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Charon's Passage: A Pyramid for the 21st Century

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Charon's Passage



a pyramid for the 21st century

Maximilian Kronauer

2017

Charon's Passage is the product of *nimiety*¹: a pyramid for the 21st century. By engaging the mausoleum within the context of global urbanization and global consumption, notions of permanence and object-form relationships are challenged and renegotiated through the introduction of foreign agents and spatial products.

As an architectural project, the mausoleum engages with architecture for architecture's sake, a side-effect of the program-less status it enjoys. Furthermore, the mausoleum is conceived as an object of permanence: culturally and tectonically it is designed to last forever and, by association, formally predicated on autonomy. Consequently, the mausoleum typology affirms the issue of significant form, privileging formal operations over the context, the user, and the program. Yet, the mausoleum falls back on antiquated imagery and symbolism, relying on its stoic stasis that has resisted change and contemporary design methodologies. Limited by an autocratic definition of form, the mausoleum is unyielding whereas 21st century architecture is dynamic; a malleable system open to interpretation. Thus, the mausoleum stands in opposition to urbanization's ethos of pluralistic formless expansion of the city.

Charon's Passage reclaims the idle territory of the mausoleum by activating it with public space for the living as well as the dead to undermine its conventional dialectics and identity of funerary architecture. Reconceptualizing the mausoleum with the active program of the casino-resort proposes a synthesis of opposing parts, a conflict that positions stereotomic form against the tectonic. Cohabiting antagonistic forces now produce an architecture of simultaneities in the mausoleum. The resolution of the mausoleum-resort/resort-mausoleum manufactures unorthodox urbanistic and social relationships between architecture and capitalist "modes of accumulation."² As casino, the typology rejects the "capitalist myth of work,"³ in favor of an "expansive choreography of leisure,"⁴ resulting in a product where life and death are bound by a singular utopian concept: paradise. In this Eden, the mausoleum is positioned as a formal artifact that empowers its own (a)political and economic systems of control. The mausoleum is now an architectural and infrastructural chassis that no longer hinges on reflection or lamentation, but supports spirited civic activities. Ultimately, the agency of the project is facilitated by overlapping autonomies that assume the scale, density, and power structures of a city-state as exhibited by the casino-resort while reinforcing the sacredness of the mausoleum's objective formal agenda.

1 *nimiety*: the state of being more than is necessary or desirable; excess

2 Aureli, Pier. *The Project of Autonomy* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2013),6.

3 Aureli. 38.

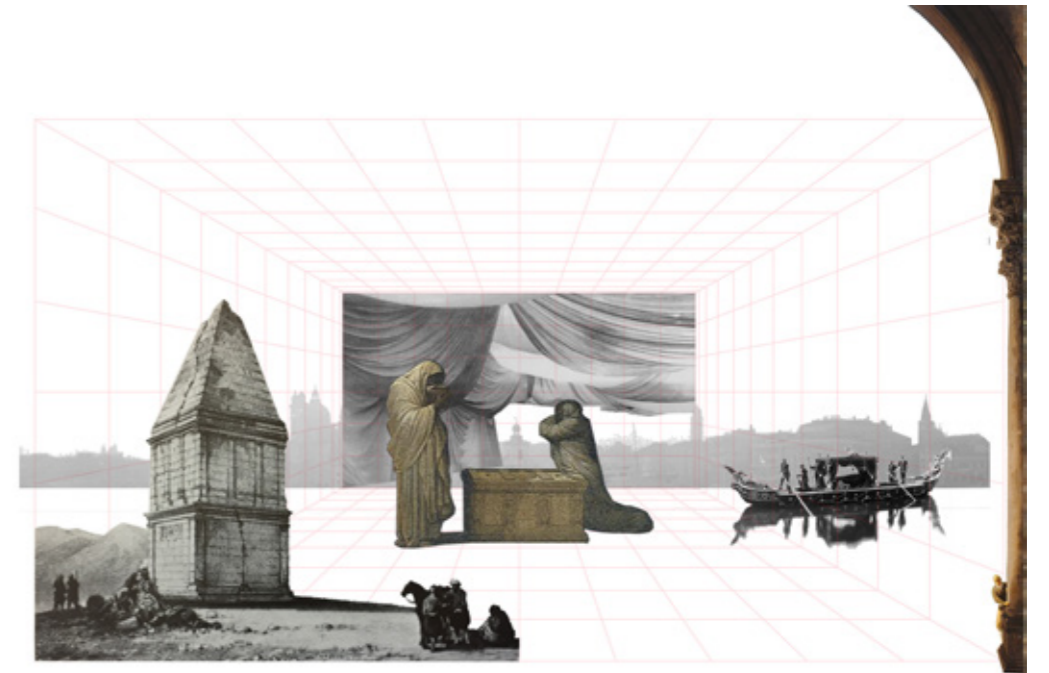
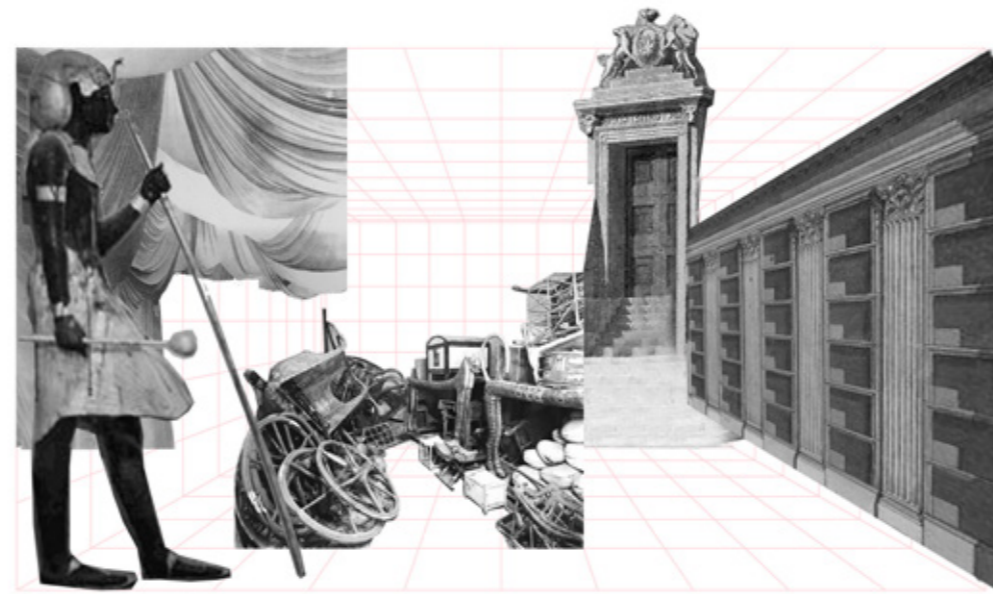
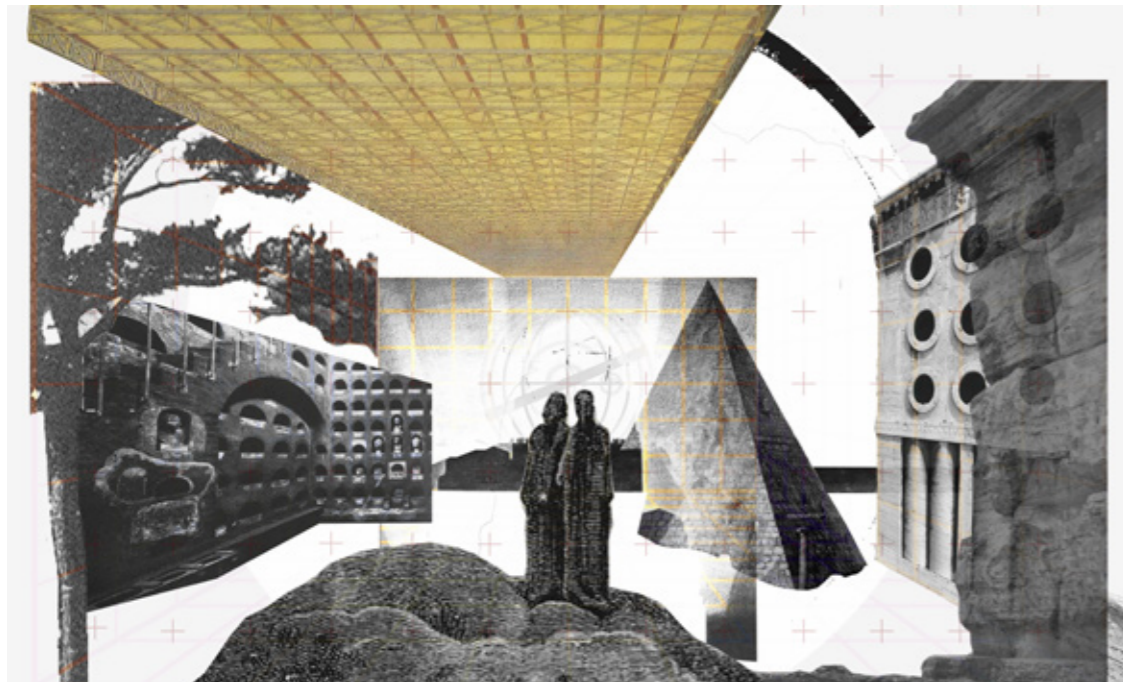
4 Easterling, Keller. *Enduring Innocence* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 23.

“Tourism maintains a Vatican-like state-within-a-state offering political asylum, internal escape, and immunity to all those converts who recognize and endorse its image.” - Keller Easterling, *Enduring Innocence*



Tomb of Nero, Giovanni Piranesi, c. 1750

Spaces of Death



Floating Sovereignties



The Tower of Babel, Pieter Bruegel, 1563

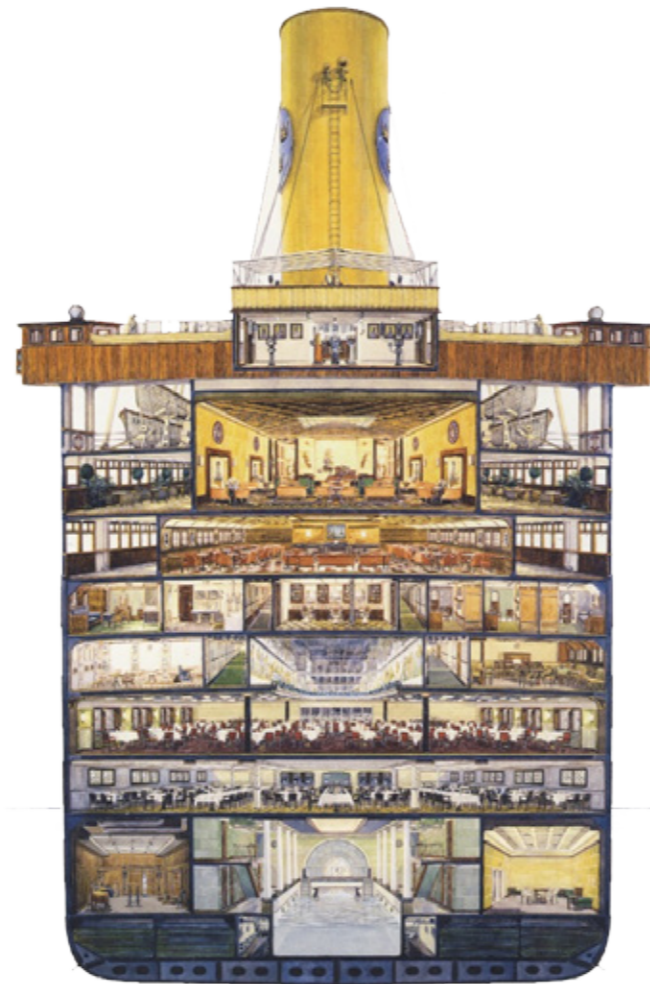


Island of Utopia

Icons of Nimiety



Tomb Eurysaces

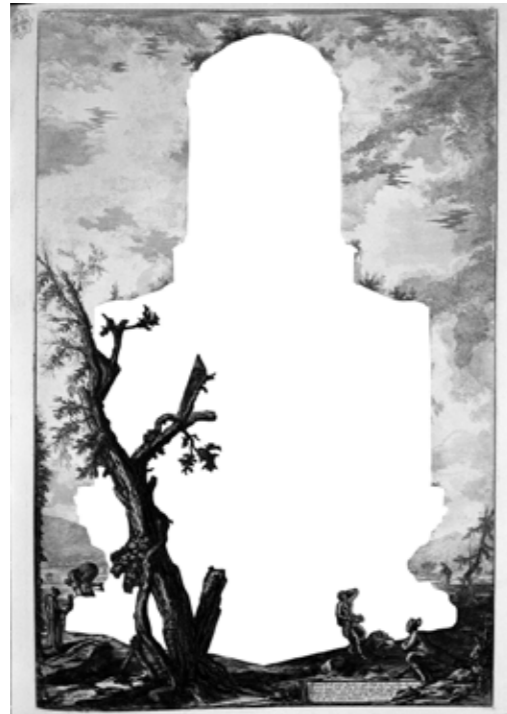


Cruise Ship Section

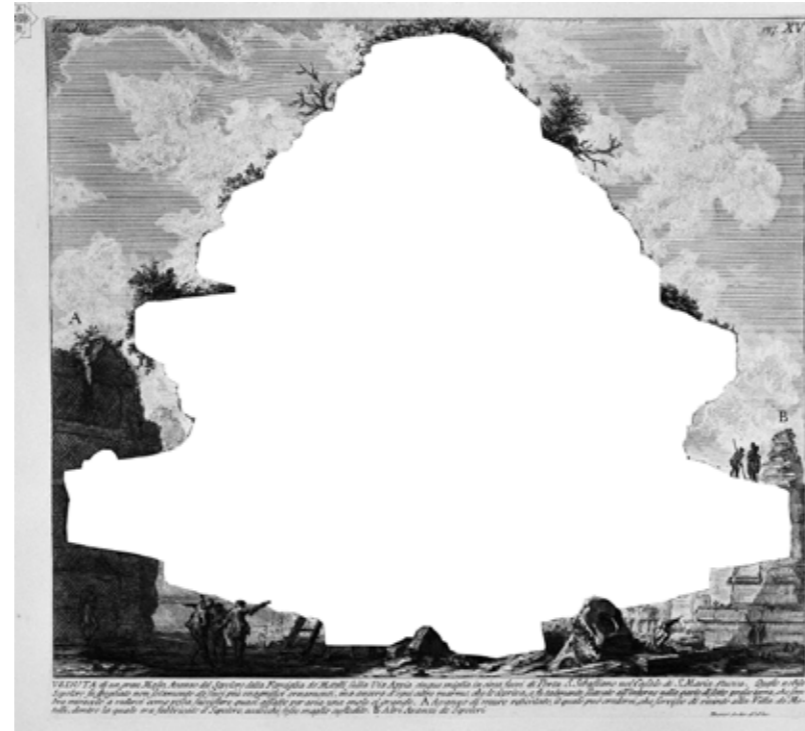


New York New York

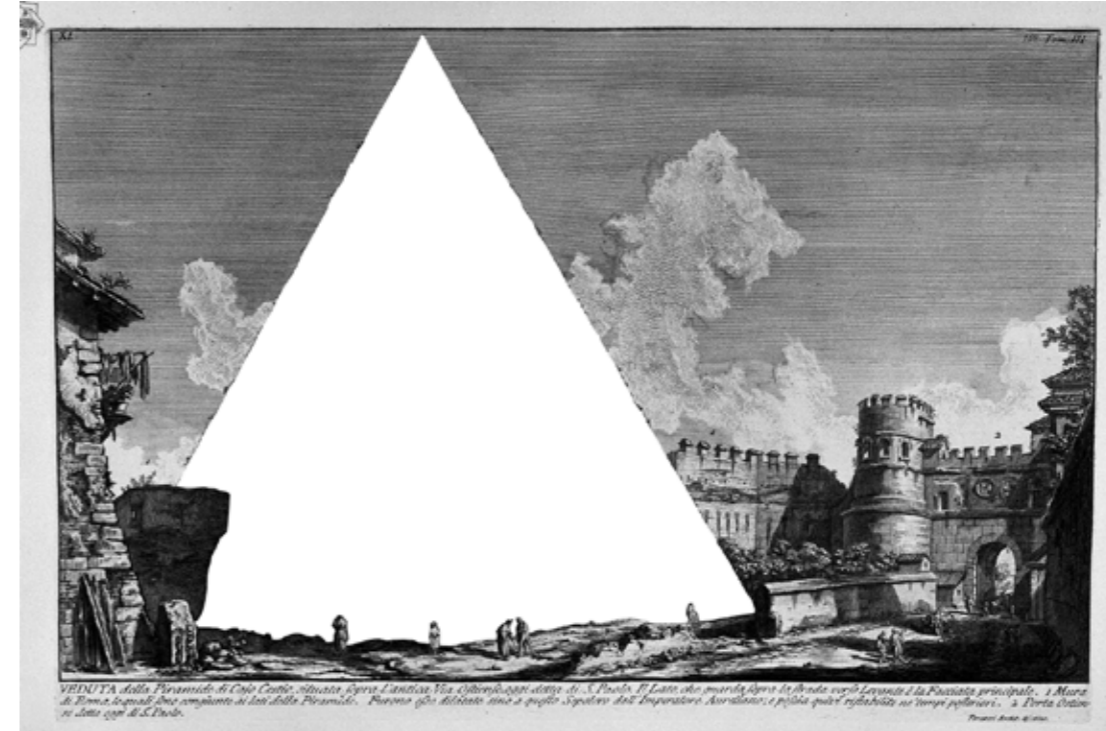
The Grand Tour



Tomb of Distaff



Roman Family Tomb



Pyramid of Cestius

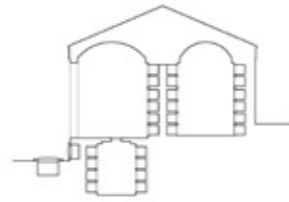
The Archipelago



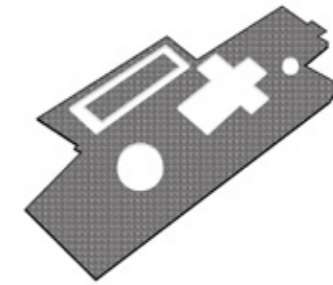
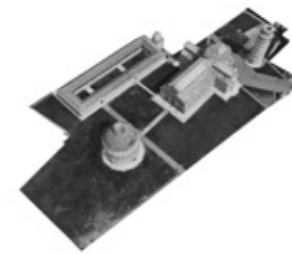
Venice Lagoon

The Cemetery

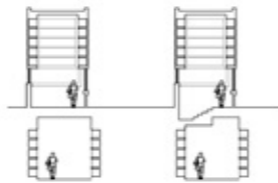
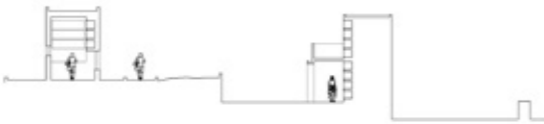
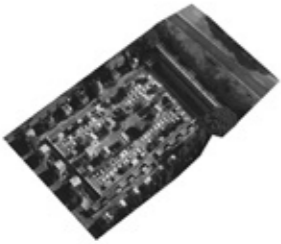
Verona



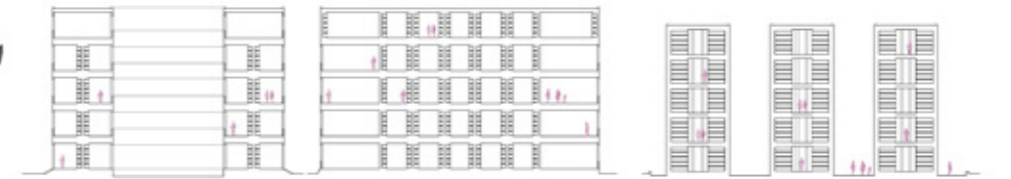
Pisa



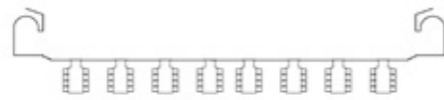
Rome



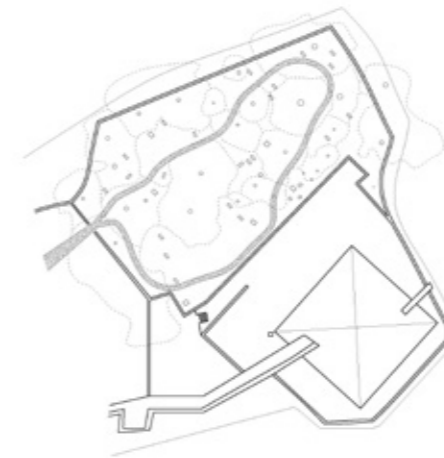
Rome



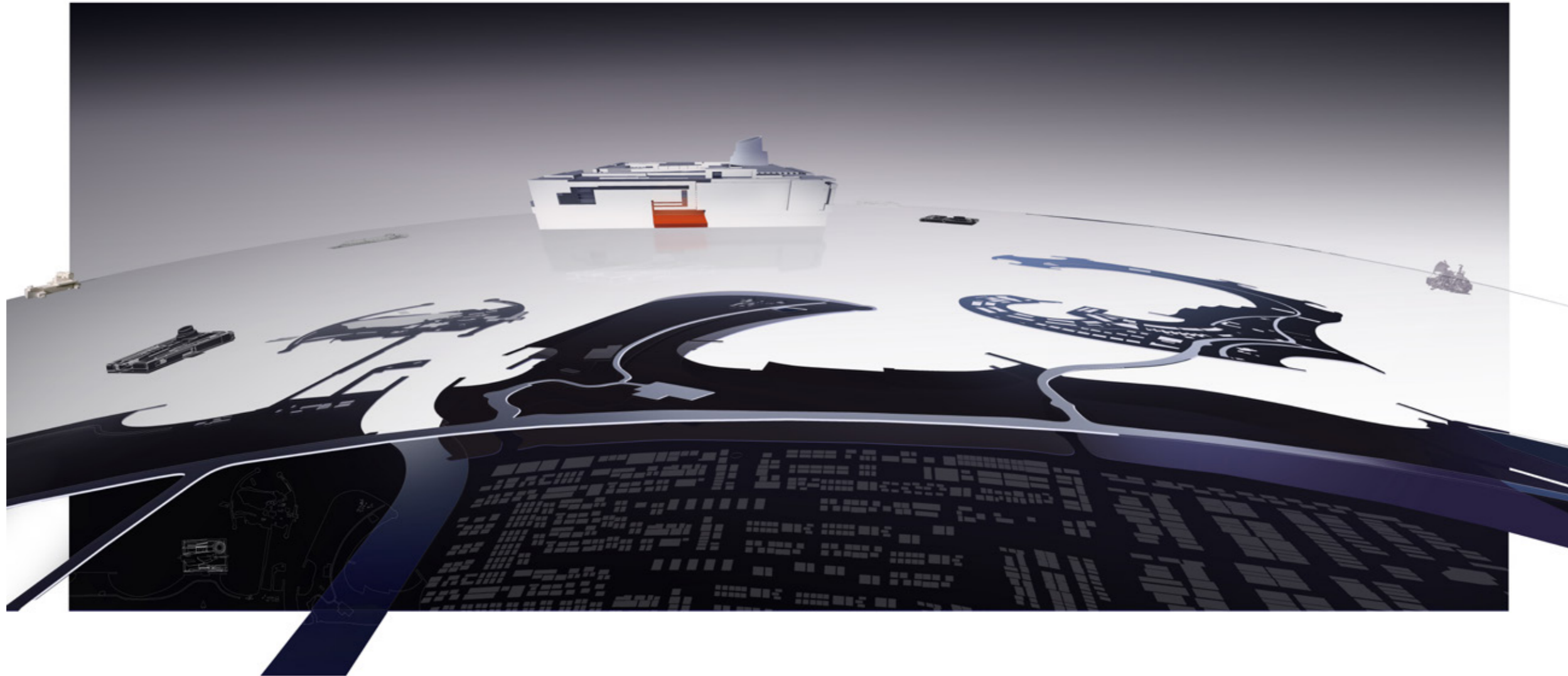
Rome



Rome



The Grand Tour



Dubai Islands

The Subject



The Promenade

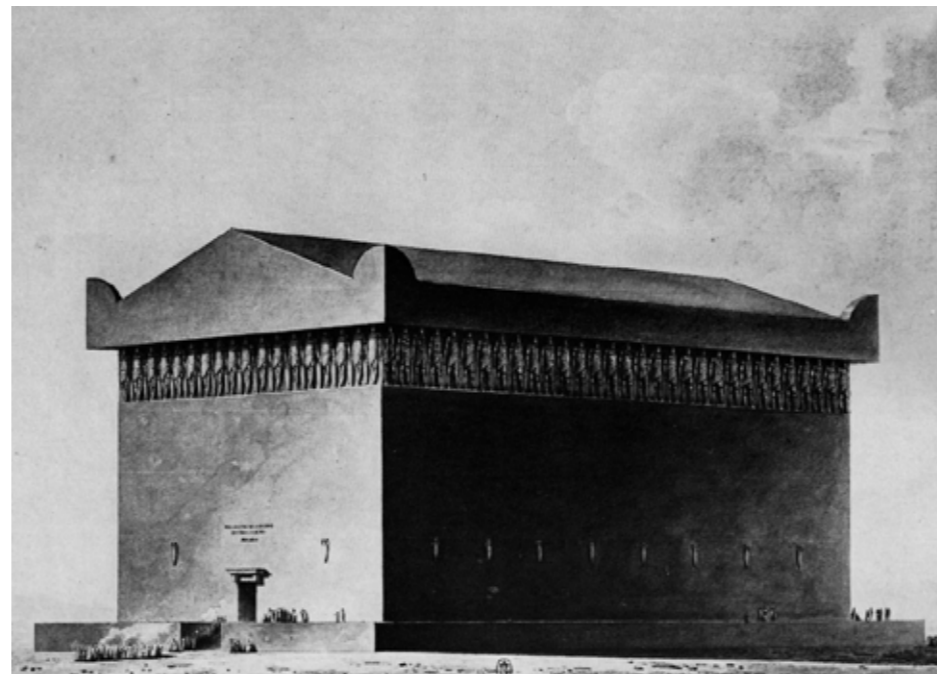
The Mausoleum

Necropolis



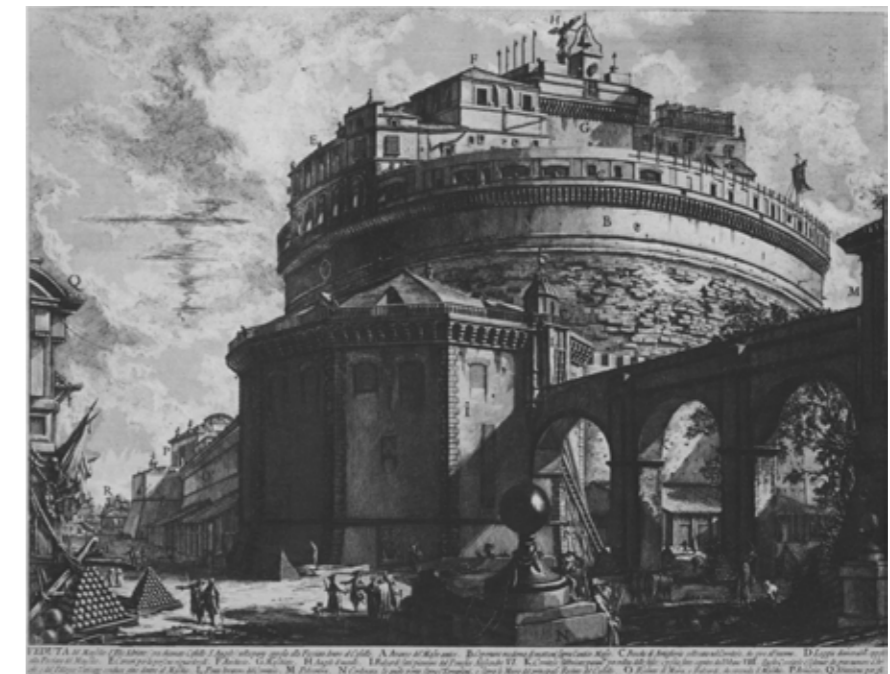
Campo Marizo, Giovanni Pianesi, 1756

Scalable Artifact



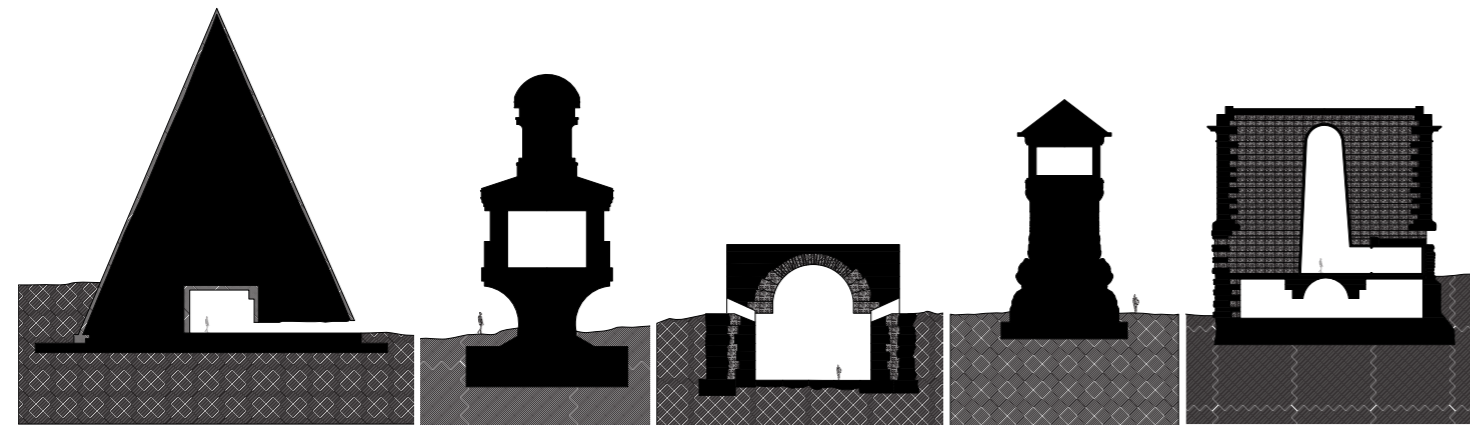
Tomb of A Soldier, Boullée, c. 1750

Urban Microcosm



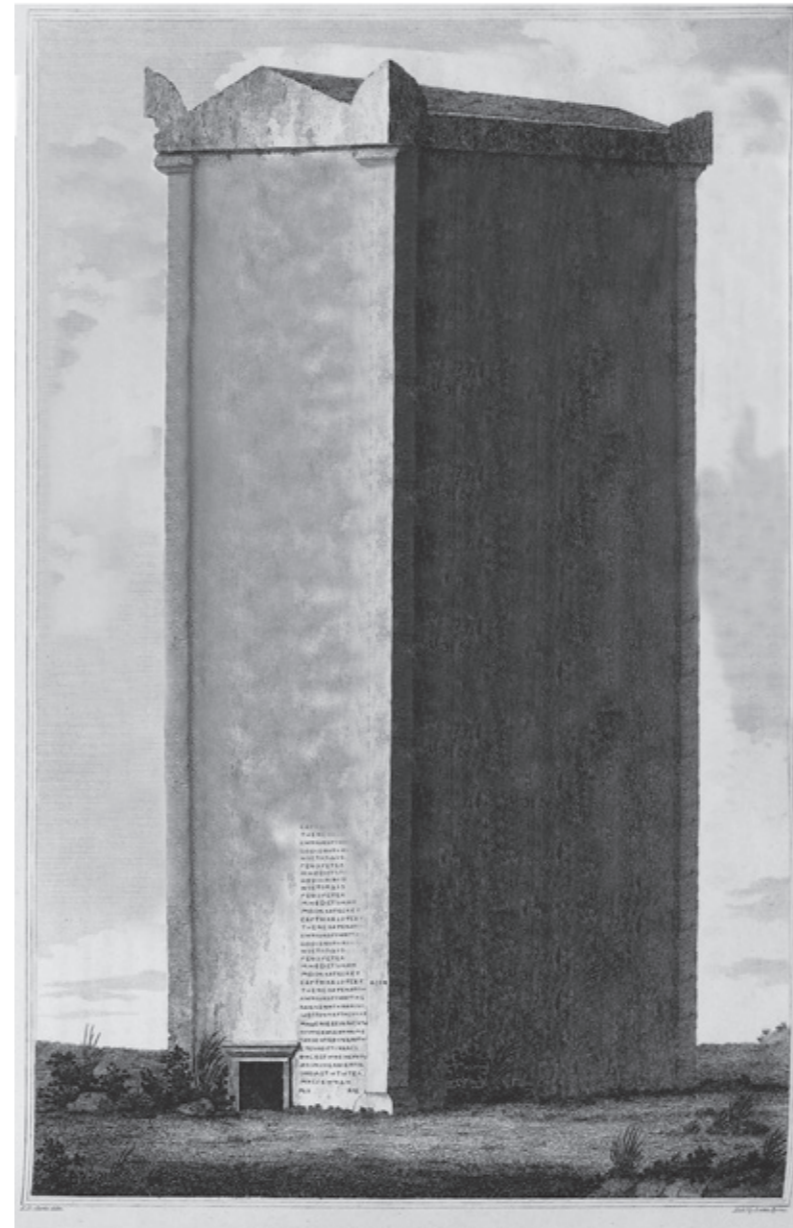
Hadrian's Tomb, Giovanni Piranesi, 1756

The Mausoleum



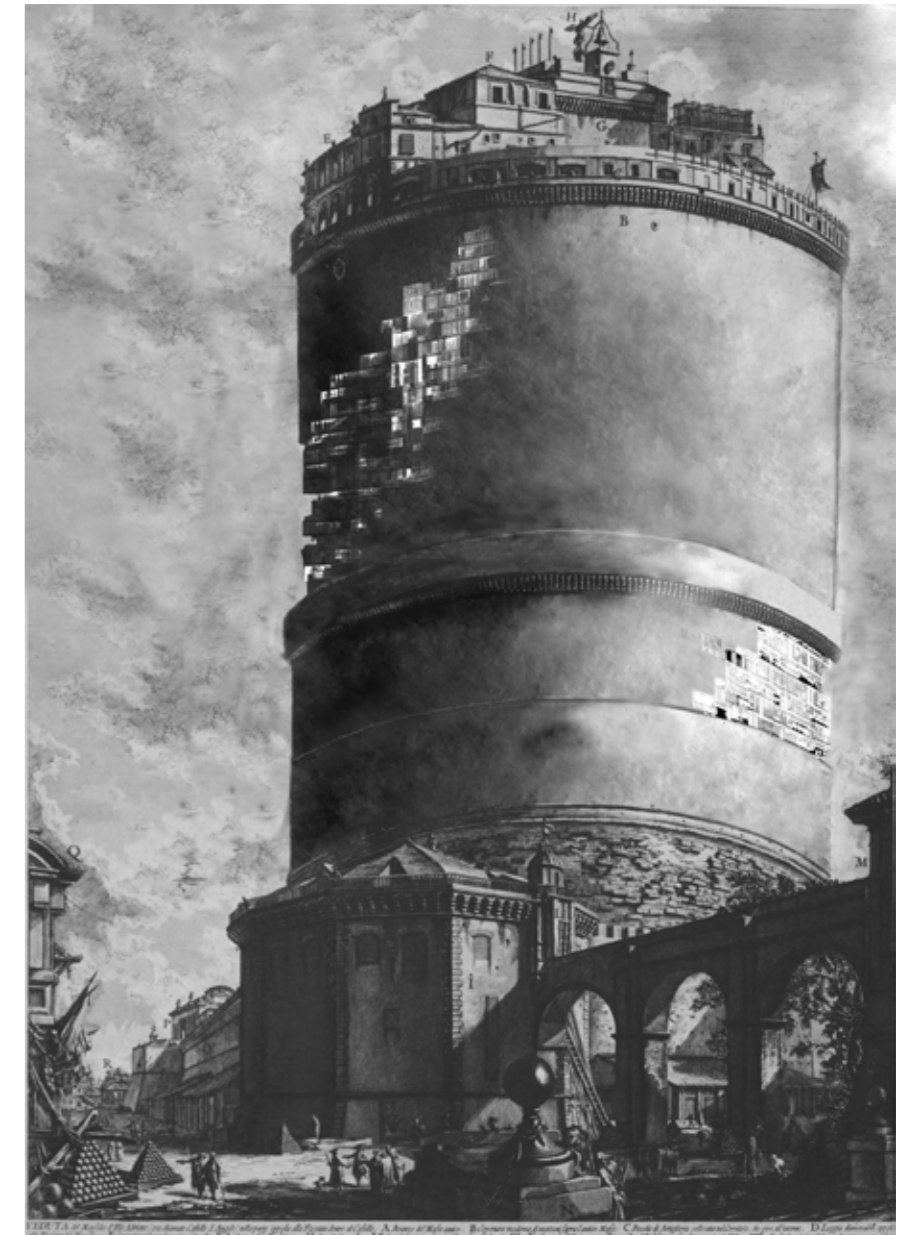
Necropolis Section

Scalable Artifact



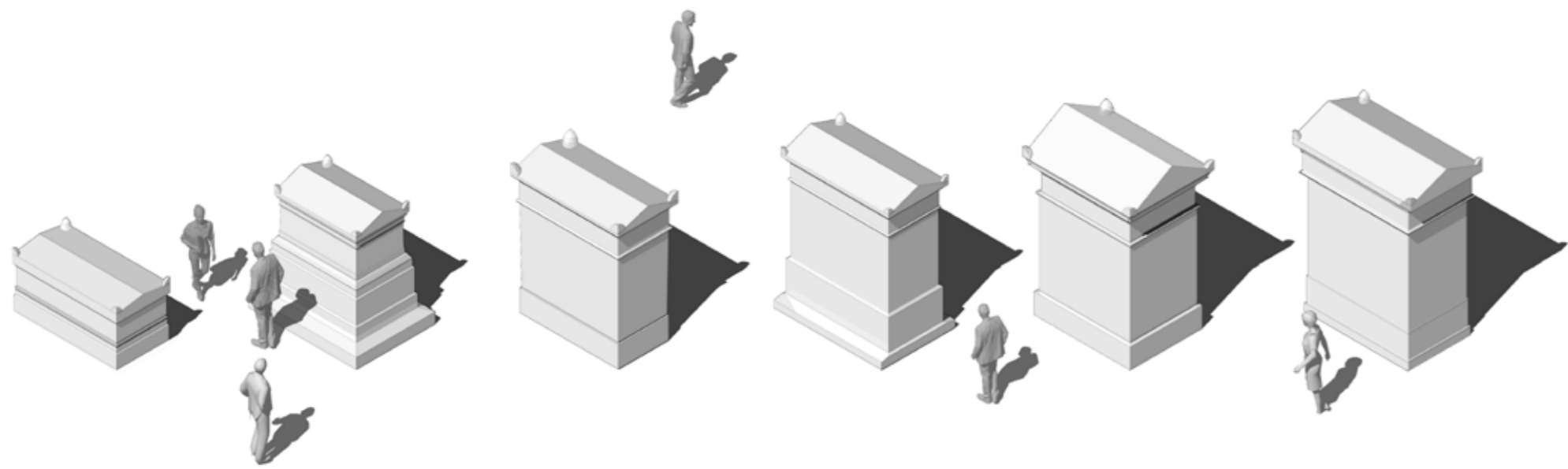
Tomb of an Individual

Urban Microcosm

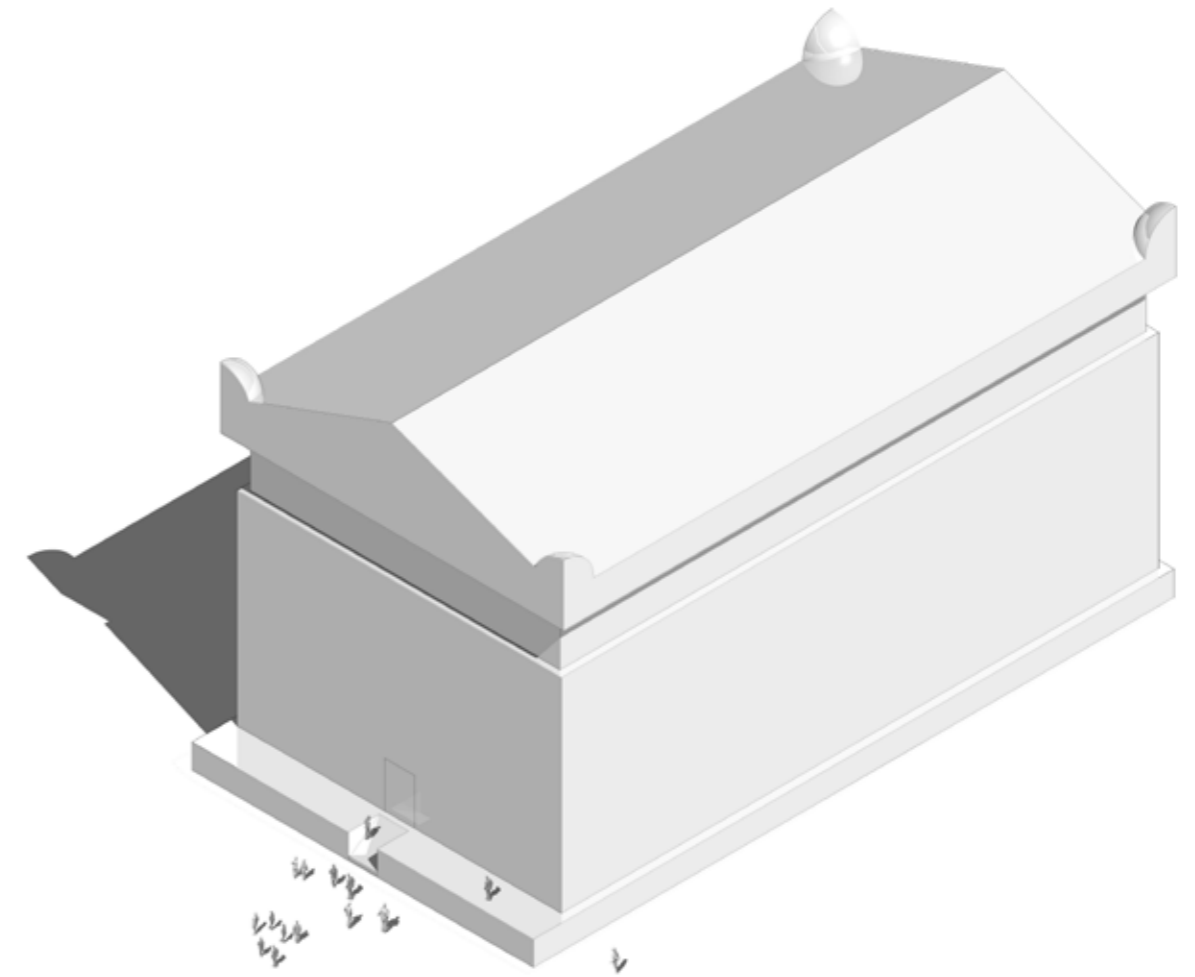


Hadrian's Skyscraper

The Mausoleum

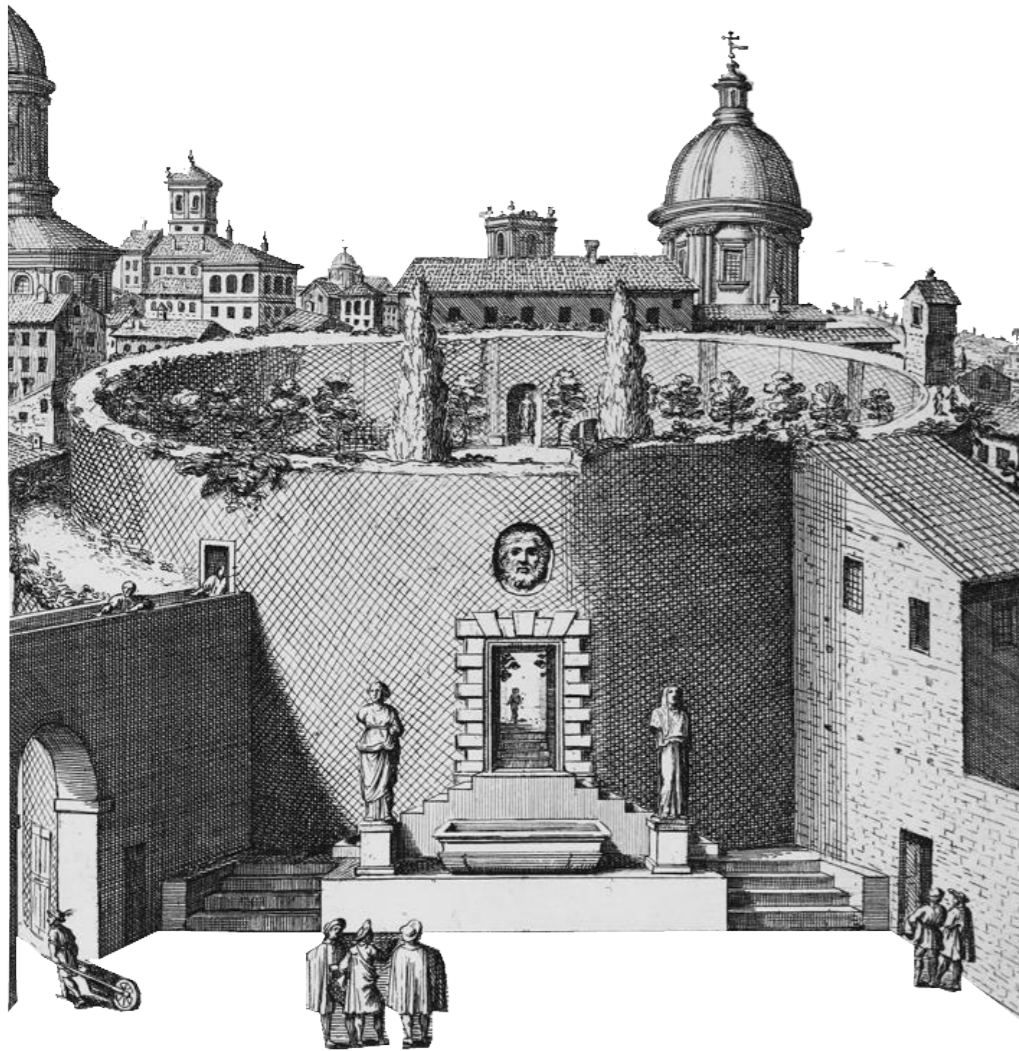


Scales of Association

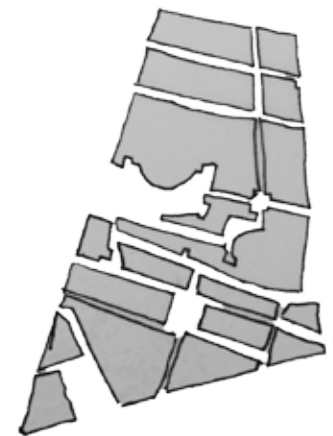
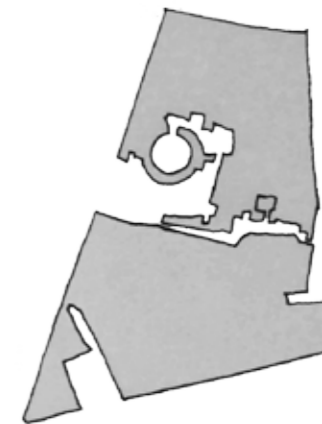
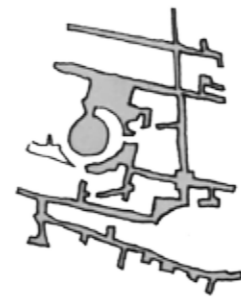


Tomb of A Soldier

The Mausoleum

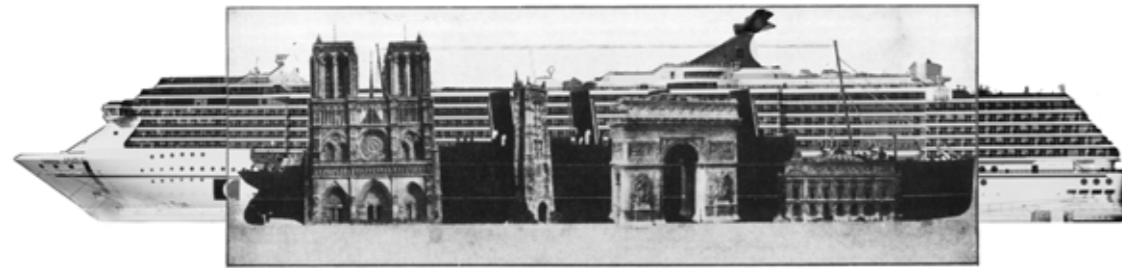


Tomb of Augustus



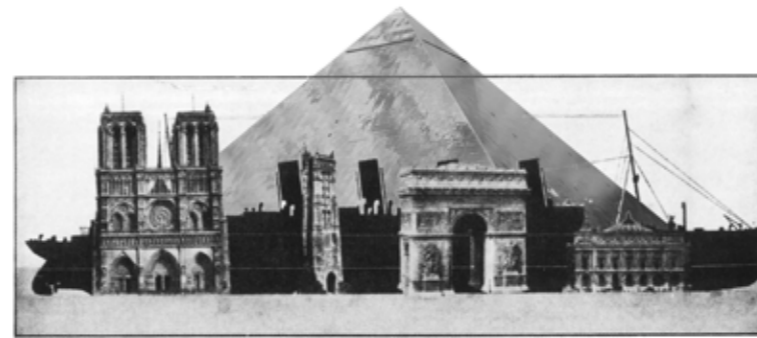
Object Urbanism

Cruise Ship



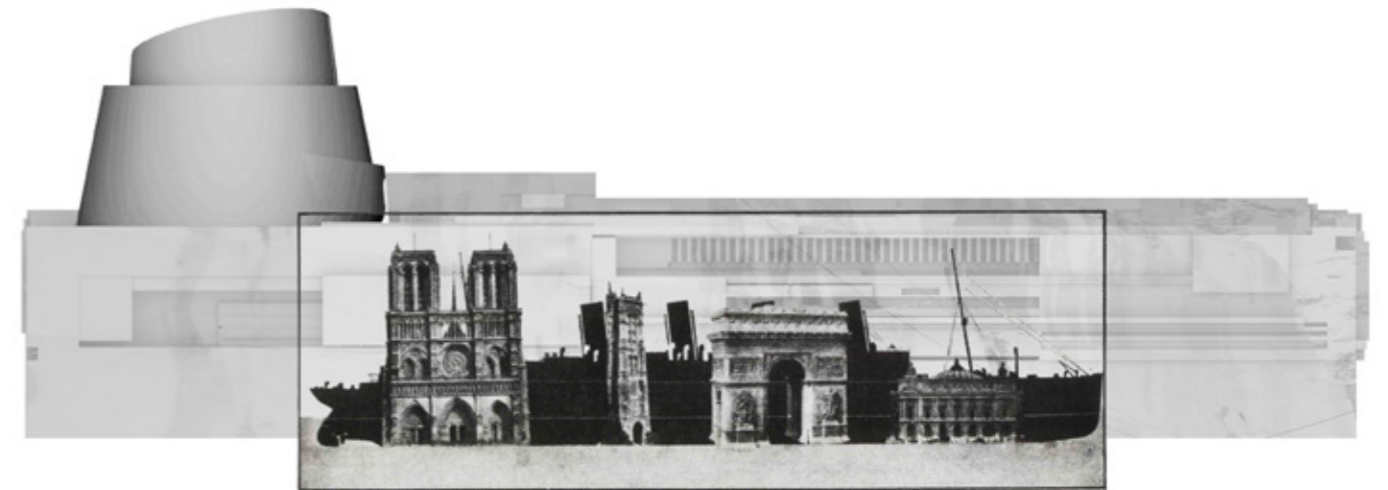
The cruise ship, *Sea of Harmony*, Royal Caribbean, carries 5,479 persons.

Casino Resort



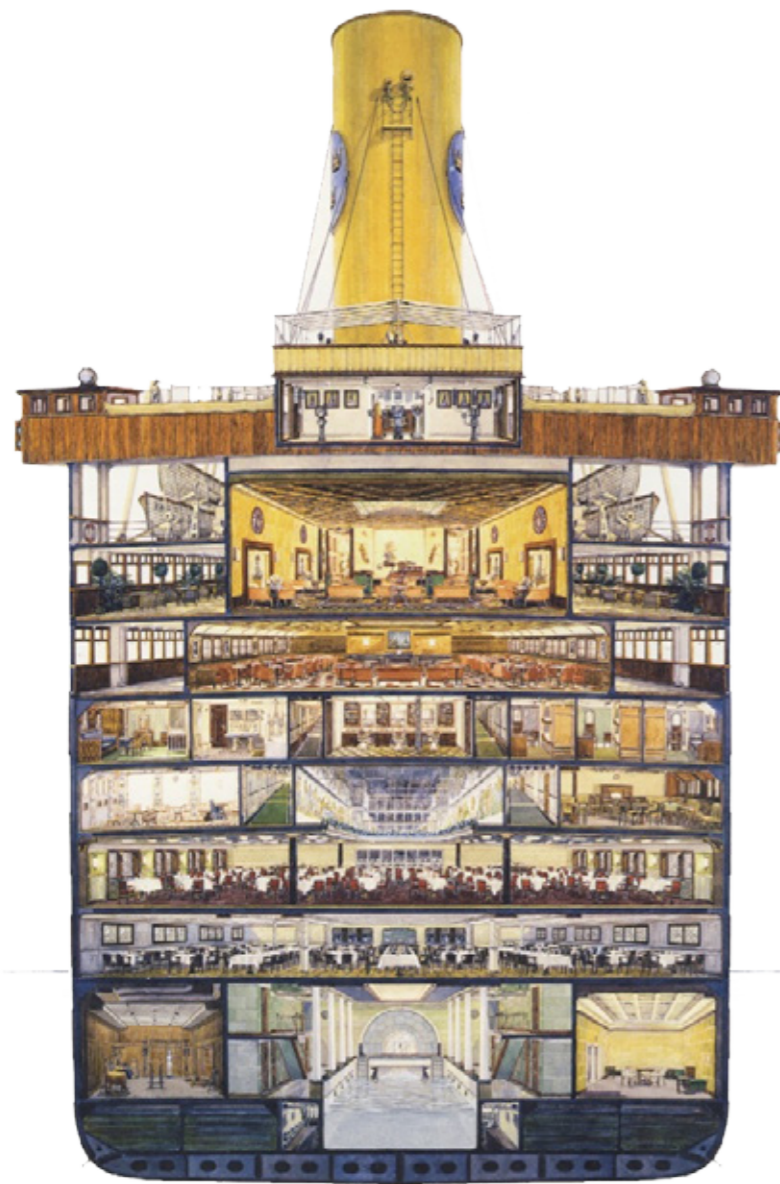
The Casino, *Luxor*, Las Vegas, holds 6,000 persons.

Mausoleum-City State



Charon's Passage, carries 12,000 persons.

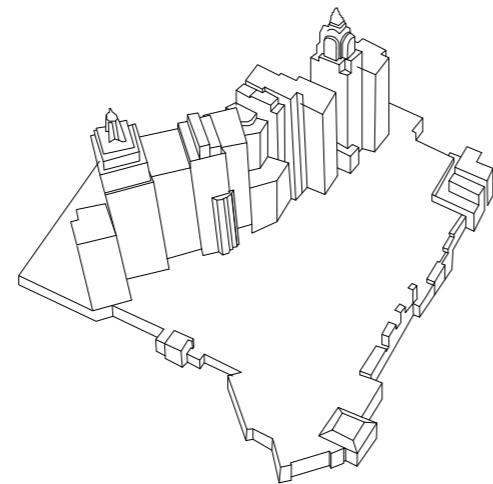
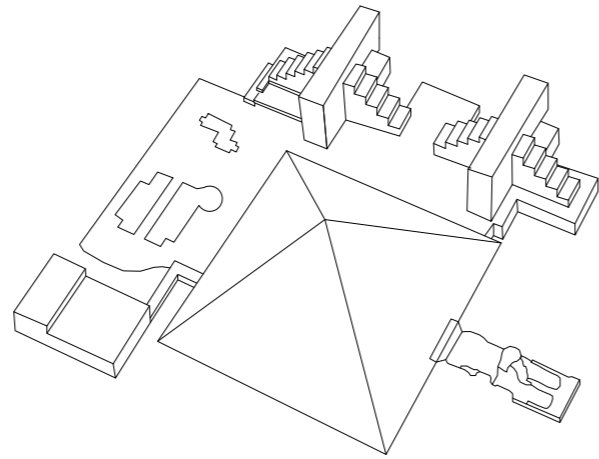
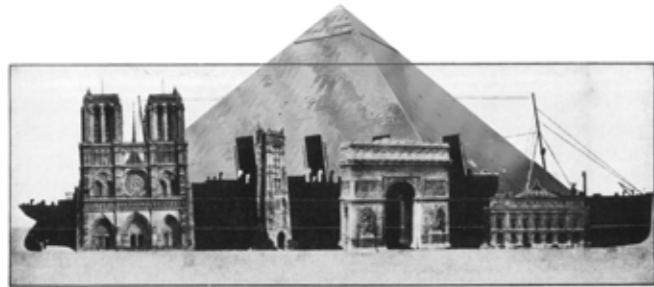
Cruise Line



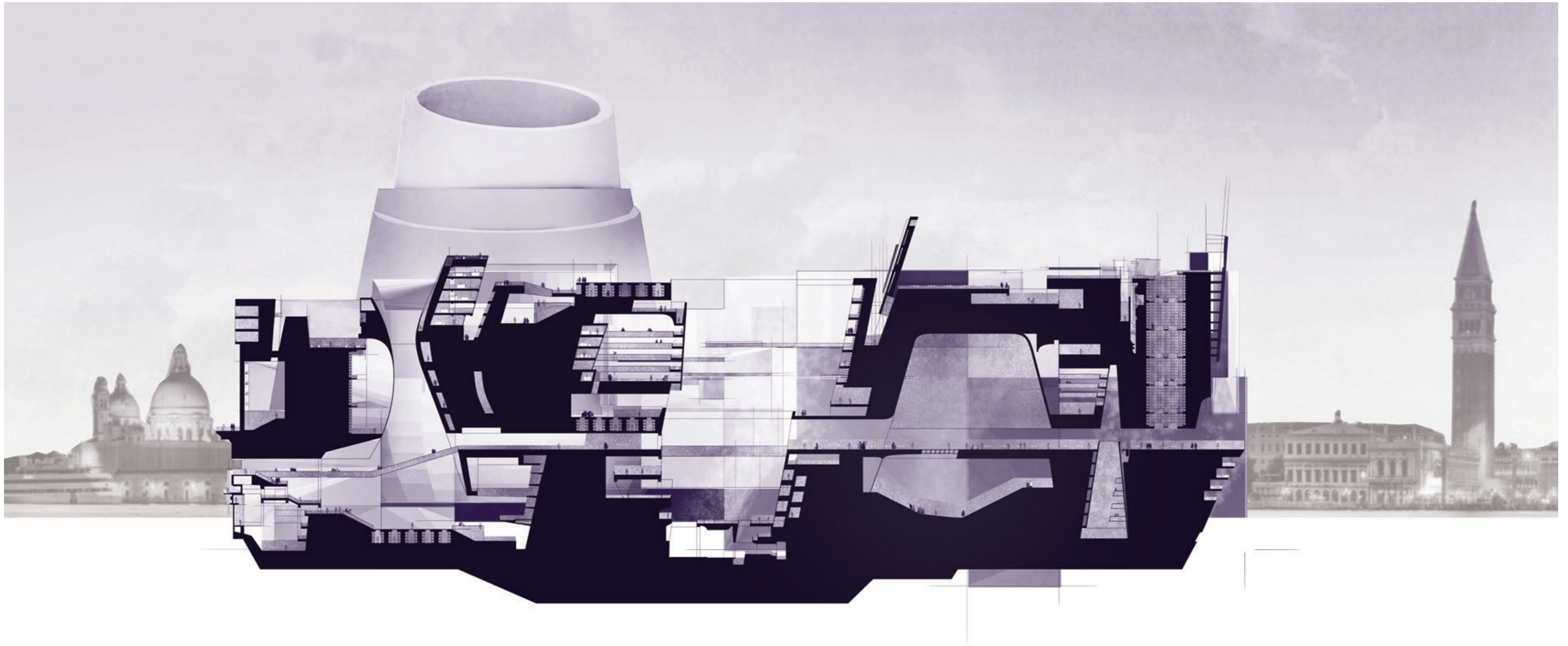
Cruise Liner Program



The Casino



City Section



Scales of Autonomy



Tomb of Hadrian



Great Pyramid



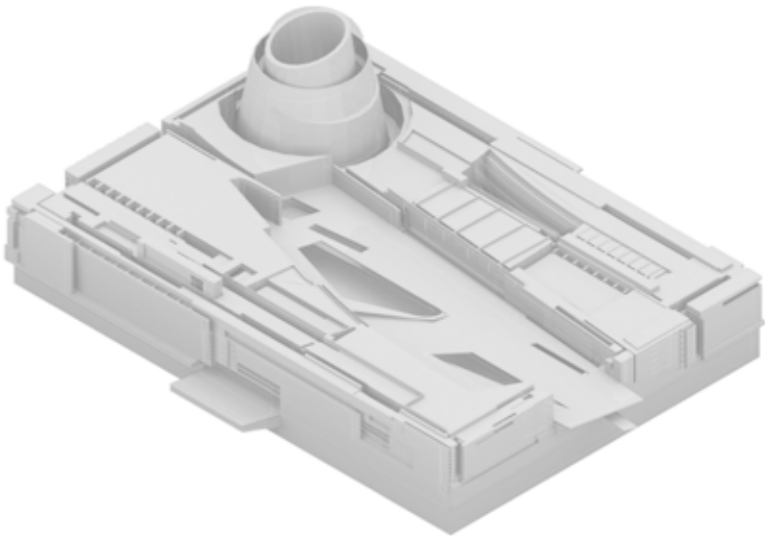
Tomb of a Soldier



New York, New York



Sea of Harmony



Charon's Passage

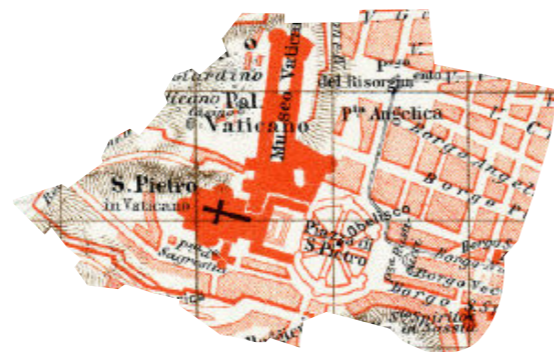
Civic Scale



Palazzo Charon



Florentia



Vatican

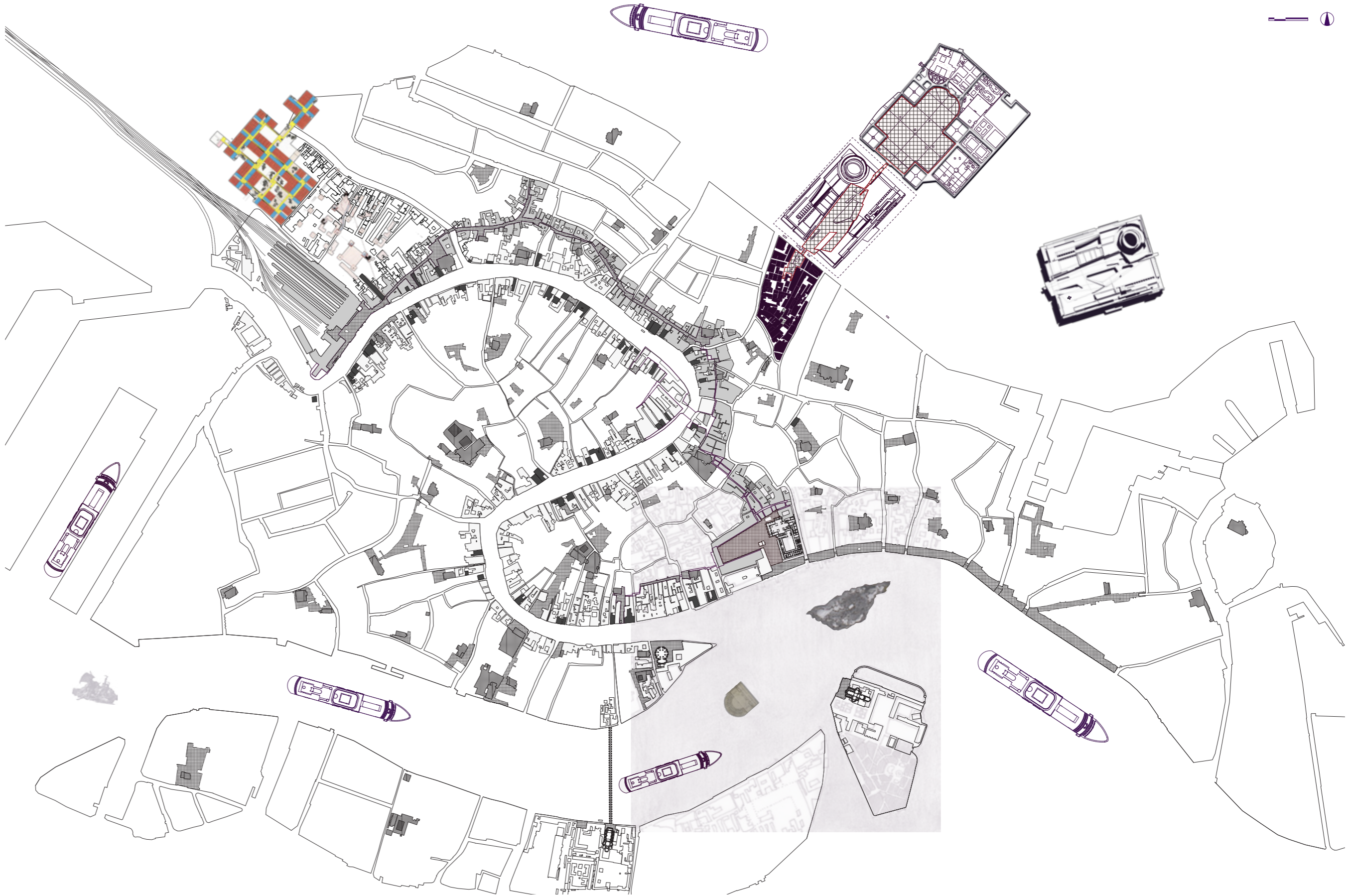


Orvieto



Lucca

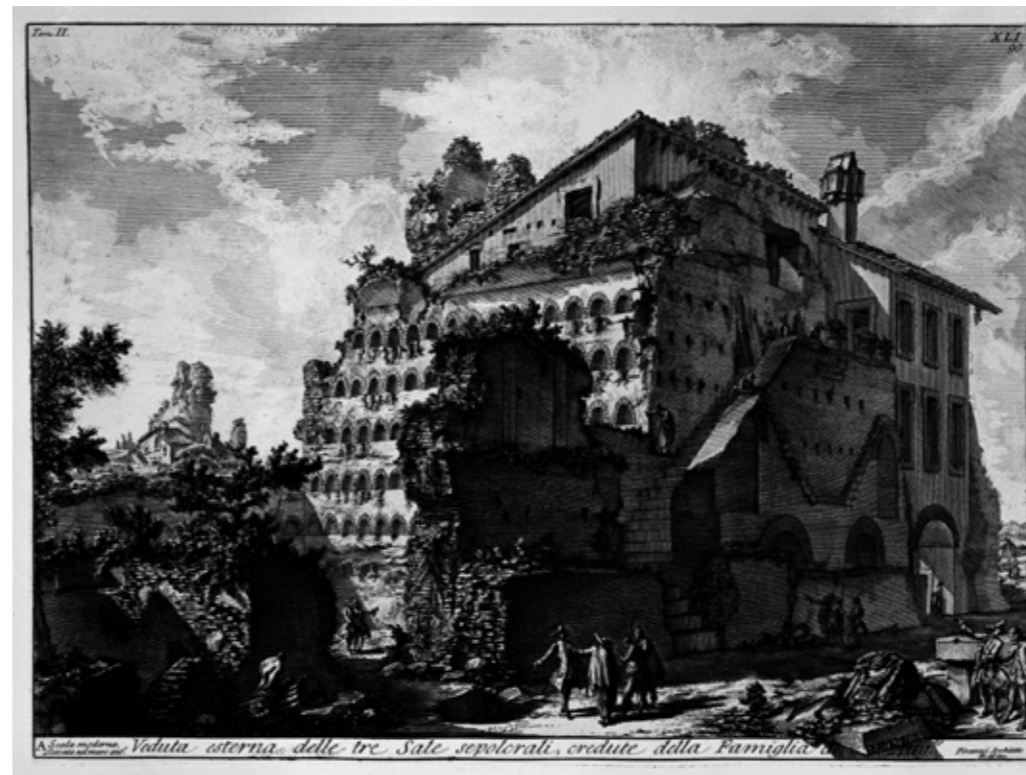
Site



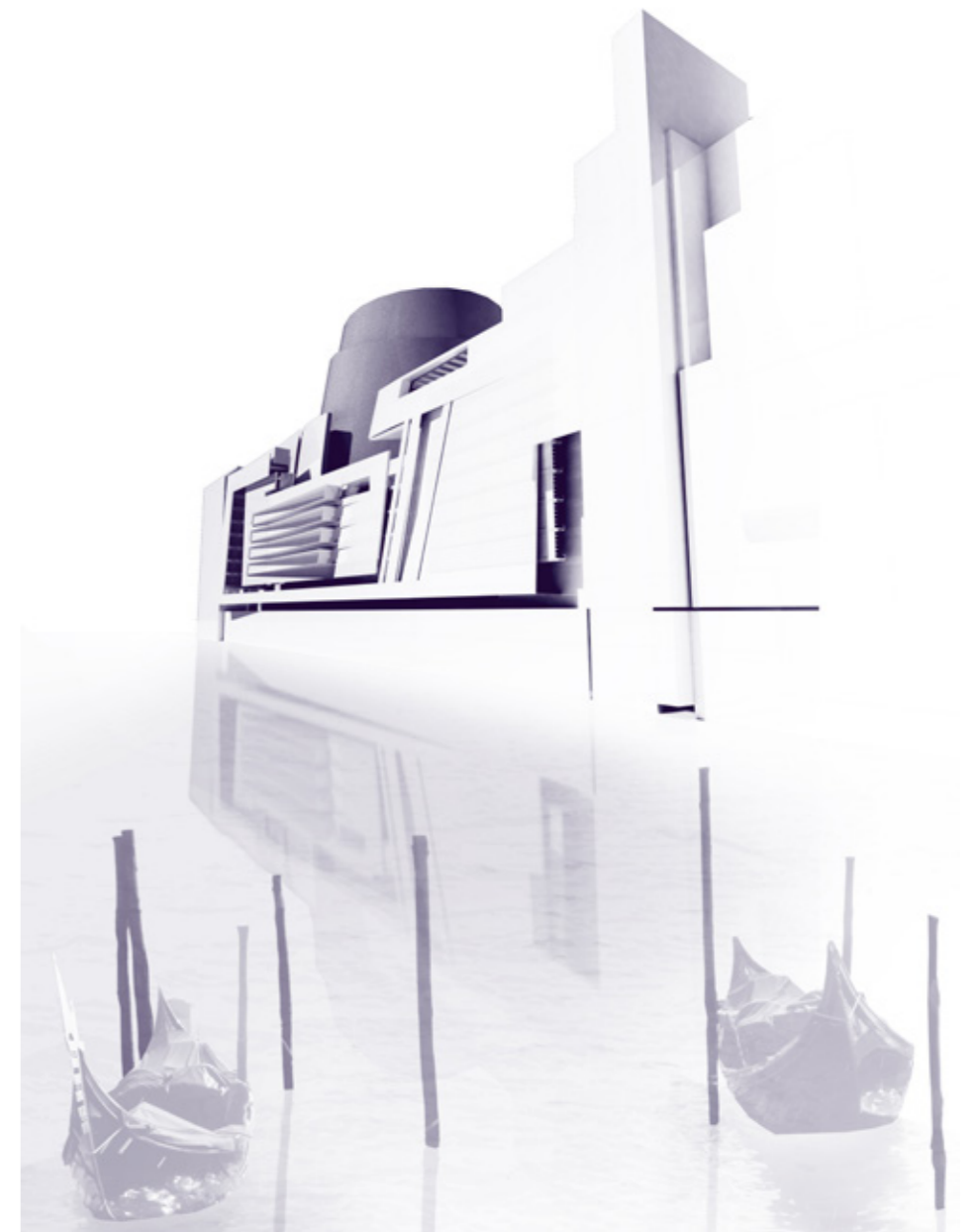
Exterior Body



Costa Fortuna, Venice



Roman Columbarium, Piranesi, c. 1750



The Cruise Ship



Sea of Harmony



Section of the Sepulchral Chamber, Piranesi, c. 1750



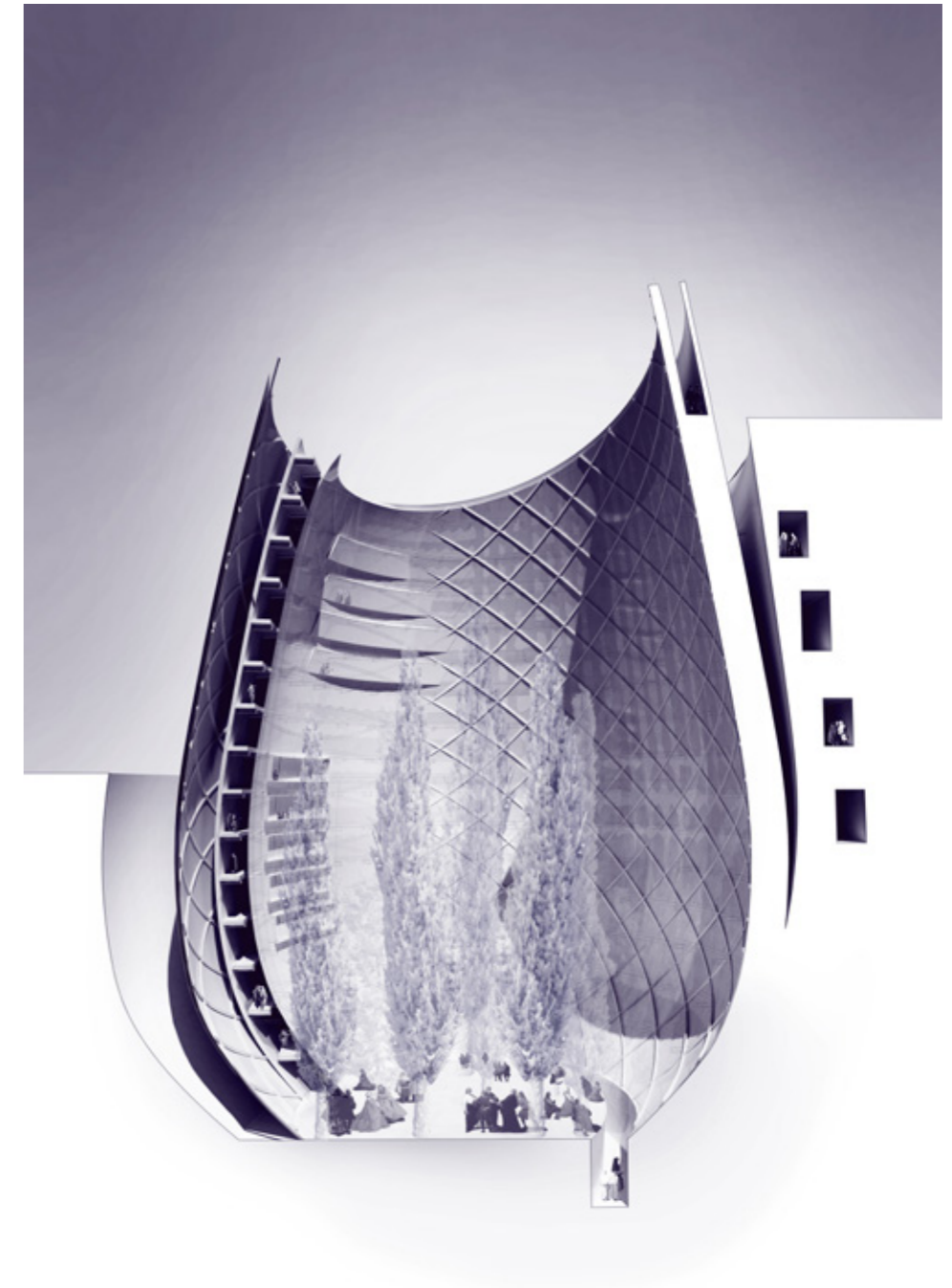
The Cruise Ship



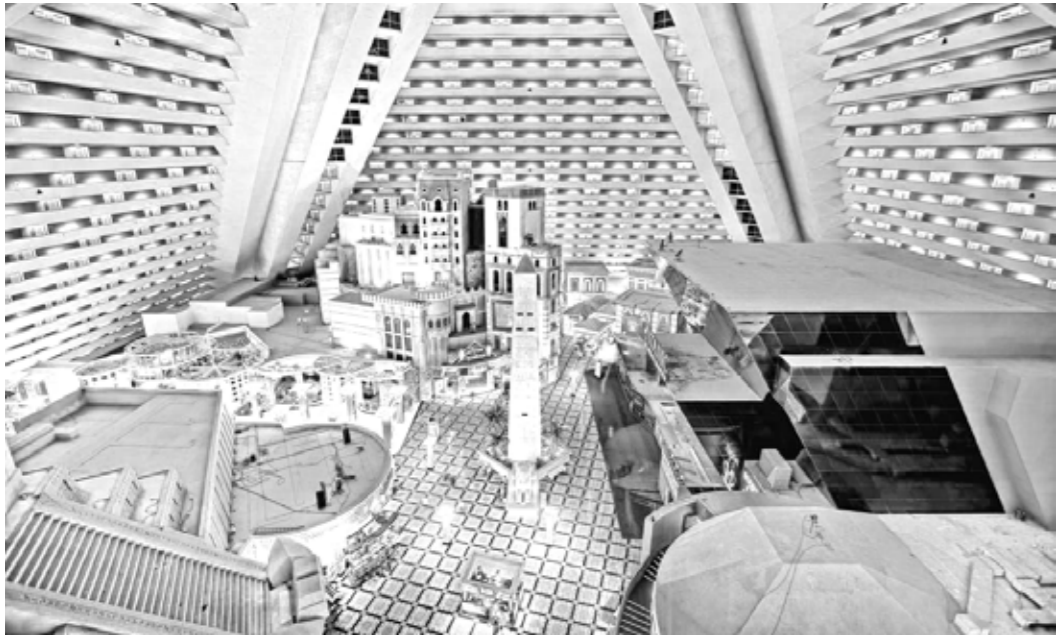
Sea of Harmony



Mausoleum of Augustus,
Aegidius Sadeler, c. 1600



The Casino



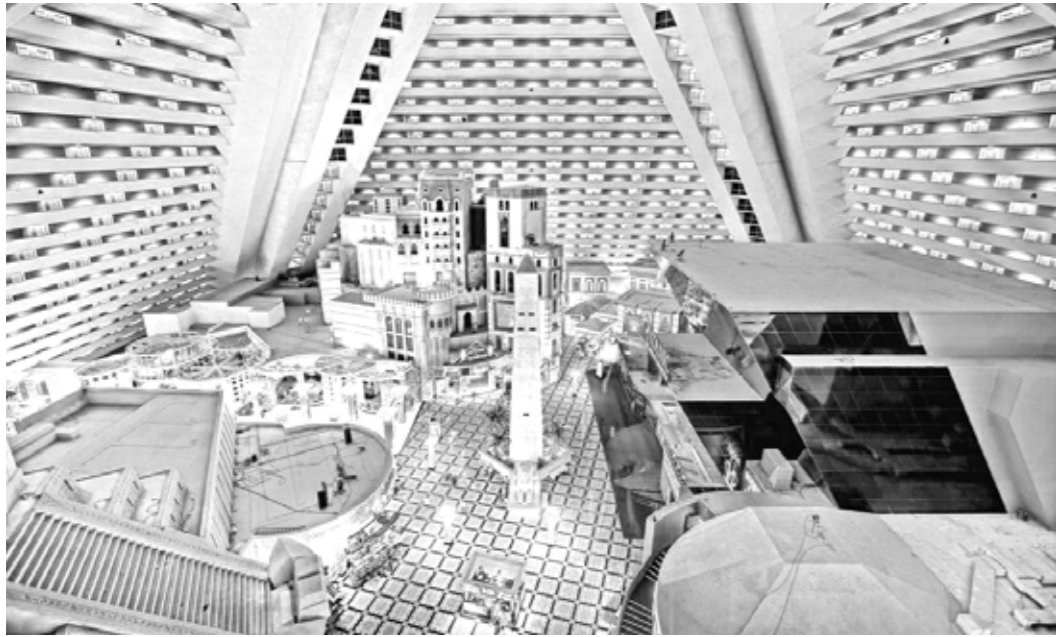
Luxor Casino, Las Vegas



New Sacristy, Michelangelo, 1520



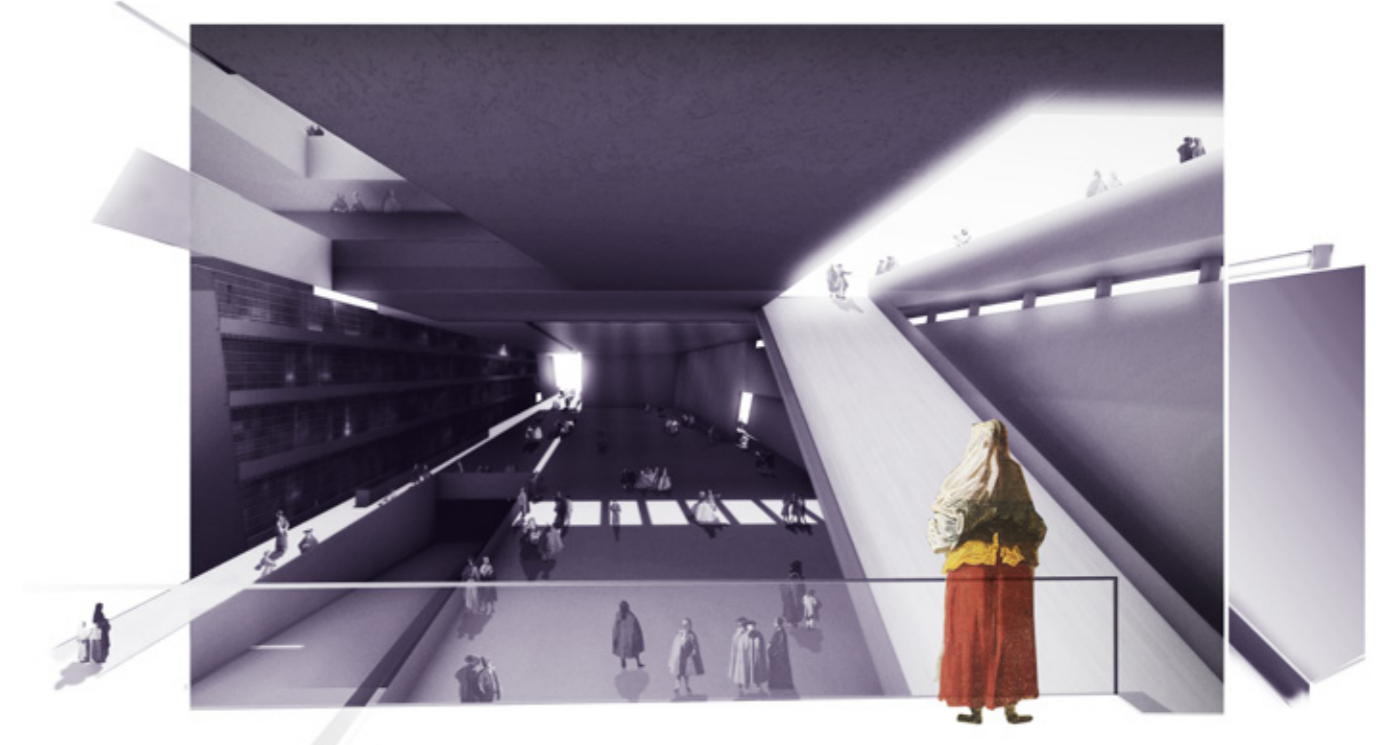
The Casino



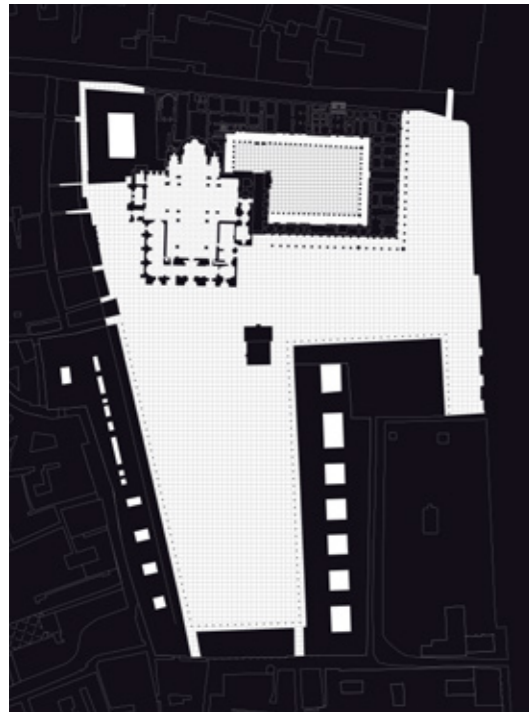
Luxor Casino, Las Vegas



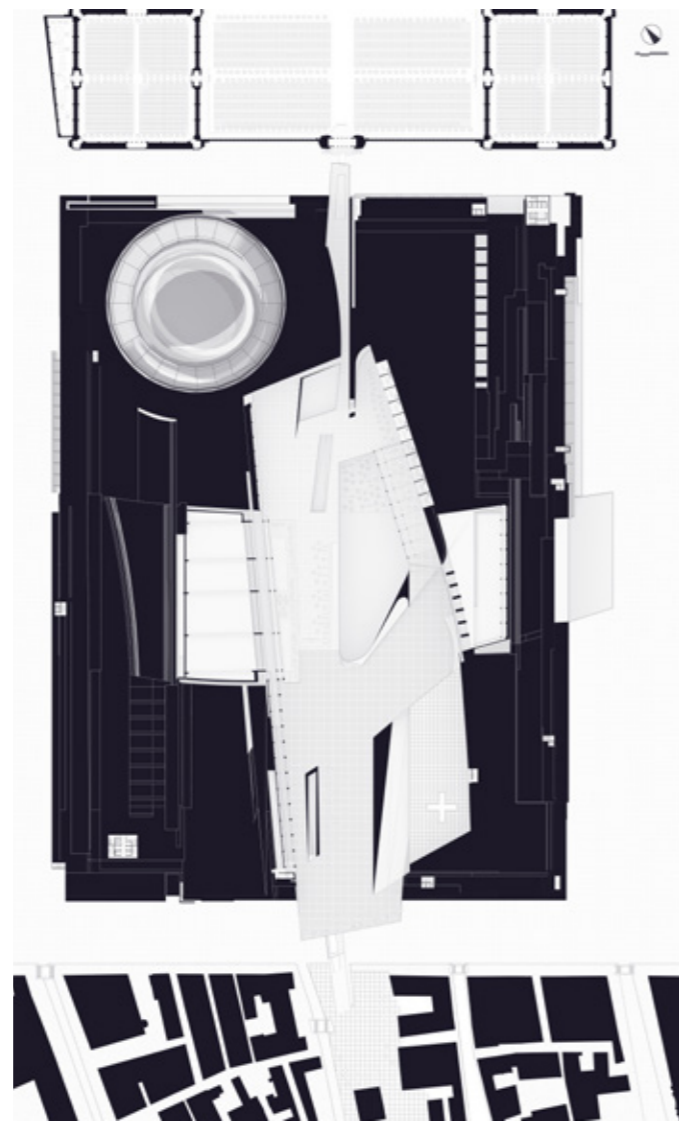
Ancient Temple, Piranesi, 1743



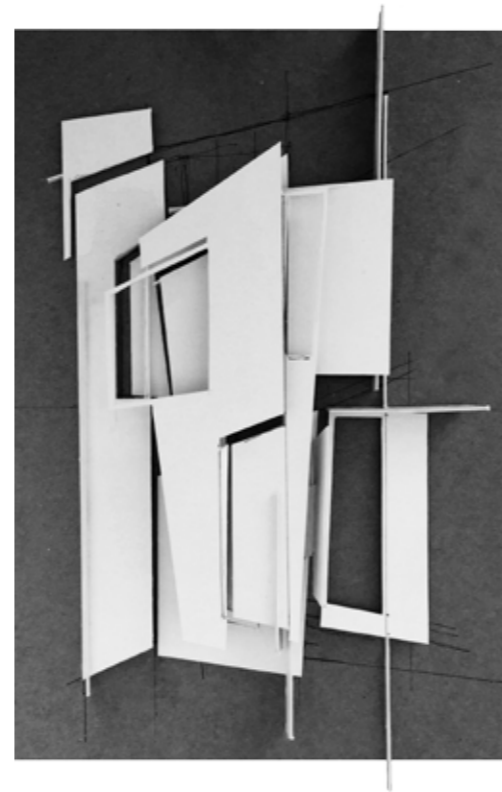
The Piazza



Piazza San Marco



Charon's Passage



Tectonic Layering

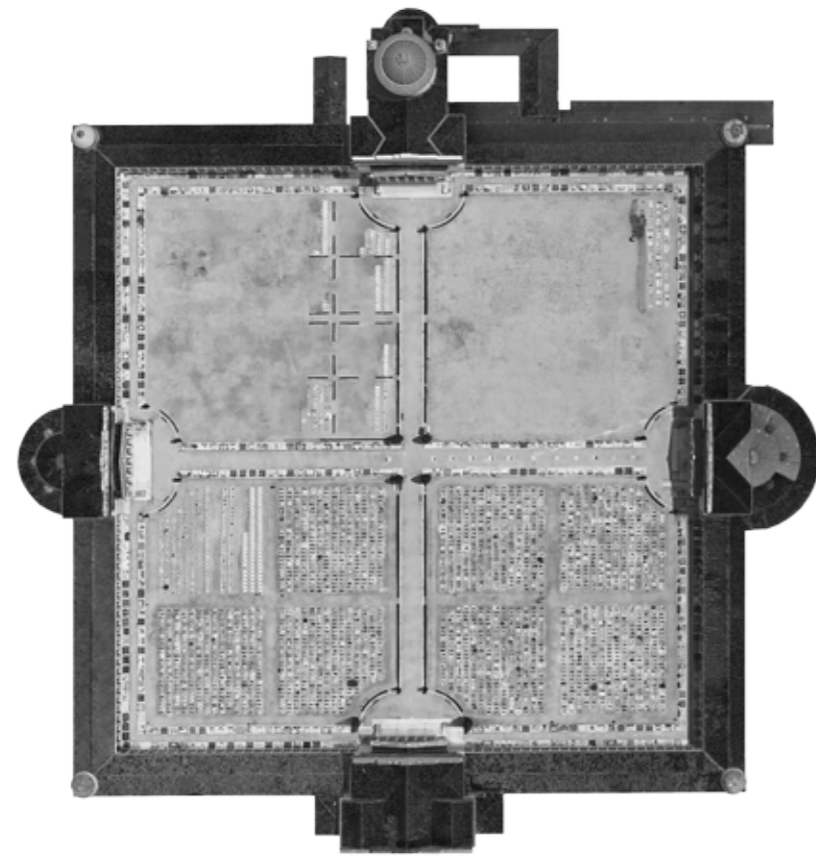


Program Overlap

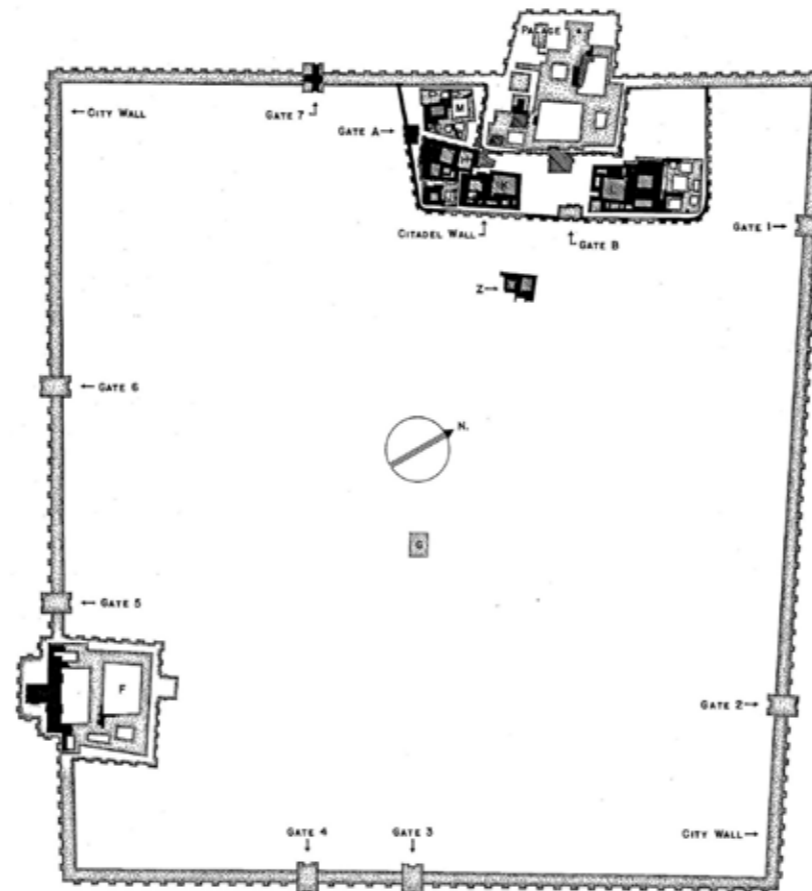


Figure Ground

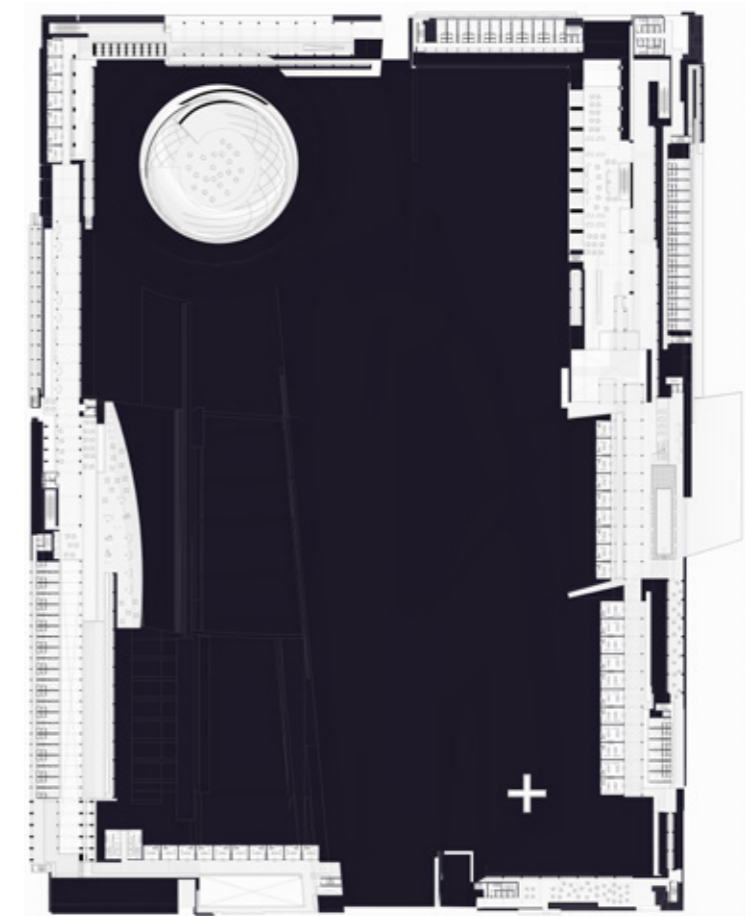
The Wall



Cimitero Monumentale, Verona

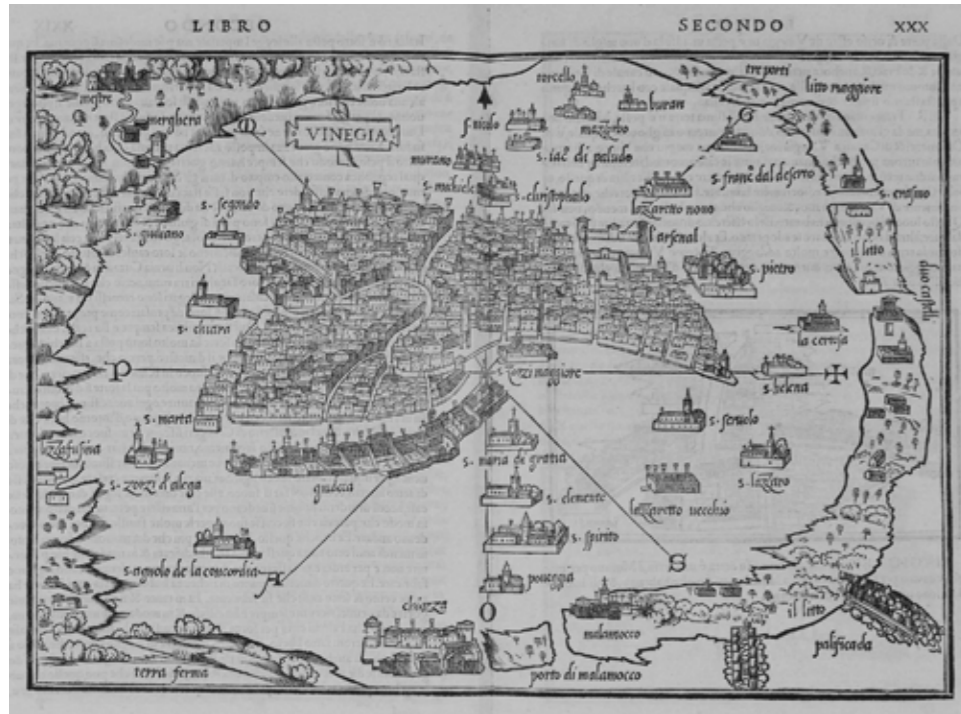


Dur-Sharrukin, Assyria



Charon's Passage

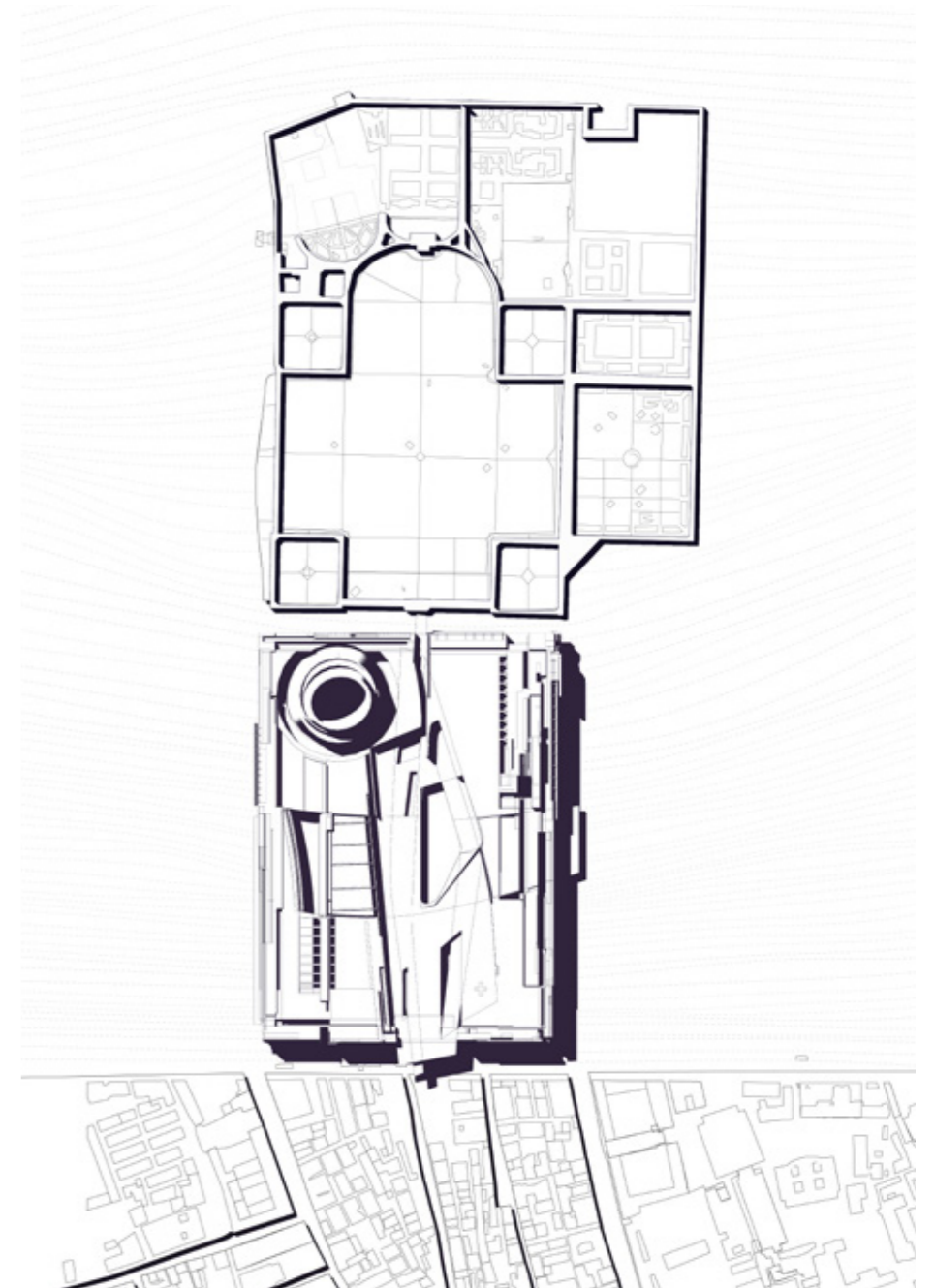
Site of Activation



Venice Lagoon, Bordone Benedetto, 1547

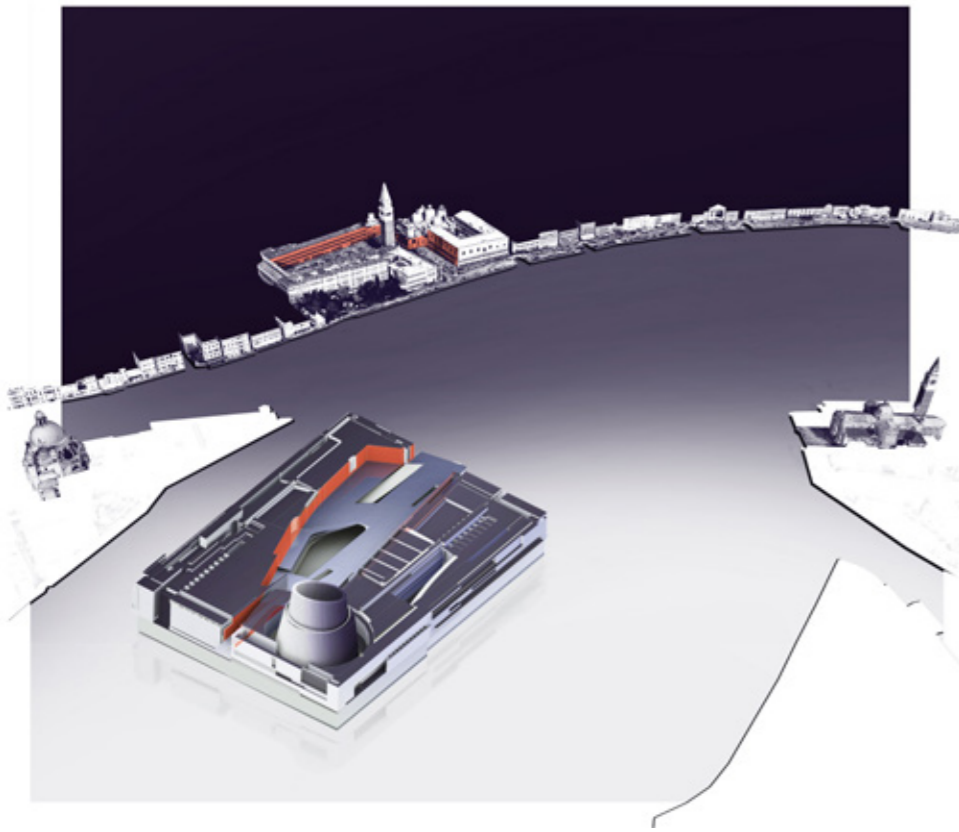


Venice Projects

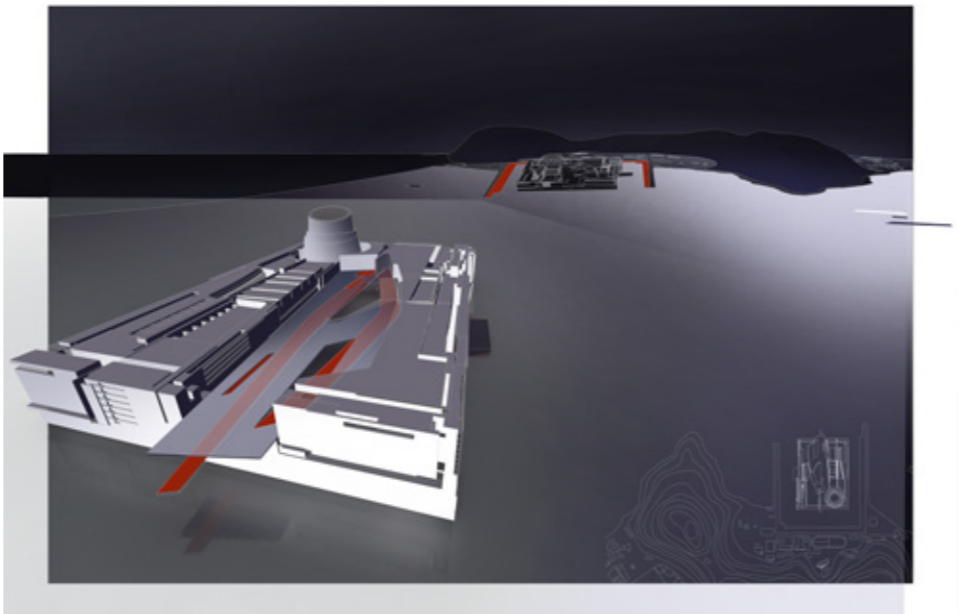


San Michele Bridge

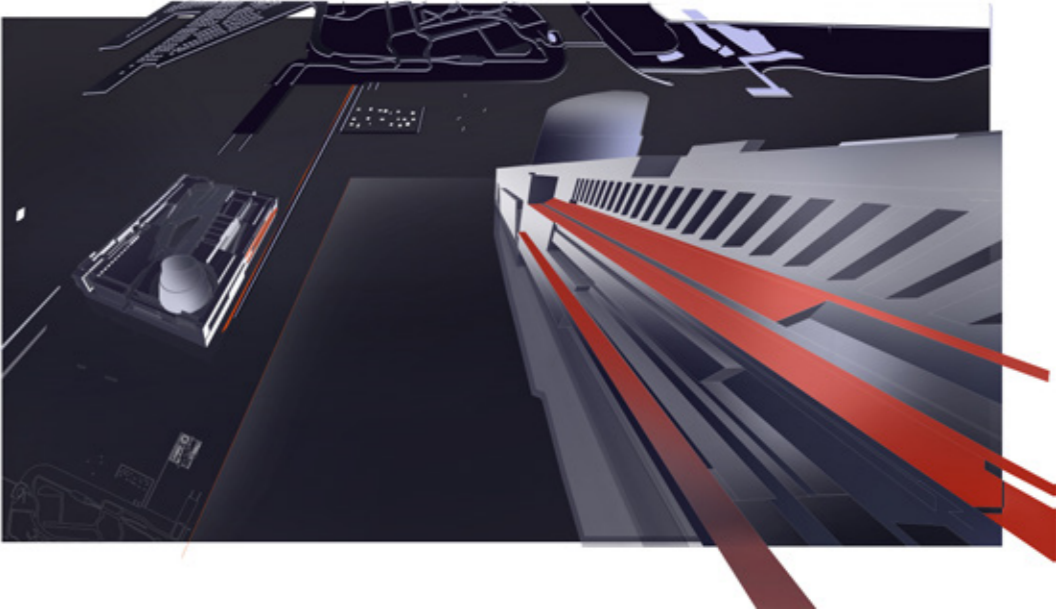
Site of Activation



Piazza Connection

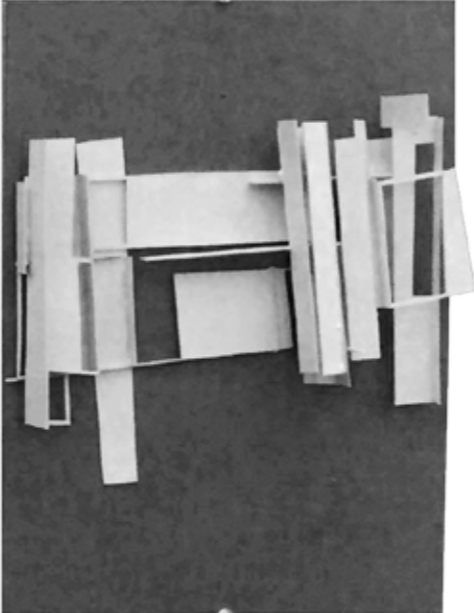
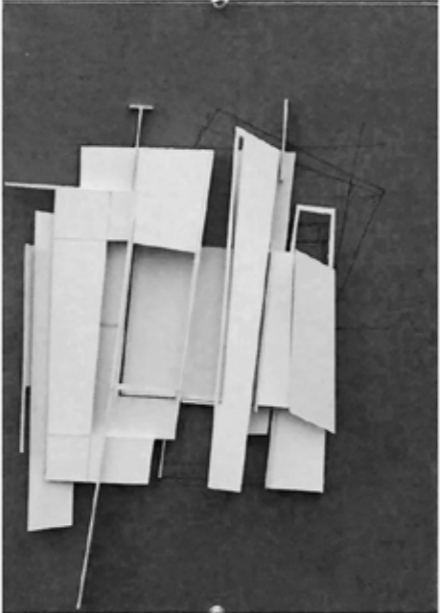
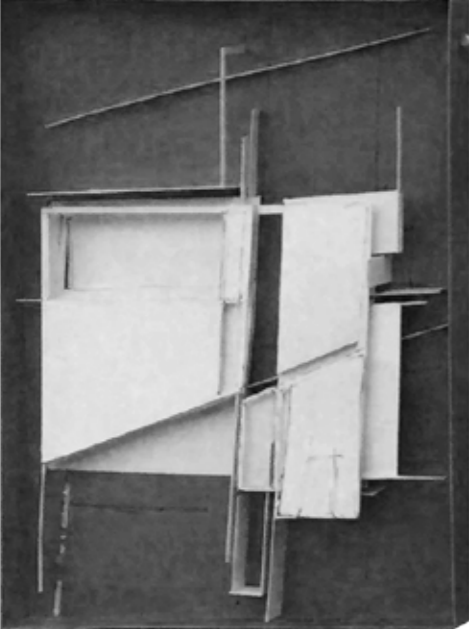


Hong Kong Port

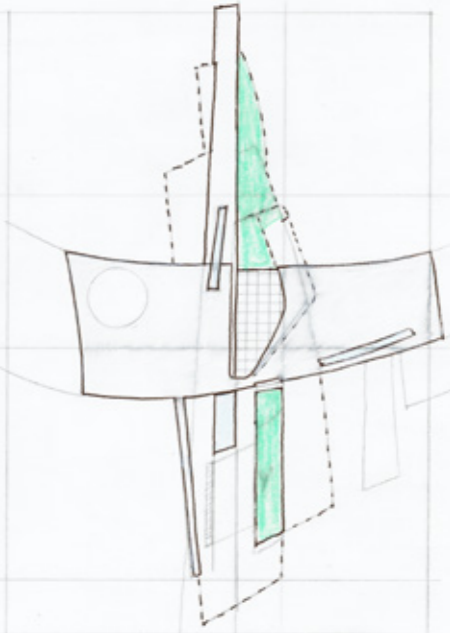
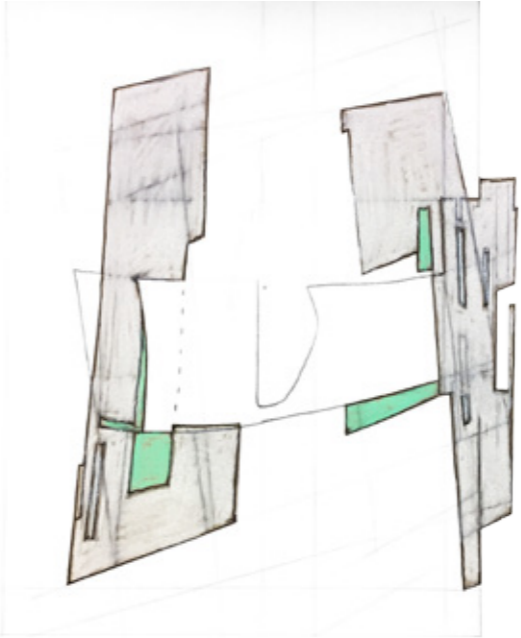
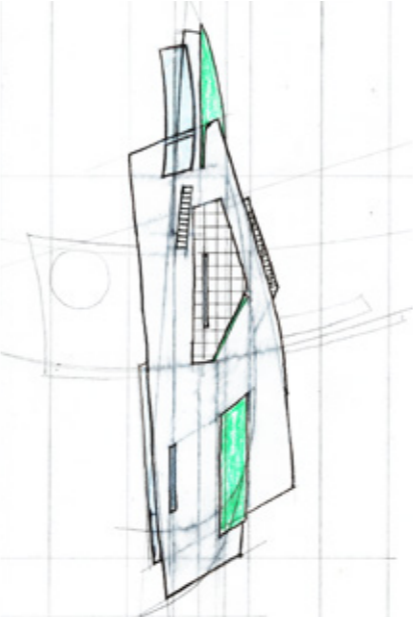


Singapore Port

City State Elements

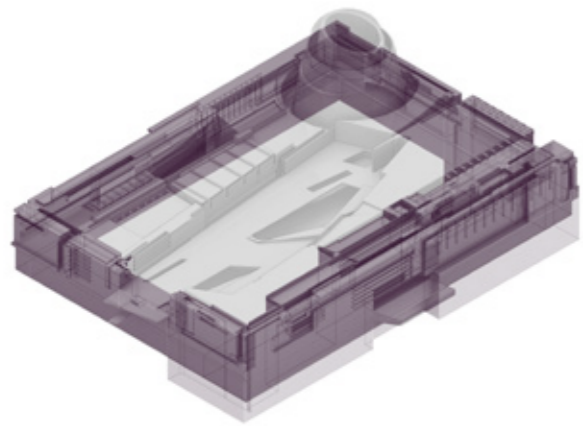


Tectonic Studies

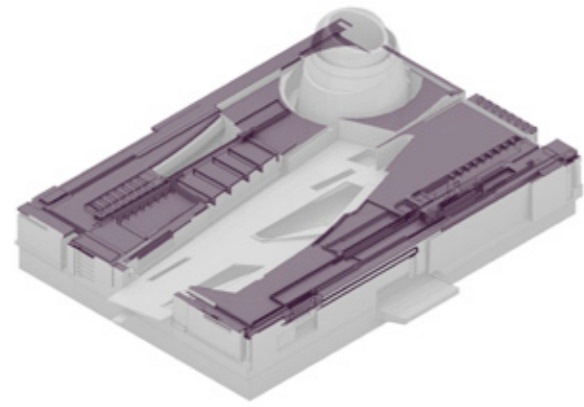


Piazza Studies

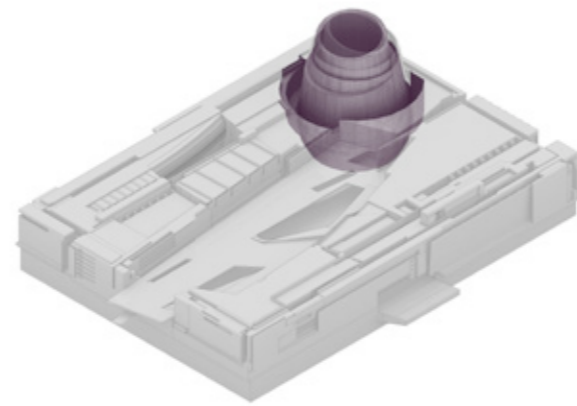
City State Elements



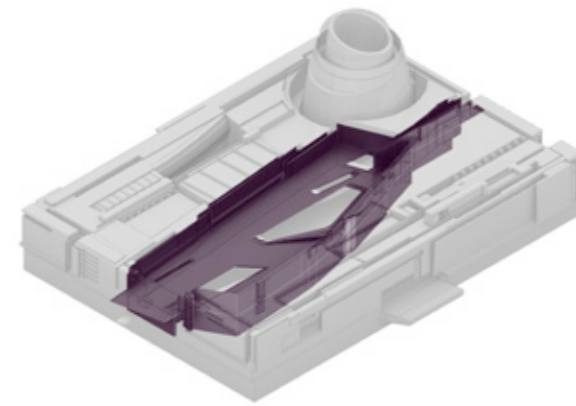
Wall



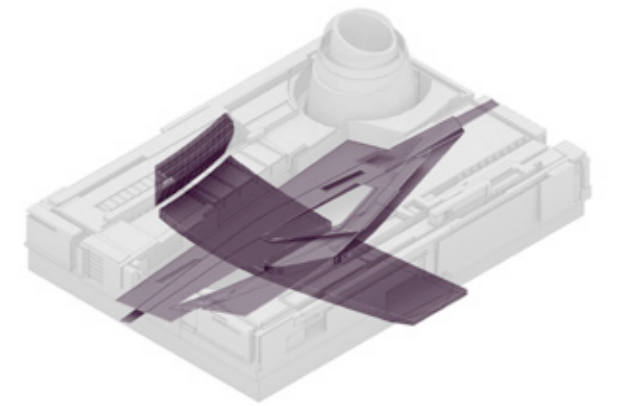
Ground Plane



Pantheon



Piazza



Cardo and Decumanus

Charon's Passage



a pyramid for the 21st century

Maximilian Kronauer

2017