been inaccessible to the public.

Recently in 2011, a handful of museums have integrated visible storage into their program. The addition to the Cranbrook Art Museum placed the museum's vast archive on display behind a glass wall, while the new Clyfford Still Museum by Allied Works included a storage room with a number of Still's painting on sliding storage racks accessible to museum visitors. Interestingly Herzog & de Meuron just completed a new building in Switzerland called Schaulager which acts a warehouse for contemporary art, in which art is stored but still publicly accessible to view. Schaulager was created around the concept that works would "take up considerably less space than in a museum because they are hung side by side on the walls and placed closer together on the floor. The works stored here are unpacked and arranged in accessible spaces, installed according to the artists' intentions."³⁵

On this topic, the director of the Brooklyn Museum, Arnold Lehman, argues that the concept of visible storage "speaks to making a public institution more public. What is in storage has always been one of those multiple secrets that museums keep. This will give people an idea of what storage looks like and what is in there."³⁶



Figure 20: The Collection (Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia)



Figure 21: The Storage (Portland Art Museum, Oregon)



Figure 22: Museum's off site storage facilities (MoMA, Queens, NY)



Figure 23: Museum of Anthropology, UBC, 1970s



Figure 24: Luce Study Center American Art, Met, NY, 1988



Figure 25: Luce Foundation, Smithsonian, DC, 2004



Figure 26: Clyfford Still Museum, Denver; Allied Works, 2011



Figure 27: Cranbrook Art Museum Addition, Michigan, 2011



Figure 28: Schaulager, Switzerland, Herzog & de Meuron, 2011

A NEW MUSEUM TYPOLOGY: *Exhibit, Event and Storage*

Given the transformation of the art museum and this current trend of ‘visible storage’ in reaction to the museum’s underutilized collections, the relationship between art and the public is continually being reshaped in contemporary culture by its context and modes of display. Over time art has become increasingly more accessible through the use of public exhibition and installations, thus challenging the very notion of the museum as the institution where art is to viewed. However, a ‘museum without walls’ would inevitably fail and, thus, the institution of the physical museum must remain. Therefore, there is a need for a new museum typology that takes into account the transformation and expansion of the art museum with regard to its overall collection.

This thesis argues for a ‘new museum typology’ that combines exhibit, event and storage and is part ‘shrine to the object,’ part ‘social condenser,’ and part ‘art storage’. Such a typology will integrate new forms of display into the public realm by offering a more informal manner of experiencing art which encourages engagement and social interaction over simple contemplation, enhancing the connection between the art and its audience. At its core, this new type of art museum will aim to increase public accessibility to underutilized collections of art currently housed in multiple institutions and address the evolving three-way relationship between the public, art and architecture on numerous scales by blurring the edges between storage, exhibition and event.

Figure 29: A New Museum Typology



THE WAREHOUSE TYPOLOGY: *An Architectural Solution for a New Museum Typology*

This proposed new museum typology combining exhibit, event and storage, calls for a specific type of architecture that can function under a variety of circumstances and spatially allows for flexibility and change. Given these desired qualities, the ‘warehouse’ typology is arguably a good solution for this new museum typology, for it is by definition a big, open and flexible space.

The form of the warehouse by its nature is a large, plain and simple one (a rectangle or box) that allows for movement and takes the emphasis off what happens on the outside, and rather places it on the functions and activities inside. The warehouse typology further makes sense given its historical roots as a building for light industry and the storage of goods, as well as its new found role in contemporary culture as a space to be converted into a venue for arts and events once industry has left its premise.

This thesis works within the context of Portland, Oregon’s North Park Blocks and responds to the city’s flourishing art culture and creative industry side. Furthermore, Portland’s relatively new and redeveloped Pearl District is an area full of reclaimed warehouses that has become known as the ‘new cultural/arts district,’ making Northwest Portland a great place to test this new art museum/warehouse typology.

Figure 30: The Warehouse Typology + Portland, Oregon



CHAPTER TWO

ALTERNATIVE PORTLAND: *Portland's Emerging Art and Cultural Scene*

This thesis takes place in Portland, Oregon and works within the context of the city's North Park Blocks. The city's flourishing, and a bit alternative, art culture makes it a great place to test this proposed new museum typology. To appreciate Portland's emerging art scene, it is necessary to understand its unique culture that makes it one of the most livable cities in the country. The city is spread out across the twin banks of the Willamette River and has more than its share of natural Pacific Northwest beauty and a modest outdoor reputation, however, "in recent years, the city has emerged as the capitol of West Coast urban cool."³⁷

There is a popular bumper sticker that says "Keep Portland Weird" which has at times become the motto of the city. What makes this city so "weird" after all? It is a combination of the people, places, events and things that all give Portland its unique, alternative character. A few of these items include: the hit IFC show "Portlandia" where the phrase "put a bird on it" was coined; the numerous food carts on every block; the naked bike ride in June; VooDoo Doughnut's bacon maple donut; Powelle's City of Books which is the largest in the country of new and used books; its celebrated bike culture; home of such companies as Nike, Stumptown coffee, and the advertising firm Wieden+Kennedy as well as a number of new start-up industries; its nearly forty micro-breweries; and its many bridges that cross the Willamette River nicknaming it "Bridgetown." These are just a few of the a number of other defining characteristics that make Portland the unique city it is.

THE NEXT ART CAPITAL: *Portland's 'Alternative Spaces'*

Over the past decade Portland's art and cultural scene has been growing faster than ever. Celebrating "all things independent and artisan," many artists have been coming to Portland making it a "small-scale metropolis with an oversize cultural footprint."¹ In fact, just this past spring, the *Wall Street Journal* has named Portland the nation's "Next Art Capital." In this article entitled, "Our Next Art Capital: Portland?" Peter Plagens explains how it is Portland's "alternative spaces" that give it such a title and reputation: "The residual roughness and collective spirit is reflected in Portland's ever-growing art scene [are] characterized by a plethora of "alternative spaces." Just what is an alternative space? Philosophically, they're less about art's being - art objects displayed



Figure 31: 'Keep Portland Weird'



Figure 32: Wieden+Kennedy Advertising



Figure 33: IFC's 'Portlandia' TV Show



Figure 34: Portland's Food Trucks

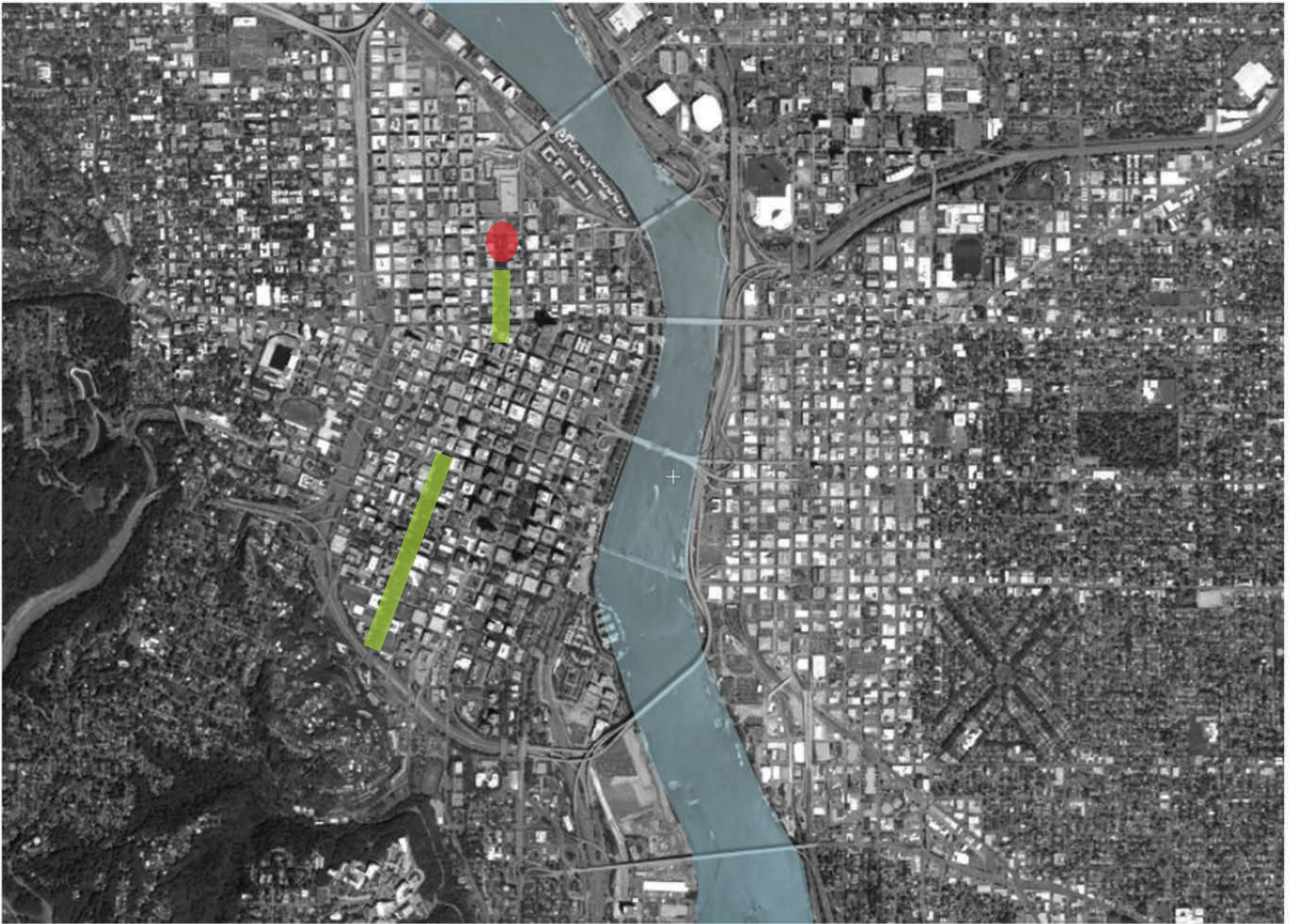


Figure 35: Site Specific: The City and The Park Blocks, Portland

and for sale—than they are about artists becoming—creating circumstances free from market pressures and the need to hobnob with the rich (who are, after all, the only people able to buy even modestly priced art with any regularity).”³⁸ An example of such alternative spaces includes an art exhibition on a 200-ton, 135-foot decommissioned crabbing ship named 12128. Docked outside the Multnomah Yacht Repair, the former crabber has a 30-square-foot on-deck exhibition space with a translucent cloth acting as its roof. Embracing this idea of alternative independence, curators of this space strive to cultivate “their own audience under their own terms and to shake up the foundations.”³⁹

THE EVENT: *Walks and Festivals*

There exist two art walks twice a month that continually bring life to Portland’s art culture. Around the site, the Pearl District hosts ‘First Thursdays in the Pearl’ in which galleries stay open after hours and host free exhibit openings for the public. During the summer months, First Thursdays are in full force as local artists take over the streets, selling artwork and playing live music for all to enjoy. First Thursdays in the summer are without a doubt quite the event, taking over a large portion of the Pearl District. On the other side of the river in Northeast Portland are Last Thursdays on Alberta. Also more popular in the summer months, the entire street of NE Alberta is shut down and local artists, performers (musical, theatrical and more) and vendors (ranging from photo booths to cotton candy machines) flood the street creating what seems to be one giant party. Although there are significantly less galleries, this art walk has quite the following and is a bit more alternative and edgy than First Thursday in the Pearl.

Along with the monthly walks, Portland also is home to a few larger art festivals, once of which is Portland Institute for Contemporary Art’s (PICA) Time Based Art (TBA) festival held each September. Inspired by European and Australian-modeled festivals, TBA is a multidisciplinary platform that provides opportunities for the creation and presentation of new work from emerging and master artists from around the world. Dedicated to art being made today, TBA’s program includes theater, dance, media, music and multidisciplinary works. Over a ten-day period every September, there is an interdisciplinary showing of nearly sixty works. Spread out over theaters and repurposed spaces, with schedules usually running past midnight, there are dozens of performances, talks, workshops, films and more. Since being founded in 2003, TBA has grown from an audience of 7,500 to 23,500 in 2010, making it Portland’s largest cultural art event and a growing success nationally and internationally. Festival curator Cathy Edwards argues that TBA “still is the only truly significant contemporary interdisciplinary festival in the United States. This immense experience of visual art, instillation, stage work, late-night programming - and embedded in it the opportunity to talk with artists, audiences and presenters - I don’t think there’s anything like this that does it so well, and also has its core value contemporary practice.”⁴⁰



Figure 36: 12128, decommissioned crabbing ship



Figure 37: First Thursday Art Walk, summertime in the Pearl District



Figure 38: First Thursday art opening, Blue Sky, Pearl District, 2009

PORTLAND ART: *Museums and Institutions*

Art Institute of Portland (AiPD): Located in Portland's Pearl District, the college offers programs ranging from in advertising, apparel accessory design, design management, to digital film, graphic design and media arts among others. In 2009, a culinary arts program was added. The school participates in Portland's Fashion Week and produces its own show during graduation week each year.

Museum of Contemporary Craft (MoCC): "Founded in 1937, Museum of Contemporary Craft in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art is a vibrant center for investigation and dialogue that helps expand the definition and exploration of craft. Through dynamic exhibitions and provocative public programming, supported by the Museum's collection and archives, the Museum advances the conversation on the role of craft and design in contemporary culture while at the same time honoring the history of the studio craft movement."⁴¹

Portland Art Museum: Located in downtown Portland along the South Park Blocks, the Portland Art Museum was founded in 1892 and is the seventh oldest museum in the United States and the oldest in the Pacific Northwest. The Museum has a collection of more than 42,000 objects that are displayed in 112,000 square feet of galleries. The Portland Art Museum devotes ninety-percent of its gallery space to its permanent collection. Also associated with the Museum are the Jubitz Center for Modern and Contemporary Art, the Gilkey Center for Graphic Arts, and the Northwest Film Center.

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA): "PICA acknowledges and advances new developments in contemporary art while fostering the creative explorations of artists and audiences. Established in 1995 by a committed group of artists and patrons, PICA features emerging and established regional, national, and international artists in all disciplines, and supports the creation of new work."⁴²

Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA): Founded in 1909, PNCA has become a leader of art education in the Pacific Northwest, focusing primarily on the visual arts and design. PNCA describes itself as "one of America's most innovative and fastest growing centers of arts education. At PNCA, leading-edge work emerges from studio process, a commitment to craft, and the practice of design and fine art thinking and making."⁴³

Yale Union: "A center for contemporary art in Southeast Portland, Oregon. It is led by a desire to support emerging and under-acknowledged contemporary artists, propose new modes of production, and stimulate the ongoing public discourse around art."⁴⁴



Figure 39: Portland Art Museum, South Park Blocks

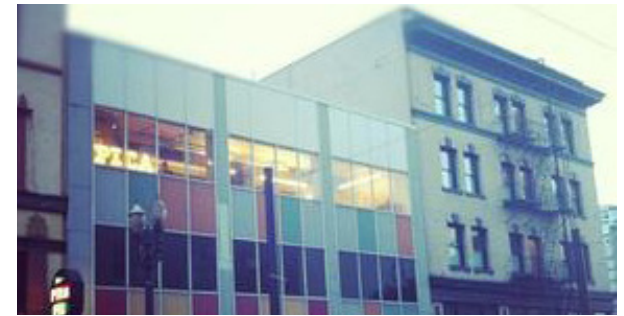


Figure 40: PICA, downtown

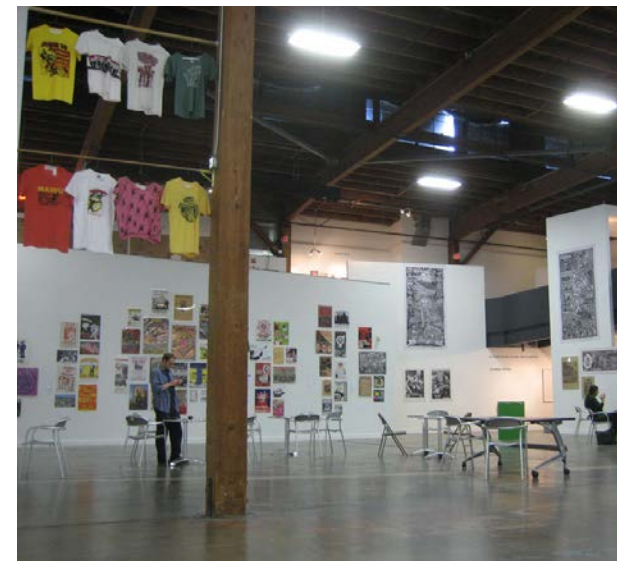


Figure 41: PNCA, Pearl District

NEW ARTS DISTRICT: *Northwest Portland*

While the Portland Art Museum and other institutions still exist around the South Park Blocks, the art scene has recently moved towards the North Park Blocks. Due to the redevelopment of the Pearl District from an industrial sector to an area of reclaimed warehouse and fashionable condos, galleries and shops, the area around the thesis site has become a prime location for the arts culture to settle into. There exists a strong gallery culture in the Pearl District with a concentration of galleries around the North Park Blocks in particular – nearly a dozen within a few blocks of the site. There are a range of galleries, including the Elizabeth Leach Gallery most closely resembling a serious New York gallery, to the off the beat, funky Blackfish Gallery that always shows a range of work from different artists, including art students. Adding to the strong art scene around the site are the mixture of smaller art institutions with larger ones, such as the Museum of Contemporary Craft (on the North Park Blocks), the Art Institute of Portland, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art and the soon-to-be expanding Pacific Northwest College of Art. The nationally recognized advertising agency, Wieden+Kennedy also resides in the Pearl District and is very involved in the surrounding arts community. Together with the now well-established and recurring events such as the First Thursday art walks and numerous summer festivals, a strong art scene has developed around the North Park Blocks, making the area the “new cultural/arts district” in Portland. The transition of Portland’s cultural landscape from the South to the North will only be strengthened by PNCA’s upcoming move into and redevelopment of the historic 511 Federal Building.



Figure 42: Northwest Portland, Portland’s News Cultural Arts District



Figure 43: Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Pearl District



Figure 44: First Thursday art opening, Wieden + Kennedy, 2012



Figure 45: Proposed 511-PNCA Renovation Rendering (Allied Works)



Figure 46: Portland Art Museums + Galleries / SW + NW Portland

CHAPTER THREE

SITE SPECIFIC: A 'Stage' at the End of the Park Blocks

The specific site of this thesis is located on the end of the North Park Blocks in Northwest Portland, Oregon. Given its location, the site acts as a sort of 'stage' at the end of the Park Blocks, creating an opportunity for something special to be designed there - a 'new museum typology' where the arts and public life come together.

Currently the site is a level parking lot between NW Glisan Street & NW Hoyt Street and NW 8th Avenue & NW Park Avenue. In relation to the site, the five North Park Blocks are directly to the south, the 511 Federal Building to the east, the US Post Office to the north, and an older mixed-use warehouse to the west. The site acts as a border between the redeveloped Pearl District to the south and Old Town to the north.

Along with the redevelopment of the Pearl District, this area is going to continue to undergo drastic changes due to the Pacific Northwest College of Art's (PNCA) plan to move into and redevelop the historic 511 Federal Building. Adjacent to this landmark building, which sits at the end of the North Park Blocks, is the chosen thesis site: a parking lot that has been significantly underutilized, yet has great potential given its location and proximity to this burgeoning art scene. In light of recent and future developments, this area around the North Park Blocks is ripe to be revitalized.

This thesis proposes an intervention in the parking lot currently adjacent to the soon to be renovated 511 Federal Building, the future site of the joint venture between PNCA and the City of Portland, that aims to create a relationship between the underutilized North Park Blocks and the 511 Federal Building in its transformed state. On this site a new museum typology will integrate the park blocks, architecture (existing and new) and art as it both ties together and expands the cultural district within the Portland's revitalized core.

Figure 47: The Site at Different Scales



South and North Park Blocks



North Park Blocks



Site Specific: "The Stage"

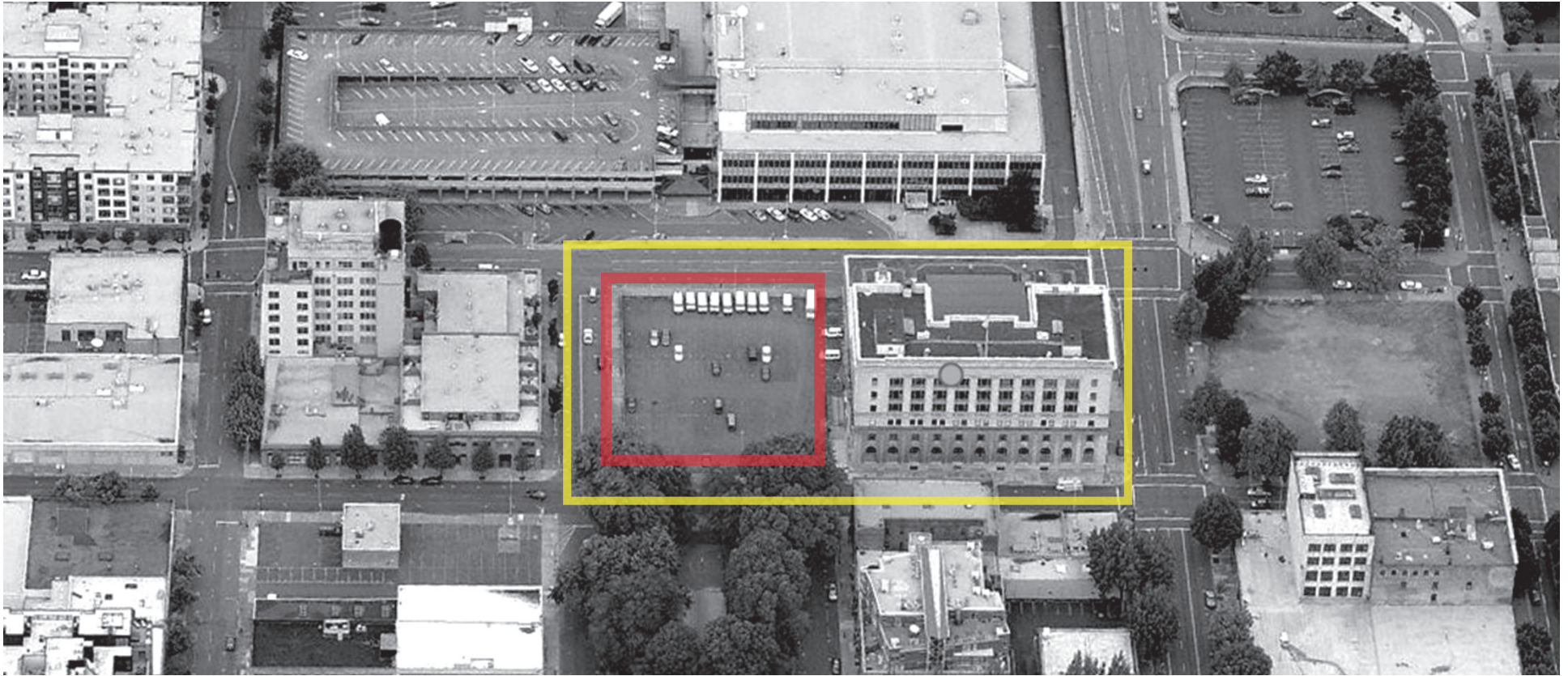
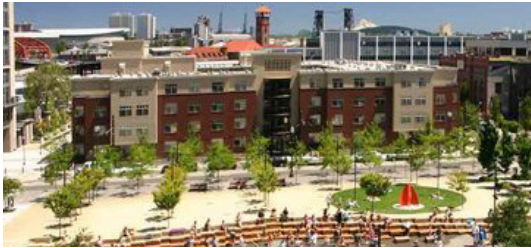


Figure 48: The Site



Figure 49: Existing Site Panorama

Figure 50: Existing Site Context



Parks



US Post Office



Broadway Bridge



The Pearl District / Condos



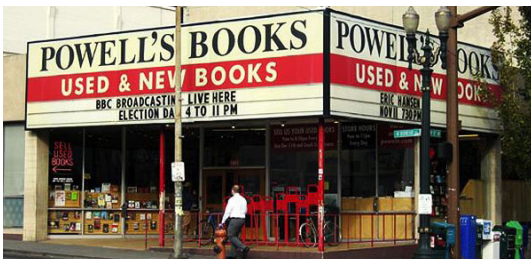
"Go By Train" / Train Station



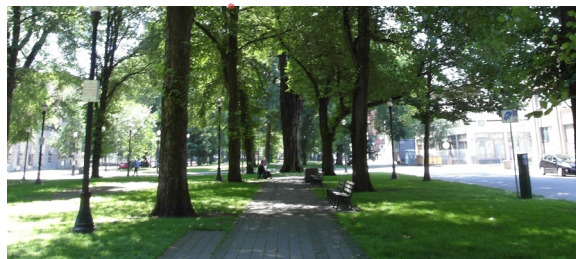
The Pearl District / Warehouses + Industry



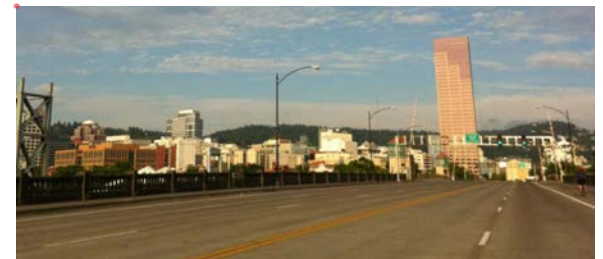
Old Town / Chinatown



Powell's Books

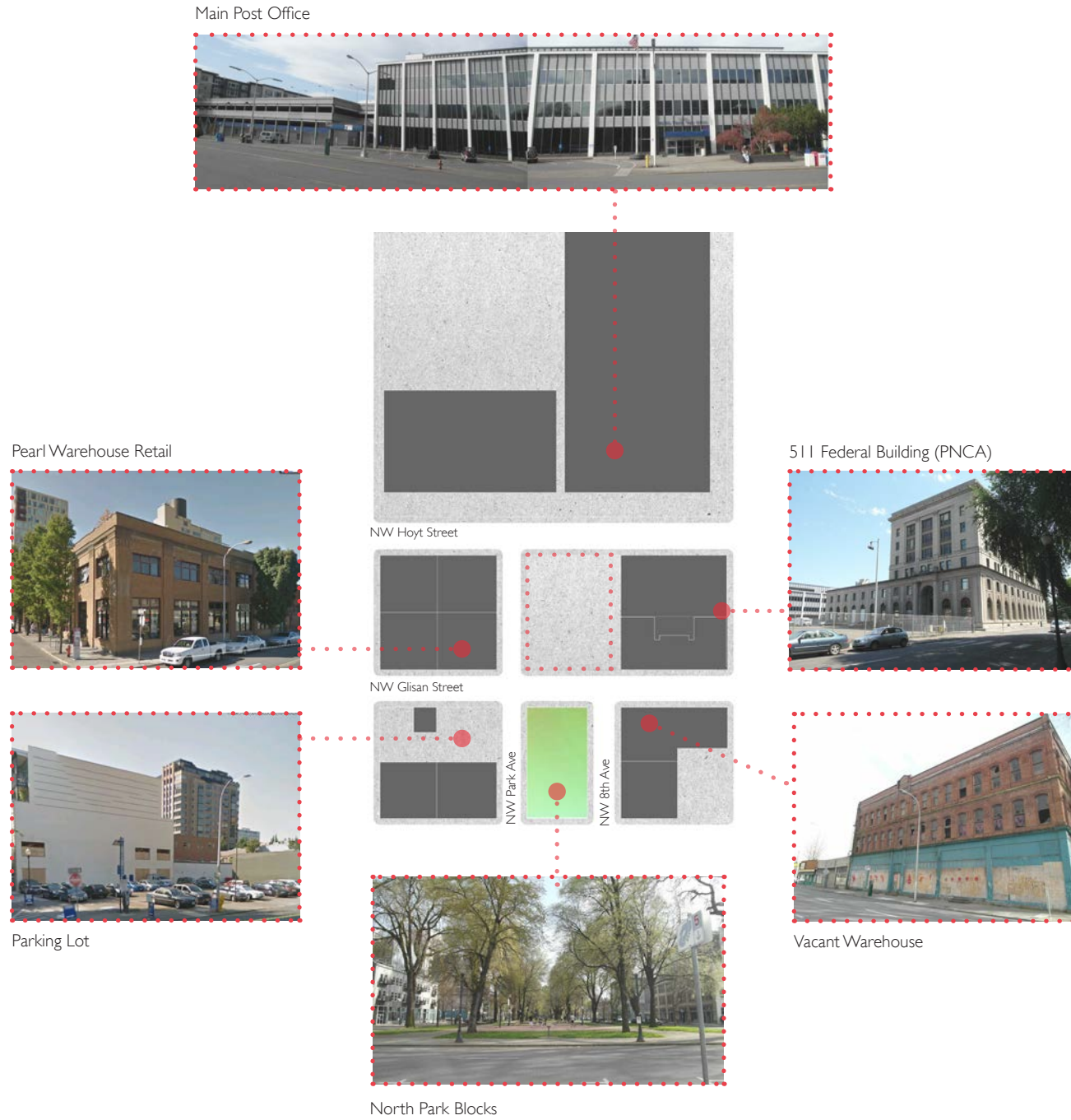


North Park Blocks



Burnside Bridge

Figure 51: Existing Surrounding Buildings to the Site



PNCA EXPANSION: *The 511 Federal Building*

To imagine how the character of the North Park Blocks will change with the expansion of PNCA into the 511 Federal Building, it is necessary to understand PNCA's mission and roots in Portland's Northwest. Founded in 1909, PNCA has become a leader of art education in the Pacific Northwest, focusing primarily on the visual arts and design. The College currently enrolls over 600 students in fifteen undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as an additional 1,500 students each year through its continuing education programs. PNCA is very involved in the cultural life of Portland with its many rotating exhibitions and public lecture series of internationally recognized visiting artists, designers and creative thinkers.

To the east of the site is Portland's historic 511 Federal Building. Formerly the main federal post office, the building is currently home to the Department of Homeland Security offices for US Immigration and Customs Services and Enforcement. Designed by Lewis P. Hobart in 1919, the building is six stories tall with a footprint of nearly 20,000 square feet. In 1979 the building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The General Services Administration began to work on the disposal beginning in 2005, deciding whether to give the space to either the Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) or the Portland Public Market. In 2008 it was announced by the federal government that it would turn the building over, free of charge, to PNCA. Currently occupying a warehouse building and a handful of other spaces in the Pearl District five blocks south on NW Johnson Street, this expansion of PNCA to the North Park Blocks signifies significant changes for both the 511 Federal Building and its surrounding areas, creating an urban campus anchored in the North Park Blocks. The renovated 511 building will be the home of PNCA's new MFA program.

The most recently proposed plan includes a \$30 million renovation by Allied Works Architecture that aims to lightly contrast the old and new. The renovation is expected to transform the onetime mail sorting room into an atrium in which students and staff can gather, as well as add new classrooms, artist spaces, a 350-seat theater and gallery space. The school plans to finish the project during the 2014-2015 school year.

Specific to Portland, this thesis aims to create a relationship between the currently underutilized North Park Blocks and the 511 Federal Building in its transformed state by designing a space that integrates the park blocks, architecture (existing and new) and art by expanding the cultural district within Portland's revitalized core.

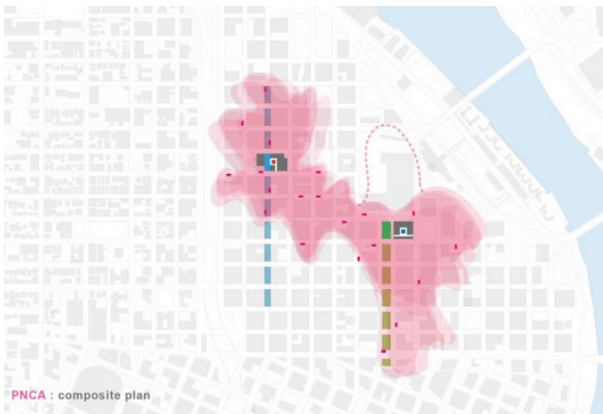
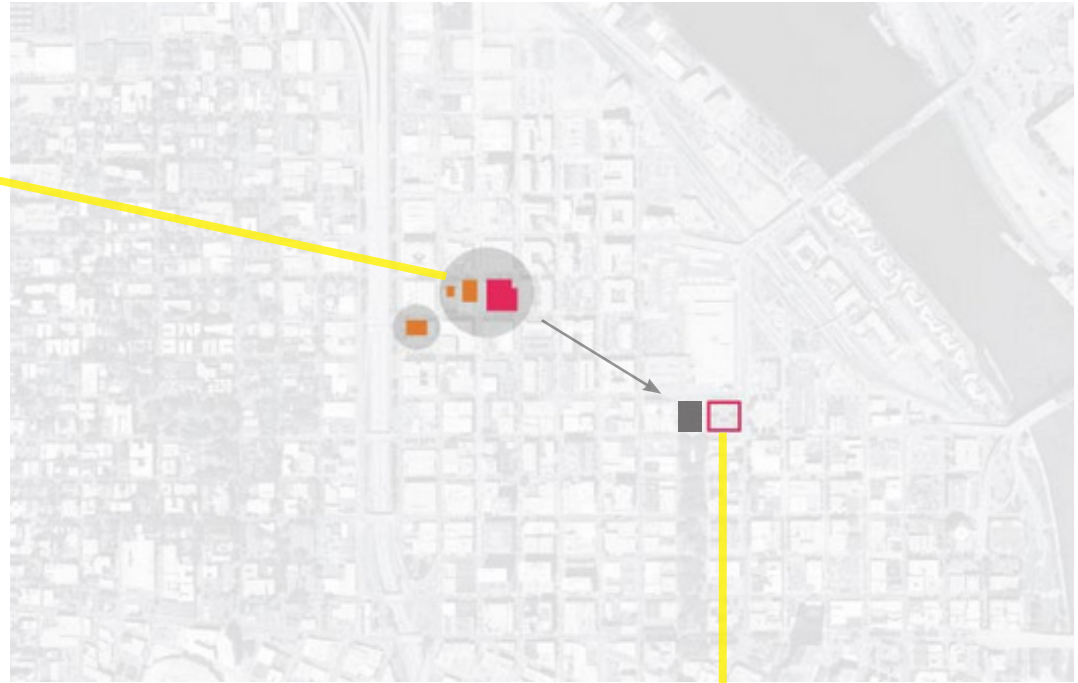


Figure 52: The North Park Blocks + City Blocks

Figure 53: Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) Expansion



Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) / Existing Building



Allied Work's PNCA Composite Plan



Existing 511 Federal Building



Allied Work's Proposed Renovation (PNCA Expansion)

CHAPTER FOUR

CROSS-CURATION: *A Concept for Art Storage, Exhibit and Event*

Currently the Portland Art Museum (PAM) acts as a sort of anchor for the arts at the end of the South Park Blocks. While there are a number of other art institutions in the Northwest - including PNCA, PICA and Museum of Contemporary Craft - no such anchor currently exists at the end of the North Park Blocks where there is unarguably a need for one. Thus, given this shift of the Arts District from the South to North Park Blocks over the past decade, formation of the Pearl District and PNCA's upcoming redevelopment of the historic 511 Federal Building, the selected site ('stage') at the end of the North Park Blocks offers an opportunity to create a place for 'cross-curation' between art institutions and galleries, connecting the Park Blocks.

This term 'cross-curation' refers to a dialogue between the existing art institutions, industries and galleries and proposes a new type of art museum that aims to increase public accessibility to underutilized collections of art currently housed in multiple institutions by revealing these works through modes of visible storage and public (curated) display. Cross-curation aims to address the evolving three-way relationship between the public, art and architecture on numerous scales by blurring the edges between storage, exhibition and event.





Figure 54: Cross-Curation: Connecting the Park Blocks

PORTLAND ART MUSEUM: *An Opportunity for Expansion*

Working with the idea of connecting the North and South Park Blocks through the means of cross-curation, and thus increasing public accessibility to underutilized collections, the Portland Art Museum is a perfect candidate for expansion given its large collection and increasing art storage issues. Founded in 1892, the PAM is the seventh oldest museum in the United States and the oldest in the Pacific Northwest. With time PAM has acquired a permanent collection of over 50,000 objects that includes over 30,000 photos and prints and 20,000 painting and sculptures. The Museum devotes about 90% of its gallery space to its permanent collection.

What isn't revealed by these statistics, however, is that of these 50,000 items in the PAM's permanent collection, only 10% (5,000 objects) are only on display at a given time. This means that that 90% of the permanent collection (45,000 objects) is in storage at a given time and not publicly accessible. Furthermore, the collection is continually growing as PAM receives about 2,000 new acquisitions a year. This is a large inventory to store and leads to the question: how and where is Portland Art Museum's growing collection to be stored?

Currently part of the permanent collection is stored on-location at the PAM in the basement, as well as in an off-site, 10,000 square-foot storage facility about ten-miles outside the city in Beaverton, Oregon. In a visit in October 2012 to the on-site storage facility, it was noted how cramped the space was, overflowing with old objects and newer acquisitions. The storage system is quite interesting and similar to other museums. Paintings are stored on large sliding metal racks, stacked vertically next to one another. To access a painting, the racks are pushed to the side, but for the most part the contents are rarely seen. Prints and photographs are stored in large metal vaults or drawers and hardly ever see the light of day. Lastly, sculptures and other three-dimensional objects are stored on shelves in the back or wherever there is leftover floor space. While the system is space saving, there is still not enough room for the continually growing collection. In an interview in October 2012, Heather Bouchey, PAM's Collections Manager, remarked: "There's no room to expand ... we need more space!"

With the overflowing state of the PAM's storage facilities, coupled with the fact that 90% of the Museum's collection is in storage and inaccessible to the public, this thesis proposes an expansion of the Portland Art Museum from its current South Park Block location to the thesis site at the end of the North Park Blocks. Such an expansion would both connect the Park Blocks and give a new life to PAM's permanent collection by increasing public accessibility to these underutilized works of art by revealing them through modes of visible storage and cross-curation with objects from other galleries and institutions along Portland's Park Blocks.



Figure 55: Proposed Expansion of PAM



Figure 56: Portland Art Museum (existing)

Figure 57: Portland Art Museum's Current Storage Facilities (2012)



CONCEPT: *Art Consolidation and Storage*

Given the proposed ‘new museum typology’ combining exhibition, event and storage, and the specific site at the end of the North Park Blocks, the question remains: how and what to design on this site? In an effort to increase public accessibility to underutilized collections of art currently housed in multiple institutions, this thesis proposes to consolidate art in storage from the PAM’s permanent collection with works from other Portland art institutions and galleries and store them together in a single location. Along with other display strategies, these works will be revealed to the public through modes of visible storage and cross-curation.

With respect to the site and the existing 511 Federal Building, this thesis proposes to store the consolidated works of art from the city in the backside of 511. The back portion of 511 is currently less than half the height of the front portion and there is conveniently a loading dock in the back as well. The existing architectural condition of 511 lends itself to being built-upon in the back with an infill of art storage. Such an architectural intervention would leave the front half (all six floors) to be used by PNCA in their expansion, while creating a dialogue between PNCA and the other art institutions in Portland.

Strategically housing all of the city’s consolidated art in visible storage in the back portion of 511 will create the feeling of a walk-in closet: a room full of art of various styles, mediums and scales waiting to be cross-curated. By proposing that the bulk of art is stored in the backside of 511, the site itself (currently the vacant lot adjacent to 511) can be designed in a flexible way that addresses the evolving three-way relationship between the public, art and architecture on numerous scales by blurring the edges between storage, exhibition and event.

Figure 58: New Museum Typology + Site



Figure 59: A Concept of Art Consolidation + Storage in Portland



CONCEPT: Pairing Art and Industry in the City

Storing art in the back portion of the 511 Federal Building takes care of the ‘storage’ component, leaving the ‘exhibit’ and the ‘event’ to be developed in this ‘new museum typology.’ For inspiration, this thesis turns to Portland’s alternative creative culture and proposes that art is paired with various industries unique to the city to create both an exhibit and event. Conceptually, art from the various institutions can be cross-curated along side different industries specific to Portland, including retail, food and creative start-ups. This pairing of industry and art aims to create a new type of relationship between art and the public by simultaneously creating an event. The concept of art being placed in new contexts (cafes, coffee shops, apartments, storefronts) is another strategy as well. In both conceptual examples, art is taken out of the realm of the traditional museum and placed into new contexts. This conceptual strategy changes the public’s experience of art by creating an event that aims to engage art, industry and the city. Included here are conceptual collages using art from various Portland institutions and images of industries specific to Portland.

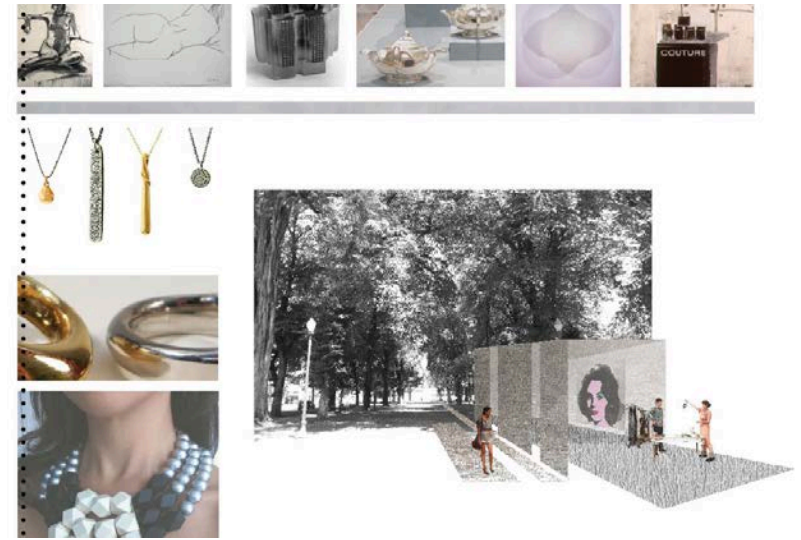


Figure 60: RETAIL, concept collage



Figure 61: CREATIVE START-UPS, concept collage

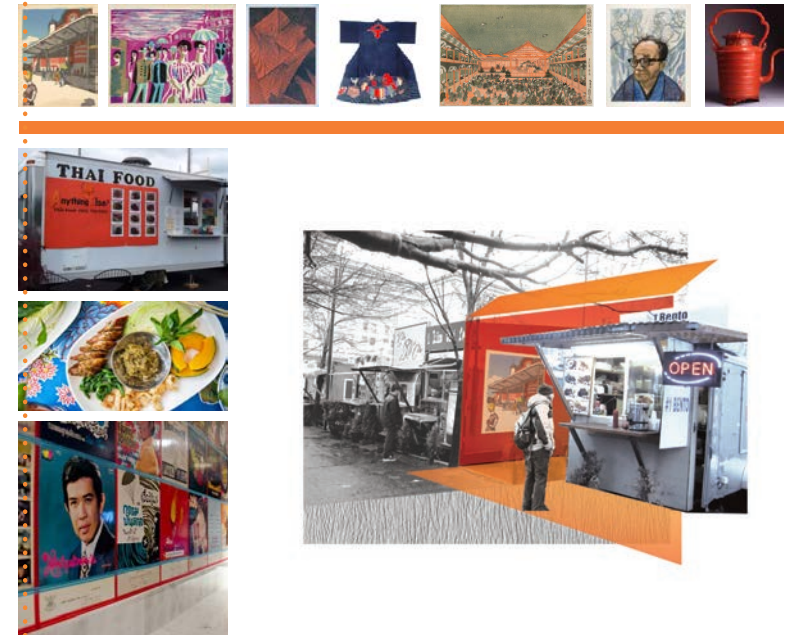


Figure 62: FOOD, concept collage

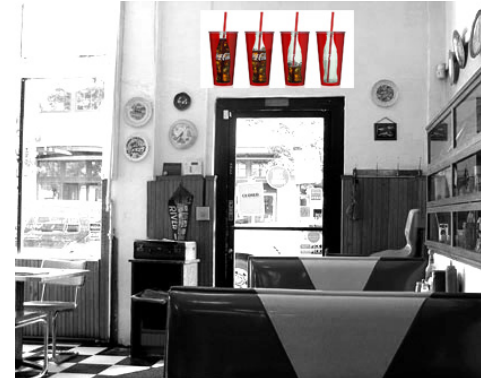


Figure 63: Art in New Context in the City concept collage

CONCEPT: 'Curation Experimentation'

Programmatically the 'storage' component will be housed in the back portion of the 511 Federal Building, while the 'event' component will take place on the site at the end of the North Park Blocks. The 'event' includes activities such as eating, shopping, learning, creating and playing. The overlap of the more solid 'storage' with the more flexible 'events' program creates the third component, the 'exhibit.' The 'exhibit' is the zone in which the 'cross-curation' occurs and the city's consolidated art (storage) is made visible. As a result, the 'curation' becomes the 'event.' Conceptually, when art is paired with industry, thus placing art into a new context, the user's experience of art changes. This 'exhibit' zone in which 'art storage' and 'event' come together is the 'curation experimentation.' Depending on the type of event there are a number of different curation experimentations possible, because each 'experiment' calls for a different types of art to be curated. The user's experience will continually change depending on the type of context and art, making the curation an ongoing experiment. Another goal of this 'curation experimentation' is to bring people into the space to see art who may otherwise not be art goers, but show up for the 'event,' and vice-versa. With this model the possibilities are endless.

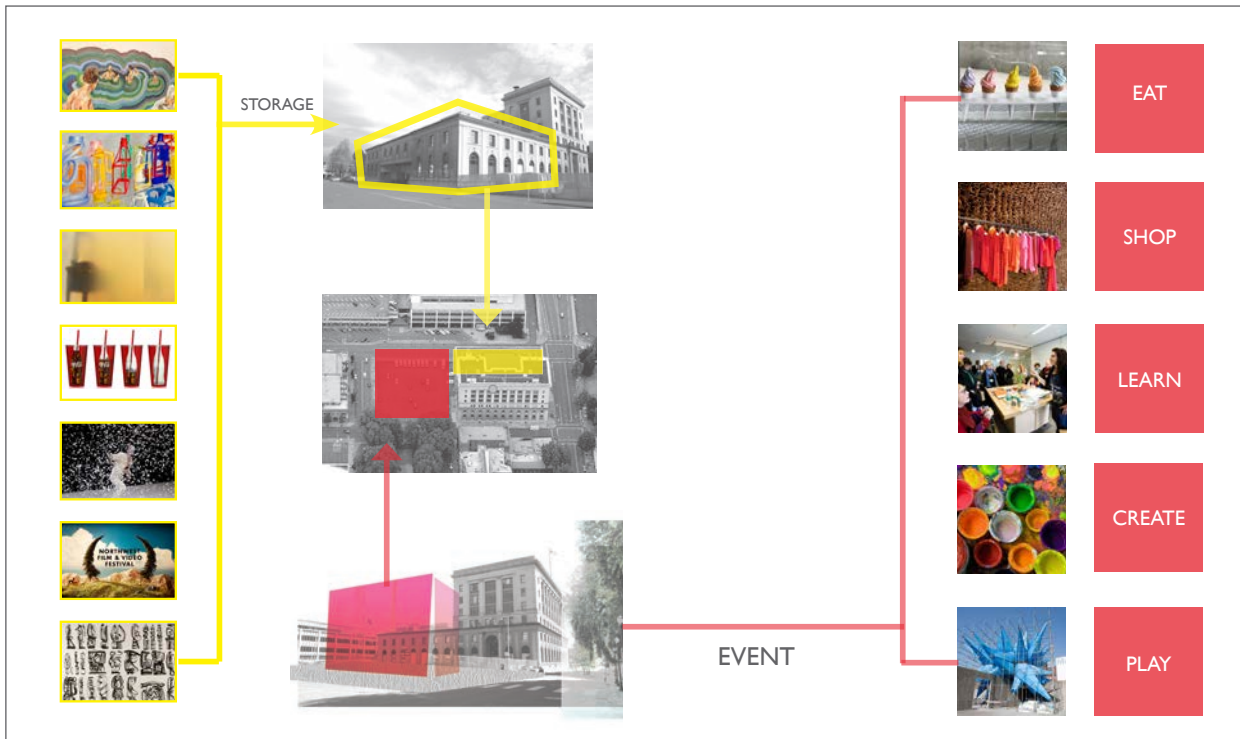


Figure 64: The Relationship of Storage and Event with Respect to the Site and 511

ART + CONTEXT



USER + EXPERIENCE



Figure 65: Curation Experimentation, conceptual collage

CHAPTER FIVE

DESIGN PROCESS: *Site and Conceptual Strategies*

Working with the developed concept of ‘curation experimentation,’ the next phase is the architectural design. The design process began with testing the program adjacencies by investigating the relationship between event (the public), exhibition (curation experimentation) and storage (consolidated art) to one another. The exhibit occurs at the edge where storage and event meet. Using the technique of paper collages and three-dimensional paper models, the edge conditions between these three programmatic elements were investigated resulting in nine different scenarios.

Each study began with a diagrammatic sketch followed by three paper collages, in which black represents the storage (more solid), silver represents the public event (more flexible) and a color represents the exhibition (the overlap). In an effort not to be distracted just yet by the specifics of the site itself, each study works within a square framework. With each scenario a paper collaged plan, section and perspective were created exploring the various spatial layouts and edge conditions possible given the three programmatic elements. A three-dimensional, cube-shaped model was then created for each investigation that abstractly explores the edge conditions through formal and spatial gestures.

Resulting in twenty-seven collages and nine physical models that were a mix of conceptual and diagrammatic, the overall exercise was disciplined and rigorous in nature. In analyzing the nine edge condition investigations, there were two that stood out as strong design strategies. In the first study the ‘exhibit is interlocked between the storage and public event,’ and in the second study the ‘public event surrounds the storage, with the exhibit in between the public event and storage.’ In both investigations there is a clear diagram communicating that the exhibition occurs directly in between (at the edge or overlap) where the storage and public event meet.

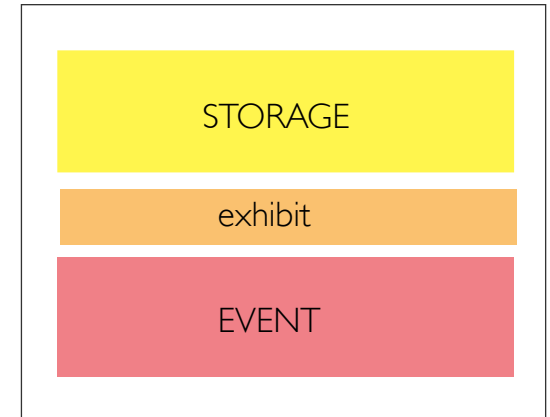


Figure 66: Program Elements

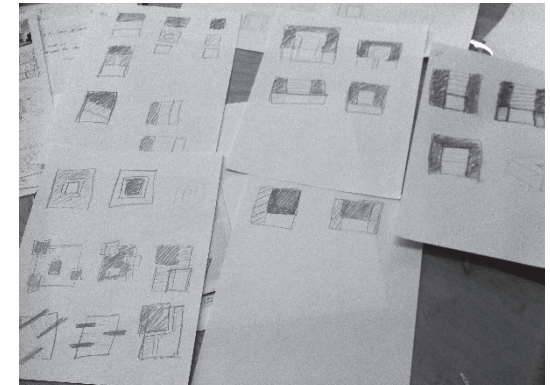


Figure 67: Diagrammatic Edge Condition Sketches

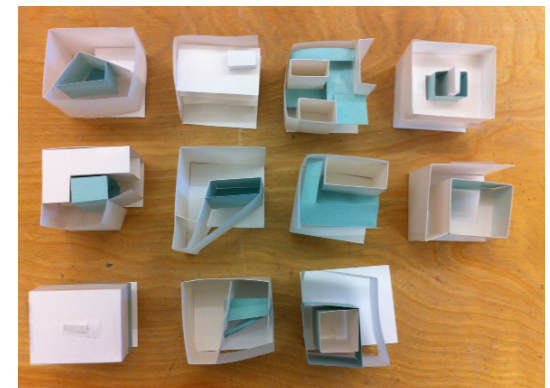


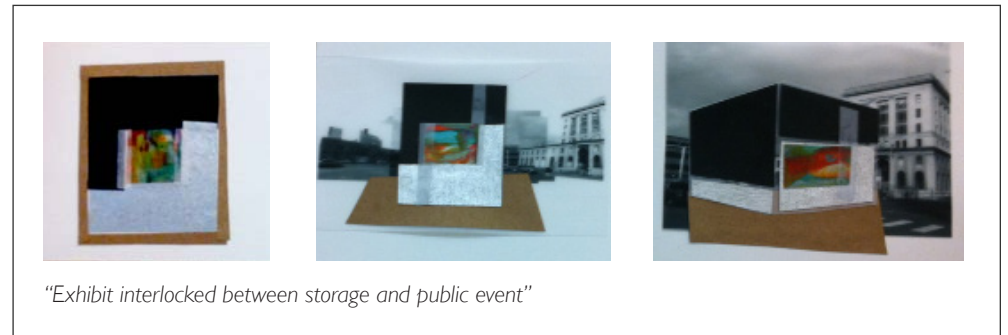
Figure 68: Edge Condition Models, top view (paper and mylar)

PLAN

SECTION

PERSPECTIVE

MODEL



"Exhibit interlocked between storage and public event"



"Public event surrounds storage, exhibit inbetween public and storage"

Figure 69: Edge Condition Investigations (paper collages and models)

SITE STRATEGY: *Conceptual Models and Site Response*

The findings generated by the previous edge conditions investigations were next tested on the site itself using conceptual paper massing models. The models respond to the initial concepts of the site being a 'stage' at the end of the North Park Blocks, and the new design attaching to the existing 511 Federal Building (with storage in its back portion). Given the existing site conditions of the Park Blocks to the south of the site, the US Postal to the north, and the 511 Federal Building to the east, a site strategy was conceived creating a courtyard between the new and old buildings, further extending the flow of the Park Blocks into the site and thus enhancing the public nature of the building's design. Creating this courtyard to the left of 511 also architecturally respects the building's existing facade and the future entrance to the PNCA expansion.

The resulting site response is conceptualized as two programmatic 'bars' - storage and event. The 'storage bar' is horizontal, extending from the back portion of the 511 Federal Building (where the consolidated art is stored) into the public realm of the site. The 'event bar' is vertical, continuing the public movement and activity of the North Park Blocks upward into the site. Where these two bars overlap and spatially interlock, the exhibit (curation experimentation) happens. Strategically holding the upper left-hand corner of the site creates a public courtyard in between these two bars and the remaining front portion of the 511 Federal Building (PNCA).

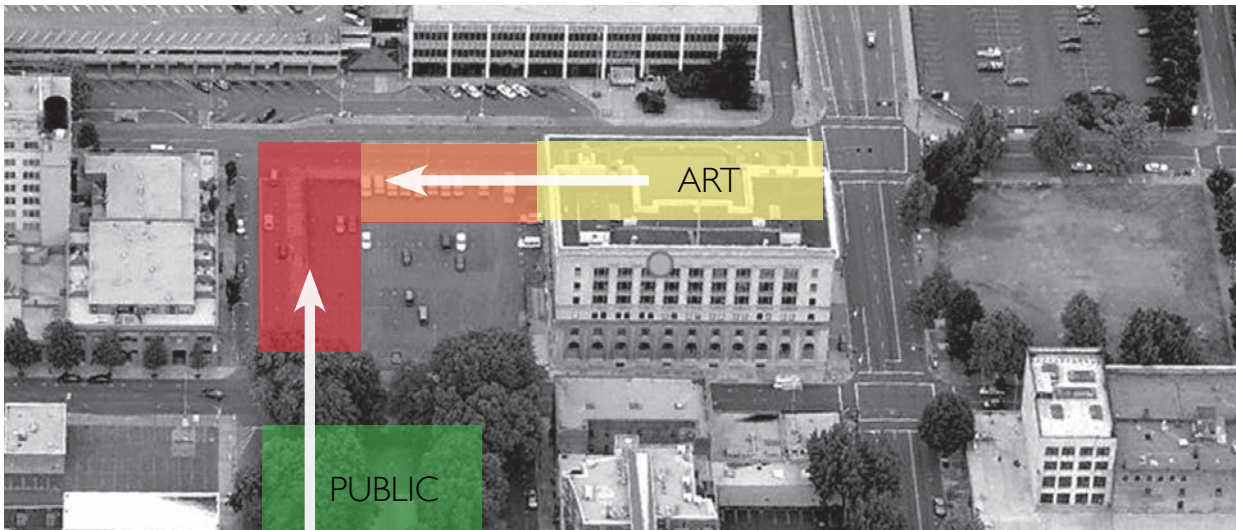


Figure 70: Site Strategy with Context

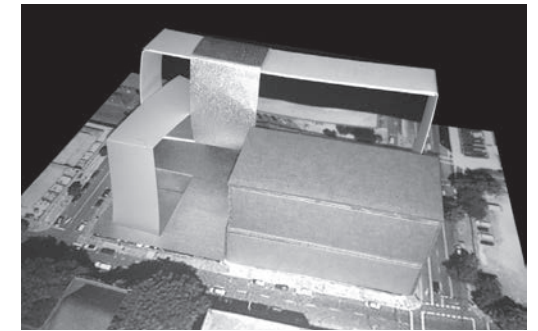


Figure 71: Massing Model One

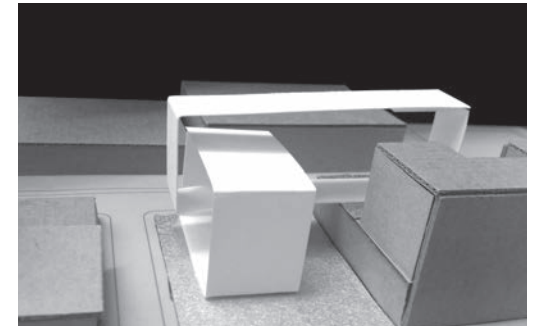


Figure 72: Massing Model Two

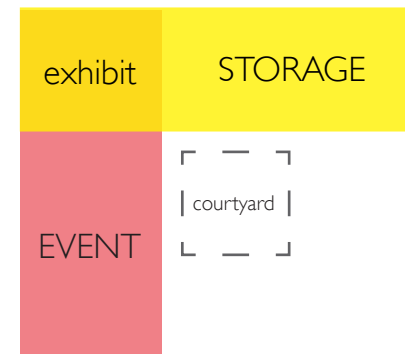


Figure 73: Site Strategy

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION: *Art and Public Building as Faciliator*

In section the program is organized into two zones: art storage and public event. The building acts a facilitator bringing art and the public together. Portland's underutilized art from various institutions and galleries enters through the back of the building (via the existing loading dock of the 511 Federal Building), while the city's public flows into the building and event space from the North Park Blocks. The event zone is further divided into five levels by industry that include spaces for general public events and festivals (first two levels), learning, retail and food. Paired with art from storage, these top three levels become pop-up kitchens, retail shops and creative learning open-studios whose tenants change from month-to-month along with the curated exhibit.

To create the 'exhibit,' art moves horizontally out of the storage zone into the public event zone on the left. Conceptually, the art is stored in drawers that are pulled out into the public zone (the site) for display. This zone (or edge) where art storage and event overlap is the exhibit and where 'curation experimentation' occurs. This exhibit zone is referred to as the 'curation lab,' where art is paired and curated alongside Portland industry. To produce changing exhibits, the curation system relies on a flexible relationship between event and storage.

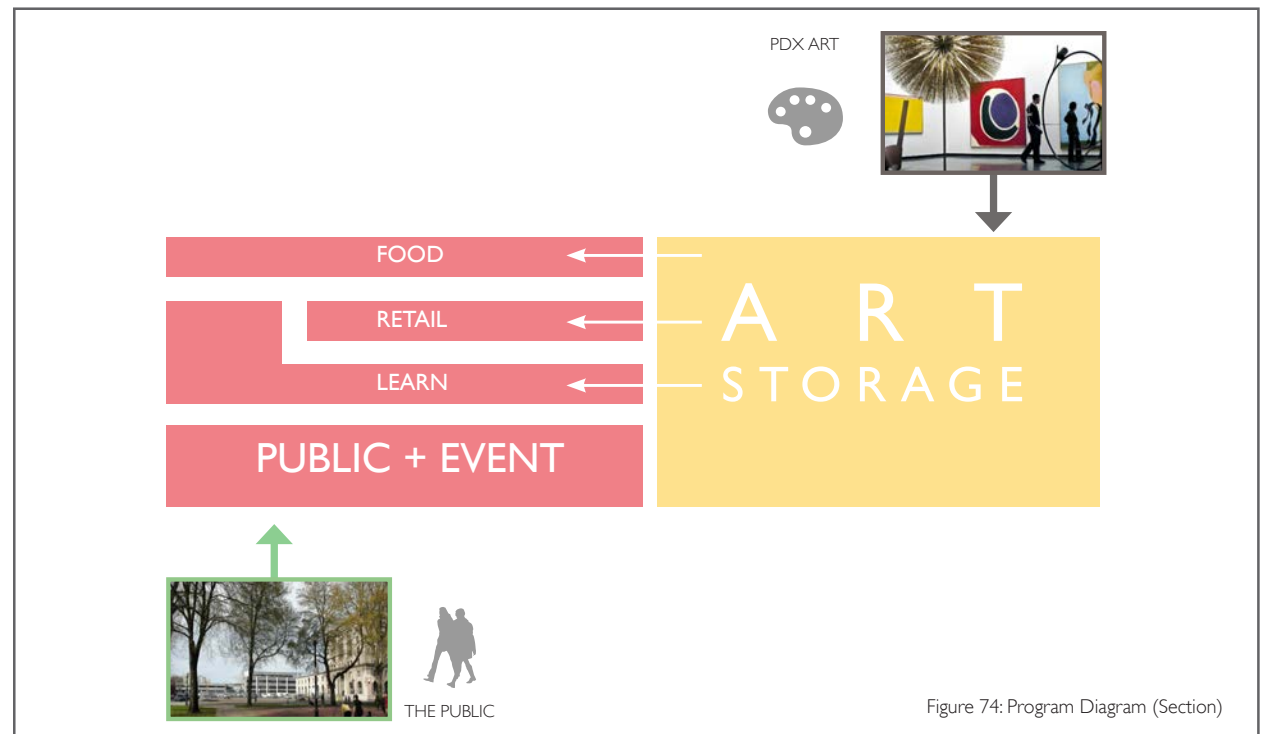


Figure 74: Program Diagram (Section)

ART STORAGE & 'CURATION LAB' SYSTEM: *Rolling Walls on Tracks Paired with Artwork*

The 'curation lab' system is based on a concept of rolling walls on tracks paired with artwork configured in different ways depending on the size of the art and an industry's programmatic and spatial needs. Inspired by the relationship between art storage and public event, the 'curation lab' is a flexible system in which art from the city enters the back of the building, is brought into art storage and stored on racks or shelves, and then depending on the type of 'event,' artwork is taken out of storage and hung onto the rolling wall. By mixing and pairing works of art from various Portland intuitions with Portland industry, it is on these walls that the art is 'cross-curated.' The art then slides into the 'curation lab' (exhibit) in the public zone. The rolling walls can pivot in any direction or be attached together to create a number of different configurations. Sculptures and other three-dimensional art works that cannot be hung on walls are slid into the 'lab' manually. Once an event changes, the rolling walls (and other art objects) slide back into storage, are 'undressed' and then 're-dressed' (curated) with new artwork inspired by the specific event, and the curation cycle continues. Constantly evolving and changing depending on a given industry's needs and the art available in storage, the end result is truly a 'curation experimentation.' Blurring the edges between storage, exhibition and event., it is inside these 'curations labs' that a new museum typology is created that is part 'shrine to the object' and part 'social condenser.'

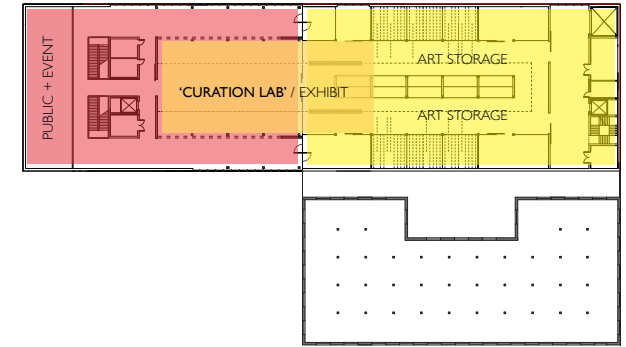


Figure 75: Typical Floor Plan (Levels 3-5)

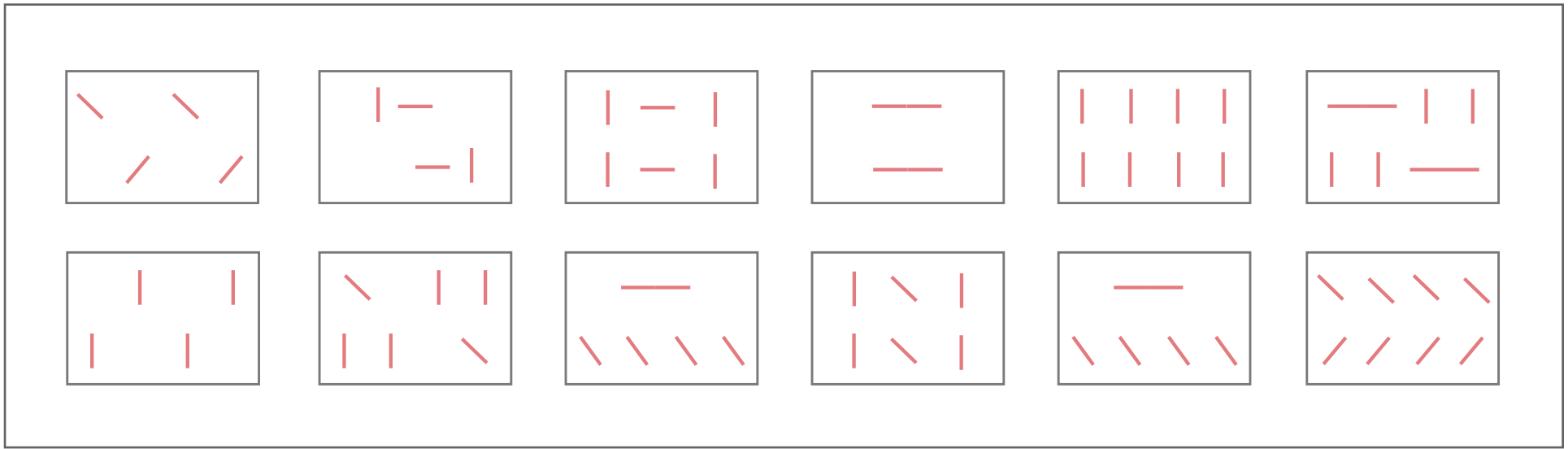


Figure 76: Exhibit and Wall Configuration Possibilities

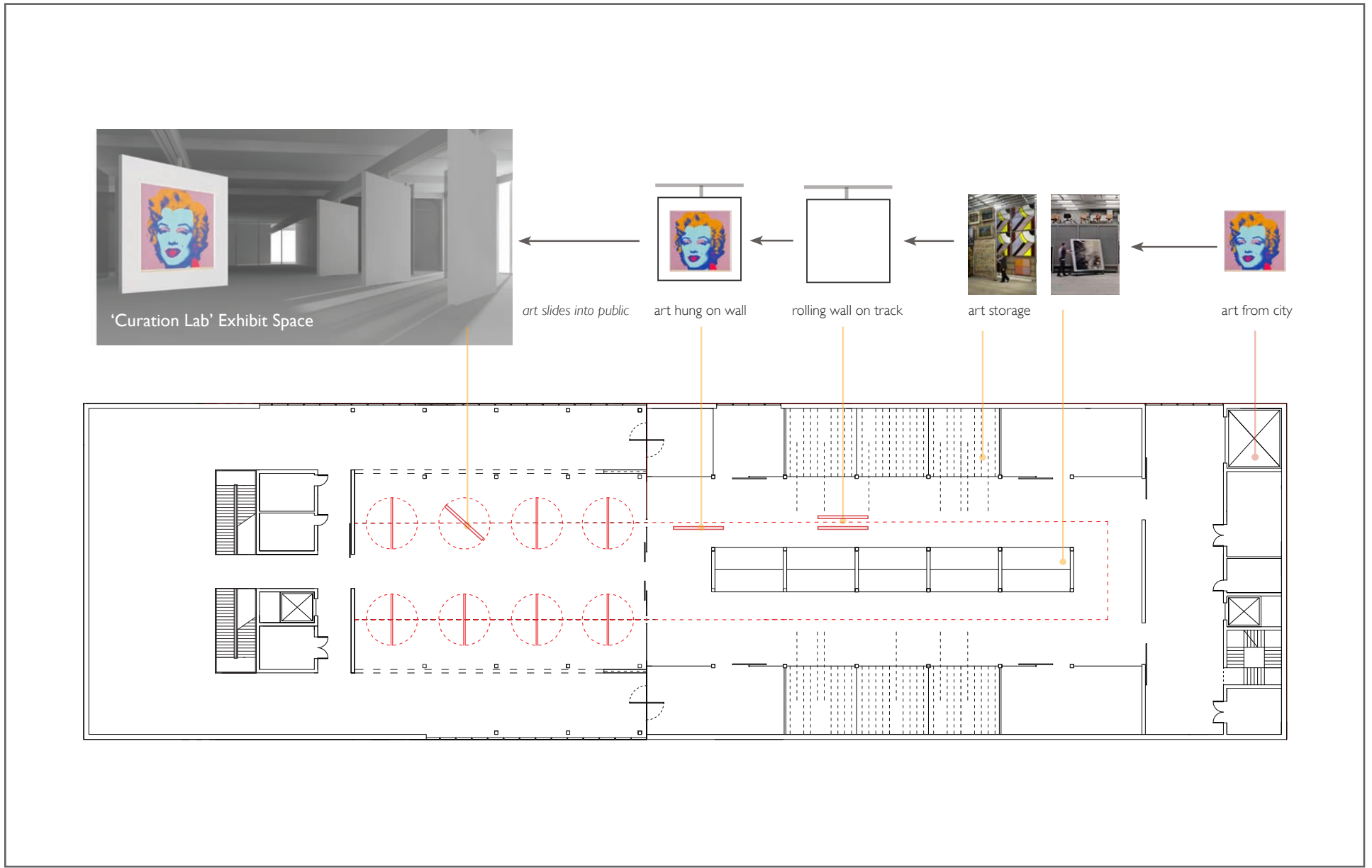


Figure 77: 'Curation Lab' System: Rolling Walls on Tracks Paired with Artwork

CHAPTER SIX

DESIGN PROPOSAL: *PDX Art Storehouse*

Working within the context of Portland, Oregon's North Park Blocks and reacting to the city's flourishing, alternative, industry and art culture, this thesis proposes a new art museum typology, the *PDX Art Storehouse*, which addresses the evolving three-way relationship between the public, art and architecture on numerous scales by blurring the edges between storage, exhibition and event. This term 'storehouse' is fitting for it reflects the concept that this new museum typology is a place for both the *storage* of art (warehouse typology), as well as a sort of *store* for the sale and display of the city's industrial goods (marketplace typology).

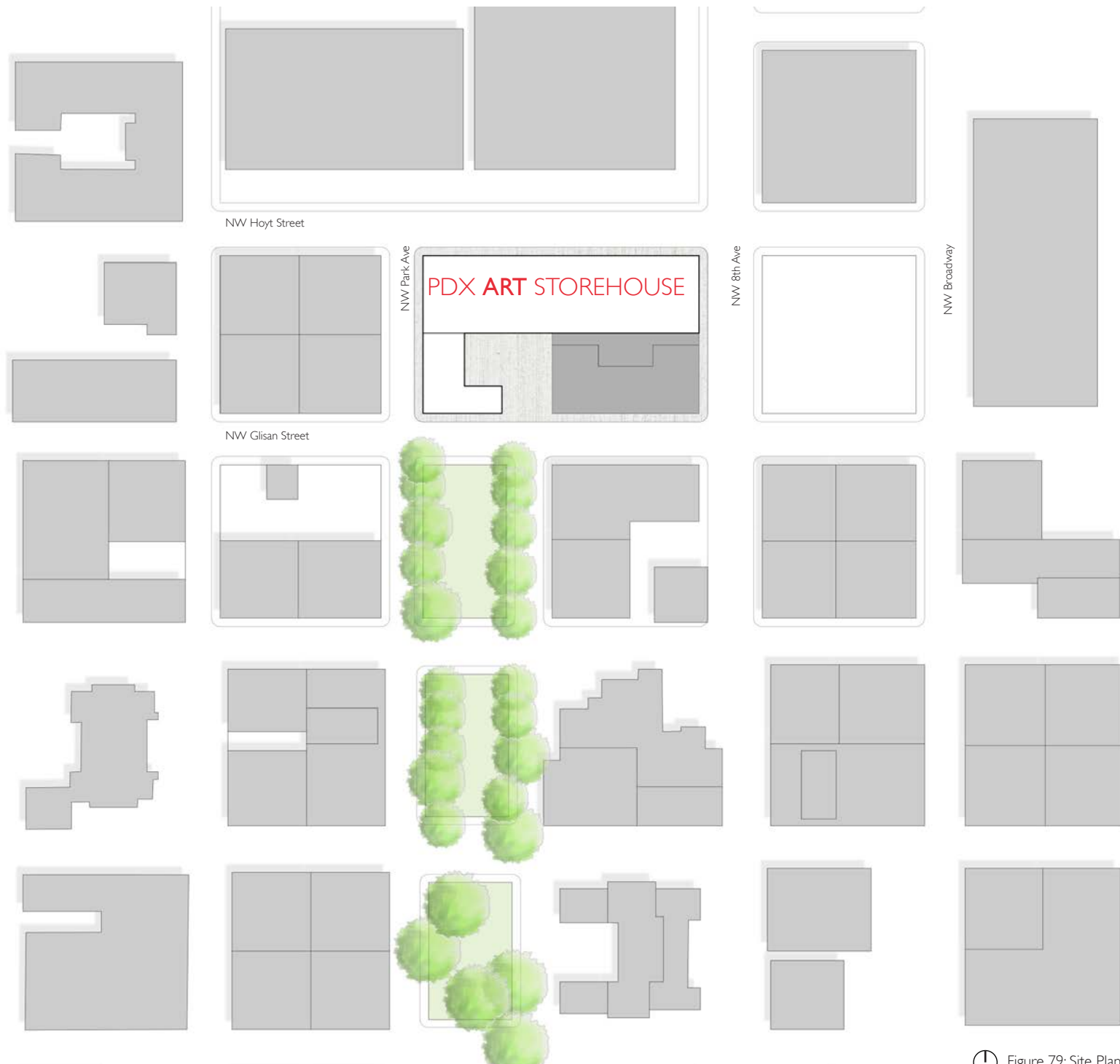
Aiming to increase public accessibility to underutilized collections of art currently housed in multiple institutions by revealing these works through modes of visible storage and cross-curation, the Storehouse is a 'curation-experimentation' pairing art with seven different contextual themes. Depending on the context, the user's experience of art is altered. The themes include: City, Park, Event, Learn, Retail, Food and Storage. -While primarily curated inside storehouse itself, art also has a presence outside the building, extending the experience of art beyond the site into Portland's greater public realm. By experiencing art curated alongside these various contextual themes, "the line between art and life [is] kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct as possible."⁴⁵

With regard to architectural design, the Storehouse is five stories tall and responds to the proportions of the existing 511 Federal Building. Integrated into each of the five floors, nearly half of the building is designated to art storage. The storage's first two floors are contained in the back portion of the existing 511 Building, with three new floors added directly above. The bulk of the rest of the building is pushed to the back half of the site (previously a vacant parking lot), creating a courtyard space between the Storehouse, the 511 Building (PNCA) and the North Park Blocks from which the public approaches the building. On the site itself, inside the Storehouse the first two levels are devoted to more general city events (festivals, shows, lectures, exhibits), while the top three levels are devoted to and inspired by Portland's creative industry which includes: learning (workshops), retail (shops) and food (cafes, restaurants). It is on these levels that the 'curation labs' exist. The following vignettes test several different scenarios possible in the Storehouse that evolve depending on the event the art is paired with, ultimately creating a variety of cross-curated exhibits and 'curation experimentations.'

PDX **ART** STOREHOUSE



Figure 78: PDX Art Storehouse Program



📍 Figure 79: Site Plan

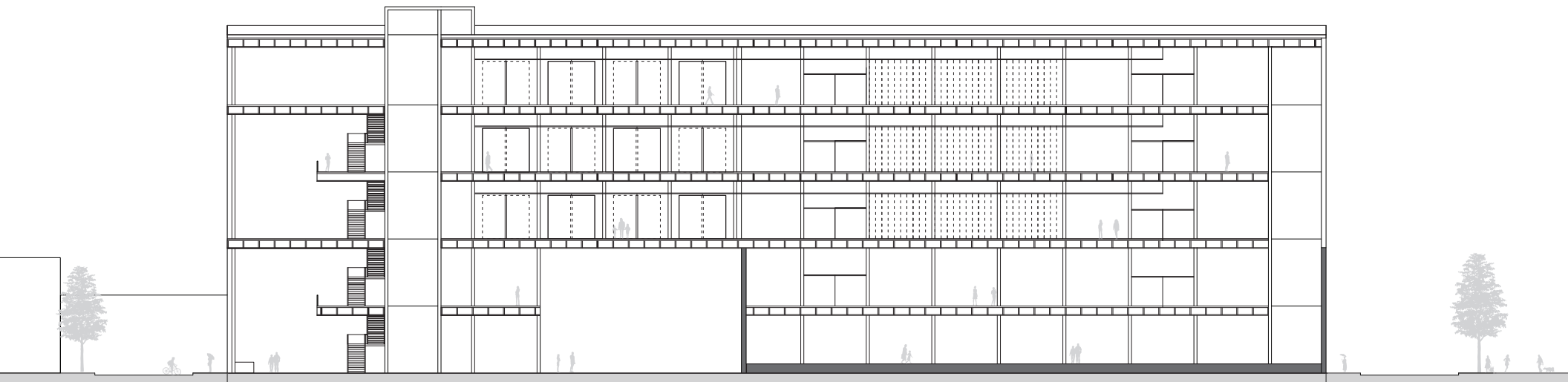


Figure 80: Section Facing North

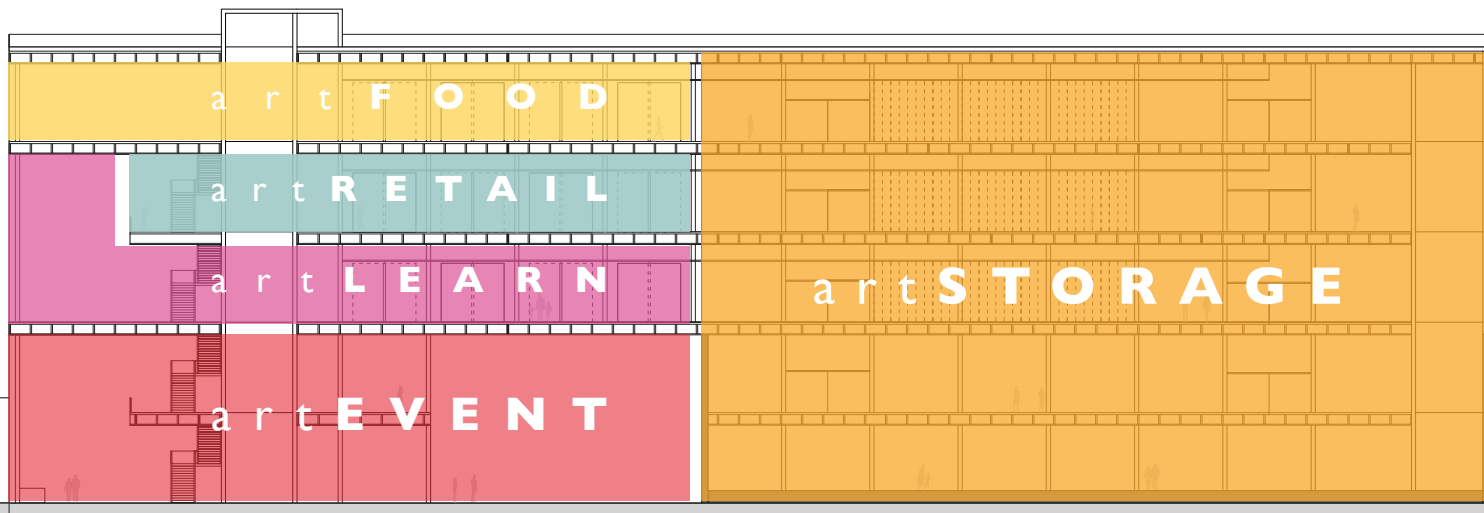


Figure 81: Section Facing North with Program

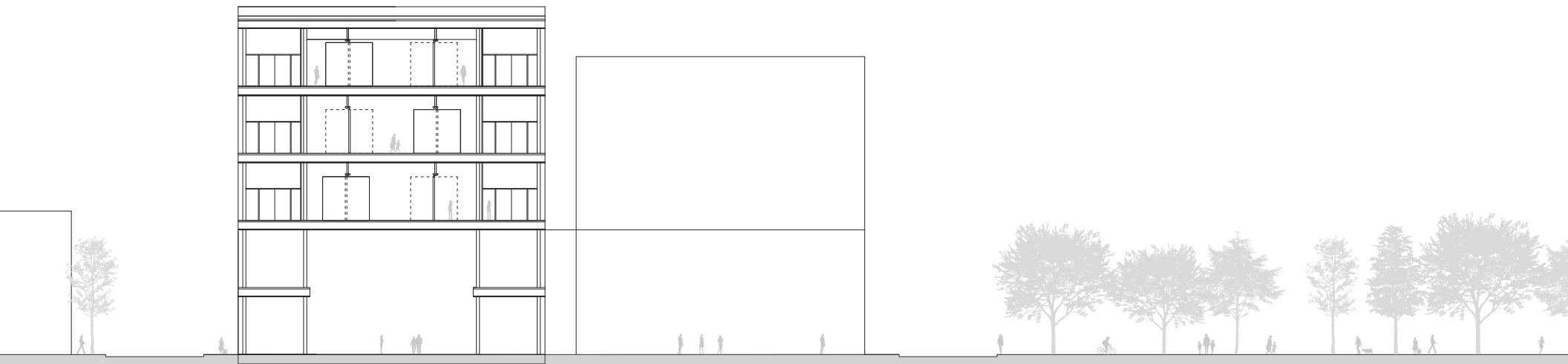


Figure 82: Section Facing East



Figure 83: Section Facing East with Program

GROUND LEVEL (EXTERIOR) / *artPARK*

At the ground level art is paired with its context, the North Park Blocks. Situated on a site directly on the North end of the Park Blocks, the PDX Art Storehouse becomes a sort of stage end of the park. Because the public approaches the building directly from the Park Blocks, art (sculptural) is dispersed into the park in an effort to blur the boundary between both inside and outside, as well as public life and art. In this way the museum's presence extends into the park. The main entrance to the building is to the left of the site. To enter the public passes under an exterior covered area which is conceived to be a front porch for the Storehouse and an area in which people can gather and events can occur rain or shine. Between the entrance hall and the existing 511 Federal Building (future home to PNCA's expansion) exists a courtyard which Portland's public pours onto from the Park Blocks directly in front, as well as can be shared by the Art Storehouse's visitors and the PNCA community alike. Similar to the public nature of the Park Blocks, the exterior space of the Storehouse is open, fluid and welcoming and can hold a variety of events at all hours ranging from public markets to concerts.

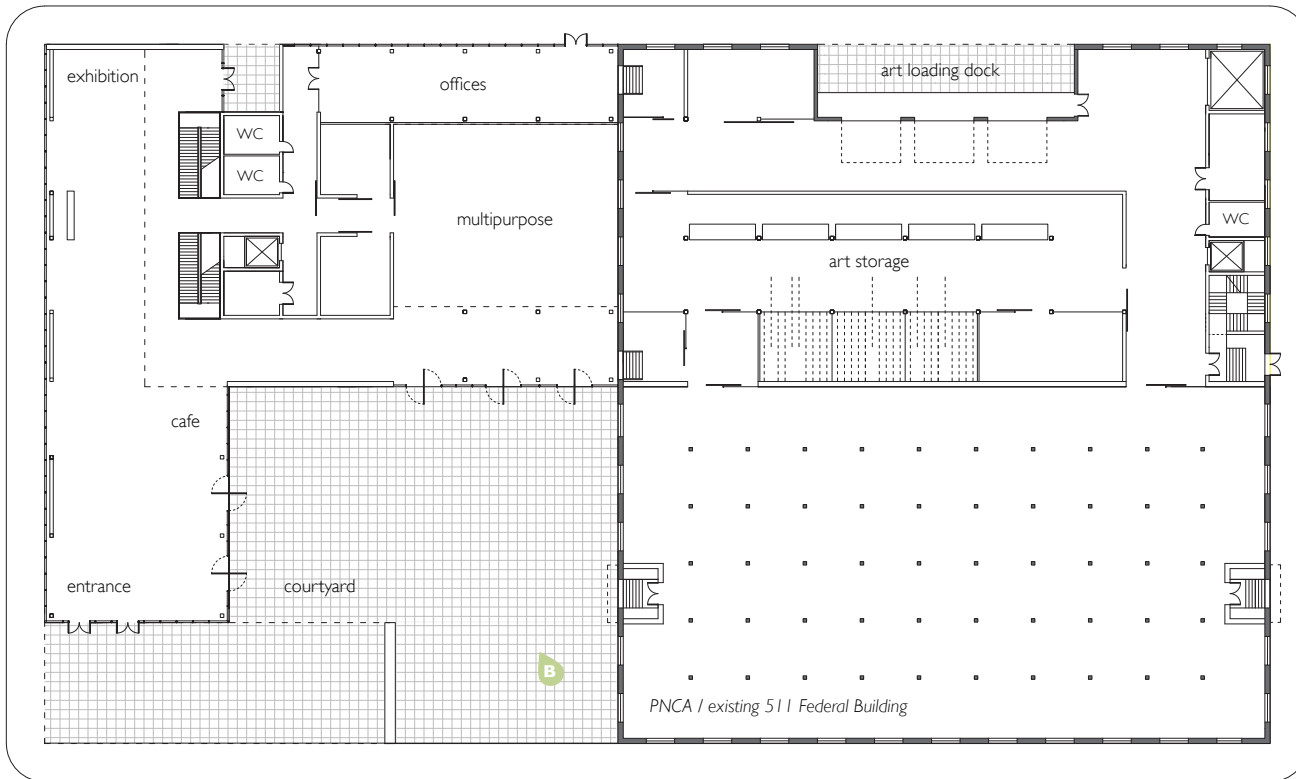
A. View Towards the Entrance from the North Park Blocks (Figure 85)

This vignette looks from the North Park Blocks directly north towards the entrance of the Storehouse. Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen's large-scale sculpture of peaches and pears sits to the left of the final North Park Block (there are five total) and hints at the art to come beyond the park. Alongside the art, the park's existing sporting activities that include basketball and boche ball take place. Seen behind the park's trees and blending in with the sky, the Storehouse is an elegant backdrop to the North Park Blocks.

B. View into the Storehouse/PNCA Courtyard with Food Trucks (Figure 86)

Shared by the Storehouse, PNCA and Portland's public, the outdoor paved courtyard space can take on a number of public functions, day or night. In this vignette the space it becomes a place for Portland's famous food trucks to park and for the community to gather during the afternoon lunch hour on a sunny day.

a r t P A R K



⌚ Ground Level (Figure 84)



North Park Blocks

A View Towards the Entrance from the North Park Blocks (Figure 85)



B View into the Storehouse/PNCA Courtyard with Food Trucks (Figure 86)



GROUND LEVEL (INTERIOR) & LEVEL TWO / *artEVENT*

Inside the Storehouse the first two levels are devoted to more general city events that include festivals, shows, lectures, and other exhibitions inspired by Portland. Upon entering the building there is a double height entrance hall that spans the length of the site and whose height responds to the first two levels of the existing 511 Federal Building. The front part of the entrance hall can open up onto the exterior courtyard and houses an informal cafe space. At the back of the entrance hall to the left is an information/security desk and to the right is the circulation core with double facing stairs whose design encourages social interaction. Opening up onto the courtyard at the back of the site is a large double height multipurpose space. Also on ground level at the very back of the building are the Storehouse's offices. The Storehouse connects to the 511 Building to the right with art storage occupying the back two levels of the existing building. The existing loading dock is used as a portal through which art from various institutions is consolidated and brought into the Storehouse to be stored on racks and shelves as part of the building's 'visible art storage' component. If accompanied by a Storehouse employee, the public can take a tour of this area. Transitioning to the second level through the use of the central staircase, there is a mezzanine level overlooking the multipurpose space below. In this mezzanine space there is an exhibition gallery and open studio workshops in which artists work and the public can enter.

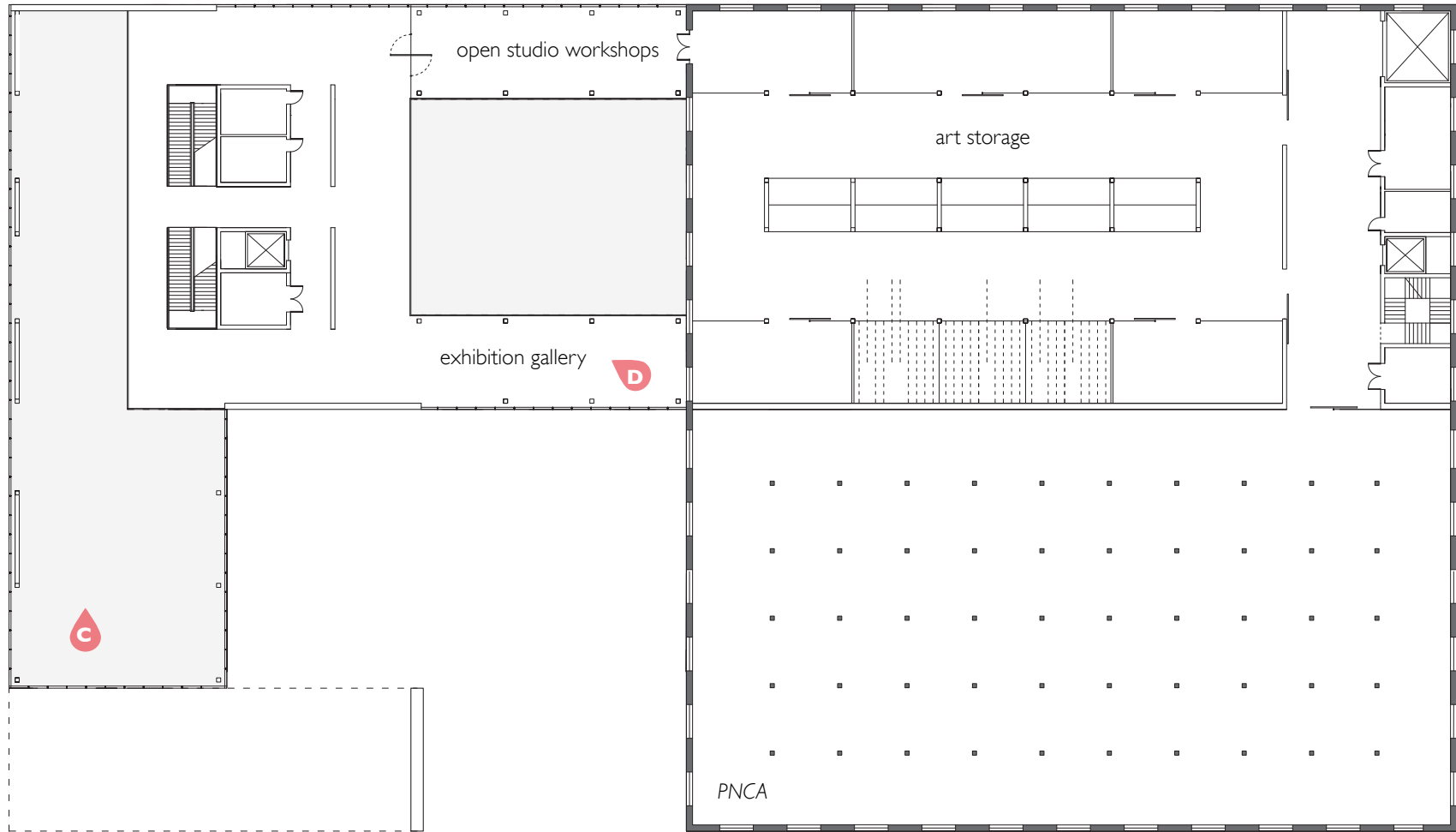
C. Ground Level Exhibit Entrance Hall / *Nike Graphic Studio Art Show* (Figure 88)

The entrance hall is transformed into a space for the Nike Graphic Studio, an annual charity art show held every fall showcasing a collection of work from some of Nike's most talented artists. Here the Nike art is paired with art from the Portland Art Museum and other institutions. To the right Stumptown coffee is served in the cafe.

D. Second Level Exhibition Gallery / *Portlandia's "Put a Bird On It" Exhibit* (Figure 89)

The second level's exhibit space is transformed for the IFC's hit TV show, "Portlandia," which is on tour with screenings in the ground level multipurpose space. Inspired by the phrase coined by the show "put a bird on it," this exhibit is cross-curated with works of art relating to birds.

a r t E V E N T



Level 2 (Figure 87)





LEVEL THREE / *artLEARN*

The third level of the Storehouse is inspired by the industry of learning. On this level begins the new addition of the art storage on top of the existing 511 Federal Building. Blurring the boundary between event and storage, the Storehouse's first 'curation lab' exhibit space also exists. Inspired by the theme of learning, the 'curation lab' on level three is intended to be a workshop/open studio space occupied by either smaller creative start-up companies or larger established creative Portland firms in an aim to teach the public about their business and/or product, as well as offer their services and expertise in the creative industry field. On this level there also exists a double-height installation and exhibition space that pairs literature with art from the Storehouse's storage, as well as includes new large-scale works from Portland artists. This space is meant to be a new type of urban living/reading room for the public to gather for lectures, take in the art, study over coffee or read a book.

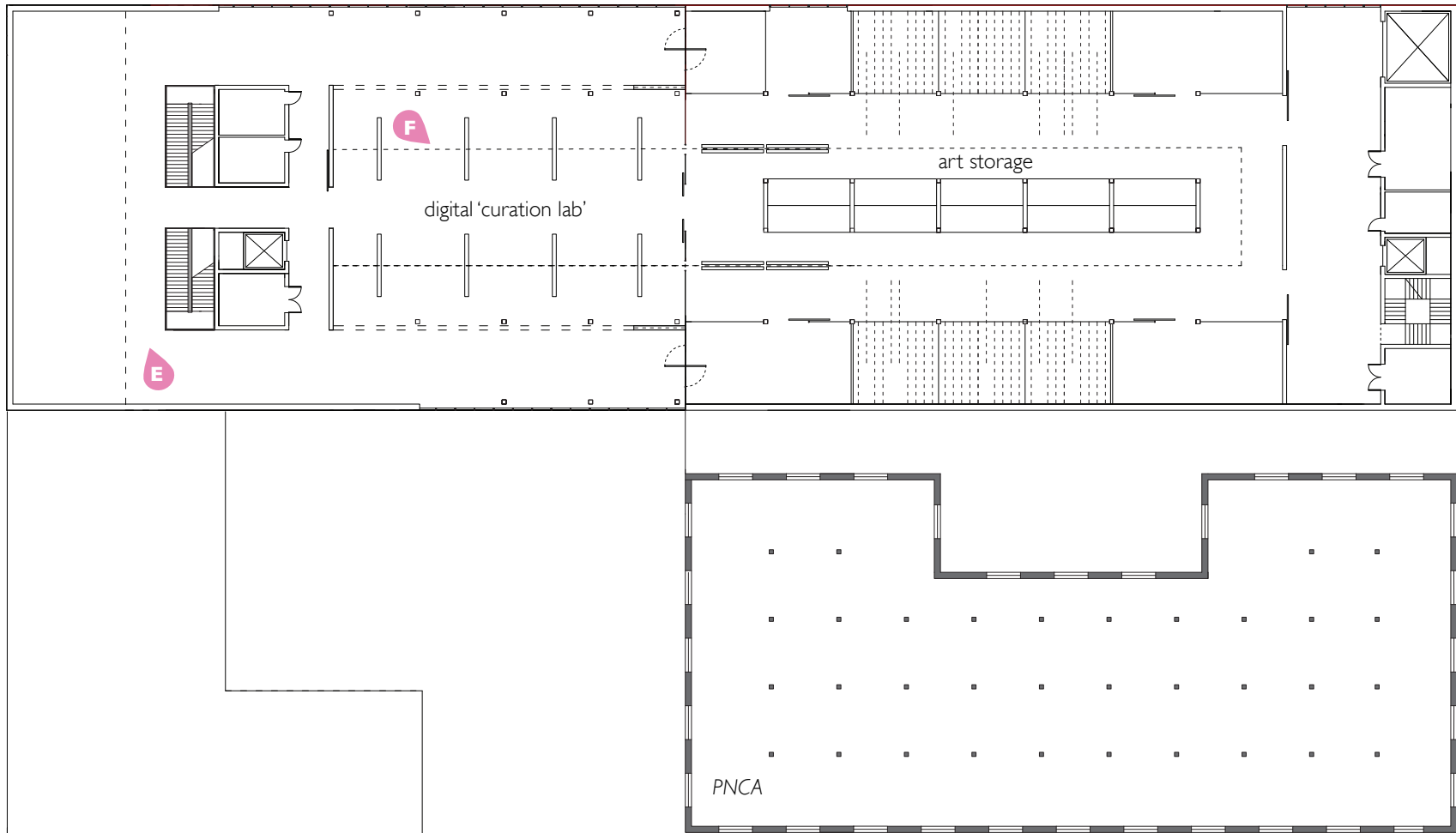
E. Double-height Installation/Exhibition Space / *Powell's Books: The Rothko Room with Jenene Nagy* (Figure 91)

Inspired by the event of learning, this double-height urban living/reading room is a space sponsored by Portland's Powell's Books and called 'The Rothko Room.' Along with a backdrop of tall bookshelves filled with books from Powell's to either simply read or purchase, each month the space is transformed when paintings from storage by artist Mark Rothko (who grew up in Portland) are paired with larger-scale installations from a local Portland artist of the same color. In this vignette Mark Rothko's pink paintings are paired with Jenene Nagy's drywall, wood, latex, and vinyl installations that blur the boundaries between built and natural environments.

F. Digital 'Curation Lab' / *Wieden+Kennedy Advertising Agency Workshop* (Figure 92)

This curation lab is sponsored by Portland's independent, creatively driven advertising agency, Wieden+Kennedy, who is best known for their work for Nike. Paired with the digital and more contemporary art from storage, the space is transformed into a digital lab and interactive workshop, in which Wieden+Kennedy's employees offer their services and knowledge of digital programs and the creative industry to Portland's creative public.

a r t L E A R N



Level 3 (Figure 90)

E Double-height Installation/Exhibition Space / Powell's Books: The Rothko Room with Jenene Nagy (Figure 91)





LEVEL FOUR / artRETAIL

The fourth level of the Storehouse is inspired by the retail industry. Similar the plan of level three, there is a 'curation lab' next to the art storage space. In the retail curation lab items and objects for sale are displayed and cross-curated along side art from the Storehouse's art storage. While the art is to be kept inside the curation lab boundary, the screens can be moved and stacked in order to expand the size of the exhibit. By adjusting the screens of the curation lab, retail items can flow outside into the circulation space to further blur the edge between event and exhibit. Similar to displaying works of art, retail items can be placed on pedestals, in display cases, and even hung on the pivoting rolling walls. In this space the retail items created by various Portland industries and artists become part of the exhibit, thus blurring the line at times between what is art (to be viewed) and what is commodity (to be sold). Intended for a range of different retail industries, the space is meant to be a kind of 'pop-up' store for designers to sell their goods in a new setting alongside curated art.

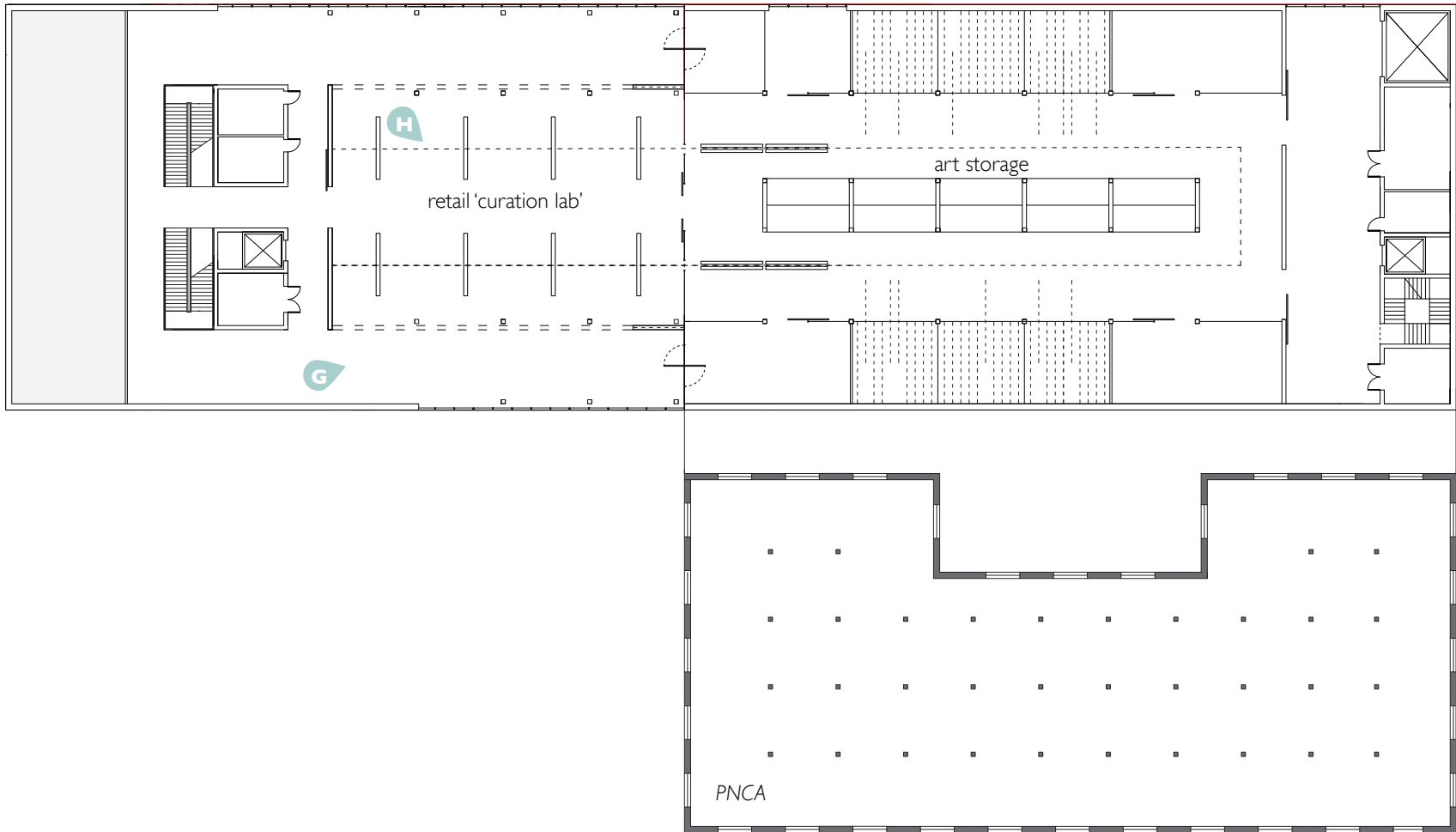
G. Retail Space Flowing Outside 'Cuartion Lab' / *The Missing Link* (Figure 94)

Inspired by the outdoor scenery and active culture special to the Pacific Northwest, as well as Portland's prevalent bike culture, this exhibit pairs bikes for sale from the Portland bike retailer, The Missing Link, with artwork showcasing Oregon's natural beauty. Given that Portland's beautiful cityscape, as well as the location of the mountains and the coast only an hour outside the city, the images of art exhibited here can easily be seen in person on any given bike ride around or outside the city. Bikes can also be taken outside for a test ride.

H. Fashion Retail 'Curation Lab' / *Garnish Apparel's 2013 Line* (Figure 95)

This curation lab exhibits locally made clothing, jewelry, and accessories from Garnish Apparel's 2013 line. Cross-curated with colorful and feminine paintings from the Storehouse's art storage, the space is transformed into a vibrant fashion boutique in which fashion becomes art, and art becomes fashionable. Pairing fashion retail with art, this exhibit is new take on the already trendy 'fashion pop-up shop' already seen in many cities.

a r t R E T A I L



Level 4 (Figure 93)





LEVEL FIVE / *artFOOD*

The fifth level of the Storehouse is devoted to Portland's much praised food industry. Recently Portland has emerged as a full-fledged dining destination in large part due to a combination of its food cart revolution and slow food phenomenon, as well as being the home to such chains such as Stumptown Coffee and the Asian restaurant Pok Pok, which both have locations in New York. The concept of pairing food with art aims to give local chefs, food cart vendors and small food venues a space to introduce their cuisine to a new, larger audience. Similar to the retail 'pop up shop,' this space is a kind of 'pop up kitchen.' When paired with food and other features such as tables, lighting and tableware, the cross-curated art becomes part of the overall dining experience. Along with good company, Portland food lovers can enjoy their meal while sitting next to, across from or under art from the Storehouse's storage which shares a similar theme to their cuisine. Depending on the curated art selected and rolling wall's arrangement, the space can transform into either a formal or casual dining setting. While similar in layout to levels three and four, the fifth level has an enclosed kitchen for the chefs to prepare the food, as well as a separate bar and lounge area. Situated on the top floor, there are also great views of the city of Portland and the Park Blocks below to be enjoyed along side the art during the meal.

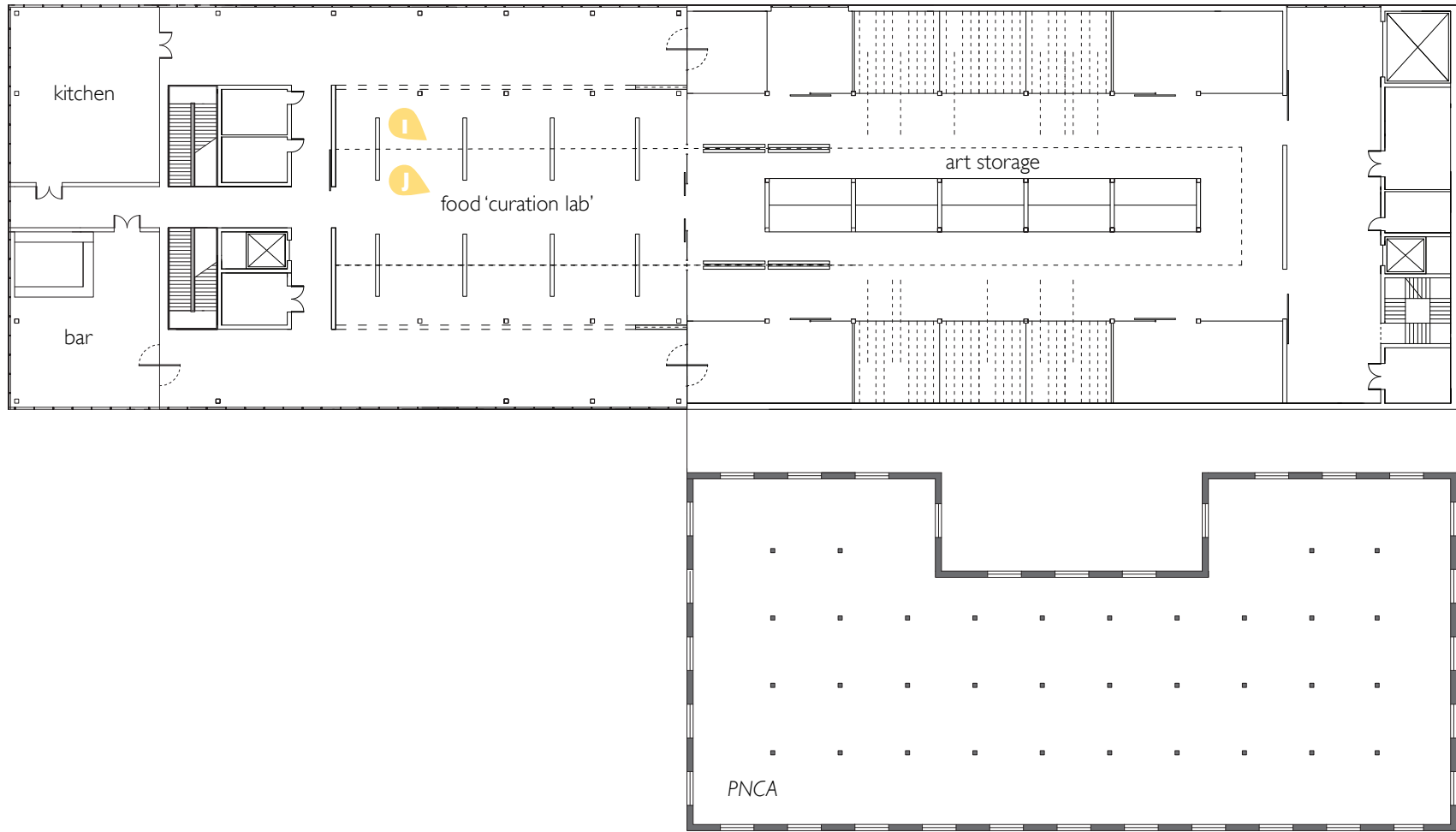
I. Food 'Curation Lab' Formal Dining / *Iron Horse* (Figure 97)

This space is transformed into an elegant dining room for the Southwestern cuisine of Iron Horse (currently a restaurant in Portland's Sellwood district, outside city center). Formal dining tables are paired with horse/rodeo themed art, as well as a horse sculpture by Deborah Butterfield and a hanging installation by Martin Puryear.

J. Food 'Curation Lab' Casual Dining / *Minizo* (Figure 98)

Currently a Japanese food truck downtown, Minizo becomes a 'pop up kitchen' as it is transformed into a casual dining space. In this setting, Japanese cuisine has inspired the cross-curation of many art pieces from the Portland Art Museum's Asian Collection, including the ukiyo-e woodblock print, "The Great Wave" by Japanese artist Katsushika Hokusai. The use of wood tables and bench seating adds to the casual atmosphere.

a r t F O O D



Level 5 (Figure 96)

1 Food 'Curation Lab' Formal Dining / Iron Horse (Figure 97)





All five levels of the Storehouse have a zone devoted to art storage, in which art currently housed in multiple institutions is consolidated into one place in an effort to increase public accessibility to otherwise underutilized collections of art. The art enters the the Storehouse on level one through the already existing loading dock of the 511 Federal Building. All floors share similar art storage systems that consist of sliding racks onto which paintings can be hung, shelving units and drawers for prints and photographs, and shelving space for three-dimensional works of art ranging in scale. The overall feeling of the visible art storage room to a degree resembles that of the walk-in closet. The storage layout of levels three to five are identical and each has the ‘curation lab’ system built-in where the rolling walls on tracks are paired with art work (Figure 77). On each level at the edge between the event and storage zones there is a check-point. Here, similar to other museum’s study centers, appointments can be made to see selected pieces of art, as well as take tours of the visible storage.

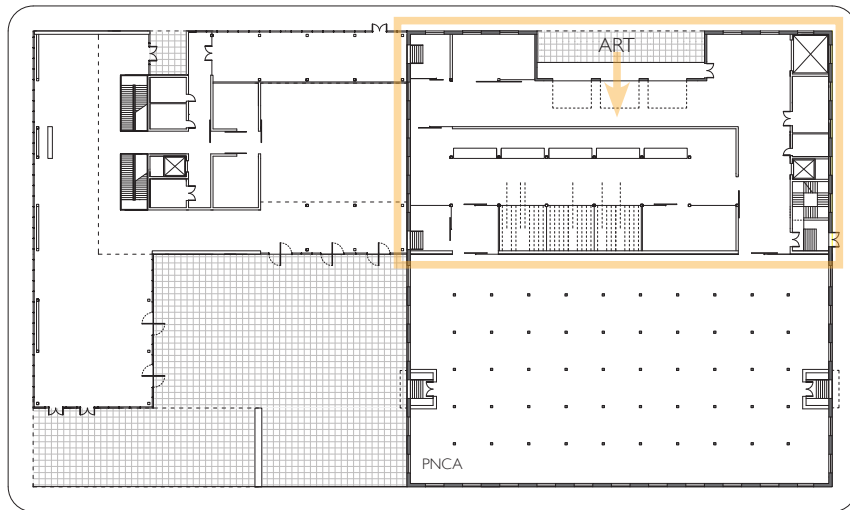


Figure 99: Art Storage, Floor Plan (Levels 1)

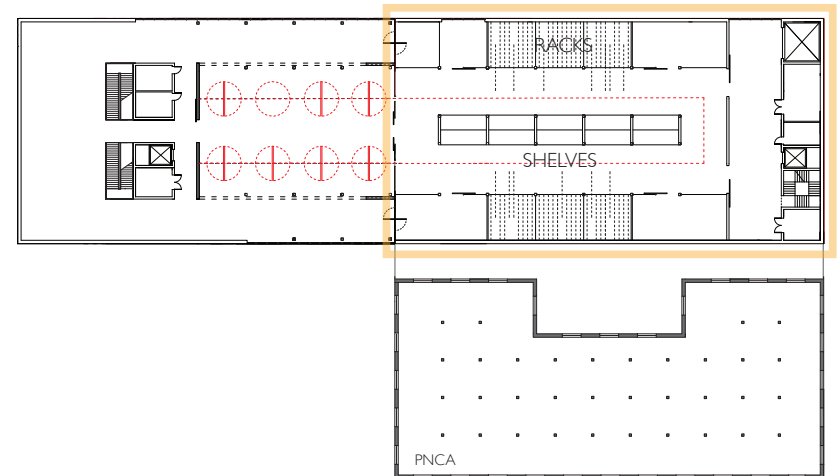


Figure 100: Art Storage, Typical Floor Plan (Levels 3 to 5)

a r t S T O R A G E



EXTERIOR / *artCITY*

Where as the entrance of the Storehouse extends into the park, the exterior of backside of the Storehouse has an opportunity to create a strong dialogue with the greater city of Portland. Facing the busy street of NW Broadway, the back of the Storehouse has a strong civic presence to the public entering Northwest Portland from the Broadway Bridge. Resting on top of the existing 511 Federal Building, this addition housing the art storage component is clad with an aluminum mesh screen that resembles a blank canvas or billboard. This exterior cladding becomes a surface onto which enlarged, reproduced images of art can either be hung during the day or projected at night. The images can either be advertisements for current exhibits inside the Storehouse, or simply an installation for the public to enjoy. Treating this surface in such a creative way continues to blur the line between art and public life, as well as transforms the building into a piece of art in itself.

L. Art Storage Exterior from NW Broadway / *Nike Graphic Studio Art Show* (Figure 103)

An image of a colorful Nike sneaker is enlarged and hung on the exterior of the Storehouse. The image not only acts as an advertisement for the Nike Graphic Studio Art Show currently taking place inside in the entrance hall, but also gives back to the city with its colorful graphic presence that aims to enliven the street life.

M. Art Storage Exterior At Night from NW Broadway / *Jenny Holzer & Flash:Light PDX Projections* (Figure 104)

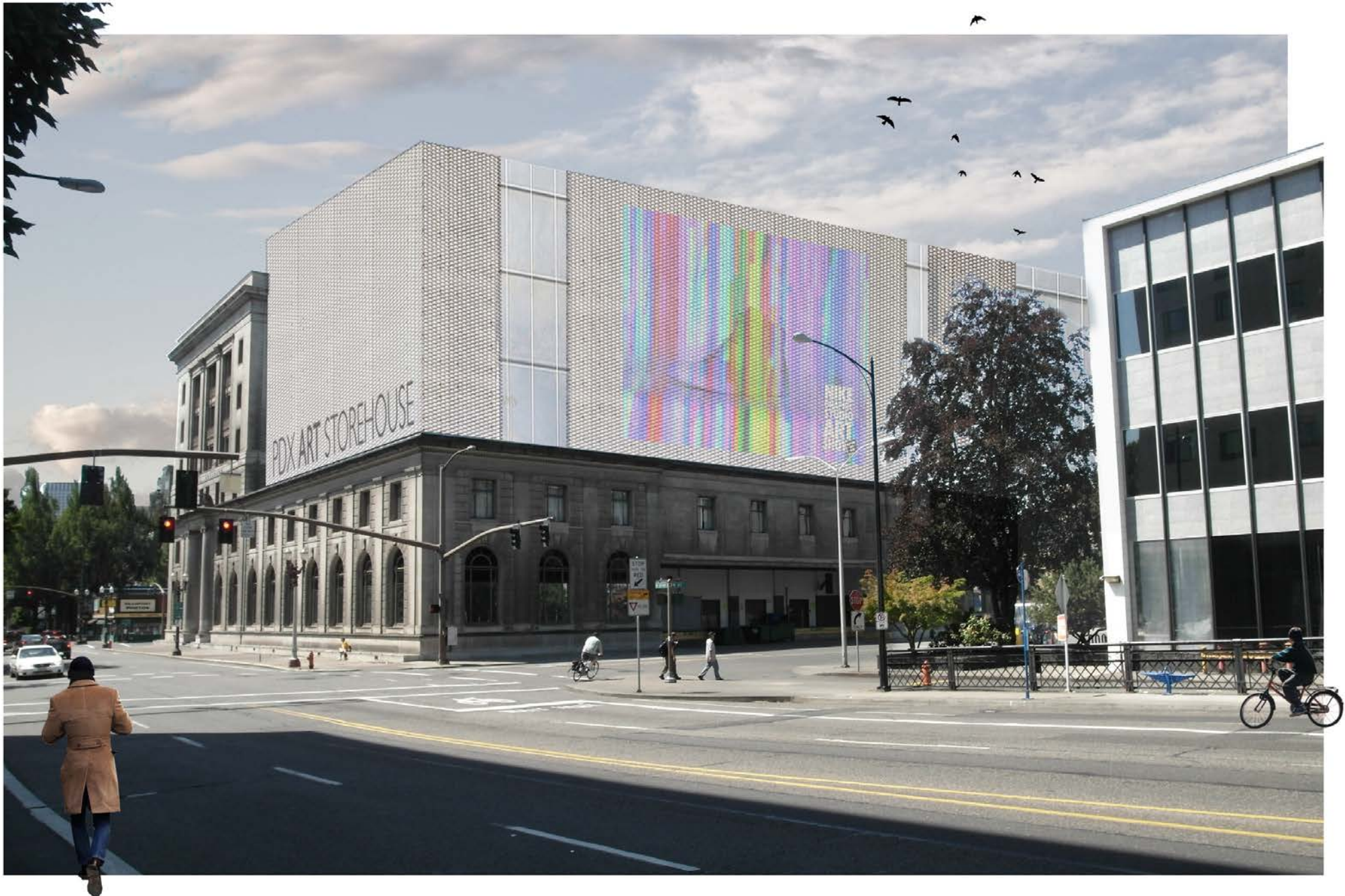
At night time the back of the Storehouse can still have a presence seen throughout the city with the use of light projections. Here the building's surface is transformed by a large-scale, bold text projection by American conceptual artist Jenny Holzer and a colorful, abstract *Flash:Light* projection. Both projections illuminate the Storehouse, giving it a strong public presence in the city after hours.

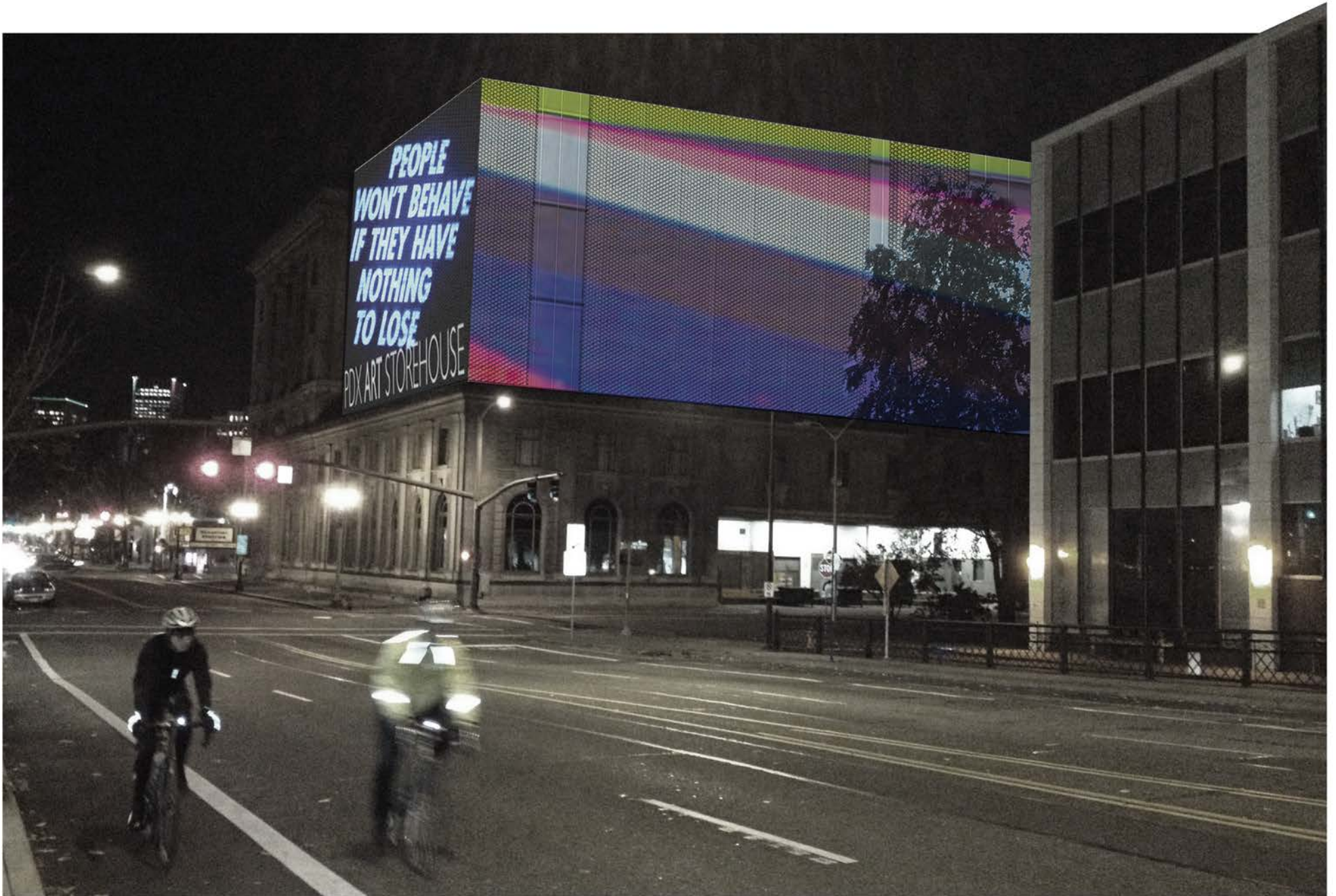
a r t C I T Y

Views from NW Broadway coming off the Broadway Bridge (Figure 102)



L Art Storage Exterior from NW Broadway / Nike Graphic Studio Art Show (Figure 103)





CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION: *A Microcosm of the City*

This thesis began with an initial interest in reimagining the art museum typology in an effort to make art more accessible to the public. The research concluded that the museum is by its nature a sort of social construct and icon. Although the typology of the art museum has undergone many transformations over past centuries, as an institution it remains a place where culture is to be lived and thus depends on the connection between art and its audience. As modes of display have changed, there have been recent trends of taking art into the streets, thus challenging the very notion of the museum as a place where art is to be viewed. However, art as an object and a collection are sacred and an architecture for the art remains relevant. Thus, a ‘museum without walls’ would inevitably fail. Instead there is a need for the life of the streets to be taken into the museum and to continually rethink the evolving three-way relationship between the public, art and architecture on numerous scales.

From initial concept to the final design, this thesis dealt with the question of how the public interacts with art. For the museum as an institution to stay relevant, the public’s experience of art must also change, creating a need for art to be better integrated into the public’s everyday life and activities. The conceptual strategy of this thesis of pairing the city’s underutilized art with industry - thus placing art in new contexts - aims to reshape the user’s experience of art, creating a new and more informal dialogue between art and the user.

Architecturally speaking the final thesis design is in fact a building, however, at its core the building is a sort of microcosm of the city. The building contains everything a city does - restaurants, shops, places to learn and gather and the energy of the streets - but also includes art. As a result the line between art and life is blurred, continually strengthening the public’s accessibility to art. Blurring the edges between art storage, exhibition and event, this thesis reflects a greater idea that architecture is more than just a building, but rather an instrument to facilitate culture, public events and social interactions, as well as create a strong dialogue between art and life.

Arguing for an expansion of the art museum based on a ‘curation experimentation’ lab system, this thesis proposes a model that is tied to the culture of Portland, Oregon, but could very easily be tested in a number of other cities and contexts at a range of scales. Just as art is often a creative experiment, so is architecture. The possibilities for curating new relationships between art and life through the lens of architecture are endless.



Figure 105: Self Portrait in the PDX Art Storehouse Opening



Portland Art Institutions & Galleries

"The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct as possible." - Allen Kaprow, "The Event"



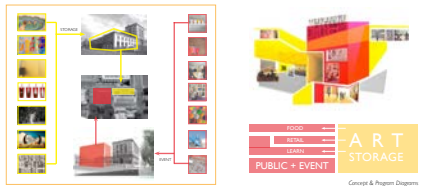
View Towards the Entrance from the North Park Blocks



Ground Level Exhibit Entrance Hall / Main Graphic South A+ B Drive



Crude+Height Installation Exhibition Space / Fourth Block The Nothing Room with Jerome Hoge



Concept & Program Diagram



View into the Storehouse/PNCA Courtyard with Food Trucks



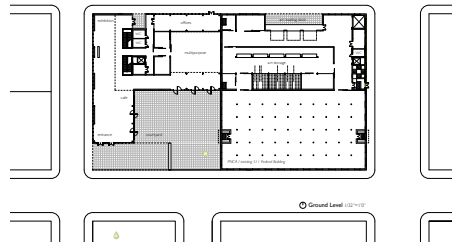
Second Level Exhibition Gallery / Portlandia "Put a Bit On It" Exhibit



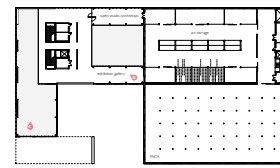
Digital Curator Lab / Wieden+Kennedy Advertising Agency Workshop



Site Plan 100-20110



Ground Level 100-20110



Level Two 100-20110



Level Three 100-20110

artPORTLAND

artPARK

artEVENT

artLEARN

Figure 106: Curation Experimentation, Printed Boards (Thesis Defense Exhibit, 4 December 2012)



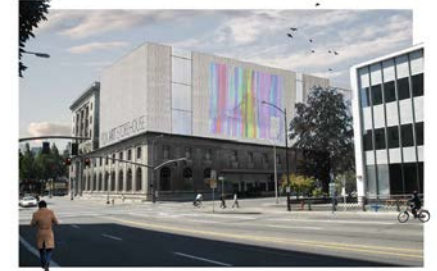
Retail Space Flowing Outside Courtyard / The Missing Link



Food Courtyard / Art-themed Dining / Icon House



Visible Art Storage Space / Artists Tea Party / Preparing for Pop Art FDC



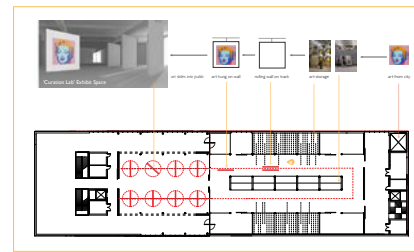
Art Storage Exterior from Hill Broadway / Icon Graphic / South Art Zone



Fashion Retail Courtyard / Art / Curatorial Approach / 2013 Zone



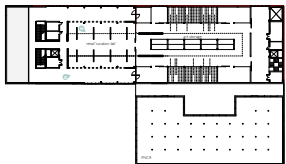
Food Courtyard / Art-themed Dining / Icon



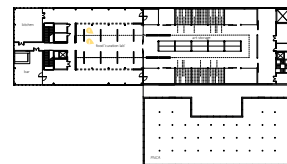
Art Storage Courtyard / System / Riding Walk on Racks / Paint with Access



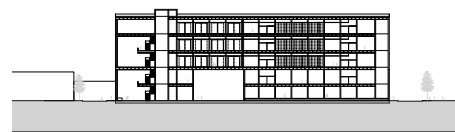
Art Storage Exterior at Night from Hill Broadway / Icon House & Rooftop FDC Perspective



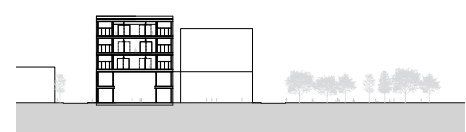
Level Plan 1:12 (1/2)



Level Plan 1:12 (1/2)



Section Facing North 1:12 (1/2)



Section Facing East 1:12 (1/2)

artRETAIL

artFOOD

artSTORAGE

artCITY

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