

Framing the Scene:

A Cinematic Approach to a Redevelopment at the
Halifax Waterfront

By

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Abstract

The fabric of the city can be understood as a collection of stories that have been recorded and rewritten over time, as an invisible narrative structure which reveals a new dimension for the visitor and resident. As places are torn down and rebuilt, evidence of the physical history comprised of stories and narratives fade and are sometimes erased. There is a resulting need for a personal interpretation of what has come before in order to interpret the past maker's intentions. With the passage of time, post-industrial sites now remain vacant and untouched within the city, and are inevitably disregarded to become misused spaces. The redevelopment of the post industrial site represents the desire to express layers of time within the scrap sites of the city and the reinterpretation of stories and narratives. These narratives, set in time, can be revealed through a process of layering and rearrangements of memory to create a framework which will facilitate and control future development.

Cinematic techniques are effective in capturing techniques of memory and the passing of time on film. Techniques such as framing, the montage, and the pan all contribute in conveying aspects of narrative and memory to an audience. This thesis investigates the role in which cinematic techniques and the structure of multiple narratives and stories can begin to correspond with each other in order to stimulate growth of an industrial site. It proposes an architecture that will detect, reveal and link fragments of the spatial narratives existing on the site and provide a base for the production of new ones.

Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents:

Abstract

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

List of Appendices

Introduction.....i

Chapter 1: Memory (Framing) Resident

1.1-	Memory and History in the City.....	1
1.2-	Collective Memory.....	7
1.3-	Memory of the Site – Geographical.....	11
1.4-	Narrative of the Site – The Characters.....	13
1.5	The Architectural frame.....	16
1.6	Architectural Proposal 1 – The Elevated Pier	18

Chapter 2: Narrative (Montage) Tourist

2.1-	Role of narrative in formation of memories.....	27
2.2-	Waterfront as location for Narrative.....	31
2.3	Narrative as text- Raymond Roussel's Locus Solus.....	33
2.4	Narrative scales vs. Site scales.....	37
2.5	Narrative montage – Written to drawing to model.....	47
2.6	Architectural Proposal 2 – The Antithesis Museum.....	51

Chapter 3: Duration (The Pan) Passenger

3.1-	Movement Within Vs. The Pan.....	59
3.2-	Recording Traces - Tarkovsky and Nostalgia.....	64
3.3-	Montage of the site.....	67
3.4-	Fixed image – Pinhole Camera Investigations.....	69
3.5-	Investigation – Conceptual Cinema models.....	72
3.6	Architectural Proposal 3: The Duration Video Galleries.....	76

Conclusion: *Architecture as the Backdrop for Narrative*.....85

Bibliography.....111

Appendix A.....113

List of Illustrations

1	Suitcase pinhole camera, photograph taken by author.....	i
2	Ariel photo of the Halifax Port,	ii
	Source: < www.portofhalifax.ca >	
3	Pier 21, Halifax Nova Scotia, photograph taken by author.....	iii
4	Cruise ship docking at waterfront.....	iii
	Source: < www.portofhalifax.ca >	
5	Electropolis Studios, Halifax Nova Scotia, photograph taken by author.....	iv
6	Collection of pinhole photographs, images by author.....	vi
7	Detail of Conceptual Drawing, image by author.....	1
8	The Boiler House at the Distillery District, before construction.....	3
	Source: < www.thedistillerydistrict.com >	
9	The Boiler House at the Distillery District, after construction.....	3
	Source: < www.thedistillerydistrict.com >	
10	Halifax Explosion, City of Halifax archives.....	7
11	Pier 21 Exhibit, photograph by author.....	8
12	Maps of Halifax, image from The City of Halifax archives.....	11
	and planning department.	
13	Site model, image by author.....	12
14	Site model, image by author.....	12
15	Narrative storyboard, the <i>Resident</i> , image by author.....	13
16	Narrative storyboard, the <i>Tourist</i> , image by author.....	14
17	Narrative storyboard, the <i>Passenger</i> , image by author.....	15
18	Map of path taken by the <i>Resident</i> , image by author.....	18
19	Mass Model: <i>framing</i> , image by author.....	19
20	Section through <i>framing</i> showing sleeping berths and sailor's mission,	20
	image by author.	
21	Mass model, <i>framing</i> , image by author.....	20
22	Section through sleeping berths, image by author.....	21
23	Perspective view of sleeping berths, image by author.....	22

24	Elevated offices in site, image by author.....	22
25	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	24
26	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	25
27	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	26
28	Detail of conceptual drawing, image by author.....	27
29	Abandoned rail cars at site, photograph taken by author.....	31
30	Storyboard for <i>Locus Solus</i> , image by author.....	33
31	Detail for storyboard for <i>Locus Solus</i> , image by author.....	34
32	Conceptual <i>artifact</i> model, image by author.....	37
33	Conceptual <i>artifact</i> model, image by author.....	38
34	Conceptual <i>artifact</i> model, image by author.....	39
35	Storyboard for the narrative of the <i>Resident</i> , image by author.....	42
36	Storyboard for the narrative of the <i>Tourist</i> , image by author.....	44
37	Storyboard for the narrative of the <i>Passenger</i> , image by author.....	46
38	Artifact box for the <i>Resident</i> , through the concept of <i>framing</i> , image by author.....	48
39	Artifact box for the <i>Resident</i> , through the concept of <i>framing</i> , image by author.....	48
40	Artifact box for the <i>Tourist</i> , through the concept of <i>montage</i> , image by author.....	49
41	Artifact box for the <i>Tourist</i> , through the concept of <i>montage</i> , image by author.....	49
42	Artifact box for the <i>Passenger</i> , through the concept of <i>duration</i> , image by author.....	50
43	Artifact box for the <i>Passenger</i> , through the concept of <i>duration</i> , image by author.....	50
44	Map of path taken by <i>Tourist</i> , image by author.....	51
45	Mass model, <i>Antithesis Museum</i> , image by author.....	53
46	Detail of mass model, <i>Antithesis Museum</i> , image by author.....	54
47	Section through <i>Antithesis Museum</i> , image by author.....	54
48	Interior of permanent structure with red velvet chair, image by author.....	55
49	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	56
50	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	57
51	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	58
52	Detail of conceptual drawing, image by author.....	59
53	Methods of <i>panning</i> , image from.....	61

The Handbook of Basic Motion- Picture Techniques, 1966.

54	Scene for Alfred Hitchcock's <i>Rear Window</i> , image from film.....	62
55	Scenes from Andrei Tarkovsy's <i>Nostalgia</i> , image from film.....	64
56	Video stills from site, image by author.....	67
57	Detail of pinhole camera photograph, image by author.....	69
58	Detail of pinhole camera photograph, image by author.....	71
59	Conceptual model, <i>surface</i> , image by author.....	72
60	Conceptual model, <i>artifact</i> , image by author.....	73
61	Conceptual model, <i>framing</i> , image by author.....	74
62	Conceptual model, <i>duration (the pan)</i> , image by author.....	75
63	Map of path taken by <i>passenger</i> , image by author.....	76
64	Mass model, duration video galleries, image by author.....	78
65	Section through duration video galleries and circulation, image by author.....	79
66	Perspective of drive in theatre, image by author.....	79
67	Plan of <i>duration video galleries</i> in context of the site, image by author.....	80
68	Mass model, <i>duration video galleries</i> , image by author.....	81
69	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	82
70	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	83
71	Detail of figure 6, Pinhole image by author.....	84
72	Sketch of storyboard concept, image by author.....	86
73	Storyboard - Beginning of the journey of the "narrative writer", image by author.....	87
74	Storyboard - Approach the site and the <i>Antithesis Museum</i> , image by author.....	88
75	Storyboard - The <i>Antithesis Museum</i> in the landscape, image by author.....	89
76	Storyboard - First encounter with the artifact box, image by author.....	90
77	Storyboard - Moving from the elevated walkway into the permanent structure.....	91
	image by author.	
78	Storyboard - The red velvet chair, image by author.....	92
79	Storyboard - Ascending up the main stairs, image by author.....	93
80	Storyboard – View from the elevated path, image by author.....	94
81	Storyboard - Approach to <i>Framing</i> , image by author.....	95
82	Storyboard – View of the elevated walkway, image by author.....	96
83	Storyboard – Stacked sleeping berths and walkway, image by author.....	97

84 Storyboard – Approach to main space, image by author.....98

85 Storyboard – Interior of the main space, image by author.....99

86 Storyboard – View from the elevated walkway, image by author.....100

87 Storyboard – Framed views of waterfront, image by author.....101

88 Storyboard – Offices for The Halifax Waterfront Corporation, image by author.....102

89 Storyboard – Traveling along abandoned tracks, image by author.....103

90 Storyboard – Approach to *Duration Video Galleries*, image by author.....104

91 Storyboard – Cars at the drive-on theatre, image by author.....105

92 Storyboard – Movement up the main ramp, image by author.....106

93 Storyboard – Views into the soundstages, image by author.....107

94 Storyboard – A strange object in the landscape, image by author.....108

95 Storyboard – Building in landscape, image by author.....109

96 Storyboard - Following the tracks: the end, image by author.....110

Appendix A

a. - The Pinhole Camera Suitcase, image by author.....113

List of Appendences

Appendix A – Constructing a Pinhole Camera Suitcase



Figure 1 – *It began with that tattered suitcase and a coffee on a cool autumn morning. Recording with the suitcase pinhole camera; Halifax, Nova Scotia.*

Introduction

What does it mean to collect? To hold onto lost and forgotten memories? To preserve our past? My mother has always collected everything, from china to tattered velvet furniture we were never allowed to sit on. These things were not from her time, but rather from generations before. Yet each object holds indescribable stories and myths in its chips and worn edges that perhaps intrigue us all to some degree. In the same way that the individual collects lost personal artifacts, the city holds onto its own artifacts, through their construction and temporal layering. The city therefore is a recording of a condition of layered time, as memories are preserved to be

perceived by future generations. However, in the post modern condition, the importance of preservation needs to be questioned, as an alternative means to the careful restoration of areas which are undergoing a change function and users. The industrial waterfront is an example of a changing space within the harbour city that has had mixed agendas for its preservation. This thesis will investigate the changing condition of memory and history in the development of an industrial site in the City of Halifax, and the future implications of writing an industrial area into the storyline of the urban fabric.

This thesis will address the vast industrial waterfront in Halifax, Nova Scotia and the potential of 3 small-scale interventions that will have the ability of evoking not only memory and personal narratives, but provide a framework for future development. The port of Halifax is unique in its geography, as it is an ice free port, allowing for commercial trade to exist all year round. In



Figure 2 – Ariel shot of the Halifax Port.

addition, the waterfront consists of a historical port area which caters to the city's tourism industry, which is anchored on each side by active shipping and cargo facilities and a large naval base. It is not the purpose of the design scheme to suggest a complete reworking of the

site but rather an integration of new programs into the existing port functions which will address the three primary users of the site; the resident, the passenger and the tourist.

Narrative was used as a foundation for the various investigations for program and site throughout this thesis. Narrative and memory can be described as subjective processes that depend mainly on an individual's memory and experience of a place and time. Through various

processes of investigation, a fiction has been established for the way in which the proposed architecture will address and respond to the evoked memories and narratives associated with the site. This process is specific to the place, which is already rich with tactile evidence and history of long voyages and sea stories. The opening of Pier 21 as a National Historical site furthers the



Figure 3 - Pier 21 National Historic Site, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

conviction of the site as a historically important area to the city of Halifax, and is grounded as a starting point for future growth for the area. The area will always remain an active port as long as the city is in the forefront of commercial sea travel, and therefore will probably not

abandon its industrial shipping roots

for the redevelopment of a completely public area. It is the intention through this thesis to propose a way of integrating a subtle and humble architecture, which will not act independently of the site but rather enhance it as an important area for the city of Halifax.

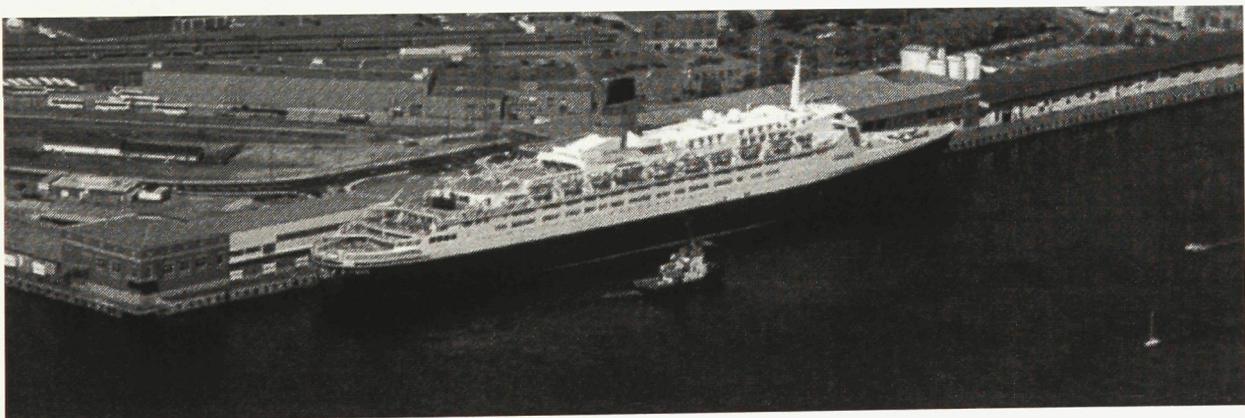


Figure 4 – Cruise ship docking at Pier 21, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Cinematic techniques have the ability to evoke personal memories and establishing narratives through devices such as framing, slow pans and creating the sense of a passage of time and the creation of artifacts. These techniques have the potential of being applied in an architectural investigation in order to evoke cinematic conditions on the site. Halifax has situated



Figure 5 – *Electropolis Studios, Halifax, Nova Scotia.*

itself as an active member in the film industry, in particular areas surrounding the site of the container pier which are used as sound stages and sets for various productions.

Electropolis Motion Picture Studios is located on the Halifax harbour, adjacent to the proposed site and is the largest film production centre in eastern Canada. Located in a former Nova Scotia Power Plant, the studios opened in 1998 and consist of various soundstages which service the areas film community. In the coming months, The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design will be relocating several of its studios in the large, adjacent two story buildings to Pier 21. This intervention will further anchor the site as an arts and cultural district that will facilitate future development of the site for residents and visitors to the port city.

A change in the fabric of the industrial waterfront is a result of technological changes in the shipping industry, and the requirement of less land for traditional port activities, resulting in spaces and buildings becoming available for development. With a decrease in commercial water traffic in waterways and harbours, a return of certain water uses, such as tour boats, personal watercraft, and ferries have developed, further allowing for a renewed public interest in the waterfront as a destination. As suggested by Hayuth and Hilling, on the topic of the change in the waterfront condition: “Given the close functional relationship between the maritime and non-maritime

components of any port city it is inevitable that change in the character of port activity will lead to modifications in the traditional port-city relationship.”¹ Declining port areas can be revived if appropriate investments are made to ensure that new attractions are developed for the area. The port lifecycle can be described through several stages, from growth of the expanded facility, to its maturity, to its full potential, to obsolescence as ground is lost to other ports and finally to dereliction after areas are abandoned. The final step in the lifecycle is the redevelopment, which signals the start of a new economic cycle for the port.² It is therefore necessary to identify redevelopment for non-port uses as an important aspect in the lifecycle of the port and its potential for re-growth. The redundant areas can either be developed for non-port uses such as leisure and culture, or for continued port uses such as new berths for cruise vessels visiting the ports.

This thesis will address the notion of the changing port, and the implications of memory and narrative in creating an architecture which will respond to a changing historical condition. Through the use of cinematic techniques and the camera, a mode for intervention and investigation will be applied in order to explore the potential of the industrial port as a place for layered narratives.

1. Y Hayuth and D Hilling. “Technological Change and Seaport Development, European Port Cities in Transition. ed. B.S Hoyle and D.A. Pinder, (London: Belhaven Press, 1992) 56.

2. Jacque Charlier. “The Regeneration of Old Port Areas for New Port Uses” European Port Cities in Transition. ed. B.S Hoyle and D.A. Pinder, (London: Belhaven Press, 1992) 140.

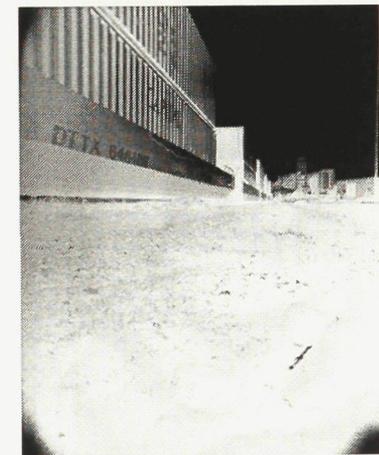
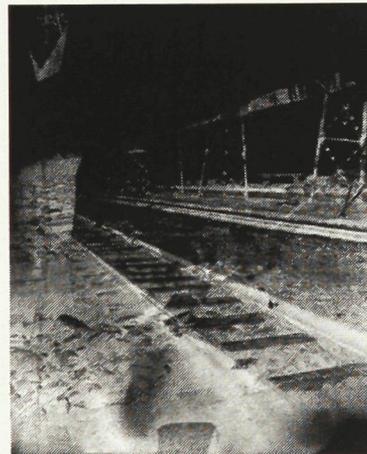
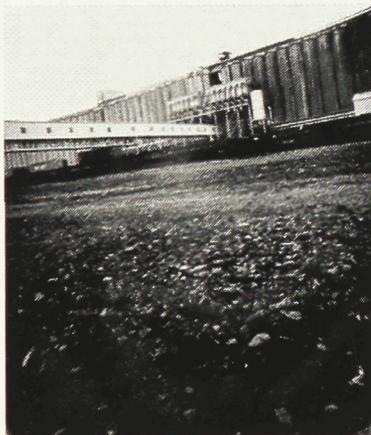
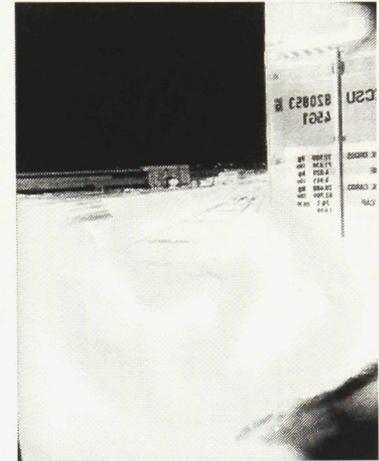
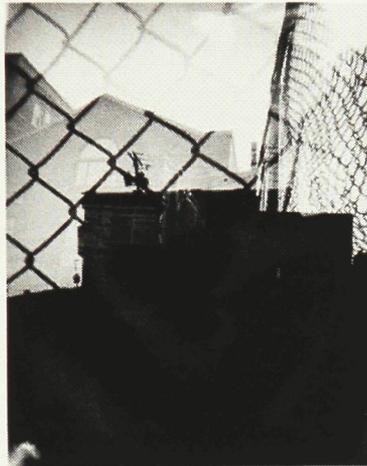
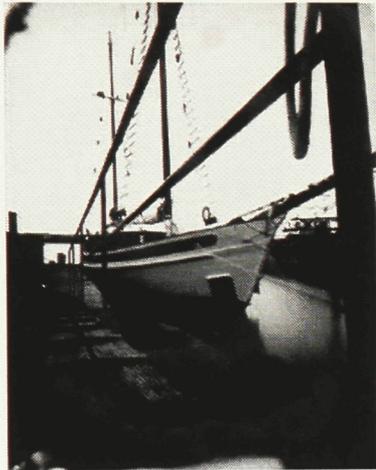
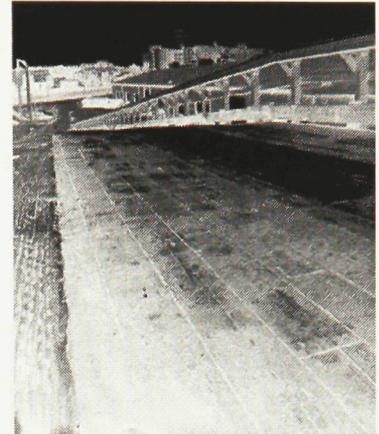
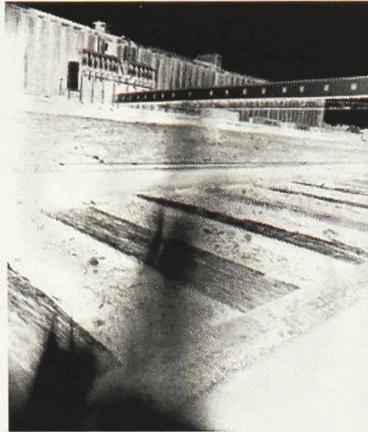
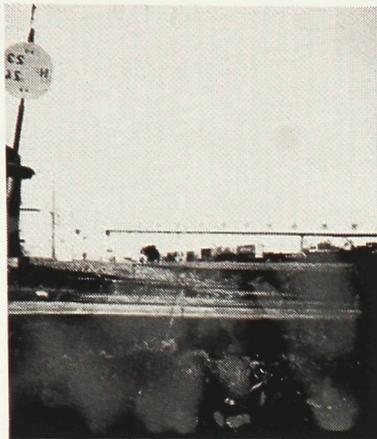


Figure 6 – Collection of images taken at the Halifax Waterfront with the pinhole suitcase.

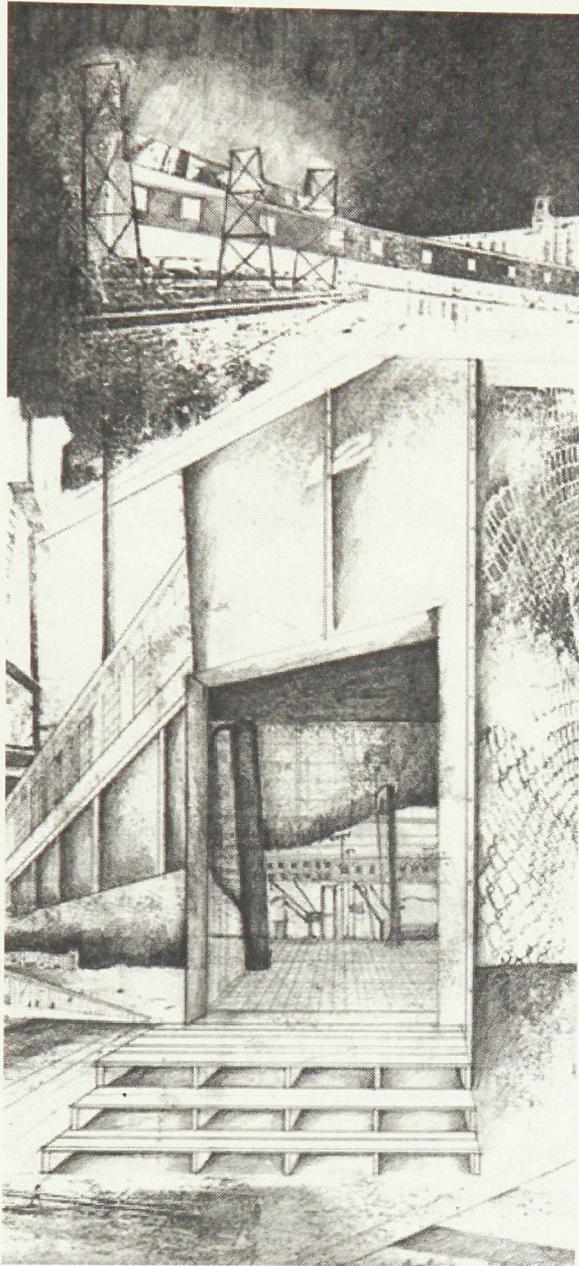


Figure 7 – *I decide to travel to the water's edge by the tracks and the large piers.*

Chapter 1: Memory (Framing) Resident

1.1 - Memory and History in the Contemporary City

The role of history and memory and the concepts of space and time play a significant role in the redevelopment of the post-industrial waterfront site. As memories exist on the site in layers, constructed over time, they must be revealed in a similar fashion as an archaeological excavation.

These fragments, in order to be perceived by the public in a particular context, must reveal themselves not in a museum like setting but rather as an integral part of the experience of the site and the surrounding city. The role of history and memory in the contemporary city is therefore not one of preservation and containment but of integration and usage.

There has been a significant shift of concepts from the historical to the present, from the nineteenth century city to the twenty-first century forms. Modernism separated the relationship between history and the city, severing the architectural intentions demonstrated in the 19th century. The modernists demonstrated their desire to forget the old city and monuments and traditional beliefs which were implemented with economic and social problems of the era past. Architecture in the 1970's and 1980's attempted to restore the public realm of the city, to re-weave the shredded urban fabric, and to reconstruct a sense of collectivity and cooperation. The current shift in urban redevelopment which appears to be transforming the city is that of historical preservation, as architects and urban planners strive not to make the same mistakes as their modernist predecessors. This method of preservation however fails to integrate the surrounding conditions of the city, therefore resulting in a fragmented condition. A more successful method for preservation is one of minimal intervention, where it is needed for the safety of the buildings and inhabitants. This method allows for the building to be read in its original historical context, as an artifact which has aged over time. A recent example of this strategy for preservation is the site of the Distillery District in Toronto, owned by Cityscape Holdings Inc, and designed by various architectural teams such as Kohn Shnier Architects, KPMB Architects, and Shim- Sutcliffe Architects. The abandoned site of the Gooderham and Worts Distillery has been revived in a way so as not to bring the buildings back to their 19th century condition, but rather layer new materials with old in order to create spaces which normally would not occur. Changes to the site are additive, and only when

new amenities were needed such as plumbing and electrical systems to keep the building's character which it had acquired with time.

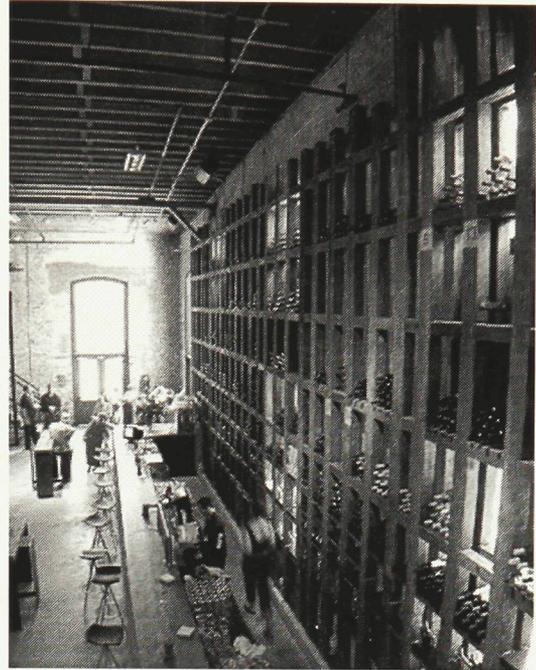
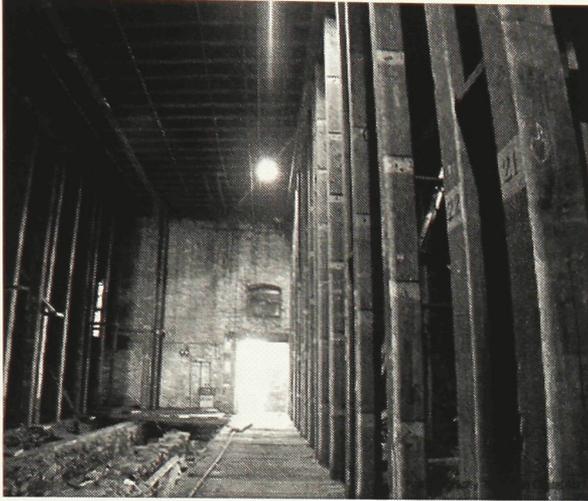


Figure 8 & 9 – *The Boiler House at the Distillery District; before and after renovation.*

In the traditional city, Medieval or Renaissance, urban memory was easy to define, as it was the image of the city that enabled the citizen to identify with its past and present “as a political, cultural, and social entity that was neither the “reality” of the city nor a purely imaginary “utopia” but rather the complex mental map of significance by which the city be recognized as home”.¹

Therefore monuments served as markers for the city fabric, which became “memory triggers” of historical events that had occurred in the city. Events of commemoration resulted in memory events which formed the basis of the cultural and political structure of the city from renaissance to the classical city. Memory of past urban events therefore existed in the realm of the collective with little room for personal memories or interpretations of exiting memories and narratives of a place.

¹ Anthony Vidler. The Architectural Uncanny. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992) 177.

Alois Riegl suggests that:

“A monument in its oldest and most original sense is a human creation, erected for the specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events...alive in the minds of future generations.”²

Monuments that are erected in public urban spaces commemorate and inform an audience of their story through a carefully placed information plaque. Monuments mark historical events which have endured time and survive within a culture.

In contrast to memories which are *represented* through historical monuments, the role of personal memory differs from that of an historical account in its ability to rearrange images of the past and present them as a series of manipulated and re-constructed personal accounts.

Collective memory therefore exists only as long as it is part of a group of individuals; but when that continuity with the past is ruptured then history comes in to play³. Our memories are therefore important to the understanding and reinterpretation of the areas of our cities which contain a series of layered stories and narratives. As stated by Aldo Rossi in his book *Architecture of the City*:

“Entire parts of the city manifest concrete signs of their way of life, their own form, and their memory and these areas may be distinguished from one another for the purpose of investigation, their characteristics morphologically and possibly also historically and linguistically”.⁴

For Rossi, when history ends, memory begins, and this change in the urban fabric and the way in which it is perceived can be seen within the changing districts of a city. He attempts, through the displacement of objects from history, to make a connection between place and memory in order to

² Alois Riegl. “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Origin,” *Oppositions 25: Monument / Monumentality*. Ed. Kurt Forster. (New York: Rizzoli, Fall 1982) 21.

³ Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994) 78.

⁴ Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982) 97.

reconcile the contradiction of the modernist utopia. As original functions and purposes have been erased from the city, it is possible to substitute invented traditions and imaginary narrations into our perceptions of the historical framework of the city. Aldo Rossi argues that consciousness of place occurs at a social and individual level, and that the city and urban landscape, because they are used and experienced over many generations, take on the characteristics of a collective consciousness. As he suggests:

“One can say that the city itself is the collective memory of its people, and like memory it is associated with objects and places. The city is the *locus* of the collective memory. This relationship between the locus and the citizenry then becomes the city’s predominant image, both of architecture and of landscape, and as certain artifacts become part of its memory, new ones emerge. In this entirely positive sense great ideas flow through the history of the city and give shape to it.”⁵

Memories of the past are made present through recollection. The extent to which a society identifies with its history is through the cultural memory of the landscape where the public eye searches and finds reminders of its past existence. This fabric of memory is only noticeable when it is torn; when familiar buildings are taken down, or when the common elements of a city street and vanish suddenly. Therefore our own perception and sense of history affects the way in which we receive spaces of the city, and allow for the creation and overlapping of personal narratives and the narrative of cultural artifacts through identifying places of memory within the city.

Historically, the knowledge of an object’s origin and history has been a requirement in order to understand the complex meaning and intentions of the maker. Resulting from the redevelopment of historical areas of our cities, artifacts have been erased in the creation of a new palette for development. As inhabitants of the city, we therefore take on the role of “narrative

⁵ Ibid, 130.

writers” in order to understand what has been made before us and consequently what we will construct in the future. As Paul Ricoeur states in his text *History and Truth*:

“Grasping the past in and through its documentary traces is an observation in the strong sense of the word – for to observe never means the mere recording of brute fact. To reconstruct an event, or rather a series of events, or a situation, or an institution, on the basis of documents is to elaborate on an objective behavior of a particular type which cannot be doubted.”⁶

The past therefore can be reconstructed through objective analysis of events. The “narrative writer” however approaches the history of the city through multiple narratives, which rely on the telling of stories and on memory. The desire for memory in the city speaks of empathy for lost territories and a sense of the unified area. Fragments of these stories overlap and become layered in order to conceive a new narrative structure to what otherwise would be a banal place in our cities. With the redevelopment of historical areas of the city, it is important to form an embodied sense of a collective memory rather than simply creating museum’s collections or a designation of historical districts. This is achieved through the introduction of historical remnants and artifacts which become facilitators in the development of the narrative and stories of the particular place. Ricoeur explains that history’s ambition is “not to bring the past back to life but to recompose and reconstruct, that is to say, to compose and construct a retrospective sequence.”⁷ Similar to this statement, the intentions of this thesis is to compose a sequence of narrative events, which will respond to the history and memory of a site which is lacking the historical monuments that mark places of importance in the traditional city.

In the realm of architecture and urban planning, the reality of memory becomes significant at the moment when architects become aware of the possibility of applying the concept of memory

⁶ Paul Ricoeur. *History and Truth*. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965) 23.

⁷ *Ibid*, 24.

through the method of cutting and shaping the fabric of the city the sequences and places that were apparent in their own memories. This usage of personal memory by the individual allows for the creation of an architecture which embodies past memories and personal events which consist of a theatrical quality which is made accessible to both residents and visitors to the city.

1.2 - Collective Memory

Collective memories of groups play a significant role in the creation of myths and narratives of the areas of the city. Myths can be defined as a traditional story which has been accepted as a history, based on events with or without facts. An example of a historical story



Terrible Halifax Disaster. Ruins at Richmond.

Figure 10 - *Aftermath of the Halifax Explosion.*

explored through this thesis was the Halifax Explosion, which was an actual event, however could form the basis for myths and stories and fictional characters. Collective memories are primarily revealed through a hierarchy of power, such as the user data processing

machines and media such as the internet and digital kiosks in order to inform residents and visitors of historical events. Interactive museum exhibits which rely on conveying facts often use interactive displays in order to inform viewers of specific memories and narratives through ideas and facts. These methods of conveying history are often biased, focusing on certain historical facts which will reach a broad audience. Narratives can be relayed to an audience through stories which reflect a historical past, yet are not bound rigidly by facts. An example of an interactive

exhibit which utilizes narrative and evoking emotion is the exhibits at the Pier 21 Museum, which is located at the Halifax waterfront, adjacent to the subject site. Pier 21 utilizes images and artifacts,



Figure 11 – *Forgotten Suitcases - Pier 21 exhibit, Halifax*

in addition to detailed facts to evoke a reconstructed history of the building and the many travelers who made their way through the building. It is through media and representation that we experience past histories and narratives differently in accordance with the methods for relaying a story to the audience.

No collective memory can exist without reference to a socially specific framework. A memory must be collective within a society in order to be associated with the historical events of a public space or place. Typically, these memories are commemorated through ceremonies and bodily practices which inform the viewer as they see images of the past in a ritual performance. This method of translation of the past acts similar to the museum exhibit, in which chosen experiences and images are conveyed in order to create and develop a succinct narrative. However, an alternative and an additional method for translating collective memory in a non-subjective way is through the layered redevelopment of historic districts which allow for the artifact to remain in its original location, so as to be interpreted by the collective experience of “place”. According to Rossi, collective memory is attributed with the transformation of the collective space in the artifacts and works of the collective. As he suggests in regards to the changing fabric of the city:

“The union between the past and the future exists in the very idea of the city that it flows through in the same way that memory flows through the life of a person; and always, in order to be realized, this idea must not only shape but be shaped by reality. This shaping is a permanent aspect of a city’s unique artifacts, monuments, and the idea we have of it. No collective memory can exist without reference to a socially specific framework.”⁸

Memory is therefore the common thread of the urban fabric, and the architecture of urban artifacts which are linked to the history of the city. It is the thread which served as a mode for investigation for this thesis and the common threads which exist on the suggested site of the Halifax Waterfront.

Experiences of the present largely depend upon knowledge of the past, as images can begin to inform and create a connection to a past condition. Cinema has a similar ability to capture fragmented images to inform a collective memory of a place or event. Unlike literature, cinema uses text as well as images to describe a condition, and conveys ideas and emotions to an audience. The cinematic image is essentially the observation of a phenomenon passing through time. Compared to other art forms, cinema distinguishes itself as giving time a visible, real form. Once recorded on film, the phenomenon is there as a given, even when time is subjective.

In the work of Andrei Tarkovsky, time is a factor in conveying collective memories and the changing conditions of characters in a place. In his film *Nostalgia*, Tarkovsky uses techniques such as slow pans, the sound of water running, and imagery of ruins and monuments to challenge the audience to conceive of the memories and passing of time which has occurred for the characters in the film. Through his provocative imagery, the site of the film is made accessible, as the audience is made aware of the scale of space and time. His work is based on the layering of the physical and emotional conditions of time in order to evoke a sense of narrative and memories. As Tarkovsky commented on the passing of time; “Time cannot vanish without a trace for it is a subjective, spiritual category; and the time we have lived settles in our soul as an experience

⁸ Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982) 130.

places within time”⁹. It is time that plays an important role for Tarkovsky into the translation of fragmented memories and histories onto film and the influences onto a collective memory of a place. Through the cinematic work, a collective memory can be informed and interpreted on a personal level as events are conveyed through the image.

⁹ Andrey Tarkovsky. Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema. (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1986) 58.

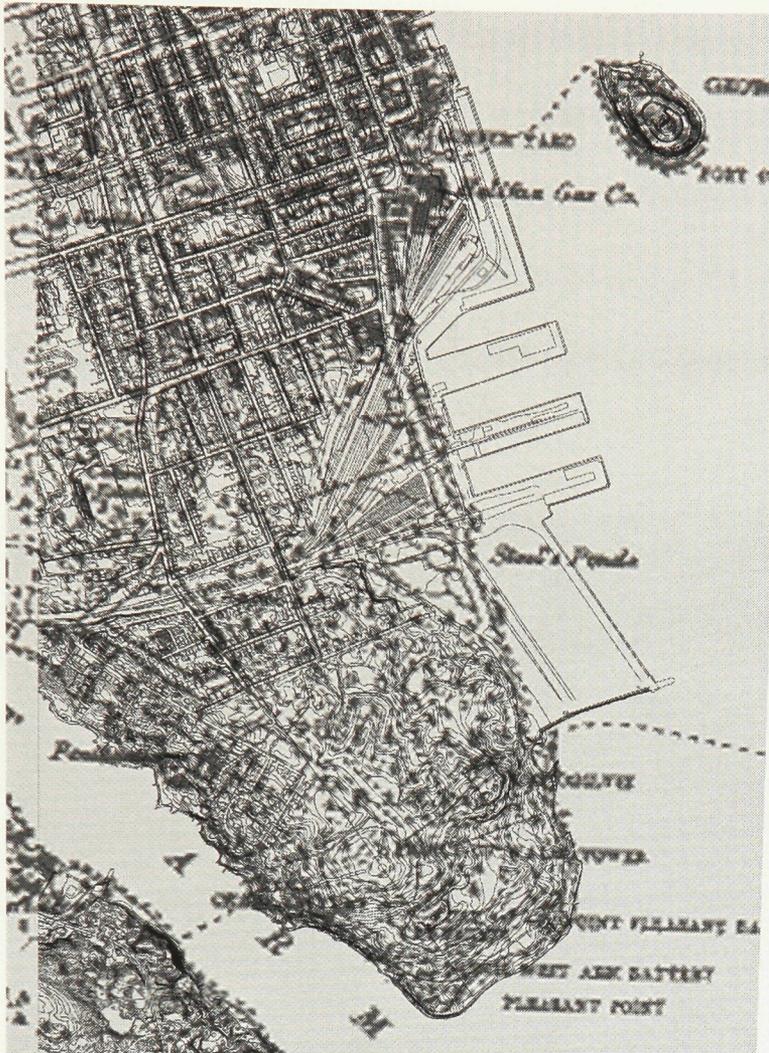


Figure 12 - Recording of the water's changing edge; existing vs. infill.

1.3 - Memory of the Site – Geographical

The Halifax waterfront as the site for investigation, is steeped in history and thus serves as a datum for the (re)creation of the stories, narrative and myths. The physical qualities of the landscape of the Halifax waterfront describe a change in the condition of memory of the site and the potential for the recreation of layered fictions. Through the process of regaining land for industry, a disruption was caused at the original shoreline which had previously been the interface between land and water. In the case of the existing site, the area of the harbour was filled in and various docks were constructed in order to accommodate for an increase in port activity. The

portion of the site addressed by this project exists from a different period than the original site of Halifax. It acts as an artifact in itself, a place for the integration of other artifacts to find a home and communicate a past to the residents of the city. Therefore, a memory exists on the fundamental level of the physical qualities of the site, in the landscape which has the possibility of revealing its numerous transformations. The result is a site which is embedded with layers of history, physically and through stories and narrative.



Figure 13– *Memory of the shoreline: model indicating the layered path between the existing and new.*

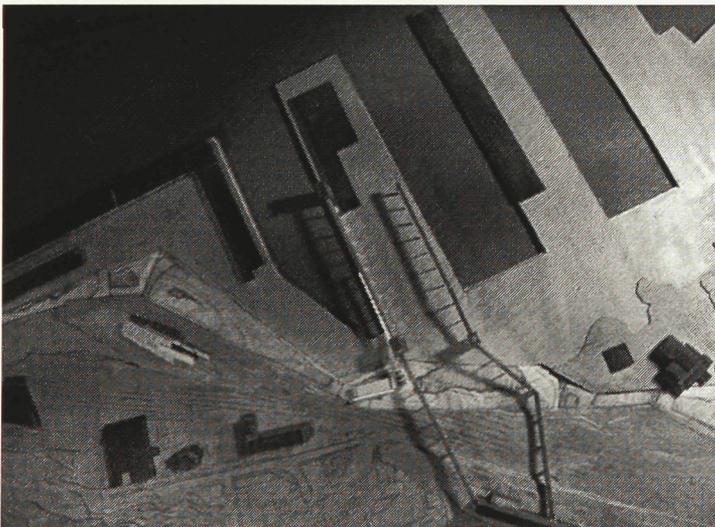


Figure 14 – *Detail of site model, showing path of characters along the waterfront.*

1.4 - Narrative of the Site – The Resident, the Tourist and the Passenger

When an historical representation has been erased, and memory can no longer be identified, as in the case for the site of the Halifax waterfront, the spectator has the ability to depart on a journey as the creator of the narrative. Through the identification of individual characters which would interact through movement across the site, the role of the master planner for future development of the site, also took on the role of the narrative writer. Three characters were identified as “users” of the site were the resident, the tourist, and the passenger. Through the development of existing stories of the site, a narrative structure was storyboarded in a graphic montage so as to inform the design intentions of the three individual projects which would serve as catalysts for future development.

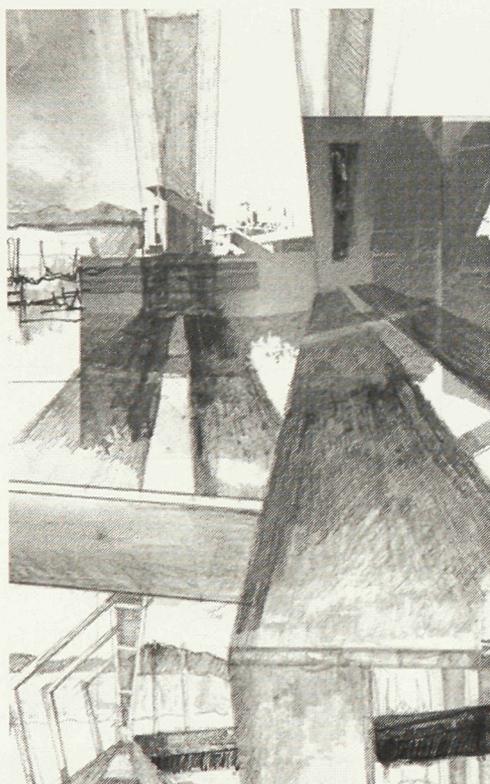


Figure 15 –*Narrative of the resident-
detail from drawing.*

The first character, the resident of the area, the local Haligonian, who would use the south-north access through the site the most frequently in order to reach other points of the city. It was determined that this character would have the greatest sense of collective memories of the area, as being the most familiar with the history and growth and development of the site and the neighboring waterfront. The path of travel of the resident was determined through the development of a narrative of a routine trip through the site. To expand this development, by using the historical event of the Halifax Explosion, a narrative was created using the various givens that had

been established in the design process to create a montage storyboard of the events. It was with

this layering process of historical, memory and fiction that the development of the storyboard was able to inform the design intention of the Elevated Pier which would serve as a point of intersection for all three of the characters and the continuous development for narrative on the site.

The second character, the Tourist, was identified as a user that would approach the site from the north access point, from the historical waterfront area. The tourist would more than likely travel from the historical site of Pier 21 and the cruise ship berth which serves as a gateway for the many cruise ships that visit Halifax every year. The narrative of the tourist was developed by exploring an event and path which described two characters navigating from a historical part of the waterfront to an area which did not have any of the traditional historical markers that they had been exposed to earlier in their journey. The narrative of the tourist will be explored further in the following chapter, and the architectural response to the story.

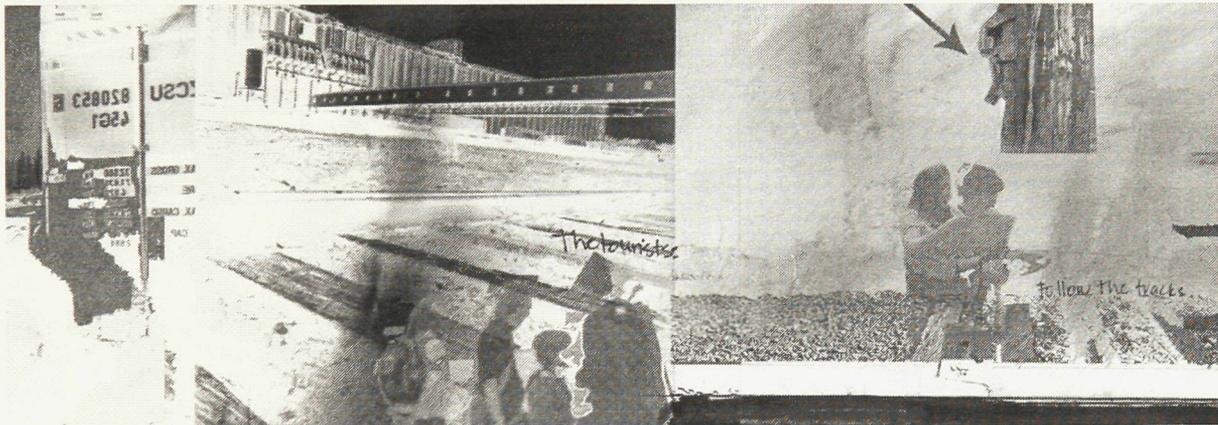


Figure 16 – *Narrative of the tourist, detail from drawing.*

The third character, the Passenger, was defined as a person that would approach the site from sea, primarily from one of the many cargo ships that enter the port from various countries. The waterfront site currently accommodates for these visitors through a Sailor's Mission, a small house which accommodates money transfers, and communication with their families. The historical story explored for this character was an actual account of a boy who was lost at sea,

which provided the basis for the fiction. This character was identified as primarily moving through the site to the mission and to the local grocery store near the site and the path was marked for various intersecting points with the other 2 characters. The narrative of the passenger will be described with more detail in the final chapter through the term “duration”.

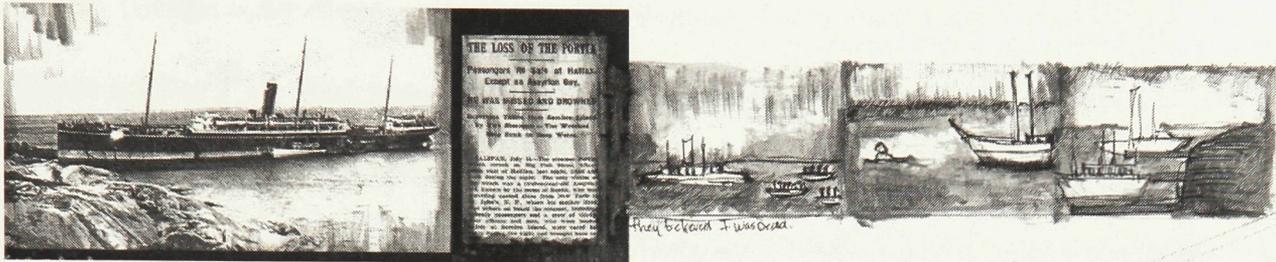


Figure 17 – Narrative of the passenger, detail from drawing.

Using an existing historical event for the characters, a narrative could be derived which would have a direct reference to the site condition and the city, as well as being part of a collective memory which would be identifiable with other residents. This method for a design process was simply an act in which to design and represent a past which had been either erased or covered up on the site. Through mapping the paths (*figures 18, 35, and 63*) of the individual users of the site, the position and functions of the three architectural propositions could be identified in order to serve the future development of the site.

1.5 - The Architectural Frame

As a fundamental technique for cinematic representations, framing serves as a viewpoint for moving images. Framing, in cinematic terms refers to a closed system in which everything which is present in the image, such as sets, characters and props are framed¹⁰. The frame therefore forms a set which has a great number of parts, and elements which in themselves form subsets. As Deleuze indicates in *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, a frame can both separate and bring parts together and appear as geometrical or physical in relation to the parts of the system. Framing to Deleuze is the art of choosing the parts of all kinds which become part of a set and eventually part of a closed system¹¹. This view of framing, as a cinematic device in order to bring together parts of different realms begins to inform the design strategy for the architectural proposition which will address the notion of framing multiple viewpoints of the site as well as their differing events and programs. The frame isolates events that take place, and allow for a focusing on the specific details of a whole scene, while the surrounding context is masked out.

Framing allows multiple viewpoints of an existing condition. As described in Kobe Abe's *The Box Man*, framing of a specific view, in this case the opening in his box, demonstrates a specific viewpoint of the world. The frame which the Box Man constructs in his surrounding box allows for an isolating as well as masking of the outside world. As described by the Box Man, as he looks outside of the cut out window of the box, he describes the world in detail:

“On the average road one usually manages not to go astray. However as soon as one looks out of the box's observation window, things appear to be quite different. The various details of the scenery become homogeneous, have equal significance. Cigarette butts...the sticky secretion in a dog's eyes...the windows of a two-story house with the curtains waving...”¹²

¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze. *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*. (London: The Athlone Press, 1986), 12.

¹¹ Ibid, 18.

¹² Kobe Abe. *The Box Man*. (New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 1974) 42.

The Box man discovers his surrounding environment by framing in and by framing out. The frame allows for a description of an obsessive level of detail of the surrounding world, as well as within the box that he has called home and adapted as an external layer of skin. In the conclusion of the story, the Box Man reflects on the internal environment of his box:

“Actually a box, in appearance, is purely and simply a right-angled parallelepiped, but when you look at it from within it’s a labyrinth of a hundred interconnecting puzzle rings. The more you struggle the more the box, like an extra outer skin growing from the body, creates new twists for the labyrinth, making the inner disposition increasingly more complex.”¹³

The box, although it appears to be simply a box, is able to construct and take on a new purpose for the individual inside, not only through framing the world outside through a small opening, but internalizing the world within the box, for the individual as a means of identifying the complexity of his own life.

In response to the structure of the frame for the Box Man, the camera responds in the same manner, as the lens “frames” the view which is projected onto the photographic paper. As the waterfront edge condition is one in which views have been blocked and cut off, aspects of strategic framing become important in the overall site development as a method for the reconnection of the viewer to the water and conversely to the surrounding city. The potential of the architecture to address this potential for multiple points of framing, both in the direction of the water and back to the surrounding site was explored through the idea of an elevated walkway. This created a meeting point for all three characters because the site has such an overwhelming scale, which cannot be completely understood as a network or in its entirety. The condition for a framing/viewing condition would therefore require a small and intimate scale, in order to contextualize the viewer into the overall condition

¹³ Ibid, 178.

1.6 - Architectural Proposal 1 - The Elevated Pier

Historical Waterfront 1:

The city of Halifax is no different than other waterfront cities that have undergone a change and development to its historical waterfront. During the 1960's many old waterfront buildings were slated for demolition to make way for a harbour-side freeway and a sewage outlet to meet urgent urban infrastructure problems. Plans for the harbour side freeway were similar at the time to those of other major Canadian waterfront cities such as Toronto and the construction of the Gardiner Expressway. However, as a result of active citizens who identified the potential of the historical structures, the project was stopped before many of the historical buildings were destroyed and the connection to the waterfront lost. The final solution for Halifax's traffic problems in the downtown area was the construction of a large interchange across from the Sheridan Hotel, in the historical port area, which still acts as a barrier between the city and the waterfront in one area.

Thanks to the historical awareness and community efforts, by 1969, both civic and federal governments were committed to retaining and restoring the buildings which had been declared of national historic importance. In 1972, Halifax City Council approved the city's three major planning objectives: to preserve and enhance the character of downtown Halifax; to enhance vistas and to preserve views from Citadel Hill to the waterfront; and to stimulate the maximum intensity of use and development of the central area of Halifax.¹⁴ Redevelopment of the waterfront area began with the 19th century buildings at the Historic Properties. These buildings were preserved with much of the charm and character of the traditional stone buildings and included various offices, shops and restaurants to cater to the growing tourism industry.

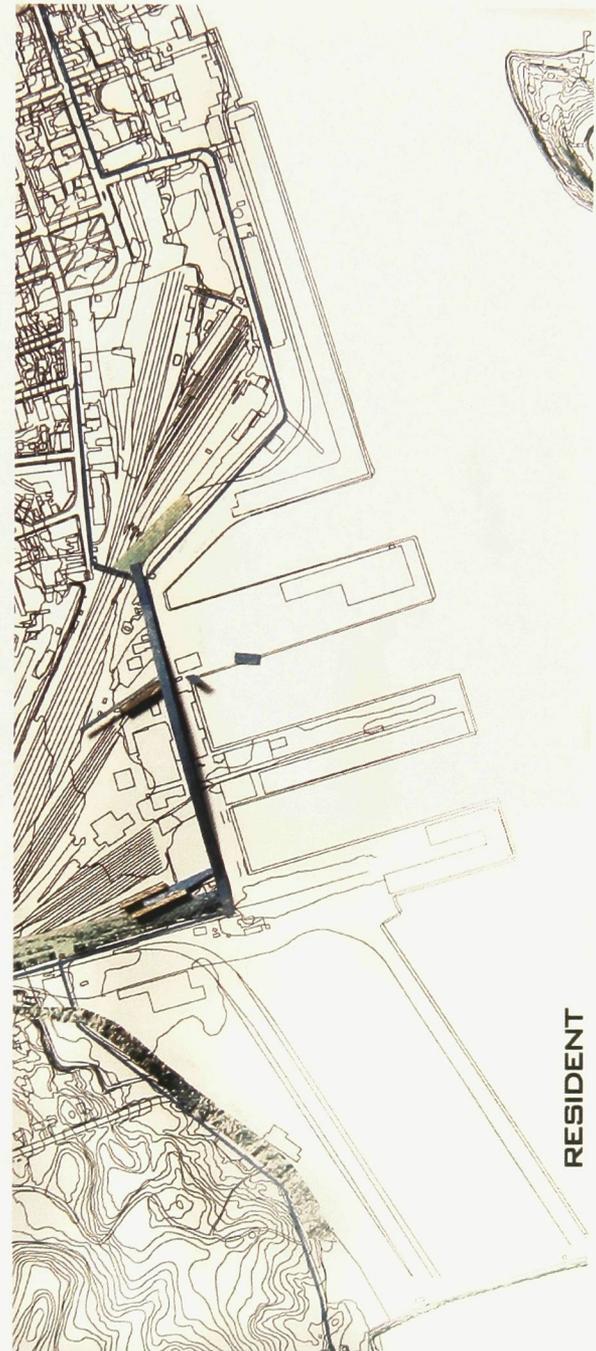


Figure 18- Path taken by resident along the north-south axis.

¹⁴ Omar Gandhi. "Halifax: Downtown Development?", *Canadian Architect*. (July 2005) 20.

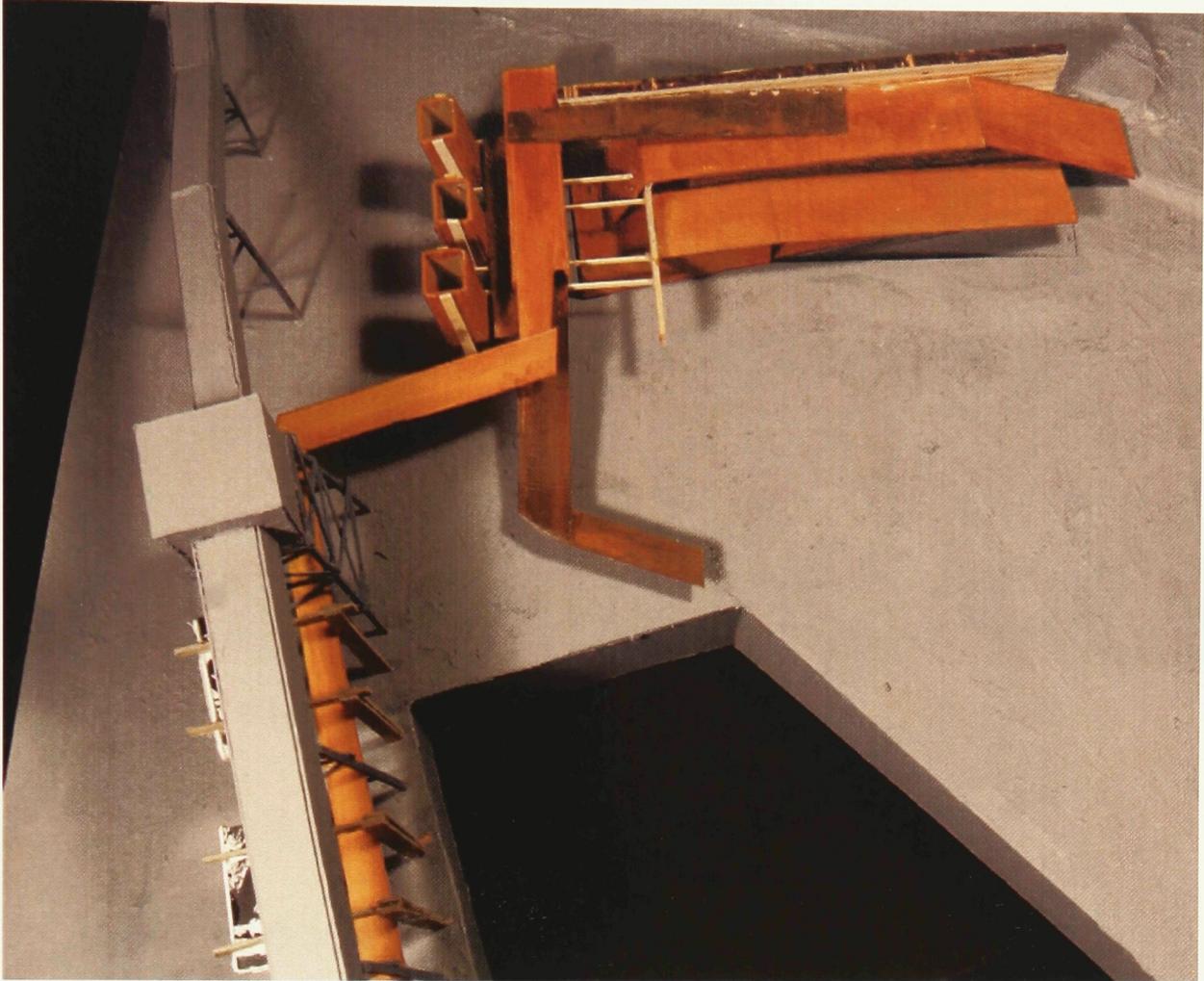


Figure 19 - Overhead view of "Framing" proposal and existing structures for grain distribution along the waterfront.

Proposal 1:

Piers and docks are a constructed layer that surrounds a natural coast to facilitate shipping and receiving by ships. For an observer, the pier also functions as a point of connection between land and sea; an intermediate point before reaching the water. The Pier becomes a meeting point, a destination for visitors to the water, a man-made construction which blurs the boundary of the shoreline and allows for an extension onto the surrounding water. By contrast, the construction of the container pier creates a barrier between land and water, eliminating views to the ocean and George's Island. For residents and tourists alike, this barrier denies the potential framing of views

of the surrounding context, and results in a quick passage through the site, ignoring the scenic potential of the water and island.

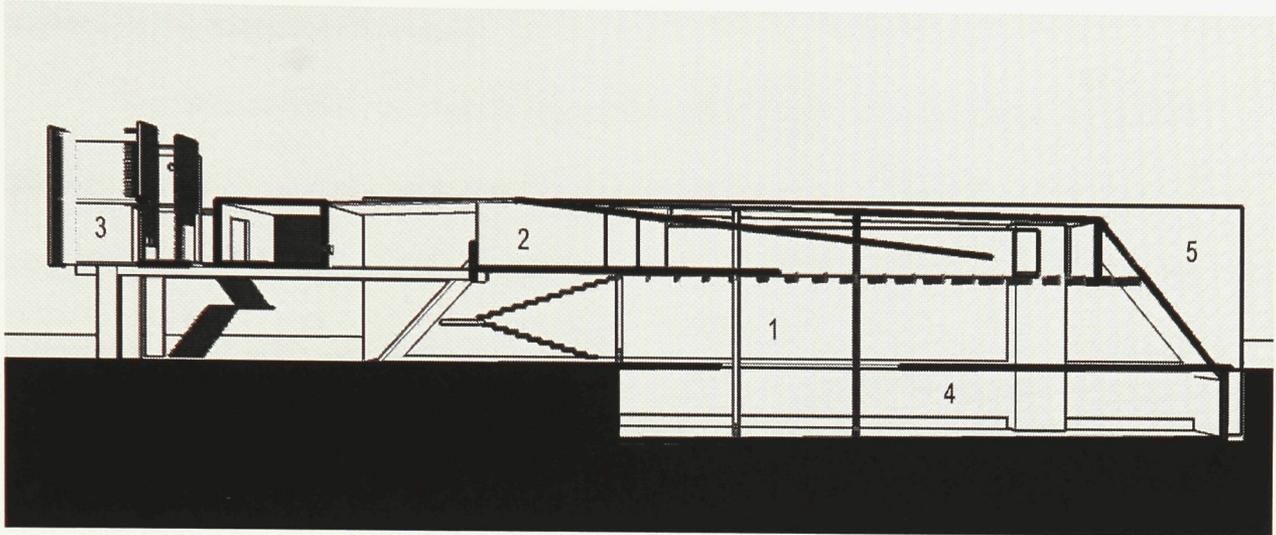


Figure 20 – Section of building showing sleeping berths and sailor's mission.

1. Main open space
2. Sailor's Mission
3. Sleeping berths
4. Service spaces
5. Storage wall

The proposed Elevated Pier will therefore address these issues of framing and surrounding “sets” which can be “framed” into the view, thus addressing what Deleuze defines as the “shot”. The Elevated Pier reflects the surrounding structures such as the elevated towers and low sheds, through its industrial palette of materials and elements such as the tall stacked sleeping

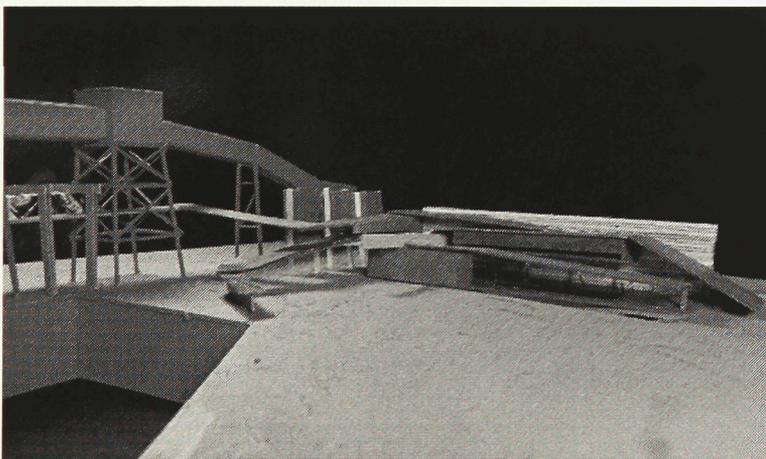


Figure 21 – Approach to building from north along the water.

berths. The proposed structure acts as a bridge in which the 3 characters (defined in the site development) can interact through the overlapping of their narratives. The elevated pier serves as a point from which to observe the framing of the water

through the architectural intervention. Further, the elevated pier will be a link which will contain elements and programs meant to address the specific needs of the three main users of the site, as outlined by the narratives developed.

The “Elevated Pier” will replace the small building which currently houses the Sailor’s Mission, and serve as a grounding point for the Halifax Waterfront Corporation. The structure consists of a thick storage wall which functions as lockers and storage spaces of visitors, and consists of a large open area which has a flexible use for the residents of the area with possible uses such as an area for a farmer’s market. Moving through the two story structure, the offices for the Sailor’s Mission over looks the first floor open area below. Through the access to the roof, the ramp emerges on the level of access to the elevated walkway. The walkway emerges from a series of stacked sleeping berths which serves as a hostel for both sailors and visitors to the site.

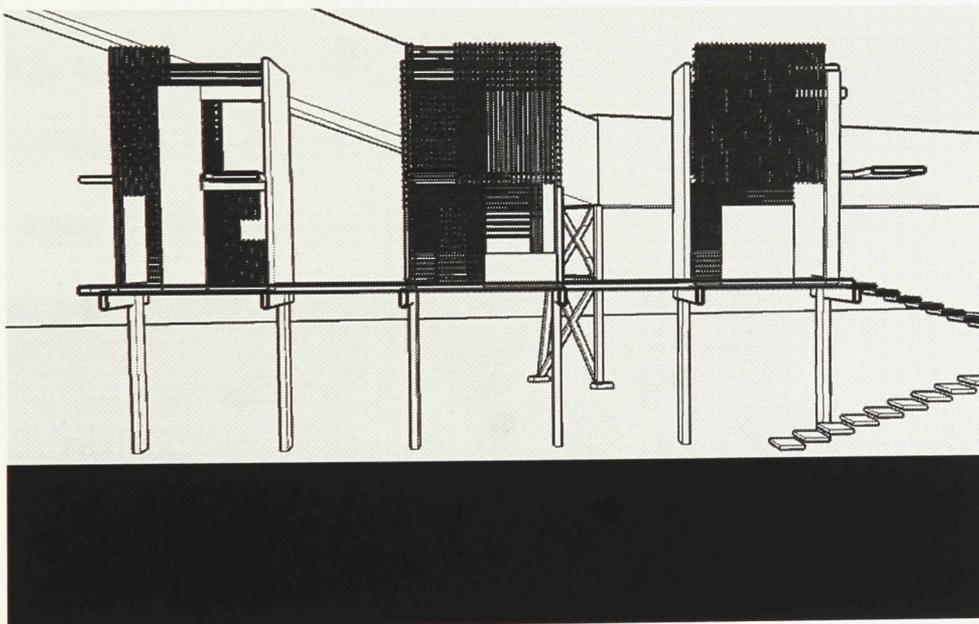


Figure 22 – Section through three stacked sleeping berths.

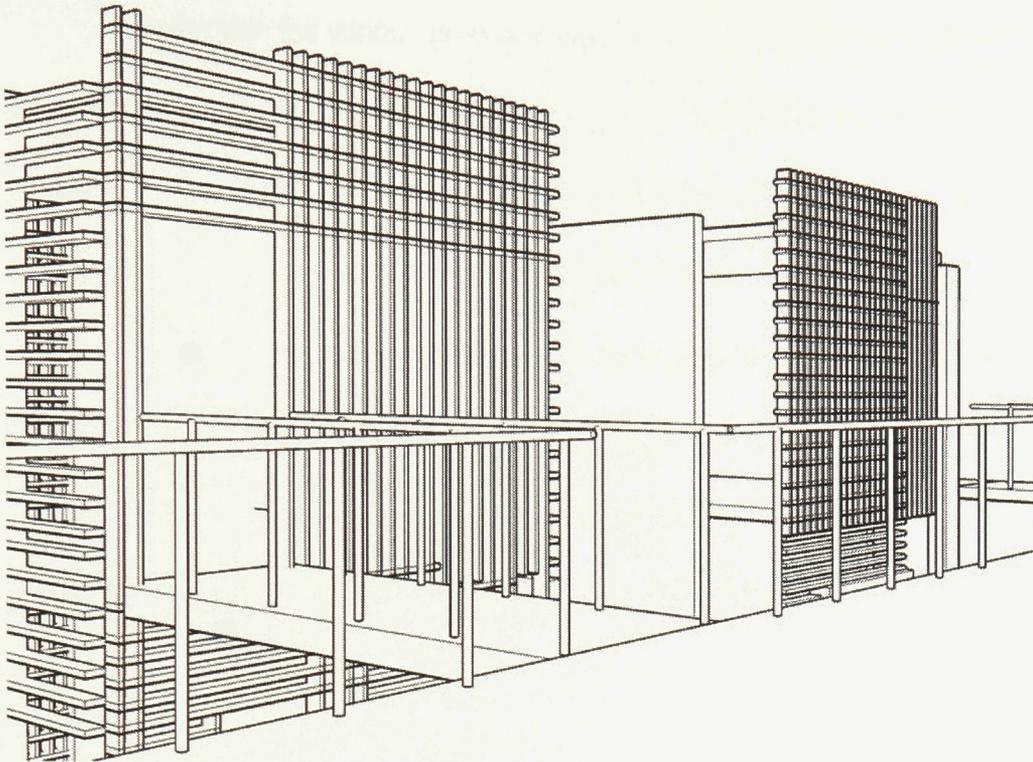


Figure 23 – *Individual sleeping berths.*

The elevated pathway bends through the existing support structures of the overhead grain tracks to offer views of the water and back to the city and leads to a series of suspended spaces from a large support structure which contains the offices for the Halifax Waterfront Development Commission, which oversees the functions of the port. It is from this elevated area that the new offices will have the greatest views of the surrounding port functions.



Figure 24 – *Elevated offices for the Halifax Waterfront Commission.*

It is through the various programmatic functions that address all three “users” of the site that various overlapping interactions will occur on the pathways connecting the multiple points of program of the structure. For the resident, areas for a large market, as well as a more accessible passage way to the site from the surrounding neighborhood aids in allowing for a reintroduction to the site. For the tourist, the proposed architecture addresses the needs for storage and sleeping berths, as well as offering unique views of the water and surrounding city which otherwise would not be accessible. For the passenger, an integrated Sailor’s mission into an area which is used for public functions, as well as new offices for the waterfront facilities.



Figure 25 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.



Figure 26 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.

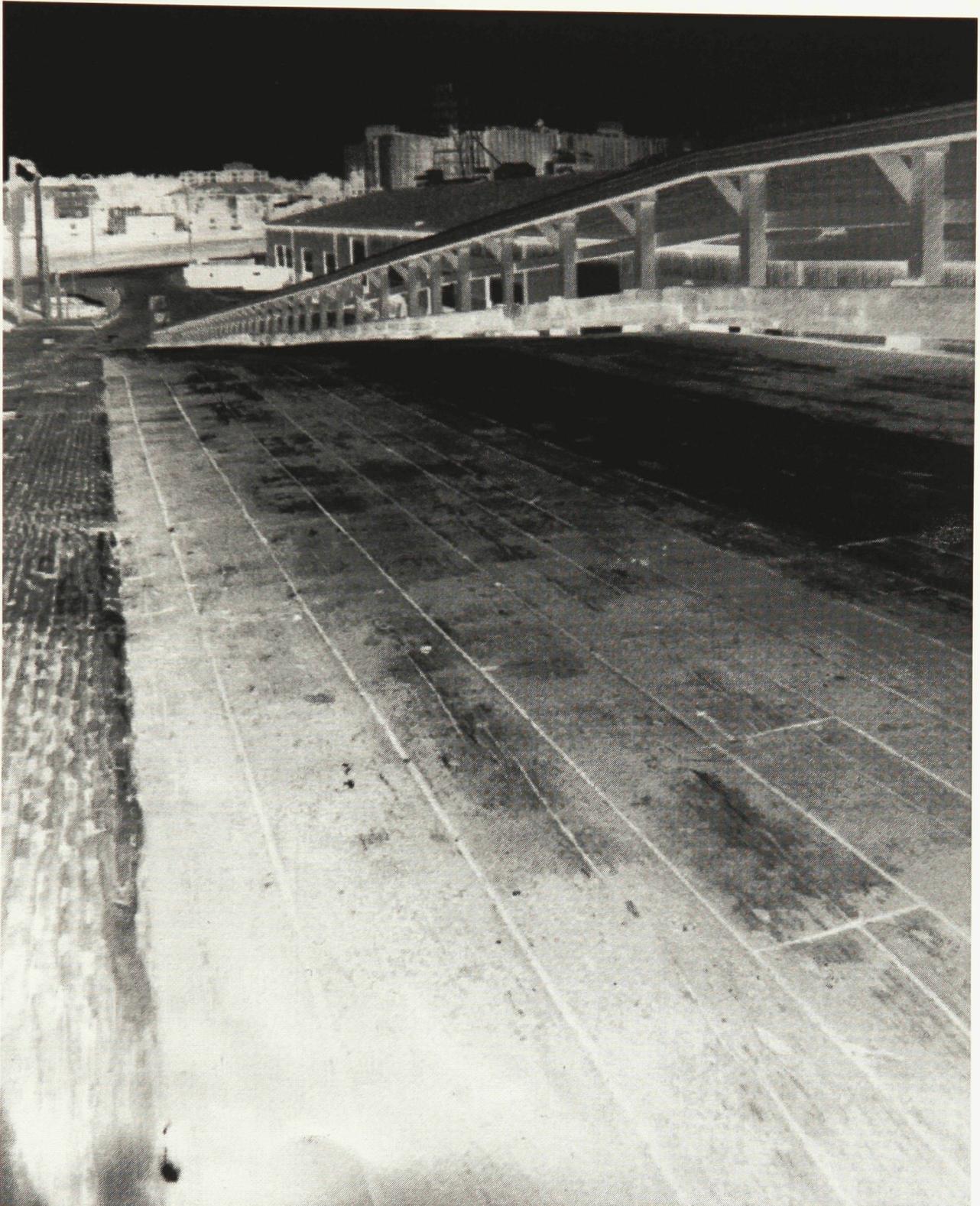


Figure 27 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.

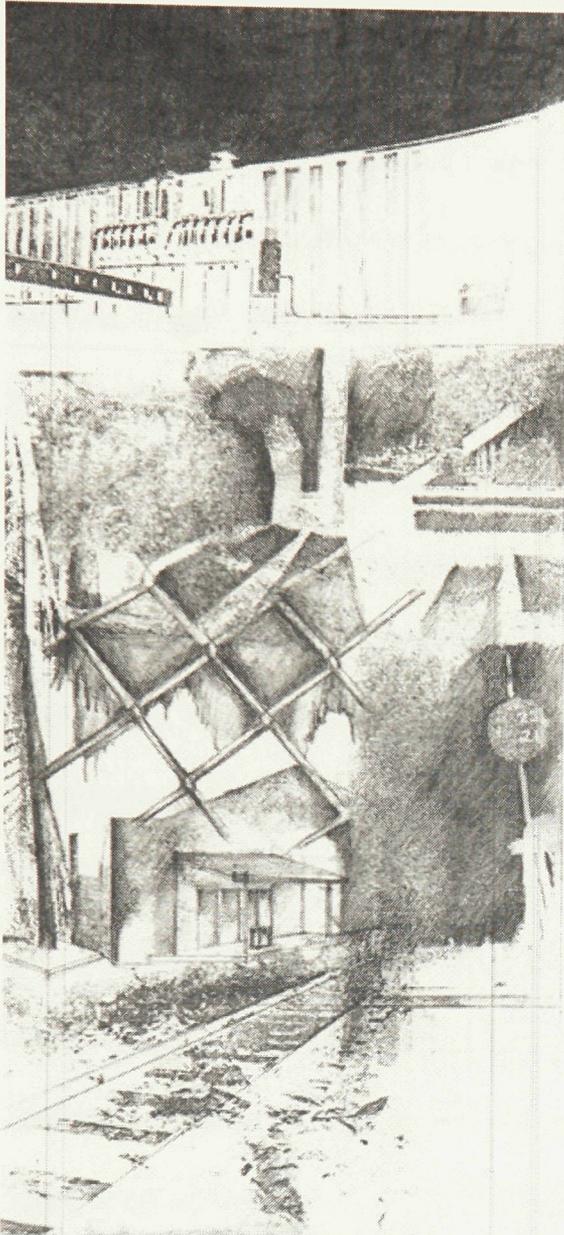


Figure 28 – *Before I could look around I am pulled through the revolving doors into the grey shed.*

Chapter 2: Narrative (Montage) Tourist

2.1 - Role of Narrative in the Formation of Memories

The role of narrative in the context of this thesis was explored for its potential relationship with architecture and urban design to gain a better understanding of human events and the spaces that are constructed for such events. Narrative was examined as a potential instrument for structuring the experience of the site, as it was vast in its size and needed to be addressed through

an intimate scale of the story and the character. Narrative can be defined as a structured sequence of events centered on a plot, which are told as stories. Narratives are fiction; and have the effect of leaving the reader in a state of suspended disbelief, questioning what is real and what is fabricated. The central element of narrative is an event, which creates a plot that allows the narrative to exist. Paul Ricoeur, in his text *Time and Narrative* introduces the fundamental aspect of exploration of theory with a three-part understanding of what he refers to as “mimesis”. Ricoeur suggests in his definition, entitled mimesis₁ that narratives arise from a “composition of the plot which is grounded in a pre-understanding of the world of action, its meaningful structures, its symbolic resources and its temporal character.”¹⁵ This refers to the everyday world which Ricoeur describes as the realm which narratives are based upon. Ricoeur suggests that architecture can be attributed as being a meaningful structure and a symbolic character which can be characterized through an understanding of narrative.

The second part of Ricoeur’s definition, mimesis₂, describes the three variations of the mediating function of the plot. First, the plot mediates between the individual events and a narrative as a whole, giving shape to a sequence of events. Secondly, emplotment “brings together factors as heterogeneous as agents, goals, means, interactions, circumstances, unexpected results.”¹⁶ Thirdly, it unites the temporal characteristics of the plot into a meaningful story that possesses a body and an ending. Thus the plot arranges a succession of events so that “the entire plot can be translated into one “thought”, which is nothing other than its “point” or “theme”¹⁷. The idea of plot was examined in this thesis through a series of existing stories and fictions which were used as a basis for each of the three characters; the resident, the passenger and the tourist. All three points of the plot are structural in the overall development of the narrative

¹⁵ Paul Ricoeur. *Time and Narrative*. (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1984), 54.

¹⁶ Ibid, 65.

¹⁷ Ibid, 67.

as outlined by Ricoeur. This structure was fundamental in determining a composition which would address the overall site condition and the experience of the site for the three characters.

The third part of Ricoeur's theory, mimesis₃, completes the circular nature of the model and acts as an interpretive aspect, which "marks the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the reader."¹⁸ As readers, we gain an understanding of our lives and of our world in a work with which we engage, be it a text, artifact, building or city, and what it may reveal. The act of interpretation reveals worlds that might be inhabited through the imagination and therefore contributes to our own inhabitation of the material world in which we live in. As stated by Alberto Perez-Gomez in regards to the role of narrative and architecture:

"In order to address the dangers of aestheticism, reductive functionalism, and either conventional or experimental formalism, architecture must consider seriously the potential of narrative as the structure of human life, a poetic vision realized in space-time."¹⁹

To bring the discussion into the realm of architecture, the work of Perez-Gomez suggests a desire and need for narrative in the process of design. He suggests "the architect, in a sense, must now also write the "script" for his or her dramas, regardless of whether this becomes an explicit or implicit transformation of the "official" building program."²⁰

Ricoeur's theory applies to the realm of architecture through its application of narrative for the creation of spaces for individuals within a dense cultural context. Architecture's focus upon the formal and the constructed often overlooks the intangible and the way in which people inhabit buildings through memory and narrative. Ricoeur's theories of narrative pertain to architecture through the depiction of spaces in which human actions unfold, which become the basis for the plot

¹⁸ Ibid, 71.

¹⁹ Alberto Perez-Gomez. Architectural Representation and the Perspective Hinge. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000) 392.

²⁰ Ibid, 392.

of a story. A space at an intimate scale such as a theatrical set is an example of a space which supports the translation of a story. Theatre is a representation of storytelling, and as expressed by Antonin Artaud in his text *The Theatre and its Double*, in one of his “Letters on Cruelty”:

“The theatre must make itself equal to life – not an individual life that individual aspect of life in which characters triumph, but the sort of liberated life which sweeps away human individuality and in which man is only a reflection. The true purpose of the theater is to create Myths, to express life in its immense, universal aspect, and from that life to extract images in which we find pleasure in discovering ourselves.”²¹

In reference to the site as theatrical backdrop, the proposed interventions serves as theatre sets amongst an existing architecture of the site and perform the role as the set for the narratives of the three characters to interact. Architecture can be considered as a system and structure that supports and informs the narrative and therefore plays an important role in the development of the story. When applied to a site condition, existing narratives, which are created through storytelling and memory, can be used as tools and a way to reconsider the design and development of a site in which historical traces may be hidden and need to be revealed or re-aligned to the site experience.

²¹ Antonin Artaud. *The Theatre and its Double*. (New York: Grove Press, 1958) 116.

2.2 – Waterfront as Location for Narrative

As urban dwellers, we long for a place of origin, and therefore use narrative as a way of reconstructing our past, as a method of reconciliation with the longing for a lost story of the spaces in which we live. Narrative personalizes and allows us the ability to identify with a specific place and area that we otherwise would not be able to relate to. The term “place” in the context used for this thesis can be defined as an area with definite or indefinite boundaries; a portion of space. If place is the necessary setting for a narrative to occur, then with reference to specific narratives of a place, memory and history are necessary in order to allow for a reading of the story.

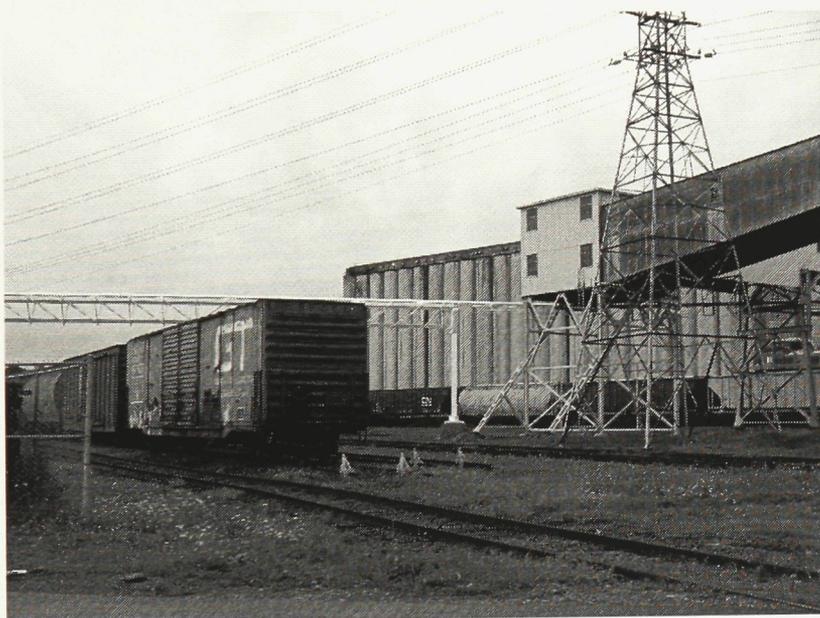


Figure 29- Abandoned rail cars - Scene from the Halifax waterfront.

The waterfront site demonstrates a series of misused and left over spaces that have the potential for redevelopment and integration into the surrounding condition. Through the existing infrastructure, permanent landmarks are established such as the Pier 21 museum and other various structures that

suggest a past and lend easily to an association to narratives. However, lying between these places are areas which present themselves as misused spaces or scrap sites, such as a series of gravel filled spaces which serve no function to the overall network of the waterfront. It is these points of intersection that will be the focus of the urban strategy for the site. As they appear as fragmented conditions, the integration of these different programmed spaces allows for the

possibility of creating a framework that will facilitate future development for the waterfront site. The reanimations of these misused spaces along a waterfront path present themselves as interventions which respect the surrounding materiality of the site. It is the intention that these 3 proposed moments will act as catalysts for future development along the industrial waterfront and serve to integrate the various scrap sites into the overall context of the site.

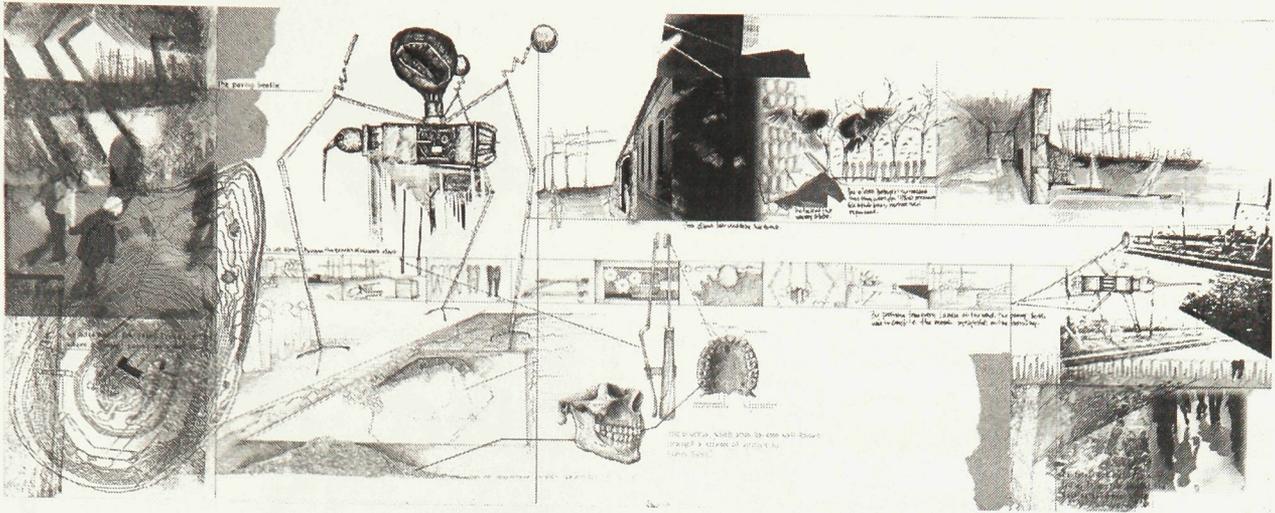


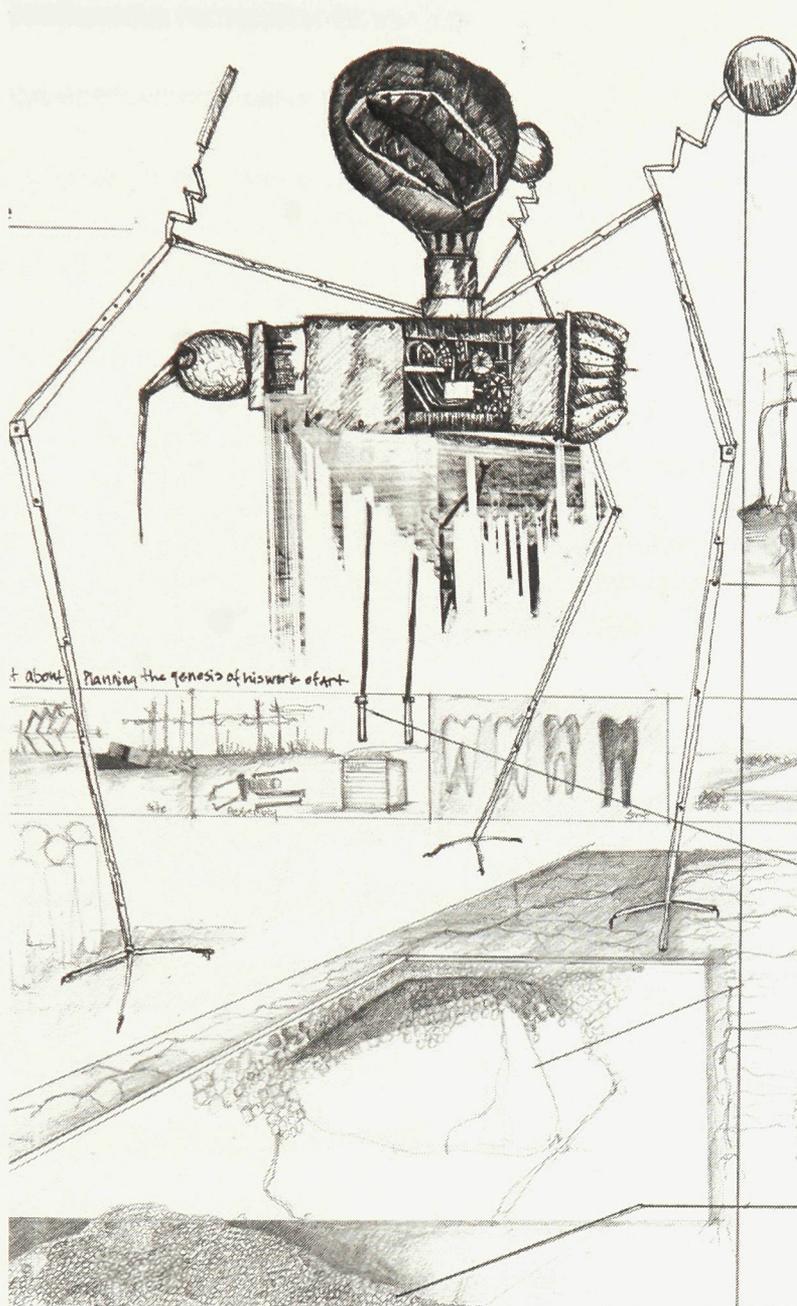
Figure 30 – Storyboard of the paving beetle from *Locus Solus*, by Raymond Roussel.

2.3 - Narrative as Text – Raymond Roussel’s *Locus Solus*

“I consequently found myself confronted with the following problem: the execution of a mosaic by a pavior’s beetle. Whence the complicated apparatus described from page 31 onwards. It was moreover a peculiarity of this method to call forth all sorts of equations of facts which had to be solved logically.”²²

The work of Raymond Roussel, a French surrealist writer, uses a game of words and phrases to construct narratives out of fragments of parts. Through exploring one of his works, *Locus Solus*, his methods for forming a descriptive story with a multiplicity of narratives were studied. The story of *Locus Solus*, translated to “place by itself”, describes the events that occur in an isolated garden outside of the city of Paris, owned by an alchemist by the name of Martial Canterel, and follows a group through a guided tour of the surreal landscape. The narrative operates on different levels and scales which are somewhat revealed as the story unfolds. Within the work exists a structure of three stories which are revealed through each overall narrative of the island, told through the narrator, Canterel.

²² Raymond Roussel. *How I Wrote Certain of my Books*. (Boston: Exact Change Books. 1995) 16.



Within each story, three vignettes are present, thus creating a layered narrative with multiple readings. As the group travels through the garden and approaches each area inhabited by mythical machines and/or constructions, the object is described by the narrator and by Canterel, followed by the reason for the machine and the myth associated with it. Roussel's machines are carefully described in technical detail which creates an imaginative image of an island of machines and strange events.

Figure 31 – Detail of Figure 29. –“From close up our ears made out a tickling sound from the paving-beetle as it shimmered in the sun.”
-Locus Solus, 26.

In an attempt to explain his creations in his work *How I wrote certain of my Books*, Roussel sought to reveal partially his intentions and method for his work, and explains to the reader; “And so I seek solace, for want of something better, in the hope that I may perhaps gain a little

posthumous recognition for my books.”²³ He refers earlier to a “painful sensation I have always experienced on seeing my works run up against and almost totally hostile incomprehension.”²⁴ However, even when describing his own work, the reader gets a compounded sense of this game with words, as Roussel never actually reveals the complex and inherent structure to his works.

Roussel’s work as described by Michel Foucault:

“The prisons , the human machines, the tortuous ciphers, the whole network of words, secrets and signs issue marvelously from a single fact of language, a series of identical words with two different meanings, the tenuousness of our language which, sent in two different directions, is suddenly brought up short, face to face with itself and forced to meet again.”²⁵

In an attempt to examine the narrative structure of *Locus Solus* as a graphic story board, the description of the paving beetle constructing the mosaic of teeth was chosen as a subject of analysis through drawing. Through the overall description of the narrative of the paving beetle and the mosaic, the story is broken down into three individual sections of details which make up the overall structure. The machine is described in exhausting detail which makes it almost impossible to understand each of its working parts, therefore playing with the reader’s imagination as one reads the layers of detail.

“The grey disc between the three claws had just been lifted again by its rod and a one-millimeter gap once more separated it from the blue one. Proving that the magnetic effect had been thereby destroyed, the nicotine-stained tooth, which had accompanied the apparatus through the air, at once quitted the back of the blue disk and fell to the ground, where it helped to fill in an unfinished part of the mosaic.”²⁶

²³ Ibid 28.

²⁴ Ibid 28.

²⁵ Michel Foucault. Death and the Labyrinth: The world of Raymond Roussel. (Los Angeles: University of Berkeley Press, 1987) 14.

²⁶ Raymond Roussel. How I Wrote Certain of my Books. (Boston: Exact Change Books. 1995) 30.

Locus Solus by Raymond Roussel was examined as a means for understanding multiple narrative structure and the possibilities for constructing storyboards for the representation of the narrative of the project. The work examined is composed of a series of details which make up the whole composition, which could exist independently, but rather read differently when comprised as a whole. This narrative technique of overall/detail would serve as the basis for the character and site development for the thesis and inform further investigations of narratives and storyboarding.

2.4 - Narrative scales vs. Site scales

Narrative was explored within two scales for the thesis, the microcosm (detail) and the macrocosm (overall) that simultaneously expresses personal and urban narratives in the context of this thesis. The body is the primary mode of perceiving the scale of the narratives expressed, as



Figure 32 – Detail of conceptual artifact model.

an overall strategy or the detail of an artifact. The micro and the macro objects serve as an expression of the past, as it demonstrates a time of making and fabrication from the smallest detail to an overall gesture. On the site, various scales of detail and texture exist, revealing to the observer a layered interpretation of the history of the site. The micro was explored in a construction that brought together the fragment (detail) and the underlying order of the site (overall). The artifact served as a

continuing device for exploration throughout the thesis and as a way of expressing specific shifts in scale, and issues of materiality and texture, which were important to the exploration of the site condition. The macro was explored by means of mapping the architectural interventions across the

site that responds to the nature of memory and narrative of particular locations which serve to facilitate future development at a smaller scale (figures 18, 44 and 63).

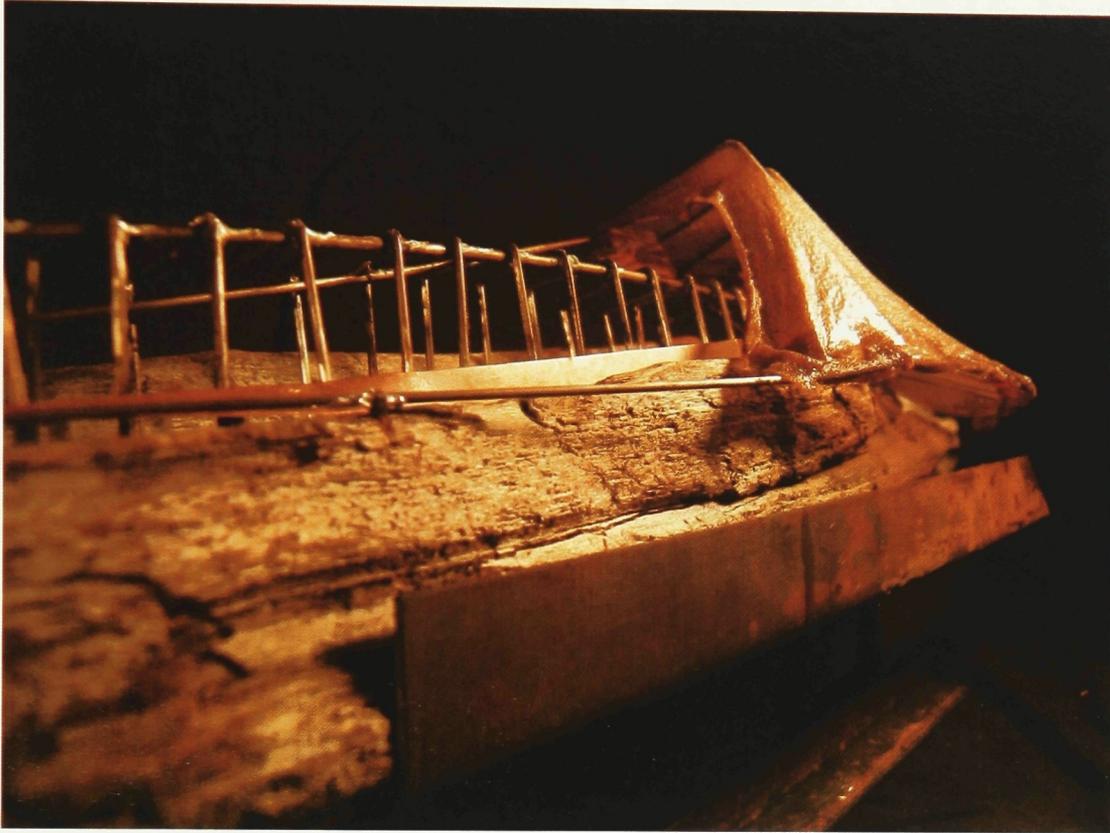


Figure 33 – *Detail of model.*

The use of narrative strategies in the design of a large urban project on the Halifax waterfront responds to the existing condition of a barren landscape with empty buildings and silent docks. The site expresses a vast surreal condition of various scales from the micro (detail) to the macro (overall), and suggests to the viewer that potentially anything would be possible at this site and at the same time overlooking the capability for various mixed programs. With a dramatic shift in scale, from the infinitely small (the artifact) to the vast (the overhead grain elevators) this design project resides, as not only a mediator between the two, but as a response to a narrative condition on the site. Therefore, the process of investigation through a series of narratives closely matches

the mimetic model suggested by Ricoeur, as the architect proposes a response to a site based upon an interpretation of the context through a rereading of an existing narrative.

The site was developed through multiple narratives and stories, which were written using the three main users of the site, described as the resident, the tourist, and the passenger. The English word “story” in French translates to “histoire”, and the Latin word “historia” refers to the recital and account of actual events. As Ricoeur states:

“There is no history therefore without an epoch of everyday subjectivity, without the establishment of the investigative ego from which history draws its excellent name. For historia is precisely the ‘availability’ and “submission to the unexpected,” that openness to others” whereby bad subjectivity is overcome.”²⁷



Figure 34 – Intersection of materials, artifact model

For Ricoeur, history draws on subjective stories of the everyday, and asserts its role to overcome the personal intentions of the historian. Narrative however, allows for a fiction based on life, as life is told through a series of stories, which comprise a *history*. Ricoeur further states that;

“Fiction, particularly narrative fiction is an irreducible dimension of *the understanding of the self*. If it is true that fiction cannot be completed other than in life, and that life can not be understood other than through stories we tell about it, than we are led to say that a life *examined*, in the sense borrowed from Socrates, is a life *narrated*.”²⁸

²⁷ Paul Ricoeur. *History and Truth*. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965) 31.

²⁸ Paul Ricoeur, “Life: A Story in search of a Narrator”, *A Ricoeur Reader*, ed. Mario Valdés. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 435.

From this “narrated life”, the assembling of multiple “stories” researched and known, an overall narrative is created from the existing framework of histories that allow for an assembled structure which may have not been created without the process of overlapping narratives. It was through this strategy that a series of overlapping paths that were both real and imagined, were identified in which the characters of the site would intersect and allow for the development of a non-linear narrative sequence. It was therefore the architectural response, which would be necessary in providing a backdrop to narrative framework.

Narrative of the Resident

1917:

It has only been 12 hours since the explosion. I can't find any recognizable faces in a sea of rubble. Nothing has been left standing, but is broken up in various sized fragments and shards scattered everywhere. My house has been flattened, my family cannot be found, so I am left to wander around through the littered streets in search of something familiar.

As I continue to wander, I decide to travel to the water's edge by the tracks and the large piers. Nothing is left here as it was first blown away and then taken out to sea when the huge waves hit. Everything has been crushed and the cold ground beneath my feet crackles as I walk across the barren site. As I look around to the water's edge I notice a small, worn object lodged into the ground. As I try to pull it out, I examine the intricate detail on one of its sides, resembling a carving from the bow of a ship. It rose from the landscape like a dancing figure amongst the surrounding rubble. I cannot take the artifact with me, even though I try as hard as I can. It would always remind me of that day when everything was shattered.

2005:

The section of fragmented wood still remains embedded in the rocky ground along the piers. The fields have grown up as well as the surrounding structures which obstruct the views to the surrounding water. The area which had all but been flattened still holds the artifacts of the past. Standing on the long platforms is the only place where the artifacts embedded in the ground can be seen with the landscape and water, unhidden from the layers of time which has covered it.

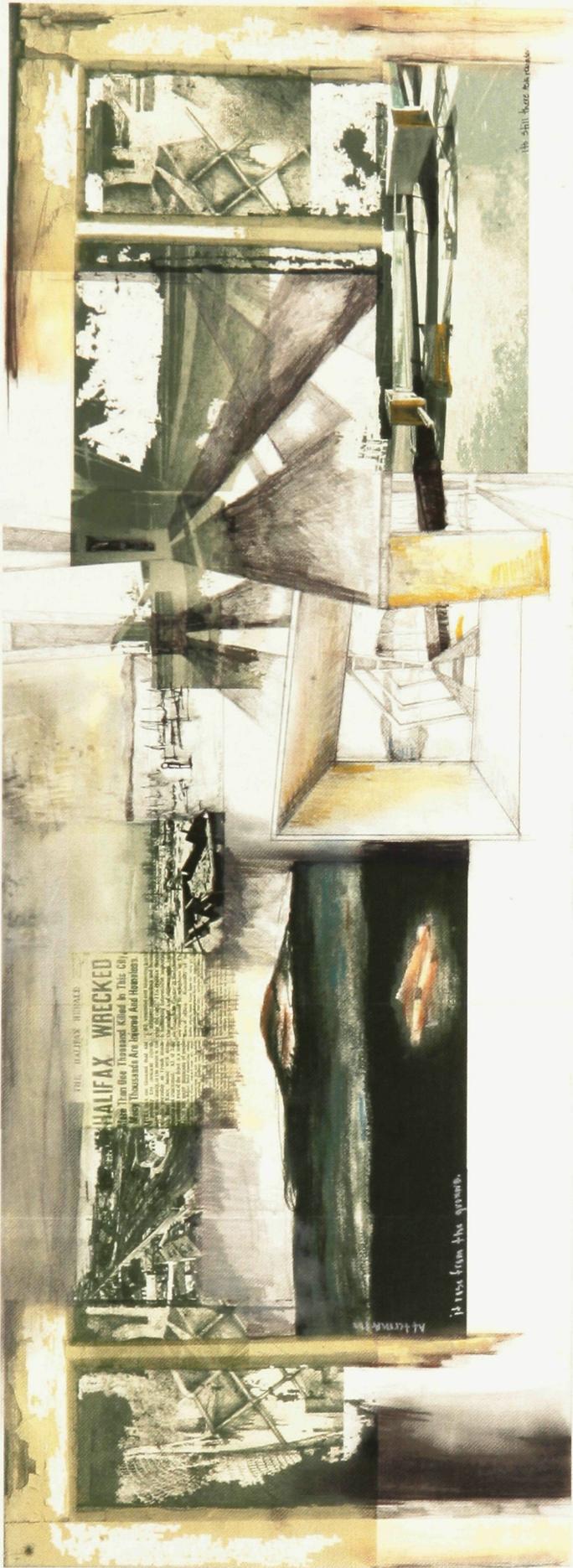


Figure 35- Storyboard for the narrative of the Resident.

Narrative of the Tourist

I have been walking all day, all along this wooden boardwalk, back and forth, as if she really thinks I enjoy this. The crowds watching those performers make it so hard to pass by and she has a tight hold onto my sweater so I can't get away.

"Would you please just hurry up, I don't have all day", she says, as we try to make our way through the crowds and onto the other side of the boats docking in the harbour.

The panhandlers are everywhere here, "spare any change... Would you like to buy my beads...Thanks anyways little one", it's hard to distinguish them from the performers and I am dragged along too quickly to answer.

Once we are through, her grip loosens a bit, but I am still unable to get free to wander around the water's edge. Through the chain link fence I see a small island with a little white lighthouse, but as I try to read the sign card to see its name, I am pulled away.

"I want to make it there before it closes, then we will go back to the hotel, now will you walk faster!"

I was beginning to ignore her. As we get a bit closer, the wooden boardwalk ends and we are faced with an empty and bleak parking lot, with a series of light grey warehouses. Our maps are misleading as we had found one that seemed to be pieced together with bits of different maps showing us a strange pathway. The map has led us to this strange place, miles from anything else. We aren't supposed to be here, this is where the ships load up with grain and the large containers. No, this isn't for visitors like us; where are the buskers and the crowds? Before I could look around I am pulled through the revolving doors into the grey shed.

Narrative of the Passenger

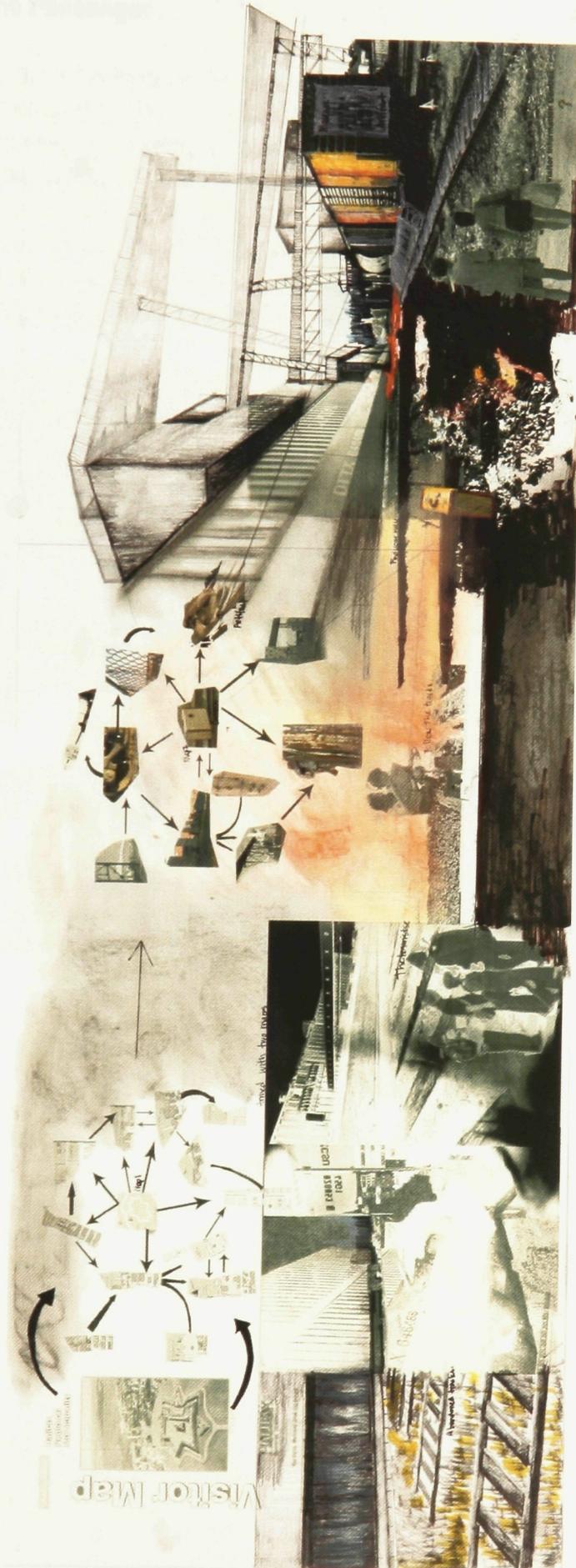


Figure 36- Storyboard for the narrative of the Tourist.

Narrative of the Passenger

As he opens his eyes on the rocky beach, all he can remember is the anticipation of seeing his mother again. The trip from New York was long, and he eagerly awaited reaching dry land again. The crash had therefore happened without any notice. He was sitting on his bunk looking at a book his grandmother had given him before he had left. There were screams, and water everywhere in the bottom of the ship where the other second class passengers were located. As everyone made it for the top deck, he could see two steamers in the distance. As the others pushed through the crowd, a large woman with an oversized tapestry bag hit his small fragile body and he was knocked into the icy cold water. No one noticed. No one heard his cries.

Lying on the rough surface in the partial sunshine, he tries to gather enough energy to move closer to the grassy slope behind him. As he crawled to his feet he searched for any recognizable signs that would indicate that he wasn't alone in this place. It was densely covered in thick pine trees and large boulders that littered the forest. He began to follow the rough shore line, and as he moved closer, he saw a large shape rising from the landscape. As he walks and walks, it seems to move farther away in the distance, its dark figure wrapped in a skin-like covering.

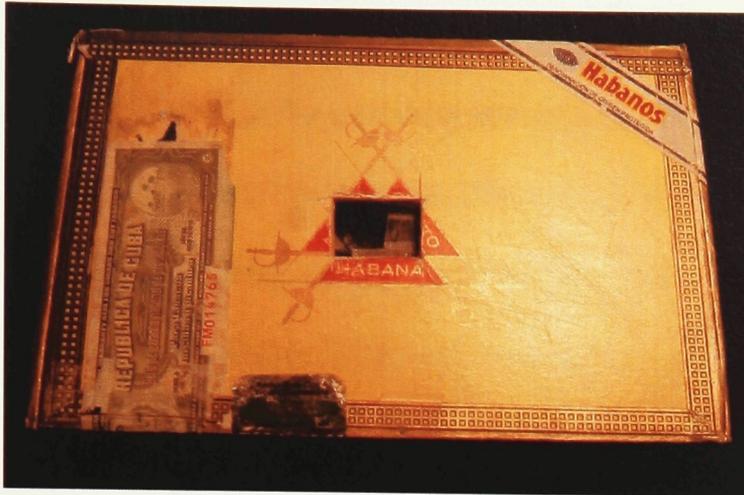
Everyone believes Basha, the Assyrian Boy died in the wreck. Word was sent to his grieving mother, although she had barely known him as he had lived with his grandmother since he was a baby. An obituary and an article put into the local paper, as the city continues on and forgets about the sunken ship.

Unaware of his presumed death, the boy wanders further, following the tall statue in the distance. After a long time... three days ...three weeks? He is unsure of the time.

Basha reaches the large statue. Its exterior is rusty and worn with time. It stands still amongst the cluster of aged pine trees. The structure is covered with a translucent skin, which wraps tightly around a metal rib cage which contains objects unrecognizable from and worn with time.

2.5 - Narrative montage

Through constructing graphic storyboards for each character's story, the intention of the architectural response was identified through the layering of the drawing. An overlapping condition which occurred between each established identity of the characters was revealed, indicating that the project could not simply be developed for three specific characters with three different functions, but rather that a tourist could be a passenger, or a resident could be a tourist, making generic assumptions difficult in planning a site for three distinct groups of people. However this overlap allowed for the flexibility for the design to address each of the characters in different ways, and accommodate the needs of the site and the City of Halifax. Therefore, at the conception of this process the idea of narrative began, which in turn led to the overall design scheme. Although the end result would not be a direct representation of these initial narratives, they would be embedded in the final scheme for the site through the process of investigation. The design process, like stories, evolves, changes and is transformed by the narrators in time.



Figures 38 & 39 – Artifact box created in response to the character described as the “Resident” through the concept of “framing”.

Artifact Boxes

The narratives established from the creation of existing stories and events began the process of investigation of stories and characters inhabiting the site. These narratives were further explored through a series of graphic representations as storyboards, which suggested the overlapping and linkages which exist between each character engaged with the site. Through the storyboards, the placement of the “architecture” was suggested by its placement as backdrops for the characters and their actions. In a continuation of this

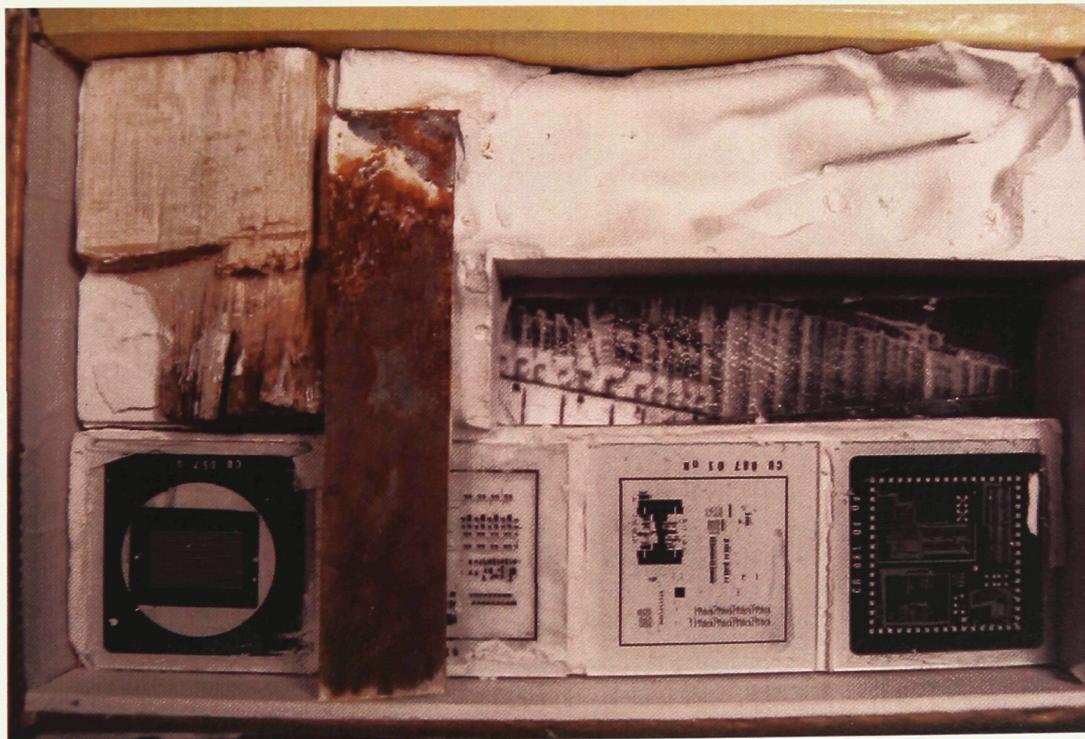
process, a series of “mimetic narrative boxes” were developed for each

character and cinematic concept corresponding to the storyboards and narratives. These containers, empty cigar cases, present the stored artifacts and their inherent storylines and scripts. Numerous openings were made in the surfaces of the box in order to offer various framed views of the “sets” within.

The first box responds to the concept of *framing* of the surrounding fabric of the site, which was derived from the narrative of the resident and the intervention of the “elevated pier”. Using

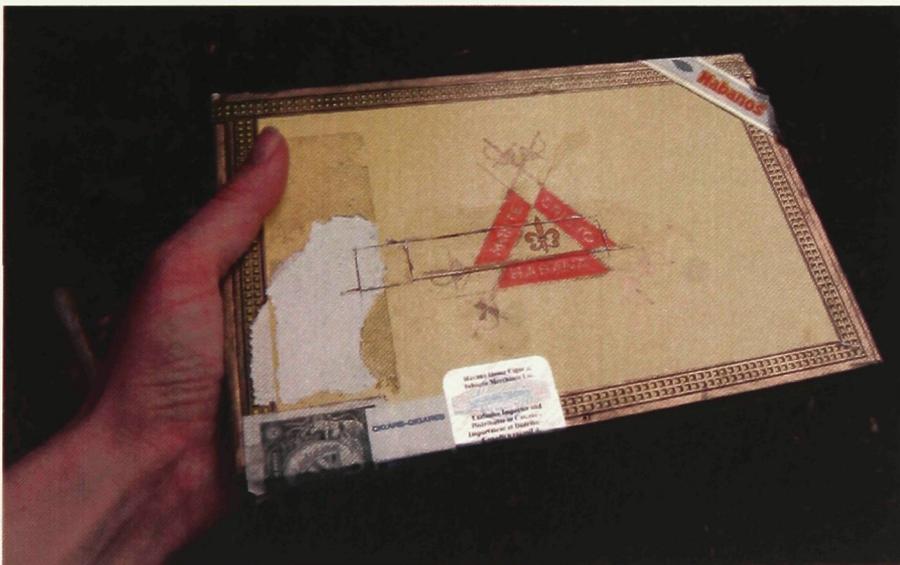
various images and artifacts, such as pinhole camera images, methods of framing were investigated through the creation of openings and the layering of materials.

The second box describes the traces or memory of the artifact, as surfaces and fragments of the narrative object are cast into a plaster mold which acts to capture the artifact frozen in time. This narrative box was created in response to the concept of the *posited artifact* and *montage* which is used to describe the tourist and the intervention of the “antithesis museum”.



Figures 40 & 41 – Artifact box created in response to the character described as the “Tourist” through the concept of “montage”.

The third box was made in response to the theme of *duration* and the cinematic principle of the *pan*. This was explored as a technique for the development of the intervention for the “duration film galleries”, which was in response to the narrative of the passenger.



Figures 42 & 43 – Artifact box created in response to the character described as the “Passenger” through the concept of “duration / the pan”.

2.6 - The Antithesis Museum

Historical Waterfront 2:

Through a renewed interest, older structures are repaired and restored in order to preserve the marketable image of the waterfront as a place of historical interest. Sympathetic treatment of heritage buildings, along with successful pedestrian linkage of the waterfront and incorporation of leisure and commercial amenities all contribute to a linking the interface of land to water. Maintenance of historic building materials such as the colour, grain and texture, contribute to the sense of authenticity of a place. The key to a successful waterfront development scheme, as outlined by Fagence is: "for most plans, the intention has been to capitalize on the uniqueness of character and location and to create a distinctive environmental ambience. Attention to thematic issues has made good real estate practice".²⁹ In a society in which everything exists in a realm of homogeneity within our cities, it is important to maintain areas of historical authenticity, so as to allow residents and visitors the ability to distinguish between other waterfront cities with particular historical identities. Pier 21 remains an extremely important historical artifact for Halifax as well as for Canada through its origins as an immigration facility between 1928 and 1971. Before its closure in 1971, over one million people had passed through its doors as landed immigrants, refugees, child evacuees, war brides, or displaced persons seeking a new life in Canada. The quiet, shed-like building on the waterfront served to welcome newcomers to Canada arriving by ship and distribute, by rail, families searching for a new life, to towns and cities across Canada .

Within the mandate of heritage as a leisure resource, the act of historical preservation serves as a major component of waterfront

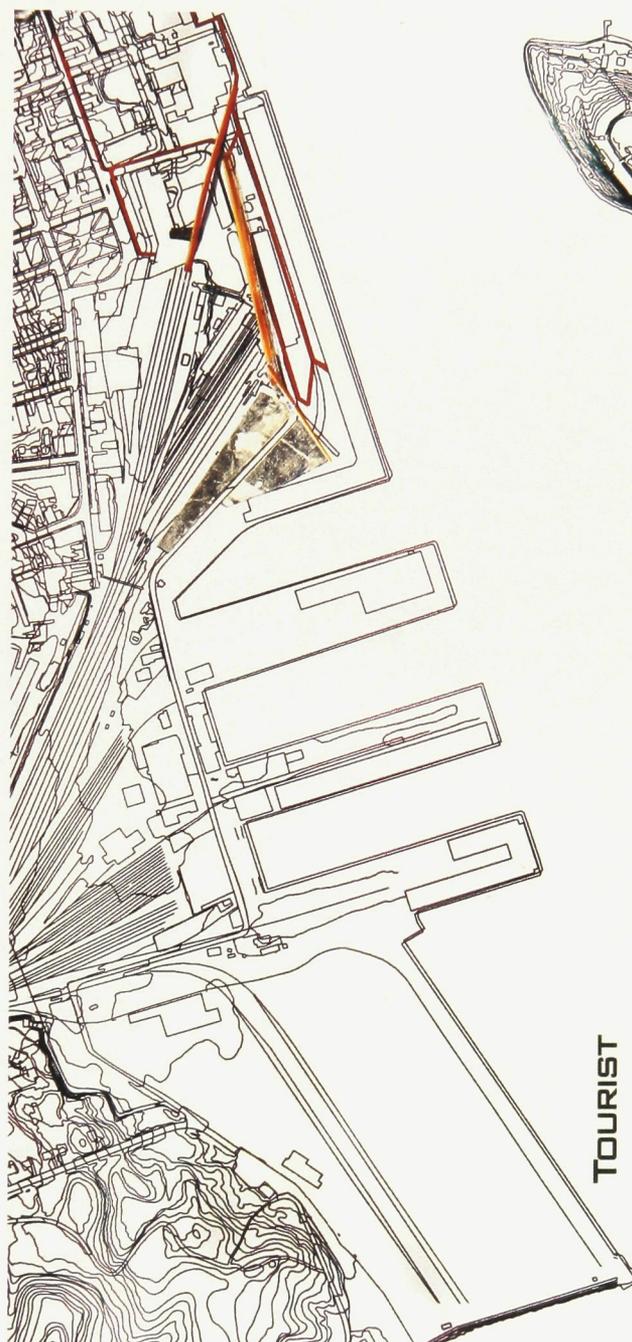


Figure 44- Path taken by tourist along the historical waterfront to the site.

²⁹ Michael Fagence, "City Waterfront Redevelopment for Leisure, Recreation and Tourism: Some Common Themes". Recreation as a Catalyst for Urban Waterfront Redevelopment. (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1995) 135.

revitalization.³⁰ In changing times and revised uses of the waterfront, recreational activities such as museums, retailing, festival markets, historic ships and hotels serve to create a new market and commercial demand for the waterfront as a whole. Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) have expressed the concept of the 'tourist-historic city' as a definable term for the redevelopment of historic and tourist cities. Through the development of this important concept, the tourism demand is explained in terms of the development of historical sites as potential attractions. Heritage has a strong role to play waterfront development by creating a place which attracts recreational tourists and related functions. With an understanding of the potentials of waterfront development, especially for leisure related activities, it is important to observe that:

*"The waterfront is the critical edge at which awareness of the natural environment is greatest, and since this is evidently the focus of increasing international concern, we must expect that the leisure waterfront will more prominently emphasize conservation and tourism promotion of the natural environment, in tandem with that of the built environment which is the concern of the tourist historic development."*³¹

³⁰ J. Tunbridge and G. Ashworth.. "Leisure Resource Development in Cityport Revitalization: The Tourist-Historic Dimension," *European Port Cities in Transition*. ed.B.S Hoyle and D.A. Pinder, (London: Belhaven Press, 1992) 195.

³¹ Ibid 198.

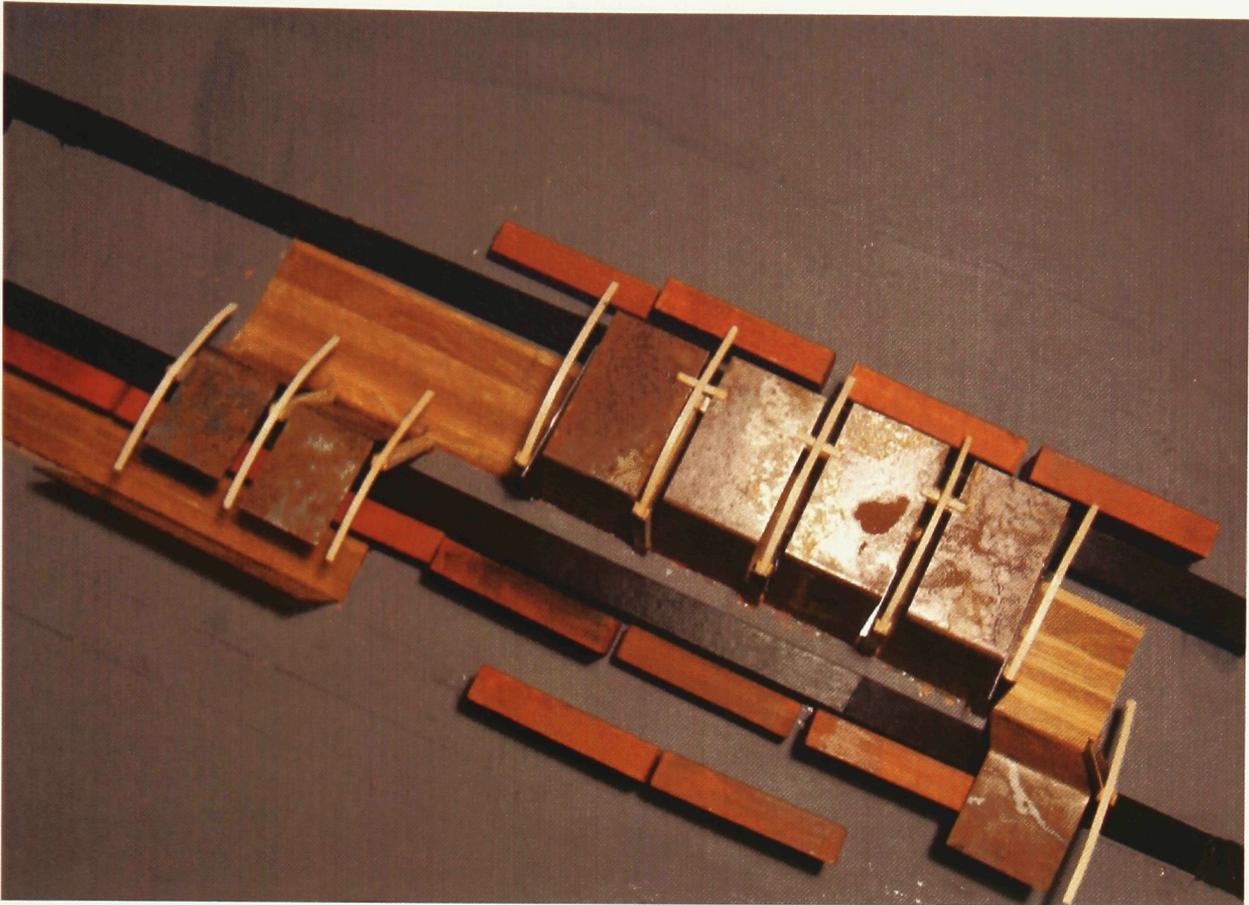


Figure 45 – Proposed structure and existing railway cars

Proposal 2:

The proposed program for the architecture for the character of the tourist of the waterfront is centred on the idea of the “Antithesis Museum”. This presents itself to the city as a place which does not house discreet artifacts, but the artifact in its construction. The space is created using existing objects from the site which are not contained but revealed in order to engage visitors to the site. The “antithesis museum” would consist of various abandoned railcars which are rearranged to create spaces for exhibits of artifacts that would reflect the history of the site and the city of Halifax. A permanent structure spanning a large open space with a large over hanging roof is constructed on the site to allow for more permanent exhibits or as a large space for functions. A large roof over-hangs the structure and completes a covering over a series of existing railway cars

which are on a series of tracks that connect to the main railway system. The potential exists for the integration of an industrial function (the railway) with a new proposal (a museum) which will allow for further development of public programs onto the site.

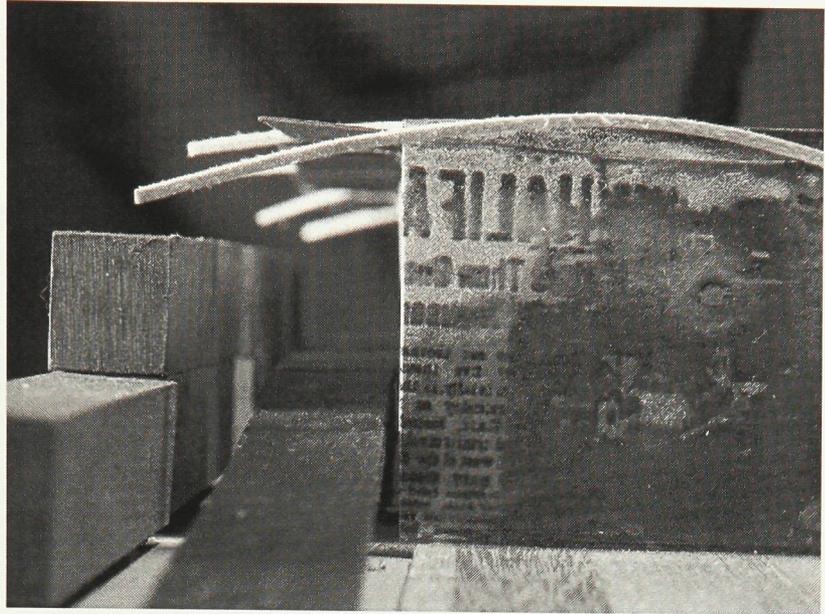


Figure 46 – Elevated walkway to stacked train cars.

The structure housing a large open space and other public facilities would be the only permanent and constant element in the composition.

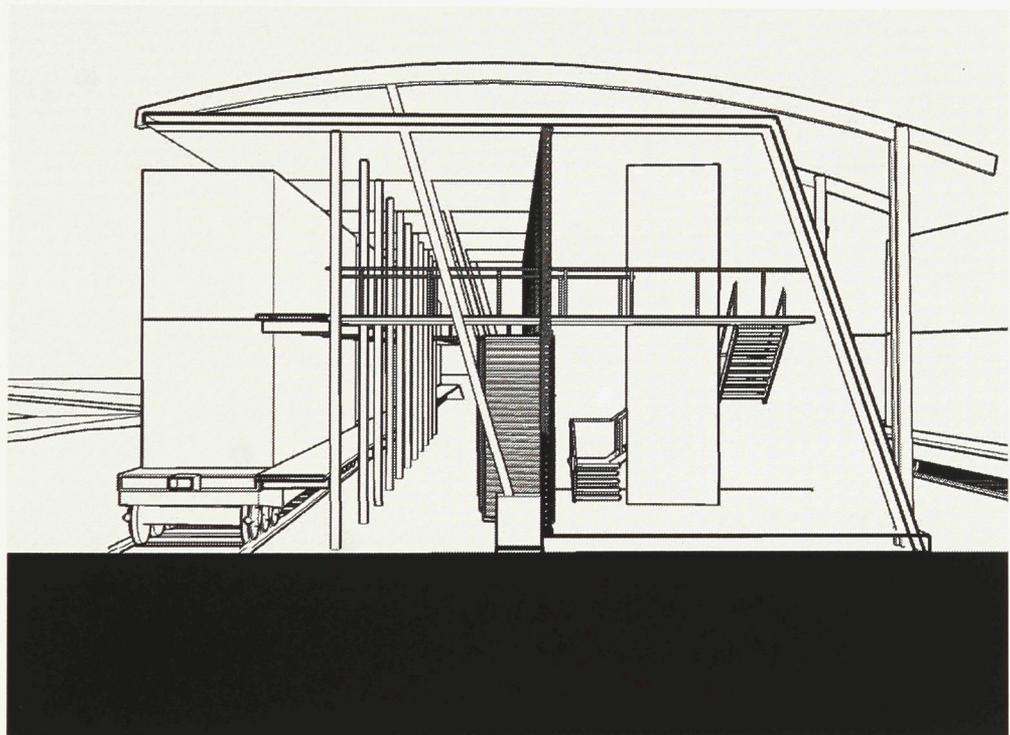


Figure 47 – Section through permanent structure and stacked train cars.

Through using the railway cars as exhibit space, the overall structure of the museum will change according to the movement of the cars and therefore reinforce the changing nature of the

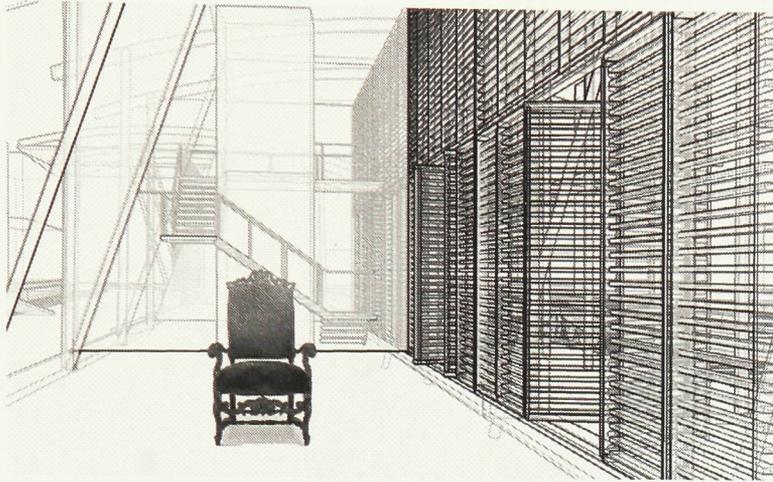


Figure 48 – Interior of permanent structure, red velvet chair on display.

site and the industrial uses which constantly change and reconfigure the landscape. A two-story walkway allows for access to the stacked cars as well as access to the permanent structure. The idea for an inhabitable structure of abandoned cars was inspired while investigating

the site with the pinhole camera. A series of boxcars which contained blankets and cardboard was observed, with left over belongings of a transient resident of the site. By contrasting a permanent and mobile structure, evolution across the site will be greatly emphasized, whilst developing spaces for future stories to be recorded.



Figure 49 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.



Figure 50 – *Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.*



Figure 51 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.

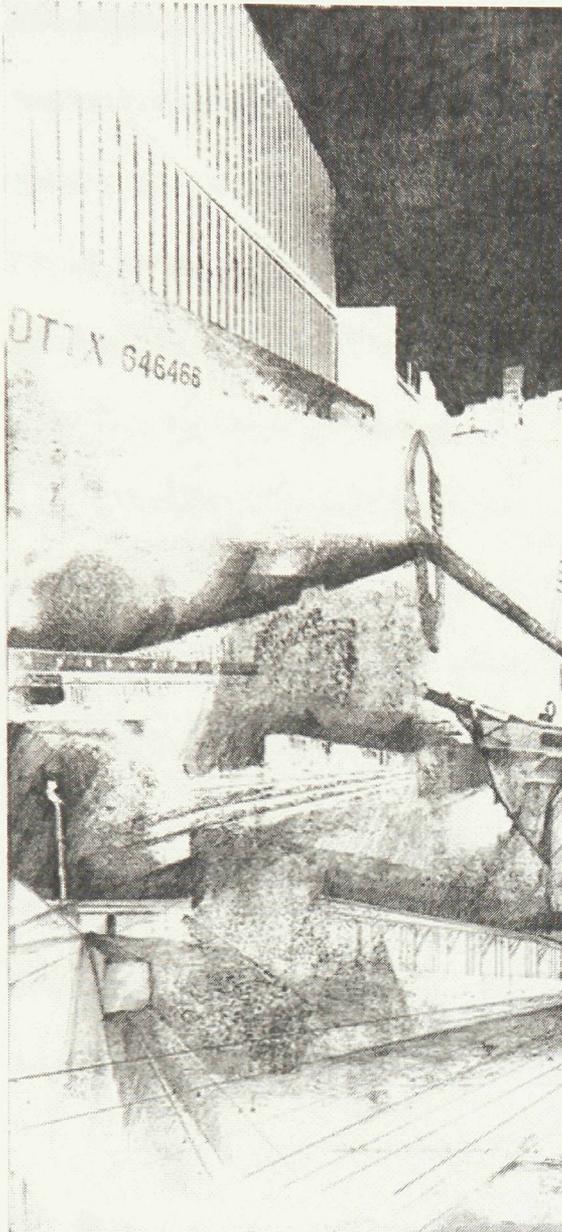


Figure 52 – “After a long time... three days ...three weeks? He is unsure of the time.”

Chapter 3: Duration (The Pan) Passenger

3.1 – Movement Within vs. The Pan

The cinema can reveal to an audience multiple levels of interpretations of life's events and evoke personal memories and stories of a specific place or time. Cinema captures something that can not be expressed in any other art form: the passing of time and duration expressed by moving

images. As expressed by Deleuze; “The cinema even more directly than painting conveys relief in time, a perspective in time: it expresses time itself as a perspective or relief.”³² For architecture, cinema does not need to focus on acceptable notions of spatial successions, but rather has the ability to reveal a set of new spatial relationships which are random and unusual experiences. It is through this representation of architectural space that memory and narrative are evoked, and the role of cinema can be identified as a key component in the investigation and representation of a narrative of non-sequential spaces.

The first motion picture was shown in 1895 in the Grand Café in Paris by artists Auguste and Louis Lumiere, and was a series of 10 short films, lasting twenty minutes. They called their invention “Cinematographie”; the “writing or sketching in motion”. Soon the concept of cinema developed with the opening of the first movie theatre in Paris in 1910, setting the stage for the construction of theatres all over the world. The first film makers used fixed cameras to capture their movies, and soon developed the technology to fix the camera on tracks in order to make the camera mobile through space. This change in the movement of the shot would serve to influence the future methods for cinematography and the transformation of architectural perception on film.

The cinematic image depends on architecture to render its representation of place in a believable way to the audience. Architecture, in addition to the actors, lighting and set design contributes to a film’s *mise-en-scene*, translating to “that which is put in the scene”. The projection of a three-dimensional setting on a flat screen is dependant on architecture’s role in supplying boundaries and surfaces which help to develop the plot as a backdrop for the *mise-en-scene*. The perception of architecture in the scene can be a powerful experience for the viewer, because what is presented is seen in an entirely new way, whether or not the setting has been seen again and again. Walter Benjamin writes on film that;

³² Gilles Deleuze. Cinema 1: The Movement Image. (London: The Athlone Press, 1986) 20.

“On the one hand, [the setting] extends our comprehension of the necessities which rule our lives; on the other hand, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action. Our taverns and our metropolitan street, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appear to have locked us up hopelessly. Then came the film and burst this prison-world asunder by the dynamite of the tenth of a second, so now in the midst of its far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go traveling. With the close up, space expands; with slow motion, movement is extended.”³³

Benjamin believed that both cinema and architecture required the ability to inhabit and move through a space which is not visually mapped out, in order to understand and experience it unconsciously. Film therefore can reveal to us an architecture which, can only otherwise exist in the imagination, an architecture composed of memory and sensation. This phenomenon suggests possible insights into the perception of real and/or proposed architecture set in our surrounding environment.

Through changes in viewing distance, in the shape and size of the field of view, in the movement of a camera through space and the duration of the scene, cinema constructs alternative worlds to an audience. This in turn heightens ones perception of their own space. Film can be an important tool in uncovering and evoking personal and collective memories of a place depicted on film, through the use of cinematic techniques and the composure of the narrative. Within the



movement of the frame, a scene can be masked in order to focus on its details. Two camera movements, *the pan* with the camera and *movement within a fixed* camera reveal to the audience different scales of time within

Figure 53 –*Method of panning with a camera.*

³³ Walter Benjamin. “The Work in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968) 236.

the frame. The cinematic frame in many of its aspects resembles the characteristics of the framed opening afforded *The Box Man* (*The Box Man*, Kobo Abe). Abe utilizes the frame as a method of isolation in order to accent and reveal to the reader otherwise overlooked aspects of the surrounding scene. In Alfred Hitchcock's 1954 thriller *Rear Window*, the main protagonist, injured and in a wheelchair, spends his days looking out his window which frames the surrounding apartments. The film was made entirely on one set built at Paramount Studios as a realistic

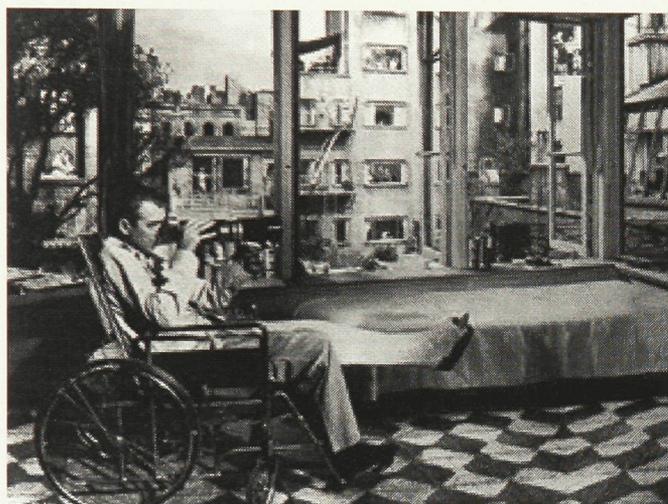


Figure 54 – Scene from Hitchcock's *Rear Window*.

courtyard composed of 32 apartments representing a (non-existent) address in Manhattan's, 125 W. 9th Street. From this window, our protagonist observes a variety of tenants and their relationships, and as the camera angle is primarily from his window, the audience is able to participate in the same voyeuristic activity as he. The way by

which the window frames the surrounding scene of the apartment complex is, for the viewer, similar to that which the camera is able to frame a specific view in an overall scene, therefore masking out the surrounding context.

Gilles Deleuze's cinema project outlined in his two books *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, map the development of cinema from classical pre World War 2 cinema (movement image) to post WW 2 cinema (time-image). The *Movement Image*, which describes Hollywood genre film, is dependent on movement and action. The *Time Image* describes a condition of non-rational links between shots, as a splicing together of different scenes of various durations. The result is a "montage" effect, as vacant and disconnected spaces appear

within the narrative, lending themselves to gaps open to the viewer's interpretation between multiple layers. As stated by Gilles Deleuze in his text *The Movement Image*:

"It is movement itself which is decomposed and recomposed. It is decomposed according to the elements between which it plays in a set: Those which remain fixed, those to which movement is attributed, those which produce or undergo such simple or divisible movement...."³⁴

When the camera is *fixed*, movement within the shot relies on the movement of elements and characters in the frame. When the camera *pans* across a site, the vastness of the landscape is exaggerated by the duration and the speed that the camera is moving. Therefore, duration of the site is emphasized through the slow pan of the camera across the horizon. The shot exists as the unity of movement, and as Deleuze suggests, is "caught between two demands: of the whole whose change it expresses throughout the film, of parts whose displacements within each set and from one set to another it determines."³⁵ The sequence and duration of the shot is the main instrument in expressing detailed fragments of the whole, and can alter the duration and perception of the scene through the camera's movements. This approach to observation of the whole and its parts framed by the means of architecture and identified through memory and narrative was a key component in the investigation of the subject site. The motion of the frame of the camera was utilized for its potential in developing "frames" across the site which would serve to outline and exaggerate specific moments of the characters' interactions on the vast site.

³⁴ Gilles Deleuze. *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*. (London: The Athlone Press, 1986) 21.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 27.

3.2 - Recording Traces – Tarkovsky & Nostalgia

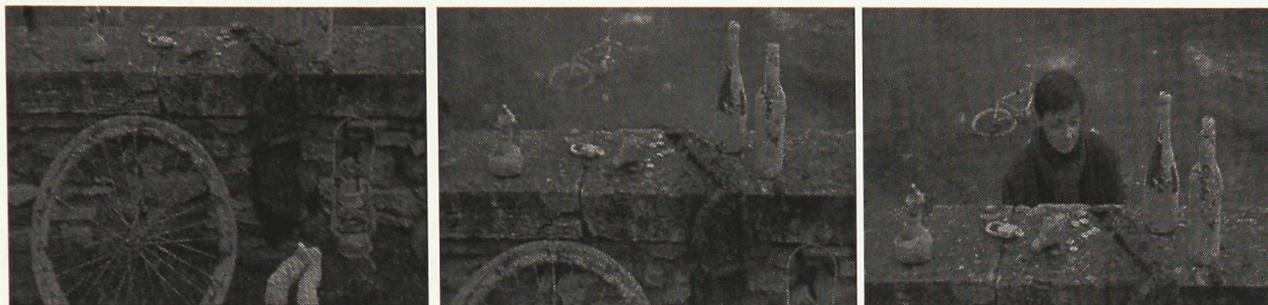


Figure 55 - Scenes from Tarkovsky's *Nostalgia*

As a cinema artist, Andrei Tarkovsky sees film as a medium for the translation of impressions of life. He suggests that, with the invention of cinema:

“For the first time in the history of the arts, in the history of culture, man found the means to take an impression of time. And simultaneously the possibility of reproducing that time on screen as often as he wanted, to repeat it and go back to it. He acquired a matrix for *actual time*.”³⁶

Tarkovsky sees the potential of film not as a way of recording actions but as a means of reconstructing and recreating life. The image therefore is “indivisible and elusive, dependant upon our consciousness and on the real world which it seeks to embody... We cannot comprehend the totality of the universe, but the poetic image is able to express that totality.”³⁷ Tarkovsky suggests that the image is an impression of life itself, and offers to the audience a scene that captures more than we can comprehend; emotion, memory, and a reflection of life. This is not true for every cinematic work, but rather those that utilize imagery to meaningfully create and evoke emotion and memory.

³⁶ Andrei Tarkovsky. *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*. (London: The Bodley Head Ltd., 1986) 62.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 106.

When composing his cinematic works, Tarkovsky believes that “one cannot conceive of a cinematic work with no sense of time passing through the shot.”³⁸ In commenting on the nature of *montage* cinema, (the process of editing together two concepts in order to create a new concept), Tarkovsky feels that it is incompatible with the true nature of cinema. He rejects Eisenstein’s concepts of *montage* cinema, as they “do not allow the film to continue beyond the edges of the screen: they do not allow the audience to bring personal experience to what is in front of them on the film.”³⁹

The cinematic works of Tarkovsky offers a phenomenological approach to the creation of scenes which, are saturated with memories and a sense of the passing of time. His cinema, with attention to light and space, are depicted like a series of live paintings which create an emotional response in his audience. His frames are often shot as frontal perspectives, limiting the framing of the shot. Tarkovsky uses the elements of time and memory as mediums in which to create films which evoke emotion and recollection. He seeks to raise personal memories though his use of imagery and sound; dripping water and textured surfaces engaging the audience into the joy and pain of the characters. As he states in his writings on cinema, “Time and memory merge into each other, they are like the two sides of the medal. It is obvious enough that without time, memory cannot exist either.”⁴⁰ He therefore captures time as a “sculpting” material, in which he shapes and alters our memories and perceptions to create a moving experience.

Tarkovsky’s *Nostalgia* was examined for its potential in capturing the passage of time and its evocation of past memories, which was also the aim of the proposed interventions on the site. In commenting on his work, Tarkovsky stated that: “Ultimately I wanted *Nostalgia* to be free of anything irrelevant or incidental that would stand in the way of my principle objective; the portrayal

³⁸ Ibid, 113.

³⁹ Ibid, 114.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 57.

of someone in a state of profound alienation from the world and himself.”⁴¹ He is able to create this sense of loss and memory through his usage of imagery and light, as well as careful framing which creates a cinematic effect that is expressive of the passage of time beyond the normal duration of the film. The backdrop for the film, a small village in Italy, depicts surfaces that have recorded their own time, emotionally evocative due to a rich materiality and texture. The film tells the story of Gorchakov, the film’s protagonist, who comes to Italy from Russia and thus goes through a nostalgic longing for his homeland and family. This story mirrors the life of the film maker, who had shot his first film outside of his home country of Russia. Through the framing and the treatment of the cinematic image as a painting, Tarkovsky expresses a passing of time and redirects our own personal memories and feelings towards the film.

The lessons learned in the work of Tarkovsky can be applied to the realm of architecture, and in particular to the objectives that this thesis addresses. Through his work, his use of materiality and light, Tarkovsky brings the realm of architecture into the realm of imagination and emotion. Today’s mundane architecture fails to tell a story and often fails to let us enter the story of the building but rather leaves us outside as spectators. Architecture can learn from cinema just as cinema has learned from architecture to incorporate the realm of imagination and personal memory which can add to a richer spatial experience. As seen with *Nostalgia*, this can be addressed through materiality, surfaces which record time, and the framing of specific moments, which lend themselves to the development of moments of interaction between *characters*.

This “cinematic” approach to design is proposed as a means of dealing with a site that is cinematic and surreal in its present condition. It is in such a place, with its vacant vastness, that nothing makes sense, neither the scale, the inhabitant, nor the usage of space. It is intended that through a cinematic approach which addresses memory, time and narrative, the proposed

⁴¹ Ibid, 202.

interventions will add richness to the existing condition and celebrate its surrealism through an abstraction of the as-found phenomena. Therefore, the project looks to cinema for inspiration to address the structure of narrative and memory of a place which is rich in textured surfaces, yet fail to integrate the spectator into the layered story.

3.3 - Montage of the Site



Figure 56 – Montage of the existing site condition: railway cars and tracks.

Montage can be describe as the assembling of multiple frames and shots together, similar to putting together parts of a machine in a rational order. Eisenstein's concept for montage suggested that meaning in cinema was not created through the object filmed but rather with the adjoining of two elements through *juxtaposition*. As he expressed in his essay *Montage and Architecture of 1940*, the word path associated with *montage* existed in cinema as an "imaginary path followed by the mind across a multiplicity of phenomena, far apart in time & space, gathered in a certain sequence into a single meaningful concept; [with] diverse impressions passing in front of an immobile spectator."⁴² He continues by suggesting that in the past, the path existed for a spectator to move through "a series of carefully disposed phenomena which [were] absorbed in

⁴² Sergei Eisenstein, "Montage and Architecture", Towards a Theory of Montage, ed. M. Glenny and R. Taylor. (London: Belhaven Press, 1992) 59.

order with [the] visual sense.”⁴³ He argues that cinema can create a revolutionary consciousness by constructing a new visual consciousness, and states that, “In themselves, the pictures, the phrases, the elements of the whole are innocent and indecipherable. The blow is struck only when the elements are juxtaposed into a sequential image.”⁴⁴

The *montage* expresses the assemblage of multiple fragments which exist in multiple durations, therefore altering the overall duration of the whole. The thesis site of the Halifax waterfront can be redefined as a vast montage of scenes with different durations, explored as a series of multiple events along a path, established along the existing shore line. Though the site was explored as a montage of events, the architecture speaks more to the cinema of Tarkovsky, which attempts to evoke emotion and memory in a particular condition. The elements of *montage* and architecture depend primarily on the juxtaposition of different parts which make up the whole. As this juxtaposition alters the time duration of the recorded image, and therefore the perception of the scene, a technique of specific framing of details within a whole is more in keeping with the interests of this thesis and the exploration of a site through/as narrative.

⁴³ Ibid, 59.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 80.

3.4 - Elapsed Images– Pinhole Camera



Figure 57 – Detail of pinhole image, layered recordings of time.

Historical Background – The Camera Obscura

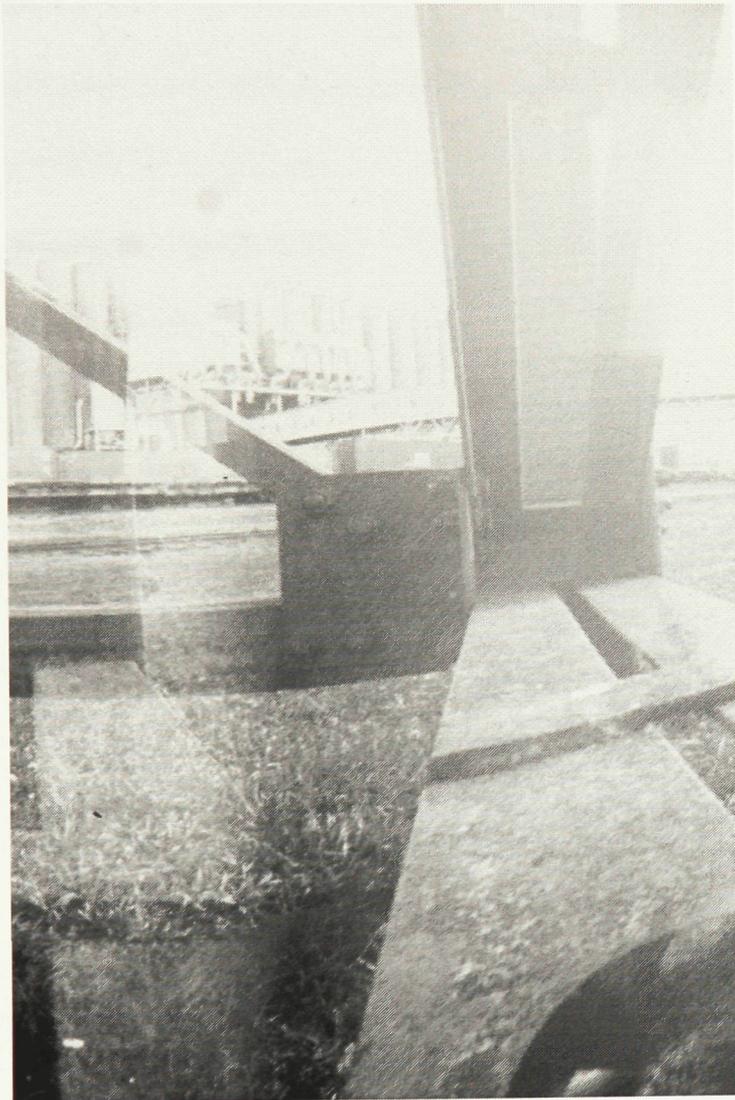
Until the early part of the eighteenth century, the optical principles of the *camera obscura* comprised the most widely used model for explaining human vision and for representing the

relationship of the perceiver as a subject to an external world. The aperture of the *camera obscura* corresponded to a single mathematically definable point from which the world could be logically deduced by a gathering of signs and recordable events. Founded on laws of nature and optics, but removed to a plane outside of nature, the *camera obscura* provided a vantage point onto the world analogous to the eye of God. Classical science aimed at discovering the unique truth of the world as seen and represented through the eyes of God which the *camera obscura* could represent and capture. Sensory evidence was rejected in favor of the representations provided by the device as there was little question as to the authenticity of the image recorded. The image produced by the mechanism of the *camera obscura* allowed for a scientific and objective view of the world through a mechanical apparatus. These images existed within boundaries in which the senses and the actions of the eyes are removed and substituted with mechanical methods of seeing.

The images produced by a pinhole camera were the starting point for the recorded investigation of this thesis. The pinhole camera has the ability to capture the duration of the passing of time onto a single sheet of photo paper. The pinhole camera captures an image that would otherwise not exist with a normal 35 mm film camera, as distance is recorded as infinite, with a great level of detail which exists across the shot, from the closest texture to the farthest object in the image. The pinhole camera was the initial *tool* for future investigations, which provided a series of distinct views of the condition of the subject site, and allowed for a focusing on intimate details in the overall gesture.

The camera constructed for the site investigations was constructed in an old worn suitcase, which I had come across in my travels. This suitcase, for me, captured an existing narrative, reinforced by its smell of old clothes and cigars left over from past travels in days gone by. It revealed a narrative by its characteristics and in its making, which initially began to inform the early investigations on the site. The suitcase-camera was constructed in such a way that

multiple shots could be taken, as the paper was stored in a black bag within the suitcase, and two holes with black gloves were added to allow the paper to be switched without using the facilities of a darkroom. As the exposures ranged from 3 minutes to 6 minutes, depending on light conditions, layers of recorded actions and movement were recorded on the paper appearing as grainy textures.



The images captured something which a conventional camera could not. The images revealed a ghostly scene, evocative of images of past events and stories which could have occurred on the site. It was from these initial pinhole images that the embedded narrative and personal memories of the site were established as a fundamental design strategy, which would continue to inform the future process and development of the project.

Figure 58 – *Detail of pinhole image, grain structures at the site.*

3.5 - Investigation – Cinematic Site moments

The various cinematic conditions (*framing*, the *pan* and the *montage*) were explored through a series of conceptual models which were the starting point for the architectural investigation in terms of form and program. Issues concerning methods of framing and horizon were identified in order to distinguish aspects of the nature of the cinematic condition. Once collaged onto the site, in a figure-ground relationship, the nature of scale-shift could be explored as a method for investigating the potential development of the site. These models allowed for a three-dimensional transformation of the site's characteristics and later served to inform other parts of the design process.

The first model describes a condition of the tension between the screen and the viewer, as it is fabricated in such a way to be in dialogue with the image below it. This begins to address a way by which the architectural insertion into the site will address the rest of the city, as a gateway into the redeveloped pathway.

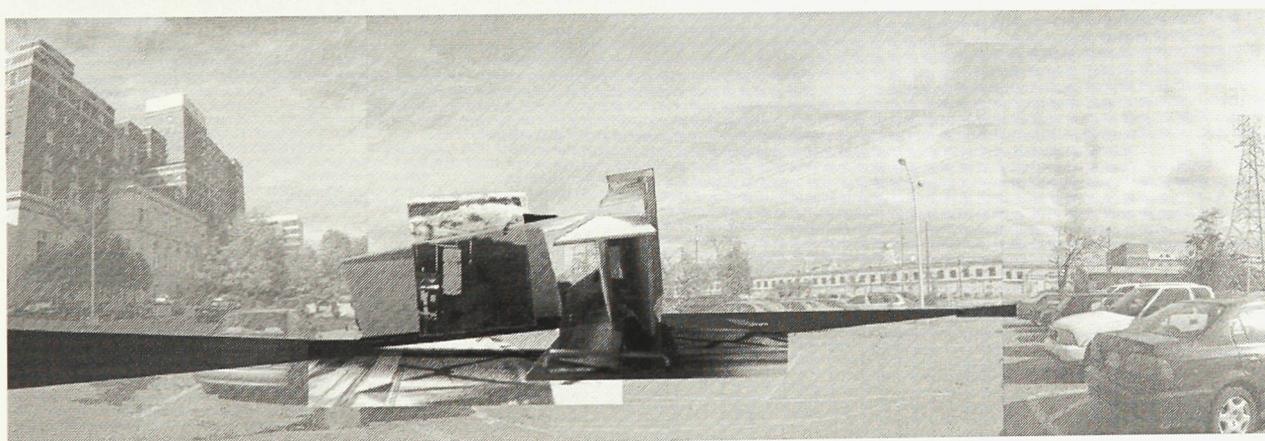


Figure 59 – Model expressing condition of a gateway to the site.

In addressing the surrounding condition of the rusted railroad tracks, the second conceptual installation on the site addresses the idea of an embodied memory as promoted by an artifact. The “artifact”, as referred to in Aldo Rossi’s work *The Architecture of the City*, is interpreted at a smaller scale than that of a building, but still holds the same conceptual impact with regards to evoking a tactile memory of the site. Although metaphorical, the construction designed to hold and “frame” the artifact can be interpreted as a larger construction with a programmatic function (such as an auditorium space or a sleeping berth).

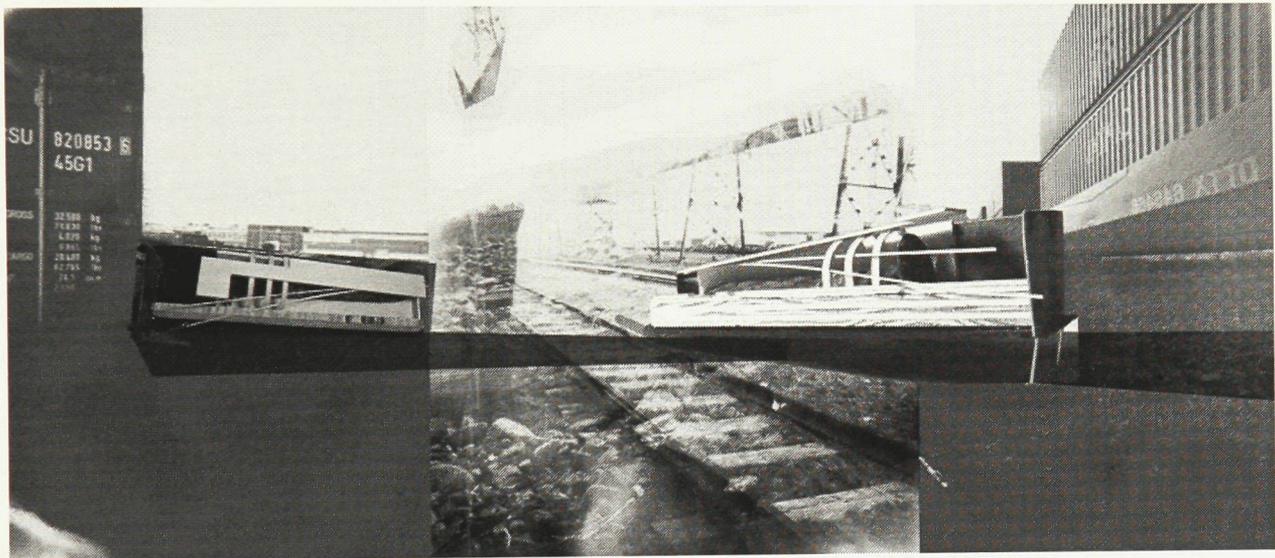


Figure 60 – Model expressing condition of the artifact.

As the waterfront edge condition is one in which views have been blocked and cut off, aspects of strategic framing become important in the overall site development and as a method for reconnecting the viewer with the water and conversely to the surrounding city. The third conceptual model addresses this potential for multiple points of framing, both in the direction of the water and back to the surrounding site. When integrated into a montage of the site, the model reveals a potential relationship between the industrial structures (which carried grain) and the potential for various viewing platforms designed to frame specific unobstructed views of the water, while serving as a meeting point for all three fictional users of the site. Due to the overwhelming scale of the surrounding site, one that cannot be completely comprehended by the viewer, the creation of a point of viewing therefore would necessarily be small and intimate, in order to comfortably engage the viewer into the overall condition.

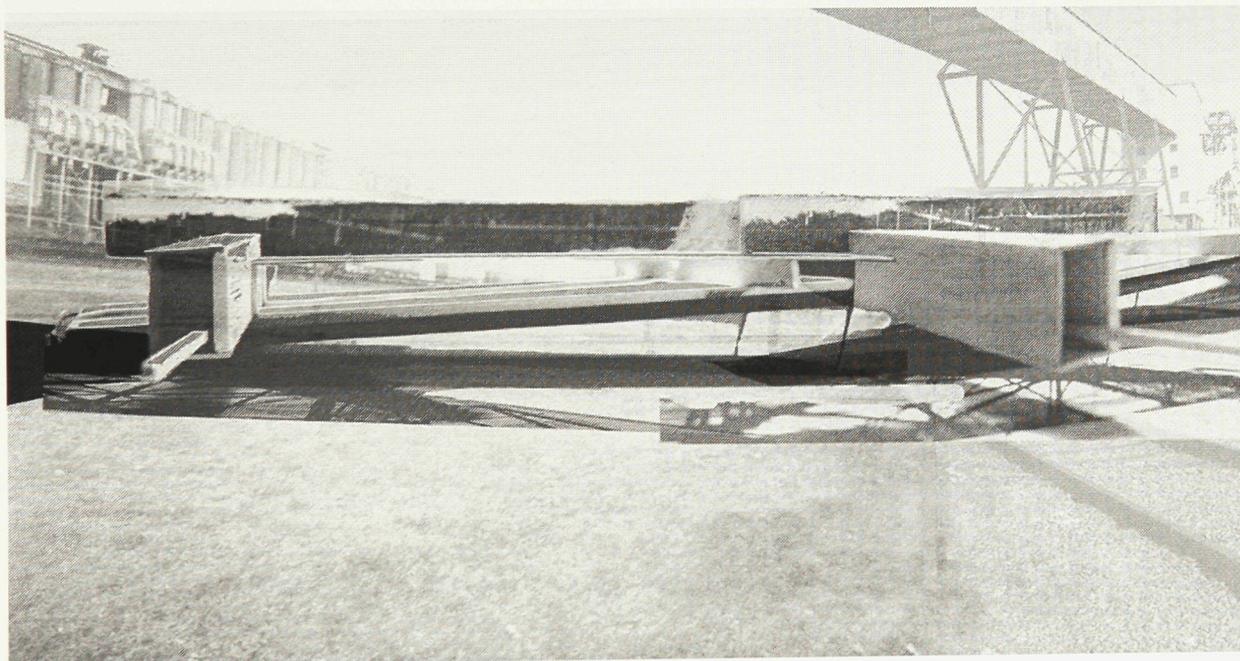


Figure 61 – Model expressing condition of framing.

As a camera pans across a great distance, the duration of the image on the film exists in *real time*. However, for the viewer, distance is experienced and exaggerated to emphasize the vastness or great length of the site through an extended time for the scene. In response to the existing site condition, a gully with existing train tracks moving into the site, this fourth model expresses the condition of the *pan* across a site as well as the potential breaks and overlaps in the surface producing an interruption in the rhythm of the *pan*. Once collaged onto the site model with the other models, a relationship to the ground was discovered allowing for the potential of vertical movement and an additional way to experience and navigate the site.

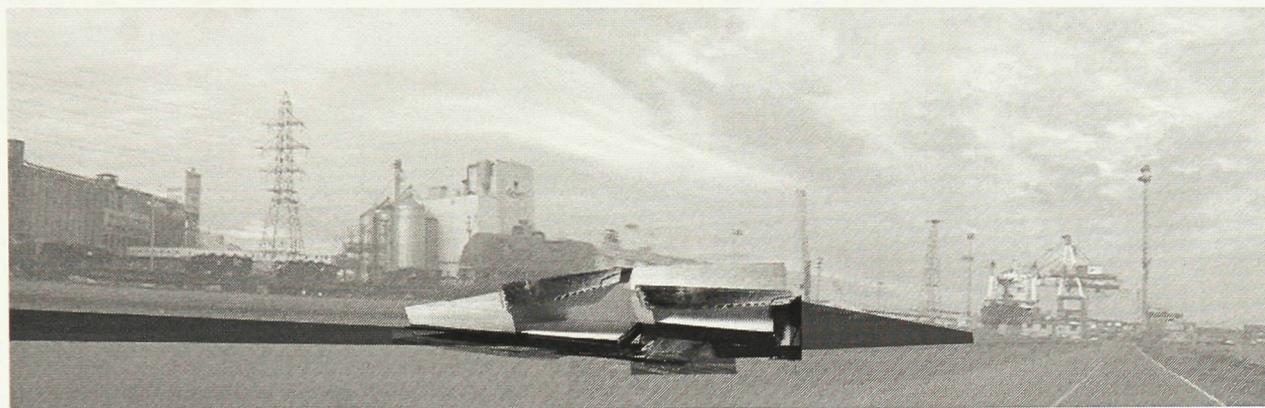


Figure 62 – Model expressing condition of duration (the pan).

3.6 - Duration: The Video Galleries / Projection Booths

Historical Waterfront 3:

The markets of leisure and tourism have had a significant role in the development of waterfronts. As technology advances and changes, revisions to commercial practices, and other causes have attracted the traditional waterfront uses to new locations. As a result, leisure, recreation, and tourism uses have come to fill the void which industries have left vacant. The sites, now less in demand for maritime and industrial purposes, are situated in key locations near downtown areas and contain existing built fabric, which offer potential for reuse. The principal purpose of waterfront redevelopment include the achievement of public access to the waterfront, improvement to the image of derelict waterfront areas and the achievement of economic regeneration by breathing new life into areas. As described by Michael Fagence, with reference to tourism and leisure:

“Although not crucially dependant upon direct waterfront locations, the activities of leisure, recreation and tourism have become closely identified with waterside locations in which the proximity of the waterside has become important in the context of planning, design, management and use.”⁴⁵

With the opening of Pier 21, various cultural groups such as the theatre group, Drum!, have situated their production spaces in the complex, as well as various art galleries. Through this influence of the arts and culture, the Halifax Port Authority has outlined a plan to promote the development of the seawall surrounding Pier 21 as an arts and cultural district over the next ten years. Their mandate states;

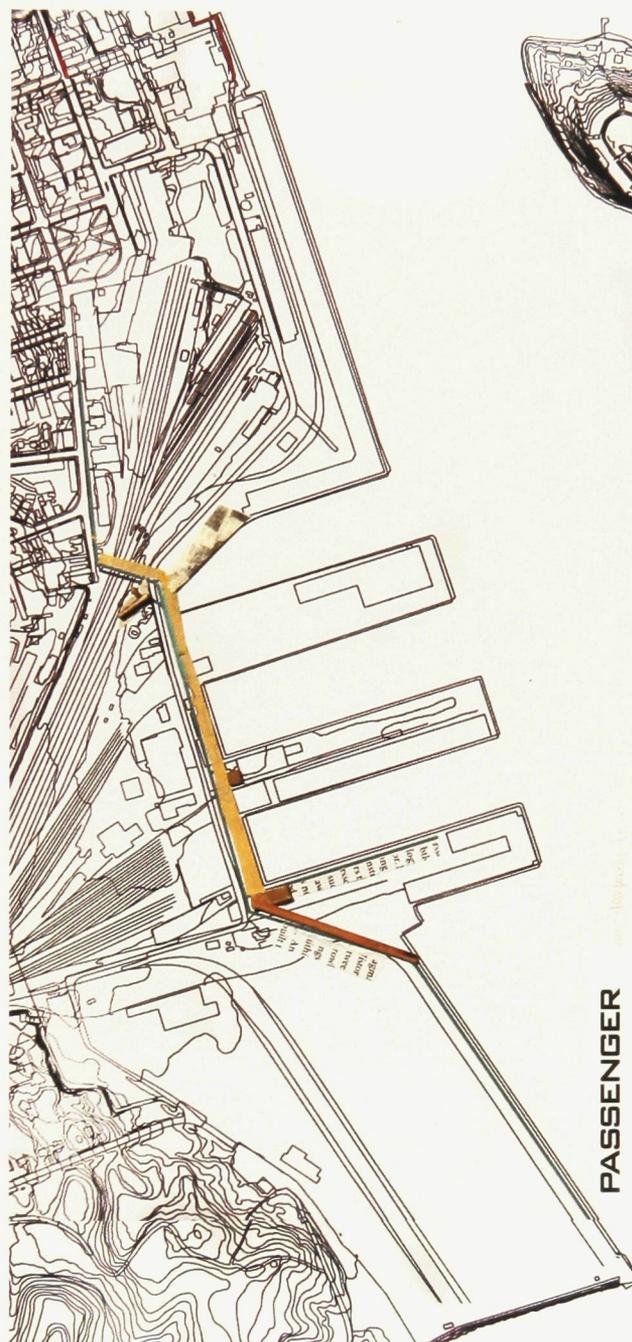


Figure 63- Path taken by the passenger from the sea

⁴⁵ Michael Fagence, "City Waterfront Redevelopment for Leisure, Recreation and Tourism: Some Common Themes". *Recreation as a Catalyst for Urban Waterfront Redevelopment*. (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 1995) 135.

“The "Seawall" has the potential to be a source of pride for Halifax and Nova Scotia. We have an opportunity to build Canada's next waterfront destination, a place where creativity and industry meet. A place for residents and visitors to enjoy year-round.”⁴⁶

It has also been recently announced that the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, a world famous art college, will move various studios into the vacant shed at Pier 22, adjacent to Pier 21, as a grounding point for the development of the new arts and cultural district. The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design has been credited with the redevelopment of the downtown area with its studios located in the historical buildings on Granville Street. With a vision for the seawall development, the area will continue to develop in order to accommodate more cruise ships and tourists who will visit the area in the coming years.

⁴⁶ Port of Halifax website – halifaxport.ca

Proposal 3:

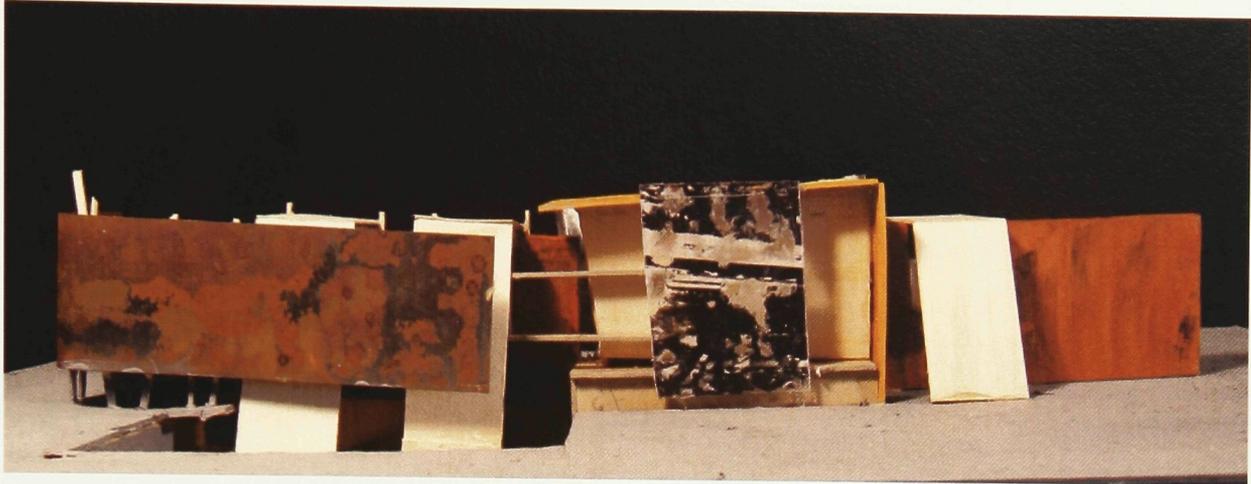


Figure 64 - Elevation of building showing metal screen and elevated walkway.

Duration allows for a development of a suspended action or emotion of disbelief. Further, *duration* creates an extension of time, in which one is aware of the passing of time, with the exaggeration of the moment. As one walks through the container pier, the experience of a surreal extended duration of time is experienced, as two opposing sides reflect two contrasting spaces of time. On one side of the road, lie various industrial buildings which remain permanent in the landscape, opposite the other side which is a changing pier that is constantly being reconfigured with the movement of cargo and shipping containers. The third instillation on the site addresses this condition of changing space and time through a series of video galleries and editing studios, which will allow for the viewing of works in either an intimate or collective setting. As the intervention addresses issues of duration and integration, the building is represented in the landscape as a thin structure that is positioned between the existing rail yard on a long and narrow residual parcel of land, currently not used by the site's industrial functions.

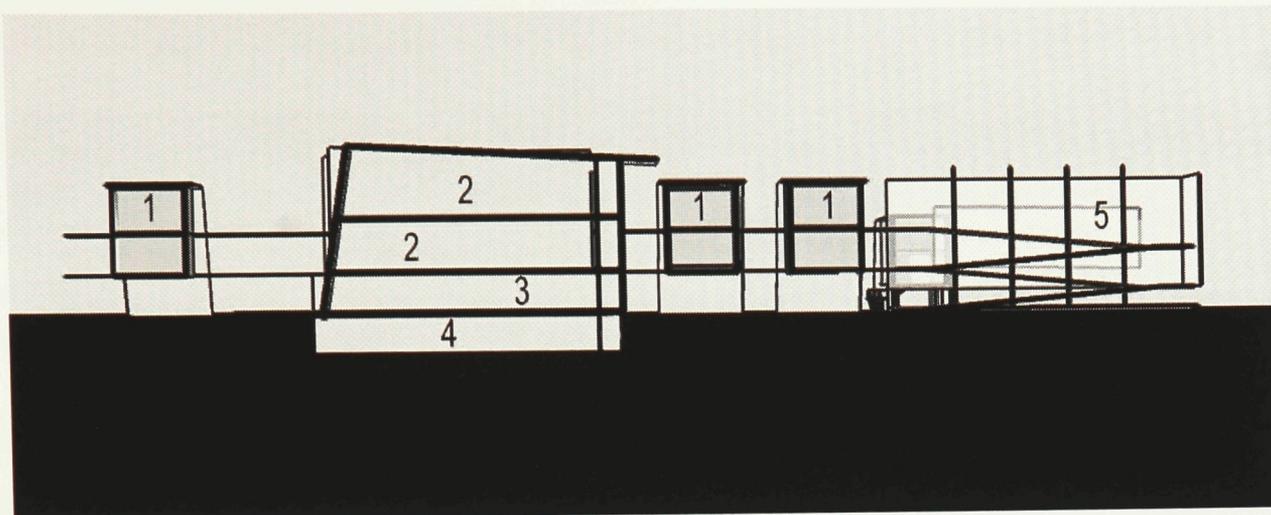


Figure 65 – Section through building showing ramp and series of facilities.

1. Editing suite/ Video galleries
2. Sound Stage
3. Costume
4. Storage for archives
5. Ramp for circulation

The building in the landscape appears as a thin and long structure with various “pods” that house the different aspects of the program. Smaller spaces suggest video galleries and editing suites, where as a larger space will house various programmatic functions which will support the cinematic activities on the site. This will include two large sound stages and spaces which will support a production (areas for costumes and storage) designed to reflect a more permanent presence on the site. To accommodate the large presence of cars that travel through the site, the structure will also double as a drive-in theatre for the city’s residents and visitors.

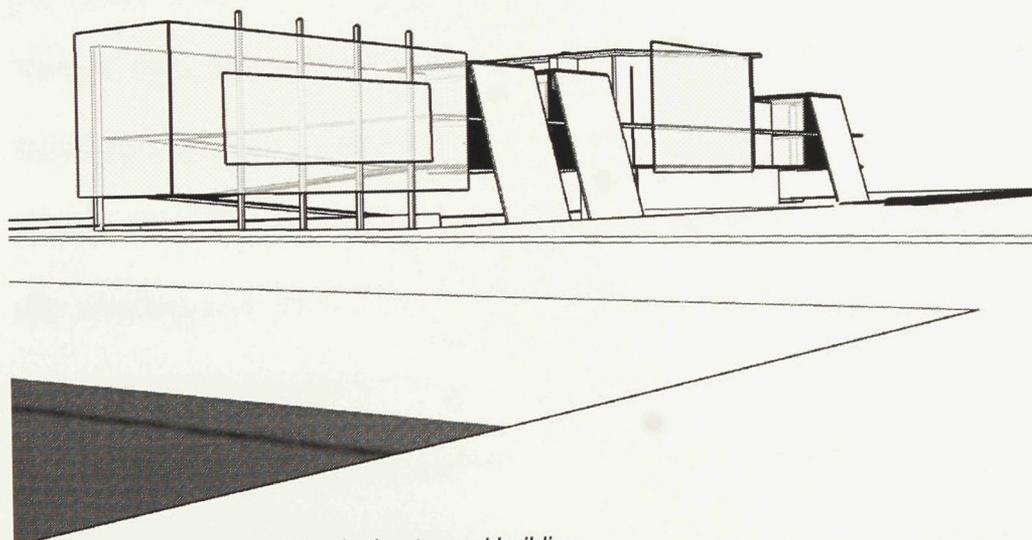


Figure 66 – View of drive-in theatre and building.

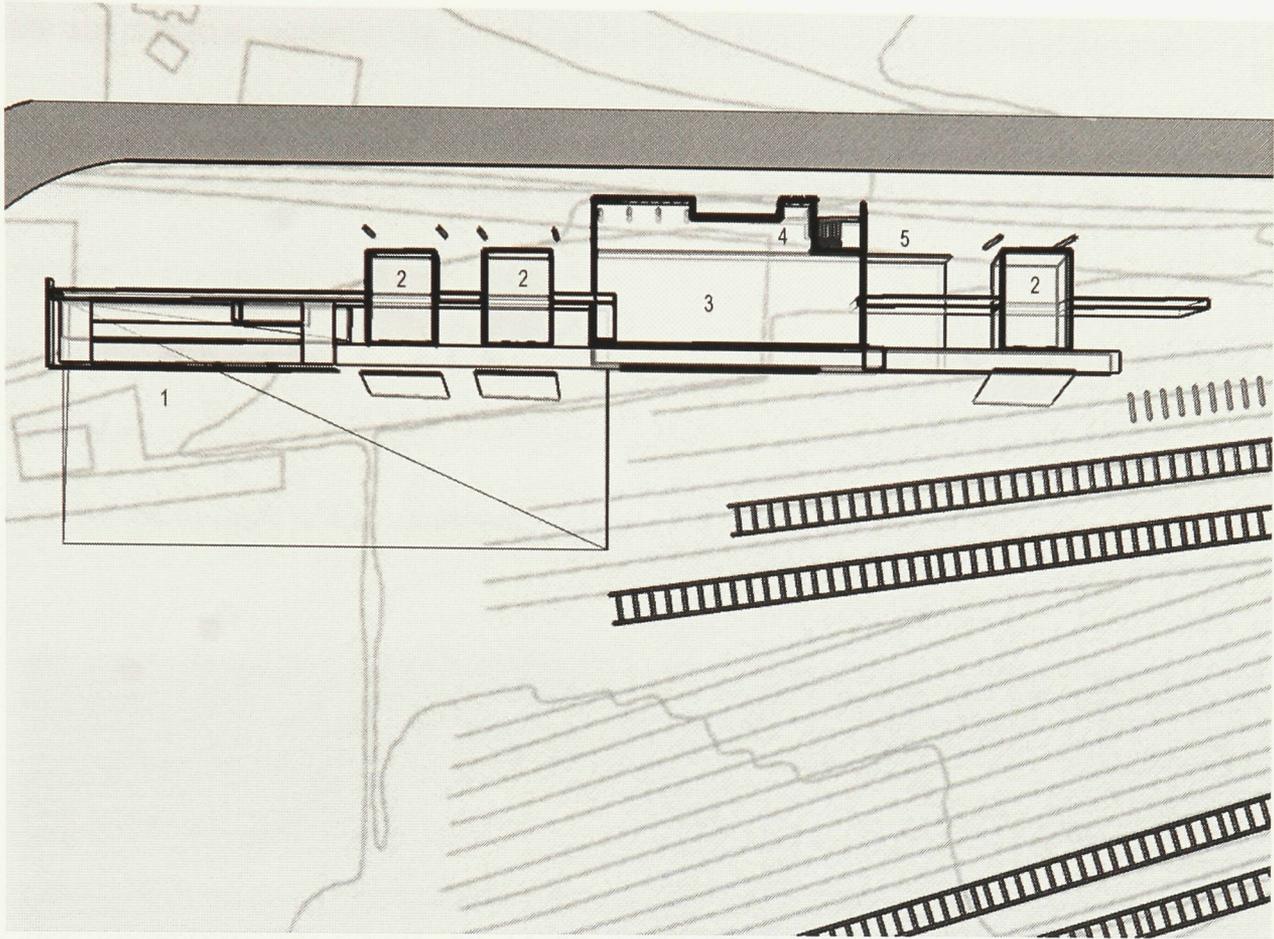


Figure 67 – Site plan of building and context

1. Drive-in theatre and outdoor seating
2. Editing suite/ Video galleries
3. Sound stage
4. Entrance foyer
5. Loading dock

As inhabitants travel up a gradual ramp, they pass between the movie screen and a perforated metal exterior screen which enhances the “duration” of the journey, as well as offering “framed” views of the surrounding site. From this ramp, the video screening rooms and editing suites are accessed, in addition to offering views to the surrounding site. The sound stages are accessed from the existing road adjacent to the building, and accommodates for large deliveries with a loading dock and a freight elevator which connects the two stages. Below the sound stages are two levels designated for costume and storage.

The program of video galleries was chosen as a method of addressing the role of cinema in the recreation of certain narratives. Through choosing the cinematic condition of *duration*, the

site was chosen as a point on the overall waterfront, which strongly represented a sense of panning and elapsed time, similar to a slow Tarkovsky pan, which slowly revealed the overall parts of the site and the city beyond. Through the experience of the circulation, as well as the linear structure of the building, the potential exists in the structure for the addition of multiple video galleries and soundstages as the demand grows for the facilities. Therefore, the structure is able to continue to expand and follow the surrounding tracks, thus asserting the potential for an exaggerated duration of the experience.

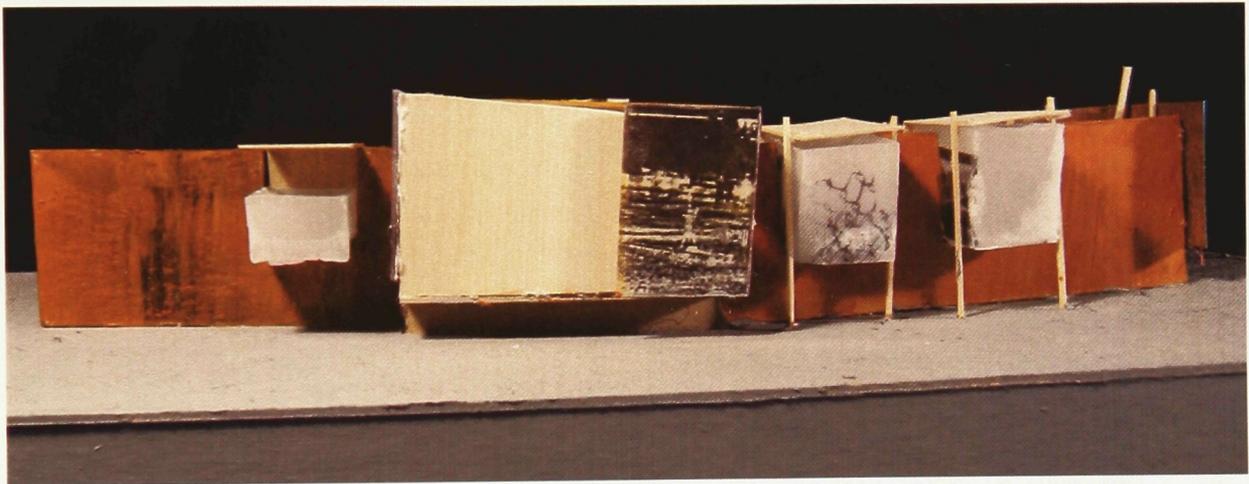


Figure 68 – *Elevation of building showing main soundstages and editing suites.*



Figure 69 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.



Figure 70 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.



Figure 71 – Detail of Figure 6, pinhole camera image.

Conclusion: Architecture as Backdrop for Narrative

Along with the three cinematic techniques, *framing, duration (the pan) and montage*, all which can be applied to the expression of a narrative within an artifact or a site (micro or macro), programs were created which would address three specific conditions for three characters; thereby creating a space for multiple narratives to occur. Vernacular forms of the site were explored through old suitcases, worn railroad ties, and cigar boxes as a means to engage the textured site condition. As this process has been centred on the concepts of narrative and film, as a sequence of events across a site, the final step in the process was explored through the making of a graphic storyboard.

Constructing a film narrative involves the making of a diagram of the different places which structures its development and the paths the characters follow within and between these places. Through the following narrative, the architect undertakes the role as the 'narrative writer', the proposed characters revealed themselves through the various spaces which had been integrated in each proposal to allow for interaction. The proposed architecture of the site was not intended to be grand, but rather a series of discreet events which are held together by cinema and narrative. The path therefore was a starting point for the investigations, and once removed, each intervention is able to stand alone in the site as proposals which enable the reanimation of misused space. The proposal is not intended to be a final scheme, but rather an addition to the existing condition which would facilitate future development and usage across the site.

The site is explored and represented through a sequence of images and events which investigates the role of memory and narrative in a cinematic condition and its application to the development of an architecture that provides the backdrop for the framing of the scene. The panels refocused the intent of this thesis, to develop an architecture that detects, reveals and links

fragments of the spatial narratives existing on the site, and also to provide a base for the production of new ones.

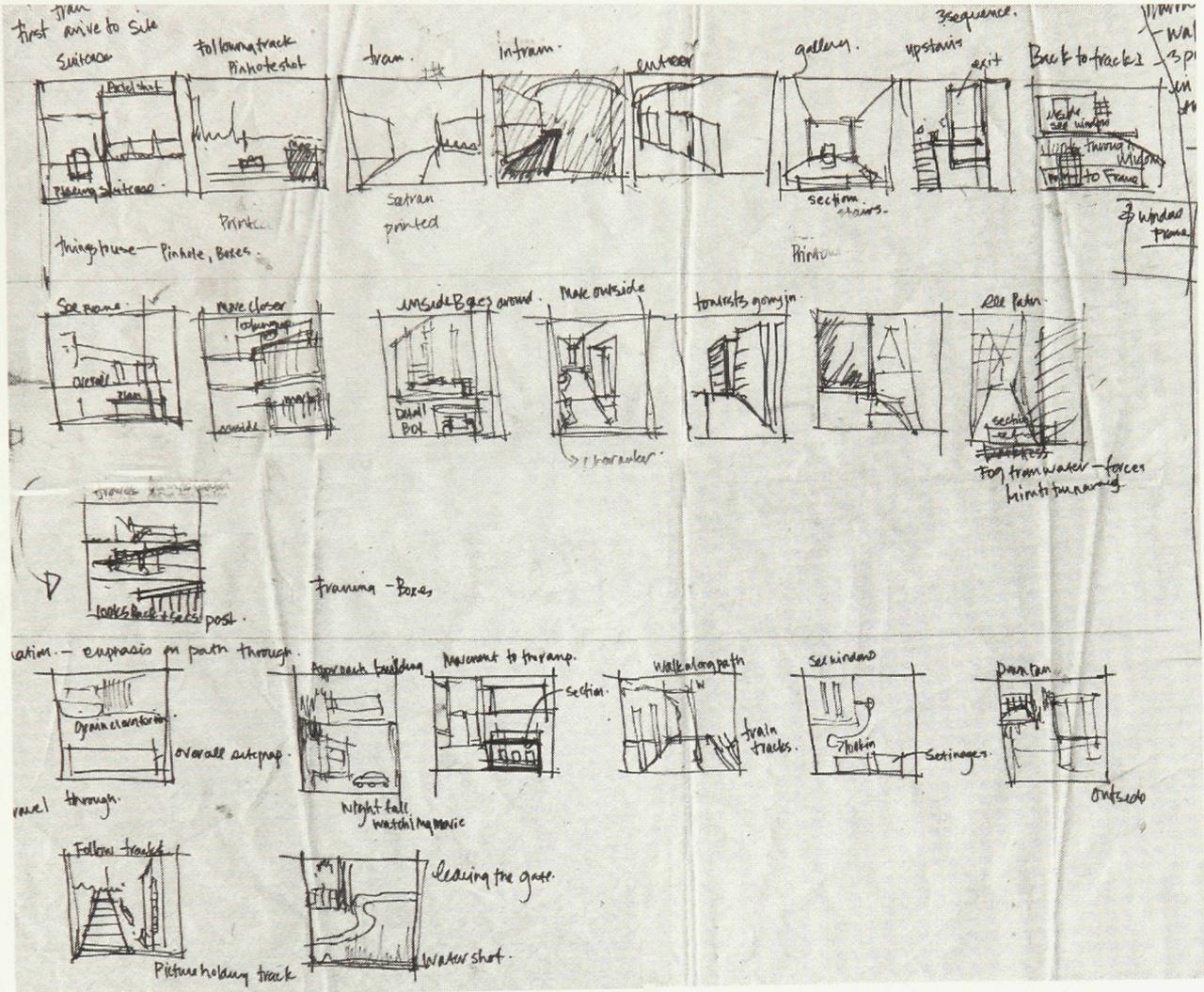


Figure 72 – Sketch of storyboard concept depicting scenes from a walkthrough of the site.



Figure 74 - Approach the site and the "Antithesis Museum".



Figure 75- The "Antithesis Museum" in the landscape.



Figure 76 - First encounter with the artifact box and the interior of the Antithesis Museum.

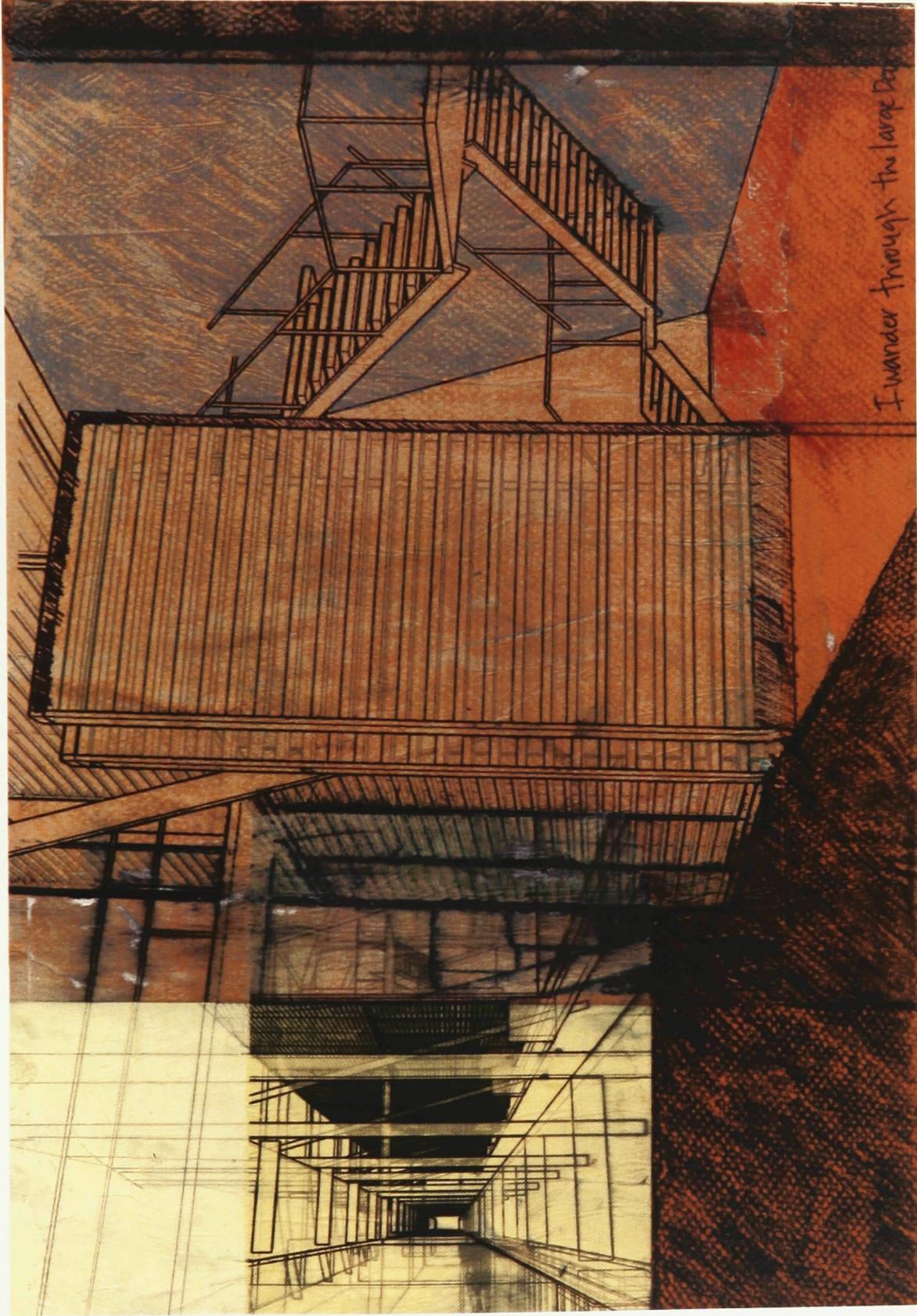


Figure 77 – Moving from the elevated walkway into the permanent structure.

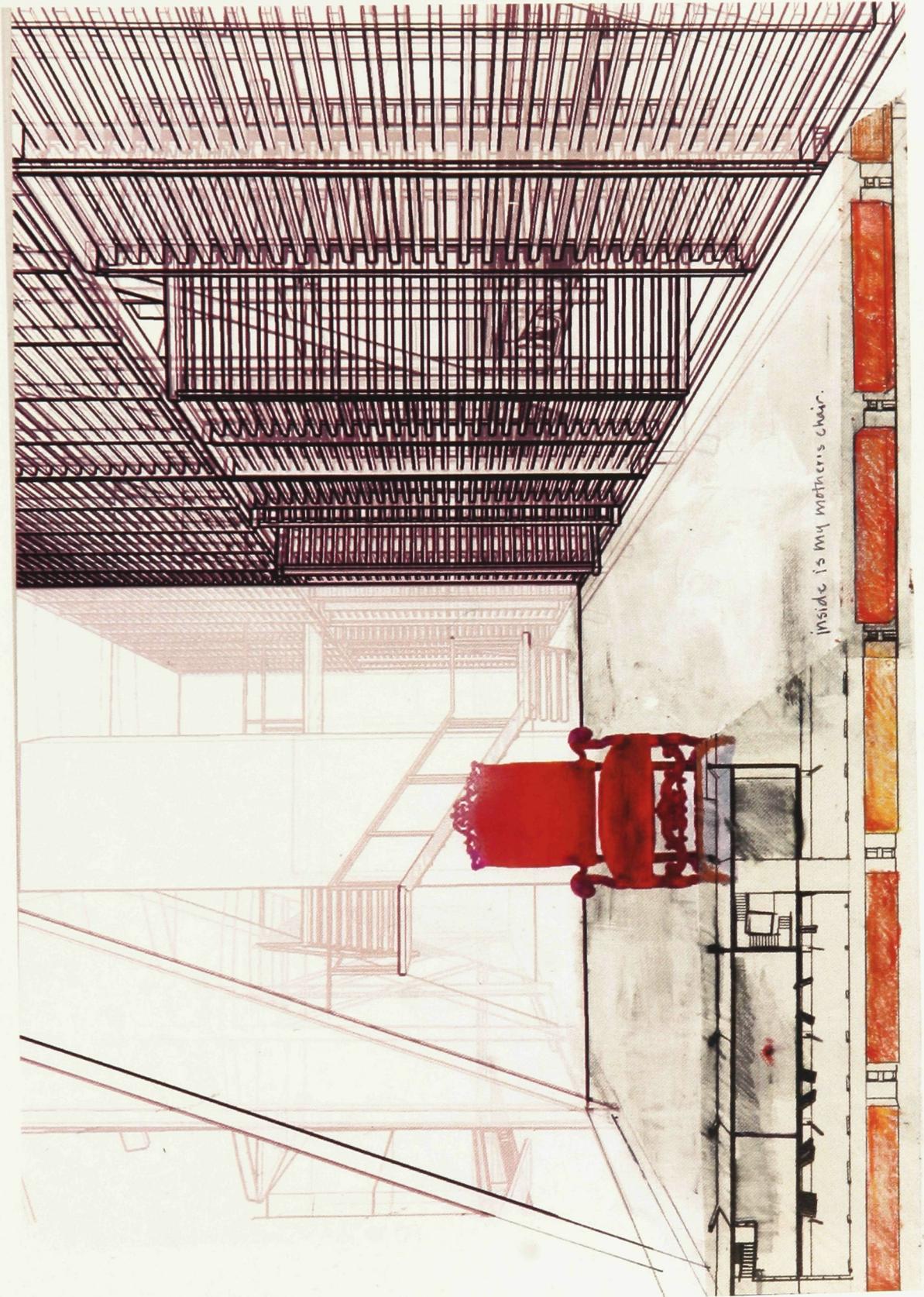


Figure 78 – The red velvet chair, interior of the permanent structure.



Figure 79 – Ascending up the main stairs to the elevated walkway and stacked train cars.

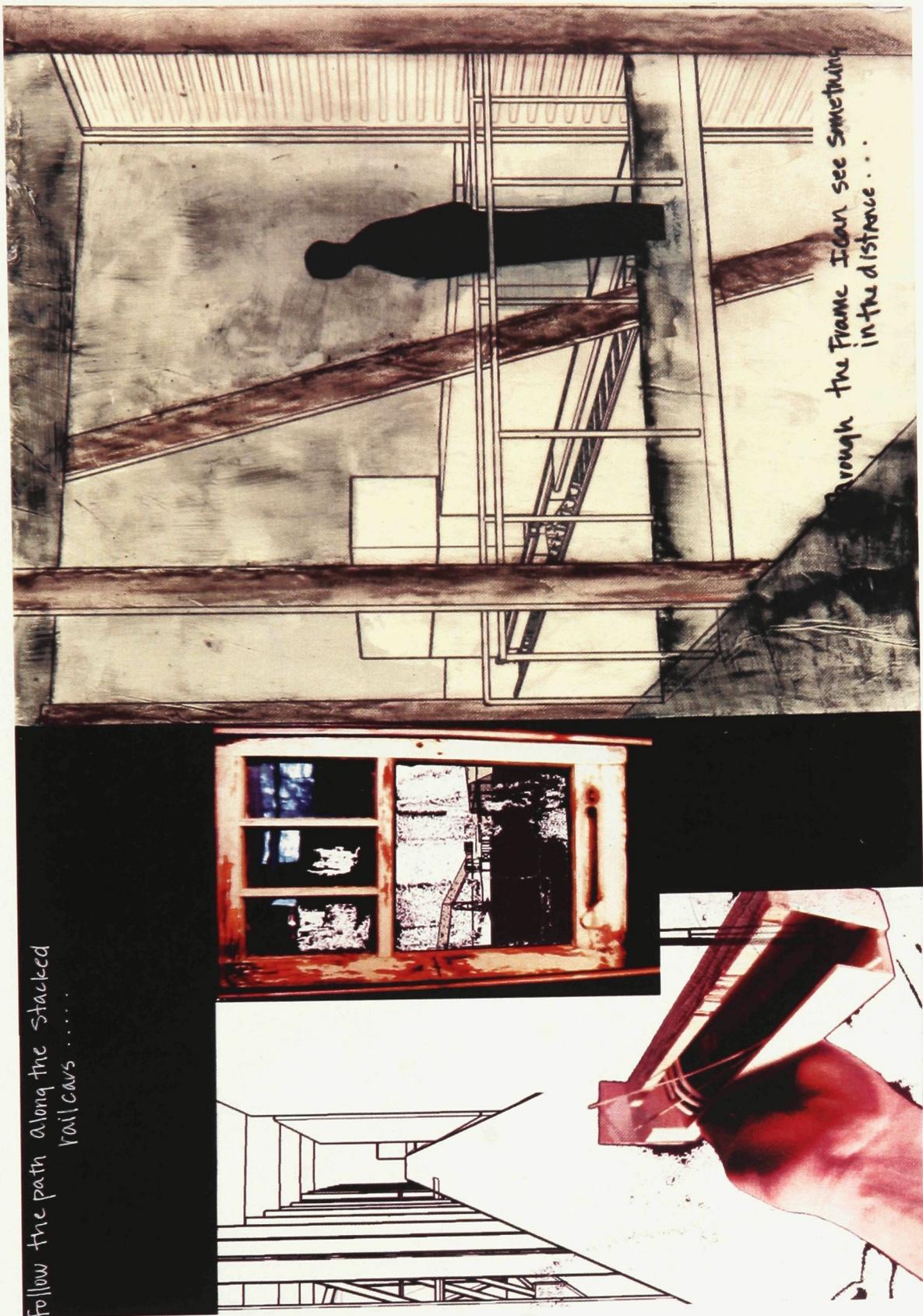


Figure 80 – View from the elevated path, to the next landmark on the waterfront.

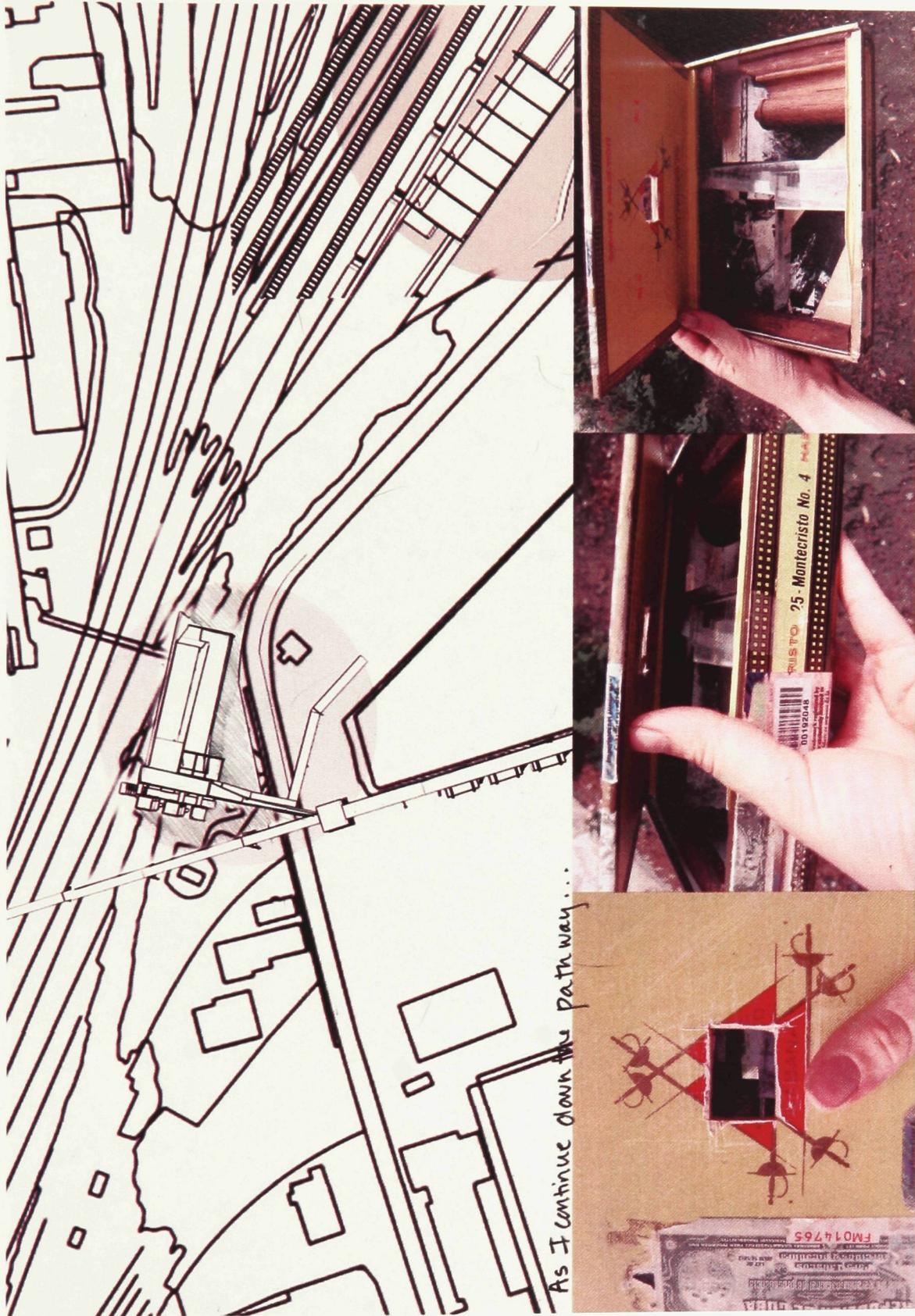


Figure 81 – Approach to “Framing”, using the artifact box as a guide.

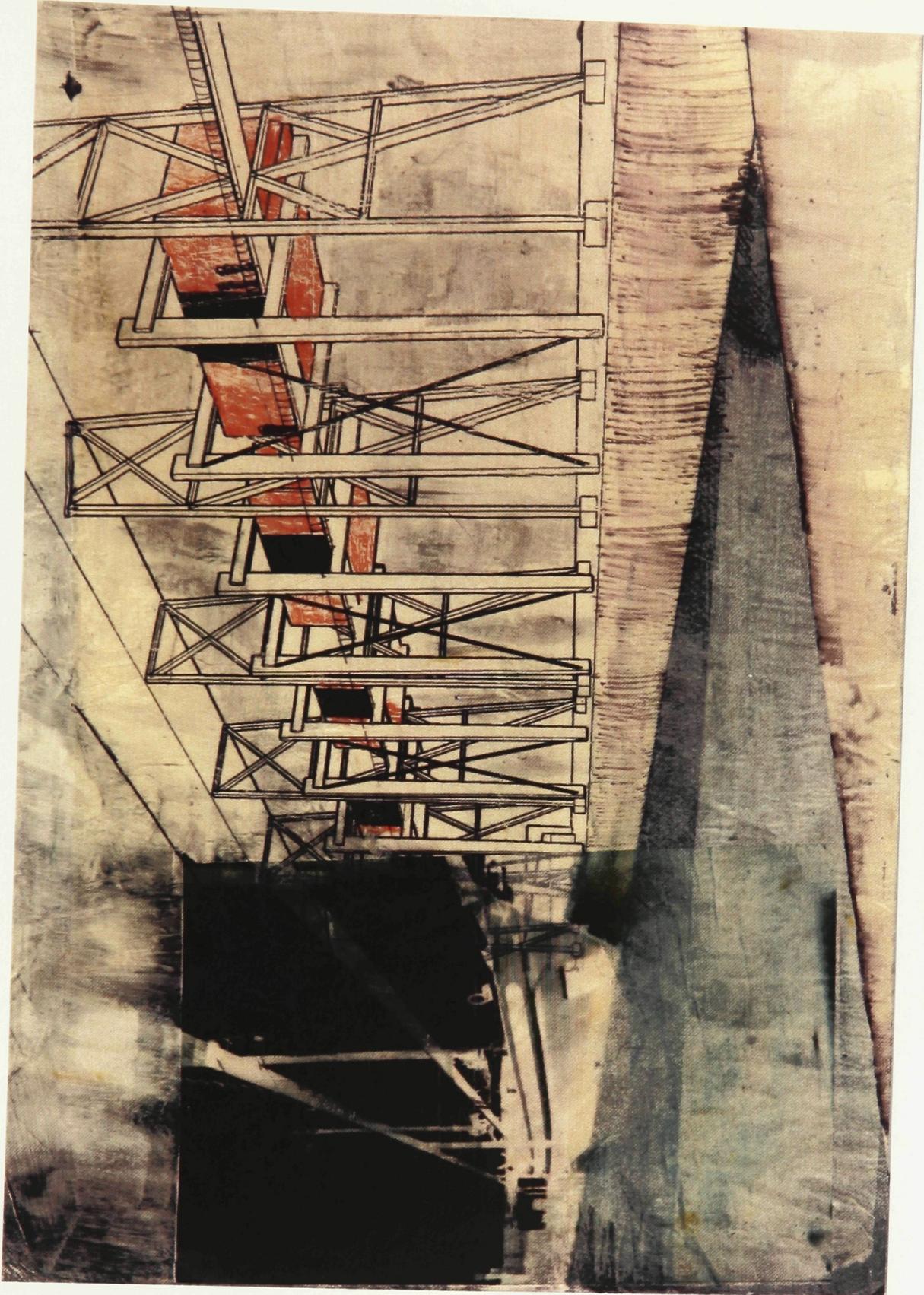


Figure 82 – View of the elevated walkway at the pier.

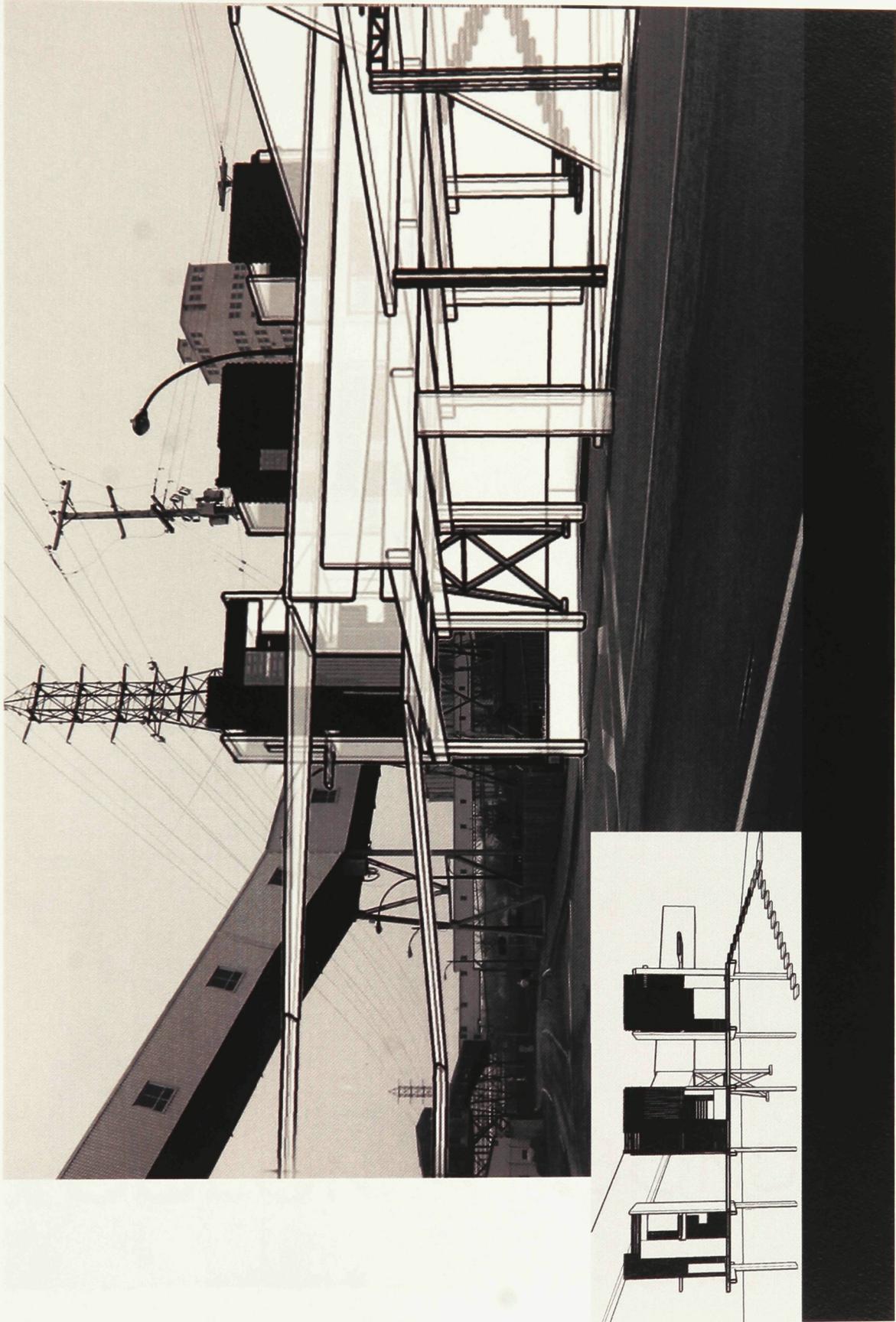


Figure 83 – Stacked sleeping berths and the elevated walkway.

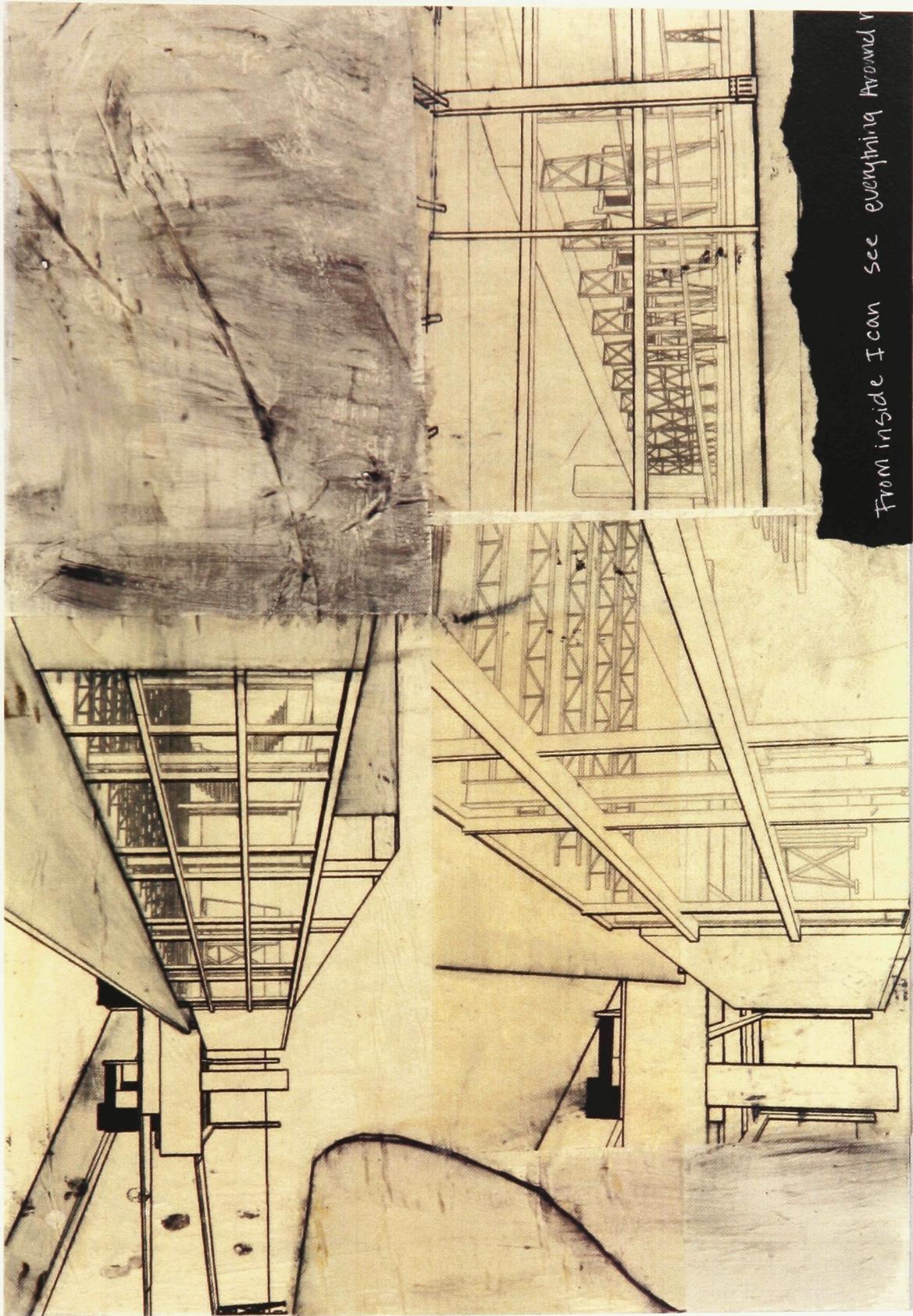
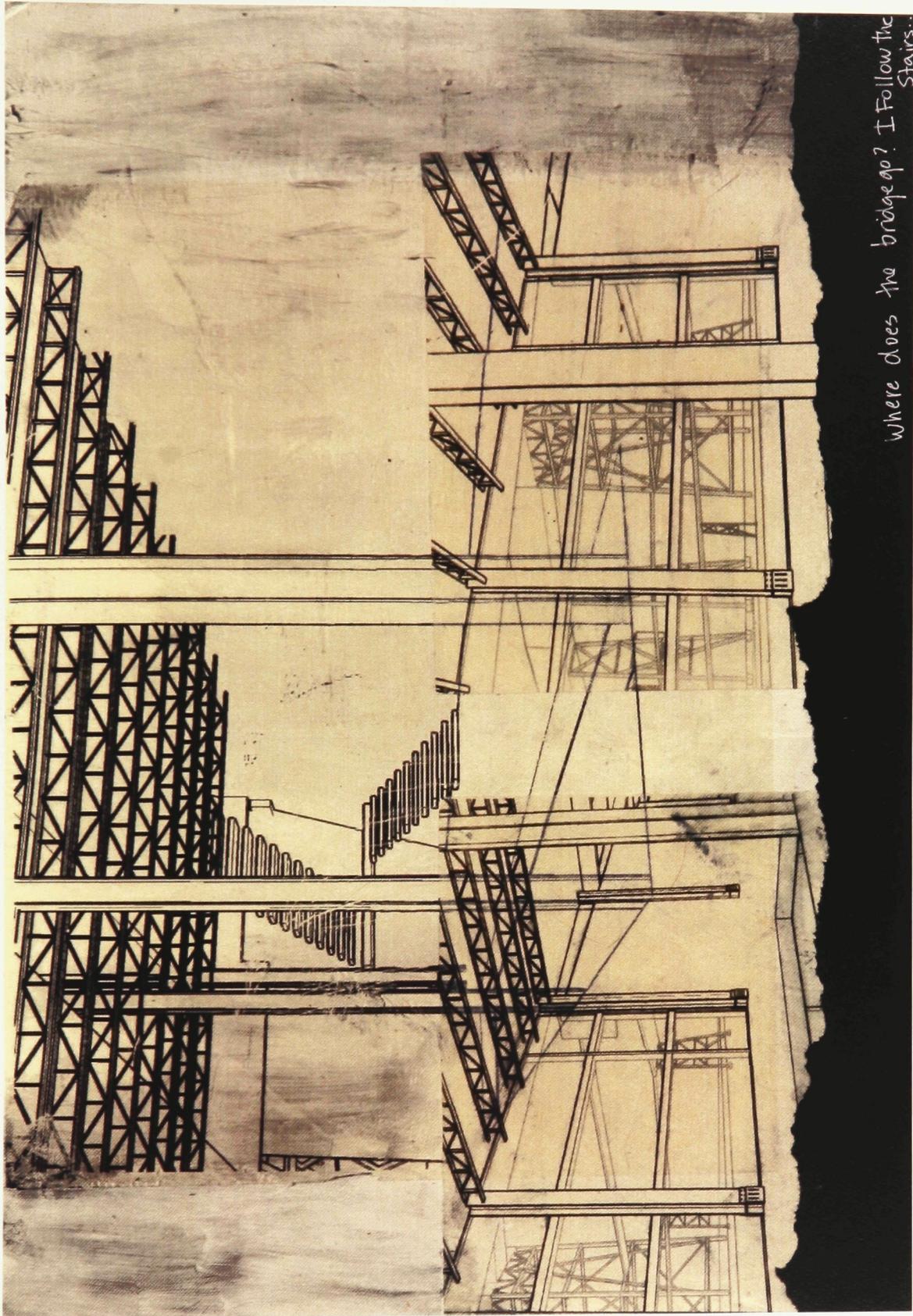


Figure 84 – Approach to the main space and the sailor's mission.



Where does the bridge go? I Follow the Stairs..

Figure 85 – Interior of the main space, view of the surrounding waterfront.



Figure 86 – View of the stacked sleeping berths from the elevated walkway.

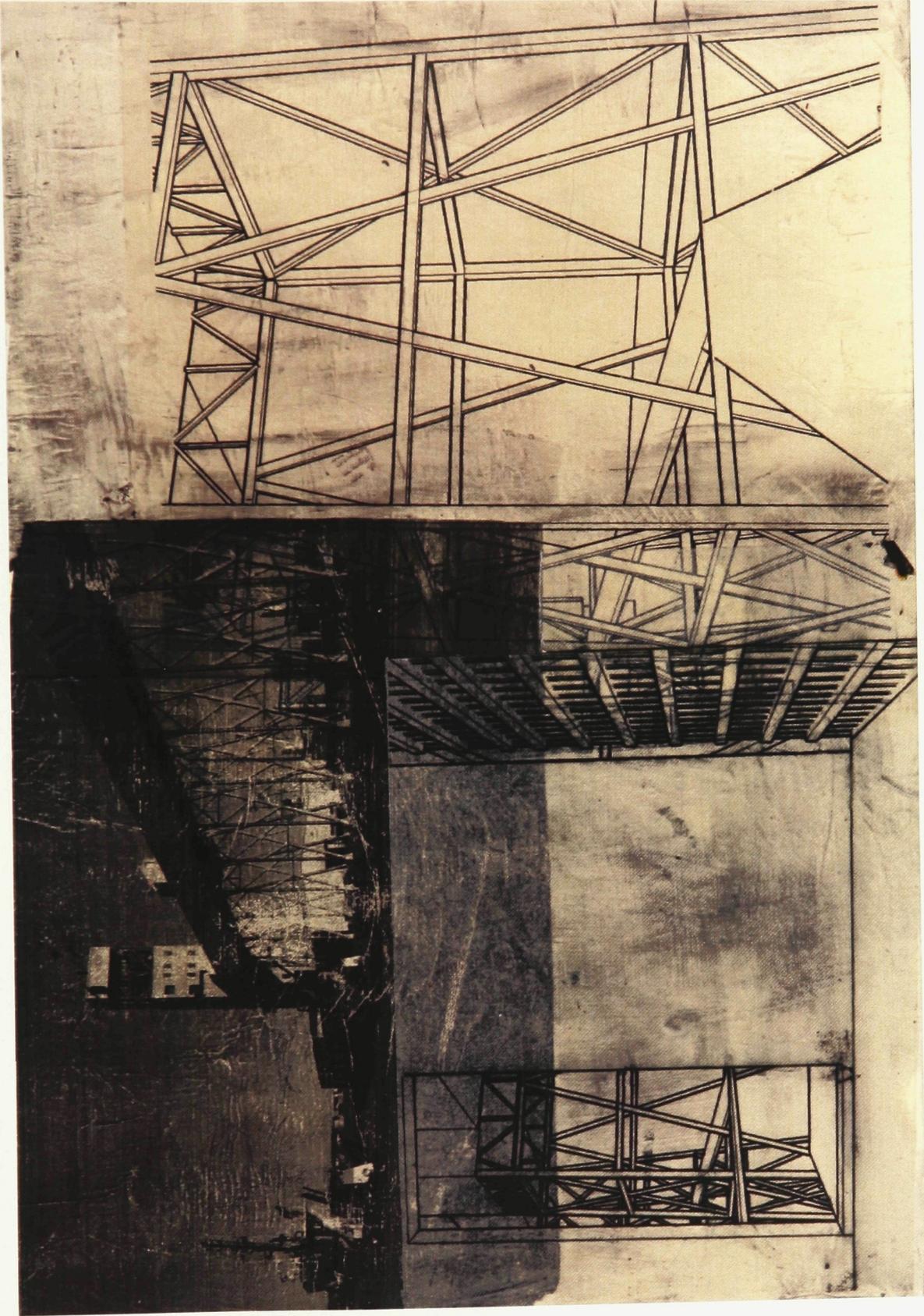
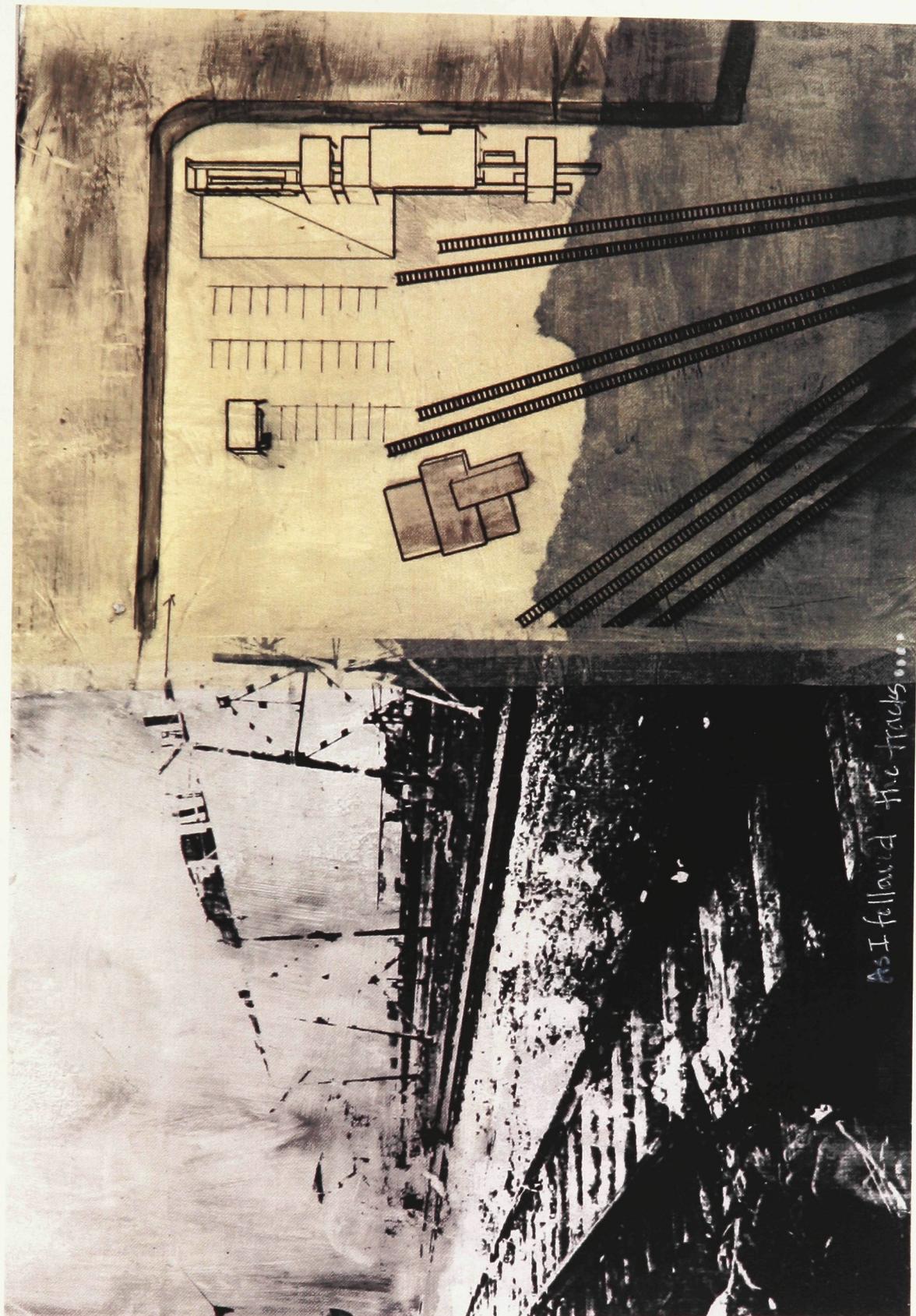


Figure 87 – Framed views of the surrounding waterfront.



Figure 88 - Offices for the Halifax Waterfront Corporation.



As I followed the tracks...
Figure 89 – Traveling along the abandoned tracks, to find the next installation.

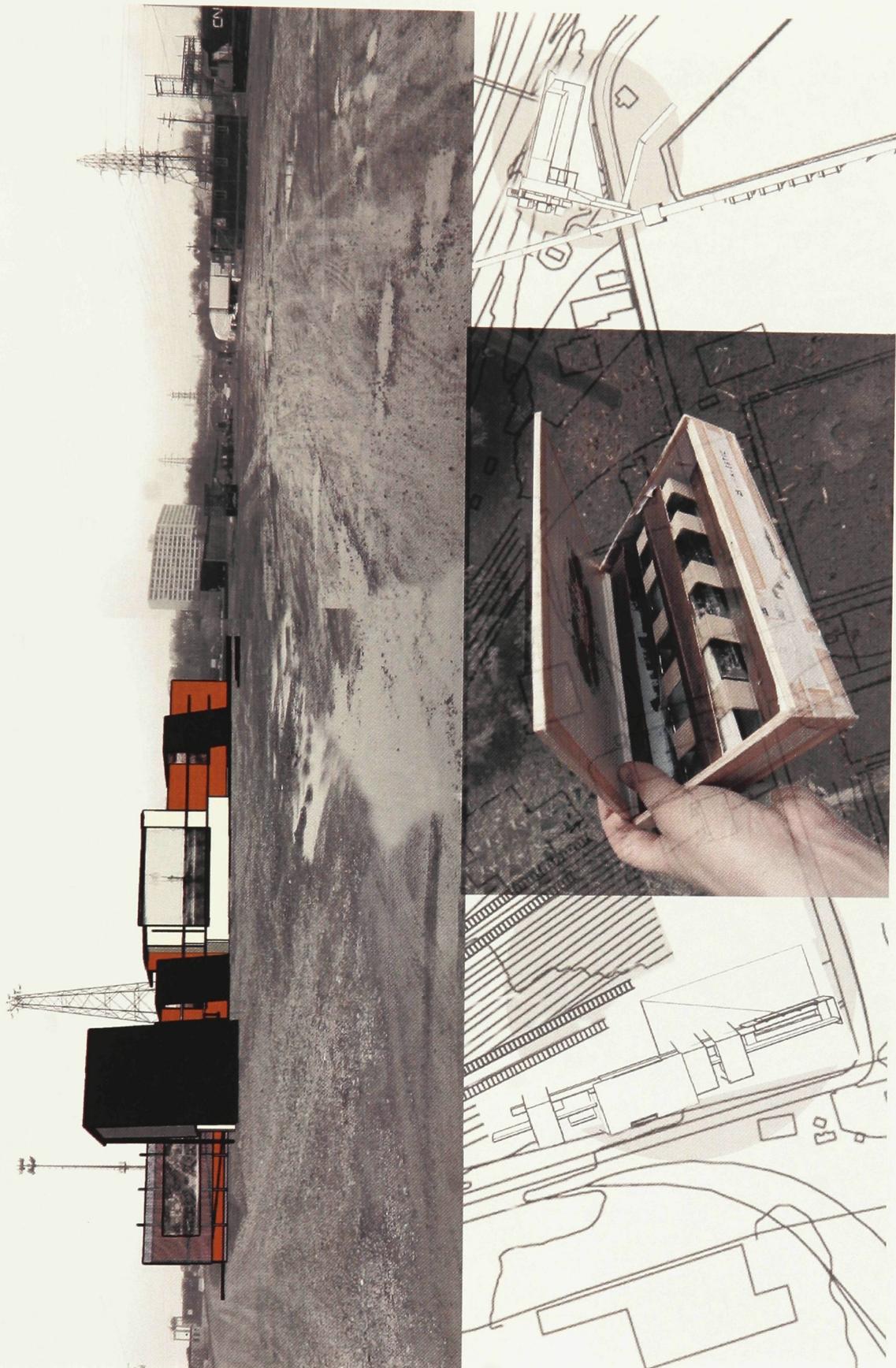


Figure 90 - Approach to "Duration Video Galleries".



its nighttime now the cars begin to line up...

Figure 91 – Nighttime falls and the cars arrive at the drive-in.



Figure 92 – Movement up the main ramp to the video galleries and editing suites.



Figure 93 – Views into the soundstages.



When the tracks a strange object appears.

Figure 94 – A strange, glowing object appears in the landscape...I move closer to see it.



Figure 95 – Leaving the galleries, site is in the distance.



Figure 96- Looking back at the journey. The end.

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Appendix A - Constructing a Pinhole Camera Suitcase

Pinhole photography, through its experimental nature offers the perfect vehicle for investigating contemporary issues and reasserting the photographer as an explorer. Unlike the single lens of a traditional camera which allows the viewer to see the shot before it is taken, the pinhole camera enables the photographer to conceptualize the view, and allows for one to experiment and explore the various capabilities of the pinhole and the images recorded on the film. The pinhole camera for this thesis was constructed using an old, worn suitcase, which allowed for greater mobility through the ability to process multiple shots.

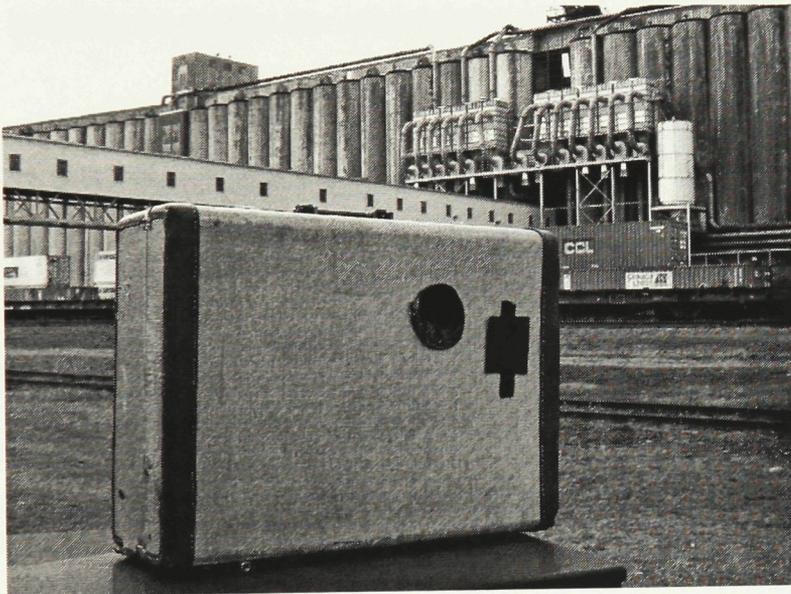


Figure A – *The pinhole camera suitcase.*

Materials:

- 1 empty suitcase
- 1 wooden box, 9 inches x 11 inches, 1 side removed
- 2 black rubber gloves
- 2 inch x 2 inch sheet of brass shim
- 1 small pin
- Emery Paper
- Black tape
- Black Paint

Instructions:

The Pinhole Camera Suitcase is unique in its construction as it allows for multiple shots to be taken while on location, without requiring a darkroom to change the photographic paper. The suitcase is easy to carry and therefore is ideal for traveling. Suitcases with a layered paper construction work well as they are easy to drill into for openings. Using a drill and a circular drill bit (size depending on size of opening needed), drill one hole on each side of the suitcase, which will be used for the gloves, and one smaller hole on the opposite edge on one side which will be used for the pinhole. Attach the two black gloves using any type of sealant, such as a glue gun and further reinforce the edges with black tape. Once complete, cover the interior of the suitcase with a matte black paint, including the smaller box which will fit into the suitcase and serve to hold the paper.

To make the pinhole, a small hole must be carefully made in the sheet of brass shim. Working on a hard and flat surface, push the needle tip into the brass shim and rotate it around the needle until a hole is made. Once the hole has been made, carefully remove the needle and gently rub the sheet of emery paper back and forth to remove the small bump on the brass shim. Examine the hole for debris and remove any by carefully inserting the needle into the pinhole, as the pinhole is the frame which will record the images.

Once the paint is dry, drill a smaller hole into one face of the wooden box and glue it into the suitcase. Attach the brass shim to the front of the suitcase with the black tape and insure that all edges are covered. A small piece of black tape can be used to cover the pinhole until it is time to expose the paper to light. In the darkroom, place an 8x 10 sheet of photographic paper inside the camera and expose the suitcase to the light, without removing the tape covering from the pinhole,

to ensure that there are no light leaks. In the case that the suitcase leaks light, seal the surrounding interior edges with black tape and black cardboard.

Once light tight, the camera can be used for multiple shots. Store the sheets of paper in a black bag at the back of the suitcase, and using black tape; attach one sheet to the interior of the wooden box prior to exposure. Once exposed, place the sheet back in the black bag, preferably in a manner so as not to confuse exposed papers with unexposed papers, and continue with photographing. Exposure times will vary on conditions, so it is best to try multiple exposures before setting out on one's travels.