

DECONSTRUCTING THE FOURTH WALL

Directions for an Urban Mise-en-scène

by

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ABSTRACT

In the ever-expanding context of the digital age, theatre is the one remaining art form incapable of reproduction or possession. The survival of performance can be attributed to its ability to create spaces and conditions that contain the illusion and magic of spectacle. However, by deconstructing the fourth wall, this space can be viewed as an extension of, rather than a container for performance.

This thesis will analyze the theatrical potential of public spaces within an urban context, informed and enhanced by the notion of performance in architecture as an autonomous event. These moments of civic theatricality are derived from the reciprocal relationship of theory and theatre as historical precedents. They are facilitated by the implementation of architectural conditions and intervention, following a framework that traces a narrative thread throughout the city.

As a city whose character has been defined by its roles and attributes as a National Capital, Ottawa inevitably struggles with establishing its own identity. Viewed through the lens of this thesis however, Ottawa possesses a number of under-utilized spaces with theatrical potential, providing an opportunity for performances while serving as a catalyst for community revitalization, and fostering a sense of identity within the urban fabric.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To Pierre Brault, for which the narrative of this thesis would cease to exist had it not been for your incredibly talented work and contribution to the local performing arts community of Ottawa, I offer profound thanks.

Finally, I owe my deepest gratitude to my family, to whom this thesis is dedicated. Mom, Dad, and Brock, thank you for your constant source of unconditional love, laughter and support along the way. Special thanks to my Mom, my rock, to whom I owe my early exposure to the wonderful world of theatre and performance, and to whom I can attribute my lifelong association with and appreciation for the arts.

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PREFACE

The direction of this thesis was heavily influenced by the work of Canadian playwright, Pierre Brault. His one-man play, *Blood on the Moon*, provided the inspiration behind the final site selection for this thesis project, which is both theatrically and historically significant to the City of Ottawa.

Blood on the Moon, originally written and performed by Pierre Brault in 1999, is based on historical events dating from April 7, 1868 to February 11, 1869. It follows the trial of James Patrick Whelan, the man who was convicted and hanged for the assassination of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. This story has specific relevance as both the only federal political assassination and final public hanging in Canadian history.

On the evening of April 7, 1868, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, former Father of Confederation, was shot and killed outside of his boarding house on Sparks Street, following a debate held at the House of Commons on Parliament Hill; James Patrick Whelan was in attendance. Less than a day later, Whelan had already been selected as the principle suspect in McGee's murder investigation based on his Fenian roots and political sympathies. He was put on trial at the Carleton County Courthouse, presently known as Arts Court, immediately adjacent to the Carleton County Gaol, where he was incarcerated. Though the evidence against Whelan was strictly circumstantial, it proved

to be fatal, and on the morning of February 11, 1869, he was publicly hanged in the presence of thousands of spectators amassed around the jailhouse.

Deconstructing the Fourth Wall: Directions for an Urban Mise-en-scène is intended to bring awareness to what once existed, through the use of architectural, theatrical, and historical devices. It traces the narrative thread of James Patrick Whelan, starting from the beginning of his journey at Parliament Hill and culminating at the gallows of the Carleton County Gaol, (presently occupied by the Ottawa International Youth Hostel). As an alternative means of discovering the city, this journey embraces Ottawa's rich history, and promotes an appreciation for the performing arts.

INTRODUCTION

The term Ottawa has evolved into a customary shorthand reference for the government of Canada, falsely implying that the city solely operates as a coherent federal capital.¹ Given its government association and number of residents, Ottawa is best perceived as both a federal capital and a populous civic region. The city faces a number of distinct challenges in each of these roles, perhaps most notably its lack of a cohesive vision at the urban scale. As Ottawa aims to embody and promote a sense of national identity and politically defined community, it fails to thrive and grow as a metropolitan area, and subsequently fails to establish its own identity independent from its dominant government-oriented stigma.

With a growing population of 1.33 million as of 2015, Ottawa-Gatineau is Canada's sixth largest metropolitan area, Ottawa accounting for more than two-thirds of this combined total.² The capital's rising population growth rate provides an opportunity to stray from the default umbrella of nationalism and redefine its identity as a booming metropolitan city.

According to Gilles Paquet, Professor Emeritus and Senior Research Fellow at the Centre on Governance, University of Ottawa, “a thriving and inspiring capital has to be a smart community” — one that fosters social learning and nurtures civic innovation.³ A smart community is a “geopolitical entity”

that not only possesses “assets, skills, and capabilities, but also a soul” and a collective capacity to transform.⁴ In order to generate social learning, a community must make the best use of its resources.

If the National Capital Region were to implement this framework, there are three critical roles necessary in yielding success.

Civic Architects: Required to work at improving “learning” relationships, networks, and regimes.

Civic Engineers: Required to provide a range of interventions that stimulate and support collaboration.

Civic Entrepreneurs: Required to interpret, promote, and define the identity of the community.

Instead of serving as a catalyst for community revitalization, the National Capital Commission’s efforts towards this transition have been anemic, presenting an adverse effect. Paquet refers to this condition as a “lack of *affectio societatis*: the will to associate [and] the engagement to commit with creativity, imagination, and gumption” necessary for the progress of a region.⁵ The NCC’s “failure to nurture” the vibrancy required for Ottawa to prosper subsequently reinforces the maintenance of the

National Capital Region as a geographical, rather than a living, entity.⁶

This thesis will aim to address the stagnant position which currently exists with Ottawa's vitality, seeking opportunity for creative outlets, theatrical interventions, and social imagination. The intent is to establish and maintain Ottawa's individual identity, making the capital a prime metropolitan destination for both residents and tourists alike. In doing so, initiative must be taken to prevent continuous vacancy of the under-utilized spaces within the city's urban fabric. This approach ultimately proposes reframing the perspective of Ottawa's public realm by interpreting the city as a stage, each space a platform for performance, and the surrounding community as the audience, those who experience and engage with these spaces. Deconstructing the fourth wall between these two conditions will trigger an incentive for revitalization.

Ottawa possesses a number of spaces which have the potential to facilitate performance, but currently lack a strong connection to or for the local community. The few that exist are crippled by a lack of visual presence, otherwise found in other cities, or lack the physical definition and appeal for performers and audience alike. This is largely due to the impenetrable dominance of national and political monuments and institutions, and a negligence to celebrate local performing arts within an accessible civic realm.

In the context of this thesis, a performance space is defined as an environment that fosters the exploration and engagement with various forms of creativity, interpretations, ideas, and boundaries. A space where the viewed can simultaneously create and break the illusion of spectacle for the viewer, depending on a variety of theatrical and architectural conditions. The nature of performance can range from a number of active arts, with an overall intent of 'action' to be observed and experienced by an audience.

A number of sites, linked along a narrative path, have been selected for this thesis project. While their original and current forms were not designed nor intended to showcase performance, they nonetheless have the potential to instill a sense of urban engagement, while augmenting their recognizable and important locations within the city. These sites, adopted as new venues, allow for augmented public use and access in the celebration of the performing arts, with the intent to promote community ownership and urban identity. Breaking the fourth wall between performance and audience will encourage a design approach based on developing connections between the urban fabric and the surrounding community. By deconstructing the stately barriers between Ottawa and its inhabitants, the viewer-viewed relationship will exist within a shared realm of transparency and permeability.

EVOLUTION OF PERFORMANCE⁷

2000 B.C.

Egypt

- earliest record of a theatrical performance
- pageant-like elaborate ceremonies carved on stone tablets

300 B.C.

Rome

- origin of Roman theatre, derived from Greek theatre
- elaborately decorated temporary structures, which gradually extended into a circular arena surrounded by towering tiers of seats

600 B.C.

Greece

- origin of Greek theatre
- worship of Dionysus, god of wine & fertility
- theatre located at the culmination of the spectator's journey through the city
- performances are held in open hillsides surrounding a circular area, the *orchestra*
- the city of Athens is the backdrop & its daily activity is the surrounding context in which the performance is set (architecture contains the spectators & frames the city setting)
- performance is integrated within the urban fabric
- performer & spectator maintain equal importance (through identical entry, lighting, attention to action & reaction)

100 B.C.

Rome

- first permanent structure is built, the *amphitheatre*, to house spectacles that amuse the citizens
- rise of the Roman Empire, decay of the cultural life
- Roman theatre deteriorates into sensual interpretive dances (*pantomimes*), vulgar farces (*mimes*), chariot races, & colossal gladiatorial battles

400 - 1100

- rebirth of theatre through the Christian church
- elaborate productions moved outdoors to accommodate a growing audience
- peasant social life centred around the marketplace
- a series of temporary acting stages (*mansions*) are used for performances, depicting biblical localities
- travelling medieval trade unions (*guilds*) compete to stage the most elaborate production
- spectators attend the sequence, or *cycle*, of plays

1400

Asia

- theatre performed in a highly traditional manner of historic & religious subject matter
- Nō theatre is the oldest form of drama to be preserved in its exact form whereby words, dance & music are rhythmically coordinated, creating beauty of motion & speech
- short & simple plots, intricate language
- gorgeous costumes complemented by vibrant masks or elaborate makeup & in the grotesque & expressive pantomime
- theatre is like a temple
- square stage extends into the audience, supported by four wooden pillars

1550

England

- climax of the dramatic renaissance
- theatre is the expression of the soul of a nation
- theatre becomes a vital force in the lives of the people
- William Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist of the Elizabethan age & arguably of all time
- Audience encouraged to actively engage with the performance by shouting in approval or hissing with distaste, favouring colour, sound & pageantry
- first public theatre is built, the Elizabethan Playhouse, modeled after medieval inn courtyards & *animal pits*
- globe “wooden O” theatre, a circular building open to the sky
- spectators stand in the area around the stage, the *pit*, or sit in the surrounding tiered galleries
- unlocalized platform stage, using little scenery to indicate locale
- performances occur in the afternoon, requiring daylight

1700

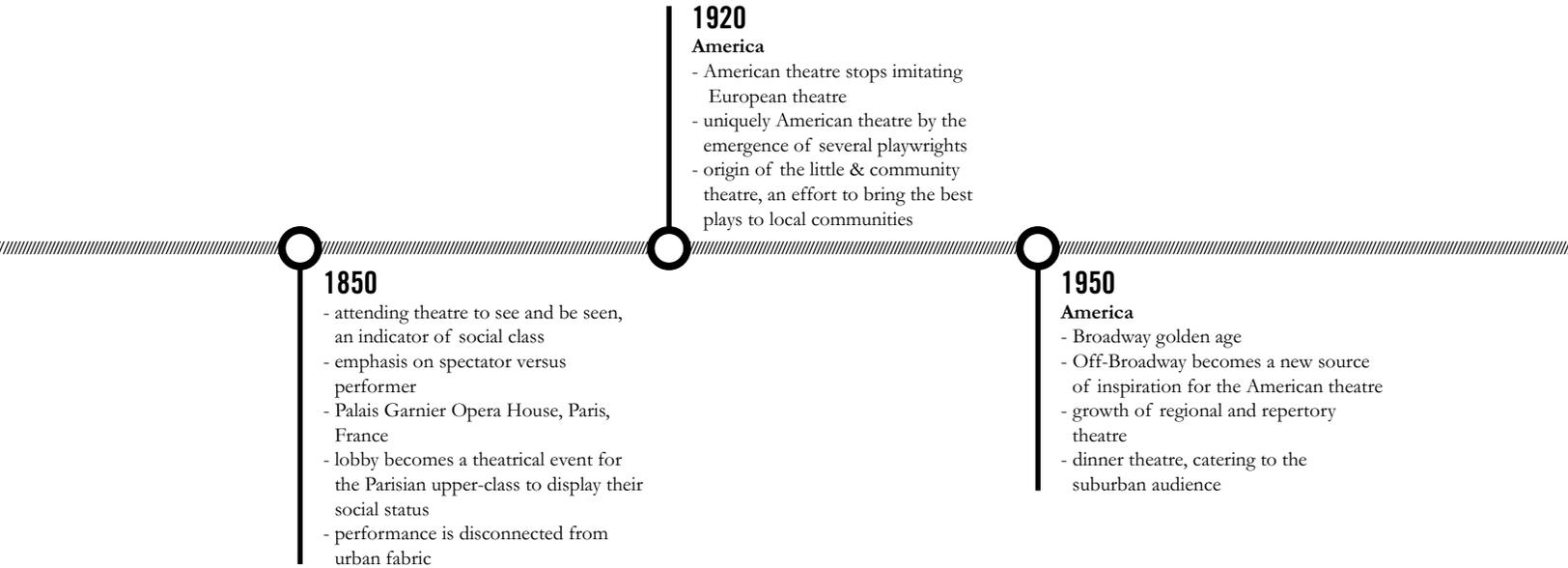
America

- settlers move westward into the newly opened territories
- origin of American theatre, derived from British theatre

1660

England

- Restoration period, production of legal & professional stage plays, *legitimate theatre*
- theatre becomes an enclosed building, audience is seated on level floors, & stage is raked to provide sightlines
- use of elaborate scenery & mechanical equipment



1850

- attending theatre to see and be seen, an indicator of social class
- emphasis on spectator versus performer
- Palais Garnier Opera House, Paris, France
- lobby becomes a theatrical event for the Parisian upper-class to display their social status
- performance is disconnected from urban fabric

1920

America

- American theatre stops imitating European theatre
- uniquely American theatre by the emergence of several playwrights
- origin of the little & community theatre, an effort to bring the best plays to local communities

1950

America

- Broadway golden age
- Off-Broadway becomes a new source of inspiration for the American theatre
- growth of regional and repertory theatre
- dinner theatre, catering to the suburban audience

2015

- urban theatre, establishing identity through informal performance space
- deconstruction of the *fourth wall*, an extension of, rather than a container for performance
- derived from the reciprocal relationship of theory & theatre as historic precedents & facilitated by the implementation of architectural conditions & intervention
- analyzes the theatrical potential of public spaces within an urban context, informed & enhanced by the notion of performance in architecture as an autonomous event
- opportunity for performance to serve as a catalyst for community revitalization, fostering a sense identity within an urban fabric

NOTES

¹ Gilles Paquet, “Canada’s Capital – 1: Getting the Capital’s Governance Right,” *Inroads: Issue 30*, accessed October 16, 2015, <http://www.gouvernance.ca/publications/11-04.pdf>.

² “Population of Census Metropolitan Areas,” Statistics Canada, last modified February 10, 2016, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/101/cst01/demo05a-eng.htm>.

³ Paquet, “Canada’s Capital.”

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Harry H. Schanker and Katherine Anne Ommanney, *The Stage and the School* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989), 292 – 320.

ACT I *Setting the Scene[s]*

The design proposal identifies and revives a number of under-utilized areas within Ottawa’s urban fabric as spaces where performance can occur. The strategy is to create a network of informal, yet recognizable, venues located within the downtown core. This network involves four main pedestrian paths of travel integrated into Ottawa’s existing infrastructure all the while tracing a narrative thread throughout the city upon each encounter. The four paths of travel culminate at a final destination — a distinct arts and theatre district, housing and celebrating a range of local performing arts.

PROXIMITY NETWORK

Radial marks and concentric circles indicate the immediate site's proximity to a network of surrounding visual & performing arts nodes within the City of Ottawa.

The concentration of radial marks identifies high density districts of arts-related activity.

The connected lines indicate the four main pedestrian paths of travel where moments of civic theatricality occur along a narrative thread leading towards the immediate site.



Dance Studio



School of Art



Art Gallery



Theatre



School of Music



Acting Company

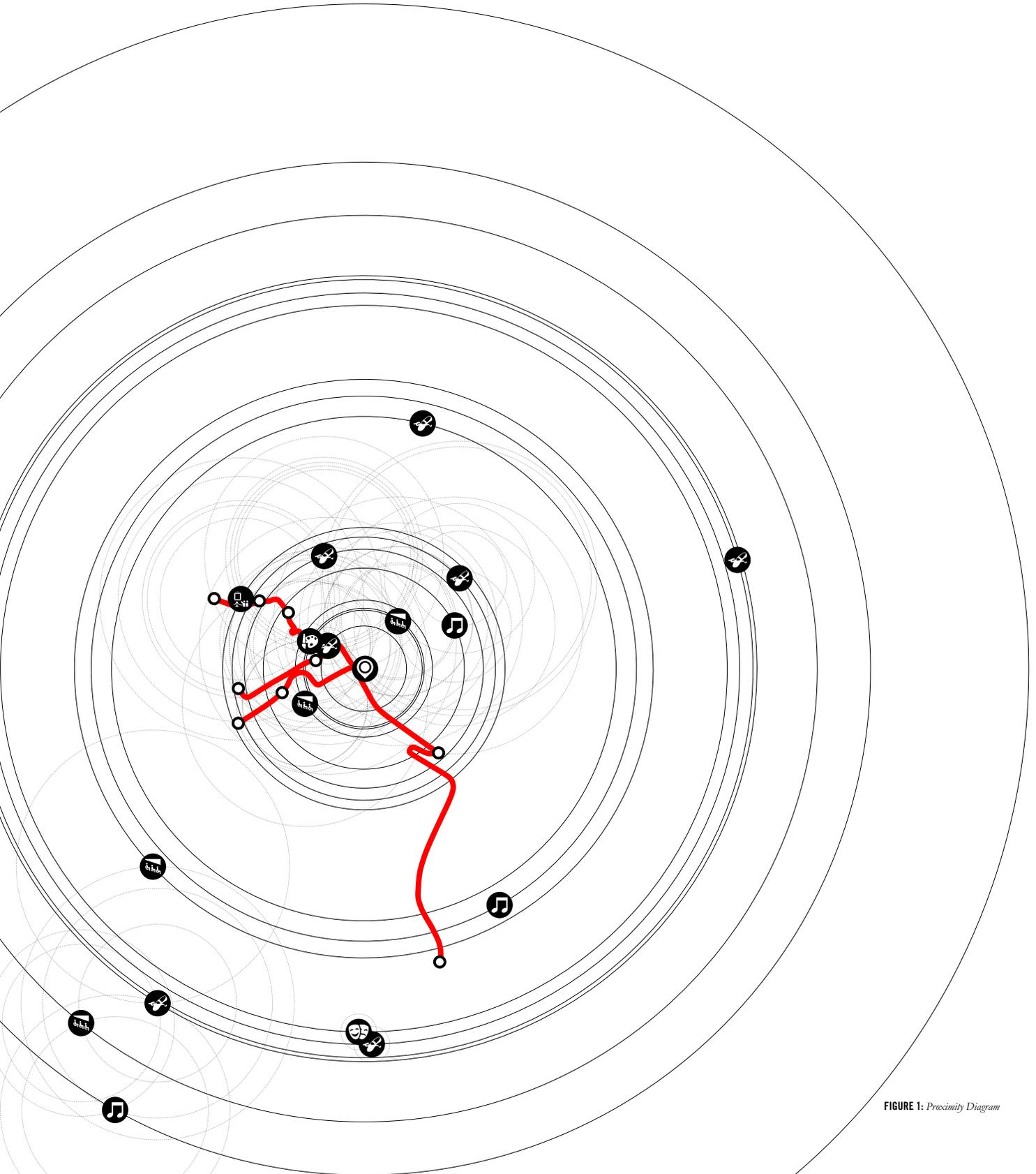


FIGURE 1: Proximity Diagram



FIGURE 2: *Astrolabe Theatre*

SCENE I PATH I

Astrolabe Theatre | Maman | Tin House Court

This sculpture, titled Maman, was built in 1999 and acquired by the National Gallery of Canada in 2004.¹ It is an iconic piece within Ottawa's urban fabric, and is on display in the gallery's exterior plaza. The proposed intervention follows a traditional theatre-in-the-round stage typology, whereby the audience is situated around all sides of the performer(s), in this instance a pianist, while also maintaining a visual connection to one another. With the use of simple spotlight techniques, Maman can transform into an intimate performance venue.

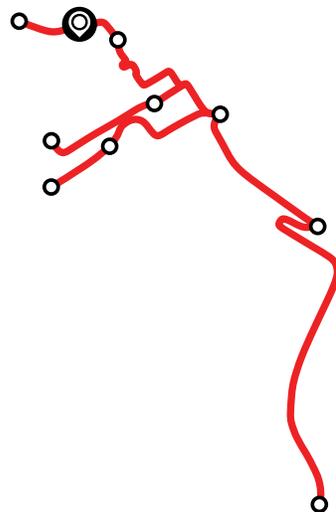




FIGURE 3: *Maman*



FIGURE 4: *Tin House Court*

SCENE II PATH II

Patterson Creek | LRT Campus Station

Patterson Creek is a small body of water that extends off the Rideau Canal. It is maintained in the winter months and used as a low traffic skating rink. The bridge above, Queen Elizabeth Drive, acts as a threshold into the creek, framing the performance space much like a proscenium arch. Traditionally, a proscenium arch is intended to separate an audience from the action on stage, but this proposed intervention challenges this condition by having two areas of entry and direction of observation. As a result, the intervention also represents a theatre-in-the-round stage typology, where piercing or deconstruction of the fourth wall will naturally occur.

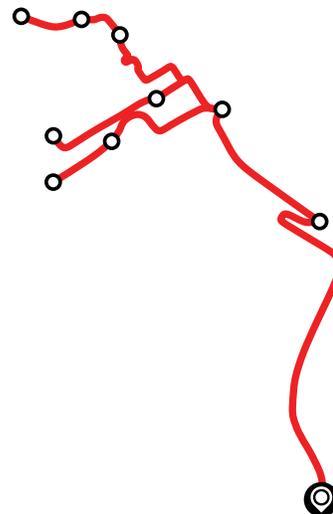




FIGURE 5: Patterson Creek



FIGURE 6: Sparks Street



FIGURE 7: Confederation Square

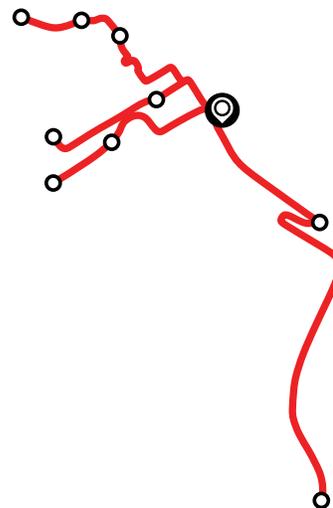


FIGURE 8: Pedestrian Overpass

SCENE V FINAL DESTINATION

Carleton County Courthouse | Carleton County Gaol

The four paths of travel are intended to trace a narrative thread throughout the city, reaching a final destination: Arts Court and the Ottawa Jail Hostel, formerly known as the Carleton County Courthouse and Carleton County Gaol, respectively. The combined structures and site will serve as a formal venue for the performing arts, establishing a distinct arts and theatre district within the city. The proposed intervention utilizes an existing corridor of cells, in what once was the Carleton County Gaol, as a venue for performance arts. In this case, a live performance piece titled *The Artist is Present* is executed by renowned performance artist, Marina Abramović. The piece involves Marina inviting the public to engage in an energy dialogue with her whereby the “performance becomes life itself.”⁶



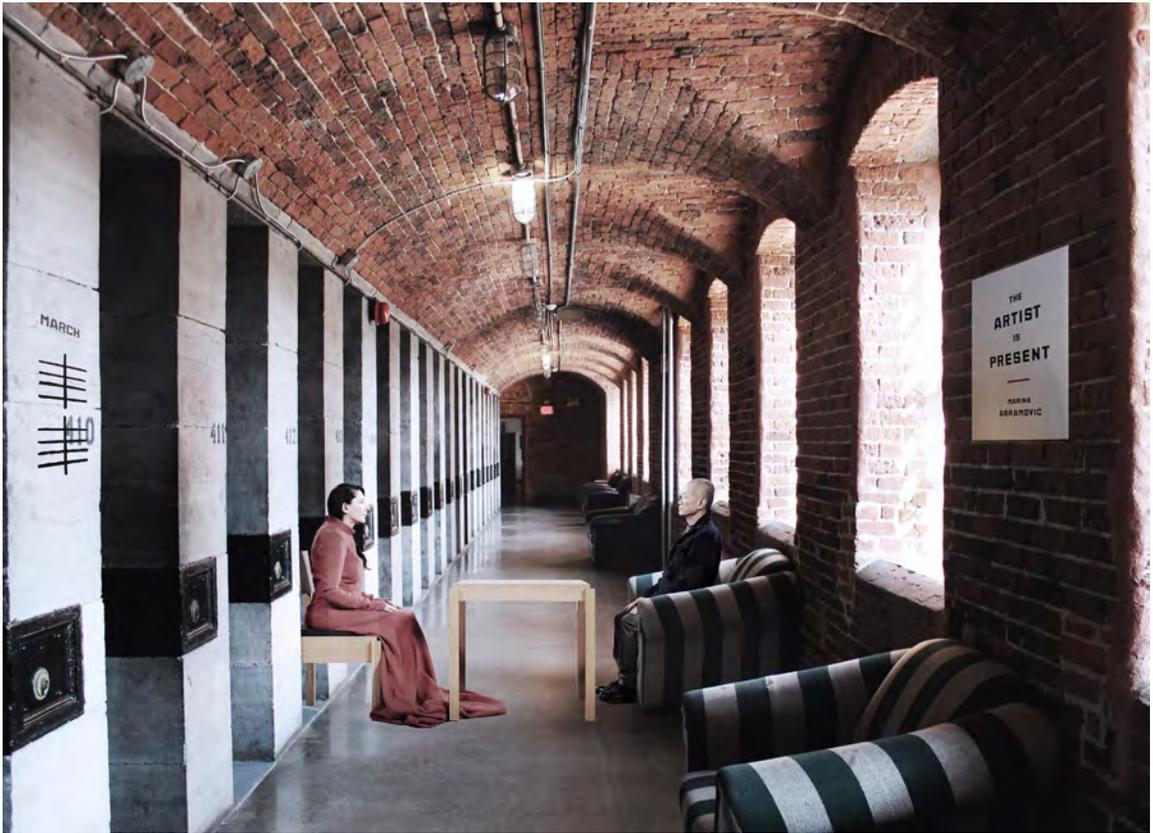


FIGURE 9: Carleton County Gaol

NOTES

¹ “Collections: Maman,” National Gallery of Canada, accessed January 5, 2016, <https://www.gallery.ca/en/see/collections/artwork.php?mkey=101000>.

² “Tin House,” Government of Canada, last modified October 1, 2015, <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1443025435843/1443025433752>.

³ “Confederation Square,” Canada’s Historic Places, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12073>.

⁴ Alyn Griffiths, “Didier Faustino’s AA exhibition includes a spiky yellow stage for public speaking,” *Dezeen Magazine*, November 10, 2015, accessed November 10, 2015, <http://www.dezeen.com/2015/11/10/didier-faustinos-aa-exhibition-spiky-yellow-stage-public-speaking-london/>.

⁵ Matthew Pearson, “New Rideau Street plan would remove one pedestrian bridge, replace the other,” *Ottawa Citizen*, April 29, 2015, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://ottawacitizen.com/life/fashion-beauty/plan-would-remove-rideau-street-pedestrian-overpass>.

⁶ Marina Abramović, “The Artist is Present,” accessed September 26, 2015, <http://marinafilm.com/>.

ACT II *Behind the Scene[s]*

The design proposal seeks to establish a distinct arts and theatre district for the city of Ottawa. The discovery of the site, currently Arts Court and The Ottawa Jail Hostel, is intended to be made after navigating through a series of theatrical narrative interventions strategically located throughout the city. By analyzing the current and historic site conditions, a much more informed design approach can be made regarding the consideration of existing versus proposed.

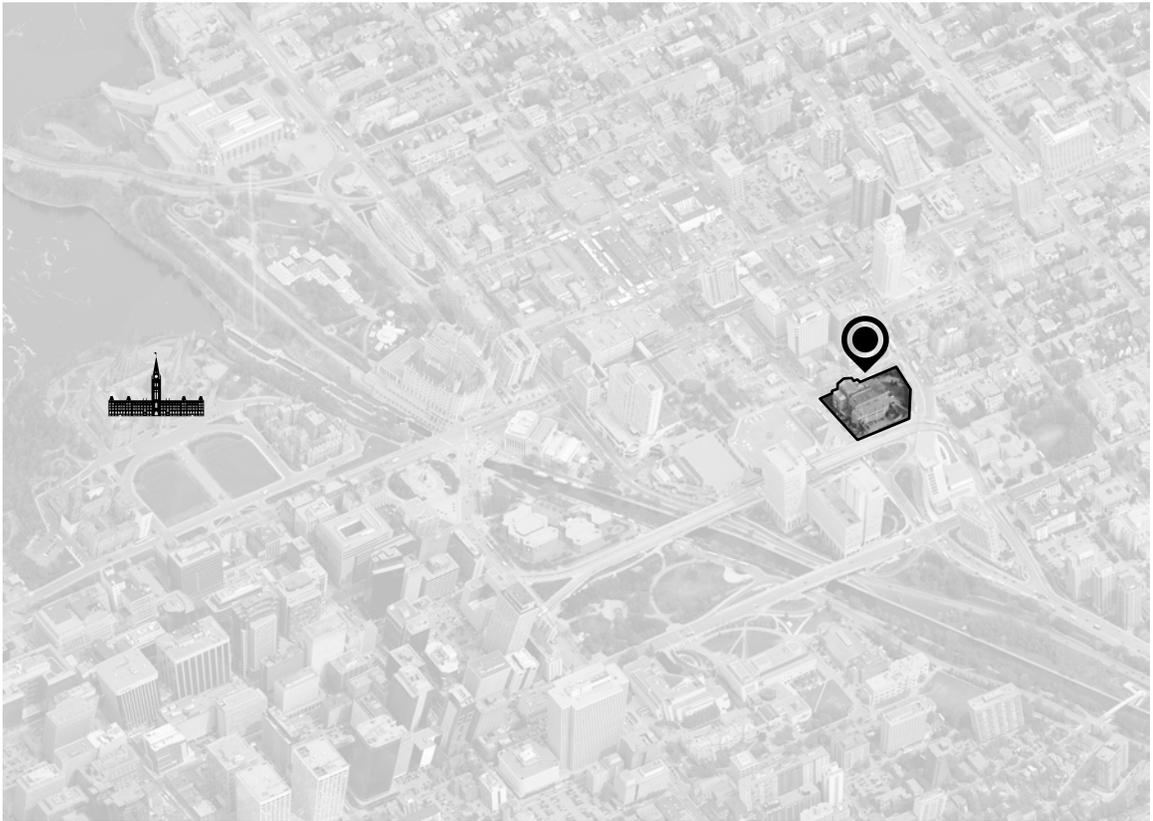


FIGURE 10: *Aerial Metropolitan Context*

SITE ANALYSIS *Figure Ground*

The figure ground diagram illustrates the variety of building types and heights surrounding the immediate site.

The buildings are toned in three different shades of grey to indicate low, mid or high-rise.

North of the Site: Commercial

East of the Site: Residential

South of the Site: Educational

West of the Site: Government & Commercial



FIGURE 11: *Figure Ground Diagram*

SITE ANALYSIS *Circulation*

The circulation diagram indicates the relatively high traffic vehicular routes surrounding the immediate site.

Line thicknesses vary based on primary right-of-way, secondary right-of-way, and local right-of-way. Arrowheads indicate direction of traffic.

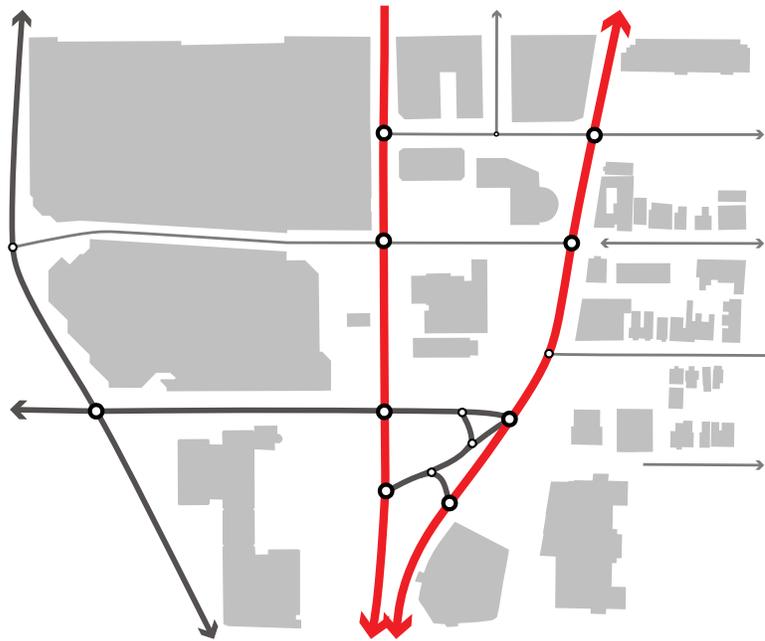


FIGURE 12: *Circulation Diagram*

CARLETON COUNTY COURTHOUSE *Arts Court*

Constructed between 1870 and 1871, the Carleton County Courthouse is located in Ottawa’s former judicial district, and has been recognized by both the Ontario Heritage Act and the City of Ottawa for possessing heritage designation. This structure has maintained an important destination within the City of Ottawa, originally as the centre of country government and now as a “locus of Ottawa’s artistic community,” presently known as Arts Court.¹

Composed of a number of ad-hoc additions in 1955 and later in 1964, that defy unity both in floor plan and section, Arts Court retains much of its original exterior Italianate architectural character.² A portion of the design proposal however, will aim to reconcile the interior composition and reconfigure this structure to accommodate for more accessible and direct circulation, particularly when bridging with its neighboring jailhouse.

Both the site and heritage building were “entrusted” to the Ottawa Arts Court Foundation in 1985, which “inaugurated” the Ottawa Arts Court as the community’s municipal arts centre in 1988.³ Presently, Arts Court offers a variety of gallery and performance spaces, and is the home of more than 30 independent local arts and culture organizations.

As the community's municipal arts centre, Arts Court does not possess a lack of arts-related activity so much as it does a lack of awareness as an established arts district for the City of Ottawa. By adopting strategies from related precedents, such as the use of light as a medium for navigation, wayfinding and visual identity, the design proposal will intend to engage the public much more than it currently does.

In the context of this thesis, Arts Court also possesses critical historical relevance as a major destination of the narrative journey of James Patrick Whelan — the courthouse in which his trial was held. Arts Court will therefore be a key component in the proposed series of urban interventions traced throughout the city, as a means of bringing awareness to what once existed in Ottawa. The courtroom, now an all-purpose venue available for rental use, is frequently referenced in *Blood on the Moon* from the perspective of Whelan, where much of the play takes place.

Located on the third floor, Arts Court Theatre is a multi-occasion, black-box performance space featuring the installation of professional sound and lighting, with a seated capacity of 130.⁴ Given Arts Court's original program and intended use as a classically-inspired, mid-nineteenth century courthouse, “expressive of government and the administration of justice,” the Arts Court Theatre will remain the formal performance venue in the design proposal.⁵

CARLETON COUNTY GAOL *Ottawa Jail Hostel*

Constructed between 1860 and 1862 in conjunction with the adjacent courthouse, the Carleton County Gaol was the first jailhouse built in the Ottawa area.⁶ It served as a prison until its closure in 1972, and has since been occupied by the Ottawa International Youth Hostel, presently known as the Ottawa Jail Hostel. Much like the Carleton County Courthouse, the jailhouse also possesses heritage designation, recognized by both the Ontario Heritage Act and the City of Ottawa, for architectural, contextual, and historical value.

This three-and-a-half storey structure is built in the Italianate style, both on the exterior and in plan — a distinct architectural movement which was adopted in central Canada during the mid-nineteenth century. It is comprised of solid limestone, connoting “strength and austerity in the vertical façade,” bold window framing, and imposing chimney stacks.⁷ Its character defining elements such as a symmetrical portico with a rounded arch and columns, segmental arch windows, pedimented stone dormers beneath the roofline, a centre dormer on the front façade surmounted by an elliptical pediment flanked by brackets, and rusticated piers reflect the heritage value of the original structure, and will be retained in the design proposal.⁸

The jailhouse is contextually significant due to its close proximity to surrounding judicial structure, the former Carleton

County Courthouse. Given that it is situated adjacent to the community's current municipal arts district, the design seeks to propose a reprogramming which caters to the performing arts, transitioning from a youth hostel to an extension of Arts Court, with an overall intent of establishing a defined arts and theatre district for the City of Ottawa.

Recognized historically, this former correctional facility preserves the record of Ottawa's original incarceration system, having housed a number of inmates who committed a range of offences, most notably, James Patrick Whelan for the suspected murder of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. It is also the site of Canada's last public execution, dating back to February 11, 1869, where thousands of people gathered to witness the spectacle that was otherwise Whelan's final moments before falling through the doors of the gallows. This specific location, marking the final destination of Whelan's narrative journey, also marks the final encounter along the thread of urban theatrical interventions. The jailhouse "reflects the evolution of Canada's criminal code," illustrating the living conditions of Canada's earliest prisoners, heavily articulated in Pierre Brault's *Blood on the Moon*.⁹ As an establishment that originally contained convicted criminals, the jailhouse will evolve into the *informal* arts and performance venue in the design proposal.



FIGURE 13: *Quartier des Spectacles, Nuit Blanche*



FIGURE 14: *Quartier des Spectacles, 1.26*



FIGURE 15: *Quartier des Spectacles, Nuit Blanche*



FIGURE 16: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminothérapie*



FIGURE 17: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminothérapie*

QUARTIER DES SPECTACLES

The theoretical design proposes a redevelopment of Arts Court and the Ottawa Jail Hostel into a distinct performing arts district.

The proposal has been inspired by Quartier des Spectacles, Montreal’s cultural and entertainment district, which boasts more than thirty performance venues, one square kilometre of cultural institutions, over one hundred performances per month, nine façades with architectural video projections, and eight lively public spaces.¹⁰

The origins of Quartier des Spectacles date back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and shortly thereafter a number of theatres and cultural establishments were introduced. In the 1960s, Montreal experienced an “unprecedented modernization,” specifically through the construction of Place des Arts, the metro system, and the establishment of Hydro-Quebec’s headquarters.¹¹ Generation of commercial and institutional activity occurred the following decade. The network of performance and cultural venues continued to expand, utilizing vacant lots and catering to both locals and tourists alike. Vibrancy of the downtown core was flourishing and by 2003, Quartier’s purpose was officially defined, acquiring its own “visual identity and shared vision: Live, Learn, Create, and Entertain Downtown.”¹² Efforts have



FIGURE 18: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway*



FIGURE 19: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway*



FIGURE 20: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway*



FIGURE 21: *Quartier des Spectacles, Architectural Lighting*



FIGURE 22: *Quartier des Spectacles, Architectural Lighting*

been made to establish a presence of major festivals while showcasing its cultural institutions and performance venues.

The task at hand was not to develop a new neighbourhood, but rather “to identify it, [highlighting] its rich cultural assets and [equipping] it with the infrastructure to accommodate outdoor events” — this inspiring vision to which a redefined Ottawa might aspire as it seeks to establish its own civic identity.¹³

A key contributor in the development and success of Quartier des Spectacles’ visual identity is the Luminous Pathway, showcasing the district’s cultural assets and arts-related activity. The strategy uses light as a medium — a direct reference to the performing arts.¹⁴ The Luminous Pathway’s fundamental role is to highlight the concentration of performance venues within the boundaries of the district by projecting into public spaces, achieved through three major elements: shared lighting signature, architectural lighting, and architectural video projections.

The shared lighting signature uses the projection of a double-row network of red dots to illuminate sidewalks and paths of travel throughout Quartier des Spectacles, creating a vibrant urban landscape while identifying different cultural venues. Inspired from the classic red carpet and former Red Light District era in Montreal, the shared lighting signature animates Quartier’s axis of discovery.¹⁵



FIGURE 23: *Quartier des Spectacles, Video Projections*

The individual architectural lighting illuminates the façades of more than twenty buildings and sites, highlighting both their vocation and distinctive features as a dramatic relief. The lighting captures the “personality and unique character” of each architectural canvas.¹⁶



FIGURE 24: *Quartier des Spectacles, Video Projections*

Lastly, the architectural video projections occupy nine building façades that vary in content throughout the year. These architectural screens transform each evening, showcasing Montreal’s digital arts. The projections zones were originally defined with the individual architectural elements of the façade in mind, integrated in the execution of the videos.¹⁷



FIGURE 25: *Quartier des Spectacles, Video Projections*

The projections are evenly distributed throughout the Quartier, with priority given to areas in need of revitalization. The use of light not only provides an identity to each arts and cultural destination within Quartier des Spectacles, but it is a medium that can be adjusted based on seasons, events, and the evolution of the district as a whole.¹⁸



FIGURE 26: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminothérapie*

Quartier des Spectacles embodies a common vision of energizing Montreal’s cultural scene to better its future, by establishing a “distinctive identity grounded in creativity.”¹⁹ It will serve as a primary precedent in the design development of Arts Court and the Ottawa Jail Hostel.



FIGURE 27: *Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway*

NOTES

¹ “Carleton County Court House,” Canada’s Historic Places, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8442>.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ “Arts Court Rental Package,” Arts Court, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://artscourt.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Rental-Package-EN-24.07.15.pdf>.

⁵ “Carleton County Court House.”

⁶ “Carleton County Gaol,” Canada’s Historic Places, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=8443>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “History and Vision of the Quartier des Spectacles,” Quartier des Spectacles Montreal, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://www.quartierdesspectacles.com/en/about/history-and-vision/>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “Lighting as a Marker of Identity,” Quartier des Spectacles Montreal, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://www.quartierdesspectacles.com/en/blog/259/the-luminous-pathway-lighting-as-a-marker-of-identity>.

¹⁵ “Discover the Quartier,” Quartier des Spectacles Montreal, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://www.quartierdesspectacles.com/en/discover-the-quartier/>.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ “Lighting as a Marker of Identity.”

¹⁹ “History and Vision of the Quartier des Spectacles.”

ACT III *Scene[s] of the Crime*

The final and most sequentially specific path of travel traces the narrative thread of James Patrick Whelan through a proposed series of urban interventions, starting from the beginning of his journey at Parliament Hill and culminating at the gallows of the Carleton County Gaol. These interventions assume varying degrees of permanence and ephemerality, due to their specific architectural, theatrical, contextual, and historical site conditions.

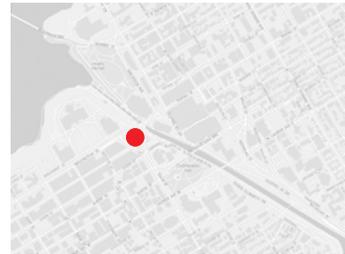
HOUSE OF COMMONS

Parliament of Canada
04.07.1868, 2:00 a.m.



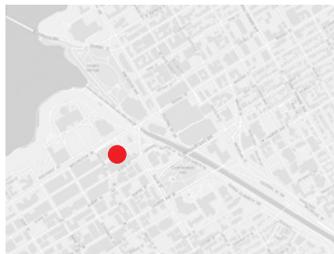
RUSSELL HOUSE

Hotel
04.07.1868



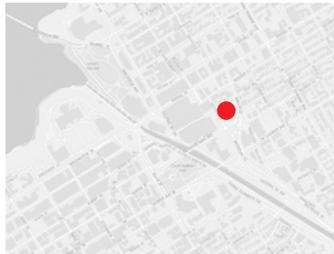
71 SPARKS STREET

Mrs. Trotter's Boarding House
04.07.1868



POLICE STATION

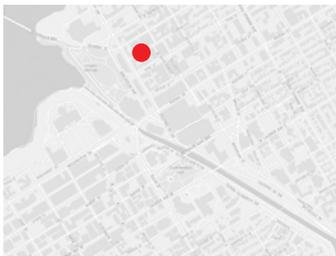
04.07.1868



CLARENCE STREET

Hotel

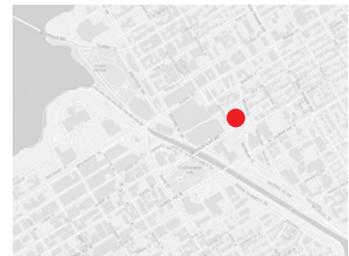
04.07.1868, 10:00 p.m.



CARLETON COUNTY GAOL

Solitary Confinement, Basement

04.07.1868



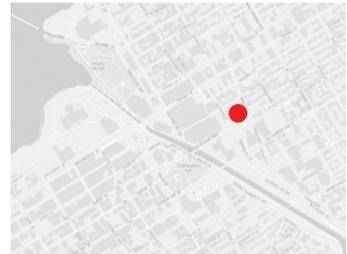
**CARLETON COUNTY
COURTHOUSE**

Courtroom
04.09.1868



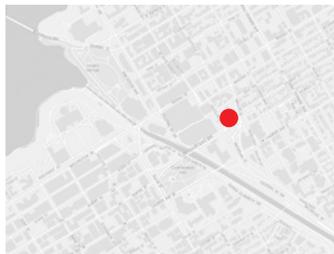
CARLETON COUNTY GAOL

Courtyard
Spring & Summer, 1868



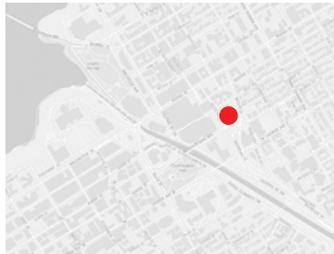
CARLETON COUNTY GAOL

Drum Cell, 6th Floor
Spring & Summer, 1868



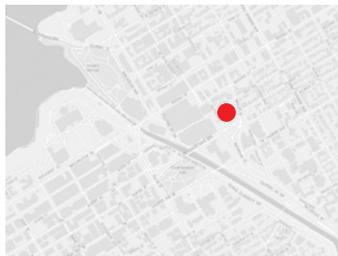
CARLETON COUNTY GAOL

Death Row
Winter, 1868 - 1869



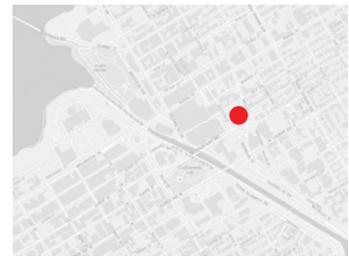
**CARLETON COUNTY
COURTHOUSE**

Courtroom
09.07.1868



CARLETON COUNTY GAOL

Gallows
02.11.1869



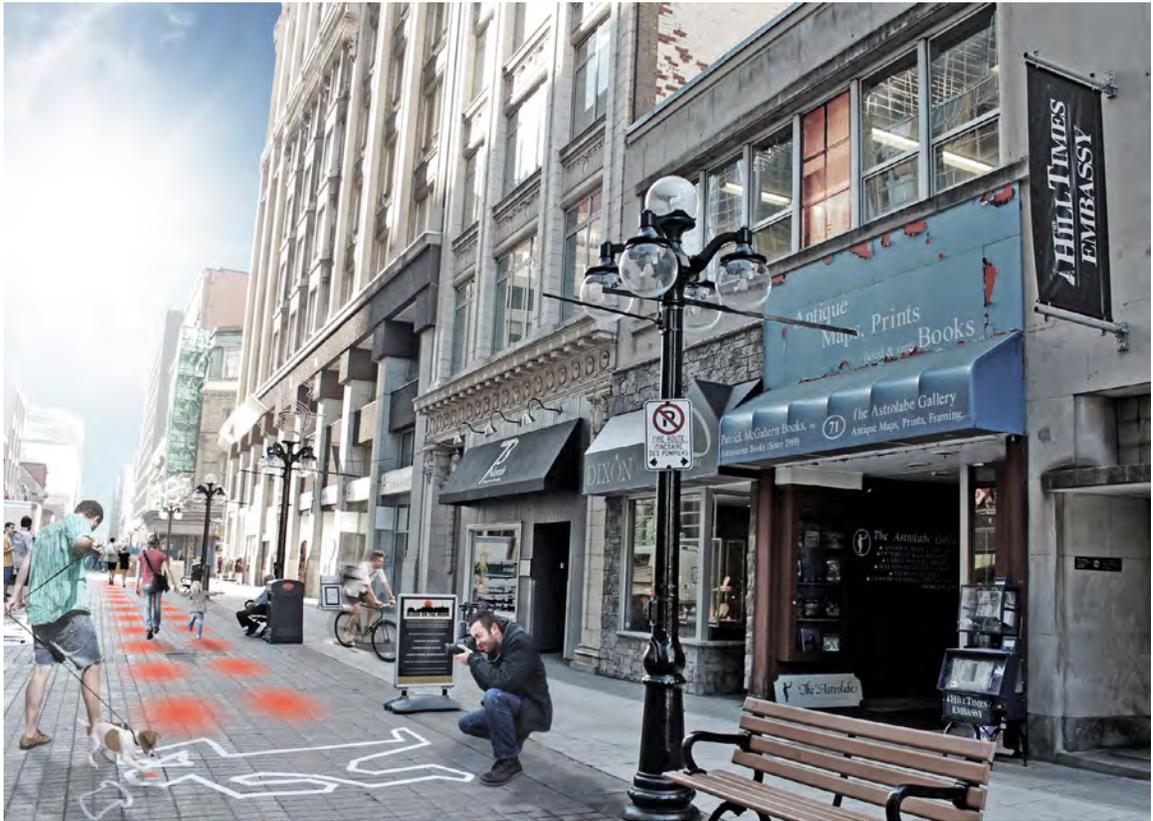


FIGURE 28: 71 Sparks Street



FIGURE 29: Russell House





FIGURE 30: Carleton County Gaol, Solitary Confinement

*...they chain me to the floor of a cement box in the basement of the Ottawa jail. When the iron door slams shut, all light evaporates.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)



FIGURE 31: Carleton County Gaol, 6th Floor Corridor

*...I've been moved up from the basement to a sixth floor suite. Nice view of the city, I'm given to understand, not that I'd any idea.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)

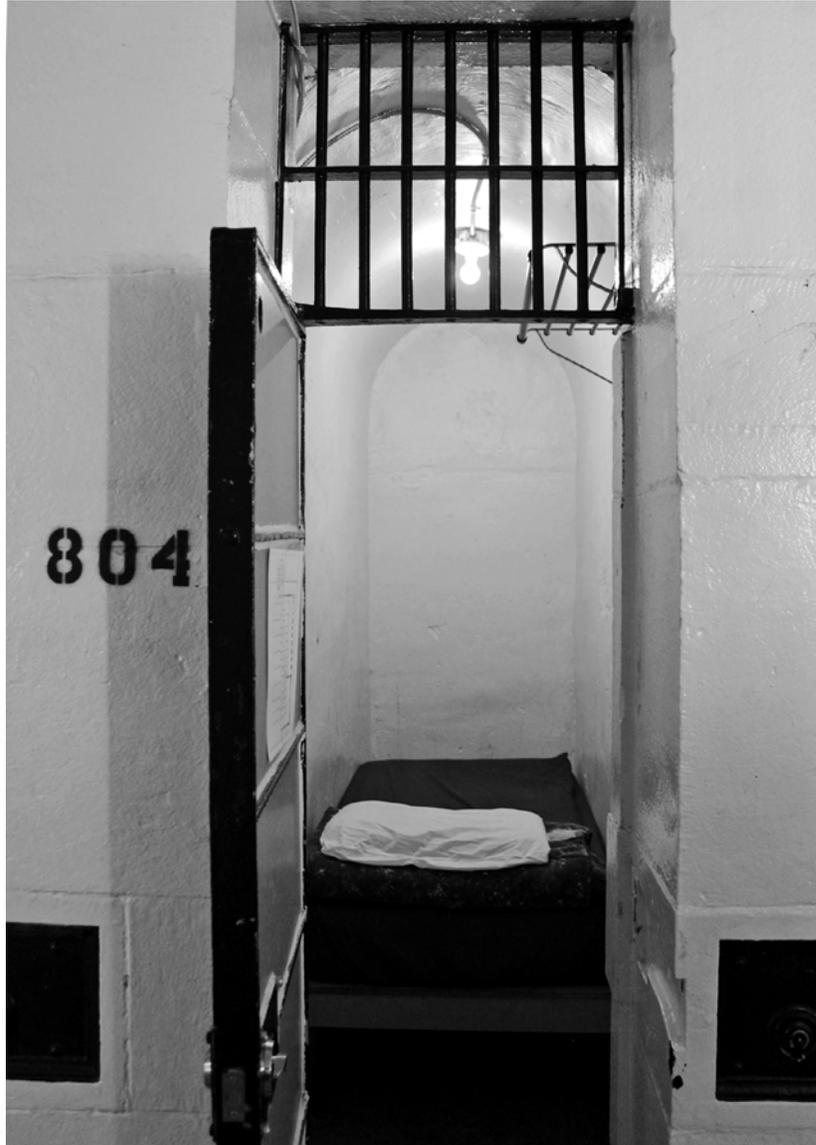


FIGURE 32: Carleton County Gaol, Drum Cell

*My new home is a vault nine feet deep, three feet wide, and the walls curve to an arch ten feet above me...The smell of sweat is everywhere. Sweat from heat, fear, isolation, rats, rape, hunger, torture, sickness. But even the foulest odor can be gotten used to; sound is another matter. In defiance of the heavy cell doors the air is filled with screams. Screams of fear, isolation, rats, rape, hunger, torture, sickness, sometimes even the screaming makes you scream.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)

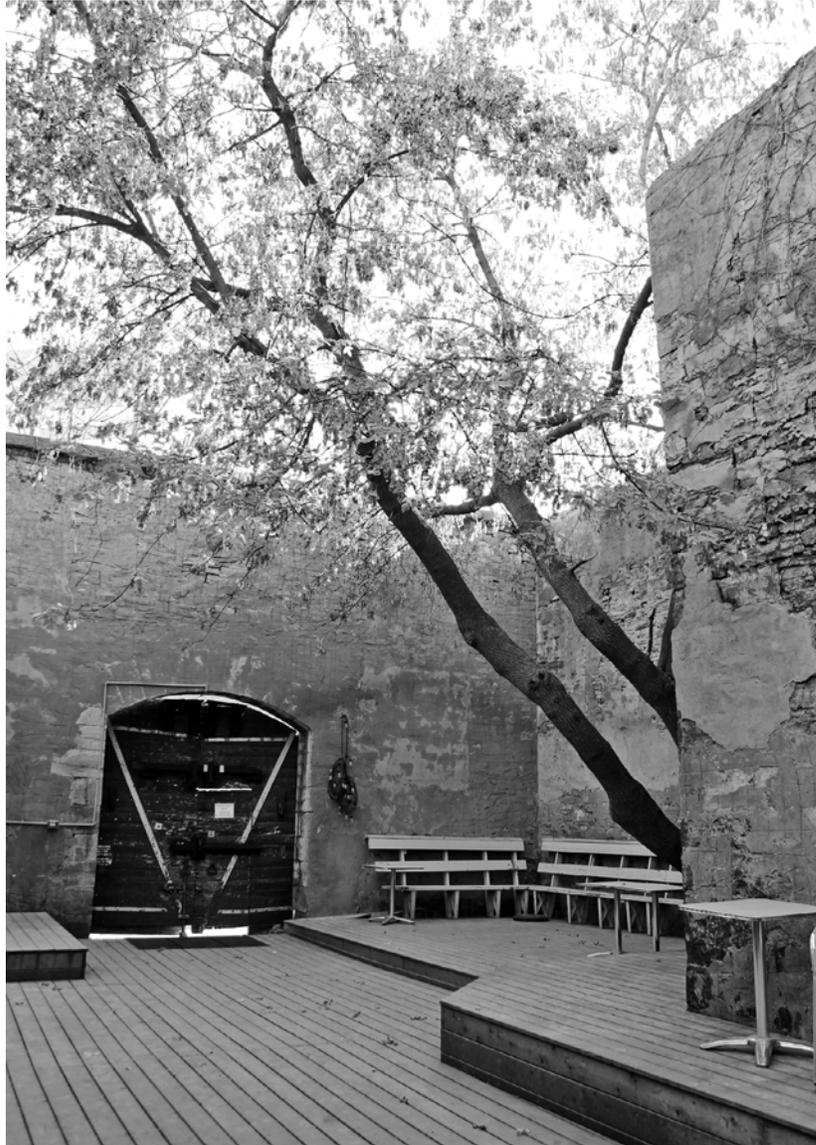


FIGURE 33: Carleton County Gaol, Courtyard

*For fifteen glorious minutes a day I am given my freedom to wander the tiny courtyard of the jail. The walls there rise over 25 feet allowing for only a sliver of sky. But there is sun and warmth and the instant my face meets the summer air I can at last exhale. I feel as though I had been holding me breath for 23 1/2 hours. I stare up at the sky and listen for the sounds of another world, an outside world that I may never see again except at the end of a rope.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)



FIGURE 34: Carleton County Gaol, Gallows

*Above my head, over the entrance of the courtyard are two small doors that one only passes through once. They are the drop of the gallows, or as we call it, the doorway to hell.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)

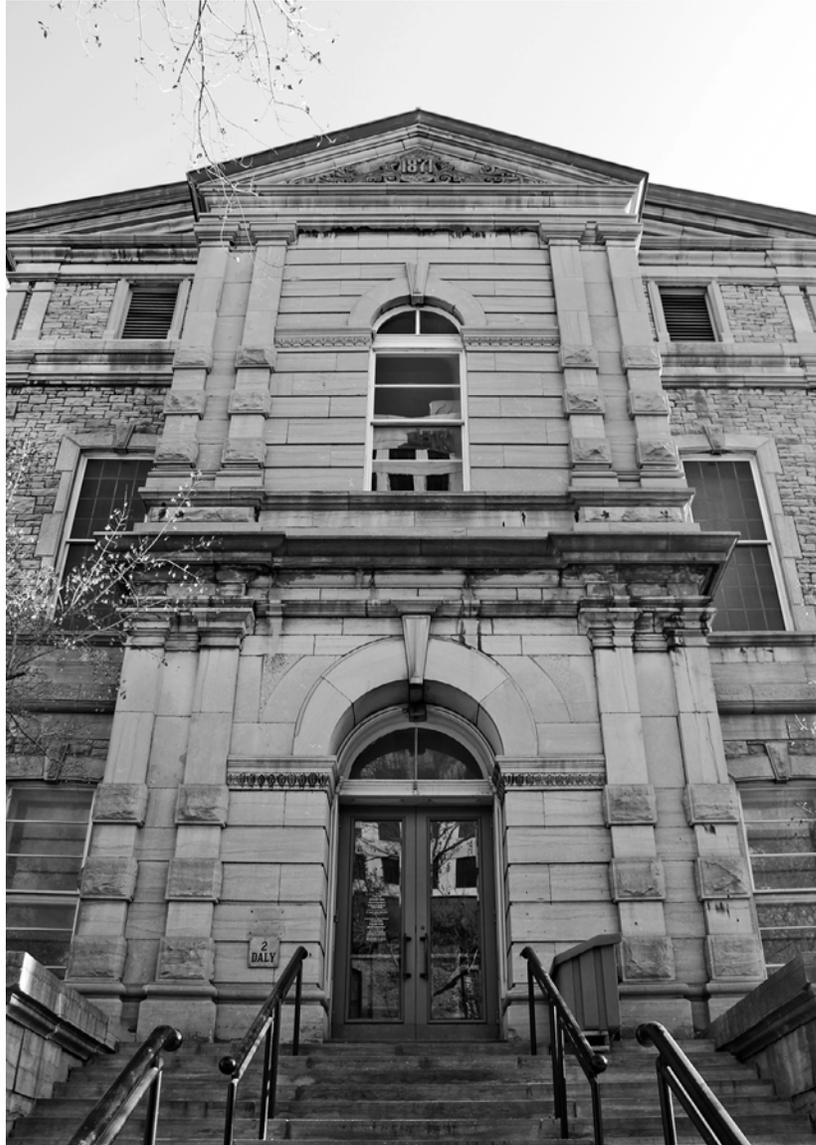


FIGURE 35: Carleton County Courthouse, Front Façade

*September 7, 1868, all approaches to the building are lined with constables. We are in the courtroom, a dingy square 60 feet wide and stacked high with benches like chicken coops.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)



FIGURE 36: Carleton County Gaol, Death Row

*I try to indulge my senses for a final time. I touch the walls and the bars. I rub my face on the cool floor. I smell my body. I listen to my heartbeat. I watch a spider dangling his own noose through the bars. Time is frozen...there is no more sleep for me.**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)



FIGURE 37: Carleton County Gaol, Noose

*Snow is swirling over the platform of the gallows and gathering in the corners...God, what a view...the door to hell opens and through it I plunge...**

*Excerpt from *Blood on the Moon* (Pierre Brault)

ACT IV *Change of Scene[s]*

A number of interventions, linked along a narrative path, have been selected for this thesis project, with an ultimate intent of arriving at a distinct arts and theatre district for the city of Ottawa. The proposed design represents these efforts, by redeveloping Arts Court and the Ottawa Jail Hostel.

CONTEXTUAL SITE PLAN

Within a 300 metre radius, the site is surrounded by a variety of building types, heights, and densities ranging from commercial, residential, educational, and government.

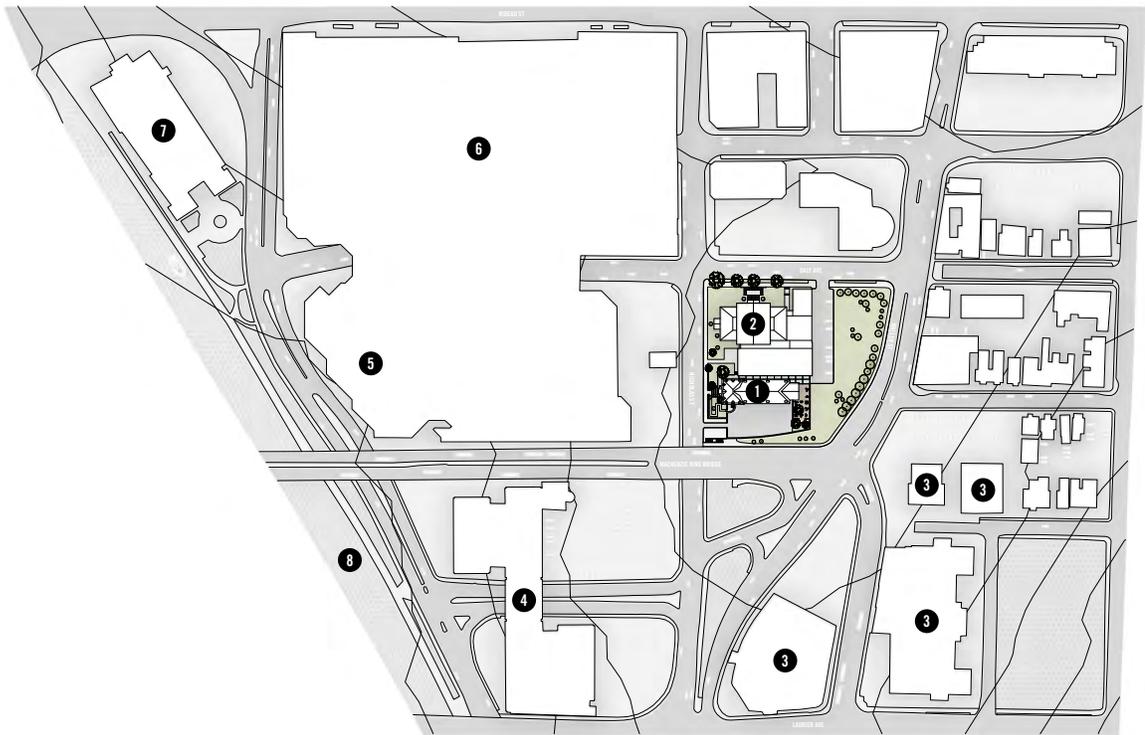


FIGURE 38: Contextual Site Plan



- ① Ottawa Jail
- ② Arts Court
- ③ University of Ottawa
- ④ National Defence Headquarters
- ⑤ Shaw Centre
- ⑥ Rideau Centre
- ⑦ Government Conference Centre
- ⑧ Rideau Canal

IMMEDIATE SITE PLAN *Design Proposal*

Bounded by Daly Avenue to the north, Waller Street to the east, Mackenzie King Bridge to the south, and Nicholas Street to the west, the immediate site is located within the Northwest neighbourhood limits of Sandy Hill, Ottawa's former judicial district.

Pedestrian access to the jail is located along Nicholas Street, and vehicular access is located along Daly Avenue.

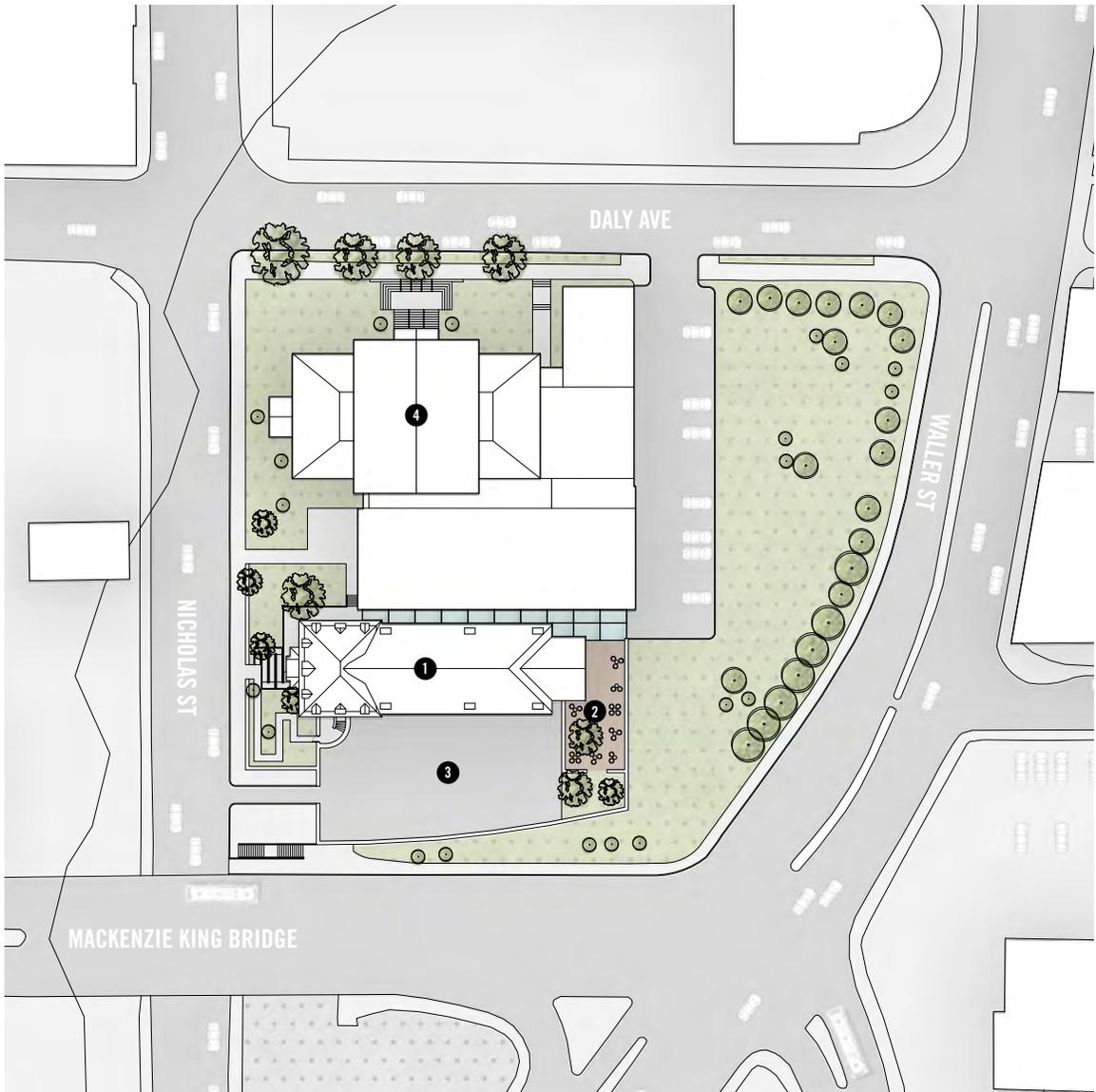
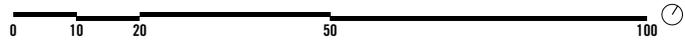


FIGURE 39: Immediate Site Plan



- 1 Ottawa Jail
- 2 Courtyard
- 3 Outdoor Performance Space
- 4 Arts Court

LEVEL 1* *Design Proposal*

Entry into the jail is accessible both by ramp and stairs from Nicholas Street. In addition to the foyer, the former governor's quarters consist of an office, coat check and lockers. The block to the rear features a kitchen and café, utilizing the former chapel pews for seating. A remaining solitary confinement cell is revealed through a glass partition, noting another major destination of the narrative journey of James Patrick Whelan – the cell in which he was first chained to, beginning his incarceration at the jail. Access to the courtyard is made available through a rear entry or by exiting directly from the elevator.

A central glass atrium connects both Arts Court and the jail providing access from the surface parking lot.

The slightly curved 25-foot boundary wall and current parking lot, just south of the main structure, transforms into a multipurpose outdoor performance venue. The wall, a cyclorama surface, caters to a variety of performances utilizing a range of technology and video mapping projections. The space is intended to be viewed by both spectators from the interior of the jail looking out a window through a framed perspective, and those passing by the arched entry on Nicholas Street.

*Original drawing provided by Barry Padolsky Associates Inc.

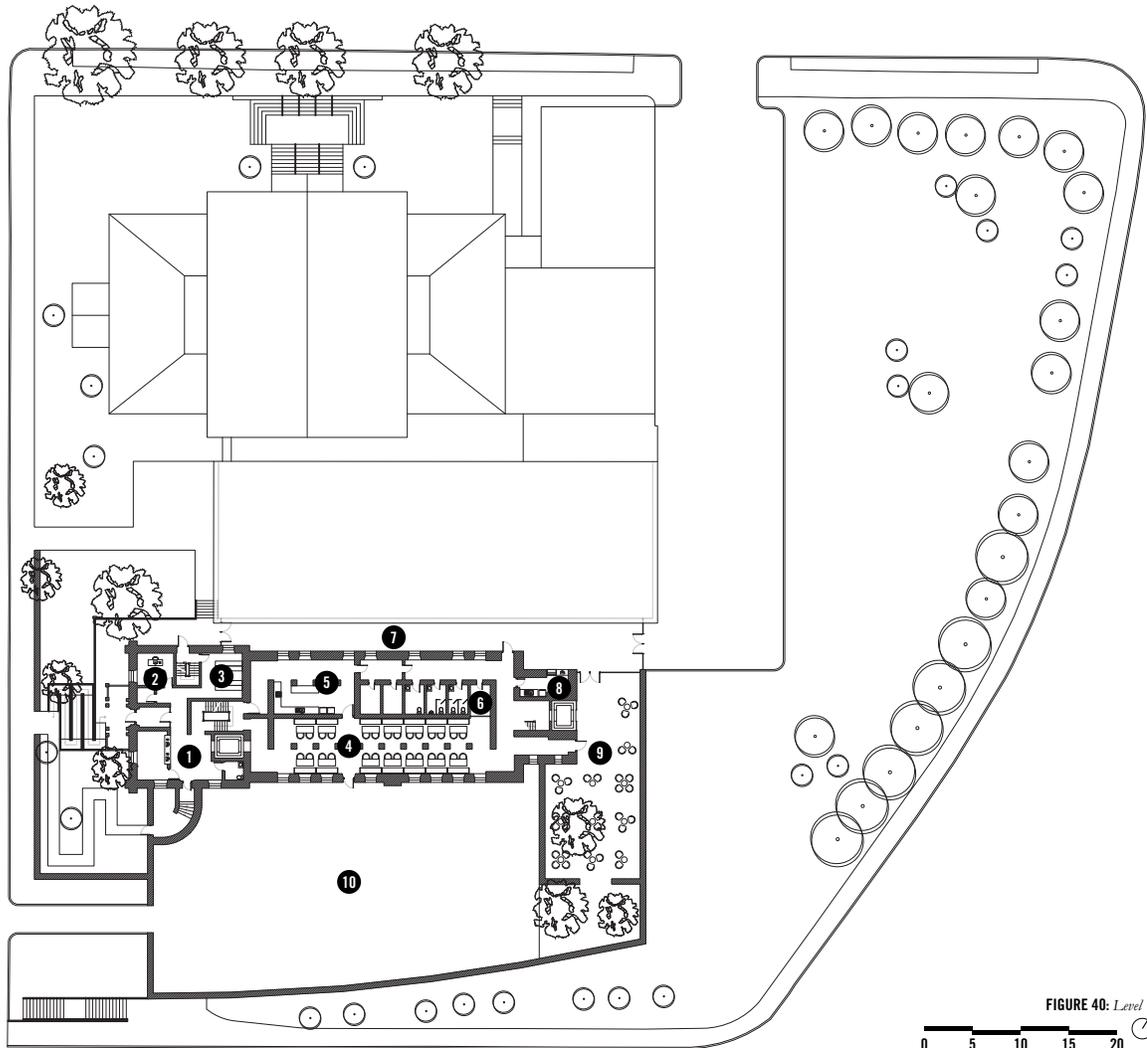
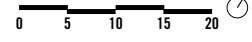


FIGURE 40: Level 1

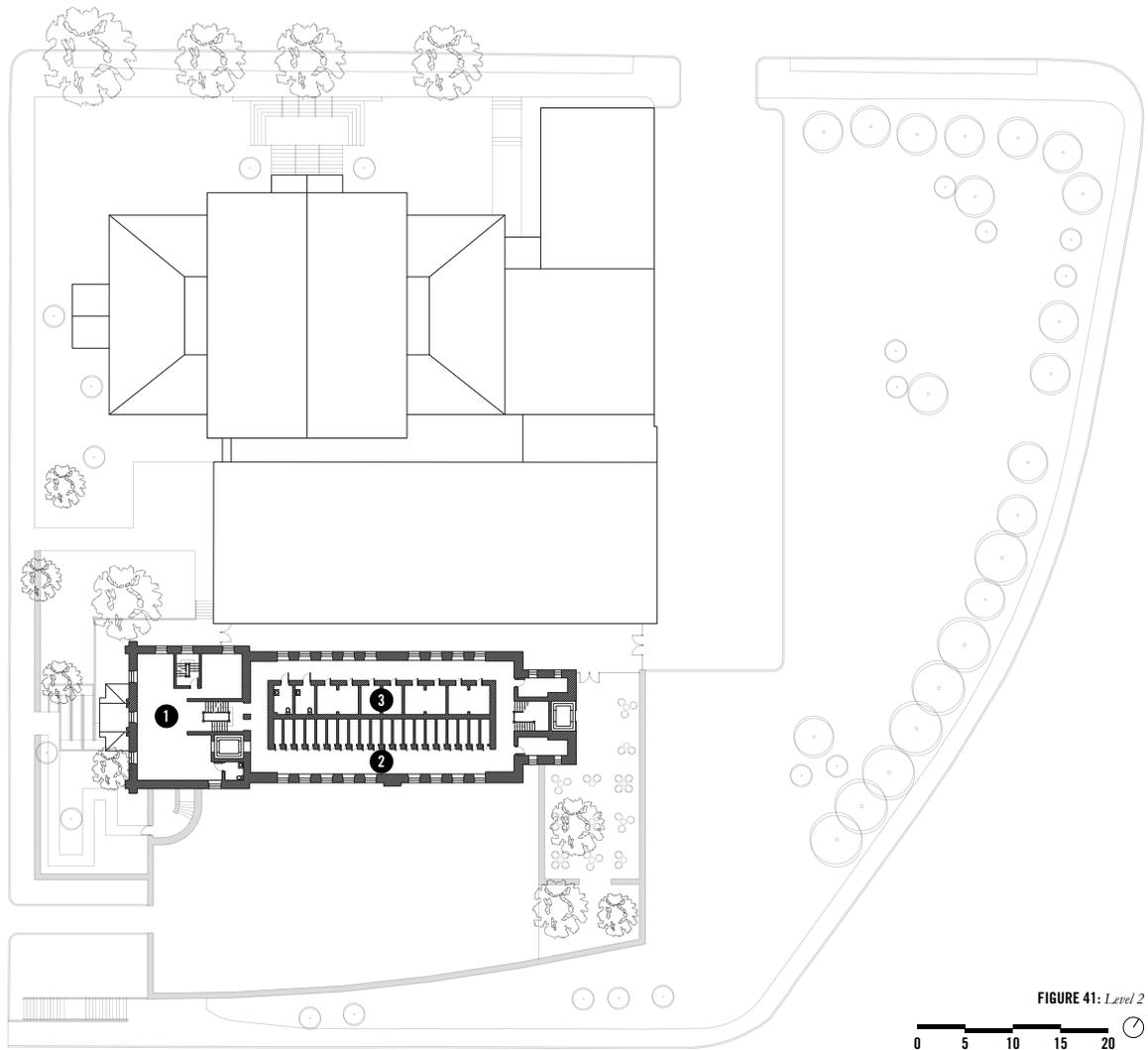


- 1 Foyer & Admissions
- 2 Office
- 3 Coat Check & Lockers
- 4 Café
- 5 Kitchen
- 6 Solitary Confinement Cell
- 7 Atrium
- 8 Serving
- 9 Courtyard
- 10 Outdoor Performance Space

LEVEL 2* *Design Proposal*

Level 2 caters specifically to the visual arts. The former governor's quarters offers an open concept space for featured exhibits. The corridor retaining the original single drum cells is intended for intimate viewing, whereas the opposite corridor is intended for larger, open exhibition and display of art.

*Original drawing provided by Barry Padolsky Associates Inc.



- ① Featured Exhibition Space
- ② Intimate Exhibition Space
- ③ Open Exhibition Space

LEVEL 3* *Design Proposal*

Level 3 caters to the performing arts, specifically with acoustic consideration. Nearly all of the partitions between the drum cells have been removed, however the original vaulted ceilings remain intact. This structural element was originally intended to allow any noise made within a cell to carry, as the prisoners were expected to keep silent when locked in their cells to encourage reflection and repent. The vaulted ceilings ensured the passage of sound, alerting the nearest prison guard.

This architectural feature has been maintained and adapted to create experiential performance sound pods. Depending on the type, number, and location of performance(s), Level 3 transforms into a layered, resonating acoustic experience, heightening the spectator's sense of sound.

A remaining drum cell is revealed adopting its own experiential acoustic qualities, noting another major destination of the narrative journey of James Patrick Whelan – the 9 by 3 foot cell in which he was relocated to for the remainder of his time, before his final death row imprisonment.

The former governor's quarters offers an open concept space for featured performances.

*Original drawing provided by Barry Padolsky Associates Inc.

Access to Arts Court is made available through two bridges within the atrium. This connection allows permeable access to the dance studios, black box studio, theatre, and courtroom in which Whelan's numerous trials were held. The bridges allow immediate proximity and opportunity to witness and celebrate all aspects of both traditional and avant-garde live performances.

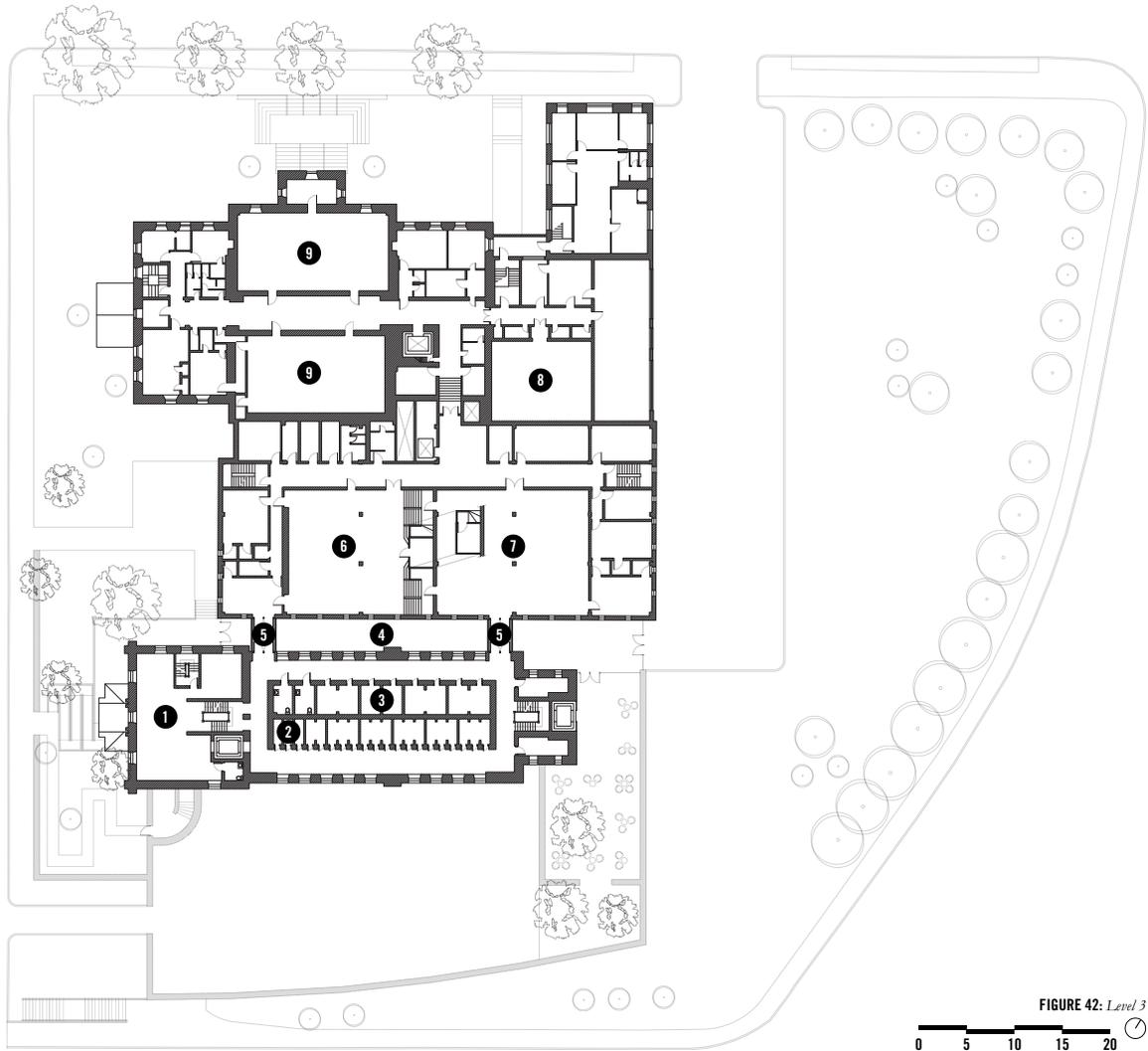


FIGURE 42: Level 3

- ① Featured Performance Space
- ② Remaining Drum Cells
- ③ Open Performance Space
- ④ Atrium
- ⑤ Bridge to Arts Court
- ⑥ Black Box Studio
- ⑦ Arts Court Theatre
- ⑧ Courtroom
- ⑨ Dance Studio

LEVEL 4* *Design Proposal*

Level 4 is the final floor of the jail, and caters to the digital arts, specifically video projection and mapping. The former governor's quarters offers an open concept space for featured exhibits. The corridor retaining the original single drum cells is intended for intimate viewing, whereas the opposite corridor is intended to be a museum exhibition, honouring and displaying the heritage and former use of the structure as Ottawa's first jailhouse.

Level 4 features the final two destinations of the narrative of James Patrick Whelan – the death row cell in which he was incarcerated until the morning of his execution in 1869, and the gallows in which he was publicly hanged, marking Canada's final public execution.

The design proposes a single elevator in place of the void below the gallows, which travels directly from Level 4 to Level 1. The shaft is exposed with a glazed wall on the exterior rear façade, suggesting the spectacle and exposure which was the theatrical nature of public execution. This intervention represents the culmination of both the journey through the jail, and the journey of James Patrick Whelan. Much like Whelan, upon entering the confines of the gallows, this moment marks the occupant's final descent.

*Original drawing provided by Barry Padolsky Associates Inc.

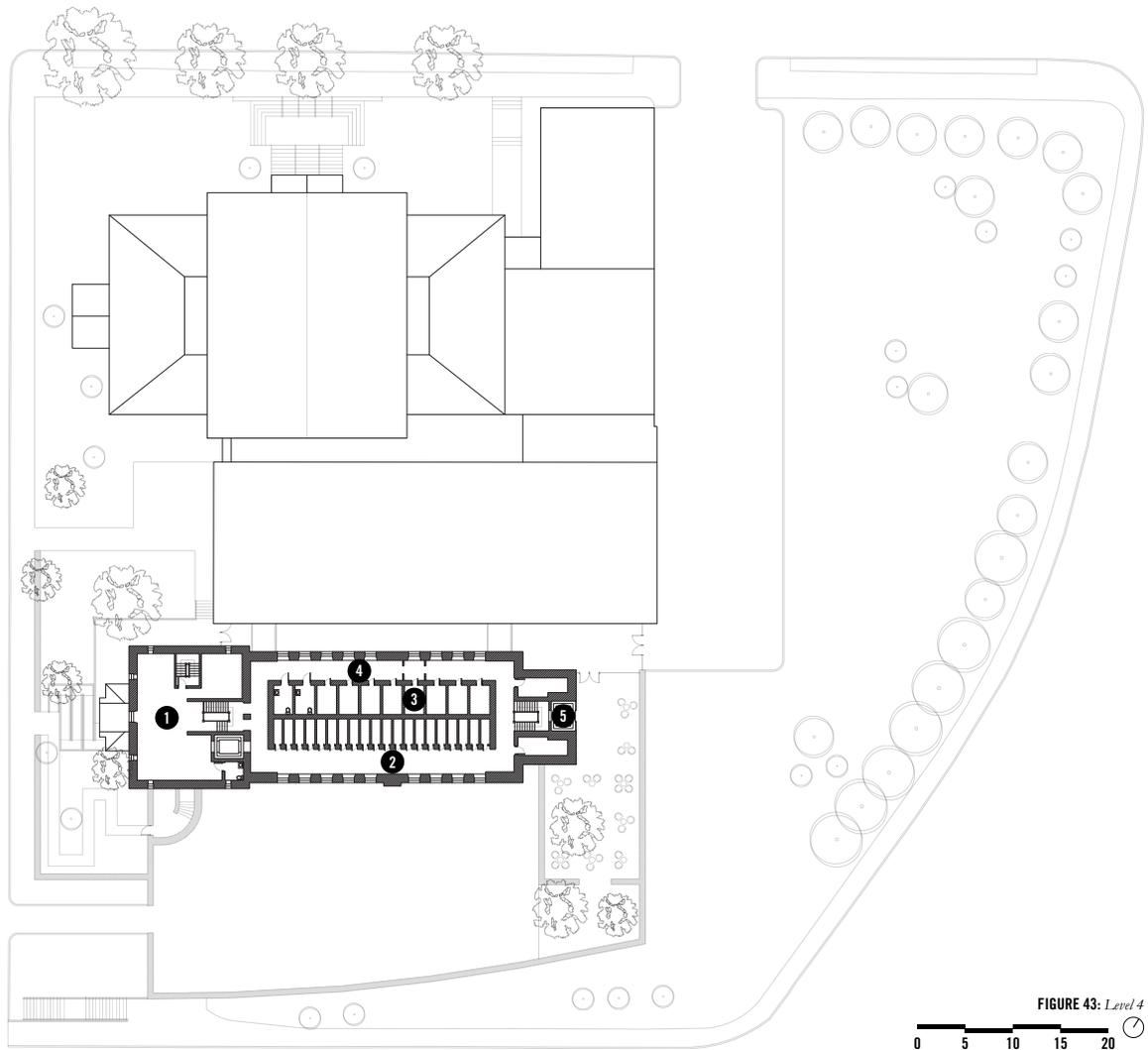
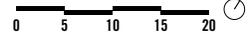


FIGURE 43: Level 4



- ① Featured Exhibition Space
- ② Intimate Exhibition Space
- ③ Death Row Cell
- ④ Museum Exhibition
- ⑤ Gallows

ELEVATIONS* *Design Proposal*

This three-and-a-half storey structure possesses a number of distinct exterior character defining elements specific to the Italiante style, and have been retained, with the exception and addition of a ramp on the west façade, a glazed elevator on the east façade, and a central atrium along the north façade.

*Original drawing(s) provided by Barry Padolsky Associates Inc.

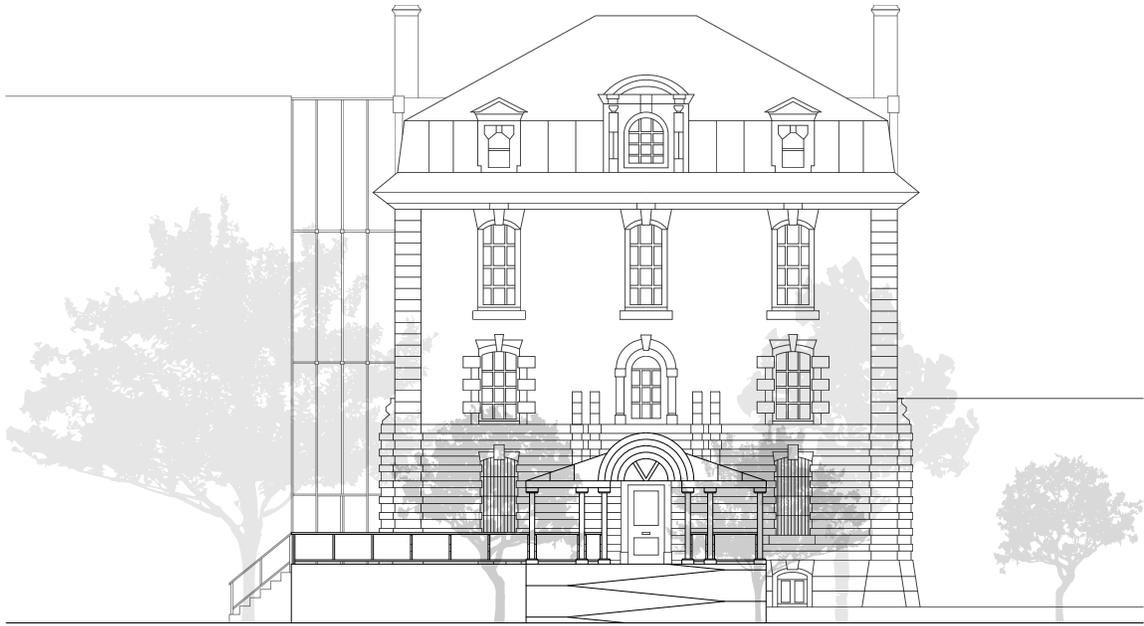


FIGURE 44: West Elevation

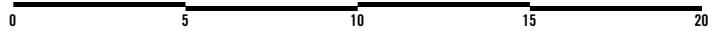
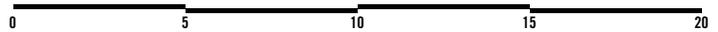


FIGURE 45: East Elevation



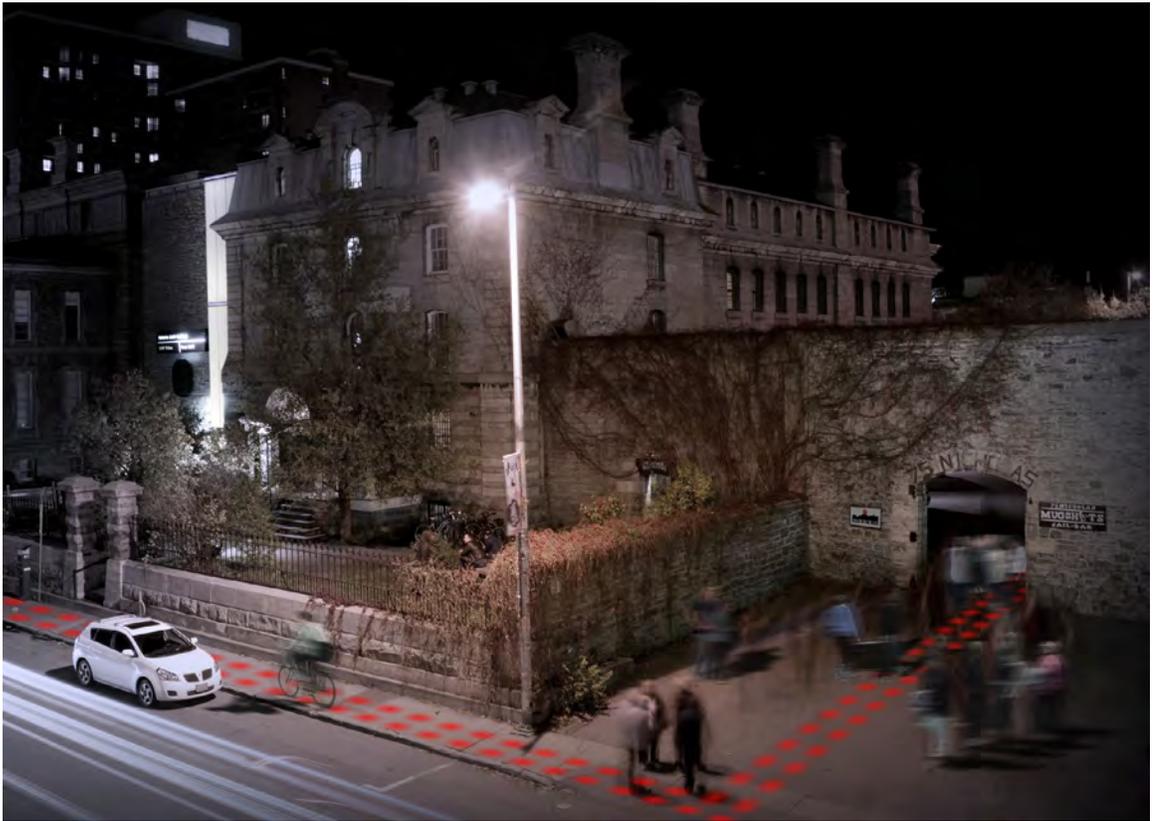


FIGURE 46: *Luminous Pathway*

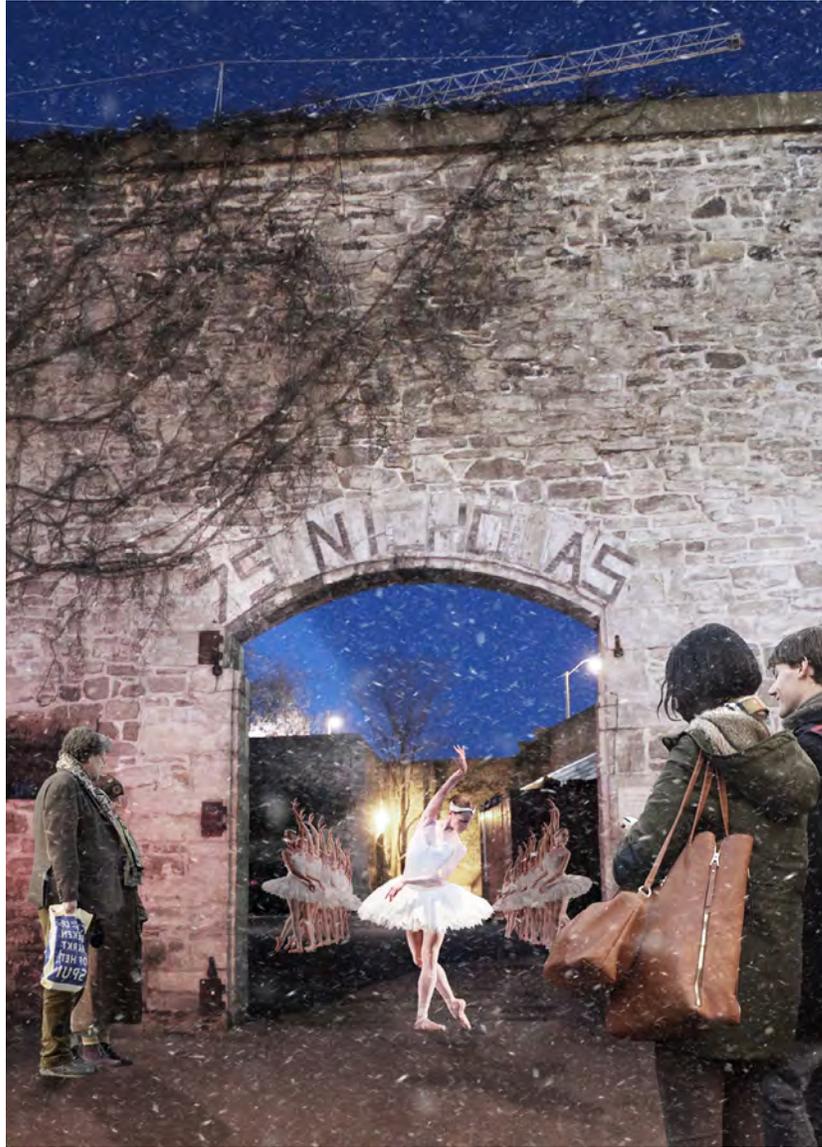


FIGURE 47: *Swan Lake* Readapted



FIGURE 48: *Pianist Readapted*



FIGURE 49: *Visual Art Cell*



FIGURE 50: *Digital Art Cell*

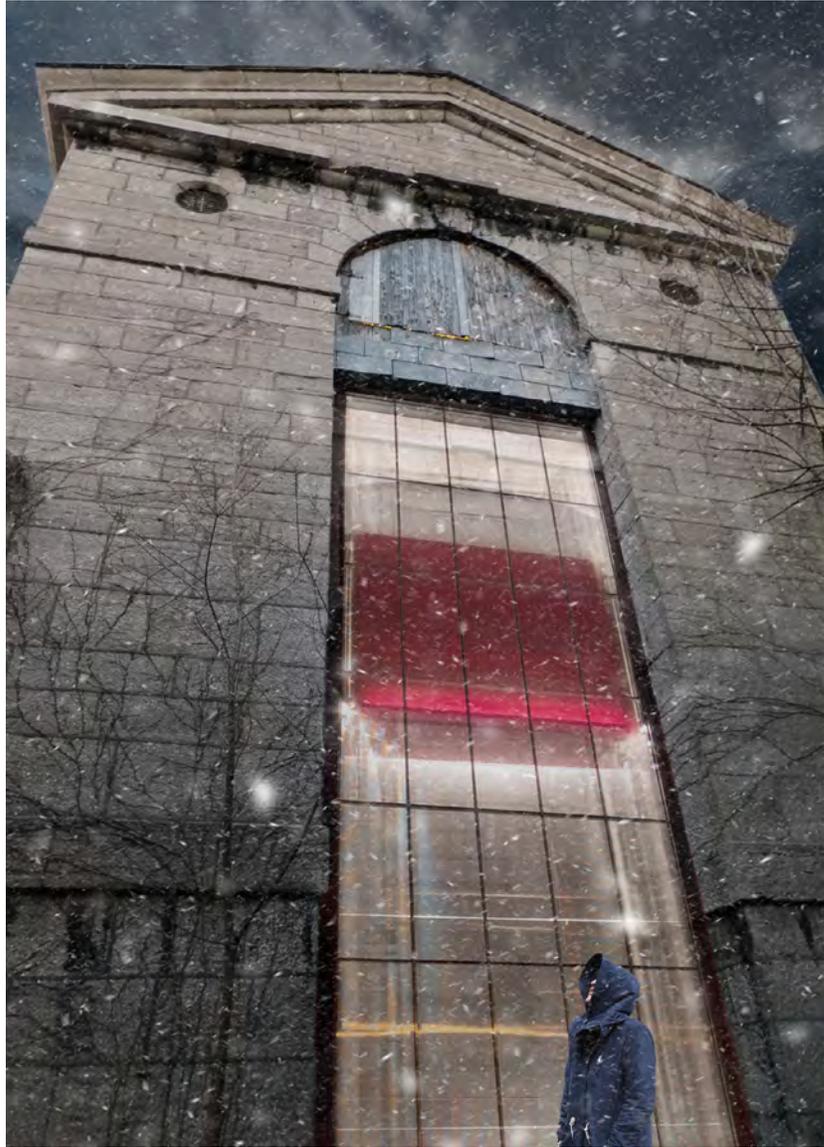


FIGURE 51: Gallows

POSTSCRIPT

Deconstructing the Fourth Wall: Directions for an Urban Mise-en-scène proposes reframing the perspective of Ottawa's public realm by interpreting the city as a stage, each space a platform for performance, and the surrounding community as the audience, those who experience and engage with these spaces. 'Deconstructing the fourth wall' between these two conditions will trigger an incentive for revitalization with an overall intent of establishing and maintaining Ottawa's individual identity.

The proposal is intended to bring awareness to what once existed, through the use of architectural, theatrical, and historical devices, assuming varying degrees of permanence and ephemerality. It traces the narrative thread of James Patrick Whelan, starting from the beginning of his journey at Parliament Hill and culminating at the gallows of the Carleton County Gaol, (presently occupied by the Ottawa International Youth Hostel).

An event schedule has been prepared noting the urban mapping of major dates, times, destinations, events, characters, and synopses in relation to the narrative interventions.

As an alternative means of discovering the city, this journey embraces Ottawa's rich history, and at large, promotes an appreciation for, and celebration of, local performing arts.

04 7

LOCATION

House of Commons, Parliament Hill // 2:00 a.m.

EVENT

Political Debate

CHARACTERS

Thomas D'Arcy McGee Unknown Man

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Following a debate at the House of Commons, Thomas D'Arcy McGee walks towards Mary Anne Trotter's Tavern on Sparks Street. An unknown man follows close behind.

LOCATION

71 Sparks Street, Mary Anne Trotter's Tavern (Presently The Astrolabe Gallery) // 2:30 a.m.

EVENT

Scene of the Crime

CHARACTERS

Mary Anne Trotter

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Outside Mary Anne Trotter's Tavern, a chalk outline is drawn on the ground, suggesting the death of Thomas D'Arcy McGee. The silhouette of Mary Anne Trotter is visible through a second storey window, dimly lit by a gas lamp.

LOCATION

Russell House, Hotel & Restaurant (Presently Confederation Square) // 2:30 a.m.

EVENT

Meeting a Friend

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Friend
Waiters

PLOT SYNOPSIS

James Patrick Whelan stops to see a friend at the Russell House, before continuing home. Spectators are encouraged to take a seat behind the false façade, and have a drink or snack.

LOCATION

Clarence Street, James Patrick Whelan's Hotel // 10:00 p.m.

EVENT

Intrusion & Interrogation

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Detective O'Neill

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Detective O'Neill wakes James Patrick Whelan in the evening, and takes him to the police station for questioning.

LOCATION

Police Station (Presently Arts Court) // 10:30 p.m.

EVENT

Suspect Questioning

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Policemen

PLOT SYNOPSIS

While under questioning, James Patrick Whelan states his alibi.

LOCATION

Carleton County Gaol, Solitary Confinement // 11:00 p.m.

EVENT

Solitary Confinement

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Policemen

PLOT SYNOPSIS

James Patrick Whelan is chained to the floor of the Solitary Confinement Cell.

04 9

LOCATION

Carleton County Courthouse, Courtroom (Presently Arts Court)

EVENT

Pre-Trial Court Hearing

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan The Magistrate

PLOT SYNOPSIS

A trial date is set for James Patrick Whelan on September 7th.

04 9-09 7

LOCATION

Carleton County Gaol, 6th Floor Drum Cell

EVENT

Drum Cell Incarceration

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Performance Artists
Prison Guards Musicians

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The vaulted ceilings of the drum cells allow for the passage of sound. Performers occupy a number of sound pods (drum cells) as venues for performance. In James Patrick Whelan's cell, *the air is filled with screams*. Two men stand on guard.

LOCATION

Carleton County Gaol, Courtyard

EVENT

15 Minutes of Freedom

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Prison Guards

PLOT SYNOPSIS

James Patrick Whelan is found wandering the courtyard. Spectators are encouraged to join, for a maximum of 15 minutes. The confines of the gallows are revealed and illuminated through a glazed façade.

09 7-09 11

LOCATION

Carleton County Courthouse, Courtroom (Presently Arts Court)

EVENT

Trial

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan
Constables
Bridget Boyle
James O'Reilly
Mary Anne Trotter
Jean-Baptiste Lacroix
Hillyard Cameron
John Joseph McGee
Ruben Wade
Alex Turner

Andrew Cullen
Jury Members
Euphémie Lafrance
Michael Duggan
Chief Justice
Sir John A. Macdonald
Lady Agnes Macdonald
Judge Richards
Crowd of People

PLOT SYNOPSIS

All approaches to the building are lined with constables. James Patrick Whelan is placed in the prisoner's dock awaiting the verdict of his trial. Spectators are encouraged to join as members of the jury. The crowd around the courthouse is immense.

09 11-02 11

LOCATION

Carleton County Gaol., Death Row

EVENT

Death Row Cell Incarceration

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Prison Guard

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The sound of scaffolding being erected in the courtyard (February 10th). A man stands on guard. Spectators are encouraged to visit the museum along the death row corridor before travelling down the elevator, marking the final descent.

02 11

LOCATION

Carleton County Gaol., Gallows // 10:00 a.m.

EVENT

Execution

CHARACTERS

James Patrick Whelan Priest
Crowd of People Policemen
Hangman Woman

PLOT SYNOPSIS

James Patrick Whelan enters the confines of the gallows. The doors to the gallows open, revealing the final descent of his narrative as a theatrical, public spectacle. Spectators are encouraged to witness this final moment around the rear east façade of the jail. *Music: woman singing.*

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FIGURE 13: “Quartier des Spectacles, Nuit Blanche.”

<https://lesechosdunord.files.wordpress.com/2015/05/2014-lumiere-copy.jpg>

FIGURE 14: “Quartier des Spectacles, 1.26.”

<http://www.argot.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/126.jpg>

FIGURE 15: “Quartier des Spectacles, Nuit Blanche.”

<http://blog.navut.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Pic-2015-02-28-125-1024x682.jpg>

FIGURE 16: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminothérapie.”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com

FIGURE 17: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminothérapie.”

http://cdx.designer.com/article/23185/Iceberg_05_gallery.jpg

FIGURE 18: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway.”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com

FIGURE 19: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway.”

https://c1.staticflickr.com/5/4112/5187867866_ea8e5bf3d_b.jpg

FIGURE 20: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway.”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com

FIGURE 21: “Quartier des Spectacles, Architectural Lighting.”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com

*All images by author unless otherwise noted

FIGURE 22: “Quartier des Spectacles, Architectural Lighting”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com.

FIGURE 23: “Quartier des Spectacles, Video Projections.”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com.

FIGURE 24: “Quartier des Spectacles, Video Projections”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com.

FIGURE 25: “Quartier des Spectacles, Video Projections.”

www.quartierdesspectacles.com.

FIGURE 26: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminothérapie.”

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/quartierdesspectacles/15469644863>.

FIGURE 27: “Quartier des Spectacles, Luminous Pathway.”

https://segd.org/sites/default/files/0902_LaVitrine_MD8787_LR_0.jpg

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FIGURE 31: Carleton County Gaol, Solitary Confinement

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FIGURE 48: Pianist Readapted

FIGURE 49: Visual Art Cell

FIGURE 50: Digital Art Cell

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