





Body Therapy and The Built Environment

By

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the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Architecture (MArch)

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# Abstract

In trying to decide whether theory and practice should be amalgamated, a lot of people fail to account for the fact that this debate is the luxury of those mainly unaffected by the factors outside of architecture that define its social structure. Critical theory as it pertains to feminism is necessary because of the disparity of violence faced by women in society both historically and currently; Many of these sites of violence are mundane until a person is forced to confront it consciously after an assault. This brings up the question of what architecture can do to prevent such assault and how an architecture or typology may start to form for the rehabilitation of survivors. Through addressing the failures of the current typologies for sexual assault preventative design, this thesis aimed to uncover opportunities for modifying already-existing architectural styles to have safer qualities for assault prevention. It also aimed to find ways to educate the public in hopes that it could evolve the community past sexual shame and lessen sex related crimes. I believe that by exploration and consideration of the connections between design and sexual safety, we may be able to create a more open conversation about sexual violence and a safer community.

## Keywords

Sexual Violence, Sexual safety, Environmental triggers, Community, Social Architecture, Social Justice, Restoration, Materiality, Diversity, Bathhouses, Community baths, Greenhouse, Landscape, Food Growth, Community garden, Healing, Typologies, Rehabilitation, Art Therapy, Art education, Sex education, Body Therapy, Alternative healing, PTSD, The Vitruvian model, Redesign, Mapping, Steam baths, Native plants, Re-greening, Restoration.



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THANK YOU!

This thesis is dedicated to all girls like me.

#MeToo







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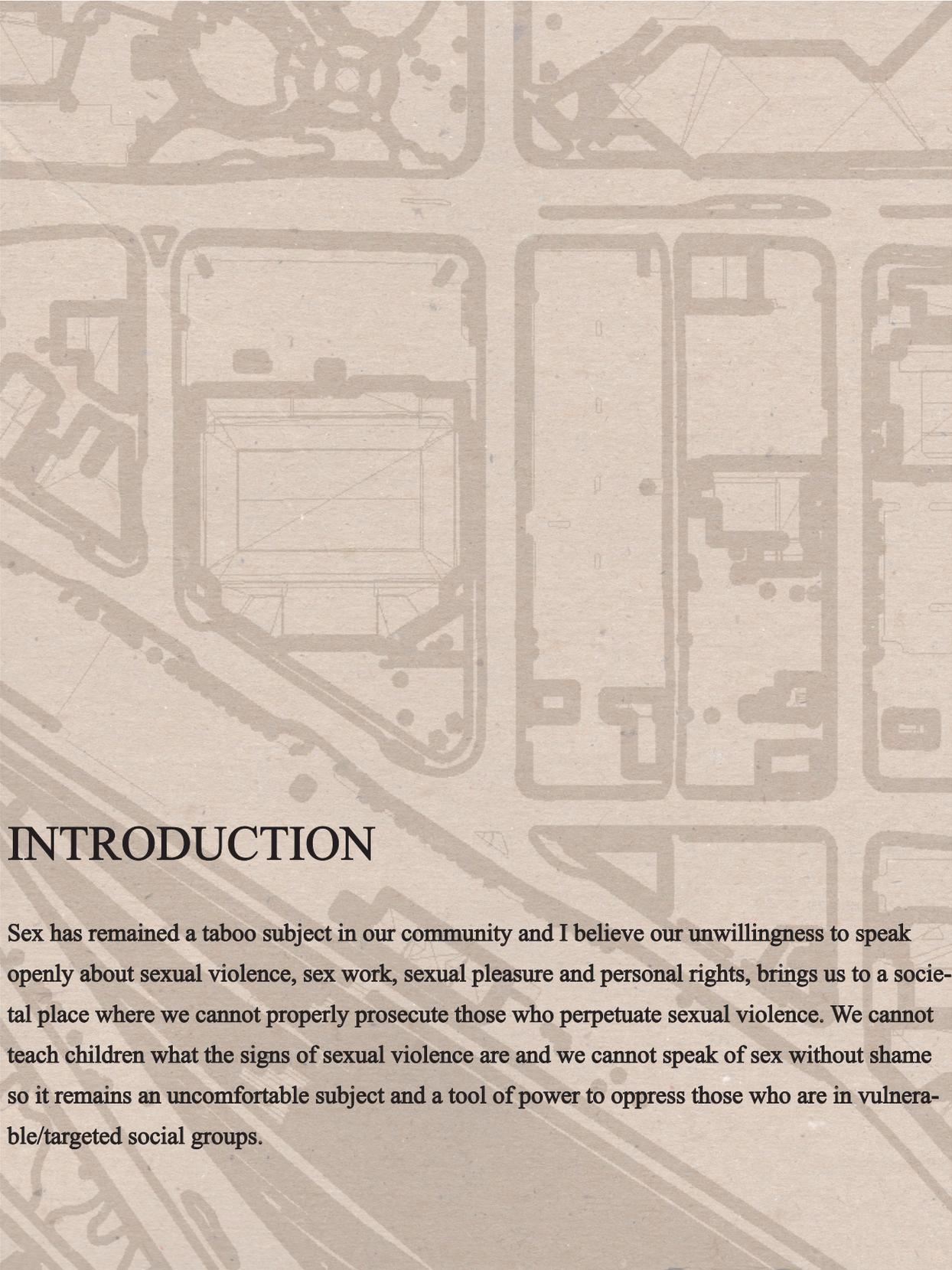
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The background of the page is a textured, light brown surface, possibly cardboard or paper, with a faint, large-scale architectural drawing or blueprint overlaid. The drawing shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements, rendered in a light, sketchy style.

## INTRODUCTION

Sex has remained a taboo subject in our community and I believe our unwillingness to speak openly about sexual violence, sex work, sexual pleasure and personal rights, brings us to a societal place where we cannot properly prosecute those who perpetuate sexual violence. We cannot teach children what the signs of sexual violence are and we cannot speak of sex without shame so it remains an uncomfortable subject and a tool of power to oppress those who are in vulnerable/targeted social groups.

(Sex education is limited and dangerous by a lack of freedom in its education.) National Center for Biotechnology Information. Last modified April 24, 2018. Accessed April 15, 2019. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5913747/>.

In a recent review of statistics in Canada, the country's oldest and largest organisation that caters to helping women, the YWCA (in collaboration with other organizations)<sup>1</sup>, states that one in three women will face sexual violence and one in six men will face sexual violence in their lifetimes. This statistic shines a light on the rampant rate at which such acts take place within our communities. Even more troubling is the likelihood of experiencing sexual violence before the age of 35 is higher for women, sadly only 5% of these assaults are reported. This points to the fact that a large percentage of us feel uncomfortable talking about this issue, and, those who do speak up on the topic are stigmatized.\* The likelihood of experiencing this kind of violence increases with more marginalized groups as there is already stigma attached to their identity. Statistics show that women are at a higher risk and that risk increases if they are of colour, have disabilities, are low income, or in sex work, etc.<sup>2</sup> underpinning the widespread issue of sexual violence is the fact that, it is estimated that only one in three Canadians understand the concept of consent. This makes for a very difficult conversation and, therefore an unbalanced justice system. This adds up to little consideration for those affected by sexual violence. This attended to reality has a lasting effect on individuals and communities.<sup>3</sup>

Architecture generally keeps a distance from the issue of sexual violence yet, we cannot deny that part of this issue is related to the built environment and as such design can play a major role in shielding the vulnerable. In architectural theory, women like Jane Jacobs, Beatriz Colomina, Jennifer Bloomer who speak on the nuances of community, crime, feminism, privacy and publicity. However, sometimes pathways of thinking about the connection between sexual violence and architecture are lost in the density of words. I believe that architectural theory and practice should exist side by side, but words are not quite architecture. There is a gap between how much the relationship of violence and space is discussed, and one reason for this is that, taking on such a controversial issue could affect the progress of a female architect's career. This is because there is a history of white male dominance in architecture and equally, a heavily gendered stigma placed on women when it comes to the topic of sex in general.<sup>4</sup>

Due to this stigma, the exploration of architecture's role in sexual violence/safety is understudied. For example, although there is an abundance of texts deploying critical feminist theory in architecture, the application of these ideas limited to things such as topic based "Biennales", competitions, freelance art installations or general artistic interventions in architectural space.<sup>5</sup>

1 "Statistics." SACHA Sexual Assault Centre, Last modified August 22, 2013, Accessed April 15, 2019. <http://sacha.ca/resources/statistics>.

2 Giscoombe, Katherine, "Sexual Harassment And Women Of Color." Catalyst, Last modified February 13, 2018. Accessed April 15, 2019.

3 "FACT SHEET: MOVING WOMEN OUT OF VIOLENCE." Canadian Women's Foundation, Last modified August, 2016. Accessed April 12, 2019.

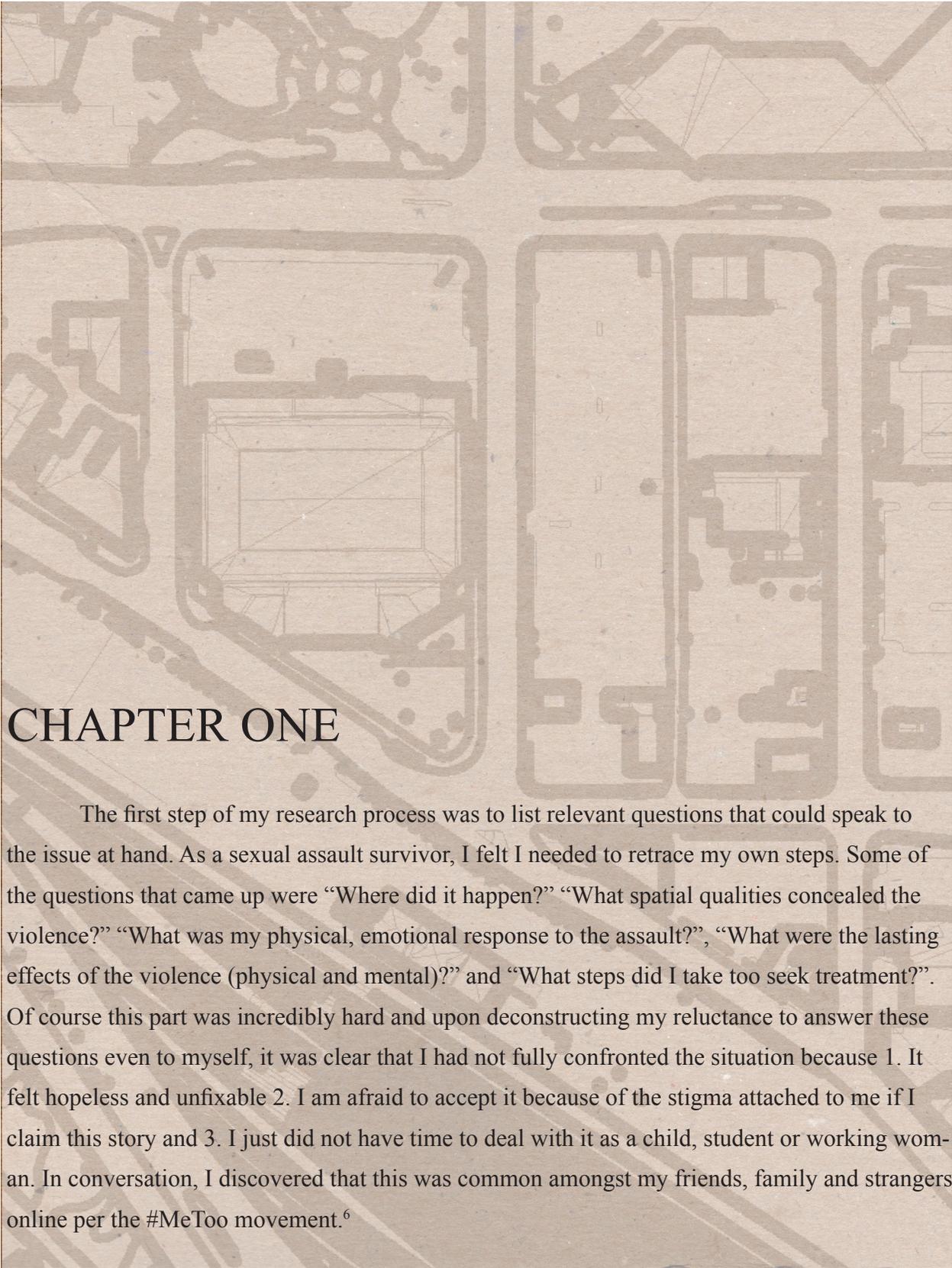
4 Morgan, Phoebe, and James Gruber, eds. In the Company of Men: Male Dominance and Sexual Harassment, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2005.

5 Stevens, Philip. "Istanbul Design Biennial: Interview with curators Beatriz colomina + Mark wigley." DesignBoom Magazine, Last modified October 20, 2016. Accessed April 11, 2019.

This observation lead to my decision to further investigate examples of what architecture can do to maximize its capacity to protect survivors of sexual violence and, further prevent future assaults. In an attempt to do that, I have had to take a step back from city-wide reimaginings and large-scale redesign and focus on developing the conventions for spaces used by sexual assault survivors. The benefit of this approach is that it will reveal a useful example of feasible change in everyday architecture/architectural convention and introduce ways to consider, through design, those who are stigmatized and, therefore at higher risk of sexual assault. This method of research and design allows me to create a sort of lexicon that can serve as a basis, to help upcoming designers consider these issues in a more integrated manner.

\* As it pertains to this paper, "Stigma is a strong feeling of disapproval that most people in a society have about something, especially when this is unfair". - "Stigma." Cambridge Dictionary. Accessed April 17, 2019. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/stigma>.  
Herek, Gregory M. "Confronting Sexual Stigma and Prejudice: Theory and Practice." University of California, Davis. Last modified , 2007. Accessed April 15, 2019. [https://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/html/Herek\\_2007\\_JSI\\_preprint.pdf](https://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/html/Herek_2007_JSI_preprint.pdf).





## CHAPTER ONE

The first step of my research process was to list relevant questions that could speak to the issue at hand. As a sexual assault survivor, I felt I needed to retrace my own steps. Some of the questions that came up were “Where did it happen?” “What spatial qualities concealed the violence?” “What was my physical, emotional response to the assault?”, “What were the lasting effects of the violence (physical and mental)?” and “What steps did I take too seek treatment?”. Of course this part was incredibly hard and upon deconstructing my reluctance to answer these questions even to myself, it was clear that I had not fully confronted the situation because 1. It felt hopeless and unfixable 2. I am afraid to accept it because of the stigma attached to me if I claim this story and 3. I just did not have time to deal with it as a child, student or working woman. In conversation, I discovered that this was common amongst my friends, family and strangers online per the #MeToo movement.<sup>6</sup>

Eventually, and after much reluctance, I attempted to answer my own questions. My assault took place in my own architectural territory (my home) by somebody who was admittedly uneducated about consent. There were no specific architectural features that allowed the assault to happen apart from the private nature of my home. My initial reaction was numbness and immediate suppression with drug abuse which led to later social and psychological isolation. I became introverted and remained untrusting of anyone therefore isolating myself further while keeping it unreported. The lasting effects showed as physical repulsion from any form of intimacy with family and friends. Upon seeking therapy, I discovered these were all symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder<sup>7</sup>, Depression with psychotic features and a General anxiety disorder, my diagnosis. Upon further conversation with friends, group therapy and family, I discovered my case was not unique or special but in fact the norm in victims. Through this self inquiry, I discovered that the lasting effects were triggered in my everyday life through my experience of space and manifested as me taking more caution in my interactions both public and private, avoiding certain areas of my city, intense paranoia, carrying weapons and avoiding social settings, for example. Although I was taking more caution to avoid certain things for my own safety, I had to face the truth that my body was the actual site of trauma, it remembered everything and was manifesting self-defense through subconscious survival tactics in my quotidian life. Realizing this led me to the programmatic conclusion of the two main aspects of a potential design example.

## THE PROGRAM

should serve the purposes of

1. Body therapy/Rehabilitation
2. Cathartic Education.

### 1. BODY THERAPY/REHABILITATION:

This term as it pertains to my thesis is in reference to the idea that the body stores memory of trauma both physically and mentally as it is the physical vessel through which we navigate the built environment but also the site of stimulus reaction to daily triggers. After sexual violence is perpetuated on an individual, it is typical for them to return to business as usual and conceal the signs of their experience. Things may seem fine with a person who has faced this type of assault but the truth is that their entire experience of the built environment (as well as those using it) immediately becomes much more vivid. Those who have not faced sexual assault or been threatened with it on a daily basis cannot share the same experience of architecture so it stands to reason that it is not instinctive to many designers.

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Ullman, Sarah E., and Henrietta H. Filipas. "Predictors of PTSD Symptom Severity and Social Reactions in Sexual Assault Victims." National Center for Biotechnology Information. PMC (10.1023/A:1011125220522). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3583013/>.

There is, because of this, a field of therapy which architecture can contribute to by understanding how diverse bodies move through the same spaces, especially bodies with trauma. The aspect of body therapy explores the shortcomings of talk-only therapy and aims to use the knowledge of environmental triggers to redefine what rehabilitation could look like. It is important to design a place where the large number of sexual assault victims can go to escape triggers in their daily life and seek shelter after assault.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. CATHARTIC EDUCATION:

The concept of cathartic education\* was coined in attempt to get to the root of injustice and stigma around sex. As provided in aforementioned statistics, Sexual ignorance is a common root of sexual violence and stigma against marginalized (vulnerable) people. If only 1 in 3 Canadians understand the concept of consent, it stands to reason that many perpetrators of sexual violence do not know that they have damaged a large part of a person's identity or perception of the world. It also stands to reason that many survivors of sexual assault are unsure of their situation although they are now living a significantly different life. A lot of this confusion and stigma as a result of years of conservative views of sex and restricted sexual education which does not take diversity or violence into account but instead focuses on either a specific (exclusionary) method of preparation and abstinence. This is dangerous because it makes it so that sex bound to (sometimes lifelong) internal shame and apathetic/dangerous experimentation. A better approach to sexual education would be more inclusive, detailed and expressive. A proper sexual education would prevent and prosecute sexual violence much more effectively. With a better sexual education, designers of the future will be able to have an open conversation about the cause and effect of spatialized violence and therefore integrate this consideration with more ease. Art is a helpful tool in community building and therapy and may be the perfect method of education to bring together an empathetic, diverse group of people from different economic classes, races, ages and physical ability.

With these two concepts, I am able to tackle the prevention and rehabilitation of survivors which I believe should be the main focus of understanding sexual assault in a progressive manner. This leads to the next part of my thesis which involved me creating a series of activities to express the experimentation of this new lexicon for body memory and its triggers.

<sup>8</sup> Biggs, Quinn M., Robert J. Ursano, Jing Wang, David S. Krantz, and Russell B. Carr. "Daily variation in post traumatic stress symptoms in individuals with and without probable post traumatic stress disorder." National Center for Biotechnology Information. PMC (10.1186/s12888-019-2041-7). Accessed April 14, 2019. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6360743/>.

\* This term was developed for this thesis to describe the fulfilment of sex specific education for the purpose of unravelling sex based ignorance

## EXERCISE I

To set a precedence it is important to research the organisations that deal with helping survivors of sexual assault. I started by looking at Canada and then searched in Europe as these two regions are generally spoken of as more progressive. I drew 15 locations as my first exercise (Exercise I) to discover consistent typologies shared amongst places that deal with this issue. From this I discovered there were a few recurring building typologies. As seen in Exercise I, the common typologies were limited to business centres/concealed business, gym/hall style, house and hospital types. The business centre typology usually consists of a large multi-storey office style buildings in which the sexual assault rehabilitation takes up a building floor or part of a floor. The gym/hall style usually a multiprogram community space in which group talk therapy can take place; this typology is known to provide space for gatherings like Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. The house typology is usually one house in a row of houses or an inconspicuous, similar building to others on a street. The hospital typology is, in fact, just a hospital or clinic; some hospitals have a special section for sexual assault talk therapy. In this research, I also discovered that the Sudbury police station also has a hidden section for check ups following a report of domestic abuse. The station however will not consider the cases of homeless women or sex workers in this section as per a quick phone call. Since I found out about most of these locations via an internet search, most of them are then, largely, inaccessible for homeless victims and some sex workers, which, as mentioned before are at higher risk of violence. Generally, only women of a certain economical class have ease of access to these spaces, and as far as stigma go, these women are often perceived to be more deserving of therapy than anybody of a lower economic class even though they all face sexual violence regardless of class.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps a major reason why these non-specific locations are the prominent typologies for centres of this nature is to hide our social shame when it comes to sex and sexual violence, and to protect the identity of those who seek therapy after an assault. Revealing these different typologies helped me discover important similarities. I quickly noticed that none of these locations had any signage upfront that explicitly states sexual assault rehabilitation takes place inside so you must know exactly what you are looking for. Although the reason why signs are left off may be to protect survivors because of the stigma surrounding sexual assault. There is also very little funding for survivors of sexual assault and this for consciously designed spaces.<sup>10</sup>

9 Hawley, Lisa D., Todd W. Leibert, and Joel A. Lane. "The Relationship Between Socioeconomic Status and Counseling Outcomes." *The Professional Counselor*. Accessed April 15, 2019. <http://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/the-relationship-between-socioeconomic-status-and-counseling-outcomes/>.

10 Smith, Emma. "Limited funding to continue sexual assault counselling 'appalling,' says advocate." *CBC News*. Last modified March 26, 2016. Accessed April 15, 2019. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/sexual-assault-counselling-funding-program-grants-1.4584279>.

The work of funding sexual assault therapy unfortunately ends up falling into the hands of concerned individuals; who either fund it themselves or have to apply for a project grant from the government.<sup>11</sup> These factors make it clear that there is no designated typology for sexual assault centres and therefore the therapy that takes place in these spaces is limited to general psychiatric methods. Although I agree with the importance of mundane exteriors to avert unwanted attention, I do not agree that the same typology must be carried out in the interiors as there should be more flexibility in treatment. My Exercise I exposed a design problem to solve: How can we reconcile the concept of privacy for protection with a more transparent program for the purpose of greater public education. This gives a more solid physical value to my dual program design; Transparency and publicity represents the aspect of Cathartic Education while privacy and concealment represents Body Therapy/Rehabilitation.

The next step after discovering the dichotomies I would be working with in my final design, was choosing a suitable site. For reasons of convenience and accessibility, I chose to stay within the boundaries of Sudbury, Ontario and search for a site within the downtown area. Downtown Sudbury is known for its contribution to arts and tourism as well as its progressive social activities and events. Unfortunately, downtown Sudbury is also perceived as the “bad part of town”. In monthly public downtown gatherings, Sudburians who are not residents of downtown express their fear of crime downtown seemingly because of the suburban bias against the presence of homeless people. Living in the city for the past six years, I have observed the slow but steady introduction of racial diversity and the general population of youth because of the university and its different campuses. This perception of downtown is highly dangerous because it can encourage apathy towards the marginalized groups more likely to face crime. This means that to design a space that can provide easier and quicker access to those who belong to marginalized groups or at a higher risk of violence.

11

“Victims Fund.” The Government of Canada: Department of Justice. Accessed April 15, 2019. <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fund-fina/cj-jp/fund-fond/index.html>.



I began the exploration of three locations: 1. the Ledo hotel, 2. the train station/via rail which sits across from the Ledo and is in close proximity to passing trains and 3. Kathleen Street, on the edge of downtown . Deciding whether to have a single location or a number of locations was another important decision to make. Although having multiple sites may have the benefit of accessibility, I eventually decided one location as it presents the opportunity for a detailed analysis.

For my location analysis, it was important for me to explore the advantages of each location and weigh them against each other. Kathleen street is known in Sudbury as the most active street for sex workers. This means is that Kathleen Street is a great candidate for a site because of its close proximity to some of those who experience the most stigmatization when it comes to sexual violence. If I was to use this location, the typology to be implemented would most likely be House typology because the area around Kathleen Street is highly residential. Having a house as the basis of my design would create an opportunity to dismantle architectural conventions within the type of building where many sexual aggressions occur, an inescapable part of daily life as well as a comforting place to a lot of people. Unpacking the architectural details of a house that impact sexual violence would be incredibly difficult because it is harder to prevent the kind of violence that happens in the privacy of a home with just the use of design. The social aspect of this typology would prevent my final design from being a general example for future designers as it is incredibly personalized. The next site of interest was the Old Via Rail train station on Elgin street. The Former Canadian Pacific Railway (VIA Rail) Station at Sudbury is a one-and-a-half storey railway station, built in 1907.<sup>12</sup>A relevant advantage to this site is its heritage value. Redesigning an important part of Sudbury's mining history would likely have a huge impact on the way people view the new program. It would definitely garner enough attention and controversy possibly leading to a larger more open conversation about the role of sexual violence and education in our communities. Currently used to host the farmers market in the summer, the site has a large plot of land surrounding it. This means that there is an opportunity for extension and growth. The station building is a long, horizontal and symmetrical, one and a half story building and would be an uninteresting study because of its Romanesque Revival style of details. Elgin street is said to be "The old Kathleen street" because of its history as an area for sex workers to operate. Elgin has seen change; over time, art stores and trendy restaurants moved in and the sex workers moved elsewhere.

12

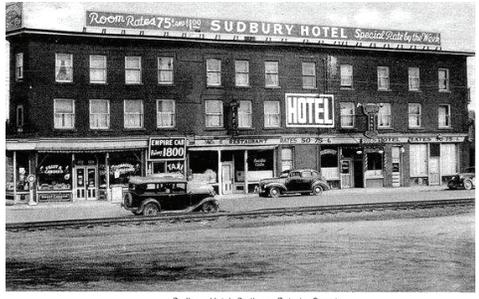
"Former Canadian Pacific Railway (VIA Rail) Station." Canada's Historic Places. Accessed April 15, 2019. <https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4596>.



House Typology on Kathleen Street



The former CP rail station on Elgin. Currently Farmers market



The Sudbury hotel, now the Ledo, 1940, Ontario Jewish Archives

Eventually, I decided that the Ledo Hotel presented the best option for a site/building. The Ledo hotel can be found on the corner of Elgin street and Van Horne street. It was built in 1907, and while there has been some changes to the facade has not changed formally over the years. The hotel has very little written about it save for the story of a fire that occurred in 1952 and some bad reviews online. The fire resulted in some reconstruction of its exterior leaving less transparency on the main floor. In 2016 it was closed as a hotel and is currently used as an hourly, weekly, or monthly rental to house those who can only afford cheap rent. The hotel has four floors, three of which are above ground at one below ground for the bar and it's activities. The Ledo is known for its historical role in entertaining workers getting off the train at the train station right across the street from it. Hotels historically have exploited the labour of women for the pleasure of men. Some women at the time worked in domestic labour in the hotel whereas others worked in the bar as servers or dancers. Of course an unspoken part of hotel usage is that a lot of men went there with the intention of meeting up with sex workers and , their secrets might have been kept within this architecture. The secrets include unchecked violence against women occur then chalked it up to "men just being men"<sup>13</sup> at the expense of women. From local myths and stories, the bar was known for its rowdy fights and for allowing under age individuals into the space. It was talked about by a few old bar patrons and workers as having a high concentration of sex workers within and outside of the bar. Given these stories, the Ledo presents a good case for the social reclamation of the site on behalf of women. The lot contains another small building separated by a parking lot which also allows a contingency for multiple structures to house both programs.

13

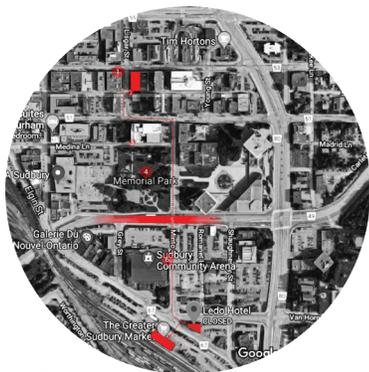
Meyer, Elizabeth J. "The Danger of "Boys Will Be Boys"." Gender and Schooling. Psychology Today, March 14, 2014. Accessed April 20, 2019. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/gender-and-schooling/201403/the-danger-boys-will-be-boys>.



## EXERCISE II

Upon choosing my site, I was able to return to a broader view of the region. It was important to me to discover the way in which assault victims would navigate the downtown area around the Ledo. The next step was to develop another exercise that would help me understand the physical attributes of environmental triggers. After discussing with friends and acquaintances, it was clear to me that many of my friends who were women put more thought into their route whereas their male counterparts did not put any thought into their route except how to get from point A to point B as quickly as possible. Talking mostly to women of colour about their general experience navigating the downtown area, they were able to identify routes to avoid so as to keep themselves safe. Exercise II was developed by using my own experience as a queer woman of colour who has lived in downtown Sudbury for close to six years. I pinpointed all three of the locations that I had lived in within this time period and plotted out my route to the Ledo hotel. As I completed each route, I took note on my Google Maps™ every time I went out of my way to avoid a certain area or was triggered by the environment. This exercise helped me to make a collection of daily obstacles that a person like myself may come across on the journey from a residential building to my site. I then created a visual representation of these maps along with photographs of the trigger areas. The common characteristics of these spaces had to do with poor lighting, narrow angles and paths, heavy landscaping (concealment). Some of the places I avoided was based on the kind of people I expected to find there (male dominated social spaces) as well as negative previous experiences with men in that spot. This exercise revealed that a lot of these trigger points have been subconsciously embedded in my muscle memory/body memory.

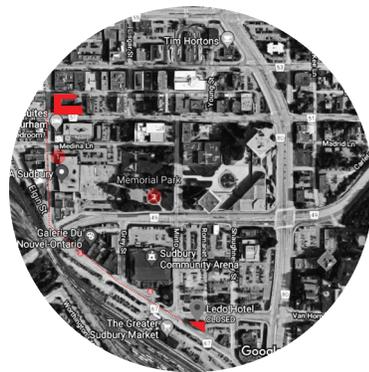
On the topic of body memory, Exercise I revealed to me that sexual assault therapy has been highly limited by the fact that it is regarded in the same way as general therapy. This means that although the mind may be treated with face-to-face talk therapy, the body, which is the site of trauma, may never recover fully as a whole. The lived experience in one's body after a sexual assault is a dissociative one so as to protect oneself and suppress the memory of the assault as best as possible. This brings up the question of why there is not more being done to develop a better method of therapy that can tackle the common Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from surviving sexual assault. Architecture is a haptic experience, so it is possible for an architect or designer to use the knowledge within their discipline to create a more effective form of therapy by manipulating interiors and experimenting with form.



MAP A

*From 50 Lisgar street to the Ledo Hotel*

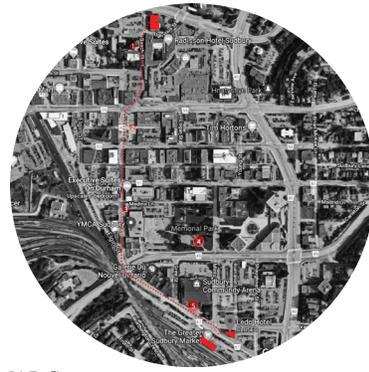
1. Scaffolding/constant construction feels trapping
2. Deep in set narrow alley way/dimly lit
3. Narrow alleyway, heavily shaded behind St Andres church of epiphany
4. Memorial park, heavily shaded and bushy. Avoid at night
5. This road is known to present accessibility issues and difficult to cross by pedestrians
6. Arena. (Rough sports and drunk men)



MAP B

*From 82 Ignatius street to the Ledo Hotel*

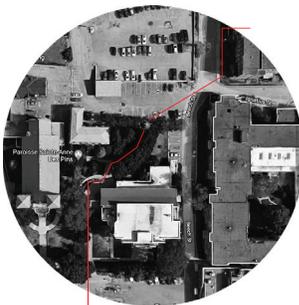
1. Heavily shaded church path short cut
2. TD misleading alleyway can act as trap
3. Approaching the YMCA. In set dark garden and heavy shrubbery (hiding spot)
4. Memorial park, heavily shaded and bushy. Avoid at night
5. Arena. (Rough sports and drunk men)



MAP C

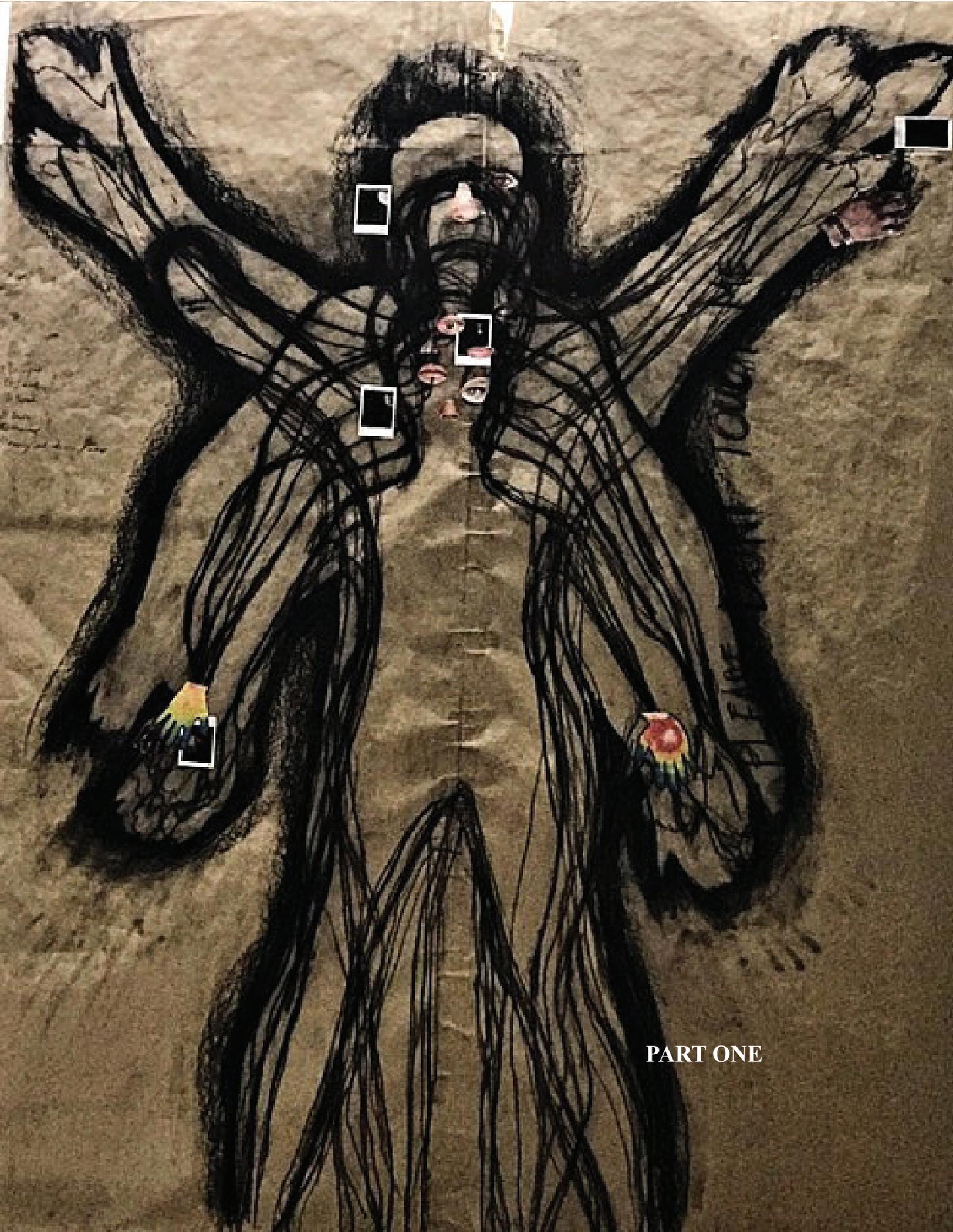
*From 50 Larch street to the Ledo Hotel*

1. Approaching the YMCA. In set dark garden and heavy shrubbery (hiding spot)
2. Memorial park, heavily shaded and bushy. Avoid at night
3. Dark underpass, no surveillance
4. Arena. (Rough sports and drunk men)



### EXERCISE III

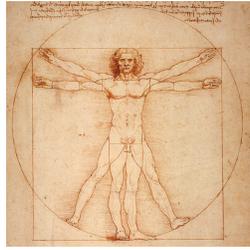
Exercise III was developed from the need to document different bodies within a single space. As an architecture student the basis by which a lot of our teachings and theory come from abstract creations such as the Vitruvian Man. The Vitruvian Man as appropriated by Leonardo da Vinci and others comes from the drawing by architect Vitruvius and his ideal of beauty and scale. The historical standing of the Vitruvian man means that the formalizing architecture, the scale of the built environment is only perfectly experienced as a white able-bodied man. Although many argue that the Vitruvian model presents a good average of the people in the world, it does not take away from the fact that the single image of beauty and scale sets a precedent for exclusionary design. Studying and documenting different bodies can help students and young designers have a wider range for innovative exploration and inclusive design. Because people with disabilities, people of color, children, trans bodies, women's bodies are not taken into consideration when designing space it stands to reason that traditional spaces leave out those bodies that are more vulnerable to violence by those who the spaces were designed for. This exercise is divided into two similar parts. The first part of this exercise involved me tracing out the bodies of 13 different people. These people were all of different heights gender race and physical ability. These traces were made with charcoal on craft paper, one on the space as the previous on the same sheet of paper. The process of tracing each person was a very intimate one which, again, brought up the concept of consent. Although everybody involved gave me their consent for the tracing, I felt I still had to keep a certain distance so as not to make them feel uncomfortable or encroach too much on their bodies. Looking at the silhouettes of these bodies gives a framework for what it is like for different bodies to exist within the same spatial constraints. After doing this, I marked out representations using collaged body parts of the five senses plus a metaphorical one. The sixth sense represented on the tracing is marked by the belly button which represents a gut feeling which is inherent to those usually threatened daily by the possibility of violence or are told to live in fear of their safety constantly. The other senses as we know it have not been included in the design process of sexually therapeutic spaces when in reality they should be taken into account for this experimental development of more efficient body therapy spaces. The second part of this exercise involved me searching online for a variety of body types to overlay on the original Vitruvian model. The bodies chosen for this include an example of children, a person with dwarfism, a person in a wheelchair, a pregnant woman, a trans man, and so on. Overlaid, these bodies represent a similar imagery to the first part of the exercise, showing how different bodies look in the same constraints of space.



PART ONE



PART TWO



## EXERCISE IV

Exercise IV was an experiment in body therapy. By this point it becomes clear that my thesis is seeking to create an opportunity to educate the community about sexual assault Using design in an attempt to reduce the stigma, while also providing rehabilitation to those who have face assault. As a result of the lack of resources and amenities for treating Post Traumatic stress symptoms in survivors, little being done beyond the theoretical conversation in architectural texts. It is time for alternative therapy experimentation. In the interest of translating philosophy to the physical, I created an artefact that represents the principles on which my design process was to be based. To do this, I took into consideration what the materiality of the object should be in relation to the story I am trying to portray. The story being told is reflected in the of program, art (to shine a light on the topic) and rehabilitation (to reacquaint the survivor with their own body and the site of trauma).

Playing on these parallel themes I decided that the important story to tell is one that not only redefined what sexual assault therapy can look like but also empowers the survivor of the assault. Though most therapy involves just talking, I believe it is important to regain body confidence and comfort after facing such trauma. This leads to the defining question for the final artefact: What happens to the body after an assault? Asking this question led me straight to the idea of the survivors cleansing which is usually what happens after an assault. Because the body is the site of the trauma, there is often a need to purify the site. Which can mean survivors to go through an intense bathing process in an attempt at purification. This takes me to my first material of choice for an artefact of healing and cleansing: soap. There are many metaphors and practises associated with soap and cleansing for example “to wash ones’ mouth out” “to wash once troubles away”, “to burst one’s bubble” etc. This means that the societal connotations of the material is quite consistently in line with the narrative of cleansing. When trying to reconcile its physical properties with my own narrative, the qualities I think of have to do with its malleability with the use of water and friction it releases specific fragrances (smell is the sun is most associated with memory)<sup>14</sup>, it has a variety of properties of color, texture, and consistency to choose from. To use soap as a basis of my design, I felt the need to create another metaphor which would connect to my specific objective.

Putting together all the qualities, I began to think of how the cleansing process can be refined to serve better rehabilitative purposes. In an attempt to refamiliarize a survivor with their bodies, I started to carve soaps to fit into some particular sensitive spots on the body that would be considered intimate and therefore intimate touch. Soap carved for the fingers, stimulate the calm stroking of one's hand, soap carved for the shoulder stimulates a shoulder rub, soap carved for hair stimulates an intimate head rub and so on. These practises, colloquially known as comforting touch may open a gateway for experiencing the body from a positive mindset once again. Thinking of a way to complete the design of the project, I decided to make a base for each of the carved soaps which would become the negative space of the geometry and contain the soaps until the shape has been worn down into a different unrecognizable shape. This simple design could hopefully serve the purpose of cleansing through a meditative adjustment of daily doctrine in my building design.



# Muskeln des Menschen.

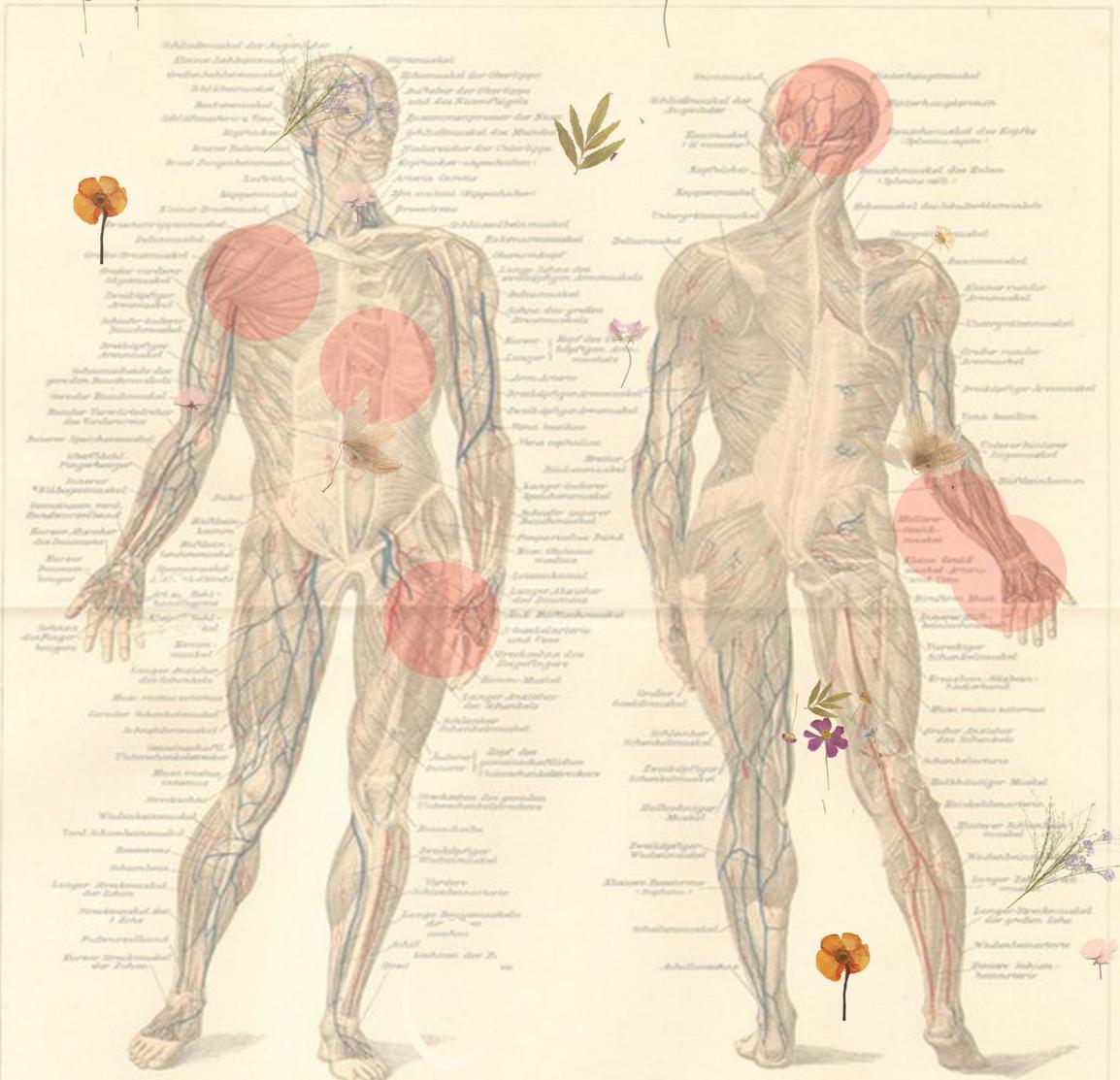


Fig. 1. Vorderansicht.

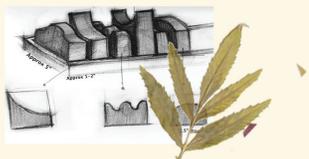
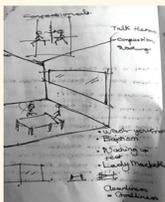
Auf der linken Körperhälfte sind am Hals, der Schulter, dem Unterarm und Oberarm die oberflächlichen Muskeln abgetragen worden.

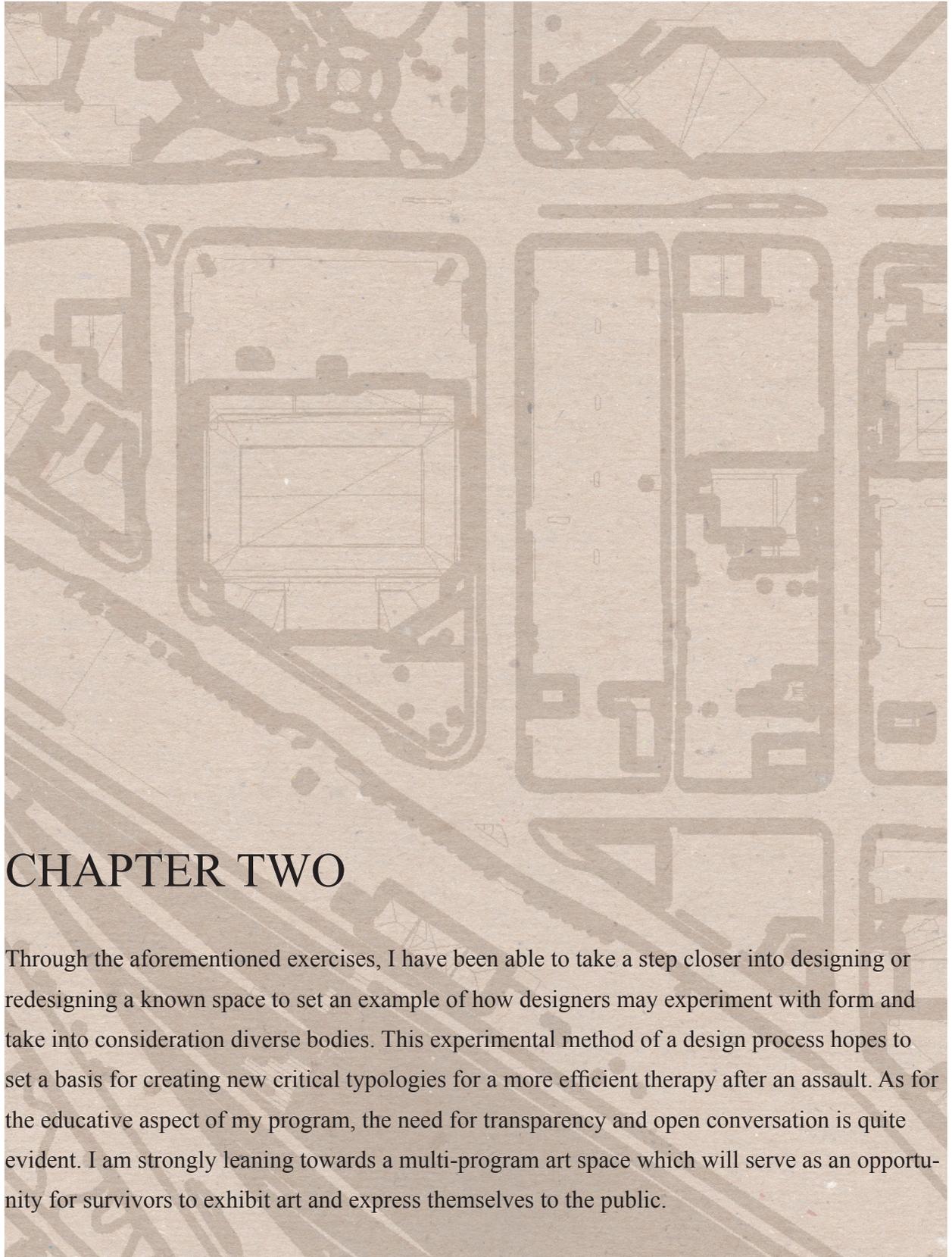
Fig. 2. Rückenansicht.

Auf der rechten Körperhälfte sind die oberflächlichen Muskeln teilweise abgetragen worden, dadurch tritt die Schulterarterie in ihrem ganzen Verlauf zum Vorschein.

Die roten Linien bezeichnen die Arterien, die blauen die Venen (vgl. Tab. Blutgefäße).







## CHAPTER TWO

Through the aforementioned exercises, I have been able to take a step closer into designing or redesigning a known space to set an example of how designers may experiment with form and take into consideration diverse bodies. This experimental method of a design process hopes to set a basis for creating new critical typologies for a more efficient therapy after an assault. As for the educative aspect of my program, the need for transparency and open conversation is quite evident. I am strongly leaning towards a multi-program art space which will serve as an opportunity for survivors to exhibit art and express themselves to the public.

## SITE CONSIDERATIONS

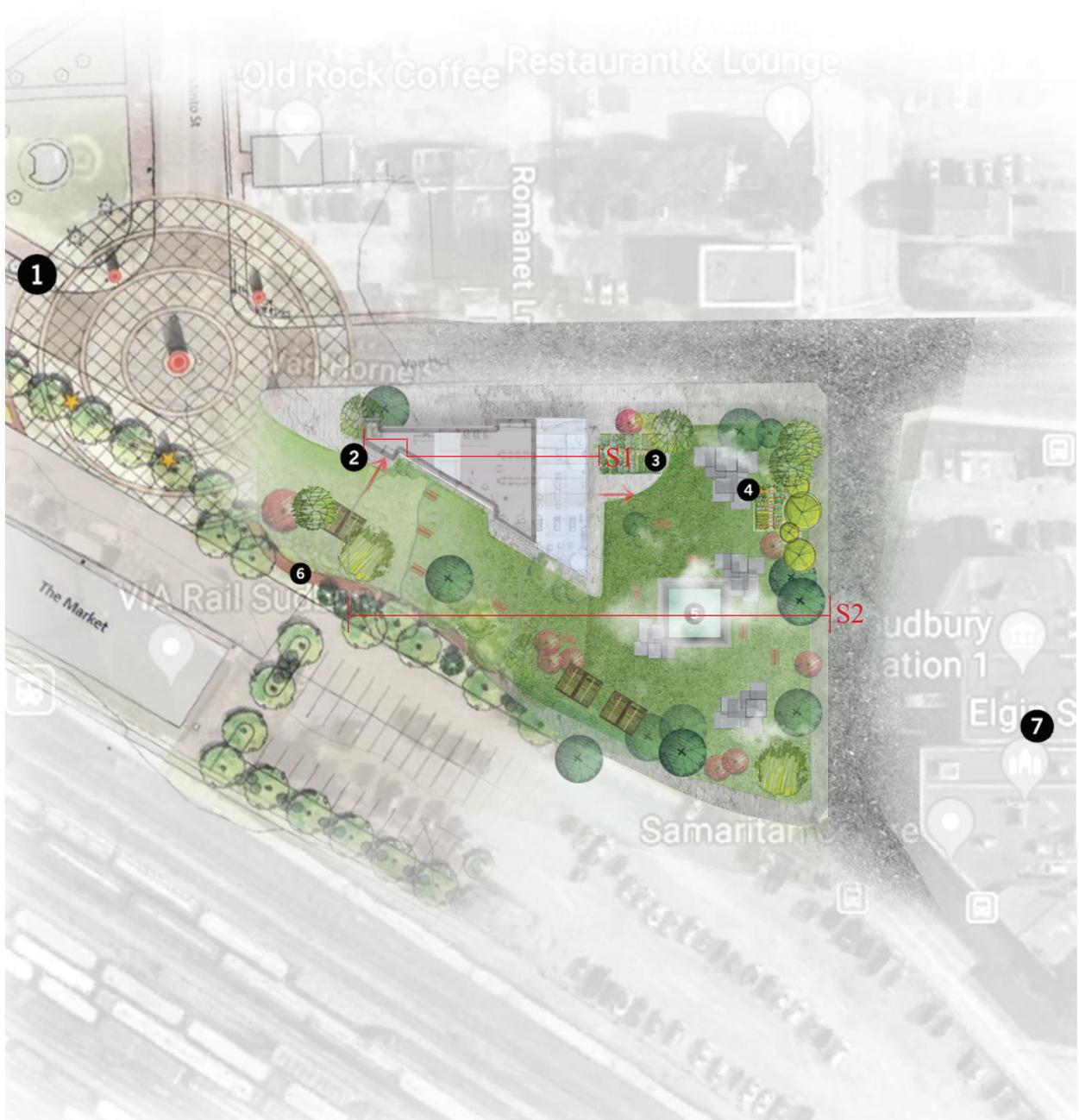
Moving forward to the design process of this building, I was able to use the programme as the driving force for choices within the building as well as information from the previous exercises. My first step was to make note of what parts of the building could point to important moments in the community. I chose four main parts of the community to focus my building design around:

**1. The Elgin Greenway:** This is part of Sudburys urban design plan to re-green the city through a park and bicycle paths. This is along the West facade of the building facing original entrance to. This connects park greenway directly to the landscape of my site.

**2. The Farmers Market:** The farmers market is a summer food and craft market where vendors take over the former CPR train station to sell goods. This ties into the part of my program that deals with therapeutic food growth.

**3. The Sudbury Police Station:** The police station is close to my site of choice but does not offer help to women who are sex workers or homeless. They are instead referred to the Samaritan centre; a soup kitchen and shelter.

**4. The Samaritan Centre:** The samaritan centre is operated by groups of volunteers, but can offer little in terms of protection and therapeutic resources. The kind of people who are allowed to volunteer is unregulated so some vulnerable and targeted groups can be put in dangerous situations with the very people who are supposed to be helping them.



1. ELGIN GREEN WAY PROPOSAL.
2. MAIN ENTRANCE ON STREET LEVEL
3. VEGETABLE BEDS
4. SOAPSTONE STEPS AS LANDSCAPE FURNITURE
5. WATER COLLECTION FEATURE CONNECTED TO UNDERGROUND CISTERN
6. BIKE PATH AND FOOT PATH AS PROPOSED IN GREENWAY PLAN
7. SAMARITAN CENTRE/SHELTER/KITCHEN

## THE BUILDING

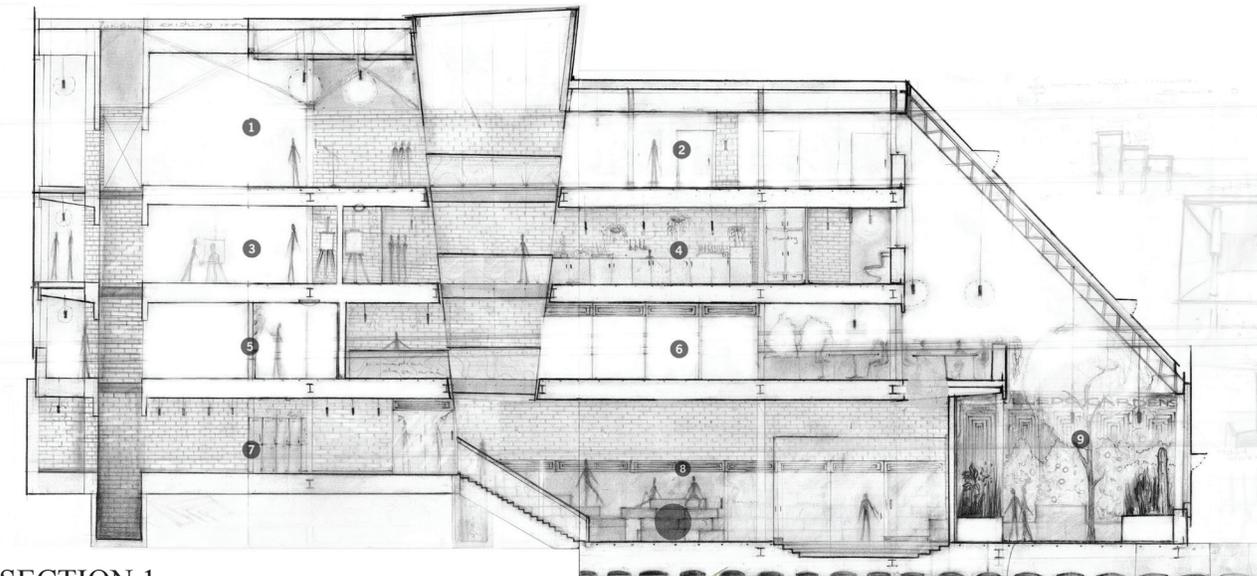
These important moments in the community made a path for me to follow in terms of understanding the parts of the community that should either be better scrutinized (samaritan centre) or celebrated (elgin greenway). I decided to expose parts of the original building according to the aforementioned community hot spots using the effect of light, floating glass. In the spirit of transparency and protection, I made the creative choice to use a translucent cloudy glass so as to have visual access to silhouettes (no space for violence) but still be unable to identify individuals as there may still be stigma attached to them. In the spirit of light and enlightenment, it was important that the final cut through the building would shed light to the basement level (as well as all other floors) which would become my bathhouse. So I made two final cuts of the glass through the building in the style of a funnel of light through the building. This funnel cut or light core became a part of a larger ventilation system. This light core also worked to divide each floor into two parts of each program and connect the spaces through a bridge on each floor. On the top level of the building, there is an event space connected by a bridge to a workshop/gallery/conference space. On the 2nd floor there is a shared visual artist studio connected by the bridge to an artist kitchen and lounge area; this then overlooks some parts of the two floors below (ground and “basement/bathhouse”). The ground floor at street level is the main entrance of the building. The main entrance comprises of two sets of glass sliding doors and is connected by a bridge to a community eating/gathering space which overlooks parts of the program below. According to my two programs of education and therapy, these divided floors can fit into one or both of these categories. The top floor as event space and gallery/artist workshop fulfills the program of cathartic education. With two rooms bound by the same soft translucent glass, there are two office-like spaces furnished with pillows and beanbags. This means the floor also incorporates the rehabilitative qualities of the program. Reinforcing this floors rehabilitative spaces are the extrusions on each side of the (now heightened) event space; also furnished with bean bags and couches for de-escalation in case of a large event that may create social triggers. The second floor is a studio and artist space that fulfills both the function of body therapy as well as cathartic education. The first floor is a reception space and looks over the lower levels’ food garden and has a fairly open program for community gathering.



SECTION 2



SOUTH ELEVATION/SITE SECTION

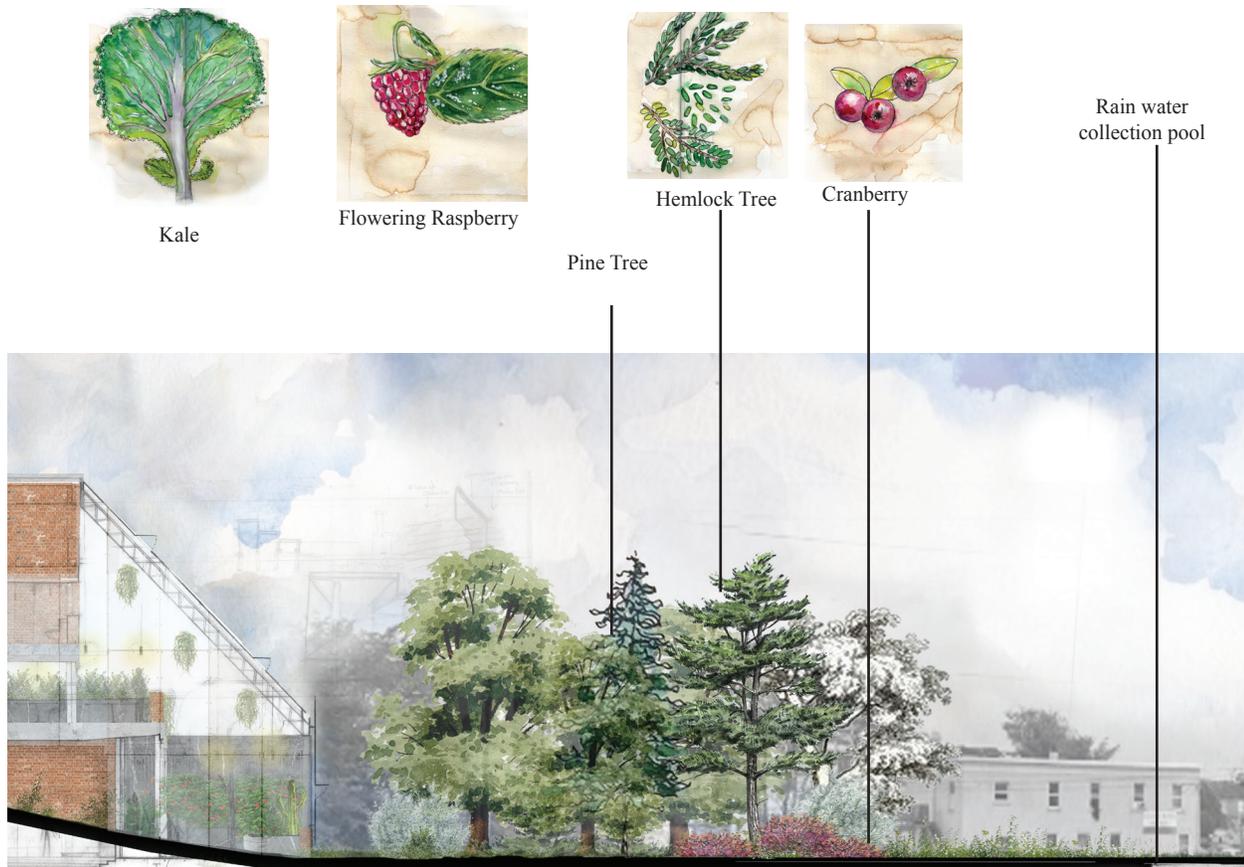


SECTION 1

1. Event space, Music, Poetry, performance art.
2. Talk therapy space. Glazed.
3. shared artist studio. Creative space.
4. Artist lounge and kitchen space. Craft space.
5. Main entrance. Green wall.
6. Community lounge. Shared meal space. Overlooks main greenhouse.
7. Change rooms: Lockers, Showers, Soap station
8. Soapstone steam bath house
9. Main greenhouse. Year-round. Native species for food growth.



The largest space is the main therapy area in the former basement level. The basement presented a good opportunity for a bathhouse that transitions into a greenhouse. The bath house is divided into two parts; the changing room, which features showers and lockers and the main bathing area. The combination of the main greenhouse and the bathhouse serves both programs and the community as well. Learning how to grow ones own food, year round is not only therapeutic but also builds community trust, is environmentally considerate and can undo a lot of environmental damage that has already happened due to Sudburys industrial past. As a part of the community’s existing programs, there are already food and vegetable gardens on the rise like the Saint Annes vegetable garden (Downtown Sudbury)<sup>15</sup> and the Delki Dozzi<sup>16</sup> community garden. The outer landscape of my building depends on the fact that the basement level exposed at the East or back wall of the building to reveal a new, gradually-lowered ground level outside of the greenhouse .This garden area is seven feet lower than the elevation of the main entrance. This space outside is also used to grow food. On the North side of the building certain trees like Hemlock, Pine and other evergreens roughly line the perimeter of the site. Evergreen trees are natural windbreakers. On the Southern perimeter of the building, there are more deciduous trees like Apple and Stag-horn Sumac shrubs.



15 "Grow your own veggies at Ste. Anne Road Community Garden." Sudbury.com. Last modified March 20, 2016. Accessed April 18, 2019. <https://www.sudbury.com/local-news/grow-your-own-veggies-at-ste-anne-road-community-garden-276597>.

16 Delki Dozzi Community Garden. Sudbury, Canada: Foodshed project Accessed April 19, 2019 <https://foodshedproject.ca/gardens/delki-dozzi-community-garden/>.

Deciduous trees provide shade in the summer but allow the sun from the south to enter the greenhouse in the winter because of the absence of leaves.

The landscaping of the site features similar soapstone slabs that mimic the style of the in formal staircase that leads to the bathhouse (I discuss this further in the following section on materiality). These are the main landscape furniture feature. There are different locations for vegetable growth on all sides of the site. In the centre of the landscape Is a water feature which resembles one of the bathing pools in the bathhouse. This feature serves the purpose of collecting rainwater into an underground cistern. The cistern stores and distributes water back into the building to water the green house plants and to create steam for the bath houses through an underground system reminiscent of Roman steam baths The network of underground steam also presented the opportunity for warming stations around the site.



Sweet Pea



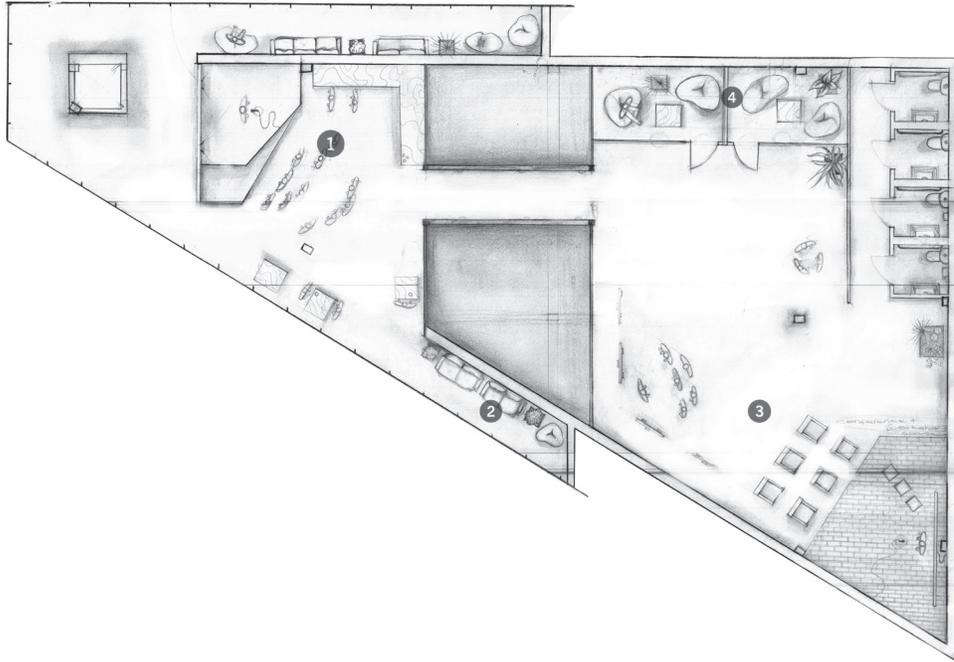
Chokeberry



Common Apple tree

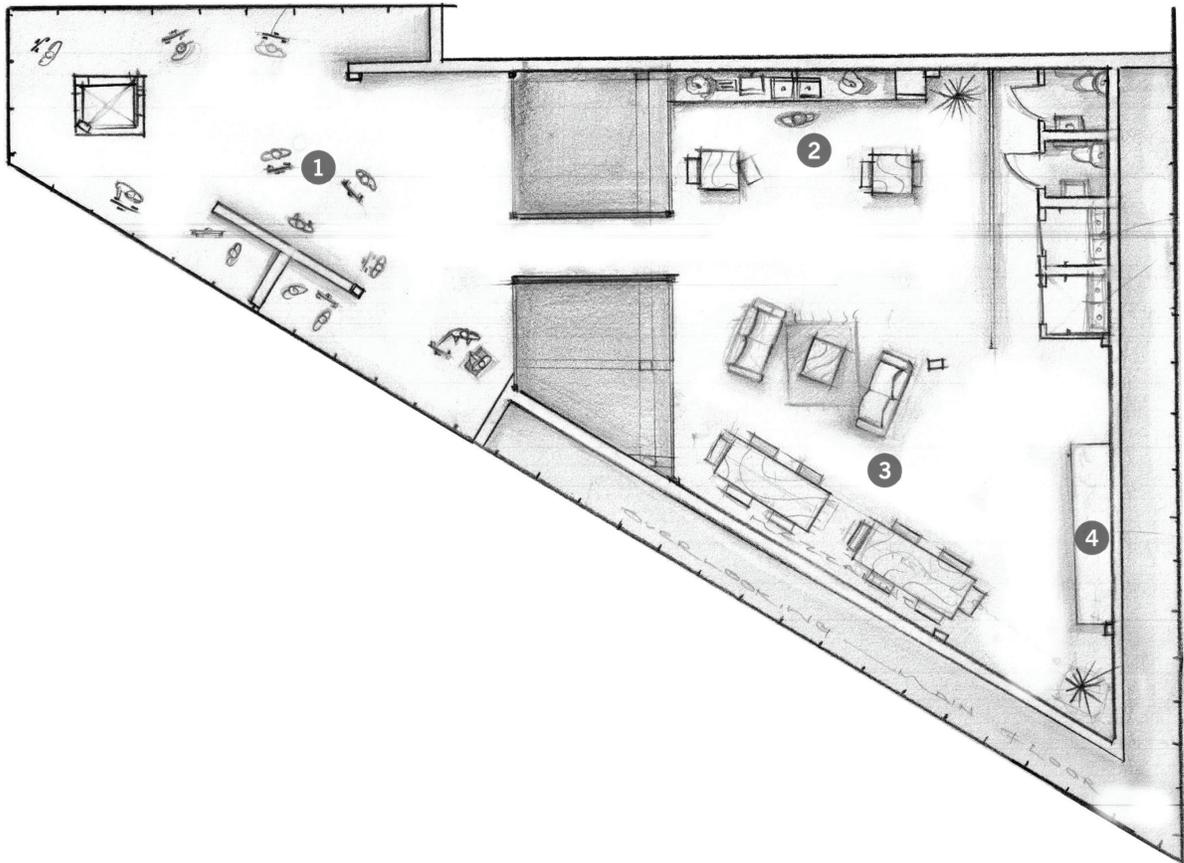
Staghorn Sumac





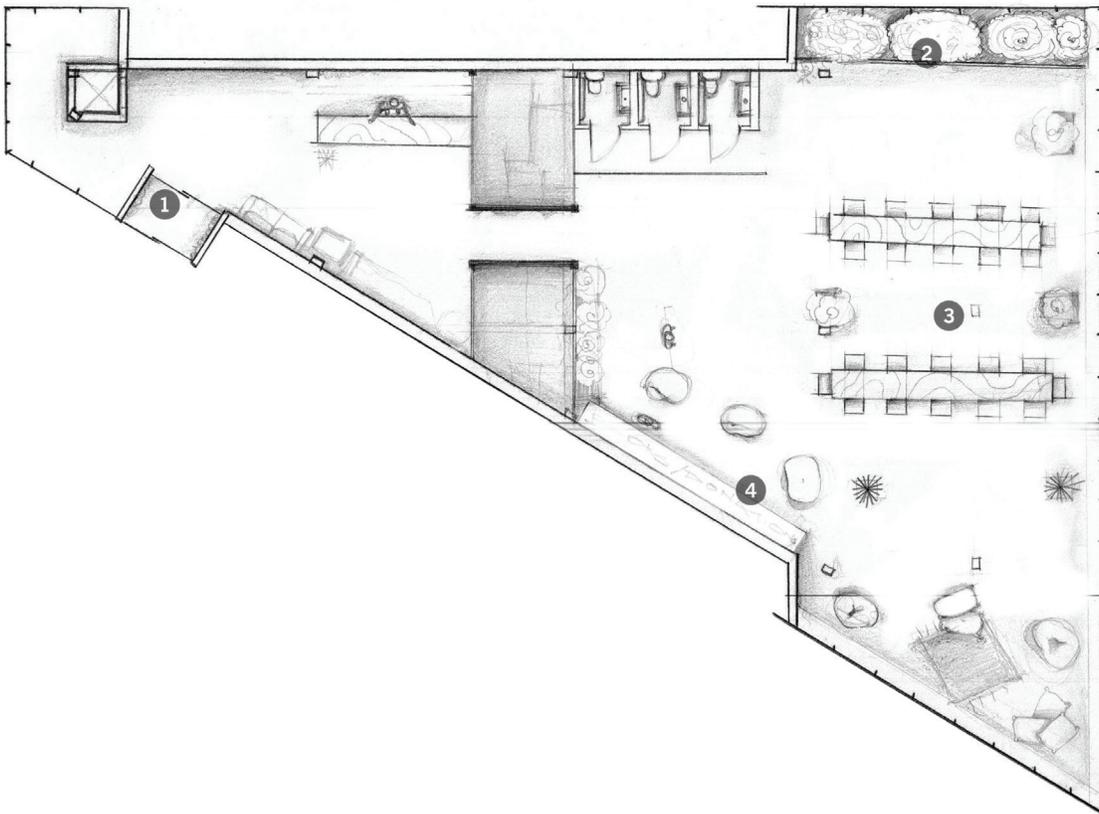
## Top floor

1. Event space. Music and performance
2. Compression area
3. Conference and exhibition space
4. Talk space



## Second floor

1. Shared studio
2. Artist kitchen
3. Artist lounge
4. Arts storage



## Ground floor

1. Entrance of Elgin Greenway. Ground level.
2. Herb growth beds
3. Community dining and lounge
4. Library of donated books



### Bathhouse plants

Chinese evergreens



Snake Plants



Dracaenae



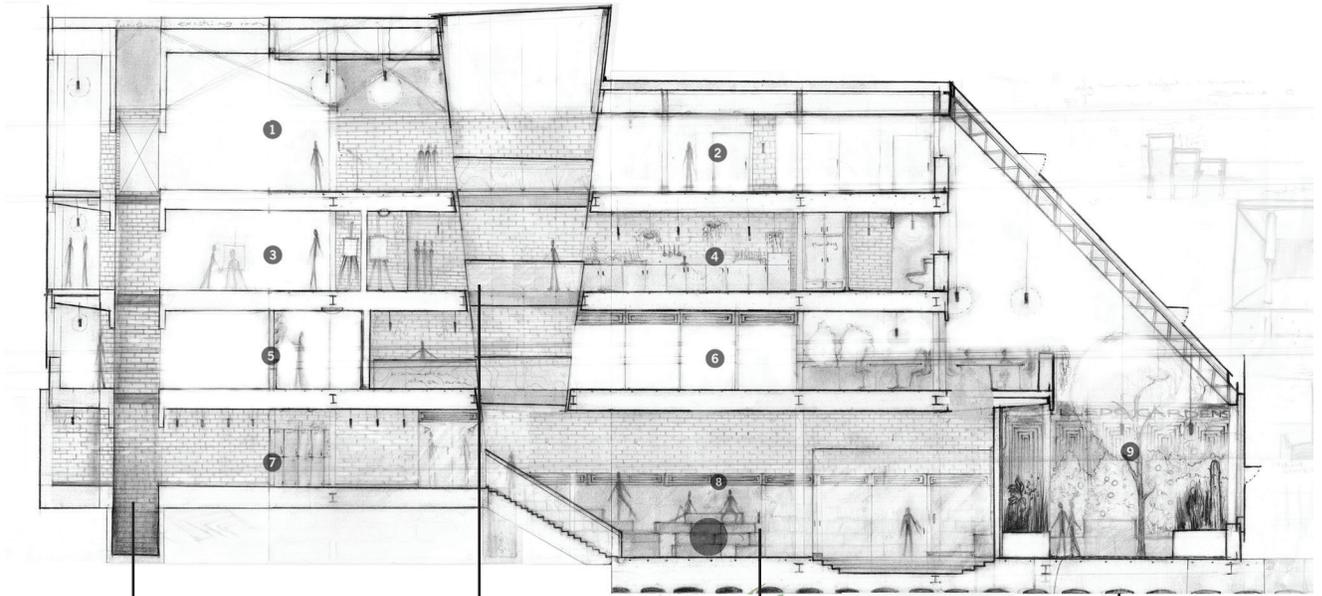
### Bathhouse/Basement level

- 0. Mechanical room. Staff and service access.
- 1. Change area. Showers and lockers
- 2. Steps to bath house
- 3. Steam bath.
- 4. Year-round greenhouse

## MATERIALITY

Because the focus of my building is related to tactility and the experience of the body in space, the material culture of the building is the main factor determining an individual's experience of the space. Historically, there is no denial that material choice and ornamentation represent the creative or philosophical intent of the buildings designer and its program. The original Ledo hotel was a structural combination of brick masonry and steel grid construction; these existing materials are layers of Sudburys industrial mining history. It was important to me that the brick remained a feature that would represent the historical sentiment of the buildings original design. Wherever brick is taken down to form my buildings extrusions, it is to be reused to finish the floor of the main greenhouse which protrudes from the back of the original hotel. It is also used to finish the flooring in the "stage" area in the conference gathering space on the top floor. The interior cladding will be the stripped back old brick masonry. Previously mentioned was the usage of soapstone in several parts of the building. Soapstone for me is the most interactive material. The soapstone is a dark colour and left in an unpolished form. Leaving the soapstone in this raw state means that with contact and friction over time, the stone will slowly erode to reveal the parts of the building as it is used overtime. An example of this is detailed in the bridges' railings and bath house stepping stones/seats. In the railings there is a skeleton of rebar passed through a continuous rectangular slab of soapstone that would organically erode into a sculptural blend of industrial and modern materials.

The steps from the Changing rooms to the main bathing area comprises of a serious set of formal stairs set in the middle of varying slabs of soapstone stacked in a staggered formation to form a more informal staircase that may double as furniture for the bathing area. IN IMAGE. Because these areas will be used and experience friction, they will also erode to reveal a more organic architecture in the long run there the relation of the body and build is revealed, each shaping the other. The soapstone is also indicative of spatial expansion of space expansion and represents the "new" in some spaces. For example in the main event space on the top floor, where the height of the room has been increased to create a more grand event space, soapstone is installed to separate the exact line of where the old building stopped and the extension begins. Another example of this occurs in the bathhouse as the main bathing area has been dropped to create a more traditional style reminiscent of the high ceilings of historical bathhouses. This means that extruding downward into the ground, the inner cladding that represents the new in the building is also soapstone. This method ensures that the users of the building may be able to follow the historical footprint of the building through its materiality.



Red brick



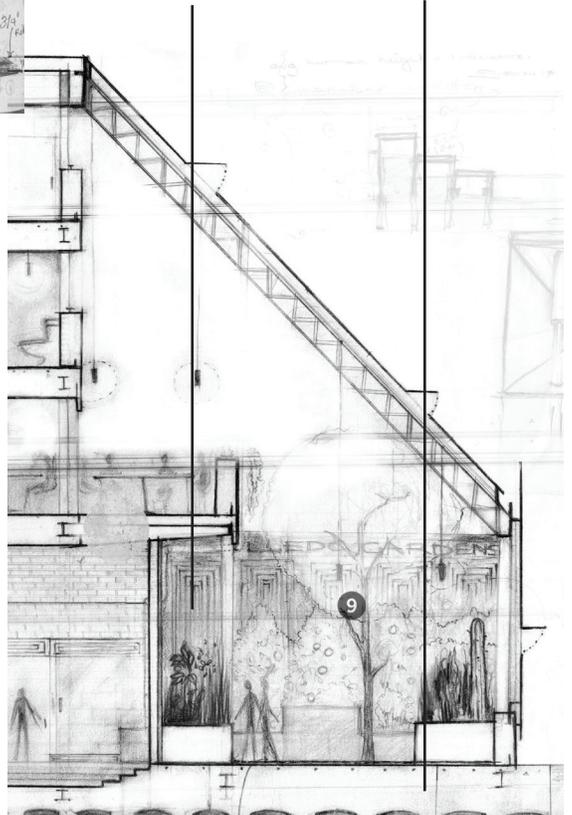
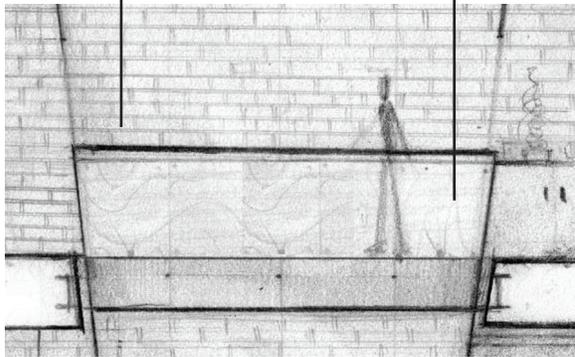
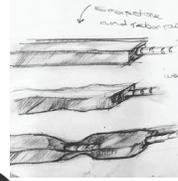
Alabaster



Dark unpolished soapstone



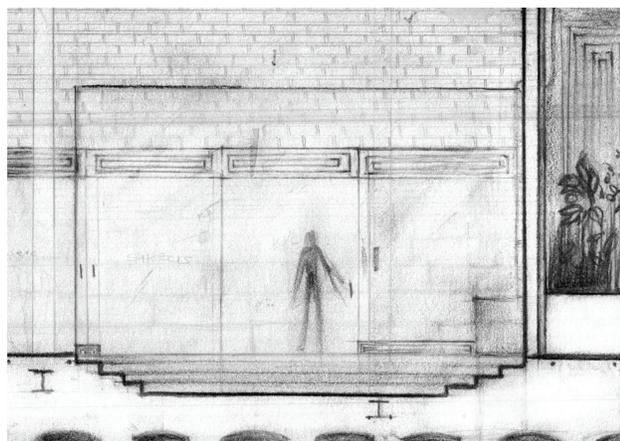
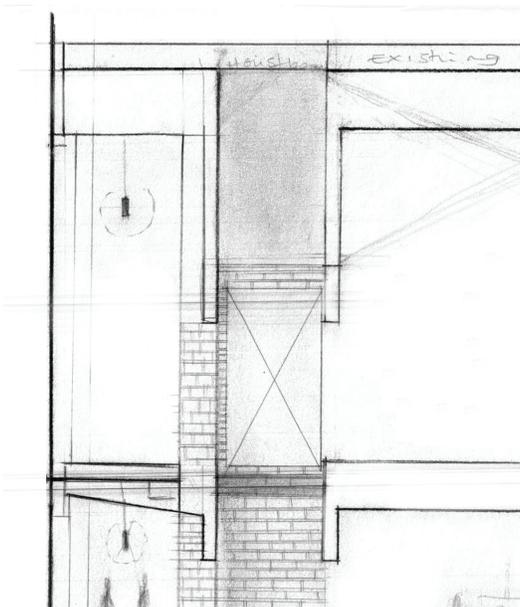
Concrete flooring



The glass curtain wall which appears everywhere I have made an extrusion, as earlier noted creates the imagery of softness within an otherwise industrial setting. A similar material which emulates with flair the best qualities of the glass is featured as finishes for bar and table tops as well as the bridges screens under the railings. This material is a warm alabaster. Although alabaster is more opaque than my glass curtain wall and light core features, it still bears a translucent quality. Paired with warm light, night time in my building will feature soft shadows and a warm glow that can be seen by passers by.



Fresh air ventilation. Air enters the Greenhouse from a lower vent. As the heat rises, it warms the building with freshly filtered air and escapes through the upper vents and the glass light core funnel.





The Lightcore and main transitional space

## CONCLUSION

Through the exploration of materials, maps and methodologies, this thesis took into account the experimental opportunities of sexual safety and architecture. I propose design can design can eliminate public ignorance through art and placemaking. Art is known to arouse empathy in different groups of people regardless of the details of their identity.<sup>17</sup> Art can also be therapeutic and more cathartic than the restricted talk therapy\* which survivors are subjected to.<sup>18</sup> Talk therapy is important but body therapy is the next step towards finding a better solution for designing more consciously and empathetically.<sup>19</sup> Architecture is a physiological, material experience and offers design a set of tools to progress our knowledge of Body therapy and to heal from sexual violence. Architecture is a good place to begin.

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\* Szalavitz, Maia. "The Trouble With Talk Therapy." TIME. Last modified November 27, 2012. Accessed April 16, 2019. <http://healthland.time.com/2012/11/27/can-branding-save-talk-therapy/>.

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